

# ZAFAR IMRAN, Ph.D.

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## AFFILIATION

*Center for International and Security Studies at Maryland (CISSM)*  
*University of Maryland College Park*

Non-resident Research Scholar (March 2021 – to-date)

Research Associate (Feb. 2020 – Feb. 2021)

## EDUCATION

*University of Maryland College Park, School of Public Policy*  
Doctor of Philosophy in Public Policy (May 2020)

*Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh PA*  
Master of Science in Public Policy and Management (May 2009)

*Sir Syed University of Engineering and Technology, Karachi, Pakistan*  
Master of Science in Software Engineering (Dec. 2002)

*University of Engineering and Technology, Lahore, Pakistan*  
Bachelor of Engineering in Civil Engineering (May 2000)

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

My research interest lies in identifying generalizable social mechanisms triggered as a result of vulnerable populations responding to changes in their respective climate systems. I argue that, given the complexity and emergence involved with the processes of climate change and climate-society interaction, macro-level accounts to explain climate-induced unrest and violence are bound to be incomplete, or worse, misleading.

Using a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches, as well as employing interdisciplinary frameworks of social-ecological systems, decision-making under uncertainty, and contentious politics, currently I am involved with designing an extensive research exercise that may trace robust social mechanisms to explain climate-society interactions, as well as social and political unrest and contention in societies experiencing climate change.

## DOCTORAL RESEARCH

- Thesis Title: '*Climate change and political contention – A mechanism based framework*'.

The dissertation proposes a mechanism-based framework to trace climate-society interactions by identifying generalizable mechanisms surrounding farmers' coping responses as well as political contention that may ensue. Employing process tracing, this case study studies the phenomenon as it unfolds in Pakistan, and is generating sustained unrest among vulnerable farmers, and triggering political contention.

- Wrote the case study on the climate-induced social stresses in Pakistan for the National Academies of Sciences report entitled *Climate and social stress: Implications for security analysis*, National Research Council, 2013

## **POLICY BRIEFS / WORKING PAPERS**

- Imran, Zafar, “Understanding climate-security risks – A mechanism-based framework” CISSM Policy Brief, (May 2020).
- Imran, Zafar, “Climate change and its impact on the political dynamics of Pakistan” CISSM Working Paper, (July 2013).

## **OPINION PIECES / BLOGS**

- Imran, Zafar, “[The ‘press and pulse’ of climate change strains farmers in Pakistan,](#)” *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, (Feb. 13, 2023).
- Imran, Zafar, “[Climate change in the Indian farmers’ protest,](#)” *Le Monde diplomatique*, (Feb. 1, 2021).

## **INVITED TALKS**

- Forman Christian College, Lahore, Pakistan (May 2021)
- Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Woods Hole, MA (June 2020)

## **HONORS AND AWARDS**

- CGS/ProQuest Distinguished Dissertation Award (Top 5 in the Social Sciences Category) (2020)
- University of Maryland, Charles A. Caramello Distinguished Dissertation Award (Social Sciences Category) (2020)
- Yamamoto-Scheffelin Endowment for Dissertation Research Prize (2020)
- Joseph W. Rogers Fellowship (2019)
- Graduate School All S.T.A.R. Fellowship, University of Maryland (2015 – 2016)
- Dean’s Fellowship, School of Public Policy, University of Maryland (2011 – 2013)

## **SKILLS**

Proficient in NetLogo, R, Java, C++, SQL, Object-Oriented Analysis and Design, UML Modeling, PC-ACE (Text analysis), NVivo  
Urdu, Punjabi – native languages; Fluent in English

## **REFERENCES:**

Nancy W. Gallagher, Ph.D.  
Professor and Director Center for International and Security Studies at Maryland (CISSM),  
University of Maryland, College Park  
(301) 405-7610, [ngallag@umd.edu](mailto:ngallag@umd.edu)

Robert H. Sprinkle, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor,  
Senior Fellow, CISSM; Senior Fellow, Center for Global Sustainability (CGS),  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eOdmBITAm8c>  
Head, Health Policy Specialization  
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