

ANALYSIS OF THE INTERCONNECTED RISKS OF CLIMATE  
SECURITY AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM:

# A Practical Guide for Mauritania



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Contextualizing Climate Change and Violent Extremism Risks in West Africa and the Sahel and Particularly in Mauritania

### CHAPTER 1

#### Part 1

General context: risks related to climate change and violent extremism

#### Part 2

Specific context: Mauritania

**Outcome:** Awareness of the risks of violent extremism exacerbated by the effects of climate change.

#### Part 1

Choosing the target area

#### Part 2

Consultation and collection of key data

- ▶ LITERATURE REVIEW
- ▶ PARTICIPATORY DATA COLLECTION

#### Part 3

Risk analysis and mapping

**Outcome:** Analytical and visual risk mapping.

### CHAPTER 2

## Gender-Sensitive Analysis of Interconnected Climate Security and Violent Extremism Risks

#### Entry Point 1

Identification of programmes and policies in the CC/VE nexus

#### Entry Point 2

Mobilizing stakeholders for an inclusive and collaborative approach

#### Entry Point 3

Implementation and financing of identified opportunities

**Outcome:** Appropriate contextual policies, programmes and intervention in the CC/VE nexus.

### CHAPTER 3

## Implementing Opportunities for Policies and Programmes Adapted to Climate and Security Risks



# INTRODUCTION



## Background

In May 2024, the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), in collaboration with the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) and with the support of the German government, launched an initiative to address the interconnected challenges of climate change and violent extremism in West Africa and the Sahel. Entitled “*Strengthening National and Regional Approaches to Address Climate Change and Violent Extremism Risks*”, this project aims to support national and regional stakeholders in developing **more informed and robust strategies and policies** in response to complex and growing regional security risks exacerbated by **climate change** and **violent extremism**.

As part of this initiative, UNICRI has developed a methodological tool adapted to the **Mauritanian context**, designed to help national and local stakeholders integrate climate, environmental and conflict sensitivity into their strategies for the **prevention of violent extremism**. The methodology was developed and refined based on recommendations gathered at **workshops** held in Dakar and Nouakchott that brought together regional experts and practitioners to collaborate and share suggestions.

The tool provides a **step-by-step** guideline that allows users to comprehensively assess the **interrelated risks** associated with climate security and violent extremism and seize **opportunities** in this nexus to promote **peacebuilding and resilience**. Indeed, by offering a structured approach, the guide helps users understand and identify how climate shocks and environmental pressures intersect with the broader challenges of violent extremism, enabling stakeholders to develop more sustainable and conflict-sensitive interventions.

One of the key elements of the methodology is the emphasis on **local ownership and collaboration**. Indeed, during the use of this tool, national and local stakeholders are encouraged to collaborate and engage directly with affected communities to ensure that local information is integrated into the analysis. The tool also promotes **gender and youth** mainstreaming, recognizing that women, youth, and marginalized groups often face disproportionate **vulnerabilities** to climate insecurity and violent extremism. This **inclusive approach** is key to creating climate adaptation and violent extremism prevention strategies that are resilient, effective, and aligned with the specific needs of diverse communities.

The methodology is therefore a critical resource for **strengthening the capacity** of national actors to address the heightened risks of climate insecurity and prevent violent extremism. By disseminating local knowledge, fostering collaboration across institutions, and ensuring a gender-responsive approach, it provides a holistic framework to address the most pressing security and climate challenges in Mauritania.



# Objectives of the methodology

## 1. Strengthening Mauritania's national strategies

The main objective of this tool is to improve existing national and regional frameworks by providing a robust and tailored approach to risk assessment. It provides stakeholders with the opportunity to better identify, analyse and address the multi-dimensional risks posed by climate change and violent extremism. This tool complements national strategies by focusing on the specific challenges in Mauritania and promotes a coordinated and sustainable response.

## 2. Promoting local ownership and stakeholder engagement

To ensure that the methodology is relevant and feasible, there needs to be active engagement and ownership by local stakeholders. This tool is designed to be adaptable to local contexts, allowing government authorities, civil society organizations, universities, and other entities based in Mauritania to tailor its application to their specific needs. By fostering inclusive dialogue and collaboration, the tool fosters a shared understanding of the challenges and a collective response.

## 3. Improving empirical evidence-based risk identification

This methodology facilitates the identification of climate and security risks by collecting and integrating various data sources, including environmental, government, and safety information. It builds the ability of stakeholders to make informed decisions through a data-driven process that identifies emerging risks. In addition, it encourages collaboration across sectors to ensure comprehensive risk analysis and coordinated actions at national and regional levels.

## 4. Fostering an inclusive and gender-responsive approach

A key element of this tool is the focus on gender-responsive risk assessment. The methodology aligns with the United Nations' Women, Peace and Security agenda and ensures that vulnerable groups, including women, youth and marginalized populations, are considered at all stages of risk identification and response. By promoting the development of inclusive policies and programmes, the tool strengthens peacebuilding efforts and ensures that interventions address the unique vulnerabilities of these groups.

Overall, this risk assessment tool is an essential resource for key stakeholders to analyse, target, and address the interrelated challenges of climate security and violent extremism in Mauritania. With a focus on evidence-based analysis, stakeholder ownership, and inclusive approaches, it is designed to support resilient and context-specific solutions in Mauritania that advance peace and security in the region.



However, two elements need to be taken into account. First, it is important to emphasize that this methodological tool focuses specifically on the **prevention of violent extremism** rather than on its countering (see definitions of concepts in Part 1 of Chapter 1). This choice reflects a proactive approach to reducing risks and building the capacity of local populations in Mauritania before violent or radicalisation dynamics emerge. In addition, this guide is designed as a **“living document”**, i.e. it is intended to **evolve** over time. It will be field-tested, implemented and adjusted according to the results obtained and feedback from stakeholders. This **flexibility** is essential to ensure that the tool remains relevant to changing **local realities, emerging needs, and lessons** learned from practical contexts. By taking this evolutionary approach, the methodology aims to maximize its effectiveness and sustainability while ensuring that it continues to address to the complex and interrelated challenges of climate security and violent extremism in Mauritania.



# CHAPTER 1

## Contextualizing Climate Change and Violent Extremism Risks in West Africa and the Sahel and Particularly in Mauritania





## Introduction

In this first chapter of the methodological tool, you will be walked through the regional context of climate security and violent extremism in West Africa and the Sahel, particularly in Mauritania. The aim is to provide you with an understanding of the essential dynamics that link climate change to the security challenges of this region. You will explore the environmental and socio-economic factors that fuel these risks, as well as the responses put in place by national actors.

This methodological tool will guide you through a **comprehensive analysis of the challenges in Mauritania**, helping you develop a clear understanding of the key issues (Chapter 1). It aims to enhance your capacity to **assess existing risks** (Chapter 2) and to incorporate these insights into strategies for **preventing violent extremism** and building **climate resilience** (Chapter 3).

### By the end of this chapter, you'll have acquired:

- \* Knowledge of the impacts of climate change in West Africa and the Sahel.
- \* An understanding of the links between climate and violent extremism in this region.
- \* A vision of the socio-political challenges specific to Mauritania in the face of climate insecurity.
- \* Familiarity with local and regional strategies for responding to climate and security risks in Mauritania.





## Part 1

# General Context: Risks Related to Climate Change and Violent Extremism

## 1. CLIMATE AND SECURITY IN WEST AFRICA AND THE SAHEL

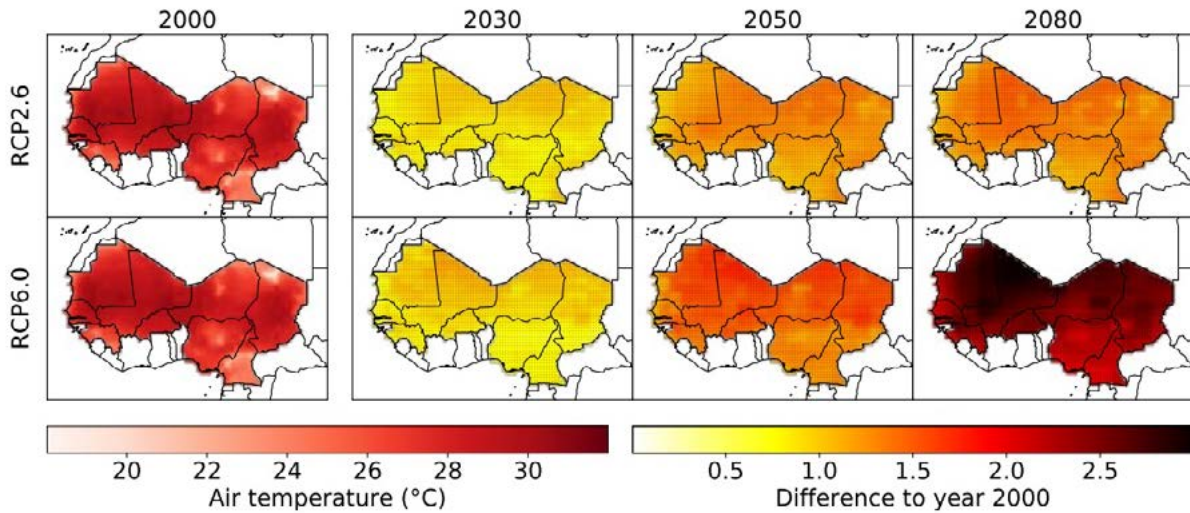
Climate change is causing an upheaval in security conditions around the world, with the West Africa and Sahel region particularly affected. Indeed, the region is experiencing climate impacts faster than the global average, potentially exacerbating political tensions and violent conflicts, often in the form of complex humanitarian crises.

Violent extremism is a major challenge in West Africa and the Sahel, where, since their independence in the 1960s, these states have experienced numerous conflicts, coups, and attacks by violent extremist groups, particularly due to the confluence of factors such as weak governance, economic decline, proliferation of weapons, foreign influence and ethnic and religious tensions<sup>1</sup>. Over the past decade, the region has been recognized as the world's new hotspot for violent extremism,<sup>2</sup> with the epicentres of violence and humanitarian disasters located in the sub-regions of Liptako-Gourma (border between Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso) and the Lake Chad Basin. A multitude of violent extremist groups operate in the region. Attacks regularly target civilians and security forces, in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, particularly in the volatile tri-border area of Liptako-Gourma. International and regional collaborations play a crucial role in preventing violent extremism, combining military initiatives with socio-economic efforts to address the root causes and impacts of extremism in the region.

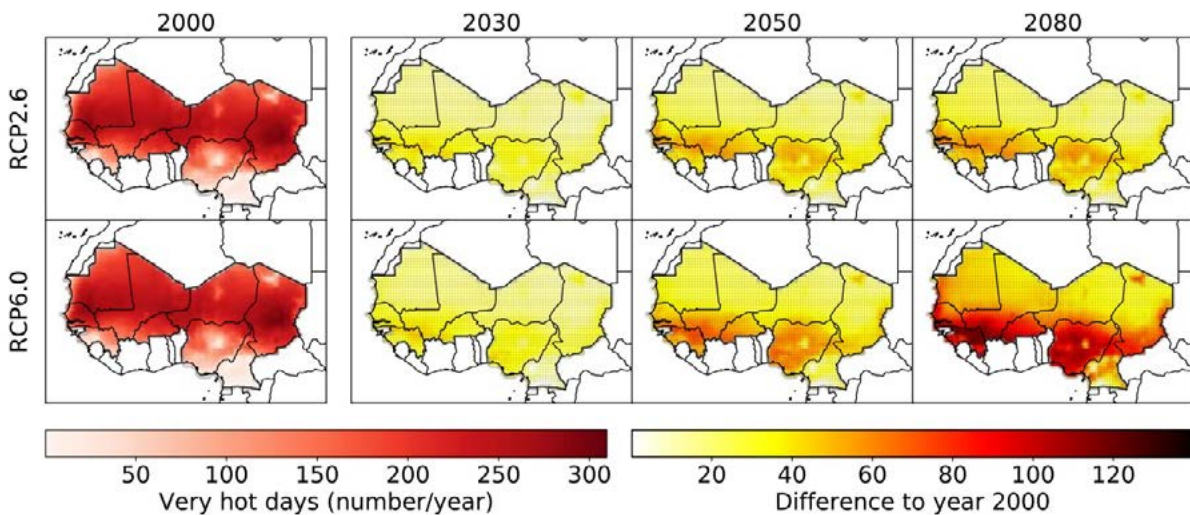
In addition to this political fragility, countries in West Africa and the Sahel are among the most exposed and vulnerable to climate change<sup>3</sup>. This is because the region will gradually become warmer, with erratic rainfall leading to an increased risk of irregular seasons, droughts, and flooding<sup>4</sup>. Climate data show that West Africa is warming faster than the global average: since



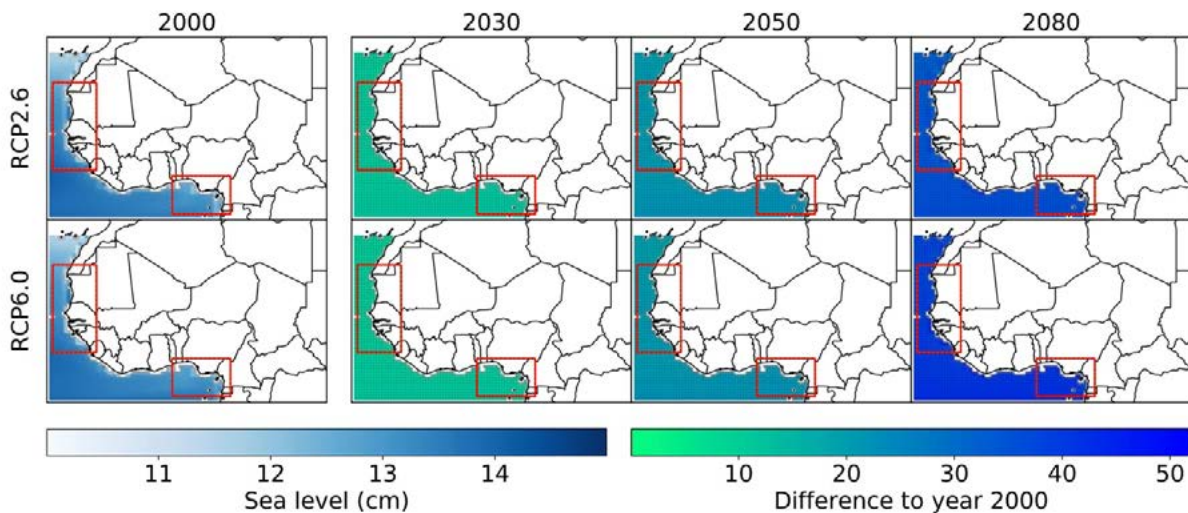
the mid-1970s, temperatures have risen between 1 to 3°C, especially in the Sahel, and rainfall is becoming less predictable in the region<sup>5</sup>. The Sahel and tropical West Africa are also projected to experience unprecedented variations in temperature and precipitation in the late 2030s and early 2040s.



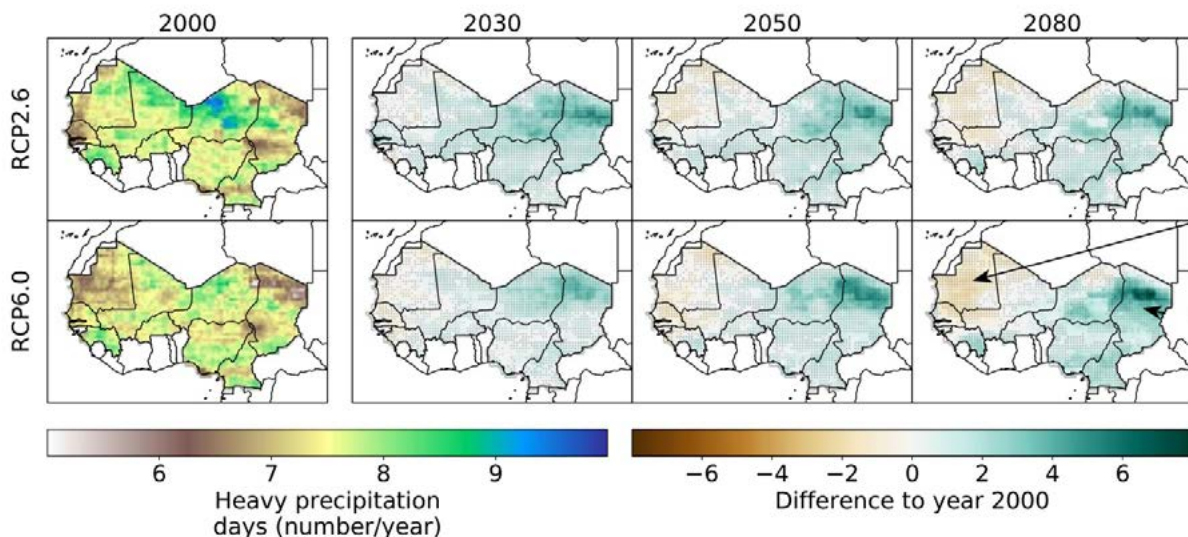
**Map 1.** Regional air temperature projections for the Sahel for different GHG emission scenarios, relative to the year 2000<sup>6</sup>.



**Map 2.** Projections of the annual number of very hot days (daily maximum temperature above 35°C) for the Sahel for different GHG emission scenarios<sup>7</sup>.



**Map 3.** Regional projections of sea level rise off the Atlantic coast and in the Gulf of Guinea under different GHG emission scenarios, relative to the year 2000<sup>8</sup>.



**Map 4.** Regional projections of the number of days of heavy precipitation over the Sahel for different GHG emission scenarios, compared to the year 2000<sup>9</sup>.

As a result, the livelihoods of individuals and communities are often severely disrupted by recurrent disasters, such as the destruction of homes and infrastructure, loss of property and income, forced displacement, deteriorating health, and food insecurity. These impacts are felt unevenly across genders and social groups, exacerbating pre-existing vulnerabilities. In the most precarious regions of West Africa and the Sahel, where the population is massively dependent on rain-fed agriculture, the possibilities of adaptation to climate change are extremely limited<sup>10</sup>.

In this context, climate change is increasingly recognised as a **“risk multiplier”**<sup>11</sup> by scientists, politicians and civil society around the world<sup>12</sup>. UN Security Council Resolution 2349 recognized that **“climate change is one of the factors affecting the political stability of the**

**region**, due to resource scarcity (including water and arable land), drought, desertification, and food insecurity.”<sup>13</sup> Indeed, projected climate change has the potential to exacerbate poverty, inequality, and social tensions in West Africa and the Sahel, undermining human security and increasing the risk of political instability, conflict, and potentially recruitment by violent extremist groups in the region<sup>14</sup>. As a result, climate change **indirectly** reinforces pre-existing threats. As Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said: “Climate change is not just an environmental threat; it is a crisis multiplier in the Sahel, exacerbating conflicts related to dwindling resources and fuelling recruitment by extremist groups”.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, these vulnerable and unstable environments often create fertile ground for the spread of radical ideologies, propaganda, and recruitment by violent extremist groups that can offer alternative livelihoods to people in precarious situations.

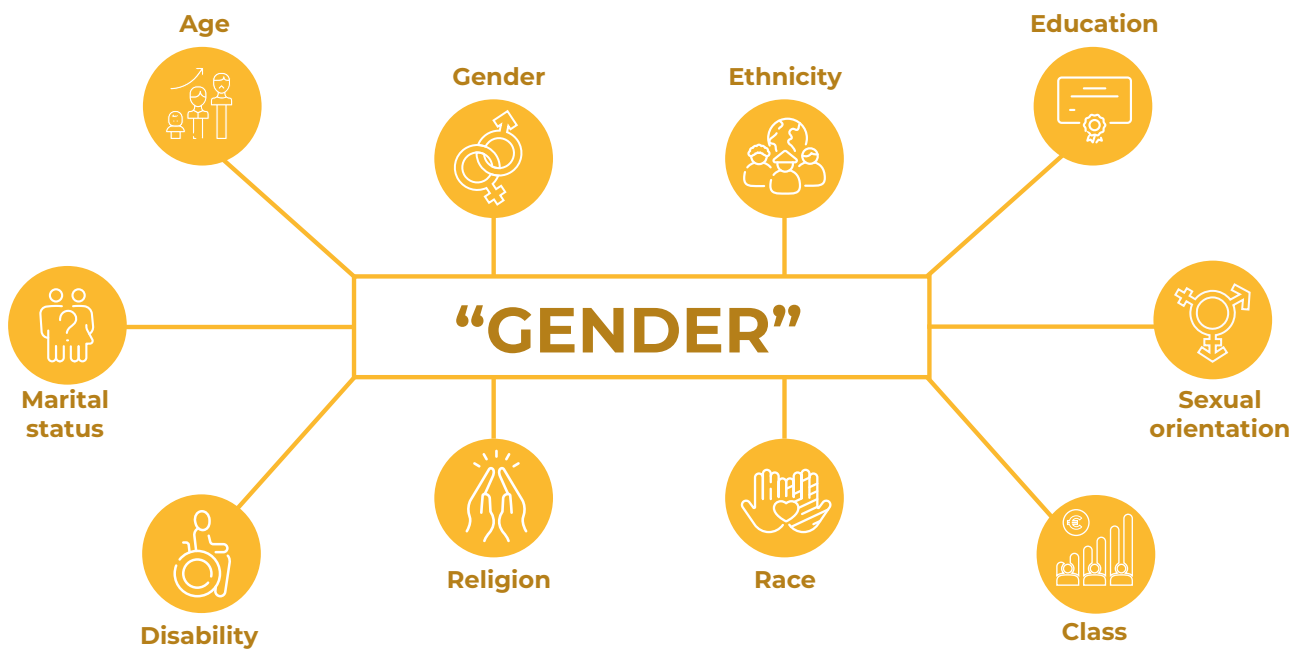
Moreover, the impacts of climate change and violent extremism are unevenly distributed across genders, systems, sectors, and geographic contexts. In fact, the impacts of climate change disproportionately affect women and girls, who mostly bear the burden of domestic work such as providing water and fuel, cooking, childcare, and household management, while they have fewer resources to adapt to changing conditions and are at increased risk of sexual and sexist violence.<sup>16</sup> Women and girls are also often the targets of gender-based violence perpetrated by violent extremist groups, which precipitates the erosion of their rights in politically unstable regions. These disproportionate impacts and inequalities reinforce the vulnerability that underpins the perpetuation of the cycle of marginalization and violent extremism.<sup>17</sup>

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### Important :

It is important to note that the concept of “gender” is not limited to just being a woman, and that women themselves are not a homogeneous group. Gender is a multidimensional concept that includes a variety of identity factors, such as ethnicity, age, race, sexual orientation, religion, disability or social class. These factors intersect to create unique experiences, often marked by multiple layers of marginalization and discrimination. This term has been institutionalized in Mauritania in the **National Strategy for the Institutionalization of Gender adopted** in 2015 and Law 2018-023 prohibiting all discrimination based on gender. Adopting a gender-sensitive approach therefore means acknowledging and taking into account this complexity in analyses and interventions.





## 2. KEY DEFINITIONS

### Climate Concepts

**Climate Change (CC):** As reported in the 6th IPCC Report, climate change is the change in the state of the climate that can be detected (through statistical tests, etc.) by changes in the mean and/or variability of its properties and that persists over a long period of time, usually for decades or more<sup>18</sup>. Climate change can be due to natural internal processes or external forcings, including modulations of solar cycles, volcanic eruptions, or persistent anthropogenic changes in atmospheric composition or land use. It should be noted that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), in its first article, defines climate change as “changes in climate that are attributed directly or indirectly to human activity altering the composition of the global atmosphere and that are in addition to the natural variability of the climate observed over comparable periods”. The Convention thus distinguishes between climate change due to human activities that alter the composition of the atmosphere and climate variability due to natural causes.

**Vulnerability:** Propensity or predisposition to be harmed. Vulnerability encompasses various concepts and elements such as sensitivity or fragility as well as the inability to cope and adapt.<sup>19</sup>



**Fragility:** The OECD defines fragility as “a combination of exposure to risk and insufficient adaptive capacity of the state, systems and/or communities to manage, absorb or mitigate these risks. Fragility can lead to negative outcomes, including violence, poverty, inequality, displacement, and environmental and political degradation.”<sup>20</sup> The OECD Fragility Framework explains that fragility can be measured across a spectrum, from more intense to less intense, and can exist across different dimensions, including environmental, political, societal, economic, and security.

**Resilience:** The ability of interdependent social, economic, and environmental systems to cope with a random evolution, disruption, or event, allowing them to respond to it or reorganize themselves in a way that preserves their fundamental function, identity, and structure.<sup>21</sup> A positive quality when it enables adaptation, learning, and/or transformation.<sup>22</sup>

## Security concepts

**Violent Extremism (VE):** Violent extremism has been given several different definitions, none of which are universally accepted. The term “extremism” has no basis in binding international legal standards<sup>23</sup>. According to the UN Secretary-General’s Plan of Action on the Prevention of Violent Extremism, the definition of violent extremism is the prerogative of Member States, as these definitions must also be consistent with the country’s obligations under international law, and in particular human rights law. However, for the purposes of this methodological tool, the term “violent extremism” will follow UNESCO’s proposed definition: “beliefs and actions of persons who support or use violence to achieve ideological, religious or political objectives”, including “terrorism and other forms of politically motivated and sectarian violence”. It is not specific to any religion, ethnicity, ideology, group, belief, or region.

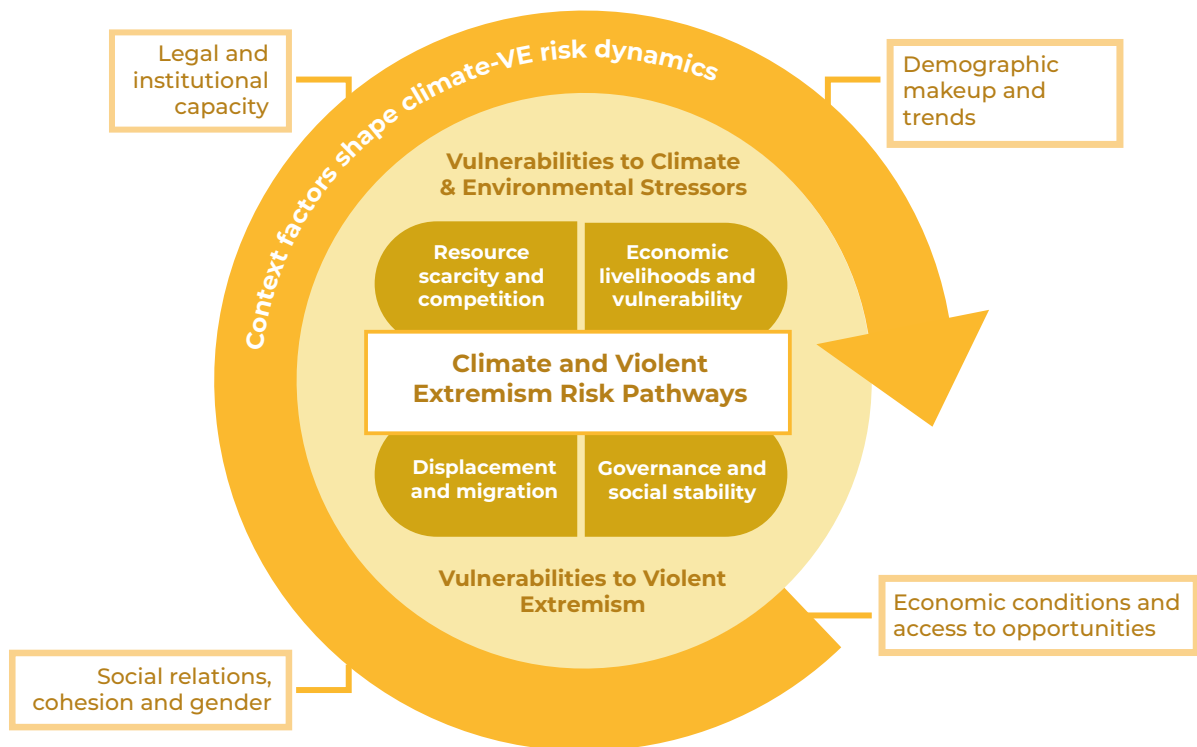


**Prevention of Violent Extremism (PVE):** There is no universal consensus on what exactly constitutes 'prevention' or 'countering violent extremism' (PVE/CVE), nor what exactly these efforts should take. In general, PVE is a proactive approach, addressing the root causes and grievances that could lead individuals or groups to extremism. It focuses on the social, economic, political and cultural factors that can contribute to and promote radicalisation, such as social exclusion, lack of economic opportunities, marginalisation, discrimination and political grievances. Initiatives to prevent violent extremism typically target the general public and communities considered to be at risk, focusing on building resilience within communities and strengthening social cohesion to create environments that are less conducive to extremism. Efforts to prevent violent extremism usually take place at an early stage, before radicalisation occurs.

**Countering Violent Extremism (CVE):** In general, countering violent extremism focuses on identifying, monitoring, and actively countering individuals or groups who are already radicalized or on the path to violent extremism. Countering violent extremism efforts include strategies such as disengagement and deradicalisation programmes, counter-narrative campaigns, rehabilitation and reintegration of former extremists, and community engagement to reduce immediate threats. Countering violent extremism interventions typically target individuals or groups who are already radicalized or showing early signs of violent behaviour and often require close collaboration with law enforcement and security agencies.

### 3. FOUR PATHWAYS OF INTERACTION BETWEEN CLIMATE AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM RISKS

As noted above, there are indirect interactions between climate change and regional political tensions, violent conflicts and complex humanitarian emergencies. During the early stages of the methodology development, and after a desk review and interviews, four context-specific pathways of interaction in West Africa and the Sahel were identified. These pathways of interaction correspond to the four ways in which climate change and violent extremism can **interact** and **amplify** existing **risks and vulnerabilities** in the region.



#### Risk pathway 1: Resource scarcity and competition

The scarcity of essential resources, such as water and arable land, is being worsened by unstable weather patterns caused by climate change. This situation has significant implications for communities in West Africa and the Sahel. Climate change contributes to prolonged droughts, natural disasters, and food insecurity, which intensify competition over limited resources and strain relationships between communities. As social cohesion deteriorates, violent extremist groups may exploit these tensions to their advantage. In areas where the state is unable to provide basic services such as education, healthcare, justice, food, and security, these groups can offer resources or protection in exchange for loyalty. This dynamic

not only strengthens their influence but also enhances their ability to recruit new members, further exacerbating instability in the region.

### **Risk pathway 2: Displacement and migration**

Extreme weather events and long-term climate changes are forcing people to migrate in search of more hospitable environments. This displacement can be both internal and cross-border, leading to increased urbanization and pressure on urban resources. Slow-onset climate change (e.g. desertification) is also altering traditional pastoral routes in the region. Migrant and refugee populations, who often live in precarious conditions, become vulnerable to recruitment by extremist groups offering financial support, security or a sense of belonging. In addition, the influx of pastoralist communities due to changing modes of pastoral mobility can put a strain on host communities, creating tensions that extremists can exploit to incite violence.

### **Risk pathway 3: Livelihoods and economic vulnerability**

Climate change is negatively impacting agricultural productivity – both livestock and fisheries –, which are the main livelihoods in the Sahel and West Africa, while population growth is exacerbating these issues. Loss of income and increased poverty can result from crop failures, livestock deaths, and reduced fish stocks, and lead to food insecurity. Economic and financial hardship creates fertile ground for recruitment by extremist groups, which can offer financial incentives or alternative livelihoods. The lack of economic opportunities and low adaptive capacity, especially for young people, can push them towards extremism as a means of survival.

### **Risk pathway 4: Governance and social stability**

Governments in the region often struggle to respond effectively to the challenges posed by climate change, such as disaster response and resource management. In addition, poor governance and inadequate public services can weaken citizens' trust in state institutions. Extremist groups can take advantage of governance vacuums by positioning themselves as alternative authorities, providing services, justice and security. Violent extremist groups can also seize natural resources, exploiting them for power and recruitment (tactical considerations). This undermines the legitimacy of the state and can lead to parallel power structures that challenge national unity and stability. When states fail to manage these conflicts, violent extremist groups can provide, to some extent, logistical and human means such as weapons and security, further destabilizing the region.



## Part 2

### Specific context: Mauritania

#### 1. GEOGRAPHICAL, CLIMATE AND DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

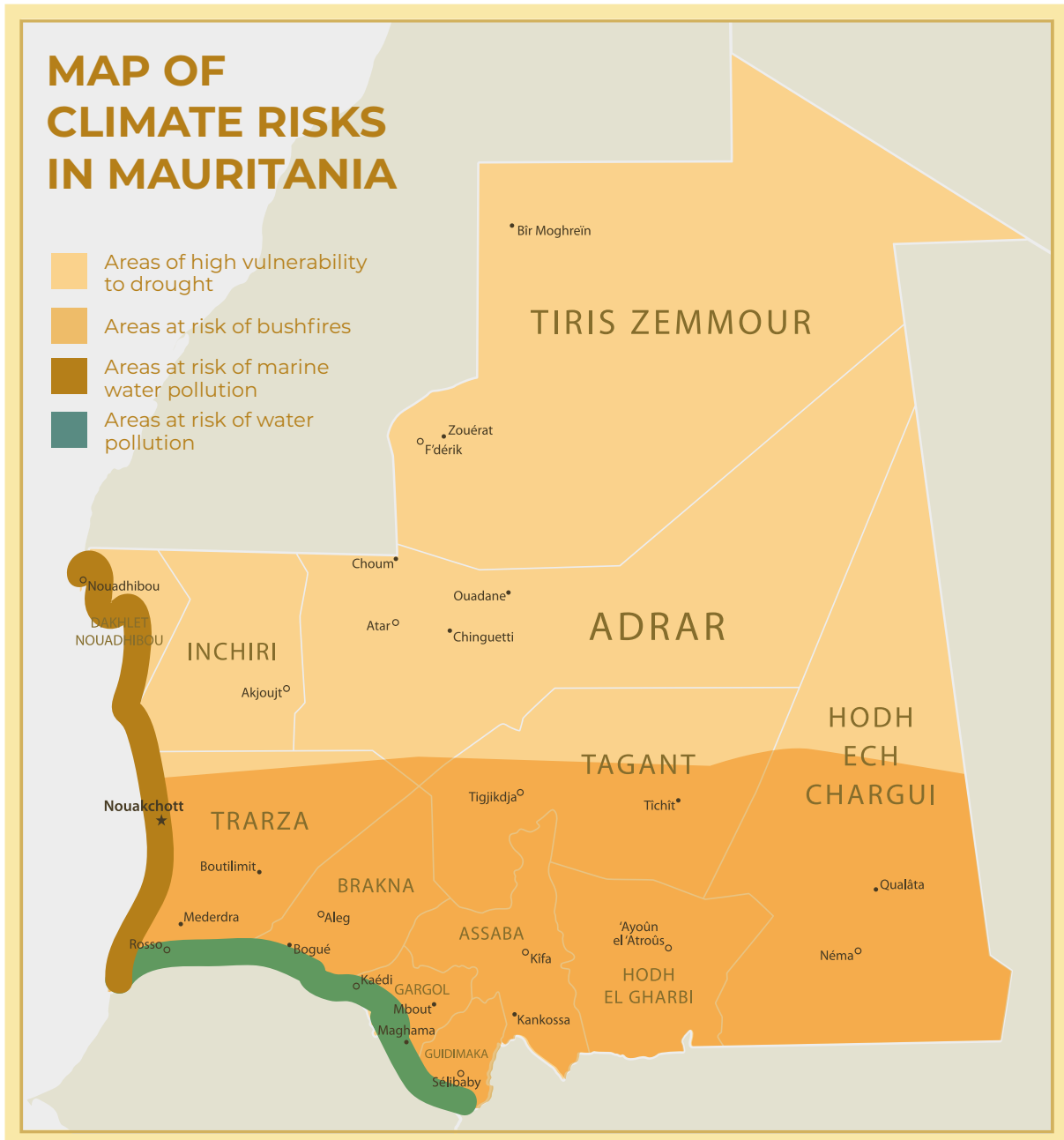
The Islamic Republic of Mauritania, located at the crossroads of the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa, is the driest country in the Sahel with 80% of its territory being arid. In 2018, Mauritania's total GHG emissions amounted to 9,944,618 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>eq, or 2.5 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>eq per capita. These emissions remain marginal on a global scale, yet Mauritania is one of the most vulnerable and severely affected countries by the impacts of climate change. Specifically, climate vulnerability in the country is manifested through:

- The increase in meteorological variability: floods, extreme heat, droughts, desertification.
- The decrease in water resources.
- The decline in agricultural harvests.
- Increase in waterborne and respiratory diseases.
- Sea level rise, erosion and the threat to coastal cities.
- Threats to fisheries related to ocean acidification.

With an area of 1,030,700 km<sup>2</sup>, it is one of the Sahelian countries most affected by recurrent droughts. This phenomenon is aggravated by extremely limited annual rainfall, outside the wet season from July to September, which only affects the southern regions of the country.<sup>24</sup> The resulting desertification is all the stronger because the effect of the climate, combined with human action, has direct consequences on an already very precarious environment. In 2023, the country experienced a significant water deficit that decimated a large part of the existing livestock, while in contrast, the year 2024 was marked by extensive floods, leading to significant destruction of infrastructure. This extreme variation illustrates the increasingly erratic nature of the seasons, characterized by oscillations between severe droughts and excessive rainfall, amplified by climate change.

Mauritania's desert climate contributes to its extreme vulnerability to the effects of climate change, which affect natural resources, agriculture, and by extension, affect all vital sectors of the national economy and food security. Mauritania is extremely vulnerable to the effects of climate change with a climate risk index of 63 in 2021. Since the 1960s, the average temperature has increased by about 1.5°C,<sup>25</sup> and projections estimate a further increase of 2.0°C to 4.5°C by 2080.<sup>26</sup> The frequency and intensity of natural disasters, such as droughts, floods, bushfires, and extreme heat waves have also been reported to be increasing. Indeed, about 33% of the Mauritanian population is in a situation of 'extreme vulnerability' to climate change.





Map of climate vulnerabilities in Mauritania <sup>27</sup>

In addition, the 2019 Report of Mauritania's Fourth National Communication on Climate Change predicts a progression towards increased aridity, an increase in the frequency of extreme events (heat waves, thunderstorms), and a gradual decrease in rainfall in the coming decades.

This global warming is making people more exposed to environmental risks. 94% of Mauritanian children are expected to be exposed to extreme temperatures by 2050.<sup>28</sup> Desertification, combined with human actions, leads to increased land degradation, thus limiting arable land which represents less than 0.5% of the national area.<sup>29</sup> Overexploitation of natural resources,

subsistence agriculture and overgrazing also contribute strongly to this land degradation, aggravating ecological pressures on rural communities. In particular, Mauritania's livestock is estimated at around 30 million head, and is particularly vulnerable to climatic conditions, as are the rural communities that depend on them. Indeed, agriculture and livestock account for between 60 and 70% of the national GDP, which underlines the importance of these sectors for the economy and their vulnerability to climate change.

Freshwater resources are also unevenly distributed, mainly concentrated along the southern border. This leaves a large part of the population in a situation of water scarcity, amplifying tensions around this crucial resource. The country was hit by repeated droughts in the 1970s and 1980s, leading to a collapse in agricultural production. As a result, poverty rates have skyrocketed in already vulnerable rural communities and led to mass exodus to urban centres, due in large part to harsh weather conditions and lack of economic opportunities. While in 1980 only 27% of Mauritania's population was urban, this rate has more than doubled to 55% in 2019.<sup>30</sup>

## Demography and socio-cultural structure

The Mauritanian population, located at the junction between the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa and estimated at 4.5 million inhabitants in 2023, is marked by great ethnic and cultural diversity. The country has a distinct cultural contrast: the north is mainly inhabited by Arab-Berber populations, while the south is mainly populated by communities of sub-Saharan origin. This diversity is also reflected in the composition of the population, where young people make up a significant proportion: about 61% of Mauritians are under the age of 25.

In 2024, economic growth is expected to reach 4.3% (compared to 3.4% in 2023). Inflation slowed significantly to 2.6% in February 2023 (2022: 9%). The country is also experiencing a rapid demographic transition but remains predominantly rural with 45% of the population still living in rural areas. However, despite increasing urbanization and economic growth, the economic outlook remains uncertain and living conditions remain precarious for many rural and urban communities. Inequalities are on the rise, as indicated in the note on multidimensional poverty developed in 2022. In Mauritania, nearly 6 out of 10 people (57%) are in poverty, while 6.3% of the population lives in extreme poverty.<sup>31</sup>



## 2. SOCIO-POLITICAL AND SECURITY CHALLENGES

### Regional instabilities and security threats

Mauritania faces a complex security situation, influenced by both regional and national factors. Since successive military coups in Mali (2020), Burkina Faso (2022), and Niger (2023), tensions have escalated within the former G5 Sahel, a regional alliance that includes Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger. These events led to the creation of the Alliance of Sahel States (AES), made up of states in political crisis, which broke off their participation in the G5 Sahel and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in 2023. This context of instability weakens regional cooperation and increases cross-border tensions.

Despite this regional instability, Mauritania stands out for its ability to maintain security on its territory. It was among the first countries in the Maghreb-Sahel to be affected by the threat of violent extremist groups, in particular the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat. The last terrorist attack on Mauritanian soil dates back to December 20, 2011, even though the country shares a 2,200 km border with Mali, the epicentre of the crisis in the Sahel with Burkina Faso. The country is considered an example of stabilization in the face of the armed terrorist groups in the region, having been able to avoid the Islamist insurgencies that affect its neighbours.

Nevertheless, the impact of violent extremism in the region remains present and mainly concerns vulnerable young people with increasingly diverse socio-anthropological profiles and multiple influences such as political frustrations, religious beliefs, ethnic conflicts and economic competition. In Mauritania, this phenomenon is better controlled, but regional dynamics and socio-economic pressures make this situation fragile.

### Conflict and climate refugees

Mauritania is also heavily impacted by the issue of refugees and cross-border migration, particularly due to the growing insecurity in Mali. The country hosts approximately 112,021 refugees and asylum seekers, mostly from Mali, 55% of whom are young people under the age of 17 and 51% are women. The political and security situation in Mali, exacerbated by the withdrawal of MINUSMA in December 2023, is contributing to an increase in this flow of refugees. The Mberra refugee camp, 20 km from the southeastern city of Bassikounou, now hosts more than 99,000 refugees<sup>32</sup>, outpacing the local population and putting increased pressure on resources.

The significant influx of refugees is creating tensions with local communities, mainly over natural resources such as water and pasture. The department of Bassikounou, close to the Malian border, is particularly affected by this pressure, with growing tensions between Malian refugees and local communities, exacerbated by competition for grazing areas and limited water points. This context also fosters conflicts between fishermen and herders over access







to water, as well as between local communities and Mauritanian returnees, particularly over land ownership (while refugees are often tolerated due to their lack of land claims, returnees are seen as potential claimants to local land).

### 3. INTERACTIONS BETWEEN CLIMATE AND SECURITY CRISES

These dynamics of migration and resource conflicts are partly aggravated by the effects of climate change. Climate variability and desertification are intensifying tensions between farmers and herders, particularly in areas near the Senegal River, where repeated droughts (2005, 2008, 2010 and 2012) have weakened the livelihoods of communities. The 1989 crisis between Mauritania and Senegal is a striking historical example, resulting in significant loss of life and displacement.

Faced with this socio-political and security complexity, Mauritania must reconcile its security stabilization efforts with the management of the influx of refugees and the challenges related to food security. Women and young people, who constitute the most vulnerable segments of society, are particularly exposed and affected by these risks, leading to migration and displacement.

The country's stability, reinforced by the first peaceful change of government through the 2019 elections, remains fragile in the face of environmental and socio-economic challenges exacerbated by climate change, security challenges and migratory pressure.



## TOOLBOX: EXISTING FRAMEWORKS AND INITIATIVES IN MAURITANIA FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND THE PREVENTION OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM

This section provides an overview of the key strategic frameworks, initiatives and projects led by the Government of Mauritania to build resilience to the impacts of climate change and prevent violent extremism. While not exhaustive, this list highlights selected adaptation policies, strategies, programmes and techniques, as well as concrete initiatives to promote social cohesion, security and sustainable development in Mauritania.

### Climate change

#### Policies, strategies and normative frameworks

- ✓ National Communications (2001, 2008, 2014, 2023): Report on the country's climate progress.
- ✓ Updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) 2021-2030 to include ambitious mitigation and adaptation targets.
- ✓ Mauritanian Coastal Development Master Plan (PDALM) (2017).
- ✓ National Environmental Action Plan (PANEDD) (2017-2021): Includes sub-programme 5, "Addressing the Effects of Climate Change".
- ✓ National Strategy for the Environment and Sustainable Development SNEDD (2017-2021).
- ✓ National Strategy for the Conservation of Wetlands (2014).
- ✓ Strategy of the National Agency of the Great Green Wall (2014).
- ✓ Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2011-2020).
- ✓ National Sustainable Development Strategy (2006): Incorporates the effects of climate change incidentally.
- ✓ National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) (2004): A framework for prioritizing adaptation needs and integrating adaptation into sectoral policies.
- ✓ Ratification of the UNFCCC (1994). Framework for International Climate Commitments.



### Current projects and programmes

- ✓ Mauritania's Updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) (2021-2030), Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development
- ✓ West African Coastal Management Programme (WACA): Strengthens coastal resilience.
- ✓ Climate Change Adaptation and Livelihoods in Three Arid Regions Project, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development.
- ✓ CBIT project : Strengthening national capacities for transparent climate reporting.
- ✓ Project for the Development of an Integrated System for the Development of Natural Capital in the Arid Zones of Mauritania (Drylands)
- ✓ PNA-CC Project: Development of a national adaptation to CC.
- ✓ Agropastoral Resilience Strengthening Project: Watershed Management and Enhancement of Environmental Value Chains.
- ✓ Project to Support the Great Green Wall.
- ✓ Green Schools Programme (PLE).
- ✓ Resilience and Sustainability Fund (FRD) programme.
- ✓ PRAGOA: Resilience of agropastoral and oasis ecosystems to climate change (Adrar region).

### Ecosystem-based adaptation techniques (EBAs)

Mauritania has included adaptation to climate change among the priorities of its development strategies and programmes. The EBA (ecosystem-based adaptation) approach is one of the priority adaptation options. Among the EBA techniques used:

- ✓ Fight against silting: Mechanical fixation and reforestation of dunes.
- ✓ Land restoration: Stone barriers, slowing thresholds.
- ✓ Rainwater management: Development of watersheds, drip irrigation.
- ✓ Valorisation of non-timber forest products.
- ✓ Defence of pastoral areas: Fodder techniques.
- ✓ Restoration of coastal and wetland areas: Dune ridge, Banc d'Arguin Park, Diawling Park.

## Prevention of Violent Extremism

### Policies, strategies and normative frameworks

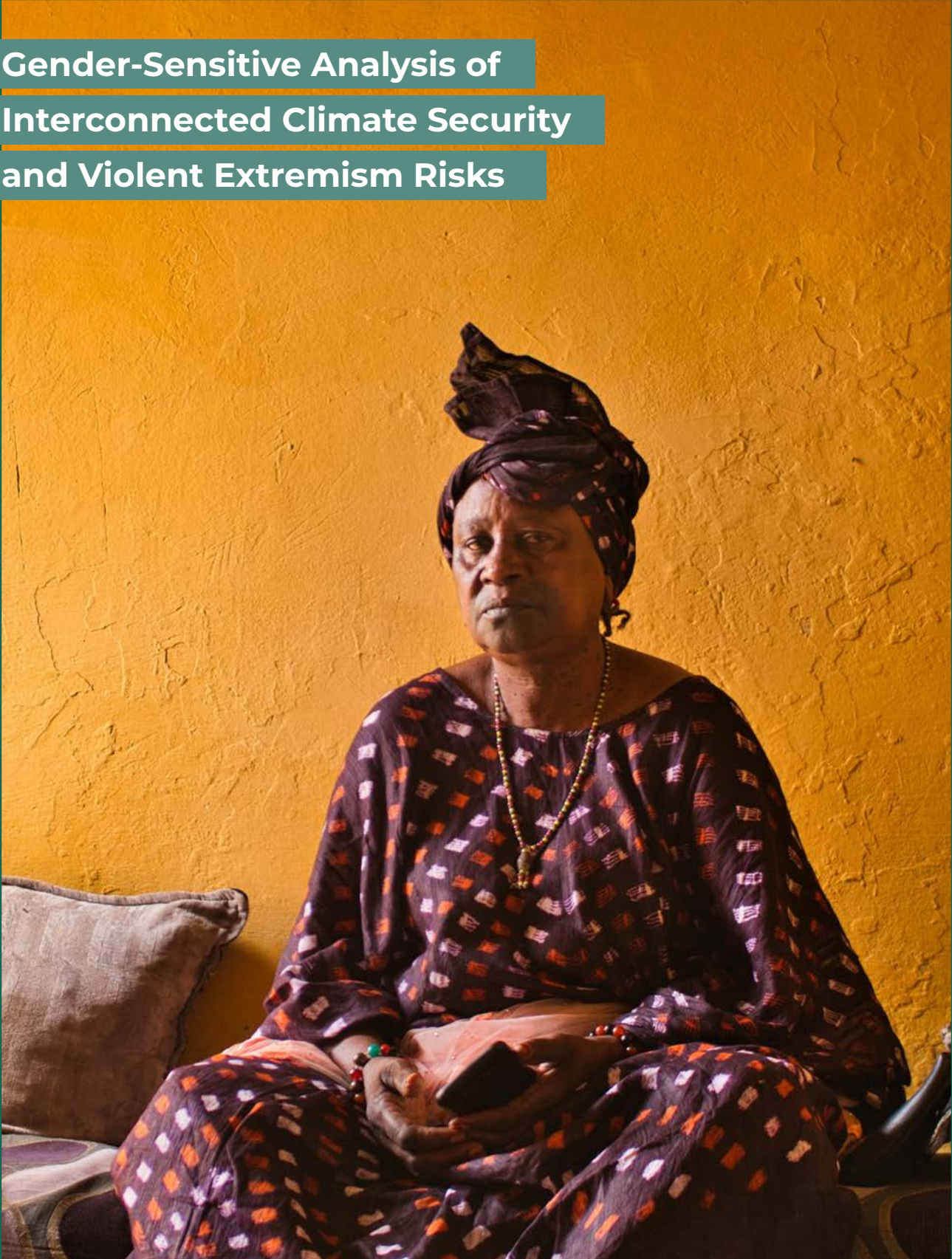
- ✓ [Statement by the Islamic Republic of Mauritania at the United Nations General Assembly \(78th session, October 2023\)](#) on “Measures to eliminate international terrorism”. Reaffirms Mauritania’s commitment against terrorism.
- ✓ [National Financial Inclusion Strategy \(SNIF\) \(2023-2028\)](#). Increases access to financial services for vulnerable populations.
- ✓ [National Open and Interoperable Data Strategy \(2023\)](#). Promotes transparency and inter-institutional data sharing.
- ✓ [National Strategy for the Institutionalization of Gender \(SNIG\) \(2023\)](#). Integrates gender equality into public policies.
- ✓ [Refugee Protection Strategy and Solutions \(2021-2025\)](#). Ensures the rights and integration of refugees.
- ✓ [Youth Strategy \(2024-2030\)](#). Supports youth inclusion and participation.
- ✓ [Resolution 2467 \(2019\)](#) Links the Women, Peace and Security agenda to the fight against violent extremism, calling for better monitoring and analysis of terrorism-related sexual violence.
- ✓ [National Strategy for Gender Equality \(2017-2030\)](#). Includes measures to empower women and combat violence, including those related to extremist dynamics.
- ✓ [Resolution 2331 \(2016\)](#). Strengthens gender inclusion in programming and encourages targeted support for women and girls affected by violent extremism.
- ✓ [Resolution 2242 \(2015\)](#). Calls for integrating the gender perspective into the prevention of violent extremism, protecting women from gender-based violence, and collecting gender-sensitive data on the drivers of radicalisation.<sup>33</sup>
- ✓ [National Strategy for Integrated Border Management in Mauritania \(2011\)](#). Strengthens border control and security.
- ✓ [Anti-Terrorism Act \(2005, amended in 2010\)](#). Defines terrorist acts and related sanctions, with a focus on international cooperation.

### Ongoing sectoral projects and programmes

- ✓ **PBF Project:** Peacebuilding Fund (Strengthening women’s leadership in preventing and countering violent extremism, through participation in criminal justice, promotion of social cohesion and cultural identity).
- ✓ **Tamkeen**, (which means empowerment in Arabic), is being implemented over five years (2021-2026) on vulnerable Mauritanian youth and women who are likely to be targeted and recruited by violent extremist groups. The project is being implemented in eight regions of the country namely Adrar, Hodh el Chargui, Hodh el Gharbi, Guidimakha, Assaba, Trarza, and Tiris Zemour, and in the capital Nouakchott and implemented by USAID partner FHI 360, and in partnership with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.
- ✓ **SEMAH** - Conflict prevention and promotion of intercultural dialogue in Mauritania: “Semah”, which means tolerance or forgiveness, is a project dedicated specifically to Mauritanian youth to encourage them to express themselves, to participate in the definition of policies that concern them and to contribute to the implementation of economic, social and humanitarian development projects. Partnership between the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport and the European Development Fund.
- ✓ **Programme to support decentralisation and local governance.** Strengthens the participation of local communities in governance and development, contributing indirectly to the PVE.
- ✓ **Mourchidates Project:** Women Religious Leaders Against Violent Extremism. This project, led by CellRad and implemented in collaboration with UNODC, aims to train women religious leaders, known as Mourchidates, to play a key role in preventing violent extremism through awareness raising and community dialogue.
- ✓ **Protection and access to justice for nomadic communities –** The National Guard of Mauritania trains its **Meharists** in gender mainstreaming. This project focuses on Meharism – a community-based policing approach adapted to remote areas – to strengthen the protection of nomadic communities and improve their access to justice.

# CHAPTER 2

## Gender-Sensitive Analysis of Interconnected Climate Security and Violent Extremism Risks



# Introduction

This chapter provides a **comprehensive** guide to help the user **identify** and **analyse areas and populations vulnerable** to climate security and violent extremism risks in Mauritania. It is structured in three main steps: first, the choice of the **target area**, then the **consultation and collection of essential data**, and finally the interpretation of this data to carry out a **risk map**. The user will be guided in a step-by-step approach, from the selection of critical areas to the analysis of the data and its visual representation, in order to identify, understand and prioritize risks accurately.

## By the end of this chapter, you'll have:

- \* Selected the critical area(s) for in-depth risk analysis.
- \* Collected and organized relevant data on climate and security risks.
- \* Synthesized and prioritized the specific risks and vulnerabilities of each area.
- \* Carried out a visual risk mapping, identifying areas of risk convergence and intervention priorities.

## Part 1

### Choosing the Target Area

**Objective:** This first step aims to guide the user in the choice of target areas in Mauritania, by identifying the places and local communities where climate and violent extremism risks are highest. This analysis will guide the user in an intervention tailored to specific needs, based on their own priorities and capacities.

#### 1. PREAMBLE

Before starting to choose the target area, take a moment to assess your priorities, available resources, and response capabilities. This preliminary work is crucial to ensure that your selection is realistic and well aligned with local needs and your objectives to ensure the most effective intervention.

To facilitate this self-assessment, here are a series of questions and tips. We advise you to take a few minutes and answer these questions briefly in writing.



## Clarification of priorities

- What are the main objectives of your intervention?
- Do you plan to address a specific risk (e.g. drought, inter-community conflicts) or a set of risks?
- What is the level of urgency of your project?

**TIP:** SOME AREAS MAY REQUIRE IMMEDIATE ACTION DUE TO HIGH RISK. PRIORITIZE YOUR PRIORITIES BASED ON URGENCY.

## Analysis of available resources and capacity

- What financial resources do you have for this intervention?
- Do you have funding dedicated to specific areas, or can you mobilise it for different regions?
- Do you have dedicated human resources on site or easily mobilizable?

**TIP:** CONSIDER THE AVAILABLE TEAM, INCLUDING LOCAL SKILLS IN DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS, COMMUNICATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS, AND MONITORING INTERVENTIONS

- What types of local support can you mobilize?

**TIP:** THINK ABOUT THE ACTORS YOU WANT TO COLLABORATE WITH (E.G. LOCAL NGOS, AUTHORITIES) AND THE RESOURCES NEEDED FOR A SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIP.

## 2. SELECTION CRITERIA: ANALYSIS

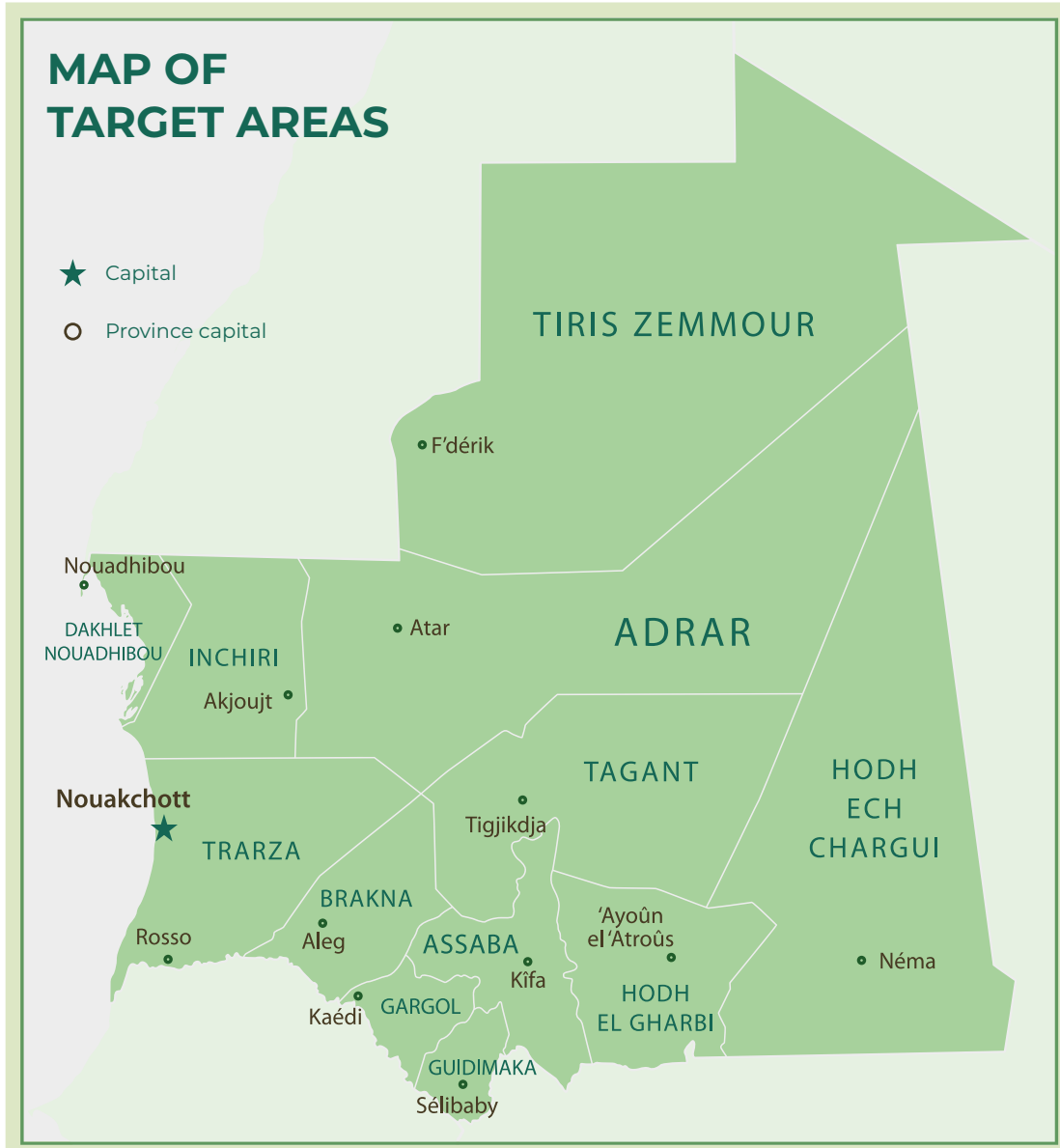
In this section, you will find a list of criteria to help you select one or more target areas based on climate and security risks in Mauritania. Each criterion is associated with specific indicators, which you can consult through easily accessible databases or reports specifically adapted to the Mauritanian context. Recommended sources are indicated for each indicator (e.g. environmental reports, climate databases, etc.).

To guide your analysis, we advise you to complete the table below for each criterion and its indicators, noting the areas or regions identified as being at high risk. For example, for the indicator “Extreme weather events,” you could note “Hodh Ech Chargui” if this region is particularly exposed. At the end of your consultation, identify the most often mentioned areas in your table to identify your priorities in a clear and structured way.



Select areas based on criteria to target specific risks:

**NOTE:** YOU CAN FIND A DESCRIPTION OF THE DATA SOURCES MENTIONED IN THE APPENDIX OF THIS DOCUMENT.



Criterion	Indicator	Recommended source to be consulted	Region(s) particularly at risk
<b>Presence of climate risks</b>	Frequency of extreme weather events (floods, wildfires, drought, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <a href="#">Climate Risk Profile, Mauritania: CRP_Mauritania_FR_20210208.pdf</a></li> <li>◆ National Communications on Climate Change at the UNFCCC (latest: July 2019).</li> <li>◆ Climate Change Knowledge Portal, World Bank, <a href="#">Mauritania - Summary   Climate Change Knowledge Portal</a></li> <li>◆ Flood and Drought Portal, UNEP <a href="#">Flood and Drought Portal</a></li> <li>◆ <a href="#">Rankings // Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative // University of Notre Dame</a></li> <li>◆ <a href="#">Think Hazard - Mauritania</a></li> <li>◆ <a href="#">CLISS Digital Library – Annual Report 2023 - AgrHyMet</a></li> </ul>	
	Prevalence of slow-onset phenomena (desertification, rising sea levels, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <a href="#">Climate Risk Profile, Mauritania: CRP_Mauritania_FR_20210208.pdf</a></li> <li>◆ National Communications on Climate Change at the UNFCCC (latest: July 2019).</li> <li>◆ Climate Change Knowledge Portal, World Bank, <a href="#">Mauritania - Summary   Climate Change Knowledge Portal</a></li> <li>◆ Flood and Drought Portal, UNEP, <a href="#">Flood and Drought Portal</a></li> <li>◆ <a href="#">Rankings // Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative // University of Notre Dame</a></li> </ul>	



<b>Presence of security risks</b>	Incidents affecting civilians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ ACLED, <a href="#">Analysis Search - ACLED</a></li> <li>◆ Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX) (OCHA), <a href="#">Mauritania - Humanitarian Data Exchange</a></li> </ul>	
	Annual number of victims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ UCDP Conflict Data Programme (Uppsala University), <a href="#">UCDP - Uppsala Conflict Data Programme</a></li> <li>◆ ACLED, <a href="#">Analysis Search - ACLED</a></li> </ul>	
	Annual number of attacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ ACLED, <a href="#">Analysis Search - ACLED</a></li> </ul>	
<b>Socio-economic indicators</b>	Level of agricultural productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ FAO Food Price Monitoring and Analysis, <a href="#">FAOSTAT</a></li> <li>◆ World Bank Open Data, <a href="#">Mauritania   Data</a></li> </ul>	
	Availability of natural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ UN Biodiversity Lab (UNEP, UNDP)- <a href="http://map.unbiodiversitylab.org/location/UNBL/mauritania">map.unbiodiversitylab.org/location/UNBL/mauritania</a></li> <li>◆ World Bank Open Data, <a href="#">Mauritania   Data</a></li> <li>◆ UNDP Human Development Index, <a href="#">Human Development Index   Human Development Reports</a></li> </ul>	
	Presence of basic infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ World Bank Open Data, <a href="#">Mauritania   Data</a></li> </ul>	
	Economic development indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ World Bank Open Data, <a href="#">Mauritania   Data</a></li> <li>◆ UNDP Human Development Index, <a href="#">Human Development Index   Human Development Reports</a></li> <li>◆ GINI Index (World Bank), <a href="#">Gini index - Mauritania   Data</a></li> </ul>	

<b>Accessibility of the area</b>	Telephone network coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ ITU Data Portal, <a href="#">Mauritania data - ITU DataHub</a></li> </ul>	
	Available transport networks		
	Refuge flows or main migration router	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Migration Data Portal, IOM, <a href="#">Migration Governance Profile: The Islamic Republic of Mauritania   Migration data portal</a></li> <li>◆ Displacement Tracking Matrix, IOM, <a href="#">Mauritania   Displacement Tracking Matrix</a></li> <li>◆ Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX) (OCHA), <a href="#">Mauritania - Humanitarian Data Exchange</a></li> </ul>	
<b>Additional risk factors</b>	Level of governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ World Bank Government Effectiveness Data, <a href="#">Government Effectiveness: Percentile Rank - Mauritania   Data</a></li> <li>◆ INFORM Index, <a href="#">Sahel</a></li> </ul>	
	Vulnerability of certain population groups (minorities, gender, youth)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ World Bank Gender Statistics, <a href="#">Mauritania   World Bank Gender Data Portal</a></li> <li>◆ UNDP Gender Development Index, <a href="#">Gender Development Index   Human Development Reports</a></li> <li>◆ Women Count, UN Women, <a href="#">Country Fact Sheet   UN Women Data Hub</a></li> </ul>	
	Crime rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ UCDP Conflict Data Programme (Uppsala University), <a href="#">UCDP - Uppsala Conflict Data Programme</a></li> <li>◆ ACLED, <a href="#">Analysis Search - ACLED</a></li> </ul>	
	Long-term dynamics (e.g. desertification, population growth, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ World Bank Open Data</li> <li>◆ Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative</li> <li>◆ UNDP Human Development Index</li> <li>◆ Climate Change Knowledge Portal, World Bank</li> </ul>	



### 3. SELECTION CRITERIA: REFLECTIONS

Analysis of results and adjustment: Once the table is completed, assess the relevance and limitations of your results and, if necessary, adjust the choice of target areas according to your strategic priorities and intervention capacities identified in the “preamble” section. This process also includes consideration of additional factors, such as:

- Institutional preferences: Available funding, requests from local authorities, national plans, etc.
- Population diversity: Keep in mind the ethnic and linguistic diversity of the areas. The effects of climate change and security threats can vary significantly within the same area, depending on differences in socio-economic status, gender, livelihood strategies, and lifestyles.

By following this structure, you will be able to select the area(s) to target in an informed way and ensure that future interventions will be both relevant and adapted to local realities (objective of this step).

## Part 2

### Consultation and Collection of Key Data

#### 1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND DATA ANALYSIS

**Objective:** In this section, the objective is to carry out an in-depth literature analysis to obtain a global view of the climate and security risks affecting the chosen target area(s) in Mauritania. This step includes the analysis of already existing data, such as reports from specialized organizations, academic articles, and relevant press articles to better understand the local situation.

**Recommended sources and data:** To facilitate this analysis, the tool offers a list of essential sources to consult (reports, databases, strategic documents, etc.) classified into several categories, thus allowing you to centralize, structure, and analyse the available information:

##### 1. Climate and weather data:

Specific local, national, and regional information on climate change in Mauritania, including the frequency of extreme weather events, land degradation, and rainfall levels, as well as reports on the state of natural resources, biodiversity, and environmental degradation. This data will provide a better understanding of the climate challenges facing the country.

- ✓ Climate Risk Profile, Mauritania: [CRP\\_Mauritania\\_FR\\_20210208.pdf](#)
- ✓ National Communications on Climate Change at the UNFCCC (latest: July 2019).
- ✓ Climate Change Knowledge Portal, World Bank, [Mauritania - Summary | Climate Change Knowledge Portal](#)
- ✓ Flood and Drought Portal, UNEP [Flood and Drought Portal](#)
- ✓ [Rankings // Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative // University of Notre Dame](#)
- ✓ [Think Hazard - Mauritania](#)
- ✓ [CLISS Digital Library – Annual Report 2023 - AgrHyMet](#)

## 2. Security situation

Security risk assessments, including security force reports and NGO assessments on the existence of violent extremist groups and their activities.

- ✓ ACLED, [Analysis Search - ACLED](#)
- ✓ Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX) (OCHA), [Mauritania - Humanitarian Data Exchange](#)
- ✓ UCDP Conflict Data Programme (Uppsala University), [UCDP - Uppsala Conflict Data Programme](#)
- ✓ FAO Food Price Monitoring and Analysis, [FAOSTAT](#)
- ✓ Division of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) and United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS). [Climate, Peace and Security in Mauritania](#).
- ✓ Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). [Climate, Peace and Security Fact Sheet: Sahel](#).

## 3. Socio-economic statistics:

Demographic and economic data, including employment status, income distribution, and poverty indicators.

- ✓ World Bank Open Data, [Mauritania | Data](#)
- ✓ UN Biodiversity Lab (UNEP, UNDP) [map.unbiodiversitylab.org/location/UNBL/mauritania](http://map.unbiodiversitylab.org/location/UNBL/mauritania)
- ✓ World Bank Open Data, [Mauritania | Data](#)
- ✓ UNDP Human Development Index, [Human Development Index | Human Development Reports](#)
- ✓ GINI Index (World Bank), [Gini index - Mauritania | Data](#)



#### 4. Gender-sensitive data:

Specific information on the vulnerability of women and youth to climate and security risks, and the impacts of these risks on social dynamics.

- ✓ International Monetary Fund (IMF), Middle East and Central Asia Department [Islamic Republic of Mauritania: Selected Issues](#). 3 février 2023.
- ✓ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). [Women and Climate Change in the Sahel](#).
- ✓ United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI). [Voices of Resilience: a Gendered Needs Analysis for the Prevention of Violent Extremism in the Sahel](#)
- ✓ Sahel Alliance, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). [A Strategy to Integrate Gender in the Security & Justice Sectors in the Sahel](#).
- ✓ UN Women, UNEP, DPPA and UNDP. [Genre, Climat et Sécurité : Maintenir une Paix Inclusive en Première Ligne du Changement Climatique](#). United Nations Development Programme, New York, NY, 2020.

#### 5. Maps and satellite images

Visualization tools to understand the impact of climate and/or violent extremism risks in targeted areas.

- ✓ CCVI. (2024). The [Climate Conflict Vulnerability Index \(CCVI\)](#) - Technical Documentation v1.0.
- ✓ Mauritania Risk Profile – based on data and analysis generated by the ([Inter-Sectoral Impact Model Intercomparison Project](#))
- ✓ United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). UNEP Strata: Climate and Security Risk Analysis. Available at: <https://unepstrata.org/>
- ✓ Global Mapping Tool “*Water, Peace, and Security*”. Partnership (IHE Delft, The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies, International Alert, et al.). <https://waterpeacesecurity.org/map>


#### Summary of the data accessed:

After reviewing the documents and recommended data, the user is prompted to summarise of the information to identify the main risks in the selected target area. This synthesis aims to prioritize the risks specific to each theme addressed (climate, security, socioeconomic, etc.) and to provide a clear and structured overview of the most significant issues for the area studied.



To facilitate this work, the user will be able to record the information in a table summarizing the severity of the consequences of each identified risk (minor, moderate, major, catastrophic) as well as its probability of occurrence (very likely, probable, possible, unlikely, very unlikely). This table will be used to categorize the different types of risks by theme, based on the indicators documented during the consultation. The main objective of this exercise is to draw up a clear picture of the most important risks in the chosen area, thus facilitating strategic decisions and intervention planning to respond to the identified vulnerabilities (in Chapter 3 of the tool).

## RISKS

		SEVERITY			
		Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
PROBABILITY	Very likely				
	Probable				
	Possible				
	Unlikely				
	Very unlikely				



**Severity scale:**

- \* **Minor (1):** The consequences of the risk are mild and easy to manage without significant effort.
- \* **Moderate (2):** The consequences of the risk are manageable but will require moderate actions and time to mitigate.
- \* **Major (3):** The consequences of the risk are serious, with a long-term impact that can lead to significant disruptions.
- \* **Catastrophic (4):** The consequences of the risk are severe and could cause lasting or irreversible damage, with major challenges in recovering.

**Probability scale:**

- \* **Very likely (5):** Risk is almost certain to occur in the study area.
- \* **Probable (4):** This risk is likely to occur in the near future.
- \* **Possible (3):** This risk could occur, but its occurrence remains uncertain.
- \* **Unlikely (2):** This risk is unlikely to occur, although it is not excluded.
- \* **Very unlikely (1):** This risk is very unlikely, with a rare or almost non-existent occurrence.

**Guiding questions:** This section provides guiding questions to structure and deepen your literature review. Using these questions, you will be able to focus your research on critical aspects of the interactions between climate risk and violent extremism in the study area. They will help you extract key information, identify key risks, and better understand specific vulnerabilities in the local context.

**Risk pathway 1: Resource scarcity and competition**

- What are the main factors of resource scarcity in the area (e.g. access to water, arable land) and how do they influence local tensions?
- How do extremist groups exploit competition for natural resources to recruit and strengthen their control?
- Are there initiatives by violent groups to provide resources (water, food) in exchange for loyalty or support?
- What local governance mechanisms exist to manage resource conflicts? Are they effective and inclusive?

## Risk pathway 2: Displacement and migration

- To what extent do climate hazards cause internal or cross-border displacement in the targeted region?
- How do these migratory movements impact relations between local communities and migrants? Are there increased tensions?
- Have extremist groups taken control of transhumance or migration routes, and how does this impact local security and governance?
- What are the effects of this displacement on women and youth, and how do these dynamics influence the risks of joining extremist groups?

## Risk pathway 3: Livelihoods and economic vulnerability

- What kinds of climatic changes impact local livelihoods, and how could these impacts be exploited for recruitment by extremist groups?
- What is the economic situation of rural communities, especially women and youth? To what extent are these groups economically vulnerable?
- Are there specific tensions between farmers and herders exacerbated by climate pressures? How do these tensions influence security dynamics?
- Are there government or international initiatives to support the economy, and are they perceived as equitable and tailored to local needs?

## Risk pathway 4: Governance and social stability

- How do economic inequality and lack of political inclusiveness influence the risks of radicalisation?
- Are extremist groups perceived as “protectors” or alternatives to the state in certain areas? If so, for what reasons (e.g. meeting basic needs, security)?
- How do local policies on land use or access to water affect relationships between different communities?
- What specific challenges do local authorities face in responding to climate crises, and how does this influence the perception of the state within local communities?

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### Remarks :

*Importance of local data:* Local data often makes critical contributions, as communities on the ground are the first to see signs of significant changes (for example, rising water levels or



changes in natural resources). Integrating this local data into the analysis is crucial, allowing for a more accurate and responsive perspective on the specific risks of the targeted area.

*Adopt a gender lens:* It is essential to apply a gender lens throughout the analysis to align this tool with the goals of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) framework. Gendered and inclusive data from vulnerable populations enrich the understanding of risks and impacts, ensuring that the strategies considered take into account the specific needs of women and other marginalized groups in each theme addressed.

## 2. PARTICIPATORY DATA COLLECTION

**Objective:** In this step, the objective is to guide the user through an **empirical data** collection to complement the information gathered during the literature review with participatory methods and field surveys. It involves directly engaging local communities and stakeholders to gather accurate information, including on local **knowledge** and **perceptions** and the direct impacts of climate change and security risks, with a focus on the experiences of vulnerable groups such as women and youth.

### Data collection methods

Here is an overview of the three recommended collection methods to get a complete perspective on local dynamics.

1. **Face-to-face surveys:** These surveys collect quantitative and qualitative data from local communities and other stakeholders. They include closed-ended questions such as multiple-choice questions, matrix questions, and “yes” or “no” questions, focusing on age and gender differentiation to better understand residents’ specific perspectives on climate and safety impacts.
2. **Key informant interviews:** These interviews are conducted with influential figures, such as local authorities, religious leaders, security experts, civil society organizations, and representatives of international organizations. These interviews can be conducted using semi-structured guides to foster open discussion, allowing participants to openly share their perceptions and experiences, while adapting the questions to the context of each target group.
3. **Focus groups in multiple locations:** Focus group discussions bring together a variety of actors (civil society, community members, women and youth) to deepen understanding of local and gendered perceptions and impacts. These exchanges also facilitate cross-sectoral dialogue, which is essential for promoting collaboration and mutual understanding between different actors.

## Objectives to which data collection must be aligned

- **Collaboration:** Encourage cooperation among participants by organizing focus groups where various stakeholders (local communities, ministry representatives, etc.) can exchange views. This promotes a collective vision of risks and possible responses and allows stakeholders to be involved in the risk analysis process.
- **Inclusion of vulnerable groups:** Make sure to actively involve vulnerable groups, including women and youth, by diversifying stakeholders in each session. It is critical that these voices are heard and represented, integrating a gender perspective into data collection to align the tool with the WPS framework.

## Key questions to guide interviews

To make it easier to conduct interviews and discussions, below is a series of key questions that can serve as a guide. These questions are designed to help gather targeted and relevant information on climate and security risks, local perceptions, as well as the specific impacts of these risks on communities, including vulnerable groups such as women and youth.

The questions also include strategic keywords, which are important elements to identify in the answers. By paying attention to these keywords, the user will be able to structure and analyse the data collected more easily by identifying recurring themes and concerns. This provides a clearer view of local dynamics, the most mentioned risks, and potential impacts. The keywords will thus serve as useful indicators to organize responses, while facilitating the identification of the main factors of vulnerability or resilience within the community studied.

- *What are the main climate and security risks in the area and on its member communities? How might this evolve in the future?*  
Extreme weather events - Observed changes in climatic and seasonal conditions - Observed changes in temperature, rainfall and extreme weather events - Expected changes in temperature, rainfall and extreme weather events.



- ***What other shocks, pressures and uncertainties are likely to affect the area and its communities in the future?***  
Identified non-climate-related natural hazards – Ongoing or potential conflict, violence, or political crises.
- ***What are the effects of security risks and climate change in the area and on the member communities?***  
Livelihoods - Lack of resources or damage to resources - Pressures or increased situations of conflict, violence within a household or between communities - Displacement/ migration of populations.
- ***What are the effects of security risks and climate change on women and youth?***  
Gender-specific data on the consequences of climate shocks, pressures and uncertainties – Increase in unemployment, begging, urban crime – Increase in the involvement of specific groups in conflicts, violence – Any impact specific to women/youth groups.
- ***What are the effects of security risks and climate change on governance?***  
Effects of climate shocks, pressures and uncertainties on institutions and access to services.
- ***What specific dynamics for women and young people are emerging in the context of security and climate risk?***  
Access to resources, gender-based violence, gender roles, increased vulnerability.

### **Analysis of the results**


Once survey and focus group data have been collected, it is crucial to structure the information obtained to get a clear overview of the risks and their urgency. To do this, the user is invited to organize this information into a risk matrix, a tool that helps to classify and compare the identified threats. Here are the detailed steps to follow to complete this matrix effectively:

- 1. Identify and note key risks:** Start by reviewing the results of surveys and discussions to identify risks or hazards that are frequently mentioned by participants.
- 2. Assess the severity of each risk:** For each risk, estimate the severity of its occurrence based on the information provided by participants. Use a simple scale, for example: high, medium, or low. The more the same risk is reported by different actors in the target area, the higher its likelihood, as their frequency of mention by different groups indicates a common concern and a widespread impact. This estimate will help to establish priorities in the actions to be undertaken.
- 3. Describe the potential impact:** Note the likely consequences mentioned by participants for each identified risk, both in the short and long term. For example, a climate risk could cause immediate crop loss (short-term impact) but also contribute to the sustainable impoverishment of the community (long-term impact).
- 4. Identify the affected groups:** For each risk, indicate the population categories most at risk, taking care to think of vulnerable or minority groups, such as women, youth, or rural communities. Briefly describe how each group might be affected by the risk, in order to better target interventions and supports.
- 5. List existing measures:** Note the initiatives or devices mentioned as already in place to reduce or prevent the identified risk. This may include local policies, outreach programmes, community networks, or emergency resources. This step helps to identify gaps in the current response and additional needs.
- 6. Identify the source of information:** For each piece of data or perception collected, note the source (person, group, organization or department) that provided the information. To ensure anonymity and protect the confidentiality of participants, it is also possible to indicate sources in a general way (e.g. “member of the local community” or “representative of the Ministry of the Environment”).

By structuring the data in this way, the user can get a clear and nuanced picture of the situation, facilitating decision-making and the development of strategies tailored to local needs and priorities. This risk matrix also makes it possible to classify and prioritize the risks identified in the chosen target area.



## Risk assessment matrix



		HAZARD							
		Severity of risk			Potential short-term impact	Long-term consequences	Who is affected and how?	What measures are in place?	Data source(s)
		Élevée	Moyenne	Faible					
RISK	<i>Example :</i> Limited water resources				Loss of access to water	Displacements	Rural communities	NGO interventions	Local investigations

### Note :

The risk must be presented as a harmful situation. The harmful event is, in concrete terms, the event/evolution that is at the origin of the damage, which can be of human origin or result from human actions or a natural phenomenon or which can lead to negative consequences.

### CHOICE OF ACTORS

To ensure meaningful and relevant data collection, it is essential to select key actors to participate in surveys, interviews and focus groups from different sectors within the target area. Participatory collaboration with representatives of communities, institutions and local organisations contributes to a better understanding of climate and security risks and vulnerabilities.

**Objective:** To select representative stakeholders who can provide diverse perspectives and in-depth knowledge on local dynamics. The categories below provide a list of potential actors to collaborate with, based on areas of expertise and community responsibilities

- \* **Mauritanian national government institutions:** These institutions play a critical role in the coordination and implementation of climate risk adaptation and risk management strategies. They provide the expertise, administrative capacity and resources needed to assess and respond to security and climate risks.
  - ✓ Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Livestock, Ministry of Agriculture, National Cell for the Fight against Violent Extremism (CELLRAD), Ministry of the Interior and Decentralization, Defence and Security Forces.



- \* **Local and traditional authorities:** These figures play a central role in understanding local perceptions and acceptance of initiatives within the community, while facilitating local dynamics and buy-in to prevention and adaptation initiatives in the face of climate and security risks.
  - ✓ Community leaders, mayors, religious representatives, customary/traditional authorities, local elected officials, religious leaders.
  
- \* **Technical and administrative institutions:** These institutions hold valuable data on climate risks and offer technical analysis, contributing to the understanding and management of risks.
  - ✓ Meteorological services, research institutes, local early warning committees, Mauritanian Institute for Oceanographic Research and Fisheries, National Programme for Adaptation to Climate Change.
  
- \* **Civil society actors:** Involving these actors ensures that the concerns of vulnerable groups, especially youth and women, are integrated into the risk analysis.
  - ✓ National Youth Council, Platform for women's organizations, nomadic and transhumant populations, youth associations, local NGOs, farmers' groups, village committees.
  
- \* **International and regional organizations:** These organizations have resources and information that complement local perspectives, provide useful regional comparisons, and support local initiatives with specific expertise and funding.
  - ✓ International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Bank, World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS).

### Notes:

The different roles of household members must be taken into account, as women and men traditionally have different responsibilities and do not have equal access and control over resources. As a result, this implies different needs and priorities.

Whether formal or informal, national and local institutions play a key role in improving or impacting negatively people's lives in the face of climate hazards and the rise of violent extremism. As a result, they are key stakeholders in the process.



## Part 3

# Risk Analysis and Mapping

**Objective:** The objective of this step is to help the user analyse the data obtained during the document review and field data collection, in order to prioritize the risks identified in the chosen target area. This prioritization will then facilitate the creation of a risk map, making it possible to visualize priority risks, critical areas, affected populations and intervention priorities.

### 1. ANALYSIS PROCESS

To guide the user in the analysis of both the collected and documentary data, it is recommended to follow the steps below and fill in the corresponding table, which will allow an efficient organization and prioritization of risks for the mapping.

1. **Synthesis of data from multiple sources:** Start by merging information from the literature review and data collected in the field. This step consists of grouping the identified risks by specifying their source (documentary or field) and noting the populations concerned. Use the table to summarize this information.
2. **Identify converging risks:** Identify risks that are mentioned both in literature sources and by participants in the field. These converging risks often represent strategic priorities, as they indicate perceived emergencies from multiple sources.
3. **Risk categorization:** Organize risks by themes, such as climate, security, and socio-economics. This categorization helps structure the analysis and prepare thematic layers for mapping.
4. **Risk prioritization:** Evaluate each risk based on its impact and probability of occurrence, using a scale from minor to catastrophic for impact and from possible to very likely for likelihood. This helps to identify risks that need immediate attention.
5. **Identification of vulnerable populations and areas:** For each prioritized risk, identify particularly vulnerable demographic groups (women, youth, rural communities, etc.) as well as the specific areas where these risks are concentrated. This analysis will be useful in directing the mapping towards the critical areas.
6. **Summary of interactions and risk trends:** Some risks can be mutually aggravating, such as conflict and food insecurity. Identify these interactions and note observed trends, such as the accumulation of vulnerabilities in certain regions or groups, to better target areas in need of priority interventions.

**7. Validation for mapping:** Finally, ensure that the identified risks, vulnerable groups, and critical areas are well-documented and consistent. This validation step is essential to ensure that the mapping is based on solid and detailed data.

Category	Risk identified	Source (Literature review/ Field)	Impact (Minor, Moderate, Major)	Probability (Very likely, Likely, Possible, etc.)	Vulnerable Groups (e.g. women, youth, rural communities)	Critical areas identified	Interactions with other risks	Summary of consequences	Observed trends (e.g. accumulation of vulnerabilities)
E.g. 1. <b>Climate</b>	Frequent droughts	Literature review, field	Major	Very likely	Farmers, rural communities	Southeast of the target region	Increased food insecurity	Reduced harvests, long-term impoverishment	Increased vulnerability of farmers in the periphery
E.g. 2. <b>Security</b>	Resource conflicts	Field	Major	Probable	Young men, nomadic herders	Border areas	Exacerbated by drought	Violence, population displacement	Loss of access to land and intensified conflict
E.g. 3. <b>Socio-economics</b>	High unemployment	Literature review	Moderate	Possible	Youth, women in urban areas	Capital and major cities	Aggravates social instability	Lack of opportunities, rural exodus	Migration to cities and increased precariousness

## 2. RISK MAPPING

The risk mapping is the final step in this chapter on risk identification and analysis. It consists of transforming the results of your analysis into a clear visual representation of the identified risks, critical areas, and vulnerable populations. Using the information summarized in the previous table, users can produce a detailed map that will serve as a basis for planning tailored interventions. Here's how to use this table to make an effective risk map.

### Using the analysis table for the mapping

The analysis table makes it possible to structure the key elements necessary for the mapping in three dimensions: the identified risks, the critical areas and the vulnerable populations. By following the information gathered in each column, users can:



- **Locate risk areas:** Identify specific regions, such as border areas, rural areas, or urban centres based on risk and their likelihood.
- **Prioritize areas:** Use impact and likelihood levels to prioritize areas based on the urgency of the response.
- **Contextualize populations:** Associate each risk with the identified vulnerable demographic groups to better understand who will be most affected in each critical area.

### Visual representation of the mapping: Risk overlay map

The risk map makes it easy to identify areas where multiple risks related to climate change and violent extremism converge and interact, creating increased vulnerabilities. By representing several themes (climate, security, socio-economic, vulnerable groups, etc.) in superimposed layers, this approach makes it possible to visualize the critical areas where coordinated interventions are needed. Each layer represents a type of risk and is coded by distinct colours or textures, making it easier to analyse interactions. For example, areas impacted by both climate and security risks will appear under a specific colour indicating this convergence.

This type of visualization focuses on areas where risks reinforce each other, providing a visual guide to strategic priorities. By overlaying risks, this map allows users to consider the multiple vulnerability factors in a region and identify hotspots that need priority action.

#### Note :

The integration of visual forecasts of seasonal and climatic conditions into risk mapping is intended to be a key asset for local authorities. By adding detection aspects, this mapping would not only identify risks but also strengthen users' capacities to anticipate them and respond effectively with the help of the tool.

### Key elements to include in the risk map

To ensure a complete analysis, the risk map should include the following:

- **Distinct thematic layers:** Each type of risk identified (e.g. climate, security, socioeconomics) should be represented by a specific layer. These layers can be layered on top of each other to visualize where the risks intersect.
- **Color-coding or texture:** Use a color-coding system for each risk (e.g., green for socio-economic risks, blue for climate risks, red for security risks). When multiple hazards converge in the same area, a new colour or visual effect (for example, hatching or bold outlines) can be applied to signal this overlay.

- **Identified critical areas:** Circle or highlight areas where multiple layers overlap significantly. This helps to identify “hot spots” where coordinated actions are prioritized.
- **Vulnerable demographic groups:** Add specific icons or symbols to overlapping areas to indicate the most vulnerable populations (e.g., women, youth, rural communities), making it easier to understand the human impacts in these critical areas.
- **Interactions and reinforcement of risks:** Areas where risks converge in particularly problematic ways (e.g. food insecurity aggravated by conflict) should be highlighted, allowing for a rapid visualization of interactions reinforcing vulnerability.

### Using and Finalizing the Risk Overlay Map

Once the map is finalized, it will serve as an essential visual support to identify entry points, guide strategic decisions and seize opportunities, the main theme and objective of Chapter 3 of this methodological tool.





# ANNEX

Description of all data sources identified in Steps 1 and 2 of the methodology.

TITLE	DESCRIPTION
<b>National Climate Change Communications at the UNFCCC</b>	National communications submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) by Mauritania. These documents report on national greenhouse gas inventories, climate change impacts, and planned adaptation and mitigation measures.
<b>Climate Change Knowledge Portal, World Bank</b>	An interactive World Bank platform providing global, regional, and country-specific data on climate risks, projections, and impacts. It offers detailed summaries and visualizations for Mauritania.
<b>Floods and Droughts Portal, UNEP</b>	A United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) tool that provides data and tools to monitor and predict flood and drought conditions, including early warning systems and resources for climate risk management.
<b>University of Notre Dame ND-GAIN Ranking</b>	A global index from the University of Notre Dame ranking countries according to their vulnerability and adaptive capacity to climate change, providing information on the impacts of climate risks and their management.
<b>Think Hazard - Mauritania</b>	A natural hazard assessment tool developed by the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), assessing the risks of natural disasters, including climate events, and providing practical information for disaster preparedness.
<b>Armed Conflict Location &amp; Event Data Project (ACLED)</b>	Organization collecting and mapping data on global conflicts and security incidents, including violence against civilians and deaths, frequently used to analyse conflict patterns in countries such as Mauritania.
<b>Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX), OCHA</b>	A data-sharing platform managed by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), providing open access to humanitarian datasets, including security incidents, refugee flows, and information on infrastructure in Mauritania.

TITLE	DESCRIPTION
<b>Uppsala Conflict Data Programme (UCDP)</b>	Uppsala University's research programme compiling data on conflicts, such as combat-related deaths, violence against civilians, and terrorist attacks, useful for monitoring conflict dynamics, including in Mauritania.
<b>FAOSTAT Food Price Monitoring and Analysis System, FAO</b>	FAO database for agricultural statistics and food price monitoring. FAOSTAT provides data on productivity, trade and economic variables that are essential for assessing food security.
<b>United Nations Laboratory for Biodiversity (UNEP, UNDP)</b>	Online mapping platform with layers of biodiversity and ecosystem health data, created by UNEP and UNDP, offering spatial data on natural resources and conservation priorities, to assess environmental health in Mauritania.
<b>UNDP Human Development Index (HDI)</b>	Annual United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) index measuring human development in terms of life expectancy, education and income, providing a relevant socio-economic context for assessing development and vulnerability.
<b>International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Data Portal</b>	ITU portal providing statistics on telecommunications, Internet access, and mobile coverage, which is essential for assessing the accessibility of digital services.



# CHAPTER 3

## Implementing Opportunities for Policies and Programmes Adapted to Climate and Security Risks



# Introduction

This chapter aims to guide the user in identifying and exploiting opportunities to develop tailored policies and programmes at local, regional and national levels to address the risks identified in the nexus of climate change and violent extremism. Following the risk mapping carried out previously, the user will be able to develop concrete interventions, integrating a holistic vision of development projects and policies. This approach encourages planning that takes into account the needs of stakeholders, the interrelationships between sectors, and the dynamics of each level of action (local, regional and national), thus promoting tailored and coordinated interventions to maximize impact in the climate change-violent extremism nexus.

This chapter proposes three entry points for the development of projects, policies and programmes in the nexus between climate change and violent extremism risks

- **Entry Point 1: Identification of feasible programmes and policies in the CC/VE nexus.** This entry point aims to help the user identify opportunities to develop programmes and policies tailored to their target area. Based on the risk mapping in Chapter 2, the user will explore relevant avenues to respond to climate and security risks, while integrating local resources and priorities.
- **Entry Point 2: Mobilize stakeholders for an inclusive and collaborative approach.** This entry point guides the user in the creation of a diverse working group, integrating key stakeholders including representatives of the State, civil society and vulnerable groups. This inclusive approach allows for the integration of diverse perspectives to assess identified opportunities and decide on actions to take, ensuring relevant interventions aligned with local realities.
- **Entry Point 3: Implementation and financing of identified opportunities.** Finally, this entry point helps the user to mobilize financial resources, plan actions, and define an operational framework to implement concrete and sustainable interventions, taking into account the key data and consultations of the previous steps.

**By the end of this chapter, you'll have:**

- \* Identified opportunities and entry points to develop programmes and policies in the CC/PVE nexus.
- \* Formed a representative working group to guide interventions.
- \* Planned policy/programme implementation.
- \* Defined financing options contributed to better inter-institutional coordination.

## Entry Point 1

### Identification of Programmes and Policies in the CC/VE Nexus

The objective of this entry point is to allow the user to identify opportunities to develop programmes and policies tailored to the specific context of their target area. Based on the risk mapping carried out in Chapter 2, the user will be able to explore the most relevant avenues to respond to climate and security risks, while taking into account local resources and priorities. This entry point aims to strengthen the user's ability to formulate concrete solutions adapted to the dynamics of the area of intervention.

#### 1. INTERVENTION OPPORTUNITIES

In this part, the objective is to guide the user in exploring projects and policies that can be developed at the intersection of climate change risks and the prevention of violent extremism. To achieve this, the user is encouraged to consider the developed risk map, which highlights areas where risks converge and outlines intervention priorities. This mapping serves as a basis for thinking about the initiatives best suited to the specific characteristics, risks and vulnerabilities of the target area. By consulting the "ideas box", the user can select the areas of intervention that are most aligned with the priorities identified, allowing them to consider concrete solutions that are relevant to their region of action.



### "Ideas Box"

Here is a list of ideas on which initiatives can be built to reduce vulnerabilities and promote resilience. The user will be able to draw inspiration from it to develop projects relevant to his target area and adapted to the risks and vulnerabilities identified in this context.

- \* Diversifying livelihoods to reduce dependence on climate-sensitive resources.
- \* Modifying agricultural practices to reduce sensitivity to climate change.
- \* Improved access to seasonal, climate and weather forecasts.
- \* Strengthening knowledge and developing appropriate technologies for adaptation.
- \* Creation of a knowledge platform to fuel discussions around climate risk management.
- \* Securing land tenure for women and youth.
- \* Facilitating access to improved seeds and other adaptive technologies.
- \* Optimizing financial services to enable risk management.
- \* Integration of simplified or visual communication methods in the dissemination of climate and safety information to include illiterate people.
- \* Development of financial access services dedicated to the promotion of entrepreneurship among women and youth.
- \* Measures to reduce inequalities in decision-making power in the household or to empower women.
- \* Promoting the representation of women and youth in decision-making structures.
- \* Integration of women's and youth's interests into local/regional/national development plans/programmes/projects.
- \* Promotion of social cohesion and peaceful coexistence.
- \* Improving cross-border cooperation and building trust between authorities and communities in border areas.
- \* Strategic policy/projects/programmes to contain/exit youth from violent extremism.
- \* Strengthening inter-State and inter-community dialogue to prevent violence and terrorism at the subregional level.

## How to choose the best avenues?

To deepen the analysis and guide your choice of the most relevant types of interventions or policies, here are some guiding questions:

- What desired impact should I aim for to reduce the specific risks identified in my area?
- Which vulnerable groups should benefit from these initiatives as a priority?
- What synergies could these initiatives create between the different actors and levels of governance (local, regional, national)?
- How could these initiatives strengthen both climate resilience and the prevention of violent extremism in my target area?

When thinking about this, it is also important to keep in mind the potential challenges related to resource mobilization:

### Institutional and organizational challenges

- **Lack of a clear strategy:** Institutions or groups do not always have well-defined frameworks to mobilize the necessary resources.
- **Lack of coordination:** Fragmented efforts among different stakeholders reduce the effectiveness of engagement initiatives.

### Socio-economic challenges

- **Difficult economic context:** A weak local or national economy limits the capacity to mobilize domestic resources.
- **Lack of community engagement:** When local populations are not sufficiently aware (e.g. lack of eco-citizenship) or involved, they contribute little to initiatives.

## 2. EXISTING STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMMES IN MAURITANIA

In this step, the user is encouraged to study in detail the existing national strategies and ongoing programmes in Mauritania. These examples can offer additional ideas and resources to build on and establish collaborations with existing initiatives, but also to help the user structure new and original projects and policies specifically designed to take effect in the CC/PVE nexus.

Here, the user is invited to refer to the “Toolbox” presented at the end of Chapter 1 of this methodological tool, which lists a number of key strategic frameworks, initiatives and projects led by the Mauritanian government, or in partnership with national and international actors, to build resilience to the impacts of climate change and prevent violent extremism.



### 3. LISTING SUITABLE POTENTIAL PROJECTS

In this final part, the user gathers the ideas for potential strategies and/or projects that seem to be the most suitable for this context. A useful option might be to organize ideas in a table, with columns for:

- Specific courses of intervention
- Potential partners
- The resources needed
- Expected impacts on mapped risks

	Avenues for intervention	Potential partners	Resources needed	Expected impacts on mapped risks
E.g. Project [...]				

This practical guide will help the user transition into the planning phase of concrete actions with a clear understanding of the available options and facilitate productive, informed discussions during the group work for the upcoming Entry Point 2.



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## Entry Point 2

### **Mobilizing Stakeholders for an Inclusive and Collaborative Approach**

After identifying potential avenues for intervention and selecting those that seem most promising, it is essential to move on to a collaborative phase. The main objective of this entry point is to guide the user in the formation of a diverse working group, including stakeholders from various sectors and levels of governance, to collectively reflect on the initiatives identified. This group will allow you to consult a variety of perspectives, consider all interests and develop relevant policies or programmes adapted to the realities of your target area.

In this section, you will be guided to form a consultation group that includes representatives of the state, civil society, as well as key actors such as traditional and religious leaders, youth, and women. The aim is to build a concerted and inclusive approach to address the challenges of climate security and the prevention of violent extremism. Such diversity within the working group is crucial to ensure that all vulnerabilities and perspectives are taken into account, and that policies or programmes are tailored to the real needs of the communities concerned.

#### **1. POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS TO BE CONSULTED**

In this stage, the objective is to identify and engage key government actors to reflect on the initiatives identified in the first entry point and develop them collaboratively. By involving national ministries and institutions responsible for climate issues and the prevention of violent extremism, it will be possible to strengthen buy-in within the state and facilitate intersectoral collaboration, which is essential to avoid a fragmented approach and to create tailored and comprehensive responses.





## Government actors to include

### Key departments to consider:

- Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development: Responsible for natural resource management and climate change adaptation policies.
- Ministry of Islamic Affairs and Original Education: Contributes to the promotion of religious values and the prevention of extremist speech.
- Ministry of Defence : Responsible for handling public security.
- Ministry of the Interior, Promotion of Decentralization and Local Development: Oversees internal security and supports local initiatives to build community resilience.
- Cell for the Prevention of Radicalization and Violent Extremism (CELLRAD): Coordinates national initiatives to prevent and counter threats related to violent extremism.
- Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty: Participates in the management of agricultural resources, which are crucial for climate resilience.
- Ministry of Livestock: Leads policies related to the pastoral sector, which is essential for food security and the peaceful management of natural resources.
- Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Employment, Sports and Civic Service: Its involvement is essential to orient actions towards young people and respond to socio-economic vulnerabilities.
- Ministry of Social Action, Children and Family: Ensures that policies consider the needs of women and children, who are often the most vulnerable groups to climate change and radicalization.
- Ministry of Fisheries, Maritime and Port Infrastructure: Responsible for the management of marine resources to ensure food security and the coastal economy.





- Ministry of Housing, Urban Planning and Spatial Planning: Ensures sustainable urban planning, reducing the risks associated with rural exodus and land use conflicts.
- Ministry of Hydraulics and Sanitation: Manages freshwater resources and sanitation infrastructure, which are essential for climate resilience and public health.

**Institutions and organizations to be mobilized:** It is also recommended to consult the national, regional and local directorates of these ministries, as well as agencies and organizations specializing in climate and security issues. Climate and gender focal points within ministerial departments can be important resource persons for this consultation.

### **Tips for engaging government actors:**

- Identify key representatives in each ministry, especially those involved in climate and PVE-related programmes or projects.
- Form a technical committee or collaborative working group that will meet with other types of actors to assess needs and adjust priorities based on local and national realities.
- Ensure regular communication among group members and foster constructive dialogue around interdependencies across sectors to enhance the relevance and effectiveness of interventions.

By working with actors from these different ministries and agencies, you will foster a shared understanding and response to the challenges and opportunities in the climate-security nexus.

## **2. NON-STATE ACTORS: NGOS, IOS AND VULNERABLE GROUPS**

The objective of this step is to identify and mobilize non-governmental actors, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international organizations (IOs), and associations representing vulnerable groups. These actors are essential to provide technical expertise, community anchoring and a local perspective that will enrich the initiatives identified in the first entry point. By including them in the discussion group, you ensure that the programmes and policies under development meet real needs and provide solutions adapted to local specificities and vulnerabilities.

### **Tips for engaging non-governmental actors**

#### **1. Non-governmental organizations**

Local and international NGOs are often well rooted in communities and have in-depth knowledge of the specific issues related to climate resilience and the prevention of violent extremism. They can:



- ✓ **Provide technical support** in the development of initiatives and share expertise/knowledge on existing practices and interventions.
- ✓ **Provide resources and a network** of useful contacts to strengthen projects to be planned or in progress.
- ✓ **Serve as a relay** to reach local populations, especially in areas where the state has a weak presence.

**TIP:** IDENTIFY NGOS WITH RELEVANT EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELDS OF CLIMATE AND SECURITY AND INVITE THEIR DELEGATES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WORKING GROUP TO REPRESENT DIVERSE INTERESTS AND ENCOURAGE ONGOING COLLABORATION.

#### **Note on potential partners:**

It is recommended to emphasize, among other things, the cultural dimension to ensure that interventions are adapted to local contexts. This includes, for example, working with culturally influential actors, such as the elderly, as well as with religious referents such as imams. The latter, through their religious authority, can play a key role in disseminating teachings promoting environmental protection. Their ability to convey important messages within communities is a key lever in encouraging sustainable and environmentally friendly practices.

## **2. International organizations**

International organizations can play a central role in providing financial resources, methodological frameworks, and overall knowledge/expertise. In addition, they facilitate linkages with similar initiatives in other countries, which can enrich discussions in the working group. IOs can also help to:

- ✓ **Promote regional coordination** to address cross-border issues in the climate-security nexus.
- ✓ **To provide comparative expertise** from similar projects in other contexts.
- ✓ **Facilitate collaboration** across various sectors and levels of governance, enabling the implementation of joint programmes with government and NGOs.

## **3. Associations and representatives of vulnerable groups**

Associations of youth, women, and traditional and religious leaders represent groups that may be particularly affected by climate change and violent extremism. Their inclusion in the focus group is therefore crucial to:

- ✓ **Ensure that the perspectives and needs of vulnerable groups** are integrated into policies and programmes.

- ✓ **Provide valuable knowledge** on social and cultural dynamics that can enhance or hinder the impact of initiatives.
- ✓ **Facilitate the acceptance and ownership of the programmes** at the local level, as these associations act as opinion leaders and community relays.

**TIP:** INCLUDE THESE REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE BEGINNING SO THAT THEY CAN DIRECTLY INFLUENCE THE PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIES DEVELOPED BY CONSIDERING THEIR RECOMMENDATIONS AT ALL STAGES OF THE PROJECT.

Overall, these non-governmental actors, who often work in direct proximity to the populations, will enrich the discussions and help you build solutions that are better adapted to local realities while ensuring their adherence.

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## Entry Point 3

### Implementation and Financing of Identified Opportunities

The objective of this entry point is to support the user in the implementation phase of the chosen policies and programmes, ensuring the effective mobilisation of financial resources and the operational planning of interventions. Indeed, this part proposes steps to identify sources of funding, develop an operational action plan with clear objectives, and define a governance and monitoring framework, integrating the partners and key data from the previous steps. This entry point also provides practical advice to transform strategic orientations into concrete and sustainable actions, taking into account local contexts and operational constraints.

#### 1. MOBILIZATION OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The identification and mobilization of financial resources is an essential step to ensure the sustainability and impact of the programmes or policies implemented in the CC/PVE nexus. To do this, these imperatives require that you:

- ✓ **If necessary, carry out a financial analysis:** specify the available sources (public, private, national and international) and the different mechanisms in the context. The analysis can be useful for mapping and aligning funds and funding with the stated CC and PVE objectives.
- ✓ **Look at funding flows** for development, humanitarian assistance, and peace programmes, for example through Aid Information Management Systems (AIMS),



which provide information on who is funding what, where, and for how long.

- ✓ **Explore opportunities** for flexible, unearmarked and multi-year funding in the respective funding mechanisms of actors from the different pillars (climate security-violent extremism).
- ✓ **Involve bilateral, national and regional donors** and international financial institutions as partners rather than just “donors” at an early stage. This allows them to sustainably support the new approach to the link between climate change and violent extremism.

The resources that can be mobilized:

- The State budget, including contributions from its technical and financial partners.
- The budget of local authorities, including contributions from their technical and financial partners.
- The resources of IOs, NGOs and associations.
- Projects and programmes of a sectoral nature.

## 2. ADVICE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

This step helps the user of the methodology to transform the identified programmes and policies into concrete interventions, oriented towards specific and tangible results. It builds on the analyses, consultations, funding needs, intervention choices made at previous entry points and aims to create a clear and structured implementation framework. To do this, the user is encouraged to follow a methodical process or “action plan” that includes the following:

- **Specific objectives:** Define the concrete results to be achieved for each intervention (e.g. increase agricultural resilience by X% in areas at risk).
- **Timeline of activities:** Develop a detailed timeline for each action, with realistic timelines based on local constraints.
- **Resources required:** Identify human, financial, and material resource needs and develop strategies to mobilize them, including the potential for external funding.
- **Monitoring indicators:** Formulate key indicators to measure the progress and impacts of actions, in line with the objectives of the CC/PVE nexus.
- **Evaluation mechanism:** Integrate an evaluation mechanism to measure their effectiveness, identify lessons learned, and adjust interventions accordingly. This guarantees a continuous improvement process and reinforces the relevance of the actions taken.

## Tips for implementation

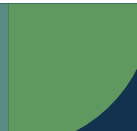
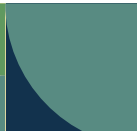
- **Build on the data collected:** When collecting the data (see Chapter 2), you gathered valuable insights into the most vulnerable areas and populations. Use this data to prioritize actions in the action plan and to target areas and groups most in need of support.
- **Involve stakeholders from the start:** Engage the stakeholders identified in Entry Point 2 to validate the goals and actions of the action plan. This collaboration ensures greater local acceptance and facilitates access to community resources.
- **Establish clear governance for each action:** Clarify the roles and responsibilities of each actor from the beginning to avoid duplication of effort and misunderstandings. For example, in an agricultural resilience intervention, local agricultural officers could be responsible for training, while community representatives provide communication.
- **Prioritize concrete and immediate actions:** Promote activities that are feasible in the short term to respond to social, economic and environmental emergencies. Avoid sticking to theoretical approaches by focusing on interventions that can produce tangible impacts. To do this, it is necessary to ensure a good flow of information (awareness-raising) and to strengthen intervention capacities to maximize the effectiveness of the actions undertaken.
- **Assess the feasibility of actions:** Take into account field constraints such as rural accessibility, seasons, and available resources. Actions must be realistic based on these constraints to avoid delays or abandonments during implementation.
- **Plan for periodic review points:** Organize follow-up and review sessions to adjust the action plan based on the results obtained and feedback from stakeholders. The review points allow for the reassessment of priorities if contexts change, including if new climate or security risks emerge.
- **Foster sustainable and self-sustaining solutions:** By integrating capacity-building elements into each action, beneficiaries become actors of their own resilience, thus reducing dependence on external aid.





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