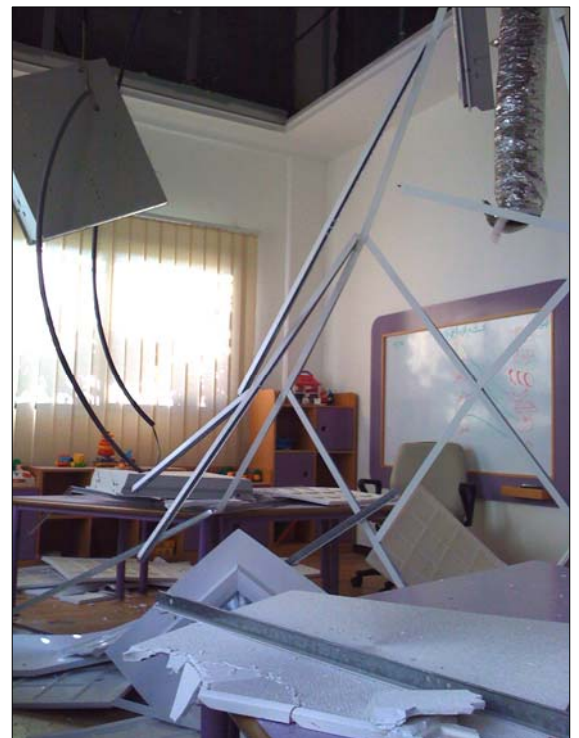




The Gaza Strip was twisted into a disaster zone due to the Israeli incursion into Gaza for more than twenty days. Over 1300 people were killed and at least 5000 were wounded. The local infrastructure was greatly destroyed leaving 1.5 million Palestinians without electricity and water. Twenty one thousand buildings were partially or totally destroyed leaving many residents without shelter. Everywhere you turn there was fear and concern; for the future, for loved ones.

Ali Abu Eyada, a student in Atfaluna kindergarten. The Israeli bombing completely destroyed his home. Ali's father said "My two deaf children lost all their clothes, books, even their hearing aids."

Since the first day of the Israeli aggression, Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children suspended its operations due to the extremely unsafe and dangerous situation. On the third of January 2009, the Atfaluna building was badly damaged due to the bombing of a neighboring building. The powerful explosion shattered all of Atfaluna's windows. The damage is estimated to be around \$20,000 in value. Providentially there was no fire and there were no casualties. Atfaluna staff is now back to work and the Atfaluna School is expected to resume on the 1st of February 2009.



Atfaluna Kindergarten was badly damaged due to the bombing of a neighboring building.



Deaf children and adults were not spared from this cruel war experience. They too felt the explosions shake the world around them as they saw family members injured as air raids shook their homes. Unaware of what was happening around them did not only add to the fear and isolation they live in, it left them not knowing what the safest thing for them to do was; leave their homes as thousands of other families did and head to a more safer area or stay at home and bare the consequences. Forty one deaf students and employees of Atfaluna were forced to leave their homes. Upon returning, six of them found that their homes had been



completely demolished by the Israeli attacks. Everything they had ever owned was now lost, the families had no choice but to take shelter in the schools run by the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).



Taghreed Abu Nameos was among the Atfaluna staff that was forced to flee her home. Having no time to take any belongings with her she now owns nothing. Taghreed and her family were delighted to see the Atfaluna bus roll up to the UNRWA school they had fled to. With tears in her eyes Taghreed could not hide her happiness at seeing familiar faces. "I am so happy to see you; I didn't know you cared for me this much, thank you for coming to check on me." She signed.



ASDC is reaching out to the deaf community by supplying the affected families with their most urgent needs. Atfaluna has also setup an emergency counseling team which is conducting field visits in order to identify and assess the needs of the most critical cases that are in need of short and long-term emergency support. Additionally we aim to provide psycho-social assistance to the Atfaluna students and their parents. The program will aim at re-establishing a sense of reason, peace, and safety to these children.

Yasmeen Shalalfa, a student at Atfaluna kindergarten. Her home in Moghraga area is partially damaged, and her family lost many belongings, Atfaluna offered her some blankets and clothing. Yasmeen's mother was amazed and said "Atfaluna did not forget us even in these dark days, many thanks for every one who cares about us."

The Centre also aims to conduct out-reach hearing screening and an awareness program to cover areas that were heavily affected by the bombardment. The campaign aims at detecting hearing loss among the general population as a result of the explosions. It will also increase awareness to the symptoms of hearing loss as a result of the sound of explosions among the general population.

With your generous donations and support to our work, we can make a difference in the lives of these much affected deaf children and their families.

Ahmed Ghoneem, a student in the fourth grade at Atfaluna School, his home in Atatra area is severely damaged. He was shocked when he saw his bedroom for the first time after the Israeli bombing, He said "I don't have any books; I even lost my school uniform."





Needs Assessment:

We are doing our best to offer the deaf children and adults in our care the most basic needs, after losing all their belongings during the war on Gaza. If you would like to lend a hand to the deaf people of the Gaza Strip who have suffered because of the war, you can support us to offer the following items:

- Blankets
- Clothing and shoes
- Hygiene kits
- Hearing Aids and batteries
- Material for school uniform
- School bags and stationery

If you would like to make a donation by bank transfer, please send us an email to support@atfaluna.net in order to provide you with all the necessary information.