

Empowering communities in Nigeria to protect themselves from floods



Photo: CDRCR

Gbekuba community is one of the most flood-prone areas in Ido, Nigeria. In June 2016, the flooding was particularly devastating, leading to loss of lives and damage to properties. Livelihoods were also seriously affected and there were significant socio-economic impacts in the community. The *Frontline* survey found that 43% of respondents thought that

recurrent flooding is the priority

threat faced by their community. Community respondents said a critical action needed was to raise awareness of the ways that the flood impacts can be reduced in communities and awareness of citizen rights before, during and after emergencies. The Centre for Disaster Risk and Crisis Reduction (CDRCR) therefore organised a meeting for communities and CSOs to design a campaign to raise awareness of the impacts of the recurrent floods and the ways that the risk can be reduced.

As part of the campaign, impacting flyers were shared that highlighted the steps to take before, during and after a flood. Community members went from door to door informing their neighbours about simple steps they could take to reduce damage, and a rally was held to draw attention to the responsibilities of government departments who can help during disasters. As a result, residents have developed personal contingency plans, organised local flood response teams tasked with providing the government with information before upcoming floods, and built relationships with different actors dealing with flood management. Sometimes it was difficult to hold meetings and open door rallies, so they often had to be flexible to adapt to changing situations.