



Proposal to Improve Academic & Social-Emotional Skills for Gazan Refugee Children

Prepared for the Fidinam International Charity Foundation – February 2026

The Problem

In Cairo, Egypt, tens of thousands of Gazan families are trying to rebuild their lives after witnessing unspeakable tragedies... before being displaced. Due to the precarious political situation on the ground, families are trying to do so without regular access to schooling or familiar community networks; all whilst carrying the ongoing stress of loss, uncertainty, and separation.

For young children, those conditions don't just feel hard in the moment; they negatively shape their cognitive and emotional development.

Our Solution

Rise Alliance for Children's (Rise) Palestine initiative exists to restore what war and displacement have taken from Gazan children: safety, routine, play, communication and belonging. Rise's program in Cairo is led by Gazan refugees themselves—people who understand firsthand both the weight families are carrying, and exactly what children need to be able to cope *and* catch up both developmentally.

Rise does so in two ways: 1) Running a community-based learning program in Nasr City to create predictable spaces where children can learn, regulate, connect with peers, and reclaim their childhood; and 2) Partnering with Gazan-led education initiatives across Cairo to strengthen their early childhood programs and build in trauma-informed components into their daily practices.

Rise's Impact to Date

Rise Palestine directly supported 450+ Gazan children and families in 2025 out of our community-based learning space. The Nasr City center is designed for families whose children are not consistently attending school and may be relying on virtual learning—or in most cases, have not had access to school since the October 7th attacks and subsequent destruction of Gaza.

Families come to Rise's center for a half-day program that children attend with a parent or caregiver. This space is intentionally structured to provide what war and displacement steals:

- Predictable routines that help children feel safe;
- Guided play and group activities that rebuild cooperation, sharing, and emotional regulation;
- Language-rich interaction that supports vocabulary, expression, and confidence; and
- Small-group learning that strengthens early academic skills in a supportive setting.

For many children, this is the only place they can practice being with peers—learning how to take turns, manage frustration, and reconnect socially. For caregivers, it is a place to feel less alone, to receive support without judgment, and to learn simple strategies that make daily life calmer and more manageable.

Proposed Expansion

With the Foundation's support, Rise aims to double its impact in 2026, so that many more children can experience quality early learning, safe and secure adult support, and the kind of consistent routines that help young brains recover and grow. Our goal is to do so by expanding our services and training, modeling and coaching educators working within new schools that are opening their doors to Palestinian youth.

Rise Alliance for Children respectfully requests consideration of a \$15k gift from the Fidnam International Charity Foundation to support our work with Noor Al Amal School in Cairo and help transform the lives of its 175 students this year.

When Dr. Suhair fled Gaza in March 2024, she brought with her 30 years of experience as a teacher and school leader—and the conviction that Gazan children deserve a safe place to learn and heal. In Cairo, she met an Egyptian school director that was willing to share his building – opening its doors to Palestinian children for the first time.

Together they created a remarkable partnership, launched in September 2025: in the mornings, the classrooms belong to Gazan refugee children and their teachers; in the afternoons, the space reopens as an Egyptian school. From this act of collaboration, Noor Al Amal was born—a Gazan refugee-led school now serving 175 children in grades 1–4.

Rise Palestine is eager to formalize our own partnership with Dr. Suhair and her team of displaced teachers to provide training, coaching, and classroom learning materials that make instruction trauma-informed and language-rich. The Foundation's support will enable us to commit to doing so for a full 12 months—helping teachers and children rebuild trust and attention after the disruption of war. Little by little, children will begin to take risks again: to speak up, to join a game, to focus long enough to read, to laugh without bracing for what comes next.

Your critical contributions would join that of dozens of inspired individuals who are supporting the Rise Palestine Initiative – including Annie Berdy, Lisa Reinsberg, Kathryn and Ramzi Dudum, Maya Samadani, Orla Coleman, Sue Dudum and Tony Tamar – as well as the Geneva-based Foundation B8 of Hope.

Please find a project budget for a 12-month engagement with the the school attached for your review.

Thank you for your consideration!