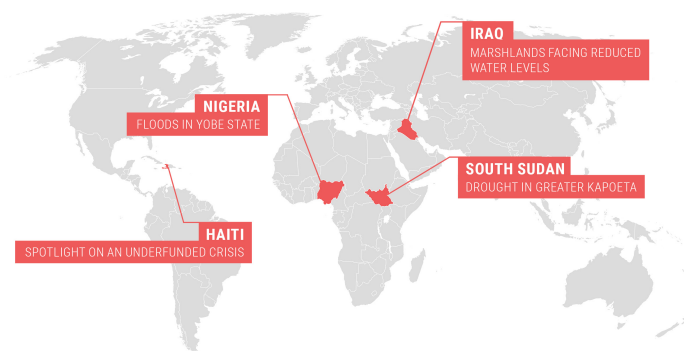


The role of climate change in driving new cycles of displacement

The impacts of climate change are being felt around the world, including in countries that are already grappling with conflict, insecurity, economic instability, and other factors that erode people's resilience and resources. Increasingly, REACH teams are conducting research to better understand how climatic factors – both extreme weather events and the slow-onset effects of rising temperatures – are compounding existing drivers of displacement whilst also triggering new movement dynamics.

In this edition of our newsletter, we highlight three recent REACH reports that examine climate-motivated displacement in different contexts, to help inform not only immediate aid action, but also support early warning, disaster risk reduction, and recovery planning efforts.



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IRAQ

REACH NEWS

In southern Iraq, people who have historically been dependent on the marshlands for their livelihoods have been forced to leave in search of new income-generation opportunities.

The marshlands of southern Iraq account for just under half of the country's inland waters and have historically been a critical livelihood source for households in Al-Basra, Maysan, and Thi Qar Governorates. In the early 1990s, Saddam Hussein drained the once-thriving marshes when Shiite rebels sought refuge there, causing almost 500,000 residents to flee. By the early 2000s, less than 10% of the original marshland area was still functioning. Despite efforts to restore the marshes in subsequent years, the area is once again at risk of reduced water levels.

Earlier this year, REACH conducted focus group discussions and interviews with people from affected communities, to understand how these climatic factors impacted livelihoods and influenced movement decisions. Some key takeaways:

- Climate change effects such as reduced rainfall and high temperatures, along with the construction of dams in Turkey and Iran, were key reasons behind the reduced water levels and increased salinity of the marshes.
- The biggest adverse impact has been felt by people who rely on the marshes for income from fishing, agriculture, livestock rearing, handicraft production, and shelter construction. Diminished incomes have limited their ability to purchase food and other necessities, as well as ensure education for their children. Relocation, including to urban centres like Basra city, has been a key coping mechanism for marshland residents in need of new livelihood opportunities.

"Livelihood activities are culturally rooted and inherited by families who have lived in this area for a long time"

- Al-Qurna Key Informant

- Displaced discussion participants noted that improved access to water and living conditions were necessary before they could consider moving back. To prevent further displacement, participants noted a need for fertilisers for farming, fodder for buffalo rearing, improved transportation, and easier access to loans.

Further reading

- Read the [Iraq Climate Motivated Displacement: Baseline Report](#).

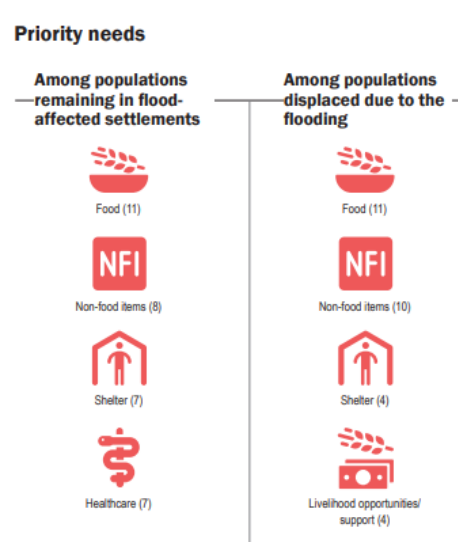
NIGERIA

REACH NEWS

Flash floods triggered by heavy rainfall in northeast Nigeria have caused deaths, injuries, and damage to homes and agricultural lands, leading hundreds of households to displace.

In recent years, flood frequency in the Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe (BAY) states has increased, often leading to displacement, destruction of basic service infrastructure, and increased risk of illnesses like malaria and other waterborne ailments. Climate and ecosystem changes, including rainfall variability, desertification, overgrazing, and overcultivation, have created a precarious situation where food scarcity and access to livelihoods have become intertwined with weather and environmental effects.

REACH conducted a rapid assessment in Yobe state in July, following a week of heavy rainfall and subsequent flooding. Through interviews and participatory mapping exercises with people who had displaced from the most flood-affected areas, our teams found that:



- Flooding had caused destruction to shelters, farmland, livelihood assets, and other household resources. Access to some communities was entirely cut off due to damaged roads, bridges, and communication lines.
- Hundreds of households were reportedly displaced – in some cases entire communities. Both displaced people and those who remained in flood-affected areas had a primary need for food, shelter, and core items like clothing, mosquito nets, and blankets. Due to destruction of food stocks and farmland, some people had resorted to foraging and eating wild foods.
- Interviewees reported that no aid had been provided to people remaining in flood areas at that stage. Those who had displaced were receiving shelter, food, and access to services from their host communities, but similarly no support from designated aid actors had been reported.

Further reading

- Read the [Yobe Floods: Displacement and Humanitarian Needs Brief](#)

SOUTH SUDAN

REACH NEWS

Repeated climate shocks and irregular weather patterns have eroded the resilience of communities in Greater Kapoeta, South Sudan, contributing to large-scale population movements.

Throughout 2021, satellite data captured below-average rainfall and drought-like conditions in Kapoeta East and North, indicating risks to harvests and livestock. Field reports and prior REACH data also indicated high levels of food insecurity, likely caused by these climatic factors. In January 2022, media and field reports highlighted a large movement of people from Kapoeta East County to Kapoeta North, due to lack of food and water.

In response to information gaps about the food security situation, water access, and movement patterns, REACH conducted focus group discussions, interviews, and infrastructure mapping to understand the impacts of recent climate shocks, as well as coping strategies and barriers. The study found:

- At the time of the assessment, Greater Kapoeta had been experiencing drought conditions for several months. In addition, the area had also experienced flooding and heavy rainfall, locust infestations, crop disease, and other climate-related shocks in recent years.
- Due to limited and erratic rainfall patterns in 2021, existing water access issues were exacerbated, with some people reported to be regularly walking up to six hours to reach water points. Safe water sources were also unavailable, resulting in unclean water being shared by both humans and livestock.
- Drought conditions had impacted agro-pastoral livelihoods and food security. Discussion participants reported increased reliance on foraging for wild foods as a means of coping with poor harvests. Inadequate access to food and clean water was also noted as contributing to illness, whilst healthcare services remained limited.
- In many communities, repeated climatic shocks had reduced the ability to use prior coping strategies, like use of livestock for sale or slaughter, or access to humanitarian aid – leading to large-scale movement in response to the 2021-22 drought. These movement patterns became circular in subsequent months, as people moved to and from their places of origin in search of food and humanitarian aid.

Further reading

- Read the South Sudan, [Greater Kapoeta Climate Impact & Displacement Profile](#)

HAITI

REACH NEWS

Spotlight on an underfunded crisis: Haiti

In this new series, each edition of our newsletter will feature a crisis where humanitarian needs remain high whilst funding shortages persist – and global attention focuses elsewhere.

No stranger to environmental hazards and the impacts of climate change, Haiti is still grappling with the fallout from a 7.2 magnitude earthquake in August 2021. As it now braces for hurricane season, the country continues to face widespread poverty, rising insecurity and violence from armed groups, and recurring political instability. The 2022 Global Humanitarian Overview projected 4.9 million people – over 40% of the total population – to be in need of assistance, highlighting protection issues, displacement, food insecurity, malnutrition, and low access to basic services. However as of September, Haiti's Humanitarian Response Plan was only 22% funded, putting it among the countries with the largest funding gaps.

REACH recently published findings from an area-based assessment of three communes in Grand'Anse, an area significantly impacted by the August 2021 earthquake. Data was collected nine months after the earthquake, to understand current conditions and persisting needs. The assessment found a worrying situation across food security, public health, shelter and infrastructure, and access to services:

- 83% of households did not have sufficient access to food in the three months prior to interview
- 76% of households did not have access to sufficient water
- 83% of households did not have access to adequate health services
- 43% of household were still either living without shelter or living in tents, collective shelters, unfinished buildings, or some other makeshift shelter
- 57% of households did not have access to latrines
- 83% of households reported they had not received humanitarian aid in the three months prior
- 48% of households in Roseaux commune reported they did not feel safe in their present location

Read the full report [here](#):



- Check out our [Climate Watch thread](#) for regular updates about our research on climate-related risks in vulnerable contexts.
- In case you missed it – our [recent coverage of the prolonged drought in Somalia](#), including a video explainer on the crisis plus links to our most recent analysis. After four failed rainy seasons, people have lost their agro-pastoral livelihoods and are displacing in search of food and water.
- Subscribe to specific country alerts on our [REACH Resource Centre](#)



Haiti - Coordinateur / Représentant Pays
 South Sudan - Senior Data Officer
 South Sudan - Senior Assessment Officer – Food Security And Livelihoods
 South Sudan - Reach Senior Assessment Officer – AAP And Community Engagement
 Iraq - Research Manager – Inter-Sector Unit

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