LANCET COUNTDOWN: TRACKING PROGRESS ON HEALTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE
In collaboration with Wellcome

A decade tracking progress on health and climate change

NIGERIA

LANCET COUNTDOWN ON HEALTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE
DATA SHEET 2026

Health and Climate Change in Nigeria

The Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change tracks the connections between health and climate change. In its tenth iteration, the 2026 Global Report shows that the health impacts of climate change have escalated, and frequently accelerated, in the decade since the Paris Agreement came into force.

This document presents key country-level findings from the 2026 Global Report of the Lancet Countdown for Nigeria.

Increasing heat exposure is placing vulnerable populations in Nigeria at greater risk of heat-related illness and mortality, while limiting safe physical activity and reducing labour capacity and potential earnings, particularly in agriculture.

Environmental conditions have become increasingly favourable for dengue transmission in Nigeria, posing growing risks to health.

Extreme drought has become substantially more widespread in Nigeria, threatening water availability, food security and livelihoods, with consequences for health and wellbeing.

Household air pollution contributes to substantial premature mortality in Nigeria, while solid biofuels dominate household energy use and electricity accounts for only a small share.

Heat and Health

Exposure to high temperatures increases the risk of heat-related illness and mortality, particularly among older adults, young children, pregnant women and those with pre-existing health conditions. Heat can also limit safe physical activity and reduce people's capacity to work, with consequences for incomes, food security and livelihoods.

People in Nigeria experienced an average of approximately 19.8 heatwave days in 2025, more than 95% of which were directly attributable to climate change. (Indicator 1.1.1)

People in Nigeria experienced approximately 3,090 hours during which heat posed a moderate or higher risk of heat stress during moderate outdoor physical activity, such as brisk walking in 2025. This was approximately 373 hours more than the annual average in the 1990s. (Indicator 1.1.2)

The average annual monetised value of heat-related mortality among people aged over 65 in Nigeria was US$3.11 billion between 2021 and 2025, equivalent to approximately 178,600 average annual incomes. This was 443% higher than in 2000–2004. (Indicator 4.1.2)

Heat-related labour capacity reduction in Nigeria caused an estimated US$24.72 billion in potential earnings losses in 2025, equivalent to approximately 8.7% of national GDP. Agriculture accounted for approximately 64% of these losses. (Indicator 4.1.3)

Dengue

Changes in temperature and rainfall can influence the environmental suitability for mosquito-borne disease transmission. In Nigeria, conditions have become increasingly favourable for dengue transmission, potentially exposing more people to the risk of infection.

The transmission potential (R_0) of dengue spread by *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes in Nigeria increased by 6.1%, from 2.33 in 1951–1960 to 2.47 in 2016–2025. For *Aedes albopictus*, transmission potential increased by 58.9%, from 0.91 to 1.45 over the same periods, indicating increasingly favourable environmental conditions for dengue transmission. (Indicator 1.3.1)

Drought

Extreme drought can threaten water availability, food production and livelihoods, with consequences for food security, nutrition and health. In Nigeria, drought has become substantially more widespread, with large areas experiencing prolonged periods of extreme drought.

An average of 77.8% of Nigeria's land area experienced at least one month of extreme drought annually between 2021 and 2025, compared with 27% in 1981–1990. (Indicator 1.2.2)

Between 2021 and 2025, an average of 28.3% of the country's land area experienced at least six months of extreme drought per year. (Indicator 1.2.2)

LIVED EXPERIENCE

In the hot /dry season (Harmattan), there's lots of draught, causing lack of water, excessive sun and so all the crops are dried up, causing low amount of food that results in malnutrition. There's also dust causing respiratory diseases and illnesses which spread among the people due to no access to healthcare.

Anonymous, public health and environmental health professional, Nigeria

Energy Transition and Health

The use of polluting household and transport fuels contributes to harmful air pollution, increasing the risk of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases and premature mortality. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), Nigeria's annual mean concentration of fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) was 56 μg/m³, more than 11 times the WHO annual guideline of 5 μg/m³. Expanding household and road transport electrification powered by renewable electricity can improve air quality, protect health and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

Household air pollution from the use of polluting fuels was associated with an estimated 118,744 deaths in Nigeria in 2023, 14.8% more than in 2016. (Indicator 3.2.2)

In 2023, solid biofuels accounted for 87% of household energy use in Nigeria, while electricity contributed only 5.8%. Electricity's share declined from 6.4% in 2016, while the share of liquid fossil fuels increased from 2.9% to 7.1%. (Indicator 3.1.2)

In 2023, fossil fuels still accounted for all of road transport energy, increasing 8.1% since 2016, with no electricity use recorded in the sector. (Indicator 3.1.3)

Testimonials were collected by The Geneva Learning Foundation as part of efforts to elevate health worker voices and recognize their lived experiences as valuable evidence in climate and health policy.

Romanello M, Walawender M, Israelsson J et al. The 2026 report of the Lancet Countdown on health and climate change: A decade of escalating health harms and a decisive moment for all. The Lancet 2026; published online October 2026. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(26)01779-4
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