

2026 FLOOD GUIDE FOR YOBE 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 YOBE IN 2026

Yobe State faces a very serious and unique situation in 2026. You have two major problems to deal with: **flooding** during the rainy season and **severe drought** during the dry season. This is what the AFO calls **compound risk** — too much water followed by too little water in the same year.

Why is Yobe so vulnerable? Three big reasons:

First, Yobe is in the Lake Chad basin. The Komadugu-Yobe River flows along the border between Yobe and Borno, and other waterways flow through the state. When heavy rains fall, these waterways overflow and flood communities. The AFO specifically mentions "**dense flooding**" along the Komadugu-Yobe river system affecting Yobe.

Second, Yobe is semi-arid. Even during the rainy season, the state does not receive as much rain as southern states. But when rain does come, it often comes hard and fast, causing flash floods.

Third, the dry season in Yobe is extremely harsh. The AFO forecasts **Very Dry** conditions from December through February. Rivers will decline sharply. Some waterways may cease flow entirely by December and January.

The Three Flood Periods for Yobe:

When?	What to Expect	How Serious?
April, May, June (Early rains)	Flooding begins in some areas. Rivers and waterways start to rise.	Low to Medium
July, August, September (Peak rainy season)	This is the most dangerous time for flooding. Heavy rains fill up the Komadugu-Yobe river system. Dense flooding affects many communities.	Medium to High
October, November (Late flooding)	Flooding continues. Water from the Sahel catchment converges toward Lake Chad. Yobe sees peak flood levels in some areas during this period.	Medium to High

WHICH PARTS OF YOBE ARE AT RISK

Yobe State falls within **Hydrological Area III (Upper Benue)** for some areas and **Hydrological Area VIII (Chad Basin)** for most of the state.

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

Season	Risk Level	Number of Communities (across HA-VIII which includes Yobe)	What This Means for Yobe

Season	Risk Level	Number of Communities (across HA-VIII which includes Yobe)	What This Means for Yobe
AMJ (April- May-June)	High	4,441 communities (for Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Yobe combined)	Early flooding begins in some areas.
JAS (July- August- September)	High	8,149 communities (for Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Yobe combined)	This is the peak. Widespread flooding across the state. This is when the Komadugu-Yobe river system is fully inundated with dense flooding.
ON (October- November)	High	6,470 communities (for Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Yobe combined)	Late flooding continues. Yobe sees peak flood levels as water converges toward Lake Chad.

From the AFO's HA-III tables (Upper Benue, for parts of Yobe):

Season	Risk Level	Number of Communities (across HA-III which includes parts of Yobe)
AMJ	High	3,301 communities
JAS	High	6,176 communities
ON	High	4,744 communities

Annual total for Yobe: Yobe is among the states with High Flood Risk in all three seasons.

Thousands of communities across the state will see flooding in 2026.

For roads: The AFO's road risk table (Table 4.26) does not list Yobe separately. This suggests that Yobe has fewer than 15 major road sections at risk. However, the AFO's community risk numbers show significant flooding — this means many rural roads will be affected.

THE KOMADUGU-YOBE RIVER: YOUR MAIN FLOOD DANGER

The Komadugu-Yobe River flows along the border between Yobe and Borno. It is the main waterway in the area and one of the key rivers feeding Lake Chad.

What the AFO says about flooding in the northeast:

"The north-east, where dense flooding along the Komadugu-Yobe and Ngadda river systems affects Borno, Yobe, and Jigawa."

What this means for Yobe:

- The Komadugu-Yobe River will overflow its banks
- This is not just a few communities — it is **"dense flooding"** affecting many areas
- If you live near the Komadugu-Yobe River or any of its tributaries, you must prepare for serious flooding
- The flooding is described as "dense" — meaning widespread, not just isolated spots

What to do if you live near the Komadugu-Yobe River:

- Know the nearest high ground. Where will you go if the river rises?
 - Pay attention to NIHSA warnings
 - Clear the drainage channels in your community
 - If you see the river rising unusually high, do not wait for an official warning. Move to higher ground.
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WHEN IS THE WORST TIME FOR YOBE?

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

- Heavy rains fall across the Sahel region
- The Komadugu-Yobe river system swells and overflows
- The AFO's "dense flooding" occurs
- Farmlands and communities near waterways are inundated

But the **ON period (October, November)** also brings serious flooding. The AFO says:

"The ON period sees the highest geographic spread of flood risk for Hydrological Area VIII (Chad Basin). Borno and Yobe record their peak flood levels as water from the Sahel catchment converges on Lake Chad."

What this means in simple words:

- In many parts of Nigeria, flooding decreases in October and November
- In Yobe, flooding can actually **peak** in October-November
- Do not assume the danger is over after September. Stay alert through November.

THE DROUGHT PROBLEM IN YOBE (COMPOUND RISK)

Yobe has a severe problem that 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)	Very Dry to Moderately Dry conditions	Even during the rainy season, Yobe does not get much rain. There is already water scarcity.
Flood Season (JAS-ON)	Medium to High flood risk	When rain does come, it comes hard and fast. The Komadugu-Yobe river system floods. This is "dense

Period	What Will Happen	What This Means for You
		flooding."
Dry Season (December-February)	Very Dry conditions	This is severe. Rivers will decline sharply. Some waterways may cease flow entirely by December and January.

What this means for Yobe farmers and herders:

- Your crops may be damaged or destroyed by "dense flooding" during JAS-ON period
- Then your animals may die of thirst in December-February because water becomes very scarce
- You must plan for BOTH too much water and too little water in the same year

The AFO states for the North-East zone (which includes Yobe):

"Communities relying on these rivers for domestic water supply and livestock watering will require managed water supply interventions."

In simple words: By December and January, the government and aid organizations may need to bring water to communities because water will be very hard to find. Do not rely only on outside help. Store water yourself.



THE LAKE CHAD BASIN CONNECTION

Yobe is part of the Lake Chad basin. The lake and its surrounding waterways are central to life in the state, even though the lake itself has shrunk dramatically.

What the AFO says about the ON period for Yobe:

"Borno and Yobe record their peak flood levels as water from the Sahel catchment converges on Lake Chad."

What this means for you:

- Water from a wide area (the Sahel catchment) flows toward Lake Chad
- This water passes through or near Yobe
- The peak flood levels in Yobe happen in October-November, not during the main rainy season
- Communities in Yobe (especially those near the Komadugu-Yobe River) should pay special attention to the ON period

WHAT CROPS ARE AT RISK IN YOBE

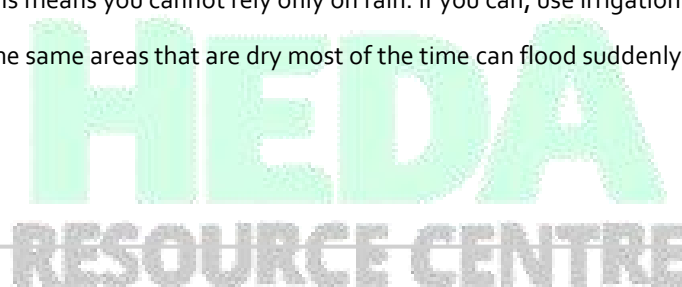
Farming in Yobe is challenging because of the dry conditions. But when floods come, they can destroy the crops that do grow.

Crop	When It Is Most at Risk	What to Do
Sorghum	JAS and ON	Sorghum is a key crop in Yobe. It is drought-tolerant but does not like standing water. 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 very drought-tolerant and well-suited to Yobe's dry conditions. But it 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. Harvest early or plant in areas away from floodplains.
Rice (where grown, near the Komadugu-Yobe River)	JAS and ON	If you grow rice in lowland areas near the river, plant early-maturing varieties. The ON period flood may actually help rice, but too much water will drown it.
Vegetables (tomatoes, peppers, onions)	JAS and ON	Use raised beds. Onions do not like wet feet — plant on ridges. In Yobe's dry conditions, you may need to irrigate vegetables during dry spells.

Special note for Yobe farmers:

The AFO says that even during the wet season, Yobe will have **Very Dry to Moderately Dry** conditions. This means you cannot rely only on rain. If you can, use irrigation for high-value crops. But be careful — the same areas that are dry most of the time can flood suddenly when rain does come.



WHAT LIVESTOCK FARMERS IN YOBE MUST DO

The dry season (December to February) is a critical danger for livestock in Yobe. The AFO says rivers will decline sharply. Some waterways may cease flow entirely. Your animals will have very little water unless you store it.

For all livestock owners:

Action	When to Do It	Why
Vaccinate all animals	February-March (before rains start)	Disease spreads faster when animals are stressed by flood or drought
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 during floods
Store water for dry season	During flood season (July-October)	THIS IS CRITICAL. By December, water will be very hard to find. Store as much water as you can.
Cut and store fodder	June-September	Grasses will be scarce in dry season. Make hay now.
Identify alternative water sources	Before December	Where will your animals drink when water becomes scarce? Boreholes? Stored water?

For cattle herders in Yobe:

- The dry season (December-February) will be **Very Dry**. This is severe.
- **Rivers will decline sharply.** Some waterways may cease flow entirely by December and January.
- 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 cattle when water runs out?
- The Komadugu-Yobe River may retain some water longer than other areas, but it is also flood-prone during JAS and ON.
- **Store water in tanks, drums, or constructed ponds during July-October.** This water will save your animals in December-February.

For goat and sheep farmers in Yobe:

- 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.
- **Store water** for your small ruminants. They need less water than cattle, but they still need water.

For poultry farmers in Yobe:

- 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.** Water may be scarce, but birds cannot survive without it.

For camel herders in Yobe (if applicable):

- Camels are adapted to dry conditions, but even they need water
- The Very Dry conditions from December-February will stress camels
- Ensure camels have access to stored water during dry season
- Camels can tolerate flooding better than cattle, but they still need dry resting areas

THE AUGUST DRY SPELL (LITTLE DRY SEASON)

Yobe 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
- 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 peak in October-November.

THE COMPOUND RISK SUMMARY FOR YOBE

Here is what the compound flood and drought risk means for Yobe:

Risk Type	When It Happens	What You Should Do
Flood risk	JAS (July-September) and ON (October-November)	Prepare for "dense flooding" along the Komadugu-Yobe River. Clear drainage. Raise livestock housing. Know your evacuation route. Plant early-maturing crops.
Drought risk	Dry season (December-February)	Store water during flood season. This is the most important thing you can do. 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. The drought will come right after the floods.

RESOURCE CENTRE

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 near the Komadugu-Yobe River: Pay attention to the water level. If you see it rising, do not wait for an official warning. Move to higher ground. The AFO warns of "dense flooding" — this means widespread, not just a small area.

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

This is the most important section for Yobe.

Action	When to Do It	Why
Store water in tanks, drums, or ponds	July-October (flood season)	THIS IS CRITICAL. By December, water will be very hard to find. Store as much as you can.
Cut and store grass for animal feed	June-September	Pasture will be gone in dry season. Make hay now.
Repair wells and boreholes	Before December	Groundwater levels will drop. Make sure your water source is working.
Reduce herd size if you cannot secure water	October-November	Better to sell animals early than find them dead of thirst in January.
Coordinate with neighbors on water sharing	Before dry season	Communities that plan together survive better.
Notify local government if your community has no water source	Before December	The AFO says "managed water supply interventions" may be needed. Speak up now.

WHO TO CALL FOR HELP IN YOBE

Agency	What They Do	Contact
NIHSA	Issues flood warnings	o800-NIHSA-NG

Agency	What They Do	Contact
NEMA	Disaster response and relief	0800-NEMA-NG
Yobe State SEMA	State-level emergency response	Contact your LGA Agriculture Officer or LGA Chairman for local numbers
NiMet	Weather forecasts	www.nimet.gov.ng
Lake Chad Basin Commission	Manages Lake Chad water resources	Ask your LGA chairman for contact information

THE BOTTOM LINE FOR YOBE

- **You will see "dense flooding" in 2026** along the Komadugu-Yobe River system. The worst months for flooding are July, August, and September. But October and November also bring peak flood levels.
- **You have compound risk:** Floods in wet season, then **Very Dry** conditions in dry season (December-February). Rivers will decline sharply. Some waterways may cease flow entirely.
- **The dry season in Yobe is severe.** The AFO says "managed water supply interventions" will be needed. But do not rely only on government help. Store water yourself during the flood season.
- **The Komadugu-Yobe River is your main flood danger.** The AFO specifically warns of "dense flooding" — widespread, not just isolated.
- **Farmers:** Plant early-maturing varieties. Harvest before October if possible. Even during wet season, conditions are Very Dry to Moderately Dry — you may need irrigation.
- **Livestock owners:** THIS IS CRITICAL. Store water during July-October for the dry season. Cut and store fodder. By December, water will be very hard to find. Your animals will suffer without stored water.

- **Cattle herders:** Consider reducing herd size before the dry season. Identify alternative water sources now. Plan migration routes early.
 - **Do not wait until water arrives.** Prepare your emergency kit, know your escape route, and store water for the dry season.
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This information comes directly from the NIHSA 2026 Annual Flood Outlook.

PREPARE NOW. DO NOT WAIT.

