



Jordan's path to a climate resilient future

Summary

Jordan faces escalating climate change challenges that exacerbate drought risks while simultaneously heightening the country's vulnerability to flash floods and heatwaves. In response, Jordan has taken important steps to address climate change adaptation (CCA) and disaster risk reduction (DRR).

This policy brief presents key findings from Mercy Corps' in-depth assessment of Jordan's CCA and DRR policies, providing five recommendations to enhance climate resilience and disaster preparedness. These findings can inform policy and programmatic decisions by the government of Jordan, United Nations agencies, donors, and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs). [See here for the full evidence report.](#)



Recommendations

- **Increase the focus on flash floods and heatwaves.** Strengthen adaptation plans within critical sectors like agriculture to address these growing threats.
- **Develop locally led action.** Implement strong legal and policy drivers to drive the development of locally led, inclusive CCA and DRR planning and action. Mandate such action in the National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (NSDRR) and update the Climate Change Bylaw 79/2019 and National Adaptation Plan (NAP). Apply the learning from NGO-led community-based projects to local CCA and DRR planning and action across Jordan.
- **Adopt a comprehensive approach to monitoring and evaluating CCA and DRR.** Improve the sharing of, and access to, existing data, and collaborate with universities and research institutes to develop new evidence. Assign staff with technical data analysis skills to climate and disaster risk analysis as a priority.
- **Improve co-ordination.** Ensure CCA and DRR stakeholders are represented on the National Climate Change Committee (NCCC) and the National Center for Security and Crisis Management (NCSCM) board of directors, and ensure there are links between these entities. Fully mobilize the underused CCA Technical Advisory Body.
- **Secure adaptation finance.** Update nationally determined contributions (NDCs) with the level of investment secured and the amount of international finance needed to deliver CCA in Jordan. Implement budget tracking to record past, present, and future investments in CCA and DRR projects, and consider establishing a country platform to coordinate cross-sector collaboration on climate finance.

Authors:

Hala Murad
hala.advocator@gmail.com

Nour Darwazeh, Mercy Corps
ndarwazeh@mercy Corps.org

Anna Beswick, LSE
a.c.beswick@lse.ac.uk

Shorouq Aburazzouq, Mercy Corps
saburazzouq@mercy Corps.org

Introduction

Climate risks manifest differently across the country, with flash floods threatening mountainous regions and heatwaves affecting outdoor workers, women, and urban communities. Significant efforts have been directed toward reducing drought risks and building resilience, with some attention given to flash floods.

Mercy Corps in Jordan is committed to addressing these gaps through partnerships that advance strategic understanding and innovative solutions. As such, Mercy Corps undertook an assessment that included a thorough analysis of Jordanian legislation related to CCA and DRR, insights from key informant interviews and focus group discussions with government, experts, and community stakeholders. It also featured a nationwide survey of over 1,000 respondents, capturing public perceptions of climate risks and resilience efforts.

Policy and legislation

Jordan has taken important steps to address CCA and DRR, recognizing the increasing risks resulting from climate change, including more frequent and intense flash floods and heatwaves. Existing policy and legislation provide a foundation for driving action, but gaps in co-ordination, implementation, and monitoring limit their effectiveness. Mercy Corps' assessment of Jordan's CCA and DRR policies identifies opportunities to strengthen and build on existing mechanisms, and these are reflected in the brief's recommendations (see Key findings).

Key policies and legislation, such as the Environmental Protection Law 6/2017 and the Climate Change Bylaw 79/2019, set the foundation for national climate action, while the NAP (2022) and the National Climate Change Policy (2022–50) outline sector-specific strategies for building resilience. The NSDRR also acknowledges climate-related hazards and the need for risk management at multiple levels.

Although this legal and policy framework is positive, the policy landscape for CCA and DRR remains disjointed, with overlapping mandates and gaps in coordination between institutions. Policy implementation has focused on broad environmental and disaster responses, with only a small number of actions implemented to address flash floods and a very limited response to addressing heatwaves.

Local CCA and DRR, including long-term monitoring, has received much less attention than national CCA and DRR policy and planning. This has limited implementation of national policies, many of which rely on local action.

Key findings

Policy reform

Jordan is increasingly vulnerable to flash floods and heatwaves, which pose significant threats to public health, infrastructure, and livelihoods. These risks are expected to escalate in the coming years due to climate change, yet the current policy framework does not adequately address them.

Both flash floods and heatwaves are identified as key risks in the NSDRR and are a growing public concern. The nationwide survey conducted as part of Mercy Corps' assessment of Jordan's CCA and DRR policies, which surveyed 1,000 community members and leaders, found that nearly 50 per cent perceive flood risk as severe or very severe, while over 70 per cent view the risk of heatwaves as severe or very severe. Research shows that women are disproportionately affected by heatwaves due to their roles in society and their nutritional and physiological requirements during menstruation and pregnancy. This highlights the importance of developing socially inclusive responses to climate risks.

The NAP gives minimal consideration to flood risk; it does not sufficiently address heatwaves within Jordan's CCA and DRR policy framework. Instead, heatwaves are more prominent in health-sector policies. Furthermore, there is no clear evidence of significant investments in risk reduction projects targeting either hazard, and co-ordination efforts remain fragmented; for example, while there is a national drought committee, there is no equivalent body dedicated to addressing floods or heatwaves.

National CCA and DRR policies need to be updated to integrate flood and heatwave risks as central components. These risks should also be embedded across broader national policies, and addressed systematically through strong planning, investment, and co-ordination efforts. The rest of the recommendations include increasing the focus on flash floods and heatwaves within Jordan's CCA and DRR framework and actions.

Local governance

Locally led action, which is based on community knowledge and experience and which fully considers social inclusion, is essential for effective CCA and DRR in Jordan. However, existing policies and legislation do not fully enable community-driven planning.

While Local Administration Law 22/2021 requires municipalities to develop emergency plans, these currently remain limited to winter preparedness. They need to be further developed to address broader CCA and DRR needs, and to include a full consideration of social inclusion.

Recent efforts by the Ministry of Local Administration to establish DRR departments across municipalities and enhance risk assessments are a positive development, but there is a need for stronger legislative backing, policy integration, and adequate resources for these efforts.

Work to support action on CCA and DRR at the local level is driven by NGOs implementing projects, in collaboration with local stakeholders. Feedback shows that these projects have the potential to support local leadership and to foster community involvement. Learning from these projects should inform wider rollout of local CCA and DRR plans across the country.

Monitoring, evaluation, and learning

Strengthening monitoring, evaluation, and learning is critical for CCA and DRR in Jordan, yet current systems lack the technical capacity, data integration, and independent oversight needed to drive evidence-based action.

Jordan has limited technical capacity to monitor climate and disaster risks. Where data exists, it is often hard to access and use, due to siloed working. Moreover, staff who have technical data analysis skills are often assigned to other priorities.

Flood maps exist but are not widely available or comprehensive, and early warning systems remain limited in coverage and effectiveness. The absence of comprehensive spatial data limits effective urban planning and development. The NAP also lacks detailed climate risk or vulnerability assessments that show how climate impacts vary across regions, sectors, and communities.



Community Member in flood prone area, Sweimeh, Al Balqa Governorate Photo: Mercy Corps

There is a need for improved technical capacity and data integration to provide CCA and DRR stakeholders with more detailed information about the locations and sectors that are most vulnerable. This would support more effective CCA and DRR responses.

In addition, national mechanisms for assessing progress in CCA and DRR remain insufficient. The Ministry of Environment is developing a monitoring, reporting and learning framework for the NAP, which identifies a vision for CCA measures that must be implemented across different sectors. The NAP framework does not currently address linkages to DRR and is not integrated with the NSDRR. Additionally, there is no clear approach to monitoring, evaluation, and learning for the NSDRR.

Establishing a systematic approach to evaluating progress on CCA and DRR would enhance transparency, support continuous learning, and provide the evidence needed to refine CCA and DRR policies and investments.

Governance and co-ordination

Effective co-ordination on CCA and DRR can accelerate progress, prevent duplication of efforts, and optimize the use of resources. However, existing governance structures for managing CCA and DRR at the national level are fragmented, which limits cross-sector collaboration.

Key leadership bodies, such as the NCCC and the NCSCM board of directors, operate independently, without formal linkages, which reduces their ability to align strategies and actions.

The need for improved coordination is acknowledged by both the NCSCM and the Ministry of Environment, with systemic challenges affecting governance at both national and local levels. A technical advisory body on CCA has been established but is underutilized. It should be fully mobilized to enhance national co-ordination and better integrate DRR into climate resilience planning.

Efforts to expand co-ordination should recognize the role the private sector can play in advancing CCA and DRR in Jordan. Businesses are embedded within local communities and can play a significant role in resilience-building. For example, positive engagement with the tourism sector in Petra has already contributed to addressing flash flood risks. This approach could be replicated across other industries and locations to enhance climate and disaster resilience nationwide.

Adaptation finance

Jordan faces significant challenges in securing sufficient climate adaptation finance to meet its growing resilience needs. While the country has outlined major investment priorities, the total funding required to address climate risks at national and local levels remains unclear, and there is no formal mechanism to track financing gaps.

Jordan's NDCs (updated in 2021, and due to be updated again in 2025) identify 21 proposed climate adaptation investment projects requiring combined funding of over US\$329 million. This is indicative of the finance needs for major adaptation projects but does not include details regarding the level of funding required to address all climate risks at the national and local levels.

Global trends suggest that Jordan likely faces a substantial gap between available climate adaptation finance and actual needs. Moreover, there is currently no systematic tracking mechanism in place to assess the required adaptation funding, the level of finance received, or the remaining shortfall.

The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation has played a central role in securing international climate finance for adaptation projects focused on addressing drought risk. This experience could be built upon to establish a platform that brings together public and private sector stakeholders, including international development finance institutions.

Jordan's Cities and Villages Development Bank (CVDB) is accredited by the world's largest climate fund, the Green Climate Fund, to provide funding for green development projects. Strengthening CVDB's role in climate finance governance could improve resource mobilization and enhance Jordan's ability to implement large-scale adaptation initiatives.

Mercy Corps' commitment to action

Mercy Corps in Jordan is dedicated to producing high-quality evidence and research to inform policy decisions, drive action, and foster meaningful change. By generating and sharing data-driven insights, Mercy Corps aim to equip policymakers with the knowledge needed to shape effective CCA and DRR strategies. Their work also serves as a call to action, encouraging stakeholders at all levels to strengthen resilience efforts and contribute to a growing learning space that supports sustainable, long-term solutions.

Mercy Corps will contribute to supporting implementation of the recommendations set out in this policy brief through its work under the 12-year Community Climate Resilience Program, funded by the Z Zurich Foundation through the Zurich Climate Resilience Alliance.

A key priority for Mercy Corps will be enhancing the adaptive capacity of highly vulnerable communities in Jordan that are affected by flash floods, heatwaves, and water scarcity. Given the urgency of heat and flood risks, these hazards will remain at the forefront of their efforts. Mercy Corps will also work to mobilize greater investment in local climate resilience initiatives, ensuring that vulnerable populations have the resources and support needed to adapt effectively.

The policy analysis summarized in this brief

This brief is part of a set of resources developed to share the findings of the assessment of the CCA and DRR policy landscape in Jordan carried out by Mercy Corps. The documents have been developed in collaboration and with the support of the Grantham Research Institute at the London School of Economics.

Download the full policy analysis evidence paper
Download Annex A: An overview of laws, policies, and legal frameworks in Jordan



The Zurich Climate Resilience Alliance is a multi-sectoral partnership, powered by the Z Zurich Foundation, focused on enhancing resilience to climate hazards in both rural and urban communities. By implementing solutions, promoting good practice, influencing policy and facilitating systemic change, we aim to ensure that all communities facing climate hazards are able to thrive. [Find out more at ZCRAlliance.org](https://ZCRAlliance.org)

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