

Information bulletin



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

China: Floods

Information bulletin n° 1
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17 June 2011

This bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Red Cross Society of China (RCSC), with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), has determined that external assistance is not required, and is therefore not seeking funding or other assistance from donors at this time.

Continuous rainstorms hit southern and central China beginning in early June. In two weeks, three rounds of torrential rains have caused intensive flooding, induced landslide and mud-rock flows in the eight provinces of Anhui, Zhejiang, Jiangxi, Hubei, Hunan, Sichuan, Chongqing and Guizhou. Government figures as of 13 June indicated that some 105 people died and 63 missing, thousands of homes were destroyed and in Hubei province alone, approximately 180,000 people had to be evacuated. Statistics are expected to rise as the third round of heavy downpours continue at time of reporting.



Floods and landslides have affected millions of people again in China this year. In Zhejiang Kaihua county, the old town was inundated by flood waters after a series of downpours hit the area.

Photo: Xinhuanet

The RCSC national headquarters mobilized relief materials for the worst-hit provinces, and a national-level water emergency response team (ERT) was also deployed to one of the worst-hit areas in Hubei to provide safe drinking water to the affected population, as their water infrastructure was destroyed by the floods.

The IFRC regional disaster management team continues to closely the situation with RCSC. A joint assessment team was deployed to further assess humanitarian needs and support in the affected areas.

<click [here](#) for map of affected areas, or [here](#) for contact information>

The situation

Sudden rainstorms battered several provinces in central, east and southern China since 3 June 2011. Within ten days, heavy rains caused serious flooding, induced landslides and mud-rock flows in at least eight provinces, namely Anhui, Zhejiang, Jiangxi, Hubei, Hunan, Sichuan, Chongqing and Guizhou. As of 13 June 2011, official figures from the ministry of civil affairs indicated that first two rounds of storms had taken the lives of 105 people, with 63 others still missing.

With a third round of storms ongoing and expanding its influence on neighbouring provinces, it is expected that the figures of people affected will continue to rise. At time of reporting, according to the ministry of civil affairs, the third round of storms had already forced about 555,000 people in the eight provinces to evacuate.

In east China's **Jiangxi and Zhejiang provinces**, local news indicate that the third bout of rains which started on 14 June had forced at least 300,000 people to evacuate, toppling 1,320 houses. In the southwestern Chongqing municipality, where biggest daily rainfall reached 104.2 mm, more than 110,000 people have been affected by the downpour, with 3,500 evacuated since Monday.

In **Hunan province**, in the already hard-hit Yueyang city in Hunan, the embankments of several reservoirs were damaged, and last week, flash floods and landslides caused by the largest rainstorm in 300 years killed 29 people and left 20 missing. In the city of Huangshan in southern **Anhui**, according to the city flood control and drought relief headquarters, water overflowed from 35 reservoirs and exceeded the warning levels in 124 reservoirs.



In Xianning, Hubei, 128 children and more than 30 teachers were trapped in a kindergarten. Government rescue team is helping the affected people to evacuate. Photo: Xinhuanet

In **Hubei province**, one of the hardest hit provinces, a total of 22 counties in seven prefectures in the province were affected, with at least 29 people dead, 10 still missing and 180,000 displaced. An approximate 7.6 thousand hectares of farmland were destroyed, with 12,000 houses collapsed. In Xianning prefecture alone, more than 53,000 people had to evacuate as downpours raised the levels of a local river by five metres, with dozens reported dead and 100 injured. In the city's Tongcheng county, which was virtually submerged in water, precipitation topped 300mm within four hours, a record volume in 200 years. Flood waters measured more than two metres deep in Tongcheng's low-lying areas. Traffic in the county seat was paralyzed, as flood waters in the area measured between 60 to 90cm deep.

Electricity and telephone services in Tongcheng were cut off by the floods. More than 300 people living downstream from one of the county's reservoirs had to evacuate after the reservoir was overwhelmed by the waters. Along with damages of other infrastructure, the county's drinking water system was completely destroyed, and safe drinking water for more than 100,000 people remains a serious concern in the county.

The national meteorological centre (NMC) also indicated that the possibility of flash floods remains high, as most of the areas hit by continuous rains had just encountered serious droughts since the end of 2010.

Red Cross Red Crescent action

The Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) provincial Red Cross branches in the affected areas immediately responded to the disaster by deploying their assessment teams to the affected areas, along with essential relief items such as rice, edible oil, tents and family kits which contain items such as rain coats, food, cleaning agents and some basic utensils.

RCSC national headquarters mobilized relief materials from its national warehouses to scale up provincial Red Cross response action. As of 14 June 2011, RCSC national headquarters mobilized relief materials including 1,400 family kits, 1,000 pieces of jackets, 1,000 pieces of quilts, 3,600 boxes of environment disinfectant and 2,200 boxes of water disinfectant worth CNY 1,500,000 (CHF 196,806) to support relief operations in affected provinces. An additional CNY 100,000 (CHF 13,120) in cash was sent to these provinces to procure relief items locally.



Hubei Red Cross branch delivering family kits to affected population Photo: RCSC

Based on an emergency needs assessment by the Hubei branch, on 14 June, RCSC national headquarters deployed a national water emergency response team (ERT) to Tongcheng county of Xianning prefecture in Hubei province, where whole county seats were submerged in flood waters and drinking water supply systems were damaged. The national water ERT, trained by IFRC and Spanish Red Cross, fully utilized equipment donated by the Spanish Red Cross¹. On 15 June, the equipment was set up and ready to be used in Tongcheng county. Local water authorities tested and approved the water quality produced by the team on the same day. The

proposed action would last for two weeks, whereby local water supply is expected to resume. At time of reporting, the team had started distributing water to schools, hospitals and kindergartens, targeting a total 6,000 beneficiaries. The water ERT was well recognized by local communities and authorities as an essential complementary relief action to the emergency water trucks deployed by the local government and military. As a result of the efficient and quality response, the Hubei Red Cross was invited by the Hubei provincial government to further establish the system and integrate this response tools into government contingency plan.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) East Asia regional office is closely monitoring the situation together with RCSC and providing updated information as it becomes available. It has indicated readiness to support RCSC's relief operation however necessary. An assessment team composed of the RCSC national headquarter and the regional disaster management team from IFRC East Asia Delegation was in Hubei to further assess disaster situation and supporting the Water ERT operation. The IFRC is currently in discussion with RCSC on support plan to the deployment of the Water ERT, and will update the response plans when required along with further assessment results collected.



RCSC national water ERT (Hubei branch) set up its water equipment in Hubei province, one of the worst hit areas in the current disaster. Photo: RCSC



One of the Red Cross water distribution points set up in Tongcheng county, where an estimated 100,000 people are currently without safe drinking water sources in the county. The community appreciated RCSC's fast action in accommodating their basic needs with quality. Photo: IFRC

¹ Spanish Red Cross donated their equipment to RCSC at the end of their water and sanitation emergency response unit (ERU) operations, deployed to China in response to the Sichuan earthquake in 2008.

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 \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The IFRC's work is guided by [Strategy 2020](#) which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.

Contact information

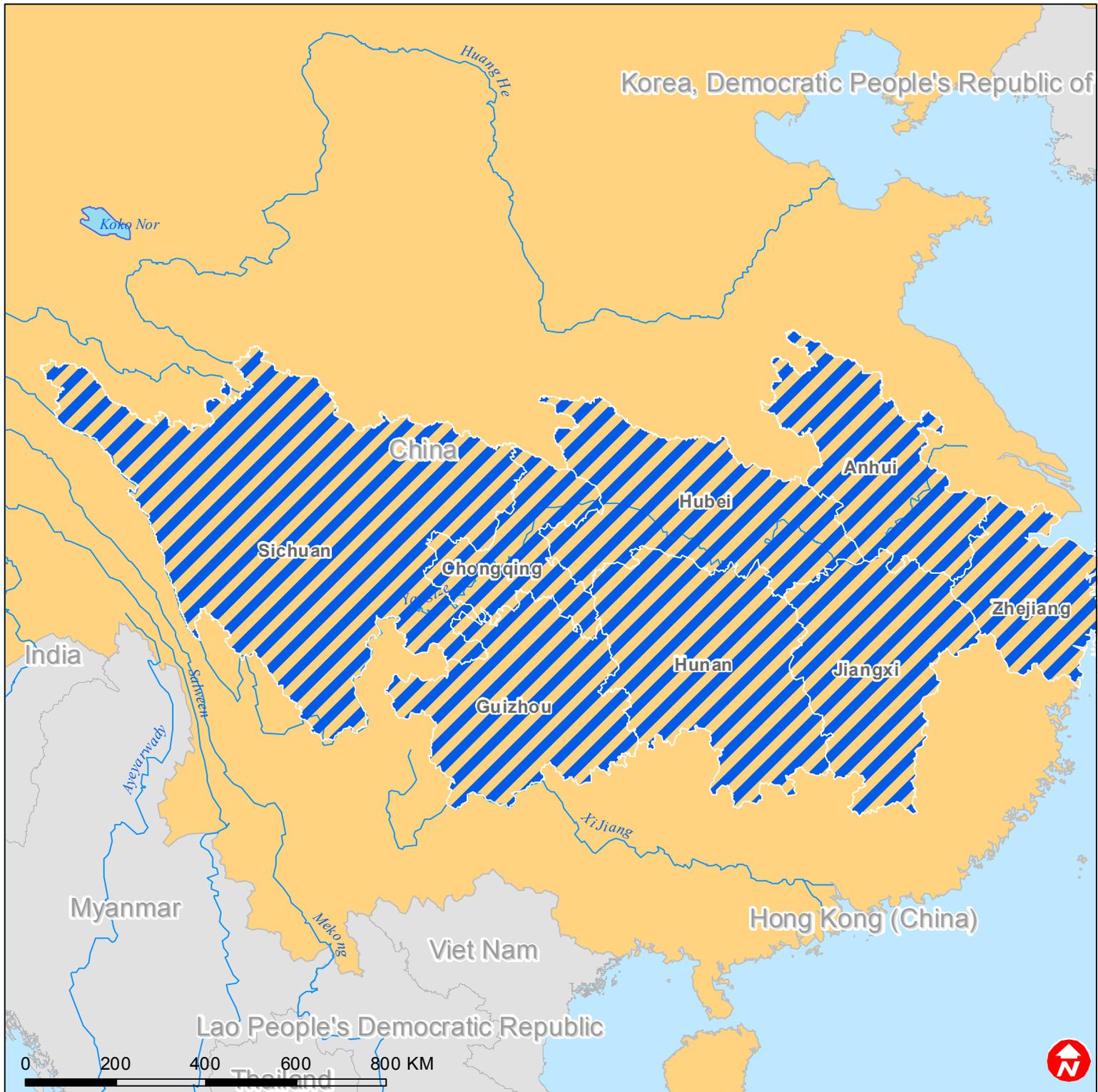
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 Affected provinces