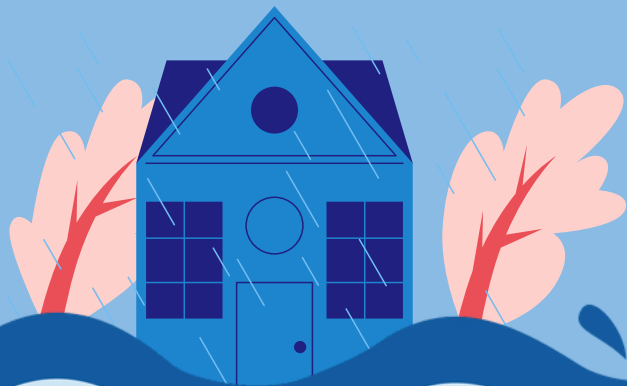


Understanding floods and their impact



Floods are natural disasters that can lead to humanitarian crises. They can result in death, disease, injuries and disabilities, displacement and economic hardship. While seasonal flooding can often be anticipated, other types, such as flash and coastal flooding, can happen suddenly, leaving at-risk populations with little time to prepare.

Types of floods



Flash floods happen when intense storms drop a large amount of rain in a short time. Authorities often have minutes to warn people before a flash flood hits.



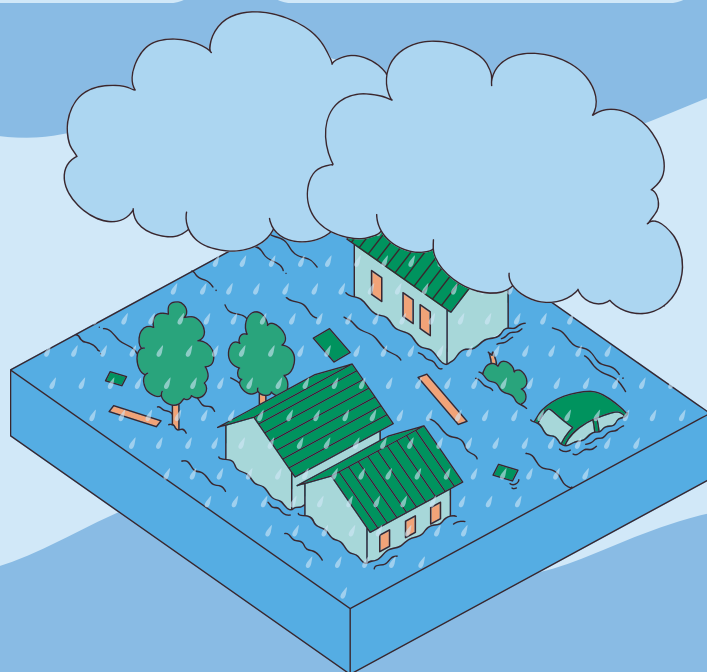
Coastal floods can be caused by powerful storms (including hurricanes and cyclones), tsunamis, storm surges and exceptionally high tides. Warnings may only be possible minutes before the flood.



River floods are often seasonal, occurring when heavy rains or melting snow cause rivers to overflow. For these floods, there might be a warning window of days to weeks, allowing time for preparedness and action.

How severe a flood is depends on:

- how deep the water gets;
- how long the flood lasts;
- how fast the water moves;
- how quickly the water rises;
- how often floods occur in the area; and
- the time of year the flood happens.



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