

Half of Muslims in the UK will struggle to feed themselves this Ramadan as the cost-of-living soars



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As the holy Islamic month of Ramadan draws nearer, Islamic Relief UK is calling on the UK government to help families financially struggling.

With an estimated 50 per cent of Muslim UK households living in poverty and deprivation compared to 18% of the general UK population (1), this Ramadan will be exceptionally tough for many people struggling to make ends meet and provide enough food for their families to break their fast with.

The charity is urging the government to increase benefit payments as close as possible to the rate of inflation and to further strengthen the UK's social security systems.

According to Islamic Relief UK partner, Give a Gift, many parents will have little or no food to break their fasts during the coming holy month, just so their children can eat.

Requests for help to another of the charity's partners, the National Zakat Foundation (NZF) have soared by 70% over the last twelve months. NZF gives out grants from Zakat (obligatory religious levy) collected from British Muslims to those in need.

The crisis is being intensified by the situation in Ukraine with sharp food price hikes hitting the UK and the effects of the pandemic still impacting families struggling financially.

Islamic Relief's partners in the UK are reporting a significant increase in the use of food banks, increased requests for support compared to the last two

lockdowns and the cost of living affecting families who will be significantly worse off this year.

Soaring prices across household essentials have severely impacted families' spending and UK households could be £1,000 worse off in 2022, according to an analysis by the Resolution Foundation.

Many people have been hit hard including low-income families, the homeless, those suffering from domestic abuse, asylum seekers and refugees who were already struggling to feed themselves.

"Families across the UK will be suffering as a result of record rates of inflation as well as increasing energy prices due to the war in Ukraine. "Last week's spring statement was an opportunity for the government to strengthen our social security systems and raise benefits payments to be, at least, in line with inflation. Instead, they've been handed a real terms cut in their payments, and with inflation set to rise further this year, the cost of living crisis will become an emergency for the poorest families. "We urgently call on the UK government to review this decision and take the bold actions necessary to avoid pushing families into destitution. "This is especially important as Muslim families begin to observe the holy month of Ramadan. Many will be fasting from sunrise to sunset and there is a real risk that families will not have enough food or will go without to feed their children."

For any questions or to request an interview with one of our spokespeople, please contact:

When and what is Ramadan?

Ramadan in 2022 is expected to begin on Saturday 2 April but it could start a day later if the moon is not sighted.

Islamic Relief is a faith-inspired, development and humanitarian agency working to transform and save the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in over 40 countries. Islamic Relief assists people according to need and does not discriminate in any way.

Set up in Birmingham in 1984 by a group of volunteers, we have assisted over 117 million people all over the world. We're saving lives and empowering people to lift themselves out of poverty in over 40 countries – from Bangladesh to Bosnia, Pakistan to Palestine, Kenya to Kosovo. Islamic Relief is on the ground in some of the world's most dangerous and difficult places – including Syria and Yemen – strengthening the most marginalised communities to withstand conflict and natural disasters and to build a brighter future. We also support vulnerable people in the UK in partnership with local charities and organisations.

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