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Collective Action To Tackle Flooding in Lagos State and Nigeria

‘From government halls to community streets, every hand must rise to build a resilient Nation where floods no longer wash away lives, livelihoods, and hope.’

Initiative for Research, Innovation and Advocacy in Development (IRIAD) through its Environment and Sustainable Development Programme, expresses its deepest sympathy and stands in solidarity with individuals, families, businesses, and communities affected by the recent flooding across Lagos State following prolonged and intense rainfall. The flooding impacted communities, including FESTAC, Gbagada, Ikeja, Ajah, Lekki, Victoria Island, Mushin, Mafoluku, Ikorodu, Oshodi, Ikotun, Maryland, Ogudu, Alakija, Agungi, Ajiran, and parts of Lagos Island, including Adeniji Adele, Olushi, Evans, and Anikantamo. Homes and businesses were submerged, roads became impassable, electricity infrastructure was damaged, commuters were stranded, and economic activities were significantly disrupted.

While heavy rainfall triggered the flooding, its severity was worsened by blocked drainage systems, indiscriminate waste disposal, inadequate drainage infrastructure, illegal construction on drainage channels and wetlands, poor urban planning, rapid urbanisation, and the increasing impacts of climate change. The flooding caused widespread displacement, destruction of property, disruption of transportation and businesses, electricity outages, and heightened health and environmental risks. These recurring incidents demonstrate that flooding is no longer merely a seasonal event but a major environmental, governance, and development challenge.

IRIAD urges all stakeholders to adopt a proactive approach to flood prevention through improved environmental governance, climate-resilient infrastructure, sustainable urban planning, and stronger disaster preparedness. The government should prioritise rehabilitation of drainage systems, enforce physical planning and environmental laws, strengthen waste management, expand early warning systems, and integrate climate adaptation into development planning. Estate developers must comply with planning regulations, avoid building on floodplains and wetlands, and incorporate climate-resilient designs into development projects.

Citizens also have an important responsibility to protect the environment by disposing of waste properly, keeping drainage channels free from obstruction, participating in community sanitation efforts, complying with environmental regulations, and following weather advisories issued by relevant authorities. Preventing flooding requires collective responsibility, behavioural change, and sustained public awareness.

CALL TO ACTION

IRIAD calls on all stakeholders to treat flooding as a recurring urban development and climate emergency

- **Federal Government of Nigeria:** Implement the recommendations contained in the **Nigeria Hydrological Services Agency (NiHSA) Annual Flood Outlook (AFO)**

2026, which provides guidance for governments, emergency managers, communities, farmers, and development partners ahead of the rainy season. The Federal Government should strengthen flood forecasting, early warning systems, river basin management, climate adaptation, and support for states to implement preventive measures before disasters occur.

- **Lagos State Government:** Accelerate the rehabilitation and expansion of drainage infrastructure, strengthen enforcement of urban planning and environmental regulations, improve waste management systems, enhance flood preparedness, and intensify public education on flood prevention and environmental sanitation.
- **Estate Developers and the Private Sector:** Comply with environmental and planning regulations, avoid construction on drainage channels, wetlands, and flood-prone areas, and invest in sustainable, climate-resilient infrastructure.
- **Community Leaders (Traditional Rulers and Village Leaders:** Champion environmental stewardship by mobilising residents for community sanitation initiatives, promoting compliance with environmental regulations, supporting flood preparedness efforts, and encouraging responsible waste management practices. Their leadership is essential in fostering community resilience and reducing flood risks.
- **Citizens:** refrain from dumping refuse into drainage channels and waterways, report environmental violations, support community sanitation initiatives, comply with weather and safety advisories, and actively participate in protecting the environment. Responsible citizenship and collective action are critical to safeguarding lives, property, and livelihoods from the impacts of flooding.
- **Civil Society Organisations:** Strengthen advocacy, civic education, community mobilisation, and accountability on flood preparedness, environmental protection, and climate resilience.

The recent flooding underscores the urgent need to shift from reactive disaster response to proactive prevention, preparedness, and resilience building. IRIAD stands in solidarity with all affected individuals and communities and calls on government, the private sector, civil society, traditional institutions, community leaders, and citizens to work collectively towards building safer, more resilient, and environmentally sustainable communities across Nigeria. IRIAD reaffirms its commitment to advancing evidence-based research, policy advocacy, civic engagement, and sustainable development to strengthen disaster preparedness, climate resilience, and environmental governance.

#TogetherAgainstFlooding #ProtectOurCommunities #BuildResilientCities #ClimateActionNow
#ClimateResilience #ResilientCommunities #ProtectLivesProtectLivelihoods
#UrbanDevelopmentAndGovernance #EnvironmentAndSustainableDevelopment

Signed

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ABOUT IRIAD

The **Initiative for Research, Innovation, and Advocacy in Development (IRIAD)** is an interdisciplinary knowledge, policy, and advocacy hub committed to developing a critical understanding of governance processes and regimes through research, documentation, policy engagement, public education, and impact advocacy to inform policies, advocacies, and other forms of interventions. Whilst promoting and encouraging active citizenship through citizens' engagement, participation, and representation in democratic governance.

IRIAD is committed to strengthening democratic governance by advancing public accountability, citizens' participation, women's rights and gender justice, and strengthening the capacities of governance institutions to be responsive, responsible, accountable, effective, and ethical

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