

Bradford group's cash plea to help civilians



CASH PLEA: Mobeen Azhar, front, and his team of fundraisers

A Bradford-based humanitarian group has launched an emergency appeal to get urgent help to Iraq civilians.

Mobeen Azhar, a spokesman for The Human Relief Foundation, today warned a humanitarian disaster was unfolding and pleaded for donations from the public to help stop unjust suffering and save innocent Iraqi lives.

He urged people to remember the ordinary people of Iraq had already been weakened by sanctions and were not all like Saddam Hussain.

Mr Azhar said: "As we watch the bombs falling on Iraq, a humanitarian disaster is unfolding.

"It is the average people of Iraq who are bearing the brunt of this war. Families just like us, who have nothing to do with the political set-up, desperately need our help now."

Mr Azhar added: "I would ask the people of Bradford to dig deep - regardless of their politics - and give generously to this appeal to stop unjust suffering.

"We are getting lots of letters from people with donations expressing their frustration at the politics involved in this war. Giving to our appeal can help people get rid of some of this frustration and the feeling of being helpless.

"Donations are coming in all the time

but at the moment it is like pouring water into an endless pit - we have to fill it."

At the start of the conflict the Foundation anticipated tents would be needed to rehouse people fleeing from bombs but it is believed many people are too scared to leave their homes.

Mr Azhar said: "Because of this information we have turned our attention to getting basic essentials to those people.

"Water cleaning facilities and fresh supplies to homes are a big issue for us. In the last Gulf War more deaths were caused by exposure to infected water than bombing itself - food is also a major concern the United Nations has said that because of this current crisis 30 per cent of Iraqis under the age of five could die from malnutrition."

The Human Relief Foundation which has an office in Claremont, Bradford, has been working in Iraq since 1991 - the Foundation was originally founded in the 1980s and worked in Somalia, across Asia and in the Middle East.

Donations can be made to the Human Relief Foundation at Barclays Bank. A/C: 70554022 Sort Code 20-11-81. Cheques payable to Human Relief Foundation can be sent to PO Box 194, Bradford BD7 1YW.