



## China: Floods and landslides

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The Red Cross Society of China continues to respond to some of the most severe flooding to have affected China in the past ten years. However it is struggling to mobilize adequate resources in the wake of the domestic appeals it carried out to respond to the Qinghai earthquake and serious drought in central parts of China earlier in the year.

As of 5 August 2010, rain-triggered floods in China this year has left 1,072 people dead and 619 others missing. China's major rivers including Yangtze, Yello and Songhua were all swollen to danger levels after heavy rains, which had inundated more than 160 cities across the country, and is no longer restricted to the southern provinces of China.

Most recently, heavy downpours that started on 7 August triggered landslides and mud-rock flows in Zhouqu county, Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of Gansu province early on 8 August, leaving 337 people dead and approximately 1,300 others missing. According to local authorities, about 45,000 people were evacuated, and at least 307 homes were destroyed. Rescuers are still racing against time in search of survivors in the debris of the town flattened by the disaster.



China's rescue teams struggle to rescue survivors in the latest round of landslides due to incessant heavy downpours in various parts of the country. (Photo: Xinhua News)

The Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) and respective local Red Cross branches are responding to the needs of the affected communities and a local assessment team was deployed within 24 hours of the event.

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[<click here for map of the affected areas, or here for detailed contact information>](#)

### The situation

Torrential rain triggered floods in China which have caused a total of 1,072 deaths and 619 missing all over China this year. As of 5 August 2010, figures published by China's flood control authority indicate that major rivers from central, northern and southern China were all swollen beyond the dangerous levels. Up to eight small reserves collapsed as a result of the continuous rainy weather, and another 1,000 reservoirs remain at risk. While many provinces are struggling either in relief or recovery stage, the most recent seriously affected province lies on the northeast and northwest of China. In the northeast province of Jilin, latest figures indicate that 85 people died and 67 others are still missing, with the floods affecting approximately six million people, with 1.93 million evacuated. About 116,000 homes were destroyed and 298,000 houses damaged so far.

In the northwest part of China, on 8 August 2010, a massive mudslide battered Zhouqu county of Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Gansu province. As of 9 August 2010, the death toll has risen to 337, with reportedly 1,148 people still missing. More than 200 people were injured, including 28 in serious condition. A total of four helicopters were used to move severely injured cases to Lanzhou, Gansu's capital city which is some 650 kilometres away from Zhouqu county. According to a statement from the provincial civil affairs,

some 45,000 people were evacuated as the mudslide destroyed up to 300 homes and damaged about 700. More than 200 hectares of farmland was devastated and over 10,000 heads of livestock swept away.

In addition, Bailong River valley, which passes through the county and is flanked by mountains on both sides, was blocked by the mudslides, creating a barrier lake that overflowed and sent massive waves crashing down on the county, ripping houses from their foundations and destroying a six-storey apartment building. An estimated two-thirds of the county's power and some communications links were down. In the worst-hit village of Yueyuan, not a single structure remained intact. As of 9 August, the roads in the outskirts of Zhouqu county have reopened.

The People's Liberation Army (PLA) of Lanzhou Military Area Command sent 2,560 soldiers to the landslide-hit region. Another 1,780 policemen and fire fighters from the ministry of public security are still struggling in their search for survivors under the debris. Hundreds of medical staff have also reached the affected areas and have started emergency medical operations.

Rescue operations, however, could be further complicated as rains are forecasted for the next five days.



Zhouqu county in the aftermath of the landslides, where building and cars are covered in mud and buried under debris. (Photo: Xinhua News)

The ministry of commerce launched an emergency response mechanism under which relief materials including 16,700 tents, 110,000 blankets, 222,000 cotton coats, 333,000 electric torches and four million candles will be sent to the county. The ministry also mobilized 435,000 boxes of mineral water, 10 tonnes of ham sausages, 295,000 boxes of instant noodles and other food supplies, which are en route to Zhouqu county at time of reporting.

At the onset of the disaster, the ministry of civil affairs sent relief supplies, including 5,200 tents, 20,000 cotton coats, and 8,000 folding beds, all of which has already reached the affected areas.

The ministry of finance also allocated CNY 500 million (USD 73 million) in emergency aid to fund rescue efforts. The money will support the relocation and relief efforts for landslide victims, hygiene and disease control, reconstruction of local infrastructure, rebuilding of houses and the clearing of the barrier lake which was formed by the massive mudslide.

The Gansu province department of civil affairs estimates there are still pressing needs for at least 10,000 tonnes of drinking water and 500 tonnes of instant food for the survival of affected population for the next 25 days.

## Red Cross Red Crescent action

In response to the Gansu landslide, the Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) Gansu Red Cross branch immediately deployed an assessment team to Zhouqu county. A total of 500 quilts, 2,000 blankets, 1,000 boxes of drinking water and 2,000 boxes of noodles were mobilized and reached the affected communities the same night. RCSC headquarters also mobilized 2,000 quilts and 400 family packs in support for the branch's response. To date, RCSC headquarter has mobilized relief materials amounting to CNY 1.72 million in response to the landslides.

Other Red Cross branches are also pouring support to the affected area: The Gannan prefecture Red Cross and the Longnan Prefecture Red Cross has altogether mobilized 1,300 quilts, 500 boxes of noodles, 493 boxes of drinking water and other relief materials such as clothes which reached Gansu on 8 August 2010. The Shanghai branch of RCSC allocated CNY 1 million (CHF 153,912) to support the Gansu branch to procuring materials locally. The Shanghai branch also deployed 100 tents, 1,000 quilts, and 500 disaster kits (including sleeping bag, mat, bowl, chopsticks, flashlight, and other daily necessities) valued at CNY 350,000 (CHF 53,869), to the affected areas. The Hong Kong branch of RCSC also support the emergency operation by sending an assessment team as well procuring 5,000 boxes noodles, 7,000 boxes of drinking water

amounting an approximate CNY 384,000 (CHF 59,102) which is expected to reach the Gansu by 10 August 2010.

An assessment team led by RCSC's vice president is expected to reach Zhouqu county on 11 August to review the situation and plan for further response.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) East Asia regional office and the Asia Pacific disaster management unit are closely monitoring the situation together with RCSC and providing updated information as it becomes available. It has indicated readiness to support RCSC's relief operation however necessary.

## 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 the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.**

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1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.

## Contact information

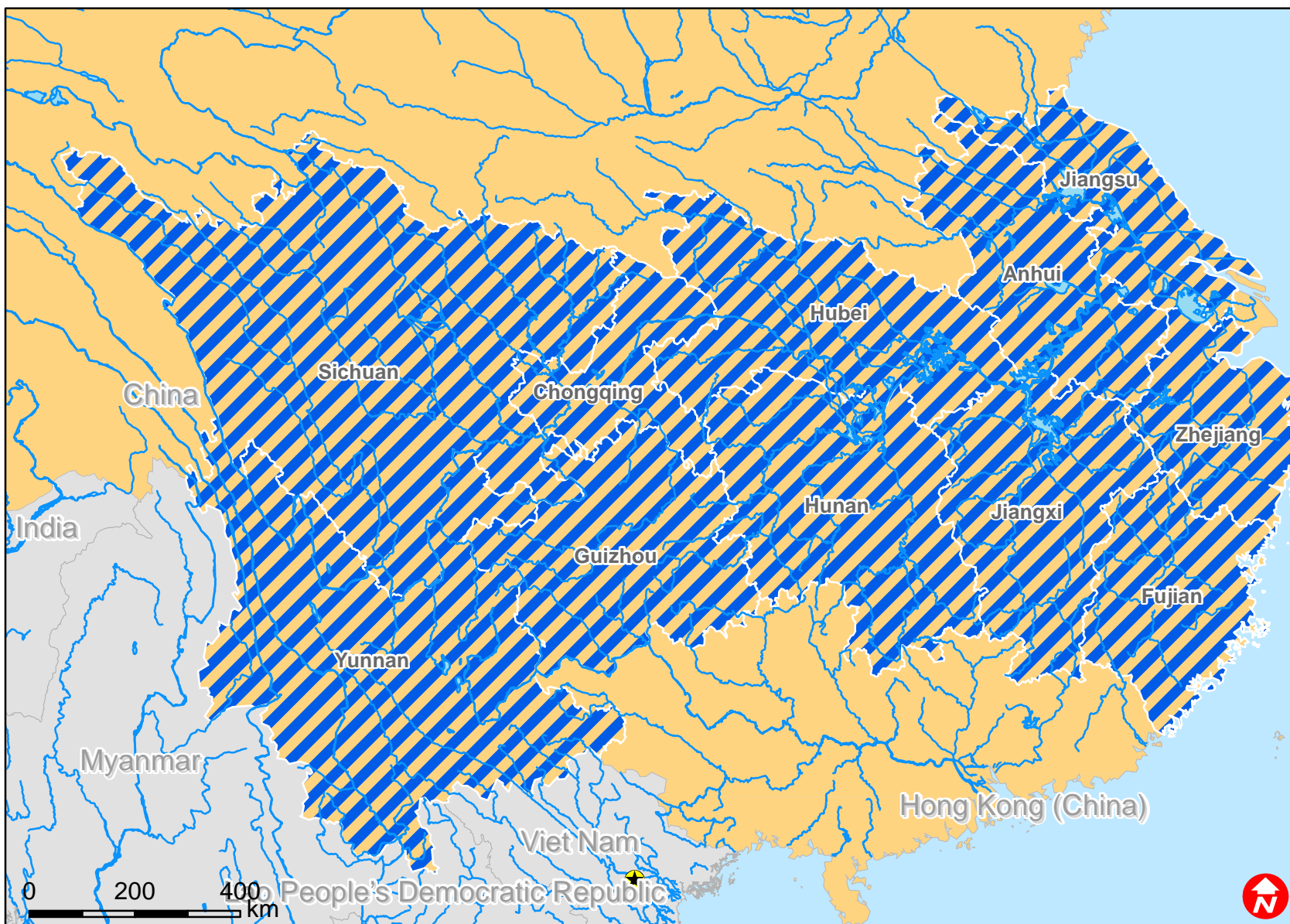
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[<map below; click here to return to the title page>](#)



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 Worst affected provinces