

A young boy with dark hair, wearing a red hoodie with "AIR NIKE" printed on it and black pants, stands in the center of the frame. He is holding a white and purple bag that also features the Islamic Relief logo. The background shows a rocky, mountainous landscape with a partially destroyed stone building and a few other people in the distance. The sky is clear and blue.

MOROCCO'S AL HAOUZ EARTHQUAKE: 8 MONTHS ON

MOROCCO STRUCK BY HISTORIC DISASTER

On the night of 8 September, 2023, a massive 6.8 magnitude earthquake struck central Morocco, killing families in their beds and flattening whole villages. Just 19 minutes later, a powerful aftershock shook survivors. In the following hours and days, hundreds more tremors were felt from Marrakech to Casablanca.

People searched for loved ones in the rubble of ruined homes. In many isolated mountain communities in the High Atlas mountains, the epicentre of the disaster, they faced an agonising wait for help as blocked roads, large distances, and landslides hampered rescue and relief efforts. In villages, towns and cities across the region, terrified and traumatised families spent nights sleeping out in the open, too afraid to seek shelter.

The most destructive quake to strike Morocco in decades, the Al Haouz earthquake left shattered communities facing a long and difficult road to recovery and healing, particularly in remote areas.



“Our home collapsed,” says Hamid, describing the moment disaster struck his village, Douar As-Salam. **“Some among us were fortunate to be rescued from beneath the rubble. The aftermath has been nothing short of devastating, with all our possessions irreparably damaged. The unforgiving cold now chills our makeshift tents, adding another layer of hardship. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to those who have come forward to lend a helping hand in our time of need.”**



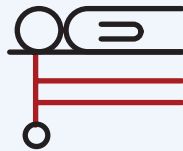
Islamic Relief's Hassaan Ghani Sheikh views the rubble of ruined homes in Tagadir village, Chichaoua, Morocco

Cover: A young boy surrounded by rubble in Al Haouz, Morocco, the epicentre of the earthquake. He is carrying winter survival items provided by Islamic Relief's Warm Me Up project, which distributed hundreds of food packs, blankets, mattresses, and heaters

Lives and communities devastated



The most powerful
quake to hit Morocco in
60 YEARS



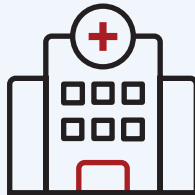
Nearly **3,000**
people died, and
thousands more injured



Close to **19,000**
homes destroyed and
60,000 others damaged



More than **580**
schools flattened and
5,600 damaged



Hospitals and historic
sites **DAMAGED** or
DESTROYED



More than
500,000
individuals displaced



Over **2.8 MILLION**
people affected, including
100,000 children

OUR IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

Within hours of the disaster, Islamic Relief launched a £10 million appeal to assist survivors. As our incredible family of supporters around the world rallied to help, we sent an emergency team to Morocco to support relief efforts and assess how we could best help survivors.

Within days, we began distributing desperately needed survival items, working with local partners Al Mobadara Association and At Tawassol. Over the next 12 weeks, we distributed 2,600 mattresses, more than 3,400 blankets, and warm clothing to help people exposed to the harsh winter weather. The more than 2,400 hygiene kits we provided helped combat the rise of waterborne disease. By the end of December, we had reached more than 7,500 people.



“The humanitarian needs here in Morocco are enormous and there is much to do to help communities to recover. With a disaster of this scale, in which so many have lost so much, the challenges can be daunting. But the incredible, strong people we have met in Morocco are inspiring - making us even more determined to work together with our local partners to do everything possible to support them.”

Ghassen Alimi, Islamic Relief’s Head of Mission in Morocco



Women in Al Haouz with essential items provided by Islamic Relief

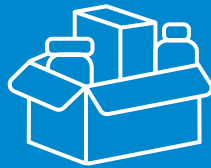
Our response in numbers

NEARLY 45,900 PEOPLE

reached by our extensive response, which has:



Completed
9 humanitarian
projects



Given nearly
3,100 food packs
to survivors



Distributed
more than **6,200**
mattresses



Provided over
7,000 blankets
and **200** pillows



Given out
over **9,400**
hygiene kits



Provided over
11,600 winter
survival kits



Installed **20**
pre-fabricated
homes



Built **2**
pre-fabricated
schools



Fitted **2**
latrines



REACHED MORE THAN

100 VILLAGES

CURRENT HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

Eight months on from the Al Haouz earthquake, the people of Morocco still face a long journey toward recovery, with the reconstruction programme expected to be costly and complex.

What's more, the need for increased investment in building community resilience to disasters has never been more urgent. Morocco is especially vulnerable to disasters such as earthquakes, droughts and landslides, which are likely to become more frequent and severe thanks to urbanisation and climate change.

Islamic Relief continues to help survivors meet their most pressing basic needs, and has identified important areas of intervention needed to improve lives into the future:

- Repairing, reconstructing, and fortifying vital earthquake-damaged infrastructure such as homes, schools, and water supply systems. So far, we have installed 20 prefabricated homes, two latrines, and two prefabricated schools.
- Supporting people to rebuild their livelihoods, so they can earn a reliable living and provide for their families. Islamic Relief member offices have already pledged to support livelihoods projects, as well as education or healthcare interventions to support children.
- Providing sponsorship and support for orphaned children, in collaboration with local partners.
- Designing development interventions to achieve long-term impact and sustainability. Plans include enabling volunteers from Islamic Relief Canada's amazing Inspire volunteer programme to make a difference as they work directly with local communities in Morocco.
- Strengthening the capacity of local partners to meet the needs of communities. We are currently one-third of the way through a programme of nine skill-building training sessions for local partners.



An older man sits amid rubble in Al Haouz, Morocco

WHERE WE ARE WORKING



OUR LOCAL PARTNERS:



OUR ONGOING RESPONSE

Islamic Relief's work in Morocco is driven by two objectives:

- 1. To provide people in crisis with immediate, vital support to meet their basic needs in the aftermath of the earthquake**
- 2. To collaborate with the Moroccan government in long-term interventions to support affected communities to recover from disasters.**

BOOSTING ACCESS TO HEALTH AND HYGIENE

The damage caused by the disaster made it harder than ever for people living in remote communities to access vital healthcare and hygiene services.

Islamic Relief has been tackling this by providing essential medical services and health education in affected communities, through 27 health caravans. Staffed by medical professionals, these mobile health clinics cover general medicine, paediatrics, dermatology, cardiology and more. They also provide advice on important topics such as dental hygiene and general health. So far, we have conducted five health caravans.

Hygiene and sanitation facilities were among the critical infrastructure damaged by the quake, increasing the risk of disease outbreaks. To help local people combat the spread of disease, we are installing showers and latrines in some of the housing units we are providing, and have also installed latrines for use by the whole village.



A woman in Morocco's Marrakech region enters an Islamic Relief mobile health clinic. Known as health caravans, the clinics are providing primary healthcare services in remote communities

DISTRIBUTING SURVIVAL ITEMS

Having lost so much in the disaster, many families still struggle to meet even their most basic needs. Determined to ease their suffering, Islamic Relief has been distributing essentials in more than 100 earthquake-affected villages in Al Haouz and Chichawa.

Teaming up with two local charities, we are providing struggling families with food packs as well as hygiene essentials, such as soap, to help prevent the spread of disease. We have also been providing hygiene supplies to schoolchildren, as well as winter survival items such as coats, boots, and hats, which have benefited more than 11,600 children so far.



A boy collects essential supplies distributed through our emergency response in Al Haouz province

PROVIDING SAFE SHELTER FOR FAMILIES

The earthquake destroyed close to 19,000 homes. Some families have been unable to rebuild, and eight months later are still living in makeshift shelters and tents which offer little protection from the elements – particularly the harsh winter weather typical in Morocco's mountainous regions.

To provide displaced families with safe and dignified places to live, Islamic Relief has begun an extensive programme that aims to construct more than 300 new homes. Some sturdy prefabricated homes and some traditional houses, the new dwellings are giving people protection and privacy once more.



“When the earthquake happened, people were in a state of panic,” says Samira, who lives with her family in Toulitmt, Chichaoua province. Their home destroyed by the quake, they had been living in a makeshift shelter, with little protection from the elements - until Islamic Relief provided them with a prefabricated house. The sturdy shelter now provides Samira and her family with safer and more private temporary accommodation. **“May God reward you with goodness for providing us with a home.”**

POWERING LOCALLY-LED DEVELOPMENT

When disasters strike, local charities and civil society organisations are often among the first to respond. Deeply rooted in the communities they serve, they have a deep understanding of local needs which makes them invaluable to development initiatives. Understanding this, Islamic Relief's work includes supporting local partners to increase their capacity to respond to emergencies and contribute community development. In Morocco, we have begun a comprehensive training programme for two local partners, which is developing their skills in important areas such as programme design, finance, logistics, and reporting and evaluation.



Staff at Al Mobadara Association receive expertise-building training from Islamic Relief



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