



Chapter 29

Women's Representation and Participation in Climate Change Governance in Nigeria: A Need for a Paradigm Shift


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Abstract

Though the effects of climate change are gender- and status-neutral, their impacts are more severe on vulnerable groups like women, children, disabled and minority groups. However, women need to be adequately represented in climate change decision-making and governance in Nigeria (the centrepiece of procedural rights) despite being amongst the most vulnerable groups to the effects of climate change. This chapter adopts a doctrinal research approach to examine gender rights' impacts of climate change, and women's representation and participation in climate change governance. The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Climate Change Act 2021 and other relevant statutes were contextually analysed along the thematic areas of climate change impact on women, and women's participation in climate change governance in Nigeria. The study finds that climate change

has impacted women's substantive and procedural rights in Nigeria. It also finds that some unintended human rights violations (especially women's rights) occur in the cause of siting and implementation of climate change mitigation and adaptation projects. Despite these effects, women must be adequately involved in Nigeria's climate change decision-making and governance because of cultural biases, patriarchy, illiteracy, and poverty. It also finds that gender rights were not adequately mainstreamed in extant international and municipal legal regimes on climate change. Hence, it is a significant challenge to enforce the rights of women infringed upon through the impacts of climate change or its coping measures in Nigeria; it also demands more women's involvement in climate change governance. It concludes by recommending that human rights (especially procedural gender rights) should be appropriately mainstreamed in Nigeria's climate change regime, and the government should create an enabling environment for their enforcement.

Keywords: Climate Change, Decision-Making, Governance, Participation, Women

Introduction

Climate change is one of the biggest challenges of the 21st century (Onu, 2021). Its effects are felt globally, particularly in the Global South and Nigeria. Nigeria is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, such as a rise in sea level, flooding, drought, extreme weather conditions, food scarcity, and diseases, amongst others. Although these effects are general, they impact more on vulnerable groups such as women and children in Nigeria. Recent research indicates that climate change and its remedial measures result in the unintended violation of substantive and procedural rights of people, especially women (Onu, 2021). Nigerian women constitute a more significant percentage of its workforce, and they labour to provide food and basic housing materials for their families. However, they are also the worst hit by the effects of climate change (Adeniyi & Adeniyi, 2020). Despite the impacts of climate change on women in Nigeria, women are sparingly represented and participate in climate change governance in Nigeria, although the current director of the Department of Climate Change, Federal Ministry of Environment, Mrs Iniobong Abiola-Awe (who serves as the focal person of Nigeria at the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the immediate past Minister of State for Environment (Barr. Sharon Ikeazor) are both women, which give the impression that women are actively involved in climate governance. Nevertheless, this is only true at the national and state levels. In reality, women are not actively involved in climate change decision-making at local

or rural levels because of patriarchy, cultural biases, equalities and economic limitations. This study uses the doctrinal research approach to examine the involvement of women in climate change decision-making in Nigeria.

The chapter is divided into six parts. Part one is the general introduction. Part two is dedicated to conceptual clarification. Part three considers the legal frameworks on climate change and women's representation. Part four examines the various factors militating against women's involvement in climate change governance in Nigeria. Part five considers the lessons that Nigeria can learn from other jurisdictions in paving the way for gender inclusion in climate change governance. Part six is the conclusion and recommendations.

Methodology

The authors used the doctrinal research methodology in carrying out this research. According to McConville and Chui (2017), doctrinal methodology "aims to systematize, rectify and clarify the law on any particular topic by a distinctive analysis of authoritative texts that consist of primary and secondary sources". Premised on the above, authors who deploy doctrinal research method demonstrate "the doctrine or gaps prevalent therein and state, with rationale and reasons, what are the correct propositions of law that need to apply" (Vibhute & Aynalem, 2009).

The doctrinal methodology is used to analyse the relevant provisions of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999; the Climate Change Act, 2021 (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2021); the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Act, 1986 (AU, 1981); the Police Act 2020 (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2020) and the National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (Establishment) Act (NESREA), (as amended) (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2007). These statutes and other relevant legal instruments were contextually analysed on the thematic areas of women's representation and participation in climate change governance in Nigeria. Social factors militating against women's participation and representation in climate change governance were sourced from secondary data and tied together with the already existing legislative analysis.

Conceptual clarification

The major concepts must be mentioned and critically examined to create a balanced basis for this discourse.

Climate change: Meaning, nature, causes, and effects.

Climate change is defined to mean “a transformation of climatic conditions that are characterized by alterations in the mean and or the distinctions of its assets that are consistent and evolve for a long period of time. This transformation of the earth’s climatic condition could take decades or longer” (IPCC, 2021:5).

Climate change is not a coincidental or unprecedented occurrence. It is a phenomenon that flows from certain domestic, commercial, industrial, and agricultural activities of man. Specific forms of carbon and gases are emitted by man’s activities, which results in climate change (YouMatter, 2018).

One of these gases is carbon dioxide. From fundamental knowledge, carbon dioxide is the gas emitted by humans when they breathe (Huma, 2019). While plants emit oxygen and take in carbon dioxide, humans take in oxygen and emit carbon dioxide. However, the general issue is that carbon dioxide (and other greenhouse gases (GHGs)) is being released into the atmosphere by people more quickly than natural processes are removing them (Locke & Mackey, 2009). A certain degree of heat in the atmosphere is beneficial and provides us with a habitable climate. Still, today’s rising carbon dioxide concentration in the atmosphere is driving a rise in global temperature with catastrophic effects. This increase in carbon level is not only from the respiratory process of breathing, as the eco-relation of plants and man could balance that, but the spike in carbon level is also a result of man burning fossil fuel and other industrial actions. These activities cause the release of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere from locations on or below the earth’s surface where it was previously accumulated as one of several forms of carbon that we refer to as fossil fuels. It is well-recognised that burning carbon-dense fuels like coal, oil, and gas is the primary source of carbon dioxide (Locke & Mackey, 2009).

Burning fossil fuels is not the only cause of climate change; greenhouse gas emission is also a major cause. In a country like Nigeria, where ownership of private vehicles is a show of luxury and riches, almost every average household owns a car or motorcycle, and those who do not own one work hard to purchase one. These vehicles, however, emit greenhouse gases such as sulphur dioxide and carbon monoxide from their exhausts (Ayeter et al., 2021).

Deforestation is another factor that contributes to climate change. Trees are meant to help deal with and reduce the impact of heat and the depleted ozone layer. However, because of the quest of humans to develop, build, and erect structures, trees are being felled indiscriminately without proper replacement. Therefore, more is needed to balance the temperature

switch-up caused by greenhouse gas emissions (Ole et al., 2023). Burning gasoline while driving, cooking using electricity generated from coal, natural gas, and oil all form the domestic source of greenhouse gas emissions, resulting in climate change.

Climate change is rapidly becoming a menace which has been and will further affect the life of Nigerians. Experts have deemed the floods of 2022 to be the worst to hit Nigeria since 2012, as they damaged the crops on more than 500,000 hectares of farmland owned by thousands of smallholder and commercial farmers around the nation. The devastation was the order of the day as many families were displaced, and many properties, businesses, and investments were lost. Floods are not the only consequence of climate change, as drought also negatively affects socio-economic growth and has been forecasted and projected to worsen in coming years (*Daily Trust*, 2022).

Not only does climate change result in natural disasters, but it also results in the loss of income for the citizens. Climate change depletes agricultural and animal production revenue at the national and individual levels by destroying farmlands. According to the World Health Organization, malaria complications that might be fatal are frequent, especially in children under five (WHO, 2023). The healthcare system may be strained as a result.

Climate change and women in Nigeria

Having examined the dire effects of climate change on the nation's domestic, economic, and medical aspects, it can be inferred that the negative impacts of climate change cut across all classes of people and therefore, everyone bears the brunt of this menace. However, considering that people have different social and circumstantial standings in society, the impact of climate change will affect them differently. Women, children, and people with disabilities are categorised as vulnerable as they have many major limitations that make them highly susceptible to unfavourable conditions (UNDP, 2023).

How are women affected by climate change in Nigeria?

Women seem to be more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change than men because of their disproportionate reliance on threatened natural resources and their representation as the majority of the world's poor. Despite these differences, men and women share similar needs and roles. The ability of the female fold to adapt to climate change is lower than men's because women need more access to resources such as land, loans, agricultural inputs, decision-making procedures, technology, training, and extension services (Osman-Elasha, 2012). During harsh weather, such as droughts and floods, women often work longer hours to ensure the household's financial

security. As a result, women will have fewer opportunities to advance their education and careers, develop their skills, or enter the workforce. Based on research, when women have less access to resources and political power because of mobility constraints, the effects of climate change are amplified (Osman-Elasha, 2012).

As a result of the worldwide climate crisis, women and children are increasingly vulnerable to human trafficking, child marriage, and other forms of abuse, as well as sexual violence associated with conflict. Women have a lower survival rate and a higher risk of injury during disasters because of persistent gender disparities that limit their access to information, mobility, decision-making power, resources, and education. When women and girls are less able to seek aid and support in the aftermath of disasters, it creates a vicious cycle that makes them more vulnerable to future disasters. Their livelihoods, welfare, and chance at recovery are all jeopardised.

Access to services and treatment is hampered, and maternal and child health risks are increased because of climate change and natural disasters (UN Women, 2022).

Women's rights are directly and indirectly affected by the effects of climate change and its remedial measures

Not only does climate change affect women economically and medically, it also affects certain women's rights. Article 24 of the ACHPR rightly provides that all peoples shall have the right to a generally satisfactory environment favourable to their development. This provision has been domesticated pursuant to the Nigerian Constitution; therefore, all Nigerian citizens can claim the right to a healthy environment. However, climate change exacerbates land, water, biodiversity, and livelihood hazards, affecting women significantly as they are more dependent and likely to suffer the negative impacts of climate change.

Women have the right to life as enshrined under section 33 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (CFRN) 1999 (as amended). This right to life is being infringed upon as the lives of women are being risked by various disasters occasioned by climate change, which, because of their dependence and gender limitations, they might not be able to deal with. The mortality and stillbirth rate amongst pregnant women have been high because of certain medical conditions caused by climate change.

The right to freedom from discrimination against women and the right to healthcare (Article 16 ACHPR) (AU, 1981) are also affected. By virtue of Section 42 of the CFRN (as amended) (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999), no

one should be discriminated against based on nativity, gender, or any other factor. However, in certain areas of the country where women are still seen, culturally, as a minority, when disaster strikes, the access that these women have to healthcare is different to that which men have. Because of cultural bias, women cannot move as freely as men and, therefore, cannot seek healthcare as freely and swiftly as a man would as against Article 16(1) of the African Charter (AU, 1981), which provides that every person has the right to the highest possible level of bodily and mental health.

Most women in rural areas depend solely on petty trading and farming as their source of income; however, when floods, drought, and other effects of climate change strike, these women have their right to movement (Section 41 CFRN) (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999) infringed as they will not be able to go to their farms or stalls. It could be wondered how this issue affects women more than men. A typical illustration would be of a couple with two children. When disaster strikes, the man can ruggedly use a boat or find some other means to travel to his workplace, but the woman has to consider how safe the means of transport is for her and her children, which most times is not so safe or palatable. The strength of a man cannot be compared to that of a pregnant woman; therefore, specific issues tend to affect women more than men.

Women's participation and representation in climate change governance and decision-making process in Nigeria

Considering the specific and general effects of climate change on women, children, and people with disabilities, these people must be included in the decision-making process regarding climate change. To guarantee an equitable distribution of benefits, people most likely impacted by climate change must be included in the planning and execution of climate response measures. Nigeria has taken commendable steps to tackle climate change regarding various legal frameworks like the Climate Change Act of 2021 (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2021), the Energy Transition Plan (Federal Republic of Nigeria, n.d.), the Electricity Act of 2023 (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2023), amongst others. Beyond these, however, there is a need for the involvement of women, to whom climate change is more detrimental, in the decision-formulation process.

Over the years, the involvement of women in various policymaking and leadership platforms has always yielded remarkable results (United Nations Women, 2022). The present director of the Department of Climate Change under the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Environment is a woman (Mrs Iniobong Abiola-Awe), who holds a master's degree in environmental

management; the post of the Minister for Environment in Nigeria has also been primarily held by women so far, Sharon Ikeazor, who was the acting Minister before Dr Iyorchia Ayu, Mrs Helen Esuene, Mrs Halima Tayo Alao, amongst others, are all women who have participated and held leadership roles in the decision-formulation process. This shows that the involvement and participation of women in the decision-making process is still bleak considering the insignificant number of women occupying leadership positions at the national and local levels; however, it is still a seeming struggle. Therefore, seeing the urgency of the need to address climate change through decision-making and climate governance adequately, women must be represented and participate. A 2019 study found that countries with more women in parliament enacted tighter laws. Women's participation in natural resource management is associated with enhanced local conservation and resource governance (United Nations Women, 2022).

By including women in climate governance will guarantee that the required attention is being paid to women's rights as they are affected by climate change. If women are involved, women's access to productive resources will inevitably be expanded. If all female smallholders had equal access to productive resources, their agricultural output would increase by 20% to 30%, alleviating hunger for 100 to 150 million people. Farm productivity improvements can lessen the need to clear more forest area, which will result in less emissions overall (United Nations WomenWatch, 2007).

The fight against climate change must be collective and balanced. There is a chance to develop new opportunities and upskill female workers as we move away from extractivist methods and fossil fuel economies. An excellent method to shift the emphasis to community wellness and boost economies without raising emissions is to increase investment in the care industry which will be more easily achieved with women onboard. Gender equality in climate action requires the protection of sexual and reproductive health and rights. Change is needed, but climate change is not needed (Onu & Lomole, 2023). The battle against climate change places a high focus on women's full and equal participation in decision-making processes. A sustainable, more equitable future will be impossible to achieve without gender equality now.

Legal framework on climate change and women's representation

Over time, and more recently, the battle against climate change has assumed the necessity for combined efforts and wholesome inclusion of all humans regardless of age, gender, colour, or other factors. It is, therefore, necessary

to analyse the existing legal frameworks on climate change, how they are related to women's rights, and the effect they have on the involvement and participation of women in the decision-formulation process.

1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended)

The Nigerian Constitution (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999) contains provisions that place obligatory roles on both the people and the government towards climate protection. Section 20 of the Constitution stipulates a clear-cut statement on the obligation of the country to safeguard the environment. It provides that the state is responsible for ensuring that Nigeria's environment, water, air, land, forests, and wildlife are all protected, improved, and safeguarded. This is usually the foremost Nigerian legal provision for environmental protection. This implies that the government of Nigeria owes every citizen (including women) the proper protection of the environment through necessary means.

Beyond this, everyone in Nigeria can express concerns, ideas, and recommendations on environmental improvement as the Constitution has guaranteed their freedom of expression. From this, the inference is drawn that women, like every other person, have the right to voice their concerns and opinions and impart that information. By virtue of Section 42 of the Constitution, as mentioned above, no person should be discriminated against on grounds of place of origin, sex, religion, status and so on. This implies that the right to voice and impart concerns, opinions, and information, amongst other rights, should not be withheld or deprived of women based on gender or any grounds. This conforms with the principle of sustainable development, which forms part of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change guidelines (UNFCCC, 2023).

Based on the provisions of the Nigerian Constitution on environmental protection, freedom of expression, and freedom from discrimination, women are entitled to be included in climate change actions without any form of restriction.

Climate Change Act 2021

The Nigerian Climate Change Act (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2021) provides an integrated body of law for unifying climate activities in line with national development concerns. It prescribes a net-zero target for 2050 to 2070 (Section 1 (f) of the Climate Change Act 2021). It also authorises the creation of a National Climate Change Action Plan in every five-year cycle to warrant that the national emission report is in line with the carbon budget goals and

dictates guidelines for realising steps for climate change alleviation (Section 19 (1) (b) of the Climate Change Act 2021). In determining the carbon budget, however, it is imperative that women are involved in determining the National Climate Change Action Plan within the stipulated cycle. This will ensure that the carbon budget goals and the guidelines for climate change alleviation are realistic and practical. Women in the household highly sponsor domestic carbon emissions through cooking and other domestic activities. Therefore, women will understand better how to handle and develop cost-effective and efficient alternatives to conventional domestic activities that emit high levels of carbon emissions.

In addition, the Act inaugurates the National Council on Climate Change, whose chairman will be the President of Nigeria, and comprise members from all sectors, including civil society, women, youth, and persons with disabilities (Sections 3 and 5(1) of the Climate Change Act 2021). This commendable provision can be deemed holistic as it recognises the various sectors of society, including those that are generally seen as a minority. The representation of women, amongst other groups, in the National Council on Climate Change, would create a balanced and equal point of view and interests in the management of the climate change fund, and so on. However, including women on the National Council does not alter the provisions of the Climate Change Act, which do not streamline climate change actions to protect women and their rights that are specifically affected by climate change.

The National Policy on Climate Change is a deliberate action to promote reduced carbon usage, increase financial expansion routes and institute a climate-resilient nation by accomplishing laid-down objectives (Climate Policy Radar, 2013). The policy recognises climate change as a major impediment to economic advancement. The plan covers tangible actions in afforestation and energy allocation to meet the challenges of the economic downturn because of climate change. The National Climate Change Policy Response and Strategy (NCCPRS) aims to build a Nigeria equipped for quick and maintainable socio-economic growth. The policy does not, however, pay due recourse to the specific effects of climate change on women; it instead focuses on the general economic and financial impacts of climate change.

Nigeria developed a climate change gender action policy in 2020. The key objective of the gender action scheme is to make sure that climate change efforts in the country are all-inclusive. This is to ensure that women, children, and other vulnerable groups can access, engage in, contribute to, and collectively enjoy climate change policies, initiatives, programmes, and funds. The plan includes the expansion of the knowledge base of women on climate change through the use of information dissemination and evidence analysis in all sectors of the economy. It is likewise constructed to support

the incorporation of gender-inventive methods in the execution of Nigeria's Nationally Determined Contributions (Onu, 2021).

The Gender Action Plan, although commendable, has achieved inconsiderable success. The most recent Action Plan is 2020, and ever since, climate change's impact on women has yet to be addressed (Onu, 2021).

African Charter on Human and People's Rights 1981

The Organisation of African Unity, the forerunner to the African Union, adopted the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on 28 June 1981 (Centre for Women, Peace and Security, 2016). The Charter was drafted over two years and specified the prescriptive structure for the African human rights framework. It serves as a legal agreement covering civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, as well as the rights of people. Every member state of the African Union has sanctioned it. The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights supervises the Charter's operation. It aids states in attaining their goals, while the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights squares this function.

Article 24 of the African Charter caters for the right to a clean and healthy environment. It provides that every person has the right to a generally satisfactory environment favourable to their development. In other words, women are not exempted from the right to have a healthy environment, which should not be infringed upon by anybody based on gender or sex.

Supporting this provision concerning women's rights are the provisions of Article 2, which provide for the right to freedom from discrimination; Article 3, which ensures the equality of all humans before the law and equal protection of the law; Article 4, which provides the right to life; Article 5, which prohibits torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment which can be occasioned by climate change when unabated; Article 6, which provides the right to personal liberty and protection from arbitrary arrest; Article 12, which provides the right to freedom of movement; Article 13, which provides the right to work; Article 16, which provides the right to physical and mental health and access to medical care; Article 17, which provides the right to education; and Article 18, which protects family and vulnerable groups. Article 18(3) of the Charter explicitly states that the state is responsible for eliminating all forms of discrimination against women and protecting children's and women's rights per international declarations and agreements. Going by this provision, the rights of women affected by climate change are meant to be protected by all means and standards. However, this is not the case, as the infringement of women's rights because of climate change impacts has only increased over the years.

The Charter also has a Protocol on women's rights commonly referred to as the Maputo Protocol, 2003 (AU, 2003), which made lofty provisions on women's emancipation and inclusion (Equality Now, 2021), the protocol was ratified by Nigeria in 2004 but is yet to be domesticated in Nigeria. This is a major impediment to the protection of women's rights in Nigeria as a nation, as the sole provisions of the African Charter cannot fully protect women from the impact of climate change, and the further framework that could specifically protect women and their rights is not domesticated in Nigeria.

National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (Establishment) Act, 2007 (NESREA).

The NESREA (Establishment) Act (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2007) was enacted to present guidelines for the safety and growth of the ecosystem in Nigeria. The main body vested with the duty for the safeguarding and improvement of the environment in the country is the NESREA (Section 1 NESREA Act). The Agency is founded as a corporate body and provides rules relevant to preserving the environment in Nigeria (Section 2 (b) NESREA Act). The Agency is responsible for preserving the environment, maintaining biodiversity and viable development of Nigeria's natural resources, and managing and cooperating with appropriate stakeholders within and outside Nigeria on implementing eco-friendly rules, regulations, standards, policies and guidelines (Section 2 NESREA Act).

A Governing Council is established under the Act to govern the Agency (Section 3 NESREA Act). The Agency shall also enforce the observance of laws, guidelines, policies and standards on pertinent conservational matters and synchronise with stakeholders within and outside Nigeria on environmental laws, principles and implementation issues (Section 7 (a) (b) NESREA Act). The Agency may also create general sensitisation and provide environmental education on organic environmental control, aid private sector conformity with environmental laws and circulate general, scientific or other data from the execution of its function (Section 7 (1) NESREA Act). This is connected to the education of the public on the need to collaborate on climate efforts and mainstream gender participation.

The Agency may also assume, direct, manage and harmonise the advancement of investigation, research, experimentations, reviews, and evaluations by public or private organisations, groups, and agencies regarding sources, implications, degree, stoppage, decrease, and decline of greenhouse gases and other matters on environmental maintenance and natural resources safeguarding besides the oil and gas sector (Section 8 (m)).

Quality research may assist policymakers in generating a workable climate policy for women or gender-neutral climate laws.

Factors mitigating against women's participation in climate change governance and decision-making process

Many factors prevent women's wide-ranging representation and involvement in climate change. They will now be discussed.

1. **Gender Inequality:** Gender inequality is a crucial challenge against women, especially in a country like Nigeria, where many patriarchal societies exist (United Nations WomenWatch, 2007). Women are relegated to the background and regarded as second-class citizens. This prevents the full exploration of their capacity to alleviate climate change even though they are most affected by it. An example of gender inequality is shown in the first edition of Nationally Determined Contributions in 2015 (WRI, 2015), which was imprecisely spoken about without proposing direct arrangements and programmes. The trouble encountered by many countries in harmonising gender considerations in their climate policies, programmes and action plans are undeniably evident.
2. **Exclusion from Policy Development:** Women are mostly denied the ability to access information and join policymaking processes on adjustments to their physical and natural environments, which is ironic as the environment is the very land on which they rely for their health and survival (Dan & Nwachukwu, 2022). They usually need more power to possess, showcase and propagate their ideas on climate change challenges. Also, the inadequate involvement of women's groups and other civil society organisations in climate change strategy progressions means that climate action scheduling in Nigeria is usually gender-biased. This emphasises the need to discuss with women's institutions and involve such institutions in preparation and decision-making processes in ensuring that climate action is gender-responsive. This can also be realised by providing specific devices to meet the needs and vulnerabilities of women.
3. **Lack of Technology:** The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC, 2023) has placed wholesome technologies in the middle of worldwide reactions to climate change. Since then, technology has become progressively useful in familiarising and modifying climate change. In Nigeria, the right to information and communication technology by women is restrained by many factors, including social and cultural bias, lack of non-refundable income, deficient technological structures in rural areas, lower levels of education, particularly in the realms of science and technology, and the anxiety

in the use or lack of interest in technology. There is a need to model technologies in a manner that they are pertinent to women's conditions and to ensure that they are afforded unlimited access to information and knowledge relevant to the working of those technologies.

4. **Ineffective Laws:** While a few laws, treaties and policies are in place that promote women's participation in climate change, they could be more effective. This may be attributed to a need for more political and stakeholder willingness to take active steps towards implementation and widespread ignorance amongst women.
5. **Biased Research:** Bias in climate research constitutes another major problem, leading to the need for appropriate information for sensitisation, policy formulation, and gender-based information and data. This restricts the perception and database of how climate change effects differ between genders.
6. **Limited Participation in Politics:** In Nigeria, women are vastly under-represented. This makes them unable to partake in regulatory influence in climate change. This demands more women's involvement in politics and citizens' support to ensure a gender balance in the country's governance.
7. **Inadequate Healthcare:** Health issues related to poverty, poor diet, domestic violence, and hard labour are more prevalent amongst women. This shows the segregated effects of the food routine on both genders, as well as the prospects for developing food production procedures through gender impartiality which will, in turn, control climate change endeavours.
8. **Water and Sanitation:** Universally, men and women are both impacted by water accessibility, obtainability and quality. However, this is in varying circumstances because of predominant gender roles and customs. Most Nigerian rural societies indicate that women are responsible for fetching water and are affected mainly by the health impacts of water and sanitation (IUCN, 2022).
9. **Unequal Access to Viable Work and Income:** A gender gap exists in access to work and job opportunities. In other cases, the remuneration of women is less than that of men for the same work value. They also have limited control of capital, credit, and digital technologies. Hence, not only are women unduly impacted by climate change, but they are also in the capacity to act in response through climate alleviation and mitigation mechanisms.
10. **Leadership, Assets and Credit:** Women's restricted claims to land, property, and inheritance constrains their capacity to obtain economic and management control on land use. The lack of public and private resources and infrastructure intensifies gender-related limitations,

limiting the power to advance valuable information, including climate education and digital and fiscal literacy.

Lessons from other jurisdictions

In taking measures towards gender consideration, it is necessary to analyse the footsteps of other countries. Therefore, it is vital to consider the policies and programmes applicable in other countries to draw out valuable lessons that can be emulated.

Zambia

Zambia has keenly operated the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (the Maputo Protocol) for legal activism (AU, 2003). The Protocol has been employed as an instrument for situations where women's rights have been breached, comprising incidents undertaken by autonomous agencies and bodies. Zambia ratified the Protocol in 2006, and it has been quoted in several court decisions. In this light, Nigeria should domesticate the Protocol for the maximum enjoyment of its provisions.

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is setting up a renewable energy fund to establish free distinctive enterprise chances for women. Because of women's limitations and prevalent disparities in accessing credit, resources, jobs, and opportunities, women can be assisted in aiding climate action by establishing new financing systems and expertise.

Uzbekistan

In Uzbekistan, a pilot green mortgage arrangement assisted pastoral homes in five territories to have access to inexpensive low-carbon energy infrastructures. Because of the programme's gender-responsive benchmarks and indications, 67% of mortgages were undertaken by women-led homes. Hence, the country was able to intensify the gender-responsiveness of climate finance, increase the efficiency, effectiveness, and maintenance of venture capital and enhance women's equality.

Cabo Verde

Cabo Verde established the Institute for Gender Equality and Equity, a supplementary organisation throughout several divisions to outline precise

targets, needs and measures relevant to ensuring gender inclusion in climate action across all industries and intervention areas.

Conclusion

The shift of attention to the need to mainstream gender involvement with respect to women is slowly gaining ground. This is because women are not only the most affected by climate change, but they are also generally exempted from the process of promoting a safe environment and providing better climates for all. However, it is never enough to identify a need; but more important to address it. Hence, the inclusion and involvement of women in climate change schemes must be guaranteed, and the duty of women's groups and associations must be consolidated. Women must be evenly represented in policymaking structures to enable them to weigh in their distinctive suggestions and proficiency on climate change. This will not only help the collective efforts towards climate change but enhance women's overall perspective and status worldwide.

Recommendations

The following recommendations will now be discussed.

1. **Enhancement of Gender Equality:** As a matter of necessity, the pessimistic orientation that women are inferior to their male counterparts must be changed in promoting climate efforts (Geneva Environment Network, 2023). It is imperative that women should also have liberal access to education, finance and training programmes to develop their skills and ensure their unlimited membership in climate change initiatives. Gender variations in access to resources, including economic services, infrastructure and technology, must be considered in planning climate change activities.
2. **Adequate Financing:** The vigorous involvement of women in the expansion and division of capital for climate change programmes is essential, especially in rural areas (Tripodi, 2023). Assessment of economic tools for climate change policy formulation is necessary to ensure that investments are gender-sensitive for transferring relevant technology and building facilities. Also, the tools must be dynamic in meeting women's specific needs and priorities.
3. **Amendment of existing laws:** Nigeria needs to expressly mainstream gender and environmental rights in Chapter four of the Constitution so that same can become justiciable. The National Climate Policy on Gender should be promulgated into a law. The Climate Change Act should be amended to explicitly create a gender right and a right to healthy

environment in Nigeria. Nigeria needs to domesticate the Maputo Protocol and make it justiciable in Nigeria.

4. **Inclusion in National Policy:** As obtainable from other jurisdictions, the Nigerian government should integrate gender standpoints into its central policies, programmes, and other attempts to build maintainable growth of climate change actions. The realisation of this can be achieved with efficient gender evaluation, sex-disaggregated data collection and application and gender-sensitive benchmarks establishment. Pragmatic devices can also be developed to promote gender inclusion.
5. **Technological Innovation:** Innovations relevant to climate change must consider women's individual needs and ensure extensive usage of their education and skill, including home-grown experience and traditional practices. Including women in the expansion of new infrastructure and technology will ensure that they are available, affordable, easy to use, efficient and maintainable.
6. **Promotion of Collaboration:** Everyone should have the right to engage earnestly, efficiently, and purposefully in scheming and decision-making procedures that affect temperature and global climate. Women's participation may involve the right to receive a prior consideration of or be enlightened on the effects of the intended actions on human rights and climate change.
7. **Promotion of Health and Family Planning:** More importantly, the government should add to its environmental conservation strategies the provision of women's health, well-being and family planning. This will enable synergy between women's health and environmental protection.
8. **Right to Land and Financial Resources:** Impediments on the right to land must be lifted, and gender-responsive approaches to climate financing should be promoted. Socio-cultural limitations on the right to assets must also be eradicated.
9. **Stakeholder Partnerships:** Efficient collaborations to address gender and climate can be initiated by climate stakeholders, as no single person can establish gender-friendly climate supply chains for women. Such collaborations need joint efforts by various organisations from suppliers, cooperatives, national and worldwide investors, and international buyers. Innovative associations that tackle climate change issues must cover the country's urban and rural areas.
10. **Agricultural Empowerment:** Empowering women in agriculture can impact climate adaptation by providing appropriate technology and resources (Government of United Kingdom, 2022). This way, more sustainable farming and conservation practices can be promoted.
11. **Education and Scientific Awareness:** Many Nigerian women are unaware of their roles in eradicating climate change. Also, women make up

just 27% of the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) workforce. Various systemic barriers contribute to these gaps, but awareness and sensitisation on protecting the environment will undoubtedly avail the situation. This can help attract women into climate science and climate policy fields nationwide.

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