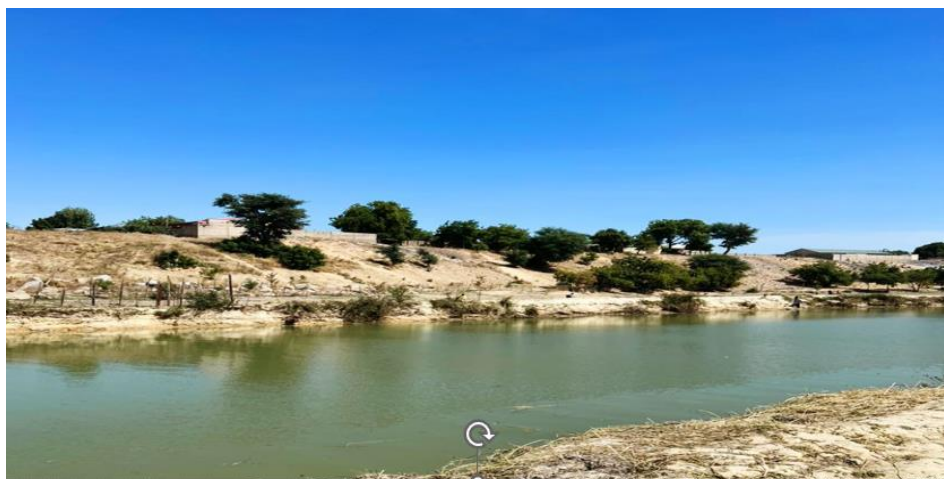




Center for Advocacy, Transparency and Accountability Initiative (CATAI) a Youth-led non-governmental, nonprofit organization providing humanitarian and Developmental response within the BAY State. With Support from Action Aid Nigeria, CATAI is implementing the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA II) Project in Northeast Nigeria funded by Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA).

This is a three-years project (2022 - 2025) which aims to improve the realization of fundamental human and democratic rights and improved, sustainable livelihoods, resilience and protection for young people, especially young women living in marginalization, including in disaster and protracted crises contexts.

In line with SPA II climate change objectives, action research was conducted to understand young people's perceptions on the effects of climate change as it relates to their livelihood and to identify mitigation or adaptation measures.



## CLIMATE CHANGE EFFECTS AND ADAPTATION OF YOUTHS LIVELIHOOD IN NORTHEAST NIGERIA

### INTRODUCTIONS

Globally, the increasing impacts of climate change continue to be seen in rising sea temperature, flooding, and fluctuation in weather patterns. These have been noticed in several areas in Nigeria over the past decades. The impact of climate change has significantly increased in West and Central Africa over the past 10 years with geographic concentrations in north-east Nigeria. Here, people struggle to access to food and suffer from climatic shocks that are negatively affecting food crops, driving up food prices. The economic decline has drastically reduced the buying power of communities to secure even the basics.

The most serious upshot of climate related problems in Nigeria have been dry spells, seasonal drought and intense rainfall leading to floods. Droughts and floods have increased in frequency, intensity and magnitude and have adversely impacted on food and water security, water quality, energy and the economic sustenance of rural communities. Climate change is affecting everybody regardless of caste, ethnicity, religion, sex, race, or level of income. Its impact has served a toxic mix of high unemployment, loss of livelihood and despondency.

Climate is changing everywhere, but people living in fragile context are affected all the more. Climate change and conflict are a toxic combination, causing mass displacement, disrupting food production and food supply deliveries, increasing risks to diseases and worsening already chronic malnutrition.



DANIDA

The recession of Lake Chad River has left about 40 million youths restive and exposed to poverty and unemployment. However, most analysis, policies and interventions related to climate change and livelihood fail to consider the youth lenses especially that of young women.

Addressing the multiple inequalities and disproportionate impacts faced by young people, and marginalized communities must be central to addressing climate induced loss and damage.

It is against this that Centre for Advocacy, Transparency and Accountability Initiative (CATAI), conducted research that aimed to determine the effects of climate change on the livelihood of young people across Borno, Adamawa and Yobe States of Nigeria and to identify mitigation or adaptation measures.

This policy brief outlines the main findings and policy implications of the study.

## APPROACH

The research was conducted phenomenologically using survey questionnaires and focus group discussions to access the assets required for improving the livelihood of young people affected by climate change across the BAY States.

First, a survey containing 35 questions was disseminated through youth networks including but not limited to networks with an environmental focus across the BAY states. The survey was designed to understand livelihood options of young people, the knowledge and effect of climate change on the livelihood activities of young people and mitigation/adaptation measures against the effects of climate change allowing for a more targeted approach. The questionnaires included an informed consent section that highlights what the study is about, it states how the information given will be used, it noted the rights of the researcher to confidentiality and the protection of their privacy.

Second, 9 in-depth qualitative interviews were conducted (3 in Borno, 3 in Adamawa and 3 in Yobe) focusing on young people who have recently been affected by extreme weather events, particularly the 2022 flood in Nigeria believed to be the worst that Nigeria has experienced in decades, as it has created humanitarian crises and compounded economic challenges in the affected areas. These interviews were held to understand how extreme weather-related events affected personal engagement and outlooks on climate adaptation. Although interviews are very personalized accounts, in local language. This method also helps to provide a more illustrative account of youth action and resilience in facing climate change impacts, particularly in Northeast Nigeria.

## FINDINGS

The study found that the livelihood of youths across Borno, Adamawa and Yobe are impacted by climate change. The major livelihood impacted by climate change as opined by survey respondents are farming and petty trading especially charcoal business. The increasing impacts of climate change across the BAY states can be seen in flooding, hike in prices of commodities, rise/change in temperature, extinction of animals, melting ice, while most common causes of climate changes are air pollution and pollution of rivers and seas.

Further findings as opined by 64% of survey respondents reveals that efforts put in place to curb the effect of climate change is ineffective, whereas 47% of survey respondents rated high the effect of climate change on their personal life. In a bit to adapt with the effects of climate change, some youths reported to have changed their livelihood options overtime to more sustained business. These implications can be seen in the resilience of the methods used by youths to combat the continuing impact of climate change on their livelihood. The findings also indicate that there are other factors making them vulnerable to the impacts of climate change such as lack of basic infrastructures, low capital base, and the use of crude farming methods.

### Livelihood opportunities of young people

Findings from the research reveals that young people across the BAY states are involved in some form of livelihood as 29.6% were employees in the public/private sector, 19.4% were farmers, 18.7% were traders, 6.2% were into feed production and fishing each respectively, 5.9 were into daily labor, 0.8% were into textile production, hunting, bead making and hair dressing respectively. While 17% are doing nothing, having no source of livelihood. This implies that the majority of the respondents engage in farming and the petty trade of their farm produce.

Most young people across the BAY states find it difficult to obtain a livelihood because the type of work available is usually labor-intensive with marginal wages.

Further findings from the quantitative and qualitative survey revealed factors that makes young people across the BAY states vulnerable to the impacts of climate change such as Insufficient funds, inadequate basic infrastructures, inaccessibility to loans, and the use of crude farming methods.

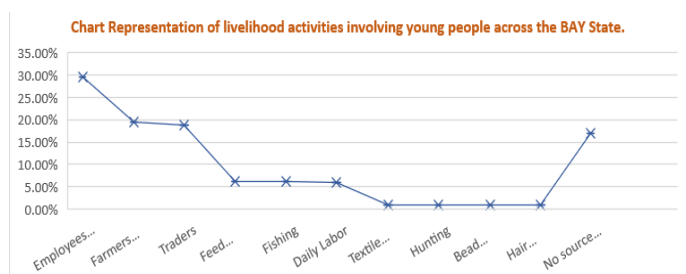


Fig 1: Survey Respondents livelihood activities across the BAY states.

## Young people's perception of climate change

To determine the young people's perception of climate change, certain factors have to be considered and they include their access to information, their information source, their level of understanding of the concept of climate change and the causes of the occurrence.

The survey and interviewed respondents said their information sources are internet, radio, television, school, friends, and academic journals. The result of their suggestions shows that internet is the major source of information for young people across the BAY states.

Findings from the quantitative survey and qualitative interviews reveals that majority of young people across the BAY states understand climate change to mean rise/change in temperature, extinction of animals, and increase/decreased rainfall mostly caused by human activities (poor waste management, air pollution through emission of greenhouse gases from vehicles, pollution of rivers and seas and burning of hydrocarbon products, deforestation and bush burning), resulting to flooding, hike in prices of commodities, conflict and displacement. In addition, majority of survey respondents strongly agree that they understand climate change and what it means, 44.3% strongly agree that climate change is happening right now, 43.8 strongly agree that the global temperature have changed compared to previous decade, 43.3% strongly agree that it poses a serious threat for people around the world and 37.8% strongly agree that it is caused by human activities.

This implies that majority of young people across the BAY states understand what is driving changing climate, with respect to changing weather patterns, especially rainfall and temperature

Majority of young people confirmed to be aware of global policies and initiatives taken by various organisations to reduce climate change/global warming. In addition, 77.6% of survey respondents opined that the issue of air pollution is very important on a global scale, followed by 70.6% whom opined that the issue of flooding is very important on a global scale. The least issue mentioned by 52.2% of survey respondents that is very important on a global scale is extinction of species.

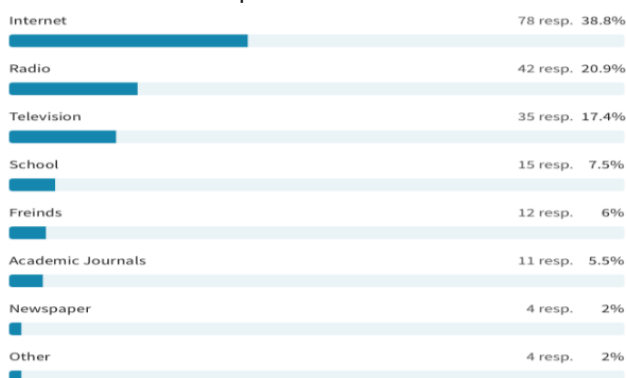


Fig 2: Survey Respondents distribution across platforms they heard about climate change

It is imperative therefore to note that the young people interviewed during this research seem to be highly aware of climate change, although their perception of the occurrence differs with respect to their level of understanding, their source of information and what they attribute to being the cause of the phenomenon. However, management practices and measures must be introduced to the young people to enable them to sustain their livelihood in the face of their changing climate, nonetheless, the challenges faced by the respondents when obtaining their livelihood is discussed subsequently.

## Impact of climate change on the livelihood activities of young people

The response of the young people across the BAY States indicates that there are several challenges to their livelihood, nonetheless, this research was interested in determining the impact of climate change on livelihood.

The results show that the most affected livelihood impacted by climate change are farming (crops, poultry and livestock) and petty trading (mostly charcoal business). Young people believed an increase in temperature contributed to reduced productivity, while unfavorable weather had adverse effect on their livelihood. A decrease in temperature is believed to cause an increase in diseases, while increased rainfall was said to be more active as a causal factor for an increase in disease vectors. Climate change is said to cause unfavorable weather conditions and is suggested to be responsible for the loss of properties during floods, decrease in rainfall, on the other hand, is adjudged to be more influential in damaging properties and propagating diseases.

On human health, majority of the research respondents opined that respiratory disease was the highest ranked potential impact of climate change, followed by Malnutrition, Infectious Disease, and displacement. In addition, all survey respondents when asked to rank how much climate change threatens their personal safety on a scale of 1-10 (with 1 been the lowest and 10 been the highest), an average of 6.9 was rated to demonstrate the extent to which respondents feel climate change threatens their personal health and safety. On the same vein, data from the in-depth interviews also revealed that climate change is a major problem caused by the increase of human activities leading to several direct and indirect impacts on health including increase in heat-related mortality, dehydration, and spread of infectious diseases, malnutrition, and damage to public health infrastructure.

47.3% of survey respondents claimed that climate change has negatively impacted on their livelihood while 37.3% of survey respondents said climate change has both positive and negative impact on their livelihood. To buttress this impact, majority of the in-depth interview's respondents 5 out of 6 persons from Borno and Adamawa stated how the effect of climate change resulting to flooding has impacted on their livelihood there restricting the movement of their good and services across neighboring towns and affecting the access to basic needs of food, housing, and health. Additionally, most of the interview respondents (5 out of 9) stated that climate change is increasingly becoming a security problem and they are concerned that climate change may increase the risk of violent conflict.

Furthermore, one of the interviewed respondents mentioned that increased temperature as a result of climate change is a favorable condition for pests such as grasshoppers that destroy/reduce their crop yield to thrive and multiply. Another interview respondent also mentioned that the flooding experienced this year has resulted to **loss of crops due to heavy rains and this is a major concern that will impact on food prices in the coming months.**

Deducing from the responses from the quantitative and qualitative data collected for this research, one can say that the effect of climate change has led to poverty, poor health, increased migration and could possibly increase the occurrence of violent conflicts.

### Techniques young people use to combat climate change impacts on their livelihood activities.

The perceived mitigation measures young people take against climate change; and their said results suggest that the young people across the BAY States are advocating for adopting better waste disposal methods (62.2%), reduced the frequency of bush burning carried out on farm (56.7%),

the need to adequately prepare for flood (27.9%) and advocate for reduction in the use of pesticides (24.4%).

In addition, interview respondents also mentioned that on a personal level, they have planted trees and participated in sensitization activities to aid fighting climate related issues. Questions were posed on what could be done to curb the effect of climate change on their livelihood and the majority of the respondents (68.5%) believe that the government should do more to help combat the effects of climate change, the respondents also proposed measures as public awareness and alternative energy use to help mitigate the effects of climate change on their livelihood.

Over time, the responsibility of tackling climate change has been passed back and forth between governments and the international community, this question was posed to the respondents and 46.3% supposed the responsibility lies with the federal government, 18.4% believes it lies on the state government, 3.5% suggest the local government while 31.3% think the responsibility is on the international community and 44.3% claims it lies on individuals.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was predicated on the need for development and examining the impact of climate change on the livelihood of young people across the BAY states, the following recommendations were tailor-made to have been to state and LGAs, communities and the international development community.

- The young people mentioned that soft loans from Governmental Organization (GOs) and well-meaning people (Non-Governmental Organizations) will improve their living situation. They revealed that they have a trade union and youth networks; therefore, relevant GOs and NGOs can use these associations to create working opportunities, introduce climate change mitigation measures, management practices, create gender awareness programs and other community initiatives targeted towards improving young people's livelihood outcomes;
- Additionally, they advocated for the availability of interest-free credit, and health services, to improve their wellbeing;
- Provision of information, resources, incentives, might mitigate the unintended consequences of climate change and help improve yield;
- Similarly, to raise climate change awareness and mitigation measure across the BAY states, the use of radio and television as a mass media campaign is worth exploring as 38.3% of the respondents get their information from this channel. In addition, responses from the Interviews suggests the need for sensitization of community members about the effects of climate change, afforestation and community-based activities as a way of curbing the effects of climate change;

- In resolving climate and conflict issue, it is necessary to adopt a conflict-sensitive approach while promoting the implementation of collaborative planning methodologies (based on tools which involve dialogue and building up cross-sector consensus) and the use of relevant governance tools. This approach will facilitate efficient, professional, and democratically managed collective decision-making processes required for the sustainable management of these areas. It will merge the technical and scientific standards needed for precise socio-environmental diagnosis, digital, strategic planning with the capacity to promote social consensus on the basis of participatory and conflict-resolution tools.

The suggested recommendations might help enhance livelihood and improve rural development, thereby assisting policymakers and researchers on how to introduce methods to reduce poverty among rural women by introducing income-generating activities.

## CONCLUSION

To ensure the research was conducted meaningfully and manageably using available resources, data collection was limited to four communities, this ensured the research represents what goes on in the studied areas. The sampled population of 250 women and 20 men helped achieve the study's aim by giving a broader understanding of the women's situation. While agriculture and trade do not fully represent all livelihoods in the study area, they keep the study's focus.

To conclude, it is important to note that, the study reveals that young people across the northeast participate in primary (agriculture) and secondary (trade) income-generating activities; however, their labor often goes unrecognized even though their income enhances their community's livelihood outcome. This research made it evident that asides the influence of climate, a low capital base affects rural young people's livelihood, lack of basic infrastructure influences their livelihood while the use of crude methods affects their livelihood and the inability to get loans for their businesses affects their livelihood.

**Find out more**

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