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A Better School for Bedouin Children, the Poorest of the Poor

We ask help to upgrade a school for the children of the Bedouin families of Wadi Abu Hindi in the Greater Jerusalem area of the Palestinian West Bank. The U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has identified this village as one of nineteen Bedouin communities at risk of removal to make way for the Separation Wall planned to reach far into the West Bank to encircle the Israeli settlements of Greater Jerusalem. The families of this wadi, are among the poorest of all the Bedouin the region. Despite this, when the school they built for their children was demolished by Israeli authorities, they rebuilt it again. And when it was demolished a second time, they rebuilt it a second time.

By helping the community of Wadi Abu Hindi add a computer lab to their school (including a generator, electric lighting, 10 computers and a printer, internet access/filtering, and teacher training), we will

- a) Give encouragement and support to a community that has taken considerable risks on behalf of their children, and demonstrate to the Bedouin communities in the region that building a school brings education and support that outweighs risk;
- b) Enhance the educational opportunities available to these children and support their teachers with training; and
- c) Develop a communication link for the village to help focus international attention on the status of the community, allowing them to tell their story and working with them to save their homes.

Total Funding Goal: \$20,000, not including Rebuilding Alliance overhead of 10% nor the Global Giving fee of 10%,

Background: This project arose because U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs asked Rebuilding Alliance board member, Jerusalem Rabbi Jeremy Milgrom, to map all the Jahalin Bedouin communities in the Greater Jerusalem area because plans for construction of the Security Wall in this area will force the removal of these villages. This was the first map ever made of the Bedouin in the region. Rabbi Milgrom has been working with the Jahalin Bedouin for more than twenty years, bringing numerous volunteers to tutor, constructing school rooms and arranging for teachers, and advocating for the community's rights as settlements expand around them. During the mapping project, he visited each wadi, each village, listening to their needs, fears, and concerns. Rabbi Milgrom co-founded Clergy for Peace and lectures in Israel and Europe on Judaism, nonviolence, and peace. He has witnessed the anguish of countless Palestinian families as their homes were demolished by Israeli bulldozers, and sees building as way to ameliorate the suffering of innocent people and push for policy change. Rabbi Milgrom continues to be an advocate for the Bedouin community, even visiting U.S. congressional representatives and senators to push for US intervention on behalf of their fair housing rights.

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