

More than 500 dead, thousands displaced in Nigeria amid worst floods in years

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The file photo shows people walking through floodwaters after heavy rainfall in Hadeja, Nigeria, September 19, 2022.

Lagos, October 13 (RHC)-- At least 500 people have been killed and thousands of others displaced as a result of floods in Nigeria since the start of the rainy season this year in what has been described as the worst floods to hit the African country in years.

Floods caused by abundant rains and poor infrastructure have affected vast swathes of the country, sparking fears of food insecurity and inflation. In a statement released in Lagos, Nigeria's Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs said "over 1.4 million persons were displaced, about 500 persons have been reported dead... and 1,546 persons were injured."

"Similarly, 45,249 houses were totally damaged... while 70,566 hectares of farmlands were completely destroyed," said the statement from the ministry's Deputy Director of Information Rhoda Ishaku Iliya.

National Emergency Management Agency spokesman Manzo Ezekiel said on Wednesday the latest figures were from last weekend. The rainy season usually begins around June, but most deaths and displacements started "around August and September," Ezekiel said. The rainy season typically ends in November in northern states and in December in the south.

"It is on record that over 1.4 million persons were displaced, with about 500 persons reported dead, 790,254 persons moved out of their locations, while 1,546 persons were injured," local Premium Times news outlet quoted the permanent secretary, Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, Nasir Sani-Gwarzo, as saying.

"Similarly, 44, 099 houses were partially damaged, 45,249 houses, totally damaged, 76,168 hectares of farm lands were partially destroyed, while 70, 566 hectares of farm lands were completely destroyed."

Premium Times reported that at least 31 Nigeria states have experienced flooding in 2022, including Kogi, Jigawa, Kebbi and Bayelsa. Emergency services say the flooding experienced this year is the worst on record since 2012.

This week, fuel scarcity caused long queues at petrol stations in the capital Abuja. Tankers were blocked by floods in neighboring states. In the southern state of Anambra, 76 people died when a boat capsized on Friday during the flooding of the Niger River.

Floods were also caused by the release of water from several dams, a process that was meant to prevent excessive flooding. More abundant rains are expected in the coming weeks.

Until Thursday, "heavy rainfall is anticipated over parts of Taraba, Ebonyi, Benue and Cross Rivers State," the Meteorological Agency said. "Flash flooding is likely." Nigeria and other countries of the Sub-Saharan Africa have been disproportionately affected by climate change in recent years.

Rice producers have warned the devastating floods could impact prices in the country of some 200 million people. Last month, the World Food Program and the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization said Nigeria was among six countries facing a high risk of catastrophic levels of hunger.

<https://www.radiohc.cu/en/noticias/internacionales/301741-more-than-500-dead-thousands-displaced-in-nigeria-amid-worst-floods-in-years>



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