



# Climate Change Policy





# Islamic Declaration on Global Climate Change

The stars, the sun and moon, and this earth in all the diversity, richness and vitality of its communities of living beings, reflect and manifest the boundless glory and mercy of their Creator. All by nature serve and glorify their Maker, all bow to their Lord's will. We humans are created to serve the Lord of all beings, to work the greatest good we can for all the species, individuals, and generations of God's creatures.

## WE AFFIRM

### ALLAH IS THE LORD AND SUSTAINER (RABB) OF ALL BEINGS

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Praise be to Allah, Lord and Sustainer of all beings (Qur'an 1: 1)

هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ

He is Allah – the Creator, the Maker, the Giver of Form (Qur'an 59: 24)

الَّذِي أَحْسَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ

Who has perfected every thing He has created (Qur'an 32: 7)

### NOTHING THAT HE CREATES IS WITHOUT VALUE

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا لَآبِغِينَ مَا خَلَقْنَاهُمْ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ

And We did not create the heavens and earth and all that is between them in jest.

We have not created them but in truth (Qur'an 44: 38-39)

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّبِيطًا

All that is in the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah. Allah encompasses all things (Qur'an 4: 126)

وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيزَانِ وَأَقِيمُوا الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ

وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ وَالْأَرْضَ وَوَضَعَهَا لِلْأَنَامِ

He raised the heaven and established the balance so that you would not transgress the balance.

Give just weight – do not skimp in the balance. He laid out the earth for all living creatures (Qur'an 55: 7-10)

### THE NATURAL STATE (FITRAH) OF ALLAH'S CREATION

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا فِطْرَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ

ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيُّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

So set your face firmly to the faith in pure devotion, the natural pattern on which Allah made humankind.

There shall be no changing Allah's creation. That is the true Way, but most people do not know (Qur'an 30: 30)

## WE RECOGNISE

### THE CORRUPTION (FASĀD) THAT HUMANS HAVE CAUSED ON EARTH IN OUR RELENTLESS PURSUIT OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND CONSUMPTION

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

Corruption has appeared on land and sea by what people's own hands have wrought, that He may let them taste some consequences of their deeds, so that they may turn back. (Qur'an 30: 41)

Disruption of the global climate is a consequence of our corruption in the earth. We are but one of the multitude of living beings with whom we share the earth, and a minuscule part of the divine order, yet we have exceptional power, and bear the responsibility to establish good and avert evil in every way we can.

لَخَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَكْبَرُ مِنْ خَلْقِ النَّاسِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

The creation of the heavens and the earth is greater than the creation of humankind, but most people do not know (Qur'an 40: 57)

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَّةٌ أُمَّتُكُمْ

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We have no right to abuse the creation or impair it. Our faith commands us to treat all things with care and awe (taqwā) of their Creator, compassion (rahmah) and utmost good (ihsān).

### WE ARE ACCOUNTABLE FOR ALL OUR ACTIONS

مَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ

Then whoever has done an atom's weight of good, shall see it, and whoever has done an atom's weight of evil, shall see it (Qur'an 99: 7-8)

## OUR CALL

We call on all muslims, wherever they may be, to tackle the root causes of climate change, environmental degradation, and the loss of biodiversity, following the example of The Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), who was, in the words of the Qur'an, "a mercy to all beings."

We bear in mind the words of our Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him)

The world is sweet and verdant, and verily Allah has made you stewards in it, and He sees how you acquit yourselves.

(Hadith related by Muslim from Abū Sa'īd Al-Khudrī)

# Contents

Islamic Declaration on Global Climate Change	facing
Definitions	3
Introduction & Context	4
Islamic Relief's Policy on Climate Change	5
Islamic Relief's Response	6
Policy Statement	8
Adaptation, human development and poverty reduction	9
Talanoa Dialogue for Climate Ambition	inside back cover



# Definitions

<b>ADAPTATION</b>	Actions taken to manage the unavoidable impacts of climate change.
<b>BIODIVERSITY</b>	Biological diversity - or biodiversity - is the term given to the variety of life on Earth and the natural patterns it forms: the animals, plants, fungi, bacteria, and other intertwined life forms within any ecosystem.
<b>CAPACITY BUILDING</b>	The practice of enhancing the strengths and attributes of, and resources available to, an individual, community, society, or organisation to respond to change.
<b>CARBON DIOXIDE (CO<sub>2</sub>)</b>	A naturally occurring gas, also a by-product of burning fossil fuels from fossil carbon deposits, such as oil, gas, and coal, of burning biomass, of land use changes, and of industrial processes such as cement production. It is the principal greenhouse gas resulting from human activities.
<b>CLIMATE CHANGE</b>	Climate change, also known as global warming, is the process of our planet heating up. The Earth has warmed by an average of 1°C in the last century, and its temperature continues to rise. The implications for people and nature are profound. Global warming is caused by people burning fossil fuels like oil and coal, farming, and destroying forests. The changing climate makes our weather more extreme and unpredictable. As temperatures rise, some areas are getting wetter and others drier.
<b>DISASTER RISK REDUCTION (DRR)</b>	Anticipating risks from future disasters; reducing existing exposure, hazards, or vulnerability; and improving resilience.
<b>ECOSYSTEM</b>	An ecosystem includes all of the living things - plants, animals and organisms - in a given area/habitat, interacting with each other, and also with their non-living environments including the weather, sun, soil, climate, and atmosphere.
<b>FOOD SECURITY</b>	Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.
<b>GREENHOUSE GAS (GHG)</b>	Parts of the atmosphere that absorb and emit radiation in such a way that produces a greenhouse effect. Water vapour (H <sub>2</sub> O), carbon dioxide (CO <sub>2</sub> ), nitrous oxide (N <sub>2</sub> O), methane (CH <sub>4</sub> ), and ozone (O <sub>3</sub> ) are the primary greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere.
<b>LIVELIHOODS</b>	The capabilities, assets - both material and social resources - and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with, and recover from, stress and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base.
<b>LOSS &amp; DAMAGE</b>	The impacts and adverse effects of climate change that can no longer be avoided through adaptation or mitigation. Loss and damage can result from sudden-onset events such as cyclones as well as slow-onset processes like rising sea-levels. Loss and damage can occur in human systems such as livelihoods, as well as natural systems like biodiversity.
<b>MITIGATION</b>	Efforts to cut or prevent the emission of greenhouse gases - limiting future warming. Attempts to remove greenhouse gases from the atmosphere by actions such as planting trees.
<b>RESILIENCE</b>	The capacity of a community to cope with a hazardous event or disturbance, responding or reorganising in ways that maintain its essential function, identity, and structure - while also maintaining the capacity for adaptation, learning, and transformation.
<b>VULNERABLE</b>	Able to be easily physically, emotionally, or mentally hurt, influenced, or attacked: and lack of capacity to cope and adapt.

# Introduction & Context

This publication sets out Islamic Relief’s policy on climate change. It builds on the foundation of Islamic perspectives and scientific evidence described in the Islamic Relief Climate Change Policy of December 2014. It outlines policy messages for Islamic Relief programmes, partners and external audiences. The policy aims to:

- support Islamic Relief in delivering its global strategy goals, and to inform strategy implementation.
- inform political forums and external audiences, and to provide a basis for much-needed advocacy and influence.

A separate document *Understanding & Responding to Climate Change* summarises Islamic Relief’s recent experience in adaptation, human development and poverty reduction. It describes the 2015 Paris Accord and the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and its relationship to Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals. It provides background on loss & damage, disability, gender, ‘leave no-one behind’, finance and impacts on diversity in relation to climate change. Finally it sets out Islamic Relief’s perspective on Islam and the climate challenge, showing how Islamic teachings provide guiding principles and values as well as practical tools and methods that can be used to stimulate individual consciences and mobilise communities to action.

*Understanding & Responding to Climate Change*, as well as *Climate Champions* describing Islamic Relief’s global climate action, can be found at <https://www.islamic-relief.org/publications/>

The pace of Global climate change today is of a different order of magnitude from the gradual changes that previously occurred throughout the most recent era, the Cenozoic. Moreover, it is human-induced: we have now become a force dominating nature. The epoch in which we live has increasingly been described in geological terms as the Anthropocene, or “Age of Humans”. Our species, though selected to be a caretaker or steward (*khalifa*) on the earth, has been the cause of such corruption and devastation on it that we are in danger ending life as we know it on our planet. This current rate of climate change cannot be sustained, and the earth’s fine equilibrium (*mizan*) may soon be lost. As we humans are woven into the fabric of the natural world, its gifts are for us to savour. But the same fossil fuels that helped us achieve most of the prosperity we see today are the main cause of climate change. Excessive pollution from fossil fuels threatens to destroy the gifts bestowed on us by God – gifts such as a functioning climate, healthy air to breathe, regular seasons, and living oceans. But our attitude to these gifts has been short-sighted, and we have abused them. What will future generations say of us, who leave them a degraded planet as our legacy? How will we face our Lord and Creator?

*Islamic Declaration on Global Climate Change 1.3*

**‘The world is sweet and verdant, and verily Allah has made you stewards in it, and He sees how you acquit yourselves’**

*Hadith related by Muslim from Abū Sa‘īd Al-Khudri*

We use the term ‘climate change’ throughout this publication, but recognise that we are witnessing something entirely unique in the Earth’s history: climate breakdown. The action of humans is causing changes within decades. Changes which once took millennia. To tackle this, we must question not only current environmental and economic policies, but also entire social and economic systems.

# Islamic Relief's Policy on Climate Change

Inspired by Islamic teachings on justice and stewardship of the Earth and informed by scientific consensus, we recognise climate change is one of the greatest issues humanity faces. It is a moral, social and environmental issue. As a matter of urgency, we will continue adaptation and risk reduction interventions

to build the resilience of communities vulnerable to the effects of climate change. We will improve the understanding of staff and supporters of mitigation efforts and issues. We aim to significantly cut our carbon footprint and help others to promote substantial and equitable reductions in greenhouse gases.

## Policy Messages

The scientific evidence is overwhelming. Global temperatures are increasing and human action is the cause. The result is climate change. It causes food, water and productive land shortages. It increases poverty. It triggers forced displacements, heightening the risk of violent conflict, extreme droughts and floods, the collapse of ice sheets leading to sea-level rises which threaten coastal cities. Climate change is responsible for a steady rise in the death toll, especially among the world's poorest.

### **We must limit global warming to 1.5°C**

The Paris Agreement sets 2°C as the upper limit for warming. We must go further than this. Limiting warming to 1.5°C will mean less extreme heat, rainfall and drought. It will ensure a slower rate of sea-level rise with fewer people exposed and more time for adaptation, reduced loss of species, smaller reductions in yield of maize, rice, wheat and other crops. It will also expose 50 per cent less of the global population to water shortages.

### **Urgent, universal and unprecedented action**

Mitigating climate change demands an urgent

global response. To avoid warming of more than 1.5°C, carbon dioxide emissions must decline substantially before 2030, and reach 'net zero' by 2050. This requires change on an unprecedented scale. System transitions, deep emissions cuts in all sectors, a range of technologies, behavioural changes and increased investment in low carbon options are needed. We must start taking carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere.

### **Climate action is sustainable development & humanitarian relief**

There must be close links to UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) if we are to ensure transitions ethically and fairly shield the poor and vulnerable. Climate change is contributing to conflict, disasters and other humanitarian crises. Rather than waiting for such calamities to happen and responding then, we must instead invest resources in disaster risk management, adaptation and resilience building and addressing loss and damage. Mitigating climate change by limiting warming to 1.5°C is the most effective way to use resources.

***Each fraction of a degree matters.***

***Each year matters.***

***Each choice matters.***

# Islamic Relief's response

Islamic teachings make it imperative for all Muslims to be good stewards of the Earth. As an organisation guided by Islamic teachings and values, we are serious about tackling climate change.

Islamic Relief is campaigning for stronger action by governments and business, reducing its own carbon footprint and raising awareness of the key issues - within the Islamic Relief family and beyond. Our worldwide network operates in over 40 countries. We work in areas other organisations cannot, and help some of the most vulnerable and hardest to reach communities on the planet. We cannot,

of course, tackle climate change alone. We therefore leverage our strong relations with governments as well as many local, national and international organisations. Islamic Relief participates in influential networks which advocate for justice and rights to minimise the impact of climate change.

Social justice, climate change and livelihoods are closely linked. It is therefore clear that organisations concerned with faith, climate change, and development must bring together their agendas to achieve shared goals. Mutually supportive outcomes must come from policy development and implementation.

## **Climate justice**

All countries have a role to play. Although industrialised countries should, for fairness and practicality, lead in cutting emissions, rapidly developing nations also must act through reduced emissions, sustainable renewable energy, halting deforestation, and smart agriculture etc. Developed countries need to provide support through transferring technology, capacity building and financial resources.

## **Poverty, resilience & adaptation**

Climate change is driving poverty everywhere. Impacts on agriculture and food security, increasing natural disasters, migration and urbanisation, and health shocks challenge efforts to eradicate poverty and suffering.

Policies and specific interventions can reduce these impacts. Opportunities, basic services, food and social security can be ensured by concentrating on integrated actions to enhance resilience and adaptation. To do this, inclusive and climate aware development policies that give poor people a voice, are vital.

Government policies that reduce the vulnerability of poor people by addressing

poverty and its causes in all its forms must be implemented urgently before climate change impacts become much larger. Development and investment which may create future vulnerabilities as the climate changes need to be challenged.

The international community must ensure that development is rapid, inclusive and climate informed. To prevent this becoming an endless cycle, development must be achieved alongside emission reductions. These can be developmental in themselves in offering health and economic benefits, and poor countries should be supported in providing social protection and cash transfers.

## **Climate change as a priority**

Climate change will affect our whole way of life. It should be considered in all aspects of government, commerce, faith, and international relations. The solutions to climate change's negative effects are also the paths to a safer, healthier, cleaner and more prosperous future for all. To achieve this brighter future, citizens of all countries, at all levels of government, society and enterprise, need to understand and be involved.

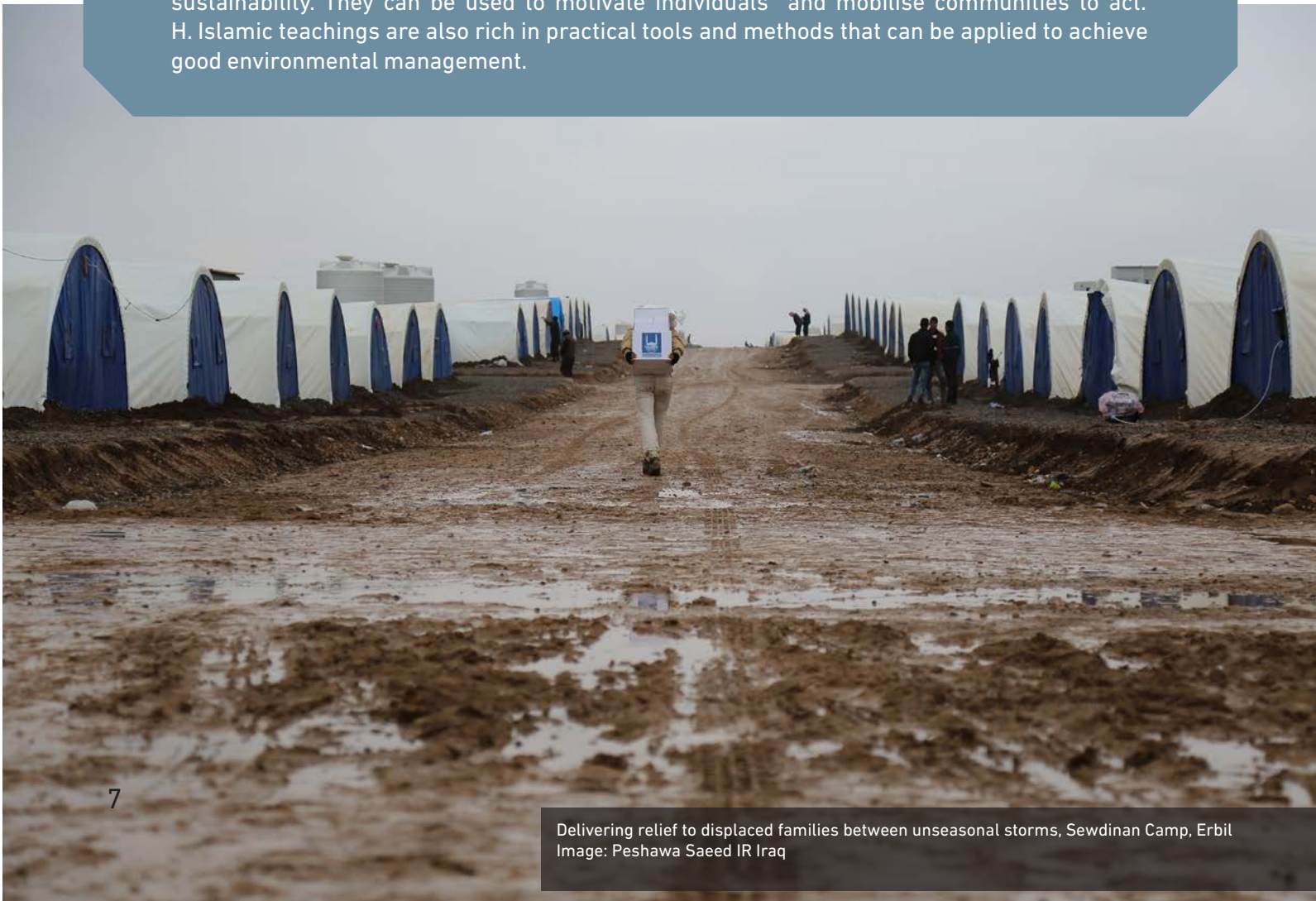
## ENGAGE- Everything matters

### Islamic Relief's response

Tackling climate change will support Islamic Relief in achieving its mission to reduce poverty and suffering. To do so, we will continue to respond with relevant development, adaptation and risk reduction interventions to help communities cope with the short-term impacts of climate change. In parallel, we will advocate for pro-poor mitigation policies that limit long-term impacts, and help create the conditions for sustainable, equitable and global prosperity.

### Policy Summary

- A. Climate change is the most important human-induced environmental challenge of our time.
- B. Climate change is negatively affecting people's lives: climate change and livelihoods are inextricably linked. Climate change is a development issue.
- C. Developing countries and poor and marginalised people are disproportionately affected by climate change - even though they have contributed less to the problem. Climate change is a moral issue of social justice.
- D. We need to act now to avoid complete catastrophe. Bold action is needed urgently.
- E. Climate change is global in its causes and consequences, so everyone must contribute to mitigating and adapting to climate change.
- F. While Islamic Relief's programmes are increasingly addressing climate change, we need to do much more.
- G. Islamic teachings provide guiding principles and values that can ensure environmental sustainability. They can be used to motivate individuals and mobilise communities to act.
- H. Islamic teachings are also rich in practical tools and methods that can be applied to achieve good environmental management.





## Policy Statement

1. Human-made global warming is happening and it poses an existential threat to life on Earth. Islamic Relief supports the Paris Accord to keep global temperature rise this century below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, and efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C. If we do not act now, we will by 2030 lose the opportunity to do so.
2. Industrialised countries should urgently set about achieving zero emissions by 2040, with fossil fuels phased out and replaced with 100 per cent renewable sources of energy. They must also support countries in the Global South to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.
3. Investment in sustainable renewable sources of energy is needed, and will also contribute to reducing poverty.
4. Climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction and resilience building are inter-linked and essential elements of current and future sustainable development planning and practice.
5. Limiting global temperature rises to below 1.5°C relies on the removal of carbon from the atmosphere. Protecting and restoring degraded forests so they become carbon sinks is currently the only scientifically-proven way to do this. Islamic Relief will promote the revival and wider adoption of Islamic approaches to conserving natural resources.
6. Islamic Relief collaborates with others and promotes enhanced cooperation amongst all stakeholders – many organisations share our climate change concerns and solutions.
7. Islamic Relief is working to reduce our carbon footprint and achieve carbon neutrality in our operations by 2021.

**Allah is the Creator of all things and He is the Guardian over all things” (Qur’an 39:62).**

**“Children of Adam! ... eat and drink but do not be profligate. He does not love the profligate.O children of Adam!.. eat and drink – but waste not by excess for Allah loves not the wasters”  
(Qur’an, 7:31)**

**“It is He who appointed you khalifs on earth ...” (Qur’an, 6:165).**

*Understanding & Responding to Climate Change* can be found at <https://www.islamic-relief.org/publications/>

# Islamic Relief's recent experience in adaptation, human development and poverty reduction

Islamic Relief raised over £26 million in the three years prior to 2017 to address issues related to climate change in 14 countries. Climate Champions: *Islamic Relief's Global Climate Action* (2018) <https://www.islamic-relief.org/publications/> sets out the challenges and describes our recent interventions.

## The Paris Accord

In 2015 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) struck a landmark agreement to keep the increase in global average temperature to well below 2 °C ; and to limit the increase to 1.5 °C. 181 countries agreed on greenhouse gas emissions, mitigation, adaptation, loss and damage and finance, to substantially reduce the risks and effects of climate change.

Nationally determined contributions are each country's plans to reduce national emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change. National adaptation plans identify adaptation needs and actions to address them

## Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

In 2018 scientists of the IPCC warned that countries' collective commitments are not yet sufficient. Only drastic reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2030 will significantly protect us. Urgent changes are needed now.

The IPCC report also shows how 'Climate change impacts and responses are closely

linked to sustainable development which balances social well-being, economic prosperity and environmental protection'. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 'provide an established framework for assessing the links between global warming of 1.5°C or 2°C and development goals that include poverty eradication, reducing inequalities, and climate action'.

National adaptation plans can benefit sustainable development and poverty reduction with global warming of 1.5°C. Sustainable development supports the fundamental social and system transformations that will help limit global warming to 1.5°C. It can achieve ambitious mitigation and adaptation in conjunction with poverty eradication and efforts to reduce inequalities.

The IPCC shows that in the context of sustainable development, international cooperation can create in all countries and for all people an enabling environment for limiting warming to 1.5°C. Such cooperation is critical for developing countries and vulnerable regions

Climate change is already effecting people, eco-systems and livelihoods all around the world. Sustainable development and poverty reduction can help combat global warming.





# TALANOA DIALOGUE

## FOR CLIMATE AMBITION



The result of Talanoa Dialogues conducted by Islamic Relief was submitted to the United Nations in October 2018.

### Where are we?

Climate change is causing poverty and suffering. Islamic scriptures are clear that humans were put on the Earth as vicegerent, with responsibility to look after the planet. Human actions are causing climate change and environmental degradation, and it is our responsibility to act.

People face heat waves, lack of rains and droughts, forest fires, extreme temperatures, intense rainfall, and erosion of the coasts as sea-levels rise. This has led to water crises, food insecurity, physical and mental health problems, energy disruption, and species loss, affecting lives, livelihoods, education, water and sanitation, leading to disputes over limited natural resources.

Women are most effected. Governments are not addressing issues. People lack information.

### Where do we want to go?

- Coordinated local, national and international strategies to fight climate change and to achieve Sustainable Development Goals.
- Informed society where all champion mitigation and adaption,
- Social and food security, resilience, clean environment and energy.
- Properly managed solid and water waste.
- Increased forest cover and forest reserves.
- Improved livelihoods and food security using climate smart technologies.
- Paved roads and streets, proper water and sanitation, and tree planting. Air-polluting vehicles banned.
- Strong strategies to protect the environment from the oil and gas industries. Affordable

alternative sources of energy are available.

Climate change needs to be tackled by the people who know their situation best, and that the duty of government is to help them plan and carry out the work necessary.

### How do we get there?

Concentrate resources on informing local communities about the hazards. They know what is needed and have practical ideas relevant to their context.

Build strong relationships between organisations, religious institutions, community leaders, government, and the international community. Encourage communities to participate in designing and implementing projects and programmes supported through national dialogue and policies.

Strengthen local communities in monitoring and holding accountable municipalities, local governmental parties and other stakeholders.

Governments invest in human health and delivering efficient and effective services. Strictly apply policies, laws and strategies for reducing emissions, and governance and adaptation related measures for water management, climate resilient agriculture, livestock, urban farming, forestry and gardening.

Women can lead activities to cope with climate change issues.

*(From Talanoa Dialogues held by Islamic Relief in Pakistan, Malawi, Niger, Mali, Somalia, Palestine (Gaza), South Sudan, Kenya, Jordan, Bangladesh, United Kingdom & Russia)*

**Climate change needs to be tackled by the people who know their situation best, and the duty of government is to help them plan and carry out the work necessary.**



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