

OPERATIONS UPDATE



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

CHINA: FLOODS

3 September 2003

Appeal No. 18/2003; Operations Update no. 03

Appeal launched on 22 July 2003 for CHF 7,932,000 (USD 5,770,000 or EUR 5,120,000) in cash, kind or services to assist 440,000 beneficiaries for 9 months.

Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) allocated: CHF 300,000

Period covered: 22 August-03 September, 2003

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 180 countries.

For more information: www.ifrc.org

In Brief

Appeal coverage: 13%; for details see the attached contributions list, also available on the Federation's website. New pledges have been received from the Australian Red Cross and Government, and the German Red Cross and Government, and will be reflected shortly. A final decision on ECHO funding for the purchase of rice is also expected shortly.

Outstanding needs: CHF 6,717,171

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: 2003 Annual Appeal for China (no. 01.66/2003)

Operational Summary: Exceptionally heavy rain and storms during the period of 27 -31 August has resulted in severe flooding in Shaanxi Province. According to the latest statistics provided by the Red Cross Society of China's (RCSC) Shaanxi Provincial branch, 26 people have been left dead and some 4.9 million people have been affected by flooding that has to date reached 66 counties and 561 townships. A reported 46,000 houses have collapsed and 4.76 million hectares of crops have been lost resulting in a total economic loss to the Province of 3 billion RMB.

The RCSC Shaanxi Provincial branch, in coordination with local RCSC branches in Weinan City and Huayin City, are supporting the Government of China's flood relief efforts by providing tents, quilts, clothing, food and medical items to flood affected individuals. Due to the severity of the situation, which has been headline news on China's CCTV, and China Daily, representatives from RCSC's National Headquarters relief and external relations divisions accompanied by representatives from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies went to Shaanxi, as this Province was not included in the original appeal, to assess the needs of the flood affected communities.

Tree tops poke through the strong rapids now flowing over areas where up until seven days ago villages and farms were located. Family homes are inundated beneath three metres of water, while the families wait out the situation in temporary shelters set up in schools and in army bases. Desperate for shelter young children and babies try to sleep on the ground of a covered outdoor market. Continuing clouds and rain are preventing the water from subsiding and flooding on access roads poses another obstacle to delivering urgently needed humanitarian assistance.

New floods in Shaanxi Province -- joint RCSC and Federation assessment mission

Fierce storms and heavy rainfall over the period 27 -31 August has resulted in severe flooding and landslides in Shaanxi province. Shaanxi province is primarily comprised of farm land traversed by numerous lakes, ponds, reservoirs and streams. According to reports provided by the Red Cross Society of China's (RCSC) Shaanxi Provincial branch, as of 3 September some 4.9 million people have been affected by flooding which commenced 27 August that has to date reached 66 counties and 561 townships. A reported 46,000 houses have collapsed and 4.76 million hectares of crops have been lost resulting in a total economic loss to the Province of 3 billion RMB.

Hundreds of thousands of people were evacuated and many villages and crops are completely gone. Villages are submerged beneath three metres of water. In some cases villages have been transformed into islands surrounded by three metre deep flood water and only a few tips of trees can be seen where there were formerly groves. The water in places continues to move fairly quickly creating newly formed rapids over what was up until seven days ago farm land. Temperatures at the moment are cold and quite damp. As the only way of drying up the water and lowering the water levels is by sunlight, continued rain and clouds means that there is no chance for this. As the ground is fairly damp, families and those displaced due to the flooding require covered shelter with solid flooring. The government, which is working hard to patch broken dikes, divert flood water, and provide displaced families with food and shelter, has opened up spaces on army bases, and is using schools as shelters. Although the official school year should have commenced this week, the opening of schools in flood affected areas in Shaanxi will be delayed for a minimum of two weeks as the schools are being used for shelters and the flood situation is still considered too unstable to allow children to begin classes. A good example of this is that roads which were accessible on 2 September were completely flooded on 3 September and are now no longer usable. In fact many of the access roads in flood affected areas are being closed down to civilian traffic to allow rescue teams easier access to the dikes.

This is only the second time since 1961 such heavy flooding has occurred in Shaanxi Province, the first time being in 2002. In fact prior to 2002 drought posed a large threat to Shaanxi. Additionally the flooding was very sudden and came quite late. Although this year's death tolls were significantly lower due to improvements in the Early Warning Systems early notification which fortunately was able to spare lives was unable to protect crops and houses from the rushing water.

Seven counties in Weinan City have suffered repeated flooding since 27 August. The floods have resulted in damage to dikes and barriers caused by the overflow from the lower part of the Wei River. These include: Hua County and Huayin City Prefecture as well as Tonguan county, Dali county, Han Chung city, Dai Shui County. Fifty five towns within these seven counties suffered severe loss due to the floods affecting 350,000 people in those counties alone. Three people were reported dead in Han Chung city and 13 people injured. Some 1,700 Housing units were lost and 200 houses sustained serious damage making them dangerous to live in. 180 head of livestock were killed. The total economic loss is estimated at around RMB 450 million.

The joint RCSC Federation assessment took place in the two most affected areas, Huayin city and Hua County.

In Huayin City Prefecture, 220,000 people were evacuated from their homes and moved to temporary shelters on or about Sunday 31 August. The RCSC's Huayin City branch assisted with relocating 253 people. The branch conducted an assessment of the situation and submitted an official request to the RCSC's Shaanxi Provincial branch for assistance with the flooding. The RCSC Huayin City branch initiated local fund raising activities by immediately placing advertisements in the local press and on television.

For now the most common illness is diarrhea but medicine is also needed for headaches, flu and antibiotics. It was noted by the RCSC branch that given the difficult living conditions and the lowered resistance of the communities any contact with the SARS virus could have a very dangerous affect.

The Chinese government has been evacuating families and so far has provided 1,500 tents, 4,000 quilts and has established some shelters in partnership with the Provincial and local branches of the RCSC. During the assessment a visit was paid to two shelters one established on an army base and one in Hua County which was based in a school. Both shelters were relying on RCSC medical teams to support health needs, additionally the

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RCSC is supplementing government assistance with food, quilts, clothing and water purification tablets. At the moment access to drinking water is very limited.

The elementary school in Hua County will not be able to open for at least two weeks and is currently housing 1500 people who sleep on the floors and under desks which have been pushed against the walls. The government is currently providing food and quilts.

On 3 September, in response to assessments conducted by the local branches the RCSC Shaanxi Provincial branch sent ten large truckloads of relief items to be distributed at three distribution points in Weinan city and two in Hua County. The relief items, valued at RMB 1.5 million mostly came from relief stock and collections conducted locally by the branches (RMB 1.2 million) with additional material supplied by RCSC headquarters in Beijing and other sources. Among the items distributed by the RCSC local branches were 50 MT grain; 1.5 MT water purification tablets; tents; clothes; medicine; and basic hygiene items. Beneficiaries were identified by branch officers and volunteers during assessment missions held over the past three days. The branches will re-evaluate the situation over the coming days to identify the most vulnerable in accordance with the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement's principles. A list of the most vulnerable will be posted for review and input by local communities to avoid bias or favouritism. In order to ensure efficient distributions local branches compile and record beneficiary lists while sending Provincial branches a photocopy. Beneficiaries are fingerprinted upon receipt of goods to ensure the fair distribution to all those in need.

The Shaanxi Provincial branch is a relatively young branch with around 15 full time staff members. The branch's first experience with flood relief operations came in 2002. The branch and the government have maintained excellent co-operation since separating resulting in good coordination on the ground and the government continues to express appreciation for the branch's assistance. The branch is working on improving its capacity for conducting relief operations based on lessons learned in 2002. Additionally the branch tries to organise relief workshops for its volunteers.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action (Appeal 18/2003) - objectives, progress, impact

Emergency relief

Objective: To provide recovery assistance in the form of rice, quilts and mosquito nets to 110,000 families in seven provinces and one municipality most affected by this year's floods.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

As of the last week of August, the RCSC with support from the Federation finalised "Plan of Action 2" the procurement of 120,000 mosquito nets. To date RCSC with support from the Federation have completed Plan of Action 1, the procurement of tents and water purification tablets; are in the process of confirming final details on Plan of Action 2 the procurement of Mosquito nets; have developed Plan of Action 3 to provide quilts with support from the German Red Cross and are working on Plan of Action 4 with ECHO regarding the distribution of rice.

The RCSC's logistics department in Beijing in cooperation with the Federation's field delegate solicited blind bids from three local suppliers of nets. The nets were chosen based on quality and price and are suitable for standard double beds. Items will be distributed in proportion to the extent of flood damage in the respective eight provinces with each of the four most affected areas receiving 15% of the items a piece and the four less severely affected provinces receiving 10% each. Mosquito nets were given priority among the identified items as they are most needed while the temperatures are still high.

ECHO is currently working with the RCSC and the Federation to finalise details regarding planned rice distributions which will be Plan of Action 4.

In Qingzho Prefecture in the Guangxi Province, 370 mm of rain water accumulated during the period of 27-29 June which was the highest level of flooding in recorded history. 547 villages in 31 townships, which depend on fishing for their livelihood were affected by the floods which destroyed 24 reservoirs. Communications, water and

electricity supplies were interrupted. Since the flooding at the end of June the local branch of the RCSC has supported the government with relief work. Local branches of the RCSC have assisted the government with the distribution of food, tents and medicine. Following a visit made during the third week of August by representatives from RCSC's headquarters and a Federation representative from DMC in Geneva, lack of food remains the main problem for flood affected families. A visit was also made to the farming community of Tjinuan (pop. 100,000), the most seriously affected area in Guangxi, where 300 mm floods affected 1,350 houses. The RCSC local branch has provided rice to villagers at intervals and those people who receive it are selected by the local house committees themselves. A beneficiary list is prepared and posted publicly a few days before a distribution is due. Villagers have the possibility to review it and make any suggestions about alterations that should occur. In this way the local community is involved in the beneficiary choices and has the opportunity to influence changes prior to the event. Red Cross tents have been erected alongside those of the government. Both the government and the RCSC have recognised the need for improvement in the design of the tents, and are working together to find out what qualities about the respective tents can be taken to create tents that will best suit the needs of the population in the future.

Federation coordination

Communications – Advocacy and Public Information

The Final Report regarding the 2002 Flood relief operations in China is available on the Federation's website.

Red Cross Society of China capacity building

By working as a team with the Federation the RCSC's national headquarters, provincial and local branches are being given an opportunity to learn about the Federation's practices by doing. Joint visits allow both the RCSC and the Federation the opportunity to learn about each other's works and identify areas in need of assistance.

For further information please contact:

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct and is committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

China - floods

ANNEX 1

APPEAL No. 18/2003

PLEDGES RECEIVED

04.09.2003

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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CASH

REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				7'932'000	TOTAL COVERAGE 15.3%	
AUSTRALIAN - GOVT/RC		516'447	AUD	467'385	04.09.03	
AUSTRIAN - RC		40'000	EUR	61'960	05.08.03	
DANISH - RC		277'500	DKK	57'581	23.07.03	
DANISH - GOVT		30'000	USD	40'530	25.07.03	DIRECTLY TO DELEGATION
ESTEC NDF/ESA		10'000	EUR	15'490	24.07.03	
FINNISH - RC		50'000	EUR	77'150	24.07.03	
JAPANESE - RC		249'543	USD	337'133	25.07.03	
LIECHTENSTEIN - RC				10'000	29.08.03	
SWEDISH - GOVT		700'000	SEK	117'600	25.07.03	
TURKISH - RC				30'000	22.07.03	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				1'214'829	CHF	15.3%

KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				0	CHF	0.0%

ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	