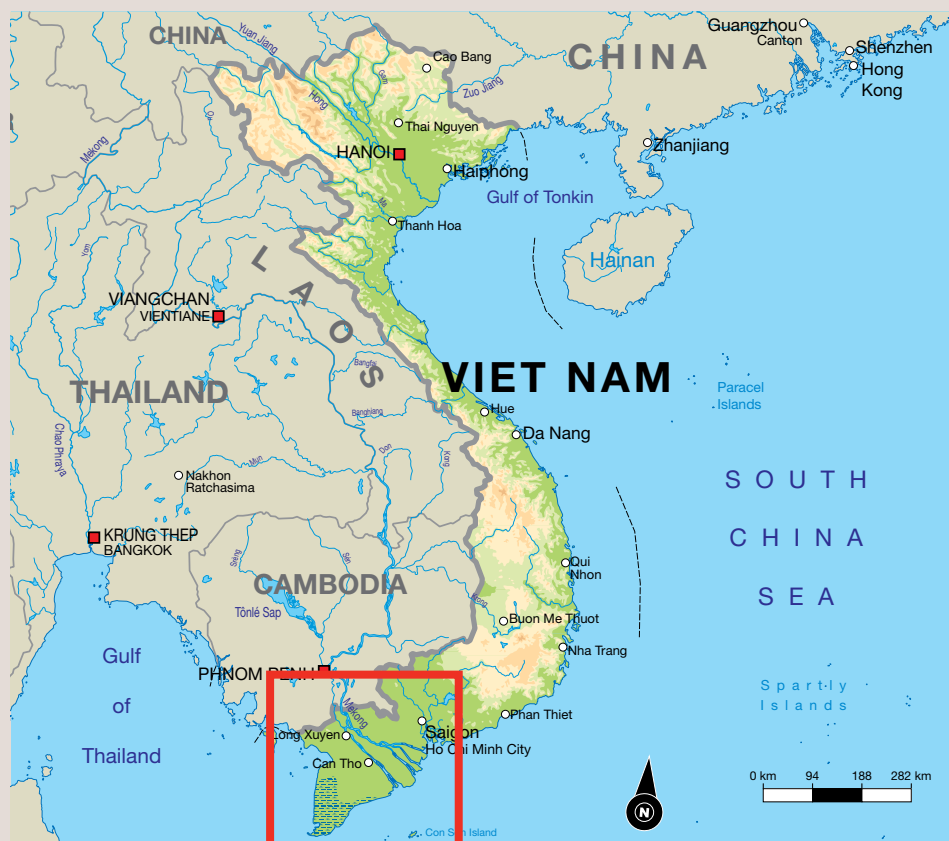


# **Viet Nam Red Cross Society**

## Mekong flood programme 2011–2012

[illegible]

A world map with a grayscale background. The landmasses are outlined in black. The Philippines is highlighted in a solid black color, and it is circled with a red line to draw attention to its location in Southeast Asia.



## Project details

<b>National Society</b>	Viet Nam Red Cross Society
<b>Appeal code</b>	MDRVN009
<b>Objective(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To meet the immediate relief needs of 1,500 households with unconditional cash grants</li> <li>• To meet the immediate food needs of 3,450 households with conditional cash grants</li> </ul>
<b>Duration</b>	October 2011 – October 2012
<b>Location</b>	An Giang, Dong Thap and Long An provinces
<b>Cost</b>	560,593 Swiss francs (CHF) <sup>1</sup> (12,427,226,000 Vietnamese dong (VND))
<b>Main sectors</b>	Emergency relief and food security
<b>Number of households</b>	4,950 households reached in total
<b>Selection criteria</b>	<p>Compulsory criteria (initial pre-selection):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Households severely affected by the flood</li> <li>• Households listed on the government poverty list</li> <li>• Households that have received no assistance to date</li> <li>• Lost food supplies (for conditional grant)</li> <li>• Lost belongings/means of livelihoods (for unconditional grant)</li> </ul> <p>Preferential criteria (post-selection):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social vulnerability criteria (see Household selection)</li> </ul>
<b>Main activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency needs assessment</li> <li>• Selection of households</li> <li>• Cash disbursement</li> <li>• Monitoring and evaluation</li> </ul>
<b>Key outcome(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediate needs of 1,500 households met through unconditional cash grants</li> <li>• Immediate food needs of 3,450 households met through conditional cash grants</li> </ul>
<b>Number of staff involved</b>	Viet Nam Red Cross Society: 77 staff
<b>Other Red Cross Red Crescent Movement involvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical support: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)</li> <li>• Funding: IFRC, French and Spanish Red Cross</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment information used</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency needs assessment by Viet Nam Red Cross Society</li> </ul>

1. Average exchange rate over the project period: CHF 1 = VND 22,168 ([www.oanda.com](http://www.oanda.com))

## Project description

### Context and programme choice

During late September 2011, floods in the Mekong delta swept through the seven provinces of An Giang, Dong Thap, Long An, Can Tho, Vinh Long, Hau Giang and Kien Giang, causing significant loss and damage, especially in the first three provinces. Unlike the typical seasonal floods that Viet Nam faces every year, the Mekong delta experienced slow onset floods inundating large areas for more than three months. Many houses, which normally would have withstood flooding, were damaged or destroyed affecting the daily life of communities and disrupting livelihoods.

In response to the disaster, the Viet Nam Red Cross Society, supported by the IFRC and Participating National Societies, responded to the needs of the most vulnerable by distributing non-food items and providing goods and services in emergency health, water and sanitation and hygiene promotion. As part of its relief activities, the Viet Nam Red Cross Society implemented two cash transfer programmes to support the households in the most affected provinces of An Giang, Dong Thap and Long An.

### Assessment and programme design

The Viet Nam Red Cross Society decided that cash transfers would provide appropriate, effective, flexible and timely assistance to flood affected households. Based on the previous experience, in the relief operation for Typhoon Ketsana as well as specific preparedness activities, the Viet Nam Red Cross Society with support from IFRC, had already devised standard operating procedures and guidelines for the implementation of cash transfer programmes. From these guidelines, an unconditional cash grant was designed to cover immediate needs and a conditional cash grant was designed for food security.

The unconditional cash transfer programme supported 1,500 households in meeting their basic immediate needs such as food and essential household items. The value of the cash grant amounted to the approximate cost of rice consumption for an average family for four to six weeks. The respective amount was estimated to be VND 500,000 (CHF 23) and was the value of the cash grant.



A man provides his signature prior to receiving the conditional cash grant for his family.

The conditional cash transfer programme supported 3,450 households in meeting their immediate food needs. The amount of the cash grant was based on family size. A family of up to three people received VND 240,000 (CHF 11), a family of four to six people received VND 480,000 (CHF 22) and a family of seven or more received VND 720,000 (CHF 33).

The Viet Nam Red Cross Society disbursed the cash transfers for both programmes directly to the households in single instalments using direct cash or cash in envelopes.

### Household selection

Household selection was conditional on a set of compulsory and preferential criteria. To be pre-selected, households had to be severely affected by the floods and appear on the latest official poverty list. In addition, to qualify for the unconditional cash transfer programme they had to have lost belongings and their means of earning a living. To qualify for the conditional cash transfer programme they had to have lost their household's food supplies in the floods.

After the pre-selection process, preference was given to households meeting one or more of the following social vulnerability criteria: female-headed households, pregnant or lactating household members, children under five-years old in the household, or households with dependants (e.g. older persons, persons living with chronic illness).

### Programme implementation

The Viet Nam Red Cross Society led the development of a one-programme approach for all Participating National Societies supporting the emergency response; this included a revision of the cash transfer programme procedures and tools to ensure a standardized response for cash transfers in Viet Nam.

By October 2011, the Viet Nam Red Cross Society successfully disbursed 1,500 unconditional cash grants to the most affected households to address their immediate needs.

In February 2012, the Viet Nam Red Cross Society, in close collaboration with the IFRC,

## Cash-based programming facts

	Relief	Food
Transfer amount per household	VND 500,000 (CHF 23)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One to three family members: VND 240,000 (CHF 11)</li> <li>Four to six family members: VND 480,000 (CHF 22)</li> <li>Seven plus family members: VND 720,000 (CHF 33)</li> </ul>
Modality	Unconditional cash grant	Conditional cash grant
Number of payments	One instalment	
Payment mechanism	Direct transfer (cash in an envelope distributed by the Viet Nam Red Cross Society)	
Method of setting value of cash transfer	Cost of rice for an average family for four to six weeks	
Partners/service providers	Local authorities	
Service provision charges	No service charges	



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successfully disbursed conditional cash grants to 3,450 vulnerable households finalizing its emergency relief and food security cash distributions.

### Programme outcome

An external evaluation of the unconditional cash transfer programme for meeting immediate needs concluded that the intervention allowed households to meet priority needs in a very timely fashion. Although the approach of setting the cash grant was not based on market values, as it was based on Viet Nam Red Cross Society's experience, it did correspond to the cost of rice for a typical family for four to six weeks. A higher amount could have been more beneficial.

The Viet Nam Red Cross Society, supported by the French Red Cross completed the post distribution monitoring of the conditional cash transfer programme intended for affected households to meet food needs. They found that the majority of expenditure was appropriate with a strong emphasis on food expenditure. A further external evaluation mentioned that the conditionality associated with cash transfers was not enforceable and therefore the conditionality may have been of limited value.

In general, both cash grant programmes were judged by the evaluators to be appropriate, cost-effective and timely.

*In September 2011, floods in the Mekong delta swept through seven provinces, causing significant loss and damage.*



## Reflecting on our learning...

The key learning points from this programme for the National Society can be summarized as follows:

1. Inconsistent cash transfer programming approaches (e.g. value of the cash grant) for different projects funded by different donors can cause households and local government officials to challenge and complain to the Viet Nam Red Cross Society.
2. The cash transfer programming approaches of different National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in one country or operation should be consistent. This can only be achieved by using a one-programme approach that is agreed upon at the design stage of a response.
3. The process of setting the value of a cash grant should be clear and accepted by all partners and communicated to all stakeholders and beneficiaries.



A woman receives her cash grant from the Viet Nam Red Cross Society to meet immediate needs.

You can learn a lot through other National Societies. For us in particular, the Bangladesh experience is interesting as they used banking and we have never done this before. In banking, identity cards are checked, you do not need to deliver direct cash and you have clear lists.

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