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KinderUSA news

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**REBUILDING HOPE
THROUGH LIBRARIES IN**



**Ramadan in
Gaza and
the West Bank:**

\$425,000

The KinderUSA farmers and women cooperative program during Ramadan purchases fresh food, live poultry, dairy products and more from Palestinian women's cooperatives and small-scale farmers. KinderUSA strives for sustainability providing the tools and training needed for both the farmers and cooperatives to succeed in the long-term.

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KinderUSA

KIDS IN NEED OF DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION AND RELIEF

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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

At KinderUSA, we strive to create a lasting, sustainable impact on the lives of children. In this newsletter, you will see how we accomplish that goal by learning about one of our projects that focuses on the very young. The Nutrition and Health Care project for infants in Gaza provides resources to help reverse the disturbing trends of malnutrition and infant mortality in Gaza, currently at rates that have not been witnessed in over 50 years. We look to the mental health and well-being of older children and teens by Rebuilding Hope through Libraries which provides safe places to learn, grow, heal,

and share in a positive cultural environment and community that will have lasting effects. To provide economic assistance that supports entire families and thereby strengthen the core of Palestinian society, our annual Ramadan farmers' project enjoyed another successful year. With so much tragedy afflicting many parts of the world, it is easy to lose sight of the worsening situation in Gaza. In the spirit of sustainability, it is incumbent upon us to sustain our own resolve to provide badly needed support to children and their families living there. Until the cruel blockaded in Gaza and

the occupation of Palestine in general come to an end, our work lies before us and demands attention.

Your unwavering support and encouragement ensure long term sustainable care for children on a daily basis, transforming lives and communities. YOU share our passion believing that ALL children deserve the same rights everywhere, nothing less. Your contributions, like those of so many before you, help us to accomplish our goals of bringing hope to the children in Palestine and beyond. When we stand together, alongside our dedicated partners and teams on the ground, there are no limits to what we can do! Please keep reading a summary of our years' work, and always know that this is your organization.

NUTRITION AND HEALTH CARE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN IN GAZA

After repeated conflicts and a blockade approaching its 10th year, the diet of Palestinians in Gaza lacks the variety and nutritional components needed. In partnership with Ard el Insan, screening of children 0-36 months has been conducted on over 2400 children for nutritional and health status. The startling report issued by UNRWA in August 2015 showing a rise in infant mortality for the first time in FIVE decades in Gaza prompted the start of this project in January 2016. In addition to providing nutritional food and micronutrient supplements to the children, mothers are trained and coun-



seled in breast feeding, proper nutrition, and meal preparation. Among the children screened, 17% were considered critical and admitted to clinic for hands on nutritional and medical treatment, while the remaining 83% were identified as suffering from nutritional disorders including: Iron Deficiency Anaemia (IDA), growth faltering

(GF), wasting and nutritional stunting, and rickets. This \$100,000 project closes at the end of December 2016 though there has been significant improvement in the beneficiaries who participated. With your support, we can continue to reverse a shocking trend for the children in Gaza in 2017.



EMERGENCY SHELTER REHABILITATION

FOR PALESTINIAN REFUGEES FROM SYRIA IN LEBANON

Lebanon is host to 1.2 million Syrian refugees and 45,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS). Most have been in Lebanon for at least three years now and what savings they may have had are gone. Securing adequate housing is one of the most urgent challenges facing these refugees with an ever-dwindling stock of affordable and adequate housing, in addition to UNRWA recently ending rent subsidies for PRS. Many have no choice but to pay inflated rents to live in overcrowded, sub-standard accommodation in dilapidated buildings, former storage spaces or garages.

There are over 800 families of Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) living in Burj El Barajneh Camp in Beirut, Lebanon. They have joined the impoverished long-term Palestinian refugees in Lebanon (PRL) in the daily struggle for jobs (however insecure, short-term and low-paid), healthcare, affordable housing and education.



Benefitting both the refugee tenants living in the improved shelters (PRS) and the property owners (PRL) this \$56,000 project provided 88 of the most vulnerable PRS essential shelter rehabilitation, focusing on safety, security, weatherproofing, and installation of essential water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities.

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OR USE THE ENCLOSED
ENVELOPE SO WE CAN
FULFILL OUR PROJECT
GOALS FOR 2016!



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THE MONTH OF **RAMADAN** IN GAZA AND THE WEST BANK

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The Ramadan Program immediately feeds children and their families who live in marginalized areas many still in makeshift shelters in Gaza since the war of 2014. Each family receives fresh food including eggs, zaatar, cheese, 8 live chickens, and fresh vegetables twice during the month of Ramadan.

Over 3800 families with 6-10 members participated in the distribution which included 83 Women Cooperatives preparing cheese, zataar, doqaa, pressed dates, and jam, while 250 small scale farmers toiled



their lands early on to prepare for the month growing fresh vegetables and raising chickens. Some of the chicken farmers in Gaza were from our micro-enterprise project that

empowered female heads of household last year. They now sell their eggs on the market, and support our projects earning an income! Thank you to all who made this project a success!



EID GIFTS

FOR THE CHILDREN IN GREECE

Fleeing war and poverty, rolling the dice on a dangerous boat trip across the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas, and walking for days is just the beginning for refugees arriving by the thousands on Greece's shores. Many refugees have already experienced trauma witnessing their homes, families, and livelihoods changed forever. Currently over 50,000 refugees are stranded in Greece, many of whom are children, lingering in camps. They are the lucky ones considering that over 10,000 unaccompanied minors have disappeared during their journey, thought to be the victims of traffickers.

KinderUSA in partnership with Humanity Crew, a Palestinian organization, provided Eid Al Fitr gifts to 1,000 refugee children in Diavata Camp which is located in an industrial area on the outskirts of Thessaloniki in northern Greece. Maintaining the tradition of gifts, as in



years past, provides a sense of comfort and normalcy for these children who are in the most unstable of situations. Young and old also received locally prepared, fresh baklava delivered by "the best bakery in Greece" and volunteers dressed as

clowns entertained all! All items were purchased locally for a cost of \$15,000, economically aiding the Greek community which has endured numerous financial challenges over the years, yet hosts a huge influx of refugees.



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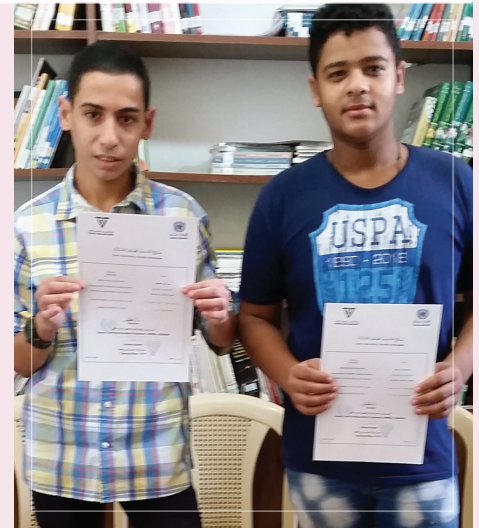
BUILDING SELF-CONFIDENCE



Ein El-Hilweh refugee camp located on the periphery of the Lebanese city Saida is the largest of 12 refugee camps and the most densely populated of all camps in Lebanon. In our fifth year, KinderUSA continues to support the Social Development Center alternative school where children who do not fulfill certain conditions to enter UNRWA schools, are slow learners, or have special behavioral issues attend free of charge. Many of these children are subject to violence at home and either end up roaming the streets, become involved in drugs, or go to work at an early age.

The school builds self-confidence and provides an environment where children are involved in designing part of the educational program along with setting the rules and regulations. Priority is given to acquiring writing and reading skills and understanding mathematical operations while having time for creative activities.

For two young men, Ibrahim and Amir, helping their family bring income into the home was the path they chose at the



Ibrahim and Amir at SDC School.

school. Both completed vocational training receiving General Electricity certification and are now ready to be employed within the camp. When asked why they chose this route rather than completing their education, Ibrahim told of his father's illness with diabetes and inability to work, while his mother is in need of heart surgery. "It is my duty to help my family, especially my siblings", said Ibrahim. With funds as little as \$36,000, KinderUSA is able to care for over 70 Palestinian children from Lebanon and Syria.



Ramadan cont.

"You cannot imagine to what extent the happiness I feel while seeing my children play with live chickens, especially that we didn't eat chicken since a year ago. Many thanks to Kinder- USA for this fresh food and my appreciation for this program. This Ramadan, I will not run to get some food from the neighbors or to the shops for a loan for food. The food made my family more secure. Please remember us always and all the people who suffer as we do." Raed's wife said.

Nutritional Meals for Children in Gaza



Well-nourished children are better able to grow and learn, participate in and contribute to their communities, and be resilient in the face of disease, disasters, and other global crises. Yet, each year, around 3 million children die due to undernutrition and for millions more, chronic malnutrition will literally stunt physical and cognitive growth of children according to UNICEF.



KinderUSA's Nutritional Meals for Kindergartens provided 1,110 children attending kindergarten (aged 4-6) in marginalized and war-torn regions of Gaza with nutritious meals at school three times a week during the fall (September – November) and spring (February – May) school semesters. Meals consist of vegetables, meat, cheese and zataar filled pastries, a juice carton, and a piece of fruit for each child. In addition to promoting healthy nutrition, the program also increases attentiveness and effectiveness of the children and enhances their psychosocial well-being as they prepare for the next school year. The children's caregivers were encouraged to attend five sessions about nutrition and health education. The program reaches 12 kindergartens, which were selected due to their proximity to the poorest and most marginalized areas in southern

Gaza where there are limited resources and services, the same areas still in rubble from the war of 2014.

The project simultaneously provides training in food production for 23 female heads of household providing a small stipend during training and full employment for 5 previously trained, hearing impaired women. Trainers for new recruits are chosen based upon their skills and knowledge from previous programs.

Board member Dr. Jess Ghanam recently visited the project and noted, "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".

Your donations of \$77,235 made this project possible. In continuing this school year, for two years to come, KinderUSA is counting on your continued support!





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REBUILDING HOPE THROUGH LIBRARIES IN

In partnership with Tamer Institute for Community Education, this project supports the role of libraries in local communities implementing a holistic approach to child psychosocial support. Through expressive arts such as storytelling, music, and animation parents and children engage in a cultural environment enhancing their psychosocial well-being. Over 2000 participants benefited from this program that also boosted the presence of 8 libraries, promoted cultural activities, and aided in the capacity development of librarians. An eight month long project, closing in October 2016 with an \$80,000 budget was only possible with your generous support!.

