

China Earthquake Situation Report

August 1, 2008

Overview

China's worst earthquake in more than 30 years devastated Sichuan and eight additional provinces on May 12, 2008, killing 69,146 people and injuring some 374,000. Thousands of aftershocks and heavy rainfall compounded the difficulties for military, government, and private workers trying to deliver aid and ensure people get shelter. More than 17,500 people remain missing and are presumed dead. Some 15,700 people are in critical condition in hospitals. The homes of 1.39 million families were completely destroyed. In July, with the military withdrawing relief efforts from the heaviest hit areas, the national attention has turned toward reconstruction.

JDC Response

Immediately following the earthquake, JDC opened an emergency mailbox to collect funds to assist quake victims. After assessing the most critical unmet needs in the affected areas, JDC is supporting a partnership between The All China Federation of Supply and Marketing Cooperatives (ACFSMC) and the Negev Institute for Strategies of Peace and Development (NISPED) in realizing a reconstruction-focused project. The ACFSMC is a preeminent actor in China's economy, particularly in Sichuan, playing a critical role in areas such as agriculture, fish farming, and dairy production, as well as in the provision of marketing and storage facilities; credit and savings frameworks for agriculture; and health, education, and welfare services. NISPED is an Israeli non-profit association that promotes peace and development, focusing on the centrality of civil society. The Institute serves as a center for education, training, consulting, and project development and has contributed its expertise to reconstruction in post-disaster countries such as Sri Lanka following the Tsunami in December 2004.

The proposed collaboration focuses on applying NISPED's expertise in the management of cooperatives, rural development, and the promotion of entrepreneurship in the process of reconstructing the rural areas of Sichuan devastated by the earthquake. The project will include training 200 Chinese trainers in the fields of agricultural business development and promoting entrepreneurship. The Chinese trainers will then manage an extensive program of business education among the rural communities of Sichuan. In a secondary phase, a series of study missions in Israel will provide the senior management of the ACFSMC and its major stakeholders an opportunity to learn from the Israeli rural development experience, to meet with senior Israeli managers and leaders, and to lay the foundations for future joint ventures of various kinds.