



# ADAPTATION BOLSTERS U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY AT HOME AND ABROAD

## 2024 PREPARE Snapshot Series

### CLIMATE ADAPTATION IS A NATIONAL SECURITY IMPERATIVE

The United States' diplomatic, defense, and intelligence communities have identified climate change as a serious threat to national and international security. From drought-driven food and water insecurity to extreme weather that destroys schools, hospitals, and ports, climate change is stressing security both at home and abroad. Extreme heat, floods, sea-level rise, and other emerging climate impacts can exacerbate fragility and violent conflict by straining resources, increasing displacement, decreasing economic security, and destabilizing livelihoods. Fragile and conflict-affected states often have limited capacity to prepare for and recover from climate-related disasters and often suffer the negative impacts of climate change more acutely. These dynamics compound the stress on the U.S. humanitarian and national security apparatus. The President's Emergency Plan for Adaptation and Resilience (PREPARE) addresses root causes of conflict and fragility in climate-vulnerable places. Actions taken to build resilience under PREPARE are complementary to efforts across the interagency to promote security and peacebuilding, especially in areas that are highly vulnerable to climate change impacts.

### PREPARE RESPONDS TO SECURITY RISKS

Climate adaptation investments directly support U.S. security interests and the stability of our global partners. PREPARE is working to support more than half a billion people in developing countries to adapt to and manage the impacts of climate change by 2030. Through this work, the U.S. government is reducing climate-induced competition over scarce resources, addressing human mobility challenges, and improving the way that the U.S. civilian and military capabilities respond to insecurity driven by

climate change. PREPARE, through its three pillars, bolsters U.S. national and international security by addressing climate impacts.



**Bolstering Water Security in Iraq:** In Basra, Iraq, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) worked to improve the government's internal coordination on water issues by providing equipment to the Basra Water Management Committee. Basra, the socioeconomic hub of southern Iraq, faces increasingly severe water shortages and diminishing water quality, in large part due to the effects of climate change. These challenges have exacerbated public discontent with government service delivery, leading to major outbreaks of social unrest, including riots in 2018. Utility entities responding to the water crisis too often lack tools to coordinate effectively to address the shortages. This USAID program in Basra improves the utility providers' access to necessary tools and thus the community's access to water, which increases agriculture productivity, helps reduce conflict over water resources, and decreases health risks from contaminated drinking water.



### **Pillar 1: PREPARE Knowledge — Information**

**is Power.** Pillar 1 builds internal U.S. government and partner capacity to produce and use information to plan for future climate risks through climate information services, including early warning systems. In the Indo-Pacific, the U.S. Department of Defense is utilizing the Defense Operational Resilience International Cooperation (DORIC) pilot program to help expand the Pacific Disaster Center's DisasterAWARE platform to include new data sets and analyses as well as in-depth partner training opportunities. They are also investing in the expansion of the joint-United States Institute of Peace/Center for Naval Analyses Climate Security Assessment Tool to the Indo-Pacific. These improved materials will equip interagency security stakeholders – both in Washington, D.C. and overseas – and our partners with tailor-made tools to engage and plan across the region.



#### **Building Climate and Conflict Resilient Communities in Northern Benin:**

The U.S. Department of State is working to reduce the risk of farmer-herder conflict in border communities in Benin by incorporating information on climate change risks – which have been identified as a direct driver of conflict in these communities – into stabilization efforts. Climate change-induced dry spells during the rainy season drive herders to migrate to areas under cultivation by farmers, which in many cases leads to conflict. This program integrates climate early warning data into traditional mediation processes and strengthens communication between farmer and herder associations to prevent the outbreak of conflict. This initiative coordinates with local climate scientists in Benin to streamline climate and environmental data analysis and trains and builds the capacity of local actors to use early warning systems effectively. Women are also trained as community dialogue facilitators, amplifying their role in early warning and civilian security and highlighting the importance of inclusivity and local empowerment in sustaining the usage of early warning systems.

### **Pillar 2: PREPARE Plans and Programs — Mainstream and Integrate Adaptation, Build Relationships,**

**Execute.** Pillar 2 supports partner-led efforts to prevent and respond to climate impacts, thereby reducing the risk that these events turn into threats to human security. In East Africa, the U.S. Department of State funded work to integrate climate adaptation considerations into disaster management. Simulation exercises conducted at the Kenya-Ethiopia and Kenya-Uganda borders contributed to the creation of standard operating procedures on cross-border disaster displacement. In a region that is increasingly facing prolonged drought and insecurity, this will enable governments, the international community, and humanitarian organizations to streamline the effective delivery of resources for affected groups. Simultaneously, through DORIC, the United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM) has augmented Kenyan Defense Force (KDF) investments in its own resilience to climate-related hazards, enabling the KDF to maintain its long-standing regional security commitments despite a changing operational environment. Investing in this partnership bolsters U.S. national security and helps to build a lasting military-to-military relationship.

### **Pillar 3: PREPARE Resources — Mobilize Finance and Private Capital.**

PREPARE maximizes the impact of U.S. taxpayer dollars by working with other donors, the private sector, and our government partners to mobilize their domestic resources, ensuring mutual investment in this long-term effort. In Somalia, an estimated 55% of the population currently lives below the national poverty line (\$2.06/day), and worsening climate shocks such as drought and floods further diminish households' assets and purchasing power. A history of conflict and present-day fragility means Somalia will continue to face a high degree of climate change vulnerability. To help address such risks, USAID is supporting the establishment of Somalia's National Climate Finance Facility to unlock new resources that build resilience to these shocks and disrupt that cycle of vulnerability to climate change and fragility.