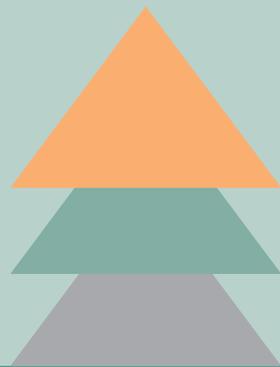


# Religions and Development Research Programme

## Mapping UK Muslim Development NGOs

**Mohammed Ralf Kroessin**

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Working Paper 30- 2009



# Religions and Development

## Research Programme

The Religions and Development Research Programme Consortium is an international research partnership that is exploring the relationships between several major world religions, development in low-income countries and poverty reduction. The programme is comprised of a series of comparative research projects that are addressing the following questions:

- How do religious values and beliefs drive the actions and interactions of individuals and faith-based organisations?
- How do religious values and beliefs and religious organisations influence the relationships between states and societies?
- In what ways do faith communities interact with development actors and what are the outcomes with respect to the achievement of development goals?

The research aims to provide knowledge and tools to enable dialogue between development partners and contribute to the achievement of development goals. We believe that our role as researchers is not to make judgements about the truth or desirability of particular values or beliefs, nor is it to urge a greater or lesser role for religion in achieving development objectives. Instead, our aim is to produce systematic and reliable knowledge and better understanding of the social world.

The research focuses on four countries (India, Pakistan, Nigeria and Tanzania), enabling the research team to study most of the major world religions: Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and African traditional belief systems. The research projects will compare two or more of the focus countries, regions within the countries, different religious traditions and selected development activities and policies.

The consortium consists of six research partner organisations, each of which is working with other researchers in the four focus countries:

- University of Birmingham, UK: International Development Department, Department of Theology and Religion, Centre for West African Studies, Centre for the Study of Global Ethics.
- University of Bath, UK: Centre for Development Studies.
- Indian Institute of Dalit Studies, New Delhi.
- Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, Ibadan.
- University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
- Lahore University of Management Sciences, Pakistan.

In addition to the research partners, links have been forged with non-academic and non-government bodies, including Islamic Relief.

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# Preface

The Religions and Development Research Programme (2005-2010) is working with research partners elsewhere in the UK and also in Nigeria, Pakistan, India and Tanzania. In addition, it has forged a non-academic partnership with Islamic Relief Worldwide, which is also based in Birmingham. In particular, it is working with Islamic Relief's Policy and Research Unit. This collaboration has taken the form of a joint appointment, in order to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and research in both directions between the programme and Islamic Relief. As part of this collaboration, a joint project to identify the Muslim development NGOs based in the UK, explore their thinking on development issues, provide a better understanding of their capacity, and understand existing links as a foundation for further networking and cooperation was embarked upon. This report summarizes the initial mapping stage of this work. However, tracing and obtaining information from the organizations proved to be difficult and time-consuming, while the idea of facilitating a network was overtaken by other initiatives, so the intended further stages of the project were not pursued. In particular, in 2007 a new umbrella body called the Muslim Charities Forum was initiated by Dr Hany El-Banna, the then President of Islamic Relief Worldwide.

The work was undertaken by Mohammed Ralf Kroessin, who was Assistant Chief Executive Officer of Muslim Aid before being appointed as Research Associate in the Religions and Development Research Programme and Islamic Relief Worldwide's Policy and Research Unit from 2006-7.

Carole Rakodi

Director, Religions and Development Research Programme



# 1 Introduction

Relatively little information is available in the public realm about the values and ways of operating of UK-based Muslim organizations working in the field of relief and development, or their relationships with government and other organizations. In addition, little is known about their positions on key development concepts and priority concerns (e.g. *zakat*, *waqf*,<sup>1</sup> credit, gender, reproductive health and HIV/AIDS). This knowledge gap is compounded by the fact that Muslim organisations have not received much attention in academic studies. This mapping of UK Muslim NGOs sought to address this basic knowledge gap by identifying what information is available in the public realm, exploring key variables such as their mission, size, networks, programmatic and geographical foci. In addition, some broader observations about the role and relevance of this particular type of faith-based organization are made.

The purpose of this descriptive mapping exercise of the work of Muslim charitable or development organisations in the UK is to outline what and where they are, what general categories may be distinguished, what they do, and what special generic features they represent. To highlight these features, short ‘snapshots’ of some organizations are included.

The study focuses on organizations engaged in relief, referring largely to short-term emergency aid following natural and human-made disasters, and/or development, which includes projects and programmes aimed at tackling poverty in middle to low income countries. The mapping sought to identify the nature of the interventions, assessing the extent to which they resemble and/or are linked to similar activities in the mainstream relief and development sector.

In the remainder of this introduction, some issues of terminology are discussed and the methodological approach adopted described.

## 1.1 Terminology

The term faith-based organization (FBO) has emerged as a widely used acronym that refers to a sub-category of the civil society not-for-profit organizations that have seen explosive growth over the past two decades (Marshall and Keough, 2004). Faith itself refers to both the organization’s source of inspiration and its links with religious organizations. Hence in a sense, FBOs have grown out of religious organizations, which are often viewed as specifically inspired and governed by religious

concepts derived from guidelines and rules set out in the scriptures and manuals of the organized religions. Typical religious organizations include religious orders or agencies linked to the religious authorities, which have a remit to provide religiously-based services in addition to the acts of worship facilitated by organizations within the faith community, such as churches, synagogues, temples or mosques.

However, as Marshall and Keough (2004) point out, there are no hard and fast definitions or boundaries delineating FBOs from others that do not claim a faith link, which themselves take countless forms. The role that religion plays, in terms of beliefs and practice as well as organizational form, varies widely. In short, FBOs are extraordinarily diverse and come in many different shapes and sizes.

The number of FBOs is said to be growing, according to Berger (2003), as among the several million NGOs in existence in the world today, an increasing number of organizations define themselves in religious terms – referring to themselves as ‘religious’, ‘spiritual’ or ‘faith-based’. Religious NGOs – or RNGOs – represent, Berger argues, a unique hybrid of religious belief and socio-political activism at all levels of society. In the context of international development, Clark (2006, see also Clark, 2007) argues, five main types of FBO are evident:

- *Faith-based representative organizations or apex bodies* which rule on doctrinal matters, govern the faithful and represent them through engagement with the state and other actors;
- *Faith-based charitable or development organizations* which mobilize the faithful in support of the poor and other social groups, and which fund or manage programmes that tackle poverty and social exclusion;
- *Faith-based socio-political organizations* which interpret and deploy faith as a political construct, organizing and mobilizing social groups on the basis of faith identities but in pursuit of broader political objectives or, alternatively, promote faith as a socio-cultural construct, as a means of uniting disparate social groups on the basis of faith-based cultural identities;
- *Faith-based missionary organizations* which spread key faith messages beyond the faithful, by actively promoting the faith and seeking converts to it, or by supporting and engaging with other faith communities on the basis of key faith principles;

- And finally, *faith-based radical, illegal or terrorist organizations* which promote radical or militant forms of faith identity, engage in illegal practices on the basis of faith beliefs or engage in armed struggle or violent acts justified on the grounds of faith.

The category of interest for this mapping exercise is that of 'charitable or development organizations'.

## 1.2 Methodology

This mapping was largely a desk-based study. It drew primarily on registers of Muslim NGOs, such as the Charity Commission's register for England and Wales and the Muslim Directory, a long-established resource within the UK Muslim community. The leads were then followed up with information available from the organizations themselves through their websites and brochures. The data was collected in 2006 and much of the financial information obtained was from 2005. Naturally, the mapping presents a snapshot in time and new organizations may have been formed subsequently.

The criteria used to select the organizations were as follows:

- UK-based, with a head office/operational centre based in the UK (excluding wholly-owned subsidiaries of foreign organizations even if registered under UK charity law)
- International in their scope, with their main operational arena in low or middle income countries.
- 'Muslim', meaning that their organizational ethics is explicitly driven by Islam.
- Primarily or largely committed to relief and development activities, with key charitable objectives that include emergency assistance and the relief of poverty, and clearly defined functions and programmes (not merely a single project such as a hospital)
- Constituted as organizations i.e. with an active, voluntary governing board of directors/trustees that exercises independent oversight of the professional staff and finances (not a personal undertaking by an individual philanthropist).

56 organizations were identified, and information collected on their mission, vision, operational philosophy, purposes, affiliations with religious bodies and international agencies, and where possible income and expenditure. The tool used for this data gathering exercise was designed for the purpose and is reproduced in Appendix 1. Limitations on time and information availability, as well as the need to guarantee confidentiality when approaching many individual organizations, has inhibited further analysis.

In order to discuss the organizations' characteristics, values, purposes and operations in more depth, two exploratory workshops were held, on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2006 in London (attended by eight NGOs) and on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2007 in Birmingham. The discussions at these workshops focussed on:

- the need for clarification of Muslim NGOs' contribution to relief and development
- their activities to raise awareness of global citizenship and the need for participation in international development activities amongst their donors (institutional and individual)
- issues of transparency and confidence amongst their supporters, government and the general public
- elucidating Islamic concepts of development

## 2 Mapping the UK Muslim NGO sector

In this section, some of the findings of the mapping exercise are presented. First, existing knowledge about Muslim FBOs in the UK is summarized. In Section 2.2 snapshots of seven organizations are presented, and finally a number of cross-cutting issues are identified.

### 2.1 Existing knowledge about Muslim NGOs

Very few studies have looked at UK Muslim FBOs working in relief and development and no comprehensive research has been carried out to identify the basic parameters of the sector. The Charity Commission for England and Wales provides a basic overview (2007) of the 1,373 Muslim organizations it regulates. Whilst many of these organizations are UK-based mosques and Islamic centres, others have charitable objectives including the relief of poverty overseas. Over 50 per cent have an annual income of less than £10,000.

Recent studies with a global focus provide some insights into operational philosophy and shed light on the operational differences between Muslim and mainstream NGOs, which are small. Muslim NGOs focus particularly on programmes for interest-free micro-finance, orphan care or food distribution during Islamic festivals (Benthall, 2003; De Cordier, 2006). The first of these emphases arises from the dual recognition of the importance of savings and credit in enabling households to improve their livelihoods and wellbeing, but the Qur'anic prohibition of *riba* (interest, usury). Orphan care is also significant for many Muslim charities due to Islamic injunctions to look after orphans. They also play a pivotal role in the collection and distribution of *zakat* from the 2 million-strong Muslim community in the UK, although it may be difficult to equate this instrument with development as its operationalization often focuses on individual poverty alleviation (Benthall, 1998).

### 2.2 'Snapshots' of UK Muslim NGOs

The 56 organizations identified vary widely in size, from those with budgets of a few thousand pounds to some with multi-million pound budgets. A number of brief portraits of Muslim NGOs originating or with overseas branches in the UK are given below, based on publicly available information about the organizations. They represent the larger Muslim NGOs and illustrate the diversity of organizational types that exist.

### 2.2.1 *Islamic Relief Worldwide*

Islamic Relief is an international relief and development organization, dedicated to alleviating the suffering of the world's poorest people. The organization has full-time offices in 25 countries and provides assistance in over 30 countries worldwide **www.islamic-relief.com** Its stated mission is:

to alleviate suffering, hunger, illiteracy and diseases worldwide regardless of color, race or creed, and to provide aid in a compassionate and dignified manner. Islamic Relief aims to provide rapid relief in the event of human and natural disasters and to establish local development projects to eradicate poverty, illiteracy and disease.

IRW was established in Birmingham in 1984 by Egyptian doctor Hany El Banna, in response to the famine in Africa. It is a member of the UN's Economic and Social Council (special category), and a signatory to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief. It is a member of BOND (British Organization of NGOs in Development), the DEC (Disasters Emergency Committee), an ECHO (European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office) framework partner and is the only Muslim organization to have a strategic partnership agreement with DFID.

Fundraising offices are situated in the following countries: Belgium, France, Italy, Germany, Mauritius, Netherlands, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and United States. Its annual income in 2005 was £35m. Fourteen field offices are spread across different countries, including Albania, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Kosovo, Mali, Pakistan, Palestinian Territories, and Sudan.

For example, Islamic Relief has worked in Pakistan since 1992 on emergency relief, development and disaster preparedness projects. Its work has heavily focused on areas that were badly affected by the 2005 Kashmir earthquake, including Muzaffarabad and Bagh, where IRW has several projects. The organization also has a highly developed orphan sponsorship programme - at present more than 27,000 orphans have been sponsored using an online database. It also emphasizes the importance of *waqf*, in this case an investment fund that generates profit for charitable projects.

## 2.2.2 Muslim Aid

Muslim Aid was founded in 1985 by Yusuf Islam (formerly Cat Stevens), who left his position as Chairman in 1999. Its website states that the organization's "vision is a world of peace, compassion and justice where all people achieve fulfilment" [www.muslimaid.org](http://www.muslimaid.org) Its mission is "To tackle poverty by developing innovative and sustainable solutions enabling people and their communities to live in dignity and independence". Its objective is to

relieve the poor, the elderly, children and all those who are in need in any part of the world as a result of natural disasters, such as floods, earthquakes, droughts, famine epidemics, poverty and plagues and the relief of those who are refugees fleeing from war zones and war victims.

This vision, mission and objective embody a number of key Muslim values, stated as:

- the universal principles of compassion, peace and justice.
- a commitment to alleviating poverty regardless of religion, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, gender or age.
- serving our beneficiaries as customers with the respect they deserve, putting their needs first.
- being adaptable and responsive to the changing needs of our beneficiaries.
- providing high quality, professional and effective services.
- working in partnership with others.
- being accountable and transparent in all our work.

Whilst underlining its commitment to diversity as a signatory to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief, a member of BOND and through its status as an EU ECHO framework partner, Muslim Aid also emphasizes its Islamic credentials with a Qur'anic quote in Arabic at the top of the website. It also appears to be appealing exclusively to Muslims by its use of the Arabic/Islamic greeting of *As-Salamu Alaykum* (Peace be upon you). Its trustees include Sir Iqbal Sacranie OBE and Muhammad Abdul Bari, giving it a close connection to the Muslim Council of Britain.

Muslim Aid worked in Bosnia following the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s. It also worked in Indonesia following the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake (tsunami) and Pakistan following the 2005 Kashmir earthquake. As with many charitable relief organizations, the tsunami served as a catalyst, leading to a

doubling of its annual income from £5m to £10m. The Pakistan earthquake, with the British Pakistani community as its key donor constituency, also further increased its fundraising. Its income in 2005 was £8.5m. It has field offices in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Iraq, Pakistan, Somalia, Sri Lanka and Sudan.

### **2.2.3 Muslim Hands - United for the Needy**

Muslim Hands is an international NGO working in over forty countries worldwide to help those affected by natural disasters, conflict and poverty [www.muslimhands.org/en/gb](http://www.muslimhands.org/en/gb) The organization was established in 1993 in Nottingham. Currently Muslim Hands has fundraising offices in the UK, France and South Africa. Its income in 2005 was £6.7m. Its stated mission is:

To be at the forefront in delivering relief from poverty, sickness and the provision of education worldwide. To provide an ethical service for the collection & distribution of funds in an effective, efficient, transparent and wholly accountable manner.

The organization is headed by Chairman Syed Lakhte Hassanain, who is also a highly respected religious teacher and leader within the Sufi Barelvi sect.

### **2.2.4 Interpal**

Interpal, the informal name for the Palestinian Relief and Development Fund is a non-political, non-profit making British charity set up in 1994 to alleviate problems faced by Palestinians [www.interpal.info](http://www.interpal.info) It focuses solely on the provision of relief and development aid to poor and needy Palestinians the world over, primarily in the Israeli-occupied territories, Lebanon, Jordan and Israel. Interpal's income in 2005 was £3.2m.

Interestingly whilst the organization's name clearly suggests its operational focus, it is not possible to classify it as a Muslim organization on the basis of its name alone. However, appeals for *zakat* and to help Muslim 'brothers and sisters' in need leave no doubt of its Islamic nature. This is reflected at board level, as it is chaired by the head teacher of an Islamic school in Leicester, Ibrahim Hewitt, whilst other trustees are notable Palestinians, such as G Faour (also a trustee of the Palestinian Return Centre), Dr. E Mustafa, Mr. I Y Ginwala MBE, Mr. M Rafiq Vindhani and Dr. S Husain. Interpal says that

it is currently the largest British charity supplying humanitarian aid to Palestinians and is “one of the largest Muslim-led charities in Europe”.

In 1996 allegations were made against Interpal and its Trustees in the Sunday Telegraph, although the paper issued an apology and retraction on 29 November 1997. It noted that

On 26 May 1996, in an article entitled ‘London fatwa backs suicide bombers’, we suggested that the Palestinian Relief and Development Fund (INTERPAL) was run by Hamas activists who encourage and support terrorist activities in Israel. We also reported claims which were being investigated by the Charity Commission that INTERPAL was used to raise money to fund the training of suicide bombers in Gaza and the West Bank. We now accept that the Trustees of INTERPAL are not Hamas activists. We also accept that the Charity Commission’s investigations found there to be no evidence of any pro-terrorist bias in the charity or of any channelling of its funds towards the training of suicide bombers. The Commission concluded that the charity is a “well run and committed organisation which carries out important work in a part of the world where there is great hardship and suffering” and that INTERPAL takes every possible step to ensure that its donations go only to charitable purposes, helping the poor and needy. We withdraw the allegations that appeared in our article and apologise to the Trustees of INTERPAL for the embarrassment caused.

On 22 August 2003 the United States Treasury published a list of charities it alleged to have links to terrorism, including Interpal which it said aided Hamas. The publication of this list led to the charity’s assets being frozen on August 26 and another investigation by the Charity Commission for England and Wales. The investigation lasted five weeks and Interpal was cleared of any illegal activities, while the US did not supply any actual evidence to the Commission. After the Board of Deputies of British Jews repeated this allegation, it was sued by Interpal. The parties settled out of court, with the Board of Deputies making a public apology and posting the statement on its website for 28 days. The statement on their website concluded:

... We referred to “terrorist organisations such as Hamas and Interpal”. We would like to make it clear that we should not have described Interpal in this way and we regret the upset and distress our item caused.

### **2.2.5 Human Appeal International**

Human Appeal International is an international development and relief charity based in Manchester, with an annual income in 2005 of £2.5m [www.humanappeal.org.uk/index.html](http://www.humanappeal.org.uk/index.html) It was established in 1991. According to the Charity Commission the charity's goals are:

The relief of poverty and sickness and the protection of good health and the advancement of education of those in need or from impoverished countries overseas and in particular Sudan, Mauritania, Ethiopia, Lebanon and Afghanistan.

Human Appeal International also states that it works to: "Relieve the suffering endured by victims of poverty social injustice and natural disasters and to improve the quality of life in deprived communities through education health and social development."

### **2.2.6 Aga Khan Foundation**

The Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) is a non-denominational, non-governmental, development agency founded in 1967 by His Highness the Aga Khan, the leader of the Shi'a Ismaili sect [www.akf.org.uk](http://www.akf.org.uk) The Foundation aims to develop and promote creative solutions to problems that impede social development, primarily in Asia and East Africa. Based in Geneva, Switzerland, it has branches and independent affiliates in fifteen countries, including in the UK, where it is a registered charity. The Aga Khan Foundation is an agency of the Aga Khan Development Network, but does not see itself as a faith-based organization, despite its establishment under the leadership of a religious figure.

The Foundation concentrates its resources on selected issues in health, education, rural development and the strengthening of civil society. Seeking innovative approaches to generic problems, it tries to identify solutions that can be replicated and adapted to conditions in many different regions. Cross-cutting issues that are also addressed by the Foundation include human resource development, community participation, gender and environmental issues.

The Aga Khan Foundation is the principal grant-making agency for social development within the Shia Ismaili Imamate. His Highness the Aga Khan provides the Foundation with regular funding for administration and new programme initiatives, as well as contributions to its endowment. The Ismaili community contributes volunteer time, professional services and substantial financial resources.

Other funding sources include income from investments and grants from government, institutional and private sector partners, as well as donations from individuals around the world. Grants are normally made to non-governmental organizations that share the Foundation's goals. In some cases, where there is no appropriate partner, the Foundation may help to create a new civil society organization or may manage a project directly. In 2004, the foundation globally provided \$149 million USD in grants for 130 projects located in sixteen countries. Its UK income was £16m.

### ***2.2.7 Edhi Foundation International***

The Edhi Foundation is a non-profit social welfare programme in Pakistan, founded by Abdul Sattar Edhi in 1951. Edhi is the head of the organization and his wife Bilquees, a nurse, oversees the maternity and adoption services it provides [www.edhifoundation.com](http://www.edhifoundation.com)

Edhi established his first welfare centre and then the Edhi Trust with a mere Rs. 5000. What started as a one-man show operating from a single room in Karachi is now the Edhi Foundation, the largest welfare organization in Pakistan. It has offices in other countries, such as Japan, the USA and the UK, where it is a registered charity with an income of £3.6m in 2005.

The foundation has over 300 centres across Pakistan, in large cities, small towns and remote rural areas. They provide medical aid, family planning and emergency assistance. In Karachi alone, the Edhi Foundation runs eight hospitals that provide free medical care, eye treatment, diabetic care and surgery. Also in Karachi, it has a four-bed cancer hospital and associated 50-bed hostel, and two Blood and Drug Banks, which provide medicine to needy persons and collect and store blood for transfusions. The foundation's nationwide network of medical centres, including mobile dispensaries, continues to expand.

The Trust runs an important ambulance service. Its Field Ambulance Service has 700 ambulances (the largest ambulance fleet in Pakistan and the largest private ambulance service network in the world) and its Air Ambulance Service has two airplanes and one helicopter owns air ambulances, providing quick access to medical facilities from far-flung areas. Another of its emergency services is a Marine and Coastal Service, which provides weather warnings, air-drops food supplies and recovers dead bodies.

The Foundation also runs a range of welfare activities

- Baby cradles (*jhoolas*) are installed at most Edhi centres, where unwanted or abandoned babies may be left. Adoptions are then arranged for the infants.
- Homes for destitute people (*Apna Ghar*) take in orphans, runaways and the mentally ill.
- Warehouses hold supplies for emergency situations.
- A Missing Persons Service posts bulletins for missing persons in the press, on radio and TV.
- Prisoners' Aid provides provisions and legal aid to imprisoned persons.
- Graveyard Services provides washing and burials for unclaimed bodies. Religious services are provided according to the deceased's religious affiliation.
- Public Kitchens feed the hungry in Karachi, Lahore, and Rawalpindi
- Refugee Assistance provides help to refugees in Pakistan.
- International Community Centres have been established in several nations to assist Pakistanis and other Asians overseas.

Whilst the Foundation does not see itself as an Islamic organization, subtle philosophical reference to Islamic social teachings and its appeals for *zakat*, would suggest that is indeed faith inspired.

## 2.3 Cross-cutting issues

Drawing on the information assembled and the discussions during the two workshops held as part of the project, a number of general issues can be identified, of which five are discussed in this section. These refer to the scale and scope of the sector, the values of the organizations of which it is comprised, their geographical and programmatic focus, and their relations with the wider development community in the UK.

### 2.3.1 *The UK Muslim relief and development NGO sector*

If we can speak of a UK Muslim relief and development NGO sector, it is certainly very diverse, including organizations that claim themselves to be secular (e.g. the Aga Khan Foundation), to those that are 'faith-inspired' (e.g. the Edhi Foundation), purely charitable relief and development organizations (e.g. Islamic Relief, Human Relief) and more specifically Muslim socio-political organizations (e.g. Muslim Aid, Interpal).

It appeared from interactions with some of the organizations that many did not have a sense of a UK Muslim sector of development NGOs with a shared identity and objectives, although many shared concerns over unfair treatment meted out to all Muslim NGOs post 9/11. In part this arises from competition between NGOs for support and the alleged 'political ambitions' of some of the key players. Nevertheless, five of the organizations (Islamic Relief, Human Appeal International, Human Relief Foundation, Muslim Aid and Muslim Hands) started the Muslim Charities Forum in 2007. This Forum aims to improve British Muslim charities' contribution to international development by promoting the exchange of experience, ideas and information amongst the members, between networks of NGOs in the UK and internationally, with the Governments, and other bodies with the interest in international development [www.muslimcharitiesforum.org.uk/aboutus/html](http://www.muslimcharitiesforum.org.uk/aboutus/html)

From the foundation of organizations such as Islamic Relief and Muslim Aid in the mid-1980s, the number of Muslim development NGOs has grown to over fifty - 56 were identified in this mapping. In particular, every emergency or crisis that particularly affects the Muslim world sees the formation of more NGOs. The sector as a whole raised some £95m in private donations and institutional funding in 2005.

### **2.3.2 Faith-based, faith-inspired, religious or secular?**

The mapping identified a range of Muslim-led organizations that deploy the Islamic faith in a variety of ways. The faith-based type appears to be the most common, in which the charity takes on a quasi-official mode of operating. This is required by some followers of, for example, the Hanafi jurisprudential school, which states that *zakat* must be collected by the Khalifa, the head of the Islamic state, and his agents (Bewley, 2001). Thus appointment of a board of trustees made up of Muslim community leaders, establishment of a scholarly advisory board and the deployment of Islamic religious texts in the form of sayings of the Prophet Muhammad and quotes from the Qur'an may be used to legitimize appeals for *zakat* funds.

In contrast, others are outwardly secular, like the Aga Khan Foundation, or try to establish a non-religious image, for example Muslim Aid's family support programme called 'Rainbow family' or its coffee shop called 'The fair factory'. Where NGOs are personal ventures, as in the case of the Edhi Foundation, the faith inspiration is linked to the founder's personal and often not openly stated beliefs.

Islamic Relief's recent attempt to produce policy positions on key issues has perhaps led to a more overt faith basis for its work than before, with policies on HIV and reproductive health underscored by Islamic evidences and *fatawa* (legal rulings).

### **2.3.3 Geographical focus**

UK Muslim NGOs' programmatic focus appears to be linked to their roots in particular segments of the British Muslim community, which is a diaspora community. Hence many organizations collect funds from Arab Muslim settled in the UK to carry out relief and development projects in the Middle East, for example the Human Relief Foundation, which focuses on Iraq. Interpal, however, seems to have been able to generate broader support from the UK Muslim community, since the Holy Land is an issue of importance throughout the Muslim world.

Many others remain true to their name. For example, the Kashmir International Relief Fund fundraises from Kashmiris in the UK for projects in Kashmir. Very few agencies seem to have been able to develop a broad support base within the Muslim community. Those that have succeeded in doing so have grown, with the largest generating more than £10m per annum as a result.

### **2.3.4 Programmatic focus**

A number of programmes repeatedly feature in fundraising appeals and make up the core operational profile of Muslim NGOs. Many of the organizations respond to disasters in the Muslim world (e.g. the Pakistan earthquake in 2006, the tsunami in Indonesia in 2005). In addition, common programmes focus on orphan sponsorship, Islamic micro-finance, Islamic education, water wells and a range of programmes associated with religious practices such as food programmes during Ramadan and sacrificial meat distribution at Eid-ul-Adha at the end of the Haj. These programmatic foci are often backed up by Islamic evidences, thus lending themselves particularly well to fundraising. For example, wells are considered the best form of continuous charity, It is also significant that most charities offer to facilitate individual acts of charity, such as the digging of a personalised well or the slaughter of an animal to provide food to the poor in celebration of the birth of child. These programmes could perhaps be labelled 'wants-based', although the majority of organizations seem to follow a needs-based approach, working with local partners and through field offices.

Programmatic issues of concern to many mainstream development actors, such as HIV or rights-based development, are extremely rare, with the exception of Islamic Relief, which seems to have made some initial steps towards developing activities in these areas through organizing an International Conference about HIV and Islam in South Africa in October 2007.

### ***2.3.5 Partnership with the mainstream development community***

From the mapping, it appears that the vast majority of UK Muslim organizations work in isolation from each other and from the mainstream UK and international development community, although some work with Muslim counterparts from the Gulf, Pakistan and also with international Islamic organizations like the Jeddah-based Islamic Development Bank and the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC).

Muslim Aid, Islamic Relief and Human Appeal International are members of the UK NGO umbrella body BOND, whilst Islamic Relief is also a member and trustee of the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC). Muslim Hands and Islamic Relief are in receipt of project funding from DFID, whilst the latter also has a Partnership Programme Agreement with DFID.

Both Islamic Relief and Muslim Aid are signatories to the Red Cross and Red Crescent Code of Conduct for NGOs in Disaster Relief, whilst the former is also a member of UN ECOSOC. Both are also EU ECHO framework partners, opening up access to sources of funding outside the British aid system. It seems significant that the two largest NGOs, Islamic Relief and Muslim Aid, are the most involved with mainstream development partners. This may be due to their size but may have also contributed to their growth.

### 3 Conclusion

Mapping the UK Muslim NGO sector has shown that, with a total budget of nearly £100m, it has the potential to make a significant contribution to development activity.

Clearly more needs to be known about the work of Muslim NGOs and there has been increasing academic, media and official interest in this type of faith-based organization. However, the field is very fluid and many organizations that make a contribution to relief and development may not even see themselves in such a role. Their work is underpinned and their world formed by a different discourse from mainstream development policy and practice, indicated by the fact that the majority of organizations do not collaborate with secular development NGOs or public sector partners. In part this is due to the diasporic nature of the UK Muslim community, which leads NGOs to view themselves as 'mainstream' in their country of origin rather than part of the UK 'development community'.

The formation of an umbrella body for UK Muslim relief and development NGOs is encouraging. However, there is a danger that many Muslim NGOs will focus on specific issues key to them, furthering their isolation from the wider development community. Intervention and support from DFID may be helpful in encouraging dialogue and cooperation between them, although the organizations generally remain sceptical because of the British government's foreign and aid policies.

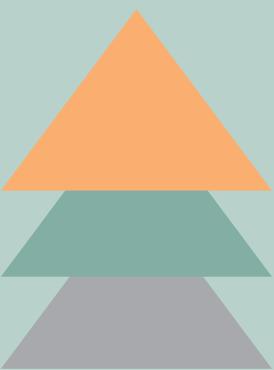
# Appendix 1 - Mapping tool

<b>CONTACT DETAILS</b>	
Name of organization	
Working name / Other names	
Acronym	
Address	
CEO/Director's name	
Policy / Advocacy contact name	
Telephone number	
Fax number	
Email address	
Web site	www. <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Urdu <input type="checkbox"/> Arabic <input type="checkbox"/> Bengali <input type="checkbox"/> Somali <input type="checkbox"/> Other .....
<b>ORGANISATIONAL</b>	
Founding year	
Type (Reg. Charity, incorp. Company etc)	
Branch of Islamic movement organisation?	
Explicit constituency?	
Vision and/or mission statement	
Objectives	
Programme expenditure 2005	
Programme expenditure 2004	
Programme expenditure 2003	
Income 2005	
Income 2004	
Income 2003	
Funding sources (%)	
Full-time staff	
Part-time staff	
Areas of work & skills levels	
Numbers of staff with degrees & post-graduate qualifications in development or similar subjects.	
How many have attended training courses last year?	
Is any of your staff trained in project/programme cycle management?	
Is any of your staff trained in SPHERE Standards?	
Is any of your staff trained in evaluation & impact assessment?	
Does any staff have an explicit policy / advocacy role?	
Major challenges perceived / anticipated	
Priorities for action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- operationally</li> <li>- fundraising</li> <li>- policy / advocacy</li> </ul>	
<b>OPERATIONAL</b>	
Target groups	
Geographical focus	
Sectoral fields of work	
Main types of activities	
Direct implementation through country offices (list)	
Working with/through partner organisations	
Memberships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- BOND (NVCO)</li> <li>- UN DPI / ESRC</li> <li>- International Islamic Council for Dawah and Relief</li> <li>- Others</li> </ul>	

<b>OPERATIONAL</b>	
Affiliations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MCB/MAB/UMO ...</li> <li>- MPH, Jubilee Debt Campaign, ...</li> <li>- IRC Code of Conduct</li> </ul>	
Exploring working philosophy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- partner vs direct implementation</li> <li>- needs vs rights-based</li> <li>- religious vs non-religious</li> <li>- development priorities</li> <li>- sectarianism?</li> <li>- co-ordination, overlap &amp; gaps</li> </ul>	
Relationship with international donor agencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- DfID</li> <li>- ECHO</li> <li>- UN (...)</li> <li>- World Bank</li> <li>- UK-based trusts (Oxfam, CAFOD etc.)</li> <li>- International trusts</li> </ul>	
Willingness to share experience / expertise?	
Challenges / issues encountered when working with donors	
Explore demand for policy formulation / guidance from the field (how to deal with HIV/Aids, environmental issues, procurement, security etc.)	
Flow of finance post 9/11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- official scrutiny (Charity Commission, Foreign Office etc.)</li> <li>- accountability</li> <li>- logistics / procurement</li> </ul>	
other	
Comments / observations	

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## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Zakat is an annual wealth tax payable that is mandatory for Sunni Muslims. Waqf is a religious endowment, with the trust usually used for land or property e.g. a mosque or madrasa (Muslim school).

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