



ISLAMIC RELIEF USA

MIDDLE EAST

BUILDING FOUNDATIONS, CREATING SOLUTIONS

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After years of hardship and poverty—and now, in some areas, the shock of recent political upheaval—people across the Middle East are struggling to rebuild and strengthen their communities.

At Islamic Relief USA, we're doing our best to help them achieve the solutions they need. This booklet showcases some of our most recent projects in the Middle East. It all starts with the support of donors like you. Together, we can help them build a better tomorrow.

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EGYPT

Egypt's history is long and rich, but today, one in five Egyptians lives in poverty. The gap between the rich and poor in Egypt is so wide that it's very difficult for people to break the cycle of poverty without help. Political unrest in early 2011 added to the crisis and many families are struggling to survive. The full effect is still unknown and people's lives are continuing to crumble.

More than one-quarter of youth ages 18-29 have not completed basic education, and one in 10 in this age group has never enrolled in school. Without an education, it's hard to build a better future.

But even those who are educated are struggling to get a job. Unemployment over the past two decades has been as high as one in four. Even with the right tools, many young Egyptians aren't getting the opportunity to use them. Islamic Relief has been working in Egypt since 2001, helping impoverished families generate income and assisting disabled persons, especially children.

When unrest in Egypt reached its peak in early 2011, Islamic Relief responded to skyrocketing unemployment and poverty, reaching out to more people, and fast. Emergency food distributions provided a boost to 2,000 impoverished families to help them through aftermath of the economic shutdown, and teams began developing several new projects. Read on for details.



MEDICAL SUPPORT

Kafr al-Sheikh is one of the poorest governorates in Egypt. Nearly 90% of all people in this area are farmers and the average family income is about \$1 per day. People here are hardly able to buy food to eat, let alone get the medicine and care they need throughout their lives to be healthy. Worse, there's only one hospital in the area that can provide care, and it's not furnished with quality equipment. Much of the equipment is not working properly, and it barely has enough supplies.

Islamic Relief is meeting the health needs of the rural poor in Metobas District in the Kafr al-Sheikh Governorate. A new project will help provide better health services to an estimated 180,000 poor Egyptians in Metobas district and surrounding villages by stocking local health clinics with much-needed medical equipment and supplies. Among the clinics being helped are a dental clinic, a pediatric clinic, delivery and neonatal clinic and an orthopedic clinic.

EARLY INTERVENTION AND REHABILITATION CENTER

The Early Intervention and Rehabilitation Center is one of Islamic Relief's longest-running projects in Egypt. This center in Cairo has provided rehabilitation services to children with special needs for a decade, helping thousands of children since it opened. EIRC is a place where parents arrive with little hope. Their hopes may be as simple as hearing their child say "mama" or "baba." The more optimistic parents wish their child could walk, talk or go to school—the basic expectations for most parents, but these are a miracle to the parents of a disabled child. EIRC has helped make miracles come true for Egyptian families.





FAMILY SPONSORSHIP

Islamic Relief's family sponsorship program provided some of the country's most impoverished families with food, health care, education assistance, entrepreneurial support and special necessities.

Participants in villages near Cairo received monthly food packages including beans, rice, pasta, oil and powdered milk to supplement their extremely limited diets. They received medical checkups and special care, including surgery where needed. Children received school uniforms and supplies, as well as tutoring, and their mothers could enroll in literacy classes. Parents received training in how to start small businesses or farm enterprises, and many of them also received the equipment they needed. And finally, many of the families also received home repairs and electric appliances.

Participant Um Monaizer, who opened a shop to sell gold items, says: "It was one of my dreams to become a businesswoman but I never trusted my skills and ability. But when you supported me, I was motivated and regained my trust. So I have sold now all my goods and have a large number of customers, as well. Not only this, but I have also saved 500 pounds and bought Eid clothes for my children. Thank you wholeheartedly!"

MEET SUAD

HELWAN, EGYPT

Suad lives in a space the size of one small bedroom with her husband and five of her children in Helwan, one of Egypt's poorest provinces.

The home is so small that they have to go outside to use the bathroom. The only privacy they have is a thin curtain that separates the bathroom from the outside.

Their kitchen is a narrow nook connected to the bedroom. Most of the time they live on potatoes and lentils because that's all they can afford.

What's worse, they don't have much water. Water trickles through the kitchen faucet in drops and Suad has to collect the water drops all night so her family has enough water to use the next day. There's no way to know how clean the water is.

Thanks to donors like you, Islamic Relief has helped provide support for Suad and her family. They receive nutritious food so they won't go hungry and school supplies so the children have the tools they need to succeed.

Even more, Islamic Relief teams were able to provide home repairs that Suad and her family desperately needed but couldn't afford. Now Suad can use any money she earns to improve her children's health and future.

Islamic Relief is giving Suad a sense of hope. Suad said, "I want my kids to become whatever they want to be," and because of Islamic Relief's work, she has hope that they will.





PALESTINE

Decades of political instability have stifled economic development in Palestine. The vast majority of Palestinians, living inside the territories or as refugees in neighboring regions, depend on international aid for survival. For many Palestinians, rebuilding their lives and their communities is near impossible because they don't have the resources, tools, or training to do so.

Islamic Relief has been providing humanitarian relief in Palestine since 1994, and opened its first office there in 1998 so that long-term development projects could be implemented and overseen by people in the field. Islamic Relief projects in the region have included food distribution, medical relief, small business loans and orphan sponsorship. Islamic Relief has also established educational enhancement centers, care programs for traumatized children and a school for the deaf.

We're giving people in Palestine the tools and resources to help themselves.



SMALL BUSINESSES FOR WOMEN

MEET FAIROUZ

Women constitute one of the most vulnerable groups in places of instability and economic decline. Women in these places are rarely equipped with the skills required to support themselves and their families.

Islamic Relief is helping 100 women receive vocational training and financial support to help jump-start and maintain their small business ventures. Projects might include organic farming, raising livestock, or sewing.

Fairouz got married right after high school. She never thought that within a few years, she would be a widow. After her husband died, she was unemployed and raising three children by herself. She barely had enough money to make ends meet, and her house was almost entirely bare. In the winter, rainwater would flood the house, and in the summer, the heat was nearly unbearable.

Islamic Relief provided Fairouz with a sewing machine so that she could start her own business as a local seamstress. She's talented and she has regular customers now—locals have started referring others to her for dress hemming, sewing cushions and tapestry. Islamic Relief has also provided support so she can purchase enough materials to help her business grow. Thanks to these resources, Fairouz is able to earn a reliable income and provide for her family. And she is thankful she can now better her life and the lives of her children.

"We are so thankful for everything. I have hope that I can get back to school now, and insha'Allah I will. God (swt) provides."



EDUCATION

For many children in Palestine, just getting to school is a challenge. And once they get there, many students don't have enough school supplies, and they don't have proper facilities to get a good education.

In the Askar camp—where children used to travel miles, across busy roads, to get to school—Islamic Relief built a new, more accessible school for more than 500 students. The school features high-tech amenities including a modern science lab to help give the students a world-class education.

Islamic Relief has also been establishing a better school environment for more than 2,000 students in poor areas by rehabilitating eight schools. Classrooms and school infrastructures are being renovated, and computer and science labs are being built and stocked. More than 100 teachers will also benefit.



LAND REHABILITATION

For many Palestinians, farming is a primary source of income. Land is precious—Palestinian farmers rely on agriculture to provide food and other basic needs for their families. And when Palestinians can't access their land or when their land is destroyed, their already vulnerable way of life suffers.

Islamic Relief has helped farmers in Palestine rehabilitate miles of farmland for farm use, by clearing the land of rocks, building terraces and agricultural roads, constructing wells and providing farmers with seedlings to start anew. The project has given Palestinians in the West Bank the resources they need to access their land, cultivate it and grow.



MEDICAL SUPPORT

In Palestine, roadblocks, travel restrictions and conflict make traveling for medical care extensive and complicated. Kidney dialysis patients need medical attention regularly, and in Palestine, this adds up to time and money that many cannot afford to spend. Patients in and near Yatta in the southern West Bank were spending up to 64 hours or more each month traveling to Hebron to receive treatment—a difficult journey through multiple checkpoints. The travel time and expense placed a heavy burden on impoverished rural patients and their families.

Islamic Relief established a new kidney dialysis unit at Abu Al Qasem hospital in the West Bank, and equipped it with six dialysis machines as well as furniture and additional equipment. Staff were trained on how to care for kidney patients, and the patients took part in workshop on preventive health care to keep their conditions from deteriorating. This center is making medical care more accessible for kidney patients in Yatta village and surrounding areas.

FAMILY SPONSORSHIP

MEET UMM MOHAMMED

Millions of families around the world struggle on a daily basis to find nutritious meals to eat, to maintain sanitary living environments, and to receive vital health screenings.

Islamic Relief's family sponsorship program helps to improve living standards of impoverished families in at-risk communities. Families are provided with the basic resources necessary for daily life, and with the tools and programs that support income-generating opportunities.

In Yatta, Umm Mohammed cares for 16 children, but she can't afford the things they need to live a dignified life, including nutritious food so that these children can grow healthy and strong.

"We don't have a lot of money, and it's hard to provide for so many children," she said.

They are trapped in the West Bank most of the time due to ongoing conflict in the region, and violence is common so traveling is dangerous.

Islamic Relief built a greenhouse right by their home to help Umm Mohammed and her 16 children grow their own food. We've even provided tools and training, so that Umm Mohammed and her family have everything they need to grow enough crops throughout the year. Now, they can feed themselves and sell crops too.

Umm Mohammed is thankful for the opportunity.

"We thank God for everything," she said, "and we are very thankful to Islamic Relief for its help."





JORDAN

Large numbers of refugees from neighboring countries, including Palestine and Iraq, have taxed Jordan's natural resources. It's estimated that the number of people in Jordan has doubled 12 times in the last 60 years. Job opportunities have become scarce, and poverty is on the rise, especially amongst Jordan's rural populations.

Islamic Relief started working in Jordan in 1997, initially by sponsoring orphans. More recently, Islamic Relief has focused on alleviating food insecurity for children across the country.

Islamic Relief has supported a Ministry of Health program to provide food to schoolchildren in Jordan in addition to orphan support, and Ramadan and Udhiyah/Qurbani meat distributions to impoverished families.

LEBANON

After 15 years of civil war in Lebanon, both the economy and infrastructure of the country suffered. Lebanon was able to rebuild much of its infrastructure since then, and has been able to enjoy relative political stability and economic growth, but some areas of the country have not been as fortunate. Hundreds of thousands of people in Lebanon are still unable to meet their basic needs.

Islamic Relief began working in Lebanon in 2006, in response to a humanitarian crisis caused by war that summer. Since then, Islamic Relief has focused on reconstruction efforts, such as hospital rehabilitation and water projects, and has provided services to war-affected individuals in the country, especially refugees.

In addition to providing orphan support and Ramadan food distributions to for impoverished families, Islamic Relief has helped hundreds of students in the town of Akkar—one of the most underserved regions in Lebanon—get an education. The program has worked to improve the conditions of schools in the region by enhancing libraries, supplying computer labs and providing school supplies.





YEMEN

Almost half of the population of Yemen lives on less than \$2 a day. Nearly one in six people in Yemen is unemployed, and high illiteracy rates and lack of education make it even harder for Yemenis to build a better future for themselves and for their children.

In 2011, political turmoil turned the dire living conditions in Yemen even more desperate. The violence has made thousands of Yemenis homeless over night.

Islamic Relief has been working in Yemen since 1998. In 2003, Islamic Relief opened a field office in Yemen to implement long-term development projects in the country. Islamic Relief has helped to provide water to thousands of people in Yemen and launched response efforts to help displaced Yemenis with food, hygiene kits and medical care, in addition to providing ongoing aid for orphans and families through orphan sponsorship and food distributions.

The Yemen Water and Sanitation project is helping to improve water, health and the environment in Lahej Governate in the long term. Islamic Relief teams are helping to provide safe drinking water to households in Al Farsha and Tour Al Bahah, and are also raising awareness on issues in hygiene, health and environment through better water management methods. By bringing better, cleaner water closer to families, Islamic Relief is preventing diseases and illnesses like malaria and diarrhea. And women and children—instead of spending their time carrying water from faraway wells—can earn an income or go to school.



EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO SYRIAN REFUGEES

Violence in Syria has forced more and more families to leave their homes to go to neighboring countries, including Jordan and Lebanon. Tens of thousands of refugees have crossed the border looking for safety, arriving hungry, scared and exhausted.

More than 80,000 refugees have been recently reported to be taking refuge in Jordan. Prior, on one day alone, more than 1,000 Syrians arrived in Bani Sakher, a village in the Akkar region of northern Lebanon. It is estimated that some 6,000 Syrian refugees were scattered throughout villages in Akkar at one point.

In partnership with the Jordan Hashemite Charity Organization (JHCO), Islamic Relief is continuing to support Syrian refugee families in Jordan through the provision of food and hygiene items.

Food kits include: rice, sugar, oil, pasta, powdered milk, baby formula, chicken stock, cheese, tomato paste, salt and beans.

Hygiene kits include: diapers, shampoo, soap, sanitary pads, bleach, detergent, liquid soap, facial tissue and toothpaste.

Food parcels have been distributed to Syrian families in Lebanon and Jordan containing staple foods and canned meat. Hygiene kits have also been delivered to families. Diapers and baby formula have been given to families with small children and infants. Families have received fuel and gas cylinders for cooking and warmth, and some have also received housing rent assistance so that they can have a safe place to sleep at night.





MEET AHMED'S FAMILY

When violence escalated in Syria, many families including Ahmed's* were forced to flee in search of safety. When Ahmed fled Homs with his family, they headed for Lebanon, where so many families had already gone. Refugee camps on the border of Lebanon and Syria provide a place to stay and vital humanitarian aid.

Once a blacksmith, Ahmed was able to provide a good life for his wife and children, but now, in the refugee camp, he makes ends meet by collecting and reselling junk. He earns on average just short of \$1 a day. They live in a tent that's meant for growing plants. Electrical wires dangle exposed outside of the tent, and it isn't waterproof. When it rains, water gets into the tent and makes the dirt ground inside muddy and uninhabitable.

"Because of the cold and wet weather, my children are severely ill with the flu and they have a fever," Ahmed said. He too suffers from stomach problems, and although there is a medical center in Wadi Ahmed, there isn't enough medicine for everyone.

Islamic Relief provided Ahmed and his family with blankets to keep them warm and dry. Islamic Relief has also provided them with hygiene kits that include the items they need to stay clean and recover. Ahmed has also received food, milk and clean diapers for his children. More, Islamic Relief is strengthening relief capacity in the camp by subsidizing housing rent so that families can sleep in a clean, safe place, and is also providing fuel so families can cook and stay warm.

"Thank you to everyone involved in helping me," said Ahmed, "it has really made a big difference, especially for my children. I haven't seen them smile in a long time."

You can help more families like Ahmed's make it through these difficult times. Your gift can provide life-saving aid to more families like Ahmed's who are suffering in the region. Together, we can help people rebuild their lives by giving them hope.

*Names have been changed to protect identities

LIBYA EMERGENCY

In 2011, political turmoil forced hundreds of thousands of Libyans to flee to neighboring countries. The International Organization for Migration called the mass exodus “one of the biggest humanitarian evacuations in history.”

Islamic Relief helped provide vital services to Libyan refugees. In Tatouine, a town in Tunisia that borders Libya, Islamic Relief provided emergency services to Libyan refugee including food, hygiene kits and baby food and other items for families with infants and toddlers in the refugee camps.

Islamic Relief also partnered with nine local organizations to coordinate goods and services to Libyan refugees quickly and efficiently.

Teams also helped established school and after-school programs for Libyan children living in refugee camps in Tunisia. Children from pre-kindergarten to eighth grade received lessons in math, science, social studies, Arabic and Quran studies. They also participated in French lessons, learned to play musical instruments, painted, and played sports as part of their after-school sessions while in the camps.

In partnership with the World Health Organization, Islamic Relief helped support mobile medical teams to provide medicine and supplies to Libyans in need of care.



TURKEY EMERGENCY

In October of 2011, a 7.2 magnitude earthquake shook one of the poorest regions in eastern Turkey. It hit just as winter was turning harsh and snow had begun to fall. Just two weeks later, a second earthquake hit, creating even more chaos and destruction.

Islamic Relief is helping to provide assistance to victims of the earthquakes in Turkey. Teams provided children in Ermişler and surrounding villages food and hygiene kits, and winter gear to protect them during the winter months.

Nearly 400 families have been helped, including more than 600 schoolchildren.



Reuters/Jonathan Burch

ONE TO ONE ORPHAN SPONSORSHIP

Orphans thrive best when they can remain in the loving environment of a family member's home, but in impoverished communities, it can be hard for a family to take on another child to feed, clothe and educate. Islamic Relief's orphan sponsorships enable guardians to provide food, health care, and an education so orphans can grow and develop like any other child—in the care of someone who loves them.

The children receive uniforms, book bags and supplies to help them succeed in school. They get nutritious food and medical care, and gifts and visits to brighten their holidays. This care makes a world of difference to an orphaned child.



MEET ILHAM AND HALA

They are only teenagers and both sisters have heart conditions and anemia. Their mother is a widow and can't afford to get them the medical they need. She can't even get them enough nutritious food so that they can grow stronger and stay healthy. Ilham, 15, often gets dizzy spells and faints because she is so weak.

When Islamic Relief's orphan sponsorship program began operating in Egypt in fall of 2011, the sisters both joined the waiting list for sponsors. With the help of generous donors, the girls will get the medical care, healthy meals and loving care that they desperately need.



MEET HANADI

She was only 1 when her father died, and has lived her life as an orphan since. Hanadi's family lived from house to house, and with some of their neighbors help they managed. Now they live in a house in Yatta, Palestine, with no sink or oven and very little food. Hanadi wasn't able to afford the education she needs to develop her full potential and make a good living one day.

But through Islamic Relief's orphan sponsorship, Hanadi is going to school and has the supplies she needs to succeed. Plus she's getting regular health care, and nutritious food and clothing, so that she can live and grow like every child should.

"We are very thankful for everything," she said.

THANK YOU



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