

30 die, scores missing in Niger flood disaster

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From **John Adams**, Minna

No fewer than 30 people have been confirmed killed as rampaging flood ripped through three communities in Mokwa Local Government Area of Niger State.

Scores were injured while 100 others are said to be missing while emergency responders intensify search and rescue operation.

The flood occurred following a torrential rainfall which lasted all through Wednesday night. According to the Niger State Emergency Management Agency (NSEMA), over 200 houses were affected by the flood which the agency said was the worst in the state in recent time.

A similar disaster in the area last year killed over 50, including women and children and washed away houses and farmland.

According to a statement by NSEMA, the latest disaster occurred at Tiffin maza and Anguwan hausawa area in Mokwa town and other nearby communities.

“The incidence occurred last night (Wednesday night) during a torrential downpour of very high intensity that lasted several hours. The surging flood submerged and washed away over 50 residential houses with their occupants,” the agency in a statement by the Director General, Alhaji Mohammed Arah said.

He said the agency in collaboration with Mokwa Local Government council, local divers and other volunteers were conducting operations to rescue survivors and possibly recover dead ones.

The Director General disclosed further that as at 10am yesterday only three survivors (a woman and her two children) have been rescued and were receiving treatment at the make-shift Mokwa General Hospital, adding that 30 corpses have so far been recovered by the rescuers.

Over 100 people are said to be unaccounted for but rescue operation was ongoing at press time with the hope of recovering more bodies.

The state government has condoled with the people of Mokwa over the unfortunate incident it described as sad.

Special Adviser on Communication, Media and Strategy, Jonathan Vatsa, said in a statement that the disaster was a devastating one and therefore called on the Federal Government to come to the rescue of the state in order to reduce the sufferings of the affected people.

He equally sympathised with the families of those who lost their lives even as he assured the people of government's support.

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Meanwhile, the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) in Niger, has engaged stakeholders on preparedness and mitigation strategies towards alleviating the impact of anticipated floods in the state.

The Director-General, Mrs Zubaida Umar, said this at a stakeholders' engagement on National Disaster Preparedness and Response Campaign (NPRC) 2025 in Minna, yesterday.

The theme of the engagement is 'Strengthening Resilience, Enhancing Preparedness and Response.'

Represented by Dr. Ishaya Chonoko, zonal director in charge of North West Zone of NEMA, Umar said the engagement was to strengthen resilience, enhance preparedness and respond to flood disasters across the country.

She said NEMA had received insights into rainfall patterns and flood scenarios for 2025 from the Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NIMET) and Nigeria Hydrological Services Agency (NIHSA).

"NEMA will deploy teams to all states to engage with flood-prone communities, taking early warning messages to the grassroots.

"This will be done with the support of state Emergency Management Agencies (SEMAs), Local Emergency Management Committees (LEMCs) and community volunteers," she said.

The DG called on partners, such as the traditional institutions, religious organisations, women and youth groups and the media, to support the initiative, saying disaster management was everyone's business.

According to her, all hands must be on deck to take the right early warning to safeguard communities at risk, protect critical infrastructure and support uninterrupted socio-economic activities in various communities.

“There is a need to step up our games on what we can do differently from the past and come up with solutions and prepare for quick response,” she added.

Also speaking, Dr. Hussaini Ibrahim, overseeing director-general, Niger State Emergency Management Agency (NSEMA), said the meeting would proffer solutions to flooding, preparedness and response from expected flooding to save lives and property and minimise flooding.

Similarly, Alhaji Ahmed Yumu, Commissioner, Ministry for Humanitarian and Disaster Management, said the campaign would help reduce impacts of annually recurring floods in the state.