

## Annual Report 2012

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Mrs. Leila Dagher  
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**Orthodox Family:** Dr. Tarek Na'was  
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### Executive Committee

**Mr. Edward Asmar** Chairman  
**Dr. Tarek Na'was** Vice Chairman  
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## Message from the Chairman



The Palestinian refugees still await a solution to the tragedy that befell them more than six decades ago. They watch and suffer as new inhabitants from all over the world continue to pour into Palestine and claim it as their own ancestral right. The plight the Palestinians find themselves in, has been the focus of much world attention who have helped in providing survival needs and services. But none have been able to return them home and end this long standing unfair and unjust situation.

The DSPR established by international and local churches thought that their mission was temporary. Wanting to do their best, they set up a good organizational system involving all the churches of the Middle East where all got equal chances of representation and service. Little did they know that 64 years later their mission would still continue with increased urgency as they try to meet the increasing needs of a growing population. Little could they imagine that the organizational structure they set up more than six decades ago still serves as their guide.

In a rapidly changing world with new ideologies and political leaderships each vying to oust the other, new refugees and asylum seekers have been created everywhere. Refugees from the destructive forces of nature have also been added to the list. Yet, all these refugees can have the choice of going home if matters in their homeland are straightened out and they choose to return. Only the Palestinian refugees stand out as a nation that has nowhere to return to. Their country is occupied and there is no place for the original inhabitants.

The services of JCC and the other regions of DSPR cannot stop. All work hard with the support of our partners from the churches and other organizations. We pray that God enlighten our path and fortify our efforts in seeking justice for those we serve empowering them with knowledge and the ability to care for themselves, their families and their communities. We are working to keep the Palestinian cause alive until the rights of the Palestinians are realized and a just solution is found for this sad and unfair situation.

Our gratitude to all who are helping us keep our beacon of light and hope shining.

**Edward Asmar**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edward Asmar".

## Acknowledgements

The JCC with its board, staff and beneficiaries, extends its gratitude to our faithful DSPR partners and friends who for many years have supported, guided and encouraged JCC as one of the DSPR regions who work with the Palestinian refugees. This support is greatly appreciated as the work and service we carry out depends on our joint efforts. We cannot do it alone Focused on our mission of empowerment with knowledge and skills leading to self reliance, our programs continue. Our aim is to make a difference, no matter how slight, to the sad situation the refugees have to endure.

It is always a great pleasure when some of our partners or members of their churches come to visit. It gives us a chance to show them our different programs, share our success tell them our challenges and listen to their thoughts. Walking through the maze of narrow alleys in the camps exposes our visitors to the suffering and the reality of life within these camps.

**Our warm and sincere thanks are extended to all who have supported our work for many years and continue to do so as one of the DSPR regions**

- Global Ministries of Netherlands – Kerk in Actie
- Global Ministries – United Church of Christ and Disciples
- Embrace the Middle East
- General Board of Global Ministries –The United Methodist Church – USA
- Christian World Service – New Zealand,
- Church World Service – USA
- Church of Scotland
- United Churches of Canada
- KAIROS – Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives
- Presbyterian Hunger Program
- Church of Sweden
- Bread for the World
- (ICCO)Interchurch Organization for Development Cooperation
- CCFD Le Comite Catholic Contre La Faim
- National Council of Churches of Australia

**We also extend our appreciation to those who support some of our special projects**

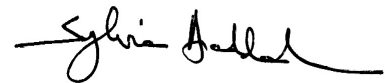
- The World Vision who continue to support our joint project for slow learners.
- The British Embassy for their support of the tutorial program for children with learning problems
- The Church of Scotland for their support of our music program
- St Colms of Scotland for their support of our moral guidance program

**We appreciate the cooperation we have with some of our local NGOs who help us improve our existing programs and often open the door to new programs. We extend our thanks to**

- EPEP- The Ecumenical Popular Education Program
- Al Jana- The Arab Resource Center for Popular Arts
- Najdeh Association
- The Family Planning Association
- Beit Atfal Assumoud
- Palestinian Women's Union
- PARD-Popular Aid for Relief and Development
- Harriri Foundation – Health Department
- The Right to Play.
- PACES- Palestinian Association for Children's Encouragement of Sports.
- START- Encouragement of Education Through Art
- ASSABIL- Friends of Public Libraries Association
- Unite Lebanon Youth Project

**Warm wishes are sent to all and we hope that we will continue to work together for a better future.**

**Sylvia Haddad  
JCC Director**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sylvia Haddad', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

## **Introduction**

The Joint Christian Committee for Social Service in Lebanon (JCC) is one of the five regions of the Department of Service for Palestinian Refugees (DSPR) which in turn is a part of the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC). The four other regions of DSPR are Gaza, the West Bank, Nazareth and Jordan.

DSPR began as an informal and spontaneous effort of local churches in response to the 1948 catastrophe of the forced flight of Palestinians from their country. As the needs became too burdensome, appeals for outside assistance were launched with demands for a formal organizational structure. A conference held in Beirut in 1951 resulted in coordination of efforts as the refugee temporary emergency seemed to be prolonged. These efforts produced the “Near East Christian Council Committee for refugee work.” This Council adopted its first constitution in 1952 through which a confederation of area committees were established.

Each of these area committees developed its own identity, determined its own composition, its own rules of procedure, functioned separately in different circumstances and faced different challenges. They were connected through a Central Office under the direction of a Central Committee made up of members from the various committees in addition to consultative members from the different churches.

This was the beginning of DSPR and although the constitution was revised at later dates, the relationship between the area committees, their Central Office and the Central Committee remains strong and unified in spite of the diversity of programs in the different regions. They all have common purposes and ideals of service based on promoting the spiritual, moral and material welfare of the refugees and displaced.

The JCC began its work in 1950 and obtained its official status in 1961 under a Ministry of Interior decree number 264/AD. The work began with relief but soon changed its focus to education and vocational training. Schools and vocational training centers were established wherever the refugees lived. Fashion design, sewing, embroidery, carpentry, metal work, shoe making, leather repair, and electronics were some of the skills offered. Hundreds of families owed and still owe their livelihood to what they learned at JCC.

Today, work at JCC has become more confined in scope but still carries out many programs to achieve the DSPR goals and strategy plans. All programs aim at improving human rights conditions, improve community life, empower women and youth, develop potentials for self realization, increase community involvement in order to attain better income generation capacities.

Programs also work to gain world recognition for the plight of the Palestinians and they advocate for their rights and support the right of return.

To achieve the objectives mentioned, the JCC carries out a variety of educational programs, offers market relevant vocational skills and conducts numerous community activities. All programs are implemented in our own Centers which have become Community Centers as well, providing space for workshops, trainings, lectures and conferences.

## **Mission**

Empowering Palestinians, regardless of age or gender, with knowledge and skills that lead to self-reliance and equipping him /her to be a provider for the family and community while at the same time preserving the Palestinian identity, heritage and culture.

## **Vision**

- Youth equipped with academic and vocational education.
- Youth participating in their community.
- Men and women carrying out sustainable community development programs.
- A community leading a dignified life while preserving the Palestinian identity, heritage and culture, and upholding the all important “Right of Return”.
- Palestinian and Lebanese communities working on restoring harmonious relations between them.
- The Palestinian struggle as central to Christian church movements in the Middle East and Worldwide

## Sabra Center:

The Sabra Center is in the southern part of Beirut and serves the heavily populated area of Sabra- Shatilla camp and its surroundings .It occupies the first two floors of a building with a small playground. A nursery, a kindergarten and a beauty program occupy the first floor. Offered on the second floor are the programs of electronics, computers, tutoring, literacy, lectures, workshops, children and youth activities and the program for the elderly.

## Sidon Center

To the south of Beirut, JCC has a spacious center in the city of Sidon which is accessible to the highest populated refugee camp in Lebanon. It is also accessible to a smaller camp and to the refugees residing in the old section of the city. Programs in beauty skills, secretarial training and student tutoring are offered. Workshops according to needs arising are conducted and often in cooperation with other organizations. The center also welcomes researchers who benefit from its facilities as they collect data and analyze it for their studies about the Palestinian community. For the last three years, an employment service to help Palestinians find jobs was carried out.

## Tyre Farm

Accessible to three camps in the south of Lebanon stands the JCC farm. Agriculture was the profession of most of the first generation refugees who worked the agricultural lands of the south at their arrival. Convinced that this skill should be passed along, the JCC runs short courses in agriculture open to both genders and to all ages. School children, scouts, photography students and other groups are welcomed to explore what the land and nature can offer. Related courses in flower arranging, soap making and bee keeping are periodically offered. The farm also hosts many groups and families who are stifled in the overcrowded camps and come for a recreational break.

## Dbayeh Center

In the Dbayeh camp to the north of Beirut, the JCC has a center which serves as a library, community and a tutoring center. Most of the children and the youth of the camp gather in this center during their free time to read, borrow books and participate in playing games, reading stories, singing, dancing and acting. Lectures and workshops are offered to and are mostly well attended.

Dealing with learning problems of children is a major program offered in addition to literacy and English classes for adults. A sports program, musical training and moral guidance have been added. A group of young men and women have been well trained through a series of workshops and have become leaders in their camp. They work as a team to defend and advocate for their camp in all situations.





## Educational Programs



### Nursery and Kindergarten in Sabra Centre

Do you know that I was a student in this very same center 50 years ago says Fatmeh Lahham as she awaits to collect her two grand children from our Kindergarten. I was a student in the Sewing and Embroidery classes. At 14 some ladies came to visit this Center and saw me. They introduced me to their brother and we soon got married. I sent all my children to this Kindergarten and now my grand children are here. I often think of Miss Samira and Miss Rose who cared for me and my children. May God rest their souls.



*Fatmeh, Daughter and Children*

To get into the Kindergarten, a closed-in balcony, used as a play area during rainy days, takes you into 3 brightly painted rooms which are well equipped with educational materials, wall hangings and colorful small tables and chairs. Sixty five children aged 3 to 5 occupy these classrooms from 8 a.m. until 1:00. They learn in a creative atmosphere through educational games, sports, activities and songs.

Two new additions have enhanced this program. First, a class for 2 year olds was introduced in response to persistent demand with 12 toddlers as the first occupants of this class.

Second, a depleted structure in the back of the building had been pulled down and the space prepared and equipped as a playground - a great achievement and luxury in this congested area. We finally have a space for play and fun, as well as a place where a platform can be mounted for the numerous performances we give every year.



## Activities

A variety of activities are carried throughout the year nurturing the children's growth. These include:

- Visits to bakeries to observe and make dough
- Handling and cutting vegetables and fruits as a means to learn colors and their benefits in soups and salads.
- Celebrating special occasions - birthdays, Christmas, mothers' day, Adha feast, national days etc.
- Attending puppet shows with educational themes
- Visits to the zoo to learn about animals
- An outdoor program to "Unite Lebanon Youth's" outdoor facility at the outskirts of Beirut gave the children a chance to learn about nature and partake in various activities such as handicrafts, drawing, singing and running in nature.
- Story reading to encourage love of books and instill reading habits
- Visits of the upper Kindergarten class to elementary schools in preparation for their move to those schools.



Trip to Dinocity the Dinosaurs Zoo

### 1. Tutoring for Academic Achievement

Many reasons lead to students' dropping out of schools in the Palestinian community. Slow learning abilities, behavioral and speech problems, poverty, bad living conditions, work restrictions against Palestinians are just a few of these reasons. Finding help to overcome these problems will help a child build self confidence, continue schooling and seek success. Both Sabra and Dbayeh Centers offer tutoring programs.

*Sabra Center:* As the students end their day at school, they come to this center and gather around tables with students from other schools. Books and copy books soon fill the tables as every student works to fulfill the assignments given while a teacher and 3 or 4 helpers

work with them to insure that they understand the assigned materials and fulfill their requirements. Grades given by their schools are always checked as an indication of progress or need for harder work. An average of 35 to 45 students, benefit yearly from this program.



Tutoring class at Sabra Center

*Dbayeh Center:* The program is known as the "Study Station" where an average of 31 to 36 students gather after school to work on their home work. They come from 9 different schools with their different syllabi. Five tutors work with them while those with learning problems and defects get specialized care.



Tutoring class at Dbayeh Center

### 2. Computer and English Classes

Learning the basics of computers is a stepping stone to a wide field of knowledge leading to different opportunities. English as well has become an essential in



all aspects of life. Thus the demand for courses in both these fields is increasing. Three centers offer these courses according to demand.

## English

Twelve young people visited the *Sidon* center asking that they be helped with their English. Some needed to sit for their university entrance exams while others had already been accepted but needed to improve their English to better understand their course assignments. For 9 months they persevered with all those sitting for the entrance exams succeeding.

In *Sabra*, the students of English have a different purpose. Eight young women took the course so as to improve their chances of finding jobs.



English Lesson at Sabra Center

## Computer

The *Dbayeh* Library/Community Center is well equipped with computers. The students taking the tutorial program have learned to use the computers in researching for their studies. Introduction to computer courses are open to the community and especially to library members. "For Women Only" is a computer course in *Sabra* center. This came at the request of some



Computer Room at Dbayeh Center

young women who were keen to learn the use of computers with the aspiration of learning computer aided design. The condition, one of them explained, is that the course be offered to women only so our parents will allow us to come. Twelve women initiated this course.

In *Sidon*, seven students benefitted from the introduction to the Cisco Computer Language course.

## 3. The Library

It was so nice said Paul, one of our staff and a resident of the *Dbayeh* camp, to observe little Mary looking through the books in the children's section. Her enthusiasm as she chose books to read and borrow soon had her mother doing the same. When they left both had books to read, get back and borrow others. Such a scene proves that the effort put into beginning and running this library was worthwhile. Seventy members enjoy reading and borrowing books. Activities never stop in this place. Regular story reading hours are scheduled for the children to listen, look at pictures, handle books and learn to love reading. The youth spend much of their free time browsing through books and borrowing what they need. Special hours are set for the women to meet, listen to lectures, have workshops and choose books to borrow.

The library has become a meeting place for the whole community where young and old meet to plan the many activities run in the camp. It has truly become a community center, a center for culture where the lights shine way into the night.



Children reading and drawing at Dbayeh Community Center

## 4. Literacy

I am 80 years old says Fahimeh as she proudly demonstrates her new skill of reading. It has always been my dream to read and write and now I can. My five children are university graduates. Now it is my turn to learn.

Following the newest methods of teaching literacy has shown encouraging results in the *Sabra Center* as 15 people of different ages convene daily. It is difficult for most to admit their illiteracy and few are ready to commit the time to learn. It is not through negligence that this program has not spread to other centers but rather to people's shyness to admit their illiteracy. More effort will be exerted to overcome this shyness and spread this program to all centers.



80 year old Fahimeh

Educational Programs	Center	Beneficiaries	Duration
Nursery and kindergarten	Sabra	77	9 months
Tutoring	Sabra ,Dbayeh	81	12 months
English	Sidon , Sabra	20	9 months
Computers	Sidon,Sabra,Dbayeh	69	9 months
Library	Dbayeh	110	12 months
Literacy	Sabra	15	10 months





## Vocational Programs



### Electronics and computers

Seated on long tables with drawings and charts displayed in front of them are the young men of the electronics program. They look with intent and concentration at diagrams of electrical wirings in the composition of the different electrical equipment including televisions, radios, recorders and household equipment. All concentrate as they try to understand how this equipment is assembled and how they function. All seem happier and more enthusiastic once they begin the manual-hands on part of the course. They much prefer to handle equipment, take them apart and re-assemble them. They like to solder metal, install electrical wirings, put up T.V. dishes on roofs and fix cellular phones.

Assembling fixing and maintaining computers was introduced as a separate course. But introducing it into the Electronics syllabus proved to be of great value to the students and is one of the attractions of the Electronics program. The course can still be taken separately but most are choosing to take it as part of the Electronics course. Studying computers is never a waste as computers have become essential for all fields

As the 9 month training period nears the end, all look for jobs and most succeed. Twelve of the fourteen registered in the Electronics program succeeded in getting employment.

### Secretarial Studies

In the kitchen of the *Sidon* Center, stacked to the side, are a pile of old typewriters once the pillar of the secretarial course this center is famous for. The sound of pounding on the typewriters' keys filled the rooms as students learned to type. But as computers were introduced these, type writers stand abandoned as a witness to the days gone by. Will anyone ever use them again? Can we throw them after all those years of faithful service!

Secretarial training is a popular course in our *Sidon* center. Every business irrelevant of its nature or size needs qualified people for office support. The course content and the methodology for teaching, has been adapted to use the different programs of the computer. As the 9 months of training end most of the 15 young



women have become proficient enough to seek employment. Some though prefer to further improve their English so as to seek better jobs.



*JCC's old typewriters*

### Agriculture

In the very south of Lebanon lies the JCC farm, near the city of Tyre. A 4000 square meter land has been well prepared with a water well and an irrigation system installed. On it have been erected 4 plastic tents, a greenhouse, a structure intended for a chicken coop and 2 small structures equipped as classrooms. The main purpose of this farm is to teach the basics of agriculture with the aim of interesting people, especially the young, in a profession with many possibilities. Two groups, each made up of 14 persons of mixed gender, took this introductory course this year. Some of those who took the course are already working in the fields and were able to use some of the information they gained immediately. We are especially pleased that Hassan Younis decided to take up agriculture as his vocation. He was able to rent a plot of land and is now planting and selling the products. Our farm and teacher continue to be a reference for him in times of need.



*Hassan Younis*

### Hair and Beauty Skills

These are increasingly popular skills that many young women are choosing as a vocation. Personal grooming for the pursuit of beauty has become very popular these days.

- *Hairdressing in Sabra Center*

Ni'mat, a jolly young woman, is proud of the achievements of her students and proudly leads any visitor to Sabra Center to observe at length what her students are doing. She is especially proud of the fact that all her students find work as soon as they finish her course. For 6 months she works with them teaching them the latest techniques in scalp care, hair coloring, cutting, styling, straightening, curling and other essentials. Her classes are usually full but confined by space to 16 girls. A second group is always ready to begin.



*Ni'mat demonstrating to students*

- *Beauty skills in Sabra*

A four- month course offered twice a year. The course includes the essentials of skin care, hair removal and the latest in make- up application. The course also includes finger and toe nail care with the latest fashion in clipping, polishing and adding designs. Drawing designs on the hands and legs with " henna" is a popular part of the course where the 14 girls taking this course were able to show their creativity and talents.

- Practical work

In a nearby home for the elderly are more than 50 women who await anxiously the care and the company of the girls from our Center. An agreement with the administration allows our girls to attend to all the grooming needs of the ladies in the home from cutting hair to applying makeup to cutting and polishing nails.



*Cutting and styling in the old people's home*

Members of the community are encouraged to get their grooming needs at the center. Minimal charges attract the women in the neighborhood and this gives our students the practice needed to deal with the public.

To know the latest trends in hair fashion and makeup, visits to a leading establishment for beauty products are essential. Talk and demonstrations from the experts are informative and enjoyable.

- Hair and Beauty studies at the *Sidon Center*

In this Center, Hairdressing and Beauty Skills are combined as one course taken over 9 months. At the end of the 6th month, the students are ready to combine their studies with an apprenticeship at a number of salons. This provides good practice and reveals their abilities and skills to possible employers. In fact from the 9 girls in the course, seven have joined salons; one has opened her own shop and one works out of her home.

### Barber Skills

Male grooming is slowly gaining popularity and is taking its place as a vocation that young men can pursue. In both *Sabra and Sidon centers* a 4 -month course in Barber skills has been designed and is gaining popularity.

- *Sidon Center*

Mohamad Zain, a middle aged man, walked into the *Sidon Center* and asked for Ashraf the teacher of the barber course. I have heard about him in Sweden to



*Future barbers in JCC Centers*

where I emigrated many years ago. I am a successful man and run a restaurant in that country but my dream has always been to be a barber. So I have dedicated 4 months to live here and study this skill .Hopefully, when I get back to Sweden, I will open a barber shop- *and he did*. Six young men were in the same class.

- *Sabra Center*

Jawdat Bakir came to the Sabra Center from Canada. He also owned a restaurant there but the barbering profession had always attracted him. He enjoyed the course and learned a lot in the company of 23 other young men. Upon completion of the course, Jawdat went back to Canada and has secured a chair in a well renowned barbershop.

- Practical work

An agreement with a boy's orphanage in Sidon serves both centers. Once a week the students go to the orphanage and work on the hair of the boys practicing all what they are learning.

Vocational Training	Center	Beneficiaries	Duration
Electronics and computer repair	Sabra	12	9 months
Secretarial	Sidon	15	9 months
Hairdressing	Sabra, Sidon	39	6,9 months
Beauty care	Sabra ,Sidon	23	6,9 months
Barber	Sabra,Sidon	30	6 months



## Programs and Trainings



### Music

Music training began in *Dbayeh* camp with a small group of youth at our Center, playing a few simple instruments. They soon began to provide the camp with music during special occasions. But many wanted to sing which began a singing program and the formation of a choir. Although they still have a long way to go but they have already performed at fundraisers and in the church of their camp.

### Arts and Crafts

Is drawing and painting included in your programs asked Raji Abdel Salam? Can we begin such a program in your centers? I belong to an organization which believes in the benefit of art for the young. Our answer was- where there are children and youth, arts and crafts are essential as a venue for creativity and fun.

In both our *Sabra and Dbayeh* centers, whose beneficiaries are mostly the young, a good amount of time is dedicated to arts and crafts. We welcomed warmly the artists from the Start organization which benefitted 30 children in *Dbayeh Center* and 20 children in *Sabra Center*.





### Sports

At the outskirts of the Dbayeh camp, a small space which was once the playground of a now destroyed school, provided the children and young people of the camp with a space to play and carry out different games. Lately the JCC received help to clear the land from the accumulated rubble and begin a football program. Forty five children signed up for the program. Two teams were made up of boys and one team was formed from girls. Football has gained popularity with the female gender. Trainers from the camp are enjoying training the young of their camp. One of the boys, the 13 year old Oliver, was chosen to represent the camp as part of the Palestinian refugee team that competed in the Ghosia football championships in Sweden.



Oliver Allawi at Ghosia Foot Championship, Sweden

In Sabra the boys of the Electronics and Computer program had never had a sports program in the different schools they attended. The successful construction of the playground in our center provided us the space to start an exercise program which is now coupled with football training in a nearby space opened to the public. The boys, reluctant and joking at first, now await their sports time impatiently.

### Lectures, Workshops, Trainings

An important part of our programs are the many lectures and workshops offered to the staff, teachers and community. In Dbayeh camp, the services of specialists in psychology, education and child development are part of the program and many lectures are given to the parents to help them with their children. A special training for safe internet use was given to the youth of the camp.

### Summer Activities

*Dbayeh camp* waits anxiously for the mid-summer carnival which has been taking place for the last four years. This event draws the whole community together as they plan and prepare for this 3 day activity. Music, dances, poetry recitals, plays, competitions, face painting, games and food are all part of the program. The carnival is open to adjoining communities and special invitations go to the other camps.



Summer Carnival at JCC Dbayeh

*In Sabra Center*, all our students and children in the community aged 5-14 are invited to join a 1 month summer program. It includes drawing, painting, puppet shows, outdoor trips and handling important themes such as honesty, cleanliness, friendship and team building. The number of participants this year was 66.

### Tying of Scarves

As the number of women wearing scarves on their heads is increasing, a short training course was begun in *Sabra Center* to teach the different ways a scarf could be tied and especially during occasions. Six enjoyed this year being innovative in tying their scarves and some are using this new found skill to gain some income.

The JCC continues to tell the story of a lost country, of uprooted people, of refugees living in camps. It tells the story of the misery of the old, the despair of the young and the yearning of all to return to their ancestral country where they can plough their lands, harvest their orchards and prune their trees. The Palestinians have been refugees for the last 64 years tolerating all the injustice of such a status. They live with the hope that one day they will return.

**Raising awareness**

Creating awareness and gaining support for refugee issues is an integral part of JCC work. Our partners' visits representing their churches and organizations are important to us and very supportive of our work. We depend on them to go back and advocate for what is just and right. The visits of church groups, media, researchers, students and volunteers are greatly welcomed.

British Ambassador Tom Fletcher and some of the Embassy staff, visited the Dbayeh camp to meet the students of the tutoring program they had helped support. His visit was welcomed by local officials and camp residents with whom he chatted as he took a tour of the camp.



*British Ambassador Tom Fletcher*

John Abu Halka, an art professor at the University of San Diego in the United States, came with the purpose of preparing an audiovisual documentation of the memories



*John Abu Halka*

of the 1948 Palestinian refugees. He was warmly received inside and outside the camps he visited and people were only too happy to relay their memories of the country they lost.

John Lewis from KAIROS, Churches of Canada, visited



*Geert Klaassen and John Lewis*

the JCC Dbayeh Center and the camp. He also visited the Sabra Center and the Shattilla camp.

Geert Klaassen a volunteer with the Kerk in Actie, Protestant Churches of Netherlands, visited all our centers and the adjoining camps, but took a special interest in the Tyre Farm.

Elias Ghorayeb, JCC education coordinator at the Dbayeh Center was invited to France by the CCFD during lent season. He was hosted at different locations for various occasions during which he described and showed pictures of the life and struggle of the refugees.



*Elias Ghorayeb*



A visit to the Sabra Center and a walk in the overcrowded and humid alleys of the Sabra-Shatilla camp is all what most of our visitors have time for. It gives them an impression of refugee life and the suffering they endure. We were happy to receive Bettina Redin and Ulrich Gundert from “Bread for the World”-Germany.



*Bettina Redin and Ulrich Gundert*



*Francis Tams - accounting consultant for the “Bread for the World” from Jerusalem with DSPR chief accountant George Stephan.*



*Rev. James Moos with Peter Makari from the Global Ministries of the United Church of Christ*



*Pastor Jonas Lange of the German Community Church in Beirut and his wife Chris*



*Chris Damon from the USA with his wife and daughter*



*Professor Ken Sawyer from the McCormick Theological Seminary of Chicago accompanied by Gabrielle Worley a volunteer working in Lebanon*





*Bevan Hall, a business man from New Zealand*

Matilde Gathoni Italian photographer needing to observe and feel life in the camps for photography reasons.

Pastors Jan Deveris, Marshall Zeiman, and program coordinator Amgad Beblawi formed a delegation from the different Presbyterian Churches in the USA

***Partners and friends, whose time does not allow field visits, are updated on JCC work- achievements and challenges.***

Emmanuelle Bennani from the Catholic Committee against Hunger the-CCFD who had invited one of our staff to their annual lent fundraising event.

Ulrika Persson from the Church of Sweden who came for an MECC meeting but took the time to listen to JCC news.

### **Working for Change**

Working to bring about change based on the principles of human rights is part of our work. The Palestinian refugees in Lebanon have very few civil rights and experience social and political discrimination resulting in poverty, fear and hopelessness. To overcome this discrimination, programs are carried out to achieve reconciliation through self expression and reaching out to others. An example of such a program was carried out through a drama project including local and refugee young people.

The JCC participates and supports activities organized by others that fight for civil rights of the refugees such as the right to work and the right of return. The youth are also made aware of their human rights and are taught to pursue these rights.



*German and Danish pastors attending a special theology course at the Near East School of Theology, who wanted to see and feel the refugee situation*



*Pastors Jan Deveris, Marshall Zeiman, and program coordinator Amgad Beblawi formed a delegation from the different Presbyterian Churches in the USA*

Cathy Gosden from the Baptist Church in England.

Sam Moodey from England touring Lebanon, with special interest in the Palestinian refugee issue.

## Volunteers

Volunteers enrich the life of an organization while enriching their own lives. The Australian Volunteer International (AVI) organization attracts their volunteers from different backgrounds, interests and expertise. The JCC had the pleasure of working with three volunteers from that organization the last of which was **Talitha Francis** who mostly worked on capacity training of the staff. A workshop for all the organizations with AVI volunteers was organized by their Middle East coordinator **Cassandra Mattie**. The meeting provided an opportunity for these organizations to know each other, exchange experiences and form a network for future benefit.

The tutoring program at the Sabra Center is always in need of help and especially for English home work. Thus all volunteers whose mother language is English or are well versed in that language find themselves in the Sabra Center working with the students on their home work. We were very happy to have this year **Hannah Scott**, a student at Oxford University and **Susanne Mollner** from the United States with her university degree in teaching English.

We are also lucky to have **Mona Bahnan** with her long life experience volunteering as an English teacher at the JCC School and in Dbayeh camp. She works with the tutoring program and with women's English classes.



*Talitha Francis*



*Hannah Scott*



*Mona Bahnan*



*Susanne Mollner*

### **The JCC School draws its Final curtain**

As the students, parents, teachers, staff and friends gathered for the end of the year graduation ceremony, the commotion, bustle, hustle, music and chatter did not hide the deep sadness and depression all felt. They were all witnessing the last ceremony being held in this old and cherished school which has served the community faithfully for the last 62 years. **It was about to close its doors never to be opened again.**

The school was established in 1950 along with 14 other schools with the goal of serving the Palestinian refugees and those seeking a good education of the local community. With time, the other schools were closed one after the other while this school gallantly held on.

The school was run in a rented premise occupying 2 floors and a playground of an old and beautiful building with architectural value. Unfortunately, the building is situated in a prime location of the city where the building developers are changing the whole area into a commercial area. The school building was lost to one of these developers and a court case against them was lost.

Thousands of students have graduated from this school. They all got a good basic education which served as a stepping stone to whatever they wanted to do next. Many kept in contact and came back to the school, walked around the classrooms and reminisced about their childhood.

Closing a school is a traumatic experience especially when its services are still greatly needed in an economically striving community where education is valued.

It is difficult to say goodbye to children for whom the school is their second home. It is difficult to part with teachers and staff who has faithfully served the school. It is difficult to part with parents who trusted their loved ones to this school.

**To all we say: Our Thoughts and Best Wishes Will Always Be With You.**

Our sincerest gratitude goes to partners and friends who believed in the mission of this school and helped us keep the school doors open until human greed intervened. All we can say at this point in time is **Thank you.**

- Global Ministries of Netherlands
- National Council of Churches of Australia
- United Church of Christ - USA
- United Methodist Church - USA
- Church of Scotland
- Graigie Bank Church - Scotland
- St. Andrews Presbyterian Church - Arizona
- Timothy and Peggy Johnson-USA
- Lebanese Women's Cultural Society- California
- American Women's Club - Beirut
- Dar-el Handasah - Beirut
- Mrs. Mimi Badran Farsoun - Beirut
- Mrs. Rula Haddad Norregaard - USA
- Rotary Cosmopolitan Club- Beirut
- Inner Wheel of the Rotary Cosmopolitan Club - Beirut
- St. Christopher's Anglican Church – Ladies Group West Australia





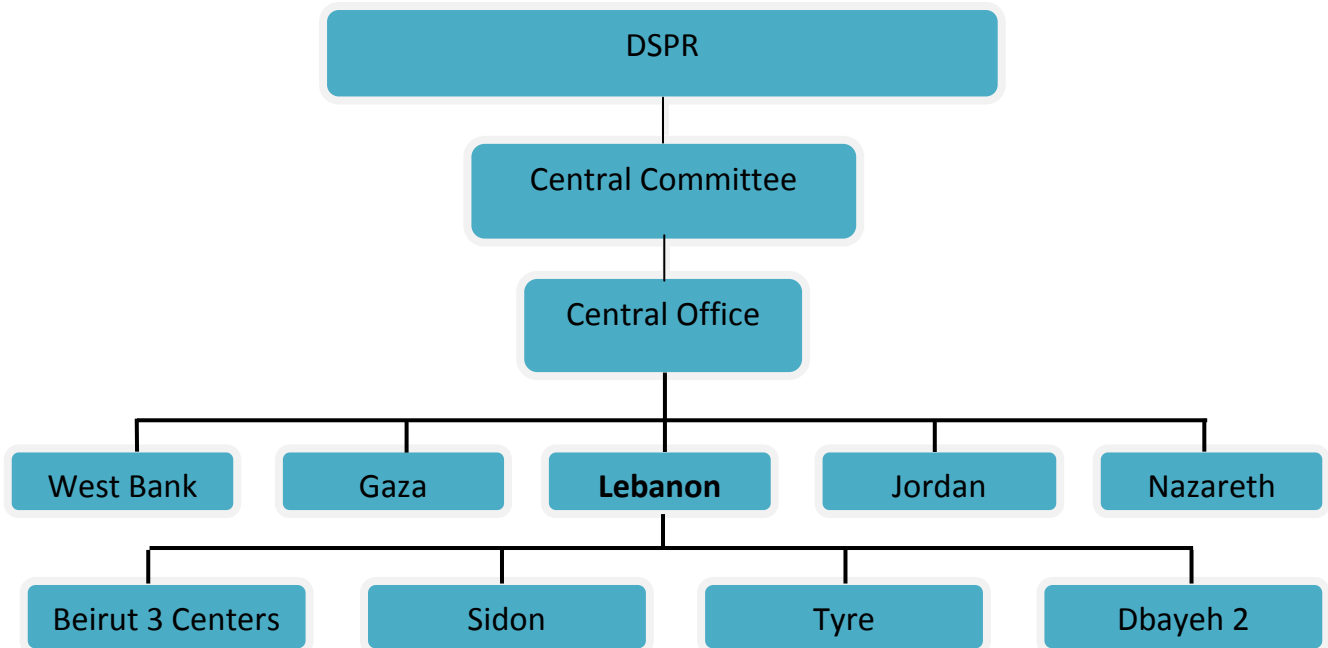
JCC School staff



JCC School Students



## Department of Service for Palestinian Refugees Structure - DSPR



*Round Table Meeting Jordan*