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## PROJECT HOPE UPDATE

OCTOBER 2007

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Dear Supporter,



Our October 2007 Newsletter concludes yet another busy summer providing educational and recreational opportunities for underprivileged young

Palestinians. It is also our first attempt to use a new email format for distribution which we hope you will find more accessible. A .pdf version of this newsletter is available upon request.

Project Hope is a grassroots organization driven by everyday people. We welcome applications to volunteer with us year-round and rely on donations from people such as yourselves. Information is available on our website [www.projecthope.ps](http://www.projecthope.ps) or by emailing [projecthope@mail.com](mailto:projecthope@mail.com) for more information. You can also help out by forwarding this email to anyone you think might be interested.



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## I. CREATIVE ARTS

### A. Dome of the Rock Replica



Youth in Balata Refugee Camp created a miniature replica of the "Dome of the Rock." The Dome of the Rock, Al-Qubbat as-Sakahrah as it is called in Arabic, is one of the world's most beautiful and enduring architectural treasures, and the oldest Muslim building to have survived basically intact in its original form. It has remained essentially unchanged since being erected by the Arab Caliph Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan from 685 AD (AH 65) completed in 691 AD (AH 72 ).

### B. Shadow Theater



This project was made possible with funding from [Motorola](#). Nablus youth were given the chance to produce a shadow theater. On stage they undertook an expressive performance using light and shadows. Drama training can play an essential role in the well-being of a child because control over one's body and voice is a vital ingredient to ownership over one's life, confidence in oneself, and the understanding of one's own actions and interactions with others. What makes this project even more unique is its use and interpretation of an art form with along-standing historical tradition in the Middle East and Muslim world.

Shadow theater, which traditionally involved two-dimensional figures casting their shadows on a screen, had an important place throughout the Ottoman Empire. Turkish shadow theater appears to have been the result of borrowing from the Mameluke-derived shadow play, the latter of which ruled Egypt until conquered by the Ottoman Empire. Egyptian shadow theater in turn may have been brought back to Egypt by Arab traders in Java. It was a particularly attractive form of entertainment and storytelling, showing epic poems, political satires, myths and legends that were popular with people of the Middle East.

The youth were given as much autonomy as possible in organizing the theatre. They were selected from throughout the community. Project Hope provided necessary assistance such as youth recruitment and the purchase of training





materials. In the preparatory training, children were taught how to communicate through expressive body movement behind a curtain and were given a number of articles from the Convention of Children's Rights to help them develop sketches having to do with the subject matter. The Shadow Theatre is being shown throughout the schools and community centers after the holy month of Ramadan.

This activity was envisioned by an international volunteer to give you a chance to think creatively and take pride in their culture. The goal was to create something that could continue to provide inspiration once completed. It was constructed out of wire, plaster, cardboard and paper mache. The project was completed in the beginning of July and remains at the Balata Children's Center.



### C. Murals

Two international volunteers spearheaded mural painting activities at three different locations in the West Bank. One was created in Jericho, part of a summer camp involving all Nablus refugee camps and Al Aqbat Refugee Camp. The other two were created in Balata Refugee Camp at the Happy Childhood Center and the Balata Youth Center.

### II. English and French



Nablus' youth continue to benefit from remedial English classes provided by Project Hope. During the summer school holidays, international volunteers helped entertain youth in their respective centers in the refugee camps and Nablus' city center. The



French language program has developed thanks to funding from the French Consulate in Jerusalem in a joint project with the Happy Childhood Center of Balata Refugee Camp and also thanks to a handful of particularly astute teachers who have volunteered with the program. Their enthusiasm and talent enriched the classes and, most importantly, the lives of the children and youth participating.

### III. Special Activities

#### A. Leadership Workshops

Project Hope and the Happy Childhood club held youth leadership workshops in the Project Hope office over a 2 day period.

#### B. Summer Camps

Project Hope provided three volunteers to the French Cultural Center's Summer Camps, which provide Nablus' children with a safe and productive environment during summer months. Volunteers spent a total of 25 days as camp counselors, leading camp activities which included French language instruction, games and songs.

### IV. Friendly Football Match

In the month of August a French Teacher and coach from France organized a football match for youth between a combined team from the Balata and Askar refugee camps against a team from the neighboring town of Aazoon.



The game was played on Nablus' Municipal grounds. It was a close contest and an entertaining match with the combined Balata-Asker team winning 3-2 in a last 20min quarter. There have already been calls from the Aazoon side for a grudge match

In an act of generosity, a previous Project Hope International Volunteer, Rob Sears, donated a complete new kit, track suit and boots to one of Nablus' football teams, Ebel Sports. He played with the club in 2005 and raised the funds in the United Kingdom.

## Zatoun Fair Trade Palestinian Products in Canada and the United States

Zatoun ([www.zatoun.com](http://www.zatoun.com)) in Canada is one of Project Hope's most committed and largest donors. Funding comes through the sale of Zatoun's high quality Palestinian fair trade olive oil and olive oil soap products. Its products are available for sale in Canada and the United States. Visit Zatoun online to find out how to purchase these products.



## Zaytoun Fair Trade Palestinian Products in the United Kingdom

Zaytoun ([www.zaytoun.org](http://www.zaytoun.org)) in the United Kingdom is supporting Project Hope through the sale of olive oil soap from Nablus' ancient soap industry. Information available about their products is available on their website.



Support our work! We welcome volunteer applications throughout the year. Money, digital cameras and laptops are useful donations. Having extra digital cameras available would allow us to carry-out photography projects where children are able to learn to use a camera. Laptops facilitate our administration and creative activities.

Sincerely,

The Project Hope Team

[www.projecthope.ps](http://www.projecthope.ps)



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