

Islamic Relief Germany

Islamic Relief Germany (IRD) is a global non-governmental organisation (NGO) based in Cologne. IRD sees itself as a charity that bases its actions on Islamic values. In light of recent events, there is a need for clarification on the following questions: How did this organisation come into being? How is it funded? How is it integrated into the charity sector? Is it part of a larger political-missionary network? The following article attempts to answer these questions.

By Carsten Frerk.

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1. The Foundation

1.1. Zakat, the religious social levy

Believing Muslims are required to observe the 'Five Pillars of Islam': 1. Shaha-da/profession of faith, 2. Salah/ritual prayer, 3. Zakat/religious social contribution, 4. Sawm/fasting during Ramadan, 5. Hajj/pilgrimage. Appropriate giving (Zakat) thus forms the third pillar of the basic religious duties. The amount of the donation is not arbitrary but can be calculated precisely. On this subject,¹ writes Islamic Relief:

"All Muslims who have reached puberty and are of sound mind are required to pay Zakat as soon as their assets exceed a minimum amount. This Nisab [minimum value of assets] corresponds to the value of 85 grams of gold [mid-December 2020: around 4,200 euros].² If the wealth you possess over the course of a lunar year exceeds this value, you should give 2.5 per cent of your wealth as zakat to those in need. You can easily calculate your zakat online. We are happy to support you and offer personal advice."

The great religious significance of this donation is illustrated by passages from the Quran that explicitly refer to the alms tax. An example:

"Those who believe and do righteous deeds, and perform prayer and pay the zakat, shall have their reward with their Lord, and they shall have no fear (of judgement), nor shall they grieve." (Quran 2:277).

According to a calculation by Islamic Relief,³ for assets of 30,000 euros (savings, land and property, etc., minus debts and loans), the zakat donation amounts to 750 euros; for assets of 100,000 euros, the annual zakat donation is 2,500 euros.

¹ <http://www.die-dritte-säule.de/de/>

² <https://www.gold.de/rechner/>

³ <http://www.die-dritte-säule.de/de/zakat-berechnen/>

Provided this is well organised, it is a steady source of income, as the voluntary donation becomes at least a moral obligation, which is quite similar to the predictable Christian church tax. (The Muslim 2.5 per cent of assets roughly corresponds to the 8 to 9 per cent Christian church tax in Germany levied on the income tax of church members).

The key difference lies in the lack of a link to state sources of information regarding the income of religious members – which automatically covers all members liable for tax (through the provision of state tax records). The shortfall in donation income must therefore be offset by a correspondingly high level of promotional expenditure. For this reason, Muslim organisations repeatedly launch PR campaigns that reach deep into the everyday lives of Muslims, as the Tagesspiegel⁴ describes for IRD in Berlin:

“They are simply part of the landscape: in many shops in Kreuzberg and Neukölln, there are donation boxes bearing the image of a mosque with two minarets – the symbol of the Muslim aid organisation ‘Islamic Relief’. The shop owners are mostly Muslims themselves. So are most of those who put money in.”

As this principle of donation applies to all Muslims, IRD is just one of several Muslim charitable organisations. Others include:

- Muslime helfen e.V.⁵, established in Ludwigshafen in 1985 (colours: yellow and green)
- WEFA – Weltweiter Einsatz für Arme⁶, established in Cologne in 2006 (colour: dark red).
- Ansaar International e.V.⁷, based in Düsseldorf since 2012 (colour: black).
- Hasene International e.V.⁸ (Islamic Community Milli Görüs), in Cologne since 2010 (colour: light green).
- International Humanitarian Relief Organisation (IHH)⁹, established in 1998, which was banned in Germany in July 2010 for supporting Hamas (colour: dark green).

1.2. Other fundraising activities

Although zakat is the main source of income as the “third pillar of Islam”, there are also “voluntary, religious donations” (“out of gratitude to the Creator”), which are also passed on in this way. Around half or more of the direct project funding provided by Islamic Relief Germany (IRD) goes exclusively to Muslim religious contexts. Ramadan (iftar food parcels, distributed in mosques, among other places), Kurban (meat from sacrificial animals), Adak (thanksgiving for fulfilled wishes) and Aqiqa (thanksgiving for the birth of a child) serve to strengthen and reinforce the faith, as do other appeals for donations (for orphans, women, emergency aid, etc.). However, no figures are published regarding the scale of these various sources of income.

⁴ <https://www.tagesspiegel.de/berlin/glaubensfragen-so-arbeitet-islamic-relief-im-team-mit-christlichen-hilfsorganisationen/5879830.html>

⁵ <https://www.muslimehelfen.org/>

⁶ <https://wefa.org/unsere-organisation/>

⁷ <https://ansaar.de/>

⁸ <https://www.hasene.org/de/>

⁹ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IHH_\(Turkish_NGO\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IHH_(Turkish_NGO))

1.3. He who pays the piper...

An old and tried-and-tested strategy of socio-political manoeuvring was already known to politicians in ancient Rome and the Middle Ages: “Cuius enim panem manduco, carmina canto” (Latin), “Whose bread I eat, his song I sing” (English), “Whose bread I eat, his song I sing” (German).

This principle is followed not only, but above all, by religious aid organisations, which display the lettering and/or logo of their organisation large and clearly visible on the boxes, bags, rice sacks, tents and banners they distribute, and whose staff wear clothing in line with an unmistakable ‘corporate identity’. At Islamic Relief, this strategy is not only strongly pronounced, but the word and figurative mark is unmistakably more religious than is familiar from today’s Christian aid and missionary organisations. The two towering minarets in the figurative mark make it immediately clear what kind of organisation this is.

Figurative and word marks of Christian and Islamic aid organisations



Islamic Relief on the ground worldwide



Quellen: Screenshots verschiedener Internetseiten

Aid organisations – on the ground



Sources: Screenshots of photos from the organizations' websites, December 2020

polis

2. The founding of Islamic Relief (Worldwide)

2.1. The history: people and organisations.

“Islamic Relief was founded in Birmingham in 1984 by two medical students of the Sunni faith in response to the famine in the Horn of Africa [Sudan, Ethiopia].”¹⁰ There are currently 100 offices in 40 countries, and Islamic Relief Worldwide describes itself in its mission statement¹¹ described as “one of the largest Islamic NGOs in the world”.

“Over the course of 34 years, by the grace of Allah (SWT), Islamic Relief has grown to become one of the largest Islamic NGOs in the world. Looking to the future, we are constantly striving to learn, develop and improve our work to help those most in need. Our aim is to do all this in accordance with our core values, which we have drawn from our Islamic faith: compassion, justice, stewardship, sincerity and excellence.”

That this self-description is accurate is demonstrated by an overview (from 2011) by Marie Juul Petersen “Islamizing Aid: Transnational Muslim NGOs After 9/11”.¹² She estimates that there are around 400 Islamic transnational religious NGOs. (The “Union of NGOs of the Islamic World”¹³ lists 354 organisations, including Islamic Relief.) The largest organisations in this field (based on annual average budgets for 2005–2009) include 23 organisations,¹⁴ with a total budget of US\$341 million.

¹⁰ http://publikationen.sozioogie.de/index.php/kongressband_2014/article/view/101

¹¹ <https://www.islamic-relief.org.za/about-us/history/>

¹² https://www.researchgate.net/publication/251191329_Islamizing_Aid_Transnational_Muslim_NGOs_After_911/download

¹³ <https://www.idsb.org/en/uyeler>

¹⁴ https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Some-of-the-largest-transnational-Muslim-NGOs-and-their-country-of-origin_tbl1_251191329

Table 1: Some of the largest Muslim humanitarian NGOs and their country of origin*), average budget 2005–2009		
Organisation	Country of origin	Budget (USD)
Islamic Relief	UK	60 million
International Islamic Relief Organisation	Saudi Arabia	47 million
Deniz Feneri Association	Turkey	46 million
Saudi Committee for the Relief of the Palestinian People	Saudi Arabia	40 million
Zayed bin Sultan al Nahayan Charitable and Humanitarian Foundation	Abu Dhabi	31 million
Qatar Charitable Society	Qatar	31 million
Direct Aid/Africa Muslims Agency	Kuwait	25 million
International Islamic Charitable Organisation	Kuwait	20 million
LIFE for Relief and Development	USA	18 million
Muslim Aid	UK	13 million
EMDAD	Iran	12.6 million
Muslim Hands	UK	10.6 million
Comité de Bienfaisance et de Secours aux Palestiniens	France	8 million
Munazzamat al Da'wa al Islamiya	Sudan	6 million
Interpal	UK	4.2 million
Total		341.4 million
*) The Aga Khan Foundation, which has an annual budget of USD 320 million, is not included as it is not considers itself to be religious.		
Source: Marie Juul Petersen, "Islamizing Aid: Transnational Muslim NGOs After 9/11", 2011.		

According to legend, the first founding donation was made in 1984, amounting to 20 pence, by nine-year-old Bassem, the nephew of *Hany El-Banna*. The founders of Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) were, according to NGO Monitor¹⁵, *Hany El-Banna* and *Essam El-Haddad*.

To explain the context in which IRW was established, the backgrounds of four individuals mentioned in the 2009 annual report¹⁶ of Islamic Relief Worldwide: *Dr Mohammed El-Alfy* (Chairman), *Dr Essam El-Haddad*, *Nader Al-Nouri* and *Ibrahim El-Zayat*.

For *Hany El-Banna* (Egyptian, born 1950), there is a detailed profile on the British networking platform LinkedIn¹⁷. It states, among other things:

"A tireless activist, founder of Islamic Relief, successful keynote speaker at national and international level, with 30 years' experience in humanitarian work, committed to interfaith dialogue, community and youth work. Has held high-level meetings with Queen Elizabeth II, Prince Charles, heads of state, UN officials, national and international government representatives, princes and princesses of the Middle East, and other VIPs."

This self-description makes no mention of his being an 'OBE' (Member of the Order of the British Empire) but merely states the sequence of his activities in a matter-of-fact manner: Bachelor of Medicine and Diploma in Islamic Studies from Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Doctor of Medicine from the University of Birmingham. 1977–1994: worked as a doctor; 1984–1999: founding member and trustee of Muslim Aid UK¹⁸, 1984–2008: Founder and President of Islamic Relief Worldwide; since July 2008: Chairman of the International HIV Fund; since November 2008: Chairman of the Muslim Charities Forum¹⁹, Chairman of Zakat House since 2009²⁰.

According to a dossier on Islamic Relief entitled "Charity / Extremism / Terror" pub-

¹⁵ https://www.ngo-monitor.org/ngos/islamic_relief_worldwide_irw/

¹⁶ <https://www.islamic-relief.org/annual-reports/>

¹⁷ <https://uk.linkedin.com/in/dr-hany-el-banna-5a88a82b>

¹⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muslim_Aid

¹⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muslim_Charity_Forum

²⁰ <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/06883617/officers>

lished by the Middle East Forum²¹. *Hany El-Banna* has been active in the Muslim Brotherhood network²².

“Hany El-Banna OBE – founder of Islamic Relief and former trustee of several charities accused of links to Islamist extremism and terrorism. El-Banna founded Islamic Relief whilst he was active in Muslim Brotherhood circles as a student. In 2016, El-Banna gave an interview to Al-Aqsa Voice, the official radio station of the terrorist group Hamas, in which he called for a ‘strong coalition’ between civil society organisations and the Hamas government to ‘ward off all foreign ideas and malicious intruders.’”

Essam El Haddad – co-founder of Islamic Relief and foreign policy adviser to the (now deposed and deceased) Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood president *Mohamed Morsi*. Egyptian prosecutors allege that *Haddad* used Islamic Relief to finance the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. The Egyptian prosecution also alleged that Haddad “financed terrorism by using global charities such as Islamic Relief.”

Nader Al Nouri – a figure not so well known in Europe, but no less important for that²³:

“Sheikh Nader Al-Nouri, one of the most prominent leaders of Da`wah and charitable work in Kuwait, chairman of the `Abdullah Al-Nouri Charity Society and former chairman of the Islamic Presentation Committee in Kuwait (IPC) [...] is one of the founders of the Islamic movement in Kuwait. He was a companion of Sheikh `Abdullah Al-Mutawa' (Abu Badr), the chairman of the Social Reform Society. With his modesty, asceticism, knowledge and manners, he had a great influence on the youth of the awakening.”

Or as the RAND Corporation (2015) writes in the report ‘Foreign financing of Islamic institutions in the Netherlands’²⁴ (on p. 66):

“According to an independent news source, the recently deceased founder of the society, Sheikh Nader Abd Al Azziz Al Nouri, was a founding member of the board of trustees of the UK-based Islamic Relief Worldwide. Under his leadership and since the organisation’s foundation in 2001, the Al Nouri Charity Society had operated in 73 countries: of these, only the UK, Germany and the Netherlands were in Western Europe.”

Ibrahim El-Zayat (born 1968), a German national, also plays a role. According to information from Companies House²⁵ (Commercial Register) *Ibrahim El-Zayat* served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) from 15 February 1998 to 13 July 2015 and as Director of Islamic Relief (UK) from 16 January 2005 to 17 September 2017. In his capacity as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of IRW, *El-Zayat* signed, for example, “a groundbreaking agreement with the African Union” in 2014²⁶ on cooperation in combating poverty and the effects of disasters in Africa. In South Africa, *Ibrahim Farouk El Zayat* (according to the 2019 annual report of IR South Africa²⁷) one of the five directors of the organisation’s Cape Town office. In Australia, *El-Zayat* (according to the 2020 Annual

²¹ <https://www.meforum.org/MiddleEastForum/media/MEFLibrary/pdf/Islamic-Relief-Dossier-v3.pdf>

²² <https://www.bpb.de/politik/extremismus/islamismus/286322/die-muslimbruderschaft>

²³ <https://www.dawahskills.com/torchbearers/nader-al-nouri-a-prominent-leader-in-dawah-and-charity-works/>

²⁴ https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR992.html

²⁵ <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/officers/MXfVRVYomoCu9ZGCyr1T9yY1r4/appointments>

²⁶ <https://www.islamic-relief.org/trailblazing-with-the-african-union/>

²⁷ <https://www.islamic-relief.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/AFS-2019-1.pdf>

Report²⁸) a member of the board of trustees of Islamic Relief Australia.

Ibrahim El-Zayat has a wide range of links to organisations associated with the Muslim Brotherhood (MB), such as the Federation of Islamic Organisations in Europe (FIOE), the Federation of Muslim Youth and Students Organisations (FEMYSO), and was chairman of the Islamic Community of Germany (IGD), which has renamed itself the German Muslim Community (DMG) and denies any personal or organisational links to the MB.

Three of the four individuals pictured from Islamic Relief Worldwide's founding period are directly or indirectly associated with the MB network.



There are numerous other indications. Two examples:

Khaled Lamada – Chairman of the US branch of Islamic Relief and founder of Egyptian Americans for Democracy and Human Rights (EADHR).²⁹ It is regarded as an important Brotherhood lobby group in the US. Lamada wrote and shared Facebook posts, mostly in Arabic, and circulated texts in which he praised the "jihad" of the "mujahideen of Egypt" for "inflicting many defeats on the Jews." He has published claims on Facebook praising Hamas for inflicting a "huge defeat" on the "Zionist entity".

Ahmed Al-Rawi – a former director of Islamic Relief Worldwide, who also served as director of the Muslim Association of Britain³⁰, which the Daily Telegraph has described as the "most important British branch of the Muslim Brotherhood". In 2004, *Al-Rawi* signed a statement supporting jihad against British and American forces in Iraq.

²⁸ https://islamic-relief.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/IR5335_A4_Annual_Report_WEB-21.07.20.pdf

²⁹ https://www.facebook.com/eadhr/?ref=page_internal

³⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muslim_Association_of_Britain

There is a simple reason for this reference to individuals: the membership of organisations in MB networks³¹ is largely denied, as is membership by many individuals. One is therefore dealing with an organisation whose lack of transparency is intentional. The expectation that one would find in Western Europe an organisation similar to those that once existed in Egypt or Jordan – formally and tightly organised and led – comes to nothing. *Lorenzo Vidino* has described this in “The Muslim Brotherhood in the West: Evolution and Western Policies”³² (pp. 8–9) as an informal “network of personal relationships”:

“Essentially, the Western Brotherhood consists of connections and collaborations built around a network of personal relationships. It hardly corresponds to a well-defined master plan or a finely orchestrated conspiracy but arises from the interaction of a small group of intelligent, educated and motivated individuals. It is essentially a fairly small, informal network of activists linked by marriage, business relationships, old friendships and, above all, a shared vision. Each organisation belonging to the movement acts independently and adapts its actions to the environment in which it operates, but a foundation of commonly accepted principles and goals unites them all. It is therefore perhaps more accurate to refer to the brotherhoods in the West as the ‘New Western Brothers’. The term ‘Brothers’ indicates that these networks have various links to the Muslim Brotherhood, but in no way suggests that the organisations operating in the West are connected through a relationship of dependency with the Egyptian or any other Middle Eastern branch of the Brotherhood.”

A detailed account of Islamic Relief, with extensive links and evidence of its affiliation with the MB network, is provided in the Middle East Forum study: ‘Islamic Relief: Charity, Extremism / Terror.’³³ A note on the Middle East Forum: the description of the Middle East Forum on Wikipedia as an “Islamophobic think tank”³⁴ is based on an article in ZEIT-ONLINE entitled “Stresemann Foundation received”³⁵ money from right-wing US financiers”, which, with the vague key sentence: “This is substantiated by documents available to ZEIT ONLINE.” A second piece of evidence is cited, which originates from an article in the “Militarist Monitor”³⁶ from 2015.

³¹ <https://www.dokumentationsstelle.at/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Der-Politische-Islam-als-Gegenstand-wissenschaftlicher-Auseinandersetzungen-und-am-Beispiel-der-Muslimbruderschaft.pdf>

³² <https://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/1300106834ICSRTheNewMBintheWest.pdf>

³³ <https://www.meforum.org/MiddleEastForum/media/MEFLibrary/pdf/Islamic-Relief-Dossier-v3.pdf>

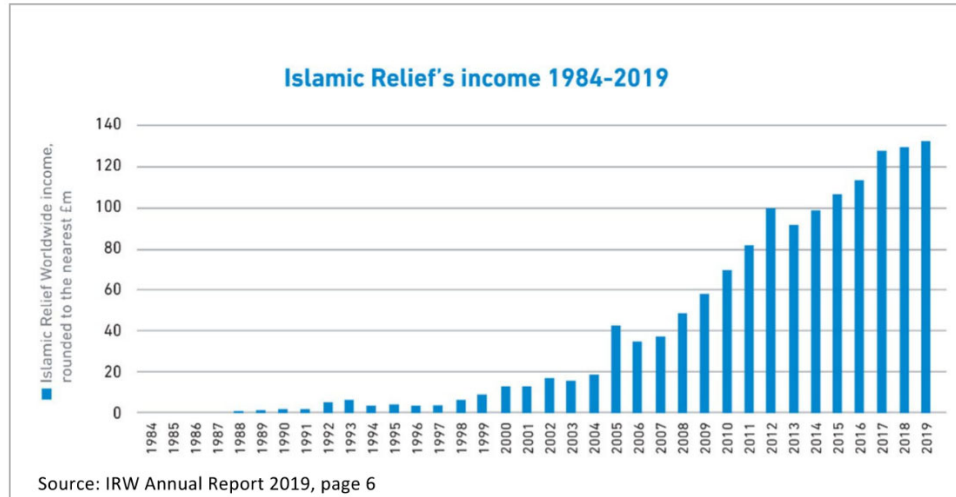
³⁴ https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_East_Forum

³⁵ <https://www.zeit.de/politik/deutschland/2017-12/afd-stiftung-gustav-stresemann-usa-finanzierung>

³⁶ https://militarist-monitor.org/profile/Middle_East_Forum/

2.2. Funding

An IRW-produced graph shows that the early years were characterised by low income. It was not until 2005, twenty years after its establishment, that the organisation's income exceeded the £20 million mark for the first time.



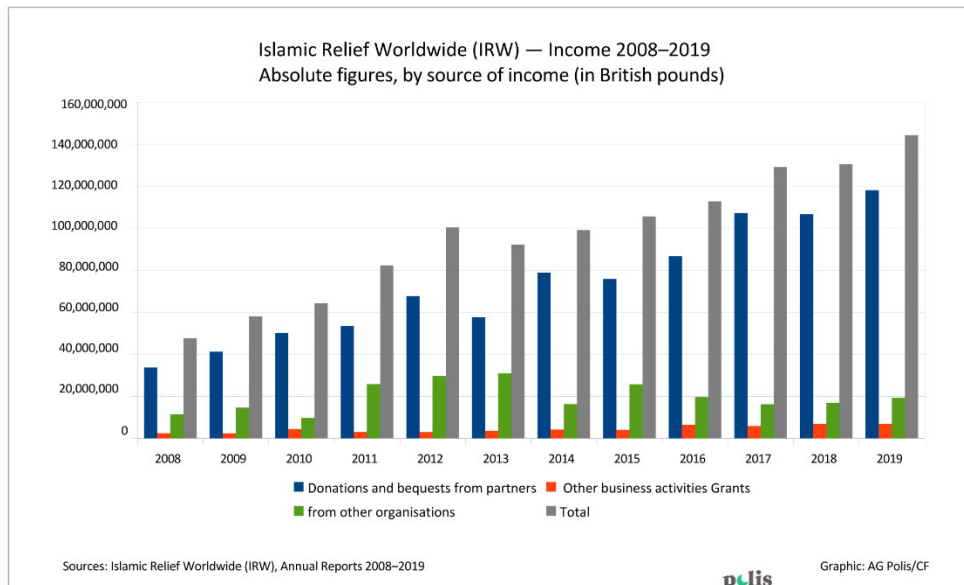
IRW publishes detailed annual reports,³⁷ which provide information on a wide range of aspects of the organisation's work and funding. The core of these reports consists of a breakdown of income and expenditure, accompanied by further information. (Since the start of 2021, only data from 2011 onwards has been available.)

Year (1 Jan – 31 Dec)	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
1. From donations, appeals and charity events												
Islamic Relief Partner**	17,257,823	21,316,324	22,186,981	25,089,238	35,174,506	34,154,566	47,414,470	51,475,192	60,419,240	77,795,806	72,475,000	86,122,000
United Kingdom	13,022,857	17,331,668	21,698,427	21,059,042	27,725,298	19,705,760	26,808,583	21,024,621	23,724,039	25,063,087	24,044,000	26,672,000
Middle East and other regions**	2,756,843	1,757,888	2,159,661	1,925,737	2,661,477	3,424,315	2,594,260	1,472,399	1,716,760	2,291,219	6,869,000	4,100,000
DEC – Disaster Emergency Committee***	706,253	775,545	3,091,847	1,376,718	2,089,995	359,124	1,384,807	1,921,915	788,342	1,986,535	2,371,000	1,165,000
Subtotal I	33,745,779	41,307,406	50,136,719	53,482,795	67,651,237	57,643,995	76,702,183	75,892,127	86,056,102	107,148,651	106,657,000	118,677,000
2. From own fundraising activities												
Charitable organisations / charity shops	401,352	573,728	562,445	670,117	761,096	874,802	1,000,184	1,009,162	1,075,201	1,071,731	1,142,000	1,219,000
Marketing proceeds / Charms revenue	8,822	4,058	2,653	12,186	149,806	200,544	692,615	497,717	563,646	501,646	0	0
Revenue from clothing recycling	0	0	0	2,365,752	2,071,659	2,088,125	2,410,719	2,415,517	2,407,076	2,312,050	2,252,000	2,219,000
Trading profits from subsidiaries	1,592,085	1,789,130	2,828,622	35,188	46,916	35,663	52,871	30,470	2,493,292	2,146,854	3,631,000	3,498,000
Subtotal II	2,402,249	2,316,996	4,893,715	3,033,243	2,959,477	3,559,194	4,145,420	4,012,876	6,475,215	5,834,283	5,825,000	6,816,000
3. Funds from institutions/organisations for charitable purposes/projects												
Waqf (religious endowments) income	108,801	182,933	203,751	214,035	317,419	332,430	377,363	388,276	416,212	432,280	457,000	479,000
Funds from institutions / organisations	11,400,568	14,404,802	9,544,799	25,576,127	29,430,636	30,577,259	15,857,189	25,773,201	19,353,461	15,744,995	16,433,772	18,774,461
Subtotal III	11,509,369	14,587,735	9,748,550	25,792,162	29,747,455	30,909,679	16,234,552	25,671,481	19,669,673	16,177,266	16,893,772	19,253,461
Total	47,657,427	58,126,797	64,278,984	82,308,200	100,368,169	92,152,858	99,142,157	105,376,484	112,802,990	129,160,229	130,372,722	144,208,461

Source: Islamic Relief Worldwide – Annual Report and Financial Statements, 2009–2019.

Over the 12 years shown (from 2008–2019), IRW's income rose from £48 million (2008) to £144 million (2019). That is a threefold increase.

³⁷ <https://www.islamic-relief.org/annual-reports/>



A breakdown by ‘source’ (donations, other own activities, institutional grants) shows an increase in revenue from allocations by IR partner organisations, rising from 63.5 per cent of revenue to 78.5 per cent.

Table 2.2: Islamic Relief Worldwide – Income, 2008–2019 (in British pounds), shares of income sources												
Years (1 Jan – 31 Dec of the year)	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
1. From donations, appeals and charity events												
Islamic Relief Partner *)	36.2	36.7	34.5	35.3	35.0	37.1	47.8	48.8	53.6	60.2	55.6	59.7
United Kingdom	27.3	29.9	33.8	25.6	27.6	21.4	27.0	19.9	21.0	19.4	19.1	18.5
Middle East and other regions **)	5.8	3.0	4.9	2.4	2.7	3.7	3.0	1.4	1.5	1.8	5.3	2.8
DEC – Disasters Emergency Committee ***)	1.5	1.3	4.8	1.7	2.1	0.4	1.6	1.8	0.7	1.5	1.8	0.8
Subtotal I	70.8	70.9	78.0	65.0	67.4	62.6	79.4	71.9	76.8	83.0	81.8	81.9
2. From own revenue-generating activities												
Charitable organisations / social department stores	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.8	0.9	0.8
Marketing proceeds / Qurbani revenue	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.0
Revenue from clothing recycling	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.9	2.1	2.7	2.4	2.3	2.1	1.6	1.7	1.5
Trading profits from subsidiaries	4.2	3.1	6.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.2	1.7	2.6	2.4
Subtotal II	5.0	4.0	6.8	3.7	3.0	3.9	4.2	3.8	5.7	4.5	5.2	4.8
3. Funds from institutions/organisations for charitable purposes/projects												
Waqf (religious endowments) income	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.3
Funds from institutions / organisations	23.9	24.8	14.8	31.1	29.3	33.2	16.0	23.9	17.1	12.2	12.6	13.0
Subtotal III	24.2	25.1	15.2	31.3	29.6	33.5	16.4	24.3	17.4	12.5	13.0	13.4
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
*) Respective national Islamic Relief organisations (in Belgium, Canada, Germany, Italy, Malaysia, etc.).												
**) Geographical regions where Islamic Relief is not represented by its own partner organisation.												
***) DEC is an umbrella organisation in the UK comprising 13 humanitarian aid organisations.												
Sources: Islamic Relief Worldwide – Annual Report and Financial Statements, 2009–2019, and own calculations (CF).												

In other words: over the past twelve years, IRW’s dependence on institutional, mostly government project grants has fallen and stood at just 13.4 per cent in 2019. The IRW partner organisations, the ‘Islamic Relief family’ so to speak, are becoming more independent. Among the IR partners, transfers from Islamic Relief USA account for the largest share.

Even though transfers from IR-USA to IRW have become relatively smaller, the IR partners in the USA, Canada, Sweden and Germany remain by far the four largest funders.

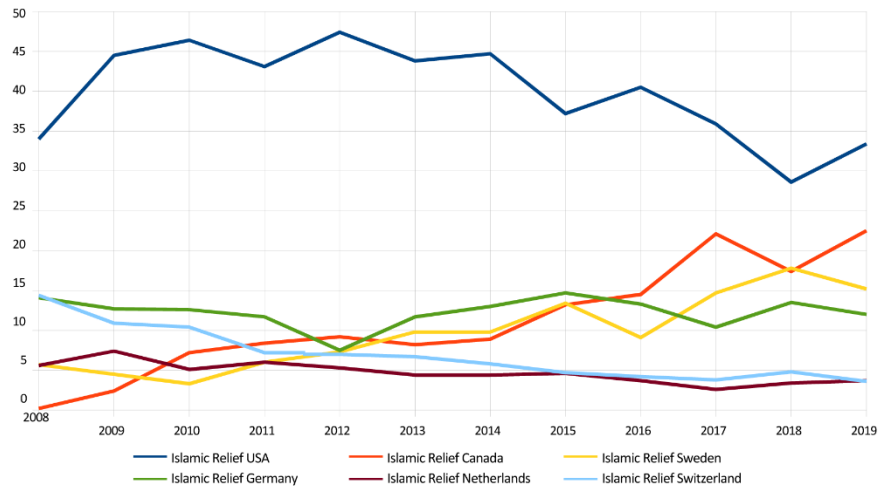
Table 3.1: Islamic Relief Worldwide – Income from donations from IR partner organisations, 2008–2019 (in British pounds)

Years (1 Jan – 31 Dec of the year)	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total
Islamic Relief USA	5,875,598	6,157,557	10,746,098	11,540,974	17,536,505	15,617,716	22,955,923	19,671,351	25,244,171	28,684,995	21,776,000	28,588,000	218,108,890
Islamic Relief Canada	27,044	500,468	1,592,270	2,469,173	3,380,352	2,905,585	4,386,483	7,944,022	9,039,308	17,693,731	12,200,000	10,338,000	81,719,736
Islamic Relief Sweden	986,100	945,409	776,406	1,888,715	2,699,969	3,461,424	4,816,775	7,118,954	5,663,907	11,763,784	13,710,000	13,712,000	66,562,777
Islamic Relief Germany	2,428,893	2,575,988	2,780,251	3,677,754	2,786,070	4,167,001	6,426,871	7,836,106	8,318,208	8,383,524	10,093,000	10,404,000	69,883,665
Islamic Relief Netherlands	972,794	1,555,432	1,137,832	1,897,876	1,951,519	1,581,398	2,157,388	2,475,325	2,304,486	2,083,246	2,549,000	3,215,000	23,886,595
Islamic Relief Switzerland	2,681,284	2,280,774	2,308,095	2,259,994	2,582,465	2,385,014	2,855,852	2,511,238	2,615,639	3,043,340	3,580,000	3,154,000	32,065,635
Islamic Relief South Africa	1,222,233	146,681	575,195	392,802	276,372	1,395,992	475,583	463,769	632,225	703,869	1,425,000	1,695,000	9,405,141
Islamic Relief Australia	0	0	0	364,108	307,842	600,545	1,096,539	1,101,913	1,771,508	1,645,271	1,513,000	1,533,000	10,384,506
Islamic Relief Belgium	442,634	621,124	399,215	630,623	1,218,303	380,540	948,877	597,273	2,125,732	1,415,591	1,434,000	1,394,000	11,608,314
Islamic Relief Mauritius	439,787	534,355	430,810	699,726	577,881	648,274	554,250	911,289	846,751	882,539	1,339,000	1,306,000	9,166,302
Secours Islamique France*)	2,034,365	1,864,615	1,581,851	2,455,891	2,861,083	1,464,732	1,979,447	1,832,681	1,986,041	2,218,274	1,841,000	732,000	22,972,020
Islamic Relief Malaysia	0	201,226	77,599	433,737	318,428	518,828	877,780	939,894	816,874	878,775	2,218,000	771,000	7,951,849
Islamic Relief Ireland	0	0	0	0	0	48,882	186,678	106,675	313,390	56,338	100,000	246,000	1,059,263
Islamic Relief Spain	0	0	0	0	0	0	103,008	33,915	126,160	131,634	225,000	234,000	831,417
Islamic Relief Italy	348,021	310,038	227,489	478,862	313,579	235,139	230,250	232,541	408,074	328,956	353,000	150,000	3,652,429
Islamic Relief Bosnia & Herzegovina	0	0	0	134,955	206,502	157,520	43,313	13,303	32,057	87,072	113,000	144,000	976,282
Islamic Relief Norway	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	22,507	68,927	31,211	170,000	25,000	317,845
Islamic Relief Singapore	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8,000
Islamic Relief Lebanon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,358	0	0	0	4,358
Islamic Relief Kosovo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14,823	0	0	14,823
Islamic Relief Libya	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	126,007	0	0	0	0	126,007
Subtotal	17,257,883	21,011,497	22,186,981	31,545,129	37,095,588	35,619,298	49,393,917	53,305,513	62,318,251	80,034,083	74,314,000	86,874,000	570,876,000
Islamic Relief United Kingdom	13,022,857	17,351,568	21,698,427	21,059,042	27,725,208	23,064,881	28,399,450	21,024,621	23,724,039	25,063,087	21,944,000	26,672,000	270,743,373
Total	30,280,640	38,363,065	43,885,408	52,604,171	64,760,885	55,684,182	77,787,367	74,330,134	85,042,290	105,097,170	96,258,000	113,546,000	841,619,433

*) Secours Islamique France (Islamic Relief France) moved from the 'Partners' category to the 'Institutions' category in 2012

Sources: Islamic Relief Worldwide – Annual Report and financial statements, 2009–2019, and own calculations (CF)

Islamic Relief Worldwide — 2008 – 2019 Projects of foreign IR partners



Sources: Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW), Annual Reports 2008–2019

Graphic: AG Polis/CF

Table 3.2: Islamic Relief Worldwide – Income from donations from IR partner organisations (excluding IR-UK), 2008–2019 (in British pounds), shares

Years (1 Jan – 31 Dec of the year)	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Islamic Relief USA	34.0	44.5	46.4	43.1	47.4	43.8	44.7	37.2	40.5	35.9	28.6	33.4
Islamic Relief Canada	0.2	2.4	7.2	8.4	9.2	8.2	8.9	13.2	14.5	22.1	17.4	22.5
Islamic Relief Sweden	5.7	4.5	3.3	6.0	7.3	9.8	9.8	13.4	9.1	14.7	17.8	15.2
Islamic Relief Germany	14.1	12.7	12.6	11.7	7.5	11.7	13.0	14.7	13.3	10.4	13.5	12.0
Islamic Relief Netherlands	5.6	7.4	5.1	6.0	5.3	4.4	4.4	4.6	3.7	2.6	3.4	3.7
Islamic Relief Switzerland	14.4	10.9	10.4	7.2	7.0	6.7	5.8	4.7	4.2	3.8	4.8	3.6
Islamic Relief South Africa	7.1	0.7	2.6	1.2	0.7	3.9	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.9	1.9	2.0
Islamic Relief Australia	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.8	1.7	2.6	2.2	2.8	2.1	2.1	1.9
Islamic Relief Belgium	2.6	3.0	1.8	2.0	3.3	1.1	1.9	1.1	3.4	1.8	1.9	1.6
Islamic Relief Mauritius	2.5	2.5	1.9	2.2	1.6	1.8	1.1	1.7	1.4	1.1	1.8	1.5
Secours Islamique France*)	11.8	8.9	7.6	7.8	7.7	4.1	4.0	3.4	3.2	2.8	2.5	0.9
Islamic Relief Malaysia	0.0	1.0	0.1	1.4	0.9	1.5	1.8	1.8	1.3	1.1	3.0	0.8
Islamic Relief Ireland	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.3
Islamic Relief Spain	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3
Islamic Relief Italy	2.0	1.5	1.0	1.5	0.8	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4	0.2
Islamic Relief Bosnia & Herzegovina	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2
Islamic Relief Norway	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.0
Islamic Relief Singapore	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Islamic Relief Lebanon	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Islamic Relief Kosovo	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Islamic Relief Libya	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*) Secours Islamique France (Islamic Relief France) moved from the 'Partners' category to the 'Institutions' category in 2012

Sources: Islamic Relief Worldwide – Annual Report and financial statements, 2009–2019, and own calculations (CF)

Regarding this overview of partner organisations, IRW writes (in the 2019 Annual Report³⁸, p. 77) on the structure of the relationship between IRW and its partners:

“All partners are independent legal entities that report locally in their respective countries. These figures represent the amounts transferred to Islamic Relief Worldwide, which are used for Islamic Relief Worldwide’s projects.”

This means, therefore, that the national IR organisations must transparently account for what they do in relation to and for IRW projects, and what constitutes exclusively their own projects.

However, the nature of the business relationship between IRD and IRW as “independent partners” is also viewed differently. For instance³⁹, the Muslim Helpline, whose sole sponsor is Islamic Relief, that Islamic Relief Germany acts as a fundraiser for Islamic Relief Worldwide.

“Islamic Relief Germany takes on individual development projects from Islamic Relief Worldwide with the aim of raising funds to finance the projects. In addition, Islamic Relief Germany collects donations for Islamic Relief Worldwide appeals during times of crisis. Through long-term fund-raising activities in Germany, Islamic Relief Germany is able to finance the development projects it has taken on.”

However, these IR partners are not the only donors. In the NGO Monitor report⁴⁰, which draws on the lists of the “Financial Tracking Services”⁴¹ of UNOCHA (the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), IRW receives financial contributions from a wide variety of sources, including in Europe, e.g. from the European Commission (for aid in Sudan) and the German Federal Government (for aid in Syria), but also from the Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church in Ireland.

Table 3.3: Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) – Grants received 2015–2020, from Europe, in British pounds (£) and US dollars (\$) (in US dollars)

Donor/Contributor	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Germany, Federal Government	US \$ 2,275,190	2,604,757	1,396,138	2,894,716	2,849,716	598,663	12,619,180
Islamic Relief France	1,832,681	1,986,041	2,218,274	1,840,760	0	0	7,877,756
Sweden	US \$ 1,195,314	1,224,440	1,106,317	1,441,586	1,077,490	1,011,327	5,986,734
European Commission	775,316	1,502,068	1,273,233	638,430	0	0	4,189,047
DFID – Department for International Development, UK	1,541,494	1,331,138	0	0	0	0	2,872,632
UNOCHA – Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	0	678,423	550	818,973	0	0	1,497,946
IRC – International Rescue Committee, UK	952,046	262,726	0	0	0	0	1,214,772
Switzerland	263,048	228,381	113,807	257,105	0	0	862,341
LWF – Lutheran World Federation	0	0	316,039	277,583	0	0	593,622
Save the Children, UK	0	0	0	486,677	0	0	486,677
HelpAge International, UK	207,472	59,932	25,889	5,744	0	0	299,037
Oxfam International	185,909	88,886	0	0	0	0	274,795
CAFOD – Catholic Agency for Overseas Development	76,830	75,000	0	45,000	0	0	196,830
Trócaire – Catholic Church in Ireland	0	0	44,056	109,491	0	0	153,547
World Vision Germany	0	0	66,230	3,156	0	0	69,386
Totals	9,305,300	10,041,792	6,560,533	8,819,221	2,857,466	1,609,990	39,194,302

Sources: NGO-Monitor, article “Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW)”, 19 November 2020, and data from the Financial Tracking System of UNOCHA – United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Among IRW’s European donors, Germany (with USD 12.6 million) ranks first, followed by Islamic Relief France (with EUR 7.9 million) and Sweden (with USD 6 million). However, this represents only the European portion of the donations. An overview of total annual government donations to Islamic Relief Worldwide can also be found on the UNOCHA website.⁴²

³⁸ <https://www.islamic-relief.org/annual-reports/>

³⁹ <http://www.mutes.de/wer-wir-sind/traeger-islamic-relief.html>

⁴⁰ https://www.ngo-monitor.org/ngos/islamic_relief_worldwide_irw/

⁴¹ <https://fts.unocha.org/data-search/results/incoming?usageYears=2017&organizations=2304&sort=sourceOrganizationName&order=asc&page=0#search-results>

⁴² <https://fts.unocha.org/global-funding/recipients/2020>

In this regard, it should be noted that a statement such as “The German Foreign Office pays Islamic Relief ...” does not accurately reflect the facts, at least from a government perspective. Aid programmes for specific countries and emergency situations are formulated, for example by United Nations organisations, with quite precisely defined earmarking, such as the “2018 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP)”⁴³ of the UNHCR (the United Nations Refugee Agency) for Syria. Aid organisations can apply for these projects or formulate their own projects within the framework of the guidelines, and may then, following a substantive review, be awarded the contract and receive funding for them. The Federal Foreign Office has published a list of “Aid organisations in the Humanitarian Aid Coordination Committee”⁴⁴, which also mentions Islamic Relief Germany. This is not a contradiction in itself, as a former Foreign Minister (Frank-Walter Steinmeier) acts as a ‘testimonial’ for an IRD project.

The Federal Foreign Office then states in the Federal Government’s response to a minor interpellation by the FDP (Bundestag printed paper 19/24269 of 13 November 2020)⁴⁵ that the expenditure was earmarked:

“The grants from the Federal Foreign Office to IRD were provided as part of project funding and were earmarked for the implementation of humanitarian aid in Syria, in particular to support healthcare facilities with medicines and medical consumables. Like all other grant recipients, IRD was also subject to the provisions of the General Supplementary Provisions on Project Funding (ANBest-P) and the Foreign Office’s Special Supplementary Provisions for the Granting of Grants (BNBest-AA) in their currently valid versions, as well as further reporting obligations of a substantive and financial nature specified in the grant notification. For each funded project, grant recipients must, upon completion of the respective project, submit full evidence of the appropriate use of the funds or, in the case of multi-year projects, interim reports as well, on the basis of which the use of funds can be verified.”

The need not to be reliant on state funding – as is the case with *misereor* and *Brot für die Welt* – is also based on Islamic Relief’s obvious religious-missionary approach. It is not only the unmistakable component of the name “Islamic Relief”, but also the fact that the donations are religiously motivated (“out of gratitude to the Creator”) and are distributed accordingly. Around half or more of the direct project funding goes to exclusively Muslim religious contexts. Ramadan (food parcels), *Kurban* (meat from sacrificial animals), *Adak* (thanksgiving for fulfilled wishes) and *Aqiqa* (thanksgiving for the birth of a child) serve to consolidate and strengthen the faith. A key item on the Muslim Brotherhood’s agenda is the defence of the faith against non-believers and, in particular, against secularists. However, in Central Europe, this is not officially funded by state aid programmes.

One can, however, view this differently. Marie Juul Petersen⁴⁶, for instance, who conducts research at the Danish Institute for Human Rights⁴⁷ – examined two Islamic Relief organisations. In her report ‘Islamising Aid: Transnational Muslim NGOs After 9/11’⁴⁸, she examines, on the one hand, the “International Islamic Re-

⁴³ https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2018_2018_hrp_syria.pdf

⁴⁴ <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/blob/239806/304b52e7c5831ed6033ea9a8145033c0/hilfsorganisationsen-koa-data.pdf>

⁴⁵ <https://dip21.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/19/242/1924269.pdf>

⁴⁶ <https://www.humanrights.dk/staff/marie-juul-petersen>

⁴⁷ <https://www.humanrights.dk/about-us>

⁴⁸ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/251191329_Islamizing_Aid_Transnational_Mus-

lief Organisation” – IIROSA (in Saudi Arabia) and, on the other, “Islamic Relief” (IR-UK in the United Kingdom). She contrasts the two organisations by asserting that the Saudi IIROSA is steeped in Islam and views everything from a religious perspective, whilst IR-UK is a secular organisation that draws a very clear distinction between its primary humanitarian aid work and its secondary religious engagement.

“Thus, at Islamic Relief, the discourse of development and humanitarian aid is the dominant narrative. Islam is largely rendered invisible and sharply demarcated from the organisation’s aid activities, primarily relevant in terms of the organisation’s personal motivation and values, and always subsidiary to general humanitarian and development policy principles. The promotion of this compartmentalised, almost secular form of Islam, coupled with mainstream aid discourses, facilitates inclusion in the field of development and humanitarian aid. The field can accommodate this type of religion because it does not challenge the fundamentally secularist assumptions of development and humanitarian aid, but rather builds on the distinction between aid and religion.”

The key distinguishing factor here is that Arab NGOs reject any cooperation with Western NGOs, whereas Islamic Relief has established good networks with various NGOs and is socially accepted.

On the other hand, Marie Juul Petersen cannot overlook the fact that the organisation’s logo alone is unmistakably religious and that the majority of its activities take place within a religious context. She thus recognises the need for Islamic Relief to present itself as a religious organisation and speaks of a “bilingualism”.

“The almost secular religiosity of Islamic Relief and its rejection of the dichotomy between ‘Muslim’ and ‘Western’ does not necessarily mean that the distinction between ‘religious’ and ‘secular’ is irrelevant within the organisation. [...] Without the distinction between religious and secular NGOs, Islamic Relief would lose its distinctive character and its ‘added value’ for institutional donors, who are always on the lookout for ‘moderate’ FBOs [Faith-Based Organisations] to support. Islamic Relief must therefore promote those religious aspects that are acceptable – and preferably even useful – to donors. At the same time, individual donors also expect a certain touch of religion in the organisation’s activities. Many of them are conservative Muslims prefer to give their donations to a Muslim organisation rather than to a secular NGO. If the organisation does not have their support, it not only loses a large part of its funding, but also forfeits its claim to religious legitimacy. As such, Islamic Relief must therefore constantly ensure that the organisation is ‘religious enough’ to meet the expectations of individual donors. [...] From this perspective, Islamic Relief must be bilingual and master both the language of development and that of Islam. This bilingual balance is neither simple nor easy.”

Depending on one’s point of view, however, this ‘bilingualism’ can also be interpreted as ‘duplicity’.

2.3. Networking

Networking is a key element of the organisation’s operations and fundraising. This involves networking both with other actors in the same sector and with institutional organisations. In this regard, Islamic Relief in the UK co-founded the Muslim Charities Forum (MCF).

The IRW Annual Report 2009 states:

“In 2009, the Muslim Charities Forum (MCF), of which Islamic Relief was a founding member, expanded its secretariat at IRW to include a board of trustees. The MCF was founded in 2007 by four British Muslim-led international NGOs. The aim of the Forum is to promote the contribution of British Muslim charities to international development through the exchange of experiences, ideas and information amongst its members, between networks of NGOs in the United Kingdom and internationally, and with governments.”

Saleh Saeed, who served as Chief Executive (CEO) of Islamic Relief Worldwide from June 2008 to February 2012, has been CEO of the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC)⁴⁹, which was founded in 1963.

“The Disasters Emergency Committee brings together 14 leading British aid organisations to raise funds during times of humanitarian crisis in poorer countries. By working together, we can raise more money to save lives and rebuild devastated communities.”

These elements are explained and illustrated by CEO *Saleh Saeed* in a presentation.⁵⁰



In his presentation (slide 17), *Saleh Saeed* describes the DEC model as comparable to alliances in other countries, such as the “Aktionsbündnis Deutschland Hilft” (ADH) in Germany.

What is noteworthy about the DEC model is that other key social actors, particularly the media, are explicitly named as partners; whilst this also occurs in Germany (appeals for donations for “Aktion Deutschland Hilft” on ARD, ZDF, etc.), it is not explicitly stated as such.

These networks and collaborations sometimes involve a confusing array of cross-links and overlaps, as evidenced by the 119 members of the CHS Alliance⁵¹, which includes not only the DEC but also Islamic Relief Worldwide and Islamic Relief Germany.

3. Islamic Relief Germany (IRD)

Islamic Relief Germany (IRD) was founded in September 1996 and entered in the register of associations in March 1997. At the time of its foundation, the board consisted of three people: 1. The doctor Dr *Hany Gawad El-Bana* (also spelled El-Banna, co-founder of Islamic Relief Worldwide, UK), the economist *Ibrahim Farouk El-Zayat* (Cologne, a member of various organisations attributed to the ‘MB family’) and the teacher *Hakan Aydin* (Cologne).

Hany El-Banna served on the board from March 1997 to May 2017, *Ibrahim El-*

⁴⁹ <https://www.dec.org.uk/>

⁵⁰ <https://slideplayer.com/slide/7258757/>

⁵¹ <https://www.chsalliance.org/about/our-members/>

Zayat from March 1997 to January 2007, and *Hakan Aydin* left the board in August 1997 after five months. (In 2020, he is Deputy Head of the Education Department of the Islamic Community Millî Görüş (IGMG) and Chairman of the Confessional Advisory Board of the Seminar for Islamic Theology at the University of Paderborn.) His successor is *Dr Almoutaz Tayara*, who has been a member of the IRW's Supervisory Board since July 2015 and became the first chair of the IRD Executive Board in May 2016. He resigned from both posts in August 2020 after anti-Semitic remarks he had made came to light, damaging the organisation's reputation (see below).

(It could not be clarified whether there may have been a predecessor organisation or parallel organisation, as the North Data database⁵² lists an "Islamic Relief Cologne Branch" for 1992, which was dissolved in autumn 1996.)

The current board of IRD, which was elected in October 2020 following the resignation of *Dr Almoutaz Tayara*⁵³, consists of the British physician and manager Dr Hossam Husain Said (born 1956)⁵⁴ as Chairman of the Board. He had already been a member of the IRD Board since October 2012; in May 2016, following the departure of Dr Hany El-Banna, he became Deputy Chairman of the IRD Board. Dr Hossam Said is also "Managing Director"⁵⁵ at the Humanitarian Academy for Development (HAD)⁵⁶ = Islamic Relief Academy", which was founded in 2013 as the "learning and development arm of Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW)". In this capacity, he is currently one of the five directors/board members of IRW. Until 2013, he was Director of International Programmes at IRW.⁵⁷ Since 2005, he has been a member of the "Islamic Relief Worldwide Board of Management and Executive Committee" and, since March 2018, "Interim Head of Corporate Services" at Islamic Relief UK. The Vice-Chair is the Cologne-based gynaecologist Dr Samar Hababa (born 1960). She has been a member of the Executive Committee since December 2014.⁵⁸ The third board member and treasurer is Usama Al-Sibai (born 1951), a general practitioner and radiologist in Hemer, who has been a member of the board since January 2007.

According to the IRD statutes, there is a peculiar provision, contrary to democratic principles⁵⁹, regarding members' right to submit motions and vote, which is reserved solely for the founding members as full members.

§ 4: Membership

- 1.) A fundamental distinction must be made between associate members and full members. The founding members are full members.
- 2.) Any Muslim man or woman who supports the aims and objectives of the association may become an associate member. The Executive Committee decides on applications for membership by a simple majority.
- 3.) Members have the right to attend the association's General Assembly. Only full members have the right to submit motions and to exercise the right to vote.

⁵² <https://www.northdata.de/Islamic+Relief+Zweigniederlassung+K%C3%B6ln,+K%C3%B6ln/HRB+23311>

⁵³ <https://www.islamicrelief.de/nachrichten/artikel/neuer-vorstand-bringt-reformen-auf-den-weg/>

⁵⁴ <https://uk.linkedin.com/in/hossam-husain-said-6a056392>

⁵⁵ <https://had-int.org/dr-hossam-said/>

⁵⁶ <https://had-int.org/about/>

⁵⁷ <https://www.islamic-relief.org/about-us/board-of-directors/>

⁵⁸ <https://www.aerztezeitung.de/Panorama/Koelner-Frauenaerztin-mit-Hidschab-268598.html>

⁵⁹ <https://www.islamicrelief.de/unsere-satzung/>

The Cologne Registry Court has allowed this provision to stand, even though it effectively means that any democratic change is restricted to the founding members.

The IRD's headquarters are in Cologne, the city that is also home to the headquarters of a number of other Islamic organisations, such as the Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs (DITIB), the Central Council of Muslims in Germany (ZMD), the Association of Islamic Cultural Centres (VIKZ) (VIKZ), the Islamic Community Millî Görüş (IGMG, in Kerpen near Cologne), the Islamic Council for the Federal Republic of Germany e. V. and the Coordination Council of Muslims (KRM). One could therefore almost say that Cologne is the 'capital of Islamic organisations in Germany', situated in the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia, where around a third of Muslims living in Germany reside.

Further IRD offices are located in Berlin, Essen, Frankfurt am Main, Hamburg and Munich. These are invariably the largest urban conurbations. The offices are responsible not only for the cities themselves, but also for regions: the Berlin office is also responsible for northern Germany.

In Bundestag printed paper 18/10923⁶⁰, (on 16 January 2017, p. 6), in response to a question from MP Volker Beck, not only are the relations between IRW and IRD outlined, but also the integration of IRD into the MB network:

"Islamic Relief Deutschland e. V.' is, in accordance with its statutes, a 'cooperation partner of the international aid organisation

, 'Islamic Relief Worldwide'. The relief work of 'Islamic Relief Deutschland e. V.' is coordinated by the 'international office in Birmingham'.

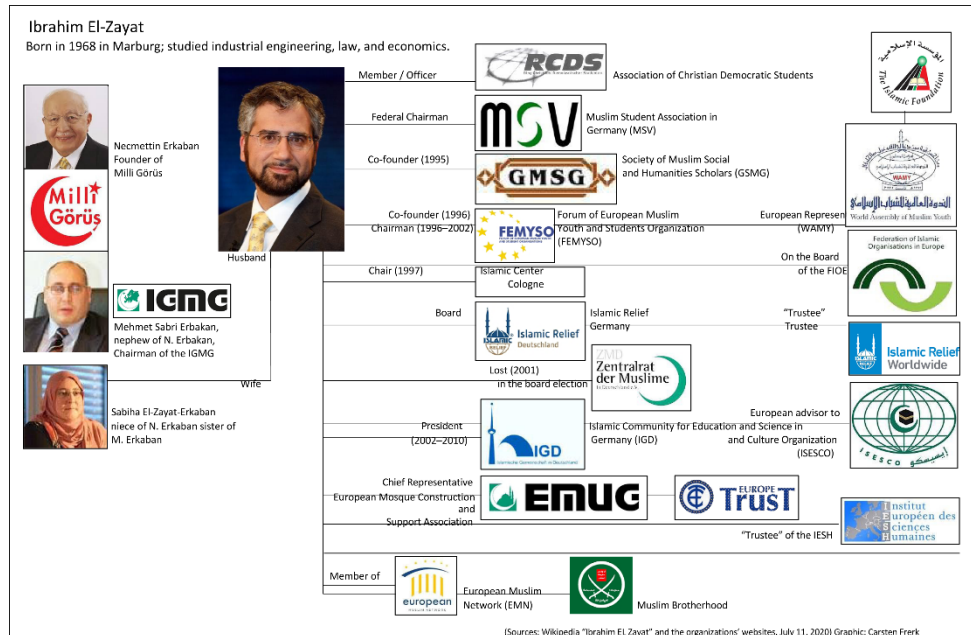
Links between 'Islamic Relief Deutschland e. V.' and 'Islamic Relief Worldwide' also arise from personnel links. For instance, board members of 'Islamic Relief Deutschland e. V.' hold or have held senior positions within 'Islamic Relief Worldwide'.

Regarding links to activities falling within the scope of Section 3 of the Act on Cooperation between the Federal Government and the Länder in Matters of the Protection of the Constitution and on the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (BVerfSchG): 'Islamic Relief Deutschland e. V.' acted as the main sponsor for the annual meeting of the 'Islamic Community in Germany e. V.' (IGD) on 13 December 2015 and was represented there with a speech. The IGD is the most important and central organisation of supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) in Germany and constitutes an organisation within the meaning of Section 3 of the BVerfSchG.

'Islamic Relief Deutschland e. V.' also sponsored various events in spring 2016 organised by 'Muslim Youth in Germany e. V.' (MJD), a formally independent youth organisation that maintains close links with the IGD. There are also links between 'Islamic Relief Deutschland e. V.' and the IGD at the personnel level."

The cross-links between Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) and Islamic Relief Deutschland (IRD), as well as the 'embedding' of Islamic Relief Deutschland within the MB network, can be clearly illustrated by the figure of *Ibrahim El-Zayat*, who has already been mentioned several times.

⁶⁰ <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/doc/btd/18/109/1810923.pdf>



El-Zayat, whom SPIEGEL described in detail in 2008 as a “versatile man of the world”⁶¹, sat on the board of Islamic Relief Germany and Islamic Relief Worldwide and has been the general representative of EMUG (European Mosque Construction and Support Association) since 1996, which now manages around 300 Millî Görüş mosques in Germany. “El-Zayat also embodies the connection between the two circles in his family life: his wife, Sabiha El-Zayat-Erbakan, is the sister of the former chairman of Millî Görüş in Germany, Mehmet Erbakan. The organisation’s founder, the Turkish Islamist Necmettin Erbakan, who died in 2011, was her uncle.”

In addition to the international activities already described, *Ibrahim El-Zayat* was president of the Islamic Community of Germany (IGD) from 2002 to 2010, and since 2018 has been president of the German Muslim Community e. V. (DMG), which is classified by the German domestic intelligence service as a “branch of the Muslim Brotherhood”⁶².

Although he denies his affiliation with the MB, he was described as the “leader of the Muslim Brotherhood in Germany” by the current leader of the MB, Mohammad Mahdi Akif, in an interview with ARD broadcast on 23 February 2007. When the newspaper *Die Welt* published this statement in an article, *El-Zayat* secured a right of reply. (Berlin Office for the Protection of the Constitution Report 2008, p. 188)⁶³

4. Partners and Networks

IRD lists a number of partnerships with other networks. Some are primarily useful for fundraising, such as membership of the German Donations Council, whilst others serve to enhance its image and provide access to ministries and authorities

⁶¹ <https://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/spiegelspecial/d-56323061.html>

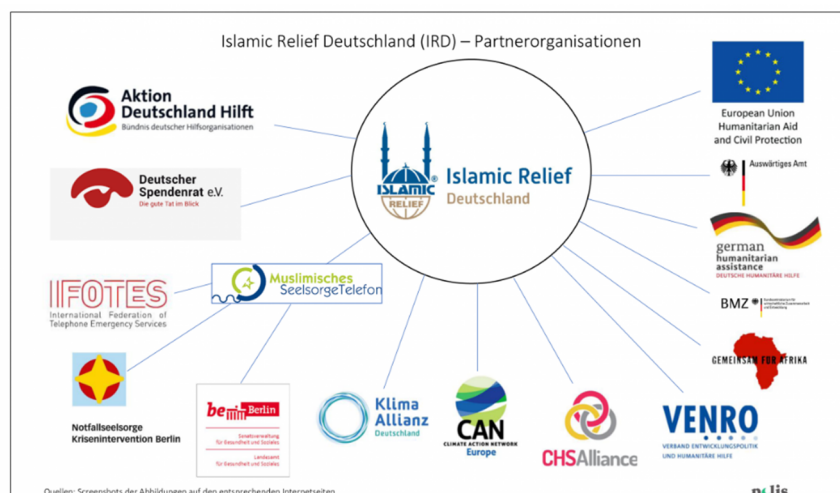
⁶² https://www.verfassungsschutz.bayern.de/islamismus/situation/legalistischer_islamismus/index.html

⁶³ <https://www.berlin.de/sen/inneres/verfassungsschutz/publikationen/verfassungsschutzberichte/>

and their project funding, such as the Climate Alliance or VENRO⁶⁴, VENRO or Gemeinsam für Afrika⁶⁵ or the CHS Alliance⁶⁶, others for political contacts, such as those in ECHO (European Union Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection)⁶⁷.

This is not the place to examine the individual partnerships in greater detail. Thus, the claims made by IRD itself and by the German Federal Government (Bundestag printed paper 18/10923, page 7)⁶⁸, regarding a partnership framework agreement with the European Commission (DG ECHO – European Union Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection), cannot be unequivocally confirmed. As is evident from an EU overview (from 2018) of ECHO partners (official list of organisations that have signed the 2014 partnership framework agreement)⁶⁹, it was not IRD but only IRW that signed the basic partnership agreement of 2014. The fact that these contractual agreements cannot simply be passed on within the respective ‘family’ is demonstrated by the fact that, for example, World Vision Europe and World Vision Germany each signed this EU partnership agreement individually, as well as by the fact that all national Red Cross organisations signed individually.

IRD is – as the only Muslim organisation to date – an associate member (2010) and a member (from 2011) of “Aktion Deutschland Hilft”⁷⁰, the “association of renowned German aid organisations”. In September 2020, however, membership was suspended until the end of 2021 for the time being⁷¹.



Eleven German organisations have joined forces in “Aktion Deutschland Hilft – Alliance of German Aid Organisations”⁷².

⁶⁴ <https://venro.org/mitglieder/unsere-mitglieder>

⁶⁵ <https://www.gemeinsam-fuer-afrika.de/>

⁶⁶ <https://www.chsalliance.org/>

⁶⁷ <https://ec.europa.eu/echo/>

⁶⁸ <https://dipbt.bundestag.de/doc/btd/18/109/1810923.pdf>

⁶⁹ https://www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/EU/XXVI/EU/04/56/EU_45649/imfname_10862145.pdf

⁷⁰ <https://www.aktion-deutschland-hilft.de/>

⁷¹ <https://www.aktion-deutschland-hilft.de/de/fachthemen/news/buendnispartnerschaft-mit-islamic-relief-deutschland-ruht-bis-auf-weiteres/>

⁷² <https://www.aktion-deutschland-hilft.de/>



It is clear at first glance that religious aid and mission organisations are in the majority within this alliance. Only three of the thirteen members (AWO, Der Paritätische and ASB) have no religious affiliation.

Secondly, IRD's membership of the German Donations Council⁷³ (since December 2011). This is relatively straightforward, as membership and the "donation certificate"⁷⁴ only formalities are checked.

"Membership of the German Fundraising Council is restricted to legal entities that raise funds and are recognised as charitable under the German Tax Code, and which have their registered office in the Federal Republic of Germany. Member organisations undertake not to use advertising that is contrary to public decency and to adhere to high quality standards. Among other things, they are required to disclose their structures, activities and finances annually and transparently in an annual report"

In this context, it is worth noting that the offices of the German Donations Council e.V. (motto: 'Focus on good deeds') are located in Berlin at Bernauer Straße 115–118, in the building of the Lazarus-Haus Berlin⁷⁵, a care facility run by the Hoffnungstaler Stiftung Lobetal⁷⁶ within the Protestant Diakonie. Islamic Relief Germany is not only a member there, but the managing director of IRD also held a seat on the board. *Tarek Abdelalem*, managing director of Islamic Relief Germany since 2005, has also been an assessor on the board of the German Donations Council e. V. since 2016. However, the Donations Council's 2018 annual report⁷⁷ (p. 2), without further explanation:

"By mutual agreement, Tarek Abdelalem's seat on the board of Islamic Relief Germany e.V. has been suspended since 10 October 2018."

This is yet another example of how interfaith partnerships, in particular, form the basis for the success of IRD (and other members of the 'MB family') in 'integrating' themselves into German structures. A timeline may help to illustrate this.

Timeline I

1994: The 'Muslim Youth of Germany' (MJD) is founded in the 'House of Islam'. 1996: Foundation of 'Islamic Relief Germany for Humanitarian Aid e. V.' in Cologne.

2001: The 'Muslim Youth of Germany e. V.' is entered in the Berlin register of associations. 2002: Foundation of 'Inssan for Intercultural Interaction e. V.' in Berlin.

⁷³ https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deutscher_Spendenrat

⁷⁴ <https://www.bz-berlin.de/liveticker/deutscher-spendenrat-verleiht-weitere-spendenzertifikate>

⁷⁵ https://www.spendenrat.de/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/DSR_Jahresabschlussbericht_2019.pdf

⁷⁶ <https://www.lobetal.de/unsere-einrichtungen-2/93-lazarus-haus-berlin>

⁷⁷ https://www.spendenrat.de/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Jahresbericht_2018.pdf

- 2008: These three organisations have three former retail premises as offices directly next to one another at Gitschiner Straße 16/17 in Berlin-Kreuzberg. Inssan e.V. and Muslim Youth in Germany are under observation by the Office for the Protection of the Constitution and are associated with the Muslim Brotherhood. Since 2003, the office manager of Islamic Relief Germany (IRD) has been a member of the advisory board of Inssan für interkulturelle Interaktion e.V.
- 2009: At the 'Cool Muslims?' conference organised by the Evangelische Akademie Loccum, Inssan e.V. and Muslimische Jugend establish direct, personal contact with the head of the Federal Youth Plan department at the BMFSFJ.
- 2009: IRD establishes – at the instigation of, in close cooperation with, and with the support of the Christian Telephone Counselling Service – the “Muslim Counselling Helpline” (MuTeS).
- 2010: Inssan e.V. is no longer mentioned in the Report on the Protection of the Constitution, thereby becoming eligible for state funding, and launches its first project: “Network against Islamophobia and Anti-Muslim Sentiment”.
- 2010: The Muslim Counselling Helpline (MuTeS) is awarded the “Active for Democracy and Tolerance 2009” prize by the Alliance for Democracy and Tolerance (BfDT).⁷⁸
- 2010: Islamic Relief Germany becomes an associate member of the “Aktionsbündnis Deutschland Hilft” (ADH). 2011: The “Dialogbereit Project – Young Muslims and Christians in Dialogue” by Muslim Youth Germany and the Catholic State Working Group for Child and Youth Protection is awarded the “Golden Hammer” by the North Rhine-Westphalia State Youth Council – as a role model against violence and racism and for democracy, human rights and tolerance.
- 2011: IRD’s Muslim helpline receives the “Aspirin Social Award 2011”⁷⁹.
- 2011: Since December 2011, Islamic Relief Germany has been a member of the German Donations Council, an umbrella organisation for charitable organisations.
- 2011: IRD becomes an equal member of the “Aktion Deutschland Hilft” alliance.
- 2012 (February): The Muslim Youth of Germany (MJD) successfully challenges in court the decision that the organisation – which has been under observation by the Office for the Protection of the Constitution since 2004 – may no longer be named in the Office’s reports.
- 2012: Inssan e. V. removes “intercultural interaction” from its name. The camouflage is no longer needed; it was and remains a purely Muslim organisation.
- Two different strategies, the same goal, and successfully achieved in 2010/2011: Inssan e. V. becomes a state-funded project organiser for the proselytisation and ‘integration’ of young Muslims, Islamic Relief becomes part of the national “Aktion Deutschland Hilft”. It is like an illustration of the statement by former Federal President Christian Wulff (3 October 2010)⁸⁰: “Islam is now also part of Germany”.

⁷⁸ <https://spendenberatung.de/nachrichten-leser/items/muslimische-seelsorgetelefon-aktiv-fuer-demokratie-und-toleranz.html>

⁷⁹ http://www.mutes.de/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF_home/PM_Aspirin_Sozialpreis_2011.pdf

⁸⁰ <https://www.migazin.de/2020/10/02/zehn-jahre-der-islam-deutschland/>

This success story of networking and recognition is being steadily expanded, for example through the awarding and receiving of honours.



Timeline II

2012: 2nd place in the competition for the “Berlin Tulip for German-Turkish Community Spirit” award from the Körber Foundation.⁸¹

2013: Launch of the professional “Meals for Orphans” campaign, which very successfully featured public testimonials from well-known politicians.

2016: Islamic Relief receives the “3 Stars Award for Excellence”.⁸²

“At a formal ceremony on 12 February 2016, the Initiative Ludwig-Erhard-Preis (ILEP) awarded Islamic Relief Germany the ‘3 Stars Award for Excellence’ from the European Foundation for Quality Management. [...] The Ludwig Erhard Prize, which is awarded annually by ILEP, is held under the patronage of the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology.”

2017: Islamic Relief Germany receives the Donation Certificate from the German Donation Council⁸³ “for the responsible and transparent handling of donations”.

2018: “4-star recognition for excellence” from the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM).

2020: IRD receives the German Donations Council’s donation certificate for the second time.

2020: It is also worth noting, however, that in 2020, IRD’s success story suffered a significant setback. Since 4 September 2020, Islamic Relief’s membership⁸⁴ in “Aktion Deutschland Hilft” has been suspended until, for the time being, the end of 2021.⁸⁵

⁸¹ <https://spendenberatung.de/nachrichten-leser/items/muslimisches-seelsorgetelefon-Berliner-Tulpe-2012.html>

⁸² <https://www.aktion-deutschland-hilft.de/de/hilfsorganisationen/islamic-relief-deutschland-ev/die-initiative-ludwig-erhard-preis-zeichnet-islamic-relief-aus/>

⁸³ <https://www.islamicrelief.de/nachrichten/artikel/islamic-relief-deutschland-erhaelt-spendenzertifikat-des-dsr/>

⁸⁴ <https://www.islamicrelief.de/nachrichten/artikel/islamic-relief-leitet-reformprozess-ein/>

⁸⁵ <https://www.aktion-deutschland-hilft.de/de/fachthemen/news/buendnispartnerschaft-mit-islamic-relief->

“The background to the current decision is what the alliance views as an indecisive approach to dealing with breaches committed by individuals within the organisation. This is incompatible with the code of values of Aktion Deutschland Hilft. Aktion Deutschland Hilft expects each of its member organisations to act swiftly and decisively in the event of misconduct, and to have robust monitoring mechanisms in place, particularly when dealing with racist, anti-Semitic or discriminatory statements.”

5. Muslim Pastoral Care Helpline (MuTeS)

A press release from the charitable giving advisory service SCHENck reports that the launch of MuTeS⁸⁶ was compared by the Berlin Senate to the fall of the Berlin Wall – which presumably means that this “interfaith project, run by Islamic Relief e. V. – in cooperation with the Diakonisches Werk Berlin-Brandenburg-schlesische Oberlausitz e. V. (DWBO) and the Caritas Association for the Archdiocese of Berlin e. V.” has broken down denominational barriers.

“Yesterday evening (02/09/09, from 6.30 pm), the launch ceremony for the world’s first Muslim helpline took place in the ballroom of the Rotes Rathaus. In her welcome address to 140 guests from Berlin’s political sphere, the Christian churches, Muslim associations and organisations, as well as the many volunteer telephone counsellors, the Commissioner for Civic Engagement, State Secretary Monika Helbig, compared the cooperation between the Islamic sponsoring association Islamic Relief and the Christian aid organisations Diakonie and Caritas on the joint Muslim helpline to the fall of the Berlin Wall 20 years ago.”

The Chairman of Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW), Saleh Saeed, had travelled from London.

The Muslim Pastoral Care Helpline was not originally an IRD idea, but has, so to speak, grown out of IRD. The result is MuTeS, as described in a self-portrayal⁸⁷, from a “contact made at a meeting of Berlin members of the Fundraising Association in 2006, which arose between the then office manager of Islamic Relief in Berlin and the fundraiser for the Church Telephone Counselling Service Berlin (KTS).”

The Berlin IRD office manager, *Imran Sagir* (born 1973), was a member of the board of Inssan e. V. from 2007 to 2013 and, prior to that (in 2001), one of the chairpersons of Muslim Youth Germany. As the Berlin office manager of IRD, he was also responsible for fundraising in northern Germany. They knew each other, and so at this conference the head of the Church Telephone Counselling Service Berlin (KTS) approached him to say that the KTS wished to set up a Turkish-language telephone counselling service. *Imran Sagir* quickly made it clear that this would not be sufficient and that a Muslim approach was necessary. This was convincing, and so a cooperation agreement was concluded between the KTS’s sponsoring organisations (Diakonisches Werk Berlin-Brandenburg-Schlesische Oberlausitz (DWBO), Caritasverband des Erzbistums Berlin) and IRD, stipulating that IRD would be the sole project sponsor and DWBO and Caritas would be cooperation partners. However, the term “Telefonseelsorge” could not be used, as it is a registered trademark of the KTS churches. In this respect, the statement by IRD (in the 2009 annual report) that “The Muslim SeelsorgeTelefon is an initiative of Islamic Relief Germany” is not entirely accurate. The Christian KTS took charge of training,

[deutschland-ruht-bis-auf-weiteres/](#)

⁸⁶ <https://www.openpr.de/news/346170/Gruendung-des-weltweit-1-Muslimischen-SeelsorgeTelefons-in-Berlin-gefeiert.html>

⁸⁷ <http://www.mutes.de/wer-wir-sind/unsere-geschichte.html>

further education and supervision, and on 1 May 2009 the service was launched with 22 volunteers.



Since 1 March 2013, a seven-day, 24-hour on-call service has been provided by 83 volunteers, and 4,950 pastoral counselling sessions were recorded for the year 2019. That is an average of 14 sessions per day and remains within manageable limits.

For Islamic Relief Germany, MuTeS is not only a (multi-award-winning) flagship initiative but is also significant in that it is the first IRD project to be implemented in Germany.

Regarding funding, the 'Berlin House of Representatives' printed paper 18/15738⁸⁸ states:

"Following a resolution by the House of Representatives on the 2016/17 biennial budget, the Muslim Pastoral Care Helpline has been funded with approximately €150,000 annually since 2016. For the year 2018, €143,000 was applied for and approved by grant notification."

In 2019 (according to the IRD Annual Report, p. 63)⁸⁹ of the total costs (€221,993.55), €193,109.60 (= 87 per cent) was funded by the Berlin State Office for Health and Social Affairs and the EU (Erasmus+). The funds from the EU's Erasmus+ programme are channelled via IFOTES⁹⁰ (International Federation of Telephone Emergency Services) and the 'Listening Skills' training programme.⁹¹

6. "Meals for Orphans"

On 27 January 2013 (according to Islamic tradition, the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad), IRD launched its PR campaign for "Meals for Orphans". As a German-Muslim aid initiative, it was professionally managed by "Deutsche Fundraising Company GmbH" (DFC)⁹² and was uncritically supported by some media outlets, e.g. by Daniel Bax in the taz⁹³.

This is standard practice, and all organisations ensure that agencies and professionals plan and organise such campaigns. However, this remains in the background of campaigns that 'touch the heart', and it is not meant to be apparent that

⁸⁸ <https://s3.kleine-anfragen.de/ka-prod/be/18/15738.pdf>

⁸⁹ <https://www.islamicrelief.de/transparenz/jahresbericht/>

⁹⁰ <https://www.ifotes.org/en/ifotes-members>

⁹¹ <http://listening-skills.eu/de/#project>

⁹² <https://www.d-fc.de/projekt/speisen-fuer-waisen/>

⁹³ <https://taz.de/Islamische-Wohltatigkeit-in-Deutschland/!5074483/>

they are professionally devised PR strategies. For ‘Brot für die Welt’, this is described here⁹⁴, is an example for Caritas⁹⁵, and for IRD, it looks like this:⁹⁶



PR Campaign for “Meals for Orphans” / Islamic Relief

Meals for Orphans – eating together and helping.
Development and implementation of a PR and fundraising campaign for Islamic Relief Deutschland e.V.
Rated “Excellent”!

Here's what we did
Our idea: Islamic Relief Germany encourages donors and supporters to invite neighbors, colleagues, and friends over for a meal. Muslims and non-Muslims get to know each other better and collect donations together.
We didn't just give the “child” a name and its own design. We also developed, wrote, and designed all the materials—from the campaign kit and mailings to the website featuring ideas, stories, and videos. And all of this in German and Turkish.
We also handled the PR, organized “Meals for Orphans” dinners with celebrities, and reported on the projects.

Here's what we've achieved
Since its launch in 2013, “Meals for Orphans” has set new records year after year in terms of participants, donations, and reach; prominent guests such as former Federal President Christian Wulf and current Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier were in attendance.
In 2014, the campaign won the German Fundraising Award in the “Best Innovation” category.
We are very pleased about this. After all, we have been supporting the implementation [since 2012] to this day.

Our services at a glance

- Idea development and conception, ongoing refinement and implementation
 - Development of campaign logo and design
- Development, design, and copywriting for all online and offline initiatives
 - Planning and execution of public relations
- Recruitment of celebrities, planning and execution of VIP events
 - Participant recruitment and support via the service hotline
 - Editorial management of social media channels and the website
- Project trips involving the production of videos, photos, and stories, as well as the recruitment and management of influencers

Sources: Text excerpts from the project description by DFC Deutsche Fundraising Company GmbH (accessed: 12/10/2020), graphics: Screenshots from Islamic Relief

With professional PR, the campaign is successful and soon boasts well-known celebrities as supporters (‘testimonials’), who, on closer inspection, are all committed religious figures and, above all, Christian politicians. It is a major step towards achieving social acceptance.

As early as November 2016⁹⁷ the list includes, among others: Frank-Walter Steinmeier⁹⁸ (SPD, then (2013) SPD parliamentary group leader, later Foreign Minister, now Federal President: 10 June 2017 breaking the fast with JUMA⁹⁹ at Berlin’s Rotes Rathaus), Christian Wulff (CDU, former Federal President), Aydan Özgüç (SPD, Minister of State), Hüseyin Avni Karslıoğlu (Turkish Ambassador), Navid Kermani (writer, Peace Prize laureate), Dieter Reiter (SPD, Lord Mayor of Munich), Dilek Kolat (SPD, Senator for Berlin), Aiman Mazyek (Central Council of Muslims), Cem Özdemir (then Federal Chairman of Alliance 90/The Greens).

⁹⁴ <https://intovr.de/2020/01/16/absolut-gluecklich-brot-fuer-die-welt-ueber-vr-fundraising-mit-intovr/>

⁹⁵ https://www.muebri.de/newsroom/medienservice/2019/10/191007_Cari-tas_freut_sich_ueber_17_neue_Pflegefachkraefte.php

⁹⁶ <https://www.speisen-fuer-waisen.de/>

⁹⁷ http://www.speisen-fuer-waisen.de/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Speisen-f%C3%BCr-Waisen_Prominente-Unterst%C3%BCtzer_2017.pdf

⁹⁸ <https://www.bild.de/regional/berlin/steinmeier-macht-mittag-bei-muslimischer-29188500.bild.html>

⁹⁹ <https://kleineanfragen.de/berlin/18/15738-foerderpraxis-des-senats.txt>



The selection 2013–2018¹⁰⁰ lists further politicians and celebrities. The striking frequency of SPD politicians may be explained by the fact that the chair of *Inssan e. V.*¹⁰¹, whose office is located right next to Islamic Relief at Gitschiner Straße 17 in Berlin and who is also part of the Muslim Brotherhood network, is a founding member and spokesperson of the Muslim Working Group within the SPD.

Even though this support is, or was, mostly one-off, IRD continues to make consistent use of it. The fact that this can be stopped is indicated by the response to an

¹⁰⁰ https://www.speisen-fuer-waisen.de/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/06_Prominente-Unterst%C3%BCtzer_2013-18.pdf

¹⁰¹ <https://fowid.de/meldung/islamischer-lobbyismus>

AfD question in the North Rhine-Westphalia state parliament (Parliamentary Paper 17/7152)¹⁰², as to whether State Secretary *Serap Güler*, who had also supported this campaign in 2018, continued to support it, and the answer was no:

“Upon becoming aware of the information regarding the sponsoring association’s links to the Muslim Brotherhood [see BT-Drs. 19/9415], State Secretary Güler immediately withdrew all support and requested that her name be removed from the website.”

7. Financial data

7.1. Income / Use of funds

The financial data of the association Islamic Relief Germany is published regularly and audited in the annual reports, which include the balance sheet, income and expenditure.

Years (Jan - 31 Dec of the year)	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total
Income														
Donations	3,527,737	3,995,599	5,267,865	6,488,224	8,822,410	8,514,418	9,594,012	11,927,201	12,596,852	13,962,207	14,315,093	15,548,288	14,492,337	128,514,173
Donations to Mafes (Muslim helpline)	0	0	0	13,031	11,630	12,625	17,425	31,293	30,732	159,555	178,562	18,504	14,887	462,115
Foreign Office	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,075,892	2,572,821	1,900,000	2,835,140	1,492,000	2,304,300	2,304,300	25,648,678
Alman Deutsche Welle	0	0	0	90,000	513,545	234,028	86,759	574,134	354,761	790,952	1,818,174	1,449,190	2,328,063	8,519,068
IMM 2007	0	0	0	0	0	0	652,036	0	0	0	0	243,817	15,118	942,971
European Commission (including ECHO)	0	253,540	453,954	0	1,613	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	712,000	1,415,117
EU (Erasmus Plus)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	47,410	47,410
State Office for Health and Social Affairs, Berlin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	143,000	145,700	288,700
City of Cologne	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	27,000	37,444	64,444
Twelve for Africa e.V.	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,484	5,552	3,318	14,698	13,193	28,591	62,956	62,956
Islamic Relief World / USA / Donation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	173,797	69,811	0	0	0	0	243,608
Institut für humanitäre Hilfe e.V.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other operating income	0	9,800	0	1,600	258,000	118,705	58,806	17,727	24,687	4,475	25	5,998	0	511,306
Expenses from project partners	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	865,105	1,172	0	0	8,463	908,806
Release of project reserves	0	0	0	0	0	2,800,000	3,900,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,700,000
Release of other reserves (R-GA, RW)	102,000	630,000	350,000	1,043,000	1,405,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,535,000
Total revenue	3,727,737	4,693,139	6,070,825	7,583,435	11,086,521	11,586,776	15,276,562	15,547,878	16,180,485	17,122,341	17,598,754	19,994,891	22,318,414	189,381,751
Use of funds														
Donations passed on to Islamic Relief Worldwide	632,000	200,000	0	3,721,623	4,218,517	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8,772,140
Direct project funding	2,080,000	2,984,147	3,000,863	532,556	3,790,820	5,490,342	7,280,681	9,310,588	13,363,480	12,071,534	11,059,310	13,971,223	14,542,618	98,143,778
Expenditure of support funds	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	284,300	165,118	52,530	76,215	19,858	612,521
Change in reserves for projects	0	225,536	1,762,075	1,495,000	2,809,000	2,590,000	6,750,000	870,000	-2,180,000	-180,262	1,000,000	-931,590	1,018,748	10,800,690
Change in free reserves	2,800	0	0	293,000	293,000	250,000	207,000	1,550,000	0	316,620	780,000	1,250,000	377,461	6,983,605
Total project funding	2,082,800	2,609,583	4,762,863	5,547,179	6,991,317	6,940,342	12,250,681	11,750,588	13,843,780	12,947,292	12,841,240	15,696,238	16,535,763	127,165,244
Project support	419,967	455,442	546,726	612,727	665,028	515,528	724,106	595,791	510,025	560,825	1,070,676	2,038,778	1,917,462	13,362,083
Advertising and self-promotion	483,638	375,280	517,205	754,425	1,533,755	1,811,572	1,871,985	2,287,623	2,454,797	2,354,797	3,043,143	2,568,580	3,326,888	24,878,668
General administration	258,985	170,294	227,545	318,242	598,862	573,289	624,036	681,519	765,074	780,974	792,215	712,895	915,236	7,242,647
Organisational costs	1,064,580	1,144,310	1,280,536	1,713,484	2,710,805	3,212,380	3,220,197	3,764,334	4,179,076	4,524,696	4,960,184	5,330,054	6,161,580	43,891,896
Total expenditure	3,706,380	4,872,968	6,051,599	7,580,862	11,076,582	11,576,722	15,256,878	15,500,322	16,079,867	16,765,716	17,546,424	19,993,591	22,317,071	188,404,826
Surplus	27,357	10,171	22,226	22,733	11,939	10,053	10,683	49,596	60,613	395,595	54,314	1,300	1,343	676,925

** Over the years, categories have been changed or subdivided in the table. An attempt has been made to present the comparable categories in a comparable manner. The categories were defined on the basis of the 2019 and 2020 annual reports.

Source: Annual reports of Islamic Relief Humanitaire Organisation in Deutschland e. V., 2008 to 2019.

¹⁰² <https://kleineanfragen.de/nordrhein-westfalen/17/7152-unterstuetzung-der-hilfsorganisation-islamic-relief-deutschland-durch-die-staatssekretaerin-serap-gueler-trotz-tx>

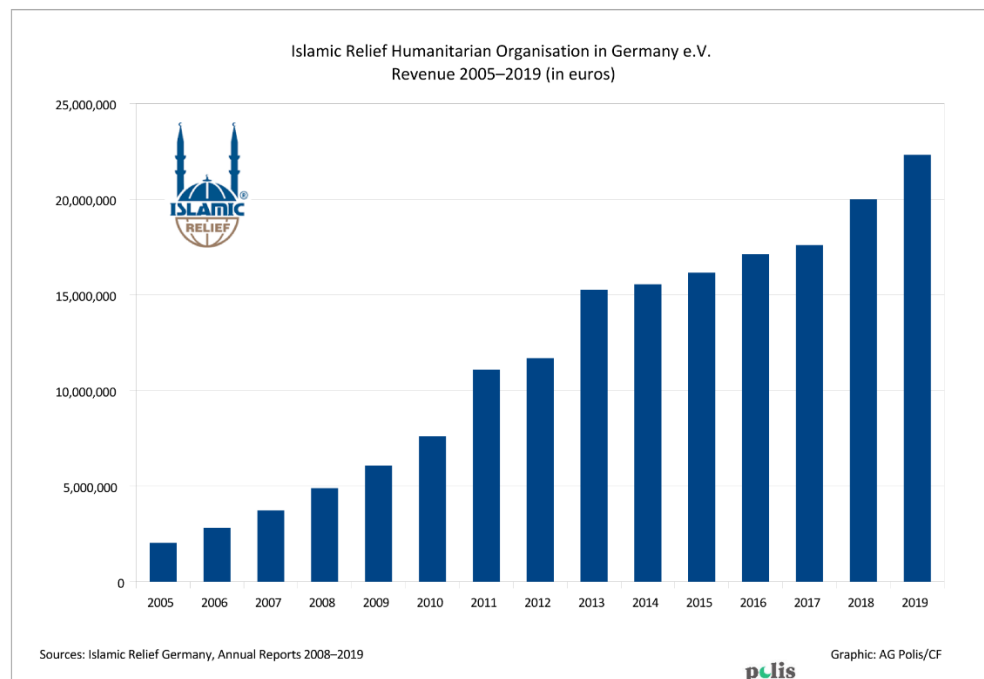
Table 4.2: Islamic Relief Humanitäre Organisation in Deutschland e. V., income and expenditure statement, 2007–2019*, in percentages (per cent)**													
Years (1 Jan – 31 Dec of the year)	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Income													
Donations	97.32	81.66	87.10	85.33	79.59	72.96	62.24	76.71	78.01	79.21	82.59	77.76	73.90
Donations to Mu'tes (Muslim helpline)	0	0	0	0.18	0.10	0.11	0.11	0.20	0.07	0.93	1.01	0.09	0.07
Foreign Office	0	0	0	0	0	0	7.05	19.12	9.28	15.39	8.48	12.53	11.22
Aktion Deutschland Hilft	0	0	0	1.18	4.65	1.99	0.57	3.69	5.90	4.09	7.83	7.25	10.12
BMZ / GIZ	0	0	0	0	0.09	0.01	4.14	0	0	0	1.22	0.07	0
European Commission (including ECHO)	0	5.39	7.13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3.19
EU (Erasmus Plus)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.21
State Office for Health and Social Affairs, Berlin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.72	0.65
City of Cologne	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.14	0.17
Together for Africa e.V.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.08	0.07	0.13
Islamic Relief World / USA Donation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.08	0.27	0	0.20	0	0
Habitat for Humanity Germany e.V.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.18
Other operating income	0	0.08	0	0.02	2.36	1.08	0.36	0.25	0.09	0.05	0	0.03	0
Repayment from project partners	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5.54	0.03	0	0	0.09
Release of project reserves	0	0	0	0	0	23.96	18.99	0	0	0	0	0	0
Release of other reserves (RW-GB / Property)	2.68	12.88	5.77	13.28	13.21	0	6.55	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total revenue	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Use of funds													
Donations passed on to Islamic Relief Worldwide	16.9	7.15	0	46.32	38.09	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Direct project funding/project expenditure	53.81	60.99	49.47	6.98	8.97	46.28	46.37	59.88	82.81	70.50	62.84	69.87	65.16
Refund of unspent funds	0	5.99	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.85	0.96	0.30	0.38	0.09
Change in reserves for projects	0	0	29.02	19.27	25.26	24.81	31.11	5.6	-13.49	-2.57	5.68	-3.17	4.56
Change in free reserves	0.08	0	0	4.60	3.16	1.28	1.31	10.01	0	2.01	2.56	5.25	2.57
Total project funding	70.79	74.13	78.49	77.17	75.48	72.37	78.79	75.49	71.17	70.90	71.38	72.33	72.38
Project support	11.24	10.06	9.01	8.06	6.03	7.06	4.74	5.11	5.69	5.64	5.97	10.15	8.59
Advertising and self-promotion	12.97	11.75	8.52	10.05	13.83	15.52	12.26	14.71	18.28	17.25	18.33	12.85	14.92
General administration	4.26	3.61	3.67	4.42	4.59	4.91	4.09	4.38	4.36	4.12	4.01	3.67	4.10
Organisational costs	28.47	25.42	21.20	22.53	24.45	27.49	21.09	24.21	28.33	27.01	28.31	26.67	27.61
Total expenditure	99.27	99.55	99.69	99.70	99.93	99.88	99.88	99.70	99.50	97.92	99.69	99.9	99.99
Surplus	0.73	0.45	0.32	0.30	0.07	0.12	0.12	0.30	0.50	2.08	0.31	0.01	0.01

*) Figures shown in the financial overviews with two decimal places have been rounded off for clarity.

**) Over the years, categories have been changed or reclassified. An attempt has been made to present the consistent categories in a comparable manner.

The categories were defined on the basis of the 2019 and 2009 annual reports

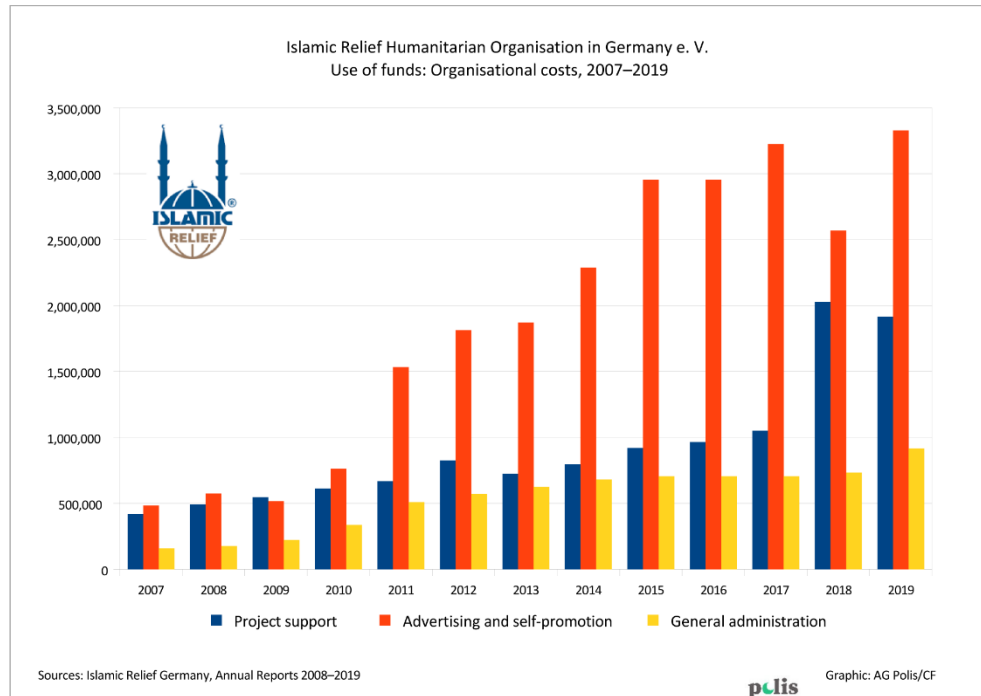
Sources: Annual reports of Islamic Relief Humanitäre Organisation in Deutschland e. V., 2008 to 2019.



It is a financial success story. Over the published period (2005–2019), income rose every year, reaching around 22 million euros in 2019, three-quarters (74 per cent) of which were donations generated by the organisation itself.

One of the reasons is certainly the high expenditure on ‘advertising and self-promotion’. Whilst the proportion allocated to ‘general administration’ remains in the region of 4 per cent of expenditure – in 2020 there were 85 staff members – and ‘project support’ (with an average of 7 per cent) ranges from 5 to 11 per cent,

the range for ‘publicity and self-promotion’ (with an average of 14 per cent) is 9 to 18 per cent. The total sum of these “organisational costs” thus ranges (with an average of 26 per cent) from 21 to 28 per cent. (Misereor¹⁰³ cites 6.5 per cent of expenditure for ‘administration and advertising’, whilst ‘Brot für die Welt’¹⁰⁴ 8.4 per cent.



As far as is known, Islamic Relief Germany has not yet applied for the DZI donation seal. However, it is also not on the list of organisations against which the DZI issues warnings¹⁰⁵. However, there are also reasons to forego the DZI donation seal, as (according to the Handelsblatt)¹⁰⁶ is quite costly.

“The charity seal costs money. On top of a basic fee of 500 euros, there is an additional charge of 0.035 per cent of the organisation’s total annual income. For an organisation that takes in around 50,000 euros a year, that amounts to just under 600 euros in audit costs annually. Money that does not go towards the projects. That is why many small organisations do without the seal.”

Islamic Relief holds the “donation certificate” from the German Donations Council, which is described as “audited transparency”¹⁰⁷:

“The new Donation Certificate from the German Donations Council (Deutscher Spendenrat e.V.) is the audit procedure in Germany whereby auditors carry out quality control of the Donation Certificate. This verifies the purposeful, economical and prudent use of donations and funding, as well as compliance with the principles of the Donations Council.

¹⁰³ <https://www.misereor.de/ueber-uns/jahresbericht>

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.brot-fuer-die-welt.de/ueber-uns/#c649>

¹⁰⁵ <http://www.dzi.de/spenderberatung/spendenauskunfte-und-information/das-dzi-rat-ab/das-dzi-warnt/>

¹⁰⁶ <https://www.handelsblatt.com/finanzen/ratgeber/geldanlage/spendenratgeber-spenden-ranking-bei-diesen-organisationen-ist-dein-geld-gut-aufgehoben/26287888.html?ticket=ST-19782920MjQ53wZdz4b2BKoHuObQ-ap2>

¹⁰⁷ <https://www.spendenrat.de/>

The donation certificate therefore already enjoys a high reputation among federal authorities and public media and broadcasting organisations.”

Essentially, it merely confirms that the accounts are kept in accordance with accounting standards, yet it is referred to as a kind of award.

7.2. Information from the Federal Government

As stated in a response from the Federal Government dated 13 November 2020 (Bundestag Printed Paper 19/24269)¹⁰⁸, Islamic Relief Germany has received around 16 million euros from the federal budget since 2013 (see Table 3.1) (Federal Foreign Office 15.2 million, BMZ/GIZ 965,040 euros).

The Federal Government stated (in April 2019) that the majority of Islamic Relief Germany’s income is transferred to Islamic Relief Worldwide in the UK (Bundestag printed paper 19/9415):¹⁰⁹

“[Question] 53. What information does the Federal Government have regarding the transfer of funds from Islamic Relief Germany to Islamic Relief Worldwide and its other national branches, and how does the Federal Government assess this?

[Answer] It is known from the publicly available annual reports of ‘Islamic Relief Deutschland e. V.’ and ‘Islamic Relief Worldwide’ that ‘Islamic Relief Deutschland e. V.’ transfers the majority of its financial project funding to ‘Islamic Relief Worldwide’.”

This account cannot be confirmed on the basis of Islamic Relief Germany’s financial overview. Such transfers are mentioned only in the years 2007, 2008, 2010 and 2011 are such transfers mentioned, which only in 2010/2011 accounted for a significant proportion of the use of funds: in 2010 the figure was 3.5 million euros (= 46 per cent) and in 2011 it was 4.2 million euros (= 38 per cent). However, the federal government’s account cannot be substantiated by the IRW’s annual reports (see Table 3.2.). In this respect, the transparency of the IRD’s financial reports leaves much to be desired.

After converting the IRW figures (in British pounds) to euros (annual average¹¹⁰) only around 50 per cent of IRD revenue flows to the IRW.

Years (1 Jan – 31 Dec of the year)	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total
IRW from IRD (in £)	2,428,893	2,676,988	2,789,251	3,677,754	2,786,070	4,167,001	6,426,871	7,836,105	8,318,208	8,339,524	10,033,000	10,404,000	69,883,665
in euros													
Net worth of IRD (in euros)*	3,036,116	2,998,227	3,084,912	4,229,417	3,426,866	4,875,391	7,969,320	10,735,464	10,148,214	9,507,057	11,337,280	11,756,520	83,104,794
(IRD to IRW)	350,000	0	3,521,603	4,218,517	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
IRD revenue	4,893,139	6,070,829	7,603,455	11,086,521	11,686,776	15,270,560	15,547,878	16,160,486	17,121,341	17,596,734	19,994,891	22,318,414	165,354,024
Remaining with IRD	1,857,033	3,072,602	4,518,543	6,857,104	8,258,910	10,394,769	7,578,558	5,425,022	6,974,127	6,091,677	8,657,601	10,561,894	82,348,830
Proportion of IRW projects	62.0	49.4	40.6	38.1	29.3	31.9	51.3	66.4	59.3	54.0	56.7	52.7	49.3

* Converted using the average annual euro/British pound sterling exchange rate

Sources: Islamic Relief Worldwide – Annual Report and Financial Statements, 2009–2019, and own calculations (CF).

7.3. Claims and peculiarities

This financial success story is also reflected in the environment and the public image of Islamic Relief Germany. In a report on the cooperation between Christian aid organisations and ‘German Muslim aid groups’ in the magazine Überblick¹¹¹ from 2005, a “great deal of mistrust” is described.

“Ahmad von Denffer, the chairman of ‘Muslime Helfen’, also describes a failed attempt to estab-

¹⁰⁸ <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/19/242/1924269.pdf>

¹⁰⁹ <https://dipbt.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/19/094/1909415.pdf>

¹¹⁰ https://reisebuch.de/reiseziele/grossbritannien/historische_pfundkurse_euro.html

¹¹¹ <http://www.der-ueberblick.de/ueberblick.archiv/one.ueberblick.article/ueberblick9cbb.html?entry=page.200303.130>

lish Christian-Muslim cooperation. For months, he wrote to Christian organisations in search of a partner to support a blood bank in Gaza. His efforts were in vain. [...]

The financial conditions are also unequal. Due to the immense differences in the budgets of Christian and Muslim organisations, it is “not possible to negotiate on equal terms”, says Mustafa Yoldas. Whilst Muslim organisations have access to donations amounting to between one and three million euros each, the EED, for example, operates with an annual budget of around 140 million euros.”

In contrast, the IRD’s 2019 annual report (p. 11) states very confidently that, thanks to its financial success, a new strategy for 2016–2021 has been formulated.

“The new strategy contains four strategic priorities. These are also the organisation’s most important objectives, which are to be achieved by 2021 as follows:

1. We have achieved a significant increase in funding for humanitarian projects.
2. We have established a clear profile and are taking a leading role in the humanitarian sector in Germany.
3. We are a committed partner of the global Islamic Relief family.
4. We have laid the foundations and developed the capabilities for the future qualitative and quantitative development of Islamic Relief.”

However, point 2 – that IRD plays a “leading role in the humanitarian sector in Germany” – misses the mark. While this may be true when referring to the Muslim community, “Germany” as a whole comprises around 230 charitable organisations, including Misereor, which reported income of €232 million (according to its 2019 annual report)¹¹² or ‘Brot für die Welt’ with income of €313 million (according to the 2019 Annual Report, p. 42).¹¹³ Even if one excludes “state contributions” from the revenue and counts only donations, the figures are €14 million for Islamic Relief, €57 million for Misereor and €64 million for Brot für die Welt.

Comparative data for other Muslim aid organisations is rarely available. For example, “Muslime helfen” publishes project overviews for the years 2010–2017¹¹⁴ (project funds disbursed in 2017: €3,153,556 / IRD: €11,059,310). No such overviews could be found for Hasene, Ansaar and WEFA. In this respect, Islamic Relief Germany’s membership of the German Donations Council for Muslim NGOs is a unique selling point, as the required transparency is thus provided.

What is peculiar about the IRD’s financial overviews – because it is unusual and, in this context, factually inappropriate – is the ‘small print’. The 2019 financial report, p. 54, states that, following its balance sheet, the IRD commits itself ‘to upholding the free democratic basic order within the meaning of the Basic Law’.

“As a member of the German Donations Council (Deutscher Spendenrat e. V.), Islamic Relief Deutschland e.V. undertakes to uphold and promote the ethical principles of the donations sector and to ensure the proper handling of donations. We undertake to publish the annual report no later than nine months after the end of a financial year. Our annual report provides truthful, transparent, comprehensible and comprehensive information.

The audit of the annual financial statements and the four-sector accounts is carried out in accordance with the requirements of the German Donations Council (Deutscher Spendenrat e. V.), the applicable guidelines of the Institute of Public Auditors in Germany (IDW) and the principles of tax law governing charitable organisations. We are committed to upholding the free democratic basic order as defined by the Basic Law and, as part of our annual declaration of commitment

¹¹² <https://www.misereor.de/ueber-uns/jahresbericht232>

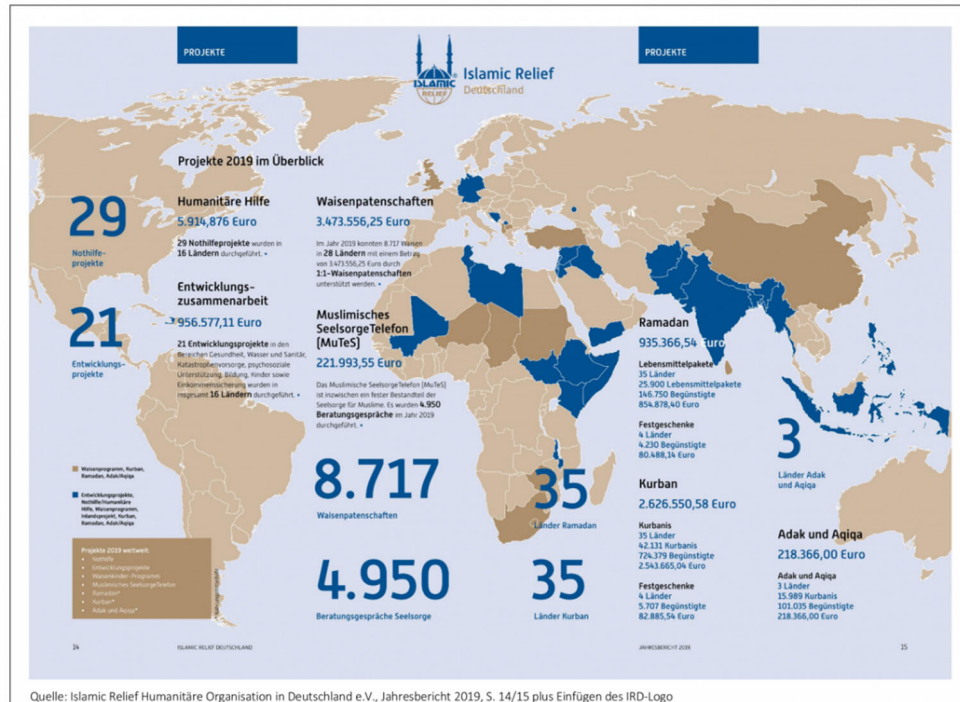
¹¹³ https://www.brot-fuer-die-welt.de/fileadmin/mediapool/40_Ueber-uns/Finanzen-Transparenz/Jahresbericht_2019/Jahresbericht_2019.pdf

¹¹⁴ <https://www.muslimehelfen.org/kampagne/jahresrueckblick-2017>

to the German Donations Council (Deutscher Spendenrat e. V.), confirm, amongst other things, our charitable status and our compliance with statutory data protection regulations and consumer protection guidelines.”

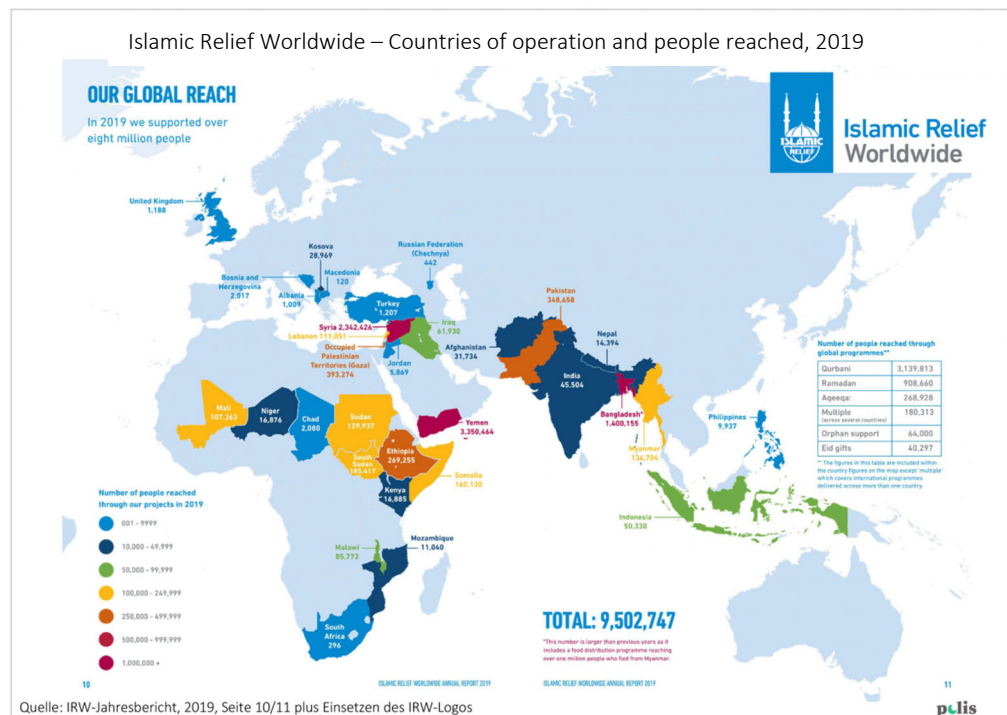
7.4. Transparency?

But is this overview of figures actually transparent? If one looks at a visualisation of the countries where funds are deployed, one must answer this question in the negative.



Although the countries in which IRD projects are funded are marked, the financial details are provided only in broad terms under headings such as ‘Humanitarian Aid’, ‘Development Cooperation’, ‘Orphan Sponsorships’, and so on. What at first glance – with so many figures – appears to be transparent is, in fact, not.

Islamic Relief Worldwide does not differ in this respect either. It also displays a world map showing the countries where it operates and states the number of people reached (with unrealistic precision). It does not state how much funding flows into the respective countries.



Up until 2010, the IRD annual reports lacked a detailed breakdown of projects, countries and sums. This breakdown appears for the first time in the 2010 annual report (p. 50 ff.). (However, this annual report¹¹⁵ is no longer available on the IRD website as of the start of 2021; since then, the reports have only been available from 2011 onwards.) There, the information is presented in six columns according to countries / projects / amounts.

Table 6: Islamic Relief Germany, finances, programmes 2010, euros, totals, percentages

Countries A–Z	Projects						Total
	Orphans	Eid al-Adha	Ramadan	Development	Emergency aid	Domestic	
Total	894,156	1,460,787	406,138	771,350	407,300	112,438	4,052,169
Shares	22.1	36.0	10.0	19.0	10.1	2.8	100

Source: Islamic Relief Germany, Annual Report 2010, page 50

This shows that around half of the expenditure (46 per cent) is used directly to support intra-religious events (Eid al-Adha and Ramadan). The extent to which aid for orphans ('orphan sponsorships') is also denominationally tied remains to be clarified. However, as it can be assumed that this aid is MFB ('Muslim Faith Based'), the proportion of religious support would then amount to around two-thirds (68.1 per cent) of expenditure.

This leads to inconsistencies in the 2010 annual report. Firstly, the following page shows an 'Overview' table in which 'Kurban/Ramadan' are grouped together – although only the total for 'Kurban' is stated – and in the following row – where the total for 'Ramadan' is stated – it reads: 'Food distribution'.

In addition to the three projects (Kurban/Ramadan/Orphans), whose totals are

¹¹⁵ <https://www.islamicrelief.de/transparenz/jahresbericht/>

summarised under “All countries”, a further twenty projects are listed by country, nine of them in “Palestine (Gaza)”. Expenditure for “Palestine (Gaza)” amounts to 469,920 euros, or 11.6 per cent of the 2010 annual budget. On the following page of the annual report, there is then a breakdown of “Support by project country in 2010”, i.e. the “All countries” category has been broken down. In this overview (for 30 recipient countries), “Palestine” receives 854,198 euros, or 21.1 per cent of the 2010 budget.

From the 2011 annual report (and in all subsequent ones), a different presentation is used, whereby (e.g. for 2019) the data is presented in great detail over several pages across four groups (Humanitarian Aid / Development Cooperation / Individual Projects / Other Projects) and across nine categories (Country / Project / Duration / Direct Beneficiaries / Implementation Partners / Donors / Total Costs / Funds Received in 2019 / Project Balance in 2019). Although this is impressive at first glance and appears very transparent, it is in fact the opposite, as it obscures any clarity with a multitude of details, or, as the saying goes: ‘You can’t see the wood for the trees’.

To achieve the desired transparency, a separate, rather time-consuming breakdown is necessary. This leads, for example, to two results. For the projects in the ‘Individual Projects’ group – which largely consist of intra-religious missionary projects such as orphan sponsorships, Ramadan, Kurban, Adal and Aqiqa – a total of 14,535.28 euros, 7,513,828 euros were spent in this group, which is 51.7 per cent.

A specially compiled overview of the 68 projects in 2019 and their total costs reveals a remarkable allocation of funds. Half of the total costs are spread across 23 projects for which Islamic Relief Worldwide acts as the implementing partner on the ground. Whether this is in the interests of the donors to “Aktion Deutschland hilft”, who have contributed a good two million euros, is for them to judge.

Implementation partners	Number Projects	Donors	Total (euros)	Total	Proportion	Share
IRW (Islamic Relief Worldwide)	10	Aktion Deutschland hilft	2,049,550	13,209,798	7.0	45.4
	0	Government funding*)	0		0	
	13	IRD own funds	11,160,248		38.4	
National Islamic Relief organisations	13	Aktion Deutschland hilft	1,897,107	7,919,323	6.5	27.2
	7	Government funding	1,557,625		5.4	
	17	IRD own funds	4,464,592		15.4	
Other organisations**)	0	Aktion Deutschland hilft	0	7,947,158	0	27.3
	2	Government funding	7,427,122		25.5	
	6	IRD own funds	520,036		1.8	
Totals	68	-	29,076,279	29,076,279	100	100
*) such as the Federal Foreign Office, EU – ECHO, etc.						
**) such as the “German-Syrian Association for the Promotion of Freedoms and Human Rights (DSV)”						
Source: Own calculations based on data from the IRD “Annual Report 2019”, pp. 50–63						

There are also peculiar links between grant recipients, grant providers and implementing partners in the projects. For instance, Islamic Relief Germany is the grant recipient for the project ‘Contribution to maintaining basic medical care in Syria’, which concerns the emergency operation of hospitals. For this, IRD receives funding totalling €4,444,364.74 from the Federal Foreign Office for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2020, which is then passed on to the implementing partner, the

“German-Syrian Association for the Promotion of Freedoms and Human Rights (DSV)”¹¹⁶, which specialises in healthcare provision. The DSV is also based in Germany, in Darmstadt. Why is the DSV not the direct recipient of the grant?

8. Muslim Brotherhood / HAMAS / Anti-Semitism

The debate surrounding Islamic Relief Germany (IRD) in Germany centres primarily on two key issues. Firstly, the question of the extent to which the IRD belongs to the Muslim Brotherhood network (MB network); and secondly, the question of its stance towards HAMAS in Palestine and whether it itself adopts anti-Semitic positions.

8.1. Affiliation with the Muslim Brotherhood

The question of whether IRD belongs to the Muslim Brotherhood network (MB) is not only substantiated by its founding history (see points 2 and 3) but is also confirmed by the German government’s responses (Bundestag printed paper 19/24269, p. 2 of 12 November 2020)¹¹⁷ as “significant personnel links”:

“To the knowledge of the Federal Government, both ‘Islamic Relief Worldwide’ (IRW) and ‘Relief Deutschland e.V.’ (IRD) have significant personnel links to the ‘Muslim Brotherhood’ or organisations affiliated with it.”

The question of affiliation with the MB network can therefore be regarded as settled for IRW and IRD.

8.2. Position on Hamas / anti-Semitism

The second question, however – namely, what IRD’s stance is on Hamas – is of political and legal significance. Hamas (Harakat Al-Muqawama Al-Islamiya / Islamic Resistance Movement) is regarded as the Palestinian offshoot of the originally Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, whose primary objective is said to be the destruction of the State of Israel.

As early as the 2009 Baden-Württemberg State Office for the Protection of the Constitution Report¹¹⁸, an article on the Muslim Youth of Germany (MJD) also mentioned the IRD and IRW and suggested a link with Hamas.

“The MJD website comments on current political events and calls for ‘solidarity with Gaza’. 76 appeals for donations are made via two Muslim welfare organisations, including ‘Islamic Relief Germany’, based in Cologne. The umbrella organisation ‘Islamic Relief Worldwide’ (IRW) is regarded as an important charitable organisation associated with the Muslim Brotherhood. IRW’s activities in the Palestinian territories are said to be linked to Hamas in terms of personnel and ideology.”

Until 2011, the financial reports provided a relatively detailed account of the purposes and countries for which the transfers received by IRW were intended, as reported by the national IR organisations. Although the majority of transfers from Islamic Relief Germany are for general religious food/meat procurement projects, the occupied territories of Palestine account for the lion’s share of the country-specific allocations.

¹¹⁶ <http://ds-verein.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Jahresbericht-2017.pdf>

¹¹⁷ <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/19/242/1924269.pdf>

¹¹⁸ https://im.baden-wuerttemberg.de/fileadmin/redaktion/m-im/intern/dateien/publikationen/Vsbericht_BW_2009.pdf

Table 8: Transfers from Islamic Relief Germany (IRD) to Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW), general and earmarked (in British pounds)

	2008			2009			2010			2011		
	Total	A	B	Total	A	B	Total	A	B	Total	A	B
General causes (Ramadan/orphans/Qurbani)	1,496,414	61.6	-	1,775,453	66.3	-	2,318,098	83.1	-	2,565,139	69.7	-
Earmarked projects...	932,479	38.4	100	901,535	33.7	100	471,153	16.9	100	1,112,615	30.3	100
of which... in Palestine	388,279	16.0	41.6	734,139	27.4	81.4	286,116	10.3	60.7	462,073	12.6	41.5
... in (s) other countries*)	544,200	22.4	58.4	167,396	6.3	18.6	185,037	6.6	39.3	650,542	17.7	58.5
Totals	2,428,893	100	-	2,676,988	100	-	2,789,251	100	-	3,677,754	100	-

*) 2008: 9 / 2009: 3 / 2010: 4 / 2011: 13 additional countries

Sources: Islamic Relief Worldwide – Annual Report and Financial Statements 2009, 2011, and own calculations (CF).

This raises the question of what exactly was being funded. This aspect was raised in the German Bundestag in April 2019 (Parliamentary Paper 19/9415)¹¹⁹. The Federal Government's response is, on the one hand, clear and, on the other, not so clear.

"[Question] 45. What findings regarding Islamic Relief and Islamic Relief Germany has the Federal Audit Office's review procedure yielded in relation to the grants from the Federal Foreign Office to Islamic Relief Germany? [Answer] The audit of the Federal Foreign Office's grants to 'Islamic Relief Deutschland e. V.' (project funding provided by the Federal Government's humanitarian aid programme abroad in the context of the Syrian crisis) by the Federal Audit Office has not yet been completed.

[Question] 46. Since when has the Federal Government been aware that Islamic Relief Worldwide, including its German branch Islamic Relief Deutschland, has been banned in Israel since 2014, and that Israel regards these organisations as part of the financial system of Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood movement and therefore classifies them as terrorist organisations?

[Answer] The Federal Government has been aware of the ban since 2014.

[Question] 47. How does the Federal Government assess these classifications with regard to the allocation of funds to these organisations, and how does it intend to proceed in this regard in future?

[Answer] Please refer to the answer to question 45 and the ongoing audit by the Federal Audit Office.

[Question] 48. When, and in what form, did the Federal Government make enquiries with Israeli authorities regarding Islamic Relief Worldwide and Islamic Relief Germany?

[Question] 49. How has the Federal Government verified that no funds have flowed from Islamic Relief Germany, Islamic Relief Worldwide or any of their branches to Hamas, its personnel or its front organisations?

[Answer] Questions 48 and 49 are answered jointly due to the factual connection between them. It is not possible to provide an answer for reasons of national security, as the available information is not authorised for use at the national level. The disclosure of this information would constitute a breach of the 'third-party rule', under which exchanged information may not be passed on to third parties without the consent of the provider of the information; see BverfGE of 13 October 2016, 2 BvE 2/15. This would hamper future cooperation with foreign intelligence services in the investigation of international terrorism and thus the fulfilment of the BfV's remit. Consequently, the public interest would be jeopardised if the information were disclosed."

This information was reiterated in the Berlin House of Representatives in December 2016. (Printed Paper 18/10 104).¹²⁰

"The Berlin Senate is aware that the organisation 'Islamic Relief Worldwide' (IRW) was banned by the Israeli authorities in June 2014 on the grounds that the organisation is part of the financial apparatus of Hamas."

Islamic Relief Worldwide was founded in 1984, Hamas in 1986. It consists of the paramilitary Kassam Brigades, a relief organisation and a political party. There is a direct link to the Muslim Brotherhood. One reason for this is the founder and spiritual and political leader of Hamas, *Sheikh Ahmad Yassin*, an undisputed member of the Muslim Brotherhood, who was deliberately killed by the Israelis

¹¹⁹ <https://dipbt.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/19/094/1909415.pdf>

¹²⁰ <https://s3.kleine-anfragen.de/ka-prod/be/18/10104.pdf>

in April 2004.¹²¹

There are differences in the political assessment of Hamas. After the Israeli government announced in 2014 that Islamic Relief was banned from operating in the West Bank¹²², the British newspaper *The Jewish Chronicle* felt compelled in August 2014 to justify this decision: “Who are Islamic Relief — and just what is Israel’s case against them?”¹²³

“It is, however, unlikely that Islamic Relief will be prevented by the British government from working in Gaza, even if Israel can prove that they have transferred funds to organisations with links to Hamas. The reason for this is that the [UK] Foreign Office takes a different view from the Israelis, the Americans and some other governments, such as Germany, regarding the funding of Hamas.

An integral part of the Hamas movement is its welfare infrastructure, which operates charitable organisations in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Over the years, millions have been sent or channelled to these organisations by Interpal and the Union for Good.

Although there is no evidence that this money was used to purchase weapons, the Americans and others have nevertheless regarded this as funding for Hamas, because Hamas leaders themselves have emphasised the seamless nature of the movement’s three components: social, political and military. Hamas’s welfare organisations are part of its political wing, and the founder of Hamas, the late Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, said that the political and military wings were ‘one body’. We cannot separate the wing from the body. If we do that, the body will not be able to fly.”

The “International Humanitarian Relief Organisation (IHH)”, which is affiliated with the Islamic community Millî Görüş, was banned in Germany in 2010 for supporting Hamas. The Federal Administrative Court upheld the ban on the organisation in April 2012 and dismissed the appeal against it. The reasons given were:¹²⁴

“[...] the social engagement of the association Internationale Humanitäre Hilfsorganisation e.V. (IHH) on behalf of Hamas [promotes] its acceptance in the Gaza Strip and facilitates its recruitment of activists who participate in terrorist acts. [...]

Although, in the Federal Administrative Court’s view, the senior members of the IHH were aware of this decision, the association nevertheless commenced its support activities and, moreover, sought to conceal them. In doing so, it made it clear that it identifies with Hamas, including the acts of violence perpetrated by that organisation (judgment of 18 April 2012, ref. 6 A 2.10).

The Federal Administrative Court is satisfied that the IHH transferred a considerable amount of the donations it had collected, over a long period of time, first to the Islamic Society and subsequently to the Salam Society for Relief & Development. According to the accurate findings of the Federal Ministry of the Interior, these social organisations operating in the Gaza Strip are integral parts of the overall structure of Hamas, which commits terrorist acts and thereby introduces violence into the relationship between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples.”

Furthermore, the ban in 2010 is not an isolated case and is based on Article 9(2) of the Basic Law¹²⁵:

“Organisations that, directly or indirectly from German soil, act against the right of the State of Israel to exist have forfeited their right to freedom of association,” explained de Maizière. The Ministry of the Interior has banned several Islamist associations in recent years; since 1964,

¹²¹ https://web.archive.org/web/20081231021855/http://www.fnst-freiheit.org/webcom/show_article.php/c-1223/nr-4/i.html

¹²² <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/dec/11/islamic-relief-charity-palestine-work-continues-israel>

¹²³ <https://www.thejc.com/comment/opinion/who-are-islamic-relief-and-just-what-is-israel-s-case-against-them-1.56205?highlight=islamic+relief>

¹²⁴ <https://www.ito.de/recht/nachrichten/n/vereinsverbot-terrorismus-hamas-gazastreifen-bundesinnenministerium/>

¹²⁵ <https://www.ito.de/recht/nachrichten/n/extremismus-bundesinnenminister-verbietet-hamas-spendenverein/>

German authorities have issued 98 bans against groups and associations, most of which held right-wing or foreign extremist views.

The legal basis for such a ban is Article 9(2) of the Basic Law, according to which associations are prohibited “whose aims or activities contravene criminal law or which are directed against the constitutional order or the idea of international understanding”.

This ban was upheld by the Federal Constitutional Court in 2018,¹²⁶ on the grounds of “donations being channelled to social welfare organisations affiliated with the terrorist organisation Hamas.”

 Islamic Relief Germany	
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Land:	Syrien
Laufzeit:	15.11.-15.12.2012
Begünstigte:	4.270 syrischen Binnenflüchtlings-Familien, das entspricht 25.640 Personen
Projektziel:	Versorgung von Flüchtlingen innerhalb Syriens mit Lebensmittelpaketen und Non-Food-Artikeln
Finanzierungspartner:	Teilfinanzierung durch Aktion Deutschland Hilft, Islamic Relief Worldwide
Implementierungspartner:	IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation, Türkei
Gesamtkosten:	150.000 Euro

However, the ban on IHH in Germany (2010) did not prevent Islamic Relief Germany from collaborating with IHH (Turkey) as an “implementation partner” in 2012 – within the framework of the “Aktionsbündnis Deutschland Hilft” – to provide relief aid to internally displaced persons in Syria.¹²⁷

In the publication by the Aktionsbündnis Deutschland Hilft (December 2012) on IRD’s aid to Syria¹²⁸ there is no mention of this.

The question of whether the two IHH organisations (in Germany and in Turkey) are connected is viewed positively in the tageszeitung¹²⁹ is viewed positively:

“The two organisations are not directly linked, but according to security circles they share common roots. The IHH was reportedly founded in Freiburg in 1992, but split five years later into a German and a Turkish organisation. Today, experts on Islam see no personnel links between the German and Turkish IHH, but they do see ideological ones: namely, that both are part of the Milli Görüs movement.”

As early as 2002, the organisation “Al-Aqsa” had been banned in Germany on suspicion of supporting Hamas and terrorism against Israel¹³⁰, as was its successor organisation “Yatim Kinderhilfe” in 2005¹³¹.

The organisation Ansaar International is also suspected of having supported Hamas and of being linked to Salafism.¹³²

Unlike Islamic Relief Germany, whose officials adopt a strictly defensive stance in

¹²⁶ <https://rsw.beck.de/aktuell/daily/meldung/detail/bverfg-bestaetigt-vereinsverbote-gegen-hamas-unterstuetzer-neonaziverein-und-hells-angels-charter>

¹²⁷ <https://moneyjihad.wordpress.com/2014/09/04/exclusive-islamic-relief-deutschland-partners-with-hamas-funding-charity-in-syria/>

¹²⁸ <https://www.aktion-deutschland-hilft.de/de/hilfsorganisationen/islamic-relief-deutschland-ev/zwischen-schreibtisch-und-krisengebiet-islamic-relief/>

¹²⁹ <https://taz.de/Verbot-der-Hilfsorganisation-IHH/!5139178/>

¹³⁰ <https://www.welt.de/print-wams/article604231/Verdacht-erhaertet-Deutsche-Spenden-fuer-den-Terror-gegen-Israel.html>

¹³¹ <https://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/innenministerium-schily-verbietet-extremistische-organisationen-a-373179.html>

¹³² https://www.t-online.de/region/duesseldorf/news/id_86667378/ansaar-scheitert-mit-klage-gegen-verfassungsschutzbericht.html

their dealings with Islamists who appear in public, Ansaar had collaborated with well-known Salafist preachers in Germany.

However, great caution is required in all discussions regarding aid for the ‘occupied Palestinian territories’ (as the UN term reads: ‘occupied Palestinian territory’). According to an overview by UNOCHA¹³³ (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), humanitarian aid for the occupied Palestinian territories amounts to between 200 and 400 million USD annually, with the German government contributing between 20 and 80 million USD per year.

Table 9: Funding of aid programmes for the ‘Occupied Palestinian Territory’, 2015–2020, absolute figures, TOP TEN, in USD

Country / Organisation	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Checksum
Funding required	706,051,110	570,702,496	551,876,643	539,721,755	350,589,271	420,381,684	3,139,322,959
Aid pledged	399,904,483	284,444,162	258,914,390	242,882,904	254,070,338	247,830,552	1,688,046,829
Proportion	56.6%	49.8	46.9%	45.0%	72.5%	59.0%	55.0%
Participating countries/organisations	55	40	47	55	53	43	49
USA, Government	136,890,672	114,955,195	111,975,227	-	-	-	363,821,094
Germany, Government	72,414,534	27,103,162	24,800,870	45,681,271	78,643,414	70,827,694	269,470,945
European Commission, HACPD	19,306,317	21,546,058	16,806,030	34,062,882	15,058,099	17,167,808	123,947,194
Japan, Government	41,370,370	20,396,306	12,289,905	9,560,972	-	29,073,197	112,690,750
Canada, Government	13,187,429	20,780,159	11,918,270	14,031,227	8,028,423	11,728,975	79,674,483
UN World Food Programme	16,878,160	-	5,972,740	13,532,127	21,100,000	-	57,483,027
UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)	-	-	-	18,652,690	8,000,000	25,335,277	51,987,967
Sweden, Government	12,987,069	11,904,685	7,958,797	11,013,870	-	7,935,451	51,799,872
Saudi Arabia, Kingdom	38,500,000	10,980,000	-	-	-	-0	49,480,000
Belgium, Government	-	15,464,302	5,565,052	9,116,409	-	15,882,413	46,028,176
Switzerland, Government	-	7,170,218	-	13,904,402	12,079,058	11,123,190	44,276,868
Norway, Government	10,009,713	7,475,161	-	13,699,167	8,050,181	-	39,234,222
United Kingdom, Government	-	-	6,527,248	-	16,748,929	-	23,276,177
Qatar, Government	-	-	-	-	13,000,000	-	13,000,000
Turkey, Government	-	-	5,133,650	-	-	6,981,802	12,115,452
Islamic Development Bank	10,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	10,000,000
Kuwait, Government	-	-	-	-	-	9,300,000	9,300,000
United Nations Children's Fund	-	-	-	-	8,057,354	-	8,057,354
Total TOP TEN	321,544,264	257,775,246	208,947,789	183,255,017	188,765,458	205,355,807	1,365,643,581
Share of the TOP TEN in aid funds	80.4%	90.6%	80.7%	75.4%	74.3%	82.9%	80.7%
Other countries/organisations	78,360,219	26,668,916	49,966,601	59,627,887	65,304,880	42,474,745	322,403,248

Source: UNOCHA (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), accessed on 18 December 2020, and own calculations (CF)

There is neither space nor scope here to delve deeply into the subject of ‘Palestine’; instead, reference is made to the report by the Scientific Service of the Bundestag: ‘The Israeli-Palestinian conflict from 1991 to 2020’¹³⁴:

“Recurring patterns include not only the construction of Israeli settlements and settlement infrastructure, as well as the tightening of Israeli security controls, such as the blockade of the Gaza Strip. Recurring patterns also include the propensity for violence and acts of violence on the Palestinian side, which are regularly followed by Israeli military actions, the political divisions within the Palestinian leadership, and their unilateral pursuit of recognition by the international community and the subsequent attainment of statehood. Every step in this direction – such as the recognition of Palestine as a state by a country, or Palestine’s admission to international organisations – is regularly met with the announcement of new settlement projects, etc., and is, for example, the reason for Israel’s withdrawal from UNESCO in 2018.”

Also useful is the article: “The Lawyers”¹³⁵ – a debate between two international lawyers.

The sweeping accusations of being a “terrorist organisation” are based on the respective political standpoint¹³⁶ and has been rendered meaningless by its overuse. Furthermore, when intelligence findings are cited as justification for such designations – findings which, however, cannot be published in the interests of national

¹³³ https://fts.unocha.org/appeals/459/donors?order=total_funding&sort=desc

¹³⁴ <https://www.bundestag.de/resource/blob/706792/c1a1eb85b36164ee5e248b5de49b4427/WD-2-058-20-pdf-data.pdf>

¹³⁵ https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/das-prinzip-recht-statt-krieg-2-2-die-anwa-elte.1184.de.html?dram:article_id=453406

¹³⁶ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-muslimbrotherhood-idUSKBN15D0VW>

security – such labelling becomes arbitrary. It should also be noted that the EU and the US have not yet classified the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organisation. (Documentation Centre, p. 36)¹³⁷

“The use of violence by the Brotherhood therefore differs both conceptually and methodologically from the terrorism practised by organisations such as al-Qaeda and, above all, Islamic State. Consequently, despite attempts to do so, the Muslim Brotherhood has not yet been designated a terrorist organisation by either the EU or the United States.”

Islamic Relief Worldwide has filed a lawsuit against the allegation. The Guardian wrote the following in July 2020¹³⁸:

“Israel has a strained relationship with many humanitarian groups operating in the Palestinian territories. In a separate but similar case, the Gaza director of a Christian aid organisation, World Vision, was accused of diverting funds to Hamas. The allegations were also based on secret statements from intelligence officials. Internal investigations by World Vision and an inquiry by the Australian government found no evidence that funds had been misused.”

The question was, however, answered by leading IRW and IRD officials themselves. The entire board of Islamic Relief Worldwide was forced to resign in August 2020 following statements made by The Times¹³⁹ / Times of Israel¹⁴⁰ and other media outlets, in which *Almoutaz Tayara* glorified Hamas.

“The trustee and director of Islamic Relief Worldwide, Almoutaz Tayara, who joined the board last month after his disgraced predecessor resigned over anti-Semitic remarks, has described the leaders of the Hamas terrorist group as ‘great men’ who followed the ‘divine and sacred call of the Muslim Brotherhood’.

‘The al-Qassem heroes did not graduate from the military academies of Britain and the US, unlike the rulers and kings of the Arab world, who were educated there in cowardice and loyalty to the foreigners – Britain and the US,’ wrote Tayara, referring to the military wing of Hamas. Tayara told the newspaper that he was ‘deeply ashamed. I do not support any terrorist movement. I support neither the Muslim Brotherhood nor the Izz al-Din al-Qassem Brigades. I am not an anti-Semite,’ he said.”

His predecessor as director of the IRW, *Heschmat Khalifa*, had already made blatantly anti-Semitic remarks and expressed admiration for Hamas in 2014 and 2015:

“Jews are ‘descendants of apes and pigs’, a common refrain among anti-Semitic Muslims, based on a controversial verse from the Quran. In other posts, he called the Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi a ‘Zionist pimp’ because of his support for Israel, as well as a ‘Zionist pig’, a ‘Zionist traitor’ and a ‘Zionist criminal’. He also called the Hamas terrorist organisation, which is responsible for the deaths of thousands of Israeli civilians, ‘the purest resistance movement in modern history’.”

Dr Almoutaz Tayara was a member of Islamic Relief Germany from 1997 to 2018 and then (from 2016) first chairman of the board. Anti-Semitic remarks by him had already come to light in 2017¹⁴¹, which were reported on again in September

¹³⁷ <https://www.dokumentationsstelle.at/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Der-Politische-Islam-als-Gegenstand-wissenschaftlicher-Auseinandersetzungen-und-am-Beispiel-der-Muslimbruderschaft.pdf>

¹³⁸ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/27/islamic-relief-to-contest-israeli-terrorism-allegations-in-court>

¹³⁹ <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/islamic-relief-leader-quits-as-times-discovers-antisemitic-posts-5dplrw9vv>

¹⁴⁰ <https://www.timesofisrael.com/entire-board-at-uks-top-muslim-charity-resigns-over-officials-hamas-praise/>

¹⁴¹ <https://vunv1863.wordpress.com/2017/11/07/gottes-bodenpersonal/>

2020¹⁴².

“In addition to glorifying the Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas, he had circulated a cartoon in 2014 in which the then US President, Barack Obama, was depicted wearing a tie featuring a Star of David. After these posts came to light, Tayara resigned from his posts at the IRW, and he is no longer standing as a candidate for the chairmanship of the IRD in the October elections.

The organisation stated in a statement published online that Tayara had “shared a total of three posts on his private Facebook account between 2014 and 2015 that were inappropriate and incompatible with the values and principles of the IRD”. They had become aware of the posts three years ago and confronted the then-chairman about them. According to his own account, the doctor had become ‘very emotional about the war between Israel and Palestine’ and had therefore ‘got carried away with these posts’. In a conversation at the time, Tayara is said to have clearly distanced himself from the form and content of the posts. The IRD accepted the apology.”

9. Conclusion

1. Charitable status questionable: According to the assessment of the Cologne tax office, ‘Islamic Relief Humanitäre Organisation in Deutschland e. V.’ is a charitable association. There are indications that raise questions about its charitable status. These include anti-Semitism and support for the terrorist organisation Hamas by IRD leaders and its tolerance by broad sections of the organisation. The stated aim (“We act regardless of political convictions, national or ethnic origin, gender and religion, and without expecting anything in return.”) has been shattered by reality

2. Missionary intent within the global network: IRD combines humanitarian aid with an explicit Muslim missionary intent. It belongs to the Sunni branch of Islam, is predominantly Arab-dominated and sees itself as part of the global “Islamic Relief family”. Germany was originally merely a base for generating income through “zakat donations” (the third pillar of Islam) and other donation revenues (Ramadan, Kurban, Adak and Aqiqa). These were used primarily for food parcels and meat donations (sacrificial animals) during religious festivals. This is in line with the Muslim Brotherhood’s religious and social agenda, which combines social and humanitarian welfare (free food and medical care for the poor) with the defence of the faith (primarily against non-believers).

3. The dialectic of trade: Muslim organisations – whose agenda includes combating ‘the West’ and secularism – establish fundraising organisations in this very ‘West’ (Western Europe, Canada, the USA, Australia, etc.), which have comparatively stable political conditions, high levels of education and economic performance, so that Muslim immigrants there can also achieve good incomes and prosperity. Donations are then collected from these residents and transferred to their countries of origin, where conditions are decidedly precarious. In this respect, Germany provides IRD with the opportunity to generate funds within Germany.

4. Church and political support: With the help of Christian church officials – particularly from the Evangelical Church – and prominent politicians – mainly from the SPD – acting as testimonials (‘Meals for Orphans’) IRD has succeeded in securing an accepted place within the organisational structure of the German charity sector

¹⁴² <https://jungle.world/artikel/2020/38/ein-zuverlaessiger-partner>

(“Aktion Deutschland Hilft”) – even if this is currently under review.

5. Division of labour: Within the “MB family”, there is a clear division of labour. Islamic Relief Germany is responsible for maintaining a positive image in Germany – even though this “good reputation” suffered damage in 2020 – and also for stabilising Islam in predominantly ‘Muslim’ countries. Inssan e. V./CLAIM handle the PR in Germany for the “victim role” of Muslims, the Muslim Youth organises youth work in accordance with the Quran, with separate activities for boys and girls, and JUMA e.V. takes care of the re-Islamisation of academic youth.

6. Lack of transparency: Transparency is limited to accounting criteria, nothing more. The impressively large volume of figures and data is not summarised or presented in a comprehensible manner.