

ONE

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THE CLIMATE-DEVELOPMENT NEXUS:
FINANCING AFRICA'S SUSTAINABLE FUTURE
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ILLUSTRATION: MOSIUOA THULO

EDITOR'S NOTE



As the world grapples with the intensifying climate crisis, Africa finds itself at a pivotal crossroads, balancing both overwhelming challenges and transformative opportunities. This edition of Africa ONE-Voice explores the intersection of climate change and finance, critical forces shaping Africa's future and its path towards sustainability.

The global conversation on climate action has shifted significantly, particularly with the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos in January 2025, where leaders reaffirmed the urgent need for scaling up climate investments in vulnerable regions. In the face of mounting climate impacts, Africa remains disproportionately affected. Yet the continent also stands as a beacon of opportunity, poised to lead the green transition with the right investments and support.

In his remarks at Davos, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa encapsulated the urgency of the moment, stating: *"As we confront the challenges of the 21st century, from climate change to pandemics, to addressing the challenges of poverty to terrorism, from migration to artificial intelligence, we are again called upon to harness that most powerful, and most enduring, of human attributes: mutually beneficial cooperation and collaboration."* This powerful message reinforces the need for global solidarity and cooperative efforts to address the interconnected crises facing Africa and the world.

The WEF outcomes underscored the importance of fostering public-private partnerships

to catalyse climate finance and accelerate the transition to a net-zero economy. Among the key highlights, the Forum introduced a new global fund focused on climate resilience in the Global South, aiming to unlock critical investments for adaptation and green development.

Additionally, South Africa has assumed the presidency of the G20 in 2025, an extraordinary opportunity for African leaders to press for a more equitable climate finance system. Discussions at the G20 this year center on how to reconcile the urgent need for climate action with the reality of high financing costs that remain a significant barrier for many African nations. The G20's commitment to creating more accessible and affordable financing models for developing economies is crucial. Without it, Africa risks being sidelined in the global green transition.

Looking ahead, the climate dialogue will only intensify as key global agreements and innovations in green technology continue to evolve. Africa's role in this transformation is not just about surviving but leading. This leadership must be driven by a bold vision for a prosperous and sustainable future. Africa can achieve this by harnessing its vast renewable energy potential, its growing green tech sector such as solar microgrid solutions already transforming rural areas and its youthful, entrepreneurial workforce to shape its green future.

The real question now is: Will the international community rise to the challenge and invest in Africa with the resources, technology, and partnerships necessary to secure a future for itself and the world?

Serah Makka

ONE in Africa Executive Director

THE FIGHT FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE AND THE CRISIS OF FINANCE

A climate justice advocate, environmentalist, and ecofeminist, Adenike Oladosu has long been a leading voice in the global movement for climate action. As COP29 has come to a close, Oladosu reflects on the strides made and the challenges that remain in the fight for climate justice, particularly in the realm of finance. Despite ongoing promises and declarations from global leaders, the financial mechanisms required to address the climate crisis remain stubbornly insufficient.



For Oladosu, the climate crisis is both personal and global, with its devastating impacts already being acutely felt, particularly in the Global South. From catastrophic flooding in Nigeria to ongoing wildfires in Spain, the signs of climate breakdown have become undeniable. However, while the urgency of the crisis continues to grow, so too does the frustration with the failure of financial systems to match the scale of the problem. Reflecting on the outcomes of COP29, Oladosu asks: **Did the proposed strategies truly deliver climate justice?**

A crisis of debt and finance

One of the core issues Oladosu consistently highlights is the intersection of

climate change and global financial instability, a challenge particularly acute in Africa. In the aftermath of COP29, she notes that the debt crisis continues to compound the climate emergency. "There's a debt crisis that is making the climate crisis worse," she says. Many countries, particularly in Africa, are stuck in a vicious cycle of borrowing to meet their immediate needs, while the funds necessary for long-term climate adaptation and mitigation remain elusive.

In Nigeria, for example, protests erupted in response to the removal of fossil fuel subsidies, a policy that has crippled local businesses and strained households. With few affordable renewable energy alternatives, citizens are left to bear the brunt of an inadequate energy transition. Oladosu warns that without substantial international support, this situation will only deteriorate, further exacerbating the crisis.

The urgency of climate change

From severe droughts in East Africa to wildfires in Southern Europe, the impacts of climate change are becoming more visible and catastrophic. "We've seen the destruction, and we know that the burden falls disproportionately on vulnerable nations," she says, **underlining that addressing this imbalance is a moral imperative.** Reflecting on the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic,

Oladosu draws a stark comparison. When the pandemic struck, resources were rapidly mobilised for vaccines, with governments and organisations coming together with remarkable speed. The same level of urgency must be applied to the climate crisis. However, COP29's outcomes left her with lingering doubts about whether that urgency has truly translated into action.

The politics of climate action

For Oladosu, the most significant barrier to meaningful climate action remains the lack of political will. In the aftermath of COP29, she remains critical of countries that have yet to feel the full force of climate change. "Some governments still think it's not affecting them yet," she says. This delayed recognition, she warns, could push the world past a point of no return.

She is particularly critical of the political dynamics surrounding climate finance, pointing to the continued prioritisation of fossil fuel investments by both governments and corporations. Despite years of climate negotiations, financial pledges like the \$100 billion annual commitment from COP15 remain unmet.

"There's a choice to be made, we must prioritize people over profit" Oladosu says, "either we act on the climate crisis, or we don't." The continued lack of transparency



and accountability, she adds, erodes trust in international climate agreements.

The call for transparency

Oladosu has been a staunch advocate for greater transparency in climate finance. Despite climate agreements established over the past decade, she points out that the financial commitments agreed upon remain unmet. "No country I've engaged with has met the financial conditions promised," she says. Additionally, she highlights the lack of investment in technological innovation and knowledge transfer are critical components needed to mitigate the climate crisis effectively.

While the funding for loss and damage remains a point of focus, Oladosu is clear that some losses, particularly those involving lives lost to climate disasters, cannot be quantified or compensated with money. "Lives lost to climate change cannot be replaced, not even with money," she asserts.

An inclusive approach to climate action

Oladosu remains committed to an inclusive approach to climate action which is one that centers grassroots movements and local communities in the solution process.

No country I've engaged with has met the financial conditions promised"

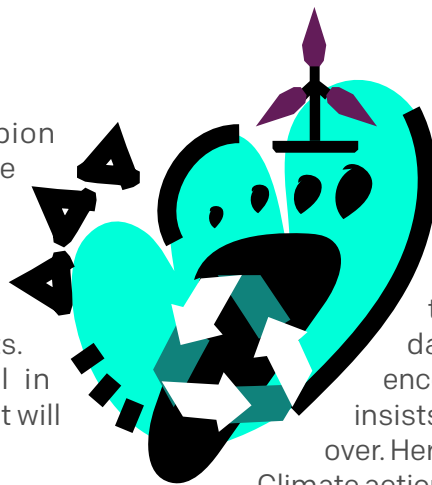


She continues to champion youth-led activism, like the Fridays for Future movement and her own I Lead Climate Action Initiative. “Young people are the ones driving change,” she reflects. “Their voices are critical in pushing for the policies that will shape the future.”

Looking back at COP29, Oladosu is encouraged by the increasing involvement of local communities and civil society organisations in climate discussions, but she emphasizes that this needs to become the norm, not the exception. The solutions to the climate crisis, she argues, are not just in the hands of politicians and corporations; they are embedded in the actions of communities and citizens.

Looking ahead

As she reflects on her role as a climate



champion for Education Cannot Wait (ECW) at COP29, Oladosu remains steadfast in her commitment to addressing loss and damage. While the conference made some strides, she insists that the fight is far from over. Her message remains clear:

Climate action must be urgent, fair and inclusive. And above all, it must involve significant financial commitments, transparent processes and the active engagement of citizens at every level.

In the wake of COP29, Oladosu’s call to action resonates louder than ever: “The climate crisis is not a distant issue; it is something we must address it with urgency.”

Contributor: Adenike Oladosu, Nigerian climate activist

POWER LIES WITH THE PEOPLE: NAVIGATING CLIMATE CHALLENGES WITH INNOVATION AND INCLUSIVITY

To explore this connection further, we sit down with Jordan Mc Lean, a climate politics and international relations analyst, a researcher for the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) who sheds light on the complex connections between environmental sustainability and global justice



James Farmer Jr., co-founder of the Congress on Racial Equality, once said, “If we do not save the environment, then whatever we do in civil rights will be of no meaning, because then we will have the equality of extinction.” These powerful words emphasize the critical link between environmental sustainability and social justice. They highlight the need for a “just transition” toward a sustainable, low-carbon economy, one that balances environmental, social and economic priorities while ensuring that vulnerable communities, particularly women, youth, and marginalized groups, are not left behind. Africa’s path to green growth depends not only on mitigating climate impacts but also on promoting inclusivity and innovation across all sectors of society.

Many African communities are already leading the way in climate adaptation,

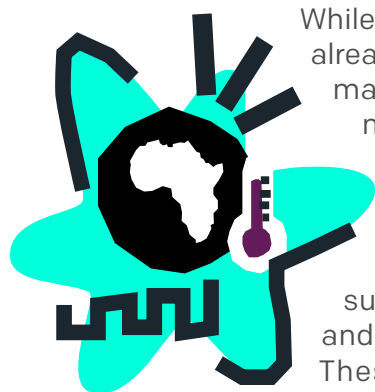
actively responding to the effects of droughts, floods and other environmental challenges. In the Sahel region, for example, where recurrent droughts have caused severe food and water shortages, the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) has been instrumental in promoting sustainable farming practices. Through rainwater harvesting, drought-resistant crops, and integrated agroforestry techniques, ICRISAT has empowered local communities to not only survive but thrive despite adversity. Women and youth have played key roles in these initiatives, actively participating in decision-making and managing natural resources.

This highlights the importance of including marginalized groups in every phase of climate policy development, from formulation to implementation. In these communities, women, youth and other marginalized groups are not just beneficiaries but essential contributors to the adaptation process. Their participation ensures that policies are shaped by the real needs and knowledge of those most affected, rather than being top-down directives. Furthermore, involving these groups in the monitoring and evaluation of climate finance and climate-responsive projects ensures that resources are directed where they are most needed and that the impact is equitable and sustainable. A successful climate strategy requires clear policies and active community engagement.

Governments must prioritise local involvement to ensure that climate finance and policies address the true needs of the people. By engaging with local communities, governments can ensure that policies are transparent, accountable and grounded in the realities on the ground.

One key policy recommendation for African governments is to institutionalise community consultation mechanisms that allow for continuous engagement, ensuring that policies remain adaptable to the evolving climate landscape. The success of climate initiatives depends on their ability to evolve alongside changing environmental and economic conditions. Rigid and outdated policies often fail to meet the needs of vulnerable populations.

The private sector also plays a crucial role in driving Africa's just transition.



While many companies are already engaged in carbon markets and green technologies, there is a need for greater innovation and investment in sectors like renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and green infrastructure. These sectors not only offer opportunities for job

creation but also present new economic models that prioritise long-term sustainability over short-term profits. For the private sector to fully embrace these opportunities, clear and consistent regulatory frameworks are essential. Ambiguities in regulations can discourage companies from making the investments needed to propel the green economy forward.

Public-private partnerships are critical also in this process. By collaborating with governments, the private sector can reduce the financial risks associated with large-scale projects, particularly in renew-

able energy and agriculture. These partnerships leverage the strengths of both sectors, ensuring that climate projects are financially viable while achieving broader social goals. Moreover, African governments must focus on improving technology transfer, as intellectual property rights and other barriers often limit access to the necessary technology for transitioning to a green economy. The private sector can play a key role in overcoming these challenges by facilitating technology transfer that supports both governments and local industries.

Alongside these efforts, multilateral development banks (MDBs) must align their investments with the Paris Agreement and prioritize funding for adaptation and resilience-building projects. While mitigation is important, many African countries are disproportionately vulnerable to the effects of climate change and require greater investment in projects that build resilience. MDBs need to reassess their investment strategies to ensure that adaptation projects often less financially appealing than mitigation initiatives are adequately funded.

Africa also stands at a critical moment in global governance. With South Africa assuming the G20 Presidency, the country is well-positioned to influence global discussions on climate finance, international financial reform and the urgent need for developed nations to increase their investment in Africa's energy and climate transition. The continent's voice must be central in shaping global climate action, ensuring that the needs of vulnerable populations are heard and that the green transition benefits all. By fostering collaboration across governments, the private sector and multilateral institutions, Africa can navigate the complexities of climate change while building a more equitable and sustainable future for all its people.

Contributor: Jordan McClean, Researcher at the South African Institute of International Affairs

REIMAGINING AFRICA'S FUTURE: DR. TOLULLAH ONI BUILDING RESILIENT AND HEALTHY CITIES AT THE CLIMATE- DEVELOPMENT CROSSROADS



In a thought-provoking conversation with Dr. Tolullah Oni, a distinguished Nigerian epidemiologist and advocate for urban health, we talk about the pressing intersection of climate change, public health and urban development. Dr. Oni's transformative journey from clinical medicine to championing health systems capable of tackling the challenges posed by Africa's rapidly urbanizing and warming environment underscores the need for a fundamental rethinking of health frameworks across the continent.

Dr. Oni's career initially focused on general medicine and infectious diseases, particularly in HIV care, where she worked in London. However, her curiosity about the broader determinants of health soon led her to pursue public health. "Even during medical school, I wanted to understand what lies behind disease," she explains, reflecting on her early desire to understand the factors shaping the health of individuals and populations. Her work in South Africa exposed a critical gap in healthcare systems, where patients managed for HIV still faced premature death due to unmanaged conditions like high blood pressure. This realisation led her to adopt a systems-based approach to health which is one that looks beyond the healthcare system itself and considers the broader social, political and environmental factors that influence

health outcomes.

At the heart of Dr. Oni's advocacy is the **urgent need to break down the silos between climate action, health and development**. She identifies three key areas for intervention: air pollution, food systems and active transport. "Addressing air pollution offers direct health benefits and reduces greenhouse gas emissions" she explains. Poor air quality not only contributes to health issues like stroke and high blood pressure but also exacerbates food insecurity by lowering agricultural productivity. She also calls for a rethink of land use to improve food security and reduce emissions, advocating for sustainable farming practices and better land management strategies. Dr. Oni's push for active transportation such as walking and cycling focuses on policies that reduce car dependency, lower emissions and promote physical activity.

Addressing air pollution offers direct health benefits and reduces greenhouse gas emissions"

The urgency of these interventions is clear. In 2018 alone, air pollution-related deaths in Lagos cost the city 3% of its GDP, with children under five accounting for half of these fatalities. “We must stop asking what we can afford to do and start asking what we can’t afford not to do,” she urges, calling for a shift in the approach climate-health solutions.

Dr. Oni is also a passionate advocate for citizen science, believing that local communities should be at the heart of shaping healthier urban environments. Through her Urban Better Citizens initiative, she empowers communities to collect data that can drive “precision advocacy” and influence policies more effectively. She emphasizes the value of local knowledge in creating solutions that work on the ground. By democratizing knowledge production, Dr. Oni believes African cities can leverage their youthful population, high mobile phone penetration and passion for environmental justice to create meaningful change.

A crucial part of this transformation, according to Dr. Oni, is the need for funding to support community-driven solutions. She advocates for shifting international funding priorities to better support cities, where much of the innovation in urban health is happening. “Mayors are often the best ministers of health because they understand the systemic nature of health risks and solutions,” she says. The focus should not just be on how much money is spent but on how many lives can be saved through well-targeted interventions.

Moving forward, Dr. Oni remains optimistic. “Air pollution is becoming a tangible entry point for mobilising health and climate action,” she notes, pointing to the work of organisations like the Asian Development Bank, which has integrated air quality metrics into its funding decisions.

She hopes to see similar approaches adopted across Africa. Furthermore, she advocates for alternative forms of activism, explaining that activism isn’t only about street protests. “Precision advocacy uses data to equip diverse actors, including those who might never march but can leverage their influence to push for systemic change,” she asserts.

Her closing message to policymakers is straightforward yet powerful: **“Quantify what you’re losing both in human life and economic capital. Then empower cities to take local action.”** In these spaces, innovation is already occurring, often with minimal resources, and Dr. Oni believes that these grassroots solutions should be supported and expanded.

Dr. Oni’s work represents a vision for African cities that are not only more resilient to climate change but also healthier, more sustainable places to live. As the continent continues to urbanize, her call-to-action challenges governments, communities and international organisations to prioritise health, climate resilience, and data-driven policies. By integrating these goals into urban planning, Dr. Oni believes that Africa can lead the way in addressing the dual crises of urbanization and climate change, creating cities that are models of resilience and well-being for generations to come.

“**Air pollution is becoming a tangible entry point for mobilising health and climate action,**”

Contributor: Dr. Tolullah Oni, Nigerian epidemiologist and advocate for urban health

Africa's path to sustainability through youth leadership and fossil fuel reform



In the wake of COP29, Yero Sarr, a prominent climate activist from Senegal, reflects on the intricate relationship between fossil fuel subsidies, global climate policies, and Africa's path toward a sustainable future. As a co-founder of the Fridays for Future movement in Senegal and one of Africa's most influential young activists, Yero has been at the forefront of advocating for climate justice. He offers a powerful perspective on the climate crisis, the role of international finance and the growing influence of youth activism.

Yero's journey into climate advocacy began during his childhood, split between Senegal and Ivory Coast, where he witnessed firsthand the devastating impacts of environmental degradation. This early exposure shaped his belief that the climate crisis is intrinsically tied to poverty and underdevelopment. For him, success is not about recognition but about leaving a legacy of positive change for future generations.

The fossil fuel dilemma: A barrier to Africa's energy transition

The ongoing global reliance on fossil fuels remains a central issue in the climate crisis. Responsible for up to 80% of greenhouse gas emissions, fossil fuels continue to be subsidized in many countries, including major emitters. This contra-

dition undermines global climate goals, as countries that are signatories to agreements like the Paris Agreement continue to fund fossil fuel projects.

For Africa, the issue is even more complex. While the continent is often viewed as a minor contributor to global emissions, its leaders face immense pressure to meet the growing energy needs of expanding populations. Fossil fuel subsidies may seem like a temporary solution to energy poverty, but they perpetuate a cycle of environmental degradation and economic dependency.

Yero emphasizes that Africa's energy transition must be rooted in self-sufficiency. The continent is rich in renewable energy resources such as sunlight, wind, and hydropower. However, the exploitation of Africa's natural resources by foreign nations often undermines local control and access to these resources, exacerbating the situation. Africa's natural resources by foreign nations often undermines local control and access to these resources, exacerbating the situation.

Youth activism: Redefining climate leadership

As a leader in the Fridays for Future movement, Yero has witnessed firsthand how youth activism is redefining climate leadership. Despite the growing presence of youth in climate movements, young activists still struggle to secure a place at the decision-making table. Yero reflects on this struggle, stating, "Youth activism is often viewed as rebellious, but what leaders don't understand is that we are not just protesting but we are taking action, planting trees, cleaning beaches and raising awareness."

He points to the influence of youth-driven movements in reshaping climate politics. Notably, youth activists have pushed leaders to address critical issues, such as loss and damage, at COP28. For Yero, youth activism is far more than a call for change, it is about taking direct action and developing the knowledge and skills to implement solutions. "The youth must have a seat and a voice at the table, not just be around it," Yero asserts. His message is clear: Young people must no longer be passive participants but active change-makers in the fight against climate change.

COP29: A turning point or another missed opportunity?

Looking back on COP29, Yero remains sceptical about the conference's ability to drive real change. He criticizes the focus on financial commitments that often result in loans rather than grants, further burdening already indebted countries. Yero also questions the sincerity of climate talks, particularly when hosted in countries with questionable human rights records, like Azerbaijan.

However, despite his scepticism, Yero

acknowledges that the fight against climate change requires collective courage. While COP29 may not have been the decisive turning point many hoped for, there is still hope for future summits. He looks to COP30 in Brazil with cautious optimism, believing that it could help reframe the conversation and usher in a new era of climate action that prioritises equity and justice.

A call for unity and action

In his closing thoughts, Yero stresses the importance of placing human well-being at the core of climate policies. For Africa, this means shedding the historical complex of dependency and taking ownership of its future. He advocates for greater investment in youth education, fostering transparency and prioritising sustainable development. Only then can Africa chart its own path to a greener, more equitable future.

"We must unite to defend our own interests," Yero concludes. "With our resources and our people, we can finance our energy transition and build a better future for all."

As the world continues to grapple with the climate crisis, Africa's leadership, fuelled by youth activism and a commitment to sustainability, will be crucial in reshaping global climate priorities and redefining what it means to fight for a sustainable future.

"We must unite to defend our own interests,"

Contributor: Yero Sarr Climate Justice Activist ChangeMaker. Forbes 30 Under 30

FROM FLOODS TO FAMINE



As a ONE Champion and climate action advocate, I've witnessed first hand how rising temperatures, erratic weather conditions and shifting rainfall patterns are destabilising the region's agriculture. Once known for its fertile land and agricultural abundance, Southeast Nigeria now faces unprecedented challenges that threaten its food security and the livelihoods of millions.

This article delves into how climate change is affecting agriculture in Southeast Nigeria, exploring its impact on food security, sharing stories from affected communities and highlighting the urgent need for sustainable solutions.

Agricultural struggles in a changing climate

For millions in Southeast Nigeria, agriculture is both a source of food and a means of income. Smallholder farmers, who form the backbone of the region's agricultural economy, are increasingly vulnerable as weather patterns become more unpredictable. Traditional farming in Southeast Nigeria relies on seasonal rains, but these have become inconsistent, leading to unpredictable planting and harvest cycles.

The effects are clear: prolonged dry spells during the planting season, sudden heavy rains that damage crops and even flooding have become more frequent. The catastrophic floods of 2022 and 2023, for

instance, swept through several states, including Abia and Anambra. According to the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), over 600,000 hectares of farmlands were destroyed, leaving farmers without crops to harvest and communities without enough food.

As one elderly farmer from Ebonyi told me, "We used to know when to plant and when to harvest. Now, we plant and pray." This uncertainty is one of the most direct ways climate change is disrupting food security in the region.

The economic toll: Rising food prices

The impacts of climate change on agriculture are not just ecological, they are economic as well. According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Nigeria could face a 20-30% reduction in crop yields by 2050 if current climate trends persist. Staple crops like rice and maize are already showing signs of decline, which has contributed to rising food prices.

“We used to know when to plant and when to harvest. Now, we plant and pray.”

In Southeast Nigeria, we're seeing price hikes on essential foods like cassava, yams and vegetables. This trend is pushing basic food items out of reach for many families. These price increases are not simply a result of market fluctuations but reflect the broader challenges in agricultural productivity due to climate change. Reduced yields mean farmers earn less, food prices soar and the entire food supply chain is strained.

Innovation in the face of adversity

While the challenges are significant, there are inspiring examples of resilience and innovation in the region. One such example is Okeke Farms in Enugu, where local farmers, in collaboration with the Nigerian Agricultural Research Council, are cultivating drought-resistant cassava varieties. These new crops can thrive with less water and withstand higher temperatures, helping farmers cope with unpredictable climate conditions.

In Imo State, the youth-led initiative Green Farm *Nigeria* is promoting sustainable practices such as crop rotation, organic composting and minimal-tillage farming. These techniques not only help improve soil moisture and boost resilience to drought but also reduce greenhouse gas emissions, making agriculture more environmentally sustainable. These innovative approaches show that, even in the face of adversity, Southeast Nigeria's farmers are adapting and finding new ways to thrive.

Rural poverty and urban migration

The economic effects of climate change are also contributing to rising rural poverty. As crops fail and livelihoods suffer, many young people are migrating from rural areas to urban centers, where opportunities are still limited. This rural-to-urban migration has become a survival strategy, but it puts pressure on already strained city infrastructures and reduces the number of young people staying behind to work the land.

Southeast Nigeria risks losing an entire generation of farmers, many of whom are seeking work in cities due to the growing unpredictability of agriculture. This loss could have long-term consequences, not

just for food production but also for the region's economic stability.

A call for action: Climate adaptation solutions

To address the growing food security crisis, a unified response is needed. The Nigerian government, private sector, civil society and youth leaders must all work together to implement climate adaptation strategies that support local farmers. First, we need targeted climate adaptation programmes that can help farmers adjust to the changing environment. This includes providing access to affordable irrigation systems, promoting climate-resilient seed varieties and offering training in sustainable farming practices. Government policies should also prioritise financial support for farmers affected by climate disasters, such as climate insurance funds to help them recover from crop failures.

Technology can also play a key role. Climate forecasting tools, mobile weather apps and early warning systems could help farmers make informed decisions about when to plant and harvest, reducing the risks associated with unpredictable weather patterns. These tools, combined with adequate support, can empower farmers to better cope with the challenges of climate change.

The role of global partnerships

International organisations like ONE Campaign and other global partners also have a vital role to play. They can advocate for climate justice, push for investments in green technologies and support climate adaptation projects in Southeast Nigeria. In addition, foreign governments and international donors can contribute by funding initiatives that help local communities build resilience to climate change.

The climate crisis poses a serious threat to food security in Southeast Nigeria, but it also presents an opportunity to innovate and build a more resilient agricultural system. The examples set by Okeke Farms and Green Farm Nigeria show that sustainable solutions are possible. Southeast Nigeria can serve as a model for climate adaptation if we take bold and inclusive action now.

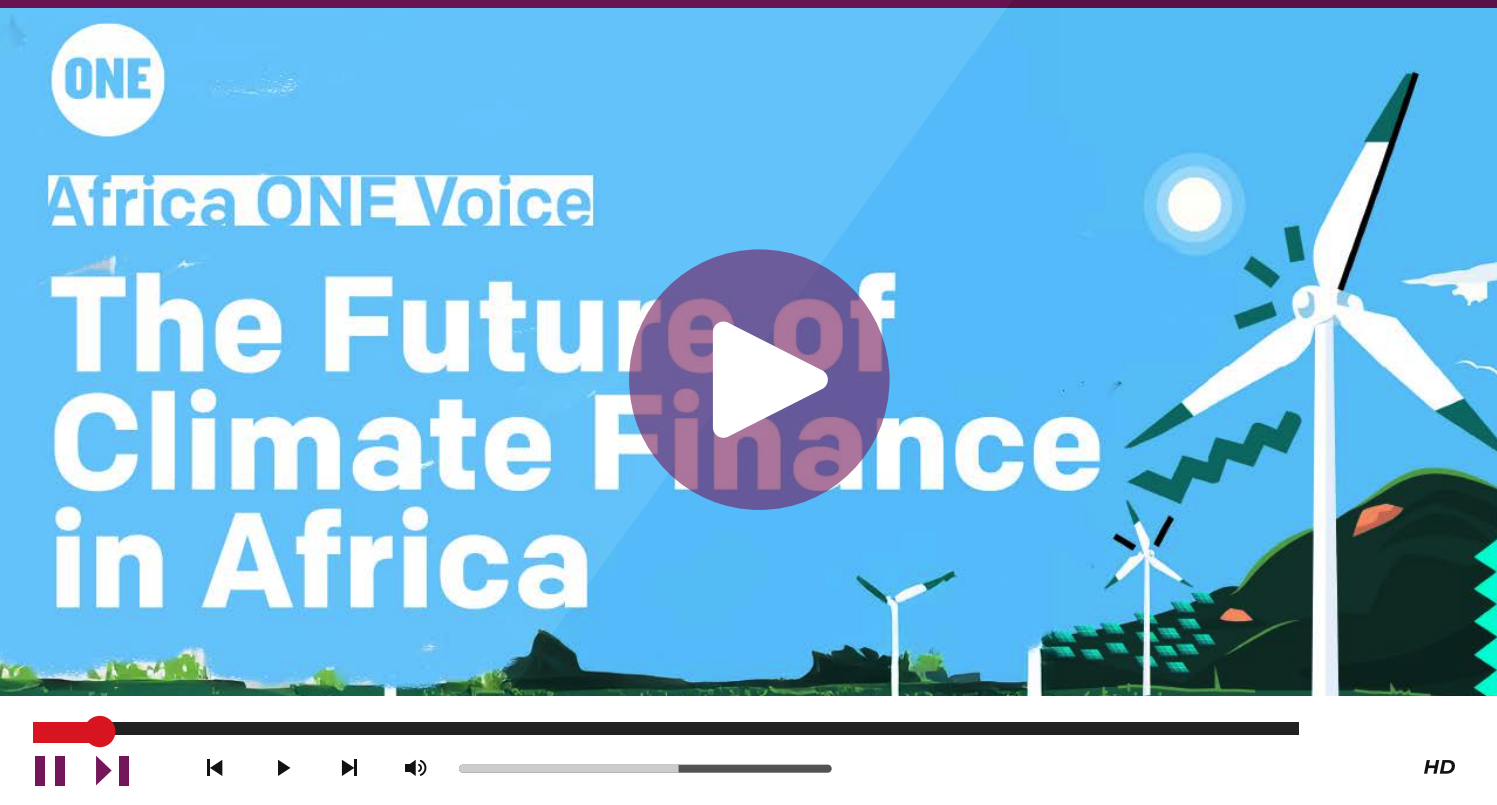
We must commit to ensuring that future generations in Southeast Nigeria inherit a region that is not only capable of feeding them but also resilient to the changing climate. This fight for food security is about more than just survival, it's about dignity, opportunity and a sustainable future.

As a ONE Champion, I am committed to amplifying this message and rallying the necessary resources and partnerships to make a real, lasting difference. Together, we can ensure that Southeast Nigeria's agricultural future is secure and thriving.

Contributor: Markfred Akachukwu, ONE Champion and Climate Change Advocate

CLIMATE FINANCE, INNOVATION, AND ACTION: AFRICA'S YOUNG VOICES

A short video featuring young African climate leaders, entrepreneurs, and activists sharing their insights on the future of climate finance in Africa. This video is available on our YouTube channel and is included in the digital version of this publication.



UNFAIR BURDENS: A CASE FOR CLIMATE COMPENSATION IN AFRICA



The issue of climate-related loss and damage has become a focal point in international climate discussions, particularly for vulnerable countries, including many African nations. The critical need for a compensation mechanism to address these effects and support recovery in African countries is evident. This article explores why such a climate compensation mechanism is essential for Africa and highlights the responsibility of developed nations to provide the necessary financial support.

Loss and damage refer to the irreversible effects of extreme weather events like hurricanes and droughts, as well

as slow-onset processes like rising sea levels. Despite the establishment of the Warsaw International Mechanism in 2013 to address loss and damage, tangible financing has been slow to materialise. At COP27, the creation of a Loss and Damage Fund was a positive step, but the financial commitments made by developed countries are still insufficient. According to the World Bank, Africa will require between \$290 billion and \$440 billion between 2020 and 2030 to finance loss and damage needs, making it essential for the international community to provide robust financial support.

Africa is especially vulnerable to the effects of climate change due to its geographical location, fragile ecosystems and limited resources for adaptation. The African Development Bank estimates that the continent could lose between 7% and 15% of its GDP by 2030 if effective climate adaptation measures are not implemented. Some key examples illustrate this vulnerability:



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- **Droughts and food insecurity: Between 2020 and 2022, a devastating drought affected the Horn of Africa, impacting 36 million people and causing the loss of over 1.5 million livestock. In 2023, the UN estimated that 25 million people in the region were at risk of hunger.**
- **Destructive flooding: Nigeria experienced its worst flooding disaster in 2022, displacing more than 1.4 million people and causing \$4.4 billion in damages. Similarly, Cyclone Idai in Southern Africa caused \$2 billion in damages and affected 3 million people.**
- **Coastal erosion and sea level rise: Rising sea levels threaten coastal areas in West Africa, with studies suggesting that up to 56% of these regions could be submerged by the end of the century. Cities like Lagos and Abidjan are at great risk.**

These disasters have significant economic, social, and environmental costs, further hindering the development efforts of African countries and pushing millions into poverty. According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Africa will need \$50 billion per year by 2030 just for climate adaptation, with the cost of loss and damage adding significantly to this amount. Without dedicated financial resources, these countries will struggle to address urgent needs in sectors like healthcare, education and infrastructure while also responding to climate impacts..

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Loss and damage severely affect millions of people in Africa each year. For example:

- **Niger experiences recurring droughts that threaten agriculture and the livelihoods of over 80% of the rural population.**
- **Mozambique lost about 10% of its GDP to Cyclones Idai and Kenneth in 2019, which pushed thousands of families into poverty.**

These examples underscore the necessity of a dedicated compensation mechanism to provide financial support and enable affected populations to recover.

Developed countries are responsible for 79% of cumulative CO2 emissions since the industrial revolution, while Africa accounts for less than 3% of global emissions. This highlights the climate injustice faced by African nations. However, the financial commitments made by industrialised countries have often fallen short. For instance, in 2020, developed nations failed to meet their promise of mobilising \$100 billion annually for global climate efforts. This failure limits the ability of vulnerable nations, including those in Africa, to adapt and rebuild.

Recognising the historical responsibility of developed countries is central to achieving climate justice. Developed nations must fulfil their financial commitments transparently and consistently to support African countries in addressing loss and damage.

A robust compensation mechanism would offer significant benefits for Africa:

- **Economic stability: Climate-related disasters cost African nations about 2% of their annual GDP, hindering development. A dedicated financing mechanism would help offset these losses, enabling governments to maintain vital services.**
- **Strengthening resilience: UNEP estimates that every dollar invested in climate resilience generates about \$4 in socioeconomic benefits. A sustainable financing mechanism would help communities become more resilient to future climate impacts.**
- **Poverty reduction: Climate change could push an additional 43 million Africans into poverty by 2030. A compensation mechanism would provide financial support to mitigate these effects.**
- **Preventing climate-induced migration: The International Organisation for Migration estimates that up to 86 million people in sub-Saharan Africa could be displaced due to climate change by 2050**

Adequate financial support would help stabilise communities and reduce migration.

Establishing a compensation mechanism for loss and damage is not only a moral obligation but a practical necessity for Africa. By recognising the historical responsibility of developed countries and ensuring sufficient financial resources, the international community can help African nations address the impacts of climate change and build resilience for the future. For African nations, the fight for climate justice continues, and as the world reflects on the outcomes of COP29, there is still hope that the momentum generated will lead to real and transformative change in future climate negotiations.

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