



EGYPT: FERRY DISASTER

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The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

In Brief

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THIS DREF BULLETIN, UPDATE NO. 1, IS BEING ISSUED BASED ON THE SITUATION DESCRIBED BELOW, REFLECTING THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME. CHF 50,000 (USD 38,109 OR EUR 32,123) WAS ALLOCATED FROM THE FEDERATION'S DISASTER RELIEF EMERGENCY FUND (DREF) TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE FOR 2 MONTHS.

UN earmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

For information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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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.

For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

The situation



An Egyptian ferry reportedly carrying approximately 1,414 persons, including women and children, sank on Friday, 3 February in the Red Sea, 40 miles off the Egyptian port of Hurghada (see map at left). An alarm was raised when the vessel disappeared from radar screens at 19:00 local time, shortly after it began its journey from the Saudi port of Dubah en route to the Egyptian port of Safaga, with a scheduled arrival of 03:00 Egyptian time. Apparently, no SOS signal was sent by the ship, though enquiries are underway to determine the sequence of events. According to an Egyptian cabinet spokesman, 387 survivors

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have been rescued, with some 135 bodies recovered so far. Hundreds remains missing and are feared dead. The cause of the tragedy remains unclear, but the ship's crew reportedly tried to respond to a fire that broke out in the ship's car deck, but in the process provoking flooding that overwhelmed the ship. According to reports, approximately 1,200 Egyptians, 99 Saudis, 3 Syrians, 2 Sudanese, and a Canadian were on board the ship.

Family members of those missing have been congregating outside the port of Safaga since Friday, with reports of rioting due to frustration over the lack of information about relatives and friends, many of whom were lower income Egyptians who were working in Saudi Arabia and other countries in the Middle East. The loss of lives also means a loss of income for hundreds of families in southern Egypt; and this could lead to additional suffering for already bereaved communities, despite the government's offer of approximately USD 5,200 for the families of the victims. USD 2,600 is also offered by the authorities to each survivor.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Egyptian Red Crescent Hurghada branch, and its sub-branches in Quseir and Safaga, as well as the Red Sea Committee, supported by the national headquarters, continued to provide support in the form of shelter, water, snacks, and blankets to the families of those missing since the disaster. These activities are being supported by some 40 experienced Egyptian Red Crescent volunteers, including youth members. Ten trained psychological support specialists have also been offering well-needed services. In addition, the national society's staff and volunteers visited the survivors in the Hurghada and Safaga hospital, providing appropriate personal items and gifts. A 24-hour service continues to be operated in both the national headquarters and the Red Sea committee.

Coordination

The Egyptian Red Crescent continues to complement the efforts of the authorities, including the local governorate, the Army, the Ministries of Interior, Health, Social Solidarity, and Defense.

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