

Welcome to JAEP Spring 2021 Newsletter

Some project news:

- We launched our new website last month. www.jaep.org.uk We plan to add the ability to make online donations in the next few months.
- Thank you to all who bought our Christmas cards during 2020, our takings were £2460, with a profit of £810. Most designs are still available to buy from our website!
- The 2021/2022 scholarship call has started. Al Quds University and Bethlehem University have received our application form. The deadline for completion is 7 June and we plan to interview using Skype at the beginning of July.
- We continue to give thanks that we were able to spend time with JAEP students in February 2020, returning home just two days before the West Bank was locked down.
- As we pass the first anniversary of the lockdown in the UK , we thought you would be interested to know how life has been for our students during this time of Covid in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT).

Vaccination programme in OPT upto the end of March 2021

Sources

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/03/1088262>

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-palestinians-vaccidUSKBN2BL24D>

To the end of March, first doses of have been received by 60% of the Israeli population and 1.3% of the OPT population.

OPT has received vaccine from; COVAX (World Health Organisation Global equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines) 60,000 doses; Russia and United Arab Emirates 70,000 doses; Israel 5000 doses; China 100,000 doses. Israel has vaccinated over 100,000 Palestinians who have permits to enter Israel.

This is enough to give one dose to 6.5% of the OPT population.

COVID restrictions therefore continue to impact greatly on JAEP students and their families.

An update from Dr. Safa Dhaher Director of Financial Aid at Al Quds University. Financial Aid organises our scholarship call each year and also trustee visits.



Palestinian strategies in the time of Covid-19

It looks a little bit strange the difference of the numbers of cases between Israel and the Palestinian Territories (West Bank and Gaza Strip (WBGS)) while they are geographically attached. COVID 19 started late in WBGS; the second week of March 2020. While Israel had many

cases by the late of February; that means we had it in very smaller numbers almost two weeks later. COVID 19 pandemic took two weeks to reach us in the West Bank and even longer to reach Gaza Strip; the first two cases in Gaza Strip were diagnosed on the 21st of March.

At the beginning the Palestinian government was rational and wise; we were the first in the region to announce “emergency status” as prevention is our first and last treatment. However, the government had to change its strategy several times to avoid a quick crash of the Palestinian economy especially the income that comes from those who works in Israel. ... The first strategy was that the Palestinian Authority took was to ask all workers to stay home and even asked Israel to seal any openings in the Separation Wall to prevent the smuggle of Palestinian workers to Israel. Other strategies were, if someone chose to continue working in Israel, he should make arrangements with his Israeli co-worker to sleep in his work place and not allowed to come back before a month and he should put himself in quarantine for fourteen days. However, the Palestinian government did not compensate the labourers, nor small business and gave half salary to those who works in the governmental institutions. Just two months later the Palestinian government fully changed the strategy from saving the people lives to save the economy with little attention to the safety measures in facing COVID 19 pandemic. Everyone went back to work as if the pandemic was a lie. Eventually the virus spread as fast as it should in such environment; now the case is different; The Palestinian government imposed a lockdown on the country several times

Some countries chose herd immunity to overcome the COVID 19 pandemic and save the economy, others’ strategy was social distancing. In Palestine we choose both.’

Vaccination plans

On 21 March, the PA (Palestinian Authority) started the first campaign for vaccination to its own people. They say there will be priorities: they started with those who are working in the health sector.

For Israel we know they almost finished the vaccination process to their citizens including Palestinians with Israeli passports and those of East Jerusalem except those who refused to take it. Israel finished her first campaign to vaccine Palestinian workers who work in Israel and in Israeli settlements in West Bank yesterday for the first dose and I was lucky with other members of my family to take it as my uncle works with the Israel’s to issue travel- permits to those who need to cross to East Jerusalem and Israel.

Impact on our students

The situation has impacted on our universities and the students. In March 2020 Universities went to electronic learning and remote education to implement social distancing, however this required a laptop for each student; for big families this became a financial problem especially that there was no

reduction of university fees. In addition to the difficulty of small spaces for the students who live in refugee camps (small houses and many siblings) which raise other problems caused by being trapped at home.

There are currently no plans for the students to return to campus for face to face teaching.

I hope this will end soon and we go to our normal life with all other difficulties that we usually had to face'

Safa H Dhafer 22 March 2021



Ibtihal (Midwifery) Top row second from left

As a person who lives in Dheisheh, I try to adapt with Covid-19 by wearing a mask when I go out, although the high numbers of persons who have Covid in the camp but by using preventive measures I can consider myself on the safe side. Also my life has changed because I spend most of my time in the home.

Hadell (Bio Chemistry) Bottom row third from the left

Our life has changed a lot with this epidemic and we are sad that many in the camp have Covid. All suffer from serious symptoms which has become very worrisome and sad.

Maha (Medicine) Middle row first from left

It has been a tough time in Dheisheh but we are doing our best to stay safe by adhering to health programmes as much as possible. Personally I feel bored because of the monotonous life we've been living because of this pandemic & I wish I could go out and have a change of pace. I have my own laptop to use to attend to lectures and lab work. I'm praying for this pandemic to end so we can get our normal lives back.

Jasmeen (Medicine) Middle row second from left

Praise be the God, online education didn't last long, when the electricity was cut it made it hard. Now I am in hospital, but dealing with patients is somewhat scary so that we are not a reason to transmit Covid to them, especially as it can be asymptomatic. But there is no escape and we must deal and live in these conditions, We ask God to heal everyone and end this pandemic.

Anwaar (Pharmacy) Middle row fourth from left

The coronavirus pandemic situation has become very difficult in all aspects whether economic, psychological, social or even educational. At first it was very difficult to adapt with e-learning, but today it becomes easier. Me and my family always try to stay at home because the situation in the camp has become alarming due to large numbers of cases of Covid. I hope that God will protect us and take away the scourge.

Aseel (Midwifery) Middle row third from left

I share a laptop with my brother, but sometimes I use my phone, and one of the difficulties we face is cutting the internet repeatedly while attending the lectures. With regard to practical training, we train in hospitals full of people infected with coronavirus, but we are trying to protect ourselves in order to fully complete the training and protect our families.