

Ongoing Charity Waqf

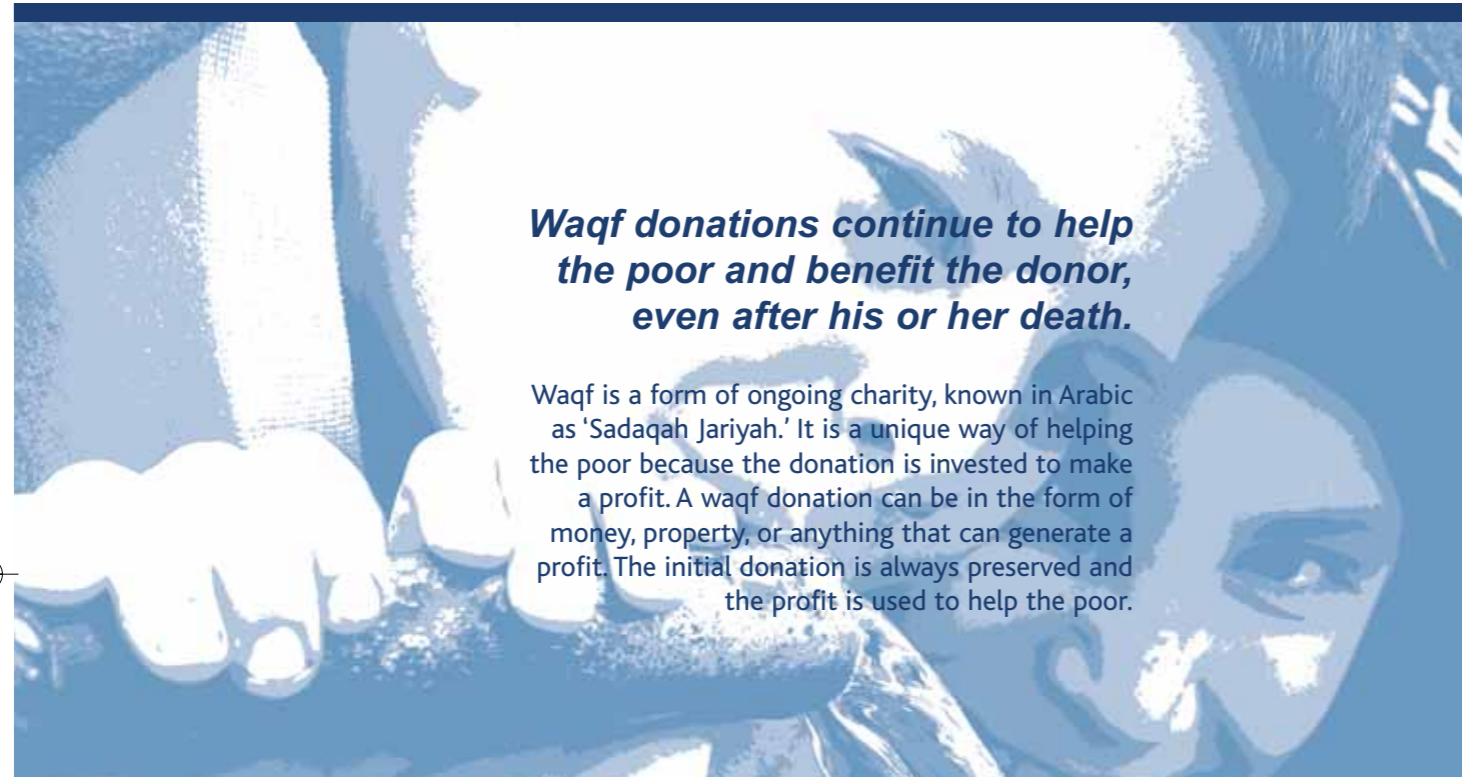


The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:
"When a person dies, all their actions come to an end except three: ongoing charity, knowledge from which people continue to benefit and righteous offspring who pray for them."



partnership

with the needy



Waqf donations continue to help the poor and benefit the donor, even after his or her death.

Waqf is a form of ongoing charity, known in Arabic as 'Sadaqah Jariyah.' It is a unique way of helping the poor because the donation is invested to make a profit. A waqf donation can be in the form of money, property, or anything that can generate a profit. The initial donation is always preserved and the profit is used to help the poor.

Razia's story

Fifteen-year-old Razia from Dhaka, Bangladesh, could not afford to go to school. When it came to looking for a job, she found she had no suitable skills.

Razia started attending the Vocational Training and Employment Support centre run by Islamic Relief and funded by Waqf donations. She received training that gave her the skills to get a job. Razia now runs a successful business making signboards and banners and is grateful for being given the opportunity to earn a living for herself and her family.



Islamic Relief uses Waqf donations to help some of the world's poorest people. Projects funded by Waqf include supporting orphans, distributing Qurbani meat, providing emergency relief, education, water, sanitation and health facilities.

To find out more about Waqf, visit:

www.islamic-relief.com/waqf



Tsunami

life goes on



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In the name of God, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate

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"It was as if the water, in an unimaginable rage, had washed away people's lives and wiped out their history. It washed away houses and carried sea vessels from the ocean and deposited them on top of buildings and bridges. It carried tractors, coaches and all types of vehicles into the middle of rice fields. It reduced massive concrete structures and multi-storey buildings to rubble. And it carried dead bodies and scattered them everywhere.

I have seen the effects of war in Bosnia, Kosova Chechnya, Iraq, Palestine and Afghanistan, but I have seen nothing like this. I visited a village 20km from Banda Aceh where volunteers were retrieving bodies from the wreckage.

As I walked around I could smell death beneath my feet.

Volunteers were pulling out the corpse of a woman whose body had become green from gangrene. Another body, that of a young boy, was hanging upside down. His hair was stiffened by congealed fluids; his face, arms, and neck had turned black.

The tsunami traumatised people and many were in a state of hysteria. I cannot imagine how terrified they must have been when the second earthquake took place, killing yet more people and devastating more lives. I tried to reassure some of the people I met but they wouldn't believe me. It was as if they had witnessed Doomsday".

Dr Hany El Banna

Tsunami



Images Of The Tsunami

Indonesia

On a recent visit to Banda Aceh, Indonesia, where Islamic Relief has been working since 2000, we captured images that show the devastating impact of the tsunami and how despite the scale of the tragedy, life goes on.

On 26th December 2004, the biggest earthquake the world has seen in 40 years, measuring 9.0 on the Richter scale, caused massive tsunami waves in south-east Asia. It caused devastation in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and a number of other countries, claiming over 273,000 lives and leaving hundreds of thousands of people homeless. Islamic Relief has been part of the global relief effort throughout the emergency phase of the disaster. It is now helping people in both countries to rebuild their lives.



This picturesque area of Banda Aceh is located just where the flooding stopped. It managed to survive the destruction caused by the tsunami and is a reminder of how lush and developed the entire area once was.



Muhajir shares his story with Mohammed Saif (right) as he looks over the sea where the 30 metre high waves struck. He clung onto the trees but the force of the waves kept washing him away and throwing him against the mountains.

Severely wounded, he eventually stumbled to safety. Walking through the piles of dead bodies he noticed a pregnant woman who was still alive. He carried her to a safe place and then returned to his home village to find it had been completely destroyed.

Many of the people affected by the tsunami were dependent on the fishing industry. Now that has all been lost and most do not even have wood with which to reconstruct boats. Islamic Relief will support many of these people through its Sustainable Livelihoods programme.



A lone sandal hangs from the branch of a tree. Its wearer may have survived, or been one of the 273,000 who perished in the disaster.



A huge generator ship was carried by the waves and brought 5 kilometres inland. It was placed perfectly in-between buildings and houses, causing no damage or destruction. It has now become something of a spectacle that people marvel at.



The tsunami left much of the drinking water in the region contaminated, adding to the risk of disease. Islamic Relief has provided clean water to tens of thousands of people through its water projects.

Authors Mohammed Saif & Mohammed Afsar

Images Of The Tsunami

Indonesia

Pages of the Quran, the Islamic holy book, are caught between branches. The verses read: "So we said: "Strike the (body) with a piece of the (heifer)." Thus Allah bringeth the dead to life and showeth you His Signs: perchance ye may understand" [1:73].



Islamic Relief sponsored a project that encouraged children to express their experience of the tsunami through drawings. The therapeutic process helped them articulate their feelings and overcome some of their trauma. The work was displayed in the local museum and will also be exhibited in Europe and America.

Islamic Relief is building 5 Health Clinics in Banda Aceh. In the immediate aftermath of the tsunami, hygiene kits were distributed to prevent the spread of disease. Now construction is underway to ensure the long-term medical needs of the people are met.



Life Goes On

People are trying hard to get on with their lives and wherever possible children are attending school. Islamic Relief will provide education for children living in camps and rehabilitate destroyed and damaged schools.

Nola's Story

Indonesia



Orphaned by the Tsunami

Seven-year-old Nola used to live with her mother, father and two younger sisters in Banda Aceh, Indonesia. On Sunday 26th December, the tsunami struck and Nola lost her entire family. She now lives in a camp for homeless people with her grandmother - and thousands of others.

Nola was watching television with her family when a great earthquake shook their home. They ran out of the house in panic but the earthquake passed without damage and the family returned inside. Then, ten minutes later, cries of "water is coming!" filled the streets and a vast wall of water surged through their house. Nola's mother held onto her tightly, struggling to keep her grip against the force of the waves. But the force was too great and Nola was taken from her mother's arms.

Nola managed to survive by clinging onto a piece of driftwood but her mother and the rest of her family died in the disaster. Nola was rescued by a stranger and now lives with her grandmother in one of the camps set up for people who lost their homes in Banda Aceh. "My grandmother is very old, but I help her with the cleaning and I fetch water from the Islamic Relief tanks," she said.

Nola attends school in the mornings and then visits the graveyard with her grandmother to pray for her family. In the afternoon she goes to the mosque to learn the Qur'an. When asked about her life in the camp Nola answers bravely, "I like it here; I have lots of new friends and a good teacher too. I want to be a doctor, and my teacher says I am very clever."

There are an estimated **400,000** people living in camps who, like Nola, lost everything in the disaster. Islamic Relief is helping them with food, water and sanitation, and is planning to rehabilitate schools in Aceh.

For further information on sponsoring an orphan visit www.alyateem.com

The Aftermath

Sri Lanka

What I saw in Sri Lanka

I am in the village of Marathumanai, one of the smallest on the east coast of Sri Lanka. Here in the Ampara district, 3,000 of the 21,000 inhabitants were swept away by the giant tsunami on the morning of 26th December 2004.

It is a few weeks on and people here are still sifting through the remains of their destroyed homes. The debris occasionally offers up possessions like mangled bicycles or mementoes of what seem to be a different life. But all too often it yields up the decomposing remains of those who were not quick enough to escape the deluge.

The acrid smell of death alerts rescue workers that there is a body nearby. Local volunteers prepare themselves for the grim task by donning latex gloves and makeshift masks. They work efficiently but with great delicacy. As they excavate, they find the decapitated remains of a woman. By chance they see something else close by. Closer inspection reveals the remains of a child, no older than a year old.



In the Ampara district, 3,000 of the 21,000 inhabitants were swept away

I see one of the relief workers break down and weep, sitting amidst the debris and sobbing uncontrollably. Someone tells me that he has yet to recover the remains of his wife and child. He imagines that this is how they will be found if they ever are. "We carry bodies away every day," the volunteer tells me, "but those young bodies are the heaviest burden."

In all the villages I visited along this 25 mile coastal stretch I noticed how few children there were. Parents told me stories of how they tried to hold on to their sons and daughters, but were forced to let go when the waves crashed into them.

"I could not hold on to him," cries one grieving father. "I should not be alive. What kind of father am I that I live while my child lies buried somewhere under all of this?" He makes a sweeping gesture towards the remains of his village and then turns away and starts digging with his hands through the layer of sand that covers his former home.

Islamic Relief has been delivering essential supplies of emergency kits including mosquito nets for babies, hygiene kits and clothes.

Food packs have also been distributed to recently widowed women who seclude themselves from the outside world, in keeping with Islamic tradition.



Elderly people also are a rare sight. Many were unable to run fast enough and were either swept away or crushed in their beds. Entire generations were lost.

Imdad, a young rescue worker, tells me of a courageous primary school teacher who tried to get his 40 charges to safety by helping them on to the roof of their school. The wave claimed the lives of all the children. When the teacher was found he was clutching a child under each arm, unwilling to relinquish his responsibility to the children even when his own life was at stake.

Desperate relatives still travel from as far away as Colombo in search of news of their loved ones. They sift through the wreckage and ask everybody they meet if they know anything. They then make their way to the schools and municipal buildings which serve as refugee camps to many of the nearly 200,000 homeless people of Ampara. Invariably their desperate pilgrimage ends at where thousands are buried in shallow graves near the local mosque. There, all that is left for grieving families is to weep and remember loved ones whose unmarked graves will haunt these communities for generations to come.

Adeel Jafferri



Six-year old Abdul Aziz was lucky to survive the tsunami. His mother had to choose between rescuing him or his younger brother, she lifted Abdul Aziz onto a safe platform and was washed away by the waves, holding her youngest son in her arms.

Abdul Aziz witnessed the tragedy and has not been able to speak since that day.

A Devastated Place

S r i L a n k a

Marathumanai village was once famous for its weaving and textile industry. Like other coastal areas in Sri Lanka, it also had a thriving fishing community. Even now, the nets and fishing boats lie broken and abandoned up to two miles inland.

It will take years before the people of Marathumanai will be able to recover. They look to outside help, but in this district it has been painfully slow in coming. Part of the reason is the relative inaccessibility of the area due to flash floods brought on by the rainy season.

In the coming months there will be a huge need for the relief efforts to be stepped up in this neglected area.

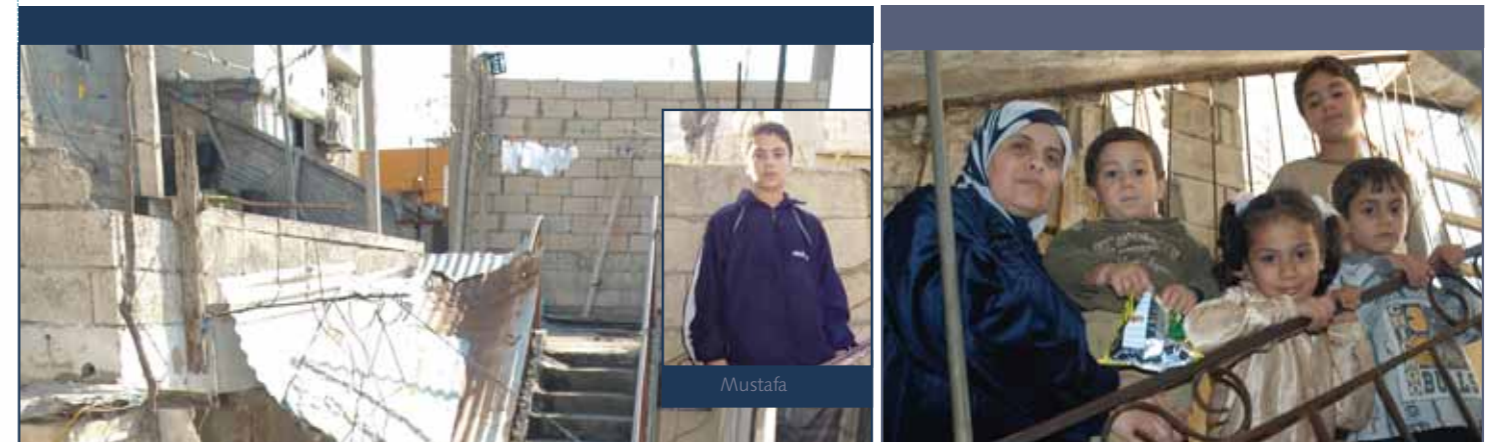
For now the people are in shock and are surviving on the generosity and goodwill of their neighbours. But this goodwill is as exhaustible as the supplies which are needed for the refugees to live.

Eventually people will have to begin looking after their own families and homes will have to be rebuilt.



Home away from home

L e b a n o n



Half a century has passed and 400,000 Palestinians who left their homes and fled to Lebanon are still living in overcrowded refugee camps. "Home" for them has become a tin hut in a fenced-off area controlled by armed guards. As long-term refugees, they have no social or civil rights and cannot access public schools or health facilities. This bleak existence is their only way of life known to an entire generation of Palestinian children.

Fourteen-year-old Mustafa lives in Ein El Helwi Camp in Lebanon. It is one of twelve camps run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA). Like other camp residents, Mustafa and his family live on a compound that is cut off from the outside world. Their home consists of two small rooms with a few items of furniture. The space is cramped and uncomfortable but it is all they've got.

Mustafa lives with his mother, three brothers and three sisters. "My mother became my hero after my father's death," he told Islamic Relief. "She is a real survivor and has struggled a lot for our sake."

Mustafa's mother tries to provide for her children but employment is scarce. As a refugee, she is prohibited from working in most professions and can only do menial jobs that are physically demanding and underpaid. She has no legal work permit and therefore no job security. Negotiating a reasonable salary, claiming overtime or asking for medical insurance is simply out of the question.

Surviving on a meagre income, the family can only afford to eat one meal a day. The rest of the money is spent on the children's education. "My mother

says if we finish our education life will be a lot better for us," explained Mustafa. "One day we will have enough money to live a decent life. That's why we have to be patient and never give up."

Mustafa is lucky to be able to go to school as many children his age are forced to work and help support their families. Banned from enrolling into Lebanese schools, refugee children depend entirely on education programmes provided by UNRWA. Too often however, they drop out of school and look for work in agriculture or the construction industry. Orphans in particular end up working long hours to supplement their mother's income, missing out on the opportunity to get an education.

In March 2005, Islamic Relief started working with Palestinian orphans in Lebanon through its One-to-One Sponsorship Programme. The Programme put a hundred orphans from the poorest families in touch with people around the world who were willing to sponsor them. These children now receive a monthly income that pays for food, education, healthcare and general living costs. With so many children in need, a further 300 orphans are expected to be sponsored within a month.

Mustafa is one of the children who receive regular financial help via Islamic Relief. Without the pressure of supplementing his mother's income, he can now work hard at school and get a good education. The Islamic Relief donor who agreed to sponsor Mustafa has lifted the burden of responsibility and allowed him to be a child again. "Thank you for supporting us on our journey towards a respectable existence," said Mustafa.

The Big Freeze

A f g h a n i s t a n



Afghanistan has been experiencing its harshest winter for at least a decade. Intense snowfall and sub-zero temperatures have resulted in blocked roads, lack of food and an outbreak of disease.

Chaman Hazuri Camp in Kabul is home to over 400 displaced families and is a deadly place to live in winter. The tents are mostly plastic shelters which let in the snow and the rain. Some residents have plastered their shelters with mud in an attempt to insulate them and keep warm but many children have already died of cold-related illnesses.

Over 200 people have died and many more are at risk. Those without permanent homes are most vulnerable as they struggle to survive the extreme weather with inadequate protection.

Chaman Hazuri is one of the refugee camps in Kabul that provides shelter for internally displaced people. It is home to over 400 Afghan families who fled during the war and returned to find their homes and livelihoods destroyed. Like thousands of other returning refugees, residents of Chaman Hazuri live in appalling conditions without basic necessities like food, warm clothes and clean water. They also lack proper heating facilities and have little protection from snowstorms, avalanches and temperatures as low as minus 17 degrees Celsius.

With snow and rain seeping in through makeshift plastic shelters, respiratory diseases like pneumonia and whooping cough have claimed many lives. Children are particularly vulnerable as many of them go out in unsuitable clothing, searching for bits of wood or paper to use for fuel. In Chaman Hazuri

Camp, one 55-year-old woman became extremely ill from the cold and was taken to the doctor for treatment. She had contracted pneumonia and sadly died a few days later, leaving behind seven children.

The harsh winter has also had an impact on livelihoods, particularly for camp residents who had been working on building sites. With the construction industry at a standstill, even their daily income of just \$2 a day has now been lost. Many families are left with virtually no income and are faced with the dilemma of either buying food or buying coal to keep themselves warm.

Islamic Relief has worked with Afghan refugees and internally displaced people for many years and recently distributed Ramadhan food packages to the residents of Chaman Hazuri Camp. In response to the current winter emergency, Islamic Relief has distributed fuel supplies, ensuring each family in the camp have a stove set and enough coal to last through the worst of the cold weather.

Forced to choose between food and fuel

Shaheesta Gul spent 21 years of his life living in a refugee camp in Pakistan. At 54, he returned to Afghanistan with eight children and five grandchildren, hoping to return to his former home and restart his life. Like thousands of others, Shaheesta found that his only option was to live in yet another refugee camp.

Shaheesta and his family now live in a tent in the Chaman Hazuri Camp in Kabul. The tent is made of nothing more than a plastic sheet and when it rains or snows, all their belongings become wet.

Although Shaheesta is not physically able to work, his eldest son Ahmaduddin owns a cart and every day he goes into the centre of Kabul looking to use his cart to transport goods for people. His daily income is no more than \$2 and from these wages he has to buy all the family's food and coal. Often he does not have enough money for both. "Sometimes it happens that I need to buy a kilogram or two of coal for heating instead of buying food to feed my family," he told Islamic Relief.



54-year-old Shaheesta Gul returned to Afghanistan after spending 21 years in a refugee camp in Pakistan. He now lives with his whole family in two tents in Chaman Hazuri Camp. The entire family, including Shaheesta's grandchildren, are supported by his eldest son Ahmaduddin, who transports goods on a cart for a living.

Shaheesta and the 400 other displaced families in Chaman Hazuri Camp receive regular packages of food and blankets from humanitarian organisations every six weeks. In reality, however, the supplies only last a maximum of 15 days. "In the past two weeks we saw a woman and two children die due to the very cold weather and the dampness in their tents," explained Ahmaduddin.

In February 2005, Islamic Relief distributed emergency winter supplies to all the families living in Chaman Hazuri Camp. "It is generous of Islamic Relief to help us by giving such a huge amount of coal," said Ahmaduddin.

"We can use it to cook and also use it as a source of heat in our tents."



Returning Refugees

Mahgull is a 42-year-old widow and mother of four who recently returned to Afghanistan. She supports her family by working as an office cleaner. Mahgull is one of around 2.3 million Afghans to have returned from Pakistan. Another 400,000 are expected to return this year and many of those who find their homes and livelihoods have been destroyed will end up in temporary camps.



Emergency Distribution

Islamic Relief's office in Kabul carried out an emergency distribution of coal and stoves for every family living in Chaman Hazuri camp. The fuel will help the families survive the worst of the cold weather. Already over 200 people have died across Afghanistan. The displaced population, which is estimated at around 200,000, have few resources to help them fend off the cold.

Tornado

Bangladesh

Over 50 people died and at least 25,000 were made homeless by a violent tornado that hit Bangladesh's northern districts of Gaibanda and Rangpur on 20th March 2005. Many people were forced to live in the open without any food or shelter and with inadequate clothing after thousands of homes were completely wiped out. 200 shops and 60 acres of rice and wheat crops were destroyed and the tornado also tore down power lines, blocked main roads with fallen trees, and killed 300 livestock and over 80% of all poultry stock.

The local government working in partnership with a local aid agency immediately sent out rescue teams to help the victims. Islamic Relief also arrived in the Gaibanda district soon after the disaster and brought emergency food and medicine to the affected population.

Over €22,400 was allocated to support 20,000 people with food and hundreds of people were treated by a team of Islamic Relief medical staff.

When Mohabbar thought his economic situation could not get much worse, a devastating tornado hit his village causing widespread destruction.



Mohabbar Ali is 60 years old and lives with his wife in a village in Gaibanda, Bangladesh. A father of four, he struggled to make ends meet by working as a labourer and earning a meagre income. His wife also worked as a housemaid but the money was not enough. Mohabbar was forced to sell his house in order to meet the needs of the family.

When Mohabbar thought his economic situation could not get much worse, a devastating tornado hit his village causing widespread destruction. Mohabbar and his family lost everything they owned. The disaster also left them injured but they were unable to go to hospital. Fortunately an Islamic

Relief emergency medical team arrived in the area and treated them.

Islamic Relief's Bangladesh team also assessed the damage and reassured victims of the tornado that their immediate food needs would be met. Within a week of the disaster, Islamic Relief gave Mohabbar and his family food supplies consisting of rice, lentils, salt and soybean oil, in keeping with local dietary habits. For Mohabbar and his family, this was a great help.

He thanked Islamic Relief for helping him during what he described as the most critical stage of his life.

Tuning-in To Local Needs

Mali

It's almost as far as Timbuktu, just a little more south-east and across the Niger river. Gourma Rharous is a fairly under-developed region along the Sahara desert in Mali. Not everyone there owns a TV but most people have access to the radio.

In remote desert areas, the radio is a lifeline that connects isolated communities with the outside world. Islamic Relief has worked in Gourma Rharous since 1997 and when it came to getting its message across to the people, there was no more effective way than setting up a radio station.



'Al Akhbar,' which means 'The News' in Arabic, is a community-owned radio station transmitted across 12 km and reaching 37,000 people in 22 villages. Broadcast in three local languages, it runs daily cultural and social programmes that share useful information and help bring the community together. Regular programme themes include education, the environment, citizens rights, health awareness and womens issues.

Islamic Relief's work in Mali focuses on community development, which means working with local people and building their capacity to lead successful civil societies. This can be challenging in isolated rural areas but Al Akhbar is able to reach these communities and encourage them to set up local initiatives. The local communities also play a vital role in managing programmes and ensure that Al Akhbar gives people a voice and an opportunity to air their views and concerns.

One of Al Akhbar's major achievements has been its role in promoting peace and reconciliation between conflicting communities such as the local population of Gourma Rharous and nomad refugees who returned after a five-year war. Another significant achievement was when a cholera epidemic broke out in Gourma Rharous and the state health service used the radio station to alert the public. Al Akhbar broadcast further information on how to observe

hygiene conditions which helped to bring an end to the cholera outbreak. It also empowered the local community by making them aware of their ability to play an active role in changing their lives for the better.



Three years after it was first set up, Al Akhbar radio station is no longer dependent on external funding and is able to sustain itself.

It is now so popular that almost everyone in the area tunes into it, from council chiefs to desert nomads!

War Child Of Sarajevo

B o s n i a



Eldin with his mother Ifa

This is the remarkable story of a boy from war-torn Bosnia. Separated from his parents at birth, he was taken to Germany by a foster family. Now aged 13, he has three women looking after him – one he calls mother, the other "Aunty," and a third, who he has never met.

When Eldin was born, he was two months premature and weighed only 4lbs. He had to be kept in an incubator but there were none available in Srebrenica. It was 12th April 1992, and the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina was escalating. The nearest incubators were in Sarajevo Hospital, three and a half hours away. Eldin's father took his baby to Sarajevo but was not allowed to stay with him. He returned home to Srebrenica and almost as soon as he did, war broke out.

Sarajevo came under heavy bombardment and the city was besieged. Baby Eldin was trapped in the hospital, far away from his anxious parents. Hospital staff moved all the babies to the basement for safety but food began to run short and water and electricity supplies were cut off. In desperation, the hospital appealed for temporary foster families to look after the babies.

Meanwhile in Srebrenica, telephone lines were cut off, making it impossible for anyone to contact the hospital. Eldin's mother, Ifa, heard no news about her baby and was terrified of the danger he faced. She felt completely helpless, having not

seen her baby since the day he was born. She had not even been able to give him a name.

It was two months into the siege that Ifa first had news of her son. She heard the hospital's appeal for foster families on a radio broadcast and was reassured that her baby was safe. By that time a Sarajevo couple, Merho and Elija, had also heard the appeal and decided to help. They took the stranded baby into their family, named him 'Eldin', and cared for him as if he were their own. They had no idea how long he would be with them.

As the war in Bosnia continued, Eldin's foster family decided to seek refuge in Germany. They wanted to take Eldin with them but could not leave the country as they did not have legal custody. The only way they could do so was to locate Eldin's parents and get their permission. Eldin's fate once again depended on a radio broadcast and sure enough, they managed to contact his parents and gain their consent. Eldin moved to Germany with his foster family and meanwhile, his parents in Srebrenica had another baby boy.

The war in Bosnia has left many scars.



Photo courtesy of Wendell Phillips

A few years later, in July 1995, over 7,000 men and boys were killed in the Srebrenica massacres. Eldin's father became one of many missing Muslims who were presumed dead. Ifa fled to Sarajevo after the massacre with her younger son but she still does not know what happened to her husband. Ten years on, the authorities are trying to identify victims found in mass graves using DNA samples.

In Sarajevo, Ifa was able to exchange messages with Eldin's foster family in Germany through the International Red Cross. She asked them if they could bring Eldin back to Bosnia and they agreed. After four years of separation, mother and son were finally reunited. When Ifa saw her child she felt so overwhelmed that she fainted. Eldin, on the other hand, was confused about the new person in his life. He could not sleep that night and woke Ifa, begging her, "Aunty, please take me back to my mother!"

Eldin now has two mothers, Elija and Ifa. During the week he lives with Ifa and his younger brother in a single room in a Refugee Collective Centre

just outside Sarajevo. Every weekend, he visits his foster family in Sarajevo. It is a practical arrangement that suits everyone but the emotional adjustment is far harder.

Ifa is grateful to Eldin's foster parents for saving his life but she worries about how much Eldin misses them. Even today, Ifa dreams of a time when Eldin would rather turn to her than to his foster mother.

Aged thirteen, Eldin is now a sensitive boy who loves both of his families and makes a conscious effort to give them each enough love. His mothers have developed a good relationship and make sure he is given all the care and attention he needs. But even with two families looking after him, Eldin's life is not entirely stable. Growing up in a refugee centre in post-war Bosnia is not easy for any child, let alone one who has already had such an eventful childhood.

War Child Of Sarajevo

B o s n i a



In September 2003, Eldin joined Islamic Relief's Orphan Sponsorship Programme and was put in touch with a lady from the UK who wanted to sponsor him. Eldin now receives regular money for schooling, clothes, food and medical care, and his sponsor also sends him letters and gifts. Once again, a stranger has taken an active interest in Eldin's life and offered to take care of him. It seems that after all the uncertainty of his early years, Eldin finally has some stability in his life. For the first time since the day he was born, all those who love him have a reason to feel optimistic about his future.

Adisa Sarajcic Hajdari

Starting From Scratch

K o s o v a

They had a pleasant life and a nice house in a village in Skenderaj, Kosova. Their carpentry business was thriving and the family lived comfortably.



It could have been the perfect family life - husband, wife and three lovely children.

But the war in Kosova changed everything.

The family fled to Macedonia for safety and when they returned, nothing was the same. House, car and workshop had all been destroyed.

They would have to rebuild their lives, starting from scratch.

A skilled carpenter, 30-year-old Besnik had no way of supporting his family when he returned to his home village of Padalisht. The war had destroyed everything. Even the machines in his workshop were gone. Besnik had nothing to show for all the years he had worked hard to build up his business.

In post-war Kosova, there are thousands of people like Besnik who returned home to find they had lost everything. Many were unable to return to their original trades and some had also lost their homes. To support people like Besnik, Islamic Relief started a Micro-Credit programme that gives interest-free loans for starting up small businesses and rebuilding homes.

Besnik applied for a loan in 2002 and used the money to buy carpentry equipment. He set up a small workshop and worked long hours, taking little rest. Within a short time, Besnik had so much work that he had to employ other people to help him. He started earning enough money

to support his family, pay the wages of his staff and repay the money he had borrowed from Islamic Relief.

With increasing demand for his work, Besnik has recently taken out a second loan to expand his workshop. The loan has not only helped his business grow rapidly but also provided his community with the services of a good carpenter.

Besnik's talent is well known in his village and even the Islamic Relief office in Kosova has benefited from his skill! In the newly-built offices, Besnik was hired to build bookshelves and kitchen cabinets. His work is of a high standard, and Islamic Relief staff in Kosova believe his success is bound to grow in the years to come.



Helping you *to help yourself*

K a s h m i r

Helping the poor is not just about distributing food and digging wells. Real help is about empowerment. It is about getting people involved in their own development and allowing them to take control of their lives. Most importantly, it is about helping people to organise themselves and work together towards a common goal.

In Azad Jammu & Kashmir, Islamic Relief has been mobilising communities in this way for many years. The change doesn't happen overnight but when it does happen, it makes a lasting difference.

"When Islamic Relief first came to our village they told us to get together and form a community organisation.

They showed us how to select members, how to work as a group and how to save money. They assured us that by working together in this way we would soon be able to solve our own problems."



"We never thought we could change our own lives," are the words of Nabila Banaras (bottom left), a young woman who lives in Narsali, a remote mountaintop village in Dhirkot, Kashmir. "For generations we've lived in this mountainous area in harsh conditions. When Islamic Relief came they taught us how to organise ourselves and overcome our problems."

Dhirkot is one of the many rural areas in Kashmir where Islamic Relief's Pakistan office work closely with the local community. Although the people there have many immediate needs, Islamic Relief has taken a more integrated approach to helping them by involving the community at every level. From identifying problems to thinking of solutions, the community is encouraged to take the lead, relying on Islamic Relief only for guidance and practical support.

Nabila was selected as head of the women's group and given training at the Islamic Relief centre in the neighbouring region of Bagh. She now co-ordinates fortnightly meetings in which the group set the agenda and discuss issues that concern them. The meetings are also attended by Nasira, an Islamic Relief Social Organiser who uses her experience in community mobilisation to guide the group and maximise its potential.

"There are twenty members in our group and most of us are housewives. One of the problems we faced on a daily basis was walking up and down the mountain carrying water. It took up a large part of our day and was often dangerous. Some women have slipped and died; others have been attacked by dogs along the way. We had accepted this as our fate because our women have always carried water up this mountain," said Nabila.



Staff from Islamic Relief Pakistan meet with the male Community Organisation in Bun Chhattar.

The women in Nabila's group were encouraged to think of ways to resolve the problem of access to water. Islamic Relief introduced the idea of building a water tank in the village on the condition that the villagers would provide some of the resources. Although initially a daunting challenge, the community managed to mobilise its efforts and contribute to the project. Once complete, the water tank was a source of pride for the villagers who felt a strong sense of collective ownership over it.

"It was a completely new way of thinking for us," explained Nabila. "We always hoped that either some external help would come, or we would live this way forever. We never thought we had the power the change things with our own hands."

Nabila's community organisation has now moved on to tackle other problems. Living up on a mountain, their children have an arduous journey to get to school and parents are often reluctant to let their children out in severe weather conditions. Then there is the problem of inadequate healthcare. For some women, particularly those who are pregnant, the hour and a half climb down the mountain has proven to be fatal.

"We don't choose to live up here, even though it's the land of our forefathers," explained Nabila.

"We live here because the city is too expensive.

In winter we are totally isolated from the rest of the world and we have to stock up before snowfall in order to survive. Life is very difficult, but we are hopeful. We want to work together to open a school, set up a health clinic and even build a proper road. We've managed to work together and get water and electricity up this mountain – we hope we can do a lot more!"



Women In Action

Kashmir

Bun Chattar is a small village nestled in the beautiful Neelum Valley in Azad Jammu & Kashmir. Remote and isolated, its only connection with the outside world is a rickety bridge that runs across the river Neelum. A traditional mountain village that has seen little change in decades, Bun Chattar is an unlikely setting for the quiet revolution that has taken place.

It's not surprising that the people of this village were a little cautious when Islamic Relief came along and proposed setting up Community Organisations (CO's). It was not something they had ever heard of and they couldn't really understand its benefits. The idea that CO's could help people work together and



Sabina (right) enjoys the benefit of the water supply project that she worked hard to make a success.

"Until now, no-one asked us poor people what we needed and no-one cared. Aid was promised but it never reached us. When Islamic Relief came they consulted us and included us in everything. They guided us and now we have so many facilities that we never had before. We wouldn't have been able to do any of this without them."

Sabina's mother

change their lives for the better was met with suspicion. Or, at least, that's what the men of the village thought.

"They refused to get involved and they also forbade their women from taking part," recalled Tafheem (top right), a senior Social Organiser for Islamic Relief Pakistan. The women on the other hand were enthusiastic about setting up CO's that would help address some of their everyday issues. Most importantly, they hoped to do something about the problem of access to water.

Sabina is one of a handful of women who were determined to take up the opportunity to solve the water problem. Slowly the small group managed to convince others and soon they had enough members to form a CO. Braving the disapproval of most of the village men, they worked with Islamic Relief's water and sanitation experts to get the ball rolling. A survey was carried out and a consultation meeting was held with the rest of the village community.

"No-one believed we could solve the water problem because they hadn't managed it in all these years," explained Sabina. "The turnout at the meeting was mostly women because it was our problem. We invited everyone hoping they might change their mind but nobody did. The men found out how much the water supply would cost and they outrightly refused to take part. They said it was too expensive but really they just wanted the CO to fail."

Without the support of many villagers, the CO members faced the choice of either abandoning the project or paying for it themselves. "The problem was that the men did not appreciate how difficult the issue of fetching water was because it was always the women who did it," explained Tafheem.

Having worked with Islamic Relief setting up CO's for many years, Tafheem knew how to mobilise the CO members but could do little about those who refused to take part.



"This rickety bridge with missing planks and snapped support lines bears the scars of cross-border firing. Before the ceasefire, Bun Chhattar would be cut off from the outside world for days on end."



"The problem was that the men did not appreciate how difficult the issue of fetching water was because it was always the women who did it."

Tafheem
Social Organiser for Islamic Relief

"There were 22 families in our CO and between us we decided to go ahead and contribute as much money as we could," explained Sabina. The women also decided that the water supply would only extend to those households that contributed to the project rather than the entire village. But that was not the end of the problem. There was hard physical labour involved which they all hoped the men would take care of. They didn't.

"We were faced with no choice but to do it ourselves," said Sabina. "The men weren't willing to help so we took turns and dug out rocks, gravel, and sand from the river and carried it on our heads. That was the hardest bit, but we managed to do it."

By the time it came to the digging, the men finally relented. At first they helped out reluctantly but once they started seeing progress, they began to change their minds about the CO. "When they saw that the work had started for real then slowly everybody started joining the COs," said Sabina.

The water project was a great success. Every house in the village now has its own water source, providing clean water for drinking and washing. Women no longer have to climb up the steep mountain paths carrying heavy pots – and all because a group of them were determined to find a solution despite all the obstacles.

"If you were to ask anyone in the village how much everything cost or how much work was carried out, they would all be able to tell you because they did it themselves," said Tafheem. "This is what COs are all about."

But for Sabina and the female members of the Bun Chhattar CO, their biggest achievement was not solving the water problem but the ability to stand up for what they believe and have faith in their own ability. "After forming the CO we realised that if we all got together we could solve our problems," said Sabina. "Before this we had no-one to guide us. In fact, we women were not even considered human. Now, for the first time, we have achieved some kind of acknowledgement and recognition in the world."

After this initial success, the Bun Chhattar Women's CO has since gone from strength to strength.

Its more recent projects include training members in vegetable cultivation, poultry raising and tailoring. All of these activities generate an income which the CO saves to use for future community projects.



Risky Business

Kashmir



Breathtaking natural beauty makes it one of the most beautiful places in the world but the mountainous region of Azad Jammu & Kashmir is far from peaceful. The calmness of its lush green hills and flowing Neelum River has been disturbed by decades of violent conflict between India and Pakistan. Thousands of Kashmiris have been displaced, many have lost their lives and those living in remote areas have been cut off from the outside world.

Islamic Relief is the only international aid agency that has worked in the region throughout the conflict. Staff on the ground have put their lives at risk on a daily basis to help those in need. Now, with the relative safety of the current ceasefire, they hope that the days of cross-border firing are finally over. Only then can the people of Azad Jammu & Kashmir look forward to a more stable future.



"Every morning we said our goodbyes as if we were not going to come back alive."

Abida Kausar (left) works as a Social Organiser for Islamic Relief in Neelum Valley, Kashmir. She joined the organisation three years ago when the region came under daily attack. Understandably, her family was reluctant to let her go.

"Neelum Valley is not only dangerous but also really isolated. Whenever there is heavy firing or the weather is bad, the area is completely cut off from the outside world. There have been times when I've been out of touch with my family for months."

Abida is part of a team of Social Organisers who travel to remote villages and help communities organise themselves to work collectively and improve their lives. "I know it's dangerous climbing these mountains and working in a conflict zone but I see what difference Islamic Relief is making to these people's lives and that's what keeps me going. I see how happy the local women are when I meet them. I know we are putting our lives at risk but I feel that their lives are just as important as ours."

Neelum Valley is located directly in the line of fire, on the Pakistan side of the border. Cross-border shelling and landmines have caused thousands of deaths and injuries. Tens of thousands of people live in fear and an estimated 75,000 have fled their homes and sought refuge elsewhere. The ongoing conflict has had a devastating effect on the lives of ordinary Kashmiris and caused widespread poverty.

In the early days Abida was nervous about working in Neelum Valley and kept her bags packed so she could leave at any moment. The first time she witnessed a firing attack her colleagues thought she would be terrified and ask for an immediate transfer. But even to her own surprise, Abida managed to overcome her fear.

"I still remember that day. I had just come back from a meeting in the field and was waiting for my colleagues before going back to the Islamic Relief office. I heard a whistling noise and saw people running. I had no idea what was going on until the driver shouted for me to quickly get in the car. I told him I had to pick up my colleagues but he said it was too dangerous. But I insisted, and so he sped to the safety shelter where we managed to find them. That was when the firing became really intense."



Abida recalls how they had to drive through 'Hit Point' – a part of the road that is directly in the line of fire. "Five bullets went through our vehicle, one of them smashing the windscreen before going out of the side window. Another came through the roof of the car. The driver just kept driving, not stopping to check if the bullets had hit any of us. It was a miracle we all survived."

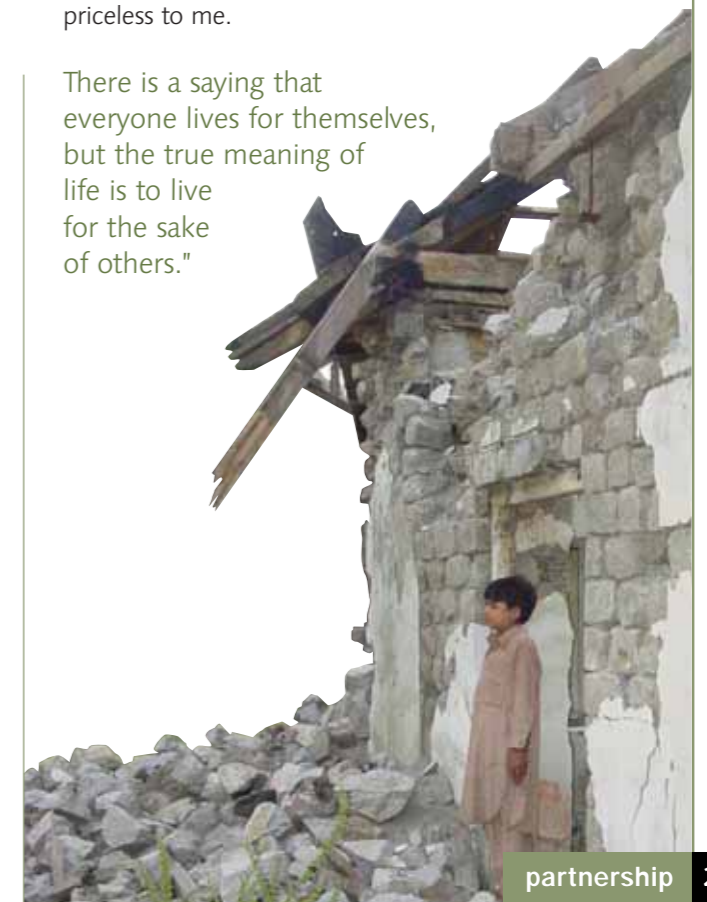
With every firing attack Abida and her colleagues know they are lucky to be alive. Just two years ago, their colleague Zulfiqar Ali was involved in a similar incident along the 'Line of Control' which divides the region. He too was working as a Social Organiser in Neelum Valley when his car was hit by four bullets. Zulfiqar died instantly. It was a tragic incident



that left the team in shock but Abida remembers him with fond memories. Zulfiqar was one of the most dedicated and inspiring people she ever worked with.

"Whenever I talked of leaving brother Zulfiqar would talk me out of it, reminding me how important our work is. Even now I find it difficult sometimes, especially when I phone home and my mother starts crying on the phone. She is ill and I wish I could be with her but I know that if we weren't here, the conflict would destroy everything. When we help people, they often pray for us and those prayers are priceless to me."

There is a saying that everyone lives for themselves, but the true meaning of life is to live for the sake of others."



The Height Of Healthcare

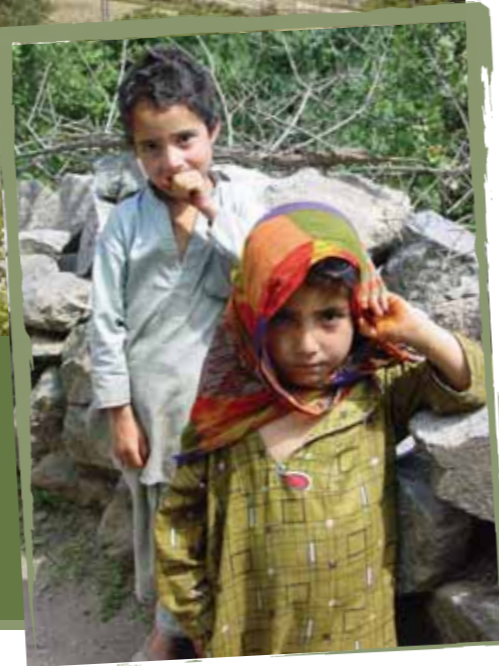
Kashmir



The Neelum Valley Health Clinic is a sanctuary for over 40,000 people who had no access to medical care except at a distant hospital, reached by travelling for hours on a dangerous mountain road.



Imagine living in a remote village on top of a mountain in conflict-ridden Azad Jammu & Kashmir. Life would be difficult for the healthiest of people, let alone those who fall ill and need medical attention. With the nearest hospital miles away, the people of Neelum Valley cannot get access to even the most basic health care. So when patients cannot get down the mountain to see the doctor, the doctor has to climb up to see them.



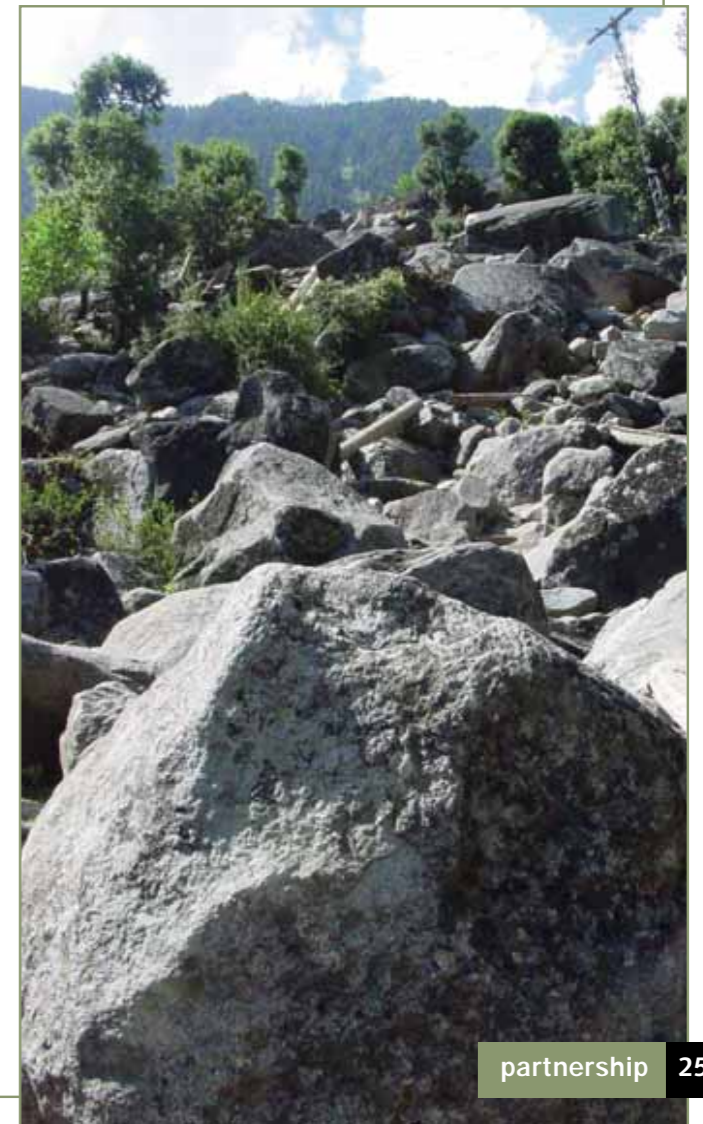
Medical care in Kashmir is scarce but where it does exist, is literally life-saving. In Neelum Valley, one of the poorest parts of Kashmir, the harsh physical environment makes it difficult to recruit and retain medical staff. Women suffer in particular as many go through pregnancy and childbirth without any kind of medical attention.

herself to raise awareness of the clinic and encourage more women to use its facilities. "A lot of women travel all the way to Muzaffarabad or Abbottabad because they don't know about this clinic. I bring them here because I've seen how good the lady doctors are," she said.

Amreza is part of a network of Community Health Workers trained by Islamic Relief to do outreach work in their local area. As the first point of contact for anyone who needs medical attention, their aim is to identify illnesses before they reach a critical stage. They also encourage people to attend Islamic Relief's health camps whenever they are in the area. Set up occasionally in various locations, the mobile camps offer facilities for general medical treatment and routinely vaccinate children against disease.

"I know a woman who kept having miscarriages so I brought her here for treatment. Now she is expecting her second baby!" said Shameem. "I feel really fortunate that we have such an excellent facility in our area."

For illnesses that need advanced medical attention, Islamic Relief also runs a Health Clinic that supports the work of the Community Health Workers. Set in a scenic location alongside the Neelum River, the clinic is a sanctuary for 43,000 local residents who previously had to travel for many hours on a dangerous mountain road to reach the nearest hospital. Their arduous journey was made worse by the unpredictability of military firing and those who managed to reach the hospital often found that doctors were unavailable or the cost of treatment was too high.



"The Health Clinic in Neelum Valley is open 24 hours a day to deal with all kinds of medical problems," explains Affan Cheema, Islamic Relief's Regional Programme Manager for Pakistan. "Male and female doctors are always available to see patients and there is a pharmacy that dispenses prescription drugs and vaccinations at affordable prices. The clinic also has operating theatres and a range of modern equipment for X-rays, ultrasound scans and ECG monitoring."

One regular patient, Shameem Azhar, is frequently seen at the clinic accompanied by other women. A local resident of Kuttan, she has taken it upon



Amreza Ali (far left) is still a teenager. In some parts of the world, young women her age are in no rush to decide their future careers. But for Amreza, the decision was easy. Living in a conflict zone left no doubt in her mind that she wanted to help her community. Amreza completed basic medical training with Islamic Relief and now works as a Community Health Worker. She has already delivered 20 babies and is responsible for a thousand patients.

"On my second day at work I delivered four babies!" said Amreza. "Women from local villages contact me when they're feeling unwell or about to give birth," she explained. Amreza's job is to visit people in their homes, give health advice and provide basic medical care. Although most of the problems she deals with are general illnesses, occasionally she gets an emergency case.

"One of my patients was seriously injured in cross-border firing. She was out with her husband when the firing started. Her husband was killed in the attack but she managed to survive and came away with a broken arm. I quickly bandaged the wound up and gave her medication before sending her to the hospital for further treatment."

20 Years In Sudan

Meeting Needs



Sudan is the largest country in Africa. With a population of 34 million, the needs of its people vary greatly from north to south and east to west. Islamic Relief has been working in different parts of Sudan for over twenty years, from providing emergency relief in Darfur to digging wells in the South. Here is an overview of some of our current projects.

THE NORTH | THE SOUTH

Region

North Kordofan, located in central-western Sudan.

Population

900,000, the majority of whom live in rural areas and make their living from agriculture and livestock.

Context

Recurrent drought leads to poor harvests and food and water shortages.

Humanitarian needs

Clean water, food security, healthcare, education, sustainable incomes, sanitation facilities and hygiene awareness.

Meeting needs

Islamic Relief has worked in the region since 1992. Projects include digging wells in drought areas, raising health and hygiene awareness, educating children with impaired hearing, providing literacy classes for adults, providing medical facilities for 40,000 displaced people and 3,000 women and children.

Region

Southern Sudan.

Population

Around 7 million people. A further 4 million are internally displaced and another 2 million have taken refuge in neighbouring countries.

Context

Ongoing conflict for the past 20 years has created instability. 2 million people have lost their lives and the impact on the country's infrastructure has been catastrophic.

Humanitarian needs

Security and ways of earning a living are the most pressing needs.

Meeting needs

Islamic Relief has been working in the region since 2004. Our work includes providing healthcare facilities, supplying water, providing schools with educational materials and distributing food parcels during the Ramadhan and Qurbani seasons.

THE SOUTH-EAST, BLUE NILE AREA | DARFUR

Region

Blue Nile regions, south-east of Sudan.

Population

700,000, most of whom can make an agricultural living from the region's rich natural resources and fertile clay soil.

Context

In 1987 the civil conflict in South Sudan spread to the Blue Nile causing widespread devastation and displacement. Foreign aid was also restricted. However, recent relative stability has allowed the return of refugees and provided hope for the future.

Humanitarian needs

Water shortages and lack of employment due to the ruined infrastructure and the loss of livestock.

Meeting Needs

In 2003, Islamic Relief became the first international aid agency to be granted permission to work in the Blue Nile region. Our work benefits 300,000 people in the area and includes providing primary education and vocational training, refurbishing hospitals and ensuring access to clean water. In addition, food parcels are distributed to returning refugees from Ethiopia and to the poorest families during the Ramadhan and Qurbani seasons.

Region

Darfur is separated into three regions; North, West and South Darfur.

Population

4 million plus at least another 2 million people internally displaced and a further 200,000 who have sought refuge in Chad.

Context

Since the early 1980s, disputes over resources have led to civil conflict but in recent years the scale of the conflict has escalated. Darfur is currently thought to be one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world.

Humanitarian needs

Security is critical. Many people are unable to return home and require shelter in refugee camps. They rely solely on international aid for food, water and clothes.

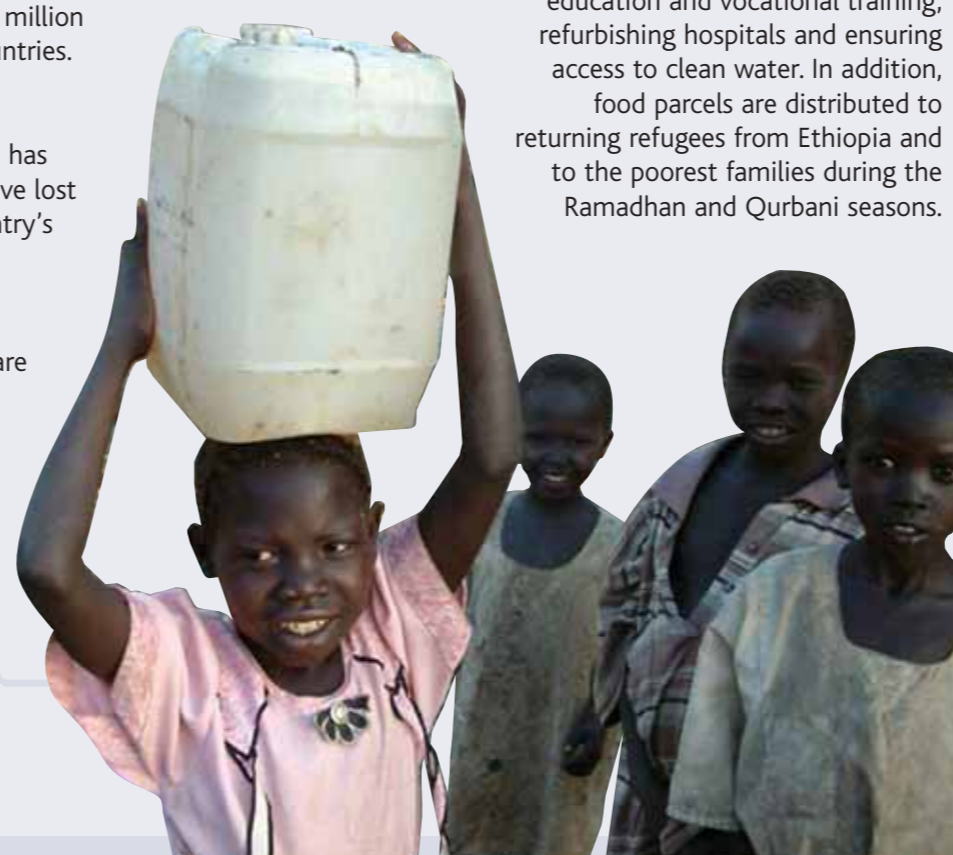
Many are in need of medical treatment for wounds or disease and children suffer due to lack of education.

Meeting Needs

Since February 2004, Islamic Relief has sent 20 containers of emergency relief worth €1.5 million to West Darfur and Chad. Food, clothes and shelter materials have been provided for those living in camps along the border. Refugee camp Kerinding II was also opened to accommodate over 5,000 people who receive food, essential living items, and medical treatment. A school was also recently set up in the camp.

Over 70,000 litres of chlorinated water was supplied on a daily basis during the height of the conflict and wells have now been dug for camp residents and local villagers.

Sanitation facilities have also been installed and fuel efficient stoves have been supplied by Islamic Relief.





News

In Brief

King Abdullah of Jordan supports Islamic Relief initiative



Dr Hany El Banna met with His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan on 6th February 2005, in Jordan.

They discussed Islamic Relief's plans to hold an international conference about the problems facing Muslim charities.

King Abdullah positively welcomed the initiative and agreed to give it his full support. He also praised Islamic Relief's humanitarian work around the world.

Islamic Relief joins Disasters Emergency Committee

Islamic Relief has been invited to join the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC), which is an umbrella organisation of 12 British charities that respond to major disasters. The DEC launches national fundraising appeals in response to disasters and enables the British public to support a number of aid agencies as they respond to overseas emergencies. Its latest appeal for the Tsunami disaster in South East Asia raised a massive £300 million.

The invitation, which has been welcomed and accepted, is a further endorsement of the vital role Islamic Relief plays in humanitarian work around the world. In a letter to the organisation's President, DEC Chairman, David Glencross, said he looked forward to "benefiting from the insights and contributions ... Islamic Relief would make to the life and effectiveness of the Disasters Emergency Committee."

The DEC is currently made up of 12 UK charities: Action Aid, Oxfam, Christian Aid, Concern, Care, CAFOD, Tearfund, World Vision, Save the Children, Merlin, Help the Aged and the Red Cross. Islamic Relief will become the latest member of the Committee.

For up-to-date information, please visit www.islamic-relief.com



'Islamic Relief is a tremendous organisation doing very important work'

Royal praise for Islamic Relief work

'Islamic Relief is a tremendous organisation doing very important work,' said His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales on a visit to the Batticaloa region of Sri Lanka on the 28th of February 2005. The Prince, accompanied by the British High Commissioner Stephen Evans, went to see first-hand the damage caused by the tsunami. He met with Islamic Relief's head of mission, Yousuf Kasujee, and praised Islamic Relief supporters for donating generously to the survivors of the tsunami.

Tribute to a respected colleague



Islamic Relief would like to pay tribute to a dedicated staff member, Ahmed al Karmoushi who died on 16th April 2005 at the age of 35. Ahmed worked for TIC International, the subsidiary of Islamic Relief that deals with second hand clothing. He worked at the Birmingham UK premises for six years and was known as a humble man, always willing to do any task, no matter how menial. Ahmed was also a Hafiz of Qur'an and the on-site Imam who led group prayers for TIC staff.

Ahmed al Karmoushi died from health complications whilst on holiday in his native country, Yemen. He leaves behind a widow and five children aged 5 to 16. Staff at TIC and Islamic Relief worldwide have so far raised over £5,000 to support the bereaved family and over 33 workers at TIC have committed to donating £5 a month from their salary. Islamic Relief Orphans Department will also support the family through its Orphans Sponsorship programme.

General Manager of TIC International, Naser Haghamed, said, "Ahmed was a very special person. He was respected by everyone here and we will all miss him very much."



Islamic Relief opens new office in Malaysia

Islamic Relief has opened a new office in Malaysia to help fundraise for its humanitarian projects around the world. The official launch, attended by former Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad, took place on 3rd May 2005 at the Sheraton Imperial Hotel in Kuala Lumpur.

Speaking at the event, Dr Mahathir supported Islamic Relief's policy of helping non-Muslims as well as Muslims and said this was particularly important for the public image of Islam.

Islamic Relief's President, Dr Hany El Banna, said the new fundraising office is one of eleven strategically placed offices around the world. With one of the fastest growing economies in the region and a well developed infrastructure, Malaysia has the potential to become a regional hub for Islamic Relief's work in the area.

Guests

And Visits

Award for promoting tolerance

Dr Hany El Banna is presented with an award by Fiona McTaggart MP for promoting tolerance and understanding between different peoples. The ceremony was organised by Friends of Islam at the House of Commons on 9th February 2005.



German Ministry of Foreign Affairs meets with Islamic Relief Deutschland

Mr Detlev Runger (right) from the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, met with Tarek Afifi from Islamic Relief Deutschland on 13 April 2005. Mr Runger promised to consider humanitarian projects submitted by Islamic Relief Deutschland for financial support in the future.



Bill Clinton visits Banda Aceh

Former US president Bill Clinton visits Islamic Relief's projects in Banda Aceh, Indonesia, on 20 February 2005. He is updated on the humanitarian situation of tsunami survivors by Islamic Relief's Tsunami Media Officer, Abdel Salam.



World Faith and Development

Dr Hany El Banna with James D Wolfensohn, President of the World Bank, at the World Faith and Development Leaders meeting which took place in Dublin, Ireland on 31st January 2005.



Guests

And Visits

Canadian Diplomats visit Islamic Relief Darfur camp

The Canadian Ambassador, His Excellency Robert Fowler and a delegation of Canadian diplomats met with Islamic Relief staff in the Kerinding camp in Darfur. The delegation was briefed on Islamic Relief's work and a meeting was arranged with women and camp elders who told the Ambassador about their lives in the camp.



Indonesian Mayor visits Islamic Relief's projects

The Mayor of Meulobah in Aceh Barat, Indonesia, Dr H Nasrudin (far left) meets with Youseff Hamad, head of Islamic Relief's operations in Meulobah, in April 2005.



Challenges and New Partnerships

Dr Hany El Banna delivers a speech on "Challenges and new Partnerships" at the Dubai International Humanitarian Aid & Re-Development Conference & Exhibition (DIHAD), on 5th to 7th April 2005. The conference was held under the auspices of HH General Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Crown Prince of Dubai and Minister of Defence of the United Arab Emirates.



Housing concerns discussed with Indonesian Minister

The Indonesian Minister of Housing, Al Hajj Muhammad Yusuf As'ari (far left) met with Dr Hossam Said, Head of Projects and Field Offices Division for Islamic Relief Worldwide on his recent visit to Indonesia.



Guests And Visits



Sustainable Development Conference in Morocco

Islamic Relief attended the 2nd International Forum on Partnerships for Sustainable Developments held in Morocco earlier this year. Rachid Lahlou, Country Director for Islamic Relief France met with Anne Kerr, Chief Co-ordinator for Sustainable Development for the UN (right). He also met with Mohamed Elyazghi, the Moroccan Minister for the Environment (pictured centre, above).



ECHO representative visits Islamic Relief camp in Darfur

Antonio F de Velasco, Humanitarian Aid Director General of the European Commission (ECHO) visited Sudan's troubled Darfur region on 11th April 2005. Mr de Velasco visited the Kerinding II camp, managed by Islamic Relief, which is home to around 5,000 people who fled their homes after fighting spread across Darfur.



Sabreen: Ambassador of goodwill

Famous Egyptian actress Sabreen on a visit to Islamic Relief headquarters in Birmingham, UK on 23rd April 2005. She toured the premises and agreed to be an ambassador of goodwill for Islamic Relief.



Lord Kinnock visits Islamic Relief and TIC International

Lord Kinnock (right) tours the premises of TIC International, a subsidiary of Islamic Relief that deals with second-hand clothing. The process is explained to him by the General Manager Nasr Haghamed. Head of Birmingham City Council, Sir Albert Bore, also accompanied him during the visit on 19th April 2005.



Islamic Relief Helps 'Make Poverty History' Africa

- Twenty of the poorest countries in the world are in Africa.
- Every three seconds a child dies of hunger or from a disease that could have been easily prevented.
- In the past 20 years, every continent in the world has grown richer, except Africa.

Even in the 21st century there are shocking disparities between people who live in Africa and those who live in the developed world.

In 2001, some of the world's wealthiest nations promised to halve world poverty by 2015. Their commitment was seen as a breakthrough but four years on, many of their targets have not been met. Now in 2005, a Global Call to Action Against Poverty is campaigning for world leaders to use 2005 as an opportunity to fulfil their promises.

If the goals are met, 500 million people will be lifted out of extreme poverty. Fewer women will die in childbirth and fewer children will die needlessly from killer diseases that can be prevented or more expertly fought. The campaign is also calling for fair trade to be developed between rich and poor countries and for the colossal amounts of debt that poor countries are in to be dropped.

As part of the campaign, over 300 charities, trade unions, faith groups and celebrities have united to help 'Make Poverty History' by promoting 2005 as an opportunity for global change. With the UK hosting the G8 Summit in July 2005, the gathering of powerful world leaders is seen as an ideal opportunity for a renewed commitment to tackling world poverty.

Islamic Relief joined the campaign in January 2005, and its President, Dr Hany El Banna, took part in a publicity video featuring prominent celebrities. Islamic Relief has been committed to tackling poverty in Africa since 1984 and has established offices in Mali, Ethiopia and throughout Sudan.

In Mali, where over 70% of the population live in poverty, Islamic Relief provides healthcare for women and children, helps those who are able to work become self sufficient and meets the needs of vulnerable orphans.

In Sudan, with the ongoing conflict in Darfur, Islamic Relief has provided emergency relief including food, water and shelter for the many thousands of internally

displaced people. In the North and South of the country Islamic Relief has been tackling the causes of poverty for over 20 years and helped develop entire communities.



In recent years Islamic Relief has also been working in Kenya and Ethiopia and aims to expand its activities in Africa over the next three years. By addressing the needs of each community and designing projects tailored to suit them, Islamic Relief will continue to help communities work their way out of poverty. It is an ambitious aim but with your support and commitment, Islamic Relief can help make poverty history.