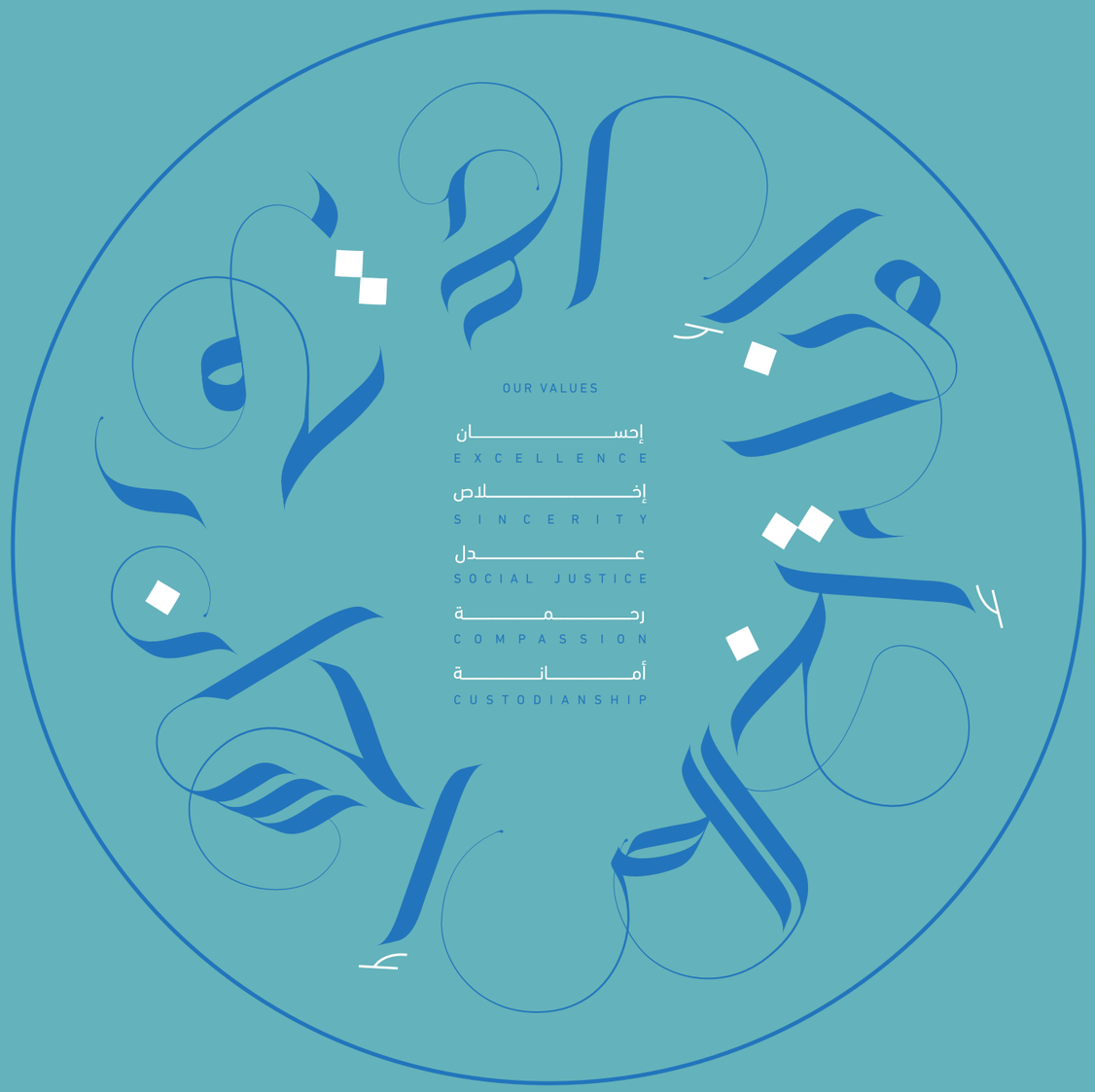
Ramadan Programme

2026



Thank you *for your support*

This report is a testament to what collective will and action can achieve even in the most challenging of times.

The world today is shaped by converging crises. Conflict, climate shocks and economic hardship continue to erode the livelihoods of millions, pushing vulnerable communities further into the margins. It is against this backdrop that Islamic Relief's Ramadan Food Assistance Programme carries its greatest meaning.

This report documents our efforts to deliver essential food support across 35 countries, reaching nearly 955,000 individuals during the blessed month of Ramadan. Our purpose extended beyond alleviating immediate hunger. We were equally committed to offering our supporters a meaningful and dignified avenue through which to fulfil their religious obligation of giving, connecting the act of charity to real, visible impact in communities that needed it most.

Our Ramadan food assistance distributions were carried out efficiently and on time, including in some of the world's most demanding humanitarian environments such as Lebanon, Gaza and Sudan.

None of the work presented in this report was accomplished without difficulty. Financial constraints were real and the scale of need on the ground grew more than ever. Yet, our country teams, local partners and volunteers responded effectively to the challenge with professionalism and dedication. This report does not claim to capture every effort or every act of service that took place. What it does reflect is the spirit of an organisation united in its commitment to uphold the dignity and wellbeing of those we serve.

To every Islamic Relief family member, donor, partner, staff and volunteer who gave of their time, resources and energy, I offer my sincere and heartfelt gratitude. May Allah (SWT) accept this humble effort, bless all who contributed, and reward them in ways that no report could ever adequately measure.

Zaheer Afzal
Seasonal Programmes Manager
Islamic Relief Worldwide

Ramadan *in numbers*

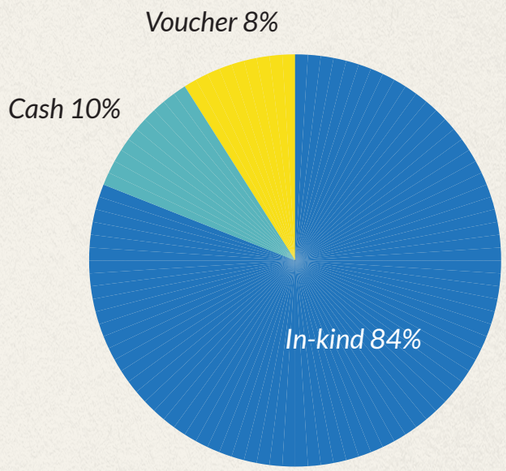
€10,086,320
Funding received

141,137
Food packs distributed

954,783
Individuals reached

35 *Countries of implementation*

59,021
Hotel meals distributed in Gaza



FOOD PACKS DISTRIBUTED

Year	No. of food packs distributed
2026	141,137
2025	155,806
2024	172,832
TOTAL	469,775

20,429
Extra packs distributed

Did you know?

Ramadan 2026 ran from 18 February – 21 March, with all food parcels delivered before or during the holy month.

Islamic Relief worked with 58 local partners across 11 countries and territories to support even more people in need in 2026 and expanded our reach to new countries such as Nigeria.

Thanks to efficient procurement processes, we exceeded the number of food parcels we planned to distribute by 17 per cent!

Reach *by territory*

Country of implementation	Food packs distributed	Individuals reached
Afghanistan	4,834	34,804
Albania	2,306	8,160
Bangladesh	18,524	75,398
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1,622	5,352
Egypt	5,283	26,419
Ethiopia	3,190	19,140
India	4,441	29,225
Indonesia	3,197	10,158
Iraq	4,564	22,820
Italy	348	1,392
Jordan	3,445	18,599
Kenya	3,135	18,810
Kosova	4,400	17,000
Lebanon	5,077	24,436
Malawi	3,268	16,340
Mali	3,147	18,882
Morocco	4,545	15,232
Myanmar	1,191	4,576
Nepal	1,879	12,452
Niger	2,539	17,773
Nigeria	1,092	9,089
North Macedonia	1,315	5,128
Occupied Palestinian Territory	11,227	295,105
Pakistan	4,464	25,531
The Philippines	2,314	12,371
Russian Federation (Chechnya)	1,033	5,165
Somalia	5,050	30,300
South Africa	7,044	30,684
South Sudan	2,401	14,406
Spain	350	1,400
Sri Lanka	1,564	6,256
Sudan	9,696	48,048
Syria	4,9590	26,112
Türkiye	2,174	9,601
Yemen	5,517	38,619

*What's in a **Ramadan food parcel?***

The food parcels we provide to families and individuals around the world are designed to provide a month's worth of nutritious meals. We carefully consider and adapt the contents of these parcels to ensure the ingredients align with local diets and tastes.

Here are some examples of what our food parcels contained in 2026:

Bosnia

10kg flour
2kg rice
3L sunflower oil
2kg beans
1.6kg macaroni
2kg corn flour
800g canned beef goulash
600g dates
2kg sugar
800g canned beef meat
260g soup
640g canned tuna
1kg salt
250g Vegeta (food seasoning)
300g chocolate spread
4x vermicelli packets

Lebanon

2kg rice
2kg green lentils
2kg red lentils
5kg Egyptian rice
3kg coarse white bulgur
1.3kg vegetable ghee
3kg chickpeas
0.4kg tahini
5l sunflower oil
4.5kg white flour
1.2kg tomato paste
5kg white sugar
2kg vermicelli
2kg khodari dates
3kg pasta/spaghetti
0.76kg canned hummus paste

Pakistan

40kg wheat flour
5L vegetable oil
6kg pulses
10kg rice
3kg dates
0.5kg sugar
900g tea
1.5L sharbat (drink)
3kg besan (gram flour)
800g salt
4x packet of vermicelli

Sri Lanka

25kg rice
5kg wheat flour
3L coconut oil
5kg sugar
3kg dates
2kg dhal lentils
1kg juice power
1kg milk powder
0.5 kg tea powder

Kenya

24kg wheat flour
10kg maize flour
10kg rice
10kg beans
5kg dates
5kg sugar
3L cooking oil

Malawi

30kg maize flour
10kg broken rice
4L cooking oil
1.3kg soya pieces
5kg sugar
5kg likuni phala (fortified flour porridge)

*How your **donations** support people in need*

Without the generosity of our donors, it would be impossible to coordinate and execute a global project on the scale of our annual Ramadan programme. Part of how we ensure your donations have the most impact is by deciding how best to distribute aid to people in need.

The Ramadan programme supports people in three main ways:

- In-kind food pack distributions: Food parcels are our most common method of Ramadan support, providing families with enough food for a month. In 22 of the 35 countries where the Ramadan project ran in 2026, food parcels made up 100% of the project's support. In other countries, food parcels were provided alongside the other forms of assistance.
- Cash assistance: Cash allows rightsholders the flexibility to buy exactly what they want in areas where markets were functioning well. Some of the countries where we provided cash assistance included Afghanistan, Türkiye and Ethiopia.
- Food voucher distributions: Vouchers are another way we give rightsholders more choice over what they receive. In 2026, we provided both restricted and unrestricted vouchers to rightsholders in countries including Jordan, Mali and Yemen.

Restricted vouchers specify the type and quantity of food items that rightsholders can exchange for their vouchers. Unrestricted vouchers have a set monetary value, allowing rightsholders to choose the food items they prefer up to the value of the voucher.

Tailored methods offer the best support

Islamic Relief's country offices tailored delivery methods to local market conditions, security and the needs of the communities we serve instead of applying a single approach worldwide. Many country offices combined cash transfers, voucher and food parcel assistance across different provinces to increase families' choice. This flexible approach ensured the support we provided was most relevant to the people we serve, and helped protect their dignity.

*GET TO KNOW: **CASH AND VOUCHERS***

What is cash assistance?

Cash provides direct financial assistance — either physical cash or equivalent vouchers — to people in need. Sometimes, this support is combined with direct in-kind aid (food parcels).

What are its benefits?

Cash support is an effective, fast and dignified means of assisting vulnerable people. It allows recipients to choose the goods they need most; supporting their dignity and personal choice, while also promoting local economies.

How do you make sure recipients use the cash correctly?

Cash support is an amanah (trust) we give to those in need, which they fulfil by using it for its intended purpose. We prioritise unrestricted cash, vouchers, and conditional cash as appropriate, and have a multi-layered safeguarding and compliance system that involves screening of recipients and vendors, verifications and digital controls.

Who receives ***Ramadan support from Islamic Relief?***

Across all countries where the Ramadan 2026 programme ran, we worked to prioritise providing support for the most vulnerable:

- People living in poverty
- Families headed by widows, single parents and women
- Orphaned children and their families
- Elderly people, particularly those without family support
- People with disabilities
- Pregnant women and new mothers
- Internally displaced people, refugees and returnees
- Families affected by conflict and natural disaster
- People managing chronic illness without support
- People in institutional settings, such as orphanages and prisons
- Large families where the majority of members are dependents

Of the 954,783 people we reached with Ramadan support in 2026:

69,519 were refugees
99,562 were internally displaced
34,277 had a disability
491,559 were female
444,219 were children
28,003 were families supported by Islamic Relief's Orphan Sponsorship Programme

Note: The grand total of these figures (1,167,139) exceeds the total people reached in 2026 (954,783) this is because some individuals are counted in several categories in this breakdown. For example, a girl with a disability would be included in the figures above for 'children', 'female' and 'had a disability'.

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491,559
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444,219
were children

28,003
families supported by our Orphan Sponsorship Programme

The people we supported through the Ramadan programme were selected through a common process, adapted to local context but consistent in principle.

1. Criteria setting: Country offices defined vulnerability criteria using scoring tools in line with seasonal programme guidelines and Shariah principles
2. Stakeholder engagement: Local authorities, community and religious leaders and partner organisations were consulted to identify and validate potential recipients
3. Data collection: Household data was gathered through door-to-door surveys, community meetings, and/or digital tools
4. Verification and validation: MEAL* teams cross checked collected data against criteria to confirm eligibility, supplemented by household visits and community-level validation sessions
5. Approval and finalisation: Final lists were reviewed and signed off by senior staff before distribution, with feedback and complains mechanisms in place throughout to safeguard transparency
6. Exceptional cases: In certain countries, all assistance was directed exclusively to families of children enrolled in Islamic Relief's Orphan Sponsorship Programme

*Monitoring, evaluation accountability and learning

The power of ***partnerships***

In 2026, Islamic Relief worked with 58 local implementing partners in 11 countries to carry out our Ramadan food parcel distributions.

These partners played a key role in supporting field activities at all stages of the project, making it possible to deliver support to people in even the hardest-to-reach places. All partners were screened according to Islamic Relief's policy to ensure compliance.

Partners carried out several key roles:

- **Full project management:** In some countries, partners assumed full management of Ramadan programme activities, including planning, procurement, coordination, execution and reporting.
- **Identifying rightsholders:** Partners provided community-level data, helped to validate lists, and facilitated fair and inclusive identification of vulnerable households.
- **Granting access:** Some partners offered use of their premises for storage or distribution, improving reach and efficiency in hard-to--reach areas.
- **Community engagement:** Partners coordinated with communities to assist with targeting, helped to raise awareness of Islamic Relief's mission and Ramadan programme, mobilising local leaders and communities to encourage acceptance and participation. They also shared information on entitlements and distribution schedules to rightsholders.

Local authorities and municipalities, faith leaders, volunteers and civil society groups also assisted us in approving and facilitating distribution plans, validating selected rightsholders and issuing permits. In Sudan, displacement committees enabled effective rightsholder selection despite conflict, while we expanded the programme's reach in Pakistan and North Macedonia expanded programme reach through the local partnerships and resource mobilisation.

Adapting to the crisis in Gaza

The crisis in Gaza closed off normal supply routes, severely restricting the import of food and making food parcel disruption impossible. Rather than halt support, we adapted, working with our regional partner to serve 59,021 hot meals to people in need inside Gaza.

Countries where we worked with partners

Our *approach*

From selecting suppliers to ensuring our rightsholders know how to reach us with their feedback, our Ramadan 2026 programme was implemented through a detailed and rigorously assessed process.

Assessing for success

The process began with a market assessment and needs assessments of families to ensure the assistance we provide was relevant, appropriate and timely. This assessment helped to determine the contents of food parcels, ration sizes and expected cost per family, enabling us to begin contacting suppliers.

Supplier selection

Offices ran open, competitive tenders advertised through national newspapers, NGO bidding platforms and Islamic Relief websites. In less secure markets or where significant time pressures existed, trusted, pre-qualified suppliers were approached, with formal approval. Shortlisted suppliers were asked to provide samples, which were checked before a contract is awarded.

Better value = more families supported

A more competitive procurement process brought the average cost of a food pack down from €86 to €67 – a saving of 22 per cent. Without any increase in budget, this made it possible to distribute 20,429 additional food packs, extending the reach of the programme considerably.

Quality assurance

Suppliers were vetted against Islamic Relief's quality and safety standards before contracts were awarded. A multi-stage quality assurance process was implemented throughout procurement and packaging. A joint team including programme, finance, procurement and MEAL colleagues, conducted warehouse inspections, sampling food packs to verify weight, contents and quality against contract specifications. Additional checks were completed at distribution locations before dispatch, and any substandard items were replaced before approval, ensuring all food packs met the required standards. Spot checks were also carried out at distribution points.

Strengthening local economies

Country offices bought food and supplies through local retailers, wholesalers and banks, putting money directly into local markets. The programme also created more than 1,500 temporary jobs, providing short-time income and practical work experience.

Safety and security

Across all countries, safety and security were prioritised to ensure the wellbeing and protection of rightsholders, staff and volunteers. The steps we took to ensure safety included:

- risk and site assessments
- coordination with authorities and community leaders
- crowd and queue management
- priority access for vulnerable groups
- staff briefing and accountability mechanisms

No safety or security incidents were reported during the project.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding was integrated throughout the programme to protect the dignity, safety and wellbeing of rightsholders, staff and volunteers. Staff and volunteers received orientation on safeguarding, protection from sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, Islamic Relief's Code of Conduct, and humanitarian protection principles before implementation. Safeguarding reporting channels were communicated to communities, and regular monitoring was conducted during distributions to ensure compliance with organisational standards. No safeguarding incidents were reported during the implementation of the programme.

Complaints and feedback mechanisms

Rightsholders could contact Islamic Relief with complaints or feedback through a variety of different mechanisms, including:

- hotlines
- WhatsApp
- email
- help desks
- complaint boxes
- community briefing sessions

Rightsholders were informed of these channels during registration, selection and distributions and materials were made available in local languages to ensure no one was excluded.

Post-distribution monitoring in most countries recorded satisfaction of between 90-97 per cent, with recipients praising the quality of food, the organisation of distribution sites and the courtesy shown by staff.

Zakat

At Islamic Relief, your zakat is distributed with the utmost care to ensure that the most vulnerable, including children and people affected by war, disease and climate disasters, have access to the help that they need.

In 2026, more than €2.8 million from our Zakat Fund was provided to support Ramadan food distributions. This money was carefully designated to comply with key Shariah principles, with the cost-per-pack allocated from verified country office budgets and only eligible expenditure included.

Zakat-funded food parcels were provided to the eight categories of zakat-eligible individuals, primarily reaching:

- People living in poverty (al fuqara)
- People in need (al masakin)
- People in debt (al gharimin)
- Those in the cause of God (fi sabilillah)
- Travellers in need (ibn al-sabeel)

Zakat al-fitr pack distributions

Zakat al-fitr remained a core pillar of our 2026 Ramadan response. In total, 36,982 Zakat al-fitr parcels were delivered across all 35 countries and territories where distributions ran. These include locally-funded distributions in a small number of countries.

As per Shariah principles, Zakat al-fitr is one sa'a (2.5-3kg) of a local staple food per person. However, Islamic Relief country offices provided full Ramadan-standard food content and weight, giving families more nourishment for longer.

On this basis, the 36,982 parcels distributed are estimated to have provided more than 7.4 million meals, calculated at two meals per person per day over 30 days.

As timely delivery is a key Shariah principle, each country office completed the distribution of these packs between the last week of Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr, based on the local Eid al-Fitr dates.

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