



**MOROCCO'S
AL HAOUZ
EARTHQUAKE:
ONE YEAR ON**

A HISTORIC DISASTER

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

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

The deadliest quake to strike Morocco since the 1960s and the most powerful ever recorded in the country; the Al Haouz earthquake left shattered communities facing a long and difficult road to recovery and healing.



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



“I was sleeping when the earthquake struck,” says Fatima, describing the terrifying moment when the earthquake destroyed her home with her and her daughter inside.

“The ceiling of the room collapsed, and the wall next to me fell until I was trapped. Only my daughter’s fingers were showing under the rubble but thankfully we were rescued.”

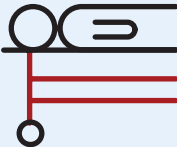
“We are now fine, thank God, and thanks to the benevolent people who helped us. [Islamic Relief] have donated food, drinks, and utensils. We thank them greatly, and may God reward them.”

‘Cover: An older man sits surrounded by rubble in Al Haouz, Morocco’

Lives and communities devastated



The most powerful quake to hit Morocco in **60 YEARS**



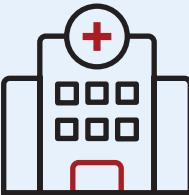
Nearly **3,000** people died, and thousands more injured



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



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



Hospitals and historic sites **DAMAGED** or **DESTROYED**



More than **500,000** individuals displaced



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

OUR IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

Within hours of the disaster, Islamic Relief launched a £10 million (R230 million) appeal to assist survivors. As our incredible family of supporters around the world rallied to help, we sent an emergency team to Morocco to support relief efforts and assess how we could best help survivors. Within days, we began distributing desperately needed survival items, working with local partners Al Mobadara Association and At Tawassol.

Over the next 12 weeks, we distributed 2,600 mattresses, more than 3,400 blankets, and warm clothing to help people exposed to the harsh winter weather. The more than 2,400 hygiene kits we provided helped combat the rise of waterborne disease. By the end of December, we had supported more than 7,500 people, and within a year had reached more than 65,000 people.



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

“The humanitarian needs here in Morocco were enormous in the wake of the earthquake. We faced great challenges [delivering aid] due to the destruction of important infrastructure and roads, which made it difficult to reach mountainous communities.

“Islamic Relief’s initial level of assistance included distributing food supplies, blankets, mattresses, and cleaning materials. The provision of health caravans played an important role and had a positive impact on the families affected by this earthquake.

“We pray to God Almighty to grant us success and to bless all of you in this tremendous work carried out by a team working tirelessly in Morocco and in Islamic Relief offices around the world. We thank all our supporters and contributors to our much-needed work.”

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

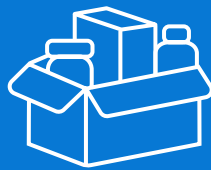
Our response in numbers

NEARLY 65,500 PEOPLE

reached by our extensive response



10 humanitarian projects completed



3,090 food packs given to survivors



6,250 mattresses distributed



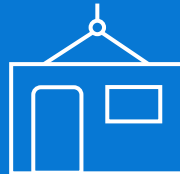
Provided over **7,000** blankets and **200** pillows



More than **17,000** hygiene kits delivered



More than **11,650** winter survival kits distributed



20 pre-fabricated homes installed/built



2 pre-fabricated schools installed/built



2 latrines fitted



REACHED MORE THAN
120 VILLAGES

CURRENT HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

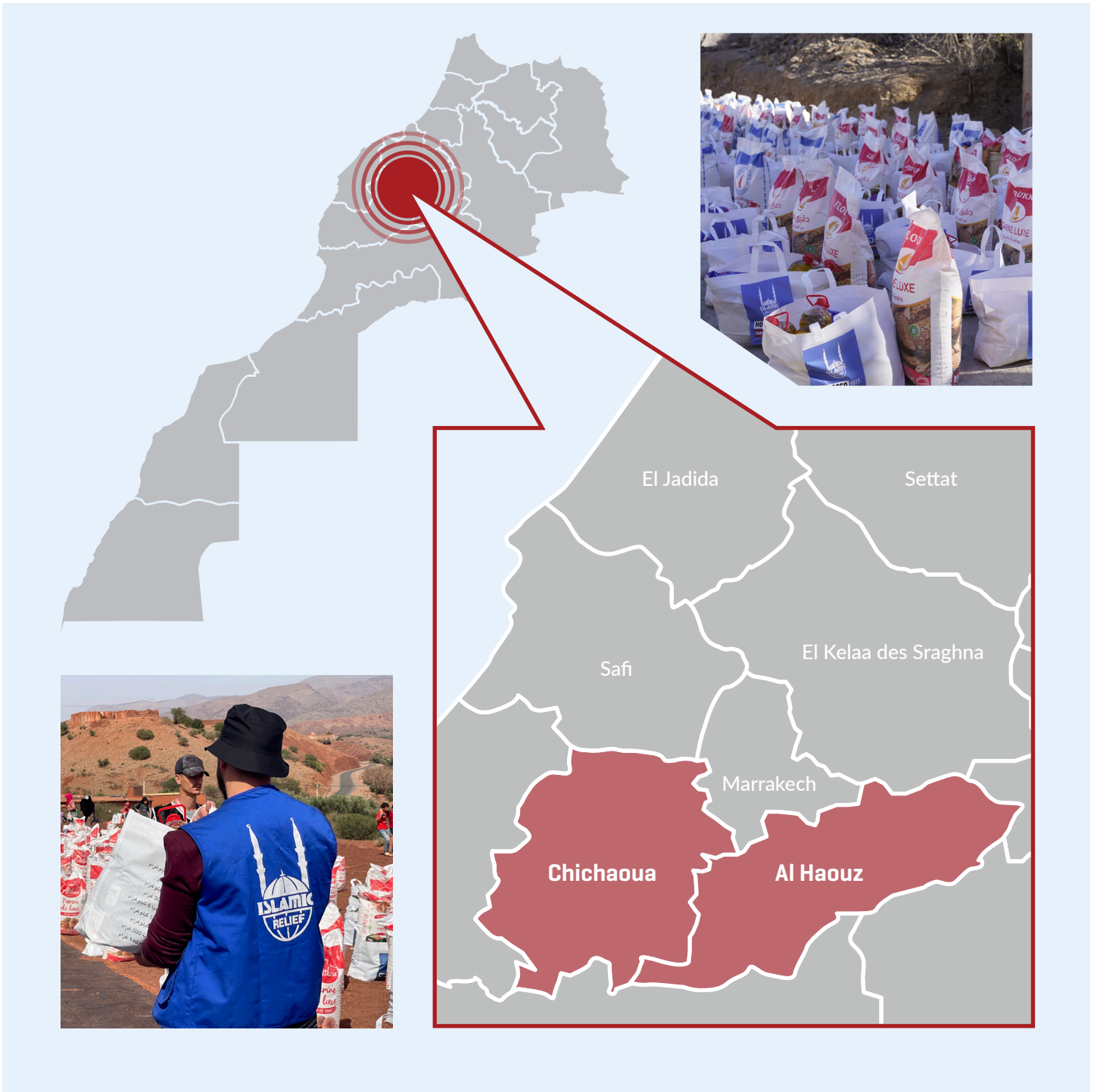
A year on from the Al Haouz earthquake, the people of Morocco are still piecing their lives back together. The reconstruction programme is costly and complex, and with Morocco particularly susceptible to natural disasters, there is a need for increased investment in building community resilience. Islamic Relief continues to help survivors meet their most pressing basic needs. Over the past 12 months, we have identified and delivered interventions aimed at improving the lives of those affected in the short and long term:

- Repairing, reconstructing, and fortifying vital earthquake-damaged infrastructure such as homes, schools, and water supply systems. So far, we have installed 20 prefabricated homes, two latrines, and two prefabricated schools.
- Supporting people to rebuild their livelihoods, so they can earn a reliable living and provide for their families. Islamic Relief member offices have already pledged to support livelihoods projects, as well as education or healthcare interventions to support children.
- Providing sponsorship and support for orphaned children, in collaboration with local partners.
- Giving qurbani meat to more 930 individuals.
- Designing development interventions to achieve long-term impact and sustainability. Plans include enabling volunteers from Islamic Relief Canada's amazing Inspire volunteer programme to make a difference as they work directly with local communities in Morocco.
- Strengthening the capacity of local partners to meet the needs of communities. We are currently one-third of the way through a programme of nine skill-building training sessions for local partners.



A survivor collects a winter survival kit containing a coat, boots, gloves, thermal underwear and other warm clothing

WHERE WE ARE WORKING



OUR LOCAL PARTNERS:



OUR ONGOING RESPONSE

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

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

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

Islamic Relief has been tackling this by providing essential medical services and health education in affected communities through the implementation of 27 health caravans. Staffed by medical professionals, these mobile health clinics cover general medicine, paediatrics, dermatology, cardiology and more. They also provide advice on important topics such as dental hygiene and general health. So far, we have conducted 11 health caravans, helping over 3,400 people.

"We extend our sincere thanks to Islamic Relief for all the support they have provided us, for standing by us in this ordeal, and for providing aid such as clothing for children, hygiene and cleaning materials," says Amina, who was living in Zekita Al-Haouz commune when the earthquake struck.

"We also thank them for the medical caravan, which has been an opportunity to offer free medical check-ups and distribute medication to the residents."

BOOSTING ACCESS TO HEALTH AND HYGIENE



Amina and her children receive medical attention from an Islamic Relief medical caravan

DISTRIBUTING SURVIVAL ITEMS

Having lost so much in the disaster, many families still struggle to meet even their most basic needs. Determined to ease their suffering, Islamic Relief has been distributing essentials in more than 120 earthquake-affected villages in Al Haouz and Chichawa. Teaming up with two local charities, we are providing struggling families with food packs as well as hygiene essentials, such as soap, to help prevent the spread of disease. We have also provided more than 17,000 hygiene kits, as well as winter survival items such as coats, boots, and hats, which have benefited more than 11,600 children so far.



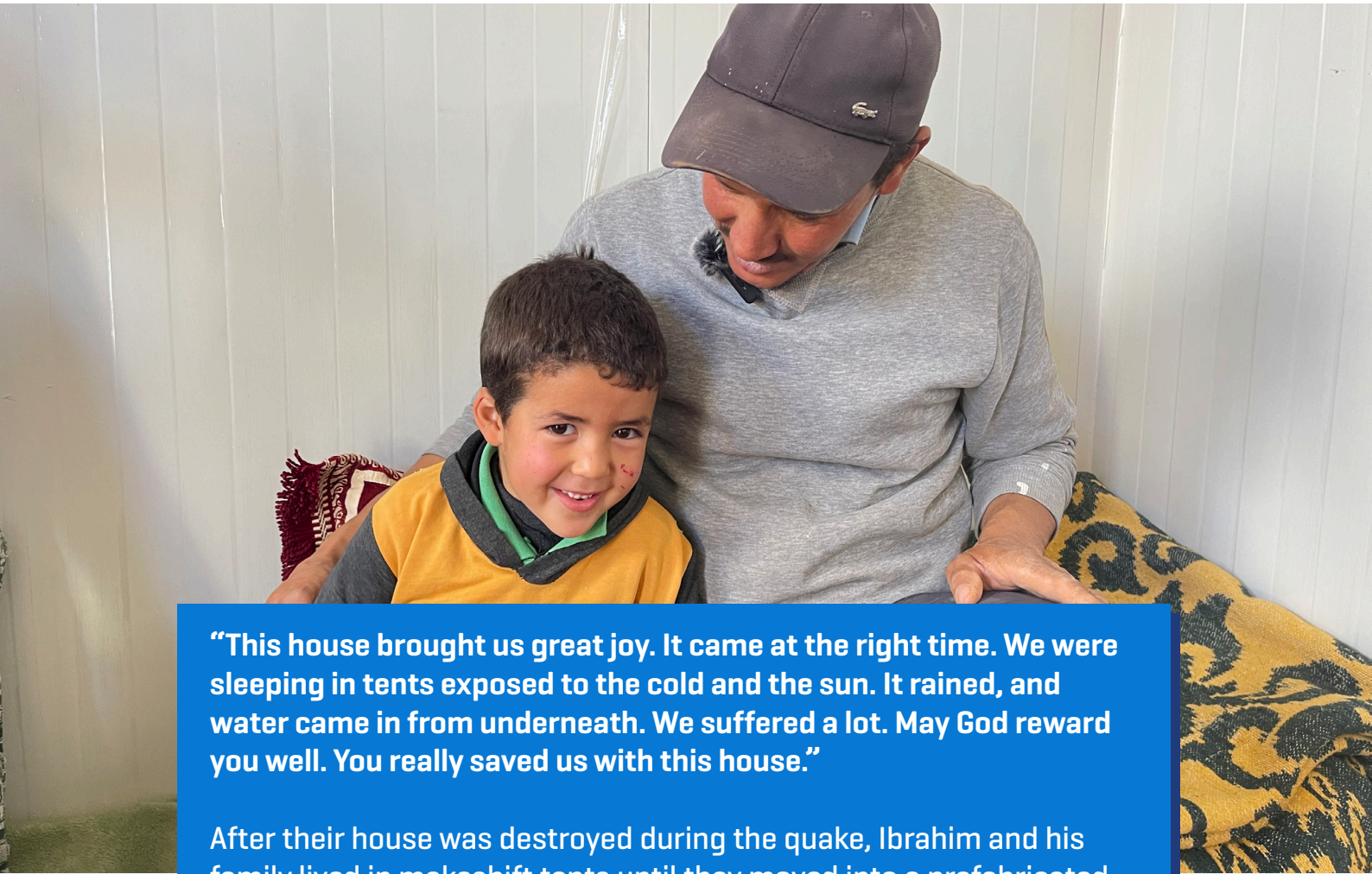
A woman collects a survival kit distributed by Islamic Relief partners

PROVIDING SAFE SHELTER AND WATER FOR FAMILIES

The earthquake destroyed nearly 19,000 homes. A year later and some families have been unable to rebuild and are still living in makeshift shelters and tents which offer little protection from the elements. To provide displaced families with safe and dignified places to live, Islamic Relief is constructing more than 300 new homes offering people protection and privacy.

Hygiene and sanitation facilities were among the critical infrastructure damaged by the quake, increasing the risk of disease outbreaks, so we installed showers and latrines in the housing units we provided.

Islamic Relief has also launched a Water Provision Project that will look to provide water pumps and solar panels for villages in dire need of water, benefiting more than 1,000 individuals.



“This house brought us great joy. It came at the right time. We were sleeping in tents exposed to the cold and the sun. It rained, and water came in from underneath. We suffered a lot. May God reward you well. You really saved us with this house.”

After their house was destroyed during the quake, Ibrahim and his family lived in makeshift tents until they moved into a prefabricated home installed by Islamic Relief

POWERING LOCALLY-LED DEVELOPMENT

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



“This experience was very important and beneficial for us. We were able to benefit from best practices at an international level and transfer them to Morocco through the cooperation of our colleagues in Islamic Relief. And of course, this helped elevate our local performance according to international standards practiced by Islamic Relief.”

**Taib Aisse, President of Al Mobadara Association,
Islamic Relief partner in Morocco**



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CONTACT

islamic-relief.org.za

Call toll free 0800 111 898

 073 154 5369

Email info@islamic-relief.org.za

P.O Box 19434 Dormerton 4015, South Africa

Visit:

islamic-relief.org.za