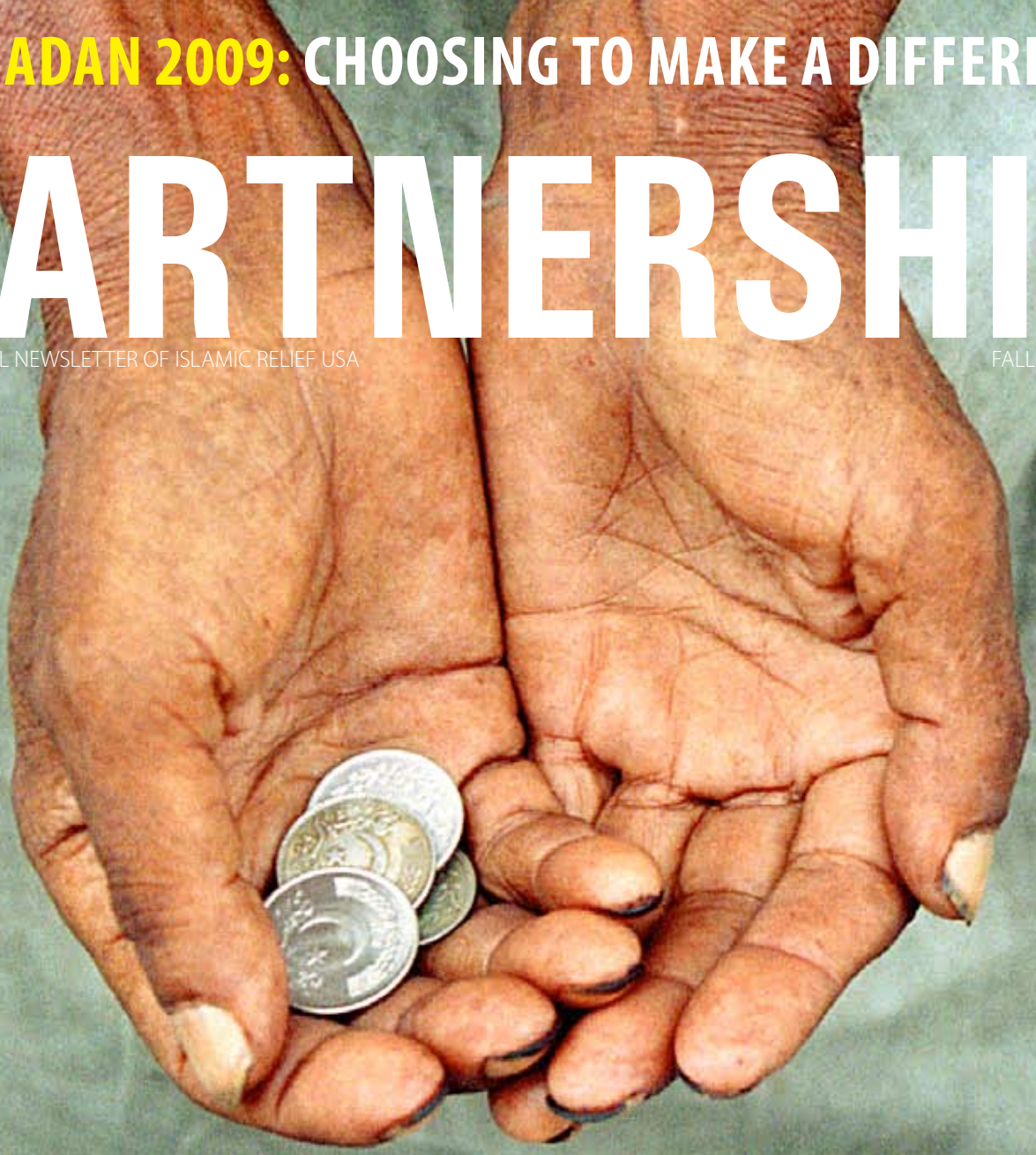


**RAMADAN 2009: CHOOSING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

# PARTNERSHIP

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF ISLAMIC RELIEF USA

FALL 2009



## MAKING ENDS MEET

POVERTY IN A WORSENING ECONOMY

The global economy has fallen, plunging the poor into even deeper poverty. Islamic Relief implements sustainable solutions to help keep families on their feet.



## PARTNERSHIP

the official newsletter  
of Islamic Relief USA

Fall 2009

### STAFF

Laila AliKhan  
Melissa Barreto  
Zaid Hisham  
Zeyad Maasarani  
Mostafa Mahboob

### CONTRIBUTORS

Naeem Muhammad  
Amalia Rehman  
Aneesa Shehadeh  
Christina Tobias-Nahi

### ISLAMIC RELIEF USA

6131 Orangethorpe Ave  
Suite 450  
Buena Park, CA 90620  
(888) 479-4968 toll-free  
partnership@irw.org  
www.irw.org  
Tax ID# 95-4453134

**PARTNERSHIP** is the  
official newsletter of  
Islamic Relief USA.  
Please contact us to  
request additional  
copies for distribution,  
or, if you would like to  
reproduce, or transmit  
any information in this  
newsletter by any means,  
electronic, photocopying,  
or otherwise.

# COVER

## Making Ends Meet

4

### Poverty in a Worsening Economy

Since the global economy fell, poverty has dramatically risen. Learn about Islamic Relief's efforts to help families weather the storm.

# FEATURES

## Ramadan: Choosing to Make a Difference

10

As over a billion people worldwide observe the blessed month, Islamic Relief USA urges efforts for positive change.

## Path to Preserve Life

16

Staff member Naeem Muhammad details his journey with Imam Zaid to increase awareness of malaria in the Muslim community.

## Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Humanitarian Wellbeing

20

Islamic Relief USA showcases efforts in Pakistan and Mali during 46<sup>th</sup> annual ISNA Convention.

## Online Facelift

24

Islamic Relief's new website offers advanced features and greater access to information.

# DEPARTMENTS

## FIELD UPDATES

### In Beauty and Struggle

14

One woman's diary of her trip with Islamic Relief to visit field projects in Yemen.

### Asia Disasters Update

23

One year after the notorious China Quake and Myanmar Cyclone, Islamic Relief continues to provide aid for those affected.

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS

### Sharing Best Practices

22

Islamic Relief schools NGOs on working in Muslim communities.

## VOLUNTEERS

### Making the Spirit Soar

26

Volunteerism brings spiritual and social satisfaction.

## NEWSBRIEFS

### Interfaith Conference

27

### Raising Global Poverty Awareness

### Encouraging Action in Ramadan

### Day of Dignity

### OFAC License

# FROM THE CEO

*As-salamu Alaykum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu,*  
(May the Peace, Mercy and Blessings of Allah be upon you)

We can all feel the side effects of the ongoing economic crisis in our daily lives. It is in the higher food costs, the ever-changing prices for gasoline, the rise in unemployment, and the increasing difficulty to buy and sell homes.

As much as the recent economic crisis has made it more challenging for us to earn a living, it has done far worse to the people who didn't have much to begin with. Our difficulties pale in comparison to a mother struggling to put a morsel of food in her baby's mouth.

Since the world economy has fallen, millions of already impoverished people have been pushed further into a pit of poverty that many may never be able to climb out of. And a growing number of people who had been living on the verge of poverty have now crossed that threshold.



As we work to overcome our own challenges, it is important to remember that there are many people who have very little and depend on our help to them get through another day.

While one's struggle in the fasting month of Ramadan may last up to 30 days, a person's poverty can last a lifetime. It is this stark reality that we must remember and do our best to help prevent.

So, if you are fasting as you read this issue, remember those that your fast is intended to remind you of: Allah, the Creator, and the millions of people around the world who, because of poverty, endure fasts daily no matter the season.

And most of all, remember that you can make a difference in a poor person's life, if you choose to.

May Allah reward your efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Abed Ayoub'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Abed Ayoub,  
CEO  
Islamic Relief USA



# RECURRING NIGHTMARE

IT WAS NEVER SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN AGAIN.  
NOT LIKE THIS. »



**N** EARLY EIGHT DECADES  
AFTER THE GREAT  
DEPRESSION, THE WORLD'S  
ECONOMIC SYSTEM  
FALTERED AGAIN AND WHAT  
BEGAN AS A MORTGAGE  
MELTDOWN HAS NOW CASCADED INTO  
A FULL-FLEDGED GLOBAL ECONOMIC  
CRISIS.

Every sector in almost every country has been hit.


Commodity prices and unemployment rates have reached all-time highs all over the world, even in the U.S., leading the G20, a coalition of 19 of the world's strongest economies, to pledge \$1.1 trillion to combat the worldwide recession.

Although failing corporations and big names have received all the media attention and international funding, they were not the hardest hit by the crisis. It was the developing world.

The 1.4 billion people living in or on-the-verge of extreme poverty are all in the developing world, where Islamic Relief is serving millions of people through various aid efforts.

Considering the harsh conditions they already endure, any economic crisis would have its most severe human consequences in the developing countries.

“For poor countries, this is a crisis upon crisis,” the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), the world's most powerful financial institutions, stated in a 2009 report. “The triple jeopardy of the food, fuel and financial crises is pushing many poor countries into a danger zone, imposing rising human costs and imperiling development prospects.”



**"THE POOREST DEVELOPING NATIONS WILL  
EXPERIENCE THE WORST OF THE ECONOMIC  
DOWNTURN IN 2009." –UNITED NATIONS**

*"Reaching into the darkness"* - Slums of Lucknow India. 2009.

By Andrew McLagan.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/andrewmclagan/3709342249/>



## UNDERACHIEVING AND OVERLOOKED

The poorest developing nations will experience the worst of the economic downturn in 2009, the United Nations (UN) stated in a document titled: “World Economic Situation and Prospects 2009.” The report, which was released in January, argued that the early response by the world’s leading economies has “failed” and called the modern financial crisis “the most severe” since the Great Depression.

Investors have stopped funding ventures in developing nations, leading commodity prices to skyrocket and worker salaries to drop severely.

With their financial well-being so heavily reliant on foreign investment, an overwhelming number of workers in the poorest regions of the world are finding themselves unemployed and unable to provide for their families.

“Most of this setback will be felt in East and South Asia, with between 56 and 80 million people likely to be affected,” the report says.

“The crisis could keep 12 to 16 million more people in poverty in Africa and another four million in Latin America and the Caribbean,” it reads.

In agreement with the UN, The World Bank and IMF have declared a “development emergency” directly caused by the crisis.

“Even though the recession is being felt most strongly so far in the advanced economies, unfortunately, conditions in developing countries are deteriorating dramatically,” John Lipsky, the IMF’s first deputy managing director, told reporters at a press briefing.

“With simultaneous recessions striking all major regions, the likelihood of painfully slow recoveries is very real, making the fight against poverty more challenging and more urgent,” he added.

## MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS AT RISK

In a report released in June, the World

Bank and IMF said that the UN’s poverty-reducing Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are currently out of reach for many countries, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

The MDGs, which Islamic Relief is dedicated to achieving, were set by the world’s leaders at the UN Millennium Summit in 2000 and re-affirmed last year.

Simply, they are eight specific goals meant to alleviate poverty and suffering in the developing world to be achieved by 2015.

The goals include helping boys and girls receive universal primary education, reducing child mortality by two-thirds, reducing the maternal mortality rate by 75 percent and stopping the spread of diseases like malaria, HIV and AIDS.

But the first, and perhaps most important objective, is to decrease the developing world’s proportion of people living in absolute poverty and chronic hunger by 50 percent.

Knowing that eliminating poverty helps all in society, in the developing world and even here in the United States, Islamic Relief operates a wide variety of projects that not only alleviate people’s suffering, but also stimulate economic growth and development.

From interest-free microfinance loans to technical training, the services and projects Islamic Relief carries out help people escape the cycle of poverty and become more self-reliant, preserving their dignity and also helping stimulate economic growth on both a local and global level.

## HITTING POVERTY ON ALL FRONTS

Islamic Relief does not limit the scope of its work to just aid distribution.

Advocating for the world’s poor and contributing to the wider discourse on humanitarian and development work, Islamic Relief representatives give lectures and presentations at universities and conferences, engage in policy dialogue with donor agencies and contribute to research on a range of developmental and humanitarian issues.

After years of serving the world’s neediest people, Islamic Relief has carefully formulated policies that cover the organization’s various fields of work. These

policies combine the organization’s core beliefs and values with modern discussions concerning humanitarian agency operations.

In the wake of the current economic crisis, these policies have the potential of not only reversing the market’s downward trend, but also improving the lives of millions of impoverished people.

## ISLAMIC MICROFINANCE

Hoping to alleviate poverty in low-income countries, governments, international development organizations and grassroots bodies have been promoting programs that provide credit and loans for small businesses.

Very few of these initiatives, however, have adhered to Islamic financing principles even when their work is undertaken in largely Muslim countries.

In 2008, Islamic Relief released a policy paper that discussed how microfinance programs based on Islamic financing principles can be established.


“A general objective common to all Islamic finance should be to develop the economy within and according to Islamic principles,” the document reads, explaining that “honesty and moral responsibility in Islamic finance contracts are indispensable ingredients of Islamic behavior.”

In that spirit, Islamic Relief’s microfinance loans come with clear and protective terms and conditions that give borrowers a fair chance to thrive, without having to bear the burden of repaying interest.

“Interest is considered an unjust instrument of financing,” Islamic Relief’s policy paper states. “If the borrower’s venture is unsuccessful through no fault of his or her own, it is unfair for the lender to consider a fixed rate of return or demand repayment; while if the borrower earns a very high rate of profit on the venture, it is unfair that the lender should receive only a small proportion of the profit even though he/she may well have provided the majority of the finance for the venture.”

## DEBT FORGIVENESS

Debt is one of the principal causes of poverty. It hampers the economic development of indebted countries and

A young boy with a distressed expression is the central focus, sitting on a wooden platform in a slum. Behind him is a wooden ladder leaning against a wall. The scene is set in a dilapidated, multi-story building with visible wooden beams and concrete structures. The image is overlaid with a grid pattern and a color gradient from yellow to red.

**"FOR POOR COUNTRIES, THIS IS A CRISIS UPON CRISIS. THE TRIPLE JEOPARDY OF FOOD, FUEL AND FINANCIAL CRISES IS PUSHING MANY POOR COUNTRIES INTO A DANGER ZONE..." –WORLD BANK AND IMF**

*"Cold, Wet, and Miserable"* – Slums of East Jakarta, Indonesia.

By D. Mahendra

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/dmahendra/3084717548/>





prevents them from investing in essential services such as healthcare and education.

The reality is many poor nations are spending more on debt repayments than on providing the most basic needs for their people.

Islamic Relief has analyzed the debt crisis from an Islamic perspective and strongly advocates debt forgiveness.

“From an ethical and moral perspective, there are clear reasons why the unpayable and unjust debts of the world’s poorest countries should be immediately canceled in full by fair and transparent means,” reads Islamic Relief’s official policy paper on debt.

“Canceling these debts would release funds that poor countries could invest in social welfare resulting in, for example, millions of children being able to attend school; reducing the incidence and impact of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other infectious diseases; increasing the provision of safe drinking water and sanitation facilities; and reversing the loss of environmental resources.”

Islamic Relief’s policy on debt forgiveness is a product of the Islamic concept of social justice, where Muslims are encouraged to rush to the aid of one who is overburdened with debt.

“According to Islamic teachings, if creditors fail to alleviate the burden of debt, then debtors are eligible for zakah,” the document reads.

Zakah, one of Islam’s five pillars of faith, is an annual fixed-rate tax Muslims pay on their wealth.

“Through zakah, Muslims are exhorted to assist the poor and the indebted, as well as other potentially vulnerable groups such as orphans and travelers,” the paper continues.

In 2008, US donors contributed over four million dollars to Islamic Relief in zakah, which was used to help people enduring the harshest conditions in the world, some of them here in the United States.

Nationwide, the domestic zakah program has successfully provided assistance to over 300 families who received over \$200,000 in aid.

## FAIR TRADE

Today, the international trading system is an unlevel playing field that disadvantages the poorest countries and is pushing many of them deeper into poverty.

Islamic Relief believes that fair trade policies would best serve impoverished producers and workers that are struggling to make ends meet.

“Fair Trade is a trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency and respect that seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalized producers and workers.”

Islamic Relief believes that fair trade aims to promote a more balanced relationship and exchange between rich and poor.

In these trying times, a more balanced and collaborative approach is exactly what we need to weather the storm.

## STIMULATING AN ECONOMY, ONE FAMILY AT A TIME

When her husband died, Um-Walid was desperate.

She was living a simple and happy life with him and their five children, but after his death, she feared she could not provide for herself or her orphans.

She had no technical skills or work experience, and her hometown was afflicted with high unemployment rates.

When she heard about an Islamic Relief income generation program for women who were heading households in her area, she could hardly believe it.

“Are all your promises real?” she asked an Islamic Relief aid worker when she arrived at the local field office.

Islamic Relief was pledging to provide 90 women with training in cooking, sewing and leather work, providing the women with salaried jobs afterwards.

The project, which was officially named “Promoting Self Help and Self Reliance Among Vulnerable Women,” did just that according to Um-Walid.

Instead of providing the women with welfare and creating further dependency, Islamic Relief helped women like Um-Walid maintain their dignity and earn

their own living.

The women divided into three workgroups and began producing high quality goods which were then heavily marketed and distributed, stimulating other sectors within the local economy.

But Um-Walid does not care about the impact on the financial system, she can only tell you how it helped her.

Able to finally provide for her children, while preserving her self-respect, Um-Walid said Islamic Relief’s income generation project has made her “feel like a new person.”

She is confident that she could now afford an apartment, daily necessities for the children, as well as their education expenses.

## “EVERYBODY WINS”

Um-Walid’s story is evidence that helping the most vulnerable in a community helps all of society.

Working closely with communities to identify their needs and provide relevant livelihoods training, Islamic Relief believes that facilitating ways for our beneficiaries to achieve lasting self-sufficiency is the best way to serve them.

Islamic Relief USA’s Vice President of Fund Development, Anwar Khan, has seen the economic downturn force already impoverished people to endure increasingly unbearable conditions. Khan frequently visits Islamic Relief projects in the field and offers a more intimate perspective of the situation.

“If we don’t help them, they’ll die,” Khan said, referring to impoverished people he’s met.

After travelling to the field multiple times, Khan is certain that the best way to help poor people around the world is through income generation projects.

Islamic Relief implements various income-generating projects around the world such as interest-free microcredit loans, cash-for-work programs, and vocational and technical training.

“We’re helping them help themselves. Instead of them being a burden on the international community, they are helping rehabilitate their own local economy. As their economy gets stronger, then the entire world’s economy will get stronger as well. Everybody wins.”

# RAMADAN

## CHOOSING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

### ISLAMIC RELIEF'S RAMADAN CAMPAIGN URGES POSITIVE CHANGE

**R**amadan, the ninth lunar month in the Islamic calendar, marks a special time for over one billion Muslims around the world. It is a time for reflection, devotion, and self-control.

But the experience of Ramadan is about more than just skipping meals. Whether it's done through a solemn prayer, a helping hand, or a considerable contribution of wealth, Ramadan is truly a test about reaching within to provide for those without.

#### FEEDING THE NEEDY

To feed a person at the end of a fasting day is encouraged as a spiritually rewarding act—one that not only draws people closer as they break fast together, but also warms the heart towards assisting those disadvantaged communities who are forced to regularly go without food.

Through Islamic Relief's seasonal Ramadan program, donors can provide a 'Ramadan food packet' to countless families and individuals facing food insecurity around the world.

Operating in conjunction with other relief and development programs that provide more sustainable assistance and improved living conditions for beneficiaries, Islamic Relief's food packets are designed to provide essential nutrition, ensuring the burden of hunger is eased

during this blessed season.

In 2008, more than 102,000 food packets were distributed to impoverished people around the world.

Food packets are 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, female-headed households, refugees, internally displaced persons, and families affected by disaster and conflict.

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

#### OFFERING OPPORTUNITY TO CHECHEN ORPHANS

The hunger and thirst that people feel during the fasting of Ramadan are only a small taste of the insecurity that an orphaned child feels. Lacking a solid source of safety and stability, orphans are often among the most vulnerable members of their societies.

In places affected by conflict, destruction and poverty, like Chechnya (Russian Fed.), children are especially susceptible to suffering.

Since 2005, Islamic Relief's One-to-One Orphan Sponsorship program has provided

for over 1,900 orphans in Chechnya, just one of over 20 countries where donors sponsor more than 27,500 orphans.

Islamic Relief USA delivers sponsors' donations directly to the orphans' families, helping them afford necessities like food, shelter, healthcare, clothing and education, without a single penny being allotted to overhead costs.

Thus, One-to-One Orphan Sponsorship makes sure that your support help the children stay in a loving environment while growing and developing like others their age.

Islamic Relief also supplements sponsored orphans' educations with vocational skills training that will enhance their future and create more opportunities to grow independent.

#### CHILD TRAUMA

Fasting in Ramadan can show us how much strain a human body can endure, but everyday life reminds us how frail the human mind can be.

In many of the areas where Islamic Relief works, many children have to cope with more than most of us are used to. They have to live with poverty, malnutrition, insecurity, and violence.

In Palestine, for example, ongoing crises and violence have had devastating effects on the children. Nearly 50 percent

Clockwise from top left: Islamic Relief staff unloading Ramadan food packets in China; A curious young girl looks through her family's food packet in Sri Lanka; Ramadan beneficiaries in Egypt.



**Ramadan is truly a test about reaching within to provide for those without.**



Above: A man waits with his food pack in Palestine.

Below: Beneficiaries receive food packets in Malawi.



**The hunger and thirst that people feel during the fasting of Ramadan are only a small taste of the insecurity that an orphaned child feels.**



of Palestinians currently suffer from some form of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Islamic Relief offers many services for children in Palestine, including psychosocial counseling, furniture for schools, breakfast for preschoolers, and many other projects that help them overcome the afflictions they endure.

“There are a whole host of problems here like poverty, unemployment, closure of industries ... There is also the serious problem of psychological trauma. Almost every household is affected by this,” Islamic Relief aid worker Hatem Shurrab said.

“Because of rising poverty many parents are unable to provide for their children’s basic needs, leaving them feeling powerless, worthless and frustrated. Unfortunately, children often bear the brunt of these emotions which only heightens the mental distress they are feeling,” said Anwar Wadi, a psychologist working with Islamic Relief in Palestine.

Islamic Relief is helping injured and traumatized Palestinian children through various projects.

Islamic Relief’s Integrated Care Program, which helps hundreds of children cope with horrific injuries such as lost limbs or paralysis, also offers one-on-one counseling to traumatized children to help them overcome their fears.

Islamic Relief also runs Educational Enhancement Centers in the refugee camps of Jabaliya and Maghazi, where children have access to computers, books and toys. The centers provide extra classes and counseling for children

## **WATER FOR LIFE**

Ramadan is a time to be thankful for all of life’s blessings. Turning on the tap and getting an unlimited supply of clean water is a blessing many take for granted.

But the reality is more than one billion people worldwide are deprived of a clean water supply, while 2.6 billion lack access to improved sanitation facilities, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

This deficiency not only impacts people’s lifestyles as they have to travel long distances to fetch water, but it also affects their quality of life, threatening them with countless waterborne diseases.

In fact, more than 1.5 million children under the age of five die every year as a result of diarrhea caused by poor hygiene, lack of sanitation facilities or disease-infested waters.

Knowing that safe water supplies, hygienic sanitation and good water management are fundamental to global health, Islamic Relief is dedicated to funding projects that alleviate the suffering of millions who lack access to clean water.

From Timbuktu to Jakarta, Islamic Relief has spearheaded initiatives that provide clean water and adequate sanitation facilities for the world’s most poorest populations.

In Mali, for example, poverty touches nearly two-thirds of the total population, with roughly one-third living in extreme poverty.

Furthermore, the lack of clean drinking water and proper hygiene and sanitation facilities for rural populations in Mali are one of the main obstacles to socioeconomic development.

In Malian water-insecure villages, where many diseases are spread due to contaminated water, Islamic Relief drilled 60 wells and constructed more than 100 bathrooms, in 2008.

Islamic Relief is working hard to provide clean drinking water to the rural populations of Mali.

With public support, we can continue to provide water for the thirsty and help improve their standard of living as well.

## **DISPLACED IN THEIR OWN HOMELAND**

Fasting sometimes makes people feel weak and helpless. But for the millions of people who were affected by the violence in Pakistan’s North West Frontier Province, weakness and helplessness took on a whole new meaning.

In April 2009, escalating violence in the Swat Valley began forcing hundreds of thousands to flee their homes, most with only the clothes on their back.

Within a matter of weeks, the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) had swelled to nearly 3 million, 80 percent of whom were women and children.

People left their villages by whatever means possible, many travelling on foot for hours and sometimes even days over harsh,

mountainous terrain.

Some settled in government-run IDP camps, but over 2.5 million people sought refuge in neighboring communities with families or in public buildings such as schools.

Displaced families urgently needed emergency humanitarian assistance including shelter, food, clean water, and medical care.

Islamic Relief responded immediately, providing hygiene kits, kitchen sets, blankets and other necessities to more than 1,600 displaced families.

But with the influx of IDPs flooding the neighboring communities, the hosts also became desperate for help.

Islamic Relief established seven Mercy Centers and nine satellite centers in Mardan, providing comprehensive services and aid to both the IDPs and members of the host communities.

Services include shelter, healthcare, first aid, and water and sanitation facilities.

Mercy Centers also double as child-friendly spaces where children can play, learn and have fun.

Government officials estimate that up to 70 percent of the children are traumatized, so the Mercy Centers also offer one-on-one psychosocial counseling for the children.

Islamic Relief is also starting a massive initiative to rehabilitate the exhausted infrastructure near the conflict zone, digging wells and constructing bathrooms.

## **THE MONTH OF UNDERSTANDING**

Ramadan is the month of mercy and compassion. But it is also a month that helps bridge a relationship between rich and poor.

The dry, raspy throat. The growling stomach. These are conditions that poor people endure everyday, when nobody else is fasting.

But after a long day’s fast, with no food or water, it is easy for us to wash away all these thoughts with a cold glass of our favorite beverage. But before we take that sip, we should remember that there are families who do not have enough food for every member to break his or her fast.

What if we were members of that family and we could not break our fast today? Could we wait? Neither can they. But they still do.

*After assisting Islamic Relief USA in a fundraising dinner that raised over \$100,000 for relief projects in Yemen, Aneesa Shehadeh and her husband were invited to take part in an Islamic Relief USA delegation that visited Yemen this past February.*

# In Beauty and Struggle

## MY TRIP TO YEMEN

I have visited Yemen many times throughout my life and although its beauty is mesmerizing, to say it is a poor country with people in dire need of food and water is a drastic understatement.

It can be emotionally overwhelming to think of all that is needed to improve the development in Yemen. Unfortunately, the country's largest handicap is its lack of natural resources.

## ARRIVAL IN SANA'A

We arrived in Sana'a on February 16, where we were welcomed by the Islamic Relief Yemen Director, Khalid Almulad, and his assistants.

At the Islamic Relief office, staff provided us with reports and a brief presentation of successful programs and projects currently underway. One of these projects is the Conflict Transformation Workshop Program which benefits tribal

leaders, imams, and many others with skills to solve issues in their communities in a nonviolent manner.

Later that day we saw a mobile health clinic donated by Islamic Relief and visited YERO, a youth center-like program that offers disadvantaged children services such as tutoring, art classes and extra curricular activities to educate as well as motivate them to do better in school and in life.

The children were very happy to be there, but this was only a glimpse of the services Islamic Relief offers these people.

During Ramadan, Islamic Relief distributes food packages to widows and orphans across 13 governorates. The Udhiyah/Qurbani program alone ensures approximately 32,000 families receive about 11 pounds of meat each, providing essentials to families that may not have otherwise enjoyed the luxury of nutrition.

## PROVIDING FOR CHILDREN

Islamic Relief also implements One-to-

One Orphan Sponsorships for over 600 children in Sana'a and Sa'ada and is in the process of opening an office in Aden to sponsor an additional 300 orphans.

The sponsorships provide financial assistance (about \$43 a month) and essential food items through the Ramadan and Udhiyah/Qurbani programs.

With the Orphan Program Coordinator, our group was able to distribute food to some of the orphans and their families.

In our short visits with them, it was heartbreaking to see their living conditions, yet they displayed gratitude for the support given to them.

## INSPIRING COMMUNITIES

On the third day of the trip, we arrived in Alselo, a town where Islamic Relief has been exceptionally productive with health and water and sanitation projects.

This includes one newly built medical center and two rehabilitated centers, a water project that benefits over 18,000

***“Although, it will take time, hard work and lots of funding, with Allah’s help, improvement is very attainable.” - Aneesa Shehadeh***



people in three districts and a training program for 15 young women from the community who were sent to Taiz Health Institute for a training program.

The officials and staff were all thankful for Islamic Relief’s support and also very active in participating in their own success. The ladies in training also met with us and voiced their eagerness in giving back to their communities.

These projects are thriving due to the fact that the people of the community take ownership and play a large role in their development.

On day five, we briefly visited my hometown, Yafa, to discuss potential health and water and sanitation projects that, Allah willing, will be evaluated in the near future.

#### **FUNDING FOOD AND WATER**

After arriving back in Sana’a we headed to Tareem, Sayun, and Hadraomout and met with a representative of the United

Nation’s World Food Program (WFP) and city officials who thanked us for the 20 tons of rice paid for by the donations raised at the Chicago fundraising dinner.

One of the towns we visited, Gael Omar in Tareem, lacks access to water but even a more serious problem is rust on the pipes contaminating the water and making it unsafe to drink.

After consulting with Islamic Relief, it was agreed this issue required immediate attention and the remainder of the Chicago fundraising dinner funds would be used to correct the problem while the remaining balance would be funded by Islamic Relief USA.

Like most of Yemen, both Yafa and Hadramout are in serious need of health and water and sanitation projects.

Sadly, it has become the norm to see petite and fragile women carrying gallons of water on their backs for miles in the hot, burning sun. May Allah bless them with patience and strength and guide us all to achieve a solution.

#### **STRUGGLE, RESPONSIBILITY AND SATISFACTION**

This visit to Yemen was not like any of the ones I have taken before. I was able to see firsthand the success and struggles of Islamic Relief. This comes with responsibility.

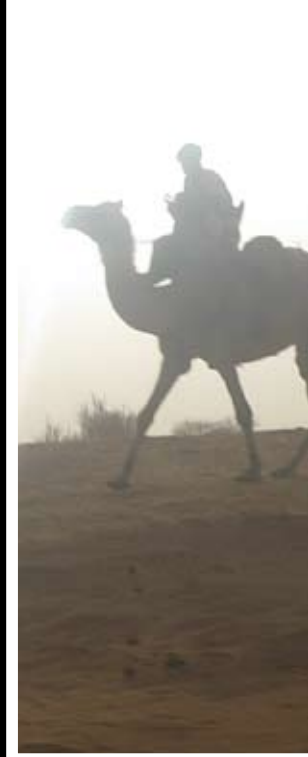
Here in the U.S., we are privileged with countless blessings and opportunities that allow us to help so much more than we are. Although, it will take time, hard work and lots of funding, with Allah’s help, improvement is very attainable.

This experience gave me a personal satisfaction, one that makes me feel closer to Allah. My philosophy is to make a difference in this life, no matter how small, and not to just take up space, Allah willing.

I would like to thank the Islamic Relief team in the U.S. and Yemen for including me in this process but more importantly, for their continuous efforts in helping the needy and developing projects that will not only benefit the people today but for many years to come.

May Allah reward your efforts.

# PATH TO PRESERVE LIFE



Staff member Naeem Muhammad tells the story of Islamic Relief USA's campaign to end malaria deaths in Mali.

**M**alaria. Until very recently, I never knew much about it.

My earliest memory of even hearing the word malaria was from old Vietnam War movies that spoke of the “sleeping disease.” But my first real encounter was when preparing for a trip to Indonesia for tsunami relief efforts.

Many parts of Indonesia are prone to malaria carrying mosquitoes. I took my dosage of Malarone daily to make sure I didn't come down with the deadly disease. But that was some time ago.

Late last year, I got a call from Imam Zaid Shakir, a respected community leader and influential Muslim scholar. He was being approached by different organizations to become a spokesperson on behalf of the Muslim community for a malaria-eradication campaign. But Imam Zaid told me he didn't want to become just



“It’s almost as if no one cares that children are dying every 30 seconds from this deadly, yet preventable, disease.”

From left: Imam Zaid Shakir greets local dignitaries in Mali; Naeem Muhammad with children in Mali; Camel in Mali.



someone else’s spokesperson; he wanted to help develop an authentic response from the Muslim Community for malaria eradication.

### MAKING THE COMMITMENT

For some time now, relief groups, government agencies and people of notoriety have committed to the Millennium Development Goals, making conscious efforts to reduce poverty, infant mortality rates, AIDS-related illnesses, and deaths due to malaria by 2015.

But the question is: Where is the Muslim community in these efforts?

Many of these goals directly impact and affect the lives of millions, yet so few of us have signed on to support them. Do we want 2015 to arrive with the whole world celebrating a successful reduction in

many of the hardships of the developing world while the Muslim community merely looks on?

Imam Zaid didn’t want that to happen and neither did I, so we began the process.

### CREATING THE CAMPAIGN

Our goal was to, at the very least, get the issue of malaria eradication on the minds and in the action plans of the Muslim community at large.

After looking at so many other groups, we decided to structure a campaign that would harness the power of the web and have the potential to reach a much larger audience than a speaking tour could attract.

Along with developing the details of the project, I was to plan a trip to one of our offices in West Africa to give Imam Zaid a real sense of the work we do and a feel for

what is needed to eradicate malaria.

The campaign developed in two ways: the actual project on the ground and the efforts to fund this work from the U.S. But to begin tackling this issue, we had to see if Islamic Relief had done this type of work before. The answer was yes!

### MALARIA AND ISLAMIC RELIEF

Islamic Relief ran a project for a time in East Africa focused on reducing deaths from malaria. This project had a very limited lifespan and had stopped some time ago.

We put out a call to all of our field offices to develop a project that would address reducing malaria-related deaths. We guaranteed long-term funding for the project through the Bite the Bug campaign.

Seeing malaria deaths daily, and on a



“Do we want 2015 to arrive with the whole world celebrating a successful reduction in many of the hardships of the developing world while the Muslim community merely looks on?”

massive scale, the field offices immediately became excited about the opportunity. They realized there is a great need but the funds just were not there.

It's almost as if no one cares that children are dying every 30 seconds from this deadly, yet preventable, disease.

From the east to the west of Africa, Islamic Relief field offices submitted project proposals to address malaria eradication. Working with our projects department, the decision was made to work with our field office in Mali.

Islamic Relief Mali happens to be one of our largest offices in the world. Islamic Relief USA has been committed to fund the work in this particular office. Having visited their field office and projects three times before, I was sincerely impressed by their dedication and the sheer scale of the work they are doing.

The Mali office implements projects

in places where no other international relief groups are working, and so many are grateful for this. We felt our project would be in great hands in Mali and God willing would see success.

#### **MAKING FUNDING A FOCUS**

Now that the field project planning was under way, it was time to focus on how to actually raise funds for the project.

Working closely with our national volunteer coordinator, we decided to change the usual routine of cooking up complete plans for campaigns without the input of the volunteers who would be running them. So we created a focus group of high school students, college students, and young professionals to meet with regularly.

These volunteers were instrumental in developing the very look and feel of the campaign. The very campaign slogan

“Educate, Communicate, Eradicate: Malaria” came from a volunteer, saying “this is the process we want to take the donors through.”

We would start by educating the public on issues of malaria. From there, they would communicate what they've learned to their family, friends, and webs of influence. And from there they would eradicate malaria by becoming one of the donors to the campaign.

Even the amount of money we asked for was an amount decided on with our young volunteers in mind. At most fundraising events the heroes are the big spenders, those who can write a check for the high thousands. And when it comes down to the many volunteers and youth they can only usually afford \$200 or less.

This campaign would focus on the small donation, just \$10 a month. And we would focus on people getting 10 of their friends or family members to do just that as well, both



Opposite: Eighteen-month-old malaria patient Fatimata and her mother.

Above: Children in Mali laugh as Islamic Relief staff members pass by.

accomplishing our target goal and spreading the awareness to as many as possible.

## TRAVELS IN MALI

While the field project was being fine tuned and the volunteer-driven web campaign was taking off, we took a brief trip with Imam Zaid to Mali to help him get a sense of the struggles of people affected by malaria as well as enabling Imam Zaid to see the capacity of Islamic Relief Mali firsthand. This tour of the country was done by road, off-road, through the desert in some of the harshest climate I've experienced.

Even still I have nothing but love for Mali and its people. So it was heart breaking when we visited a hospital in Ghourma Rharous, northern Mali.

We sat with families who came to receive help for their children suffering from malaria. One of these children was Fatimata Mohamed, who is only 18 months old. She first got malaria last year during the rainy season. She was vomiting, had a very high fever and cried a lot.

There are many other signs which worried Fatimata's mother Jamlia and she brought the baby to the hospital where she was diagnosed with malaria. She took the medicine and felt better after a little while, but fell sick again when her other two siblings fell sick with malaria.

I couldn't fathom the site of three of my children at the same time suffering from this deadly disease. As we left the hospital, Imam Zaid alerted us to something the doctor told him directly, that just that morning they had run out of the medicine they use to help children suffering from malaria.

The news only fuelled our desire to get involved and showed us how important it was for us to act immediately.

## THE HOME EFFORT

When we returned home we took the trip's many stories, reminders and lessons and got to work.

We informed our staff, donors, and volunteers about what we learned. We worked with organizations such as ISNA,

MYNA, MSA, and others to give us a platform to further the cause and get more people involved with malaria eradication.

As time went on we started to attend conferences and conventions to build community support for the effort. Imam Zaid contacted his friends and colleagues from different organizations to build an event that is the first of its kind.

Bringing together Muslim organizations from various backgrounds to work together for positive change, the United for Change event, scheduled for this September, will focus on unifying the Muslim community to work towards malaria eradication.

This event, this effort, helps ensure the Muslim community enacts the Qur'anic statement, "To enjoin in what is right, and to forbid what is wrong."

It is the right thing for us to do all that we can do within our power to help those suffering from malaria. And it would be totally wrong for us to allow millions to suffer and die without us making an effort.

**For more information, visit [www.bitethebug.org](http://www.bitethebug.org).**

# Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Humanitarian Wellbeing

ISLAMIC RELIEF USA SHOWCASES EFFORTS IN PAKISTAN AND MALI DURING ISNA CONVENTION

**A**s 25,000 Muslims from almost every part of the nation scurried back and forth between lectures, matrimonial sessions and a jam-packed bazaar, Islamic Relief USA staff called on 2009 ISNA convention-goers to get educated and take action.

With a three-dimensional exhibit that spanned 40 feet wide, visitors to the Islamic Relief booth were intimately guided through life-size displays of the conflict in Pakistan and an African household being treated for malaria.

“The theme of the conference was ‘Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness,’ which is exactly what our work is about,” said Naeem Muhammad, Interim Fund Development Manager for Islamic Relief USA. “Islamic Relief’s many projects around the world make it possible for people to pursue happiness through access to education, access to health services, access to a means of income and much more.”

## MERCY, FROM PAKISTAN TO D.C.

The entrance to the Islamic Relief exhibit immediately transplanted visitors from their convention bazaar surroundings into the life of internally displaced (IDP) families in Pakistan.

Focused on Islamic Relief’s Mercy Center construction efforts in multiple areas of the Mardan district of Pakistan, the display included large print graphics

with beneficiary stories direct from the field, household cooking items representing the kinds of non-food aid Islamic Relief distributes, and a life size display of children in the Mercy Centers playing with toys, reading books and receiving psycho-social support from local staff.

“The idea was to really bring guests into the experience of being displaced by conflict, having to flee from their homes without warning and with no time to get supplies,” said Nazia Ahmed, Volunteer Coordinator for Islamic Relief USA. “Once people are able to share in the experience of these families, we transition them into learning about the outstanding services the Mercy Centers provide and encourage them to take part in these efforts, to take part in the solution.”

## A NATION BITING BACK

Once done learning about the displaced, booth visitors were walked through a curtain of mosquito nets, entering them into a new continent and a new development campaign.

Complete with wall graphics, informational mosquito displays and a real-life bed covered with an insecticide net, the Bite the Bug exhibit taught booth visitors about the negative effects of malaria and the efforts Islamic Relief is taking to preserve life in Mali by preventing future malaria deaths.

“Bite the Bug is about three things:

Educating Americans about malaria, encouraging them to communicate what they’ve learned to friends and families, and inspiring them to help eradicate the disease by joining our campaign or starting their own,” said Naeem Muhammad, Southeast Development Coordinator for Islamic Relief USA.

“From my own experience, I know how bad malaria can be. When I used to live in West Africa, both my children and I caught malaria. It took my oldest son a month to get rid of it,” reflected Kemba Saibou, an Islamic Relief USA volunteer from Maryland.

“Alhamdulillah, I had the money to take my son to the doctor and try three different medications. But there are so many cases where the children either aren’t treated fully or the parents don’t react quickly enough and the children are lost. I could really relate to [to the malaria display] after seeing my own little ones suffer from the disease. I could really relate to [to the malaria display] after seeing my own little ones suffer from the disease.”

From the hundreds of people who toured Islamic Relief’s exhibit during the convention, \$25,000 was raised to help eradicate malaria in Mali and continue the construction of Mercy Centers in Pakistan.

**For more information on Islamic Relief USA’s Bite the Bug campaign, visit [www.bitethebug.org](http://www.bitethebug.org). For information on the Mercy Center Project, visit [www.irw.org](http://www.irw.org).**

Clockwise from right: Staff member, Belkacem Nahi, speaks with ISNA guests; Volunteer, Kemba Saibou (left), explains malaria-eradication efforts; The Islamic Relief ISNA booth showcased both the Mercy Center and Bite the Bug.

"From my own experience, I know how bad malaria can be. When I used to live in West Africa, both my children and I caught malaria. It took my oldest son a month to get rid of it."

Kemba Saibou, an Islamic Relief USA volunteer from Maryland



# SHARING BEST PRACTICES

ISLAMIC RELIEF EDUCATES NGOS DURING ANNUAL INTERACTION FORUM



## ACCOMMODATIONS, NOT ASSUMPTIONS

One of the main themes of the session emphasized the need for NGOs to leave all assumptions and pre-conceived notions behind and instead seek out the knowledge of the local people to help develop projects relevant and useful to the community.

“Just because an NGO has been successful in one Muslim country doesn’t mean they can assume they’re going to be successful in another,” said Tobias-Nahi. “Sudan is different from Pakistan which is different from Afghanistan. Each cultural context deserves its own sensitivity.”

“It’s important that we bring the Muslim perspective to the table, especially since a lot of the beneficiaries and people we work for are Muslim,” said Mahmoud. “In this field, where the people are so diverse and the work isn’t uniform, having different perspectives is important.”

## COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS

With so much of the international aid budget being given to impoverished Muslim populations around the world, being able to effectively sensitize and work with other organizations becomes vital to poverty eradication efforts.

“In these times of having lost half the world’s wealth in the last year, we need to consolidate and work together to conserve resources and be more effective and efficient in our work,” said Tobias-Nahi. “Forums like InterAction’s allow us to learn from others’ successes and failures and vice versa.”

“If you know what does and doesn’t work, it saves time and money. It helps build that collective consciousness that we need to work together to solve global issues.”

In Washington, D.C., more than 800 nonprofit, corporate and government players gathered at the Annual InterAction Forum, marking the organization’s 25th anniversary and emphasizing on the need for unity in efforts to eradicate poverty.

2009 also marked Islamic Relief USA’s third year participating in the forum with seven representatives attending, aiding in the planning and sponsoring one of the closing sessions.

“Being able to attend the forum and be active participants, shows that Islamic Relief USA is on the same level as major international NGOs and allows us to share our own best practices and experiences with others,” said Christina Tobias-Nahi, Director of Public Affairs for Islamic Relief USA.

## WORKING IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

With presentations by Dr. Ajaz Ahmed Khan, Head of Research and Policy Unit for Islamic Relief Worldwide, Siddarth Shah, Medical Director for Greenleaf Integrated, and Manal Omar, Program officer for U.S. Institute of Peace, Islamic Relief’s interactive

session focused on diversity in the Muslim world and the importance for NGO’s to be aware of the cultural and religious sensitivities of the communities they work in.

“Muslims predominate in all categories of assistance: emergency, development and refugee operations. Should that matter? It should not, because humanitarianism should respond to needs, without regard to religious or other affiliations,” stated Khan in his presentation.

“At the same time, we as humanitarians, should be aware of who our clients are, if only to ensure that their needs are well-understood and properly met. Being ‘identity blind’ should not mean ‘identity unaware.’”

Session participants were placed in group roundtables, then presented with case studies and asked to create policies that effectively worked with everyone’s respective sensitivities.

“Our session was very well-attended. The panellists were amazing and I think a lot of people enjoyed it because it wasn’t the typical things NGOs talk about at conferences,” said Public Affairs Intern for Islamic Relief USA, Tariq Mahmoud.

# PROJECT UPDATES

## THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

ONE YEAR AFTER THE CHINA EARTHQUAKE



DURING WHAT WAS CALLED the strongest earthquake to hit the country in over 30 years, the 7.8 magnitude mid-day quake affected over 10 million people across China.

Thousands of children were in school when the earthquake struck but many did not survive. Those who did, found it difficult to resume their education as school buildings were either destroyed fully or partially damaged.

Children were also suffering from

psychological trauma that they associated with schools. With the help of Islamic Relief's transitional schools, children were able to get back to class not just for continuing their studies but also to strengthen them emotionally and slowly forget the past.

"If Islamic Relief was not here to help us, we would have had no place to resume our classes as fast as possible," said 10-year-old Chen Yu, who is a resident of a boarding school that Islamic Relief constructed.

### THE CRISIS

- 69,000 confirmed dead
- 200,000 people were injured
- 18,600 were missing

### THE AID

- Constructed and established boarding facilities for 300 children
- Provided, water, shelter, and medical care

## REBUILDING WHAT'S LOST

ISLAMIC RELIEF HELPS REBUILD MYANMAR CYCLONE-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES



FOR OVER A YEAR since Cyclone Nargis Struck Myanmar, Islamic Relief has been working closely with the affected communities, providing them with aid and helping them to rebuild what they lost.

Immediately after the storm hit, Islamic Relief field staff mobilized and began distributing aid parcels to displaced families, including food, hygiene kits, kitchen sets, mosquito nets and blankets.

After the preliminary emergency phase, Islamic Relief began rehabilitating Myanmar's devastated infrastructure so the

people could get back to leading normal lives.

Working with Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), Islamic Relief cleaned contaminated ponds which communities were using as their source of drinking water.

Working with leading agricultural experts, International Development Enterprises, Islamic Relief helped farmers rehabilitate their fields by funding seeds, tractors and fertilizer, which enabled farmers to plant rice before the monsoon season.

### THE CRISIS

- 140,000 people killed
- 2.4 million people affected
- 450,000 homes destroyed
- Crops washed away
- Water sources contaminated

### THE AID

- Distributed 16,000 water containers
- Provided 3,000 families with material to construct temporary shelters
- Constructed 1,000 homes that were raised above the ground to avoid damage by the floodwaters
- Provided 280 fishing boats and nets for fishermen
- Equipped 100 schools with new furniture
- Rebuilt six schools in Hmaw Be Township.

# ONLINE FACELIFT

## ISLAMIC RELIEF USA'S NEW WEBSITE

**A**fter many years of consideration, and over a year and a half of planning, Islamic Relief USA has launched a new website, offering regular donors as well as first-time guests an improved visual design as well as increased functionality.

Islamic Relief USA Web Developer, Reshad Noorzay, explains the new site:

### Q: WHY DEVELOP A NEW WEBSITE NOW?

**A:** The world is heading into a new era of web technology; an era that allows people to interact with other people and organizations, to share thoughts and ideas as opposed to just reading static pages.

Islamic Relief USA is entering this era as well with the launch of this new site. We're giving our supporters the opportunity to connect with Islamic Relief instead of just reading about what we do.

### Q: WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR SUPPORTERS TO BE ABLE TO CONNECT WITH ISLAMIC RELIEF?

**A:** Islamic Relief supporters are unique in terms of their commitment to and care for the organization.

Instead of a receipt just being a tax benefit, our supporters truly care about the work we do and the people who benefit from it. This makes connecting with us much more important.

With the new website, we're looking to remove the limitations and expand the reasons for supporters to

visit the site and have better ways to stay informed and contribute to the dialogue of what work we implement here and overseas.

### Q: WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IS THE MOST BENEFICIAL ASPECT OF THE NEW WEBSITE?

**A:** The new site offers supporters the ability to manage their own personal account with Islamic Relief, providing a personalized level of connection to the organization. With the personal account, a supporter becomes part of Islamic Relief USA's online community, further helping that community grow.

### Q: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE IMPROVED FEATURES THE NEW WEBSITE OFFERS?

**A:** Well, with the personalized accounts, each member of Islamic Relief USA will have their own profiles, allowing them to receive custom updates and information, based on their interests in our projects and the regions we work; supporters can join a team fundraiser to raise funds for the projects they're interested in; members can create discussion groups and forums; and the new website will even offer supporters the option of donating monthly online.

There is also a great amount of increased accessibility and networking. The site isn't just about donating anymore, it's about enabling our supporters to reach out to friends and family, share their ideas and be an actual player in the process.

**You can visit the new site at [www.IslamicReliefUSA.org](http://www.IslamicReliefUSA.org).**

"Our supporters truly care about the work we do and the people who benefit from it. This makes connecting with us much more important."



**MEMBER LOGIN**  
Customize your profile, keep track of donations, & stay updated.

**SEARCH TOOL**  
Quickly search the site with just a few simple keywords



**DONATE OPTIONS**  
Improved donation options allow monthly donations online.

**GO SOCIAL**  
Stay involved through social networking.

**EMAIL PREFERENCES**  
Customize your personal options.

# MAKING THE SPIRIT SOAR

BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

WITH ISLAMIC RELIEF USA

**P**eople think volunteering is a selfless act. In reality, volunteering is an act done by dynamic and driven people who want to give meaning to their own lives while making the world a better place for themselves and others.

This concept is the fundamental principle behind organizations like Islamic Relief USA, who have a more global view of human connectedness.

It is also a fundamental component of the success and viability of so many nonprofit organizations that not only have their roots in the volunteer passion that created them, but in the loving hands that contribute daily to keep their work alive.

“I was blessed with the honor and privilege of working for Islamic Relief USA in their booth at the MAS-ICNA convention,” writes Omar Gadelhak. “For seven hours me, the operations manager, and my best friend Umair Hamid began an operation of our own collecting pledges, emptying donation boxes, and doing all we could... by the Grace of Allah we had collected over \$270,000...” It seems almost miraculous what a few people can accomplish from a day’s effort.

Volunteering not only benefits the recipient of the program being implemented, but impacts the lives of those who choose to help drive the campaigns as well.

Volunteers are able to work alongside highly-skilled and experienced professionals, developing skills and working in capacities that would not be open to them professionally for many years.

Damir, a volunteer from last Ramadan’s “Give

*There is also that invaluable and intangible benefit of being at the core of work that makes the spirit soar and makes the mundane tasks of life more than tolerable.*

a Portion, Save an Orphan” campaign had the opportunity of visiting Bosnia and experienced directly the impact this campaign had on the life of the child he sponsored.

Damir wrote, “I was with Ibrahim...I took him to the dentist, too. I am waiting for some shoes from the states for him, and most importantly, inshaAllah (God willing), we’ll be able to help them with their house in Srebrenica that is completely destroyed. That is a long process but some of my friends from the states and the UNDP offered their help during the process.”

Volunteer opportunities at Islamic Relief USA also allow one to experience a variety of work environments without a long-term commitment or obligation. The skills learned in volunteer experiences are often broad and varied, helping to build a wide range of skills.

Islamic Relief USA offers its volunteers the chance to visit mosques during Ramadan, participate in the logistics of large-scale projects like “Day of Dignity,” develop administrative skills in regional offices, and help save lives through their promoting campaigns such as “Bite The Bug.”

There is also that invaluable and intangible benefit of being at the core of work that makes the spirit soar and makes the mundane tasks of life more than tolerable.

**For more information on Islamic Relief USA volunteer opportunities, contact Nazia Hussein at [Nazia@irw.org](mailto:Nazia@irw.org).**



### ISLAMIC RELIEF USA AT INTERFAITH CONFERENCE

Director of Public Affairs, Christina Tobias-Nahi, spoke at the InterFaith Conference's (IFC) 5th Annual InterFaith Bridge Builders' Awards event held on June 1st at the Pope John Paul II Cultural Center in Washington, D.C.

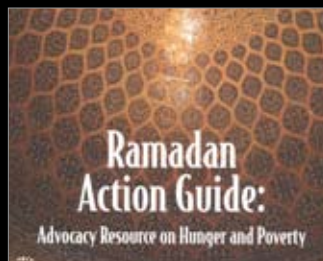
IFC has strived for over 30 years to promote mutual understanding among diverse faith communities in the region and works to build a just society. The annual awards held in June each year highlight selected individuals and groups for their bridge-building work.

Tobias-Nahi, on behalf of IFC, awarded Peter Adriance, for his "pioneering work within and beyond the religious community to better understand and become engaged with the care of our fragile earth."



### ISLAMIC RELIEF USA LICENSED TO WORK IN GAZA

Recently, concerns have been raised about Islamic Relief's ability to implement projects in Gaza. According to the U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Asset Control (OFAC), Islamic Relief USA is licensed to work in Gaza, operating Family Sponsorship Programs, School Feeding Programs and increasing capacity of emergency and Intensive Care Units at main hospitals.



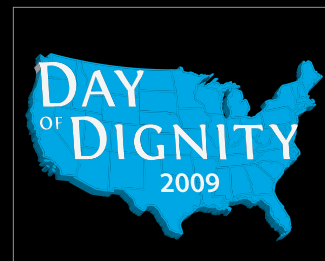
### ENCOURAGING ACTION IN RAMADAN

Once again, Islamic Relief USA was asked to be the key partner of the Ramadan Action Guide, an advocacy tool to educate our community about hunger issues during Ramadan and throughout the year.

The guide promotes different ways one can become involved in alleviating hunger by means such as networking with elected representatives, establishing local food banks or volunteering for Islamic Relief's Day of Dignity.

This publication, now in its second year, is co-produced by The Alliance to End Hunger and One (formerly the One Campaign), both of whom promoted the guide during the National ISNA Convention held in D.C. over 4th of July weekend.

To get copies please contact our Public Affairs Department.



### DAY OF DIGNITY COMING TO 20 CITIES

The annual day that helps thousands across the nation with essential support is back this Ramadan. This year's Day of Dignity is scheduled to begin August 15 and last until December 8, assisting over 23,000 people in 20 cities throughout the U.S. To see when Day of Dignity is coming to your town, log onto [www.dayofdignity.com](http://www.dayofdignity.com).

### RAISING GLOBAL POVERTY AWARENESS

In an effort to advance awareness on global poverty issues with elected representatives, Islamic Relief USA presented work to national delegates and met with grassroots organizers from across the nation during the 2009 RESULTS International Conference: Empowering People to End Poverty held in Washington, D.C. on June 22.



# Islamic Relief

*A Worldwide Leader in Alleviating Poverty*

PO Box 5640, Buena Park, CA 90622 | [www.irw.org](http://www.irw.org) | Tax ID# 95-4453134

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
GARDENA, CA  
PERMIT#: 240

**(888) 479-4968**

**[www.irw.org](http://www.irw.org)**



8/15  
Fort Thompson, SD

8/22  
Chicago, IL

8/29  
Baltimore, MD  
Seattle, WA

8/30  
Philadelphia, PA

9/5  
Washington, DC  
Dallas, TX  
Newark, NJ

9/6  
Atlanta, GA

9/12  
Detroit, MI  
Kalamazoo, MI

9/19  
Portland, OR

9/13  
Boston, MA

9/26  
Elizabeth, NJ

9/27  
Irvington, NJ

10/3  
Brooklyn, NY

10/4  
Manhattan, NY

11/21  
Seattle, WA

12/5  
Phoenix, AZ

12/6  
Las Vegas, NV

**[www.DayofDignity.com](http://www.DayofDignity.com)**