

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

Appeal No. MDRCN001
Date 14 August 2006

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 185 countries.

In Brief

Operations Update no.01; Period covered: 2 August 2006 to 14 August 2006;
Appeal target: CHF 5,950,200 (USD 4,825,791 OR EUR 3,782,708);
Appeal coverage: 5.3%; Outstanding needs: CHF 5,632,800 (USD 4,562,671 or EUR 3,565,238)

[<click here to go directly to the attached update contributions list>](#)

Appeal history:

- Launched 2 August 2006 for CHF 5,950,200 (USD 4,825,791 OR EUR 3,782,708)
- Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) allocated: CHF 213,000

Operational Summary: The flood and storm situation in China remains turbulent with two substantial Typhoons Prapiroon and Saomai having struck China since the launch of this appeal on 2 August. This Operations Update summarises the impact of the latest typhoons to strike China and describes briefly the early steps to be taken to implement the RCSC/Federation Appeal. While some funding has been confirmed and other discussions are ongoing, confirmed funding is urgently required to move forward with planned relief and recovery activities.



The aftermath of the typhoons were felt across many villages

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Background

The storm situation in China remains turbulent with two substantial typhoons; Prapiroon and Saomai striking China after the launch of the Federation's Appeal on 2 August. On 3 August, tropical storm Prapiroon forced the evacuation of 844,000 people in southern China's Guangdong and Hainan provinces and the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. Prapiroon's force eventually left 80 people dead, destroying some 30,000 homes and damaging 140,000 others.

Typhoon Saomai, the eighth of a series of deadly typhoons and tropical storms struck southern China on Thursday 10 August leaving, according to the latest statistics from the ministry of civil affairs, some 295 people dead and over 160 missing. Typhoon Saomai, the strongest typhoon to strike the country in fifty years, pummelled the country's eastern provinces including Fujian, Zhejiang and Jiangxi, destroying thousands of homes, and necessitating the evacuation of over 1.5 million people on Wednesday 9 August prior to its arrival.

Table 1: Ministry of Civil Affairs -Latest Statistics for Typhoon Saomai as of 13 August 2006.

Province	No of people Affected	No. of people Evacuated	Damaged Farmland (Hectare)	Destroyed Farmland	Collapsed rooms	Damaged rooms
Zhejiang	2,426,000	1,001,000	80,800	4,600	21,000	82,000
Fujian	1,455,000	710,000	69,800	7,600	38,000	281,000
Jiangxi	1,841,000	35,200	89,200	13,300	1,900	7,200
Hubei	198,000	327	5,100	600	377	947
Total	5,920,000	1,746,527	244,900	26,100	61,277	371,147

Typhoon Saomai, packing winds of up to 216 km (135 mph) per hour, approached Zhejiang province and the challenge for provincial officials in the hours before its arrival was how to keep everyone safe. Exactly fifty years had passed since 1 August 1956, when 4,900 people were killed in Zhejiang province by what, up until a few days ago, was the most powerful typhoon to hit the area.

These past fifty years have given rise to lightning speed innovations in technology, tremendous changes in social and cultural roles around the world, and most recently enormous changes in China which now finds itself straddling centuries. In any of China's major cities one will encounter a cross section of groups of migrant workers walking the streets with shovels and gritty sacks of their meagre personal belongings representing some of the 800 million rural poor, (whose lives today are not much unlike the lives of the rural poor fifty years ago) and the newly emerging middle class.



A couple walking along one of the destroyed buildings.

More and more, the internet, television and text messaging are becoming essential parts of local early warning systems, but in China where a vast number of communities live as their families did 50 years ago without access to mobile phones and the internet, the reach of modern technology is still fairly limited with lives being saved using basic equipment.

In preparation for typhoon Saomai, local government officials in Wenzhou's Cangnan county prepared 30 gongs to warn people of the upcoming disaster. While much progress has been made in developing state of the art life saving technology to track large scale storms such as the

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recent ones in China, at the same time the recent spate of typhoons underscores the importance of providing communities especially the thousands of rural communities in China with basic information about preparedness and basic early warning systems.

Again, it was the basic needs that needed to be most urgently attended to with local Red Cross Society of China branches in Zhejiang and neighbouring Fujian immediately mobilising essential items such as tents, blankets, family kits, clothes, medicine, disinfectant and other necessities from the society's nearby disaster preparedness centres. The RCSC headquarters supplemented local efforts by providing relief funds and materials to Zhejiang province. In addition, the head of the Red Cross Red Crescent's relief division joined an emergency coordination team on an assessment of the affected area on 11 August.

Severe floods from the period of June through August are annual occurrences in China but over the past fifty years, new challenges have arisen for China's rural poor. To understand the true repercussions of these typhoons it is important to regard each of these typhoons not as independent disasters but a contributing factor to pre-existing hardship with each recent loss tying into a long list of larger pre-existing obstacles for the rural poor.

Loss of land/loss of livelihood

The country's ministry of civil affairs reports that to date more than 32 million hectares of farmland have been destroyed by natural disasters this year. At the same time millions of people have been displaced as typhoons that have struck southern China since May have destroyed or damaged some five million homes. In total, natural disasters in 2006 have claimed the lives of 1,699 with 415 missing; and led to direct losses totalling more than RMB 130 billion (USD 16.25 billion).



A villager clearing the debris caused by the typhoons.

According to China's ministry of land and resources, China is home to 22 percent of the world's population yet the country possesses a mere seven percent of the world's arable land. Since 1996, China has lost eight million hectares of its arable land with 27 provinces facing the problem of decreasing levels of farmland due to factors such as soil erosion and the conversion of farmland into industrial sites. At the same time, other chronic natural disasters, particularly widespread and record breaking drought in Sichuan and Chongqing, is putting an additional strain on the country's limited available agricultural resources. Thousands of farmers, in addition to the families affected by the eight tropical storms and typhoons, are now finding their crops and small plots of land completely ruined.

With crops and farmland ruined, families are left with no other choice then to go to the city to seek out work. This option in itself is risky as the contracts are mostly unregulated and these workers are forced to enter an arena of questionable employers who may or may not eventually pay them. Home becomes the cramped living conditions away from their families which they withstand to save as much money as they can. At the same time the migrant workers, many who are quite young and whose hours extend through the night, walk through the streets poorly clothed, carrying their tools and covered in dirt facing a certain degree of stigma in the larger cities from the city's wealthier residents.

Loss of Lives

During the period between harvests, China's villages are home to women, children and the elderly with many of the working age men having left for the cities to seek out extra income as migrant labourers. In Jiangxi province, following typhoon Prapiroon which struck China on 3 August, men were returning to their typhoon decimated villages to find that the generations of women who they had left behind to try to support had been suddenly killed by the storm without ever having the chance to say good bye.

Operational developments

Red Cross and Red Crescent action - objectives, progress, impact

Emergency relief (food and basic non-food items)

Objective: 60,000 of the most affected families (240,000 people) in Hunan, Jiangxi, Guangdong, Guangxi and Fujian provinces have received 3,600 MT rice (15kg per person/one time distribution), 1,300 family tents and 30,000 quilts.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

Soft pledges received thus far indicate the ability to partially cover the need for quilts and rice, however, confirmed funding is required to cover the costs of these items. Procurement of quilts has commenced.

Reconstruction of Shelter

Objective: 1,200 most vulnerable displaced and poor families living in highly-flood affected villages are assisted in the rebuilding of their homes in Hunan, one county in Jiangxi and one county in Guangxi through supplements to local government response.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

Funding received thus far in response to the appeal will be used to support the construction of some 300 houses in Hunan province which was most heavily hit by 14 July's tropical storm Bilis. The Federation's regional disaster management officer, regional disaster management delegate and the Red Cross Red Crescent's head of relief will travel to Hunan province on 15 August to meet with local authorities to identify an appropriate location for Federation supported reconstruction activities.

Flood mitigation activities

Objective: the vulnerability of communities affected by this year's floods to future flood disaster is reduced through the introduction of community based flood mitigation activities in four villages.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

Funds are required to implement this important component of the appeal. It should be noted that the largest number of deaths following each of the typhoons have occurred in inland areas which were less prepared to respond to floods, then areas along the coast where preparedness plans have been established.

Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF)

Objective: Immediately distribute rice (300 MT); blankets (10,000) and water purification materials to victims of Tropical Storm Bilis (14 July) in Hunan Province.

Following tropical storm Bilis which struck China on 14 July, the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) released CHF 213,000 (USD 172,291). DREF released on Friday 21 July has been used by the Red Cross Red Crescent for the immediate distribution of rice (300 MT); blankets (10,000) and water purification materials.

Hunan province was the most heavily affected by the fourth typhoon which hit China this year, particularly in Chenzhou and Hengyang prefectures. Bilis which was also the most deadly of the seven typhoons and tropical storms that struck China over the past three months left at least 612 people dead. Based on the extensive levels of damage in Chenzhou and Hengyang prefectures, the Red Cross and Red Crescent distributed relief items to flood affected families in Zixing, Yongxing, Yi Zhang and Gui Yang counties in Chenzhou prefecture; and, Lai Yang and Heng Nan counties in Heng Yang prefecture.

Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) – national-level activities

The RCSC launched a national appeal on 21 July and so far received donations from nationally based corporations, provincial based Red Cross branches and the Hong Kong and the Macao Red Cross. Funds raised through the national appeal will be used to build new houses for 800 poor homeless families in nine villages in Hunan, Jiangxi, Guangxi, Guangdong and Fujian. The society plans to have some 386 families move to new homes prior to China's "Spring Festival" in February. Red Cross and Red Crescent will also use the fund to rebuild nine township hospitals or medical schools in Hunan, Jiangxi, Guangxi, Guangdong, Fujian and Zhejiang. To date the RCSC headquarters has also sent 12 teams to monitor local disaster relief work.

[Contributions list below; click here to return to the title page.](#)

The International Federation undertakes activities that are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet 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>

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CHINA - FLOODS

ANNEX 1

APPEAL No. MDRCN001

PLEDGES RECEIVED

15/08/2006

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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CASH

					TOTAL COVERAGE	
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				5,950,200		5.3%
SWEDISH - GOVT		1,500,000	SEK	255,750	03.08.06	
AMCROSS		50,000	USD	61,650		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				317,400	CHF	5.3%

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	