Sierra Leone
Flood and landslide Situation Report No. 3
18 August 2017

Highlights

Based on data from the Office of National Security, the total number of registered people affected by the floods and landslides stands at 6,714, as at 18 August 2017. With the registration now closed, the number of affected should stabilize, allowing for better planning and assessment of needs to support the affected communities.

While the recovery of bodies and response efforts to the affected communities continues, the relocation of households residing in disaster prone areas has commenced. UNICEF is supporting the Government of Sierra Leone by ensuring the provision of WASH services, infection prevention and control materials, and essential medicines at the temporary displacement centres and in health facilities to prevent and mitigate the propagation of diseases, such as cholera. Priorities for UNICEF also include support to affected children, including provision of psychosocial support and identification of child protection concerns.

UNICEF’s Response with partners

WASH

- Provision of WASH facilities and services at the Regent temporary displacement centre is continuing. Through its implementing partners, UNICEF has completed the installation of the water supply system and constructed four emergency latrine drop holes. The establishment of the emergency health treatment centre is almost complete. Solid waste cleaning, small bridges and landscaping have also been undertaken on the site. Installation of a sustainable rain water harvesting system is also underway.
- At the Glory registration centre in Regent, one 6,000 litre bladder and hand washing stations have been installed.
- UNICEF is coordinating with implementing partner LWI to address the issue of waste management at the temporary displacement centres. Issues with misuse of water have also been noted. UNICEF is liaising with LWI to ensure this is addressed through deployment of hygiene promoters to manage tap stands at the sites.
- UNICEF, through its implementing partners ADP-SL and GOAL, is continuing to support the provision of WASH services in health facilities. Through ADP-SL, UNICEF supported the MoHS with the cleaning of the morgue at Connaught Hospital, establishing disinfection stations and 12 handwashing stations for staff, patients and relatives. One 6,000 litre tank was also installed to increase the water supply. These activities will be replicated at the 34 Military Hospital, PMCH and Lumley Hospital. UNICEF engineers are assessing additional water supply and sanitation requirements on all four sites.

Health

- UNICEF is continuing to provide infection prevention and control materials and essential medicines to the four main hospitals in Freetown, based on the needs and requests made by the Director of Drugs and Medical Supplies.
Planning for a GAVI-supported cholera vaccination campaign is continuing, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Sanitation and the World Health Organization. The start of the campaign, for one year, has been scheduled for the end of the month. 150 community health workers will be trained on 20 August on cholera case detection.

In collaboration with WASH teams, support to the provision of WASH services in health facilities is ongoing.

**Child Protection**

- A safe space for affected children has been established at the Regent temporary displacement centre. Children will be able to access recreational activities and receive psychosocial support.
- In collaboration with the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children’s Affairs (MSWGCA) and partners, UNICEF is continuing to provide psychosocial support to affected children and identifying child protection concerns.
- UNICEF is supporting the non-governmental organization Don Bosco through the provision of essential supplies to support 300 families who have been relocated from affected areas.
- UNICEF is coordinating with the MSWGCA and the Family Support Unit for the establishment of Child Protection Desks to ensure 24-hour social worker presence and police presence in affected locations.
- UNICEF is supporting the leadership of MSWGCA in coordinating the Child Protection, Psychosocial Support and Gender Pillar by compiling a ‘who does what where’ matrix of organization activities.

**Education**

- Eight recreational kits and five ECD kits have been released for the child friendly spaces. The education team will provide crash courses on the use of the kits.

**Nutrition**

- UNICEF continues to work with Directorate of Food and Nutrition to promote breastfeeding and as part of cholera prevention, ensure regulation on donation and use of milk substitutes consistent with the Breast-milk Substitutes Code and the Infant and Young Child Feeding in emergencies global policy.
- In partnership with the UNICEF Communications for Development (C4D) team, training was conducted for the 150 community health workers from the affected areas at St Martin, Kissy. The training was conducted on the screening of children to identify severe acute malnutrition cases, breastfeeding promotion and support, key messages on harmful effects of formulae feeding and monitoring large scale donations of breast milk substitutes at the community level. Community health workers were given data collection tools (tally sheet and referral forms) and mid-upper arm circumference screening tapes to identify and report on malnourished children in the affected sites as well as on donations of breast milk substitutes.
- UNICEF continues to provide technical support to the Directorate of Food and Nutrition to develop a response plan along with a comprehensive budget estimating funding needs for the food and nutrition sector.

**Social mobilization**

- 14 District Social Mobilization Coordinators and their district council counterparts were engaged as part of the post Maternal Child Health Week campaign. The occasion was an opportunity to sensitize district councilors on cholera prevention messaging.
- 150 community health workers are being oriented to support the dissemination of key messages around diarrhoeal diseases, including cholera and malaria prevention, at the temporary displacement centres and at community level. The orientation for community and religious leaders will be completed over the weekend.
- Radio programmes, including phone-ins, have been launched to provide a platform for communities to express their concerns.
- Based on a U-Report poll conducted last night, 67 per cent of responders (66 per cent in Western Area) cited that they do not know how to treat cholera and 62 per cent (60 per cent in Western Area) do not know how to prevent cholera; highlighting the need to scale-up social mobilization efforts on cholera prevention.

**Humanitarian leadership and coordination**

The Government of Sierra Leone has initiated its emergency response mechanism, under the leadership of the Office of National Security. A command centre has been established in the area of Regent, the epicenter of the landslide, to ensure coordination of efforts. At the technical level, pillars have been activated to coordinate the response (child protection, health, logistics, security, social mobilization, food and nutrition, WASH).
At the level of the United Nations Country Team, the United Nations Resident Coordinator has designated the Country Director and Representative of the World Food Programme as Incident Manager. The Regional Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs will be supporting the response of the United Nations Country Team. In terms of field coordination, meetings are held at the Office of National Security twice a day and the United Nations Country Team is also meeting daily to ensure coordination at the level of the United Nations.

**Humanitarian Strategy**

Following the initial operations to rescue survivors and recover the bodies, the response is being implemented on three levels: 1) support to communities affected by the landslide and floods as well as mitigation of resurgence and potential risks; 2) providing support to those in the temporary displacement centres; and 3) mitigating potential risks, such as cholera or any other outbreaks.

To support the response, UNICEF has established a field and mobile team composed of members from all sectors. The UNICEF strategy is focused on the immediate response, prevention (potential disease outbreaks and other emergencies) and recovery. Sectors are currently assessing their needs and gaps to develop plans for the next steps in the response.

**Human Resources**

The Country Office is supporting staff that have been either directly or indirectly affected by the crisis. The Human Resources team, Staff Association, Peer Support Volunteers and counsellors are on standby to provide assistance to staff. While there is no need for additional staff at the moment, the Regional Office is providing remote support as required Human Resources will request support from the Regional Office to fast-track the recruitment of the Emergency Officer position.

**Funding**

The crisis has garnered a lot of media attention and the Country Office has been contacted by several donors that are interested in supporting the response and recovery. Donors have been flexible in terms of fund utilization to support the response and the Country Office is preparing a response plan on potential gaps for donor support.

**Next SitRep: 21 August 2017**

**Who to contact for further information:**

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