

# Partnership

the official newsletter of Islamic Relief

Winter 2007

## Lebanon

In the aftermath of the devastating conflict which left nearly a quarter of the country's population homeless, Islamic Relief focuses its efforts on reconstruction and rebuilding.

### Evening of Inspiration

Internationally renowned artist Sami Yusuf headlines a six-city tour to benefit children, and victims of the humanitarian crisis in the Middle East.

### Humanitarian Day 2006

Islamic Relief's 5th annual Ramadan event to serve the homeless population expands to 14 cities nationwide.

### Darfur, Sudan

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# LEBANON:

# Life After WAR

July 2006 saw the small country of Lebanon come under an attack that lasted six weeks and completely changed the life of the whole nation. In a short space of time one million people, nearly a quarter of Lebanon's population, fled from towns and villages in the south of the country, leaving behind their homes, possessions and sometimes even their loved ones.

Throughout the six-week conflict, Islamic Relief continued to work in the south of Lebanon, which came under the heaviest attack. Islamic Relief staff on the ground continued to distribute food, blankets and other desperately needed relief items to those who were unable to flee to safety.

By the time a ceasefire was agreed on August 14, 2006, over 1,000 people - mainly civilians - had been killed and thousands more injured. Houses, schools and hospitals across the country had been reduced to smoldering mounds of rubble and roads and bridges were completely destroyed.

The ceasefire has allowed Islamic Relief and other aid agencies to work more extensively in the region. Most of the families that left their villages have now returned home and Islamic Relief is continuing to work with them, distributing food, clean water and helping them rebuild their lives.

Islamic Relief was one of the few international aid agencies that continued to work on the ground in south Lebanon, and other war-affected areas. Working with our partner, the Islamic Welfare Association, we delivered food, medicine and other essential relief items to thousands of people in Sidon, Tyre, Nabatiyeh and other southern areas.

## SIX-WEEK CONFLICT

During the first few weeks of fighting Islamic Relief staff delivered daily hot meals to 5,000 people who took shelter in schools and community centers in Sidon. Islamic Relief staff also distributed food parcels containing canned meat, rice, beans, tea, oil and sugar to 10,000 people in Tyre, another 10,000 in Sidon and 3,000 in Nabatiyeh. Thousands of jerry cans to store water, hygiene kits and sleeping mats were also provided for displaced families.

## 48-HOUR WINDOW

On July 30, 2006, the southern town of Qana was bombed, killing around 30 people, over half of them children who had taken shelter in the basement of a building. In the wake of the Qana incident, a 48-hour cessation of air attacks was announced which enabled Islamic Relief to deliver much-needed relief to people in towns further south, including Qana itself. When Islamic Relief reached Qana, people told us they had not received any food aid for 20 days.



## SHIPMENTS OF AID WITH THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

Islamic Relief worked with long-time partner the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to send two shipments of emergency aid items for victims of the humanitarian crisis in Lebanon. The cargo planes carried essential aid items supplied by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, including medical supplies, hygiene kits, powdered milk, baby formula, and hand soap. Aid distribution was overseen by Islamic Relief, the Hariri Foundation, a Lebanese development and education organization, and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

## PERMANENT CEASEFIRE

On August 14, the first day of the permanent ceasefire, Islamic Relief immediately began

distributing aid south of the Litani River to people who had come under the heaviest attack but had not received any help during the war. In Nabatiyeh, in coordination with the United Nations World Food Program (WFP) and the International Red Cross, Islamic Relief staff supplied 5,000 people with food, clean water and hygiene kits.

## RETURNING HOME

Since the ceasefire, thousands of families have returned home. This kind of mass population movement, coupled with people's exposure to the elements, can lead to the spread of disease. The lack of access to safe water after the destruction of pipes and sewage systems has also increased the risk of disease. With little healthcare or medicine available, a severe lack of water and sanitation facilities could result in a serious outbreak of diseases, especially amongst children.

Islamic Relief has distributed clean drinking water to the people of Nabatiyeh and Marouahine as well as providing 50 water bladders thus providing thousands of liters of clean water to villages in south Lebanon. Islamic Relief also provided the water pumping station in Bent Jbeil, in the south of Lebanon, with a generator to pump drinking water to 1,500 people.

Islamic Relief has served over 235,000 people in Lebanon and is continuing to provide emergency relief to those affected by the conflict. To date we have provided:

- 35,000 hot meals
- 25,800 family-size food packages
- 2,400 family-size hygiene kits
- 2 million liters of safe drinking water



# children & CONFLICT

For thousands of children caught in the midst of the fighting in Lebanon, the conflict has been particularly traumatic. It is estimated that up to half of those killed, injured or displaced from their homes were children. These stark numbers mask the personal tragedies of the young lives that were lost or thrown into turbulence.

## TOO FRIGHTENED TO FLEE

The high death toll among children is partly due to them being too young or scared to escape during conflict. Many families made long, arduous journeys on foot, with little food or water. Mothers had to make the impossible decision of leaving some of their children behind because they could not afford to take them or because they were too young to travel. In the basements of houses across southern Lebanon, older children were left looking after their younger siblings, huddled together as the bombs fell around them.

## LANDMINES

One of the greatest threats to children's health and security since the conflict ended has been from unexploded landmines, rockets and cluster bombs. At least 13 civilians have been killed and 53 injured by unexploded ordnances (UXO) since the ceasefire, and this number is expected to rise. Children are particularly vulnerable as they are tempted to play with the small objects that look like balls.

## HIDDEN WOUNDS

The mental scars caused by the trauma of the conflict will take longer to heal than the physical wounds. In war, children are forced to experience the same horrors as adults but without the same sense of understanding or context. The impact of these traumatic events is already evident with children sitting quietly, unable to play, or haunted by nightmares whenever they sleep.





# “THERE IS STILL A LOT OF WORK TO BE DONE”

Islamic Relief USA Staff Member Sabeen Shaiq Returns from War-Affected Region

After the ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah, tragedy is still affecting the lives of Lebanese civilians. In a small village in southern Lebanon, Zebqine, families are starting to return home to assess the damage and collect any memories they can salvage. Two brothers, Hussein, 15 and Ali, 13 had returned home many times to sift through the rubble that was once their home. Nothing could have prepared them for what they were about to experience during one of their visits. On Wednesday, September 6, 2006, while they were going through their home looking for their school books they were shocked by a sudden flash of a bluish-yellow light. An unexploded bomb that had landed in their home had been detonated.

At first Hussein did not know what happened, as there was no noise from the bomb. Hussein had thought that Ali had playfully thrown

something at him. Hussein reached back to pull it off, then Ali yelled at him to stop. Hussein did not realize that he was actually pulling his skin off the back of his neck and face.

Like most residents in the south, they had been warned about going into their fields and had been shown pictures of the various types of cluster bombs that were dropped by Israel in the last few days of the conflict. But as their older sister Hiba shared, you would never expect to find a bomb in your own house.

Islamic Relief USA staff members visited the boys and their family in a hospital in Tyre (Sour) right after Hussein was coming out of surgery the next day. The boys were in good spirits considering their situation and pain they were in. They were lucky considering what could have happened if they had come across the numerous cluster bombs littering

Lebanon. Hussein and Ali suffered second degree burns. Thankfully, they will physically recover and heal with time, but the emotional scars may linger permanently.

For Hussein and Ali, one of the hardest things for them and their family is losing their home along with all the memories, pictures, and belongings they have had since childhood. This is unfortunately a common theme in this village where 85 percent of the town's homes have been completely destroyed and where 40 homes were destroyed just 5 minutes before the ceasefire.

As true in any war-torn area, even though the official conflict is over, there are still a lot of lingering remnants that are greatly affecting the population. There is still a lot of work to be done. The people of Lebanon cannot be forgotten.





# LEBANESE PRIME MINISTER THANKS ISLAMIC RELIEF

## Islamic Relief Affirms Long-Term Commitment to Help Rebuild Country

Senior Lebanese officials including Prime Minister Fuoad Siniora met with Islamic Relief Worldwide President and founder, Dr. Hany El Banna on August 25, 2006. The meeting, held at the Prime Minister's office, focused on the humanitarian crisis in the country. Dr. El Banna briefed Prime Minister Siniora regarding Islamic Relief's aid distributions and ongoing rehabilitation activities. Dr. El Banna added that Islamic Relief would continue to work with the people of Lebanon even after the current emergency. Prime Minister Siniora told Dr El Banna, "We appreciate your initiatives and your efforts to help those that are suffering from this war."

Islamic Relief was one of only a handful of international aid organizations that continued to deliver aid in southern Lebanon during the height of the recent war.

### Q&A WITH DR. HANY EL BANNA

*Having recently returned from Lebanon, could you describe the impact of the ongoing conflict on the lives of ordinary people?*

Devastating. It has had a shattering impact on the lives of ordinary people.

Around a quarter of the entire population has been displaced. Those people who had the means have fled abroad. We met some of them in Damascus, Syria, where 180,000 refugees have arrived. They're living in schools and government buildings.

Almost a million people have been displaced within Lebanon. Amongst the displaced are the elderly and the disabled who have no money and have had to stay in their deserted villages and towns, facing extreme danger and deprivation.

*Can you describe some of the difficulties that aid agencies have faced in providing humanitarian relief to the people of Lebanon?*

The only entrance to Lebanon is via Syria. There used to be 3 roads, but 2 are closed due to bombings. It takes 3 to 4 hours for a car to get to the Lebanon border - imagine how long it would take for a heavy truckload of relief aid?

Because of the destruction, we had to unload the supplies from larger onto smaller trucks to take the aid as far as Tripoli. Then we unloaded the trucks onto smaller vehicles in order to get across the damaged roads towards the south. Even finding drivers willing to risk their lives by taking the aid was difficult.

There is no such thing as a safe route, not even for ambulances or relief aid.

*How would you describe the morale of the people you met in Lebanon?*

Judging by the people I met, there was a strong spirit amongst them. There is a spirit of self-help and a strong sense of community and cooperation. Although the Lebanese are very diverse, Muslims – Druze, Sunni, Shi'ah, and Christians, all were united in the face of this crisis and were helping those in need to the best of their ability, regardless of their background. They weren't waiting for outside help; they were hard at work doing as much as they could.



## THE CONFLICT

The conflict between the Sudan government and rebels started three years ago. Since then it has been estimated by the United Nations that almost 200,000 people have been killed and 2.2 million have been displaced from their homes. Many of these

## BACKGROUND

people are living in squalid conditions in overcrowded refugee camps. Atrocities continue to be committed, with villages being looted and women being raped. The escalation in violence has also pushed displaced people across the border into refugee camps in eastern Chad.

## LACK OF AID

The United Nations has estimated that the fighting has left half a million people in Darfur cut off from aid. In recent months the number of attacks on aid convoys and workers has risen dramatically and many agencies are no longer able to deliver humanitarian relief.

Internally displaced people living in the many refugee camps in the country have been the worst-affected by the aid shortages as they have little access to food, healthcare, clean water and sanitation. Attacks on aid workers and camp residents have also increased, with women particularly vulnerable to violent assault and rape.



### "I WANT MY CHILDREN TO BE AID WORKERS"

Fatma, aged 65, has four daughters and one son. She is partially sighted and unable to work. Like so many others, she had to abandon her home when the conflict reached her village. Fatma and her family are amongst 10,000 displaced people who make the Kerinding II camp their home.

"I will never forget the night in January 2003 when our village was attacked," she said. "They were shooting and burning houses. We ran away from our house but my husband's legs had been wounded. They burned three houses and one of them was ours. The next morning they came back and looted all the cattle and other property that belonged to the villagers. Some time later, when the attack stopped, we returned and found my husband. He had to be hospitalized but died seven days later."

Before the war in Darfur, Fatma's family had a good life. They owned 20 cows, 20 sheep, 12 goats, 4 donkeys, 1 horse and a reasonable amount of land that was suitable for farming. They had also stocked enough food to last the entire family for two years. Today, they have nothing.

"Our lives depend on Islamic Relief," says Fatma. "We are happy being supported by them because we are taken care of better than people in other camps. We receive extra soap, clothes, shoes, and other items."

"Our life has changed completely. The war that caused us these problems is still going on. Our village is just 15 kilometers away from this camp but we cannot go and visit it. We feel very angry because we cannot go back to our home due to the security situation. Armed militia are everywhere around us. My family cannot go even 1,000 meters away of the camp to collect fire wood and grass."

Fatma is still hopeful for her family's future. "I would like my children to be educated and help with humanitarian work, like Islamic Relief's aid workers have been doing," she said.

The camps for displaced people have become a symbol of the Darfur conflict. There are now approximately 200 camps in the region, some near the border with Chad, others near major towns and cities. The Kerinding II camp in West Darfur was established by Islamic Relief in 2004 and is home to almost 10,000 people.

Nermin Silajdzic, Islamic Relief's camp coordinator, describes life for people in Darfur and the challenges he faces working there.

### *What is life like in the camps?*

Life in the camp is very difficult, especially when compared to how people lived before the conflict. A family of about six share one shelter that is 10 x 13 feet. Some people had been sleeping on the ground for about a year before Islamic Relief distributed mats.

### *What is the security situation like?*

The number of security incidents within the camps has increased recently, with people being attacked and donkeys being stolen.

Men, women and children are all being terrorized by militia groups on a daily basis. Shots are often fired into the air to frighten people as the militia ride by on horses or camels. Parents fear for their children and do not let them leave the camp. Many people have had family members killed or raped when the militia attacked their villages. Now they cannot sleep at night because they know the militias are nearby.

### *Are people able to earn a living?*

The majority of those living in the Kerinding II camp have no way of earning a living and rely solely on assistance from aid agencies and the United Nations. Some people collect grass and wood from outside the camp and sell it in the market. Leaving the camp, however, is extremely dangerous. Women who do venture out then have to carry sacks of grass to the market, 3 miles away in the town of El Geneina. A sack of grass will earn them 100 Sudanese dinars (approximately 47 cents) but if it doesn't sell they have to carry it back to the camp and try again the following day.

Recently Islamic Relief has been mobilizing people into groups such as the newly formed Women's Affairs Committee. These committees encourage people to come together and explore ways they can earn a living and support each other.

### *Are children able to go to school?*

Islamic Relief operates a school that has over 1,800 students, mainly from the Kerinding II camp. There are 35 teachers but they do not get paid very much so parents often contribute to their salaries to ensure that the teachers can afford basic necessities of life, such as food. The school itself does not have benches or chairs and needs more books and teaching materials. Despite this, children enjoy school and many of them aspire to be teachers and headmasters when they grow up.

Islamic Relief is also raising awareness amongst parents about the importance of education. Many children do not attend school because they are trying to earn money and girls in particular drop out by the age of 14 or 16 to get married. Islamic

Relief staff members are trying to get these children back to school.

### *How are children coping?*

It seems to me that children in the camp have lost one phase in their life – childhood. They are too mature for their age. Earlier I was talking with 20 children from the camp and I noticed how they don't have any desire for toys and playgrounds. They make trucks from old oil cans and play with them in the sand but when I asked what they would like to have the answers were not childlike. A few of the children said they would like to have a bike, a football or a toy but mostly they asked for beds, mosquito nets, blankets, teacups, carpets, clothes, shoes and school bags. One six-year-old girl, Hisham, told me that she would like to receive a blanket to protect herself from mosquitoes and from the cold.

### *Do camp residents have access to healthcare?*

Islamic Relief operates a health clinic that provides essential healthcare, medicine, antenatal care and health awareness training.

Between 100 and 140 patients visit the clinic everyday and the 13 members of staff struggle to keep up with the demand. At the moment we are also cleaning up the camp, cluster by cluster, to ensure better hygiene and we regularly distribute soap and other hygiene items to camp residents.

### *How do people feel about returning home?*

People cannot go back because of the security situation. Of course they would like to go back eventually but they don't know when this will be possible. They are patient people, prepared to wait for the security situation to improve.

The reality is that rural areas in Darfur are very unsafe and many villages have now been claimed by militia members, who have been farming on the land. Recently, International Red Cross workers have been helping people restore family relations by training them in how to write messages for their loved ones, establish contact and find out if they are still alive.

### *What are some of the humanitarian issues in Darfur?*

The biggest humanitarian problem in Darfur is that there is no freedom of movement because bandits control the roads. This means that humanitarian convoys have not been able to deliver aid in areas of great need. Some people are dying of hunger and sickness because sufficient aid cannot reach them.

We also have a problem with unregistered people living in the camp. There are currently over 8,500 registered people in the camp and another 1,200 or so who are not – plus around 600 who live just outside. These people come to the Kerinding II camp for many reasons, including the fact that nearby camps are very overcrowded, or because they have family in Kerinding II. However as they are not registered they don't have the ration cards they need to get food and other aid items. But people end up sharing their food with them anyway, especially with women or the elderly.





# The State of

# Water

## in the world

**W**ater is a basic need of humanity. Life and death are inextricably linked to the availability and cleanliness of this resource. Millions, however, are left without such access. Some of Islamic Relief's most important development projects to prevent future disasters include installing and cultivating water resources in under-privileged regions of the world.

An example of Islamic Relief's work in this important sector is making water contaminated by arsenic safe to drink.

Arsenic is a notoriously poisonous metalloid that has many allotropic forms; yellow, black and gray are a few that are regularly seen. Arsenic contamination of groundwater has led to a massive epidemic of arsenic poisoning in Bangladesh and neighboring countries. It is estimated that approximately 57 million people are drinking groundwater with arsenic concentrations elevated above the World Health Organization's (WHO) standard of 10 parts per billion. *(from Wikipedia)*

According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF):

- 1 billion people do not have access to safe water
- 2.6 billion live without basic sanitation
- Millions of people in the developing world, including an estimated 425 million children under the age of 18, still do not have access to an improved water supply

- Over 980 million children still do not have access to adequate sanitation
- Of all babies born in the developing world each year, around half live without basic sanitation and one in five without access to safe drinking water, increasing the risk of water-borne illness
- Unsafe water and lack of basic sanitation, combined with poor hygiene, contribute to the deaths of more than 1.5 million children under the age of five
- Factors such as illness, the daily journey to collect water and the absence of hygienic facilities in schools keep older children – particularly girls – out of class and uneducated, perpetuating the cycle of poverty.

Islamic Relief operates a wide-array of water and sanitation projects in the following countries: Afghanistan, Albania, Bangladesh, Chechnya, Indonesia, Kosova, Pakistan, Palestine, and Sudan. Projects include delivery of clean water to rural areas, digging water wells and hand pumps, installation of water supply and irrigation systems, installation of new toilet and bathing facilities, and more.

### Water Facts

- If all the earth's water fit in a gallon jug, available fresh water would equal just over a tablespoon.
- A person can live about a month without food, but only about a week without water.
- A person needs 4 to 5 gallons of water per day to survive.
- The average American individual uses 100 to 176 gallons of water at home each day.
- The average African family uses about 5 gallons of water each day.
- More than 200 million hours are spent each day by women and female children to collect water from distant, often polluted sources.
- Approximately 60 to 70 percent of the rural population in the developing world have neither access to a safe and convenient source of water nor a satisfactory means of waste disposal.
- According to the United Nations, 20 percent of the world's population in 30 countries face water shortages. This number is expected to rise to 30 percent of the world's population in 50 countries in 2025.
- Poor people in the developing world pay on average 12 times more per liter of water than fellow citizens connected to municipal systems; these poverty-stricken people use less water, much of which is dirty and contaminated.

*\*Source: Water Partners International*

*\*According to a report published by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in September 2006*





# Evening of Inspiration

## Over 7,000 Across the Country Inspired to Help Those in Need

Islamic Relief brought the highly popular “Evening of Inspiration” benefit concert to the United States for the first time, after holding it for the third straight year in the United Kingdom and selling out in all six venues. Over \$1 million was raised at the events; most of the funds will benefit projects to help children and other victims of the humanitarian crisis in the Middle East.

The “Evening of Inspiration” benefit concert - touring in Dallas, New Jersey, Detroit, and Los Angeles from July 27 to August 6 - showcased some of the world’s leading performers of Islamic cultural entertainment.

The event reshaped the culture of Islamic entertainment throughout the United States, being one of the first tours of its nature in history.

Headliners included platinum-selling artist Sami Yusuf and the Maryland-based group Native Deen. Yusuf has fast become the leading Islamic singer in Europe, the Middle East and United States. TIME Magazine has called Yusuf “Islam’s biggest rock star” who’s “songs of peace elicit Beatle-sized frenzy.” Muslim comedians taking part in the concerts included Mohammad Amer, Preacher Moss, and Azhar Usman.

The Dallas Morning News, which covered the city’s sold out show reported, “Diversity was on display and maybe even the star of the show. The audience crossed just about every imaginable line - black, white and brown, young and old, conservative dress and thoroughly modern.”

Islamic Relief has always strived to connect with its donors and supporters and express gratitude for their generosity and support. The benefit concerts provided attendees with fun-filled, family entertainment while raising awareness and funds for humanitarian causes.

*“Islamic Relief benefit [concert] is a refreshing departure from the routine.”* - The Dallas Morning News, July 28, 2006



# AIDS

Understanding

## Islamic Relief attends AIDS 2006 Conference

Islamic Relief representatives attended the world's largest HIV/AIDS conference, which took place in Toronto, Canada from August 13-18. Bringing together individuals, aid groups, business and political leaders concerned with the epidemic, the conference aimed to inform, motivate, and send people back home more proactive in the fight against the deadly disease.

Since the threat of HIV/AIDS made a prominent global presence over two decades ago, the disease has taken countless lives of children, women, and men. According to the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), an estimated 39 million people worldwide are infected with the disease. The majority of those affected are living in developing countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Just last year alone, over 2.8 million people lost their lives because of AIDS-related causes. UNAIDS reports 4.1 million new people were infected with the virus last year. Since treatment is too expensive for those in the developing countries, many cases of infection go untreated, especially for children. Only 8-13 percent of children under 15 infected by HIV in developing countries have access to treatment.

In Africa, a growing segment of new infection cases are in mothers and children. Many times, husbands carrying the disease infect their wives and then it is passed on to their newborns. About 30 percent of pregnant women in South Africa are HIV positive. A new phenomenon as a result is the "AIDS Orphan." These are children who's parents are either too debilitated by the disease to take care of their children or have lost the battle to HIV/AIDS.

Poor communities dealing with the increasing death toll of HIV/AIDS around the world are

further entangled in the cycle of poverty and underdevelopment. When a family loses its breadwinner to the disease, this causes further hardship on the family members and decreases the economic output of the area.

Islamic Relief is operating an AIDS orphans project in South Africa, helping fill these important gaps. The tragic affects of HIV/AIDS on countless of innocent lives cannot be ignored. Long-term, Islamic Relief hopes to expand its projects to help the innocent children, women and men who are faced with this epidemic.





# UNITING TO FIGHT AIDS

Islamic Relief joins religious leaders from around the world to respond to HIV/AIDS.

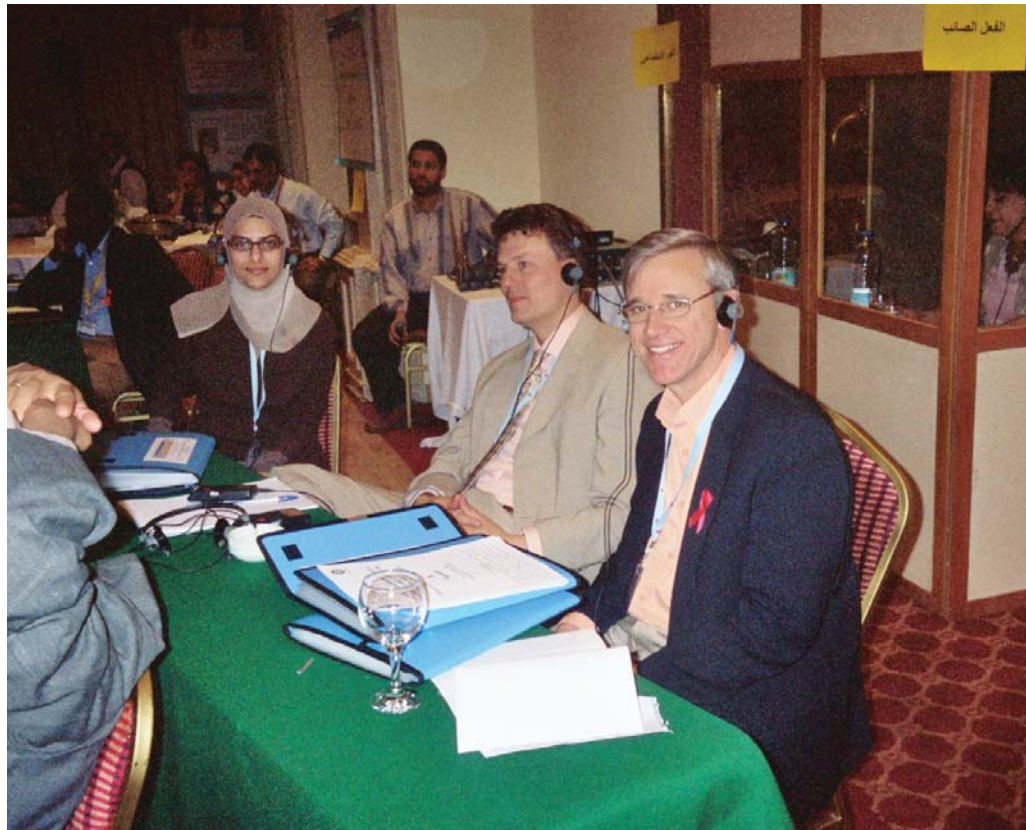
It has been 25 years since HIV/AIDS came on to the world radar. Since 1981 over 25 million people have lost their lives to a disease that has been, and continues to be greatly misunderstood. Because of the taboo and stigma attached to this disease Islamic Relief has been cautious to approach the subject, but now with the deadly virus growing to new proportions we are diving into working on this pandemic.

HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) is the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome). It may be passed when infected blood, semen, or vaginal secretions come in contact with an uninfected person's broken skin or mucous membranes. Pregnant women can also pass HIV to their baby during pregnancy or delivery, as well as through breast-feeding.

AIDS is a severe, life-threatening condition caused by HIV. Most people infected with HIV seem healthy, and many do not realize they have been infected. Without treatment, most people with HIV infection will develop serious symptoms at some point in the future. HIV infects white blood cells that manage the operation of the immune system. This leaves the infected person vulnerable to life-threatening illnesses.

The current global situation is going through an all too familiar chapter in history. Asia and the Middle East are bogged down by the stigma that alienates survivors from their families and jobs and the taboo that prevents proper treatment and prevents people from being tested for the disease. As a result, the epidemic is not getting the proper attention. If prevention methods and education about the disease are not disseminated soon, the epidemic might reach to the level of sub-Saharan Africa. This trend is already evident according to the United Nations which states that the Arab region accounts for one of the highest infection growth rates in the world.

Recently Islamic Relief staff attended a conference organized by the United Nations



Development Program (UNDP) and the League of Arab States. It was the 2nd annual regional forum for religious leaders regarding HIV/AIDS in the Arab States, consisting of Muslim and Christian, male and female scholars from all over the Arab world. For five days, the leading religious leaders in the Arab world discussed sensitive issues related to AIDS in a constructive interfaith dialog for a sustainable response. They worked towards creating a joint action pact built upon previously agreed principles from previous conferences.

Islamic Relief is also planning its own conference which hopes to build on this and other conferences on the subject. Islamic Relief is in a unique situation as an organization built upon Islamic values with a mission of being a purely humanitarian relief organization. Islamic Relief hopes to develop and apply approaches to HIV/AIDS which are both effective and Islamically sound. The conference aims to develop these approaches jointly by Islamic scholars, HIV/AIDS-related practitioners, and people living with HIV/AIDS. They will be based on Islamic teachings and examples of good practice, and will build upon existing Muslim and interfaith declarations related to HIV/AIDS.



# TAKING CONVENTION ATTENDEES TO 'ANOTHER WORLD'

Islamic Relief's 'IR Xperience' exhibition Showcases International Projects

Each year during the Labor Day weekend, tens of thousands of people congregate for the national Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) Convention, the largest Muslim-American symposium in the United States. Now in its 43rd year, the convention is known for drawing in nationally and internationally acclaimed speakers, its musically-filled entertainment sessions, and most of all, its highly anticipated, mammoth bazaar. Anyone who's attended the ISNA national

convention has experienced the sea of 500 bazaar booths filled with clothing, books, multimedia, jewelry, artwork, and information on various organizations and causes.

And, at the front-center of this year's ISNA bazaar, stood a seemingly misplaced emergency shelter, a water well, and a makeshift orphan classroom...all props in Islamic Relief's booth.

For the first year, Islamic Relief brought the

"IR Xperience" to the United States. The "IR Xperience" is an innovative exhibition which allows bystanders to feel and experience the lives of those less fortunate. The display "Xperience" centered around three themes: Orphan Support/Education, Emergency Shelter, and Water and Sanitation.

A partial classroom, equipped with desks, school supplies, and typical class information, was in the Orphan Support/Education quarter. There, attendees could learn about the over 15,000 orphans supported by Islamic Relief donors in 18 countries worldwide.

Directly next to the orphan classroom, towered a makeshift emergency shelter like the ones created in Pakistan after the 7.6 magnitude earthquake left over 3.5 million people homeless. After emergencies such as earthquakes and tsunamis, Islamic Relief instantly responds to the needs of those affected by erecting temporary tents and building shelters like the one displayed at ISNA.

The last section of the display included a water well and water-droplet facts about the state of water around the world. For instance, many of us do not know that 1.1 billion people in the world do not have access to safe water; or, that the average woman in Africa and Asia has to walk 3.7 miles to collect water; and, that 2.2 million people in developing countries, mostly children, die every year from diseases associated with lack of access to safe water and adequate sanitation.

The display received the attention of many of the ISNA attendees including a special visit from comedian Preacher Moss, film director/producer Morgan Spurlock, and ISNA President Ingrid Mattson.



# COMMUNITY FUND-RAISING EVENTS

A Special Thanks to Our Generous Donors

While the world suffered through calamity after calamity in 2004 and 2005, the world also witnessed an increased level of benevolence and generosity in 2006.

Days into 2005, millions of people in Asia and East Africa found themselves struggling to cope with the aftermath of the most powerful tsunami to hit the earth in 40 years. Months later, tragedy hit home when Hurricane Katrina, one of the worst disasters in United States' history, struck down on the Gulf Coast. Soon afterwards, amidst existing unsteadiness, a 7.6 magnitude earthquake devastated South Asia, affecting over 5 million people. And recently, conflict in the Middle East left thousands injured, and displaced over a million people in Lebanon.

With the consistency of a loyal friend, Islamic Relief's donors opened their hearts and wallets during these times of difficulties. Millions of dollars were raised for emergency relief and implementation projects. During the Islamic month of Ramadan alone in 2006, donors at community fund-raising events contributed more than \$2 million to Islamic Relief projects worldwide!

Islamic Relief would like to recognize its donors and volunteers in the following communities who have spent their hard-earned time and money to organize community fund-raising events in their area:

Anaheim, CA, Atlanta, GA, Bay Area, CA, Boston, MA, Brooklyn, NY, Canton, MI, Chicago, IL, Dallas, TX, Dearborn, MI, Detroit, MI, Houston, TX, Garden Grove, CA, Long Beach, CA, Los Angeles, CA, Memphis, TN, Miami, FL, Milwaukee, WI, Minneapolis, MN, Pittsburgh, PA, Princeton, NJ, San Diego, CA, Seattle, WA, Tampa, FL, and Washington, DC.

May God Almighty reward all of you with the best.





# HURRICANE KATRINA

## Islamic Relief Continues to Help Victims in the Gulf Coast

Despite the current lack of media attention the victims of Hurricane Katrina receive, the needs for recovery and relief still remain crucial. More than a year after the worst natural disaster in U.S. history, Islamic Relief has remained on the ground on the Gulf Coast to provide much needed aid as part of the recovery efforts.

Thus far, Islamic Relief has provided over \$2 million in aid to hurricane victims in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas. In Louisiana alone, Islamic Relief has distributed over 1.5 million pounds of food to beneficiaries in Baton Rouge and New Orleans.

With projects initiated in the aforementioned states since the recovery efforts began, Islamic Relief's current efforts are focused on helping hurricane victims in the affected areas of Louisiana. Islamic Relief has many ongoing aid distribution and assistance programs operating in the state as part of its relief efforts.

Islamic Relief's project coordinator in Louisiana, Ruben Vaughan, has been in the area since the first few weeks after the storm hit. Vaughan said "the role of Islamic Relief in Louisiana has been very diverse since the

fall of last year. We have been blessed to aid those in need with food, clothing, shelter, and medical supplies."

At the Magnolia Farmers Market, Islamic Relief's point of distribution in New Orleans, over 20,000 people have benefitted from aid provided between the few months of June and November, 2006. Primarily a food distribution point, the Farmers Market is open five days a week to locals needing to restock on the essentials. In addition to canned foods, bread, cereal, water, and hygiene supplies, Islamic Relief also distributes bedroom, bath, and kitchen sets to residents recovering from the disaster.

Islamic Relief's annual 'Humanitarian Day' for the homeless and needy families also took place in New Orleans and Baton Rouge for the first time this past Islamic holy month of Ramadan to assist the needy in the two cities. The event served close to one thousand people on the weekend of October 14-15. Event attendees were served hot catered Cajun cuisine, groceries, hygiene kits, and household supplies. In addition to the above, Islamic relief also delivers food on the first Thursday of every month to the elderly in poverty

who have no transportation. This effort is conducted in conjunction with the Capital Area Agency in Baton Rouge.

Islamic Relief also hosted a 15 person volunteer team from Dartmouth College for two weeks in December. The volunteer coordinators from Dartmouth chose to partner with Islamic Relief to contribute to the continuous rebuilding effort of New Orleans and the surrounding parishes. During their stay, the student volunteers worked on projects in coordination with Islamic Assistance of New Orleans, Masjid Ar-Raheem of New Orleans, the Second Harvest Food Bank of New Orleans, the United Way, and the American Red Cross of Plaquemines Parish.

"The relationship with those that benefit from this effort is truly beautiful because there is love involved," added Vaughan. "Some evacuees, after receiving our services, volunteer in our events to give back to their communities and bond closer to this compassionate effort."





Manager. "In 2006, a total of 102 partners scattered across the country assisted volunteer groups," she said.

"My first experience of Humanitarian Day was something I will never forget; something I will probably carry for the rest of my life," noted a first-time volunteer. "Physically helping people less fortunate than I am was something different from giving *zakah* (mandatory almsgiving for Muslims). My main goal wasn't to hand out shirts or supplies, it was just to bring a smile to their faces and bring a little hope to their lives. The people were so polite, thankful and humorous that I couldn't help but smile to myself."

The event has traditionally taken place in the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, when Muslims are encouraged to donate to the poor and needy.

The Boston Herald reported, "You don't see much out there to try to help people who are in need," a homeless veteran said...It was a declaration of appreciation for the 'Humanitarian Day for the Homeless' event at the center, sponsored by Islamic Relief."

Yousef Abdallah, Islamic Relief's operations manager for the Northeast office noted, "We have reached out to countless homeless and have seen faces filled with happiness; that is the best thing about my job. We need to do more domestic projects. It's about what we face right in front of us: Love thy neighbor, and here we are."

Islamic Relief's domestic projects have increased tremendously over the years. In addition to responding to emergencies such as Hurricane Katrina, Islamic Relief is continuously involved in assisting needy individuals and families within the U.S. and working with community organizations to improve people's livelihoods.

With new cities already lined up for the

14-15, 2006. In partnership with Los Angeles-based ILM Foundation, and community organizations within each of the 14 cities, this year's event came a far way since its inception in Downtown Los Angeles' 'skid row' in 2002.

Participating cities for this year's event included: Baltimore, Baton Rouge, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Houston, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Newark, New Orleans, New York, Portland, and Washington D.C.

Volunteers in the 14 cities converged in local neighborhoods to provide essentials to the homeless such as a warm meal, a gift package

# Humanitarian Day

## Ramadan Respite for Our Nation's Homeless

The fifth annual 'Humanitarian Day' for the homeless event this year helped serve over 18,000 homeless and needy people in 14 cities across the United States. Muslims throughout the participating cities helped serve food and other much-needed supplies as they observed their fast in the month of Ramadan.

Islamic Relief was one of the lead coordinators of the event, which took place on October

including hygiene and emergency kits, bath towels, clothing, blankets, ponchos, and toys for children. In addition, free of charge HIV/AIDS screenings, flu vaccinations, educational materials and referral information was also provided.

"Government entities, community organizations and religious institutions are among the partners for Humanitarian Day," said Clareen Menzies, Islamic Relief's Projects

next Humanitarian Day, Menzies attributes the growth of the project to word-of-mouth publicity and the approach to serving the needy. "The word is spreading," she said. "People who are involved have a huge benefit and they tell others. Commitment to treating people with respect and kindness sets us apart from other programs and we hope they will remember."



Domestic Projects



# DEDICATED TO SERVE

Islamic Relief Awarded 'Medal of Dedication' by Pakistan government



Pakistani President General Pervez Musharraf presented the Sitar-i-Isaar ('Star of Dedication') Award to Islamic Relief and other aid groups for their relief efforts after last year's devastating earthquake. The award ceremony took place on September 21 at the Pakistani Embassy in Washington, D.C.

The award represents President Musharraf's acknowledgement of the tireless, hard work of Islamic Relief in Pakistan. President Musharraf has assured Islamic Relief that the government of Pakistan will always be a supportive partner of its efforts.

Islamic Relief is grateful for this honor and has been continuing its efforts to assist victims of last October's earthquake. Islamic Relief's Chairman of the Board, Dr. Mohamed Attawia, was on hand to receive the award from President Musharraf.

The earthquake that struck the South Asian subcontinent last October has affected over 3 million people. Islamic Relief continues to operate long-term sustainable development projects to ensure that the millions who have been left homeless are not forgotten. Islamic Relief has collected

over \$30 million in aid (cash and in-kind) thus far, and its projects have benefited over 340,000 people.

Islamic Relief has established shelters, mobile health clinics, and water and sanitation facilities throughout the earthquake-affected areas. Approximately 1.7 million people have also benefited from Islamic Relief's Road Re-Opening and Access Project, which cleared landslides to open roads for aid to be delivered to the affected areas.



# MOVING FORWARD

## Islamic Relief USA Headquarters Moves to New Facility

After a decade long residency in Burbank, California, Islamic Relief has relocated its national headquarters to Buena Park, California. The move from Los Angeles County to Orange County, effective in July of 2006, was extremely well received by staff and local community members.

The move, as a sign of the times, signifies the exponential growth that has been progressively mounting at Islamic Relief. In addition to a larger office - nearly 3 times the size of the previous office - Islamic Relief has also doubled its staff to better operate the expanded international and domestic projects.

“As hard as it was to leave Islamic Relief’s home for so many years,” says Sabeen Shaiq, Islamic Relief Programs Coordinator, “it seems appropriate that we moved closer to our

donor base and into a larger more professional environment. Islamic Relief is growing in many ways and this is just one of them.”

After serving its donors and beneficiaries from the same location for over ten years, relocation was inevitable. The new office offers local Southern California donors a more convenient, central location which is close to major freeways and Islamic centers.

Mohammed Daud, Accounting Manager, has been working for Islamic Relief since 1998. During this time, he’s seen the company and its staff members expand and mature into the family it is today.

“Our office building is surrounded by modern buildings,” says Daud. “We have a view from this office to nearby mountains full of snow

in the winter whenever there is snowfall. It is a sight worth seeing, picturesque and refreshing.”

In addition to its national headquarters in Buena Park, California, Islamic Relief has established offices in Totowa, New Jersey; Detroit, Michigan; and Dallas, Texas.

Daud added, “All praise is to God Almighty. We have a large prayer room, where brothers and sisters can pray very comfortably all together, in congregation. This is a unique facility and blessing from God Almighty. We are very grateful for all this and hope, as a result, we will do our job in much better way to help the needy all over the world.”





Every 30 seconds in Africa a child dies of malaria.  
\$10 can save a life.



As little as \$10 can provide a bed net and malaria treatment for one individual in Africa. Please help save lives and donate today.

Call (888) 479-4968 or email [info@irw.org](mailto:info@irw.org)

Malaria kills more than a million people per year; 90 percent of those who die are in Africa, and the victims are mostly children. Each year, malaria afflicts approximately a half-billion people.

Islamic Relief is working towards fighting this disease in an effort to reach one of the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals.

Islamic Relief operates the following projects to help fight the disease:

#### SUDAN

- Radio campaign to provide educational information on how to protect against malaria.
- Provision of equipment and training to hospitals to help treat malaria patients.
- Awareness campaigns to educate students about malaria in south Sudan and Darfur.
- Distribution of bed nets with insecticide and provision of health awareness trainings in the Blue Nile State.
- Treatment of malaria patients at Islamic Relief's primary healthcare center.

#### ETHIOPIA

- Distribution of bed nets with insecticide to pregnant and lactating mothers.



# Islamic Relief

*A Worldwide Leader in Alleviating Poverty*

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For the third year in a row, Islamic Relief USA has been recognized as a 4-star charity by Charity Navigator, its highest rating. Charity navigator is America's largest charity evaluator.

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