

2026 FLOOD GUIDE FOR ADAMAWA STATE

Source: Nigeria Hydrological Services Agency (NIHSA) 2026 Annual Flood Outlook

EDITORIAL NOTE

Every year, flooding reshapes life across Nigeria — flooding farmlands, endangering agricultural yield, displacing communities, closing schools, and cutting off roads. The Nigeria Hydrological Services Agency (NIHSA) has mapped what 2026 will look like, and the picture is clear: with the right preparation, communities can absorb what is coming without catastrophe. We know this because 2025 proved it. Early warning and organised community action reduced flood fatalities by 76% and displaced persons by 84% compared to 2024 (ref). The goal for 2026 is to go further.

The flood year follows a predictable rhythm, and that predictability is a gift. The early rains of April through June give communities a window to act — clearing drainage channels, reinforcing riverbanks, and registering households for alerts — before the peak season intensifies in July, August, and September. By the time October and November arrive, the heaviest rains may have eased, but water that fell months earlier in Adamawa and Cameroon is still travelling downstream toward the delta states. Communities in Anambra, Delta, Bayelsa, and Rivers need to stay vigilant well into November, long after they might assume the danger has passed.

The Communities That Need the Most Support:

Ten states face the sharpest risk in 2026: Kogi, Niger, Delta, Anambra, Benue, Kebbi, Rivers, Bayelsa, Adamawa, and Cross River but the threat is not abstract. Across Nigeria, 30,707 communities are at risk, along with 4,792 health facilities and 10,684

schools. When a health centre floods, patients lose access to care. When a school fills with water, children lose months of learning. These are the human costs that preparation can prevent.

In Kogi, where the Niger and Benue rivers meet at Lokoja, riverine flooding can isolate entire communities for weeks. Local governments there should be identifying high ground now, designating safe assembly points, and making sure every community has a marked escape route. In Benue, the low-lying areas around Makurdi need the same attention before the Benue River crests. In Port Harcourt and other urban settings, where poor urban drainage compounds river and tidal flooding, the single most impactful community action is also the simplest — keeping drains clear of refuse.

With 4.2 million hectares of farmland at risk, agriculture sits at the centre of the 2026 challenge. Planting early-maturing crop varieties and using ridges or mounds instead of flat planting beds reduces both waterlogging damage and the risk of a total harvest loss. Staggered planting — sowing in batches rather than all at once means that if one batch is hit by flooding, others survive. Harvesting before October, and storing produce in elevated spaces away from floodwater, protects what has already been grown.

For northern farming communities, the challenge runs deeper, because the flood season is immediately followed by a severe dry period from December through February. The practical response is to treat flood season not only as a threat but as an opportunity — storing water in tanks, drums, and ponds during the wet months to carry livestock and households through the drought that follows.

The infrastructure of flood resilience is not complicated. It is community flood wardens who know which households have elderly or disabled residents and can reach them first. It is local radio stations broadcasting NIHSA alerts in local languages

so that fishermen and farmers in remote areas receive warnings in time to act. It is traditional rulers and community leaders who have identified, in advance, which road out of the community stays passable longest. It is households that keep a small emergency kit — water purification tablets, key documents, basic medicine — packed and accessible before the rains arrive.

None of this requires waiting for government. Communities that prepare themselves reduce their own losses and make it easier for relief to reach those who need it most when flooding does occur.

Where local government is active and well-coordinated, the difference in outcomes is measurable. The priorities for 2026 are straightforward: clear primary drainage channels before April, pre-position food and medical supplies in high-risk areas before July, and ensure that development permits are not issued for floodplain land. These are not expensive interventions. They are largely organisational — a matter of doing in advance what would otherwise be done in crisis.

Nigeria has 30,707 communities, 10,684 schools, and 4,792 health facilities in the path of the 2026 flood season. Each one is also a community that has survived flooding before, that has knowledge of its own landscape, and that can act. The science has been done. The warnings have been issued. What happens next depends on what communities, local governments, and individuals choose to do with this information — starting now, while there is still time.

UNDERSTANDING WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN ADAMAWA IN 2026

Adamawa State has a very special and dangerous position. The **River Benue enters Nigeria through Adamawa** at a place called **Wuroboki**. Water that comes from

the **Lagdo Dam in Cameroon** flows into Adamawa first before moving down to Taraba, Benue, Kogi, and other states.

This means Adamawa is the **early warning sentinel** for the whole country. When water levels rise in Adamawa, other states downstream have only **48 to 72 hours** to prepare before the floodwaters reach them.



The Three Flood Periods for Adamawa:

When?	What to Expect	How Serious?
April, May, June (Early rains)	Flooding builds along the upper course of the Benue River. Water levels start to rise at Wuroboki.	Low to Medium
July, August, September (Peak rainy season)	This is the most dangerous time. The Benue River swells. Water spills onto farmlands and into communities.	Medium to High

When?	What to Expect	How Serious?
October, November (Late flooding)	Water continues to flow. The recession is delayed by continued rainfall in the Jos Plateau headwaters. Late flooding destroys standing crops.	Medium to High

WHAT HAPPENED IN ADAMAWA IN 2025 (TO PREPARE YOU FOR 2026)

In 2025, Adamawa was one of the hardest-hit states in Nigeria. The numbers tell the story:

Impact	How Many People
People displaced	23,077
People affected	Over 60,000
Crops lost	9,000 hectares

The lesson from 2025: When the warning comes, you must act immediately. Do not wait.

WHICH PARTS OF ADAMAWA ARE AT RISK

Adamawa State falls within **Hydrological Area III (Upper Benue)** . This means Adamawa is at the head of the Benue River system before the water moves downstream.

By the numbers (from NIHSA):

Season	Risk Level	How Many Communities?	What This Means
AMJ (April-May-June)	High	3,301 communities	Early flooding begins along the Benue. Low-lying areas see water.
JAS (July-August-September)	High	6,176 communities	This is the peak. Widespread flooding across the state.
ON (October-November)	High	4,744 communities	Late flooding continues. Crops still in the field are destroyed.

Annual total for Adamawa: Adamawa is among the **Top 10 High Risk States** in Nigeria. Thousands of communities across the state will see flooding in 2026.

THE WUROBOKI GAUGE STATION: YOUR EARLY WARNING

NIHSA has a monitoring station at **Wuroboki** (where the Benue River enters Nigeria from Cameroon).

What Was Recorded in 2025	What Is Expected in 2026
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What Was Recorded in 2025	What Is Expected in 2026
Peak discharge: 4,122 cubic metres per second	Projected peak: 3,900 to 5,200 cubic metres per second
Peak arrived on August 22	Expected to be High Flood Risk

Why this matters to you: When water levels rise at Wuroboki, communities downstream in Adamawa (and all the way to Kogi) have only 48 to 72 hours before the floodwaters arrive. If you live near the Benue River, you must pay attention to NIHSA warnings.

WHEN IS THE WORST TIME FOR ADAMAWA?

The **JAS period (July, August, September)** is the most dangerous. But the **ON period (October, November)** is also very dangerous for farmers because late-season crops are still in the field.

The 2025 peak at Wuroboki arrived on August 22. In 2026, expect the peak around the same time — late August to early September.

THE DROUGHT PROBLEM IN ADAMAWA (COMPOUND RISK)

Period	What Will Happen	What This Means for You
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Wet Season (April-September)	Very Dry to Moderately Dry conditions	Even during the rainy season, Adamawa does not get as much water as the south. There is already water scarcity.
Flood Season (JAS-ON)	High flood risk	Too much water at once. Rivers overflow. Farms and homes are flooded.
Dry Season (December-February)	Very Dry conditions	Rivers will stop flowing. Many tributaries will have no water at all by December or January.

Adamawa has a serious problem that many southern states do not face. It is called **compound risk** — too much water followed by too little water in the same year.

What this means for Adamawa farmers and herders:

- Your crops may be destroyed by flood in September-October
- Then your animals may die of thirst in December-February
- You must plan for BOTH extremes in the same year

HEDA
RESOURCE CENTRE

WHAT CROPS ARE AT RISK IN ADAMAWA

Crop	When It Is Most at Risk	What to Do
Rice (lowland)	JAS (July-September) and ON (October-November)	Plant with first rains in March-April. Prepare small walls to hold water, but also clear drainage channels. Late-season rice (planted August-September) is at extreme risk in ON

Crop	When It Is Most at Risk	What to Do
		period.
Maize	JAS (July-September)	Plant on ridges. Maize does not like wet feet. Use early to medium-maturing varieties (90-110 days). Plant in batches so if one batch floods, others survive.
Sorghum	JAS and ON	This is a key crop in Adamawa. The ON period flood (October-November) can destroy sorghum still in the field. Plan to harvest before October if possible.
Groundnuts	ON (October-November)	Groundnuts are at high risk during late flooding. If you plant groundnuts, harvest early or plant in areas away from the Benue floodplain.
Cowpea	JAS (July-September)	Choose early-maturing varieties. Plant in April-May. Harvest before the peak flood arrives in August.
Vegetables	JAS and ON	Use raised beds. During heavy rain, watch for fungal diseases.

WHAT LIVESTOCK FARMERS IN ADAMAWA MUST DO

The dry season (December to February) is a serious danger for livestock in Adamawa. Rivers will stop flowing. Water will become very scarce.

For all livestock owners:

Action	When to Do It	Why
Vaccinate all animals	February-March (before rains start)	Wet ground spreads diseases faster
Deworm all animals	Start of rains, then again mid-season	Worms and parasites increase in wet conditions
Provide raised housing	Before April	Animals must have dry ground to stand on
Store water for dry season	During flood season (July-October)	By December, rivers will stop flowing. You will need stored water.
Cut and store fodder	June-September	Grasses will be scarce in dry season. Make hay now.

For cattle herders in Adamawa:

- The dry season (December-February) will be **Very Dry**. This is severe.
- Identify alternative water sources now. Where will your animals drink when the rivers stop flowing?
- Consider reducing herd size before the dry season if you cannot secure water.
- Plan migration routes early. Do not wait until December to decide where to go.

For goat and sheep farmers in Adamawa:

- Raised housing is essential. Wet ground causes foot rot and pneumonia.
- Cut and store grasses in June and July. Use these during the August dry spell and the December-February dry season.
- Pregnant and lactating females need priority feeding during dry periods.

For poultry farmers in Adamawa:

- During hot months (March-May), reduce bird numbers per cage. Do not overcrowd.
- Improve ventilation in poultry houses.
- Feed during cooler hours (early morning, late evening).
- Add electrolytes and vitamins to drinking water.
- During heavy rains, ensure housing is leak-proof.

For fish farmers in Adamawa:

- Before heavy rains (March-June), strengthen pond walls and embankments.
- Clear drainage channels so water does not overflow.
- During hot May, warmer water holds less oxygen. Increase aeration.
- Place shade over ponds using palm fronds or netting.
- During dry season (December-February), water levels may drop. Monitor closely. Consider partial harvest if pond gets too low.



WHAT TO DO IF FLOODING COMES

When NIHSA or NEMA sends a High Flood Risk warning:

1. **Leave immediately.** Do not wait to see the water.
2. Move to the designated safe place in your community (high ground).
3. **Do not try to walk through moving floodwater.** It can sweep you away.
4. If it is safe, switch off electricity at the mains before leaving.
5. Take your emergency kit, important documents, and any medicines you need.
6. Make sure all family members are accounted for — especially children and elderly people.
7. Report to your local government flood officer or community flood warden.

Special warning for Adamawa: Because you are the first state to receive water from Cameroon, your warning time is shorter than you think. When NIHSA issues a warning based on Wuroboki readings, act immediately.

WHAT TO PREPARE BEFORE THE FLOODS COME

Every household in a flood-risk area should prepare:

- An emergency kit containing: water purification tablets, first aid supplies, copies of important documents (in a waterproof bag), and enough food for at least three days.
- Know your escape route. Where is the nearest high ground?
- Register with your local government flood officer to receive alerts by phone or radio.
- Raise important belongings (mattresses, electronics, food stores) above the expected flood level.
- Clear the drainage channels around your home before the rains begin.

For farmers: Store harvested crops in elevated storage. Do not keep bags of grain on the floor where floodwater can reach them.

For livestock owners: Identify high ground where you can move animals during flooding. Have a plan to move them quickly.

THE DROUGHT PREPARATION YOU NEED (DECEMBER-FEBRUARY)

Because Adamawa faces **Very Dry** conditions in dry season, you must prepare while there is still water.

Action	When to Do It	Why
Store water in tanks, drums, or ponds	July-October (flood season)	By December, rivers will stop flowing
Cut and store grass for	June-September	Pasture will be gone in dry season

Action	When to Do It	Why
Animal feed		
Repair wells and boreholes	Before December	Groundwater levels will drop
Reduce herd size if you cannot secure water	October-November	Better to sell animals early than find them dead of thirst
Coordinate with neighbors on water sharing	Before dry season	Communities that plan together survive better

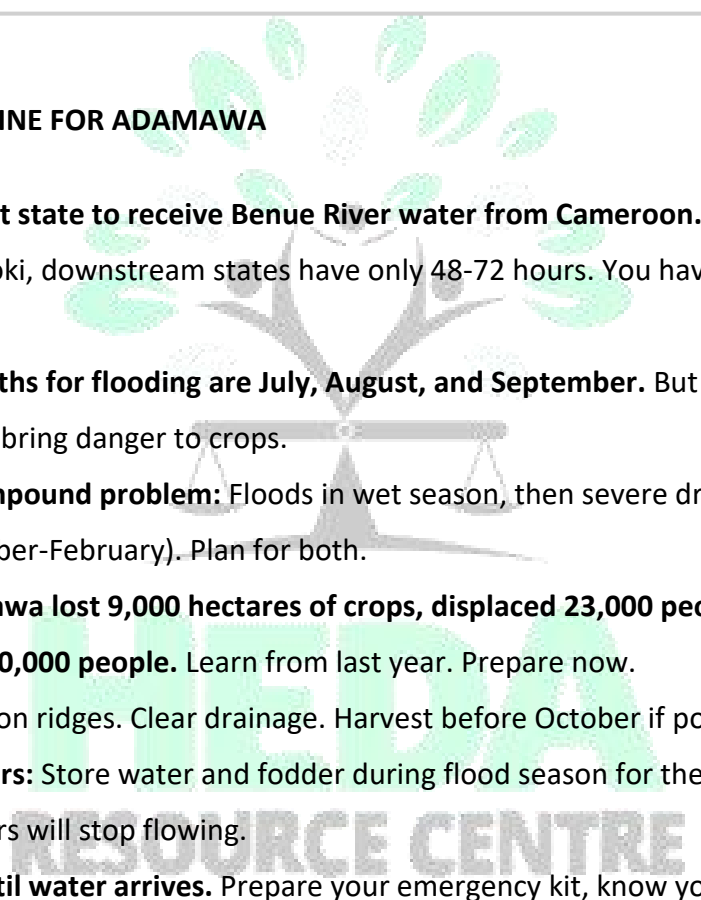


Agency	What They Do	Contact
NIHSA	Issues flood warnings. Monitors Wuroboki station.	0800-NIHSA-NG
NEMA	Disaster response and relief	0800-NEMA-NG
Adamawa State SEMA	State-level emergency response	Contact your LGA Agriculture Officer for local numbers
NiMet	Weather forecasts	www.nimet.gov.ng

Cameroon/Nigeria border authorities	Information on Lagdo Dam releases	Ask your LGA chairman for contact information
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WHO TO CALL FOR HELP IN ADAMAWA

THE BOTTOM LINE FOR ADAMAWA

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- **You are the first state to receive Benue River water from Cameroon.** When water rises at Wuroboki, downstream states have only 48-72 hours. You have even less time.
 - **The worst months for flooding are July, August, and September.** But October and November also bring danger to crops.
 - **You have a compound problem:** Floods in wet season, then severe drought in dry season (December-February). Plan for both.
 - **In 2025, Adamawa lost 9,000 hectares of crops, displaced 23,000 people, and affected over 60,000 people.** Learn from last year. Prepare now.
 - **Farmers:** Plant on ridges. Clear drainage. Harvest before October if possible.
 - **Livestock owners:** Store water and fodder during flood season for the dry season. By December, rivers will stop flowing.
 - **Do not wait until water arrives.** Prepare your emergency kit, know your escape route, and have a plan for your animals.
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This information comes directly from the NIHSA 2026 Annual Flood Outlook.

PREPARE NOW. DO NOT WAIT.