

**Alert note**

*Sierra Leone, Floods 18<sup>th</sup> October 2024*

**Completed by:** Council of Churches of Sierra Leone

**Date completed:** 17<sup>th</sup> October 2024

**Forum:** Sierra Leone Forum

**Type of emergency:** Floods

**Date of emergency:** October 2024

**The nature of the emergency**

Sierra Leone has faced severe flooding caused by sudden, unusual, unprecedented heavy and prolonged rainfall as of 8<sup>th</sup> October 2024 ([Relief Web](#) 16<sup>th</sup> October 2024).

According to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies ([IFRC](#)), the rainfall is expected to continue up to the end of October 2024.

The floods were exacerbated by the overflow of Bumbuna Dam in Tonkolili in Sierra Leone, which overflowed beyond its capacity due to excessive rainfall leading to flooding downstream, displacing 50 communities and causing significant property loss ([NDMA SL](#)).

Sierra Leone has also received flood waters originating from heavy rains experienced in the Futa Jallon highlands in Guinea overflowing and emptying into the Atlantic Ocean through Sierra Leone, leading to severe flooding. Floods in Sierra Leone have affected 11 out of 16 districts in Sierra Leone according to the National Disaster Agency ([NDMA](#)).

**The impact and scale of the emergency**

This is a medium size emergency with a widespread reach affecting the Southern, Northern and Western region of Sierra Leone.

The most affected areas include Bo, Bonthe, Bombali, Falaba, Kambia, Moyamba, Tonkolilil, Port Loko, Pujehon and the Western Area

According to the [European Union](#) (October 14<sup>th</sup> 2024), the flooding has significantly impacted communities, farmland, businesses and infrastructure.

As a result, 716 people have been displaced, 596 people have been affected and 167 buildings including schools and hospitals have been destroyed. In the rural agricultural areas, 7,375 ha of crops have been flooded and farmland have been inundated, jeopardizing and disrupting food supply, livelihoods and the local economies of farmers.

Shelter, Water and Sanitation

Some affected families are living in overcrowded temporary makeshift thatch houses with poor sanitation, posing a health risk for the outbreak of waterborne diseases. Other affected families are living in public institutions such as schools, while others are hosted by relatives. The floods have also disrupted livelihoods, access and schooling ([Reliefweb](#)).

Food

Food is scarce, and most depend on limited support from relatives causing their meals to be irregular, mainly affecting children and the elderly.

**Local and national capacity**

People affected by the floods have received immediate support from community-based organizations and traditional mechanisms through traditional leaders. Agricultural cooperatives are providing some support in the form of seeds for replanting.

The local and central government through the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) have established a country level coordination mechanism led by the national Disaster Management Agency (NDMA). NDMA in collaboration with other stakeholders including Relief and humanitarian organizations, and various ministries focusing on food security, health, and shelter have initiated coordination efforts among government and non-government actors for a more coordinated response.

[DG ECHO](#) has allocated EUR 200,000 to contribute to the Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) of the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) to assist floods affected people in the country.

**Key needs and gaps**

The National Disaster Management Authority [NDMA](#) and other UN agencies are coordinating with government and non-government organizations and other agencies including faith-based organizations to collect information and on the possible areas of need.

Roads remain impassable disrupting local economies and resulting in delayed response to conduct more detailed assessments and to respond to those marooned by waters([ReliefWeb](#)). The local government is also planning to collect more detailed information through conducting assessments when access issues are resolved. World Food Program and the Sierra Leone Red Cross Society have initiated mobilization of emergency assistance in terms of food, health kits and agricultural inputs.

An initial community assessment by Sierra Leone Council of churches staff, conducted in the three Chiefdoms of Kambia District, Mambolo, Samu Chiefdoms indicated that severe flooding has affected large sections of Mambolo, Magbema and Samu chiefdoms, displacing an estimated 1,500 households (over 10,000 persons).

According to the report, food is scarce and many IDPs reported irregular meal patterns. In addition, local water sources have been contaminated therefore posing a potential risk of waterborne diseases due to the presence of contaminated water necessitating an intervention to mitigate the possibility of an outbreak of waterborne diseases. Access to clean drinking water is a priority also because the community has reported significant contamination of local water sources which pose a serious health risk.

In the medium term, the provision of seed (rice) and farming tools is essential to support affected households to replant during the next planting season in line with business start-up for women who were engaged in micro-business enterprises to enable them to restart their livelihoods.

To support children to return to school, it is important to support the rebuilding of school structures that have collapsed and support school feeding and provision of teaching and learning materials to affected schools.

The existing gaps of information include the need for detailed demographic data on the age, gender and disability status of the flood affected communities. Due to access issues, comprehensive assessment on the damaged infrastructure is yet to be collected including the flood effect on roads, schools, and other facilities.

NDMA is however planning to lead a joint assessment in the coming weeks to provide regular updates informing effective response and resource allocation.

Please indicate whether you are considering:

	Indicate your intention with an X below
Rapid Response Fund ( <i>intended for small and medium scale emergencies</i> )	<b>X</b>
Appeal ( <i>intended for large scale emergencies</i> )	

Forum Capacity and members intention to respond		
ACT Member	Geographical focus	Sectors of expertise and experience
Council of Churches in Sierra Leone	National	Cash Programs, Relief distribution, Psychosocial support, Livelihoods, Protection, WASH
Potential responses		
<p>Based on an assessment report (03/10/2024), the Council of Churches in Sierra Leone (CCSL) would like to focus on alleviating the most pressing needs of providing clean drinking water and cash to support the needs of the affected families. CCSL is requesting financial support to provide cash assistance, providing temporary toilets, distribution of hygiene kits and hygiene promotion, and psychosocial support to the affected. <sup>[OBJ]</sup></p>		