



ANNUAL REPORT

2019 | 2020



Kids in Need of Development, Education & Relief

CHANGING THE WORLD, ONE CHILD AT A TIME.



Mission

KinderUSA is the leading American Muslim organization focused on the health and well being of Palestinian children. We envision a free, just and peaceful Palestine where children thrive and look forward to a productive future, like children everywhere. Our mission is to improve the lives of Palestinian children and other children in crisis through development and emergency relief.

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FROM THE CHAIR

COVID-19

CHALLENGES PRESENTED BY PANDEMIC

The whole world shared in the unique trauma of the Covid-19 pandemic. Restricted movement. Fearing for life. Debilitating uncertainty. These realities came as a shock to many of us. For communities in Gaza, the West Bank, and throughout the Levant, it was all too familiar. What we found so jarring has defined Palestinian life for decades. The pandemic was merely another chapter in a long-form tragedy.

For Palestinians, restricted movement is nothing new. Checkpoints and border walls are a routine of life in the West Bank. Gaza has endured a blockade imposed by Egypt and Israel for over a decade. Refugees in Lebanon are confined to their respective ghettos. The pandemic placed these communities into an added quarantine.

For instance, the government in Gaza locked down 30 of its 90 neighborhoods to stop the spread of Covid-19. These measures halted in-person learning, leaving children with nowhere to go. They also made it difficult for breadwinners to provide for their families. Many parents were unable to work. Daily essentials, already in unfortunate supply, found themselves even more scarce.





As it did elsewhere, the pandemic took its toll on the Palestinian population. Gaza's healthcare system found itself unprepared. Case numbers climbed as the disease spread throughout the strip's dense population. Hospitals lacked testing kits and found themselves short on ICU beds. Fatalities rose as citizens, both young and old, fell prey to the virus.

Amin, a father of 7, comes from an area east of Rafah in Gaza. Cross-border violence in the area has always kept him worried for his family. Because of the pandemic, he had to, "...worry also about Coronavirus and how to protect my children."

It is because of this crisis, that KinderUSA's work was all the more important. These communities already live a life defined by strife. As a result of the deadly coronavirus, they found themselves even more vulnerable.

HOW WE ADAPTED

In spite of the odds, KinderUSA stayed true to its mission. Our staff on the ground worked tirelessly. We supported our partners and provided aid to the most marginalized Palestinian communities. In addition to food, we provided families with protective personal equipment (PPE) to keep them safe during the pandemic. We also made efforts to improve the

mental and emotional well-being of Palestinian children.

While it was far from business as usual for KinderUSA, our resolve endured. We doubled down on our efforts to support the children and families of Palestine. As you will see in this report, these are the kind of moments that define us as an organization. Without your care and contributions, none of this would have been possible. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you.

Dr. Laila Al-Marayati

Dr. Laila Al-Marayati, Board Chair



GAZA

HIGHLIGHTS

▶ RAMADAN

Once again, KinderUSA provided aid to Gazan families for the holy month of Ramadan. Like in previous years, we worked with local farmers and women-run cooperatives for provisions. We gave families chicken, eggs, fresh fruit, and fresh vegetables. Beneficiaries received enough food to prepare a nutritious iftar for the whole month.

At the close of Ramadan 2020, our results surpassed even our own distribution expectations. We provided aid to 2400 families in desperate need. This kind of support sends an important message to the children of Palestine. Even in the face of a global crisis, their well-being is not

forgotten. Their lives still matter and we will continue to support them.

ZAHRAN

Zahran is one of our Ramadan beneficiaries. He and his 11 family members live in a makeshift three-room home in Rafah. Three of his children have physical impairments, requiring ongoing therapy and medication. Due to the pandemic, Zahran lost his job in the agricultural sector. This left him worrying about how he would provide for his family.

Through our Ramadan distribution, Zahran's family received live chickens, fresh vegetables, and fresh dairy. They



even received mamoul as a treat for the children.

“We are grateful for this food you have provided. Each month, I feel helpless not knowing how I will feed my children. This month, I do not have to ask for a loan from the store or beg from my neighbors. My children have not had such good food like this in a long time. We cannot thank you enough. Ramadan Kareem.” - Zahran

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

The food situation in Gaza grows more dismal with each passing year. Over 68% of households in the Gaza Strip face food insecurity. That's about 1.7 million people. In 2020, 93% of households lacked food with enough iron. Limited resources, minimal economic opportunities, and the blockade have all contributed to this tragic reality.

“There is no flour, and the fridge is empty,” according to Mousa, an unemployed father of 7. “What difference, we have no electricity.”

Thus, KinderUSA continued its Nutritional Meals program throughout the Gaza Strip. The program provided more than 32,000 meals to 14 kindergarten classes. By the end of 2020, over 450 families received fresh food and dairy.

According to Bassam, another beneficiary, “I did not get any food aid from any party in the previous period. I was very happy with the quantity and quality of the items in the food parcel, especially with all varieties... they contain fresh vegetables and cheese that I cannot afford to buy for my family. Thank you to all who made this possible.”



AN'AM AL MABOH

During the height of the pandemic, Ana'am al Maboh lost both her job and home. She struggled, worrying about how she would provide for her five children. Rather than live on the street, the family settled in an abandoned storefront that lacked adequate kitchen and bathroom facilities.

Our partners in Gaza directed us to provide aid for Ana'am and her family. As beneficiaries, they received a month's worth of food and essentials. These included dried legumes, canned meats, eggs, and milk. The family also received PPE to stay safe from the pandemic.

“Now I have enough food to feed my family. I do not need to beg for food to feed my family! You have been extremely supportive through this difficult time. I could not have gotten through this month without your help!”- Ana'am

WESTBANK HIGHLIGHTS

SHUFAT CAMP FOOD DISTRIBUTION

In 2020, KinderUSA set out to provide food for the Shufat camp in East Jerusalem. Though considered Jerusalem citizens, Shufat residents still endure checkpoints and a separation wall. These obstructions lead to desperation within the camp. Parents can't provide healthy food for their children. As a result, youth in Shufat suffer malnutrition and other health issues.

Our aim was to provide the children of Shufat with healthy meals for 66 school days. Our volunteers helped prepare meals in cooperation with members of Shufat's local women's center. We

worked hard to supply healthy food for various schools around Shufat and East Jerusalem.

Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the project shuttered in June 2020. Luckily, we were able to make significant gains by March of that year.

Through our efforts, 150 schoolchildren were able to receive 3 months' worth of healthy meals. This not only benefitted the camp's malnourished children but families as well. Mothers were able to take part in awareness workshops about healthy children's meals. Through these workshops, mothers in Shufat learned how to track the health of their children in relation to the food they eat.



BAYAN

Bayan is a 7-year-old first grader at the Shufat school. She has 3 brothers, one of them a newborn with heart disease. Her mother spends a lot of time in the Jerusalem hospital with the newborn. Bayan's father works hard to make money to cover medical expenses. This leaves the rest of the kids with little money for daily expenses. With only one shekel a day, Bayan can't buy any kind of healthy food from the cafeteria. Her only options are chips and cheap chocolates.

According to Bayan's teacher, she suffers from psychological problems, family strife, economic hardships, and weak health.

As Bayan puts it, there is, "...no one to take care of us because my mother is always busy with my newborn brother... and my father works hard to get money..."

When Bayan saw the daily meals funded by KinderUSA, she worried she wouldn't be able to afford them. She was shocked and thrilled to learn it would cost her nothing. She said, "(for a) long time, I haven't eaten this kind of food."



LEBANON

HIGHLIGHTS

LEBANON IN CRISIS

2019 and 2020 saw Lebanon in a state of utter crisis. In 2019, the country began a slow descent into political instability. By 2020 it suffered fallout from both the pandemic and the explosion in the Port of Beirut. The Beirut blast left over 200 dead, hundreds of thousands homeless, and thousands more witnessing their livelihoods in ruins.

These compounding crises left most of the population without resources. The state's declaration of emergency and lockdown orders committed citizens to their homes. As a result, Middle to lower-income breadwinners were unable to reliably provide for their families.

Thousands of Lebanese families relied on charities just to survive.

One such family is that of Mr. Fadel. He and his wife, live in Hay Seloum with their 6 children, one of whom has special needs. The family lives in a 2-room apartment the can barely afford. Due to Covid restrictions, Mr. Fasel has been unable to earn income. He can barely even secure any food.

Hay Selloum has a high population density scattered throughout many unlicensed buildings. Many residents are poor and the area is full of pollution.

Another family in that area is that of Zeinab's. Zeinab lost her job two after months of being paid half her promised



salary. She lives with her mother, her brother, her sisters, and her nieces and nephews. Her brother suffers from debilitating PTSD. One sister suffers from chronic illness. The other sister is divorced and lives with the family along with her three children.

Zeinab and her family, unfortunately, had to leave their apartment in Hay Selloum because they were not able to pay the rent. Due to Lebanon's dire situation, there are currently no employment opportunities for Zeinab.



RELIEF PROVIDED

KinderUSA, in partnership with MAP UK, distributed essential supplies throughout Lebanon. Understanding the emergency need for food security, KinderUSA continued to operate its Mobile Library in the south. Through the Mobile Library, we distributed food, PPE, and education to the camps and settlements. The Mobile Library also served as a hub for fun children's activities such as storytelling. We held these activities outdoors, in keeping with local Covid protocols.

We also partnered with the Lebanese Food Bank (LFB). In this partnership, we worked toward distributing freshly cooked meals to families throughout the Beirut area. These areas included Chiah, Chatilla, and Hay Selloum. We placed a significant focus on lower-income, high-need residents. By the end of 2020, we provided supply kits for over two hundred families. Each kit contained legumes, rice, spices, and other culinary essentials.

THE RIGHT TO PLAY

In the words of KinderUSA Chair, Dr. Laila Al-Marayati, “Children have an inherent right to play...” Palestinian children face an onslaught of indignities on a routine basis. One of the most detrimental is the deprivation of a normal childhood.

Young Palestinians face many physical and nutritional perils. They also find themselves at risk of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. These children suffer flashbacks, nightmares, and severe anxiety. Their psyches develop amidst artillery smoke, rubble, and the loss of loved ones. If left untreated, PTSD can have far-reaching consequences.

There is a lack of relevant and effective psychological support among Palestinian

communities. This is disastrous for early development. Especially for children in such a vulnerable situation. Thus, KinderUSA worked to provide Palestinian children with measured psychosocial treatment programs.

Effective psychological treatment is a lengthy process where every small step matters. One of these steps was normalizing playing for children. Fun cooperative activities are essential to childhood development. They allow children to communicate, express themselves, and develop their behavior. Providing this kind of support is the bedrock of KinderUSA's mission. As such, we sought to remind Palestinian children of their inalienable right to play.





REBUILDING COPING CAPACITIES

Throughout 2019 and 2020, we sought to provide Palestinian children with the normal childhood experiences they deserve. One of these efforts was the Rebuilding Coping Capacities project. The Beit Lahia Development Association (BLDA) helped us organize this project. Our goal was to facilitate a safe space for Gazan children to enjoy and express themselves. By doing so, we sought to provide them with the necessary psychological support.

About 8 BLDA mentors oversaw fun activities for children from the worst affected areas of the Gaza strip. Activities included hula hooping, basketball, relay races, and mural painting. By providing children with a space to play, we gave them a respite from the routine turmoil of their lives.

YES THEATER

Yes Theater is a Hebron-based theater program for children. The program operates in coordination with the Hebron governorate's educational systems. Over 8400 students took part in 70 staged performances throughout the region. These children came from all across the Hebron area, including Al Aroub camp, Kharas village, and Al Fawar camp.

Through Yes Theater, children were able to take part in the production of original plays. The themes of these plays were derived from the daily lives of Palestinian children. The plays were also based on traditional Arab and Palestinian stories.

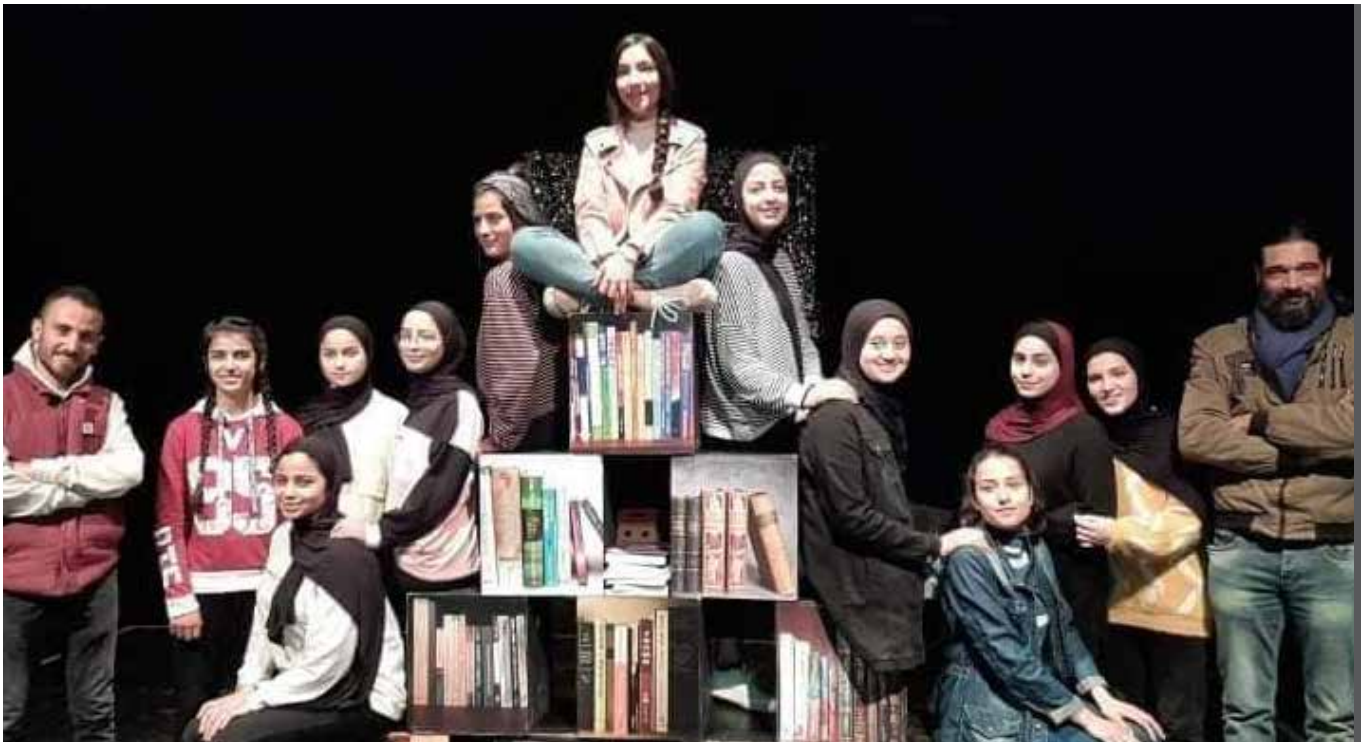
Yes Theater gave Palestinian children the chance to have fun. It also promoted emotional well-being. Creative group settings allow children to form intellectual, emotional, and creative bonds with

each other. Participation also builds self-confidence, self-awareness, and self-worth among its participants.

The plays' themes also helped bolster a fragile sense of identity. Childhood in Palestine is full of uncertainty. Violence, poverty, and potential displacement disrupt critical development years. It isn't uncommon for Palestinian youth to give into despair and lose themselves in a cycle of tragedy.

The stories of our lives that we tell, and how we tell them, have a direct effect on our sense of self. They can help us develop a sense of agency and a feeling of control. Palestinian children experienced these benefits by engaging in Yes Theater. By enacting their experiences, they could derive meaning from their turbulent lives.





| SUHAILA

Suhaila, a thirteen-year-old with no prior theater experience, was a Yes Theater participant. Growing up in an at-risk camp, she had trouble relating to children her age. Participating with other children in the program helped to change that. According to Suhaila, it was a therapeutic experience. She says, “Yes Theater gave me dreams and ambitions that I didn’t have before. It was a dynamic force that changed my life for the better.”



YOUNG SOCIAL INNOVATORS PROGRAM

Palestinian children view school as a relief from lives defined by strife. It allows them to spend time with and learn from one another. Because of this, KinderUSA values and supports various school programs in the region. One of these programs is the Young Social Innovators Program (YSIP). The YSIP emerged as a way to introduce creative problem-solving to students.

The Palestinian education system is very rigid and traditional. Current curricula favor rote memorization and spoon-feeding. Furthermore, schools don't give teachers autonomy in crafting lesson plans. As a result, many Palestinian students lack creative thinking skills. According to YSIP facilitators, participants couldn't think outside the box. This was

especially true when dealing with issues relevant to their daily lives.

The YSIP targeted 50 Palestinian students. In the first 6 months of the program, instructors abstained from routine problem-solving activities. Instead, they focused on dynamic strategies for novel challenges. In this setting, the students opened up in creative and innovative ways. As the program progressed, they demonstrated a deep understanding of experiential learning.

Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic presented challenges to the YSIP. To stop the spread, the Palestinian government shut down all in-person learning. The YSIP had to then move to a remote learning model.



This adaptation, though disruptive, netted some positive results. In the planning stages, the YSIP was only meant to serve children in the city of Bethlehem. The shift to remote learning allowed for the program to reach children in several cities throughout the West Bank and even Gaza.

The students were able to learn more about each other's communities in this environment. This helped them nurture empathetic learning skills. In one

instance, participants (all younger than 13) showed awareness of community members with disabilities. The children reportedly lamented the inaccessibility of their environment. They then came up with an accessible learning space to promote inclusivity.

FUN ACTIVITIES DURING RAMADAN



During Ramadan 2019, KinderUSA implemented a program for children from 8 of the most marginalized areas of Gaza. Participants engaged in a month of fun and community-based activities. These included story-telling, basketball, and a meal to break their fast at the close of each day. While our goal was to reach 1400 children, we ended up reaching almost 2000 children.

According to Ahmed, a coordinator, "Most of the children were nervous at first. Their families cannot afford taking them to special places, like a garden or a sports club because they are very poor and consider playing games a luxury, not a basic need."

It speaks to the severity of the situation that these children viewed something so fundamental as a luxury. It also speaks to the importance of the work KinderUSA does for the Palestinian people.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

KIDS IN NEED OF DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION, AND RELIEF
STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
DECEMBER 31,

ASSETS

<u>CURRENT ASSETS</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Cash	\$ 514,859	\$ 390,026
Contributions receivable	23,033	29,688
Grant receivable, donor restricted	-	50,000
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	<u>537,892</u>	<u>469,714</u>
 <u>PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT</u>		
Office furniture	3,657	3,657
Office equipment	9,559	6,553
	<u>13,216</u>	<u>10,210</u>
Less accumulated depreciation	<u>(10,235)</u>	<u>(9,291)</u>
TOTAL PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT	<u>2,981</u>	<u>919</u>
 Investments	 4,674	 3,528
Security deposit	<u>1,070</u>	<u>1,070</u>
TOTAL OTHER ASSETS	<u>5,744</u>	<u>4,598</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$ 546,617</u>	<u>\$ 475,231</u>

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

<u>CURRENT LIABILITIES</u>		
Accounts payable	\$ 3,163	\$ 5,113
Accrued expense	<u>3,604</u>	<u>1,296</u>
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	<u>6,767</u>	<u>6,409</u>
 <u>NET ASSETS</u>		
Donor restricted	-	50,000
Without donor restrictions	<u>539,850</u>	<u>418,822</u>
TOTAL NET ASSETS	<u>539,850</u>	<u>468,822</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	<u>\$ 546,617</u>	<u>\$ 475,231</u>

KIDS IN NEED OF DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION, AND RELIEF
STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31,

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
<u>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</u>		
Cash received from contributions, programs, etc.	\$ 996,310	\$ 861,126
Cash received from Paycheck Protection Program loan forgiveness	24,747	-
Cash paid to employees	(141,471)	(141,031)
Cash paid to vendors	<u>(751,997)</u>	<u>(769,791)</u>
 CASH PROVIDED BY (USED IN) OPERATING ACTIVITIES	 <u>127,589</u>	 <u>(49,696)</u>
<u>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</u>		
Proceeds on sale of investments	250	-
Purchase of fixed assets	<u>(3,006)</u>	<u>-</u>
CASH USED IN INVESTING ACTIVITIES	<u>(2,756)</u>	<u>-</u>
 <u>NET INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH</u>	 124,833	 (49,696)
<u>CASH, beginning of year</u>	<u>390,026</u>	<u>439,722</u>
<u>CASH, end of year</u>	<u>\$ 514,859</u>	<u>\$ 390,026</u>
 <u>RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME TO NET CASH PROVIDED BY (USED IN) OPERATING ACTIVITIES</u>		
<u>NET INCOME</u>	\$ 71,028	\$ 9,428
<u>ADJUSTMENTS TO RECONCILE NET INCOME TO NET CASH PROVIDED BY (USED IN) OPERATING ACTIVITIES</u>		
Depreciation	944	878
Unrealized (gain) loss on investments	(1,396)	(813)
Change in asset and liability accounts affecting net income:		
Accounts receivable	6,655	(9,804)
Grants receivable, donor restricted	50,000	(50,000)
Prepaid expense	-	350
Accounts payable	(1,950)	2,466
Accrued liabilities	<u>2,308</u>	<u>(2,201)</u>
<u>NET CASH PROVIDED BY (USED IN) OPERATIONS</u>	<u>\$ 127,589</u>	<u>\$ (49,696)</u>



CHANGING THE WORLD, ONE CHILD AT A TIME.



2019
2020



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