



PCRF ANNUAL REPORT 2008



The Palestine Children's Relief Fund
A non-profit humanitarian relief organization

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PCRF
ANNUAL REPORT
2008
The Palestine Children's Relief Fund
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Contents

05	Message from the President and Chairman of the Board
09	Kind Words From Our Supporters
13	Injured & Sick Children Treated Abroad in 2008
27	Injured & Sick Refugee Children Treated in Lebanon, 2008
41	Volunteer Surgery & Medical Missions in 2008
69	Palestine Humanitarian Relief Projects for 2008
85	Lebanon Humanitarian Relief Projects for 2008
91	Budget for 2009



PCRF
ANNUAL REPORT
2008
The Palestine Children's Relief Fund
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05

Message from the President
and Chairman of the Board



Message from the President and Chairman of the Board

Dear Friends,

As 2008 comes to a close, the prospects for peace in the Holy Land remain dim at best. 1.5 million people in the Gaza Strip remain under siege, unable to obtain basic necessities, let alone the kind of pediatric surgical care that the Palestine Children's Relief Fund (PCRF) specializes in providing in local public hospitals. The West Bank is in a better situation than Gaza, but its population remain unable to move freely and often unable to obtain access to medical facilities where treatment is available. Meanwhile, the health care status of Palestinians in the diaspora is in some cases even worse than what their brethren face in Palestine. The nearly half-million refugees in Lebanon remain stateless and lacking proper access to specialized medical facilities in their impoverished camps, while tens of thousands of Palestinians in war-torn Iraq have been made refugees once again as a result of sectarian violence.

Despite these harsh realities, the PCRF is working hard to respond to the medical and humanitarian needs of Palestinian and Arab children

throughout the Middle East. 2008 was our most active year in providing care for thousands of Palestinian and Iraqi children in our 17-year existence. Nearly sixty surgery teams from Europe, North, Central and South America, Asia, Australia and New Zealand volunteered in Palestine, Lebanon and Syria to treat thousands of children with war injuries, congenital malformations and diseases who could not be treated locally. In many cases, the PCRF is saving the lives of children who otherwise would not have the surgery needed to live. For example, nearly 200 children had open-heart surgery through our "Healing Hearts" campaign in Makassed Hospital in East Jerusalem. The PCRF has built and supports the first and only congenital heart program serving children from the West Bank and Gaza Strip. We have built and expanded the first and only pediatric cardiac intensive care unit, and expert teams from all over the world have worked in saving the lives of children born with heart disease. The PCRF is working with the International Palestinian Cardiac Organization (IPCRO) to achieve an independent and self-sufficient program in the near future.



Our other surgical accomplishments in 2008 include building the only pediatric scoliosis program for children with spinal deformities. We also are treating children with cleft lip and palate deformities through a generous grant from The Smile Train. Hundreds of children have had corrections of these facial deformities, while training and support for local doctors is being provided through the newly established Palestinian Cleft Society.

The PCRf is the main NGO bringing volunteer surgery teams from abroad to treat children in the Middle East. In addition to providing expert care in many highly specialized areas, the PCRf is also the main relief group sending injured children outside of the Middle East for free care in Europe, North America and parts of the Middle East. Dozens of children with serious injuries from all over the Middle East had millions of dollars worth of free care that they otherwise would not get in their homeland. We thank and appreciate the support from our host families, local PCRf chapters and volunteers who helped to care for these children while they were being treated in

their areas. Without the support of our volunteers and chapters, the PCRf would not be able to survive as one of the top relief groups working in the Middle East.

In addition to bringing volunteer surgery teams into the region to treat children in local hospitals, and sending injured children outside of their homelands for free surgery and treatment, the PCRf also provides other forms of urgent humanitarian support and aid for Palestinian children suffering under military occupation, as well as the impoverished status as refugees. In 2008, we provided thousands of hungry children in Gaza powder milk and other basic foodstuffs to help them endure the siege. We also provided hundreds of disabled children free wheelchairs, as well as rehabilitation and speech therapy. Hundreds of poor school children received free eyeglasses school bags and clothing, while educational programs were provided for children in first aid and sanitation. The PCRf also runs a Child Sponsorship Program for poor children with medical needs, and we continue to run an Women Empowerment Program in Lebanon's camps.

This report outlines in a comprehensive manner our work in 2008. While we are confident that our work made a difference in the lives of thousands of families in Palestine and other parts of the Middle East, the next year promises to bring many more challenges. We rely 100% on the support and generosity of individual donors to do our humanitarian work. While we are determined and committed to continue to help heal the wounds of war and occupation facing children in the Middle East, we need your help to achieve this noble aim. Please help us make 2009 even a more effective and successful year as a humanitarian relief group, for peace and for the children.



Dr. Musa Nasir
Chairman of the Board

Steve Sosebee
President & CEO





PCRF
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2008
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09

Kind Words From Our
Supporters



Kind Words From Our Supporters



Children's Relief Fund that light up the hope for these children and their families.*

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Palestine Children's Relief Fund for their commitment and noble work and for the remarkable job you do in helping Palestinian children, who are in vital need of this medical attention. Children living under occupation and under the constant threat of danger endure the most. It is organizations like the Palestine

*HRH Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein
UN Messenger of Peace*



"If you want to be a part of something positive, that helps the most innocent victims of conflict, then join the PCRf in helping to heal the suffering of these poor children. They have a proven track record of professionalism and hard work, where individuals can make a difference.*"

Rev. Desmond Tutu

"Children are often the innocent victims of conflict-torn areas, and I deeply appreciate your devotion to bringing them hope and helping them heal. Not only has your organization given hundreds of children free medical care that they could not previously obtain, you have shown them that there are loving people throughout the world who care very much about their well-being.*"

Gov. Schwarzenegger



"I would like to encourage friends who are interested in helping heal the wounds of war and occupation in the Middle East to support the humanitarian work of the Palestine Children's Relief Fund. They have a proven track record of providing life-saving, non-political aid in an area where children are suffering and in great need.*"

Former US President Jimmy Carter



"With your support, the Palestine Children's Relief Fund will continue its very important work, providing hope and guidance to these children so they can build a brighter future for us all. I applaud you and wish you continued success. Shoukran ala Majwhodicom wa-Salaam Alay-com.*"

Actor Richard Gere

