

THE 'HAVES' AND THE 'HAVE-NOTS'

You will find out

- The division between the rich and the poor in today's world.
- The attitude of Islam towards wealth.
- The teaching of the Qur'an about sharing wealth.

In the glossary

Allah

Hadith

Muhammad

Qur'an

Sadaqah

Zakah

We live in a very unfair and unequal world. It is split between the wealthy developed world and the poor developing world. Extract A, taken from the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, shows living in such an unequal world denies to 3 out of every 4 people in the world a basic human right:

A *“... freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people...”*

United Nations Declaration of Human Rights

ISLAM, WEALTH AND POVERTY

The teaching of Islam about wealth and poverty is very clear. The poor people in the world are the responsibility of the rich and wealthy. The rich have been blessed by Allah but only so that they can share their wealth with the poor, especially widows and orphans. Part of a rich person's wealth belongs to the poor anyway:

B *“In the wealth is the share of the beggars and the deprived.”*

Qur'an. Surah 70.25

The consequences of living a selfish life and not sharing with others are very serious. The selfish person who keeps all his wealth and does not share with those in need places himself outside the Muslim community. As the Hadith says:

C *“He who eats and drinks while his brother goes hungry is not one of us.”*

This is the kind of wealth that the Qur'an warns people against.



SHARING WITH THOSE IN NEED

There are two ways in which a Muslim can share his wealth with those who are in need:

- The Qur'an teaches that a worker should be paid a wage which enables them to enjoy the same standard of living as their employer. This ideal, Muslims believe, could be the starting point for solving the problem of world poverty. Poverty stems from rulers and employers who are selfish and greedy. The only answer to poverty in the world is to establish peace and justice on principles that are found in the Qur'an:

D *“Those who spend their wealth in Allah’s way are like a grain of corn which brings forth seven ears, each bearing a hundred grains. Allah gives plenty to whom He pleases. He is generous and knowing.”*

Qur'an. Surah 2.261

- Everything that a person has he has received from Allah. Wealth needs to be 'purified' and a person does this by giving generously to those in need. There are two ways that a Muslim can do this – by paying zakah and by paying **sadaqah**. You will find out the difference between the two by looking at unit 27.

OVER TO YOU ►►►

- 1 Extract A suggests that the most important of all human rights is freedom from want and fear. Do you agree with this? Do you and your friends enjoy freedom from want and fear? Does everyone?
- 2 Muhammad was particularly concerned about the needs of orphans and widows. Carry out some research to discover why he was particularly concerned about the welfare of these two groups.

TAKE TIME TO THINK

The Qur'an says that some of us have been given wealth so that we can share it with others. Do you think that the poor have a 'right' to share your wealth. If so, how will you try to share it with them?

The Qur'an teaches that Allah has given enough for everyone to share.



ISLAMIC RELIEF WORLDWIDE

You will find out

- The work of Islamic Relief Worldwide.
- The four areas in which the charity works.
- Some of the charity's projects.

In the glossary

Muhammad

Prophet

Qur'an



Islamic Relief Worldwide is committed to making a difference in the lives of children like this.

Wars, floods, earthquakes, drought and famine kill millions of people each year. Those who survive often lose their homes and are forced to live for years in temporary housing without clean water or adequate toilets.

Some of these people remain in refugee camps for years, enduring terrible conditions and running severe health risks. Over 35 million people throughout the world live as refugees.

A *“Islamic Relief seeks to alleviate the suffering, hunger, illiteracy and disease worldwide without regard to colour, race or creed and to provide aid in a compassionate and dignified manner.”*

Islamic Relief Worldwide



OVER TO YOU ►►►

- 1 Explain in one or two sentences the reasons for the existence of the charity Islamic Relief Worldwide.
- 2 Discuss with your partner what you think Extracts B and C mean and then write your explanations down in your book.
- 3 Explain the five areas in which Islamic Relief Worldwide works. Add your own comment on why you think each of them is very important.
- 4 Imagine that you are working for Islamic Relief Worldwide. You are having a discussion with fellow workers about the importance of providing education for girls as well as boys. What arguments would you put forward?

ISLAMIC RELIEF WORLDWIDE

Islamic Relief Worldwide was set up in 1984 as a response to the famines that were affecting Africa at the time. You can find the aims of the organisation in Extract A. Islamic Relief Worldwide works in response to this text from the Qur'an:

B *“Whoever saved a life it would be as if he saved the life of all mankind.”*

Islamic Relief Worldwide

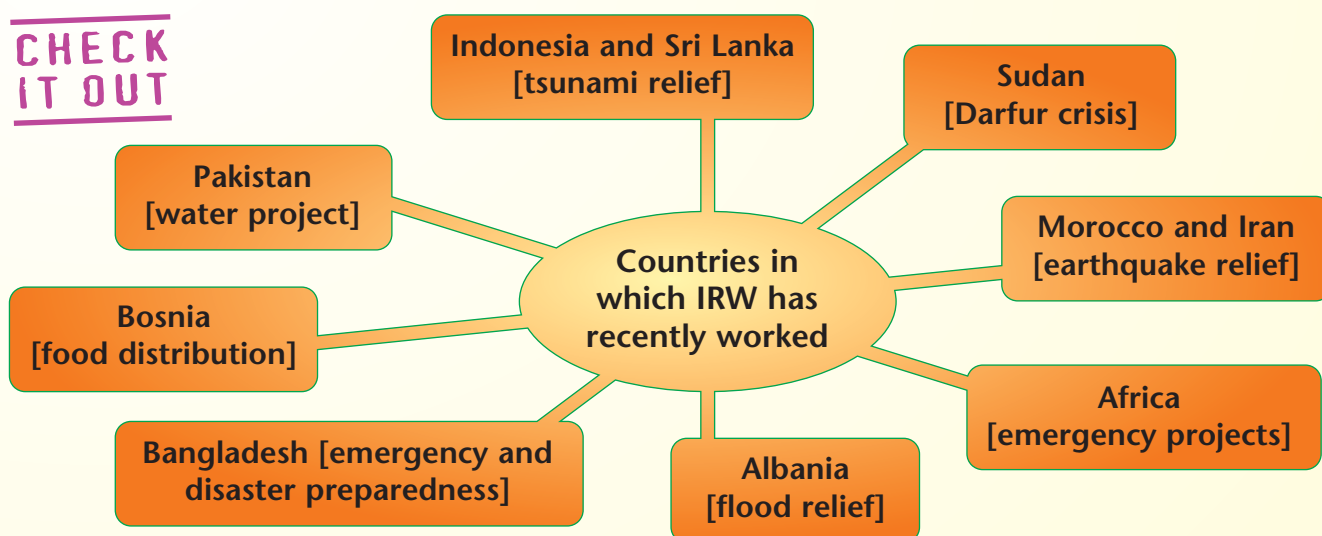
Islamic Relief Worldwide mainly works in five areas:

- **To provide both short-term aid** [Emergency Relief] **and long-term aid** [Development Projects]. It has emergency teams ready to respond to disasters as soon as they occur.
- **To improve the lives of women and children.** These are the two most vulnerable groups in poor countries. In Africa and Asia, for instance, women walk 6km on average each day simply to fetch water for the family.
- **To improve the health of the people.** Around 80% of all diseases in the world are due to poor sanitation and inadequate water supplies. Water-borne diseases account for 2.5 million deaths a year – and most of those who die are under the age of five.
- **To fight poverty.** Poor living conditions reduce a person's ability to earn a living and reduce the number of children enrolled in school – especially girls. Water shortages lead to poor harvests and hunger. They are all part of the cycle of poverty in poor countries.
- **To provide education.** Education is the way out of the poverty trap for millions of people. Even when it is available, education often has very poor resources – open-air schools, poor buildings, few books and teachers, little training. Islamic Relief Worldwide believes that the only way out of poverty is to raise the level of literacy – especially for girls [C].

C *“Educate a boy and you educate one person. Educate a girl and you educate a nation.”*

A.Ibn Badis, Algerian Muslim Reform

Islamic Relief Worldwide works throughout the world:



CARING FOR ORPHANS

Islamic Relief Worldwide also has an Orphans Welfare Programme which provides care for orphans and other members of their families. This reflects the concern of the Prophet Muhammad for orphans, since he lost his mother and father at a very young age. This programme includes the provision of healthcare and education within their communities.