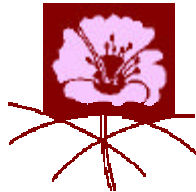


Women's Affairs Technical Committee

Ramallah - Palestine



Annual Report
1999



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Introduction

Six years have passed since WATC has started operating from offices. This year has signaled a qualitative change in the work of the Committee, mainly affecting the work of a few non-government organizations in Palestine from a gender perspective. WATC has started since last year, to reach out to women and men in rural areas through the collective work of partner non-government organizations working in the sectors of water, agriculture and education to make sure that women are benefiting too. Together with the Catholic Relief Service, the Palestinian Hydrology Group and the Union of Agricultural Work Committees, WATC was able to reach out to tens of villages to make sure that women are recipients of development resources, that they become empowered as groups in village committees and that they become decision-makers in initiatives that take place in their villages. Through this work, our partner non-government organizations, have been further trained by us on gender mainstreaming, which led to more appreciation of women's capacities and skills, and they have joined us on the recognition that effective development to Palestine cannot be achieved without the active participation of women, without giving women their due respect and appreciation and without believing in their abilities to effect changes in our communities.

In addition to the above-mentioned development work, WATC has resumed its successful implementation of its various programs. The networking Program, involving five of the Women Committees within WATC has continued with its work throughout 420 villages in the different parts of Palestine reaching out to over seventeen thousand women. The involvement of WATC with the Welfare's consortium Block -Grant Project, has further enabled it and its partners to reach out to more remote areas sensing the special needs of marginalized women. Our Media Program continued successfully with our radio program broadcast twice weekly, our bi-weekly newspaper "Sawt An-Nissa" becoming one of the praised local newspapers carrying the voices of not only women but also the marginalized in society and attracting many conscious pens including those of gender-aware men, and our Television Program succeeding in showing how different social problems affect men and women differently.

We also pride ourselves in being able to provide transportation money, mainly locally raised, to tens of young financially-deprived girls enabling a few of them to be the first from their villages to further their education in local universities after enabling them to conclude the secondary school education. More success is marked by our ability to furnish twelve kindergartens in some of the most deprived areas, with books, toys, some furniture as well as renovation work and painting to lighten up the places for the use of young children. Hundreds of kindergarten teachers were trained on a variety of subjects including sex education and gender issues so that the future generations are dealt with differently.

Our program targeting young women, continued successfully to target 280 young women leaders, whom we hope will build a women's movement stronger than ours and more able to address the different discriminations women face in society.

Those are some of our achievements. This report will speak about the progress of our work during the year 1999 in more detail, quantitatively and qualitatively. Needless to say, that our work remains to be very challenging given the many political problems Palestinians continue to face.

It is our hope that WATC will be able to make even small differences in the building up of a state, within which is weaved a culture of human and women rights. We continue to view our annual small achievements as small steps towards a long process of collective work. We thank all our friends and partners who have helped us make all the above-mentioned achievements. We thank them for believing in us and for allowing us to design our own agendas, programs and projects without attempting to impose agendas upon us. For your moral and financial support we shall always be grateful.

Sincerely,

Suheir Azzouni
Director General

The Women's Networking Program

The implementation of the different components of this project was provided by USAID.

- A. Local Women's Networking
- B. International Women's Networking
- C. Advocacy for Equal Rights for Women through Strengthening the Networking between the Women's Committees and Institutions

A. Local Women's Networking

WATC Board of Trustees Meetings:

The Board of Trustees held two meetings during the year 1999. The first meeting was held in June to discuss the financial and administrative reports of the year 1998, while the second meeting, facilitated by Dr. Hanna Qaqish, was held in August to define conditions of membership to the Women's Affairs Technical Committee (WATC). At the second meeting, a consensus was not reached due to the absenteeism of some Board Members thus the discussion of the issue was postponed for the next meeting.

WATC Executive Committee Meetings:

The Executive Committee held five meetings in January, May, July, September and November 1999. At these meetings, a range of issues were raised: relations with WATC affiliates and other associates, administrative and managerial functions of WATC overall programs including Urjuwan, the Palestinian family law and the need to amend Palestinian civic code to encompass Moslems, Christians and Jews under a unified law, international women's day and other related activities. In addition to the march held to protest inhumane and degrading working conditions witnessed at Hebron Lighter Factory that led to the death of 14 women. During these meetings, the Executive Committee agreed on the implementation of a new project funded by the Welfare Association Consortium to provide small grants for small non-governmental community organizations in the southern area of the West Bank.

B. International Women's Networking

The International Women's Networking project carried out a wide range of activities:

- A list of relevant e-mail accounts was prepared to promulgate WATC activities. Moreover, the project constantly responds to people's inquiries on issues related to women.
- In coordination with the Palestinian Youth Council, WATC positively responded to the inclination of two Belgium-based Arab organizations to establish ties with parallel women organizations in Palestine.
- The Project started networking with other two new organizations namely "NAD Network, " and "Women International Network, "

WATC Website

A bilingual website was constructed for the Women's Affair Technical Committee. The website provides information on WATC's structure, activities, publications, articles, statistics on Palestinian women and offers a comprehensive database on women's institutions and associations based in Palestine. Since its construction, around 4000 visitors were located, an average of 40 visitors per week open the site.

Palestinian Women Forum

The Network project constructed the "Palestinian Women Forum," to promulgate activities of 35 women's institutions. The project is hoping to develop the forum through the inclusion of substantial data, news items and critical articles. The Forum email account is : Palestinian-women@onelist.com

Publications in English Language

Two publications in English were issued covering a range of topics including:

- Activities of WATC and its member organizations
- The International Declaration of Human rights
- The press conference on "Beit Alta'a", house of obedience, an Islamic regulation which legally obliges women to reunite with their husbands against their will
- Honor crimes and their penalties
- Statistics on the growth of family violence in Lebanon
- Database for academic disadvantaged students
- Sessions of Beijing Conference and role of the Palestinian delegation
- Confrontation with the occupation military troops while celebrating Women's International Day.

Publications in Arabic Language

Four publications in Arabic were issued. The publications raised a variety of issues:

- Activities of WATC affiliates in the project "Advocacy for Equal Rights for Women through Strengthening the Network between the Women's Committees and Institutions"
- WATC's activities
- WATC participation in a conference convened in Norway
- All sessions and workshops conducted in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (WBG) on the topic of leadership and early marriage
- Training programs conducted on legal and social topics
- Presentation of short stories related to women's issues
- The campaign launched on violence against women
- The International Declaration of Human Rights
- The proceedings of the second Arab meeting on Beijing conference,
- Women and political parties
- Women and the development of the Palestinian Society

Distribution of Publications

Over 15,000 copies of publications were distributed between 1st April – 31st December, 1999 to women's institutions and affiliates, Baladna Cultural Center and women's departments at PNA ministries, and to visitors of the Nativity Church in Bethlehem in addition to more than 70 local and international organizations.

C. Advocacy for Equal Rights for Women through Strengthening the Networking between the Women's Committees and Institutions

The second phase of the project started on April, 1, 1999 and concluded on March 31, 2000. The strategies and procedures of this phase were defined upon the evaluation of the project in the first phase.

The project's activities stressed on empowering women in the political parties and the need to involve more women at the decision-making level. To achieve this, women were encouraged to run for elections and join local councils. Moreover, coordination between WATC five women committees was even raised to higher levels to help build up potential for a local leadership capable of participating in the building up of a democratic civil society that guarantees equality and eliminates gender-discrimination.

At this stage, the project continued with its activities in the selected constituencies and expanded even further to include more women in new additional locations. Throughout its overall activities, the project targeted women affiliating them with WATC grass-root committees. Women in the political parties as well as women in the labor force were also targeted.

General Activities

- The Board of Trustees held two meetings in June and August, 1999
- The Administrative Committee held five meetings in January, May, July, September and November, 1999
- Representatives of WATC Women Committees held four meetings in February, June, September and November 1999, to discuss the plan of action for the year 2000. The plan was based on the need assessment approved by the Administrative Committee which aimed towards building the capacity of institutions in finance, management and administration. These meetings also tackled the guidelines for the five-year plan of action as well as a three year pilot project.
- Project coordinators held twelve meetings in February, May, June, August, September and November 1999, to plan activities and suggest how to celebrate the International Women's Day for the year 2000. The meetings also discussed a list major significant accomplishments of the project, analyzed guidelines for the short term plan, raised challenges and obstacles encountered by project coordinators.

Activities to Mark the International Women's Day

- Three festivals were convened in the districts of Jenin, Tulkarem, and Nablus.
- In cooperation with the administration of Jericho Winter Festival, women were given the opportunity to exhibit their products at the Jericho Agricultural Exhibition.
- Women were gathered from all over Palestinian territories to take part in major marches held in the centre of the West Bank on 6th and 8th March, 2000.
- A huge festival was held in Shu'fat Refugee Camp in participation with all political parties and national groups.
- Organization of a trip to archeological sites of Jerusalem.
- In Hebron district, around 5000 women took part in the march headed by Palestinian women police. Members of the Palestinian Legislative Council and other national figures attended the festival held immediately after the event
- Around 110 women participated in the workshop held in Gaza Strip to mark International Women's Day.
- Around 858 workshops were held to tackle women's legal and political rights, women's re-productive and psychological health, early marriage and women's participation in decision making.
- Along with representatives of the Women's Committees, the Project Coordinators at WATC visited the local Council of Kheirbet Qais, a village located to the south of Nablus, in solidarity with the female Council Head to give her support in her challenging position.
- WATC took part in a march to protest the inhumane and degrading working conditions at the Hebron Lighters' Industrial Factory which led to the death of 14 women.
- Project coordinators and other women volunteers of the project participated in a session to discuss the Palestinian Family Law.

Training Courses

- A series of training courses were conducted for the project coordinators on "Evaluation and Planning, " and "Training of Trainers (TOT), " which raised topics on problem-solving, an introduction to adult education, methodologies on the design of training materials and approaches to training. The training courses were conducted by Mr. Nabil Shibli, Mr. Sami Khader and Ms. Karam Sandouka from Maa'n Development Center.
- A series of training courses were conducted on the same topics in Gaza Strip
- Two training courses were conducted in Gaza Strip for project coordinators, volunteers and WATC staff to upgrade their interpersonal skills in computer.

Publications

- A poster entitled " Together Towards Equal Right for Women" was distributed on the occasion of the International Women's Day.

- Greeting cards that carried WATC slogan were sent to congratulate Palestinian women and women worldwide.
- Four publications were issued in Arabic and two in English.

Accomplishments

- A committee was established to follow up amendments on the Palestinian labor law. The committee is composed of the Federation of Labor Union , Palestinian NGO Network and Palestinian Working Women Society, in addition to WATC.
- A campaign was launched in Al Tabaka in Hebron district to build additional classes in the Girls' School. The campaign was sponsored by Al Tabaka municipality.
- Women were encouraged to join the General Union of Palestinian Women.
- Women laborers were encouraged to join labor unions.
- Around 80% of factories located in the central constituency were considering 1st of May a vacation day.
- The Palestinian Red Crescent Society in Gaza was contracted to enroll 70 disabled persons.
- National figures in Shu'fat Refugee Camp agreed to launch a cleaning campaign in the camp and a number of follow up committees were organized.
- There was an increase in the number of women who occupy senior positions in political parties particularly the increase witnessed in the Union of Palestinian Women's Committees.
- The Latin Church Council in Beit Sahour agreed in an unprecedented move to enroll women in the council.
- The Ministry of Education was mobilized to afford illiteracy classes for women in Al Sabrah area at Gaza Strip.
- Some women were persuaded to run for the forthcoming local elections.
- Two coordinators were recruited to operate in the central region and new volunteers joined lately the project.
- Active women in the village of Deir Al Soudan were encouraged to approach the Palestinian Ministry of Health to demand establishment of a clinic.
- The Ministry of Youth modified its programs drawn for Bethlehem camps from a gender perspective.
- Increase the number of membership applications to women's institutions and affiliates.
- WATC assisted women to obtain their labor rights from their ex-employers.
- Hundreds of signatures were submitted to the Palestinian Legislative Council to define the minimum wage of labor as a procedure till a legislation is enacted.
- Women's institutions and affiliates held a number of coordination meetings.
- A committee to uphold rights of undergraduate female students was established in Jerusalem Open University in Jenin and Heron University as well.
- Women in Al Moaskar area in Gaza strip were encouraged to meet with the Mayor of Gaza to raise the issue of cleaning the streets of Al Moaskar
- The Electricity Company in Khan Younes in Gaza Strip was persuaded to change the timing of electricity cut off during Al Tawjihi examinations to allow students to study during the evening hours.
- Al Ouja Mayor agreed that women could hold their meetings in the hall of the municipality.

- WATC contributed in establishing a committee to support women who intended to run for the forthcoming municipal elections for the Jericho area.
- The project reached 16068 women in WBG.
- The project targeted women in 449 new areas.
- Around 1063 of these women are potential leaders.
- Around 536 decision makers and persons in senior positions were approached through WATC coordination sessions and networking like members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, municipalities' mayors, directors of schools and national institutions.
- Around 1263 workshops and training programs were conducted in WBG on the topic of women rights and citizenship rights.

The Media Program

- A. Written Media Project
- B. Audio Media Project
- C. Visual Media Project

The Women's Affairs Technical Committee utilized Palestinian local media to raise awareness of the Palestinian community on women's issues. The media program includes written and audio-visual projects. The written media through publication of "Sawt An-Nissaa' (Voice of Women) Newspaper, and the audio media through production of radio programs entitled "Ma' Almara" (With Women) and the visual media through production of television programs entitled "Besaraha" (Frankly).

A. *Written Media Project "Sawt Al-Nisa' Newspaper"*

Sawt An-Nissa' Newspaper aims at raising the awareness of the Palestinian community about women's rights and issues. The newspaper also aims at mobilizing the Palestinian legislative members to enact gender-sensitive legislation and regulations through demonstrating how women hurt because of the pertaining laws and legislation. The newspaper tackled a wide range of issues. It introduced the Palestinian labor law and its drawbacks. It highlighted some selected articles of the labor law and other laws showing how these affaect women negatively. Various social controversies were also presented like; violence against women, early marriage and women deprivation from their right to education. Discrimination at the decision making level and women's marginalization in municipal councils' were issues focused upon.

Konrade Adenauer helped WATC cover the cost of the production of the newspaper.. The number of pages increased from 8 to 12 pages starting issue no. 71.

Some of the topics that appeared in Sawt An-Nissa' include:

- Crimes of honor
- Women detainees and their conditions
- Agony of the Palestinian women laborer
- Divorced women and their standard of living
- Successful models on women enrollment in local councils
- Women's International Day
- A report on the Palestinian Women Forum convened in Jericho in the year 1999
- Results of women's innovation contest
- The disabled
- Early marriage
- Violence against women
- Inter-familial marriages
- A thorough analysis of the publication issued by the Ministry of Palestinian Planning and International Cooperation on poverty in Palestine
- Women and education
- The international labor day
- Israeli Identity-card withdrawal from Palestinians residing in East Jerusalem
- Discrimination against women

- Gender and development
- Health issues
- Women role in confronting the Israeli settlements
- Agony of Palestinian women street merchants in Ramallah Central Market
- Juvenile crimes
- Investigation and statistics on violence against women
- Stories of struggles of some women to survive
- Innovative women
- Cases on foreign women married with Palestinian men
- Women's declination to play a distinguished role in the Palestinian economy
- The Palestinian women and political struggle
- The economic conditions of the martyrs' families
- Women in the media
- Infertility
- How women are portrayed in literature
- WATC advocacy efforts on enabling women to make passports for their children
- Biased attitudes towards women
- Agony of the Palestinian rural women
- The Lighter Corporation incident
- Suicide in the Palestinian community
- Agony of the Palestinian disabled women

A research on "Gender and Rural Development, " was translated by WATC Director Suheir Azouni and published in series in Sawt-An-Nissa' in addition to another series telling the story of female martyr and fighter Dalal Al Moghrabi.

It is worth mentioning within this context that WATC received positive feedback from the community praising the newspaper efforts in introducing women and human rights issues.

Training Program

A training course on Page Maker and Photo Shop programs were conducted for WATC staff by its Media Department.

A seminar was held to evaluate Sawt An-Nissa' newspaper in terms of competence, realization of objectives and inclusion of gender issues. The evaluation workshop was Attended by a number of persons concerned with the newspaper and a discussion of the modifications suggested followed. WATC has implemented all suggested modifications.

Audio Media

The radio program, funded by Swedish Diakonia, produced 1000 radio programs entitled "With Women. " These programs are 20 minutes in duration and are broadcast twice weekly on the Voice of Palestine. The airspace allocated to WATC radio programs were considered prime time compared to those allocated to other ngo programs specialized on highlighting specific topics. Although radio programs were not live, WATC succeeded in advocating women's rights in its short episodes as well as in a two hour live popular program entitled "Daief Ala Alhawa' featuring the programs coordinator. Several of WATC employees and Board Members appeared on local and international radio programs throughout the year.

"With Women" Radio programs discussed a wide range of issues including:

- Rumors and their impact on women,
- Role of women artists in theatrical plays and obstacles encountered at stage,
- Role of women in sports: interviews with women awarded golden medals at national contests,
- General and specific anniversaries like rural women's day, Palestinian folk national day and the week to protest violence against women,
- The incident of the lighter corporation led to the death of 14 girls,
- Health topics like Osteoporosis,
- An interview with a male advocate who embraced the cause of women through original and innovative work. The interview was coupled with a report on development of human resources,
- General topics of specific importance like early marriage, women education and participation in the economy, and
- crucial aspects related to the Palestinian family law.

Training Program

Training programs were designed to raise the awareness of Palestinian mass media on gender issues. The first part of the three-day training program was conducted under the title "Towards common understanding of Women issues in the Palestinian Mass Media." It aimed at upgrading the capacities of mass media personnel in the field of program production. The second part of the training program was conducted in Gaza Strip on August, 1999. WATC contracted a number of well-known trainers like Mr. Aref Hejawi, Dr. Nader Ezzat, Mr. Talal Okal, and Mr. Hani Habib.

The Radio Program Committee

The Committee is composed of representatives of women's institutions. Members of the Committee held twelve meetings over the year of 1999 to suggest topics, define priorities and evaluate the final program production. Another committee was established to provide the radio committee with consultancy services. This Committee included media specialists Zaa'l Abu Rakti and Aref Hejawi. This Committee held 3 meetings a month to micro manage and evaluate programs' details in terms of technicalities and substance.

Promotional and Advertisement Policies

Radio episodes were advertised on a regular basis in Sawt An-Nissaa' newspaper. The advertisement policy changed and production of new promotional materials like stickers and banners was undertaken. During the year 1999, 1000 stickers were distributed over WBG through WATC project coordinators and banners were hanged at WBG strategic regions and working areas.

Assessment and Evaluation

WATC distributed 1200 open-ended questionnaire over WBG through 28 researchers. Questionnaire item analysis highlighted the programs' competence, popularity, circulation among women and furthermore identified program's development visions. The analysis drew guidelines for future planning and highlighted possible cooperation

with Palestinian local radio and Television stations. It was found that 38% of Voice of Palestine audience listens to WATC radio programs.

Accomplishments

- The program is still broadcast according to schedule,
- The training program achieved its ends as it successfully advocated for the inclusion of women's issues and concerns in the strategy of Palestinian mass media
- The program will be re-broadcast at 6 local radio stations in WB,
- A semi joint venture with Voice of Palestine radio station was accomplished when WATC succeeded to advocate women's rights for two hours in a live program
- The audience percentage is constant rising

Support to Media Activities of WATC - Visual Media

The audio program entitled "Bisara" (frankly) highlighted how social issues affect women and men differently in an effort to show that gender issues should be taken into consideration when dealing with social matters. The implementation of the program encountered serious obstacles, but WATC succeeded to produce a number of episodes through the year 1999.

The structure of the program includes a forum of discussion that encompasses three guests, a ten minutes documentary film, a caricature on the topic in question, a piece of literature "entitled "Hamsa, " written by feminist writer Wedad Barghouthi and a sketch acted by Mr. Mohammad Bakri and artist Housam Shakhshir.

The program, supported by the Netherland Representative Office targets viewers who are not reached by WATC other programs, taking into consideration that a big percentage of the Palestinian community are TV-viewers.

The aim of the program is to

- Raise public awareness about gender issues
- Target groups that are not reached via other WATC programs
- Show the specificity of the situation of Palestinian women
- Advocate for a more civil and democratic society
- Lobby the decision-makers vis--vis women issues
- Alert the public about the upcoming draft legislation in an effort to mobilize the public to intervene on behalf of women's issues
- Mobilize politicians to serve the best interests of women through their involving them in WATC TV episodes
- Utilize the power of the media for the interests of women.

Accomplishments

- Structure of the program was defined
- Completion of field film documentaries on:
 - Women's health and family planning
 - Women and superstition
 - Intra-familial relations; mother in law, daughter in law, etc.
 - Raising children as a communal and/or parents' duty,
 - Violence manifested at schools

- Child labor
- Status of mentally-disabled persons
- Beggary
- Status of unmarried women,
- Tools to define future professions
- Education in foreign countries
- Women and the Palestinian Family Law,
- Women and their participation in non-traditional professions (incomplete)

Research on the following topics were concluded:

- Choice of the spouse
- Marriage across religions
- Heritage
- Women from the role of political resistance to that of state-building (composed of two parts: the institutionalized role and community role)
- Women and literature
- Income generation projects

Due to obstacles encountered with the National Palestinian Broadcast Service and their inability to produce the film episodes in time, WATC Contracted Ms. Sawsan Al Joabeh to execute the part of the field documentaries.

- Women and rumors
- Dilemma of adolescent
- Women's reproductive and productive health
- Violence against women
- Women eligibility to nationality
- Status of unmarried women
- The Palestinian patriarchal community and the effect on women's equality
- Status of the widow
- Women's role in the Palestinian legislative council
- Speculations on the role of a husband
- Women in low status professions
- Women enrollment in unofficial sectors
- Men support of women's position, role, status, etc.
- Women and social insurance
- Women and the political parties
- Women and chronic diseases
- Uterus Carcinoma
- The husband's role in raising children

Campaigning Program

A. The project on "Lobbying with Young Women Leaders"

The project on Lobbying with Young Women Leaders was supported by both the Irish Representative Office and Swedish Diakonia. The project aims at equipping young women leaders with tools and skills that would enable them uphold principles of human and women's rights with the aim to mobilize legislators to enact laws that advocate women's rights in particular.

One of the project's component is to coordinate and network with Palestinian youth institutions that implement counterpart programs to review issues of mutual concerns. In the year 1999, the project succeeded to coordinated with more than 50 institutions: The Palestinian Ministry of Youth and Sport, Quakers, Tamer Institute for Community Education, Halhoul Municipality, Nablus Municipality, Center for Development of Society Resources, Palestinian Medical Relief Committees, In'ash Al-Usrah Society, Primary Health Care, Beit Omar Municipality, Save the Children Society, the Austrian Center, the Palestinian Youth Federation, the Palestinian Youth Council, the Charitable Societies' Federation, Bisan Center, Palestinian Hydrology Group for Water and Environment Resources Development, Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees, the Palestinian Red Crescent, members of the Palestinian legislative council, Ibda'a Teacher's Center, Palestinian Center for the Dissemination of Democracy and Community Development (Panorama), Al Najah National University, Birzeit University, Jerusalem Open University, Al Lud Charitable Society, Abu Dis College, AT-Tireh Community College, Hebron University, the Polytechnic College, Law the Institute for Human Rights and Environment Protection, Center for Democratic Advancement, Secretariat for the Palestinian Child Plan, Bethlehem University, women center located in Balata and Askar camp, Palestinian Working Women Society, Union of Palestinian Women's Committees, Union of Women's Committees for Social Work, General Union of Women's Struggle Committee, Union for Palestinian Women's Working Committees, Palestinian Group for Planning and Management, UNDP, Kufor Hares Women's Center, Kabalan Charitable Society, Beit Dajan Charitable society, Tobas Local Council, the Palestinian Labor Union, Kufor Labad Society, Atil Charitable Society, Women's Center for Legal Aid and Counseling, Jerusalem Center for Women, the Palestinian Ministry of Education, Women Institute for Ein Beit Almaa' camp, and Women's Studies Center.

Description of Activities

- During the year 1999, women leaders convened 75 meetings in the southern, northern and central regions. The meetings were held to brief associates on the project, establish a network with community-based committees, youth institutions and women's institutions and finally strengthen the relations with the Palestinian civil society through engaging women in the current political, social and cultural debates and in training programs designed to upgrade women's interpersonal skills. These meetings discussed a wide range of topics; status of women in the Palestinian legislative council and their influential role to alter regulations that infringe women's rights; drugs; the environment; reproductive health; counseling; adolescence; Aids and sexual diseases; the Palestinian Police women; the Palestinian Independent State,

is it real or just an illusion? Palestinians in the diaspora and the role of the Palestinian youth.

A series of weekly lectures were delivered on the topic of self definition, needs assessment, expression of feelings and self-development and violence against women

- Around ten workshops were organized in the year 1999 on the following topics: "self-expression through artwork, " held in Ramallah in cooperation with Quakers Institute. "Drugs, " held in Ramallah in cooperation with Quakers institute, Primary Health Care, Tamer Institute for Community Development, Palestinian Medical Relief Committees. Another workshop on "Drugs, " was held in Halhoul in cooperation with the Austrian center and Quakers institute. "Physical changes and threats of early marriage, " held in Hebron district in cooperation with In'ash Al-Usrah Society. "Reproductive health, counseling, and adolescence, " held in the district of Nablus, Hebron and Tulkarem in cooperation with In'sh Al Usrah Society. "Use of Medicine, " held in cooperation with the Palestinian Medical Relief Committees. A workshop on the theme of "Mixed activities males and females" and on "Elaboration of A vision for Development of Youths in Palestine, " were held in WB.
- Young leaderships participated in a two-day volunteer work to clean water springs spread over Palestine in Ein Alsultan, Ein Al Ouja and Wadi AL Bathan in cooperation with the the following groups : the Palestinian Hydrology Group for Water and Environment Resources Development, Quakers Institute, the Palestinian Red Crescent, the Palestinian Medical Relief Committees, Environment and Energy Research Center, Save the Children and the Palestinian Society for Protection of Environment.
- The Quakers Institute and the Palestinian Hydrology Group for Water and Environment Resources Development funded production of promotional materials distributed on this occasion.
- To mark the anniversary of the international elderly day coincides 21st March, 1999 women leaders visited elderly people households located in the district of Nablus, Akbet Jaber, Bethlehem, Al Bireh and Jerusalem. Women leaders socialized with elderly people and delivered modest gifts to mark the day.
- In initiation of the Palestinian Center for the Dissemination of Democracy and Community Development and in presence of some members of Palestinian legislative council, women leaders took part in a seminar entitled " Events of 4th May, 2000".
- To promulgate Women's Affairs Technical Committee's programs, young leaders visited a wide range of women's institutions in Jerusalem and several villages of WB like Kufor Na'meh in addition to Bethlehem university to brief students on WATC programs.
- In initiation of the Palestinian Center for the Dissemination of Democracy and Community Development - Panorama, Project coordinators and young leaders

presented a paper in a conference held in Ramallah entitled "Networking, " The paper discussed young leaders' experience in networking,

- In coordination with the Palestinian Ministry of Youth and Sport, youth leaders participated in 13 summer camps held in July and August, 1999 in Salfit, Jerusalem, Ramallah and Nablus; lectures were delivered on the topic of: Youth role in building a Palestinian Civil Society. An introduction to democracy: basics and applications, youth role in the current development process, healthy life, relations between both sex, photography and sculpture, leaders and leaderships, the patriarchal authority, students' drop-out from schools, communications, planning, conflict resolution.
- Young leaderships participated in two marches to mark the anniversary of, the International women's day and the universal declaration on human rights initiated by Law the Society for the Protection of Human Rights and Environment Preservation.
- Young leaders participated in:
 - Five marches held in the district of Hebron, Nablus, Ramallah, Betouniya and Bethlehem to protest the incident of Hebron Lighter Corporation
 - Two marches held in Hebron to mark Palestine independence day and to show solidarity with Palestinian detainees
 - A march held in the Nablus district to mark the Palestine independence day
 - A march held in Bethlehem district to announce Bethlehem celebrations for year 2000
 - Young leaders participated in five theatrical plays entitled " Abu Shaker Affairs '99, " held in the district of Hebron, Nablus, Ramallah, Jerusalem and Tulkarem.
 - Young leaders delivered speeches at schools to mark the Palestine folk day
 - Youth leaders and counterparts participated in organizing a folk exhibitions in the campus of Al Najah and BirZeit Universities.

Training Program

Around 40 training programs were conducted in February, April, May, June, July, August, September, November and December, 1999. The training programs raised a wide range of topics on:

- The project on "Youth and Democracy, " was discussed in cooperation with the Palestinian Center for the Dissemination of Democracy and Community Development - Panorama,
- "Self- Actualization, " conducted by Mr. Nabil Shalabi (with participation of 20 women leaders),
- "Gender analysis, " conducted by Ms. Islah Jad in the district of Nablus and Hebron. Another training program on "Gender analysis, " was a conducted by the Palestinian Center for Peace and Democracy in Tulkarem, Jenin, Qalkilia, Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Another two training programs were held at the village of Bani Zeid and Beit Rima,
- "Interpersonal skills and leadership, " conducted by Mr. Abdelkader Abu Awad in the district of Tulkarem, Jenin, Kalkilia, Nablus, Jericho, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Ramallah and Hebron.

- "Empowerment and Lobbying, " conducted by Abdelkader Abu Awad was held for projects' coordinators. Another training program on "Empowerment and Lobbying, " was held by Peace and Democracy Center in the district of Bethlehem, Jericho, Tulkarem, Jenin, Kalkilia, Hebron, and Nablus.
- "Human rights, " conducted by the Center for Development of Democracy in the district of Nablus, Tulkarem, Jenin, Kalkilia and Hebron.
- Planning and Organization

Accomplishments

- Around 140 new leaders joined the project, there are now 280 women leaders distributed around WBG,
- Inclusion of new geographical areas that were not originally targeted; 25 villages and 3 refugee camps,
- WATC Network links were expanded to include more counterpart institutions that work on parallel programs,
- WATC activities targeted women at Palestinian universities and colleges to encourage them occupy senior positions at Student Councils and at other local councils,
- Enhancement of citizenship and communal responsibility through executing various volunteer activities,
- Emergence of young leaders in institutions located in targeted constituencies,
- Reinforcement of women's capacities and interpersonal skills through their engagement in seminars, workshops and in other national and international conferences.
- Young leaders affiliated to Human Right Network, The branch of International Jurists, Geneva and the International Federation Paris and Young leaders affiliated to WATC institutions, Palestine have met and started coordination relations.

B. The project on Campaigning with Rural Women

The project, supported by German Friedrich Ebert Foundation, was initiated as a WATC pilot project in 1996. It was continued throughout 1997, 1998 and concluded in May 1999 to be evaluated and resumed after modifications if needed. The aim of the project is to empower women in the rural areas of Palestine through entrenching the concept of citizenship in their daily practices. Women were enabled to envision their long term needs through the execution of a wide range of activities that respond to their current persisting needs. These activities took place in the northern and southern constituencies of Palestine and in Gaza Strip.

Description of Activities

Northern Constituencies

Project coordinators executed a wide range of activities:

- 67 visits were organized to 6 villages; Jayous, Marda, Beita, Eskaka, Yasouf, Deir Estiya, Asira Alkeblia and Beit Dajan.

- 21 meetings were held with the following parties to coordinate activities and take part in activities of January, February, March, April and May, 1999 amongst: Deir Estiya Girls School, the General Union of Palestinian Women, women associations, Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees, the Medical Society, Beita Women Committee, the Palestinian Prisoner's Center, Union of Health Work Committees and the Ministry of Supply,
- Two workshops were held during the month of March and May on "Protection of Environment, " in Deir Estiya village and on "Expired Food, " in Marda village
- Project coordinators participated in 3 marches on 7th, 8th, 9th March, 1999 to mark international women's day held in Al Ram and Nablus and participated in Palestine land day on April, 1999
- Project coordinators organized a modest lunch during the month of February and March in Deir Estiya, Jayous and Beita and invested revenues in building new classes in a number of Girls' Schools.
- Deir Estiya and Marda Girls' Schools were assisted to hold an open day of activities
- A celebration to mark women's international day was held during April in Eskasa village,
- Distribution of towels and cloths to families in need with WATC slogans printed on them.
- In presence of project's volunteers and the funding agency, a graduation party was organized for women's trainees on the month of May in Albira city,
- Mr. Khaled Nabris visited three villages in the northern constituencies to assess the whereabouts of the project and its impact on the targeted groups.

Southern Constituencies

- Project coordinators held 21 meetings during the period of January till May with the following institutions: Women's Center for Legal Aid and Counseling, Union of Women's Committees for Social Work, Union of Agricultural Relief Committees, Ina'sh Alusrah Society, Child Art Center, Palestinian Ministry of Local Government, Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture, Yata Girls' School, Ministry of Supply, Women's associations and Terres Des Hommes. They also participated in a sewing training program held in Al Obiedieh village,

The regional coordinator held

- 6 follow up meetings with project coordinators to assess the whereabouts of the project,
- 6 visits to the southern villages during the month of January and March,
- Distributed towels to women in need to mark international women's day,

- The field Coordinators participated during the month of January in a two-day workshop on "Drugs, " in coordination with other institutions. The field Coordinators held workshops during the period of January till 19th May, 1999 in Beit Omar, Nahalin, Al Obeidieh, Sourif, Beit Oula, Al Samoua', Sa'ir, Housan and Yatta. The workshops raised a wide range of topics; early marriage, divorce, breast cancer, enuresis nocturna, family planning and general infections.
- Around 21 lectures were delivered in Beit Omar, Obeidieh, Sair, Sourif, Nahalin, Al Samoa', Houssan and Beit Oula. The lectures raised a wide range of topics: the political, social and economical role of women, permissible conditions entitled in Islamic marriage contracts, Palestinian legislation and women's rights, uncontrolled urination, expired food, uterus carcinoma, family planning, food conservation, women's legal rights in custody.
- A counseling session was held during the month of May in the village of Housan for women facing family problems.
- Mr. Khaled Al Nabris visited during the month of May three villages in the southern constituency to evaluate the project and its impact on the targeted groups.
- A graduation party was held for projects' volunteers in Baladna Cultural Center in the presence of Friedrich Eibert Director and WATC administration..

Gaza Strip

- Project Coordinators held 11 follow up meetings with WATC manager in Gaza Strip
- Project volunteers held a general assembly for information exchange during the month of January, participated in a march to mark international labor day and distributed towels to families in need to mark international women's day
- The general coordinator executed a wide range of activities:
 - Held 14 meetings during the period of January till May with the following bodies: Union of Health Work Committees, Al Nour Kindergarten in Al Magharka, the project volunteers, Women Health Center in Breij, Al Mawasi Kindergarten, Palestinian Center Against Violence. A meeting was held with program's trainers on human rights and democracy and another with Mr. Khaled Nabris.
 - Held 108 field visits to Hajar El Dik, Al Zaweida, Al Mawasi, Oreibeh, Jabalia, Heker Al Jamea', Karara, Beit Hanoun, Rafah,, Jouzet Al Baloun Yout, Ma'an, Khan Younes, Al Magharka and Beit Lahia.
 - Held 5 lectures on January, February and March on early marriage, violence within family, parents' relations with their sons, health problems that might occur to children and mothers and fungal infection.

- Participated in 4 workshops held during the month of February, April and May on project's assessment, Palestinian labor law and the expensive rents of houses organized by the General Union of Palestinian Women.
Mr. Khaled Al Nabris organized a workshop to assess the project impacts.
- Participated with other volunteers in the celebrations held on 4th and 10th March to mark international women's day, in the exhibition organized by women's institutions in Khan Younes and in the protest organized at the international Committee of the Red Cross in solidarity with Palestinian detainees',
- Participated in the celebrations held on the month of April to mark the international day for the Palestinian Child.
- A Medical activity was held on March in Jaher Al Dik village,
- Mr. Khaled Nabris organized 4 field visits to villages of Gaza Strip to assess the impact of the project on the targeted groups,

Training Program

- The project coordinator participated in a five-day training program on human rights and the specificity of the Palestinian situation organized by Women's Center for Legal Aid and Counseling
- The project's volunteers participated in 3 training programs on food manufacturing organized by the Ministry of Supply
- A training program was held in Nablus on the dilemma of the Palestinian family law
- Around 13 training programs entitled "First Aid, " were held during the month of January, February, March, April and May in the southern constituencies of WB. The training programs underwent a thorough assessment.
- Around 4 workshops conducted by Dr. Farida Banani entitled "Dilemma of the Palestinian Family Law, " were held on the month of March for project's coordinators and volunteers in the district of Ramallah, Jenin, Hebron and Bethlehem
- A three day-training program on the topic of human rights and democracy was held in the month of March for project's volunteers in Gaza Strip

An evaluation of the project was conducted by Khaled Nabris and Nasrin Khalaf through Field Visits and Sessions held with project's coordinators.

Accomplishments

- Around 91 women leaders participated in the training programs, among them 63 leaders from 21 villages in WBG,
- Establishment of Sanabel groups, each consisting of 5-20 women from 31 villages in WBG
- Coordination with 41 new institutions in WBG
- Establishment of a kindergarten in the village of Jouzet Al Dik through Sanabel groups

- Establishment of a small cooperative society as a source of income to Projects' volunteers who collected sewing machines for this purpose
- The project successfully targeted 223 women in the southern constituency, 300 women in northern constituency and 885 women in Gaza Strip,
- The project reinforced volunteers' self-confident and self-esteem.

C. The project on Girls Education Campaign

WATC observed when conducted field visits to villages of WBG that girls drop-out rate from schools is very high. The high percentage of girls dropping out is due to scarcity of girls' secondary high schools, inflation, fertility rate and many other cultural, social and economic factors. According to the Palestinian Ministry of Education, there are only 183 high schools available to girls among 520 sites. According to the survey conducted by WATC, girls spent \$ 50 dollars on transportation expenses. On this basis, WATC decided to facilitate their education through reimbursement of travel expenses.

WATC has started to locally and internationally fundraise for a sponsorship project to enable these girls pursue their undergraduate and graduate studies. This modest move will hopefully lead to a drop in the high percentage of early marriages witnessed in the Palestinian community. WATC is currently assisting 3 students of special needs and 16 women living in scattered villages. In an unprecedented move at Al Moghayer village, WATC succeeded to enable a girl pursue her post graduate studies at BirZeit University.

An amount of \$ 4500 dollars was granted from Abdel-Mohsen Qattan Institute on 23 January, 1999 in addition to several thousands of dollars collected from Palestinian and foreign friends of WATC.

Accomplishments

- Around 25 girls were financially assisted to arrive at school,
- Around 3 students of special needs were assisted to arrive at school,
- Several institutions and individuals funded the project amongst, Abdelmohsen Qattan, Jane Barbour, Mr. Peter Hazel, Arther Anderson Institute, Al Youssef Editing Corporation, MASAR, Manal Yaish, Thomas Naf, Linda Neil, Nabil Shibli, Vivian Manneh, Terry Bullata, Moustafa Barghouthi, Suheir Azzouni and WATC staff.

D- The project on Supporting Kindergarten of Women's Committee

The project commenced on 15th September 1998 and terminated on 15th July 1999. The project aimed at rehabilitating 12 kindergarten located over WBG for use of 3 WATC affiliates: Union of Palestinian Women's Committee, Union of Women's Committees for Social Work and Union of Palestinian Working Women's Committees. The project was supported by the World Bank funded Welfare Association Consortium, and administrated by WATC.

The kindergartens to be supported were selected upon a criteria of need and number of persons served as well as to geographical distribution. The distribution was as follows; 4 in Gaza Strip and 8 in WB (4 kindergartens for use of Union of Women's Committees for Social Work, 3 for use of Union of Palestinian Women's Committee and 1 for use of Union of Palestinian Working Women's Committees). Each kindergarten received a total of \$5000 dollars.

Description of activities

- Renovations and reparations of buildings
- Furnishing kindergartens and equipping all of them with essential toys
- Training of trainers

Renovations and Arrangements

The grant for supporting kindergarten of women's committees was almost spent on renovation expenses. Due to the severe conditions of these kindergartens, the grant was not sufficient to furnish all of them or complete even the renovation of those located in Al Shate'a' and Al Aroub camps in Gaza Strip. Even most of kindergartens' courtyards were not renovated or repaired for financial constrains. Renovation of kindergarten encompassed:

- Painting of 12 kindergartens
- Building and/or renovation of toilettes
- Tiles for 6 kindergartens floor
- Carpets for 10 kindergartens
- Shelves, boards and desks for 7 kindergartens
- Toys were distributed unequally to 7 kindergartens
- Chairs and tables for 10 kindergartens

Training Program

Around 99 instructors joint 10 training programs conducted over 4 regions, a total of 304 training hours. The training program raised the topic of communication skills, administration, sexual education, ethics, gender, stages of development, needs of the disabled child, rights of the child and curricula planning.

Accomplishments

- Implementing new activities with both children and parents in addition to efforts made to develop kindergartens,
- Assessment of the official curricula and other related activities was conducted by instructors,
- Recruitment of a coordinator and re-supervision of some WATC affiliates on administration of kindergarten,
- Mutual planning was conducted by both instructors and supervisors and efficient coordination was established between WATC affiliates,

Advocacy for Women's Rights Program

The project on Advocacy for Women's Rights is supported by the Norwegian government. Several activities were implemented in an attempt to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. These activities were carried out through elaboration of training programs, network with several non-government and government institutions and with members of legislative councils in addition to the holding of many sessions and meetings to advocate for change of legislation towards a more gender-sensitive one..

Objectives

- Empowerment of women to qualify them participate in the political life and in the decision making process
- Documentation of all forms of discrimination against women and modifications and/or alternation of laws when infringement of women's rights are evident
- Formulation of lobby groups to mobilize members of the legislative council and decision makers to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women to achieve equality
- Raise awareness of women on relevant laws and regulations to create a powerful grassroots' platform capable to take action when necessary
- Networking with non-government and government organizations to efface discrimination against women

Target Groups

- The Palestinian Legislators and decision-makers
- Women in general
- The political factions, human rights institutions and non-government organizations
- Other segments of the community

Description of Activities

Training Program

The training programs were designed for women and for specific segments of the Palestinian community. Topics on women's rights and other related issues were raised as the below table shows.

No.	Subject	Constituency	Trainer	Target	No/Part
1.	Gender	Center areas	WATC	Both sexes	70
2.	Democracy and Women Rights	Center areas	WATC	Students from both sexes	75
3.	Legislation and Regulations		WATC	Women	83
4.	Communication Skills	Center areas	WATC	Women	11
5.	Gender	Gaza	WATC	Kindergarten Teachers	23

6.	Advocacy	Gaza	Nabil Shebli	Both Sexes	17
7.	Strategic Planning	Rafah Gaza	Maher Issa	Both Sexes	20
8.	Gender	Rafah Gaza	WATC	Both Sexes	20
9.	Empowerment and Lobbying	Rafah Gaza	Maher Issa	Both Sexes	20
10.	Communication Skills	Rafah Gaza	Maher Issa	Both Sexes	20
11.	Gender	Abasan Rafah	WATC	Both Sexes	30
12.	Gender	Gaza	WATC	Women Employees/ Women's Institutions	24
13.	Leadership Skills	Rafah Gaza	Maher Issa	Both Sexes	20
14.	Communication Skills	Jerusalem	WATC	Women	22
15.	Empowerment and Lobbying	Jerusalem	WATC	Female Students	30
16.	Human Rights and Women's Rights	Center areas	WATC	Women	29
17.	Human Rights and Women's Rights	Center areas	WATC	Women	25
18.	Human Rights and Women's Rights	Center areas	WATC	Women	30
19.	Human Rights and Women's Rights	Center areas	WATC	Women	25
20.	Human Rights and Women's Rights	Center areas	WATC	Women	20
21.	Women's Rights and the Islamic "Al Fekeh"	Center areas	Farida Banani	Women	27
22.	Negotiations and Lobbying	Northern areas	WATC	Students from Both Sexes	18
23.	Communication Skills	Northern areas	WATC	Students from Both Sexes	18
24.	Empowerment and Lobbying	Northern areas	WATC	Women Leaderships	12
25.	Women's Rights and the Islamic "Al Fekeh"	Northern areas	WATC	Miscellaneous	60
26.	Women's Rights and the Islamic "Al Fekeh"	Southern areas	Farida Banani	Women	30
27.	Empowerment and Lobbying	Southern areas	WATC	Women	25

Meetings of Projects' Coordinators

- Project coordinators held 10 meetings at WATC to coordinate and follow up activities and discuss prospects of collaboration with other projects,
- Another 15 meetings were held to assess the whereabouts of the project,

Coordination with Community-Based Organizations and other Governmental Institutions

- More than 30 meetings were held with representatives of 25 non-governmental and governmental institutions operating in Gaza Strip,
- More than 20 meetings were held with officials representing the legislative council and the Palestinian ministries,
- Around 38 meetings were held with representatives of 15 non-governmental and governmental institutions operating in the central constituency,
- The project coordinator in Jerusalem attended more than 22 meetings with representatives of non-governmental and governmental institutions to reinforce coordination and collaboration and to insure efficiency in networking,
- More than 30 meetings were held with many institutions operating in the northern constituency to achieve justice and equality to women,
- More than 35 meetings were held with representatives of non-governmental and governmental institutions operating in the southern constituency and with members of legislative council to raise the latter awareness on women's issues.

Workshops and Training Programs attended by Projects' Coordinators

- Project coordinators in Gaza office attended more than 35 workshops to introduce women's issues and assist in elaborating programs and drawing of plans in cooperation with several institutions
- The project coordinator of the central area attended more than 25 workshops and training programs with the aim to raise awareness of attendees on women's rights
- The project coordinator in Jerusalem attended 15 workshops and training programs on legislation and women's rights in order to upgrade her interpersonal skills and then convey knowledge gained to other WATC staff,

Miscellaneous Activities

- More than 1200 women were targeted through 27 meetings held at 25 different geographical areas in Gaza Strip on the topic of early marriage, the importance of women's enrollment in municipal councils, divorce, custody, human rights and women's rights, violence against women, crimes committed on family-honor base, civic code, women's needs, rape and its impact on women, women's rights and labor,
- In coordination with the project on Campaigning with Rural Women and the Palestinian Medical Relief Committee, around 250 women were targeted when a one-day medical activity was executed at Hajer Al Dike village. A seminar was held at the same day on women's health and Parasite.
- In coordination with the project on Campaigning with Rural Women, more than 150 women were targeted when Sanabel groups held several meetings in the district of Jenin, Nablus, Hebron, Bethlehem and Tulkarem on Women's Rights and on the Islamic "Al Fekeh" lectured by the Moroccan Expert Farida Banani,
- More than 60 dignitaries were targeted when a seminar on women's rights and Islamic Law was held in the district of Nablus in participation with Farida

- Banani, political and social personalities, university experts on Islamic religion and members of legislative council,
- More than 280 women and female students were targeted through 20 meetings held in the villages of the central constituency on the topic of early marriages, women's rights, school-drop out, and women enrollment in the municipalities' councils.
 - More than 185 female students and around 250 women from all over areas of WB were targeted when 18 meetings were organized by the project coordinator in Jerusalem to raise awareness of attendees on the topic of women's rights, discrimination and on early marriage and its impact,
 - Around 200 female students and 420 women were targeted through more than 35 meetings held in the rural areas of the northern constituency and at its schools and universities to raise awareness of attendees on women's rights and legal issues,
 - Around 5 marches were held in the WBG to mark the international women's day. A celebration was held for participants of the central constituency's march to consider the international women's day a vacation day. More, several festivals were held on this occasion in the northern constituency and in the district of Tulkarem and Nablus in participation of more than 250 women who raised slogans on equality, early marriage and legislation
 - The project's team and WATC staff participated in a march on the universal declaration of human rights held in Ramallah to reveal the political, social and economical hardships of Palestinians
 - The project's team participated in the festival held in the district of Nablus to mark the international labor day and participated in a solidarity march with the Palestinian detainees
 - More than 500 persons participated in a march organized by the project's team and held in Ramallah, in front of the Palestinian ministry of labor, to protest the inhuman and degrading conditions at Hebron Lighter Cooperation which led to 14 deaths. The protesters demanded prosecution of officials in charge and called for elaboration of policies and procedures to guarantee safety of labor women at the workplace
 - In coordination and participation of community-based institutions, associations and governmental organs, the project's team held a march in the district of Ramallah to mark the week on violence against women. Around 150 women and men participated in the march launched after a press conference convened on the topic of common patterns of violence against women and on procedures and policies which should be adopted to eliminate of all forms of violence against women
 - The project's coordinator in Jerusalem held a demonstration, in front of the Israeli high court of justice, to protest confiscation of identity cards from Palestinian residence of Jerusalem
 - Discussions on women's issues were held in official and local radio and television programs to reinforce women's role in the Palestinian society and encourage her enrolment in all life domains
 - In coordination with Eshtar Theater, around 10 theatrical play entitled "Abu Shaker Affairs '99, " were performed at WBG. The play raises a wide range of women's issues like violence against women, sexual assaults, early marriage and women's rights to education. Following each performance, a discussion is undertaken on the raised issues

- A training program was conducted for members of WB security apparatus on gender, communication, leadership and administrative skills
- A committee composed from representatives of community-based institutions and associations was established in Gaza to efface the order of the House of Obedience "Beit Al Taa'," undertaken by the Islamic courts. The committee held 20 meetings and undertook many initiatives to efface the order
- A committee composed from representatives of 14 institutions was established in Gaza to elaborate a Palestinian family law in coordination and collaboration of its parallel committee based in WB; more than 7 meetings were held to discuss the law in question

Topics' Highlights

- Legislation and regulation like labor law, family law, civic code, etc.
- Discriminatory practices against women manifested at Palestinian ministries and related departments,
- Women's Education in coordination with the Palestinian Ministry of Education,
- Human rights and women's rights,
- Violence against women and within family,
- Women's role at decision making level and the struggle to occupy senior positions,
- Women's role in municipality and village councils,
- Enhancement of civil society and citizenship concepts,

Accomplishments

- The following were accomplished in Gaza Strip:
 - More than 1500 women were targeted
 - Around 1000 women attended the march and the festival held on the international women's day
 - Around 210 volunteers were mobilized
 - New lobbying groups were formulated in Rafah and at the eastern and western constituencies of Gaza Strip
 - The project's team active participation in the activities of "Beit Al Taa" committee and in the committee responsible for elaborating Palestinian family law
- The project's team accomplished the following:
 - Participated in several marches held on women's issues in areas of WBG
 - More than 435 women and female students were targeted in Jerusalem,
 - A decision was made by the Palestinian Ministry of Education to gender sensitize the Arabic language of the official curricula at the elementary, preparatory and secondary phases.
 - Several festivals on the international women's day were held in WBG,
 - Several influential personalities at community-based institutions and education organizations were mobilized to advocate women's issues,
 - More than 80% of the recommendations on the Palestinian civic code were realized when approved by the Palestinian legislative council and signed by President Yasser Arafat
 - Coordination was raised to higher levels between women's institution, human rights organizations and associates to discuss Palestinian laws and in particular

Palestinian family law. A committee was established to coordinate and follow up latest development on legislation.

- The project's team contributed immensely to the drafting of a code of conduct on the Palestinian Family Law
- The coordination committee continued to coordinate with 15 institutions based in the district of Bethlehem to serve the best interests of women,
- A new coordination committee was formed in the northern constituency to raise awareness of the public on women's issues,

Gender Mainstreaming of Consortium Developmental Programs

A. Community-Led Village Revitalization Program

The project was implemented in cooperation with the village councils and committees of beneficiaries in cooperation with the Department of Development and Planning in the Palestinian Ministry of Local Governments. The project is three years in duration and has three co-partners the Catholic Relief Committee, Union of Agricultural Work Committees and Palestinian Hydrology Group for Water & Environment Resources Development. The project aims to upgrade infrastructure of these villages, develop a cooperative mechanism and accomplish a high standard of living through developing the sector of education, health, women, agriculture, water and the sanitation services. The project includes sub-projects and cooperative projects.

The Implementation Mechanism

The implementation phase started on 1st December, 1999. A rapid research was conducted to define the need assessment of the targeted villages. The local community including women participated in the sessions and workshops held to define these needs. WATC visited the targeted villages in the districts of Hebron and Jenin and met with members of local institutions and members of villages' councils for orientation. Several committees were elected including women to oversee the implementation of the project.

Targeted Villages

The project will be implemented in 24 villages in WB, 12 villages in the district of Hebron and 12 villages in the district of Jenin.

- The project will be implemented in the villages of Zeif, Khalet Al Mieh, Um Alsafa, Al Rofaieh Wadeirat, Al Karmel and Khalet Saleh. These villages are registered within the coalition of Yatta villages.
- The project will be implemented also in the villages of Al Majed, Saka, Deir Al Asal Altahta, Kharsa, Beit Al Roush Al Fouka. These villages are registered within the coalition of Doura villages. The project's beneficiaries are estimated to 17200 persons.
- The project will be implemented in the villages of Jenin: Fakoua', Jalboun, Arbouni, Arana, Deir Abu Deif, Beit Kad, Tayasir, Sir, Raba, Seris, Al Jdiedeh, and Al mosalieh.

B. Block Grant Project:

The Block Grant Project is implemented through a consortium including the Catholic Relief Service, The Palestinian Hydrology Group and the Women's Affairs Technical Committee. The Project is supported by the welfare Consortium funded by the World Bank. The Project aims at activating the role of the local community through small grants that aim at raising the capacity of the small local institutions in the marginalised areas in the southern part of Hebron. Projects targetted include the sectors of education, environment preservation, agriculture and water and WATC role in to mainstream gender issues in all implemented projects. Forty one villages are targetted.

The implementation of the Project started on October 4,1999 and is scheduled to continue for a period of fourteen months. Several workshops were held among the consortium partners and members of the team were trained on how to mainstream gender issues in the projects and view gender as the responsibility of all involved. Several sessions were held in the rural areas holding appraisal sessions and defining the needs of the local communities and of women in particular.

Income Generation Projects

Urjwan eatery did not succeed to make profit for the year 1999. This is due to the heavy expenses like the monthly salaries of employees, rental expenses, expenditures, supplies, furniture, equipments, decorations in addition to inefficiency of the administration of the Baladna Cultural Center where the eatery is housed and the problems that erupted between the Bireh Municipality and the Baladna Cultural Center. WATC Executive Committee suggested that Baladna should recruit a new administrative director and add new services to revitalize Urjwan. Unfortunately, WATC suggestion wer not accepted. Alternative solutions were presented but none were convenient for legal considerations that have to do with the signed agreement between WATC and Baladna Cultural Center.

Urjuwan, however, succeeded to make profits in some months. Currently, the project is trying to compensate the loss for the year 1999.

The Training Hall

WATC moved its offices to Awad Center at Al Ersal Street. The training hall didn't make any revenue for the year 1999 but used for WATC training activities and meetings which were numerous.

General Matters

WATC participated in several conferences, sessions, workshops and training programs.

- The Director of WATC Suheir Azzouni participated in a conference on democracy held on 14th-17th February in India presenting a paper on WATC advocacy efforts for more rights for women. The conference was organized by the National Endowment for Democracy.
- WATC participated in a conference entitled "Palestine at Junctions: Aspects of the Palestinian State, " held on 21st-23rd June at BirZeit University, Palestine organized by the Arab Thought Forum.
- The Programs Manager of WATC, Vivian Manneh participated in a visitation program titled "Women and the Enhancement of Democratic Values, " held on 27th September-15th October at the United States of America.
- Ms. Wedad Barghouthi participated in a conference entitled "The Economical Role of Women in Globalization and Role of Coordination and Media, " held on 17th-19th November in Tunisia. Invitation was extended by UNDP.
- Tami Rafidi and Elham Sami from WATC office in Ramallah and WATC staff in Gaza participated in a conference entitled " Women in Palestine, " held on 21st-23rd November in Gaza Strip. The conference was organized by Gaza Program for Psychological Health.

- WATC participated in a conference entitled "Freedom of Expression, " held on 25th-26th November in Ramallah. The conference was organized by Al Quds University.
- The Project Coordinator Maha Al Khayat participated in a conference entitled "Women's Reproductive Health and Decision Makers, " held on 30th November-7th December in Tunisia. Invitation was extended by the Tunisian Institute for Family Planning.
- WATC participated in a workshop entitled "Leadership, Innovation and Transformation, " held on 12th- 17th December in Jericho organized by the Center of Democracy and Non-Violence.
- WATC received an invitation from the United Nation **ESCWA** to participate in a regional conference in preparation for UN session held in Lebanon on 21st-28 May.
- WATC participated in a conference titled "Women's Movement and Democratic Transformations, " held on 17th-18th December in Ramallah, Palestine. The conference raised the topic of women's movement and democratic transformations: comparative perspectives, women's movement, NGOs and the dilemma of relations with grassroots, women's movement and social movements: strategies for future. The conference was organized by MUWATIN and Birzeit University Women's Study Center.
- WATC received an invitation to participate in a seminar held on 12th-14th October in Haifa to exchange experiences and share common concerns.
- WATC participated in a training program on the training booklet entitled "Safety and Security: Struggle to Eliminate Violence Against Women and Girls, " held on 29th October in Jordan.
- The Program Manager at WATC, Vivian Mannneh participated in a seminar held for the regional partners in Jordan on 2nd and 3rd March organized by Diakonia.
- The Project Coordinator at WATC, Shuaa' Marar participated in an international meeting entitled "Women Dialogue to Halt Violence Against Women, " held on 8th-9th March in Italy organized by UNICEF.
- The Project Coordinator, Najwa Saadeh participated in a training course entitled "Training of Trainers on Women Development Project, " held on 22nd March-1st in Italy.

Visiting Delegations

Several delegations visited WATC headquarter:

- An Italian delegation on 5th January
- A Finnish consultant on 20th January
- An official personality from Malta on 8 February
- A South African Delegation on 22nd March,
- UNESCO Representative Dr. Omar Masalha and Mr. Jehad Karshooli from the National Committee for Culture and Science on 23rd March
- Researcher Debi Morton on 29th May
- The Irish Embassy on 7th June
- An Italian delegation from "Associazione Per La Pace, " on 29th July and 29th October
- The Palestinian Ambassador, Mde. Layla Shahid visited WATC on 12th October as a gesture of appreciation for WATC's submission of a complaint against her resignation to chairperson Arafat

- Three Swedish representatives from "Women to Women, " and "the Democratic Women's Movement, " on 21st October
- American student delegation on 17th January