

# Partnership

the official newsletter of Islamic Relief

Fall 2008

## RAMADAN

The season of giving is approaching; millions donated last year to help the needy

## MYANMAR

The aftermath of the worst storm to hit the country in two decades

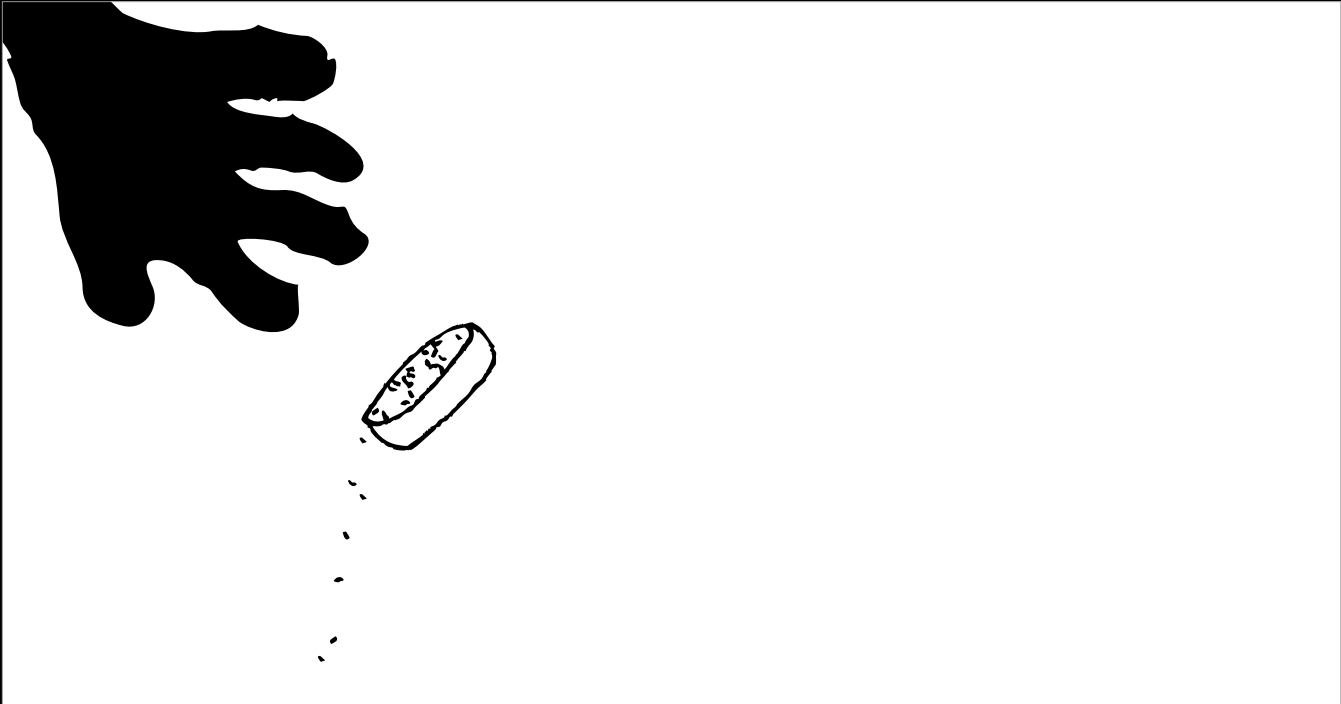
## GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS

The silent tsunami that is affecting 37 countries around the world, and putting millions at risk of starvation, malnutrition and civil unrest.



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Food scarcity, global warming, and rocketing food and fuel prices have led to a dangerous global food crisis, plunging an extra 100 million people into poverty.

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Islamic Relief helps provide immediate aid to those suffering from the hunger crisis.

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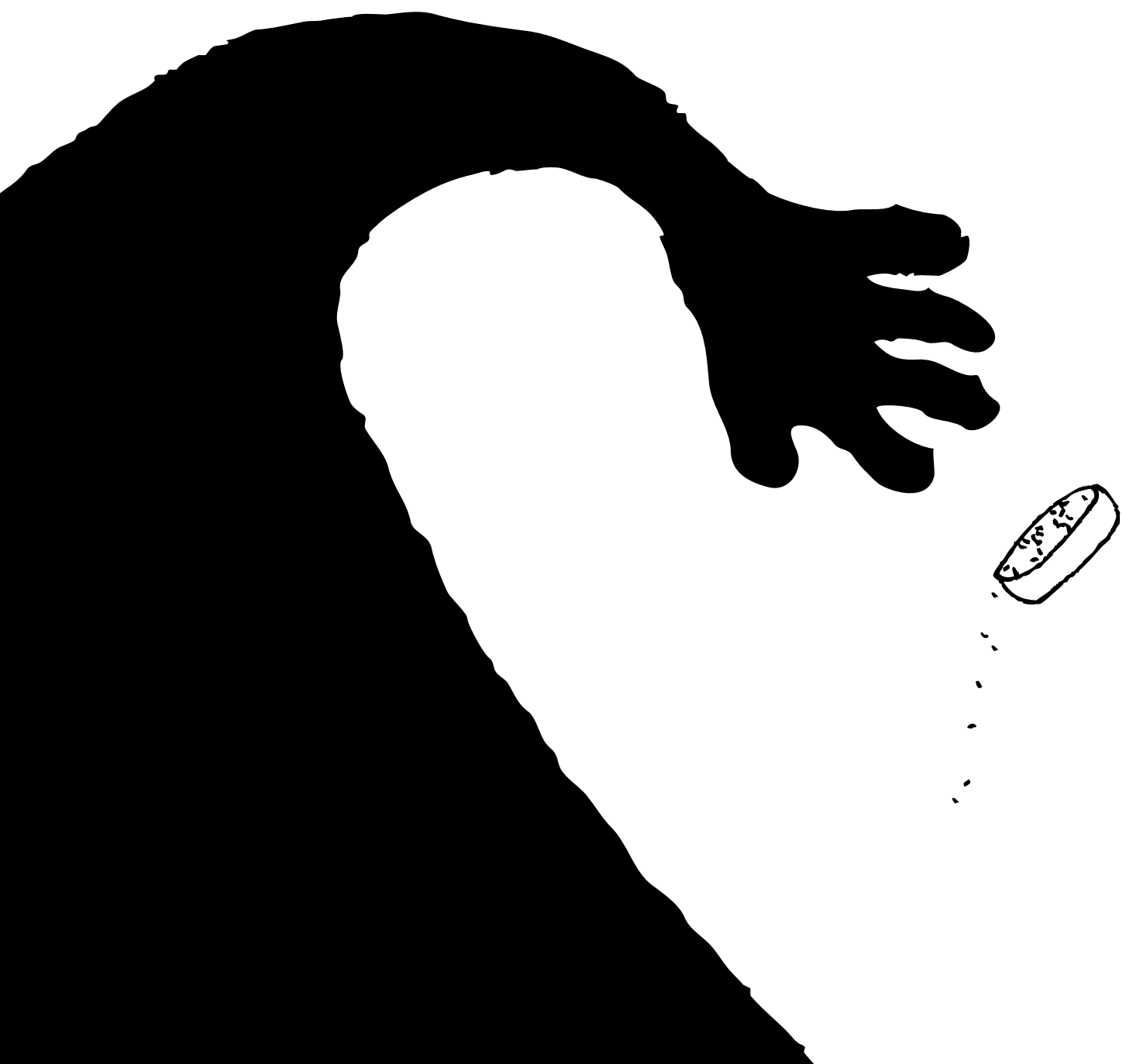
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(Cover)

REUTERS/Radu Sigheti (Ethiopia), courtesy of alertnet.org.

(Opposite)

Malnourished child in Ethiopia. REUTERS/Radu Sigheti (Ethiopia), courtesy of alertnet.org.



# GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS: THE SILENT TSUNAMI

The Wave That's Rippling Through the World

The age-old pattern of famine is changing. It is no longer just rural populations being affected by hunger, but urban ones as well. Although food is available in markets and shops, very few can afford it. This is the new face of hunger.

Global food prices have risen by 75% since the year 2000, while the price of wheat has risen 200%. According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the world's poorest countries can expect the cost of their imported foods to rise 56%.

Food scarcity, global warming, and rocketing food and fuel prices have led to a dangerous global food crisis, plunging an additional 100 million people into poverty. This crisis is already affecting 37 countries around the world, putting millions at risk of starvation, malnutrition and civil unrest.

Out of those countries currently facing a food crisis, 21 are in Africa, where 2.9 million people already die each year because of hunger-related deaths.

In sub-Saharan Africa alone, close to 315 million people live on less than \$1 a day (UN), 206 million across Africa suffer from malnutrition (FAO), and an estimated

30 million Africans are currently being affected by the food crisis (World Bank).

### THE CAUSES OF CRISIS

There is no one solid explanation for the food crisis, but rather a multitude of reasons and ongoing factors that are contributing to its severity.

Dramatic climate changes, rising oil prices, market speculation, increased economic activity in developing countries, and a growing demand for bio-fuels all play their part in the crisis.

Once the price of rice or wheat has risen, other factors start to deteriorate the situation. People start panicking and hoarding, as speculators buy up supply and food producing countries impose export controls to try and preserve food for their own people.

This then means less is available for export to countries which rely on food imports. The increasing cost of grains increases the price of meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy products.

### WHAT CAN BE DONE?

The practice of waiting for a crisis to

unfold before we take notice needs to change. Though emergency aid helps, it does not last and it will not provide any security for impoverished communities against similar crises in the future.

Donors need to re-examine the way they give. By supplying non-governmental organizations, such as Islamic Relief, with ample funds in advance, efforts can be made to establish long-term development projects.

Projects like disaster preparedness, health and nutritional feeding centers, small scale agriculture and business can all better provide communities with the tools they need to thrive and prevent future disasters.

### ISLAMIC RELIEF RESPONDS

Islamic Relief has strived to ease the pains of hunger for millions suffering throughout the world. Islamic Relief has initiated emergency responses to famines and hunger crises, and established feeding centers and nutritional programs around the globe.

Those affected by this food crisis need immediate aid to survive. Islamic Relief has launched an emergency response to help as many victims as possible as the situation deteriorates.

## 2007-2008 FOOD PRICE INCREASES

COUNTRY	PRICE INCREASE	RESULT
AFGHANISTAN	200% rise in price of staple food items	Increased cases of families selling children Rise in child labor cases
EGYPT	150% rise in wheat prices 57% rise in cooking oil	200 injured during protests against food increases Street fights over food
INDIA	20% rise in prices for rice and lentils	Violent demonstrations throughout the country
IRAQ	150% rise in rice prices	Increased crime rates Increased cases of looting food trucks
PAKISTAN	130% rise in prices of flour 70% rise in prices for basmati rice	Increased number of suicides due to hunger and poverty
PALESTINE	84% rise in price of wheat flour	Price hikes adding to an already ongoing suffering
SOMALIA	80% of Somalis can not afford to feed themselves 18% rise in price of flour	Public demonstrations against the price increases Increased robberies for food
YEMEN	133% rise in price of rice 47% rise in price of milk	Families cut meals to one a day Increase in riots and robberies for food

# THE PAIN OF SEVERE HUNGER

Islamic Relief Helps Provide Immediate Aid to Food Crisis Victims



Extreme hunger causes malnutrition, leaving people more vulnerable to illnesses such as diarrhea and malaria. As food prices have continued to rise, aid agencies have noticed an increase in rates of malnutrition. This is often in areas suffering from drought and conflict, which make it even more difficult for people to access the food they need.

(Opposite)

Malnourished child in Ethiopia. REUTERS/

Radu Sigheti (Ethiopia), courtesy of

alernet.org.

(Below)

Men receive food during an Islamic Relief

distribution in Somalia.



## DROUGHT AND CONFLICT

Somalia relies heavily on imported food to feed its people. However, the rising cost of food on the global market and the devaluation of the Somali currency have pushed prices beyond the reach of most families. Because of drought, local harvests have also been poor, and the cost of locally produced food has also risen.

In Somalia, the price of many cereals have climbed at record levels, by between 100 and 375 percent. Unable to afford food, people have used up their reserves and now have nothing left. The increasing cost of food, poor *gu* (seasonal) rains and a deepening drought, have pushed the number of people reliant on humanitarian assistance up to 2.6 million.

Currently over 22 percent of Somali children are malnourished. Typically during food shortages most of the children suffering from malnutrition are from rural areas. However, in Somalia rates of malnutrition among the urban poor are rising.

### ISLAMIC RELIEF IN SOMALIA

Shihab Babiker is Islamic Relief's Acting Country Director in Somalia. He explains how the global food crisis has affected the war-torn country.

"Food prices in Somalia have been increasing since last year," said Babiker. "They are now at the stage where 80 percent of the population can't afford to buy food. For example, the cost of flour and rice has almost doubled in the last year. The consequence of the increase in price is that rates of hunger are spreading throughout the country. This is affecting the security and peace of the country."

"Children who have been displaced by the fighting are particularly vulnerable, and many are dying from hunger," Babiker explained. "Hundreds of deaths are reported every month as a result of hunger and malnutrition. Almost all displaced families are suffering from malnutrition and all say that their only worry is how to get enough food."

Babiker continued, "The food crisis has caused instability, conflict and security threats across the country. People are forced to rob in order to survive. Many youth and bandits attack wherever they can, without seeming to care who dies. This is increasing conflict between clans and is hampering the ability of aid agencies to deliver essential humanitarian aid."

"There have been almost continuous riots and demonstrations in many areas of Puntland where Islamic Relief works, especially in the main towns of Bossaso, Garowe and Galkaio. Most of the people involved in these incidents are those who are the poorest and those who have been displaced."

Babiker explained, "Islamic Relief is carrying out water trucking in Mogadishu and 21 communities in Puntland that have been affected by drought and food shortages. This provides people with the water they need to survive and is also helping to reduce the incidences of waterborne diseases in the region. We are also distributing monthly food rations



(Clockwise from top)

Islamic Relief staff survey an empty water pan in Mandera, Kenya.

Abdul Aziz with his mother and sister outside their home.

Drought-affected families line up for aid distributions. REUTERS/Radu Sigheti (Ethiopia), courtesy of alertnet.org.



to over 2,000 displaced families living in the Afgoi area and have set up a mobile medical team.”

## KENYA

As in Somalia, the global food crisis has also pushed prices up in Kenya, forcing people to use up their reserves of food. The situation is made worse by the fact that the Horn of Africa has had poor seasonal rains that have not replenished water sources.

The result is that many people are struggling to feed their families. Rates of malnutrition in vulnerable areas, such as Mandera in north-east Kenya, where Islamic Relief works, have already risen from 15 percent to 25 percent in 12 months. It is feared that without rain and with global food prices still rising, this situation will become much worse.

## ON THE BRINK

In May 2008, Haniya Dar, Islamic Relief’s Regional Program Officer for East Africa, traveled to Mandera, Kenya to visit projects in the area. She saw the impact of the global food crisis and the deepening drought on local communities. While in Mandera, Haniya met 10-year-old Abdulaziz Hassan Aliow. She describes the challenges facing his family, and many others like them.

“Abdulaziz lives with his mother and seven siblings in Mandera. His mother often struggles to provide for her large family. When they are in season she sells bananas, but



at the moment there are no bananas to sell. Her eldest son is the main breadwinner in the family and is employed as a casual laborer, loading and unloading goods.”

“The family lives in a small *tukul* – a traditional shelter that looks like an upturned coconut, and is almost identical to those of their neighbors. It only has a small stick fence that offers little privacy. There is no running water, but the family does have their own basic bathroom.”

Haniya said, “Abdulaziz’s mother buys 125 grams of meat for the nine members of the family every other day. She says that this amount of meat would only fill half my cupped hand. The family can only afford to eat one meal a day, but count themselves lucky because water is only a five minute walk away.”

“Mandera has not had enough rain over the last few months to support the families that depend on water. Most people in this region are pastoralists, who rely on water not only for drinking and cooking, but also in order to keep their crops and livestock alive. Many people still have not been able to build up their food stocks or livestock after the 2006 drought that decimated herds, so this latest drought could be extremely damaging.”

“The villages outside Mandera rely on a handful of wells or traditional open reservoirs that collect rain water. Although it is meant to be the rainy season, only one of the reservoirs I visited had any water in it, the rest were completely dry. This is putting increased pressure on the wells in the surrounding villages. Those areas with no wells at all are now reliant on water that is being trucked in,” Haniya explained.

“Combined with the poor rains, the global food crisis will have a devastating impact on families such as Abdulaziz’s who are dependent on agriculture. If the rains don’t come soon, Abdulaziz’s family could once again be pushed to the edge of survival.”

## ETHIOPIA

An increase in prices, a limited supply of food and a lack of emergency resources are also causing serious problems in drought-stricken Ethiopia. Estimates show that 4.6 million people are in need of emergency food support. According to UNICEF, 75,000 children are already suffering from severe malnutrition.

Drought throughout Ethiopia has led to poor harvests and has depleted pasture. The shortage of locally grown cereals is pushing the price up at local markets, often beyond the reach of poor families.

Many people in Ethiopia are pastoralists who rely on their animals for their survival. However, the lack of pasture has already caused the death of many animals. The remaining animals are often in poor health, reducing the price of livestock in the market.

The affect of crop shortages and the decreasing price of livestock, has resulted in an increase in rates of malnutrition, especially in the south and east of the country. Although there has been rain in some areas

which has improved pasture, this has brought with it new problems, including outbreaks of diarrhea among children already weakened by food shortages.

## RISING MALNUTRITION

Islamic Relief works in the Somali Region of Ethiopia where a combination of drought and conflict has pushed rates of malnutrition among children to over 30 percent. This has increased admissions to therapeutic feeding centers, which provide food and healthcare to malnourished children.

In the Somali Region of Ethiopia Islamic Relief is working to provide people with clean water and food. Working with UNICEF, Islamic Relief has been drilling wells and constructing *birkas* (water pans) and are training communities on good health and hygiene practices in order to reduce the incidence of waterborne diseases.

Islamic Relief is also screening local communities in El Kere and Hargelle through mobile health teams in order to assess those who need emergency assistance and provide children and pregnant and new mothers with highly nutritious food. They are also training local people to identify children in their community who are malnourished and in need of medical assistance.

## IMPROVING ANIMAL HEALTH

In order to assist pastoralists affected by the food crisis, Islamic Relief is working with them to improve the health of their animals. In conjunction with the Ethiopian government, Islamic Relief is training community animal health workers to identify diseases and to administer the appropriate treatment. Islamic Relief has also established two veterinary pharmacies in Hargelle and Chereti Districts and have vaccinated over 54,000 animals.

Mohamed Hussein Hassen lives in Hargelle Woreda, Afder in the Somali Region of Ethiopia. His family are pastoralists whose lives depend on their animals. Previously, he was treating sick animals using traditional methods or illegal drugs. However, the drugs were of poor quality and he did not know how to administer them properly.

Sudden outbreaks of disease among livestock in the remote area where Mohamed lives are common. Although many of the illnesses could be easily treated, preventing the death of many animals, this is not possible because of the lack of vets in the area.

Mohamed received training from Islamic Relief in order to become a community animal health worker. The training involved both theoretical and practical elements to help him treat common health problems among livestock. He was also supplied with high quality drugs and equipment to enable him to carry out his work. The new veterinary pharmacy Islamic Relief established in Hargelle enables Mohamed and other community animal health workers to stock up on drugs when their supplies run out.

Mohamed is not only committed to improving the health of livestock among his community, but is also working to spread the knowledge he learned to other pastoralists.

# RAMADAN: FOOD FOR WHOM THE SUN NEVER SETS

Get into the Spirit of Giving with Islamic Relief

FEATURES



Every year 1.5 billion Muslims around the world celebrate the holy month of Ramadan. During this month, Muslims fast from dawn to dusk, increasing their awareness of the plight of the poor, hungry, and the ill around the world.

After a full day of fasting, there is nothing more welcomed than breaking one's fast with the *iftar* meal. However, *iftar* is a luxury many people around the world cannot afford.

According to Islamic tradition and teachings, feeding people at the end of a fasting day represents a spiritually rewarding act. The spirit of the month

encourages increased amounts of charitable acts to Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

During Ramadan, donations to Islamic Relief increase tremendously, affording Islamic Relief the extra opportunity to help provide food to the thousands of people living in poverty around the world.

Islamic Relief's seasonal Ramadan program offers an opportunity for many needy people around the world who face food insecurity and hunger to be provided with a 'Ramadan Food Package,' which ensures that their burden is eased during the month of Ramadan.

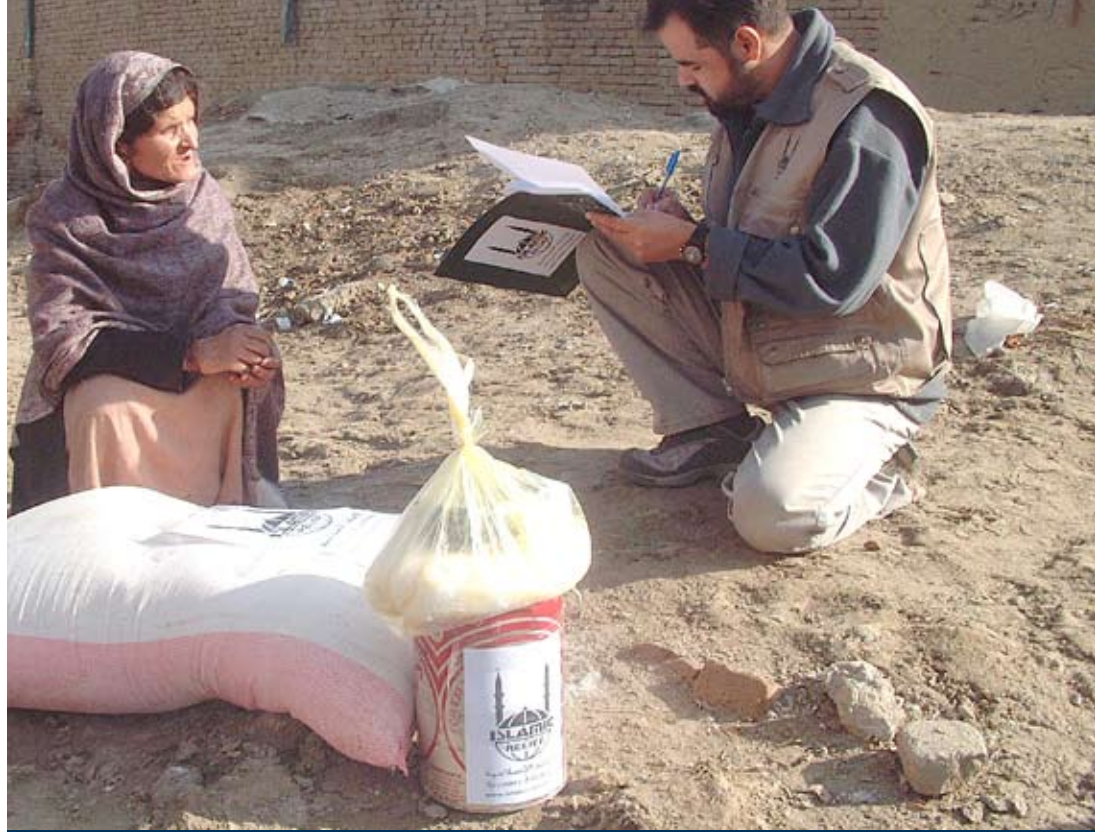
\*Adhering to the fourth pillar of Islam, Muslims fast from dawn to dusk for 29 or 30 days during Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar.

(Opposite)

2007 Ramadan food distribution in Egypt.

(Left)

2006 Ramadan food distribution in Afghanistan.



The program is designed to operate in conjunction with other relief and development programs that provide more sustainable assistance in improving living conditions for beneficiaries.

In 2007, more than \$2.7 million worth of food packets was donated to families in need in 23 countries. The food packages are generally distributed to those who need it the most, including families living below the poverty line, widows, orphans, pregnant women, poor families with disabled or elderly members, women who are head of households, refugee returnees, internally displaced persons, families with no employed members, and households affected by disasters and conflict.

Items included in the food packets vary depending on country, but generally include essential items such as flour, sugar, cooking oil, dates, rice, lentil, beans, macaroni, canned meat, and other items.

Islamic Relief's domestic Ramadan projects have also increased tremendously over the past few years. The most successful project has been Islamic Relief's annual homeless feeding, held in 19 cities across the United States in 2007, serving thousands homeless individuals.

During Ramadan, Muslims fast during daylight and break their fast with a warm meal when the sun sets. However, there are thousands of people living in poverty, for whom the sun never sets. With Islamic Relief's annual Ramadan projects, there is now a chance to provide food for those who have very little.

Islamic Relief and the millions of beneficiaries would like to thank the donors for their generosity.

## RAMADAN 2007

Last year, working in conjunction with local welfare groups, a wide range of beneficiaries were selected to receive Ramadan food packages, including widows, orphans, the destitute, elderly, disabled, refugees and people affected by disasters.

Below is a chart showing how many beneficiaries or number of packs donated in each country

COUNTRY	# FOOD PACKS	# BENEFICIARIES
Afghanistan	4,900	24,500
Albania	2,324	11,620
Bangladesh	9,025	45,125
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2,250	11,250
Chechnya (Russian Fed)	6,100	30,272
China	1,800	8,176
Egypt	4,102	20,510
Ethiopia	4,200	21,000
India	5,500	27,500
Indonesia	9,334	36,419
Iraq	17,400	95,400
Jordan	2,150	10,660
Kenya	1,474	8,844
Kosova	900	6,044
Mali	4,588	22,940
Niger	8,886	62,202
Pakistan	8,350	58,450
Palestine	20,000	140,000
Somalia	3,070	18,120
South Africa	5,000	25,000
Sudan	24,041	120,205
Yemen	2,738	13,690
<b>Total</b>	<b>148,132</b>	<b>817,927</b>

# RAMADAN AROUND THE WORLD

In 2007, Islamic Relief provided more than 817,000 people around the world with Ramadan Food Packages. Working with local welfare groups and community organizations, each group of beneficiaries was chosen based on need and included categories such as widows, orphans, the destitute, aged, disabled, refugees and people affected by disasters.



Beneficiaries in Donxiang, China happily receive their Ramadan Food Packages.





Mejra Mujkanovic of Bosnia opens her Ramadan Food Package provided by Islamic Relief. The packet contained rice, wheat flour, beans, oil, macaroni, canned meat, sugar, spices, chocolate cream, dates, coffee, ketchup, mineral water, and juice.



In China, more than 8,000 people benefitted from the Ramadan Food Packages. Each one contained 25 kg of wheat flour and 5 kg of high quality edible oil.



Each food package distributed in Palestine contained 5 kg rice, 3 kg lentils, 4 kg beans, 2 kg chick peas, 1 kg halawa, 1 kg tomato paste, 3 liters oil, 1 kg macaroni, 1 kg taheena, 2 kg pasta and 5 kg sugar.

For beneficiaries in Chechnya, each Ramadan Food Package consisted of rice, sugar, macaroni, tea, cans of milk, cans of fish, packs of buckwheat, and candy.



In Palestine, Ramadan Food Packages were distributed in North Gaza, Gaza, Middle area, Khan Younis, Rafah, Jerusalem, Jenin, Tulkarem, Hebron, Jericho, Bethlehem, and Ramalla.





## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

How One Person Benefitted from the Ramadan Food Package

When he was 11-years-old, Ibraheem Muhammad's father suddenly fell sick. His family had no savings and spent four months surviving off bread and cheese that their neighbors would give them.

"It was the worst time I had ever lived, and that time I will always remember. I have never felt poor until I felt that hunger," said Ibraheem. "I thank God it is not a regular problem and when it happened again it was not severe like the first time."

Now at 17-years-old, Ibraheem's father is disabled and his mother has a brain disease. Ibraheem and his older brother are the only breadwinners in their household, selling vegetables to support his family. Usually all his family gets to eat is bread, aubergines and lentils they buy from the local markets.

"The problem we face is that our income cannot provide for the whole family. No matter how much we work, the needs outweigh the income," said Ibraheem.

Ibraheem lives in Egypt and is the only one out of his five siblings who attends school because his family cannot afford the expense. But even then, according to Ibraheem the education is not good quality and the building is not suitable for children to be in.

"I try to work to help my brother, or at least cover my own expenses. I want to share his burden but I cannot with my health condition. Sometimes I lie in bed unable to move from the pain, and watch my brother waking up so early to earn a living for our family."

Ibraheem heard about Islamic Relief's distributions from the television and decided to register to receive a Ramadan Food Package.

"The Ramadan Package makes a big difference to us," said Ibraheem. "I do not have to worry anymore at the beginning of every Ramadan how will we survive through the month. I do not worry about if someone in the family – may God bless them all- fell sick, we would starve in Ramadan."

With the help of the food package, Ibraheem was able to save his money usually spent on food to pay for his school fees and buy a school uniform.

"No one knows what the word poor means until he experiences it, nor what starving or hunger means until he suffers from it. I accept that I am poor, but I wish I were not. I could live in poverty, but my parents or my sister, it is so hard to see them struggling through it everyday."

"Indeed, the Ramadan Package makes a difference to us all."

# GIVE A PORTION, SAVE AN ORPHAN

## Local Muslim Student Organizations Team Up for the Ramadan Orphan Drive

**T**his year more than 100 organizations have registered for Islamic Relief's 2008 Ramadan Orphan Drive – *Give a Portion, Save an Orphan.*

Last year alone, 30 Muslim Student Associations (MSA) from across the nation helped conduct the Ramadan drive. With less than two weeks of planning, they were able to not only achieve but surpass their goal of 250 orphan sponsorships.

A junior college in Tyler, Texas inspired other schools to join the drive after they collected 18 orphans' sponsorships on the first day. Meanwhile children at Genessee Academy, an Islamic school from Michigan, collected over \$20,000 in funds for Islamic Relief's Orphan General Fund. After learning about zakat at the Islamic Association of Collin County's Sunday School, students collected enough zakat money to sponsor 20 orphans.

The MSA at the University of California, Irvine did what has never been done before by going to masjids after every prayer and asking if the Muslims wanted their ticket

to Paradise: an orphan sponsorship. As the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "I and the caretaker of an orphan will enter Paradise like this" joining his index and middle fingers together. This great reminder enabled the MSA at UC Irvine to collect 149 sponsorships!

With a goal of 250 orphan sponsorships during last year's drive, volunteering organizations and individuals helped raise an astounding 427 sponsorships!

With so many children in need around the world, this year Islamic Relief is looking to get even more orphan sponsorships. Our goal is to sponsor 2,008 orphans in Ramadan 2008. This year it is not only a drive among the Muslim Student Associations, but other campus organizations, as well as youth groups, Sunday schools, Islamic Schools, and Muslim American Society Chapters.

With God's Mercy and your help, we can achieve our goal.

This Ramadan, volunteers will attend iftars,

dinners, nightly Taraweeh and Jumua prayers, asking their family, friends, and community members to give a portion, to save an orphan.

As organizations register, Islamic Relief sends a starter kit with all the resources needed to run a successful orphan sponsorship drive complete with various tools and tips to help anyone run a drive from start to finish.

By signing up to sponsor an orphan, donors can choose from any one of the available countries and sponsor an orphan either monthly or yearly. Islamic Relief will then send the donor a report with information on the sponsored child.

Register an organization you belong to and make a difference in the life of those who need it most.

**Not part of an organization? You can still help, email [orphandrive@irw.org](mailto:orphandrive@irw.org). We are looking for state representatives to help us with the drive.**

**Register today at [www.irw.org/orphandrive](http://www.irw.org/orphandrive).**





# KOMSOMOLSKAYA'S NEW SCHOOL

Islamic Relief Completes Construction of New School  
in Chechnya

In 2000, the village of Komsomolskaya in Chechnya in the Russian Federation came under attack. The village was devastated and nearly all the villagers fled. The old school was reduced to rubble and when people began to return, the children found they had nowhere to study.

In September 2007, Islamic Relief finished the construction of a new school in Komsomolskaya, funded by the Islamic Development Bank. The opening ceremony was a time of celebration for the whole village.

(Left to right)  
Batukaeva Zina, headmistress of  
Komsomolskaya's school consults with  
Islamic Relief staff.

Pupils during the opening ceremony of  
Komsomolskaya's new school.



**W**asim Bahja, Islamic Relief's Regional Program Officer in the Russian Federation's Chechnya region, saw the process from the planning stages through to opening the doors to the first students. He explains why this school was desperately needed.

## SHORTAGES, OVERCROWDING AND ILL-HEALTH

"Many Chechens who have been displaced by fighting are now looking to return to their home villages. However, they face many challenges. One of the greatest is the lack of education services for their children."

Since the start of the conflict, 460 schools have been destroyed or seriously damaged, yet only around half have been rebuilt. The shortage of schools leaves many children without a stable education. There is also severe overcrowding and it is not uncommon for students to be taught in corridors or kitchens.

Most of the schools operating in Chechnya are housed in temporary or unfinished buildings, lacking basic health and safety measures, safe playgrounds, electricity, and central heating. In a region where temperatures can dip below minus 20 degrees in winter, this is a major problem.

"Parents said how their children regularly suffer from the flu, tuberculosis and other infectious diseases as a result of the conditions at school."

## RETURNING HOME TO KOMSOMOLSKAYA

"Before the conflict, Komsomolskaya was home to 8,000 people, however, after it was attacked most left. Some are still reluctant to return because of the lack of education facilities."

Originally built in 1957, the school in Komsomolskaya served the host community as well as many nearby villages. But during the conflict, the school was completely destroyed and only fit to house animals.

The village was provided with temporary classrooms next to the original school but they were overcrowded and unhygienic, lacking electricity, heating, and unsuitable for children with disabilities.

## INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY

"Before work on the new school began, Islamic Relief staff visited the site of the old school, met with the children, teachers, the headmistress, local authorities, and representatives of the local community."

Committed to the project from the beginning, the community played an active role in the construction of the new school.

"The project even gave some women who had lost their husbands in the war the opportunity to earn some money. The children were very excited and visited the



site every day to watch the progress of the building.”

#### NEW TERM, NEW SCHOOL

The new school opened on September 1, 2007 just in time for the first day of the new school year. With 12 classrooms, a library, offices, recreational facilities, a kitchen, and water and sanitation facilities, the new school provides 640 students with high quality education.

Improvements to the quality of education have encouraged many displaced families to return home. More than 80 families have returned to the village since construction began, with more expected to return as the months pass.

#### A POSITIVE INFLUENCE

“In March 2000 our village was completely destroyed by fighting. Villagers were forced to make a camp in the melting spring snow on the edge of the village. Hungry children were crying in the cold and some pregnant women were forced to give birth in the camp,” said Batukaeva Zina, headmistress of Komsomolskaya Village School.

“During that time the village school was ruined. But as people slowly returned home, some of the locals asked me if I would organize schooling for their children. Together with some other teachers we vowed to fulfill this task. In the remnants

of the village hospital, with blankets for windows and a few bits of furniture, we welcomed 79 students back to school.”

Headmistress Zina has worked as a teacher in the village since 1971. Gradually, she helped the community make renovations to the damaged school. They replaced the blankets with window film, installed new doors and small stoves to warm the rooms in the cold season. The school stayed in this building for three years.

In September of 2003, Zina and the staff moved to a temporary school that was only able to accommodate 180 children when 230 children attended each day. The classrooms were cramped and there was no fresh air.

“When Islamic Relief began to construct a new school, I spent the whole of the summer holidays at the center of the construction process. The builders consulted me about the design and structure of the school, and we tried to keep the new school like the original one. I was pleased that the builders were interested in my opinion and considered my recommendations.”

“The reconstruction of the school has had a positive influence on the life of the whole village. People are now more optimistic and enthusiastic and the school has encouraged more people to return to the village. This is because all parents want the best conditions for their children and our school is now one of the most modern and beautiful in the whole of Chechnya.”

# POVERTY IN EGYPT

Reaching the Neediest Families



In April, 2008 Islamic Relief staff member Yousef Abdallah travelled to our field office in Egypt.

This is his account of the trip:



Egypt is known for the famous pyramids of Giza, the Nile River, and the imposing Sphinx that sits as a testament to the country's ancient history. But how many of us know that there are people who live within sight of these archeological wonders but can barely afford their day's bread?

Hunger, lack of shelter, illness without access to proper medical treatment, illiteracy, and unemployment are just a few of the terrible conditions that many Egyptians live with on a day-to-day basis. On my recent trip to Egypt, I met with many people who felt powerless and

vulnerable due to their crippling poverty.

Poverty is on the rise in Egypt; the gap between the rich and the poor is increasing and the number of Egyptians living on a sub-sufficient income is astonishing. A massive 43.9 percent of a total 80 million people in Egypt live on less than \$2 a day with about 30 percent of them not having access to improved sanitation.

Many have even lost children to diseases found in germ-infested waters. Many would consider themselves lucky to eat one meager meal a day and to find any shelter that would keep them off the street.

During my visit to Islamic Relief's Early Intervention and Rehabilitation Center (EIRC) in Helwan, I met with many children with special needs and listened to their stories.

The country director and project manager told me that Islamic Relief, as an NGO, is trying to identify and meet peoples' emerging needs. We enable people to appreciate the value of transparency in an organized set-up, developing "cost effective" models of services which can be replicated by others, reach the unreachable, and tap the talented resources within the community. It is our goal to generate an ongoing means of support.

In an effort to reach the neediest of people, study their situation, and set up projects to help improve their livelihood, we visited many families in "Ezbet Elwaldah" among other areas in the borough of Helwan, south of Cairo.

Having been to several underdeveloped regions of the world, it was a shocking experience. I met with many destitute families, some of whom live on less than \$15 a month. It still amazes me that people can live on \$15 a month.

This is the land of the famed Nile River, a revered source of life, and yet the most impoverished people live along its banks—one of whom is Sanaa Usman, a single mother of four children: 16 year-old Rabab, Dalal, who is 15, 8 year-old Mumin, and Sherif who is a 6 year-old boy.

Sanaa, like so many others, has been

struggling since she became a single mother. The family lives in a one-room apartment devoid of proper sanitation and plumbing. Sanaa is unable to provide for her children and heartbreakingly confided in me, "I don't know what to do, our life has been nothing but struggle, no matter what I do and how much I try, I have not been able to provide for my children."

She and her children face a difficult life, with their situation continuing to worsen to the point that she had to take her children out of school.

"If I send them to school, they need to eat before and after they go to school. I wish I can provide them with more than one meal, but right now all we can eat is one meal in the middle of the day and we have to wait until the same time the following day for another meal."

Their miserable situation does not end here. Unable to provide for her family, Sanaa is forced to give away her 15 year-old daughter Dalal in marriage with the hopes that someone else can provide for her, giving Sanaa one less person to worry about.

Listening to Sanaa's story, which is one of many, I was reminded with what the Project Analyst in the Egypt office, Fatma Tharwat, quoted to me from one of her visits to the field. She was asking the families about their children and if they attended school, they looked at her in disbelief saying, "What schools are you talking about?" Fatma then told me that, "Even education is a luxury many of them can't afford."

Since my return from Egypt I have asked myself why there are people still living in such deplorable conditions and what can be done to alleviate their suffering.

I would like to pose this question to all who read this article: What are you going to do to help alleviate Sanaa's suffering and the suffering of many others like her? It is my hope that you'll join Islamic Relief in playing a part, however small, in bringing not only Egyptians out of poverty, but all who are much less fortunate than you and I.

Truly, in the case of the most impoverished, a little goes a long way.

(Left to right)  
Islamic Relief staff and volunteers in  
Myanmar.

Cyclone-affected families receive aid from  
Islamic Relief's distributions.

# WEATHERING THE STORM

Islamic Relief Aids Cyclone-Affected Victims



On Saturday, May 3, 2008, Cyclone Nargis hit the country of Myanmar (Burma) sending winds up to 118 mph crashing through the country. In the aftermath around 78,000 people have been declared dead and millions have been left homeless. Aid agencies have called Nargis the worst storm to hit the country in more than two decades.



The storm caused severe damage, flattening tens of thousands of homes, destroying roads, and ripping down power lines. In some villages, close to 95% of the shelter was destroyed or damaged.

As the days passed following the disaster, it became apparent that the country did not have the capacity to adequately respond to the disaster.

Since the storm hit, only around 40 percent of the 2.4 million people affected have received vital emergency aid. Around 56,000 people are still missing.

Tens of thousands of people are now living in informal camps and makeshift shelters along roadsides. Many areas of the country are completely cut-off from aid due to severe flooding and extensive road damage.

Burmese state television had declared five regions with a combined population of 24 million people to be disaster zones.

Even though some essential aid has been distributed, the needs of those suffering are immense.

Tens of thousands of survivors are in the densely populated and worst-affected region of Irrawaddy Delta face a growing risk of infectious disease such as dysentery from contaminated water supplies and poor sanitation.

#### ISLAMIC RELIEF IN MYANMAR

Islamic Relief has launched a \$6 million emergency appeal to aid those worst-affected by Cyclone Nargis.

After weeks of controversy following the cyclone, the government of Myanmar agreed to open its doors to foreign aid workers. Islamic Relief was among those who were granted entry.

Upon arrival in Yangon, Myanmar's capital, Islamic Relief teams registered with UNOCHA to begin emergency aid work in the sectors of water and sanitation and shelter.

Islamic Relief teams also met with local aid partners to coordinate aid efforts.

Islamic Relief has distributed food packages to the most affected families in the Southern Yangon Township. The packs consisted of rice, lentils, dried fish, and salt.

Urgent needs include food, water purification tablets, water filters, hygiene kits, medicines, and mosquito nets.

# RISING THROUGH THE RUBBLE

Islamic Relief Helps China Recuperate After the Earthquake



More than 10 million people across China have been affected by the devastating 7.8 magnitude earthquake that hit the country on May 12, 2008. Over 69,000 people are confirmed dead, more than 200,000 people have been injured, and at least another 18,600 are still missing in what is being called the strongest earthquake to hit the country in over 30 years.



## AID PROVIDED SO FAR:

Gansu Province—2,300 beneficiaries

- 48,000 bags of instant noodles
- 30,000 bottles of mineral water
- 300 cartons of biscuits
- 10,800 kg of cooked meat



(Opposite)

Islamic Relief staff takes needs assessments from earthquake victims.

(Left)

Islamic Relief staff help unload emergency aid for earthquake-affected families.

The mid-day quake collapsed schools, buildings, water towers, houses and communications systems, leaving thousands of people, including many school children, buried under large piles of rubble.

In the days following the quake, heavy rains, numerous aftershocks and widespread landslides hampered search and rescue efforts. Relief efforts are focused on providing temporary shelter and medical care for those left homeless by the quake.

### THE STATE OF SURVIVORS

In Sichuan province, more than 200,000 houses have entirely collapsed while more than 4 million were damaged in some way. This and other damage have left almost 5 million people homeless and in need of temporary shelter.

Tents and makeshift shelters cover every stretch of available land while tens of thousands sleep outside on the ground out of fear of becoming trapped during an aftershock. Concerned by the numbers of those in need, the Chinese government has increased its efforts to get aid to survivors.

The government of China has vowed to prevent outbreaks of disease during the relief and recovery phases by ensuring the safety of drinking water and food, checking public health conditions and disinfecting recovered bodies (CNN).

School children have begun resuming classes established in makeshift schools under donated tents. Resuming

everyday routines is being encouraged by the Chinese government as a way to help survivors get their lives back to normal and begin the healing process.

### ISLAMIC RELIEF'S RESPONSE

Islamic Relief is in China providing immediate relief to those worst-affected by this disaster with food, water, shelter, and medical care.

To distribute aid, Islamic Relief is working in conjunction with the China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation (CFPA) and the Gansu Association for NGO International Economic and Technical Cooperation (GANGO), two of the largest operational NGOs in the country.

Islamic Relief has already provided emergency aid in the Gansu Province where over 200,000 people have been displaced and close to another 5,000 were injured during the quake.

### ISLAMIC RELIEF IN CHINA

Islamic Relief has been working in China providing short-term relief and long-term development. In Shaanxi, Islamic Relief was able to respond quickly to the floods of 2002, providing immediate emergency relief, and later rebuilding houses for hundreds of people left homeless by the deluge.

Islamic Relief's Ramadan and Qurbani food distributions have contributed towards alleviating severe food shortages. Each Ramadan, Islamic Relief's food distributions benefit over 6,500 people, while the Qurbani distributions reach a further 4,000.

# SUPPORTING LONG TERM SOLUTIONS IN BANGLADESH

An Islamic Relief staff member recently visited our field office in Bangladesh. Below is an account of her experience.



(Clockwise from left)

Families work to rebuild their homes after the cyclone.

Cyclone affected students resume classes in temporary schools.

Cyclone victims line up to receive aid from Islamic Relief.



As I looked through the pictures immediately taken after Cyclone Sidr hit Bangladesh in November 2007, the most striking sight was not the destruction of crops, trees, homes and lives, but the face of an elder Bangladeshi widow; no anger, no sadness, no fear, but only one tear.

This tear drop held no emotion while her eyes looked out into the horizon. I could not tell if she was aware of what was actually around her: devastation, destruction and death. Over 8 million people were affected, about 40,000 people were injured, over 3,200 people died, 4 million trees were ruined, and more than 13,700 schools were damaged.

People were living under the open sky, no cover from the cold, no employment, and no warm clothes. I could not put this picture down because I could not accept the absence of emotion, yet I had to go beyond that one victim. I saw hundreds of pictures with such victims and then started seeing the pictures of the relief that came in. Of all the pictures I saw, that one still lingers in my mind.

Islamic Relief responded to victims of Cyclone Sidr with medical assistance, food packages, emergency shelter, blankets, and kits with essential domestic, kitchen, and hygiene items. Over 158,000 families were helped in the immediate stages after Sidr Cyclone devastated the regions of Bagerhat, Phatukali, and Jalokahti.

Islamic Relief has two new offices in Bangladesh and continues to work in the cyclone-affected areas. Currently, projects include water and sanitation, livelihood recovery including farming and other locally suitable trades, multipurpose cyclone shelter, child welfare and orphan sponsorships, psychosocial support, reforestation, Integration of Disaster Risk Reduction with community capacity building, and vocational trade education for those most deprived and underprivileged. Besides the Cyclone Sidr emergency programs, Islamic Relief implements many development projects in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh is a very poor country with people who have rich spirits. In spite of lacking the basics of one meal per day, simple footwear, clothes, or even homes, there is no bitterness.

The people's contentment and acceptance of the situation has profoundly affected me.

How can I accept their situation? How can any of us accept it? We have to look beyond the emergencies and the pictures on our television. Poverty continues long after the cameras go away. Keeping that in our hearts and mind, we must continue to help during emergencies as well as during long-term development programs.

One highly admirable development program is the Vocational Training and Education Program. Through this program, some of Cyclone Sidr victims attend mobile vocational trade center and are now learning how to use a computers to better their future.

This mobile unit with 10 machines travels around the cyclone-affected areas and trains people to use computers when some may have never even seen one. The cost? \$500 per student, that's it.

The Bangladesh Vocational Trade Education program is a six-month vocational trade course which enables a young adult to learn specific trades that allow them to earn a lifetime of income. Computer education is not the only trade. There are courses for electrical technicians, mechanics, computer technicians, seamstresses, fashion designers, courses specially designed for the handicapped, and many more – all for only \$500 per student.

Can you imagine \$500 and an entire lifetime of income? It cost me a lot more to attend one course in college and let's not talk about the cost of books!

Cyclone Sidr acts as a reminder to me to not only support emergency causes but also long-term development programs. All of those lives that were affected have permanently changed. How have our lives permanently changed by their suffering?

The effort needed to make them stable is not a one night effort nor a one month-long effort, but a continuous effort. This stability will only come when the root of the problem is addressed and a solution is provided. We cannot forget the images from our television sets of natural disasters, make a one time or two time donation and feel content with ourselves. We must involve ourselves, push ourselves, and encourage each other to become part of a permanent change, to become part of the solution. Supporting a student at the Vocational Training and Education Program is a permanent change, a solution, not in one life, but in every single life that student touches.

# REBUILDING IN BANDA ACEH

Community Members Help Islamic Relief Complete Orphan Center



Nearly four years have passed since the devastating tsunami came crashing down on Banda Aceh, Indonesia in December of 2004. The catastrophic aftermath left over 150,000 people dead, around 500,000 people homeless, and nearly 800,000 people without livelihoods.

Over 70,000 children throughout Banda Aceh were left orphaned, losing one or both of their parents in the destruction.

Initial estimates to rebuild the effected areas of Banda Aceh were around \$6.1 billion, an amount so great that many agencies were forced to close their operations, leaving orphans with very little assistance.

**A VISION FOR THE CHILDREN**

In the weeks following the tsunami, members of the Muslim Unity Center in Michigan visited the effected areas of Banda Aceh. The Unity Center members wanted to build something real and lasting – a facility that would help affected children get back on their feet, mentally and physically.

Inspired, and trying to address the long-term needs of tsunami-affected children, Islamic Relief partnered with the Muslim Unity Center and an organization in Indonesia to establish the Recreational and Residential Center for Orphans in Banda Aceh.

By using a holistic, community-based approach, Islamic Relief social workers collaborated with NGOs in the area to conduct extensive first-person interviews with sponsored orphans and their families

to assess their needs for long-term recovery. The result of these assessments was an over 9,000 square-foot boarding school and rehabilitation center offering orphans shelter and support aimed to improve overall physical and mental health, social skills building, and livelihoods.

Opened in March 2008, the center’s total cost was \$550,000; over \$300,000 of which was provided by generous donors from the Muslim Unity Center.

Complete with boys’ and girls’ dormitories, the center is built to house 70 orphaned and destitute children, providing them with free room and board, electricity, water and sanitation facilities, classrooms, libraries, vocational

training, kitchen and dining areas, and recreational facilities.

The Muslim Unity Center stands as a shining example for others to follow. Willing to think out of the box and invest in a long-term project, the Unity Center has provided a guiding example of how Islamic Relief can work with community members on various projects, allowing donors to have more ownership and allowing Islamic Relief to fulfill its goals of alleviating poverty and suffering worldwide.

Islamic Relief applauds and thanks the Muslim Unity Center’s vision, leadership and sincere and generous donors. We pray that more communities will look to the Unity Center as an example to aspire to.



(Above)  
Dr. Muhammad Kashlan, Mushir Khwaja, Zaynab Salman of Muslim Unity Center, and Anwar Khan and Misbah Shahid of Islamic Relief at the new orphan center in Banda Aceh.

(Opposite)  
Children playing at the new orphan center.

(Left)



# DAY OF DIGNITY

Annual Ramadan Homeless Feeding Event

Islamic Relief's annual Ramadan service day for the homeless across the nation has been renamed and reworked. While in past years our Ramadan food drives were held during only one weekend of Ramadan, this year, the Day of Dignity event will take place in multiple cities, during each of the four weekends of Ramadan.

In 2007, Ramadan food drives 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.

Over the past few years, Islamic Relief's efforts have helped over tens of thousands of homeless and needy people across the country. Thousands of volunteers have worked energetically and respectfully to serve the needs of beneficiaries.





# DAY OF DIGNITY

**THIS YEAR, EACH OF THE PARTICIPATING 20 CITIES HAS BEEN ASSIGNED A DAY. THE SCHEDULE FOR DAY OF DIGNITY IS AS FOLLOWS:**

**9.6.08**

Las Vegas, NV  
Seattle, WA

**9.7.08**

Phoenix, AZ  
Portland, OR

**9.13.08**

Detroit, MI  
Irvington, NJ  
Kalamazoo, MI  
Newark, NJ  
Paterson, NJ

**9.14.08**

Chicago, IL  
Elizabeth, NJ  
Philadelphia, PA

**9.20.08**

Atlanta, GA  
Ft. Thompson, SD

**9.21.08**

Dallas, TX  
Minneapolis, MN

**9.27.08**

Baltimore, MD  
Boston, MA

**9.28.08**

New York, NY  
Washington, DC

# DARWISH CONCERTS RAISE AWARENESS

Islamic Relief and Singer Iman Al Bahr Darwish Raise Money for Palestine

(Clockwise from left)  
Iman Al-Bahr Darwish performs during a Palestine fund-raising dinner in Orange County.

Islamic Relief staff talks with Palestinian children living in Gaza.

Islamic Relief staff distribute aid to needy families in Palestine.



In hopes of raising awareness and much-needed funds for the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Palestine, Islamic Relief organized a series of six fund-raising concerts featuring world-renowned Arabic singer Iman Al Bahr Darwish.

Darwish, who comes from a legendary artistic family, travelled from Egypt to the United States to perform in front of excited audiences.

The crowd consisted of all types of attendees: young and old, families, and groups of friends.

Thanks to generous donations during the concert tour, Islamic Relief was able to raise over \$600,000 for Palestine.

The humanitarian crisis in Palestine is at its worst in 30 years. Seventy-nine percent of Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip are living in poverty. At least 1.3 million Palestinians are estimated to be food

insecure and over 75,000 Gazans have lost their jobs due to border closures.

Islamic Relief launched a \$10 million appeal to provide emergency relief for victims of this crisis, so far benefiting 500,000 people including children, hospital patients, farmers, and needy families.

In addition to emergency distributions of food and supplies to families, Islamic Relief has been working to rejuvenate the community as a whole. Since the appeal began, Islamic Relief has renovated hospitals, jump started local businesses, and implemented programs for Palestinian children affected by conflict.

Though the inspiring lyrics created an exquisite mood, the purpose behind the event was certainly still kept in mind. Every attendee that evening had one common goal in mind: to alleviate the humanitarian suffering in Palestine.





## HUNGER AT HOME AND ABROAD

On March 13, Islamic Relief was invited to the White House to attend a Compassion in Action Roundtable on “Faith-Based and Community Solutions to Hunger at Home and Abroad.”

Looking at hunger domestically, the discussion also focused on the gap between recommended nutritional requirements and the purchasing power of the world’s poorest populations.

It concluded that although Americans help to feed 70 million people in more than 50 countries through food aid, humanitarian assistance programs, and agricultural support - more is still needed.



## WORKING TO END POVERTY

In May, hundreds of organizations, including Islamic Relief, came together for “New Visions to End Poverty ’08,” InterAction’s annual national 3-day forum in Washington D.C.

Islamic Relief had a large display booth and multiple staff attending concurrent workshops and sessions to network and share best practices in the nonprofit sector.

Featured keynote speakers this year included former Irish President Mary Robinson, as well as Henrietta Fore, Administrator for USAID, and Kemal Davis, Administrator for the UN Development Program. Following this meeting, Islamic Relief participated in some of the ongoing working groups, especially following the disasters in Myanmar and China.



## ISLAMIC RELIEF DIALOGUE WITH CONGRESSIONAL STAFF

On June 6, Islamic Relief worked with the Aspen Institute to convene a Congressional Dialogue with Muslim-American leaders.

The dialogue was part of a larger series of small, invite-only roundtable discussions to be held on Capitol Hill bringing together Islamic organizations and congressional staffers to foster better understanding of challenges faced by Islamic organizations and Muslim leaders. After the summer recess, a second roundtable will be held with print and T.V. media representatives.



# EMPOWERING YOUTH THROUGH ACTION

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

Every day 25,000 people die from hunger.

Source: [www.freedomfromhunger.org/info](http://www.freedomfromhunger.org/info)

More than 815 million people today are chronically undernourished (they consume less than the amount of calories essential for good health and growth) and more than 180 million children are significantly underweight. Vulnerable children weakened by hunger can succumb to common illnesses such as diarrhea, pneumonia, and malaria.



“Hunger is the most extreme form of poverty.”

This year alone 11 million children, younger than 5 will die needlessly. More than half from hunger-related causes.

What is school feeding and how does this compare to your school experience?

A UNICEF study found that of the world’s 300 million hungry children, 134 million do not attend school. School feeding programs strive to end hunger by providing children with a low cost or free nutritious meal. When schools can provide a meal, enrollments double and more girls can attend school. It also allows families to save that money to spend on other needs. Plus, fortified foods counter deficiencies from home meals thus helping school performance.

In rural areas, school is often far from home. Children frequently have to leave home early and walk a considerable distance to school. Often there is no breakfast at home; one reason is it is not practical for many mothers to rise before dawn to spend the considerable time necessary to light a fire and prepare a hot meal.

School meals usually consist of a fortified cereal-based drink and simple gruel or fortified biscuits, prepared by parents or paid cooks (sometimes the students themselves

are responsible for collecting the wood for the fire on the weekends). School feeding programs thus help children access nutritious meals, receive an education, and can improve health and family stability and community involvement in education. All this for less than a quarter a day!

The U.S. the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education program (part of the Farm Bill) is currently under reauthorization but may see a cut in what is spent overseas; as a consequence more children could go to bed hungry.

Far more people die from causes related to chronic hunger than to famine. Chronically hungry people are exceptionally vulnerable when famine or other disasters strike; they have fewer resources to protect themselves and their families.

[freedomfromhunger.org](http://freedomfromhunger.org)

In some countries a large percentage of school-age children still do not attend school. Also, in some countries more boys than girls attend school. Out-of-school children have the same nutritional and health needs as children attending school, but they do not benefit from school meals and are often forgotten. These can include children from the poorest families as well as children with disabilities, either physical or psychological.

# ACT. FURTHER REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Over 35 billion grains of rice have been donated just by playing an award-winning online game ([www.freerice.com](http://www.freerice.com))! Challenge yourself – test your vocabulary and feed hungry children in Bangladesh and elsewhere with every correct answer! You can also watch a short video seeing how the rice is distributed and prepared and see how you can have an impact – even from your very own home or school.

A recommended caloric intake is a 1,000 calorie diet for a toddler or children up to age five, and then adds 100 calories for each year thereafter.

Determine how many calories you need based on your age, and then go online and find one of the many caloric intake tracking sheets that are downloadable for young people. Spend a week filling it in to see how you are doing. Are you under or overeating; are you eating a variety of foods and exercising regularly?

**Malnutrition** - caused by eating too little, too much or an unbalanced diet that does not contain all nutrients necessary for good nutritional status, which is different from undernutrition or being undernourished.

## AS ALWAYS, WE CHALLENGE YOU TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Let us know other ways you are helping those who do not have enough to eat – from planting a vegetable garden, to collecting cans for local food banks, preparing meals at soup kitchens for homeless families, or volunteering at Islamic Relief's Day of Dignity during the month of Ramadan. We want to hear from you!

# 5 Years in a Row!

Islamic Relief considers the trust of its donors to be priceless and as a result, Islamic Relief holds itself to the highest of standards. For the fifth consecutive year, Islamic Relief has been awarded a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, America's premier charity evaluator.



"Only 3% of the charities we've rated have received at least 5 consecutive 4-star evaluations, indicating that Islamic Relief outperforms most charities in America in its efforts to operate in the most fiscally responsible way possible."

- Charity Navigator, April 30, 2008

Islamic Relief will always remain committed to using the hard earned donations of our supporters to help those less fortunate in the most efficient way possible.



**Islamic Relief**

*A Worldwide Leader in Alleviating Poverty*

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