



This report is produced by OCHA in collaboration with the UN Resident Coordinator Office in Sierra Leone and humanitarian partners.

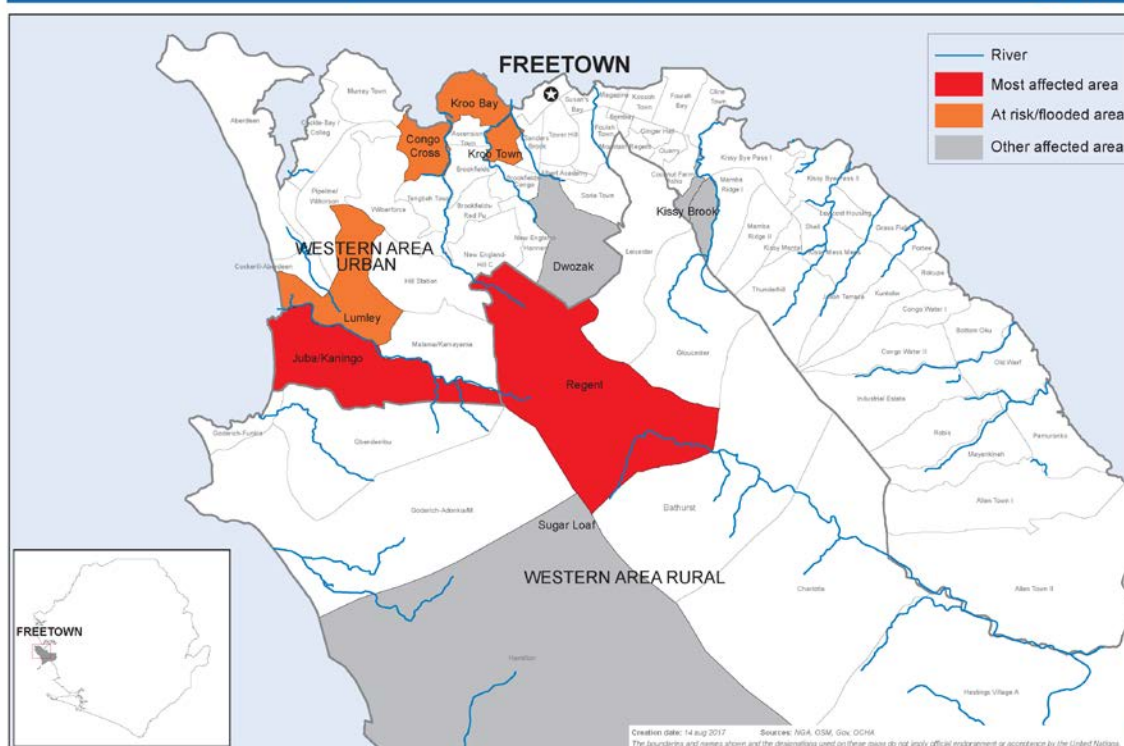
## Situation overview

- Torrential rains have led to a series of significant floods and mudslides on 14 August in several areas of Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone. Emergency support is being provided for the two different types of responses: floods and mudslides.
- According to Freetown Mayor, rescue workers have recovered 270 bodies so far, mainly from the Regent neighborhood where the mudslide happened. As rescue operations are still ongoing, the death toll is expected to rise.
- Sierra Leone's Office of National Security (ONS) estimates that more than 3,000 people have lost their homes.
- The Government is currently evaluating the needs of Internally Displaced Persons but is currently requesting affected people to evacuate and stay with relatives
- Heavy rains fell in the area last night and rescue efforts are on-going. However, rescue teams lack the right equipment and are facing difficult conditions with large amounts of mud and debris.
- ONS has recommended the voluntary evacuation of several disaster-prone areas as floodwaters continue to damage infrastructure and homes.
- Communication lines and electricity have been disrupted in some parts of the capital, and extensive damage to roads, infrastructure and houses is also expected.
- In 2015 floods and torrential rains made over 9,000 people temporarily homeless in Freetown but this year's disaster is unprecedented by the number of people killed in the mudslide.



*Freetown, Sierra Leone, 14 August 2017: Mudslides in the Regent neighborhood of Freetown, Sierra Leone, where hundreds have lost their lives on 14 August.*  
 Credit: United Nations

**Sierra Leone : Affected areas by mudslides and floods (14 aug 2017)**



## Coordination

- The Disaster Management Department of the Office of National Security oversees the overall coordination and response, with military and police involved in rescue operations in affected areas.
- The Red Cross of Sierra Leone has deployed three rescue teams and eleven vehicles in support of the Government with support from IFRC.
- Resident Coordinator Sunil Saigal has designated WFP Country Director Housainou Taal as the Incident Coordinator for the UN system. OCHA's Regional Office for West and Central Africa has been liaising closely with the RC's Office to provide any support required, including on reporting, mapping and needs assessments, and remains on standby should any surge support be requested.
- Several NGOs and bilateral partners are also involved, including Save The Children, Caritas, DFID, Israid, and MSF.



*Freetown, Sierra Leone, 14 August 2017: Rescue teams are digging through the mud and debris, looking for survivors. Credit: United Nations*

## Response efforts

- Response efforts are focusing on three main areas: rescuing people from the mudslides, responding to the floods, and preventing further disasters in at-risk areas
- Three teams are conducting rapid assessments in 13 areas and a more comprehensive picture of the impact of floods and humanitarian needs will be available soon.
- The registration of missing people, as well as those affected and dead is ongoing while search and rescue efforts are continuing on 15 August despite limited capacity. Identification of victims and body management is a priority as morgues of hospitals are overwhelmed.
- The removing of rubble is difficult because of the lack of equipment, capacity and the weather conditions. Private companies have provided some heavy equipment as well as the military.
- WFP and the Red Cross are supporting the registration of survivors, and those who have lost family members.
- Red Cross volunteers are digging for missing persons and supporting distraught families.
- WFP is providing food rations to the people evacuated.
- UNFPA is distributing 530 dignity kits.
- UNOPS is providing technical advice and coordinating drone mapping.
- WHO is supporting the Ministry of Health in providing medical assistance to the injured.
- UNICEF has activated a water and sanitation response to mitigate the risk of epidemics following the floods.
- The IFRC has today released more than US\$275,000 from its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to bolster initial search and rescue and recovery efforts. These emergency funds will enable volunteers to assist more than 9,000 people with search and rescue, first aid, health care, water, sanitation and hygiene promotion and emergency food.



*Freetown, Sierra Leone, 14 August 2017: Sierra Leone military and Red Cross volunteers are clearing rubbles, looking for survivors. Rescue teams lack adequate equipment and bad conditions are putting them at risk. Credit: United Nations*