

2026 FLOOD GUIDE FOR BAUCHI STATE

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.



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

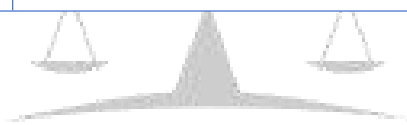
UNDERSTANDING WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN BAUCHI IN 2026

Bauchi State sits in the northeastern part of Nigeria. The state is part of **Hydrological Area III (Upper Benue)** and also has territory in **Hydrological Area VIII (Chad Basin)**. This means Bauchi is affected by two different river systems: the Benue River system to the south and the Lake Chad basin system to the north.

Bauchi has a special challenge that many southern states do not face. It is called **compound risk** — too much water during flood season, then too little water during dry season. You will need to plan for both.

The Three Flood Periods for Bauchi:

When?	What to Expect	How Serious?
April, May, June (Early rains)	Flooding begins in some areas. Rivers start to rise.	Low to Medium
July, August, September (Peak rainy season)	This is the most dangerous time for flooding. Heavy rains fill up rivers and waterways.	Medium to High
October, November (Late flooding)	Flooding continues. Water from higher areas moves down.	Medium to High



WHICH PARTS OF BAUCHI ARE AT RISK

Bauchi State is spread across two Hydrological Areas:

- **Hydrological Area III (Upper Benue):** This covers parts of Bauchi along with Adamawa, Gombe, Plateau, Taraba, Borno, and Yobe
- **Hydrological Area VIII (Chad Basin):** This covers parts of Bauchi along with Borno, Jigawa, Kano, Yobe, Adamawa, and Katsina

By the numbers (from NIHSA across both HAs):

Season	Risk Level	Number of Communities (across HA-III which includes parts of Bauchi)	What This Means for Bauchi
AMJ (April-May-June)	High	3,301 communities (HA-III) + 4,441 communities (HA-VIII)	Early flooding begins. Some communities see water.
JAS (July-August-September)	High	6,176 communities (HA-III) + 8,149 communities (HA-VIII)	This is the peak. Widespread flooding across the state.
ON (October-November)	High	4,744 communities (HA-III) + 6,470 communities (HA-VIII)	Late flooding continues. Crops still in the field are at risk.

Annual total for Bauchi: Bauchi is among the states with High Flood Risk in all three seasons. Many communities across the state will see flooding in 2026.

For roads: Bauchi has **17 road sections** identified as at risk of flooding in 2026 (Table 4.26 of the AFO).

WHEN IS THE WORST TIME FOR BAUCHI?

The **JAS period (July, August, September)** is the most dangerous for Bauchi. This is when:

- Heavy monsoon rains fall across the state
- Rivers in the Upper Benue system swell
- Waterways in the Chad Basin fill up
- Farmlands and low-lying communities flood

The **ON period (October, November)** also remains risky. Do not assume the danger is over after September. Late flooding can destroy crops that are still in the field.

THE DROUGHT PROBLEM IN BAUCHI (COMPOUND RISK)

Bauchi 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.

Period	What Will Happen	What This Means for You
Wet Season (April-September)	Moderately Dry to Very Dry conditions (depending on location)	Bauchi does not get as much rainfall as southern states. There is already water scarcity in many areas.
Flood Season (JAS-ON)	Medium to High flood risk	When rain does come, it comes hard and fast. Water rushes through waterways and floods low-lying areas.
Dry Season (December-February)	Very Dry conditions	Rivers will slow down. Some smaller streams may stop flowing. Water will become scarce.

What this means for Bauchi farmers and herders:

- Your crops may be damaged by flood during JAS-ON period
 - Then your animals may struggle to find water in December-February
 - You must plan for BOTH too much water and too little water in the same year
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THE LAKE CHAD BASIN CONNECTION

Parts of Bauchi (especially northern areas) drain into the Lake Chad basin. The AFO warns that the **ON period (October-November)** sees the highest geographic spread of flood risk for Hydrological Area VIII (Chad Basin).

What this means for Bauchi:

- During October and November, water from the Sahel catchment converges toward Lake Chad
- This water passes through parts of Bauchi before moving north
- Communities in northern Bauchi may see their peak flood levels during October-November, not during JAS

If you live in northern Bauchi (areas that drain toward Lake Chad), pay special attention to the ON period.

WHAT CROPS ARE AT RISK IN BAUCHI

Crop	When It Is Most at Risk	What to Do

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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 Bauchi. The ON period flood (October-November) can destroy sorghum still in the field. Plant early-maturing varieties. Try to harvest before October.
Millet	JAS and ON	Millet is drought-tolerant but does not like standing water. Plant on raised beds or ridges in areas that flood. Early-maturing varieties are safer.
Cowpea	JAS (July-September)	Choose early-maturing varieties. Plant in April-May. Harvest before the peak flood arrives in August-September.

Crop	When It Is Most at Risk	What to Do
Groundnuts	ON (October-November)	Groundnuts are at risk during late flooding. If you plant groundnuts, harvest early or plant in areas away from floodplains.
Rice (lowland, where grown)	JAS and ON	If you grow rice in lowland areas, plant early. Prepare small walls to hold water, but also clear drainage channels.
Vegetables (tomatoes, peppers, onions)	JAS and ON	Use raised beds. During heavy rain, watch for fungal diseases. Onions do not like wet feet — plant on ridges.

WHAT LIVESTOCK FARMERS IN BAUCHI MUST DO

The dry season (December to February) is a serious danger for livestock in **Bauchi**. Water will become scarce. Pasture will dry up.

For all livestock owners:

Action	When to Do It	Why
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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, water will be harder to find
Cut and store fodder	June-September	Grasses will be scarce in dry season. Make hay now.
Identify water sources for dry season	Before December	Where will your animals drink when streams slow down?

RESOURCE CENTRE

For cattle herders in Bauchi:

- The dry season (December-February) will be **Very Dry** in parts of Bauchi (especially northern areas)
- Identify alternative water sources now. Do not wait until December.
- Consider reducing herd size before the dry season if you cannot secure enough water and pasture.
- Plan migration routes early. Where will you take your animals when water runs out?

- If you live in the southern part of Bauchi (toward the Benue system), you may have better water access than those in the north.

For goat and sheep farmers in Bauchi:

- Raised housing is essential. Wet ground causes foot rot and pneumonia.
- Cut and store grasses in June, July, and August. Use these during the dry season (December-February).
- Pregnant and lactating females need priority feeding during dry periods.
- During the August dry spell (little dry season), use stored feed to keep animals healthy.

For poultry farmers in Bauchi:

- 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.
- During dry season, ensure birds have constant access to water.

THE AUGUST DRY SPELL (LITTLE DRY SEASON)

The AFO indicates that the dry spell prediction (August Break) is **not applicable** for some areas. But in Bauchi, you may still experience a reduction in rainfall around August.

What to do during the August dry spell (if it happens):

- Store water in tanks, drums, or ponds during July for use in August
- Use stored fodder for livestock if grasses dry up
- If you planted second season crops, be prepared to water them if rain stops

- Do not assume the dry spell means the flood season is over. Flooding can return in September.

THE COMPOUND RISK SUMMARY FOR BAUCHI

The AFO includes a summary table for compound flood and drought risk. Here is what it means for Bauchi:

Risk Type	When It Happens	What You Should Do
Flood risk	JAS (July-September) and ON (October-November)	Prepare for flooding. Clear drainage. Raise livestock housing. Know your evacuation route.
Drought risk	Dry season (December-February)	Store water during flood season. Cut and store fodder. Identify alternative water sources.
Compound risk	Both in the same year	You must plan for both. Do not focus only on floods and forget about drought.

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.
 8. **For livestock:** Move animals to higher ground before the water arrives. Do not wait.
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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. Store water and fodder for the dry season.

THE DROUGHT PREPARATION YOU NEED (DECEMBER-FEBRUARY)

Because parts of Bauchi face **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, water will be harder to find
Cut and store grass for animal feed	June-September	Pasture will be dry and scarce in dry season
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 weak from thirst
Coordinate with neighbors on water sharing	Before dry season	Communities that plan together survive better

THE TWO ZONES OF BAUCHI: SOUTH VS NORTH

Bauchi is a large state. Conditions vary between the south (closer to the Benue system) and the north (closer to the Chad Basin).

Zone	Flood Risk	Drought Risk	What You Should Focus On
Southern Bauchi (near	Higher flood risk from Benue	Moderate drought risk	Focus more on flood preparation. But do

Zone	Flood Risk	Drought Risk	What You Should Focus On
Benue system)	tributaries		not ignore dry season.
Northern Bauchi (toward Chad Basin)	Moderate flood risk from local waterways	Higher drought risk (Very Dry in dry season)	Focus more on dry season water storage. But prepare for flash floods during JAS.

WHO TO CALL FOR HELP IN BAUCHI

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

THE BOTTOM LINE FOR BAUCHI

- **You will see flooding in 2026.** The worst months are July, August, and September. But October and November also bring risk.
- **Bauchi is in two Hydrological Areas:** Upper Benue (south) and Chad Basin (north). Your experience may vary depending on where you live.
- **You have compound risk:** Floods in wet season, then dry conditions in dry season (December-February). Plan for both.
- **If you live in northern Bauchi (Chad Basin zone):** Your peak flooding may come in October-November. Pay attention to the ON period. Also prepare for Very Dry conditions in dry season.
- **If you live in southern Bauchi (Upper Benue zone):** Your flood risk is higher during JAS. But do not ignore dry season preparation.
- **Farmers:** Plant early-maturing varieties. Harvest before October if possible. Store harvested crops in elevated storage.
- **Livestock owners:** Store water and fodder during flood season for the dry season. By December, water will be harder to find.
- **17 road sections in Bauchi are at risk of flooding.** Plan alternative routes if you travel during rainy season.
- **Do not wait until water arrives.** Prepare your emergency kit, know your escape route, and have a plan for your animals.



This information comes directly from the NIHSA 2026 Annual Flood Outlook.

PREPARE NOW. DO NOT WAIT.