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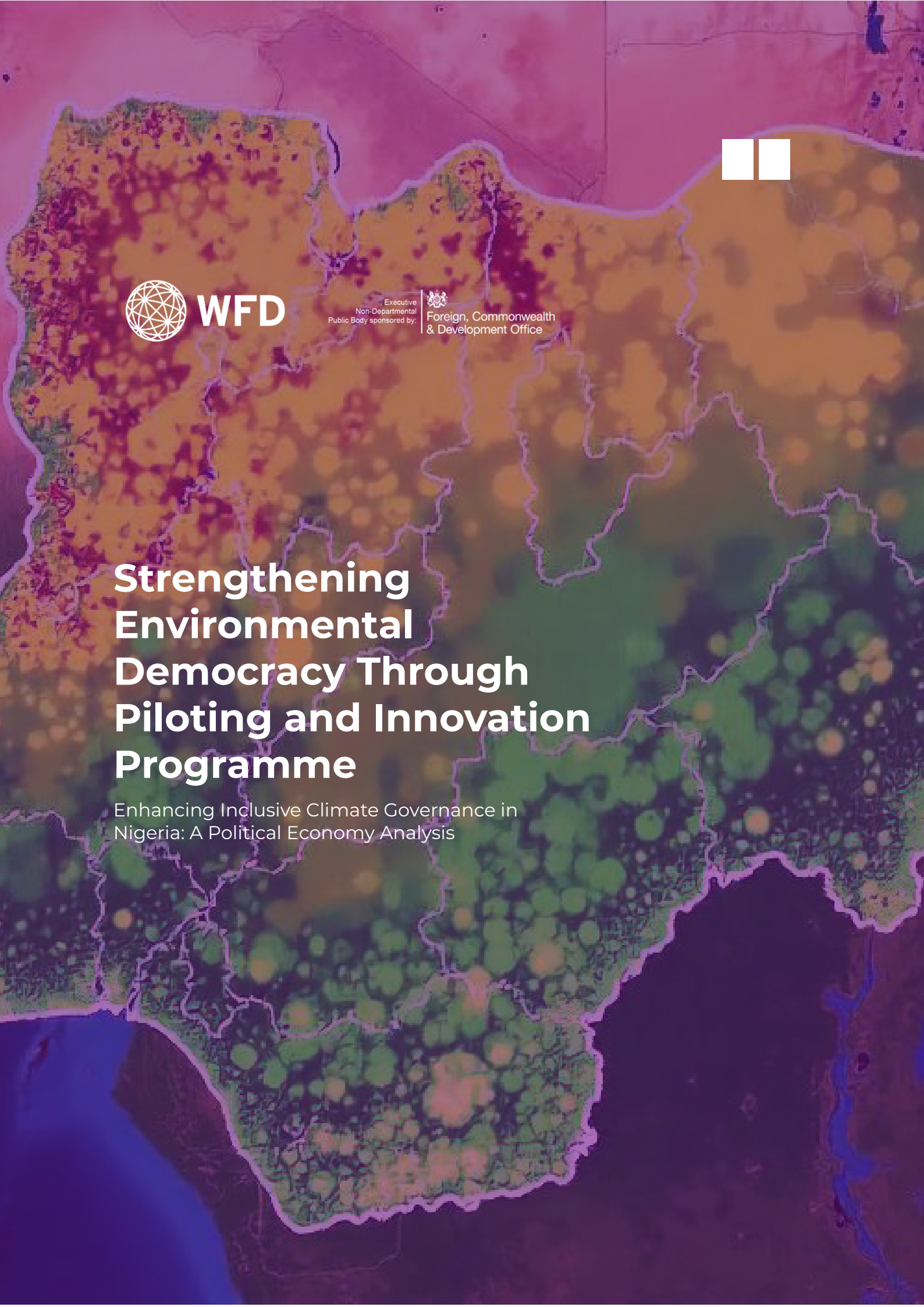
Enhancing Inclusive Climate Governance in Nigeria: A Political Economy Analysis



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Enhancing Inclusive Climate Governance in Nigeria: A Political Economy Analysis

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© 2025 Disclaimer. This publication, *Inclusivity and Climate Governance in Nigeria: A Political Economy Analysis,* presents a detailed assessment of how inclusive Nigeria's climate governance structures and processes are, particularly for women, youth, and persons with disabilities. The study employs both qualitative and quantitative methods across Nigeria's six geopolitical zones, guided by WFD's Environmental Democracy Political Economy Analysis (PEA) tool. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the information presented, the findings, analyses, and conclusions are intended for informational, advocacy and research purposes only and should not be construed as endorsement or critique. The Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) bear no responsibility for any direct or indirect errors, omissions, or consequences resulting from the use of the information provided. This publication is intended for informational purposes only. WFD disclaim liability for any loss or damage arising from the use of this report or its contents.

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Acknowledgment

This report was prepared as part of the “Strengthening Environmental Democracy Through Piloting and Innovation Programme,” commissioned by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD). The study was undertaken to provide a comprehensive Political Economy Analysis (PEA) of climate governance and inclusivity in Nigeria, with a particular focus on structurally disadvantaged groups.

We express our deep appreciation to the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) for their strategic guidance and unwavering support throughout the development of this study. Special thanks goes to Adebowale Olorunmola, Olusola Folayan, Duncan Wall, Rafael Jimenez Aybar and Michael Nevin whose inputs and oversight were instrumental in shaping the analysis’s scope, methodology, and focus.

We sincerely thank the Senate Committee on Environment for its support and continued commitment to promoting responsive and inclusive environmental legislation. Their engagement provided critical policy perspectives that informed the framing of this analysis and its alignment with ongoing national climate governance efforts.

We acknowledge the valuable contributions of government officials, civil society organisations, community-based groups, and representatives of marginalised populations, women, youth, persons with disabilities, and smallholder farmers who participated in focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and the national validation workshop. Their perspectives and experiences enriched the findings and ensured the recommendations reflect Nigeria’s diverse realities.

We also thank the research and facilitation team for their dedication to rigorous data collection and analysis, and for ensuring that voices often left out of climate governance processes were heard and amplified in this report.

Lastly, we appreciate the stakeholders across Nigeria’s six geopolitical and ecological zones, whose engagement and feedback were critical in shaping actionable and context-specific recommendations. We hope that this report contributes meaningfully to advancing inclusive, transparent, and accountable climate governance in Nigeria.

Ishaku Huzi

Preface

This report, *Enhancing Inclusive Climate Governance in Nigeria: A Political Economy Analysis,* was commissioned by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) in Nigeria as part of its regional programme titled *Strengthening Environmental Democracy Through Piloting and Innovation*. It reflects WFD's enduring commitment to promoting democratic governance that is responsive, inclusive, and sustainable in the face of pressing climate challenges.

Nigeria's vulnerability to climate change is starkly evident across its six diverse ecological zones—from the arid Sahelian north to the coastal lowlands of the south. These zones experience varying environmental pressures, development challenges, and political realities. Addressing climate change within this complex landscape requires governance systems that are both context-sensitive and inclusive of the multiple voices that shape Nigeria's environmental future.

To this end, this political economy analysis was undertaken to deepen understanding of the underlying power dynamics, institutional arrangements, and stakeholder interests that influence climate governance in Nigeria. Deliberate effort was made to ensure that stakeholder's consultation was inclusive of women, young persons and people with disabilities. Through extensive engagement with a broad spectrum of stakeholders—including government actors, civil society organisations, traditional institutions, private sector representatives, and community voices—this report identifies critical barriers and opportunities for fostering inclusive and accountable climate governance.

The findings and recommendations contained herein are intended to inform and guide policymakers, development partners, and civic actors in their efforts to build a more participatory, equitable, and effective climate governance framework. By focusing on the political economy dimensions of climate action, the report highlights the importance of aligning incentives, strengthening institutions, and enhancing the capacity of underrepresented groups to engage in decision-making processes.

We extend our sincere appreciation to all those who contributed their insights, experiences, and expertise during the course of this research. Their participation has been invaluable in shaping a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play and in charting a path forward for more inclusive environmental democracy in Nigeria.

It is our hope that this report will serve as both a resource and a call to action for all stakeholders committed to advancing climate resilience and democratic governance in Nigeria and beyond.

Adebowale Olorunmola
Country Director, Nigeria
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Executive Summary

The Political Economy Analysis (PEA) on Climate Governance and Inclusion in Nigeria, commissioned by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD), provides a comprehensive assessment of the inclusivity of Nigeria's climate governance structures and processes. This report evaluates the extent to which structurally disadvantaged groups, including women, youth, and persons with disabilities, participate in climate-related decision-making. The study focuses on Nigeria's varied ecological and geopolitical zones, offering region-specific insights to foster environmental democracy, enhance social inclusion, and improve nationwide policy implementation1. Nigeria faces significant climate vulnerabilities, including severe flooding, rapid desertification, and widespread soil erosion, which threaten its socio-economic stability and the livelihoods of millions. Despite adopting frameworks like the National Climate Change Policy, the National Adaptation Plan, and the Climate Change Act, the benefits of these policies have not been equitably distributed. Weak governance structures, lack of access to justice, and the exclusion of marginalised groups have hindered the effectiveness of these initiatives.

The primary objective of this study is to enhance the inclusivity, transparency, and accountability of Nigeria's climate governance arrangements and processes. By focusing on structurally disadvantaged groups, the study seeks to improve their representation and active participation in shaping climate-related policies and programs. The study encompasses Nigeria's six geopolitical and ecological zones, reflecting the country's diverse socio-political and environmental realities.

The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. This includes an extensive desktop review of existing policies, laws, and frameworks, stakeholder engagement through virtual meetings, focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and a national-level validation meeting. The analysis is guided by the WFD's bespoke Environmental Democracy Political Economy Analysis (PEA) tool, which examines power dynamics, inclusivity, policy effectiveness, and barriers and opportunities for reforms.

Nigeria is acutely vulnerable to climate change, with significant impacts on agriculture, health, and water resources. Erratic rainfall patterns, rising sea levels, and more intense rainfall have caused extended dry spells, frequent flooding, and displacement. The economic instability, marked by significant inflation and a cost-of-living surge, further compounds

these challenges.

The study identifies several systemic, structural, and operational challenges affecting climate governance in Nigeria. These include limited access to information, participation, justice, mitigation and adaptation efforts, equity considerations, accountability, and institutional coordination. Marginalised groups often lack access to resources and platforms for participation, exacerbating their exposure to climate risks.

Institutional weaknesses, socio-cultural and gender barriers, economic constraints, and information and awareness barriers hinder effective participation in climate governance. The regulatory framework for participation is primarily anchored in the Climate Change Act (2021), the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Act (1992), and the Land Use Act (1978), but enforcement is weak, and consultations are often tokenistic.

To address the challenges identified in the report, several key recommendations have been proposed. Firstly, it is essential to enhance inclusivity and representation by actively including marginalised groups in climate governance structures. This involves ensuring that policies are gender-responsive and disability-inclusive, thereby promoting a more equitable approach to climate governance. Additionally, improving resource distribution is crucial. Climate funds and resources should be allocated equitably across all regions, with mechanisms in place to track the impact on marginalised communities. This will ensure that the benefits of climate initiatives are felt by those who need them most.

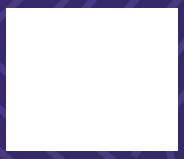
Strengthening institutional capacity is another vital recommendation. Local government bodies must be equipped with the technical expertise and resources necessary to design and implement effective climate adaptation measures. This will enhance their ability to respond to climate challenges and support community resilience. Furthermore, increasing transparency and accountability is imperative. Robust mechanisms should be established to monitor and assess the impacts of climate interventions, ensuring transparency in project implementation and fostering public trust.

Lastly, fostering behavioral and ideological change is essential for long-term success. Public perception must shift to view climate change as an urgent, collective challenge that requires broad societal action. This can be achieved through increased media coverage and advocacy from traditional and religious leaders, who can play a pivotal role in promoting sustainable practices and encouraging community engagement.

The analysis revealed profound systemic gaps that undermine Nigeria's capacity to mitigate and adapt to escalating climate risks. However, significant opportunities exist to improve climate governance through increased advocacy for inclusivity, building institutional capacity, and leveraging local and international partnerships. Strengthening mechanisms for transparency, accountability, and the integration of grassroots perspectives is crucial to addressing systemic vulnerabilities and fostering a more inclusive and effective climate governance framework.

Chapter 1

Introduction



The Final Report for the Political Economy Analysis (PEA) on Climate Governance and Inclusion in Nigeria presents a comprehensive assessment of the inclusivity of Nigeria's climate governance structures and processes. This analysis, commissioned by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD), evaluates the extent to which structurally disadvantaged groups, women, youth, and persons with disabilities participate in climate-related decision-making. The study focuses on Nigeria's varied ecological and geopolitical zones, providing region-specific insights to foster environmental democracy, enhance social inclusion, and improve nationwide policy implementation.

This report summarises findings from extensive stakeholder engagement, analysis specific to ecological zones, and thorough data collection efforts. It examines the historical and current barriers and opportunities for fostering inclusivity in climate governance, providing actionable recommendations to address the governance gaps that hinder equitable participation in climate action. It underscores the critical need for inclusive frameworks that empower all citizens, particularly the most vulnerable, to shape climate policies and programs that directly impact their lives.

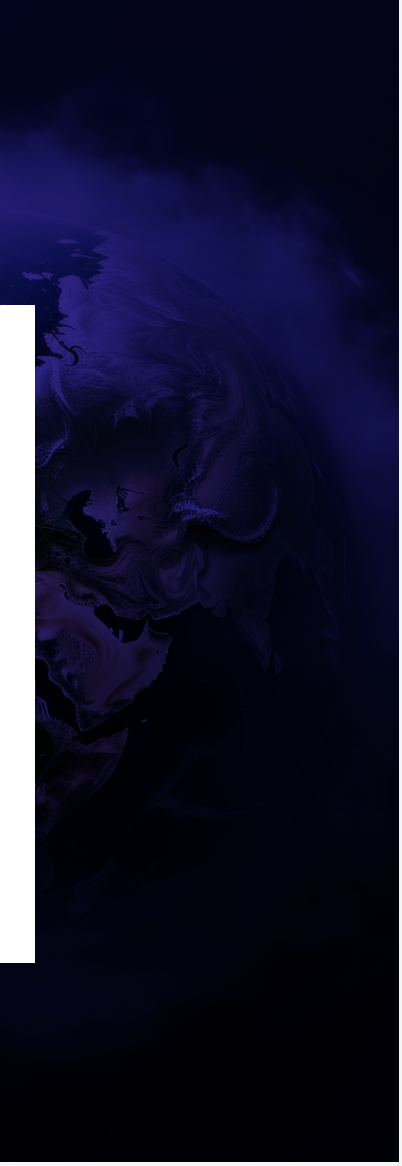
This section outlines the final report's purpose, summarising the rationale, objectives, methodology, and analytical framework underpinning the study.

1.1 Background and Rationale for the Report

Nigeria is at the forefront of climate vulnerability in Africa, grappling with various environmental challenges that threaten its socio-economic stability and the livelihoods of millions. These challenges, including severe flooding, rapid desertification, and widespread soil erosion, are intensifying due to climate change and poor governance. While Nigeria has made strides in adopting frameworks like the National Climate Change Policy, the National Adaptation Plan and the Climate Change Act, the direct impacts and benefits of these policies have yet to be equitably distributed. Weak governance structures, lack of access to justice and legal redress, coupled with the exclusion of marginalised groups such as women, youth, and persons with disabilities, have significantly hindered the effectiveness of these initiatives.

The country's geopolitical and ecological diversity complicates its climate governance landscape.Regions like the Sahel grapple with desertification, while mangrove forests in the Niger Delta are battling rising sea levels and pollution. Despite the disproportionate burden borne by vulnerable communities in these areas, their voices remain largely absent from decision-making processes.

Stakeholder engagement at the local level is minimal and ineffective, excluding those most affected by climate change from shaping policies that directly impact their lives. The exclusion undermines environmental democracy, leading to uniform solutions that fail to address Nigeria's diverse ecological zones unique needs and the specific vulnerabilities of affected individuals.



Nigeria's international commitments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) emphasise the importance of public participation, inclusivity and equity in climate action. However, the inadequate implementation of these commitments reveals a persistent governance gap. Structural barriers, including limited human and institutional capacity, insufficient resources, low political will and resistance, and vested interest, continue to obstruct the inclusion of underrepresented groups in climate governance. Nigeria's policies may continue to encourage inequality and inefficiency without their involvement, failing to build the resilience necessary to address climate impacts.

The rationale for this study is rooted in the urgent need to address these gaps and foster a governance system that prioritises inclusivity, equity, and justice. Inclusive governance ensures vulnerable groups have a voice in shaping climate policies and programs that directly affect their livelihoods—tailoring climate actions to the specific needs of Nigeria's ecological zones to enhance policy effectiveness and equitable access to resources and adaptation measures.

1.2 Objectives and Scope

The primary objective of this study is to enhance the inclusivity, transparency, and accountability of Nigeria's climate governance arrangements and processes. By focusing on structurally disadvantaged groups such as women, youth, smallholder farmers and persons with disabilities, the study seeks to improve their representation and active participation in shaping climate-related policies and programs. This approach aligns with the broader goal of fostering environmental democracy, ensuring that the communities most affected by climate change are empowered to contribute to decision-making processes and benefit equitably from climate action.

Specifically, the study aims to assess Nigeria's current state of climate governance, examining how inclusivity is integrated into decision-making frameworks. It evaluates the effectiveness of existing policies, particularly in addressing the unique challenges faced by different ecological zones, and identifies opportunities to enhance citizen participation. The study also investigates the roles and influence of political actors and structurally disadvantaged groups in climate governance, exploring the barriers that prevent their full engagement and the potential strategies to overcome these challenges through the intervention of WFD.

To ensure a comprehensive analysis, the study encompasses Nigeria's six geopolitical and ecological zones, reflecting the country's diverse socio-political and environmental realities. It examines region-specific climate challenges, such as desertification in the Sahel and flooding in coastal areas. It provides a nuanced understanding of the localised impacts of climate change, who are the most impacted, and governance gaps. Including diverse ecological contexts enables the study to offer tailored recommendations that address each zone's specific needs and priorities.

01

Assessing the effectiveness of policies in addressing the needs of Nigeria's diverse ecological zones and vulnerable populations rather than a general assessment of effectiveness

02

identifying gaps and opportunities for enhancing inclusion within existing climate governance policies and initiatives

03

Examining the institutional and systemic barriers that limit the participation of marginalised groups in climate decision-making processes.

04

Exploring strategies to strengthen representation and equity in climate governance frameworks at national and subnational levels.

The scope of the study also involves robust engagement with stakeholders from the government, civil society, non-governmental organisations, interest groups, and local communities to ensure that findings are grounded in diverse perspectives.

1.3 Methodology and Analytical Framework

The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques to provide a nuanced and comprehensive analysis of climate governance in Nigeria. This approach ensures that diverse perspectives are captured, particularly those of marginalised groups often excluded from climate decision-making processes.

- **Desktop Review**
- **Stakeholders Engagement**
- **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)**
- **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)**
- **Validation Meeting**

Desktop Review

The foundational phase of the study involved an extensive review of existing policies, laws, and frameworks, including **the National Climate Change Policy, Climate Change Act, National Adaptation Plan Framework and Nigeria's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)**. This review offers a comprehensive understanding of Nigeria's policies governing climate action. Additionally, relevant reports, academic literature, and international best practices on inclusive climate governance were analysed to place Nigeria's efforts within the context of global trends and standards

Stakeholder Engagement

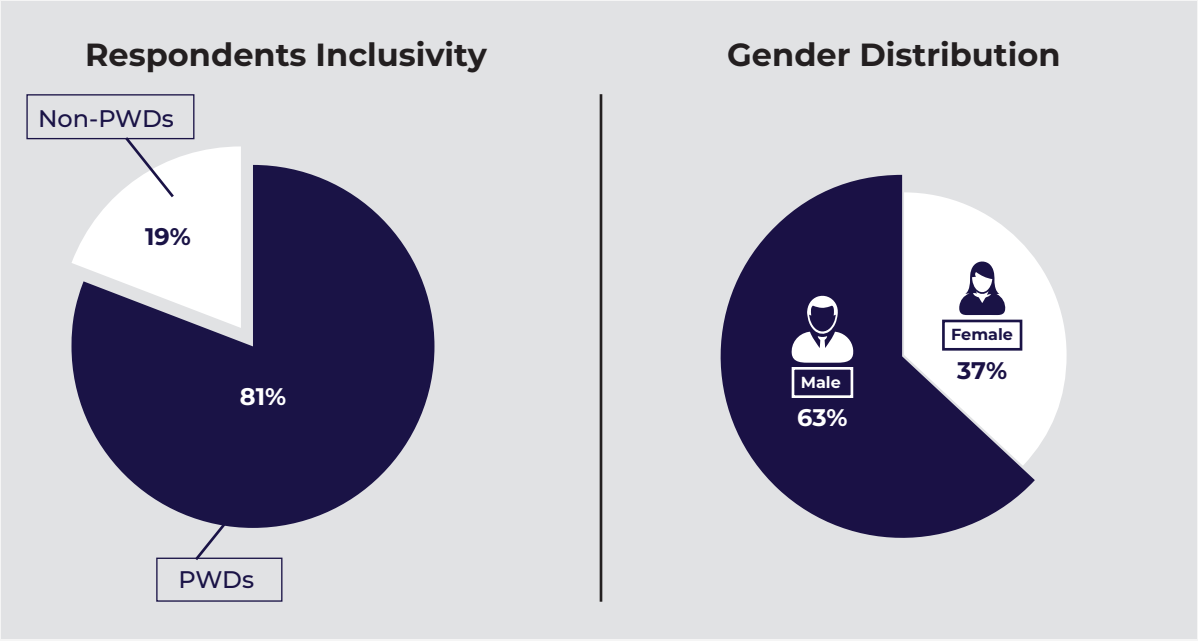
Stakeholder identification and mapping was a critical component of the methodology, identifying key actors such as government agencies, civil society organisations, community groups, and representatives of marginalised populations. To ensure broad participation, virtual meetings were conducted at the inception phase to introduce the study's objectives, establish expectations, and solicit initial stakeholder insights. This engagement ensured that the perspectives and experiences of diverse actors were integrated into the study from the outset.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

A two-day Focus Group Discussion was conducted with sector experts from Nigeria's six ecological zones, capturing communities' unique climate-related challenges and opportunities in these diverse regions. The FGDs provided a platform for open dialogue with representatives from vulnerable groups, civil society organisations, and federal and sub-national government officials. These discussions were instrumental in understanding localised governance barriers and the political and socio-environmental dynamics influencing climate actions at the community level.

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

To complement the FGDs, in-depth interviews were held with policymakers, climate experts, and community leaders. These Key Informant Interviews offered more profound insights into systemic governance issues, policy implementation gaps, and the potential for reforms to enhance inclusivity in climate governance. By focusing on stakeholders with direct influence over or experience with climate policies, these interviews provided a critical perspective on Nigeria's operational realities of climate governance.



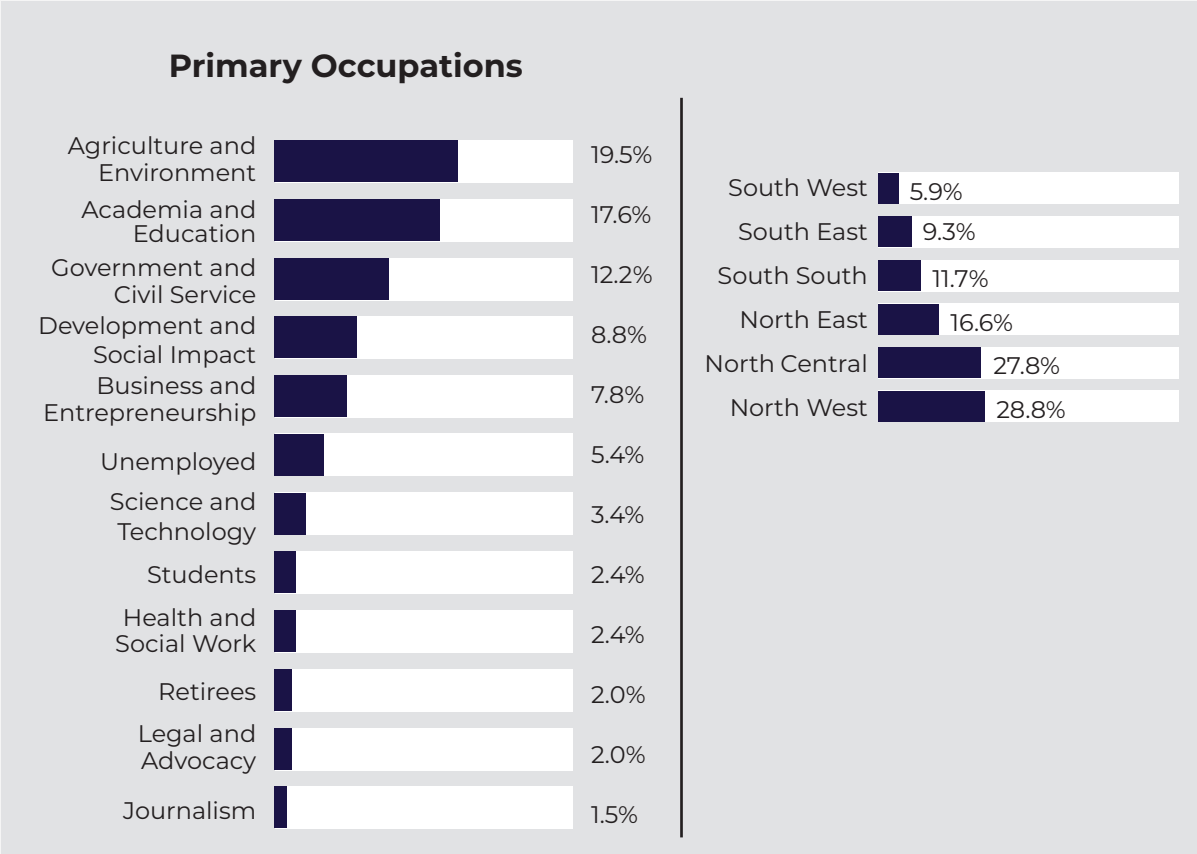


Figure 1: Demographic Description of Respondents

Validation Meeting

A national-level validation meeting was convened to present and refine preliminary findings. This forum allowed stakeholders to critique the study's outputs, ensuring that the recommendations were actionable, context-specific, and aligned with the needs and priorities of various actors. The feedback from this meeting played a vital role in finalising the analysis and recommendations.

Analytical Framework

The study is guided by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy's (WFD) bespoke Environmental Democracy Political Economy Analysis (PEA) tool. This framework provides a structured lens for examining the complex interplay of governance, equity, and climate action. The analysis emphasises several key dimensions:

- **Power Dynamics:** The framework explores how power relations influence decision-making in climate governance, identifying the actors who hold authority and those excluded from critical processes.

- **Inclusivity:** The analysis assesses how marginalised groups, such as women, youth, and persons with disabilities, are represented and can participate meaningfully in policy formulation and implementation.

- **Policy Effectiveness:** Climate policies are evaluated to determine whether they adequately address the needs of Nigeria's diverse ecological zones and vulnerable populations.

- **Barriers and Opportunities:** The study identifies systemic governance gaps and highlights opportunities for reforms to create a more inclusive and effective climate governance structure.

1.4 Limitations of the Study

This study encountered several constraints that may influence the scope and depth of its findings. Challenges in accessing recent, disaggregated, and region-specific data limited the precision of specific analyses. While efforts were made to engage diverse stakeholders, logistical and resource constraints affected the extent of participation, especially from marginalised groups such as women, youth, smallholder farmers, and persons with disabilities in remote ecological zones. Security challenges in conflict-affected areas also restricted on-the-ground data collection, potentially underrepresenting localised climate impacts and governance challenges in those regions. Although there are limitations to the study, it offers a valuable foundation for understanding climate governance in Nigeria. It also provides actionable recommendations to improve inclusivity and effectiveness. Future research could overcome these limitations by extending timelines, expanding stakeholder engagement, and improving access to comprehensive data.

Chapter 2

Global Climate Change Context and Overview

Climate change is one of the most urgent challenges of the 21st century, with significant impacts on ecosystems, economies, and societies worldwide. Human activities, mainly burning fossil fuels, industrial operations, deforestation, and agricultural practices, are the main contributors to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. These emissions are causing unprecedented changes in the Earth's climate system. The global average temperature has risen by approximately 1.1°C above pre-industrial levels. Without significant mitigation, it is projected to exceed 2°C within this century, with cascading impacts on natural and human systems. Expected global climate changes include rising sea levels, a higher frequency and intensity of extreme weather events such as heatwaves, storms, and floods, and disruptions to hydrological cycles. These changes threaten biodiversity, food and water security, and human health, with disproportionate impacts on structurally disadvantaged populations that are disproportionately affected, particularly in developing regions.

To address these challenges, international frameworks such as the **Paris Agreement** aim to limit global temperature rise to below 2°C while pursuing aggressive adaptation and resiliency-building efforts. This necessitates transformative actions across various sectors to achieve net-zero emissions by the middle of the century, the" beginning of the end"1 of the fossil fuel era. This decision lays the groundwork for a swift, just, and equitable transition, which is supported by significant emissions reductions and increased financial support. Additionally, the Conference of Parties at Sharm El-Sheik (COP27) operationalised the Loss and Damage Fund, securing over $726 million to assist countries that are most severely affected by climate change. Furthermore, 130 countries committed to doubling the rate of energy efficiency improvements and tripling renewable energy capacity by 2030, reinforcing the global shift toward sustainable energy sources as an essential part of climate mitigation strategies.

2.1 National climate change vulnerability and impact

Nigeria is a lower middle-income country with the largest economy in Africa since 2012[1], but it dropped to the 4 th position following a series of macroeconomic decisions, including policy changes and currency devaluation.[2] Nigeria has an estimated population of 229.15 million people (2024)[3] with an annual population growth rate of 2.4%[4] and a GDP of 362bn[5] in 2023. Nigeria's population will reach 262.9 and 401.3 million in 2030 and 2050, respectively.[6]

1 Nigeria (2018). First Biennial Update Report of the Federal Republic of Nigeria under the UNFCCC. URL: https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/SubmissionsStaging/NationalReports/Documents/218354_Nigeria-BUR1-1-Nigeria%20BUR1_Final%20(2).pdf

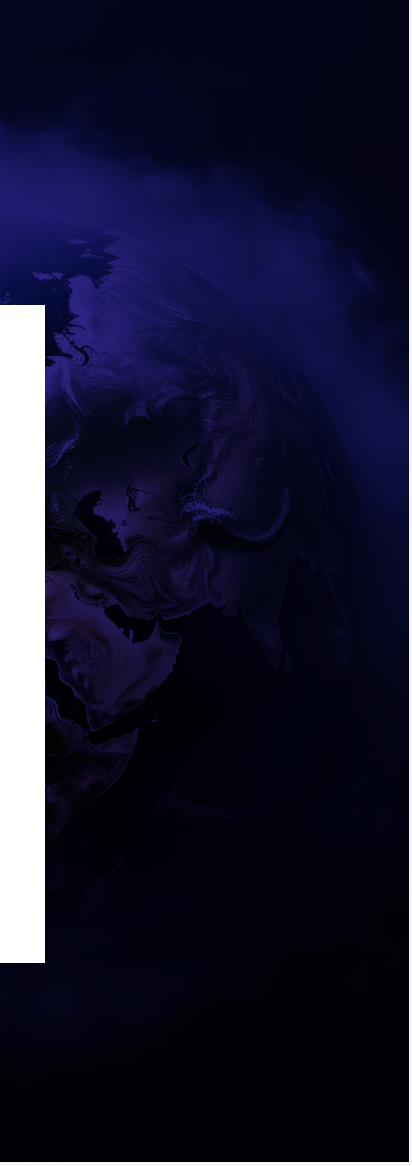
2 African countries with the highest Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2024 https://www.statista.com/statistics/1120999/gdp-of-african-countries-by-country

3 Nigeria Population 1950-2024. https://www.macrotrends.net/global-metrics/countries/nga/nigeria/population

4 Nigeria country profile https://datacommons.org/place/country/NGA

5 https://datatopics.worldbank.org/world-development-indicators/

6 World Bank: Nigeria country profile https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/nigeria



Approximately 54% of the population currently lives in urban areas, and this is projected to increase to 60% and 70% of the population by 2030 and 2050, respectively. [7]

Table 1: Data Snapshots: Key Development Indicators

Indicator	Projection
Population density (people per sq. km of land area) (2020)	229
Life expectancy at birth, total (years) (2021)	53
GDP per capita (current US$) (2022)	2184
Access to electricity (% of population) (2021)	59.5
Agricultural land (% of land area) (2020)	76
CO^2 emissions (kg per 2015 US$ of GDP) (2020)	0.223
CO^2 emissions (metric tons per capita) (2020)	0.538
CO^2 emissions (metric tons per capita) (2021)[9]	0.6

The agricultural sector is critical to Nigeria's economy and overall food security, contributing 24.4% to the country's GDP[10]. According to the World Bank (2021), nearly 78% of the total land mass of Nigeria, representing 708,000 km^2, is under agricultural cultivation and dominated mainly by smallholder farmers. The sector employs two-thirds of the country's population and is particularly important in the north, where it is the major contributor to the region's GDP.

In 2022, Nigeria ranked 152th out of 185 countries on the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative ND-GAIN Index[11] . Nigeria is considered highly vulnerable to climate change impacts, with a score of 39.4 and a low readiness score of 0.25. Key vulnerabilities showed worst scores for projected change in cereal yields (0.97) and agriculture capacity (0.97) [12]

Historical climate trends include an increase in temperatures of an average of 0.8°C between 1960–2006, with a steep increase since 1980, and larger increases in the northern

7 Worldometer Nigeria Population 2024. https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/nigeria-population/?ref=exo-insight.ghost.io
8 World Bank (2021). DataBank – World Development Indicators. URL: https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-developmentindicators
9 Our World in Data URL: https://ourworldindata.org/co2/country/nigeria
10 Department of Climate Change, Federal Ministry of Environment, 2021
11 University of Notre Dame (2023). Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative. URL: https://gain.nd.edu/our-work/country-index/
12 https://gain-new.crc.nd.edu/country/nigeria

region. Significant variability of precipitation between years and climate zones; a decrease in predictability for seasonal rains. Conflicting information exists on annual precipitation across the country, but some analyses show a decrease of 3.5mm per month per decade between 1960–2006. Historical sea level rise cannot be confirmed in Nigeria, but significant inundation of coastal towns has already occurred. Projections indicate a rise in temperatures of 1.1–2.5°C by 2060; a more extreme increase is expected in the north. Increase in the number of extreme heat days to 260 days by 2100 (versus only 10 days in 1990). There is a substantial decrease in cold nights, projected to be near zero by 2090. High uncertainty around future rainfall amount and frequency; variability likely to increase. Increased variability in rainfall and extreme rainfall events across most of the country. Rise in sea levels of 0.4–1.0 m by 2100.[13]

Nigeria is acutely vulnerable to the increasing impacts of climate change, which manifest across its diverse ecological zones and socio-economic sectors. The nation has seen a significant increase in average temperatures over the past few decades, and projections suggest that further warming could negatively impact agriculture, health, and water resources. Erratic rainfall patterns have caused extended dry spells in northern regions, while southern and central areas have experienced more frequent flooding.

These fluctuations disrupt agricultural cycles, reduce crop yields, and threaten food security. Coastal and riverine flooding, exacerbated by rising sea levels and more intense rainfall, has particularly impacted states such as Bayelsa, Kogi and Lagos, resulting in displacement, loss of livelihoods, and damage to critical infrastructure. In the northern states, all the "frontline states" within the Great Green Wall zone face accelerated desertification and land degradation has been observed, driven by diminished vegetation cover and unsustainable land-use practices.

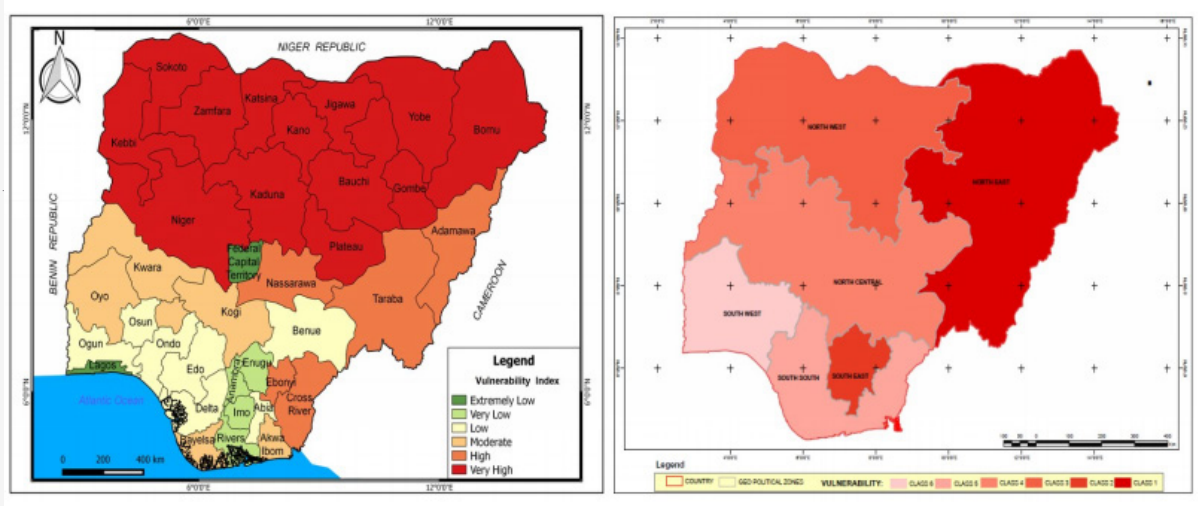


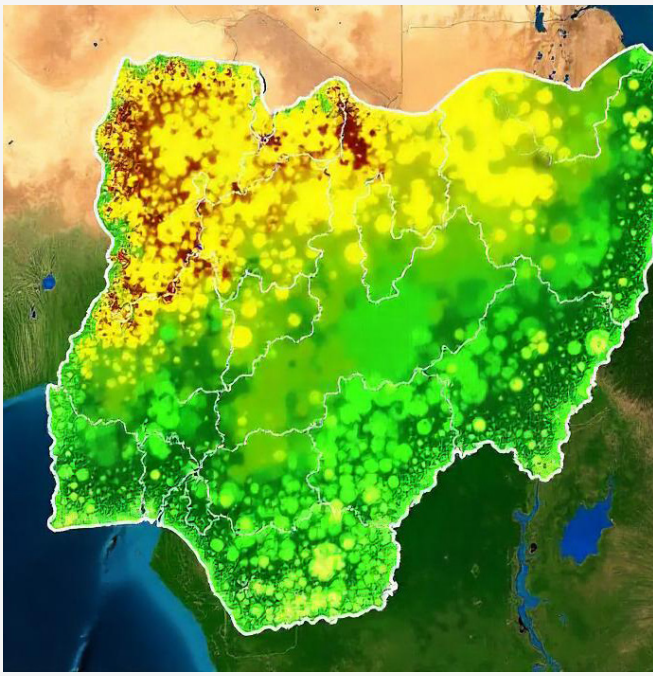
Figure 2: Patterns of climate change vulnerability and Spatial variations across regions and states [14]

13 Climate Risk Profile Nigeria. https://www.climatelinks.org/sites/default/files/asset/document/2019_USAID-ATLAS-Nigeria-Climate-Risk-Profile.pdf

14 Federal Ministry of Environment (2014). United Nations Climate Change Nigeria. National Communication (NC). NC 2. 2014. https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/nganc2.pdf

Public health challenges have worsened, with rising cases of heat-related illnesses, vector-borne diseases such as malaria, and waterborne diseases resulting from contaminated floodwaters. Nigeria's vulnerability to climate change is compounded by its economic dependency on climate-sensitive sectors, particularly agriculture, which employs over 70% of the population and is predominantly rainfed. Rapid urbanisation and high population growth increase the strain on natural resources, increasing susceptibility to water scarcity and food insecurity. Weak infrastructure and institutional capacity impede effective responses to climate risks. At the same time, social inequalities create significant challenges for structurally disadvantaged and marginalised groups, including women, youth, smallholder farmers, people with disabilities, and low-income households. These groups often need more access to resources and need help adapting. Competition for diminishing resources, such as arable land and water, has exacerbated conflicts, especially in the country's northern region.

Nigeria's current economic crisis, marked by significant inflationary pressures and a cost-of-living surge, underscores the complex interplay between macroeconomic shifts, fiscal reforms, and climate vulnerability. Liberalizing the foreign exchange market and removing energy subsidies have intensified inflation, with rates reaching 33.88% in October 2024 and food inflation surging to 39.16%. Additionally, climate-related shocks, such as flooding and erratic rainfall, have exacerbated agricultural disruptions, further contributing to rising food prices. These developments have worsened household financial stress, with over 33 million Nigerians projected to experience acute food insecurity due to soaring costs and declining purchasing power. The economic instability has direct and compounding effects on climate adaptation capacity, limiting access to essential agricultural inputs like fertilizers and climate-smart technologies, while also stalling critical investments in urban flood mitigation infrastructure. The erosion of fiscal space at both federal and state levels weakens the response capacity to these intertwined economic and environmental challenges, diluting funding for climate programs and widening institutional inefficiencies in resource allocation.[15]



These developments have exacerbated household financial stress, with over 33 million Nigerians projected to experience acute food insecurity by next year due to soaring costs and declining purchasing power.[16] This economic instability has direct and compounding effects on climate adaptation capacity. In agriculture, smallholder farmers need reduced access to essential inputs, such as fertilizers and climate-smart technologies, limiting their ability

15 https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/nigeria-inflation-rises-second-month-october
16 https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/nigerias-hunger-crisis-deepens-with-33-million-risk-report-says

to implement adaptive measures in the face of erratic rainfall and rising temperatures. In urban centres like Kano and Lagos, the economic strain has stalled critical investments in flood mitigation infrastructure, exposing informal settlements to increased risk during extreme weather events.

The erosion of fiscal space at both federal and state levels further weakens the response capacity to these intertwined challenges. Budget constraints and inflation have diluted funding for climate programs, while institutional inefficiencies impede the effective deployment of resources. Consequently, vulnerable populations, particularly those in climate-sensitive sectors like agriculture, bear the brunt of these cascading impacts, with food systems, water resources, and public health systems under severe stress. The confluence of economic fragility and escalating climate risks in Nigeria puts a mark on the systemic challenges that amplify vulnerabilities and reduce resilience across socio-economic strata. Failure to address these core drivers severely limits the country's ability to absorb and adapt to climate shocks, which negatively impacts economic growth, social justice, and climate resilience.

Nigeria's increasing farmer-herder crisis is a climate-conflict nexus deeply rooted in the country's environmental and socio-economic dynamics. Climate variability, including shifting rainfall patterns, prolonged droughts, and desertification, has severely impacted arable land and water resources, particularly in the northern and central regions. This has forced pastoralist communities to migrate southward, escalating disputes with farming communities over diminishing resources. The shrinking of Lake Chad, which has lost over 90% of its surface area since the 1960s, exemplifies the scale of ecological stress driving these conflicts. These farmer-herder clashes have caused significant loss of life, displacement, and disruption to agricultural production, particularly in the Middle Belt states, with devastating implications for food security and local economies.

The socio-economic vulnerability of smallholder farmers and pastoralists, coupled with weak governance and inadequate resource management, exacerbates the situation. Poorly implemented land-use policies and unresolved disputes over resource access further fuel tensions. These challenges destabilise local livelihoods and strain national stability as competition for resources intensifies with climate impacts.

The nexus between Nigeria's climate change and energy systems extends beyond cooking energy, highlighting the vulnerabilities of broader energy needs in rural and underserved areas. Disruptions in climate patterns, such as prolonged droughts, flooding, and extreme temperatures, adversely affect biomass availability—the primary source of cooking energy for many, and challenge the reliability of renewable energy systems like solar and hydro, which are sensitive to weather variability. As of 2020, only 4.2% of Nigeria's rural population had access to clean cooking fuels. Meanwhile, grid electricity coverage in rural areas remained at 39%, leaving millions dependent on inefficient and environmentally damaging energy sources[17]. Flooding frequently damages infrastructure such as power lines and mini-grids, compromising energy access. Additionally, the increased reliance on diesel generators for irrigation and small businesses amplifies greenhouse gas emissions

17 https://www.statista.com/statistics/1307410/clean-cooking-rural-access-rate-in-nigeria/

while straining household finances. These challenges underscore how climate change intensifies Nigeria's energy insecurity across domestic and productive uses, particularly in vulnerable communities.

Climate change disproportionately affects women in Nigeria, particularly those in rural and low-income communities, due to existing gender inequalities that amplify their vulnerabilities. Women are often the primary caregivers and providers of household resources such as water, food, and energy, making them highly dependent on climate-sensitive sectors like agriculture and natural resource management. Prolonged droughts, erratic rainfall, and flooding increase the burden on women, forcing them to travel longer distances to fetch water and fuel wood, which reduces their time for education or income-generating activities.[18] In displacement scenarios caused by climate-induced disasters, women face heightened risks of gender-based violence and loss of livelihoods. According to UN Women, 80% of those displaced by climate impacts globally are women, a statistic that reflects similar trends in Nigeria's conflict-prone and climate-affected areas. Despite these challenges, women are often excluded from decision-making processes related to climate adaptation, limiting their ability to shape policies that address their specific needs[19].

Nigeria's 2021 Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), an essential compliance component of the Paris Agreement, pledged to reduce emissions by 20% below business as usual (unconditionally) and 47% conditional to international support by 2030. The NDC outlined the country's priorities and actions to reduce emissions and strengthen resilience across seven economic sectors: agriculture, industry, transport, waste, energy, and oil and gas, with water serving as a crucial driver for climate action. If implemented effectively, the NDC can help states drive social and economic changes needed to meet climate goals, including catalysing investments from different sources (private, national and international) and helping achieve long-term development priorities.

2.1.1 Climate Risk in Nigeria

Table 2: Summary of risk projections

Climate Parameter	Projection
Temperature Increase	Projected increase of 2.9°C to 5.7°C by the end of the century, with more rapid rises in northern regions.
Night-time Temperature Increase	Night-time temperatures expected to rise by up to 4.7°C, compounding heat stress effects.
Heat Waves	Duration to increase by 8 to 55 days annually by century's end, significantly affecting northern areas.

18 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). (2022). Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Cambridge University Press. DOI: 10.1017/9781009325844.

19 UN Women. (2022). Gender equality in climate action: The disproportionate impact of climate change on women and girls. United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. Available at: https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2022/03/feature-the-disproportionate-impact-of-climate-change-on-women-and-girls

Rainfall Variability	Decrease in rainfall in northern regions (20% more dry days), while southern areas face flooding risks.
Soil Moisture and Aridity	Slight decrease in soil moisture (1.1%) and up to a 10% increase in aridity, worsening agricultural stress.
Health Impacts	Increased prevalence of heat-related illnesses, vector-borne diseases (e.g., malaria), and waterborne diseases due to flooding and contaminated water supplies.
Desertification	Accelerated desertification in the northern regions, reducing arable land and driving migration and resource conflicts.

2.1.2 Analysis of Climate Risks by Region, Exposure Level, and Core Governance Challenges per Geopolitical Zone

Table 3: Region exposure level and associated governance challenges

Region	Key Climate Risks	Exposure Level	Core Governance Challenges
North Central	Prolonged droughts Seasonal flooding Land degradation Unpredictable rainfall patterns	High Agriculture and pastoral livelihoods are heavily impacted; critical infrastructure is at risk.	Weak coordination between federal and local governments in land-use planning Limited early warning systems for flooding and drought
North East	Severe droughts Desertification Lake Chad Basin degradation	Very High High dependence on natural resources; displacement of vulnerable populations; widespread poverty.	Poor resource management in the Lake Chad Basin Inadequate adaptation financing Security challenges hindering intervention efforts
North West	Desertification Erratic rainfall Resource conflicts	High Predominantly rural economy reliant on rain-fed agriculture; rising conflict over diminishing resources.	Lack of enforcement of grazing and land-use policies Limited capacity to resolve farmer-herder conflicts Weak extension services to support climate-resilient agriculture
South East	Rising sea levels Frequent flooding Severe soil erosion	Medium-High Coastal and inland areas face recurring natural disasters affecting housing, roads, and farmlands.	Fragmented policies on erosion control Insufficient funding for flood mitigation infrastructure Weak community engagement in disaster risk management

South South	Coastal flooding , Erosion Pollution from oil exploration activities	Very High Major economic hub for oil and fisheries; high exposure to sea-level rise and environmental contamination.	Regulatory gaps in oil spill prevention and cleanup Inadequate coastal defense systems. Over-reliance on fossil fuel economy impeding transition to green energy
South West	Rising sea levels Extreme rainfall Recurrent flooding	High Densely populated areas like Lagos experience frequent disruption of urban infrastructure and economic losses.	Poor urban planning and enforcement of building codes Limited capacity to handle urban flooding Insufficient investment in drainage and flood control systems

2.2 Country Political context

Nigeria, a Federal Republic composed of 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory, has a complex socio-political and economic history closely tied to its abundant natural resources, particularly oil. Since joining OPEC in 1971, Nigeria has been a significant player in the global oil market and was the 11th largest oil producer globally in 2020. However, this oil dependency has been both a blessing and a challenge, creating wealth while exposing the economy to volatility and governance issues.

The 2023 election marked a pivotal moment in Nigeria's political history, with Bola Ahmed Tinubu succeeding Muhammadu Buhari as president. Buhari's tenure, initially celebrated for its anti-corruption and counterterrorism agenda, was later criticised for selective enforcement of anti-corruption efforts and an overall failure to address systemic governance and security issues effectively. Tinubu's administration inherited these challenges, pledging reforms to stabilise the economy and improve infrastructure. A cornerstone of Tinubu's policy agenda was the removal of the fuel subsidy, a move aimed at reducing government expenditure, as the subsidy had been costing the Nigerian government approximately $10 billion annually. This decision was also influenced by the desire to curb fuel smuggling into neighbouring countries, where subsidised fuel was resold at higher prices, and to address the economic distortions caused by the subsidy system. However, the removal significantly exacerbated inflation, with rates exceeding 25% by late 2023. Reports from the National Bureau of Statistics and the World Bank indicated that this policy decision directly contributed to increased living costs, pushing an additional 4 million Nigerians into poverty within months.[20]

Nigeria continues to grapple with pervasive corruption, which undermines public trust and stifles socio-economic development. Previous administrations made progress in tackling corruption, but efforts have often been perceived as politically motivated rather

20 International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). (2023). Nigeria's lesson on how to scrap fuel subsidies. Available at: https://www.ifpri.org/blog/nigerias-lesson-how-scrap-fuel-subsidies.

than systematic. Security challenges also remain pressing, with Boko Haram and other armed groups conducting regular attacks, mass kidnappings, and escalating violence. In the northeast and northwest, terrorism has devastated communities, while in the north-central region, farmer-herder clashes over land use and resources have become increasingly violent.

Police brutality remains a contentious issue. The #EndSARS protests of 2020 highlighted deep frustrations with policing practices, leading to international attention and calls for reform. Despite promises, progress on meaningful police reform has been slow, and the public remains sceptical about the government's commitment to change and social justice reforms.

In the Niger Delta, oil-related pollution continues to devastate ecosystems and livelihoods. Communities reliant on fishing and farming face significant disruptions, with inadequate compensation for environmental damages caused by oil spills. While high-profile legal cases have resulted in victories for some communities, enforcement and accountability still need consistency.

Economically, Nigeria ranks low on the UNDP Human Development Index, with over 40% of the impoverished population. Regional disparities have widened, with rural areas and northern regions experiencing increasing poverty levels, while southern zones show slight improvements. Nigeria's economy, heavily dependent on oil revenues, has suffered multiple recessions due to fluctuations in global oil prices, compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Agriculture and energy are the largest sources of Nigeria's greenhouse gas emissions. Forestry and land-use changes account for significant emissions, but exact figures remain uncertain. While the country has ambitious renewable energy targets, progress has been limited, with natural gas continuing to dominate electricity generation. Power outages are frequent, and unreliable electricity forces many Nigerians to rely on costly and polluting generators, contributing significantly to carbon emissions.

Despite Nigeria's oil wealth, the refining capacity is limited, necessitating heavy reliance on imported petroleum products. Efforts to expand natural gas production aim to reduce dependence on imported fuels, but implementation has been slow. Meanwhile, electricity access remains a significant challenge, with only 55% of the population connected to the grid as of 2019. Ambitious government targets to increase electricity access to 90% by 2030 appear unattainable without accelerated reforms.

2.2.1 Snapshot of the current climate governance landscape in Nigeria

Nigeria has made significant efforts in enhancing its climate governance framework in recent years. In May 2024, , President Bola Tinubu appointed Ajuri Ngelale, then Special Adviser on Media and Publicity to the President, as the Special Presidential Envoy on Climate Action (SPEC). This role designates Ngelale as Nigeria's chief negotiator on climate-related matters, reporting directly to the President. The Office of the Special

Presidential Envoy on Climate Action is tasked with leading Nigeria's climate diplomacy efforts, coordinating climate action plans across federal ministries, and engaging with international organisations to advance global climate goals in line with Nigeria's national interests. The SPEC also combined this position with that of Nigeria's Focal Point to the UNFCCC, creating a new governance arrangement hitherto held by the Federal Ministry of Environment and the Director General of the National Council on Climate Change (NCCC). While these appointments are the prerogative of the President, these positions are not known under the Climate Act and at best, amounts to usurpation of some statutory functions of the Council.

In June 2024, President Tinubu approved new leadership (the Director General, a Senior Special Assistant to the President on Climate Finance and a Senior Special Assistant to the President on Climate Technology and Digital Operations) for the National Council on Climate Change (NCCC) to strengthen the strategic oversight of Nigeria's climate agenda. These appointments, supposedly aimed to enhance Nigeria's capacity to implement effective climate policies and engage with global climate finance mechanisms,[21] created new layers of bureaucracy. However, this restructuring led to overlapping mandates and potential conflicts with the National Council on Climate Change (NCCC), established under the Climate Change Act 2021. Experts argued that rather than creating new bodies with similar functions, strengthening the NCCC would have been more effective and cost-efficient. By September 2024, Ajuri Ngelale resigned from his positions, citing personal and health-related reasons. The SPEC and Focal Point positions are now conferred on the DG and the NCCC. This sudden departure further opens up the instability and challenges associated with the rapid high-level changes in Nigeria's climate governance framework during that period.

The governance structure of the National Council on Climate Change, established by the Climate Change Act, comprises a high-level coordinating body chaired by the President, with representatives from key ministries, the private sector, and PWD's constituency tasked with overseeing the implementation of Nigeria's climate policies and ensuring alignment with national and international commitments. Nevertheless, the Council is yet to be constituted and inaugurated, leaving the DG as head of the NCCC Secretariat to steer climate governance in the country. The absence of a fully operational NCCC has led to governance ambiguities, with critical climate policy decisions concentrated within a few executive appointments rather than through an inclusive, structured, and legally-backed council. This deviation from the provisions of the Climate Change Act 2021 has been criticized for undermining the participatory framework envisioned by the legislation. While political adversaries have not prominently challenged this situation, environmentalists and civil society groups have expressed concerns. Some environmental activists, emphasised that climate change is a critical issue that should not be politicized or used for economic speculation. They advocated for a cohesive and transparent approach to climate governance, aligning with the structures established by the Climate Change Act.[22]

21 https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/702253-tinubu-appoints-new-leadership-for-nigerias-climate-change-council.html

22 Stop playing politics with climate change: Q&A with Nigeria's Nnimmo Bassey

The relationship between the NCCC and other government entities and private players appears to be dictated by some instruments other than the Council's decision since it has not been statutorily constituted.

Governance Structure of the NCCC

The President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria-

Chairman

The Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria-

Vice Chairman

Director-General National Council on Climate Change-

Secretary

Members: The Ministers of Environment, Finance, Budget and National Planning, Mines and Steel Development, Agriculture, Women's Affairs and Social Development, Power, Transportation ,Water Resources

Others Attorney General of the Federation, CBN Governor, National Security Adviser, Chairman NGF, ALGON, Conservation Foundation

Youth, PWD's The National President, Women, environment related CSO

Figure 3: Governance Structure of the NCCC

https://news.mongabay.com/2023/10/stop-playing-politics-with-climate-change-qa-with-nigerias-nnimmo-bassey

Nigeria has been proactive in international climate discussions. At COP27 in November 2022, the country reaffirmed its commitment to achieving net-zero emissions by 2060. It emphasised the importance of global support in financing its energy transition, as well as its participation in international initiatives aimed at reducing forest loss and methane emissions.

In May 2023, Nigeria launched its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) Implementation Framework, providing a detailed roadmap and estimated cost($189bn) for achieving its emission reduction targets through sectoral strategies. [23]

Nigeria is preparing to update its third Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC 3.0) to strengthen and enhance its climate ambitions. While some progress has been made in fostering inclusivity, gaps remain in representation, transparency, and access to climate information. The NDC 3.0 update process wil be involving broader stakeholder engagement, incorporating input from subnational actors, civil society, and marginalised groups, though the actual influence of these stakeholders on decision-making remains inconsistent. WFD can play role in tracking and reporting on the inclusivitiy of the processing which is due to submitted sometime in July 2025. The country has finalized and submitted its Biennial Transparency Report (BTR) in December 2024, as the UNFCCC requires. The report provided detailed insights into Nigeria's progress in emissions reduction and the implementation of related policies, including the support it received and needed to undertake ambitious climate actions. Strengthening accountability mechanisms and institutionalizing representation quotas for disadvantaged groups will be critical to making the NDC process more inclusive and effective.

These are financed through budget allocations, carbon taxes, and other forms of international assistance. The Council will manage this Fund. Although the Fund has not yet been fully operationalized, there are concerns regarding its management. These concerns stem from past experiences managing the Ecological and Natural Resources Funds, which have unfortunately been misused as slush funds.

Before the Climate Change Act was enacted, the Department of Climate Change (DCC) within the Federal Ministry of Environment oversaw climate policy in Nigeria. The DCC led and convened the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Climate Change (IMCCC), which brought together stakeholders from various ministries, the private sector, civil society, and academia. However, the roles of the DCC and the IMCCC became overshadowed by the newly established National Climate Change Council (NCCC). The ministries that were part of the original IMCCC became members of the NCCC. However, particular responsibility, such as the development of the carbon budget, which was assigned to the Ministries of Trade and Environment under the Act, but no official statement has been made on the status of the IMCCC.

23 https://ndcpartnership.org/news/nigeria-launches-ndc-implementation-framework-drive-national-climate-action

Major policies

Until recently, Nigeria's central climate policy was outlined in the National Climate Change Policy Response and Strategy (NCCPRS), which was adopted in 2012. The NCCPRS established broad strategic objectives that included mitigation, adaptation, climate-related scientific and technological development, public awareness, private sector involvement, and strengthening institutions to address climate change.

In June 2021, the policy was revised and updated into the National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) and the National Climate Change Programmes for 2021-2030. These documents outline the necessary mitigation and adaptation measures, enabling conditions, and means of implementation required to achieve Nigeria's climate objectives. However, despite adopting these new documents, the NCCP does not align with the updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) or the new climate law in Nigeria. Until recently, Nigeria's central climate policy was outlined in the National Climate Change Policy Response and Strategy (NCCPRS), which was adopted in 2012. The NCCPRS established broad strategic objectives that included mitigation, adaptation, climate-related scientific and technological development, public awareness, private sector involvement, and strengthening institutions to address climate change.

On the economic front, the Nigeria Vision 20:2020 served as a long-term framework for the country's financial and development strategies, including climate objectives. However, many of the targets set in this vision were not achieved. The Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) for 2017-2020 was established to guide the nation's economic development following the recession of 2016, which was caused by low oil prices. The ERGP included initiatives to address Nigeria's environmental and climate challenges, such as the Great Green Wall Initiative and the issuance of green bonds.

A successor to the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP), the Medium-Term National Development Plan 2021-2025 was approved in November 2021—the new plan aimed to promote the development of decarbonisation pathways. In the short term, the Economic Sustainability Plan (ESP), created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, includes measures to support the installation of solar home systems and encourage domestic gas use.

Sub-national Action

Several Nigerian states proactively address climate change by developing and implementing localised policies and action plans. The Climate Change Act (2021) does not explicitly mandate states to develop climate action plans; however, it provides a framework that encourages subnational governments to align their policies with national climate objectives. For instance, Lagos State has adopted a Climate Action Plan that integrates climate resilience into its urban planning, focusing on reducing emissions, managing flooding, and improving energy efficiency in Africa's most populous city. As a coastal state highly vulnerable to sea level rise and flooding, Lagos's plan prioritises sustainable infrastructure and adaptation measures to protect its economy and millions of residents. The Act also establishes the NCCC, which is tasked with coordinating climate action across all levels of government, creating opportunities for states to enhance their climate governance through alignment with national strategies. However, implementation at the state level remains voluntary, and

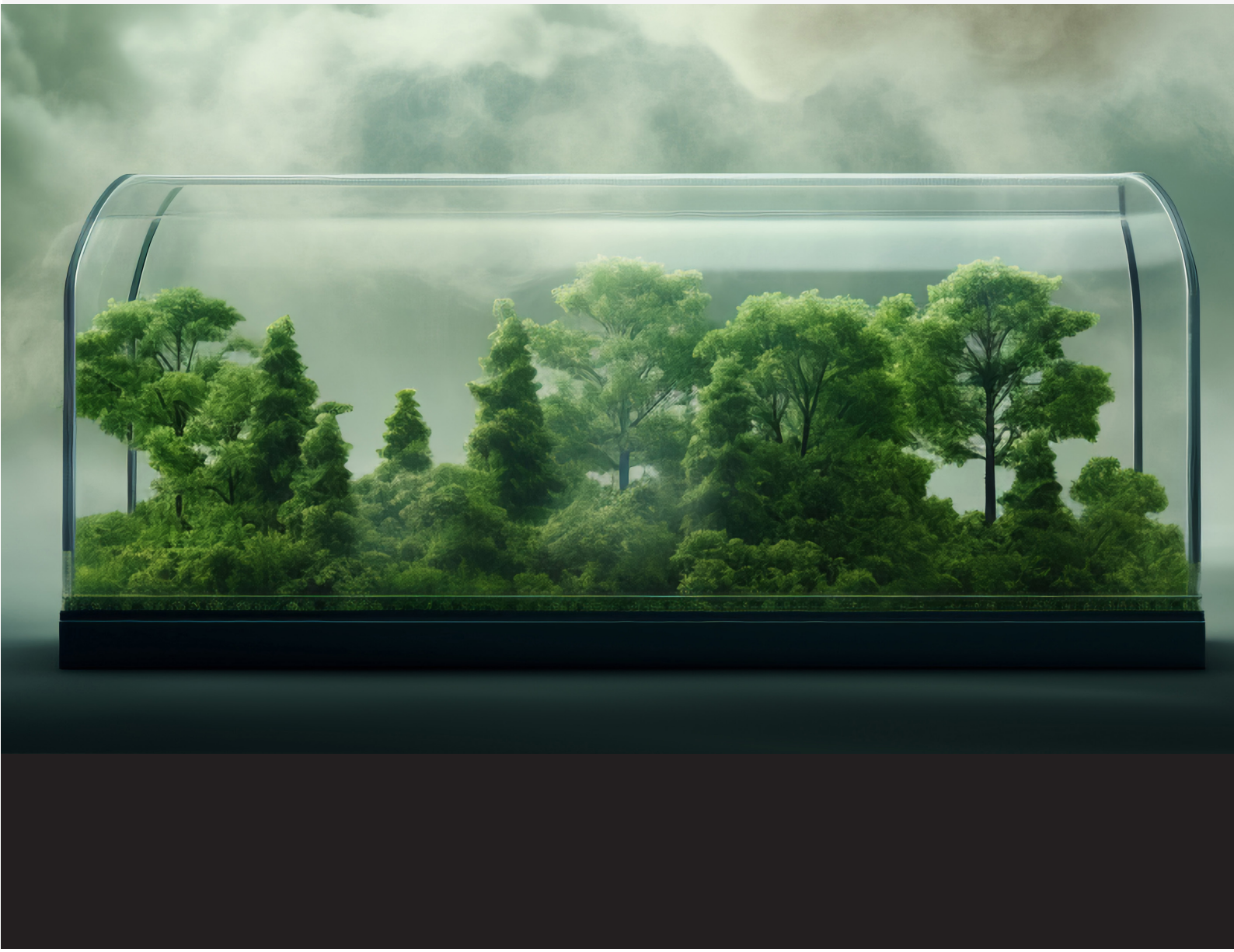
disparities exist in the extent to which states have adopted climate-responsive policies.

Borno State has formulated a Climate Resilience Plan in the northeastern region to tackle the dual challenges of climate vulnerability and ongoing conflict. This plan emphasises the restoration of degraded lands and promoting sustainable agricultural practices to build resilience among local communities. Similarly, Ekiti State's Climate Action Plan focuses on climate-smart agriculture, renewable energy, and sustainable water management, aligning these goals with broader economic and social development objectives.

Figure 4: Climate Governance Structure at Subnational

States like Cross River and Benue have also established institutional mechanisms to enhance climate governance. Cross River State has set up the Green Economic Commission and the Climate Change Council to align its rich biodiversity and forestry resources with sustainable economic development goals. These bodies facilitate policy coordination and stakeholder engagement, ensuring that climate initiatives are inclusive and impactful. In Benue State, the Climate Change Council focuses on addressing the agricultural impacts of climate change, a critical priority for a region heavily dependent on farming. By institutionalising climate governance, these states enhance their capacity to respond to climate challenges and contribute to national and global climate goals.

Additionally, seven northwestern states, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto, and Zamfara, have signed the Kano Declaration on Climate Change and Environment. This commitment aims to address the climate crisis in the region through conservation of biodiversity, rural integration, enhanced collaboration, adaptation finance, sustainable development, and climate security. Despite these developments of institutionalising climate governance at the state level, findings indicate that including the structurally disadvantaged people remains a challenge as some appointments to government bodies are made to " fulfil righteousness".



Chapter 3

Key Challenges to Inclusivity in Climate Governance: Analysis of Key finding

3.1 Main Challenges Identified (FGD and Survey)

Nigeria's climate governance is hindered by several systemic, structural, and operational challenges that affect decision-making and implementation levels across the country, including access to information, participation, justice, mitigation and adaptation, equity, accountability, and institutional coordination.

Overall problem statement

Box 1 Problem Statement

Nigeria's diverse geopolitical and agroecological zones experience unique climate risks and governance challenges stemming from regional economic inequalities, disparities, differences in institutional capacity, political power imbalances, and varying levels of access to resources and decision-making platforms. These factors lead to unequal representation, accountability, and engagement in climate governance. The resulting disparities hinder the implementation of inclusive and effective climate policies that address the specific needs and vulnerabilities of each region, particularly for structurally disadvantaged groups such as women, youth, and persons with disabilities.

3.1.1 Understanding The Cause and Impact of Climate Change Across the Geopolitical zones

Nigeria's geopolitical zones experience diverse and interconnected impacts of climate change, reflecting the unique environmental and socio-economic challenges each region faces. Stakeholders across the zones highlighted that climate change exacerbates existing vulnerabilities, disrupts livelihoods, and undermines community resilience. A recurring concern across the discussions was the inadequacy of governance systems in addressing the differentiated impacts effectively.

In the North Central zone, participants emphasised the cyclical nature of droughts and floods, which have intensified due to deforestation, agricultural expansion, and poor land management practices. These climatic shifts have reduced agricultural productivity, displaced families during seasonal floods, and increased competition over shrinking arable land. Stakeholders noted the lack of coordinated water management systems as a major driver of these challenges, leaving rural communities particularly vulnerable. While direct interstate conflicts over water resources are not extensively documented, disputes have

arisen over water management projects that affect multiple states. For example, the proposed Kafin Zaki Dam in Bauchi State has sparked contention among Bauchi, Yobe, and Borno states, with concerns about reduced downstream water flow affecting agriculture and livelihoods. Additionally, transboundary water management issues, such as the release of water from Cameroon's Lagdo Dam, have led to severe flooding in downstream Nigerian states, further reiterating the need for improved coordination and communication in water governance.

The North East zone experiences severe desertification and the degradation of the Lake Chad Basin, a critical resource for millions of people. Stakeholders in this region expressed concern about the interplay of environmental degradation and socio-political instability, which has led to heightened food insecurity and displacement. Poor land-use practices, overgrazing, and insufficient interventions to rehabilitate degraded lands exacerbate these issues, creating a cycle of resource scarcity and conflict.

In the North West, erratic rainfall patterns and desert encroachment pose significant challenges to livelihoods reliant on agriculture and pastoralism. Farmers and herders frequently clash over diminishing

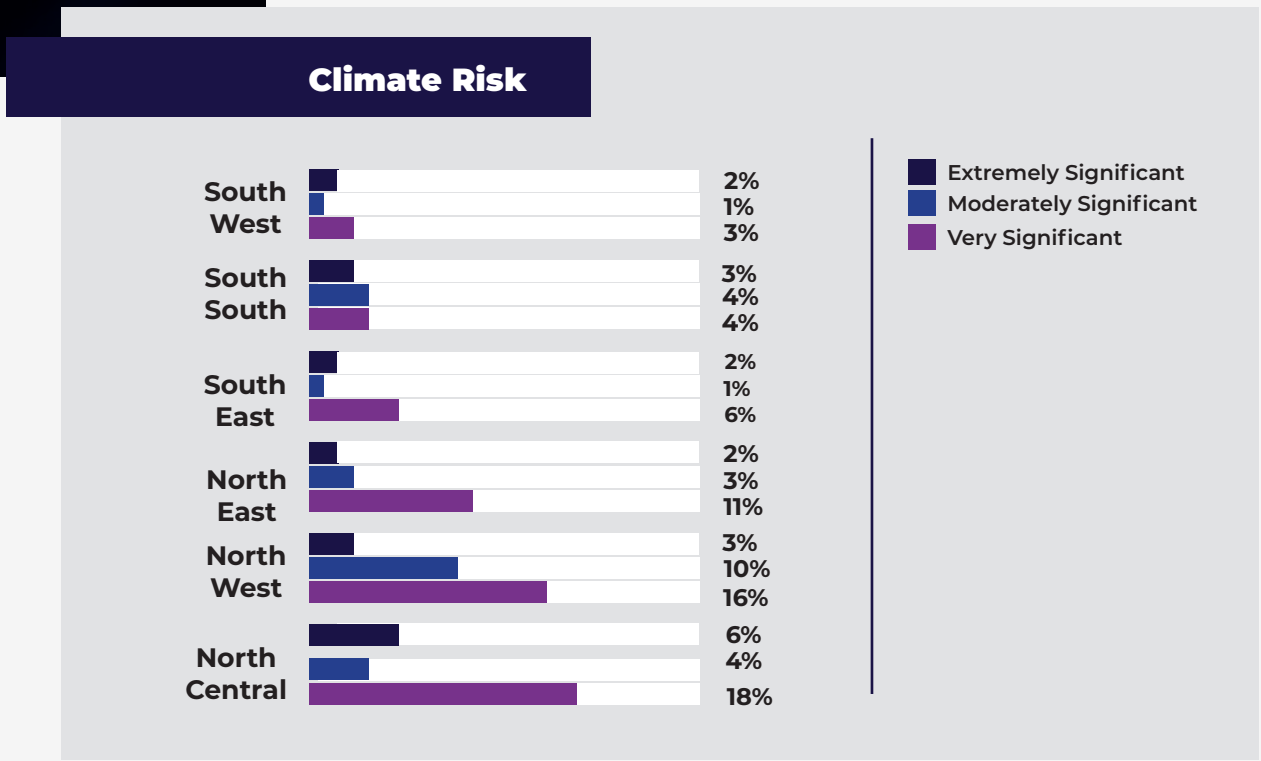


Figure 5: Significance of the risk on the population. (Source: Field Survey 2024)

In the South East, stakeholders described the twin threats of rising sea levels and severe soil erosion, disrupting agricultural activities and infrastructure. Communities living along riverbanks and in urban flood-prone areas face recurrent displacement, exacerbated by

poor urban planning and insufficient investment in erosion control measures. Participants stressed that flooding and erosion displace communities and disrupt local economies, leading to long-term social and economic instability.

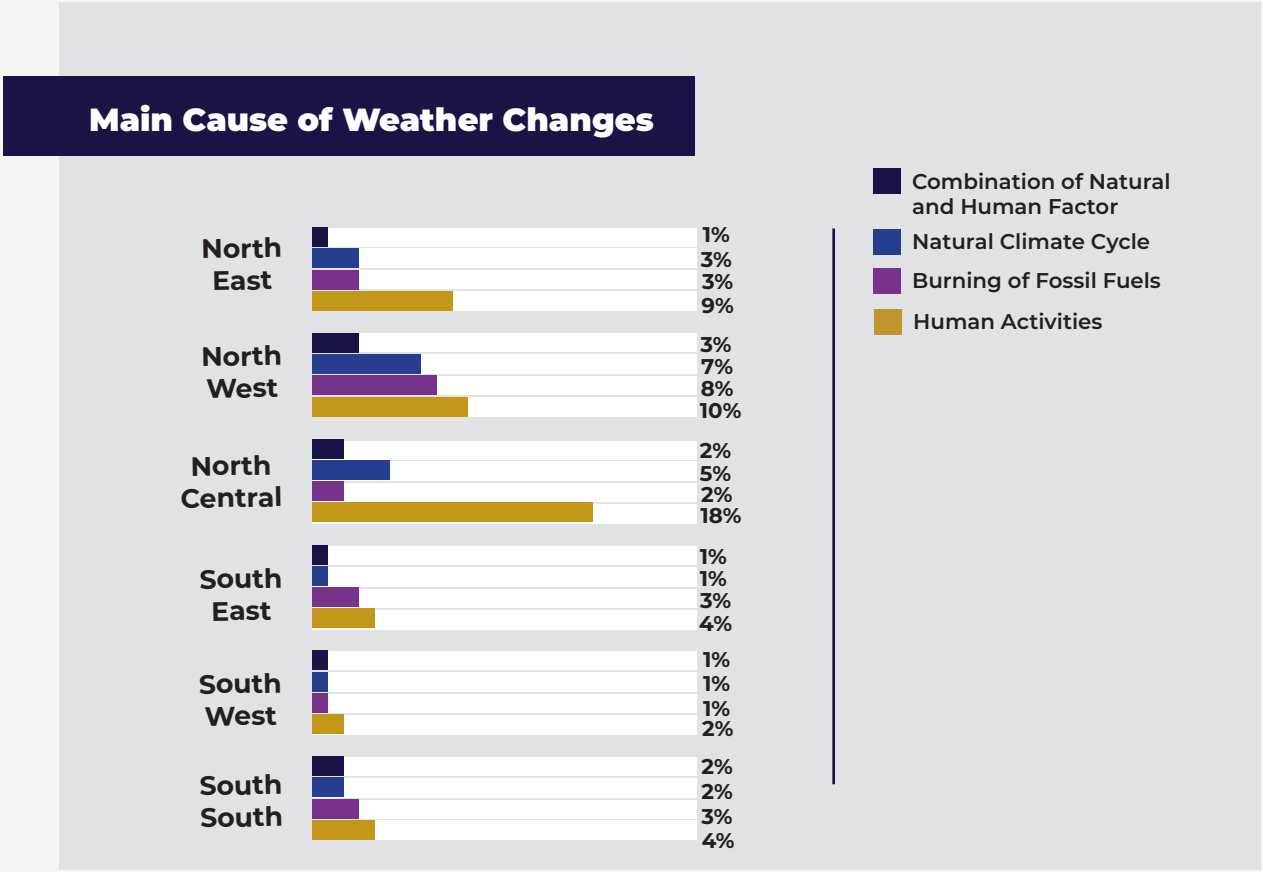


Figure 6: Main Cause of Weather Changes

The South South faces compounding environmental degradation caused by oil exploration activities, coastal flooding, and biodiversity loss. Stakeholders in this region voiced deep concerns about the health impacts of pollution and the destruction of fishing and farming livelihoods. The absence of robust regulatory frameworks and accountability mechanisms for addressing oil pollution has left many communities feeling neglected and increasingly vulnerable to the impacts of rising sea levels and erosion.

In the South West, urban stakeholders highlighted the recurrent flooding in densely populated areas like Lagos, which is driven by extreme rainfall, rising sea levels, and inadequate drainage systems. These events disrupt urban infrastructure, reduce agricultural productivity, and threaten economic stability. Stakeholders emphasised the importance of better urban planning, strengthened flood management systems, and improved public awareness to mitigate these risks effectively.

Across all zones, stakeholders expressed frustration with governance challenges that hinder effective climate adaptation and mitigation. A lack of inclusivity in decision-making, weak policy implementation, and inadequate funding for climate action were recurring themes. Vulnerable groups, particularly women, youth, and persons with disabilities, often lack access to resources and platforms for participation, further exacerbating their

exposure to climate risks.

Nigeria faces a convergence of environmental challenges that compound the effects of climate change, impacting communities across its geopolitical zones. Water pollution, exacerbated by industrial waste, oil spills, and untreated sewage, severely affects water quality, particularly in the South, where it disrupts fishing livelihoods, threatens biodiversity, and endangers public health. Simultaneously, water scarcity has become a pressing issue in the North East and North West due to declining rainfall and overuse of water resources, intensifying agricultural challenges and fueling resource-based conflicts. Soil degradation and deforestation, driven by unsustainable farming practices, logging, and urban expansion, have reduced land fertility in the North, Central and South East, undermining food security. Air pollution, particularly in urban areas like Lagos, escalates due to vehicular emissions, industrial activities, and reliance on diesel generators, worsening public health outcomes and exacerbating climate vulnerabilities.

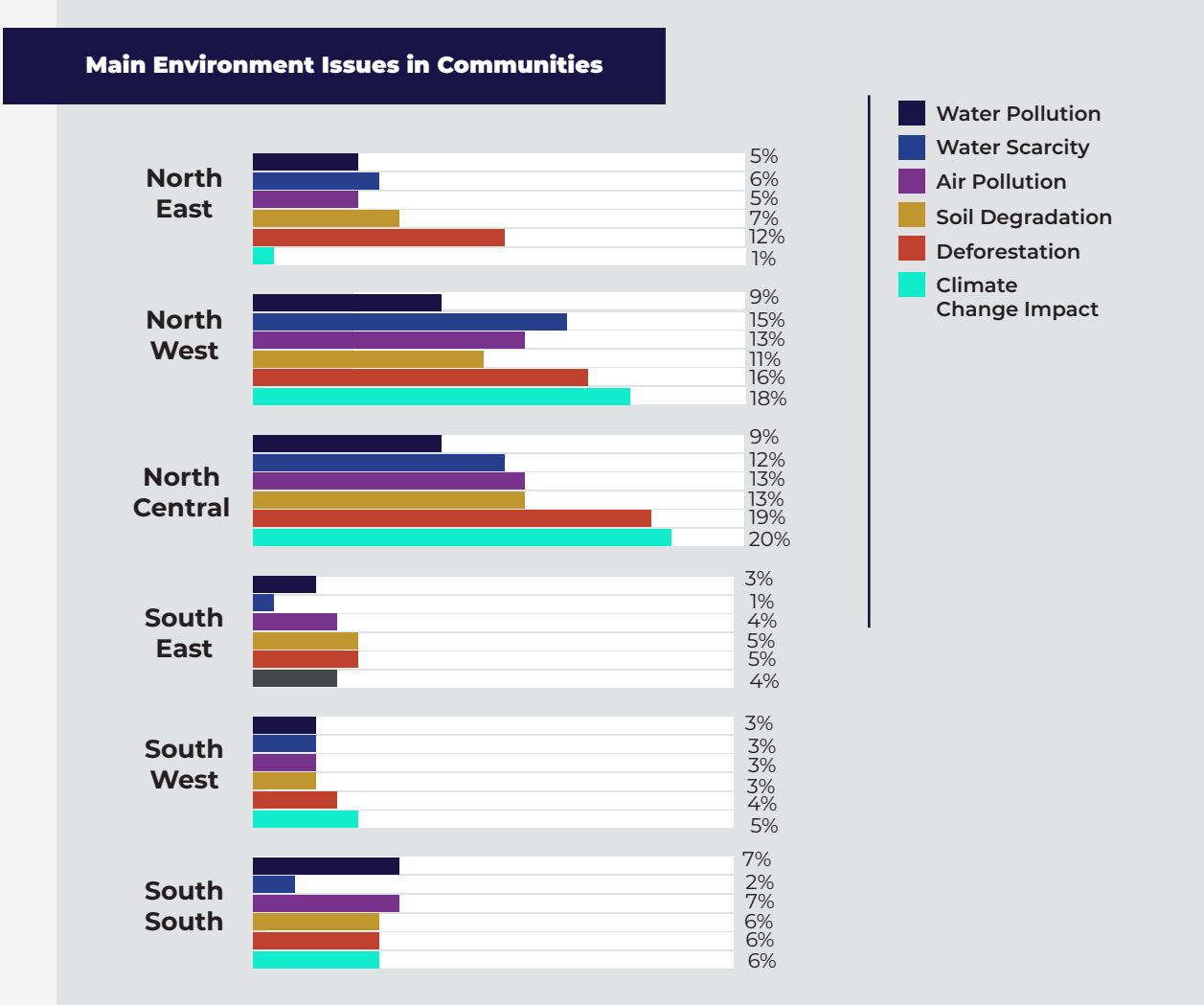


Figure 7 : Main Environmental issues in communities. (Source: Field Survey 2024)

Over the past two decades, changing weather patterns have introduced significant variability across the country, with stakeholders highlighting increasingly erratic rainfall, prolonged dry spells, and intensified storms. These shifts have disrupted traditional agricultural practices, caused frequent flooding in the South East and South West, and intensified droughts and desertification in the North East and North West. Despite the significance of these risks, responses remain fragmented, with limited integration of climate considerations into regional planning and development. The impacts are deeply felt in resource-dependent communities, where environmental degradation and climate variability exacerbate poverty and inequality.

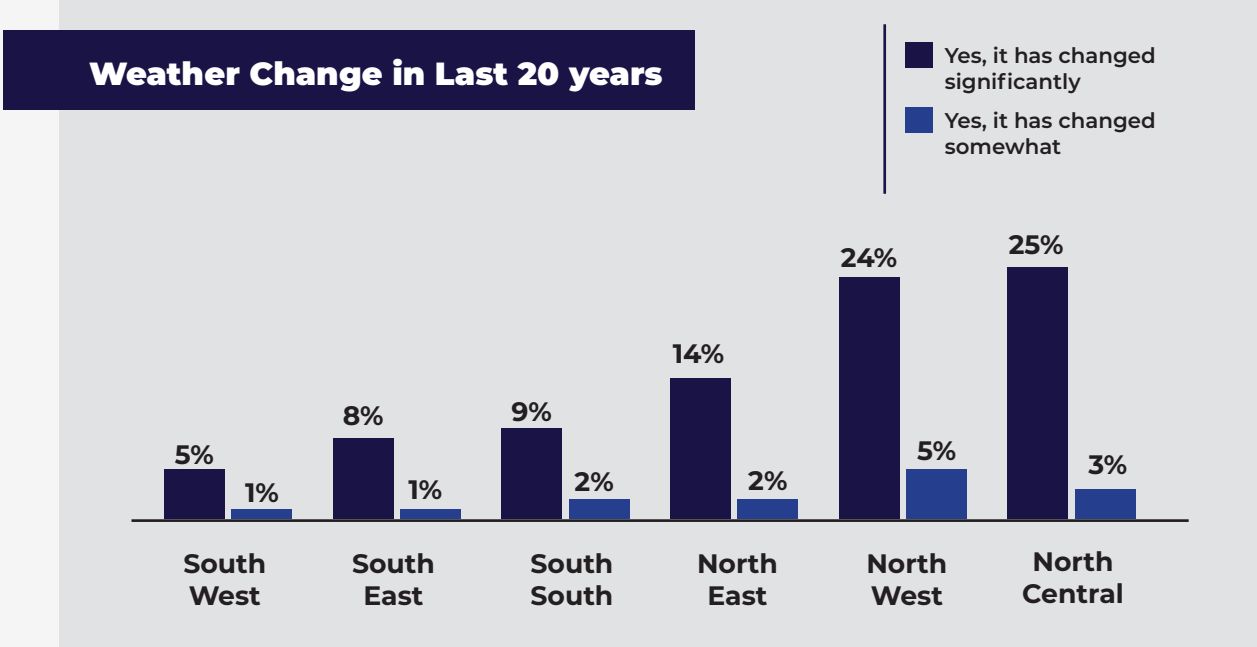


Figure 8: Weather change in the last 20 years (Source: Field Survey 2024)

3.1.2 Identified Governance Challenges

Access to Information and Transparency

At the decision-making level, while legal rights to information are established under frameworks like the Freedom of Information Act, these rights are not fully operational across all geopolitical zones. Political and cultural barriers, such as outright impunity, restrictive gender norms and low literacy rates, limit the accessibility of climate information to marginalised groups. Inconsistent communication mediums and the absence of localized languages further exacerbate this problem. At the implementation level, regional and local government agencies lack clear guidance, technical expertise, and Measurement, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) systems to monitor and report on climate actions effectively. This gap undermines trust and the ability to track progress.

Access to Decision-Making and Participation

Decision-making processes remain inaccessible primarily to non-state actors, particularly structurally disadvantaged groups such as women, youth, and persons with disabilities.

Policymaking is often top-down, with limited stakeholder consultations, and feedback from these engagements is rarely incorporated into final decisions. Climate and environmental policies are sometimes diluted to maintain the status quo of political power dynamics, further marginalising vulnerable groups. At the implementation level, weak monitoring and evaluation systems and politicised data manipulation reduce the accountability and effectiveness of climate initiatives.

Access to Justice

Legal mechanisms for addressing environmental grievances remain underdeveloped, with limited scope for seeking justice. Legal representation costs are prohibitive for many, and judicial rulings on environmental offences often result in reduced penalties due to corruption and power imbalances. Often, the lack of specialised courts with in-depth knowledge of ecological issues to speedily dispose and adjudicate on the subject matter further compounds the problem. Furthermore, the slow judicial process discourages communities from pursuing justice, leaving environmental violations largely unaddressed.

Mitigation and Adaptation Efforts

Nigeria's mitigation targets often exclude key sectors like financial ,telecommunication/ ICT, health and education, as the 2021 NDC is restricted to seven sectors, though it has the potential to make it economy-wide. The situation at the state level is worse, often with limited alignment with global climate goals. No cross-cutting comprehensive development vision is articulated and mechanisms for review, cross-sector coordination, and funding are inadequate, leading to stalled or underfunded initiatives. At the federal, existing policies, such as the remaining subsidies on fossil fuels, contradict low-carbon development goals. Similarly, adaptation efforts are hampered by fragmented planning, insufficient public finance, and limited capacity to attract private investment, despite opportunities in climate-smart agriculture, renewable energy, water management, ecosystem restoration, and climate-resilient infrastructure, with pilot efforts such as NIRSAL's climate-resilient farming programs, Nigeria's Solar Power Naija initiative, and Lagos' flood resilience projects facing major obstacles like regulatory uncertainty, high financing risks, and weak public-private coordination. Rent-seeking behaviour at various government levels diverts funds from meaningful adaptation projects without visible change incentives. The lack of coordinated action at the sectoral level leaves many communities unprepared for climate risks with few or no plans for improvement. Adequate implementation of the Climate Change Act (CC Act), including the full operationalisation of the National Council on Climate Change (NCCC), would help address these challenges by strengthening cross-sector coordination, ensuring policy alignment, mobilizing dedicated climate finance through the National Climate Change Fund, and enhancing accountability mechanisms

to phase out contradictory policies like fossil fuel subsidies while advancing low-carbon development goals.

Equity Considerations
Climate policies and actions often fail to integrate social equity, gender equality, and the needs of marginalised populations. Policies are developed in silos, missing opportunities to address systemic inequalities. During implementation, there is limited use of social and environmental assessment tools to evaluate equity outcomes. Policymakers also lack a clear understanding of the implications of climate policies on job creation, social protection and justice, and transitions, perpetuating inequities in access to climate resources and decision-making.

Accountability and Institutional Coordination
A lack of clarity in regulatory frameworks regarding roles, responsibilities, and enforcement mechanisms creates inefficiencies and conflicts among agencies. Oversight institutions are absent or lack independence(or are captured by those they are supposed to regulate), reducing their ability to hold implementing agencies accountable. Institutional leaders often prioritise political interests over climate goals, undermining efforts to build robust MRV systems. Lack of prioritising environment and political interest leads to limited capacity within government agencies and inadequate budget allocations, further hampers the effective delivery of climate policies.

Institutional Ownership and Coordination
At the decision-making level, policies lack the buy-in of influential political stakeholders, resulting in weak implementation. Inter-ministerial committees on climate and environment are often ad-hoc, underfunded, lack statutory authority, and fail to include officials with real decision-making power. Additionally, representatives in these bodies are sometimes “cherry-picked,” undermining their legitimacy and effectiveness. At the implementation level, fragmented coordination among agencies and sectors results in missed opportunities for cohesive climate action.

3.1.3 Groups most affected

The groups most affected by climate change and environmental issues across Nigeria’s geopolitical zones include women, youth, persons with disabilities (PWDs), and smallholder farmers, as identified through stakeholder consultations and documented evidence. Women often bear the brunt of climate impacts due to their roles in subsistence agriculture and household resource management, especially in the North Central and North East regions, where droughts and land degradation have reduced access to water and arable land. Youth, particularly in urban areas, face challenges related to displacement and unemployment due to flooding and infrastructure collapse, most notably in the South West. Persons with disabilities encounter heightened vulnerabilities due to mobility constraints, lack of access to appropriate information on disaster preparedness, lack of inclusive planning in disaster response mechanisms, limiting their ability to adapt or evacuate during extreme events.

Smallholder farmers, spread across all the geopolitical and ecological zones, are

disproportionately affected by erratic rainfall, desertification, and pollution, directly undermining their livelihoods. Coastal communities in the Niger Delta face existential threats from oil pollution, biodiversity loss, and rising sea levels, with their fishing and farming livelihoods at risk. Marginalised populations across all zones frequently lack representation in climate governance structures, which results in policies that fail to address their specific needs. The compounding effects of these challenges, combined with systemic inequalities and inadequate support mechanisms, amplify the hardships faced by these groups, underscoring the need for inclusive climate governance.

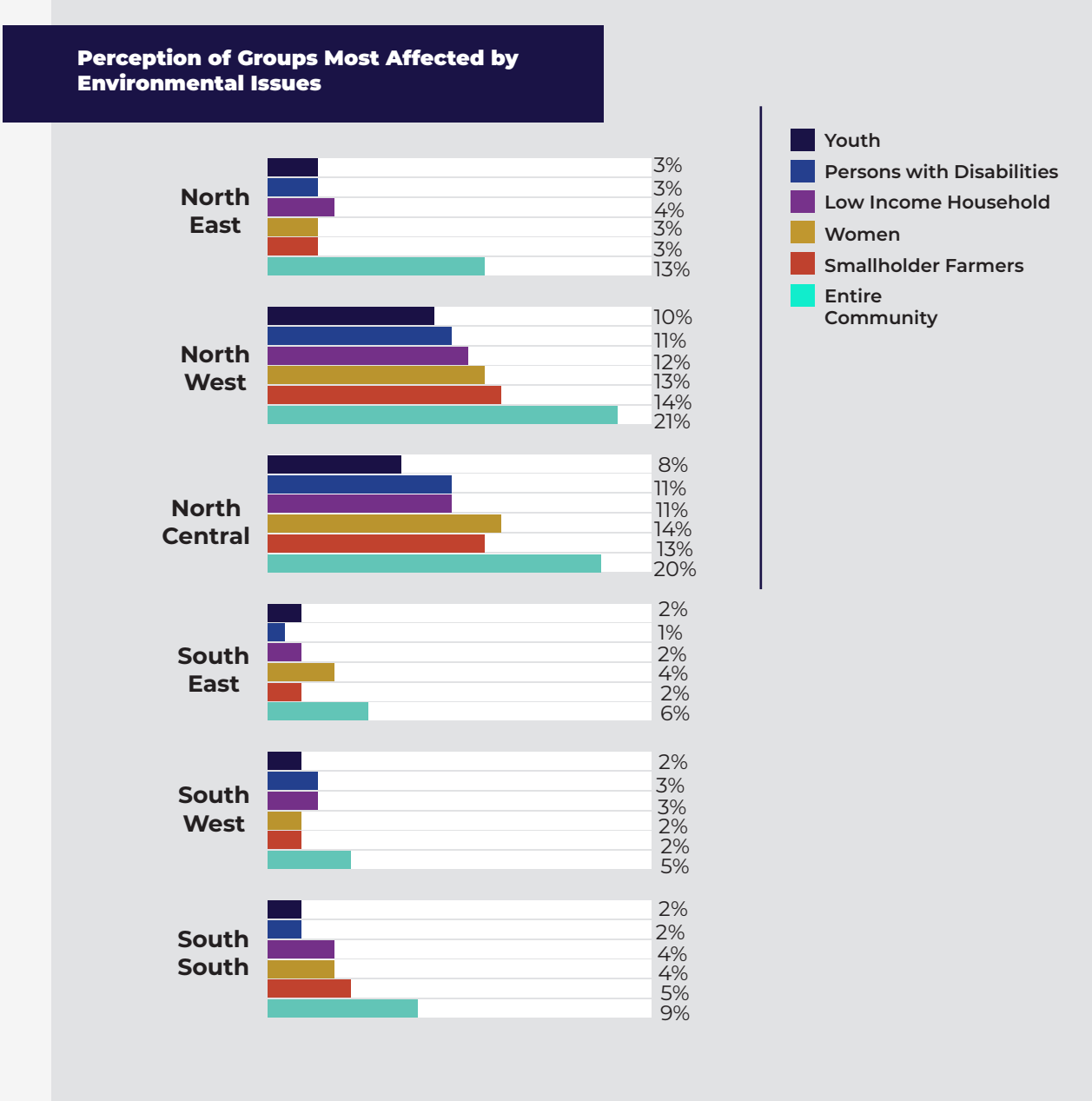


Figure 9: Group Most Affected (Source: Field Survey 2024)

3.1.4 Marginalised Group Participation in Climate Governance

Participation of marginalised groups, such as women, youth, persons with disabilities (PWDs), and Indigenous communities, in Nigeria's climate governance, remains limited despite their disproportionate vulnerability to climate change impacts. Structural barriers, socio-economic inequalities, and governance deficits hinder these groups from accessing decision-making platforms, contributing to policies that often overlook their specific needs and perspectives.

Women, particularly those in rural areas, are heavily involved in agriculture and household resource management, yet they are rarely included in formal climate governance processes. Cultural norms, inadequate representation, and limited access to information and resources prevent them from influencing policies that directly affect their livelihoods. Similarly, youth, who represent a significant portion of Nigeria's population, are excluded from leadership roles and consultations on climate strategies despite being key stakeholders in long-term climate resilience. The distrust between the government and marginalised groups has often led to a sense of helplessness, causing some individuals to lose hope and become unmotivated to engage completely.However, women- and youth-led CSOs, such as the Women Environmental Programme (WEP) and other youth lead SDGs networks, play a crucial role in bridging this gap by advocating for inclusive climate policies, providing grassroots capacity-building programs, and facilitating direct engagement between marginalised communities and policymakers, helping restore trust and empower these actors to participate in governance.

Persons with disabilities face compounded challenges in participating in climate governance due to physical and systemic barriers, including inaccessible meeting venues, lack of inclusive communication formats, and insufficient consideration of their needs in disaster response planning. Indigenous and local communities, particularly in the South and North East, are often excluded from consultations, even though their traditional knowledge and lived experiences are invaluable for designing effective adaptation strategies.

Inadequate stakeholder engagement mechanisms, top-down policymaking, and weak accountability systems further undermine efforts to include marginalised groups. Stakeholder consultations are frequently tokenistic, with limited follow-through on incorporating feedback into actionable policies. Although the Climate Change Act (2021) mandates stakeholder inclusion, it lacks legally binding provisions for structured consultations, leaving most processes discretionary or donor-driven rather than locally initiated. As a result, consultations led by international donors tend to emphasize inclusivity, while government-driven processes often remain exclusive, reinforcing the exclusion of marginalised voices in climate governance. The lack of legal and institutional frameworks guaranteeing the participation of marginalised groups in climate governance perpetuates their exclusion.

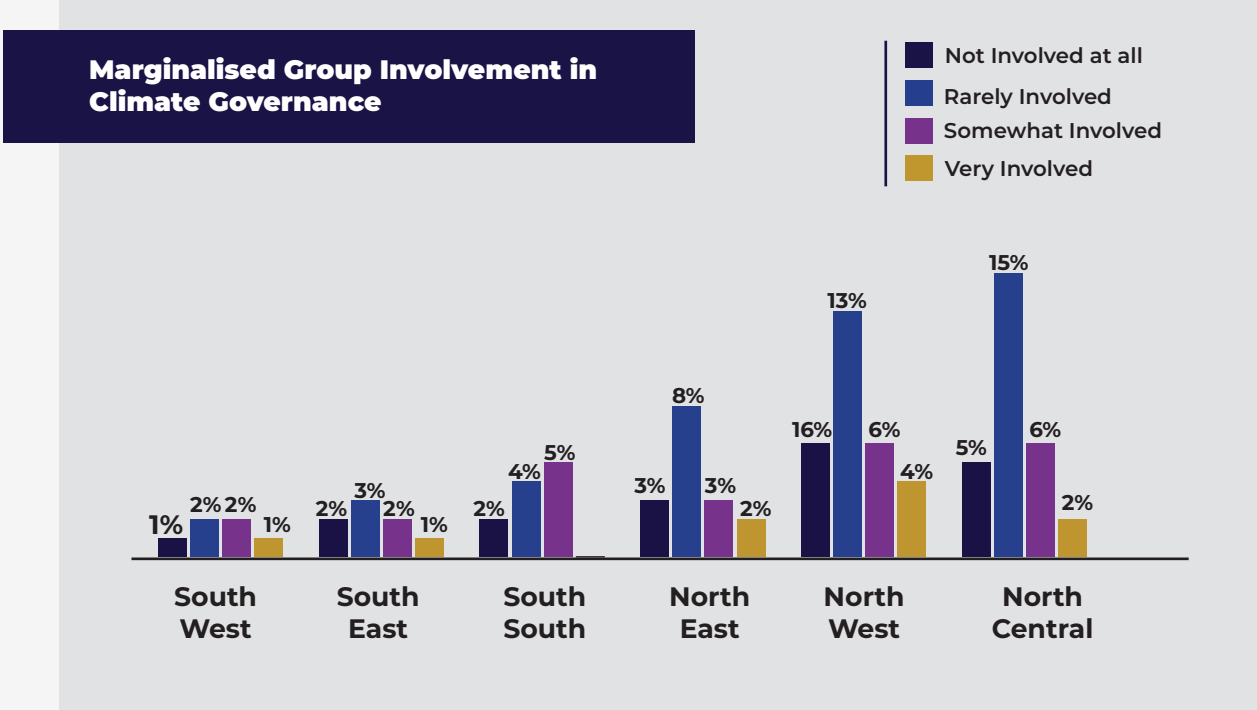


Figure 10: Group involvement in climate governance

3.2 Barriers to Participation in Climate Governance Across Geopolitical Zones

Institutional and Structural Barriers

Institutional weaknesses are a recurring challenge to climate governance across Nigeria's geopolitical zones. In the North Central region, weak local governance structures and unclear mandates for regional agencies hinder effective grassroots engagement. Community members often lack formal channels to voice concerns or contribute to climate policy discussions. In the North East, security challenges such as insurgency and displacement disrupt governance systems, overshadowing climate concerns and limiting the participation of affected communities in decision-making processes. The absence of stable governance further marginalises voices in these conflict-affected areas. Similarly, in the North West, traditional hierarchies dominate decision-making, often excluding women, youth, and other marginalised groups due to entrenched cultural norms. Recent high incidents of banditry and kidnapping have further exacerbated insecurity, shifting governance attention from climate change. The South-East struggles with ethnic militias, fragmented institutional frameworks and overlapping responsibilities among agencies, which create confusion and reduce transparency. In the South-South, corporate dominance by oil companies and their collaborators marginalises local activism and voices in environmental management, sidelining community input in decisions that directly impact their lives. In urban centres such as Lagos in the southwest, bureaucratic inefficiencies and elitist decision-making prioritise economic interests over inclusivity, limiting the scope for broader participation.

Socio-Cultural and Gender Barriers

Cultural norms and gender disparities are significant barriers to participation in climate governance, particularly in the rural areas of the North Central and North West regions. Patriarchal structures discourage women and marginalised groups from taking part in public discussions, reinforcing systemic exclusion. In the North East, traditional gender roles further limit women's involvement in governance processes. At the same time, displaced persons often face social stigma and are rarely consulted on policies affecting their resettlement and adaptation needs. In the South East, ethnic divisions and historical tensions erode trust in centralised climate initiatives, reducing community participation. In the South-South, gender inequities intersect with environmental challenges, where women, despite bearing the brunt of pollution and land degradation, are largely excluded from decision-making platforms. Urbanisation in the South West has created stark divides between affluent populations and marginalised groups in informal settlements, further limiting the latter's influence in urban climate governance.

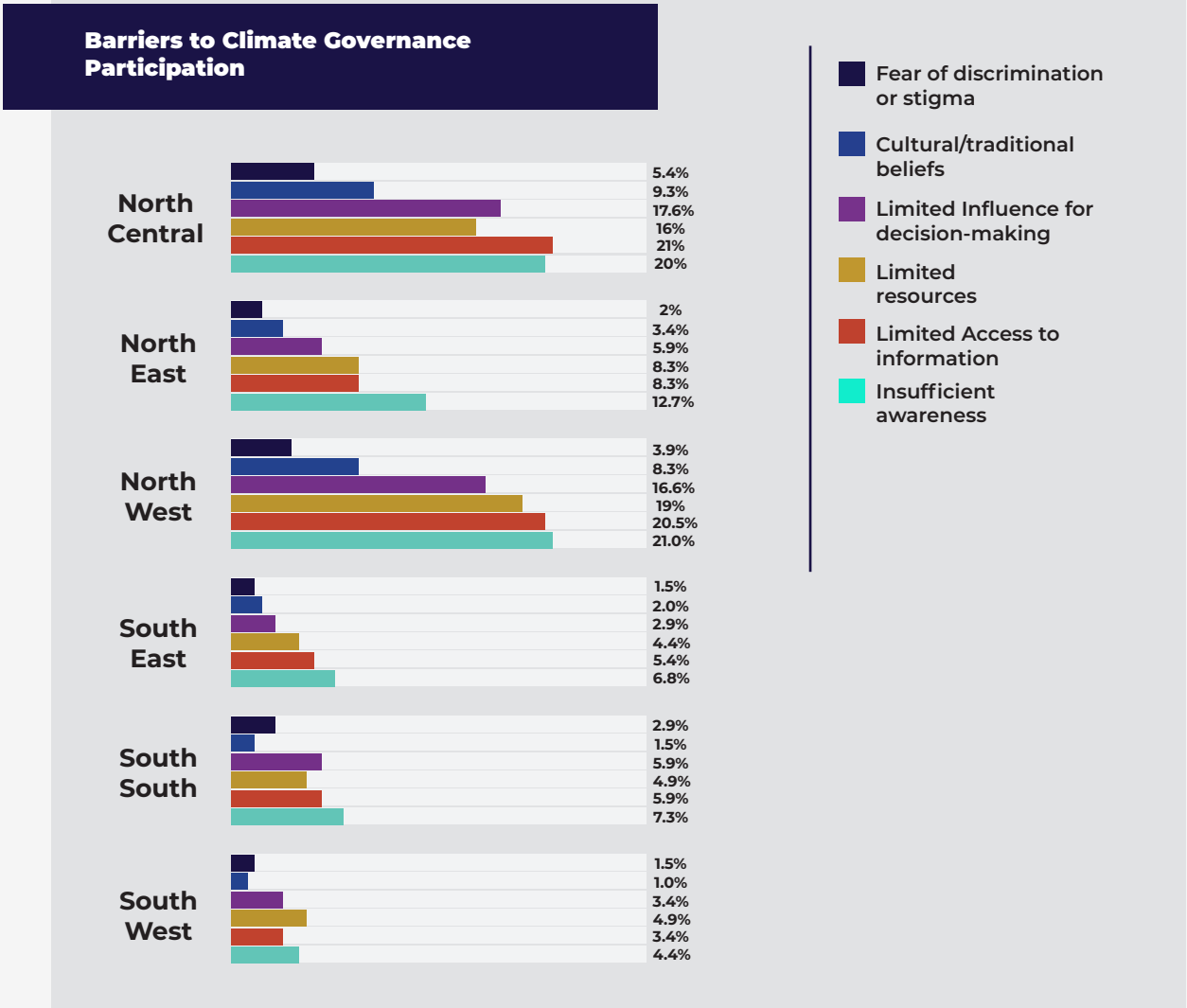


Figure 11: Barriers to participation in climate governance

Economic and Resource Barriers

Economic constraints are another significant challenge to participation in climate governance. In the North Central and North West, limited financial resources prevent local governments from facilitating capacity-building initiatives or engaging communities effectively. Where resources are available, the political will to allocate or prioritise climate governance is often low. Chronic poverty, unemployment and the absence of an effective social protection system in almost all the northern zones exacerbate barriers to engagement, as survival priorities often overshadow participation in governance processes. Resource conflicts between farmers and herders in the North West divert attention from broader climate issues, reducing focus on inclusive governance. In the Southeast, economic constraints among smallholder farmers and rural populations restrict their ability to attend stakeholder meetings or access necessary information. Similarly, oil-dependent economies prioritise short-term profits over sustainable practices in the South-South, sidelining community interests. In urban areas of the South West, inadequate resources in informal settlements limit their participation in climate adaptation planning.

Information and Awareness Barriers

The lack of accessible and actionable information is a pervasive barrier across all zones. In the North Central and North East, insufficient climate education and poor communication infrastructure hinder awareness, leaving communities unaware of their rights or the importance of engaging in governance processes. This is even worse for persons with disabilities as no tailored information package is available to address their peculiar challenges. In the North West, language barriers and the absence of localised communication strategies limit the inclusion of rural populations. In the South-East and South-South, misinformation and distrust of government-led initiatives further reduce public interest in participating in climate governance efforts. Urban areas in the South West, while benefiting from higher literacy rates, often lack accessible information about how to engage with governance structures effectively.

Policy and Regulatory Barriers

Nigeria's regulatory framework for participation in climate governance is primarily anchored in the Climate Change Act (2021), the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Act (1992), the Land Use Act (1978), and national policies such as the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). The Climate Change Act formally establishes the National Council on Climate Change (NCCC) as the coordinating body responsible for climate governance and mandates stakeholder engagement. However, it lacks binding provisions detailing structured participation mechanisms, making consultations largely discretionary. Similarly, the EIA Act (1992) stipulates public participation in environmental decision-making, yet enforcement is weak, particularly in industries like oil and gas, where regulatory capture undermines compliance. The Land Use Act and urban planning laws further complicate governance by creating conflicts between federal, state, and local authorities, particularly in land-use planning and climate adaptation efforts.

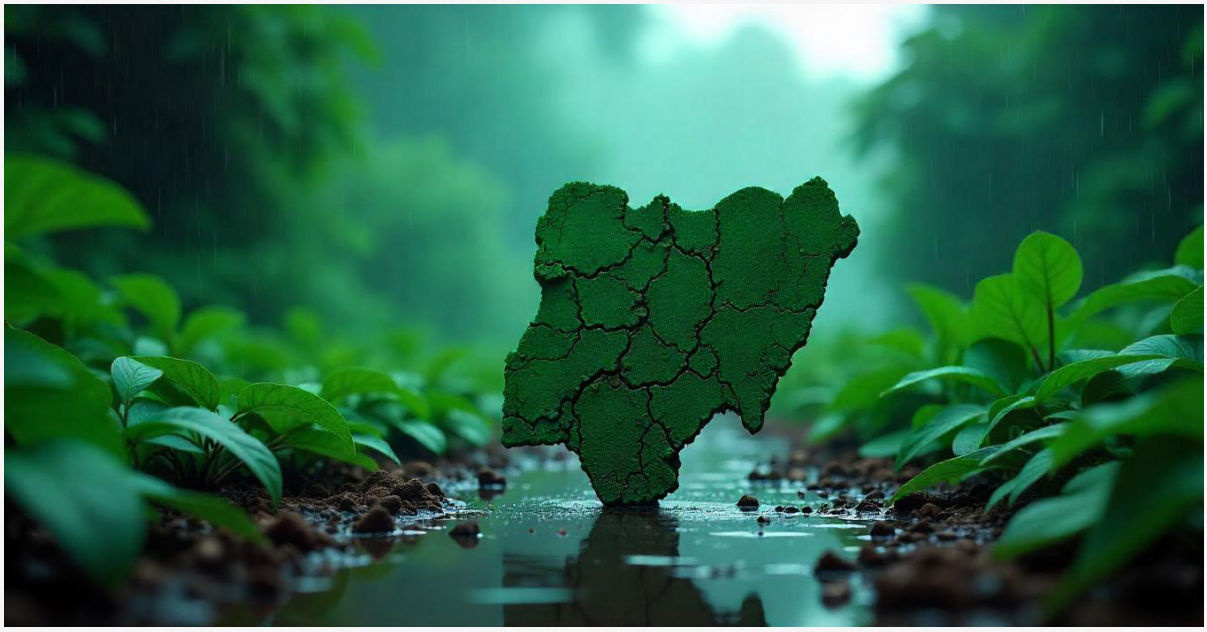
Policy inconsistencies and weak enforcement frameworks further undermine participation in climate governance. In the North Central and North West, inconsistent implementation of land-use and climate policies creates distrust, deterring communities from engaging

with governance systems. The absence of tailored policies for conflict-affected regions in the North East excludes most areas from broader national climate strategies, leading to further marginalization. The South East grapples with overlapping mandates between federal, state, and local authorities, leading to confusion and reduced effectiveness of participatory frameworks. In the South South, regulatory capture by oil companies prevents the proper enforcement of environmental laws, marginalizing communities most affected by pollution and limiting their participation in governance. Urban climate governance in the South West heavily prioritizes economic growth, often neglecting the needs of marginalised populations in policy design and implementation, particularly in informal settlements vulnerable to climate-related disasters.

These regulatory gaps contribute to broader policy contradictions, such as Nigeria's continued fossil fuel subsidies undermining its emission reduction commitments under the NDCs, weak enforcement of land restoration programs despite afforestation initiatives like the Great Green Wall, and the prioritization of rapid urbanization over climate resilience planning in the South West. Furthermore, regulatory fragmentation prevents coordinated responses to climate impacts, limiting opportunities for meaningful stakeholder engagement. Nigeria's ambition to create an inclusive and effective climate governance framework remains largely unrealized without clear legal mandates, strong enforcement mechanisms, and harmonised policies.

Cross-Cutting Barriers

Across all regions, marginalised groups face systemic exclusion from climate governance. Limited legal provisions guaranteeing participation, tokenistic stakeholder engagement processes, and inadequate funding for capacity-building initiatives perpetuate their marginalisation. These barriers underscore the urgent need for reforms to create inclusive governance frameworks that empower marginalised groups to actively participate in shaping Nigeria's climate future. Addressing these barriers requires targeted interventions at all levels of governance, enhanced resource allocation, and sustained efforts to integrate



3.2.1 Quality of Representation of Marginalised Groups in Climate Governance

The study's findings reveal that the representation of Marginalised groups in climate governance across Nigeria's geopolitical zones is mainly ineffective and inconsistent. While various policies and frameworks highlight the importance of inclusivity, their implementation has fallen short, leaving critical voices from women, youth, persons with disabilities (PWDs), and indigenous communities unrepresented or underrepresented in decision-making processes.

Across all geopolitical zones, representation is often tokenistic, with marginalised groups included in climate governance structures primarily to fulfil procedural requirements rather than to influence policy outcomes. Stakeholder engagement processes are frequently top-down, and consultations with marginalised groups rarely translate into actionable changes in policies or programs. This lack of substantive engagement has resulted in climate policies that fail to address these groups' specific vulnerabilities and priorities.

In the North Central and North East, cultural and socio-economic barriers heavily limit the participation of women and youth, particularly in rural areas. Decision-making forums are often dominated by traditional hierarchies and political elites, with marginalised groups having little influence. In conflict-affected regions of the North East, the displacement of communities further compounds these challenges, as internally displaced persons (IDPs) are rarely included in governance processes that directly impact their resettlement or adaptation strategies.

In the North West, similar patterns are observed, with entrenched patriarchal norms and resource conflicts between farmers and herders further marginalising vulnerable groups. Youth in this region often face unemployment and lack access to platforms where they can advocate for climate-resilient livelihoods despite being disproportionately affected by climate risks such as desertification.

The South East and South South zones lack trust between marginalised groups and governance institutions. In the South East, ethnic and historical tensions undermine inclusive decision-making. At the same time, in the South-South, corporate dominance by oil companies in climate-related discussions sidelines the voices of local communities most affected by environmental degradation and pollution. Women and youth in these regions often feel excluded from important discussions regarding land use, remediation, and coastal protection, as other vested interest groups dominate the process.

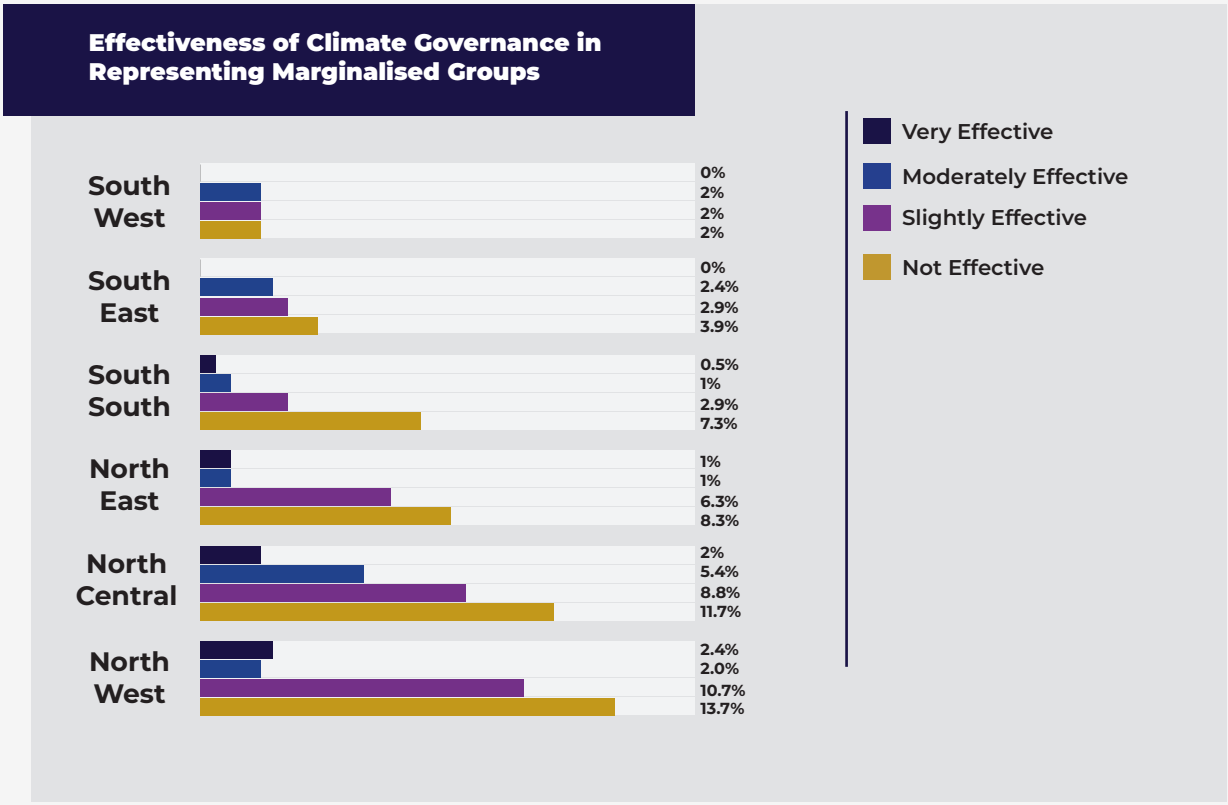


Figure 12: Effectiveness of governance system in representing marginalised groups

In the South West, urbanisation has created stark disparities in representation. While urban areas like Lagos have better access to governance structures, marginalised groups, particularly those from informal settlements, are not included in urban climate adaptation strategies. These communities often lack the resources, information, and institutional support to participate effectively in climate governance.

The study highlights systemic barriers to effective representation, including weak legal and institutional frameworks to mandate participation, lack of accessible platforms for engagement, and limited political will to prioritise inclusivity. Marginalised groups often lack the capacity and resources to advocate for their interests, while governance structures remain ill-equipped to accommodate diverse perspectives. This ineffective representation perpetuates a cycle of exclusion, leaving the most vulnerable groups further disadvantaged in the face of climate change.

3.2.2 Access to Climate Information

The study reveals that access to climate information across Nigeria's geopolitical zones is slightly accessible but remains uneven and ineffective. While national policies and laws such as the Freedom of Information Act provide a legal framework for access to information and transparency, their implementation is inconsistent across regions. In urban areas, particularly in the South West and parts of the South East, access to climate information is relatively better due to higher literacy rates, improved communication infrastructure, and active civil society organisations. However, even in these zones, the information often lacks relevance to local contexts or is disseminated in formats that are not easily understandable to marginalised groups or outright denial of access to such information. Furthermore, stakeholders noted that climate information focuses on broader policy goals rather than actionable, localised data, limiting its utility for community-level adaptation and mitigation efforts.

In rural areas, particularly in the North East, North West, and parts of the South-South, access to climate information is severely constrained by poor infrastructure, low literacy rates, and linguistic barriers. Many rural communities rely on traditional media, such as radio, for information, yet climate content is rarely tailored to their needs or delivered in local languages. Additionally, a lack of targeted outreach programs further marginalises vulnerable populations who are already disproportionately affected by climate risks. The absence of localised Measurement, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) systems and insufficient coordination among local government agencies exacerbates the gap in information dissemination. As a result, communities most vulnerable to climate impacts often need to be made aware of policies, programs, or resources available to them, leaving them ill-equipped to engage in governance processes or adopt climate-resilient practices.

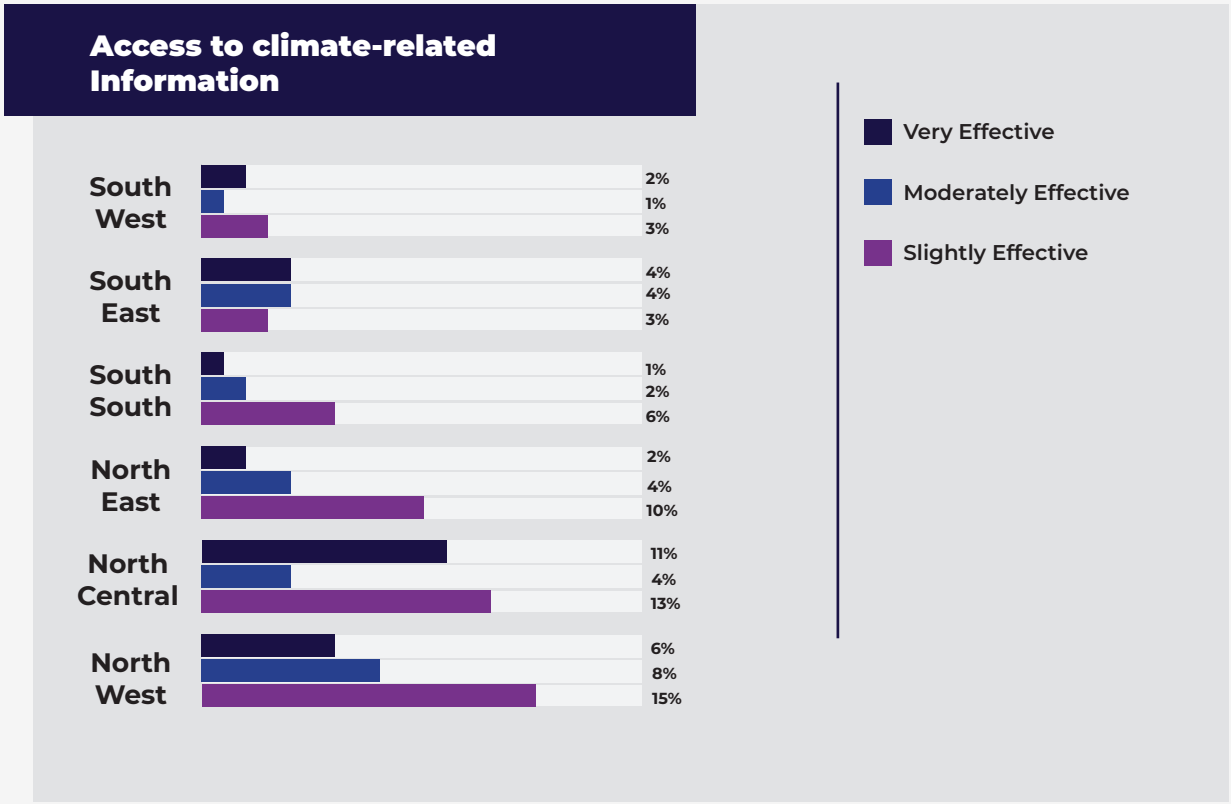


Figure 13: Access to climate-related information

3.2.3 Transparency of the Climate Governance Process

The study highlights that transparency in Nigeria's climate governance process is perceived as limited across the geopolitical zones, with most stakeholders indicating that it is either "not transparent" or only "somewhat transparent." Key governance functions, including policy formulation, resource allocation, and implementation, are often shrouded in opacity, undermining public trust and accountability. Across the zones, stakeholders consistently raised concerns about the lack of accessible information regarding the development and execution of climate policies and the absence of mechanisms to track progress effectively. Although the Climate Change Act (2021) includes provisions aimed at enhancing transparency—such as carbon budgeting, annual climate reporting, and stakeholder participation—weak enforcement, the absence of a publicly accessible reporting mechanism, and the lack of clear financial accountability structures have limited its effectiveness in addressing governance capacity.

In the North Central and North East, transparency could be better, with limited public awareness about climate-related programs and decisions. Communities in these regions often feel excluded from governance processes due to inadequate communication from authorities and weak mechanisms for stakeholder engagement. Similarly, traditional hierarchies and local elite dominance in the North West further obscure decision-making, with little effort to share climate governance updates or financial expenditures with affected communities. Across these northern zones, the absence of accessible Measurement, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) systems compounds the issue, as there is no reliable mechanism to assess whether policies and interventions are achieving their intended outcomes.

In the southern zones, transparency challenges also persist, though to a somewhat lesser degree. Corporate interests dominate environmental governance in the South-South, particularly in oil and gas activities. Stakeholders from this region reported that oil spill remediation processes, coastal protection plans, and biodiversity conservation programs often lack transparency, with decisions influenced by private sector priorities rather than community needs. In the South East and South West, urban stakeholders noted limited public reporting on the progress of climate adaptation and mitigation initiatives, with most information centralised at federal levels and rarely shared in accessible formats for local actors. Even in areas where climate projects are implemented, stakeholders observed a disconnect between stated objectives and on-ground realities, further eroding public trust.

The lack of independent oversight institutions exacerbates the transparency deficit across all zones. Key implementing agencies, such as the Department of Climate Change and the National Council on Climate Change, often operate with limited external accountability. At the same time, inter-ministerial committees responsible for climate coordination lack statutory powers to enforce transparency. The National Council on Climate Change (NCCC), as foreseen under the Climate Change Act (2021), has the legal mandate to improve transparency by overseeing climate governance, coordinating inter-agency efforts, tracking climate finance, and enforcing compliance through its statutory powers. However,

its effectiveness in addressing these challenges will depend on full operationalisation, institutional independence, and strong enforcement mechanisms to ensure transparency is not undermined by political interference or weak subnational coordination. Financial opacity is another significant issue, as stakeholders across zones pointed to the absence of transparent reporting on the allocation and utilisation of climate funds, whether from domestic budgets or international aid. Turf wars, overlapping mandates, and competition over budget allocations among government agencies further deepen the lack of accountability.

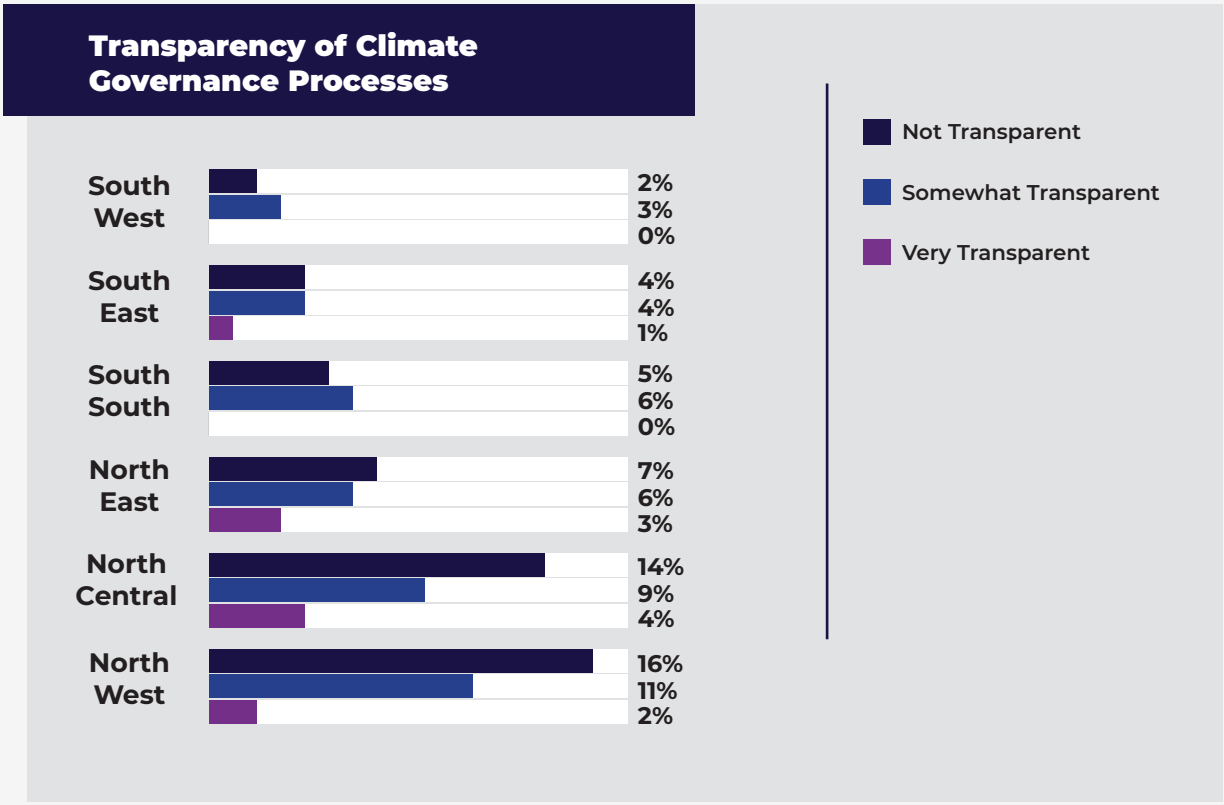


Figure 14: Transparency of the climate governance process

3.3 Unresolved challenges

Limited Inclusivity in Decision-Making- Marginalised groups, including women, youth, and persons with disabilities, are often inadequately represented in climate governance structures. There is a lack of deliberate efforts to ensure genuine inclusivity. Findings suggest that there are more political slogans and rhetoric than actual commitments to ensure that the right individuals with valuable perspectives are present and have input in the decision-making process. This exclusion results in policies that do not fully address the specific needs of these communities, ultimately reducing the effectiveness of climate adaptation and mitigation efforts.

Fragmented Policy Frameworks- overlapping mandates and a lack of coordination among government agencies result in “turf wars” and inefficiencies. This fragmentation hinders the development and implementation of cohesive climate strategies, delaying progress in

addressing environmental challenges and often not being cost-effective.
Resource Allocation Disparities- effective response to climate change is a function of resource availability and prioritisation. Therefore, states or entities with strong financial bases and political commitments tend to fare better. This disparity results in an imbalance exacerbating existing inequalities and leaves certain areas more susceptible to climate impacts.

Weak Institutional Capacity- local government bodies frequently lack the technical expertise and resources to design, plan and implement effective climate adaptation measures. This deficiency undermines the execution of climate policies and lowers the adaptive capacity of communities to build resilience to environmental changes.

Inadequate Monitoring and Accountability- corruption undermines democratic processes and hampers sustainable development efforts. The absence of robust mechanisms for monitoring and assessing the impacts of climate interventions leads to inefficiencies and missed opportunities for improvement. Additionally, transparency issues in project implementation breed mistrust among stakeholders, further hindering progress.

Social Norms and Cultural Barriers-traditional power dynamics and gender roles limit the participation of women and marginalised groups in climate governance. These social structures impede access to finance and economic growth that can foster transformational change for these vulnerable groups.

3.3.1 Analysis of Post-Legislative Scrutiny (PLS) for the Nigerian Climate Change Act

The Climate Change Act of 2021 provides a legal framework for Nigeria's climate governance, outlining mandates such as the establishment of a carbon budgeting process, the creation of adaptation plans, and the operationalisation of the National Council on Climate Change (NCCC). However, a review of the Act and its implementation suggests that Post-Legislative Scrutiny (PLS) has not been fully institutionalized, and existing mechanisms remain skeletal at best. For instance, while the Act mandates reporting requirements such as periodic progress assessments by the NCCC, these reviews are limited to high-level summaries and lack the detailed technical evaluations characteristic of a robust PLS framework. Furthermore, there is no independent body tasked with conducting external audits of the Act's implementation, leaving a gap in accountability and transparency.

Currently, the NCCC, which should play a pivotal role in monitoring the Act's implementation, is constrained by operational bottlenecks, such as incomplete membership, limited funding, and weak integration with state-level frameworks.

For example, while the Act envisions state-level councils to complement the NCCC's national efforts, the establishment of such councils is inconsistent, with significant regional disparities in their functionality. Without a structured PLS mechanism, these gaps persist unaddressed, reducing the effectiveness of the Act. Additionally, there is no formalised process for incorporating lessons learned from implementation into legislative reviews, which hinders the Act's evolution in response to emerging climate risks and global best practices.

An important skeletal feature of PLS observed in Nigeria is the Climate Change Act's requirement for periodic progress reporting on national climate targets, such as the carbon budget and adaptation plans. However, these reports have largely focused on high-level achievements without a critical examination of on-ground implementation challenges, such as resource allocation inefficiencies or alignment between federal and state priorities. In contrast, robust PLS frameworks, such as those in the UK's Climate Change Act, involve independent, legally mandated reviews by an external body, which Nigeria currently lacks. For the National Assembly to fully be able to advance Post-Legislative Scrutiny (PLS) on the Climate Change Act as a parliamentary oversight practice, Nigeria needs to establish independent oversight mechanisms to generate and manage the necessary data, develop technical guidelines for legislative reviews, and create participatory platforms that include civil society, academia, and marginalised groups.

3.3.2 Assessment of Climate Proofing in Climate-Related Policies and National Development Plans

A critical evaluation of Nigeria's climate-related policies and national development plans reveals that climate proofing has not been systematically or uniformly applied across governance frameworks. While some policies make reference to climate risks, there is no standardized or legally mandated climate proofing process embedded within policymaking structures. For example, the National Adaptation Plan Framework (NAPF) emphasizes the importance of adaptation across sectors, but it lacks operational guidelines or climate risk assessment tools to evaluate the compatibility of sectoral policies with Nigeria's climate goals. Similarly, the National Development Plan 2021–2025, while highlighting renewable energy and sustainable development, does not include mechanisms to evaluate or mitigate the climate impacts of proposed infrastructure projects or economic initiatives.
Key climate policies, such as the National Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Policy (NREEEP) and the Economic Sustainability Plan (ESP), also lack explicit climate proofing frameworks. The NREEEP, for instance, promotes renewable energy but does not account for climate resilience in its implementation, such as ensuring energy infrastructure can withstand extreme weather events. Similarly, the ESP prioritizes economic recovery but overlooks how initiatives like rural electrification or agricultural expansion could integrate adaptive measures to address flooding, drought, or land degradation. This omission risks undermining the sustainability and resilience of these programs.

The lack of climate proofing also creates inconsistencies between national policies and Nigeria's international commitments, such as the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For instance, policies promoting agricultural expansion in

the north fail to consider the region's vulnerability to desertification, leading to potential maladaptation. To address this, Nigeria must introduce mandatory climate proofing guidelines across all policymaking processes. This would involve developing sector-specific climate risk screening tools, establishing climate proofing as a requirement during legislative drafting and review, and training policymakers on integrating climate considerations into development plans.

At present, climate proofing efforts are ad hoc and project-specific rather than systemic. For instance, certain donor-funded programs, such as those supported by the Green Climate Fund (GCF), include climate risk assessments as part of project design, but these practices are not institutionalized within Nigeria's domestic policymaking structures. To achieve climate proofing at scale, a public policy imperative due to Nigeria's very high climate change vulnerability, Nigeria must adopt a comprehensive framework that mandates climate impact assessments for all policies, plans, and projects. This would align national development objectives with climate resilience goals, ensuring that climate risks are systematically addressed across sectors and levels of governance.

3.3.3 Missed opportunities

Nigeria has significant untapped potential to enhance its climate resilience and governance frameworks. A critical missed opportunity lies in the inadequate integration of climate risk assessments into governance processes. Although policies addressing region-specific vulnerabilities could significantly reduce risks, the absence of systematic risk assessments has prevented targeted responses. For example, failing to align policies with the realities of desertification in the north or recurrent flooding in coastal areas has left communities vulnerable. Strengthening institutional capacity and coordination across federal, state, and local levels could unlock more effective governance and enhance public trust.

The lack of robust early warning systems represents another area where Nigeria needs to catch up. While such systems could mitigate the impacts of floods, droughts, and extreme heat, limited investment and technical expertise have hindered their nationwide deployment. Early warning systems are particularly important for rural and low-income communities, which often bear the brunt of extreme weather events. Establishing clear information channels and disaster preparedness plans could provide these communities with the tools to adapt and respond proactively, reducing displacement, damages and poverty.

Institutionalising climate resilience or climate-proofing as a core governance priority or requirement remains an untapped opportunity. Integrating resilience into urban and rural planning can significantly reduce the vulnerability of infrastructure and livelihoods to climate impacts. However, competing political priorities have diverted focus from long-term adaptation strategies.

Similarly, global climate mechanisms, such as the Paris Agreement and the Green Climate Fund, offer underutilised funding and technology transfer opportunities. Better alignment with international frameworks could give Nigeria the resources to accelerate adaptation

and mitigation efforts, benefiting vulnerable populations directly.

Engaging local communities in decision-making is another area of missed potential. Centralised governance systems and limited participatory frameworks have excluded grassroots perspectives, resulting in policies that lack relevance to local realities. For instance, planning often overlooks traditional and indigenous knowledge, which could complement scientific approaches. These insights could strengthen resource management, biodiversity conservation, and community-driven adaptation strategies. Similarly, incorporating gender-sensitive and youth-inclusive approaches into governance could enhance the effectiveness of interventions while addressing systemic inequalities.

Nigeria's urban planning systems have yet to fully account for climate risks. Rapid urbanisation continues without integrating flooding, heat stress, and sustainable infrastructure considerations. This oversight has left cities like Lagos increasingly vulnerable to climate impacts. Improved enforcement of regulations and investment in technical expertise could enhance urban safety and sustainability. Additionally, underutilising international partnerships for funding and technical assistance limits Nigeria's ability to meet climate targets and strengthen resilience. Proactive engagement with global initiatives could bring much-needed resources and expertise to address local challenges.

Again, climate governance has not been fully integrated into peacebuilding efforts, and an opportunity to address the role of climate risks in fueling resource-based conflicts is missing. Policies that link environmental restoration with conflict resolution could mitigate farmer-herder clashes in regions like the North Central.

3.3.4 Emerging Opportunities

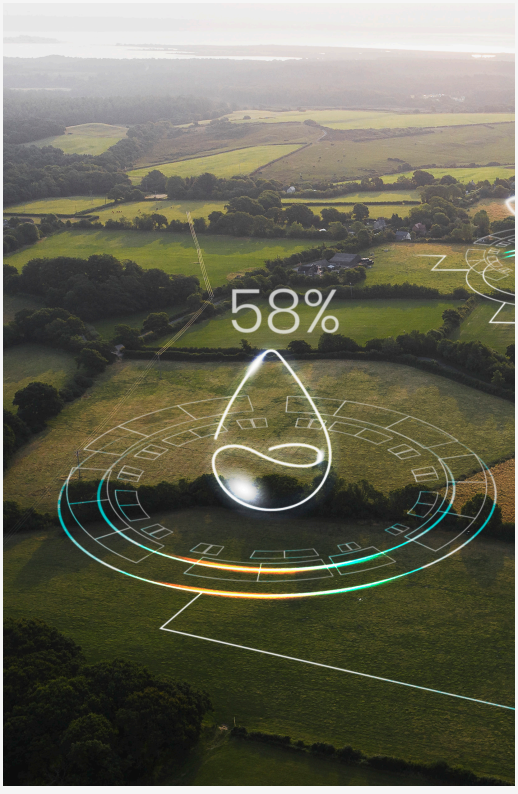
The Climate Change Act of 2021 offers a strengthened legal framework, providing a robust foundation for coordinated climate action at national and subnational levels. Once fully constituted, the composition and membership of the National Council on Climate Change (NCCC) can improve coordination among various stakeholders at both federal and state levels. It will also streamline policy formulation and enforcement while enhancing institutional capacity-building. This legal development presents an opportunity for the systematic integration of climate considerations across different levels of government, with subnational governments playing a crucial role in localised implementation to address specific vulnerabilities. As previously mentioned, the slow implementation of specific provisions of the Act, such as the Climate Fund, frequent changes in the leadership of the Council's Secretariat, and the lack of a statutory Action Plan or any known work plan for the NCCC, provides an opportunity for WFD to engage and strengthen governance.

Growing awareness and advocacy are reshaping the climate governance landscape, driven

by civil society organisations (CSOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and youth-led movements. These groups amplify marginalised voices, including women, youth, and persons with disabilities, and enhance grassroots participation. Their involvement in initiatives like mangrove restoration and flood management fosters environmental stewardship and accountability, paving the way for more inclusive governance models. Identifying and collaborating with such civil groups can deepen public participation and inclusive governance.

Nigeria's active participation in international climate agreements, such as the Paris Agreement, has unlocked pathways to international funding and technical assistance. Multilateral funding windows like Adaptation, Green Climate, and Loss and Damage Funds can provide critical support for adaptation and mitigation projects. This opportunity, particularly relevant for underserved regions such as the Niger Delta and northern arid zones, can bridge existing funding gaps and enable equitable climate action.

The current administration's focus on economic reforms, infrastructure development, and appropriate policies will hopefully improve Nigeria's attractiveness for climate-related investments. Reforms targeting renewable energy expansion, green job creation, and climate-resilient infrastructure establish a favourable environment for scaling up sustainable initiatives. These efforts align with global trends toward green economic transitions, offering Nigeria a competitive advantage in attracting international partnerships.



Decentralised climate action is gaining traction as states adopt localised climate policies and integrate climate objectives into their development agendas. Examples like Lagos' Climate Action Plan and Osun State's climate strategies showcase how tailored approaches can address region-specific risks, such as desertification in the north and coastal flooding, while fostering inclusivity and local ownership of solutions. Working with some of these state authorities to strengthen the implementation of some of the stale-led climate programmes can facilitate inclusive climate management at local levels and increase the participation of marginalised groups.

Technological advancements in climate data collection are another critical opportunity supported by initiatives from the Nigerian Meteorological Agency and other stakeholders. These technologies enhance early warning systems, climate risk mapping, and evidence-based policymaking, enabling more targeted interventions to protect vulnerable communities.

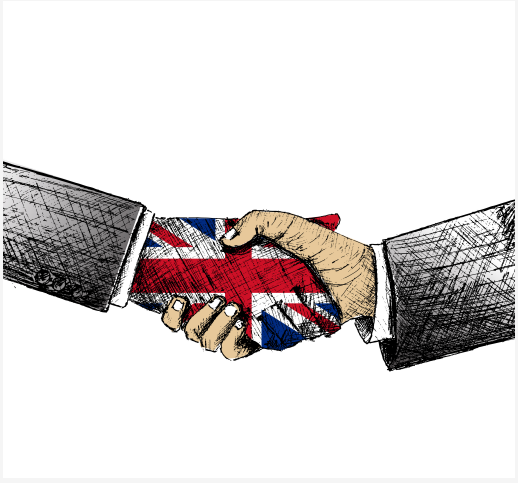
Efforts to engage marginalised communities in climate adaptation initiatives have shown promise, with pilot programs and institutional setups like the Disability Commission Act providing frameworks for inclusive governance. Scaling these initiatives can address systemic inequities in decision-making processes, ensuring that vulnerable populations are integral to climate resilience efforts.

The shift toward economic diversification, particularly reducing dependency on oil and promoting renewable energy and sustainable agriculture, creates resilient livelihoods. This transition is essential for mitigating the socioeconomic impacts of climate-induced livelihood losses, particularly in regions most affected by climate risks, and aligns with global sustainability goals.

Cross-sectoral collaboration is increasing, bringing together government agencies, the private sector, and research institutions. This collaboration enables innovative and integrated approaches to addressing climate challenges, such as urban flooding and biodiversity loss, and fosters a culture of shared responsibility for environmental sustainability. For instance, the Nigeria Electrification Project (NEP) brings together the Rural Electrification Agency (REA), World Bank, and private solar companies to expand off-grid renewable energy solutions. Similarly, collaborations such as AGRA's climate-smart agriculture initiatives with Flour Mills of Nigeria, Lagos State's flood resilience partnership with ARUP Engineering, and Shell's mangrove restoration efforts in the Niger Delta highlight how the private sector is actively engaged in addressing climate challenges through multi-stakeholder approaches. Youth-driven advocacy and grassroots mobilization are gaining momentum, injecting urgency and creativity into Nigeria's climate governance discourse. These movements demand accountability and systemic reforms and contribute to cultivating environmental awareness and stewardship, particularly in rural and underserved areas. Leveraging the tech-savviness, social media outreach and creative depth of these youth groups can amplify public participation and enhance inclusion.communities, which often bear the brunt of extreme weather events. Establishing clear information channels and disaster preparedness plans could provide these communities with the tools to adapt and respond proactively, reducing displacement, damages and poverty.

Enhancing Climate Governance Through Strategic Partnerships: The UK's PACE Initiative in Nigeria

In 2024, the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) initiated the Partnership for Agile Governance and Climate Engagement (PACE) to address Nigeria's complex governance and climate change challenges. The program is primarily focused on the north-western states of Kaduna, Kano, and Jigawa, while also engaging with stakeholders at both federal and regional levels. PACE aims to strengthen institutional accountability and inclusivity, ensuring that governance structures are equipped to develop



and implement effective policies in response to Nigeria's pressing climate issues.

A key strength of PACE is its integrated approach, which acknowledges that governance reforms and climate action must go hand in hand for sustainable development. Rather than treating these as separate issues, PACE fosters a holistic strategy that aligns institutional improvements with climate adaptation efforts.

Another defining feature of the program is coalition-building. Recognizing that a collaborative approach is essential for lasting change, PACE facilitates partnerships between government agencies, civil society organisations, the private sector, and other key stakeholders. By creating a network of engaged actors, the initiative enhances the potential for comprehensive and sustainable solutions to both governance inefficiencies and climate vulnerabilities.

Capacity enhancement is also a central pillar of PACE. The initiative seeks to improve public financial management and policy implementation, ensuring that governmental institutions are more responsive, transparent, and efficient. By strengthening these systems, PACE aims to foster better service delivery, increase citizen engagement, and create a governance framework that can effectively tackle climate change and its socio-economic consequences.

Despite its promising outlook, PACE faces several potential challenges. One major concern is Nigeria's complex political landscape, where shifting political interests and power dynamics may impact the consistency and effectiveness of the program's implementation. If governance reforms conflict with entrenched political interests, the initiative could struggle to maintain momentum.
Resource allocation is another potential barrier. Ensuring that adequate financial and human resources are available across all targeted regions is crucial for the program's success. Any disparities in resource distribution could hinder PACE's ability to achieve its objectives equitably.

Also, sustainability concerns loom over the initiative. The long-term impact of PACE depends on local institutions and communities taking ownership of the reforms introduced. Without robust local buy-in, there is a risk that the initiative's gains may not be sustained beyond its active implementation phase.

The Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) can strategically leverage the PACE initiative to advance its ongoing efforts in fostering inclusive climate governance in Nigeria. By aligning its work with PACE's objectives, WFD can enhance democratic accountability and citizen participation in climate decision-making. One way to achieve this is by facilitating multi-stakeholder

dialogues that bring together policymakers, civil society organisations, and marginalised groups—ensuring that governance reforms under PACE are inclusive and responsive to local needs. Additionally, WFD can support legislative oversight mechanisms, helping Nigeria's lawmakers scrutinize and refine climate policies in alignment with international best practices. Through capacity-building programs, WFD can also empower local institutions to effectively implement climate policies, ensuring that the reforms introduced by PACE are sustainable and institutionalized beyond the program's lifespan.

3.3.5 Assumptions

Maintenance of relative political stability enables sustained implementation of climate policies and programs. However, the risk of political instability, regional conflicts, and election-related disruptions, particularly in conflict-prone zones like the Northeast and North Central, could undermine progress and create significant implementation challenges.

Effective partner engagement is also assumed, with government agencies, private sector actors, and civil society organisations expected to collaborate on sensitive issues such as co-creating solutions, resource distribution, equity, and governance reforms. Yet, resistance from political elites or entrenched interests poses a risk to collaboration, potentially undermining transparency and limiting the impact of inclusive governance efforts.
The availability of international and domestic funding for climate initiatives is another critical assumption, supported by Nigeria's commitments under global frameworks like the Paris Agreement. However, economic downturns, shifting donor priorities, or fiscal mismanagement could jeopardize the consistent flow of resources needed to sustain adaptation and mitigation programs.

Accessible infrastructure and secure communication channels are assumed to facilitate effective stakeholder engagement across Nigeria's diverse geopolitical zones. Poor infrastructure, coupled with security challenges across all the regions, presents a significant risk, potentially limiting access to affected communities and constraining collaboration among key actors.

Community willingness to engage in climate governance and adopt sustainable practices is seen as a foundational assumption. This hinges on providing marginalised groups with adequate resources and information. However, entrenched cultural norms, low levels of climate literacy, and immediate economic hardships could divert attention from long-term climate goals, reducing the community's interest in participation.

The capacity and commitment of government institutions, particularly the Ministry of

Environment/NCCC, are assumed to be sufficient to implement and monitor climate policies effectively. Institutional rivalry, overlapping mandates, and corruption remain significant risks that could hinder the enforcement and operationalisation of critical climate governance measures.

Private sector participation in climate-smart technologies, renewable energy, and sustainable business practices is anticipated to grow. Yet, the absence of clear regulatory frameworks, robust climate investment strategies, insufficient incentives, and misalignment with broader climate goals may reduce private sector investment and involvement, limiting opportunities for innovation and progress.

Stability in the legal and policy frameworks governing climate action, such as the Climate Change Act, is a crucial assumption. Delayed implementation or shifts in political priorities could weaken these frameworks, undermining their potential to drive effective and inclusive governance.

Nigeria's continued engagement in international collaborations and technical partnerships is expected to enhance its capacity to tackle climate change. However, global geopolitical tensions or shifting international priorities pose a risk to sustaining these partnerships, potentially reducing the level of external support available for critical projects.

Lastly, the availability of reliable climate data and research to guide policy and project design is assumed. A lack of funding or inadequate coordination among research institutions could hinder the accessibility and quality of region-specific data, undermining evidence-based decision-making and targeted interventions.

3.4 Systems, Practices & Structures

Nigeria's climate governance is anchored in a centralised institutional structure with overlapping roles at national and state levels. At the national level, the Federal Ministry of Environment plays a lead role in formulating climate policies, supported by agencies such as the National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA), NOSDRA, Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria (FRIN), Great Green Wall Agency and the National Parks Board, and other entities from other ministries like the Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NiMet). The recently established National Council on Climate Change (NCCC), under the Climate Change Act (2021), is a coordinating body for national climate actions, including adaptation and mitigation strategies. However, its operationalisation is nascent, with limited integration of sub-national frameworks.

At the state level, climate governance is less formalised. Still, it is beginning to crystallize in some few states adopting climate action plans, such as Lagos, Kaduna, Borno, Kano, Ekiti, Cross Rivers and Osun. Even with these new efforts, effective governance remains a function of the available resources for the state to implement its climate plans effectively and the willingness of the State Governor to provide the right leadership. Not all states have equal resources, capacities and technical knowledge. Disparities in terms of their economic base, peculiar climate vulnerabilities and revenue allocation influence their

level of implementation. The commitment of their respective State Houses of Assembly to appropriate budgetary allocation for climate action is a determinant factor of success. Equally, the level of enforcement of environmental laws and regulations by their respective State Environmental Agencies and other relevant regulatory agencies is key. The awareness of ecological and human rights among citizens and other non-state actors significantly affects their engagement with these issues and their pursuit of redress in cases of violations. Additionally, deep-seated historical barriers and social norms that disadvantage women and youth can also shape the direction of reforms related to environmental matters.

The lack of the financial and technical capacity to implement policies effectively results in region-specific challenges like flooding or desertification being inadequately addressed. Collaboration between national and state institutions remains weak, characterised by fragmented efforts and limited alignment with local needs, further hindering the localisation and effectiveness of climate governance.

3.4.1 Formal Systems

In Nigeria, the formal systems of climate governance are defined by established legal frameworks, decision-making structures, and institutional mechanisms, yet these systems face significant gaps. The Climate Change Act (2021) provides a foundation for national policy, but enforcement and localization remain inadequate, especially in vulnerable regions like the Niger Delta and northern zones. Overlapping mandates among ministries and agencies lead to inefficiencies, rivalries, and reduced policy impact. Climate governance is largely centralised, with decisions dominated by the executive branch, leaving limited roles for judicial and legislative oversight. Election cycles, high turnover of parliamentarians and inconsistent policy implementation hinder long-term planning. Moreover, marginalised groups, such as women, youth, and persons with disabilities (PWDs), have minimal representation in governance structures, curbing the inclusivity of climate strategies. While formal provisions exist for public participation and access to information under the Climate Change Act (2021), the Freedom of Information (FoI) Act (2011), and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Act (1992), weak enforcement, limited public awareness, and the absence of structured consultation frameworks significantly reduce their effectiveness. Public engagement remains largely discretionary, with limited access to climate data, elite-dominated decision-making processes, and weak institutional mechanisms preventing widespread participation, particularly at the grassroots level.

Informal systems are influenced by cultural norms, social perceptions, and economic dependencies, which shape community behaviours and engagement with climate governance. Traditional norms often exclude women and youth from decision-making, particularly in rural areas, while faith-based interpretations in some communities undermine scientific approaches to climate issues. Social perceptions of women and

PWDs as dependents reduce their roles in governance, and climate risks need to be better communicated in local languages, limiting rural participation. Economically, reliance on fossil fuels and resource allocation driven by elite interests undermines transitions to renewable energy and neglect vulnerable communities' needs.

Practices

Formal Practices in climate governance focus on policy development, legislative oversight, institutional mechanisms, and public consultation. National policies and legislations such as the Climate Change Act (2021), National Adaptation Plan Framework (NAPF), and Just Transition Plan emphasize broad goals but need more localization to address region-specific challenges. The opaque electoral process that compromises voting rights and franchises, coupled with limited legislative influence due to executive dominance and fixation on the next election cycle, has rendered the legislature weak and merely a rubber stamp. Poor inter-agency coordination and resource allocation hinder mechanisms like the National Council on Climate Change (NCCC) and state-level climate desks. Public consultations are conducted sporadically, but accessibility barriers often exclude marginalised groups, leaving many policies disconnected from diverse community needs.

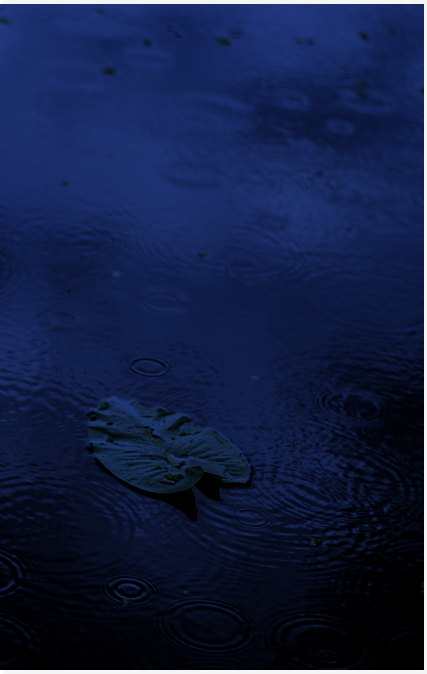
Cultural and social norms, information dissemination, and economic dependencies shape Informal Practices. Gendered roles and traditional leadership structures dominate local governance, excluding women and youth. Climate information dissemination relies on formal channels, often in English, restricting access for rural and low-literacy populations. Economic dependencies on fossil fuel subsidies and extractive industries perpetuate environmental degradation, while short-term incentives discourage sustainable practices and limit renewable energy adoption

3.4.2 Structural Factors and Key Features

In Nigeria, addressing climate governance challenges is primarily prioritised at the **ministerial level,** led by the Federal Ministry of Environment and supported by agencies such as the NCCC. The NCCC is a high–level body comprising ministers, chaired by the President, and with a few sectoral representatives from the private sector, women, youth, and PWD. The appointments of representatives are often driven by political decisions rather than technical expertise or competence. Policy directions and key declarations primarily come from the executive branch, particularly the President's office, highlighting the dominant role of this part of the government. In contrast, the parliament and judiciary have less prominent functions. Despite the executive's leading role in guiding Nigeria's commitment to international climate agreements, such as the Paris Agreement, and in adopting frameworks like the Climate Change Act of 2021, there is frequently a significant disconnect between these high-level declarations and the actions of implementing agencies.

At the departmental and agency levels, limited capacity, resource constraints, and overlapping mandates frequently hinder the effective execution of climate policies. For instance, while the NCCC coordinates national climate actions, operational bottlenecks and a lack of integration with state-level frameworks dilute its effectiveness. As of COP29, the NCCC does not have full membership, and decisions are not made based on a broad national consensus. Additionally, findings from various states and geopolitical zones show that State Governors are the primary decision-makers on climate issues, often with minimal or no input from technical agencies or other non-state actors, including marginalised groups.This gap is exacerbated by inconsistent inter-agency collaboration and weak accountability mechanisms at both federal and state levels. As a result, high-level political commitments often fail to translate into actionable concrete and measurable outcomes at the operational level, highlighting a critical need for better alignment between strategic declarations and implementation efforts.

Structural Features of climate governance reflect historical inequities, regional disparities, and geographic vulnerabilities. Colonial-era land policies and a focus on extractive industries have entrenched inequalities, particularly in marginalised regions. Wealthier states, like Lagos, receive better infrastructure and resources, while poorer states lack the capacity to implement basic adaptation measures. Despite the recent increase of the Federal Account Allocation Committee (FCAA) to state governments occasioned by the removal of fuel subsidies, the situation might hardly change with a deliberate shift in prioritising climate action. Financial and institutional limitations and inefficient resource allocation hinder local government's ability to implement effective climate initiatives.



Underlying capacity constraints in Nigeria's climate governance, such as inadequate budgets, insufficient staffing, and limited technical expertise, are primarily due to systemic inefficiencies, competing priorities, and governance challenges. One significant reason is the **misalignment of resource allocation with policy mandates.** Climate change is often deprioritised in favour of immediate economic and political concerns, such as security, infrastructure development, and debt servicing, leaving limited fiscal space for environmental initiatives.

Additionally, **weak institutional frameworks** and fragmented inter-agency coordination contribute to inefficiencies in utilising available resources. MDAs often operate with overlapping mandates and limited collaboration, resulting in resource wastage, inefficiency, and duplication of efforts rather than targeted capacity building.

Another critical factor is **low political will** and inconsistent leadership on climate issues. While high-level commitments, such as the Climate Change Act, have been enacted, translating these into budgetary allocations and actionable programs remains challenging. Bureaucratic inertia and corruption further erode confidence in the system, discouraging

sustained investments in staffing, training, and technology.

External funding reliance exacerbates the issue. Nigeria depends heavily on international donors and climate finance for major environmental projects, but these funds often come with stringent conditions or delays. For instance, Nigeria's total NDC budget estimate stands at $191 billion, yet only $4.45 billion has been mobilized from international sources (climate finance flow assessment) between 2015 and 2024, with government MDAs attracting $2.95 billion and the private sector securing $1.45 billion. The domestic climate budget remains significantly lower, highlighting Nigeria's heavy reliance on donor funding. Furthermore, while mitigation efforts especially in the energy sector—receive the majority of funding, adaptation projects, despite their importance for climate resilience, remain underfunded.[24]This dependence, coupled with inadequate domestic resource mobilisation, limits the ability of institutions to independently fulfil their mandates effectively. This also affects the National Assembly's ability to exercise its constitutional role in ODA funding allocation, ensuring climate finance aligns with constituency needs. While NASS approves ODA-related budget allocations and has oversight responsibilities, weak enforcement mechanisms, limited access to financial reporting, and executive dominance in donor negotiations constrain its influence over funding priorities and accountability. As a result, climate finance decisions often bypass legislative scrutiny, reducing transparency and limiting the effectiveness of resource allocation in addressing local climate challenges.

Access to relevant information on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, environmental degradation, and climate risks in Nigeria is limited and uneven, primarily due to data generation, dissemination, and institutional coordination gaps. While agencies such as the Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NiMet) and the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) provide some data on emissions, environmental risks, and adaptation options, these resources often need to be updated and more user-friendly. This creates significant barriers for policymakers, researchers, and the public in accessing actionable information.

In terms of GHG emissions and agents of environmental degradation, detailed and region-specific data are scarce. Efforts to monitor emissions, especially in sectors like energy, agriculture, and oil and gas, are hindered by insufficient technical capacity and underinvestment in monitoring infrastructure. Information on the progress of mitigation measures, implementation of adaptation strategies, and their outcomes is even less accessible, with reporting often limited to high-level summaries in National Communications to international bodies like the UNFCCC.

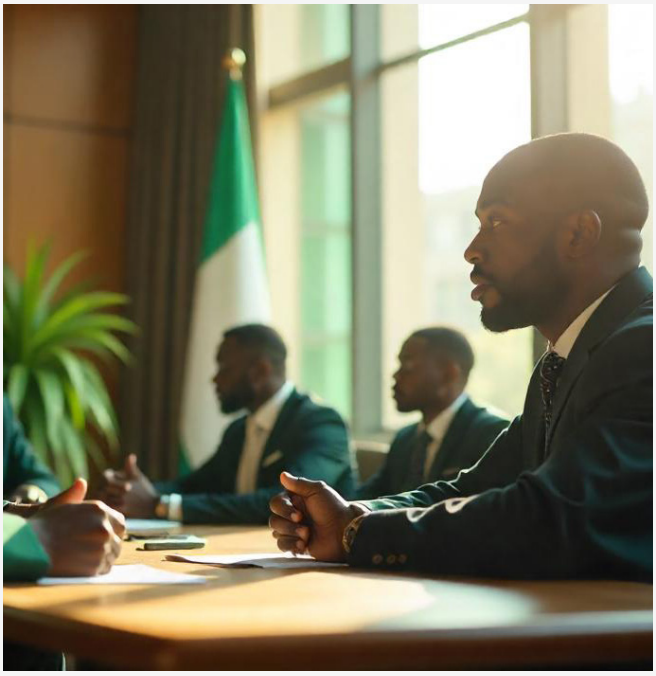
Public awareness of climate risks and adaptation options remains low, especially in rural and underserved communities, due to poor dissemination of information in local languages and reliance on formal channels that do not reach grassroots levels. Furthermore, data on climate finance, including sources, allocations, and impacts, is opaque, with limited public reporting or accountability mechanisms in place. These situations are noticeable at both federal and state levels.

Civil Society Organisation

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in Nigeria play a growing but uneven role in influencing

public debate and policymaking on climate governance. Historically, civil society engagement in policymaking has been limited, reflecting a cultural legacy where governance processes were predominantly top-down and centralised, leaving little room for participatory approaches. However, in recent years, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), youth movements, and grassroots groups have become more vocal in advocating for environmental and climate-related issues, particularly in areas like mangrove restoration, flood management, and renewable energy advocacy. These organisations operate through various funding models, with many relying heavily on international donor grants, which often come with stringent conditions and delays, limiting their financial autonomy. Domestic resource mobilization remains weak, with minimal government or private sector funding allocated to climate-focused civil society initiatives, forcing many NGOs to align project priorities with donor interests rather than localized needs. Despite these advancements, civil society's influence is often limited by inadequate mechanisms for engagement, a lack of government transparency, and deep-seated trust issues, further exacerbated by the perception that NGOs act as external agents rather than grassroots-driven actors.. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are frequently seen as lacking trust, especially in the relationship between the government and certain social groups, including women, youth, and persons with disabilities. These groups often feel excluded from decision-making processes. This exclusion is compounded by a perception of civil society as adversarial rather than collaborators or agents of foreign interest paying them to subvert government actions, leading to various attempts to curtail their interference. The situation in regions like the Niger Delta, where resource governance disputes are prevalent, is a typical example.

While some civil society actors have successfully mobilized public support and influenced discourse, their ability to shape formal policies remains restricted due to weak institutional frameworks, inconsistent government receptivity, and a lack of clear pathways for translating advocacy into actionable policy.



Structural Factors & Key Features (NCCC)

Nigeria's climate governance framework includes coordination structures such as the **National Council on Climate Change (NCCC)**, established under the Climate Change Act (2021), to align policies, plans, and targets across sectors and subnational scales. The NCCC is designed to be a central coordinating body that brings together relevant sectors, including energy, agriculture, transport, and health. However, the effectiveness of this structure is hindered by uneven representation and insufficient seniority among its

members, limiting their ability to enforce decisions. The council is chaired by the President or a designated representative, lending it high-level political authority. Still, accountability mechanisms remain weak, with limited clarity on how they report to the public or legislative bodies.
The decisions of the NCCC carry legal authority under the Climate Change Act, but enforcement often depends on political will and institutional capacity at both federal and state levels. Without robust enforcement mechanisms, the Council relies on political influence and collaboration to drive implementation. This is a significant limitation, as sectoral ministries and subnational governments may need to deprioritise climate action in favour of competing priorities.

Non-state actors, including civil society organisations (CSOs), private sector representatives, and academia, are included in some coordination efforts, but their participation is often limited to advisory roles rather than decision-making. Selection processes for non-state actor representation lack transparency and inclusivity, reducing the potential for broad-based influence. This exclusion, coupled with weak institutionalised channels for civil society engagement, hampers the ability of non-state actors to shape outcomes meaningfully.
The Act mandates the Council (S.25(1) and (2) to work with CSOs and indeed oblige them information when requested under the Freedom of Information Act as a measure of transparency, but this is hardly the situation in practice.

Despite attempts by the World Bank in 2021 to train state governments in the act of climate budget tagging and tracking at the state levels, climate expenditures are still unclear and not monitored. Budgetary competition and political influence among ministerial actors, such as the Federal Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Finance, and sectoral ministries like Agriculture and Energy, often obstruct effective coordination. These rivalries result in fragmented efforts, duplication of roles, and inefficient resource allocation, further complicating cooperation.

Political Structures and Alliance
Performance goals for ministries and agencies often lack specific climate-related benchmarks or key performance indicators, and budget allocations for climate initiatives are generally inadequate. Moreover, cross-sectoral collaboration is hindered by siloed governance structures and competing interests, which reduce the effectiveness of coordinated climate action.

In Nigeria's climate governance, organized or solo opposition will likely attempt to weaken or thwart proposed climate policies at several key veto points. These include the National Assembly, where political interests may challenge or delay the passage of climate-related laws, particularly if they threaten vested economic or political interests. The executive branch, especially at the ministerial level, could face resistance from influential stakeholders or industries, such as oil and gas, which may oppose policies that impact their economic interests. Additionally, state governments might resist national climate policies that require significant local investment or conflict with regional priorities. Finally, civil society and community groups could either challenge or press for more substantial commitments, influencing public opinion and potentially leading to resistance to implementing weak

policies at the local or regional level.

Table 6: Identified Players in Climate Governance Space

State/Political Players or Stakeholders	Civil Society / Citizen Actors, Leaders and Stakeholders
• The President as Chairman of the National Council on Climate Change (NCCC) is the primary body coordinating climate policies under the Climate Change Act. • The Minister of Environment oversees implementation of key environmental conventions as the UNCCCD, UNCBD, • The Minister of Finance (as member of Committee of Ministers of Finance on Climate Change-Helsenski Principles) • DG, NCCCC, Head of Secretariat of the NCCCC • Senate President & Speaker House of Representatives • Chairmen, Senate and House Committees on Climate Change • Energy Transition Office- Vice President's Office	• Environmental Rights Act(ERA) Climate Change Network Nigeria (CCN-Nigeria). • ActionAid Nigeria • Youth and Environmental Advocacy Centre (YEAC-Nigeria) • Batnon Center for Environment and Sustainable Development • Kebetkache Women Development & Resource Centre • SustyVibes • Afrihealth Optonet Association (AHOA) • Women Environmental Programme • Lift Humanity Foundation • Centre for Human Rights and Climate Change Research • Center for Climate Change and Development Alex Ekwueme University • Caritas Nigeria • Christian Aid • International Centre for Energy, Environment and Development (ICEED) • Nigerian Conservation Foundation

Business/Economic Players or Stakeholders	
• Nigeria Economic Summit Group (NESG) • Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) • National Employers Consultative Forum (NECA) • Nigeria Sovereign Investment Authority • Access Bank Plc • Sterling Bank • UBA PLc • FMCB • Central Bank of Nigeria • Dangote Group • NNPCL	

Table 7: Identified Players in Climate Governance Space and their interests

Category	Key Player	Key Interest
State/Political Players	DG, National Council on Climate Change (NCCC)	• Effective implementation of the Climate Change Act, achieving national climate goals, securing funding. • Ensuring national climate targets and goals are achieved including the NDCs
	Minister of Federal Ministry of Environment	• Formulating and implementing climate strategies, aligning with international commitments especially those under the of UNCCCD, UNCBD, Montreal Protocol and forestry, national parks, pollution control, and Ogoni clean up and semi-arid land management.
	State Commissioners of Environment	• Addressing region-specific risks, integrating state development with climate policies. • Implementing resolutions of the National Council on Environment as pertains climate action and ecological management

	Chairmen, Local Government Authorities	• Expanding community-level adaptation, ensuring grassroots service delivery.
	Legislature	• Ensuring budget allocations for climate initiatives, balancing regional representation.
	Traditional Leaders	• Protecting cultural practices, aligning adaptation measures with community norms.
	Judiciary	• Ensuring compliance with climate laws, upholding environmental rights and dispute settlement on environmental issues.
	International Partners (e.g., UNDP, WB)	• Promoting sustainable development goals, encouraging compliance with international agreements.
	Political Elites	• Maintaining political power, leveraging climate projects for political capital.
Political Parties		• Winning elections, formulating maintaining dominance in national policies, driving legislative changes, and influencing public discourse. Interested in economic growth, energy transition policies, regional development, balancing industrial interests
Civil Society	NGOs (e.g., NGOCE, Women Arise)	• Promoting transparency, advocating for marginalised groups, grassroots participation.
	Community-Based Organisations (CBOs)	• Representing local needs, ensuring inclusivity in governance.
	Youth and Women's Movements	• Advocating for equity, empowerment, and inclusion in climate governance.
	Research Institutions	• Supporting evidence-based policymaking, conducting climate risk assessments.
	Faith-Based Organisations	• Promoting environmental stewardship, raising awareness among followers.
	Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)	• Ensuring inclusivity in climate policies, addressing unique vulnerabilities.
Business/ Economic Players	Fossil Fuel Companies	Preserving economic interests, minimizing regulatory impact.

	Fossil Fuel Companies	Preserving economic interests, minimizing regulatory impact.
	Renewable Energy Firms	Expanding renewable energy adoption, benefiting from subsidies and incentives.
	Agricultural Businesses	Ensuring resilience to climate risks, leveraging climate-smart technologies.
	Financial Institutions	Supporting green financing initiatives, investing in renewable energy.
	Industrial Sector (e.g., cement, steel)	Minimizing costs of compliance, balancing environmental and economic priorities.
	Private Sector Coalitions	Aligning policies with economic opportunities, reducing regulatory burdens.
International Donors & Development Partners	ODA Donors (e.g., UK, Germany, USAID, Norway, Canada, France, Japan, Sweden, EU)	Climate finance, supporting renewable energy transitions, biodiversity conservation, climate-resilient agriculture, and governance reforms.
	Multilateral Institutions (GEF, GCF, UNDP, World Bank, IMF, African Development Bank, ECOWAS)	Promoting sustainable development goals (SDGs), aligning with global climate agreements, climate adaptation, mitigation, and ensuring financial accountability.

Table 8: Power Dynamics: Dividers and Connectors

Dividers	Connectors
Wealthier regions (e.g., Lagos) have more resources, marginalizing poorer regions (e.g., Northeast, North Central).	Common climate risks (e.g., flooding, desertification) unite regions, fostering cross-border collaboration.
Competition for limited funding creates mistrust between states and federal agencies.	Shared dependence on agriculture fosters collaboration on climate-smart practices. There is general consensus on food scarcity, poverty and insecurity are common challenges across the country that need shared vision to address.

Federal dominance sidelines local governments, reducing their influence and sense of ownership.	International climate commitments encourage national and subnational coordination.
State leaders often prioritize short-term political gains over long-term climate goals.	Global agreements pressure fossil fuel companies and the government to align with sustainability.
Fossil fuel companies resist transitions, clashing with renewable energy advocates.	NGOs and community-based organisations provide platforms for dialogue and inclusive policies.
Traditional leaders prioritize cultural practices conflicting with modern climate solutions.	Youth movements and grassroots activism promote solidarity among marginalised groups.
Gender norms and biases exclude women, youth, and marginalised groups from decision-making.	Traditional and religious leaders can mediate and build trust in communities for climate initiatives.
Ethnic and regional tensions in areas like the Niger Delta exacerbate resource competition.	Indigenous and community-driven adaptation strategies, like mangrove restoration, showcase collaborative models.
Corruption and non-transparent resource allocation erode trust among stakeholders.	Regional frameworks aligned with national climate goals foster stronger collaboration. Regional Development Commissions and geopolitical governors' forum attempting to solve cross/transboundary challenges can facilitate cooperation.
Limited public participation leads to skepticism and resistance from affected communities.	Partnerships with development partners enable shared goals and resource mobilization.
Overlapping mandates and inconsistent climate policy implementation cause inefficiencies.	Shared environmental and social values around sustainability can unify diverse groups.

Table 9: Behaviour Drivers

Player/Role	Relevant Behaviour Driver
President DG, National Council on Climate Change (NCCC)	• Makes final decision on both the institutions and persons driving climate change in the country. Can be influenced by strong international bodies/persons and key personal aides. • Desire for better performance to achieve national and international climate commitments. Political reward for achieving measurable results under international agreements like the Paris Accord.
Minister of Environment	• Compliance with formal rights, rules, and policies (Climate Change Act 2021). Pressure to secure financial or material gains through international funding. • Desire to meet KPI and Performace bond signed with the President in 2023.
State Governors/ Commissioners for Environment	• Political party politics influencing priorities and resource allocation. Desire for recognition at state level for implementing successful climate projects.
Local Government Authorities	• Financial constraints and desire for material gains to secure funding for grassroots adaptation. Recognition for effective service delivery and community satisfaction.
Traditional Leaders	• Cultural norms and values emphasizing the protection of local livelihoods and traditions. Emerging trends of grassroots activism creating pressure to align with modern climate initiatives.

Legislature	• Political party politics affecting the prioritization of climate legislation. Recognition and political reward for championing climate-related policies. • More interested in next election cycle and constituency projects. • Towing party affiliations/alligience rather than subject matter.
International Partners (e.g., UNDP, WB)	• Financial or material gain in the form of project impact and global recognition. Trends in global climate finance and alignment with donor priorities. • Meeting their institution's Country Programme goals and thematic targets.
Fossil Fuel Companies	• Financial or material loss from restrictive policies. Pressure to align with emerging trends in green energy markets.
Renewable Energy Firms	• Financial and material gain from subsidies and green investment incentives. Recognition as pioneers of energy transition.
Agricultural Businesses	• Financial or material gain through climate-smart agricultural practices. • Desire for better performance in crop resilience and production.

Table 10: Frames around climate and the environment

Player/Role	Frames (explicit and implicit)
National Council on Climate Change (NCCC)	• Centralised governance approach to align national goals with global standards (e.g., Paris Agreement). Backed by scientific and legal frameworks like the Climate Change Act (2021). • Climate change as a governance challenge that requires policy coordination. Needs to shift toward greater inclusivity and local adaptation. Limited equity considerations: marginalised groups often lack representation in the council's decisions. Limited focus on inclusivity and equity; policies often prioritize national-level goals over localized implementation. • Pursue of value chain localization in renewable energy as part of the current government's economic diversification plan • High-level government representatives are messengers, but engagement with local and marginalised communities is weak.
Federal Ministry of Environment	• Technical and policy-driven approach focused on Conventions on Combating Desertification, Biodiversity, Montreal Protocol on Sustances that Deplete Ozone Layer. GEF Focal Point. Backed by partnerships with scientific and international institutions. Climate change as a technical issue requiring funding and international. Policies often reflect top-down approaches with minimal grassroots engagement or contextual adaptation. cooperation. • Minimal focus on equity; projects are designed top-down, often neglecting grassroots needs. Government officials and international partners serve as messengers, with limited grassroots communication strategies.
State Ministries of Environment	• Addressing region-specific climate risks through localized action plans. Backed by state-level frameworks like Lagos Climate Action Plan. Climate as a regional issue tied to economic resilience. Needs more alignment with national priorities. Often neglect equity dimensions, focusing instead on infrastructural and economic gains. • Focus on economic and infrastructure gains often overshadows equity and long-term sustainability. • Regional political leaders and local authorities are key messengers but often lack transparency and public engagement.

Local Government Authorities	• Locally led adaptation as first line of defense and resilience against climate impacts. Grassroots adaptation as a priority, framed as a development issue. Scientific knowledge, tools and skill remains weak at this level. Climate as a secondary issue to immediate local needs like infrastructure and public services. often focus on broad community needs, with little attention to specific vulnerable groups. Climate often deprioritised in favor of immediate concerns like infrastructure and basic services. Local leaders and council members act as messengers but lack reach to marginalised groups.
Traditional Leaders	Climate framed through cultural preservation and environmental stewardship. Limited scientific backing. Local ecosystems as cultural assets. Needs integration with modern scientific approaches for action. Equity considerations often reflect traditional hierarchies, excluding marginalised groups like women and youth. Resistance to modern climate solutions perceived as undermining cultural heritage. Communicate through trusted community figures but may resist modern, top-down solutions.
Legislature	Climate as a legislative challenge requiring funding and regulatory frameworks. Often tied to political ideologies. Focused on economic impacts and legislative oversight. Needs to integrate equity and social justice in narratives. Representation in legislative processes is often limited to urban elites. Limited equity focus; legislative priorities often driven by urban elites and political agendas. Politicians and legislative committees are messengers but often fail to engage the public directly.
International Partners and Bilateral Donors (e.g., UNDP, WB, UKFCDO, EU, USAID etc)	Climate framed as a global crisis requiring multilateral cooperation. Strong scientific backing. Climate action as a means to achieve sustainable development goals (SDGs). Needs more integration with local realities. Advocacy for inclusivity but often driven by donor priorities. Local realities and contextual needs often underrepresented in donor-driven initiatives. International agencies and donor representatives are key messengers, often sidelining local voices.
Fossil Fuel Companies	Economic growth prioritised; climate solutions framed as incremental improvements and efficiency (e.g., cleaner technology). Climate action framed as compatible with continued fossil fuel exploitation. Needs stronger emphasis on transitions. Neglect of equity implications, focusing on profitability. Emphasis on profitability and market dominance; resistance to disruptive transitions. Industry representatives and lobbyists dominate the narrative, often downplaying urgency.

Renewable Energy Firms	Framed as economic and environmental opportunity. Backed by emerging market trends and global scientific consensus. Transitioning to renewables as a win-win solution. Needs broader equity integration. Rarely addressed; focus on market growth over social outcomes. Market-driven focus that rarely integrates equity or social outcomes. Industry leaders and trade organisations act as messengers, engaging policy stakeholders.
Agricultural Businesses	Climate-smart agriculture as a solution to resilience challenges. Strongly backed by science. Framed as a productivity and food security issue. Needs integration of equity concerns. Focuses on producers; often neglects landless laborers and women farmers. Focus on producers often excludes considerations for landless laborers and marginalised farming communities. Industry associations and cooperatives are messengers but lack grassroots reach.
Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)	Framed as a social justice and equity challenge. Advocates for community-driven solutions. Inclusive climate governance as a pathway to resilience. Needs stronger alignment with government policies. Equity is central to their advocacy, with strong representation for marginalised groups. Limited integration with government frameworks; advocacy efforts may not translate into tangible policy changes. NGOs and activists are messengers, often amplifying local voices.
Youth Movements	Climate framed as intergenerational justice. Tied to global youth movements like Fridays for Future. Urgency and accountability for climate action. Needs broader policy influence. Focused on youth inclusion but less on intersectional issues like disability. Focus on youth representation may overlook intersectionality, such as inclusion of PWDs and rural voices. Social media influencers and youth leaders are messengers, with strong public engagement.
Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)	Climate framed as an inclusion issue. Advocacy for disability-responsive policies. Vulnerability and exclusion in climate governance. Needs to expand representation. Central to their advocacy, with calls for accessible solutions. Advocacy often siloed, with limited integration into broader climate governance frameworks. Advocacy groups and disability rights organisations are messengers.
Community-Based Organisations (CBOs)	Climate action framed as community resilience and self-reliance. Limited scientific backing. Local adaptation as a key to sustainability. Needs more institutional support. Focuses on community equity but limited resources to address broader systemic issues. Resource constraints limit systemic impact; focus on local adaptation may overlook larger structural challenges. Communications: Local leaders and activists act as messengers with strong grassroots reach.

Faith-Based Organisations	Framed as moral stewardship of the Earth. Tied to spiritual and cultural values. Environmental conservation as a spiritual duty. Needs scientific integration. Equity often interpreted through moral teachings but may lack inclusivity. Limited scientific integration; equity considerations often shaped by hierarchical moral teachings. Religious leaders and clergy are trusted messengers with broad societal influence. Faith-based organisations (FBOs) in Nigeria exhibit varied approaches to climate change, reflecting differences in doctrine, leadership priorities, and community engagement strategies. While some major religious institutions, such as the Catholic Church, have adopted explicit messaging on climate change—emphasizing stewardship of the environment, social justice, and the moral imperative to act—others take a more indirect approach, integrating climate concerns into broader themes of community welfare, economic justice, and disaster response. For instance, the Catholic Church, particularly through the influence of Pope Francis' encyclical Laudato Si', has been vocal about climate responsibility, advocating for urgent action to combat environmental degradation and its disproportionate impact on the poor. The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and various Protestant denominations tend to frame climate issues within the context of social development, economic justice, and humanitarian aid, often responding to climate-induced disasters but with less explicit theological messaging on environmental stewardship. Among Islamic organisations, perspectives on climate change are frequently linked to concepts of justice (adl), responsibility (mas'ooliyyah), and sustainable resource management, as outlined in Islamic teachings. Groups like NASFAT (Nasrul-lahi-il-Fatih Society of Nigeria) and Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI) have engaged in tree-planting initiatives, water conservation programs, and disaster relief efforts, but climate action is generally framed within broader socio-economic and humanitarian concerns rather than as a standalone advocacy issue. The implications of these varied approaches are significant. Given their deep influence on communities, FBOs can play a pivotal role in shaping public attitudes toward climate action, especially in rural and semi-urban areas where religious institutions are among the most trusted social entities. However, the lack of a unified, cross-faith climate narrative means that engagement remains fragmented, and climate messaging is often subordinated to other development priorities.

Media	Climate framed as an urgent environmental and economic issue. Influenced by global and national narratives. Climate crises and disasters dominate coverage. Needs more equity and solution-oriented reporting. Rarely discussed in detail; coverage often focuses on high-level impacts. Equity and solution-oriented reporting often overshadowed by crisis-oriented framing and lack of localized perspectives. Journalists and media houses act as messengers, with variable accuracy in framing issues.
Political Parties	Climate framed as a policy issue requiring legislative and executive action. Often tied to broader political agendas and manifestos. Climate action as a component of national development and public welfare strategies. Needs to prioritize climate within political discourse. Equity considerations are often secondary to broader political goals. Climate policies frequently reflect political agendas, which may not always align with scientific recommendations or community needs. Politicians and party spokespersons are the primary messengers, with varying degrees of public engagement and commitment to climate action.

Chapter 4

What does positive change look like in this context

Systemic Change: The full operationalisation of the Climate Change Act has been achieved. The Council has been constituted with its full complement of members. A national action plan and carbon budget have been developed, and the National Climate Fund is now operational and functioning with a transparent fund management system. A framework for private sector involvement has been defined and adopted, and an investment plan is in place. Additionally, representatives for women, youth, and persons with disabilities (PWDs) on the Council are being selected through a transparent process.

Inclusivity and Representation- marginalised groups, such as women, youth, and persons with disabilities (PWDs), would be actively included in climate governance structures. Defined quotas for structurally disadvantaged groups should be specified by law for their representation in all climate's decision-making bodies. Gender-responsive and disability-inclusive policies would be incorporated into all climate action plans, ensuring that these groups are represented at all levels of decision-making. This change would manifest in increased participation of marginalised populations in policy discussions, with community-based organisations and local leaders co-designing solutions with policymakers. A significant rise in women and youth-led climate projects would be evident nationwide.

Equity in Resource Distribution—Climate funds and resources would be equitably allocated across all N regions. This would involve transparency and accountability in the distribution of resources, with regional climate funds targeting specific risks such as desertification and coastal erosion. Over time, mechanisms for tracking the impact of these funds on marginalised communities would be established, ensuring that the benefits of climate initiatives reach those who need them most.

Behavioural and Ideological Change- public perception of climate change would shift to view it as an urgent, collective challenge that requires broad societal action. This shift would be supported by increased media coverage focused on equity and solutions and traditional and religious leaders advocating for sustainable practices. Political parties encouraged to make it an electoral issue and embedded in their manifestos. Private sector actors would align more closely with green economy initiatives driven by market incentives. Cultural norms would evolve to integrate modern climate practices while respecting local traditions, and educational reforms would embed climate literacy at all levels, fostering a generational shift towards sustainability.

Corporate fit of desired change

The corporate theory of change outlined offers a foundational framework for driving systemic, inclusive, and equitable climate governance improvements. However, to align with Nigeria's unique context (geopolitical and ecological zones), it should emphasise decentralization, ensuring integration across national, state, and local levels to address the

country's significant regional disparities. Specific attention should be given to strengthening the capacity of local governments to implement grassroots adaptation measures effectively, supported by tailored frameworks that address regional vulnerabilities like desertification in the north and flooding in the south. The theory of change should also embed equity-centred resource allocation, with participatory budgeting mechanisms and transparency to ensure vulnerable regions and marginalised groups receive adequate support.

Additionally, the framework must deepen its focus on inclusivity and representation by ensuring structurally disadvantaged groups, women, youth, and persons with disabilities are actively involved in decision-making. Mechanisms for robust monitoring and accountability are necessary to counteract corruption and inefficiencies while leveraging traditional leaders and indigenous knowledge systems to foster community trust and acceptance of climate policies. Enhancing media engagement to promote equity-focused and solutions-oriented reporting will further align public narratives with climate action priorities. By addressing these critical contextual realities, the theory of change would more effectively catalyze sustainable, inclusive, and equitable governance in Nigeria.

Table 11: Progress Markers

Need to see	Systemic Change: The full operationalisation of the Climate Change Act has been achieved. The Council has been constituted with its full complement of members. A national action plan and carbon budget have been developed, and the National Climate Fund is now operational and functioning with a transparent fund management system. A framework for private sector involvement has been defined and adopted, and an investment plan is in place. Additionally, representatives for women, youth, and persons with disabilities (PWDs) on the Council are being selected through a transparent processvulnerable, such as the Niger Delta and Northeast, ensuring that resources are directed where they are most needed.
Expect to see	Improved coordination between federal, state, and local governments, resulting in the seamless implementation of policies and more effective resource allocation, minimizing inefficiencies and overlapping mandates. Increased participation of marginalised groups in policy discussions, with clear mechanisms to incorporate their voices into decision-making processes. Programs that directly address the vulnerabilities of marginalised populations, such as access to renewable energy, climate-smart agriculture, and resilience-building initiatives. Regional climate funds targeting specific risks, such as desertification in the north and coastal erosion in the south, with development partners channeling resources directly to underserved communities. More private sector actors aligning with green economy initiatives, driven by market incentives, while traditional and religious leaders advocate for environmental stewardship.

Like to see	The creation of regional hubs for climate innovation, fostering inter-state collaboration, knowledge sharing, and the development of context-specific climate action plans. Climate related Skill acquisition programme for marginalised groups and job placements opportunities after traning. WFD support the development of tools/ guidelines for government agencies starting with NCCC,NEMA & SEMA for the inclusion of PWDs in climate governance. Community-based organisations and local leaders co-designing solutions with policymakers, leading to the creation of locally relevant climate action plans. A significant increase in women and youth-led climate projects, with these groups driving innovative solutions and gaining recognition for their contributions to sustainability. Mechanisms for tracking the impact of funds on marginalised communities, ensuring tangible benefits and the adoption of participatory budgeting approaches to prioritize local needs.
Love to see	Nigeria emerging as a leader in Africa for climate governance, with innovative, inclusive, and equitable frameworks that serve as a model for other countries. A fully inclusive climate governance structure where decisions are shaped by the diverse needs and inputs of Nigeria's population, reflecting the values of equity and justice. A nationwide shift in public perception of climate change, with increased awareness of its urgency and the need for collective action, amplified by widespread climate literacy in schools and media. Framing climate justice issues as human rights issues to provide basis for pursue of fundamental rights in cases of breach. Refresher training for legislators on climate change governance and social inclusion- and legislation on affirmative action for PWDs. Cultural norms evolving to integrate modern climate practices while preserving local traditions, and the establishment of nationwide climate awareness campaigns that create a generational shift in attitudes towards sustainability.

4.1 Conclusion and Recommendations

The analysis of Nigeria's climate governance underscores profound systemic gaps that undermine the nation's capacity to mitigate and adapt to escalating climate risks. While the Climate Change Act and international commitments like the Paris Agreement establish a strong legal framework, these provisions have yet to translate into meaningful, inclusive, and effective national, regional, and local governance. Across Nigeria's geopolitical zones, climate risks manifest in region-specific challenges, including desertification and drought in the north, flooding and pollution in the south, and pervasive environmental degradation. These risks are compounded by weak institutional frameworks, insufficient resource allocation, and fragmented governance structures, which fail to address the socio-economic and environmental vulnerabilities of the most affected communities.

Marginalised groups, despite their vulnerability to climate impacts, these groups have limited access to decision-making platforms and are often absent from policy discussions that directly affect their lives. This exclusion is most pronounced in conflict-affected and underserved regions, such as the North East, where insecurity and displacement exacerbate governance challenges. Environmental risks like oil pollution and urban flooding persist in other areas, such as the South-South and South West, with little accountability or community engagement to address these issues effectively. The limited representation of marginalised voices in climate governance reflects more profound systemic inequities, further entrenching disparities in resilience and adaptive capacity.

The study also highlights critical gaps in access to climate information and the integration of local knowledge into governance frameworks. While mechanisms like the Freedom of Information Act exist, their application is inconsistent, leaving communities without the data and tools to prepare for climate risks. This information gap is most severe in rural and economically disadvantaged areas, where low literacy rates, linguistic barriers, and inadequate dissemination channels hinder awareness. Similarly, the lack of transparency in climate financing and project implementation reduces trust in governance systems, limiting the effectiveness of policies designed to foster resilience and equity.

Nigeria's fragmented approach to climate governance further diminishes its ability to mobilize resources, align strategies, and implement effective interventions. Coordination among federal, state, and local governments is weak, with overlapping mandates and siloed operations hindering progress. Efforts to engage with global funding mechanisms, such as the Green Climate Fund, are hampered by bureaucratic inefficiencies and capacity constraints, leaving vital opportunities for adaptation and mitigation underutilised. Urban planning overlooks climate risks, particularly in fast-growing cities like Lagos, where informal settlements remain exposed to flooding, heat stress, and other hazards. Stakeholders across Nigeria expressed frustration over the lack of inclusivity and the reactive rather than proactive approach to addressing climate risks, highlighting the urgent need for systemic reforms and equitable governance mechanisms.

While these challenges are apparent, the findings also highlight significant opportunities to improve Nigeria's climate governance. This can be achieved through increased advocacy for inclusivity, building institutional capacity for effective communication and messaging on climate governance, and leveraging both local and international partnerships. Such efforts can help align policies with the diverse needs of the population and the demands of a changing climate. Additionally, mechanisms should be strengthened to prioritize transparency, accountability, and the integration of grassroots perspectives in order to address systemic vulnerabilities.

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