

Information bulletin



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

China: Floods

Information bulletin n° 4
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23 July 2010

This bulletin reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Red Cross Society of China welcomes direct cash assistance to provide support to the affected population. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) can also receive cash contributions on behalf of the Red Cross Society of China through its [annual support plan](#) from donors for this operation.

As of 21 July 2010, floods in the first half of 2010 and three major bouts of continuous torrential rains and storms between May and July have already claimed 742 lives, with 367 still missing, up to 7.6 million hectares of farmland affected and 670,000 houses destroyed. National media also indicate that direct economic losses have reached an estimated CNY 152.4 billion (CHF 23.4 billion). Levels of more than 230 rivers have passed the danger mark and in some areas along the Yangtze River, it is reported to experience the worst flooding in 30 years



Villagers struggled back home through water, with rice and quilts distributed by the RCSC in Guowei village of Jingzhou Prefecture.
Photo: IFRC

The RCSC and branches continue their support in emergency relief operations in the disastrous area. By 22 July, RCSC headquarters had increased their assistance up to CNY12 million (CHF 1.85 million) in cash and kind to the affected communities.

The RCSC senior managers' team, accompanied by two IFRC staff, visited two of the most affected areas in Hubei province on 21 - 23 July to conduct an assessment.

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

The situation

Torrential rains and storms, massive flooding and landslides are estimated to have affected up to 120 million people in 27 provinces and municipalities to date. According to the latest official figures released by the Chinese government, 742 people have died and 367 people are missing since the beginning of the year due to floods in the country. In July alone, 12 provinces have been affected, with 273 dead, 218 people still missing and over 3 million people displaced. Devastated farmland has reached up to 7.6 million hectares, with direct economic lost amounting CNY 58.27 billion (CHF 8.95 billion). With the typhoon season approaching, it is estimated that more are to be affected in the coming months.

Days of torrential rains have raised water levels in many of the tributaries of Yangtze to record levels. The Three Gorges Dam on the Yangtze River that was constructed to generate electricity and flood control has

experienced a large influx of water. However, the water flows were contained and released at “safe levels”, according to the operators of the dam.

As of 20 July 2010, the floods in Hubei this year has affected almost 10 million people, with 74 dead, four missing and 4,619 injured. An estimated 3.58 million people were evacuated. Affected farmland has reached 1.43 million hectares, with 152,690 hectares completely destroyed. Over 20,000 households have lost their homes, with 75,000 houses collapsed and 110,000 houses damaged. Direct economic losses to date amount approximately CNY 11.73 billion (CHF 1.8 billion).

Floods in Hubei this year are characterized by the scale of widely-spread affected areas throughout the whole province and intensified rainfall. On 8 – 13 July 2010, except for Shennongjia forest area, all other 16 prefectures / administrative zones, composed of 113 counties/areas, were affected.

Red Cross Red Crescent action

Since May, the Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) has been carrying out extensive relief work in the affected provinces.

RCSC deployed an assessment team to Hubei province (Jinzhou prefecture and Xianning prefecture), located at the centre of China, with both the Yangtze and Han rivers running through the province. As most of their farmland and homes have been destroyed, the interviewed families are now more concerned about food and how to reconstruct their home afterwards. However, the water level in their community is remaining high, and it is still a question when the affected people could return to their home and start the recovery process, according to local people and authorities.

Most people who have been evacuated are now staying either in make-shift temporary shelters or with relatives. The government has provided ten days' worth of food supplies and CNY 10 per day for each affected person in the affected areas. These people may need more support, especially if the waters do not recede quickly, with many unable to return to their homes, jobs and resume normal economic activities.

By 22 July, RCSC headquarters provided assistance amounting CNY 12 million (CHF 1.85 million) in cash and kinds to the affected areas. Relief supplies include tents, quilts, rice, drinking water and purification tablets as well as environmental disinfectant. An urgent need for food items such as rice and cooking oil was identified as a top priority by the people affected. It is also noted that the quilts distributed to families were not only used as a cover but also transformed into temporary a bed or mattress. Livelihood measures, including reconstruction of houses and recovery of farmlands were also indicated as priorities.

RCSC and local health authorities deployed health teams to provide basic medical care to the population. There is no major outbreak of diseases in the community visited by the assessment team. However,



Villagers were forced to move from their homes as houses were destroyed or badly damaged by flooding or rains. Many seek shelter in tents, including the child pictured here sleeping when the Hubei Red Cross branch distributed a bag of rice to his family. Photo: IFRC



The assessment team travelled by boat across the flooded farmland to the temporary resettlement site to Zitan Village in Xianning. Photo: IFRC

according to the local health authority, there has been a slight increase in cases of skin diseases because of exposure to flood waters. Since the ground water (drinking water source) was also polluted by the floods, the government and RCSC provided water purification tablet for the families.

All RCSC provincial branches are involved in relief actions and are actively seeking funds to meet the needs of the affected people. While RCSC continues to raise funds domestically to support the emergency response, they also welcome direct cash contributions from international communities. It is notable that during the first half of the year, RCSC has already launched national appeals for the exceptionally serious drought as well the Qinghai Yushu earthquake. RCSC launched a national appeal in April right after the 7.1 magnitude earthquake hit the area, and successfully mobilized CNY 2.3 billion (CHF 353.6 million) to support the Qinghai Yushu recovery programme. However, there is a strong indication that the National Society will face difficulties in mobilizing sufficient funds for the floods which came only a month - and continues for several others - after the earthquake.

International support can be made either directly to RCSC or through the IFRC's 2010 country plan for China. At this moment, IFRC plans to support Hubei province with CHF 150,000 in providing 3,000 families with 30 kilogrammes of rice and two quilts each.

The IFRC East Asia regional office continues discussions with RCSC on how to support the emergency response to the floods through the IFRC's country plan for China for 2010.



RCSC distributing food items, mostly rice to the displaced families. According to interviews by the assessment team, the need for food items is still a pressing concern among the affected communities whose farmlands has been completely destroyed by the water. Photo: IFRC



The RCSC assessment team met 72-year old beneficiary who now lives in a tent with five other members of his family, including his wife, his son, his son's wife and two grandchildren. His home was destroyed by the floods and food is scarce, with all their provisions finished. The entirety of his family's farmland was devastated and they are now very worried about having no income for this year. There is still no workable plan to recover the land on time to harvest a complementary yield before winter comes. Photo: IFRC

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.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The IFRC's work is guided by [Strategy 2020](#) which puts forward three strategic aims:

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

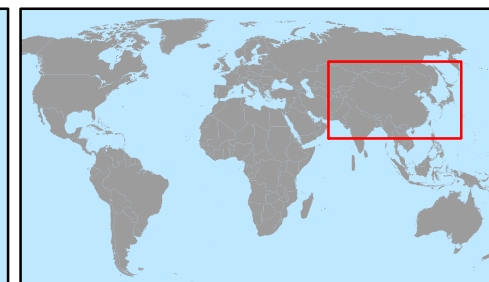
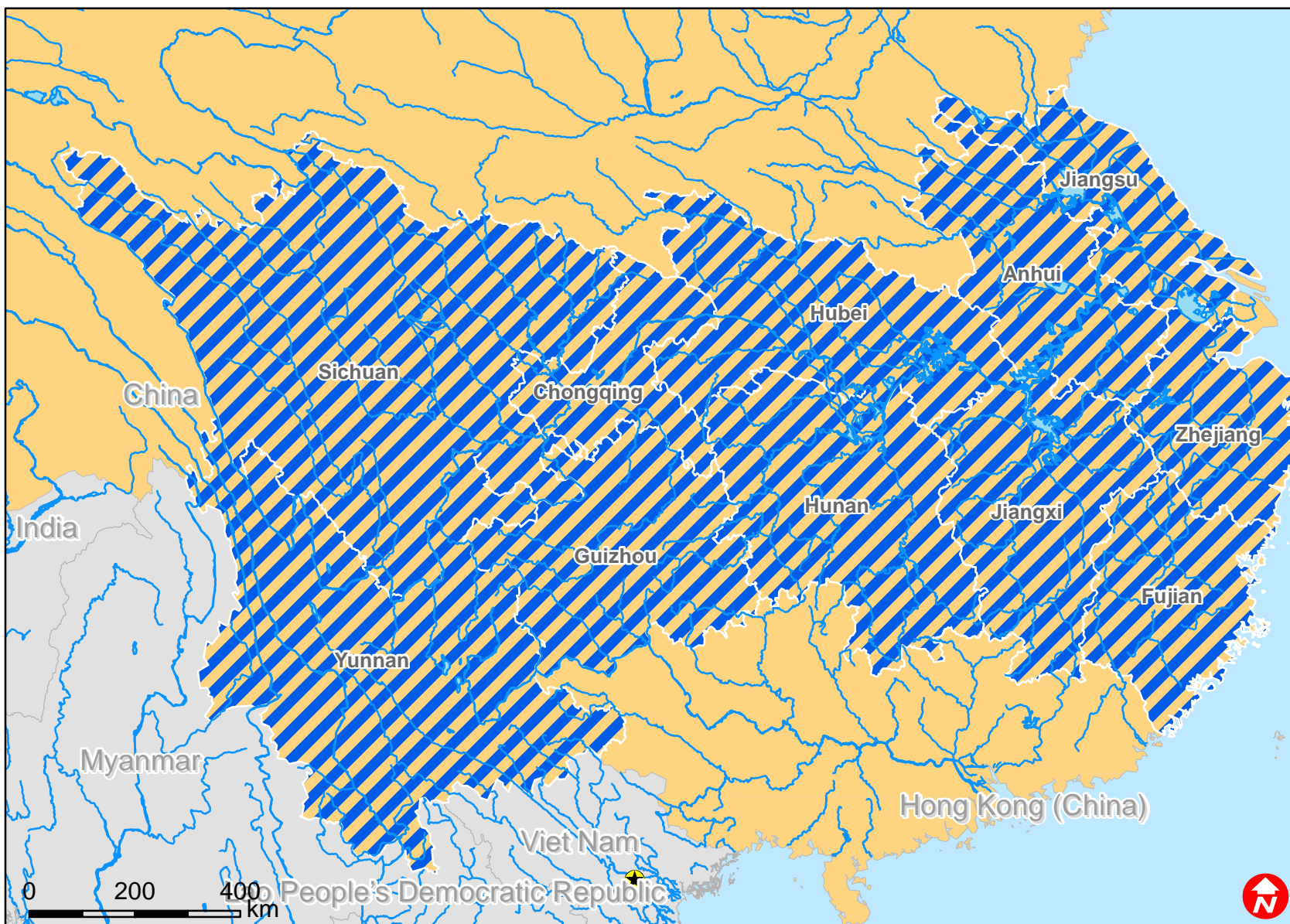
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[<map below; click here to return to the title page>](#)



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 Worst affected provinces