

CHINA: FLOODS

**appeal no: 21/98
20 July 1998**

***THIS APPEAL SEEKS CHF 6,770,000
IN CASH, KIND AND SERVICES
TO ASSIST 270,000 FAMILIES (1 MILLION PEOPLE)
FOR 3 MONTHS***

The Disaster

More than 20 provinces throughout South Eastern China have been hit by heavy seasonal floods which began in March — two months earlier than normal — and have been continuing with unusual severity. Provinces battling the heaviest floods are Jiangxi, Fujian, Guanxi, Hunan, and Sichuan, several of them facing the worst deluges in living memory.

Official figures from these areas list at least 526 dead, 120,000 injured, 292,000 homeless, 4.9 million rooms and 3.6 million hectares of cropland damaged. The direct economic loss is put at RMB 43 billion (CHF 7.6 billion) according to the Ministry of Civil Affairs.

Entire villages have been washed away by swift and violent floods. People managed to flee to the mountains or on top of dams but were unable to rescue much of their food stocks or belongings. Many farmers have lost their entire harvests.

Temperatures vary from 35 to 40 degrees Celsius and humidity is well above 90 per cent. This, combined with insufficient sanitation and lots of stagnant water, increases the risk of waterborne epidemics.

Meteorological forecasts indicate that the worst is yet to come. The water level is already high and if predicted rains arrive, the situation will get even more serious.

The Response so far

Government Action •

The government has provided military tents to homeless people, started to reconstruct destroyed roads and bridges in some of the worst affected areas, and has mobilised significant resources to fight the floods.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action •

The Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) has released RMB 150,000 (CHF 26,800) to the affected provinces for emergency relief operations.

RCSC has set up a task force of five senior staff to manage operational activities, organise logistics, national fund-raising and international relations. This will be strengthened by three Federation delegates to support the implementation of the operation. Additional technical resources are being provided by the Federation regional delegation in Kuala Lumpur in the fields of media liaison and financial management.

Red Cross volunteers throughout the affected areas have, from the onset of the disaster, participated in rescue work and provided first aid to the injured as well as distributed relief items. 620 medical teams have been mobilised and are providing medical treatment and sanitation work at provincial and county levels.

RCSC has mobilised its branches to begin fund-raising. Cash and in-kind support has been collected in all affected provinces. This has enabled local Red Cross branches to distribute some food, medicine and clothes but this assistance is far from sufficient. Red Cross branches in unaffected neighbouring provinces have also collected money, clothes and blankets for distribution. This Federation Appeal is designed to complement RCSC national mobilisation which has always been so important in the past and is again expected to be this time.

RCSC has alerted all provincial branches to closely follow the situation and make regular reports to headquarters.

On 9 July the Federation released an Alert while an assessment was underway; this has already mobilised some CHF 250,000 including CHF 50,000 from the Canadian Red Cross and CHF 100,000 from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund for the immediate procurement of relief material.

A number of national societies have been contacted, as has ECHO, in order to accelerate the mobilisation of resources. The British, Canadian and Danish Red Cross Societies have already provided delegates.

Co-ordination •

At national level the emergency situation is co-ordinated by the Ministry of Civil Affairs and local authorities. The Red Cross role is outlined in a law specifying its auxiliary role to government. Red Cross action is co-ordinated at national level by a management team set up for this operation, supported by the Federation representative.

The Intended Operation

Assessment of Needs •

A needs assessment was conducted between 9 and 15 July by a team of senior staff from the RCSC and two Federation Secretariat staff in Jiangxi and Fujian provinces. The team confirms the desperate need for food, medicine, disinfectants and water purification tablets. RCSC will follow closely developments in the other affected provinces and the operation may be extended as needs arise and depending on resources available from the Ministry of Civil Affairs. Relief stocks in RCSC disaster preparedness centres have been depleted but these continue to provide support through their permanent staff and are being used as co-ordination centres for this operation.

Immediate Needs •

Food: The food stocks of many families were swept away or spoiled by polluted flood water. Gardens and croplands were inundated and in many areas standing crops, ready to be harvested when the floods came, are still under water and spoiled. The Red Cross response will be to supply 8,000 MT of rice to support over one million beneficiaries for 20 days.

Disinfectants and water purification tablets: Disinfectants of varying chemical composition are essential to ensure safe water supplies, sanitise public areas and living quarters and treat stagnant pools of water that can become breeding grounds for disease-spreading bacteria and insects. Red Cross teams are equipped with spraying equipment but in most case vector control chemical material is running out.

Medicines: Medicines to treat gastrointestinal, respiratory, and skin ailments are among the medical items needed, and will be procured locally.

Logistics: All relief items and medicines can be purchased locally, but transport may be difficult as some areas are only accessible by boat.

Considering the enormous numbers in need and making a realistic estimation of the expected international assistance, RCSC decided to limit its activities to the provision of relief items to 270,000 most vulnerable families — over one million people. The selection of these families and relief distribution will be made by the county branches of the RCSC.

The economy in the affected areas is mainly mixed industrial and agricultural. The affected population rely on small-scale farming and depend entirely on their own crops. Yields will not be sufficient this year to satisfy their nutritional needs.

Families will receive at one time a ration of 30 kg of basic food (rice/wheat) to assist them until official support comes on stream. In addition RCSC teams will continue health and sanitation services through medical teams already active in the field.

Anticipated Later Needs •

Should the response to this appeal permit, the RCSC will provide clothing and quilts during the month of September as autumn and winter are usually very cold.

Red Cross Objectives •

- To ensure the rapid mobilisation of funds and materials to provide immediate assistance;
- to provide basic food (rice/wheat) to over 1 million people (270,000 families, mainly temporarily displaced from their flooded homes), for 20 days with a ration equivalent to 1,600 Kcal per day;
- to supply the medical and sanitation teams with basic medical supplies and sanitation material to assist people during the emergency phase;
- to provide safe water to 1 million people for a period of 60 days by supplying 60 million water purification tablets to purify 10 litres of water per person per day.

National Society/Federation Plan of Action

Emergency Phase •

The structure of the RCSC, right down to the county level, and its substantial operational experience considerably facilitates the conduct of this operation. Logistical and procurement systems and procedures are established and in line with Federation guidelines and procedures.

The operation will be directly managed at the provincial level. A Federation field delegate will work from the provinces and the districts, mainly focusing on monitoring the flood situation and facilitating the implementation of the operation. For ten weeks, a Federation information/reporting delegate is posted to ensure full media coverage of the operation and appropriate reporting. Both delegates will travel extensively in the affected areas. The information aspect of the operation will be supported by a Federation regional information delegate for the first ten days. The Federation representative in Beijing will support National Societies at national level and maintain contact with the Federation Secretariat.

The situation is not stable and depending on the level of rain in the coming weeks the Federation/RCSC operation may be adjusted. At this point in time the priority is to assist rapidly those who have lost all their belongings and food and ensure that medical teams have all the necessary supplies.

Logistics •

The procurement of relief supplies will be made in China by the RCSC at provincial level. Lines of supply have already been opened at national and provincial levels.

The Federation Logistics Delegate for the DPR Korea operation, based in Beijing, will provide additional technical support for this operation.

Capacity of the National Society •

RCSC has extensive experience in relief operations. Operational procedures and effective management structures are well in place. The Red Cross has excellent working relationship with local authorities and more and more a decentralised approach. The Society has a proven record in the mobilisation of resources.

Present Capacity of the Federation in China •

The Federation has had a permanent presence in China since early this year. The operation will be supported by a team of five delegates, including the Beijing -based logistic delegate for the Federation DPRK operation and the information delegate from the regional delegation in Kuala Lumpur.

Evaluation •

At the end of the operation the Federation and RCSC will conduct an evaluation exercise aimed at continuous improvement for future operations. This evaluation will actively involve the Red Cross at provincial and district levels as well as selected participating national societies.

Budget summary

See Annex 1 for details.

Conclusion

As so many people have been affected by this sudden disaster, the Federation is urging National Societies to support this massive operation with cash contributions to facilitate the implementation of the operation and to avoid difficulties and delays due to international shipments.

Donors may contact Marcel Fortier, Desk Officer, on ++4122 7304268 (e.mail: fortier@ifrc.org) for more information.

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George Weber
Secretary General

BUDGET SUMMARY

APPEAL N° 21/98
IN CHF

ANNEX 1

CHINA: Emergency Floods Operation

FOOD ITEMS

Basic Food (Rice/Wheat - 8.000 MT x CHF 485) 3,880,000.00

NON FOOD ITEMS

Basic medical supplies 615,000.00

Sanitation material, vector control 225,000.00

Water purification tablets (60.000.000 tablets) 924,000.00

TOTAL EMERGENCY RELIEF SUPPLIES 5,644,000.00

Transport (relief goods - 8.200 MT) 697,000.00

Storage 24,000.00

Air transport costs 45,000.00

Personnel (Expat staff / 11 del/months) 110,000.00

Personnel (150 local staff x CHF 190 x 3 months) 85,500.00

Training 20,000.00

Travel & communications 63,000.00

Information 18,000.00

Evaluation 12,000.00

Administrative, office & general expenses 47,000.00

Secretariat operational support 154,500.00

TOTAL NEEDS IN CASH 1,276,000.00

TOTAL APPEAL 6,920,000.00

LESS CASH ON HAND 150,000.00 0.00

NET REQUEST CASH & SERVICES 6,770,000.00

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NB: All relief items will be procured locally