



The IBBY library in Beit Hanoun, April 2013



The same library in July 2014

## The IBBY libraries attacked

But in recent years there have been three devastating wars fought in this tiny, closed territory. And each time these children became invisible – they were “collateral damage”. Anything, apparently, can be done to them with impunity. There is a stated policy justifying targeted killings. Does this not qualify as a crime against humanity? And the 2014 war has been the cruelest for civilians, especially for the children.

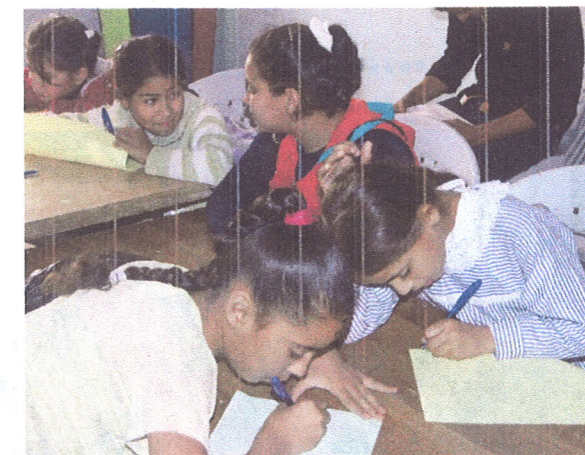
At dawn on Sunday, 18 July 2014 the Israeli Occupation forces targeted the al-Ataa Charitable Society resulting in the partial destruction of the building. The damage was great and among the projects that were destroyed was the IBBY library.

Again at dawn ten days later on Thursday 28 July, just before the humanitarian truce ended, the Israeli Occupation forces targeted the Society again: a direct rocket from an F16 that completely destroyed the whole building, levelling it to the ground. With this, Beit Hanoun lost an essential institution that had served all the sections of the Palestinian community: the children, women, young people and those with special needs.

There is no clear news from our library in Rafah as it is a military zone and no one is allowed to go there because of flooding and a serious sewage spill. However, we do know that several of the children who were library patrons have been killed.

We also know that the librarians and most of the children users of both these libraries have lost their homes and now have nowhere to live.

By the end of July it was reported that there are 182,604 internally displaced people in Gaza.



Since the beginning of the Israeli offensive, over 2,000 Palestinians have been killed, some 1,600 of whom are civilians, including at least 500 children and 300 women. Well over 10,000 others have been wounded. These are mostly civilians, many women and children. Thousands of houses have been completely or partially destroyed by Israeli shelling.

In April 2013 the IBBY President, Executive Director and Foundation President visited Gaza and saw just how much the young library users loved and depended on their libraries. They felt safe there. They could explore their feelings and find hope there. They could imagine a better life there. Today these children have been robbed of all that these libraries gave them.





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### Hope for the future

The IBBY community has **an obligation to rebuild these libraries**, and we will – re-housing and re-stocking them in order to try to bring these children who have lost so much help and **the knowledge that they are not alone**, not abandoned as they rebuild their lives once again. Perhaps with time they can regain a sense of safety and belief in the value of dialogue and hope for the future. **They will know that we care.**

### How to help

If you would like to support IBBY as it continues its valuable work in endeavouring to help children deal with these tragedies and give them a chance to emerge from them as whole, strong and as loving as possible, **please give generously.**

Account:	IBBY
Bank:	Basler Kantonalbank: BKBBCHBB
For donations in Swiss francs:	CH38 0077 0016 0566 2424 6
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Or go to the IBBY website:	<a href="http://www.ibby.org">www.ibby.org</a> > donations

Thank you!

IBBY Appeal September 2014

2014 has been a year  
notable for violence, conflict  
and destruction.



### IBBY libraries for the children of Gaza

This year we are seeing tragedies and unrest around the world every day. However, the fate of the children of Gaza stands out amongst these tragic events because they are trapped in a life that offers so little hope for change. It is a life of repeated warfare over which they have absolutely no control, and which for them can only be perceived as being about hate and oppression.

In the tradition of Lepman and calling on IBBY's experience of working with children who are traumatized, IBBY has been supporting two children's libraries in the Gaza Strip since 2008. One library was situated in the northern community of Beit Hanoun near the Israeli border, the other in the south in the town of Rafah, close to the border crossing with Egypt. The funding for the libraries came, to a great extent, from the great American children's author Katherine Paterson and her family foundation. Because people from the region cannot visit Gaza and the residents of the Gaza Strip are forbidden by the Israelis and Egyptians to travel, the librarians had to be trained long distance. The books selected by IBBY experts in the region took months to arrive, but they did finally reach Gaza and the libraries could at last open. The children from the local communities found a safe refuge – as long as there was no war raging around them.

### Books can build bridges of understanding and peace

The International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) was established shortly after the close of World War II with the hope of helping the world move beyond such things. IBBY's founder, Jella Lepman, believed that books could build bridges of understanding and peace between people. Children all over the world needed to know what all good readers know: you are not alone; others, even your enemies, have experiences, feelings and needs just like you do, and there is a whole world out there that you know little about.