



**OCHA Situation Report No. 9
Sichuan Province, China– Earthquake
27 May 2008**

NOTE: *This report is based on information received from the office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator, the media, as well as other partners.*

Key Summary

- **More than 3.3 million tents are urgently needed** and have been requested by the Government of China to the international community.
- **Tent Requirements/Sizes: 30 sq. m (6x5 m), 16 m sq.m (4x4m) or 15 sq.m (5x3m)**
(Footnote: *it is not necessary that the tents be winterized.*)
- Donors are encouraged to report their contributions, including in-kind contributions, to OCHA's **Financial Tracking System (FTS)**, <http://ocha.unog.ch/fts2/>.

Situation

1. On 12 May 2008 a major earthquake measuring 8.0 (original 7.9 RS was raised to 8.0 by Chinese authorities) on the Richter scale struck Wenchuan County, Aba Prefecture some 92km northwest of Chengdu City, the capital of Sichuan Province. The earthquake took place at 14.48 Beijing-time and tremors were felt as far as Wuhan, Shanghai and Beijing.

2. Two aftershocks of 5.4 and 5.7 respectively hit Qingchuang County (Sichuan Province) and Ningqiang County (Shaanxi Province) on 27 May according to the China National Seismological Network. The aftershocks caused an additional 420,000 houses to collapse as well as bringing down more rubble from the mountains. As of 26 May, 182 aftershocks measuring 4 or higher on the Richter scale have been recorded.

3. According to official statistics from the Information Office of the State Council, the death toll is 67,183 people, with an additional 361,822 people injured and 20,790 people missing. More than 45.61 million people were affected and around 15 million people have been relocated. A total of 64,719 bodies have been buried in Sichuan Province alone. Soldiers and medical personnel have rescued 83,988 people from debris. Around 5.46 million homes have been destroyed; an additional 5.9 million homes are seriously damaged.

Environmental Situation

4. The Government of China reported that earthquakes have damaged 2,380 dams across the region, including 1,803 dams in Sichuan province alone. Of these, the Government reports that 69 are at risk of rupturing, including the Zipingpu Dam, upriver from Dujiangyan in Sichuan province.

5. The Government of China has estimated that 700,000 people are threatened by the possible rupture of earthquake/landslide-caused lakes. To alleviate threats, local water authorities are taking emergency measures including satellite and on-site monitoring and investigation; relocation of populations from low-lying at-risk areas; and the dredging of lakes. The Government reported that priority attention is focused on a quake lake in Tangjiashan, Beichuan County, which is blocking the

Jianhe River and, with more than 128 million cubic meters of water behind it, believed to pose the greatest risk to human welfare.

6. The Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) reported that water quality at 71 sites in 48 affected cities and counties in Sichuan, Shaanxi, and Gansu Provinces, including Chongqing Municipality met the national standard. The air quality in the ten most affected cities and counties was also reported as normal.

7. MEP reported that necessary measures had been taken to mitigate any possible harmful effects of four industrial chemical leakages thus far identified (Shifang Municipality, Qingchuan County, and Mianzhu city). Meanwhile, MEP and local counterparts reported continued examination of all chemical industry operations to identify potential secondary environmental risks.

8. Nuclear facilities and radioactive sources have been confirmed safe and under control, according to MEP. A total of 50 radioactive sources with potential environmental risks have been identified. Of those, 35 have been recovered and stored by local environmental authorities. The remaining 15 radioactive sources either remain buried in debris or are located in buildings with a high risk of collapse and difficult to reach.

Needs

9. The Government of China is accepting international medical teams and is requesting supplies and medical equipment from the international community (*please refer to OCHA Situation Report #6 for a detailed list*). All medicines, medical equipment and disinfection products, procured either in China or abroad, should be officially registered in China or other countries; detailed information on registration and accreditation requirements will be provided by the Disaster Relief Headquarters of the People's Government of Sichuan Province.

10. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), health priorities are the following: 1) treating the injured; 2) communicable disease surveillance and control; 3) ensuring safe water and food supply; 4) immediate and long-term mental health and psychosocial support; 5) reconstruction of the health care system in affected-areas.

National Response

11. According to the Ministry of Civil Affairs, around 566,400 tents have been delivered to the affected areas, including 3.5 million quilts; 8.34 million items of clothing; 450,000 tons of fuel; and 940,000 tons of coal. As of 26 May, 1,600 temporary homes have been set up in the earthquake-zone and 4,000 temporary homes are under construction. The Government of China has decided that 1.5 million temporary houses will be built for survivors.

12. According to the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator's China Situation Report, the Government of China has turned its primary attention from search and rescue efforts to finding shelter for earthquake survivors. Large 'tent cities' are appearing in affected areas with more than 30,000 people. Sanitation has emerged as a concern in the temporary settlements.

13. 9.4 billion *yuan* (US\$ 1.35 billion) in cash and relief materials have been forwarded to the earthquake-affected areas. The Government of China's Disaster Relief Fund for Earthquake-stricken areas reached 19.2 billion *yuan* (US\$ 2.76 billion) as of 27 May; the fund includes both central and local budgets. Wealthier provinces and cities have been ordered to provide immediate technical and financial aid to their partnered affected communities.

14. The State Council Earthquake Relief Headquarters have established 9 working groups on earthquake relief: 1) Disaster relief and rescue (lead: General Staff HQ); 2) Basic needs of the people (lead: Ministry of Civil Affairs); 3) Earthquake monitoring (lead: Seismological Bureau); 4) Health and epidemic prevention group (lead: Ministry of Health); 5) Public information (lead: Central Propaganda

Department); 6) Production recovery (lead: Ministry of Industry); 7) Infrastructure protection and reconstruction (lead: Development & Reform Commission); 8) Water conservancy (lead: Ministry of Water Resources); and 9) Public Security (Lead: Ministry of Public Security).

15. Ministry of Health (MoH) has deployed a Cell Phone Epidemic Emergency Reporting system to ensure rapid detection and response to potential epidemics as of 22 May. No major epidemic diseases or emergency public health problems have been reported as of 26 May.

International Response

16. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon visited one of the hardest hit towns, Yingxiu, in Wenchuan County on 24 May and met with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao. SG Ban pledged continued support from the UN and expressed condolences to the Chinese people.

17. WHO's China Emergency Response Task Force continues to monitor and respond to health sector needs as communicated by the Ministry of Health, and in coordination with the UN Disaster Management Team (UN DMT). WHO emergency medical supplies (as requested by MoH) are in transit to Chengdu; WHO will also deploy experts to support the reconstruction of the health care system. In collaboration with UNICEF and UNFPA, WHO is preparing a rapid health assessment tool. WHO continues to monitor the environmental and public health impacts of the earthquake and to provide technical guidance on critical health issues as requested.

18. UNICEF's emergency relief shipment containing 100 tons of health (basic medicines and equipment) and nutritional supplies for children and pregnant women is scheduled to arrive on 30 May from the UNICEF global warehouse in Denmark. This shipment will provide support for basic health needs of 1.4 million people over 3 months and special nutritional supplements for 110,000 children under five and 42,000 pregnant women. The shipment is expected to arrive in Chengdu and then will be transported to the 13 worst-hit counties; UNICEF is working with national and local authorities to coordinate the delivery.

19. ILO is working with partners to identify entrepreneurship and livelihood activities as part of rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts. Two ILO officials on crisis reconstruction and economic recovery will be deployed shortly.

20. WFP issued tenders for 473 metric tons of rice, wheat flour, and vegetable oil – the second batch of relief food for the earthquake-affected areas, which will supply 100,000 people with emergency relief rations for a further 3 weeks. Two WFP staff arrived in Mianyang city on 23 May to assist the Red Cross in distributing WFP emergency food rations.

21. UNFPA distributed 4,400 blankets; hygiene kits are being prepared for delivery while requests for reproductive health kits are being processed. A field mission to assess the damage of health facilities is being planned while an UNFPA technical specialist for humanitarian response has been deployed.

22. UNDP's first consignment of 358 tents and 1,500 quilts have been transported to Chengdu and ready for distribution. This is part of the US \$2 million relief package (under the CERF grant).

23. According to OCHA's Financial Tracking System (FTS), a total of US \$175 million in funding (contributions and commitments) have been made, in addition to US \$9 million in pledges from more than 45 donors. Most of these commitments and pledges are cash or in-kind contributions.

Coordination

24. Contact information for the delivery of disaster assistance in China:

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25. UN support to the Government is coordinated by the UN Resident Coordinator and assisted by UN partners and the UN Disaster Management Team. OCHA's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) in Bangkok is liaising closely with the UNDMT and the China Earthquake Administration.

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This Situation Report, together with further information on ongoing emergencies, is also available on ReliefWeb <http://www.reliefweb.int>

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