

DPR KOREA: TYPHOON

25 September 2000

appeal no. 25/2000

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period covered: 19 - 24 September 2000

The DPRK Red Cross, supported by the Federation, has carried out an assessment in the worst-hit province of South Hamgyong. Relief items including cooking sets, blankets and plastic sheeting were distributed by the DPRK Red Cross to 285 families. The emphasis is currently on water and sanitation and shelter. With the approach of freezing winter temperatures, those who have lost their houses risk further hardship. Contributions are urgently needed to provide materials in order that 6,000 beneficiaries may re-build their homes.

The context

Typhoon Prapiroon (Tropical Storm No. 12) hit the north-east coast of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) late at night on 30 August and brought about nearly 30 hours of heavy rain which caused flash flooding in many places in the eastern part of the country. Damage was extensive since the storm coincided with a tidal wave in the east Sea of Korea. Roads, bridges, railways, communications, houses and paddy fields have been seriously damaged. The scale of destruction exceeds that caused by other natural disasters in the DPRK since 1995. The worst of the storm damage occurred in South Hamgyong Province where the 11 cities and counties were severely affected, leaving more than 10,000 homeless flood victims. In Hoesang District in Hamhung City, the provincial seat (350 km north east of Pyongyang), 5 villages located at the mouth of valley where the flash flood hit in the early morning of 31 August were particularly hard hit, and around 550 people (178 families) lost their home and property. Typhoon Saomai (Tropical Storm No. 14), which passed over the Korean peninsula on 16 September, has compounded the misery caused by Typhoon Prapiroon, however, no additional major damage of infrastructure has been reported. Other parts of the country including North Hamgyong and Kangwon Province, were also badly affected by the typhoons and tidal wave. Following a joint assessment made by the DPRK Red Cross Society and the Federation in

South Hamgyong, the Federation launched a preliminary appeal on 19 September seeking CHF 950,000 to assist 6,000 flood victims in four of the worst hit counties in South Hamgyong Province.

Latest events

The Government reacted quickly to the disaster by mobilising the local population in large numbers, focusing on repairs to roads and other infrastructure. The government’s Flood and Damage Relief Committee (FDRC) is responsible for the response and is undertaking assessments. Due to the difficulties in access to many of the affected areas, findings are not yet complete. A co-ordination group has been established under the UN Disaster Management Team consisting of UN agencies, the Federation and NGOs. The group will work closely with the FDRC once further information on needs is available. The effects of the storm damage on the harvest will be assessed shortly by FAO and the WFP. As an initial response, WFP has provided 600 MT of food in the context of food-for-work programmes in the storm affected area.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Assessment •

A rapid joint National Society/Federation assessment in South Hamgyong Province took place from 13 - 15 September. The team met the Red Cross branch and the provincial FDRC and visited several villages hit by the storm. In Haisang District north of Hamhung City the main road to North Hamgyong Province was reported to be cut off in 36 places over a distance of several kilometres. In five of the villages in the district, 178 houses were completely destroyed by the flash floods leaving 550 families homeless. According to preliminary assessment reports from the Red Cross branch and the FDRC, over 1,200 houses have been destroyed. This figure relates to four of the 11 counties in South Hamgyong Province alone. In addition to houses which are totally destroyed, large numbers of partially destroyed houses were observed by the team. Moreover, it is anticipated that the number of collapsed houses will increase, since many suffered serious structural damage. On 1 September, a nearby dam flooded Jong Am Dong in the outskirts of Hamhung City which has a population of 6,400, and 40 houses collapsed instantly. Several hours later, more houses collapsed, with the total of ruined housing reaching 194, leaving over 800 people homeless. Several water sources were found to be destroyed or contaminated. The number of water sources which are in need of repair is yet to be assessed.

A Red Cross relief team from the headquarters is stationed in Hamhung to assist the Red Cross branch in further needs assessments in order to compile beneficiary lists in each of the affected villages in the four counties targeted by the DPRK Red Cross. The relief team has completed an assessment in the 36 ri:s/dong:s (villages) in Kumay, Hamhung, Hongwon and Pukchong counties. The assessment in other counties and provinces is ongoing in order to gain an overall view of the damage sustained.

Assessed family houses which sustained storm damage

County/City	No. of Ri/dong (villages)	Houses destroyed	Families/ population	Partly destroyed houses	Families/ Population
Hamhung city	11	545	622/2,618	692	794/3,419
Kumya county	10	277	346/1,452	1,063	1,204/4,986
Hongwon county	6	352	440/1,935	278	368/1,642
Pukchong county	9	439	555/2,288	566	697/2,945
Total	36	1,613	1,963/8,293	2,599	3,063/12,992

On 21 September, a WFP field officer reported that in Pukchong County, South Hamgyong Province, 13 people were killed and 80 injured during the storm. These figures refer only to the main county since some ri areas are still isolated. The Federation water & sanitation delegate, together with staff from the DPRK Red Cross, is to travel to South Hamgyong province to make further assessments of the needs relating to water.

Branch activity •

The South Hamgyong provincial Red Cross branch has set up a number of emergency First Aid posts at road rehabilitation sites in the area to provide first aid assistance to the population engaged in manual repair work. The Red Cross first aid posts at village level co-ordinate their activities with the ri-hospitals and doctors and professional health staff have been allocated to assist the volunteers at certain posts.

Distribution •

As the initial assessment took place, the following relief items from the DPRK Red Cross’s disaster preparedness stock were distributed to homeless families.

District	Ri/Dong	Families/ Population	Cooking set (set)	Blanket (pcs)	Plastic sheet (roll)
Hoisang	Songwon	30/154	30	154	2
	Ryongbong	29/157	29	157	2
	Sudong	54/243	54	243	4
	Ryongho	17/103	17	103	0
	Sangbong	25/135	25	135	0
Sapo	Ryonghung	33/177	33	177	0
Haen	Ryonghung	62/365	62	365	2
Yonggwang		35/189	35	189	0
Total		285/1523	285	1,523	10

A Federation truck has been allocated to shuttle blankets, cooking sets, first aid kits and plastic sheeting to Hamhung from the Red Cross regional disaster preparedness warehouses in Wonsan and Pyongyang.

Children's Aid Direct (CAD) in DPRK has made available a stock of 3,600 containers of water purification tablets (2.8 million tablets; each tablet for 25 litres of water) in Hamhung for distribution by the Red Cross in affected villages in South Hamgyong Province. The water and sanitation assessment will determine if chlorine which is in stock can be used to treat contaminated water sources.

Outstanding needs

The disaster preparedness stock in Wonsan and Pyongyang central warehouses will be fully utilised in the first phase, hence there is an urgent need to replace blankets, cooking sets, plastic sheeting and first aid material. The procurement process for relief items will begin this week, therefore cash contributions are urgently needed. The government and local authorities are concentrating on the repair of infrastructure and will not be in a position to assist in the rehabilitation of houses. To enable homeless families to reconstruct their houses before the arrival of winter, cash donations are urgently required in order to procure cement. To avoid an increase in waterborne diseases, many of the water sources have to be repaired and treated. To reinforce the capacity of the Federation country delegation, a field delegate stationed in Hamhung and a vehicle are urgently needed.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

The National Society, both at headquarters and branch level, has regular contacts with the FDRC to co-ordinate assistance. The Federation participates in the co-ordination group under the UN Disaster Management Team to provide the UN agencies and the NGOs with data on the Red Cross operation and to ensure co-ordination of relief activities.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

Conclusion

The temperature in the storm affected area is expected to drop to minus 5-10 C as of the end of November and the winter season lasts until late February - early March. Most of those who lost their houses are presently accommodated in temporary shelter and shacks with no means of heating. It is therefore essential that donors respond rapidly to the appeal in order to expedite procurement of cement. The number of those severely affected is likely to increase, since many villages are not accessible and full assessment of damage has yet to be carried out. The Red Cross disaster preparedness stock, though limited, has proved to be extremely useful. Furthermore, the rapid response by the National Society/Federation has significantly strengthened the Red Cross profile in the country.

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This and other reports on Federation operations are available on the Federation's website: <http://www.ifrc.org>

DPR Korea: Typhoon						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 25/2000		PLEDGES RECEIVED				09/25/00
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				950,124		TOTAL COVERAGE 5.1%
JAPANESE - RC				48,000	25.09.00	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				48,000	CHF	5.1%
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	
THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS ARE LINKED TO THIS APPEAL:						