



RESEARCH ARTICLE

OJSSH0601001-767

# AN EVALUATION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF CLIMATE-INDUCED DISPLACEMENT IN NIGERIA.

Erundu, C. I.

*Department of Sociology, University of Port Harcourt, Choba, Rivers State, Nigeria*

**Corresponding Author Email:** [chinyere.erundu@uniport.edu.ng](mailto:chinyere.erundu@uniport.edu.ng); Phone no.: +234 803 799 2102

## ABSTRACT

With Nigeria suffering notable climate-induced displacement resulting from adverse environmental conditions and socioeconomic vulnerabilities, climate change has become a major global cause of migration and displacement. Emphasizing important ecological factors including desertification, flooding, and coastline erosion, this study assesses the socio-economic consequences of such migration in Nigeria. While congested displacement camps generate public health crises and social tensions, these events disturb livelihoods, aggravate unemployment, and lower access to education and healthcare. Using case studies from areas including the Lake Chad Basin, Niger Delta, and Benue Valley which are climate-vulnerable the study uses a qualitative research approach based on secondary data. Results show that poor governance systems and insufficient policy responses aggravate the effects of relocation, therefore stressing the importance of thorough national policies and regional collaboration. This article underlines the need to include climate justice concepts, improve governance capacity, and promote worldwide cooperation to solve the underlying causes and lessen the effects of displacement. To help affected people build resilience, it further suggests investing in climate-resilient livelihoods, improving social services, and developing proactive disaster management strategies. This work offers a varied perspective that adds to the larger conversation on climate resilience and sustainable development in fragile areas.

**Keywords:** *Climate, Displacement, Evaluation, Implications, Socio-economic.*

**LICENSE:** This work by Open Journals Nigeria is licensed and published under the Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0 International License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided this article is duly cited.

**COPYRIGHT:** The Author(s) completely retain the copyright of this published article.

**OPEN ACCESS:** The Author(s) approves that this article remains permanently online in the open access (OA) mode.

**QA:** This Article is published in line with "COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics) and PIE (Publication Integrity & Ethics)".

## INTRODUCTION

Globally migration and displacement trends now mostly originate from climate change. Significant climate-induced displacement in Nigeria results from socioeconomic vulnerability and environmental pressures. Severe deserts in the northern areas, periodic floods in the south, and coastline erosion in the Niger Delta cause these displacements from which livelihoods are disrupted and current socioeconomic issues are exacerbated (Sambo & Rafiu, 2018; Oyilieze *et al.*, 2022).

Rising temperatures and less rainfall aggravate the terrible effects of desertification the northern part of Nigeria suffers. Millions of people have been forced to flee their homes and conventional livelihoods as Lake Chad shrinks—having lost about 90% of its surface area since the 1960s (Teye & Nikoi, 2022). Often searching for suitable land, pastoralists and farmers migrate and cause resource-based disputes in central Nigeria. These difficulties draw attention to the area's sensitivity to socioeconomic and environmental pressures.

Particularly in river basins like the Niger and Benue, flooding presents a regular hazard in the southern areas. Thousands of floods yearly destroy infrastructure, farms, and houses. For instance, the floods of 2022 uprooted almost 1.4 million people, therefore highlighting weaknesses in Nigeria's capacity for disaster response (Lenshie *et al.*, 2022). Niger Delta Region's coastal erosion exacerbates the displacement challenge, especially as rising sea levels and land degradation menace the habitat as well as the species in one of the economically competitive locales in Nigeria (Nenger *et al.*, 2024).

There are widespread socioeconomic consequences related to these environmental pressures. Resettled individuals, among other things, can face joblessness, loss of property, and reduced access to healthcare and education. Overcrowded displacement camps contribute to public health issues such as water-related diseases, malnutrition, and lack of hygiene facilities (Olunusi, 2024). Additionally, the competition over resources between refugees and residents creates inter-group tensions and contributes to instability in the region.

This article aims to assess the social and economic costs of displacement resulting from the effects of climate change with a particular focus on Nigeria. The paper calls for policy options and solutions that are flexible enough to address the emerging challenge by analyzing the influence of the issue on health, education, and employment. It also suggests optimal interventions thus enhancing the understanding of climate change resilience in developing nations.

Climate-induced displacement is a significant global issue, especially in areas such as Nigeria, where environmental pressures converge with entrenched socio-economic weaknesses. This section offers a comprehensive examination of the research about the factors, socio-economic consequences, and policy responses to climate-induced displacement in Nigeria.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

For years, the phenomenon of climate change-induced displacement in Nigeria has not only politically evolved but has also been shaped by other political and environmental entities. In the 1960s the Lake Chad Basin supported

millions of people through agriculture and fishing. But, when the lake began to shrink because of abuse of water resources and reduced rainfall, then the issue of relocation emerged sharply (Terminski, 2012). Similarly, for the southern area, flood-induced migration began in the 1970s when poor urban planning and deforestation aggravated the normal rainfall pattern.

Often reactive rather than proactive, historical policy reactions have focused more on short-term disaster relief than on long-term resilience-building. This legacy helps to explain the present difficulties in fairly and sustainably managing displacement (Etim, 2024).

## **ENVIRONMENTAL DRIVERS OF DISPLACEMENT**

The main causes of migration in Nigeria are environmental ones including coastline erosion, flooding, and desertification, profoundly changing the socio-economic and ecological scene. In northern Nigeria, where people mostly rely on rain-fed farming and animal husbandry, desertification has seriously harmed. The Lake Chad Basin shows this conundrum; climatic change and excessive water usage have caused a reduction of more than 90% since the 1960s (Teye & Nikoi, 2022). In search of suitable land and water, whole populations have been driven southward, therefore aggravating resource competition in central Nigeria and encouraging violent conflicts between farmers and herders (Adeoye *et al.*, 2009). Thousands annually are displaced in southern Nigeria by recurring flooding in the basins of the Niger and Benue rivers. Deforestation, poor urban design, and climate change have escalated flood events. Among the most devastating floods in Nigerian history, the 2022 floods affected approximately 3.2 million people and caused losses to infrastructure valued at billions of dollars (Lenshie *et al.*, 2022). In addition to displacing populations, severe floods impede the local economy, especially agriculture and trade, which are essential for regional livelihoods.

Simultaneously, in the Niger Delta, increasing sea levels and coastal erosion are displacing populations and jeopardizing wildlife. Human activities, including oil production, intensify these problems by destabilizing soil formations and hastening land degradation. Coastal erosion has compelled fishing villages to vacate their residences, rendering them economically precarious. A significant number migrate to metropolitan regions, where they encounter additional socio-economic difficulties, such as restricted access to employment and critical services (Oyilieze *et al.*, 2022).

The environmental issues underscore the pressing necessity for sustainable policies and adaptive methods to mitigate the displacement and cascading socio-economic repercussions affecting millions of Nigerians.

## **REGIONAL FOCUS AND COMPARATIVE INSIGHTS**

Nigeria's problems with climate-induced displacement fit a larger regional concern in the Sahel and West Africa, where frequent desertification, resource scarcity, and extreme weather events rule. Shared climatic circumstances cause similar patterns of displacement in nations like Niger, Chad, and Mali. The numerous nation-spanning Lake Chad Basin has grown to be a focal point for relocation brought on by environmental damage. Arable land and shrinking water supplies in this area have caused more migration; displaced people usually cross national boundaries in quest of stability (Teye & Nikoi, 2022).

For example, the relocation of pastoralists in Niger reflects the circumstances in northern Nigeria, where herders migrate southward owing to desertification, usually resulting in clashes with farming communities (Naz & Saleem, 2024). Through coordinated resource management, regional governance projects including the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) have sought to address common concerns; nevertheless, low money and political commitment impede their efficacy (Nenger & Odimegwu, 2024).

## **SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF DISPLACEMENT**

The socio-economic effects of climate-induced relocation in Nigeria are significant, influencing livelihoods, education, public health, and social cohesion. Disruption of livelihoods is one of the most immediate effects. Desertification has reduced many areas in the northern region of Nigeria to be unfit for cultivation; hence, reducing agricultural productivity and income for families (Sambo & Rafiu, 2018). Frequent displacement in flood zones disrupts farming cycles, making it difficult for farmers to rebuild their homes before the next disaster strikes (Mohammed, 2019). Additionally, many fishing communities have suffered from coastal erosion, which has forced most of them to abandon their traditional way of life and move to towns and crowded areas in search of alternative means of survival.

For such children, displacement heavily impacts education: poor physical infrastructure, inadequate supplies, and limited resources often interrupt education in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps. Families tend to prioritize survival over education and are as such usually denying their children consistent educational facilities. UNICEF (2021) estimates that 61% of displaced children in Nigeria are currently out of school, which perpetuates poverty and shrinks possibilities in the future. In flood-prone areas such as Benue State, flooded households argue that one of the significant barriers to schooling is the lack of easily accessible schools (Lenshie *et al.*, 2022).

Another crucial challenge that is experienced in a displaced environment is acute and chronic diseases. Lack of clean water and unsanitary facilities such as inadequate latrines and sanitation in congested and poorly developed Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps lead to the spread of waterborne diseases such as cholera. Insufficient food supplies lead to malnutrition, a recurring problem; displaced people typically struggle with mental health issues including anxiety and despair as they negotiate the uncertainties of their situation (Olunusi, 2024; Naz & Saleem, 2024).

Climate-induced displacement worsens social tensions and conflicts. The flood of herders displaced by desertification in central Nigeria has heightened land and water resource rivalry, which has led to bloody conflicts among farming populations. Often turning into more general intercommunal violence, these disputes have major ramifications for national security and social stability (Adeoye *et al.*, 2009). Further splits and difficulties in social cohesiveness arise from the strained relationships between host communities and displaced populations as competition for resources like homes and employment rises (Naz & Saleem, 2024).

These linked socioeconomic effects highlight the pressing need for thorough plans to solve the underlying causes of climate-induced displacement and assist the impacted persons in reconstructing their lives and communities.

## **INTERSECTIONALITY AND VULNERABLE GROUPS**

Particularly affected by climate-induced displacement are women, children, and marginalized ethnic groups. Women, for example, typically have restricted access to resources, education, and healthcare but shoulder the weight of preserving home stability during displacement. Women displaced by floods in Anambra State reported greater rates of unemployment and domestic abuse than men (Oyilieze *et al.*, 2022).

Another vulnerable category is children, whose schooling is disrupted by displacement and who run the danger of child labour and trafficking. Over 60% of displaced children in Nigeria are reportedly absent from school, according to UNICEF (2021), hence extending poverty and inequality cycles. Already excluded by historical neglect, ethnic minorities in the Niger Delta confront exacerbated difficulties as coastal erosion compels them to flee ancestral grounds (Lenshie *et al.*, 2022).

## **SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACTS**

Policy approaches may ignore the psychological and social effects of displacement. Losing their homes, businesses, and social networks causes trauma for many displaced people. Poor living circumstances and congestion in IDP camps aggravate mental health problems like anxiety and depression (Naz & Saleem, 2024).

Furthermore, disturbed is community cohesiveness since relocation disturbs established support networks and fuels hostility between newcomers and host groups. For instance, the flood of displaced herders into farming villages in central Nigeria has frayed social relationships and caused mistrust and sometimes violence (Nenger & Odimegwu, 2024).

## **GOVERNANCE AND POLICY RESPONSES**

While strong government and policy frameworks are necessary to address climate-induced displacement in Nigeria, many obstacles still exist in this regard. A major barrier is weak institutional frameworks as institutions like the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) battle with insufficient budget, corruption, and poor coordination (Oyilieze *et al.*, 2022). For example, the floods of 2022 revealed important deficiencies in disaster readiness, therefore leaving many displaced households without enough cover or aid (Lenshie *et al.*, 2022).

Particularly in transboundary regions like the Lake Chad Basin, the lack of regional cooperation further complicates attempts to control climate consequences. Although groups like the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) have started cooperative initiatives to stop desertification and displacement, their effectiveness and sustainability are limited by inadequate financial and political support, therefore restricting their impact (Teye & Nikoi, 2022).

In addition, policy gaps are preventing effective solutions to the issues arising from climate displacement. Currently, Nigeria doesn't have a well-developed national policy that is intended to address this issue. Even though some plans for climate change adaptation have been undertaken, these plans often do not address the needs of IDPs specifically; thereby making the latter susceptible to even higher levels of marginalisation and invisibility (Sambo & Rafiu, 2018).

Such challenges reaffirm why institutional capacity, increased regionalism, and purposeful policy formation are the things that reduce the impact of climate displacement as well as protect vulnerable groups are needed immediately.

### **POLICY GAPS AND GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES**

Nigeria's governmental response to climate-induced displacement is still disjointed and inadequately funded. The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) lacks the tools and authority to handle long-term displacement issues even as it plans disaster relief (Lenshie *et al.*, 2022). The lack of a thorough national policy on climate migration aggravates the situation even more since it leaves displaced people open to exploitation and neglect (Etim, 2024). Furthermore, impeding good government are corruption and bureaucratic inefficiencies. Often misused funds set for disaster assistance impair public confidence in government institutions and restrict the effect of actions (Oyilieze *et al.*, 2022).

### **RESILIENCE AND ADAPTATION STRATEGIES**

Many communities have created resilience plans to handle displacement brought on by climate change despite the difficulties. To help slow down desertification, pastoralists in the north have embraced rotational grazing and water collecting (Akinyemi, 2016). Similar elevated dwellings and diverse revenue streams through non-agricultural industries have been created by flood-prone southern villages (Etim, 2024).

Projects under government direction, such as the Great Green Wall project, seek to stop Sahel displacement and battle desertification. However, these initiatives sometimes lack financing or poor execution, which emphasizes the necessity of more investment in community-driven adaptation plans (Teye & Nikoi, 2022).

### **THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL ACTORS**

Addressing climate-induced displacement in Nigeria depends critically on international organizations. Camp food, shelter, education, and other essential services are provided to refugees by UNHCR and UNICEF (UNICEF, 2021). To reduce displacement risks, the World Bank has also funded endeavours to combat climate change such as reforestation initiatives and dams and dykes construction programmes (Ofori *et al.*, 2023).

International interventions are sometimes criticised, in the meantime, for being structuralist and not responsive enough to local needs. Some projects funded by donors in the Niger Delta region have been criticised for not involving the local communities hence decreasing their sustainability (Mbakwem, 2022).

### **FUTURE PROJECTIONS AND SCENARIOS**

High temperatures, natural disasters, and increased population density, all indicate a massive scale of migration in Nigeria across the next decades. Unless adequate measures are taken to address the situation, more than 50% of the arable land in the Sahel region may vanish by 2025, displacing millions more (Nenger & Odimegwu, 2024).

Other vulnerable regions are the Niger Delta where the coastal areas are at risk of being flooded due to the rising sea levels and the Lake Chad Basin where water scarcity that could lead to displacement might begin shortly. These

cases describe why immediate preventative measures are required to address displacement due to climate change effects (Ofori *et al.*, 2023).

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS**

Displacement caused by climate change is a complex phenomenon that occurs due to different environmental, socio-economic, and political factors, to understand its causes and impacts as well as possible solutions this section is dedicated to presenting and discussing relevant theories from the current literature regarding this phenomenon in Nigeria.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINISM**

Environmental determinism is a theory in which the differences in the environmental context predetermine population mobility. This framework shows how, in Nigeria, desertification, flooding, or coastal erosion directly causes people to be displaced. As illustrated when this lake which was once the fourth largest in Africa is decreasing drastically due to environmental degradation that has seen 89.1% of the surface area of the lake dry up, entire populations have to shift in the quest for water and cultivable land (Terminski, 2012). Critics of this framework point out how oversimplified complicated sociopolitical aspects are in it. Still, it is crucial to comprehend how climate change causes displacement, especially in ecologically sensitive areas like northern Nigeria (Lenshie *et al.*, 2022).

#### **1. PUSH-PULL THEORY OF MIGRATION**

The whole paradigm of the push-pull theory proposed by Everett Lee floods our view of migration. While pull factors such as enhanced paid work opportunities and improved lifestyles in different states pull people from one region to another, push factors including drought, floods, and land degradation push people from one area to another. These forces are the direct cause of the rural-to-urban migration in Nigeria. For instance, flood victims from other southern Nigerian states, which experienced flooding this year, usually move to scarcely populated areas as urban centres such, as Lagos State which only contributes to the worsening traffic in those cities as well as exerting pressure on infrastructure (Akinyemi, 2016). However, these migration processes are not without obstacles such as; financial constraints and sociopolitical factors that lie in between (Etim, 2024).

#### **2. RESOURCE SCARCITY THEORY**

Resource scarcity theory stresses how variations in the availability of resources tend to cut down on certain resources that in turn helps competitiveness as well as conflict. This hypothesis is particularly relevant in Nigeria, where recent episodes of dryness, and water scarcity in the north have augmented farmer-herder clash. Due to the reduced availability of resources in places such as the Lake Chad Basin, pastoralists have moved southwards, hence increasing land use competition (Etim, 2024). Nenger and Odimegwu (2024) explain how resource scarcity, as a result of displacement due to climate change has disrupted community peace-making structures and demand for legal interventions concerning social and environmental repercussions of displacement.

### **3. CLIMATE JUSTICE FRAMEWORK**

Creating awareness around the differentiated impact of climate change on marginalised populations, the theory of climate justice influences just adaptation policies. Nigeria's climate-related displacement is worst in poor adaptation capacity in rural areas. Mbakwem (2022) posits that the integration of climate justice in policy intentions will enable a check on the failure to address displacement through inadequate funding and support for vulnerable groups.

This approach also challenges the international relations of climate change as it puts the industrialised countries responsible for their shares of world emissions. It requires international financial and technological assistance for nations such as Nigeria in the lesser-developed world to manage climate impacts (Ofori *et al.*, 2023).

### **4. SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS FRAMEWORK**

By grouping livelihood assets into natural, human, financial, physical, and social capital, the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) provides a complete prism for viewing the socioeconomic effects of relocation. Often in Nigeria, displacement causes these vital assets to deteriorate. Environmental events like desertification and flooding often cause natural capital arable land and water supplies to be destroyed. This loss disturbs access to basic resources and agriculture, leaving displaced people trying to maintain their livelihoods. Human capital suffers similarly; displacement disturbs health care and education, hence aggravating the vulnerabilities of people driven from their homes. Whether in farming, fishing, or trading, households' loss of their main livelihoods causes financial instability that damages financial capital as well.

Rebuilding livelihoods for displaced people need more than simply financial support, according to Akinyemi (2016). Good interventions have to incorporate initiatives for capacity-building meant to empower people and communities. In the face of continuous difficulties, these initiatives can assist displaced people to create sustainable livelihoods, promote resilience, and aid in restoring lost possessions.

### **5. POLITICAL ECOLOGY FRAMEWORK**

Political ecology studies how socioeconomic inequality, political power, and environmental changes interact. In Nigeria, corruption and poor government worsen the effects of relocation brought on by climate change. For example, poor reactions to disaster management sometimes leave displaced people without enough help (Nenger & Odimegwu, 2024).

This framework emphasizes how institutional shortcomings and power disparities exacerbate weaknesses. For instance, land grabs in flood-affected regions sometimes replace already underprivileged populations, therefore aggravating socioeconomic inequality (Etim, 2024).

### **6. HUMAN SECURITY FRAMEWORK**

The human security framework turns the emphasis from conventional, state-centric security to the welfare of people and communities. It stresses seven aspects of security: political, personal, community, environmental, health, financial, and food security. Climate-related relocation in Nigeria seriously compromises several aspects of human security.



As livelihoods in farming and fishing vanish, economic security suffers and displaced people must look for other, usually less consistent sources of income. Particularly in flood and drought-prone regions, where lower agricultural output aggravates food shortage and malnutrition, food security is also in danger. Particularly in congested internally displaced persons (IDP) camps, where inadequate sanitation and limited access to healthcare services help to cause disease epidemics, therefore endangering vulnerable populations, health security becomes a major issue (Naz & Saleem, 2024).

Emphasizing the need for thorough, people-centered policies that not only solve the immediate effects of displacement but also guarantee long-term solutions to safeguard the welfare of impacted people and communities, the human security framework

## **MATERIALS AND METHOD**

This study employs a qualitative research approach, incorporating secondary data analysis and case study methods to explore the socio-economic implications of climate-induced displacement in Nigeria. By combining several data sources and analytical approaches, this methodology is meant to give a complete knowledge of the issues.

### **RESEARCH DESIGN**

A qualitative approach was selected due to its ability to capture the complexity and multidimensionality of climate-induced displacement. This design enables a thorough exploration of the drivers, impacts, and responses to displacement, incorporating both theoretical insights and empirical data.

### **DATA SOURCES**

The study relies mainly on secondary data from credible sources, including:

- Journal articles, books, and reports on climate change, migration, and socio-economic impacts.
- Reports from international organizations such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).
- National policy documents and reports from the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC).

### **CASE STUDIES**

To illustrate the impact of climate change displacement at the regional level, specific regions in Nigeria, the Benue Valley, Niger Delta, and the Lake Chad Basin were considered. These examples present a somewhat contextualised understanding of the challenges and the responses linked to displacement.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This section explores the study's findings in depth, examining the environmental drivers, socio-economic impacts, and governance challenges associated with climate-induced displacement in Nigeria.

## ENVIRONMENTAL DRIVERS OF DISPLACEMENT

Possible environmental factors that have led to displacement in Nigeria include but are not limited to desertification, flooding, and coastal erosion. These drivers work at unequal tiers, impacting communities differently.

### 1. DESERTIFICATION IN THE NORTH

One of the most critical ecological factors that lead to migration in the northern Nigeria region is desertification. The changing climate, characterized by long-term reduced rainfall, increased heat, and improper land use, has significantly degraded large areas of the arid and semi-arid Sahel zones, particularly the Lake Chad Basin. Historically a reliable source of water for fishing and agriculture, the Lake Chad Basin has reduced its water surface area by over 90% from the 1960s onwards, meaning that millions of people dependent on the same are now displaced (Teye & Nikoi, 2022).

Among pastoralist people, displacement brought on by desertification is very severe. Often running afoul of agricultural communities over land use, herders are driven southward in search of pasture and water as grazing areas dwindle. Describing these farmer-herder disputes as a major secondary impact of environmental displacement, Naz and Saleem (2024) help to explain regional instability and insecurity.

Desertification has socioeconomic effects beyond migration. Losing access to conventional livelihoods, displaced people can suffer poverty and unemployment. For example, Akinyemi (2016) points out that many families have been driven into metropolitan areas where they fight to fit into the labour market by the impossibility of sustaining agriculture in desertified areas.

### 2. FLOODING IN THE SOUTH

Particularly in the Niger and Benue River basins, recurrent flooding in southern Nigeria has displaced millions of people and devastated homes, farms, and important infrastructure. Among the deadliest floods in Nigeria's history, the 2022 floods claimed over 3.2 million lives and resulted in damages of billions of dollars (Lenshie *et al.*, 2022).

Low-income communities, who typically live in flood-prone locations with insufficient drainage systems, are disproportionately affected by flooding. These people live in constant cycles of displacement since government backing and resources restrict reconstruction projects. Adeoye *et al.* (2009) contend that bad urban design and deforestation aggravate flooding effects by substituting impermeable surfaces for natural floodplains, hence raising runoff and flood intensity.

Long-term effects of flooding include economic unrest and food shortages. Often destroying crops and animals, floods leave impacted households without food or income. Olunusi (2024) underlines how the degradation of agricultural land in areas prone to floods fuels increasing food prices, hence aggravating poverty and inequality.

### 3. COASTAL EROSION IN THE NIGER DELTA

Climate change, as a result of global warming especially caused by increased sea levels and extraction of oil from the sea, has led to the destruction of beaches and, thus, displacement of thousands of persons in the Niger

Delta. This is so because many of these coastal towns, which rely on agriculture and fishing, among other economic activities, lose heavily due to damage to arable land for cultivation and fish stocks. Residents of the Niger Delta, fishing communities in particular, have experienced changes in the ways they engage in commerce and address their day-to-day needs, as well as a disruption to cultural practices associated with the rivers of that region, Oyilieze *et al.* (2022).

Impacts of coastal erosion borders natural impacts, including destruction of habitats and loss of species. Mangrove forests are greatly degraded and support many populations, as well as occurring naturally to reduce erosion. According to Mohammed (2019), the removal of mangrove vegetation worsens displacement by increasing vulnerable coastal regions to storm surges and flooding.

Coastal erosion has been attempted to be slowed down in some places through the building of sea walls and reforestation of mangroves, but these are insufficient to address the challenge. These steps are sometimes lacking in finance or are poorly coordinated between government departments and local communities (Lenshie *et al.*, 2022).

## **SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF DISPLACEMENT**

Climate-induced displacement in Nigeria has far-reaching socio-economic consequences, affecting livelihoods, education, public health, and social stability.

### **1. LIVELIHOOD DISRUPTION**

Especially in agriculture and fisheries, which are highly vulnerable to environmental changes, displacement disturbs established livelihoods. Desertification has made large tracts of northern Nigeria's agricultural land useless, causing farmers to flee their fields and look for other means of income. According to Akinyemi (2016), displaced farmers frequently settle in cities where they encounter limited social services access and high unemployment rates. Comparably, coastal erosion in the Niger Delta has destroyed fishing villages. According to Oyilieze *et al.* (2022), a lack of skills and resources causes many displaced fishermen to be unable to shift to other types of employment, so resulting in economic marginalization. The combined effect of disturbance of livelihoods helps to explain growing economic disparity and poverty rates.

### **2. EDUCATIONAL DISRUPTION**

One of the most badly impacted sectors under displacement is education. Due to the absence of provisions and amenities in IDP camps, several children fail to complete their education smoothly. UNICEF (2021) estimates that more than 60% of displaced children in Nigeria lack access to education, which limits their opportunities and perpetuates the cycle of poverty.

In states such as Benue State, schools are dismantled or turned into temporary shelters when flood strikes, hence disrupting education further. Moreover, the impact of education disruption described by Naz and Saleem (2024) is the reduction of economic growth and human capital formation.

## HEALTH CHALLENGES

In displacement environments, public health issues become quite important. Disease epidemics find rich ground in overcrowded, inadequately equipped IDP camps without basic sanitation, clean water, and healthcare facilities. Cholera and malaria are particularly prevalent, with Olunusi (2024) reporting that over 30% of IDP camps in Nigeria have experienced cholera outbreaks in the past five years.

Common among displaced people are also mental health problems, including sadness, anxiety, and trauma. Policy solutions can ignore these difficulties, therefore depriving impacted people of the tools they need to restore their lives (Lenshie *et al.*, 2022).

## GOVERNANCE AND POLICY GAPS

Governance challenges exacerbate the impacts of climate-induced displacement in Nigeria. Weak institutional frameworks, corruption, and policy gaps hinder effective responses.

### 1. WEAK INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS

Mitigating displacement is the task of agencies such as the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), but often, the agency is powerless to contain the scale of the task. As Lenshie *et al.* (2022) argue, most disaster management is more of a short-term fix; there is more focus on relief rather than prevention.

### 2. POLICY GAPS

Nigeria does not have a comprehensive national policy that is supposed to address displacement occasioned by climate change. Although activities such as reforestation and flood prevention are undertaken, this effort is sometimes done without regard to the affected people. Teye & Nikoi (2022) highlight some policies to be harmonized to meet the structural forces leading to displacement and the displaced population requirements.

## CONCLUSION

Displacement due to climate change in Nigeria is an emerging issue with environmental, socio-economic, and governance implications. This study demonstrates that anti-environment issues such as coastal erosion, flood, and desertification are influential in displacing millions of people across the nation. These displacements lead to issues of education, health, and social integration, exacerbate socioeconomic risk factors, and disrupt sources of income. These issues are more pronounced in Nigeria because of governance and policy gaps, which have reduced assistance for displaced people and escalated tensions between host communities and immigrants. A combination of the absence of a sound national policy framework that addresses climate-induced displacement, coupled with low institutional preparedness, illustrates why urgent and concerted action is required.

To address this problem, there must be a multilateral approach where short-term salvation practices are as important as mid to long-term reconstruction strategies. Measures to mitigate the impact of displacement include improving the governance structures, promoting climate-related livelihoods, accessing education and health facilities and, therefore, improving the integration of the affected communities. In addition, adopting concepts of climate justice

and promoting global responsibility will contribute to ensuring that the required assistance is provided to vulnerable populations.

This work has emphasised the importance of regional collaboration and international collaboration for dealing with common challenges present, including a challenge like the one faced by the Lake Chad Basin. Foreign financing and encouragement of alliances can help Nigeria adopt sustainable solutions to the challenges of reducing the risks of displacement and improving the quality of living of affected populations.

Managing climate-induced displacement in the context of the Nigerian experience requires that there is a shift away from the reactive approach that seeks to address the consequences of displacement while ignoring the structural issues. In collaboration with the goals of providing greater goals of social, economic, and environmental returns, this will go a long way to address the more immediate pain of affected people.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This section provides necessary recommendations for addressing the socio-economic effects of climate-induced displacement in Nigeria by drawing from the identified facts. These recommendations have both short-term and long-term objectives with a focus on developing more sustainability and coping capabilities.

- **Strengthen Governance and Institutional Capacity:** In Nigeria, controlling flood-related displacement calls for a thorough climate strategy, including social protection, disaster risk reduction, and adaptation strategies. Equitable access to resources and services for displaced persons depends on effective coordination among several government levels (Teye & Nikoi, 2022). Through improved financing, training, and resource management, strengthening agencies such as NEMA will help to improve disaster response. Furthermore, vital for reducing forced migration and guaranteeing equitable displacement management are preventative actions, including public sensitizing (Lenshie *et al.*, 2022) and climate displacement alerts.
- **Promote Livelihood Restoration and Economic Resilience:** Supporting climate-smart agriculture through agroforestry, effective water management, and resilient crops can help Nigeria address displacement caused by climate change and losses of livelihoods (Akinyemi, 2016). Projects like the Great Green Wall project will help to combat desertification and advance sustainable agriculture. Equally vital is generating alternate income streams for displaced people via microfinance, vocational training, and employment in industries such as construction, IT, and renewable energy (Oyilieze *et al.*, 2022). These approaches help afflicted areas to be resilient, adaptable, and economically recovering.
- **Improve Social Services and Infrastructure:** Establishing temporary classrooms in IDP camps, offering scholarships, and preparing instructors for displacement environments help the government give displaced children's education priority (UNICEF, 2021). Furthermore, vital for general well-being and stability is strengthening healthcare in these camps using mobile clinics, telemedicine, and mental health treatments (Olunusi, 2024).

- **Address Social and Psychological Impacts:** Reducing violence and advancing integration between displaced people and host communities depend on improving social cohesiveness. Projects driven by communities, including shared infrastructure and cooperative businesses, promote cooperation and mutual benefit (Naz & Saleem, 2024). Equally vital is giving displaced people psychological assistance via peer groups and qualified counsellors, therefore enabling healing, resilience building, and successful reintegration (Lenshie *et al.*).
- **Strengthen International Cooperation:** Mobilizing foreign funding is crucial for Nigeria's climate adaptation and displacement management efforts. Mechanisms like the Green Climate Fund enable large-scale projects in disaster preparedness, sustainable agriculture, and resilient infrastructure (Teye & Nikoi, 2022). Regional coordination, through bodies like the Lake Chad Basin Commission, fosters cross-border cooperation on issues such as flooding, desertification, and migration. Strengthening redressive justice and sustainable development enhances collective solutions to climate-induced displacement (Naz & Saleem, 2024).
- **Integrate Climate Justice Principles:** Prioritizing vulnerable groups in climate adaptation efforts is crucial for fair outcomes. Targeted strategies should address gender-specific risks, enhance resource access, and ensure protection in displaced settings, fostering resilience and social equity (Oyilieze *et al.*, 2022). Additionally, advocating for global responsibility is key to addressing climate-induced migration. Nigeria should push for greater accountability from developed nations and seek increased financial and technical support for climate adaptation in underdeveloped regions (Ofori *et al.*, 2023).

## REFERENCES

- Abdulmalik Mohammed, Y. (2019). Climate-Induced Migration in Coastal Areas of Nigeria and its Economic Effects on Coastal Ecosystem Livelihoods. *Lafia Journal of Economics and Management Sciences*, 4(1): 128-128.
- Adeoye, N. O., Ayanlade, A., & Babatimehin, O. (2009). Climate change and menace of floods in Nigerian cities: socio-economic implications. *Advances in Natural and Applied Sciences*, 3(3): 369-378.
- Akinyemi, T. E. (2016). *Climate change, migration and resource contestations: a case study of north-south migration in Nigeria* (Doctoral dissertation).
- Etim, E. I. (2024). Assessing the impact of climate change in North Central Nigeria: A study of the herders-farmers conflict. *Baze University*
- Lenshie, N. E., Ojeh, V. N., Oruonye, E. D., Ezeibe, C., Ajaero, C., Nzeadibe, T. C., ... & Osadebe, N. (2022). Geopolitics of climate change-induced conflict and population displacement in West Africa. *Local Environment*, 27(3): 287-308.

- Mbakwem, E. U. (2022). *Exploring the environmental refugee crisis in Nigeria through a climate justice framework* (Doctoral dissertation, Glasgow Caledonian University).
- Naz, U., & Saleem, M. S. (2024). Climate-Induced Vulnerabilities: Conflict and Migration Patterns in the Sahel Region of Africa. *Pakistan Languages and Humanities Review*, **8**(2): 295-311.
- Nenger, J. A., Odimegwu, N. U., & Nwankwo, C. N. (2024). The Impact of Climate Change on Forced Migration in the Sahel: Human Rights Perspective (Nigeria as a case study). *Canadian Social Science*, **20**(1): 23-31.
- Ofori, D. O., Bandauko, E., Kutor, S. K., Odoi, A., Asare, A. B., Akyea, T., & Arku, G. (2023). A Systematic Review of International and Internal Climate-Induced Migration in Africa. *Sustainability*, **15**(22): 16105.
- Olunusi, B. O. (2024). Overview of climate-induced food insecurity in Nigeria. *African Journal of Food Science*, **18**(5): 69–76. <https://doi.org/10.5897/ajfs2024.2306>
- Oyilieze, A. A., Joe-Ikechebelu, N. N., Okedo-Alex, I. N., Okafor, K. J., Omoruyi, F. A., Okeke, J., ... & Echendu, S. T. (2022). Climate-Driven Temporary Displacement of Women and Children in Anambra State, Nigeria: The Causes and Consequences. *Climate Change in Asia and Africa-Examining the Biophysical and Social Consequences, and Society's Responses*.
- Sambo, I., & Rafiu, A. A. (2018). Climate Change-Induced displacement: Drivers, challenges and mitigation measures. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, **8**(12): <https://doi.org/10.29322/ijsrp.8.12.2018.p8426>.
- Terminski, B. (2012). Environmentally-induced displacement: theoretical frameworks and current challenges. *Centre d'Etude de l'Ethnicité et des Migrations, Université de Liège, Research Paper*.
- Teye, J. K., & Nikoi, E. G. (2022). Climate-induced migration in West Africa. In *Migration in West Africa: IMISCOE regional reader* (pp. 79-105). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- UNICEF. (2021). Education in Emergencies: Nigeria Country Report. *UNICEF Publications*