

# Partnership

the official newsletter of Islamic Relief

Winter 2009

## AFGHANISTAN

Years of conflict, poverty and addiction have left millions of Afghans in desperate need of support to survive

### UDHIYAH/QURBANI

The blessed days of Eid are quickly approaching; Over 2 million people helped worldwide last year



COVER

# Afghanistan: In Struggle and Optimism



## 4 Afghanistan: Striving to Rebuild and Restart

Islamic Relief's projects help more than 500,000 across Afghanistan over the last three years.

## 6 Afghanistan: In Focus

Photo spread from Afghanistan field visit.

## 8 A Generation of Hope and Optimism

Islamic Relief's development program trains Afghan widows and orphans for the future.

# FEATURE



## Udhiyah/Qurbani: More Than Just Meat

Islamic Relief prepares for the upcoming Udhiyah/Qurbani season. Over 2 million people benefitted last year.

15

# DEPARTMENTS

## Field Updates

### Children of Mali Aim for the Stars

Education projects in Mali give children high hopes.

10

### Fasting with Dignity

Ramadan food distributions help disadvantaged families in 23 countries worldwide.

12

### Orphan Sponsorships Finish Strong

Ramadan orphan drive sponsors over 1,200 children.

14

### Horn of Africa In Need

Food crisis threatens community security.

18

## Events

### Marking 15 Years of Alleviating Poverty

Evening of Inspiration concert tour focuses on children.

20

## News

### Islamic Relief and HIV/AIDS

### South Asia Quake: 3 years on

### New Islamic Relief office in Virginia

### Islamic Relief joins InterAction

### Speaking out on poverty

21

## Activities

### Building a school

22

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# AFGHANISTAN:

## STRIVING TO REBUILD & RESTART



Enduring three decades of war and conflict, Afghanistan and its people are in desperate need of continuous support. Over half of the country's 31 million people live below the poverty line, and 40 percent of the population survives on less than \$1 a day.

Visiting different IDP (internally displaced people) camps, I saw just how much in need the many people living in poverty are.

“What’s a mother supposed to do when her child won’t go to sleep at night because he’s crying of hunger?” said Khanum Gul, a mother of six living in an IDP camp in Kabul. “How can a mother bear not being able to feed her child?”

When it reaches 65 degrees Fahrenheit in California, I complain about the cold. Since returning from Afghanistan, I now think about the thousands of people living in camps, in minus 9.4 degrees Fahrenheit, without even a simple blanket to protect them from the cold. Thousands of men, women, children, youth, and elderly die every winter.

Visiting Afghanistan opened my eyes to the severe conditions people are living in, especially in Shortepa, in Northern Afghanistan where a growing number of people are addicted to opium; it’s their only means for controlling and relieving pain. This has led to a massive culture of dependency.

Many of those dependent on opium in Shortepa are women who use the drug to relieve pain caused by working for many hours on heavy weaving looms.

While in Shortepa, I met a 39-year-old mother of eight. Just six months before, she gave birth to twins and has been very ill ever since. She had been weaving rugs all her life, including during her pregnancy. She took opium to relieve her back and stomach pain.

Now she doesn’t have the energy to get up. Her husband can’t afford to take care of her anymore so she lives with her mother and the twin baby boys. When the boys cry for milk, she doesn’t have the energy to nurse them, so she gives them opium to keep them quiet.

Islamic Relief has opened a Drug Rehabilitation and Health Center to help build awareness on the harmful effects of opium.

#### ISLAMIC RELIEF IN AFGHANISTAN

Islamic Relief has been working in Afghanistan since 1992, implementing projects such as drought relief, health and

education, water and sanitation, livelihoods support, orphan sponsorship and building community infrastructure.

Apart from providing immediate aid, Islamic Relief targets long-term development, helping people to lessen their dependency on foreign aid and acquire self-sufficiency.

With offices in Kabul, Kandahar and Mazar-e-Sharif, Islamic Relief operates hundreds of projects in all areas of Afghanistan, assisting more than half a million people in the past three years alone.

From emergency aid to seasonal Ramadan food distributions, from a women’s bakery in Kandahar and Helmand to a health clinic in Paghman, Islamic Relief is expanding its efforts in supporting the disadvantaged people in Afghanistan.

Opposite: Khanum Gul and family.

Below: Islamic Relief USA staff member Homaira Shifa with children at IDP camp in Kabul.



## AFGHANISTAN: AN OVERVIEW

**90%** of the 1.5 million widows in Afghanistan are illiterate

**70%** of the Afghan population is malnourished

**54%** of children are stunted in growth

**40%** of Afghanistan’s population lives on less than \$1 a day

**25%** of children die before reaching their fifth birthday

**72%** of people over the age of 15 cannot read or write



# Afghanistan: In Focus

Photos from Islamic Relief's recent field visit to Afghanistan



Clockwise from top left: Patients at the Shortepa Drug Rehabilitation Clinic; Children retrieve water from an Islamic Relief-established well; A beneficiary of Islamic Relief's meat distributions in Kabul; Families receive canned meat from Islamic Relief; Paghman School; Young girls living in IDP camp in Qargha; Family working on weaving loom in Shortepa; A doctor checks in a patient and her child at the Drug Rehabilitation Center in Shortepa; Students at Abduljan Secondary School in Paghman.





# A Generation of Hope and Optimism

Islamic Relief staff member Homaira Shifa reports on Kabul Training Center

COVER



*Wow, I could have easily been in her situation.*  
The recurring thought kept crossing my mind while sitting in Zahra's one-room house. At the tender age of 16, when Zahra should have been playing or singing with the neighborhood girls, when the worst of her worries should have been getting bad grades in school, the death of her parents robbed her of her childhood.



Opposite: Islamic Relief staff member Homaira Shifa speaks with Zahra.

Below: Kabul Integrated Family Development Center.



She now plays both mother and father to her three younger, orphaned siblings.

“My father died of cancer when I was 15 years old,” said Zahra as she wipes her tears. “We didn’t have money for treatment and he ended up dying; leaving us all alone. But thanks to Islamic Relief, there is hope for us now.”

Zahra, a beneficiary of Islamic Relief’s Kabul Integrated Development Center for Widows and Orphans has been attending the training center for five months now and is positive the skills and learning she acquires will help her find suitable employment so she can support her younger siblings.

Living off of bread and tea everyday, Zahra is one of the over two million orphaned children in Afghanistan.

Islamic Relief provides a monthly income to each orphan. Living on 700 Afghani’s a

month, which equals approximately \$14; Zahra uses that money to buy tea and bread, her family’s daily meal.

A country that has been enduring war and conflict for nearly three decades, Afghanistan is in desperate need of international support to start rebuilding.

More than 1.5 million widows live in Afghanistan, almost 90 percent of them unable to read and write. It is generally difficult for widows to get a good job in Afghanistan, forcing them to beg on the streets.

Islamic Relief’s development center helps these widows acquire self-sufficiency and not be dependent on aid for survival.

The program teaches English and provides computer and literacy training to widows and orphans, guaranteeing them a job upon completion of the curriculum. What may seem like basic skills for many, the ability to read and write is a privilege for thousands

of widows and orphans in Afghanistan.

Eighteen-year-old Amina has been attending the development center for a year and has gained invaluable skill sets.

“When I first started, I didn’t even know how to hold a pencil,” said Amina. “The teacher physically held my hand and showed me how to write.”

Amina now knows basic reading and writing skills and is extremely optimistic about her future.

Although talking to Amina and Zahra saddened me because of their plight, the sparkle of hope in their eyes makes me happy to think they have a chance at a better future. But I still cannot help but think that it could easily have been me in Zahra’s shoes tending and providing for my younger siblings had my parents not decided to move to the US after the Soviet invasion in 1979.



# CHILDREN OF MALI AIM FOR THE STARS

Islamic Relief's education projects give children high hopes

“When I grow up I’ll be the president of Mali,” says ten-year-old Mostafa Traoure, eyes brimming with dreams and a smile full of innocence. “And I will be a social worker,” pitches in sixteen-year-old Siaka Kone, beaming with pride.

Koniba Diallo is only seven-year-old but aspires to work in an office when he grows up, while 11-year-old Mariam Kamara doesn’t miss a day of school because she wants to work hard to become a secretary in a “government office.”

## EDUCATION FOR ALL

Dreams. Hopes. Aims. Aspirations. Orphans. All these are common factors with the children above. One other thing that is common is Islamic Relief. Because of Islamic Relief, Mostafa, Siaka, Koniba, Mariam and hundreds of other Malian children have a chance to gain education and live a life of dignity once again. Being orphans at young ages, these children and many more are left to tend for themselves, and in most cases for their families as well.

Islamic Relief sponsors more than 27,000 orphans across 22 countries. Through the orphan sponsorship program, Islamic Relief aims to provide basic necessities to orphans,







Far left: 10 year old orphan Mostafa Traoure.

Left: Islamic Relief USA staff member Belkacem Nahi poses with orphans enrolled in the Education for All Project in Mali.

improve their health and nutrition, and provide them with a chance to attain an education.

#### FUTURE OF MALI

In a country where the literacy rate is only 46.4% of the total population of 12 million, four-year-old Niagale Bagayogo is one of the very lucky few who has a chance of getting educated and contributing positively to the progress and development of her country.

Niagale lost both her parents and now lives with her stepmother in the village of Ouelessobougou. Through Islamic Relief's orphan sponsorship program, little Niagale has a hope of going to school. The sponsorship fund also contributes to her family's day-to-day expenses.

Islamic Relief also supports local schools through provision of school facilities for nomad settlements, training

community teachers in teaching methodologies and building the capacity of school management committees to provide a steady source of income.

To ensure children receive adequate nutrition Islamic Relief, with the support of the World Food Program, also supports school feeding programs where children are fed a nutritionally balanced meal.

#### ISLAMIC RELIEF IN MALI

Islamic Relief has been working in Mali since 1997 providing services in community based initiatives that improve the livelihoods of poor communities through increasing and diversifying agricultural yield. Islamic Relief is also striving to fight blindness through promotion of hygienic and sanitary behavior and practices.

# FASTING WITH DIGNITY

How Islamic Relief's Ramadan distributions helped the needy



Clockwise from top: Amena Abu Baid, beneficiary of Islamic Relief's Ramadan distributions in 2008; A young girl receives a Ramadan Food Package during Islamic Relief's distributions in Egypt; Amena Abu Baid's son holds up cooking oil included by Islamic Relief in the Ramadan Food Package.





“Islamic Relief assists us to live in dignity,” says 49-year-old Amena Abu Baid, a Palestinian mother of 13 children. “Ever since my family was sponsored by Islamic Relief, we have received help both for Ramadan and Qurbani. Islamic Relief comes to us to help, we don’t beg them but we thank them.”



Amena and her family of 14 have been beneficiaries of Islamic Relief’s Family Sponsorship program for the past three years. Under this program, disadvantaged families receive financial, educational, health and nutritional support.

Amena is the sole provider for her large family since her husband is ill and unemployed. She finds odd jobs to keep the flow of income coming and put food on the table but an average day fares her less than \$2.

“We eat chicken once a month. My children love it but it’s too expensive for us. To provide one meal for the whole family, it costs \$11,” says Amena. With the help of Islamic Relief’s Ramadan drive, Amena and her family were able to have a hearty nutritious meal consisting of staples such as flour, sugar, cooking oil, dates, rice, lentil, beans, macaroni, and canned meat throughout the month of Ramadan.

#### FEEDING THE NEEDY WORLDWIDE

Islamic Relief’s seasonal Ramadan program provides for many disadvantaged people around the world facing food insecurity and hunger with a ‘Ramadan Food Packet,’ ensuring that their burden is eased during the month.

Though the contents of the food packets vary from region to region, they are designed to provide the basic nutritional necessities to help families survive. The program is designed to operate in conjunction with other relief and development programs that provide a more sustainable assistance in improving living conditions for beneficiaries.

In 2007 alone, more than \$2.6 million worth of food packets were provided to disadvantaged families in 23 countries.

Domestically, Islamic Relief has been successfully carrying out feeding events for homeless people throughout Ramadan across the U.S. In previous years, Ramadan feedings were only held on one weekend during the entire month. In 2008, Islamic Relief provided food, along with other supplies and services, to homeless and disadvantaged families on all four weekends of the blessed month. Through the “Day of Dignity” project, beneficiaries were served in 18 U.S. cities.

It is because of the generous support of our donors and partners that Islamic Relief is able to provide food for those less fortunate in the holy month of Ramadan. It is also with the prayers of people like Mama Abdia who is over a 100 years old, of Yabicho, Kenya when she says, “May Allah reward you for all the food you have given us. I am praying that Allah accepts your fasting and blesses you in abundance.”

“Despite currently job hunting and notwithstanding the economic conditions, I am a proud, committed sponsor.”

## ORPHAN SPONSORSHIPS FINISH STRONG

Ramadan Orphan Sponsorship Drive Helps 1,250 around the world.

Despite the economic crisis at hand, students around the country collaborated with Islamic Relief to ‘Give a Portion, Save an Orphan.’

Working with over 100 student organizations and volunteers nationwide including Muslim Student Associations (MSA), Islamic schools, youth groups, and Sunday schools, generous supporters gave over \$500,000 to Islamic Relief’s Ramadan 2008 orphan drive, enabling sponsorships for over 1,250 orphans around the world.

Donor and sponsor of three orphans through Islamic Relief, Mohsin Zafsar said about the drive, “Despite currently job hunting and notwithstanding the economic conditions, I am a proud, committed sponsor. Insha’Allah (God Willing) I plan on sponsoring more orphans as soon as I get a steady income again.”

### FASTING FOR A CAUSE

Many students raised funds for the orphan drive by initiating fast-a-thon dinners on their campuses. MSA members asked non-Muslims to fast for a day and donate their lunch money to help the orphan drive.

Local businesses were then asked to donate money to match each day non-Muslims fasted, thus doubling the donations to the drive.

At local mosques, students waited outside at tables after each of the five daily prayers to encourage others to sponsor an orphan for less than \$2 day. Many students even stayed late through the night prayers during the last 10 days of Ramadan.

### DISCONTINUING NEW ONE-TO-ONES

The 2008 Ramadan Orphan Drive signaled the temporary discontinuation of any new orphan sponsorships through Islamic Relief’s One-to-One orphan sponsorship program. Donors currently enrolled in the One-to-One Sponsorship program will still be able to continue their sponsorships and receive reports of how their orphans are doing.

Islamic Relief would like to thank each and every volunteer, supporter, donor and partner who assisted during this year’s orphan drive for their hard work and dedication to reach out to donors despite sponsorship price increases and the current economic situation nationwide. May Allah reward your efforts.





## UDHIYAH/QURBANI: MORE THAN JUST MEAT

Generous donors support more than 2 million people with seasonal meat donations

Islamic Relief started the Udhayah/Qurbani project in 1986 with 670 Udhayah/Qurbanis. Since then, the project has been increasing in size, with over 71,000 Qurbanis performed last year, benefitting over 2.1 million people in 27 countries around the world.

### A MEAL MANY MILES AWAY

Fifty-year-old Bibi Amina lives with her disabled husband and five children in Kandahar, Afghanistan. She is a beneficiary of Islamic Relief's Udhayah/Qurbani projects.

Amina's husband was injured during the conflict in Afghanistan and as a result is now paralyzed, despite undergoing several surgeries. Her son was killed and the family's home destroyed. They now live in a single-room mud house.

Life now is very difficult for Amina as she is forced to beg for food at a nearby shrine to survive. But begging is not enough to sustain a family of seven, so Amina struggles frequently to find any odd job that might support her family such as washing carpets and attending births. Even her children have stopped going to school to help their mother by working as laborers. The family earns around 1,500 Afghanis per month, equivalent to about \$30.

Bibi Amina is extremely grateful to Islamic Relief for the Udhayah/Qurbani food package, which provided the family with food for two months.

"I had forgotten the taste of meat because I had not had any for many months," said Amina.



## ISLAMIC RELIEF AND UDHIYAH/QURBANI

Udhiyah/Qurbani is an Islamic religious practice performed at the time of Eid al-Adha (the 10th day of the Islamic month of Dhul al-Hijjah) involving the sacrifice of an animal, usually a sheep, goat or cow. This holiday commemorates the sacrifice that Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) made to Almighty God to show his devotion and commitment.

Islamic Relief's seasonal projects during these times not only fulfill the obligation of donors but also support disadvantaged families and individuals around the world. Once the Udhiyah/Qurbani donation is received, Islamic Relief ensures that the sacrifice is carried out hygienically and efficiently according to Islamic guidelines, and then distributes it to some of the world's poorest people.

As in previous Udhiyah/Qurbani projects, last year Islamic Relief delivered the Udhiyah/Qurbani meat through three

different methods: fresh meat distribution, canned meat distribution, or frozen meat distribution. The method chosen for a country depends on several factors including cost, availability of livestock, logistics and the current situation of that country.

To see a list of countries where Islamic Relief is performing Udhiyah/Qurbani this year, visit our website at [www.irw.org](http://www.irw.org).



Clockwise left: Sultan Alom, a beneficiary of Qurbani distribution in Bangladesh; Islamic Relief staff with animals in Ethiopia; Qurbani distribution in Pakistan-administered Kashmir; Mali Qurbani distribution; Preparation of canned meat in New Zealand.







# HORN OF AFRICA IN NEED

Global food crisis threatens community security

FIELD UPDATES



Rising food and fuel prices, violent protests and riots are all calling for an immediate response to worsening world food insecurity.



Currently, around 36 countries are said to be inching closer and closer to a food crisis that could ultimately result in widespread starvation. While experts estimate a decade before prices drop, the world's poorest are left to suffer the brunt of this crisis.

Hunger is already a leading cause of death in the world's poorest countries. It kills around 10 million people each year – more than AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria combined. According to the United Nations' World Food Program (WFP), the current food crisis has already left nearly 1 billion people struggling to survive.

### MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS MOVING BACKWARDS

The rise in food prices is the result of a number of factors including poor weather conditions in key food-producing countries, higher fuel costs, more land being used for bio-fuels, and an increase in demand in emerging economies.

The World Bank estimates that global food prices have risen by 83 percent in the last three years. This has pushed up to 100 million people back into poverty, erasing the progress made to meet the Millennium Development Goals.

Without significant changes, the world faces a global humanitarian crisis.

### HUNGER IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

Due to drought and the increasing cost in global fuel and food prices, up to 17 million people in the Horn of Africa are facing severe hunger, destitution and are in dire need for humanitarian assistance.

The price of staple foods continues to rise as supplies deteriorate. Further compounded by failed harvests, falling wages for laborers and low livestock prices, the purchasing power is steadily decreasing for the poorest households.

Ethiopia, Somalia and parts of Northern Kenya are particularly vulnerable to widespread malnutrition as drought has reached exceptional levels and food security has been exacerbated by conflict. The escalation of global food prices compounds this by making consumables more expensive in areas of East Africa that are highly dependant on food imports.

The current crisis has hit pastoralist communities particularly hard because it follows several years of drought and poor harvests.

Opposite: A farmer in Mandera, Kenya keeps his fields irrigated with assistance from Islamic Relief.

Below: Mohamad Hussein, a Community Animal Health Worker trained by Islamic Relief, cares for livestock in Afder, Ethiopia.



“Around 80 percent of people in Mandera are pastoralists who rely on their animals for survival. But the water shortages and lack of pasture have caused many animals to die, while others are in poor health,” said Islamic Relief’s Head of Mission in Kenya, Yesuf Abdella.

“Pastoralists rely on their animals for meat and milk which makes up a large part of their diet. Without their animals and with the cost of other food products rising, malnutrition has also soared.”

### HELPING COMMUNITIES

Islamic Relief first responded to the global food crisis in June of this year, operating in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. So far, the Somali Region of Ethiopia has been the focus of Islamic Relief’s response efforts.

Islamic Relief teams are assisting more than 78,000 people as they continue to respond to emergency needs for water, supplementary food and livestock recovery in Chareti and Hargelle in the Somali region of Ethiopia.

In the Mandera district of Kenya, Islamic Relief is helping drought-affected communities engage in agricultural activities. By providing people with training, seeds and tools, and by installing pumps to irrigate farmland, Islamic Relief is helping families grow crops to feed their families and sell at local markets for income.

“Islamic Relief is doing something unique by implementing this project. In this region recurrent droughts are predictable but communities are not prepared so as to be able to cope. By giving people the means to grow their own food, we are reducing dependency on humanitarian aid and giving people long-term solutions,” said Abdella.

# MARKING 15 YEARS OF ALLEVIATING POVERTY

3rd Annual Evening of Inspiration focuses on children



Clockwise from left: Zain Bhikha performs during Islamic Relief's Evening of Inspiration in San Jose, CA; seven8six performs during the Orange County event; Comedian Baba Ali entertains the crowd in San Jose.

In its 3rd year in the United States, the Evening of Inspiration tour featured world-renowned nasheed (Islamic songs) singer Zain Bhikha, R&B sensation seven8six, and comedian Baba Ali not just in a concert, but a nationwide appeal to help the millions of children affected by humanitarian crises around the world.

More than \$2 million have been raised in the past three years, helping support countless numbers of children worldwide through education, provision of water and sanitation, emergency relief, healthcare, food and nutrition, shelter, psychosocial support, orphan sponsorships, and much more.

This year Islamic Relief marked 15 years of alleviating poverty around the world. Starting with a few hundred dollars in 1993, Islamic Relief has grown to raise more than \$60 million of aid in 2007 for

projects around the world. Islamic Relief now operates projects in more than 35 countries worldwide.

“Islamic Relief is doing amazing work all over the world, including my country South Africa and most of you know South Africa has the highest rate of HIV/AIDS in the world,” said Bhikha. “Because of HIV/AIDS, many parents die young and leave children as orphans and it’s for this reason that Islamic Relief specifically focuses on alleviating the conditions of orphans.”

Shahaab Quraishi of seven8six expressed his deep regard for Islamic Relief’s effort.

“We (seven8six) have a deep history with Islamic Relief,” said Quraishi. “It dates back to our youth when we were volunteers for Islamic Relief, helping with various events throughout our communities. Since

then, we have understood the importance of the work that Islamic Relief does. This was our third time of being a part of the Evening of Inspiration line-up and we pray for many more!”

Baba Ali, the popular comedian for this year’s tour said, “The Evening of Inspiration tour was not just about the artists and performances, but more importantly about helping the children in need, and I was fortunate enough to be part of the special tour.”

The tour was held in Dallas, TX; Jamaica, NY; San Jose, CA; and Orange County, CA. Because of the tremendous support of our generous donors, over half a million dollars were raised for children in need throughout the world.





### ISLAMIC RELIEF AND HIV/AIDS

December 1 is World AIDS Day, a day dedicated to raising awareness of the AIDS epidemic caused by the spread of the HIV infection. The United Nations currently estimates over 39.5 million people living with HIV in the world today. This number includes around 2.3 million children under the age of 15.

Islamic Relief implements various HIV/AIDS projects by integrating it into the program objectives and activities.

Islamic Relief offers free HIV testing, medical care and support to orphans in Mali. While in Bangladesh, a peer educator program that teaches young girls about various health issues including HIV/AIDS.

Islamic Relief provides education and information about HIV/AIDS in its health programs in Sudan and Indonesia. In South Africa, Islamic Relief supports children orphaned by AIDS. Due to the program's growth, there is a community care center being developed to provide preventative education and medical treatment for HIV/AIDS.

### ISLAMIC RELIEF OPENS NEW OFFICE IN VIRGINIA

Islamic Relief is pleased to announce its new home in Old Town Alexandria, Northern Virginia, just minutes from Reagan National Airport and the nation's capitol. The new permanent facility has two spacious floors and a large warehouse for keeping supplies for domestic emergencies as well as for holding community events. The staff held a pre-open house in the last week of Ramadan and invited partners from the greater Washington DC area.



### ISLAMIC RELIEF SPEAKS ON POVERTY AT CAPITOL HILL

Islamic Relief was invited to speak to close out a week of events entitled "Fighting Poverty with Faith: A Week of Action." Different organizations and interfaith leaders, along with Congressman John Sarbanes of Maryland and Senator Barbara Boxer of California gave remarks on the steps of the U.S. Capitol on domestic poverty on September 16.

This week of action was to bring attention to the needs of the nation's poor and urge candidates for elected office to outline what they would do in their first 100 days in office to develop comprehensive plans for reducing poverty and creating economic opportunities in the United States.

### ISLAMIC RELIEF GRANTED MEMBERSHIP TO INTERACTION

On September 9, Islamic Relief USA was unanimously voted in as a new member of InterAction, the largest coalition of U.S.-based international NGOs (non-governmental organizations) focused on the world's poor and vulnerable people.

Over the past two years, Islamic Relief has participated in a variety of InterAction's events and select working groups. Now a full-fledged member, Islamic Relief USA can look forward to many benefits that will help in our mission of aiding the world's most vulnerable people in working together with our peer organizations and in helping to shape recommendations for the incoming Administration.



### 3 YEAR COMMEMORATION OF SOUTH ASIA EARTHQUAKE

On October 8, 2005 a devastating earthquake of 7.6 magnitude rattled parts of Northern Pakistan and Kashmir, killing over 73,000 people and leaving 3.3 million homeless. Islamic Relief was one of the first relief agencies to respond to the calamity with emergency aid and services for over 260,000 survivors.

Three years later, Islamic Relief is still committed to helping the earthquake survivors by rebuilding homes and lives. After the success of its emergency and recovery phase, Islamic Relief moved on to long term reconstruction and development in four districts of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

"Reconstruction in the affected areas is well underway. Working with partners, Islamic Relief is helping over 73,100 people move into their new earthquake resistant homes. We are also continuing to assist people with access to healthcare, education and clean water by re-building clinics, schools and water schemes," says Islamic Relief's country director for Pakistan, Munier Mohammad.

# THINK

## EMPOWERING YOUTH THROUGH ACTION

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



What is a school? A common definition is “a building where young people receive education”. Close your eyes for a moment and think of all the things you take for granted at your school:

A roof over your head to protect you from the weather elements:

- A blackboard or whiteboard for instruction
- Books on various subjects
- Notebooks
- Writing supplies (pencils, calligraphy brushes, etc)
- Possibly a computer
- Hot lunch
- Clean drinking water
- Bathrooms
- Backpack to carry your materials home

In many countries pupils have very few, if any of these luxuries we consider essentials. A stick in the dirt might suffice for writing. A few grains of rice provided by a school feeding program may be the only meal of the day. There may be no electricity at home for completing homework.

# CARE

### **Do this Activity:**

(It can be done in a full-time or weekend school, but for best results should take place over a series of days).

Split the class in two groups. Group A comes to school as normal, prepared and organized and Group B brings NOTHING to school. No school supplies, no back pack, no lunch, no books, nothing.

Now, it is the job of Group A to welcome and provide for their classmates - sharing lunches, books and supplies. Each student should write an expressive journal discussing their feelings about how they perceived being treated.

Was this a good experience? What take-home lessons were learned?





When building a school there are many factors to take into consideration:

- There are different landforms and terrains.
- There are country-specific weather conditions.
- There are variations in building materials available locally – mud, thatch, wood, etc.

A study must be made if the area is prone to any natural hazards or disasters like fires, flooding, landslides, earthquakes, to name a few and the structures must be built with those designs in mind. Think how you could adapt your design.

**Avoid glass windows in a hurricane zone – why?**  
**Build on elevated stilts in a flooding zone – why?**

Engineers must construct buildings durable enough to survive catastrophes like earthquakes. Think about how the following factors contribute to the durability of a structure.

- Distribution of weight
- Variation in shape
- Variation in height
- Variation in foundation material

Try building a structure on a piece of cardboard and then shifting it back and forth? Did it withstand the movement? Fall partially? Collapse fully?

To explore this concept further, go to the web for projects. One idea is to do research or a structural analysis of the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, Turkey. This is one of the largest freestanding domed structures on Earth and has survived all magnitudes of earthquakes for nearly 1,500 years. Why? How did it resist?

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

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For four years in a row, Islamic Relief USA has been recognized as a 4-star charity by Charity Navigator, its highest rating. Of the 5,131 charities evaluated by Charity Navigator, only 4% have received this prestigious distinction.