



PALESTINE REFUGEES TODAY

AN UNRWA NEWSLETTER • FEB. 1967 • NO. 52



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THE COVER PICTURE shows a refugee student nurse, supervised by a staff nurse, assisting on ward duty at Augusta Victoria Hospital in Jerusalem, Jordan. All photographs and other pictures and information material about the work of UNRWA, may be obtained from the address on the last page.

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Pledging Conference Reveals a Critical Deficit

The magnitude of the financial crisis facing UNRWA was confirmed by a recent pledging conference at which government contributions announced for 1967 fell substantially short of the amount needed by the Agency to maintain its present level of assistance to the Palestine refugees.

At the meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee of the General Assembly for the Announcement of Voluntary Contributions to UNRWA, held in December at United Nations Headquarters in New York, 32 governments pledged contributions totalling \$18.7 million towards UNRWA's operations in 1967. The contributions announced by a number of governments were for the period mid-1966 to mid-1967. On the presumption that the latter will make similar contributions for the last half of 1967, the total of contributions from those governments that made pledges at the conference would amount to approximately \$30.4 million. The Agency expects that its total income may amount to some \$35 million, which would include unannounced contributions from governments that have been regular contributors in the past, possible special governmental contributions, and non-governmental and private donations.

UNRWA's budget for 1967, as presented to the General Assembly, called for an expenditure of \$39.3 million to maintain its present programme of assistance. At a meeting of the UNRWA Advisory Commission in Beirut in February, the Agency announced that it hoped to achieve additional economies that would reduce its expenditure by \$800,000. Thus UNRWA would face a deficit of some \$3.5 million.

Commissioner-General's Statement to Pledging Conference

Before the announcement of the pledges at the conference, the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, Mr. Laurence Michelmore, made a statement in which he said that, if additional funds were not received and the anticipated deficit materialized, "the only alternative would be to reduce some services to the refugees."

"This is a course that no officer in UNRWA would like to contemplate," continued the Commissioner-General, "for we believe that any curtailment would bring hardship and suffering to the refugees, and threaten still more their already precarious existence. The effects on stability in the area could also be very serious."

The Commissioner-General said that UNRWA had similarly faced a serious problem in 1966; but that the urgent appeal issued by the General Assembly had led to further assistance from a number of countries. "I would like once again to express deep gratitude to the governments which helped in this emergency," added Mr. Michelmore.

The Commissioner-General pointed out that the increasing demand for education was the major cause for the increase in UNRWA's budget for 1967. He reported that school enrolment for the 1966-67 academic year increased by 5 per cent in the elementary schools and by 10 per cent in the preparatory schools (see article and statistics on page 4).

Government Contributions Announced

As in previous years, the Governments of the United States and the United Kingdom pledged the largest sums, although both Governments decreased their contributions. The United States pledged \$22.2 million of which the Agency, in accordance with its normal practice, allocated \$11.1 million to its fiscal year 1966, and the same amount to 1967. With a similar contribution for 1967-68, the total United States contribution for 1967 would amount to \$22.2 million, a reduction of \$350,000 from the amount provided in 1966. The United States pledge carried the stipulation that its contribution should not exceed 70 per cent of the contributions from all governments.

The Government of the United Kingdom pledged \$4.5 million, 55 per cent of which was to be used in UNRWA's education, vocational training and health programmes. UNRWA received \$5 million from the United Kingdom in 1966.

At mid-January, pledges from other governments, including pledges not announced at the pledging conference, were as follows (in the equivalent of U.S. dollars) :

Australia, \$100,800 (for the first half of 1967); Austria, \$10,000; Belgium, \$30,000; Canada, \$1,111,111; Ceylon, \$1,000; China, \$20,000 (an increase of \$10,000); Denmark, \$39,820 (for the first half of 1967; an increase); the Federal Republic of Germany, \$750,000 (an increase of 50 per cent over the previous year); Finland, \$15,000 (an increase of \$5,000); France, approximately \$244,000 (an increase); Ghana, \$3,000; Greece, \$15,000; India, \$13,333; Iran, \$6,000; Ireland, \$25,000; Jamaica, \$560; Japan, \$40,000, (an increase of \$10,000); Kuwait, \$220,000; Libya, \$100,000; Malaysia, \$1,500; Morocco, \$24,701 (an increase of \$5,000); the Netherlands, approximately \$120,000 (an increase); Niger, \$500; Norway, \$84,000 (an increase of \$7,000); Pakistan, \$20,964; Philippines, \$1,250; Saudi Arabia, \$297,000; Sweden, \$200,000 (approximately); Switzerland, \$104,652; Tunisia, \$4,000; Turkey, \$8,000, and Yugoslavia, \$20,000.

In addition to announced governmental pledges, the Agency expects to credit the four "host" Governments (Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Arab Republic) with contributions totalling \$660,000, principally in the form of local services.



QUARTER OF A MILLION REFUGEE CHILDREN IN SCHOOL

The number of refugee children attending school now exceeds a quarter of a million. Figures for the 1966-67 academic year show that 191,447 children are enrolled in the 441 UNRWA/UNESCO schools. A further 60,000 refugee children attend government or private schools, most of them with grants from UNRWA, making the total more than 251,000.

As in recent years, there was a considerable increase in the number of children in UNRWA/UNESCO schools. Compared with the previous year's figures, attendance in elementary schools rose by 5 per cent, and in preparatory schools by 10 per cent. As the Commissioner-General reported to delegates attending the Pledging Conference in New York (see page 1), the rate of increase in school enrolment was once again substantially larger than the rate of increase in population, and was the major cause of the increase in UNRWA's budget for 1967. A year ago, there were 180,054 refugee children enrolled in 431 UNRWA/UNESCO schools.

Enrolment figures for 1966-67 are as follows:

Country	Elementary	Preparatory	Boys	Girls	Total
Jordan	67,608	13,331	43,941	36,998	80,939
Gaza	41,969	16,956	30,986	27,939	58,925
Lebanon	21,298	3,544	14,037	10,805	24,842
Syria	20,025	6,716	15,428	11,313	26,741
Total	150,900	40,547	104,392	87,055	191,447

Once again, there was a significant increase in the number of girls attending school. This year, more than 45 per cent of the children in UNRWA/UNESCO schools are girls, an increase of almost one per cent. This has been a continuing trend, reflecting the changing status of women in the area; 10 years ago, only 34 per cent of the pupils in UNRWA/UNESCO schools were girls, and 15 years ago the figure was only 23 per cent.

* * *

AMBITION ATTAINED

Noura knew her vocation: she wanted to be a midwife. But her father would not hear of it. Like many of the older generation in the Middle East, he considered it improper for a girl to work outside the home -- an attitude that, until very recently, applied particularly to the nursing profession. Noura's pleas met with repeated refusals.

Noura, an 18-year-old refugee girl who lived with her parents in a refugee camp in Lebanon, took her problem to UNRWA's Field Nursing Officer who was then a Swedish nurse who had been working for some years in Lebanon. The nurse discovered that the main cause of the father's objection was that Noura would

have to shed her "tarha", the traditional head-piece worn by many Arab women, and wear a uniform, which he considered immodest.

So, the Swedish nurse dressed up in a borrowed student midwife's uniform and went to visit Noura's family. The father greeted her cordially, and they spent some time chatting over the cups of thick Arabic coffee with which guests are customarily served. As she got up to leave, the nurse asked: "Do you like my uniform? You don't find it immodest, do you?"

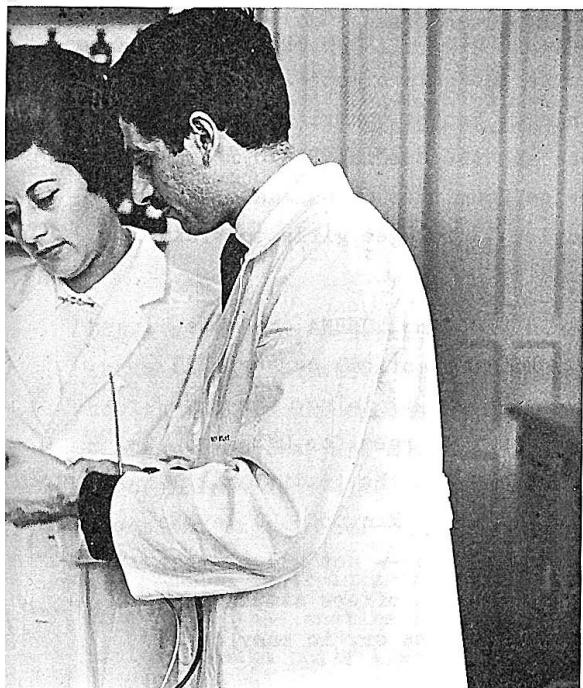
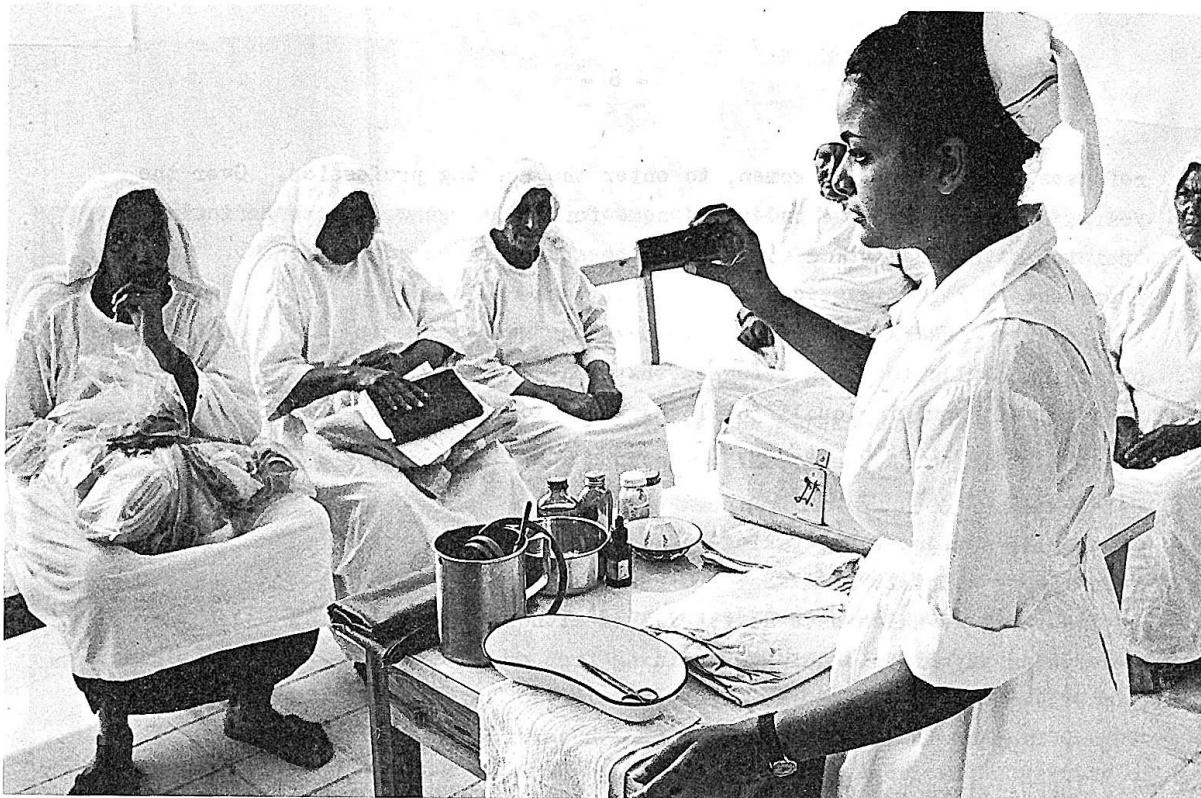
"Not at all," replied the father.

"Well, this is the uniform that Noura will wear if she goes into training," said the nurse.

Noura's father laughed and soon gave in. Shortly afterwards, Noura entered a midwifery course, and joined the staff of UNRWA after completing her training. Thus Noura attained her ambition.

The pictures. Page 7 : Dayahs receiving in-service training in Gaza. Right: An instructor demonstrates to Miss Amal Habib in a microbiology laboratory, during her post-basic public health course. On study leave from her position as Field Nursing Officer in Syria, Miss Habib is attending the American University of Beirut on an UNRWA scholarship.

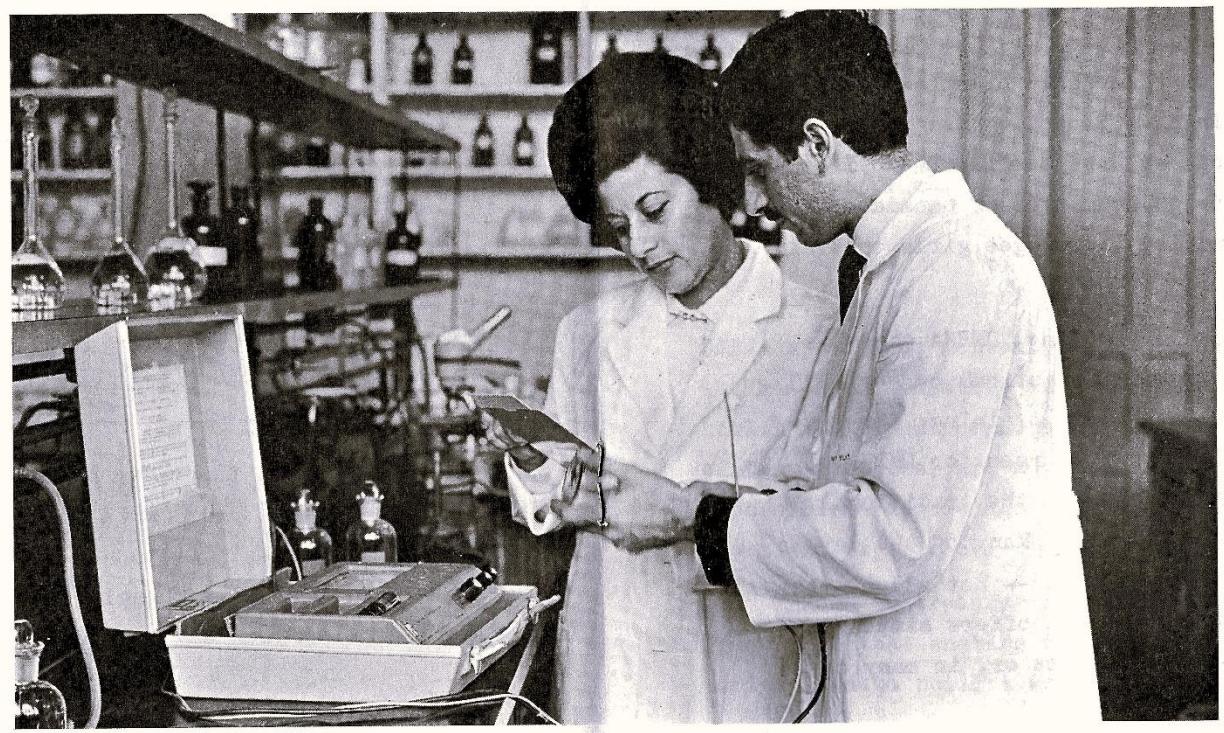
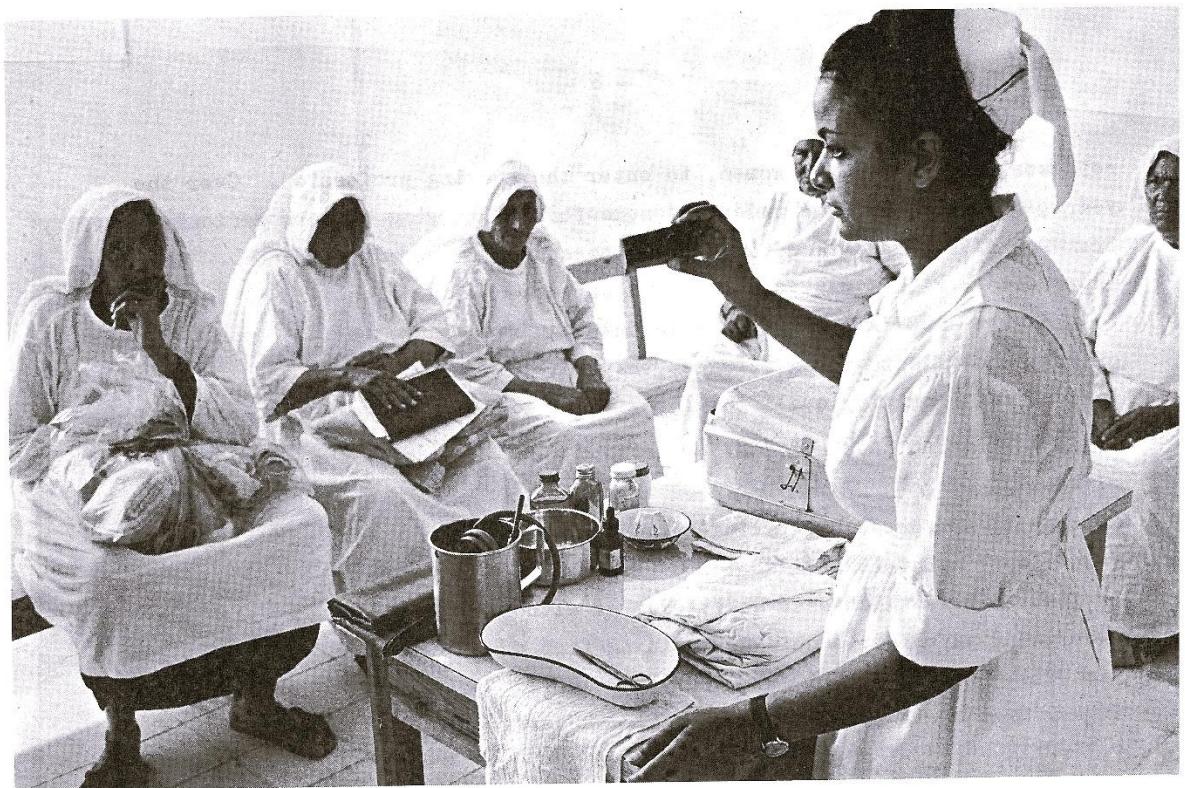




Although the incident occurred some years ago, the attitude of Noura's father towards a professional career for young women is still common in many parts of the Middle East, where until only recently the women's place was in the home and relatively few girls went to school.

But the status of women in the Arab world is changing. Girls are going to school in ever-increasing numbers, paving the way for them to enter professional careers, including midwifery and nursing. As in the case of Noura's father, attitudes are also changing towards the nursing profession, and it is coming to be regarded as a respected career for girls. With higher standards and higher entrance requirements than in the past, schools of nursing are today attracting better-educated girls. Also there are now possibilities for graduate nurses to continue their professional education in the Middle East through post-basic training, qualifying them for senior posts.

Since its early years of operation, UNRWA has been active in assisting young



refugees, men as well as women, to enter the nursing profession. Over the years, 685 refugees have undergone some form of nursing or para-medical training with UNRWA's aid, and 46 are presently undergoing training. This represents a significant contribution of para-medical professional skills to the area. UNRWA's nursing training programmes serve the dual purpose of giving skills to young refugees that enable them to become self-supporting, and of providing qualified local staff to work within the Agency's health service for the refugees.

More than 300 young refugees have graduated as nurses with UNRWA's aid and another 43 are presently taking basic training in nursing schools in the four "host" countries. Almost 100 young men and women have received training in institutions which have admitted them without charge; 36 are presently undergoing psychiatric nursing training free of charge. Post-basic training has been given to 21 refugee nurses, qualifying them for supervisory positions, many of them within UNRWA's health service.

UNRWA gives basic nursing training to young men and women both by subsidising schools of nursing and by granting individual scholarships to selected students at nonsubsidised institutions. Funds for this are very limited, but many refugees have been trained with the help of special donations to UNRWA for nursing and midwifery training. Recent contributions have come from Sweden, through the Swedish Red Cross and the Swedish Radio Broadcasting Committee, and from the Unitarian Service Committee of Canada. Earlier contributions from the United Kingdom enabled 21 refugee girls to train as nurses in England.

In addition to sending refugees to schools of nursing, UNRWA conducts its own courses which have trained 85 midwives and 55 practical nurses; 213 nurses employed by UNRWA have received special ophthalmic training, for eye diseases are common in the area. There are refresher courses for UNRWA staff, and an in-service training programme for "dayahs", the traditional midwives who perform most deliveries in the Middle East. Many of the dayahs have no formal training, and use knowledge and traditions -- not all of them good -- handed down from generation to generation. UNRWA offers simple in-service training and provides them with midwifery supplies or, in many cases,



Miss Georgette Abed (right), UNRWA's Area Nurse in the Hebron area of Jordan, talks with a staff nurse and with refugee patients during a visit to the UNRWA clinic in Dheisheh refugee camp near Bethlehem. Miss Abed, a refugee herself, took post-training in public health nursing with a scholarship from UNRWA.

UNRWA's clinics, maternity centres and rehydration/nutrition centres; in addition she has administrative duties and responsibility for the in-service training of health staff. Throughout UNRWA's area of operation, locally recruited nurses, many of them refugees, are moving into key positions — something that would have been impossible a decade ago when there were few Arab nurses with the necessary qualifications and experience.

Thanks to training received with UNRWA's assistance, many refugees have found a vocation that enables them both to serve their fellow refugees and their communities, and to build a worthwhile future for themselves.

* * *

IN BRIEF

Palestinian to head UNRWA's School Education Division.

Mr. Wajed Mustakim, a Palestinian educator who has been a staff member of UNESCO at its Paris Headquarters since 1952, has returned to serve the Palestine refugees as Chief of UNRWA's School Education Division. Mr. Mustakim's appointment was made by the Director-General of UNESCO with the agreement of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA. Mr. Mustakim is familiar with the joint UNRWA/UNESCO education programme for the refugees, having spent a year on loan from UNESCO as UNRWA's Field Education Officer in the Gaza Strip. As Chief of the School Education Division, Mr. Mustakim has responsibility for the elementary and preparatory cycles of education, including the operation of 441 UNRWA/UNESCO schools.

Visitors

Mr. René Maheu, the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), made a recent visit to the Middle East, during which he held discussions with senior UNRWA officials in Beirut, and inspected various aspects of the education programme for the refugees, which is a joint operation of UNRWA and UNESCO.

Mrs. Helvi Sipila, Chairman of the Finnish Refugee Council and First Vice-President of Zonta International, made a return visit to UNRWA's Ramallah Girls' Training Centre in Jordan, and also saw the proposed site of a new re-hydration/nutrition centre to be built and operated in Nuweimeh refugee camp, Jericho, with funds from Finland.

Miss Ruth Tomlinson, a representative and a former Vice-President of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women, met eight of the refugee girls "adopted" by that organization, during her recent visit to Beirut. The girls had all received training at the Ramallah Girls' Training Centre with scholarships from the International Federation or from various national Federations of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, and are now working as secretaries in Beirut.

Professor A.J. Mayer, of Harvard University (United States) and currently a Visiting Professor of Economics at the American University of Beirut, revisited the Gaza Strip in January, where he had served in 1948 as a member of the American Friends' Service Committee, which provided relief services for the refugees prior to the establishment of UNRWA.

Mr. Daniel van der Meulen, a distinguished ethnologist and an ex-Minister of the Netherlands Government and presently the Chairman of the International Christian Peace Movement, accompanied by Mr. Oman Bijleveld, also an ethnologist, visited refugee camps and UNRWA's training centres at Siblin, Lebanon.

Contributions

A Bergen (Norway) shoe merchant, Rolf Bjerkvig, and his family had a project that kept them busy during the long winter evenings -- collecting, repairing and cleaning used shoes for refugees. More than 2,600 pairs of shoes were collected, mostly by the Bjerkvig family and their friends, in a campaign sponsored by the Norwegian Save the Children Fund. Each pair was checked and cleaned or repaired by the Bjerkvig family before shipment. The shoes, most of them for children, will be distributed to needy refugees in the Gaza Strip.

The Norwegian Refugee Council has made a further contribution of \$8,000 to provide scholarships for 16 young men in the blacksmith/welding course at UNRWA's Gaza Vocational Training Centre. A previous donation from the Norwegian Refugee Council enabled UNRWA to expand this centre in 1962.

Another donation from Norway consists of 920 kilos (almost one ton) of used clothing that was gathered under the direction of Col. Mirco Rolf, a former Commander of the Swedish Battalion of the United Nations Emergency Force in the Gaza Strip.

The cost of one year's operation of UNRWA's rehydration/nutrition centres in Amman New Camp and in Ein Sultan Camp in Jordan has been covered by a contribution of £1,800 (\$5,040) from the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (Oxfam) in the United Kingdom.

The Women's Auxiliary of UNRWA has contributed some \$3,000 to finance the operation of a number of UNRWA Women's Activities Centres and Play Centres during 1967.

Officers and men of the Canadian Contingent of the United Nations Emergency Force in the Gaza Strip have made a contribution of some 1,200 Egyptian pounds (approximately \$2,800) as a result of their annual Christmas collection in aid of the refugees. The funds will be used to build new shelters for refugees presently living in old army barracks and to operate play centres for refugee children.

Further contributions from various Federations of Business and Professional Women's Clubs have provided another four scholarships for refugee girls attending UNRWA's Ramallah Girls' Training Centre in Jordan. The Federation of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has donated two scholarships (\$1,000) and the International Federation and the New Zealand Federation have each given one scholarship (\$500).

A donation of \$1,950 from the Canadian Red Cross Youth will finance the operation of three UNRWA play centres for refugee children for one year. These play centres provide opportunities for healthy and constructive recreation otherwise not available in the crowded refugee camps. The Red Cross Youth in Saskatchewan has contributed \$500 to provide a scholarship for a trainee at UNRWA's Siblin Vocational Training Centre in Lebanon.

Entraide Socialiste Belge has contributed a further \$1,500 towards the operating costs of UNRWA's new rehydration/nutrition centre in Jabalia refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. The rehydration/nutrition centre will form part of a new health centre being built with funds from Belgium, including substantial contributions from Entraide Socialiste.

Mr. A.E. Huntsinger, of Texas, (United States) has made a contribution of \$1,500 to be applied to the cost of a new health centre in Rafah refugee camp in the Gaza Strip.

The Milwaukee Chapter of the Organization of Arab Students (United States), has provided a two-year scholarship for a trainee at UNRWA's Kalandia Vocational Training Centre in Jordan through its donation of \$1,000.

Dr. John H. Davis, (United States), who served as Commissioner-General of UNRWA from 1959 to 1963, has made a donation of \$500 for a scholarship for a refugee girl at the Ramallah Girls' Training Centre in Jordan. It was under Dr. Davis' leadership that UNRWA's vocational training programme was expanded four-fold.

Other \$500 scholarships have been contributed by the Collegiate School for Girls, Blackpool (United Kingdom), Dr. R.P. Baird (Canada), Mrs. Helvi Sipila, Chairman of the Finnish Refugee Council, Zonta International District XIII, the Victorian Division of the United Nations Association of Australia, and by five donors in the Federal Republic of Germany: Dr. Hermann Abe, the Director of the Deutsche Bank in Frankfurt, the Berliner Bank, Bayerische Motoren Werke A.G., Munich, Index-Werke Hahn and Tessky, Esslingen, and the Near East Representation of German Banks.

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UNRWA GRADUATES: TWO TALES

There is no shortage of "success stories" of the graduates of UNRWA's training centres. More than 7,500 young refugees have passed through the training centres, and most are now at work throughout the Middle East, with some further afield. Reports come in from far and wide witnessing to their success and to the wide dispersion of the graduates in their places of employment. Among the recent reports are these two tales:

Adnan Abdallah, one of the first graduates of UNRWA's Wadi Seer Vocational Training Centre in Jordan, returned to the centre recently. He told the principal how, after graduating from the plasterer/tilesetter's course, he managed to get to Germany, where he found a good job. One day, he was in a shop when two other Arabs entered. Chatting over coffee, Adnan found that they were building contractors from Libya. Hearing that Adnan was an experienced tilesetter and plasterer, they offered him a job. Adnan went to Libya, where he worked for a good salary. With the expansion of their business, the contractors soon needed more skilled

builders. Adnan immediately suggested Wadi Seer Graduates. The purpose of his return visit to Wadi Seer was to recruit six builders and five plasterer/tilesetters from the centre.

From Kuwait comes the report of an incident that concerns an instructor from UNRWA's Kalandia Vocational Training Centre, also in Jordan. The instructor was returning last year from a trip to Kuwait, some 800 miles from Jerusalem, across the desert. He and his wife had just left Kuwait when their car broke down, stranding them in the desert. Fortunately, there was a pumping station a little distance away, part of the network of pipelines that links the oil installations of the area. A worker from the pumping station came to see what the trouble was. The young man immediately recognized the instructor, and introduced himself as a graduate from the diesel mechanics course at Kalandia. He went back to the pumping station and returned with four other men employed there -- all Kalandia graduates. They pushed the car to the station, sent another car to Kuwait for a spare part, made the repairs, and sent the instructor and his wife safely on their way.

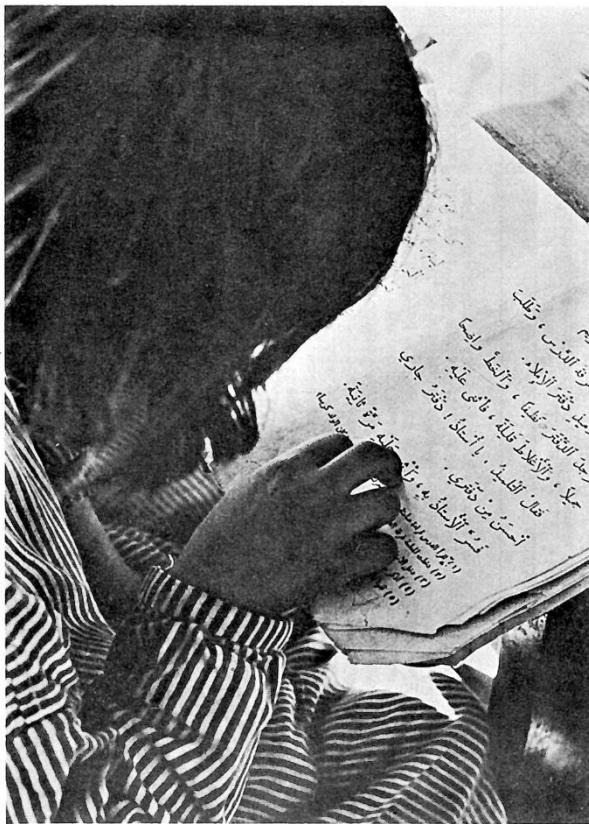
The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) is a subsidiary organ of the United Nations, established by the General Assembly in December 1949. In co-operation with the host governments (Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, and the United Arab Republic) it carries out its two-fold task: first: to provide food, health and welfare services, and shelter for the refugees; second: to provide education and training to refugee children and young adults including general education, vocational and teacher training, and university scholarships.

UNRWA began work in May 1950 and its mandate expires on 30 June 1969.

Further information may be obtained from :

UNRWA Liaison Office,
United Nations,
New York, N.Y.,
United States.

UNRWA Public Information Office,
Museitbeh Quarter,
Beirut,
Lebanon



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UNITED STATES COMMITTEE FOR REFUGEES
20 West 40th Street
New York, New York 10018

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PAID
NEW YORK, N. Y.
PERMIT NO. 2126

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42701-March 1967-3,650