

2025 CLIMATE AND HEALTH POLICY PRIORITIES FOR NIGERIA

This document summarises key priority areas of focus for Nigeria, supported by evidence from the 2025 Global Report of the Lancet Countdown.

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A NATIONAL HEAT-HEALTH ACTION PLAN TO PROTECT HEALTH AND LIVELIHOODS

- 1 Nigeria must develop and implement a National Heat-Health Action Plan to protect vulnerable populations, reduce preventable deaths, and protect workers. Priority measures include forecast-based early warnings, occupational safety standards for outdoor workers, heat-resilient urban planning, and public awareness campaigns to prevent heat-related illness.

Extreme heat is increasingly affecting health, particularly among children and older adults. In 2024, people in Nigeria were exposed to 33.2 heatwave days each, on average. Of these, 28.4 (85%) would not have been expected to occur without climate change. (**Indicator 1.1.1**). Prolonged exposure raises risks of dehydration, heat exhaustion, and cardiovascular strain, particularly for people with existing health conditions. From 2012–2021, Nigeria recorded an estimated 19,566 heat-attributable deaths annually, a 131% increase compared with 1990–1999 (**Indicator 1.1.5**).

Extreme heat also undermines labour productivity, affecting people's livelihoods and the economy as a whole. In 2024, it caused the loss of 31.9 billion potential labour hours, 169% more than in 1990–1999. Losses were greatest in agriculture (72.5%), followed by services (10.5%) and manufacturing (10%), threatening livelihoods and national economic stability (**Indicator 1.1.3**).

Fully implementing a coordinated Heat-Health Action Plan, with clear responsibilities across health, labour, and urban-planning ministries, can reduce mortality, sustain economic output, and build resilience to intensifying heat extremes. The plan would benefit from forecast-based alerts linked to community health outreach, protection measures for outdoor workers, expansion of cooling shelters in high-risk areas, and public information campaigns promoting hydration and early recognition of heat illness. Integrating these actions into emergency preparedness and primary healthcare systems will ensure sustained protection for vulnerable populations and strengthen national resilience.

STRENGTHEN SURVEILLANCE AND PREVENTION OF CLIMATE-SENSITIVE INFECTIOUS DISEASES

- 2 Strengthening climate-integrated disease surveillance and prevention systems to respond to the growing threat of vector- and water-borne infections is essential to protect health. This includes linking meteorological data with health surveillance, expanding community awareness campaigns, and scaling up local capacity for early detection, control, and response.

Climate change is increasing the risk of transmission of infectious diseases across Nigeria. Between 2015–2024, the average transmission potential (R_0) for dengue spread by *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes increased by 6% compared with 1951–1960, while *Aedes albopictus* transmission potential rose by 68% (exceeding an R_0 of 1, marking a risk of exponential spread of the disease (**Indicator 1.3.1**). Estimated vibriosis cases increased by 144% between 2024 and 1990–1999 (**Indicator 1.3.6**). These changes reflect expanding ecological suitability for disease vectors as temperatures rise and rainfall patterns shift.

Embedding climate data into routine health surveillance, expanding laboratory and field diagnostic capacity, and strengthening rapid response systems are critical to reduce outbreak risks. At the same time, sustained investment in community awareness and prevention will empower households to manage heat, hygiene, and vector risks more effectively. Together, these measures will deliver an integrated early warning and response system that protects health and builds long-term resilience to climate-sensitive infectious diseases.

ACCELERATE CLEAN ENERGY ACCESS TO REDUCE ENERGY POVERTY AND IMPROVE HEALTH

3 Accelerating Nigeria's transition from fossil fuels to clean, renewable energy can reduce energy poverty, improve health, and advance national climate goals. Expanding access to reliable, affordable electricity, especially in rural and peri-urban areas, will cut dependence on biomass and fossil fuels, lower indoor air pollution, and enhance living standards.

Fossil fuels continue to dominate Nigeria's energy system. In 2022, road transport energy was 100% fossil-fuel based (**Indicator 3.1.3**). At the household level, reliance on traditional fuels remains high: 88.5% of household energy came from biomass, while only 5.9% came from electricity (**Indicator 3.1.2**). In the national mix, coal supplied 1.1% of total energy and 0% of electricity, while renewables accounted for 0% of total energy supply in 2022 (**Indicator 3.1.1**). This pattern drives high exposure to household air pollution, especially for women and children, increasing respiratory and cardiovascular risks

Expanding clean electricity access and modern cooking solutions through off-grid and mini-grid systems, rural electrification, and targeted financing for low-income households can substantially reduce indoor air pollution and energy poverty. Integrating solar and wind power into community health centres, schools, and public facilities will ensure reliable energy for essential services, while promoting clean cookstove adoption and electric cooking will protect women and children from household air pollution and improve long-term health and economic resilience.

Accelerating Action

Urgent action is needed in Nigeria to protect health from escalating climate risks. Strengthening early warning systems, health workforce capacity, and public awareness across sectors will reduce the burden of extreme heat, infectious diseases, and air pollution. Coordinated, climate-aligned action will build resilience, protect lives, and safeguard national development.

Contributors

This document was written by Tafadzwanashe Mabhaudhi, Zakari Ali, Wendy Geza, and Getrude Njokwe (University of Pretoria) from the Lancet Countdown Africa Centre.

Review on behalf of the Lancet Countdown was provided by Mahnoor Saeed, MPP and Elise Digga, MPH.



For more of the latest data on health and climate change, you can find country data sheets by scanning the QR code.