

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: JIANGXI EARTHQUAKE

28 November 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 183 countries.

In Brief

This Bulletin (no. 01/05) is being issued for information only, and is based on the needs described below. An allocation from the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is being requested. The replenishment of DREF is welcome and needed. The Federation does not anticipate further needs.

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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

According to latest reports, a magnitude 5.7 earthquake that jolted China's northern Jiangxi province at 08:49 (00:49 GMT) on Saturday 26 November has left 14 people dead. According to the most recent statistics from the Red Cross Society of China's (RCSC) Jiangxi provincial branch, some 377 people have been treated for earthquake-related injuries.

The quake's epicentre was in Ruichang city, with the quake's force felt in northern Jiangxi province, eastern Hubei province, southern Anhui province, northwestern Zhejiang province and northeastern Hunan province. China's state seismic bureau reports that five of the deaths occurred in Ruichang city, seven in Jiujiang county and two in Wuxue, a city facing Jiujiang across the Yangtze river in central China's Hubei province.

In Jiujiang county, preliminary reports from the local branch reported some 8,072 "rooms" (approximately 3,000-4,000 homes) have been demolished and 132,196 "rooms" have been seriously damaged, with some local officials indicating that the quake has flattened thousands of rural homes.

In Ruichang city, which is situated in northern Jiangxi by the Yangtze river on the border to Hubei province, its 420,000 residents were shocked by the largest earthquake to strike the area in over fifty years and the aftershocks

that were felt throughout the city at 13:00 local time. Fears of further damage led to thousands of people leaving their homes and doctors treating people outside hospitals. Chinese television showed collapsed brick buildings and deep cracks in those still standing. The damage to water sources caused by the earthquake has also created a shortage of clean drinking water.

The state seismic bureau has sent two work teams to give guidance to rescue operation in the quake-hit area. Teams dispatched by local seismic bureaux of Jiangxi, Hubei and Fujian provinces are also on their way to the quake-stricken region to render help.

Tents and emergency medical services are provided outside a hospital, and officials in Beijing are preparing to send emergency supplies to the affected regions.

Jiangxi is among the poorest provinces in China. On average, the subsistence farmers in the province's rural areas support households of up to seven people on a monthly income of RMB 300 (CHF 49). For other farmers, the cost of house repairs or construction often requires a sizeable proportion of their income. For many of Jiangxi's rural poor, particularly those people who have lost their rice harvests in the recent waves of floods, the ability to repair or construct a new home could take years.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

In less than twelve hours after the earthquake struck, the Red Cross Society of China's Jiangxi provincial Jiujiang county and Ruichang city branches immediately released family tents to provide shelter to some 500 people. The RCSC branch staff worked quickly to gather information about the extent of the damage and identify priority needs in the affected area.

The Federation will support the RCSC with funds released from the Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) to address the needs for temporary shelter and protection for up to 2,000 affected families, with the immediate release of 200 family-sized tents (each tent housing seven people) and 2,000 quilts from the RCSC disaster preparedness centre in Xiaogan. This is based on information provided by the local branches to the relief division at RCSC headquarters in Beijing, as well as discussions held on 27 November between representatives from the Federation and the RCSC relief division. The RCSC Xiaogan disaster preparedness centre is located in Hubei province, close to the Jiangxi border, Ruichang county and Jiujiang city. Road access from the centre to the affected area remains intact following the earthquake. Additionally, as water sources have been damaged, the Federation is supporting RCSC headquarters with the release and distribution of approximately 1,650 cartons of bottled water, which will be distributed throughout the affected area.

On Monday 28 November, the Federation's relief delegate is joining an assessment team led by the head of the RCSC relief division. The team is also distributing the tents and quilts released from the Xiaogan disaster preparedness centre. The earthquake is an especially harsh blow for the residents of both Jiujiang county and Ruichang city, which were severely affected by severe floods and landslides in May and a destructive typhoon in September. Most recently, some 260,000 people were severely affected by floods in Jiujiang city.

The RCSC's Jiangxi provincial branch plays a key role in the province's disaster response mechanism. Over the past year, the Jiangxi provincial branch has been working with the Hong Kong Red Cross on increasing the branch's capacity to implement community-based disaster preparedness project activities. Since September, following local flood response activities coordinated by the RCSC Jiangxi provincial branch, the branch has been working with RCSC headquarters and the Federation to distribute relief items to flood victims as part of the Federation's 2005 emergency flood operation (please see [China Floods Emergency Appeal 05EA017](#)).

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