

INFORMATION BULLETIN



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA: FLOODS

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The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 185 countries.

In Brief

This Bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the situation and the information available at this time. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

Following severe floods that struck South Pyongan, North Hwanghae, Kangwon and South Hamgyong provinces over 14-15 July and left nearly 17,000 families homeless, the DPRK Red Cross rapidly mobilized 2,386 volunteers to provide rescue, evacuation and first aid support within affected communities. While the situation is improving as flood waters begin to recede in some of the areas, the society is providing 4,950 family kits in six of the most severely affected counties within the respective provinces. To date, the society has completed distribution of family kits containing urgently needed items such as water purification tablets, kitchen sets, blankets, water containers and plastic sheeting to 3,100 families in Songchon and Sinyang counties in South Pyongan province. Distributions to a further 1,850 families are ongoing in Yandok county (South Pyongan province) and affected counties in the remaining three flood-hit provinces.

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- The DPRK Red Cross Society: Min Byong Gwan (secretary-general) phone: +850.2.381.8986; fax: +850.2.381.3490.
- Federation country delegation in DPRK: Jacob Timmer (head of delegation); email: ifrcpk02@ifrc.org; phone: +850.2.381.4350; fax: +850.2.381.3490.
- Federation East Asia regional delegation in China: Alistair Henley (head of regional delegation); alistair.henley@ifrc.org; phone: +86.10.6532.7162, fax: +86.10.6532.7166.
- Federation Secretariat in Geneva (Asia Pacific department): Ewa Eriksson (regional officer); email: ewa.eriksson@ifrc.org; phone: +41.22.730.4252; fax: +41.22.733.0395; or Sandra Rosner (senior assistant); email: sandra.rosner@ifrc.org; phone: +41.22.730.4456; fax: +41.22.733.0395

The Situation

Ten days ago, an intense typhoon ("Typhoon No. 3") generating torrential rains induced extensive flooding over a period of two days (14/15 July) and triggered land slippage from hillsides in South Pyongan, North Hwanghae, Kangwon and South Hamgyong provinces. In these four provinces of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), rains precipitated landslides and flash floods that totally or partially destroyed 23,400 houses and rendered more than 16,960 families homeless, causing extensive damage to crops and infrastructure. More statistics are available in Table 1 attached to this bulletin; note however that these statistics are only for counties where the Red Cross is working and does not represent the total figures.

In some locations, whole villages have been swept away and essential public facilities such as clinics have been destroyed, while widespread damage to roads and bridges has displaced and stranded many people. Access to affected locations and communications are further constrained by extensive damage sustained by telephone networks, making it difficult to collect reliable information relating to casualties. Pyongyang's official media said on 21 July that hundreds of people were dead or missing following flash floods, which transformed farmland into lakes in a matter of minutes. Over the past few days, these floodwaters have begun to recede allowing some families to return home.

Families affected by the floods are currently being temporarily accommodated and cared for in public buildings such as schools and offices.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The floods have had an impact on four provinces – South Pyongan, North Hwanghae, Kangwon and South Hamgyong. Subsequently, the government has requested the DPRK Red Cross to focus its attention on the most severely affected counties within each of the respective provinces.

In South Pyongan province alone, where 280-320 mm of rainfall was recorded during the first six hours of 16 July, the DPRK Red Cross is distributing 4,100 family kits within the counties of Sinyang, Yangdok and Songchon. The society is also distributing 850 family kits within North Hwanghae (Sinpyong county); Kangwon (Kosan county); and South Hamgyong (Sudong county). For more information, please refer to the attached distribution table. Each family kit includes five blankets, two water containers (20 litres and 10 litres), one plastic sheet (4x2m), one set of basic kitchen equipment and 1,400 water purification tablets.

On Thursday 20 July, a representative from the Federation's country delegation visited Songchon county of South Pyongan, one of the areas most seriously affected by the floods. The visit was made in the context of an interagency assessment (Federation, United Nations Development Programme, World Food Programme, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation) arranged by the national society with the ministry of foreign affairs.

The assessment provided an opportunity to meet with local DPRK Red Cross staff and volunteers. On the same day, a convoy of DPRK Red Cross/Federation delegation trucks arrived in Songchon county town, transporting the final batch of 'family kits' items from the national society's municipal stores in Pyongyang to beleaguered families in Songchon. To date, the DPRK Red Cross has been the sole agency besides the government to provide support in the flood affected area.

In a briefing by the chairperson of the county peoples' committee made prior to the assessment, the chairperson was particularly appreciative of the contribution made by local DPRK Red Cross volunteers, not only for their support during the current flood but also for preparing people in advance. The national society was able to immediately release relief items and mobilize 2,386 volunteers to provide rescue, evacuation and first aid support within affected communities. Its ability to act swiftly in situations such as this comes from the DPRK Red Cross's and the Federation secretariat's continuous investment of time and effort in developing the national society's capacity in disaster management through the its multi-tiered annual disaster management programme.

The Federation delegation is coordinating its activities with the UN and other international agencies in the DPRK.

The International Federation undertakes activities that are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to achieve the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- *Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.*
- *Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.*
- *Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.*
- *Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.*

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

Table 1: Losses and damages in the counties where DPRK Red Cross is delivering family kits

14 -15 July: Flash Floods in DPRK							
Statistics are only for Red Cross operational areas							
Province	South Pyongan			North Hwanghae	Kangwon	South Hamgyong	Total
County	Yandok	Songchon	Sinyang	Sinpyong	Kosan	Sudong	
Houses							
completely destroyed	1,300	1,900	3,491	439	269	108	7,507
partly damaged	2,700	2,500	3,102	NA	NA	NA	8,302
submerged	510	3,100	525	200	311	432	5,076
People							
Homeless families	1,810	5,000	4,016	639	580	540	12,585
No. of missing	91	0	36	0	0	0	127
No. of deaths	54	3	52	3	0	9	121
Infrastructure							
Arable land (hectares)**							
totally washed away	0	1,140	0	0	482	493	2,115
silted	0	1,030	314	0	276	636	2,256
submerged	0	3,888	0	1,212	2235	1584	8,919
Roads (km)							
damaged	17	30	8.3	18.6	2	25.4	101.3
Bridges							
damaged	4	8	4	3	3	49	71
Railways (km)							
damaged	4	5	22.5	0	NA	NA	31
Bridges damaged	0	0	7	NA	NA	NA	7
Tunnels damaged	0	3	1	NA	NA	NA	4
Public buildings							
damaged/destroyed	126	124	0	0	NA	49	299

** There is little or no rice paddy fields in Yangdok county, which specializes in maize grown on terraced hillsides

Table 2: DPRK Red Cross distributions of family kits as of 25 July 2006

Province	South Pyongan			North Hwanghae	Kangwon Province	South Hamgyong	Total no. of families
County	Yandok	Songchon	Sinyang	Sinpyong	Kosan	Sudong	
No. of families left homeless	1,810	5,000	4,016	639	580	540	12,585
No. of DPRK RC Family Kits distributed	1,000	1,300	1,800	350	270	230	4,950
Distribution status	Ongoing	Completed	Completed	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	

Note: Each DPRK Red Cross family kit contains the following emergency water and shelter items: 1 plastic sheet (4x2m); 5 blankets; 1 set of basic kitchen equipment; 2 water containers (20 litres and 10 litres) and 1,400 water purification tablets.

[Infographic map below; click here to return to the title page or contact information.](#)



DPRK: Floods



In some locations, whole villages have been swept away and essential public facilities (such as clinics) destroyed, while widespread damage to roads and bridges has displaced and stranded many people. Access to affected locations and communications are further constrained by extensive damage sustained by telephone networks, making it difficult to collect reliable information relating to casualties.

Pyongyang's official media said on 21 July hundreds of people were dead or missing following flash floods which transformed farmland into lakes in a matter of minutes. Over the past few days these flood waters have begun to recede allowing some families to return home.