

Sheffield Emergency Aid for Gaza

Update: Winter 2024

The context:

No one imagined that the onslaught on Gaza would last as long as it has, becoming the world's first live-streamed genocide. Israel's relentless bombardment has used weapons so powerful that they have inflicted deaths, injuries and destruction on a scale that dwarfs the five previous Israeli attacks on Gaza. The direct death toll mounts relentlessly, with Gaza labelled as the deadliest place on earth for children because of the intensity of the attacks and the danger of acute malnutrition and starvation. Meanwhile, the deliberate destruction of hospitals and the denial of essential medical supplies means that injuries cannot be treated and, inevitably, yet more men, women and children will die.



*There is no safe place in Gaza. **Above:** Khan Younis, where our team is based.*

Since the 1990s, Sheffield PSC has developed and supported Children's Centres in Gaza. More recently, the charity Sheffield Palestine Cultural Exchange (SPaCE) has also supported these initiatives.

In the grim context of Gaza today, we continue to support our team on the ground, who use your donations to provide emergency aid, bringing some relief to those who receive it. This bulletin gives updates on the work enabled by these donations:

- ***£270,000 has been sent to Gaza as relief to date (November 2024)***
- ***8557 families have been supported.***

Food and Water - still a priority

A significant percentage of the families now receiving support from the Emergency Fund are those forcibly displaced by Israel from northern Gaza to the south.

Their homes are in Jabalia, Beit Lahia, Beit Hanoun, the Beach Camp and Gaza City, places now cruelly besieged, under daily attack and close to starvation.



These new families swell the numbers in tents in the Khan Younis region, where our team operates, all needing food and water.

Therefore, basic food parcels are a top priority and, with fresh vegetables and meat hard to source, the parcels are predominantly dry goods.

Clean water is another basic essential of life. MECA (Middle East Children's Alliance) and Al Fajr (a local charity, whose name means Dawn of Youth) work with our team to keep the supply going, as far as humanly possible, in the area.



A FOCUS ON CHILDREN

Despite the dire context of life in Gaza, the initiatives to give some relief to children, reported in the last Bulletin, have grown impressively. Therapeutic play, educational activities and fun gatherings are taking place, delivered by those who formerly made the Children's Centres such a success.

This team has sourced or salvaged equipment such as face paint, paper and crayons (even fancy dress costumes) and now provide enjoyable sessions for youngsters and, at times, mothers. Our partners also avoid "one-off" visits, aiming to provide 4 events in each place to give a sense of continuity



Even as we report these positive steps, we acknowledge that these children have seen what no child should see and have all lost people precious to them. They live with the daily reality of genocide and – when the attacks cease – the consequences in terms of physical and psychological damage to them will endure.

Education:

Formal education for students of all ages has been ended by this crisis. The Nouran Centre was destroyed, but managed to find other premises. The Emergency Fund team salvaged school furniture, provided stationery etc and paid their rent for three months. The Centre now provides education, 6 days a week, for up to 60 children. Staff from the Never Stop Dreaming Project and the Qayis Centre for Psychological and Community Support offer entertainment on the remaining day.



Vanguard Film-makers:

Before the genocide, this small independent film-making centre supported the Children's Projects and partnered with SPaCE.



Now, it too has salvaged what it can from its offices and started a 'Training Project for Young Palestinian Journalists'. This enables youngsters to script and film their own reports, giving voice to children's experiences and stories.

To recognise the link between Vanguard and Sheffield, they commemorated the anniversary of Qayis el Farra, to whose memory the project is dedicated.

As always, we pay tribute to the selfless dedication of all our partners on the ground who enable our donations to make a difference.

Our next priority: protection from the cold wet days.

Warm clothes and blankets, especially for children and mothers, are desperately needed. People are still living in tents and some of these are a year old now. So, we ask you to continue to donate to this work.

To donate, use this QR code.



Or: Sheffield PSC: Sort code: 05 08 03. Account No 21639516
SPaCE: Sort Code 05 08 18: Account No 33129312

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