

ORPHANS

CHARITY MAGAZINE

4TH EDITION | 2022

**MISS
SEHRISH
SIDDIQUE**

*From the
streets,
to the
classroom*

**Catch up
with our
children**

UPDATE FROM
OUR ORPHANS

SPECIAL
INSIGHT
**WHAT
PALESTINE
WANTS**

**My Child,
Leukaemia
& Me**

A MOTHER'S
STORY

**Zain
Bhikha**

Celebrates 25 Years:
EXCLUSIVE
INTERVIEW





A little gift of hope

It's that time of year again. I am so excited to bring you this issue on behalf of Orphans in Need, hoping to make you smile while you relax and unwind.

Inside, there are several heart-warming success stories about Orphans in Need sponsorship, which show not only how much kindness can change a life, but how it can change the future. One of these stories is mine, and I feel so blessed and thankful to share it with you.

I was sponsored by my amazing donor through Orphans in Need from the age of eight, and it paved the path for me to achieve my father's dream of becoming a teacher and helping the next generation. I hope this magazine conveys my personal thanks to my donor and everyone helping orphans who went through what I did.

I am confident the pages within will meet you with feelings of fulfilment, joy and inspiration. This magazine keeps in mind the promises we have all been

making to ourselves throughout the pandemic - to make every second count, try new things, and spend quality time with our loved ones. This issue will inspire you to do exactly that.

For those who are foodies and love to cook as I do, take delight in the delicious recipes inspired by the favourite foods of the Prophet Muhammed (SAW).

You will also have the chance to read exciting exclusive interviews and features of people you know and love. Hear from renowned nasheed artist Zain Bhikha, YouTube sensation SuperSaf, best-selling author Na'ima B. Robert (who has a special letter to you as well as insight on her book with Mufti Menk) - and many more!

I hope you enjoy discovering the above and everything in between. Your support means everything to orphans and widows. Thank you.

By Miss Sehrish Siddique
Sponsored Child & Teacher

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"Be kind, for whenever kindness becomes a part of something, it beautifies it. Whenever it is taken from something, it leaves it tarnished."

[Muslim]

WHY IS FOOD SO IMPORTANT?

Food is more than just a means to survive; it is the foundation of life itself. Without food, we would never have the health and strength to live our day-to-day lives. For instance, we could not go to work or school if we were malnourished. Sadly, many orphans and widows in impoverished communities struggle with this very issue, and can't make a living because they are starving and grow more and more tired and weak every day.

This year, we ensured your food parcels reached orphans and widows affected by food poverty across 15 countries in Asia, The Middle East and Africa. Every food parcel fed a family of five for a whole month. Inside, there is locally sourced items such as rice, noodles, wheat flour, lentils, vegetable oil, salt, spices, tea, sugar, dates, sanitation products and more.

11 MILLION MEALS DELIVERED



Saadia with her children

"MY CHILDREN WERE FORCED TO LEAVE SCHOOL"

Saadia and her husband were living in a slum in Nairobi, Kenya, with their five children and Saadia's sick mother. Her husband was earning just enough to support them, and they were all courageous and optimistic about the life they had, because they knew they always had each other.

Sadly, their happiness shattered, and everything changed when

Saadia's husband passed away. In their grief, the reality of their horrific living conditions felt more noticeable than ever, and the loss meant that their house no longer felt like home. Sleeping on an empty stomach and grieving, they lay on the floor of a shelter made from recycled material - located in an overcrowded slum and surrounded by a rubbish dump with no central sewage system.

Saadia was now walking long distances under the blazing heat of the sun to get clean water, her husband was no longer walking by her side. Saadia says, "My husband would tell me to thank Allah (swt) as we have each other and we are

surviving thanks to His mercy. We were happy. I don't know how to stay brave like that anymore."

Saadia was having nightmares that she and her children would not survive. She began working casual jobs, but this was difficult as she had grown malnourished, weak and depressed. Due to this, she could no longer afford her children's school fees or pay rent on time. Her children were forced to leave school, and their house was locked up many times, forcing them to sleep on the streets.

"My husband would tell me to thank Allah (swt) as we have each other and we are surviving thanks to His mercy."

Saadia and her children finally found solace in the monthly food parcels you gave her. The nutritious food meant she felt more energetic and could earn money and manage the rent and school fees. She moved forward with a renewed sense of hope. Before she sat with her children to eat food for the first time in a long time, she prayed for Orphans in Need and their donors and thanked Allah (swt) for the meal. If it weren't for people like you, widowed families like Saadia's would not have survived the year. Thank you.

Your *Qurbani* Brought joy last Eid

Your Qurbani was the reason that hope flooded in and laughter echoed in orphan and widow homes across 10 countries including:

In Gaza, where orphans who lost their homes after the airstrikes gathered to eat together and shared smiles of joy. In India where mothers who had been widowed because of the coronavirus pandemic shed tears of relief; they could finally feed their family. In Sierra Leone, where malnourished children made Dua to Allah for you because they enjoyed nutritious meat for the first time.

Thanks to you, thousands of orphaned children, widows and the poor enjoyed the celebrations with a full heart, and will keep the sweet memories of Eid treasured in their hearts forever.

**THANK
YOU!**

1 Million Meals Delivered

Soul food

by Saima Duhare

As we begin to prepare for Ramadan, we've put together a few recipes inspired by the Prophet (saw)'s favourite ingredients. We pray that love for the Prophet (saw) will grow in your heart and soul, while making and eating the food. Ameen.

Food is an integral part of everyday life. Our connection to certain foods and ingredients not only revolves around taste, feel, aesthetics and aroma - but also the benefits to our spiritual, physical and mental health. To benefit us, the Prophet (saw) taught us the etiquette of food.

Firstly, he (saw) taught us that we should eat together. The act of cooking, eating, and sharing food builds relationships with family, friends, neighbours and strangers. Behind each dish

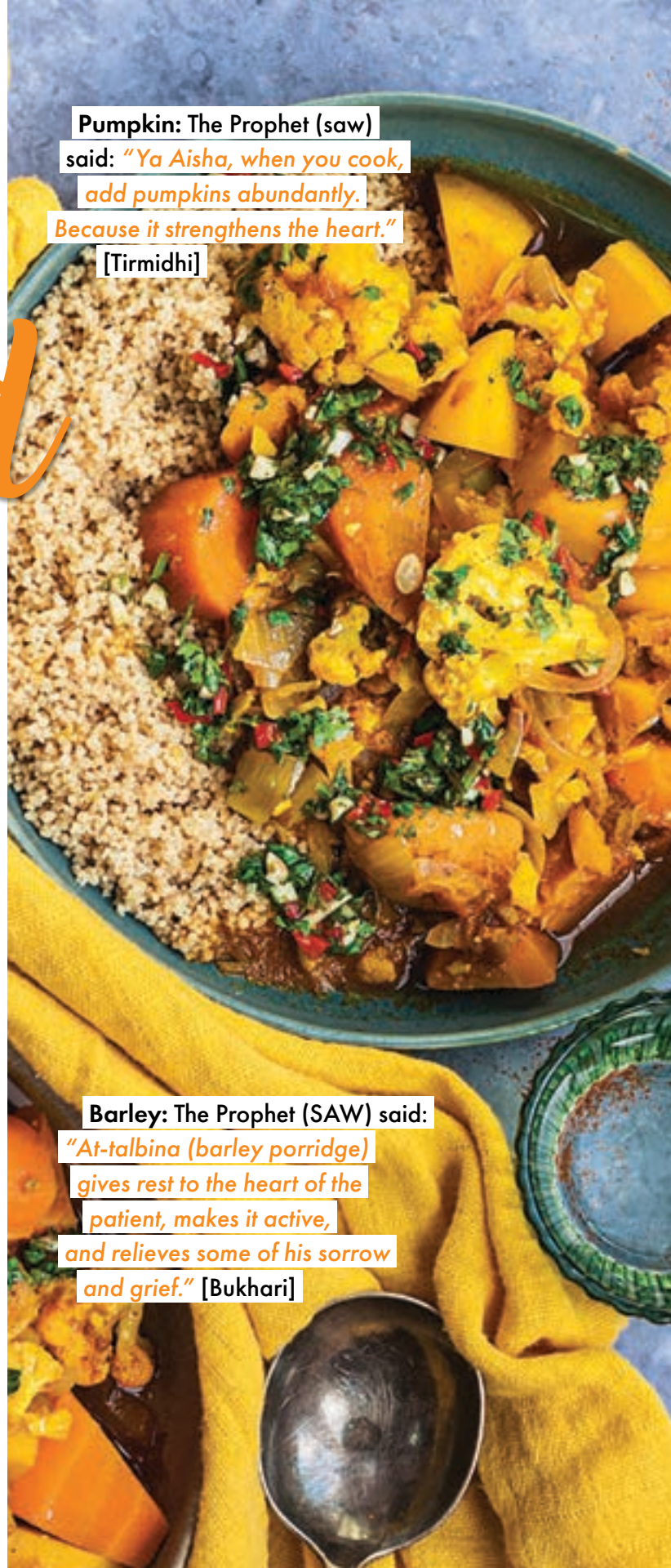
resides tradition, and cultural heritage that allows us to break down barriers and be united in our love for food.

The Prophet (saw) also taught us that we should fill our stomachs with $\frac{1}{3}$ food, $\frac{1}{3}$ water and $\frac{1}{3}$ air, and to fast every year in Ramadan and optionally every Monday and Thursday. There is wisdom to these teachings, as dieticians have now discovered there are many positive effects that small portion sizes, and intermittent fasting has on our wellbeing.

There is even wisdom to the Prophet (saw)'s favourite foods. There are many foods that he (saw) loved, such as melon, dates, honey, pomegranate, pumpkin, barley, lamb, fig, olives, mushrooms and more - and each ingredient nourishes our body.

We hope you enjoy these recipes, inspired by a few of these ingredients and traditional foods eaten at the time.

Note: You can purchase the spice blends used in these recipes from your local Asian supermarket.



Pumpkin: The Prophet (saw) said: "Ya Aisha, when you cook, add pumpkins abundantly. Because it strengthens the heart." [Tirmidhi]

Barley: The Prophet (SAW) said: "At-talbina (barley porridge) gives rest to the heart of the patient, makes it active, and relieves some of his sorrow and grief." [Bukhari]

FRAGRANT AFRICAN BERBER TAGINE WITH VEGETABLES

Serves: 2 | Time: 30 minutes | Allergens: Mustard, Celery, Soy, Gluten (Barley)

This barley couscous is specially prepared to the Berber cuisine traditions, using a special berber spice blend to elevate the taste. The seasonal vegetables contain plenty of fibre and a significant amount of magnesium and iron.

Ingredients

- Olive oil
- Salt
- Pepper
- 1 onion
- 20g ginger
- 2 garlic cloves
- 2 carrots
- 400g pumpkin or butternut squash (based on preference)
- 1 parsnip
- 1 small cauliflower
- 1 swede
- 4 apricots
- 1.5 tbsp Berber spice
- 20g harissa paste
- 30g tomato puree
- 1 lemon
- 120g organic pearl barley

Dressing:

- 20g coriander
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 red chilli
- 4 tbsp olive oil

Method

1. Peel and slice the onion, ginger and garlic clove - reserving 1 garlic clove for the dressing.
2. Peel and cut all the vegetables into bite size pieces. (The carrots, pumpkin/butternut squash, parsnip, cauliflower, and swede.)
3. Make the lemon peel: Peel the lemon and finely chop the skin (Pro tip: you can use a potato peeler if you have one.)
4. Roughly chop the apricots.
5. Boil a kettle full of water (which will be used to boil the vegetables, and the pearl barley later on.)
6. In a large saucepan with a lid, heat 2-4 tbsp of oil over a medium-high heat. Once hot, add and sauté the onion, ginger and garlic for 5 minutes until golden brown.
7. Next, add the vegetables and lemon peel, and then coat with the berber spice.
8. Once evenly coated, pour in 1 litre of boiled water, and stir to combine.
9. Next, add the harissa paste and tomato puree. Stir to combine.
10. Lastly, add the apricots, and reduce the heat so it simmers for around 20-30 mins. Add salt for taste.
11. Halfway through, check the vegetables which should be nice and tender. You should be able to pierce a knife through them.
12. Meanwhile put the pearl barley into a separate pan with a lid, and pour in 240ml of boiled water to make barley couscous. Cover and leave for 10 minutes.
13. For the dressing: finely chop the chilli, garlic clove and the coriander - discarding the stalks.
14. Pour 4 tbsp of oil into a small bowl, squeeze the whole lemon in, and mix in the coriander, remaining garlic and chilli. Set aside.
15. Finally, portion the couscous and vegetables onto a plate. Pour the dressing on top and tuck in.

Photographer credit: Twinsinmykitchen
 Recipes: Saima Duhare (Halal Fresh)

Pomegranate: The Prophet
 (saw) said, *“There is not a
 pomegranate which does not
 have a pip from one of the
 pomegranates of Jannah in it.”*
 [Abu Nu'aim]

**Lamb: Abdullah ibn
 Massoud reports:**
*“A shoulder was the Prophet’s
 most preferable piece of
 meat on the bone.”*
 [Ahmad, Abu Dawood
 and Al-Tirmidhi]

Photographer credit: Twinsinmykitchen
 Recipes: Saima Duhare (Halal Fresh)

OTTOMAN LAMB TABBOULEH WITH TANGY POMEGRANATE MOLASSES DRESSING & FETA SALAD

Serves: 2 | Time: 35 minutes | Allergens: Milk, wheat, egg, mustard, celery

This delicious and nutritious Levantine meal is packed with authentic ottoman flavours, which lends itself beautifully to the dish. It is a good source of iron, complex carbohydrates, and protein.

Ingredients

- 250g lamb mince
- 30g tomato puree
- 10g harissa paste
- 1 onion
- 120g bulgur wheat
- 1 tbsp Lebanese spice
- 1 courgette
- 1 tomato
- 50g feta
- 20g fresh parsley
- 50g pomegranate seeds
- 2 Turkish flatbreads
- 1 tsp dried mint
- 50g yogurt

Dressing:

- 1 lemon
- 2 tbsp pomegranate molasses dressing
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 1 garlic clove

Method

1. Boil a kettle of water. Once boiled, place the bulgur wheat in a medium sized saucepan and pour in the boiling water. Cover with a lid, and let it simmer for 15-20 minutes or until tender.
2. In the meantime, peel the onion and dice.
3. Peel the garlic and finely chop.
4. Roughly chop the tomato.
5. Cut the courgette in half (lengthways), until you’ve made 6 pieces. Then hold them together and cut them into cubes.
6. Finely chop the parsley including the stalks.
7. Add 1-4 tbsp olive oil to a pan over a medium high heat, and once hot, throw in the lamb mince with the Lebanese spice blend, and mix. Cook this for 6 minutes, breaking the meat with a wooden spoon.
8. Meanwhile, make the dressing. Cut the lemon in half and squeeze it all into a small bowl. Add the olive oil, pomegranate molasses dressing, garlic, salt, and pepper to taste. Set aside.
9. Add the onion and courgette to the lamb, and cook for a further 2-3 minutes.
10. Once the bulgur wheat is cooked, remove it from the gas. Drain excess water. Then add the tomato paste and the harissa paste, mixing it thoroughly.
11. Once mixed, add it to the pan of lamb. Throw in the parsley and tomatoes, and pour over the dressing. Mix it all together and cook for 1 minute.
12. Then add salt and pepper to taste, and stir in half of the pomegranate seeds. Switch off the gas.
13. Warm the flatbread either in a toaster or on a clean frying pan.
14. In a separate bowl, empty the yogurt, sprinkle over the mint and drizzle olive oil. Set this mixture aside.
15. Portion the lamb tabbouleh, crumble the feta cheese over it and garnish with the rest of the pomegranate seeds. Serve with warm bread and yogurt.



www.halalfresh.co.uk
 Instagram: @halalfreshuk

WHOLESOME & SIMPLE SWEET TREATS

Inspired by the Prophet Muhammed (saw)'s love of dates, honey and pomegranate.

"Honey is a remedy for every illness and the Qur'an is a remedy for illness of the mind, therefore I recommend to you both."

[Muslim]

Method

1. Take two glasses and pour 1 and a ½ tbsp of honey evenly into the bottom of both glasses.
2. In a bowl, whisk together the greek yoghurt, whipping cream, and rosewater until the mixture is thickened. You don't want it to be too runny otherwise it will sink into the honey.
3. Carefully spoon the creamy yoghurt mixture on top of the honey.
4. Drizzle the remaining honey over the yoghurt, and spoon the pomegranate seeds on top.
5. Optionally, add a handful of chopped pistachio nuts. Add rosemary to garnish.

1 Serves: 2
Time: 10 mins
V GF

A TOUCH OF SWEETNESS: HONEY, GREEK YOGHURT & POMEGRANATE

Creamy yoghurt enveloped with sweet nutritious honey and heart-healthy pomegranate... it's a match made in heaven.

Ingredients

- 210g greek yoghurt
- 125g whipping cream
- 1 handful chopped pistachio
- 2 tbsp pomegranate seeds
- Approx 4 tbsp honey
- ½ tsp rosewater



2 Serves: 16
Time: 15 mins
Allergens: Nuts (cashew and almond)
V GF

CHOCOLATE DATE TRUFFLES

A little chocolate a day keeps the doctor away. Right? These fudgy truffles benefit from healthy fats and antioxidants.

Ingredients

- 180g pitted medjool dates
- 15ml coconut oil
- 30ml water
- 24g unsweetened cacao or cocoa powder
- ¾ tsp vanilla extract
- 24g cashew butter
- 1 pinch of sea salt
- 56-84g almond flour

Method

1. Line a dish with baking paper and set aside.
2. Melt coconut oil, and add it into the food processor with the pitted dates and water. Mix until a paste forms. (A blender will also work but small bits may remain: This is fine too).
3. Add cocoa powder, vanilla extract, cashew butter and a pinch of salt. Blend again to combine.
4. Little by little, add the almond flour in 28g measurements until the mixture forms a ball in the food processor. (You're looking for a sticky energy bite texture).
5. Empty some cocoa powder in a bowl which will be used to coat the truffles in.
6. Use a scoop or a lightly oiled tablespoon to scoop out 1 tbsp. Roll the mixture between the palms of your hands. There should be around 16. If it is too sticky, add a bit of cocoa powder to your hands.
7. Next, roll the truffles in the cocoa powder bowl to coat them, and transfer them to the lined dish one by one. (This adds flavour and prevents them from sticking.)
8. For the best texture, transfer to the freezer for 30 minutes before tucking in.

"Indeed in dates there is a cure." [Muslim]

GASPING FOR AIR

Your kindness and generosity was the lifeline that gave India hope when a second wave of coronavirus left destruction in its wake.

Haunting the second largest country of the world, international response was required last March when India grappled with the world's worst COVID-19 emergency. Cases surged and millions were getting infected every day. To make matters worse, the virus mutated into the Delta variant, a more transmissible variant of the original strain.

India could not breathe; shortages of oxygen, medical supplies, beds, and hospital staff compounded the crisis. Within a month, the death toll surged past 200,000 marking a record number of new infections in a short period of time.



More and more children were being orphaned every day, widowed families suffered, and hundreds of thousands of elderly people, and immunocompromised

patients fought for their lives. Most harrowingly, grieving families had to wait to say goodbye to their loved ones, as crematoriums were full.

When India couldn't breathe, You gave them oxygen

The sharp increase in cases strained the healthcare system, forcing people at death's door to wait in long lines outside hospitals. With families begging to have their loved ones seen to, there was no light amidst distressing darkness. Soon, the government deployed military planes and trains to get oxygen from overseas. That's where you stepped in.

Together, we worked to offer a breath of relief to those who were most severely affected by the pandemic across India and Jammu and Kashmir. We gave 3 emergency ambulances, 420 oxygen concentrators, 700 oxygen cylinders and 10,000 emergency food packs .

We also delivered thousands of Qurbani meals in India, bringing a glimmer of hope to orphaned children, widows and the poor who were isolating to keep safe, and grieving the death of their loved ones.

Thank you for helping India and bringing hope. We couldn't have done it without you.



IN INDIA WE DELIVERED:

3 EMERGENCY AMBULANCES

420 OXYGEN CONCENTRATORS

700 OXYGEN CYLINDERS

10,000 EMERGENCY FOOD PACKS

THE CHILDREN OF GAZA

“We **RUN** under the trees
 We **HIDE** under tables
WHAT shall we do?
THEY STILL SEE US.”

IMAGINE this...

Bombs are raining down on your city. The ground is shaking and the sound of sirens are warnings you will soon lose your home or your loved ones – if you haven’t already. Electricity and water services are down, and you are surrounded with darkness and grief, seeking shelter in abandoned buildings. You are dehydrated, starving, injured and in dire need of life-saving medication. Just when all hope seems lost, you see a ray of light... someone wants to help you.

This is what reality looked like for the people of Gaza, but thanks to you, they found safety and solace in your kindness during a time of hardship. We delivered over 2.5 million meals to over 27,150 people, and 1.25 million litres of filtered water to over 8,500 people who urgently needed it. Medical supplies were given to

6 hospitals, helping over 2250 injured patients, and we distributed cooking essentials and bedding to over 720 people who were displaced.

Your love and care came through for Gaza when they were counting on you.

*A ceasefire stops the **BOMBS.**
 It does not **STOP** the **AFTERMATH.***

The children of Gaza have been through hell and back, especially those who are orphaned and alone. Even though our 4,800 sponsored orphans had access to shelter, food, water and medical aid – their world was full of terror. The airstrikes affected their psychological wellbeing profoundly. Every child feared for their lives in the war, as they watched the city turn to rubble and dust. Thousands stood helplessly by as people died or lost their homes, sleeping in empty buildings.

Schools have now reopened, and sponsored children are receiving an education. This means they may heal from their past, in hopes of building a better life. However, their academic journey has not been without difficulty. Concentrating in class is tough when the recent horrors are fresh in their minds, and they are battling flashbacks, crippling anxiety and night terrors.

Thanks to sponsorship, orphans who have been impacted have been given the opportunity to access psychological help at professional centres, which are usually unaffordable. To support their overall wellbeing, they are provided with a nutritious diet consisting of dates, fruit, orange juice, vegetables and chicken.

If you asked the child today what you meant to them, they would say you were “an angel” who cares in this world. Thank you.



**IN PALESTINE
 WE DELIVERED:**

1.25 MILLION LITRES OF WATER

2,250 INJURED PATIENTS TREATED

2.5 MILLION MEALS

About the author

Jomah was born and bred in Gaza, having lived there for over four decades. He dreams of restoring hope and joy to Palestine, one step at a time. He continues to work in the region, delivering vital support to needy orphans and widows all year round.



LIFE IN PALESTINE

RAMADAN AND EID IN THE BLESSED LAND

The biggest thing that gives patience to any Muslim when he gets into trouble, like losing the dearest ones in his life, is Allah's (swt) reward.

The people here in Gaza try to console and support each other by reminding one another the patient person's reward in this life and in the hereafter. Everyone in Gaza has experienced the loss of at least one of their family members or friends. We are all aware of their feelings of loss. We all wonder... will the soul return again to the people of the stricken city? This question is on the mind of each individual in Gaza. They are wondering if life will get back to what it was, or will it always be enclaved with grief?

Holding onto our values

While many traditional social structures have collapsed under the occupation, most Palestinians continue to be guided by Islamic principles and Arabic cultural values. For example, **hospitality, loyalty, generosity, honour and respect for elders.** Palestinian homes are always ready to receive guests, both announced and unannounced guests with food, sweets and Arabic or Turkish coffee. In fact, visits from family and neighbours are commonplace, often occurring once or twice a week.

Life in Ramadan

One of the most common traditions in Gaza during Ramadan is making *Qatayef*, a sweet dumpling infused with fillings like cream, nuts, chocolate & dates. In Gaza, you will see many shops and bakeries selling it through

the month. Our children love watching it being prepared and all Gazans love to eat it.

People in Gaza are used to spending their days during Ramadan differently to other days. They all visit each other, especially their relatives, to foster good relations. They are also keen to read the Qur'an and increase the number of Qur'anic pages that they are used to reading. The streets in Gaza became crowded with people throughout the day; some go to the markets to buy groceries, some visit their relatives, and others go to the mosque to pray.

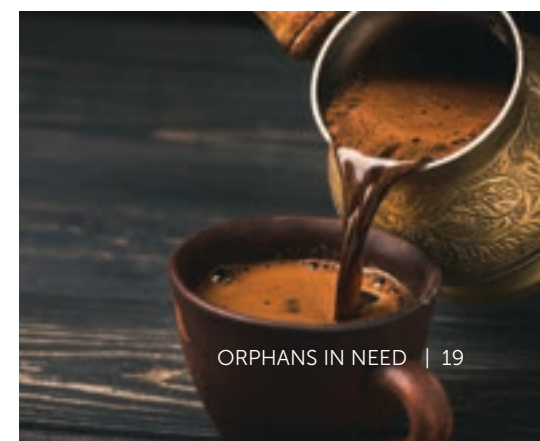
Preparing for Eid

Typically, in the run up to Eid, children are wearing new embroidered clothes and have new toys, running from house to house, eating candies and cookies. When the Palestinians in Gaza aren't trapped in

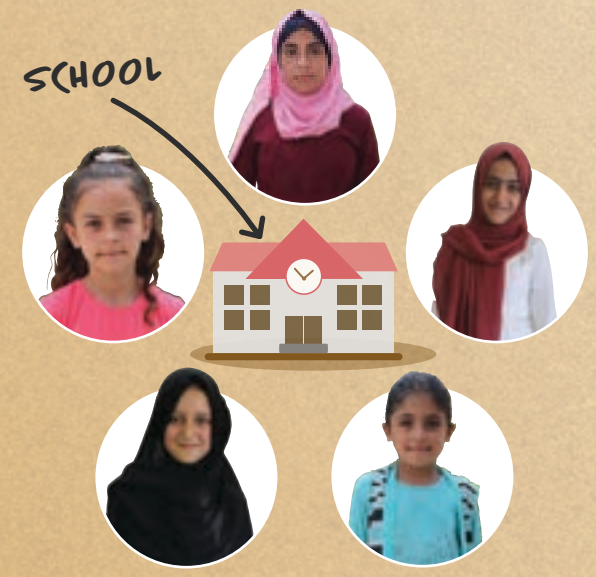
conflict, they live peacefully and prepare themselves to celebrate Eid Al-Fitr, by making traditional Eid cookies like *Qatayef* and *Baklava*. During the days of Eid, mosques are filled with worshippers, and the streets become overcrowded with people wearing new clothes, shaking each other's hands, exchanging greetings, and visiting each other.

Holding onto our identity

Palestine has a lot of customs and traditions derived from its history. These have been preserved through Palestinian folk legacies, such as proverbs and folk songs. Despite the challenges they have faced over decades, they will not let go of their identity. **Food, clothing, poetry and the arts,** these are all some of the unique ways in which the history of Palestine is preserved.



PALESTINE: WHO HAVE YOU SAVED?



In Ramadan 2021, the world was left reeling due to the development of events in the long-lasting Palestine conflict. Our young brothers and sisters in Gaza were in need of urgent help, more than ever.

At Orphans in Need, we have supported over 40,000 orphans and widows in Palestine during the airstrikes. We've met countless children who would love nothing more than to see an end to the conflict they've witnessed since a young age. Like every other child, they have aspirations and dreams too.



Thanks to your help, we were able to support many children in Palestine over Ramadan. Your donations meant they could get the education they deserve. Widows were able to feed and clothe their children as a result of your generosity. Meet 20 of the orphans you were able to transform the lives of.



"FULFILLING A
**FATHER'S
DREAM**
IN JAMMU & KASHMIR"

Along the banks of the famous, pristine rivers of Jammu & Kashmir, Musaib played with his friends.

Every day, he watched with awe at some civil engineers working on a bridge overlooking the beautiful valley.

Musaib would often come home to tell his father he wanted to be like them when he grows up. His father was overjoyed seeing how his son had the same dream as he did. But where he couldn't pursue his dreams due to his financial plight, he hoped his son would.

"Paradise on Earth"

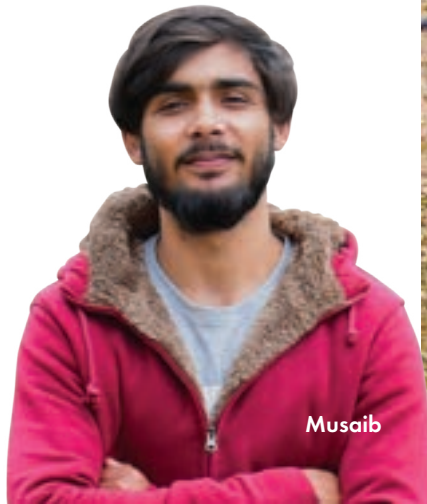
Musaib's home town is known as "paradise on earth." His father would say he was also experiencing the paradise of life itself: childhood.

Musaib wanted to work in the beautiful outdoors, admiring the streams and serene scenery that Jammu & Kashmir had to offer.

Sadly, Musaib's world of dreams collapsed when his father passed away after a diagnosis of five cancerous tumours. Musaib had to drop out of school and sacrifice his dreams to work and support his family. He was only four years from getting admission into college to study engineering.

Thanks to sponsorship, Musaib now studies at a well-renowned college of engineering. He tells us, "Whenever you all ask me how are you and how are your studies going, it feels like my father is speaking to me with a different name."

When he stepped inside the college he asked, "Is this real? I'm on my way to fulfil mine and my father's dream. A path has opened that I thought had closed the day he passed away. Thank you."



Musaib



NEW
TO THE
TEAM



Our children are the future: our plan to re-build Jammu & Kashmir's future by educating more orphaned children.

Last September, numerous local charity organization members and volunteers from Uri, Lolab, Keran and various regions throughout the valley gathered to discuss the future of Jammu & Kashmir.

The discussion was based on how the children of Jammu & Kashmir are its future, and how providing education to more orphaned children will help in re-building Jammu & Kashmir's future, where generational cycles of poverty are finally broken.

In response, Orphans in Need increased educational funding and employed new Orphan Sponsorship Manager, Mr Junaid Ahmad, who will oversee the sponsorship programme, and take responsibility for ensuring more orphaned children are provided with access to education.

CATCH UP WITH OUR CHILDREN

We believe that education is a powerful tool to eradicate poverty and change the world, so that's why we wanted to catch you up on some of the amazing achievements of our sponsored orphaned children this year.

Your ongoing support has meant that orphaned children are reaching new heights with their dreams and careers, transforming into inspirational leaders who are leading future generations out of poverty.



Aahil Somalia

Aahil's father was killed when he was six years old.

"We were heartbroken, and my mother couldn't afford schooling. Sponsorship allowed me to go to school and then study **Public Administration**. Now I'm working at an office that feels like my second home. Thank you."



Ameera Bangladesh

"I am currently studying **Higher Education** to fulfil my dreams of being a teacher and a role-model to orphaned girls like me."

When Ameera's father passed away, her relatives abandoned her family, and so Ameera had to abandon her dreams. Thanks to you, she has hope again.



Fawzia Somalia

"It is not easy for orphan girls to study and stand on their own two feet. Thanks to receiving sponsorship since the age of 13, I studied **Nursing** and now I work in a clinic."

Fawzia's father was killed in cold blood when she was just six years old. Thank you for helping her.



Rashida Jammu & Kashmir

"Ups and downs don't decide our future. Never give up, Allah (swt) is with you."

Rashida and her mother held onto their faith when tragedy struck and Rashida's father passed away. Alhamdulillah, she is now preparing for her NEET exams so she can study an MBBS to be a **Doctor**.



Yasir Somalia

Yasir received sponsorship from the age of 13. He volunteered in youth groups because he wanted to protect children from crime and extremists.

"Thanks to my sponsor, I trained as a **Police Officer**. Now I'm an officer who helps children, women and vulnerable people."



Lena Palestine

"My dream is I will have my own tailoring business. Women will wear my embroidered clothes and walk in the streets of a safe Gaza."

Lena has learning disabilities so she couldn't go to university like the others. Thanks to sponsorship, she is studying an **Embroidery and Sewing** course.

FREE YOUR CREATIVE MIND & FLY

THE POWER & PRESENCE OF CREATIVITY IN OUR LIVES

Creativity is a powerful, diverse presence in its own right. It lives in everything beautiful that surrounds us, so that we don't need to live in an, empty, mundane world.

It is the art that makes cafes feel cosy and houses feel like home. It is the soul that gives life to poetry, magical movies, sweet bedtime stories, and scary campfire tales.

It is the heart of the pen that glides across a blank piece of paper, bringing a whole new universe to life. And the life of the brush that paints from the gallery of an infinite imagination.

At Orphans in Need, we aim to bring the joy of creativity to the lives of our orphaned children. It puts a smile on their face, and also benefits them. How?

To be creative, they need to be good planners, have patience, imagination, a keen eye, and passion. All of these things are important to nurture, for the sake of the futures of our children.



FIVE WAYS TO ENJOY CREATIVITY WITH YOUR CHILDREN

1 Involve your child in solving problems, for example: when the living room is messy ask: "What should we do about it?" Applaud all ideas, especially the unexpected ones! This is a good way to develop creative problem-solving skills.

2 Try mindful drawing. Regardless of artistic experience, let your inner-critic go, and let your creative mind fly. Focus on drawing mindfully by bringing your attention to the present moment, focusing solely on the drawing.

3 Bake your child's favourite cookies and brownies together, but tweak the recipes a little. For example, swap one of the usual ingredients like chocolate chips to white chocolate chips, fudge, M&M's or anything else your child wants to try.

4 Go on walks with your child, and lend them a phone to use the camera. Encourage them to experiment with new angles and practice editing photos, allowing them to let their inner photographer loose.

5 When you're at the supermarket with your child, hunt for an item they have never eaten before. Together look for a new recipe and cook with them for dinner. You could also get creative with its presentation.



WORDS HAVE THE POWER TO CHANGE LIVES

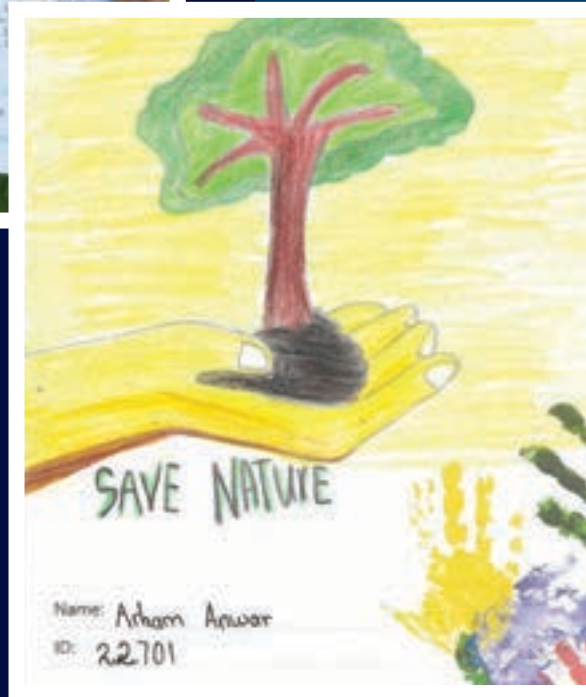
We believe that creativity is a powerful tool that can change the lives of our orphans. To harness its power, we encourage our children to draw, write stories, journal and more. Writing itself in particular is beneficial, because it is powerful tool in healing trauma.



We encourage our children to spend a lot of time writing these moving stories, and making art. Read this heart-warming story about how the strongest warrior is the one that arises as honest, kind and compassionate in the face of hardship.



We provide orphans with an education, a safe place, food, medical care and more. But without spiritual and psychological healing from trauma, it can be very difficult for children to move forward and grow as adults. By writing stories that embody their struggles, orphaned children can begin to process the painful memories of their past.



We can truly learn so much from their words. Each word written by our children's own hands teaches us so much about survival and strength.

Once upon a time... There was a little boy namely Rihan used to live in a backward village. Rihan belongs to a family whom earn hard to mouth. Rihan's Father was a tlasherman could hardly feed his family. Besides belongs to such a family Rihan always dream big. During his School times he used to climb rocks fence walls, trees to give satisfaction to his dreams Rihan always think that his aspiration will always remain a dream as he was still known to his sources in his early edge. Rihan left for school didn't return back for two days while looking for him he was found on a near by mountain with a stick like a warrior with a sword. Finding such a passion in a young child he got sponsored in an Institute of

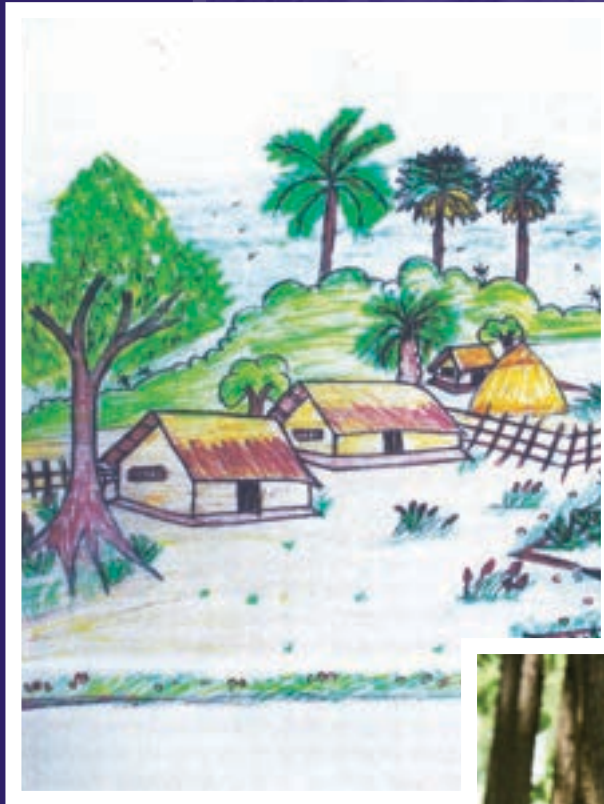
mountainering where he could over them to his dreams after the completion of his course Rihan marked his steps in the same instation as civilian instactor. One who is such devotee to his dreams, could difineally overcome on them Rihan's passion toward mountainering increased day by day. Luckily Rihan got elcted to represent India to scale the worlds highest peak passionate towards his dreams, after 256 hours long Journey Rihan scaled the mounteverest (8848m) The highest peak in the world Rihan was honoral with many awards. Rihan is my inspiration Now

The End
Name: Danish Age: 13 Location: Jamnagar, Gujarat (IN)

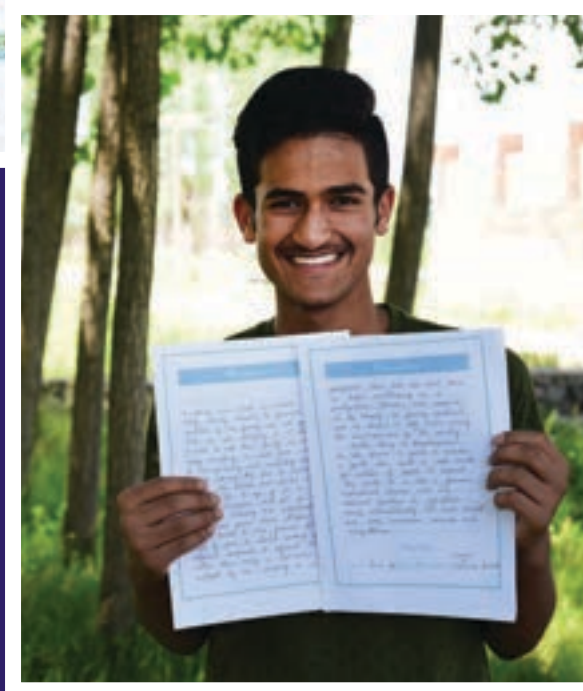
CHILDREN'S ART GALLERY

“IF WE COULD SEE THE WORLD THROUGH THE EYES OF A CHILD. WE WOULD SEE THE MAGIC IN EVERYTHING.”

While writing is an effective way to process trauma, drawing and colouring are tools that helps one notice the magic and vibrancy of the world. It is said that Carl Jung promoted colouring and drawing mandalas years ago, as a way to enhance psychological wellbeing.



Did you know... A published art therapy study states that 45 minutes of creative expression such as drawing and painting significantly lessens stress in the body. Regardless of artistic experience or talent.



Thank you for giving orphans a warm, loving home where they are free to laugh, play, learn and create. By doing so, you have given orphans the chance to succeed and prosper, while seeing the magic and joy of life again.



CHILDREN'S ART GALLERY

Sehrish

From the streets to the classroom

The story of an orphaned girl
whose dream came true...
thanks to your help.

School is a gift not all children will appreciate. In some cases, attending school five days a week may feel like a major injustice to them. Meanwhile, in the Makri district of Muzaffarabad in Pakistan, Sehrish Siddique could only dream of going to school. Now a qualified teacher, Sehrish was once an orphaned child whose mother couldn't afford to send her to school. Sehrish reflects on her journey and how Orphan Sponsorship changed her life.



"My mother tells me that when I was 3 years old, I used to cry seeing other children going to school, because I wanted to go as well," recalls Sehrish. She did, however, have a taste of being in the education system. Each day, Sehrish's father, Raja Muhammad, would walk her to nursery. He'd always hoped that his daughter would someday become a teacher. It is unimaginable how he must have felt not to be able to afford to send her to school to fulfil this dream.

The tragedy that changed their lives forever.

Regardless of Sehrish not being able to study, the family were happy. Tragedy then struck when Sehrish was 4 years old. Her father suddenly passed away from cardiac arrest. Now, Sehrish's mother, Amroza Begum, was left a widow.

Amroza had two daughters and was unable to send them to school. She struggled to manage the income and expenditure of the household, as Raja had once done. Amroza awoke each day with the anxiousness surrounding how she would even feed her daughters that day. "It was tough for our family to survive. It's not easy for women to survive on their own in countries like ours. Our fathers were the source of income," says Sehrish.

Nevertheless, Amroza pushed on. "My mother struggled so much, but she always had a firm belief in my abilities to grow up and do something with my life. Her hard work and supportive nature made me who I am today, and she will always be my role model."

Sponsorship gave me hope & ENCOURAGEMENT

Sehrish with her mother Amroza Begum

Being sponsored and the gift of education

Then came the day when the family's prayers were answered. A generous donor from the UK heard of Sehrish's situation through Orphans in Need. They wanted to help and consequently sponsored Sehrish through our Orphan Sponsorship programme. Upon hearing the news of the secure monthly donations that would now come to their home, the family were overjoyed. They were now eating regular meals, and Sehrish was blessed with the opportunity to attend school. Her father's dreams of his daughter's success were coming true.

"The sponsorship gave me hope and encouragement."

According to UNICEF, an estimated 22.8 million children aged 5-16 are out of school. Sehrish emphasises the importance of education and how pivotal it is in a child's life. "Education gives you freedom, it opens so many doors for you, and it empowers you." She further states that if you could gift anything to a young girl, in particular, it should be an education. "Education is important for every child – including girls. Girls are the ones who also become mothers and can educate and train the future generations. If they are educated, future generations will most likely be educated. As a result, they will come out of the poverty cycle and won't need to depend on anyone."

Today, Sehrish lives with her mother and sister, Irum, and is able to provide for her family. A qualified school teacher, she credits her sponsorship for the opportunities

she's received. "Without the support from Orphans in Need, I cannot imagine completing my education and doing my Master of Philosophy!" says the school teacher. Sehrish recalls the overwhelming "joy and happiness" that her mother felt when seeing her daughter graduate school. "I can stand on my own feet now and support my family. We feel more independent now. People talk about our success in the community and see us as role models! My mother said that my hard work has brought honour to the family."

The struggle and strength of a schoolgirl in Pakistan

"One of my best friends once said to me: don't give up so easily without trying in life. At least try. At least try doing something, anything can be achieved by taking even smaller actions. Break up your goals into smaller actionable points and take the actions. This is the same advice I give to my students now."

While Sehrish is celebrated by members of her local community and serves as an inspirational figure to the local children and those in her classes, she describes the struggle of being a girl in education. "The majority of girls in my hometown only go for basic education and they don't go to university. They cannot afford it and their parents don't believe in girls' education, because there are not many job prospects for girls after education."

"It's not easy to go out far from home to study and survive in a male-dominated society. Psychologically and emotionally, it was hard as people ask, 'why you are educating

the girl?', 'what she will do after education?', 'how is education going to help her?'...people ask so many questions. But I focused on my objective rather than listening to people. It was disheartening at the time, but I focused on my goal, which was to stand on my own feet, to help my mother and to support her. My mum used to say to everyone: 'If boys can study, then so can girls.'

Sehrish says that if she wasn't gifted the sponsorship, she would have married young and spent her time carrying out domestic work, rather than achieving her dreams.

"Securing government jobs in primary teaching in Jammu & Kashmir is very tough," tells Sehrish. She recalls when she was offered the role, and everyone was calling to congratulate her Mum. "Seeing that happiness on my mother's face was the proudest moment in my life."

Miss Sehrish Siddique: The Future

After successfully completing her education, Sehrish returned to the classroom, but this time as a school teacher. Her favourite subject to teach is Maths, but she teaches the 30 children in her class a range of subjects. "They are all from disadvantaged and poor backgrounds. But their parents want them to do something with their lives. They are keen learners despite their backgrounds."

This isn't just a job for Sehrish. She is passionate and committed to making a change in these children's lives. "They even don't have books and notebooks," says Sehrish. "I buy them from my own salary. I always motivate my students by example, by telling them my own story about how I came from a very disadvantaged background and how I became who I am today."

When asked what makes her happy, Sehrish mentions that, as well as cooking (favourite food – biryani!), reading and spending time with her family, helping her students is truly important to her, and keeps her content. "I want to change the mindset of my students. Mindset is everything. If they believe they can do it, they will try for it."



Seeing my students progressing in their studies is the best feeling."

The 23-year-old is described by our OiN Pakistan team as someone who is "hardworking and very focused." They go on to say that she is "very clear about what she needs in her life, and how she will achieve that."

The orphan sponsorship Sehrish received changed the course of her life for the better. Her zeal and ambition is something we are all so proud of.

Sehrish now walks to school each morning, ready to change the world that little bit more. From the little girl who would walk to nursery hand-in-hand with her father, she now walks to school alone, but her father remains in her heart as she carries out the good in this world, like he had always dreamt for her.

May Allah bless the Siddique family and reward them for their patience. Ameen!

There are millions of orphans around the world who are still praying for their miracle. You can help shape their tomorrow. Donate now to our Orphan Sponsorship programme by scanning the QR code. You will be with your orphaned child each step of the way, receiving regular updates about the changes that you will make to their lives.



From Sehrish: how you can support your child's education

"You should consider higher education for both boys and girls. Keep your child's studies balanced and make sure that they are giving time to their studies. Help your child to walk their path of interest, bearing in mind their capacity. These discussions should be had when your child enters secondary school, so that they can make up their minds and follow their field of interest."

“A love letter to the next generation”

Na'ima B. Robert

Best-selling children’s author talks about the value of reading and her dream for us to send books as love letters to the next generation.

Dear reader,

The world is our oyster, the sky is the limit, and our life in this world is a beautiful gift from Allah.

It is a gift that never stops giving, with new chances every day for us to say thank you and return our love to Allah, the Gift Giver. The power of this love is that as we get closer to Him, we aim to make Him proud by being our best selves as Muslims.

And whilst we aim to dream dreams worthy of us as Allah’s beloved people, we work towards making a beautiful home in heaven. We work to achieve our dreams by letting go of limiting beliefs about what is and isn’t possible and trusting Allah to make miracles! I believe that our life is a masterpiece – so let’s live it like we mean it, with love for Islam in our hearts.

One of the sweetest ways we can celebrate our love for Allah is by introducing it to our children’s lives through Islamic children’s literature. Whilst they read books that appeal to their youthful, vibrant minds, they will begin

to understand their place in the world and develop pride and confidence in their religious faith and values.

The more they connect with Allah, the more confident they will feel to dream big and be the best self that Allah can help them be! There is nothing more fulfilling than seeing the children in our lives approach Islam with an open heart and with genuine curiosity.

I would encourage everyone reading this to make a conscious decision to fill the lives of the children around them with books and keep them off screens for as long as possible. Truly, books are love letters to the next generation! That is why I love to write them, and my dream is that together, we ensure our future leaders have a collection of treasured love letters.

And as you take care of their dreams and relationship with this world and the hereafter, my wish for you is that you too, get closer to Allah and make all of your dreams come true, Insha’Allah

With love,
Na’ima B. Robert




Q&A



What is your advice to aspiring writers reading this?

Write daily and read widely, wisely and well! Get yourself into a writing community, start honing your skills and develop your writing voice. The sky is the limit! If you are interested, I also have a free 6 week writing course for those just starting out: bit.ly/freewritingcourse

What was the most rewarding moment in your career?

Choosing one moment would be hard! I was incredulous when my first book, ‘The Swirling Hijab’ was published! And then when ‘Ramadan Moon’, and ‘Going to Mecca’ became family favourites. I also loved working with **Mufti Menk** on my book ‘Let it go’, based off quotes from his book ‘Motivational Moments.’

What are your plans for the future?

I always wanted to be the Muslim Michael Morpurgo! Insha’Allah, I would like to have published 50 books within the next 5 years - and I plan to break into new genres like chapter books and adult fiction. The second book in the series with **Mufti Menk** is also due within the year, which is very exciting!

Na'ima's ALL-TIME TOP CHILDREN'S TITLES

This is Why We Pray

By Ameenah Muhammad-Diggins (Rockridge Press)



Cinderella - An Islamic Tale

By Fawzia Gilani (Kube Publishers)



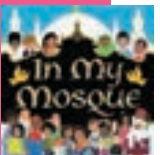
Ramadan Around the World

By Ndaa Hassan



In My Mosque

By M.O Yukset (Harper Collins)



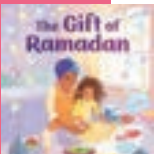
Let's Learn Surah Ar-Rahman

By Sudduf Wyne & Na'ima B. Robert (Little Hibba Books)



The Gift of Ramadan

By Rabiah York-Lumbard (Albert Whitman & Company)



Ramadan (Celebrate the World)

By Hannah Eliot (Little Simon)



Reclaim you

Pick the lens through which you see the world

By Zimarina Sarwar



There's a running joke in my house about my daughter's ability to turn any event into a detective case. Piecing together discarded receipts, old parking tickets and leftover packaging in the recycle bin, she can summarise any given person's movements that day- right down to what they ate and drank, and in which order. This isn't a coincidence; she has consumed so many mystery novels that she now approaches

the world as Sherlock Holmes in turbo-mode.

And this is the thing, human beings have a particular lens through which we see the world and that lens is created by what we choose to expose ourselves to. Just as 'you are what you eat' applies to what we fill our stomachs with, making active choices about what we expose our minds to drastically alters our perception of the world. What we consume through social media, through visual technology and the things we read has an impact. Who we speak to and what we spend our time speaking

about creates the internal landscape on which everything else grows... or dies.

This is a sobering reality and an incredible opportunity to take back control. Making a conscious effort to guard what we allow into our mental space will help us edge closer to being, feeling and experiencing the world in a better way. The lens through which we view the world is in our hands. Think of the lens of gratitude

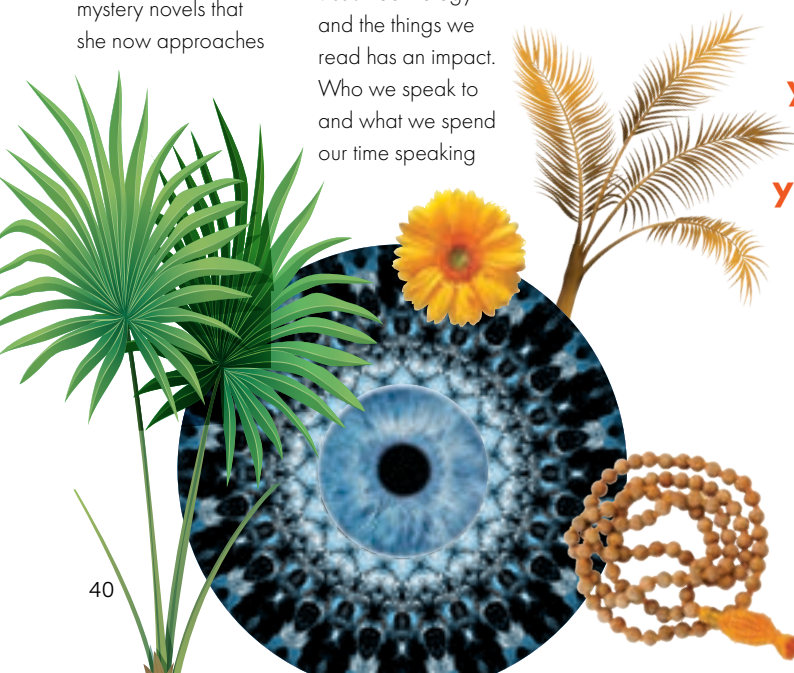
as an example. When you actively and consistently ponder on the things in your life you are grateful for, you will become more attuned to spotting other blessings as they come your way. Your internal vision gets sharper, and through practice, you will naturally incline towards more of the same.

about yourself and the world? Think of where you would like to be and the kind of 'input' (through media, company, spiritual practice and more) that will get you there.

In a world of instant gratification and endless stimulation, allow your head and heart time to pause and reflect. Actively strip away the noise that distracts, diverts, and disturbs so you can refocus. Be vigilant about allowing in what nourishes your heart and soul since they are, without doubt, the most valuable things we can guard.

What are you seeing through your current lens?

Take a moment to do a mental inventory of your daily habits: what do you spend most of your time doing? How do those activities end up making you feel



EID PARTY
"Thank you for my gift."



WINTER DISTRIBUTION
"Thank you for keeping me warm."



FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL
"Thank you for my uniform."



EMERGENCY AMBULANCE
"Thank you for saving lives."

WHAT WE'VE BEEN DOING
Here are some highlights of the amazing work we have carried out this year.



GAZA EMERGENCY
"Thank you for helping my family."



WORLD BOOK DAY
"Thank you for giving us books."



QURBANI DISTRIBUTION
"Thank you for bringing joy on Eid."



FUTURE DOCTOR
"Thank you for helping me learn."

THE LIFELONG EFFECTS OF CHILDHOOD TRAUMA

When people think of “childhood trauma,” they may limit it to the obvious causes, such as physical or sexual abuse. However, there are many experiences that can cause childhood trauma. Some other ways that children can be exposed to trauma are:

- Poverty-induced stress
- Chronic illness
- Accidents
- Death of family members
- Bullying, including cyberbullying
- Separation from a parent/caregiver
- Exposure to violence

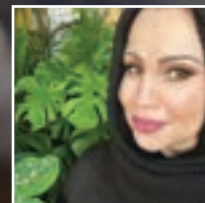
Globally, there are over a billion children living in conflict zones. Most of these areas are lacking in resources and impoverished, making it hard to meet basic needs, let alone access mental healthcare.

A study published in *Frontiers in Psychiatry* found that in Palestine, where we sponsor over 4800 children, almost 90% of children in the Gaza Strip experienced trauma. More than 80% of children in the study had witnessed trauma to others, which can be traumatic for them. This is called secondary or vicarious trauma. For children who are orphaned, their trauma becomes compounded, as they lack the support system of having their biological parents present in their lives. Perhaps even more concerning is that studies show children who are orphaned are at further risk for additional traumas to occur.

The impact of childhood trauma doesn't stop when childhood is over. Research on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) have shown that the effects of childhood trauma can be lifelong.

Not only are these experiences related to the development of anxiety, depression, and PTSD, but they are also correlated with physical health problems that may be potentially deadly, such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and Alzheimer's, as well as negative effects on educational achievements and income attainment.

That's why our sponsorship programme assists with not only basic needs, but access to mental healthcare - because we know the effects of childhood trauma don't end when childhood does.



Azmia Magane is a social worker and therapist with experience in child welfare. She currently serves as the executive of MuslimGirl.com, and her written works can be found in publications such as *Teen Vogue*, *Bustle*, *Glamour*, *Allure*, *Elle*, and more.

Why Giving Back Feels Good

“A man’s true wealth is the good he does in this world.”

- Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

We've all heard the saying that it's better to give than to receive, but did you know there's science behind it? A 2008 study by Harvard Business School Professor Michael Norton and his colleagues found that giving money away to others made people happier than spending it on themselves -- even when participants predicted that spending on themselves would make them happier.

That happiness shows up in our brain's biology; our psychology is reflected in our physiology. A 2006 study by the National Institutes of Health found that when people give to charity, it activates parts of the brain associated with trust, pleasure, and social connection.

This is likely why generosity has been linked to a myriad of health benefits for those giving, including reduced stress levels, lower blood pressure, and increased self-esteem. So if you ever find yourself in need of a mood-boost, find someone to help, and see what happens. You'll likely help them - and yourself!

My Child, Leukaemia & Me

The inspiring story of Yusuf and how he has transformed the lives of 10 orphans

Most 11-year-olds are at an exciting time in their lives. Who *isn't* excited about being in Year 7? It's a time for playing with friends in the park, learning new things and shaping into the person you will become.

But for Yusuf, this was the age he was diagnosed with leukaemia, and his life changed forever as he spent most of his days in hospital with his Mum. Yusuf's family decided to do something to lift Yusuf's spirits, and together they launched a fundraiser for orphaned children living in poverty.

Over two years later, Yusuf's illness is still ongoing, but so is his strength. From the Oncology ward, Yusuf's mother, Dr Tasneem Afzal, speaks to us about her son's story and their journey with Orphans in Need.

Staying afloat through the storm

My son Yusuf is now thirteen. He has received intensive chemotherapy to treat blood cancer for two years, and has a year of treatment left. Sadly, we are currently in the

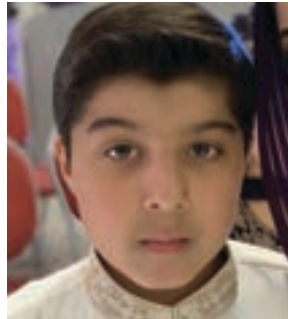
Oncology ward as Yusuf is unwell. When you face situations like this in life, where your loved ones are in serious trouble, your vulnerability is stripped to its core.

Yusuf is showing immense courage. Even though he has been critically unwell and goes through several surgical procedures - he has the most beautifully positive outlook in life. He cannot live life like his siblings and peers. Yet, he always has a bright smile on his face and has inspiring conversations with everyone around him.

We pray and dream that Yusuf's treatments will be successful. And one day, we hope to look back at these years

and thank The Almighty for keeping us afloat through this storm. His illness has been a harrowing ordeal for his little body, but thankfully he has medical help, psychological and social support available to him.

Yusuf and I often think about children in third world countries who have no such support. This broke our hearts, and that's why we started fundraising for Orphans in Need.



Sadaqah for my son

I contacted Orphans in Need to set up a regular sadaqah in Yusuf's name; one of the virtues of giving sadaqah is easing hardships and removing calamities. And I was so overwhelmed with the response. Overnight, we raised over £3,000!

The page is still active, and we have now raised enough to sponsor ten orphans for three years. We receive detailed feedback on provisions of shelter, food, education, medical care and more – Alhamdulillah. Yusuf recently requested that we should continue fundraising, to support these orphans for another three years, Insha'Allah. The duas he has received are heart-warming, and he is so grateful.

Staying strong

My advice to parents dealing with the same situation is try to stay strong. Focus on supporting your child and making them smile. Also, setting up a fundraising page was very healing for Yusuf and me.

I would also advise you to be confident in learning about the treatments and their effects on your child's body. I am a medic by profession, so I already understood what was happening. But I met

many parents who learnt and could follow complex treatment regimens without any medical knowledge.

Lastly, I'd say let yourself feel the hard days, you are only human. I still pace around the hallway some nights in tears, begging Allah to give Yusuf complete healing. And after, I submit to the mercy of Allah.

A huge 'thank you' to Yusuf and his family, who have transformed the lives of ten orphans. We pray for healing, good health and success for Yusuf – a true Orphans in Need hero. To support Yusuf's fundraiser, scan the QR code below.



HALL OF FAME

Fundraising Superstars



Meet some of the champion superheroes who keep the work of Orphans in Need alive.



SUPERHERO DAD!

Danny talks to us about fundraising as a parent:

"Monthly orphan sponsorship allowed each one of my own children to choose an orphan from around the world and feel honoured that Allah had made a way for them to directly contribute to their welfare."

When Danny first contacted us, he was certain he wanted to do more than set up a direct debit. The reason being, he wanted to have a more active role in serving a purpose so that he could teach his



SHABANA: From Belfast to London...

"It's been an amazing journey meeting passionate, inspiring volunteers who give up their free time to help orphans and widows."

Fundraising Manager, Shabana, oversees opportunities to work with individuals and communities dedicated to making a change. From studying Law, to teaching children, Shabana has always been determined to change lives. Eventually, she joined the Orphans in Need family and has been working closely with our supporters for 7 years.

Drop an email to Shabana at shabana.ali@orphansinneed.org if you would like to support orphans and widows by fundraising & volunteering.

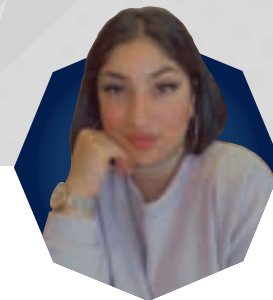


Made in Italy: GRAZIE BIAGIO!

"Delivering hope, smiles and opportunities to these children is something that helps you sleep better at night."

Biagio, a self-proclaimed "pizza and pasta lover" from Italy, moved to the UK in 2015. For many years, Biagio has been in the Orphans in Need family.

Biagio hosted a wonderful event on the Greenwich campus where he studied, including activities, presentations and of course, free pizza! The goal? To sponsor 11-year-old Najma from India for a year. Biagio raised enough to cover almost 2 years of her living expenses! Grazie, Biagio!



HAFSA: A Long-time Superhero Reflects...

"The best part about charity work is the family you're with, the fun you have and the connection you make with them that lasts forever."

Biryani-lover Hafsa has been volunteering for Orphans in Need since 2014. It's been more than half a decade of fundraising, escape rooms and more – all filled with "great memories and fulfilment." Hafsa believes that changing the world starts with making a widow or orphan smile, somewhere in the world. She brands it "a cycle. A beautiful cycle of love and support." Thank you, Hafsa!

children about the importance of giving.

Danny is a believer that children should appreciate that the good they have in their life is a gift from the Almighty. He first began introducing them to the world of fundraising by sharing his photographs and videos of his adventures. He also hoped to inspire his children each time he would join us for volunteering.

One of these adventures was the Trek for Gaza on Mount Snowdon last year. Danny travelled there with the Orphans in Need family, to start

the hike at 8am in the morning. He recalls how motivating it was when his children made the decision to join him on the trip. They were so excited about it!

Danny is an inspiring father, striving to balance his work life, parenthood, and his dreams of making a difference. He believes that the key to doing so, is in coming together as a family, so that everyone is contributing and supporting each other. If any parents are reading this, Danny wanted to share some words, from one parent to another:

"If you flag volunteering as a priority, don't let anything hold you back. We are all faced with different challenges in life, so don't look at what others do as a measuring stick. Set small goals, and grow from there. You will meet nice people, and it is beautiful when you reunite and reminisce about all the good memories. And the best feeling is ending your day knowing you are doing something to help others."

A big 'thanks' to Danny and his family for their fantastic support.



Reaching new heights

AISHA & NAILAH

Trek for Gaza

Not all superheroes wear capes, some wear hijab! Despite it being a stormy day in August (a British summer does not disappoint), Nailah Edwards and Aisha Rosalie brought girl power to Mount Snowdon. The gloominess of the day didn't stop the pair as they joined an inspiring team of volunteers to trek up Mount Snowdon.

Nailah found herself worlds away from the studio of Islam Channel, where she works as a producer/presenter. Aisha, a YouTuber who loves to travel, was also placing herself in a completely new environment – Mount Snowdon was a welcome challenge for both friends, who regularly collaborate on making short films and Islamic content. They even collaborated to document the run-up to the Trek for Gaza challenge on their YouTube channels. If climbing the mountain wasn't enough, the girls pledged to raise a stupendous **£10,000** for Gaza, which they have now exceeded to **£14,000!** Allahu Akbar!

We sat down with Nailah and Aisha to talk about their Trek for Gaza experience, and what it was like fundraising for Orphans in Need.

What made you get involved with Orphans in Need?

Aisha: Since reverting, I've found so much peace. Allah has granted me with so much love and passion for the deen that I have found immense happiness in helping people make a positive change in their life. Honestly, I just decided that it's time to start giving back. Seeing orphans going through hardship is heart-breaking and I wish to give as much to them as possible!

Nailah: Their work is absolutely amazing. As a Mum, I can't imagine my daughter being an orphan left on the street. The thought alone can bring me to my knees. I thought if I would want someone to care for my girl if I was gone, then how can I not do the same for those parents whose children are left all alone?

Why is it important to undertake charity work?

Aisha: It's a huge part of our religion and people rely on it. There are people in the world who rely on these resources to survive.

Nailah: Allah has blessed us all with skills and tools, we have to use the blessings given to us to live the most beneficial and productive lives. A productive life doesn't mean you finish 10 work projects in a day. As a Muslim productivity is far more important. We have to be productive in creating the best work for our Ummah to thrive in and helping those less fortunate. Creating opportunities for others to thrive when Allah has given you a comfortable life is the perfect way to do that.

Tell us about that beautiful day on which you trekked for Gaza.

Aisha: It was the hardest thing I've ever done. There were lots of times where I thought 'I can't do this'. I became a lot closer to Allah that day.

Nailah: The trek up was killer, wasn't sure that we were all going to make it at some points but, Alhamdulillah, everyone did. I felt so close to Allah when I reached the top purely because of my intentions. Every step and struggle I had to overcome to reach the summit. And then the walk down, Allah cleared the skies and gave me some of the best views I've ever seen in my entire life.

What was your favourite part of the trek?

Aisha: Eating hummus on the summit!

Nailah: Hummus on the summit - if you haven't seen our trek vlog you won't get the joke!

You raised over £14k, do you have a message for everyone who supported you?

Aisha: Thank you so much to everyone that supported and helped us, Alhamdulillah! May Allah give you goodness in this life and the next! Ameen.

Nailah: The number of people who contributed is unbelievable. Even if they have little, they still gave whatever they could and every pound was appreciated and celebrated with Takbirs ['God is greatest'] from Aisha and myself.

Nailah and Aisha did an incredible job fundraising. Be sure to follow Nailah @victoriaofislam and Aisha @aisha_rosalie on Instagram – who knows, you may just see them on the top of another mountain very soon!

"You all made this possible, we were just the beacon that brought it all together but it's your sacrifices that have helped so many. May Allah bless and reward you all multiple times in this life and the next."



NAILAH EDWARDS
Born in Canada, Nailah moved to Malaysia at 15, where she reverted to Islam at 22. She now works in London's Islamic film industry and has a YouTube presence.

AISHA ROSALIE
Aisha was born and raised in Britain. She reverted to Islam at 22. Since reverting, she has gotten married and now makes dawah-style videos and short films for her YouTube subscribers.

RUN, EMON, RUN!

His commitment to working hard is second to none. Not only did he run the Great Manchester Run this year, he also participated in the London Marathon, a matter of days later!

At the start of Ramadan 2021, Emon launched his 'Run, Emon, Run!' campaign to raise funds to build a school for under-privileged children. With the help of some amazing volunteers, Emon has raised a staggering £25k! Emon and his nephew, Jamiul, were crowned the winners of BBC 'Race Across the World' in 2020.

"I decided to take on my Ramadan challenge which was to run 200k whilst fasting," says Emon, who lives in Bradford. Surprisingly, he had never participated in a race until the Great Manchester Run in October 2021. "The Manchester run was actually my first ever race, so I was really anxious about it!"

Emon credits his team of 25 runners who joined him on the Run. "All the participants loved it and everyone managed to get over the finishing line, I don't think anyone in the team had done a 10k race before." Emon reflects on the "electric" atmosphere and how he was glad to have prepared physically for the event. Just one week later, Emon ran the London Marathon, which was the "experience of a lifetime". And the race is not over yet, Emon plans to run six more marathons this year!



His superpower? Speed! Emon Choudhury is running to build a school for orphans in Nepal.

When asked why he chose to fundraise to build a school, Emon states that being born in the UK, we "take for granted what we have been blessed with." As part of his BBC 'Race Across the World' show, he met homeless people and orphaned children. It was this experience that inspired him to launch the project.

"My dad taught me from a young age the importance of charity; not only as being a good Muslim, but being a good human."

Emon's father built an orphanage in Bangladesh almost 40 years ago, which still runs on donations from Emon's family. He has always wanted to work on a project his father would be proud of. "Teaming up with Orphans in Need allowed me to try and build my own legacy whilst I'm still here. Education is crucial to any child, but even more crucial if the child comes from an impoverished background. This is the gateway to their future. It's our duty to help facilitate this in any way we can."

"I approached Orphans in Need and found a project through which I was able to fulfil myself," says Emon, who donated his prize money from the BBC show to various charities. The reason he chose a building project is so that he can visit in the future. "I can go and visit in years to come knowing that I had a hand in building it and that I've helped children with a better life. Seeing is believing."

"Anyone can do a marathon. You don't need to be a runner, you can walk it if you like. That's the beauty of running – it's for everyone from all different backgrounds."

Emon invites everyone to volunteer and run for Orphans in Need, even if running isn't your strongest trait. He states that "if you have a desire to start it, then that's all you need."

Support Emon's fundraiser by scanning the QR code.

PLEASE SCAN





ZAIN BHIKHA

It was December 2016. I was climbing Mount Hira in Makkah with my brother and my friend. At some point on the journey, my friend played the melody of 'Mountains of Makkah', A tune that took me right back to the days when my Mum would be driving me and my siblings to school, and the anthem would often play on the local Islamic radio station. This song was part of my childhood, and there I was, on a life-changing journey remembering this song that felt like home. And I'm not alone...you remember it too! >

Words ADAM IQBAL

I was blessed with the opportunity to sit down with legendary Islamic recording artist, Zain Bhikha, on Zoom, to reflect on his incredible journey which spans almost three decades. I join from my home in grey Britain and Zain joins from his home in sunny South Africa. “I’m still getting used to doing things virtually!” he laughs.

“I have a small home studio set up here,” he says, referring to his surroundings. Zain tells me of how he and his family relocated from Johannesburg to Cape Town around one year ago. “We’re still settling in as a family but, Alhamdulillah, we enjoy Cape Town, it’s a lot more beautiful with the nature and the ocean and the mountains. So, Alhamdulillah, it’s been a life-changing opportunity for us.”

I notice a display of his published books showcased behind him. In awe of the breadth of how much he has achieved, I wonder if he’s used to seeing his name on his works. “It never gets old. Up until today – 25 years later, the barakah of it all... the opportunity that Allah can use you in a positive way beyond your wildest expectations.”

I, obviously, do not miss this opportunity to tell Zain of my experience in Makkah and how ‘Mountains of Makkah’ takes me right back to that sun-kissed morning on Mount Hira. “There was a lovely saying that someone said to me: ‘songs remind us of who we are and where we came from’, and it’s a very personal thing. It’s intangible. It’s a feeling that you get. Many people like you, who grew up with my songs, they remind them a lot of their family, home, parents... Alhamdulillah, I’m really just overwhelmed to be part of that. Almost a silent accompaniment to somebody’s life, and it’s such a beautiful thing.”

Despite being one of the world’s most celebrated nasheed artists, Zain reflects on his journey and recalls how, at the beginning, he wasn’t even sure if people would be interested in hearing his tracks. “A song like ‘Give Thanks to Allah’, I wrote so many years ago... a simple song. When I started, it was more about ‘can I do it?’ and I wanted to express myself.”

Like many fans that listen to Zain’s music to feel closer to their faith, it seems Zain produces his material for the exact same “yearning”. He reflects on ‘Give Thanks to Allah’, an earlier song he produced. At the time of writing, Zain was “going through a lot of issues” and “was trying to determine what the greater purpose of life was, and trying to re-connect with our Creator.”

This seemed to work. As Zain began to practice more and more, he was blessed with the opportunity to perform the once-in-a-lifetime Hajj pilgrimage. Previously when in Makkah, he had spent time writing songs which praised the Prophet (saw) and Allah (swt). For example, he had written ‘Mount Hira’ whilst in Makkah. Unlike his previous Umrah experiences (of which there had been a few), Zain tells me he promised himself “no songs”, as he would aim to focus solely on his Hajj, and his “own salvation.” This changed when Zain happened to share an elevator with an elderly gentleman. “He turned to me and said, ‘can you do me a favour?’, and I was like ‘sure, can I help you?’ He said ‘while you are here, can you please write a song about Medina?’, and that gave me the permission.” This encounter seemed to be part of an “immense plan”, and Zain has no doubt that Allah was guiding him to continue writing whilst on his pilgrimage. Thus, Zain wrote many tracks whilst in Makkah and Medina, including ‘City of Medina’, ‘The Journey’, and more from his 2006 album, ‘Mountains of Makkah’.



It is evident to me that Zain holds his parents in the highest regard, as one should. Whenever he speaks of them, his face lights up and it’s clear that he owes a lot to them. In fact, he credits his mother and father for “liberating” him by allowing him to nurture his artistic talents, something which he states most parents in his community whilst growing up would not allow.

**“Time goes
by on the
WINGS OF
A BUTTERFLY,
and what goes with
it is all that
you have.”**

‘Time’ (2002) by Zain Bhikha

It was Zain’s father who gave Yusuf Islam a cassette that his son had produced. When Yusuf was working on his ‘A is for Allah’ official songbook, he had invited Zain to record the song. Now, Zain’s voice was to be propelled beyond the borders of South Africa and echoed across the world. Working with Yusuf also meant that Zain met Dawud Wharmsby, a friend who remains close to him to this very day. The conversation surrounding Yusuf Islam and how he helped kickstart his nasheeds career still brings a smile to Zain’s face, decades later.

Zain tells me that his father had advised him not to make music his sole source of income. While he did indeed pursue his artistic interests, that didn’t stop him also working full-time and having a successful career as the CEO of a pharmaceutical company.

I ask Zain about a beautiful, intriguing line from his 2002 track, 'Time', and he beams at the reference of a song that is "so special" to him. Zain explains how, when he wrote the song, in 1998, he was going through a lot of changes. He was driving past the school he used to attend, and the field in which he used to play as a child. "Time is so relative," he ponders. "Like a dusty window pane, we see our past, but we don't see specifically. Allah speaks about time, we always as human beings are going to be at a loss when it comes to time. It's so fragile, like butterfly wings. The best we can do is make the most of every moment and every person that we meet. And then move on, but keep what you've learned from the past."

We talk further about the notion of time. As Muslims, Zain feels we can utilize our time well. He considers the thought of the modern world getting lost in media and screens, and that getting closer to Allah is experiential. Whether we lose somebody, or are blessed with an experience like Hajj, he says that it takes time to connect to our Maker, and this generally happens through experiences. Zain explores that our lives, from an Islamic perspective, are based on appointed times, so we must "create a balance for ourselves". He mentions salah and Ramadan, which are bestowed upon us at certain times that come around consistently. "The Prophet (saw) was so disciplined in whatever he did. It goes against the freedom that people propose in today's world, but ultimately, being a Muslim is surrendering what we want for what Allah loves and what Allah expects from us. And that's when we find the real freedom."

In his 2011 album, 'Hope', Zain recorded a track titled 'Heal the World'. When asked what we can



Zain with Dawud Wharnsby and Yusuf Islam

do to help achieve world healing, Zain advises to give sadaqah, lillah and zakat. "There's no greater joy that you'd feel when you do something for the pleasure of Allah and you do something that will help another human being on earth."

Zain Bhikha Studios was established as a not-for-profit, a waqf that operates from donations

and investments. Zain, even after all the years of success he has been blessed with, tells me it still feels like a passion, rather than a career, and he cannot take credit. He acknowledges Allah (swt) as the One who gave him the gift of his talents. "What better way to celebrate a gift than to praise the One who gave it to you?" smiles Zain, in gratitude.



Flashback: 9-year-old Zain

The FUTURE...

As we wrap up our reflection on his remarkable life so far, I'm curious of what we can expect from Zain Bhikha this year.

As bedtime has been an important aspect of Zain's own parenting journey, he tells me that he is working on developing an app for young parents and their children, and how they can deal with bedtime.

Story time is also something Zain holds very dearly, so we can look forward to a new series of songbooks, including 'Everything Belongs to Allah' and 'The Monkey, the Cow and the Wolf'. A division of Zain Bhikha Studios, ZeeBeeKids, will also see the launch of a brand new animated series – another thing for his young fanbase to look forward to.

And that's not all, on the horizon is an album that is "different to what [he's] done before", composed for a mature audience. We'll hopefully be hearing some singles this year, in the run-up to its release.

On a personal level, Zain is looking forward to Ramadan. "Leading up to the blessed month, we're always afraid of how we're going to adjust our bodies to stay without food and drink. Once it starts, you suddenly get into a beautiful routine and are surrendering to Allah."

With lots to look forward to this year from Zain, I'm excited to see what 2022 will bring for him.

Follow Zain on Instagram @zainbhikhaofficial and be sure to stream his discography on all major streaming platforms!

Our RAMADAN playlist



SIEDD
"Remember Me"



CASTILLO
"I Need You"



ISHAQ AYUBI
"Maula"



MAHER ZAIN
"Ramadan"



ZAIN BHIKHA
"Orphan Child"

There's no place like home

"Home" is just a place in a distant dream for millions of orphans and widows in the world. The reality is that they may never see within the walls of a warm, safe home, to live in with dignity.

In many cultures, widows are seen as outcasts. The community turns them away, and they lose their rights. As women, they are denied the right to an education, can't earn a living and live in terrible conditions with their orphaned children.

Thanks to supporters like you, not all hope is lost for orphans and widows. Together, we have provided long-term protection to widowed families by building widow homes.



Meet Mahmooda, a forty-two-year-old widow living in Jammu & Kashmir with her three daughters. Mahmooda was living in a freezing tin shed, isolated and cast away from the local community and her relatives. She told us, "When my daughters ask me why our relatives don't visit us, I don't know what to say. They never even asked us how we were doing, have we had something to eat or not. I believe there is no humanity left in the world. I would often pray for my death."

Mahmooda was suffering with anxiety, depression and suicidal

thoughts. She slept very little, staying awake in fear of what would happen to her daughters while they were asleep in an unsafe, unlocked shed. The freezing weather conditions meant they were falling sick quite often too. All these issues were especially worrying given Mahmooda was recently diagnosed with a heart condition. Thanks to you, we have

"I believe there is no humanity left in the world. I would often pray for my death."

built a home for Mahmooda and her daughters. The moment they saw their house, their eyes filled with tears of happiness. You have changed their lives completely; they have finally found their home.



Home sweet home

Now they can rest their heads on a soft bed, wrapped up in warm blankets, feeling safe. They can sit by the window with a hot cup of Kashmiri tea, admiring the beautiful snow outside instead of suffering freezing weather conditions. They can enjoy the little things, like cooking warm meals together using the monthly food parcels they are provided with, and the feeling of knowing their futures are secure because the orphaned girls receive orphan sponsorship.

i
Jammu & Kashmir has been affected by political instability, territory disputes, and natural disaster for decades. Many have lost their jobs and families due to curfews that restrict their access to food, water, and medical aid. Several earthquakes have destroyed the infrastructure, resulting in many widows and orphans living in houses made of scrap material like mud and sheets of steel.

They are happy that the kind-hearted people of Allah are looking out for them. They know that they are not outcasts but deserving of protection and care. Thank you, we could not have done this without you.



SUPER SAF

So you want to be a YouTuber?

From humble beginnings to an internet sensation: SuperSaf speaks...

Safwan AhmedMia, known as SuperSaf, launched his own YouTube channel in 2011, centred around his one true passion – technology. 10 years on, his content has accumulated over 350 million views from across the world.

Renowned for his signature sunglasses, the British Muslim has soared into an internet sensation. I think 'super' is an understatement. Saf manages to produce all of his own content and regularly posts to his three million social media followers. But who is the Saf behind the shades?

"I'm just regular old Saf!" he says, sitting in his home studio. I wonder what made him sign up to YouTube over a decade ago. He tells me how he was "fascinated" by YouTube and the online world in general. "My dad always says: 'Allah helps those who help themselves'. A platform like YouTube allows you to make your own opportunities, you don't need to rely on anyone else. You can just make content and put it on there. Insha'Allah, if it's good, you'll find an audience."

The youngest of four brothers, the globally-celebrated internet blogger grew up in council flats, and reminisces how his family couldn't afford internet access at home. With local crime rates on the rise, his parents kept him and his siblings at home. It was his father's video camera that kept Saf and his brothers entertained. They'd often use it to film comedy skits, and Saf was always in front of the camera. From short movies to action movie trailers, "there's still some embarrassing stuff online!" laughs Saf.

Having completed his degree in Multimedia Computing and known by his family and friends as the go-to genius for all things tech, Saf began posting technology-related content online. "The more content I posted, the more people would ask me for advice. Tech support, from just being my family and friends, then went to people from the other

side of the world asking me which camera they should buy."

Saf references a recent study which found that 75% of children from the UK and the USA want to become 'YouTubers'. But with success comes the trial of negative comments. "10 years in, it still does affect me." Saf does have a couple of mechanisms to deal with the negativity. "The first is: positivity always outweighs negativity". Saf tells me that for each negative comment, there are hundreds of positive ones. Secondly, Saf mentions a story in which the Prophet (saw) had rubbish thrown over him each time he passed the home of a woman. Then, one day, she did not. He (saw) learned she was ill, and went to courteously visit the woman. This story teaches of forgiveness and of harbouring no hatred.

Saf speaks of his faith and how it keeps him grounded. "It's the base of everything I do and it keeps my intentions in check." It's easy to get caught up in the world of

technology. While he may skip lunch to focus on his work, Saf credits his prayers for breaking up his day, as they are compulsory and bring him away from his screen.

An important thread that intertwines our faith is the practise of giving. Speaking of Orphans in Need, Saf reveals he is a regular supporter of our work. Our mission to help orphans and widows prompts him to reflect on the fact that parents are a gift. "Being blessed with parents is something that we all take for granted, those of us who do have parents. Being able to help those who are not as fortunate as you is such a big, big thing. What Orphans in Need is doing across the world is amazing, and you have my full support."

Follow Saf on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and TikTok @SuperSaf



Saf celebrating over 1 Million Youtube subscribers

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