

2026 FLOOD GUIDE FOR KADUNA 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.

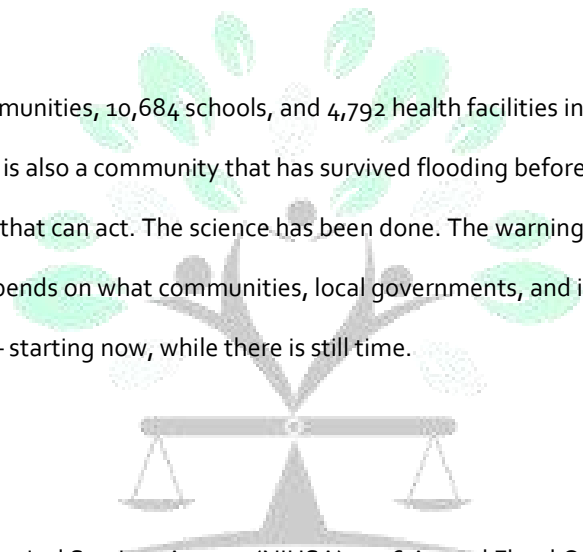
For northern farming communities, the challenge runs deeper, because the flood season is immediately followed by a severe dry period from December through February. The practical response is to treat flood season not only as a threat but as an opportunity — storing water in tanks, drums, and ponds during 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 KADUNA IN 2026

Kaduna State faces serious flooding in 2026, especially in its low-lying areas and communities along river courses. The state is part of the Niger Central hydrological zone, which means water that falls in Kaduna flows into the Niger River system.

Why is Kaduna vulnerable to flooding? Three main reasons:

First, Kaduna has several major rivers. The Kaduna River flows through the state capital and many communities. The state also has parts of other river systems. When heavy rains fall, these rivers swell and overflow into nearby communities.

Second, Kaduna is in the Niger Central zone. The AFO places Kaduna in Hydrological Area II (Niger Central). This means the state is affected by flooding from the Niger River system, as well as local flooding.

Third, Kaduna has urban flooding problems. Kaduna City and other towns have drainage channels that are often blocked with garbage. When heavy rain falls, water pools on roads and enters homes.

The Three Flood Periods for Kaduna:

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. Flooding spreads to low-lying communities. Urban flooding worsens.	Medium to High
October, November (Late flooding)	Flooding continues. Recession flooding affects parts of the state. Late-season crops are at risk.	Medium to High

RESOURCE CENTRE

WHICH PARTS OF KADUNA ARE AT RISK

Kaduna State falls within **Hydrological Area II (Niger Central)** and also has parts in **Hydrological Area VIII (Chad Basin)** for some northern areas.

By the numbers (from NIHSA for HA-II):

Season	Risk Level	Number of Communities (across HA-II which includes Kaduna)	What This Means for Kaduna
AMJ (April-May-June)	High	1,147 communities (for FCT, Kaduna, Kogi, Kwara, Niger combined)	Early flooding begins. Low-lying areas near rivers see water.
JAS (July-August-September)	High	1,832 communities (for FCT, Kaduna, Kogi, Kwara, Niger, Oyo, Plateau, Zamfara combined)	This is peak flooding. Widespread inundation across low-lying areas.
ON (October-November)	High	1,405 communities (for FCT, Kaduna, Kogi, Kwara, Niger, Oyo, Plateau, Zamfara combined)	Late flooding continues. Recession flooding affects the state.

From the AFO's HA-VIII tables (Chad Basin, for northern parts of Kaduna):

Season	Risk Level	Number of Communities (across HA-VIII which includes parts of Kaduna)
AMJ	High	4,441 communities
JAS	High	8,149 communities
ON	High	6,470 communities

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

For roads: Kaduna has **132 road sections** identified as at risk of flooding in 2026 (Table 4.26 of the AFO). This is the 2nd highest in Nigeria, behind only Lagos.

THE KADUNA RIVER: YOUR MAIN FLOOD DANGER

The Kaduna River flows through the state capital and many communities. It is a major tributary of the Niger River.

What you should know about the Kaduna River:

- It is fed by rainfall from a wide area, including the highlands of Kaduna and surrounding states
- When upstream areas get heavy rain, the river can rise quickly
- Low-lying communities along the river are at highest risk
- The river flows through Kaduna City, putting parts of the capital at risk

What to do if you live near the Kaduna 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 KADUNA CITY

Kaduna City faces serious urban flooding when heavy rain falls on blocked drainage channels.

What causes urban flooding in Kaduna City:

- Drainage channels blocked with plastic, sand, and garbage (the number one cause)
- Buildings constructed in areas where water naturally flows
- Roads that do not have proper drainage
- Rapid development without proper planning
- The Kaduna River overflowing its banks

What the AFO says about Kaduna's flood risk:

The AFO's road risk table shows **132 road sections at risk in Kaduna** — the 2nd highest in Nigeria, behind only Lagos. This means many roads in Kaduna State, including in the capital city, will become impassable during the flood season.

Known flood-prone areas in Kaduna State (based on historical records, not directly from the AFO but consistent with its risk assessment):

- **Kaduna City** – low-lying areas near the Kaduna River, areas with poor drainage
- **Zaria** – low-lying areas, areas near streams
- **Kafanchan** – low-lying areas
- **Birnin Gwari** – areas near rivers
- **Soba** – low-lying agricultural areas

What you can do in Kaduna City and other towns:

- **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 DROUGHT SITUATION IN KADUNA (DRY SEASON)

Unlike states in the far north, Kaduna does not face severe drought. But there is still a dry season to prepare for.

Wet season outlook (April-September 2026):

Zone	Forecast	What This Means
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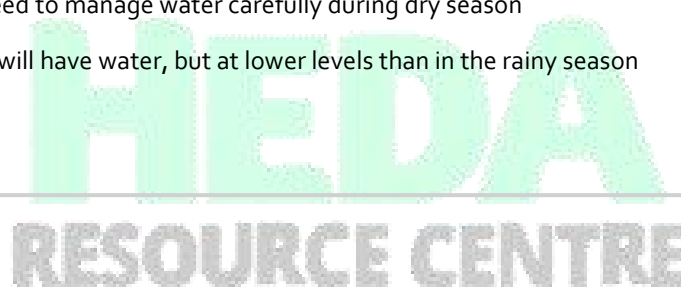
Zone	Forecast	What This Means
North-Central (including Kaduna)	Slightly Dry to Normal	You will have near-normal rainfall. But monitor water sources from May onwards.

Dry season outlook (October 2026 - March 2027):

Zone	Forecast	What This Means
North-Central (including Kaduna)	Moderately Dry to Slightly Dry	The dry season will be drier than normal. Baseflow in rivers will be below the wet-season peak.

What this means for Kaduna:

- You do not have the extreme "Very Dry" drought of the far north
- But you will still need to manage water carefully during dry season
- The Kaduna River will have water, but at lower levels than in the rainy season



WHAT CROPS ARE AT RISK IN KADUNA

Kaduna is a major agricultural state, known for maize, sorghum, millet, rice, groundnuts, cotton, and ginger. Here is how different crops will be affected.

Crop	When It Is Most at Risk	What to Do
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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. Second season maize is at risk in ON period.
Sorghum	JAS and ON	Sorghum is a key crop in Kaduna. The ON period flood (October-November) can destroy sorghum still in the field. Plant early-maturing varieties. Harvest before October if possible.
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.
Rice (lowland areas)	JAS and ON	Rice can handle water, but too much will drown it. Plant early-maturing varieties. Clear drainage channels.
Ginger	JAS (July-September)	Kaduna is famous for ginger. Ginger does not like wet feet. Plant on ridges. Ensure good drainage. Wet conditions can increase fungal diseases in ginger.
Cowpea	JAS (July-September)	Choose early-maturing varieties. Plant in April-May. Harvest before the peak flood arrives in August-September.
Groundnuts	ON (October-November)	Groundnuts are at risk during late flooding. Harvest early or plant in areas away from floodplains.

Crop	When It Is Most at Risk	What to Do
Cotton	JAS and ON	Cotton does not like wet feet. Plant on ridges. Harvest before October if possible.
Vegetables (tomatoes, peppers, onions)	JAS and ON	Use raised beds. Onions do not like wet feet — plant on ridges.

Special note for Kaduna farmers:

Because Kaduna is in **High Flood Risk** during JAS, you will see significant flooding in low-lying agricultural areas. The main dangers are:

1. **Waterlogging** in low-lying fields (standing water that drowns crops)
2. **Fungal diseases** in many crops (especially in ginger, maize, and sorghum)
3. **Soil erosion** on sloping land
4. **Late flooding** in ON period destroying late-season crops

What to do about waterlogging: Dig drainage channels in your fields to let excess water escape. Plant on ridges or mounds for all crops that do not like wet feet.

What to do about fungal diseases: In ginger (very important for Kaduna), ensure good drainage. Remove infected plants promptly. In maize and sorghum, space plants properly so air can flow.

What to do about erosion: Plant cover crops to hold the soil. Use contour ridges on sloping land.

What to do about late flooding: Plant early-maturing varieties. Try to harvest before October.

WHAT LIVESTOCK FARMERS IN KADUNA 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?
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.

For cattle herders in Kaduna:

- The dry season (December-February) will be **Moderately Dry to Slightly Dry**.
- Identify alternative water sources now. Do not wait until December.

- Plan grazing routes to ensure access to water.
- The Kaduna River valley will retain some water longer than other areas, but it is also flood-prone during JAS.

For goat and sheep farmers in Kaduna:

- Raised housing is essential during flood season. 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 Kaduna:

- 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)

Kaduna 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 continue into ON period.

THE ROAD DISRUPTION WARNING

Kaduna has **132 road sections** at risk of flooding in 2026. This is the 2nd highest in Nigeria, behind only Lagos.

What this means:

- Many roads will become impassable during the flood season, especially in low-lying areas and near rivers
- Major roads in and around Kaduna City will be affected
- The Kaduna-Abuja road (a major highway) may be affected in some sections
- Roads connecting Kaduna to other states may be affected
- 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
- If you travel on the Kaduna-Abuja road, check road conditions before you leave

WHAT TO DO IF FLOODING COMES

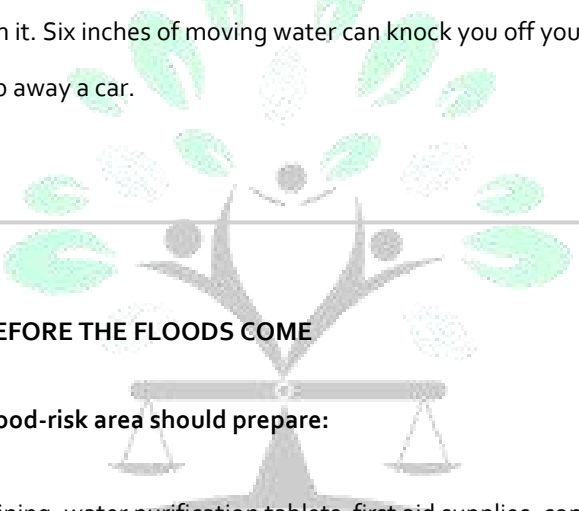
When NIHSA or NEMA sends a High Flood Risk warning:

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 a low-lying area near the Kaduna 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 in Kaduna City: Pay attention to local flooding. If you see water pooling on roads, do not attempt to drive through it. 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 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.
- Do not throw garbage into drains.

For farmers: Store harvested crops in elevated storage. Dig drainage channels in low-lying fields. Plant early-maturing varieties.

For livestock owners: Identify high ground where you can move animals during flooding. Store water and fodder for the dry season.

WHO TO CALL FOR HELP IN KADUNA

Agency	What They Do	Contact
NIHSA	Issues flood warnings	0800-NIHSA-NG
NEMA	Disaster response and relief	0800-NEMA-NG
Kaduna State SEMA	State-level emergency response	Contact your LGA Agriculture Officer or LGA Chairman for local numbers
NiMet	Weather forecasts	www.nimet.gov.ng
Kaduna State Roads Agency	Road maintenance and closures	Ask your LGA chairman for contact information



THE BOTTOM LINE FOR KADUNA

- **You will see significant flooding in 2026.** Kaduna is in High Flood Risk during AMJ, JAS, and ON.
- **The worst months are July, August, and September (JAS).** This is the peak flood season for the state.
- **October and November also carry risk** from recession flooding and late-season crop damage.
- **The Kaduna River is your main flood danger.** Low-lying communities along the river are at highest risk.

- **132 road sections in Kaduna are at risk of flooding.** This is the 2nd highest in Nigeria, behind only Lagos. Stock up on supplies before the flood peak.
- **Kaduna City faces urban flooding.** Keep drains clear. Do not throw garbage into drainage channels.
- **The Kaduna-Abuja road may be affected.** If you travel on this road, check conditions before you leave.
- **Farmers:** Plant early-maturing varieties. Dig drainage channels. Harvest before October if possible. Ginger farmers should watch for fungal diseases.
- **The dry season will be Moderately Dry to Slightly Dry.** Water will be less available than in the rainy season, but not severely scarce.
- **Do not wait until water arrives.** Prepare your emergency kit, know your escape route, and stay alert through November.

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

PREPARE NOW. DO NOT WAIT.

