

INFORMATION BULLETIN



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

VIET NAM: FLOODS

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Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) Allocated: N/A

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 180 countries.

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In Brief

This document is being issued based on the needs described below reflecting the information available at this time. The Vietnamese government has indicated that whilst the flooding is serious no international appeal is required at this time. However the Vietnamese Red Cross will continue to their response activities and targeted financial support to these actions is being solicited through the Federation from interested donors. Accordingly the Federation will not consider the formal launch of an international appeal at this moment

The Situation

Severe flooding continues in the central provinces of Viet Nam killing more than 50 people and leaving thousands more without adequate clean water, food or shelter. After only recently recovering from floods in late October, the provinces, Binh Thuan, Ninh Thuan, Khanh Hoa, Phu Yen, Binh Dinh, Quang Ngai and Quang Nam, are now hit again by torrential rain with recent rehabilitation efforts washed away.

Regarded as the worst flood since 1964, the numbers of people estimated killed stands at 58 with six missing and 12 injured. More than 1600 houses have been destroyed and up to 25,000 families affected. Low-land area has flooded forming a vast lake destroying thousands of hectares of crops and rice fields. The economic loss to Viet Nam is estimated to be VND 371 billion (USD 24 million).

Heavy rainfall during the period 11-14 November 2003 resulted in water levels in all rivers rising from 0.02 m to 3.21 m – well above alarm level III. This sudden rise has resulted in severe flash flooding to five provinces Quang Nam, Binh Dinh, Phu Yen, Khanh Hoa and Ninh Thuan – one of the poorest and worst affected provinces.

Province	Population
Viet Nam	78,685,800
Quang Nam	1,402,700
Quang Ngai	1,206,400
Binh Dinh	1,492,300
Phu Yen	811,000
Khanh Hoa	1,066,300
Ninh Thuan	531,700

Source: World Health Organisation planning figures – population estimates 2001.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Viet Nam Red Cross (VNRC): The society at different levels has mobilized Red Cross shock brigades to evacuate people to safe areas and participate in search and rescue as well as build temporary shelters for displaced people. The Red Cross branch in Ninh Thuan province mobilized available contributions from communities in the province valued at VND 97 million and VND 250 million from outside support.

In Binh Dinh province the branch has evacuated 900 families to safe areas and been involved in search and rescue. It has released VND 25 million from reserved funds to provide 250 relief kits - each kit consists of rice, instant noodles, blanket and mosquito net - to the worst affected families. Some support from Norwegian Red Cross and VNRC headquarters (VND 167 million – approximately CHF 15,000) has been mobilized to assist affected people in districts of Phu Cat, Tuy Phuoc, Van Canh, An Lao, Hoai An, Hoai Nhon and Tay Son. The Red Cross of Ho Chi Minh city contributed VND 15 million with the Go Vap chapter offering VND 10 million to procure necessary items for the worst affected people.

In Phu Yen, the Red Cross at local levels has evacuated 800 households to safe locations; in cooperation with local authority rescued 150 workers working under the Da Rang Bridge project. VNRC headquarters has released VND 30 million from their emergency fund to support two provinces of Ninh Thuan (VND 20 million), Phu Yen (VND 10 million) to procure necessary relief items for the worst affected people.

Federation: The Federation programme coordinator in Hanoi has been in contact with the VNRC to review assistance. In Geneva the Asia/Pacific Department and the head of operations in Disaster Management and Coordination (DMC) division have discussed additional support if required with a number of partner national societies. The World Health Organisation (WHO) confirmed their office in Hanoi has been discussing possible primary health care clinic and water and sanitation assistance and has made contact with the Federation's DMC division in Geneva - this proposal is currently being evaluated with the Southeast Asia disaster management unit in Bangkok. WHO has requested the Federation to provide details of their basic health care and wat/san emergency response unit (ERU availability and suitability, if required. The Secretariat in Geneva and the regional delegation disaster management unit in Bangkok are also evaluating this possibility.

Other Action

The local government of Ninh Thuan, Phu Yen, Binh Dinh has provided VND 1-2 million to support to families who have had members killed with VND 500,000 to families with injured people and VND 1- 3 million for those families that have lost their homes.

International organizations met last week in the Vietnam Disaster Management Working Group (DMWG) to share information and discuss next steps. Following the meeting, a joint assessment team (UNICEF and CARE Vietnam) sent staff to Ninh Thuan to carry out a damage analysis and needs assessment and UNOCHA will provide an emergency grant of USD 80,000 through UNDP and UNDMT in Vietnam to assist the flood victims in Binh Dinh province.

Summary and follow up:

Consistent monitoring of the situation by the Federation on DMIS clearly indicates that the extent of the disaster, whilst currently manageable by the authorities, requires a more formal communication to partners (including non-RCRC). The Federation is in detailed discussion with the VNRC on the scope and mechanics of possible options for limited and targeted RCRC support. A proposal for ongoing distributions of household kits, rice and shelter materials are being studied and will be part of the next Information Bulletin expected in mid-week. The Federation membership has clearly indicated willingness to provide some form of financial support to any relief activities.

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For further details please contact :

- *Federation Office in Hanoi: Martina Schloffer, Programme Coordinator; Phone +844.942.2983; Fax +844.942.2987; emai: ifrcvn04@ifrc.org*
- *Viet Nam Red Cross, Nguyen Hung Ha, DPP Officer, Phone+844.943293; Fax+844.942.4285; email vnrcdq@netnam.org.vn*
- *Federation Secretariat, Geneva, Iain Logan/Charles Evans/Sandra Rosner Phone 41 22 730 4984/4320/4456; Fax 41 22 733 0395; email iain.logan@ifrc.org / charles.evans@ifrc.org / sandra.rosner@ifrc.org*

All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal.