

The Gaza Mental Health Foundation Inc.

PO Box 380273, Cambridge, MA 02238

November 2013

DIRECTORS

Greetings friends,

Bill Slaughter
President

We're writing now to ask for support for the people of Gaza.

Donald McInnes
Treasurer

In recent months, the ongoing bad situation has taken a turn for the worse. The Egyptian military takeover has ended last year's mild lessening of siege conditions. Once again, transit through the southern border is extremely limited, while the other land and sea borders remain very tightly sealed.

Hilary Rantisi
Clerk

Constance Cutter

Through the auspices of the World Health Organization, I was able to enter the Gaza Strip in March 2013. I visited organizations that we donate to, and also surveyed other groups for potential future ties.

J. Timothy Davis

Marwan el Masri

Nancy Murray

During my visit, I achieved a better understanding of the general fabric of psychosocial/healthcare supports in the Strip overall, and was pleased to find there was a good coordination of scarce resources between such organizations as the Gaza Community Mental Health Programme (GCMHP) and UNICEF. While government and UN clinics are overwhelmed, GCMHP psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers continue to play a central role in serving women, children and families.

Alice Rothchild

Sara Roy

Ahmad Taha

Conditions then were dismal, with very disruptive fuel, electricity and water shortages affecting healthcare, sanitation and all aspects of life, and the overcrowded schools all running on double shifts. People in Gaza - especially children, but also the caregivers themselves - live with some degree of trauma daily and suffer what can best be described as 'ongoing traumatic stress disorder' - there is, regrettably, nothing 'post' (as in PTSD) about it.

ADVISORS

Cindy Corrie

Craig Corrie

Jess Ghannam

Ellis Goldberg

David Hall

Elaine Hagopian

Another of our recipient organizations, New Horizons/Afaq Jadeedah, chose as a group play therapy theme 'what to do during and after missile attacks.' The need to help children deal with such events was brought home to me when a six-year-old spontaneously dug a hole in front of me as I was sitting in a Gaza City park. He then crashed a stick into it repeatedly, saying only "saruukh" (missile). While he was doing this, a plane caused terrifying sonic booms overhead.

John Pirroni

Yale Rabin

Ted Rynearson

Therese Saliba

Tom Suarez

David Trimble

I now have a permit to return to Gaza to visit recipient organizations again in March 2014. **Before then I hope that you will heed this appeal and give generously to our foundation so that we can distribute resources to the organizations that are doing critically important mental health work on the ground.**

Your tax-deductible donations tell the people of Gaza that they are not forgotten.

Thank you,

Bill Slaughter, MD, MA (psychiatry, psychology)
President, Gaza Mental Health Foundation

PS Please note our new mailing address (above).