



This report is produced by OCHA in collaboration with the UN Resident Coordinator Office in Sierra Leone and humanitarian partners. An emergency state was declared by Sierra Leone following floods and landslides that have left over 400 people dead and destroyed thousands of homes on 14 August.

Situation overview

- The Government and the UN system through the Resident Coordinator have requested international support. A deployment of a UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team should take place within 48 hours to support the ongoing assessments, coordination and reporting efforts.
- Relief effort are stepping up and more aid is coming. The NGO Consortium Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC) has indicated that, among its member organisations, ActionAid, IFRC, Oxfam, World Vision, Christian Aid and Care International have started responding to the most pressing needs.
- So far, 409 dead bodies were removed from the rubbles across the 13 impacted communities and the number may still rise. UNODC has set up a joint team composed of forensics, scientific police and a specialized rescue expert unit with trained dogs to lend support to search and rescue efforts, as well as recovery and identification of bodies.
- Burial of unidentified bodies has begun Thursday, 17 August, in Waterloo in the outskirts of Freetown and a total of 300 bodies were buried so far. A seven-day mourning period starting 16 August was announced on 15 August.
- Together with UNOPS, UNDP has engaged the Environmental Protection Agency to develop a prevention roadmap that includes immediate evacuation planning in areas that seem prone to a recurrence of the slide, develop coordinated messaging on prevention, and undertake an in-depth study on the cause of the slide, which many say is the first in 45 years in the country. UNOPS with support from UNDP is currently undertaking a geo-mapping exercise and UNDP is in discussion to field a geologist to help with the analysis.
- UNFPA adapted the rapid EmONC assessment tool to better understand the needs of the health facilities in the affected areas to determine gaps in EmONC and assess the gaps in the provision of sexual and reproductive health services family planning, adolescent youth friendly health services and Gender Based Violence (GBV) services.
- UN Women is co-facilitating a gender analysis of primary and secondary data provided on survivors by the response agencies.

Priority needs

For survivors of the landslide and people affected by the floods:

- Health care for injured survivors
- Water, prevention of diseases, hygiene
- Essential household utensils and other non-food items
- Sleeping mats, blankets and pillows for those in shelters and in host families
- Reducing protection risks, notably risks related to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and specific risks faced by children.

Body management, removal of debris, clear water ways and drainage.

Private sector engagement in emergency relief is critical to enable the private sector to bring necessary technical expertise and add capacity in low-resourced sites.

Response efforts



HEALTH

- WHO is leading the health partners' response in supporting national authorities to address health related issues emerging from the mudslide emergency. WHO personnel has been reassigned and deployed to support the response. At the same time, technical support is being provided to the Public Health National Emergency Operations Center in the Ministry of Health and Sanitation to enhance response capacity and to design appropriate interventions.
- All the response pillars – Surveillance, Safe burial, IPC, Case management, Communication, Coordination and Psychosocial support – have been activated to facilitate effective coordination. This has included: conducting a comprehensive risk assessment for flooding and possible disease outbreak in the affected districts. Assessments on the health needs of the affected families and communities is ongoing. Surveillance of key epidemic prone diseases are being enhanced with the technical leadership of WHO to detect and prevent any potential risk of waterborne and other disease outbreaks

- On 16 August, UNICEF delivered a mix of supplies to the main Connaught hospital in Freetown, which includes the mortuary, including heavy duty gloves, body bags, tents, chlorine and facemasks. Four hospitals in Freetown will be supported by the WASH section and partners to handle infection prevention and control procedures.
- Two UNFPA teams have been dispatched to 10 health facilities located in the affected areas on 17 August to conduct the rapid assessments. The UNFPA country office will also work with the Ministry of Health and Sanitation to mobilize outreach teams to affected areas.
- IOM has provided hygiene items to the Central Medical Store including masks, aprons, chlorine and buckets.



Freetown, Sierra Leone, 15 August 2017: Hundreds are registering as homeless in the Regent and Lumley centres set up for displaced persons. Credit: United Nations

FOOD SECURITY

- On 17 August, WFP food distributions took place in George Brook, Mountain Cut and Wellington, reaching 189 of 244 planned households. So far WFP delivered two-week rations to a total of 369 out of 786 planned households.

WASH

- WHO is supporting the MOHS with cholera preparedness including updating the cholera response plan and procurement of cholera testing reagents and supplies.
- UNICEF is working with the Ministry of Health and Sanitation and partners to prepare for a cholera vaccination in the coming weeks.
- In Regent, construction is underway for four emergency latrines, two bathrooms and a 10,000-litre rainwater-harvesting system. The existing latrines and three drop holes will be repaired once construction of the four new emergency latrines is completed.
- In Kanningo, three mobile toilets have been installed and three temporary bathrooms have been constructed.
- UNICEF has also provided WASH packages in these areas, which include portable water (initially through trucking), sanitation (mobile toilets/emergency latrines, handwashing stations, Aquatabs, soap and hygiene education).

SHELTER

- ONS and IOM have agreed upon a standard shelter and kitchen kit to be distributed to families whose houses were destroyed.

EDUCATION

- UNICEF is assessing damage to school buildings and is working closely with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. The start of the academic year has been pushed back to 11 September 2017.

SOCIAL MOBILIZATION

- As lead of the social mobilization pillar, UNICEF is also supporting social mobilization efforts, focused on key messages around diarrhoeal diseases, including cholera and malaria prevention.
- The national 117 hotline, used heavily during the Ebola outbreak, has been activated for cholera reports.
- UNICEF has been using its free text message service, U-Report, to gather data on the needs of people living in Freetown, following the deadly floods and landslides. Around half of those who responded to a question on their biggest concern, cited looking for missing relatives. More than a third of respondents said their water supply had been affected by the flooding disaster. More results can be found on the following link: <https://sierraleone.ureport.in/poll/2191/>.

Pledges and commitments

- China: US\$1million to the Government of Sierra Leone through its embassy in Freetown.
- EU: 300,000 EUR for vulnerable families affected by disaster (through local and international partners)
- Ireland: 400,000 EUR for START fund (International NGOs)
- Red Cross DREF: US\$275,000 for 1,600 families (about 9,000 people)
- Israel announced it will send medicine, clean water, and blankets via the embassy in Senegal.
- UK, Guinea, Nigeria and Liberia also pledged support.
- Switzerland pledged US\$415,000 (CHF 400,000) as an immediate measure to respond to the crisis.

FOCAL POINTS – SIERRA LEONE EMERGENCY

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