

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

VIET NAM : FLOODS

Information Bulletin

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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 185 countries.

In Brief

This Bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the situation and the information available at this time. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

The Situation

Heavy incessant rains in early August have caused serious flooding in six provinces across Central Viet Nam and its Central Highlands. With a downpour of some 10,000 mm in four days, the provinces of Dak Lak, Lam Dong, Gia Lai, Dak Nong, Ha Tinh and Quang Binh have been severely affected. [<click here for map>](#)

Two needs assessment teams comprising representatives of the government of Viet Nam, the United Nations, non-government organizations and the Viet Nam Red Cross (VNRC) have prepared a report clarifying the impact of the disaster. Flooding in the affected areas has been the most devastating since 1944, claiming lives of 74 people and injuring 130. Total damage has been estimated at USD 130 million (CHF 156.4 million¹).

The report also indicates that some 1,848 houses have collapsed and 170,656 badly damaged as of 17 August 2007. Personal belongings, household items and food stocks have been damaged, and livelihoods disrupted. About 66,943 hectares of rice fields have been inundated with floodwater for several days, of which 23,655 hectares are completely lost. Some 40,000 hectares of farmland have been submerged, destroying valuable vegetable fields. Initial estimates show agricultural losses of up to 30,000 tonnes of rice in the coming harvest. Around 4,267 hectares of aqua-cultural farms are also damaged.

The hardest hit provinces are Ha Tinh and Quang Binh in the central zone, and Dak Lak in the central highlands. These are classified by the government among the poorest provinces in Viet Nam. Altogether, 27 communes in Ha Tinh and 66 communes in six districts in Quang Binh were submerged in flood waters for up to four days. In Dak Lak, 3,775 families from minority groups living in lowland high-risk locations had to be evacuated to safer surroundings for two to three days.

Damages are calculated at USD 40 million (CHF 48.1 million) in Ha Tinh against the initially estimated USD 28 million, accounting for ten per cent of the province's gross domestic product. Similarly, Quang Binh province sustained damages amounting to USD 38 million (CHF 45.7 million), an increase of 13 per cent against the initial estimation of 12 per cent of the province's GDP. Losses in Dak Lak are estimated as much as USD 39 million (CHF 47 million) or eight per cent of the province's GDP.

About 130,000 people (approximately ten per cent of the resident population) were severely affected by the floods in Ha Tinh province, with 80 percent of this concentrated in the two mountainous districts. In Quang Binh

¹ Federation foreign exchange rates, September 2007

province, 240,000 people constituting 30 percent of the resident population face the same situation as do some 46,000 people in Dak Lak, comprising 29 percent of the province's resident population.

Electrical supply was disrupted for four days while submerged roads and railway lines affected transportation and communication between the North and South for several days. Repairs are ongoing on the 154 km of road damaged.

It has been nearly three weeks since disaster first struck. Beneficiaries have returned to their houses, and gradually to their everyday lives. However, it will not be easy for those whose belongings and/or houses have been destroyed or washed away. It is also obvious that they all face food shortages that will last for eight months until the next harvest in April 2008. To many families, another great concern is where to obtain money for their children's new text books when the school year begins again.

In addition, a large number of the beneficiaries live in rural and mountainous areas where drinking water is obtained from open household wells. These wells have been contaminated by the flooding, thus increasing health risks. The Viet Nam ministry of health in cooperation with other relevant authorities is working on water decontamination. To date, no disease has been reported in the affected areas.

The impact of the flood has received national and international attention. The government of Viet Nam has pledged to release 3,000 tonnes of rice to cover immediate needs, and USD 5 million (CHF 6 million) for relief and rehabilitation to the five affected provinces, focusing on the most severely hit provinces of Ha Tinh, Quang Binh and Dak Lak. The government's support is indicated in the following table:

| Provinces | Cash (converted into USD) | Rice (tonne) |
|------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Ha Tinh | 1,250,000 | 1,500 |
| Quang Binh | 1,250,000 | 1,500 |
| Dak Lak | 937,000 | - |
| Dac Nong | 625,000 | - |
| Lam Dong | 625,000 | - |
| Kon Tum | 312,000 | - |

The Viet Nam Fatherland Front (VFF) has launched a local appeal to seek support for the affected people. International organizations active in Viet Nam have also responded. To date, Oxfam, USAID (through Care International), Save Children Alliance, and the Canadian government through its embassy, are reported to provide collective support amounting to USD 432,600 (CHF 520,000). This support is mainly for the two provinces of Ha Tinh and Quang Binh, and seeks to provide rice, utensils, and household kits, sterilization of water wells, and reconstruction of houses. These relief activities are coordinated by the People's Aid Coordinating Committee (Paccomm) or directly by the provincial authorities.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Through the French Red Cross, the French ministry of foreign affairs has pledged EUR 86,000 (CHF 141,000) to support all families in the most affected districts of Quang Binh with rice and household kits. The French Red Cross is working with the Viet Name Red Cross (VNRC) to select beneficiaries and distribute relief items. Altogether, 700 tonnes of rice will be distributed. Each beneficiary will receive 30 kg of rice for a two-month period. VNRC itself will provide 3,000 households with utensils, plastic water collectors, water containers, blankets and mosquito nets to economically challenged families whose houses have been severely damaged.

VNRC itself provided guidance to its chapters in providing emergency response action by sending two teams to the six affected provinces in Central Viet Nam and the Central Highlands. These teams worked to assist those affected by the floods with relief goods, and to conduct further assessments. VNRC provided 900 household kits (an estimated CHF 27,000) and VND 82 million (CHF 6,200) in cash from its buffer stock and emergency relief fund respectively, to support people in these six provinces. Relief items consist of plastic water collectors, water containers, soap, mosquito nets, blankets and utensils. Cash assistance has also been provided to the most vulnerable households, with each family receiving VND 1,000,000 (CHF 76).

Red Cross chapters in affected provinces responded immediately to the floods, using chapter cars and speed boats to evacuate people, and rented trucks to transport relief goods to distribution points. The Red Cross chapters in areas such as Dak Nong and Dak Lack in the central highlands, and Ha Tinh and Quang Binh in the central area, mobilized local resources to provide noodles, water, rice and tents. Some of the chapters also provided small cash disbursements of USD 12- USD 65 (CHF 14 to CHF 78) to families who lost their family members. The Ha Tinh chapter in cooperation with a pagoda in Thua Thien Hue province distributed relief goods valued at USD 7,500 (CHF 9,000) to affected people in the province.

Red Cross youth volunteers have also been called in to help people repair houses and clean up the environment.

Other Red Cross chapters in non-affected provinces have also directly responded to needs. For instance, the Ho Chi Minh City chapter mobilized USD 28,000 (CHF 33,700) from its members, staff and volunteers to support the affected people. In addition, the Thanh Hoa chapter assisted its neighbouring chapter Ha Tinh with USD 300 (CHF 360).

While not launching an international appeal, the VNRC welcomes assistance from international and national sources to assist those affected by the floods. The Federation's country delegation is working with the VNRC headquarters on a daily basis and has recommended the VNRC build a network among Red Cross chapters in non-affected provinces to support the disaster-hit areas.

VNRC has calculated needs for further relief activities as follow:

| Needs | Province | | Total |
|----------------------------|----------|----------|-------|
| | Dak Lak | Dac Nong | |
| Household kits (units) | 1,000 | 500 | 1,500 |
| Rice (tonne) | 200 | | 200 |
| Cloth | 3,000 | | 3,000 |
| Mosquito net (units) | 3,000 | | 3,000 |
| Blanket (units) | 3,000 | | 3,000 |
| House construction (units) | 400 | | 400 |

** The HQ has released 900 household kits with an additional 3,000 to be distributed in the coming days from the 9,000 kits in three warehouses in Hanoi, HCMC, and Quang Tri. It is early in the flood season, and VNRC needs support to expand its buffer stock in order to have some 15,000 household kits in stock for timely response when the typhoon season starts.*

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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 Federation's Global Agenda

The International Federation's activities are aligned with under a 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.

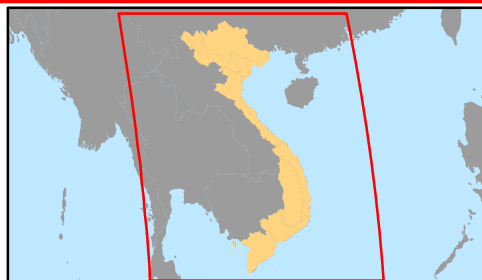
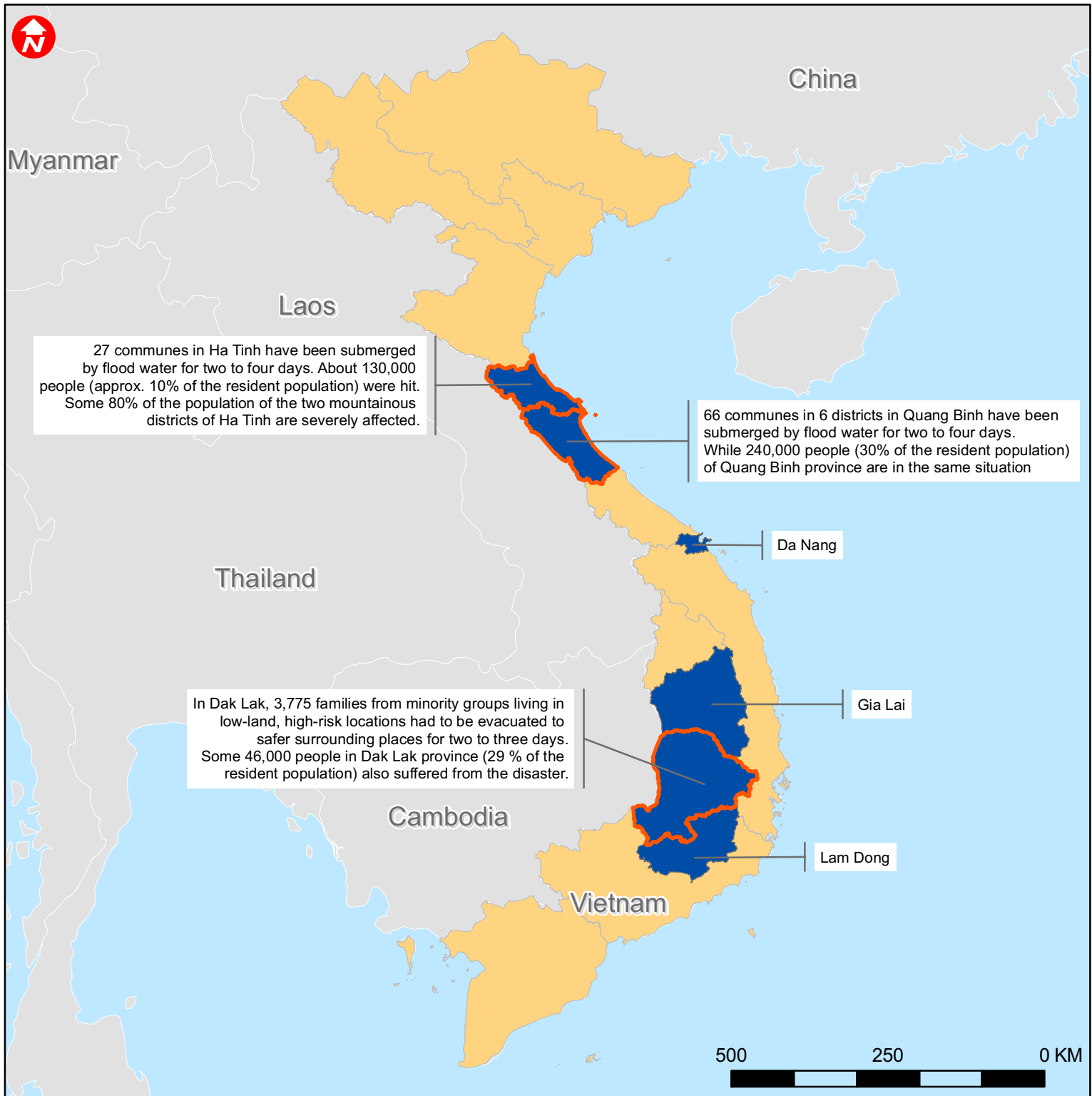
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Vietnam: Floods



Heavy and constant rains over the four recent days with total rainfalls of 1,000 mm have caused flooding in six provinces across the Central Highland and the Central of Vietnam. 71 people have been reported dead, 130 injured

- Hardest hit provinces
- Affected provinces

The maps used do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies or National Societies concerning the legal status of a territory or of its authorities.

Map data sources
 ESRI
 DEVINFO
 Federation