POLICY BRIEF

ADDRESSING CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT-INDUCED DRIVERS OF MIGRATION IN NIGERIA: POLICY INSIGHTS FOR SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As environmental degradation intensifies, migration becomes a survival strategy in Sub-Saharan Africa. In Nigeria, a mixed-methods study reveals that while climate and environmental issues drive 11% of household migration, economic reasons prevail. Integrating scientific and local knowledge offers critical insights. These findings call for partnerships between government and communities to design context-specific interventions that tackle climate-induced migration's root causes and support vulnerable populations in both origin and destination areas.

INTRODUCTION

Climate change and environmental degradation are notable migration drivers across Nigeria, particularly due to floods, droughts, and land degradation. This has led to increased internal migration, particularly from rural agricultural areas, with millions projected to migrate by 2050. These shifts threaten food security, livelihoods, and social stability. This brief offers evidence-based insights for policymakers at all levels, urging the development of integrated, locally driven strategies. By understanding environmental drivers of migration, decision-makers can craft proactive policies that build community resilience, support adaptation, and reduce the long-term impacts of climate-induced displacement in Nigeria.

RESEARCH APPROACH

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining climatic trend analysis with community surveys. Using the Modified Mann-Kendall test and Sen's slope, it assessed environmental changes from 1993–2022. Insights from focus groups and household surveys

reveal how climate and environmental stressors influence migration, informing policies to address climate and environment-driven migration in Nigeria.

Figure 1: Community participation on environment and climate-induced drivers of migration discussions

KEY FINDINGS

1. After the socioeconomic factors (search for jobs and business opportunities), the climate/environment ranks as the third most significant driver of migration in Nigeria, contributing 11%.
2. Climatic and environmental factors such as drought (32%), inadequate rainfall (27%) are the major climatic/environmental contributors to migration.
3. Good weather conditions and adequate rainfall are the major climate and environment-based pull factors of migration into destination communities.
4. Migration destination communities enjoyed benefits such as markets for local products, cheap labour and economic prosperity.
5. Migration destination communities experienced challenges such as competition for jobs, insecurity, pressure on agricultural lands, pressure on land for development, pressure on environmental resources and land degradation
6. The major migration-induced land degradation challenges at the destination communities are deforestation and land pressures due to urban growth
7. There is a unanimous agreement on the need for government-led interventions in discussing environment and climate-induced migration issues

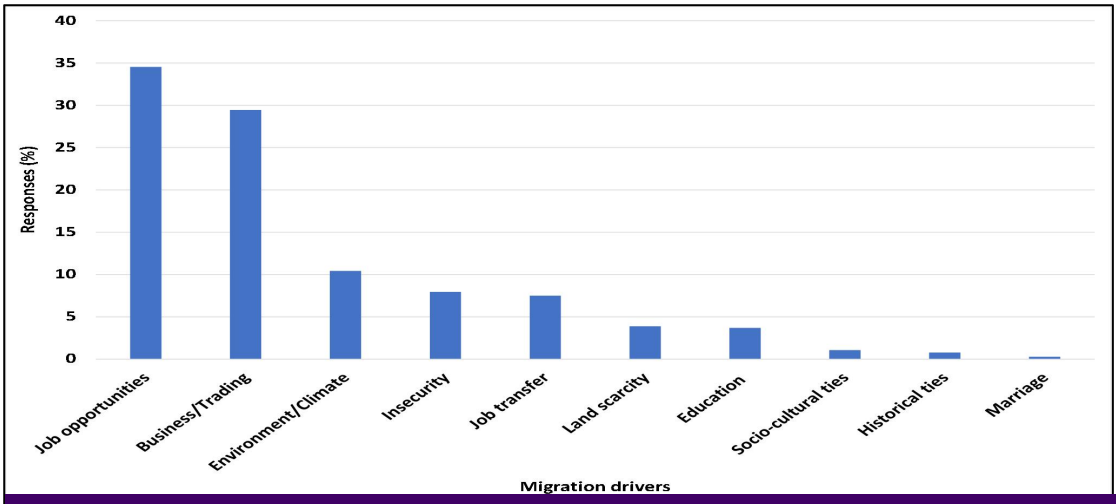

Figure 2: Drivers of migration in Nigeria

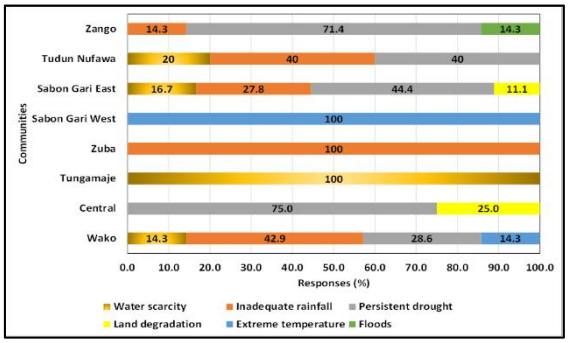

Figure 3: Climatic/environmental migration push factors

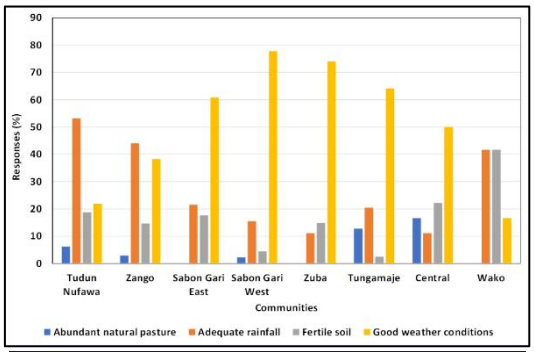

Figure 4: Climatic/environmental migration pull factors

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Figure 5: Land degradation activities at migration destination communities

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Addressing climate-related migration in Nigeria requires a proactive, inclusive policy framework. Key recommendations include strengthening local resilience in migration hotspots, supporting climate-resilient agriculture, and establishing robust early warning systems. Government agencies must partner with local communities, private actors, and civil

society to drive sustainable change. A unified strategy involving NEMA, NOA, NiMet, the Department of Climate Change, and IOM will enable a national framework that aligns local action with federal coordination. These measures will not only reduce displacement but build long-term resilience, ensuring a sustainable future for vulnerable populations across Nigeria.

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