

THE ROLE OF NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS IN DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT IN FRAGILE, CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE-AFFECTED COUNTRIES

The Disaster-Fragility, Conflict and Violence (FCV) nexus

The World Bank (WB) estimates that, by 2030, up to two-thirds of the global extreme poor will be living in fragile and conflict-affected situations. Of the top 20 countries most vulnerable to climate change¹, 14 are considered by the WB as fragile and conflict-affected². Households affected by conflict experience greater economic losses and longer recovery time in the aftermath of a disaster³.

FCV conditions undermine governments and societies' ability to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters, as well as weaken their capacity to preserve their environment and promote a sustainable usage of their natural resources. Conversely, climate and disaster risks, and how they are managed, can exacerbate FCV conditions.

Nature-Based Solutions (NBS)

NBS is an umbrella term for a set of interventions that seek to protect, manage, and/or restore natural systems, while addressing multiple development goals such as climate and disaster risk resilience, economic and social prosperity, food security and biodiversity conservation.

NBS potential in addressing the disaster-FCV nexus

In FCV settings, NBS may offer a sustainable approach by harnessing the resilience of ecosystems to mitigate disaster risks, foster community resilience, and promote peace. As such, NBS interventions can yield co-benefits beyond mitigating climate and disaster risks, potentially alleviating certain conditions of FCV.

GFDRR's Contributions to NBS In FVC Contexts

By providing targeted support and expertise, the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) is instrumental in overcoming the unique challenges of FCV contexts, ensuring that NBS interventions are not only feasible but also effective in building resilience and stability in these vulnerable regions. Between Fiscal Year 2012 and 2022, one-fourth of GFDRR's funding went to activities in FCV countries, through a total of 320 grants amounting to US\$153 million.



THREE BENEFITS OF LEVERAGING NBS IN FCV CONTEXTS:

1

Cost-effectiveness⁴: By leveraging local knowledge and practices and relying on natural systems, NBS can provide a cost-effective and flexible approach for DRM in comparison with traditional disaster risk reduction infrastructure solutions which often involve larger funding and capacity. This can support the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction investments in FCV settings, which often face constrained financial resources.

2

Community-level resilience: NBS often rely on participatory approaches involving local communities in planning, management, and maintenance processes. As such, NBS can address the needs of particularly vulnerable groups while enhancing disaster risk awareness. Such approaches not only build community resilience but may also contribute to promoting social cohesion and strengthening trust in governance structures.

3

Create jobs while safeguarding natural resources: NBS initiatives promote sustainable natural resource management while generating employment and livelihoods opportunities. This dual focus addresses economic hardships and potential resource-related tensions in FCV settings, thereby enhancing the necessary conditions for sustainable development.



GLOBAL PROGRAM ON
NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS
FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE



GFDRR
Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery



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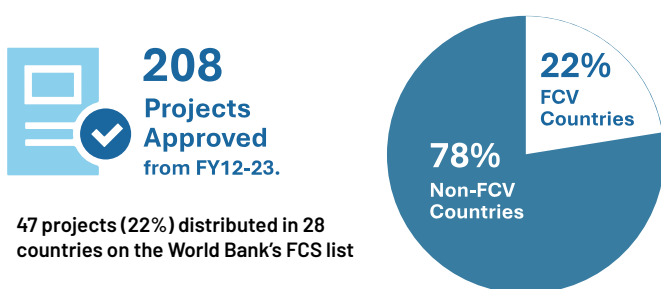
CROSS-CUTTING CHALLENGES OF NBS IMPLEMENTATION IN FCV CONTEXTS

FCV settings present challenges that can lead to increased costs and extended timeline for NBS interventions⁵

Security concerns	Ongoing conflict or high levels of interpersonal violence can lead to NBS site restrictions, disrupt infrastructure, and hinder community engagement.
Political instability	Fragile governance and corruption may lead to a lack of continuity in NBS projects and priority shifts.
Data scarcity	The lack of reliable data on hazard exposure and vulnerability can challenge the planning, monitoring and evaluation of NBS investments.
Human capital constraints	Phenomena such as brain-drain, or the absence of trained personnel with NBS-related expertise, are common challenges in FCV countries.
Broken social contract	Lack of trust and cooperation between different parties can hinder community engagement and exacerbate resource competition, posing significant challenges to NBS operations.

NBS IN FCV: INSIGHTS FROM THE WORLD BANK PORTFOLIO⁶

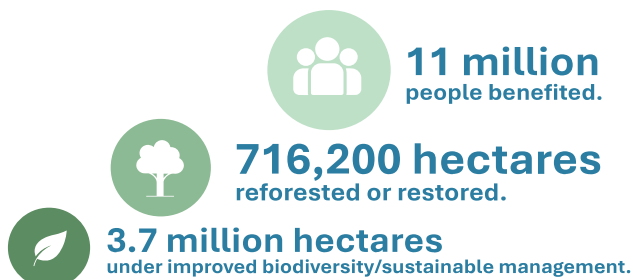
PROJECT DISTRIBUTION



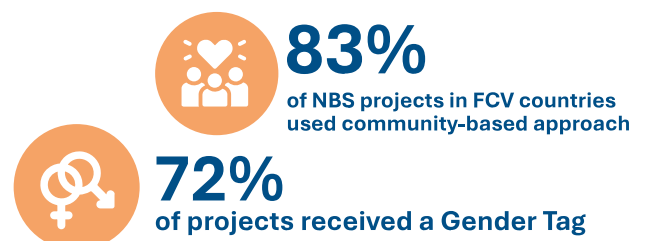
INVESTMENT IN NBS IN FCVS



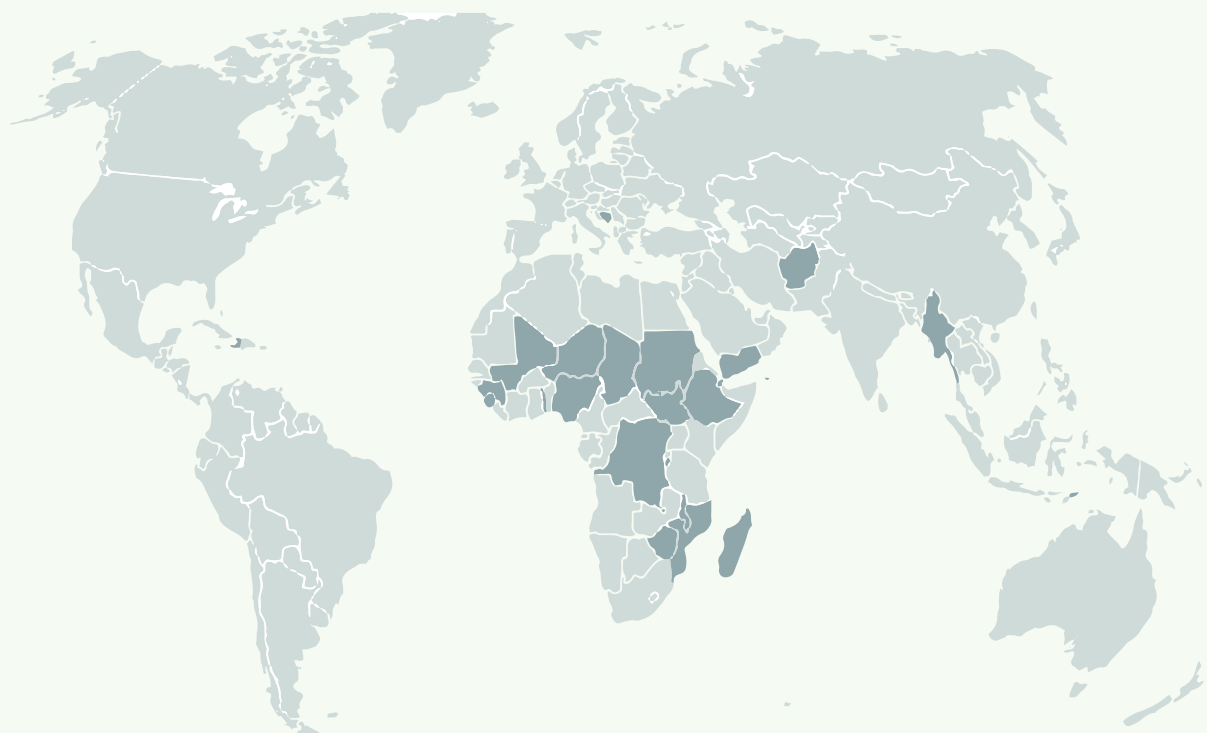
IMPACT GOALS



COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACH AND GENDER



OVERVIEW OF FCV COUNTRIES WITH PROJECTS THAT INCLUDE NBS SUPPORTED BY THE WORLD BANK BETWEEN 2012-2023



SELECTED EXAMPLES OF HOW WORLD BANK NBS INTERVENTIONS SUPPORT THE ALLEVIATION OF CERTAIN FCV CONDITIONS

Overcoming data constraints to identify investment opportunities

The NBS Opportunity Scan developed by the GPNBS conducts an analytical assessment using geospatial data to map potential benefits of NBS and identify investment opportunities. In **Burkina Faso**, this analysis is providing input for investments in transport and urban development, helping to move project preparation forward in areas with travel restrictions in place due to security concerns.

Inclusive and resilient upgrading of vulnerable neighborhoods

In the **Central African Republic**, the World Bank is working with a grant from the City Gap Fund to conduct community engagement workshops to prepare local development plans, which in turn are informing neighbourhood upgrading investments in the cities of Bangui and Berberati. The neighbourhood and investment selection prioritizes areas of extreme vulnerability, with the presence

Increasing livelihood opportunities

The World Bank is supporting the government of the **Republic of Congo** to restore degraded agricultural land through NBS activities, which include reforestation and assisted natural generation to improve soil stabilization and reduce soil erosion. In parallel, the project is improving management capacity in protected areas, aiming to enhance livelihood opportunities through ecotourism for indigenous peoples and local communities.

Disaster - Fragility, Conflict and Violence (FCV) Nexus



Through its thematic area on the Disaster-FCV Nexus, GFDRR and the World Bank are aiming to contribute to increasing development finance on disaster risk reduction and climate resilience in FCV settings.

The Global Program on Nature-Based Solutions for Climate Resilience (GPNBS)

The GPNBS is a cross-sectoral effort at the World Bank Group led by GFDRR, with a mission to increase investments in solutions that integrate and strengthen natural systems across regions and sectors.



CASE STUDIES FROM THE WORLD BANK PORTFOLIO



Integrating NBS in urban infrastructure in N'Djamena

This project aims to improve flood protection and drainage infrastructure and strengthen climate-resilient urban planning and community investments in the capital city of Chad. The potential of NBS, including green corridors and floodplains as flood-mitigation measures, will be assessed as part of the technical studies underway. The project will aim to expand and consolidate local initiatives already present in the city, such as urban agriculture, local food markets, production organic composting, and tree nurseries. Not only will this enhance food protection and climate resilience, but it will also help address some key drivers of fragility in Chad, such as water scarcity, food insecurity, and environmental degradation.

The GPNBS team is supporting the project task team with an NBS Opportunity Scan, and with inputs in the preparation of terms of reference for technical studies that will further assess the investments that will be taken forward, ensuring that firms conducting these studies have the experience and capability to explore NBS as part of the project.

Landscape restoration and livelihood resilience in Niger

With the support of the World Bank, the Government of Niger is working to adopt climate smart restoration practices and improve access to livelihoods in targeted communities, recognizing the nexus between natural resource degradation, climate impacts and social conflicts.

Through landscape restoration, it aims to reconcile economic, social, and climate concerns, using the environment as the driver for socio-economic regeneration. In practice, this involves the use of communal planning tools, a governance structure that uses local committees with strengthened conflict resolution mechanism to control the restored land, and promotion of capacity building activities necessary for long-term interventions, including encouraging women to take leadership roles in the process.

It is expected that landscape restoration activities will involve NBS activities such as tree planting and reforestation, which in turn will increase water availability, strengthen resilience against droughts, floods and other climate disasters, as well as support local food security and create employment opportunities.



- 1 According to the ND-GAIN index.
- 2 The list of fragile and conflict-affected situations (FCS) is released annually by the World Bank and aims to inform strategic and operational decision-making within the World Bank. The list is based on publicly available global indicators followed by an internal review; and is updated every year on July 1st to reflect changes in country situations
- 3 GFDRR (2024). Economic analysis of disasters in FCV countries [upcoming].
- 4 World Bank (2019). Nature-based Solutions: a Cost-effective Approach for Disaster Risk and Water Resource Management. Available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/disasterriskmanagement/brief/nature-based-solutions-cost-effective-approach-for-disaster-risk-and-water-resource-management>
- 5 The background note "Challenges and opportunities to scale climate finance for NBS in FCV countries" (forthcoming) provides more information on specific challenges.
- 6 These projects were identified as part of GPNBS' portfolio review process. The team utilized an algorithm to search the World Bank's Operation Portal Database and extract projects that used common NBS terms in project documents. The list of projects was then manually screened and reviewed to ensure that the project truly included specific NBS activities that aimed to build climate resilience.