

CHINA: EARTHQUAKE IN HEBEI PROVINCE

**appeal no: 03/98
(Preliminary)
13 January 1998**

***THIS PRELIMINARY APPEAL SEEKS
CHF 1,750,000 IN CASH TO ASSIST
110,000 BENEFICIARIES FOR 6 MONTHS***

Summary

The International Federation is appealing for assistance on behalf of the Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) and 110,000 beneficiaries, following a highly-destructive earthquake on January 10, which killed at least 50 people and left 50,000 homeless.

The Disaster

A powerful earthquake struck Zhangjiankou Prefecture of northern Hebei Province just before noon local time (0350 GMT) on 10 January. The epicentre of the 6.2 Richter magnitude (5.8 on the body wave scale) quake was 33 kilometres (20 miles) below the earth's surface at 41.33N and 114.71E. The jolt was strongly felt in Beijing, approximately 200km (124 miles) to the Southeast. This mountainous tableland in the northern half of the province, through which the Great Wall runs, is dotted with townships and villages. This, along with difficult access and wintry weather is hampering relief and search and rescue efforts.

Hebei Province has a population of approximately 53 million people, more than half of whom live in the south where industry in the provincial capital of Shijiazhuang (population 1,000,000) is the main employer. In the north, many of the villagers farm and raise livestock. Food stocks are buried in collapsed buildings and the death toll among livestock has yet to be assessed.

Victims are now especially vulnerable to the extreme cold weather and freezing winds that blow down from the Mongolian steppes. Night temperatures of about minus 20° centigrade (5° F) are making life even more difficult and dangerous for those without shelter and for those who fear sleeping indoors during the many aftershocks.

Extensive damage occurred in four of the five counties affected: Zhangbei, Shangyi, Kangbao and Wanquan Counties, with Zhangbei and Shangyi the hardest hit. A total of 585 villages in 37 townships suffered varying degrees of damage.

The most recent information provided by the Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) headquarters through its Hebei provincial and local branches shows:

- { At least 50 dead;
- { Nearly 12,000 injured, more than 1,200 seriously;
- { 471,000 affected in four counties;
- { 264,469 rooms seriously damaged;
- { 130,660 rooms destroyed;
- { Over 50,000 homeless.

The Response so far

Government Action w

Given the complexities involved — the type of damage, cold weather, remoteness of some villages — information on the impact of the disaster is still coming in.

Local and provincial government workers, rapidly mobilised, are winding down search and rescue operations. Schools and other public buildings deemed structurally safe are being used as shelters for the homeless. Several thousand troops from a nearby military base are assisting: quilts, heavy coats and food have been distributed. Structural engineers have begun the complex task of examining the integrity of the large city buildings, apartment blocks, infrastructure and industry that were shaken by the earthquake. The government is assisting the RCSC in transportation of personnel and relief goods, while the Hebei Provincial Government granted exceptional access to the disaster area to Federation representatives.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action w

Red Cross Society of China

Working with local public health staff, Red Cross medical teams were speedily deployed to administer first aid, set up field hospitals, transport victims to hospitals, assess the status of victims and help to reunite families. Local Red Cross branches are also distributing their stocks of warm winter clothing blankets and medicine, and are also assisting in decontamination of water supplies and disease control.

Senior staff from Hebei Provincial Red Cross and RCSC headquarters staff are in the disaster area conducting a preliminary assessment. Using emergency relief funds 2,700 cartons of instant noodles have been procured and delivered to the branches for distribution. In addition, RCSC Headquarters has released the equivalent of CHF 17,000 from its emergency relief fund to local branches.

The RCSC International Department is co-ordinating international inquiries and assisting the Federation in arranging transportation and accommodation of Federation staff. Photographs and reports from the RCSC Information Department have been posted to the Federation homepage (www.ifrc.org), and to its own homepage (www.chineseredcross.org.cn).

The RCSC has an extensive nation-wide network of 156,000 grassroots units, 2,562 county and district branches, 347 prefecture and city branches and 30 provincial branches. Early response to the RCSC National appeal from branches throughout China has been good. Cash and in-kind contributions of tents, quilts and clothing are on their way to the disaster area:

- { Shanghai Branch has raised over CHF 33,000 to date;
- { Disaster Preparedness Centre in Xiaogan delivered 5,000 coats;
- { Disaster Preparedness Centre in Shenyang provided 400 coats;
- { Hubei Branch donated 50 heavy tents;
- { Beijing Branch provided an initial cash contribution equalling CHF 8,000;
- { Hong Kong has embarked on a fund-raising campaign and currently has three staff on site.

International Federation

The International Federation released CHF 500,000 from its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to allow the RCSC to begin the operation. A Secretariat Media Service Officer arrived in Beijing today and will provide photographs and video footage of the disaster area in the near future. A Secretariat Senior Relief Officer is currently on his way to China to assist the RCSC in finalising the appeal. The Japanese Red Cross is airlifting blankets to the affected area and has made a cash contribution to the Federation. Their delegate will join the Federation’s Secretariat staff and RCSC on a mission to the disaster area on 14 January. A Reporting/Monitoring Delegate is also being recruited.

Other Agencies’ Action w

UNDHA issued Situation report No. 1 on 12 January 1998.

Co-ordination w

The RCSC is co-ordinating its relief efforts with those of the provincial and local governments, the military, and the Ministry of Civil Affairs, including its public health department. The RCSC will take the lead for needs assessment, procurement and distribution of relief goods funded through the International Federation. For local procurement of relief supplies the Society will work closely with the Federation Logistics Delegate (sponsored by Belgian Red Cross) who is in Beijing for DPRK operation support.

The Intended Operation

Assessment of Needs •

The initial needs assessment by RCSC staff and the Headquarters assessment team has determined that beneficiaries will require both emergency and rehabilitative assistance over the months to come.

Immediate Needs •

Due to the effect of this type of disaster, the number of people involved, remoteness of some villages, and the severe winter weather, the following are urgently needed:

Item	Quantity	Number of Beneficiaries
Cotton quilts	5,000	5,000
Heavy coats	10,000	10,000
Rice and flour	500 mt	33,333
Medicines and medical supplies	assorted	51,600
Multipurpose generators	10	

Anticipated Later Needs •

As immediate needs are met and families begin the task of returning to their homes, and in some cases to the new sites where their villages will be reconstructed, the RCSC plans to identify specific villages to provide longer term shelter during the rehabilitation phase.

The RCSC will identify damaged Red Cross first aid stations, branch offices and hospitals and propose repairs, reconstruction and equipment needs. It will take several weeks to develop a comprehensive plan of action.

Red Cross Objectives •

- { To provide 110,000 beneficiaries with relief goods as determined through needs assessment and Federation Rules and Regulations of Disaster Relief;
- { to provide two villages with temporary living facilities during reconstruction of their homes;
- { to repair or reconstruct damaged RCSC First Aid stations and hospitals in the affected villages — the extent of which will be communicated following a needs assessment.

National Society/Federation Plan of Action

The Plan of Action will be included in the Appeal, to be submitted as soon as assessments are complete and information analysed.

Budget summary

See Annex 1 for details.

Conclusion

Hundreds of thousands of earthquake victims experienced the emotional trauma such an event causes. In addition to the 50,000 homeless, tens of thousands are afraid to sleep in their homes aftershocks serve to reinforce their fears. As time goes on the effects of the bitter cold, lack of adequate clothing, food and shelter will only add to their misery. Cash contributions are urgently needed to help these people keep their health and strength so they can begin the long process of rebuilding their homes and their lives.

Margareta Wahlström
Under Secretary General,
Disaster Response & Operations Coordination

George Weber
Secretary General

BUDGET SUMMARYAPPEAL No. 3/98-
IN CHF

ANNEX 1

NEEDS IN KIND (OR CASH)**Relief supplies**

Quilts (10,000 pieces x CHF 12)	120,000.00
Winter coats (5,000 pieces x CHF 13)	65,000.00
Rice (500 T x CHF 520)	260,000.00
Tents (200 x CHF 700)	140,000.00
Assorted medicines	135,000.00
Vehicles: 2 x 4WD (maintenance/spare parts)	70,000.00
Generators (10 units x CHF 5,200)	52,000.00
Mobile telephones (4 sets x CHF 250)	1,000.00
Camera with digital capacity	1,000.00

TOTAL NEEDS IN KIND (OR CASH)	844,000.00
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NEEDS IN CASH

Transport	20,000.00
Personnel (1 technical support delegate / 6 months)	60,000.00
Travel & communications	30,000.00
Monitoring/Evaluation	30,000.00
Information	35,000.00
Administrative, office & general expenses	40,000.00
Rehabilitation phase - budget following assessment	611,000.00
Secretariat operational support	80,000.00

TOTAL NEEDS IN CASH	906,000.00
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TOTAL APPEAL CASH & KIND	1,750,000.00
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LESS CASH ON HAND	0.00
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NET REQUEST CASH & KIND	1,750,000.00
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NB: all procurement will be done locally

Rehabilitation phase: assessment in progress for RCSC First Aid Centres and Hospitals
(construction/medical equipment)