



PALESTINE REFUGEES TODAY

An UNRWA Newsletter

SPECIAL ISSUE FOR EUROPE

March 1962



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The photographs in this Newsletter, and other photographs of Arab refugees, may be obtained from the Public Information Office, UNRWA, UNESCO Building, Beirut, Lebanon, or from the UNRWA Liaison Office, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland.

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF UNRWA

This special Supplement to our UNRWA Newsletter gives examples of the many ways in which Europe has helped the Palestine refugees. The European nations have contributed generously and in a wide variety of ways towards the welfare of the Palestine Arab refugees, and this aid has been invaluable to UNRWA in its work of caring for these 1,000,000 unfortunate persons.

Last year Europe came forward in heartwarming response to World Refugee Year, giving funds which have played a great part in enabling UNRWA to carry out its plans for the expansion of vocational training facilities for the young refugees. New training centres have been built and are still going up and the Agency is moving rapidly towards its goal of an output of over 2,000 graduates a year as compared with 300 in 1960.

Encouraged by the generosity with which Europe has responded in the past to the needs of the Palestine Arab refugees, UNRWA is once again turning to the people and governments of Europe, asking them to help in meeting the cost of the training and maintenance of the young refugees attending the new vocational training and expanded centres. The Agency is launching a drive to raise \$1 million in 1962 and again in 1963 in the form of 2,000 individual training scholarships of \$500 each. These scholarships will cover the cost of a year's study in one of UNRWA's vocational or teacher training centres. The "adopted" trainees will become personally known to those who are aiding them, for we propose to furnish each donor with a photograph of the trainee and a short story of his or her life and also to arrange for the trainee to write from time to time to his or her sponsor. We hope that by these means it will be possible to convey to the donors some idea of how much their generosity means to individual young refugees and their families.

It is my earnest hope that as many as possible of the younger refugees can be equipped, through the continued generosity of donors in Europe, to enter their adult life with the possibility, wherever they may live in future, of putting their skills and their latent talents to constructive use.

John H. Davis
The Director of UNRWA

EUROPEAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNRWA
IN WORLD REFUGEE YEAR

During World Refugee Year, the Agency made a special appeal to all those concerned about the plight of the Palestine Arab refugees in order to raise - over and above its ordinary budget - the funds necessary to build new vocational training schools, award university scholarships and give loans and grants to make refugee families independent. In response to this appeal, the various European national committees and voluntary agencies sent the following donations:

<u>Donors</u> -----	<u>Contribution</u> <u>(in dollars)</u>	<u>Earmarked</u> <u>for</u>
Danish National Committee	145,000	Expansion of the Teacher Training Centre at Ramallah
Federal German National Committee	215,000	Expansion of the Vocational Training Centre at Damascus
	25,000	Equipment of the Vocational Training Centre at Sibliin, Lebanon
Greek Government	2,500	Vocational training
Holy See	11,965	Clinics and youth welfare centres
Irish Red Cross	42,005	Wadi Seer vocational training scholarships
Netherlands National Committee	30,676	Training and rehabilitation handicapped children
Norwegian National Committee	100,000 **	Expansion of Gaza Vocational Training Centre
St. John's Ambulance Brigade (UK)	2,380	Training courses for nurses
Staff Association of the U.N. European Office and Specialized Agencies	4,673	University scholarships

** \$20,000 of this total represents the proceeds of the Stamp Plan.

<u>Donors</u> -----	<u>Contribution</u> <u>(in dollars)</u>	<u>Earmarked</u> <u>for</u>
Swedish Broadcasting Relief Committee	25,600	Training courses for nurses and pharmacists.
Swedish Red Cross	20,000	Siblin V.T.C. - Lebanon.
United Kingdom National Committee	586,000	Damascus Vocational Training Centre.
	310,000	Vocational and Teacher Training Centre for Girls (Jordan).
	343,000	Loans and grants.

In addition, 15 European countries were among the 72 States which participated in the Stamp Plan jointly organized by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and UNRWA in order to publicize World Refugee Year and raise money from the sale of commemorative stamps. These countries were Belgium, Finland, France, Federal Germany, Greece, the Holy See, Iceland, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey. UNRWA has so far received \$266,600 as its share of the receipts of this campaign.

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EUROPEAN DONORS GIVE SCHOLARSHIPS
TO YOUNG REFUGEES

World Refugee Year contributions have made it possible for UNRWA to build or expand vocational training centres for young Arab refugees in the four host countries of Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Gaza Strip. Since funds for operating these centres are not yet assured, Dr. John H. Davis, the Director of UNRWA, is now appealing for 2,000 vocational training scholarships in each of the years 1962 and 1963. The scholarship covers tuition, board and lodging, tools, necessary clothing and pocket money for each trainee, and costs \$500 or £180, for one year.

Any contribution, whatever its size, is welcome and UNRWA is prepared to furnish those who give complete \$500 scholarships with pictures and short "histories" of their adopted trainees.

Europe has already responded generously to the appeal. The Irish Red Cross has sponsored two full classes for two years at the Wadi Seer Vocational Training Centre in Jordan; the British United Nations Association has given 28 one year scholarships at the same centre; the Norwegian Government has sponsored a class of 14 carpenter wood machinists at the Gaza Vocational Training Centre and the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief is giving a total of 66 one year scholarships at the Damascus Vocational Training Centre. The Finnish Girl Guides' Association has indicated that it wishes to sponsor three refugee girls at the combined teacher training and vocational training centre for women, now being built in Jordan. Private donors in European countries are sponsoring individual boys and girls training as teachers, sheet metal workers, office workers and fitter machinists. By the beginning of March 1962, a total of just under \$100,000 had been given or pledged for vocational scholarships by organizations and individuals in Europe.

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THE UNRWA LIAISON OFFICE IN EUROPE

A year ago, UNRWA opened a liaison office in Europe at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, headquarters of the European Office of the United Nations.

The aim of the Liaison Office is to keep the Agency in regular contact with the European governments and organizations which show their interest in the Palestine refugees by their financial or other support.

The Liaison Office is directed by Mr. Raymond Courvoisier (Switzerland), formerly UNRWA Representative in Lebanon and in the United Arab Republic.

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SWISS GOVERNMENT DONATES 300 TONS OF DRY MILK

The Swiss Government has offered UNRWA donations of 300 tons of powdered whole milk and 14 tons of processed cheese which have been gratefully accepted by the Director of the Agency, Dr. John H. Davis. The milk will be reconstituted in the Agency's milk centres and given to babies under one year of age.

Both these donations are over and above the regular annual contributions of the Swiss Government to UNRWA's programme. Switzerland's 1961 contribution (\$35,046) is being used to build four new clinics and an infant health centre, badly needed to replace worn-out installations that have been used hitherto.

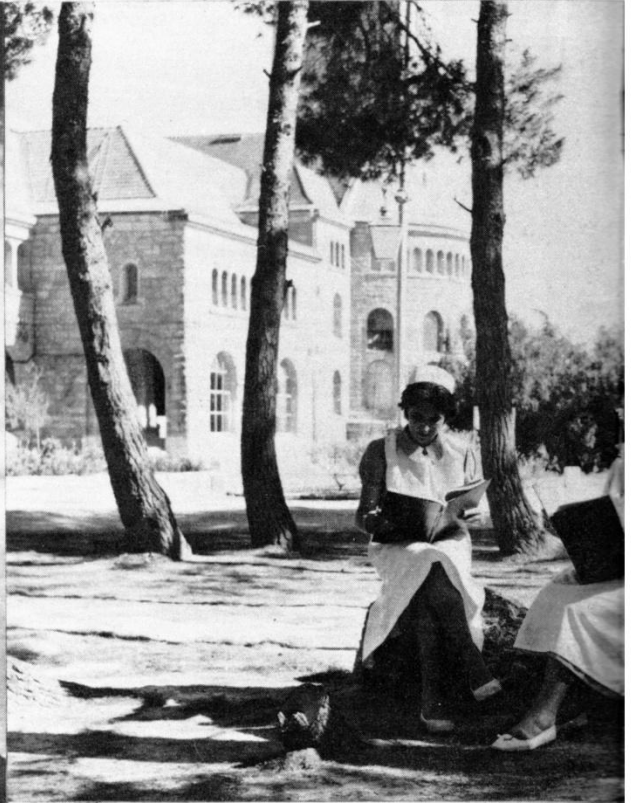
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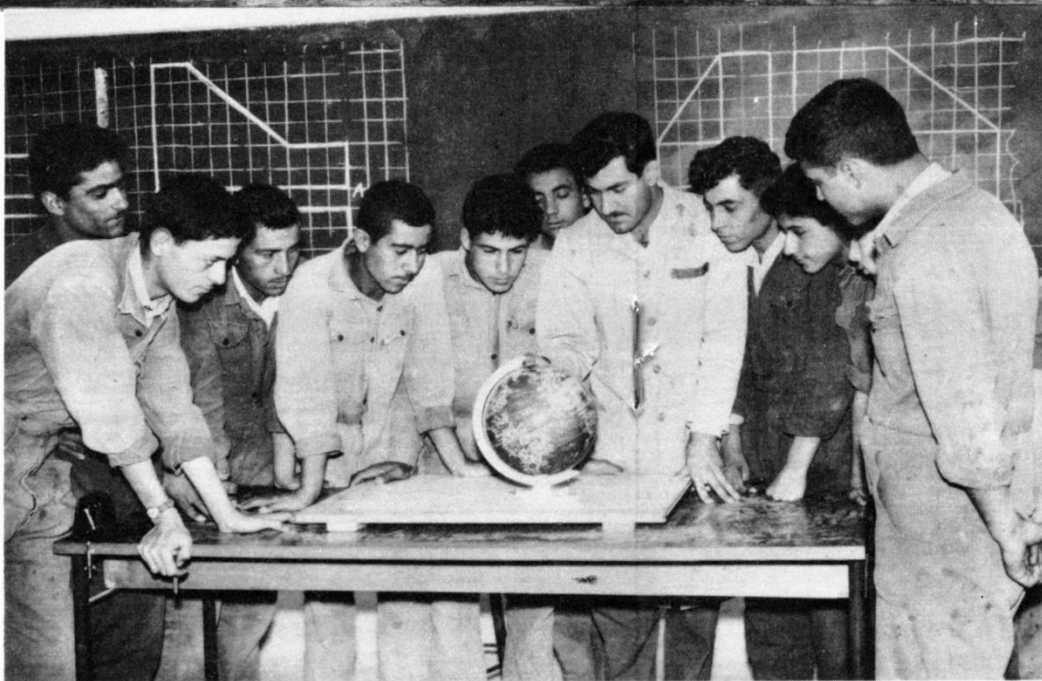
BRITISH WORLD REFUGEE YEAR DONATION USED FOR
NEW UNRWA VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE IN DAMASCUS

On the outskirts of Damascus, near the airport, is an attractive group of new modern buildings: workshops, classrooms, dormitories, a refectory, offices, staff houses. This is the new UNRWA Vocational Training Centre. Some of the buildings are still under construction and landscaping is yet to come, but progress is underway. When this centre was opened in November 1961, 180 boys were enrolled. In one year's time, however, 376 boys will be receiving instruction here. The cost of construction and equipment of the centre (\$798,500) was contributed by the United Kingdom Committee for World Refugee Year (\$586,000) and the Federal German Committee (\$310,000).

The new centre was opened in October 1961 and 140 boys are now learning nine trades in three departments. The Electricity Department groups the workshops of electricians, wiremen-cable jointers and radio/TV mechanics. In the Building Department, there are courses for plumbers and carpenters. In the Mechanics Department, the trades taught are fitter-machinists, sheet-metal workers who repair car-bodies and make metal furniture, auto mechanics who work on cars and lorries, and diesel mechanics who repair heavy equipment "on site". In addition, 40 boys are following courses for architectural draughtsmen and business and office workers.

Beginning in September 1962, six additional courses will be taught in the Centre: telecommunications mechanic, builder/





Left : A trainee at UNRWA's Damascus Vocational Training Centre. This refugee is learning to be a wireman cable jointer.

Middle : Refugee student nurses at the Augusta Victoria Hospital, Jerusalem.

Wadi Seer trainees admire the globes that have been presented to them.

Right : The Austrian workers who have "adopted" Beit Sahour. On the left, Robert Brunner and Franz Wieland.



shutterer, plasterer/tilesetter, upholsterer, blacksmith/welder, and moulder.

The Principal of the Damascus Centre, Mahmoud Hamad, himself a refugee, has a Master's degree in horticulture from the University of Kansas. He is a former director of an agricultural college and was later chief of the department of pomology in the Syrian Ministry of Agriculture.

As the trainees come from all parts of the country (and most of them from the refugee camps where their families are living), the centre is residential. The schedule is the same for all: rise at 6 a.m., breakfast at 6.45 a.m., workshops and classes until lunch at noon, return to classes from 1 to 3 p.m., recreation in the playing field each afternoon, dinner at 5.30 p.m., one hour of study in the evening, and lights out at 9.30 p.m. However, even with this full schedule, the boys still have time for reading in the library, or for playing chess, draughts or table-tennis in the common-room. The English teacher has formed a drama group, and there are hopes of organizing a choral group before long. Sometimes the boys attend a lecture or a film showing. On Fridays, they are allowed to visit nearby Damascus.

Boys who are growing up in refugee camps are eager to enter an UNRWA Vocational Training Centre where they have the chance to learn one of the skills needed in the rapidly developing Middle East economy and to look forward to becoming useful and responsible citizens, no matter where they may eventually live.

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SCANDINAVIAN GIFTS FOR THE EXPANSION OF UNRWA TRAINING CENTRES

A World Refugee Year donation of \$100,000 has been received by UNRWA from the Norwegian Refugee Council. This will cover the cost of an extension to the Agency's seven-year old Vocational Training Centre in Gaza, and will increase its capacity to 368 trainees. New classrooms, dormitories, staff houses, a common room and a library will be built; and the dining, kitchen and laundry facilities will be expanded. New courses will also be added: refrigeration mechanics (the first to be given in any of UNRWA's vocational training centres), plumbing, architectural and mechanical draughtsmanship, business and office practices. Additional courses will also be given in radio/television mechanics.

The Danish Refugee Council has given UNRWA the first instalment of its \$145,000 World Refugee Year donation. This is being used for the expansion of the Agency's Teacher Training Centre for Men in Ramallah, near Jerusalem (Jordan).

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BELGIAN CARITAS HELPS PROGRAMME FOR REFUGEE WOMEN

"Caritas" of Belgium has sent UNRWA a donation of \$900 for a novel venture: the adaptation and equipment of two of the existing Agency sewing centres, in camps in Jordan and Lebanon, for a new afternoon programme of women's activities. These centres are presently open in the morning for sewing and dress-making courses given to classes of 30 girls. Now, in two of them, girls and women are to be taught first aid, the care of infants, and cookery mainly based upon the best use of the monthly rations distributed to the refugees by UNRWA.

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FRANCE GRANTS SCHOLARSHIPS TO YOUNG REFUGEES

A striking characteristic of the Palestine refugee population is its extreme youthfulness: half the refugees are 18 years of age or under. UNRWA provides elementary schooling for all children and secondary schooling for a certain percentage, comparable to the proportion of young people who attend secondary schools in the host countries. UNRWA also sends some students to Middle Eastern universities; its three-year programme will double the annual number of scholarships provided from 90 to 180.

However, there are never enough available opportunities for all of the young refugees who are eager to secure more advanced education. To help meet this need, the French Government awards various school and university scholarships to both young and adult refugees. An annual budget of about \$24,000 is earmarked for this programme, which was inaugurated in 1957/58.

During the school-year 1960/61, 179 Palestine refugees received scholarships, totalling LL.77,362 (\$24,176). Thus, 53 children were able to continue their secondary education and 77 adults to study French. Over 30 young refugees were enrolled in various institutions in Beirut: 26 in the Faculté française de Médecine, 6 in the Ecole supérieure des Ingénieurs, one in the Ecole de Droit and one in the Centre d'Etudes mathématiques. Last but not least, 15 boys were placed in the Benedictine Fathers' School at Qubbeh (near Tripoli, Lebanon), where approxi-

mately a hundred young men receive three years of general and technical education in Arabic, English, French, mathematics and science, plus practical workshop experience to train them to become fitter machinists, welders and moulders.

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FINLAND TAKES AN INTEREST IN THE ARAB REFUGEES

On 14 September, the Finnish Foreign Minister informed the Director of the Agency that his Government intends to contribute \$10,000 to UNRWA's 1962 budget. Mr. Kajalainen added: "I would like, once more, to give expression to the sincere appreciation which we in Finland feel for the invaluable work that UNRWA carries on for the benefit of Arab refugees in the Near East. Experience with our own refugee problem makes us keenly aware, not only of the difficulties involved, but also of the deep satisfaction that such great humanitarian endeavour carries with it."

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TWO AUSTRIAN WORKERS SPONSOR A SEWING AND KNITTING CENTRE

Robert Brunner and Franz Wieland, two Austrian workers, spent their summer holiday this year on the bumpy roads that lead from Vienna to Jordan. With five of their friends, they piled into a small van loaded to the roof not only with food-supplies, cameras and a tent, but also with four knitting-machines and one sewing-machine destined for Beit Sahour, near Bethlehem. In this village a Lutheran Pastor, the Reverend Weigelt, runs a sewing centre for Arab refugee girls. The two young workers have equipped this centre with fifteen knitting-machines, worth nearly \$1,500, which enable the girls to earn a little money for their families.

The two friends began to be interested in the refugees in 1959, when they were on a pilgrimage to the Holy Places. During the long train journey they heard for the first time about the Arab refugee problem. When they came to visit some of the camps in Jordan, they were especially struck by the refugees' longing for work. Once back in Vienna, they mentioned this to their employer, who owns a knitting-machine factory. He made them a gift of four machines, which Pastor Weigelt immediately installed in his sewing centre.

But Robert and Franz were not content with this achievement. They enlisted the support of Bishop May of the Evangelical Church and of Dr. Wlach, Secretary-General of the Austrian World Refugee Year Committee. With their help, an exhibition of photographs and refugee work was opened. This project brought in more than 6,000 Schillings (about \$2,000) for supplies to be sent to the sewing centre. They also invited to Austria a young refugee who spent six months at their factory learning how to operate and maintain knitting-machines.

Their latest journey was a result of careful planning: the Austrian Ministry of the Interior lent them the van, the Defence Ministry lent them the tent and camping gear, the Ministry of Commerce provided the movie camera and film to enable them to photograph the Holy Places and the young refugees. When they returned to Vienna, the two friends were enthusiastically planning for the future: explaining to people around them the problem of the Palestine refugees, raising money for the Beit Sahour centre, and exploring ways in which they could help other refugee girls, who feel their idleness a burden, to make use of the time on their hands.

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THE SCANDINAVIAN SOLDIERS OF THE UNITED
NATIONS GIVE PRESENTS TO THE CHILDREN OF GAZA

Ever since the Suez crisis, a United Nations Emergency Force, comprising 7 national contingents, has been stationed in the Gaza Strip. The soldiers in the blue berets are well acquainted with the difficult situation of the refugees. Because of their special concern for the refugee children, the 630 officers and men of the 9th Swedish Battalion, at the end of their tour of duty donated \$576 to the Agency, towards the upkeep of the kindergarten in UNRWA's Jabalia Camp.

The 400 Norwegian officers and men of the "Danor" Battalion, the combined Danish-Norwegian unit of the Emergency Force, invited 33 refugee children to the party organized in celebration of their national day. Each little guest received a complete set of clothes. By the end of April 1961 the Norwegian soldiers had sent the Agency 660 pounds of clothing collected in their country.

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A GERMAN EDITOR GIVES TWO GLOBES
TO YOUNG REFUGEES

The refugee pupils in UNRWA schools are thrilled with their geography lessons. Unable to take a train or plane to visit foreign countries, they day-dream over maps where coloured patches indicate faraway continents.

The trainees at UNRWA's Wadi Seer Vocational Training Centre, near Amman, can now plunge heart and soul into this imaginary exploration. They have received two large globes, one political, the other economic, from Herr Günther Wolf, editor of the Schwarzwälder Bote, one of the oldest German dailies, published at Oberndorf on the Neckar.

Mr. Wolf published several articles sent to him by UNRWA, including one on the Wadi Seer Centre. Since he would have paid about \$20 to a correspondent for these articles, he presented this sum to the Wadi Seer trainees.

The principal, Mr. Wadi Dides, used the money to buy two globes. "They will remain," he wrote to the donors, "as proof of the German people's interest in the Palestine refugees."

The refugee boys were anxious to express their gratitude to their distant friend. Out of their meagre pocket-money they managed to collect enough to buy a metal cigarette-box, bearing the emblem of the Wadi Seer Centre. This gift has gone to Oberndorf as a token of their appreciation.

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SWEDISH GIFT HELPS TO TRAIN REFUGEE NURSES

Eighteen young Palestine Arab refugees, all at the start of a nursing training course made possible through Swedish donation, were asked to write an essay on the happiest event of their lives.

"What happiest event?" they queried, for most remembered a life only of hardship and poverty. Some impressed their German instructress by writing: "The day my sister got well...the time my brother returned..."

"We in the West," commented the instructress, "would have chosen our first dance or the day we bought our first radio. These youngsters have so little, they appreciate basic values."

Zeinab Mahmoud Nassif, a Moslem girl who grew up in a

refugee camp, wrote that her happiest event was yet to come: "The day I graduate from nursing training and show that in Jordan, with determination, it is possible for a girl to become a nurse."

Zeinab wanted to be a nurse from the day that she saw her father regain his health after an illness, thanks to medical care. But when she put it to her family that she wished to follow this profession, they would not hear of it. Many people in Jordan today still consider that nursing is not a respectable profession for women. But Zeinab was determined. She refused to eat for three days until she finally won the permission of her family to follow the course.

These 18 young people are being given the training as a result of a World Refugee Year contribution from the Swedish Broadcasting Relief Committee, through the Swedish Save the Children Fund and the Swedish Red Cross. The donation was given to UNRWA as part of a total World Refugee Year gift of 133,000 Swedish crowns. Other refugee training projects being financed from this generous contribution are a course for assistant pharmacists in Gaza and nursing education in Lebanon and elsewhere.

The nursing training course, which will provide three years' training for 60 young refugees altogether, is being run by the Lutheran World Federation and conducted at the Augusta Victoria Hospital on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem, Jordan. This hospital has been operated since 1950 by the LWF, with support from Lutherans in several countries. Of the hospital's 315 beds, 284 are reserved for refugees. UNRWA makes a substantial annual grant towards the budget of this hospital.

The nursing students board at the hospital. In addition to academic courses, they have begun practical nursing and after six months they will begin to do simple tasks in the hospital. The students will have no need for concern for their future after they finish the course, for Jordan desperately needs them. And so for all, like Zeinab, graduation day will mean, thanks to Swedish generosity, the promise of a life made happy with the security and fulfilment of a worth-while career.

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The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) is a special, temporary, non-political body established by the General Assembly of the United Nations 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: immediate: to provide food, health services, education, training and shelter for the refugees; long-term: to assist the refugees to become self-supporting.

UNRWA began work in May 1950 and its present mandate expires on 30 June 1963.

Further information may be obtained from:

UNRWA Liaison Office
Palais des Nations
Geneva
Switzerland

UNRWA Public Information Office
UNESCO Building
Beirut
Lebanon

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(For information purposes - Not an official record)

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