
UPA: a Profile

Mission

United Palestinian Appeal, Inc. is a non-profit, non-political, tax-exempt American charity, independent of any political affiliation or ideology. Its mission is to alleviate the suffering of Palestinians, particularly those in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and the refugee camps of Lebanon, and to contribute to the long-term socio-economic and cultural development of Palestinian society. UPA maintains its independence and integrity by not accepting funds from political groups or from any source that may attach unacceptable conditions to its contributions. Donations to UPA are tax-deductible in accordance with applicable laws. UPA's federal tax-exemption I.D. number is 11-2494808.

Since its establishment, UPA has developed numerous programs to assist Palestinians in the fields of health, education, child services, community development, and emergency relief.

Each year, UPA implements a variety of fundraising strategies, including direct mail campaigns, individual solicitations, corporate appeals, community outreach, and distribution of hand-made Palestinian artwork and embroidery. When needed, it also conducts emergency campaigns to address urgent humanitarian crises. UPA is proud to have contributed over \$15 million towards the development of Palestinian society, and we look forward to strengthening that development in the future.

History

- UPA was established in 1978 in the State of New York by a group of Palestinian-Americans from the business and professional communities who shared the objective of creating an efficient and professionally managed charity that would assist needy Palestinians.
- In 1980, UPA was granted tax-exempt status under Section 501 (c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.
- In 1985, UPA became the first Palestinian-American charity to be registered with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) as a Private and Voluntary Organization (PVO).*
- In 1985, UPA began funding the construction of a \$2.4 million nursing college on the Mount of Olives affiliated with Makassed Hospital. Thanks to a \$1 million grant from King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, UPA was also able to greatly expand its assistance programs in the areas of health care, education, children's services, community development, and emergency relief.
- In 1986, UPA initiated its Child Sponsorship program.
- Between 1985 and 1987, UPA sent nearly half a million dollars worth of emergency medicines and supplies to Palestinian refugees in Southern Lebanon.
- In 1987, with the outbreak of the first intifada, UPA shifted its funding priorities to emergency medical relief for intifada-related injuries.
- In 1989, UPA became the first Palestinian-American charity accepted by the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), the national organization allowing for charitable solicitation of federal government employees.
- In 1990, al-Makassed/UPA Nursing College in East Jerusalem was completed, the first modern, four-year nursing college in Palestine offering training to meet the increasing health care demands of the Palestinian population.
- In 1991, UPA was accepted as a participating member agency by the Independent Charities of America (ICA), a nationwide consortium of approved charities soliciting state, federal and local public employees.

* Registration does not imply endorsement.

- In 1994, with the signing of the Oslo accords, UPA re-focused its grant making on programs aimed at the long-term socioeconomic recovery and development of Palestinian society in the West Bank and Gaza.
- From 2000 onwards, UPA responded to al-Aqsa intifada by giving priority to emergency medical relief.
- In 2002, UPA was awarded a \$2.7 million grant from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to implement a job creation and infrastructure development program for two years throughout the West Bank and Gaza in cooperation with the Welfare Association in East Jerusalem. The program represented an emergency response to devastating economic collapse, including an unemployment rate of over 60 percent.
- In 2003, UPA and its partner, Nour Foundation sent over \$424,000 worth of medicines and supplies to West Bank hospitals and clinics.
- In 2004, UPA successfully completed the USAID funded Emergency Employment Generation Project. It also shipped, with its partner, Nour Foundation, over \$1 million in medical supplies, including hygiene kits, supplemental feeding formula, blankets, and clothing, to UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees) offices for distribution to hospitals, clinics, and schools in West Bank and Gaza.
- In 2005/2006, UPA partnered with Project Harmony in implementing the MEDIA Youth Leadership Exchange Program funded by the State Department Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' Linking Individuals, Knowledge, and Culture Initiative between the US and Jordanian/Palestinian students. UPA was subcontracted in the amount of \$59,206 and provided over \$14,000 of in-kind services to the program.
- In 2006, UPA facilitated two pharmaceutical shipments to the Gaza and Lebanon: 1) a shipment of \$6.5 million worth of pharmaceuticals to the United Nations Reliefs and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) for refugees and non-refugees in Gaza in over 15 of the UNRWA Health Centers, to aid over 35,000 needy Palestinians; and 2) a \$1.5 million pharmaceutical shipment to the Hariri Foundation to aid Palestinian refugees and people of Lebanon.

2008 Activities

1. Arab Resource Center for Popular Arts (ARCPA) – “Telling Children’s Stories”

UPA granted \$10,000 to the Arab Resource Center for Popular Arts (ARCPA) in Lebanon to print four stories written by Palestinian children from refugee camps and poor neighborhoods in Beirut, about their experiences as refugees in Lebanon. These stories came out of an art therapy process designed to help these children express themselves, producing text and illustration.

2. Barghouthi Education Fund -- Scholarships

UPA granted \$50,000 to the Barghouthi Education Fund for scholarships for 10 students via our partner In’ash El Usra Society.

3. Hope Fund (Lexington, VA) -- Scholarships

UPA granted \$10,940 to the Hope Fund in Virginia to pay for the travel expenses for 10 Palestinian students to study in the United States. The Hope Fund links high performing Palestinian students living below the poverty line with American colleges and universities willing to provide them with full scholarships. UPA’s grant paid for airfare from the Middle East as well as travel costs within the U.S., and associated costs such as visa fees.

4. Palestinian Agricultural Research Committee (PARC) – Food Distribution

UPA granted \$50,000 to the Palestinian Agricultural Research Committee (PARC) in Gaza for their “From Besieged Farmers to Besieged Families” project. The project’s intent is to aid both the besieged farmers who need a place to sell their crops, and to aid besieged families who are suffering from hunger. This project then both provides income to the farmers while providing food for hungry families.

5. Palestinian Center for Youth Work – Rooftop Gardens

UPA granted \$25,200 for the Palestinian Center for Youth Work’s Rooftop Gardens project in Gaza. 30 families with no employment and living below the poverty line in Beit Hanoun achieved sustained food security and a supplementary income through this project. The rooftop gardens project provided all the initial startup materials such as soil, seeds, and technical equipment for the families and trained them in growing various vegetables in an urban setting, and the families were able to sell excess food on the market to generate income.

6. Palestinian Medical Relief Society (PMRS) – Emergency Grant for Gaza Mobile Clinic

UPA granted \$40,000 to PMRS in February 2008, shortly after Israel bombed their Gaza clinic. These funds went towards provision of medicines and equipment that had been destroyed in the bombing.

7. Patient’s Friends Society, Jerusalem – Home Safety & First Aid

UPA granted \$28,750 to the Patient’s Friends Society to train 25 educators on home safety with first aid kits, since accidents are one of the most important factors threatening Palestinian children's lives. This included identifying first aid and home safety trainers, developing a curriculum and training manuals, and organizing a schedule for teaching/training.

8. Relief International/ Schools Online- Palestine (RI) – Women & Youth First-Aid Teams

UPA granted \$30,000 to Relief International/ Schools Online- Palestine (RI) to train women and youth teams in first-response in case of injury in their communities in Gaza due to violence, accident, or natural causes. Teams of 13 each were trained, totaling 780 individuals directly benefiting from training, in addition to the more than 200,000 indirect beneficiaries in the community who would be cared for by these teams. In addition to the obvious benefit of training first-responders for the community, this project aimed to elevate the status of women and youth specifically by giving them leadership roles.

9. St. John’s Eye Hospital – Mobile Eye Clinics

UPA granted \$25,000 to St. John’s Eye Hospital for mobile outreach clinics all over the West Bank. These clinics were able to reach patients who otherwise might not have access to the hospital itself for care. Over 3,000 patients were treated in 2008 with direct eye care provision, and different forms of education about vision health, 92% of which were new cases, thanks to these mobile clinics.

10. Union of Health Care Committees (UHCC) – Mobile Clinics

UPA granted a total of \$45,000 to the Union of Health Care Committees for mobile clinics in the northern West Bank. These clinics focused on providing pregnant health care services, health services to children at kindergartens, and specialized health services for those with chronic diseases in 5 districts in the northern West Bank.

11. Union of Health Care Committees (UHCC) – Summer Youth Camp

UPA granted \$2,000 to the Union of Health Care Committees to hold a summer camp for youth in the Northern District of the West Bank. The camp aimed to enhance the youths' cultural and technical skills, reduce the pressure on them from the occupation, and to build and enhance cooperation and group work. 60 boys and girls directly benefited from the eleven-day camp.