



Islamic Relief Afghanistan

*Annual Report* 2024

# FOREWORD

**As we reflect on the year 2024, we celebrate the unwavering spirit and resilience of the Afghan people, who have confronted staggering challenges with remarkable courage. This year has tested us with unprecedented emergencies and multiple shocks, and yet, in the face of these crises, our community's strength and determination shine through.**

In 2024, the crises in Afghanistan reached critical levels. In Herat, where in 2023 devastating earthquakes affected approximately 300,000 people, the humanitarian situation has been compounded by a continuous influx of Afghan returnees from Pakistan. An estimated 900,000 people have made the journey home since September 2023.

Furthermore, Afghanistan experienced heavy rainfall and flash floods in its northeastern regions, significantly impacting 21 districts across Badakhshan, Baghlan, and Takhar provinces in early May. This natural disaster resulted in the loss of 350 lives and left 1,700 individuals injured. The floods also wreaked havoc on local communities, destroying crops, damaging homes, and displacing families.

Combined, these interconnected crises have caused an urgent humanitarian situation, placing significant strain on resources and support systems for the affected populations.

We witnessed families living in worn-out tents after earthquakes destroyed their homes and Afghan returnees arriving with nothing but the clothes on their backs. Floods displaced families who had lost everything they had worked for throughout their lives, leaving them worried about where their next meal would come from.

Islamic Relief teams were among the first responders to these crises, providing critical life-saving assistance, such as clean drinking water, mobile health services, emergency shelters, non-food items, and cash assistance to help families meet their immediate needs.

I am pleased to share that in 2024, despite the fluid operational environment, our teams successfully reached nearly 1 million vulnerable people across 20 provinces. We achieved this through the successful delivery of a variety of programmes, including primary healthcare services, impactful education, dignified shelters, and transformative livelihood projects, among others.

As you read this annual report, you will see stories from children and families who have been positively impacted by these programmes and gain a deeper understanding of how our efforts help them overcome the challenges they face today. This support guides them toward a safer, healthier, and more prosperous future.

You will hear from 9-year-old Salma\*, who is continuing her education at a school supported by Islamic Relief, having previously worked on the streets as a shoe

shiner to provide for her younger siblings. You will also discover the efforts of Taslima and other dedicated female health workers delivering life-saving medical services to remote areas.

Afghanistan faced significant funding and coordination challenges in 2024, with only 53 per cent of resources needed for the Humanitarian Needs Response Plan (HRNP) secured by December 2024. Delays in getting approval for new grant agreements from local authorities further restricted our ability to deliver timely services. We adapted our structure to match the current funding reality, and maintained our operations throughout the year despite high staff turnover and leadership changes.

Islamic Relief firmly believes in adhering to international standards for humanitarian and development assistance. We uphold the dignity of our rightsholders while supporting them according to their priorities and needs. We achieve this by combining our technical expertise with local insight to ensure value for money and sustainability, along with clear exit strategies. We believe that involving community members in every step of the response enhances their resilience and helps build trust and credibility in our work.

In 2025, Islamic Relief Afghanistan faces significant challenges, including diminishing institutional funding, declining donor interest, and a deteriorating economy. Nevertheless, we are excited to continue expanding our services into hard-to-reach areas that many organisations tend to avoid due to their remoteness and associated operational costs.

Our focus will be on delivering essential services such as healthcare, clean water, education, shelter and livelihoods while helping communities achieve self-sufficiency. Additionally, we will adopt a localisation approach, seeking local solutions to respond effectively to the escalating impacts of climate change.

We owe our achievements to the dedication of our staff, the collaboration of our partners, the resolve of our rightsholders, and the generosity of our donors. Your contributions are vital for us to maintain and expand essential relief efforts for those who are most in need.



**Muhammad Zulqarnain**  
Country Director

# HUMANITARIAN OVERVIEW



Humanitarian funding needed  
in 2024:

**£2.44 billion**



Humanitarian funding secured  
by Dec 2024:

**£1.29 billion (53%)**



People in need:

**22.9 million**



People displaced:

**6.4 million**



People affected by  
earthquakes:

**300,000**



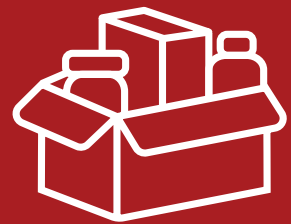
Afghan returnees  
since September 2023:

**900,000**



People affected by floods:

**280,000**



Children under 5 years  
facing acute malnutrition:

**3.5 million**



Pregnant and breastfeeding  
mothers facing acute  
malnutrition:

**1.2 million**



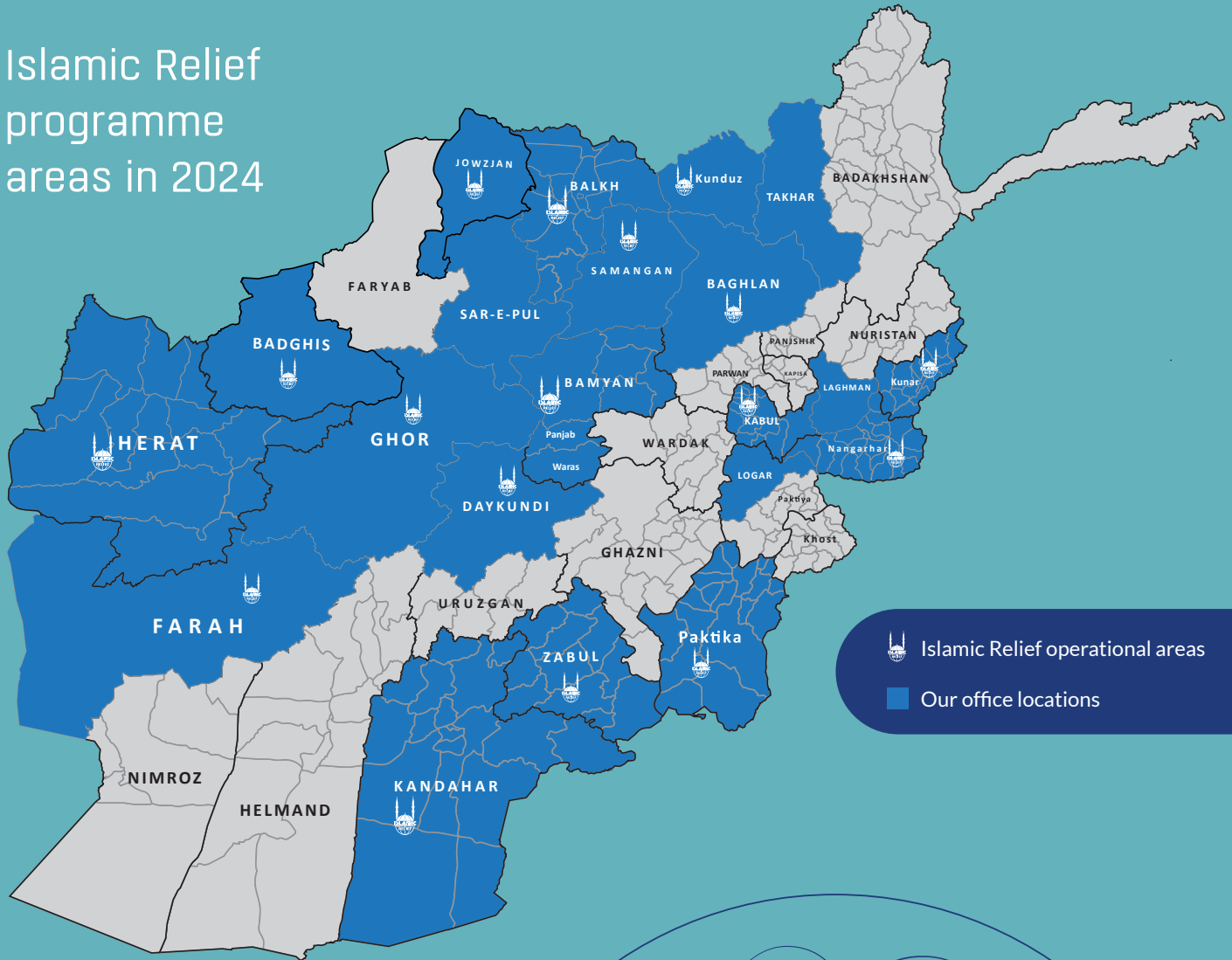
Provinces affected by some  
form of natural disasters:

**33 out of 34**



# OUR FOOTPRINT

Islamic Relief programme areas in 2024



- Islamic Relief operational areas
- Our office locations

*Islamic Relief in Afghanistan*

Islamic Relief began supporting the people of Afghanistan in 1992, working with local partners to run Ramadan and qurbani food distributions. Since then we have expanded our work, with more than 600 staff members now working for us across 19 provinces. The national country office is in the capital, Kabul, while area offices managing regional operations are located in Jalalabad, Herat, Balkh and Kandahar.

OUR VALUES

- إِسْتِخْلَاقٌ  
EXCELLENCE
- إِسْخَارٌ  
SINCERITY
- عَدْلٌ  
SOCIAL JUSTICE
- رَحْمَةٌ  
COMPASSION
- أَمَانَةٌ  
CUSTODIANSHIP

# OUR IMPACT IN NUMBERS

In 2024, we reached approximately **1 million vulnerable people** across **20 provinces** through a wide range of programmes:



**£17 million**  
package of humanitarian  
and development initiatives  
implemented



Nearly **125,500**  
mothers and children  
supported with vital  
healthcare



More than **30,500**  
students empowered  
through impactful education  
services



**10,350** people  
supported to live in safety  
and dignity through our  
shelter provision



**6,900** people supplied  
with winter survival items,  
cash assistance and  
blankets, significantly  
enhancing their wellbeing



**255,098** people  
uplifted through our life-  
changing livelihoods  
projects



**182,200** vulnerable  
people assisted through  
our Eid gifts, Ramadan and  
qurbani food distributions



More than **17,670**  
people received life-skills  
training to create livelihood  
opportunities



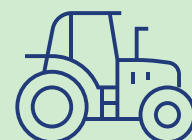
**8,600** people reached  
through our protection and  
inclusion programmes



Close to **173,300**  
people benefitted from water,  
sanitation and emergency non-  
food item services, including  
household and hygiene items



**87,240** orphaned  
children and families were  
supported through our Orphan  
Sponsorship Programme,  
offering hope for the future and  
making a profound difference in  
the lives of their families



**31,000** rural farmers  
benefitted from climate-  
resilient interventions such as  
dams, water ponds, irrigation  
canals, flood protection walls,  
solar energy systems, among  
others

# OUR CORE PROGRAMMES



*Islamic Relief teams arrive to assess the impact of flash floods in Baghlan in May 2024*

Our most important programme focus throughout 2024 and into 2025 has been our humanitarian emergency response and early recovery work. In the face of the dire and pressing humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, the everyday burden so many families bear has been eased by our emergency and seasonal programmes; from food packs during the holy month of Ramadan, winterisation assistance to keep families warm, to cash assistance to enable displaced families to meet their immediate needs.

In 2024, we were at the forefront of emergency response efforts, responding to flash floods in the northeastern regions and to the aftermath of the brutal earthquakes in Herat province, while also supporting Afghan returnees from Pakistan and Iran. Islamic Relief is often among the first humanitarian agencies to respond, providing critical aid such as primary health services, cash assistance, water and sanitation, shelter, and blankets.

We continued to support impactful, long-term livelihood initiatives that equip local communities with the financial resources, skills, and infrastructure needed to earn a reliable income and protect and enhance their wellbeing. Our support included providing small cash grants to hundreds of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), along with tailored vocational skills training to enhance technical and business skills and improve economic resilience. We also repaired and improved vital community infrastructure, such as markets, irrigation canals, feeder roads, flood protection walls, and check dams to protect villages from flooding while giving farmers a more reliable water supply and helping them sell their produce.

Our other programme areas include providing education and orphan sponsorship to support some

of Afghanistan's most vulnerable children, projects to improve water and sanitation facilities, helping communities adapt to the ravages of climate change, and shelter provision. In all of these programmes, our protection and inclusion focus ensures that the most vulnerable – such as women and girls, older people and those with disabilities – are included in our interventions and protected from harm.

Our work is not done in isolation. We collaborate closely with other humanitarian organisations and United Nations (UN) agencies. In 2023 and 2024, our efforts meant Islamic Relief was among a handful of non-government organisations (NGOs) selected to advance the UN's Area-based Approach to Development Emergency Initiatives (ABADEI) 2.0 programme, focusing on enhancing community livelihoods and repairing and improving critical infrastructure across the central highlands, western and northern regions.



*Our staff distributing animal fodder to earthquake-affected families in Herat*



# ABADEI: REBUILDING LIVELIHOODS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES



*Rehabilitated irrigation canals provide valuable water for farming for thousands of rural farmers throughout the year*

Our most significant initiative to date, ABADEI, is the flagship project of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Afghanistan. ABADEI supports basic human needs and complements short-term humanitarian life-saving assistance by safeguarding livelihoods and strengthening community resilience.

The ABADEI programme was launched in March 2022 and initially spanned 12 Afghan provinces, including Balkh, Bamyán, Herat, Kunduz, Kandahar, and Sar-e Pol. The project's first phase concluded in March 2023, significantly enhancing food security for over 170,000 vulnerable individuals and supporting nearly 1,700 SMEs owned by women.

Through its cash-for-work component, ABADEI also facilitated the completion of over 200 infrastructure projects in the agricultural sector across six provinces. These efforts have contributed to protecting agricultural land from floods and improving the crop yields of local farmers.

Based on the success of phase one, Islamic Relief Afghanistan was among the few NGOs selected to advance the ABADEI 2.0 project. ABADEI 2.0 has been implemented across the central highlands, western regions and northern regions, focusing on two main goals:

Enhancing community resilience and economic development, mainly through supporting women entrepreneurs with cash grants and skills training.

Improving community livelihoods and climate resilience in areas like Bamyán, Daikundi, Ghor, Herat, Badghis and Farah.

This project, which successfully concluded in June 2024, involved repairing and constructing key community infrastructure, including irrigation systems, flood protection walls, markets, feeder roads, and check dams, as well as expanding women's access to technical and vocational education and training.

"This project has unlocked economic possibilities that have been dormant for centuries. By collaborating with the communities themselves, we are creating pathways to prosperity," says Abdullah Sawiz, ABADEI project lead at Islamic Relief.

"Together, we've constructed vital infrastructure, such as canals, protection walls, check dams and markets, while simultaneously empowering women with valuable skills and financial support to grow their businesses."



*The ABADEI project equipped 1,750 women and girls with employability skills and knowledge*

# STORIES OF TRANSFORMATION

## 'The market gave us a new face as female entrepreneurs'

In the bustling heart of Bamyan city, a vibrant new market has transformed the landscape for female entrepreneurs. "The market gave us a new face as female entrepreneurs," shares Fatima, a local shop owner. With a safe and dignified space to operate, women are finally able to showcase their products and pursue their business dreams.

The market is alive with energy, featuring neatly constructed iron-sheet stalls brimming with beautifully handmade traditional clothing. From long dresses and matching trousers to colourful headscarves, purses, and shoes, each stall reflects the rich cultural heritage of Bamyan. It's not just a marketplace; it's a celebration of creativity and resilience.

Business is thriving, and Fatima is one of many who has experienced a significant turnaround. "I have seen more customers coming to me," she notes, proudly sharing that her monthly profits have reached 8,000 Afghanis (approximately £85). This newfound financial stability enables her to feed her family, underscoring the market's crucial role as a lifeline for many.

Fatima expressed her heartfelt gratitude, saying, "I want to thank Islamic Relief and UNDP for addressing our needs and bringing them to this satisfactory level."



Fatima was among the small business owners that have moved into the newly constructed shops in Bamyan



Khair is no longer worried about floods destroying his crops and his village in Ghor

## 'When it rains, it is both a blessing and a curse'

Tablak village, located in the heart of Dawlatyar district in the picturesque highland province of Ghor, is home to over 1,000 families who primarily depend on agriculture and livestock for their livelihoods.

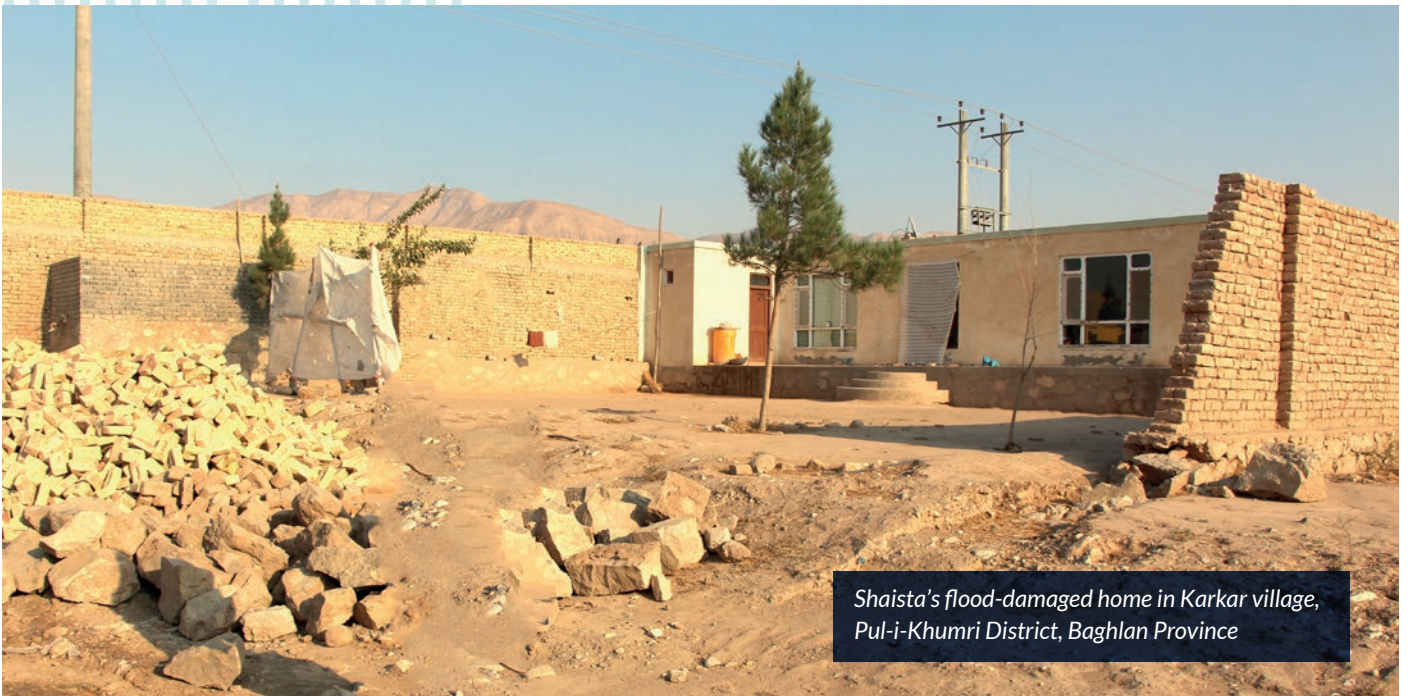
For generations, the villagers have faced the devastating consequences of seasonal floods that have destroyed their crops, swept away livestock, and even claimed lives.

Thanks to the UNDP's ABADeI programme, Islamic Relief constructed a check dam with a capacity of 10,000 cubic meters. This dam acts as a crucial defence against the impact of downstream flooding on the village, its crops, and livestock.

The check dam proved to be a lifeline for the villagers during the unprecedented flash floods in May 2024, successfully protecting the area from destruction. Additionally, it serves as a water storage facility for the community.

"When it rains, it is both a blessing and a curse," says Khair, a farmer from Tablak. "Our crops used to be swept away by the floods, but this season was different. The speed of the floodwater was minimal. The check dam is now full of water, allowing us to irrigate our crops throughout the season. Thank you, Islamic Relief and UNDP, for your support."





*Shaista's flood-damaged home in Karkar village, Pul-i-Khumri District, Baghlan Province*

## Rebuilding Lives: Shaista's journey to recovery

On the evening of 11 May 2024, an unprecedented flash flood swept through the Pul-e-Khumri district of Baghlan province, leaving a trail of destruction and despair. Among those affected was Shaista, a 40-year-old cart vendor and father of four, who experienced the fury of nature firsthand.

As torrential rains pounded his village, Shaista and his family huddled in their home, wrestling with anxiety and uncertainty. "It felt like an ordinary rainy season at first," Shaista recalls, "but then the skies unleashed a deluge. The floodwaters surged, sweeping away my home's boundary wall and engulfing our yard. I spent that night praying, terrified for my family's safety."

In the aftermath, the situation grew dire. When the floodwaters receded, Shaista found his home vulnerable to intruders and wild animals. Unable to repair his damaged boundary wall, he struggled to provide for his family, facing shortages of food and a lack of work in the city, where many were displaced like him.

Recognising the urgent needs of flood-affected families, Islamic Relief's emergency teams were among the first to respond, providing vital multipurpose cash assistance. Thanks to generous funding from the Canadian Humanitarian Assistance Fund (CHAF), Shaista's was among 520 flood-affected families who received cash assistance for shelter repairs to rebuild their homes.

"I was overwhelmed with gratitude when I was registered for the cash-for-shelter repairs programme," Shaista says. "The funds I received were lifelines, restoring my hope and sense of security."

Over two instalments, Shaista received a total of 23,677 Afs (approximately £255), which he prudently

utilised for home repair. He purchased bricks and hired a mason to rebuild his boundary wall and repair part of his damaged house. Importantly, Shaista also ensured his children had adequate supplies, including wheat flour and cooking oil.

Now, as Shaista looks at his rebuilt home, he feels a renewed sense of peace. "My boundary wall stands tall, providing my family privacy and safety. This allows me to focus on my work, knowing my loved ones are secure while I'm away.

"I am deeply grateful to Islamic Relief and the Canadian Humanitarian Assistance Fund for their generous support. You have helped us feel safe and loved again!"



*Shaista and his children proudly stand next to their newly repaired boundary wall in Karkar village, Pul-e-Khumri, Baghlan province*





Taslima, an Islamic Relief midwife, measures a moderately malnourished child at Shino Sub-Health Centre in Kunar province

## Bringing healthcare to remote areas

Kunar province is surrounded by steep mountains, with mud-brick villages that lie miles away from reliable health facilities. Women and children often have to travel long distances, sometimes on foot, to seek medical care in the provincial capital, Asadabad. Even by car it is a three-hour journey along a dangerous unpaved road.

Islamic Relief established a Sub-Health Centre in Shino village, Kunar Province, in October 2023. This centre serves several peripheral villages, some as far as 10 kilometres away. It offers primary healthcare services, including sexual and reproductive health services such as antenatal and postnatal care and family planning. Other services include vaccinations, psychosocial support, health education, treatment for malnutrition, care for minor injuries, and referral services.

A small group of dedicated women is working to bring this healthcare to the most remote areas. One of them is Taslima, a 30-year-old midwife from Shino village, who drives three hours each day to reach the clinic.

“Traveling to the clinic on unpaved, rocky roads in the mountains is challenging and physically demanding,” Taslima says. “The roads can be unsafe, and we often face issues like flat tires that delay us from getting to the clinic or returning home.”

Despite these dangers, she visits the clinic every day with a mahram (guardian), remedying conditions which previously went untreated, including malnutrition and anaemia. Community health workers like Taslima embody resilience and dedication, embarking on arduous journeys to bring healthcare to remote villages in Kunar.

Ibrahim, a community member in Shino village, was filled with gratitude:

“We lost too many children and mothers on our long journey to the provincial city for treatment about three hours away. Now, with this clinic just a few steps away, a lot has changed. It is the only healthcare facility in this vast area, drawing people from as far as 30 kilometres. Thank you for your assistance.”

On average, our teams see approximately 1,000 patients per month, primarily women and children with diverse medical needs.



Islamic Relief's Sub-Health Centre in Shino village, Kunar province



Salma reading a book at Sweet Home School in Jalalabad

## From the streets to the classroom: Salma's journey towards a brighter future

In the heart of Jalalabad City, Nangarhar province, Salma\*, a nine-year-old orphan and the third of seven siblings, spent her early years navigating the harsh realities of life on the streets. To support her family, she took on the challenging role of a shoe shiner, supplementing her mother's modest income from house cleaning, which barely covered their basic needs.

"I always dreamed of going to school," Salma reflects, her voice tinged with both sorrow and determination. "But the circumstances didn't allow me that opportunity. My mother's good days earned her about 100 Afs (approximately £1), which was nowhere near enough for our survival. I felt I had to step up for my siblings."

Each day on the street not only posed physical dangers, but also stripped Salma of the dignity she longed for, leaving her with anxiety about her future and the weight of the responsibilities she had taken on at such a young age.

Recognising her struggle, Islamic Relief's community outreach teams made contact with Salma, eager to gain a better understanding of her circumstances. This crucial intervention changed Salma's life. Shortly after, she received an admission letter to the Sweet Home school run by Islamic Relief, where she could finally pursue her dream of becoming a doctor.

"I can't express how excited I was to join the school! The environment is so friendly and supportive for girls like me," Salma beams. "I feel loved and cared for here. The teachers and my classmates welcome me with open arms." Salma received a school uniform and the necessary learning materials, setting her on a new path filled with possibilities.

Salma has already progressed to second grade in the new academic year, which began on 20 March 2025. She has not only formed friendships

but also discovered a love for learning, mastering the alphabet, numbers, and basic drawing skills.

Reflecting on her growth, Salma says, "The biggest impact for me has been learning to read and write. I enjoy playing, but learning to express myself is what I cherish the most."

With deep gratitude, she shares her aspirations: "I want to become a doctor, and I hope Islamic Relief and its donors will help me achieve this dream."

We'd like to extend our thanks to Islamic Relief UK's Charity Week initiative, which supports 370 orphaned children like Salma with learning materials such as school uniforms and educational resources, enabling them to pursue their dreams and shape their future.



Salma playing on swings with her friends at her school in Jalalabad

\*Name changed to protect confidentiality



## Harnessing solar power to save Afghan farming communities



*Fida has begun harvesting pumpkins on his farm in the Dehdadi district of Balkh*

In the Dehdadi district of Afghanistan's Balkh province, once barren and dry fields have been transformed into green, thriving farmland. Just a few years ago, this land seemed impossible to cultivate. But today, it stands as a symbol of resilience, thanks to the efforts of farmers like 42-year-old Fida Mohammad.

Fida, a father of nine, has lived his entire life farming in Dehdadi. For generations, his family relied on their three-hectare farm to grow wheat, beans, and vegetables, but as the effects of the climate crisis worsened, the once fertile land turned to dust. Water scarcity and unpredictable weather made it almost impossible to farm, threatening his family's survival.

"No one thought anything could grow here," Fida said, recalling how traditional farming methods failed in the face of climate change.

Fida's story isn't unique. In Afghanistan, 80 per cent of people rely on agriculture in some form, and most of them are small-scale farmers like Fida. As the climate becomes more unpredictable, they face a battle for survival. Without proper support and resources, this battle is becoming harder to win.

In response, Islamic Relief launched the Resilience Building Through Advancing Livelihoods (ReAL) programme in 2021. The goal was to help over 200 rural farmers adapt to the changing climate by giving them the tools they needed to survive.

Fida was among the first to receive high-quality sesame and cotton seeds from Islamic Relief, which brought a successful harvest.

"I made good income from it, Alhamdulillah," he says. But that was only the beginning.

Recognising the crucial role of water, Islamic Relief installed a solar-powered irrigation system on Fida's farm. This technology gave him a reliable water supply, allowing him to grow crops year-round, without worrying about erratic rainfall or costly fuel for

traditional pumps. He shared the irrigation system with 20 other farmers.

The results were immediate. Fida's wheat harvest more than doubled last year, going from 15 to 35 bags.

"After the solar system was installed, we started growing three or four crops each year," Fida explains.

"This means we have a steady income for our families."

The surplus vegetables he grows provide extra money, which goes back into the local economy. This is the kind of community-driven, sustainable solution that the international community and donors must focus on.

Fida's story is a reminder that real lives are at stake. His journey shows that with the right support, communities can adapt and thrive.

Solar-powered irrigation is just one example of how innovation can transform lives. It provides more than just water, it delivers food security, economic stability, and hope. When we talk about climate justice, we need to talk about solutions like these that make a tangible difference on the ground.



*Fida's solar-powered irrigation farm*



Abdul sits with his children outside their new home in the Arghistan district of Kandahar

## Abdul's journey to stability and hope

Abdul, a 47-year-old father of six, has experienced the hardships of life in ways most could hardly imagine. After returning to his hometown, Batokhail village in the Arghistan district of Kandahar, 10 years ago, Abdul faced tremendous challenges. Having lived in Pakistan for 17 years, he returned to Afghanistan with the hopes of rebuilding his life. However, the transition proved difficult. For years, he struggled to find stable housing, often living in a tent or a small one-room mud house.

"I couldn't afford to buy basic things or rent a home for my family," Abdul says. "My children were in dire condition, experiencing hunger without a stable roof over their heads." For three long years, Abdul's family lived in his father-in-law's leaky house, a space that provided little comfort from the harsh weather. "When it rained, water would pour into the house. It was unbearable during both winter and summer," he recalls, reflecting on the difficult conditions they endured.

Despite the visible scars from a severe car accident that led to multiple surgeries and ongoing pain, Abdul remains resolute. "I am the main breadwinner for my family," he says, relying on farming during the rainy season to grow wheat and vegetables on his 2.5 acres of land. In winter, he boosts his income by driving trucks that import goods from Pakistan. "My monthly income is about 5,000 Afs (approx. £55), which helps cover our basic needs," he explains.

The turning point in Abdul's life came when he was registered for the Islamic Relief shelter programme. "This opportunity changed everything for us," he says, as he received 224,000 Afs (approx. £2,400) in three instalments, which allowed him to build a new home. "Alhamdulillah. I'm grateful for the home." Abdul says of his newly constructed three-room mud-brick home.

This new home has provided Abdul's family with the stability and safe haven they desperately needed. For the first time in years, they can enjoy a dignified living space free from the challenges of extreme weather. "I can now look for work, knowing my wife, daughter, and sons are safe from danger," Abdul says, his voice swelling with gratitude. "My family is praying for you," he says, directing his thanks to both Islamic Relief and the Green Lane Mosque in Birmingham, UK, whose generous funding made this transformation possible.

Abdul's journey from homelessness to housed exemplifies the profound impact that humanitarian assistance can have on an individual's life. Thanks to the generous assistance from Islamic Relief and the Green Lane Mosque, Abdul and his family are now on a path toward a more stable and hopeful future.



Abdul's new home in the Arghistan district, Kandahar





## The joy of Eid: Maryam and Ali's experience

Eid al-Fitr is a time of joy, feasting, and celebration, but for many orphaned children in Afghanistan, it can be a painful reminder of what they've lost. Amid the vibrant decorations and celebratory gatherings, two orphaned children, Maryam and Ali\*, share a glimpse into their lives, highlighting both the struggles they face and the happiness brought by Islamic Relief's Eid Gift distribution.

### 'I was the happiest person in the world'

Maryam, a nine-year-old girl from Kabul, knows this feeling all too well. After losing her father to illness four years ago, Maryam and her family have faced numerous challenges. With her mother struggling to provide for seven family members, the simple joys of Eid seemed out of reach. However, this year, a glimmer of hope arrived, thanks to Islamic Relief's Eid Gifts project.

Before receiving the Eid Gift in the form of cash assistance, Maryam's mother was anxious about being able to purchase new clothes for the occasion. But just days before Eid, Maryam's family was selected to receive cash assistance. "When my mother told us the news, my siblings and I were overjoyed!" Maryam exclaims, her eyes shining.

With the cash assistance of 2,975 Afs (approx. £32), her mother was able to buy not just a beautiful dress but also a blue jacket, trousers, shoes, a school bag, and fun items like a unicorn pencil case and fashionable sunglasses for Maryam. The day of Eid dawned bright and cheerful, and for Maryam, it felt like a fairy tale come true. "I was the happiest person in the world!" she says, laughing, as she remembered how her siblings looked in their new clothes.

### 'This Eid has been truly special and unlike any I've experienced before'

Ali, a 12-year-old boy from a neighbouring community, also experienced the transformative power of these Eid gifts. An orphan like Maryam, Ali shared his excitement about the

kindness of our supporters. "It's more than just gifts; it's the love shared by those who care about us. We feel seen and valued," Ali remarks.

Ali headed to the Eid ground in his neighbourhood early in the morning, bubbling with excitement and joy. He was dressed in a traditional outfit consisting of a matching maroon shirt and trousers, complemented by his favourite sports shoes and stylish sunglasses. He shares, "This Eid has been truly special and unlike any I've experienced before." The joy of wearing new clothes filled his heart with happiness, making the celebrations unforgettable. He adds, "May Allah bless all those who have contributed to our happiness."

Both Maryam and Ali embody the resilience and hope that shine through even the most challenging circumstances. The support provided by Islamic Relief not only brought smiles to their faces but also eased their families' worries during a time of celebration.



Ali getting ready to go to a nearby playground with friends to play football

\*Names changed to protect confidentiality



# VOICES OF TRUST: WHY ISLAMIC RELIEF IS MY WORKPLACE OF CHOICE



**Shearuddin Nasiri**  
Community Mobiliser – Balkh

“Islamic Relief is my workplace of choice because it embodies a strong commitment to making a meaningful difference in the lives of vulnerable populations. The organisation’s emphasis on collaboration, empathy, and community participation aligns perfectly with my values as a social worker.

“I appreciate the supportive and friendly work culture that fosters teamwork and enables me to contribute to impactful projects. Additionally, the opportunities for professional development and the chance to engage in sustainable solutions inspire me to grow and expand my skills. You have given me the platform to fulfil my passion for humanitarian work and create lasting change in the community.”



**Ramin Sadat**  
Multimedia Producer – Kabul

“Islamic Relief is my workplace of choice because, over the past three years I have been here, it has evolved into a platform that has helped me achieve my dreams and aspirations. I find profound fulfilment in being part of impactful projects that support vulnerable communities, such as internally displaced persons, remote populations, and returnees.

“The sense of teamwork and a shared dedication to making a meaningful difference inspires me daily. Each day presents new opportunities for both professional growth and spiritual development. This commitment to service and personal development is what makes Islamic Relief my ideal workplace.”



**Rahimullah Safi**  
Driver – Nangarhar

“Since joining Islamic Relief in February 2023, I’ve found a sense of belonging within this organisation that feels like home. A pivotal moment that stands out in my journey happened during a challenging mission to remote mountainous villages. Our vehicle became trapped in deep snow, the ground beneath it a treacherous mix of mud and rocks. As my colleagues and I assessed the situation, it was clear that we needed to come together to overcome this obstacle.

“In an inspiring display of teamwork, we divided our efforts: some of us ventured to the village to rally the community for assistance, while others worked tirelessly to clear the path ahead. This collective determination paid off, and we eventually made it to the village, ready to register families in need of aid.”



**Wahida Haidary**  
Psychosocial Counsellor – Herat

“As a psychosocial counsellor working with earthquake-displaced communities for two years now, I believe Islamic Relief is my workplace of choice because of its deep commitment to holistic humanitarian support and community resilience.

“The organisation’s values align with my passion for uplifting individuals and families to heal both mentally and emotionally in the face of trauma. Islamic Relief’s emphasis on cultural sensitivity and community engagement ensures that its interventions are not only effective but also respectful of the traditions and beliefs of those it serves.

“Thank you for the opportunity.”

# TWO YEARS IN AFGHANISTAN: 'I WILL CARRY THESE MOMENTS IN MY HEART FOREVER'



*Fatima sends us off with warm wishes*

My name is Dahir Abdullahi, and I've spent the past two years working in Afghanistan as the Communication and External Relations Manager for Islamic Relief. During this time, I've met and listened to the stories of many remarkable people who have shown incredible resilience in the face of hardship. These individuals - resilient female entrepreneurs, returnees who have seen it all, hardworking farmers, grateful patients, and promising children - have deeply inspired me.

I've had the joy of traveling to 14 out of the 34 provinces with my colleague Ramin Sadat, our multimedia producer, who shares my passion for the work we do. We also happen to be the same age, although I look younger than him. He would disagree. Together, we've visited countless communities, and in each encounter, I've felt the warm hospitality of the Afghan people. They welcomed me with open arms, and I felt safer and more at home in the countryside than in the bustling cities.

Two encounters stand out in my memory, and they continue to humble me. The first was with a young girl named Fatima\*. The 10 year old, lives with her mother and four siblings in a hilly neighbourhood on the outskirts of Kabul. Her father abandoned the family after succumbing to drug addiction. As her mother talked about their struggles, tears streamed down her cheeks, and I couldn't help but shed a few tears of my own, hidden behind my sunglasses. After the interview, Fatima followed her brother and shyly reached out to shake my hand - a blend of innocence and strength. That night, Fatima's haunting eyes lingered in my dreams, stirring a deep sense of responsibility within me. The next day, I returned to bring a small gift to help support her family, hoping to provide them with some comfort.

The second moment that touched my heart was with a 70-year-old grandfather named Khaikai in the Miama village of Paktika province. Islamic Relief had launched a solar-powered water project that transformed the lives of many families by providing them with clean water. This project spared women and girls from the arduous journey of navigating a narrow, rocky path to fetch water from open sources.



*Khaikai, the village leader of Miama, Paktika*

Khaikai, also the village leader, welcomed us and showed us how this project changed the villagers' daily lives. As we were preparing to leave at 4pm, Khaikai insisted we stay for the night, a gesture of hospitality rooted in the Pashtun culture. Unknown to us, Khaikai had even organised food, accommodation, and a ram to be slaughtered for us, ensuring our stay was memorable. It took my colleagues half an hour of discussion to explain to him why we needed to leave due to the organisation's security policies, but eventually, he reluctantly agreed. In our farewell, I gently held his chin, a gesture of respect in my culture, feeling grateful for his kindness.

These moments stay with me, inspiring me to do more. I will carry them in my heart forever, reminding me of the strength and hope that exist even in the most challenging circumstances.



*Dahir Abdullahi, our Communication and External Relations Manager, meets an Afghan returnee at Omari Camp, Nangarhar*



# A VISUAL JOURNEY THROUGH 2024



**Baghlan:** Responding to emergencies within 24 hours of the flash floods occurring



**Balkh:** Ensuring orphaned children have access to education to pursue their dreams of becoming important contributors to society



**Bamyan:** Building sustainable livelihoods and nourishment for children of vulnerable families through goat milk



**Ghor:** Assisting winter-ravaged families to afford winter supplies, such as heating fuel and food, through multipurpose cash assistance



**Herat:** Putting a roof over the heads of earthquake-affected families who have lived nearly two years in worn-out tents



**Kabul:** Providing vital primary healthcare services to internally displaced and poor host communities



**Kandahar:** Enhancing the agricultural productivity and income of rural farmers through the provision of certified seeds, farming tools, and fertilisers



**Kunar:** Providing clean water to families in remote areas who had relied on contaminated water sources



**Loghar:** Providing warmth to families facing the harsh winter



**Nangarhar:** Easing the burden of vulnerable families during the holy month of Ramadan



**Samangan:** Engaging communities on their needs and priorities



**Zabol:** Delivering medical services in remote areas



# ACCOUNTABILITY TOWARDS COMMUNITIES



Islamic Relief's monitoring, evaluation, learning, and accountability officer responding to a request during a distribution activity in Ghor province

In 2024, we made significant progress in ensuring accountability across the diverse segments of the communities we serve, including women, girls, the elderly, and children. By strengthening our accountability framework, we actively listened to and responded promptly to the needs and inquiries of the communities we serve and other stakeholders.

We implemented several key innovations, including the development of an accountability dashboard, orienting local community leaders and committees on our complaint and feedback mechanism, and deploying our accountability teams in project implementation. We also displayed banners with contact information for complaints and feedback at all distribution points and events to ensure a wider reach and greater responsiveness. As a result of these initiatives, we experienced a remarkable 104 per cent increase in community feedback compared to the previous year, indicating enhanced engagement and trust from the communities we serve.

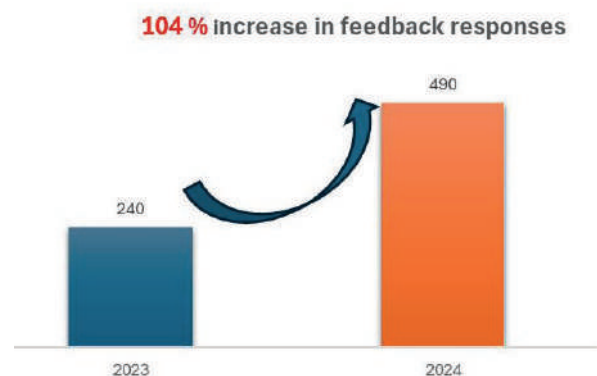
Community participation is essential to the success of our programmes. We used various channels, including Focus Group Discussions and one-on-one meetings, to gain a deeper understanding of community perceptions of our work. We also utilised a toll-free number, WhatsApp, an email address, and portable complaint boxes as channels for communities to reach out to us.

Our efforts to promote diverse gender participation resulted in significant engagement across various demographic groups. In 2024, we received 490 pieces of feedback, with women representing 33 per cent and their male counterparts contributing 67 per cent of the total feedback received. Notably, 79 per cent of the feedback we registered came through our toll-

free phone number. Approximately 26 per cent of the responses were from individuals seeking humanitarian assistance, 16 per cent pertained to feedback on our activities, 13 per cent were requests for information, 7 per cent were messages of appreciation, and 7 per cent concerned delays in cash assistance payments, among other issues.






"The feedback we've gathered from our communities has been instrumental in shaping and tailoring our activities and responses to the needs of the people we support," says Nargis Amiri, our accountability and learning assistant in Afghanistan. "When their opinions are considered and integrated into our response, rightsholders feel they're part of the project."

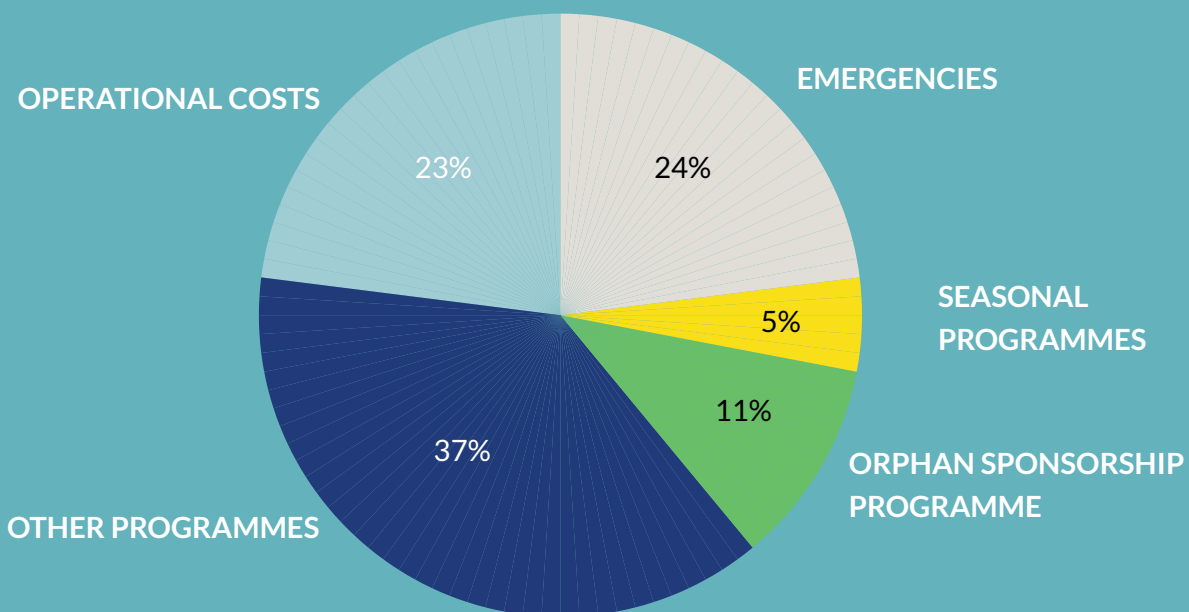
Islamic Relief Afghanistan remains committed to strengthening accountability across all our programmes, ensuring we are informed about community feedback regarding our work and maintaining transparency in our interventions.



# OUR FINANCES: HOW EVERY POUND IS SPENT

FINANCES AT A GLANCE			
	GBP	Afghanis	
Total operating income	£17,476,238	1,598,376,708	

Programme delivery expenditure	GBP	Afghanis	Overall %
 Emergencies	£4,178,567	382,171,753	24%
 Seasonal programmes (qurbani, Ramadan, Eid gifts and winterisation)	£940,131	85,984,398	5%
 Orphan Sponsorship Programme	£1,967,702	179,966,013	11%
 Other programmes (education, health, infrastructure, water and sanitation)	£6,456,111	590,475,917	37%
Subtotal for programme delivery	£13,542,511	1,238,598,080	77%
 Operational costs (personnel and management)	£3,933,727	359,778,627	23%
<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<b>£17,476,238</b>	<b>1,598,376,708</b>	<b>100%</b>







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