



International Civilian Peacebuilding Training Program

IPT Specialisation Course on Environmental Peacebuilding

Participant's Testimonials

Naza Orazova, Programme Administrator, OSCE Centre in Ashgabat



“As Programme Administrator at the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat, working on environmental activities, I understand environmental challenges as an integral component of security and stability. I joined the Environmental Peacebuilding Course to deepen my understanding of the links between climate change, environmental governance, and peacebuilding. The training exceeded my expectations by providing a comprehensive and science-based overview of the current climate situation and the potential consequences of inaction. I particularly appreciated the sessions on international legal frameworks and transparency mechanisms, which strengthened my understanding of how countries are expected to implement and report on their climate commitments. The course was practical, focused, and highly inspiring, reinforcing the importance of evidence-based action. Another highlight of the course was the opportunity to connect with professionals from conflict-affected regions. Hearing first-hand experiences from participants working under challenging circumstances while striving to advance environmental protection and peacebuilding provided valuable perspectives on the realities of conflict and reinforced the importance of environmental co-operation as a tool for building resilience and fostering dialogue. I plan to apply the knowledge gained in designing and implementing environmental initiatives that promote regional co-operation, resilience, and sustainable security, while also sharing these insights with colleagues and partners.”

Esenam Adzo Norgbey Apawu, National Disaster Management Organisation Ghana, Senior Principal Disaster Control Officer



“As a Disaster Management Officer with Ghana’s Disaster Management Organization (NADMO) with a special focus on gender and climate change, my work navigates the complex intersections of disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and environmental conservation. I participated in the IPT Specialisation Course on Environmental Peacebuilding to explore the grey areas among environmental conservation, peacebuilding, security and disaster risk reduction. The knowledge and skills I gained from the course will enable me to develop more inclusive and effective approaches to disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, and environmental conservation in Ghana and beyond. I plan to apply the concepts and tools acquired to develop context-specific strategies, facilitate dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders, and inform policy and programme development. My sincere appreciation to the Austrian Centre for Peace for curating a diverse cohort of participants with rich expertise and experiences. I am also grateful to the facilitators for their exceptional guidance, insightful presentations, and engaging discussions.”



Nasiru Rabi, Civil Engineer/Project Manager, UNDP



“As a Civil Engineer/Project Manager with UNDP working in conflict-affected and post-crisis communities in North-East Nigeria, I have come to appreciate the strong connection between environmental sustainability, resilient infrastructure, and lasting peace. Through my involvement in public infrastructure reconstruction and community stabilization projects, I have witnessed how environmental challenges such as resource scarcity, climate change, and damaged infrastructure can affect livelihoods and increase social and economic vulnerabilities. At the same time, I have witnessed how well-designed and inclusive infrastructure projects can help restore communities, create economic opportunities, strengthen social cohesion, and support long-term stability. The Environmental Peacebuilding course provided an excellent opportunity to deepen my understanding of the links between climate change, natural resource management, infrastructure development, and human security. It also exposed me to valuable international experiences and practical approaches on how environmental cooperation can contribute to conflict prevention, recovery, and sustainable peacebuilding. What I found particularly valuable was the quality of the lecturers and fellow participants, whose diverse experiences enriched the discussions and learning process. The professionalism of the organizers and the interactive nature of the course made it a truly rewarding experience. The knowledge and insights I gained will further enhance my ability to manage infrastructure and recovery projects that not only improve living conditions and livelihoods but also promote resilience, environmental sustainability, and peaceful coexistence in vulnerable communities.”

Birgitte Skarboe, Economic and Environmental Officer, OSCE



“The IPT Specialisation Course on Environmental Peacebuilding came at exactly the right moment. I had just moved from the OSCE's Conflict Prevention Centre into a role specialising in the organisation's economic and environmental security dimension and was looking to deepen my expertise in environmental peacebuilding concepts and find new ideas for cross-cutting work across the OSCE's three security dimensions. For someone with a background in peace and conflict who wants to engage more deeply with the environment as a peacebuilding tool, this course is precisely the right entry point. It sharpened my understanding of both directions at once: the environmental dimensions of peace and security, and the peace and security dimensions of sustainable development. These are distinct but deeply connected lenses – and the course handled both with rigour. Particularly valuable was developing a real-life environmental peacebuilding intervention proposal, a process made all the richer by the collective expertise of exceptionally experienced instructors and a diverse group of participants bringing perspectives from very different conflict contexts. As a bonus, the course setting in the Peace Castle of Stadtschlaining is simply – as one says in Austria – traumhaft. I look forward to translating these new perspectives into my practical work.”



Davis Macharia Mirara, Advocate of the High Court of Kenya



“I am an Advocate of the High Court of Kenya and a Partner at Mirara & Associates Advocates LLP and joined the IPT Specialization Course on Environmental Peacebuilding to deepen my understanding of the relationship between environmental change, natural resource governance, and conflict. In my legal practice, I have observed how disputes over land, water, and other resources can be intensified by environmental pressures, making it increasingly important to adopt preventive and collaborative approaches to conflict management. The course provided valuable insights into the environment–climate–peace nexus and offered practical tools for conflict analysis, environmental do-no-harm approaches, and inclusive peacebuilding. I particularly appreciated the opportunity to learn from experienced practitioners and engage with participants from diverse professional and cultural backgrounds. The course has given me a broader perspective on how environmental and climate issues influence many of the disputes that come before us. I will draw on these insights in my legal practice, particularly in matters involving land and natural resources, and continue promoting practical and constructive approaches to dispute resolution.”

Mary Tekle Berhane, Project Coordinator, Ethiopian Catholic Church Archdiocese



“I am a Project Coordinator in the Ethiopian Catholic Church Archdiocese of Addis Ababa, Justice and Peace Department. Having been engaged in justice and peace awareness-creation activities in Ethiopia, I wanted to deepen my understanding of the relationship between the environment and peace. The IPT Specialization Course on Environmental Peacebuilding was very informative and motivational and reshaped my insights toward the interconnected nature and application of environment and peacebuilding. The integrated approaches that were introduced, the practical examples from projects and international frameworks, as well as the case studies from different conflict contexts, were very useful. I learned from knowledgeable trainers how a peacebuilding project can take a transformative role by recognizing and mainstreaming environmental and climate issues into peace efforts. The diverse group of participants and the lessons we learned from each other were a great addition to the knowledge we acquired through the formal course setting. In addition, the training coordination played an important role in guiding us toward the shared purpose that brought us together. The magnificent Peace Castle added an element of beauty, history, and passion to the course days, which I was honored to experience.”

Dana Bogdan, Environmental Programme Officer, OSCE



“As Environmental Programme Officer in the Office of the Coordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities at the OSCE Secretariat in Vienna, I am on a day-to-day basis dealing with the interlinkages between security and the environment. Contributing to the OSCE’s comprehensive approach to security, my work aims at strengthening co-operation on environmental issues as part of a broader effort to prevent conflict, build confidence, and promote good relations between neighboring countries. I was interested in the IPT Specialisation Course on Environmental Peacebuilding organized by the ACP as it seemed - and during the training proved to be



one of the most comprehensive trainings on the environment, climate, peace, and security nexus that currently exists. Throughout the training we had the opportunity to delve into the details of how the environment can be leveraged for peace, and how to correctly apply a climate lens to different aspects of peacebuilding work. Especially useful from a professional perspective were the modules on international legal frameworks and climate/environment-sensitive programming, which provided an excellent opportunity for generating new ideas that could be further explored in my work at the OSCE. I fully recommend the training to all OSCE staff, who need to mainstream environmental considerations into their projects and programmes.”

Jyldyz Djakypbay Kyzy, PhD Student in Sociology



"As a PhD student in Sociology researching internal migration, I joined the IPT Specialization Course on Environmental Peacebuilding to deepen my understanding of the connections between environmental challenges, conflict, and peacebuilding processes. The training was an enriching and eye-opening experience that broadened my perspective on how environmental issues can contribute to social tensions, displacement, and other complex societal challenges. I was particularly impressed by the interdisciplinary approach of the course and the opportunity to learn from experienced practitioners and participants from diverse backgrounds. The knowledge and skills I gained will be highly valuable for my academic research, especially in examining the environmental dimensions of migration. I also hope to apply these insights in future fieldwork and professional engagements where understanding the links between environment, conflict, and peacebuilding can contribute to more sustainable and inclusive solutions. I highly recommend this course to researchers, practitioners, policymakers and community leaders interested in understanding the intersections of environment, conflict, and peacebuilding, as it provides valuable theoretical insights, practical tools, and a truly enriching international learning experience.”

Wambui Kabir, Principal Investigations and Compliance Officer, Kenya's NCIC



"I am a Principal Investigations and Compliance Officer at Kenya's National Cohesion and Integration Commission. I joined the IPT Specialisation Course on Environmental Peacebuilding to deepen my understanding of how environmental and climate-related factors influence conflict and peace processes. The course broadened my perspective on the environment–climate–peace–security nexus and provided practical approaches for designing effective peacebuilding interventions. The diverse experiences shared by participants and facilitators enriched the learning experience and demonstrated how environmental challenges can be transformed into opportunities for cooperation and peace. The knowledge and skills I gained will help me integrate environmental and climate considerations into conflict analysis, early warning systems, and preventive interventions in Kenya. I also intend to promote more inclusive and conflict-sensitive approaches to addressing resource-based conflicts, particularly those related to land, water, and climate-induced pressures. The training strengthened my conviction that environmental peacebuilding can play a vital role in fostering sustainable peace and social cohesion.”



Oumarou Paul Koalaga, Executive Director, Institute for Strategy and International Relations



“I participated in the IPT Specialisation Course on Environmental Peacebuilding in November 2025. After attending this excellent training, with highly experienced trainers, I am fully satisfied with the new expertise I acquired. Coming from a security and peace background with a focus on the Sahel region, I am now able to link climate action with peacebuilding, build trust through shared resource management such as water and land, and empower marginalized voices. In addition, I feel better quipped in addressing critical challenges, including power imbalances (e.g. gender inequalities and North-South dynamics), and emphasising the need to align peacebuilding practices with existing local governance structures instead of imposing external models. My key takeaways will help me to promote context-specific and collaborative approaches that acknowledge power dynamics and integrate environmental efforts into broader peacebuilding strategies.”

Christian Melis, Environmental Governance Officer, OSCE



“I have always been attracted by the close connection between the environment and security, and in my professional experience with the OSCE - initially as Water and Energy Adviser in Tajikistan and then as Environmental Governance Officer at the Secretariat in Vienna – I have learned to consider environmental threats not only as a challenge, but also as an opportunity to strengthen collaboration, confidence, and peace. The Environmental Peacebuilding course in Schlaining at the ACP represented a unique opportunity to delve deeper into the multifaceted climate, natural resources, and security nexus, as well as a great occasion to broaden my knowledge of best practices and experiences inside and outside the OSCE region. I particularly appreciated the impressive quality of lecturers and trainers that, together with the valuable professionalism of the organizers, made the course a memorable step in my capacity development and an enrichment of skills to apply in my daily work in support of environmental transboundary co-operation as a way to build and maintain peace.”

Anastasiia Tarasova, Coordinator of the Department of Political Science, Central European University



“It was a real privilege to attend the IPT Specialization Course on Environmental Peacebuilding and join the cohort of professionals and innovative thinkers, who are bringing peace and meaningful change to their communities and countries. The training was of highest standards in terms of organization and topics covered. The curriculum was insightful and developed in a way that perfectly linked theory with practice. During the lectures and informal activities, participants had room to exchange ideas, perspectives, and best practices. During my career, I implemented several projects dealing with environmental aspects and economic development in Central Asia and recently conducted research on the war in Ukraine and its impact on the environment. Thus, I found the training extremely useful for my professional development and for meeting likeminded people to elaborate on the development of joint projects or initiatives. I hope that through common efforts and small steps, we will be able to preserve our environment, as environment and peace are an agenda for the whole



of humanity. I am sincerely grateful to the organizers, who developed such an inspiring training. I highly recommend the course to professionals, practitioners, policy makers, academics, community leaders, and all those who believe and strive for contributing to the environmental peacebuilding agenda”.

Hum Bhandari, NGO Federation of Nepal and Association of International NGOs in Nepal, Team Leader



“I am a PhD scholar at the Department of Conflict, Peace and Development Studies in Tribhuvan University and a development practitioner. I attended the IPT Specialisation Course on Environmental Peacebuilding in November 2024, which has deepened my understanding of environmental issues, climate change, global actors, as well as related laws and instruments. The course has provided me with new insights and perspectives regarding the climate change, peace, security, and human rights nexus. Informed about recent data and research, analytical frameworks, and best practices of environmental peacebuilding in the field, I returned from the training with a deep sense of enthusiasm and motivation to design programmes, research, and advocacy to address environmental challenges and foster harmony, peace and justice with local and global impacts. The lecturers of the training had great knowledge and experience, which they shared in an engaging and participatory manner. The course is highly useful for mid-career professionals to get better equipped for environment- and conflict-sensitive policy and programme design.”

Merdan Gochkarov, National Project Officer, OSCE Centre in Ashgabat



“The IPT SC on Environmental Peacebuilding was timely and rich in content and provided me with analytical and programmatic tools and techniques to address climate-related peace and security risks. I acquired a solid knowledge of how climate change, environmental factors, and competition over natural resources can be a driver and risk-multiplier of conflict. As an analytical tool, I learned how gender, social inequalities, and power dynamics shape the way in which different groups and individuals experience climate- and environmental-related security risks. More importantly, I enriched my skillset on climate- and environment-sensitive programming, taking into account potential “connectors” and “dividers” in a given context to maximize the positive outcome of peacebuilding interventions. Applying the newly gained knowledge in practice and as part of the Project Team at the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat, I recently conducted a Regional Workshop on Conservation of Migratory Species in Central Asia. Emphasizing an integrated multistakeholder approach to climate- and environmental-related security risks, I contributed to enhanced partnerships among various UN agencies, the OSCE, GIZ and national partners from the Central Asian region for the benefit of current and future generations and our shared home, the planet Earth. I am very grateful to the organizers and the Austrian Permanent Mission to the OSCE for offering such an impactful course, thereby advancing the noble cause to prevent conflicts through environmental peacebuilding.”