



SITUATION REPORT

FLOOD RISKS IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

JULY 2023

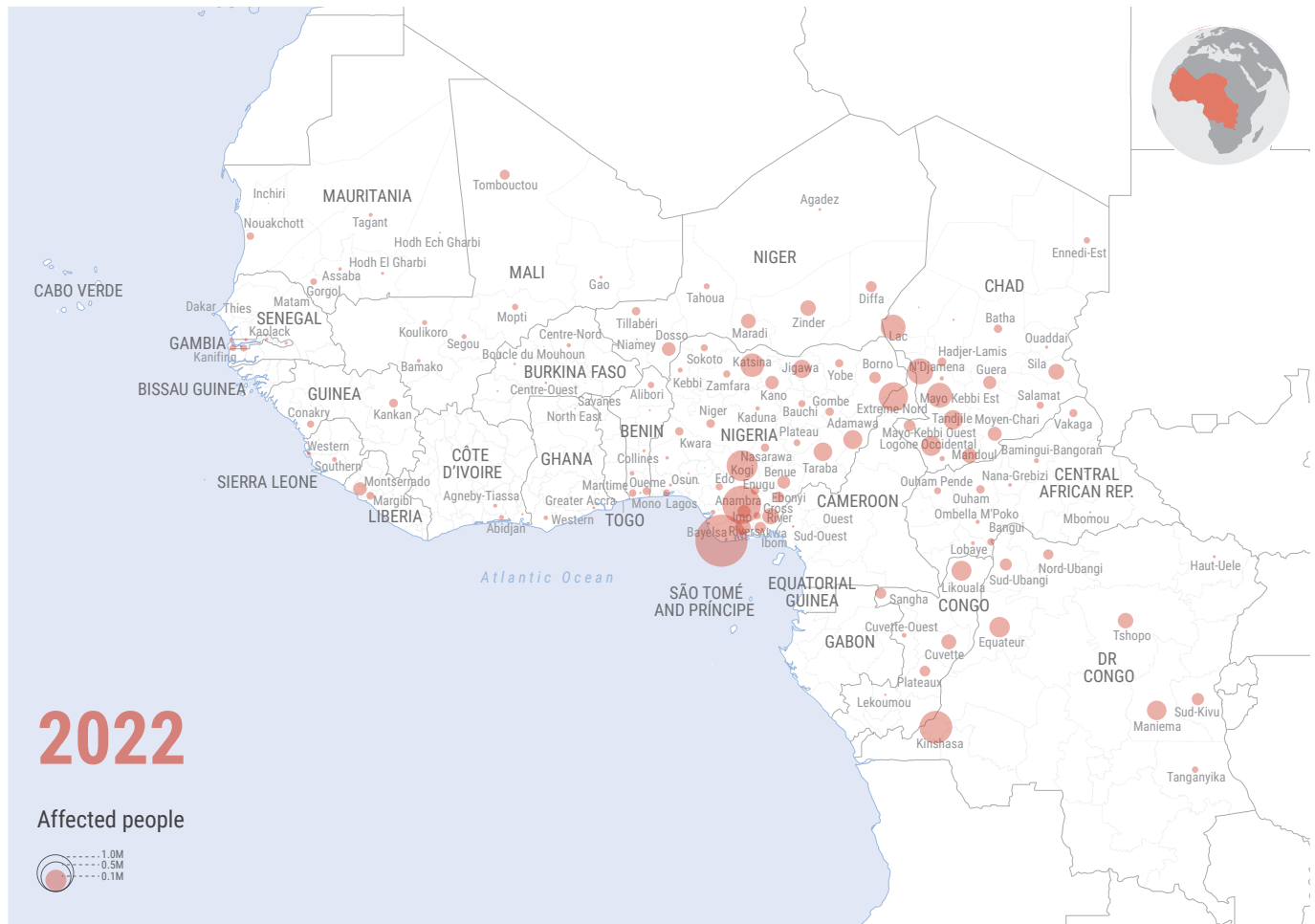
This note was produced by the West and Central Africa Flood Task Force created within the regional Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) group.

The aim of the note is to provide information on seasonal flood forecasts for 2023 and to provide recommendations for disaster preparedness and response to natural hazards.

Context overview

Countries in West and Central Africa are highly exposed to the risk of flooding during the rainy season. In 2022, West and Central Africa experienced one of the worst years in terms of humanitarian impact due to flooding, with **8.5 million people**

affected (1,567 reported dead and 4,401 injured) in 20 countries of the region. The most affected countries were Nigeria, Chad and the Democratic Republic of Congo, with 4.5 million, 1.5 million and 946,000 people affected respectively.



1,567
People killed

4,401
People injured

517k
Houses destroyed

1.6M
Affected fields

People affected

8.5M

People displaced

3.2M

GLOBAL FIGURES IN 2022

Nigeria	4.5M	2.4M
Chad	1.5M	281k
RDC	946k	309k
Congo	327k	-
Niger	327k	23k
Cameroon	317k	66k
Central African Republic	120k	25k
Liberia	89k	1k
Mali	79k	-
Benin	75k	1k
Mauritania	54k	36k
Gambia	53k	7k
Guinea	48k	335
Senegal	26k	8k
Togo	19k	6k
Côte d'Ivoire	17k	3k
Sierra Leone	17k	-
Burkina Faso	16k	96
Ghana	13k	13K
São Tomé-and-Príncipe	350	-

Seasonal forecasts¹ suggest that over the **July-August-September** period of 2023, the Sahelian strip will be “wetter” than normal, with surplus rainfall over **Mali, southern Mauritania, northern Guinea, Burkina Faso, and western Niger**. Rainfall amounts between “average” and “above average” are also expected over

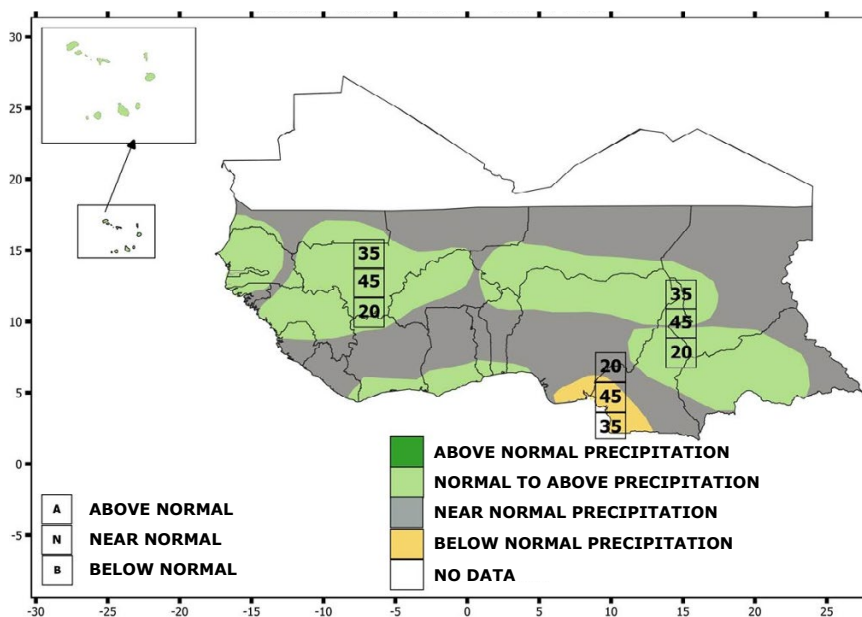
Cape Verde, Senegal, Gambia, southwest Mauritania, and the rest of the Sahelian strip (Niger, Chad and the northern parts of Togo, Benin, Nigeria and Cameroon).

The analysis classifies this period as “rainy” overall and predicts an **increase in the level of flood risk**.



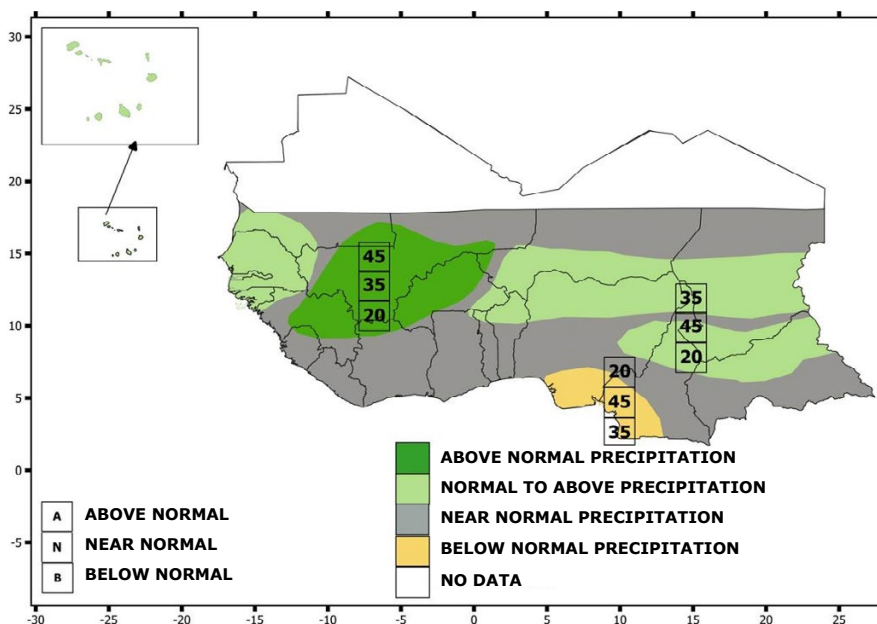
Seasonal precipitation forecast for the Sudano-Sahelian region valid for June-July-August 2023

Elaborated June 7, 2023



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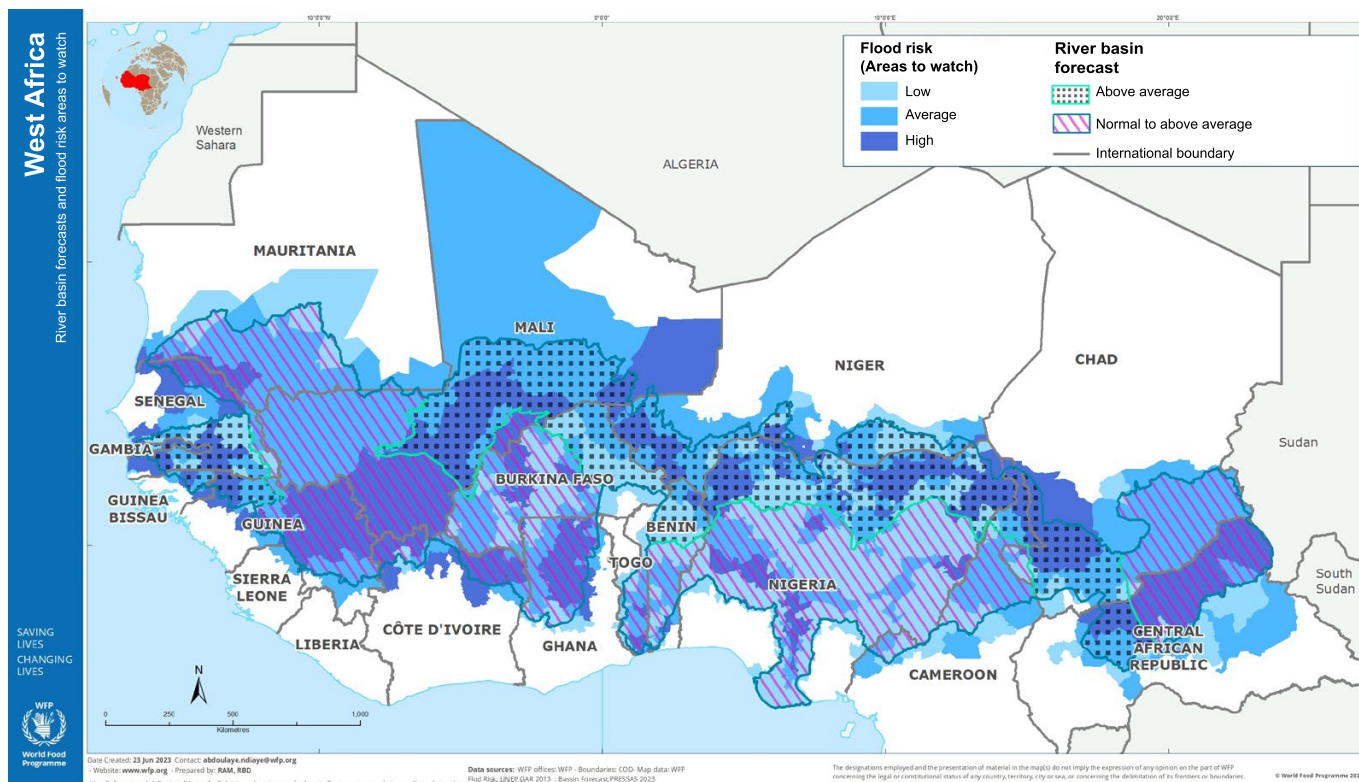
¹ Meteorological bulletin published in June 2023 by the African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development (ACMAD).

These conclusions are confirmed by the World Food Programme's (WFP) updated flood risk analysis.² The map below shows the flood risk for 2023, overlaying river basins that are likely to experience above-normal levels with normal to above-normal levels (legend with pink stripes). Administrative areas located in river basins expected to experience normal or below-normal levels are

excluded from this map. Areas classified according to flood risk are shown in blue. The area's most at risk are shown in dark blue with dotted lines.

It is important to note that this flood risk assessment is not specific to the 2023 season, but rather expresses the general flood exposure of certain areas.³

Humanitarian impact analysis



Similarly, in June 2023, the **FAO reported that the increased risk of flooding** over the coming months could **exacerbate an already alarming situation of food insecurity in the region**.⁴ Flooding of crops and loss of harvests, as well as the destruction of material assets and animal lives in exposed localities, have been identified as risks that could contribute to increased food insecurity for affected populations. Already in 2022, over **2.7 million hectares of crops**⁵ have been destroyed, resulting in the loss of livelihoods for around 1.4 million people.

In view of the forecasts issued by meteorological institutions, **contamination of water points** is to be feared, which could favor the **emergence and spread of epidemics and other water-borne diseases** (cholera, diarrhea, malaria, dengue fever, bilharzia, etc.). These risks are even greater for the most marginalized and vulnerable groups, such as women, disabled people, displaced persons, and children.

The possible **destruction of homes, infrastructure, and equipment** (health centers, schools, markets, etc.) could impact people's livelihoods and their ability to access basic social services (primary

² As part of the Integrated Context Analysis (ICA), a flood risk analysis was carried out for the West African region. Flood data were taken from the UNEP/UNDRR Global Risk Assessment (GAR). The original dataset has been aggregated to the admin2 level. It should be noted that the UNDRR data is the result of a global analysis that combines historical flood information with modeled flood data. Two key indicators were used for the analysis: the percentage of the area affected by flooding in relation to the total area of the administrative unit; and the maximum expected frequency of flooding events with the range of values classified by Natural Break (Jenks) to classify flood risk into low, medium, and high levels.

³ For more details concerning the list of communes most at risk, please contact WFP: Regional Bureau for Western Africa (RBD) Dakar, Senegal rbd.ram@wfp.org

⁴ Proactive action to food risk in the Sahel - FAO's initiative to safeguard livelihoods and food security, June 2023

⁵ Idem

healthcare, education, etc.). The heavy rains of 2022 led to the **displacement of over 3.2 million people and the destruction of over 517,000 homes.**⁶

It is important to consider that in some of the countries classified as “at risk” (Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Chad, Nigeria, DRC, and Cameroon) humanitarian actors are already providing vital assistance to several million

people, including host communities, Internally Displaced Persons, and refugees.

The risk of flooding in these localities could **increase people’s vulnerability**, negatively impact living conditions in **local communities**, and **reduce the physical and operational access capacity of humanitarian actors**, with a subsequent impact on aid delivery.

Recommendations for flood risk preparedness and response

- **Identify existing warning mechanisms and how they work:** be aware of alert levels and establish dissemination procedures to ensure that alerts reach people at risk.
- **Update risk analysis and strengthen monitoring mechanisms** in areas exposed to between “normal” and “above normal” levels of rainfall and flood risk, involving all key players (local authorities, humanitarian and development players, national hydrological and meteorological services, research institutes, etc.). These are as follows:
 - Administrative areas with “medium” or “high” flood risk, located in river basins with expected levels above average;
 - Administrative areas at “high” risk of flooding, located in river basins with average or above-average expected levels;
 - All other areas identified as being at “high” risk of flooding.
- **Launch of anticipatory actions to mitigate and prevent the impact of flooding** on households, property, livelihoods, and health, by triggering pre-positioned funds.
- **Identification of priority multi-sectoral preparedness and response actions** to be implemented both immediately and in the event of an emergency, including aspects relating to coordination, needs analysis and information management, anticipation of access-related risks, communication, etc.
- **Activation of preparedness mechanisms within the various intervention sectors** (health, food security, protection, education, etc.) and reinforcement of contingency stocks available at country level, in high-risk areas with a high risk of experiencing restricted access in the event of an emergency response.
- **Capacity building for all players**, to ensure effective assistance.
- Strengthen **communication and awareness-raising activities** with local communities in at-risk areas, in collaboration with local media and existing community-based early warning systems.
- **Pre-identify funding opportunities** available at country and regional level for emergency preparedness and response activities.

6 Flooding Snapshot, OCHA ROWCA, February 2023



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