# MAKERERE UNIVERSITY ROTARY PEACE CENTER

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**SOCIAL CHANGE INITIATIVE IMPLEMENTATION REPORT**

## CLIMATEWISE: EMPOWERING FUTURES THROUGH COMPREHENSIVE CLIMATE CHANGE EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

**LOCATION:** ABUJA AND NASARAWA STATE

**START AND COMPLETION DATE:** JANUARY TO OCTOBER 2024

**DEBORAH ODU OBOR, 2024**

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION AND PEACE STUDIES, SCHOOL OF LIBERAL AND PERFORMING ARTS
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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**Abstract / Summary: (250 words)**

The project aims to reduce knowledge gaps, increase environmental awareness and strengthen communities' capacity for climate adaptation and resilience. Specifically, the project focuses on the intergenerational knowledge bank, building resilience and adaptability to climate-related risks and disasters, mainly by developing climate change and environmental sustainability courses, training trainers, conducting community dialogue and climate mediation workshops, establishing ClimateWISE clubs, CommunityWISE clubs, and HouseholdWISE ambassadors to strengthen collective climate action.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## 1.1 Introduction and Background: (800words)

Climate change is a global phenomenon characterised by the long-term alteration of temperature and typical weather patterns, driven significantly by human activities such as fossil fuel consumption, deforestation, and industrial processes. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), average global temperatures have risen by approximately 1.2 degrees Celsius since the late 19th century, leading to widespread and intensifying impacts across the planet, including more frequent extreme weather events, rising sea levels, and shifts in ecosystems (IPCC 2022). These changes pose significant risks not only to natural environments but also to human livelihoods, health, and security globally.

The ClimateWISE project addresses the critical need for comprehensive climate change education in Nigeria, focusing mainly on building resilience and adaptation among children, teachers, the farming community, and other selected members of the community in Nasarawa state. Despite Africa's low global carbon dioxide emissions, the continent is facing greater vulnerability to the consequences of climate change, a reality reflected in Nigeria's ecological threat with evidence in their levels of resilience. The implication is that Nigeria is the least prepared to adapt and build resilience to the threat of climate change.

In Africa, climate change triggers conflicts, evidenced by the increase in resource-based conflicts, floods, migration, and food insecurity. Vulnerable communities lack preparedness and resilience, as highlighted by the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative and IEP's Ecological Threat Report (2023).

Focusing specifically on Nigeria, the situation is dire. As Africa's most populous nation, Nigeria plays a crucial role in the continent's ecological and socio-economic landscape. However, it is also one of the countries most vulnerable to climate change. Key threats include increased flooding, droughts, desertification, and biodiversity loss.

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Nigeria faces inadequate climate literacy; only a quarter of the population is aware, primarily driven by conflicts. Insufficient government-led integration of climate education in schools hampers systematic knowledge dissemination, affecting sustainability and effectiveness. The absence of Climate Change Clubs restricts engagement and collective action.

This lack of awareness impedes environmental consciousness and empowered leadership, hindering transgenerational knowledge and community participation. The ClimateWISE project in Nasarawa State addresses these gaps by delivering comprehensive education, bridging knowledge gaps, fostering awareness, and building resilience among children, teachers, and local groups through tailored courses and training.

Climate change has been regarded as one of the main drivers of conflicts affecting global peace and prosperity in Nigeria. As shown by floods, increased rural-urban migration, resource conflicts (water and land), displacements within the country and food insecurity, Africa is the most affected. The Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative (ND-GAIN) Index (2019) indicates their heightened vulnerability and lack of preparedness, adaptation, and resilience to the impacts of climate change. The Ecological Threat Report of the IEP (2023) states that the most vulnerable communities are the least adaptive, prepared and resilient to ecological shocks, so creating a high level of adaptability and human capital through knowledge exchange is fundamental to mitigating and building resilience.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP 2023) emphasises that climate change education serves as a powerful catalyst for behaviour change. By fostering awareness and understanding of environmental issues, educational initiatives empower individuals and communities to adopt sustainable practices and contribute to climate action. Climate change education equips learners with critical knowledge about the causes and effects of climate change. By understanding the science behind climate phenomena, individuals are better positioned to make informed choices that reduce their environmental impact, such as conserving energy and reducing waste. Also, educational programs that promote active participation, such as hands-on projects and community involvement, instil a sense of

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ownership and responsibility toward environmental stewardship. When learners engage in climate action initiatives, they are more likely to internalise these values and integrate them into their daily lives. Studies have shown that The UNEP highlights that comprehensive climate education can lead to significant behavioural shifts. For example, students exposed to sustainability education show a greater likelihood of engaging in eco-friendly practices, such as recycling, conservation, and community initiatives, than those without such exposure.

Similarly, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2023) has identified climate change education as a critical strategy for community resilience because it strengthens community awareness of risks and is adapted to sustainable practices (community control of interventions, empowered decision-making, behavioural adaptation and community engagement and collaboration).

A cursory look at the Nigerian adaptability, mitigation strategies and resilience to the ecological shock and climate change incidence is clear evidence of an absence of awareness or literacy and comprehensive climate change awareness. Statistics show that only 1 out of four of the population in Nigeria has heard of climate change; the incidences of climate-induced conflict drove the awareness. Despite the climate action steps taken by the Government of Nigeria to incorporate Climate change education into the educational systems, evidence is that they are absent, especially in government-owned schools, which hinders the systematic dissemination of knowledge on climate change among students and teachers. Where there is evidence of climate change education, sustainability and how it is taught is not sustainable and likely not to lead to climate resilience in the advent of climate change issues. It also inhibits collective action and participation in climate-related projects and discussions. The lack of established Climate Change Clubs in schools and community initiatives limits platforms for engaging students and community members in climate change discussions and actions. The lack of increased awareness and education on climate change prevents the fostering of environmentally conscious individuals capable of actively mitigating climate risks. Furthermore, the absence of a cultivated culture of environmental responsibility and the lack of empowered persons hinders transgenerational climate change knowledge, leadership potential in climate action, and climate

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actions for peace, thereby limiting community participation in climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts. Hence, the ClimateWISE project addresses the critical need for comprehensive climate change education in Nigeria and focuses mainly on strengthening resilience and adaptation among children, teachers, agricultural groups and other local members in Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

### 1.2 Problem Statement: (250 words)

The African continent faces significant vulnerability to the consequences of climate change despite contributing only 3 per cent of global carbon dioxide emissions, as highlighted by the United Nations Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2014). Within Africa, countries rank poorly on the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative (ND-GAIN) Index (2019), indicating their heightened vulnerability and lack of preparedness, adaptation, and resilience to the impacts of climate change.

The impact of climate change in Nigeria are evident, with increased temperatures, irregular rainfall, extreme weather events, drought, desertification, rising sea levels, flooding, land degradation, biodiversity loss, food insecurity, and conflicts. These impacts vary across Nigeria, with the North facing low precipitation, leading to drought and desertification, while the South experiences high precipitation, resulting in flooding and erosion. Despite these realities, there are low level of awareness and literacy about climate change. Where they exist at all, the impact of climate change creates the awareness.

Furthermore, this lack of preparedness and awareness is widespread across various African demographic and social divisions, especially among children, fragile communities, and women, creating disparities in climate change literacy. Of particular concern is the inadequacy of climate change education in all forms of education in Nigeria. However, this insufficiency is more conspicuous in informal settings, and the most fragile communities.

Nigeria, a country influential in both political and social aspects within the continent, is emblematic of this issue. A survey by Afrobarometer (2019) reveals that only about one in four

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citizens in Nigeria possess basic awareness about climate change. This indicates a significant knowledge gap, leaving most of the population ill-prepared to respond adequately to climate challenges.

Despite these challenges, Nigeria's climate change awareness levels are low. The deficiency in awareness has been identified as a significant reason for the country's overall low level of understanding and preparedness. The urgency of this situation cannot be overstated. Studies have projected significant economic losses for Nigeria due to climate change impacts, emphasizing the need for immediate action to raise awareness, foster preparedness, and drive effective adaptation measures.

Though more climate change education has been focused on formal educational institutions, there is a need to include other segments of the population. It is important to note that only some have equal access or benefits from formal education. Incorporating climate change education into various platforms such as community workshops, local outreach programmes, media campaigns, training and climate actions can reach a wider audience, including those who might not be engaged through formal education channels. Formal education systems might not cater to all demographics or individuals, particularly marginalized communities, adults, and those in remote areas. By diversifying educational approaches, inclusivity is enhanced, ensuring that climate change knowledge reaches a broader spectrum of society, including those historically underserved or excluded. Educating beyond formal institutions involves communities directly in the learning process, engaging community members fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility towards climate change issues, encouraging active participation, collaboration, and innovation in addressing local climate challenges. This will enhance community engagement and ownership. Climate change education tailored to various population segments allows customisation according to local contexts, cultures, and languages. The involvement of these parties helps individuals understand the direct impacts of climate change on their lives, encouraging more meaningful engagement and practical solutions. Implementing education across various segments of society supports lifelong learning,

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ensuring that individuals continuously update their knowledge and adapt their behaviours to change.

A cursory look at the Nigerian educational system shows an absence of awareness or literacy and comprehensive climate change curriculum in schools and educational institutions, especially government-owned schools, which hinders the systematic dissemination of knowledge on climate change among students and teachers. Where there is evidence of climate change education, sustainability and how it is taught is not sustainable and likely not to lead to climate resilience in the advent of climate change. It also inhibits collective action and participation in climate-related projects and discussions. The lack of established Climate Change Clubs in schools and community initiatives limits platforms for engaging students and community members in climate change discussions and actions. The lack of increased awareness and education on climate change prevents the fostering of environmentally conscious individuals capable of actively mitigating climate risks.

Furthermore, the absence of a cultivated culture of environmental responsibility and the lack of empowered persons hinder the leadership potential in climate action, limiting community participation in climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts. The IEP Ecological 2023 report notes that little attention is focused on resilience, especially the ecological shocks people experience in the incidence of climate change; hence, there is a need to strengthen community resilience and adaptive capacity through literacy and education to enhance informed decision-making, adoption of sustainable practices, and effective response strategies to climate-related risks and disasters. The alarming shifts in environmental dynamics and climate patterns present an imminent threat, potentially catalyzing heightened social discord and civil upheaval in communities ill-equipped to navigate such challenges. Identifying education as a potent tool, it serves as a linchpin in fortifying awareness, inducing behavioral transformations, nurturing inventive approaches, and fostering empowerment. Tackling these deficiencies emerges as a pivotal imperative to bridge existing knowledge disparities, cultivate ecological mindfulness, and construct robust societal frameworks adept at proactively addressing and ameliorating the repercussions of climate change within Nigeria. The ClimateWISE project, therefore, assumes

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a paramount role in this endeavour by orchestrating a concerted effort towards equipping communities with the requisite resilience and proficiency to effectively confront the multifaceted impacts of climate change. Hence, the ClimateWISE project addresses critical issues related to climate change education in Nigeria, especially among the most vulnerable or impacted (children, community members, and farmers) in Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

### 1.3 Goals and Objectives: (400 words)

The general goal and objective of the social change initiative was to bridge the intergenerational climate change knowledge gap among school pupils and mitigate climate-related conflict among the agricultural communities in agricultural communities. The specific objective include:

1. Enhance climate change literacy by developing a tailored curriculum, training teachers, and establishing ClimateWISE Clubs.
2. Foster environmental leadership and engagement through tree planting, organise media outreach programmes and host interactive sessions with community members on climate actions.
3. Strengthen community resilience in Nasarawa State by conducting workshops, fostering collective action through climate projects, and establishing ongoing knowledge-sharing platforms for effective climate adaptation and mitigation.
4. Promote lifelong climate education, promoting sustainable practices and behaviour change in schools, communities, and households.

### 1.4 Challenges and mitigation strategies: (400 words)

The ClimateWISE initiative encountered a number of challenges. For instance, the initiative aimed to train teachers across the state on climate change to empower them to the extent of cascading the knowledge gained to the students and integrating climate change education into the curricula of primary and secondary schools. However, a significant challenge emerged: Climate change was only taught in Basic Science at the senior secondary level and senior

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primary school, which implies that the knowledge is gained when the student gets to those classes. The Management staff of the school sampled expressed a preference for direct training of students instead of focusing on teachers who might not be able to integrate climate change into their lesson notes and modules they teach. This change was a welcome development as the initiative aims to educate students to bridge the gap in intergenerational climate change knowledge. Consequently, the initiative pivoted to prioritise students in the initiative. This approach was instrumental in fostering a more engaging learning environment, as students quickly embraced the opportunity to gain knowledge and take an active role in climate advocacy.

Additionally, the initiative sought to establish ClimateWISE clubs in participating schools to promote ongoing climate education and community engagement. However, schools indicated that they already had existing clubs focused on various initiatives, making the establishment of new, specific clubs unnecessary. This lack of willingness to create additional clubs posed an obstacle to the initiative's goal of fostering dedicated climate-focused spaces within schools. The initiative adapted its strategy to address these challenges by incorporating existing frameworks rather than introducing entirely new ones. Instead of forming separate clubs, students engaged directly through an innovative programme called EcoTales. This program leveraged students' creativity to write their stories about climate change, thus allowing them to express their understanding and personal connections to the topic. The initial stage involved the project team writing a foundational story that illustrated climate change concepts, inspiring students to contribute their narratives. By focusing on the students' preferences and existing structures, the initiative respected the school's current frameworks and enhanced students' engagement with climate education. The use of storytelling through EcoTales became a powerful tool for conveying complex climate issues in an accessible format, enabling students to relate more personally to the subject matter.

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# CHAPTER TWO

## 2.0 Literature Review

This section discusses the literature review, theoretical underpinning, theory of change and its application and the methods and design utilised for the project.

## 2.1 Literature Review (1000 words)

Climate change education (CCE) has emerged as a critical field of study, intertwining education with the pragmatic needs of environmental sustainability. The relationship between CCE and environmental sustainability is complex and multifaceted, reflecting the urgent need to address climate challenges through robust educational frameworks. This literature review synthesizes key findings that illustrate how CCE contributes to promoting environmental sustainability.

**Defining Climate Change Education**

CCE encompasses a spectrum of educational practices aimed at fostering awareness and understanding of climate change, its effects, and actionable solutions. UNESCO defines CCE as not merely an academic subject but as an integral part of education for sustainable development (ESD) that prepares students to proactively engage with environmental issues. The goal of CCE is to build climate literacy and empower learners to take informed action for sustainability.

**CCE's Role in Promoting Environmental Sustainability**

**Increased Awareness and Knowledge:** Several studies have shown that CCE enhances awareness and knowledge regarding climate issues among learners. Research by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) emphasises that effective climate education equips individuals and communities with essential knowledge about environmental challenges, enabling them to make informed decisions and engage in sustainable practices. This newfound awareness leads to behavioural changes that contribute to sustainability efforts, such as reducing carbon footprints and advocating for green policies12.

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**Empowerment of Future Leaders:** Literature suggests that CCE serves to empower future generations to become leaders in climate action. A study by Lee et al. highlights how integrating CCE in curricula fosters critical thinking, problem-solving, and leadership skills among students. These skills are crucial for developing innovative solutions to environmental challenges and for advocating sustainable practices within their communities34. Empowered individuals are more likely to engage in activism and policy advocacy, furthering the cause of environmental sustainability.

**Community Engagement and Advocacy:** CCE encourages community engagement, fostering a sense of responsibility towards local and global environments. Programs that include experiential learning—such as community gardening, waste management, and renewable energy projects—have shown positive correlations with sustainable practices in local communities. Research conducted by the Earth Day Network indicates that educational outreach initiatives can lead to significant improvements in local environmental conditions, as educated communities often adopt sustainable practices driven by collective action56.

**Bridging the Education Policy Gap:** Current literature underscores the importance of connecting educational initiatives with policy frameworks for greater impact. Studies have shown that when educational objectives align with local, national, and global sustainability goals, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the outcomes are significantly enhanced. For instance, the Paris Agreement emphasises the need for climate education to be a part of national policies to ensure widespread engagement and effective action against climate change78. Thus, CCE not only fosters environmental awareness but also lays the groundwork for informed citizenship and policy advocacy.

**Challenges in Implementing CCE**

While the relationship between CCE and environmental sustainability is promising, challenges remain. A study by Parris and Kates outlines that integrating CCE into existing curricula can be hindered by institutional resistance, lack of resources, and insufficient teacher training9. These barriers often contribute to inconsistent implementation and an inadequate focus on

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climate issues in educational settings. Moreover, disparities in access to climate education across different socioeconomic groups pose a significant obstacle to achieving equitable environmental sustainability outcomes.

Implementing Climate Change Education (CCE) in Nigeria faces several challenges, which can hinder its effectiveness in fostering climate literacy and sustainable practices. Various authors have documented these challenges, shedding light on systemic, institutional, and societal factors that complicate efforts to integrate CCE into the educational curriculum. The challenges include:

a. Limited Curriculum Integration: According to UNICEF (2023) one significant challenge is the inadequate incorporation of climate change topics within the existing educational curriculum. The Nigerian Universal Basic Education (UBE) curriculum has been criticized for not substantially covering environmental issues, including climate change. According to research by Ayanlade and Jegede, broadly integrating climate education into curricula requires substantial reform to ensure it is prioritised across all levels of education, from primary to tertiary institutions.
b. Teacher Preparedness and Training: The inadequacy of teacher training in climate science is another critical challenge. Many educators lack the requisite knowledge and skills to teach climate-related topics effectively. A study by Ayanlade and Jegede (2016) highlights that Nigerian teachers often feel unprepared to convey complex climate concepts to their students, essentially limiting the scope and quality of climate education in classrooms. This lack of preparedness can lead to misinformation or superficial treatment of climate topics.
c. Resource Constraints: Financial and material constraints further complicate the implementation of CCE. Many educational institutions in Nigeria face significant budgetary limitations, which hinder their ability to procure updated teaching materials, technology, and training resources necessary for effective climate education. As noted by Uzosike, inadequate infrastructure and educational resources significantly impede the application of CCE methodologies in schools Yusuf et al. (2024).

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d. Societal Attitudes and Awareness: Societal attitudes toward climate change also play a role in the challenges of implementing CCE. There is often a lack of awareness and understanding among communities regarding the urgency of climate issues. This disconnect can result in resistance to educational initiatives or a lack of support for integrating climate education into schools. Research by the Nigerian Environmental Study/Action Team emphasises that addressing public perceptions and fostering awareness is essential for garnering support for climate-related educational initiatives (Eze et al. 2022).
e. Political and Policy Gaps: Political instability and inconsistent educational policies further exacerbate the challenges faced in implementing CCE. Research has shown that political will is crucial for the successful integration of climate education into national policies and frameworks. Authors like Parris and Kates argue that the absence of a cohesive national policy on climate education undermines the urgency and prioritisation of CCE within the educational system (Ayanlade and Jegede 2016).

Nwankwoala (2015) suggested that for the creation of awareness on climate change through environmental education in Nigeria to be sustained, some policy statements needs to be made including:

a. The curriculum at primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education must include environmental education as a compulsory subject.
b. Teachers and educators should from time to time embark on seminars and workshops on climate and environmental changes.
c. Teachers should study and create sun safety awareness. This should be classroom and school wide activities that will raise children‟s awareness of stratospheric ozone depletion, ultraviolet radiation and simple sun safety practices.
d. There should be school sun safety programmes. This should be a collaborative effort of schools, communities, teachers, parents, health professionals, environmental groups, meteorologists, educational organizations and others. It is believed that with everyone‟s help, sun protection can go beyond classrooms to the entire communities.

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e. There should be a study of past climate conditions which is known as pale climatology.
f. Students should be taught how to be environmentally friendly and sustainable; both natural and human causes of climate and environmental changes.
g. The policy should state that all levels of education should design subjects and courses that will expose students to climate and environmentally-friendly education.

## 2.2 Theoretical Underpinnings (1000words)

The Transformative Learning Theory guided the discussion of the study. Jack Mezirow propounded the theory. It focuses on how individuals change their perspectives and assumptions through experiences, leading to personal and social transformation. The theory assumes that learning is fundamentally rooted in personal experiences. Individuals bring their past experiences, beliefs, and values to the learning process, which shapes their understanding of new information. Transformative learning often begins with a "disorienting dilemma," a challenging experience that disrupts an individual's current worldview and prompts them to seek new ways of thinking. This can be a life crisis or a significant change in circumstances.

## 2.3 Change theory and how it was applied: (700 words)

There is a significant intergenerational knowledge gap regarding climate change in Nigeria. This gap leads to insufficient environmental sustainability awareness and weak community capacity for climate adaptation, resilience, and mitigation. As a result, communities are increasingly vulnerable to climate-related risks and disasters. The project operates on the premise that increasing environmental awareness and strengthening community capacities can achieve measurable change in climate adaptation and resilience.

Hence, if students and community stakeholders receive comprehensive climate change education, they will gain the knowledge and skills to understand and address climate change impacts. This education will foster environmental awareness, proactive engagement, and community action, leading to increased resilience and sustainability.

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The ClimateWISE initiative aims to empower students and communities in Nigeria through a series of targeted activities designed to close the intergenerational climate change knowledge gap and enhance community capacity for climate adaptation and resilience. The key components of the solution include:

1. Educational Courses: Develop and deliver comprehensive climate change and environmental sustainability courses tailored for both students and community members. These courses aim to provide foundational knowledge and practical skills for understanding and addressing climate change impacts.
2. EcoTales: Create and share engaging climate stories that illustrate the effects of climate change and the importance of sustainability. These stories serve as educational tools to inspire and inform both young and adult audiences about environmental issues.
3. Green Legacy Initiative: Organize tree planting events to involve students and community members in hands-on environmental actions. These events not only contribute to ecological restoration but also provide practical learning experiences that reinforce the importance of environmental stewardship.
4. Community Outreach: Conduct community dialogue sessions focused on mitigating climate-induced conflicts in agricultural communities, particularly in Nasarawa State. These sessions aim to raise awareness, encourage sustainable practices, and foster community resilience against climate-related challenges.

The ClimateWISE initiative applied this Theory of Change through the following steps:

Educational Courses: The ClimateWISE initiative developed and delivered comprehensive climate change and environmental sustainability courses tailored for both students and community members. These courses provided foundational knowledge and practical skills necessary for understanding and addressing climate change impacts. By integrating these courses into school curricula and community education programs, ClimateWISE ensured that participants gained a thorough understanding of climate science, its effects, and strategies for mitigation and adaptation.

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EcoTales: ClimateWISE created and shared engaging climate stories, known as EcoTales, that illustrated the effects of climate change and the importance of sustainability. These stories served as powerful educational tools, inspiring and informing both young and adult audiences about environmental issues. Through storytelling, ClimateWISE made complex climate concepts accessible and relatable, fostering a deeper connection to environmental stewardship.

Green Legacy Initiative: The Green Legacy Initiative organised tree planting events that involved students and community members in hands-on environmental actions. These events not only contributed to ecological restoration but also provided practical learning experiences. Participants learned about the importance of trees in combating climate change, enhancing biodiversity, and improving local ecosystems. The initiative reinforced the value of environmental stewardship and encouraged ongoing community engagement in sustainability efforts.

Community Outreach: ClimateWISE conducted community dialogue sessions focused on mitigating climate-induced conflicts in agricultural communities, particularly in Nasarawa State. These sessions aimed to raise awareness about climate change impacts and encourage sustainable practices. By facilitating open discussions, ClimateWISE helped community members share their experiences, learn from each other, and develop collective strategies for climate adaptation and resilience. The outreach efforts fostered a sense of community solidarity and proactive engagement in addressing climate-related challenges.

## 2.4 Methods and Design: (800 words)

This section discusses the methods and design for data collection, analysis and ethical considerations.

### 2.4.1 Design

The initiative employed the qualitative design to explore the experiences, perceptions, and outcomes related to climate change education facilitated by ClimateWISE. This approach

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emphasises understanding the nuances of individuals' experiences surrounding climate change education and its implications for both students and community stakeholders.

### 2.4.1 Sample Population

The study population will consist of two primary groups:

**2.4.1.1 Students:** Primary school pupils and Secondary school students who have participated in the ClimateWISE initiative. This group will provide insights into their learning experiences and perceptions of climate change.

**2.4.1.2 Community Stakeholders:** This group will include community leaders, women leaders and groups, youth leaders, religious and traditional leaders, and civil society organisations.

### 2.4.3 Sampling Technique

A non-probability, purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants who could provide rich and relevant information about the ClimateWISE initiative. The technique was used to intentionally select stakeholders most relevant to the intervention.

### 4.3.1 Criteria for Selection

The following criteria were employed to identify participants for the study:

a. Schools Without Tree Planting Initiatives: Schools that currently do not have any tree planting programs will be selected. This criterion aims to address a lack of environmental greening efforts and examine the potential impact of ClimateWISE initiatives.
b. Communities Facing Climate-Related Issues: Communities that experience significant climate-related challenges, such as flooding, drought, or other environmental degradation, will be included. This focus will help ensure that the initiative targets areas where climate change education can be particularly relevant and impactful.

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c. Schools Not Currently Teaching Climate Change: Schools that do not integrate climate change topics into their curricula will be prioritised. This criterion is essential for evaluating the initiative's effectiveness in providing foundational knowledge that is otherwise absent from traditional education.
d. Schools Committed to Establishing ClimateWISE Clubs: Institutions that express willingness to establish ClimateWISE clubs will be included in the sample. This commitment reflects a proactive stance on engaging students in climate action and education, making them ideal candidates for the initiative's implementation.

### 2.4.4 Data Collection Technique

Data will be collected through a combination of techniques tailored to elicit qualitative insights:

The following data collection techniques will be employed to gather qualitative insights for the study:

**Storytelling: Ecotales** was developed, providing a foundation for students to create their own climate change stories. This technique allows students to engage creatively with climate issues and express their understanding through narrative form.

**Facilitated Presentations:** Community stakeholders will participate in presentations focusing on mitigating climate-related conflicts in agricultural environments. Specialized modules will be developed to guide these discussions, ensuring that stakeholders can effectively share and learn from one another.

**Focus Group Discussions:** During the community stakeholder engagement, participants engaged in focus group discussions to draw insights on individual and community initiatives to mitigate climate-related issues.

**School Outreach:** Educational outreach utilised the Integrated Education for Development (IED) materials, such as climate bulletins and almanacs. These resources will be strategically

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placed in classrooms to educate students about climate change, enhancing their understanding and awareness of environmental issues.

**Tree Planting Initiatives:** Tree planting activities were organised as part of the data collection process. These initiatives will allow participants to engage in practical climate action while providing a hands-on approach to learning about sustainability and ecosystem management.

Storytelling Workshops: These workshops will serve as a platform for participants, especially students, to express their understanding of climate change through narratives. They will be encouraged to share personal experiences or creative stories that connect their lives to broader environmental themes.

**Scenario Building:** This technique involved creating hypothetical scenarios related to climate change challenges and opportunities. Participants will collaborate to explore the implications of these scenarios, fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills. This method enables the examination of potential consequences while engaging participants in envisioning solutions.

### 2.4.5 Analysis and Presentation of Data

The analysis of collected data involved qualitative analysis techniques to identify themes and insights about participants' experiences.

Thematic Analysis: Data from storytelling, presentations, and scenario-building exercises will be transcribed and coded to identify recurrent themes. Thematic analysis will help distil the essence of participants' experiences, capturing their emotions, challenges, and learning.

The initiative utilised the following ethical considerations:

a. Do no harm: The initiative was designed to ensure a positive impact on students and community members. It adopted sustainable tools and practices that not only avoided harm but actively contributed to ecological well-being and climate resilience.

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b. Informed and voluntary consent: All participants, including community stakeholders and school administrators, were thoroughly informed about the initiative's goals and processes. Formal approvals were secured prior to commencement, and additional consent was sought at various stages, particularly when new items or recommendations emerged that were not included in the initial proposal.
c. Beneficence: The initiative provided substantial benefits to community stakeholders, students, and participating schools. These benefits included the planting of trees, an increased understanding of climate change issues, and the development of climate stewards and ambassadors within the community.

### 2.4.7 Scope and Limitations of the Study

#### 2.4.7.1 Scope of the Study

The initiative aimed to bridge intergenerational knowledge gaps related to climate change among students while simultaneously fostering resilience skills among community stakeholders. By equipping these groups with the necessary tools and understanding, the initiative sought to mitigate climate-related conflicts in agricultural communities effectively. This dual focus ensures a holistic approach to climate education and community empowerment, enabling sustainable practices that can adapt to the challenges posed by climate change.

#### 2.4.7.2 Limitations of the Study

The initiative was limited by resources; however, the initiator of the project provided additional resources to augment it. The population reached is great, however, measuring the impact in reference to a larger population that couldn’t be reached at the time the intervention happened limits this intervention. Additionally, behavioural change was one of the outcomes of the initiative such that individuals have an increased understanding of climate change, its impacts and the actions to adapt to it. While the initiative fostered awareness and promoted behavioural shifts, the variability in individual and community responses can be unpredictable.

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# CHAPTER THREE

## 3.0 Introduction

This session discusses the ClimateWISE interventions and activities and the key findings/impact of the initiative.

## 3.1 Interventions and Activities: (1200 words)

The initiative had four activities: a community needs assessment, Eco Tales, Green Legacy, and a workshop on mitigating climate-related conflict in agricultural communities.

1. **Conducted community needs assessment:** The assessment aimed at eliciting information from school and community stakeholders to assess their level of knowledge about climate change. From the evaluation, many students only understood climate change as a change in weather patterns. They did not know the causes and impacts of climate change, as well as the necessary actions to take.
2. **Eco Tales:** Eco tales leverage the power of storytelling to enhance students' understanding and emotional engagement with climate-related issues. Recognising that many students lacked comprehensive knowledge about this pressing issue, the initiative adopted storytelling as a dynamic tool to illuminate the complexities of climate change in an engaging and accessible manner.

   The Power of Climate Storytelling, story writing, storytelling and moral lessons. The initiative began with the realisation that traditional teaching methods about climate change often left students feeling detached from the subject matter. To bridge this gap, Eco Tales emphasised storytelling as a useful tool in cultivating an understanding of climate change. The Eco Tales Initiative actively encouraged students to engage in the practice of story writing, fostering their creative expression while deepening their understanding of climate issues.

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Firstly, the story ‘Echoes from Mother Earth’. "Echoes of Mother Earth" is an emotional tale that highlights the relationship between humanity and the environment through the character of Mother Earth. Once flourishing with life—forests, oceans, and clean air—Mother Earth nurtured all her children: trees, animals, rivers, and insects. However, as human populations grew, they began to exploit her resources greedily, disrupting the balance of nature. The story had the following impact:

**A.** Simplified climate change knowledge. Students have always seen climate change as a technical term that has not been understood. During the intervention, using Mother Earth as the main character in the story aroused the students' interest in understanding climate change better.

**B.** Increased Awareness of Environmental Issues: The story highlights the consequences of neglecting the environment, helping readers understand the importance of protecting natural resources. This awareness can foster a deeper comprehension of climate change and ecological balance.

**C.** Empowerment of Young Readers: By depicting children as active agents of change, the story empowers young readers to believe in their ability to make a difference. This can inspire them to become more involved in environmental initiatives in their communities.

**D.** Promotion of Sustainable Climate Practices: The narrative encourages readers to adopt sustainable habits, such as tree planting, recycling, and using clean energy. This led to a behavioural shift among children and families who might start implementing these practices in their daily lives.

**E.** Community Engagement and Activism: The story emphasises collective action, encouraging young readers to engage with their communities in environmental protection efforts. This can increase participation in local clean-up events, tree-planting activities, and other sustainability projects.

**F.** Cultivation of Environmental Stewardship: The narrative fosters a sense of responsibility and stewardship for the planet among young readers. This instils values

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prioritising the environment's health, encouraging a lifelong commitment to conservation.

**G.** Generation of Discussion and Education: The story catalysed discussions about climate change and environmental protection in educational settings. Teachers and parents can use it as a platform to educate children about ecological issues and the importance of taking action.

**H.** Hope and Resilience: The story conveys a message of hope and instils resilience in young readers. They felt encouraged to believe their efforts could contribute to positive change, reinforcing a hopeful outlook for the future.

Secondly, in one of the schools visited, students took the initiative to write some stories on climate change. These stories were collated monthly and published quarterly. The maiden edition (first volume) of the story will be published in November 2024.

3. **Green Legacy Initiative:** The Green Legacy is a tree-planting initiative. In a vibrant community buzzing with energy, the Green Legacy Initiative embarked on a mission to transform lifeless landscapes into thriving ecosystems. One of the schools visited by the initiative stood out; its vast grounds were stark and empty—no trees or flowers graced the land, leaving it yearning for life and shade.

   Recognising the beauty and benefits trees could bring, the school management warmly embraced the initiative, eager to set a new course for their environment. They requested that special trees known as the Pride of Barbados be planted, as well as flamboyant flowers, shade, and ornamental trees. This magnificent tree was more than just a beautiful addition; it was deeply significant for the school community. Each year, the school management ventured far and wide to gather branches of pride of Barbados for biology practicals during the West Africa Senior Secondary School Examination. With this initiative, for the next academic session, the school management would no longer have to travel great distances; soon, they would have their very own Pride of Barbados right at their doorstep.

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4. Conduct educational workshops and training sessions on climate change, sustainable agriculture practices, and conflict resolution strategies. The initiative provided technical guidance, materials, and resources to support communities in adopting sustainable practices to combat the impact of climate change. It also launched an advocacy campaign to raise awareness among local and national policymakers about the intersections of climate change and conflict, influencing policies that effectively address these issues.

### 3.2 Key findings/impact: (800words)

The ClimateWISE initiative has demonstrated significant impacts on both students and their communities, leading to enhanced awareness and proactive engagement in addressing climate change. The following key findings highlight the transformative effects of the program on primary and secondary school students.

1. **Conducted community needs assessment:** Many students conceptualised climate change narrowly, primarily associating it with changes in weather patterns. This limited scope suggests a lack of comprehensive education on the broader implications of climate change, including the various factors contributing to this global phenomenon, such as greenhouse gas emissions, deforestation, and industrial activities. The assessment revealed that a significant number of students were unaware of the primary causes of climate change. This includes human activities like burning fossil fuels, land-use changes, and waste management practices. The absence of this knowledge highlights a critical educational gap that requires immediate attention to better inform students about the anthropogenic factors driving climate change. Students exhibited insufficient knowledge concerning the far-reaching impacts of climate change. While they might recognise examples such as extreme weather events (e.g., flooding, erosion, droughts), they struggled to make connections to their local environments, the economy, and social structures. Such knowledge is vital for preparing students to anticipate and respond to climate-related challenges in their communities. The evaluation found that students were generally unfamiliar with actionable steps they

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could take to mitigate climate change effects. This includes sustainable practices such as reducing energy consumption, minimising waste, advocating for policy changes, and engaging in community initiatives. This lack of agency can result in disempowerment, as students feel insulated from the climate crisis.

2. Empowered students in primary and secondary school about climate change

One of the most profound impacts of the ClimateWISE initiative is the empowerment of students across primary and secondary schools to understand and engage with climate change issues. The program provided structured educational frameworks that allowed students to explore the complexities of climate science, the anthropogenic factors contributing to climate change, and the socio-economic implications of environmental degradation. Through interactive workshops, lectures, and collaborative projects, students developed both critical thinking skills and scientific literacy in relation to climate issues.

This empowerment goes beyond mere knowledge acquisition; students are equipped to become advocates for sustainability within their communities. Many have taken on leadership roles in initiating climate-related discussions, leading campaigns for greener practices in their schools, and participating actively in community forums dedicated to environmental issues. The initiative nurtured a sense of agency among students, encouraging them to recognize their potential influence on local and global climate challenges.

3. Students took personal development climate actions such as tree planting

Another notable outcome of the ClimateWISE initiative is the development of personal climate actions among students, particularly through tree planting initiatives. Students demonstrated a genuine commitment to tangible environmental stewardship by organizing and participating in local tree planting events. This hands-on approach to engaging with climate action not only contributes to carbon sequestration but also fosters a deeper connection to their local ecosystems.

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The tree planting activities serve multiple educational purposes: they provide students with practical knowledge of biodiversity, ecosystem services, and the importance of native species in maintaining ecological balance. Moreover, these activities emphasize the significance of community involvement in environmental conservation. Students often reported feelings of accomplishment and pride after participating in these initiatives, reinforcing the notion that individual actions can collectively lead to meaningful change. This aspect of the initiative has fostered a culture of sustainability, encouraging students to consider their roles in mitigating climate impacts.

4. Many of the students started writing stories that were geared towards the increase in climate change knowledge.

The ClimateWISE initiative also catalysed an increase in climate change literacy among students through the creative medium of storytelling. Many students began to write their own narratives focused on climate change, reflecting their understanding, concerns, and aspirations for a sustainable future. This method of expression allowed them to articulate complex ideas surrounding climate science in relatable and engaging formats.

By developing their own climate change stories, students explored personal and collective experiences with environmental issues, thereby reinforcing their understanding of climate phenomena. The act of storytelling not only serves as a vehicle for self-expression but also as a tool for education. These stories have the potential to influence peers and community members, spreading awareness about the urgent need for climate action in accessible language.

Furthermore, the cultivation of creative writing encourages critical reflection on climate-related topics, prompting students to engage in discussions about climate resilience, sustainability, and environmental justice. This innovative approach not only enhances climate literacy but also fosters empathy and collective responsibility among students, embedding the significance of climate change within cultural narratives.

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# CHAPTER FOUR

## 4.1 General Conclusion (300words)

The ClimateWISE initiative highlights the urgent need for enhanced climate change education in Nigeria, where understanding remains nascent and underdeveloped. Currently, climate change topics are inconsistently integrated into educational curricula, affecting only a limited number of students at specific levels. This results in significant gaps in comprehension among the wider population. Moreover, while climate change is taught, it often remains theoretical, neglecting practical sessions that focus on actionable climate initiatives. Important topics such as tree planting, gardening, responsible waste disposal, and other resilience strategies are not adequately covered, which hinders students' ability to apply their knowledge in real-world contexts.

To address these shortcomings, the initiative advocates for a comprehensive restructuring of educational curricula. This should encompass aspects of climate change terminology, its causes, impacts, and actionable responses. Equipping educators with the necessary knowledge and resources through targeted professional development programs is essential for effective teaching. Additionally, involving parents and community members in climate education efforts can significantly amplify learning and impact.

Local contexts should be integrated into climate change discussions, illustrating how these issues uniquely affect students' communities and ecosystems. Empowering students through hands-on projects—such as creating climate action plans and participating in sustainability initiatives like gardening and waste management—fosters a sense of agency and responsibility.

Furthermore, many communities lack awareness of the connections between climate change and social conflicts, leaving them ill-prepared for the complex challenges posed by environmental degradation.

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Improving climate education is imperative at all levels of the educational system. By linking curricula to social and political contexts, fostering community awareness, and prioritizing resilience strategies, we can equip individuals with the knowledge necessary for proactive engagement in tackling climate challenges. Ultimately, the ClimateWISE initiative exemplifies how innovative strategies—like the Eco Tales and Green Legacy programs—can inspire environmental stewardship and create lasting change within communities.

### 4.2 Recommendations/Implications for Policy: (500 words)

**For Educators**

Educators play a pivotal role in shaping the understanding and actions of future generations regarding climate change. To enhance climate education, the following recommendations are critical:

1. **Integrating Climate Change into Curricula:** Educational institutions should embed climate change topics across various subjects to foster interdisciplinary learning. This integration will ensure that students grasp the multifaceted nature of climate issues, including social, economic, and environmental dimensions. Teacher training programs must be enhanced to equip educators with the necessary knowledge and pedagogical skills.
2. **Utilising Experiential Learning:** Schools should adopt experiential learning methodologies that involve outdoor activities, field trips, and community service related to environmental stewardship. Programs like Eco Tales encourage storytelling that connects climate concepts to student's daily lives, making the learning process more relatable and impactful. Engaging students in hands-on projects, such as tree planting and local clean-up activities, enhances their personal connection to environmental issues.
3. **Promoting Collaborative Projects:** Educators should foster collaboration between schools and local communities for climate action initiatives. Partnerships with local organisations can facilitate student participation in community-driven environmental projects. This approach not only enhances learning but also instils a sense of responsibility and agency among students.

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4. **Assessing Awareness and Impact:** Continuous assessment of students' understanding and awareness of climate issues is crucial. Evaluative frameworks should be established to gauge the effectiveness of climate education initiatives and understand their impact on student behaviour and community engagement.

5. Develop an interdisciplinary approach that incorporates climate change lessons across various subjects, such as science, social studies, and arts, allowing students to view climate issues from multiple perspectives.

**For Rotary International**

Rotary International has a unique capacity to mobilise community resources and expertise. To enhance its role in climate initiatives, the following recommendations should be considered:

6. **Supporting Local Climate Action Projects**

Rotary clubs can play a crucial role in identifying and funding local climate action projects. By collaborating with local communities, clubs can implement initiatives such as tree planting, water conservation, and sustainable agricultural practices, thereby enhancing resilience against climate impacts.

7. **Facilitating Knowledge Exchange Programs:** Rotary International should promote knowledge exchange programs that connect clubs in different regions facing similar climate challenges. This platform can facilitate the sharing of best practices, innovative solutions, and successful initiatives, empowering local clubs to adopt effective strategies.
8. **Advocating for Climate Education:** Rotary should advocate for the inclusion of climate change education in school curricula. By collaborating with educational institutions and government bodies, Rotary can support initiatives that promote awareness and understanding of climate issues among youth and community members.
9. **Engaging in Policy Advocacy:** Rotary clubs can engage in policy advocacy at local and national levels to promote supportive regulations and funding for climate change education

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and community initiatives. Leveraging the network of Rotary members can amplify these advocacy efforts and foster greater community involvement in climate actions.

**For the Government**

10. **Increase Funding for Climate Education:** Allocate more governmental resources towards climate education initiatives, including grants for schools to implement innovative programs and projects.

11. **Support Research and Development:** Invest in research to continuously assess and update educational strategies concerning climate change, helping to identify the most effective practices for teaching and community engagement.

12. **Establish a National Climate Education Policy:** Create policies that mandate climate education as a priority in schools, ensuring it remains a focus within the national educational framework. The government should create a comprehensive national framework for climate change education that outlines clear objectives, content guidelines, and learning outcomes.

13. **Interdisciplinary Approach:** Encourage schools to integrate climate change topics into subjects such as social studies, literature, art, and mathematics. An interdisciplinary approach allows students to appreciate the relevance of climate change across various fields and encourages critical thinking.

### 4.3 Sustainability plan: (800words)

During the implementation of the initiative, the following sustainability plans were put in place:

1. Eco Tales: The initiative was designed to captivate students through storytelling while highlighting critical environmental themes.

   **Sustainability Structure**

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a. **Story Development and Collation:** Schools will host interactive workshops where students collaborate with educators and local writers to develop their storytelling skills. These sessions will focus on various ecological concepts, encouraging students to explore themes like biodiversity, climate change, and conservation through their narratives.

b. **Publication and Distribution of Stories:** Once the stories are developed, they will be compiled into an anthology. This collection will be professionally printed and strategically distributed to local libraries, community centres, and during school events. This approach not only elevates the voices of young authors but also engages the broader community, making the ideals of sustainability accessible to all.

2. **Green Legacy:** This sustainability plan aims to green the environment in schools and cultivate a culture of environmental ownership. The initiative co-created a plan with the school administrators titled "Plant a Tree Before You Graduate," seeks to instill a sense of environmental stewardship among students by making them responsible for nurturing a tree throughout their school years.

   **Sustainability Structure:**

   a. Personalised Tree-Planting Initiatives: Each student will be given a tree sapling to plant and care for, instilling ownership and personal responsibility for climate action. A personalised tree-planting day will be organized, where students can invite their families, fostering community participation and support.

3. **Inter-School Competitions:** Establish friendly competitions among schools focused on environmental initiatives. Awards for the best Eco Tales, most successful tree planting projects, or innovative sustainability campaigns can galvanize student and community interest, creating a sense of unity and friendly rivalry.

4. **Utilising Social Media for Awareness:** Leveraging social media platforms to share Eco Tales stories and progress reports on tree planting will create a digital community

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of engaged citizens. This outreach will publicize the initiative's impact while encouraging others to participate in local environmental efforts.

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## APPENDICES

**Picture 1:** A cross-section of students who too part in the ClimateWISE Session


**Source: Author**

**Picture 2:** Students taking turns on planting trees

**Source: Author**

**Picture 3:** Tree planting session

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**Source: Author**

**Picture 4:** Facilitation of an introduction to Climate change and Climate Actions at SETA International School, Nasarawa State


**Source: Author**

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**Picture 5:** A cross-section of Students and teachers who took part in the ClimateWISE Training and EcoTales session


**Source: Author**

**Picture 6:** At the general Assembly to introducte ClimnnateWISE Initiative to the Students

**Source: Author**

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**Picture 7:** A cross-section of participants at the training on mitigating climate-related conflicts in agricultural communities


**Source: Author**

**Picture 8:** Lead Facilitator at the mitigating climate-related conflicts in agricultural communities training


**Source: Author**

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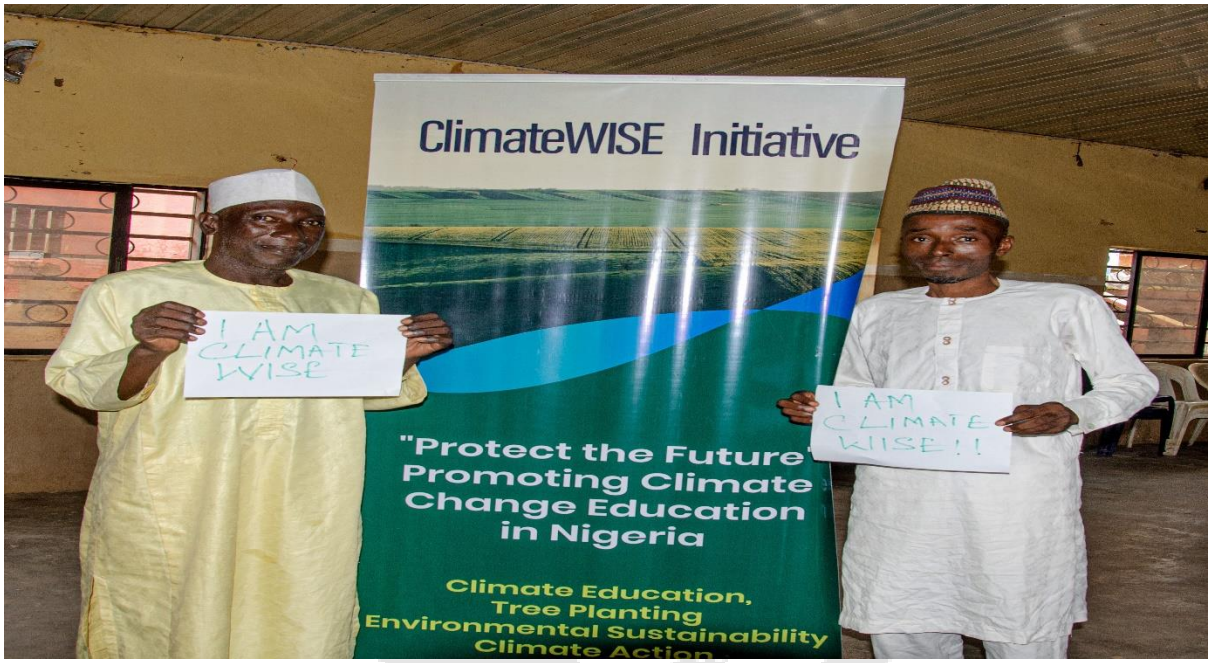
**Picture 9:** Traditional and religious leader of Angwan Hausawa Community in Nasarawa State at the training on mitigating climate-related conflicts in agricultural communities




**Source: Author**

**Picture 10:** Women Stakeholders at the training on mitigating climate related conflicts in agricultural communities


**Source: Author**

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**References**