



South Asia   
Child Support Update 2017

**Thanks,  
you've been  
amazing**



# You've helped us change the lives of hundreds of children in **South Asia**

## Together, we've reached:

Afghanistan: **230** children

Bangladesh: **442** children

Cambodia: **194** children

India: **282** children

Indonesia: **348** children

Pakistan: **597** children

Sri Lanka: **247** children



## Our Rainbow Family Community

### Afghanistan

**Over three decades of war and conflict has had a devastating impact on Afghanistan's population.**

Thousands of families are still living in severe poverty, with little or no access to the basic necessities of life. Children are the most vulnerable members of Afghan society, with many being forced into work and missing out on their childhood and education. Muslim Aid's Rainbow Family Programme is supporting families to send their children to school, as well as providing assistance for shelter and food. This year, families benefitted from Muslim Aid's seasonal projects. Needy families received food packs during the holy month of Ramadan, and fresh meat was distributed for the special occasion of Eid ul Fitr.

### Bangladesh

**Bangladesh has the highest rate of child marriage in South Asia.**

Girls from poorer families are more likely to get married as a child, and often drop out of school because of the costs associated with education. Once enrolled into the Rainbow Family Programme, their school expenses are catered for, and they can complete a full course of primary and secondary school education. Families also receive counselling and guidance on the dangers of such practices, and the importance of childhood education. This year, Rainbow Family children took part in celebrations for Universal Children's Day to highlight and promote the importance of children's rights. Children also received additional funds to help purchase new school equipment for the beginning of the school term.





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**5million**  
children in  
India are  
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## Cambodia

**Health and education both remain important challenges and development priorities for Cambodia.**

Whilst enrolment in primary education has increased, completion rates for primary and lower secondary school, are low. Continued poverty, forces parents to take their children out of school to work and support the family, with many failing to ever return.

The Muslim Aid team in Cambodia have introduced after-school learning clubs for supported children to further strengthen the education process. Children are taught the Khmer and English language and provided homework support. The clubs also provide children with a safe place to learn essential life skills, to develop and grow into active members of Cambodian society.



## India

**More than 5 million children in India are involved in child labour. These children are denied an education and find themselves vulnerable to violence or abuse.**

The Rainbow Family Programme seeks to protect children from such challenges, by ensuring they grow up in a safe environment and works to lift them out of poverty. The Rainbow Family Programme assigns each supported child a mentor who is responsible for monitoring the child's educational progress, and making sure they remain in school. The mentoring scheme not only benefits the children but their families too. Regular meetings are organised for mothers and guardians, which provides them with the opportunity to raise and discuss any challenges or concerns they may have about the welfare of their children.

## Indonesia

**In 2004, Indonesia experienced one of the most catastrophic disasters in history.**

A powerful undersea quake sent massive waves crashing into coastal areas of Sumatra and communities across the whole of South East Asia. The disaster claimed more than 200,000 lives, thousands were reported missing and one million people made homeless. Those who survived, lost everything they once had; their loved ones, their family homes and their livelihoods.

Muslim Aid was at the forefront of the humanitarian response; affected families were provided with much needed emergency relief and shelter. Long-term development efforts such as livelihood and education projects were introduced to help families and children improve their lives and futures.

The Rainbow Family Programme has helped enrol hundreds of children in Indonesia into school and complete a full course of primary and secondary education. In addition to this, children also benefit from a quality mentoring scheme. Mentors meet children on a regular basis, and provide emotional, social and academic support. They help children to develop key character strengths and inspire them to become the best version of themselves, in all aspects of their life. As a testament to the great work carried out by mentors, Rainbow Family children have been very positive and grateful for the mentoring that they receive. Children are achieving more positive outcomes in school with more than half of the children having successfully graduated from higher secondary school.







## Pakistan

**The root causes of poverty in Pakistan are attributed to the country's high population growth rate and the largely illiterate populace. Pakistan has the second highest number of out-of-school children in the world. Poorer Pakistani families do not send their children to school because they simply cannot afford the fees.**

Muslim Aid supports children from some of the neediest communities in Pakistan to gain access to an education, and equips them with the knowledge and skills needed to find employment. In addition to financial assistance, Muslim Aid also provides emotional support which is important in the development of any child. Children are often engaged in activities to help build their confidence and enhance their social skills. Activities range from recreational and educational excursions, to taking

part in discussions and the celebration of International Days. This year, children took part in celebrations for Menstrual Hygiene Day. They attended an event organised by Menstrual Hygiene Management in Pakistan to help raise awareness of the challenges girls and women face in managing their menstrual cycles. The event consisted of a theatre performance, a panel discussion, and an art exhibition showcasing the work of students.







## Sri Lanka

**War and natural disaster in Sri Lanka have left thousands of women widowed and forced into becoming the main income earners for their families.**

Without a regular source of income, women have struggled to cover the living and educational expenses for their children. Muslim Aid has provided over 90 families assisted by the Rainbow Family programme with livelihood support. They have been provided with funds to help purchase items to set up their businesses, as well as training on how to maximise their income. This initiative gives families the opportunity to improve their standard of living and become self-reliant members of society.







## Meet Abdul Hamid from Indonesia

**I am 43 years old and have lived in Indonesia all my life. I have over a decade of experience in international development.**

I joined Muslim Aid in 2007 and before then I worked for 'Save the Children'. We worked to support the livelihoods of some of the poorest people in the country. We worked with communities to help them generate income so they could become more self-sufficient and able to support their families.

I feel blessed to have lived a comfortable life, have a regular income and a loving family around me. But I have seen many people in my country who have not been as fortunate. Poverty can be seen everywhere in Indonesia, with millions of families living below the poverty line. Being a father myself, my heart aches to see parents who cannot afford to send their children to school. I wish for all children to have the same opportunities as my children have, and to be the best they can.

And it is this desire that brought me to Muslim Aid's Rainbow Family Programme.

**What motivates me in my work at Muslim Aid is knowing that I am doing my little bit in helping to alleviate the suffering of children in Indonesia. It's especially rewarding to see children successfully completing their schooling and building brighter futures for themselves and their families. I am truly grateful for this opportunity.**

Abdul Hamid, Rainbow Family Co-ordinator, Indonesia.





[muslimaid.org/rainbowfamily](https://muslimaid.org/rainbowfamily) 

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Design: WeareOneAgency.com