

2026 FLOOD GUIDE FOR EDO 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.

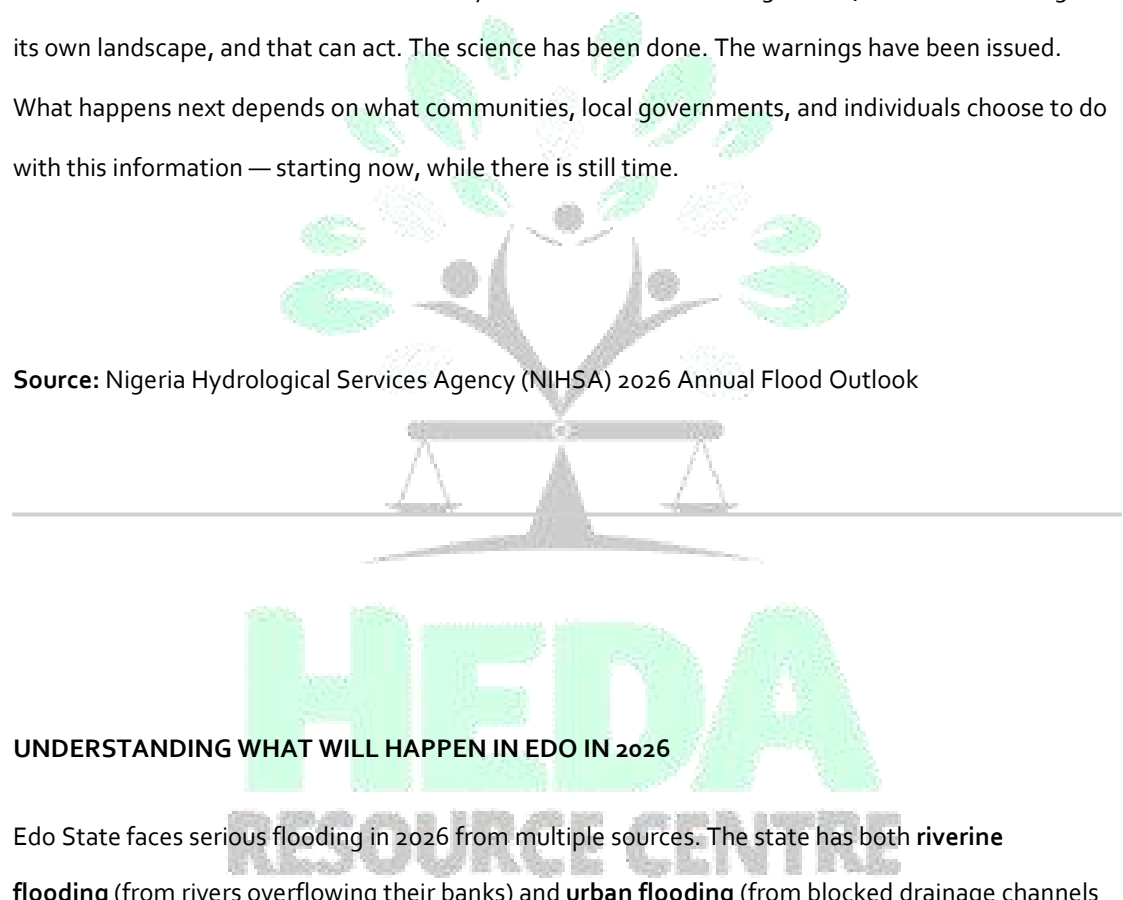
None of this requires waiting for government. Communities that prepare themselves reduce their own losses and make it easier for relief to reach those who need it most when flooding does occur.

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 EDO IN 2026

Edo State faces serious flooding in 2026 from multiple sources. The state has both **riverine flooding** (from rivers overflowing their banks) and **urban flooding** (from blocked drainage channels in cities). The state capital, Benin City, is especially vulnerable to urban flooding.

Why is Edo vulnerable to flooding? Three big reasons:

First, Edo has several major rivers. The Ikpoba River flows through Benin City. The state also has parts of the Niger River system in its southern areas. When heavy rains fall, these rivers swell and overflow.

Second, Edo is in both the Niger Delta and Western Littoral zones. Parts of the state drain into the Niger Delta, while other parts drain into the coastal river systems of the southwest. This means water comes from multiple directions.

Third, Edo has rapid urbanization. Benin City and other towns are growing quickly. Many new buildings are constructed without proper drainage. Natural waterways are blocked. When heavy rain falls, water has nowhere to go.



The Three Flood Periods for Edo:

When?	What to Expect	How Serious?
April, May, June (Early rains)	Rains intensify. Rivers begin to rise. Urban areas with blocked drains see flash floods.	Low to Medium
July, August, September (Peak rainy season)	This is the most dangerous time. Heavy rains fill up rivers. The Ikpoba River overflows. Urban flooding worsens.	Medium to High
October, November (Late flooding)	Flooding continues. Recession flooding from upstream areas affects southern parts of the state.	Medium to High

WHICH PARTS OF EDO ARE AT RISK

Edo State falls within **Hydrological Area V (Niger Delta)** for its southern parts and **Hydrological Area VI (Western Littoral)** for most of the state.

By the numbers (from NIHSA):

Season	Risk Level	Number of Communities (across HA-V which includes parts of Edo)	Number of Communities (across HA-VI which includes most of Edo)	What This Means for Edo
AMJ (April-May-June)	High	531 communities (HA-V)	849 communities (HA-VI)	Early flooding begins. Rivers rise. Urban areas see flash floods.
JAS (July-August-September)	High	863 communities (HA-V)	1,195 communities (HA-VI)	This is peak flooding. Widespread inundation across the state.
ON (October-November)	High	587 communities (HA-V)	1,024 communities (HA-VI)	Late flooding continues. Southern parts of Edo remain at risk.

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

For roads: Edo has **39 road sections** identified as at risk of flooding in 2026 (Table 4.26 of the AFO).

THE URBAN FLOOD HOTSPOT: BENIN CITY

The AFO lists Edo as one of Nigeria's **Urban Flood Hotspots** for 2026.

Rank	State	Specific Location	Main Flood Cause	Risk Level
7	Edo	Benin City	Ikpoba River flooding; urban drainage failure	Medium to High

What this means for Benin City:

- The **Ikpoba River** will overflow its banks during peak flooding (JAS period)
- Urban drainage channels are blocked or inadequate
- Water will pool on roads and enter homes and businesses
- Low-lying neighborhoods near the Ikpoba River are at highest risk
- The AFO specifically mentions "urban drainage failure" as a cause — this means blocked drains are a major problem

If you live in Benin City, especially in low-lying areas near the Ikpoba River, you must take flooding seriously in 2026.

THE IKPoBA RIVER: YOUR MAIN FLOOD DANGER IN BENIN CITY

The Ikpoba River flows through Benin City. When heavy rains fall, the river swells. When it overflows, water spreads into surrounding neighborhoods.

What you should know about the Ikpoba River:

- It is fed by rainfall from a wide area, not just Benin City
- When upstream areas get heavy rain, the river can rise quickly
- The river's floodplain includes many neighborhoods that were built decades ago, before anyone understood flood risks
- The AFO warns that "urban drainage failure" makes the problem worse

What to do if you live near the Ikpoba River:

- Know the nearest high ground. Where will you go if the river rises?
- Pay attention to NIHSA warnings. Do not ignore them.
- Clear the drainage channels in your neighborhood. Blocked drains make flooding worse.
- If you see the river rising unusually high, do not wait for an official warning. Move to higher ground.

URBAN FLOODING IN BENIN CITY AND OTHER TOWNS

Edo's cities and towns face **urban flooding** when heavy rain falls on blocked drainage channels. The AFO specifically mentions "urban drainage failure" as a major cause of flooding in Edo.

What causes urban flooding in Edo:

- Drainage channels blocked with plastic, sand, and garbage (this is the number one cause)
- Buildings constructed in areas where water naturally flows
- Roads that do not have proper drainage
- Natural waterways that have been filled in or built over

What you can do in your town or city:

- **Do not throw garbage into drains.** This is the most important thing you can do.
- Clear the drainage channel in front of your home before the rains begin.
- If you see a blocked drain that needs government help, report it to your local government.
- If your home is in a low-lying area, prepare sandbags to divert water away from your door.
- Do not build structures on top of drainage channels or natural waterways.

THE NIGER DELTA CONNECTION

Southern parts of Edo (areas near the Niger River and the Delta State border) are part of the Niger Delta flood zone (HA-V).

What this means for southern Edo:

- You are affected by **recession flooding** from the Niger River
- Water that fell in northern Nigeria months ago will reach you in October and November
- Do not assume the flood season is over after September
- The ON period (October-November) is especially important for southern Edo communities

WHAT CROPS ARE AT RISK IN EDO

Edo has diverse agriculture, including root crops, vegetables, and tree crops. Here is how different crops will be affected.

Crop	When It Is Most at Risk	What to Do
Cassava	Year-round but worse in JAS and ON	Plant on mounds or ridges. Cassava does not like wet feet. With above-normal rainfall in the south, ridges are essential. Choose early to medium-maturing varieties (8-12 months).
Yam	JAS (July-September)	Plant on mounds in March-April. Plant in batches. Harvest before October if possible.

Crop	When It Is Most at Risk	What to Do
Maize	JAS (July-September)	Plant on ridges. Use early to medium-maturing varieties (90-110 days). Plant in batches.
Rice (where grown, especially in southern Edo)	JAS and ON	Plant early-maturing varieties. Clear drainage channels. In lowland areas, prepare small walls to hold water, but do not let water sit too deep.
Vegetables (okra, pepper, tomatoes, leafy greens)	JAS and ON	Use raised beds. During heavy rain, watch for fungal diseases. Improve air circulation between plants.
Oil Palm	Year-round	Oil palm can tolerate wet conditions, but young seedlings can be drowned. Ensure drainage channels are clear in oil palm plantations.
Rubber	Year-round	Rubber plantations on low-lying land may experience waterlogging. Ensure good drainage.
Cocoa	Year-round	Cocoa does not like wet feet. If you have cocoa on low-lying land, ensure drainage channels are clear. Watch for black pod disease (increased by wet conditions).
Plantain and Banana	Year-round	These crops can tolerate wet conditions but do not like standing water. Ensure good drainage around the base of each plant.

Special note for Edo farmers: The AFO forecasts **Moderately Wet to Very Wet** conditions for the South-South zone (which includes parts of Edo) during the wet season. This means more water than usual. Plant on ridges or mounds for all crops that do not like wet feet.

WHAT LIVESTOCK AND FISH FARMERS IN EDO MUST DO

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. Wet ground causes foot rot and pneumonia.
Prepare for heat	March-May (hot months)	Provide shade and plenty of water
Have an evacuation plan for animals	Before flood season	Where will you take your animals when water rises?

For poultry farmers in Edo:

- Reduce the number of birds per cage. Do not overcrowd.

- Open the sides of your poultry house for ventilation.
- Feed birds early in the morning and late in the evening (cooler hours).
- Add vitamins and electrolytes to drinking water.
- Never leave birds without water. Check twice every day.
- During heavy rains, ensure housing is leak-proof and raised off the ground.
- Watch for **coccidiosis** — wet litter increases this disease. Keep litter dry.

For goat and sheep farmers in Edo:

- Raised housing is essential. Do not let animals sleep on wet ground.
- Watch for foot rot. If an animal starts limping, treat immediately.
- Cut and store grasses in June and July. Use these during the August dry spell when grass may be scarce.
- During heavy rains and flooding, move animals to higher ground.

For pig farmers in Edo:

- Pigs must have dry sleeping areas. Wet conditions cause pneumonia.
- Provide shaded mud holes for pigs to cool themselves (pigs do not sweat).
- During hot May, ensure plenty of clean drinking water.
- In flood-prone areas (especially southern Edo near the Niger Delta), have a plan to move pigs to higher ground.

For fish farmers in Edo:

Fish farming is practiced in many parts of Edo, especially in areas with access to water.

Action	When to Do It	Why
Strengthen pond walls and embankments	Before heavy rains (March-June)	Floodwaters can wash away weak walls. Your fish will escape.

Action	When to Do It	Why
Clear drainage channels	Before April	Prevent overflow into your ponds from surrounding water
Install screens or netting at water inlets	Before April	Stop debris from entering and stop fish from escaping
Raise pond walls higher than normal	Before flood season	With above-normal rainfall, water levels will be higher than usual
Have harvest nets ready	Before JAS period	If flooding threatens, you may need to harvest quickly
Monitor water quality	Throughout rainy season	Inflow from floods can change water temperature and oxygen levels suddenly

Special warning for fish farmers in southern Edo (near the Niger Delta): Recession flooding in October-November can raise water levels suddenly. Have a plan to protect your ponds during this period.

HEDA
RESOURCE CENTRE

THE AUGUST DRY SPELL (LITTLE DRY SEASON)

Edo may experience a reduction in rainfall around August (the "August Break").

What to do during the August dry spell:

- Store water in tanks, drums, or ponds during July for use in August

- If you have vegetable farms, be prepared to water them if rain stops
 - Use stored fodder for livestock if grasses dry up
 - Do not assume the dry spell means the flood season is over. Flooding can return in September, and the ON period (October-November) still carries risk.
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THE ROAD DISRUPTION WARNING

Edo has **39 road sections** at risk of flooding in 2026.

What this means:

- Many roads, especially those near rivers and in low-lying areas, will become impassable during the flood season
- Benin City roads will be affected by urban flooding
- You may not be able to travel between communities
- Markets may become inaccessible
- Emergency services may not reach you quickly

What you should do:

- Stock up on essential supplies (food, medicine, fuel) before the flood peak (by late September)
 - If you need to travel for work or market, plan your trips before September
 - Identify alternative routes before roads are flooded
 - Listen to NIHSA and NEMA warnings about road closures
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WHAT TO DO IF FLOODING COMES

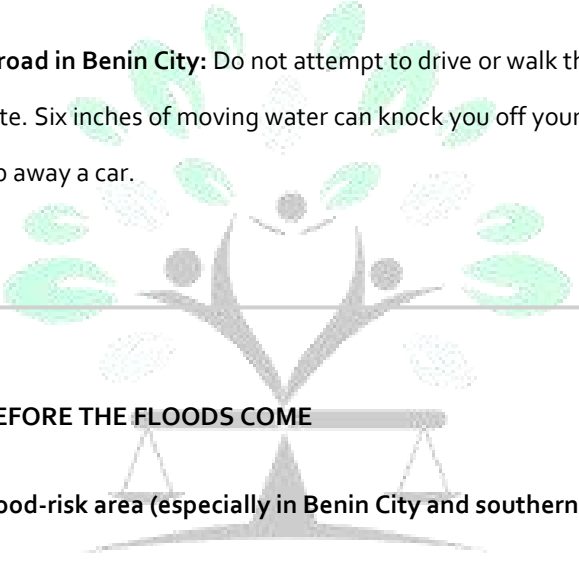
When NIHSA or NEMA sends a High Flood Risk warning:

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.

If you are in Benin City near the Ikpoba River: Pay attention to the river level. If you see it rising unusually high, do not wait for an official warning. Move to higher ground.

If you are on a flooded road in Benin City: Do not attempt to drive or walk through floodwater. Turn back or find another route. Six inches of moving water can knock you off your feet. One foot of moving water can sweep away a car.



WHAT TO PREPARE BEFORE THE FLOODS COME

Every household in a flood-risk area (especially in Benin City and southern Edo) 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. **This is especially important in Benin City.**
- If you have sandbags, keep them ready to divert water away from your door.

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 GOOD NEWS FOR EDO

Unlike northern states, Edo does not face severe drought during the dry season.

Dry season outlook (October 2026 - March 2027):

Zone	Forecast	What This Means
South-South (including parts of Edo)	Slightly Wet to Moderately Wet	You will have water throughout the dry season. No drought vulnerability.
South-West (including parts of Edo)	Normal to Slightly Wet	You will have adequate water throughout the dry season.

This means you do not need to worry about rivers stopping or severe water scarcity.

However, note that the ON period (October-November) is still part of the dry season outlook. This means during the early dry season, conditions will be wet enough to cause flooding from recession flows in southern Edo.

WHO TO CALL FOR HELP IN EDO

Agency	What They Do	Contact
NIHSA	Issues flood warnings	0800-NIHSA-NG

Agency	What They Do	Contact
NEMA	Disaster response and relief	0800-NEMA-NG
Edo 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 EDO

- **You will see flooding in 2026.** The worst months are July, August, and September. But October and November also bring risk, especially in southern Edo.
- **Benin City is an Urban Flood Hotspot.** The Ikpoba River will overflow, and blocked drainage channels will make flooding worse.
- **Urban drainage failure is a major problem in Edo.** Keep drains clear. Do not throw garbage into drainage channels. This is the most important thing you can do.
- **Southern Edo (near the Niger Delta)** is at risk from recession flooding in October-November. Do not assume the danger is over after September.
- **39 road sections in Edo are at risk of flooding.** Stock up on supplies before the flood peak.
- **The AFO forecasts Moderately Wet to Very Wet conditions** for the South-South zone. This means more water than usual.
- **Farmers:** Plant on mounds or ridges. Clear drainage channels. Watch for fungal diseases. For tree crops (cocoa, oil palm, rubber), ensure good drainage.
- **Fish farmers in southern Edo:** Prepare for recession flooding in October-November. Strengthen pond walls.

- **The good news:** You do not face severe drought like northern states. Your dry season will have adequate water.
 - **Do not wait until water arrives.** Prepare your emergency kit, know your escape route, and keep your drains clear.
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This information comes directly from the NIHSA 2026 Annual Flood Outlook.

PREPARE NOW. DO NOT WAIT.

