

UPA Connect

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MAJOR NEW PROJECTS See details inside

UPA Connect

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Clockwise from upper-left: UPA scholarship recipients (Dar Al-Kalima); Outdoor activities for deaf children in Gaza (Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children); Play for Palestinian children in a

refugee camp in Lebanon (National Institute for Social Care and Vocational Training); Building home gardens in Khan Younis (Al-Huda Development Association).

Letter from the Executive Director

The outcome of the war in Gaza will continue to haunt its residents and drain resources for years to come. The effects of violence will linger to test the resilience of human beings in their quest to have a future to live for rather than a present to die for. Such is the continuing story of human struggle in Gaza.

For 2015, we are launching pilot projects in Gaza that address two high priority areas: children's mental health and youth employment. The devastation of war has a disproportionate impact on children. In consultation with local and international mental health experts, we will identify therapies that are effective in treating children traumatized by war and integrate them into the standard kindergarten curriculum at select schools in Gaza.

To promote youth employment in an environment where 64% of the population is under the age of 25 and 45% is unemployed, we

are supporting a microfinance project that targets youth in Gaza between the ages of 20 and 24. The project will provide business training that will help participants propose a small business idea that will be funded with a combination of a grant and a loan from UPA.

We are excited about these two projects and hope you will find them meaningful and worthy of your support. Thank you again for your commitment to our mission and for making our work possible.

Sincerely,

Saleem F. Zaru
Executive Director



The **UPA Connect** newsletter is published quarterly by **United Palestinian Appeal, Inc. (UPA)**. UPA was founded in 1978 as a non-profit humanitarian organization to alleviate the suffering of Palestinians, particularly those in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and refugee camps throughout the Middle East, and to contribute to the long-term socioeconomic and cultural development of Palestinian society.

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Children's Fund Quarterly Report: October - December 2014



Al-Huda Development Association

Khan Younis, Gaza Strip

Al-Huda believes that early education is essential for developing a child's sense of self and setting the stage for their future success. During the 2014 assault on Gaza, the Al-Huda Kindergarten in Khan Younis was damaged and many teaching aids and books were destroyed, forcing teachers to do their jobs with limited means. A grant from the UPA Children's Fund allowed Al-Huda to purchase modern teaching aids, including a computer, photocopier, and projector, as well as schoolbooks for each of the students. According to the director of the kindergarten, the children have become happier, more active students. Attendance at the school has also increased, so Al-Huda can now reach even more children.



Fares Al-Arab for Development and Charity Works

Gaza City, Gaza Strip

Fares Al-Arab has offered psychological support for children living in shelters and refugee camps since the 2014 invasion of Gaza. With support from the UPA Children's Fund, Fares al-Arab was able to visit two shelters and provide psychosocial activities to help children who witnessed the devastation of the summer war. Staff members were able to meet with children of all ages and tailor activities to each age group, giving the children a space to convey their hopes and dreams. Twelve-year old Abdullah wrote, "This project gives us the chance to express our feelings, increase our self confidence and restore our smiles."



Palestinian Association for Education and Environmental Protection (PAEEP)

Gaza City, Gaza Strip

PAEEP provides toys and teacher training to some of the most in-need kindergartens in Gaza. With a grant from the UPA Children's Fund, PAEEP selected three kindergartens in Al-Shuja'iyyeh, one of the hardest-hit areas of Gaza during the 2014 war, to receive educational and recreational toys and training for teachers on how to support students that struggle to adapt to their situation. The manager of one of the kindergartens agreed that the "toys will allow the children to play and learn through playing." PAEEP also funded an "open day" of entertainment and games for students, featuring entertainers and group activities. The toys and training will serve future classes that pass through the selected kindergartens.



Palestinian Happy Child Centre

Jerusalem

The Palestinian Happy Child Centre provides hope to children with special needs, and their families, by creating a space for learning and fun. Through the UPA Children's Fund, the Happy Child Centre hosted puppet shows, fun days and trips for over 300 children. It also held workshops to teach families how to support and encourage their children. Many autistic children have made great strides forward since coming to the Happy Child Centre, thanks to the personalized program that it offers. One mother, whose daughter Shahd was born with a hearing disability, says that thanks to the Happy Child Centre Shahd received cochlear implants, speech therapy, and occupational therapy. At 8 years old, Shahd is able to hear and speak, and is enrolled in a regular school.

Join the "Circle of Hope"



"Here, where the hills slope... We cultivate hope."
-Mahmoud Darwish

Dear Friends of UPA,

We would like to invite you to join the UPA "Circle of Hope," our monthly-giving program. Through this program, you can show your ongoing commitment to our mission and help enhance the sustainability of our programs. By joining the UPA "Circle of Hope," you are able to make automatic, recurring credit card donations, making your charitable giving an efficient, hassle-free process.

Ways to join:

1. By Mail: Fill out the enclosed donation envelope with your credit card information, indicate the donation amount and check "Monthly." By providing your email address, you will receive an automatic notification whenever your card is charged.
2. Online: Visit our donation page at helpupa.org/hope and make sure to select the frequency of your donation.
3. By Phone: Call us at 855-659-5007 ext. 200.

Thank you for considering joining the UPA "Circle of Hope" and for your dedication and generosity!

Sincerely,

The **UPA** Team



How your donations are used:

In 2013, 95% of UPA's operating expenses were used for programs that directly benefit Palestinian communities in need.

Connect thru Giving

UPA is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible according to applicable laws.



Transformative humanitarian work in Palestinian communities.



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