

Sheffield Emergency Aid for Gaza

BEFORE THE GENOCIDE BEGAN

Even before Israel launched its current war on Gaza, it had laid siege to the people of this small strip of land, tightly restricting essential supplies by land, air and sea and periodically launching military assaults. Children, who make up half of Gaza's population, suffered the most.

Since the early 1990s, Sheffield PSC has supported Palestinian initiatives to develop Children's Centres providing educational activities, a Mobile Library, fun and games and psychological support. More recently, the Sheffield Palestine Cultural Exchange charity (SPaCE) has also supported these important projects.



All this seems a lifetime ago - this, and much more, has been destroyed in the genocide. It is ironic to look back with nostalgia to the days of the siege, but we do, inevitably, as some of the children and workers at the Centres are known to have been killed and much of the equipment has been destroyed, as have the Centres themselves.



Above: all that remains of the Never Stop Dreaming Children's Centre, Khan Younis.

THE EMERGENCY AID WORK BEGINS: OCTOBER 2023



Musheir el Farra and his son, Qasem, were in Gaza when the Israeli attacks began. They immediately began reporting back to Sheffield PSC in short, filmed despatches. These were widely circulated.

They also began to buy and distribute food and other basic essentials, working with a trusted network of friends and partners. While Musheir and Qasem were in Gaza,

Sheffield PSC began to collect and send funds to sustain the relief work.

After their return to Sheffield, the Emergency Aid work continued.

REPORTING BACK FROM GAZA

As of June 2024, over 5,000 families have received support. Sheffield and the surrounding areas have collected and sent £210,400 to Gaza.

Fundraising gathered momentum as people worked hard to counteract officialdom's political indifference to Palestinian suffering in the genocide.

On the right, you can see food parcels being assembled. Our co-workers in Gaza are committed to transparent accounting and send details of how the aid is used, with names of recipients, numbers in their families, what was given etc.



In addition to sending the best form of accounting possible under devastating military attacks, the team in Gaza also send photographs to show the work they are doing.

We deeply respect and salute these people who risk their own safety to bring essential aid to families who have lost everything.

This child's face speaks of her trauma - another childhood destroyed.

EXAMPLES OF WHAT THE EMERGENCY FUND HAS PROVIDED

FOOD



Famine is a fact in Gaza. Starvation is now a weapon of war in Israel's massive armoury.

Israel's genocide and the cynical complicity of its allies, are reflected in the haunting images of malnourished children and of families queuing for food, struggling to keep alive amidst death and destruction

The support the Emergency Aid Fund can give is a drop in the ocean of need created by Israel's policy of denying entry to aid trucks.

But for a few thousand people it is a lifeline and every such act of solidarity is a sign to all the people of Gaza that they have support from abroad, that they have not been abandoned.



BASIC SHELTER FROM THE ELEMENTS



People in Gaza have been displaced many times. Most Gazans are refugee families whose status as refugees dates back to the Nakba of 1947-49.

Now, in this genocide, they have been forced to leave their homes, move repeatedly from place to place, with what they can carry and live in tented encampments

Tented communities, like this in Khan Younis, are reminiscent of the tents of the first wave of the Nakba, reminding us that this current genocide is an extension and escalation of Israel's long-term plan to remove Palestinians from their land.



Above right: The Emergency Fund provides complete plastic-sheeted tents, with toilets - basic but much valued shelter.

CLEAN WATER

Gaza's water supply was seriously compromised before October 2023 due to Israel's control over the aquifer and attacks on water purification systems. The unprecedented bombing, targeting infrastructure, means that clean water is extremely scarce. Contaminated water is the norm.



Above: The Emergency team is trying to salvage whatever is useable and has obtained and installed some water tanks like these shown above. [MECA](#), (the Middle East Children's Alliance) an invaluable and established partner of the Sheffield-supported Children's Centres, has filled the tanks with clean water. The task now is to keep them full and the team are working on this. And again - we know this is not enough, but it helps.



CARE FOR CHILDREN



This bulletin opened with a look back at our work with children.

Everyone knows that it is children who have been the main victims of the bombing - and who can calculate the damage to young bodies and minds living through this genocide?



With children in mind, the team in Gaza has already provided warm clothes for youngsters and now has arranged some glimpses of normality in terms of entertainment, carried out in the name of the Qayis Psychological and Community Support Centre. (*Qayis's photo adorns the back of the hoodie worn by the child on the right.*)

USE THE QR CODE TO FIND OUT MORE AND HOW TO DONATE

- £20 provides powdered milk for a baby for 2 weeks
- £40 will create a food parcel, enough for a family of 8 for 2 weeks
- In addition, when possible, children's activities will be arranged.

