

Situation Report #1:

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Flooding

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This report is produced by the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO) in collaboration with humanitarian partners. It covers the period from 18 to 31 July.

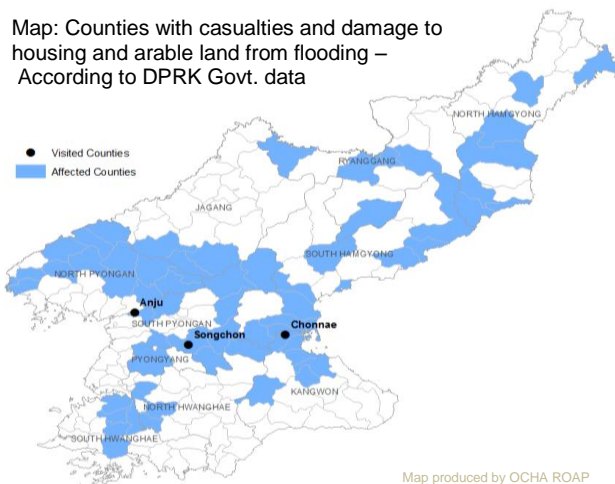
HIGHLIGHTS/KEY PRIORITIES

- Torrential rain country-wide between 18 and 29 July caused flooding, and in some places severe damages to private dwellings, public buildings, infrastructure and agricultural fields. According to the Government of DPRK, some 62,889 people have been homeless and leaving 88 people dead. The three most affected counties are Anju City and Songchon in South Pyongan Province, and Chonnae in Kangwon province, according to the Government.
- Immediate food assistance is required for the people in those counties most affected by the flood. Although flood damages have been observed in maize, soy bean and rice fields, it is difficult to quantify the possible yield losses at this juncture. Crop production will be assessed during the upcoming Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission planned for September/October 2012.
- Due to break-down of water supply systems, inundation of dug wells and hand pumps by flood water and crowded places, as a result of destruction of large number of private homes, access to clean water and health care remain high priorities to avoid outbreak of diseases. Preliminary support is mobilized from UN agencies and partners to address immediate needs. However, further assessments in Health and WASH clusters over the coming days are required in order to establish exact needs.

1. SITUATION OVERVIEW

Continuous rainfall and the cyclone KHANUN on 18-19 July and again on 23-24 July caused flash flooding principally in counties in four provinces; North and South Hamgyong, Kangwon, and South Pyongan; and a heavy downpour on 29-30 July, coupled with heavy thunderstorms, have worsened the flood situation for DPRK. The Government had to launch rescue operation to evacuate affected people. In all the flood affected counties, the livelihood and economic well-being of the people is affected.

According to official data gathered and shared by the Government, a total of 18,856 households are affected, making 62,889 people homeless, and the current number of deaths totals 88. The large number of homeless people have suffered from completely and partially destroyed and submerged houses. The Government also reports a large degree of infrastructure damage affecting roads and bridges, as well as over 30,600 hectares of arable land affected.



The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) together with the DPRK Red Cross Society have distributed relief items (tarpaulins, quilts with cover, cooking set, jerry can, hygiene kit and water purification tablets) to 6,610 families (29,950 persons) in 16 affected counties (Nyongwon, Wonsan city, Munchon city, Chonnae, Rakwon, Pukchong, Tanchon, Kim Chaek, Songchon, Sinyang, Unsan, Yomju, Taegwan, Hamju, Orang and Dongsin).

A request to the UN Country Team to release pre-positioned emergency stocks was made by the Government on 30 July to support the ongoing relief and recovery efforts in the affected counties; in particular for food and fuel. On 31 July, an inter-agency assessment mission was conducted (comprising UN agencies, resident NGOs, IFRC, Swiss Development Cooperation and the European Union's Aid Cooperation Office). Two assessment teams, together with Government representatives, visited Chonnae County in Kangwon Province, Songchon County and Anju City in South Pyongan Province which, according to the Government, were considered the most affected.

While most of the data provided by the Government at this juncture could not be verified during the inter-agency assessment missions to determine the human impact, the material damages are evident, mostly interrupting the water supply systems and standing crops in the field.

2. HUMANITARIAN NEEDS AND RESPONSE

FOOD SECURITY & AGRICULTURE

Needs:

In Chonnae County, the Government reported 6,772 people homeless while 454 hectare of arable land. In Songchon, maize, soya and some rice was affected (2,260 hectare of the 8,297 hectare total), with 430 hectare submerged, 450 hectare totally damaged, and 1380 hectare flooded. Around 1,000 heads of livestock were reported lost. In Anju City, it was reported that 60 percent of arable land is affected (4,800 out of 8,838 ha submerged). Estimates of affected yield are difficult to determine at this stage, although some affected crops were observed. Households reported loss of food stocks and cooking utensils stored at home. In Chonnae some kitchen garden losses were reported. Public distribution rations are reportedly reduced to 300g per day from 375g.



The government officials prioritised need for food, fuel (for pumping water from agricultural fields), medicine and water supply/purification. Farmers are requesting seeds and other agricultural inputs (fertiliser, plastic sheets and fuel) for the next season.

Response:

Targeted short-term emergency food assistance (400g cereals/person/day for 14 days) is recommended for the homeless people in the worst affected counties (100 or more homeless people). Assuming maize will be distributed, 400g will provide 1,464 kcal (70 percent of daily energy requirement of 2,100 kcal).

Regular food assistance to child institutions and pregnant and lactating women in the WFP-assisted counties will continue with priority of food delivery.

Gaps & Constraints:

It is difficult to determine the longer term prospects of food security. The Crop and Food Security Assessment (CFSAM), scheduled for September/October 2012, will be able to assess the situation. It is recommended the areas affected by current flooding are included in the assessment. Flood risk season in DPRK normally continues until end-August. Any possible future floods in the cereal basket provinces of DPR Korea would affect the food production in a higher scale.

HEALTH & NUTRITION

Needs:

In Songchon County, the occurrence of diarrhea has already increased by 30 percent. 7 out of 49 health facilities washed away, with 12 submerged. Stocks of drugs and vaccines are affected. Local authorities request essential medicines and consumables.

In Anju City, where 45 percent of population is affected, two dong clinics were partially destroyed. A need for essential drugs, IV fluid and water purification tablets has been identified, along with hospital consumables.



In Chonnae, no damage is reported to hospital facilities. However, there is health risk for households affected by water contamination and waterlogged buildings. A four-fold increase in diarrhea cases and a doubling of outpatient load are reported at the county hospital. Out of 80 patients, 20 had diarrhea, 15 with respiratory infection (ARI) and pneumonia, and 8 treated for injury. A further 17 severe injuries were referred to the provincial hospital.

In general, unless the WASH and Health needs are addressed, rapid increase in diarrhea, skin infection and respiratory infections could occur.

Response:

The Health and Nutrition Cluster will conduct a further detailed assessment, which is planned to take place on 6th August. Health and Nutrition Cluster is sending the assessment mission to most affected counties. However, a priority is already identified for essential drugs and IV fluid, water purification, hospital supplies and consumables, diagnostic kits, and logistic support for rapid response health teams.

The Government has responded with mobilisation of over 700 staff in Songchon, and 600 in Anju City for emergency health services. The DPRK Red Cross Society has already responded with some shelter and family kits, including water purification tablets, for those displaced. The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) is also assessing the impacts and further information is expected from the Government. MoPH is looking to transfer stocks of therapeutic milk stocks to areas of need.

Nutritional foodstuffs are required for children and the malnourished, however flooding is not likely to have any immediate effect on nutritional status of children. Malnutrition is frequently associated with diarrhea, but prompt hygiene and sanitation measures will help prevent outbreaks. Hospital capacity to treat severe malnutrition is not affected.

With the urgent need WHO is allocating US\$134,130 from Regional Emergency Funds (SEARHEF), and UNICEF is allocating US\$78,000.

Gaps & Constraints:

There is a huge gap in bacteriological diagnostic supplies and consumables for identification of types on infection among affected population. Mobile teams established by MoPH and local authorities for prevention of disease outbreaks require logistic support, transport and surveillance reporting forms. More health education among the population and training of laboratory staff is an issue of concern. Additional support may be provided after further health needs assessment. Most of damaged ri-hospitals are not accessible due to roads' condition. All damaged hospitals require immediate rehabilitation before winter season.

WATER SANITATION & HYGIENE

Needs:

Damaged water source and pumping stations leave 4,500 families in Songchon County without water supply, 36,000 families in Anju City without water. The wells being used are contaminated due to overflow of pit latrines and open drainage. As such there is a high risk of diarrhea outbreak. In Chonnae the water supply to 9,400 families is cut off due to damaged pipes and pump stations. Many rely on local spring water and wells, which may be contaminated and not of standard drinking water quality.



Tube well in Anju City

From Government figures, approximately 50,000 families will need immediate support for clean water from six severely affected counties. About 30,000 families whose water source is badly contaminated will need water purification tablets and about 20,000 homeless families will need water and hygiene kits. A need to spread hygiene education messages, to prevent the outbreak of diarrhea, is identified as a priority.

Response:

IFRC has already distributed 6,610 household kits (including water and hygiene) to the homeless families, as well as deploying 3 movable water purifying plants to Anju city covering the needs of the hospital and other institutions.

UNICEF has distributed 100 water and hygiene kits during inter-agency assessment mission, and is sending 1,000,000 water tablets to the most affected area in Anju city within next 24 hours. UNICEF is working with Ministry of City Management (MoCM) to dispatch 4,000 water and hygiene kits to different parts of the affected areas. UNICEF is allocating US\$175,000 to WASH activities.

Save the Children is planning to dispatch 100 hygiene kits to three different counties in South Hamgyong Province, and will also work with provincial authorities to find out the needs in North Hamgyong Province to help develop an appropriate response plan.

Gaps & Constraints:

With the urgent need to import water purification tablets, UNICEF has placed order for 10,000,000 tablets and will be delivered within 10 days. 50,000 copies of IEC materials were ordered before emergency, now fast tracked for quick delivery. There is also a need for further assessment of the damages to the of water infrastructure for planning the recovery phase.

EDUCATION

Needs:

From the counties visited, of 35 education facilities affected, 3 kindergartens and 3 schools are completely damaged (approximately 1000 child attendance). Others are partially damaged and some schools have reported damage to furniture and loss of teaching learning materials. They will need rehabilitation before they reopen after summer vacation in September.

Response:

No immediate responses as schools are closed for summer vacation. There is also no need for temporary learning space. Children are at home and not in any relief camp.

Gaps & Constraints:

Further assessment is being made by the Government.

SHELTER

Needs:

32 counties/districts/cities across eight provinces have reported damaged or submerged houses. At least 3,589 households have been affected by completely destroyed shelters, 3,236 households by partially destroyed shelters and 12,031 households by submerged shelters. In the visited counties of Songchon and Chonnae, 3,517 households (12,433 persons) and 2,200 households (6,772 persons) have been respectively affected by damaged or submerged shelters.

According to IFRC, Some of the families met in Songchon County were too shocked to start considering reconstruction plans. But they acknowledged that they would need support to rebuild their shelters, especially the economically disadvantaged. Community members would essentially need support of construction materials such as cement, steel, tiles, timber, wall and floor paper, paints. It is envisaged that technical support to identify safer and disaster-resilient locations for their new shelters would also be useful.

Response:

Affected people have been supported by local authorities as well as community members. Most affected people are living in temporary shelters either in communal houses or with host-neighbour families.

Gaps & Constraints:

IFRC report it is likely that once basic infrastructure, including water and sanitation, is back in place, individual shelter reconstruction would get a priority focus.

3. COORDINATION

In support of the Government efforts to respond, the humanitarian and early recovery agencies coordinate their activities through the Inter-Agency Emergency Coordination Group (IAECG), which is led by WFP and Save the Children International under the auspices of the UN Resident Coordinator (RC). The IAECG comprises all UN agencies (WFP, UNICEF, WHO, UNDP, UNFPA and FAO), IFRC/ICRC, The Swiss Development Cooperation and the six resident NGOs (Premiere Urgence, Save the Children International, Concern Worldwide, WelthungerHilfe, Triangle, and Handicap International).

Assessment missions are conducted together with Government representatives (National Coordination Committee (NCC) for the UN, the Korean European Cooperation Coordination Agency (KECCA) for resident NGOs and DPRK Red Cross Society for IFRC).

Due to the emergency, access to the counties that were visited was granted to all humanitarian and early recovery agencies by the Government within 24 hours. Access has also been granted to conduct follow-up assessments in Health and WASH.

4. FUNDING

While the Government has requested the UN to release the pre-positioned emergency stocks in-country, including food and fuel, no request for funding has yet been made. Further assessments to be conducted in the Health and WASH sectors over the coming week, will help to determine any financial support required to sustain the humanitarian and early recovery response.

5. CONTACT

For more information, please contact:

Jérôme Sauvage, UN Resident Coordinator.

E-mail: unctdprk.kp@undp.org.

For more information about the response of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), please visit <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/Appeals/rpts12/KPfl30071201.pdf>