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## Information bulletin Thailand: Floods

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

### Information Bulletin n° 2 GLIDE n° [FL-2011-000135-THA](#) 28 October 2011

This bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Thai Red Cross Society is not seeking international assistance at this time.

**Summary:** The severe floods that have been affecting Thailand for four months are now directly threatening the central areas of Bangkok. Outer suburbs of the metropolitan area are already inundated. Don Mueng airport (the former main international airport) is now, in parts, under almost 1 metre of water and is closed (the flood relief operations centre based at the airport continues to operate). The government has declared a five-day holiday in all flood-affected provinces, including Bangkok. It also advised all residents who were able to leave the city to do so. Within the city itself there is a tense calm and an unusual quietness as people await the fate of the central area. The authorities, businesses and individuals have been busy building an array of flood defences from those that are highly engineered to a few sandbags damming footsteps.



Despite the widespread flooding that has disrupted everyday life, spirits are still high as shown by this young beneficiary after receiving relief items provided by Thai Red Cross in Pathiumthani on 29 October 2011. (Photo: Thai Red Cross)

The flood threat to the capital has greatly magnified international media interest as hundreds of thousands of Thais in the central, northern and north-eastern parts of the country have been affected for some time now. The Thai prime minister has invoked emergency powers under a domestic disaster law to focus efforts on protecting Bangkok city, the nation's economic centre. Fourteen districts along the Chao Phraya river are critically affected and several more are at risk. The challenge is to manage a huge run-off from the north passing via the city on its way to the Gulf of Thailand. The situation is

expected to exacerbate this weekend by a high tide that will put extreme pressure on the city's elaborate flood defences.

Latest figures from the Royal Thai government indicate that 373 people have been killed (including 61 who were under the age of 19) in what has been described as the worst floods in 50 years. Since 25 July the accumulated affected population is estimated to be at 2.94 million households (9.5 million people). At least 3.8 million acres of farmland has been inundated. The floods have had a devastating effect economically and socially in both rural and urban areas.

The Thai Red Cross has been active in 42 flood-affected provinces. So far, the national society has reached more than 800,000 people with basic relief, drinking water, hot meals, search and rescue and medical assistance.

## The situation

While Bangkok is under increasing threat, the situation in some parts of the long-suffering north has begun to show signs of improvement. However, as the floodwaters recede so the task for recovery becomes increasingly apparent. However, four north-east provinces – Mahasarakham, Kalasin, Sri Sakhet and Buriram – are being hit by heavy rainfall and overflow of the Moon and Chee rivers. Nonthaburi and Pathumthani provinces are also struggling with floodwaters arriving and affecting residential and industrial areas. Those living in submerged houses have been evacuated to various centres for the displaced.

For Bangkok, there are various estimates on the severity of flooding. Red zone areas, including those near the river and the various inner city canals (klongs), could flood to up to 2 metres. Elsewhere, there are predictions of flooding between 20cm and 1 metre. Two main roads in Bangkok – namely Paholyothin and Vipavadhhi Rangsit – are cut off in parts. The main airport Suvarnabhumi is open and protected by newly installed (and major) flood defences. The main access road and rail link between the airport and city also remain open.

Some challenges have been identified, including the identification of more safe (ie flood-free) evacuations centres and shortages of basic supplies. Sixteen essential items have been listed as controlled items to prevent price hikes, including bottled water, ready-to-eat food, eggs, flashlights, batteries, life jackets and sand. Disruption to the logistics supply chain is preventing the delivery of relief supplies to the most affected and inundated/isolated beneficiaries. Flood waters also heighten the risk of various infections, principally of the skin, eyes and digestive systems.

The Thai Red Cross Society (TRCS) has also been part of joint assessments led by the government that has identified urgent needs to include drinking water, purification tablets, basic food items, shelter materials, generators, sanitation equipment (mobile toilets), mosquito nets, rubber boots, medical kits, flash lights, waste bags and life jackets.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

TRCS has been responding to the crisis since 27 June, working in coordination with provincial and national authorities. At least 800,000 people have been reached in 42 affected provinces. To date, more than 122,890 family kits have been distributed along with 1.3 million bottles of drinking water (a significant part of those efforts that fall within the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) cluster coordination).

Two Red Cross emergency kitchens – in Ayutthaya and Saraburi provinces – are producing 4,000 hot meals a day. The kitchen in Ayutthaya has been running since 11 October, the one in Saraburi since 20 October.

Red Cross teams have also been involved in evacuating people to safety and have provided flood-affected communities with latrines.

Inter-agency coordination meetings have identified Thai Red Cross as the best placed humanitarian organisation to support migrant workers. The national society is doing this in collaboration with the disaster management authorities as well as IOM and UNHCR.

With the growing possibility of major disruption in Bangkok coupled with the improved flood situation in some of the longer-hit provinces, TRCS plans to move some of its deployed teams – including mobile kitchen, water unit and flat bottom boats – back to assist the capital. Within the metropolitan area, relief kits have

been delivered to one affected district thus far: Bang Pard. Table 1 summarizes the national society's response to date:

**Table 1: Thai Red Cross assistance (by region) 27 June to 28 October**

Region	Provinces	Assistance							
		Relief kits	Bottled water	Water team	Shelter box	Flat bottom boat	Mobile kitchen	Medical team	HH medicine
		(kit)	(bottle)	(team)	(box)	(boat)	(meals per day)	(team)	(kit)
Northern	14	66,513	736,212	2	0	2	4,000(ended)	1(ended)	0
North East	9	20,717	197,268	-	0	2	0	0	0
Central	9	66,296	854,352	1	448	5	8,000	2(ended)	0
East	6	15,998	149,976	-	0	0	0	0	20,000
South	3	3,150	24,000	-	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Bangkok</b>	1	2,300	27,600	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>174,974</b>	<b>1,989,408</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20,000</b>

The TRCS has been designated by the Royal Thai Government, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as the designated recipient of international assistance. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has been supporting the national society coordinate with international donors, many of whom have expressed interest to support TRCS IFRC has also been supporting in terms of managing international media interest.

IFRC, together with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), continues to coordinate regularly with TRCS to monitor the floods situation and response. Red Cross Red Crescent Movement support in the relief operation includes technical support when requested and coordination of relief efforts.

## Contact information

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## How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGOs\) 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.

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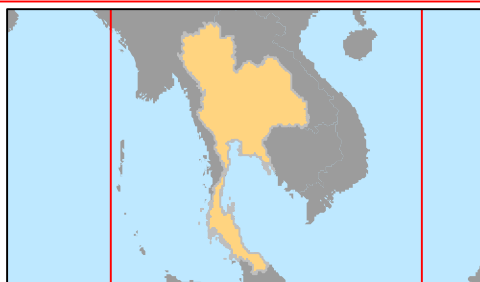
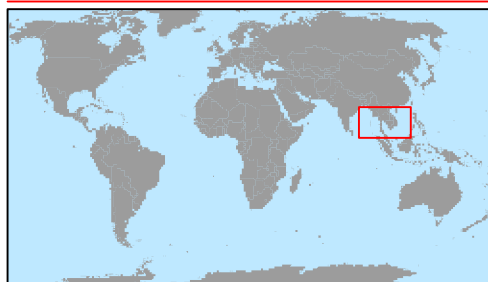
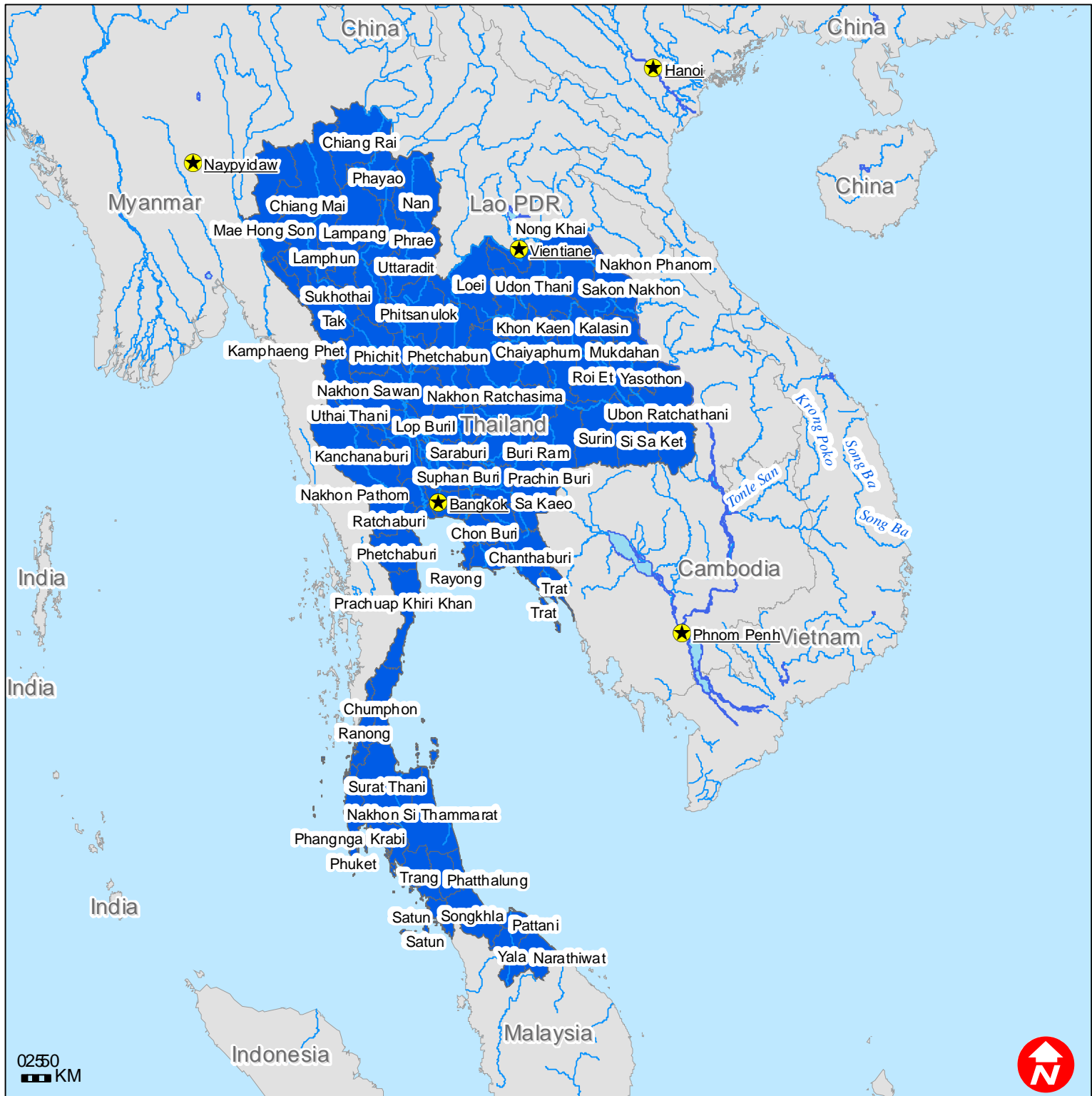





The IFRC's work is guided by [Strategy 2020](#) which puts forward three strategic aims:

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.
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# Thailand: Floods



-  Capitals
-  Perennial Rivers
-  Affected provinces