

Environmental sustainability nigeria

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Increasing climate variability in Nigeria is causing more intense and untimely rainfall. Adding to land degradation, flash floods, landslides, and gully erosion have worsened across one of the ten most vulnerable countries to climate change impacts. By 2009, an estimated 6,000 gullies were destroying roads, highways, pipelines, and houses across rural and urban Nigeria. Many Nigerians lived in fear and despair due to these extreme weather events.

In Calabar, in Southern Nigeria, Nkese Oyo-Ita, a 75-year-old grandmother, recalls, "Whenever it rained, all the boys would come out with shovels and cutlass to clear the street and create gutters. But that was not enough to solve the problem... We lived in extreme fear of being drowned or washed away with our belongings."

Sudden, unpredictable, and uncontrollable floods erode the soil, and the loss of life and property is a nightmare for many Nigerians. "It destroys crops, farms, lands and houses. We used to have a cocoa plantation, but the erosion swept it away," said Michael Igboria, of Edo State in Southern Nigeria.

In response to the situation, the Nigeria Erosion and Water Shed Management Project (NEWMAP), launched in 2012, adopted innovative integrated approaches based on community participation. The project, completed in 2022, linked poverty alleviation with sustainable ecosystems and better disaster-risk prevention. This holistic approach has improved the lives and safety of more than 12 million people in 23 states in Nigeria.

"When the road and gully had not been done, my husband used to put sands on parts of the road damaged by flood erosion. Now he no longer has to do this. The work done by the project in our community is very good, and residents are very happy because they no longer fear flood and gully erosion," says Roseline Okhale, of the Ibore Community in Edo State.

To help farmers cope with droughts, climate-smart agricultural innovations to conserve water such as solar-powered drip irrigation and rainwater harvesting have been rolled out.



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To help the Government of Nigeria finance "green investments" in agriculture, energy, water, and transport, green Bonds were issued - a premiere in Africa. The bonds raised \$30 million in 2017 and \$41 million in 2019.

The NEWMAP supported initiatives helped decrease greenhouse gas emissions. Afforestation and innovative technologies, such as fuel-efficient cookstoves, solar-powered Primary Health Centres, borehole pumps, meat-dryers, and agro-processing plants, were introduced to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, deforestation, and dependence on fossil fuels and fuel wood.

Climate-focused policy research and initiatives include an LPG Framework to reduce dependence on wood and kerosene, feasibility studies of grid-connected solar power plants, and a transportation system running on natural gas, as well as digital Environment Impact Assessments.

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