

DREF operation



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Egypt: Gaza humanitarian crisis

DREF operation n° MDREG008
CE-2009-000002-EGY
10 January 2009

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 and 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.

CHF 346,524 (USD 310,244 or EUR 230,970) has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to deliver basic relief items to meet the needs for 100 families¹ in the form of food and non food relief, and emergency shelter, and to support the Egyptian Red Crescent Society (ERCS) response and preparedness activities related to the crisis in Gaza.

[<click here for contact details, or here for the budget>](#)

The ERCS, supported by the International Federation, is preparing teams, structures and relief stocks for potential population movements, reinforcing its set-up to respond to a large humanitarian crisis. Un-earmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

Summary: The Israeli Government, pursuing their stated aim to cease the launch of missiles and rockets from Gaza into southern Israeli towns, has initiated a series of military operations, including ground advances into Gaza on 3 January 2009. On 7 January 2009, the Palestinian city of Rafah experienced heavy bombardment.

Fourteen days of hostilities have resulted in a dire humanitarian situation in Gaza, placing at risk the lives and welfare of some 1.5 million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. The UN reports more than 800 deaths and over 3,300, injured, many severely. There has been a disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable (it is estimated that roughly 20 percent of the fatalities and 40 percent of the injuries are women and children). The numbers of affected are expected to rise as the military actions continue.

Concerns over the evolving humanitarian situation continues to mount. The International Federation is working to support the ERCS to update contingency plans in order to respond with vital protection and assistance as needed. The Federation is fully supporting all members of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to urgently meet current and forthcoming humanitarian needs. For the Federation, support to the ERCS is a particular priority, concentrating on the Rafah Crossing Point to facilitate the entry of medical supplies as well as the transport of seriously wounded people from Gaza to Egypt for proper medical treatment. The ERCS, supported by the Federation, is preparing for possible cross border population movements of civilians in search of safety and assistance. In anticipation of an eventual truce or ceasefire to hostilities, the Federation's support to the ERCS is also designed to make full use of 'humanitarian space' that will allow the unhindered entry of humanitarian assistance into Gaza from Egypt. The humanitarian needs in Gaza are immense, and particularly effective coordination efforts will be needed to deliver the significant amounts of basic food and non-food assistance to meet the needs.

¹ One family is defined as 8 members

This operation is expected to be implemented over 1 month (although the situation remains volatile at time of writing), and will therefore be completed by February 2009; a Final Report will be made available by 30 May 2009 (three months after the end of the operation).

The situation

On 27 December, 2008, Israel initiated air strikes in the Gaza Strip, culminating in ground operations into Gaza on 3 January 2009 and the bombing of Rafah's border on 7 January 2009. On 9 January 2009, in response to reported attacks on humanitarian sites and vehicles, UN agencies suspended their activities in Gaza. According to the ICRC, the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS), and UN agencies, the humanitarian efforts in Gaza are seriously compromised due to the deteriorating security situation and security breaches. The situation in the hospitals continues to be dire, with basic medical supplies critically limited. The ongoing insecurity increases the potential for large-scale population movements. In addition to the lack of basic supplies and food, most towns are without electric power, and water is an increasing issue of concern.

Coordination and partnerships

In Gaza, the ICRC, in partnership with the PRCS, is assuming the lead agency function for the Movement. The International Federation supports the ERCS in their response efforts, including updated contingency planning. Further coordination mechanisms are in place in Jordan between the ICRC, the Federation, and respective operating National Societies.

In Egypt, the Federation ensures a coordination and support service where required and supports the ERCS as the main conduit for all assistance destined for Gaza through Al-Areesh and Rafah from other Red Cross Red Crescent Societies. The Federation also supports the ERCS as the auxiliary to Egypt's public authorities in the humanitarian field. The operations currently underway on the Egyptian side of the Gaza border are expected to be scaled-up with the full support of the Federation and numerous member societies who are currently dispatching much-needed assistance destined for the civilian population and medical facilities of Gaza.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Collectively the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, through the Federation, the ICRC and partner Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, are working hard to mount an effective, timely, and appropriate response to the humanitarian crisis.

Activities conducted by the ERCS: The ERCS has mobilized its volunteers and staff to provide immediate humanitarian assistance, working in close coordination with the Egyptian authorities. The ERCS has assisted in transporting more than one hundred injured people to medical facilities and treatment in Egypt. Many more are expected to need medical care. The ERCS remains in close contact with the authorities in terms of supporting the transportation of relief items and medical equipment, as well as with the PRCS President and other National Societies.

The ERCS has received indications of further in-kind support from other partner National Societies (Saudi, Turkish, Kuwaiti, Qatar, Sudan, Syrian, Russian, and Iranian), and others have expressed interest in supporting the humanitarian response through cash contributions (a number of partner National Societies have launched fundraising campaigns in their respective countries).

The ERCS is coordinating the storage of the donations received with the local authorities. Several governmental warehouses and related logistic capacities are put at the ERCS's disposal to receive extra donations in El-Arish and Rafah. The ERCS is the only organization that works with the local authorities in dispatching goods, medical equipment, drugs and relief material into Gaza through the different cross border points. The ERCS has facilitated the entry of hundreds of metric tons of relief and medical items into Gaza.

Teams of ERCS youth volunteers from the El-Arish North Sinai Red Crescent branch who have been trained on relief operations and psychological support are divided into three groups: one group for loading and unloading the trucks at the border; the second group for visiting the wounded people in hospitals; and the third group for providing psychological support for the relatives.

Mobilization of assistance and support from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) National Societies: Several National Societies of the MENA region have benefited from the logistic facilities of their Governments to convey their donations at the border point of El Arish. Saudi RC, Qatari RC and Turkish RC sent their teams in Cairo and El Arish to support ERCS through procurement of relief items to be transported into Gaza and are in contact with the Ministry of Health for medical evacuation of wounded Palestinians. Qatari RC is also initiating a Psycho-Social support programme.

Federation support: The Federation ensures coordination and support services where required and supports the ERCS as the main conduit for all assistance destined for Gaza through El-Arish and Rafah from other Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. It also supports the ERCS as the auxiliary to Egypt's public authorities in the humanitarian field. The Federation team was reinforced with the arrival of the North Africa regional representative, joined by a Norwegian Red Cross delegate who will be specifically tasked to support the ERCS in the mobilization plan and updating the ERCS contingency plan.

ICRC support: The ICRC has the lead agency role for coordinating with all parties to ensure that the humanitarian needs are met and that International Humanitarian Law (IHL) is respected in conflict situations, presently in and around Gaza. It is responsible for coordinating safe passage for humanitarian teams in Gaza. In Egypt, the ICRC delegation was reinforced by two additional staff (North Africa cooperation delegate and a logistician). An assessment was conducted in El-Arish. Together with the Federation, the ICRC Delegation is participating in the finalization of the contingency plan and contributes to an effective coordination plan for the Movement mobilization effort. This coordination, as well as an appropriate information mechanism, is crucial for the sake of an efficient response to the needs of affected population.

The needs

The ERCS plays a critical role as a partner with the Government and local authorities. It is vital that the ERCS is supported in its humanitarian assistance effort to deliver relief and medical items and supplies to Gaza. The ERCS is working and coordinating very closely with the PRCS. ERCS contingency plans are also based on a possible influx of people from Gaza into Egypt.

This DREF allocation will support the ERCS in the three following areas:

- § Assisting the ERCS's logistic and operational set-up (headquarters, and the El-Arish and Rafah branches), and relief team management.
- § Support the ERCS coordination effort within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement as well as its other partners to respond to the humanitarian needs identified in Gaza.
- § Support ERCS preparedness and organizational readiness in case of a large-scale population movement from Gaza (pre-positioning of relief stocks, reinforcement of 3 operational rooms, volunteers and staff management).

Beneficiary selection: ERCS activities to date have been focused on the transport of relief and medical material to be transferred to Gaza and the provision of psycho-social support to the wounded Palestinians evacuated to the Egyptian hospitals. The Egyptian Ministry of Health (MoH) is responsible for the medical evacuation of injured/wounded Palestinians.

National Society Capacity:

ERCS history and background: the ERCS is responsible for the provision of humanitarian care and assistance for vulnerable population and for people affected by natural and man-made disasters. The ERCS is the main organisation that assists the public authorities in disaster preparedness and response. The ERCS promotes and disseminates international humanitarian law and values in accordance with the Geneva Conventions. The ERCS enjoys good coordination and cooperation levels with the various Egyptian authorities, and enjoys credibility and respect among the general public.

Legal base: The ERCS was founded in 1912. It was recognized by the ICRC in 1924 and admitted into the League (now the International Federation) in 1929. The Society was registered again under a presidential decree in 1967.

Constituency: The Society operates through 27 branches (one in each governorate). Every branch is registered at the governorate administration and has its own general assembly. Average membership of the branches is approximately 5,000. In most branches, the percentage of women exceeds that of men. Volunteers of the headquarters and branches exceed 20,000.

Leadership: The General Assembly is composed of elected members from each of the ERCS's 27 branches, and meets once every year. The main governing body is the Board. The President of the Board is appointed by a presidential decree. The Board elects among its members the Secretary General and the Treasurer, and appoints a Director General who runs the daily managerial affairs and is accountable to the elected Secretary General.

Human resources: At headquarters level, there are eight administrative divisions: advocacy and public relations; external relations; disaster management; health care; youth affairs; financial; administration; and monitoring and evaluation. Personnel at headquarters level exceed 60, including 15 professional workers, 25 administrative employees and 20 drivers and aids; in addition to 50 staff working at headquarters youth clubs and blood banks.

The proposed operation

Pre-positioning of relief stocks (food and basic non-food items)

Objective: Relief items are available in anticipation of a possible large-scale influx of people from Gaza seeking safety, shelter, and assistance.

Activities planned at ERCS headquarters (relief and logistics department) and at branch levels (El-Arish and Rafah branches):

- Procurement and pre-positioning (for 100 families, 8 persons per family) of blankets, mattresses, clothing, tarpaulins, family tents, kitchen sets, jerry cans, hygiene kits, and a minibus for the transport of volunteers.
- Monitor the existing situation and conduct rapid emergency needs and capacity assessments.
- Support the authorities in beneficiary registration and delivery of assistance.
- Distribute relief supplies to beneficiaries.
- Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions.

Psychological support and restoring family links

Objective: Psycho-social support is provided to affected families and ERCS capacities in Restoring Family Links (RFL) are enhanced.

Activities planned:

- Establish a psycho-social support cell in the temporary camp in order to provide the necessary support to the affected people, to their families and to help them recover from the tragedy.
- Reinforce the ERCS RFL capacity, with the support of ICRC.
- Procure telecoms hardware.
- Conduct refresher training as required.

Logistics

Objective: Operational objectives are supported in procuring and delivering a range of relief items in line with operational priorities.

Activities planned:

- Assess and reinforce the ERCS's local logistics capacity increasing the coordinated mobilization of relief goods including reception of all incoming goods; warehousing and efficient dispatch of goods to the final distribution points. The Federation will also work with the ERCS to support and build logistics capacity through logistic and relief workshops.
- Support the ERCS in establishing a resource mobilization table and relief system with the support of the Federation's Dubai-based Logistics Service Centre.

- Conduct rapid refresher on logistics methods and standards.
- Establish/reinforce the operation room in the ERCS headquarters, and the El-Arish and Rafah branches, increasing staff capacity and performance, and strengthening the communication skills.
- Liaise and coordinate actions with the local authorities and other key actors.

The Federation will be working on mobilizing specific relief items to respond to needs in the field and donors are urged to coordinate with the ERCS and the Federation's Regional Office for North Africa regarding specific and outstanding needs.

Communications – Advocacy and Public information

Adequate visibility for donors and the Federation will be ensured, including maintaining a high profile in national media, when possible. Photographs highlighting the contribution of donors will be taken throughout the relief operations and made available to donors upon completion. The ERCS will produce regular updates, interim progress report to the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, National Societies, as well as local diplomatic missions, government ministries, UN agencies, NGO's and ERCS branches.

The ERCS, through their headquarters emergency cell and within its branches, is maintaining a steady flow of timely and accurate information between the field and other major stakeholders. These regular updates are provided and communicated to the Federation, which is vital for fundraising, advocacy and maintaining the profile of emergency operations.

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 Gabr, Secretary General, Egyptian Red Crescent Society, Phone: ++20 22 6703979; fax: +20 22 6703967; email: erc@egyptianrc.org
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DREF OPERATION BUDGET SUMMARY

Annex I

Egypt: Gaza Humanitarian crisis

MDREG008

BUDGET CHF

RELIEF NEEDS

Shelter	57,100
Construction Materials	
Clothing & Textiles	36,200
Food	33,600
Seeds & Plants	
Water & Sanitation	5,000
Medical & First Aid	3,500
Teaching Materials	
Utensils & Tools	3,600
Other Supplies & Services	25,000
Total Relief Needs	164,000

CAPITAL EQUIPMENT

Land & Buildings	
Vehicles Purchase	
Computers & Telecom Equipment	15,000
Office/Household Furniture & Equip.	15,000
Medical Equipment	
Other Machinery & Equipment	

TRANSPORT, STORAGE & VEHICLES

Storage - Warehouse	20,000
Distribution & Monitoring	
Transport & Vehicles Costs	60,000

PERSONNEL

International Staff	
Regionally Deployed Staff	
National Staff	7,000
National Society Staff	18,000
Consultants	

WORKSHOPS & TRAINING

Workshops & Training	5,000
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GENERAL EXPENSES

Travel	10,000
Information & Public Relations	
Office running costs	
Communication Costs	
Professional Fees	
Financial Charges	
Other General Expenses	10,000

SERVICE FEES

Service Fees

PROGRAMME SUPPORT

Programme Support - PSR	22,524
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Total Operational Needs**182,524****DREF ALLOCATION****346,524**