

# **CHINA: FLOODS**

05 August 1998

*appeal no. 21/98*

*situation report no. 2*

*period covered: 28 July - 05 August*

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*Flooding along the Yangtze river has already affected some 140 million people and the situation is expected to worsen under the influence of summer storms. Emergency assistance has begun in the worst affected provinces, where hundreds of medical teams are caring for victims and water purification tablets are being distributed, but a shortage of hard cash is holding up purchases of relief goods.*

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## ***The context***

Continuous rains since March have caused extensive flooding that is now affecting an estimated 140 million people in 20 provinces in central and south east China. In many areas, the floods are being described as the worst in living memory. According to the latest official figures, more than 1,200 people have been killed, 2.9 million houses have been destroyed and 3.3 million hectares of crops and farmlands have been washed away or damaged. Meteorological forecasts indicate that the flood season will continue until September and that heavy rains and summer typhoons may make the disaster even worse.

## ***Latest events***

### **Overall Situation •**

Conditions are worsening in central China as waters continue to rise and waterlogged, secondary levees (mud embankments) collapse along the flood-swollen Yangtze River. There are some 6,300 km of dikes along the Yangtze, the world's third longest river. The waters have now reached levels unseen since floods in 1954 killed more than 30,000 people. Millions of soldiers and civilians are maintaining round-the-clock vigils on the dikes, watching for signs of collapse and plugging leaks.

Because of the worsening situation the province of Hubei has been added to the regions covered by this appeal.

No large-scale outbreak of communicable disease has yet been reported in the flood-hit areas in Hubei, Hunan, Jingxi and Anhui provinces.

### **Hubei Province •**

Recent storms and floods have destroyed 117 embankments along the Yangtze River in Hubei, affecting 20.7 million people in 58 counties across the province. Hubei has resettled 1.27 million people. So far, 428,000 houses have collapsed, 1.386m hectares of crop-growing land have been affected. Economic losses amount to RMB 12.7 billion (CHF 2.2 billion).

Hubei provincial Government has allocated RMB 14.5 million (CHF 2.6 million) as relief funds for stricken areas, while prefecture and county levels have allocated RMB 33 million (CHF 5.9 million). Hubei has launched a fund drive within the province, raising RMB 37 million (CHF 6.6 million) and RMB 13.8 million (CHF 2.4 million) of in-kind donations.

A dike outside the levee of the Yangtze in Jiayu was breached, stranding more than 50,000 residents.

The province has sent 25,000 relief workers to the flood-battered areas. More than 1 million people have been inoculated against disease and the local media are running disease prevention information.

#### **Hunan Province •**

The floods have affected 8.84 million people in 32 counties across Hunan province. Hunan has resettled 861,000 people. So far, 520,000 ha of crop-growing land have been affected. 375,000 houses have collapsed and 31,700 livestock have died. Economic losses amount to RMB 15.15 billion (CHF 2.7 billion).

Hunan Province has allocated RMB 14 million (CHF 2.5 million) and dispatched food, medicine and drinking water to stricken areas.

#### **Sichuan Province •**

Flooding over the past few days claimed 20 lives and injured 370 by Monday, 3 August. Torrential rains have caused flooding in 22 counties, affecting 22,500 ha of crops and destroying some 6,550 houses. The year's fifth rainstorm hit eight cities and prefectures, causing water levels in the upper reaches of the Yangtze River and main tributaries to reach the danger-line, and provoking landslides and mud and rock flows in some places. Yibin city was seriously hit, with eight townships flooded, eight people dead and more than 300 others stranded. In Jianwei County, some 30 townships and 250 people were affected.

#### **Jiangxi Province •**

The flood disaster has affected 7,904,000 people, injuring 7,600 people and killing 150. Jiangxi has resettled 843,000 people. So far, 238,000 buildings and family dwellings have collapsed, leaving some 190,000 people homeless. Economic losses amount to RMB 19.9 billion (CHF 3.5 billion).

Governments at provincial, prefecture and county levels have allocated RMB 46.52 million (CHF 8.3 million) and dispatched food.

#### **Fujian Province •**

The flood disaster has affected 5.98 million people, killing 120 people, and injuring 6,500. So far, 670,000 houses and buildings have collapsed and some 550,000 people have been left homeless. Economic losses amount to RMB 87.7 billion (CHF 15.7 billion).

#### **Guanxi Province •**

The flood disaster has affected 1.5 million people, killing 140, and injuring 5,500. So far, 129,000 family dwellings have collapsed and some 190,000 people have been left homeless. Economic losses amount to RMB 14.6 billion (CHF 2.6 billion).

## ***Red Cross/Red Crescent action***

#### **Disaster Preparedness •**

All RCSC Provincial Branches based in the flood zone geared up for this years floods by developing disaster relief plans and, in some areas, engaging in disaster relief training. In Hunan Province, some

8,500 cadres were trained in disaster preparedness and relief in April and May, expanding local teams of volunteers. In Hubei, local branches of the RCSC prepared their emergency facilities and transportation equipment.

As the flooding worsened in many areas of central China, contingency plans have been developed by RCSC at provincial level.

#### **Relief Assistance •**

About CHF 250,000 have been used to purchase water purification tablets. A total of 1,633 boxes went to the provinces of Fujian (705 boxes), Jiangxi (409 boxes), Hunan (407 boxes), Sichuan (205 boxes) and Guangxi (410 boxes).

Provincial levels of the RCSC have been working in close co-operation with the Department of Public Health to provide medical care for flood victims. In Hunan province, 510 medical teams have been dispatched to disaster stricken areas, and more than RMB 2,480,000 (CHF 430,000) worth of drugs have been distributed. In Hubei, 350 medical teams, comprised of medical and RCSC personnel, have been sent to the disaster areas. In addition, some 16,000 Red Cross volunteers are helping with the relief efforts and the reinforcement of dikes. To date, some 633,000 persons have received medical treatment.

#### **Local Fund-raising •**

To date, the RCSC has received donations of RMB 48.93 million (CHF 8.8 million) in cash and kind, most of which has been distributed to the flooded provinces.

RCSC Branches at all levels, especially in the flooded areas, are actively fund raising. To date, RCSC branches on the mainland have raised RMB 11 million (CHF 1.9 million). In Hunan alone, a total of RMB 1,900,000 in cash and in-kind donations have been received. The Hong Kong Red Cross will donate another million RMB (CHF 180,000) for the provinces of Hubei, Hunan, Jiangxi, and Sichuan and will send a team to help in the relief work. The Red Cross of Taiwan is also preparing to send disaster relief supplies.

#### **Federation Delegation •**

The Federation delegation currently comprises a Federation Representative, an Information/Reporting delegate and a Field delegate. Their main tasks are to support the National Society in monitoring, reporting, financial management and planning activities. The operation is also supported by the Federation Regional Delegation in Kuala Lumpur which provides technical assistance in information and accounting areas.

## ***Outstanding needs***

The Federation urgently needs cash contributions in order to be able to move ahead with the local procurement of 5,000 mt of basic relief supplies -- including food for one million people evacuated from their homes and medical supplies for the teams working in the disaster areas.

## ***External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media***

The Red Cross operation has been given extensive media coverage both in China and internationally. The RCSC/Federation team that has just returned from a field assessment visit to some of the flooded areas in Hunan and Hubei provinces was quoted widely in the written and electronic media, and

information continues to be distributed to news agencies, embassies and private companies in China. Some 50 media interviews have been generated in Geneva and Beijing.

## *Contributions*

Hard and soft pledges received so far have covered 40 per cent of the appeal total. See Annex 1 for details.

## *Conclusion*

Although there is growing awareness internationally of the gravity of the disaster in China, reflected in the growing number of queries and expressions of support being received at the Secretariat, hard cash for urgently needed purchases is still in short supply. Donors are urged to speed up their mobilisation of funds, particularly in view of the increasing needs, to permit rapid Red Cross action in the field.

Because of the magnitude of the disaster and the anticipated worsening of the situation in the coming days, the Federation expects to review the size of its support to the Red Cross Society of China. Donors will be kept informed.

For further information, please contact Marcel Fortier, Desk Officer, on +4122 7304268 (e.mail: fortier@ifrc.org).

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## **CHINA - FLOODS**

**APPEAL No. 21/98**

**PLEDGES  
RECEIVED**

**05/08/98**

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE
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**CASH**

REQUESTED IN APPEAL----- ----->		6,770,000	
CANADIAN - RC	50,000 CAD	51,230	15/07/98
CANADIAN - RC	100,000 CAD	102,460	20/07/98
CANADIAN - RC/GOVT	50,000 CAD	51,230	28/07/98
BRITISH - RC/GOVT	150,000 GBP	368,070	25/07/98
DANISH - RC	500,000 DKK	108,500	24/07/98
DANISH - RC/GOVT	2,000,000 DKK	434,000	05/08/98
ICELAND - RC	200,000 ISK	41,870	20/07/98
NORWEGIAN RC/GOVT	1,350,000 NOK	264,033	03/01/00
NORWEGIAN - RC	150,000 NOK	29,337	23/07/98
US EMBASSY - BEIJING	250,000 USD	375,000	17/02/00
<b>SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH</b>		<b>1,825,730 CHF</b>	

**KIND AND SERVICES  
(INCL. PERSONNEL)**

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE
CANADIAN - RC	1 DEL X 10 WEEKS			12,500	
BRITISH - RC	1 DEL X 6 MONTHS			30,000	
DANISH - RC	1 DEL X 3 MONTHS			15,000	
<b>SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES</b>				<b>57,500 CHF</b>	

**NOT REQUESTED IN  
APPEAL**

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0.00 CHF		