



2018 | Newsletter | The Rehma Fund for Children

In our 5th annual newsletter, we reflect on how much has been accomplished on our journey; from the first hopeful effort to honor our little girl's memory, trusting that our desire to help other children would pave a path forward, to a fund whose projects have direct impact on children's healthcare opportunities in multiple countries.

The theme for 2018 has been to provide children with the vital support they need to recover from illness and trauma. We are proud to announce the Humanity Rises Rehma Child Life Center, scheduled to launch in 2019, in partnership with Humanity Rises, a refugee focused non-profit, to serve Rohingya children who have fled violence in Myanmar and are living in the Balukhali refugee camps in Bangladesh. The Rehma Child Life Center will provide critical pediatric mental health support, coupled with a basic schooling program that creates an opportunity for play and connection - key in helping children to begin to recover from the trauma they have experienced.



At The Indus Hospital (TIH), Karachi, the Psychosocial department has expanded its essential services to serve all pediatric patients, helping children and their families cope with difficult procedures, childhood cancer and sometimes, sadly, bereavement. In both these situations, the common thread is ensuring children have access to a secure environment where they can form trusted relationships with people trained to offer the psychological support they need.

Our other projects have continued to grow. The Vascular Anomalies Centers in Vietnam and at TIH in Pakistan continue to expand, treating more children and tackling more complicated cases than before. Our collaboration with Boston Children's Hospital's OPENPediatric program continues to focus on increasing awareness, training and prevention of Non-Accidental Trauma (NAT).

The mission of The Rehma Fund is to Equalize Access to Healthcare for All Children, Everywhere.

We are deeply grateful for the support of our donors, partner institutions, family and friends that allows us to pursue this mission. None of our work would be possible without them.

With heartfelt thanks,
Nada & Sameer

Humanity Rises is a refugee aid organization founded by Kel Kelly, an incredible humanitarian/mom of four/founder and CEO of a PR and social media agency, after her volunteer experience in 2016 at the Camp Moria refugee camp in Lesbos, Greece.



Kel visited the Balukhali refugee camp in October 2018 to do due diligence for the Humanity Rises Rehma Child Life Center.

In this picture, Kel is hugging a 12 year old Rohingya boy, Osman, who lost both his parents in the genocide violence launched by the Myanmar military. The shrapnel from the bomb that killed them left scars on Osman's face. When she asked Osman what he wanted to be when he grew up, he replied, "I don't know. Only God knows."

The Rehma Fund, in collaboration with Humanity Rises, is proud to announce the Humanity Rises Rehma Child Life Center, a new initiative to provide a desperately needed sense of 'normalcy' for Rohingya child refugees who have fled genocide in Myanmar and witnessed unimaginable violence.

In 2017 and 2018, over 700,000 of the 1.3m Rohingya in Myanmar have been driven out of the country and into refugee camps near Cox Bazaar in Bangladesh through what the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights described as a "textbook example of ethnic cleansing" and "the world's fastest-growing refugee crisis." Some estimates state that 43,000 children have lost either one or both parents and that more than half the refugees are children.

The conditions in the refugee camps are abysmal, with a lack of resources including food, clean water and suitable housing. Disease such as typhoid and cholera are rampant. Many of the children in the camp have witnessed unspeakable horror, including the razing of their villages and the murder, rape and/or torture of loved ones.



12 y.o. Osman, orphaned and injured by genocide

"We cannot expect Rohingya children to overcome the traumatic experiences they've suffered when exposed to further insecurity and fears of violence in the camps. The overwhelming message from these children is that they are afraid – afraid of wild animals, afraid of going to the toilet, afraid of being attacked while collecting firewood, afraid of being taken in the night, afraid of what the future holds. This is no way for a child to live, especially after having fled violence and horror in Myanmar. These children need ongoing support to help them feel more secure," said Mark Pierce, Country Director for Save the Children in Bangladesh.



The Humanity Rises Rehma Child Life Center, scheduled to launch in February 2019, will provide a safe space for children under the care of trained teachers and therapists to learn, play and benefit from individual mental health support where needed.

In addition to a 'school-like' building where lessons in basic literacy and numeracy will be taught, the children will have access to safe drinking water, gender-separated latrines, play areas and be provided with educational materials, school bags, uniforms and shoes. Group therapy and individualized mental health support will be conducted in a safe, separate space.

Safe schools and non-formal learning/play spaces are some of the most beneficial environments for children and youth during a period of uncertainty. To ensure that support is delivered in the most effective manner, the center will draw on the guidelines established by the International Network for Education (INEE) whose pediatric mental health standards are used by respected child-focused organizations including UNICEF.



Children have a right to feel safe and to spend as much time as they can learning and growing through play. It is how they acquire self-confidence and the skills that will help them navigate the tremendous challenges they face and to heal from the trauma they have experienced.

<http://www.humanityrises.org/>

In 2018, the Rehma Fund supported the Vietnam VAC's expansion to a second location and the 'Rehma Fellowship' continued to support pediatric dermatology internships for Vietnam VAC physicians.



The VAC in Saigon, Vietnam provides free medical care to treat a multitude of disfiguring skin diseases in underserved children. Based on the success of the center in Saigon, the VAC has now opened a second center in Danang City.

Psychosocial/Child Life services at The Indus Hospital have gone from strength to strength

Ayesha Noor, a shy, 6 year old, was diagnosed with osteosarcoma in her right leg. Her leg was amputated from her hip socket.

Ayesha was anxious and reluctant to undergo the procedure. After the amputation, Ayesha withdrew and stopped speaking.

During this time, Ayesha enrolled in the new, ground breaking hospital school “Indus Kay Sitaray” (Stars of Indus). In an encouraging, safe environment, Ayesha made friends, formed trusted relationships with her teachers and started to speak again. She expressed her desire to walk and dance like her friends.

On graduation day, Ayesha walked in the procession with her friends.



Today, Ayesha is a mentor for children who face limb amputations as part of their treatment. She shows them how she can walk, and even jump, with the help of her walker!

To date, three Vietnamese physicians on the Rehma Fellowship have traveled to the United States to train at Texas Childrens Hospital and Massachusetts General Hospital in pediatric anesthesiology, and surgical and pediatric dermatology.

Since inception in 2010, the VAC has provided life-changing treatment to approximately 7,000 children. Key to this success is supporting the training and education of local healthcare providers committed to treating underserved children in Saigon with the same outstanding level of care that they would receive at world-leading institutions.

<http://www.vietnamvac.org>

The Rehma Fund and The Indus Hospital (TIH) in Karachi collaborated to create the first of its kind Vascular Anomalies Center (VAC) and Child Life Program in Pakistan. In 2018, both programs expanded to serve more children and have become the standard of care for treating children with vascular anomalies and helping children cope with the psychological trauma of severe illness through counseling and play therapy.

The Indus Hospital (TIH) is a full-service hospital in Pakistan that provides premium healthcare completely free to people who typically don't have access to healthcare services, nor the means to pay for it.

The Rehma Fund's very first project is one we feel especially passionate about; establishing Pakistan's first Psychosocial (POD)/Child Life Services department for pediatric cancer patients. The program has been so successful, thanks to the dedicated and passionate staff led by Aneela Abbas, that it has expanded to serve all pediatric patients at TIH and is being considered for expansion to other locations.

Services offered to children include parent and child mentorship, support groups, therapeutic stories specifically developed and illustrated by a local author and illustrator, support offered to bereaved parents and a medical equipment familiarization program for children to help manage their anxiety related to procedures.

One of the biggest developments in 2018 was the initiation of a schooling program for children whose lives have been disrupted by their hospital stays; the first group of students graduated in

The Indus VAC has changed the lives of children affected by disfiguring vascular anomalies

Last year, we featured two little girls who were brought to the inaugural VAC clinic with hemangiomas.

After receiving care from the VAC for a year or more, the girls have made extraordinary progress.



Before/ after treatment



Vascular anomalies are disfiguring and can lead to social stigma and ostracism. These girls, and other children like them who have been treated at the Indus VAC, now have a chance at a normal life.

September 2018. The aim is to provide a level of 'normalcy' for the child and provide them with a quality education so they can more easily resume their formal schooling when they return home.



A young boy struggling with aggressive outbursts and who was refusing treatment drew this picture of his heart during an art therapy session showing how much anger (the red section) he felt about his powerlessness. Counselors helped him work through his anxiety and frustration before surgery. Today, he is on the last phase of chemotherapy.

We are excited about further initiatives that will enhance the support offered to pediatric patients and make them accessible to more children in need: palliative care services, an outdoor play area and training the motivated staff to diagnose and manage patients with special needs and learning disabilities.

Our second project with TIH, the Vascular Anomalies Center (VAC), started treating patients in early 2017 with a PDL Laser System, generously donated by Candela-Syneron. To date, the center has treated 150 children. The center conducts weekly VAC clinics and laser procedures and has, through close collaboration with the Vietnam VAC, another Rehma Fund partner organization, become adept at treating venous (vein related vs arterial) vascular anomalies that are responsive to drugs and laser-based treatment.

Going forward, a key focus will be to gain experience and expertise in more complex cases, including arterial malformations and those requiring interventional radiology approaches, thereby increasing the number of patients treated. The VAC at TIH is the only one of its kind in the country that offers the opportunity for disfigured children to receive life-changing treatment that will allow them to lead a life free of stigma. We hope to support the VAC's growth as it expands to serve more children in need of treatment.

<http://www.indushospital.org.pk/>

The Rehma Fund partnership with OPENPediatrics at Boston Children's Hospital is focused on driving utilization of existing Non Accidental Trauma (NAT) content as well as planning new content for the future.

The creation of the NAT module within OPENPediatrics, a unique online curriculum focused on helping clinicians identify and treat possible instances of abuse, was one of the first projects that was funded by the Rehma Fund in 2015. The content has been adapted to be used as Continuing Medical Education (CME) for healthcare providers and is now used in pediatric residency programs around the country as training material. To date, the NAT curriculum and video content has been used in 94 countries around the world.



In addition, in 2015, the Rehma Fund provided a five-year grant to fund an annual 'World Shared Practice Forum' on NAT. Building on the success of the 2016 and 2017 Forums, the 2018 Forum was led by Dr Jeanette Perez-Rosello of Boston Children's Hospital, on the topic of identifying bone-fractures and will be published by the end of 2018.

<http://www.openpediatrics.org/>

Rehma Fund in the UK & Canada

Rehma's aunts and uncles continued to raise money through charity runs and comedy drives to support local healthcare institutions focused on improving healthcare access for children.

How to Support Us

Donations can be made via credit card at www.rehmafund.org.

Checks should be made out to the National Philanthropic Trust. Please reference The Rehma Fund for Children in the memo line. Checks should be mailed to:

The J.P. Morgan Charitable Giving Fund
c/o National Philanthropic Trust
165 Township Line Road, Suite 150
Jenkintown, PA 19046

Donations to the US fund are tax-deductible in the USA. The Rehma Fund for Children in the USA is administered by the National Philanthropic Trust, a 501(c)(3) public charity dedicated to increasing philanthropy in society.