



I. Overall Vision and Objectives

Overall Vision

The overall vision of the Women's Affairs Technical Committee is to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women as an integral part of achieving a democratic society that respects human and women rights. Among the top priorities of WATC is the enhancement of awareness in society about gender issues and women's rights in Palestine.

WATC Objectives

WATC has a number of objectives that aim to achieve. Among these, are the followings:

1- To enhance and strengthen women's participation in public life, especially at the decision-making and leadership level.

2- To lobby decision-makers in the Palestinian Authority for more gender sensitive policies, at all levels.

3- To lobby decision-makers and members of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) to promote equal rights and social justice in Palestinian society.

4- To raise Palestinian women's awareness regarding their rights and the importance of defending them, and also to general gender-issues.

5- To enhance the self-assertiveness and self-confidence of women through legal literacy campaigns and other awareness projects.

6- To provide women with skills needed to face socio-economic challenges, and to promote their participation in economic decision making at all levels.





Introduction

The Palestinian people faced and are still facing one of the most violent and unstable periods since the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza in 1967. Israel imposed new tough measures, such as mobility restrictions, strict closures, and continuing curfews leaving the Palestinians with a completely collapsed economy and the most difficult social life. Al-Aqsa Intifada in September 2000, and the closure imposed on the Palestinian territories, might well indicate that borders will be finally segregated.

Economic development over the past 7 years have revealed that trade links have not replaced the importance of labor ties. This economic trend affected the Palestinian households as a whole especially women. Women's poverty is directly related to the absence of economic opportunities and autonomy, lack of access to economic resources, lack of access to education and support services and their minimal participation in the decision-making process.

However, between July and September 2001 Israel announced the construction of further 10 settlements in the area and a total of 42,000 Palestinians were reported to work in Israeli areas. Such developments suggest that the process of territorial integration through the use of cheap Palestinian labor might continue, at least not until the final status peace agreement is reached.

The economic records of the past 7 years reveal that the Palestinian economy failed to grow autonomously or to separate from Israel. Since the eruption of al-Aqsa Intifada, on September 29th, 2000, GNP per capita was estimated to have decreased by 27% in 2001. Unemployment rate rose to over 28% in July 2001, and poverty increased to 60.4% of the total Palestinian households.

This caused the Women's Affairs Technical Committee to integrate into its programs the practical needs of women. Despite the difficulties the Women's Affairs Technical Committee succeeded in working on fulfilling women's needs on the strategic and practical levels thus empowering them to ask for and struggle to get their own needs and rights. WATC was, and still is, very keen to empower women organizations working at the grassroots level to achieve a high level of organized women political work. WATC sees that women cannot achieve power at decision-making level without formulating and enhancing women's organized power at the grassroots level. All plans, programs and projects are constructed to achieve that end.



WATC Programs



1. Networking

a) Advocacy for Equal Rights for Women through Strengthening the Networking between Women's Committees and Institutions:



Funded by the USAID, the project was launched in 1998 and terminated on 30 September 2001. Throughout the implementation process the project has been renewed several times, in coordination with the funders. The project was evaluated by the Women's Studies Program at Birzeit University. Many achievements and successes were reached, as well. One result was the empowerment of women leaders, capable of

defending their rights and advocate for women's issues, thus one step on the path of fulfilling the main goal of the project, creating an equal civic democratic society, in which women are part of the decision-making process.

Objectives:

- 1- Strengthening women within political parties enabling them to stand for their rights and enable them to widen their organized constituencies among women.
- 2- Enlightening women of their civil, political, religious and social rights in all spheres of life.
- 3- Strengthening women in decision-taking and decision-making within their committees.
- 4- Widening the number of women, and the general public, targeted at the grassroots level, and reaching as many women as possible through conducting enlightening programs for women, through which women's needs can be identified.
- 5- Enhancing coordination among the five women's committees targeted by the project. Also, using the Internet as a means to increase cooperation between the committees, on the one hand, and governmental, non-governmental, local and international organizations, on the other.
- 6- Widening the women cadre within women's committees, throughout the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, by affiliating new members into the committees.
- 7- Networking with other local governmental and non-governmental organizations, through strengthening the networking between the women's committees and setting joint plans.





Achievements:

- 1- 294 areas were reached in the West Bank, including Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, through field coordinators and volunteers.
- 2- 18,422 women, men, students from both sexes were reached.
- 3- 5125 women were constantly active throughout the whole project period.
- 4- 891 women were classified as women leaders in West Bank and Gaza areas.
- 5- 1396 workshops, training courses, seminars and meetings were held in West Bank and Gaza areas, by field coordinators for women at the grassroots level.
- 6- 23 central training courses were conducted for field coordinators and volunteers. Each training course comprised of a minimum of 18 training hours, some 24 training hours.
- 7- A bank of information was established documenting the areas targeted by field coordinators throughout the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In addition to workshops and services offered in each area.
- 8- Women's affiliation to women's committees increased, the overall number reached is 220 women in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip throughout the project period. Further, enhancing women's committees' role in the different areas.
- 9- 15 women were hired in high-ranking decision-making positions within the different political parties as a result of the project.
- 10- Volunteers, especially volunteers in Gaza, became fully capable of conducting training courses, workshops and seminars themselves on different topics, as a result of volunteering in the project. They are also capable of examining women's needs in the different areas, adequately.
- 11- The project opened job opportunities for women in the different areas to satisfy the practical needs of women.

Constraints:

1- Organizational Constraints: Coordination between the different women committees was missing sometimes. Coordination with decision makers needed more planning. On the other hand, appropriate facilities were lacking, in addition to a problem in the electricity, which hindered the action plan, there was also a problem in transportation especially to the remote areas. A major obstacle was the lack of qualified trainers in some of the remote areas.

2- Economic Constraints: Women were asking more for practical needs and less for strategic needs. Unemployment was increasing especially with the beginning of the second Intifada. Going in the implementation plan when poverty was increasing with no functional economy, was not easy to do.





based on traditional and cultural beliefs. This in a way affected the movement of women in rural areas, which reflected itself on the action plan.

4-Political Constraints: The siege enforced by the Israeli occupation was a major obstacle in this project. In addition to the political instability and insecurity when it comes to mobility.



3- Social Constraints: There was a big problem with the stereotyped image of women

2. Campaigning

Campaigning with Rural Women (Sanabel)

This project is based on the notion of 'active citizenship' aiming at working towards empowering women, who later on will be

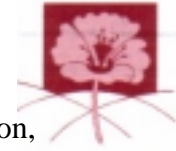
working towards trying to meet their practical needs and play an important role in changing their community. This implies that women need to know their rights and to be aware of their important role in the state building process as well as social change agents. If their practical needs are accomplished, their priorities will broaden to include their strategic needs whether in their family or in their society at large. They will also view issues in a wider perspective through which community needs and concerns will be of interest to them. WATC through its grass roots connection realized that it is more effective to work on the strategic needs of women unlike working on their practical needs.

During implementation of Sanabel projects, it was obvious that rural Palestinian women are in great need of awareness and empowerment programs. Sanabel had come a long way in doing so. In the West Bank and Gaza Strip women had shown commitment to the project as well to women's needs. The project was evaluated by an external professional evaluator who, in turn, recommended the continuation of the project and its implementation with more concentration on work inside the villages.

Objectives:

- 1- To help women realize their practical needs and empower them to achieve them.
- 2- To enhance women's awareness of their rights and roles in society and help them to improve their self image.
- 3- To empower women to discover their inner and collective power.
- 4- To bridge the gap between decision makers and women in general through training women on the needed skills.





5- To select a number of gender-aware women with skills of mobilization, negotiation, organization and networking and form support groups in different rural areas of the West Bank and Gaza.

6- To raise the awareness and sensitivity of rural populations about the need to develop and implement gender-equal plans of development that would promote civil society.

Achievements:

Using the funds provided by National Endowment for Democracy (NED), Ford Foundation, and Westminster Foundation Sanabel Achieved the following:

- 1- Implement Sanabel Project in three new areas, Nablus, Hebron and Gaza.
- 2- Establishment 21 new Sanabel group in 21 villages in the new areas.
- 3- 660 women were reached by the training programs of this project.
- 4- 844 women were reached by the lectures and workshops of this project in the different areas.
- 5- a manual of the practical and strategic needs for women was prepared as a result of the Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA) held by Specialists.
- 6- Start a network between new groups and organizations that will work on satisfying those needs for women.
- 7- Reactivate Sanabel Groups' social work in the different targeted villages.
- 8- Sanabel groups in Gaza got the initial approval to establish women committees in the different villages.

Constraints:

- 1- The political situation affected the implementation process. The siege prevented project coordinators from field visits several times, and many activities were not held as scheduled.
- 2- Transportation: working in remote areas means that finding transportation at all times is difficult.
- 3- The traditional perception of the society to such projects made it difficult for the coordinators to implement the project as planned. (This obstacle was solved with time).

Lobbying with Young Women Leaders

The political participation of Palestinian women influences the decision-making, thus the attaining of women's rights. Women's political committees are of great importance in this regard. Yet, these committees lack the participation of the





youth sector that should contribute as the future foundation of these committees for sustainability purposes. Accordingly, the proposed project seeks to empower a group of young women that would play an effective and major role in improving the structure of the women's movement in Palestine, and ultimately empowering women in Palestine generally.

A five-year project was implemented by WATC funded by the Swedish Diakonia (1997-2001) and the Irish Representative Office to the Palestinian National Authority (1999-2001) and Oxfam Quebec (1997-1998). The project targeted 320 young women from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, who in return addressed YW from Palestinian cities, villages and camps. Field coordinators were from women's political committees as part of the integration process of young women into the committees' programs once the project ended.

The project aimed at training YW on leadership and communication skills, gender issues, democracy, lobbying and advocacy. It also aimed at enhancing their self-assertiveness, personality and awareness of their human rights through encouraging them to organize and implement activities either on their own or in cooperation with other youth organizations. Regional and inter-regional activities were implemented by YW. YW were also encouraged to debate with legislative council members on community issues, as well as, student issues, such as fees, curricula and unavailability of schools for girls.

Objectives:

- 1- To organize different groups of 280 young women to act as their community leaders in order to play a positive and effective role in the women's movement.
- 2- To train the new targeted young women on the following skills: leadership, gender analysis, democracy, communication, lobbying skills, vocational counseling, organizing and running meetings and workshops, team work and negotiation skills.
- 3- To develop and enhance their self-assertiveness and personality and awareness of their human rights.
- 4- To support the targeted young women in assessing the society's needs and work on meeting those needs within their boundaries.
- 5- To join young women in 10 youth social organizations that deal with human rights, women's rights and democracy.
- 6- To encourage and coordinate with six local universities and three colleges.
- 7- To choose the new targeted group from 25 villages and three refugee camps in accordance to special criteria.
- 8- To train young women on using the e-mail and Internet to exchange views and ideas on international level regarding the future of the Palestinian young women.
- 9- To build a network of young women composed of members from 10 youth organizations,





for communication purposes.

10- To motivate the young women leaders for more activities to realize the notion of citizenship and responsibility.

Achievements:

- 1- 280 young women were reached in the different areas of the West Bank and Gaza.
- 2- The young women leaders were acquainted with new skills through training courses in leadership, communication, lobbying, gender, first aid and civil defense, computer and internet, crisis management, democracy, human and women rights.
- 3- The young women leaders issued a special newsletter called “Qatr An - Nada” that has their own writings.
- 4- The young women were empowered and this was detected by their facilitation of many activities themselves such as lectures and workshops.
- 5- A number of those women leaders reached decision-making positions in their areas for instance the Higher Committee of the National and Islamic Movement of the Intifada, and the Palestinian Youth Council.
- 6- The Young Women leaders were affiliated to the different women committees and participated in all their activities.

Constraints:

- 1- Political Constraints: The siege, bombing campaign and invasions delayed the action plan of the project, especially that mobility was very difficult between cities and towns.
- 2- Economic Constraints: As a result of the political situation, the Palestinian people’s economic situation deteriorated. This resulted in an increase in the percentage of early marriage among young women especially in Hebron.
- 3- Social Constraints: One of the major effects of occupation is forcing many young women to stay home as a result of both culture, and growing conservative attitudes.
- 4- Funding: Limited funding of the project affected the activities in some areas of the West Bank and Gaza. WATC was not able to hire more field coordinators to follow up all the project activities due to limited budget.

Girls’ Education Campaign

Since 1996, the Women’s Affairs Technical Committee started implementing a Girls’ Education Campaign Program by paying the travel costs for young women to commute from their villages to the nearest secondary school. This project addressed the problems of drop out from schools for rural girls especially in the far- to -reach areas. Studies showed that drop out of school and early marriage are interrelated. This correlation is very clear in the West Bank and Gaza where many young women in rural areas get married at the age of 13-16 as a result of traditions that





consider girls a social and economic burden that can be solved by marriage. With the beginning of the intifada in 2000, the Israeli occupation enforced a strict closure and siege upon the Palestinian territories that caused economy to collapse, and unemployment rates to increase. Many people became in desperate need for income to cover the basic needs of the household. The economic deterioration reflected itself on the social relations and, as usual, left women, especially young women in rural areas, victims. The new situation added to the discrimination against women and many young women were deprived of their opportunity of education, empowerment and basically of having a future.

Objectives:

1. Increase the number of rural young women finishing secondary education.
2. Raise the average age of marriage for rural young women.
3. Equip women with all the skills needed for having a better future.
4. Empower rural women in Palestine through Education to stand for their rights and have wider choices in life.

Achievements:

During the academic years of 2000/2001 and 2001/2002, WATC supported 33 female university students with tuition and 41 female high school students from various areas of the West Bank and Gaza to commute to their schools using the funds provided by NORAD and the South African Representative Office to the Palestinian Authority. Those girls were targeted from the following areas:

- 1- 15 high school and 8 university female students are from the Southern Region of the West Bank.
- 2- 11 high school and 12 university female students are from the Central Region of the West Bank.
- 3- 1 high school and 8 university female students are from the Northern Region of the West Bank.
- 4- 14 high school and 5 university students are from the Gaza Strip.

Constraints:

Political Constraints: The strict siege and the continuous invasions imposed by the Israeli occupation resulted in difficulties in mobility from one town to another. The educational process was altered, students had to stay home for more than two months, the General Examination was held late and in





a very difficult circumstances and Universities finished the semester late and the summer course was cancelled.

Empowering Women Via Internet Centers - Women of the Future

The double isolation of women leads not only to social detachment (i.e. from families and friends), it also entails the lack of access to further education and the loss in job opportunities. The lack of knowledge of modern forms of communication also reduces future career opportunities and successful political engagement with regards to working for a more just and equal society. It therefore works to freeze current structures of inequality in social and political life, instead of allowing women to improve their social and political status and acquire a more equal position in Palestine.

Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, the funder of the project, aims at empowering Palestinian women through setting up women Internet cafes or Internet centers in remote areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The access was for women on a non-discriminatory basis (e.g. with regards to political or religious affiliation).

WATC, the major partner in implementing the associated activities, cooperated in overseeing and managing the project as well as in providing training to women trainers in basic techniques of computer literacy, maintenance, using the internet and email for communication and education purposes as well as networking.

Nevertheless, the centers were used for private and/or commercial communication as well (“open house for women”).

The Internet centers were set up in cooperation with the women committees organized in WATC. With the help of WATC, FES identified the appropriate committees and locations.

Internet cafes / centers were set up with priority in areas where isolation of women from the outside world was most grave - for political and social reasons. Areas targeted were: in the Gaza Strip: Khan Younis, Gaza City and in the West Bank: Hebron, Qalquilya and Salfeet.

Each center was provided with three to six computers, a printer and a telephone line with modem.

Objectives:

1- To overcome the double isolation of Palestinian women arising from





- the lack of contiguity of the Palestinian territories
- traditional social patterns
- 2- To empower women through access to modern techniques of communication.

Achievements:

- 1- Women Internet centers provided access to computer facilities, Internet and email for women in remote areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.
- 2- Women coordinators were trained and are capable of running the Internet centers and of providing training to women.
- 3- Women coordinators identified with the project and manage the centers.
- 4- Women internet centers offered training in computer literacy, basic computer maintenance, using the internet and email for communication and education purposes, excel as well as networking by internet / email and web page design.
- 5- Women used the Internet centers for communication, information, education and networking thus overcoming isolation and increasing their career opportunities.
- 6- Women Internet centers offered training as well as symbolic-price access for women.
- 7- Training offers widened to include other groups also.

3. Media

Written Media Program (Voice of Women)

Objectives:

- 1- To raise the awareness of the Palestinian Society, Women in particular on women rights, social justice, and social development.
- 2- To lobby decision makers through detecting facts and hopes of women on the grassroots level.
- 3- To depict the miserable reality women live in and the discrimination imposed on them.
- 4- To portray live examples of women who broke the social restrictions and reached decision-making positions or achieved their ambitions.
- 5- To create a new awareness supported by a new reading that disentangles the social and religious heritage according to a new reading, which complies with civilization and modernization.
- 6- To create a new feminist forum that portrays the concerns of women to the Palestinian society and to the world.



Achievements:

Funded by Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 24 supplements of The Voice of Women has been





published in 2001, focusing on different social, economic, political, cultural and legal issues related to Palestinian women and the Palestinian society. Following is a brief description of the tackled aspects:

1. Social aspect: social discrimination against women, such as violence, early marriage and divorce.
2. Economic aspect: violations of women's economic rights, such as equal opportunity and wages, women's independence in the labor market, as well as, their deprivation of work in the first place.
3. Political aspect: through the voices of grassroots and elitists, The Voice of Women pressured decision-makers into respecting women's roles and acknowledging the importance of their decision-making role and presence. During the Intifada Voice of Women covered many cases of the Israeli violations to universal agreements and the violent attacks of the occupation and their visible and invisible effects on Palestinian women.
4. Cultural aspect: discussing the Palestinian cultural heritage, which tends to control our social mentality, through a new perspective.
5. Legal aspect: the legal issue is the supplement's core focus, stressing its inter-relatedness with all other social, economic, political and cultural violations, discrimination and aspects. Examples: Personal Status Law, Labor Law, Elections Law, marital age, and others are focal issues which The Voice of Women tackles trying to pressure high ranking authorities in adopting equal and gender-sensitive laws.
6. An assessment workshop for "Voice Of Women" was held on May 5th, 2001. 16 participants attended the evaluation including WATC's director general, the program officer, VOW editor in chief, different VOW journalists, representatives of different NGOs and the representatives of the women committees.

Constraints:

1. The difficulty in reaching women living in marginalized areas, especially under the current political situation.
2. The lack of journalists interested in women's cause. WATC has conducted training courses for journalists from different organizations to help solve this issue.
3. Journalists' shallow understanding of gender issues.
4. The difficulty in reaching people ready to talk about their experiences, as a result of cultural, social and personal convictions.

Audio Media Radio Program (With Women - Against Silence)

The Women's Affairs Technical Committee (WATC) has produced a radio program entitled 'With Women', funded by DIAKONIA, through which Palestinian women would be given the





opportunity to voice their concerns and problems. The importance of presenting women's issues through a radio program lies in the fact that radio is considered one of the most widespread approaches of media means, especially for those who do not read and write and of course most of them are women.

Despite difficulties faced by the program in 2001, it was not interrupted, but rather continued during all program cycles due to the fact that officials at the 'Voice of Palestine' were interested in continuing it. 'With Women' is the only program amongst other institutions' programs that has maintained its continuity. The program is broadcast at Radio Ajyal and the name was changed to 'Against Silence' in 2001.

Objectives:

1. To activate and develop women's ability to obtain their civil rights.
2. To enable women to practice their right to freedom of speech.
3. To increase the society's acceptance of women's rights.
4. To increase women's understanding of the context and characteristics of civil society.
5. To increase the participation of the local community in social issues.

Achievements:

- 1- Creating a regular radio program through audio media for the last five years.
- 2- Encouraging other women organizations to have such programs.
- 3- Targeting 70 journalists from different parts of the West Bank and Gaza and debating on women's issue and rights in media.
- 4- Advocating women's rights even during the intifada in relation with economic, political and social rights.
- 5- The professional evaluation showed that 39% of the males listening to Palestine radio are regular listeners to the program, and 45% of the females are regular listeners to the program. 80% evaluated the program as having a very good coverage for women concerns and hopes.
- 6- 43 radio episodes were broadcast, most of which tackled women-related aspects. Every topic was connected with events and developments occurring in Palestine, which in return detects women's issues on both the short-term and long-term.

Constraints:

- 1- The political situation postponed the implementation of some activities, such as the training courses.
- 2- The slowness in getting feedback of the program, because comments from listeners are confined to those reaching us through live phone calls during the program or through oral words.





3- The lack of administrative assistance for the project to help in accomplishing matters.



4- The economic situation of the cadre in Ajyal Radio Station, which affected the work team and Ajyal's work policy with other organizations.

5- Visitors' incapacity of reaching the studio in order to record and broadcast the episodes as a result of the Israeli closure and curfews, thus visitors are limited to those capable of reaching Ramallah City.

6- The difficulty in moving from one area to another due to the Israeli imposed closure, which

hinders us from conducting field-recorded episodes.

7- The budget's limitation: If there was additional funding, the program could have depended on correspondents from different areas of the West Bank and Gaza.

4. Advocacy for Women Rights:

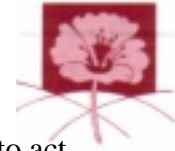
The Norwegian Agency for Development cooperation (NORAD) provided support to the Women's Affairs Technical Committee (WATC) to implement the first phase of the Advocacy for Women's Rights project for the period November 1, 1997 - November 1, 2000. The first phase of the Project focused on the legislation process and awareness at the grass roots level. The deterioration of the political situation that took place in September 2000 and the Israeli closures that followed made the work of the PLC difficult. However, advocacy for women's rights continued with decision makers, also, community awareness campaigns continued at the community level. The difficult economic and social situation, that highly affected women in particular, requested that WATC take into consideration the practical needs of women without losing the strategic vision of the advocacy programmed. Therefore, a revised proposal was sent to NORAD in November 2000 in this regard and was approved.

As the funds of the first phase were not all used by WATC, the project was extended until the new agreement signed between WATC and NORAD for phase 2 on 13.02.2001, for one year. The amount of remaining funds from phase 1 was added to the funds of phase 2 to be used in 2001 as agreed upon with NORAD.

Objectives:

1. To enhance the self-assertiveness of women by helping them discover their inner strength and collective power.
2. To raise awareness of women to the importance of their role in minimizing the effect of the existing crisis.
3. To build a communication network with all available resources including different





governmental and non-governmental organizations to form support groups trained to act efficiently during emergencies aiming at reducing sufferings of community members.

4. To upgrade skills of women in dealing with times of crisis and emergencies on the practical and strategic levels.

Achievements:

1. Laws that were drafted at the Legislative Council became more sensitive to women's rights after the lobbying efforts by the project team and the Pressure group.
2. Most of the amendments proposed were accepted and approved by the PLC during the first reading of the law.
3. A Technical Committee of 3 lawyers was established to prepare the Family Law draft to be ready before the first reading in the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC).
4. More than 60 meetings were conducted by a Pressure Group of Law institutions and ministries to discuss the laws in the Arab countries so as to provide recommendations concerning the Social Security Law to the Women's Unit in the PLC.
5. A group of 30 male and female volunteer lawyers was established to support WATC in its training and workshops for laws discussion. This group is a good example of voluntary and professional work that can lead to a real change in the attitude of other professionals toward women's issues.
6. A pressure group was established from 33 educated women who were exposed to intensive training in guidance and counseling and they provide important support in training of women.
7. A Family Law Preparatory Committee was established by WATC, the General Union of Palestinian Woman, PNGO and other women organizations to plan and advocate for a unified Family Law that is gender sensitive.
8. Networking with other women organizations, and the General Union of Palestinian Woman in the Emergency Committee, in addition to forming emergency committees from NGOs and women at the grassroots level.
9. Networking with Human Rights organizations, PINGO for planning activities related to Women's rights, especially female prisoners, and women and children suffering from violence.
10. Many meetings were conducted with all political parties, PLC members, Women's unit, and law unit at the PLC, members of the Civil Status Law Committee, in addition to other decision makers to lobby for a fair and gender sensitive law.
11. Issues considered of most importance in the Civil Law were addressed in the media as agreed upon by all Women's organization and Human Rights.
12. Networking with women institutions to protect women that were exposed to violence. In addition to supporting the ten female students who were dismissed from the Azhar University because of refusing to wear the veil. The University apologized and the students returned to the university.
13. Organize Marches with other organizations on the 8th of March and other occasions such as





peaceful marches to demonstrate our right.

14. More than sixty meetings were held to discuss the different laws such as the social security law.

15. Coordinate with other NGOs on different activities related to women's and human rights.

16. Many sit-in strikes and demonstrations took place to express our demand for international protection for all the Palestinian people especially women and children all over the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

17. Training courses on management, communication skills, conflict resolution, gender and women rights, and dealing with the media for elections were held in most of the areas of the West Bank and Gaza.

18. The project coordinators attended a number of workshops and training courses that were held by other organizations related to our work.

19. Many workshops were conducted with women discussing different issues, such as how to deal with children under stress, how to deal with their own feeling especially those related to the current crises, early marriage and its affect on girls and those mothers need to work hard to protect these daughters from early marriage.

20. 22 meetings were held in Gaza in 18 sites, and the number of women who attended was 970 women.

Constraints:

1. The deterioration in the political situation, closures, curfews and restrictions on mobility between cities and villages, which affects follow up, training and monitoring.
2. The mobility problem between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank due to the border closure and the restricted permissions restrain full coordination and holding mutual activities in addition to extra cost.
3. Delays in addressing the different laws at the legislative council due to changes in the agenda and political problems.
4. Decision-makers are not all gender sensitive or aware of women's rights and needs.

5. Partnership and Gender Mainstreaming

Block Grant

WATC implemented the Block Grant project in collaboration with several organizations including the Catholic Relief Services and the Palestinian Hydrology Group and the World Bank's Welfare Consortium who provided the financial support for the project. This project ended in the year 2001. The overall goal of the project is to activate and increase the capacity of small institutions in the Southern Area of Hebron through small grants. The targeted institutions are educational, environmental, agricultural and hydrological. WATC's role in the project was to ensure all projects are implemented in a gender-sensitive manner.





Villages Targeted:

1. Deir Razeh
2. Al Burj
3. Hadab Al Fawwar
4. Beit Mirsem
5. Al Karmel
6. Khalat Al Mieh
7. Al Ramadin
8. Hadab Al'alaqa
9. Mirzab
10. Beit Ula
11. Yatta
12. Dura
13. Bani Na'im
14. Beit Kahel
15. Erreihieh
16. Sekkah
17. Almajd
18. Raboud
19. Simya
20. Mnaizel
21. Shweikeh
22. Sosya
23. Ithna
24. Samu'
25. Beit Awwa
26. Beit Mirsem
27. Al Ramadeen
28. Innab Al Saghira



Achievements:

1. Cleaving of Agricultural roads in the targeted villages.
2. Creating Children's activity centers.
3. Establishment of Kindergartens.
4. Establishment of computer labs in the different villages.
5. Construction of domestic and agricultural rainwater harvesting systems.
6. Construction of agricultural cisterns.
7. Establishment of community service centers in the targeted villages.





Community Lead Village Service Rehabilitation Project

Supported by the USAID, and led by the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in cooperation with the Palestinian Hydrology Group and the Union of Agricultural Work Committees, WATC participated in the implementation of the Community Led Village Service Rehabilitation Project (VRP). This project aims at providing rapid and integrated community mobilization techniques addressing short-term needs brought on both the deteriorating state of the infrastructure and continued difficulties with service delivery. The project targets twenty-four villages in Hebron and Nablus districts. WATC's key role is to raise gender issues at the grassroots level and to ensure that the project is implemented in a gender sensitive manner. The project develops the infrastructure of the targeted areas and addresses women's basic and practical needs, allowing rural women more time for focusing on their strategic needs. The VRP supports smaller projects working with water, wastewater, agriculture, healthcare, education and other social services. The program directly benefits an estimated number of 52,000 people.

Villages Targeted:

The VRP targets the following villages:

* Hebron's Yatta Village Coalition including: Zeif, Khalet Al Mieh, Al Dweir, Al Rofaieh Deiret, Alkarmel and Khalet Saleh.

* Hebron's Dourah Village Coalition including: Al Majed, Saka, Deir Al Asal Al Foqa, Kharsa, Al Sorra, Beit Awwa, Beit AlRoush Alfouka. The project's beneficiaries are estimated at 17,200 persons in this area specifically.

* Jenin Area Villages including: Fakou'a, Jalboun, Arbouni, Arana, Deir Abu Deif, Beit Kad, Tayasir, Sir, Raba, Series, Al Jdeideh and AlMosalieh.

Achievements:

The main achievements of the project in the different villages mentioned above are not only related to infra structure but it goes beyond that to achieve the following:

- 1- Make sure that women are involved in the decisions related to the project such as establishing cisterns and agricultural underground wells, building and finishing schools for boys and girls, building health centers, Paving agricultural roads, opening market places and playgrounds, and putting waste containers
- 2- Establishing and furnishing women centers.
- 3- Holding advocacy and educational programs for women.
- 4- Holding training courses in income generation and creating the base for women to start new businesses.
- 5- Working with Parents' councils in the different schools on the importance of girls' education.





Constraints:

1. The deterioration in the political situation, closures, curfews and restrictions on mobility between cities and villages, which affects follow up.
2. Lack of commitment of some contractors in implementing the different projects.
3. Lack of Raw Material as a result of closure.
4. The delay of Payments by the CRS caused the contractors to pressure the coordinators.





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