



AMERICAN
FRIENDS OF
unrwa



ANNUAL REPORT

2013

UNRWA IS THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES

About

American Friends of UNRWA

Who We Are

American Friends of UNRWA (AFU) is an independent 501c3 nonprofit organization that provides support for the humanitarian work of UNRWA through advocacy, fundraising, and outreach.

AFU aims to educate the general American public about the situation of Palestinian refugees and generate support for UNRWA's education, health, and social service programs.

We Empower: Advocacy

American Friends of UNRWA works to mobilize American public interest and support for UNRWA and its programs through awareness campaigns.

We seek to encourage Americans to voice their support for UNRWA's humanitarian and human development work to their surrounding community.

We Educate: Outreach

American Friends of UNRWA is dedicated to informing the general public of the situation and needs of Palestinian refugees.

We host events featuring UNRWA experts, distribute materials promoting UNRWA programs, and provide daily updates to followers through a variety of media outlets.

We Assist: Fundraising

By engaging in private sector fundraising activities, AFU is able to provide financial support to UNRWA's humanitarian programs.

We act as a liaison among private foundations and corporations, nongovernmental organizations, and individuals to raise funds and for life saving and empowering programs.

Letter from our Leaders

Dear Friends,

We are incredibly proud to report that over the past year, American Friends of UNRWA (AFU) has continued to grow in its reach and ability to assist the Palestine refugee communities most in need. As extreme challenges from Gaza to Syria continue to affect Palestine refugees and UNRWA, we continue to work tirelessly to support critical programs that serve as a lifeline to many Palestinians.

In the West Bank, Palestine refugee communities continue to face threats of displacement and economic turmoil due to the Israeli occupation. Through the support of dedicated partners, we were able to send school supplies to Bedouin communities struggling to survive and continue our support of vital shelter rehabilitation programs. We also supported the West Bank economy through our Olive Tree Initiative, which supports UNRWA's critical Job Creation Program.

In Gaza, the ongoing blockade continues to cripple the economy, making it incredibly difficult for Palestine refugee families to cope. The most vulnerable communities, particularly youth, face extreme difficulties in their lives, grappling with trauma from past conflicts and ongoing challenges related to the illegal blockade. Through our Gaza Solidarity 5K walk/run events, we have contributed greatly to UNRWA's Community Mental Health Program. Our supporters have also helped us contribute to UNRWA's emergency feeding program, which serves as a lifeline for thousands of families in Gaza.

In Syria, the ongoing conflict tested UNRWA's operations and ability to help Palestine refugees throughout the country, through the help of our supporters, we were able to provide critical emergency assistance through UNRWA services. Access to Yarmouk camp, once the most thriving Palestine refugee camp in Syria, became besieged in 2013, trapping thousands of civilians inside. We continue to urge all actors involved to allow unhindered humanitarian access to the camp, and to fund programs that serve Palestine refugees displaced from Yarmouk and other dangerous areas of Syria.

What we were able to accomplish in 2013 was remarkable, and it couldn't have been done without the support of our partners, donors, and supporters. With continuing conflicts across the region, we need your dedicated support in the coming year more than ever. We thank you for your generous support and hope that together, we can make next year even bigger and better for American Friends of UNRWA and Palestine refugees who need our help.

Thank you for your continued support,



Amb. (Ret.) Philip C. Wilcox, Jr.
Board Chair



Abby Smardon
Executive Director

West Bank

A photograph of a young olive tree planted in a field. The tree is in the foreground, with its trunk and branches visible. The background shows a town built on a hillside, surrounded by green hills under a clear sky. The ground around the tree is dark brown soil, and there are some rocks and other plants nearby.

Olive Tree Initiative

Through AFU's Olive Tree Initiative and Job Creation Program (JCP), UNRWA provided 24 unemployed refugees with a decent wage, work experience, and agricultural job training in 2013. Since the beginning of the Olive Tree Initiative, JCP workers have planted more than 5,000 trees in the region.

With a donation of \$500, UNRWA is able to provide one refugee with live-saving employment for three months. This past year AFU planted olive trees in West Bank in honor of **40** donors.

Pictured on this page is one of the olive trees planted in Jalqamous through UNRWA's Job Creation Program. This tree was planted in honor of a generous AFU donor.



Canaan Fair Trade Olive Oil Sales

AFU's staff participated in the Olive Harvest Festival at the Canaan Fair Trade factory outside the northern West Bank city of Jenin. AFU supporters in Ohio sell Canaan's fair trade organic olive oil to help fund UNRWA's Job Creation Program, a staple in the Palestine refugee community in providing opportunities to Palestine refugees struggling to survive. Canaan products purchased via our website benefit our work.



Support for Khan Al-Ahmar

AFU sent books and school supplies to the Khan al-Ahmar school in the West Bank through a partnership with the Sacramento Sister City Initiative.

These supplies helped to advance the quality of education of Palestine refugee students and to nourish the potential for their futures.

UNRWA FACTS ABOUT THE WEST BANK

- **UNRWA provides 750 people housing in the West Bank.**
- **UNRWA schools in the West Bank scored above local math and science averages in 2013.**
- **98 Palestinian homes in east Jerusalem were destroyed in 2013.**
- **565 Palestinian homes were demolished in the West Bank's Area C in 2013.**
- **95% of UNRWA staff are Palestinian refugees.**

Gaza



UNRWA's Community Mental Health Program (CMHP) provides psychosocial support for Palestine refugees affected by conflict and the ongoing blockade. After the 2012 conflict, the Post Traumatic Stress Disorder rate among children in Gaza doubled, according to UNRWA. Of patients treated by UNRWA for PTSD, 42% are under the age of nine.

AFU supports CMHP through annual Gaza Solidarity 5K walk/runs. In 2013, races were hosted in Washington DC and San Francisco. Both cities far exceeded expectations! We had nearly 400 people participant in our 5K walk/run held in Rock Creek Park in the heart of Washington DC.

Together with participants and generous sponsors, over \$92,000 was raised which provided counseling to 3,066 children in Gaza suffering from PTSD and other psychological trauma.



With nearly 400 participants at the 2nd annual DC Gaza Solidarity 5K, we raised \$92,295 for the Community Mental Health Program.

Washington DC Gaza Solidarity 5K

May 2013

Why did you run in the race?



“Because I’m Palestinian, and I know what they are going through.”



“To support the children of Gaza! I hope to be here every single year.”



“I believe that everyone has a right to live in peace.”

San Francisco Gaza Solidarity 5K

October 2013

On October 5, 2013, we took our Gaza Solidarity 5K walk/run to San Francisco, California for the first time.

The event was well-received, again surpassing our goals. We registered over 300 runners and raised over \$35,000 for CMHP.

As our inaugural event on the west coast, our San Francisco Gaza Solidarity 5K raised \$35,000 to support mental health in Gaza.

Nearly 400 American children and families from the San Francisco Bay Area came out to the race to show solidarity with children and families in Gaza!

The support from San Francisco alone allowed us to provide counseling to nearly 1,200 children in 2013.

Between Washington DC and San Francisco, supporters enabled us to change the lives of 4,254 children in Gaza!





UNRWA FACTS ABOUT GAZA

-The winter storm in Gaza displaced about 10,000 people and damaged or destroyed 1,500 homes.

-Blackouts in Gaza now last 16 hours a day on average.

-42% of those in Gaza treated for PTSD are under 9 years of age.

-UNRWA runs 62 women's centers in Gaza.

-PTSD in Gaza has risen by more than 100% since November 2012.

-33.8% of Palestinian refugees in Gaza are unemployed.

-In 2013, Gaza 5K participants enabled us to change the lives of 4,254 children in Gaza!

International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, November 2013

AFU held a reception in New York City with UNRWA Regional Ambassador Mohammed Assaf and UNRWA Commissioner-General, Filippo Grandi. This event served as an opportunity for the New York community to learn more about UNRWA's critical work in Gaza, while raising significant funds through a small auction, benefiting UNRWA's emergency work in Gaza.

Mohammed Assaf, UNRWA Youth Ambassador

UNRWA welcomed Mohammed Assaf, winner of 2013 Arab Idol, as the first ever goodwill Youth Ambassador to UNRWA. UNRWA is proud to work with an individual who is committed to spreading awareness about Palestine refugees and reminding the world that their plight continues to this day.

As a Palestine refugee from Khan Younis in Gaza, Mohammed Assaf was a "child of UNRWA" himself and has vigilantly acted to spread the voices of Palestine refugees across borders and throughout the world.



Mohammed Assaf, poses with the American Friends of UNRWA staff, New York, November 2013.



Mohammed Assaf posing with UNRWA Arabic Spokesperson, Sami Mashasha, New York, November 2013.



Mohammed Assaf, poses with auction winners and American Friends of UNRWA Executive Director, Abby Smardon, New York, November 2013.



Syria

The ongoing crisis in Syria presented new challenges to UNRWA's work serving Palestine refugees in the country. The once thriving Yarmouk camp, home to 160,000 Palestine refugees, has been severely affected by the conflict--in July, access to the camp was restricted by armed groups, effectively trapping remaining Palestine refugees inside and prohibiting humanitarian access by UNRWA.

In 2013 AFU was active in providing support for Palestine refugees from Syria in Lebanon and UNRWA humanitarian programs within Syria.

Syria Emergency Appeal

540,000 Palestinian refugees are registered with UNRWA in Syria. It is estimated that 270,000 are displaced within in the country and 80,000 have fled to Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Gaza, Turkey, and others. Those who fled Syria are in a very precarious situation with limited rights and difficult living conditions. Of the 540,000 Palestinian refugees, we estimate that 420,000 men, women, and children need urgent humanitarian assistance. UNRWA is continually pushing for humanitarian access to at-risk and suffering Palestinian refugees in Syria.

UNRWA FACTS ABOUT SYRIA

7,968 displaced Palestinian and Syrian refugees are sheltered in 18 UNRWA facilities.

In 2013, UNRWA with the Palestinian Red Crescent delivered 2000 polio vaccine doses to Yarmouk.

Over 50% of UNRWA schools are closed in Syria due to the ongoing conflict.

2/3 of Palestinian refugee students have been affected by school closures.



UNRWA continues food aid to Palestine refugees affected by conflict in Syria.



Of 23 UNRWA health centers in Syria, 13 were forced to close their doors due to ongoing violence.

To make up for the loss, UNRWA has opened eight health points in collective centers, where refugees can access free primary and mother-and-child health care--like this child, receiving a vaccination.

Jordan & Lebanon



Back to School

In partnership with UNICEF and the EU, UNRWA delivered 40,000 back-to-school kits to students across Lebanon.

The kits contained stationery items for the students to use throughout the school year at one of UNRWA's 69 schools in Lebanon.

These kits provide vital supplies to facilitate learning and brighten the future for a generation of Palestinian refugees.



UNRWA FACTS ABOUT LEBANON & JORDAN

-11,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria escaped to Jordan.

-51,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria escaped to Lebanon.

-UNRWA operates 137 healthcare centers and 128 dental clinics through Lebanon, the West Bank, Jordan, Syria, and the Gaza Strip.

-UNRWA spends more than 50% of their regular budget on education.

AFU Field Visits

In 2013, our staff took two visits to the field in order to see first hand projects that benefit from funding by American Friends of UNRWA. We also participated in stewardship activities, planting olive trees in the West Bank for generous donors.

In October, our trip took us to refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza, meeting with school officials and mental health counselors in Gaza and visiting the Bedouin community of Khan al-Ahmar and Aida refugee camp in the West Bank.

We also participated in workshops with UNRWA headquarters, and met with the Spanish and the Italian national committees to develop more effective partnerships.



UNRWA University Scholarship Fund



Wala and Ahmad, pictured above, are awardees of UNRWA University Scholarships in the West Bank provided by AFU supporters.

AFU partnered with the Foundation for Middle East Peace this year to provide 6 scholarships to both male and female Palestine refugees who will attend university in the West Bank and Gaza, opening doors to their futures that otherwise would have remained closed.

Other generous donors have responded to this new initiative by pledging to support additional UNRWA students throughout their high education pursuits.

Together, we are giving Palestinian refugee students a chance at a brighter future.

With your support, American Friends of UNRWA provided:



Four 4-year scholarships



One 5-year scholarship



One 6-year scholarship

61.09%

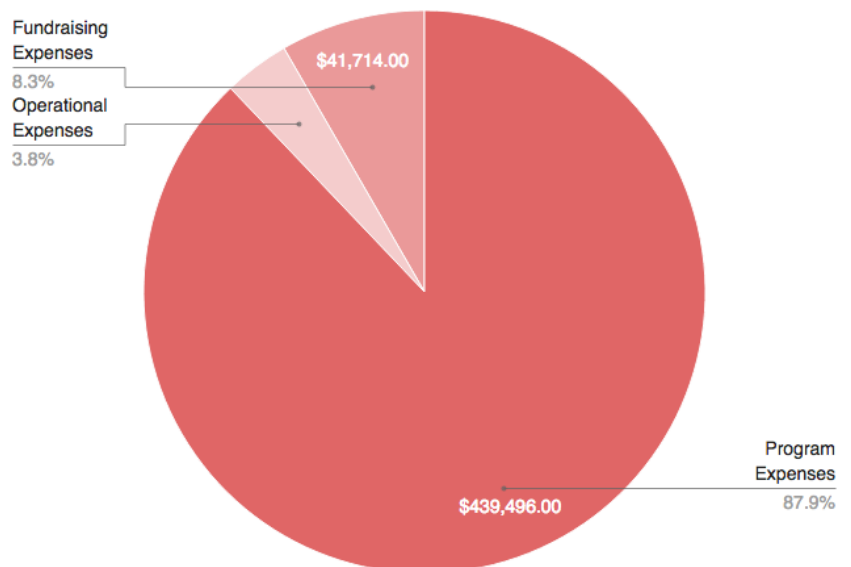
increase in contributions to UNRWA from 2012 to 2013

	2012	2013
Contributions to UNRWA	\$201,711.00	\$324,937.00
Total Revenue	\$536,560.00	\$729,120.00

Date	Amount	Program
February 2013	\$106,000	Emergency relief efforts to PRS in Lebanon
	\$20,000	Shelter rehabilitation in the West Bank
	\$12,000	Job creation in the West Bank
	\$5,000	UNRWA's health program
	\$5,000	University Scholarships
April 2013	\$10,000	Jerash health clinic in Jordan
	\$20,000	2013 Emergency Appeal
	\$9,500	University Scholarships from FMEP
	\$14,302	Gaza Marathon peer-to-peer fundraising
	\$385	Books and school supplies for Khan al Ahmar School
May 2013	\$750	Supplies for Khan al Ahmar School
August 2013	\$93,000	CMHP in Gaza
	\$27,000	UNRWA's Ramadan campaign

2013 Expenses

Program Expenses	\$610,641.00
Operational Expenses	\$21,089.00
Fundraising Expenses	\$48,177.00



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