



Since 1949



CNEWA-Pontifical Mission, Jerusalem
a papal agency for Middle East relief and development

Annual Report 2020

*Msgr. Peter Vaccari, President
CNEWA - Pontifical Mission*



Annual Report 2020

CNEWA-Pontifical Mission

establishment and work today

In 1949, after the Arab Israeli war and the occupation of Palestine, Pope Pius XII founded the Pontifical Mission for Palestine (PMP) as his special agency for relief and development in the Middle East. The Pontiff entrusted its leadership and administration to the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA) in New York, USA. CNEWA was founded by Pope Pius XI in 1926 to support the work and activities of the Eastern churches in Northeast Africa, India, and Eastern Europe.

PMP began implementing programs and projects through three regional offices in Beirut, Jerusalem, and Amman. After the 1967 war and the occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, with the blessing of Pope Paul VI, PMP began supporting a network of community-based organizations (CBOs) and Church-affiliated institutions throughout the Holy Land. PMP works for, through and with the local churches, allocating donor funds for programs and projects that support the Church institutions and community leaders in Palestine and Israel. The Amman Regional Office oversees projects in Jordan and Iraq while the Beirut Regional Office oversees projects in Lebanon, Syria, and Egypt.

The Apostolic Delegate in Palestine inaugurates the new sewing workshop for the Refugees



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Msgr. Peter
Vaccari, the new
President of
CNEWA-Pontifical
Mission



Forward

Bethlehem was selected as the Capital of Arab Culture in 2020, of which the city had plans for various cultural, artistic and community events involving local institutions and visiting delegations. However, in March 2020, the first cases of COVID-19 were discovered in Beit Jala – just as the pandemic gripped the world, and all plans had to be put on hold. Although this was - and continues to be, a pandemic that has affected countless lives all over the world, people of good will have responded generously through our headquarters at CNEWA - US, and through CNEWA Canada, and other partner donors, trusting in the mission and vision of the Jerusalem office.

During the pandemic, PMP disbursed emergency aid totaling a quarter of a million dollars, for those in need: people who lost their jobs and income and were unable to feed their families; local schools that could not afford to pay teacher's salaries as parents were jobless and couldn't afford the school fees; medical workers working on the frontlines to provide healthcare for COVID-19 patients; and monasteries which lost all sources of income and donations because of the shutdown of the tourism sector, risking the operations of these institutions and salaries of all staff members.

Although 2020 was a year of reflection for our office in preparation for 2021, PMP continued to aid the local community through other development projects, despite the closures and restrictions of the pandemic. A few highlights of the accomplishments this year:

Thanks to the generous support of Misereor, PMP concluded another phase of green energy solar panel installations for 11 local Palestinian and Church-related institutions, which generated a total of 100 KWH of free electricity and reduced operating costs.

With the generous funds from various donors, PMP continued to fund youth programs and maintained services of youth institutions in 2020, amounting to approximately a quarter of a million dollars. Another quarter of a million dollars of aid was invested in pastoral activities and programs, targeting Christian children and youth, to help them re-discover the roots of their faith and stay connected to their faith, which upholds their identity and steadfastness

in the land of their forefathers.

Supporting and maintaining the services of local community-based organizations was the largest program, with an investment of approximately one million dollars.

In 2020, PMP contracted local researchers to conduct a survey on the prospects of the job market in Israel and develop ways on how to offer educational and career guidance programs for local area schools in Jerusalem. PMP also conducted a survey of the Christian-related institutions which serves one third of the Palestinian community with employment and services. The results of the studies will provide a guideline on how to improve current programs and explore new initiatives that respond to the needs on the ground.

In looking ahead, PMP continues to support a community under occupation-deprived of social and political stability and awaiting the opportunity to be able to prosper and enjoy stability in their own land.

Joseph Hazboun
Regional Director



Country Brief *Palestine*

Daily military raids in East Jerusalem and West Bank, including the arrest of youth and children; house demolitions; land confiscation; and settlement construction in East Jerusalem and the West Bank (especially the E1 plan), all continue unabated. The military presence throughout these areas as well as permanent manned checkpoints at major arteries in the West Bank, impose major access restrictions for most of the population daily, affecting all aspects of livelihood (access to education, employment, etc.)

There are several concerns regarding the Christian community in the West Bank; there are around 50,000 Christians in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza Strip. A major concern currently is the violation and attack on Christian land and properties, especially in the Bethlehem region, by Muslim individuals or families. Emigration of Christian families is still a threat to the overall Christian presence in Palestine.

Christian-based organizations do not receive any funding from the PA and are experiencing more financial problems. For this reason, there continues to be a strong dependency on donor funding to maintain facilities and equipment as well as income generating initiatives that could cover the running costs.

The UN Report published in 2012 indicated that Gaza would become unlivable by 2020. Gaza's socioeconomic crisis is currently at breaking point; Gaza's economy continues to deteriorate with high unemployment and limited job opportunities in addition to serious environmental issues and access restrictions at border crossings, thus putting Gaza on the trajectory of becoming unlivable.

The population of settlers in West Bank settlements surged by more than 3% (or 463,353 people) in 2019, well above the growth rate of Israel's overall population. There is an estimated 2.99 million Palestinians living in the West Bank who are increasingly facing isolation; Area A and B borders densely-populated Palestinian cities, while Area C includes vast expanses of open space—which has been earmarked for the almost exclusive use of Israeli settlements. Also, unemployment and poverty have risen due to the closures and restrictions from the COVID-19 pandemic which had a severe impact on the Palestinian economy. The situation is desperate—40 percent households in the West Bank had their income decline by more than half and in Gaza, unemployment has hit 49 percent. Focusing on reducing overall living costs is required while

maintaining essential health/medical, social, and educational services for the community is needed.

Country Brief *Israel*

Israel's population increased to 9.3 million in 2020, according to the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS). There are currently 6.870 million Jews, accounting for 74% of the population, and 1.956 million Arabs in Israel, which make up 21% of the population. Some 50,000 people died this year with 1 in 15 deaths as coronavirus related. The CBS said that the pandemic played a part in raising the number of deaths by some 6,000 people relative to the number of deaths in 2019.

A change in the political governing body has led to further alienation of the Arab community in Israel (counts around 1.95 million among a total population of 9.2 million Israelis). The Arab community has been suffering from growing violence and organized crime – 2020 saw the highest number of murders in Arab Israeli communities across Israel. The Israeli government's long-standing neglect of these areas and an identity crisis and social cohesion have allowed organized crime and street violence to ensue within these communities.

Issues of identity play an important role in the lives of the Christian community in Israel — a tiny minority group amongst a significant Jewish, Muslim, and Druze population. Isolationism and fear have increased among Christians living throughout the Holy Land. Israel's Tag Meir organization revealed that extremist Jewish settlers have carried out arson attacks on 46 mosques and 12 churches in the West Bank and Israel over the past decade.

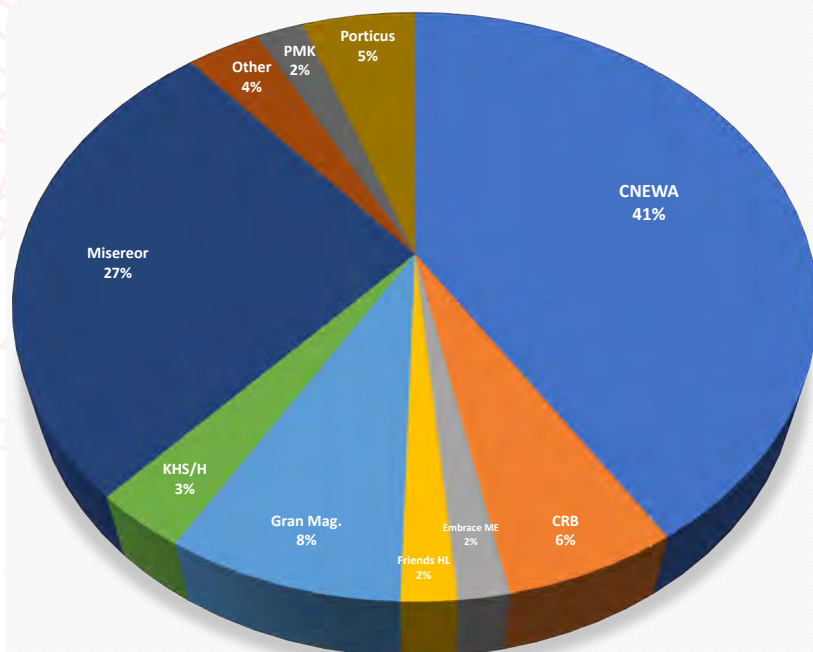
The pandemic has raised unemployment and poverty rates among Arab Israelis; according to local statistics, 1,980,309 Israelis live below the poverty line of which 702,832 are Arab Israelis and 346,397 of this population are Arab Israeli children. More attention needs to be given to the Arab community in Israel, especially in the form of leadership training and improving the relationship between Christian and Muslim youth that can foster cohesion within the community and help protect the Christian presence.

2020 Program Review

The outbreak of the highly contagious COVID-19 virus that has swept across the globe, had a significant impact on the populations in Israel and Palestine. The Israeli government locked down the country in efforts to contain the spread of the virus whereby local businesses, schools and other critical institutions were shutdown which plunged more than one million Israelis into unemployment. Following the discovery of coronavirus in Bethlehem Governorate in the beginning of March, the city was completely sealed and put under curfew to prevent the spread of the virus. The Palestinian Authority imposed heavy restrictions on the West Bank to contain the outbreak.

Unemployment has soared since the outbreak and economic hardship continues to exacerbate poverty and food insecurity for Palestinians. In 2020, PMP received a total of USD 283,400 in emergency aid that delivered food packages and coupons to families in need, protective gear for COVID-19 infections in hospitals and other healthcare centers in Gaza and the West Bank.

Other efforts helped local institutions cope with the economic crisis that resulted from government closures and restrictions on institutions during the pandemic. Donor aid, totaling USD 2.1 million supported ongoing programs at partner institutions enabling these programs to continue to deliver essential health/medical, education and social programs for Palestinians in



the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip; 40 percent of the aid supported projects in Bethlehem Governorate, where the Palestinian Christian presence is highest.

PMP also continued its programs to help deliver support for programs in Israel, totaling USD 189,300 for programs that support local Church institutions and community-based institutions in Israel; a majority of this aid supported projects within the communities of Ramleh and Jaffa where there is a strong Christian presence.

USD 2.4 million
Total emergency aid
and donor contributions/
grants

104 projects
implemented in
collaboration with local
partners in Palestine and
Israel

Emergency Intervention
USD 283,400
to Palestine for
COVID-19 Pandemic

Palestine
USD 2,150,000
(West Bank, East
Jerusalem, and the Gaza
Strip)

Israel
USD 189,300

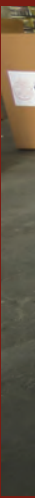
**40% of donor aid
for Palestine**
supported projects in
Bethlehem Governorate

**31% of donor aid
for Palestine**
supported projects in
the Gaza Strip

**40% of donor aid
for Israel**
supported projects in
the Ramleh & Jaffa

Emergency Aid and Relief – COVID 19

Prolonged closure of the West Bank had a significant economic impact on Bethlehem families. PMP continuously worked alongside local partners to assess the immediate needs of the local communities, prioritizing vulnerable households, the elderly and those caring for the elderly, families living below the poverty line who have already been devastated by the outbreak. Amid the unfolding crisis, in mid-March, PMP organized an emergency meeting with members of the Catholic Coordinating Aid Organizations (CCAO) to respond to the needs of vulnerable quarantined Bethlehem families. Through local partners in Bethlehem, the local mobilization efforts of partner community-based organizations as well as hundreds of local volunteers, enabled PMP to reach 198 families in need with no income, loss of employment and are under a real threat of living below the poverty line. With the funds, each family was provided with food coupons (between 150 NIS – 450 NIS) and /or payment for unpaid electricity bills. The project's food coupons enabled families to purchase high quality food products from select local supermarkets and grocery vendors as well as fresh produce from fruit, vegetable, and meat vendors. A total of 9 supermarkets and vendors and their staff were indirectly supported from the grant, as well as benefiting the local economy including farmers, food suppliers and butchers who supply the local supermarkets and vendors. Other families were provided with reasonable funds to cover unpaid electricity bills to avert electricity disconnection during the pandemic and lockdown. The project was especially significant given the overall closure of Bethlehem from other areas of the West Bank and Israel, the intercity lockdowns and overall economic instability which can easily put vulnerable households in dire situations, severe debt, and household poverty.



Other needs have evolved during the crisis, as local hospitals in East Jerusalem and Bethlehem required lifesaving medical equipment and salaries of medical staff at the only lab in Bethlehem authorized to conduct COVID-19 tests for the Governorate. This effort ensured that COVID-19 testing could continue as other West Bank hospitals were quickly overwhelmed.

PMP disbursed over 280,000 in emergency assistance for COVID related aid.

Chamber of Commerce & John Paul II Foundation's food package program and aid for poor families



NECC Mother and Child Clinics Emergency Support – Psychosocial Program

News of the COVID-19 virus that spread throughout the world, troubled the people of the Gaza Strip. There were serious concerns raised locally on how to tackle a virus in one of the most vulnerable and densely populated areas on the globe. Gaza reported its first COVID-19 case on March 22, 2020, among the returnees to the Gaza Strip. A health crisis was emerging among the population with limited ability to track and contain the virus, given that Gaza is densely crowded where social distancing is hard to implement, the economy is already precarious, and in a context, that has suffered from a 14-year blockade and deliberate de-development of Gaza.

At the beginning of March 2020 when the first cases were diagnosed, NECC Mother and Child Clinics and its non-emergency health care services were suspended for almost 7 weeks. Within one month, the lockdown measures were lifted, and service provision resumed but with limited capacity. NECC re-evaluated its health and psychosocial program activities to adhere to government regulations, decreasing the number of attendees to prevent cross-infection.

In total, 1,253 school children received psychosocial support sessions; 677 kindergarten children in particular, were reached, using the CBI approach and 1,097 mothers/women received psychosocial support sessions. NECC's psychosocial support provided beneficiaries with access to free counselling services during the project period.

The project also offered therapy kits for children and their families at home (due to the

spread of the coronavirus in neighborhoods throughout Gaza). NECC provided therapy kits with story books and coloring books, crayons, and brochures on different types of recreational activities to do at home. During the project period, children also received a symbolic gift during the counselling sessions to reward them for their participation.

NECC counsellors were able to measure the change (via telephone) in children's/ adult's behavior during the closure and in-person sessions once government regulations were lifted. The therapy sessions helped both children and adults improve their overall mental health and wellbeing.



From the Field

Psychosocial Support Program at NECC Mother and Child Clinics

Yousef is a 7-year-old from Shejaia area, who lives with 9 members of his family; his father is unemployed. His mother sought NECC's psychosocial consultations with a psychosocial counselor because of her son's stammer; because of this condition, Yousef suffers from low self-esteem. He has been bullied by other children and thus became isolated by his peers and unable to defend himself. When Yousef's mother attended the psychosocial sessions at a NECC clinic with her child, Yousef refused to cooperate. The counsellor conducted a SDQ assessment questionnaire, and the results indicated a behavioral problem in social settings which lead to behavioral and emotional issues. The NECC psychosocial counselor provided psychosocial guidance for the mother on how to help her child and referred Yousef to a speech therapist. The counselor also scheduled group psychosocial support sessions, and slowly integrated the child with a group of 5 children of the same age. The counsellor also involved the mother in the treatment plan. Altogether, there were 12 sessions of psychosocial support, guidance and counseling for Yousef and his mother. Once the therapy was complete,

Emergency Assistance				
No.	Partner Institution	Location	Subject	Total
1	Greek Catholic Melkite Church	Rafidia	Emergency assistance to poor families	\$8,200.00
2	Latin Parish of Beit Jala	Beit Jala	Emergency Support for poor families	\$15,000.00
3	Latin Parish of Beit Sahour	Beit Sahour	Emergency Support for poor families	\$9,800.00
4	Latin Parish of St. Catherine	Gaza	Emergency Support for poor families	\$21,000.00
5	John Paul II Foundation	Bethlehem	Emergency support for medical supplies	\$15,000.00
6	NECC	Gaza	Employment for Christian Yotuh	\$1,500.00
7	Birzeit Women Charitable Society	Birzeit	Emergency support for salaries	\$1,300.00
8	Latin Parish	Birzeit	Emergency support for working families	\$2,200.00
9	St. Joseph Sisters School	Bethlehem	Emergency support for teachers training	\$2,000.00
10	Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce	Bethlehem	Emergency Support for poor families	\$40,000.00
11	Latin Parish	Beit Jala	Emergency Support for poor families	\$14,000.00
12	Greek Melkite Catholic Parish	Rafidia	Emergency Support for poor families	\$9,498.17
13	Latin Parish	Birzeit	Emergency support for working families	\$5,000.00
14	Support five Christian schools	Bethlehem	Emergency support to sustain operations	\$81,073.52
15	Latin Parish of St. Catherine	Bethlehem	Emergency Support for poor families	\$15,000.00
16	Latin Parish of Our Lady of Fatima	Beit Sahour	Emergency Support for poor families	\$5,000.00
17	Latin Parish of the Annunciation	Beit Jala	Emergency Support for poor families	\$10,000.00
18	St. Joseph Sisters School	Bethlehem	Emergency support to poor students/tuition fees	\$6,600.00
19	Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate	Jerusalem	Emergency Support for poor families	\$3,200.00
20	Monastery Notre Dame du Mont Carmel	Haifa	Emergency support for the Cloistered Sisters	\$18,000.00
TOTAL				\$283,371.69

the counselor conducted a post assessment questionnaire as well as direct observation between the mother and the child, which revealed an overall improvement in the child. The mother thanked NECC team for these distinguished services they provided to support, and protect, vulnerable children in Gaza, and maintain their wellbeing.



Provide greater opportunities for decent employment

The challenges facing the dwindling Christian community in the Holy Land are multi-fold. Unemployment, especially after graduation, is high as there is a lack of job opportunities for graduates. In some areas such as the Gaza Strip, the job market is highly competitive.

PMP developed an educational guidance and employment program in partnership with local partners, that offers viable and temporary job opportunities for new Christian graduates. These programs aim to provide the opportunity for undergraduates to find work according to their skills and the job market after high school. Programs centered towards university graduates aim to find decent work opportunities, and at the same time, enhances job skills and experience that will meet the requirements of other potential employers. The program is especially significant since unemployment has increased since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rehabilitation of rain water cistern at the Benedictine Monastery on Mt. of Olives, Jerusalem





CEGAS

The Educational Guidance Program provided professional educational counselling services for 10th grade students who are attending five private Christian schools in East Jerusalem. The purpose of the project is to respond to the lack of educational counselling services, programs, and Arabic-speaking professionals within the Palestinian Christian East Jerusalem schools. PMP implemented the project in partnership with a Haifa-based organization, Committee for Educational Guidance for Arab Students (CEGAS), which helped students identify and build upon their academic and personal strengths and weaknesses.

The project was launched in October 2019 with scheduled workshops at two East Jerusalem Christian Schools. The COVID-19 pandemic that swept through Israel and Palestine, created difficulties for local Christian schools to safely continue providing an education for its students.

As a result of the pandemic, the project with CEGAS was immediately halted in early March 2020 following the general orders of the Israeli Ministry of Health. The PMP and CEGAS have jointly agreed to suspend the program until the next academic school year. The workshop/sessions reviewed topics on self-awareness, communication, decision-making and setting future career goals. A pre and post survey was given to the students, which measured knowledge and identified skills gained from the workshop as well as the students' opinions of the workshops and whether it was beneficial. A total of 77 students out of the 92 who participated in the workshop/sessions, completed the survey. The result of the survey is also valuable source of information that can be used to further validate PMP's approach in East Jerusalem education sector that there continues to be the need for life skills and career guidance programs at local schools in East Jerusalem, especially that the occupation continues to make a profound impact on the lives of young people (as verified by the 77 students who took the survey).



Kuchinate

Kuchinate was founded in 2011 by Dr. Diddy Mymin Kahn, clinical psychologist, and trauma specialist, together with Sister Azezet Habtezghi Kidane, member of the Comboni Missionary Sisters. Kuchinate, which means “crochet” in the Eritrean language of Tigrinya, is a local cooperative especially for asylum-seeking African women, located in South Tel Aviv. Most of the women are single mothers and more than 60% of them are survivors of trafficking and torture. The cooperative provides a holistic approach to the value of “caring for the stranger within our midst, offering psychosocial group therapy or individual therapy for the women. Kuchinate also teaches the women marketable skills, weaving colorful African baskets, African artwork, stationary and other items. Others work directly in sales, represent the cooperative and lead workshops. All earn a fair wage whereby all items sold in the Kuchinate studio and online, directly support the women.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the women of Kuchinate found themselves facing immense economic and financial responsibility for their entire families. With the generous donations of several foundations including CNEWA, totaling \$30,000, supported Kuchinate’s crisis response program which distributed food-vouchers, medicine, school supplies and rent-support to prevent hunger or homelessness among the women of Kuchinate and their families. The emergency program made sure that more than 300 women and their children and families (reaching at least 1,000 beneficiaries) of the Kuchinate network received the emergency aid in addition to updated and accurate information about government regulations and protection strategies against Covid-19.





Enhance and improve access to better public facilities

Many community-based organizations and Church institutions in Israel and Palestine face difficulties such as severe financial constraints and fundraising capabilities, which further limits the ability to provide and sustain services in the long-term. Additionally, these institutions provide quality healthcare programs to people of all nationalities, ethnicities, and religious groups without discrimination.

With the support of donors, PMP provided financial support in 2020, that enhanced and improved the facilities and services, despite COVID-19 restrictions imposed on the local population. Grants enabled these institutions to procure needed equipment and/or conduct rehabilitation work which have impacted the lives of thousands of people.

It is part of PMP's strategy to continue to support the work of Church organizations and institutions whose quality services are with Christian values and act as the "tools of evangelization". PMP has continued partnership with several Christian institutions that care for the marginalized and poor and for those who come from broken homes, have minimal to no access to health, education and social care and are in dire need of continued support.



Rehabilitation works at the Franciscan Sisters School, Jericho



Create greater opportunities to decent employment

No.	Partner Institution	Location	Subject	Total
1	Caritas Baby Hospital	Bethlehem	Employment for Christian Yotuh	\$9,810.00
2	Arab Orthodox Cultural Center	Gaza	Strategic planning for the employment of youth	\$13,480.00
3	Greek Melkite Catholic Bishop	Jerusalem	Minor rehabilitations for the homes of the Pat.	\$3,500.00
4	Benedictine Sisters	Jerusalem	Rehabilitation of the water cisterns	\$3,500.00
5	Franciscan Sisters	Jericho	Replace the doors	\$1,500.00
6	Al-Ahli Arab Hospital	Gaza	On the job training and employment	\$96,885.28
7	YMCA	Gaza	Micro-business program for entrepreneurs	\$18,110.00
8	Comboni Sisters, Kushinate Program	Tel Aviv	Support the asylum seeker women program	\$15,000.00
9	Home Notre Dame des Douleurs	Jerusalem	Repair damages caused by electrical shortage	\$6,000.00
			TOTAL	\$167,785.28

The Rehabilitation of PMECC

The project improved the facilities of the PMECC and its service to the community and its members. Before the project began, the center's furniture was run-down, space was limited, the fire alarm/smoke detection system and other emergency systems were outdated, the internet/WIFI was obsolete, and the electrical network and outlets required replacement as it prevented the center from using modern equipment. Moreover, local law required the installation of a security/intercom system for the protection of minors in a public space.

PMECC was officially inaugurated on January 20, 2020, just before the pandemic reached Bethlehem. The renovation project has changed the overall project situation and ensured the health and safety of thousands of children, youth who attend the center's activities annually in addition to the health and safety of staff. The new spacious center has reduced the need to utilize other workspaces for PMECC activities, reducing transportation costs and rent for these spaces. The project also generated around 51 job opportunities for local laborers from the Bethlehem and has supported suppliers and the local economy.





Rosary Sisters Nursery Bethlehem

As a public education institution in the care of children under the age of 5 years old, it was compulsory that the Rosary Sisters Nursery in Bethlehem meet modern building codes. Upon inspection of the Rosary Sisters Nursery earlier this year, the government offices cited building code violations which must be met to renew the school's license. Soon after the inspection took place, the COVID-19 pandemic abruptly hit Bethlehem and the West Bank, closing much of the public and private sectors. As a result, thousands of people have lost their jobs and household poverty increased. The number of schoolchildren attending the nursery also dropped to a total of 38 nursery school children, as breadwinners have lost their jobs and are unable to afford sending their children to the school. The Rosary Sisters faced with two difficult situations: the issue of the school license renewal and meeting government requirements, and the impact of COVID-19 pandemic. The Sisters believed that seeking donor financial aid to renovate the school was key to renewing the license and keeping the entire institution open. Most importantly, the nursery schoolchildren would have a safe learning environment in which to safely play and learn. The Sisters believed that by renovating the premise, more parents would enroll their children once the pandemic is over and people return to their jobs.

With donor support through PMP, the Rosary Sisters was able to renovate sections of the nursery including the bathroom, kitchen, playground, classrooms, and main corridor of the building. The project also supported a total of 10 local laborers with temporary wages while supporting 5 local sub-contractors (hiring 10 workers) and 4 major suppliers from the Bethlehem area. Supporting local laborers, contractors and suppliers and their families boosted household income while supporting Bethlehem's struggling economy due to the lockdown/closures and cessation of tourism, trade, and commerce. The school was officially inaugurated in October 2020. Despite the pandemic closures, the school was able to open to students for the 2020-2021 academic year.



Solar Energy Installations and Hydroponic Systems

PMP concluded another phase of green energy solar panel installations for 11 local Palestinian and Church-related institutions in 2020, part of a strategy to help local Palestinian institutions in East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza Strip reduce overhead costs. The systems provide a practical solution to rising utility costs as unpredictable changes arise from political conflict (which is a threat to livelihoods in the Middle East), pandemic (COVID-19), global market fluctuations and the effects of climate change (heatwaves causing greater electrical consumption which leads to power outages).

Israel is a leading country in the development of solar panel systems thus there are maintenance services and replacement parts and upkeep accessible and available, even though the systems have a long lifespan.

The project has made positive short-term and long-term impacts on the partner institutions that serve schoolchildren, the elderly, and special-needs children. These institutions have lost revenue (income) from parents and family members since the COVID-19 pandemic began (March 2020) and are unable to pay school tuition fees or other residential fees for elderly



residents of retirement homes. Additionally, the PA does not provide annual subsidies to local institutions or for local services. The project has provided an immediate and sustainable opportunity, especially during the pandemic, to continue to receive electricity without the threat of cut-offs and at the same time, save costs on utility bills.

The project will continue to help partner institutions save annual costs whereby these savings can be applied to help cover other operational costs, salaries, and rehabilitation projects of the institutions in the future.



Subsidized Institutions

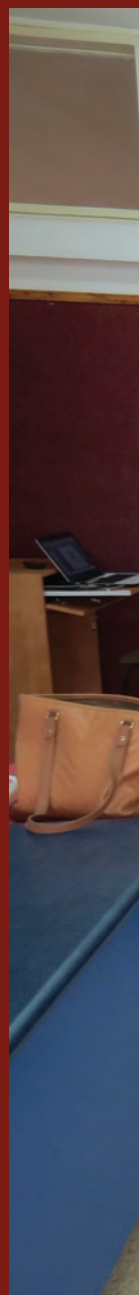
PMP maintains its commitment to support three public institutions in the health and education sectors: Near East Council of Churches Mother and Child Clinics (NECC) in Gaza, Pope Paul VI Ephpheta Institute for the Deaf in Bethlehem, and the Pontifical Mission Educational and Cultural Center (PMECC), also in Bethlehem.

Paul VI Ephpheta Institute, Bethlehem

In the Palestinian territories, it is estimated that 3% of the population have hearing impairments. Particularly, in some isolated villages, the percentage rises to 15% among residents, thus ranking among the highest in the world. This can almost entirely be attributed to genetic inheritance, rather than trauma or infection during childhood. In Palestine, about 40% of marriages are cross cousin marriages, which increases the chance that their children will have a genetic disorder.

Till today, hearing-impaired children in Palestine do not receive the proper care and assistance services they require, as there are very few institutions that exist and there is no government support system for children with disabilities. Deaf children and their families must find alternative educational and support services, which can be both costly and difficult, for the average Palestinian family. Ephpheta is operated by the Sisters of Saint Dorothy and is the only school that allows students to continue their formal education to the 12th grade. Ephpheta's staff are comprised of 32 speech therapists, audiologists, social workers and teachers trained in the field of oral deaf education and auditory-verbal therapy, provide 180 deaf students with a valuable education for life.

CNEWA's annual subsidy in 2020 supported the operations of the school, specifically all teacher's salaries in the preschool and early rehabilitation program, kindergarten, primary and lower secondary schooling, individualized speech therapy, social welfare assistance program and parental group training.





PMECC

The Pontifical Mission Educational and Cultural Center (PMECC) was established in 1970 as a small library to cater to all children and youth who lacked access to books and extracurricular programs. The Sisters and with the support of its team, created afterschool programs and a summer camp program for children and youth that uses 'hands-on learning approach' and tools in its programs which help school-aged children and youth to read and socialize. The center is the only library in Bethlehem Governorate that targets school-aged children, adolescents, and families. These activities cater the needs of both Christians and Muslims, young and adult alike, which foster social interaction and build relationships as they learn to do things together in an atmosphere of trust, respect, and responsibility, as well as appreciation and acceptance of what is different and unique.

CNEWA's support in 2020 contributed towards the operation of the center. This effort ensured that residents of Bethlehem and other areas of Hebron as well as other areas, have access to academic resources and educational activities that promote reading and knowledge which contribute towards the overall wellbeing of children.





NECC Mother and Child Clinics

The lack of a national healthcare system and lack of health insurance in Gaza puts 2 million Gaza residents at risk. NECC Mother and Child Clinics is part of a network of Gaza's non-government organizations and medical institutions that provide free healthcare and wellbeing programs; NECC specifically targets mothers and their children (especially those that are non-refugee and ineligible for medical insurance) and are often denied access to healthcare due to their non-refugee status. Medical prevention and care at NECC include prenatal and antenatal care are provided annually, including home follow-up visits, dental and access to educational workshops, which require donor funding annually.

Near East Council of Churches Committee for Refugees Work (NECCCRW)-the Gaza Area Committee is part of the Department of Service to the Palestine Refugees (DSPR). The DSPR is a department of the Middle East Council of Churches. NECCCRW Gaza is an integral part of the Palestinian Society and culture and operates with support from the churches, ecumenical and secular organizations.

CNEWA's support in 2020 contributed towards NECC's healthcare program only. This effort ensured that both mother and child had access to quality healthcare that supported healthy growth and development; the support covered the costs of iron supplements and vitamins, check-ups and lab testing for babies and children in addition to all pre-and post-natal care for women.





Donors & Benefactors

PMP is grateful to CNEWA, CNEWA Canada and other partner donors and benefactors that fund our work in the Holy Land. Without your generosity and support, our work would not be possible. Thank you!

- Diocese of Stockholm
- Children's Relief Bethlehem
- Embrace the Middle East
- Friends of the Holy Land
- Grand Magisterium
- Kindermissionswerk
- Knights of the Holy Sepulchre, Holland
- Manos Unidas
- Misereor



*Most Rev Richard Gagnon
Archdiocese of Winnipeg, Canada
visits the Orthodox School, Taybeh*



*CNEWA/PMP Director & Staff
Visit with the new Syrian Catholic
Patriarchal Vicar in Jerusalem
Mar Yacoub Afram Samaan*

*A drawing by a child in Gaza
at a psychosocial session
with the NECC in Gaza*

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