

Medical Aid for Palestinians works for the health and dignity of Palestinians living under occupation and as refugees.

**MAP**  
MEDICAL AID FOR PALESTINIANS

# WITNESS



# PALESTINE ON THE EDGE

## **VIOLENCE IN THE WEST BANK**

MAP's emergency aid to hospitals

## **PALESTINIAN REFUGEES**

Providing hope and health in Lebanon's camps

## **CYCLE PALESTINE 2015**

Cyclists go the extra mile for MAP

## **WE ARE #WITHGAZA**

Celebrities join MAP's call for reconstruction and an end to Gaza's blockade

WINTER/SPRING 2016



## DEAR READER

As we head into winter, Palestine is at boiling point and the situation for Palestinians across the Middle East continues to worsen. The recent outbreak of violence across the West Bank and East Jerusalem has left dozens of Palestinians and several Israelis dead. In Gaza, tens of thousands of people remain homeless after last year's war, many living amidst the ruins of their former homes. In Lebanon's camps, refugees from Syria huddle in garages and icy shipping containers.

I look back over a grim year for the Palestinian people. We have seen the continuing decline of the humanitarian situation in Gaza and the terrible ongoing conflict in Syria – causing the displacement of 80,000 Palestinian refugees, many of them from the Yarmouk camp near Damascus, into neighbouring countries like Lebanon and Jordan. Meanwhile, in Lebanon, hundreds of residents of Ein el Helweh camp were temporarily forced from their homes due to fierce clashes, and in the West Bank Bedouin herders in Area C face continued demolitions of their homes and livelihoods by the Israeli military. Yet whenever I spend time with our burns doctors in Nablus, or our midwives in Lebanon, or the surgeons that are mending broken bones in Gaza, I am continually inspired by their resilience and hope in the face of such adversity.

The failure of political actors to realise their responsibilities is shocking. The building of illegal settlements continues apace while the prospects of a two-state solution recede. Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Ya'alon briefed diplomatic correspondents in June that *"there is no humanitarian distress in Gaza."*

I'm not sure if Ya'alon has been to Gaza recently, but on my trips I have seen a very different situation. I witnessed a place where the impossibility of recovery from the recent devastation continues to drain away hope for a better future. Surgeons having to operate by the light of their mobile phones due to power cuts; 30% of essential medicines at zero stock; patients denied permission to travel for life-saving care – just some of the distressing aspects of daily reality in Gaza. Some 60% of Gaza's young people are unemployed; tens of thousands of public sector workers have not been paid for months; 120,000 Palestinians are not connected to the water network due to unrepaired damage. In September, almost one third of all requests for permits out of Gaza for hospital treatment were denied by Israel or had no response, the lowest rate in six years.

Against the backdrop of such challenges, in this issue of Witness we reflect on MAP's achievements and highlight some of the ways in which we continue to respond to crises and health challenges to Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza and Lebanon.

I would like to express my thanks to our field teams for their incredible efforts under such difficult conditions, and to you, our supporters, for giving us the resources to make a remarkable difference to the health and lives of so many. Thanks to you we continue to extend our hands in friendship, solidarity and care to the Palestinian people. With our new projects, including support for women's cancer diagnosis and care in the West Bank and improving neurosurgery and physiotherapy in Gaza, we are set to reach even more people over the coming year.

Nelson Mandela once famously said that *"we know too well that our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians."* The struggle for that freedom continues and until it is realised we at MAP will never cease to work for the health and dignity of Palestinians living under occupation or as refugees.

**TONY LAURANCE CBE**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Medical Aid for Palestinians

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Front cover photograph:  
William Parry



## GAZA

Reconstruction stalled as winter sets in

Sixteen months after the devastating attacks of 2014, the pace of reconstruction in Gaza remains painfully slow. Over 100,000 Palestinians were left homeless by the conflict, and 17 hospitals and 56 primary healthcare facilities were damaged or destroyed.

So far, only a handful of homes have been rebuilt, leaving many families exposed to the winter cold, some of them still living in temporary shipping containers or in the rubble of bomb-damaged apartments.

The sluggish pace of reconstruction is due in part to the Israeli government's restrictions on the flow of construction materials into Gaza. MAP, in partnership with the Association of International Development Agencies (AIDA) and Avaaz, has been calling for an end to these restrictions, and of the blockade of Gaza, through a petition, which has so far gathered more than 670,000 signatures.

## GAZA

UN Human Rights Council resolution supports accountability for 2014 attacks



Following the publication of the findings of the UN's Independent Commission of Inquiry into the 2014 Conflict in Gaza, 41 out of 47 Member States of the Human

Rights Council supported a resolution calling for accountability and justice for all violations of international law in the occupied Palestinian territory including East Jerusalem.

MAP was at the UN for this vote, in order to highlight attacks on medical infrastructure and personnel in Gaza, and to launch new report 'No More Impunity: Gaza's Health Sector Under Attack'.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights will now monitor the implementation of the Commission's recommendations, and will report back to the Human Rights Council in March 2016.

## GAZA



## LEBANON

Armed violence displaces thousands from Palestinian refugee camp

In August, fierce clashes between rival armed groups forced over 1,000 Palestinians to flee their homes in Ein el Helweh camp, South Lebanon, and seek shelter in the streets and mosques outside the camp.

The violence broke out shortly after a charity marathon through the camp, organised by one of MAP's local partners. MAP helped to distribute food and water to the displaced families, who have all since returned to their homes.

[Read more on page 5.](#)

## WEST BANK

MAP provides emergency medicines in response to crisis

Violence in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza, which erupted in October, caused the deaths both of Palestinians and of Israelis, and injured over 10,000 Palestinians.

In response to the crisis, MAP committed to provide £65,000 of medicines and disposable medical equipment to hospitals in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.



## WEST BANK

Medics and ambulances attacked amidst clashes



Even those seeking to reach and treat the wounded during the clashes found themselves in harm's way, and the Palestine Red Crescent Society declared a 'state of emergency' after charting a number of alleged violent incidents against its vehicles and crews by Israeli security forces and settlers.

These included violent attacks on paramedics; damage to ambulances caused by rubber bullets, stone-throwing and live rounds; and delays when carrying the injured to hospitals.

[Read more on page 3-4.](#)

# RESPONDING TO VIOLENCE IN THE WEST BANK

In October, clashes at the Al Aqsa mosque compound in Jerusalem spilled over into an explosion of violence across the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza. The crisis has been characterised by a spate of stabbing attacks on Israelis and a high number of Palestinian deaths at the hands of Israeli security forces, many of them due to the use of live ammunition at protests.

Countless column inches have been devoted to the question of whether the violence constitutes a 'third intifada'. What is clear is that these are lone attackers and that it is not organised violence – a symptom surely of a community at breaking point. Meanwhile, political solutions have not been forthcoming, the response of the Israeli military has been fierce and thousands of Palestinians have been injured.



Participants practice their skills at the Primary Trauma Care training

Soon after the crisis began, the Palestine Red Crescent Society declared a 'state of emergency' after an alarming number of its ambulances and paramedics were attacked by Israeli forces and settlers alike.

Even outside times of heightened conflict, Palestinians in the West Bank face a high risk of serious injuries, many caused by the military occupation. Communities are also often isolated and cut off from main hospital emergency services. The capacity of all medical staff to provide emergency medical treatment can therefore make the difference between life and death.

For this reason, MAP is currently running a project in collaboration with the Palestinian Ministry of Health to train 3,500 nurses, midwives and physicians in the West Bank in emergency care – teaching them how quickly to stabilize and treat serious injuries, whether they are caused by high impact weaponry, explosions or accidents. MAP has provided necessary training equipment



Paula Sherriff MP and Lord Purvis of Tweed meet an injured firefighter at Rafidiya Hospital during a delegation to the West Bank

## STATISTICS

In October, the Palestinian Red Crescent Society recorded

**228**  
VIOLATIONS  
against its teams

leaving

**116**  
PARAMEDICS  
INJURED

and

**56**  
AMBULANCES  
DAMAGED



An ambulance at a protest in Beit El, October

for a two-day course which teaches the participants emergency medical skills such as checking airways and circulation, and proper treatment for chest, spine, abdominal and limb injuries.

West Bank residents also face considerable risk of burns injuries, especially in winter months when overcrowding often leads to burns from boiling water or open fires. Violence from Israeli settlers – as highlighted by the deadly arson attack on the Dawabsheh family in Douma in September this year – also endangers lives.

Since 2009, MAP has supported the development of burns treatment in Palestine. At the Rafidiya Hospital in Nablus, MAP helped to establish and equip the West Bank's only dedicated Burns Unit, also providing training for staff and medical disposables.





Fleur van den Sande

*"MAP has had a big role in the success of the unit," Dr Anas Abu Safa, a plastic surgeon and head of the Rafidiya Burns Unit recently told us. "We have received good equipment from MAP, and support with disposables needed to keep the unit serving the Palestinian people."* Nevertheless, with only one dedicated burns unit in the West Bank, Palestinians in the south must often travel over two hours to reach Nablus, even in the most serious of cases.

To overcome this problem, MAP is currently helping to establish a second burns unit at the Alia Hospital in Hebron. MAP has completely renovated the unit, equipment is being procured and plans are being put in place to provide training for the staff in burns care. Once open, it will provide burns treatment for the over 850,000 people living in the southern West Bank and lives will be saved by prompt treatment unobstructed by travel and checkpoints.

## HEALTHCARE IN HARM'S WAY

In late October, Al Makassed hospital in East Jerusalem was raided by Israeli security forces on two occasions. According to the hospital's director, former MAP CEO Rafiq al-Husseini, the forces demanded that staff hand over the medical files of a Palestinian youth who was shot by Israeli forces and treated in the hospital. At a later peaceful protest against the raids, held by medical staff outside the hospital, Israeli forces reportedly fired tear gas canisters and other projectiles inside the hospital grounds.

In another shocking incident in November, Israeli forces raided Al Ahli Hospital in Hebron, shooting and killing a Palestinian man and taking his cousin – a patient at the hospital – into custody.

## OUR EMERGENCY AID TO WEST BANK HOSPITALS

MAP committed to deliver £65,000 in additional medicines and disposable medical equipment to hospitals in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, as they seek to deal with the high number of injuries across the territory.

MAP CEO Tony Laurance said: "We will be urgently delivering additional medical support to hospitals in the West Bank and East Jerusalem in order to respond to the current needs of the Palestinian people. Political solutions to the current violence must be found, and the protected status of medical personnel, infrastructure and vehicles must be respected."



Fleur van den Sande

**"Actions that undermine the ability of health workers to provide care to those in need are violations of international law. The conduct by the Israeli security forces during several entries into Makassed hospital this past week is unacceptable and must not be repeated."**

Robert Piper  
UN Humanitarian  
Coordinator  
for the occupied  
Palestinian territory

Throughout this period of escalation ambulances and paramedics attempting to reach or treat the wounded were impeded and even attacked. In October alone, the Palestine Red Crescent Society recorded 228 violations against their teams and volunteers by Israeli security forces and settlers, leaving 116 paramedics injured and 56 ambulances damaged. PRCS ambulances were also delayed or obstructed in the line of duty on 56 occasions.

In April 2015, MAP joined the Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition. This coalition of international organisations seeks to promote the security of health workers and services threatened by war and unrest. The protection of hospitals and clinics as safe spaces and of medical personnel treating the wounded are vital to the realisation of the right to health for all.



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# PROVIDING HOPE AND HEALTH

## FOR PALESTINIAN REFUGEES IN LEBANON

Just over an hour's drive south of Beirut is the Palestinian refugee camp of Ein el Helweh. Surrounded by Lebanese army checkpoints, and sitting just outside the town of Saida, the densely built-up two-square-kilometres of camp is home to more than 90,000 refugees.

During the 1948 Nakba, approximately 100,000 Palestinians, mainly from Galilee and the coastal cities of Jaffa, Haifa and Acre, were forced from their homes and fled into Lebanon.

Today there are between 260,000 and 280,000 Palestinians in Lebanon, most of whom are dispersed among 12 refugee camps across the country. In Ein el Helweh, the largest of these, a tangled web of wiring criss-crosses narrow alleyways where the sun struggles to shine through the few gaps between breezeblock buildings. In the last few months the camp has been constantly in the news, and always for the wrong reasons. Headlines tell of assassinations, revenge plots between the camp's warring factions, and unintended deaths or injuries to civilians during their violent feuds.

The residents here suffer the same exclusions and lack of opportunities that Palestinians face across the country, with the added layer of fear brought on by the frequent conflicts. A beneficiary of one of our projects in the camp recently told a member of MAP's field team: *"When my husband goes out to work, I am not sure if he will make it back home. The electricity is always cut and the frequent shootings are putting us under lots of stress. I wish we could afford to live outside the camp."*

MAP and our local partners (Naba'a, Solidarity Association and National Institution for Social Care and Vocational Training) run a number of projects in Ein el Helweh, providing vital support where access to healthcare is restricted by poverty and marginalisation. The projects include our UNICEF-supported psychosocial support initiatives for children, the healthcare and advice provided to expectant and new mothers by MAP's midwives, and protection services for men, women, and children. Our projects also provide support to Palestinians who have fled war and destruction in Syria, many of whom have sought refuge in the camp.

In August we supported a local partner to organise a marathon for young people in the camp. The event was a celebration for children, in defiance of the harsh conditions and restrictions they face on a daily basis living in Ein el Helweh. Participants came from local organisations, youth groups and disability charities, and many runners wore signs with slogans such as 'we run to protect our camp' and 'we want our camp free of shooting'. The joy that lit up the children's faces was heartening.

Sadly, just a few hours after this joyful celebration, a personal dispute in the camp erupted into violent confrontation, and one person was killed. A conflict between rival political factions ensued, causing three deaths and eight injuries. More than a hundred families left their homes inside the camp and took shelter in the streets and mosques surrounding the camp. It is another symptom of the tension and despair here.

MAP responded by supporting those displaced from the camp, covering the cost of hot meals and water. Though a solution to the plight of Palestinians in Lebanon and their 67-year-long displacement is not in sight, we remain ready to support them at their times of greatest need.



Children line up for the start of the Ein el Helweh marathon

### PALESTINIANS FLEEING FROM SYRIA TO LEBANON SHAMS' STORY



**PHOTOGRAPH ▼ BELOW:**  
A temporary shelter in Ein el Helweh, housing a number of Palestinian families who have fled the war in Syria

Shams\* is a Palestinian refugee from Yarmouk camp, Syria, who fled to Ein el Helweh in Lebanon with her husband and two children four years ago. The family's struggle to survive through a lack of access

to work or services was compounded by the armed conflict which erupted in August, just one week after Shams gave birth to a baby girl.

The sound of shooting, screaming, and children crying reminded her of the time they escaped Yarmouk camp. *"I couldn't help but think that we have escaped one war only to experience another,"* she recently told a member of our field team.



MAP's midwives have provided her and her baby with medical care, health advice and counselling during their home visits. These visits have also brought some comfort and reassurance to

Shams in uncertain times: *"The midwife is the only one that I can talk to freely; I can tell her about my struggles and concerns. She encourages me and makes me feel better."*

\*names have been changed to protect the identity of those involved.



# ASFARI-MAP SCHOLARS ARRIVE IN THE UK

MAP and the Asfari Foundation are funding four scholarships for Palestinian medical and health professionals to undertake one-year postgraduate Master's degrees at universities in the UK. Here are their stories in their own words:

## MANAR JABER:

**"When I received the scholarship, I jumped for joy!"**

"My name is Manar Jaber and I am from Bethlehem, Palestine. I have been a physiotherapist for nine years, in the field of paediatrics.

I believe that three things are vital to improving the quality of life

for children with disabilities: early intervention; a strong support system for families; and ensuring awareness of disability among health providers and communities. My hope is to be a pioneer in this field and to apply all my future knowledge and experiences at work and as a volunteer in rural villages.

I am looking forward to living in the UK, having the feeling of freedom and of owning my human rights and dignity. At the same time, I will miss my mother and my family and the children at work. I will also miss Palestine, I love every street and house in my country."



## AIDA SHAAR:

**"I believe it is a privilege to lessen people's suffering"**

"My name is Aida Shaar, I am 23 years old and from Nablus in Palestine. I have just finished my fifth year of medical school, and am taking a year off to study for an MSc in Human and Applied Physiology at King's College London.

I was thrilled when I heard I had won the scholarship, and I still am! It's a huge responsibility, and I will do my very best to meet the expectations of my sponsors, my family and my country, Palestine.

I'm really excited about studying in the heart of London with all the opportunities, views and places there.

I believe I'll be a more independent and empowered individual after this exposure, though I will miss being around my family and friends. I am blessed with incredibly supportive and funny people around me here."



## AMANI MOHSEN:

**"I always wanted to be a doctor"**

"My name is Amani Mohsen, and I'm a Palestinian refugee living in Lebanon. I always wanted to be a doctor when I was younger, to be a wise person that could help people, manage their illnesses and create beautiful smiles everywhere.

In Shatila camp, where I live, education levels are low, meaning that many young mothers are illiterate and knowledge about health and illness is low. As a medical student I began working with women's groups to educate them about their bodies and diseases.

This led me to decide to specialize in obstetrics and gynaecology.

I was very happy when I was accepted for the scholarship and a master's degree at Cardiff University. I hope to use what I learn in Cardiff to help change health conditions in Lebanon's Palestinian camps."



## IBRAHIM AL MIARI:

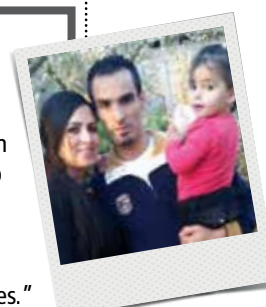
**"Education and service to others are my top priorities"**

"My name is Ibrahim Youssef Al Miari, and I was born in Lebanon in 1982. My family fled to Lebanon from Palestine in 1948, and have lived in Ein El Helweh camp ever since, which is where I grew up. I became a registered nurse in 2005.

When I heard that I had won the scholarship to study for an MSc in Public and Environmental Health at Birmingham University, I couldn't believe it! It was a special day full of optimism, happiness and hope.

I will use what I learn in this MSc to serve my community better and to

improve the effectiveness of environmental and health projects in Lebanon's Palestinian refugee camps. I will continue to apply the same diligence to my studies as I have up to this point, making education and service to others my top priorities."



# CELEBRITIES STAND #WITHGAZA

Over a year on from the 2014 assault on Gaza, which left over 2,000 Palestinians dead (including over 550 children) and 10,000 injured, residents are still dealing with its devastating effects. The blockade continues to stifle Gaza's economy and prevents the import of the reconstruction materials needed to fully rebuild the 19,000 destroyed homes or the 17 hospitals and 56 clinics damaged or destroyed by Israel's bombardment. The hidden scourge of chronic malnutrition threatens children's lives. Even basic medicines and medical disposables are at zero-stock levels, and those with long-term injuries struggle to access the care they need.

With conflicts continuing to worsen across the Middle East, the ongoing humanitarian crisis affecting Gaza risks being forgotten. A group of high-profile individuals have joined MAP to bring attention to some of the individual stories of Gaza's residents, and help amplify our call for an end to years of blockade and conflict which continue to blight their lives.

Join our call, and stand #WithGaza



Follow MAP on Twitter  
@MedicalAidPal

**"This image of a mangled wheelchair among the rubble of a disability centre is a painful reminder of how devastating Gaza's conflicts have been for its most vulnerable residents."**

Actor and director **David Morrissey** is well known for a range of roles on stage and screen including, recently, hit US drama *The Walking Dead*. In 2009 he visited the camps of Lebanon with UNRWA to conduct drama workshops with Palestinian students.

David's photo depicts the Mebarret al Rahma Centre for People with Disabilities in North Gaza. During the 2014 attacks, the centre was struck by a missile. Two disabled women were killed and three disabled residents and a care support worker were severely injured. Since the destruction of the facility, former residents have been forced to relocate to a nearby building where space is limited and services reduced.

**David said: "This image of a mangled wheelchair among the rubble of a disability centre is a painful reminder of how devastating Gaza's conflicts have been for its most vulnerable residents. Though the bombs fell silent over a year ago, their suffering will continue until the cycle is broken and the blockade lifted."**

David Morrissey



Camilla Rutherford

Tom Birkett

Film and TV actor **Camilla Rutherford** is holding a photo of Tala from southern Gaza. Tala was admitted to a MAP-supported malnutrition clinic at six months old, underweight and suffering from anaemia.

Crippled by conflict and blockade, Gaza's economy is on the verge of collapse, with unemployment at 43%. The human effect of this can be seen in Tala, whose father has been unable to find a job. "We receive some food rations from the government, but it is not enough at all," Tala's mother told MAP.

**Camilla said: "Every child feels the pain of their family acutely. When Tala's father cannot get work, her family struggles to find food to survive. We must end the closure of Gaza to give the next generation a chance to thrive."**





Tom Birkett



Tom Birkett

### Bella Freud

**Bella Freud** is a fashion designer and vocal activist for the Palestinian cause. She co-founded the HOPING Foundation, which supports projects to provide opportunities for young Palestinians living as refugees to play, learn and express themselves.

The little girl in Bella's photo is Qammar, who was admitted to a MAP-supported malnutrition clinic in Gaza at six months old, weighing just 5.5kg. Qammar's condition has improved thanks to the care she has received, but without an end to the blockade, many more children will suffer as she has.



Tom Birkett

### Bill Bailey

**Bill Bailey** is one of the UK's best-known comedians, and a long-time supporter of MAP. His photo depicts the former site of El Wafa, Gaza's only rehabilitation hospital, which was completely destroyed by Israeli bombardment in 2014. Over a year on, the hospital still lies in ruins, and staff struggle to provide their vital services at much smaller temporary site. Restrictions on the entry of building materials have stymied attempts to rebuild and repair health infrastructure destroyed across Gaza last year.

**Bill said:** *"The destruction of this hospital is a tragedy for the people of Gaza. The rubble of El Wafa remains a symbol of the failure of all of us to protect civilians in Gaza, and a year on shows how little the world has done to help them to rebuild."*

# HELPING GAZA REBUILD

**In many areas of Gaza, it is hard to believe that it is more than a year since the end of Israel's terrifying 51-day assault in August 2014. Nineteen thousand houses were destroyed but only a handful have been rebuilt. Children play in the rubble in the devastated neighbourhood of Shuja'iyya. In Khuza'a, families live in temporary metal shipping-containers – sweltering in summer and freezing in the winter months – which sit on the site of their former homes.**

At the site of El Wafa hospital, Gaza's only rehabilitation hospital which was destroyed by Israeli war planes during the offensive, rubble is still being cleared. The building and much of its equipment was lost although, thankfully, no patients or staff were injured or killed in the attack. El Wafa's staff have relocated their services to a nearby geriatrics hospital. The previous hospital consisted of three six-floor buildings, providing medical assistance including medical rehabilitation, oxygen therapy, speciality surgeries, and intensive care, and outreach programmes. At the temporary site, staff struggle to provide the specialised care that patients need, due to shortages of medication and vital equipment.

The difficulty of rebuilding after the 2014 attacks – the deadliest and most destructive escalation of hostilities in recent years – is compounded by the illegal blockade of Gaza, which has now entered its ninth year. Just 5% of the nearly 7 million tons of cement, steel and aggregate needed for reconstruction had been allowed in by Israel one year on. At the current rate, it would take 17 years for Gaza to rebuild, and yet the UN recently warned that the territory could be uninhabitable in just 5 years.

Despite these struggles, MAP's team in Gaza has done remarkable work supporting the health needs of the territory's 1.8 million residents over the past year. During and immediately after the conflict, we supplied medicines and disposables for the hospitals and distributed 1,500 hygiene kits, 500 blankets and 500 mattresses to displaced families. We have also pre-positioned additional kits and blankets for release

during any future emergencies. We have continued to send medical teams to Gaza – orthopaedic and plastic surgeons and specialists in emergency care – to work alongside local clinicians treating some of the most severe injuries. We are now expanding this support to strengthen the capacity of Gaza's doctors to provide emergency care, neurosurgery and reconstructive surgery. We are also looking at how we can best help patients – including victims of the conflict – when they are discharged from hospital. We have provided assistive devices and home adaptations for some of those with long-term disabilities, and we are working on a project to improve out-patient physiotherapy services which are so vital for effective rehabilitation.

Food insecurity, exacerbated by blockade, poverty and repeated conflict, has contributed to hidden malnutrition in Gaza. One in ten children under five suffer from stunting due to a chronic lack of access to nutritious food, and a majority (58%) of school-age children suffer from anaemia. We continue to support the

treatment of such children. With our partners at the Ard El Insan clinic, over 5,000 children have been screened and 277 children diagnosed with chronic malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies have been treated. We have also provided 500 patients with coeliac disease with medical care, cooking demonstrations and provisions of gluten-free flour – often too expensive for poorer families.

There are approximately 50,000 births each year in Gaza. Roughly 3,700 new-borns are identified as 'high risk' due to complications during pregnancy or birth. We have provided neonatal life support training to over a hundred doctors, nurses and midwives working in Ministry of Health hospitals, to give babies in Gaza the best possible start in life. In partnership with the Red Crescent Society, we have also provided health services and awareness sessions to over 5,000 new mothers.

Though crisis continues to grip Gaza, thanks to our supporters, MAP has been able to assist some of the territory's most vulnerable residents. At El Wafa, the staff are working hard to raise the money to rebuild on a new site, in a safer location away from the Israeli border. MAP has provided £136,000 of vital equipment, medicines and disposables to the new hospital, made possible in large part by the generosity of supporters like you and a donation from the UK Islamic Mission.

The hospital's Director, Dr Basman Alashi, remains resilient and hopeful despite of the challenges they face. "In 10 years, El Wafa will be exactly how it was in 2014," he recently told MAP. "Twenty years from now the people of Gaza will have a better future, especially in regards to health matters." With the continued help of people like you, we can ensure his prediction comes true.



A gluten-free meal is prepared for patients with coeliac disease at the Ard El Insan clinic



Temporary container homes

## STATISTICS

During the attacks

**17**  
**HOSPITALS**  
were damaged or destroyed

**56**  
**PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CLINICS**  
were damaged or destroyed

**45**  
**AMBULANCES**  
were damaged or destroyed





in Khuza'a



Rubble still being cleared Al Wafa hospital

## APPEAL UPDATE

### GAZA'S FIRST LIMB RECONSTRUCTION UNIT

In September, MAP launched an appeal to set up Gaza's first dedicated limb reconstruction unit. Thanks to the kindness of MAP supporters we have now reached our target and have begun work to set up this essential unit at Al Shifa Hospital.

The unit will support people who have sustained severe injuries, like 10-year-old Weam, featured on the cover of the last edition of Witness. When her legs were severely damaged



after her home was hit by a missile during the 2014 assault on Gaza, a MAP-supported team of British surgeons was able to give

Weam the expert medical care she needed to save her right leg. She is now recovering well and is back at school. The new unit means that there will now be a permanent specialist team of Palestinian surgeons, nurses and doctors in Gaza who are able to provide the care Weam received, whenever it is needed.



MAP-IDEALS surgeons work with the Palestinian colleagues at Al Shifa Hospital

## STATISTICS

During the attacks

**19,000**

homes were destroyed

making

**100,000**

Palestinians homeless

## APPEAL UPDATE

### MEDICINES FOR GAZA'S BABIES

Last summer we appealed for help to buy essential medicines to help babies in Gaza's neo-natal care units. We told the story of baby Karim who desperately needed an IV drip of Total Parenteral Nutrition, but his doctors couldn't get hold of any.

Heartbreakingly, doctors were not able to get the medicines Karim needed in time, and he passed away. While baby Karim's short life wasn't saved, your kind donations have meant we have been able to supply Gaza's hospitals with essential medicines which have undoubtedly saved the lives of many others.





# CYCLE PALESTINE 2015



Cycle Palestine 2015 participants on their 200km journey across the West Bank

On 27 September 2015 a group of 34 adventurous cyclists took on the challenge to cycle 200km across the West Bank to raise funds for Medical Aid for Palestinians' projects across the region. The cyclists resolutely made their journey for five swelteringly hot days across demanding terrain from Nablus, through to Ramallah, Jericho, Bethlehem and Hebron, ending their ride in East Jerusalem.

As they cycled through many small villages and towns, the team was greeted warmly by the people they met. Children would run out and chase them along the dusty roads, cheering them on. Wearing MAP's cycle jerseys and high visibility vests, the cyclists were quite a spectacle!

On their journey they witnessed first-hand the daily reality of Palestinians' lives under occupation and as refugees in the West Bank. They cycled through Qalqilya, where the separation wall surrounds the town with a small break on the eastern side. Historically a place rich with agricultural land and ample water supplies, Qalqilya residents now have to buy their water from Israel and struggle to survive due to the separation wall cutting them off from jobs, their lands and their families.

A long descent took the cyclists 250m below sea level into the Jordan Valley, where the team were met by MAP's project officer Esperanza Shanan, who took them to see one of MAP's projects serving the most vulnerable Bedouin communities in the West Bank's 'Area C'.

Here, MAP's mobile clinic transports medical staff to over thirty small encampments to provide medicines and consultations, mainly to women and children needing essential medical care. The Bedouin living in these communities face a constant threat of housing

demolitions by Israeli forces, and lack running water, mains electricity, access to sewage disposal and access to adequate education.

The cyclists also visited the deserted streets in the centre of Hebron, where many Palestinian families have been forced to abandon their shops due to the presence of approximately 850 Israeli settlers and 650 soldiers. There was a strong and chilling military presence and many of the streets lay empty, with the shutters of Palestinian shops permanently closed since 1994.

Cycle Palestine 2015 participant Chris Taylor, who works for the trip's Official Sponsor, Forte Securities, had this to say about what he saw:

**"Alongside all the unfairness, the sporadic violence and the harshness of laws and daily life designed to erode human capability and faith in each other, there are people working to make a difference for the future and give hope. We saw doctors and other medical staff (MAP staff and volunteers) giving their time and expertise out in the field to people that have nothing. We visited refugees that are working so hard to better themselves physically and mentally. It was simply amazing the strength of these people and all the people supporting them."**

**"I feel privileged to have been part of this challenge. It has inspired me to fight even harder for Palestine and its people."**

Tain Joliffe





Richard Gray



Richard Gray



MAP



MAP

The cyclists in East Jerusalem at the end of their journey

The cyclists shared a home-cooked lunch with one of the three families that still live on Shuhada Street, opposite Abraham's Mosque, and heard about their struggle to survive in their hometown.

For the final day, the cyclists cycled through the Aida refugee camp in Bethlehem and then up to East Jerusalem, where the local MAP team met them with cheers and gratitude for their sterling efforts. It was an incredible achievement, and one which has raised over £120,000 for MAP's work in the West Bank, Gaza and Lebanon.

Most of the riders were British, but they were also joined by two Australian, one French and three Irish cyclists. The group's oldest participant, Judith Hammond (72), inspired everyone with her dedication. She put in huge amounts of training to ensure she could climb the steep Palestinian hills with the same determination as the fittest of the cyclists.

Malcolm and Kirsten Mitchell made the epic journey from Melbourne to be a part of the cycle team. Malcolm grew up in Gaza in the seventies when his father worked for the UN, and had never returned to Palestine. It was an eye-

opening and moving experience for him to see the changes that have taken place in the West Bank since he left aged fifteen.

Also among the cyclists were two surgeons, two doctors and a nurse, all of whom were incredibly passionate about MAP's projects providing medical aid to the Palestinian people.

After five days of adventure, tragedy, challenge and meeting the inspiring people of Palestine, the cycling team enjoyed a final supper together in Jerusalem and gathered to sing songs and listen to spoken-word poetry together in their hotel in Jerusalem.



MAP

Banksy in Bethlehem

## IN MEMORY OF STEVE ONYETT

The cyclists faced tragedy on the first day of the ride when one of the team died due to a suspected heart attack.

To lose a fellow team member so soon into the trip and in such tragic circumstances left everyone in shock and disbelief. Steven Onyett (a lecturer at Exeter University) had already made a great impression on everyone involved, and had charmed them with his love of life and care for people. His partner Emily, also on the ride, encouraged the team to continue the ride and in honour of Steve they decided to dedicate the remainder of their efforts to him. The Chairman of the Bank of Palestine was so moved by Steve's story and his commitment to Palestine that he agreed to match donations on Steve's fundraising page up to £20,000.



**"Hope and happiness can only be seen in the eyes of the many young children we met. They hadn't yet been scarred irreversibly by the occupation."**

Mr Khalad Dawas  
(Surgeon at UCLH)

## Get involved!

If you would like to get involved, or find out more about MAP's future challenges please email: [communityfundraising@map-uk.org](mailto:communityfundraising@map-uk.org)



# WILL YOU REMEMBER?

## HELP MAP BY LEAVING A GIFT IN YOUR WILL



One of the young Palestinians that you are helping

### The support that MAP relies on each year comes primarily from one source – people like you.

Individual contributions from people from all walks of life make the humanitarian assistance highlighted in this magazine possible. Even during the global financial crisis, people like you have found the money to contribute which has made such a difference to Palestinians.

A child born in Palestine today faces an uncertain future. They are growing up under military occupation or as refugees. Their prospects are bleak. The essential support and services which organisations like MAP provide give them the chance of a better life.

Choosing to remember MAP when you are writing your will can give hope to next generation of Palestinians. Every year these donations help provide Palestinians with access to medical aid and healthcare.

The legacies which MAP receives every year, from supporters like Joan Beazleigh, are vital to our work. Throughout her life, Joan supported the struggle to help Palestinian refugees. She participated in many demonstrations in London about

the plight of the Palestinian people, including at the time of the siege of Beirut and the Sabra and Shatila Refugee Camp massacre in the 1980s. At the age of almost 70 Joan undertook her last journey to the occupied Palestinian territories with a group of British women. On this visit Joan put her life on the line when she stood in front of an Israeli tank to stop it from entering a Palestinian village. After refusing to move, Joan was shot at with tear gas and, badly injured, was rushed to hospital by Palestinian medics.

When Joan died in 2013, her support for the cause continued with the legacy she gave to MAP. Thanks to Joan's support MAP has been able to grow our programmes to support more Palestinians who need our help. Like Joan, you too can make a huge gesture of support.

**If you would like to receive more information** about leaving a gift in your will to MAP then please contact [info@map-uk.org](mailto:info@map-uk.org), call 020 7226 4114, or tick the box on your donation form.



[@Jemima\\_Khan](https://twitter.com/Jemima_Khan)

*One year on, #Gaza's children are still in danger. Please help @MedicalAidPal provide vital medicines. #Gaza1YearOn*

*Jemima Goldsmith  
#Gaza1YearOn  
campaign in July*



### OUR SUPPORTERS

*Thank you!*

We are so lucky to have incredible supporters who dedicate so much of their time to fundraise for MAP. Below is a snapshot of some of the hundreds of people who are helping make a difference every day:

- Students at **Elmhurst Primary School** raised £4,000 at their 'Fundraiser for Gaza'
- We had **three generations of the Snow family** ride from London to Windsor and raise money and awareness for MAP
- **Madelaine Davidson Lees** and 'Futures for Palestine' have raised over £4,000 since the spring with their ongoing fundraising activities in Andalucia, Spain
- We continue to have MAP runners in races all over the world: **Alex Clark** raised money doing the Barcelona Marathon, **Jasmine Lail** ran the Paris Marathon and we had a group of runners in Bethlehem doing the Palestine Marathon in March
- Poet **John Ennis** donated all proceeds from the sale of his book which launched at the Listowel Writers' Festival in Ireland
- **Thomas Ullman** bravely cycled over 3,000km from Leipzig to Sarajevo and back for MAP
- **Nazia Ulla** and her team of MAP supporters organised the Peterborough Family Fun day and raised over £6,000 in August
- The **Iffley Music Society** had a community concert for MAP in July
- **All of our amazing fundraisers** who participated in or organised over 300 events in the last few months. Thank you to each and every one of you.



# GET INVOLVED 2016

Make a new year's resolution to get fit and support MAP along the way! With hundreds of events across the UK which you can participate in, start small with a 5k run or go big and cycle coast-to-coast. Below are a few events you can take part in. Visit the events page on our website to see a full listing or give our fundraising team a call on 020 7226 4114.

## CYCLING EVENTS 2016

### 3 January

The Frozen Devin Llanwrtyd Wells, Wales

### 13 March

Performance Cycles Winter Mini-Sportive Cirencester, Gloucestershire

### 22 April

Coast to Coast Cycle Challenge Whitehaven to Whitley Bay

### 1 May

Cambridge 50/100

### 15 May

Tour de Tendring Dovercourt, Harwich

### 5 June

Dragon Ride Port Talbot, Wales

### 18 June

Edinburgh Night Ride

### 26 June

London Cycle Sportive

### 16 September

Coast to Coast Cycle Challenge Whitehaven to Whitley Bay

## RUNNING EVENTS 2016

### 1 January

Serpentine New Year's Day 10K London

### 28 February

Cambridge Half Marathon

### 13 March

Bath Half Marathon Bath

### 19 March

Windsor 10K, 15K, 20K Run Windsor, Bucks

### 7 April

Burnham Esplanade Winter 5K Burnham on Sea, Somerset

### 28/29 May

Edinburgh Marathon Festival

### 30 May

Bupa London 10K London

### 5 June

Derry Walled City Marathon Derry, Londonderry

### 9 July

Whitworth Thread 5K Matlock, Derbyshire

### 10 July

British 10K London Run London

### 11 September

Great North Run Gateshead, Northumbria

### 2 October

Bournemouth Marathon Bournemouth, Dorset

## OBSTACLE EVENTS 2016

### 17 January

Forest Warrior Withington Estate, Gloucestershire

### 6 March

Devil Mud Run Stanley Pontlarge, Cheltenham

### 12 March

The Mighty Deerstalker Innerleithen, Peeblesshire, Scotland

### 16 April

Monster Race Charlbury, Oxfordshire

### 1 May

London West Tough Mudder Fawley, Henley on Thames

### 21/22 May

Midlands Tough Mudder Grantham, Leicestershire

### 11/12 June

Gelt Gladiator Bramton, Cumbria

### 23/24 July

Spartan Race Edinburgh, Scotland

### 3/4 September

Spartan Elton Hall, Peterborough

### 24/25 September

South London Tough Mudder Faygate, West Sussex

No matter what you choose to do, our fundraising team is here to support you, please email [communityfundraising@map-uk.org](mailto:communityfundraising@map-uk.org) or call 020 7226 4114 if you have any questions!

Thank you

## YOUR DONATION

**£1** Buys a bag of IV fluid for a patient in a Gaza hospital



**£4** Provides a lifesaving unit of blood

**£12** pays for one mammography test for women over 40 to support the early detection of breast cancer

**£20** covers one year of iron supplements for an anaemic child

**£50** covers the cost of an orthopaedic assessment for a child with complex disabilities



**£200** covers the salary of one psychosocial worker supporting 300 refugee children for one month



**£1,200** pays for a GP for a month, to visit isolated communities in the Jordan Valley cut off from the West Bank because of the occupation

# MAP NEWS

## ■ BRITISH PARLIAMENTARIANS WITNESS OCCUPATION IN THE WEST BANK

 @paulasherriff

*Some things we saw/heard in Hebron/Susiya yesterday tough to articulate/digest but resilience/courage of the local Palestinians incredible*



MAP and our partners Caabu supported a cross-party delegation of MPs to visit the occupied West Bank in August. The delegation included Sir Alan Duncan MP (Con), Rt Hon David Jones MP (Con), Sarah Champion MP (Lab), Paula Sherriff MP (Lab), John Nicolson MP (SNP) and Lord Purvis of Tweed (LD).

The delegation joined up with MAP's mobile health clinic in the Jordan Valley and visited the burns unit we are supporting in Nablus as well as visiting medical projects and vulnerable communities across the West Bank.

 @mrjohnnicolson

*Hebron's old town centre, cleared of Palestinians. Only illegal settler families are allowed to live here now.*



## ■ #MPS2GAZA CAMPAIGN GAINS MOMENTUM

At the end of the last Parliament, 101 MPs signed a motion calling for access into Gaza so that they can independently assess the humanitarian situation faced by residents. Since May's election, new MPs have signalled their support for our campaign. No British back-bench MP has been permitted to visit the territory by Israel since 2009.

## ■ MAP CALLS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY FOR GAZA HOSPITAL AND AMBULANCE ATTACKS AT UN

At the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva this June, MAP launched a report into attacks on medical personnel and infrastructure during the 2014 assault on Gaza, written with our partners Al Mezan and Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights. MAP supported Dr Ghassan Abu Sittah, Head of Plastic Surgery at the American University of Beirut, to speak at the session about his experience working in Gaza's Al Shifa hospital during the conflict.

Members of the Council, including the UK, voted to support a historic resolution calling for accountability and justice for all breaches of international law committed during the 2014 attacks.



*"As a doctor who believes that prevention is better than cure I am here to impress on you the need to end the cycle of impunity which has fuelled the escalation in ferocity of attacks."*

Dr Ghassan Abu Sittah, speaking at the UN Human Rights Council in June

## ■ REMEMBERING GAZA'S CHILDREN

556 children were killed during last year's terrifying 51-day assault on Gaza. With our partners Al Mezan, we are publishing the names and photographs of each of these children, to highlight the disproportionate effect of the conflict on the territory's youngest residents. With our latest film 'Imagine it here', we have been calling for the international community to protect Gaza's children and lift the blockade.



Donate online at

**www.map-uk.org**

Or call today on

**020 7226 4114**



Follow MAP on Twitter @MedicalAidPal and Facebook [www.facebook.com/MedicalAidforPalestinians](http://www.facebook.com/MedicalAidforPalestinians)

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MEDICAL AID FOR PALESTINIANS