

# **CHINA: FLOODS**

2 September 1999

*appeal no. 17/99*

*situation report no. 3*

*period covered: 18-31 August 1999*

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*While assessments indicate that the level of destruction caused by this year's floods in China are less than those of 1998, there are still a total of over 5.5 million persons affected throughout the country. The support provided thus far has enabled the Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) and the Federation to initiate the procurement of much needed relief assistance for approximately one million vulnerable persons targeted within the current Appeal. Red Cross reserves are however close to being exhausted, and there is an urgent need for additional funds.*

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## ***The context***

Sustained rainfall since the middle of June has caused extensive flooding along the upper and middle reaches of the Yangtze river in China. According to official figures released on 5 August 1999, over 700 people have died and 24,000 were injured as a result of this year's floods and 5.5 million have been displaced throughout the country. Chinese media has furthermore reported that more than 100 people were killed in flash floods in Hunan on 16 August, but these figures have not been confirmed by the authorities. Four provinces in particular - Jiangxi, Hubei, Hunan and Anhui - have been most affected by the flooding. In these provinces, Red Cross branches estimate some 60 million people have been put at risk, while 1.8 million have been evacuated from their homes.

Metrological forecasts indicate that further rainfall is due, with the potential of further floods not only along the Yangtze but also along the Yellow River. Experts fear that the Yellow River would be particularly prone to flooding given that up to 35% of the existing levees along the river have not been built according to minimum specifications. Recent flash floods in Hunan and Hong Kong also indicate how volatile the situation is, due to relentless rain throughout these regions.

## ***Latest events***

Based on the findings of joint assessment teams made up from staff from the headquarters and the Hong Kong branch of the RCSC as well as the Federation, the Appeal was expanded on 24 August to 10.2 million Swiss francs to ensure that more than 1 million people have access to clean water and

sanitation materials for 2 months, and to provide food assistance to approximately 250,000 people in those communities worst hit by the disaster for up to three months.

Two teams monitored the situation in Anhui and Hubei provinces, and Hunan and Jiangxi provinces, respectively. While the flooding has affected numerous provinces along the Yangtze, it is now clear that people living in the four provinces of Hubei, Hunan, Anhui, and Jiangxi have been the most severely affected. The Federation has therefore decided that it will concentrate its relief effort specifically in these provinces where flood waters have receded in the past few weeks but still remain at about four metres in many areas, leaving more than one million people homeless and millions of hectares of farmland under water. Continued heavy rainfall was also witnessed by the team. The newly arrived field delegate is also assessing the flood situation in Jiangxi and Hunan Province, and another field delegate is expected to arrive on the 3 September to further reinforce the delegation.

## ***Red Cross/Red Crescent action***

The Red Cross is operating clinics set up in temporary shelter areas as well as dispatching mobile teams of doctors and nurses to villages cut off by deep flood waters. The most common ailments treated are respiratory infections, skin diseases, and diarrhoea. Two Federation field delegates will monitor the progress of relief operations currently underway in the four target provinces, which will be carried out by the RCSC.

The various components of the Red Cross/Red Crescent involved in the operation (the RCSC, the Hong Kong branch, the Macao Red Cross, and the Federation) will continue their assistance in many of the other provinces affected. Procurement is expected to start this week in line with the initial Plan of Action, and a revised Plan of Action is expected in the following week. Both plans seek to address some of the emergency needs (in the form of basic food, water purification tablets and sanitation materials) of the victims.

## ***Outstanding needs***

Although this year's floods are believed to be less severe than last year's, many of the worst hit areas have now experienced flooding three to five years in a row. Both of this year's rice crops have been damaged in many areas, robbing farmers yet again of their main income base. Although food is available through government loan schemes, many of these people can simply not afford the loan terms given the cumulative impact of the through floods over the last few years. The assistance provided through this Appeal is therefore the only source of help for these people.

## ***External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media***

The recently issued press release on the launch of the Revised Appeal prompted interviews with Reuters, AP, and AFP in Beijing. All Beijing based media were contacted and informed of a planned field trip to the province of Hunan, where delegates will be accompanied by a cameraman from the RCSC. Both broadcast and print media have shown keen interest in obtaining more footage of the floods, and AP-TN will do the regular pooling of material.

## ***Contributions***

See Annex 1 for details.

Director  
Operations Funding and Reporting Department

Director  
Asia and Pacific Department

**CHINA, FLOODS**

ANNEX 1

**APPEAL No. 17/99**

**PLEDGES RECEIVED**

09/02/99

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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**CASH**

REQUESTED IN APPEAL----->	10,200,000	49.42%
AUSTRALIAN - RC	25,000 AUD	25,820 08/10/99
AUSTRALIAN - RC		32,600 FIELD DELEGATE (reimbursement)
BRITISH - RC/GOVT	490,196 GBP	1,193,580 08/13/99
CANADIAN - RC	100,000 CAD	95,930 07/20/99 RELIEF SUPPLIES
CANADIAN - RC/GOVT	100,000 CAD	105,950 08/18/99
CANADIAN - RC	200,000 CAD	211,800 08/25/99
ECHO	1,000,000 EUR	1,604,500 08/30/99
FINNISH - RC	67,280 EUR	107,951 08/23/99
GERMAN - RC/GOVT	224,341 DEM	184,005 08/17/99 WATER PURIFICATION TABLETS
GERMAN - RC	20,000 DEM	16,404 08/19/99
JAPANESE - RC	10,000,000 JPY	129,800 08/19/99
NETHERLANDS - RC		16,900 FIELD DELEGATE (reimbursement)
SPANISH - RC	3,000,000 ESP	28,926 08/19/99
SWEDISH - RC	1,800,000 SEK	329,040 08/10/99
UNITED STATES - GOVT	500,000 USD	785,000 08/10/99 WATSAN, FOOD, CLOTHING, QUILTS
AMERICAN - RC	100,000 USD	157,000 08/13/99
PRIVATE		1,000 08/10/99
<b>SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH</b>	<b>5,026,206 CHF</b>	<b>49.28%</b>

**KIND AND SERVICES (INCL. PERSONNEL)**

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
ICELANDIC - RC	DELEGATE			15,000		INFO/REPORTING DELEGATE
<b>SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES</b>				<b>15,000 CHF</b>		<b>0.15%</b>

**NOT REQUESTED IN APPEAL**

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
<b>SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED</b>				<b>0 CHF</b>		