

Information bulletin



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

China: Floods

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Flooding caused by heavy rains has hit more than nine provinces in southern China, causing 63 deaths and the evacuation of 1.66 million people. An estimated 40 million people have been affected by floods, shortly following the devastation of the 12 May earthquake.

Branches of the Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) have mobilized relief workers and goods to aid the affected populations. The headquarters of the RCSC is closely monitoring the situation and distributing aid to assist branches in their efforts.

The Red Cross Society of China, with the support of the International Federation, is not yet considering launching an international appeal for the flood related relief efforts at this time, but is monitoring the situation closely.

[<click here to view the map of the affected area, or here for detailed contact information>](#)



People of He Chi village in Guangxi province wait for rescuers to help them escape the rising flood waters. RCSC

The Situation

So shortly after the devastating Wenchuan earthquake on 12 May, China is facing yet another natural disaster causing the displacement of millions and economic losses soaring into the billions. Since 7 June, at least nine provinces in southern China have been inundated with continuous rains causing rivers to overflow and threatening to burst dams throughout the region. Some areas have reported the worst flooding in 100 years, and with rains forecast for at least another 3 days, the area is bracing for more.

Thus far, the flooding has been focused in the provinces of Guangdong, Guangxi, Guizhou, Yunnan, Zhejiang, Anhui, Jiangxi, Hubei and Hunan. Guangdong, Guangxi, Hunan and Jiangxi have been the hardest hit so far. Sichuan and other provinces as far north as Gansu province are also reporting heavy rains and it is expected that the rains will begin moving north over the next few days.

Already an estimated 40 million people have been affected thus far, and at least 63 are reported dead with another 13 missing, according to the ministry of civil affairs official counts¹. Evacuations across nine provinces have displaced 1.66 million people, including thousands in Sichuan who are still reeling from the earthquake which left five million homeless just one month ago. More than 20,000 people were moved to avoid the dangers

¹ Numbers in the media claiming more than 170 lives have been lost are from total figures killed in flooding since the beginning of the year, including this disaster.

of rain induced landslides near the quake's epicentre in Wenchuan. Another 52,000 have been evacuated from other high risk areas in the province.

In neighbouring Guangxi province, one million have been evacuated, as reservoirs and dams are threatening to overflow. But it is Guangdong province which has been hit the hardest, and although the Xijiang and Beijiang rivers have subsided below dangerous levels, there is still a high likelihood that flooding in those areas, as well as along the Pearl River Delta, will continue as more rains are forecast.

Surprisingly, the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River are threatening to flood parts of Shanxi, Shaanxi, Henan and Shandong provinces after years of being plagued by low water levels. The second longest river in China, 5,500 kilometres long (3,400 miles), the Yellow River has been known as both a source of life and devastation for the Chinese people throughout history. This year, the river is already causing concern to those in its path. Concerns are also turning to the Yangtze River, which is expected to be affected by increasing rains in the coming days and weeks.

Damage reports gathered around the nation show that at least 134,000 houses have been destroyed, 2.32 million hectares (9,000 square miles) of farmland have been damaged, and direct economic losses are adding up to an estimated CNY 27.7 billion (CHF 4 billion). There are additional worries that these floods will result in an increase in the prices of vegetables and sugar, bringing further challenges to much of the country's population who have already suffered their third major catastrophe of the year.

Earlier this year, record breaking snowstorms blanketed the southern parts of China killing 50 people, crippling the transportation system and causing billions of dollars worth of damage.

And the country is still deep in the relief and recovery efforts following the 12 May earthquake that killed nearly 70,000 people and affected an estimated 40 million people across Sichuan and neighbouring provinces.

Based on a four level system of rating disasters (1 being most severe), the Chinese government has activated emergency disaster relief response Level 2 to some areas in Guangxi province, and Level 3 to other areas of Guangxi, Guangdong, Hunan and Jiangxi provinces.



The RCSC found He Chi village in Guangxi province submerged in water when they arrived to bring relief supplies. RCSC



Villagers take refuge on the roofs of houses and float to safety on makeshift rafts in He Chi village, Guangxi province. RCSC

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The branches of the Red Cross Society of China have responded in their respective areas, where needed. The Guangdong Red Cross branch has sent CNY 750,000 (CHF 109,000) worth of relief supplies to flood hit areas. As early as 2 June, the Guangdong Red Cross branch distributed 50 tonnes of rice and 2,000 family first aid kits to those in flooded areas. By 16 June, the branch had dispatched three assessment teams, which distributed an additional 500 family first aid kits and ten tons of rice each, resulting in a total of 1,500 first aid kits and 30 tonnes of rice being delivered to beneficiaries on 16 June. The RCSC headquarters has provided the branch 50 sprayers, 1,500 mosquito nets, 500 boxes of water purification tablets, and 500 boxes of environmental disinfectants.



Villagers in scenic Yangshou near Guilin, in Guangxi province, walk along their flooded crops. The loss of farmland and the subsequent inflation of vegetable prices is of increasing concern in China this season. RCSC.

The RCSC headquarters allocated relief goods to the Guangxi Red Cross branch from the disaster preparedness centre located in neighbouring Yunnan province. This shipment valued over CNY 282,000 (CHF 41,000) included 1,500 blankets, 1,500 mosquito nets and 350 boxes of water purification tablets and 500 boxes environmental disinfectants. Guangxi Red Cross was also able to mobilize five tons of emergency medicines and 15 tents valued at CNY 70,000 (CHF 10,000) from their own supply sources.

Fujian Red Cross branch has launched an appeal for flood affected people in the province. Already, 12 counties have experienced flooding and more than 10,000 people have been evacuated from the highest risk areas. Heavy rains are expected to continue in the coming days, and a local meteorological station is predicting "geological disasters" in the

province.

The RCSC headquarters was able to provide CNY 100,000 (CHF 14,500) from their emergency fund to Guizhou province, including an allocation of 4,000 blankets. The RCSC headquarters is monitoring the situation closely and will continue to keep the International Federation informed of developments and Red Cross actions throughout the nation.

This year has brought extreme challenges to the RCSC with the unusual string of natural disasters, starting with the snowstorms in January and February, only to be followed by the horrific earthquake on 12 May. These floods come at a time when the RCSC is still deeply involved in the earthquake relief and recovery efforts, for which many of the disaster preparedness stocks throughout the nation have been depleted. The RCSC has responded rapidly and effectively to all of these disasters, bringing much needed relief items and first aid support to the affected populations. The flood season in China comes every year from around May to August, and has resulted in the RCSC launching both national and international appeals the last few years.

With the focus of the nation greatly on the earthquake, and an unprecedented outpouring of support from donors for earthquake relief, the RCSC will be facing a big challenge in raising support for flood relief efforts in the weeks ahead. The International Federation will work closely with the RCSC to monitor the situation and report on developments to partners and the public.

How we work

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.

The International Federation's activities 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.

Contact information

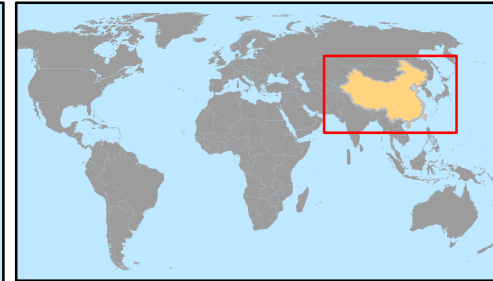
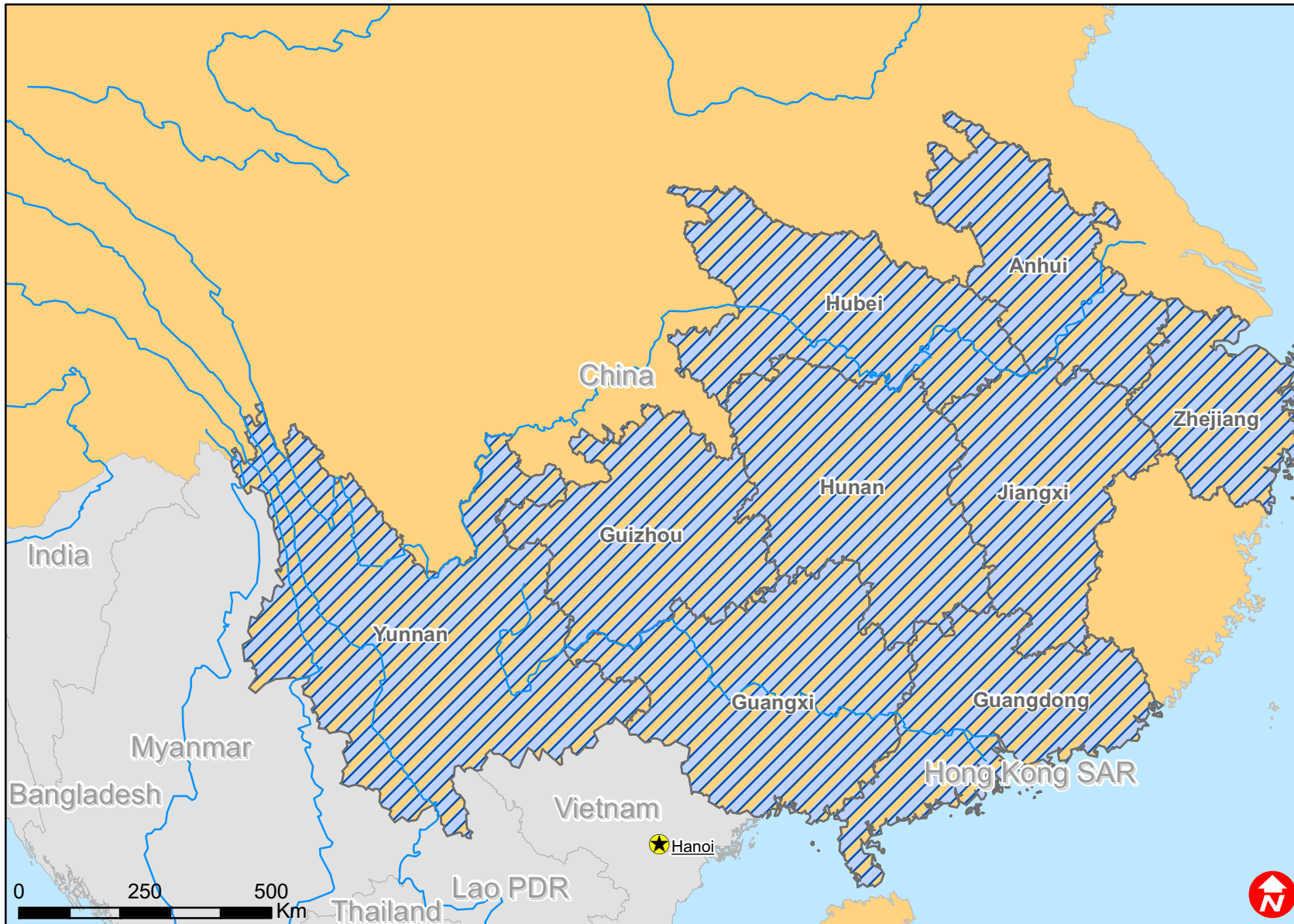
For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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



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 Affected provinces