

# **CHINA: FLOODS**

21 August 1998

*appeal no. 21/98*

*situation report no. 4*

*period covered: 13 - 20 August*

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*As flooding in China continues the numbers affected and the relief needs grow steadily. The Red Cross Society of China, which has already assisted some 1.5 million people, has begun the purchase and distribution of medical and sanitation supplies and foodstuffs for CHF 1.8 million. The most urgent need is for cash to continue financing large scale purchasing of relief items.*

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## ***The context***

Relentless rains over the past five months continue to cause vast flooding that is now affecting an estimated 240 million people -- one fifth of China's population -- in central and south east China. In many areas, the floods are being described as the worst in living memory. The Yangtze River has now reached record levels. Official figures state that more than 2,000 people have died in the floods, 5.58 million houses have been destroyed, 12.05 million houses have been damaged, 21.5 million hectares of crops have been affected and another 4.78 million destroyed. To date, 13.8 million people have been evacuated.

## ***Latest events***

Heavy rainfall is continuing along the Yangtze River Valley in central and east China. The situation is growing increasingly serious as dikes along swollen rivers, now waterlogged for more than 50 days, become steadily weaker.

The past week has also seen an increase in rain, flooding and mud slides in north-eastern China. In northern China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, flooding has claimed 81 lives and destroyed 250,000 homes. More than 910,000 people are now stranded by floodwater in this area.

The central and provincial governments and the State Flood Control and Drought Relief Department met recently to discuss epidemic disease prevention in flood areas. In addition, the government recently stated that some one million people may drop below the poverty-line as a result of this year's floods.

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

### **Relief activities •**

From the beginning of the disaster, the RCSC has been actively distributing relief, primarily in-kind donations of medicine and food. To date, it has assisted approximately 1.5 million people and distributed some RMB 90 million (CHF 16.2 million) worth of relief supplies to flood-affected areas in 12 provinces.

Federation funded relief commenced in early August with the purchase and distribution of CHF 250,000 worth of water purification tablets. Distribution of these tablets to the six provinces covered by the appeal -- Hunan, Jiangxi, Fujian, Guangxi, Jiansu and Sichuan -- will be completed in the next few days.

A CHF 1.8 million procurement and distribution plan (including the water purification tablets mentioned above), has been completed for the six provinces. The RCSC is now beginning to procure and distribute the following relief supplies:

- { 54,000 packs of medicines, including medicines for gastrointestinal problems, intestinal diseases, cold remedies, dysentery and antibiotics, which will be distributed to medical teams;
- { 234,000 bottles of disinfectant;
- { 1,897 metric tonnes of rice, to be distributed to 63,233 families to sustain them for a 20 day period.

In addition, RCSC is providing medicine and health education to more than 300,000 people evacuated from a 90-square-kilometre flood diversion area in Hubei.

Early next week, a RCSC assessment team will travel to Heilongjiang Province in north-eastern China to evaluate the increasingly difficult flood situation there.

Officials from the Central Government met with the RCSC to discuss the government's support requirements for sanitation teams working to prevent epidemic disease in flood-affected areas.

#### **Fund-raising •**

The Red Cross Society of China has been actively fund-raising at both headquarters and branch level. It has received substantial contributions, primarily in the form of in-kind donations. Limited financial contributions have made it difficult to transport these in-kind donations. The RCSC is also short of cash to purchase specific items required for the relief programme, including medicine, water purification tablets, food and sanitation supplies.

#### **Federation Delegation •**

The Federation Delegation is now composed of four delegates -- one representative, one information/reporting delegate and two field delegates with monitoring and reporting functions -- and in addition receives technical support from the Southeast and East Asia Regional Delegation.

Federation delegates will be assessing relief activity in Hunan and Jiangxi provinces over the next few days. Next week, a Federation team will travel to north-east China in order to assess the need for Federation involvement in this area where recent flooding has affected hundreds of thousands of people.

Following on a relief and financial management course held for the RCSC in June, the Finance Delegate from the Regional Delegation worked in Beijing in the reporting period to support financial reporting on the flood relief programme.

## ***Outstanding needs***

The most urgent need at present is for cash. National Societies that have made pledges are urged to transfer funds as soon as possible, to allow large scale procurement of relief items to move ahead.

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

The Federation Delegation in China continued to work with the media, completing some 30 interviews over the past week, primarily with the international media, on the human aspects of this disaster, the work of the Red Cross Society of China, the needs of those affected, and the Federation's appeal for CHF 6.7 million. So far, since the launch of the appeal, the delegation has given some 70 interviews, providing high visibility to Red Cross humanitarian efforts. In addition some 20 interviews have been given from the Secretariat in Geneva.

Information sharing with Beijing-based embassies continues on a weekly basis. The Federation continues to co-ordinate closely with MSF to strengthen relief delivery through shared information. Contact with Handicap International, an NGO that is currently working with disabled people in Guangxi province, has been established and discussions on how they can best complement Red Cross flood assistance will commence in the next few days.

## ***Contributions***

See Annex 1 for details.

## ***Conclusion***

The deteriorating situation and the increasing numbers of people affected make rapid relief action essential. To achieve this, continuing support, particularly in the form of cash, is urgently required.

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### **CHINA - FLOODS**

**APPEAL No. 21/98**

**PLEDGES  
 RECEIVED**

**21/08/98**

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE
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# CASH

REQUESTED IN APPEAL		6,770,000	
AUSTRALIAN - RC	100,000 USD	150,000	04/08/98
BRITISH - RC/GOVT	150,000 GBP	368,070	25/07/98
CANADIAN - RC	50,000 CAD	51,230	15/07/98
CANADIAN - RC	160,000 CAD	163,936	20/08/98
CANADIAN - RC	100,000 CAD	102,460	20/07/98
CANADIAN - RC/GOVT	50,000 CAD	51,230	28/08/98
CANADIAN - RC/GOVT	200,000 CAD	204,920	20/08/98
DANISH - RC	500,000 DKK	108,500	24/07/98
DANISH - RC/GOVT	2,000,000 DKK	434,000	05/08/98
ECHO	355,000 XEU	590,507	20/08/98
GERMAN - RC/GOVT	350,000 DEM	294,630	11/08/98 WATE
ICELAND - RC	200,000 ISK	41,870	20/07/98
JAPANESE - RC	10,000,000 JPY	107,760	13/08/98
REP. KOREA RC	30,000 CHF	30,000	08/08/98
MACAU - RC	136,736 USD	205,104	14/08/98
NETHERLANDS - RC	270,000 NLG	201,626	20/08/98 MEDIC
NORWEGIAN RC/GOVT	1,350,000 NOK	264,033	23/07/98
NORWEGIAN - RC	150,000 NOK	29,337	23/07/98
SPAIN - RC/GOVT	12,000,000 ESP	118,992	12/08/98
SWEDISH - RC/GOVT	1,500,000 SEK	283,200	12/08/98
AMCROSS: AMERICAN EXPRESS	25,000 USD	37,500	36,019
US EMBASSY - BEIJING	250,000 USD	375,000	27/07/98
PRIVATE	40.00 USD	60.00	06/08/98
PRIVATE	1,200 CHF	1,200	12/08/98
<b>SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH</b>		4,215,165 CHF	

## 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	
BELGIUM - RC	1 DEL X 3 MONTHS			15,000	

SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES	72,500 CHF
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**NOT REQUESTED IN  
APPEAL**

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