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Volume 10 . Issue 1
November 2014

KinderUSA news



SEE PAGE

03

Focus on Palestinians
in Lebanon



SEE PAGE

05

Food shortage stunts
growth in Gaza



SEE PAGE

07

Brave employees work
through war during
Ramadan

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DONATIONS HELP HORRIFIC TRAGEDY IN GAZA

More than 2,200 people were killed and up to 11,100 wounded in last summer's Israeli bombardment of Gaza. Using large aerial bombs, without warning and in breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention, a series of attacks throughout July and August were targeted at family residences killing hundreds of Palestinian children.

"Israeli forces have brazenly flouted the laws of war by attacking civilian homes, displaying callous indifference to the carnage caused," said

Philip Luther, Director of the Middle East and North Africa Program at Amnesty International.

Since 2007, Gaza has been isolated by Israeli land, sea, and air blockade leading to seriously diminished access to basic humanitarian services. The bombardment resulted in billions of dollars' worth of damage. Many neighborhoods were reduced to rubble and the vital infrastructure including schools, hospitals and water systems will take years to re-build – a

CONTINUE ON PAGE 6




KinderUSA

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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Welcome to this issue. Here, you'll read about the huge difference you've made to countless families throughout the world who are facing the most challenging of life-threatening circumstances.

Whether it's providing medical supplies and food to the homeless and bereaved in Gaza and helping to rebuild the infrastructure; maintaining educational support for refugees in Lebanon; stamping out disease in Africa through clean water initiatives or putting the smile back on the faces of children who have forgotten the joy and innocence of youth by providing them with play areas, your generosity is making a massive impact.

In Gaza, where 536 children were tragically killed during 50 days of fighting, deprivation is an ongoing reality with the continuing blockade and the succession of wars. Poor nutrition, lack of adequate shelter, and trauma all undermine the ability of children to reach their full potential, as well as having detrimental ramifications for society as a whole. Throughout this issue, you'll see the myriad of instances where your contribution is helping alleviate pain and suffering on a practical and emotional basis in the short and long term.

For example, the Hot Meals project in Gaza aims to address both nutritional and societal needs. To help stave the current

crisis, children are provided with what is often their only meal of the day. At the same time, female heads of household are taught essential skills that will help them to support their families autonomously in the long run.

Transforming your passion, commitment and generosity into real change for children and families is our commitment to you, our donors. Your support helps to save and assist the most vulnerable, needy and marginalized children. To ensure that your donation makes the greatest impact, we work with a range of community-based organizations to solve current problems and build for the future.

The shocking deaths of so many children in Gaza and beyond, but more incredible the survival of thousands more, means that we remain highly motivated no matter what the challenge. Putting the interests of these children at the heart of our work, and with you by our side, we can try to reverse the horrors of the war and deprivation inflicted upon these innocent beings.

Our work is impossible without you. Thank you.

WELL-BEING SUPPORT FOR AFRICA

Over 5000 people in Africa, including a high number of internally displaced children, have benefitted this year from the construction of four invaluable wells supplying clean, safe drinking water.

A \$10,000 investment from donors in partnership with the Amoud Foundation and KinderUSA was used to build two wells in both Uganda and Somalia in areas where clean drinking water is either non-existent or extremely difficult to collect.

The construction of the wells has meant that the onerous task of water collection, which often falls to women and children, has been considerably lightened and easier access to water has cut the risk of life-threatening water borne disease.



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ENVELOPE SO WE CAN
FULFILL OUR PROJECT
GOALS FOR 2014!



FOCUS ON PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON



"Ahmed is a six year old Palestinian refugee child from Syria. He has been deaf since birth, never attended school and never learned how to read or sign. When visitors arrive, he brings them books in his hands and points to the pictures. In the words of our Executive Director: "I fell in love with him and my heart was broken, all in the same breath".



The Palestinians of Lebanon, old and new, are truly the forgotten people. Successive waves of refugees are abandoned by the world and left to fend for themselves with few resources and endless restrictions on movement, employment and opportunity.

Many have told aid workers that they would rather brave the horror and violence of Syria than endure the monotony, misery, and despair of the Lebanese camps.

A high percentage of the twice-displaced Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) now live in one of the most overcrowded and overburdened refugee camps in Lebanon, Burj El Barajneh in Beirut. With little or no opportunity to earn an income, they are almost entirely dependent on humanitarian aid with families struggling to meet essential needs such as food for their children.

The already impoverished Palestinian refugees from Lebanon (PRL) live in fear of neglect from donors and NGOs that are focusing their attention on refugees from Syria.

Aiming to alleviate the burden on both populations, KinderUSA has distributed food vouchers to incoming new families from the

PRS community and to families from the PRL community who host them. Lasting for three months including Ramadan in 2014, project funds of \$30,000 enabled the purchase of meat and vegetables to supplement the dry foods received from other organizations.



ECONOMICALLY EMPOWERING FEMALE HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD

We would like to thank our donors who provided the \$10,000 to make this pilot project possible.

This project was piloted in marginalized, rural areas of Gaza before the start of the war. The goal was to provide women with resources and training so they could support their families through sustainable small-scale enterprise.

Fourteen women were selected for a farming initiative. Five were each given two pregnant sheep with enough fodder for five months, a veterinarian kit, and training in the care and maintenance of the animals. The other nine women received ten pairs of mating pigeons, towers to keep them in, fodder for five months



and training in the care of the birds.

In June 2014, at the close of the six-month period, three of the farmers sold their lambs at market and with the proceeds were able to contribute to their household income. The feedback was very positive and the women were determined to continue with the enterprise. The pigeon farmers all sold their young pigeons for

profit and were preparing for the next mating round when the war broke out.

Many of these women lived in the eastern and northern areas of Gaza, which suffered heavy war damage. A follow-up visit from our staff revealed that of the five sheep farmers, three had lost everything, including their homes. The remaining two, while still having some semblance of a roof over their heads, lost their animals. The pigeon farmers did not fare any better, having lost their birds due to the destruction of their homes and their subsequent inability to provide fodder to keep them alive.



KinderUSA board member Dr. Jess Ghannam

The determination of these women to succeed in their enterprise was very impressive and they only failed due to circumstances beyond their control so our goal is to reintroduce this project on a wider scale in 2015. We would like to thank our donors who provided the \$10,000 to make this pilot project possible.

FOOD SHORTAGE STUNTS GROWTH IN GAZA



Many of the children exhibit visible signs of stunted growth and anemia: "Sadly, children in Gaza are getting smaller every year," said KinderUSA board member Dr. Jess Ghannam

The population of the Gaza Strip continues to suffer a strangling blockade coupled with wars and invasions with devastating effects on the children who, as we saw last summer, are often caught in the crossfire.

Women, many of whom are heads of households, must be versatile in finding ways to care for their families with limited resources and training.

Addressing these needs, for the second year, KinderUSA is distributing hot meals to children in kindergartens situated in marginalized areas of Gaza.

Working with women cooperatives that prepare the meals, the project provides training and employment for female heads of household who are able to make a small income to care for their families.

Four of the kindergartens are situated near the 'buffer zones'

where unemployment is high and 65% of households live on less than \$1 a day. As a consequence of intermittent violence and poor nutrition, children in these areas face a range of psychosocial trauma that af-

fects their concentration and overall developmental skills.

Many of these children exhibit visible signs of stunted growth and anemia: "Sadly, children in Gaza are getting smaller every year," said KinderUSA board member Dr. Jess Ghannam, who traveled to the area last January.

"In some instances, this is the only hot meal these children receive. The level of food insecurity is painful to see. The amount of stunting is beyond belief and this program is having a significant impact".

The project is supported until the end of the 2015 school year by both a grant and donor funds totaling \$65,000. Restoring confidence and self-reliance for women during the most difficult times, while providing nutrition for children helps address the bewildering injustice these families continue to face.





DONATIONS HELP HORRIFIC TRAGEDY IN GAZA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

daunting challenge even without the necessity of navigating a suffocating seven-year blockade that restricts people, goods and services in and out of the area. "There are families since 2012 living without a home, now where will these families go?" said one Gazan mother. "Most have no electricity and my baby wears only pampers because it is so hot. This is not Gaza. All the infrastructure has gone. We cannot continue like this. My children have the same right to live as all children." Providing the right to a life of dignity with good health, shelter, education is not a political statement, but a moral obligation. For over seven years 1.8 million people have lived under a medieval siege. More than half of these people are children. Crisis relief from KinderUSA Your generosity and determination to stand in solidarity with the people of Gaza provided vital humanitarian relief throughout and post crisis:

1500 food parcels distributed to vulnerable households in Beit Lahiya as early as 17 July, through a local NGO. At the same time, data was gathered to support a more comprehensive relief operation post hostilities.

\$52,000 dispersed to deliver food during the bombardment. Mindful of the farmers and vendors who were prepared for Ramadan, our partner sought out fresh food including chicken, eggs and vegetables.

A second \$50,000 distribution of food delivered to 1,382 families from 5 August. Each food parcel contained 16 items of dry goods, vegetables and dairy, the content based on interview feedback from families.

In partnership with the Welfare Association, \$35,000 of medical supplies and disposables distributed. Some 87% of all beneficiaries said that emergency services benefitted from the donation. In partnership with UNRWA, \$20,000 donated for medical supplies to Al Shifa hospital.

In partnership with ANERA, \$50,000 donated for clean drinking water and \$20,000 for medical supplies.

In cooperation with UNRWA and in consultation with families and shelter directors, families living in UNRWA schools and tents after losing everything in the attack, received hygiene kits worth \$40,000.

\$50,000 donated so that our ground staff, working with vendors, could provide 1875 children living in shelters in some of the hardest hit areas such as Rafah, Beit Hanoun, Shujaya, Al Zaytoun and Al Burej with uniforms and shoes so that they could return to school once re-opened. Over 100 schools were used as shelters for the more than 300,000 displaced civilians. The resumption of classes was delayed and so too the healing process these children deserve. For many families, the inability to provide the necessary uniforms for their children added to their grief, having lost everything.

PLAY TIME GIFT FOR GAZA CHILDREN

As part of their goal to provide safe play areas for children in war-torn Gaza, a couple from the Iranian American community of Greater Los Angeles, donated a considerable amount of funding to rehabilitate 15 playgrounds in the region. Selfless in their generosity, the pair asked for plaques in the new play areas to read: "A gift from all the people around the

world who stand up for justice for Palestinians."
"We want this to be a gift from



people who participate in demonstrations, donate to causes, whether supporting BDS, or even joining social media campaigns. We want the children in Gaza to be reminded that the world has not forgotten them. Thank you from all the children in Gaza whose lives you have touched!" they said.

BRAVE EMPLOYEES WORK THROUGH WAR DURING RAMADAN

The month of Ramadan is normally a peaceful time for family and friends to fast and pray. Through the generosity of donors, families who go without during the year enjoy a month of extra food on their plates.

In 2014, ten days into Ramadan, the attack on Gaza began and the first phase of our operations there were halted for the safety of all concerned. However, our courageous staff insisted on starting the second phase of distribution during the offensive to get much needed food to families who would otherwise go without. In total, 1050 families from the south, north and middle areas of Gaza received fresh vegetables that farmers could not sell on the market, dairy, jam, dates and live chickens that were raised specifically for this distribution.

In the West Bank, 500 families from Hebron, Jenin, and Jericho received live chickens and fro-



zen meats (depending upon the storage capability), pickled vegetables, dairy, zataar, rice, olive and corn oil - all from 10 local cooperatives. Distribution activities also provided employment for 10 unemployed people.

Many of the beneficiary families have no income and rely on donations for food. Muneer, an un-

employed father of seven children, gratefully told our partner: "I can now sleep for a few nights knowing my family will be fed."

Basma, female head of household caring for nine members of her family, felt that the food was a blessing and thanked all who contributed: "May Allah make you happy the way you have made us happy," she said.

"Getting food is just one of the many challenges I face," said Abdul, who cares for 13 family members. "My children are growing up and their needs are growing every day. I often force them to go to bed early to help them forget that there is no dinner," he continued. "Like rain in the desert, the food we received helped us survive the remainder of Ramadan and the war, which was a hard time when aid was very scarce. May Allah bless all who made this possible for my family."



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TOP MARKS FOR EDUCATION IN EIN EL HILWEH REFUGEE CAMP

The scholastic year of 2013-2014 was a success according to the director of the Social Development Center in the Ein el Hilweh Camp.

With ongoing fighting in Syria, an increasing number of Palestinian refugee families flee to the camp seeking safe shelter. A number of the children from Syria are now students of the Social Development Center (SDC), which hired two Syrians to teach the curriculum as taught in Syria. "Our students have achieved notable scores due to the intensive remedial classes given to them," Mecarum said. "Giving the Palestinian children from Syr-



ia the opportunity to learn keeps them from having to move into the labor market".

KinderUSA is in its third year of supporting the camp's school through an annual budget of \$31,000. There has been a continual increase in students due to

both the influx of children from Syria and uptake from children who are already in the camp but have thus far missed out on educational opportunities: "Our school would not be possible without the full support of KinderUSA," said the director.