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International Conference on Population and Development

ICPD and Climate Change in Kenya

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Kenya Vision 2030

ICPD and Climate Change in Kenya

Let Us Act Now!

Published by:

National Council For Population and Development,
Chancery Building, 4th Floor,Valley Road,
P. O. Box 48994– 00100, Nairobi, Kenya
www.ncpd.go.ke

ISBN: 978-9914-45-036-1

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Recommended citation: NCPD 2024. ICPD and Climate Change in Kenya

The development and printing of this policy brief was made possible through the generous financial support of UNFPA, Planned Parenthood Global, NAYA and Faith to Action Network, thus enabling wider dissemination of key information on future-proofing the ICPD.

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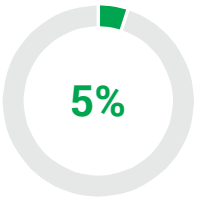
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Executive Summary

Underscoring the urgency of climate change action

Climate change poses a critical challenge to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Vision 2030, and the Bottom-Up Transformative Agenda (BETA). This brief underscores the urgency of climate action, highlighting Kenya's significant exposure to natural hazards like floods and droughts, which have economic costs of up to 5% of GDP annually. Despite progress in the implementation of national climate policies and legislations, gaps remain in integrating climate strategies with population and development priorities. Key recommendations include enhancing policy integration, governance, community action, disaster risk reduction, and social protection systems.





GDP share of economic costs incurred by Kenya as a result of exposure to natural hazards like floods and droughts

Notable Takeaways

Kenya's significant exposure to natural hazards like floods and droughts have economic costs of up to 5% of GDP annually. Despite progress in the implementation of national climate policies and legislations, gaps remain in integrating climate strategies with population and development priorities

Key recommendations include enhancing policy integration, governance, community action, disaster risk reduction, and social protection systems.

Introduction



Climate change has emerged as a critical national and global challenge, affecting progress in implementing the ICPD PoA, especially in the context of realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Climate change has emerged as a critical national and global challenge, affecting progress in implementing the ICPD PoA, especially in the context of realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as Vision 2030 and Bottom-Up Transformative Agenda (BETA). The increasing urgency to address the climate crisis has become a pivotal focus in global policy discourse. This urgency was first recognized at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, which acknowledged the interconnectedness of environmental, economic, and social issues. This summit laid the foundation for sustainable development as a comprehensive approach to global development challenges. Two years later, the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo in 1994 underscored the critical link between population dynamics and sustainable development, emphasizing the need for integrating population policies with environmental strategies.

In 1997, the Kyoto Protocol further solidified global commitment by setting legally binding emission reduction targets for developed countries, marking a significant step in international climate policy.

The 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) reaffirmed the global community's commitment to sustainable development and led to the formulation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which include specific targets for climate action. Finally, in 2015, the Paris Agreement marked a landmark global commitment to limit temperature rise and foster climate resilience.

The intersection of climate change with population and development issues requires further attention and hence this brief aims to highlight the urgency of climate action and its implications for population and development. It explains the purpose of examining Kenya's achievements, identifying challenges, and providing actionable recommendations for enhancing the integration of climate action with population and development priorities.

Key Insights

Climate Situation in Kenya

Kenya's climate is influenced by global, regional and localized climatic conditions. Kenya is highly exposed to multiplicity of natural hazards, the most common being floods and droughts. The economic costs of climate change impacts are high, amounting to between 3% and 5% of GDP per year over the past decade. Without appropriate climate action, these costs could rise to between 6.5% and 8.5% of GDP by 2050. According to the Kenya Climate risk Country profile, Kenya is recognized as highly vulnerable to climate change impacts, ranked 152 out of 181 countries in the 2019 ND-GAIN Index due to a combination of political, geographic, and social factors. Kenya's vulnerability to climate change is worsened by frequent and intense droughts, storms, floods, heat waves, rising sea levels, melting glaciers and warming oceans leading to direct devastation of biotic systems and natural habitats, which have severe socio-economic impacts.

Given its diverse topography, temperatures across the country vary significantly, with the highlands experiencing much cooler temperatures than coastal and lowland zones. Little seasonal variation in temperatures has been observed, with average temperatures ranging between 18°C at the higher elevations to 26°C along the coast. The most significant rise in temperature is observed for the start to the primary rainy and humid, spring season (March to May), in the arid and semi-arid regions of the country.

Temperatures in Kenya are projected to continue rising by 1.7°C by the 2050s and by approximately 3.5°C at the end of the century. Additionally, the number of hot days and nights will increase, with 'hot days' projected to occur on 19% – 45% of days by mid-century. Hot nights are expected to increase more quickly, projected to occur on 45%–75% of nights by mid-century and on 64%–93% of



Economic Costs

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Vulnerability

According to the Kenya climate risk country profile, Kenya is recognized as highly vulnerable to climate change impacts, ranked 152 out of 181 countries in the 2019 ND-GAIN Index due to a combination of political, geographic, and social factors

Kenya is critically exposed to the adverse effects of climate change due to the country's worsened water scarcity index. This has serious implications for Kenya's Vision 2030 as these impacts will be detrimental to the country's tourism, agriculture, industry, and energy sectors



nights by end of century. Cold days and nights are expected to become increasingly rare. Precipitation in Kenya is projected to remain highly variable and uncertain, however average rainfall is expected to increase by mid-century, particularly during the 'short rains', which occur between October and December. However, the period between heavy rainfall events may increase. Importantly, rainfall in the arid zones are generally projected to decrease.

The country's water scarcity index has worsened alongside its rapid population growth, and is expected to fall from approximately 586 m3 per capita in 2010 to as low as 293 m3 per capita by 2050. Kenya is thus critically exposed to the adverse effects of climate change. This has serious implications for Kenya's Vision 2030 as these impacts will be detrimental to the country's tourism, agriculture, industry, and energy sectors.

As sea surface temperatures rise alongside rising sea levels and coasts continue to erode, Kenya's coastal ecosystems, estuaries, beaches, coral reefs and marine biodiversity are at risk. Sea level rise in combination with extreme weather events is likely to

Water Scarcity

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Risks

As sea surface temperatures rise alongside rising sea levels and coasts continue to erode, Kenya's coastal ecosystems, estuaries, beaches, coral reefs and marine biodiversity are at risk



intensify flooding as the majority of the coastland, cities, ports and infrastructure is low-lying. Kenya is highly vulnerable to adverse impacts on the health of its citizens as temperatures rise and rainfall patterns change. While the country has made progress tackling communicable diseases such as HIV-AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, this is likely to be undermined by projected changes in climate. The government has identified malaria, Rift Valley fever, malnutrition, water borne diseases (such as cholera), scabies, jiggers and lice infestations as some of the most negative impacts in Kenya's future. Additionally, the incidence and seasonality of other critical stressors including: heat stress, air pollution, asthma, vector-borne diseases (i.e. malaria, dengue, schistosomiasis, and tick-borne diseases), water-borne and food-borne diseases, and diarrheal diseases are also expected to increase.

293m^3

Water Scarcity Index

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Progress made in Climate Action

Kenya has served as a leader in addressing climate change issues nationally and across the region and was one of the first countries in Africa to enact a



comprehensive law and policy to guide national and subnational climate action. Furthermore, established institutions and mechanisms are in place to monitor the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, to address vulnerabilities which will be exacerbated by climate change, and to strengthen the country's social and economic structures against vulnerability. The Climate Change Act of 2016 and the updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) outline Kenya's climate commitments, including a 32% reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2030. The National Adaptation Plan 2015-2030 (NAP) integrates climate adaptation into the health sector and prioritizes vulnerable groups. The National Climate Change Action Plan 2023-2027 (NCCAP III) recognizes increased risk of gender based violence and teen pregnancies due to the impact of climate change.

The recent 2023 Nairobi Africa Climate Summit demonstrated Kenya's leadership in climate action. The Green Climate Fund Project Towards Ending Drought Emergencies "TWENDE" targets ecosystem-based adaptation, while the Financing Locally-Led Climate Action (FLLoCA) project, funded by the World Bank, aims to build community resilience and strengthen county governments' climate finance and governance systems. In addition, all the 47 counties in the country developed their County Climate Change Act, established a climate change fund, operationalized Climate Change Units, developed their own Project for Community Resilience and Adaptation (PCRA) and County Climate Change Action Plans (CCCAP) and received the 1st FLLoCA grant to support institutional arrangements and capacity building.

Kenya, like other countries, is bearing the brunt of climate variability and change, hence the Government is committed to increasing its coping capacity and resilience to natural hazards, reducing the potential impacts from climate change, and strengthening its disaster risk management strategies. Kenya's Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Authority is working at both the national

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and sub-national level to implement actions outlined in its Vision 2030 strategy. The Government has initiated the enactment of the Climate Change Act (No. 11 of 2016) to provide the regulatory framework for enhanced climate change response towards the transition to low carbon climate resilient development.

Climate change impacts

Evidence has shown that climate-related disasters have impacted human populations in many areas including agricultural production, food security, water management and public health. The level of impacts and strategies of populations depends heavily on their socio-economic status, socio-cultural norms, access to resources, poverty as well as gender. Vulnerable populations, including women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, often face heightened risks during climate disasters and movements including violence, exploitation and lack of access to essential services including healthcare.

Climate change poses a serious negative impact on agriculture-based livelihoods in Kenya, challenging the sustainability of current arable, pastoral and fishing practices. Rising temperatures will likely alter the mix and distribution of agriculture and livestock pests, while increased incidence of droughts, coupled with reduced rainfall projections will further challenge agricultural sustainability. The expected changes in rainfall, coupled with increased aridity and more severe droughts, are anticipated to increase existing vulnerabilities in agriculture, forests, urban areas, as well as in livestock and dryland water resource management.

Challenges

Despite progress made in addressing the issues of climate change, significant challenges and gaps remain in integrating climate policies with population and development priorities. The linkage between climate change-related policies and institutional mechanisms, and population and development priorities, is weak. The Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) submitted by Kenya in 2020 and disaster risk reduction strategies lack comprehensive integration of population and development issues.

Technical and financial constraints hinder effective climate action. Gaps in technical capacity, policy guidance, and funding limit the implementation of comprehensive climate strategies. Social protection systems are not well-aligned with climate adaptation needs and humanitarian responses. Climate-induced displacement and conflicts disrupt settlement patterns and access to essential services, exacerbating the vulnerability of affected populations to the effects of climate change.



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Vulnerable populations, including women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, often face heightened risks during climate disasters and movements including violence, exploitation and lack of access to essential services including healthcare

Recommendations

Policy Integration:
Strengthen the integration of climate change with population and development priorities in national policies. Embed climate adaptation and resilience building across all government sectors, ensuring human rights are central to these policies.

Governance and Inclusiveness:
Reform climate governance to include future generations and improve inclusiveness in decision-making processes. Enhance technical capacities at national and county levels for sustained integration of population and development into climate action.

Evidence and Community Action:
Invest in research to validate the linkages between demographic trends and climate change. Support community-level actions that integrate climate change with population and development, ensuring vulnerable populations have the resources for climate action.

Disaster Risk Reduction:
Develop effective disaster risk reduction and early warning systems. Ensure the capacity to deliver essential services during climate emergencies is robust.

Social Protection and Resilience:
Increase adaptive capacity and social protection systems to mitigate the impacts of climate change. Promote innovative financing models and technologies that include population issues in climate action.

Technical and financial constraints hinder effective climate action. Gaps in technical capacity, policy guidance, and funding limit the implementation of comprehensive climate strategies.



Conclusion

Kenya has made remarkable progress in addressing the issues of climate change through the development and implementation of comprehensive legislations and policies like the Climate Change Act of 2016 and the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC).

However, significant challenges persist in aligning climate policies with development priorities. To mitigate climate change impacts on its economy, agriculture, water resources, and public health, Kenya must strengthen policy integration, enhance governance, support community actions, and develop robust disaster risk reduction and social protection systems. Addressing these areas will improve Kenya's resilience and help achieve Vision 2030 and SDG targets.

> **To mitigate climate change impacts on its economy, agriculture, water resources, and public health, Kenya must strengthen policy integration, enhance governance, support community actions, and develop robust disaster risk reduction and social protection systems**



Strengthening policy integration, enhancing governance, supporting community actions and developing robust disaster risk reduction and social protection systems will improve Kenya's resilience and help achieve Vision 2030 and SDG targets.

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Acknowledgements

Author(s): Ken Lwaki (NCPD), Maurice Oduor (NCPD), Jane Wanjaria (NCPD), Millicent Oluteyo (NCPD), Saida (UNFPA)

Reviewers: Dr. Mohamed Sheikh (NCPD), Nzomo Mulatya (NCPD), John Wafula (UNFPA), Ezekiel Ngure (UNFPA)

Graphic Design: Kevin Ong'any (Kenya Year Book)

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