



Interpal



25 Years 25 Voices

The stories and experiences that
have defined Interpal's journey

Annual Report | A Silver Anniversary Edition

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The stories and experiences that have defined Interpal's journey.

The Interpal story is not just ours. It is defined by our beneficiaries, whose integrity and resilience have inspired our projects throughout the years. The Interpal story is also defined by our supporters, for whom we are so grateful, and all the individuals and groups we have encountered as we work to empower Palestinians in need.

As we mark our 25th year in operation, we invite you to take a look at the following collection of 25 stories and experiences that have shaped our journey.

We've certainly enjoyed the Interpal story, and we hope you do too.



A young girl taking part in Interpal's Palestinian culture and heritage activities in the Gaza Strip.



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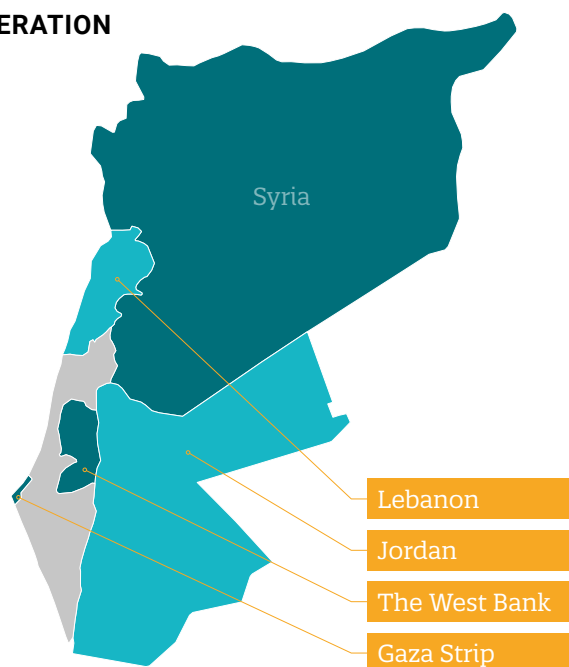
Interpal At 25

Dr Essam Mustafa, Interpal's founder and vice-chairman, raised £200 in his very first collection for Palestinians in need at Regent's Park Mosque in the early 1980s. Interpal was born in 1994, and over the course of two and a half decades, Interpal's supporters have donated millions of pounds for its vital projects in the field.

Interpal was founded to provide humanitarian and development aid to Palestinians, and is a British registered charity working on the ground in the occupied Palestinian territories and refugee camps in Lebanon and Jordan. The charity also provides support to refugees fleeing from violence in Syria.

Interpal's aim has always been to alleviate the suffering and disadvantage faced by Palestinians through immediate relief and to support Palestinian society through long-term development programmes.

AREAS OF OPERATION



OUR MAIN INTERVENTIONS ARE IN 5 KEY AREAS:



Medical Aid



Education Aid



Community Development

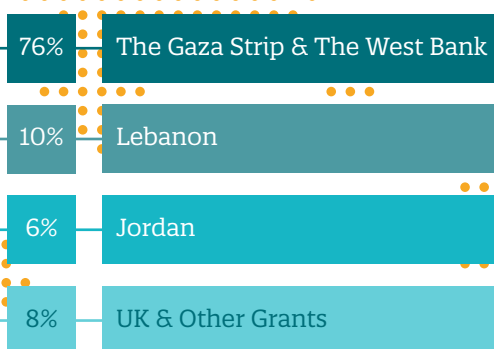


Humanitarian Aid



Advocacy & Awareness

SPENDING BY AREA* (*2018 FIGURES)



Ibrahim Hewitt

CHAIRMAN OF INTERPAL'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES

“Interpal owes its 25th year in operation to all the Palestinians who are determined to live with dignity, and who persevere despite ongoing dispossession.

Since the charity commenced operations in 1994, Interpal's aim has been to build the foundations needed for Palestinians to improve their own lives. Over the course of two and a half decades, we have come to learn that an essential part of our work is to keep on rebuilding those foundations at every turn and at every injustice inflicted upon them.

All of our initiatives are designed to capture a sense of hope and resilience among those whose lives have been repeatedly destroyed. We are proud to have supported individuals as they rebuild their communities, and to have provided thousands of families every year with access to clean water, financial aid, medical aid and education support.

While Interpal's work in the region has continued to make a positive difference to the lives of Palestinians over the years, it has also held up a mirror to those who continue to commit crimes against them, and to those who have failed to protect them.

Millions of Palestinians have yet to see those responsible brought to justice, as they languish under Israel's brutal, 52-year long occupation of the West Bank, Jerusalem and Gaza Strip, and the ongoing Nakba which began 71 years ago. We are determined to continue to help protect the most vulnerable in Palestinian society for as long as Israel continues its human rights abuses, and for as long as Palestinians ask for our support.

Our work would not be possible without our donors. We will always be grateful for your commitment to helping Interpal to provide basic essentials to Palestinians in desperate need for so long. Looking ahead, we hope that you will continue to join in our efforts to support Palestinians for as long as it is necessary.”

“The list of Palestinian refugees’ genuine grievances is long and complicated, and it tears at the conscience of the world, whether we like it or not.

It includes the occupation of the Palestinian territories and the expulsion of more than 750,000 Palestinians in 1948; they or their descendants remain refugees to this day. It includes the severe reduction of Palestine’s natural resources, especially the water sources. It includes the lack of protection and respect for the holy places of the Muslim and Christian Palestinians, and the imprisonment of the people of Palestine in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip using the “Separation Wall” and siege. Along with the frequent Israeli military offensives against the civilian population, the humanitarian situation in Palestine is a crisis of immense proportions.

The Palestinian cause is gaining the support of people around the world, but more must be done. Israel continues to commit violations of human rights, war crimes and crimes against humanity on a daily basis. The voice of the people of Palestine is being stifled as their rights are trampled upon by the occupation.

Humanitarian work, therefore, is an essential component of the struggle for Palestinian rights; for justice; and for peace.”

THE WORLD’S LONGEST RUNNING REFUGEE CRISIS

More than 71 years ago, 750,000 Palestinians were expelled from or fled their homes at the hands of Israeli militias. Hundreds of Palestinian towns and villages were emptied and their populations devastated. This tragedy is known as the ‘Nakba’ by Palestinians, and heralded decades of displacement, conflict, and persecution.

5 MILLION PALESTINIAN REFUGEES

There are now over 5 million Palestinian refugees registered with UNRWA.

58 OFFICIAL REFUGEE CAMPS

There are approximately 58 official refugee camps across the occupied Palestinian territories, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria. There are also unofficial ‘gatherings’ or camps that house refugees.

65% BELOW POVERTY LINE

65% of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon live below the poverty line. (UNRWA)

80% RELY ON HUMANITARIAN AID

80 percent of the population in Gaza relies on humanitarian aid to survive. (UN)

Dr Husam Zomlot

PALESTINIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE UK



Dr Essam Mustafa, Dr Husam Zomlot and Ibrahim Hewitt, meeting to discuss Interpal's new book, in February 2019.

“To unleash our economy we just need to do one thing: end this occupation – the Israeli military occupation.”

The above statement was made by the Palestinian Ambassador to the UK, Dr Husam Zomlot, in June 2019 in a press interview responding to the Trump administration's largely rejected economic portion of its Israeli-Palestinian peace proposal, led by White House Senior Adviser Jared Kushner. Indeed, the “deal of the century” did little to address the Israeli military occupation of the Palestinian territories, and millions of Palestinian refugees have continued to struggle without economic freedom and basic rights.

Two months earlier, Dr Husam Zomlot attended a lunch to mark Interpal's 25th year in operation and the launch of its book 'Faith, Hope & Charity- the Interpal Story.' The book launch was also attended by political columnist Peter Osborne, the former Palestinian Authority Minister Ziad Abu Zayyad, British-Israeli historian Professor Avi Shlaim and Dr Alon Liel, the former Director General of the Foreign Ministry of Israel.

The group discussed Interpal's work to assist Palestinians in need in one of the most difficult and dangerous environments in the world, recognising Interpal's efforts to support hundreds of thousands of Palestinians in the last 25 years.

The Israeli military occupation is devastating Palestinians' lives. Interpal and other organisations working in the region will continue to provide a vital source of support for as long as it takes for the international community to take decisive action to end the brutal Israeli occupation, and bring about lasting justice for Palestinians.

Christopher Gunness

CHIEF SPOKESPERSON FOR
THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF
AND WORKS AGENCY FOR
PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE
NEAR EAST

“Accountability is very important.

Especially if you are in Gaza, and you have just seen your children killed or your home destroyed. Grieving for something when you don't know what quite happened adds another layer of complication and trauma. Accountability is therefore a psychological truth. People in Gaza need to know what happened. We are pulling bodies out of the rubble every day. There are people who simply don't know what happened to their children, or their fathers, or their grandparents.

There must be accountability for the psychological factor to this, so that people can recover. There has to be accountability in the legal sense as well. Because if ever you have been the subject of a gross injustice, one of the things that will help you get to a space which you might begin to call normality, would be a sense of accountability and justice.”

An excerpt from a speech by Christopher Gunness at Interpal's 20th anniversary event, in the aftermath of the devastating Israeli assault on Gaza in 2014.

Recent Israeli military assaults & violations of international law

2007

The blockade on Gaza

Since 2007, Israel has imposed a land, sea and air blockade on the Gaza Strip, severely controlling the import of basic necessities including food, fuel and medicines.

2008 - 2009

Operation 'Cast Lead' in Gaza

In December 2008, Israel launched a three week bombardment of the Gaza Strip. People were unable to flee to safety, heavily populated areas were bombed mercilessly and white phosphorous was used on the civilian population. The attack left 1,400 Palestinians dead, and over 5,000 wounded.

2012

Operation 'Pillar of Defense'

Whilst still recovering from the 2008/2009 bombardment and the ongoing siege, Palestinians in Gaza were once more terrorised by a week-long bombardment in November 2012. Over 150 people were killed, 30 of them children.

2014

Operation 'Protective Edge' in Gaza

On July 8th 2014, the Gaza Strip came under attack by Israeli forces. The aggression and violence continued for seven weeks. 2,100 Palestinians were killed and over 11,200 Palestinians were injured, including 3,000 children. At least 500,000 people were forced to flee their homes and live in emergency shelters or with host families.

2019

The Great March of Return

At the time of writing, the "Great March of Return" protests in Gaza that began on 30 March 2018 have, according to the Palestine Centre for Human Rights, resulted in 214 Palestinian deaths and a further 14,251 Palestinians wounded. Since the protests began, the health sector in Gaza has been brought to the brink of collapse, with health facilities severely under-resourced and unable to cope with the massive influx of casualties.

2019

Ongoing Settlement Building

More than 620,000 Israeli citizens currently reside in settlements in the West Bank. Hundreds of thousands of square meters, including farmland and grazing areas, have been appropriated from Palestinians in order to build them (B'Tselem). There are now approximately 755,000 Palestinian refugees in the West Bank. From 2006 until 31 May 2019, Israel demolished at least 1,424 Palestinian residential units in the West Bank (not including East Jerusalem), causing 6,269 people to lose their homes. (B'Tselem)



Humanitarian Aid

Since 1994, Interpal's Humanitarian Aid programmes have provided continued support to thousands of Palestinian refugees, working to alleviate food insecurity and poverty in the occupied Palestinian territories and the refugee camps in Jordan and Lebanon. Interpal provides on-going financial assistance to families, as well as mitigating any unexpected costs arising from illness, disability or emergency medical needs.

Interpal's seasonal programmes provide Palestinians with vouchers and cash to buy essential food and supplies as well as parcels with staple food items. The charity also organises collective Iftars for special groups during Ramadan and Qurbanis for families during Eid Al Adha. As part of its mission to provide multi-dimensional aid, Interpal always ensures that products are locally sourced to support the local economy, including Palestinian businesses and farmers.

INTERPAL AT 25



Interpal provides clean safe drinking water to over 250,000 Palestinians in Gaza in addition to a further 50,000 refugees every year.



Up to 15,000 families receive food and financial assistance during Ramadan.



Up to 8,000 families benefit from our Qurbani distributions every year.



Interpal currently supports over 1,000 elderly Palestinians with special needs.



Interpal's annual Winter Aid programmes support over 5,000 families with fuel, clothes, food and financial aid.



Nejma Younis

AL-JALIL REFUGEE CAMP, LEBANON

“I remember the Nakba. I remember fleeing with my father and mother; we had nothing—we literally had nothing.

My mother was carrying my 6-month-old sister and she was crying out for milk. We had no milk to give her, no water; we had nothing to give her. That was when my mother put her on to the ground and left her. I saw her throw my baby sister away.

I ran over to my baby sister, grabbed her and hid her under my dress. When my mother heard her crying again she said to me, ‘Why? Why did you bring her back?’ I cried out loud. And then I said:

‘We aren’t going to leave her, are we?’

My mother didn’t want to leave her. She scooped her back into her arms and we continued to walk until we reached the next town. My sister was crying more, she was hungry, she wanted to be fed; all she needed was water. We couldn’t even give her water.”

There are now five generations of Palestinians living in refugee camps across Lebanon, Jordan and the occupied Palestinian territories. For many who first experienced the Nakba 71 years ago, the trauma has stayed with them. Interpal continues to support Nejma through a local elderly centre in Lebanon’s Al-Jalil refugee camp.

Father of 10-year-old Remas

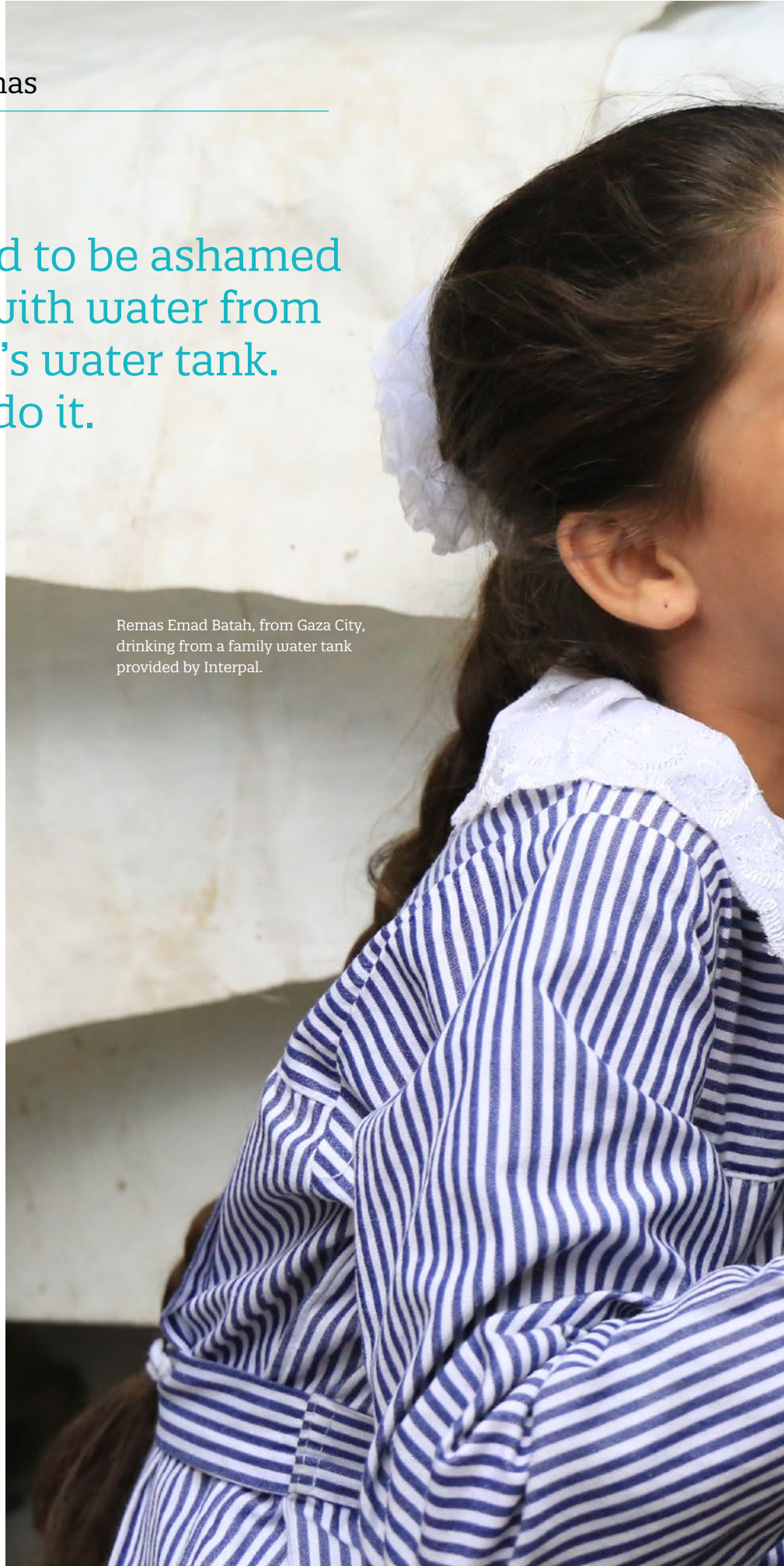
THE GAZA STRIP

“My children used to be ashamed to fill up bottles with water from the local mosque’s water tank. They’d refuse to do it.

They didn’t want to be seen using something for needy people. Before the siege, I used to work outside Gaza in a shop selling electrical goods. Back then, things were good, I could buy furniture, I could support my family. When the borders closed, I couldn’t find any work in Gaza and I haven’t been able to provide for my family since.

Two years ago, Interpal provided us with our own a water tank, which they fill twice a month. I want to express gratitude and thanks to Interpal’s donors. From my heart-thanks for this help, we desperately needed it.”

Remas Emad Batah, from Gaza City, drinking from a family water tank provided by Interpal.





Mohammad

AGE 39, THE GAZA STRIP

“I won’t lose hope. If I lost all hope, I’d be lost too. I keep the brightest dreams in my mind.

Dreams where I see that my family’s future is good and where my children have anything they desire. A house full of peace, tranquillity and food”

As part of Interpal’s Social Welfare Fund, Mohammad receives a regular lifeline of financial support for his family.

One-to-One Sponsorships

Musa's Mother

MAHATTAH REFUGEE CAMP, JORDAN

“Without Interpal’s financial aid, I wouldn’t be able to buy Eid clothes for Musa, and I couldn’t pay for the specialist services that he desperately needs.

My son Musa has Down’s syndrome, which means that he needs specialist care to reach his full potential. With my husband out of work, the only source of income we have is from my eldest son. This isn’t enough to live a decent life and we struggle to make ends meet. It broke my heart that I wasn’t able to afford the specialist care that Musa needs. This is why I am so grateful that he is now a sponsored child of Interpal. We receive financial help on a monthly basis, and now I can afford the specialist services he needs. Thank you Interpal.”

Musa Ya'qoub, who has benefited from Interpal's Child Sponsorship Programme.





Over 25 years, Interpal's Sponsorship Programme has grown to become the charity's largest on-going humanitarian project, supporting over 6,000 Palestinian needy, orphaned and disabled children every year. The Sponsorship Programme provides a vital, regular financial lifeline to some of the most vulnerable families in the occupied Palestinian territories and refugee camps in Jordan and Lebanon.

By working closely with families and communities, and with the help of its generous donors, Interpal is able to ensure that Palestinian children are given the support they need to build their own futures with confidence. This includes helping parents to buy medicines, clothes or books, enhancing the quality of life for their children. In line with Interpal's commitment to multidimensional aid, the charity includes sponsored children in other projects as well, such as fun days, health events and education programmes.



Medical Aid

The right to health is an inalienable human right and one that cannot be achieved without access to adequate healthcare. Over the course of two and half decades, Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank and refugee camps in Jordan and Lebanon have struggled to achieve this right. In line with its commitment to ensuring better health and quality of life for Palestinians, Interpal's Medical Aid Fund supports both the Palestinian health sector and thousands of vulnerable individuals every year.

Interpal's Poor Patient Fund has expanded to subsidise the medical costs of up to 1,000 individuals every year. Interpal has continued to provide vital training for health professionals in various specialties, including transplant surgery, anaesthesiology and psychiatry. This includes supporting the running costs of a specialist medical charity that supports the health sector in the West Bank. The charity also regularly helps to restock healthcare facilities with basic medical supplies and specialist equipment.

Supporting individuals with special needs is also a vital part of Interpal's work, with the charity's most recent efforts going towards the provision of assistive devices and medical support for people with disabilities.

INTERPAL AT 25



Up to 500,000 Palestinians are benefiting from our support provided to hospitals and health clinics in the field.



Interpal funds specialist treatment for over 4,500 patients annually, including extreme and rare cases.



Over 10,000 children and their families benefit from our funding for trauma support and psycho-social programmes every year.



Interpal's Poor Patient Fund has grown over the years, now subsidising the medical costs for up to 1,000 individuals annually.

Dr Basman Alashi

DIRECTOR OF EL WAFA HOSPITAL, THE GAZA STRIP

“Interpal was the first local organisation to extend its hand to support us. We need the support to save lives.”

Interpal's Gaza team delivering emergency supplies to El Wafa Hospital in 2014.



During the 2014 Israeli assault on Gaza, staff and patients at El Wafa hospital in Shujaiya were forced to evacuate after the Israeli army shelled the hospital on 17th July.

The hospital was filled with smoke and dust, with fires breaking out around the facility. The disabled and elderly patients were quickly transported to cars and ambulances to get them to safety. All staff and patients were able to safely leave the hospital whilst it was being mercilessly attacked.

During the assault, El Wafa was the only medical institution that provided medical rehabilitation to people with disabilities and injuries. With their building and equipment lost, they were supporting the patients they had on limited resources. The loss of the hospital was a huge blow to the Palestinian health sector and the thousands of patients who needed El Wafa.

Interpal provided El Wafa with essential medical supplies whilst they were in a temporary complex to ensure their vulnerable patients could be looked after as best as possible.

Interpal is proud to support El Wafa's staff, who during the assault and beyond, continue to show bravery and commitment to their patients at all times.



Community Development

Interpal's Community Development Fund builds lasting resilience by focusing on increasing economic independence, the quality of local infrastructure, freedom of movement, access to housing and psychological well-being.



With unemployment as high as 69% for young people in the Gaza Strip according to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Interpal's Job Creation Programme provides stable employment, on the job training and confidence building for people struggling to survive with limited opportunities. The programme was expanded to Lebanon, where Interpal employs social workers from within the refugee camps to serve their own communities. In addition, the programme has helped people set up small businesses and provided the tools with which to earn an income.



Interpal continues to support the agriculture sector in the Gaza Strip, purchasing beehives and the bees to house them for beekeepers, while planting olive, fig, guava, orange, and lemon trees to further support the livelihoods of Palestinian farmers. Interpal's popular Tok-Tok Livelihood project also provides individuals in the Gaza Strip with the means to gain long term financial independence.



The Outreach Bus Programme has become a key fixture in Interpal's project portfolio for community development. It is also a project which incorporates multi-dimensional aid by creating jobs for the drivers and encouraging institutions to consider accessibility and mobility of students, referring them to the service.



Interpal's Safe Housing projects continue to support hundreds of Palestinian families made homeless by conflict. Interpal provides dozens of temporary shelters and caravans, as well as supporting the reconstruction and improvement of homes within refugee camps across its areas of operation.

Eslam

AGE 26, THE GAZA STRIP

“Having a physical disability is not that big a deal. At least my mind still works. I can study, read and think.

I still managed to finish high school and join the University College of Applied Sciences. Since graduating, I have worked in three different jobs. I'm now working as a secretary on a temporary contract for three months. Interpal provides me with a great source of support by taking me to my work place and back. I'm so grateful that I am part of Interpal's Outreach Programme, and I'm so grateful for this help.”



Dalaal

A FARMER FROM BEIT LAHIA, THE GAZA STRIP

“It is our source of living. It is our source of life.

I have been a farmer since I got married about 28 years ago. My mum and whole family are farmers too. I love my work. Although it's not easy, I can't envisage a life without it. I have six boys and four girls, and it means that I can help them get through school and university.

I dream to be able to one day perform Hajj and to see all my children happy and secure with their own families. I would like to be able to reach maximum production on the farm, but I'd need items like fertiliser to achieve this. I know we will one day be able to achieve this, when life here gets easier and items can more easily enter Gaza.

I want my community to be able to one day depend on itself in all kinds of production. It can be done- but we need an easier way to have access to raw materials. Because of the siege, this is not possible now.”





The siege on Gaza is taking its toll on the agriculture sector; with limits on imports, farmers are unable to increase or, in many cases, even maintain production levels. Every day, women like Dalaal go to extraordinary lengths to support their families and communities despite the difficulties they face.



Education Aid

Interpal's Education Aid Fund has continued to support various projects, complementing existing educational services in Palestinian refugee camps aimed at improving access to education, the quality of education and the educational sector as a whole for Palestinians. The importance of education, both as a route out of poverty and as a way to help resilience, cannot be underestimated. Palestine's young people deserve opportunities and ways to expand their minds and talents.

Interpal's Education Aid Programmes now provide 5,000 Palestinian students every year with school kits and uniforms as well as covering school fees. The charity also continues to provide vocational training, as well as delivering equipment to university laboratories and providing schools with generators, computers or furniture, benefiting over 20,000 students in the last year alone.

INTERPAL AT 25



Up to 8,000 disadvantaged children are provided with school kits and uniforms every year.



1,000 university students benefit from tuition fee support every year.



Interpal works with educational institutions to provide generators, water tanks and other supplies or resources.



Interpal funds buses, toys and outdoor playground equipment for schools and education centres in refugee camps in Lebanon, Jordan and the West Bank, benefiting hundreds of children and their families.



Special needs education projects are a key focus, such as a speech therapy clinic in Gaza which Interpal supports, benefiting 600 children a month.



Interpal funds annual school fees for Palestinian and Syrian refugee children in south Lebanon.

Hadeel

THE GAZA STRIP

“After the death of my father, our lives changed – the security we once felt had vanished and we missed the love of our father.



My personality also changed: I became a determined young girl, who aimed to succeed in life, despite our hardships. I'm doing well at school, and I'm working hard to finish and join the faculty of medicine. I'm one of the lucky ones; my education fees have been covered by Interpal within their Educational Aid Programme for Dar Al-Fadeelah Students. I want to thank Interpal's donors for their generous support to orphans and needy people."

Staff, Supporters & Volunteers

Wafaa

PROJECTS COORDINATOR FOR INTERPAL, THE WEST BANK

“In Interpal I see a merciful father for an orphan who lost the embrace of his forbearing father. I see a kind compassionate mother for a child who was separated from the care of his loving mother.

I see a dutiful son for an elderly person emaciated by the years of life, and a protecting house for those suffering from freezing winters and stifling summers.

In the land of the enduring Interpal wrote a message, a message of life and humanity written into the lives of the many children deprived of having the life that children in other parts of the world enjoy.

Interpal weaved the threads of new hope, bringing to life happiness in the hearts of the poor and needy. I learned from Interpal that the truest accomplishment in life is not just the achievements we make for ourselves, but achieving the hopes of others and making them reality.

In 2011, a gifted journey began, a journey with the hardest of paths. In 2015, I began my role as a coordinator, implementing Interpal's projects through its partner that supervises seven separate offices in different areas across the West Bank. Since then, desire and determination accompanied my fast moving footsteps to draw maps to happiness in the lives of the vulnerable.

This is how I know Interpal and this is what I have learned though my travels in the shade of her giving. Interpal is a journey of giving, its story began 25 years ago and its journey is still moving in the direction of a better future for all Palestinians.



Sahar

SOCIAL WORKER FOR INTERPAL, THE GAZA STRIP



“Living conditions in Gaza are worsening by the day. I am not sure what our beneficiaries would do without the humanitarian support they receive.

When I first began my job as a social worker for Interpal, I found it so difficult. I was overwhelmed by the amount of people in need and I would hide my tears when I witnessed all the suffering. While this has motivated me to want to help our beneficiaries even more, I do so with the knowledge that their suffering and hardship continue to worsen.

Living conditions in Gaza are severe, more so than anyone could imagine. People face so many burdens here; accumulated debts, serious illnesses without available treatment, lack of food and a general feeling of insecurity.

Until we see an end to the occupation and siege in Gaza, nothing will improve. The UN said that the Gaza Strip will be uninhabitable by 2020; in my view, Gaza has not been habitable for many, many years.

Despite all of this, my greatest achievement is seeing the smiles of children when providing them with assistance. It gives me the strength to get through the toughest days.”

Amani

FORMER HEAD OF PROJECTS, LEBANON FIELD OFFICE

“Palestinian refugees in Lebanon face structural oppression, with Lebanese laws preventing them from basic economic, social and civil rights.

For example, refugees are barred from dozens of professions, which limit them and cause extreme hardship. The dire humanitarian situation is obvious to anyone who visits a camp. There is also the issue of how dependent refugees are on aid, and the decline in services available for them despite the growing need. Now with the influx of Syrian refugees, things are getting more desperate- and this causes further pressures on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. The political situation on the ground is tense, and complicated.

Interpal works to address all the problems mentioned, but the difficulties to support a growing number of beneficiaries in an increasingly tense political climate are many. The lack of rights that the Palestinians have makes interventions more difficult- impacting their ability to affect long term improvements. We must also manage logistical issues such as not being able to access beneficiaries due to sectarian violence in areas or other security issues. Another challenge is that Palestinian refugees are ‘forgotten’- meaning a lack of funds available for them in a worsening situation.

Despite the political and security issues, Interpal has worked to provide aid in varied forms- we set strict criteria to ensure we support the most vulnerable, and those that may fall ‘through the gaps’. It is difficult, as so many people are in need but it is important to ensure that we can help as many people as possible and compliment the aid work being done by others.

It is important to remember that Palestinians have been refugees in Lebanon for over 70 years, and their refugee status is the main obstacle to them achieving a better life and not needing international assistance. In the absence of this changing, Interpal will continue to address their needs within the complex political climate in Lebanon during these uncertain times.”

Sophia Bashir

AGE 9, INTERPAL SUPPORTER

“When I visited Palestine, I was amazed and in awe of where I was. I have been very fortunate and blessed to visit Palestine and to meet its people.

In all their suffering, they were still extremely generous. I can only pray that I can have the opportunity to visit again and again.

I hope that I can do more to help Palestine because after visiting the country, and seeing first-hand what they go through every day, I feel it is so unfair and unjust. Interpal has helped those in need in very difficult situations. I wish to be able to fundraise again for them and to educate people about the Palestinian cause.

We need to join together and help the Palestinians as much as we can because they don't deserve to suffer as they do.”

Sophia, in front of one of Banksy's best-known works; “Rage, Flower Thrower” in Beit Sahour, Bethlehem.



Derek Bird

INTERPAL SUPPORTER

“Interpal has a proven record of providing humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people, on whom the world has too often turned its back.

My dad was in Palestine in WWII, in the anti-aircraft side of the RA. It is vitally important that we provide for the basic needs of the indigenous people of the land of Palestine until a fair and just solution to the political situation is found.”

Derek Bird at one of Interpal's fundraising events in Dewsbury.



False allegations against Interpal

Interpal has had to overcome many obstacles since its foundation. Despite facing ongoing hostility from anti-Palestinian groups, thanks to the support of its donors, Interpal is strong and resolute in the work it does and is continuing to make a difference to thousands of lives every year.

1996

Following libellous allegations published by the Sunday Telegraph in May 1996, Interpal's Trustees took legal action against the offending publication. The Sunday Telegraph published an apology and a retraction on 29 November 1998.

2003

In August 2003, Interpal was designated as a "terrorist entity" by the US Treasury, making it illegal for US citizens and permanent residents to provide funds to the charity. There was no due process and it was, Trustees believe, a politically-motivated move instigated by the Israeli government. A few weeks later, after another inquiry, the Charity Commission cleared Interpal of any illegal activities; the US Treasury did not provide evidence to support its designation. The British authorities allowed Interpal to return to work as normal.

2009

In 2009 the Charity Commission published the results of its 3-year investigation and **found no evidence to substantiate allegations of illegal activity on the part of the charity.**

2013

In November 2013, 33 British MPs signed the Early Day Motion 786, calling on the Government to "press the US administration to rescind its damaging designation of Interpal."

2019

In June 2019, Interpal's Board of Trustees successfully **won £120,000 in libel damages** against Associated Newspapers, the publisher of the Daily Mail and MailOnline.

2019

In August 2019, the Jewish Chronicle apologised to the Trustees of Interpal over the newspaper's publication of false and defamatory allegations, agreeing to pay £50,000 in damages to the Trustees. The newspaper also took the welcome step of offering to publish an article by Interpal's Chair of Trustees, Ibrahim Hewitt.

Associated Newspapers

THE PUBLISHER OF THE DAILY MAIL AND MAILONLINE

“We apologise to the Trustees for any distress caused.”

“Articles dated 2 and 15 August claimed that Interpal, a charity supporting Palestinians, funded a 'hate festival' in which children acted out the murder of Jews. In fact, while Interpal donated to the festival, it did not fund or support the play and the Trustees of Interpal unequivocally condemned the activities the play depicted. It was not our intention to suggest that the Trustees promote or condone anti-Semitism or attacks on Jews. The 15 August article also referred to Interpal having been listed as a 'specially designated global terrorist organisation' by the United States.

We are happy to make clear that this designation, which took place in 2003, has always been strongly contested by Interpal and its Trustees, and Interpal continues to operate lawfully within the aegis of the Charity Commission. The Trustees assure us, and we accept, that neither Interpal, nor its Trustees, have ever been involved in or provided support for terrorist activity of any kind. We apologise to the Trustees for any distress caused.”

The above was published by the Mail Online on 15 May 2019.



The Jewish Chronicle

BRITISH NEWSPAPER

“The Trustees of Interpal – Apology”

“In an article dated 21 March 2019 (“Corbyn spoke at conference calling for release of terrorists, attended by 'blood libel' cleric Salah”) we referred to the charity Interpal, which supports Palestinians in need, as having been listed by the United States as a “Specially Designated Global Terrorist Organisation” in 2003. We wish to make clear that Interpal and its Trustees have always strongly contested the US designation, and Interpal continues to operate fully lawfully under the aegis of the Charity Commission.

We accept that neither Interpal, nor its Trustees, have ever been involved with or provided support for terrorist activity of any kind. We apologise unreservedly to the Trustees for any distress caused and have agreed to pay them damages for libel.

Our article also suggested that Ibrahim Hewitt, one of the Trustees and the Chairman of Interpal, has expressed extremist views concerning punishments for adulterers and gay people. In fact, the views attributed to Mr Hewitt arise out of a book he wrote some 25 years ago regarding the interpretation of the Koran. Mr Hewitt has asked us to make clear that he does not condone discrimination in any form, including against gay people or adulterers, and we are happy to do so.”

The above was published online by the Jewish Chronicle on 23 August 2019.

Peter Osborne

JOURNALIST AND BROADCASTER

“It will be a dark day if we allow Interpal’s detractors to drive it out of business.”

Interpal has recently published a history celebrating their first quarter century. It is an inspiring story of a charity that raised £200 in its first collection at Regents Park Mosque more than 20 years ago.

Today, they support thousands of Palestinian families and refugees through their work. It goes without saying that if Interpal have provable links to terror, it should be closed at once. But the British government is happy for the charity to work in Britain, where I believe it has played an important role in channelling donations to humanitarian projects.

It is about time that Interpal received the support it deserves. It will be a dark day were we to allow it to be driven out of business.

From left to right; Dr Daud Abdullah (Middle East Monitor), Peter Osborne (journalist and broadcaster), Chris Doyle (CAABU) and Aimee Shalan (MAP), speaking at Interpal's 20th anniversary symposium in 2014.





“A well-run and committed organisation which carries out important work in a part of the world where there is great hardship and suffering.”





Yvonne Ridley

JOURNALIST AND AUTHOR

“Sometimes the smallest act of kindness is all that is needed to keep alive the enduring spirit of hope.”

“For most of us our lives are punctuated and defined by the problems we encounter on the way. Either we are engulfed in one or just emerging from one or bracing ourselves for another challenge looming on the horizon.

Sadly for Palestinians there is no relief or respite from the ongoing problem of occupation; no light at the end of a tunnel from the violence, oppression and dehumanisation which turns slowly on a grinding wheel of suffering.

How these amazing, heroic people have survived for so long is almost beyond comprehension but hope has proved essential in their ongoing struggle for equality, freedom and justice.

They survive on the hope that tomorrow will be better than today and it is that hope which reminds me of the work done by Interpal and how vitally important it is that it keeps on going.

Interpal for the last 25 years has brought hope to Palestinians by way of putting food on the table, nurturing young minds through education, empowering women through start-up businesses while providing counselling for those in despair.

I have witnessed with my own eyes the work done by Interpal and I'm not sure what has moved me more - the dedication and commitment of Interpal volunteers and workers or the reward of seeing the smiles break across the faces of Palestinians.

Sometimes the smallest act of kindness is all that is needed to keep alive the enduring spirit of hope and that reminds me so much of the work that has come to define Interpal. The charity is large enough to take on the most ambitious projects with partners like UNRWA but it is small enough to know, by name those who need help.

It is also one of the few organisations I know that looks forward to the day when it's no longer needed by the Palestinians. On that day it will mean all Palestinians will be free, equal citizens enjoying human rights and good governance.”



Yvonne Ridley during an Interpal-led delegation to Lebanon in 2016.

Nandita Dawson

CAMDEN-ABU DIS FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION

“CADFA sends best wishes to Interpal and congratulations for 25 years!

Memories and thanks for your support with our advocacy work which is so important with all the media and pressure stacked against letting people see what is happening in Palestine or letting people hear Palestinian voices. Small grants from Interpal have helped CADFA make and distribute human rights reports and materials and bring groups of young people from Palestine who have talked to and raised the awareness of many young people and policy-makers here.”



Advocacy & Awareness

Interpal recognises the importance of increasing awareness of the injustice suffered by Palestinians, promoting Palestinian voices and supporting advocacy. The last two and a half decades have seen a worsening of the humanitarian crisis facing Palestinians across the Middle East. Over the years, Interpal has worked to build a durable foundation for Palestinian human rights, through knowledge-sharing, facilitating greater understanding in the UK of the cause, and actively supporting international advocacy.

From supporting campaigns tackling Palestinian dispossession to funding school competitions; Interpal has been at the heart of raising awareness for the plight of the Palestinian people. Just some of our achievements over the years include:



Taking delegations and groups to visit and witness the humanitarian crisis facing Palestinian refugees via the 'Bear Witness Programme.'



Supporting twinning activities and cultural exchange visits to strengthen links between places in the occupied Palestinian territories and Britain.



Contributing to international tribunals, conferences and activities in respect of human rights and international law.



Organising parliamentary events and symposiums to provide much needed platform for human rights advocates, journalists, MPs, academics and NGOs working for the Palestinian cause.



Actively participating in the "Palestine Platform", an NGO community in the UK that draws attention to Palestinian human rights.



Interpal Supporter

2015

“I stand with Palestine.”

Awareness-raising street campaign in
London, 2015.

“The War-torn Child”

Hafsah Aneela Bashir

POEM FOR INTERPAL'S POETRY
COMPETITION, "PALESTINE
VERSES," IN 2014

“I will tell God everything

The sharp metal pieces
Taken out of my stomach
Will all come with me...

I will tell God everything
The men with the guns
And the aeroplanes of fire
Will all get in trouble

I will tell God everything
And ask if the lightning in the sky
Was Him taking photos
If not, I'll give him my drawings

I will tell God everything
That mama's face was gone
But I found Baba's feet
And put them together like shoes.”



A young Palestinian refugee,
Northern Lebanon

Looking Ahead

We have come a long way since launching at Willesden Library, London in 1994; over the course of two and a half decades, Interpal has become one of the foremost UK specialist NGOs working in Palestine, helping to protect the human rights of thousands of Palestinian families every year.

We owe our 25th year in operation to the Palestinians we meet every day- those who refuse to forfeit the dignity of their families and communities in the face of ongoing occupation, siege and displacement. We also owe our longevity to you, our donors, who have helped us to protect the human rights of Palestinians for so long.

Looking ahead, there may be some changes to the way we operate as we protect our legacy and commitment to Palestinians in urgent need. Despite attempts by anti-Palestinian groups to hinder our much-needed work in the field, we are strong and resolute in the work we do, and we will continue our vital work until the day that Palestinians are no longer in need.

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