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Erosion consumes 17 houses, three families — Calabar residents

AUGUST 1, 2014 BY MUDIAGA AFFE 0 COMMENTS

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An area affected by erosion.

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Residents of the Ikot Effanga area of Calabar metropolis in Cross River State say no fewer than three families have been washed away and 17 houses consumed by erosion.

It was learnt that 10 more houses were under the threat of being eroded if the torrents of rainfall continued. The houses under threats have at least five persons in each family.

Our correspondent, who visited the devastated portion of the community which is behind the Calabar station of the Nigeria Television Authority, observed that despite the threat to lives, most families had yet to relocate.

In one of the houses which was three kilometres away from a massive gully erosion site, resident of the building, Mr. Nya Ekpo, said residents of the community whose houses were under threat did not have anywhere to go.

Ekpo identified the three missing families that disappeared after the downpour last Wednesday to include Udo (family of three); Elizabeth (family of two) and Uko (family of three).

Ekpo said the erosion threat to the area was compounded by a government contractor that abandoned the drainage project eight years ago that would have properly channeled the flood.

He said, "So far, 17 houses have disappeared, even my own house is under threat as it is not far from the erosion site. We do not have anywhere to go to. Where do I start from? Three families were wiped away during the last rainfall."

Another resident of the area, Moses Eyo, said they lived in fear, especially when it rained.

Eyo said, "I have relocated from my room to the sitting room because my room is near the gully. We all sleep in the parlour now. Anytime it rains my blood pressure increases. We are appealing to the state and the federal governments to intervene urgently."

Chief Press Secretary to the state Governor, Mr. Christian Ita, said government was doing its best to address the numerous cases of erosion confronting the state capital.

"A lot of intervention has been going on and we will continue to do that," he said.

The Commissioner representing Cross River State in the board of the Niger Delta Development Commission, Mr. Paul Adah, called on the National Emergency Management Agency and the State Emergency Management Agency to urgently resettle residents occupying the houses under threat.

He also warned residents to stop blocking water channels, warning that the drainage problem in the area was compounded by indiscriminate dumping of refuse.

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Adah also called on the Federal Government to release the ecological intervention funds that was due to the NDDC to tackle problems of erosion affecting the region.

"The FG should release the ecological funds due the NDDC to tackle problems of this nature in the region," he said.

The head of the information unit of SEMA, Mr. David Akate, said erosion of such magnitude could only be handled by the state ministries of environment and works.

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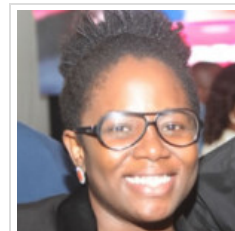


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