



A Thousand Kilometres From Home...

The UMA Helps Rebuild Brisbane

A thousand kilometres away from home, away from family, away from Sydney, completely out of our comfort zone. We were in a little town called Goodna, which bore the brunt of the recent floods in Queensland no less than 10 weeks ago.

This is a town that had cars swept away, skip bins dumped on rooves, entire shopping centres gutted, a caravan park flipped upside down; a town where it is not uncommon for people to have lost all their material possessions.

If someone were to tell these people a week ago that a bus full of Muslim brothers from Sydney would arrive to help rebuild their homes and try to piece their lives back together, no one would have believed it.

But that bus did arrive, with 25 brothers... Builders, Carpenters, Plumbers, Electricians, Painters... and a few Office boys to top it off. These brothers sacrificed their time, work, and money to help these people in need.

We hired our own bus to drive up to Brisbane. Due to the sheer amount of work that was going on, unfortunately the organisers were unable to provide tools for us - we would have probably flown up but because we needed to take our own tools we had to organise for a bus to drive up. The bus itself cost us \$3,000 (plus at least \$600 petrol), and was funded entirely out of donations from and collected by the UMA.

As soon as the brothers arrived, they were in the thick of it - putting up gyprock walls and ceilings and insulation, running cables, plumbing, painting, removing tiles, and general rebuilding of houses which saw the worst of the floods.

Alhamdulillah, we felt that we affected the lives of some people. They learnt that we had a strong work ethic, commitment to the task at hand, and a sense of humour. For some of these people, it was the first time that they had ever met and spent time with a Muslim, and without fail, each and every one of them reacted positively to our presence. If the least we were able to do was change these people's perception of Islam and Muslims, Insha Allah our intentions were met.

It was also a great experience to meet our brothers from the Islamic Society of Darra (www.isd.org.au). A special thanks goes out to the Imam Sheikh Ikraam and all the members of that mosque who showed us the best of hospitality, fine food, and good character. These brothers were fantastic hosts, and made us truly feel that we had a home away from home. We would be honoured to be in their company again.

As well as helping the people of Goodna, we found that this journey also helped us on a personal level, allowing us to spend time with each other, working on purifying ourselves, increasing the brotherhood, and meeting other Muslims who we may never have had a chance to meet otherwise.

We thank Allah for allowing us to work and strive in his path.

In regards to how the trip was organised, the UMA went through the formal channels to help these people via Volunteering QLD (http://www.emergencyvolunteering.com.au/qld_floods.shtml)

Brother Moustafa Sanoussi

United Muslims of Australia (UMA)

Centre Address: 69 Croydon Street Lakemba NSW 2195

Postal Address: P.O. Box 145 Lakemba NSW 2195 Australia

Website: www.uma.org.au Email: info@uma.org.au

Phone: (61) 1300 730 693 Fax: (612) 9759 4455 Mobile: 0416 000 862 - 0416 000 (UMA)

