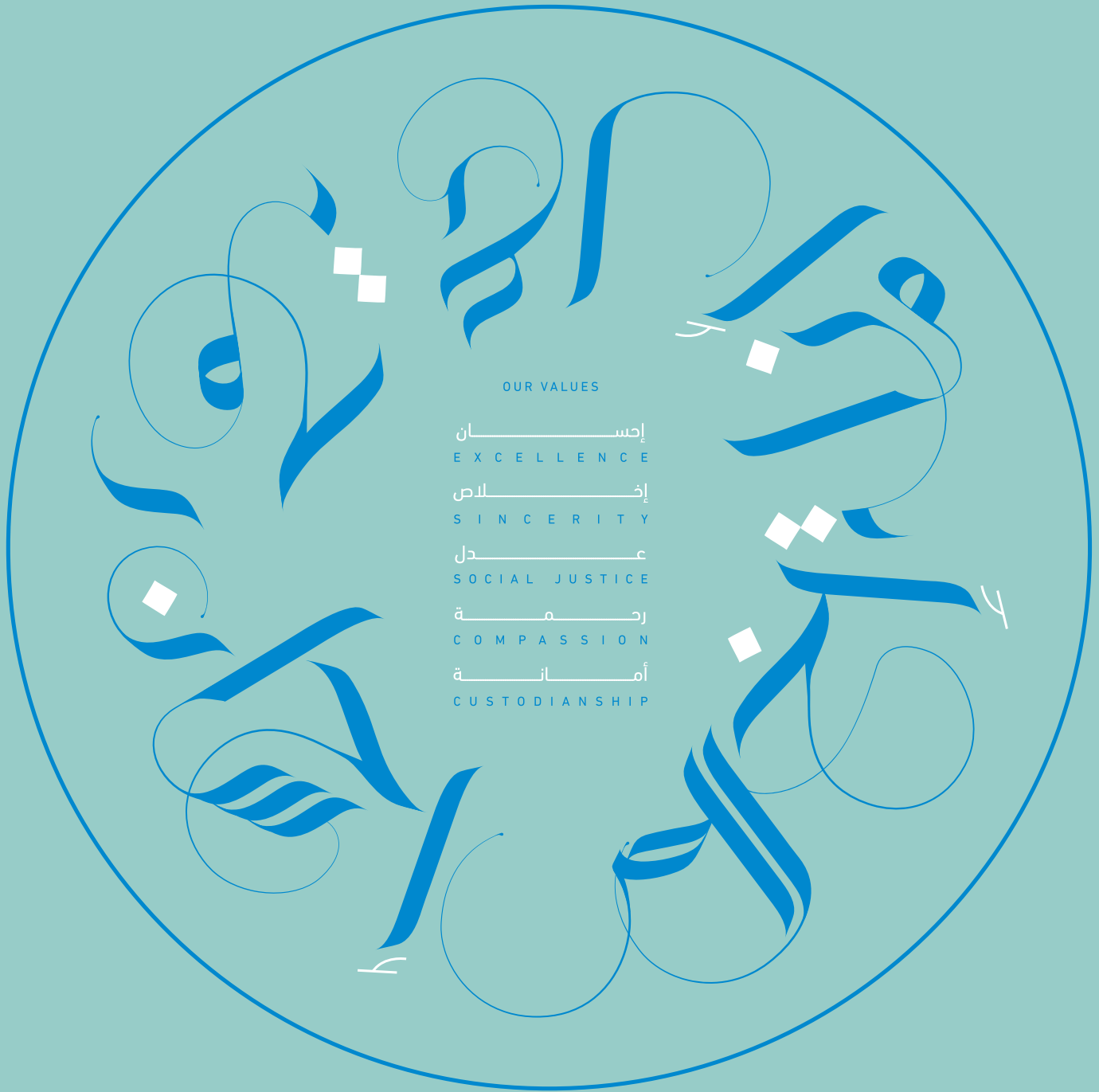


A photograph of two women in a rural setting. They are hanging long, thin strips of red meat, likely beef or lamb, on a horizontal wooden pole. The woman in the foreground is wearing a black headscarf with colorful embroidery and a black shawl. The woman behind her is wearing a light green headscarf and a green shawl. They are holding a metal tray. The background shows a blue sky with white clouds and some green foliage.

# **ISLAMIC RELIEF WORLDWIDE**

## **GLOBAL REACH, IMPACT AND LEARNING REPORT**

Reporting period: January – December 2022



“O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives. Whether one is rich or poor, Allah is more worthy of both.”

**Qur'an, 4:135**

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# ACRONYMS

<b>CP</b>	<b>Child protection</b>
<b>DRR</b>	<b>Disaster risk reduction</b>
<b>FGM/C</b>	<b>Female genital mutilation / cutting</b>
<b>GBV</b>	<b>Gender-based violence</b>
<b>NGO</b>	<b>Non-governmental organisation</b>
<b>SDG</b>	<b>Sustainable Development Goal</b>
<b>WASH</b>	<b>Water, sanitation and hygiene</b>



Islamic Relief continues supporting vulnerable families in the Horn of Africa amid fears of a severe food crisis as the result of worsening drought conditions.



# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Background

Islamic Relief operates in multiple countries and diverse situations—from conflict-stricken parts of Afghanistan to areas grappling with climate change in Bangladesh, and from food-insecure communities in the Horn of Africa to numerous other locations suffering from crises or in need of sustainable development. By adopting a multi-faceted approach that is sensitive to the unique conditions of each context, we strive to alleviate immediate suffering while paving the way for long-term, self-sustaining improvements.

This report aims to highlight the diversity of Islamic Relief's operations and to use analysis of impact and reach data to assess the value of the organisation's community-driven solutions, sustainable development programmes, and humanitarian support. Our aim is also to articulate changes occurring at the project level across various contexts where Islamic Relief has been active.

The following chapters contain a detailed account of impact and reach metrics region by region, with a clear picture of how each region and country has contributed to our overall reach and impact. Through project spotlights, we also bring to life some of the projects behind the data. We conclude by setting out our learning from programme delivery in 2022: the challenges we have faced, the lessons learned, and the paths that lie ahead if we are to achieve more effective, inclusive, and sustainable interventions.

## 1.2. Methodology

To ensure a comprehensive and robust understanding of the impact and reach of Islamic Relief's programmes, we used a multi-pronged approach in gathering and analysing data for this report. We used a variety of data sources, each offering unique insights into the reach and impact of our interventions across different contexts and sectors.

One of our primary data sources has been Islamic Relief's annual reach data collection. This set of quantitative data provides metrics on how many individuals have been directly and indirectly impacted by our programmes. This gives us a numerical basis for understanding the scale of our operations and for tracking changes in reach year by year.

Case-study stories, originally compiled as part of data collection for Islamic Relief's 2022 Annual Report, have been used in the 'Project spotlights' feature of this report to provide a qualitative perspective, offering deeper insight into select projects of interest. These spotlights serve as illustrative examples, bringing to life the projects behind the numbers and providing a more holistic view of our impact on wellbeing, empowerment, and community resilience.

In addition, we have included material from secondary data sources, such as narrative reporting on selected projects, and evaluation reports from our monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning (MEAL) teams. By combining quantitative data, qualitative narratives, and evaluations, we aim to present a balanced and thorough account of Islamic Relief's work. This multi-dimensional approach allows us not only to report on what has been achieved but also to assess how we can continue to evolve and enhance our impact moving forward.

One major limitation we want to acknowledge is that not all country offices provided inputs for this report, particularly for the project spotlights. As a result, the report may not present a full view of all operations. Another limitation is a lack of evidence in some areas, particularly when reporting on outcomes or impact. While some reporting may outline performance in relation to activities, we sometimes fall short in providing empirical data to substantiate the claimed outcomes or impacts. Improvements in the evidence base capturing the results of our programming is one of our top priorities for the coming period.

## 2. GLOBAL IMPACT IN 2022

The year 2022 presented extraordinary challenges for so many marginalised communities around the world. From climate-induced catastrophes to the lingering effects of Covid-19 and socio-economic downturns, the world's most at-risk populations confronted crises like never before. In trying times like these, the significance of our international programmes, supported by Islamic Relief country offices, is very apparent. This section captures the scope and impact of our efforts over the past year in cumulative global terms.

In 2022, Islamic Relief implemented

**835 projects**

in

**40 countries**

Our 2022 programmes reached over:

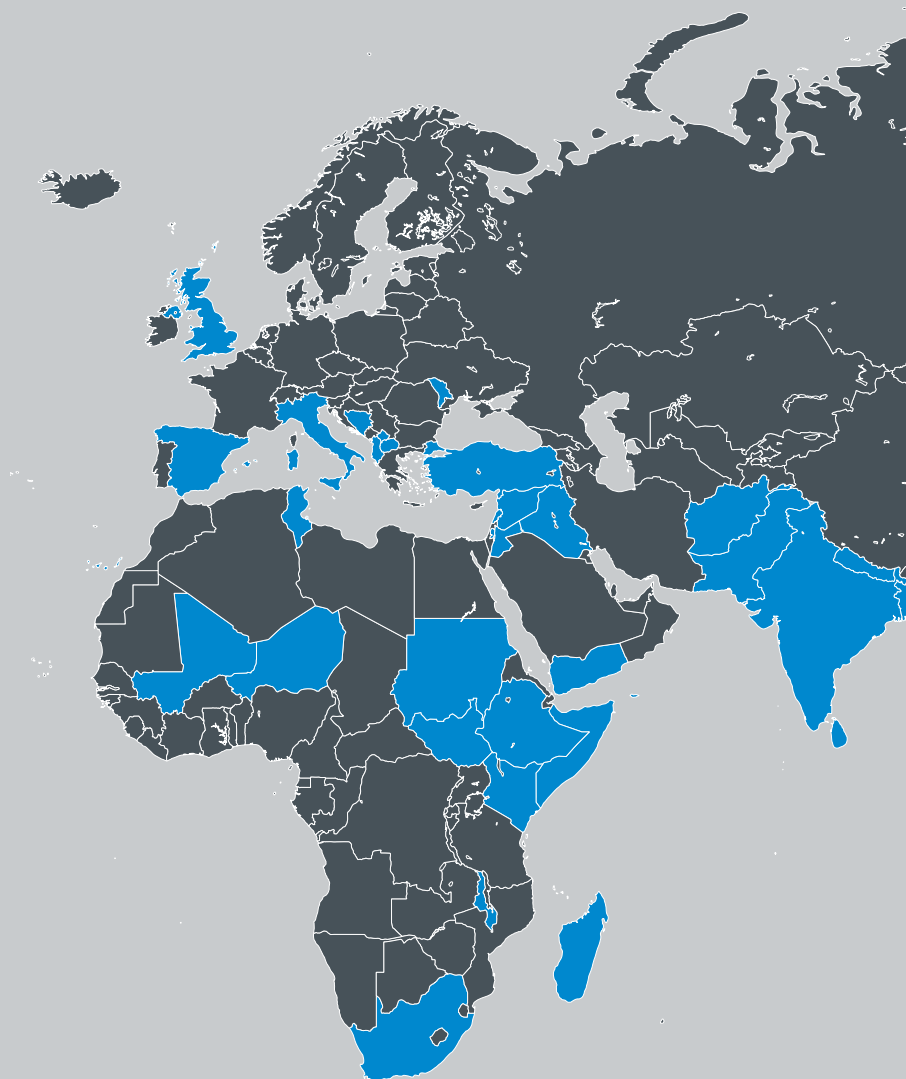
**17,330,264 direct rightsholders<sup>1</sup>**

And:

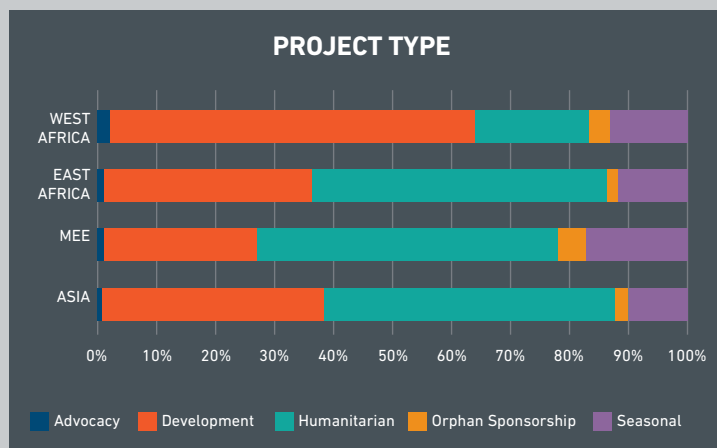
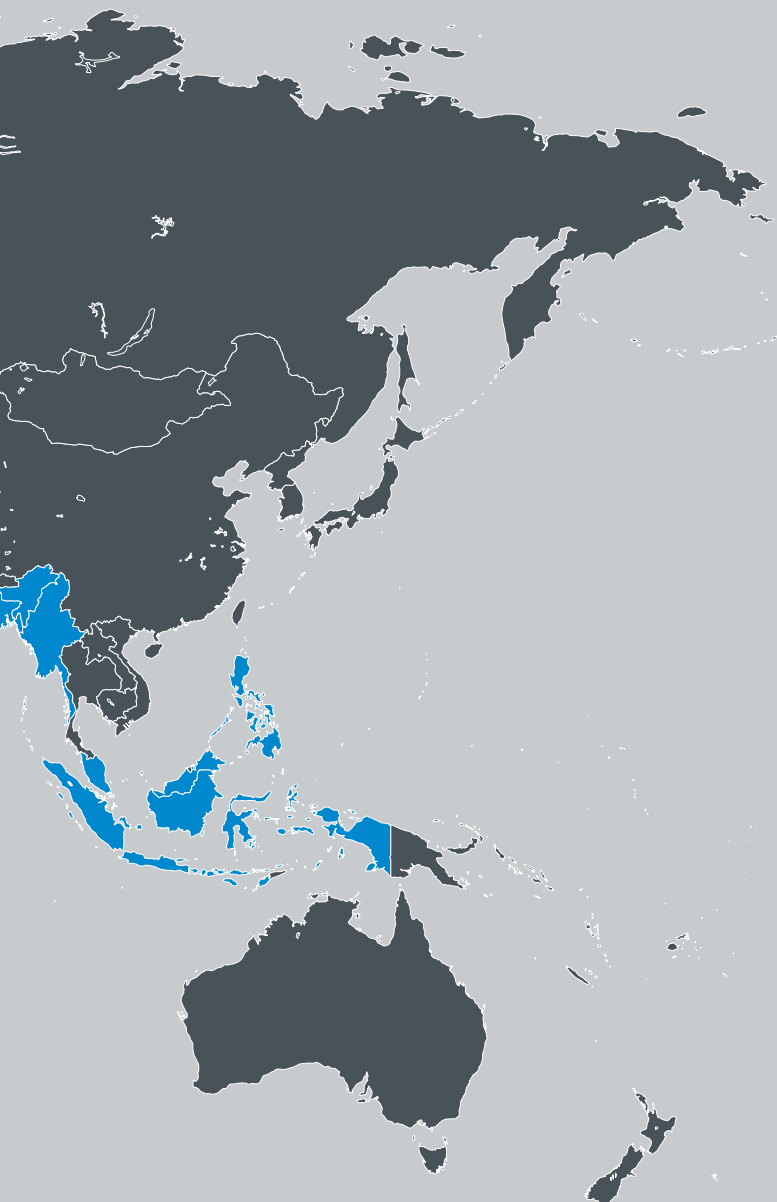
**12,165,154 indirect rightsholders**

Types of project	Numbers of projects	Direct rightsholders
Humanitarian <sup>2</sup>	369	9,849,300
Seasonal	107 <sup>3</sup>	6,407,464
Development <sup>4</sup>	327	2,834,443
Orphan sponsorship	26 <sup>5</sup>	95,040
Advocacy	6	26,339

Numbers of seasonal campaigns	Aqiqah	Qurbani	Ramadan	Eid gifts	Winterisation
Asia	2	7	9	3	5
Middle East	1	12	13	7	13
East Africa	2	5	5	5	
West Africa	1	4	4	3	
Europe		1	3	1	1







Primary sector	Projects	Direct rightsholders
Seasonal programmes	107	6,407,464
Food distribution	72	3,244,991
Health	58	2,603,280
Food security and livelihoods	156	2,394,902
Water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH)	67	1,156,636
Other	63	1,042,672
Cash programming	66	968,943
Climate change adaptation and/or mitigation	17	455,846
Shelter	38	183,708
Protection and Inclusion (gender/age/disability)	31	154,375
Education	56	147,577
Non-food item distribution	21	136,255
Disaster risk reduction (DRR)	23	120,488
Orphan sponsorship programme	26	95,226
Equally distributed across multiple sectors	9	55,369
Microfinance	19	43,533
Community peace building	3	1,239
Advocacy	1	82
Safeguarding	1	0

Cross-cutting themes	Number of projects
Climate change <sup>6</sup>	179
Women's empowerment <sup>7</sup>	254
Protection mainstreaming	254
Inclusion of people with disabilities	384
Inclusion of older people	300

<sup>1</sup> With seasonal/OSP overlap removed

<sup>2</sup> Humanitarian programmes relate to emergency response, which tends to be more short term (less than 12 months)

<sup>3</sup> This is comprised of the following campaigns: Aqiqah, Eid gifts, Qurbani, Ramadan, and winterisation

<sup>4</sup> Development programmes are usually longer term (12 months+)

<sup>5</sup> This is the number of countries where the orphan sponsorship programme is being implemented, rather than the number of individual projects.

<sup>6</sup> This can include emergency-related projects with a climate component as well as projects more fully focused on adaptation and mitigation, or (for example) climate migration.

<sup>7</sup> This can include projects on women's livelihoods, education for girls, and tackling gender-based violence such as domestic violence or early forced marriage. A single project can mainstream more than one cross-cutting theme.



# 3. REGIONAL IMPACT: EAST AFRICA

## 3.1 Regional overview

### 3.1.1. Major crisis and vulnerability in East Africa

The impact of climate change and protracted crises, together with the strain on health systems worldwide due to Covid-19, continued to take a heavy toll on populations around the world in 2022. Conflict was a significant concern in East Africa throughout the year. Several countries in the region, such as South Sudan, Somalia, and Ethiopia, witnessed varying degrees of violent conflicts, often driven by political, ethnic, and territorial disputes. These conflicts resulted in significant loss of life, displacement of populations, and disruption of livelihoods. The conflicts also hampered efforts to achieve stability and impeded socio-economic development in the affected areas.

Food insecurity continued to pose a severe threat to East Africa in 2022. The region faced recurring cycles of droughts, floods, and locust infestations, which adversely affected agricultural production and the availability of food. Insufficient rainfall and erratic weather patterns led to reduced crop yields, livestock losses, and depletion of water resources, exacerbating the vulnerability of communities dependent on agriculture. Drought affected 36.6 million people in Ethiopia, Somalia, and Kenya, including 2.7 million who were displaced. Nine million livestock perished. It is estimated that more than 43,000 people died of hunger, mainly in Somalia. Islamic Relief reached 1.7 million of those affected with a combination of cash transfers and emergency food assistance, WASH projects, non-food items (NFIs), health and nutrition programmes, and initiatives protecting and supporting livelihoods.

East Africa experienced the impact of climate change particularly severely in 2022. Rising temperatures, changing rainfall patterns, and the increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events adversely affected ecosystems,

agriculture, and water resources – and the communities that depend on them. The region's susceptibility to climate change was evident in recurrent droughts, which strained water supplies, contributed to desertification, and forced communities to migrate in search of more favourable conditions. Climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts continue to be a crucial priority for East African nations.

Displacement remained a critical consequence of the interconnected crises in East Africa. Conflict and climate change-induced events, such as droughts and floods, led to large-scale internal and cross-border displacement. Communities were uprooted from their homes, seeking safety and livelihood opportunities elsewhere. The influx of displaced populations placed additional strain on host communities and stretched the already limited resources of humanitarian organisations. The provision of adequate shelter, food, water, healthcare, and education for displaced populations remained a significant challenge.

Governments, regional bodies, and international organisations made considerable efforts to address the crises and vulnerabilities in East Africa during 2022. Islamic Relief's response included an increase in our funding allocation for East Africa as a region, which grew from \$44.5 million to \$60.2 million, and a shift in emphasis towards more large, regional and longer-term programming.



### 3.1.2. Strategic sectoral priorities for East

In accordance with Islamic Relief's strategy for East Africa<sup>8</sup>, our programmes in the region aim to increase the resilience of the poorest and most vulnerable communities through disaster risk reduction (DRR), climate change adaptation, food security programmes, and sustainable livelihoods. Communities in this region face increasing livelihood challenges and hazards because of prolonged droughts, conflicts, and a variety of other factors. Shocks and stresses include climate change, rapid population growth, political and economic marginalisation of some regions and communities, land degradation, and livestock trade bans. In response, our regional strategy includes the following areas:

1. Disaster preparedness, response, and recovery: protecting the lives and livelihoods of disaster-prone communities; provision of appropriate and timely emergency assistance; and through emergency assistance and supporting households and communities to rebuild.
2. Climate-resilient livelihoods and investing in people: increasing assets, income, food security and employment opportunities; and investments in education, WASH, and health services
3. Cross-cutting themes: protection, inclusion, conflict, and environmental sensitivity; MEAL; and policy influencing and advocacy.

The reach data confirms and aligns with our regional strategic objectives, as figure x details.

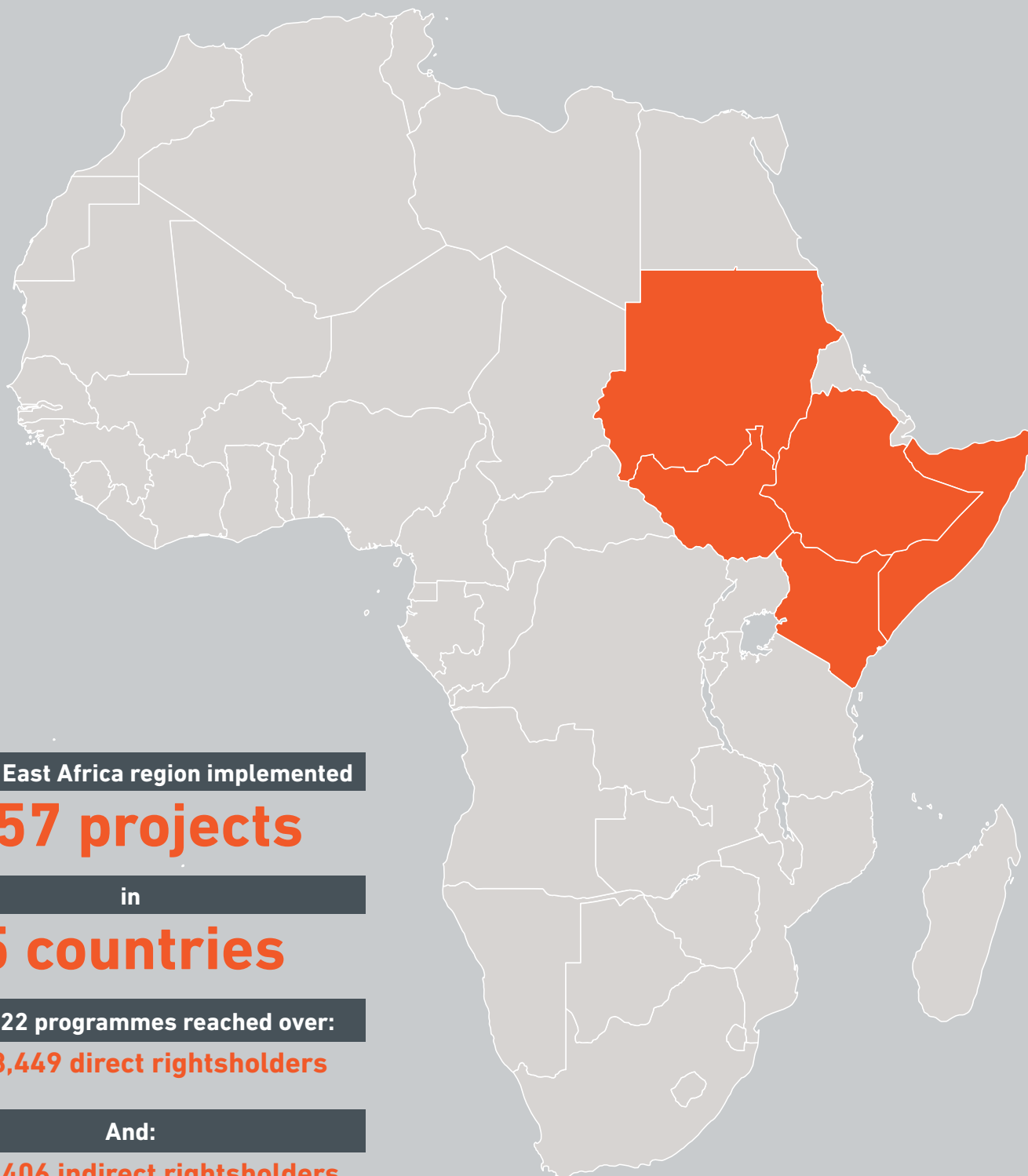
**Table 1: Sectoral priorities for East Africa**

Sector	Projects	Direct rightsholders
Food security and livelihoods	48	996,515
Cash programming	25	567,012
Seasonal	17	1,394,013
Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)	15	397,099
Education	11	58,181
Other	7	40,685
Food distribution	6	130,565
Health	6	103,630
Protection and inclusion (gender/age/disability)	4	39,579
Non-food item distribution	4	29,298
Orphan sponsorship programme	4	14,944
Climate change adaptation and/or mitigation	3	45,479
Disaster risk reduction (DRR)	3	35,679
Shelter	2	3,511
Equally distributed across multiple sectors	1	1,940
Community peace building	1	319

<sup>8</sup> Islamic Relief Worldwide East Africa Regional Strategy (2017-2021), Islamic Relief Worldwide, 2018.

## 3.2 East Africa reach and impact

This section captures the scope and impact of our efforts over the past year, specifically in the East Africa region. Using key data and impact metrics, this is a snapshot illustrating the region's achievements, demonstrating the quantifiable change that has been delivered through our own initiatives and those implemented in partnership with others.





**Table 2: East Africa heat map with boxes highlighting the below data**

Country	Projects	Direct rightsholders	Indirect rightsholders
Ethiopia	27	747,611	1,037,145
Kenya	28	470,866	466,751
Somalia	42	1,136,222	1,582,726
South Sudan	18	298,769	19,250
Sudan	42	1,204,982	721,534

**Table 3: Project types**

Country	Advocacy	Development	Humanitarian	Orphan sponsorship	Seasonal
Ethiopia		13	9	1	4
Kenya	1	13	10	1	3
Somalia		7	30	1	4
South Sudan		12	3	0	3
Sudan		12	26	1	3
<b>Total</b>	1	57	78	4	17

**Table 4: East Africa contribution to key cross-cutting themes**

Cross-cutting themes	Projects
Climate change	54
Women's empowerment	64
Protection mainstreaming	78
Inclusion of people with disabilities	88
Inclusion of older people	58



Islamic Relief has distributed Ramadan food parcels to some of the world's most vulnerable people in Ethiopia.

Ethiopia 2022

## 3.3 Country spotlights

Country spotlights, and particularly project spotlights within countries, are a key feature in this report. These spotlights offer a measure of country-specific analysis and bring a qualitative dimension to complement our data-driven insights. Our spotlights delve into select projects, presenting in-depth narratives that bring to life the impact behind the statistics. They serve as illustrative examples that not only highlight successful outcomes but also provide a holistic view of how our initiatives are contributing to well-being, empowerment, and community resilience.

### Country spotlight: South Sudan

#### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
<b>Overall country metrics</b>	<b>298,769</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Top sectoral contributions</b>		
Food security and livelihoods	147,202	9
Seasonal Programme	92,747	3
WASH	36,080	2

#### Project spotlight

Early Recovery and Resilience Programme for Communities Affected by Conflict in South Sudan (ERRP)

To address the cumulative effects of years of prolonged conflict, chronic vulnerability and weak basic services, our team in South Sudan implemented a project with an integrated multi-sector approach to provide the assistance that was most needed by communities in Wau and Kapoeta East counties, as part of an 18-month response plan. The project focused on health and nutrition,

WASH, food security and livelihoods.

Key project achievements included:

- Increased ownership of productive and non productive assets from 49.7 per cent to 90.7 per cent which can be attributed to ERRP's support in training beneficiaries in milk handling and marketing, provision of hybrid goats and chickens, and treatment of livestock by community animal health workers.
- Increased access to health services from 56.8 per cent to 91.8 per cent, which can be attributed to ERRP's support for the rehabilitation of

health facilities, medical personnel training, and procurement and distribution of medicines to health facilities.

- Reduction in the cases of waterborne diseases among the targeted beneficiaries from 90.2 per cent to 63.4 per cent.

The [community-led total sanitation \(CLTS\) approach](#) was piloted in this project. This approach seeks to achieve a change in sanitation behaviour through community participation, rather than constructing toilets. The key to success is social engagement with communities to encourage participation and debate, alerting rightsholders and local leaders to the dangers of open defecation to their health and encouraging a collaborative approach within communities to stop open defecation.

As a result of this approach, the project rightsholders in this case were triggered to construct and use semi-permanent pit latrines for themselves. This led to reduced open defecation and a reduction in waterborne disease cases.



## Country summary: Kenya

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Overall country metric	470,866	28
Top sectoral contributions		
Seasonal programmes	359,198	3
Cash programming	65,968	10
Food security and livelihoods	35,418	4

### Project spotlight

Building Resilience Initiatives for Pastoralist Communities in Kenya, 2020-2022, funded by Islamic Relief USA

This project is a two-year economic strengthening programme that worked directly with 4,934 smallholder farmers, traders, young people, and women in three sub-counties of Garissa County, Kenya. The project had three main areas of focus:

1. Capacity building, specifically in the area of advanced, innovative livelihoods practices and vocational skills that are in high demand
2. Providing access to innovative and climate-smart technologies as well as financial services and markets, helping to ensure that improved capacity translates into higher productivity and incomes
3. Creating an enabling environment for smallholder farmers, traders, young people and women, by encouraging supportive attitudes towards them.

Key project achievements included:

- Increased incomes and better access to a wider range of food among the target population

- Women and young people equipped with diversified livelihood skills and knowledge
- Better business opportunities and increased employment among young people and women
- More sustainable livelihoods for smallholder farmers and young people, including valueadding activities in the onward agriculture supply chain.
- Access to innovative, climate-smart technologies and inputs for smallholder farmers and young people
- Increased access to financial services and markets for smallholder farmers and young people.

In addition to these key achievements, the project's positive impact can also be demonstrated in behavioural change among smallholder farmers, who have adopted sustainable agricultural practices such as small plot horticulture (kitchen gardens), better post-harvest management of crops, and the use of climate-smart technologies such as solar-powered irrigation, cooling facilities and processing machines.

## Country spotlight: Somalia

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Overall country metric	1,136,222	42
Top sectoral contributions		
Seasonal programme	396,997	4
Food security and livelihoods	265,894	17
Cash programming	256,091	9

### Project spotlight

Strengthen Agricultural Resilience in Awdal (SARIA) project, 2021-2022, funded by Islamic Relief USA

This is an integrated climate change and environmental protection project reaching rightsholders in the Awdal and Marodijeh regions. It aims to build resilience in the face of recurrent droughts and desert locust infestation, including the capacity for recovery when disaster strikes.

The project has four key focus areas:

- 1.Improving the income of 1,000 vulnerable households through general capacity building and the provision of drought-tolerant seeds
- 2.Improving food security among vulnerable households through increased agricultural production using sustainable agricultural practices
- 3.Improving people's ability to adapt to climate change and benefit from DRR
- 4.Providing livestock support to improve the livelihoods and food security of farmers who have dropped out of a pastoralist way of life
- 5.Improving the health of beneficiaries through promotion of and training in better practice in health, hygiene and nutrition.

Key project achievements included:

- 1,000 farmers have been set up for and trained in alternative crop farming and animal husbandry through 20 farmer cooperatives. Their training included seed bed preparation, group management, and alternative cropping strategies
- 100 per cent of the target communities now have access to a sustainable water supply for human and animal consumption, and for irrigation
- 90 per cent of the rightsholders have adopted new technology and approaches such as energy-saving cooking stoves. This has reduced their reliance on firewood for cooking, which in turn reduces the workload and vulnerability of women and girls who may otherwise have to travel long distances to collect firewood. The stoves provided benefit the environment by reducing the use of charcoal and associated CO2 emissions. Use of these stoves will also prevent the widespread cutting down of indigenous trees for charcoal and firewood, which has resulted in deforestation and ecosystem destruction throughout Somaliland.

## Country spotlight: Ethiopia

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
<b>Overall country metric</b>	747,611	22
<b>Top sectoral contributions</b>		
Seasonal programme	285,002	4
Food security and livelihoods	235,491	5
Cash programming	160,073	9

## Country spotlight: Sudan

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
<b>Overall country metric</b>	1204982	42
<b>Top sectoral contributions</b>		
Food security and livelihoods	387,928	9
Seasonal Programme	260,070	3
Cash programming	237,963	3

### Project spotlight

Integrated Development Project to Improve Access to Basic Services by Conflict Affected Vulnerable Communities in Blue Nile and Kordofan States, Sudan, funded by Islamic Relief USA

Supported by data gleaned from needs assessments and gender and context analysis, and working in alignment with a community development plan, Islamic Relief Sudan designed and implemented an integrated project aiming to address the needs of a conflict-affected population through socio-economic empowerment. The project set out to give women and men equal access to the assets they needed to pursue diverse and sustainable livelihoods, building food security and general resilience. Another key aim was to increase access to and use of safe, equitable, affordable and plentiful water resources for drinking, cooking and agriculture. The project also prioritised the development of gender-sensitive hygiene and sanitation services to uphold dignity and respect cultural norms.

Key project achievements included:

- Improved women's involvement and empowerment. The project ensured that

at least half of people participating in the community structures that were formed were women. These structures included food security and livelihoods committees and cooperatives, as well as the project's main integrated development plan team. All the participants in the Development Plan team with group savings and loans associations established through the project were women

- Improved food security for both women and men, with gender-balanced access to diversified and resilient livelihoods. Islamic Relief Sudan provided cash-crop seeds to 800 vulnerable households and food-crop seeds to 202 female-headed households. The proportion of female-headed households participating in farming increased from 45 per cent to 70 per cent.
- Improved employability and entrepreneurial skills among young people. The project aimed to facilitate youth employment through skills development. As a result, 30 per cent of those receiving vocational/entrepreneurial skills training found employment, while another 35 per cent started their own businesses.



# 4. REGIONAL IMPACT: WEST AFRICA

## 4.1 Regional overview

### 4.1.1 Major crisis and vulnerability in West Africa

The impact of multi-dimensional crises has continued to worsen in West Africa, increasing humanitarian needs and underlining the importance of Islamic Relief's operations in Mali, Niger and Malawi. Protracted stressors for local communities – including the effects of climate change, insecurity, and political instability – have been aggravated by more frequent natural disasters, increased outbreaks of violence, and geopolitical and macro-economic shocks, such as the war in Ukraine. The impact of these events has been severely felt by ordinary people in West Africa. In Mali, the number of people requiring humanitarian assistance increased from 5.9 million in 2021 to 7.5 million in 2022<sup>9</sup>, in Niger there were 3.7 million people in need in 2022<sup>10</sup>.

The region is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, which are leading to irregular rainfall, floods and drought. In Mali, vulnerable households in rural areas – which make up approximately 80 per cent of the population – have been impacted significantly by irregular rainfall and repeated flooding<sup>11</sup>. In 2021, Niger experienced unfavourable rain and prolonged periods of drought, resulting in decreased agricultural production and a surge in food prices. The effects of this were still being felt in 2022. Tropical Storm Ana and Cyclone Gombe in Malawi brought torrential rains and flooding, severely affecting agricultural productivity and causing extensive damage to water and sanitation systems. The severe flooding increased the incidence of communicable diseases, including the country's deadliest cholera outbreak for a decade<sup>12</sup>.

The war in Ukraine and its effects on the global economy, including international commodity prices, have been heavily felt by African countries. In Mali, which imports nearly 70 per cent of its food, coarse grain prices more than doubled in 2022<sup>13</sup>. The economy has also been greatly affected by sanctions imposed by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the West Africa Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), as well as by Mali's withdrawal from the G5 Sahel group of nations<sup>14</sup>. Niger and Malawi have also seen the secondary effects of the Russia-Ukraine conflict with increased food and fertiliser prices<sup>15</sup>, and inflation reached 33.7 per cent in October 2022 – three times the rate a year previously. The worsening economic conditions in the region have put increasing pressure on many households as their purchasing power has decreased, with prices continuing to rise<sup>16</sup>.

Niger faced persistent conflict and insecurity, especially along its borders with Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, and Nigeria, and internal tensions have continued to escalate. Previous stressors related to land tenure and access to water and other natural resources have been amplified by the persistent presence of non-state armed groups and episodes of violence<sup>17</sup>. Insecurity in Mali is caused by a variety of factors: inter-communal conflicts, socio-political instability, adverse weather conditions, and the protracted consequences of Covid-19 have all contributed to a picture in which increasing numbers of people have been displaced from their home areas<sup>18</sup>. These situations have been further exacerbated by droughts, floods, poor access to basic services and economic opportunities, and rising food and fuel costs<sup>19</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> Mali Annual Country Report 2022, United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), 2023.

<sup>10</sup> Humanitarian Action for Children 2023 – Niger, UNICEF, 2023.

<sup>11</sup> Mali: Humanitarian Response Plan 2023, United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), 2023.

<sup>12</sup> SPELL OUT UNSDGCF PLEASE 2022 UN Malawi Results Report, UNSDGCF, 2023.

<sup>13</sup> Mali: Humanitarian Response Plan 2023, FAO, 2023.

<sup>14</sup> Mali Rapport Annuel de Resultats 2022, Nations Unies Mali, 2022.

<sup>15</sup> Mali Annual Country Report 2022, WFP, 2023.

<sup>16</sup> Country Office Annual Report, Malawi, UNICEF, 2022.

<sup>17</sup> Niger: Humanitarian Response Plan 2023, FAO, 2023.

<sup>18</sup> Humanitarian Action for Children 2023 – Mali, UNICEF, 2023.

<sup>19</sup> Niger: Humanitarian Response Plan 2023, FAO, 2023.



### 4.1.2 Strategic sectoral priorities for West Africa

In response to a series of crises, Islamic Relief's West Africa regional team implemented a multi-faceted strategy in the region. In Mali, the focus was on minimising the humanitarian fallout from conflicts and natural disasters by investing in disaster preparedness. We also sought to lift communities out of poverty through integrated, long-term, multi-sector projects. Meanwhile, in Malawi, the strategy emphasised building resilience at both the household and community levels. This was to be accomplished by promoting sustainable livelihoods, enhancing food security, and facilitating social and financial inclusion. Special attention was also given to ensuring better access to safe drinking water and promoting better hygiene practices.

Building community and household resilience was also a strong feature of the strategy in Niger. Islamic Relief Niger has been implementing multi-year integrated projects aimed at enabling

ultra-poor households to reach a more financially secure position. Alongside this, our Niger team have initiated programmes that specifically tackle food insecurity and malnutrition, particularly in communities feeling the adverse impacts of climate change and conflict. These programmes have included cash and voucher systems to enable people to buy food, capacity-building in malnutrition screening and treatment, and strengthening local food production to meet the needs of vulnerable groups.

Through these targeted strategies, the aim of our teams in West Africa has been to maximise their impact and provide comprehensive support to rightsholders across the region.

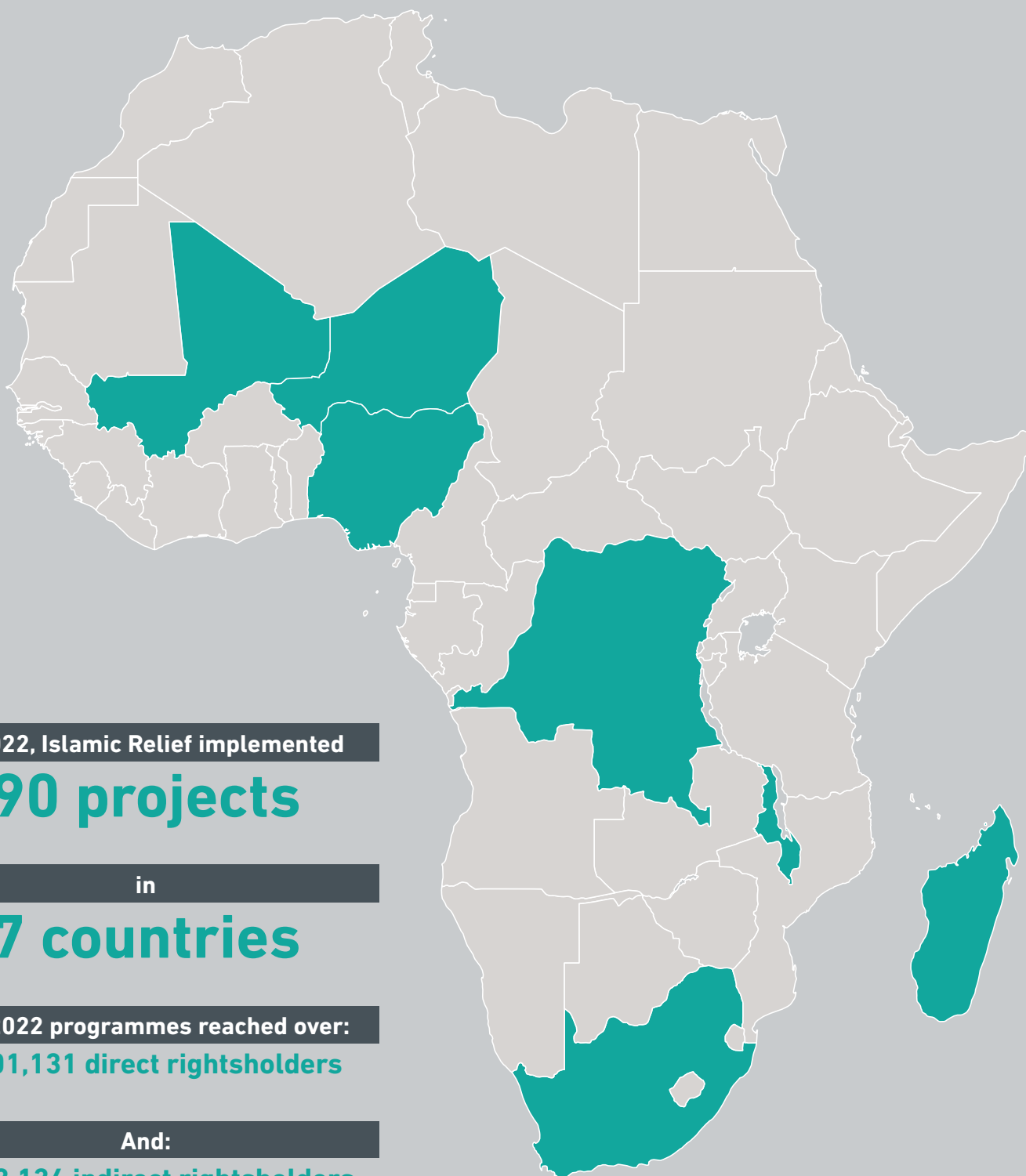
The reach data confirms and aligns with the regional strategic objectives, as figure x details.

**Table 5: Sectoral priorities for West Africa**

Sectors	Projects	Direct	Indirect
Seasonal Programme	12	1,629,840	n/a
Health	4	1,297,192	151,746
Food Security & Livelihoods	23	434,389	565,542
WASH	7	78,122	114,956
Protection & Inclusion (Gender / Age / Disability)	6	62,595	167,259
Microfinance	5	28,376	85,671
Food distribution	6	25,732	91,457
Cash programming	3	12,339	27,930
Orphan sponsorship programme	4	11,609	n/a
Shelter	3	10,548	53,501
Education	11	6,846	15,938
Non Food Item Distribution	1	2,690	6,860
Climate change Adaptation and/or Mitigation	1	750	22,263
Other	4	103	11

## 4.2 West and southern Africa reach and impact

This section captures the scope and impact of our efforts over the past year, specifically in the West Africa region. Using key data and impact metrics, this is a snapshot illustrating the achievements of our teams in the region, helping to show the quantifiable change that has been delivered through our own initiatives and those implemented in partnership with others.



In 2022, Islamic Relief implemented

**90 projects**

in

**7 countries**

Our 2022 programmes reached over:

**3,601,131 direct rightsholders**

And:

**1,303,134 indirect rightsholders**



**Table 6: West Africa heat map with boxes highlighting the below data**

Country	# of projects	# of direct RHs	# of indirect RHs
Malawi	11	364082	20646
Mali	28	991565	599022
Niger	32	2176961	658560
South Africa	14	50838	14180
Nigeria	3	8387	0
Madagascar	1	9262	10726
DRC	1	36	0

**Table 7: Project types**

Country	Advocacy	Development	Humanitarian	Orphan sponsorship	Seasonal
Malawi		7		1	3
Mali	1	20	3	1	3
Niger		18	9	1	4
Nigeria		1	2		
South Africa		9	2	1	2
DRC		1			
Madagascar			1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>

**Table 8: Cross-cutting**

Cross-cutting themes	Projects
Climate change	30
Women's empowerment	45
Protection mainstreaming	37
Inclusion of people with disabilities	43
Inclusion of older people	25



Water for Food Security in the village of Dognoumana" is a 12-month Food Security Project aiming to improve the food and nutritional security

Mali 2022

## 4.3 Country spotlights

Our country spotlights for West Africa include example projects from the Zomba district of Malawi, from Gourma Rharous in Mali, and from Ouallam in Niger – all funded by Islamic Relief USA.

### Country spotlight: Malawi

#### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Overall country metric	364,082	11
Top sectoral contributions		
Seasonal	317016	3
WASH	14,398	2
Protection & Inclusion (Gender / Age / Disability)	18,423	2

#### Project spotlight

Integrated Action for Community Resilience in Zomba district funded by Islamic Relief USA

Our Integrated Action for Community Resilience in Zomba District project is contributing to improved living conditions and resilience among vulnerable communities by delivering:

- Better access to diversified and resilient livelihood opportunities for vulnerable families
- Faith-based programming that ensures better protection for the most vulnerable within their communities, particularly women and girls.

Key project achievements to date have included:

- An increase from 53 per cent to 72 per cent in the proportion of community leaders (including members of community protection committees and faith leaders) who have applicable knowledge of gender, inclusion and protection issues, sensitivities and needs. To further strengthen the knowledge gained, an action plan was developed to implement community activities such as awareness campaigns, back-to-school campaigns, and enforcement of community by-laws
- The formation of three clubs/associations of farmers who are working together to improve links, share knowledge on different farming practices, and facilitate collaboration in value chain analysis and development.



Islamic Relief Malawi has distributed 6240 Ramadan Food Packs containing essential items to vulnerable and poverty stricken households

Malawi 2022

## Country spotlight: Mali

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Overall country metric	991,565	28
Top sectoral contributions		
Seasonal	506,957	3
Food security and livelihoods	361,478	10
WASH	51,391	3

### Project spotlight

WASH, Food security and livelihoods, and Disaster Risk Reduction in Gourma Rharous funded by Islamic Relief USA

To address the increasingly complex needs stemming from conflict and climate change – and compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic – Islamic Relief Mali has implemented a multisectoral project over 30 months in Gourma Rharous. Its aim is to positively support those affected and enable them to live in dignity in challenging circumstances. Project activities, which were spread over 17 villages, particularly targeted internally displaced people (IDPs), returnees who were previously displaced, and poor families hosting the displaced. The project sought to:

1. Improve the use of gender-sensitive WASH services
2. Increase engagement of households in economic opportunities that contribute to improved food security and more productive livelihoods
3. Strengthen people's capacity to prepare themselves for climate and conflict shocks
4. Enhance the protection and social cohesion mechanisms in targeted communities.

Key project achievements included:

- 16 drinking points have been installed in 15 villages, with access ramps for people with disabilities and the addition of gravel underfoot so that people who are visually impaired can find their way to the water points. Over three-quarters of households (77 per cent) now have access to safe water and gender-sensitive water points, including 91 per cent of female-headed households and 63 per cent of families that include people with disabilities. The average walking time spent collecting water has reduced from over 30 minutes to 19 minutes. Three hundred gender-separated

latrines have been built in 17 villages, resulting in an 82 per cent reduction in open defecation, with particularly marked improvement in the 14 nomadic villages covered in this intervention

- Two irrigated areas of 60 hectares (ha) were rehabilitated for rice production, to the benefit of 240 farmers who received training to make the most of the land to grow rice effectively. Five market garden areas were equipped with water points with solar irrigation systems to benefit 500 market gardeners, including 250 women and 10 people with disabilities. Six hundred goats and 12 tonnes of cattle feed were distributed to 300 vulnerable women, while 120ha of land was regenerated to support the provision of animal fodder during the lean season. Seventy per cent of households increased their productive assets and increased their livestock production
- 16 communities and community-based organisations strengthened disaster preparedness; 41 per cent of people interviewed said that their communities were better prepared for disaster risks because of Islamic Relief's awareness campaigning
- 85 people were trained in the Channels of Hope methodology for child protection (CP) and gender-based violence. Seventeen community action teams were established, one in every intervention village, and these developed action plans to bring about changes in knowledge, attitudes, and practices. Among faith leaders, 95 per cent have now been involved in conflict management, while 68 per cent of rightsholders have improved their knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding social cohesion.

This is the first Islamic Relief project in the Gourma Rharous Circle that has followed the 'triple nexus' principles and approach, with deliberate integration of humanitarian, development, and conflict prevention elements.



## Country spotlight: Niger

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Overall country metric	2,176,961	32
Top sectoral contributions		
Health	1,297,192	4
Seasonal	760,816	4
Food security and livelihoods	50,512	8

### Project spotlight

Strengthening Nutritional Resilience in the District of Ouallam funded by Islamic Relief USA

This 36-month project, implemented from December 2020 to December 2023, aimed to reduce the prevalence of global acute malnutrition (GAM) in 2,000 vulnerable households in the Ouallam district, through nutrition-sensitive resilience programming. The project focused on three main areas of desired outcomes:

1. Improving access for children under the age of five to high-quality, timely nutrition and related health care services
2. Enabling rightsholders to actively participate in gender-responsive, resilient livelihood systems that support improved nutrition
3. Enhancing protection, particularly for women, girls, and people with disabilities, supported through faith-based programming.

Key project achievements in 2022 included:

- 91 per cent of targeted households reported improvements in the quality and timeliness of nutritional health service provision in the 20 intervention villages. Twenty community malnutrition management centres were established, and 200 mothers were established as leaders and models to mobilise 2,000 peers for malnutrition management training. The project helped ensure that 6,905 children aged six to 59

months were screened for malnutrition and referred to additional services if needed, while 11,663 people were reached through awareness sessions and training on malnutrition. Over three-quarters of targeted communities (78 per cent) reported improved perception of malnutrition prevention services

- 83 per cent of rightsholders reported increases in their income. The proportion of women with access to and control over productive assets increased from 10 per cent to 38 per cent. A hundred village loan and savings associations were established to provide informal financial services to members. Off-farm income diversification improved by 58 per cent
- Knowledge of GBV and CP issues increased from zero to 69 per cent. Enhanced protection practices were reported by 83 per cent of participants, while 160 community protection actors (eight people per village) received training that is enabling them to raise awareness in their communities on GBV, CP, child marriage, child labour, stigmatisation of people with disabilities, and refusal of education for children.



Islamic Relief Niger is in the process of installing a water tower in the village of Deli Tondi Atoukaira, the women beneficiaries of the project of this village are undergoing training on good agricultural practices.

Niger 2022.



# 5. REGIONAL IMPACT: ASIA

## 5.1 Regional overview

### 5.1.1 Major crisis and vulnerability in Asia

Many countries in Asia experienced a range of interconnected crises and vulnerabilities in 2022, causing a negative impact on millions of people and exacerbating existing challenges. The convergence of factors such as climate change, food insecurity, conflicts, economic fluctuations, and unemployment posed severe challenges to the region's development and wellbeing.

Climate change remained a significant concern in Asia during 2022, with a continuation in the pattern of extreme weather events, rising sea levels, and disruptions in agricultural activities. Several countries in the region faced severe floods, drought, heatwaves, or a combination of these, damaging food production, infrastructure, and livelihoods. For example, parts of South Asia experienced devastating floods, while countries in Southeast Asia grappled with drought-induced water shortages.

The region experienced several climate-related shocks in 2022, including extreme weather events, rising sea levels, and natural disasters. Countries such as Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and the Philippines faced devastating cyclones and floods, resulting in loss of lives, displacement of communities, and extensive damage to infrastructure. The region's vulnerability to climate change means it is imperative to put robust adaptation and mitigation strategies in place.

Food security remained a pressing concern in Asia during 2022, with millions facing acute hunger and malnutrition. This was primarily driven by climate-related challenges, conflicts, and economic conditions. Crop failures due to extreme weather events and conflicts in certain regions disrupted food supply chains, leading to price spikes and food shortages. The situation was particularly acute in conflict-affected areas such as Afghanistan, where access to food was severely restricted.

Economic conditions in Asia varied during 2022. While some countries experienced growth and recovery, others struggled with economic downturns, exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic's lingering impact. The pandemic-induced economic slowdown contributed to increases in unemployment and income disparities in countries such as India, Indonesia, and the Philippines.





### 5.1.2 Strategic sectoral priorities for Asia

Islamic Relief's strategy for Asia is tailored to meet the unique and evolving challenges of the region<sup>20</sup>. The strategy is built on four cornerstone objectives that are intended to complement each other for widespread impact. The first objective is to reduce the effects of conflicts and natural disasters through immediate response and long-term preparedness initiatives. The second is to lift local communities out of poverty and vulnerability, focusing on climate resilience, sustainable livelihood programmes, and the promotion of child rights and welfare across the region. The third objective centres on rallying both human and financial resources to back our endeavours, with an emphasis on increasing funding from institutional and bilateral donors. Lastly, the strategy seeks to strengthen regional cooperation, aspiring towards improved programme quality, recognition as a regional leader in climate change adaptation, and achieving an increasingly prominent role as

a faith-based organisation tackling poverty and vulnerability within civil society in the region.

In terms of sectoral focus, our regional strategy focuses on:

- Climate change adaptation and DRR
- Sustainable livelihoods, including vocational training
- Shelter and WASH
- Child welfare, with a particular focus on orphans
- Health and nutrition
- Education

The reach data somewhat confirms and aligns with the regional strategic objectives, as figure x details.

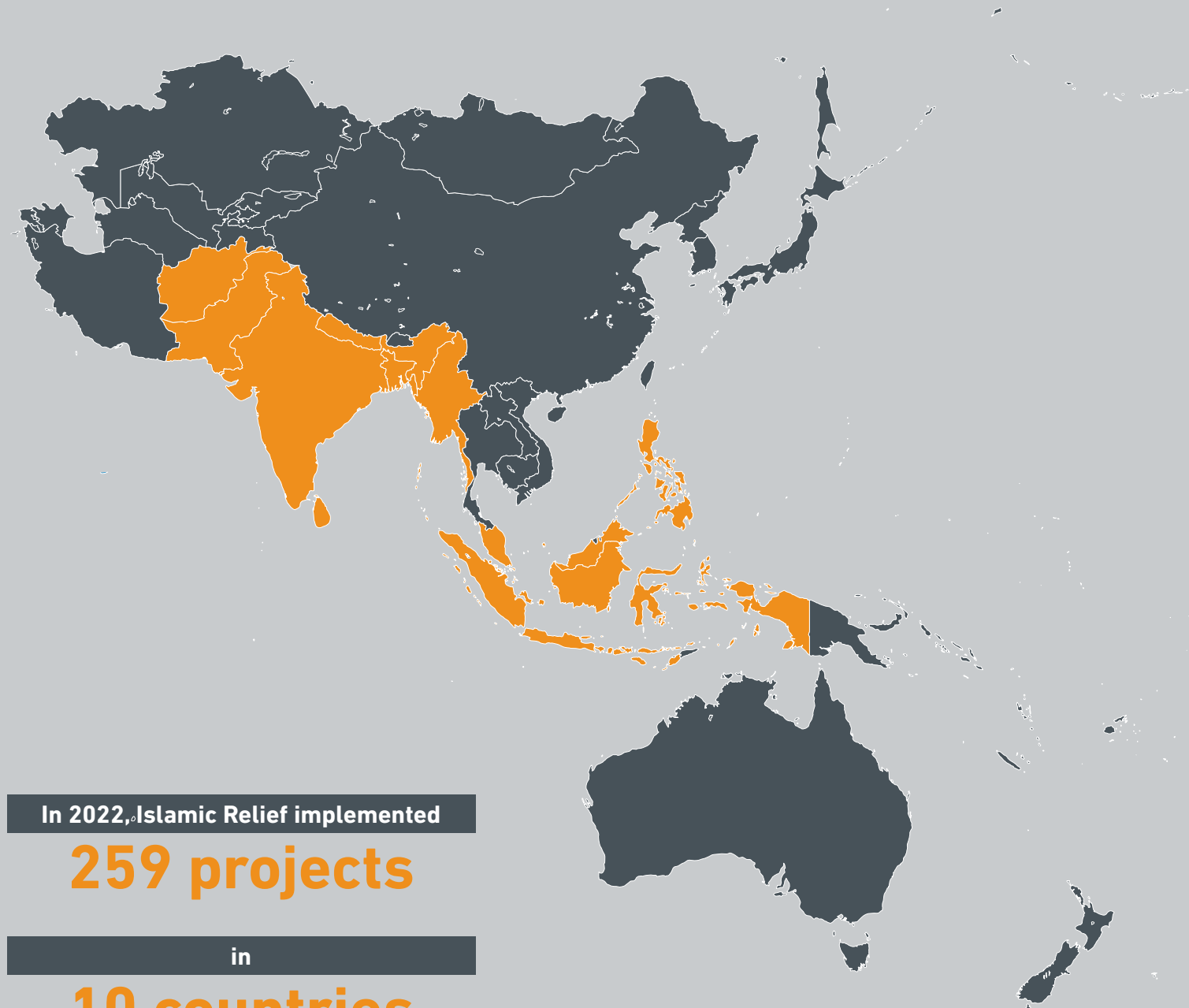
**Table 9: Sectoral priorities for Asia**

Sectors	Projects	# of Direct Rightsholders (	# of Indirect Rightsholders
Seasonal Programme	26	2,048,337	n/a
Food Security & Livelihoods	55	805,913	657,253
Food distribution	36	798,512	388,708
WASH	28	427,987	2,305,374
Cash programming	15	312,641	1,469,321
Climate change Adaptation and/or Mitigation	11	209,496	254,000
Shelter	22	160,060	59,840
Health	10	130,613	60,456
Non Food Item Distribution	6	78,213	4,374
Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)	4	65,951	306,712
Equally Distributed Across Multiple Sectors - please select the sectors involved via the next question	6	26,671	12,193
Orphan sponsorship programme	6	25,174	n/a
Education	12	21,379	10,571
Protection & Inclusion (Gender / Age / Disability)	5	17,646	29,767
Other	8	15,804	107,123
Microfinance	6	4,243	10,027
Community Peace Building	2	920	n/a
Safeguarding	1	0	36

<sup>20</sup> Asia: Regional Strategy, Islamic Relief Worldwide, 2017.

## 5.2 Asia reach and impact

This section captures the scope and impact of our aid and development efforts over the past year, specifically in the Asia region.



In 2022, Islamic Relief implemented

**259 projects**

in

**10 countries**

Our 2022 programmes reached over:

**5,149,560 direct rightsholders**

And:

**5,675,755 indirect rightsholders**

**Table 10: Asia heat map with boxes highlighting the below data**

Country	Projects	Direct rightsholders	Indirect rightsholders
Afghanistan	43	1,243,789	2,014,996
Bangladesh	63	1,481,540	494,498
India	4	39,109	875
Indonesia	11	80,909	30,428
Malaysia	1	810	1,109
Myanmar	22	213,547	11,381
Nepal	11	84,433	33,983
Pakistan	74	1,808,512	2,730,249
Philippines	17	86,782	334,942
Sri Lanka	13	110,129	23,294

**Table 11: Project types**

Country	Advocacy	Development	Humanitarian	Orphan sponsorship	Seasonal
Afghanistan		9	29	1	4
Bangladesh		20	37	1	5
India		2		1	1
Indonesia		4	4	1	2
Malaysia			1		
Myanmar		17	3		2
Nepal		6	2		3
Pakistan	1	26	41	1	5
Philippines	1	7	7		2
Sri Lanka		7	3	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>26</b>

**Table 12: Asia's contribution to key cross-cuttingcrosscutting themes**

Cross-cutting themes	Number of projects
Climate change	76
Women's empowerment	66
Protection mainstreaming	92
Inclusion of people with disabilities	159
Inclusion of older people	150



## 5.3 Country spotlights

Our country spotlights for Asia include example projects from six of the nine countries featured, variously funded by Islamic Relief Netherlands; our member offices in the United States, Canada and Germany; and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

### Country spotlight: Bangladesh

#### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Overall country metric	1,481,540	63
Top sectoral contributions		
Seasonal Programme	921,033	5
Food security and livelihoods	159,122	17
Non-food item distribution Food distribution	211,854	5



Islamic RELief Bangladesh distributed hygiene kits to flood affected families in Sylhet district.. Bangladesh 2022

## Project spotlight

Promoting the Model for the Elimination of Extreme Poverty in Bangladesh (PM-EEP), funded by Islamic Relief Germany-

This project focuses on eradicating extreme poverty and enhancing the wellbeing of its target population. It aims to diversify income streams and generate various livelihood options for 1,000 households grappling with extreme poverty, helping them to achieve a better quality of life and improved socio-economic standing. The EEP project is guided by five core objectives: the eradication of extreme poverty; the fortification of community-based organisations for collective impact and empowerment; skill and capacity development for the targeted beneficiaries; the establishment of a sustainable, group-led financial system; and advocacy for the model's replication in other local communities and the wider development sector.

The main positive outcomes include:

1. Previously destitute families have been empowered to lift themselves out of extreme poverty
2. Relevant government departments and national and international development partners have been made aware of the EEP model and equipped to replicate it
3. The wider public in the target area are aware of and support the funding, replication and scaling up of the EEP model
4. The National Cooperative Network (NCN) is acting as an umbrella organisation for 'apex bodies' implementing the EEP model, and its contribution includes linking apex bodies to external service providers.

Key project achievements:

- Improved economic status:
  - The average monthly income of participants has increased to BDT 7,787, up from a baseline of BDT 4,927
  - The average value of productive assets per participant has risen to BDT 30,548 from a baseline of BDT 11,215, with non-productive asset value averaging BDT 17,431, compared to a baseline of BDT 5,616

- The average interest-free loan size has grown to BDT 21,439, a significant increase from the baseline loan size of BDT 2,246 with interest.
- Improved dietary intake
  - All households can now afford three proper meals a day, a stark contrast to only 1 per cent being able to do so at the outset
  - 100 per cent of participating households now have acceptable levels of nutrition.
- Women's empowerment
  - 100 per cent of targeted women are now actively involved in family decision-making processes, including control over financial and other resources within their households
  - 100 per cent of targeted women have the freedom to travel alone to various public places in their local areas, including markets, government complexes, hospitals, and banks
  - 72 per cent of beneficiaries report consistent support from local government and other service providers, while the remaining 28 per cent have not yet sought such support.
  - 71 per cent of beneficiaries have access to social safety net programmes.

The Elimination of Extreme Poverty (EEP) model, developed by Islamic Relief Bangladesh, is an integrated framework designed to address the multifaceted challenges of extreme poverty. The model incorporates a range of components such as resilience, micro-Takaful, sanitation, child protection, nutrition, education, and livelihood development, among others. It has been rigorously tested through a variety of projects implemented over the years, such as ICAP, HELP UP, RIP, and SAFOLLO, to name a few. These projects have not only been successful in achieving their goals but have also shown significant increases in household income, thereby proving the model's effectiveness.

## Country spotlight: Nepal

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Overall country metric	84,433	11
Top sectoral contributions		
Seasonal programme	49,583	3
Food security and livelihoods	17,352	5
Protection	15,427	2

### Project spotlight

Equal and Just Society by Reducing Gender-based Violence in Rautahat District, funded by Islamic Relief Canada

This project involves a mix of service delivery and a rights-based approach, aiming to reduce the incidence of gender-based violence through the provision of needs-based protection, livelihoods development, and educational support to GBV survivors and those at risk.

The three main components of project delivery have been:

1. Extensive awareness generation on the issues of GBV at household and community levels
2. Social and economic empowerment of women, providing them with support to meet the particular needs identified during case management. Empowerment is achieved in many ways, including through on/off farm livelihoods development, education, psychosocial support, and health care
3. Strengthening existing government protection arrangements to provide services effectively and efficiently.

Key project achievements include:

- Successful implementation of planned activities during Covid-19 pandemic, taking appropriate precautions and following public safety protocols
- More than 75 per cent of respondents and stakeholders satisfied with the value for money attained by the project and its efficient use of resources
- 95 per cent of the intended right-holders enhanced their knowledge and awareness of GBV issues. (measured by awareness of at least three GBV prevention measures they can adopt to mitigate GBV in their lives and at community level)
- The annual income of vulnerable women and girls who participated in livelihood activities increased by 28 per cent
- Establishment of a referral mechanism to address GBV in the two project municipalities
- The number of GBV cases reported to and handled by police increased by 47 per cent
- The project was assessed on 12 gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) markers and was found to be GESI aware.

This project has a community-based approach, centred around community learning and protection centre that are led by women and supported by facilitators from local partner organisations. It engages key community figures and entities such as youth groups, schools, mothers' groups, religious leaders, and village child protection committees to promote its objectives through awareness campaigns.



## Country spotlight: India

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Overall country metric	39,109	4
Top sectoral contributions		
Seasonal	36,609	1
Orphan sponsorship programme	2,341	14



Islamic Relief distributed food packs to 8,104 vulnerable families (36,609 individuals) under seasonal food distribution programme.

India 2022.

## Country spotlight: Indonesia

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Overall country metric	80,909	11
Top sectoral contribution		
Seasonal programme	41,028	2
Climate change adaptation and/or mitigation	17,411	4
Food security and livelihoods	15,832	1

### Project spotlight

Fostering the Role of Religious Places in DRR and Livelihood Convergence, funded by Islamic Relief Netherlands

Islamic Relief Indonesia has been actively involved in disaster response in Central Sulawesi, collaborating with local non-government organisations (NGOs) to provide immediate relief such as food, water, and shelter in Palu city and Sigi district. Given the geological risks in the area – with evidence from the National Geology Body indicating that liquefaction, tsunamis, and earthquakes could potentially reoccur in Central Sulawesi – the project delivers disaster risk reduction (DRR) measures to enhance community resilience.

The project aims to:

1. Build resilience at the community level against liquefaction triggered by earthquakes
2. Build the capacity of district-level government in risk analysis, planning, budgeting, preparedness, and mitigation against liquefaction.

The positive impact of this project at the community level has included:

- Community awareness and skills in disaster preparedness have increased significantly, proven by various self-initiated actions that have subsequently occurred in information dissemination, emergency responses, and the building of resilience infrastructure

- The targeted villages show increased resilience scores, indicating an improved capacity to handle and adapt to disasters
- Hydroponic farming practices have been successfully adopted by 44 per cent of rightsholders.

At the government level, positive developments have included the following:

- The project has boosted the Sigi district's rating on the regional resilience index because of the creation of various essential DRR documents and plans
- Budget allocation for DRR has increased by 20 per cent for the 2021-2026 period, with comprehensive planning documents developed
- Government officers have been trained and certified in disaster management, acting as resource persons for DRR
- The DRR network at multiple levels has been strengthened, promoting more coordinated and systematic disaster risk management.

In addition, the DRR forum established by the project has significantly influenced new DRR policies in Sigi district, aligned with the national Sendai Framework. The newly established Centre of Emergency Control and Response (PUSDALOPS) coordinates and communicates disaster responses.



## Country spotlight: Philippines

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Overall country metric	86,782	17
Top sectoral contributions		
Seasonal	49,790	2
Shelter	5,786	2
Food distribution	9,210	2

### Project spotlight

THRIVE Project (Thrive to Build Forward Better and Safer), funded by Islamic Relief USA

In a bid to support conflict-affected communities, a short-term project was implemented by Islamic Relief Philippines with a focus on economic recovery, women's empowerment, and mental well-being. As part of its economic revitalisation efforts, the project identified 100 individuals who were each granted 10,000 pesos as start-up capital. Parallel to this, 100 women were organised into 20 groups, each embarking on a duck-egg production venture with support provided.

Recognising that financial aid alone is not enough for long-term sustainability, the project also conducted comprehensive skills training in a variety of subjects, including drafting business proposals, leadership skills, financial management, and the technical aspects of duck egg production.

Key project achievements included:

- Rightsholders have started building up savings to use in case of emergencies, primarily for health needs
- Social bonds among women have been strengthened through self-help groups and project activities, providing mutual support for mental health and daily needs like food and emergencies
- 100 per cent of rightsholders used their 10,000-peso start-up capital to revive or start small businesses. Post-project monitoring showed 47 per cent were earning P500-1800 per day
- 20 women-led groups in duck-egg production reported a monthly income of P1,000-8,000, with 91 per cent of participants earning daily or weekly income by selling 16-31 eggs per day at local markets.

A cornerstone of the project was the implementation of a minimum economic recovery standards (MERS) study, mapping out market-based strategies for effective development interventions.



100 women-headed households receive egg-layer ducks and another 100 vulnerable families each receive P10,000 worth of cash grants to revive livelihoods lost due to displacement.

Philippines 2022



## Country spotlight: Pakistan

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Overall country metric	1,808,512	74
Top sectoral contributions		
Seasonal	347,446	5
Food security and livelihoods	316,612	12
WASH	279,114	8

### Project spotlight

Climate Sensitive Livelihood Modelling (CSLM) Project, funded by Islamic Relief USA

Islamic Relief Pakistan (IRP) is implementing a project aimed at improving the socio-economic wellbeing and food security of vulnerable families in coastal, urban, and semi-urban areas. Faced with climate change, these communities currently rely on destructive coping strategies such as selling assets and pulling children out of school. The project's key elements include:

- Efficient water use and management through community-based approaches to support livelihoods
- Capacity building in sustainable water and land management
- Climate-resilient interventions in agriculture for rural areas and vocational training for urban areas, aimed at increasing income and food security.

The project has developed an advocacy and awareness strategy that includes three core elements: collaboration with academia to produce evidence-based research on the impacts of climate change on food and water security; active engagement with communities and civil society organisations to develop climate-sensitive solutions; and offering technical assistance to state institutions for informed planning and successful implementation of programmes.

Initial achievements include:

1. Formation of community organisations and farmers' groups to build local capacity. These groups have been trained in various skills, such as leadership and advocacy
2. Collaborations with research bodies to tap into technical expertise, in areas including social mobilisation, food security, and WASH activities
3. Collaborations with various provincial and district government bodies, as well as local and national organisations.

## Country spotlight: Sri Lanka

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Overall country metric	110,129	13
Top sectoral contributions		
Seasonal	71,706	2
Food distribution	15,852	2
Food Security & Livelihoods	6,3852	3

## Country spotlight: Afghanistan

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Overall country metric	1,243,789	43
Top sectoral contributions		
Seasonal	413,862	4
Food distribution	303,038	15
Food Security & Livelihoods	256,236	9

### Project spotlight

Area Based Approach for Development Emergency Initiative (ABADEI) Project, funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

This project offered immediate, life-sustaining support to vulnerable households in six provinces of Afghanistan: Bamyan, Balkh, Kunar, Kandahar, Herat, and Nangarhar. The overarching objective was to improve these households' ability to meet basic food and livelihood needs while also building resilience against future challenges.

Two main aims drove the establishment of this project. The first was to increase the income of nearly 166,342 households through a combination of short-term cash-for-work employment opportunities and unconditional

cash transfers. The second was to sustain existing livelihoods and boost agricultural production, through the rehabilitation of 198 key community assets and pieces of infrastructure in the targeted provinces.

The project operated through a robust cash-for-work approach with two main intervention strands: one focused on the development and rehabilitation of existing community-based irrigation systems to improve agricultural productivity, the other offering cash-for-work opportunities to the most vulnerable within their immediate localities.

## Country spotlight: Myanmar

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Overall country metric	213,547	22
Top sectoral contribution		
Seasonal	117,280	2
Food Security & Livelihoods	29,357	4
Health	41,643	6



# 6. REGIONAL IMPACT: MIDDLE EAST AND EASTERN EUROPE

## 6.1 Regional overview

### 6.1.1 Major crisis and vulnerability in THE Middle East and Eastern Europe

The Middle East has long been plagued by a multitude of crises and vulnerabilities, and has served as a hotspot for global conflicts. One of the foremost challenges faced by so many countries in the region is political instability. Many Middle Eastern nations also suffer from weak governance, corruption, and significant limits on political freedoms. The ongoing conflicts in Syria and Yemen have created power vacuums, with profound consequences. The crisis in Syria, ongoing since 2011, has resulted in a large-scale humanitarian crisis, mass displacement, and regional instability. Similarly, Yemen's protracted crisis has caused severe suffering, leaving millions dependent on humanitarian aid.

Economic vulnerabilities permeate the Middle East region, often serving as a catalyst for unrest. Countries heavily reliant on oil revenues face challenges due to fluctuating prices, leading to economic downturns, high unemployment rates, and increased inequality. The limited diversification of economies hinders sustainable development and the effective provision of social services, causing dissatisfaction among the citizens of a number of Middle Eastern countries.

The Middle East hosts a significant number of refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs). Ongoing conflicts and political instability have led to mass displacement, with millions seeking refuge within the region and beyond. The unprecedented extent of displacement within the region is putting an enormous strain on the resources of host communities and countries, undermining social cohesion and in some cases affecting local economies and even national security. Although the Balkan countries have achieved significant progress in economic development, the region faced numerous challenges in 2022, ranging

from political instability and economic setbacks to climate change impacts and high unemployment rates. This region comprises countries with a complex history and diverse cultural backgrounds. In 2022, the region faced a series of interconnected crises and vulnerabilities. Several Balkan countries experienced political instability, characterised by upheavals in government, hotly contested elections, and social unrest. These issues hindered the implementation of much-needed reforms and contributed to an atmosphere of uncertainty and mistrust in multiple countries. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the failure to form a government after the general election in 2022 deepened ethnic divisions and stalled progress in addressing critical issues.

There were multiple economic challenges to grapple with in the region, including high inflation, rising public debt, and slow recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. These factors contributed to economic stagnation and adversely affected living standards for many. Albania experienced a severe financial crisis in 2022, with high inflation rates and a weakened national currency leading to reduced purchasing power for citizens.

Climate change posed significant threats to the region, with extreme weather events, water scarcity, and agricultural disruption affecting vulnerable communities. In North Macedonia, a prolonged drought in 2022 resulted in water shortages, damaging agricultural productivity and livelihoods in rural areas.



### 6.1.2 Strategic sectoral priorities for THE Middle East and Eastern Europe

Islamic Relief has a five-year strategy for the Middle East and North Africa-Eastern Europe (MENA-EE), to address the evolving challenges in the region<sup>21</sup>. The strategy is anchored in three primary goals designed to have a broad impact. These are:

- Reducing the humanitarian impact of conflicts and natural disasters by responding to crises and adopting preparedness measures
- Empowering local communities to emerge from poverty and vulnerability by working to tackle recurrent food insecurity, to improve limited livelihood options, and to widen access to education
- Mobilising people and funds to support our work, particularly increasing funding from institutional and bilateral donors.

In terms of sectoral focus, Islamic Relief's MENAEE regional team has chosen to focus on the following:

1. Education and vocational training
2. Food security and livelihoods
3. Shelter and NFIs
4. WASH
5. Health and nutrition

The reach data somewhat confirms and aligns with the regional strategic objectives, as figure x details.

**Table 13: Sectoral priorities for theEast Middle East and Eastern Europe**

Sectors	Projects	Direct	Indirect
Food distribution	18	2,285,344	327,217
Seasonal	46	1,242,277	60
Health	37	1,071,334	479,380
Other	23	975,968	4412
WASH	17	253,428	10,671
Climate change Adaptation and/or Mitigation	2	200,121	200,000
Food Security & Livelihoods	30	158,085	200,096
Cash programming	22	76,566	20,991
Education	22	61,171	38,783
Orphan sponsorship programme	13	43,499	2,378
Equally Distributed Across Multiple Sectors - please select the sectors involved via the next question	2	26,758	4,981
Non Food Item Distribution	10	26,054	33,669
Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)	15	18,758	8,700
Protection & Inclusion (Gender / Age / Disability)	4	11,484	5,220
Microfinance	8	10,914	505
Shelter	11	9,589	20,796
Advocacy	1	82	0

<sup>21</sup> Middle East, North Africa, and Eastern Europe Region (MENA-EE) Regional Strategy 2017-2021, Islamic Relief Worldwide, 2017.

## 6.2 Middle East, North Africa and Eastern Europe reach and impact

This section captures the scope and impact of our efforts over the past year, specifically in the MENAEE region.



In 2022, MENAEE region implemented

**281 projects**

in

**13 countries**

Our 2022 programmes reached over:

**6,471,431 direct rightsholders**

And:

**1,357,859 indirect rightsholders**

**Table 14: MEEE heat map with boxes highlighting the below data**

Country	Projects	Direct rightsholders
Albania	10	53,404
Bosnia and Herzegovina	20	34,892
Iraq	7	66,251
Jordan	25	1,411,22
Kosova	24	145,195
Lebanon	17	115,651
North Macedonia	8	128,906
Occupied Palestinian Territory oPt (Gaza) & West Bank	50	1,002,410
Russian Federation (Chechnya)	8	24,201
Syria	31	1,006,660
Tunisia	11	78,486
Türkiye Turkey	11	101,864
Yemen	59	3,572,389

**Table 15: Project types**

Country	Advocacy	Development	Humanitarian	Orphan sponsorship	Seasonal
Albania		3	3	1	3
Bosnia and & Herzegovina		10	6	1	3
Iraq			3	1	3
Jordan	1	7	12	1	4
Kosova		17	1	1	5
Lebanon		9	3	1	4
North Macedonia		3	2		3
oPt (Gaza & West Bank)		3	42	1	4
Russian Federation (Chechnya)		4	1	1	2
Syria		1	25	1	4
Tunisia	1	5	1	1	3
TürkiyeTurkey		3	3	1	4
Yemen		12	42	1	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>46</b>

**Table 16: MENAEE's contribution to key cross-cuttingcrosscutting themes**

Cross-cutting themes	Projects
Climate change	18
Women's empowerment	79
Protection mainstreaming	49
Inclusion of people with disabilities	95
Inclusion of older people	66



## 5.3 Country spotlights – Middle East

Our eight country spotlights in the Middle East region feature five project examples from Gaza, Yemen, Jordan, Iraq, and Türkiye.

### Country spotlight: oPt (Gaza)

Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Overall country metric	1,002,410	50
Top sectoral contributions		
Health	361,213	6
Seasonal	263,347	4
Climate change adaptation and/or mitigation	200,121	2

Project spotlight

Tree Planting in Palestine Project, funded by Islamic Relief Canada

This project set out to strengthen the agriculture sector in Gaza, while also enhancing the adaptive capacity and resilience of the community in the face of climate change and other environmental stressors. Recognising the pivotal importance of smallholder farmers for the local economy and food security, this project supported 665 in implementing a targeted tree-planting initiative designed to restore productive capacity and reduce vulnerability.

Tree planting is not only positive environmentally but is also a strategic intervention that delivers multiple benefits. It aids soil conservation, improves water retention and fertility, and can provide an additional source of income through production of fruit, nuts, or timber in the long term. The species

of trees chosen in this case were native to the region and drought-resistant, ensuring sustainability and lessening the need for water-intensive care.

Key project achievements have included:

- 665 farmers equipped with farming tools to improve agricultural production
- Expansion of the green area of the Gaza Strip by planting around 950 donums (approximately 950,000 square metres) with olive trees
- The planting of trees is considered a blessing in itself, with historical and cultural significance as an integral part of the Palestinian heritage. Olive trees are well suited to tolerating the salinity of the water in Gaza and to withstand climate change and diseases.



Islamic Relief implemented a tree planting activity for Palestinian farmers where about olive trees were planted across a 2,000 square meters piece of land

Gaza 2022.

## Country spotlight: Yemen

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Yemen	3,572,389	59
Top sectoral contributions		
Food distributions	2,174,986	8
WASH	161,520	8
Seasonal	170,496	4

### Project spotlight

Emergency Cholera Rapid Response for the Affected Populations in Yemen, funded by IR Germany.

This project has played a pivotal role in controlling and averting cholera outbreaks via a comprehensive approach combining health and WASH elements. Designed to lower both the death rate and the incidence of disease, the project was established at a time when cholera cases were increasing and health facilities were extremely limited.

Working in partnership with the Ministry of Public Health and Population and the UN's health cluster, Islamic Relief Yemen took the following key steps:

- Targeted four high-priority districts, focusing on building local capacity
- Supported the establishment and equipping of at least one diarrhoea treatment centre and one oral rehydration centre in each district
- Trained health workers and community volunteers in various aspects such as case

management, infection control, and the distribution of cholera kits, strengthening the healthcare system's ability to cope with future outbreaks.

Notable accomplishments of the project include:

- Effective management or treatment was achieved for 72 per cent of the designated cases
- A significant 87 per cent of respondents indicated having access to cholera control and prevention services in their localities
- Sixteen healthcare centres received comprehensive support and supplies, including essential medication, consumables, lab reagents, and cholera rapid-test kits
- Twelve doctors were hired and assigned to the four diarrhoea treatment centre
- A total of 653 hygiene education sessions were held, covering aspects of domestic, personal, and environmental cleanliness in targeted areas.

## Country spotlight: Tunisia

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Overall country metric	78,486	11
Top sectoral contributions		
Education	26,306	3
Health	27,612	1
Seasonal	19,319	3

## Country spotlight: Jordan

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
<b>Jordan</b>	141,122	25
<b>Top sectoral contributions</b>		
Seasonal	98,717	4
Health	19,683	4
Microfinance	9,611	6

### Project spotlight

Improving Access to Secondary and Tertiary Health Care Services for Syrian Refugees and Host Communities in Jordan, funded by

This project focused on enabling the most vulnerable refugees – pregnant and breastfeeding women, children, and patients with chronic life-threatening illnesses – to get the specialist health care they needed. Key components of the project included provision of high-quality and timely secondary and tertiary health services for the targeted population through IRJ contracted to Islamic Relief Jordan; and awareness sessions on Covid-19, hygiene practices, and other health issues.

Key project achievements included:

- 92 per cent of community members reported safe access to health care services provided by Islamic Relief Jordan,

contributing to the overall health and well-being of Syrian refugees and Jordanian families in targeted areas

- 81 per cent of participants were found to have increased their knowledge of Covid-19, hygiene practices and other health issues after attending the project's awareness-raising sessions
- Secondary and tertiary healthcare referrals were made for a total of 137 patients, 14 of whom were referred to a specialist dental surgical mission for children with disabilities that was held in cooperation with the Palestine Children's Relief Fund (PCRF)
- Hygiene kits and awareness sessions on safe hygiene practices provided for 500 rightsholders.



Islamic Relief Jordan target to distribute 4kg of lamb meat to 8,900 families from Palestinian & Syrian refugees, including local Jordanian families.

Jordan 2022



## Country spotlight: Iraq

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Overall country metric	66,251	7
Top sectoral contributions		
Seasonal	59,048	3
Orphan sponsorship programme	1,303	1
WASH	5,900	3

### Project spotlight

Rehabilitation of WASH Schemes and Community Assets, multiple funders

This multi-faceted project in Diyala governorate, aligned with the recommendations of the local municipality, focused primarily on improving WASH services and restoring community assets that needed to be repaired or upgraded. Targeting 3,000 households, the project aimed to ease hardship for displaced people returning to their home areas and improve the economic prospects of both returnees and local communities.

Key project components included:

- Rehabilitation of 20 non-functioning water schemes
- Removal of debris and cleaning of public spaces
- Five hygiene campaigns
- Rehabilitation of essential communal assets such as local markets, small roads, and irrigation channels.

This project has succeeded in addressing crucial water and community asset needs across 46 villages, benefiting 2,445 families and 11,402 individuals. With a focus on post-ISIS recovery, the project has had a number of important benefits:

- Construction of 15 water filtration stations to address water scarcity and poor water quality
- Establishment of community leader committees to manage these units, ensuring sustainable water access and financial viability through nominal fees
- Construction of public halls at affordable rates for local events, fostering social cohesion
- Improved infrastructure through repairs to irrigation canal repairs and the resurfacing of roads, conserving water and facilitating farmers' access to local markets
- Improved economic stability and better living conditions for returning residents and those who stayed during the conflict.



Islamic Relief Worldwide-Iraq office has distributed 955 Ramadan food basket to the orphans and vulnerable families in Baghdad province,

Iraq 2022.

## Country spotlight: Türkiye

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Overall country metric	101,864	11
Top sectoral contribution		
Seasonal	89,215	4
Non-food item distribution	5,874	1
Orphan sponsorship programme	4,406	1

### Project spotlight

Support to Agriculture Based Livelihoods in Türkiye, funded by Islamic Relief USA

This project aimed to enhance the food security and livelihoods of 450 households (2,250 individuals) through agriculture, beekeeping, and vocational training, in alignment with the Turkish government's Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan. Designed after stakeholder consultations led by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation and Islamic Relief's team in Türkiye, the project provided 400 families with agricultural inputs such as land rent, seeds, and fertilisers, as well as vocational training to enhance crop yields. It also provided 50 families with beehives and training in beekeeping, created links with local markets to improve income levels, and paid special attention to boosting income-generating activities among women. The project beneficiaries included both Syrian refugees and the host population in Türkiye, to minimise social tension.

Key project achievements have included:

- Alignment with the Turkish component of the Regional Refugee Response Plan

- Good returns on investment, with bee-keeping achieving the highest return. With an initial project budget of \$197,731 USD, the value of production turned out to be \$512,193
- Giving women and female-headed households greater access to pathways to livelihood activities.

Islamic Relief Türkiye made livelihood pathways more accessible to women in this project by ensuring that they had land and greenhouses allocated to them close to home. This reduced travel time, making it easier for women to juggle multiple responsibilities. Women from more conservative families were encouraged to work in greenhouses, where they could be sheltered from view and less affected by restrictions on their movement in the local area. They were also encouraged to choose their own greenhouse partners, which gave them more of a sense of ownership and active participation in the project. Many women in the community reported feeling motivated and encouraged to engage in work outside the home through this project.





## Country spotlight: Syria

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Overall country metric	1,006,660	31
Top sectoral contributions		
Health	442,305	6
Seasonal	292,693	4
Food distribution	106,071	5



Provision of critical support to the Healthcare system in the northwest of the country, Syria 2022.

## Country spotlight: Lebanon

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Overall country metric	115,651	17
Top sectoral contributions		
Seasonal	78,324	4
WASH	17,294	1
Orphan sponsorship programme	5,776	2



## 6.4 Country spotlights – Eastern Europe

Our country spotlights featuring five countries in Eastern Europe include one project spotlight from Bosnia and Herzegovina and another project straddling Kosova and Albania that is making a positive impact in both countries.

### Country spotlight: Bosnia

#### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Bosnia and Herzegovina	34,892	6720
<b>Top sectoral contributions</b>		
Seasonal	26,960	343
Non-food item distribution	1,883	93
Education	2,310	4

#### Project spotlight

Greenhouses and Business Education for Poor People in Bosnia and Herzegovina, funded by Islamic Relief Netherlands

This project aimed to boost the prospects of 65 at-risk households and their communities by equipping them with the necessary tools, education, and mentorship to achieve long-term prosperity. With a focus on supplying greenhouses and essential farming equipment, this programme also offered in-depth training on agricultural best practice and market strategies. The objective was to boost household earnings, thereby sparking a positive loop of family prosperity, community development and the revival of local markets.

Noteworthy outcomes of the project have included:

- A high engagement rate of 98 per cent among beneficiaries in the greenhouse farming methods advocated by the programme
- A substantial 80 per cent of beneficiaries managed to adequately meet the nutritional needs of their families
- 66 per cent of beneficiaries experiencing a surge in income from the sale of their produce.

### Country spotlight: Russian Federation (Chechnya)

#### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
<b>Overall country metric</b>	24,201	8
<b>Top sectoral contributions</b>		
Seasonal	9921	2
Education	6,785	2
Orphan sponsorship programme	4398	1

## Country spotlight: Albania and Kosova

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
<b>Albania</b>	53,404	10
<i>Top sectoral contributions</i>		
Seasonal	35,356	3
Health	14,714	1
Orphan sponsorship programme	1,339	1
<b>Kosovo</b>	145,195	24
<i>Top sectoral contributions</i>		
Seasonal	71,427	5
Health	68,907	2
Orphan sponsorship programme	1,087	1

### Project spotlight

Sustainable Livelihoods – New Opportunities for Farming and Agriculture in Kosova and Albania, funded by Islamic Relief Canada

Through this project, Islamic Relief Albania and Kosova aimed to enhance the livelihoods of vulnerable rural households by distributing livestock and equipping people with greenhouses. The project was designed to address aspects of rural poverty and food insecurity, targeting two sectors: agriculture and livestock farming.

For the agriculture component, greenhouses were distributed to selected families who also received comprehensive training and necessary supplies. The training covered topics including

greenhouse management, seasonal crop rotation, pest control, and irrigation techniques. These families were also supplied with high-quality seeds, irrigation systems, and organic pesticides.

In the livestock component, cows or other livestock were distributed to selected households. These households received a package that included the animals, fodder, and vaccinations, aimed at helping them set up their own small-scale family farms. They also underwent training sessions covering livestock rearing, health management, and basic accounting skills to manage their new income-generating assets effectively.



Through training and provision of assets, Islamic Relief helped 258 families by providing 150 greenhouses through engaging in small business activities and provide healthy nutrition.

Kosovo 2022.



## Country spotlight: North Macedonia

### Country impact areas

	Total reach	Projects
Overall country metric	128,906	8
Top sectoral contributions		
Health	99,710	3
Seasonal	27453	3
Education	1700	1



Winterisation distribution of food packs and fire wood. North Macedonia 2022.



# 7. KEY LEARNING IN 2022<sup>22</sup>

In navigating the complexities of programme implementation, Islamic Relief and its country offices and regional teams have learned a lot. This chapter consolidates this learning, sourced from learning logs and evaluation reports from our country offices. It presents an overview, capturing learning at the operational, programmatic, and strategic levels.

## 7.1 Operational lessons learned

This subset of lessons learned focuses on specific incidents, events, and activities within the day-to-day implementation of projects. By taking this learning on board, we can improve efficiency, effectiveness, and safety in Islamic Relief operations.

Our key operational lessons in 2022 were as follows:

- **Time allocation and contingency planning:** Recognise that administrative processes, like signing sub-agreements, can often be subject to delays. Anticipating this, it is helpful to extend the allocated time frame for these activities to a seven-month period. Counteract potential delays by employing strategic planning that sequences activities logically and allows for adaptability in timelines. Foster intensive coordination with all relevant authorities and stakeholders to avoid bottlenecks and to facilitate smoother operations.
- **Local procurement:** To expedite projects and mitigate delays, tap into local markets for procurement needs. This approach not only supports the local economy but also makes delivery timelines more manageable. Implement a rigorous pre-qualification process for suppliers and carry out comprehensive market analysis to identify the most reliable and cost-effective options. Maintain close coordination with local actors and authorities to ensure the smooth delivery of procured items.
- **Accessibility of healthcare and other services:** Expand outreach initiatives to areas that are difficult to access. Consider offering help with transport challenges for priority cases, whether that means assigning mobile health units or assisting with subsidised transport to fixed health facilities. Boost the stock of essential medicines and supplies to maintain the community's trust in the healthcare services provided. Analyse local needs to better align the supply chain with demand.
- **Staff recruitment and retention:** Address the gap in skilled technical staff by re-evaluating current recruitment practices and implementing capacity-building programmes. Offer competitive incentives to attract and retain qualified staff. Ensure that salaries and benefits are delivered consistently and in a timely manner. Proactively manage staff workloads and performance metrics to ensure effectiveness and avoid staff burnout. Prioritise the provision of adequate levels of staffing, especially in critical or newly launched programme areas, to ensure successful implementation.
- **Community awareness and participation:** Elevate community involvement by organising awareness-raising sessions and distributing educational resources. Adopt an inclusive approach by targeting a diverse audience, involving the likes of community leaders, women, the elderly, and people with disabilities to ensure a broad spectrum of participation. These efforts not only inform but also empower the community to be active stakeholders in the project.
- **Evaluation process engagement:** Simplify the process of access and cooperation for evaluation teams in the field. This can be achieved by briefing project staff on the evaluation objectives and schedule, as well as by formally introducing the evaluation team to local authorities. This upfront communication helps to build trust and to smooth the path for an unimpeded evaluation process.
- **Rightsholder awareness and communication:** Enhance rightsholders' and communities' awareness of project plans and activities, through intentional outreach and communication. Such activities should be considered during the design stage and included in budget and resource allocation to ensure that appropriate information and messages are relayed in an appropriate and timely manner.
- **MEAL processes:** Needs assessments, monitoring, and evaluation activities should be included in project design and implementation and have adequate budget allocated. In emergency settings, coordination with other organisations and agencies can help ease the burden and pressure of conducting thorough analysis of stakeholders' needs. MEAL staff should also be included in projects' budget in accordance with the Islamic Relief MEAL framework.
- **Local procurement:** Having clearly designated roles, responsibilities, and contracts with local businesses can help reduce delays and confusion by plainly outlining expectations for service delivery.

<sup>22</sup> Lessons learned drawn from external evaluation reports commissioned and finalised in 2022 and the consolidated country learning log.

## 7.2 Programmatic lessons learned

Programmatic lessons learned have a wider scope, with the potential to enhance the management and implementation of programmes and projects more widely. Lessons in this area are derived from assessing the design and execution of each intervention overall, highlighting key strengths and weaknesses, to improve programmatic strategies and management in the future. Our main learning from programmatic experiences in 2022 are as follows:

1. **Comprehensive analysis:** For every project design, undertake appropriate situational analyses to set up relevant, effective, and sustainable results pathways. Data should be collected and analysed using methodology that supports data disaggregation based on sex, age, and disability. This will ensure we can respond effectively to rightsholders' specific needs by collect high-quality data that is reliably sound, accurate, timely, consistent and complete. This may include specific data on gender equity, social cohesion, people living with disabilities, climate change and environmental factors, and value chain assessments to identify risks and opportunities for a project's success.
2. **Restoration of stakeholder relationships:** Mitigate the negative impact on stakeholder relationships that can occur with incomplete projects by identifying alternative funding in case needed, to maintain delivery and trust.
3. **WASH rehabilitation and health-related interventions:** Continue to identify cost-effective rehabilitation activities that improve health and safety in coordination with key actors and health facilities. Enhance healthcare quality through further rehabilitation works and accessible facilities for people with disabilities.
4. **Sustainability and continuity:** Initiate a continuity planning process, ideally prior to formal project closure, to maximise use of remaining resources for continuation/transition purposes. For any given project, this would typically involve the following minimum steps:
  - a. Organise a sustainability assessment for rightsholders who are still participating in activities initiated by the projects
  - b. Building on the sustainability assessment, develop a continuation plan for the project with a costed workplan for continuation and exit support for rightsholders, including realistic roles and expectations for rightsholders, staff, and external stakeholders like local government and landowners. This plan should also include a matrix of risks and assumptions that indicates the likelihood of any negative impact for rightsholders, with mitigation strategies.
  - c. Work with human resources colleagues to find ways to continue existing or prior project staff, including options to bridge periods between project-specific contracts, to maintain and reinforce institutional capacity and continuity where possible.
  - d. Ensure that the continuity plan connects to existing or upcoming projects or partner initiatives.
  - e. Work with procurement colleagues to clarify asset ownership and the rights of project participants to sell assets.
5. **Coordination and communication with stakeholders:** Promote good practice by sharing successes, challenges, and lessons learned. Involve local authorities in early stages for essential buy-in and alignment. Be an active participant in peer networks. Effective coordination among partners, government, and other organisations is critical for achieving high-quality outcomes in humanitarian programmes.
6. **Beneficiary targeting:** Ensure that beneficiary targeting is determined primarily by needs demonstrated by assessments and evidence. Advocate for gender inclusivity where local norms contradict guidelines.
7. **Feedback and complaint mechanisms:** Strengthen efforts and standard operating processes to ensure rightsholders' awareness and use of feedback and complaint mechanisms. This involves a proactive approach to address potential barriers, such as low literacy or accessibility, and proper budgeting to ensure that information about the mechanisms can be disseminated through appropriate channels and in accessible ways.
8. **Resource allocation and budgeting:** Proper resource allocation and budgeting should include all required components of intervention activities to ensure the project activities can be completed to the best level of quality. Planning for additional costs – such as awareness raising around complaints and response mechanisms, needs assessments and field visits – will help guarantee that sufficient budget and time are available for these activities. Staffing needs should also be considered to ensure that the required staff are able to compete the intended intervention and prevent any delays that may arise from their departure.

## 7.3 Strategic lessons learned

Strategic lessons learned focus on the organisation's broader long-term vision, objectives, and tactical approaches, highlighting opportunities for enhancement or realignment. Learning at this level aims to provide more effective support to its country-based teams.

**1. Improve, integrate, and globalise MEAL system:**

A global and fully functional MEAL system with a proper database system will enhance early detection of problems, and improve accountability and learning at all levels. Ultimately that should translate into improving institutional memory across the board.

- 2. Technical expertise:** Ensure appropriate technical oversight of key programme areas by building engagement channels from headquarters technical experts to priority country operations. For some country programme portfolios, it may be advisable not to rely on remote support but to directly hire the right technical expertise at programme and project level, especially when building up a new programming domain such as agricultural livelihoods.

- 3. Globalised learning:** We need to continue to build a system that supports a fully inclusive and globalised approach to institutional learning. Success in this area has the potential to significantly enhance accountability, learning and institutional memory. It will help every office to extract crucial insights over time, enabling us to provide interventions of increasing impact and value for rightsholders.



Emergency WASH response for affected population in Taiz, Yemen 2022.





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