

CEPAL

Canadian-Palestinian
Educational Exchange



Taking Stock 2005

CEPAL's Annual Report



Dear CEPAL Supporter

Without your generous support CEPAL's educational activities in the Palestinian refugee camps of Bourj el-Barajneh, Shatila and Wavel would not have taken place in the summer of 2005. At a time when our commitment to assisting Palestinian students has become more important than ever, we are happy to report that our 9th year of operation was a highly successful one.

The current instability in Lebanon and the continued deterioration of conditions in the refugee camps makes CEPAL's grassroots level work towards the enhancement of the lives of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon an essential bridge of solidarity. We support non-governmental organisations in the refugee camps by providing Canadian volunteers to help implement their summer programs. Through living and working with Palestinian refugee families, Canadians from a variety of different academic and professional backgrounds are able to experience the daily lives of Palestinian refugees firsthand. In turn, CEPAL volunteers are able to share these experiences with a further diverse array of Canadians when they return, thereby raising awareness of the particular situation of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. CEPAL's summer program builds long-lasting bonds between the volunteers, as well as the Canadian communities in which they raise awareness, and the historically neglected and isolated Palestinian refugee communities in Lebanon.

Whether you supported the organization directly in its fundraising efforts, or sponsored Marie-Soleil, Marie-Eve, Carolina, Lindsey, Shauna, Mina, May, Phil or Renee, you helped make this important exchange possible. Thank you for your continued support and faith in CEPAL!

Sincerely,

All of us at CEPAL

CEPAL Canadian-Palestinian
Educational Exchange

CEPAL is a charitable organization, founded in 1996 by individuals who share a deep commitment to the respect of human dignity and the rights of all people. Our objective is to assist the Palestinian refugees in the pursuit of their basic human rights by increasing their access to education, and by raising public awareness in Canada about their struggle.

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Stateless in Lebanon for 57 Years



2005 marked the 57th anniversary of “al-Nakba” – the catastrophe – that created the first wave of Palestinian refugees and led to the continued suffering of their descendants. In Lebanon, the Palestinians’ half-century of exile has been marked by a 16 year saga of unimaginable violence, the 1975-1991 war, with the 1982 Israeli invasions, protracted sieges of Palestinian camps, and massacres. Since peace returned to Lebanon in 1991, the Lebanese have been busy reconstructing their country, buoyed by the hope of a better future. By contrast, the Palestinians in Lebanon have been facing ever-greater socio-economic and political pressures.



Photo by Shauna Trainor

Palestinians in Lebanon are not citizens of any country, have no civil rights, and are prohibited by law from employment in over 70 professions

Over 60% of Palestinian families in Lebanon live below the UN established poverty-line.

There is currently an educational crisis among the refugees in Lebanon.

Palestinians with good language skills have a better chance of obtaining entrance to universities, and of securing better paying jobs.

CEPAL’s Areas of Operation

Bourj el-Barajneh

- Approximately 20,405 registered Palestine refugees
- 293 families of whom 1,068 persons are registered as special hardship cases
- One UNRWA health centre with an average of 79 patients per day
- Two UNRWA elementary schools for 1,056 enrolled pupils in 2003/2004

Shatila Camp

- Approximately 12,235 registered Palestine refugees
- 500 families of whom 1,630 persons are registered as special hardship cases
- One UNRWA health centre with an average of 168 patients per day
- Seven UNRWA elementary schools for 2,511 enrolled pupils in 2003/2004

Wavel Camp

- Approximately 7,357 registered Palestine refugees
- 200 families of whom 908 persons are registered as special hardship cases
- One UNRWA health centre with an average of 65 patients per day
- One UNRWA elementary and one secondary school for 833 enrolled pupils in 2003/2004



Our Partners

Arab Resource Centre on Popular Arts (ARCPA) / Al Jana

ARCPA is a non-profit organisation founded in 1990. The centre works to both impart skills and instill self-confidence in Palestinian children and youth through art activities and a creative pedagogical technique known as “active learning.” It is a great resource for CEPAL volunteers and CEPAL has been working with ARCPA since 2000, when our volunteers offered English classes to a small group of students working as “Young Filmmakers/Journalists,” collecting and documenting information about their lives in the refugee camps.

Association Najdeh

Najdeh works primarily with women in low-income families and in the field of education. It provides social services and runs income-generating projects that help to support approximately 2,500 women and their families in the camps throughout Lebanon. CEPAL has been working with Najdeh since 1997. CEPAL works with Najdeh in Bourj el-Barajneh, Shatila and Wavel camps, as well as in the town of Taalabayya in the Bekaa valley.

Beit Atfal Assomoud/NISCVT

NISCVT was founded in 1976 to care for children who were orphaned following the siege and massacre of Tel al-Zataar camp. Following the 1982 massacres in Sabra/Shatila, NISCVT extended its program to provide support to fatherless families. As of December 1995, NISCVT was sponsoring 1,284 children from 762 families. NISCVT operates 11 centers throughout Lebanon. These centers provide educational, recreational, and cultural activities for children and youth; computer training for youth; training for income generation projects; mother-and-child programs, including sewing, embroidery and literacy; and camp-based social workers who work with the sponsored families. NISCVT also runs 8 kindergartens, a dental clinic in Shatila and Bourj el-Shamali and one mobile dental clinic.

Children and Youth Centre

The Children and Youth Centre was founded in the 1990s to serve the Shatila community and to provide a place for children and youth to come together and learn. It is an organization that places a great deal of importance on community work and strives to make its members sensitive to social justice issues by empowering them as youth with a variety of skills.

National Association for Vocational Training and Social Services (NAVTS)

The NAVTS is an independent social and educational institution established in 1983. It works to combat illiteracy, poverty and disease, helping young men and women in their career choices by offering intensive vocational training based on current market demands in Lebanon.

Popular Aid for Relief and Development (PARD)

PARD is an independent social and medical organization founded in 1985 by a group of experienced and specialized volunteers. The organization provides social and medical services to the displaced people and those with low-incomes in the camps and deprived areas.

United Nations Relief & Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)

UNRWA provides education, health and relief and social services to 3.8 million registered Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Last year, CEPAL volunteers worked with UNRWA in Shatila and Wavel camps. CEPAL volunteers offered two English and sports and nutrition classes to 30 students in Shatila, and two English classes to approximately 30 students in Wavel.

UNRWA Women's Centres

The Women's Centre is affiliated with UNRWA, though independent of it, and provides services particularly to women, although also accepts youth and men to its programs. It focuses extensively on practical training skills, as well as language and computer classes.

Women's Humanitarian Organization (WHO)

The Women's Humanitarian Organization was founded in 1993 to serve women and children living in Palestinian refugee camps. Its main areas of activities are: early childhood education (nursery); kindergarten (3-6 years old); vocational training; an elderly care program; a day-care program for the children of working mothers; an after-school tutorial program; a summer activities program for children and youth; physiotherapy; community disability project.

Our Resources



CEPAL maintains a website with stories from our volunteers who lived and worked in the refugee camps, our publications—such as our bi-annual newsletter—and transcripts from the talks given by our guest keynote speakers. In addition, our e-newsletters distribute updates from the refugee camps in Lebanon and information on upcoming CEPAL events and news for our members. Construction of a new version of the website is still on going and will offer more resources and better navigation.

We are currently recruiting for our overseas Summer Program, and will interview and select candidates by March 2006. Our recruitment selection committee and candidate interview committee are composed of CEPAL board members and volunteers who share a deep commitment to CEPAL's mandate. Our pre-departure orientation will be held in May, with our volunteer coordinators heading to Lebanon in June and our volunteer teachers in July.

Our Sustaining Members and Friends of CEPAL who provide the necessary financial support are essential to making CEPAL's programs a reality. Through their incredible generosity, our members and donors not only help CEPAL implement its current programs but also help CEPAL plan for the future.

Our largest event is the United Nations Day of Solidarity with Palestinian People, held in Parliament Hill each November. This year the United Nations Day of Solidarity was an opportunity for CEPAL's first screening of the documentary film *Voices*, filmed in the summer of 2005 by CEPAL volunteers. In addition, a Summer Program Launch was held in both Ottawa and Montreal, with guest speaker Terry Rempel from BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugees' Rights coming in from Palestine. Please continue to visit our website for details on upcoming events.



Najdeh class in Shatila. Photo by Carolina Vergara Lamarre, 2005

Our 2005 Summer Volunteers



Quotes from our volunteers of the 2005 Summer Program...

From top-left to bottom-right:

Renée Pinchero, May Wai-Sze Tam, Philippe Johnson, Shauna Trainor, Lindsey Marchessault, Carolina Vergara Lamarre, Mina Chung, Marie-Eve Fiset, Marie-Soleil Beaudoin



"Living the Wavel experience has been for me an exceptional human experience."

- Marie-Soleil

"Thanks for giving me the opportunity to go to Lebanon this summer. I had an amazing experience that I will never forget and one that has tied me to the Middle East and the Palestinian cause."

- Shauna Trainor

"It was an amazing experience for me. I miss the camp often. I feel lucky to have had the experience."

- Lindsey Marchessault

"Une expérience incroyablement significative. Qui a changé beaucoup de choses en moi et qui n'a pas terminé de le faire. Merci à vous, gens du board qui faites un excellent travail. Si j'ai paru critique dans mon rapport c'est d'abord parce que je trouve le travail du CEPAL extraordinaire et que j'ai à cœur l'amélioration du programme outremer. Vous pouvez compter sur moi. Merci pour tout encore une fois."

- Marie-Eve Fiset

"I have only been in Lebanon a week and a half and have only just started teaching; however I have already noticed how fast time passes while here in the camps. When I am not teaching, most of my free time is spent enjoying invitations to tea, coffee, dinner and engagement parties. Lesson planning therefore usually occurs late at night or in the wee hours of the morning. I already know how difficult it will be to leave all the wonderful people I have met and have yet to meet. Amidst the heat, the grime and the mazes that are Bourj al Barajneh and Shatila, I have found such a wonderful energy, strength and warmth among the Palestinians living here in the camps."

- Carolina Vergara



Highlights from 2005

Education Summer Program

- Seven volunteers and two coordinators sent to implement the Summer Program from June to August 2005.
- 18 classes served over 300 students in Bourj el-Barajneh and Shatila camps.
- 10 classes served over 113 students in Wavel camp.
- Raised \$24,101.46 for the operation of the Summer Program with the help of CEPAL's community of supporters in Canada, while volunteer teachers raised \$20,726.25.
- 2005 exhibition (shown on Parliament Hill at the annual United Nations Day of Solidarity with Palestinians held on November 29) composed of students' poems, photos, pictures and letters about their own lives and aspirations for the future.

Special Events and Fundraisers

CEPAL Volunteers and board members have been planning awareness-raising and fundraising events throughout the year. Events have taken place in Ottawa, Montreal, and Toronto.

Ottawa

- The Annual General Meeting voted in a new Board of Directors.
- The United Nations Day of Solidarity with a presentation of the film *Voices*, created by 2005 CEPAL volunteer Marie-Eve Fiset, in addition to brief presentations by each volunteer about their experiences during the summer.
- Summer Program Launch, included presentations from CEPAL's President, Vice President, Overseas Program Director and Lebanon Field Coordinator, as well as the vocals of Rula Shraydah. Keynote address was presented by Terry Rempel from BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights.
- Outdoor screening of the award winning film *The Olive Harvest*, written and directed by Hanna Elias.
- Screening of the feature film *Rana's Wedding* at the Ottawa Public Library Auditorium, with brief overview of CEPAL's role by president and vice-president.
- CEPAL picture and art gallery at film-screening and lecture with Mohamed Bakri, director and producer of the film *Jenin, Jenin* and MP Carolyn Parrish

Montreal

- Summer Program volunteer Marie-Eve Fiset presented an exhibition of drawings from her students followed by a presentation of her film, *Voices* to approximately 50 people at La bibliothèque Francine McKenzie.
- Summer Program volunteers Carolina Vergara and Lindsey Marchessault gave a presentation at the Montreal Public School Le Monnais of their photography project which took place in Shatila camp. They presented for two English as a Second Language classes of approximately 25 students, aged 10 -12, introducing basic

vocabulary, the concept of refugees, and why is it important that people understand the situation of Palestinian refugees.

- Pre-departure orientation sessions for Summer Program volunteers and coordinators.
- Summer Program Launch at Concordia University with keynote address by Terry Rempel from BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights and photo exhibition.

Toronto

- Summer Program volunteer Shauna Trainor organized a presentation for extended family and friends where approximately 30 people attended.

Awareness Raising and Communications

- Summer Program volunteer Carolina Vergara participated in an interview for CHIN radio station in Ottawa. Topics included what CEPAL is and does, why Carolina chose to volunteer with CEPAL, and what life was like for two months in the camps.
- Communications Director George Salhani was interviewed by CHIN radio in Ottawa to discuss CEPAL and the United Nations Day of Solidarity event.
- Treasurer Sami Al-Husseini discussed the film *Rana's Wedding* and CEPAL on the Rogers Cable television show *Daytime*.
- Summer Volunteer Mina Chung was interviewed regarding her reasons for volunteering with CEPAL on the show *Daytime* on Rogers Cable Television.
- Creation of the film *Voices* by Summer Program volunteer Marie-Eve Fiset which follows the daily lives of the volunteers and their students in the refugee camps of Lebanon.
- At the end of 2005, there are 534 subscribers to CEPAL's email distribution list.
- CEPAL adopted a new look for the Arch Newsletter and letterhead as well as a logo for posters and publications.

Other

- CEPAL acquired an online repository to facilitate in the management of information of the organization for years to come.

Special Summer Projects



This year's CEPAL team consisted of nine volunteers. Five volunteers worked in Bourj el-Barajneh and Shatila camps, while two volunteers lived and worked in Wavel camp. In addition, two coordinators—the Lebanon Field Coordinator and the Wavel Coordinator—managed the program in Lebanon.

CEPAL Summer Program volunteers coordinated a variety of special projects over the course of the 2005 Summer Program. As with other years, these projects included photography and art exhibits created by CEPAL students. The volunteers this year recommend these types of projects, in addition to drama workshops and internet classes to be carried forth into future years because they are very effective ways for teaching in the camps. Photography exhibits have also included photographs taken by CEPAL students themselves. In addition, one CEPAL volunteer created a film entitled *Voices*, which will be used for future awareness-raising events and recruitment activities.

Voices

Voices was filmed in three Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon: Wavel, Bourj el-Barajneh and Shatila. It relates the experience of nine CEPAL volunteers who went to Lebanon to teach English and French and to spent time with Palestinians in exile. Each volunteer was filmed in their classroom where the students, young and old, talk about themselves through different activities such as artistic activities, plays, poetry, storytelling, and photography. The filming of these activities was a way to show the viewer, through the eye of the camera, their lives and dreams of CEPAL's students.

The film was screened at CEPAL's annual United Nations Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on Parliament Hill on November 29, 2005 with over 100 people in attendance. The film will also be used for recruiting purposes, and all volunteers will receive a copy of the film to use for future awareness-raising endeavors. Feedback on the film has been very positive.

Environmental and Health Education

At the Women's Humanitarian Organization (WHO) the theme of environmental and health education was adopted, whereby CEPAL volunteers taught through eight different activities: 1) Students did research on health and environmental issues; 2) Students created workshops on health and environmental issues, including summer outings and a trip to the Healthy Eating Program being run in conjunction with the American University Beirut; 3) Painting and Murals; 4) Handicrafts; 5) Writing competitions; 6) Newspaper or journal of summer activities; 7) The compilation of a resource book from the summer activities; and 8) Role-playing and singing practice for the year-end show. This was a very successful theme and it has been recommended that CEPAL volunteers follow a similar strategy in the future.

Brevet Study Skills Workshop

Brevet skills training continued with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) classes. In Wavel, more formal English classes were provided that focused on building traditional skills such as reading, writing, and grammar, in preparation for the following

year's Brevet exam. Volunteers worked on things like writing organized essays and guessing new vocabulary by using contextual clues such as the surrounding words and the affixes. Having students choose a topic out of a hat, brainstorming words that were associated with that topic, and then writing in their journals about that topic for 15 minutes every couple of classes was thoroughly enjoyed by the students. At the end of the year, this work was put into a collective journal. The more formal content was mixed with a more informal project-based approach that incorporated these skills. One of the most successful projects was a webzine consisting of work the students had done throughout the summer.

Brevet skills workshops will continue to be offered by CEPAL volunteers. It has been recommended that Brevet classes be focused more on a combination of classes that incorporates Brevet type skills, especially reading and writing, with class projects such as magazines, newsletters and photography.

Mentorship Program

At the UNRWA Women's Centre in Wavel camp, CEPAL volunteer Marie-Soleil Beaudoin began a mentorship program with a grade 11 high school student from Wavel who had solid English skills. The student would attend all classes with Marie-Soleil in order to help with translation. Marie-Soleil would meet with the student to plan the week's activities. Marie-Soleil would ask the student what she thought the children would like to do and together they planned the classes. After each class they would also discuss how they thought the classes went.

Marie-Soleil said this relationship was very beneficial because there was an Arabic-English speaker on hand to explain details and to help with discipline of students, and this student's input with regard to what the children would enjoy and what they were capable of, given that the volunteer was a camp resident and participant in the camp's educational system, was invaluable. The mentorship program also allowed for a true exchange of skills and ideas between CEPAL and a member of the camp community; it also helped the student gain skills and strengthen her English.

The centre's director was so impressed with this arrangement that she has shown interest in expanding the mentorship program into a class that involves more volunteers. It has been recommended that the first class be a mixed English class with a tutor-training class. Young adults would be recruited by the centre to help out with the summer activities. They would work with the CEPAL volunteer teacher to help plan activities for the youth summer activity programs. This approach has many benefits: young adults from the camp gain skills in a kind of mentorship relationship with the CEPAL volunteer; they get to practice their English with the volunteer; this becomes more of an exchange between CEPAL and members of the camp; we will have the benefit of someone who knows the children and the school system that they are accustomed to; and we can offer a class to young adults who otherwise do not have any activities during the summer.



Financial Report 2005

Income

Chequing Account	2005	2004
Term Deposit	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
In-kind Donation	\$ 1,132.10	\$ 0.00
Sustaining Membership	\$ 9,026.00	\$ 10,347.94
General Membership contributions	\$ 1,501.39	\$ 1,738.44
Volunteer Sponsorship	\$ 20,726.25	\$ 20,235.43
Summer Program Sponsorship	\$ 3,200.00	\$ 3,053.38
Web Donations (Canada Helps)	\$ 430.00	\$ 814.92
Payroll Giving (United Way)	\$ 961.37	\$ 584.09
Events Sponsorship	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Events Donation	\$ 3,745.70	\$ 2,982.20
Raffles	\$ 237.00	\$ 499.00
Silent Auctions	\$ 0.00	\$ 300.00
T-shirt sales	\$ 60.00	\$ 105.00
Other Income	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 22,598.41
Income Gross Total	\$ 50,019.81	\$ 64,258.81



Najdeh class with summer volunteers Shauna Trainor and Marie-Eve Fiset, 2005

Expenses

Office and Administration	2005	2004
Rent	\$ 3,180.00	\$ 2,966.00
Postage and Copying	\$ 759.14	\$ 579.19
Printing, Publications and Supplies	\$ 462.60	\$ 138.03
Internet Services	\$ 405.54	\$ 389.86
Telephone	\$ 1,002.87	\$ 1,238.57
Legal Fees	\$ 135.00	\$ 0.00
Bank Fees	\$ 83.26	\$ 52.00
Board Travel	\$ 688.87	\$ 0.00
Other Expenses – Admin	\$ 0.00	\$ 744.96
NSF Cheques	\$ 275.00	\$ 3,000.00
	<u>\$ 6,992.28</u>	<u>\$ 9,108.61</u>
Summer Program	2005	2004
Recruitment and Interview Costs	\$ 1,116.01	\$ 720.06
Copying	\$ 702.96	\$ 0.00
Postage	\$ 117.96	\$ 0.00
Training	\$ 379.05	\$ 1,925.33
Airfare	\$ 14,550.54	\$ 14,831.72
Visas	\$ 476.50	\$ 495.00
Insurance	\$ 1,744.25	\$ 1,347.63
Overseas Stipends	\$ 14,268.54	\$ 18,000.00
Special Project Exhibition	\$ 494.91	\$ 0.00
Debriefing Costs	\$ 356.50	\$ 280.23
Other Expenses – Summer Program	\$ 465.10	\$ 100.00
	<u>\$ 34,672.32</u>	<u>\$ 37,699.97</u>
Special Events	2005	2004
Venue Expenses	\$ 1,129.65	\$ 0.00
Travel and Accommodation of Speaker	\$ 2,309.85	\$ 361.75
Refreshments & Food Expenses	\$ 305.91	\$ 150.63
Other Expenses – Special Events	\$ 1,226.11	\$ 528.24
	<u>\$ 4,971.52</u>	<u>\$ 1,040.62</u>
Gross Expense Total	<u>\$ 46,636.12</u>	<u>\$ 47,849.20</u>



How You Can Help

There are many ways to contribute to CEPAL's work and every bit helps. Whether you volunteer your time or generously donate funds, you are providing the gift of education to those who need it the most.

Volunteer

CEPAL is always looking for volunteers to help in the running of the organization. Whether it be in desktop publishing, book keeping, content contributing, or event organizing, your time and skills can be put to use for the benefit of CEPAL's programs.

Make a Donation

An online donation can be made via www.cepal.ca. Please note that our web donation form provider, CanadaHelps, will issue an electronic tax receipt. Giving to CEPAL online helps us save on mailing costs, allows more of your gift to go towards the program, and allows our volunteers to devote more of their time to running the program. If you cannot give online, you may write a cheque to CEPAL and mail it to CEPAL, third floor, 323 Chapel St, Ottawa, ON, K1N 7Z2.

You can give in the following ways:

- In memory of a loved one, or to commemorate a birthday, graduation, marriage or any other special occasion.
- Become a Friend of CEPAL or Sustaining Member.
- Make a monthly Commitment for 1 year. To donate to CEPAL on a monthly basis, you can mail us 12 post-dated cheques for monthly payments of \$10, \$15, \$25 or any amount you choose.
- Give to CEPAL through the United Way payroll deduction program. To donate to CEPAL through this campaign, list the name ("Canadian Palestinian Educational Exchange") and its charitable number "862761418 RR 0001" on the donation form.
- You can also help by donating the cost towards printing of posters, making CEPAL merchandise or donating items to be sold at auctions or placed in raffles.

As the Board of 2005, we thank you for
your continuing support of CEPAL

Kathy Ramsey - President
Sami Al-Hussieni - Treasurer
Shannon Dow - Overseas Program Director
George Salhani - Communications Director
Stella Andonoff - Education Director
Cyrine Hashash - Events Director
Christina Nitsou - In-Canada and Overseas Curriculum Coordinator