

Floods in China 1996

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The flooding situation in China continues to worsen. Many more deaths are reported in Hubei and Hunan Province. The latest reports from the media place the death toll over 1600 since the flooding began in late June.

Typhoon Gloria is bearing down on Fujian Province. Heavy rains and high winds up to 120 km per hour are predicted by weather forecasters. Chinese authorities evacuated vulnerable residents to safe areas and shelters. As of 1134 GMT the leading edge of the storm was moving over Fujian and into Zhejiang Province, one of the worst hit by flooding this month. At least 20 people died in the Philippines as Gloria swept across its northern islands.

Following close to the heels of Typhoon Gloria is Tropical Storm Herb. It is picking up strength as it moves across the Pacific and is expected to be upgraded to typhoon status. If it continues on its west-northwesterly course, Herb will cross over the northern tip of Taiwan hitting the continent in Zhejiang Province.

Coastal surges, landslides, wind-damage, and more flooding are anticipated throughout the already inundated areas of China. Millions of military and civilian workers are working to contain the Yangtze River in Hunan and Hubei Provinces. In Guizhou Province temperatures are climbing, adding to the misery already experienced by the flood victims.

The Red Cross Society of China has provided the detailed plan of action for the Federation supported relief operation in Anhui, Guizhou, Hubei, Hunan, Jiangsu, and Zhejiang Provinces (attached as annex 1). Distribution of disinfectants, medicine, food, and shelter materials is underway. Provincial RCSC Branch and Disaster Preparedness staff not directly affected by the disaster are assisting in the procurement and transportation of relief items.

Senior staff from the RCSC Headquarters are currently in the disaster area, meeting with provincial RCSC staff and volunteers, as well as local officials. Their assessment will be included in the next report.

The RCSC is able to procure all identified relief goods in China. To date, CHF 1.15 million has been sent, which includes the CHF 500,000 from DREF. Funds are urgently needed to provide for the 1.2 million beneficiaries targeted in the appeal. Donors are asked to transfer pledges to the Secretariat as quickly as possible. The current list of contributions is attached as annex 2. The Federation Relief/Monitoring Delegate will depart for Beijing within the next days.

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