

# 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

## CHINA: FLOODS

5 August 2005

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 181 countries.

### In Brief

This Bulletin (no. 7/2005) is being issued based on the status of the situation and information available at this time. China's flood season has returned with a vengeance, as serious flooding has struck several parts of China in the past 48 hours at the same time as the country is preparing to be hit by Typhoon Matsa. Red Cross relief operations are underway in several provinces in southern China struck by heavy flooding in June. The response so far, including a Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) allocation of CHF 200,000, has nearly exhausted resources of Red Cross Society of China. In view of these new and ongoing needs, the national society and the Federation are preparing an international appeal that will be launched early next week.

*For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:*

- In China: Mr. Wang Xiaohua, director of external relations department, Red Cross Society of China, Beijing; email: [rcsc@chineseredcross.org.cn](mailto:rcsc@chineseredcross.org.cn); phone: +86.10.65124169; fax: +86.10.65124169.
- In China: Mr. Alistair Henley, head of East Asia regional delegation, Beijing, email: [ifrcen01@ifrc.org](mailto:ifrcen01@ifrc.org); phone: +86.10.65327162, fax: +86.10.65327166.
- In Geneva: Asia and Pacific department, Ms. Ewa Eriksson, East Asia regional officer, email: [ewa.eriksson@ifrc.org](mailto:ewa.eriksson@ifrc.org); phone: +41227304252; fax: +41.22.7330395

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organisations \(NGO's\) 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>

### The Situation

China's flood season has returned with a vengeance, as serious flooding has struck several parts of China in recent days at the same time as the country is preparing to be hit by Typhoon Matsa. Heavy rains fell on large parts of the country on 3 and 4 August affecting especially northern areas. The eastern province of Anhui was particularly hit, with 260 millimetres of rain falling in one location on Wednesday (3 August), and a total of 300,000 people affected in the whole province. Severe thunderstorms were also recorded with one person killed in Beijing and the international airport having to close for several hours.

Meanwhile, several of China's eastern coastal provinces are facing the threat of massive storms as Typhoon Matsa speeds across the East China Sea. Zhejiang province is directly threatened but it is predicted that torrential downpours and storm winds will affect several provinces in eastern and central China in the coming days, including Shanghai, Liaoning, Shandong, Anhui, Jiangsu, Jiangxi and Hunan.

These widespread rains bring to an end a period of extreme heat and prolonged drought that has affected large areas of both southern and northern China. In July, a record 18 consecutive days of temperatures above 35 degrees Celsius were recorded in parts of southern China leading to mounting concerns about water shortages and drought conditions.

## **Red Cross and Red Crescent action**

The Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) headquarters has despatched assessment teams to Anhui province in the east and Heilongjiang in the far north part of the country. The Federation's disaster management coordinator has cut short a preparedness training programme in Hunan province and is joining the team in Anhui.

Preliminary reports received from the Red Cross branches in these provinces indicate that 13 counties and 1,870,000 people were affected in Anhui. Four people have died and 1,033 houses collapsed. This follows on from a tornado that struck 12 villages on 30 July, killing 15 people and leaving 638 homeless. In Heilongjiang, 112,000 people were badly affected by floods that happened between 26 and 29 July, leaving over 11,200 people homeless. The local Red Cross has provided assistance valued at RMB 88,000 (CHF 14,000). Further information will be sent back over the weekend by the assessment teams on the latest flooding and first hand details of the effects of Typhoon Matsa as it moves inland.

RCSC relief operations are continuing in several southern provinces in response to the serious floods that struck in June and early July this year. Guangxi was one of the hardest hit areas and supplies of rice, quilts, water purification tablets mosquito nets and clothes are being distributed by the provincial Red Cross branch. Similarly, distributions are underway in Hunan, Sichuan, Chongqing and Guizhou. Most of the relief supplies come from resources made available by RCSC headquarters or raised within the province by the local branches, but supplies have also been procured with donations of USD 100,000 received from the American embassy in Beijing, RMB 200,000 (CHF 31,000) from the Hong Kong Red Cross branch and CHF 200,000 from the Federation's DREF (see [Information Bulletin No. 6](#) for further details).

The condition of many of those affected by these floods, however, remains precarious in the extreme. The Federation has just sent the former East Asia regional information delegate back to Hunan province to assess the situation in villages badly affected by this season's flooding and also to revisit those hit last year. His report, '[Floods haunt rural China](#)', emphasizes the toll that successive disastrous floods are taking on individuals and communities in rural China. Rural hardship is deepening and many villages are dying from a cumulative exhaustion of resources.

Red Cross resources to respond are also dwindling. Since the start of the year, RCSC has responded to different disasters in 24 provinces throughout the country, and the headquarters has sent to its branches supplies and cash totalling RMB 16.5 million (CHF 2.6 million). This has effectively drained it of nearly all the resources it has to cope with the latest floods and anticipated disasters later this year, as well as to provide continued support in the above provinces where assistance is most needed. Consequently, the Federation is working with RCSC to prepare an international appeal to meet these needs that will be launched early next week.

**[Click here to return to the title page or contact information.](#)**