117 MILLION LIVES SAVED SINCE 1984
FIND OUT HOW YOU’VE MADE THIS POSSIBLE ALHAMDULILLAH!

For the love of Allah

TACKLING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE HEAD ON

NEW TECH HOW SMART THINKING IS SAVING LIVES
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P.53 | GAZA
An interview with sister Bodour
Assalamu alaikum wa rahmatullah,
Peace and mercy be upon you.

I’ve always had a keen interest in aid work and Alhamdulillah, I’ve now been working in the development sector for over 16 years.

I believe that as a sector, we’re undergoing a huge transformation. There is enormous demand on NGOs due to the unprecedented level of natural and manmade disasters but simply not enough capacity to help everyone. There have however been many improvements, such as a greater level of transparency and accountability and a shift of resources towards national organisations.

The recent safe-guarding scandal was a clear warning that we need to put the people we seek to help at the heart of our work. During my many years in this sector what’s stuck with me most is the trust that people place in us. The money we raise is a great amanah and we will be held accountable to Allah (SWT).

It is also important for international aid organisations to build their capacity to recognise the contribution of national and local NGOs who have strong local knowledge and are often the first to respond to disasters. Processes are becoming more ‘localised’ but a change in the mindset of governments and aid organisations is crucial. We must build stronger local partnerships.

Islamic Relief has a very strong track record of helping communities to rebuild their lives after a disaster has struck and build resilience in preparation. Our response to Typhoon Haiyan in 2013 is a strong example of community collaboration during the recovery stage and our commitment to strengthening community resilience long afterwards. Four and half years later, we’re still running projects in the Philippines.

Responding, rebuilding and improving resilience are the cornerstone of all of our work and I hope that this magazine will highlight this commitment.

Imran Madden
Director, Islamic Relief UK

“Our response to Typhoon Haiyan in 2013 is a strong example of our commitment to community collaboration.”

IMRAN MADDEN: AID IN ACTION

Woman affected by Typhoon Haiyan (The Philippines, 2013)
Imran led on the post-typhoon response in 2013 and has travelled extensively in the course of his time with Islamic Relief, leading some of our biggest humanitarian responses in Sudan, Bosnia, Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Nepal.
For the past seven years, the Syrian people have been suffering the devastating consequences of war. A staggering 13.1 million people across Syria are in urgent need of humanitarian aid across the country. Alhamdulillah, thanks to your donations since the devastating conflict began, we’ve delivered more than £239 million worth of aid inside Syria. We’ve provided over 522,500 displaced Syrians with winter kits and 2.3 million food parcels to men, women and children in need, reaching areas many other organisations cannot.

We’ve been working on the ground in Aleppo, Afrin, Idlib and Hama and through partners in Eastern Ghouta. We’ve also been serving refugee families in neighbouring countries as they’ve fled in search of safety. Thanks to you we’ve been able to help millions of vulnerable people.

With the ongoing conflict in Yemen, thousands of lives have been lost and millions left in turmoil. Over 22 million people are in urgent need of humanitarian aid and approximately 18 million have been left food insecure. Through our emergency appeal, we’ve been distributing aid across Yemen, providing food to more than 2.5 million people. We’ve also equipped 21 hospitals and clinics across the country to support doctors and nurses working to treat the wounded, sick and malnourished as well as working to support children through child protection and psycho-social support activities.

Your donations have helped us to serve communities in urgent need of aid. Alhamdulillah!
Women, children and the elderly have been affected in particularly high numbers. According to reports, civilians have been killed and landmines have also been planted. Satellite imagery confirms that villages have been set alight, leaving townships deserted and entire communities displaced.

Alhamdulillah, we’re continuing to work in Myanmar and serve communities in need. You’ve donated over £1,000,000 to help people fleeing Myanmar, enabling us to support families in crisis for the love of Allah. Thank you.

Since late August 2017, the situation in Rakhine State (Myanmar) has worsened. Violent clashes have resulted in the death of over 5,000 people and forced over 655,000 to flee their country and seek refuge in neighbouring Bangladesh.

Across East Africa, more than 19 million people are on the brink of starvation. People are in critical need of food, clean water and medical treatment with women and children the worst affected.

Thanks to your help, we’re on the ground delivering life-saving assistance including food, medical treatment for malnutrition and safe drinking water to millions of vulnerable people. We’ve rehabilitated 50 boreholes in South Sudan and trained 20,000 locals on best hygiene practices. Alhamdulillah, we’ve also provided 1,392 households in Somalia with food packs during their time of need, as well constructing boreholes to serve up to 500 households a day during periods of drought. For the love of Allah, join us in helping save even more lives.
**OVER 117 MILLION LIVES SAVED SINCE 1984**

7 MILLION IN THIS YEAR ALONE

**HELP US SAVE MORE LIVES THIS YEAR!**

**VISIT:** ISLAMIC-RELIEF.ORG.UK

### SOME INTERESTING FACTS FROM 2017

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>20,000 Locals in South Sudan trained on best hygiene practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>£1,000,000+ Raised during Charity Week</td>
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<td>Over 200,000 Tonnes of crops harvested in Gaza</td>
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<td>3,000,000+ People received Qurbani</td>
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<td>Over ¾ million pounds provided to support refugees and asylum seekers in the UK</td>
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<td>36,000 People in Mosul, Iraq, provided with emergency food aid</td>
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<td>4.5+ million Syrians provided with aid</td>
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<td>Over 50 boreholes rehabilitated in South Sudan</td>
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<td>3+ million winter items provided for Syrians in crisis</td>
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<td>18 tonnes of cholera medicine distributed in war-torn Yemen</td>
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<td>7 million lives saved in this year alone</td>
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<td>15 healthcare facilities supported in Aleppo and Idlib, Syria</td>
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<td>2,000+ Letters sent to MPs in support of Yemenis’ and Syrians in conflict</td>
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<td>3,000,000+ people received Qurbani</td>
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<td>Over ¼ million pounds provided to support refugees and asylum seekers in the UK</td>
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<td>19 tonnes of cholera medicine distributed in war-torn Yemen</td>
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<td>A banana auctioned for £3k during Charity Week 2017</td>
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<td>Almost £50k invested to support women in the UK affected by domestic abuse</td>
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Climate change is having an immense impact on communities across Africa, in particular Kenya, where families are facing prolonged dry seasons and regularly failing rains. They’re not only left struggling with dry periods and hot weather but also food shortages and collapsing livelihoods.

For pastoralists who rear animals such as sheep, this poses the risk of losing all of their herds - the backbone of their livelihood. In fact, in 2018, a staggering 3.4 million people now risk becoming destitute due to climate change induced drought.

To support these communities, we’re investing a staggering £2,000,000 in sustainable traditional livelihoods over the next three years. We’re working with pastoralist communities in northern Kenya providing satellite technology, livestock insurance, dams and access to safe water to strengthen community resilience against droughts and prevent their herds from dying.

Insha’Allah, locals will be able to maintain their livelihoods and survive the ravaging effects of drought, remaining happy and healthy!

We spoke to Aliow Mohamed, East Africa Regional Disaster Preparedness Manager, who is running the project to find out more!

Hi Aliow. Drought is such a big issue. How does it impact families?
Drought forces pastoralists to move from their villages in search of water and food. Men travel long distances with little knowledge of where to find water and pasture - with dire consequences. Being away from their family for such long periods strains family relationships and families typically lose over 50% of their animals. Once a herd has depleted to that level, it takes a family on average seven years to recover. This regeneration is also hampered by yearly cyclical drought.

What dangers do women and girls face?
Women and girls are the most affected by drought. They travel for kilometres, climbing up hills and mountains in search of shrubs, dry leaves and water to try and sustain their weak animals. They’ll spend the better part of their day looking for water, as water points become congested and waiting times increase. Girls drop out of school, become exposed to abuse in isolated areas, stress and hunger, and may even suffer miscarriages from carrying such heavy loads.

How do people normally cope?
People have a communal set up. They share animals and other resources in times of crisis. Pastoralists then traditionally turn to herd-splitting, where most of the herd is taken across Ethiopia or Somalia in search of pastures and water. The smaller part then stays with the women. This only has a 20% chance of success though and in some cases, whole herds may die, leaving the community in dire poverty.

What are the negative impacts of these coping mechanisms?
Families are separated, divorce rates rise and livestock inevitably die. Sometimes, young girls are forcibly married to older men in the hope that they’ll at least have food and their family will have one less mouth to feed. Local families are trying to build resilience against the increasing...
effects of climate change but are traditional methods sufficient to help them survive?

No. With changing climate trends, traditional coping strategies such as migrating to Ethiopia or Somalia are ineffective. We must address the underlying causes of community vulnerability through technological means, as well as considering social and environmental factors. By mapping forage and water sources through remote sensing technology for example, mass migration will be reduced.

So how can modern technology and innovative methods help protect traditional ways of life?

Satellite mapping of food and water sources will enable community members to become aware of their environment and reduce over-grazing and high concentrations of animals on grazing lands. Imaging through an NDVI (Normalized Difference Vegetation Index) sent via mobile phones will allow locals to accurately find grass and water sources.

We’ll also be working with community members on the importance of insuring livestock against drought and introducing a scheme for herds. The livestock insurance premium will be paid in when herds are reduced by more than 20%, meaning families won’t need to sell weak animals, allowing them to recover more quickly.

What about building boreholes to provide clean water?

We’re building a borehole so locals will have enough safe water to drink. We’re also building a mega-dam to harvest rainwater when there’s no other source of water. When completely full, it can be used by livestock and to water crops for seven months until the next lot of rainfall.

“Women and girls are the most affected by drought. Girls drop out of school and become exposed to abuse.”

How does building a dam impact the local environment?

Boreholes and traditional shallow wells remain dry during drought as underground water levels have dropped drastically due to the changing climate pattern. A water dam will help address these challenges. It will be constructed in the rangeland, 15km from the nearest town/village and won’t affect the local environment in any way whatsoever as it will be made of natural materials (mud).

You’ll be offering livestock insurance and vouchers for the dam but how will locals be able to afford these?

This community values livestock - it’s their prestige and ‘gold’. They’ll go miles to provide their livestock with water and forage. So to protect their livestock, they’ll club together as a community to gather funds and pay for the services. This cycle will continue until everyone benefits.

How does this create economic opportunities for locals?

The project will provide services, inject income through cash for work and help form cooperative groups to develop agri-businesses. Ultimately, the project will impact local economies through livestock insurance and resilience against drought stress and other effects of climate change.

This is such a unique approach! How did you think of it?

We aim to support people by protecting communities’ core traditional values. Islamic Relief staff have a wealth of experience living and working in rural communities in Kenya, meaning we can bring innovation to traditional ways of coping and living. In Kenya, herds are a source of wealth for both families and the national economy, so by harnessing modern technology and innovative methods, we can respond to climate change, maintain crucial traditional herding systems and support both families’ livelihoods and wellbeing all at the same time!

Thanks Aliow. Insha’Allah, we’ll hear all about the project’s great success very soon!

Women and girls are the most affected by drought. Girls drop out of school and become exposed to abuse.”

A young boy drinks from an Islamic Relief water harvesting system in Kenya.
WHAT A DIFFERENCE A FENCE MAKES

40-year-old mother of eight Hadjo lives in the village of Sadeize Koira in southwest Niger - an area with one of the most erratic patterns of rainfall and struggling against the effects of climate change.

Hadjo’s main source of income is agriculture, growing cabbages, onions, tomatoes and lettuce during dry season and peanuts, sesame seeds and bambara groundnuts in rainy season. However, due to unreliable crop yields, Hadjo struggles to provide for her family.

Alhamdulillah, thanks to our resilience building programme Hadjo and many other community members can now maintain a stable livelihood and meet their essential living needs:

“The training sessions were helpful and I now have my own space to grow crops. I used to borrow land but the donkeys and goats roaming around made it difficult to grow anything. With my new fence, my crops are safe and I have produced my first harvest of the year.”

Small changes lead to great things Masha’Allah!

A SIMPLE SMS CAN SAVES LIVES

In disaster-prone countries such as Bangladesh, where flooding is an ongoing threat, early warning systems are crucial to help save lives.

Supported by Aid Match funding from the UK Government, we’re enabling Bangladeshi authorities to deliver quicker and more accurate flood warnings to flood-prone communities in Bangladesh thanks to our new mobile SMS warning system.

Whereas previous systems relied on hydro-meteorological data collected from river gauges and rainfall across the country, this new system is faster and more accurate. Rather than gathering several times a day to be later manually entered into a computer register, our new system uses mobile SMS technology to collect and send data automatically.

This new method of data processing dramatically shortens the time required to update the central register, as well as improving the quality of information by eradicating the possibility of human error.

With forecasting times cut by at least two hours, forecasts will be produced twice a day rather than just once. During the monsoon season in particular, vulnerable communities will receive early warnings as well as flood warnings via SMS, helping them to prepare for future disasters and ultimately saving lives.

THE NO. 1 REASON GIRLS AREN’T GOING TO SCHOOL

Education provides the means to a brighter, more prosperous future. However, a lack of adequate sanitary facilities at school poses a significant barrier to accessing education. This is particularly true for young teenage girls.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, research estimates that every one in ten girls misses several days of school each and every month during their menstrual cycle. Without adequate latrines at school, girls are unable to attend classes and are instead forced to stay at home. This therefore hampers their academic progress.

This critical issue is a problem that local teacher Ibrahim Dahim Dawaje knows all too well:

“I teach many classes outside under the trees. With no toilets, not many girls attend school. When they’re on their period, girls do not come to school.”

Alhamdulillah! We not only rehabilitated Ibrahim’s school, but also built a specialised latrine so that young girls can attend school each and every day of the month. Thank you for your support!

SMA RT THINKING

COMING TO A FRIDGE NEAR YOU THIS RAMADAN!

SAVING LIVES NEVER TASTED SO GOOD ORDER YOUR CAKE NOW!

thecakecampaign.org    #Cakes4Syria
Whether you’re one of our country officers delivering vital aid in the field, a local donor calling up during a live appeal to offer their hard-earned Zakat, or a brother or sister struggling up a mountain to raise money for communities in need - you are all lifesavers. Each and every one of our supporters is a key part of a crucial chain which starts with a simple donation. Your support is transformed into food, water, medical care and a brighter future for communities in need worldwide.

In the Holy Qur'an, Allah (SWT) tells us: “Whoever saves one life – it is as if he had saved mankind entirely” (5:32). Life is a sacred blessing from Allah (SWT), which we should cherish and protect each and every day of our lives. By giving in charity and helping others in need, you become your very own lifesaver!

Ravalia Umm Ali, known fondly by everyone as Aunty Ravalia (pictured right) is one of our most enthusiastic orphan sponsors. She’s always been passionate about charity work and with the support of her family, Aunty Ravalia has sponsored more than 27 orphans with Islamic Relief. SubhanAllah!

Here are just a few of the many special people who are saving lives with Islamic Relief.

“Allah has given me everything, yet some children do not even have food on the table.”

Aunty Ravalia is described as a “legend” by the fundraising team - not only for her commitment to helping others but also her kind, sweet-hearted nature, Masha’Allah!

Field officer Nibal leading craft activities with Syrian children as part of our Safe Space psychosocial programme in Jordan.

Sakeeb and Areed taking part in the Halifax to Bradford run, in support of children in need around the world.
And tire yourself out, because it makes life worth living! I have seen that water stagnates when it stands still, yet when it runs it is sweet and pure.

(Imam Shafi)

I feel a burning passion to help alleviate the suffering of others. I have to do something - ignoring it is simply not an option for me.

(Tufail Hussain)

Our Orphans Officer in Kosovo witnessed many atrocities during the Kosovan genocide. She now works for Islamic Relief helping children in need.

Fundraisers taking a moment to thank Allah (SWT) at the summit of Snowdon during a fundraising trek.

Deputy Director Tufail Hussain visiting an IR sponsored orphan in Bangladesh. Tufail himself was an orphan and has made it his life mission to help others.

One of many nurses at our post-natal clinic in Shifa Hospital, Gaza, working to save lives.

“I feel a burning passion to help alleviate the suffering of others. I have to do something - ignoring it is simply not an option for me.”

(Tufail Hussain)
When two-year-old Ghazal started treatment at our clinic, she was unable to walk. However, since undergoing physiotherapy and speech therapy, she can now walk and is starting school.

“I was born to climb mountains. I will not stop climbing until every person on this planet has safe water for life.”

Hamid Mehmood on an IR trek to Gilgit (Pakistan), raising money to provide safe water worldwide.

Islamie Relief murderer Shuaib Mohammed Hussain has helped install 36 boreholes across Somalia.

After receiving literacy training with IR, Uzmah Laly can now read and write, and is head of the local health committee, working to save lives.

Young volunteer Moaad helping at one of our Zain Bhikha events.
EMPOWERING WOMEN

By providing female-headed households in rural areas across Pakistan with livestock, widows and orphans can live healthier, more prosperous lives.

Zamida has had a hard life. At 54 years old, she’s struggling to look after her three daughters, following the tragic death of her husband in a road accident eight years ago. Living in the village of Androt (Bagh district) in Kashmir (AJK), income generating opportunities are rare even for men. However, Zamida never lost hope at the challenges she faced: “I worked in the fields with men and grew vegetables. I kept buffalo and goats and sold milk to support my family. I never begged for support.”

In Kashmir, 80% of women who are considered poor have no livestock. Owning livestock is essential for families living in rural areas - especially female-headed households. Women who don’t own their own livestock lack an important source of food and income and are amongst the poorest members of the community. Although this is an important issue, lack of government funding often means that little support is provided to lift people out of poverty and minimal resources are available to improve livestock breeds.

However, thanks to your Zakat, Zamida has her own animals which help her to feed her children. Alhamdulillah! Your generous donations are helping us to empower women in Kashmir through our sustainable livelihood project centred on livestock. We’re supporting 3,258 vulnerable families by providing them with livestock including goats and also training women’s farming cooperatives. We’re working with the community to build greater food security and promote the respect and social protection of women, supporting local women to live safer, more dignified and more prosperous lives.

Alhamdulillah, Zamida now has a more stable future thanks to the milking goat and two kids provided by this project. Before we came to help Zamida, she had been selling buffalo milk but for the past three months, the animal was not giving milk. Zamida is passionate about her children receiving a good education and becoming independent. However, providing for their education and covering living costs is expensive. Her new livestock are fortunately now providing her with a key source of income and crucial hope for her and her daughters: “It is a very good breed and offers great nutritional support for the family. Every six months, it would give two kids, which means we can trade them and use the milk as well.”

It’s thanks to your Zakat that Zamida can now support her family and ensure her children have a brighter future free from poverty. From Zamida and everyone at Islamic Relief, thank you for supporting widowed women in need across Pakistan. You are crucially helping families in need to recover and build a more stable future for themselves, Masha’Allah! As an Islamic Relief donor, you are making a world of difference to communities worldwide.
Due to our over-consumption, an estimated 1,000 people are dying each and every day. Our pollution, our waste and our habits are causing the climate to change. Here’s how our habits are directly affecting others around the world.

A THOUSAND PEOPLE DIE EACH DAY BECAUSE OF US

DROUGHT AND FAMINE
As the planet is getting hotter, fertile land is drying up and becoming barren. This has left communities who rely upon agriculture struggling to survive. Without enough water, crops fail and families go hungry. They may even die.

Last year alone, 19 million people were left in urgent need of food, water and medical treatment because of drought in East Africa.

INCREASED FLOODING, HURRICANES AND STORMS
Higher temperatures are causing ice caps to melt, leading to more and more water vapour to form in our atmosphere. This is why we’re now experiencing more extremes and frequent climate events such as flooding, hurricanes and storms. Across the globe these events are depleting crops, infrastructure and food sources.

Last year, severe flash flooding across Nepal and Bangladesh killed over 1,300 people and devastated the lives of 4.5 million.

EARTHQUAKES, VOLCANIC ERUPTIONS AND TSUNAMIS
When ice caps melt, the weight on the Earth’s crust also weakens. The crust then “bounces back”. The result? Earthquakes, tremors and volcanic activity in already vulnerable areas. When these destroy homes, schools, infrastructure and livelihoods.

With hurricane Lima devastating the Caribbean, we’re seeing how climate change is making natural disasters not only more common but stronger. This has to stop.

FAILED LIVELIHOODS
Oceans are getting warmer and PH levels are lowering (what’s known as acidification). This is affecting fish and other marine species. As their natural environment and sources of food change, so do the numbers, movements and lifespan of fish. Not only this but with rising tide levels and rivers becoming saltier, local fishing and rice farming are becoming impossible. This will devastate the lives of people relying on the oceans and waters to earn a living.

In Bangladesh, it’s estimated that by 2050, rice productivity will drop by 15%, therefore destroying local livelihoods.

DISPLACEMENT AND MIGRATION
Since 2008, 22.5 million people have been displaced as a result of climate- or weather-related disasters. With their homes, schools and food sources destroyed, families are forced to flee in search of daily essentials such as food, water, shelter and safety.

What’s more, even when a disaster hasn’t hit, with their livelihoods at risk, many people are migrating to urban areas to build a more sustainable future that is safer and healthier.

HERE’S THREE KEY WAYS WE CAN HELP

1. BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES
We’re introducing earthquake-proof homes, safety systems, drought and flood-resistant seeds and climate adaptive technology to help communities combat the effects of climate change.

2. LOBBYING GOVERNMENTS
Call on your MP to stand up to their commitments on climate change.

3. CHANGING OUR OWN HABITS
Consume less, recycle more and help protect the environment.
Islamic Relief has been doing great charitable work for many years now. I am so happy to hear that they are now educating the Muslim community on the problem of violence against women and girls. To commit any kind of violence, particularly towards women and girls who are in our protection, is a type of injustice (zulm). In the hadith Qudsi we are reminded that Allah Almighty said, “O my servants, I have forbidden injustice for Myself and I have forbidden it among you, so do not oppress one another…” [Muslim]. Those who commit such acts will be answerable in the court of Allah as an oppressor. I am very proud and happy to be a part of this campaign to help end violence against women and girls.

Islamic Relief recently launched a campaign to raise awareness of violence against women and girls worldwide. Muslim community leaders and high profile figures have joined forces with us and are calling on the world to end this injustice. Let’s hear what they have to say about this important issue.

**ABDUL QAYYUM IMAM**

“Islamic Relief has been doing great charitable work for many years now. I am so happy to hear that they are now educating the Muslim community on the problem of violence against women and girls. To commit any kind of violence, particularly towards women and girls who are in our protection, is a type of injustice (zulm). In the hadith Qudsi we are reminded that Allah Almighty said, “O my servants, I have forbidden injustice for Myself and I have forbidden it among you, so do not oppress one another…” [Muslim]. Those who commit such acts will be answerable in the court of Allah as an oppressor. I am very proud and happy to be a part of this campaign to help end violence against women and girls.”

**SAFWAN AHMEDMIA TECH BLOGGER**

“There are a lot of misconceptions about Islam and how some Muslim men treat women. Some unjust practices stem from cultural traditions but they are definitely nothing to do with Islam. That’s why this is such an important message to get out there. Islam has always taught me to respect and honour women. I think for people who have such misconceptions or who have been taught to treat women unjustly need to break out this mindset. This campaign is sending out a powerful message and it’s important for everybody to make a stand and say that this is not OK and that it never will be.”

**MARIAH IDRISI HIJABI MODEL**

“As a woman I feel that it’s my responsibility to ensure that women are protected all over the world, whether they are Muslim, non-Muslim, black or white. Islamic Relief is the biggest Muslim charity in the world, so for them to support something like this is incredibly powerful as many people see this issue as quite a taboo. It’s great to see that we ourselves are calling for change and encouraging people to change their mentality. It takes someone from within the community to speak up and encourage other people to stand up. That’s why this campaign is so powerful because the name Islamic Relief says we are that community and we are speaking up to tackle violence against all women and girls on a global scale.”

They’re all standing up to tackle violence against women and girls.

What do an Imam, a tech blogger and a hijabi model have in common?

We’d like to say a big thank you to Imam Abdul Qayyum, Safwan Ahmedmia, Mariah Idriissi and all of our other ambassadors in our campaign. As we stand up and declare that we honour women, will you do the same? Say no to violence against women and girls. #HonourHer

Find out how you can get involved by visiting our website now.
Humanity seems to love frivolous things... Phones, shoes, computers and all the latest gadgets...

Some people spend their Sundays polishing their cars and neglecting the Qur’an, their weekends shopping for the perfect outfit and forgetting those in need, and their nights deep in sleep forgetting to pray to Allah (SWT).

But how much time do we spend in search of the love of Allah (SWT)?

Islamic Relief offers all of us the opportunity to gain Allah’s pleasure and mercy. Here are just a handful of the 117 million precious lives that you’ve helped save and transform.
After her husband tragically died, Rabia was left to bring up her children alone in a remote village in Sylhet (Bangladesh). Rabia was forced to beg to make money and her children faced an uncertain future.

Alhamdulillah, your donations have enabled us to provide Rabia with handicraft training, access to a savings account and links to a local market. She is now able to earn her own income and her children are attending school, enabling them to build a brighter future free from poverty.

Sakina lost her father when she was very young. When her mother then remarried, she left Sakina and her sister with their grandmother. Living in abject poverty, children like Sakina run the high risk of becoming child brides.

Alhamdulillah, our work with thousands of orphans like Sakina means that children are given an education, hot meals and a safe place to play. More importantly, young girls are safe from the risk of child marriage.

Ameen was given help to buy a rickshaw and can now provide for his family. Not only this but he also takes the elders in his area to hospital, so even more lives are saved!
Your donations are enabling us to provide life-saving care for vulnerable babies worldwide at medical facilities and hospitals such as Shifa Hospital (Gaza).

When Ali became addicted to opium, his life fell apart. He no longer resembled the bodybuilder he once was. However, thanks to your donations, people like Ali can receive treatment for their addiction and rebuild their lives.

From the age of eight, Mohammed Al-Sadiq was being cared for in Alresala’s orphan sponsorship programme. This has helped him in mathematics and to a degree. Without your help, his future may have been a lot less bright.

This young baby was born in an Islamic Relief funded medical centre in Mali. Her mother had arrived just days before the birth in a cart. Centres such as these are essential for ensuring that new arrivals are born happy and healthy.

Life is ultimately in the hands of Allah (swt). However, we also have a crucial part to play. Allah (swt) tells us in the Holy Qur’an:

“Whoever saves a life – it is as if he had saved the whole of mankind.” (5:32)

Helping to save lives is a form of worshipping Allah (swt) and something that each and every one of us should strive for.
At Islamic Relief, we have a fantastic volunteering team with over 2,000 lifesavers offering their time and skills to save lives worldwide. We love the incredible energy and warmth they bring to our organisation. Their zeal, motivation and eagerness is positively contagious!

Here’s some inspirational advice for potential and current volunteers, our very own Volunteer Coordinator, Abdulla Almamun.

As the Volunteer Coordinator, what really inspires me is the personal choice that each volunteer makes to take positive action for their community whilst also embarking on a personal journey of self-development. It’s incredibly important to cultivate this energy. What’s more, it’s also important to reflect upon the spiritual benefits that helping others can bring.

With that in mind, I’d like to share three top tips to keep the momentum going and help remind ourselves of the fantastic spiritual blessings of volunteering.

1. **REMEMBER YOUR INTENTIONS**
   As Muslims we believe above all else that all our actions are judged by our intentions. So, when we embark upon this exciting new journey, let’s remind ourselves of why we want to help others. With the right intentions we can help people in need in the best way possible whilst also pleasing Allah (SWT).

2. **HEAL AND YOU WILL BE HEALED**
   Our volunteers love to make other people happy and raise their spirits. A positive “can do” approach, coupled with bags of enthusiasm are the essentials for any charity work. Yet such positivity can also help you too!

   The Prophet (SAW) said that:
   
   “The most beloved people to Allah are those who are most beneficial to the people. The most beloved deed to Allah is to make a Muslim happy, or to remove one of his troubles, or to forgive his debt, or to feed his hunger.” [Al-Mu’jam al-Awsat]

   By helping others with such enthusiasm, we’re also helping ourselves both spiritually and emotionally. SubhanAllah!

3. **WITH HARDSHIP COMES EASE**
   If you’re ever feeling low and struggling to find motivation, simply recite this important du’a to Allah (SWT):

   “O Allah, help me to remember You, to thank You, and to worship You in the best of manners.” [Ahmad;abu Dawud]

   This du’a can help us through any period of difficulty as it calls upon us to:

   - **Remember Allah (dhikr):**
     Our hearts find peace in the remembrance of Allah (SWT). So when you’re hit with a challenge, think about why you’re doing what you’re doing. Our actions are for Allah above all else and He is here to support you!

   - **Be thankful to Allah (shukur):**
     Allah (SWT) has bestowed upon us so many blessings whilst many other people all around the world are suffering. As a volunteer perhaps you feel you may not always get to hear thank you from the people you’re helping but remember: Allah rewards those who are patient and strive for the good of others.

   - **Worship Allah in the best way (ibadah):**
     We should remember that worshipping Allah (SWT) is not solely about rituals such as fasting and prayers but also good manners, actions and interaction with other people. By offering your time in the service of others, you are worshipping Allah. SubhanAllah!

   So, remember that as volunteers you are our very own ambassadors. You’re lifesavers working to support communities in need across 40 countries. SubhanAllah! So for anyone thinking about volunteering, don’t hesitate! It’s an important part of being a Muslim!
SubhanAllah! Seeds, skill training and schooling are helping to triple household income in Somaliland, lifting people out of poverty.

During the prolonged civil war and collapse of public services across Somalia in the early 1990s, most assets such as land and markets were destroyed. Many have since not been revitalised.

What’s more, recurring drought and seasonal flooding are now also taking their toll on local populations and their livelihoods. Seven years on, signs of the devastating drought of 2011 can still be seen, with livestock still thin and weak.

Communities are left struggling as rainfalls are still erratic and with insufficient governmental and private support structures, families face a mountain of financial difficulties. For farming communities, the lack of agricultural research, irrigation, training, animal treatment facilities and access to financial credit hinders farmers’ economic development.

As a result of these challenges, the majority of the local population are living in poverty. In fact, most live on less than $1 (70p) a day. Food insecurity is widespread and mortality rates are high due to a lack of health education and facilities.

Integrated sustainable development: From recovery to resilience

In Abdaal and Dacarbudhuq, around 90 miles from Somaliland’s main city of Hargeisa, internally displaced families and host communities rely heavily on farming and livestock to earn a living. In these areas, we’re supporting communities to recover from the effects of drought and conflict by restoring their livelihoods and improving access to social infrastructure. This means just under 5,000 households will see their income increase from $1 a day to $3 – from around 70p to just over £2 – bringing them above the poverty line.

Launched in 2015, our Integrated Sustainable Development (ISD) Programme aims to tackle poverty by tailoring solutions to each individual community. In time, thanks to this £2,000,000 project, these families will be able to lift themselves out of poverty and sustain their development, increasing resilience to hazards and related shocks.

We’re increasing income and food security by:

- Providing livestock and agricultural services
- Supporting local women through skills training and micro-credit schemes
- Promoting youth entrepreneurship through vocational training and microcredit grants
- Building shallow wells to offer safe drinking water for all
- Rehabilitating schools and training teachers

Most importantly, we’re forming resilient communities through Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) training and introducing alternative farming techniques.

Now three years into the project, we’ve already seen some great progress. Alhamdulillah! The local school and boreholes have been renovated, young people have been trained in carpentry, plumbing and electrics and women have started their own Shariah-compliant businesses. Almost all of these families now earn $3 a day from casual labour and all their children attend school regularly.

Thanks to your support, thousands of families are empowered to live more stable, prosperous lives. Thank you.
GÉNÉR DÉCLARATION

WE DECLARE THAT

1. GOD CREATED ALL HUMAN BEINGS AS EQUAL
   “Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer – We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward (in the Hereafter) according to the best of what they used to do.” (Qur’an, 19:97)

2. EVERY HUMAN BEING HAS INNATE DIGNITY AND GOD-GIVEN RIGHTS
   “We have bestowed dignity on the progeny of Adam…[,] and conferred on them special favours, above a great part of Our creation.” (Qur’an, 17:70)

3. EVERY HUMAN BEING HAS THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION
   “And every soul earns not [blame] except against itself and no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another. Then to your Lord is your return, and He will inform you concerning that over which you used to differ.” (Qur’an, 3:124)

4. GOD COMMANDS US TO ACT KINDLY AND JUSTLY
   “Do you who believe stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah – We will surely cause you to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward (in the Hereafter) according to the best of what you used to do.” (Qur’an, 4:135)

5. THOSE IN POWER SHOULD NOT ABUSE THEIR PRIVILEGE OR DENY THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS
   “You who believe, be steadfast in your devotion to God and bear witness impartially: do not let hatred of others lead you away from justice but adhere to justice, for that is closer to awareness of God. Be mindful of God; God is well aware of all that you do.” (Qur’an, 5:8)

6. GENDER-BASED DISCRIMINATION HAS NO PLACE IN ISLAM
   “There is not to be any causing of harm, nor is there to be any reciprocating of harm.” (Hadith Ibn Majah)

7. THE PROPHETIC MESSAGE IS ONE OF BALANCE AND JUSTICE FOR ALL
   “O People [men]! It is true that you have certain rights with regard to your women, but they also have rights over you.” (The Last Sermon of Prophet Muhammad, SAW)

8. WE ARE OBLIGED TO TACKLE INJUSTICE IN ALL ITS FORMS
   “People! We created you all from a single man and a single woman, and made you into nations and tribes so that you should recognize one another. In God’s eyes, the most honoured of you are the ones most mindful of Him: God is well aware of all that you do.” (Qur’an, 49:13)

We stand for justice and gender equality. We’re calling on faith leaders, community leaders, activists, community members, civil society, UN agencies, national governments, aid funding organisations and each and every individual to stand for gender justice worldwide.

Kenya
We’re training young girls to become ambassadors and teach their peers about the dangers of early and forced marriage.

WE'RE TRAINING YOUNG GIRLS TO BECOME AMBASSADORS AND TEACH THEIR PEERS ABOUT THE DANGERS OF EARLY AND FORCED MARRIAGE.

We're speaking out and declaring our commitment to achieving gender justice worldwide.

In the Holy Qur’an, Allah (SWT) calls upon us to be kind, merciful and to treat one another equally - as we wish to be treated ourselves. Allah (SWT) declares that we must do no harm and stand up against injustice.

“Allamah says that He created for you spouses from amongst yourselves for you to live within tranquility. He ordained love and kindness between you. There truly are signs in this for those who reflect.” (30: 21)

We're speaking out and declaring our commitment to achieving gender justice worldwide.

All forms of gender-based violence and discrimination therefore go against the key principles of Islam, Allah’s Creation and His commandments.

However, the reality is that women on average are paid 24% less than men for the same work simply because of their gender. Worldwide, 35% of women experience physical or sexual violence and 71% of victims of human trafficking are girls and women. What’s more, girls are 2.5 times more likely to drop out of education in conflict settings compared to boys and early marriage is the leading cause of death amongst 15 to 19 year-old girls in developing countries. On top of this, FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) affects a staggering 133 women and girls across the globe, with a further two million at risk of being cut every year.

Enough is enough. We must take action. That’s why we have launched the consultation of the Gender Justice Declaration, declaring our commitment to achieving gender justice worldwide.

Kenya
We’re training young girls to become ambassadors and teach their peers about the dangers of early and forced marriage.

LIFESAVER
37
WE DECLARE THAT

GÉNÉR

JUSTICE

DECLARATION

We’re speaking out and declaring our commitment to achieving gender justice worldwide.

Allah (SWT), the sole Creator of the Universe and of men and women, is The Best of Planners, The Most Just and The Most Wise. If we are to follow Him and worship Him in all His glory, we must emulate His qualities of mercy, peace, justice, kindness, love and unity.

LEGAL

DECLARATION

JUSTICE

GENDER

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LIFESAVER
38
Mushrooms are helping widows in Indonesia’s most deprived region to launch life-changing financial ventures.

For widows living in West Lombok, earning a living can be incredibly challenging. In this particularly deprived region of Indonesia, female-headed households struggle to survive.

That’s where we stepped in to give these sisters a helping hand! As part of our commitment to providing crucial livelihoods support, we launched a mushroom growing project in the region for 149 local women.

Many of the women who took part in the project had not finished primary school and had struggled to find jobs. However, in Indonesia, mushrooms are particularly special. Highly prized and able to bring quick returns on small investments, these vegetables offer a great way out of poverty!

Growing and selling oyster mushrooms as street food snacks, from mushroom crisps to satay and pudding to ice-cream, these new business owners have built themselves a stable livelihood.

For Surmini, a mother-of-three, the project offered a vital lifeline:

“It’s changed my life and my income dramatically. I sell mushroom products every day and in fact, sometimes I can’t meet customer demand because there’s not enough mushrooms!”

When Surmini’s husband died over a year before the project started, she was left supporting her five-year-old son and two step-children with no means of income.

Finding work as a housemaid, she was struggling to support a family of four on just $2 (£1.40) a day. Alhamdulillah, the project means that Surmini no longer has to worry about how she’ll feed her family:

“Afther my husband died, I was very worried about my children’s future. During the training, we were told to care for the mushrooms in the same way you care for a baby. We were very surprised to see them growing. I screamed loudly in delight!”

As well as mushroom growing, the women have received training in other areas of business management including packaging, seed cultivation, marketing and accounting. Working in groups, they can produce around 350kg of fresh mushrooms each month, which they can sell for around £400. Such a seemingly simple venture has transformed the lives of these women and indirectly supported a further 629 people. Alhamdulillah!
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wudu book

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50% of all profits go to Islamic Relief’s water projects.
RAMADAN RECIPES

WITH SOME LONG DAYS AHEAD, HERE’S TWO TASTY SYRIAN-STYLE RECIPES TO KEEP YOU HEALTHY AND ENERGISED THIS RAMADAN.

FOUL MEDAMES - FAVA BEAN SALAD (SERVES 4)

**INGREDIENTS**
- 2 cans fava beans
- 1 can chickpeas
- 2 vine-ripened tomatoes
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 3-4 crushed garlic cloves
- 1 Freshly squeezed lemon
- ¼ cup chopped flat leaf parsley
- 2-3 tbsp. tahini
- ½ tsp. cumin
- Salt and pepper (to season)

Optional:
- Onions and paprika (topping)

**METHOD**
1. Rinse and drain the canned fava beans and chickpeas and boil in a pot of water.
2. Once cooked, dice the tomatoes into small pieces and then prepare the sauce in a bowl, mixing the tahini, olive oil, lemon juice, salt, pepper, garlic, and cumin with a little water.
3. Add the tomato, cooked beans and chickpeas to the sauce mix and stir together. Top with chopped parsley and a drizzle of olive oil.
4. For an even tastier flavour, sprinkle with paprika and chopped onions.
5. Top with warm pitta bread (ideally wholemeal) and boiled eggs for extra protein.

With this hearty suhoor you’ll now be all set for another fasting day. Enjoy!

FATOUSH - TOASTED BREAD SALAD (SERVES 4)

**INGREDIENTS**
- 2 heads of romaine lettuce
- 1 large cucumber
- A handful radishes
- 4 vine-ripened tomatoes
- 2 cups chopped spring onion
- 1 cup flat leafed parsley
- 1 cup fresh mint (leaves only)
- 2-3 tbsp. tahini
- 1/2 tsp. cumin
- Salt and pepper (to season)

Optional:
- 1 cup diced feta cheese

**DRESSING** (to taste):
- 3 crushed garlic cloves
- 1 freshly squeezed lemon
- 1 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp. sumac
- 2 tbsp. vinegar
- Salt (to season)

**METHOD**
1. When ready to serve, add the crispy bread croutons. Make sure you don’t add the croutons beforehand as the bread will go soggy!
2. Serve as preferred. For an extra tasty kick, sprinkle crumbly feta cheese on top.

Mmm, delicious! Now you can enjoy a healthy, tasty and nutritional iftar!

5. When ready to serve, add the crispy bread croutons. Make sure you don’t add the croutons beforehand as the bread will go soggy.
6. Serve as preferred. For an extra tasty kick, sprinkle crumbly feta cheese on top.

Mmm, delicious! Now you can enjoy a healthy, tasty and nutritional iftar!
On 14th June 2017, tragedy struck the families of Grenfell tower in West London. This devastating fire placed an entire community in crisis and shocked the nation.

As the tragedy unfolded Islamic Relief stepped in to help. Zia Salik, National Community Fundraising Manager, tells his story:

"Back in June I had just returned to London after several weeks of working in East Africa and the Middle East overseeing Islamic Relief’s aid response to the drought and famine there. I also visited relief camps that were hosting families fleeing the war in Syria.

That night I was taking for granted the safety and security of life in the UK. It was midnight and I was preparing for pre-dawn Ramadan prayers when I saw the blaze from the balcony of my flat in Queen’s Park three miles away. I knew straight away that a tragedy was unfolding. I just didn’t realise how big a tragedy until I stood looking up at Grenfell Tower in flames and hours later it was still burning.

That day I was in a state of pure shock and horror. I knew very quickly that it was a time for action to support the bewildered, disoriented and traumatised people who escaped from the tower with their lives and nothing else.

I went to Grenfell Tower and was there for over 24 hours until 3am the following morning, co-ordinating Islamic Relief’s response.

I visited mosques, churches and sports centres and worked with volunteers to distribute water and food to survivors and locals, and also set up temporary accommodation.

The words “community spirit” were thrown around a lot throughout the day. I just didn’t hear this though - I witnessed it, felt it and I was inspired by it.

Men, women and children from every background, and every faith and none, came together and brought whatever they felt families would need. People were travelling from as far as Southampton and Manchester.

That grim summer day the sense of displacement and confusion I witnessed made me feel like I was back overseas again but I saw hundreds of people who believe in helping their neighbour, just like us.

The initial response was testament to not only the diversity of the city we live in but also of the fact that when it really matters, like it did on the 14th of June 2017, we will come together."

Within an hour, our staff and volunteers distributed 6,000 bottles of water and clothes. As the tragedy unfolded we made funds available from our Global Emergency Fund, held a series of live appeals and raised tens of thousands of pounds towards the Grenfell Muslim Response Unit (GMRU).

From everyone at Islamic Relief UK, thank you for being part of this great effort.

The sense of displacement and confusion I witnessed made me feel like I was back overseas again."

Zia Salik, National Community Fundraising Manager
DARE TO RIDE, RUN OR CLIMB

GO ON THE ADVENTURE OF A LIFETIME
SAVE LIVES NOW

Sign up for a challenge now at:
IRUK.CO/CHALLENGES

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Indian Muslim Welfare Society provided: £100,850 to support our Grenfell, Myanmar and East Africa emergency appeals.

Birmingham Central Mosque raised: £25,000 to fund emergency food packs in Myanmar.

Leicester Islamic Academy fundraised: £48,151 towards our Syrian, Palestine, Myanmar and East Africa appeals.

Majlis al-Falah gave: £125,000 towards boreholes in Somaliland and food packs during the East Africa Crisis.

Raise for Life donated: £42,228 to provide medicine as part of our Yemen Cholera Emergency Response.

We’d like to say a massive thank you to these organisations and our full network of community partners across the UK.

Your support is helping us to continue our work and save lives worldwide. Thank you!

If you’re feeling inspired, why not join us and become one of our newest community partners? Whether you’re a mosque, community centre or even a small group of enthusiastic friends, each and every one of you can make a big difference to people in need across the globe.

Visit our website at iruk.co/partnerships or contact a dedicated member of our team at partnerships@islamic-relief.org.uk to start your fundraising today!
With no way to make a living and no source of food, many families are living in real crisis - one which requires a sustainable, clever solution. What is the solution you may ask? To break out of the brutal cycle of poverty, to build communities resilient to disaster and help families build brighter, better, safer futures.

From fishing, growing, farming, or running your own business, the answer is not always that simple - not when there are a range of complex barriers holding families back. That's why we work to recognise and eliminate these multiple obstacles.

**HOW DOES IT WORK?**

Working alongside communities, we build projects based on our sustainable livelihoods model. This provides the building blocks for a stable future. Locals are placed at the centre of each project, which means that each individual’s financial, nutritional, health and social needs are met.

**HELLO SUCCESS**

**GOODBYE POVERTY.**

**DISCOVER OUR SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS IN BANGLADESH**

The benefits and potential of this model are endless! The successes of sustainable projects continue to grow and be led by the communities themselves, meaning Islamic Relief can sow the seeds of self-reliance across communities worldwide.

This livelihoods model has been tried, tested and developed over a number of years and is now being adopted and adapted across a range of areas and countries, including Bangladesh. Here, we’ve been working with orphans and their families, supporting them to earn a living and access resources, which has in turn reduced stigma and enabled them to become leaders within their own communities.

Alhamdullilah, this model has also now been replicated across other countries such as Pakistan, Somalia and Kenya. In each country, projects are based around the key principles of the model and adapted for the local context. This means that projects work with the communities’ specific needs and can be sustained over the long-term. And that’s what makes this work so successful! Alhamdulillah!

Your generous donations are crucially helping us empower local communities and break the cycle of poverty, allowing families to make a better and brighter future for themselves and generations to come. Thank you for your ongoing support. You are transforming lives!

Our sustainable plan works in three inter-dependent stages:

1. **INPUT**
   - Based on self-identified needs, households are provided with cash grants, bespoke training and other key inputs from Islamic Relief in collaboration with the local government. As a result, household income can grow up to a staggering 400% in three years!

2. **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**
   - Self-help groups are set up and as families become increasingly independent and empowered, they build their own initiatives including community food banks and revolving loan schemes. Additional households in the community can then benefit from these community assets.

3. **COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT**
   - As the model expands, entire communities become empowered. Sending community representatives to district level forums means greater access to resources and greater influence with both the government and the private sector. This therefore enables low income families to negotiate favorable deals with businesses and banks, much like a cooperative.
For people across the Palestinian Territories, life is incredibly challenging. Over a quarter of families live below the poverty line and in Gaza, where almost 80% of people receive overseas aid, unemployment is the highest in the world at a staggering 43%.

We’ve been providing humanitarian relief in the region since 1994, including food distribution, medical care and orphan sponsorship. To give you an insight into life in Gaza and working for Islamic Relief Palestine, we interviewed our colleague and Communications Officer, Bodour!

IRUK: Assalam alaikum Bodour! Hello from the team here at Islamic Relief UK! Let’s start with a bit about you. Tell us about yourself and where you’re from?

B: Wa alaikum salam! I’m Bodour Abu Kueik, I’m 28 and I live in Gaza. I have two sisters and one brother and I recently got married. I graduated in Press and Media and have been working as Communications Officer for Islamic Relief Palestine since 2015.

IRUK: What inspired you to work in the humanitarian field? How did you start working for Islamic Relief and become a lifesaver?

B: In 2012, I received a call from Islamic Relief to work with them as an intern for one month in the Communications Department. As I was one of the highest achieving students at my university, I then worked as a Media Assistant for two years. In 2014, after the conflict, I left Islamic Relief to take a media course with the UN in New York. When I returned to Gaza, Islamic Relief announced that they were looking to hire a Communications Officer so I applied and later got the job.

IRUK: How did you feel on your first day? Was the job everything you expected?

B: I was very excited since I knew that working with Islamic Relief would give me the opportunity to use my skills in media and also pursue my interest in helping others.

IRUK: You’re working on the ground in Gaza day in, day out. Could you tell us what daily life is like in the region and what are the most pressing needs?

B: Because no one can visit, we can’t travel and there’s no longer any media coverage of Gaza, people outside the region cannot understand just how many families in Gaza are suffering. We’re lacking in basic essentials. Less than 4% of fresh water is drinkable, the sea is polluted with sewage and we have electricity for only four hours a day.

People are trapped in besieged Gaza and denied their right to freedom of movement. They can’t travel not even for urgent reasons such as to receive medical treatment, to study or to visit relatives. They’ve also lost their right to work and provide a decent life for their families. The ongoing siege and conflicts, in addition to the political instability, have increased the psychological suffering of people here. What’s beautiful though is that people here hold out some kind of hope. They always seek to improve their living conditions - even with the little resources available.

IRUK: How are you and the team working to overcome these obstacles? How are you saving lives?

B: Islamic Relief are always on the ground ready to respond to emergencies. During the last conflict, the team worked day and night to deliver food and non-food assistance to those who’d been left displaced and were seeking shelter in local schools. We were also on hand to help during the rainwater floods. Throughout the year and especially during Ramadan, the team deliver hot meals and food parcels to orphans and their families which brings such joy.

Staff work hard to ensure that locals can live a dignified life.

IRUK: Run us through a typical working day.

B: Many of the staff members carry out field work such as visiting sponsored orphans, running recreational activities for orphans and visiting impoverished families. We renovate houses, provide psychological support, develop technical training colleges and run a range of other projects.

We maintain strong relationships with each other. Many colleagues eat breakfast together and we pray Dhuhr together. After work, staff also play tennis and we also organise a weekly football match.

IRUK: What’s the most challenging part of your job?

B: During the last conflict it was heartbreaking to hear children’s personal experiences of how they were affected, I felt helpless. The frequent power cuts and insufficient access to internet limited our ability to work. We need more advanced assistive tools such as cameras and lenses but these are very difficult to find locally.

IRUK: What’s the most rewarding part of your work?

B: We forget all the difficulties we’ve faced once we see the children smiling and we hear the du’a of the people we’ve helped.

IRUK: What are your dreams for the future?

B: I dream to become a lifesaver for all vulnerable groups of people across the globe; especially those suffering from violence, natural disasters, poverty and disease. I’d also love to build a volunteer team with people from different backgrounds and of diverse nationalities.

IRUK: What are some of the ways people at home can help transform and save lives across Palestine?

B: Any contribution will support Islamic Relief’s efforts to change the life of a child in need, a young man who dreams of living a decent life, an elderly person who is exhausted physically by disease, a woman who has lost the breadwinner in her family or even any vulnerable household in Palestine.

Your support makes them feel that they are not alone, that there are people out there who feel their suffering and will offer a helping hand. This improves their psychological wellbeing and makes them cling more to their hopes and dreams. As for young people, they will be able to find work, perhaps even through self-employment. I hope that with your support, Islamic Relief will be able to give young people the opportunity to find jobs.

IRUK: Do you have a message to all our supporters and lifesavers out there?

B: Despite all the tragedies we face, we see hope and joy in the eyes of children and the hearts of people across Gaza. You are essentially the source of this hope and joy. To all our supporters: thank you. May Allah reward you with the best of rewards.

IRUK: Thank you Bodour for all your amazing work and for sharing your story. All the best to you and your team!

IRUK: Thank you for making such an important contribution and for sharing your story. All the best to you and your team!
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