YEMEN
ANNUAL REPORT 2020

THE WORLD’S WORST HUMANITARIAN CRISIS CONTINUES
OUR VALUES

EXCELLENCE
SINCERITY
SOCIAL JUSTICE
COMPASSION
CUSTODIANSHIP
MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

After almost six years of conflict, the international community’s failure to end the suffering of people in Yemen is more apparent than ever.

Yemen is the world’s worst humanitarian crisis, and the numbers are staggering. Nearly a quarter of a million people have now died – mostly due to hunger and a lack of healthcare, as well as the violence. More than 24.3 million people need humanitarian aid.

The numbers are so huge that the individuals at the heart of this suffering often get forgotten. The malnourished mothers walking for miles to bring their frail children to feeding centres. The children who lost friends, relatives and even limbs to the ongoing conflict, but remain determined to get an education. The men delirious with hunger because they have given their last morsels of food to their children. They all need so much more support from the world.

Yemen is Islamic Relief’s biggest humanitarian response, and we now have more than 3,300 staff and volunteers working in 17 of Yemen’s 22 governorates. Many of our staff work 18-hour days and seven-day weeks to deliver food, water and other life-saving aid, all while caring for their own families.

2020 brought even more challenges. Thousands more people were killed, injured or had to flee their homes as the conflict raged on. Covid-19 further strained a health system already unable to cope, and remittances from Yemenis abroad decreased at a time when international humanitarian funding for Yemen is also dwindling. The need to promote social distancing increased pressure on our staff, as to reduce overcrowding we have to provide more food distributions in more locations just to reach the same number of people.

Yemen is also experiencing the impacts of climate change. Around 300,000 people lost their homes due to heavy flooding and torrential rains, and Islamic Relief provided water, food and shelter to those affected.

Our biggest concern now is that people in Yemen will face a famine. Rates of hunger have increased again during the past year – especially as the United Nations (UN) had to cut its food rations due to lack of funding. At least 16.2 million people face high levels of acute food insecurity this year.

I am proud that Islamic Relief is the biggest non-governmental organisation partner of the UN World Food Program, delivering food to more than two million people every month. We support 164 nutrition centres and health clinics, where the poorest and most vulnerable families can get help. You can read more about this incredible work throughout this report.

Islamic Relief continues to advocate for the rights of Yemenis to live in safety and dignity. In June 2020 Islamic Relief spoke at the Yemen Pledging Conference, urging the international community to increase humanitarian funding and redouble efforts to end the conflict and secure peace.

It is hard to be positive when the situation is so desperate. But when I think of all the people I have met in Yemen, I know that it is too important for the world to fail. We must all do everything in our power to help. Our commitment to Yemen is long-term. Islamic Relief will continue to provide life-saving aid while it is needed; and we will work hand-in-hand with communities when there is finally peace and it is time to rebuild and look to the future, insha’Allah.

Waseem Ahmad
Chief Executive Officer
MESSAGE FROM THE COUNTRY DIRECTOR

In 2020, 80 per cent of Yemenis were deemed at risk of hunger and disease. Fighting devastated the economy and destroyed critical infrastructure. Yemen is again teetering on the brink of famine – more than 40 per cent of Yemeni households are estimated to have lost their primary source of income, and are finding it difficult to buy even the minimum amount of food. In addition, there are acute water and sanitation deficits in 54 districts, while 46 districts are at high risk of cholera. A lack of funding will result in the scaling down of humanitarian aid, which will only worsen an already terrible situation.

Islamic Relief deeply appreciates our partners and supporters. Without their support and the tremendous efforts of the Islamic Relief teams, we would not be able to continue saving lives, alleviating suffering, preventing widespread disease outbreaks and delivering aid efficiently, accurately and transparently.

During 2020, with the spread of Covid-19 restricting local and international travel, medical services and information, Islamic Relief Yemen was strongly placed to support affected communities. We played an integral part in preventing the spread of coronavirus through distributing masks, gloves and medical equipment to healthcare workers. We also provided particularly vulnerable families with immediate financial support through emergency food security interventions and cash transfers.

Although we faced multifaceted operational challenges during the implementation of activities on the ground, the team, with the staunch support of stakeholders, clusters, local authorities and the cooperation of communities, successfully delivered life-saving and life-changing assistance.

Islamic Relief Yemen appeals to the international community to increase contributions, put an end to this vicious war through a rapprochement between the parties, and bring them to the negotiation table. Only then will Yemen be in peace, and the humanitarian situation able to improve.

Muhammad Zulqarnain Abbas
Country Director, Yemen
OVER 3.7 MILLION PEOPLE HELPED IN 17 GOVERNORATES

Years of intense conflict in Yemen have left millions struggling to find food, water and basic healthcare. Even before the conflict escalated, Yemen was one of the poorest countries in the Arab region. The world’s largest human-made crisis has resulted in armed conflict, displacement, risk of famine, disease outbreaks, and severe economic decline. An estimated 24.3 million people, about 80 per cent of the population, need humanitarian aid to survive – a greater number of people in need than in any other country in the world.

We have been responding to the emergency since the start of the conflict. In 2020 alone, we reached more than 3.7 million people through interventions including food aid, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), nutrition and healthcare, orphan and child welfare, survival items and livelihoods.

A girl collects Eid gifts provided by Islamic Relief in 2020.
**OUR FOCUS AREAS**

**FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS**
We support communities through food security, livelihoods, and agriculture support. We provide emergency assistance to vulnerable families in affected communities, saving lives and providing for minimum nutritional needs.

**EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE**
Through in-kind donations, cash or voucher transfers and rapid response mechanisms, we provide monthly food rations to the most vulnerable people and newly displaced households.

**WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)**
We provide emergency water sanitation, solid waste management, hygiene services and assistance to highly vulnerable people. We restore and maintain water supply systems and sanitation facilities, particularly in high-risk areas, to protect people from water-borne diseases.

**NUTRITION**
Our nutrition work is aimed at children under five, and pregnant and breastfeeding women in displaced and host populations. We provide preventative and treatment nutrition services based in health facilities and in the community.

**HEALTH**
We focus on providing primary and secondary healthcare, delivering a full package of services to ensure infrastructure and health workers are supported to deliver high-quality healthcare independent of any other interventions.

**ORPHAN AND CHILD WELFARE**
In 2020, our orphan and child welfare programme expanded activities into Sana’a and Aden governorates, enrolling 700 new orphans to our sponsorship programme. The regular stipend their families receive helps meet their basic needs, including schooling, and is integrated with other projects.
The humanitarian crisis in Yemen remains the worst in the world, driven by conflict, disease, economic collapse and the breakdown of public institutions and services. After five years of continuous war, millions of people are hungry, ill, destitute and acutely vulnerable. A staggering 80 per cent of the entire population, 24.3 million people, require some form of humanitarian assistance and protection.

Three years ago, Yemen experienced the worst cholera outbreak in modern times, and for the past 18 months the country has been on the brink of famine. The escalation of the conflict from March 2015 onwards has dramatically aggravated the crisis, in which millions of people face risks to their safety and basic rights.
Established in 1998, Islamic Relief Yemen is part of Islamic Relief Worldwide, which has been delivering humanitarian relief and development programmes around the world for over 37 years.

Islamic Relief Yemen’s country office is in the capital city, Sana’a. We have eight field offices in Dhamar, Amran, Aden, Taiz, Hodeida, Sa’a da, Marib and Raymah. We have 336 national and international members of staff and 3,000 volunteers.

Assured of our strong reputation delivering impactful programming, our generous donors have provided valued financial, technical and in-kind support. They include: the UN World Food Program (UNWFP), the Yemen Humanitarian Fund (YHF), the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), Global Affairs Canada (GAC), Trocaire, Finn Church Aid (FCA), Radio-Help, Islamic Relief’s own International Waqf Fund, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Islamic Relief Australia, Islamic Development Bank, Start Fund, Islamic Relief Worldwide, Islamic Relief Belgium, Islamic Relief Canada, Islamic Relief Germany, Islamic Relief Ireland, Islamic Relief Mauritius, Islamic Relief Netherlands, Islamic Relief South Africa, Islamic Relief Switzerland, Islamic Relief UK, Islamic Relief USA, and others.

In addition to delivering lifesaving emergency projects, Islamic Relief Yemen works on early recovery and development interventions, child welfare programmes, and seasonal interventions such as Ramadan and qurbani distributions. We are an active member of clusters and coordinate closely with stakeholders including communities, UN agencies, national and international non-governmental organisations, local authorities and civil society.
**IN YEMEN, AT LEAST ONE CHILD DIES EVERY TEN MINUTES BECAUSE OF PREVENTABLE DISEASES SUCH AS DIARRHOEA AND MALNUTRITION.**

Islamic Relief Yemen provided humanitarian assistance to 3,701,848 individuals across the country through food security, livelihoods, health, nutrition, orphans and child welfare and water and sanitation projects. We implemented 55 projects during 2020.

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<tr>
<th>Sectors</th>
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<th>Projects</th>
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<td>Integrated food security and livelihoods</td>
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<td><strong>Grand total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,701,848</strong></td>
<td><strong>55</strong></td>
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In 2020, we continued distributing food and cash/vouchers, reaching over 2.3 million people per month. Our emergency kits (food, hygiene and dignity), benefitted over 42,000 displaced people in five governorates (Sana’a, Hodeida, Dhamar, Amran and Raymah), as well as flood-affected populations in three governorates (Sana’a, Dhamar, Amran). We supported people in Covid-19 quarantine centres in two governorates (Sana’a and Dhamar).

Despite the ongoing expansion of conflict areas, we continued to reach those most affected with emergency assistance, referring any cases that needed further help.
2020 was a challenging year for the people of Yemen, already facing weakened health, a volatile economic situation, and threat of famine and other disease outbreaks. Covid-19 brought further difficulties, requiring us to adapt and quickly put in place precautions for both the team and beneficiaries, so we could continue to ensure more than 336,000 households were food secure on a monthly basis.

In partnership with WFP, in six governorates we undertook emergency interventions of general food distribution and our cash/voucher transfer network, helping to alleviate pressure on vulnerable households that were not able to meet their basic food needs.

In addition, through our rapid response mechanism, Islamic Relief Yemen has distributed support kits, followed by emergency food assistance, to newly displaced people affected by floods, conflict and other emergencies.
This year, Islamic Relief managed 11 health projects that supported 107 health facilities (44 hospitals and 63 primary healthcare facilities) in 12 governorates to provide primary and secondary healthcare, cholera response and rehabilitation facilities. We provided health workers with incentives, provided medication and medical supplies, supported referrals, trained health workers and supported operational costs, to ensure health facilities were able to function properly. This is part of our objective to deliver a full package of services to ensure the infrastructure and workforce are in the position to deliver quality healthcare.

Four projects were dedicated to Covid-19 activities – Islamic Relief is one of few non-governmental organisations to support Covid-19 interventions in Yemen. We gave medicines, other medical supplies and equipment including ventilators to Covid-19 isolation centres.

A total of 280,056 people benefited from primary healthcare services, reproductive healthcare, health education, surgeries, consultations, medication and inpatient services.

Raghad’s story

Three waves of cholera have swept Yemen since 2016. Islamic Relief has been distributing emergency supplies including hygiene cholera kits, medicines, equipment and lab solutions, as well as training health workers on cholera management and infection control.

Eight-year-old Raghad contracted cholera. "We were living in good conditions before the war, but now the humanitarian situation has been exacerbated by war and affected the family badly," says her mother.

“My sister and daughter have both been infected by cholera. My daughter was suffering with watery diarrhoea and severe vomiting. I took her to Al-Modhafir hospital where she received medical care and she got better. The hospital provided free medicines to Raghad, so we thank Islamic Relief for the support.”
The nutrition situation in Yemen remains alarming. An estimated 7.6 million people require services to treat or prevent malnutrition, with 4.7 million in acute need – including 2.8 million children under five, and 1.2 million pregnant or breastfeeding women. Five governorates have acute malnutrition rates exceeding the 15 per cent World Health Organization emergency threshold. In Yemen, at least one child dies every ten minutes because of preventable diseases such as diarrhoea and malnutrition.

In 2020, Islamic Relief supported the Ministry of Public Health to provide treatment and preventative nutrition services through 155 health facilities and 489 food distribution points across seven governorates in Yemen.

Key areas of support were:
- monthly incentives to 287 health workers and 352 community health volunteers
- capacity building on management and prevention of acute malnutrition
- giving medicines/medical supplies to all health facilities
- equipping health workers with furniture and other essential items
- providing specialised nutrition supplies
- referral mechanisms for severely malnourished people with medical complications for inpatient care
- integrated health/nutrition outreach services in hard-to reach villages
- distributing Covid-19 personal protection equipment (PPE) to health workers and community health volunteers.

Over 130,000 acutely malnourished children and mothers were enrolled in our targeted supplementary feeding programme for nutrition rehabilitation, while our preventative programme served 629,108 mothers and children.

Yasmeen’s story

“When Yasmeen cries, I give her milk mixed with water as I have no milk for her. Sometimes we have nothing to feed our children, so we would have only one meal the whole day. I thought it was enough, but I might have lost her,” says 18-month-old Yasmeen’s mother.

Yasmeen was admitted to an in-patient clinic with severe malnutrition, and is now gaining weight after a course of antibiotics and Plumpy’Nut, a high-energy peanut paste. Despite having no easy way to get to the clinic, Yasmeen’s parents have committed to coming regularly for the eight months of treatment Yasmeen needs.

“We live in a remote area, so we are used to walking kilometres to reach the health facility due to the fuel crisis,” says her father, Aqeel.

Islamic Relief is implementing nutrition programmes for severely malnourished children and pregnant or breastfeeding women, and supporting local health centres like this one to treat malnourished children. Islamic Relief, in partnership with the World Food Program, is also providing food to the most vulnerable families.

“My wife and I were hopeless and depressed to see Yasmeen’s condition, but Alhamdulillah she became very healthy thanks to Allah and to the generous support of Islamic Relief Yemen.”
The Islamic Relief follow-up team check on Yasmeen’s recovery from malnutrition.
WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)
Khaled’s story

Khaled, 29, is a healthcare worker.

“We had been going through difficulties getting water for my health facility as we did not have the money for water trucking, or fuel was unavailable for the truck. Even the water from trucks came from untreated sources. We really suffered because we used to carry jerry cans to collect water from an untreated well far away.

“Once Islamic Relief constructed a water point with an automatic solar system and repaired the well, we can see a big difference: the water is clean and we can get as much as we need, and easily access the water any time day and night.

“Our life has totally changed for the good. It has become easier because water is the most important thing in life! We haven’t faced any health problems since the well was repaired, so we do really thank Islamic Relief for their staunch support.”

Khaled’s health centre now has clean water thanks to Islamic Relief.

Over two thirds of Yemeni people needed support to meet their basic water and sanitation needs in 2020. Millions faced heightened exposure to disease and malnutrition, driven in part by critical water and sanitation conditions including irregular and insufficient access to safe water, adequate sanitation or hygiene provisions. Decades of underdevelopment, damage from conflict and cyclones, and fragile fuel imports have left WASH systems struggling to provide minimum services.

Islamic Relief designed and implemented projects to meet the WASH needs of vulnerable people in the most affected areas, benefiting 188,203 people during 2020.

Our main activities are providing safe drinking water, promoting healthy hygiene practices to prevent the spread of disease, distributing hygiene kits, and undertaking health and hygiene awareness and solid waste cleaning campaigns. We helped provide equipment including pumps, generators and solar systems, as well as repairing pipes and networks, expanding water systems to connect new households, protecting water sources such as open wells, and testing water quality.

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In 2020, 25 per cent of the population, including 2.1 million children and 1.2 million pregnant and breastfeeding women, suffered from either moderate or severe malnutrition. Nearly 1.5 million families depend on food assistance to survive, the majority with no means of support. A further 10 million people have just enough income to buy what they need in local markets, but are highly sensitive to minute increases in the cost of food and fuel. During periods of currency volatility, they are often forced to reduce what they eat for weeks and months at a time.

We focus on food security and livelihood interventions to enhance vulnerable households’ resilience, saving lives and improving access to basic food needs and income opportunities.

We implemented 17 projects in response to increasing levels of food insecurity and malnutrition, targeting the most vulnerable and food insecure households. We improved access to food, economic empowerment, restored livelihoods, improved agricultural infrastructure, and carried out cash-based interventions.

**Najeeb’s story**

Thirty-eight-year-old Najeeb is married with four children. He is unemployed, but he tries his best to support his family through agricultural work.

Najeeb’s village has a very bumpy and rugged road, so reaching the nearest public services takes three to five hours on foot. Improving this road would resolve all kinds of issues for local people, who struggle to access food from the market or from charities.

“Vehicles can’t go through those rugged roads because it’s nearly impossible, so we can only use donkeys to deliver food baskets and supplements,” says Najeeb, who lives in Moshk in Dhamar.

The increase in food prices worsened the situation. “The cost of a sack of flour jumped from 4,000 Riyal to 12,000 Riyal, which became unaffordable to many. We travel three hours daily to bring water, but this water is not safe for drinking.”

Islamic Relief is delivering a project covering several communities in Dhamar and Al Hodeida governorates. The scheme, which will benefit around 6,200 conflict-affected families, includes repairing water sources, homes and schools, is also improving protection for vital agricultural land and repairing the road in Najeeb’s village. This will allow better access to food, water and support from non-governmental organisations such as Islamic Relief. “If they finish repairing this road, our situation in the village will get better,” says Najeeb.
Najeeb walks along a stretch of road repaired by Islamic Relief in Moshk, Yemen.
Huda’s children receiving Eid gifts from Islamic Relief.

ORPHAN AND CHILD WELFARE

ORPHAN AND CHILD WELFARE
In 2020, we expanded our orphan and child welfare programme in Sana’a and Aden governorates, enrolling 700 new orphans in our sponsorship programme, despite the challenges of Covid-19. The total number of sponsored orphans in Yemen is now over 34,300.

Sponsorship aims to alleviate the suffering of orphans’ families, who receive monthly payments to cover their food, education, health and sometimes shelter needs. In addition, our orphan and child welfare programme focuses on implementing projects that deal with child protection and early childhood interventions.

This programme has at times integrated other projects to support orphans, such as distributing educational kits to orphans and their siblings, giving the children and their guardians vocational training and livelihood support, providing health check-ups, and seasonal projects such as Ramadan food distribution, qurbani distribution and winter support.

Huda’s story

Huda is a widow in her 30s. She lives with her eight children in a two-room, rented house. After her husband died, Huda had to support the whole family. “We used to live in good conditions before the war erupted and my husband was alive. He was working and taking care of the children. Unfortunately, the situation totally deteriorated when he died. We faced difficulties getting water, food and health services.”

With no source of income to support her children, Islamic Relief’s orphan sponsorship programme has been a lifeline for the family. “I learnt how to sew clothes with support from Islamic Relief, now I am able to work to provide food to my children and meet their expenses. In addition we are benefiting from Islamic Relief orphan sponsorship. This sponsorship is really helping us so much.”

“All I hope is that my children have good living conditions and finish their education. And I hope that this war will end.”
Through our seasonal projects we distributed food, winter survival items, and Eid gifts. In the holy month of Ramadan, our main target is to distribute food among those in need and most affected by the crisis. This programme has been taking place in Yemen since 1998.

Our winter kit distribution gives out blankets, hats, gloves and other warm clothing to protect vulnerable people when the cold winter weather sets in. We also distribute qurbani meat to vulnerable families at Eid al-Adha, and give gifts to children in need in Eid al-Fitr. In 2020, a total of 366,519 people benefited from our seasonal projects.

Siham's story
Twenty-two-year-old Siham lives in Sana’a. Her elder brother is the breadwinner for a family of five, but he is forced to rely on daily wage labour, which leaves them without a reliable source of income. “Due to the current situation in the country, people have no work and we struggle to get food. I have disabilities and I struggle to get food, education, water, and health services,” says Siham.

“We were fine before this war as jobs were easy to get. Now, people can’t find jobs and are living in dire straits and fear. My brothers could not complete their education because of the dire condition that the family is facing. They left school to work and contribute to meeting the family’s expenses.”

Siham and her family received a gift of qurbani meat in 2020 – one of over 29,000 meat packs distributed through our qurbani programme in Yemen. She is looking forward to finishing her education and hopes for a brighter future.
Twenty-two year old Siham waits to receive her family’s parcel of qurbani meat.
Feteeni’s story

Feteeni, 62, is married with nine children. The family, who have been uprooted from their home, have been receiving emergency food assistance from Islamic Relief.

“We were living in Al-hudaidah governorate, but we had to flee to Sana’a due to the brutal war. Imagine, we were living on the frontlines between the two warring parties. Our lives flashed before our eyes as the airstrikes hit many houses of our neighbours. The causalities were in the hundreds, and we were awaiting our turn – just seconds could make a difference between our lives and death. I had enough of living in such a place,” says Feteeni.

Feteeni, who has diabetes, now cannot feed his children because he has no reliable income. The little he earns from repairing bikes is not enough to meet his family’s basic needs. “Soaring prices made our lives go from bad to worse. Our only meal for the entire day is rice.”

Islamic Relief, along with our partner the World Food Programme, intervened. Our emergency food assistance project eased the suffering of millions of Yemenis, including Feteeni.

“The organisation provides us with a food basket including 70kg of flour, 10 litres of cooking oil, 5kg of beans, 5kg of sugar, 5kg of rice and a sack of salt every two months. I am told that we will receive this on a monthly basis soon. The food basket alleviates our suffering, so we really appreciate all the support we receive from the organisation,” says Feteeni.