



All Party Parliamentary Group
on British Muslims

Faith as the Fourth Emergency Service

British Muslim charitable
contributions to the UK



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The All Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims was launched in 2017. The cross party group of parliamentarians is co-chaired by Anna Soubry MP and Wes Streeting MP.

The Group was established to highlight the aspirations and challenges facing British Muslims; to celebrate the contributions of Muslim communities to Britain and to investigate prejudice, discrimination and hatred against Muslims in the UK.

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Foreword

It is a mark of their growing importance that the All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims has taken the time to produce such a thoughtful and comprehensive overview of the work of Muslim charities.

Britain's Muslim charities are a tremendous force for good and this report helps us understand the many ways in which they contribute to our national life.

We have long associated Muslim charities with their work

internationally, and indeed they represent a significant slice of the UK charity sector's overseas aid provision. But as this report makes clear, it's time for us to think about the way Muslim charities punch above their weight domestically too.

Another highlight to my mind was the evidence that Muslim charities are increasingly working alongside other, non-Muslim charities. I hope that all charities, both faith based and otherwise, will now

start thinking more about the opportunities for collaboration with Muslim organisations. Working together not only increases the impact we have but enriches our organisations, our lives and our society.

The dedication of Muslim charities and volunteers is an example to the whole charity sector, and I am confident they will continue to thrive and further grow their contribution to society in years to come.



Sir Stuart Etherington
Chief Executive
National Council for
Voluntary Organisations

Executive summary

The APPG on British Muslims launched this report to highlight the contributions British Muslim charitable organisations make to the UK. We issued a call for submissions and held evidence hearings in Parliament in November 2017. British Muslim charities, large and small, from grassroots organisations to national institutions, responded providing oral and written evidence of their work and programmes in the UK. Through the submissions, the APPG sought to assess the demonstrable impact British Muslim charities are making to communities throughout the UK. These charities have seen exponential growth in budget and programmes in recent years. Their work in an array of fields, from poverty relief and homelessness to prisoner rehabilitation or women's refuges shows evidence of a sector that is valuable as it is vibrant. Case studies presented throughout the report give specific showcase to initiatives and causes taken on by British Muslim charities.

IMPACT

British Muslim charities play an essential role in contributing to the social welfare of the UK. In Islam, charity, Zakat, is the third of the five pillars of faith obliging all followers to give. But Zakat is only one, albeit mandatory, of a plethora of ways by which Muslims are encouraged by faith to give support to those less fortunate. While Zakat is to be kept local, charity refers to all neighbours of the community, Muslim or not and though many of the donors to Muslim charities are themselves Muslim, a growing proportion of their beneficiaries are not.

This bears out particularly in

the deep concern evinced for supporting the homeless. British Muslim charities go beyond just giving money for food, offering support services to get people out of the vulnerable positions they may find themselves in. Charity is also not simply monetary, but can be performed in the giving of time or professional skills. Muslims donate their medical expertise to those needing assistance and volunteer time to talk to those in destitution and treat them like another human being, giving form to Islamic teaching which commends a smile as an act of charity.

British Muslim charities seek to help other sections of society that can find themselves in desperation or crisis. This is seen

British Muslim charities play an essential role in contributing to the social welfare of the UK.

in the health based charitable organisations that offer relief to the heavy stresses of the NHS. It is further exemplified in the Grenfell Muslim Response Unit's deploying to assist victims, residents and families following the devastating fire which engulfed Grenfell Tower fire in June 2017. The aid was immediate relief and longer term support for the victims and families affected assisting with shelter, food, money, clothing and legal and bereavement services to assist the community in their recovery.

British Muslim charities impact on British society also looks to the future. They are actively engaging younger generations and seek out innovation through technology and new apps. This insures the continuation of a giving spirit within the community which evolves to keep with the times. British Muslim charities' are

also major players in community cohesion, building interfaith relationships with Churches and Synagogues throughout the UK. They also act as an effective bridge between social groups and governing bodies, local and national, providing vital information to statutory agencies about communities in need of support.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL INTEGRATION

The work of British Muslim charities is a strong antidote to false assumptions about British Muslim communities perpetuated in sections of our media. Though Islam is the second largest religion in Britain, Muslim constitute less than five per cent of the British population, Though small, the British Muslim population is a very active one in terms of charity. Muslims in Britain believe they can be equally British and Muslim without any contradictions or conflict in their dual identity. This is best exemplified in the Muslim charity sector with the commitment, by donors and charitable institutions alike, to address social ills on their doorstep.

In light of this, British Muslims take on the social and political issues of the UK as their own and seek to resolve them. Homelessness and its causes are a large concern that British Muslim charities are taking on. The goal is to end homelessness, but this being a complex problem, requires a complex solution.

British Muslim charities' dedication to ending social ills at the root position drives them to consider more long-term approaches to their initiatives. The provision of essential services, like food and shelter, and a strong commitment to education that is seen in many of these charities demonstrates a pledge to the

whole of British society where beneficiaries are supported whatever their background.

Lastly, British Muslim charities act as diplomats, purveyors of 'soft power' for the Muslim community and wider British society, more generally. They are emblematic of British Muslim aspirations to 'give local and live global', connecting charity giving in the UK to a concern with human welfare everywhere, both at home and abroad.

OBSTACLES AND BARRIERS

British Muslim charities face many of the same issues that other organisations within the sector experience. This ranges from the challenge of growth and maintaining charity giving to the tension of maintaining a focus on the local as they become bigger, expanding their operations at home and abroad. Several smaller British Muslim charities run purely off voluntary donations (both monetary and in service) but the larger ones which solicit obligatory and voluntary acts of charitable donations strive to keep administrative costs to the bare minimum in order to ensure donations reach those for whom it is genuinely intended.

A major barrier faced by British Muslim charities is found in negative narratives that are conveyed and amplified in the media and political discourse. False beliefs that Muslims are trying to 'ban' Christmas, 'Islamise' Britain or have ties to terrorist organisations has made the environment increasingly antagonistic towards British Muslim charities. Strides have been made to combat this through wider exposure of interfaith work and through media coverage of local events, but the larger negative assumptions still loom large.

Added to public opinion, recent counterterrorism legislation has placed Muslim organisations operating in the charitable sector under unduly high levels of scrutiny. Increased need for auditing and fear of abuse in the sector for terrorism financing, itself at odds with available evidence demonstrating reasonable cause for alarm, has heightened concerns that Muslim charities are being singled out for disproportionately negative attention and scrutiny. The Charity Commission has in recent years increased the volume of statutory inquiries into Muslim

charities and its former chair has made comments that has, at times, caused considerable damage to the reputation of British Muslim charities, even though independent reports have to date found scant evidence for claims of abuse.

Much work is needed in repairing the relationship between British Muslim charities and the Charity Commission. There is a wider need to correct false narratives that exist in greater society that is beyond the scope of this report but which necessarily affects the Muslim charitable sector.

This report gives the spotlight to British Muslim charities and seeks to highlight the work they do for the UK and the essential role they play in British society. Bringing to light the work of British Muslim charities and the issues faced by these organisations can help rectify some of the errors of the past and begin a multilateral approach toward a mutually enriching future for Muslim charities, British society and all those who find their needs met by the acts of charity and array of services provided by Muslim charities.

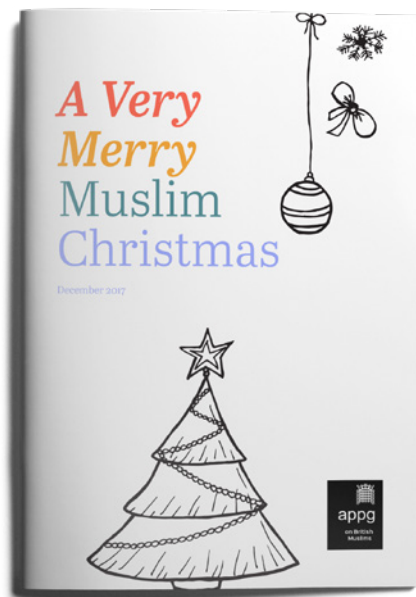


Children of Adam at work in Lincolns Inn Fields. Photo credit: Children of Adam.

Section 1: Introduction

It too often takes a religious holiday to lift the blinders of the everyday hustle and bustle to reveal the reality of the world beyond the morning commute, the always busy lifestyle. This reality is over 300,000 rough sleepers¹ throughout the United Kingdom. This reality is that the number of Britons living below the poverty line is the highest it has been in twenty years². This reality is four million British children living in poverty, two thirds of whom belong to a family where at least one parent is working full or part time. Who stands with those who find themselves in need of support to help them get back onto their feet?

In December, we released a short summary of some of our findings about Muslim charitable contributions in the winter season. A multitude of uplifting examples of charitable endeavours during the Christmas and New



Year holidays roused us to present these findings to the public to showcase many of the brilliant things British Muslims would be doing to share in the spirit of the season. From serving meals to the homeless and destitute to collecting warm clothing and distributing ‘Winter Warmer’ packs. The inspiring examples of goodwill prompted us to release that timely pamphlet and give due credit to such charitable works.

Charity is a core element of all the world’s great religions. A concern with those less fortunate than oneself is, in the Abrahamic faith, an act of devotion; a testimony to the universal values of religion and the goodwill to all humanity that they embody.

“Our neighbours are not simply Asians, or Pakistanis, or Muslims. They are Christians, and Jews, or anyone else around. They are all our neighbours,” are the words used by Nasim Ashraf of the UK Education and Faith Foundations (UKEFF) to describe the charity’s ethos.³ “Islam is a British religion. We are not simply in here, we are of here. Being Muslim and being British goes hand in hand... As more and more young people are becoming involved in charity work we are seeing more that they are one or more generations removed from ‘home.’ This is there home, here is where they live their life. They are British. As Muslims, giving is an extension of their identity, and they give back to here, their home,” Dr. Bilal Hassam of Penny Appeal told us in evidence to the group.⁴

In the fast paced, always changing world of today, it is not hard to think that charities only exist

around the holidays or in those rare instances when the going gets tough. The truth is that charitable organisations are year-round endeavours requiring the dedication of not simply paid staff, but the efforts of hundreds of volunteers, thousands of volunteer hours, and donations in all forms and quantities. The parlance of the times and the rhetoric of the media often shed an unfair light on Muslim charities. They function much the same as other charities in the sector, yet are often left unnoticed and uncelebrated. Worse, they are accused of fulfilling self-serving political agendas or accused of abuse for financing global terrorism, despite evidence revealing the near non-existent level of such occurrences.⁵

The untold story of British Muslim charities, in much the way it reaches beyond Muslim communities, tells a tale greater than Britain itself. A dedication to the common welfare is displayed through a vast array of programmes, projects and initiatives run by Muslim charities. Even those rare unfortunate tragedies fall under the auspices of these unsung heroes.

On 14 June, as news outlets across the country rolled images of the twenty storeys of Grenfell Tower ablaze, it was British Muslim charities who ran towards the smoke and horror. Penny Appeal’s Team Orange was one of the first charities on the ground providing refuge and support for the victims of this appalling tragedy. In the dark days that followed, Grenfell Muslim Response Unit (GMRU) assisted with shelter and food,

1 An estimated 307,000 individuals sleep rough or in inadequate, temporary housing in the UK. One in every 200 people in the UK are homeless, according to Shelter”, The Guardian, 11 November 2017.

2 Record levels of poverty in working families, BBC, 16 March 2017.

3 Quote from testimony delivered by Nasim Ashraf as evidence to the APPG on British Muslims on 22 November, 2017.

4 Quote from testimony delivered by Dr. Bilal Hassam as evidence to the APPG on British Muslims on 22 November, 2017.

5 This is a reference to the report done by Claystone investigating Muslim charities in the UK after claims were made by the outgoing chair of the Charities Commission that a significant threat of terrorist financing could come from the sector. This will be further elaborate in Section 4.



National Zakat Foundation advertisements on London Underground, April 2018

financial resources, resettlement support, and funeral costs. GMRU established the first hotline for families affected by the fire. In the first week, we heard how GMRU raised and distributed over £148,000 progressing in week two to work with fifteen different charities on the ground to supplement the work of statutory agencies. Over 3,000 meals were distributed to families affected by the tragedy. To this day, these charities work as the UK continues to recover from this tragedy.⁶

“It was organised chaos,” said Zain Miah describing the scene facing the Grenfell Muslim Response Unit. “The survivors appreciated that we did not just tick boxes but treated them like real people and investigated their specific needs. We gave food, cash, and provided shelter, but then we ask what are the next steps to helping these

people through this tragedy.”⁷

This is not an isolated incident. British Muslim charities also answered the call by raising support funds and assisting victims of the Manchester Arena terrorist attack in May 2017. The work of British Muslim charities can also be seen in welfare and medical support for the elderly, asylum seekers and refugees among other vulnerable groups.

The work of these charities seeks not to simply provide quick and temporary fixes, but to pursue a long term resolution to the problems in society. While food, shelter, and financial aid are the initial images of charity, there is a deeper strategy at work. Charity itself is changing with society. The integration of new technologies and the approach to bringing people from all walks of life together works hand in hand with

dedication to the common welfare. Whether the specific skills of professional groups or the man hours of hundreds of volunteers, charities are utilising assets at their disposal to transform how charity is done at home. The use of apps and technology is another facet of how Muslim charities are creating a larger, cross generational charitable community.

The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims set out to assess the contribution of British Muslim charities in the UK and the difficulties they face. We set out to do this by reaching out to as many British Muslim charities as possible to conduct surveys and interviews with their directors, managers, volunteers, and other affiliates. The APPG looked into a wide scope of charities ranging from small and local networks

⁶ The Grenfell Muslim Response United (GMRU) was a cooperation of numerous charities hosted by the National Zakat Foundation that responded immediately to the Grenfell Tower fire and has continued providing aid and support to victims through the ongoing recovery. The details of their work are reported in the Grenfell Muslim Response United Report published in October of 2017 by the National Zakat Foundation.

⁷ Quotes from testimony delivered by Zain Miah as evidence to the APPG on British Muslims on 23 November, 2017.

to UK wide charities, and even organisations that partake in international initiatives. Through written submissions, testimony, and submission of other materials (such as financial and annual reports), the APPG sought to highlight their events, projects and contributions to the United Kingdom, and reveal scrutiny and challenges within the charity sector. This report showcases the findings of the APPG and seeks

to celebrate the work of Muslim charities in Britain. We hope the findings presented here enhance the esteem in which Muslim charities are held as befits the wide ranging evidence of activity, enterprise and human compassion that we had the privilege of hearing about first hand. We could not reasonably do justice to the immense scale of work Muslim charities are engaged in but we hope we have been able to capture

the tremendous significance of their work and its value to British society. We hope too that our efforts will encourage others to look upon British Muslims anew and recognise that this group of less than three million people through their charitable activities punch far above their weight.



APPG members hear evidence from Muslim charities in Parliament, November 2017



Laura Marks and Julie Siddiqi of Nisa-Nashim give evidence to the APPG, November 2017

Section 2: Assessing the Impact of British Muslim Charities

Observant Muslims are among the most charitable of givers with Islam mandating an array of obligatory and preferred charitable donations as acts of worship. Charity as a pillar of Islam, Zakat, requires the payment of 2.5% of disposable income and wealth to charity. But beyond this obligation are many other forms of charity that are esteemed as furthering an individual's good deeds before God, from voluntary giving such as sadaqah and lillah, to endowments (waqfs), fitya or kaffarah and qardh hasan.

Traditionally focused on social and structural problems affecting poverty, hardship and natural and humanitarian disasters in Muslim majority countries around the world, British Muslim charities are increasingly centring focus on problems and communities closer to home.

A noticeable difficulty in making fair and accurate assessments of impact resides in the modesty of data capture by British Muslim charities. Much as they abide by the Islamic ethos on giving, so do they adhere to exhortations to do so with humility and without proclaiming their acts of charity.

We could not reasonably expect to give full measure to scale of Muslim charity contributions to the UK and we acknowledge that while incredibly valuable as a guide to the scope of work currently being

done by British Muslim charities, the information provided herein is merely indicative of some of the impact made by Muslim charities. It is in no way exhaustive of their contributions to British society.

THE LIVING SPIRIT OF CHARITY WITHIN ISLAM

Islam demands a charitable element to the life of its adherents. Charity, known as Zakat, is one of the five pillars, or tenets, of Islam.

We heard from many British Muslim charity representatives how Islamic teachings are practised by their institutions to give due to social needs close to home. The faith element of our work was one of the things survivors found most satisfactory. It added a humanity to our work. We recognised the victims as people first", Zain Miah of the Grenfell Muslim Response Unit (GMRU) told us.⁸

We heard from Nasim Ashraf of UK Education and Faith Foundation who said: "We do this because Islam demands it of us. We give as a part of our religion to all of our neighbours, and not just Muslims."⁹

The CEO of Penny Appeal, Aamer Naeem, adeptly summarised this ethos saying that British Muslims are stepping up to support communities "not because of who they are, but rather because of who we are; people driven to serve others."¹⁰

In Islamic teaching it is made very clear that Zakat is to be kept

local. There is a misconception that Zakat goes back to other Muslim communities, but Ashraf clarifies that "Zakat is not just for foreigners. It is for our community. Our neighbours are not only Asians or Pakistanis, or just Muslims, they are Christians or Jews. Zakat is for all our neighbours here in Britain."¹¹

"Where the money is collected is where it should be distributed, our job is to determine where the money and help is most needed," is how Iqbal Nasim of the National Zakat Foundation (NZF) explained the role and purpose of NZF's distribution of zakat donations in the UK.¹²

The NZF, as handlers of religious obligation, further noted that "Anyone who gives Zakat to NZF can be confident that its Zakat policy is in line with Islamic teachings and supported by leading UK scholars."¹³ Many of the charities featured in this report specifically state in their mission statements, like the Al-Mizan Trust, that "To support disadvantaged people and deprived communities across the UK, regardless of their faith or cultural background."¹⁴ All of this together gives a rich backdrop for how British Muslim charities stand sincerely dedicated to the people of the United Kingdom. Giving is the lived part of the Muslim life. It goes beyond the theological and religious, becoming a cultural and ethical attitude that permeates the everyday life of Muslims.

8 Quote from testimony delivered by Zain Miah as evidence to the APPG on British Muslims on 23 November, 2017.

9 Quote from testimony delivered by Nasim Ashraf as evidence to the APPG on British Muslims on 22 November, 2017.

10 James Caan delivers gifts of joy to sick children at the Royal London Hospital, LinkedIn, 6 December 2017. Available at: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/james-caan-delivers-gifts-joy-sick-children-royal-london-adeem-younis>

11 Quote from testimony delivered by Nasim Ashraf as evidence to the APPG on British Muslims on 22 November, 2017.

12 Quote from testimony delivered by Iqbal Nasim as evidence to the APPG on British Muslims on 23 November, 2017.

13 National Zakat Foundation (NZF) Report of the Trustees (Incorporating the Director's Report) for the Year Ended 31 December 2016.

14 Al-Mizan Charitable Trust Annual Report and Accounts 2015-2016.

CHARITY AS MORE THAN JUST MONEY

In 2016, the Charity Commission praised Muslim charities during their peak donation period of the holy month of Ramadan. The Commission estimated that during the month that nearly £38 per second were donated. This adds up to be £371 per person on the year.¹⁵ This inspiring commitment to charity was displayed when the Department for International Development vowed to match fund whatever Islamic Relief's Ramadan Appeal raised up to £5million. This was in 2012, in 2011, Islamic Relief raised over £9million.¹⁶

The National Zakat Foundation has estimated the minimum zakat potential of British Muslims to be in the region of £500 million annually. The charity itself aims to increase its zakat base to reach one quarter of a million zakat payers thereby raising an annual budget for UK spend of £80-100 million.¹⁷

The first place many will rush to for an answer to the question of what impact charity has on society is to look at monetary value. But small budgets and small charities can make demonstrable impact on the lives of their near neighbours though their size and spend does not rival that of their larger counterparts. The scope varies widely from organisation to organisation. Some charities are more local and often might be highly specialised, thus the amount of capital they require may not be as much as the more national or even international charities that work in a variety of different areas throughout the sector.

For instance, organisations like the Penny Appeal and Human Appeal work with funds being generated in the millions of pounds, but they are large organisations that also work on projects outside the UK.¹⁸ Penny Appeal is exemplary in its commitment to run a sister project in the UK for every project it takes on outside the country.¹⁹ Al-Mizan Charitable Trust works in the tens of thousands of pounds and show annual growth

In 2016, the Charity Commission estimated Muslim charities to raise £100 million during Ramadan. That's nearly £38 per second or £371 per Muslim in a year.

in fundraising up through 2016 fiscal year.²⁰ Larger charities tend to also seek funding through grant initiatives and seasonal

appeals. Smaller organisations such as Palmers Green Mosque run entirely off of volunteer effort and only function as funds become available or assets can be donated. Through the use of an ambulance, this organisation can run a mobile clinic that delivers on-site healthcare and advice to the less fortunate. This requires approximately £20,000-30,000 to run one ambulance. They also have ambitions of delivering flu vaccines in the future and purchased at bulk, those are £2.95 per jab. These costs are the sole contents of their budgets as all their personnel are completely volunteering professionals.²¹

Human Appeal's annual 'Wrap Up' campaign, in partnership with Hands on London, saw the charity collect a combined total of nearly 25,000 winter coats and other warm winter clothing for rough sleepers, refugees and other vulnerable people in Greater Manchester, London, Glasgow and



Human Relief 'Wrap Up' campaign with Metro Mayor of Manchester, Andy Burnham. photo credit: Human Appeal

15 Staufenberg, Jess (2016). "Charity Commission hails 'sheer scale' of fundraising by British Muslims during Ramadan" The Independent. 22 July.

16 Pudelek, Jenna (2012). "DfID to give up to £5m of match funding to Islamic Relief Ramadan appeal" Third Sector. 18 July. (<https://www.thirdsector.co.uk/dfid-give-5m-match-funding-islamic-relief-ramadan-appeal/fundraising/article/1141638>)

17 Quote from testimony delivered by Iqbal Nasim as evidence to the APPG on British Muslims on 23 November, 2017

18 Human Appeal Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2016, Penny Appeal UK Programmes Report 2016

19 From testimony delivered by Dr. Bilal Hassam with Penny Appeal as evidence to the APPG on British Muslims on 22 November, 2017.

20 Al-Mizan Charitable Trust Annual Report and Accounts 2015-2016.

21 Given by Dr. A Samad Billoo as evidence to the APPG on British Muslims on 22 November, 2017.

Birmingham in 2017.

While the varying budgets make a grand picture difficult to establish, the sum total attributed to the reports submitted to the APPG have shown two major characteristics of British Muslim charities impact on their communities.

First, it represents a willingness of the public to help their neighbours. Many of these charities have stated to the APPG that most of their donors are Muslim and increasingly, their recipients are coming from outside the Muslim community. Based on the testimony given at the hearings called by the APPG and from the written responses submitted, 80% or more of Muslim charities' donors are Muslim while a small minority comes from non-Muslim affiliates or from larger public events. This is in contrast to the profile of charity recipients where a majority were from non-Muslim backgrounds, ranging between just over 50% to 75%.²²

There is, of course, a desire for those who give to want their donations to remain local, but the local identity taken on is British and blind to religious or ethnic differences. In their mission statements many Muslim charities address such issues as poverty, homelessness, and women and children contextualising the situation using British statistics and figures, not those simply of the British Muslim component of these group populations.

The second element, seen in the financial statements printed in annual reports, is the way in which

they are allocated. For a charity to maintain its integrity, the closest scrutiny is taken to assure there are no discrepancies between what comes in and what goes out. The stringency of self-auditing in British Muslim charities comes about in its robustness not simply because of a declaration from the Charities Commission, but because Islam itself demands it. Take Zakat for example. Zakat being a religious requirement, there is an interest in scrutinising the way in which the funds are collected and disbursed. The National Zakat Foundation has explained in their reports that they have consulted scholars to ensure that the amount of money used for operational expenses complies with the standard policy for non-profits, but also theological standards as well. "[Zakat] is not just a pillar, Islam should be made better by Zakat. We are shifting the idea of Zakat from just being obligatory and poverty relief to being a strategic tool for the benefit for those helped and for society," Iqbal Nasim of NZF clarified.²³

In 2016, the average Briton donated £18.²⁴ Thanks to the burst of giving during the month of Ramadan in 2016, the average British Muslim donated £371 in 2016.²⁵ It should be noted that the appeal campaigns during Ramadan also go to international support, but this should not be taken as the full story. The commitment British Muslims have to the UK which they consider home and their neighbours, their fellow Britons is significant and the commodity that Ramadan and British Muslims

represent to the charitable sector is very important to society. To add to this, the contribution British Muslims make towards the betterment of the UK is not only in the pounds raised, but in the services and skills provided in everyday life.

DEEPER SOCIETAL CHANGE AT THE HEART OF BRITISH MUSLIM CHARITY

There is a greater story behind the amount raised and spent through charitable works. At face value alone, they tell of a community dedicated to its neighbours defined in the broadest possible sense. In their allocation it tells a desire to end the issues that plagues British society. The infographic at the back of this report designates the sums raised for specific issues. These donations go into food and school kits aimed at alleviating the reality of homelessness and poverty²⁶, but beyond that they go into services that not only sooth the sickness, but actively work against the disease.²⁷ The amounts raised over very short bursts, especially the £177,000 of Muslim Aid collected in response to the Grenfell Tower fire and the £26,000 donated to the We Love Manchester fund by Human Appeal in response to the Manchester Arena bombing.²⁸

Far more important than the number of pounds raised, is the number of people helped. This is where the true impact is felt. This number comes directly through the homeless given a warm meal or supported on a pathway towards escaping a desperate situation. Al-Mizan Charitable Trust has

22 The charities who reported back to the APPG on these rates, held the common 80% or higher for rate of Muslim donors contributing to their funding while the recipients tended to vary slightly more. Charities that give direct funds or assistance had a better idea of the proportion of help they offered to different groups, while charities that provided for care packages or food bank/soup kitchens had a harder time estimating this number as their disbursement occurred through a third-party group or to a bulk population that was not properly recorded.

23 Quote from testimony delivered by Iqbal Nasim as evidence to the APPG on British Muslims on 23 November, 2017.

24 UK Giving 2017, an overview of charitable giving in the UK. Charities Aid Foundation, April 2017. p 11 <https://www.cafonline.org/docs/default-source/about-us-publications/caf-uk-giving-web.pdf>

25 Staufenberg, Jess (2016). "Charity Commission hails 'sheer scale' of fundraising by British Muslims during Ramadan" The Independent. 22 July.

26 Al-Mizan Charitable Trust APPG on British Muslims Written Submission 22 November 2017.

27 Muslim Doctor's Association (MDA) APPG on British Muslims Oral Submission 23 November 2017.

28 Grenfell Muslim Response United Report published in October of 2017 by the National Zakat Foundation, Human Appeal Annual Report 2016.

been able to support or 12,000 families living in poverty.²⁹ This is the nearly 5,000 individuals and families eligible to receive Zakat funding that the NZF have assisted.³⁰ For example, the refugees given financial support to help them get by week to week and those refugees of professional backgrounds who have been given a new lease of life in the UK through financial support to sit conversion exams so that they can regain their dignity and a sense of themselves in their new habitat.³¹

It also shows in the women and children who are counselled and helped through abuse and hardship. This starts with the general dedication shown by numerous Muslim charities for caring for and assisting the homeless and displaced. Al- Mizan Charitable Trust specifically prepares care packages for Mothers Days (packages filled with supplies for new mothers) and for Back to School (packages filled with uniforms and stationary supplies).³² The National Zakat Foundation traces its founding back to a case of domestic violence and to cases of financial hardship among British Muslim women. Between 25-35% of NZF's projects are directed towards projects supporting vulnerable women.³³ They maintain over 27 beds for victimized women. NZF regularly receives referrals from larger charities, such as the British Red Cross, Refugee Council, Refugee Action, Victim Support and the Women's Aid network, seeking support for clients without recourse to public funds who are in need of emergency accommodation, financial support or other necessities. The flexibility in NZF's operational

model, which allows the charity to assess applications on a case by case basis, permits it to adapt to arising needs. Increasingly, the charity finds itself the 'first port of call' for statutory and public sector agencies seeking a partner to whom clients of Muslim background can be referred safe in the knowledge that their religious requirements will be met.

More specifically, British Muslim organisations are also transforming the cultural sentiment towards helping orphans. Penny Appeal has produced the first Islamic Guidance Document about Adoption and Fostering to promote these practices and address the needs of children in care.³⁴



Photo credit: GMRU

Helping prisoners gain access to opportunity and supporting their rehabilitation or the spread of healthcare knowledge among the homeless are further examples of the multi-faceted interventions Muslim charities are implementing to help individuals and families in the UK. What charity does is empower people to help each other. This is seen in donations, but even those who have nothing to give monetarily can help their neighbour through giving time and volunteering, a resource which many smaller charities thrive on.

GIVING IN TIMES OF TRAGEDY

Charity is contagious. The acts illustrated throughout this report offer a more hopeful alternative to the more common stories that run on the evening news which emphasis conflict or strife. Charities are the unsung heroes in our local communities whose work happens almost in stealth. But times of national tragedy or national crisis brings the work of charities into full public view. No more so that during two recent incidents of tragic proportions.

BRITISH MUSLIM CHARITY RESPONSE TO THE GRENFELL TOWER FIRE

On 14 June 2017, a fire broke out in the twenty-four-storey public housing flats of Grenfell Tower in North Kensington. Of the 129 flats in the tower, twenty-three housed victims. Seventy-one people died as a result of the fire and over seventy suffered physical injury. The fire took over twenty-four hours to control, believed to have started at 1:00 on Wednesday on the fourth floor. Most of the tower suffered severe damage and twenty-two apartments at the neighbouring Grenfell Walk were also destroyed. Recently installed cladding on the side of the building is being blamed for the rapid spreading of the fire. Many residents reported being ignored by the authorities in the aftermath of the fire which occurred in a London Borough with a high wealth disparity between rich and poor. A public inquiry ordered by Prime Minister Theresa May is currently ongoing.³⁵

In response to the Grenfell Tower fire, the Grenfell Muslim Response Unit (GMRU) was formed. British

29 Al- Mizan Charitable Trust Annual Report and Accounts 2015-2016.

30 National Zakat Foundation (NZF) Report of the Trustees (Incorporating the Director's Report) for the Year Ended 31 December 2016.

31 National Zakat Foundation APPG on British Muslims Testimony 2017

32 Al-Mizan Charitable Trust APPG on British Muslims Written Submission 22 November 2017.

33 National Zakat Foundation APPG on British Muslims Testimony 2017.

34 Penny Appeal "UK's first Islamic Guidance Document on Adoption and Fostering" 21 March, 2018. House of Commons. (<https://pennyappeal.org/news/uks-first-islamic-guidance-document-adoption-and-fostering>)

35 BBC "London fire: A visual guide to what happened at Grenfell Tower" 13 December 2017. (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-40301289>)



Zain Miah of the Grenfell Muslim Response Unit recognised for the charity's efforts at Progress 1000 hosted by the Evening Standard. Photo credit: London Evening Standard.

Muslim charities partnered with emergency response services, local councils, and local organisations to assist the victims of the fire. Over 400 people were assisted by the GMRU. £40,000 were provided to victims in need of financial assistance alongside the service of thousands of hot meals and assistance with emergency calls. Emergency shelter was provided for thirty of the victims and fifty funeral services were paid for by the GMRU. The unit provided legal assistance and arranged the funerals and burials of those who had lost their lives, assisting families in giving their loved ones a dignified end.³⁶

BRITISH MUSLIM CHARITABLE RESPONSE TO MANCHESTER ATTACK

A similar effort was also put into the response to the Manchester attack on 22 May 2017.

At 22:30 on the night of Monday, 22 May a suicide bomber detonated an explosive device, that included approximately two thousand nuts amongst its projectiles, just outside the Manchester Arena where an Ariana Grande concert

had just ended. Of the nearly 14,000 in attendance from all over the UK, mostly teenagers and families, twenty-two people were killed by the blast while over one hundred were physically injured. Many more were left with mental and emotional trauma that continues to this day. This was the deadliest attack in the UK since the bombings of 7 July, 2005.³⁷

Planning across multiple agencies within Greater Manchester made the response rapid and collaborative. Arena staff, paramedic and ambulance services, British Transport Police, local hospital personnel, and other members of the community rapidly responded to the attack and many other members of the community stepped up to assist with the aftermath and healing needed following the attack. The Kerslake report into the response to the attack highlighted areas for improvement for future responses. The report also commended the Greater Manchester Police and denounced instances of unethical behaviour by the press.³⁸

British Muslim charities, such as Big Iftar, used existing ties to the community to provide aid and support for victims of the terrorist attack. Twenty-two victims³⁹ were assisted and over £25,000 were raised by British Muslim

charities to support twenty-two of the victims. Charities which are Manchester based, like Human Appeal, led the way on creating online donation pages where Muslims could pledge financial support for the victims of the Manchester Arena attack. While the media narrative in response to such incidents can often present a conflictual reading of British Muslims and relations with wider British society, the work of British Muslim charities portrays a divergent picture, one of British Muslim communities coming to the aid of their fellow citizens and neighbours; denouncing acts of violence which seek to drive communities apart by embracing endeavours which bring communities together.

CHARITY THROUGH DONATION OF SKILL OR EXPERTISE

The impact of British Muslim charity work is also seen in the mobilisation of its people into the greater British community. Again, charity is more than simply pounds or hours donated. Charity provides a wonderful opportunity for all elements of society to translate their talents and passions into acts of neighbourly love. While soup kitchens, food banks, and temporary shelters



Mobile medicine for the homeless, Muslim Community and Education Centre, Palmers Green mosque, photo credit: Palmers Green mosque.

³⁶ Grenfell Muslim Response United Report published in October of 2017 by the National Zakat Foundation

³⁷ The Kerslake Report: An independent review into the preparedness for, and emergency response to, the Manchester Arena attack on 22nd May 2017. (https://www.kerslakearenareview.co.uk/media/1022/kerslake_arena_review_printed_final.pdf)

³⁸ The Kerslake Report

³⁹ Big Iftar written submission to the APPG on British Muslims, 23 November 2017.



Photo Credit: Human Appeal

are a vital piece of the mission for charitable work, helping one's neighbour involves numerous other potential assistance services. The British Muslim community has a great wealth in the variety of its capital that can be dedicated towards helping the less fortunate. Healthcare professionals, financial and business consultation, educational and social service specialisation, and many other expertise have been converted into altruism

through British Muslim charities.

ADDRESSING BRITISH HEALTHCARE

The winter time tends to bring out the worse of the ongoing stress on the NHS to meet the demands of the UK. Lack of funding and shortages of medical professionals leave even the professionals themselves feeling that the care given to patients is not sufficient for what they need. The state of hospitals and surgeries has been described as “war zone medicine.”⁴⁰ A few of the British Muslim charities contacted for this report have worked to alleviate the stress on the NHS by capitalising on valuable social capital: British Muslim medical professionals.

One example of this is the Health and Nutrition Development Society (HANDS) which started with medical professionals travelling to Calais and Dunkirk in France as well as to Greece to assist refugees. The skills and expertise employed there were mobilised back in the UK to help

vulnerable groups via the work of Palmers Green Mosque. What they learned working in disaster struck areas could be used at home in the UK, albeit in a very different context. “Instead of getting everyone together for a weekend or multiple day trip, this can run constantly on only an hour or two a day without having to travel,” is how Shaykh Talat of Palmers Green mosque described the initiative.⁴¹

The focus of the initiative is to provide healthcare education. They operate from an ambulance that allows them to bring healthcare check ups to the less fortunate. They can also get people in contact with the help they need, but are not a transport service. Everything they do is completely voluntary and their budget is based only on the upkeep costs of the ambulance. “Our main aim is prevention, we learned in Calais working with the other groups around, that there was a missing element. No one was looking into the hygiene and basic healthcare standards of the area. That is

British Muslim Charity Response to the Grenfell Tower Tragedy

Seventy-one people died and over seventy individuals were injured as a result of a fire at Grenfell Tower in North Kensington on the morning of 14 June, 2017. As smoke rose from the tower block and amidst the horror in the streets below, the Grenfell Muslim Response Unit (GMRU) brought together twenty-two organisations from service and faith organisations and a small army of volunteers to answer the needs of the victims of this tragedy. Within forty-eight hours of the fire, the GMRU established emergency helplines to meet the needs of survivors and victims. Temporary housing and relief was organised and through support workers at the Al-Manar mosque in west London, a system was set up to

distribute cash to those who lost all their material belongings. Through the Ramadan Tent Project, meals were provided and £2,000 worth of food vouchers were issued. GMRU did not stop with the immediate response for the needs of the day but also brought the skills and talents to the table through organising and giving legal assistance and the arrangement for funerals for the families who lost loved ones in the tragedy. In the combined efforts of the GMRU, speed, compassion, and dignity exuded from this brilliant display of the Muslim community coming to the aid of their fellow neighbours in a truly dark moment in recent history.

40 Marsh, Sarah and Denis Campbell (2018). “NHS Crisis: ‘I live in fear I’ll miss a serious ill patient and they will die’” The Guardian. 11 Jan.

41 Quote from testimony delivered by Shaykh Talat as evidence to the APPG on British Muslims on 22 November, 2017.

where we naturally fit in.”⁴²

The mobilisation of healthcare giving is also seen through the development and growth of the Muslim Doctor's Association (MDA). In 2004, a group of doctors, dentists, dietitians, pharmacists, and other healthcare professionals came together to donate their skills through the MDA.⁴³ They were dedicated to increasing healthcare standards in their communities and combating health inequalities. They provide free healthcare education and life style advice while also holding seminars to educate the public on various healthcare matters. “We want to address health concerns for the community. We address women's health, childcare health, issues of hypertension, diabetes, and knowledge about cancer screenings. We also hope to clear up misunderstandings about mental health and address the stigma that faces the community,” said Dr. Hina Shahid.⁴⁴ Their aim is largely focused on preventative healthcare, specifically educating the community about self-reporting and Hajj health as well as contributing to humanitarian and health policy projects. Between 2015-2016, the MDA gave free health checks to 500 individuals and offered free healthcare advice to over 1,000 people throughout the UK. MDA operates on a small budget of £5000 a year but they count 100 volunteers active in offering medical support and have logged 15,000 volunteer hours in medical treatment support. An example of their recent voluntary call for medical assistance came in the hours following the Grenfell Tower fire. “We just put out a call to our 700 volunteers”, Dr Hina Shahid told us.



Muslims contributing to 'green-up' initiatives run by Ahmadiyya Young Muslims Association. Photo credit: AMYA

MDA also contribute their work through developing health technology to aid the underprivileged. One app they are working on can provide antenatal care for pregnant refugee women. These endeavours were even recognised by WIRED Health in 2016 as one of the top-20

start-ups.⁴⁵ British Muslim organisations not only strive to set new standards for charitable work in the UK, but on the global level as well.

While only 7.2% of donations in the UK were made online, the 17% of them that were made via mobile devices has grown between 2014 and 2015. This continued growth of online giving needs to be recognized by the charity sector as it is a major point of entry for getting the millennial generation into charitable work.⁴⁶ The incorporation of new technology and apps into the charity sector can assist with micro-donations. This was demonstrated with the UN World Food Programme's use of the Share the Meal app, which allowed donors to make a \$0.50 donation with a few taps on their mobile device. Between the launch of the app at the end of 2015, over 13 million \$0.50 meals have been shared.⁴⁷ While the charity sector has been slow to catch onto the use of apps and technology, it will become very valuable for raising funds as the amount of people who carry cash around is dropping and physical collection



Muslims contributing to 'clean-up' initiatives by run Ahmadiyya Young Muslims Association. Photo credit: AMYA

⁴² Shaykh Talat, APPG hearing, 22 November, 2017.

⁴³ Quote from testimony delivered by Dr Hina Shahid of the Muslim Doctors' Association (MDA) to the APPG on British Muslims on 23 November 2017.

⁴⁴ APPG on British Muslims Muslim Doctor's Association (MDA) Oral Submission 23 November, 2017.

⁴⁵ MDA APPG Submission.

⁴⁶ Charitable Giving Report: How Non-profit Fundraising Performed in 2016. Blackbaud Institute. p.10

⁴⁷ Evertt, Cath (2017). “How apps and tech are transforming the ways charities raise money,” The Guardian. 28 June.

can only be carried out in so many locations.⁴⁸ MDA's pregnancy app show a major innovative spirit within British Muslim charities. "The app is linked to a website that are both translated into multiple languages and take into account multiple cultural sensitivities. The idea is that if a mother if having an issue, she can tap on her phone and get the information or help she needs."⁴⁹

The technological aptitude that British Muslim charities

demonstrate coheres with the push for advancing charitable work into the future proposed by the House of Lords in their report *Stronger Charities for a Stronger Society*. The report outlines the need to engage online fundraising and the awareness a social media presence can bring. Advancements of apps and proper usage of the internet will not only make donating easier, but can also help attract a younger generation of charitably active citizens.⁵⁰

ENGAGING THE NEXT GENERATION

In the engagement of all elements of a given society towards one goal, a real challenge comes about in overcoming youth apathy and widespread ignorance. Both of these challenges are transcended in the example set by the Islamic Unity Society's (IUS) Imam Hussein Blood Donation Campaign (IHBDC). Since 1995, the IUS has brought young Muslims of various backgrounds together

Innovation in the Charity Sector by British Muslim Charities

The stereotypical image of the charitable sector consists of a soup kitchen or food bank which collections are made at various public locations and distributed in the basement of a community centre or religious building. Technology is increasingly changing society as it is currently recognised. In 2018, apps and convenience rule many day to day activities. This offers tremendous potential for growth in the charity sector.

As online ordering and food delivery proliferates many of the large grocery chains throughout the UK and such delivery apps as Deliveroo and Uber Eats are becoming popular, InTouch Foundation brings the concept of delivery to the charity sector. InTouch Foundation is the brainchild of Osman Gondal, who wanted to do his part for charity by cooking meals at his home and delivering them by car to the homeless of his community in Bradford. Since 2012, this service has grown to include a mobile delivery van and food truck that to date has provided over 200,000 meals and half a million drinks for the homeless. The service has even evolved into providing emergency care items such as toiletries and sleeping bags. Second and third locations were established in Keighley and Leeds. Despite the growth and evolution of InTouch,

the organisation remains comprised entirely of volunteers. 95% of InTouch Foundation's work is for local communities in the UK. One individual who has benefited from the service provided by InTouch Foundation's mobile catering said that if it weren't for the charity's help, he would have been compelled to steal in order to feed his family. InTouch Foundation embodies Islamic teachings which encourage the faithful to feed the hungry and indigent.



Photo credit: Muslim Doctors' Association

Another example of the innovative spirit of British Muslim charities comes from a unique service with a wide-reaching impact. The Muslim Doctors Association (MDA) is working on a smartphone app to decrease morbidity and mortality inequalities for pregnant ethnic women in the

UK. Partnered with the Nuffield Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology at Oxford University, the MDA is working to develop a website and app that can work as an effective portal to provide, in multiple languages, necessary information and assistance to pregnant refugee women. These types of initiatives not only take charity beyond the stereotypical sense of giving, but also build important bridges while putting the talents of dedicated professionals to work for the greatest good.

⁴⁸ Everett, *Apps and Charities*, The Guardian.

⁴⁹ Dr. Shahid, APPG hearing, 23 November, 2017.

⁵⁰ House of Lords (2017) "Stronger charities for a stronger society" Select Committee on Charities. 26 March.

to achieve common goals for their communities. Comprised of students and young professionals the organisation drives Muslim youth to give back in London, Leeds, and Manchester. Since 2006, one of their main works has been the IHBDC.⁵¹ The initiative aimed at getting Muslims to donate blood so that these donations would be available to

their community. These blood donations had a higher likelihood of being potential matches for minority communities that would not have a large donation pool in the past. “We encourage people to donate using the quote “Whoever saves one life, saves the whole of mankind.” We partner for the benefit of the NHS to get more people to give blood. For no more

than an hour of your life you save three adult lives.”⁵² In their first decade, IHBDC has collected over 3,500 blood donations which is equivalent to saving the lives of 10,000 adults or 25,000 children. In 2016 alone, IHBDC collected 720 donations, potentially saving the lives of 2,160 adults or 5,040 children.⁵³

Muslim prisoner rehabilitation projects

Just as the government grapples with the urgent need to reform and improve the prison system in the UK, British Muslim charities have already made great strides to improve the rehabilitative abilities of the UK’s prisons. The 234% increase of the Muslim prison population between 1997 and 2015 has demanded action. British Muslims constitute less than five per cent of the UK population but account for almost three times that in the prison population with the percentage of Muslim prisoners rising steadily from eight per cent in 2002 to 15.2% in 2016.

Muslim Aid has answered that call by recruiting and referring 170 mentors to prison chaplains for training and pairing. These mentors work closely with inmates to reduce the re-offending rate and to give them a support system as they undergo family reunification and reintegrate into society after release. This can be a very difficult time filled with backlash from family and community. The mentors work to smooth this transition and maintain the confidence and resilience of former inmates. This act speaks to a larger appeal to compassion within a community and an inclusion in spite of past wrong doings. The cycle of prisons can be as entrapping and detrimental to society as the cycles of poverty or homelessness. British Muslim charities’ are attempting to break these cycles so that individuals can be supported in their efforts to overcome their past and further their future.

DATE PALM PROJECT

VP left his family at a young age and became involved in gang activity. He was involved in using and selling Class A and Class B substances. At

the point of referral, VP was serving a two year sentence at HMP Highpoint for possession with intent to supply Class A drugs.

Prior to his moving into accommodation provided by the Date Palm Project, the project staff worked with him in the probation hostel where he had been placed. During that time he engaged with the team through key working sessions and by attending in-house activities. He demonstrated his motivation and willingness to change. He got involved in doing work experience and during this time gained his Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) card. Upon moving into the Date Palm Project, he was supported by staff to look for work in the construction industry. He was offered temporary work with an agency, which he began the next day. After three weeks, he was offered full time work with a well known and well established construction business.

He is now independent and pays his rent every month. After he had established his working patterns and learnt how to prepare and attend work, he began to socialize more with other residents and attend in house activities whenever he was not at work.

VP has been attending his probation meetings in the evenings after work and he makes time to see his case worker once a week when he finishes work.

VP has managed the transition into work very well and he is a role model to other clients, who recognize his financial independence and all the opportunities which are now open to him. VP will be moving into his own accommodation in the coming weeks.

51 Written Submission to the APPG on British Muslims by the Islamic Unity Society on the Imam Hussein Blood Donation Campaign (IHBDC) 22 November, 2017.

52 Quote from testimony delivered by Mustafa Khan as evidence to the APPG on British Muslims on 22 November, 2017.

53 IUS Written Submission, APPG, 22 November, 2017.

Examples like the IUS help to not only act as a gateway towards the next generation of philanthropy through engagement of young Muslims, but also help to overcome the community's lack of knowledge and even outdated practices. IHBDC got the stone rolling by opening the community up to a simple charitable activity such as blood donation realising that the diversity of Britain allows for a great diversity of blood types, thus the more who donate, the greater needs can be fulfilled by healthcare professionals.⁵⁴ "We have opened up Mosques and community centres to getting people to donate blood. In the future we hope to talk about organ donation, but first we need to obtain a scholarly consensus within the community."⁵⁵ British Muslim charities have also worked to raise the profile of other pressing issues such as adoption and fostering of orphaned children.

Penny Appeal has worked to host over thirty adoption and fostering events and assisted with hundreds of applications. The work of Penny Appeal and other Muslim charities can help to overcome outmoded or false beliefs on adoption and fostering to assist children in social care.⁵⁶

British Muslim charities have helped to confront many who have been marginalised via demeaning generalisations and social disapproval. Single mothers and abused women are regularly the concern and, at times, the focus of some of the Muslim charities in the UK. Overcoming the myth of prisoners being beyond rehabilitation is also intrinsic to such organisations as Muslim Aid who not only seek to reduce the second-time offender rate, but trains mentors to work with prisoners to support them on their path to successful rehabilitation.⁵⁷

While the prison population has increased, steadily maintaining one quarter as non-whites, the Muslim prison population has risen from 8% in 2002 to 15% in 2015.⁵⁸ In just London, Muslim males make up 30% of the prison population.⁵⁹ Muslim Aid try to end this trend through their Prisoners Rehabilitation Programme. Muslim Aid assigns a mentor to an inmate prior to their release who will assist them practically and emotionally helping them to reintegrate into society. The mentors help to find the inmates housing, employment, and to deal with the alienation and social stigma that follows a prison sentence in the hope of reducing the re-offending rate.⁶⁰

A similar endeavour is evident in the Date Palm Project supported by the National Zakat Foundation and the Better Community Business Network. The project is administered by St Mungo's

British Muslim Charities Take on Homelessness

Homelessness stands as one of the greatest failures of modern societies. Local and national government figures across the globe have made pledges in 2017 and 2018 to end homelessness. This concern is echoed in London Mayor, Sadiq Khan's pledge to end homelessness by 2020. This hope also rings through the halls of Westminster in Prime Minister Theresa May's calling of homelessness as "shameful" to a modern country. This is a very common theme that carries through a great number of the British Muslim charities showcased here. The desire to end homelessness is not a whimsical foray which charities use to garner more donations, it is a problem many are seeking to address through

long-term solutions. The work of British Muslim organisations is not simply to feed and house the homeless or to provide temporary relief from a far greater problem. The charities are attempting to delineate homelessness as a problem arising from a complex mix of economic difficulties, a housing crisis or rising rents throughout the UK among a plethora of other factors. This problem also exists among crises in the NHS and in public acknowledgement and pursued treatment of mental health disorders. Homelessness is a complex problem that will require a complex resolution and robust policies to tackle the issue. British Muslim charities, for their part, are among those leading the way towards the realisation of the hope to end homelessness.

54 A Report Optimisa Research for the NHS Blood and Transplant addressed the cultural sensitivities of blood donation in various groups throughout the UK. Optimisa Research (2014) "BAME Organ Donation 2014: Gaining a deeper understanding of attitudes, cultural and lifestyle influences and behaviours towards organ donation within BAME communities in the UK" NHS Blood and Transplant.

55 Mustafa Khan, APPG hearing, 22 November, 2017.

56 Penny Appeal UK Programmes Report 2016.

57 Written Submission to the APPG on British Muslims by Muslim Aid. 22 November, 2017.

58 Allen, Grahame and Christ Watson (2017) "UK Prison Population Statistics" House of Commons Library Briefing Paper, 20 April.

59 Muslim Aid Prisoners Rehabilitation Project. UK Development Programmes. (<https://www.muslimaid.org/what-we-do/uk-programmes/prisoners-project/>)

60 Muslim Aid Prisoners Rehabilitation Project. UK Development Programmes. (<https://www.muslimaid.org/what-we-do/uk-programmes/prisoners-project/>)

Broadway and is tailored for young male Muslim prisoners aged 18-25. The project aims to help prisoner leaving HMP Feltham (and other prisons in London and the South East) to turn their lives around by providing housing for four to six months upon release and support services to meet their individual needs. Referrals are initially made the prison team, and project workers from Date Palm will then visit the inmate before his release to determine his suitability for the project. Project

workers are on hand to assist with a range of support services from helping residents to apply for training and attend courses to supporting residents to access GP and dentistry services and working with psychotherapists to offer counselling and support to residents. Over the last three years, from 2014-2017, the project assisted 62 young men each staying an average of six months in supported accommodation.

A NEW APPROACH TO HOMELESSNESS

So far, this report has shown the myriad of ways in which British Muslim charities setting new standards and innovating in areas of work to meet the growing demands on the charity sector and increasing need in society. Alleviating poverty and homelessness are issues that stands out again and again as the primary focal point of a large number of the charities giving evidence to the APPG. In many

‘Muslim Mitzvah’ - Sadaqa Day

Background: Mitzvah Day is a day of service put on by members of the British Jewish Community in various localities throughout the UK. In the interest of interfaith cooperation and in having a day of social action for Muslims, British Muslims used the model of Mitzvah Day to create Sadaqa Day. Sadaqa means a voluntary giving, usually of cash, but has had its meaning pushed to mean more than monetary giving, to champion the giving of time and service to the less well off in society. Sadaqa Day and Mitzvah Day are now days where British Muslims and Jews come together to hold multiple events throughout the UK.

Events are planned to occur at different periods in the calendar to spread out the acts of charity into a year around endeavour. Sadaqa Day occurs in March and Mitzvah Day usually occurs in the preceding November. Sadaqa Day started in 2015.

Location: All throughout the UK. One of the key features of the initiative is to encourage Muslims to focus their charitable work on communities in the UK.

Events: In 2017, Mitzvah Day involved eighty-four events throughout the UK where Jewish and Muslim individuals worked together on social action projects. Sadaqa Day in 2017 included fifteen projects throughout the UK of the same nature. These events ranged from organising food banks and soup kitchens, to visiting care homes, assisting refugee and asylum seekers, and various local initiatives.

Goals: To encourage greater interfaith charitable work, especially between Britain’s Jewish and Muslim populations. To show that charity is more than the act of giving money, that it can be the volunteering of time, expertise and the offer of friendship to the community. These social action days also offer a place for families to work together and for the youth to be more engaged in charitable work.

A major objective of this initiative is to get Muslims out in their communities and to recognise their civic role in British society. The events held on these social action days also seek to empower women in their faith and in their community.

Future: Thus far the combined work done for Mitzvah and Sadaqa Days have brought together eight faiths and over 40,000 volunteers to engage in over one thousand projects throughout the UK and increasingly into the rest of the world. A major network of Jewish and Muslim women came out of these charity events known as Nisa-Nashim. This network brings local groups of Jewish and Muslim women together to discuss issues in the community and has grown to becoming an international event. In 2017, there were twenty-four local groups in the UK totalling in over 3,000 participants. The future looks promising as this event continues to grow both in the inclusion of volunteers from other faiths and the hosting of new events in more localities throughout the UK. Events such as Mitzvah and Sadaqa Days hope to inspire other like-minded initiatives that get Muslims out in their community to build greater networks of all Britons helping each other across the country.



Photo credit: Sadaqa Day

of their mission statements, their objectives are stated as helping those less fortunate and specifically, to help end homelessness in the UK.

The new Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 is the first major piece of legislation in more than a decade which introduces new measures to help tackle the problem. The new Act raises the duty on local authorities towards the homeless, including those that do not meet 'primary need' and promises a new code of guidance and £73 million to assist in ending homelessness. The guidelines already in place and the insufficient accounting of rough sleepers makes this issue hard to get a full grasp of.⁶¹

British Muslim charities are active in addressing the problem of homelessness from the larger projects run by major charities to the small, volunteer run initiatives providing food out of mobile vans or on trestle tables set up in public squares. Hundreds of thousands of pounds for meals, shelter, and emergency aid kits have been spent. Hundreds of thousands of individuals have been assisted. The National Zakat Foundation, Al-Mizan Trust, Muslim Aid, Penny Appeal, and many more Muslim charities and partnering organisations are dedicated to ending one of society's greatest ills. Increasing sixteen percent in the UK alone, since 2016, British Muslim charities are leading a long-needed call to stand in opposition to the rise of homelessness. "Our goal is to remove destitution. We need to empower people and address core problems. We are against poverty and homelessness, not the homeless themselves. We need to help abused children and get professional assistance and advice to those who need it," said Nasim Ashraf with UKEFF.⁶² Combined

British Muslim charities have assisted over 300,000 homeless individuals supplying food packs and hot meals. The NZT donated over £350,000 to support housing for the less fortunate.⁶³

The story of InTouch Foundation presents an example of the heart of British Muslim dedication to combating homelessness. Osman Gondal wanted to do more than simply donate money to help the less fortunate of his community in Bradford. He started by cooking meals in his own kitchen and delivering them to those in need. Eventually the operation grew to include a mobile food catering van. The idea was not to just set up another food kitchen or have something for people to passively donate to, Osman wanted to actually have these charitable acts be a conscious and cultural part of his volunteers' identity. For Gondal, his volunteers are his greatest asset and without volunteers the meals cannot be made or delivered. Osman even asks his sponsors to get involved and take over one of the delivery dates, not simply to throw money at the problem. His goal is to have people actively live out the bonds they form between their neighbours, Muslim or otherwise. To date, InTouch Foundation has delivered 200,000 meals and

half a million drinks along with emergency items such as sleeping bags and toiletries. 95% of InTouch Foundation's work is in local UK communities.⁶⁴

BUILDING INTERFAITH BRIDGES

Numbers given, numbers helped, innovations, initiatives, and crisis responses have given a diverse picture of the work done by British Muslim charities, but one last factor, harder to be quantified in reports, has a lasting effect not only on the growth of community altruism, but on unity and cohesion throughout the country. This impact occurs through the act of bridge building and deepening interfaith relationships. Collaborations between Muslims and Christians, or Muslims and Jews, or Muslims and Christians and Jews, featured prominently in the evidence we heard.

"Conversion is not why we do this. We are not trying to convert anyone," Ashraf told the APPG. "We do this because Islam demands it of us, and for all our neighbours, not just Muslims. We work out of a church and we have had people who work with us tell us that our Christian values are in tandem with your Muslim



InTouch Foundation's Osman Gondal and volunteers. Photo credit: InTouch Foundation

61 Full Fact "Homelessness in England" 22 March 2018. (<https://fullfact.org/economy/homelessness-england/>)

62 Quote from testimony delivered by Nasim Ashraf as evidence to the APPG on British Muslims on 22 November, 2017.

63 National Zakat Foundation (NZF) Report of the Trustees (Incorporating the Director's Report) for the Year Ended 31 December 2016.

64 Quote from testimony delivered by Osman Gondal as evidence to the APPG on British Muslims on 23 November, 2017.

values.”⁶⁵

The concepts of love and charity between neighbours and fellow man is one of the great unifying principles between the major religions of the world. This is demonstrated beautifully in the collaborations amongst Jewish, Christian, and Muslim charities. Mitzvah Day and Sadaqa Day are two days planned on opposite times of the year that bring Jewish and Muslim charities and the communities they exist within together to partake in a variety of events throughout each day to help combat homelessness. These charity days build bridges in several respects. They bring together religious groups who at times have been drawn into opposition. They bring together the diverse communities in which they work. “The basic idea is everybody on one day of the year can just go out and do good. We found people wanted to do something with people that they didn’t know as much, so it became about community building. Mitzvah means a commandment and a good deed. A very easy link to other faith community,” said Laura Marks. “British Jews feel a real need to build connection with Muslims. We hope the media coverage can show how normal this is, to go out and do charity.”⁶⁶ The day even builds bridges between generations and even countries as Mitzvah Day and Sadaqa Day have grown into international holidays with events occurring across the globe.

In Golders Green, Mitzvah Day brings together the Islamic Centre and Mosque and the GG United Synagogue to organise and distribute food packages and collect blood donations. The network established through Mitzvah Day has grown to

provide for a mutual respect of empowering women within the greater community.⁶⁷ Nisa-Nashim was established as a Muslim-Jewish women’s group that mobilizes women against anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. Nisa-Nashim operates on a local basis and has grown to now have twenty-four active chapters throughout the UK. In March of 2017, the Nisa-Nashim put on their inaugural National Conference in the UK which brought together

“We do this because Islam demands it of us, for all our neighbours, not just Muslims”

over 200 Jewish and Muslim women, the biggest gathering of its kind in Europe.⁶⁸

The Woking Asian Business Forum (WABF) built a bridge not only between Muslims and Christians but between British Muslims and their local council through the purchasing of a Christmas Tree. For ten years the elders of the Muslim community have presented the official Christmas Tree for the Borough of Woking to be displayed in Jubilee Square. This simple act speaks to a shattering of religious, cultural, and ethnic barriers and shows one religion seeing another’s holiday as a wonderful “time for giving and being thankful with a full heart.”⁶⁹

Many of the bridges built through the collaboration of British Muslim charities with local councils and other religious organisations throughout Britain have existed for many years. These networks of cohesion build strong communities and provide for a much more diverse and inclusive UK, equally dedicated to the plight of those found in

hard times and ready to respond to the unexpected tragedies and emergencies that arise throughout the year. Modesty tends to make these bridges less visible to the untrained eye, but no doubt just as non-Muslims can be seen giving and helping during the events tied to Islamic holidays, likewise Muslims can be seen serving warm meals and delivering aid on Christmas and Easter.

In the numbers displayed here the impact of British Muslims on the UK becomes more visible. Pound for pound and with each volunteer, this essential segment of the British community is highlighted and its dedication to the needs and cries of the local citizenry is aligned with everyone else. The bridge building and the complexity of the innerworkings and collaborations not only between British Muslims and the world around them, but between organisations, governments, and individuals sets a benchmark for cohesion and integration. In the next section we take a closer look at integration to show how British Muslim charities are not only working for their specific mission, but to build a better Britain for all its diverse constituency.

65 Nasim Ashraf, APPG hearing, 22 November 2017.

66 Quote from testimony delivered by Julie Siddiqi and Laura Marks as evidence to the APPG on British Muslims on 23 November, 2017.

67 Mitzvah Day End of Year Newsletter “Impact ’16: What Mitzvahs did we do in 2016”

68 Mitzvah Day Report 2015.

69 Mitzvah Day Report 2015.

Section 3: Social and Political Integration

The British Muslim community plays an integral role in the greater social and political order of the UK. Global events, old narratives, and media portrayal over the past few decades have begged the isolation of Muslim populations in Europe and the Western world. Because of this a rich element of the diversity of what it means to be British is left absent.

MISCONCEPTIONS OF BRITISH MUSLIMS

Muslims are the second largest religious group in the UK, but only make up about 5% of the population.⁷⁰ This fact is often neglected in the wave of international news that make the refugee crisis give the impression that Muslims are taking over Europe. This sentiment was echoed when last holiday season, Tesco featured a Muslim family in their Christmas advertisements leading to boycotts and outrage

over a supposed societal attempt to erase Christmas.⁷¹ These false narratives have led groups such as Ipsos MORI to seek out a statistical basis for what British Muslims are. They found that 94% of Muslims believe they have a freedom to practice their religion in Britain and 70% feel they are treated fair by the government despite rises of prejudice and discrimination in general society. 83% believe that it is possible to fully be British and a separate cultural or religious identity. Two thirds of Britons agree with them.⁷²

Shia Ithna'ashari Community of Middlesex (SICM) Christmas Soup Kitchen

Background: SICM's major focus is on helping out the homeless and individuals in need where ever they can and especially during the harshest times of the year, the winter season. They have established strong interfaith relationships with their local churches and found Christmas to be a wonderful opportunity to give back to the local community. Since 2011, SICM has partnered with West London Churches Homeless Concern (also known as Glass Door) to participate in Christmas Mass and support soup kitchens during Christmas and Boxing Day.

Location: Harrow is the home to SICM. Although Harrow is known throughout the UK as fairly affluent, that does not mean that homelessness and poverty are exempt from the area. Their work is focused at St. Columba's Church and Chelsea Methodist Church. Midnight Mass services on Christmas Eve take place at St. Alban's Church. SICM has strong interfaith relationships with churches throughout Harrow and Hertfordshire.

Events: Muslim volunteers prepare and serve hot meals, welcome guests, engage in community building dialogue, and clean up the area between services. The events not only provide a hub for

interfaith cooperation, but also give the homeless a place to come together and be a part of a community family over the holiday season. The solidarity shared during the Midnight Mass events brings people of different faiths together and emphasises the importance of the diversity of British society and the strength of the communities within.

Goals: Bring to light the reality of homelessness and poverty even in more affluent areas of the UK. Engage all members of society in dialogue and relationship building to breakdown divisions within society and seek better understanding of each other. To use a society-wide issue such as homelessness as an opportunity for interfaith dialogue and exercise of civic responsibility.

Future: Even focused local action in the charity sector has room to grow. If not necessarily in the area covered by a particular organisation, the spirit of interfaith cooperation and community engagement with all members of society, even those stuck in impoverished conditions, can carry on in different forms all throughout the UK. Continued development of these relationships can seek to expand their numbers and influence social and civic responsibility across generations as more and more youth are encouraged to partake.

⁷⁰ 2011 United Kingdom Census.

⁷¹ Belam, Martin (2017). "Threats to boycott Tesco after Muslim features family in Christmas Ad" 13 November.

⁷² Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute (2018). "A review of survey research on Muslims in Britain." Aziz Foundation, Barrow Cadbury Trust, The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and Unbound Philanthropy.

Ipsos MORI also revealed in their report a propensity for Muslim giving reflected in the last section of this report. One in five Muslims have volunteered for charity in the last year and the young (16-24) population is more likely to get out and volunteer. Muslims are also more likely to be involved in community groups than other Britons. A minority of these Muslims partake in religious groups or sporting groups/clubs than greater social organisations.⁷³

Yet the negative images still exist, but British Muslim charities have worked to correct this societal misunderstanding. Two major factors can assist in correcting the idea of British Muslims.

First, British Muslims are a rich and historical component of the British identity. Ipsos MORI in the report, *A Review of Survey Research on Muslims in Britain*⁷⁴ examined how British Muslims responded to the 2011 UK Census question “How would you describe your national identity?” They were allowed to check multiple boxes on this response, but only 23.6% checked Other, indicating a foreign national identity, and 3.6% checked a British identity in combination with a foreign identity. 57.2% checked British only and no other options.⁷⁵ To those who have come to call the UK home, a sense of responsibility for all of the UK’s people as neighbours and members of society follows. The British Muslim community not only exemplifies this in an elegant and innovative way, but does it in the face of adversity.

Examples of how Muslim charities are trying to reframe the narrative on British Muslims as self-interested, or net receiver groups can be seen in the advertisement produced by Penny Appeal in December 2017. The

advert presents an act of everyday kindness showing a young Muslim female sharing a cup of tea and friendship with an elderly woman. Acts which of themselves are small and straightforward but which can make all the difference to social problems such as loneliness and isolation in the elderly population. The advertisement is illustrative of how Muslim charities are trying to prevail over populist perceptions too quick to denounce Muslims as not being ‘like us’.

The integration and relationships currently being fostered are essential to the future of the UK. Its ability to support those who wish to call Britain home will be tested and it is the hard work that British Muslim charities have done and will continue to do in the coming years that will provide a smooth path into the future.

SOCIAL ISSUES IN THE UK

The methods and attention given to the social need of the UK have evolved throughout time, but its existence as a fundamental tenet of how British society grades itself has remained. Just as social needs rank high for the UK, they are fundamental to Islam. Muslims represent a section of our society who not only see the human value of charitable work, but are duty-bound by their religion to disburse charity to all their neighbours. The challenge for Muslims lies in finding ways to fulfil their call to charity within their given society. In British society they can see this through in the daily needs of those who slip through the UK system. The British Muslim population provides a great number of volunteers throughout the year ready to help at any opportunity.

LONG TERM APPROACH TO SOCIAL ILLS

The British Muslim charity network mobilises the talents of its community into giving long term and far reaching options for the plights of society. Beyond this, the network has an innovative spirit, looking across generations and into the more technologically integrated future. This is seen in the app being developed by the MDA for pregnant refugees,⁷⁶ and is seen through adoption and effective use of social media, greater online presence, and development of further uses for technology in the charity sector. The support of youth and students is also empowering the next generation to take the reins of the British Muslim community and continue its progress and integration into a future of greater unity in the UK. This is seen in the initiatives of the IUS and Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association UK as they not only open up to a younger demographic, but set a progressive stage for innovation and creative methods necessary to a struggling charity sector.⁷⁷

SOCIAL INTEGRATION THROUGH INTERFAITH COOPERATION

Other instances of social and political integration that British Muslim charities partake in are less obvious and often contradictory to common assumption. Assumption sometimes leads to the false belief that due to the theological differences between Muslims, Jews, and Christians, these groups with such different religious identities or affiliations could not possibly work with each other. These assumptions could not be further from the truth. In fact, churches, mosques, and

⁷³ Ipsos MORI, 2018, p.49-53.

⁷⁴ Kully-Kaur ballagan, Roger Mortimore and Glenn Gottfried, *A Review of Survey Research on Muslims in Britain*. Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute, 2018.

⁷⁵ Ipsos MORI, 2018, p.34-35.

⁷⁶ Muslim Doctor’s Association Written Submission to APPG on British Muslims, 23 November, 2017.

⁷⁷ Islamic Unity Society Written Submission to the APPG on British Muslims, 22 November, 2017, Farooq Aftab’s Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association UK Written Submission for the APPG on British Muslims 27 September, 2017.

synagogues have worked together to do charitable events on each other's major holidays for several years now. Interestingly, this cooperation of religions provides for a nice spread of holidays amongst each religion so that charity itself almost has a year-round continuity from event to event, decreasing the lag that often occurs between holy holidays on the individual level.

Studies have shown that individuals are more likely to donate to a given charity if they can visualise a real-life beneficiary over figures and reports.⁷⁸ Thus, it is easier for donors to relate

to a narrative that is close to them, such as for someone who comes from a similar ethnic or religious background. The Charity Commission has taken note of the fact that this is made more problematic by the fact that the Trustees of British charities do not reflect the great UK's diversity.⁷⁹ The integration of charitable works among several religious groups in interfaith dialogue allows for a wider, British narrative to rise above and promote donations to come in from a wide variety of backgrounds knowing that they are likely to be helping someone whom they can relate to.

The more people that are involved in these multi-faith charitable events, the more they can break down fear of the other. Mitzvah and Sadaqa Days move from being uniquely Jewish or Muslim to becoming British as they are integrated into the whole of society, especially when all of the UK become the beneficiary of the work and donations collected during these events.⁸⁰ Members of different faiths have even been invited to attend each other's services. For instance, St. Alban's Church invites the Shia Ithna'ashari Community of Middlesex to a midnight mass on Christmas Eve.⁸¹ This extension of an olive branch during one of the churches' most sacred masses is a brilliant display of interfaith realising its greatest potential for community building.

Interfaith cooperation even goes beyond the more focused goal of charitable organisations. The dialogue that occurs during these events, at times even becoming the focus of an event such as a seminar or panel discussion allowing for the community to discuss important topics. Fears and differences are dispelled when members of each religious group come together and become



Penny Appeal and James Caan distribute presents to sick children at Great Ormond Street Hospital in London, photo credit: Penny Appeal

British Muslim Charities Concern for Women and Children

A constantly reoccurring theme in the mission and events held by British Muslim charities revolve around the care for women and children in British communities. A great calling not only from the charity sector, but also in Islam is to empower women in their communities. The National Zakat Foundation, The UK Education and Faith Foundation, Al-Mizan, and Penny Appeal stand out among many other British Muslim

charities that have specific initiatives to support victims of domestic abuse, single mothers living below the poverty line, and support for children in getting supplies for school and warm meals. Major strides seek to keep pregnant women, including refugees, safe during a most vulnerable time. Once a frequent taboo in Muslim communities, the increase in adoption and fostering programmes has also as given rise to great progress in alleviating social care needs facing British children.

78 Martin, Richard and John Randal (2008). "How is donation behaviour affected by the donations of others?" *Journal of Economic Behaviour & Organization*. 67: 228-238.

79 Charities Commission (2017). "Charities must do more to promote diversity on their boards, new research shows." 13 November. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/charities-must-do-more-to-promote-diversity-on-their-boards-new-research-shows>)

80 From testimony delivered by Julie Siddiqi and Laura Marks as evidence to the APPG on British Muslims on 23 November, 2017.

81 Shia Ithna'ashari Community of Middlesex Written Submission to the APPG on British Muslims "SICM Christmas Interfaith Work" 22 November 2017.

one British community. True meanings can have light shed on them about the historical and ethical importance of certain holidays. Religious scriptures can reveal similarities in thought just as easily as misconceptions can be clarified.

The Abraham Initiative was a major project organised by Muslim Aid that spoke on misconceptions of hate in churches and synagogues in London. While the discussions and speaking events can get into deeper theological issues, they also discuss greater issues for the community as a whole.⁸² The Al-Mizan Charitable Trust has held public events on disavowing the myth that the cure for poverty is to simply give everyone a job. In these discussions the British community can gain an understanding of the complexity behind growing social problems such as homelessness and poverty. The work of interfaith events not only widens the scope of many charitable organisations of different religions and backgrounds, but gives a wide platform for various different members of the community to have their voice heard.⁸³ In doing

this, it provides for a much more inclusive platform for a more effective democracy to be at work in the UK.

“People don’t hang out in the same geographical locations,” Julie Siddiqi said when discussing the importance of the UK wide, interfaith woman’s group called Nisa-Nashim. “It’s important to build friendships and bring people together. No one is talking about the difficulties of Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia in each community. To have the big discussion we need to have like on Israeli and Palestine we first need to develop a Jewish/Muslim community. We can’t talk about these issues without understanding. Women will have to do it first.”⁸⁴

BRITISH MUSLIM CHARITIES AS POLITICAL INTEGRATORS

British Muslim charities play a role connecting communities to statutory institutions and advocate on their behalf in policy for a as well as provide a line of communication to local councils. Due to pressures faced by local councils and constraints imposed by budget cuts to local services, the

help British Muslim charities offer stands to assist local cohesion and when it comes to addressing a community’s needs. This can be seen quite effectively in times of great tragedy. The greatest hour for British Muslim charities impact on local cohesion unfortunately came in one of the darkest moments in recent history. The Grenfell Tower fire speaks, in one way, to major failures in regulation that will require foremost effort from both local councils and Parliament itself to ensure that something of that nature does not occur again. In another respect, the fire spoke to a highly effective network that came together to respond to an emergency. The response via the GMRU became a powerful team effort of local councils and Muslim charities to tackle immediate struggles and assist those affected in order to begin the healing process for the community. This was also by no means a moonlighting operation. Through the effort of the GMRU, Muslim charities worked for the victims, acting as a microphone for an otherwise disenfranchised community enabling it to have its voice heard.⁸⁵

Another example of this comes

Youth Engagement in the British Muslim Community

All charitable organisations have a lot to gain in having the foresight to understand youth engagement is essential to continuing the improvement and prosperity of any community. The work of the Islamic Unity Society (IUS) and Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association UK (AMYA) and other organisations that provide scholarships and upward bound opportunities for young people demonstrate the important need to pass the torch to the next generation. The next generation will need to continue the work of deciphering false narratives from reality. Their

growing up with new technology carries with it the hope of an innovating spirit to continue to be reflected in charitable initiatives and acts. British Muslim charities like the IUS in its blood donation campaign and the AMYA in its New Year’s celebration clean-up and ‘green-up’ projects and engagement in food donations and elderly care home visitations are setting up the next generation to understand the variety of forms charitable work can take. In the actions of British Muslim charities, hope for the future remains in the upcoming generations adoption of the passion and vigour the current sector holds for the community.

82 Muslim Aid Written Submission to the APPG on British Muslims 22 November, 2017.

83 Al-Mizan Charitable Trust Annual Report and Accounts 2015-2016.

84 From testimony delivered by Julie Siddiqi and Laura Marks as evidence to the APPG on British Muslims on 23 November, 2017.

85 Grenfell Muslim Response United Report published in October of 2017 by the National Zakat Foundation.

at the mercy of mother nature. Instances of flooding and other damages to major storms are as hard to prepare for as they are to predict. In December 2015, the aftermath of Storm Desmond and Storm Eva resulted in major damage and flooding throughout the UK. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association UK (AMYA) dispatched hundreds of volunteers from throughout the country to put in over 7,000 hours of service to visit over 10,000 homes to check up, assist, and raise spirits during the holiday season throughout, Leeds, York,

Halifax, Keighley, Hebden Bridge, Calderdale and many other small towns and villages.⁸⁶

Cooperation between British Muslim charities and local councils are not limited to emergency relief. Most of the smaller local charities have nurtured a long-lasting partnership with their local officials. The Shia Ithna'ashari Community of Middlesex (SICM) works closely with the council in Harrow to take on the often-forgotten problem of homelessness due to the affluence of the area.⁸⁷ Those partaking

in Mitzvah Day and Sadaqa Day events partnered with local governments throughout the UK to bring awareness to the less fortunate and bridge Muslim populations with their greater communities. The work of British Muslim charities with local government is nicely summed up in the highly symbolic act of peace demonstrated through the Woking Asian Business Forum's gifting of Woking's borough Christmas tree that has continued for the last decade.

The bridge building between local governments and the Muslim

Seasonal Packs by The Al-Mizan Trust

Background: The Al-Mizan Trust takes to heart the problem that one in five people in the UK live below the poverty line, despite the fact that the country is considered one of the wealthier in the world. The Trust not only works to support individual welfare but also to provide services such as offering access to skills and opportunities for people to improve their situation beyond immediate financial support. Al-Mizan focuses on seasonal change as an optimal opportunity to give back to the community during the difficult winter months and with back to school preparations.

Location: Located in London, the Al-Mizan Trust partners with local organisations to assist the homeless in London, Manchester, and Birmingham.

Events: Throughout the year, the Al-Mizan Trust puts together and distributes various packs. During the harsh conditions of the winter months, the Trust puts together its Winter Warmer packs consisting of sleeping bag, warm coat, jumper, hat, scarf, gloves, thermal socks, toiletries, first aid items, and emergency snacks. Each pack is worth approximately fifty pounds and 1,300 of them have been distributed up through 2017. During Mother's Day, the Trust distributes Mother and Baby Kits. These kits consist of sixty pounds worth of nappies, laundry detergent, maternity towels, nappy sacks, baby wipes, bottles, bibs, nappy rash cream, sleepsuits, bodysuits, toys, teether, hat, scratch mitts, nail cutter, muslin cloths, thermometer, hooded towel, changing

mat, blanket, and cotton wool balls. 400 have been distributed. During Back to School season, the Trust distributes Back to School Backpacks loaded with sixty pounds worth of school supplies including a school uniform and book vouchers. 400 of these have been distributed to date.

Goals: Like many British Muslim charitable organisations, and many British charitable organisations in general, the overall goal is to end homelessness. This is a task for which merely raising funds will not provide the solution. The Al-Mizan Trust aims to help people not only get through the rough times, but gain access to upward bound options. The seasonal assisting packs begin by offering the everyday essentials for some of the most vulnerable in British society.

Future: The seasonal packs are just a starting point for the overall vision of the Al-Mizan Trust. They also provide welfare grants and through a partnership with the Beta Charitable Trust, Islamic Unity Society, and the Salaam Centre have formed the Sufra NW London food bank and kitchen in Brent. Beyond aid, the Trust has put together various community discussions that strike at the roots of the problems of poverty and homelessness bringing a consciousness of the greater problem into the public eye. As the seasonal packs expect to grow and increase throughout the UK, they also seek to bring greater cultural awareness to the troubles of the less fortunate and to change the system so that such staggering statistics as the one in five Britons living below the poverty line can be decreased, if not entirely overcome.

⁸⁶ Farooq Aftab's Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association UK Written Submission for the APPG on British Muslims 27 September, 2017.

⁸⁷ Shia Ithna'ashari Community of Middlesex Written Submission to the APPG on British Muslims "SICM Christmas Interfaith Work" 22 November 2017.

community through charities is also enriched by conservation initiatives of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association (AMYA). AMYA of Milton Keynes takes on street and park cleaning projects in Stanton Low Park and Oakridge Park.⁸⁸

The AMYA had similar work in Sheffield planting trees for peace in 2015 in response to the Paris terror attacks that year.⁸⁹ These projects unite the community to help local councils to truly give back to their community in a way that manifests itself as a physical bettering of their local environments. The collaboration that young Muslims have with their councils and community through the AMYA also works as interfaith with the joining in of local Jewish and other faith based organisations to clean-up and 'green-up' the UK.⁹⁰

While local work is the major focus for both the small Muslim charities and even in how many of the larger charities operate, their integral work often works its way up to providing a microphone for the community to the Mayor of London, MPs and even the Prime Minister. Several MPs have attended Mitzvah and Sadaqa Day events giving Parliament itself a sense of the power interfaith work has on bringing the community together.⁹¹ Penny Appeal sponsored Mayor Sadiq Khan's open-air Eid Festival celebration in Trafalgar Square.⁹² The Warm Hearts Winter Appeal, organized by Muslim Aid, worked specifically to answer former Prime Minister David Cameron's call to address homelessness in the UK.⁹³ The major emphasis on ending homelessness pushed by

many of the organisations covered in this report speaks to past and present government leaders throughout the world and the increasingly global call to end this pariah on society at all levels.

BRITISH MUSLIM CHARITIES AS GLOBAL DIPLOMATS

As demonstrated by Mayor Sadiq Khan's travels to Pakistan and India, the British Muslim community not only plays a key role in integration within the UK, but also of the UK with other communities around the world. Recognition of the profound role British Muslim charities play in international cooperation is essential to sustained improvement of the world around the UK. The larger charities such as Penny Appeal not only oversee the helping of the less fortunate within the British community, but also those neighbours facing hardships across the world. The bridging of the local with the global is seen best in how the refugee crisis is addressed.

British Muslim charities have been supplying the first welcoming hand to refugees looking to become a part of the British community. From the specialised charitable organisations offering medical and business consultation to the youth driven groups and other traditional British Muslim charities warm meals, integral advice, and apps are creating an avenue from some of the most dangerous locations to a warm home in the UK. The work done by these organisations strengthens the UK both in enriching its community and history and in building bridges not only within

but outward to other parts of the world.

As the UK prepares for post-Brexit trade and international relations, the Commonwealth appears to be growing as an area of future interest.⁹⁴ The ties between Britain and the Commonwealth will be a focus of future affairs and those historic connections are most readily seen in the families of immigrants from those countries. British Muslims hold deep ties to the people of the Commonwealth given their countries of origin being among such Member states as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Malaysia, and Nigeria, among others. British Muslim charitable organisations not only stand as diplomats to the people of the Commonwealth through their ethnic connections, but also in their ongoing charity programmes abroad. British Muslim charities play a major role in serving as global diplomats dispensing humanitarian aid around the world.

British Muslim charities have made for themselves an essential cog in the complex machine of social and political integration in the UK through their dedication to larger British issues, development of interfaith bonds, and bringing together the people and their governments, local and national. There is a further asset at work that stands as reinforcement and it exists in smaller endeavours that carry large weight in the public eye. All of the philanthropic events held by charities large and small that challenge misconceptions of Muslims or promote their skills and talents repaint a vibrant picture of British Muslims. In this, British Muslim charities are

88 Milton Keynes Citizen (2017) "Muslim Youth Association members take part in Milton Keynes parks clean up" 06 March. (<https://www.miltonkeynes.co.uk/news/muslim-youth-association-members-take-part-in-milton-keynes-parks-clean-up-1-7851864>)

89 Muslims for Humanity (2015). "100s of Muslims Unite with Community to Plant Trees for Peace" (<http://www.muslimsforhumanity.org.uk/2015/11/100s-muslims-unite-community-plant-trees-peace/>)

90 Muslims for Humanity (2015). "100s of Muslims Unite with Community to Plant Trees for Peace" (<http://www.muslimsforhumanity.org.uk/2015/11/100s-muslims-unite-community-plant-trees-peace/>)

91 Sadaqa Day 2016 Report.

92 "Penny Appeal at Home" Penny Appeal UK Programmes Report 2016.

93 Muslim Aid Written Submission to the APPG on British Muslims 22 November, 2017.

94 Blitz, James (2018). "Brexiters Focus on the Commonwealth Factor" Financial Times. 14 February.

a vital asset for British Muslims, and wider society illustrating the best of what British Muslims have to offer to their country and to disadvantaged communities around the world.

The UK owes an enormous debt to the tremendous work of British Muslim charities. Many of the charities discussed in this report have managed to persevere despite facing multiple adversities. The innumerable hurdles that stand against any charity are multiplied for British Muslim charities and it ought to be a more focused goal of the Government and the charity regulator to address obstacles and hurdles faced by British Muslim charities so they all can work together to pursue common goals.



Penny Appeal's Christmas advertisement, December 2017.

Section 4: Obstacles and Barriers to British Muslim Charities

The challenges that face British Muslim charities come in two major varieties, those faced by any organisation operating in the charity sector, and those that come about through targeting by false stereotypes and public opinion on social and political matters. A difficulty that arose in compiling the obstacles and barriers for this report lies in the fact that many of the charities represented here do not report them. The large charities that produce annual reports have a section towards the end that spells out challenges faced and future outlook, but this is almost non-existent in the small organisations that do not produce regular reports. It can be a key piece to growth and progress of an organisation to consider obstacles and barriers encountered year by year to assist with improvements. It is a recommendation of this report that more charitable organisations take the time to think about the challenges they face. This line of thought is not only beneficial to the organisations themselves, but also towards working with other partners, governments, and the people to seek out effective solutions.

OPERATIONAL BARRIERS IN THE CHARITY SECTOR

The first obstacles and barriers stated by the British Muslim charities who have reported them are fairly consistent across the board. A common theme emerges from the challenges of increasing numbers of applications for aid and maintaining a steadily growing capacity both for donations and distribution. Often staffing capabilities are the major

limiting factor here. Does a given organisation have not only the right amount of people, but the right people with the skill set for effectively evaluating the needs of individuals and to properly dispense the aid in the most effective ways for the greatest benefit to the given community? The organisational infrastructure must also be appropriate for reaching out to and being able to maintain inflow from various donors and to continue partnering cooperation. Capacity also speaks to the charities that provide shelters and space for distribution of meals or care packages. As word spreads and a charity gathers more resources, this does not necessarily mean a given organisation has greater space to handle the growth potential it has before it.

Money is always a key challenge to charitable organisations. Many of the representatives who attended the evidence hearings of the APPG on the 22 and 23 of November 2017 showed a flexibility towards being able to skilfully adapt to keep a charity afloat. Certain costs are hard to avoid. Talat Shaykh with Palmers Green Mosque is run totally by volunteers and his budget only accounts for routine maintenance on their one (looking towards a second) ambulance and the medical supplies to equip it. It costs approximately £20,000-30,000 to maintain each ambulance for their mobile clinic. He also spoke of desiring to give out flu jabs, but at bulk they cost £2.95 each and has not been able to get donations from the NHS at the time of this report's writing.⁹⁵

These challenges are not new to the charity sector, but do speak to a larger tension that must not go unaddressed. This is the tension

between having a large and affluent charitable organisation, but staying true to the local community and local needs. Some charities must remain relatively small to accommodate for this. Donors themselves often desire their donations to be directed to their near neighbours. The larger an organisation gets, the greater the chance that it loses its local connection to the people. Penny Appeal has an interesting solution for this by having a policy, that for each of their international initiatives they will maintain a sister initiative in the UK.⁹⁶

Essential to any successful charity is conveying confidence and certainty about where and how donations are utilised by the organisation. British Muslims have a bit of an upper hand here as such important sources of philanthropy found in Zakat are not only at the oversight of the donor, but of stringent theological regulation as well. Unfortunately, poor narratives constructed through the uncertainty of this age of terrorism have magnified the focus regulatory bodies such as the Charity Commission has placed on British Muslim charities. Because of this, numerous Muslim non-profits have been forced to keep very good records and self-auditing is done on a highly regular basis.

NARRATIVE AND LEGISLATIVE CLIMATE CHALLENGES TO BRITISH MUSLIM CHARITIES

The blind throwing of money at a problem is not often a proper solution and would not require a third party charity to see through. Those in need must be identified. Is it a warm meal they need, a shelter, or protection from abuse,

⁹⁵ Quote from testimony delivered by Shaykh Talat as evidence to the APPG on British Muslims during on 22 November, 2017.

⁹⁶ From testimony delivered by Dr. Bilal Hassam with Penny Appeal as evidence to the APPG on British Muslims on 22 November, 2017.

or simply a chance to succeed. Maybe it is simply more knowledge of options or an opportunity to make sure they are in good health. Too often narrative is co-opted to denounce the very act of charity. The story is sometimes miscast as a false truth deeming the poor too idle, addicted to harmful substances or having made a series of bad choices.

The narrative towards British Muslim charities themselves is troubling. It begins with misconceptions of Islam and Muslims. The belief that Muslims only care for their own kind and thus only support Muslim countries abroad over the UK is inaccurate and at sharp odds with the increasing focus on projects in the UK. The false claims that Muslims want to 'ban' Christian holidays or 'Islamise' Britain. Written here they seem out dated and ridiculous which makes their appearance in news stories all the more problematic.

Over the last eighteen years, a raft of legislation has added to the statute books since the 2000 Terrorism Act, including the Antiterrorism, Crime and Security Act of 2001, the Terrorism Act of 2006, the Counter Terrorism Act of 2008, Terrorist Asset Freezing etc. Act of 2010, Terrorism Prevention and Investigations Measures Act 2011, Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, and Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. In the interest of national security, the legislative measures have created an incriminating generalisation about organisations working with or in any states that have become home to terrorist organisations and make for a very difficult climate for British Muslim charities to operate within especially when their work takes them into conflict zones or failed or weak states.

The Charities Protection Bill is an example of legislation designed to protect the charitable sector (England and Wales) from terrorist abuse. A Home Office consultation document in 2007 stated: *"while the scale of terrorist links to charitable activity is extremely small, in comparison to the size of the charitable sector, the scope for exploitation of charities by terrorists could become a significant aspect of the terrorist finance threat without appropriate and coordinated action now by the sector, regulator and government"*.⁹⁷ To counter this, the Charity Commission has been granted a bigger budget and greater powers including the power to disqualify individuals it considers unfit to be trustees.

Increased legislation has created greater levels of vigilance within the way Muslim charities operate. This includes internal tightening up of procedures, regular internal reviews, rigorously assessing risks, and meticulously planning operations, to list a few. However, what can feel like 'intense scrutiny', has resulted in Muslim charities having to expend additional time and resources defending the legitimacy of its humanitarian work.

A second factor in the area of counter-terrorism measures within the charity sector and effects on Muslim charities is the phenomenon of 'de-risking' resulting in charity organisations being denied banking facilities or having their banks accounts shut down. In the last five years, a number of banks, including HSBC and NatWest, have closed accounts, and blocked or delayed funds or transfers from accounts held by UK registered charities, and INGOs. In most cases no detailed explanation has been provided to explain the bank's

decision, although there is a widespread assumption that these actions stem from banks' concerns about risks relating to the financing of terrorism and the adoption of risk averse measures when it comes to handling requests from British Muslim charities.

As result of the above factors, the work of charities is being negatively affected. British Muslim INGOs have asserted that they are disproportionately affected, even actively discriminated against, by counter-terrorism measures.

The National Risk Assessment (NRA) report looked into money laundering and potential terrorist financing coming from the UK in 2017. They recognised that a small number of cases specifically of non-profit organisations in the charity sector showed instances that could link between abuse used to fund global terrorism. Overall based on their 2015 assessment the risk for this abuse was found to be low. In the 2017 report, raises issues such as heightened oversight and specific risks faced by the sub sector of charities that work directly in areas that are deemed at high risk (e.g. Iraq and Syria).⁹⁸

The fear of potential terror financing has led to many drastic moves against Muslim charities in recent times. In 2014, The Department for Communities and Local Government withdrew an estimated £140,000 from member organisations of the Muslim Charities Forum.⁹⁹ HSBC has shut down bank accounts of Muslim charities including one of the largest, Islamic Relief, due to new 'de-risk' measures whereby Muslim charities fall beyond the bank's 'risk appetite'.¹⁰⁰

The Charity Commission must straddle a difficult line between

97 Home Office (2007) 'Review of Safeguards To Protect the Charitable Sector (England and Wales) from Terrorist Abuse: A Consultation Document', May. p 3

98 "National risk assessment of money laundering and terrorist financing 2017" HM Treasury. Home Office. October (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/655198/National_risk_assessment_of_money_laundersing_and_terrorist_financing_2017_pdf_web.pdf)

99 James, Sam Burne (2014). "DCLG withdraws £140,000 funding from Muslim Charities Forum" Third Sector. 23 December. (<https://www.thirdsector.co.uk/dclg-withdraws-140000-funding-muslim-charities-forum/policy-and-politics/article/1327607>)

100 Gader, Dipesh (2016). "Terror fear makes HSBC cut ties to Muslim charity" The Times. 03 January. (<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/terror-fear-makes-hsbc-cut-ties-to-muslim-charity-fgm5d796mlr>)

being the regulator of charities responsible to Parliament and to assure smooth activity in the sector, maintaining the integrity of charity organisations and confidence in the sector. In 2017, the Charity Commission released two reports of charities that breached the requirements of the recent anti-terror legislation. The report was intended to be a warning to organisations in the sector that the Commission would be taking a harsher stance on charity operations.¹⁰¹

To verify the importance of recognizing these false narratives and removing them from the political process, consider the investigations by the Charity Commission on potential risks and abuse of the sector for terrorism financing. In 2015, the former chair of the Charity Commission, William Shawcross stated a concern that charity fundraising was being abused to fund terrorism abroad, particularly through funding collected to help those at risk as a result of the conflict in Syria. This started a trend of news articles, headlines, and reports stating that terrorist funding through the charity sector was occurring at record rates throughout the UK. Though a report by Claystone revealed that no empirical evidence was found to support such claims¹⁰², a great deal of damage had been done to the reputation of British Muslim charities. The chief executive of the Charity Finance Group, Caron Bradshaw said “It’s wrong to paint the sector as a hotbed

of Islamic extremism.”¹⁰³

Sir Stephen Bubb, the former Chief Executive of the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations (ACEVO), has criticised the Charity Commission, under the leadership of William Shawcross, the outgoing chair, for its “overemphasis on ‘Islamist abuse’” and for launching a disproportionate number of statutory inquiries into Muslim charities.¹⁰⁴

The harm to the greater charity

“It’s wrong to paint the sector as a hotbed of Islamic extremism.”

sector will take time to undo and there is much work that needs to be done by the Charity Commission to regain the confidence of the British Muslim charities in particular.

Many have call for a clearing up of these misunderstandings and the opening up of a dialogue between the British Muslim Charities, the Charities Commission, and Parliament.^{105 106} A report by Chatham House calls for the UK government to take ownership on helping to guide charities through the perilous environment of counter-terrorism legislation and to clear up the ambiguities that lie within and stand against the creation of double standards or unfair conditions for Muslim charities.¹⁰⁷

Recent history has potentially set up a major backlash for charitable

work throughout the UK. It is of the utmost importance that the Charity Commission be seen to be operating impartially, fairly and rigorously to maintain and defend the good name of British charities, including British Muslim charities. A loss of confidence in the charity sector stands to undo the tremendous good work done by charities, large and small, in the UK.

This hostile environment stands to undermine the vast contribution British Muslim charities make towards cohesive communities. A more robust charity sector is in the interests of all working in the sector and all those who rely upon their vital work.

101 The Charity Commission (2017). “Regulator publishes reports of cases involving individuals convicted of terrorism offences” 16 October. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/regulator-publishes-reports-of-cases-involving-individuals-convicted-of-terrorism-offences>)

102 Claystone’s report scrutinized eighty-six charities, thirty-seven of which raised funds to support victims of the crisis in Syria and found “no empirical evidence” to support that British Muslim charities were contributing to terrorism or extremism. The report recommends a reflection on what drove the chair and the commission to make the claims it did and commented on the long road ahead for the Charities Commission to make things right and restore the sector’s confidence in the regulatory body. The full report was produced by Adam Belaon titled “Muslim Charities: A Suspect Sector” Claystone, November 2014.

103 Belaon, Adam (2014). “Muslim Charities: A Suspect Sector” Claystone.

104 ‘Sir Stephen Bubb says Charity Commission has ‘disproportionate focus’ on Islamic extremism’, Third Sector, 20 November 2015. <https://www.thirdsector.co.uk/sir-stephen-bubb-says-charity-commission-disproportionate-focus-islamic-extremism/governance/article/1373704>

105 Metcalfe-Hough, Tom Keatinge, and Sara Pantuliano (2015). “UK humanitarian aid in the age of counterterrorism: perceptions and reality” ODI. March (<https://www.odi.org/publications/9301-uk-humanitarian-aid-age-counterterrorism-perceptions-and-reality>)

106 Kroessin, Mohammed (2007). “Islamic Charities and the War on Terror: Dispelling the myths” Humanitarian Practice Network. July. (<https://odihpn.org/magazine/islamic-charities-and-the-war-on-terror-dispelling-the-myths/>)

107 Keatinge, Tom and Florence Keen (2017) “Humanitarian Action and Non-state Armed Groups: The Impact of Banking Restrictions on UK NGOs” Chatham House. International Security Office and International Law Programme. April.

Section 5: Looking Towards the Future

The work of charity is always ongoing. Social media is alive with hashtags spreading the word of charitable campaigns. This is seen in Islamic Relief's #HonourHer campaign that is raising money to end violence against women and girls.¹⁰⁸ The National Zakat Foundation used #VisitMyMosque to promote the open house visitation of over 200 mosques throughout the UK to all on 18 February. In a poll commissioned by the Muslim Council of Britain to coincide with Visit My Mosque Day in 2018, 90% of Britons admitted to never having been in a mosque.¹⁰⁹ This day hopes to change that number while also opening up dialogue for interfaith

and to dispel false narratives. Islamic Relief put on the first UK Interfaith Charity Shop bringing together Britons of different faith backgrounds to donate items for the benefit of others. The Jewish charity Norwood, the London Buddhist Centre and Spitalfields Crypt Trust collaborated in this endeavour.¹¹⁰

From 15 May to 14 June 2018 is the holy month of Ramadan. In 2016, the Charity Commission anticipated that British Muslims would raise £100million in that one month alone.¹¹¹ The Commission estimated that during the month that nearly £38 per second were donated. This amounts to £371 per person in a year.¹¹² Various appeals go out during the month and feature prominently on the

websites of such British Muslim charities as the National Zakat Foundation, Islamic Relief, and Muslim Aid to name a few. This year, as with every other, British Muslim charities will look to build upon the vast sums raised during Ramadan. The concentration of charity giving in the month of Ramadan will be felt throughout the year and in communities across Britain. British Muslims can take pride in fulfilling a fundamental pillar of faith while simultaneously contributing to the development and growth of Muslim organisations which reminds us all of the benevolence of charity towards our fellow man.



Photo credit: NW Sufra.

108 Islamic Relief. "Will You Honour Her?" campaign found at <https://action.islamic-relief.org.uk/page/22062/data/1>

109 National Zakat Foundation. "Record numbers at Visit My Mosque day 2018" campaign found at <https://www.nzf.org.uk/blog/record-numbers-at-visit-my-mosque-day-2018/>

110 Islamic Relief. "Islamic Relief forms part of the UK's first interfaith charity shop at Selfridges by Artangel and Miranda July" found at <https://www.islamic-relief.org.uk/islamic-relief-forms-part-uks-first-interfaith-charity-shop-selfridges-artangel-miranda-july/>

111 May, Melanie (2017). "Ramadan Fundraising Appeals Round-up for 2017" UK Fundraising. 1 June. (<http://fundraising.co.uk/2017/06/01/ramadan-fundraising-appeals-round-2017/#.WsrdrIjwbIU>)

112 Staufenberg, Jess (2016). "Charity Commission hails 'sheer scale' of fundraising by British Muslims during Ramadan" The Independent. 22 July.

Section 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

This report has highlighted the immense amount of work, hours, and giving to the United Kingdom's communities, large and small, and show the impact, social and political integration, and overcoming of various hardships by British Muslim charities. At the end of the day, they are equally British and Muslim and not only a prized addition to the UK's charity sector, but an essential piece to the greater British community. Recent global events and the besmirching narratives provided by both the media and politicians has sought to alienate Muslims in the UK. But they have persevered and continued to give and work for their fellow British neighbours. The work they have done in recent years has provided a model that the rest of Britain and the world should take a page from in empowering its populations, applying the changes of the times and technology, and in building bridges through dialogue between various different groups.

SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS:

1 British Muslim charities are increasingly meeting the needs of British communities in a myriad of ways, from emergency and disaster relief to addressing the social needs of disadvantaged groups. Recognition of British Muslim charitable contributions could be assisted by charities producing reports specifically for their UK donor base highlighting investments and activities in the UK by programme sector, spend and impact.

2 Monitoring and evaluation of charitable contributions should be an essential part of the work of Muslim charities to retain the confidence of donors and to allow for the assessment and verification of impact claims. An improvement in the recording and monitoring of impact would greatly assist the sector's understanding of the demonstrable value of its work and enhance recognition of these interventions in wider society.

3 Volunteering is a core component of all charities but especially in the sustainability of smaller charities which may, in some cases, rely wholly or substantially on volunteer hours to function. Documenting volunteer hours in programme records should be encouraged to give due regard to factors which possess an economic value but are

not incorporated in budgeting of economic cost.

4 Recent scandals involving sexual misconduct in major British charities has highlighted the particular dangers arising from the disproportionate focus on Muslim charities to the neglect of the sector as a whole. The Charity Commission plays a vital role in maintaining the integrity of the charitable sector, donor confidence in charity institutions and compliance with regulatory frameworks and the criminal law. Criticisms by British Muslim charities of unwarranted claims about terrorism financing risks to the sector and undue attention by the regulator is a serious cause for concern. We recommend a confidence building exercise by the Commission and a regular dialogue with British Muslim charities to dispel perceptions of bias or discrimination and build strong relationships for the future. The recent appointment of Baroness Stowell as chair of the Charity Commission presents an opportunity to usher in a new era of engagement and collaboration.

5 Testimony and submissions to the APPG presents good evidence of how adept Muslim charities have become at mobilising effectively in response to domestic crises and major incidents. The Grenfell

Muslim Response Unit is a notable and exemplary case. We recommend further examination of assets, strategic planning and contingency planning to continue to build on the capacity of Muslim charities to respond to crisis situations affecting communities in the UK. The lessons learnt from the GMRU should be captured for future planning.

6 The growing evidence of a new way of thinking about disbursing charity in the UK to improve the conditions of British Muslim communities and British society is highly commendable and we strongly welcome developments in this area. We recognise, however, the tentative nature of progress in sections of the Muslim charitable sector in this regard and strongly encourage a broader dialogue through, for example, the facilitation of key stakeholder engagement and the establishment of project advisory groups, to support and inform these developments.

7 Much of the evidence presented to us has left us acutely aware of how Muslim charities are broadening their focus to adopt programmes in the UK. From prisoner rehabilitation projects to women's empowerment and social action initiatives, these programmes show an growing interest in doing charity 'at home' within Muslim communities and

in wider British society. These endeavours are encouraging steps for the future of Muslim charities and British Muslim communities. We would welcome consideration by Muslim charities of a more systematised approach to their UK projects through creation of structures dedicated to UK programme planning and delivery.

8 It is our view that public understanding of the vital work done by British Muslim charities in the UK is weak. This appears to stem from ad hoc media reporting of their work and the narrow scope of information dissemination by Muslim charities. British Muslim charities have the potential to play a very useful and valuable role in

bettering community relations and tackling negative media stereotypes of Islam and British Muslim communities. To achieve this, they require a more developed PR and communications strategy and we highly recommend Muslim charities to further consider steps in this area for individual and collective benefit.



Photo credit: NW Suфра.

Acknowledgements

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Mohamed Mishal Mohamed, Al-Mizan Charitable Trust; Iqbal Nasim, National Zakat Foundation; Osman Gondal, InTouch Foundation; Zain Miah, Grenfell Muslim Response Unit; Laura Marks OBE, Mitzvah Day and Nisa-Nashim; Dr Hanan Chehata, Children of Adam Soup Kitchen; Mustafa Field MBE, The Big Iftar; and, Julie Siddiqi, Sadaqa Day and Nisa-Nashim.

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The APPG pays tribute to the thousands more faith-based charities, volunteer groups and community organisations in the UK who deliver invaluable charitable services in Britain.

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The views and conclusions expressed in this report, unless expressly attributed to other individuals or organisations, are those of the Officers and the Secretariat of the APPG. The APPG takes full responsibility for its conclusions and analysis.

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Appendix 1

Witnesses and Formal Minutes

The following witnesses gave oral evidence to the inquiry:

Wednesday 22 November 2017

Ali Khimji, Director & Operations Manager and Mohamed Mishal Mohamed, Al-Mizan Charitable Trust

Nasim Ashraf, Chair, UKEFF UK Education & Faith Foundation

Shaykh Talat, Chairman and Trustee & Dr A Samad Billoo, MCEC Palmers Green Mosque

Mustafa Khan, Coordinator, IUS Imam Hussain Blood Donation Campaign

Mr Rafi Bhatti, Ahmadiyya Muslim Community UK

Dr. Bilal Hassam, Penny Appeal

Thursday 23 November 2017

Iqbal Nasim, Chief Executive, National Zakat Foundation

Zain Miah, Grenfell Muslim Response Unit & Project Manager, National Zakat Foundation

Dr Hina Shahid GP, Chair, Muslim Doctors Association

Julie Siddiqi, Founder of Sadaqa Day & Co-chair Nisa-Nashim

Laura Marks, Founder of Mitzvah Day & Co-chair Nisa-Nashim

Osman Gondal, Founder & Board Member, InTouch Foundation

Mustafa Field MBE, Co- founder, The Big Iftar

Appendix 2

Written Evidence

The following individuals and organisations sent written evidence to the inquiry:

Fareed Ahmad, National Secretary External Affairs, Ahmadiyya Muslim Community UK	Laura Marks, Founder of Mitzvah Day & Co-chair Nisa Nasim
Ali Khimji, Operations Manager, Al-Mizan Charitable Trust	Dr Hina Shahid GP, Chair, Muslim Doctors Association
Dr Abida Malik, Director of Research, The Bridge Institute	Lotifa Begum, Global Advocacy Coordinator, Muslim Aid
Dr Hanan Chehata, Founder, Children of Adam	Muslim Hands
Samra Said, UK Programmes Manager, Human Appeal	Iqbal Nasim, Chief Executive, National Zakat Foundation
Mustafa Khan, Coordinator, IUS Imam Hussain Blood Donation Campaign	Zain Miah, Grenfell Muslim Response Unit & Project Manager, National Zakat Foundation
Osman Gondal, Founder & Board Member, InTouch Foundation	Harris Iqbal, Head of Programmes & Dr. Bilal Hassam, Penny Appeal
Nasim Ashraf, Chair, UKEFF UK Education & Faith Foundation	Shia Ithna'ashari Community of Middlesex (SICM)
Shaykh Talat, Chairman and Trustee, MCEC Palmers Green Mosque	Mustafa Field MBE, Co- founder, The Big Iftar
Julie Siddiqi, Founder of Sadaqa Day & Co-chair Nisa Nashim	Woking Shah Jahan Mosque
	Muslim Aid

Health

Blood Donation



IUS Imam Hussain Blood Donation Campaign

All from one charitable service provider

720

blood donations in 2016

Equivalent to

2,160

Adults



5,040

Children

Since 2006: Total Donations - 3,408
Equivalent to: 10,224 adults & 23,856 infants

32%

Expected increase in
blood donations 2017

Clinical Support

Muslim Doctors Association 2015 - 2016

In the last 2 years delivered free health checks, advice and life support training in the UK.

500

People were provided free health checks

1000

People were provided free health advice

The Muslim Doctors' Association is currently working on a smartphone app to improve access to high quality antenatal care for pregnant refugee women

Palmer's Green Mosque

Aim to provide care for people with no fixed abode, who would otherwise find it difficult to access NHS.

Invested in an Ambulance
Yearly cost of Ambulance: up to £30K

Extensive clinical volunteer base of over 300 clinicians

Voluntary team includes:
Paramedics
General Practitioners / Hospital Doctors
Nurses
Pharmacists
Emergency Responders

Grenfell Tower Response

Grenfell Muslim Response Unit



Over 400

Assisted



Over £140,000 Financial assistance was provided.

Over 3,000 hot meals were served.

Over 1,000 emergency calls were taken.

Over 30 people were provided emergency shelter.

Lead almost 50 funeral services.

Team Orange

Penny appeal were one of the first charities on the ground to support the victims and families affected by the Grenfell Tower.

Over two consecutive days at the Westway Trust' Sports and Fitness Centre, which was quickly established as a refuge, information hub and volunteer centre in collaboration with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Everyone Active, British Red Cross, among others.

Provided

Over 300

Hot Meals

Over 100

Large Blankets

Over 250

Food Parcels

Muslim Aid

Over £177,000

was raised by Muslim Aid in response to the Grenfell Tower Fire

Distributions Towards

Immediate Cash Assistance

Food Provisions

Resettlement Support

Funeral Services

Following consultation with various stakeholders, the project is now hosted by the National Zakat Foundation and is now funded by four amazing charities, NZF itself, Islamic Relief Aid, all of whom are committed to the vision of GMRU.

Homelessness

Total Assisted

Over 300,000

People

16%

Increase in homelessness across the UK since 2016

Overall Food Distribution

Over 300,000

Food packs / Hot meals

InTouch Foundation Provided

200k

Meals

500k

Drinks

Almost 6,000

Winter Warmer packs,
Provided by Al-Mizan Trust,
Muslim Aid and Penny Appeal

National Zakat Foundation
Donation for supported housing

Over 350k

Human Appeal

Partnered with One Roof Leicester to pilot a multi-faith night shelter project that rotates around seven places of worship, for ten rough sleepers each night.

Prisoners

Prisoner Rehabilitation Project

234% Increase in Muslim prison population 1997 - 2015

Muslim Aid aims to reduce the re-offending rate through structured mentoring and opportunity placements utilising trained and skilled volunteers.

To date, 170 mentors have been recruited and referred to prison chaplains for training and pairing, and the expenditure on the project has almost reached £50,000.

General Welfare Fund

Al-Mizan Trust awards grants to meet recipients' individual needs. Prisoners are but one beneficiary.

Grant Size

£50+
Small

£200+
Medium

£500+
Large

Grants Provided

Over 200

2014 - 2015
Funded Applicants

Social Support

Food Banks

Al-Mizan Trust Partnered with: Beta Charitable Trust, Islamic Unity Society & Salam Centre to create Sufra NW London

Over £100,000

Invested in core costs

Over 14,000

People provided food aid over 4 years

Muslim Aid

Collaborated with Sufra NW London. They also provided hot meals to the elderly & the homeless.

Projected that 250 vulnerable people will benefit from the initiative

Aims to reduce street homelessness by 50% among service users

Salma: Food Bank
Provided food to 7,000 people

Food item donation
Open door policy
Warehouse open Mon-Fri

Human Appeal

Deaf world project

60

Hard of hearing young people support

Manchester Arena Attack

22
Victims Supported

Over £25,000
Raised

Total Donation 2016

Over £19.2m

Women & Children

Housing

National Zakat Foundation of the total Zakat distributed

Almost

25% - 35%

Went towards women projects such as housing services

27

beds were also provided for vulnerable women

UKEFF 2016

Over £17,000

Was provided for income loss and temporary relocation, victims of abuse, women groups, young children.

Al-Mizan Trust

400

Provided mother & baby kits

400

Back to school backpacks

2014 - 2015

Approx 45.4%

of the general welfare fund was awarded to women & children

Adoption & Fostering Programme

Penny Appeal

Held over 30 adoption & fostering events

Cost:

£100,000

Over 300

Adoption & Fostering applications assessed

Over 40

Applications provided to service users

Cost:

£250,000

(Supported by DFE)



All Party Parliamentary Group
on British Muslims