

Mapping tool analyzes how climate change, conflict and aid intersect in Africa

March 2 2012

Researchers have developed a [new dynamic mapping tool](#) that will help policymakers and other groups determine a country's vulnerabilities to climate change and conflicts and show how these two issues intersect in Africa.

The pilot version of the tool was released this month by the Robert S. Strauss Center for International Security and Law at The University of Texas at Austin and additional data tools are expected to come online starting this spring.

"The complex pathways from climate change to security impacts have demanded new [datasets](#) to fill [knowledge gaps](#), but also new ways of presenting the data to be of most use in policy planning," said Francis J. Gavin, director of the Strauss Center. "This [mapping tool](#) allows policymakers to analyze data from multiple sources at once, providing integrated analysis of the drivers and responses related to [security risks](#) stemming from climate change."

The mapping tool, created by the center's program on Climate Change and African Political Stability (CCAPS) in partnership with AidData, allows researchers to select and layer any combination of CCAPS data onto one map to get a better view of the intersection of climate change and responses by local actors and aid organizations.

The tool can help show how patterns of conflict could exacerbate insecurity caused by climate change in a region. It can also show how

those dynamics are changing over time.

Users can also see the location of aid projects funded by 27 donors tracked in Malawi's Aid Management Platform and discern if it is effectively targeting the regions where climate change poses the most significant risk to the sustainable development and political stability of a country.

The data for Malawi was gathered by faculty and students working with the CCAPS project who traveled to the small, landlocked African nation in 2011 to collect data to input into the mapping tool.

"Being able to see in a map all the donor-funded activities in Malawi has transformed the way we think about development and positively helped our own planning effort," said Ken Lipenga, minister of finance and development planning in Malawi.

The mapping tool is also a significant innovation in the context of the global aid transparency movement. It represents the first effort of the sort envisioned by the Open Aid Partnership, an initiative spearheaded by the World Bank to increase the openness and effectiveness of development assistance at the subnational level.

While the mapping tool is in its first stage of development, the next stage will convey a comprehensive picture of trends in Africa. Users will be able to access raw CCAPS data and use the mapping tool to combine CCAPS datasets with other organizations. These thematic mapping tools will include data on:

- **Climate Change Vulnerability:** Users will be able to visualize the different components of the [CCAPS vulnerability model](#), using both historical and projected climate data for Africa.

- **Conflict:** Users will access the current Armed Conflict Location and Event Data, real-time ACLED conflict data updated weekly, and CCAPS' [Social Conflict and Africa Database](#).
- **Adaptation Aid:** In addition to the current [development aid projects in Malawi](#), the mapping tool will include climate-coded aid projects in select countries and continent-wide data on adaptation aid.
- **Governance:** Users will have access to the first-ever continent-wide database classifying the political institutions in Africa on a spectrum of constitutional design, as well as data on governance quality and disaster management.

By integrating the various lines of CCAPS research, as well as other existing datasets, the CCAPS mapping tool aims to provide the most comprehensive view yet of [climate change](#) and security in Africa. CCAPS and AidData will release the thematic mapping tools throughout the spring and summer of 2012.

The mapping tool is available at:
www.strausscenter.org/ccaps/mappingtool .

Provided by University of Texas at Austin

Citation: Mapping tool analyzes how climate change, conflict and aid intersect in Africa (2012, March 2) retrieved 17 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-03-tool-climate-conflict-aid-intersect.html>

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