

Alert

China – No. 22/2010

ACT responds to floods emergency in south-west China

Geneva, 20 July 2010

Weeks of torrential rains since early July have resulted in flooding and landslides in south and east China, which have worsened again since July 15. As of July 16, according to official reports at 16:00pm (local time), a total of 11 provinces and municipalities, including Anhui (east China), Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Fujian, Jiangxi, Hubei, Hunan, Chongqing, Sichuan, Guizhou and Yunnan (south-west China) have been affected, mostly along the Yangtze River.

According to the Chinese Ministry of Water Resources, the water flowing into the massive Three Gorges Dam is expected to reach 69000 m³ per second. The Hydrographic Office of Yangtze River issued a flood warning yesterday of potential flooding on the scale of those in 1998 when over 4,000 people were killed and around 18 million forced to leave their homes. The situation is being closely monitored as more rain and flooding is expected with the typhoon season having already arrived.

Impact

Official reports estimate over 38 million people affected, including 146 persons killed, 40 missing and 1,314,000 evacuated from their homes. Altogether 2,654,000 hectares of crops have been affected and 379,800 hectares ruined by the floods. 124,000 homes have been destroyed and 327,000 severely damaged. Direct economic losses are estimated at 29.52 billion yuan (US \$4.35 billion).

National and international response

Relevant government departments have mounted a response. Local authorities are evacuating people from affected areas and are supporting preparedness and damage mitigation measures against potential worsening of the situation. The Chinese Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Civil Affairs have allocated 370 million yuan (US \$54.58 million) for relief work in six of the most severely affected areas. Materials including tents, rice and quilts have been distributed and **Chinese ACT member, Amity Foundation**, reports that it is expected that the

government will continue to provide tents, rice and clean water to affected families, targeting the worst affected provinces or municipalities. National organisations, including the Red Cross Society of China and the Chinese Foundation for Poverty Alleviation, are responding with the provision of relief assistance using nationally available resources.

However, Amity also reports the need for other relief items to complement the government's assistance, including cooking oil and basic household items such as stoves, mosquito nets and bedding. In addition, as the authorities and NGOs focus limited resources on the worst affected areas, Amity foresees gaps in assistance to people in more remote areas and in areas sustaining secondary-level flooding. It is expected that rehabilitation needs in the near future will include repair and rebuilding of damaged houses, support for livelihood and agricultural production recovery, and rehabilitation of dam and irrigation systems.

ACT response

Amity Foundation is in close contact with their project office in Yunnan, working in close cooperation with the local authorities. They are also in contact with local partner the China Christian Council (CCC) in Chongqing and Hubei. Partners are currently conducting assessments of needs and other issues related to logistics and the availability of relief materials in the local markets.

Amity has been fundraising nationally since mid-June for relief assistance to people affected by the floods emergency in Hunan and Guangxi, but with the continued and expanded scale of the floods they now require international assistance and are preparing a Preliminary ACT Appeal to be submitted to the ACT Secretariat in Geneva by the end of this week.

Amity will focus on supporting people in more remote areas, or in areas not prioritised for government assistance as worst-affected, which are likely to be under-served. For the relief phase this is likely to include target areas within Yunnan, Chongqing and Hubei to support approximately 3,000 households (12,000 individuals). According to their assessment results, they will consider the special needs of the most vulnerable people in designing and targeting assistance.

Any funding indication or pledge should be communicated to Jessie Kgoroadira, ACT Chief Finance Officer (jkg@actalliance.org).

Thank you for your attention.

For further information please contact the ACT Secretariat:

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