Newsletter 2023-2024

# FIYSABIYLILLAH

**Compassionate Aid Organization** 

# Newsletter 2023



**Fiysabiylillah Compassionate Aid Organization** is a Canadian registered charity committed to enriching the lives of the less fortunate through the initiation and support of sustainable projects, and through the development of one's faith as the ultimate source of strength.



fiysabiylillah.org

info@fiysabiylillah.org

Oshawa, ON, CANADA

Support from Fiysabiylillah is making a significant difference in our community. May Allah reward all the donors abundantly for their kindness and generosity.

## **Inside this Edition**

Page 3 – Message from the Founder

Page 4 - Seniors Fun Club

Page 5 – Juice Carts and Auto Rickshaws

Page 6 - Crisis in Gaza - a personal account

Page 7 – Helping the People of Morocco

Page 8 – Women's Empowerment Sewing Factory

Page 9 – Iftar on the Island of Zanzibar

Page 10 – Summer Day Camp Update

Page 11 - Food Hamper Program

Page 12 – Creative Corner

Page 13 - My First Ummah Trip

Page 15 – Orphan Support

Page 16 – 2023 Donations Disbursements

### Al-Asr

بِسُمِ ٱللهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ Bismillahirrahmanirrahim IN THE NAME OF GOD, THE MOST GRACIOUS, THE MOST MERCIFUL

> وَالْعَصْرِ Wal 'asr BY TIME,

إِنَّ الْإِنسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ Innal-insana lafi khusr INDEED, MANKIND IS IN LOSS,

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بالصَّبْر

Illal-ladhina 'Amanu wa-'Amilus salihati watawa-saw bil haqqi wa-tawa-saw bis sabr

EXCEPT FOR THOSE WHO HAVE BELIEVED AND DONE RIGHTEOUS DEEDS AND ADVISED EACH OTHER TO TRUTH AND ADVISED EACH OTHER TO PATIENCE.

#### 2023-2024 Executive Committee

Nafeeza Hooseinny-Nabibaksh Afaf Abu Hussein Asia Maktabi Fatima Yakub Fozia Hooseinny Eman Al Khouli

Newsletter Editor - Ruwaidah Khan



Donations can be dropped off at the Fiysabiylillah Learning Centre

Located at 375 Ritson Rd N, Oshawa

Text at 416-562-3844 before dropping of items

## Message from the Founder



May the peace and blessings of Almighty Allah be with each and every one of you.

It gives me great pleasure to look back at the highlights of the past year as we move forward into 2024. Fiysabiylillah Compassionate Aid Organization acknowledges that none of this was possible without the help of Almighty Allah, your generous donations and help from the many members and volunteers.

The year started out with the organization's Board approving a Flood Relief Project to help flood victims in three villages of the Sindh Province in Pakistan. The organization was able to provide tents, water pumps and food hampers to one hundred and ten families. In March/April (Ramadan), the organization continued its Feed the Needy Program in Guyana, India, Kenya, Pakistan, Syria, Tanzania, Turkey and Yemen. This Project could not have been accomplished without the help of the many project coordinators (Directors and members). Our next project was the Qurbanee project that lasted three days (at the end of the Hajj pilgrimage) where animal sacrifice was done all over the world. The organization, through its members, was able to organize animal sacrifice in Guyana, India, Kenya, Pakistan, Tanzania, Turkey and Yemen. In addition, the organization continued supporting its Syrian Widows & Orphans Sponsorship Program, the Markazil Orphanage and Al-Hudaa Academy Orphans (Kenya) and its Reusable Sanitary Pads projects (Canada).

This year, new projects were approved by the board such as the Bangladesh Women's Empowerment Project, The Nigerian Wells Project and the Khadija Girls School Project (Uganda).

As we approached the end of 2023, we were faced with the escalation of the Palestinian conflict. It was very sad to see the great number of children being killed in the war, as those with strong war artillery pummeled the helpless in the name of safety and security.

Looking ahead to 2024, Fiysabiylillah Compassionate Aid Organization is committed to helping the people of Gaza through humanitarian aid in the form of water, food and shelter as soon as our volunteers are able to do so. May Allah accept our many Dua's for the people of Gaza and the oppressed around the globe. Ameen

In 2024 Fiysabiylillah Compassionate Aid Organization is committed to working together with Unity and Togetherness as we help the less fortunate locally and abroad

"O Allah, I seek refuge with Thee from sadness and grief, laziness and weakness, miserliness and cowardice, from being overcome by debt and to be empowered by men." (Bukhari)

We are looking forward to your continued support and generous donations as we focus on helping the Needy of Gaza and around the world. May the Peace and blessings of Almighty Allah be with us, as we strive for Truth and Justice. Ameen

Sister Fozia

#### Tuesday from 10am to 2pm

Fiysabiylillah Learning Centre located at 375 Ritson Road North in Oshawa, Ontario

Please feel free to join us as we still have space for a few more sisters. Contact Sr Fozia at

info@fiysabiylillah.org or send me a text at 416 562 3844



We started to sell some donated items at the meetings, which helps to support projects like buying school supplies for children in poorer countries.



The sisters are now meeting once a month for Quran Club. We wanted to get together to discuss one juz of Quran each time. This helps us to connect more deeply with the Holy Quran, to share our perspectives with other sisters and to learn new things from others.

## **Seniors Fun Club**

Written by Afaf Abu Hussein

Sister Fozia had an idea to begin a Seniors Club back in November of 2022. The basic idea was to provide an opportunity for senior ladies to come together for two hours of sharing their experiences and talents, sewing, crocheting and discussing Islam. Since then, we have been having this gathering every Tuesday and we spend the rest of the week looking forward to the next meeting. At each session we begin by learning Arabic words found in the Holy Quran, so non-Arabic speaking members can have a deeper understanding of the meaning of the Quranic teachings.

After that, sisters who can sew, help to complete sanitary pad kits that are being made to send to an African country for young girls. Last year our shipment of reusable sanitary pads was shipped to Nigeria and in 2024 we are hoping to prepare one thousand kits for young girls in Uganda. Those who don't sew contribute to the project by ironing, tidying up scraps and trimming threads and seams.

Fun time is exercise time where we all chip in to share our various "keep fit" exercises for the body. Some weeks we do yoga with meditation and stretches and our instructor for that is sister Fatima Omar. We sweat but are left invigorated and happy. The end goal is for us to have a healthy body that will lead to a healthy mind.

Zuhr prayer is a must and, depending on the time, we perform the salaat and make du'a. After that we gather for our Islamic talk where we discuss different topics, which help us to live the right way and keep us positive. Here is where we have open discussions on selected topics prepared by Sister Afaf. She has the ability to engage her audience by giving real life examples to make a point and to also encourage us to partake by sharing our own views and life experiences. Lately we have covered topics such as "Anger Management" from an Islamic perspective as opposed to the western way. We look forward each week to discuss a topic that will engage us to take action to get closer to Almighty Allah.

Finally, we circle around to enjoy our potluck where we get to taste the foods from all the different cultures. Seniors Club now includes more than fifteen sisters who regularly attend. They are from different ages and cultures since not all those who come are seniors.

We all start and finish these gatherings with an appreciation for our sisterhood, which is full of love for each other for the sake of Allah (swt), Alhamdulillah. This brings us contentment and happiness and an overwhelming gratitude for each other and for Almighty Allah (swt).

### Juice carts and Auto Rickshaws

supporting micro businesses in Pakistan



They go a long way in providing employment opportunities within the needy community. The support of our donors like you allows us to continue to empower individuals and communities through sustainable initiatives like this. Please know your contributions make a significant difference in the lives of many, helping them access employment opportunities and training they otherwise would not have.



"Thanks to your generous contributions, we've successfully provided juice carts to the underprivileged in our community. Your support has helped create opportunities and spread smiles where they're needed most. May Allah reward Fiysabiylillah and the donors abundantly for their kindness and compassion. Let's continue to make a positive impact together".

Healers Welfare Organization in Pakistan (Kishwar Saleem)





# Crisis in Gaza – A personal account

Written by Eman Alkhouli

The Gaza Strip, is located on the Mediterranean coast, in Palestine. It has a rich history dating back thousands of years. The city faces complex challenges, including political unrest and economic struggles, and being under Israeli occupation for the last 20 years. Despite the ongoing siege, Gazans maintain a resilient spirit. Gaza City is known for its vibrant markets, historical landmarks, beautiful beaches and ocean and the resilience of its people in the face of adversity.

# How can you help through Fiysabiylillah?

#### 1. Gaza Relief

Purchase and distribution of food, blankets, shelters, and basic necessities to the people of Gaza.

#### 2. Child Amputee support

Providing food, medicine, and additional prosthetic limbs (if needed) to Palestinian child refugees after surgery and fitting for artificial limbs at the Hospital in Turkey.

Donate at www.fiysabiylillah.org

As someone who was born and lived the majority of her life in Gaza we lived a life full of love and happiness. We lived around our families and had amazing connections with our community. Regardless of the constraints that we faced in Gaza due to the siege we found ways to enjoy life where possible. We had gatherings weekly, had dinners, enjoyed and celebrated weddings and milestones of our loved ones. Even with the restrictions and limited jobs we were able to work and live with our limited resources comfortably.

After a long life with our family in Gaza we decided to move to Canada to give our children a better future and education. leaving behind our loved ones and families, knowing the difficulty of being able to go back and visit. Our decision to leave was because living under siege and restrictions during war was a harrowing experience. Daily life becomes a constant struggle, as access to basic necessities like food, water, and medical supplies are severely limited during the times of Israeli bombardments. The constant threat of violence and the fear of losing loved ones creates a pervasive atmosphere of anxiety.

Communities became isolated, communication disrupted, and movement restricted, making it difficult to seek help or escape danger during those times of sporadic attack by the Israeli Military. The psychological toll was immense, leaving lasting scars on our families and us.

Over the last year Gaza has been enduring yet another genocide by the Israeli Military, driving millions of people to displacement and homelessness, killing and injuring many. Starting on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023 this bombardment of the Gaza Strip has led to the complete destruction of infrastructure and lives. The strip lacks food, clean water, electricity, and Internet connection with very limited access, leading citizens to starvation and dehydration. Gaza is in need of urgent humanitarian support and an immediate ceasefire to end this ongoing genocide of the people of Palestine. As the world watches and turns a blind eye, the people of Gaza continue to show the world life and resilience in the face of gruesome circumstances with Allah's strength.

# Helping the people of Morocco's Al Haouz Province after the devastating 6.4 earthquake

Written by Nafiza Ghanniaiman

In October 2023, I planned to visit Morocco. I've traveled to Morocco a few times and I did not expect my trip to be unusual this time around. However, on September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023, the unexpected happened. A devastating 6.4 earthquake hit Morocco's Al Haouz province and an estimated 3000 people lost their lives. At first, I was astounded. I wondered if I would even be able to go.

Thankfully, the families I knew were doing just fine. I was also relieved to learn that I could still travel to

Morocco. However, my perspective for this trip changed. I wanted to go and help in any way I could.

Naturally, other Canadians also wanted to help. With monetary donations from Fiysabiylillah Compassionate Aid Organization, I joined a specialized team in Morocco to provide food and essential goods to those who needed it most.

On October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, In Oulad Berhil, we bought groceries for 42 families. Each family received \$100 CA in food items and essential goods. These included: rice, lentils, and seven different grains, 40 pounds of flour, sugar, oil, honey, tea, milk (box), peanut butter, cheese, jam, noodles, spices, soap powder, toothpaste and canned sardines.

Then we made the difficult journey through Tizi N'Test. We were only one of five groups to visit because it's difficult to reach. It's deep in the

mountains. You could still see the cracks in the ground from the earthquake. There were also still aftershocks: one the day before and another one the day after we left. Transportation cost \$100 and we gave our coordinator \$300 for helping us to navigate the journey.



The saddest part of the journey was the glimpse we got of the households that were wiped out by the earthquake. We met one person who was the sole survivor of his family. We learned that some communities remained inaccessible and supplies were already running low before we got there because the affected areas were too difficult to reach.

The last part of our journey took us to an orphanage. We gave \$200 in monetary donations to the orphanage and gave an additional \$200 to a widow who lost her husband and who had five children to provide for.

May Allah grant His Mercy and Comfort to all those affected by the disaster and may He grant Jannah-tul Firdous to those who passed away. Ameen."



# **Women's Empowerment Sewing Factory Update**

Written by Fahmida Khatun

Fiysabiylillah C.A.O in partnership with Onkur Foundation Trust in Bangladesh completed the Sewing Factory in 2024. The factory aids in creating safe jobs and empowering destitute women. The factory is located in the remote Pathra village in Northwest Bangladesh. The total project cost was \$13,000 USD, which included construction of the factory, 8-10 industrial sewing machines, training, and sewing accessories. Alhamdulillah, The land was donated for the factory from a Bangladesh brother and architectural drawings were provided free of charge. Since its completion in early 2024 they have started on their winter blanket project and sanitary pad production. They also hope to sew handicrafts and Bangladeshi clothing, bed and cushion covers, and other items for sale in the future.

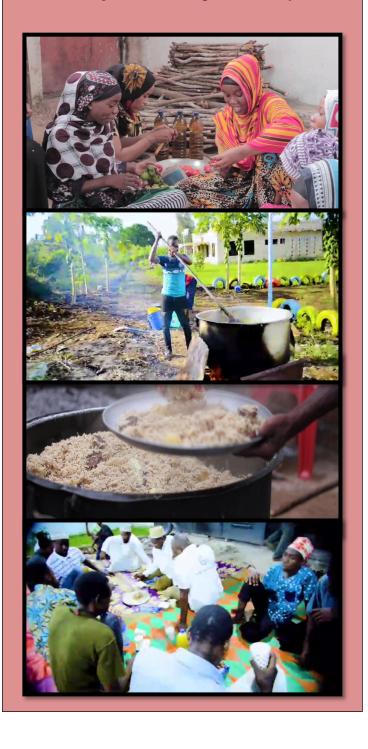
There are two parallel efforts Onkur Foundation Trust has identified to make the project selfsustaining in the long run:

- 1. Build a sewing factory where they can cut and sew, store machines and materials, and train the workers. Onkur is training interested less fortunate widows, divorced and low income women and girls how to sew so that they can sew clothes for their own families and can earn a livelihood by sewing in this factory. Women will also be trained to produce affordable and reusable sanitary napkins for the rural area where they are not familiar with these products.
- 2. Onkur plans to sell these traditional handicrafts and clothes in online and physical stores and at different fairs to make sure these women can earn their living, InshaAllah.



# Iftar on the Island of Zanzibar

During Ramadan Fiysabiylillah supports the Village Iftar Program in partnership with PDS (Perspective Development Skills) in Zanzibar, Tanzania. Iftar and Sahoor are provided to over three hundred and fifty villagers each night. At a cost of \$400 USD Fiysabiylillah collected donations to provide 3 Village Iftars last year.



# Mtanga Primary School UPDATE

Disabled childrens at Mtanga Primary School Kilwa, Tanzania hold goats resulting from a donation by Fiysabiylillah Compassionate Aid Organization in 2019.



Two goats donated in 2019 multiplied to 11 goats (2 goats died by disease). Staff and children are keeping goats well and are happy to report the success of this project under the Fiysabiylillah Agriculture 4 Change Program.

## Volunteers needed

Fiysabiylillah has ZERO Admin fees.

100% of all money donated goes towards
our projects.

We are looking for assistance in the following areas:

- Web Design/Social Media Content
- Bookkeeping
- Youth Group Leaders/ Camp Counselors
- Fundraising



Summer Camp this year was a successful program we organized for local kids (boys and girls) aged 8-16yrs of age. Each week we have one group made up of 10-15 children that participate in four to five days of activities.

One of the activities was sewing. This year we taught kids to sew a pencil case out of fabric and a zipper. The kids learned how to attach the zipper then to complete the pencil case and they were very happy to accomplish something they could use. We had fishing activities with canoeing. The kids learned how to catch and clean fish, and then they are cooked and enjoy tasting their hard work. Canoeing is also something new to most, they learn about water safety and how to paddle, turn in the water and reach shore safely. There is also an important element of studying the Arabic language, Islamic studies, praying salaat, which teaches kids the importance of having fun but also taking time to remember Allah SWT. They are many more activities, which the children enjoy to make it a memorable week.

All camp counselors are volunteers and are encouraged to bring their talents with kids to help the community. If you would like to volunteer (July-August) please contact Sr. Fozia at info@fiysabiylillah.org or text at 416 562 3844.

Camp runs from 9 AM - 3 PM at two locations (Kawartha Lakes & at Fiysabiylillah Learning Centre in Oshawa) through the weeks of July and August.

Cost \$150 / child / week (\$75 for single parents)



"My name is Aisha Faris and I have been going to the Fiysabiylillah camp since I was 9 years old, I am now 13 yrs old. I get to make friends, spend the day outside in the fresh air, and bake or craft. Going to camp is a very exciting week for me in my summer break. I learned how to play cricket, how to sew a pencil case (I use that pencil case in school now), how to canoe, fish, and bake the worlds best cookies which I now bake for my family at home (recipe on p.12). I remember going into camp with the welcoming faces. It is such a great experience, and wish I can go every year!"

#### DONATE

#### In Canada

Email transfer - info@fiysabiylillah.org (Please include the project you are donating towards and your contact info-email or ph.#) PayPal—visit www.fiysabiylillah.org

Cheque \$\_\_\_\_\_

Payable to Fiysabiylillah C.A.O
Mail to: 31 Elmeroy Court
Whitby, ON, L1N 8A5

#### In the USA

**Zelle transfer - donation@fiysabiylillah.org** (Please include the project you are donating towards and your contact info-email or ph.#)

Compassionate Aid and Healers Welfare

nization

## **Food Hamper Program**

Basic food items distributed in Guyana, India, Pakistan, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, Yemen, and Kenya











# Creative Corner

#### **No Alibi The Neighbor of Qudos**

Poem Written by Asia Maktabi

No Alibi

The Neighbor of Qudos

The blessed Land.

The cradle of the Prophets.

To whom should we apologize?

To Omar Ibn Al Khattab or to Salah Al deen Al Ayubi.

To whom should we apologize?

The martyrs, the widows or the babies in their cribs.

Pain squeezes our hearts.

Pain ties our hands.

Word scatter from the tongue,

The tongue is unable to speak.

It is hard to say sorry.

A thousand sorries is not enough.

Useless words that do not protect from the cold, from the rain or from fears.

No words will heal the wounds.

The beautiful sites are gone.

Whose eyes can sleep?

Whose ears can remain deaf?

Oh Gazza, your rights will be on our necks.

I swear to Allah,

How can we say

Sorry Gazza,

We apologize.

We apologize.

There is no alibi.

It is time to say

Wa Wa Mutasima.

Wa Wa Mutasima.

Gazza, you are the Heroine of this world.

You gave the lesson to everyone!

The land of the prophets will never be down.

Now your freedom is just a moment away.

Great Gazza your victory is near.

To end your sorrow, to end your grief.

Asking Allah for forgiveness.

Praying to Him for our helplessness.

All our excuses will not be acceptable.

Oh Gazza.

No Alibi











https://thenib.com



## **Best Ever Chocolate Chip Cookies**

- A Fiysabiylillah Summer Camp Recipe Favourite -



#### How to Make Chocolate Chip Cookies Step-By-Step

- 1. Beat the butter and sugars, then beat in the eggs and vanilla.
- 2. Dissolve the baking soda in hot water and add to the mixture.
- 3. Stir in the flour, chocolate chips, and walnuts.
- 4. Drop dough onto a prepared baking sheet.
- 5. Bake until the edges are golden brown.

How Long to Bake Chocolate Chip Cookies In an oven preheated to 350 degrees F, the chocolate chip cookies should be perfectly baked in about 10 minutes.

https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/10813/best-chocolate-chip-cookies/

#### **Ingredients**

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 teaspoons hot water
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 cup chopped walnuts

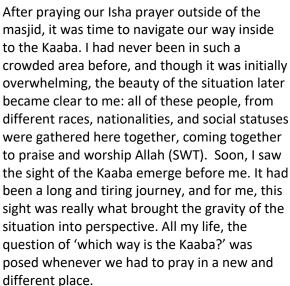


## **My First Ummah Trip**

Written by Majeedah Khan

During the 2023 winter break, my family and I travelled to Saudi Arabia to complete the act of Umrah. After an 11 hour plane ride, we touched down safely in Jeddah before getting in a taxi and beginning our journey to the holy city of Mecca. The drive to our hotel was beautiful, as we took in the vast, mountainous landscape, which was so different from what we were used to seeing here in Ontario. After checking into our hotel, we headed straight to Masjid al-Haram to complete our Umrah.





When you're thousands of miles away from the place, it's really easy to disconnect and forget what exactly it is you're praying to, and why you're doing so. However, actually seeing the Kaaba right before my eyes, and thinking about all of the events that took place in that very area was a surreal experience. As we completed our Tawaf, the seven laps around the Kaaba, I tried hard to remember every important thing to ask of Allah (SWT). The big crowd was a bit of a stressful experience for me, and at times I had to remind myself to focus more on my du'as and less on the people around me. It was difficult, because I was trying hard not to get pushed around too much, but I think that experience served as an excellent metaphor for our trip. Yes, it was both tiring and trying at times, but it was important to make sure that our main goal and the thing that was constantly at the forefront of our minds was the praise and remembrance of Allah SWT, as we attempted to garner as many blessings as possible from the holiest place on Earth.

After completing the Tawaf, we prayed two rakat and drank some of the holy Zamzam water before moving on to complete the Saie. This area wasn't nearly as congested, which gave me the opportunity to make sincere dua, and reflect on the experiences of Hagar, as I followed her exact path between the two hills of Safa and Marwa.......(continued on p.14) 13



Article (My First Ummah Trip) continued from page 13....

Once we had all completed the Saie, the boys went to get their hair cut, and after us girls trimmed ours back at the hotel, we exited the state of Ihram and completed our Umrah.

We continued to take advantage of the blessings being offered in Mecca by attending each prayer at the masjid. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to pray for some of the trip, but just being in the city was surreal, and a very spiritual experience for me. As I walked in the streets towards the masjid, I couldn't help but think, 'could the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) have walked where I'm walking right now?'. In fact, I *know* I walked in his footsteps on at least one occasion, which was when we climbed Mount Jabar, the site of his first revelation from Allah SWT. Later, we arrived in Madinah for our last few days. Both the masjid and the city itself were absolutely beautiful, and you could just feel it in the attitude of the people, see it in their smiles, that this was truly a blessed place. We had the opportunity to pray in the Rawdah, which the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), said was equivalent to praying in Jannah, as well as attending many historical sites, such as Masjid Quba, and Mount Uhud, the site of the famous battle of Uhud.

Unfortunately, the time moved too fast, and before we knew it, it was time to pack up and prepare for the long journey home. I was sad to be leaving, but was intensely grateful for the experience, which served as an amazing spiritual renewal, and ultimately, brought me closer to Allah SWT and my faith.



## **Orphan Support**

# Fiysabiylillah supports orphans in the following ways:

- Shelter
- Food
- Medicine
- School Supplies
- Education
- Clothing/ Uniforms



# Fiysabiylillah is committed to helping these orphan programs annually:

- ☐ Syrian Orphan and Widow Program (Jordan)
- ☐ Markazil Orphanage (Kenya)
- ☐ Hudaa Academy (Kenya)
- ☐ PDS Charity School (Zanzibar)
- ☐ Bibi Sharifa Orphanage (Tanzania)





## Hudaa Academy Orphan Sponsorship Update

(excerpt taken from the 2023 Annual Report provided by Shahid Yakub)

Your support has had a profound impact on the lives of orphans and vulnerable children through the Hudaa Academy Orphan Program. Thanks to your ongoing support, we were able to cover a wide range of expenses, including education, meals, accommodation, healthcare, school uniforms, books, and tuition fees for these deserving children. Your generosity has empowered these young minds to break free from the cycle of poverty and build a brighter future. Throughout the year, we provided comprehensive support to orphans, ensuring they receive quality education and care.

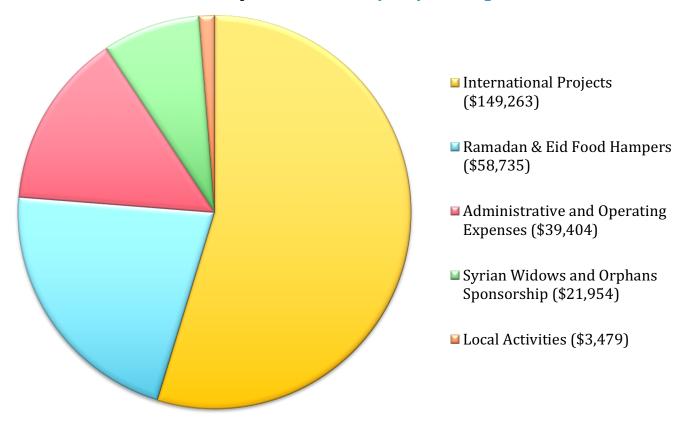


"We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to Fiysabiylillah C.A.O for your continued trust, belief in our mission, and your consistent financial support. Together, we have been able to bring hope, relief, and empowerment to numerous individuals and families in need."

-Hudaa Academy

# Fiysabiylillah Compassionate Aid Organization 2023 Donations Disbursement

\*For detailed financial information, please visit www.fiysabiylillah.org.



<sup>\*0%</sup> of cash donations go toward Administrative and Operating Expenses, which are paid for by donations-in-kind (non-monetary).

## **Thank You For Working With Us**



**Onkur Foundation** 











JazakAllah to all the partnering organizations for assisting Fiysabiylillah in all we have accomplished. We could not have completed projects around the world without your compassion and similar vision - to help those in need for the pleasure of Allah.

<sup>\*</sup> International Projects excludes money collected for Syrian Orphans and Widows & Food Hampers.