Response to the Questionnaire in relation to Human Rights Council Resolution A/HRC/RES/38/4 on human rights and climate change

1. Please describe the impacts of the adverse effects of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of the human rights of women and girls. Where possible, please share specific examples and stories.

*Response: Climate change or global warming are used inter- changeably to describe the change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activities that alter the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods. In Nigeria, the most visible impacts of climate change are increasing flood, deforestation and rise in sea level. Being that Nigeria is a developing country, most women and girls are engaged in agrarian activities. The rise in sea level, deforestation and flood has adversely affected the social, economic rights of most women and girls to education, food, shelter, health, water and sanitation. In addition, due to the rise in epidemic caused by the floods, the right to life is threatened. Climate change equally affects the right to life through an increase in hunger and malnutrition and related disorders impacting on child growth and development; cardiorespiratory morbidity and maternal mortality. During the 2018 outbreak of cholera in Nigeria, about 80% of the affected persons were women and children.*

*The effects of climate change on natural resources can also further exacerbate existing gender inequalities.  Girls may be kept out of school to fetch water, as droughts drive them to walk farther and farther to find it. In addition, due to desertification, women and girls who have the sole responsibility of cooking are unable to access firewood easily. They are further burdened in their search for the firewood and exposed to the danger of sexual assault or molestation.*

*As a consequence of climate change, the potential for food production decreases, increasing the risk of hunger and food insecurity. This equally reduces the financial liquidity of women and girls who depend on the sales from their farmer produce for survival and education.*

*Desertification, in which fertile land becomes barren desert, now affects as much as 60% of Nigeria’s land, exacerbated by drought and climate change. As a result, cattle herders from northern Nigeria have been pushed farther and farther south to find land to graze livestock, causing friction with farmers settled in central states. As Nigeria’s population has spiraled to 191 million, and amid an ongoing conflict with Islamist insurgents, the competition for land has become fierce. These conflicts result in deaths of most of the men and leave the women and girls as head of households and breadwinners. Most of them are displaced and exposes to sexual harassment or sex for survival activities.*

1. Please describe any relevant commitments, legislation and other measures that you have taken to promote a gender- responsive approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation at the local. National, regional and international level and to ensure the full and effective enjoyment of the human rights of women and girls impacted by the adverse effects of climate change. Please include relevant mechanism used to promote accountability and /or implementation.

*Response: The highest decision making body in Nigeria, the Federal Executive Council approved and adopted a National Policy on Climate Change and Response Strategy as a national document for implementing climate change activities in the country. This policy is to provide the government with a framework for tackling environmental challenges occasioned by global changes in the climate, the effect of which has manifested in increased flooding and rise in sea level. The policy framework will guide economic and social response of Nigerians to the global trend of climate change. The policy will also map out activities in the area of adaptation and awareness creation to ensure appropriate mitigation and adaptation. In addition, a department(Climate Change Department) within the Ministry of Environment has been set up to formulate effective response and adaptation framework to address the challenges of climate change.There are also ministries of environment at the state level, present in the thirty six states in the country with equally elaborate mandates to address challenges arising from climate change.*

*In addition the federal government established National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to manage disasters. The state equivalent SEMA are present in almost all the thirty six states with exception of a few. There is however the need for policy makers to adopt a more inclusive approach in the development of adaptation and mitigation measures.*

*The Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act, 2015 is an additional measure put in place by the Nigerian government to ensure the full and effective enjoyment of human rights of women and girls generally. The law goes a long way to protect women and girls from sexual violence, especially those displaced by climate change or conflict.*

*Nigeria also have an Anti- Torture Act,2017 and the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Bill to further ensure the full and effective enjoyment of human rights of women and girls.*

1. Please share a summary of any relevant data that captures how the adverse effects of climate change have affected women and girls, taking into account multiple and interesting forms of discrimination.

*Response: In 2007, the Federal Ministry of Environment carried out assessment of Gender Sensitive Climate Change Adaptation in several communities within seven states of the country. One of the conclusions reached was that the impact of climate change on gender relations has been neglected, due to gender blindness still afflicting development policy making, and the slow response by development agencies to the development challenge presented by climate change.*

1. Please describe mechanisms and tools, which can be used to measure and monitor the impacts of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of the human rights of women and girls.

Response:*The Nigerian Meteorological Agency was set up by the Federal Government of Nigeria with the main responsibility to produce weather, water and climate information for socio- economic development of Nigeria. There is in place a climate change monitoring system that integrates satellite observations, ground based data and forecast models to monitor and forecast changes in the weather and climate. Accurate information and data, make future predictions more precise and equip relevant agencies adopt strategies such as, building sea defences, relocating the populations from flood-prone areas, improved water management, and early warning systems. In addition, the Presidential Committee on North East Initiative (PCNI),NEMA, SEMA, NHRC in collaboration with development partners are monitoring the effects of the conflicts on all citizens, including women and girls.*

*In addition, the National Human Rights Commission has in place a monitoring mechanism across all various thematic lines including women and children. The thematic team of the Commission monitors all issues with potentials of adverse effect on the rights of women including climate change. Also, displaced women and girls in internally displaced persons camps and host communities are monitored as to how their rights are affected by conflicts resulting from climate change and other factors.*

1. Please identify and share examples of good practices and challenges in the promotion, protection, and fulfilment of the human rights of women and girls in the context of the adverse effects of climate change. Please include examples that highlight multilateral cooperation, gender mainstreaming, gender responsive approaches, and the full, meaningful and effective participation of women and girls in relevant decision-making processes.

*Response:*

*The federal ministry of women affairs in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders developed a gender policy which is targeted at addressing human rights concerns of women and children. In addition, the Commission led the development of a National Action Plan on the Promotion and protection of human rights in Nigeria which incorporates protection of the rights of women and children. The Commission also created a thematic team to handle issues of rights of women and children.*

*To further ensure that the rights of children are protected and promoted, the Federal Government enacted the Child’s Rights Act in 2003 which has been adopted in some states. Also at the states level, some states have passed laws aimed at protecting and promoting the rights of women and girls. These laws include: Ekiti State Gender based violence (Prohibition) Law 2011, Lagos State Protection Against Domestic Violence Law of Lagos State 2009, Edo State Female Circumcision & Genital Mutilation (Prohibition) Law, Cross Rivers State Girl Child Marriage & Female Circumcision (Prohibition) Law 2000, Rivers State Abolition of Female Circumcision Law 2001, Ogun State Female Circumcision & Genital Mutilation (Prohibition) Law 2000, Ebonyi State Abolition of Harmful Traditional Practices Against Women& Children Law 2001 etc*

1. Please provide any additional information you believe would be useful to support efforts to integrate a gender- responsive approach into climate action at the local, national, regional and international levels for the full and effective enjoyment of the rights of women and girls.

*Response: Considering that women constitute the majority of the world’s poorest and more dependent for their livelihood on natural resources that are threatened by climate change, governments have an obligation to facilitate public participation in addressing climate change and its effects and developing adequate responses. It is imperative that when convening these consultations/ sessions/ conferences the opinionsof those most adversely affected by climate change are heard.It is equally important that during these consultations, that assessment and disclosure of climate change impacts are discussed, there is effective communication of those impacts in a language and venue that is accessible to the persons who will be affected; and an opportunity for affected persons to voice their concerns.*