



Aid for Chechnya

Food, Clothing and Four New Schools for War-torn Chechen Refugees

**Education and Dawaa:
Four Schools / Madrassas
for children & adults (left)**



Chechnya is a modern Muslim society. Anyone who has had the fortune of knowing the Chechen people will no doubt testify to their nobleness, fierce independence and loyalty to family. It is hard for the modern world to comprehend the logic of the Chechens when once again they have plunged into a war that is seemingly impossible to win. But after being forced by tyranny into facing a choice of surrender or death, the noble Chechens have chosen to stand for freedom.

Only now are we beginning to see the video footage of thousands of terrified refugees clamouring to get out of Grozny, as Russian aircraft pound the city relentlessly with heavy artillery. Three months of intensive bombing, they have left their homes, schools and hospitals in rubble, with no electricity or running water.

Only now is the world beginning to understand the plight of the Chechen people, and the suffering is not over. Once again the cameras have moved on, but the fighting certainly continues...no wonder then, that those who

managed to get themselves to safety in Georgia and Ingushetia have not yet returned, many will certainly not have much to return to.

"Peace in Chechnya seems to be a life-time away" said one old Chechen on our last visit to Duici, he seems to be right.

Muslim Hands has established a full time office in Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia, and has been working with the victims of the war at the refugee camps in Duici, south of the Georgian-Chechen border. Duici is the largest refugee camp with more than 7,000 refugees staying in this region. Although many refugees have found some kind of accommodation in the villages around Duici, on our arrival, food was very scarce.

Al-Hamdulillah, Muslim Hands in partnership with the only official Chechen aid organisation, has been distributing food and fuel in and around Duici regularly since their arrival, and over

the border into Chechnya when conditions have allowed. We also performed Qurbani here in March 2000 and distributed meat to five villages in the region.

Refugees inside Chechnya have been far more difficult to reach. The only feasible route to this area, high in the Caucasus Mountains is extremely dangerous to navigate, especially in the winter months. Last year Muslim Hands purchased two four wheel drive trucks that are suitable for this route and they are now taking food and clothing over the border into Chechnya itself.

Besides the regular food, clothing and fuel distributions, Muslim Hands, Georgia, has been providing financial support to the severely sick and injured in hospitals in Tbilisi and Akhmeta in Azerbaijan.

We have also established four madrassas / schools for the refugee children. The schools were initially designed to cater for around 500 full time students but adults also wishing to learn the Quran have increased numbers to around 700.



Caring for sick and injured in Tbilisi hospitals (centre)

Regular food & fuel distribution in Georgia (left)

Specialist vehicles carry food into Chechnya (right)