



SUPPORTING  
COMMUNITIES  
SINCE 2011

**ISLAMIC RELIEF IN**  
**TUNISIA**  
**AID AND HOPE**

# ISLAMIC RELIEF IN TUNISIA



Islamic Relief is a faith-inspired humanitarian and development agency working to save and transform the lives of some of the world's most vulnerable people. Established in the UK in 1984, we work in over 40 countries, assisting people according to need, and do not discriminate in any way.

Islamic Relief began working in Tunisia in 2011 to support refugees, following conflict in Libya which saw many flee to Tunisia for safety. Working closely with communities, we've developed an in-depth understanding of their needs and worked to provide support accordingly. We have been supporting the people of Tunisia by involving them in all stages of our programmes, ensuring they play a full part in shaping interventions that will positively impact their lives.

Our work in Tunisia includes providing lifesaving humanitarian aid in times of crisis and ongoing development programmes that help communities adapt to climate change, earn a sustainable living and get access to basic needs and services like food, healthcare and education. We also provide vital assistance to refugee and migrant communities in the country. We aim to support rural communities to grow in self-reliance, with a particular focus on empowering women and young people.

# WHERE WE WORK

With a dedicated team of 30 staff and four volunteers working from our country offices, we serve communities across the whole country, including in hard-to-reach areas. Islamic Relief's main office is in the capital, Tunis. Our office in Jendouba coordinates operations in the country's north west and our office in Medenine coordinates operations in the south.



# SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES TO BECOME SELF-RELIANT

A farmer harvests watermelons grown with support from an Islamic Relief livelihoods project for rural communities in Kebilli.



# A MESSAGE FROM OUR COUNTRY DIRECTOR'

Islamic Relief started operating in Tunisia in 2011, supporting Libyan refugees who fled to Tunisia for safety. In 2014 we began moving our programming focus from emergency to development interventions. Today, our main priorities are improving water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in schools, much-needed women's empowerment projects and orphan sponsorship programmes.

**Many communities in Tunisia, particularly in rural areas, face deep poverty and difficulties fuelled by the effects of climate change, weak education and healthcare systems and a lack of clean water.**

Rural areas often lack infrastructure and organisation, posing an obstacle to local development. This, coupled with natural resources like arable land and forests dwindling and lost livelihoods as a result of climate change, has left communities in deep poverty. Many do not know where their next meal is coming from.

More than 100,000 children drop out of school each year, leaving many unable to escape the cycle of poverty. Most rural schools have limited access to safe water and sanitation facilities, and children are suffering from health problems such as hepatitis as a result. Moreover, these schools often lack libraries, extracurricular facilities and even basic infrastructure like adequate numbers of classrooms.

Women in rural communities also face major challenges, with limited access to employment, education and information about their rights. As a result, many lack social and legal protection and are vulnerable to exploitation when it comes to earning a living.

The gradual disengagement of the state in Tunisia has led to civil associations emerging (especially among young people and women) whose initiatives are often promising. However, these associations are relatively young and

often face problems with internal governance, organisation and a lack of resources and technical skills.

Another major challenge facing communities in Tunisia has been the decline of tourism, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic. This has led to widespread job losses and has had a dire impact on many local businesses. The country has also witnessed a fall in the production of oil and phosphates, in part because of poorly handled work-related disputes in state-owned enterprises.

According to the World Bank, the pandemic has had a major impact on the Tunisian economy. At the same time, travel restrictions saw exports in Tunisia's main manufacturing exports reduce by 27 per cent in 2020.

The combination of these factors has led to high levels of poverty and unemployment and unfulfilled demands for social justice.

Islamic Relief is proud to serve the resilient communities of Tunisia, with the support of our generous partners and donors. The people of Tunisia hope for a brighter future for themselves and future generations. We call on the world to do more to support them in this endeavour.



**Mohamed Rebei**  
Country Director, Islamic Relief Tunisia

# OUR PROGRAMMES IN TUNISIA

Our work in Tunisia focuses on helping vulnerable communities to lift themselves out of poverty and improve their living conditions.

**Our main priorities include:**

**Lifesaving emergency programmes**



Islamic Relief's emergency response in Tunisia has helped thousands of refugees fleeing war and conflict. In 2011, we supported more than 15,000 refugees living in camps in the provinces of Medednine and Tataouine. We continue to provide lifesaving aid and counselling support to families who have fled conflict-affected Libya.

Tunisia is prone to natural disasters, particularly flooding. Often among the first to respond to a humanitarian crisis, Islamic Relief delivers vital interventions during emergencies. Our humanitarian response includes food aid, shelter, protecting the most vulnerable, and providing survival items.

Amid the Covid-19 pandemic, we worked with the Ministry of Health to help combat the spread of the virus, distributing emergency hygiene items to medical staff and equipping hospital and health centres with the equipment they desperately needed. In total, our initiatives meant over 22,500 vulnerable people in Tunisia received lifesaving aid in 2020 alone.

# DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

We work closely with communities to address their long-term needs and improve outcomes. We help families adapt to the changing climate so they can grow enough food and earn a reliable living. We also help communities access good-quality healthcare, and improve access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). We also support vulnerable children and their families to help meet their basic needs and gain an education.

Our health programmes have provided hospital beds and medical equipment across four different districts, while our WASH interventions supported schools to run sessions promoting good hygiene practices, as well as equipping them with desperately needed hygiene facilities.



# EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES AND CREATING LASTING CHANGE



Islamic Relief Tunisia works to help women to become self-reliant. We provide women with training and equipment to start their own businesses and support them with marketing, and with exhibiting their products. We also provide women with vital healthcare, as well as education around their rights, economic opportunities and topical issues such as climate change, so that their voices are heard in the community.

We provide young people with vocational training, giving them the skills and support they need to start earning a living in a country where unemployment is rife. We also run numerous education programmes in Tunisia, to help children secure a brighter future and escape the cycle of poverty. Our work involves repairing schools and supporting them with the training and equipment they need to flourish.

We advocate for change in Tunisia, amplifying the voice of the most vulnerable members of society and working to address the root causes of poverty. We do this by networking with authorities and civil society to raise awareness in local communities around people's basic rights and the importance of environmental protection.

# UNLOCKING WOMEN'S POTENTIAL



Many women in Tunisia struggle with daily life – particularly in rural areas where communities are predominantly male-dominated. Women usually cannot find employment except as seasonal agricultural labourers, from which they earn very little. Many women are also unaware of their rights and lack access to healthcare and education. Already prevalent, gender-based violence worsened amid restrictions imposed to combat the spread of Covid-19 in the country.

Islamic Relief has been working with women in Jendouba and Tataouine to boost their self-reliance. Bringing women together in groups, we provide vocational training in beekeeping, goat farming, handicrafts and oil

extraction and distillation, giving members the skills needed to earn a reliable living. Women also receive business management and networking training and access to work venues, tools and raw materials, as well as support with marketing and exhibitions to promote their products.

The project also raises awareness of women's health and social rights and gives women access to specialist healthcare. We're educating women on topical issues such as combating the effects of climate change, so that they can influence decision-making in their communities.



**“Women’s economic empowerment enables them to provide for their families and improve their incomes, which will have a very positive impact on children’s health and education. It is one of our most important goals. Islamic Relief’s project is a whole series of valuable activities”,** says Monia Bouzzi, who is training women in entrepreneurship as part of our project in Jendouba.



“The project is an integrated network and a whole series of activities, and is greatly benefitting women,” adds Monia.


“My role is to provide training and mentorship and to organise skills training programmes around handicrafts, beekeeping and oil extraction and distillation.

“In coordination with Islamic Relief staff, women are being trained according to their cooperative’s speciality. They are trained in all technical matters, as well as in governance and managing a cooperative.

“What makes Islamic Relief’s project unique is the fact that they linked the economic, social, health and environmental aspects in the area – and this relates to our development goals.

“With regard to the empowerment of women, we know that 72 per cent of the region is rural. We can’t work on the sustainability of these women’s cooperatives unless we connect them with public and private institutions, civil society and national organisations.

“Now that women are benefitting from Islamic Relief’s project, the next step is to empower them to also be financed by banks that will allow every woman to expand her project and to increase her profit”.



**“I will do the impossible to inspire my daughters”**

Suniya, a mother struggling to provide for her children, is among those benefitting from the project in Jendouba.

“I live in very difficult circumstances. My husband has kidney disease so I’m in charge of my household, while my husband can only earn a small income. Rural women are marginalised. There’s no source of money here. Only the men work, the women are unemployed and are kept at home,” says Suniya.

“We’re benefitting from this project in many different ways. There are now opportunities that weren’t previously available to us. We’re scaling up women’s aspirations to the best extent. They can be active in the community.

“We can get a lot of things out of this project. We’ll get honey from the beehives, which will provide many things. Our work isn’t limited to beekeeping either – we also have oil distillation and handicrafts. We’ve many plants here that can be used for oil.

“Our project is going to succeed because of the region’s potential and because we’ve strong women who are ready to work.”

The women have taken leadership roles in organising training and open days to increase awareness of health issues, social rights, safety and the environment. They’ve become empowered voices within their communities and are motivated to inspire other women to follow in their footsteps.

“We thank you so much for bringing us this project. Of course, when women work and are involved in projects, they become more actively involved in the community and have a role to play. Thanks to this project, we’re going to be active in our communities, just like men. Women do not have to limit their lives based on whether their husbands work or not – women have their own role to play in society.

“I’ve a daughter who wants to be a doctor but my circumstances didn’t allow her to study medicine. My second daughter wants to be a pilot. Both of them have dreams, and I’ll work to allow them to achieve their dreams and provide them with everything they need.

“Now when my daughter asks me for a pair of shoes, I’ll not say no. Now I can buy her what she wants. By working hard, I have a guaranteed income, I don’t need the help of anyone else. I’ll succeed for sure, and I’ll do the impossible to inspire my daughters”, says Suniya.

**“This project is giving women a sense that they are equal to men and they can earn as much by working hard. Women are also now able to provide money for their children’s education so that they can succeed too.**

**Islamic Relief is also running a project in Al-Farsh, Tataouine, to help create new livelihoods for women. The project involves converting agricultural produce into canned food.**



“The idea of the project is to try to find a simple source of livelihood, a financial resource for rural woman. The idea is to convert agricultural products into food staples, and in this way women will be able to help with the expenses of their homes,” says Samira, who is president of her women’s group.

“The project is based around women working collectively and contributing to creating valuable produce in tins and jars. It is a modest source of livelihood, but we have a vision for the future to open up to foreign markets.

“In addition to the financial benefits, this project is helping to build women and girls’ confidence. The rural community is normally a closed, remote society. However, as part of the project, girls now participate in major national and international exhibitions and train abroad in Italy.

“There, they have the opportunity to mix with different types of people which is greatly improving their social skills and confidence. Even when it comes to me, I used to be very shy but this project is helping me to come out of my shell.

“Our products – Oudh Al-Farsh – are doing very well. The proof of our success is that we won a bronze medal for our wheat couscous, one of our tinned products. This is proof that we can be very successful, particularly if we have the opportunity to sell our produce abroad.

“Islamic Relief has played a great role in our success. They gave us production units after we were unable to pay rent on our existing ones. The production units are core to the project and we could not operate without them.

“Not only that, but Islamic Relief also provided training for us and facilitated our participation in exhibitions.

“My wish is now for Al-Farsh products to be present in all Tunisian markets, as well as having a presence abroad,” says Samira.

# BUILDING RESILIENCE AGAINST THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE



Rural communities in Tunisia face many environmental challenges which are having a dire impact on their lives and livelihoods. Climate change has seen unpredictable weather conditions during the agricultural season, which is harming crop growth. Farmers have also noticed an increase in disease among their crops, leading to lower quality yields. To make matters worse, farmers are finding that the pests that attack their crops are becoming resistant to the pesticides available, and as a result these crops are becoming infested with insects and dying. Sadly, this has cost many farmers their livelihoods and left them struggling to feed their families.

Islamic Relief is working with rural communities in Kebilli, Tunisia, to help protect farmers' livelihoods amid these challenges, and to support them to create new, sustainable livelihoods. We are providing farmers with training in combating the effects of environmental challenges, as well as greenhouses, seeds, insect-proof nets and fertilisers to help them earn a living once more. Some farmers have also received goats and are selling their produce to help sustain their families.

## Ali's story

Ali, a farmer from Kebilli, has worked hard to adapt his farming style to suit the changing climate, but needed good-quality pesticides to treat his crops.

"I've been working as a farmer for 30 years. In the past, the pesticides I used eliminated insects and diseases, and they were useful. But now, the effect of these pesticides has become very weak," says Ali, who received new pesticides from Islamic Relief.

We also gave him ten plastic covers to protect his plants, and compensation for the crops that he lost to pests and disease.

"Farmers have been using damaged plastic covers because they face difficulties in purchasing them. In fact, they aren't even available in the market. Islamic Relief has provided us with plastic covers and we're maintaining them ourselves. We would like to thank you for your support. Plastic covers and effective pesticides are very important to us. With continued support of this kind, the situation of farmers will change completely."



## Supporting farmers like Saleh

These environmental challenges have also affected Saleh, another farmer from Kebilli. The situation in his local area has been so difficult that some farmers have been forced to sell their greenhouses to pay off their debts, while others have gone without food and clothes in order to save their farms.

“The farmers here are very frustrated. We need to treat the diseases that attack our farms and trees. Sometimes we treat them incorrectly, which causes plants to die. If an insect attacks the plant, it will be instantly damaged and farmers will really feel the loss,” says Saleh.

Saleh was given pesticides, plastic covers to protect his plants and financial assistance as part of Islamic Relief’s project.

“The farmers have been very happy with this support. Their situation has greatly improved. For example, when you provide financial assistance to a farmer, he can save some money and use it to buy goats, from which he can make a living,” he says.

Many farmers have struggled to cope with the difficulties they have faced, and it has impacted their mental health.

**“When people’s livelihoods are safe, they work much harder. For example, when my situation is difficult, I feel frustrated and it affects my work. The deteriorating prices have affected the spirits of farmers.”**

The financial support provided as part of Islamic Relief’s project is helping to ease the burden. The farmers can now clear their debts and protect their crops, allowing them to continue to make a living.

**“I am now a person who gains his profits by his own efforts. I sleep comfortably, and I do not have any debts, thank God,” says Saleh.**



Saleh chopping his freshly grown watermelon.

# SUPPORTING VULNERABLE CHILDREN



Islamic Relief's child welfare programme transforms the lives of many vulnerable children. Thanks to the support of our donors, we have sponsored 590 orphaned children in Tunisia, giving their families a regular stipend toward their basic needs and schooling.

Seeing education as essential to building a brighter future, we improve access to good-quality preschool and basic education and provide schools with clean water, sanitation and hygiene support.

Wherever possible we integrate our support with other projects, such as providing vocational training and livelihood support to their guardians, offering health check-ups, and distributing food, Eid gifts and winter survival items.



“My husband died in an accident. In harvest season he just went out to the field on his bike and by lunchtime we learnt that a car had hit him and that he had died,” says Um Makfula, explaining how she was left to provide for her children alone.

“My husband left behind a one-year-old daughter and two-year-old daughter. They were too young when they lost their father and will not remember him.

“After my husband died my financial situation was extremely difficult. Sometimes I struggled to find food for my children and had to ask neighbours to help. There are many good people around.

“I also struggled to pay for other expenses, like my electricity bill. However, my biggest fear was that my children would not be able to continue with their education and my biggest hope is for them to do so.”

Then, one of Um Makfula’s children was enrolled on Islamic Relief’s Orphan Sponsorship Programme.

“Islamic Relief’s support is helping me a lot and has compensated me with a lot of things. I spend Islamic Relief’s grant on essential daily items and I’m also now able to meet my children’s needs.

“The support has been a lifeline, particularly during the Coronavirus pandemic where life became much more difficult, and amid the high cost of living.

“Thank you, and may God bless those who helped me”, says Um Makfula.

## Um Khadija’s story



“I spend my days raising animals, although I don’t earn much and it is difficult.

“Muhammad, my son, is struggling with poor health. I must monitor his health and get him the necessary treatment, such as medical massages which are expensive. I must also pay his taxi fares so that he is able to go to school and gain an education”, says Um Khadija, who has been raising her son alone after his father passed away.

“I was always in need. I wanted to provide everything for my son so that he could gain an education. I wanted to help with his health treatment costs but I suffer from joint problems and earn little from my job, so it was a struggle.

“Islamic Relief is a lifeline and offers me a grant every three months as part of its Orphan Sponsorship Programme. They also give me additional aid such as a food pack to help me get through the month of Ramadan, and qurbani meat at Eid.

“This grant is very useful and covers the cost of bills and things I need for my son. Islamic Relief also helped me refurbish my bathroom, provided me with furniture and refurbished the kitchen”.

# IMPROVING HYGIENE IN SCHOOLS



**Islamic Relief staff run a hygiene session in Elghabat Kassrine School.**

In Tunisia, youth unemployment is rife and is contributing to social unrest in the country. To help combat this issue, education - particularly for vulnerable young people - is key. However, many schools in rural areas lack basic washing and hygiene facilities which is hindering pupils' studies. This, alongside poor education around hygiene practices, has led to the spread of harmful diseases such as hepatitis. A report by the Ministry of Education in 2016 showed that more than 1,000 Tunisian schools in rural areas do not have access to clean water or hygiene facilities. In fact, more than 1,800 students from 34 different schools have been affected by hepatitis as a result. Given the Covid-19 outbreak, this was particularly worrying.

To make matters worse, poorly planned infrastructure in schools has meant that

many washing facilities are mixed and lack segregated toilets. Many girls have been subject to sexual violence and abuse as a result, which has meant that parents are now afraid to send their daughters to school. All of these issues have contributed significantly to almost 100,000 young people dropping out of school without any qualifications, making it difficult to find work.

Islamic Relief is working with schools to help them run sessions to promote good hygiene practices, as well as equipping them with the hygiene facilities they desperately need, which will benefit 75,000 students in rural schools. We'll also be providing female students with hygiene and dignity kits and ensuring they have segregated restrooms at school. To help improve the education on offer, we're building school libraries.



## Helping pupils in Elghabat Kassrine School



Our work has already transformed students' attitudes and behaviour towards health and hygiene, as well as renovating the school's facilities. Hajar, a sixth-grade student, took part in an Islamic Relief health club at the school.

"At my school, the sanitary units were not good and there were no health procedures. People did not care about hygiene. Very few of us washed our hands," says Hajar.

The health club taught students the importance of personal hygiene and hand-washing, with a particular focus on measures to help combat the spread of Covid-19.

"Now our situation has changed and there is better hygiene awareness. I learned how to take responsibility for my hygiene and I now urge other students to apply the health practices we learned, for example, social distancing. I also urge students to practise good hygiene and wear face masks because of the pandemic," she adds.

"The health club run by our teacher has had a great impact on us. We received training, learned new things, organised plays and conducted awareness campaigns for young people. We plan to put posters up at break times and spread information to raise awareness of social distancing during this pandemic. I'll benefit from this, and so will many others", says Hajar.

The project is also helping Zahra, another pupil at the school, to enjoy school and feel safe.

"In the winter, the rain came through the ceilings. Some of the windows were broken and we were getting sick. We were afraid that the ceiling would fall

on us and someone could get injured. The sanitary units were in an indescribable condition. I used to be afraid of them and of the insects in there. Now, the sanitary units are wonderful and are being cleaned regularly, so I am no longer afraid. The condition of the halls has improved, the classrooms have been renewed and we feel more comfortable", she says.

Teachers at the school have noticed the change in pupils' attitude towards learning following Islamic Relief's project. "I give special thanks to Islamic Relief on behalf of the educational staff. I think the changes that have been made to the school are the most wonderful thing that has ever been done," says Mrs Naela, the school's head teacher.

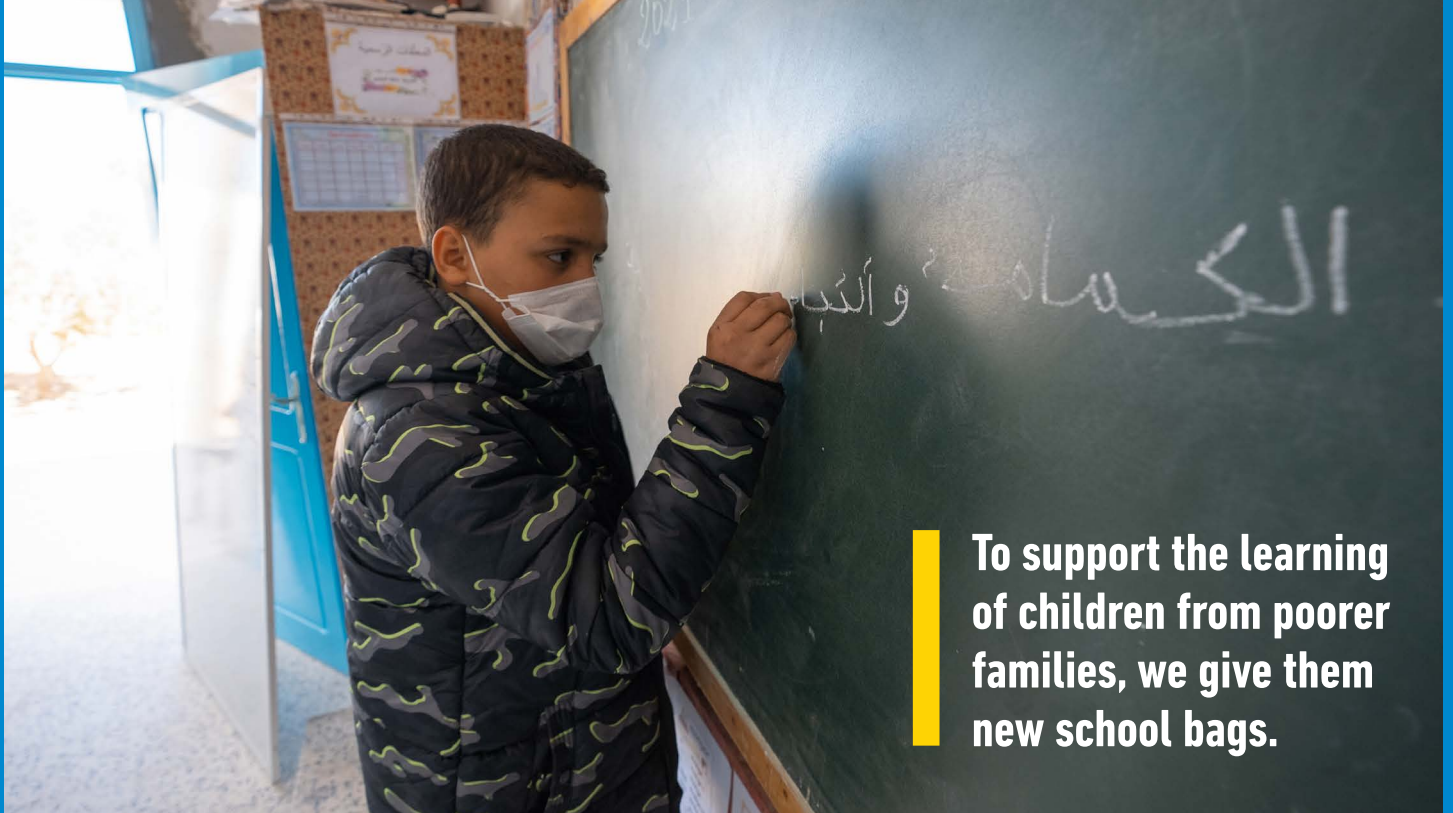
"As educational staff, we want these behaviours to be acquired and sustained. The students will pass them on to the rest of their classmates. I believe that these health clubs should continue in every institution because they develop the students' abilities and establish new behaviours.

"When the children found clean toilets, equipped with soap, and saw the school cleaners constantly cleaning, I noticed a great change. At first, changing their mindset was difficult, but little by little, and in coordination with the health club, new behaviours were established.

"In the past, the students used to write on the walls and damage the facilities, but now they have changed," she says.

Through the project, Islamic Relief hopes to improve pupils' learning experience and their attitude towards school even more, to help ensure they have a brighter future.

# BETTER ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION



To support the learning of children from poorer families, we give them new school bags.

As well as improving washing facilities and improving attitudes towards hygiene in schools, we help build the capacity of schools to deliver good-quality education.

In Medenine, we helped 14 schools and libraries. Schools received new ICT suites, teacher training and an exciting extracurricular programme, benefitting 8,200 pupils and helping to reduce the number of children dropping out of school.

Public libraries were equipped with new technology, and we trained staff so that these spaces are better run and organised to help foster a culture of learning. We also set up mobile libraries so that rural communities can access books and materials.

**“The Ministry of Education extends its deepest thanks and appreciation to Islamic Relief Worldwide - Tunisia office. This is for its continuous support and fruitful cooperation in the field of rehabilitating school infrastructure and health education in the school environment,”**

says Fethi Sallaouti, Tunisia’s Minister of Education, following the successful implementation of the project.

For especially vulnerable children, such as those living with disabilities, we help run extracurricular activities to support learning and development. We provide daily snacks to children living in difficult circumstances, and have distributed school bags to 20,000 children across the country.



# A LIFELINE FOR VULNERABLE FAMILIES

Tunisia neighbours Libya, which has been affected by severe conflict since 2011, despite efforts by the United Nations and the international community to put an end to it. Many families fleeing the country seek safety and brighter futures in Tunisia. However, a lack of asylum laws in Tunisia means that refugee families are unable to secure stable work, leaving them highly vulnerable.

Islamic Relief has been providing essential humanitarian aid to vulnerable Libyan families in Tunisia since 2011. When the conflict began, we were on the ground at the Tunisian border and distributed essential survival items such as tents, food, blankets and medicines to thousands of vulnerable families.

Since then, we've been managing several refugee camps, which provide families with essential humanitarian aid and shelter and are a lifeline for many families. We also provide refugee families with psychosocial support to help them come to terms with trauma. In addition, Islamic Relief helps them to access healthcare, education, vocational training and livelihood opportunities to help build self-reliance.

**In total, we've helped support almost 4,000 Libyan refugees in Tunisia.**

Islamic Relief staff run a child-friendly space in Ramada Camp, where children can learn and play.





Severe flooding in Nabeul, 2018.

**Islamic Relief Tunisia is among the first to respond when disaster strikes. We have provided those affected with food assistance and cash support, distributed survival items and provided shelter. We also worked to help communities get back on their feet.**

Flooding struck Nabeul in 2018, causing widespread destruction. Six people lost their lives, agricultural livelihoods were destroyed and roads, electric poles and railways were severely damaged. The flooding also damaged or destroyed 35 schools in the area. As well as distributing essential survival items,

Islamic Relief worked with the Ministry of Education to help clean and repair schools in the area affected by the flooding so that pupils could continue their education. We also gave pupils essential school supplies which had been lost amid the floods.



**Islamic Relief staff cleaning school benches in Batru School following flooding in Nabeul.**

# HEALTHCARE SUPPORT



The healthcare system in Tunisia is very weak. Healthcare facilities lack the staff training, infrastructure and equipment needed to provide high-quality care.

Islamic Relief works to improve access to lifesaving and life-changing healthcare. We support hospitals and health centres, proving them with desperately needed medicines, medical equipment, facilities and beds.

**In total, we've helped reach 250,000 vulnerable people through our healthcare projects in Tunisia.**

## **“I thank Islamic Relief for their support”**

“I was unable to cover the cost of my medical expenses and I couldn't access health services to receive treatment,” says 56-year-old Fawzi.

Fawzi and his wife and two young children were forced flee to Tunisia after conflict broke out in their city, Tripoli.

Fawzi has had diabetes for many years. He has been unable to find work in Tunisia and could not afford the cost of his medication, so his health deteriorated.

“However, then I came across Islamic Relief staff who are supporting Libyans with healthcare. I was able to receive the treatment I needed from a specialist doctor, and they conducted the necessary tests.

“I thank Islamic Relief for their support. I am very grateful for their much-needed help and I hope they will continue their vital work”, says Fawzi.

# FACING COVID-19

As in so many other countries, Covid-19 threatened to push many struggling families in Tunisia over the edge, as they lost livelihoods and loved ones and battled with a lack of information and poor medical services. With the healthcare sector in Tunisia already under strain, hospitals could not keep up with demand and many people with symptoms of the disease struggled to access treatment.

Islamic Relief worked with the Ministry of Health to help combat the spread of the virus and improve access to healthcare. We distributed emergency hygiene items, face masks, gloves and medical equipment to healthcare workers and equipped hospitals and health centres with essential medical supplies, hospital beds and equipment. We also worked to improve access to health services for those living in remote and rural areas, and worked to equip health centres in these areas to treat Covid-19 patients.



**Islamic Relief staff distributing essential medical equipment to help treat Covid-19 patients**

# HELPING TO SURVIVE HARSH WINTERS



Islamic Relief staff distributing essential winter items in Jendouba.

Temperatures in northern Tunisia can drop to below freezing during winter and many vulnerable families are ill-equipped to deal with the harsh temperatures. Many children cannot face going out in the cold, and stop attending school during the winter, which greatly impacts their education.

Islamic Relief works with communities in Jendouba, Kef and Kassrine in northern Tunisia to provide children with essential items such as blankets and warm clothing to help keep them warm through the winter, while also encouraging them to go to school.

**“I would like to send thousands of flowers to the donors to thank them for their help”**

“When it’s too cold, I find it difficult to leave the house and attend school,” says 12-year-old Ahlem from Jendouba.

Ahlem goes to school in a mountainous region where temperatures in winter fall very low. Her family cannot afford to buy her warm clothes and a coat, so she often misses school during the winter as a result of the cold weather.

“Even when I do attend school, I find it very difficult to concentrate because I am so cold and there are no heaters at my school,” she explains.

Then, Ahlem received a winter kit containing warm clothes and a blanket from Islamic Relief.

“I was very happy to receive the winter kit from Islamic Relief. Now, I feel equal to the other students. I can attend school every day and I’m much more comfortable.

“I can now concentrate during lessons and I feel that my learning is improving day by day.”



## “I now have dreams to become a doctor to help other children and their families in Tunisia”

“I only eat once a day - a sandwich given at school,” says seven-year-old Manar from Jendouba, explaining how her father does not earn enough to feed the family.

“I have only old clothes and shoes made with plastic which do not keep me warm during the winter,” says Manar.

Manar lives with her family in a hut several kilometres from her school, making it difficult to attend school during the winter.

Manar received a winter kit from Islamic Relief, which is helping to keep her warm during winter months.

“My life changed when I received Islamic Relief’s winter kit. I feel much better during winter and I’m more motivated to attend school.

“I now have dreams to become a doctor to help other children and their families in Tunisia,” says Manar.



# LIFTING SPIRITS DURING RAMADAN AND EID



Every year Islamic Relief provides vulnerable families in Tunisia with food parcels during Ramadan and qurbani meat on Eid al-Adha. They are a much-needed relief for households without enough food to break their fast or mark the Eid festivals. Wherever possible, we integrate our seasonal food distributions with our other humanitarian and development programmes, increasing our positive impact for the vulnerable people with whom we work throughout the year. We work closely with local communities, making sure our food parcels reach those most in need, without discriminating in any way.

Every Ramadan, Islamic Relief provides vulnerable families in Tunisia with food parcels containing essential items such as oil, flour and dates. The food parcels allow them to be better prepared for the month of Ramadan, easing their worries about how to access food with which to end their fast each evening.

Amid the Covid-19 pandemic, Islamic Relief staff adapted their Ramadan programme by delivering food packages to families' doors, to ensure their safety and help prevent the spread of the virus.

## “Thank you for planting happiness and hope in orphans’ hearts”

“I struggle to cover my family’s daily expenses and I live on a government pension which is simply not enough to live on” says mother-of-five Massouda. Since she lost her husband, she has been the sole breadwinner for her family.

“The big challenge is paying school fees for my children as most of them are studying.

“During tough times we’re also unable to pay our rent and have to rely on the help of others. My priority is making sure my family have enough to eat, and this takes precedence over other needs such as rent, healthcare and school expenses.”

Massouda received a food parcel during Ramadan which brought relief during the holy month.

**“I’m so glad to see people help each other in this difficult situation, as many people lack the resources to buy food. Thank you for planting happiness and hope in our hearts.”**

“The food parcels are very helpful to us. We receive items such as tomatoes, milk and oil which are essential food items for us. Alhamdulillah for everything”.



**We also run a qurbani programme in Tunisia, providing meat to vulnerable families so they can celebrate Eid free from worrying about how they will eat.**



## “Alhamdulillah, I’m able to meet my children’s needs on Eid al-Adha”

“I have four children. Three of them had to drop out of school because I couldn’t afford to send them. Only my youngest son is able to attend primary school. I’m not able to provide for their basic needs,” says Salma, describing her difficult financial situation after her husband’s death.

“Eid ul Adha is religious occasion celebrating forgiveness and sacrifice. It’s time to greet each other, visit relatives and share meals.

“However, we can’t afford to celebrate Eid as we used to. Meat is so expensive and I simply can’t afford it.

“Then, Islamic Relief provided us with qurbani meat, which meant we were able to enjoy Eid.

“Alhamdulillah, I’m very grateful to Islamic Relief. My children are now so excited on Eid because of this kind support.

“Alhamdulillah I’m able to meet my children’s needs on Eid al-Adha and they are happy.”

# OUR IMPACT IN NUMBERS

Since 2011 we've helped over 1.36 million people living in Tunisia



44 projects delivered



Over 22,500 people received emergency lifesaving aid



Water, sanitation and hygiene projects helped nearly 23,000 people



590 children have been supported through our orphan sponsorship programme



Almost 24,000 people have been empowered to earn a reliable living



Over 250,000 people benefitted from health services



Our Ramadan and qurbani programmes provided over 125,000 people with food

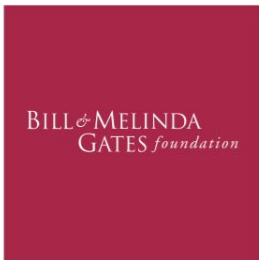
**A member of a women's group in Al-Farsh, Tataouine, celebrates selling her agricultural produce with the support of Islamic Relief.**



# PARTNERSHIPS



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