

IISD Programs

Resilience

Managing risks to move
from crisis to sustainability



International Institute for
Sustainable Development

Why We Are Needed

Fragility, conflict and violence have displaced 60 million people—the highest levels ever recorded.



The climate is increasingly unpredictable and disaster risks are rising. Fragility, conflict and violence have displaced 60 million people—the highest levels ever recorded. Global demands are placing unprecedented pressure on the natural systems that have supported human development for millennia.

In this uncertain context, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals will mean redesigning economic policies, development programs and business strategies to perform under a variety of new conditions. Risk assessment must reflect the latest science

and on-the-ground needs; and learning and knowledge-sharing must take top priority, given the unprecedented nature of some of these risks and the urgency to act.

IISD is a pioneer in participatory risk management. Our experts were among the first to develop tools that assess the links between environmental change and human security. We train practitioners around the world—from project managers to peace-keepers—to address the environmental sources of conflict. We turn assessments into action by supporting governments to devise climate adaptation strategies.

How We Are Effective

We are a multidisciplinary team of policy researchers with field experience in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

For over 15 years, IISD has worked with governments, civil society, communities and businesses to help them manage climate- and conflict-related risks. We are a multidisciplinary team of policy researchers with field experience in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Our expertise in political economy, natural resource management, disaster risk reduction, conflict analysis and participatory processes are brought together to work on three resilience challenges:

Climate Adaptation: Climate change is already affecting communities and ecosystems, and will worsen in coming decades. Our experts develop the strategies, tools and policy advice needed to respond effectively. We factor climate-change

adaptation into routine decision-making and track its progress.

Environment, Conflict and Peacebuilding:

Environmental factors can be a source of conflict and important to the peacebuilding process. Our researchers reveal these links and devise detailed options for addressing them so that fragile societies can move onto pathways of resilience.

Food Security: Resilient food systems and value chains underpin food security. We identify and monitor a range of factors, from social organization to private-sector investment, that allow these systems to function productively in a context of climate uncertainty.



Our Achievements

Three examples:

Combining science, policy, and community knowledge for adaptation

action: IISD has worked in more than 20 countries to assess the impacts of climate change on different stakeholders. In the Dominican Republic, we identified climate risks in the Yaque del Sur watershed and adaptation options for agricultural production, infrastructure and reforestation.

Acting on the links between climate and security:

Climate change can hinder the efforts of fragile states to move toward stability and sustainability. IISD has conducted field research in Africa and the Middle East to understand these dynamics, developed principles for climate-resilient peacebuilding, and provided guidance for accessing and using climate information in fragile states.

Managing risks along agricultural value chains:

Our research into food security looks at whole food systems, not just issues at the production level. In Uganda, we studied how to manage climate risks along the coffee value chain. As a result, for the first time, the government started integrating climate risks into trade-related issues.

More information:

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