



**25**  
YEARS OF  
SERVICE TO HUMANITY  
1984~2009



# GAZA HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

**ISLAMIC RELIEF  
UPDATE FEB '09**

# GAZA HUMANITARIAN CRISIS



On 27 December 2008 a wave of air and missile attacks in Gaza started a humanitarian crisis. The 22 day conflict left hundreds dead and thousands injured, many of them women and children. Throughout the conflict Islamic Relief was on the ground, delivering life-saving aid, but it is only now that the full scale of the tragedy is starting to emerge.

- ▶ **1,300** dead
- ▶ **5,200** injured
- ▶ **50,000** homeless
- ▶ **400,000** without water
- ▶ **Over 1 million** dependent on aid

In the densely populated Gaza Strip people have been struggling to survive with **no electricity and limited access to food and water**. Gaza's **hospitals have been at breaking point** as they try to treat the injured without adequate medical supplies. Throughout the 22-day crisis the situation was so volatile that people were afraid to go out even to get food or medical help.

## Islamic Relief has been there throughout the crisis.

We have been working in Gaza since 1998 and are currently one of the largest international aid agencies responding to the crisis. Our aid warehouses in Gaza and expertise on the ground allowed us to **provide life-saving aid** throughout the period of fighting. **Your donations helped us** provide emergency food, blankets and medical aid for the people of Gaza when they were most in need.

## We need to do more. The crisis is far from over.

Islamic Relief Worldwide has launched a global appeal raise funds that will help the people of Gaza rebuild their lives after the devastating conflict. With your help we will continue to support the people of Gaza through this difficult period and give them hope of a better future.

# WHAT ISLAMIC RELIEF IS DOING WITH YOUR SUPPORT



## Giving life-saving medical care

**Within six hours of the conflict** Islamic Relief began distributing five truckloads of medical aid to hospitals in Gaza, including the main Al Shifa hospital. The syringes, surgical gloves, oral tubes and bandages we supplied were desperately needed by hospitals struggling to cope with the huge numbers of casualties.

Islamic Relief has been working closely with the World Health Organisation and supplied **almost \$1 million worth of critical medical equipment** such as anaesthesia machines and oxygen cylinders that will **help thousands of patients** in the coming weeks.

Medical staff in Gaza's hospitals are working 24 hours a day to help the injured but even basic medical equipment is in short supply. Over the next few days Islamic Relief is planning to deliver **half a million dollars worth of medical aid** to Gaza's hospitals.

*"On a normal day before this started, we received around ten cases a day. Now we receive 50 patients all at once. Unfortunately this means we have no choice but to treat the injured on the floor;"*

**Dr Haytham Dababish,**  
Head of the Emergency Department at  
Al Shifa hospital.

# WHAT ISLAMIC RELIEF IS DOING WITH YOUR SUPPORT



## Providing emergency food and water

Food is in short supply in Gaza as most shops and bakeries closed due to the violence and shortage of fuel. Some shops are now starting to open but cooking gas and water remain in short supply.

During the 22-day conflict Islamic Relief distributed **four truckloads of food** including flour, rice, beans and tinned meat to hospitals in Gaza. Food stocks at the hospitals were almost depleted when the Islamic Relief delivery arrived. We also distributed **food parcels to vulnerable families** who were dependent on aid and 48,000kg of powdered milk for young children to help prevent malnutrition.

To date Islamic Relief has distributed **half a million dollars worth of food to 200,000 people** sheltering in hospitals and school buildings. Over the next two months **we will provide a further 100,000 people with food parcels** that will last one month.

## Helping displaced families

More than 50,000 people in Gaza have been displaced from their homes by the fighting. **Over 25,000 have been taking shelter in UN buildings** where they have little access to food or clean water. Others are living in tents on the site of their former homes or lodging with friends and relatives. To assist these displaced families, Islamic Relief has provided **canned food, over 2,000 blankets and 2,000 hygiene kits.**

*"This war has destroyed a lot in Gaza. It has violently impacted on homes, schools, roads and more importantly, on the hearts of people."*



**Hatem Shurrab,**  
Islamic Relief Aid Worker in Gaza.

# ISLAMIC RELIEF'S PLANS FOR THE COMING MONTHS



## Rebuilding hope for the people of Gaza

**The fighting has ended and media attention is now elsewhere but Islamic Relief is still there.** Over the next few months Islamic Relief will spend over \$300,000 removing waste and rubble from Gaza. We will be delivering **\$1.5 million worth of food** for the people of Gaza, and another **\$50,000 worth of food for hospitals**. We will be supporting the healthcare system with nearly **half a million dollars worth of medical aid** and spend \$50,000 on rehabilitating homes.

The people of Gaza will also need psycho-social support. Islamic Relief has been working with its partner CAFOD for many years to help **children traumatised by the ongoing conflict**. The project has already had a **positive impact on the lives of 2,000 children**. "The programme has taken many steps forward but the current bombing means we will have to start all over again. Sadly, I feel **the need for counselling is now even greater**," said Hatem Shurrab. In the next couple of months Islamic Relief will provide psycho-social care for at least 5,000 children to help them come to terms with what they have experienced.

*"I have seen things I will never forget all my life. An orphaned nine-year-old girl holding her baby sister in one of the shelters. A mother crying for many days after losing her son. A father struggling to feed his small children. The people of Gaza are traumatised by what has happened."*

**Hatem Shurrab,**

Islamic Relief Aid Worker in Gaza.

To read Hatem's diary of the crisis visit

[www.islamic-relief.com](http://www.islamic-relief.com)

## Summary of Islamic Relief's work so far

Type of aid delivered	Number of people reached	Cost in USD
Food for civilians	100,000	1,000,000
Relief items (blankets etc)	7,000	350,000
Medical supplies, drugs, equipment	150,000	1,500,000
Food for hospitals	5,000	150,000

# YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

## IS ISLAMIC RELIEF (IR) WELL ESTABLISHED IN GAZA?

Islamic Relief has been working in Palestine since 1994, providing food, medical aid, small business loans and orphan sponsorships. We also provide specialist care for deaf children and those traumatised by the ongoing conflict.

## WAS IR ALLOWED TO WORK IN GAZA AMID THE CRISIS?

IR is currently the largest UK-based aid agency in Gaza. Our emergency distributions began within six hours of the crisis and are ongoing. There are no restrictions or curfews placed specifically on the humanitarian activities of Islamic Relief in Gaza.

## HOW DO YOU WORK IN SUCH A DANGEROUS ENVIRONMENT?

The situation in Gaza has been extremely volatile and our staff have risked their lives to ensure aid reaches civilians throughout the three weeks of fighting. Fortunately none of our staff were injured although they have all suffered personal tragedies.

## HOW DO YOU GET AID INTO GAZA?

The United Nation's World Health Organisation coordinates aid shipments into Gaza on behalf of all aid agencies and we work closely with them to ensure our supplies are delivered. We also have an office in the West Bank that helps with logistics and a warehouse of aid supplies within Gaza. Some of our aid comes in through the Rafah border crossing with Egypt and we also purchase supplies in the local Gaza markets whenever possible.

## IS IR WORKING WITH OTHER AID AGENCIES IN GAZA?

Yes, we work in close coordination with other well respected agencies such as the United Nations to ensure that aid and services reach the affected people. Before the current crisis for example, we worked with the UN to renovate the main Al-Shifa hospital in Gaza.

## DOES IR WORK WITH ANY ARMED OR POLITICAL GROUPS?

No, IR is an apolitical, non-profit, humanitarian organisation with no affiliations to any political parties or other groups. The goal of Islamic Relief is to alleviate the poverty and suffering of the world's poorest people.

## HOW CAN YOU ENSURE MY DONATION WILL HELP THE PEOPLE OF GAZA?

IR is legally bound to honour the wishes of its donors, so any donation to the Gaza appeal will only be used for this purpose. Our reputation as a trustworthy and efficient organisation is well-known to governments as well as organisations and individuals who have worked with us over the past 25 years.





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