

OPERATIONS UPDATE



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

CHINA: JIANGXI EARTHQUAKE

ME no. 05ME070
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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 over 183 countries.

In Brief

Operations Update no. 02; Period covered: 4 December 2005 to 17 February 2006

This DREF Bulletin Update no. 2 is being issued based on the situation described below reflecting the information available at this time. Following 26 November's earthquake in Jiangxi, CHF 130,000 was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to release and distribute relief items and tents from the Red Cross Society of China's (RCSC) disaster preparedness stocks to the most affected areas. The RCSC, with support from the Japanese Red Cross, is providing 25 temporary latrines to Ruichang city to assist those families living in tents with longer-term sanitation needs. At the same time, the RCSC's Jiangxi provincial branch is supporting families in repairing and reconstructing their homes with funds raised in the province and by the RCSC Shanghai branch.

This operation is expected to be completed by the end of February, and a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (28 May 2005). Replenishment of DREF by unearmarked contributions is welcome and needed.

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

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Background, and current situation

The 26 November's earthquake affecting Jiangxi (Ruichang city and Jiujiang county), Hubei and Anhui provinces left at least 16 people dead, with more than 8,000 people seeking treatment for earthquake-related injuries. In Jiangxi, some 600,000 residents were evacuated because of the quake, which destroyed 150,000 houses. In Hubei, 7,500 people were evacuated following the quake, while in Anhui, where 32 homes were destroyed, the number of evacuees was lower. According to relief officers from the Red Cross Society of China's Jiangxi provincial branch, aftershocks close to the earthquake's epicentre in Ruichang city have continued to affect Jiangxi over the past three months. The earthquake came as an especially harsh blow for the



In Ruichang, tents are pitched right in front of earthquake-damaged buildings.

residents of both Jiujiang county and Ruichang city, which were affected by severe floods and landslides in May and a destructive typhoon in September 2005.

While assistance from the government, family members and friends have allowed a large number of families originally displaced by the earthquake to find permanent housing, according to the Relief division of the Jiangxi Red Cross, some 13,000 people remain in tents. The main street of Ruichang city and the city's lake are lined with tents housing displaced families, beneath billboards promoting the dream of a modern city that will be built in the earthquake's wake. Government assistance has been primarily directed towards those families who were most severely affected by the earthquake, with those families who lost their entire homes receiving some RMB 11,000 (USD 1,375) in compensation. On average, a typical 60 square metre brick house, which lacks water and sanitation facilities or glass windows, will cost anywhere between RMB 10,000-30,000 (approximately CHF 1,600 – 4,900) to build.

Even with compensation from the government, many families who had already lost their crops and fields to 2005's floods are unable to rebuild their homes. Increasingly common over the past decade, working age men and women faced with no other alternatives for supporting families are heading to cities as migrant workers. In 2003, some 40 percent of all rural income was earned by migrant workers. More and more of these workers, however, are arriving in the cities, only to find further disappointment in urban areas where the income gap continues to grow wider. Over the past twelve years, the estimated average monthly wages for migrant workers in Guangdong rose by just RMB 68 (CHF 11), with most factories paying less than RMB 1,000 (CHF 163). According to official estimates, rural migrant workers have lost some USD 12 billion (approximately CHF 16 billion) in unpaid wages. The failure of factories in paying migrant workers who have come to the cities to support the needs of their families in the rural areas not only affects the workers but also the villages they come from, who after losing their crops and homes have banked their last hope on China's booming cities.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Some 13,000 people are still living in tents in Ruichang city. The mid-sized city's main street is lined with blue family tents provided by the government. With the recent celebration of the Lunar New Year, optimistic red banners draped on the openings of family tents indicate a graceful acceptance that even amidst a year of earthquakes, avian influenza and floods, life continues. Prior to the Lunar New Year (27 January), those people who were living in tents had no appropriate sanitation facilities. According to the RCSC Ruichang branch staff, the people living in tents were returning to abandoned buildings to use the toilet or wash. Based on the need to support sanitation needs identified by RCSC headquarters and the Federation in December, the Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS) agreed to directly support the RCSC by providing temporary toilets for Ruichang.



The RCSC and Japanese Red Cross jointly support sanitation needs in Ruichang with temporary latrines and a maintenance truck.



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On Tuesday 13 December, a coordination meeting convened in Ruichang county between representatives from the RCSC's Jiangxi provincial branch, Ruichang city branch, Jiujiang county branch and Jiujiang city branch, local government officials, the Federation's regional disaster management delegate and the Federation's flood relief delegate. The meeting was facilitated by Ruichang's vice mayor representing the Ruichang city council, who outlined the city's sanitation needs for a period of six months and a plan of action. Temporary latrines and a maintenance truck arrived in Ruichang the week before the Spring Festival. Since its arrival, the city council has been responsible for ensuring the latrines, which have been strategically placed closed to the clusters of tents lining the city's streets, are cleaned every two days.

At the same time, the RCSC's Jiangxi provincial branch is supporting families with repairing and reconstructing their homes with funds raised in the province and by the RCSC's Shanghai branch.

Hubei province-Huang Mei county

Besides Jiangxi, 26 November's earthquake also affected Huang Mei county in Hubei. The RCSC's Hubei provincial branch sent medical teams to the affected area and collected and distributed warm clothing valued at RMB 20,000 (CHF 3,260). Tents were provided to some 200 people by the ministry of civil affairs. During the second week of December, RCSC headquarters provided the branch with 2,500 sets of winter clothes for distribution in the affected area. Items were released by the RCSC's regional disaster preparedness centre in Jiangsu. The 13-person branch has a strong relief department which, with support from RCSC headquarters, responded to three waves of floods in 2005 that struck the area over the period August – October 2005.

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