



Islamic Relief's  
**'Do no harm' commitment**

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“There should be neither harming nor reciprocating harm,”  
– saying of Prophet Muhammad (Hadith, Ibn Majah)

Islamic Relief is committed to supporting those in need without expecting anything in return in line with our international commitments to Leave No One Behind<sup>1</sup> and the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability<sup>2</sup>. We assist people according to need and do not discriminate in any way.

We recognise that much of our work now takes place in complex, fragile or conflict-affected environments where tensions are high, the context can change rapidly and the situation is opaque. We also recognise that external interventions, such as the provision of humanitarian aid or development assistance, interact with the local context in ways that are sometimes unforeseen.

This document sets out Islamic Relief's commitment to understand and minimise any negative effects of its operations. It is effective immediately and applies to all of our programmes in every country in which we work. It is intended to guide our staff in their work and demonstrate our commitment to the highest standards of quality and accountability.

## **Islamic Relief is committed to ensuring that its work does not cause harm to:**

- The people we seek to support and their families and wider communities, in particular in relation to their safety, dignity and rights
- The functioning of communities, relationships between social groups and state-society relations
- The environment
- Local markets and sustainable livelihoods

In this context 'harm' refers to the prolongation or worsening of pre-existing harmful situations or factors as well as contributing to new or additional negative effects.

Wherever possible, Islamic Relief will try to ensure that our programmes target root causes of insecurity, risk and inequality. We will also strive to support and develop local or national services and governance structures, and minimise displacement or substitution of services to avoid undermining the social contract between duty bearers and rights holders.

To ensure that our assistance remains beneficial to communities, Islamic Relief is committed to adopting a context-sensitive approach to its work.

Context sensitivity is the ability of an organisation to understand the context it operates in and the effects its interventions have on the context and vice versa.

<sup>1</sup> Leave No One Behind is a pledge by UN Member States as part of their commitment to try and attain the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. It is a pledge to reach the furthest behind first to ensure no one will be left behind in a country's development.

<sup>2</sup> The Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability is a voluntary, measurable standard of principled, high quality and accountable humanitarian aid. Islamic Relief is a Certified CHS organisation which means it is independently audited against its CHS commitments each year to maintain its Certification status.

**In practice this means that Islamic Relief is committed to:**

1. Understanding the wider context in which our programmes are implemented, through context analysis and the inclusion of views from the communities we seek to support. This means understanding political, social, economic and conflict dynamics and the ways our interventions may impact upon local cultures, gender relations, ethnic or religious relations, political relationships, economies and natural environments.
2. Identifying ways to minimise any negative impacts of our work to avoid raising tensions in the community.
3. Identifying ways to maximise the positive impacts of our work and build trust and respectful relationships in communities.
4. Communicating transparently about our work to communities and governments and responding quickly to feedback or complaints.
5. Changing course or stopping projects where necessary to prevent our work from causing harm.
6. Regularly reviewing our risk registers, frameworks and procedures.
7. Identifying, monitoring and reporting the actual unintended as well as intended effects of our work, whether positive or negative, through project management and reporting processes and community feedback.
8. Evaluating the impact of our work, including unintended outcomes.
9. Behaving professionally at all times and without abusing the unequal power relations that our work sometimes confers on us.
10. Continually learning and improving the way in which we deliver our work.

**Islamic Relief also abides by the international humanitarian principles of:**

- Humanity: Every individual's right to live with dignity. Also the duty of others to try to save lives and alleviate suffering.
- Impartiality: To act when there is need, without discrimination.
- Neutrality: To act without preference for one group or another in conflict.
- Independence: To ensure that humanitarian work is autonomous, separate from any other political, economic or military interests.

**This commitment is reflected in our internal quality standards (IHSAN – numbers 5.1.4, 5.1.12 and 5.1.17) and related internal policies including:**

• Code of conduct	• Gender Justice
• Environment	• Feedback and complaints
• Safeguarding	• Risk management
• Child protection	• Data protection
• Prevention from sexual exploitation and abuse	• Procurement