

Muslim community falling into poverty ten times higher than UK population according to recent figures by NZF and Islamic Relief UK



PUBLISHED FEB 23, 2021
BY [ISLAMIC RELIEF](#)

A record number of Muslims are seeking hardship relief from a national charity due to the COVID-19 pandemic and, with a second Ramadan in lockdown approaching, funds are still urgently needed to respond to these needs, said National Zakat Foundation and Islamic Relief UK today.

Requests for help from National Zakat Foundation (NZF) have soared from approximately 15 a day before the first lockdown to over 70 a day during the latter period of 2020, and with the long-term financial impact of COVID still heavily affecting the community, the need remains very high. NZF gives out grants from Zakat (obligatory religious levy) collected from British Muslims to those in need. With the vast majority of Zakat typically being given in Ramadan, NZF are urgently seeking funds to ensure they can meet the needs of the community in the weeks and months ahead.

To prevent a shortage of funds to meet demand, NZF appealed for £500,000 from the Muslim community and Islamic Relief responded by donating £200,000.

“Throughout the pandemic, we have been helping people affected by COVID-19 in some of the poorest countries in the world, but we can see that people in this country are in desperate need. So many can’t afford to eat, pay their rent, clothe themselves or heat their homes. It’s a real emergency. And we do not have time to wait to respond to these needs. “There is no organisation like NZF who can urgently distribute

cash to those in need in such a robust and accountable manner and we are grateful to them for allowing us to be able to respond to so many thousands of Muslims in urgent need.”

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 poverty at a rate 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, who recorded that 30% of people in the UK have had to use their savings.

As well as facing poverty, Muslim communities are especially vulnerable as many live in extended households where elderly people and those with existing health conditions are most at risk. Key workers, such as NHS staff and transport workers from these families also have the additional fear of catching the virus.

Leena (name changed to protect identity) lives in Leeds with her husband (a self-employed taxi driver) and their four children, aged 15, 13, 11 and 6. She explained:

“I’ve never had to approach charity before in my life, but we are really struggling at the moment. My husband’s earnings as a taxi driver have plummeted since COVID-19. He’s earning around £140-200 less a week than he did before COVID-19. But the bills are piling up and it’s become incredibly stressful. This time of year is usually really busy for him, but people aren’t going out and the work just isn’t there. “I’m worried about how to put food on the table, gas and electric bills, children’s clothes; just last week, I couldn’t afford to buy washing powder. Now that the children are often off school, they need computers, but that’s totally out of the question, when we can’t even afford the essentials.”

Green Lanes Mosque in Birmingham have also received more

than double the enquiries they received before COVID-19.

Uthmaan Ahmad, a case worker at the Green Lanes Mosque said:

Adeel, a taxi driver from Rushden in Northamptonshire in the Midlands turned to Green Lanes Mosque for support. He was earning approximately £40 a day prior to the COVID-19 pandemic working early shifts getting people to school and work. He didn't have his own vehicle so had to give up 60% of what he earned to the company he worked for to cover the costs of the vehicle and insurance.

As the COVID-19 pandemic progressed Adeel started to lose his customers but still had to pay the fees to the company and was then only earning £10-15 a day and sometimes making a loss.

He also started to go without food.

NZF also revealed that they had seen a 51% spike in demand for support from asylum seekers since May.

Many of the places asylum seekers would typically turn to for food – such as charity drop-in centres – have had to close. And thousands of asylum seekers have been placed in hotels to avoid living in overcrowded houses and are given meals instead of an allowance. This means they can't afford to pay for essential items such as Internet for their children's education or top-up for mobile phones to get information on COVID-19 or speak to family members.

Given the unprecedented demand in the UK for Zakat, NZF has given out £3.5 million to those in need in less than a year and has been granting £400,000 a month in the past few months. Funds are rapidly running out.

For more information and interviews, 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.

Press release distributed by Media Pigeon on behalf of Islamic Relief, on Feb 23, 2021. For more information subscribe and [follow](#) us.

Press Contacts

1. Jonaid Jilani

Jonaid Jilani

jonaid.jilani@islamic-relief.org.uk

07872 403 534

Media Assets

Embedded Media

Visit the [online press release](#) to interact with the embedded media.

<https://mediapigeon.io/newsroom/islamic-relief/releases/en/muslim-community-falling-into-poverty-ten-times-higher-than-uk-population-according-to-recent-figures-by-nzf-and-islamic-relief-uk-4906>

Islamic Relief

Newsroom: <https://mediapigeon.io/newsroom/islamic-relief>

Website: <https://www.islamic-relief.org/>

Primary Email: info@islamic-relief.org.uk

Social Media

Facebook - <http://www.facebook.com/islamicreliefuk>

Twitter - <http://twitter.com/islamicreliefuk>

Youtube - <http://www.youtube.com/islamicreliefuk>

Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/islamicreliefuk/>

Linkedin - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/islamic-relief-uk/>
