YEMEN

HUMANITARIAN ADVOCACY UPDATE

LAST UPDATED 4 NOVEMBER 2026

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Escalating conflict and displacement:** Renewed fighting has displaced around 280,000 people since August, mainly in Taiz, Lahj and Aden. Many families face repeated displacement, placing further pressure on overstretched sites and host communities (see page 2).
- **Humanitarian conditions are deteriorating:** Cholera cases are spreading fast. The crisis is particularly acute in Taiz, where disrupted supply routes, rising prices and severe shortages of essential supplies and services are devastating civilians (see page 3).
- **International action is urgently needed:** Protect civilians and civilian infrastructure, secure safe and unimpeded humanitarian access, increase flexible funding, strengthen local humanitarian leadership, and intensify diplomatic efforts to prevent further escalation (see page 5).
- **Islamic Relief is responding:** Our offices and partners in Taiz, Aden and Lahj are providing aid to newly displaced families (see page 7).

23.1 m
People in need in Yemen

299,335
Newly displaced

8,513
Casualties since August 2026

17.8 m
Lack access to essential services

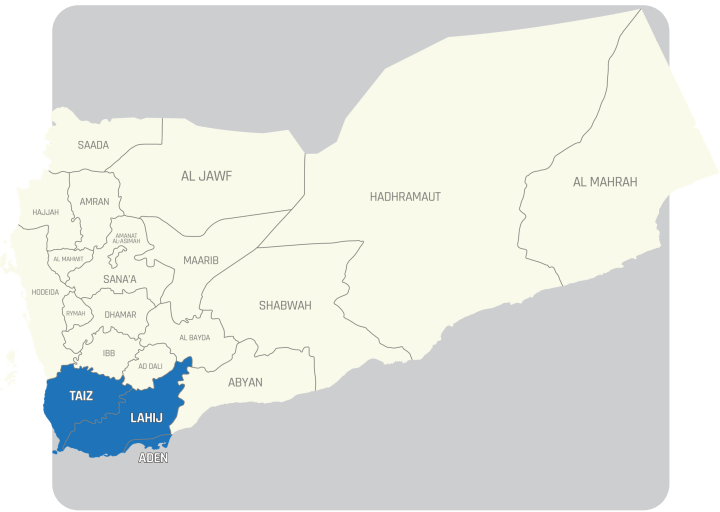
3.2 m
Children are out of school

23%
Of 2026 Yemen appeal funded

ISLAMIC RELIEF IN YEMEN AT A GLANCE

- Islamic Relief has worked throughout Yemen continuously since 1998, delivering both emergency aid and long-term development. Last year we reached 1.08 million people across Yemen.

- We currently have offices in the Aden, Lahj and Taiz governorates and work closely with local partner organisations all over the country to deliver programmes that support local health and nutrition services, strengthen food security and sustainable livelihoods, increase access to education, and improve water and sanitation. We also run an orphan sponsorship programme, which supports more than 8,000 vulnerable children and their families in Sana'a, Sa'dah and Al Hudaydah, and we deliver seasonal assistance during Ramadan, Qurbani and Eid.



HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

Escalations and security developments

Yemen is experiencing its most serious escalation in violence since the April 2022 truce. Fighting along the western coast has intensified since June and surged in September, displacing more than 299,000 individuals between 1 August and 2 November, most of them in Taiz, Lahj and Aden.

Civilian casualties continue to rise, with 100 people killed or wounded per day. Since the start of August until 23 October, there have been at least 8,513 casualties, including 1,574 killed and 6,939 injured.

The conflict has spread beyond the western coast, with clashes reported in Marib, Lahj, Al Jawf, Hajjah, Al Bayda and Saada. Hostilities around Taiz have intensified, disrupting the Taiz–Aden Road. Infrastructure damage and contested access have effectively cut the city's main southern supply route, restricting humanitarian and commercial deliveries. Humanitarian movements are being restricted at checkpoints despite approved permits, and damaged roads are slowing supplies between Taiz and the south.

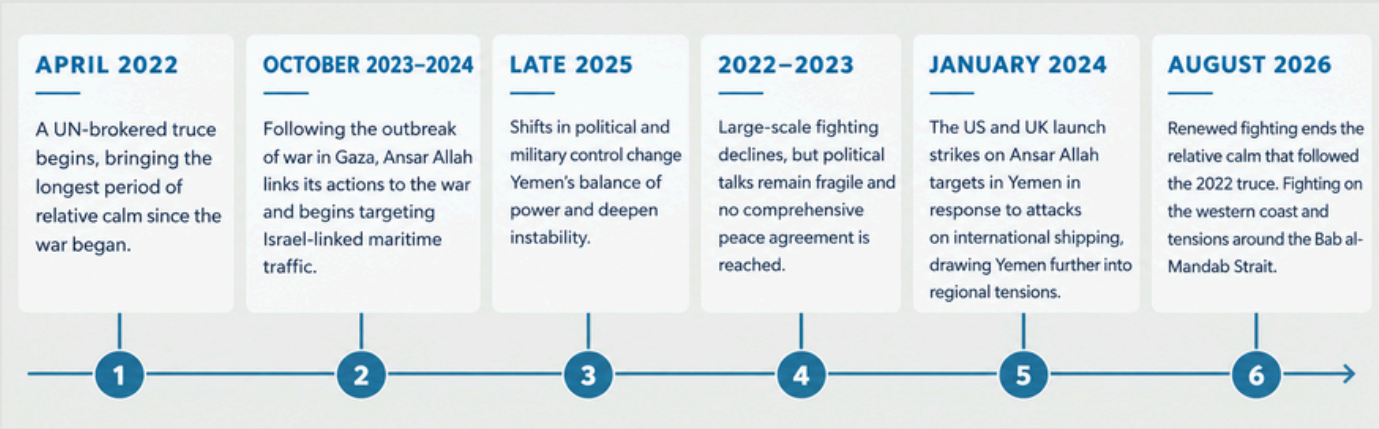
Food and water supplies are now running critically low in Taiz city, where most residents depend on trucked water. There are also severe shortages of medicines, fuel, oxygen, blood and reagents.

Continued fighting is likely to force more people from their homes, deepen poverty and damage essential infrastructure.

People fleeing the fighting are sheltering in desperate conditions in tents and overcrowded schools, without adequate shelter, water or sanitation. Cholera is spreading rapidly as a result.

Disruption in the Bab al-Mandab Strait has increased import costs, contributing to rising food and fuel prices in Yemen. Growing links between the conflict and wider regional tensions are likely to prolong instability and further undermine recovery efforts.

Escalations timeline:



HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

Food insecurity and livelihoods

Yemen is facing one of the world's worst food crises. Hunger is rising despite higher food imports, as millions of families cannot afford enough to eat. Around 18.3 million people face acute food insecurity. Recent monitoring found that 74% of households in accessible areas could not meet their basic food needs, the highest level recorded this year. In government-controlled areas, 41% of households faced severe food deprivation.

Economic pressures are making the crisis worse. Inflation, a weaker currency and years of conflict have eroded household incomes. Yemen imports about 90% of its food, leaving it highly exposed to disruptions in regional trade and shipping through the Bab al-Mandab Strait. Food supplies are falling as transport and shipping costs rise. Families are responding by skipping meals, eating less nutritious food or taking on debt. In Taiz, authorities reported that potato prices doubled within just four days, increasing from 1,000 Yemeni rials to 2,000 Yemeni rials per kilogram. During the same period, flour prices rose by 50%, from 38,000 to 57,000 Yemeni rials per bag.

Fuel shortages and higher prices are adding to the pressure by raising the cost of transport, food production, water pumping, electricity and humanitarian operations.

Displacement and population movements

Recent fighting has triggered one of Yemen's largest displacement crises in recent years. Almost 300,000 individuals have been forced from their homes between 1 August and 2 November, mainly in Taiz, Lahj and Aden. This adds to the needs of around 5.2 million people already displaced across Government of Yemen-controlled areas.

Many fled with little and now lack adequate food, clothing, shelter and hygiene supplies. Some families were separated as they fled fighting and insecurity.

Refugees are facing serious protection risks. By 29 October, 4,151 Yemenis, Somalis, Ethiopians and Eritreans had arrived in Somalia from Yemen.

Continued fighting could force more people from their homes and deepen humanitarian needs. Repeated displacement disrupts livelihoods, education and access to essential services, while putting greater pressure on host communities. The longer displacement lasts, the harder it becomes for families to rebuild their lives and livelihoods.

Water scarcity

Access to safe water and sanitation remains a major challenge in Yemen. An estimated 17.8 million people lack adequate access to essential services, including clean water and sanitation. Only around one-third of the population is connected to a piped water network.

Recent fighting is putting further strain on these services. Displaced families are arriving in areas where water is already scarce, while insecurity and damaged roads make emergency water deliveries harder.

Poor water and sanitation also increase the risk of disease. Cholera remains a major threat, with thousands of cases reported in 2026. Children, older people and other vulnerable groups face the greatest risks. On the West Coast, around 40% of newly displaced households rely on unprotected wells or surface water for drinking, while nearly one-third lack a lockable latrine.

Water scarcity is also threatening farming and rural livelihoods. Agriculture uses most of Yemen's water, while groundwater is being depleted faster than it can recover. A very strong El Niño adds further strain and is expected to compound existing food insecurity. It can bring too little rain during the growing season, followed by heavy rain and floods. Shrinking water supplies, degraded grazing land and more frequent climate shocks are threatening farming and livestock, while Yemen also faces indirect risks through wheat imports.

Health sector

Yemen's health system was already fragile before fighting escalated in August 2026, with only around 60% of health facilities fully functional. The escalation has put further pressure on essential care. In Taiz city, 42 health facilities report severe shortages of medicines, fuel, oxygen, water and other supplies. Health workers are treating rising numbers of war injuries and disease cases despite shortages of staff support and resources.

Disease outbreaks are adding to the pressure. Suspected cholera and acute watery diarrhoea cases rose from 217 in epidemiological week 36 to 647 in week 39, before falling to 356 in week 42. The risk remains high, particularly for displaced families living in poor conditions.

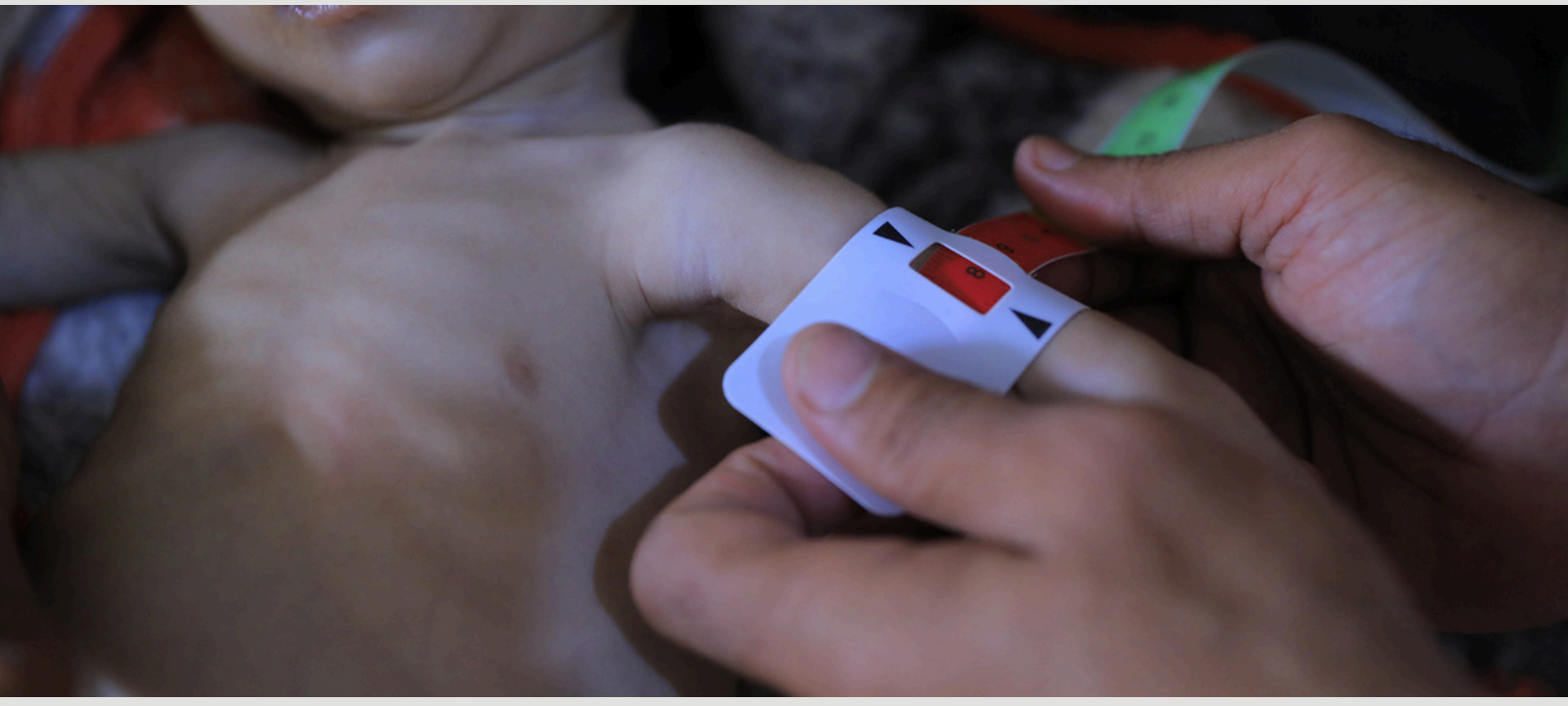
Children face severe risks from malnutrition and disease. More than 2.2 million children under five are acutely malnourished, including over 500,000 with severe acute malnutrition. Among displaced children recently screened, more than one in four were acutely malnourished. Poor diets and disease reinforce each other, putting children at greater risk.

Education

An estimated 3.2 million children are out of school. Poverty, displacement, child labour, unpaid teachers and damaged schools continue to keep children out of classrooms.

The latest fighting has caused further disruption. By mid-September, more than 240 schools had closed or suspended classes, affecting over 137,000 students. Repeated displacement causes children to miss lessons and puts further pressure on schools in host communities.

For many families, education is simply becoming unaffordable. Transport, uniforms and school supplies are beyond their means, while some children must work to support their families. Damaged schools and shortages of teachers and learning materials add to the problem. In some areas, unexploded ordnance and other remnants of war make the journey to school unsafe. Girls face greater risks of dropping out and early marriage, while boys are more likely to enter child labour.



ADVOCACY

OUR ASKS

To member states/ donors:

1. Increase flexible and predictable humanitarian funding.
With only 23 per cent of the humanitarian appeal funded as of November 2026, aid actors are being forced into impossible choices, deciding which services continue and which must wait. Donors should urgently scale up flexible, multi-year and needs-based funding to prevent further erosion of life-saving services. Humanitarian, development and economic support should be aligned to sustain livelihoods, essential services and household purchasing power, so that needs do not keep growing.

2. Invest directly in local humanitarian leadership, and centre affected communities in humanitarian decision-making.
National and local organisations remain at the forefront of the response, often operating in the most difficult and hard-to-reach areas. Funding should be channelled as directly as possible to local actors through equitable, flexible and multi-year partnerships that strengthen their capacity while preserving their independence.
Donors should also invest in the safety, wellbeing and operational capacity of Yemeni humanitarian workers, who continue to deliver assistance despite insecurity, economic hardship and movement restrictions.

3. Protect civilians and uphold international humanitarian law.
Member states must use their diplomatic influence to ensure all parties respect their obligations under international humanitarian law, protect civilians and civilian infrastructure, and ensure humanitarian access to all people in need.

4. Prioritise protection and gender-responsive programming.
Donors should expand support for protection services, including gender-based violence prevention and response, child protection, legal assistance and mental health and psychosocial support. Funding should prioritise women and girl led organisations and ensure that women and girls are meaningfully consulted in the design, implementation and evaluation of humanitarian programmes.

5. Support safe and dignified solutions for displaced communities.
Member states and donors should increase funding for cash assistance, shelter, core relief items, livelihoods and essential services for displaced people, refugees and host communities. Displacement sites and transit routes must be made safer through improved lighting, gender-sensitive sanitation facilities, protection measures and expanded mine action, risk education and survivor assistance programmes.

6. Strengthen diplomatic engagement for peace and humanitarian access.
The international community must intensify coordinated diplomatic efforts to prevent further fragmentation, institutional collapse and humanitarian deterioration in Yemen. Member states should actively support an inclusive, Yemeni-led political process and ensure that political developments do not result in further suffering for civilians.

Humanitarian access concerns must remain central to diplomatic engagement at all levels. Immediate measures are required to establish and protect humanitarian corridors to communities cut off by conflict and movement restrictions. This includes keeping routes into Taiz city safe and open for civilians, humanitarian supplies and essential goods, including fuel.

ADVOCACY

To regional and international powers:

1. Protect civilians and civilian infrastructure.
All regional powers with influence over parties to the conflict must use that influence to ensure respect for international humanitarian law. Civilians and the infrastructure they rely on, including homes, schools, hospitals, water systems, ports and key transport routes which are vital for humanitarian aid and commercial imports, must be protected from attack and military use.

Fuel needed to run hospitals, water pumping and oxygen production must be allowed to reach those who depend on it. Civilians wishing to leave conflict areas must be able to do so freely and safely, and injured people must be able to reach medical care without delay.

2. Ensure humanitarian access and protect humanitarian space.
Press all parties and authorities to allow safe, rapid and unimpeded humanitarian access to people in need. Aid must never be used as a political bargaining tool or restricted in ways that undermine humanitarian principles.

Humanitarian workers, including UN, NGO and civil society staff, must be protected from detention, harassment and interference. They must be free to work safely and independently, based on humanitarian need alone.

3. Prevent further escalation and regional spillover.
Step up diplomatic efforts to prevent further military escalation and wider regional conflict. Civilians must not pay the price for regional rivalries or military calculations. Regional and international powers should work to de-escalate hostilities, protect maritime security and prevent further disruption to trade, imports and humanitarian supplies on which millions of Yemenis depend.

4. Sustain diplomatic efforts for peace.
Remain engaged in diplomatic efforts to prevent further fragmentation, institutional collapse and humanitarian suffering. Humanitarian concerns must remain at the heart of political discussions and negotiations. Protecting civilians, reducing suffering and creating the conditions for lasting peace must remain central to these efforts.

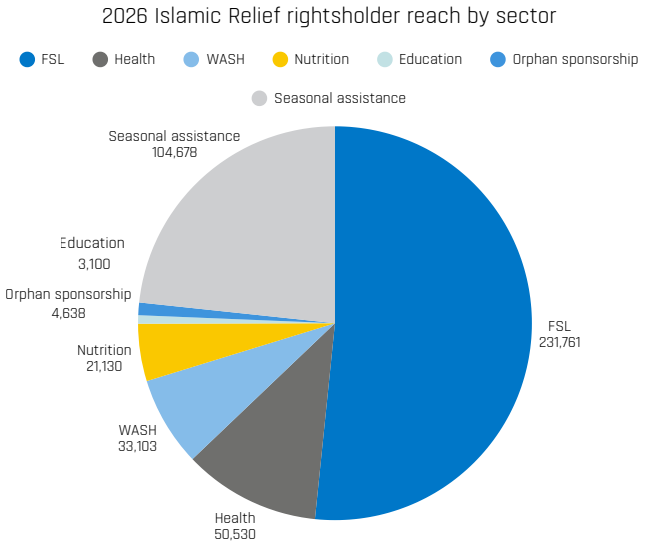


Operations

ISLAMIC RELIEF'S WORK IN YEMEN

Amid one of the world's most protracted humanitarian crises, Islamic Relief Yemen continues to deliver lifesaving assistance while investing in communities' long-term recovery. In 2025, we supported 1,080,274 people across multiple governorates through integrated interventions in food security, health, nutrition, WASH, education, orphan support and local capacity strengthening.

Recognising the importance of locally led humanitarian action, in 2026, Islamic Relief is supporting 15 local Yemeni NGOs through a multi-year capacity strengthening programme in Aden. Through training, mentoring and organisational development support, local organisations are enhancing their ability to deliver effective humanitarian assistance and engage with international donors, helping create a more sustainable and locally led response system.





Our operations in 2026

Food insecurity

In 2026, Islamic Relief supported 32,813 households (229,691 people) through a food assistance programme supported by the World Food Programme across Amran, Dhamar and Raymah, distributing almost 696 metric tonnes of food. Our seasonal Ramadan, Qurbani and Eid programmes reached a further 13,689 households, around 95,233 people.

Support is also shifting towards longer-term livelihoods. From November 2026, a three-year programme in Aden and Lahj will support 310 vulnerable households (2,170 people) with initial cash assistance followed by apprenticeships, business training, productive assets and ongoing livelihood support. A further livelihoods initiative that will establish sustainable income-generating activities, the Ignite Village Project in Taiz, is planned to support 360 households, particularly women-headed households, displaced families and people with disabilities.

Orphan sponsorship programme

In 2026, Islamic Relief's orphan sponsorship programme supported 4,638 children and their families across Sana'a, Sa'dah, Aden, Taiz, Lahj and Al Hudaydah. Additional food and cash assistance helped families facing acute hardship, including food support for 95 orphan families (benefiting 665 people), and a USD 97 cash grant for 1,405 orphaned children and other vulnerable rightsholders.

Seasonal assistance complemented this support. During winter 2025/26, 1,265 vulnerable households (8,855 people) in Dhamar and Sa'dah received vouchers for essential winter clothing and other items. Islamic Relief will continue supporting orphaned children across Yemen in 2027.



Health, WASH and nutrition

Islamic Relief continues to deliver integrated health, nutrition and WASH support across some of Yemen's most underserved areas. In Taiz, emergency healthcare support reached 8,773 people between January and April 2026. The project deployed 24 healthcare workers across two health facilities, provided medicines, medical supplies, infection prevention materials and water tanks, conducted 33 health outreach visits, and launched training on basic emergency obstetric and newborn care to improve maternal and newborn health services.

An ongoing programme in Al Hudaydah, and later Taiz, reached 38,225 people through 14 health facilities, including more than 30,000 primary healthcare consultations and reproductive health services for 7,823 people. The project rehabilitated and equipped health facilities, installed solar power systems, strengthened water and sanitation infrastructure, and trained healthcare workers in maternal, neonatal and psychosocial support services.

Between 2023 and 2026, across Al Hudaydah, Sa'dah and Raymah, programmes have rehabilitated and equipped health facilities, strengthened maternal and newborn care, provided medicines and trained health workers, while restoring water infrastructure and improving access to safe water and hygiene services.

In Raymah, integrated support treated 3,493 malnourished children and assisted 4,340 pregnant and lactating women by supporting 14 health facilities, deploying 28 healthcare workers abd 43 community volunteers. Across the three governorates, emergency outreach programmes admitted 13,297 malnourished children for treatment, of whom 9,114 recovered, alongside extensive community health and hygiene activities.

Islamic Relief is also investing in longer-term health capacity. Between 2023 and 2026, across Aden, Raymah, Lahj, Sana'a, Sa'dah, Dhamar and Al Hudaydah, 300 female students were supported to undertake midwifery education, while resilience programmes reached 21,760 people through WASH interventions, including rehabilitated solar-powered water systems and hygiene support.

From 2027, the proposed Yemen Resilience Project aims to bring health, nutrition, WASH and livelihoods assistance together in Taiz and Lahj. The planned programme includes rehabilitating and equipping health facilities, deploying healthcare workers, conducting community outreach activities and linking healthcare services with broader resilience-building support for vulnerable households.





Education

Islamic Relief is expanding access to education for children affected by conflict and displacement in Tuban District, Lahj Governorate, through a new education project running from late 2026 to 2027.

The project will improve learning conditions in a local school by rehabilitating classrooms, upgrading sanitation facilities and providing cleaning supplies. Students will receive school bags, stationery, recreational materials and hygiene kits, while volunteer teachers will receive training on hygiene promotion and WASH practices. The project aims to create a safer, healthier and more inclusive learning environment for vulnerable children and help them continue their education despite the challenges of conflict and displacement.

In 2027, Islamic Relief is seeking to scale up its support through a larger integrated education and WASH programme in Lahj. The proposed intervention will rehabilitate 13 primary and secondary schools, improve water and sanitation systems, install solar power systems, provide school furniture, and distribute more than 3,100 school bags and learning materials. The programme aims to increase school enrolment and retention, particularly among girls and children with disabilities, while strengthening the capacity of school management committees and communities to maintain services over the long term.





CASE STUDY

PURCHASING POWER CONTINUES TO DECLINE

For millions of families across Yemen, daily life has become a constant struggle to afford even the most basic necessities. Among them is Anshirah, a widowed mother caring for her five children with no regular source of income based in Taiz. Like many vulnerable households, Aisha relies on humanitarian assistance to survive.

"We have no source of income. As we face difficulty in providing food except for what Islamic Relief provides through the sponsorship programme, we only buy basic necessities."

The effects of weakened purchasing power extend far beyond hunger. Families increasingly struggle to access healthcare, education, and other essential services. "The standard of living is extremely difficult. We struggle to provide food, and there is no access to education or medical care because we have no income." Anshirah said.

For families like Anshirah's, even items that many households elsewhere consider routine are now unaffordable luxuries. One example is meat. Once a normal part of diets in many communities, it has become inaccessible for countless families due to soaring prices. "Meat is very expensive and it is not part of our regular diet. We cannot afford to buy it due to its high price. The only time we have meat is when Islamic Relief gives it to us."

During Eid al-Adha, Islamic Relief's qurbani programme provides orphan families with fresh meat, offering much-needed nutrition and a rare moment of happiness. For Anshirah and her children, receiving a qurbani meat pack brought relief from months of hardship.

"Eid al-Adha is a blessed occasion and a time of goodness. The qurbani meat pack helped my family a lot.It brings us joy. For us, it is one of the best days of the year."

Beyond the food itself, the assistance reminds families that they have not been forgotten. Anshirah was asked how she knew about Islamic Relief available support: "I knew about Islamic Relief through people who told me that they are kind and come to help those in need. Later, they came to our home three days after my husband passed away and registered us."

This family's story reflects a wider reality facing millions of Yemenis. As food prices rise, fuel becomes more expensive, and livelihoods remain limited, household purchasing power continues to decline. Even basic staples are becoming unaffordable.



