

2012-ISSUE 1

ZAKATNEWS

The Leader in Empowering Lives through Zakat



In Service Since 2001

ZAKAT
FOUNDATION
of AMERICA

ONE YEAR, 100 WELLS

*Our commitment to build 100 wells
in 100 communities in need of clean
water across Africa. p. 8-9*

OVER \$2M IN HUMANITARIAN AID PROVIDED TO SYRIA

*Helping rebuild the lives of
the Syrian people. p. 3*

NEW COMMUNITY CENTER IN CHICAGO NEIGHBORHOOD

*Education, mentoring, and
agriculture programs. p. 14*



*Beneficiaries of new
well built by ZF.*

CONTENTS

FROM THE DIRECTOR, 2

EMERGENCY RELIEF

Syria, 3

Kenya & Uganda, 4-5

SADAQA JARIYAH

Somalia, 6-9

EDUCATION

Sri-Lanka, India, Afghanistan, 10-11

HEALTHCARE

Kenya & Palestine, 12

DEVELOPMENT

Bosnia, 13

USA PROGRAMS, 14

WEB EXCLUSIVES

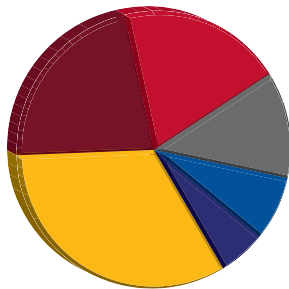
Bangladesh, Ghana, Kenya, 15

OUR MISSION

Zakat Foundation of America (ZF) is an international charity organization that helps generous and caring people reach out to those in need. ZF fosters charitable giving to alleviate the immediate needs of poor communities and to establish long-term development projects that ensure individual and community growth.

A PARTNER YOU CAN TRUST

ZF takes pride in careful management and distribution of funds raised. In 2011, 94.42 cents of every dollar donated went directly into our programs.



FUND ALLOCATION

21.89%	SEASONAL PROGRAMS
19.61%	ORPHAN SCHOLARSHIP
12.29%	EDUCATION
7.58%	DEVELOPMENT
5.44%	PROGRAM SUPPORT
33.18%	EMERGENCY AID

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FROM THE DIRECTOR



Syria—Khalil Demir (center), helping with food distribution for Syrian refugees in Turkey.

Assalamu alaykum, Peace be upon you. Dear Brothers and Sisters:

After you have found time to read through this newsletter, you will notice that a majority of the stories share a similar theme: water. That is because here at Zakat Foundation of America (ZF) we are exploring ways to conserve and share the basic element that is so important to human life.

We believe freshwater scarcity in the near future can, and will, create serious problems for humanity. It can, and will, cause regional conflicts and wars. Therefore, we are concerned.

In order to understand the need for water, we must turn to the drought in Somalia. It has made life for Somalis unbearable. As you know, since August 2011, ZF has been providing food, water and medical care to the Somali people. After seeing the extreme suffering of Somalis due to water shortage, we took on a well-building campaign. And since water shortage is not only limited to Somalia, ZF decided to make a milestone program and launched the One Year, 100 Wells Campaign. In this year alone, we hope to quench many communities' water needs for survival. We ask Allah (*most high*) and we ask you to please help us accomplish this critical task. You can, as an individual, community, school, MSA, or masjid help us to build a water well.

While we are concerned about water, we have not forgotten other regions and other conflicts. Syria has been one of our main focal points. By the grace of Allah (*swt*) we have spent over 2 million dollars to provide humanitarian aid for the Syrian people. Our offices in Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey have been toiling away in 24/7 mode for many months. We are grateful to our donors who supported our Syrian effort. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Syrian-Americans for their tireless efforts. Your dedication will bring peace and prosperity to Syria, inshallah (*God willing*). Please continue to support our Syrian effort.

Thank you for being part of this honorable endeavor.

Wassalamu Alaykum,

Khalil Demir

Khalil Demir,
Executive Director

Over \$2M in Humanitarian Aid Provided to Syria

When the people of Syria began peacefully protesting in March 2011, the Syrian government responded with violence and civilian casualties. To date, there have been 42,750 civilian arrests, 94,300 reported injuries and 11,000 documented casualties.

As the government crackdown continues, Syrians have fled to neighboring countries to settle temporarily. About 42,000 refugees fled to Jordan, 24,000 more are in Turkey and 20,000 refugees are in Lebanon. *

Zakat Foundation of America (ZF) has been a dedicated supporter of Syrian refugees throughout this tumultuous time. ZF's Syrian Crisis Humanitarian Relief was launched immediately in Syria, Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon.

Here is a brief description of some of our activities:

IN JORDAN

- > Expanding our operations to Jordan where 42,000 refugees are living; we are distributing food packages, blankets, mattresses and kitchen utensils
- > Helping refugees receive medical aid in several clinics
- > Providing dental care through Hijab Dental Clinic to many refugees who suffered dental fractures due to torture

IN TURKEY

- > Delivering food packages, kitchen utensils and household items to refugees
- > Distributing hundreds of jilbab (women's Islamic attire) and children's clothes

- > Shipped a 40 foot container of clothes, shoes, blankets, school supplies, toys, medical supplies, personal care, and other emergency relief items valued at about \$237,000 to refugees

IN LEBANON

- > Opened two clinics to provide free medicine and treatment for people who do not have the means to pay for medical care
- > Providing ongoing support at Al-Zahraa and Al-Shifa hospitals in Tripoli to refugees with life-threatening injuries
- > Distributing clothes, food packages, blankets, mattresses and kitchen utensils to refugees

IN SYRIA

- > Sending about 100 first aid kits every week directly to civilians
- > Distributing food packages, baby formula, hygiene items, diapers and other essential items that are greatly lacking in Syria

Here in the US, ZF is sponsoring regular fundraisers and donation drives in cities across the country to raise money for the people of Syria during this time of need. ZF remains committed to providing emergency relief to the people of Syria to help rebuild the lives and communities of the Syrian people. ■



Lebanon—
Syrian refugees
receiving aid.

** Note: All numbers are approximate as there is no official entity registering refugees: exact numbers cannot be calculated.*

ZF's Standardized Emergency Relief Covers Areas Hit by Floods

In the past year, impoverished countries have experienced the full impact of flooding: from human casualties to destruction of livestock and agriculture. Damage in areas that are not equipped to handle flooding will always have long-term effects.

In commitment to our vision of building a sustainable future, Zakat Foundation of America (ZF) launched several flood relief campaigns, many of which are intended to rebuild the lives of communities most affected by flooding. Here is a breakdown of countries where ZF worked to build a sustainable future:

- > Sri Lanka
- > Pakistan
- > Philippines
- > Kenya
- > Uganda

When a natural disaster dissipates and public attention wanes, people still struggle to survive. ZF has standardized emergency relief to include development through education and access to resources. It is as essential to impart education into the lives of victims as it is to provide food packages and other items because education will remain with survivors after the food packages no longer come. ■





Saving Lives of Flood Victims in Kenya and Uganda

In Kenya and Uganda, Zakat Foundation of America (ZF) has been focused on helping victims affected by massive flooding. Torrential rains have caused floods, destroyed homes, crops and livestock, wiped out the food supply and created a need for international assistance.

ZF fought the spread of malaria in Uganda by distributing long-lasting insecticide treated mosquito nets. In Kenya, ZF provided short and long-term flood relief through two distinct distribution programs.

Short-term relief was provided through distribution of food packages containing maize, beans, wheat flour and cooking oil that will last for the next three months. And long-term relief was provided through the distribution of hybrid maize seeds, meant to provide food once the three months are over.

The hybrid maize seeds were planted this month and, after three months, when food packages will run low, flood victims will be able to harvest the planted maize. The crops they cultivate will provide them with enough food to last until the next planting season.

In addition to food distribution, ZF trained local volunteers to assess the damage caused by flooding to homes and property. Volunteers then issued ZF ration cards that provide services specifically meant for each family. Relief packages were given with the ZF ration cards, thus families were able to get the things they needed to make life a bit easier.

The District Commissioner of Budalangi District, Mr. Khalif Mohammed, attended the emergency relief package distribution and expressed his deepest gratitude for the work ZF is doing in Kenya. A number of flood victims were thankful that a Muslim organization like ZF had come to their aid; the first time since flooding in the region in 1961.

Right now, families affected by the flood have enough high energy and protein foods to sustain them for the next three months. Hunger and starvation has become a problem of the past and the people of Kenya and Uganda are looking toward the future. ■



Kenya—Beneficiaries receiving food packages.

Continued Support for the People of Somalia: *Two New Water Wells Built in Mogadishu*



Somalia—Beneficiaries happily getting fresh, clean water from a well built by ZF.

The situation in war-torn Somalia is getting worse each day and its people—especially its children—are dying in appalling numbers due to lack of food and water.

Continued conflict and political instability in this East African nation have brought about the collapse of the country's basic public health, education, water and agricultural systems.

The displaced families and villagers in the Benadir region of Mogadishu have been suffering from a lack of access to clean drinking water for many months. Even as the drought and famine conditions lessened in the area, the people have been forced to buy water from nearby localities, putting severe financial strain on their families. Some people are simply unable to afford the water and have been

reduced to drinking only what is necessary to survive, often resorting to getting water from contaminated sources in the region.

In January 2012, Zakat Foundation of America (ZF) launched a development project for the people of Somalia for long-term relief. ZF collected funds to build water wells for the people affected by the drought. Each well costs \$2,500 and, by the grace of God, we just finished building two wells in the region.

The people living in these communities will benefit from these wells for decades or more. Hand dug wells are inexpensive alternatives to machine-drilled wells, which are costly and difficult to construct due to lack of access to machinery and building sites. The ability to collect clean, drinkable water

without hazards to personal safety or the health of villagers means so much to the people of the Mogadishu region of Somalia.

These wells will enable families and displaced persons to successfully rebuild their lives after the famine of 2011, which devastated their livestock and left them with no crops to harvest. Access to water will allow them to sustain new livestock and dairy animals in order to generate income and feed their children.

ZF has been providing aid in Somalia since 2009 and will continue to do so as long as we are needed there. We are committed to providing basic human needs, such as food and water, to the people of Somalia through long-term development projects in the region. ■

American Kids Raising Funds to Build Wells for Somalis

A small group of kids from the Zakat Foundation of America's (ZF) East Coast Office in Delaware turned what started as a small project into a huge success. In November 2011, a group of kids from ZF's East Coast Office decided to work together to raise funds to build a well in drought-stricken Somalia. Through bake sales, scarf sales, and book fairs the kids raised more money than anticipated and now have enough to build seven wells in the region.

The situation in war-torn Somalia is getting worse every day and its

people—especially its children—are dying in appalling numbers due to lack of food and water. The kids explained that they wanted to help other kids like themselves across the world and, with their hard work, Alhamdulillah, they have found a way to do so.

Mirac Kekik, 13, said that he thought raising enough money for one well seemed a little out of their reach, but when they made over \$4,000 he realized that anything is possible with the help of Allah (swt).

Nur Kose, 13, said, "When we heard that the Zakat Foundation of America would be able to build a well in Africa if we could raise \$3,000, we could not wait to get started. It was tremendously exciting to think that we could help out in providing clean water for people halfway across the world."

We welcome you to join these enterprising kids and be part of our One Year 100 Wells Campaign and help provide the most basic human need, water, to the people of Somalia. ■



USA
—Delaware youth
fundraising team.



WATER FACTS:

- > Dirty water kills a child every 20 seconds
- > Waterborne diseases kill almost 4,000 children every day
- > 1 in 7 people in the world do not have access to safe drinking water
- > 80% of illnesses in developing countries are linked to poor water and sanitation
- > 3.5 million people die each year from a water related disease
- > The weight of water that women in Africa and Asia carry on their heads is about 45 pounds, the same as an airport luggage allowance ■





Building 100 Wells in 100 Communities Across Africa

Nearly 1 billion people do not have access to clean, safe drinking water. We are changing that—one community at a time—with our campaign launched to build wells in communities in need of safe, clean water.

The One Year, 100 Wells Campaign is our plan to build 100 wells in 100 different communities across Africa. Among the countries we will be working in are Ghana, Somalia, Kenya, Uganda, Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso.

The communities will play a role in building the wells to give residents a chance to contribute to this local project. We want them to feel like they played a vital role in bringing such a simple yet crucial blessing into their community: water.

Construction of the wells has begun and with the response we have gotten so far, we are expecting to reach our goal of building 100 wells in the next year, inshallah.

So far we have raised enough to build 10 wells. Alhumdulillah, seven of those wells are now complete; five in Ghana and two in Somalia.

Three more wells are currently under construction; two wells in Ethiopia and one in Kenya.

People here in the US and around the world are taking part in this campaign to provide safe, clean water to communities in need.

Here at Zakat Foundation of America we are working hard to give communities across the world access to clean water and our goal is to make water scarcity an issue of the past. ■

Community members excited to use their new well.

250 Scholarships Awarded to Deserving Students in Sri Lanka



Twenty-eight year old Lebbe Sulaima and her family have come a long way in the past few years. When the tsunami struck Sri Lanka in 2004, Lebbe's family lost their home and spent the next year travelling on foot between refugee camps for tsunami victims. This young woman, who had always wanted to complete her college education, had little hope that would ever happen. That was to change, however, when Zakat Foundation of America (ZF) awarded Lebbe a full scholarship to the College of Management and Technology (COMTECH) in Sri Lanka.

Lebbe recently received her Bachelor's Degree in Arts from COMTECH. She says that the help she received from ZF is something she will remember for the rest of her life. Since graduating, Lebbe secured a job and is now supporting her family.

ZF believes that the youth are our future and that is why it is important to educate them today. We support schools and students all around the world, including COMTECH in Sri Lanka, where young deserving adults are given the opportunity to get a quality education for free.

In January 2012, ZF extended 250 scholarships to students both men and women studying information technology, human resource management and the English language. ZF distributed the scholarships in a ceremony before the semester began on January 9th. ■

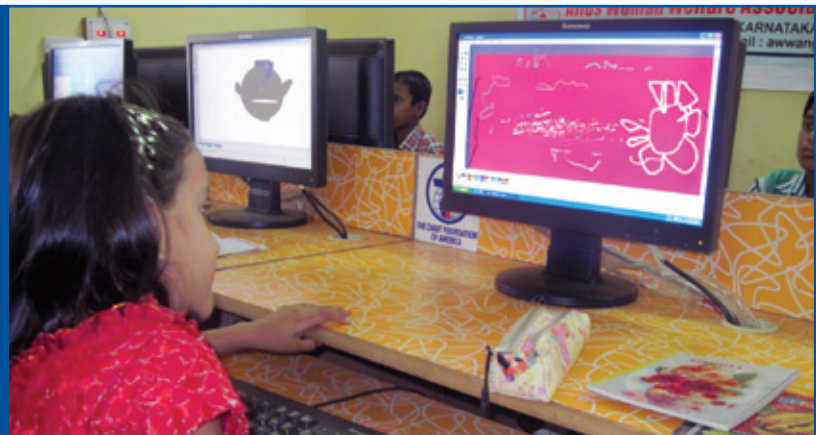


Sri Lanka—COMTECH scholarship awards ceremony.

ZF's Computer Literacy Project in Southwestern India School: Making Wishes Come True

Zakat Foundation of America's Computer Literacy Project in India's southwestern state of Karnataka is making dreams come true for some of the many women and children who attend the school's computer classes.

Web Exclusive: Read more at ZAKAT.ORG.



India—Student utilizing the computer lab at the southwestern India school.



*Students at the
Afghans4Tomorrow
elementary school*

A New School in Afghanistan for Those Affected by War

Zakat Foundation of America (ZF) is covering the tuition of 133 disadvantaged students at the Afghans4Tomorrow elementary school in the Chehelsotoon district of Kabul.

The Afghans4tomorrow School was the first place to open its gates for females, some of whom were refugees. These students missed their education during years of war in Afghanistan and now that they are more than 10 years old (some up to 25 years old), they are not allowed to attend government schools.

When we asked some of the students whose tuition we cover

to share their stories with ZF, here is a sample of what they expressed, in their own words.

Hamida, 23, 7th grade:

"I was feeling very sad because I was very far from school and education every day I was thinking and talking with myself I don't know when I become sick and scared from society, family and everyone I was not able to talk with someone... Once a month I have been visited by the doctor for my checkup. After a while my illness gets more and more, then I went to Pakistan for my illness treatment/ psychotherapy. Then my parents

figure out my problem and find the A4T01 school and enrolled me. Slowly I find myself, school principal and all lovely teacher help and support me. Now I am feeling better and also I am not going to the doctor. I can see my future in this school. I want to say big thanks from my heart.

Read more stories from students as Afghans4Tomorrow at ZAKAT.ORG ■

Giving the Gift of Sight in a Kenyan Village

Here at Zakat Foundation of America (ZF) we believe that healthcare is a human right. That is why we open mobile health clinics around the world in communities that need it the most. In December, ZF funded three mobile health clinics in the cities of Matete, Matungu and Mount Elgon, Kenya, where, before we arrived, residents had to walk miles in the heat in search of medical care.

Since the clinics opened in December, there have been countless patients treated for different ailments. Among those treated were some local residents who had become blind from cataracts.

Alhumdulillah, we have performed surgery on 17 people to correct for cataract blindness, and every surgery has been successful. Families are beyond grateful as people who were unable to see or to read are now able to see clearly and read again.

Of those 17 surgeries, we also had three children who were treated for cataract infection and they have now been able to return to school.

The patients of the mobile health clinics express their gratitude daily to ZF volunteers who work in the clinics, but the real thanks goes to our donors who help us keep projects like this one alive. ■



Doctors performing cataract surgery on one beneficiary.

Palestinian Boy Receives New Kidney and a New Life

Kidney surgery beneficiary.



For the last five of his six years of life, Yahya Ahmed Hasan Maslmih, a Palestinian boy from Bethlehem, had to undergo dialysis every 48 hours in

order to live. He was in desperate need of a kidney. His father wished to donate his own kidney to his son, however, because of his modest salary he could not afford the transplant surgery.

By the grace of Allah (*swt*), the Maslmih family was finally able to find a donor to provide for the surgery in the US. The family then had to look for a sponsor to cover the plane tickets and housing they would need to be able to live comfortably during the operation and long recovery period. The Palestinian Children's Relief Fund, on behalf of the Maslmih, applied to Zakat Foundation of America (ZF) to cover these essential funds.

We are overjoyed to share with you the recent success of Yahya's

surgery, which took place in Boston this February. Yahya left the hospital on February 19th and he is doing very well. The doctor who performed his surgery was very pleased with Yahya's progress.

Yahya still needs many visits to the hospital for checkups and tests but because of his new kidney he no longer needs dialysis. Thanks to your generous donations, Yahya can have a normal childhood and hopefully, a long, healthy life. ■

Livestock Development Project Brings Independence to Families

From 1992 to 1995, the world witnessed one of the worst genocides captured on television in the Bosnian War. As the former Yugoslavia fractured along ethnic lines, groups such as the Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs engaged in conflict that caused the displacement and indiscriminate massacre of hundreds of thousands of Bosnians who were largely Muslim.

In an effort to rebuild displaced communities in Bosnia, Zakat Foundation of America (ZF) launched its Livestock Development Project. ZF representatives on the ground identified five needy families who were impacted by the conflict and passed along cows to the families to help them earn a livelihood. The Livestock Development Project is part of a larger campaign to empower displaced communities in what is now Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The first family who received a cow is from Vlasenica, in eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina. Ganic Senaid, the head of the household, was wounded in the attack on Srebrenica, and because of his injuries, working to support his family has become extremely difficult. The Senaid family is extremely grateful to ZF for providing them with an opportunity to make money by selling milk and cheese produced by their new cow.

Mirza Dubinović, whose brother was killed while fighting in the Bosnia and Herzegovina Army, received a cow to support his and his brother's family. Alhumdulillah, the Dubinović family has been given a chance to make ends meet for the first time.

Khalil Rahmanović, who has a family of seven (including some distant relatives) recently returned to his village, Potocari, in eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina. Potocari is far from the city so finding work has been difficult for Khalil. The Rahmanović family was presented with a cow from ZF and is happy that no family member will ever have to go to sleep on an empty stomach again.

ZF's Livestock Development Project is just one of many long-term development projects that encourages needy families to learn a skill or trade to make a living. Other projects include gardening co-ops, sewing programs and livestock sharing programs that provide lasting benefits to needy people around the world. ■

Two of the very happy families who received cows through our Bosnia Livestock Development Project.





USA—ZF community center in Chicago's South Shore neighborhood.

Zakat Foundation of America Opens New Community Center in Chicago

While a lot of the programs Zakat Foundation of America (ZF) offers are international, our Social Services Program was specifically created to help people in the Chicagoland area and in states across the US.

Alhumdulillah, ZF just opened a new Chicago Community Center in the South Shore neighborhood located at 1759 E. 75th Street in Chicago to serve local community members.

Some of the programs the new Community Center offers include:

MENTORING —INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP

- > Health
- > Employment
- > Marriage and Parenting

EDUCATIONAL AND TUTORING PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH AND SENIORS

- > Nutrition and Health Awareness
- > ESL, Arabic, Spanish classes
- > GED, ACT, SAT prep
- > Cultural Arts

COMMUNITY GARDEN

- > Provides education about agriculture
- > Harvest will be distributed to the community
- > Promotes a sense of community pride

ZF is committed to serving the needs of the community and we are excited about joining the South Shore community in Chicago to expand our reach. ■

Conserving Water for Our Future

After browsing through this newsletter, you will notice that a lot of the stories share a similar theme: water. That is because here at Zakat Foundation of America (ZF) we are focusing on finding ways to conserve and share the basic element that is so important to human life.

We have clean water at our fingertips but sometimes we do not realize how much we are using. It is important that we conserve water not only for those in need, but for future generations.

Here are some easy ways to conserve water:

- > Turn off the water while brushing your teeth and save 25 gallons a month.
- > Turn off the water while you shave and save up to 300 gallons a month.
- > Run your clothes washer and dishwasher only when they are full. You can save up to 1,000 gallons a month.
- > Shorten your shower by a minute or two and you will save up to 150 gallons per month.
- > Designate one glass for your drinking water each day or refill a water bottle. This will cut down on the number of glasses to wash.

There are many more ways you can save water every day. Let us commit to doing this together so we can all conserve water for our future. ■

Being Stewards of Our Resources: Zakat News Goes Triannual

In order to cut down on the cost of printing, Zakat News will be published on a triannual basis, delivered to your mailbox three times a year. This will allow us to direct more funding toward our programs around the world.

Visit us at ZAKAT.ORG to get the most up-to-date information on where you can make a difference! ■

A Safe House for Abused Women

A young girl from the Congo, Aline Uzamukunda was only 14 when she met a man in Rwanda who promised he would bring her to Kenya for a better life. When they arrived in the city of Nairobi however, the man locked up Aline and declared her to be his new wife. After countless days, Aline managed to escape and found sanctuary in ZF Safe House Program in Nairobi, Kenya.

The ZF Safe House Program provides shelter to refugee children and women who are either homeless or are victims of violence and abuse. Residents can recover and receive counseling.

To learn more about Aline Uzamukunda's miraculous spirit, visit ZAKAT.ORG ■

Ghana Office Expands as Part of Sustainable Development Goal

ZF Ghana office is one of the first non-governmental organizations in West Africa to adopt sustainable development as a mission.

Read more about our Ghana office, sustainable development efforts at ZAKAT.ORG. ■



New Mosque in Kenya

By the grace of God, the construction of a mosque Malakisi, Kenya has been completed, where ZF has torn down the town's old dilapidated mosque and replaced it with a larger and structurally sound one. The old mosque was falling apart and could not accommodate the 700 to 800 people who attended Friday prayers there.

The Malakisi community appealed to ZF in early December to rebuild the local mosque. Thanks to our generous and kindhearted donors, ZF responded positively to the request. Construction for the new mosque began on January 10, 2012 and was completed in late May 2012.

Read more at ZAKAT.ORG ■

Kenya—Top Two: Completed mosque. Bottom: Women praying for ZF for building a new mosque.



Bangladesh—Happy orphans displaying their scholastic achievements.

From Herding Cows to Winning Scholarships: The Story of Noor Hussain

When Noor Hussain was 4 years old his entire life changed in an instant. Noor's family grew up in the small village of Charkhoaz in the Feni district of Bangladesh and at the age of 4, Noor's father died in a car accident leaving him, his brother, and four sisters to fend for themselves.

To learn about how Zakat Foundation of America helped Noor turn his misfortune around, visit ZAKAT.ORG. ■



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Provide food, medicine & shelter



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