

Partnership

the official newsletter of Islamic Relief

Winter 2008

PAKISTAN

The region of Baluchistan, Pakistan suffers from regular drought. Water is in scarce supply and few people have access to electricity. What people do have in abundance are wind and sunshine. Explore how Islamic Relief is utilizing this precious natural resource to give people light and water.

Bangladesh: Cyclone Sidr Hits

Category 4 super cyclonic storm hits the country, taking 3,000 lives and affecting 3.1 million people.

Humanitarian Day

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LIGHT & LIFE



MOST VILLAGES THROUGHOUT BALUCHISTAN, PAKISTAN DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO RUNNING WATER OR ELECTRICITY.

PEOPLE ARE FORCED TO BURN EXPENSIVE OIL TO COOK AND LIGHT THEIR HOMES, AND WOMEN SPEND MANY HOURS A DAY FETCHING WATER FOR THEIR FAMILIES.

BUT TWO THINGS THEY DO HAVE IN ABUNDANCE ARE WIND AND SUN LIGHT.

USING THESE TWO NATURAL RESOURCES ISLAMIC RELIEF IS HELPING TO TRANSFORM THE LIFE OF ONE VILLAGE.

T

he village of Patkin is made up of 50 households and is located in the middle of the parched, dry landscape that characterizes Baluchistan.

Like most villages in the region, Patkin has no electricity and is regularly plagued by drought. Finding water is a daily struggle. Agriculture and farming are the main sources of income in this region and failed crops have left many families living in desperate conditions. Although there are wells in the village, they only contain salty water and women have to walk for many miles in the baking sun to reach the nearest source of drinkable water.

“WE HAD NO IDEA WE COULD HELP OURSELVES”

Islamic Relief has been working in Baluchistan since 2002 and has already installed windmills in many villages to help draw water for the communities. However, it was decided that this work should be expanded so people could utilize the other natural resource they had in abundance, sunshine. Islamic Relief’s community development officers helped

the villagers of Patkin to form their own Community Organization (CO), identifying the need for clean water and electricity as their priorities.

Munir Ahmed, a teacher from Patkin, explained, “Before the Community Organization, we were scattered, selfish and did not care about helping each other, there was no unity among us. We had no idea that we could help ourselves by working together.” He continued, “With the help of Islamic Relief we formed a Community Organization both for men and women. Now the local villagers are united, we discuss our issues in our monthly meeting and find solutions to those issues.”

IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS

“Islamic Relief initiated work in the village by making the Community Organization. They told us how we should work for ourselves and to stand on our own feet. They told us that they would co-operate with us in solving the problems,” said Ali Ahmed, a resident of Patkin. “We had a drinking water problem. There was an open well in the village from where we fetched water for our household use. But

to drink the water is risky and it has a bad smell and taste,” explained Ahmed. As a result of drinking the contaminated water, diseases such as diarrhea and dysentery were common throughout the village.

It is often the women’s job to fetch the water but this can mean walking for almost a whole day to find uncontaminated, safe water. The women said that this made them really tired and they often fell ill, making it difficult for them to look after their children. In addition, the lack of electricity in the village meant people had to burn kerosene lamps to light their homes and use firewood for cooking, both of which let off smoke that irritates the eyes and throat. After school, children had no choice but to do their homework using the oil lamps to see but this caused infections in their eyes and restrain them from studying.

WATER FOR LIFE

Islamic Relief worked with the community to install a Solar Lighting and Water pumping system in Patkin, taking advantage of the blistering heat and strong winds in the region. The solar-powered water pumping system uses the sun to



Children retrieve water from the community pumping system in Patkin. The new water system allows women more time with their families and working on income-generating projects.



National Development Director for Islamic Relief, Anwar Khan, takes a break with some children by a central water pump in Kharan, Pakistan. Islamic Relief established the water pumping system as a way to bring water to a central location in the village, making it easier on the community to have access to the much-needed natural resource.

run a pump that brings water from deep under the ground, providing a source of safe water in the middle of the village. This saves women vital time and energy, allowing them to spend the rest of the day caring for their children or working on income-generating activities such as traditional Balochi embroidery. Villagers helped with the construction of the central water tank and have also laid a pipeline to irrigate land so they can begin to grow crops, something that was unthinkable a few months ago.

“Before the installation of the solar pump, we faced problems in accessing clean drinking water. We would fetch water from far-flung areas and from open wells. But now we don’t have problems in accessing clean drinking water,” said Ali Ahmed.

POWER FROM THE SUN

Islamic Relief also installed solar panels on people’s homes, which provide them with light. Villagers have been trained on how to maintain the pumps and the panels which means the project is sustainable. And by using the sun as energy, it is also environmentally friendly. For villagers like Ali Ahmed the system has transformed their lives. “We use fuel wood for heating and cooking purposes but before the installation of the solar lighting system we used kerosene oil for lighting – this posed many problems,” he said. “Thanks to the new solar lighting our monthly expenses have become less.

Because of the bright lights, my children study every night. When I see my children are studying I pray for Islamic Relief and the team.”

Community Organizations

Islamic Relief began its work in Patkin by forming a CO made up of members of the village who identified their main problems and also the solutions to overcome them.

As part of our support to COs in Pakistan, Islamic Relief provides a package of management and financial training. With this knowledge, the CO in Patkin has set up a savings system, which has allowed them to give small loans to members in order to help with their businesses or farming.

SUSTAINABLE GRASS ROOTS DEVELOPMENT

Islamic Relief has tried to help to set up COs in all the communities we work, with ensuring community participation and input, thus making our projects sustainable and appropriate to each village. Without the COs it is unlikely that our projects would be accepted by the community and would thus have limited long-term benefits.

THE MOST DIFFICULT TIMES

Seventy-two-year-old Bibi Naaz is the manager of the female CO in Killi Abdul

Samad Totaazi, a remote village in Kharan, Baluchistan. Bibi Naaz has partially lost her eye-sight and lives with 16 members of her extended family. “I have faced some extremely difficult situations in my life, most recently when we lost our animals and crops in the long drought. By losing these we have been through the most difficult times of our life,” Bibi said. “Not only that but there is very little water for drinking and washing and we used to fetch water from far away areas which was difficult and took a long-time.”

“We were scattered, there was no unity between the residents of Killi. Each of us was thinking in isolation and was not bothered about other people’s problems. With the formation of the Community Organization, we learned we can find solutions to our problems and help each other. We also learned about saving money for worse situations and for our community development.”

Through the formation of the Community Organization, the village identified the need for clean water and also income generating activities as major issues. “The old well was not covered and was polluted with dirt and sometimes deadly animals like snakes. That caused a number of diseases among people.” Islamic Relief has been working with the community, providing them with hand-pumps and also livestock so they can produce milk, butter, yogurt and wool to sell in the market. •

WASHED AWAY

Hundreds of Thousands are Homeless after Pakistan Cyclone Floods Cities

Cover



The most pressing needs are for shelter, clean drinking water, food, and healthcare and sanitation facilities.

EMERGENCY INTERVENTION

Islamic Relief dispatched an emergency team to Baluchistan and work began in the regions of Kharan and Chagai. In Chagai, 80 percent of the population has been displaced from their homes and in many rural areas up to 60 percent of houses have been washed away.

Islamic Relief provided 900 families in Chagai and Kharan with temporary shelter, food aid, water cans and kitchen sets. Working with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), Islamic Relief also distributed tents and relief items to displaced families in Chagai and Kharan. Islamic Relief has also planned to distribute shelter kits, kitchen sets and hygiene kits to 1,800 more families in Kharan in partnership with the Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (SIDA.)

Islamic Relief recently began a project in Kharan and Jaffarabad working with the UK Government's Department for International Development. The project will provide shelter repair kits, hygiene kits, kitchen sets and water cans to 3,400 families as well as the provision of health and hygiene sessions to stop the spread of disease.

HEALTH CONCERNS

Islamic Relief has already provided healthcare to thousands of people injured in the floods in 12 health centers in Kharan and Chagai. Islamic Relief is also working with UNICEF on a project that will focus on the provision of clean drinking water and sanitation facilities to prevent the spread of waterborne diseases.

Islamic Relief's plans also include the provision of safe drinking water, water bladders, water purification tablets and water cans to 6,000 families in Kharan City and its suburbs. The construction of new restrooms and drainage facilities, which had been damaged in the floods, as well as carrying out hygiene promotion sessions, are also in the works. •

Since the cyclone hit, nearly 400,000 people have been displaced and little remains of the mud brick homes that once characterized the landscape of Baluchistan and Sindh, Pakistan.

On June 25, 2007 a cyclone hit the regions of Baluchistan and Sindh in Pakistan, causing widespread and severe flooding. More than 300 people have died in the floods and around 400,000 have lost their homes. The floods washed away or seriously damaged people's mud-brick homes and left them stranded as roads turned to mud.

VILLAGES WASHED AWAY

Around 2.5 million people have been affected by the floods and as many as 500,000 have been left without safe drinking water as water sources have been destroyed or contaminated.

With no water or sanitation facilities, the threat of waterborne disease and skin conditions is high, especially among vulnerable young children. In some places, entire villages have been washed away and people have lost all their possessions, food stocks, clothes, livelihoods and livestock.



Pakistani Cricket star, Shahid Afridi, distributes aid to families in Baluchistan.

DEVASTATED AND DISPLACED

Islamic Relief reassures flood victims they are not forgotten

In June 2007, devastating floods affected 2 million people in Pakistan. More than 250,000 people were forced to flee their homes in the western province of Baluchistan, the most severely affected area. Large concrete bridges, roads, homes and schools were washed away. Islamic Relief's offices in the area were ready to respond to the floods.

Islamic Relief's national development director, Anwar Khan, visited the area in July.

Muhammad Yaqub, a local resident, described how heavy rain and water came into their mud brick homes. They picked up their children and ran into the few higher areas they could find. For twelve hours they waited, huddled with their children until the

torrent of raging water slowed to become a river. They waded back to what was left of their homes and picked up a few blankets. They could not drink the local water since it had been contaminated. Those who had money ordered water from water tanks, those who were poor had to walk for hours to get water. In the month after the floods had washed away their homes, the families received a small food package and tent provided by Islamic Relief. Before the tent arrived, the family was spending their days in temperatures reaching up to 120° F, sitting under any tree that still remained.

In the Kolan area of Kharan, where there were once mosques, schools and homes for thousands of people, there was now a barren plain. Islamic Relief invited Pakistani cricket player Shahid Afridi to visit the area.

Afridi participated in the distribution of \$100,000 worth of tents, blankets, monthly food parcels and kitchen sets. People stood for hours in the heat to receive their emergency supplies. Some froze when they saw Afridi, the famous cricket player, distributing supplies by hand to them. They never dreamt of meeting him in normal circumstances and felt that the world was ignoring their current plight. As he visited the devastated areas, hundreds of people followed his car in cars, motorcycles, bicycles and many by foot. His trip was short but showed that the world had not forgotten those effected by the flood during their time of need.

Afridi will be visiting the United States in February 2008 to raise awareness for the humanitarian needs in Baluchistan. •

ZAREENA'S KITCHEN GARDEN

Two Years After the Earthquake, Villagers in Pakistan are Re-building their Livelihoods

Zareena, 30, and her family used to live in a three-room house with access to clean water, until the devastating earthquake left cracks in their home, making it dangerous for them and their children to live inside. Zareena's husband works as a driver and they had to use his small income to fix the damage. Islamic Relief supported people in Zareena's village with a shelter program as well as health and hygiene projects. They were also given training in agriculture, livestock and handicrafts to help them earn a living again.

"Kitchen gardening training was especially beneficial for me," says Zareena, "I learned how to use my land and increase production. I used what I had learned and managed to grow vegetables during the season. Our

neighbors also enjoyed the fresh vegetables and many of them are now inspired to start kitchen gardening next season."

"We are thankful for donors for supporting us and helping us to improve our lives. Agricultural training helped us a lot because we have land but we lack the knowledge to work the land with modern techniques. Regular Community Organization meetings also increased our knowledge on how to use and conserve natural resources," says Zareena.

The 2005 earthquake wiped out entire towns and villages across Pakistan-administered Kashmir. In Pakistan, India and Afghanistan, over 73,000 people were killed and around 3.5 million lost

their homes. Thousands took shelter in makeshift tent camps with little access to food, clean water, medication, or sanitation facilities.

Islamic Relief was one of the first aid agencies to respond to the disaster and continues to support earthquake-affected communities today. The focus is now on helping people rebuild their lives by supporting reconstruction, helping children go back to school and providing livelihoods training.

"I benefited enormously from my kitchen garden so I want to start a seed bank for maximum production. I will start this in the future and share its usefulness with the other villagers," says Zareena. •

ISLAMIC RELIEF'S EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE, 2006-2007

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Islamic Relief set up over 660 Community Organizations (CO), comprising of more than 231,000 people from four districts of Kashmir.

These COs then led the rehabilitation effort in their area and supported villagers' reconstruction and livelihood activities.

EDUCATION

After the earthquake, Islamic Relief helped 1,000 children carry on with their education by providing large tents suitable for classes. Children were also provided with school equipment, bags and stationery.

Currently, Islamic Relief is planning to rehabilitate 10 earthquake-affected schools in Kashmir which will give more children the chance to go to school.

REBUILDING HOMES

Around 86,800 lives will be rehabilitated through the reconstruction and rehabilitation project that includes rebuilding

earthquake damaged homes and training people to revitalize their communities after the disaster.

SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

Thousands of people lost their agricultural land, livestock and businesses in the earthquake. Over 50,000 people across Bagh, Neelum Valley, Muzaffarabad and Rawlakot are benefitting from this project.

HEALTH

Islamic Relief is beginning a health program in Muzaffarabad and Neelum Valley, where the aim is to reconstruct and equip four healthcare centers.

CASH-FOR-WORK

Islamic Relief launched a cash-for-work program so people could earn a living while contributing to the rehabilitation effort, making them less reliant on aid agencies for support. Over 40,000 people will benefit from the cash-for-work programs. Islamic Relief is working in partnership with the

Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) and Christian Aid on this project.

WATER AND SANITATION

Around 6,000 households have benefitted from Islamic Relief's rehabilitation of water infrastructure, providing people with clean water and improved sanitation facilities.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Islamic Relief is working with communities on disaster preparedness programs to strengthen their capacity to cope during disasters. Activities include training in first aid, constructing shelters and retaining walls, and mine awareness. Over 58,000 people will benefit from this project.

ORPHANS SPONSORSHIP

Thousands of children were affected by the earthquake, with many losing one or both of their parents. Over 1,800 children in earthquake-affected areas have been sponsored by Islamic Relief donors since 2005.

COMBATING DEPENDENCY

The Rise and Response to Opium Dependency in Afghanistan



Afghanistan in 2001 hoping for a fresh start in life. They returned home with nothing, except the food package they received from the United Nations, and had to stay with relatives for a few months before getting their own two-roomed house in a small village in Shortepa.

Unfortunately, Taza Gul, a patient at Islamic Relief's drug center in Shortepa, is just one of the many number of women who are dependent on drugs in Afghanistan. She suffers from many medical and psychological problems. She often feels suicidal, blames herself for her children's addiction to opium and considers herself unable to care for them.

"I gave birth to 11 daughters and sons but unfortunately six of them have passed away," said Taza Gul. "In my last unsafe delivery I gave birth to twin male babies with the support of an inexperienced, traditional birth attendant. I suffered severe problems after the birth and became seriously sick with continuous, intolerable pain."

UNENDING AGONY

"As the time passed, my problem got so complicated and the pain became tremendously agonizing, that I started crying all day and night. This is when I was advised by an addict to use the opium for pain relief. I found it relaxed me and got rid of my pain and I didn't have any other access to painkillers because there was no health center here at the time," she continued.

"None of my other family members ever advised me to stop. My husband, two young sons and many other close relatives also use the drug."

"The health of my twin babies was very bad. They looked so weak and pale because we could not afford to give them enough food or healthcare. We were spending most of our money on

For many people in Afghanistan without access to healthcare, opium is often the only means they have to control pain. However, there is now a massive culture of dependency throughout the country, creating serious social, economic and health effects on those who are addicted as well as their families and communities. Islamic Relief has opened a new health center in northern Afghanistan to treat dependency, giving people a chance to combat their addiction and begin a new life.

Afghanistan is the world's largest producer of opium and heroin; a rising number of Afghans are also becoming dependent on the drug. One of the provinces most severely affected is Balkh in northern Afghanistan. Here, opium is often traded like tea and is largely considered to be a medicine rather than a dangerous drug.

Many of the people dependent on opium in Balkh are women who use it to dull the pain caused by working for many hours on heavy weaving looms. However, the dependency is affecting their health, livelihoods and ability to care for their children. In order to tackle this problem, Islamic Relief has been working in partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and has established a Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Center, in northern Balkh's Shortepa District that provides counseling, detoxification services, and medical care.

TAZA'S PAIN

After living in an Afghan refugee camp in Pakistan for 15 years, 42-year-old Taza Gul, along with her husband and children, returned to their native



Recovering opium addicts rest in their room at Islamic Relief's Afghanistan health center. The center helps treat people suffering from opium dependency, offering counseling, medical care and detoxification services.

the drugs. The health of one of the twins deteriorated so badly that he died when he was only eight months old.”

DETERMINED TO CHANGE

“This event has deeply touched my senses and I am now determined to give more time to the surviving twin and to save his life. I started working hard with my husband on our small home farm and tried to get laboring work where I could, but I found it difficult to leave my child at home as he used to cry when I was not there,” Taza explained.

“Unfortunately I took the advice of another neighbor who told me to give my child some of the same ghost (opium) to relax him so I could go out to work. Many other mothers also do this. It is the decision between staying at home and having no money or to calm my sons with the drug so I can earn money for their food. I made the wrong decision and gave him the drug so I could go and work.”

UNCERTAIN FUTURE

“I am sad not only because I am an addict but because I don't know what the future of my sons will be. They have never been to school and have no interest in going. I wish me and my family could give the drug up and I am hopeful that the treatment I am receiving will help me.”

ISLAMIC RELIEF'S WORK

Islamic Relief's drug treatment and rehabilitation center in Shortepa provides residential care as well as in home support, including counseling, detoxification, advice and regular follow-ups to check patients' progress. This is part of a general health clinic that provides over 7,500 people with basic health care including prenatal and post-natal care. The staff also carries out educational awareness-raising sessions concerning the harmful effects of drug use within the local communities. •



NEW SKILLS GIVE NEW HOPE

Islamic Relief Opens Development Program to Train Afghan Families for the Future

Although billions of dollars have gone towards rebuilding infrastructure in Afghanistan, many people are still in need. To help relieve some of the labor and economic hardships on families, Islamic Relief has established an Integrated Family Development Program in Kabul, offering education in much needed skills.

Six years after the 2001 war, millions of Afghans still live in refugee camps and many have settled across the globe. For those that have returned home hoping to restart their lives, many challenges lie ahead. Unemployment for able workers is high while orphans, widows and the disabled are becoming a legacy of the conflict.

Most of the world has forgotten about the orphans and children of war that have grown up in conflict. Many of these children work several hours a day as street vendors, cleaners and carpet weavers. Their dream is to provide for their widowed mothers and

families, to become self sufficient and not to be dependent on handouts.

Islamic Relief's Integrated Family Development Program helps them do just this. The three-year program consists of courses in literacy training, English language and computer skills to prepare families for better jobs in the future. Currently, there are 60 widows and 60 orphans enrolled. After completion of the program, attendees are guaranteed jobs in Afghanistan by international charities.

The training meets the demand for computer literate and English-speaking employees. It also offers the children a chance to work with computers instead of weaving, where their hands may be damaged. Instead of cleaning the floor of an office, they could be managing the office.

For many of the enrolled orphans, it is the first time they have been in a building that has fresh paint and new carpets, let

alone computers. One student mentioned that she does not attend school because her teacher, who has another job, does not show up most of the time.

One current student works the night shift at an orphanage so she can provide for her own six orphans at home. She brings them leftover food from the orphanage. The family has not had meat or fruit in years. She enrolled in the literacy classes so she can read information that her doctor writes. Her aim is to become self-reliant so neither she, nor her children are dependent on others.

A 30-year-old student became a widow three years ago when robbers murdered her husband. Feeling that she was too young to beg on the street, she enrolled in the program because she believes the training will help her to become self-sufficient. "Everybody knows Allah is with those that help orphans and widows," she said. •



DAMAGED CHILDHOODS

VIOLENCE AND GROWING INSECURITY IN IRAQ HAS DEEPLY AFFECTED THE LIVES OF THE COUNTRY'S CHILDREN. IT HAS LEFT MANY WITHOUT ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE AND EDUCATION, FORCED OTHERS FROM THEIR HOMES AND LED TO THOUSANDS LOSING THEIR PARENTS. IN A COUNTRY WHERE LESS THAN ONE-THIRD OF PEOPLE HAVE ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER AND WHERE 15 PER CENT OF THE POPULATION REGULARLY GOES WITHOUT FOOD, CHILDREN ARE BEARING THE BRUNT OF A GROWING HUMANITARIAN CRISIS.

(Above) Young girls color on notepads donated by Islamic Relief. Fighting in Iraq has caused many schools to close, leaving students with very little and sometimes no access to education.

(Next page) Students receive hygiene kits donated by Islamic Relief

The fighting in Iraq has pushed four million people from their homes. Two million have fled to neighboring countries while the rest have sought refuge elsewhere inside Iraq. This has caused great disruption for children and has left many with no way to go to school. The problem is made worse by the large number of schools that have been forced to close and the high numbers of teachers who have been killed or who have fled the country. In some schools the situation is so bad that children are forced to take their lessons in shifts.

MALNUTRITION AND DISEASE

The closure and destruction of hospitals and health centers, a shortage of health professionals and a severe lack of clean

water, is also having a serious impact on the health of Iraq's children. With around 8 million Iraqis dependent on humanitarian aid and many people not able to access even basics such as food and shelter, malnutrition and disease are rife. The situation is even bleaker for those children who have lost their parents and may be living on the streets with little or no protection or support.

RASHA'S STORY

17-year-old Rasha lives with her mother and two younger sisters in Baghdad. Three years ago the girls' father was killed in a bomb blast in their neighborhood. His death has left Rasha's mother struggling to support the family and has left Rasha suffering from post-traumatic stress.



“In the early morning of Dec. 3, 2004, I woke up terrified by a frightening blast that shook the foundations of our house. I saw smashed glass and dust all around me. I smelled the smoke of the blast, and heard the screams of the people,” Rasha said.

Tragically, Rasha’s father and uncle died in the blast and another uncle was seriously injured. Rasha has been deeply affected by her loss and still suffers from depression. She feels responsible for her mother who has also become ill as a result of the tragedy and even dropped out of school for a while to care for her. Most children in Iraq have experienced some kind of trauma like Rasha but few receive any kind of support to help them deal with their anxiety and loss.

A year after her husband’s death, Rasha’s mother returned to her job, but it has been difficult to care for her three daughters on her one small salary. Nobody in her family is in a position to help as they too have lost fathers and husbands in the violence.

“I have been living in this tragedy for almost three years now and the security situation has severely deteriorated,” said Rasha. “Death and killing have become normal in Baghdad. People in Iraq know they may be killed or injured just by walking on the streets.”

Islamic Relief began sponsoring Rasha’s seven-year-old sister Duha in 2006. The sponsorship is a massive help to the family and helps provide them with basic items as well as ensuring the girls can continue at school.

“You do not know and cannot see my sister’s happiness when she comes back from Islamic Relief’s office with her gifts and money,” Rasha told us. “This makes me happy and puts an end to my sadness.”

Islamic Relief has been supporting orphans in Iraq since 2004. Orphans are provided with basic items such as food, clothing and decent shelter, as well as supporting access to health care and education.

As part of Islamic Relief’s work to support children in Iraq they also do extensive work with schools throughout the country. This includes the rehabilitation of water and sanitation facilities, hygiene and dental health sessions and the provision of school equipment, furniture and hygiene kits to pupils. •

GETTING AN EDUCATION IN DARFUR

Campsite Education Relieves Children From a Dull, Devastating Life



Fifteen-year-old Zainab (left) lives in Kerinding II camp with her parents, two brothers and two sisters. Islamic Relief established the camp in 2004 and has been providing over 10,000 displaced people with relative security, as well as shelter, food and other necessities.

Zainab and her family were lucky to escape alive from their home village as many of her neighbors and friends were tragically killed. Although she is now living in the relative safety of the camp, she still doesn't feel secure and every night she is plagued by horrific dreams of what she witnessed in her village.

Every day she has to face danger as she ventures away from the camp to collect firewood for the family. This can take several hours and puts her at great risk of being attacked and even raped. Nevertheless Zainab says that she is luckier than most as she and her siblings have their own straw hut and their parents have their own shelter.

Zainab is one of over 1,500 students who attend the Masakhane school in the Kerinding II camp. The school is often the only source of stability for children like Zainab, giving them some sense of normality in their fractured lives. The school has 37 teachers and the pupils have to pay a small fee each month. This covers the cost of the teacher's breakfasts as they have to walk all the way from El Geneina town to the camp. The children each receive a free lunch at school, provided by the World Food Program, which is often the most nutritious meal of their day, encouraging them to continue their education.

The school not only gives children in the camp a valuable education and the chance for a better future, but also helps relieve the boredom of life in the camp where there is very little for children to do and nowhere for them to go. •



CONTINUING CRISIS

Darfur and Chad

The crisis in Darfur, one of the worst humanitarian disasters in the world, has been on going since 2003. Yet with more than 200,000 dead the situation shows no sign of improving. In the first two months of 2007 alone 80,000 people were forced to flee their homes as fighting continued to spread. As the number of armed groups multiply in the region, Darfur and now neighboring eastern Chad are becoming increasingly dangerous for the people who live there.

The fighting has caused more than two million people, one in three of Darfur's population, to flee their homes and seek safety in camps, old buildings or in neighboring Chad and the Central African Republic. So severe is the situation inside Darfur that half the population is now completely dependent on humanitarian aid for their survival. But the instability and rise in violent attacks is making it more and more difficult for aid agencies to deliver the help that is desperately needed. Consequently, about one million of the most vulnerable people in the most remote rural areas are without aid. People

whose houses have been burned have fled to overcrowded camps often with no personal belongings. Although they may have access to basic necessities such as food and water in these camps, they are still at risk from violence. In many camps, women face danger if they venture out to collect firewood.

ISLAMIC RELIEF IN DARFUR

Islamic Relief has been working in West Darfur since 2004 setting up and running the Kerinding II camp for displaced people near the town of El Geneina. The camp provides over 10,000 people with relative security as well as shelter, food, water, sanitation facilities, healthcare and schools for the children. The location was chosen because of the large number of families that were pouring into the town looking for safety from the fighting in their home villages. Many arrived with little more than the clothes on their backs and all were in desperate need of shelter and basic services such as medical care. Although many have been housed in camps such as Kerinding II, the continual stream of people entering El Geneina has forced many thousands to

squat on disused pieces of land or in old buildings. These people have little access to any help or basic services and are amongst the most vulnerable people displaced by the instability.

CHAD

As the conflict in Darfur has intensified it has continued to push thousands of displaced people into neighboring Chad. Around 200,000 Sudanese refugees have poured over the border and are now living in cramped camps. Tragically, the fighting from Darfur has also crossed the same border and militia violence within Chad is growing, causing over 128,000 Chadians to become displaced.

The internally displaced people are now living in informal camps with even more limited resources than their Sudanese counterparts. The sites where internally displaced Chadians have settled lack in all essential facilities such as shelter, clean water and sanitation. In some places the situation is so bad that people have crossed the Chad border into Darfur to try and

In Darfur, fighting and instability have left four million people in need of humanitarian aid, but one quarter are not receiving it.



access help from the camps within the troubled region.

HEAVY RAINS

The rainy season has already begun in Chad, making the delivery of aid extremely difficult. The heavy rains have also caused an increase in cases of malaria, especially among undernourished children, triggering fears of a cholera outbreak. There is also a severe shortage of health facilities for displaced people, with many smaller sites having no services at all.

In some of the towns where the internally displaced people have fled, there are only 100 toilets per 25,000 people, well below the recommended international standards. Even before the Sudanese refugees entered Chad's eastern region, this was one of the poorest places on earth. The increasing numbers of internally displaced people

have led to tensions between them and the local host community over scarce resources, such as water and food. Although conditions in the camps for Sudanese refugees are cramped and often unhygienic, they are receiving regular food supplies and are able to access some health and education facilities.

NEW OFFICE

Islamic Relief set up a new office in Chad in the capital city of N'Djamena in March 2007. We have already delivered emergency items such as tents, blankets, kitchen sets and plastic sheeting to 15,000 people in the town of Haouich, eastern Chad and will continue to provide support to the internally displaced people and host population for the next six months. As well as emergency relief, Islamic Relief will also provide shelter, support income generation activities and provide support to orphans.

A NEW HOME FOR THOUSANDS

At the beginning of June 2007, Islamic Relief began to relocate 4,000 people who had been living on disused land and in public buildings in El Geneina to Kerinding II camp. The camp co-ordinator, Nermin Silajdzic, explains why this was necessary and what life in the camp can offer.

"The people who have come to El Geneina have all fled violence in their home villages and have settled here because it is relatively safe and close to their homes. When they arrive in the town they find any open space, old or half finished building that they can shelter in, constructing 'homes' from straw, plastic sheeting and any other materials they can lay their hands on. A few people have managed to find shelter in buildings belonging to the Sultan of Masalit tribe, the so-called Sultan House settlement."



FLEEING HOME

One of these people is 47-year-old Yousuf (above) who is living in the Sultan House settlement with his family of 13. Like all other displaced people living in El Geneina town, Yousuf and his family do not have access to services such as healthcare, clean water and schools, which are available to those families living in Kerinding II camp. Like the other women in the settlement, Yousuf's wives have to walk for about 40 minutes just to get to the nearest water source. This is a journey they have to make several times a day in order to collect the water the family needs. Sometimes Yousuf will pay to hire a donkey to carry the water back from the well, but this is not always possible.

BACK-BREAKING WORK

Yousuf receives monthly food parcels from the United Nation's World Food

Program (WFP) but he must work to buy the extra food that his family needs. Two of the most common activities for the internally displaced community in El Geneina are stone cutting and the sale of mud bricks. Women can often spend eight hours a day digging and mixing mud to make bricks. In his old village Yousuf made a living selling fruit, vegetables and livestock such as goats and cows, he had a horse and enough food to feed both his families and even some surplus in store. Now, like many other displaced people, he has trouble buying even basic items such as blankets and plastic sheets.

MOVE TO KERINDING II

The move to Kerinding II camp for 4,000 people should provide them with extra protection and security. It will also give them access to healthcare, education for their children, clean water and sanitation

facilities, as well as essential items such as blankets and sheets.

Each family that moves into Kerinding II is provided with the materials to build their own shelter and special volunteer teams are on hand to help elderly and disabled people build their homes. Extra latrines and showers have also been constructed in the camp to help cope with the influx of new residents and the capacity of the health clinic in the camp has been extended. The relocation that began at the start of June will be gradual so the camp is not overwhelmed by the 4,000 new residents. So far over 480 households have been relocated to the camp. Yousuf's family is one of over 600 households from the Sultan House settlement moving to Kerinding II camp. Yousuf is happy about the move but what he would really like is to be able to return to his home village and the life he once had. •

HUMANITARIAN DAY 2007

Islamic Relief brings aid to 19 cities across the United States



Volunteers host children's arts and crafts during the 2007 Humanitarian Day held at the Cultural Cup Food Bank in Phoenix, Arizona.

On September 29 and 30, 2007, the 3rd weekend in Ramadan, Muslims collaborated to help people in need in 19 cities across the country. Halls and church sanctuaries were rented, community centers and parks were utilized and streets were blocked off to give room for tables of items for distribution to each city's neediest families. The items distributed included hygiene packs (donated by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints), blankets, backpacks, caps, mittens, winter coats, sleeping bags, tote bags, toys, as well as hot meals.

Most sites offered health screenings throughout the day including tests for diabetes, high blood pressure, HIV/AIDS, hearing and eye sight, wound dressing and first aid. Islamic Relief gave each city a grant to assist in purchasing items. An estimated 25,000 people were provided with aid this day across the country, and just under 4,000 volunteers worked energetically and respectfully to meet the needs.

This is the third year Islamic Relief coordinated the nationwide event – each passing year has seen an increase in the number of cities involved, from five in 2005, 14 in 2006, to a total of 19 cities this year. Each city appointed a volunteer coordinator, whose responsibility was to secure a site for the event, recruit volunteers and purchase or solicit goods to be distributed. A two-day training, held in Los Angeles and sponsored by Islamic Relief, was developed to give the necessary tools for coordinating the event and an opportunity for coordinators to meet and talk about their plans and concerns. A new component to this year's event was the addition of an Islamic Relief staff at each Humanitarian Day site.

Next year, the number of cities and volunteers is expected to increase. The goal is 30 cities in 2008. A complete volunteer effort, Humanitarian Day has been a great opportunity for Muslims to fulfill their Ramadan obligation of helping the needy and exhibiting a genuinely positive image to others.

Special thanks goes out to the Islamic Relief Community Development Department for lending its staff, the staff of Islamic Relief in Buena Park for last minute tasks and schedules, Islamic Relief Finance Department for its extraordinary patience and to all of the volunteers for their hard work. •

Islamic Relief With Positive Belief
By: Habibullah Saleem

Assisting the less fortunate to upgrade their belief
A committed task by Islamic Relief
Coming to the rescue of those in need
Making it possible for them to succeed
Islamic Relief in so many cities
Helping the homeless to denounce self-pity
Humanitarian Day sponsored each year
A magnificent charity bringing about cheer
Gift bags of clothes, toiletries and food
Delivering to the needy, renewing their mood
Smiles and laughter so often not seen
Islamic Relief a part of their dream
The dream of stability, receiving health care
Islamic Relief with relief to spare
Caring for the feet, ears and eyes
Receiving assistance, caught by surprise
Checks made available to cover the cost
Lifting the spirits of those who feel lost
Oh how wonderful Humanitarian Day
Returning to the path after going astray
Excellent training prepared for the test
Throughout our cities experiencing success
A day of service greater than hope
Learning to thrive rather than cope
Islamic Relief so others will live
Another giant step to what it means to give



Humanitarian Day Volunteers
in Washington, D.C. (Left) and
Philadelphia, PA (Above).

SAVING A CHILD, ONE LYRIC AT A TIME

Evening of Inspiration raises \$1 million to help child victims of humanitarian crises



In a dark hall illuminated only by a stage filled with lights reaching down from above, more than 2,000 people sat quietly, eagerly awaiting. Smoke started to rise slowly, setting the stage for what was to come next. Then the music began, the lights started to flash, and the crowd grew more anxious. When the music slowed down, a bright spotlight cut through the smoke, revealing what the audience was waiting for. They cheered, clapped and yelled in unison for the star of the show, “Sami, Sami, Sami.”

In its second year in the United States, the Evening of Inspiration benefit concert, hosted by Islamic Relief, rocked the United States in five major cities. After last year’s sold-out shows in Dallas, New Jersey, Detroit and Los Angeles, Islamic Relief expanded the tour to include northern California. Attendance this year doubled, reaching a record of 11,000 attendees. The tour raised more than \$1 million, with the sole purpose of benefitting children and other victims of humanitarian crises around the world.

Islamic Relief programs support more than 16,000 orphans, many of whom live in impoverished areas and have no family members to care for them. The tour showcased some of the world’s leading performers of Islamic cultural entertainment, including Native Deen, a U.S.-based hip-hop group formed by artists Naeem Muhammad, Abdul-Malik Ahmad and Joshua Salaam.

British artist Hamza Robertson, performed for the first time in the United States, while Texan comedian Mo Amer moderated the event. Sami Yusuf, a popular performer in the Muslim world and the Middle East who was dubbed “Islam’s biggest rock star” by TIME magazine, was the tour’s main headliner.

“Islamic Relief is a pioneer in bringing an alternative method of raising awareness and much-needed funds for projects and services it provides around the world,” said Anwar Khan, Islamic Relief’s National Development Director. “Unlike typical fund-raising dinners, benefit



Native Deen (left) and Hamza Robertson (below) sing to raise money for orphans around the world.



concerts open doors to communities that nonprofit aid organizations wouldn't be able to reach otherwise."

Khan added that Islamic Relief has always examined various ways of helping orphans, widows and families around the world, and that benefit concerts provide opportunities for people to help those who are less fortunate.

Yusuf praised Islamic Relief for its "tremendous efforts in providing aid to people who need it, irrespective of race or faith." He also expressed appreciation for the "dedicated volunteers and workers risking their lives to help save lives," adding that Islamic Relief's "pioneering

long-term development and poverty alleviation projects are making a real difference in the lives of millions of people all around the globe."

This year's venues included The Majestic Theatre, one of the nation's most illustrious movie houses; the Shrine Auditorium, where the famed Academy Awards were held; and The Max Fischer Music Center, home of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. •

Islamic Relief has already started on next year's tour and if you are interested in helping out and have stage, music and artistic talents, please email inspiration@irw.org.

THOUSANDS AFFECTED BY RAGING FIRES IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Scorching Wildfires Spread Across Southern California Destroying
Thousands of Homes





On Sunday, October 21, devastating wildfires spread across southern California, burning 516,356 acres, destroying 2,013 homes, killing seven individuals, and injuring close to 100 people. The fires forced more than 500,000 people to leave their homes, resulting in the largest evacuation in the history of the state of California.

Islamic Relief immediately responded to the disaster by dispatching staff to the affected areas in San Diego to assess the fire damage and decide what aid was most needed. Meanwhile, supporters were encouraged to donate towards the Natural Disaster Fund to help the victims.

Islamic Relief's initial relief efforts included covering housing and food costs for the evacuees in San Diego and assembling 1000 Hygiene Care Packages containing critical daily necessities. Islamic Relief also redirected several hygiene packages from their Hurricane Katrina efforts in Louisiana for distribution to the fire victims.

While assessing the fire damage, Islamic Relief took notice of the many affected Native Reservations in San Diego. Sixty-four homes burned at the Rincón Nation of Luiseno Native Reservation, where tribes had to fight their own fires. Islamic Relief workers toured the area, where many businesses and homes burned, and spoke with tribal members and tribal elders.

Islamic Relief donated 250 cleaning kits and face masks to the Rincon Band of Luiseno Indians Department of Tribal Housing and the San Pasqual Indian Reservation Fire Station. The Nestle Company donated 5,760 water bottles to Islamic Relief, which Islamic Relief delivered to the Indian Reservations.

For several days, the firefighters of Southern California worked arduous 24 hour shifts in an effort to stop the flames that were enveloping a significant portion of the Southland. Many did not sleep for days and put their lives in danger as the fires showed no sign of relenting. In an effort to show gratitude for their hours of intense labor, Islamic Relief handed out 800 signed thank you cards to the fire fighters. The cards were signed by students at New Horizon School Pasadena, New Horizon School Irvine and Orange Crescent School. The cards were distributed to several fire departments in the fire-affected regions of Southern California. Our gratitude goes out to the schools that participated in the signing of the cards.

In a return gesture of the gratitude shown by the schools, the Orange County Fire Authority sent each school a thank you card of their own, with junior firefighter caps and small fire trucks. Islamic Relief also received a note of thank you from their Division Chief, Ed Flemming, in which he emphasized their appreciation for the cards and for helping to keep the safety of our communities at the forefront.

Islamic Relief's domestic projects have increased tremendously over the years. In addition to responding to emergencies such as Hurricane Katrina – where more than \$3.2 million in aid has helped over 60,000 people - 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. •

A DREAM IS BORN

Five and Six-year-olds Raise \$7,500 for Orphans During Ramadan

In Ramadan of 2004, Fozia Fazal sponsored an orphan through a college student participating in the Drive to Save Lives orphan sponsorship drive by Islamic Relief.

Upon receiving the biodata of her sponsored orphan, Fozia was touched and wanted to encourage her community to help these orphans. Knowing it had great potential, she soon became involved in the local Sunday school.

“How could we make a difference? How could I make a difference in the mind of a child here to help them understand about the less fortunate?”

In Ramadan of 2006, with Fozia’s encouragement, the students and staff at the Islamic Association of Collin County (IACC) Sunday school were able to raise \$2,500 for orphans. This was great, but Fozia felt a tug in her heart that they had to do more. She contacted the teaching staff asking them to help her push the orphan sponsorship program. The teachers agreed and began explaining to the students that while they were getting Eid clothes ready and enjoying iftar parties, there were children the same age as they were that had nothing. They had no parent or parents to buy them new clothes, or cook a meal.

“I wanted our children here to understand that other children don’t even know what a PlayStation, iPod, or cell phone is, let alone get the latest gadgets that we take for granted here.”

Every Ramadan, the teachers shift their lesson plans to focus on the importance of fasting and charity. This year, five and six-year-olds joined with college students in the Drive to Save Lives.



On the first Sunday of Ramadan, students decorated colorful “Zakat Boxes” as they learned the importance of zakat, the fourth pillar of Islam. Children walked home that Sunday afternoon with one focus - giving the gift of hope as Eid presents to orphans around the world.

On the second Sunday in Ramadan, the children came back to school with their Zakat boxes bobbing up and down in their hands. They were able to collect \$3,500 in the first week. As the work spread in universities, it was the children who motivated the older students to push harder. As Ramadan ended, the staff and students were able to collect over \$7,500.00.

With the commitment and dedication from teachers, children and parents, the IACC school was able to sponsor 20 orphans – one orphan from each of the countries available by Islamic Relief.

Fozia plans to hold this drive again next Ramadan, but this time pushing it to a new level. •

Students at the Islamic Association of Collins County (IACC) Sunday School gather to hear about the importance of charity and fasting during Ramadan. This year, the students and staff at IACC were able to raise \$7,500 for orphans.

RAMADAN FACTS

- Ramadan is the month of mercy in Islam. It is the month when the Holy Qur’an was completed being revealed by God to the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him.
- Community fundraising this Ramadan raised a record-breaking \$3.7 million, including pledges, from activities.
- Nearly 200 Islamic centers across the country opened their doors to Islamic Relief’s appeals for orphans, Palestine, Africa, Chechnya and many other humanitarian causes.
- University and elementary school students worked together to provide over 400 orphans with basic medical care, education and food security.
- Islamic Relief would like to thank all the mosques, organizations, MSAs, schools, volunteers and donors who helped us to urge the feeding of the needy in Ramadan.

THE GIFT OF FOOD

Udhiyah/Qurbani Meat Distribution Helps Beneficiaries Worldwide



Umm Ali, 49, and her family have low income and can barely cover basic daily necessities. As beneficiaries of Islamic Relief's international Udhiyah/ Qurbani program, Umm Ali and her family received fresh meat, helping to ease their food struggles.

Islamic Relief began the Udhiyah/ Qurbani project in 1986, with 670 sheep offered for Qurbani. Last year, more than 66,000 Qurbanis were distributed in around 30 countries benefitting more than 2.1 million people.

Udhiyah/Qurbani is an Islamic religious practice performed at the time of Eid al-Adha (the 10th day of the Islamic month of Dhu al-Hijjah) involving the slaughtering of an animal; usually a sheep, goat, or cow. The event commemorates the devotion and commitment of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) to God Almighty.

Islamic Relief has over 20 years of experience in implementing the Qurbani

project. Muslims donate the cost of a sheep or cow to be sacrificed on their behalf by Islamic Relief, and the meat is then distributed to the needy in poorer countries. For many poor people the Qurbani meat is the only meat they will have eaten that year.

AID FOR UMM ALI

Forty-nine-year-old Umm Ali lives in the Al-Adhamiyah neighborhood of Baghdad, Iraq. She lives with her retired husband, two sons, two daughters, as well as her widowed daughter who has a 2-year old son. Like most people in Iraq, Umm Ali's family struggles on a daily basis for survival.

Umm Ali and her family are suffering from the dire living conditions in Baghdad. They live in one of the hot-spots, Al-Adhamiyah neighborhood, where they frequently witness violence. From time to time, a siege is imposed on the neighborhood, severely affecting Umm Ali and her family.

Umm Ali's family has very limited income. Her husband receives a monthly salary of about \$65. To make ends meet, he also works as a peddler in the market. Their oldest son Ali, 17, is forced to leave school and work with his father in the market. The family can barely cover its basic daily necessities. Life is becoming harder day after day in Baghdad.

Umm Ali and her family were recent beneficiaries of Islamic Relief's international Udhiyah/Qurbani program.

"Thank you very much for all good things you are doing and for serving the needy people," said Umm Ali. "May Allah bless you all and help you to carry out more and more good initiatives, especially during these bad and difficult days. May Allah ease all suffering of Iraqis soon." •



IN THE AFTERMATH OF CYCLONE SIDR

Cyclone Sidr devastates the south western coast of Bangladesh

What is being called the deadliest storm to hit the country in more than a decade, Cyclone Sidr has devastated the coastal belt of Bangladesh, claiming over 3,000 lives and affecting 3.1 million people in 28 districts.

The category 4 super cyclonic storm struck Bangladesh around midnight on Thursday, Nov. 15th and has since damaged over 800,000 homes, destroyed over 900,000 acres of crops, killed over 240,000 livestock and destroyed over 300,000 trees.

Because the storm severely disrupted power lines and mobility, casualty figures are expected to rise as communication lines and access to villages are restored. Many

evacuees have lost their homes and are now living in shelters or along roadsides.

Shortages of food, water and medicines are raising fears that diseases will quickly spread. Dead bodies scattered across the landscape make this risk even greater.

The Bangladesh Air Force has been operating helicopter missions to deliver relief aid to the worst affected areas, but devastation is to such an extent that the environment is not conducive to humanitarian aid, still leaving 30% of the affected coastal villages without aid.

The need for aid is so great that the government appealed for international



support. “At this time we will welcome support from the international community. We are doing the best as we can do ourselves,” said the Bangladeshi foreign ministry in a statement.

AID TO THOSE IN NEED

Islamic Relief has already allocated \$1 million for the initial emergency assistance as part of its \$6 million response effort.

Islamic Relief has planned a two phase response, consisting of emergency and relief and recovery projects. The first phase is a three month emergency response for victims, including distributions of food, blankets, shelter kits and other items. Phase two will focus on long-term needs, including shelter and livelihoods training.

Islamic Relief Bangladesh has opened an Emergency Control Room (ECM)

and has dispatched about 300 disaster preparedness volunteers in 10 districts to aid in distributing relief. Islamic Relief’s Emergency Response Unit began distribution of aid in the worst affected areas of Patuakhali and Bagerhat.

Islamic Relief has also deployed two medical teams consisting of a doctor, two nurses, a paramedic and two volunteers to provide medicines and treat injuries of those in need. So far, hundreds of patients have been treated for injuries and other diseases.

Islamic Relief has provided more than 8,900 families with 5kgs of pre-cooked rice, 1 kg of molasses, matches, candles and 1 kg of salt.

Over 6,450 families across the three cyclone-affected coastal districts have benefitted from Islamic Relief’s emergency distributions so far. •

(Opposite) “The people are in trauma, the whole time I was there I never saw a child smile, just silent faces everywhere.”—Habib Malik, Islamic Relief Staff member who visited the aftermath of Cyclone Sidr.

(Above) Only remnants of houses remain after either being destroyed by the cyclone or by falling trees.

“CHILDREN’S VILLAGE” INSPIRES ACTION

Islamic Relief’s ISNA booth receives 100 orphan sponsorships

The Islamic Society of North America’s annual convention was held during Labor Day weekend at the Rosemont convention center just outside of Chicago, Illinois this year. Every year the convention is a mecca of a multitude of Muslim Americans, including scholars, guest speakers, and organizations that support various causes that cater to the needs, interests, and responsibilities of Muslims. Islamic Relief has been a regular exhibitor at the ISNA convention for many years. Volunteers and staff members promoted and illustrated the many projects in worldwide poverty alleviation that Islamic Relief strives for.

“This year, Islamic Relief’s exhibit at the ISNA convention was by far one of the most successful and striking,” said Bilal Kazmi, an Islamic Relief staff member. Volunteers and staff members came from all over the United States to help promote Islamic Relief’s work. The crew collectively incorporated their artistic abilities, strengths, and dedication to build a unique display featuring visual scenes of facts on world poverty and diseases and what Islamic Relief is doing to help aid those affected. Corners filled with burlap sacks, soil, and plants symbolized agricultural income generation projects and grain distribution to those in need. A replica of a well and mosquito netting hanging from the walls illustrated water sanitation and well construction projects along with malaria prevention measures and aid Islamic Relief has been working on.

The underlying theme of this year’s exhibit was: “Africa: Think, Care, Act.” One of the outside walls was covered with large construction paper posters displaying the theme. Visitors to the



booth were encouraged to write what they felt inspired them to think, care, and act upon the most. Numerous patrons delightfully added their welcomed input. Staff members and volunteers would then proceed to give tours of the exhibit and educate people on the work Islamic Relief does in Africa.

With the tireless efforts of Islamic Relief’s volunteers, more than 100 orphans were sponsored at this year’s ISNA convention. More than 500 people registered with Islamic Relief. But most importantly, awareness and attention was brought to what people can do to help the poor and suffering around the world. With the success of this year’s exhibit, Islamic Relief’s volunteers and staff are eagerly looking forward to next year’s convention. •

Dr. Muzammil Siddiqi, Chairman of the Fiqh Council of North America, is taken on a guided tour of the “Children’s Village,” Islamic Relief’s booth at ISNA focusing on world poverty, disease, underprivileged youth and what Islamic Relief is doing to help those in need.



ISLAMIC RELIEF TEAMS UP WITH MUSLIM VOLLEYBALL

The Muslim Volleyball Association (MVBA) held their 3rd annual volleyball tournament during August and September this year. The finals were held on September 9, 2007, where Darul Huda Islamic Center won the tournament and was presented with a beautiful trophy sponsored by Islamic Relief.

Hundreds of people showed up for the three week event at the Islamic Center of Irving, located in the heart of Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW). MVBA organizers highlighted Islamic Relief's aid efforts during the entire tournament. Regional development director of Islamic Relief, Azhar Azeez, attended the final and presented the trophy to the winning team.



CONTINUING SOMALIA CONFLICT STRAINS HUMANITARIAN RELIEF

Since 1991, there has been no effective source of government in Somalia, causing the country to break into factional fighting and turmoil. Since the beginning of this year, nearly 450,000 people have been displaced. In early November, nearly 90,000 people fled the capital of Mogadishu.

Many of the displaced peoples live in settlements which lack basic necessities, while others have settled on roads outside the city. Recently, many aid workers have been blocked due to the continuing conflicts.

"Unfortunately the security situation has deteriorated to the level it was earlier this year and looks set to get even worse. Only a few aid agencies including Islamic Relief are able to work there now," said Shihab Babiker, Country Director of Islamic Relief Somalia.

With help from the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO), Islamic Relief has just completed a six month project that provided more than 15,500 displaced people with food, clean water, emergency healthcare, and shelter.



HILTON HUMANITARIAN CONFERENCE

Islamic Relief was present once again at the annual Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Conference in New York in September. The Hilton Foundation generously donated \$500,000 to Islamic Relief during the Pakistani earthquake relief efforts. Each year they invite the world's leading thinkers and practitioners to gather and share best practices and to hear a prominent keynote speaker. This year the speaker was United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.



ONE CAMPAIGN LAUNCHES FAITH INITIATIVE

Another notable collaboration, the ONE Campaign, has asked Islamic Relief to take on an advisory role with several new pilot projects they are launching in their efforts to tackle global poverty. One upcoming project is their new Faith Outreach Initiative which launched over Thanksgiving weekend this year.

Through this they are bridging two experiences – the historical legacy of many major successful social movements in the United States which have at their core the values and participation of religious communities; and the day-to-day experiences of hearing from individuals and congregations asking how they can be involved in effectively raising their voices on behalf of the poorest people around the world.



UNDERSTANDING HIV/AIDS

In September, Islamic Relief's Director of Public Policy attended a small roundtable with Sally Smith, the UNAIDS liaison with faith-based organizations visiting from Geneva, to help her better understand the enormous role played by Islamic Relief in the global response to HIV/AIDS.

Islamic Relief carries out various HIV/AIDS projects acceptable to the communities and countries they work with. Projects include free HIV testing, medical support to HIV/AIDS orphans, and education on awareness and prevention of the disease. Indeed, Islamic Relief convened a conference with Muslim scholars and service-delivery persons as well as infected patients on this important issue in South Africa just before World AIDS Day on December 1st.



DALLAS, TX CARES ABOUT DARFUR

On Tuesday, Oct. 9th, Islamic Relief attended "Does Dallas Care?", a two-day conference held at the Southern Methodist University (SMU) in Dallas, Texas.

SMU's Human Rights Education Program and Perkins School of Theology gave Dallas a sense of urgency about the crisis occurring in Darfur. Rick Halperin, director of the Human Rights Education Program and a history professor at SMU, was surprised by the immense proportion of the situation in Darfur and called for more to be done to alleviate the peoples' suffering.

The conference featured a panel of Dallas-area religious leaders. Anwar Khan, national development director for Islamic Relief, spoke about his trips to Darfur and eyewitness accounts of the suffering there. Islamic Relief has been working in Darfur since the beginning of the crisis.

THINK.

Empowering Youth Through Action

Where we invite you to come up with innovative solutions to the problems that confront us.

Disaster Risk Reduction

Islamic Relief was invited to attend an event on Disaster Risk Reduction at the Brookings Institution in Washington D.C. on the occasion of International Disaster Reduction Day (IDDR) October 10th.

The theme selected for the World Disaster Reduction Campaign 2006-2007, coordinated by the UN/ISDR secretariat in cooperation with UNESCO has been “Disaster Risk Reduction Begins at School”.

The initiative helps children fulfill a role: to serve as agents of disaster risk reduction and to become agents for sustainable development. Children were – and still are – among the most vulnerable groups in society to disasters; they were – and still generally are – perceived as “passive victims.” But this campaign has shown that children can play an active part in disaster risk reduction.



“Children will be one day the mayors, the architects and the decision makers of the world of tomorrow. If we teach them what they can do from the early age they will build a safer world.”

Salvano Briceño

Director, UN/ISDR secretariat

CARE.



One way for youth to learn more is through an interactive online video game in English, French, Spanish, Chinese and Russian - teaching how to protect urban areas and villages against natural hazards through disaster risk planning and management.

The game, “Stop Disasters” includes five natural hazard scenarios (flooding, tsunami, wildfire, hurricane and earthquake) set in five different geographic environments with three different

levels of difficulty that require critical decision-making and strategic planning.

In each scenario, you as a player have a specific mission to fulfill within a budget and limit time. Then a natural hazard strikes after which you assess damage and receive a score. The player who has protected the most people and their livelihoods (property and resources) wins the game.

You can play “Stop Disasters!” at <http://www.stopdisastersgame.org/en>.

ACT.

Further reflection questions:

After reading this issue and seeing updates about those still affected by the Pakistani earthquake or the recent devastating fires in Southern California, what are the lessons learned?

Goal: To learn about safety and natural hazards.

- With a critical eye map the geographical surroundings of your community. This is called a **risk map**. All you need is paper and pencil.
- Begin by drawing the most important buildings. Also draw structures that could be dangerous (dams or power plants for example). Identify all roads, rivers, electricity lines, water sources and sewage systems, etc. You can invent your own symbols. Identify where the people who will need the most help in the event of disaster live.
- Finally, look up in books or in old newspapers, or ask elders in your community, what important disasters have



occurred in the past. Ask what did people do at that time? Find out which people and institutions in the community can help now.

- **Then think about...**
 - a. What actions could reduce the impact of disasters in your community?
 - b. What actions could increase the vulnerability of your community?
 - c. What you should do individually to be prepared (such as creating a family emergency plan)?

RISK MAP - YOUR COMMUNITY

Tell us what you're doing to raise awareness on the effects of human actions and environmental degradation (you may want to get a free copy of "Let's Learn to Prevent Disasters: Fun Ways for Kids to Join in Risk Reduction" and the highly popular board game "Riskland" from the ISDR/UNICEF) or

look to groups such as Architecture for Humanity which seek to find solutions to humanitarian crises and even have ongoing open design challenges where students are encouraged to apply.









We challenge you to make a difference and create a culture of prevention!

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MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGS) ARE EIGHT WAYS TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLE IN SOME OF THE WORLD'S POOREST COUNTRIES. THESE GOALS WERE DEVELOPED BY THE UNITED NATIONS IN 2000, WITH THE AIM OF ACHIEVING THEM BY 2015.

ISLAMIC RELIEF SUPPORTS THE MDGS, AND MANY OF OUR PROJECTS AROUND THE WORLD ARE CONTRIBUTING TOWARD THIS GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN PROJECT.

 <p>1. ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER</p> <p>Problem: One billion people worldwide live on less than \$1 a day, and more than a quarter of children under 5 in developing countries are malnourished.</p> <p>Target: Reduce the number of people living on less than \$1 a day and the number of people who suffer from hunger by 50%.</p>	 <p>5. IMPROVE MATERNAL HEALTH</p> <p>Problem: More than half a million women each year die during pregnancy or childbirth. Many more women suffer serious injuries that, if left untreated, can cause lifelong pain and humiliation.</p> <p>Target: Reduce the maternal mortality ratio by 75%.</p>
 <p>2. ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION</p> <p>Problem: 115 million children of primary school age are not receiving an education. Most of these children are from the poorest families where the mother has had no formal education herself.</p> <p>Target: Ensure that by 2015 all boys and girls can complete a full course of primary education.</p>	 <p>6. COMBAT HIV/AIDS, MALARIA AND OTHER DISEASES</p> <p>Problem: 20 million people have already died from HIV/AIDS. Malaria continues to kill one million people a year.</p> <p>Target: Stop the progress of, and begin to reverse, the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other major diseases.</p>
 <p>3. PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER WOMEN</p> <p>Problem: Gender equality is a human right and at the heart of the MDGs, but girls are often left behind in education, employment and decision-making.</p> <p>Target: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education. Promote female-based income generation projects.</p>	 <p>7. ENSURE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY</p> <p>Problem: In sub-Saharan Africa, 42% of people do not have access to safe drinking water.</p> <p>Target: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs, reverse the loss of environmental resources and reduce the number of people without access to safe drinking water by 50%.</p>
 <p>4. REDUCE CHILD MORTALITY</p> <p>Problem: Every day, 300,000 children under the age of 5 die - that is 11 million children a year. Most of these deaths are caused by diseases that can be easily treated with inexpensive drugs.</p> <p>Target: Reduce the mortality rate of children under the age of 5 by two thirds.</p>	 <p>8. GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>Problem: More than 185 million people worldwide are unemployed - almost half of those are between the ages of 15 and 24.</p> <p>Target: In cooperation with developing countries, create and implement strategies for decent and productive vocational employment for youth.</p>



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