

Islamic Relief UK Warns that Cost of Living Crisis is Escalating as Families Turning to Food Banks Doubles in Two Months and Calls for Help Skyrocket



PUBLISHED JUL 8, 2022
BY [ISLAMIC RELIEF](#)

Charity is deeply concerned by rising levels of poverty as it plans to distribute food and essential items as part of the Islamic holiday of Eid-al-Adha (1), when Muslims give Qurbani (2) meat to those in need.

Islamic Relief UK's partners across England and Scotland are reporting a further wave of unprecedented calls for help from families struggling with the cost-of-living crisis. People using food banks have doubled in just the last two months and organisations are meeting many families who have not previously sought help.

The charity plans to distribute 3,400 food parcels over the coming weeks through 19 of its partners as part of the Islamic festival of Eid al-Adha. This will be the charity's biggest ever Qurbani food distribution and it will also help provide 2,300 cooked meals through the Felix Project in London and a further 12,000 meals with FareShare, 8,000kg of meat and over 3,000 Eid gifts for children.

Many of Islamic Relief UK's partners are warning that the coming winter will be particularly hard on families as energy bills are predicted to rise even further.

Islamic Relief UK partner, Masjid Al-Falaah in Birmingham is reporting that it is helping to feed an extra 100 people every weekend compared to two months ago. It is also reporting that

public donations of money to the mosque have also been affected; donations have plummeted in just one year by 35% due to the cost-of-living crisis, plummeting £13k and severely impacting the mosque's ability to help people through their food bank services.

In London, Newham Community Project are reporting that the number of people coming to their food bank has doubled in the last two months. The project has also seen an increase in domestic violence cases, which many families are telling them have been exacerbated by the stress of the cost-of-living crisis.

Islamic Relief UK's partners are also fearing what will happen in the coming months. Sufra in London are anticipating that the 500 people they see a week accessing their food bank, will significantly increase as they head towards winter due to rising energy bills.

While Islamic Relief UK welcomes the government's most recent raft of emergency measures to help with the cost-of-living crisis, the charity is stating that this will not resolve the crisis in the long term.

Islamic Relief UK is calling on the government to urgently work at every level to strengthen the social security system and ensure that benefit payments are, at least, enough for people to afford essential household goods and adequately feed themselves and stay warm.

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

According to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, figures this year showed that more than one in five of the UK population (22 per cent) are living in poverty- 14.5 million people - and almost one in three children in the UK are living in poverty (31 per cent).

Islamic Relief UK will be distributing food packs this Qurbani through Sufra NW, Cambridge Central Mosque, Newham

Community Centre, Masjid Al-Falaah, Coventry Muslim resource centre, Birmingham Central Mosque, Fareshare, Liverpool Region Mosque Network, The Abrahamic Foundation, Give a Gift, The Felix project, East London Mosque, Masjid Al Hikmah, One Roof Leicester, Crookston Community Group, Pl84u SUFFA, Renaisi, North Paddington Foodbank and Cann Hall Masjid.

Food packs will contain items such as rice, pasta, flour, oil, sugar, salt, canned tuna, tomatoes, vegetables, rice pudding, canned soup, cereals and biscuits.

Tufail Hussain, Director of Islamic Relief UK said: “Two months ago during the holy month of Ramadan, when families were struggling to put food on the table, we were deeply concerned about the possibility of the crisis intensifying. Now our partners are telling us that things are the worst they’ve seen and families in the UK are struggling more than ever.

“Instead of jumping from one set of emergency measures to another, we need the UK government to commit to ensuring that benefit payments are, at a minimum, enough for families to be able to adequately feed themselves.”

“Even with the recent announcements, as inflation and energy prices continue to rise, the most vulnerable families will still be making tough choices.

“Islamic Relief UK will partner with 19 partners across the country to bring some food and relief to these families as part of the Islamic festival of Eid.”

For more information or to request to interview one of our spokespeople, please contact:

Jonaïd Jilani: 07872 403534;

1. The month of Dhul Hijjah is one of the holiest periods of the Islamic year, when two very special events (Hajj and Eid ul Adha) take place.

Hajj in Islam is a sacred pilgrimage performed by Muslims at the holy mosque Masjid al-Haram in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. It is

one of the five pillars of Islam and takes place during the month of Dhul Hijjah, the twelfth month in the Islam calendar.

As Muslims, undertaking Hajj in Islam – is a spiritual duty, as long as they are financially, physically and emotionally able to do so.

On Eid al-Adha, Muslims remember the sacrifice made by Prophet Ibrahim (AS). In remembrance of his sacrifice and to help the poor and needy, Muslim give Qurbani.

2. Qurbanimeans sacrifice. Every year during the Islamic month of Dhul Hijjah, Muslims around the world slaughter an animal – a goat, sheep, cow or camel – to reflect the Prophet Ibrahim’s willingness to sacrifice his son Ismail, for the sake of God. In 2022, Qurbani distributions will aim to reach more people than ever before. After the animal has been sacrificed, its meat is then distributed to those most in need.

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.

Press release distributed by Media Pigeon on behalf of Islamic Relief, on Jul 8, 2022. For more information [subscribe and follow us](#).

Press Contacts

1. Jonaid Jilani

Jonaid Jilani

jonaid.jilani@islamic-relief.org.uk

07872 403 534

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