

CHAD, NIGER & NIGERIA

Flooding

Briefing note – 30 September 2020

Crisis Impact Overview

Heavy rains have caused extensive flooding in Chad, Niger and Nigeria since the onset of rainy seasons in June. Chad's rainy season, expected to last until October, is the heaviest in the past 30 years (OCHA 25/08/2020). Flooding in Niger has affected almost twice the estimated population. Flooding in Nigeria is less widespread than in 2019, but is still significant (NIHSA 06/2020; OCHA 21/07/2020).

Almost 60% of all affected people and over half of reported deaths from the three countries are in Niger, the country most affected by floods (UNHCR 15/09/2020). Flooding has affected more than 516,000 people across all eight regions, and resulted in at least 71 deaths (UNHCR 17/09/2020; OCHA 24/09/2020). Nigeria is at risk of cross-border flooding, given it is downstream from other flood-affected countries along the Niger River basin, including Niger (HNO 12/2019).

In all three countries, heavy rainfall and flash floods have resulted in the widespread destruction of shelters, driving displacement. Emergency shelters are overcrowded and unsanitary, increasing the risk of COVID-19 infection and the spread of water-borne diseases (IOM 1/09/2020; OCHA 07/09/2020).

The Boko Haram insurgency in the Lake Chad region complicates flood relief efforts and increases protection concerns for highly vulnerable displaced populations in all three countries. The situation is most severe in northeast Nigeria, where over 2.7 million people are displaced and 10.6 million people are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance, especially food, shelter and WASH (OCHA 14/09/2020; UNHCR 31/07/2020). Additionally, cross-border violence from Mali affects northwest Niger and insecurity caused by banditry poses further risks to flood-affected populations in northwest Nigeria.

Key priorities across the three countries



+880,000
people affected by flooding



+544,000
hectares of crops destroyed



High risk
of multiple disease outbreaks

National response capacity

Various national government agencies and national Red Cross societies

International response capacity

UN agencies (IOM, OCHA, UNHCR, UNICEF WFP), INGOs

Anticipated scope and scale

Based on projections and patterns from previous years, flooding is likely to continue into October in all countries. The number of people affected in Chad and Niger has already significantly exceeded estimates (OCHA 21/07/2020; UN News 28/08/2020).

Needs will continue to be exacerbated by COVID-19 and ongoing insecurity in the Lake Chad region, northwest Niger, and northwest Nigeria. Both issues increase protection risks and limit access to basic services, shelter, and humanitarian assistance (IOM 30/04/2020).

Humanitarian constraints



Heavy rainfall has made some roads impassable in all countries and has temporarily blocked access to four IDP sites in Niger (Floodlist 06/09/2020; Tchadinfos 10/08/2020; UNHCR 17/09/2020).

Armed group attacks on aid workers are frequent in the Lake Chad region. Recent killings have been reported in Nigeria and Niger (ACAPS 13/08/2020; OCHA 14/09/2020). Armed escorts are required in three Nigerian states.

COVID-19 prevention measures including curfews in Nigeria and Chad and limitations on gatherings in Nigeria may continue to complicate humanitarian operations.

Sectoral needs



Shelter and NFIs

Emergency shelter is a major need among affected populations. In northeast Nigeria, heavy rainfall and high winds have left 19,781 shelters damaged or destroyed, affecting some 69,7000 IDPs in an area where shelter needs were already severe (OCHA 14/09/2020). In Chad, 5,250 temporary shelters were destroyed in N'Djamena (IOM 01/09/2020).

Affected people in all three countries have lost essential household items in the floods. NFI needs include mosquito nets, bedding and hygiene kits (IFRC 27/08/2020; UN News 28/08/2020; IOM DTM 06/09/2020).



Food and livelihoods

Flooding has destroyed hundreds of thousands of hectares of crops across the three countries, affecting access to food and livelihoods. This may lead to very poor agricultural harvests and increase already significant levels of food insecurity: 2 million in Niger, 3.7 million in Chad and up to 7 million in Nigeria (WFP accessed 23/09/2020; Cadre Harmonise 10/08/2020; OCHA 14/09/2020). This situation is most critical in Chad, where almost 25% of the population is food insecure.

Over two-thirds of the Nigeria population and over 80% of people living in Chad and Niger depend on farming for subsistence and livelihoods. There is an urgent need for food and vegetable seeds assistance to make up for lost crops (OCHA 11/09/2020; FSP accessed 22/09/2020). Reduced incomes and food stocks as a result of COVID-19 measures make the need for assistance especially pressing.



Health

Stagnant water increases the risk of waterborne diseases in all three countries. This risk is especially acute in overcrowded IDP camps and densely populated urban areas such as Niger's and Chad's capital cities, both heavily affected by flooding (HNO 12/2019; IFRC 27/08/2020).

In the first 10 days of September, 10 people died from malaria and another unidentified disease in an IDP camp in Lac province, Chad. There is a new outbreak of chikungunya in eastern Chad with 24,858 cases (OCHA 18/09/2020; OCHA 11/09/2020). These issues may compound pressure on healthcare systems overwhelmed by COVID-19.



WASH

Flooding has destroyed WASH infrastructure, reducing access to safe drinking water and essential services. In N'Djamena, Chad, 11% of the displaced population are in need of water. Across Niger, 713 water wells have been destroyed (UN News 28/08/2020; Africa Radio 09/09/2020).

WASH infrastructure destruction combined with overcrowded living conditions of affected people presents a high risk for the emergence and spread of diseases including COVID-19. Provision of adequate sanitation facilities and hygiene promotion are needed (IFRC 27/08/2020).

Aggravating factors

COVID-19

As of 29 September 1,185 confirmed COVID-19 cases are recorded in Chad, 1,196 in Niger, and 58,460 in Nigeria (WHO 30/09/2020). Economic shocks resulting from COVID-19 related market disruptions, movement restrictions and reduced livelihood options have affected people's ability to buy food, with decreased stocks and increased prices. Consequently they are less able to meet additional needs arising from repeated flooding than in previous years (OCHA 30/06/2020; OCHA 31/08/2020). People in Chad, the poorest and most food insecure country of the three, will struggle most to cope with these additional shocks, particularly in conflict- and flood-affected Lac province. In northeast Nigeria, the number of people in need of urgent assistance has increased from 7.9 million to 10.6 million since the onset of COVID-19 (OCHA 14/09/2020). At the same time, COVID prevention measures have reduced access to basic services and reduced the presence of humanitarian workers in affected areas. Flooding increases the risk of disease outbreaks, adding pressure to fragile and overstretched healthcare systems – particularly in conflict-affected areas of each country – already impacted by COVID-19 (OCHA 14/09/2020).

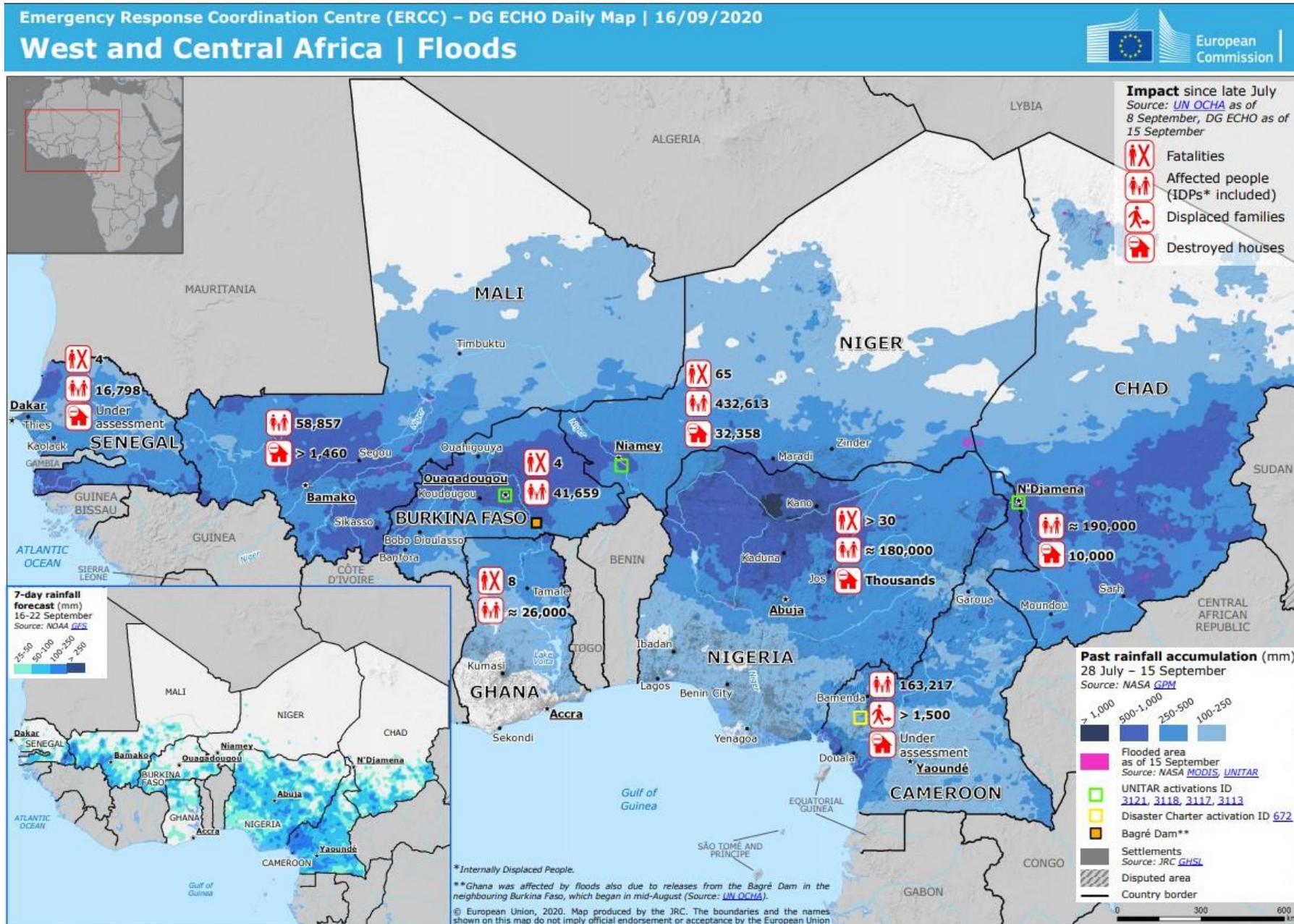
Insecurity

The Boko Haram insurgency severely affects security conditions in the Lake Chad region of all three countries. Frequent, indiscriminate attacks on villages have resulted in over 3.4 million internal and cross-border displaced people in the region, 80% of whom are in Nigeria (UNHCR 31/07/2020; OCHA 18/09/2020; OCHA 14/09/2020). This violence both increases humanitarian needs and reduces access to affected populations, particularly in Borno state, Nigeria where around 800,000 people are completely inaccessible (OCHA 05/04/2019). Overcrowded camps are unable to meet shelter needs with almost 25,000 IDPs sleeping outside or in shared spaces in northeast Nigeria and only 3% of IDPs living in camps in Chad's Lac province having a solid shelter (OCHA 18/09/2020; OCHA 14/09/2020). These conditions make such populations especially vulnerable to flooding, which will likely worsen needs and limit further the provision of humanitarian assistance (UN News 28/08/2020).

Transborder flooding

As **Nigeria** is located downstream from other flood-affected countries, it is affected by rainfall patterns and responses by its neighbours. In 2012, the release of water from the Lagdo Dam in Cameroon led to flooding in 27 Nigerian states. Flash flooding in **Niger** and Mali increases the risk of severe flooding in northwestern Nigeria, which is located downstream from these countries. If these countries release water from their dams into the Niger and Benue rivers, this is likely to cause flooding in the downstream Nigerian states of Kebbi and Niger, as occurred in 2019 (HumAngle 29/07/2020; Punch 26/08/2020).

Flooding and its impact in Chad, Niger, Nigeria and neighbouring countries, September 2020



Source: ECHO 16/09/2020