

Information bulletin



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Vietnam: Floods

Information bulletin n° 1
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4 November 2008

This bulletin is being issued for information only and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at present. The Vietnam Red Cross (VNRC) will, however, accept direct assistance to provide support to the affected population.

[<click here to view the map of the affected area, or here for contact information>](#)



In Hanoi, Pham Ngoc Thach street was among the many places submerged in the city. Several places were under one metre of water while rushing waters broke through steel shutter doors of houses and shops.

(Source: www.vnexpress.net)

The Situation

Torrential and persistent rainfall over the past 72 hours caused widespread flooding in various parts of the North and the Central provinces of Vietnam. Cities and provinces badly affected by flood waters include Thai Nguyen, Phu Tho, Vinh Phuc, Bac Giang, Ha Noi, Hoa Binh, Ninh Binh, Ha Tinh, Nghe An and Quang Binh. According to government information, 85 have been reported dead so far. Up to 20,000 families in the capital city of Hanoi are affected by the floods while 2,000 families in rural areas along the Red River have been moved to safer areas.

Evacuation has also been carried out in areas where dykes have been breached, including the provinces of Ninh Binh and Vinh Phuc. As many as 200 families have been evacuated from the latter province. Mudslides have also been reported in many areas. In Ninh Binh province, the breaching of one dyke has seriously flooded seven communes while in Ha Nam province, three other communes have been affected as well.

In many provinces, houses have been destroyed or damaged by flood water. Damage to farmland and aquaculture is huge while business and production enterprises have been suspended over the last three days. In the capital city of Hanoi, thousands of families have had no access to fresh clean water for this period as flooding has caused power outages, and stopped water pumps. In response, the local authorities have been distributing clean water to those affected.

Current figures numbering those affected and damage to property are as follow:

Number of people badly affected	Houses destroyed	Houses flooded/damaged	Rice/vegetable fields	Aquaculture resources	Drainage systems	Dykes damaged	Rural roads damaged
600,000	128 houses	106,800 houses	241.118 hectares	25.456 hectares	457 units	84.847 m ³	168.451m

From 30 October to 2 November, rainfall in the plain areas and the midlands of the Northern provinces reached between 100mm and 300mm, particularly in some areas where rainfall was more than 350mm. This includes Ha Noi (700 mm), Hoa Binh (547mm), Vinh Phuc (425mm), and Lang Son (610 mm).

Daily activities in many parts of the country, including large cities, have been disrupted in many ways. Utilities such as electricity and roads between provinces have been severely cut off, while transportation within cities such as Hanoi have also been greatly disrupted. Many areas within the city are waterlogged with levels up to two metres, leading the government to take the decision to allow school and university students a week's leave beginning Monday, 3 November. According to local news sources, up to five hospitals in Hanoi have been flooded up to 60-70 cm on the first level, forcing all patients, personnel and equipment to shift to higher floors. Access remains impossible for small vehicles and even ambulances due to flooding of the hospital compounds; the only possible means of access is currently by truck or cyclo. These hospitals have been running on generators ever since the floods hit, but normal power sources were restored yesterday (3 November).



Thousands of houses in the districts of Hoa Lu, Gia Vien and Nho Quan in Ninh Binh were submerged after two dams on the Hoang Long River were breached.
(Source: www.vnexpress.net)

Local marketplaces have been closed due to the lack of transportation for goods and services while in places where markets are open, food prices have risen sharply. In order to stabilize prices, the Vietnam Food Company is vending rice by mobile truck to the affected people.

Hanoi itself and other provinces such as Vinh Phuc in the north continue to experience heavy rainfall and increasing water levels. In the northern central provinces of Thanh Hoa and Ha Tinh, heavy rain and rising water levels are also forecast.

The government is leading response efforts through military personnel and citizens to evacuate those affected, to reinforce dykes and to help in the distribution of relief items.

A meeting by the disaster management working group (DMWG) represented by Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, UN agencies, international and national NGOs today (4 November) discussed the flood situation, highlighting damages and the affected population.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The VNRC headquarters has sent teams into the affected provinces of Nghe An, Ninh Binh, Ha Tinh and Quang Binh to provide relief goods and collect information regarding the flood situation. Relief items include 900 household kits to beneficiaries who have lost all their possessions in the flooding.

Up to VND 500 million (USD 30,000) has been allocated by the national society to the provincial chapters for food and support to those who have lost family members. The money is allocated from the national headquarters' disaster relief fund which is now running low. The VNRC continues to establish information on the damages, needs and gaps, and welcomes any support or contributions to help in the mitigation of and response to the current situation.

During its monthly coordination meeting on yesterday (3 November) with the VNRC and partner national societies, the International Federation discussed updates on the flood situation and highlighted the importance of having good information on the damage and needs via the VNRC network in order to move ahead in an effective manner. Following today's meeting with the DMWG, the International Federation will continue liaising with the VNRC chapters directly for further information on the situation.

Needs

According to VNRC needs assessment garnered through direct communications with the chapters in the flood-affected provinces, initial needs stand at VND 198 billion (CHF 13.9 million or USD 12 million) to buy rice seeds, VND 515 billion (CHF 36 million or USD 31 million) for emergency needs, 5,000 tonnes of rice for further relief,

40 tonnes of vegetable seeds and 30 tonnes of maize seeds for initial livelihood recovery in 17 provinces. These include Lang Son, Thai Nguyen, Bac Giang, Phu Tho, Vinh Phuc, Hoa Binh, Hanoi, Ninh Binh, Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Ha Tinh, Bac Ninh, Hung Yen, Hai Duong, Ha Nam, Nam Dinh and Thai Binh. An estimate of total damages at present in those provinces is VND 6,162 billion (CHF 425 million or USD367 million).

The decision on the necessity of an emergency appeal is presently under consideration.

How we work

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGOs\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

Contact information

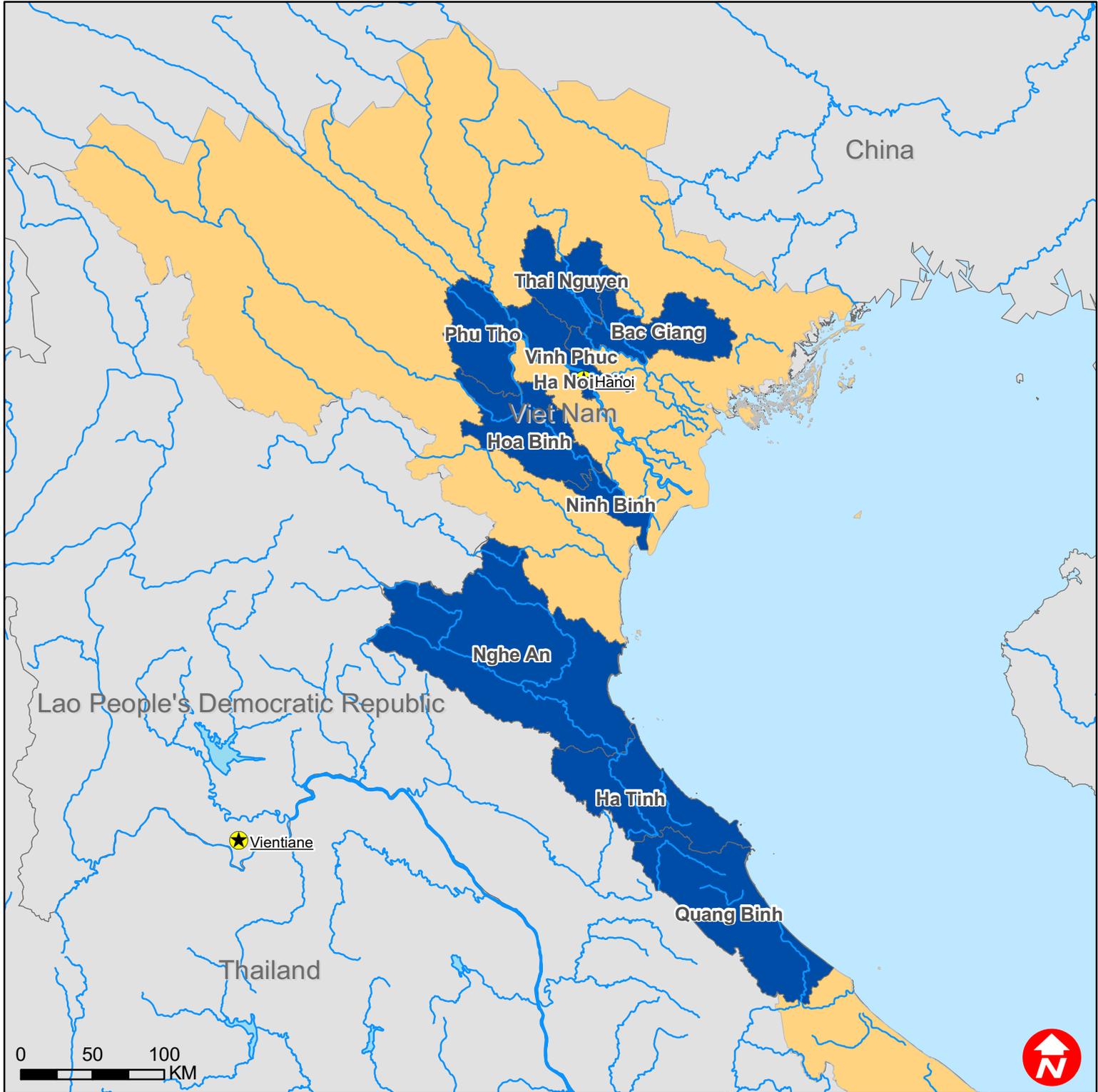
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- ★ Capitals
- Affected provinces