

# FLOODING MENACE ON SOCIAL ENVIRONMENTAL DEVELOPMENT: CREATING AWARENESS THROUGH MUSIC

## **Enoh Okafor**

Doctor of Music Theory and Composition from Nnamdi Azikiwe University (UNIZIK) (Awka/Nigeria).  
Senior Lecturer at University of Delta Agbor (Delta State/Nigeria).  
E-mail: justina.okafor@unidel.edu.ng

Recebido em: 5 de maio de 2025  
Aprovado em: 7 de julho de 2025  
Sistema de Avaliação: Double Blind Review  
RPR | a. 22 | n. 2 | p. 59-72 | jul./dez. 2025  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25112/rpr.v2.4214>

## **ABSTRACT**

Climate manifestations resulting in floods causes social environmental catastrophes which enormously impacts social environmental development. Various medium of climate manifestations dissemination are available among these media is music but in Nigeria this media is seldomly explored by the government. The study focusses on awareness creation through music medium to educate Nigerian populace on the effects of climate menace. The study analyzes two song lyrics as primary sources. Both songs provided useful information on the effects of climate manifestation as well as resolutions. The study scope is limited to selected States in Nigeria using random sampling as well as Content Analysis (CA) method. The study concludes that since climate manifestations are global phenomenon, it is therefore, incumbent for countries in Africa, especially Nigeria (the Nigeria Government including State and Local government respectively to collaborate with organizations and agencies including music exponents to educate and create awareness about the hazards of climate manifestations and how to improve the social environmental development of the populace.

**Keywords:** Music. Floods. Catastrophes. Environment.

## 1 BACKGROUND/INTRODUCTION

Various global communities in the world, Africa and Nigeria inclusive, have experienced the effects of climate manifestations of diverse degree. Climate manifestations such as floods have wrecked a lot of damages to the social environmental development of the society. Lawal (2020) highlights that climate change is a global problem which directly affects human life and also destroys property (Lawal 2020). Many factors lead to climate manifestations such as natural-factors and man-made factors (Anthropogenic). Flooding is internationally acknowledged as one of the leading environmental calamities that have devastated urban areas and cost tens of billions of dollars in property and human lives (Ezebube, Ani & Uchegbu, 2023). Lawal (2020) affirms that the effects of climate change are absolutely injurious and have over the years caused disasters deeply affecting human lives and property. In recent times, there have been concerted efforts – through publication of works, holding of symposia etc. – to enlighten the public on the far-reaching consequences of climate change and its causes (Lawal, 2020). This implies that public enlightenment is very vital; this is in line with the advocacy of employing music as a strategy to enlighten and create awareness on the impact of climate manifestations in the society. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, it employs theoretical conceptualization (content analysis published by Bardin in 1977) which proposes the use of existing literature reviews, or materials related to the study in order to draw plausible conclusions. Random sampling method was employed to select some States in Nigeria from four geographical location – the States includes Delta, Edo, Lagos, Ogun, Imo and Bornu. The study also employs textual analysis of two song lyrics relating to anthropogenic causes of climate manifestations/menace and its effects on social environmental development – this was done in order to substantiate and establish that music is a useful informatic tool. The use of selected States in Nigeria as a case study, is to establish that flooding menace has affected many States in Nigeria and lack of proactiveness of government agencies to engage music experts on awareness campaign of the effects and mitigation of climate manifestations in Nigeria.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW: NATURAL DISASTERS IN NIGERIA, 1900–2020

EM-DAT defines disasters as situations or events which overwhelm local capacity, necessitating a request for external assistance at the national or international level (EM-DAT, 2025). Data documentation from 1990 to 2000 reveals that flood as a climate manifestation has the highest affected data number of 10,275,064 (WBG, 2021). In 2002, more than 16 states were flooded in Nigeria (Lawal 2020). Flooding remains one of Nigeria's most devastating natural disasters, and climate change is amplifying both its frequency and intensity said Joseph Utsev, Nigeria's Minister of Water Resources and Sanitation, during

the presentation of the Annual Flood Outlook (AFO), also Richard Pheelangwah, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Water Resources and Sanitation, echoed his concern when he highlights the heavy toll flooding takes on communities, infrastructure, and the environment. He stressed the urgent need for robust prediction, preparedness, and response systems, especially in light of climate change and past devastating floods in 2012 and 2022. In 2024, at least 320 people died and 1.3 million were affected by floods in 31 Nigerian States (source: <https://www.downtoearth>). Data culmination of natural hazard from 1900 to 2020 five years from 2025 reveals that flood has the highest number of total affected and total damage in terms of US dollar equivalent (WGB, 2021). If the culmination is grueling how about five years from 2020? Below are pictorials of recent flooding menace across selected States in Nigeria from 2021 to 2025.



**Fig. 1. Source: AI Overview 2021**



**Fig. 2. Source: YouTube (TVC News) 2022**



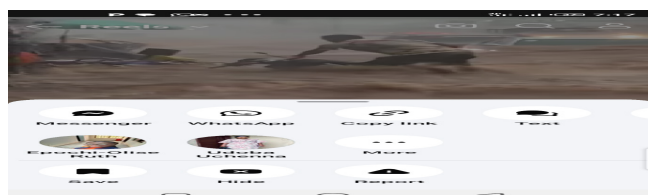
**Fig.3. Source: Channels Television 2023**



**Fig. 4. Source: YouTube (Innonaija) 2024**



**Fig. 5. Courtesy: Sydney Shocker (2025)**



**(Courtesy: Philip Okwuokenye 2025)**



**Source: Premium Times (April 29th, 2025)**



**Source: (Courtesy: Josephine Peter 2025)**

The pictorial informatics from fig. i, ii, iii, iv and v above reveals various flooding menace and catastrophes across selected States in Nigeria. Flooding has been a recurring and increasingly severe problem in Nigeria from 2021 to 2025 with 2022 and 2024 being particularly devastating years (Source: <https://aioverview>). What is its implication on social environmental development in Nigeria?

### **3 FLOODING AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT: A FOCUS ON NIGERIA**

The World Bank Group reports that Nigeria is currently dealing with a wide range of environmental challenges, some of which are exacerbated by climate change, and negatively affects every sector, particularly agriculture, water resources and infrastructure. Other challenges facing the country are deforestation and de-vegetation, causing biodiversity loss and land degradation; floods, erosion, drought and desertification which are degrading the environment especially in the semi-arid areas of the country resulting in environmental pollution. Climate change impacts in Nigeria is expected to have significant impacts on livelihoods and the broader economy. Given projected climate change trends, Nigeria and the surrounding West African region is expected to be a hotspot of food insecurity in the future. Given the dependency of Nigeria's economy on climate-sensitive industries (agriculture, forestry, oil, and gas extraction), climate change inaction could cost Nigeria between 6%–30% by 2050, equivalent to a loss of US\$100–460 billion (WBG 2021). (WBG 2021). What is the way forward? Education through music media is the key.

### **4 WHY MUSIC?**

Information about the dangers of global warming is widely available and yet action toward mitigation remains insufficient. Results from public surveys show that, although the majority of Americans understand that global warming is happening and that it is mostly human-caused, far fewer are taking direct action to mitigate that risk (Carman, Lacroix, Leiserowitz, Maibach, Rosenthal, Kotcher, Neyens, Wang, Marlon, & Golberg 2021). For Onnoghen, Ojong, Omang, Obibessong, and Asor (2020) in Usang, et al (2024) climate change education is very vital to enable individuals and communities to adapt and mitigate the impacts of climate towards sustainability in Nigeria. This statement is incomplete without adding awareness creation through music. Dixon (2024) asserts that climate change is often communicated in scientific manner that fails to capture lay audiences emotionally, resulting in a lack of motivation to take action. Studies show that narrative is an effective strategy for engaging the emotional response to scientific information that is necessary to encourage community participation and action. Music can reliably express, modulate, and

induce emotional states, and, as a temporal art form, may be a particularly effective vehicle for conveying narrative (Dixon, 2024). Music has been discovered to be a powerful and valuable tool which can be used to communicate to communities and institutions around the world the message of the impacts of climate change and ways to adapt and mitigate effectively for global sustainability (Anabaraonye, Ewa, Hope, Anthony, and Okoro, 2020 in Usang et al, 2024). Alexzander (2021) cites (Ramsey 2002; Turner and Freedman 2004) that music can be used as education tools; music plays important roles in formal and informal disaster risk education. Songs in classrooms are beneficial for social and environmental studies because of their abilities to capture student interest, sensitize attitudes towards issues, draw from a rich data source, and make connections between theory and real situations. (Ramsey 2002; Turner and Freedman 2004 in Alexzander, 2021). Corroborating Alexzander, (2021), Adeyemi (2024) highlights that in many African communities, music, dance, and storytelling are now taking on raising awareness about climate change. In a world where technical reports and policy dialogues often fails to resonate with grassroots communities, African artists are stepping forward using their craft to educate, inspire and drive action (Adeyemi, 2024). Summary of key points from the literature review: Dixon (2024) had argued the limitation communicated in scientific manner that fails to capture lay audiences emotionally, resulting in a lack of motivation to take action. Adeyemi (2024) tolled Dixon's line of argument in another dimension stating that 'in a world where technical reports and policy dialogues often fails to resonate with grassroots communities music can deliver better'; both authors agrees that music can be used as effective vehicle for conveying narrative and spur motivation to take action, hence artists in their pockets round the globe including Africa are stepping forward to using their craft to educate, inspire and drive action.

## 5 TEXTUAL ANALYSES OF TWO MUSIC EXAMPLES

Two songs selected for the study deals with anthropogenic (man-made) causes of climate manifestations or menace such as tree cutting (deforestation), tree burning, poaching, bush burning and plastic waste littering of the environment. These songs were selected because anthropogenic activities are also prominent in Nigeria, the song titles are "Sons of October" and 'Wetin the Plastic Do You'. 'Sons of October' was performed by a group of Zambia musicians who go by the name Yes Rasta. They taught people about the effects of climate change through their music. The genre is reggae. (<https://www.music>earth>humanity>#conservationmusic>). Below is an analysis of the lyrics of 'Sons of October' - its message is about the effects of anthropogenic activities as well as solution to curtail future occurrence. Its message is apt, and relevant to other regions of the globe.



- i. In the sun of October  
My people getting hotter  
With umbrellas on in very corner  
These are the signs of October  
Still in the month of August,  
          though its not yet over  
I am the son of October
- ii. Mother is asking  
She is crying  
You have burnt the bush  
You have finished all the trees  
Even me, I was telling your children  
Not to indiscriminately cut the trees  
You should just be trimming  
Be mindful in the way you use  
          that \charcoal and firewood  
Use less wood and charcoal in  
          the kitchen  
Trim the extra shoots on stumps  
          you find
- iii. Climate change is a natural disaster  
Got to take it to Jah people  
Due to lack of information  
Children are left in danger  
We need to change the behaviour  
Got to take this all to Jah people
- iv. Lets conserve our land  
And keep it safe  
How we can solve this  
Lets get together people of Mambanje  
Lets get together people of Zimbabwe  
Deforestation destroys our land  
So that our trees don't perish,



Lets do Afforestation  
 Burning of the bush destroys our land  
 Lets not burn the bush  
 Erosion destroys our land!  
 For us to stop erosion  
 Lets not pull sledges for this  
     causes gullies  
 Lets stop doing stream  
     bank cultivation

The first (i) six-line prose outlines the scorching effect of deforestation. The second (ii) ten-line prose is a figurative statement (personification) referring to the environment as 'mother'; it outlines the suffocation of anthropogenic effects. The third (iii) six-line prose outlines the urgency of carrying 'mother's cry' (that is, the message of climate manifestations and its effects including way forward) to the people while the fourth (iv) fourteen-line prose proffer solution by encouraging tree planting (afforestation) and discouraging anthropogenic activities.

Textual analysis of the second song 'Wetin the **Plastic Do You?**' by E. J. Okafor - The lyrics of the music titled 'Wetin the Plastic Do You?' is mostly in pidgin English language and a mixture of English language at the end of the music. The message was composed by E. J. Okafor in collaboration with University of Delta Agbor Waste Management Team. UNIDEL Waste Management Team was constituted to campaign for a clean environment first within the University environment and secondly for a better social environmental development of the Ika people of Delta State, Nigeria. It aims to educate the people on the benefit and importance of saving the environment from plastic littering to avoid climate manifestations. Saving the environment from climate manifestations will also mitigate the problem of flooding and serve to improve social environmental development of communities. The aim for a clean environment is also, to forestall sickness and flooding of the environment due to drainage blockage captured vividly in the abridged version of the lyrics below.

Wetin the Plastic, do you?  
 Why you dey litter-am everywhere?  
 If you burn plastic  
 You dey destroy our environment for us  
 If you throw-am for road

E go block our gutters  
 Plastic nor dey decay  
 Plastic nor dey break  
 Why you dey litter-am everywhere  
 You dey destroy our environment  
 If you throw-am anyhow  
 E go make mosquitoes gather  
 Sickness go full everywhere  
 Take plastic from the environment  
 Make our environment clean for us  
 Cleanliness they say is next to godliness  
 Save our environment for us  
 Recycle the plastics  
 Recycle the peps  
 Save our land  
 Save our climate  
 Plastic dey say put me for trash-can  
 Save plastic, save yourself

Wetin the plastic, do you? is a question and a figurative statement that warns of the effect of proliferation of plastics and its attendant outcome on the environment.

## **6 EXIGENCIES OF AWARENESS CREATION**

Adeyemi (2024) highlights that across the continent, a growing number of artists are using their influence to spotlight the pressing issues of climate-change and environmental preservation (Adeyemi, 2024). Example of such artists include Yoko Ono, Patti Smith with Jesse Paris and Rebecca Foon, Kety Fusco, Tenzin Choegyal who wrote a quote "Our world is our home, and it is vital to take an active role in protecting our planet; and Ben Harper who wrote that 'Music is the true voice of the human spirit' It can go beyond language, beyond age, and beyond color [...] straight to the heart of all people (UN SDG Action Campaign, 2021). In Nigeria Burna Boy is mentioned as using his spotlight to attract United Nations Environment Programme for the 'Green New Deal' in 2021. That was four years ago, are there still Nigeria artists in the fore-front? There is a clarion call to involve all in the fight against climate manifestations.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS/CONCLUSION

Global Greenhouse Warming (2018) in Usang, Nwafor, Odoh, Ewa & Anabaraonye (2024) explains that climate change mitigation is any action taken to eliminate or reduce the long-term risk and hazards of climate change to human life, property, and society. This implies that various possibilities are open towards taking strategic actions to eliminate, reduce or cushion the effects of climate manifestations. Therefore, one of the actions that the Nigerian government can embark on is using the medium of music to create awareness of the effects of climate menace on social environmental development and how to mitigate such effects in order to avoid future occurrences. Research institutions in Nigeria should delve into music-climatology study in order to evolve ways music can be used to cope with and reduce or eradicate climate manifestations in Nigeria.

The Annual Flood Outlook (2025) reports that flooding is expected to hit 30 States and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) in 2025, putting more than 1,200 communities at high risk and that flooding remains one of Nigeria's most devastating natural disasters. This information propels for urgent collaboration with music experts to educate and raise fund to ameliorate the effects of flooding by the government of the projected States. This awareness creation should begin from the grassroots/villages, then to urban centers of Nigeria as a conglomerate. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) can also key-in in the collaboration, other government agencies in Nigeria including public and private institutions can take a cue from the French Embassy Fund (FEF) and access funds from such organisations. Also, agencies like EM-DAT whose main objective is to serve the purpose of humanitarian action at national and international levels can be accessed since their initiative aims, is to rationalize decision-making for disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction strategies as well as provide an objective base for vulnerability assessment and priority setting. Finally, as Tenzin Choegyal wrote "Our world is our home, and it is vital to take an active role in protecting our planet". Therefore, with the power of music let us inspire, mobilize people, organisations and decision makers across the world in Asia, Europe, Antarctica, North and South America, Australia, Africa, Nigeria and other regions to take and play active role in protecting our planet

## REFERENCES

Adeyemi-John Emmanuel. 'Home Sustainability - The Role of Music and Dance in Raising Climate Change Awareness in Africa'. *Climate Action Africa*. (2024) <https://climateactionafrica> Retrieved 28th June, 2025

Alexander Bob. 'Hazards and Disasters Represented in Music (chapter 12)'. *Research Gate*. Pp. 131-141 (2021). <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/350021222> Retrieved 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2025

Annual Flood Outlook. 'Nigeria: Africa's most populous nation adopts community-based flood forecasting in 2025 outlook'. (2025) <https://www.downtoearth> Retrieved 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2025

Carman, J., Lacroix, K., Leiserowitz, A., Maibach, E. W., Rosenthal, S. A., Kotcher, J. E., Neyens, L., Wang, X., Marlon, J., & Golberg M. H. *Americans actions to limit and prepare for global warming, March 2021*. (2021) Yale University and George Mason University. Yale Program on Climate Change Communication.

Dixon, Catherine Emma. 'Music as a Vehicle for Climate Change Communication' *Storytelling to Accelerate Climate Solutions (Springer)* Book EPUB, pp. 265-293 Chapter|Open Access (2024) <https://springer.com> Retrieved 28th June, 2025

EM-DAT: 'The Emergency Events Database - Universite Catholique de Louvain (UCL) - CRED, D. Guha-Sapir, Brussels, Belgium'. URL: [https://emdat.be/emdat\\_db/](https://emdat.be/emdat_db/)

EM-DAT OVERVIEW (LATEST NEWS). International Disaster Database Center for Research on the Epidemiology of Disaster (2025). <https://em-dat> Retrieved 27<sup>th</sup> June, 2025

Ezebube, M. Nkiruka; Ani, D. Chinedu and Uchegbu, N. Smart. 'Landuse, landcover change dynamics and flooding in the lower Niger basin Onitsha, South Eastern Nigeria'. *Land Use Policy* Vol. 131 (2023). <https://www.sciencedirect> <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2023.106748> Retrieved 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2025

Flooding in Nigeria – AI Overview <https://aioverview> Retrieved 27<sup>th</sup> June, 2025

IFFN. 'Fire Situation in Nigeria'. URL: [https://www2.fire.uni-freiburg.de/iffn/iffn\\_34/12-IFFN-34-Nigeria.pdf](https://www2.fire.uni-freiburg.de/iffn/iffn_34/12-IFFN-34-Nigeria.pdf) (2006)

Janeslei Pereira Vaz de Quadros and Rosemari Monteiro Castilho Fogiatto Silveira 'Bardin's Method Of Content Analysis In Educational Research In Science, Technology And Society' *REVISITA* (2025) ISSN: 2358-2472 <https://doi.org/10.56238/arev7n3-215> Retrieved 28th June, 2025

Lawal Badru. 'Climate Change in Nigeria: Causes, Effects and Legal Framework'. *UNILAG LAW REVIEW* Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 186-205 (2020). Retrieved 17th April, 2025

Leiserowitz, A., Maibach, E. W., Rosenthal, S. A., Kotcher, J. E., Carman, J., Wang, X., Marlon J. R., Lacroix, K., & Goldberg, M. A. *Climate change in the American Mind, March 2021*. (2021) Yale University and George Mason University. Yale Program on Climate Change Communication

Music, Earth, Humanity. <https://www.music>earth>humanity>#conservationmusic> Retrieved 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2025

Nigeria. 'Nigeria's Third National Communication under the UNFCCC'. URL: <https://unfccc.int/documents/226453> (2020)

UN SDG Action Campaign. 'Medium-How Five Artists use the Power of Music to Take Action on Climate Change'. (2021) <https://howfiveartistsusethepowerofmusictotakeactionon.com> Retrieved 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2025

Usang N Onnoghen, Gideon U Nwafor, Christian C Odoh, Beatrice O Ewa and Benjamin Anabaraonye. 'The Role of Eco-Musicology in Enhancing Climate Resilience in Nigeria'.

*Recent Archives in Journalism & Mass Communication*. Volume 1 Issue 2. (2024) Doi: 10.19080/RAJMC.2024.01.555557 Retrieved 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2025

World Bank Data Bank. 'Climate Risk Country Profile: Nigeria'. *World Development Indicators, Nigeria*. pp.5,15-17,21,27-29(2021) <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/worlddevelopment-indicators> Retrieved 14<sup>th</sup> April, 2025

## OTHER SOURCES

Pic. i. Flood scene in Nigeria (2021). Source: AI Overview <https://aioverview> Retrieved 27th June, 2025

Pic. ii. Flood scene: Imo State in 2022. Source: YouTube(TVC News) <https://tvcnnews.com> Retrieved 30th April, 2025

Pic. iii. Flood scene: Ogun State 2023. Source: Channels Television <https://chanenelstelevision.com> Retrieved 27th June, 2025

Pic. iv. Flood scene: Bornu State, 2024.

YouTube (Innonaija) <https://innonaija.com> Retrieved 30th April, 2025

Pic. v. Flood scene: Uselu (Edo State) 2025 SydneyShocker <https://www.facebook.com/share> Retrieved 1st May, 2025

Pic. v. Flood scene: Flooded-area-in-LekkiLagos-1062x598\_fvtgvg

Source: Premium Times (April 29th, 2025) Retrieved 30th April, 2025

Pic. v. Flood scene: early April 2025 in Agbor, Delta State

Philip Okwuokenye and Josephine Peter - <https://www.facebook.com/share/> Retrieved 17th April, 2025