

DREF operation final report



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Egypt: Palestinian Pilgrims Stranded in Arish

DREF operation n° MDREG006
16 December 2008

The International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the International 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 150,000 (USD 129,650 or EUR 94,975) was allocated from the International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 31 December 2007 to support the Egyptian Red Crescent (Egyptian RC) in delivering assistance to Palestinian pilgrims and to replenish disaster preparedness stocks.

The first instalment of the DREF allocation was used to replenish the basic disaster preparedness stocks (relief items) of the Egyptian RC depleted to cover the immediate needs of the Palestinian pilgrims who were returning from pilgrimage and were stranded for days in the Egyptian Sinai.

On 24 April, an extension of the timeframe of the operation was requested until the end of August 2008 based on the information given by the Egyptian RC and due to the repeated crises on the Egyptian borders.

[<click here for the final financial report, or here to view contact details>](#)



Map of Egypt showing El-Arish

The situation

Palestinian pilgrims returning from pilgrimage arrived in Egypt on 30 December 2007, mostly by ferries and through the Nuweiba port of the Red Sea. The pilgrims had planned to go back home through the Rafah border crossing point, which was the border used on their way to Mecca. Egyptian authorities rerouted the pilgrims through Aouja (border controlled by Israel). Faced to the reluctance of the pilgrims to change their itinerary, Egyptian officials decided to settle the pilgrims into temporary camps outside the Mediterranean city

of El-Arish. At their arrival in El-Arish, the pilgrims refused to leave the buses and requested to go back directly to Gaza.

The first group, 1,600 pilgrims, arrived on 30 December 2007; the second group, 1,200 pilgrims, on 1 January 2008; and additional pilgrims reached El-Arish in early January. Temporary accommodation in youth clubs, camps, stadiums and schools was provided to them by the governorate of North Sinai. During the first days of the incidence, two pilgrims died, bringing the total Palestinian travelers having died in Egypt since the closure of Rafah International Crossing Point to 24, including 10 women and a child (source: Palestinian Centre for Human Rights)

On 30 December, the International Federation, together with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Office in Cairo, were contacted by the Egyptian RC to discuss possible support and assistance. The International Federation's regional representation in Tunis, in contact with the Middle East/North Africa Zone office, submitted a DREF request to support this operation. An allocation of CHF 150,000 was granted.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The strong coordination between the Egyptian RC branches and headquarters, in addition to the quick deployment of volunteers and relief materials, has once more demonstrated the efficiency of the National Society and its reliability as a partner. The good knowledge of the emergency mechanism (DREF), the effective coordination within the Movement actors (rapid communication with ICRC and the International Federation), has allowed a quick response to the crisis. Thanks to the allocation of the DREF, the Egyptian RC was in a position to cover immediate needs and to discuss its role in this operation with the national authorities. This has resulted in a short but responsive operation, respecting initial plans in covering the emergency needs identified for the pilgrims. The Egyptian RC volunteers' assistance in the distribution of relief items as well as the provision of psychological support has been greatly appreciated by the beneficiaries.

After the emergency situation, the Egyptian RC requested an extension of the timeframe of the DREF operation until the end of August in order to be able to use the remaining funds to strengthen El-Arish branches' capacity through renovating the existing warehouse and procuring basic relief supplies, as well as training National Society staff and volunteers in disaster management.

Progress towards objectives

The first installment was used for the immediate action and to establish a list of the most vulnerable people. The deployed teams, with the assistance of other involved parties such as the local authorities, have been able to rapidly reach all the pilgrims, record their needs and organize the humanitarian assistance. Building on previous experiences, the Egyptian RC has developed standard emergency tools and systems, and trained their volunteers on them in order to be immediately operational (rapid needs assessment, registration of beneficiaries, stock management, etc.).

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Objective: Meals, 1,500 mattresses and 1,500 pillows are distributed to the beneficiaries, according to the assessment and selection criteria that identified actual needs.

Activities planned at headquarters (relief and logistics department) and branch level (South and North Sinai branches):

- Monitor the existing situation and conduct rapid emergency needs and capacity assessments;
- Develop beneficiary registration system to deliver intended assistance;
- Distribute relief supplies and control supply movements from point of dispatch to end user;
- Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions.

The following items were distributed to the target beneficiaries:

- 3,000 blankets for 750 families;
- 830 mattresses
- 500 pillows;
- Food parcels (canned meat, fresh fruit, sugar, milk, water, cheese, juice, canned fruit, and bread);
- 2,500 meals.

During the assessment phase, the National Society volunteers recorded all the data regarding the affected persons and their specific needs. Thanks to the collected data, the Egyptian RC clearly outlined its plan of relief items' distribution and the beneficiaries. Since the data was precise and accurate, it was easy for the Egyptian RC to schedule the distribution.

During the first days of distribution, the National Society used its own stock and the relief items were transported from the warehouse of the central committee in Cairo to the Sinai region. The stock sent was already packed and ready to be distributed. Meanwhile, the National Society contacted its suppliers and purchased the quantities to complete the relief items distribution. The main quantity of food (including meals) was regionally purchased from the two main sites in North and South Sinai (Nuweiba and El-Arish).

A special committee composed of representatives from the Egyptian RC headquarters, from North Sinai branch and the governorate, including the secretariat of the governor and departments of health and solidarity, was established to assure the distribution of the food parcels.

The mattresses, blankets and pillows were used to replenish the emergency relief stock of the National Society, as it has used its own stock to cover the immediate needs of the pilgrims.

The local authorities offered a location known by all the population and easily accessible for most of the victims. The most vulnerable have benefited from the visit of the National Society volunteers who transported the relief items to them.

Warehousing

Objective: El-Arish warehouse is renovated.



El-Arish warehouse during the renovation

The renovation of the warehouse has provided a modernized and secure strategic place where the Egyptian RC could stock relief items in order to respond to any emergency situation that could happen in the North Sinai region. This will allow to improve the pace of activities of the Egyptian RC during future emergencies since the relief items were used to be shipped by road from Cairo (more than 300 Km).

After the timeframe extension and the finalization of the renovation of the warehouse, the following items were purchased to replenish the National Society stocks:

- 1,000 cover sheets;
- 1,000 covers for pillows;
- 30 tents

Volunteers development

Objective: Volunteers of El-Arish branch (North Sinai) are trained in disaster management and their skills are developed.

During 12-14 August 2008, a team of 21 first aid volunteers from the North Sinai branch, who were deployed during this operation, attended a workshop on disaster management. The facilitators were from the Egyptian RC headquarters.

Conclusion

The most important result of this operation is that an important quantity of relief items has been distributed to more than 2,600 people. The emergency operation was conducted immediately after and has been very helpful during a time when the local authorities were in shortage of support. Relief items were in accordance with the needs of the beneficiaries, the distribution was conducted in better conditions, and the items reached all the identified beneficiaries without delay.

It was not the first time that the Egyptian RC faced such an emergency situation and as it has been the case in the previous emergencies (please refer to DREF operations related to Egypt on www.ifrc.org), the coordination between the National Society and the local authorities was successful.

Although this was an emergency situation, it had a positive side where the community and the National Society came together as one and showed a dedication and devotion to help relieve the situation as well as provide the pilgrims – most of them being elderly – with psycho-social support.

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:

- In Egypt: Prof Dr. Mamdouh Gabr, Secretary General, Egyptian Red Crescent Society, Cairo; phone: +20 22 6703979; fax: +20 22 6703967; email: erc@egyptianrc.org
- In Tunisia: Anne Elisabeth Leclerc, Head of Regional Representation, North Africa Regional Representation, Tunis; phone: + 216 71 862485; fax: + 216 71 862971; email: ae.leclerc@ifrc.org
- In Jordan: Eduard Tschan, Deputy Head, Middle East and North Africa Zone, Amman (temporary); phone: +962 79 5042922; email: eduard.tschan@ifrc.org
- In Geneva: Pablo Medina, Operations Coordinator, Operations Coordination Team; phone: +41 22 730 4381; fax: +41 22 730 0395; email: pablo.medina@ifrc.org

[<Final financial report below; click here to return to the title page>](#)

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDREG006 - Egypt: Palestinian Pilgrims Arish

Final Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2007/12-2008/09
Budget Timeframe	2008/01-2008/08
Appeal	MDREG006
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Consolidated Response to Appeal

	Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
A. Budget	150,000					150,000
B. Opening Balance	0					0
Income						
<u>Other Income</u>						
Voluntary Income	150,000					150,000
C5. Other Income	150,000					150,000
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C5)	150,000					150,000
D. Total Funding = B + C	150,000					150,000
Appeal Coverage	100%					100%

II. Balance of Funds

	Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
B. Opening Balance	0					0
C. Income	150,000					150,000
E. Expenditure	-150,000					-150,000
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)	0					0

III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination		
A		B					A - B	
BUDGET (C)	150,000					150,000		
Supplies								
Shelter - Relief		14,353				14,353	-14,353	
Construction Materials	45,000	57,269				57,269	-12,269	
Clothing & textiles	51,798	33,593				33,593	18,205	
Food	25,702	25,702				25,702	0	
Total Supplies	122,500	130,918				130,918	-8,418	
Personnel								
National Staff	1,000	1,000				1,000	0	
Total Personnel	1,000	1,000				1,000	0	
Workshops & Training								
Workshops & Training	15,000	5,461				5,461	9,539	
Total Workshops & Training	15,000	5,461				5,461	9,539	
General Expenditure								
Travel		2,337				2,337	-2,337	
Office Costs	1,250						1,250	
Financial Charges	500	534				534	-34	
Total General Expenditure	1,750	2,871				2,871	-1,121	
Programme Support								
Program Support	9,750	9,750				9,750	0	
Total Programme Support	9,750	9,750				9,750	0	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	150,000	150,000				150,000	0	
VARIANCE (C - D)		0				0		