

DREF operation final report



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Egypt: Ferry Disaster

DREF operation n° MDREG001
2 January 2008

The International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross Red Crescent response to emergencies. The DREF is a vital part of the International Federation's disaster response system and increases the ability of national societies to respond to disasters.

Summary: CHF 50,000 (USD 38,109 or EUR 32,123) was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 3 February 2006 to support the national society in delivering assistance to beneficiaries and to replenish disaster preparedness stocks.

This DREF operation aimed to assist the Egyptian Red Crescent Society (Egyptian RCS) in its efforts to meet the humanitarian needs of the victims of the ferry disaster in the Red Sea. The assistance mainly included provision of psychological support not only to the families of the victims, but also to the survivors. In addition, food and non food items, along with shelter, were provided to the beneficiaries. In total, 2,518 individuals were reached with this operation.

This DREF allocation has not only allowed the Egyptian RCS to enhance the mobilization of its efforts and its volunteers, but also reinforced the good communication and coordination between the headquarters and branches of the National Society.

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The geographical location of the Al-Salam Boccaccio ferry disaster

The situation

The Al-Salam Boccaccio 98 sank in the Red Sea on 3 February 2006 while on its way from Saudi Arabia to the Egyptian port of Safaga. Shortly after the ship's departure, an electrical fire broke out which the crew extinguished with water hoses. According to the investigations, the ferry's drains were blocked, causing an accumulation of water which led to the ferry capsizing. The Egyptian special parliamentary commission investigation found that the ferry's drains had not been inspected by the Maritime Safety Board, and that the fire extinguisher, which could have been used instead of water to put out the electrical fire, was not working. Other safety failings included lifejackets and life rafts that were unfit for use and a shortage of available winches to lower safety rafts.

The ship, reported to be carrying 1,312 passengers, 96 crew members and 220 vehicles, included Egyptians working in Saudi Arabia in addition to pilgrims returning from the Hajj. In total, around 400 people were

rescued. Survivors reported that passengers dived into the water in a desperate attempt to clear paper, plastic bags and other debris from the drains. The 36-year-old vessel was routinely overloaded with passengers and despite being originally licensed in Italy to carry 1,187 people, was permitted to carry up to 2,890 passengers by Egyptian authorities.

Most of those killed were poor workers and peasants who were returning from Saudi Arabia where they were employed as “guest workers,” mostly in the low-paid service and construction industries. With an unemployment rate of more than 20 percent, large numbers of Egyptians are forced to support their families by working in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states.

Hundreds of grieving family members who waited at the Egyptian port for news of their relatives' fate clashed with the police, chanted anti-government slogans and ransacked the offices of the Maritime Transport Company.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action



Volunteers supported the affected people

Immediately a team of 10 Red Crescent volunteers trained in psychological support left the headquarters to join the Red Sea Red Crescent team. They were able to assist the victims and support the Egyptian Red Crescent Society (Egyptian RCS) team that had been present immediately after the breakdown of the disaster.

In the meantime, some 40 volunteers from the National Society's Red Sea and Cairo committees (10 trained in psychological support) were dispatched to the area to assist the families and friends who congregated waiting for news of relatives and survivors. The team erected tents, and provided light meals and beverages for the families. Some members of the team worked for the

assessment of the situation in order to determine the action to be undertaken by the National Society. A 24 hours service was activated in the national headquarters as well as in the Red Sea committee.

Eight volunteers from the national headquarters, and 30 from the Hurghada branch and its sub-branches in Quseir and Safaga, as well as the Red Sea Committee, continued to provide shelter, psychological support, tracing services to the families of the persons who were missing. In total, the Egyptian RCS provided support to 2,518 individuals. In addition, the National Society collaborated with the Ministry of Endowments to establish a special fund for the families of those persons who perished in the tragic event.

A hotline number was also established by the National Society in order to provide information to affected families, and to collect pledges. Staff and volunteers of the Red Crescent conducted a survey among the families who lost their income earners (bread winners) in order to formulate an income-generating project. The plan of action for the post-emergency phase that was developed by the Egyptian RCS in coordination with the North Africa regional office of the International Federation can be summarized as follows:

- Replenishing relief items that were used in the emergency status;
- Providing blankets for the families of victims and for some of the survivors;
- Wrapping remains of bodies;
- Erecting caravan tents in Safaga and Huraga, the place offered by the government for lodging families;
- Providing immediate support (including food, drinks, medical equipments and clothes) to the survivors;
- Providing psychological support to the victims of the families and the survivors.

Conclusion

This disaster has proved the ability of the Egyptian RCS to mobilize its efforts and its volunteers. It has also shown the good communication and coordination between the headquarters of the National Society and its branches all over the country.

The Egyptian RCS is an auxiliary to the government in the humanitarian field and therefore it is important for the National Society to adapt itself to its environment and changes. Learning from its previous experience during the bomb blasts in Dahab, the Egyptian RCS has worked in its utmost to be better prepared to respond to risk and vulnerability, support the vulnerable, and reinforce the Red Sea branch. In addition, the Egyptian RCS has expanded its training courses for the youth and volunteers in disaster management, community based first aid and psychological support in other National Society branches.

How we work

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDREG001 - Egypt - Ferry Disaster

Final Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2006/02-2006/08
Budget Timeframe	2006/02-2006/07
Appeal	MDREG001
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Consolidated Response to Appeal

	Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation	TOTAL
A. Budget		50,000				50,000
B. Opening Balance		0				0
Income						
<u>Reallocations (within appeal or from/to another appeal)</u>						
<i>DREF</i>		50,000				50,000
<i>C3. Reallocations (within appeal or</i>		50,000				50,000
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C6)		50,000				50,000
D. Total Funding = B + C		50,000				50,000

II. Balance of Funds

	Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation	TOTAL
B. Opening Balance		0				0
C. Income		50,000				50,000
E. Expenditure		-50,000				-50,000
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)		0				0

III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation		
A		B					A - B	
BUDGET (C)		50,000					50,000	
Supplies								
Shelter - Relief	10,000		8,389			8,389	1,611	
Clothing & textiles			23,861			23,861	-23,861	
Food	15,500		9,563			9,563	5,937	
Other Supplies & Services			26			26	-26	
Total Supplies	25,500		41,839			41,839	-16,339	
Transport & Storage								
Transport & Vehicle Costs	10,150		2,271			2,271	7,879	
Total Transport & Storage	10,150		2,271			2,271	7,879	
Personnel								
National Society Staff	8,500		23			23	8,477	
Total Personnel	8,500		23			23	8,477	
General Expenditure								
Travel			1,889			1,889	-1,889	
Office Costs	2,600		727			727	1,873	
Communications			0			0	-0	
Total General Expenditure	2,600		2,617			2,617	-17	
Programme Support								
Program Support	3,250		3,250			3,250	0	
Total Programme Support	3,250		3,250			3,250	0	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	50,000		50,000			50,000	-0	
VARIANCE (C - D)			-0				-0	