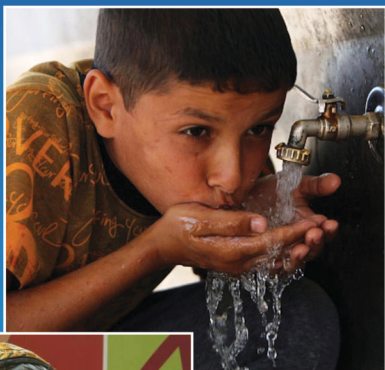


Clean Water for the Children of Gaza



Where is Gaza?



GAZA is a tiny strip of land approximately 26 miles long and four to seven miles wide, located at the southern edge of historic Palestine on the border with Egypt. Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem together make up the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel.

RAFAH, a town and refugee camp of approximately 150,000, sits on the Egyptian border and is one of only two current entrances for people leaving or entering Gaza.

One of the most crowded places on earth, Gaza is home to nearly two million people; over half of them children, all suffering from the lack of safe, clean water for drinking, cooking and bathing.

You can help provide healthy water to children in Gaza - home to over a million children who are in the midst of a water crisis.

Why is there a water crisis in Gaza?

Gaza is grossly overpopulated due to the massive influx of refugees from other parts of Palestine--3/4 of Gaza's nearly 2 million people are refugee families.

While the natural source of fresh water for Gaza is groundwater from a shallow coastal aquifer downstream from Israel, water usage in Gaza today is four times the aquifer's natural recharge rate.

Because of the extreme human and agricultural demands placed on this aquifer, salt water intrusion from the Mediterranean Sea has turned Gaza's underlying groundwater brackish. It is also polluted with untreated sewage and agricultural chemical runoff. Thus, at least 95% of the groundwater in Gaza is unfit for human use, posing grave health risks especially to children.

Other factors include:

- 1.** The twelve-year Israeli/Egyptian blockade on Gaza which has severely limited the import of resources needed for maintaining water systems.
- 2.** Attacks by the Israeli military which have repeatedly devastated the water/sewer infrastructure.
- 3.** Electricity is limited to 2-4 unpredictable hours per day due to the blockade's affect on fuel as well as disputes between Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Hamas and Egypt over supplies and payments. This has crippled operation of the water/sewer network including large sewage and desalination plants.



Palestinian mother washes her daughters outside during power outage in a refugee camp near Khan Younis, Gaza.

The Maia Project

In 2009, the Middle East Children's Alliance (MECA) launched the Maia Project (Maia means "water" in Arabic) to install water purification and desalination units in schools in Gaza.

Since then, MECA has installed 71 units which are providing clean drinking water to over 73,000 children.

These Gaza-built systems also benefit the children's families as the children bring water home from their schools.



Purchasing water from a private vendor, an expensive burden on the poor majority.

We Need Your Help!

Congregation Shaarei Shamayim, First Unitarian Society-Madison, Jewish Voice for Peace/Madison, and Madison-Rafah Sister City Project need to raise \$16,000 to fund a Maia Project water treatment system that will provide two schools (3,250 students) with clean drinking water in Rafah, a city in Gaza.

Ultimately, solving the water crisis in Gaza requires ending the blockade and finding a just and permanent resolution to the conflict between Israel and Palestine. It also requires a change in U.S. policy that currently supports the devastation of Gaza.

The children of Gaza cannot wait. Please help now!



Please donate today by sending a check payable to MRSCP marked “Water” to:

**Madison-Rafah Sister City Project (MRSCP)*
P.O. Box 5214
Madison WI 53705**



**or by contributing online at
www.mecaforpeace.org/Madison**

**100 percent of your donation will be sent by MRSCP to MECA to fund this project. MRSCP will send you a receipt at the end of the year for your tax records.*



The Maia Project is an effort of the Middle East Children's Alliance (MECA), a U.S. nonprofit organization with a 30-year track record of improving the lives of children in the Middle East, especially Palestinians, through aid, empowerment and education.

www.mecaforpeace.org

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