Highlights

Response operations continued throughout the weekend. Based on adjusted figures, the Office of National Security has reported that, as of 20 August 2017, the total number of registered people affected by the floods and landslides stands at 5,905 in over six communities (Culvert, Dwarzark, Kamayamah, Kanikay, Kaninko and Regent).

Through further assessments, it was determined that the earlier reported “crack” at the opposite side of the mountain range that fed the landslide in Regent is not a “crack” but it’s a flow of debris from the original landslide and thus is not presenting imminent risks.

To support the United Nations response, a United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team has been deployed to Sierra Leone. The team will assist with coordination, information management and needs assessment activities. In the meantime, UNICEF is continuing to support the Government of Sierra Leone in 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. UNICEF also continued to support affected children, including provision of psychosocial support and identification of child protection concerns. As of 20 August, supplies with a total value of US$179,024 have been distributed to implementing partners to support affected communities.

UNICEF’s Response with partners

WASH

- UNICEF continued to support the provision and daily delivery of water to the affected communities (6,000 litres in Kaningo, 11,000 litres in Kaningo, 6,000 litres in Pentagon and 10,000 litres in Kamayamah).
- In Regent a new 6,000 litres bladder was installed at the newly established Kalilu Barbo and Mama Obama temporary displacement centres. The two new centres are home to 400 displaced persons.
- UNICEF continued to support sanitation at the three existing holding centres in Saio, Kaningo and Pentagon. Four mobile latrines were deployed to the two new temporary displacement centers and installation of emergency trench latrines and bath places is underway.
- Handwashing stations and soap have been installed and are operational in the three existing centres. Four stations were installed in the two new centres. Installation of more stations is underway.
- Construction of rainwater harvesting systems in both Saio and Kaningo was completed. Installation of the 10,000 litre tanks is ongoing; this will ease the burden of water trucking especially when the roads are rendered impassable after the rains. Construction of a similar system at the Pentagon holding area is underway.
- Implementation of WASH activities for affected communities has begun. A total of 1,200 Aquatabs and education on use was done in Kaningo. This will be scaled-up in all the other sites.
• Due to the increased workload at the Regent temporary displacement centre resulting from the added two centres, operations at the Pentagon and Kamayamah sites were handed over to UNICEF implementing partner SLAV.
• Support to the WASH pillar coordination continued. UNICEF facilitated a monitoring visit for the pillar heads to all the sites.

Health
• UNICEF continued 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. In collaboration with WASH teams, support to the provision of WASH services to the hospitals is also ongoing.
• Planning for cholera preparedness is continuing. A quick assessment of selected Cholera Treatment Units will be conducted to ascertain capacities and decide on prepositioning of cholera kits. Application for funding to GAVI cholera vaccination has also been completed and transmitted by the Ministry of Health and Sanitation to GAVI designated team for review.
• The first cholera kit in UNICEF warehouse has been requested by the Chief Medical Officer for prepositioning at Regent CHC; the second kit will be sent to Connaught Hospital.
• To support communities with the recovery of dead bodies in flood affected communities, UNICEF through its implementing partner Development Initiatives Programme, supplied protective equipment (goggles, coveralls, facemasks, aprons, body bags, absorbent pads and rubber boots) to military officers and community members in Regent, Lumley Bridge, Kamayamah and Kaningo.

Child Protection
• Child friendly spaces have been established in Pentagon, Regent and Kamayamah to enable children to access recreational activities and receive psychosocial support. Child Protection is assessing the other sites to look at feasibility of establishing child friendly spaces.
• 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. 200 children were relocated to Don Bosco during the weekend and items such as mattresses, pillows, bedsheets and disposable plates/cutlery were released to support the affected children. UNICEF will be conducting an assessment of WASH services and other needs.

Education
• An additional eight recreational kits and seven ECD kits were released for the child friendly spaces.
• The education team is supporting the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology on developing a response and recovery plan, in light of school reopening on 11 September.

Nutrition
• UNICEF is working in coordination with the Directorate of Food and Nutrition to ensure available stocks of Plumpy Nuts at the outpatient therapeutic centres in the flood affected areas.
• In partnership with Directorate of Food and Nutrition and DHMT, UNICEF is supporting the screening of children and their referral for treatment.
• UNICEF is providing 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.
• UNICEF in partnership with WHO continues to support the Directorate of Food and Nutrition, MoHS to finalize the Joint statement on infant and young child feeding and use of breast milk substitutes in emergencies.

Social mobilization
• 82 religious leaders from Western Area Urban and Rural were oriented on engaging families and communities through their religious platforms, to support the dissemination of key messages around diarrhoeal diseases, including cholera and malaria prevention, at the temporary displacement centres and at community level.
• Peer supervisors engaged for the community health worker emergency response reported the following figures for 20 August: 2,152 households visited, including 1,247 males and 830 mothers of children under five. 295 community dialogues were held and 331 stakeholders were also engaged on issues surrounding cholera and malaria prevention.
• Based on a U-Report poll conducted on Saturday, responders from the Western who say they are affected, cited as their main concerns: 1) finding missing relatives (38 per cent); 2) finding shelter (37 per cent); 3) getting food (13 per cent); 4) getting water (12 per cent). Forty-nine per cent also indicated that their water source has been affected by the flooding.
Information received through U-Report and RapidPro is supporting UNICEF and partners in adjusting their response to reach the most affected.

### Humanitarian leadership and coordination

The Government of Sierra Leone initiated its emergency response mechanism, under the leadership of the Office of National Security. A command centre was 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, shelter).

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. To support the United Nations response, a United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team has been deployed to Sierra Leone. The team will assist with coordination, information management and needs assessment activities. 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 in focused on the immediate response, prevention (potential disease outbreaks and other emergencies) and recovery.

### 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 (at the Regional Office and HQ) 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 finalizing a response plan on potential gaps for donor support.

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