

**Annual 2019**  
**The Foundation – Shatila’s Children and Youth Center (CYC)**

**Annual Report for the year 2019**

(our Swedish Postal Giro Acct. number is 59 84 28-1; Bankgiro 208-6254))

***What is the CYC?***

The CYC has existed since 1997. It was registered with the Lebanese authorities as a non-governmental organization in 2008, whereupon it was renamed “The Children & Youth Association”. The organization conducts its activities in Shatila, with an affiliated branch in the refugee camp Nahr el Bahred since the camp war there in 2007. CYC affords a meeting place for the refugee camp’s children and youth. During their leisure time children and youth are given help with their schoolwork and engaging in other meaningful activities that contribute to developing their capabilities.

Abu Moujahed is the head of the organization. Work locally is led by a number of selected young people who form a committee that plans activities together with Abu Moujahed. The activities are planned in meetings open to all participants. The direct involvement of children and youth in the planning process is a fundamental principle, applied equally for both girls and boys. The “Child-to-Child” method (Children help Children) is basic to the way activities are organized and carried out. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is the guideline when the content of various activities are decided upon.

Some of the organizations that support the work of the CYC are the following:

- in Lebanon, Unicef and Unesco
- in France, Chatila les enfants de l’espoire-France
- in England and Italy, organizations and individual persons

The CYC runs a Youth Hostel (Guest House) in Shatila, which also brings in funds for activities.

The CYC seethes with activities and energy – read about it on the website:

<https://cycshatila.org/> (insert the link in your browser).

***What is the Foundation?***

The supporting Foundation was established in the year 2000. Its purpose is to

- 1) support activities of the Children & Youth Association. The Foundation collects money from godparents and receives gifts and donations from individuals and organizations. The funds that are collected are sent as contributions to agree-upon activities to benefit all children and youth at the CYC.
- 2) disseminate information regarding the situation of children and youth in Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon.

The Foundation is non-partisan and independent (for more information see our website – *faddershatila.se*).

## THE YEAR 2019

The year can be described in part with notes from a very well visited godparents meeting (about 50 persons present) 22/9 when Abu Moujahed and his colleagues, Mohammad Al Latif and Rayan El Bachaoui from the CYC, responsible respectively for sports activities and treasurer.

Our Palestinian friends gave a picture of both darkness and hope. USA's and Israel's plans for the Middle East are meant to get rid of "the Palestinian problem" once and for all (the Kushner Plan). At the same time, among other things, the CYC continues to work for – against all odds – to create a bearable situation and hope for the future for children and youth in the refugee camps, Shatila and Nahr el Bared.

Abu Moujahed had summed up the ever more difficult situation in Lebanon and in the camps. A worrisome economic situation developed as the US/Trump-regime withdrew its fee from UNWRA, the special UN organization mandated to deal with school, health and the management of the camps. It is a matter of 300 of the total sum (about 360 million dollars) that is no longer paid out by the USA, as if the many million Palestinian refugees in the camps in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine – the West Bank and Gaza – suddenly could find new sources of funding and support.

In Lebanon the situation became increasingly chaotic during the past year. The rich had taken their money (dollars) out of the country and banks only paid smaller sums and extremely little in dollars. The value of the Lebanese pound declined immensely. Politically there was disorder, no Prime Minister was appointed and no government was in place. With at least one million Syrian refugees in the country and everyone's competition for job sit is a wonder that the ticking bomb that Lebanon is did not explode. Emigrate! Get out of here! Is the visible or hidden message. At the same time Syria, Iraq and Yemen are imploding. Countries that used to support us, says Abu Moujahed. Now we have to support them! And we all need to stand together against USA's plans – and therewith he also included European unity. "Otherwise the snake will eat all our children", he said. He also emphasized how important it is to care for the children's dignity so that poverty and misery won't take over. The CYC's resources are worse than ever – the large organizations like UNICEF and Save the Children no longer allocate support for the running of our endeavor – but one has to grit one's teeth, giving up is no alternative.

Palestinians that have employment organized demonstrations demanding that the new law must be cancelled. The law requires that Palestinians in Lebanon have to obtain work permits for the few jobs for which they have hitherto been eligible. The demonstrations took place in the refugee camps, their only location for activism, and were coordinated with strikes. Many work places lost their cheap labour, and some Palestinians unfortunately lost their jobs.

This state of affairs, where young people manifest involvement for their current and future situation pleased Abu Moujahed; likewise the fact that many young people throughout the world are beginning to protest, saying it is enough now – regarding the failure of the adult world; "the children are our future!".

In October the Lebanese youth began to demonstrate on the streets and city squares all across the country. They demanded that all corrupt and sectarian politicians should leave their leadership positions. The demonstrations were many and strong during the final quarter of the

year. They demanded a technocratization by introducing government by entirely new persons and with no connections to religion or corruption. They did not leave the streets, setting up barriers and tents. The demonstrations continued until the end of the year without a solution, and they also continued into the following year, 2020.

The refugees were not involved in the demonstrations, even though Palestinians, for example, make up 10% of the population and definitely need better conditions. They have grave experiences. Many a time earlier the camps have been attacked and refugees were blamed for being the country's root problem.

## **ACTIVITIES 2019**

The CYC's friends have a strong involvement for the cause of the refugee children in Shatila. Many disseminate knowledge regarding the CYC within their organizations, at work places and amongst circles of friends.

### **Visit from the CYC**

September 19-26 Abu Moujahed and his two colleagues Muhamad and Rayan visited Göteborg.

- a) 21/9 **Peace Run (Fredsløppet)** Slottsskogen. Muhamad and Rayan ran 5 km. The Foundation was present and informed about the CYC,
- b) 22/9 **Godparents** meeting. Lasse Fryk was the moderator and Rifah Saadi interpreted.
- c) Meeting at **Björkåfrihet**.
- d) 23/9 Meeting with **Teachers Union's** (LF) Student section representatives.
- e) 24/9 **Mixgården**. Annual meeting with the members. Discussion regarding continuing cooperation between the CYC and Mixgården.
- f) Meeting of the *Foundation's Board* with Abu Moujahed.
- g) Abu Moujahed talked about the CYC at a meeting of the local group of **Swedish Palestine Association** (Palestinagruppen) study circle.

### **Study trip to Lebanon in October**

About 20 persons participated in a trip to Lebanon organized by the longtime friends of Abu Moujahed, Arne Malmgren and Birgitta Elfström. The program was also designed with them. Several of the participants are godparents and half of them have worked as health care personnel within refugee camps in Lebanon. On our homepage, faddershatila.se there are four travel reports, all of which express great admiration for the work carried at in the CYC. All participants of the trip are now godparents for the CYC; this shows how being there provides one with first hand experience of the significance of economic and solidarity support for the center's activities.

### **More donors**

Abu Moujahed has expressed and we in the godparents organization too have understood that we must look into the possibility of finding economic support not only from individual godparents but also from solidarity organizations that comprehend the situation of the Palestinian refugees and the great need that exists to afford a better daily situation for the children and youth.

### **Godparents letters**

Periodically during the year in godparents letters we inform the godparents about developments in Lebanon, and about the CYC. Therewith we also refer to the CYC's homepage [cycshatila.org](http://cycshatila.org) where one can find plenty of pictures, plus information about ongoing activities at the Center.

### **Facebook**

The Foundation Shatila Children and Youth Center is the name of Facebook site, but it is sufficient to write Shatila and the page will appear. There you will find the best updates.

### **Our homepage *faddershatila.se***

Here you can find many important documents concerning ourselves and the CYC. The Annual Reports are deposited there, and also various texts/images regarding our activities. When you want to use and disseminate material – contact the Board – we will upon request send folders.

### **Information material**

The Board has a handsome information folder with texts and pictures regarding the godparents work and about the CYC.

### **THE FOUNDATION'S BOARD MEETINGS 2019**

9/3 Annual meeting

9/3 Board meeting

8/4 and 6/8 Board meeting; planning for the visit.

24/9 Board meeting with Abu Mujahed present.

14/10 A summing up meeting after the visit.

18/11 The Board's summing up after the visit from the CYC. Rifah Saadi and Lasse Fryk participated.

### **Economy 2019**

**(Calculations are shown in Swedish Crowns – SEK)**

#### **Payments to CYC:**

<i>Date</i>	<i>SEK</i>
<b>Year 2019</b>	<b>200 000</b>
Cf 2018	302 000
Cf 2017	305 000

Comment: during 2018 almost all the money accumulated until then on the account was sent to the CYC. Consequently the sum for 2019 decreased rather substantially.

#### **Income:**

<i>From godparents and other friends of the CYC</i>		
<b>Year 2019</b>	<b>241 994,60</b>	<b>SEK</b>
Cf 2018	240 928	SEK
<b>Cf 2017</b>	<b>231 485</b>	<b>SEK</b>

*Comment:* Generous gifts came from individuals as well as godparents and other friends of the CYC. We receive donations in connection with birthdays, funerals and other events. Artists donated works that we lotted out in an internet lottery.

**Expenses:**

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Plusgiro fees: 2 751,50 SEK

Authorized auditor: 5 850,00 SEK

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*Comment:* Maintaining a register, fees for bank transfers to Lebanon and annual cost for homepage (One.com) are paid with money received from sales of Enjoy-voucher booklets.

**Number of Godparents:**

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**Yr 2019: 96**

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Cf 2018: 103

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Cf 2017: 100

**Comment:** Behind each post aggregated to make up the total sum in the Income column (above) there exists either an individual or several godparents in one and the same family. Many have increased their monthly contribution and we have welcomed 13 new godparents during the year.

Regular contributions help the CYC in being able to predict the foundations collected sum when preparing its budget.

*General comment:*

97,7 % of the collected funds goes to the benefit of the CYC children and youth!

**Authorized Auditor:** Åsa Jeanson/Adact Revisor & Konsulter AB, Odinsgatan 9, 411 03 Göteborg.

**Dear godparents and friends of the CYC - Without your money life would be much tougher. The predictable sums they receive through godparenthood helps facilitate joy of life to the highest degree for children who in fact live in urban misery.**

The CYC has fantastic and generous godparents and many friends but need to have more. If we become many more the total contribution will also be greater; thus help us recruit more godparents! Urge others to donate money for the children at the CYC, Tell them about the work carried out there.

Ask someone to come and present a lecture and show pictures from the camps and the CYC. Ask us members of the board and we will gladly help organize such an arrangement.

A BIG AND WARM THANK YOU FOR ALL THE CONTRIBUTIONS THROUGHOUT 2019 – the money facilitates a better situation for the children and youth at the CYC as well as their belief in the future!

**The Foundation – Shatila's Children and Youth Center**  
Göteborg 2020-03-06

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Eva Hammad

Jane Mattsson

Néstor Verdinelli

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