

Increasing cost of living is driving UK Muslims deeper into poverty as calls for help to charity surge



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A record number of Muslims are seeking hardship relief from a national charity due to the rising cost of living, said National Zakat Foundation (NZF) and Islamic Relief UK today.

Requests for help to the National Zakat Foundation 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.

Islamic Relief UK have responded by donating £100,000 towards NZF which will help 440 people, especially with the holy Islamic month of Ramadan approaching.

The rising cost of living, the effects of the pandemic as well as the situation in the Ukraine have all contributed to a devastating situation for families, many of who will be struggling to put food on the table and choosing between eating and household bills.

The unprecedented demand for support from NZF reflects the statistics recently revealed by Muslim Census, which stated that the Muslim community in the UK has fallen into a poverty at a rate of 10 times higher than the national average.

The report also revealed that job losses among Muslims have been six times greater compared to the rest of the population since the pandemic began and that 42% of the Muslims surveyed have had to use their savings to cover their expenses during the pandemic. This compares to a recent study by AJ Bell, an established investment platform, that recorded that 30% of people in the UK have had to use their

savings.

“At NZF, we’ve seen a record number of applications to our Hardship Relief Fund over the last 12 months. The cost-of-living crisis has meant that Muslims who were already struggling to get by from month to month are facing an unprecedented struggle just to cover the basics – from food to heating. Sadly we expect the situation to get worse over the coming months. “I’m pleased that NZF is working with Islamic Relief UK in a joint effort to help those affected by the rising cost of living here in the UK. Islamic Relief is a leader in international charity. We are proud to partner with them to address the very real needs of our UK Muslim community. Islamic Relief UK’s £100,000 donation to our Hardship Relief Fund will greatly help Muslim individuals and families who are struggling here and now.”

“Many families in the UK are struggling to put food on the table and parents are going hungry just so their children can eat. The cost of living crisis is pushing families deeper into poverty, this should not be happening in one of the richest countries in the world. “The NZF hardship fund is a lifeline for many struggling families, especially during these difficult times. “Islamic Relief UK is proud of our partnership with NZF and we hope our support will go towards making a huge difference to people across the country.”

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

Muslims are required to give 2.5% of their cash and other assets every year, for a set of eight purposes set out in the Quran. Rather than being a charitable donation, Zakat is in fact the duty upon Muslims, as a means of redistributing wealth in order to restore social equality and promote a more just society.

The value of Zakat is estimated to range from US\$ 200 billion to US\$ 1 trillion per annum across the world (Stirk, 2015).

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.

National Zakat Foundation (NZF) is the only platform with a national reach enabling Muslims to give Zakat to those who need it here in the UK. Since 2011, NZF has enabled support to tens of thousands of Muslims across the country with Zakat given by people right here in the UK, helping to get their lives back on track and unlocking the potential of those held back by their financial circumstances.

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