



THE
WORLD
FEDERATION
OF KHOJA SHIA ITHNA-ASHERI MUSLIM COMMUNITIES

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The World Federation is an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

Ramadhan Relief Fund 'A Strategic Overview'

By
Relief & Economic Development of the Secretariat

A guide to the policy behind the community's Ramadhan Relief Initiatives

This draft policy paper was presented to the 7th Executive Council Meeting of the 2006-2009 Term hosted by the Bhavnagar Jamaat, Gujarat India (November 2008). The World Federation is consulting the community on this paper and will collate the feedback and present the paper once again to the 8th Executive Council Meeting in Paris, France for adoption.

Vision Statement:

'The World Federation exists to achieve the pleasure of Allah SWT by developing spiritual and vibrant communities serving humanity.'

Mission Statement:

'The World Federation enables its member institutions to promote the values and practices of the Islamic Shia Ithna Asheri Faith for the spiritual and material well being of humanity at large.'

'We Exist to Serve'

1 BACKGROUND

This paper has been created by the Secretariat in order to codify and clarify the KSI Community's policy towards the Ramadhan Relief Fund.

The activities that form Ramadhan Relief are a testimony to the togetherness of our global KSI Community. They are a hallmark of the benefits of centralisation.

Regional Federations such as Africa Federation, Gujarat Council, Pakistan Communities and our agencies (where our Members are not present) will work hard to implement this strategy within their respective areas.

The Council of European Jamaats, NASIMCO and other members will work hard to raise the awareness and the funds to enable this work to continue, and to progress.

The document explains:

- The ethos of the Ramadhan Relief Fund
- The organisations on the ground that The World Federation will partner
- The types of activities that this initiative will contain
- The emphasis on clear needs assessments
- The factors used in allocating funds
- The importance of reporting from Regional Members and agencies.
- Recommendations the future programmes.

2 ETHOS AND PURPOSE

'The Ramadhan Relief campaign is a worldwide initiative focussed on helping deserving Rozedaars, during the Holy Month of Ramadhan. The initiative will focus on reducing the burdens on these Mumineen and their families and to bring a sense of comfort and hope to them.'

The World Federation must work in areas where our Shia Mumineen are present, and must help deserving individuals. The work shall be a combination of welfare work with income generation for those able to work. In addition, the programme will be the frontline campaign against extreme poverty.

Extreme poverty is defined as being for those who live on less than \$1.25 a day.¹ There are over one billion people worldwide who live on less than this amount (at least one in six people who live in the world today) and many are of our faith. The World Federation shall use the Ramadhan Relief campaign to help these Mumineen.

3 REGIONAL FEDERATIONS AND AGENCIES

The World Federation will work with its Regional Members and with the agencies that it has set up worldwide, in order to deliver this humanitarian programme.

The below countries have been, or will be, covered under this programme. In all of these countries, many of our Shia Ithna Asheri brothers and sisters are unable to break free from the vicious cycle of poverty. The initiative should not be limited to these countries only, but should cover areas where deserving Mumineen are present. The footnote marks, an area where The World Federation will work with a Regional Members.

Afghanistan
Bangladesh

¹ According to the World Bank.

Bosnia
Burma (Myanmar)
India ²
Indian Ocean Islands ³
Indonesia
Iran
Iraq
Kenya⁴
Pakistan⁵
South Africa
Sri Lanka
Tanzania⁶
Thailand
Uganda⁷

Within India, The World Federation has worked, and shall work (where possible), in the following areas:

Bihar State
Gujarat State ⁸
Hyderabad and surrounding districts
Karnataka State
Uttar Pradesh State
Mumbai⁹ and surrounding areas
Punjab State

4 ACTIVITIES

In order to meet the ethos, the forms of activities that The World Federation must recommend to the Regional Members and to the agencies must include:

- Distribution of ration and food parcels
- Distribution of essential household items like bedding and blankets
- Distribution of essential clothing
- Distribution of cash as we may not know the priorities and hardships of recipients
- Clearing of debts
- Income Generation support
- Other welfare work that may be localised.

However, The World Federation must emphasise on combining the above Relief work with Tableegh initiatives. The principal purpose behind combining the two areas is because the Holy Month of Ramadhan is a time when a community's spirituality may peak and where interest in learning about Islam would be greater. For this reason, The World Federation must also encourage its Regional Members and agencies to:

- Organise Iftar Sessions
- Organise Majalises where possible.
- Facilitate Islamic learning sessions including Quran classes and teachings of Ahlul Bayt (A.S.)
- Distribution of Qurans and other Tableegh literature.

However, although the above Tableegh activities should be carried out, one must not lose sight of the Ramadhan Relief ethos.

² Various

³ Regional Council of the Indian Ocean or Africa Federation (as appropriate)

⁴ Africa Federation

⁵ Hussaini Foundation (Mehfile Murtaza) and KSI Pirhai Jamaats

⁶ Africa Federation

⁷ Africa Federation

⁸ Gujarat Council

⁹ KSI Mumbai Jamaat

STEP 1: NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The World Federation must begin planning for Ramadhan Relief, early in the Islamic calendar. In the month of Rajab, The World Federation must send the Regional Members and its agencies a needs assessment letter or email.

The World Federation shall:

- Emphasise the ethos of Ramadhan Relief
- Ask for example of activities that may be carried out.
- Ask whether the organisation has the capacity to conduct this initiative
- Ask what work it will endeavour to carry out
- Ask how much funds it will require, together with a breakdown
- Ask the agency or Regional Federation to prioritise these, as The World Federation may not be able fund all their workings
- Explain that The World Federation will be allocating funds worldwide, and send the allocation criteria to them.

The Secretariat¹⁰ will need to then analyse each needs assessment and ask further questions as need be. Comparisons must be made to reports received in previous years.

STEP 2: ALLOCATION CRITERIA

The Office Bearers and the Assistant Secretary General of Relief & Economic Development will then agree an allocation for each Regional Federation and each agency, at the end of Rajab. This will mean that funds will be set at least one month before the Holy Month. This is particularly important, since the cost of food always increases in Ramadhan. Should the funds be sent early, provisions could be purchased in advance and more effective planning can take place.

Separate allocations should be made for Sadat and Non Sadat.

In order to allocate, The World Federation will bear in mind the following criteria:

1. Whether there is an urgent need in that particular locality or region. Examples of this may include: high food prices, a natural disaster, war or political problems which have exacerbated the deprivation.
2. Whether the activities, put forward in the needs assessment, further the ethos of Ramadhan Relief.
3. The quality of programs put forward in the needs assessment and the priorities received from the Regional Federation and the agencies.
4. The answers received to further questions from The World Federation.
5. The track record of the Regional Federation or agency, in previous Ramadhan Relief programmes and other initiatives.
6. Whether the Regional Federation and agencies will be collecting funds from other sources. Where this is the case, The World Federation should provide the difference, or provide a top up as appropriate.

The allocation criteria above should be applied to all Regional Federations and agencies.

The World Federation should then inform the Regional Federation and agencies and submit funds to them by the beginning of Sha'baan.

¹⁰ Relief & Economic Development

STEP 3: FUNDRAISING

The World Federation must work with the Regional Federations, including CoEJ and NASIMCO to create an effective, persuasive and transparent fundraising drive to raise the funds needed. Fundraising must occur locally in Africa, Pakistan Communities and in India in order to help fund the programme locally (as much as possible.)

The fundraising campaign should begin in Rajab and end after the Holy Month. The World Federation will try to fund the project without a deficit, when possible.

STEP 4: REPORTING FRAMEWORK

The World Federation must seek reports from all the Regional Federations and agencies. The World Federation will write to them, and ask the reports to include:

1. Specific details of the activities, events and functions carried out.
2. The number of people that have been positively affected, together with other necessary details.
3. The geographical area covered by the relief efforts.
4. The recommendations to improve for next year and a local evaluation of the programme.
5. Photographs where possible (for fundraising).

STEP 5: RECOMMENDATIONS

1. This Ramadhan Relief initiative should be centralised through the KSI community structures (and as with all other similar community endeavours) the Regional Federations shall fully support this programme.
2. The Ramadhan Relief fund process must be made clear to the agencies, and they must not seek to raise funds (unless agreed with the World Federation Secretariat) directly from Regional Federations and from Jamaats.
3. Ramadhan Relief shall be an effective combination of Relief and Tableegh activities.
4. Ramadhan Relief should include Ulama Gifts (not on a welfare basis) but on a basis for those who help serve the community. This should be at the discretion of the Secretariat and advised by regional federations, where appropriate.
5. The key concepts and ethos of the project should be communicated to Regional Federations and agencies by the end of Jamaadi al Ula.
6. The World Federation must allocate funds early, for example towards the end of Rajab or early Sha'baan.
7. The World Federation, in partnership with CoEJ and NASIMCO, must launch the Ramadhan Relief campaign in Rajab, so less estimation is required in allocation.
8. The allocation criteria used by The World Federation should be made public and placed on its website.
9. Reports should be sent by Regional Federations and agencies to The World Federation within 8 weeks of Eid ul Fitr. If no report is submitted, The World Federation will not allocate funds for the following year.
10. Agencies must not spend more than the allocated budget, unless they are able to pay for the expenses. The World Federation will not reimburse overspending.
11. The World Federation, CoEJ and NASIMCO should work hard to create a persuasive and effective fundraising campaign and must use technology and speeches to spread awareness. This should include an In focus magazine and other medium forms which will help appeal for this important initiative.
12. Fitra and Kaffara should continue to be disbursed as per the Islamic Rules, with agencies that the Secretariat feels will implement this most effectively.