

Qatar Charity opens the largest Islamic Center in Luxembourg

**As a part of "Greetings to You" campaign,
The distribution of gift boxes for local
workers in Qatar**

Feature

Free
Issue

«Yemen, we are with you» Ongoing Relief Efforts



Ghiras Editorial



First, I would like to congratulate the People of Qatar people as well as the Arab and Muslim nations for the coming of the holy month of Ramadan. We pray to Almighty Allah to accept the good deeds and acts of worshipping from all of us. Because Ramadan is the month of giving, we named our campaign for this year "Ramadan Al Basma" (Ramadan of Smiles). We hope that through our partnership with the philanthropists that we can draw a smile on the faces of the needy and bring joy to their hearts. A smile is a rewarded act of charity as explained in the Prophetic tradition (Hadith) and it will not be seen on the faces of the needy unless they felt the change in their lives.

This issue sheds light on a number of important activities and events such as the ongoing campaign called "Yemen, we are with you" to alleviate the suffering of our brothers and sisters in Yemen. The section devoted for this campaign covers the initial call for help, the launching of the campaign, our consultation meeting with Yemeni Relief and Coordination Authority and other humanitarian organizations, and supervising the distribution of 120 tons of relief from the Qatari Government airlifted to Djibouti.

The 11th issue also covers the commencement of large projects or the implementation of significant events. This includes the opening of the largest Islamic Center in Luxembourg, organizing the second "Companions" match in Al-Madinah to draw attention to the issues of orphans, hosting the third International Forum for Humanitarian Work by a joint cooperation with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs, food security promoting projects in Syria, and the rehabilitation of the agricultural land affected by the most recent aggression on Gaza. In addition, this issue will cover important local projects such as concluding the second phase and launching the third of "Zawaj" (Marriage) project, concluding the fourth phase of the national competition to promote values "Snafi wa Habbat Al Reeh", in which 95 Qatari schools have taken part, signing a number of important agreements with local and international organizations such the agreement with the UN's World Food Program, and the memorandum of strategic alliance to promote cooperation with Al Asmakh Charity.

Success stories are also present as always in "Ghiras". This issue introduces two success stories highlighting the effect of our supportive projects of income and housing.

This issue also covers other topics you may find interesting.

May Almighty Allah accept our good deeds, and we hope to see you in upcoming issues.

Chief Executive Officer

Yousef Bin Ahmed Al-Kuwari



Ghiras

Periodic Magazine by Qatar Charity
Issue 11 – June 2015 AD

EDITOR-IN-CHEIF
YUSUF BIN AHMED AL-KUWARI

EXECUTIVE EDITOR
JASSIM IBRAHIM ALMANSOURI

MANAGING EDITOR
ALI ALRASHEED

EDITORS
AHMED MOHAMMED AHMEDOU
AWADALLA GUBARA AHMED

TRANSLATION
EK TRANSLATIONS

PROOFREADER
JAMAL AL-DIN BELKE

PHOTOGRAPHER
MOHEMED ENAS A. ALEEM

DESIGNER
KHADIR AL-SHEIKH HILAL



Qatar Charity Hosts the Third Forum for Humanitarian Action
(Report)

10



Sameer Jana Family... From Living in Caves to a decent Life
(Success Story –Albania)

12



Qatar Charity and the World Food Programme WFP sign a Cooperation Agreement to Fight Hunger and Malnutrition
(Report)

22

P.O.BOX 1224 DOHA - QATAR
TEL:+974 44667711 FAX: +974 44667733
EMAIL: ghiras@qcharity.org WEB: www.qcharity.org
f @qcharity

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Electronic copy

Please send us your email to :
ghiras@qcharity.org

Printed copy

Cost 10 QAR to benefit QC development projects.
Please call : +974 44667711



Qatar Charity and Cyclists from Qatar Provide Support for Gaza Educational Program

Qatar Charity, 'Qatar Sandstormers' and the Qatar Cycling Center announced their partnership to support an educational program in the Gaza Strip worth more than QAR 5.0 million (USD 1.4 million) as part of the 'Cyclists' Initiative for Education' that was launched earlier this year. The teams will volunteer through their participation in the Global Biking Initiative (GBI) challenge for gaining support to this educational program in Gaza. The activities of the GBI began on 7 June in Venice, Italy and will see them ride to Stuttgart, Germany. Qatar Cycling and Qatar Sandstormers teams will participate in this race that will continue for seven days in which participants will to cross 800 km at an altitude of up to 7000 meters in the Alps Mountains. The two teams consist of 35 cyclists, the majority of whom are Qataris and will cross four European countries: Italy, Austria, Switzerland, and Germany. Abdul Nasser Al-Zahir Al-Rifai,

the CEO of Local Development Department in Qatar Charity stated that this is a praiseworthy event as participants raise money for supporting charitable and humanitarian work.

Fruitful Partnership

Marouf Mahmoud, a member of Qatar Sandstormers Team, said that selecting to support a project for the construction of a girls' secondary school in Gaza stems from their belief in the importance and necessity of education. This is especially so in areas where children face challenges and difficulties that impede their access to necessary education needed for the advancement of their communities.

In turn, Dr. Abdul Aziz Al-Kuwari, the Director of Qatar Cycling Center, expressed his appreciation for humanitarian services, pointing out that cyclists participated in a number of initiatives for helping the needy as part of their own philosophy. The companies that support Qatar cyclists expressed their happiness

to cooperate for education programs. They also praised Qatar cyclists' humanitarian efforts that strengthen the presence of Qatar charitable and humanitarian role worldwide.

The GBI consists of hundreds of bikers from more than twenty countries around the world who participate in charitable projects of their own choice. Sponsored by many companies, the bikers transfer the sponsorship value to charitable projects. The volunteers, in turn, travel at their own expense as a contribution to humanitarian work. Constructing Al-Shaimaa Secondary School in Gaza will cost QAR 5.4 million (USD 1.5 million). It will provide secondary education for female students in the town of Beit Lahiya and the nearby Bedouin villages in the northern part of the Gaza Strip. The school will serve 1920 female students annually and will improve the quality of education by providing modern, well-equipped facilities to improve the overall educational environment.



Qatar Charity Hosts a High-Level Consultative Meeting on the Humanitarian Situation in Yemen

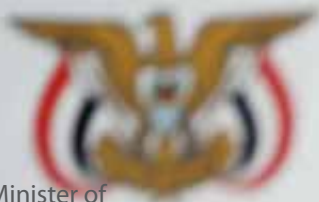
In May 2015, Qatar Charity hosted a high-level consultative meeting on the humanitarian situation in Yemen, in cooperation with the Yemen Relief and Coordination Organization of the Chairman's office of the Council of Ministers. The meeting was attended by the representatives of humanitarian organizations in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the Islamic World League to search for the most effective ways to respond to the humanitarian situation in Yemen. The meeting highlighted the challenges and difficulties facing humanitarian efforts to respond to the situation in Yemen. It also aimed at introducing the Yemen Relief and Coordination Organization, methods of coordinating with it, developing a response roadmap for humanitarian activists,

distributing roles among them and consulting with them on the possible ways to respond to the humanitarian situation in Yemen effectively.

Mr. Yousef Bin Ahmed Al-Kuwari, CEO of Qatar Charity stressed that this meeting is held in order to search for chances of restoring hope in Yemen and to deliver humanitarian aid to beneficiaries in order to mitigate their suffering in such difficult circumstances. He considered the formation of the Yemen Relief and Coordination Organization an important step in this framework as it provides coordination between humanitarian efforts to ensure the efficient performance of the roles of the humanitarian activists. For his part, Dr. Ahmed Marikhi, Director of the Department for International Development in the Qatar Ministry of Foreign

Affairs, spoke about the efforts of the State of Qatar since the beginning of the Yemeni crisis. He stated that Qatar has spared no effort in providing humanitarian aid through its governmental bodies and non-governmental organizations while noting that efforts are still ongoing to deliver aid to Yemen. He confirmed that urgent aid is being delivered through an airlift through Djibouti.

Ambassador Marikhi expressed his pleasure for the establishment of the Yemen Relief and Coordination Organization and emphasized on the need of coordinating with it. He also requested finding methods that would guarantee the success of the delivery of aid to the beneficiaries, considering the obstacles and challenges facing relief operations, Mrs. Nadia Abdul Aziz Al-Saqqaf,



The Yemeni Minister of Information: The situation in Yemen requires an urgent intervention or otherwise the health system in the country will collapse



the Director of the Higher Committee for Relief in Yemen and Minister of Information also made a presentation on the humanitarian situation in Yemen indicating that it needs an urgent intervention or otherwise the health system will collapse in the country. Severe crises in water and food are also expected to happen she added noting that this meeting aims to exchange information about the humanitarian situation in Yemen and to highlight the challenges and difficulties faced by the relief efforts in Yemen. Key recommendations At the end of the meeting, the participants agreed on the establishment of the Higher Committee for Relief in Yemen and holding a consultative meeting of humanitarian organizations on the humanitarian situation in Yemen

once a month to be hosted by one of the humanitarian organizations in the Gulf Cooperation Council. A team with a periodic chairmanship also emerged out of the consultative meeting of humanitarian organizations on the humanitarian situation in Yemen. This team will be chaired by the hosting organization of the meeting while humanitarian organizations who participated in the first meeting shall be considered as members of the team. They also recommended communicating with the various humanitarian coordination bodies available in Yemen for cooperation, to provide humanitarian aid to beneficiaries efficiently and effectively. The meeting also recommended ensuring the delivery of aid in

accordance with the known international standards and to respect the followed humanitarian principles. Moreover, they encouraged the implementation of a portion of the grants of the Gulf Cooperation Council be assigned for humanitarian work in Yemen in coordination with the High Relief Committee and other competent authorities, such as the specialized organizations of the United Nations. They also recommended humanitarian organizations to provide the Higher Committee for Relief with the needed information to update the website of the Higher Committee with information in accordance with policy of information dissemination adopted.



Launching the 'Recovery' Project for 93,000 Flood Affected Somalis

Qatar Charity has launched its 'Recovery' project in Somalia's Middle Shabelle province. Its shall benefit approximately 93,000 individuals affected by flooding in 2014 with a budget of QAR 3.6 million (USD 1.0 million).

A field visit was conducted by a delegation from the headquarters Qatar Charity consists of Ibrahim Ali Abdullah Abbel, Director of Emergency Relief; Abdullah Ibrahim Al-Sada, Director of Food Security and Mohamed Aderdor, Disaster Preparedness

and Response Manager. They visited Jowhar, the capital of Middle Shabelle in order to launch the project.

Eng. Hassan bin Hamza, Charge d'Affaires at the Qatari embassy in Somalia witnessed the inauguration of the project. He announced the commencement of the various activities of this valuable relief project and participated in all field activities of the project with Qatar Charity team.

The project aims at reclaiming 250 hectares of agricultural land in one of the most

important agricultural provinces in Somalia as well as rehabilitating 500 pastoral households and farmers affected by the floods, refurbishing 4 elementary and preparatory schools and 4 health centers affected by floods, building 7 artesian wells and providing them with new electric generators, rehabilitating 10 kilometers of irrigation canals and providing alternative sources of income for 58 affected families.



Equipping a Health Center for Treating Ebola in Sierra Leone

Qatar Charity has equipped a health center with 50 beds in Lunsar, Sierra Leone for treating Ebola

Because of risks experienced by doctors treating Ebola patients, this vital health project has enabled medical staff working at the center to purchase the necessary equipment for personal protection. It has provided 270 pairs of protective footwear, 33,000 pairs of gloves, 4450 gowns, 180 cleaning collection kits, 10,000 protective facemasks, 20 stethoscopes, 20 thermometers, 80 bottles of chlorine and talcum powder,

“
The center has implemented more than 6000 vital life-saving operations effectively and safely
In collaboration with the International Medical Corps,

”
 hand sterilization solutions and 150 body bags.
 The International Medical Corps has been running two Ebola

treatment centers (ETC) in Sierra Leone since December 2014.

One of them has been equipped with 50 beds in Lunsar (Port Loko province) and the other with 100 beds in Makeni (Bombali province.)

The Ebola crisis is still frightening, and varying in degrees of intensity in the most affected countries like Guinea and Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone recorded an average of 9 cases per week last April, while Guinea recorded between 21 and 57 cases per week in the past months.



As part of the «Our Greetings» campaign...

The Distribution of Gift Boxes for Workers in Qatar

Lakom Tahia' (Our Greetings) campaign, which was launched at the beginning of May 2015, continues to distribute gift boxes to workers, so far benefitting 1000 in Um Salal and Al-Rayyan cities as well as Al-Khor Hospital. The campaign aims at collecting basic personal care items then distributing them to workers as gift boxes starting from the beginning of May in recognition of their ongoing efforts in the construction of vital infrastructure projects in Qatar. In this occasion, Abdul Nasser Al-Yafei, Qatar Charity Executive Director for Local Development, stressed that this campaign aims to create symbiotic and

“

The distribution of the gift boxes have so far covered Um Salal and Al-Rayyan cities and Al-Khor Hospital

”

complementary ties within the community. He added that this campaign fits into the local development department's

strategy, covering three dimensions: social, economic, and cultural, to keep them up-to-date with the National Development Strategy 2016-2030 as part of the overall Qatar National Vision 2030.

The distribution process is what distinguishes this year's version of the campaign as it now includes ill workers currently in hospitals. There are also a larger number of participating volunteers, students, and people with special needs, in collaboration with the Qatar Volunteer Center, school administrations and others.

Aiding the needy

In mid-May, Qatar Charity also provided support to the workers



What distinguishes this year's version of the campaign is the inclusion of a wider range of workers such as workers now receiving medical treatment in hospitals; thus, the campaign's beneficiaries number increases to 5000



whose homes were affected by the fire that broke out in Doha's industrial zone earlier in the month. During the first phase, 450 workers benefitted. Qatar Charity provided food parcels that contained basic food supplies such as rice, sugar, cooking oil, and tea, while the second phase is expected to provide clothes, blankets, and other related essential items. In the same context, Qatar Charity's Friends Cultural Center has provided 1000 food parcels for low-income workers living in camps across Qatar, including those affected by the aforementioned fire

in the industrial zone. Each food parcel contains basic food supplies such as rice, sugar, tea, cooking oil, lentils, biscuits, chickpeas, and other items benefitting 500 affected workers and 500 non-affected ones.

Partners and supporters

This year's campaign is implemented with the support of numerous organizations such as: Sidra Medical and Research Center - part of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, Doha Bus Company, W Doha Hotel, Radisson Blu Hotel,

Movenpick Hotel, Hyatt Plaza, Landmark complex and Villaggio complex.

Their support ranges from the donation of the personal care items, providing transportation or marketing campaign space, to the organization and implementation of the campaign, including public relations and advertising by Orchestra and Tomooh Initiative for Volunteer Work. This allows other volunteering efforts in the community to join the mission of Qatar Charity.

The target group

The campaign targets 5000 workers in Qatar, who will be provided with gift boxes that include a toothbrush, toothpaste, a towel, a comb, hand soap, shampoo, deodorant, socks, a cap, and hand sterilizer, to help create a clean and healthy work environment and to nurture social participation values to maintain the community.



With the Participation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Qatar Charity Hosts the Third Forum for Humanitarian Action

Integration of Arab and Islamic values in the humanitarian code of conduct is the most prominent recommendation of the forum.

Qatar Charity hosted the 'Third International Forum for Humanitarian Action' in Doha from 19 to 20 May 2015. Under the slogan, 'Towards more effective and safer humanitarian action', this two-day forum involved the participation of

the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Government of Qatar Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Committee of the Red Cross, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and a number of Gulf Cooperation Council-origin and international humanitarian organizations.

This edition of the forum was

held in a more unstable world compared to the previous two editions. The Syrian crises has reached a stalemate with no signs of a foreseeable solution, the humanitarian situation in Somalia is still critical considering the huge humanitarian needs, exacerbated by a deteriorating security situation, and Yemen is struggling in a rapidly-escalated conflict. Furthermore, the situations



in Iraq and Libya have further deteriorated while the decades-long conflict in the occupied Palestine Territories continues.

The two-day event is an important opportunity for consultation between humanitarian actors in the region and their partners from global humanitarian organizations regarding current humanitarian challenges in order to best ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The forum will include a series of lectures and workshops divided into two themes; humanitarian codes of conduct and safe access to the victims of armed conflicts.

Recommendations

The forum made a number of recommendations relating to the two themes. Relevant to the forum's recommendation,

Qatar Charity expressed its willingness to finance a comprehensive scientific study on the humanitarian principles and codes of conduct and the ways of applying these codes by humanitarian organizations, provided that Arab and Islamic values have to be integrated into this code.

The closing session included many speakers' presentations. One of the most significant presentations was the speech of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's presentation from Ambassador Hisham Yousuf. After thanking the audience, he expressed his joy for the success of the forum, noting that the forum has contributed to the improvement of the participants' expertise in the field of humanitarian action. As well Ronald Ovieringr, the Representative of the International Committee

of the Red Cross office in Kuwait praised the forum and considered that it puts forth two important issues that represent the key obstacles in the face of humanitarian action. He noted to the efforts of local and regional organizations in the Middle East; pointing out that the International Red Cross has an open-door policy for the organizations to perform the humanitarian work effectively and safely.

For his part, Dr. Atta Al-Mannan Bakheet, Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Islamic Dawaa Organization explained the history of the forum and how it evolved and grew successfully which is indicated by the steady increase of the number of its members. He also pointed out that the expansion of the forum ensures the success of this event.





Albania

The Late Sameer Jana's Family...From Living in Caves to a dignified Life


A mother and her three orphans lived in a cave on a mountain's edge around the capital Tirana for 12 years. In the winter there is extremely cold, with temperatures reaching 20 degrees below zero. The late Sameer Jana's family was overjoyed when they were granted a furnished house that meets the requirements of a decent life.

Floria Hassan Jana, the widow of Sameer Jana is pleased as this

house has entirely changed her family's life. The cave they lived in for more than a decade had been used as a tank hangar during the time of communism. 'We suffered from extreme heat in the summer and extreme cold in the winter; it was very cold as the temperature reaches 20 degrees below zero,' she said. Her three children who are sponsored by Qatar Charity are also pleased.

Qatar Charity Albania offered the house as part of its project's

activities to improve the living conditions of orphans' families and to provide them with the necessary services so as to regain and maintain their human dignity and social stability after the loss of their breadwinner. The house was granted in the presence of Qatar consul in Albania, Awad Alhababi, Sheikh Hamad Bin Fahid Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Thani, Qatar Charity's office, and some people from the neighborhood including the neighborhood chief.



By Supporting Her Creative Project... Qatar Charity Change the Life of a Palestinian Girl with Special Needs

Although she is poor and cannot move around without a wheelchair, Amna Jameel Shabana has accomplished a remarkable change in her life and the life of her family. She recently started a project supported by Qatar Charity.

Amna was born infected with muscles' atrophy 24 years ago. Her family's situation was further aggravated after the birth of a second son, Sameh, who was also infected with the same disease at an early age. It is known that muscular atrophy causes a complete paralysis of the legs. A patient's condition gets worse and worse while getting older, which may lead to death. This is exactly what happened to who passed away after 17 years of suffering.

Amna added that helping and serving two patients of complete paralysis required her family to devote their full time for treatment. Amna's mother couldn't do it alone, which required her father to stop working in order to help. Thus, he became unable to provide the basic needs of his family, particularly with two university students in the family. The family lives in a rented house in

Ramallah because they had to move from their home in Hebron to be closer to medical treatment and to minimize transportation expenses.

Qatar Charity has selected Amna to take advantage of the Deprived Families Economic Empowerment Program (DEEP) implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in partnership with the Arab Center for Agricultural Development (ACAD) funded by Qatar Charity through the Islamic Development Bank (IDB).

A feasibility study for Amna's project was executed by a specialized team who provided her with counseling and guidance in the administrative and technical issues for the management and development of her project. Within just three months, a Center for Innovation and Cultural Excellence, managed by Amna, was opened. An official opening ceremony for the project was organized to raise Amna's morale, where a group of Qatar Charity staff, institutions executing the project, a large number of Amna's family and relatives, and her friends attended the ceremony.

Amna joined the university and

studied finance and banking.

She is an activist and volunteer in many local organizations and institutions, especially in those institutions that take care of people with special needs. She aspires to pursue higher studies to achieve greater success. Amna is working on developing her project and increasing the services provided by the center. She hopes that the benefactors in Qatar Charity continue supporting her and her project until it increases in size and scale. Qatar Charity has entered into an agreement with IDB and UNDP for the implementation of the 'Alraed' project. This economic empowerment for poor families in Palestine initiative contributes to help poor Palestinian families build up their productive capacities and self-reliance. With funding from IDB, the contribution of Qatar Charity totals QAR 16.2 million (USD 4.5 million) distributed over three phases. During 2013, Qatar Charity completed the third phase of the project worth QAR 5.4 million (USD 1.5 million) in the health, education, economic empowerment and social housing sectors.



Under the supervision of Qatar Charity Chairman and with the participation of the Qatari ambassador in Belgium

Qatar Charity Opens the first Islamic Center in Luxembourg and inspects some of its cultural projects in Europe

Sheikh Hamad Bin Nasser Bin Jassim Al-Thani, the Chairman of Qatar Charity, opened Luxembourg's first Islamic center in May 2015. The center, which cost more

than QAR 9.0 million (USD 2.5 million) directly benefits more than 3000 Muslims living in Luxembourg City. There are approximately 10,000 Muslims living in the Kingdom

of Luxembourg. The center comprises a mosque, a school, a Da'wah center and an educational center for youth. Speaking at the opening ceremony, which was attended



by Qatar's ambassador in Belgium and Luxembourg, Sheikh Ali bin Jassim Al-Thani; the Mayor of Luxembourg City, Lydie Polfer; the Archbishop and other religious leaders, Sheikh Hamad Bin Nasser Bin Jassim Al-Thani, expressed delight at the opening of this great cultural building. He cited that Qatar Charity seeks to provide such a center to serve Muslims in Luxembourg and to be a symbol and a message of peace, goodness and coexistence for the followers of all religions, as instructed by the teachings of our religion, which is the same message that Qatar Charity is keen to spread in the world.

For her part, the Mayor of Luxembourg City expressed happiness at the opening of the center, which she said would serve the city in particular and the Kingdom in general. She pointed out that the center serves as a model for social and religious coexistence. Mayor Polfer concluded her speech by thanking Qatar Charity and all those who contributed to its construction. Archbishop Jean-Claude Hollerich,

also thanked those in charge and those who supported the establishment of the center, pointing out that it serves all religions and seeks to protect the religious rights of all citizens. Following the opening ceremony, the delegation Luxembourg's dignitaries toured the center which was built over an area of 650 square meters to which Qatar Charity contributed 75 % of its total cost. Islamic communities The delegation also inspected a number of projects Qatar Charity contributed towards on the European continent. The delegation's schedule included visiting the first Islamic high school in France, to which Qatar Charity has contributed QAR 4.1 million (USD 1.1 million) for its new building, and visiting the second largest Islamic mosque and center in France, with Qatar Charity also contributing to its construction. Lille The delegation began its tour by visiting Ibn Rushd School in the French city of Lille. This is considered the first Islamic high school in France, opening in 2003. The number of students attending the school now is 600 students,

both males and females, and the number is anticipated to increase in the forthcoming years especially, after the opening of a new preparatory school in 2012. Reims The delegation also visited the Great Islamic Center in Reims, which is considered the second largest Islamic mosque and center in France. The center comprises a place of prayer for men and women with a capacity of 2500 worshippers, an Islamic cultural center consisting of classrooms, a reading hall, Islamic library and a multipurpose hall that can accommodate up to 500 persons. During their visit, the delegation was received by Rono Robini, Mayor; Gzafini Albertini, a member of the French Parliament; in addition to his two deputies, Fatima Al-Hussain, housing and city policy official, and Mr. Rashid Al-Hawari. The center president, board of directors members and Qutby Abed Al-Kabir, the center project manager and the executive director of the Islamic Organizations Union in France also met with the delegation.



Dr. Amer Al-Zemmali, the Former Advisor of Muslim World Affairs in the

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Talks to Ghiras

Codes of conduct for humanitarian work, the problem of safe access to the victims of armed conflicts and the protection of humanitarian and relief work convoys are pressing issues for those interested in relief and humanitarian work. Without a protective legal code and a safe environment that enables relief workers to have access to the afflicted people, the victims of armed conflicts will be isolated and killed not only by wars, but

also by starvation, the absence of medical aid, contaminated water or other negative circumstances created by the hindering of relief and humanitarian work.

During the 'Third International Forum for Humanitarian Work' hosted by Qatar Charity in Doha from 19 to 20 May 2015 and attended by many practitioners, academics and researchers in relief and humanitarian field, Ghiras conducted this interview with Dr. Amer Al-Zemmali.

The best defenders of humanitarian work are those who provide relief aid

In your opinion, what are the main challenges facing humanitarian and relief workers nowadays?

The challenges facing relief workers are as huge as the volume of relief work needed after natural disasters, armed conflicts, and riots. It can be summarized in the following points: First: the recent conflicts are mostly internal armed conflicts that occur between parties living in one country. These conflicts are complex in terms of their economic and social aspects as well as their sectarian, ethnic, and regional backgrounds. Therefore, the humanitarian worker faces many challenges due to the nature of these conflicts.

Second: the large number of relief and humanitarian organizations, in my opinion, does not necessarily indicate that they are efficient and have coordination between each other. Therefore, humanitarian work always needs more benevolent efforts, field coordination, information, and experiences sharing to succeed.

Third: the political humanitarian structure isn't helpful as the politician always prefers military priorities on the humanitarian ones. Belligerents, either in international or internal conflicts, rarely respect the importance of humanitarian necessities compared with military ones.

Challenges are great and remarkable as you mentioned. How do you think workers in this field can face them?

In every conflict, we know that there is an agreement on achieving the minimum balances in giving priority to humanitarian necessities and requirements. We realize that wars are fierce, but it is necessary to take into account the humanitarian aspect. As groups get closer to achieving military goals, they move further away from humanitarian goals. Accordingly, it is necessary to take into account the balance between humanitarian necessities and military requirements. Another challenge is the emergence of uncontrolled military groups that do not consider people's rights while committing

Providing the security needs for the relief workers is not the problem of international laws and norms but in those who are supposed to respect such laws

violations. Although these patterns of behavior were limited to certain groups in the past, today they exceed all boundaries, and don't take into account morals and the law. Therefore, the basics of humanitarian work in the global systems may need sincere intentions. Nevertheless, I think that the weakness of supply also affects humanitarian work. In my opinion, the best defenders of humanitarian work are those who provide humanitarian aid. If they act well and comply with the principles of humanitarian work, surely this will be reflected on the image of humanitarian work. However, we still need to raise awareness, conduct training, develop relief work, and conduct a self-revision. In the Arab and Islamic World, humanitarian work suffers from some deficiencies related to training and human capacity development.

To what extent do international laws cater to the security needs of humanitarian and aid workers?

Many laws stipulate the need for mandatory and safe access to afflicted people and many laws and resolutions in international laws assure that. However, the real obstacles are represented in the armed groups and outlaw parties that do not respect humanitarian work. Insecurity threatens relief work in general and the three parties of the humanitarian operations; workers, methods, and or affected people in particular. One or two of the parties, or maybe

the three of them may suffer insecurity, which forms a major problem. I think the issue relates to the parties' commitment to humanitarian work laws and values. Humanitarian work should be free, neutral, and independent, and it should be based on humanitarian considerations.

How do you evaluate the performance of the relief and humanitarian civil work in comparison with the civil crisis level?

In my opinion, there are several crises and disasters in the Arab and Islamic World and there is an acceptable civil effort in return at the level of official organizations, the Red Crescent, and local and volunteer associations. Besides, some Arab and Islamic countries have dedicated humanitarian and charity associations. However, this needs more development and control due to fieldwork needs. I am optimistic in terms of humanitarian work in the Arab and Islamic World. There are some considerations which make us classify this effort as insufficient, but with improvement and effort in our performance, we can play the appropriate role. The role of civil society has become crucial today, as official efforts are no longer sufficient.

About ...Dr. Amer Al-Zemalli

Dr. Al-Zemalli studied law and has a license in law, as well as Master's and PhD degrees. He has authored many books, particularly in the field of humanitarian and international law. Moreover, he executed field missions in Arab, African, Asian, European and American countries.

He was the Advisor of Muslim World Affairs in the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for more than 20 years, a member of the legal department of the ICRC and a field legal advisor before he joined the protection department in the committee's office in Geneva.



Ready or Not, Here Come the Sustainable Development Goals

JAMAL AL-DIN BELKE

In September 2015, a key United Nations summit is to be held in New York for member states to vote on the draft set of proposed new, universal goals, targets and indicators known as the sustainable development goals (SDGs). If approved, the SDGs shall follow and expand upon the millennium development goals (MDGs) with effect from 1 January 2016. The MDGs had been agreed upon by governments in 2000 and provided a universal focal point for governments on which to base their policies and overseas aid programs to end poverty. Likewise, bilateral donors, multilaterals, UN agencies, development banks, foundations, INGOs, CBOs, etc. used the MDGs to shape their strategies and programming. For fifteen years, the MDGs have been regularly criticized for being too narrow in overall scope and too broad in measurements. The proposed seventeen SDGs and their 169 targets still have some critics who say they still are too few though they are outnumbered by many who believe the SDGs have significantly too many goals and targets. Regardless, once approved, UN member states will frame their policies and agendas over the next fifteen years to work towards achieving these.

While the eight MDGs gave a focal point in which governments, bilateral donors, multilaterals, UN agencies, development banks, foundations, INGOs, CBOs, etc. to strategically actively work towards, not surprisingly they had their shortcomings. For example, the MDGs lack of directly addressing economic development and by default leaving out considerations as to the root causes of poverty and the all-inclusive nature of development is regularly cited as a key gap. This is due the fact that no matter what progress has been made in the past fifteen years, approximately 1 billion people still live on less than US\$ 1.25 a day and 800 million

people do not have enough food to eat. The SDGs have had a much greater input and longer, more transparent process of drafting them than the MDGs. An open working group with representatives from seventy governments started working on these in spring 2013. More than ten thematic and eighty national consultations were held while online surveys were conducted to feed into the drafting and redrafting processes. Since January 2015, UN member states have been meeting and discussing these though significant changes aren't expected before being put forward for the vote in September 2015.

The biggest concern at this time concerns how these lofty goals shall be paid for. Annual expenditures of billions and trillions of US dollars are being bantered about for different aspects of the SDGs which clearly public finance alone cannot possibly cover. Even with private sector involvement, should tax reforms and reigning in corruption measures fail, it is hard to imagine sufficient funding to meet these being secured.

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia shall host a major conference on financing for SDGs in July 2015 at which it is hoped clear financing processes will be agreed. Should this conference in Addis Ababa fail to produce the hoped-for results, the September Summit and the SDGs themselves may be set for an even more difficult road to acceptance and application.

UN secretary general Ban Ki-moon has grouped closely related SDGs into six 'essential elements' which are illustrated with their counterparts from the MDGs in the following chart.

Millennium Development Goals (2000-2015)	Essential Element	Sustainable Development Goals (2016-2030)
MDG 1-Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger MDG 3-Promote gender equality and empower women	Dignity	SDG 1-End poverty in all its forms everywhere SDG 5-Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
MDG 2-Achieve universal primary education MDG 4-Reduce child mortality MDG 5-Improve maternal health MDG 6-Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases	People	SDG 2-End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture SDG 3-Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages SDG 4-Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
MDG 7-Ensure environmental sustainability	Planet	SDG 6-Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all SDG 12-Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns SDG 13-Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts SDG 14-Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development SDG 15-Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss
MDG 8-Develop a global partnership for development	Partnership	SDG 17-Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development
	Justice	SDG 16-Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
	Prosperity	SDG 7-Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all SDG 8-Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all SDG 9-Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation SDG 10-Reduce inequality within and among countries SDG 11-Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

WTF? A guide to disaster aid acronyms

Guide to the clanking machinery of international relief acronymage:

UNDAC: United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination. UNDAC teams have deployed to Nepal to help the UN and government during the first phase of the earthquake. **UNDAC** also assists in the coordination of incoming international relief.

OSOCC: On-Site Operations Coordination Centre. Developed by the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to assist countries in coordinating international search-and-rescue efforts following an earthquake. Its private online workspace is called the Virtual **OSOCC (VOSOCC)**. On the ground it has one or more **BOOs** - Bases of Operation.

UNRC: United Nations Resident Coordinator. In countries with no emergency, UN agencies are coordinated by a Resident

Coordinator.

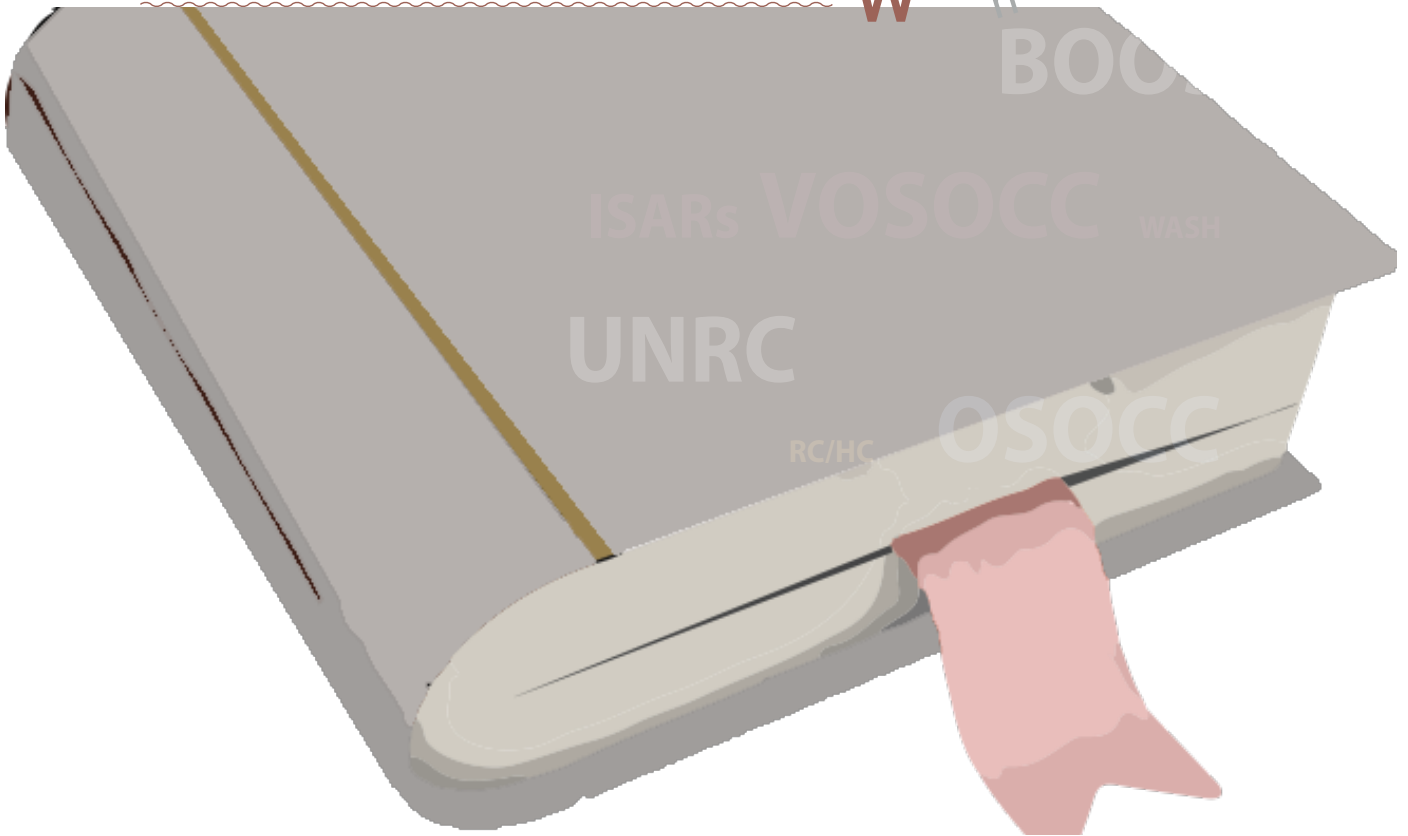
HC: In an emergency, a Humanitarian Coordinator is appointed to coordinate both UN and non-UN international humanitarian action in liaison with government. The **HC** is usually, but not always, the **RC**. When the two hats are worn by one individual, as now in Nepal, he or she is known by the title **RC/HC**.

IASC: Inter-Agency Standing Committee. Grouping UN agencies, NGOs, the Red Cross, and other international organisations, the **IASC** is a forum for humanitarian responders to develop policies, agree on a clear division of responsibility for the various aspects of humanitarian assistance and identify gaps in response. Weaknesses in the humanitarian system exposed by

disasters in Pakistan and Haiti led to a process of **IASC** reform, called the «Transformative Agenda» - TA.

L3: Level 3 emergency. This is the **IASC** classification for the most severe, large-scale humanitarian crises. There are four crises currently designated as **L3**: Iraq, Syria, Central African Republic and South Sudan. Nepal has yet to make the list. The classification should activate a faster mobilisation of human and financial resources, and is based on five criteria: scale, complexity, urgency, capacity and reputational risk.

NFI: Non-food items. The category is a catch-all for non-medical supplies including mattresses, household items, hygiene kits, tents, buckets, tarpaulins and so on.



AAP: Accountability to Affected Populations. Accountability has been a buzzword in aid for years now, and gaining in prominence as an issue. The improvement of two-way communication between aid agencies and their clients - or "beneficiaries" - is now often wrapped up in **AAP**. Related terms include **CwC** - Communicating with Communities and **CDAC** - Communicating with Disaster-Affected Communities.

WASH: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene. All of which are often lacking in the aftermath of a disaster and can lead to the spread of disease.

CMCoord: Civil-Military Coordination. Aka **CIMIC** or **CIVMIL**. The often strained relationship between aid agencies and militaries has its own specialist roles and

policies. (h/t Oliver Lacey-Hall)

FTS: The UN's Financial Tracking Service. Updated in real time, it tracks pledges and actual contributions made towards humanitarian response around the world.

IA RTE: Inter-Agency Real-Time Evaluation. Mandated by the **IASC**, **IA RTEs** are commissioned reports in the first few weeks and months of a new emergency to give quick feedback on gaps, access constraints, potential threats and quality of the humanitarian response. There have been at least eight RTEs.

MIRA: Multi-Cluster Initial Rapid Assessment. Developed by the **IASC** to identify strategic humanitarian priorities during the first weeks following an emergency, carried out by a team of emergency specialists from various sectors.

MIRA is a flavour of **NA** - Needs

Assessment

INSARAG: International Search and Rescue Advisory Group. Under a UN umbrella, this network of more than 80 countries and organisations establishes minimum standards for search-and-rescue and a methodology for international coordination in earthquake response.

USAR: Urban Search And Rescue. When search and rescue teams are deployed internationally, they may be called **ISARs**. About 60 **USARs** have registered in Nepal and the government has said it does not need any more. They often are combined with **FMTs** - Foreign Medical Teams.

K9: Canine. Sniffer dogs used by **USARs** and **ISARs**.

Source: <http://www.irinnews.org/report/101436/wtf-a-guide-to-disaster-aid-acronyms>



Several Memorandums of Understanding and Mutual Cooperation Agreements Signed

Qatar Charity has recently signed several memorandums of understanding and cooperation agreements designed to implement and support projects inside and outside Qatar.

World Food Program

Qatar Charity and the United Nations' World Food Programme signed a cooperation agreement to fight starvation and malnutrition and promote international food security last May in Rome, Italy. Qatar Charity CEO, Yousef Bin Ahmed Al-

Kuwari and Barbara Noseworthy, Assistant Executive Director of WFP signed the agreement in the presence of Qatar's Ambassador to Italy Abdul Aziz Al-Maliki Al-Juhani.

A trilateral agreement

Qatar Charity also signed a cooperation agreement with UK-based Human Appeal International and Lebanon-based Al Reaya Organization to establish a garment factory for Syrian refugee women in Lebanon. The trilateral agreement

was concluded on the sidelines of the 'Third International Forum for Humanitarian Action' hosted by Qatar Charity from 19 to 20 May 2015. This QAR 3.7 million (USD 1.0 million) project aims at economically empowering Syrian refugee women.

Al-Asmakh Charity Foundation

Qatar Charity and Al-Asmakh Foundation have signed a strategic alliance memorandum to promote mutual cooperation and share benefits and preferential



advantages of both organizations. The two parties also signed a memorandum of understanding for the implementation of relief projects benefiting 29,000 affected Yemenis at a cost of QAR 1.5 million (USD 412,000). The agreement will help provide basic food and medical necessities for affected people in the governorates of Aden and Hodidah.

The two agreements were signed by the Al Asmakh Foundation Chairman's Adviser, Jassem Bin Salem Al-Ansari and Qatar Charity Executive Director of International Development, Mohammad Bin Ali Al-Ghamedi.

Al-Ansari Foundation

Qatar Charity signed a cooperation agreement with Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ansari Foundation for Quran Studies under which the former party benefits from the facilities

The cooperation agreement with the United Nations' World Food Programme (WFP) represents an opportunity for the private sector of Qatar to be more involved in supporting the campaigns aimed at raising donations to fight malnutrition

and services provided by the latter to conduct seminars and workshops and to host scientists and intellectuals. The agreement was signed by Qatar Charity's CEO, Yousef Bin Ahmed Al-Kuwari, and the Chairman of Al-Ansari Foundation, Dr. Mohammed Al-Ansari.

Al-Khor Housing Community

Qatar Charity has also signed a mutual cooperation agreement with Al-Khor Housing Community, which provides housing for 12,500 employees from Qatargas and RasGas.

The agreement includes a number of charity services such as the distribution of containers for collecting in-kind donations and the placing of Qatar Charity donation boxes across its housing facilities as well as providing free lecture halls and theatres for Qatar Charity use. The agreement also helps provide facilities to help support Qatar Charity community activities and events Al-Khor facilities in addition to helping with the promotion and mobilization for the charity's various local and international campaigns.



Qatar Charity Allocates Additional Funding for New Educational Projects for Syrians

Qatar Charity announced its allocation of QAR 3.7 million (USD 1.0 million) for additional educational projects for displaced Syrian refugees. The announcement came during a speech delivered by Ibrahim Ali Abdullah, Qatar Charity Director of Relief, at the opening session of an international conference entitled 'ILM' ('Education') that was held in Istanbul Turkey from 1 to 3 May 2015. The

theme of the conference that was organized by the Syrian Education Commission was 'Syria and Education... Reality and Challenges'. The Syrian Education Commission ('ILM') is a non-profit organization specialized in educational affairs. It coordinates with many schools, institutes, and educational bodies to work for the benefit of students inside and outside of

Syria.

Schools' curricula

Current projects will involve printing school textbooks and will care for and provide guardianship for street children who have been obliged to drop out from school to work despite their young age and vulnerability to dangers and negative implications that threaten their future. The total amount of the



projects implemented or still under implementation with ILM amounts to QAR 12.0 million (USD 3.3 million). The scopes of these projects have included printing schools' textbooks, constructing, renovating and operating schools as well as supporting teachers and the overall educational process of the Syrian displaced and refugee students. The conference focused on discussing the various dimensions of the humanitarian tragedy in Syria represented in denying millions of Syrian students their right of education due to displacement. It also tackled the significant negative repercussions of such tragedy on the Syrians after four years of the Syrian crisis. The conference was attended by a host of intellectuals, university directors, academics, businessmen and civil society organizations interested in education affairs. A meeting between Qatar Charity and the Islamic Development Bank was held as part of the conference activities with the

presence of Al-Mansour Ben Fata, Director of Trust Funds Department in IDB and Qatar Charity's Ibrahim Ali Abdullah. The meeting discussed the joint cooperation between the two parties in terms of implementing projects for the displaced Syrian refugees. In the same context, both parties maintained their permanence in printing schools' textbooks, provided that Qatar Charity shall provide a research study covering this aspect. The projects implemented or still under implementation with the Syrian Education Commission and in partnership with IDB are the culmination of two agreements signed between Qatar Charity, IDB and the Syrian Education Commission. The first agreement total QAR 4.7 million (USD 1.3 million) for printing schools textbooks, teacher training and expanding the schools' capacities, upgrading schools' equipment and supporting registration process. A key outcome of this agreement was printing 566,340

school textbooks. The second agreement amounted to QAR 7.3 million (USD 2.0 million) and is currently ongoing to print 1,183,015 school textbooks and build a 6000 square meter temporary school for refugee children in southern Turkey's Antakya city. It will also renovate 52 schools in Aleppo to serve about 25,000 students and provide necessary support for the educational process such as the provision of students' and teachers. Qatar Charity has provided QAR 239.0 million (USD 65.7 million) in all its programming for Syrians over the past four years, serving 4,509,407 persons while the educational sector has accounted for QAR 24.5 million (USD 6.7 million) benefitting 355,615 persons.