

Issue: 10 Dead, Several Rendered Homeless After Bagré Dam Spillage

Date: September 7, 2020

Location: North Eastern Ghana

BACKGROUND/ DEMOGRAPHY

North Eastern Ghana



Source: Google Maps

- ✓ The Bagré Dam is a multipurpose dam on the White Volta located near Bagré Village in Burkina Faso.
- ✓ The spillage of the dam which began on August 10, 2020, has led to the destruction of food crops of mainly smallholder farmers who consistently face perennial flooding around this time annually through rainfall.
- ✓ Chereponi is the capital of the Chereponi district, a district in the North East Region and has an estimated population of 67609.
- ✓ The major industry engaging majority of the workers in the district is agriculture, farming, and animal husbandry. Crops such as rice, corn, soya bean, groundnuts and watermelon are mostly cultivated.
- ✓ It shares boundaries with the following Districts: Gushegu Municipal to the west; Bunkpurugu Nyankpanduri District to the north, Saboba District to the south and The Republic of Togo to the east bordered by the River Oti.

INCIDENT PROFILE

Several farms along the White Volta in the Bawku West District in the Upper East Region have been destroyed by flooding, resulting from the spillage of excess water from the Bagre Dam in Burkina Faso on August 10, 2020. Districts affected included the Bawku Municipal, Bawku West, Binduri, Nabdram and Talensi.

In the early hours of September 7th, 2020, several communities in the North East Region along the White Volta have become inaccessible following heavy downpours of rain. This came after the spillage of water from the Bagre Dam had already devastated communities along the White Volta. Reports indicate that Chereponi, Kpasinkpe, and some other communities in the Mamprugu and Moaduru Districts cannot be accessed except through Bolgatanga in the Upper East Region.

Also, the Adali Bridge in the Chereponi District has been damaged, making it difficult for people in the area to cross to other communities. This has affected economic and social activities in the communities. Additionally, owing to unavailability of schools in some of the affected areas, access to schools in other communities may be curtailed for students.

Furthermore, many farmlands have also been submerged in the floods, leading to huge loses to about 500 famers as well as pastoralists⁸. Crops such as maize, millet, groundnuts, soyabeans, tomatoes and pepper, have been destroyed. Given that these crops are staple foods in the affected areas, the risk of food insecurity in is imminent. The floods have made it impossible for the National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO) to venture into the affected areas to aid the victims of the flood.

The death toll in the flooded communities so far is ten (10). Six of the dead were found in the flooded White Volta tributaries at Dalung in the Kumbungu District, while two other bodies were also retrieved from the river at a point near Daboya. At Sariba, near Kpasenkpe in the West Mamprusi District, two bodies were also recovered from the water.



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RISKS ANALYSIS:

- The road cut-off along the path flooded by the spill water has affected the movement of persons across the affected communities on both sides of the flood waters. Passengers on long journeys have also been stranded and some have returned to the nearby towns. Again, stranded passengers at these cut off points are also vulnerable to armed robbers' attacks given the fragile security situation in the affected areas.
- Affected persons in communities along the banks of the White Volta, especially those into farming and animal rearing risk the loss of their farms and animals as well as their places of abode. This subsequently affects their ability to meet their livelihood demands.
- Destruction of crops and animals also has implications for food security in the affected areas. Given that agriculture is the mainstay of livelihood of the populations in affected communities, destruction of crops and livestock have the potential to heighten food insecurity. Aside this, increase in food prices in these affected areas is also possible. This would further aggravate access to food.
- As bridges and sections of road networks have been severed, access to major towns could be limited for economic activities, access to healthcare and shelter for the displaced persons. There could be a high possibility of need to access healthcare especially, as the flood could create conditions necessary for the spread of communicable diseases like cholera and typhoid fever. With the severance of these communities from the towns, health security would be negatively impacted. Furthermore, the displacement and movements of affected people in communities in search of humanitarian assistance makes adherence to COVID-19 prevention protocol likely impossible. This also has potential to heighten risk of infection of the pandemic.

MECHANISMS FOR INTERVENTIONS:

- Officials of NADMO and the Ghana Police Service have cautioned travelers not to attempt crossing the submerged paths of the roads. Police presence at the cut-off section of the road at Kobore (Bawku West District) have kept passengers compliant of the caution given.
- The Fire Service is working with Officials of NADMO to pump out water from the homes of affected victims. The Army is also on standby to engage in search and rescue missions if missing persons are declared.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- There is the urgent need for NADMO, together with relevant agencies, to undertake risk and vulnerability assessment to inform their intervention to support affected



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populations in the communities.

- Security agencies should strengthen partnership with NADMO, District and Regional Health Directorates, local community NGOs and relevant agencies to provide adequate security and healthcare support to affected populations. This should also include humanitarian assistance to support the displaced populations in the affected communities.

References:

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