

The world must not forget Yemen crisis as malnutrition and attacks increase



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BY [ISLAMIC RELIEF](#)

As the world responds generously and compassionately to the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, Islamic Relief is urging international governments not to forget the ongoing suffering in Yemen. Seven years of conflict there have left more than 21 million people in need of aid, and clinics supported by Islamic Relief are currently inundated with malnourished children on the verge of starvation.

Since late 2021 deadly attacks on civilians – by all parties to the conflict – have escalated again, with hundreds of people reported killed each month.

Ahead of this week's international pledging conference for Yemen – to be held in Geneva on 16th March – the needs are greater than ever. Islamic Relief is calling on the international community to not only commit immediate aid but also ensure independent monitoring and accountability for attacks, and increase diplomatic efforts to end the devastating conflict and plot a course to economic stability.

The international response to the Yemen crisis is chronically underfunded. Islamic Relief is distributing lifesaving food aid to more than 2.4 million people in partnership with the UN's World Food Programme (WFP), but rations have had to be reduced in quantity and frequency because of funding cuts to the WFP. In recent years, Islamic Relief's supporters and partners around the world have donated more money to Yemen than some major governments.

Seven years of conflict have destroyed millions of lives and left the country's infrastructure and economy in ruins. Hospitals and schools have been bombed and half of the country's health facilities have shut down. Unemployment is

rising and the cost of food and essential supplies has spiralled out of reach for poor families. The numbers are staggering:

“For the past seven years the people of Yemen have been bombed and forced from their homes, with hunger a constant curse for many. Millions of people are facing starvation. This morning they will wake up and not know if they will be able to feed their children today. This crisis is one of the biggest catastrophes of this century, yet it is rarely in the news. “It has been uplifting to see the compassion and humanity with which the international community has committed aid to the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and the heart of Europe. I sincerely hope that governments will respond as generously for the people of Yemen. Funding for Ukraine continues to be needed, but it must be in addition to, not instead of, funding for Yemen and other crises.”

Dr Asmahan Al Badani, Islamic Relief’s nutrition coordinator in Hodeidah governorate in Yemen, said:

“People are now so poor they have to choose between buying food or medicine. Last week I met a woman suffering from liver disease. She’s a single mother of four, and two of her children are severely malnourished. She can’t afford medicine to treat her disease because she spends any money she gets on food to stop her children starving. She told me she can tolerate the physical pain of her own illness but cannot bear to see her children suffer. “Seven years of war have robbed a generation of its childhood. Now when I ask a child what they want to be in the future, they say, “I just want to eat and live.” They are terrified of dying. At school they hear teachers read out the names of their friends and fellow pupils who have died. They discuss death all the time and it is very traumatic for them.”

Islamic Relief is calling on all parties to the conflict to cease hostilities and protect civilians. The charity is calling on international donors to commit flexible, multi-year funding to the humanitarian response in Yemen and to increase support to local Yemeni organisations, which are at the forefront of the response and are often particularly under-funded.

In the past three years Islamic Relief has provided more than GBP £24 million / USD \$31 million for Yemen through its own funds, raised from generous communities worldwide.

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Press Contacts

1. **Jonaid Jilani**

Jonaid Jilani

jonaid.jilani@islamic-relief.org.uk

07872 403 534

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Islamic Relief

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

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

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