

# K4D's work around climate change and related issues (2016-2021)

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The K4D helpdesk service provides brief summaries of current research, evidence, and lessons learned. Helpdesk reports are not rigorous or systematic reviews; they are intended to provide an introduction to the most important evidence related to a research question. They draw on a rapid desk-based review of published literature and consultation with subject specialists.

Helpdesk reports are commissioned by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth, & Development Office and other Government departments, but the views and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of FCDO, the UK Government, K4D or any other contributing organisation. For further information, please contact helpdesk@k4d.info.

# 1. Introduction

The Knowledge, Evidence and Learning for Development Programme (K4D) provides access to all FCDO staff to recent research and evidence. The programme has produced over 1000 rapid evidence syntheses (helpdesk queries (HDQ)), 40 emerging issues reports (EIRs), and run 40 learning journeys (LJs) from 2016 to 2021. Much of K4D's body of evidence responds to core, crosscutting development challenges. In K4D's previous iterations, the Helpdesk has been providing evidence and knowledge services to the UK Government since 2001.

The rapid nature of the K4D service and its flexibility means that it is responsive to emerging events, crises, and policy changes, as has been demonstrated e.g. through its work on COVID-19 (Quak, 2021; Herbert, 2021a). Climate change and related environmental issues have been the focus of many evidence requests and much of the learning activity of K4D, in line with DFID's previous commitment to the mainstreaming of climate considerations in all its programming.

This report provides an illustrative overview of K4D's work from October 2016 until May 2021 connected to climate change. Given the breadth of K4D reports that touch on climate change (or related issues), this report has taken a sub-section of reports to focus on, with a total of 75 reports explored and 2 LJs touched on in more detail (see "Methodology" below). It is hence *not* an in-depth nor exhaustive analysis of climate change per se, nor the many different climate-related issues explored by K4D over the past four years. The content is purely illustrative, based on a rapid review of this sub-section. Insights are also taken from the data that K4D collects for each request based on the information provided by advisers and FCDO (e.g. purpose of request, adviser's cadre). Hence, the data is limited to the information available to the K4D team at the time of the request and the level of details available may vary from one request to the other. The purpose of this report is to inform FCDO about some of the specifics of their requests on climate-related issues, in general. This report will be used as input for a K4D-FCDO learning event on climate change issues. It also makes up part of a series of K4D reports, with the other reports synthesising K4D work on Covid-19 (Quak, 2021) and conflict, violence, and peace (Herbert, 2021b).

#### Summary

Helpdesk requests cover a wide range of subjects. The 75 papers in this sample all focus on, or in some way address climate change or environmental issues (either explicitly or tangentially). This report reflects the interdisciplinary and cross-cutting nature of climate change and environment issues, and their complexity. It also reflects the importance FCDO sets on climate change as a fundamental development issue. A number of categorisations have been provided to explore different aspects of the sub-section. Where possible examples of queries have been given to illustrate the various categorisations. The findings can be summarised as follows:

Thematic group and typology: The majority of the reports are inter- and multidisciplinary in nature, reflecting the complexity and cross-cutting nature of climate change and related issues. Two leading sub-themes – economics and governance – feature prominently in the sub-section. An array of climate and environment topics are covered, but the most frequent include climate change impacts, nature and/or natural resources management, mitigation, water, climate &/or environmental policy, and climate change programming – broadly reflecting the domination of economics and governance subthemes.

- Origin of research requests: There is quite an array of requesting teams in this subsection reflecting the cross-cutting nature of climate change issues, as well as the strategic importance given to the issue by FCDO. Among FCDO's 13 professional groups, advisers from 11 groups have made requests around climate and environment issues in this sub-section. Climate & Environment (unsurprisingly) have dominated the users, followed by Economist advisers and Governance advisers to a lesser degree. A large proportion of other FCDO staff (such as research specialists, programme officers and managers, and policy analysts and officers) have also requested climate related reports, as well as other Government departments. 40% of requests in this sub-section came from country offices, country joint units and regional research hubs. Other key requestor groups include Heads of Profession.
- Intended use of the reports: A number of the requests were used to inform cross-HMG strategy and programming (such as the Sahel strategy or the DEFRA-led Blue Planet fund). Preparation for COP26 and to inform policy ahead of the conference were stated purposes for 10% of the climate-related Helpdesk reports (7 out of the 70 HDRs). Other reports have been used in preparation for external meetings with other donor agencies (e.g. the World Bank and UN), or to be used as guidance for FCDO on a subject.
- **Request type:** The majority of this sub-section of outputs are analytical, which refers to enquiries framed as specific research questions that need to be answered by compiling and linking multiple sources of evidence. The purpose mostly mentioned by the requesters is to support specific programme design or business case development.
- Geography: Just over half of the requests (38) take a general focus, where no country or region is specified. Following that, the most common regions of focus were: sub-Saharan Africa (17), Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (10), and South Asia (5) (bearing in mind that one report specifically looked at both sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia and another looked at both South Asia and East Asia & Pacific, so have been included under all relevant regions); FCAS (3); East Asia & Pacific (2); Europe & Central Asia (1); and small island developing states (SIDS) (1). The reports have a relatively wide country coverage, with 34 specific countries mentioned in total in research titles or research questions, and some additional smaller regions such as East Africa.
- Feedback and citations: This sub-section of reports have received lower feedback responses than K4D outputs on average. The majority of requesters that filled in an evaluation form gave high scores for quality. Just over half of the publicly available reports in this sub-section have been cited by an assortment of major knowledge hubs, reports, books and academic journals, with many of them being cited more than once.

#### Methodology

The selection of K4D outputs on climate change was based on an extensive search in the K4D repository on titles and research questions using NVIVO. The Annex shows all publicly available K4D outputs included in this report (with information on the type of query<sup>1</sup>, geographical region (based on World Bank region definitions), and FCDO purpose). Specifically, this paper was prepared by reviewing a sub-section of K4D outputs between October 2016 – May 2021 that are relevant to the theme of climate change, identified through key word searches using the NVIVO

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See the Request types and intended use section for the definitions of the Typology and different types of query requests.

platform. Key words included: "climate", "climate change", "environment", "water", "nature-based solution", "NbS", "green", "carbon". Both published and unpublished outputs were included.

A large number of HDQs and EIRs were initially identified using this method (about 800 papers), these were further reduced by restricting the initial sub-section to reports with 60 or more points of reference to the above key words. This produced a selection of 115 reports, roughly a 10% sample of the overall number of Helpdesk and Emerging Issue reports produced as of 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021. A further 40 reports were excluded from this final sub-section after being deemed not relevant based on a scan of the report's summary and the expert knowledge of the researcher. Reasons for exclusion include a focus on "water" but in relation to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH); the use of "environment" in relation to the business environment or an enabling environment. The final selection for this overview report is therefore 75 papers – 70 HDQs (of which 50 are single HDQs (with six-days of research time allocated) and 20 are multiple HDQs (with more than six days of research time allocated but produced in one report)) and 5 EIRs (with variable days allocated from 12-days and upwards).

Given the size of the sub-section and the relatively short timeframe of the K4D programme, it is not possible to identify trends over time. Therefore, this paper provides an illustrative overview of the climate change theme (based on the sub-section of 75 queries), highlighting some thematic topics of focus and case studies, rather than providing a comprehensive analysis of all outputs on the selected theme. There are a number of limitations to this methodology, including the effect of the length of the paper, with longer papers biased towards having more (key) words. The key words themselves are limited in scope given time constraints (other potentially important words that were not searched for include "adaptation", "mitigation", "energy", "natural resources"). The data itself is only as strong as the data that is provided to us by advisers and FCDO and this can be limited given the rapid nature of the service – so for example, information on the purpose of a Helpdesk or which team an adviser is from can only be gleaned from information given by advisers or from emails. The data has been cleaned where possible using information from the logging of other HDQs. Where possible we have tried to identify key events, or uses the reports have fed into, but again this is based on the information we have been given. Lastly, the subthemes and "climate typology" developed are for illustrative purposes only, they are basic (e.g. the sub-themes are based on FCDO cadre categories) and not robust, however, they enable a discussion through the standardisation of the vast array of K4D reports and topics.

## 2. Thematic coverage

Helpdesk requests cover a wide range of subjects. In addition to the climate and environment theme that all this sub-section of reports relate to (whether as a primary concern or secondary), the sample was further classified into broad thematic groups based on the reports' research questions, and in some cases, where the information in the research questions is limited, also the overview of the report. The categories for the sub-themes are based on the FCDO cadre system (see below and Table 1).<sup>2</sup>

The FCDO's Cadre system is a succession of the model established by DFID, and it provides the organisational framework for most of FCDO's work related to international development. Table 1 collates the staff competencies detailed in the FCDO's technical competency frameworks. For this report, the competencies are used as a proxy to identify the thematic focus of each Cadre and categorise the reports.

Although the reports were classified into just one sub-theme each for ease of discussion, most reports are related to more than one or two topics and had a focus on multiple themes – demonstrating the cross-cutting nature of climate and environment issues, that many of the queries are multi-disciplinary in nature, and also the generally broad scope of the queries. Hence, this classification is illustrative and not conclusive, being based on the author's interpretation and to be used for discussion purposes only.

Eleven clusters of key broad sub-themes were identified in the sub-section. The most frequently requested sub-themes related to Economics (17) and Governance (15). Other key sub-themes include Social Development (8), Conflict (7), Evaluation (6) (this was defined as those queries relating to FCDO programming or guidance) and Livelihoods (6). Sub-themes with less coverage are Health (5), Humanitarian (4), Infrastructure (4), Education (2) and Private Sector Development (1). The table below includes the number of reports from the sub-section related to each thematic area. See Table 2 below, which also includes a question example from each theme.

As these reports vary significantly in size – with the majority being 6-day HDQs, and some being much larger multi-HDQs and EIRs – the numbers below do not directly represent the time spent on the different thematic areas identified, the importance of these issues, or their weighting. The single HDQs are focussed on fewer subjects and have fewer research questions, whereas the papers that are classified as multiple HDQs and EIRs, provide broader analyses and include more research questions.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Please note, for these thematic groupings the FCDO "Economist" cadre is taken as "Economics".

Table 1: FCDO thematic Cadres and competencies<sup>3,4</sup>

FCDO Cadre	Competencies
Climate and environment	Climate change impacts, adaptation and resilience; low carbon development and climate change mitigation; environmental stewardship, including natural resource management, resource scarcity, ecosystem services and pollution; climate and environment science; environmental management systems; climate and environmental governance, nationally and internationally; and environment and climate finance.
Conflict	Primary competencies: applied conflict and political analysis; conflict sensitivity; and conflict response: building peace and stability. Competency specialisms: climate, environment and natural resource management; inclusive economic development; legacies of armed conflict including transitional justice; migration, serious and organised crime; peace processes including conflict resolution mechanisms; violent extremism; and security, justice and human rights.
Economist	Macroeconomic knowledge; microeconomic knowledge; international economics; econometrics and data; and effective communication for economists.
Education	Education policy; education systems; global education system; equity and education; and research, evidence and innovation.
Evaluation	Research methodology, method, techniques, and application of these; identifying research/evaluation needs, design and research/evaluation scope; analysing and interpreting complex information; managing and commissioning evaluations.
Governance	Core competency: applied governance and political economy analysis. Specialist competencies: accountable and inclusive politics; public sector governance and service delivery; inclusive growth and economic development; public financial management and domestic revenue mobilisation; anti-corruption; and security, justice and human rights.
Health	Public health; health systems development; health architecture; health improvement and wider determinants of health; evidence, innovation and evaluation; and protracted crises, fragile-and-conflict-affected-states and nutrition.
Humanitarian	Planning and managing relief operations; humanitarian theory and architecture; international humanitarian law and principles; and crisis risk and resilience.
Infrastructure	Infrastructure for sustainable development and UK aid delivery; infrastructure policy, governance and finance; infrastructure implementation and delivery and operation; infrastructure users and beneficiaries; infrastructure effects on and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> This tables only includes the thematic Cadres as it seeks to identify themes in FCDO's requests to K4D. It excludes the Cadres of: programme delivery and statistics.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Notably the Cadre competency descriptions are not written in a standardised way having varying levels of detail e.g. with some specifying core and specialism competencies, and others just specifying general competencies. They are therefore not exactly comparable and provide an indicative guide to the thematic scope/lens of work of the Cadre. Some competencies are stated in multiple Cadres.

	response to the environment, natural disasters and the climate crisis; infrastructure response in fragile and conflict affected situations, humanitarian crises and different contexts; urban sectors, options and technology;
Livelihoods	Primary competencies: Climate-smart & resilient agriculture, food systems & markets; building resilience and managing risks to shocks and stresses; supporting transition, transformation and innovation; politics, governance and enabling environment for sustainable natural resource and environmental management and markets; nutrition and food security; and jobs and incomes. Specialism competencies: women's economic empowerment; and graduation from poverty and social protection.
Private sector development	Economic development, inclusive growth and poverty reduction; private sector contribution to development; investment and finance; investment climate reform; market systems development; and trade and development.
Social development	Social policy (social and political analysis and inclusion); poverty and vulnerability analysis and monitoring; gender equality and the rights and empowerment of women and girls; empowerment and accountability; and social protection.

Source: Information extracted from the FCDO technical competency frameworks for each Cadre, updated in May 2020, https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dfid-technical-competency-frameworks

Main sub-theme (based on cadre subjects)	No. of reports	Example of research question				
Economics	17	What is the evidence on the risk of capital flight in vulnerable countries due to a better understanding of physical climate change risks?				
Governance	15	Please provide a summary of published commentary and opinion about the ability of current governance arrangements within the region to facilitate a regional approach to shared climate change and natural resource management issues in East Africa.				
Social Development	8	What is the global and South Asian evidence on women-initiated or women-led measures to cope with environmental stresses and climate change, with a focus on their social and ecological impacts? What evidence is there that social and economic empowerment of women leads to enhanced capacity to deal with such stresses?				
		What is the evidence base on climate change as a driver of conflict in Afghanistan and other Fragile and Conflict Affected States?				
Evaluation	6	What are the main lessons from the FCDO funded projects/research focusing on climate and weather in East Africa?				

Table 2: Classification of report sub-themes after climate and environment (based on cadre delineations)

Livelihoods	6	How has climate change affected income-generating activities (IGAs) for urban/peri-urban dwellers in fragile and conflicted affected states?
Health	5	What can developing countries do over the mid-term horizon (next 5 years) to improve water security to prepare for a potential increase in disease outbreaks and pandemics such as Covid-19?
Humanitarian       4    What are the existing guidance, s humanitarian sector around reduced to the sector around		What are the existing guidance, standards, and protocols in the humanitarian sector around reducing harm to the environment (including carbon emission reduction, reducing pollution, reversing climate change)?
Infrastructure	4	What are the main types of floods and causes of flooding in urban areas in Africa, and what factors increase flood risk in African cities (and particularly in Nigeria)? Drawing on lessons learned from Africa and Asia, what interventions are used to manage urban flood risk in developing countries, and how effective have these interventions been in terms of cost-benefit analysis, number of beneficiaries or other metrics relating to value for money?
Education	2	Education, Girls' Education and Climate Change
Private Sector Development	1	What do private sector markets for climate adaptation and resilience products and services look like in LMICs in Africa and South Asia?

Source: Author's interpretation drawing on K4D data

## 3. Typology of climate and/or environment issues

In addition to the sub-themes, the sample was also classified into a broad typology of climate and/or environment issues, to give an idea of which areas FCDO requests have clustered around. The typology is basic and merely illustrative, it does not indicate the importance of these issues or their weighting, merely providing a descriptive representation of some of the climate and environment requests coming from FCDO. Table 3 below gives a summary of 14 climate topics, with a brief definition (most of these issues are interlinked and the delineation between them is subjective), and a HDQ example. As with the sub-themes, most reports are related to multiple climate topics, although attempts have been made to categorise each report to just one main climate topic.

An array of climate and environment topics are covered, and queries are spread quite evenly between a number of them. But the most frequent include Climate change impacts (10), Nature &/or natural resources management (8), Climate &/or environmental policy (7), Mitigation (7), Water (7), Climate change programming (6) and Specific thematic guidance (6) – broadly reflecting the domination of economics and governance sub-themes. Many of these topics also reflect K4D LJs that have been ongoing or that reports were commissioned to support, in particular the Water Security LJ (which has also expanded to include a focus on Nature-based solutions (NbS)). Other topics that are less frequent in this sample of reports includes: Adaptation, Disaster Risk and Reduction (DRR) & resilience (5); Green growth (5); Climate change responses (3); Climate finance (3); Air pollution (2); and Environmental engagement (2). It is also important to consider the bias that was created with the

key words used in the original K4D outputs search, as these included "water" and "NbS" specifically but did not include "mitigation" or "adaptation".

Many of the queries were requested to support preparations for COP 26 (7 out of 75 reports – see the Request types and intended use section of this report for further discussion).

Key climate / environment topic (No. of reports)	Description	Example of research question
Climate change impacts (10)	Reports mainly looking at how the effects of climate change (are predicted to) impact on a country or sector.	What are the major internal and external environmental risks to which Iraq is exposed?
Nature &/or natural resources management (8)	Reports looking at nature related topics, including Nature- based Solutions (NbS) and biodiversity. Natural resources management is also included in this topic.	What are some best practice examples of nature-based solutions for water security? What are some of the implementation challenges and lessons learned?
Climate &/or environmental policy (7)	Reports focusing on climate change policies and politics, and/or environmental policies and regulation.	What factors affect the political will of African governments to address climate change?
Mitigation (7)	Reports looking at methods to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or to decarbonise sectors.	What is the carbon abatement potential of reforestation relative to other mitigation measures? What is the best practice on reforestation, i.e. what works best according to the evidence?
Water (7)	Reports with a focus around water issues, such as water security. Many of these reports are often linked to the K4D LJ on Water Security.	What are the key vulnerabilities in the water infrastructure system in urban and peri-urban areas in fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS)?
Climate change programming (6)	Reports that cover climate related programming or donor interventions in a country.	Please provide mapping of climate smart programming in Ugandan refugee hosting districts. What does the evidence tell us on the impact of climate smart programming in Ugandan refugee hosting districts?
Specific thematic guidance (6)	This is a miscellaneous category, but largely covers reports that have a focus on a specific sector or topic, such as	<i>Climate and environment learning resource guide</i>

Table 3: Typology of climate and environmental topics queries are related to

	gender and climate change. Also reports (often in the form of annotated bibliographies) providing general climate- related guidance and resources.	
Adaptation, DRR & resilience (5)	Reports looking at adaptation to climate change impacts, resilience to climate change or natural disasters, or DRR.	What lessons have been learned on resilience programming in Pakistan? What has worked best, and are there take-aways in terms of strategic framework and approach, sectoral focus, target populations, and operating models?
Green growth (5)	Reports specifically exploring economic growth that is environmentally sustainable. Including in specific sectors/topics.	What examples are there of high- emitting developing states pursuing low carbon/green development and how have they organised the state, private sector, and civil society to achieve this? What helped/hindered this and what were the trade-offs? Consider also lessons from developmental state theory and how these relate to green growth approaches.
Climate change vulnerability (4)	Reports that explore vulnerability to climate change, for example those that are most exposed to climate change impacts or have the least ability to adapt.	Which areas and population groups in Pakistan are most exposed to the combined effects of climate change and natural disasters, food insecurity and chronic malnutrition, and COVID- 19?
Climate change responses (3)	Reports that are looking at responses to climate change, including both mitigation and adaptation, as well as risks and opportunities. Climate impacts often also make up a section of the report.	What is the evidence base of the linkages between population change in Africa and climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resilience?
Climate finance (3)	Reports exploring financing of climate interventions and action (both adaptation and mitigation), and related issues such as barriers.	What are the lessons learned and best practices from initiatives aimed at engaging or financing local and national women's, Indigenous Peoples, disabled person's organisations/actors within the Global South, or other grassroots civil society organisations, in climate finance initiatives?

Air pollution (2)	Reports that have a focus on air pollution in particular (there is often some crossover with mitigation).	What is the evidence base for interventions in low and lower middle incomes countries to improve air quality and/or mitigate its impact on health outcomes for populations, with a focus on children under 5 years old?
Environmental engagement (2)	Reports specifically exploring engagement with environmental issues, such as through civil society, or religion.	What are the key drivers and barriers to environmental engagement in the MENA region?

Source: Author's interpretation drawing on K4D data

## 4. Origin of research requests – FCDO Cadres and teams

K4D records different information and data about each query and the adviser making the request (the level of detail on each request can vary, making it more difficult to make comparisons). Figure 1 depicts the Cadres that have requested research on climate change from K4D. It reveals that while several FCDO Cadres submit research requests relating to conflict, the vast majority of these requests do indeed come from the Climate & Environment Cadre. Please note that nine of the reports did not have information recorded about the team or cadre of the requester.

Among the 13 FCDO professional groups<sup>5</sup>, this sub-section has advisers from 11 groups making requests around climate and environment issues (no requests came from the Statistics or Private Sector Cadres). Climate & Environment (unsurprisingly) have dominated the users, followed by Economist advisers and Governance advisers to a lesser degree (see Figure 1). There is also a large proportion of other FCDO staff (such as research specialists, programme officers and managers, and policy analysts and officers) who have also requested climate related reports, as well as other Government departments.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The Cadres are taken as being: Climate & Environment; Conflict; Economist; Education; Evaluation; Governance; Health; Humanitarian; Infrastructure; Livelihoods; Private Sector; Social development; and Statistics.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> In this sub-section, "other Government departments" largely refers to the Stabilisation Unit.



Figure 1: Number of reports requested by FCDO professional group (from sub-section of 75 reports)

Figure 2 shows the teams or organisational units that most frequently requested climate change related K4D reports based on the 75 reports in the final sub-section. Research requests to K4D were spread relatively evenly over a large number of teams – 40 teams in total for the 75 reports in the sample. For ease of representation only the top 11 requesting teams are included in Figure 2, these are those teams that have requested more than one report. Notably, comparability of the data is complicated by the variable use of team names – e.g. some people refer to the "Stabilisation Unit" as a team, while others refer to "STAR MENA & Asia team - Stabilisation Unit" as a team. The data was also cleaned in places where although the requester's team or cadre was not stated, this information had been recorded for previous requests from the same adviser. Hence, changes of position and changes of team name may not be fully reflected.

40% of the requests came from country offices, country joint units and regional research hubs. Other key requestor groups include Heads of Profession (possibly reflecting the strategic importance given to climate change issues by DFID and now FCDO). There is quite an array of requesting teams reflecting the cross-cutting nature of climate change issues, as well as the strategic importance given to the issue by FCDO.

Source: Author's analysis drawing on K4D data



Figure 2: Most frequent climate related requests by team or organisational unit (top 11 teams out of 40 in total)

## 5. Request type and intended use of reports

The sub-section of 75 reports were categorised into the following typology of queries based on the query question (see Table 4) – although some reports could be categorised into more than one type and classification was not always clear cut given the similarities between the typology groupings (e.g. Analytical vs Overview of literature). Table 4 shows that most requests in the sub-section were analytical (46), which often relates to the high number of requests to analyse the evidence around a climate change issue. There were 15 requests to provide an overview of the literature around a subject (e.g. overview of the literature around nature-based solutions and water security). Six requests could be categorised as lessons learned from evaluations (e.g. lessons learned from carbon pricing in developing countries), and five categorised as mapping of activities (e.g. mapping donor support for climate change initiatives in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)). Finally, there were three donor practice requests (e.g. guidance, standards and protocols in Humanitarian sector on reducing harm to the environment).

Source: Author's analysis drawing on K4D data

#### Table 4: Types of requests

Type (No. of reports)	Description	HDQ example
Analytical (46)	Enquiry is framed as a specific research question, which can be narrow or broad. The answer may not be ready-made and may have to be compiled by piecing together and making links between different strands of literature. Typically requires looking at multiple types of literature.	How cost-effective are different interventions for disaster risk reduction and adaptation to climate change? Which interventions offer the best cost-effectiveness/value-for-money? For the interventions identified, how location/context specific are the cost- effectiveness/value-for-money metrics? What is the strength of the evidence behind the cost-effectiveness/value-for-money measurements for different types of interventions?
Overview of literature (15)	Enquirer wants to know what the recent literature has to say on a given issue. Usually an 'area of interest' rather than a specific research question. Typically limited to academic literature and leading policy papers.	What are the main funding mechanisms for climate adaptation/resilience programmes in developing countries?
Evaluation & Lessons learned (6)	Enquirer is looking for a summary of the main practical lessons learned from evaluations or an overview of best practice policy in a particular area. Increasingly this category might include evidence of impact of interventions in a particular area. Typically limited to donor evaluation and policy literature.	What evidence is available on the lessons learned from implementing carbon taxes and other climate change mitigation strategies related to taxation and public finances (e.g. feebates) in developing countries?
Mapping (5)	Enquirer is looking for basic information on organisations or individuals and their activities in a particular area of work. Typically presented in a tabular format.	Who are the key donors in the climate change space in the Middle East and North Africa? Focus on ODA eligible countries, include bilateral as well as multilateral finance, and single country and regional projects.
Donor practice (3)	Enquirer looking for examples of how donors have approached a particular issue, or the type of work donors have done in a particular area of practice. Typically limited to donor material.	What have international donors been doing to support climate change mitigation and adaptation programmes in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger? What lessons have been learned from these activities?

Source: Author's interpretation drawing on K4D data

The intended use of the K4D reports could be determined from the recorded purposes of the requests (where provided – in this sub-section three queries did not have a recorded purpose). Seven types of intended use have been determined as Table 5 shows. In this sub-section, most often reports were commissioned to help support operational needs such as developing business cases, designing programmes, informing investments, or informing policy work (see Figure 3). From feedback and learnings from LJs, it's been found that business cases are significant areas of useful input for K4D products (Edwards, 2020: 3).

Most queries in this sub-section are related to programme design (24), either informing the redesign of a business case or new programme design around a certain issue. Fourteen queries were related to scoping out or synthesising evidence and information, often to inform potential UK Aid investments or a potential investment decision. These reports often related to emerging issues, to help a team understand an issue better. The purposes of nine reports were related to helping to develop a policy position, especially supporting senior management or cross-HMG strategies (such as the Sahel strategy or the DEFRA-led Blue Planet fund). These reports were also often linked to COP26 support. Overall, preparation for COP26 and to inform policy ahead of the conference were stated purposes for 10% of these climate-related Helpdesk reports (7 out of the 70 Helpdesks). Other reports have been used in preparation for external meetings with other donor agencies (e.g. the World Bank and UN), or to be used as guidance for FCDO on a subject topic (7), such as the Education, Girls' Education and Climate Change EIR. Four reports were related to informing or supporting further research, often taking place in tandem with other non-K4D studies or to identify gaps for further research.

Fourteen queries were directly linked to supporting K4D LJs, through providing evidence on a certain topic. In all, eight different K4D LJs were supported in this sub-section of reports, with the Water Security LJ having the most reports associated with it (five Helpdesk reports). The K4D LJs these reports have linked to include: Pollution & Poverty; Gender Equality; Supporting a demographic transition in sub-Saharan Africa; Climate and Environment (C&E) CPD Launch; Prosperity Fund Covid-19 Evidence Initiative; MENA C&E Theory of Change; Water security; Education and climate change.

Ten out of the 75 reports in the sub-section were issued for internal use only.

Table 5: Types of FCDO purpose for requests

Type (No. of reports)	Description
Programme design (24)	Typically, these queries come from country offices and are intended to feed directly into country-level programming, design and business case development. They may be specifically intended for influencing partners and government or learning lessons from practice in other countries. They are at the implementation end of the policy cycle.
Scoping / synthesis of evidence (14)	Typically, the query will support a rapid assessment of a situation, looking at risks and opportunities for engagement on an issue or for potential future programming. The report is intended to help the agency or individual get to grips with the basics of an issue. Often this is in response to renewed ministerial interest in an area or country or to inform a decision on further programming.
Support for LJ (14)	The report will be directly related to a K4D-FCDO LJ, either as a standalone product or a resource ahead of an event or module to provide, e.g. background reading.
Inform policy work (9)	The report is meant to inform the development of a formal policy position on a given area. Typically, these types of queries come from policy or research teams in headquarters.
Resource Guide (7)	The report will be used as guidance for FCDO on a certain subject.
Inform further research (4)	Typically, these requests are commissioned to complement other FCDO commissioned research or studies, often to either fill in highlighted knowledge gaps or identify gaps where further, larger research pieces may need to be commissioned.

Source: Author's interpretation drawing on K4D data



Figure 3: Intended use of research

Source: Author's analysis drawing on K4D data

## 6. Geographical coverage

The geographical focus of this sub-section of reports is explored by categorising the reports according to geographical regions or countries of interest based on query titles and summaries. Geographical regions are based on World Bank regions<sup>7</sup> but with the addition of Small Island Developing States (SIDS)<sup>8</sup> and Fragile and Conflict Affected Situations (FCAS)<sup>9</sup> to capture these interesting categories (see Figure 4). Some reports are categorised under multiple categories. Just over half of the requests (38) take a general focus, where no country or region is specified. Of the remaining 37 requests that looked at specific regions or countries, the majority (17) were focusing on sub-Saharan Africa, MENA (10), or South Asia (5) (bearing in mind that one report specifically looked at both sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia and another looked at both South Asia and East Asia & Pacific, so these have been included under all relevant regions). Regions with only a few reports related to them include FCAS (3); East Asia & Pacific (2); Europe & Central Asia (1); and SIDS (1).

Some requests have a focus on specific countries (or smaller regions), although some of these reports look at more than one country (see Table 6). Overall, 34 different countries (or smaller regions such as East Africa) are specified in this sub-section of reports. In particular, within sub-Saharan Africa requests, both East Africa and the G5 Sahel are the focus of three queries respectively. Kenya, Iraq, Jordan, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda and Uganda all have at least one query that is exclusively focusing on them as the single country of interest. In particular, Uganda is the specific focus of three queries, and Jordan and Pakistan each have two queries specifically focusing on them. Seven queries look at evidence from five or more countries that were specified by the Requester (either as part of a region such as MENA, or as a mixture of countries across regions such as Brazil, India, Nigeria, the Philippines, and South Africa).

The focus on the G5 Sahel (3) and MENA (10) could reflect the renewed interest in these regions by FCDO. The Sahel work in particular was commissioned when the new cross-HMG Sahel strategy was being operationalised and programming being scaled up in a region DFID had not worked in much before. The MENA region was also an area of increased interest for FCDO over the last few years, especially in climate and environment, with strengthening of the climate change agenda in the region, the development of a MENA C&E Team and the development of a MENA regional climate programme (which the K4D MENA C&E Theory of Change LJ helped to support).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Based on World Bank country groups: https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Based on the UN list: https://www.un.org/ohrlls/content/list-sids

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Based on the World Bank list: https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/fragilityconflictviolence/brief/harmonized-listof-fragile-situations



#### Figure 4: Regional geographic focus\* of the reports\*\*

Source: Author's analysis drawing on K4D data

\* Geographical regions are based on World Bank regions with the addition of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Fragile and Conflict Affected Situations (FCAS) as categories

\*\* Please note that one report specifically covered both Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, and so has been recorded under both these regions, meaning that there are 77 reports in total here

Table 6: Number of reports that focus on that country, or mention the country in the research question

Country (or smaller region)	No. of reports
Jordan	4
Burkina Faso	3
Chad	3
East Africa	3
Egypt	3
India	3
Iraq	3
Lebanon	3
Libya	3
Mali	3
Mauritania	3
Могоссо	3
Niger	3
Pakistan	3
The Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs)	3
Tunisia	3
Uganda	3
Algeria	2
Bangladesh	2
Nigeria	2
Syria	2
the Philippines	2
Afghanistan	1
Brazil	1
Indonesia	1
Kenya	1
Myanmar	1
Nepal	1
North Africa	1
Rwanda	1
South Africa	1
Thailand	1
Turkey	1
Yemen	1

Source: Author's analysis drawing on K4D data

# 7. Feedback and citations

Users of the K4D helpdesk service are asked to complete an online evaluation form for every report, which asks users to grade reports on overall quality, relevance and clarity. 262 evaluation forms have been completed on HDQs from 2016 until March 2021 (K4D, 2021b). The formal evaluation allows for ranking of papers on a scale of Excellent, Very good, Good, Fair and Poor.

The sub-section of K4D Helpdesk reports on climate-related issues received relatively low feedback responses via the evaluation form than the average response for K4D Helpdesk reports (at around 35%). 21% of requesters from the 70 HDRs in the sub-section (not considering the 5 EIRs) filled in feedback forms (i.e. 15 out of 70). Of these 15 formal evaluations, 13 were rated "Very Good" or "Excellent" in quality. In addition to the formal feedback form, an additional seven Helpdesk reports received informal feedback from advisers via email that was all positive. Further impacts from the reports include authors being invited to give further talks about their reports by FCDO (for example, the EIR on trends in conflict and stability in the Indo-Pacific).

As of 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021, 51% of the 65 reports that have been published publicly (10 were not published at the request of the FCDO adviser) have been cited by major knowledge hubs, think tank reports, books and academic journals, with many of the reports being cited more than once. In total, this sub-section of K4D reports were cited in 30 different journal articles.

As highlighted in the previous section, this sub-section of reports has supported eight K4D LJs. In particular, the Water Security LJ has proven very successful and impactful. Box 1 provides more information about the LJ and its impacts – this LJ is still ongoing.

Another good example of a climate-related LJ is that of the Education, Climate and Environment LJ that is coming to an end soon. This LJ aimed to generate greater cross-cadre dialogue and build collaborative capacity within FCDO around education for sustainable development. With a longer-term aim of ensuring that FCDO's education programming is both climate and environment smart, and that the role of education is recognised and where appropriate integrated into broader climate, environment, initiatives. The LJ brought together a 'coalition of the willing', involving FCDO (Education, C&E and Infrastructure cadres), K4D, ACER, EU, Global Partnership for Education, Mott MacDonald early in 2020. This led to joint contributions for the mapping, sharing ideas, sharing communications platforms (e.g. blogs through GPE). The pandemic stalled the work and subsequently the focus of the framing piece changed to look at girls' education and climate resilience/mitigation.

Box 1: Impacts of the Water Security Learning Journey and supporting materials

The Water Security LJ has been ongoing since January 2020, with the aim of increasing FCDO learning on water security and climate, complementing its new water policy. The LJ also pivoted to support the response to Covid-19 and to consider how mid-term responses should focus on water security in the context of climate change, which may lead to increasing outbreaks of zoonotic diseases.

In August 2020, K4D hosted a webinar headed by UK Government Minister Zac Goldsmith and chaired by Dr John Matthews from the Alliance for Global Water Adaptation as part of the **virtual World Water Week**. The event was organised by K4D with FCDO Stockholm. The rapid assessment **evidence compiled by K4D was used in the Minister's speech**. Feedback showed the paper exceeded expectations for its use of robust and comprehensive evidence. **The communications material produced for the event was also described as valuable**. The event's reach has spread beyond the initial participants, being shared through policy and practitioner newsletters and blogs. It has also spawned a new hashtag, **#WaterAtCOP26**, which partners are using to highlight work in the run-up to the COP26 in Glasgow in November 2021.

This LJ has included a number of Helpdesk reports as supporting material. Advisor feedback on a Helpdesk report on nature-based solutions for Water Security, perceived it as valuable for both policy and programming: "for programming, it's easier to say [how you are] spending UK government money...when developing a business case, that's useful;" for policy, "[the report is] focused on evidence, technical, grey material...it shapes policy, not suggesting." Overall, K4D helped "shift dial" to the issue of climate change, which the WASH community has been ignoring: they "used papers...comms...to say you should be thinking where water is coming [from] now and [in the] future."

Source: K4D, 2021a

## 8. References

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## 9. Annex

#### List of published K4D reports analysed in relation to climate change

Please note: the 10 reports in the sub-section that were not made publicly available (i.e. unpublished) are not included in this annex

\* Main sub-themes are based on FCDO cadre names

\*\* Regional scope is based on World Bank regions with the addition of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Fragile and Conflict Affected States (FCAS) categories

Main sub- theme*	Report No.	Title	Key climate / env. topic	Request type	FCDO purpose	Regional scope**	Focus countries	Requester's cadre
	HDR242	Climate change and stability in North Africa	Climate change impacts	Analytical	Programme design	MENA	North Africa	Programme officer / manager
	HDR527	Climate change as a driver of conflict in Afghanistan and other Fragile and Conflict Affected States	Climate change impacts	Analytical	Scoping / synthesis of evidence	FCAS	Afghanistan	Policy analyst / adviser / manager
t	HDR639	Climate change, vulnerability to violent extremism and conflict in Kenya	Climate change impacts	Analytical	Programme design	Sub- Saharan Africa	Kenya	Evaluation
Conflict	HDR772	Review of horizon scanning literature on the context for humanitarian and crisis response	Climate change vulnerability	Overview of literature	Scoping / synthesis of evidence	General		Humanitarian
	HDR895	Water, climate change and conflict	Water	Analytical	Support for Learning Journey	General		Climate & Environment
	EIR42	Trends in conflict and stability in the Indo-Pacific	Climate change impacts	Analytical	Programme design	East Asia & Pacific	Bangladesh, Indonesia, India, the Philippines, Thailand	Other Government department

Main sub- theme*	Report No.	Title	Key climate / env. topic	Request type	FCDO purpose	Regional scope**	Focus countries	Requester's cadre
	HDR274	Cost-effectiveness of disaster risk reduction and adaptation to climate change	Adaptation, DRR & resilience	Analytical	Resource guide	General		Economist
	HDR305	Inclusive Green Growth in developing countries	Green growth	Overview of literature	Not stated	General		Policy analyst / adviser / manager
	HDR322	Environmental safeguards for industrial parks	Climate &/or Environmental policy	Analytical	Not stated	General		Research specialist
	HDR499	Carbon abatement potential of reforestation	Mitigation	Analytical	Programme design	General		Climate & Environment
	HDR587	International donor activity on climate change mitigation and adaptation in the G5 Sahel countries	Climate change programming	Donor practice	Inform further research	Sub- Saharan Africa	Sahel	Governance
Economics	HDR626	How losing access to concessional finance affects Small Island Developing States (SIDS)	Climate change vulnerability	Analytical	Inform policy work	SIDS		Governance
Есо	HDR727	Risk of capital flight due to a better understanding of climate change	Climate change impacts	Analytical	Scoping / synthesis of evidence	General		Climate & Environment
	HDR799	Lessons learned from carbon pricing in developing countries	Mitigation	Evaluation & Lessons learned	Inform policy work	General		Economist
	HDR800	Financing for climate adaptation – an overview of current regimes	Climate finance	Overview of literature	Inform policy work	General		Economist
	HDR813	Nature-based solutions and water security	Nature &/or natural resources management	Overview of literature	Support for Learning Journey	General		Climate & Environment
	HDR857	Water Finance and Nature-based solutions	Nature &/or natural resources management	Analytical	Support for Learning Journey	General		Climate & Environment

Main sub- theme*	Report No.	Title	Key climate / env. topic	Request type	FCDO purpose	Regional scope**	Focus countries	Requester's cadre
	HDR874	The Covid-19 pandemic and the future of Global Value Chains (GVCs)	Green growth	Analytical	Support for Learning Journey	General		Other Government department
	HDR876	The Costs of Climate Change Adaptation in Middle- income Countries	Climate finance	Analytical	Support for Learning Journey	General		Other Government department
	HDR903	Donor support for climate change initiatives in the Middle East and North Africa	Climate change programming	Mapping	Support for Learning Journey	MENA	Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the occupied OPTs, Syria, Tunisia, Yemen	Climate & Environment
	HDR976	Impacts of trade facilitation on carbon emissions	Mitigation	Analytical	Programme design	General	Brazil, India, Nigeria, the Philippines, South Africa	Economist
	HDR1006	Nature-based Solutions (NbS) – What are They and What are the Barriers and Enablers to Their Use?	Nature &/or natural resources management	Overview of literature	Support for Learning Journey	General		Climate & Environment
	EIR11	Natural resource depletion and economic growth in Uganda	Nature &/or natural resources management	Analytical	Programme design	Sub- Saharan Africa	Uganda	Climate & Environment
Educa tion	EIR29	Education, Girls' Education and Climate Change	Specific thematic guidance	Overview of literature	Support for Learning Journey	General		Education
Evalu ation	HDR644	Development, Climate and Environment: An Annotated Bibliography	Specific thematic guidance	Overview of literature	Support for Learning Journey	General		Infrastructure

Main sub- theme*	Report No.	Title	Key climate / env. topic	Request type	FCDO purpose	Regional scope**	Focus countries	Requester's cadre
	HDR998	Lessons for FCDO climate change programming in East Africa	Climate change programming	Evaluation & Lessons learned	Scoping / synthesis of evidence	Sub- Saharan Africa	East Africa	Climate & Environment
	HDR1008	Tools and methodologies for calculating greenhouse gas emissions for FCDO programme planning	Mitigation	Mapping	Resource guide	General		Climate & Environment
	HDR449	Shared climate change and natural resource management issues in East Africa	Nature &/or natural resources management	Overview of literature	Programme design	Sub- Saharan Africa	East Africa	Climate & Environment
	HDR450	Shared governance of climate change and natural resources issues in East Africa	Nature &/or natural resources management	Overview of literature	Programme design	Sub- Saharan Africa	East Africa	Climate & Environment
	HDR453	Natural resource management strategies in the Sahel	Nature &/or natural resources management	Analytical	Programme design	Sub- Saharan Africa	Sahel	Governance
Governance	HDR541	Mainstreaming climate and environmental considerations into existing development programmes	Climate &/or Environmental policy	Analytical	Programme design	General		Research specialist
Gove	HDR618	The International Community Role in the Climate and Environment Space in Jordan	Climate change programming	Donor practice	Scoping / synthesis of evidence	MENA	Jordan	Conflict
	HDR619	Jordan's environmental policies and engagement on climate change	Climate &/or Environmental policy	Analytical	Scoping / synthesis of evidence	MENA	Jordan	Conflict
	HDR660	Climate compatible development and rapid urbanisation in Rwanda	Climate &/or Environmental policy	Overview of literature	Scoping / synthesis of evidence	Sub- Saharan Africa	Rwanda	Governance
	HDR701	Political will of African governments to address climate change	Climate &/or Environmental policy	Analytical	Programme design	Sub- Saharan Africa		Climate & Environment

Main sub- theme*	Report No.	Title	Key climate / env. topic	Request type	FCDO purpose	Regional scope**	Focus countries	Requester's cadre
	HDR732	Who Drives Green Transformations in High Emitting Developing Countries?	Green growth	Analytical	Scoping / synthesis of evidence	General		Climate & Environment
	HDR832	Drivers and barriers to environmental engagement in the MENA region	Environmental engagement	Analytical	Programme design	MENA	Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the OPTs, Tunisia, Turkey	Policy analyst / adviser / manager
	HDR886	Comparing the Paris Agenda with the 2030 and Addis Ababa Action Agenda	Climate &/or Environmental policy	Analytical	Not stated	General		Economist
	HDR894	Climate change risks and opportunities in the Middle East and North Africa	Climate change impacts	Analytical	Support for Learning Journey	MENA		Climate & Environment
	HDR951	Climate and environment learning resource guide	Specific thematic guidance	Overview of literature	Resource guide	General		Climate & Environment
	HDR972	Lessons on disaster resilience programming in Pakistan	Adaptation, DRR & resilience	Evaluation & Lessons learned	Programme design	South Asia	Pakistan	Humanitarian
	HDR777	Interventions in LICs and LMICs to improve air quality and/or mitigate its impacts	Air pollution	Analytical	Scoping / synthesis of evidence	General		Health
Health	HDR803	Water security beyond Covid-19	Water	Analytical	Support for Learning Journey	General		Climate & Environment
	HDR962	Climate Change and Air Pollution	Mitigation	Analytical	Inform policy work	General		Health
Huma nitari an	HDR653	Guidance, standards and protocols in Humanitarian sector on reducing harm to the environment	Climate &/or Environmental policy	Donor practice	Programme design	General		Humanitarian

Main sub- theme*	Report No.	Title	Key climate / env. topic	Request type	FCDO purpose	Regional scope**	Focus countries	Requester's cadre
	HDR740	Mapping of climate smart programming in refugee hosting districts in Uganda	Climate change programming	Mapping	Scoping / synthesis of evidence	Sub- Saharan Africa	Uganda	Programme officer / manager
	HDR741	Mapping of climate smart programming in refugee hosting districts in Uganda	Climate change programming	Analytical	Scoping / synthesis of evidence	Sub- Saharan Africa	Uganda	Programme officer / manager
	HDR973	the areas and populations groups in Pakistan most exposed to the combined effects of climate, disaster risks and C19	Climate change vulnerability	Analytical	Programme design	South Asia	Pakistan	Humanitarian
arre	HDR786	Sectors that are challenging to decarbonise	Mitigation	Analytical	Resource guide	General		Climate & Environment
Infrastructure	HDR912	Water infrastructure in fragile- and conflict-affected states	Water	Analytical	Programme design	FCAS		Research specialist
Infra	HDR923	Urban flood risk management in Africa	Water	Analytical	Programme design	Sub- Saharan Africa		Infrastructure
	HDR675	Climate change in Nigeria: impacts and responses	Climate change impacts	Analytical	Inform policy work	Sub- Saharan Africa	Nigeria	Climate & Environment
S	HDR764	the projected impacts of climate change on food security in the Middle East and North Africa	Climate change impacts	Analytical	Inform policy work	MENA		Research specialist
Livelihoods	HDR843	Marine biodiversity and poverty alleviation	Nature &/or natural resources management	Analytical	Programme design	General		Climate & Environment
	HDR872	National and local factors in just transitions for low- and middle-income countries	Green growth	Analytical	Inform policy work	General		Climate & Environment
	HDR928	Income-generating activities (IGAs) and climate change vulnerabilities	Climate change responses	Analytical	Programme design	FCAS		Research Specialist

Main sub- theme*	Report No.	Title	Key climate / env. topic	Request type	FCDO purpose	Regional scope**	Focus countries	Requester's cadre
	HDR987	Creating Green Jobs in Developing Countries	Green growth	Evaluation & Lessons learned	Scoping / synthesis of evidence	General		Livelihoods
Private sector dev.t	HDR927	Private Sector markets for climate adaptation and resilience products and services	Adaptation, DRR & resilience	Analytical	Programme design	Sub- Saharan Africa, South Asia		Economist
Social development	HDR295	Women-Initiated Measures to Cope with Environmental Stresses and Climate Change in South Asia	Adaptation, DRR & resilience	Overview of literature	Inform further research	South Asia	Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan	Climate & Environment
	HDR354	Environmental risks in Irag	Climate change impacts	Analytical	Programme design	MENA	Iraq	Economist
	HDR900	The linkages between population change and climate change in Africa	Climate change responses	Analytical	Inform policy work	Sub- Saharan Africa		Health
	HDR922	The bottom billion in Africa: poverty trends and forecasts	Climate change vulnerability	Analytical	Scoping / synthesis of evidence	Sub- Saharan Africa		Social Development
	HDR1004	Access to climate finance by women and marginalised groups in the Global South	Climate finance	Evaluation & Lessons learned	Scoping / synthesis of evidence	General		Climate & Environment
	HDR1005	Role of faith and belief in environmental engagement and action in MENA region	Environmental engagement	Analytical	Programme design	MENA		Climate & Environment
	EIR27	Unmet Needs and Opportunities for Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation in the G5 Sahel Region	Climate change responses	Analytical	Inform further research	Sub- Saharan Africa	Sahel	Governance

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#### About this report

This report is based on twelve days of desk-based research. The K4D research helpdesk provides rapid syntheses of a selection of recent relevant literature and international expert thinking in response to specific questions relating to international development. For any enquiries, contact helpdesk@k4d.info.

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