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NAIROBI FORWARD-LOOKING STRATEGIES
FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

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The situation of Palestinian women

Report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

The present report has been prepared in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 1988/25 and Council decision 1988/23. The report describes the situation of Palestinian women and children living inside and outside the occupied Palestinian territories in the period from 15 October 1987 to 1 November 1988.

*E/CN.6/1989/1.

CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION	1-5	3
I. SITUATION OF PALESTINIAN WOMEN AND CHILDREN LIVING INSIDE THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES	6-43	4
A. Background information	6-7	4
B. Political situation	8-21	6
C. Economic situation	22-24	9
D. Living conditions	25-27	11
E. Social matters	28-36	11
F. Assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied territories	37-43	14
II. SITUATION OF PALESTINIAN WOMEN LIVING OUTSIDE THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES	44-56	15
A. Background information	44	15
B. Political matters	45	15
C. Social matters	46-50	15
D. Health	51-56	17

Tables

1. Distribution of registered Palestinian population as of 30 June 1988	4
2. Palestinian population inside and outside the occupied territories, by age group	5
3. Sex distribution of heads of Palestinian families inside and outside the occupied territories	6
4. Average age of Palestinians inside and outside the occupied territories, by sex	6
5. Employed persons and employees, by occupation and sex, 1986	10
6. Household facilities in dwellings, by selected localities, 1985	11
7. West Bank and Gaza Strip: distribution of male and female refugee pupils in UNRWA schools, 1987	12
8. Distribution of refugee pupils receiving education in UNRWA schools as of October 1987	16

INTRODUCTION

1. This report has been prepared in pursuance of Economic and Social Council resolution 1988/25 in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report on the situation of Palestinian women and children inside and outside the occupied Palestinian territories to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-third session. When the resolution was adopted, the Secretary-General presented a statement of programme budget implications (E/1988/15/Add.1, annex IV), in which it was indicated that the new report would cover only developments that had taken place since 15 October 1987. The report is an update of the previous one (E/CN.6/1988/8 and Corr.1) and deals with the situation of Palestinian women and children living inside the occupied Palestinian territories, and outside, in the host countries as defined by United Nations practice, namely Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic.

2. In resolution 1988/25, the Council also requested the Secretary-General, as a matter of urgency, to send a mission composed of experts on the status of women to investigate the situation of Palestinian women and children in the light of the recent tragic developments in the occupied Palestinian territories. Speaking in the Economic and Social Council on 26 May 1988, in explanation of the position of his Government before the vote on draft resolution IX, concerning the situation of Palestinian women, contained in the report of the Second Committee on agenda item 11 on the advancement of women, the representative of Israel stated that it was Israel's belief that United Nations funds should be spent more appropriately and more judiciously than on an investigatory commission, with which Israel would in any case not co-operate. In the course of further inquiries by the Office of the Secretary-General, Israel reiterated its position and prevented the Secretary-General from sending the requested investigatory mission. Subsequently, when the programme budget implications of resolution 1988/25 were considered by the Fifth Committee, the representative of Israel stated that ... Israel supported assistance by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to the Palestinians, but would not co-operate with missions and studies by other bodies such as the Economic and Social Council. Therefore, it would not admit ... the five experts and staff members indicated in resolution 1988/25. (A/C.5/43/SR.27, para. 20.)

3. In the circumstances, the report has been prepared in accordance with paragraph 6 of the statement on programme budget implications, in which it is stated that:

"Should the investigating mission be dispatched, the report of that mission would form the body of the Secretary-General's report on conditions of Palestinian women and children in the occupied territories in question. As was the case in document E/CN.6/1988/8, information on the situation of Palestinian women living outside the occupied territories would be sought from the Governments concerned as well as from existing United Nations sources. In the event that no investigating mission is dispatched, the analysis of the situation of Palestinian women and children living in the occupied territories would be prepared on the basis of information obtained from other United Nations reports, with the collaboration of other relevant United Nations offices." (E/1988/15/Add.1, annex IV, para. 6.)

An analysis of these reports provided little relevant information. Although there are a number of comprehensive reports, only those of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), World

Health Organization (WHO), and the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories contained some information on women. Because of this, the report has been based largely on those official sources and any effort to identify additional sources would have gone beyond the time and resources available for this report.

4. The Secretary-General, in a note verbale dated 29 June 1988, invited the Governments of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, as the host countries, and the Government of Israel, as the occupying power, to provide the Secretary-General with information by 1 October 1988 on the situation of Palestinian women and children living in the host countries and the occupied territories. No reply had been received at the time the present report was being prepared.

5. In a letter dated 20 June 1988, the Secretariat invited the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to provide information required for the report. Their reply is reflected here. In addition the report makes use of data on the occupied territories published by the Government of Israel in the Statistical Abstract of Israel 1987.

I. SITUATION OF PALESTINIAN WOMEN AND CHILDREN LIVING INSIDE THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

A. Background information

6. As of 30 June 1988, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip had a total registered Palestinian population of 844,708 (see table 1). About 40 per cent of the registered population lives in camps. The average family is estimated to consist of six persons, with a male to female ratio of 51:49, and the annual growth rate of this UNRWA registered population increase was estimated at 2.5 per cent. 1/

Table 1. Distribution of registered Palestinian population as of 30 June 1988

Field	Population	Number of camps	Total camp population <u>a/</u>	Percentage of population in camps	Registered persons not in camps	Percentage of population not in camps
West Bank	385 634	20	100 499	26.1	285 135	73.9
Gaza Strip	459 074	8	253 008	55.1	206 066	44.9
Total	844 708	28	353 507	41.85	491 201	58.15

Source: Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/43/13), table 2.

a/ It is estimated that a further 52,000 persons, who are not registered refugees, live in camps. About 37,000 of these are persons displaced as a result of the June 1967 hostilities.

Table 2. Distribution of female Palestinian population inside and outside the occupied territories, by age group

Age	West Bank		Gaza Strip		Jordan		Lebanon		Syrian Arab Republic		Percent-age	Total
	Percent-age	Total	Percent-age	Total	Percent-age	Total	Percent-age	Total	Percent-age	Total		
0-5	47.7	36 213	47.8	54 536	48.5	75 138	48.7	34 611	48.9	36 652	48.3	237 150
6-15	48.0	82 201	48.2	119 467	48.4	197 384	48.5	63 553	48.9	61 078	48.4	523 683
16-60	48.0	237 747	55.8	259 461	47.5	535 335	48.4	168 041	49.0	152 150	48.1	1 352 734
Over 60	55.4	37 084	48.8	31 269	54.4	78 265	54.6	26 224	55.0	19 587	54.9	192 429
Total	48.8	393 245	48.8	464 733	48.4	886 122	49.0	292 429	49.4	269 467	48.8	2 305 966

Source: United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, 30 January 1989.

7. In the West Bank, 37 per cent of the Palestinian refugee families accounted by UNRWA, are headed by females, while in the Gaza Strip the percentage is 18 per cent. This compares with an average of 20 per cent in Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan. In the age distribution of the population, there are slightly more men than women in all age groups up to age 60. After this age, there are more women than men. The distribution of registered female Palestinian population by age group both inside and outside the occupied territories is shown in table 2. The distribution of male and female heads of families is shown in table 3 and the age distribution of male and female refugees in table 4.

Table 3. Sex distribution of heads of Palestinian families inside and outside the occupied territories

Sex	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Jordan	Lebanon	Syrian Arab Republic	Total
Males	56 250	78 968	98 178	51 927	43 395	328 718
Females	32 467	17 220	22 409	14 606	12 771	99 473
Total	88 717	96 188	120 587	66 533	56 166	428 191
Percentage of female heads of family	36.6	17.9	18.6	21.95	22.74	23.2

Source: United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

Table 4. Average age of Palestinians inside and outside the occupied territories, by sex

Sex	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Jordan	Lebanon	Syrian Arab Republic	Total
Males	28.9	25.5	28.4	27.3	25.9	27.5
Females	30.4	26.9	29.3	28.4	26.9	28.6
Total	29.6	26.2	28.8	27.9	26.4	28.0

Source: United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

B. Political situation

8. The situation of Palestinian women during the past year has been profoundly affected by the events surrounding the Intifada, or uprising, that began in December 1987.

9. According to the report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories (A/43/694), the violence and repression in the occupied territories has reached an unprecedented level since the beginning of Intifada. The uprising has been marked by many casualties from shootings, beatings or gas inhalation. The exact number of casualties can only be estimated because of different reporting periods for the various sources providing estimates. According to estimates by Palestinian and Israeli lawyers and doctors, as reported in United Nations document, during the first two months of the uprising, 20 per cent of the injured were women, ranging in number in the West Bank between 126 and 153 and in the Gaza Strip between 90 and 264. According to the same source, some 5 to 10 per cent of the injured were children 10 years of age or younger. Altogether there were between 630 and 766 injuries in the West Bank between 31 and 76 and in the Gaza Strip between 450 and 1,320 (A/43/694, para. 357). According to an estimate made by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the total number of injured women ranged between 600 and 671.*

10. It was reported by the Special Committee that, in the first four months of the uprising, there was a 10 per cent increase in the number of miscarriages among women in the Gaza Strip, compared with the same period in the previous years. Nearly 70 per cent of these were said to have resulted from inhalation of tear gas (A/43/694, para. 365). The total number of miscarriages reported from different United Nations sources was between 124 ^{2/} and 166 (A/43/694, para. 365). A PLO estimate, based on a listing of individual cases, gave a total of 131. Of these, 65 per cent occurred after the third month of pregnancy and 22 per cent during the eighth and ninth months.

11. Palestinian civilians, including women and children, were subject to mass arrests and administrative detention. In the period under review, the Special Committee reported mistreatment of women and minor detainees, overcrowded prisons and harsh conditions of detention (A/43/694, sect. IV). It was stated that young children, under 15 years of age were beaten, interrogated and tortured. ^{3/} Incidents were reported of sexual harassment (A/43/694, sect. IV). Dozens of children aged 8-12 years were arrested during the first week of May 1988, after throwing stones at soldiers (A/43/694, para. 294) and according to an information reported in the United Nations document A/41/INF.DOC/7, annex, para. 11(4), the number of children detained up to 28 March 1988 had risen to 1,650. According to PLO estimates for 9 December 1987-13 June 1988, 1,087 children were detained and 101 had been killed.

12. Raiding, demolishing or sealing of houses were common punishments. In the period under review, well over 100 houses were destroyed, according to estimates compiled from United Nations sources. ^{4/} Curfews, often lasting for some days, the various economic sanctions and general strikes further contributed to the deterioration of daily life. Other punitive measures included cutting off the water, electricity and telephone lines of refugee camps or whole towns. ^{5/} Palestinian residents were also subjected to new restrictive practices such as confiscation of identity cards (without which they cannot move freely) and preparation of special "lists" of Palestinians, which the authorities can consult before issuing permits and travel documents to members of the family (A/43/694, para. 248). On 28 April 1988, a new order made parents whose children up to 12 years of age were caught rioting (defined

*Reply from the PLO Bureau of Social Affairs, dated 2 December 1988, to the letter sent by the Secretariat on 20 June 1988.

as throwing stones, burning cars and tires or blocking roads) responsible for their children's acts and obliged to pay fines. In serious cases they could be subject to criminal charges (A/43/694, para. 368).

13. Raids carried out on hospitals and health centres* led, on some occasions, to their closure and interruption of their medical functions, and to harassment of patients, medical staff and visitors. For example, a maternity wing in the Women's Union Hospital was stormed on one occasion. Vehicles and ambulances were at times prevented from carrying patients to the hospitals. Refugee camps and other localities had no medical care for up to several successive days, owing to curfews and sieges. An order by the Israeli occupation authorities on 20 December 1987 warned all health centres and hospitals in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip not to receive people injured during the uprising. 6/

14. A number of measures were taken by Palestinians to disengage the economy of the occupied territories from Israel, including:

(a) A boycott and a "shifting away" from consumption of Israeli goods with a consequent reduction in the living standard of the population (TD/B/1183, paras. 11 and 16);

(b) Initiatives designed to ensure self-sufficiency and strengthen the Palestinian "household economy" by producing meat, fruit and vegetables and increasing local employment in rural areas, refugee camps and some urban communities (TD/B/1183, para. 11);

(c) Creation of local self-help committees to extend health, education, welfare and economic services to the population; 7/ creation of alternative employment opportunities for Palestinians who ceased to work in Israel or resigned from their posts in Israeli Civil administration (TD/B/1183, para. 11);

(d) A "return to agriculture campaign", the agricultural output having shown a steady decline during the previous years (TD/B/1142, chap. D, para. 11), which stressed the need to cultivate staples, vegetables and fruits that could substitute for the imports of those items from Israel (TD/B/1183, para. 83).

15. One measure taken by the Palestinians against the Israeli authorities consisted of a "tax revolt", solidarity by the commercial sector with the uprising and absenteeism from work in Israel by migrant labourers at a rate of 20-100 per cent during the different phases of Intifada.

16. Schools, universities and training centres were closed for most of the reporting period. Teaching in elementary, preparatory and secondary schools has been seriously affected by frequent closures due to curfews, prevailing tension, and invasions by demonstrators and security forces. On the West Bank, the Israeli occupation authorities ordered the closure of all educational institutions from 4 February to 23 May 1988. Both UNRWA private schools and the government schools had to close on 21 July 1988; the vocational training centres were also affected, 8/ and numerous incidents also occurred at academic institutions, including closure of universities, searches and seizure of books and documents and interference in the appointment of male and female teaching staff (A/43/694, sect. IV, paras. 470, 471 and 478).

17. The Israeli authorities imposed systematic and prolonged curfews, as on 28 March 1988, when the territories were closed for 72 hours. Food convoys

*The El-Shifa, Women's Union, Nasser, Ramallah, El-Ahli and Hebron hospitals and the Columbia Camp clinic.

were prevented from entering areas under curfew and the territories often faced a total ban on fuel and petrol deliveries lasting up to two weeks. Some towns and villages had to cope with the interruption of electricity, water supplies and telephone lines: from 7 March 1988 the village of Kabatiya was completely closed for 33 days, with no access to medical facilities (A/43/694, paras. 390 and 614). Goods movement in and between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip was restricted.

18. Financial and administrative restrictions were also introduced such as: the reduction by one fifth of the amount of money that Palestinians could bring to the West Bank from Jordan; restrictions on cheques drawn on bank accounts of Palestinian welfare organizations; the obligation to prove that all taxes had been paid before licences or other documents could be issued. 9/

19. Owing to the drop in tax revenues, the civil administration stated that it had to freeze many development projects, such as provision of funds for local authorities, welfare assistance, electricity grids, water works and communication systems, and medical care payments (A/43/694, sect. IV, para. 429).

20. Other measures included confiscation of land, regulation of cropping patterns (a shift away from field crops to vegetables and melons, resulting in low income growth, limitation on water and irrigation supplies, strict control of Palestinian exports, entry of subsidized Israeli goods into the occupied Palestinian territories. 10/

21. The uprising led to the creation of alternative Palestinian social, economic and political structures and popular committees were set up to cope with all the needs of the Palestinian population. According to the occupation authorities they also included "shock committees", which dealt with people who violate directives to strike, close their shops or refrain from going to work in Israel. 11/ Palestinian women were actively participating in the popular committees and various social associations as a means of meeting the basic educational, economic and relief needs of the Palestinian population. There were instances of harassment of the organizations by the Security authorities. A welfare society, "In'ash al-Usra", in El-bireh, serving 15,000 Palestinian women and children, was closed by the authorities, 11/ and the offices of the Palestinian Women's Union were invaded, and their files confiscated. Many welfare centres, including those that used to organize educational courses for women and young people, had to close because welfare assistance had been frozen by the Israel authorities owing to the drop in tax collection. In many places women organized silent marches and demonstrations to mark International Women's Day on 8 March 1988 (A/43/694, para. 205).

C. Economic situation

22. There are differences in the economic structures of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which affect the role of the women. As can be seen from table 5, on the West Bank approximately 14 per cent of the labour force consists of women, while the percentage in the Gaza Strip is only 4 per cent. On the West Bank, women work mostly in agriculture, while in the Gaza Strip their main employment is in professional, technical and related work (53 per cent of the female employment). This reflects the limited opportunities for women outside public service employment in the Gaza Strip. On the West Bank, slightly over a quarter of the economically active women were employed in the public sector and half were employed on the farms. In the Gaza Strip, almost two thirds were employed in the public sector. For both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, unemployment is higher for women than for men (women's employment on the West Bank in 1986 was 6.4 per cent against 3.8 per cent for men and in the Gaza Strip 9.1 per cent against 3.5 per cent for men).

23. In the Gaza Strip there is also evidence that males are to some extent employed outside the occupied territories but that women do not have the same opportunity.

24. There are no data on income differentials by sex in the occupied territories nor on the specific effects of the Intifadah on the economy and particularly on the employment and income of women and children.

Table 5. Employed persons by occupation and sex, 1986
(Percentage)

	<u>West Bank</u>		<u>Gaza Strip</u>	
	All employed persons	Females	All employed persons	Females
Scientific and academic workers	2.7	5.2	1.3	3.55
Other professional, technical and related workers	5.9	18.85	5.9	53.3
Administrators and managers	1.1	-	1.4	3.7
Clerical and related workers	2.7	4.55	2.4	4.7
Sales personnel	10.0	2.6	10.7	1.7
Service personnel	6.9	4.43	8.2	3.7
Agricultural workers	23.2	54.04	18.9	7.6
Skilled workers in industry, mining, building, transport and other skilled workers	25.4	8.75	30.7	17.2
Other workers in industry, building, transport and unskilled workers	22.0	1.03	20.4	2.4
Total	100	100	100	100
	<u>Thousands</u>			
Total numbers employed	167.0	23.3	94.2	4.0
	<u>Percentage</u>			
Percentage of females employed	13.95	-	4.25	-

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel 1987, No. 38 (Jerusalem, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1987), table XXVII/25.

D. Living conditions

25. The Palestinian population in the period under review continued to face an acute housing shortage. The most recent statistics show that the average housing density was three persons per room; nearly half the population lived in overcrowded conditions, with seven or more persons to a dwelling. Obstacles to the granting of building permits, combined with the systematic demolition or sealing of the houses of suspected persons, increased the difficulties. 12/

26. Data on basic household amenities show differences between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. As can be seen from table 6, the availability of certain amenities, some publicly provided, depends on the type of locality.

27. One characteristic of the life of Palestinian women was the frequent splitting up of families, and the absence of male family members due to detention, expulsion, imprisonment or death. In 1988, according to information provided by UNRWA, some 130,000 refugees were receiving assistance for Special Hardship Cases (SHCs), 13/ and over 60 per cent of the families were headed by women or elderly persons. Cash grants were given to 1,020 selected SHC families as emergency assistance. Some welfare services were focusing on vocational education for young people and women in sewing and embroidery, and on programmes for women preparing them to participate in educational, sporting, cultural and other recreational activities (A/43/367-E/1988/82, para. 88).

Table 6. Household facilities in dwellings, by selected localities (1985)
(Percentage)

	<u>West Bank</u>		<u>Gaza Strip</u>	
	<u>Villages</u>	<u>Towns</u>	<u>Refugee camps</u>	<u>Towns</u>
Heating facilities	98.2	97.2	42.9	57.6
Running water in dwelling	49.5	91.0	68.5	83.2
Taps in courtyard	15.3	7.3	29.4	15.0
Toilets	44.4	77.7	97.4	98.7
Bathroom	85.5	99.8	65.8	78.6
Electricity around the clock	46.4	98.2	94.4	93.7

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel 1987, No. 38 (Central Bureau of Statistics, 1987), table XXVII/17.

E. Social matters

1. Education

28. Access to educational services varies by area and by age. According to statistics on enrolment included in UNRWA Statistical Yearbook 1986-1987, table 9, on the West Bank, up to age 12 approximately two thirds of the girls

who can attend school do so. The percentage declines as age increases. In contrast, in the Gaza Strip the percentage of girls attending schools of potential population by age is about 80 per cent. This may reflect the fact that over half of the children in the Gaza Strip attend UNRWA schools, whereas on the West Bank the largest percentage are of government schools. For both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip the percentage of enrolment of boys is slightly higher than for girls. ^{17/} Detailed information on the distribution of refugee pupils receiving education in UNRWA schools in 1987/88 is given in table 7. There were 98 schools in the West Bank with 1,328 teachers and 146 schools in the Gaza Strip with 2,545 teachers. Due to increase in teaching staff, the class sections with more than 50 pupils were reduced in Gaza from 59 to 10 and in the West Bank from 28 to 11.

Table 7. West Bank and Gaza Strip: distribution of male and female refugee pupils in UNRWA schools, 1987

Type of school	West Bank					Gaza Strip					1
	Girls		Boys		Total	Girls		Boys			
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage		
Elementary	15 395	54.2	13 032	45.8	28 427	30 539	47.9	33 224	52.1	63	
Preparatory	6 135	53.5	5 333	47.3	11 468	11 847	47.3	13 206	52.7	25	

Source: Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/43/13), table 5.

29. The discrepancy between male and female attendance at vocational training courses continued. The Ramallah Women's Training Centre was still the only women's training centre run by UNRWA. Except for teacher training courses, where the attendance was more than 50 per cent of female, the male to female ratio was 5 to 1. In order to reduce this discrepancy, UNRWA took steps to encourage women to join existing training programmes and introduced some new courses. An intake of 20 trainees was admitted for a new physiotherapy course and additional courses in nursing are being planned. In the biennium 1989-1990, semi-professional courses will for the first time be introduced for female trainees at the Gaza Training Centre (A/43/367-E/1988/82, para. 36).

30. During the period under review, on the West Bank, pupils in the elementary and preparatory schools lost nearly 40 per cent of their class time; in the Gaza Strip the figure was 35 per cent. Vocational training centres were even worse affected: on the West Bank, three training centres were open for only 44 days; in the Gaza Strip, one training centre was open for only 50 days. ^{14/} As a result of frequent closures of universities and the administrative restrictions on academic institutions, 16,000 students lost the entire academic year (A/43/693, para. 496).

2. Health

31. According to the annual report of the Director of Health of UNRWA for the year 1987, ^{15/} the health conditions of the Palestinian population (men, women and children alike) are closely linked to political and socio-economic conditions. Equivalent detailed information related to the non-refugee

population is not available. Medical services, which were poor to begin with, have been seriously affected by the many casualties incurred during the Palestinian uprising and by the emergency measures taken by the Israeli authorities (see paras. 11-12 above).

32. To cope with this emergency situation, UNRWA increased its medical staff (10 additional doctors were employed at health centres in the West Bank camps) and extended the working hours at the centres (some remained operational for 24 hours a day). 16/ To increase the coverage of maternal and child care services on the West Bank, two new centres were established and the premises of one camp health centre, were enlarged. In the Gaza Strip, a second mobile health team was established and one maternal and child health (MCH) subcentre was open twice weekly instead of one day a week. 17/ Greater emphasis was placed on the prevention and treatment of disability among children. Many children received both out-patient and in-patient treatment in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

33. UNRWA continued to provide maternal and health services and pre-natal, natal, infant and child care at its health units, supported by specialists and hospital referral services. These consisted of 41 health centres, six maternal and child health subcentres, eight maternity wards (six in the Gaza Strip and two in the West Bank) and 46 supplementary feeding centres. 19/ Maternal care provided by UNRWA clinics consisted of regular health supervision, nutritional support, treatment of anaemia throughout pregnancy and nursing, and the immunization of pregnant women with tetanus toxoid. More than 25,000 pregnant women were registered for antenatal care at UNRWA maternal and child care clinics, representing about 75 per cent of the expected number of pregnant women. In the West Bank, 10 per cent of the women registered at UNRWA maternal and child care clinics were at high risk and 12 per cent at moderate risk, with a corresponding risk pattern among neonates. Out of all deliveries reported in 1987, 59 per cent were at subsidized and government hospitals, 28 per cent took place at home, attended by UNRWA-trained midwives or by dayahs (traditional birth attendants) and 13 per cent were at UNRWA maternal and child care centres (with only 65 beds in eight camps). The child care services provided by the agency consisted of the supervision of infants and pre-school children and the immunization of those registered at its maternal and child care clinics. More than 59,000 children (up to the age of three) were registered at UNRWA maternal and child care clinics for health supervision and immunization. This represents 75 per cent of the expected number of children in this age group. 20/

34. UNRWA continued to provide nutrition and supplementary feeding services to children, pregnant women, nursing mothers and infants. 21/ Since Intifada, the programme has been expanded. The mid-day meal programme was extended to include any child up to 10 years of age and, if medically necessary, children over 10 years old. The powdered milk distribution programme was extended to all children (including non-refugees) below the age of three. The dry-ration and dry-milk distribution programme was extended to include the refugee population not normally eligible for such services, including pregnant women, nursing mothers and children aged 6-36 months.

35. Family planning services continued, focused on health education for women registered at the agency's maternal and child care clinics. The health and family education programme of the three preparatory girls' schools was expanded to boys' schools. 22/

36. With regard to environmental health, although progress was made in providing indoor water taps and sewage systems to refugee shelters in some camps, a number of problems related to sanitation remained. The incidence of communicable diseases transmitted through environmental channels increased. Head lice and scabies have become endemic among school children. 23/

F. Assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied territories

37. During the period under review, United Nations bodies and specialized agencies continued to provide assistance to the Palestinian people, including special programmes of assistance for Palestinian women and children in the occupied Palestinian territories, mostly directed to the refugee population.

38. UNRWA, as noted earlier, continued to provide both regular and emergency programmes, the latter being particularly important. Food supplies and cash were provided to refugees and to a small number of non-refugees in the Gaza Strip and on the West Bank. Additional and temporary health, relief and refugee affairs personnel have been employed to assist in the distribution of the aid and to counsel families in distress (A/43/367-E/1988/82, para. 7). Assistance was also provided to SHCs, consisting of dry food rations, clothing and cash allowances. It was estimated that, by the end of 1988, out of a total of 183,700 registered refugee families, 8,250 families in the Gaza Strip and 5,170 families on the West Bank would be registered as SHC cases (A/43/367-E/1988/82, para. 86). Children from these families were given preferential admission to the training centres. Help was given to selected families to establish small enterprises (A/43/367, paras. 86-89). A working relationship between UNRWA and the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Centre for Environmental Health Activities has been established to boost the Agency's on-going sanitation programmes. 24/

39. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) directed its assistance through UNRWA, concentrating on immunization and vaccination, and on technical assistance for training and the improvement of infrastructures. It provided technical assistance to local health departments to develop the traditional birth attendants (TBA) training programme and funded the training of 16 midwives (supervisors) and 1,150 TBAs in the West Bank (A/43/367, para. 48). It also assisted in training 652 kindergarten teachers, upgrading facilities in 60 kindergartens, renovating 20 and furnishing 120 others (A/43/367-E/1988/82, para. 49). In co-operation with the Save the Children Federation and the communities concerned, UNICEF also helped to reduce the incidence of water-related diseases in 25 villages in the northern part of the West Bank, and the southern part of the Gaza Strip (A/43/367, para. 21).

40. The International Labour Organisation (ILO), identified for partial and full financing several United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) projects in vocational training for women (A/43/367, para. 32).

41. UNDP implemented two projects in the field of employment and development: "Youth programme" and "Women's institutions" (A/43/367-E/1988/82, para. 33). A project entitled "Women's institute" will be carried out in the near future. A centre will be established, providing technical and specialized training for women in various fields, and serving as a permanent exhibition to promote and market traditional and new products such as house small-scale industries operated by charitable organizations (A/43/367-E/1988/82, paras. 33 and 34).

42. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) concentrated its assistance mainly on educational supplies and equipment, and on a permanent surveillance of educational institutions and university fellowships (A/43/367-E/1988/82, paras. 41-44).

43. WHO and United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) provided assistance in particular to women and children, in primary health care, environmental health, and the training and education of health personnel. Two centres were designated as WHO Collaborating Centres in primary health care

research: the Ramallah Health Services Research Centre on the West Bank and the Gaza Health Services Research Centre. The Ramallah Centre placed special emphasis on the monitoring and evaluation of an expanded primary health care programme, the evaluation and supervision of the work of dayahs and a review of infant and child mortality (A/43/367-E/1988/82, paras. 60-68).

II. SITUATION OF PALESTINIAN WOMEN LIVING OUTSIDE THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

A. Background information

44. On 30 June 1988, in Lebanon, there were 288,176 refugees registered with UNRWA: 148,007 (51.36 per cent) in 13 camps and 140,169 (48.64 per cent) not in camps. In the Syrian Arab Republic, there were 265,221:77,779 or 29.33 per cent in 10 camps and 187,442 or 70.67 per cent outside the camps. In Jordan, there were 870,490:213,539 or 24.53 per cent in camps and 656,951 or 75.47 per cent outside the camps. 25/

B. Political matters

45. In the period under review, the situation in Lebanon remained critical. After the lifting of the siege at three camps (two at Beirut, Shatila and Burj el-Barajneh, and the third, Rashidieh, near Tyre) in 1987, refugees were evacuated to the camps in the south. In January 1988, several hundred Palestinian families fled northward seeking alternative shelter. Nearly 100 of these families had occupied UNRWA schools in the region of Saida. Renewed violence erupted later in 1988, resulting in further casualties in Beirut and a new displacement of families. 26/

C. Social matters*

46. In Lebanon, in 1987/88, over 30,000 pupils (out of a total of 33,500) were enrolled in 75 UNRWA schools (out of 83) functioning as of March 1988. Some of the schools were closed because of emergency conditions, damage to school premises, or occupation by homeless refugees. Some pupils attended the schools outside the camps, or attended classes organized by "popular committees". Despite these efforts, some schools could not complete their 1986/87 school year programmes.

47. Schools in the Syrian Arab Republic and in Jordan operated satisfactorily throughout 1987/88. There were 111 UNRWA schools in the Syrian Arab Republic served by 1,550 teachers and 195 in Jordan with 3,712 teachers. Enrolment in elementary and preparatory classes in the Syrian Arab Republic was 52,576 and 134,601 in Jordan. A new elementary preparatory school (for 1,300 boys and girls) was completed in Damascus, and several others were under construction in Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic. 27/

48. Detailed information on the situation of refugee pupils receiving education in UNRWA schools (as of October 1987) is given in table 8.

*The information on education is based exclusively on UNRWA reports.

Table 8. Distribution of refugee pupils receiving education in UNRWA schools as of October 1987 a/

Field	Number of schools	Number of teachers	Number of pupils in elementary classes <u>b/</u>			Number of pupils in preparatory classes <u>b/</u>			Total number of pupils
			Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	
Jordan	195	3 712	45 142	46 786	91 928	20 747	21 926	42 673	134 601
Lebanon	83	1 183	11 552	12 430	23 982	4 766	4 685	9 451	33 500 <u>c/</u>
Syrian Arab Republic	111	1 550	17 469	18 496	35 965	7 827	8 784	16 611	52 576

Source: Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third session, Supplement No. 13 (A/43/13), table 5.

a/ Excluding 104,017 refugee pupils attending elementary, preparatory and secondary government and private schools.

b/ Including non-eligible children attending UNRWA schools, of which there were 54,080 in October 1987. Of these, 17,252 were in the Gaza Strip, where all refugee children have always been regarded in practice as eligible for educational services.

c/ No enrolment figures were received in October 1987. This figure shows the January 1988 enrolment in schools that were open and an estimate for the schools that were closed.

49. Training centres in the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan proceeded normally. The Sibilin training centre in Lebanon, closed since September 1983, was reopened. During its four-year closure, UNRWA provided training for 225 refugee boys and girls in other locations in Lebanon. 28/

50. About 60 per cent of the students in the UNRWA pre-service teacher-training centres (529 out of 881) were young women. At the Sibilin centre in Lebanon, at the Damascus Vocational Training Centre and at the Wadi Seer Training Centre in Jordan, 121 young women completed training in 1987/88 as quantity surveyors, architectural draughtswomen, mechanical engineering draughtswomen, construction technicians, radio and television mechanics, medical laboratory technicians and assistant pharmacists. At the Amman Training Centre in Jordan, some women were attending courses in beauty culture, home and institutional management, business and office practice programmes relating to the advancement of Palestinian women. The discrepancy in vocational training opportunities (except for pre-service teacher training) for Palestinian men and women continued, however, and women constituted only 20 per cent of the trainees at these centres.*

*Reply from the UNRWA Executive Office, dated 10 October 1988, to the letter sent by the Secretariat on 20 June 1988.

D. Health*

51. During the period under review, UNRWA continued to provide health services to the eligible refugee population outside the occupied Arab territories.
52. In Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic, health education concentrated on activating camp and school health committees to encourage the refugee population to assume responsibility for its own health and that of the community. 29/ The small family planning programme, which advised women of childbearing age on the health advantages of properly spacing their children has been offered on a limited basis through the UNRWA clinic. 30/
53. There was a 20 per cent increase in out-patients' consultations at UNRWA clinics. In the Syrian Arab Republic, one combined health and feeding centre was established. In Jordan, two maternal and child care subcentres were established. 31/
54. In Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic, there have been steady improvements in environmental health, including the provision of indoor water taps to five camps in Jordan.
55. The security situation in Lebanon severely affected the use of health facilities, owing to curfews, clashes between the militia and other restrictions on movement. The 76 per cent overall utilization rate of UNRWA out-patient clinics in 1987 for the five fields of operation was offset, mainly in Lebanon, by the limitations imposed on movement of refugees and inaccessibility of the medical care facilities. Four health centres in the central Lebanon, Saida and Tyre areas, could not operate during the year. Health and medical facilities in the Beirut area were also affected: the UNRWA clinic in the Shatila Camp was heavily damaged in 1986 and all the other camps were inaccessible to health teams until the sieges were lifted in January 1988. Supplies for health care services were maintained, in Burj el-Barajneh with the co-operation of the Palestine Red Crescent hospital, and in Rashidieh in limited amounts, sufficient to treat women and children. It was also difficult for some families to receive UNRWA services because they had been displaced from their Camps. Two mobile medical teams were established in the Beirut and Saida areas to help displaced families. The gradual restoration of full services in all areas was again interrupted by new clashes and incidents in April 1988, seriously disrupting the agency's environmental health, nutrition and supplementary feeding programmes.
56. Nevertheless, UNRWA relief services were provided to all categories of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon up to the end of 1988, including the expanded distribution of basic rations. There were no reports of major epidemics of communicable diseases. Vaccination programmes were normal. UNICEF, in co-ordination with UNRWA, WHO and local health authorities carried out a mass immunization campaign for all children, including Palestinians not previously vaccinated. There were some improvements in the health sector and environmental infrastructure. The Polyclinic in Beirut was expanded and the new health centre of Saida was established. Some water supply projects were completed.

*The information on health is based exclusively on UNRWA reports, in particular Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/43/13) and World Health Organization document A41/INF.DOC/5.

Notes

1/ "Health conditions of the Arab population in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine: annual report of the Director of Health of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East for the year 1987" (A41/INF.DOC/5), para. 2.

2/ World Health Organization document A41/INF.DOC/7, annex, appendix 1.

3/ Ibid., document A41/INF.DOC/7, annex, part II, sect. A.2.

4/ Ibid., sect. A.10; Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/43/13), chap. II, para. 109; A/43/362-S/19881; A/43/477-S/20052); and A/43/694.

5/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/43/13), chap. II, sect. B, para. 30.

6/ World Health Organization, document A41/INF.DOC/7, annex, part II, sect. B.1-B.4.

7/ Division for Palestinian Rights Bulletin, vol. XI, No. 7 (1988), p. 3; and A/43/694, para. 71.

8/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/43/13), chap. II, sect. B, paras. 42 and 44.

9/ A/43/694; TD/B/1183; and Division for Palestinian Rights Bulletin, vol. XI, Nos. 5 and 7.

10/ TD/B/1142 and 1183; and A41/INF.DOC/7, annex.

11/ Division for Palestinian Rights Bulletin, vol. XI, No. 7 (1988), p. 3; and A/43/694, para. 71.

12/ World Health Organization document A41/INF.DOC/7, annex, part I, sect. B(4).

13/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/43/13), chap. II, para. 93.

14/ Ibid., paras. 42-44.

15/ World Health Organization document A41/INF.DOC/5.

16/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/43/13), chap. II, paras. 38 and 39.

17/ World Health Organization document A41/INF.DOC/5, para. 127.

18/ Ibid., para. 90.

19/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/43/13), para. 37.

20/ World Health Organization document A41/INF.DOC/5, annex, paras. 4, 101, 108, 118, 120 and 125 and table 7.

22/ Ibid., paras. 103, 104, 109, 112 and 136.

23/ Ibid., paras. 117, 118 and 165-167.

24/ Ibid., para. 176.

25/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/43/13), table 2.

26/ Ibid., chap. II, paras. 11-13 and 27.

27/ Ibid., para. 60.

28/ Ibid., paras. 26 and 67.

29/ World Health Organization document A41/INF.DOC/5, annex, para. 135.

30/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/43/13), para. 82.

31/ Ibid., paras. 73, 74 and 76.