

Approximately 4500 Houses Destroyed and Many Feared Dead in Flood Disaster in Katsina, Ogun, Niger, Anambra, Edo, Jigawa and Ondo States, Nigeria.

BACKGROUND



- The affected States include; Katsina, Jigawa (North-West), Niger (North-Central) Ogun, Ondo (South-West), Anambra (South-East), and Edo (South-South).
- Repeated flooding incidents in Nigeria, has become a perennial problem. The disaster is linked to climate change, especially in increased frequency and intensity of rainfall from May to September annually. Other related factors include; poor urban planning, inadequate drainage systems, dams collapse and improper waste management, among others.
- In Nigeria, States along the coastal zones are more vulnerable to flooding due to rise in sea level and upwelling tides. The devastating impact of flood includes; deaths, injuries and internal displacement mostly involving women and children, food insecurity due to the destruction of crops and farmlands, destruction of properties/livelihoods and health-related risks.
- WANEP, as part of its contribution to the goal of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), utilizes its community based early warning system across the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria to monitor the proximate conditions of natural and human induced disasters towards alerting the appropriate authorities for early response and increasing the resilience of vulnerable communities.

INCIDENT PROFILE

Between July 3 and 27, 2018, the WANEP's National Early Warning System (NEWS) recorded the cumulative deaths of more than of 81 people with at least 4500 houses destroyed and thousands displaced from communities affected by flood incidents in Katsina, Ogun, Niger, Anambra, Edo, Jigawa and Ondo States¹. The flash floods submerged crops and farmlands in the affected States.

While the rescue operations are in progress, the statistics and level of impacts, are still being captured by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). So far, Katsina State was reported to be the hardest hit by the flood with a reported death of 52 people, 27 people injured and 20 others reported missing in Kwata, Dantudu, Sabuwar, Tukare, Tsohuwar Tukare and Ungwar Mai Kwari communities in Jibia Local Government Area (LGA) of the State². In addition, a preliminary investigation has revealed that over 500 houses were destroyed, displacing at least 5,000 people with 260 livestock³ killed in the incident in the affected communities. Similarly, in Ogun State, 12 people (7 females and 5 males) were reported dead with 3 people missing in the flood incident that ravaged Ijaiye, Kuto, Lafenwa, Oke Lantoro, Amolaso, Kobiti and Illawo communities in Abeokuta-North LGA⁴. The flood incident was however worsened due to the overflow of Ogun and Sokori River into the communities. In this case, an estimated 3,800 houses and 8 vehicles⁵ were reportedly destroyed. Others States with recorded fatality include; Niger State with 7 deaths (teenage girls) and one reported missing⁶; Edo State, 2 children dead (male and female)⁷; Anambra State, 1 person dead (female)⁸; Jigawa State, 6 people dead⁹; and in Ondo State, 1 person (male) was reported dead¹⁰, while in Ayetoro community in Ilaje LGA, about 25 houses were reportedly destroyed and 200 people displaced due to water surge from the Atlantic Ocean¹¹ into the community. In Yobe State, an undisclosed number of houses were destroyed and 200 displaced in Nayi, Nawa, Shago, Tara, Fulatari, Pompomari and Bulabulin communities in Damaturu LGA of the State.¹² Ebonyi State also had communities flooded, destruction of houses and displacements.¹³



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RISK ANALYSIS:

In a bid to enhance the level of disaster preparedness of flood prone States in the country, the Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NiMet) in its 2018 Seasonal Rainfall Prediction (SRP)¹⁴ issued early warning alerts of imminent flooding, especially in communities adjoining riverine areas. In addition to this assertion, the Nigeria Hydrological Services Agency (NIHSA) in its Annual Flood Outlook (AFO) also revealed that 380 LGAs in 35 States would experience flooding with 78 LGAs vulnerable to high risk of flooding¹⁵. Despite these climate projections, communities were ill prepared to prevent and/or manage flooding disasters. The increasing frequency and severity of floods across the country continue to pose serious threat to human and food security in the affected States. A significant number of the flood-affected communities are amongst the poor neighbourhoods with squatters and weak constructed houses in Nigeria's coastlines. The integrity of the buildings are further challenged by poor drainage systems, ineffective waste management and lack of town planning. The indiscriminate depletion of the forest cover and coastlines for settlement and other economic reasons occasioned by intense rainfall increase vulnerability of those communities to flooding and other disasters.

The scale and impact of the disaster could be attributed to limited knowledge of disaster risk reduction strategies and resilient capacities by affected population. Without adequate emergency response to the current crisis, there is an increased likelihood of opportunistic health related problems and possible outbreak of water-borne diseases such as cholera, typhoid etc. Therefore, this requires collective effort from the affected State Governments and the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to mitigate the impact and coordinate humanitarian aid to the benefit of the affected communities.

MECHANISMS FOR INTERVENTIONS:

- The NEMA through its State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), Nigeria Aids Corps delivered relief assistance to affected victims of flood in the affected States to cushion the impact of the flooding, while displaced persons have been resettled at makeshift camps in communities.
- On-the-site assessments of affected flood locations by State and Non-State actors to unravel the extent of damages for adequate intervention and compensation.
- Several State Governments have commenced clearing and cleaning of drainages, while additional drainages are being constructed to prevent flooding.
- The Anambra State Government set up 28 centers as Internally Displaced Persons' camp across the 8 LGAs in the State¹⁶ to accommodate residents who might lose their houses to flood. Anambra State has been identified as vulnerable to high risk flooding in 2018.
- The National Economic Council (NEC) approved collaborative partnerships on flood prevention, mitigation and preparedness in the country including; a Federal Project Coordinating Unit to comprise Officers from collaborating entities (Federal, States and the Presidential Committee on Flood, Relief and Rehabilitation-PCFRR) and desilting of major tributaries and canals ahead of the flooding season.¹⁷

RECOMMENDATIONS



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- State Governments in partnership with SEMA should deepen collaborations with media establishments to widen the scope of awareness with communities beginning from the month of March especially as the rainy seasons have begun and also build community capacity to prevent flood disasters;
- Improve Government- NGO partnership at the State level in the development of State level contingency and disaster preparedness operation plan plan critical for prompt emergency response. This should stimulate coordination and accountability by both government and non-government actors responding to emergency at the State level;
- State Governments to set up proper refuse disposal mechanism/policy to include regular clearing of drainage systems. Offenders littering the drainage systems should be arrested to serve as deterrence to others;
- The intervention by the State Government in the demolition of illegal structures including buildings along waterways and drainage channels is commendable, but should also be supported with the construction of flood control structures in partnership with Disaster Management Agencies in a bid to lessen the impact of flood in the high risk States;
- The commitment of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the ECOWAS Commission to Nigeria in designing a national strategic plan towards the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction¹⁸ is commendable; this should serve as a guide in mitigating the risk of both man-made and nature-induced disasters.

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