



**Mariam from Beit Nabala**



**Zahieh from Al-Masmiyya Al Kabira**



**Heigar from Al-Dawayima**



**Fatima from Dayr Al-Dubban**



**Zuhdiyah from Dayr Yasin**



### Contribute to Our Refugee Programs

#### Present Ordering Information

- **Mariam from Beit Nabala (Yaffa)**
- **Zahieh from Al-Masmiyya Al-Kabira (Gaza)**
- **Heigar from Al-Dawayima (Hebron)**
- **Fatima from Dayr Al-Dubban (Hebron)**
- **Zuhdiyah from Dayr Yasin (Jerusalem)**

Your contribution will enable the YWCA of Palestine to advocate for the Right of Refugees and provide a dignified source of sustainable income for the women and their families. For more information related to the Fabric of Our Lives Project and where to order dolls go to our

**website: [www.ywca-palestine.org](http://www.ywca-palestine.org).**

**Email: [council@ywca-palestine.org](mailto:council@ywca-palestine.org)**

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**Young Women's Christian Association – Palestine**



## The Fabric of Our Lives

*“Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state. Everyone has the right to leave any country, including “her” own, and to return to “her” country.” Article 13, from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.*

Will you hear my story?  
Will you support me?  
It is a human story.

Oppression can never prohibit me from expressing my culture, heritage, history, faith and dignity.

My past was stolen, but would you help me restore my future?

We hope that your participation in this project allows you to become informed about Al Nakba and how it created thousands of refugees overnight, and how the catastrophes continue until today.

We call on you to join us in our call for refugee rights, Right of Return, and work for Peace with Justice.

Here is how you can act:

- Join our witness visits for Peace with Justice (posted on our website);
- Join YWCA and other movements to call on your governments to implement the UN Resolutions that recognize the rights of return, right for statehood, sovereignty and freedom for Palestinians;
- Support morally responsible investment and corporate responsibility;
- Support Palestinian economic justice and the right of women for a dignified livelihood;
- Join us in commemorating the UN Day of Solidarity with Palestinians on November 29 and commemorating AL Nakba on May 15.

As part of the World YWCA's commitment to peace with justice for all people and the right to self determination, freedom, and dignity, all UN Resolutions, including the right of return for Palestinian refugees and Palestinians living in exile were affirmed by the YWCA movement across the world.

The Fabric of Our Lives Project is an advocacy project of the YWCA of Palestine under our Rights for Women for Peace, Security and Dignity. The primary purpose of the project is to raise awareness on the importance of refugee rights. The project provides tools for advocating for the Right of Return and reparations as outlined in UN Resolutions 194 and 237. Its secondary purpose is to support women's livelihoods and their families.

May 15 marks the anniversary of the Palestinian Nakba (the Catastrophe) which resulted in the expulsion of over 750,000 Palestinians from their homes, land and means of livelihood. More than three-quarters of the



Palestinian population were expelled by military assaults and threats, and over 525 Palestinian cities and towns were destroyed. Due to the ongoing occupation of the land of Palestine, the number of refugee has exceedingly increased; the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) estimates that over five million Palestinians are registered today as refugees.

The Fabric of Our Lives project seeks to shed light on the history of the Nakba as well as on the ongoing Nakba, and forced displacement and dispossession still taking place throughout Palestine, and the implications that this has on communities, especially women and children.

The YWCA of Palestine was one of the first organizations to provide services for Palestinian refugees, even before the camps were established. While some of the historic organizations no longer exist today, the YWCA continues to work in Jalazoune Refugee Camp (outside of Ramallah), and Aqbet Jaber Refugee Camp (on the outskirts of Jericho) in addition to many other places in Palestine.

The YWCA seeks your support and involvement in the Fabric of Our Lives project to support both the livelihoods and rights of refugee women and their families to have a dignified life until their rights are restored.



The process began with listening to stories from women who remember what happened in 1948. These stories are then fleshed out with more details about their village both past and present. During the interviews the women sometimes bring out embroidery they have done.

Next we designed a model dress based on real dresses worn during that time period in the village.

Here is a chest panel from a dress typical from the Jerusalem area used for our Dayr Yasin dress.



Next we worked on creating a mold out of olive wood. It was difficult choosing the right body and face. We reviewed many molds. Olive wood is important to us because it is a symbol of peace and reminds us that the Palestinian people are rooted in this land like this sacred tree, while still seeking peace



Then we worked with the women in the camps who took the dress models and recreated the designs for the different dolls.

## Today and Waiting (The word Today is replacing 2010)

*Chronologies  
with no purpose  
just dates upon dates  
to remind us we once existed over There  
years are only names for massacres 48, 67  
today and waiting  
the dead are numbered  
listed, graphed, mapped  
and clustered in phosphorous  
wrapped neatly in statistics.*

*Today and waiting  
long enough in visa lines  
to carve out a home of fake smiles and documents  
to know I am from There and unwanted anywhere else.  
The There they accuse us of  
The There of stories told in shelters in Beirut  
by grandparents  
voices trembling  
not knowing if they will see There again.  
"The Oranges There taste different, ya benti."*

*Today and waiting  
to negotiate or not negotiate  
to apologize for our own Nakba  
accept exile and pray for forgetfulness  
and "be practical" child  
be "pragmatic" child  
"The refugees are the last stumbling block"  
so they negotiate us away  
"They will never let us return" child  
as if we need permission to be from There  
or had a choice to be from somewhere else.*

*Today and waiting  
for another boat to break another siege  
for mothers to make miracles raising children  
only on water and lentils and no shoes for school  
for some to let us be human and work  
others to just let us be  
Palestinian and return.  
There will be more boats  
I will sit in one---curled up in memory  
that still smells of lead and concrete  
my children will learn to play  
by a beach in Yaffa, they will tell stories  
Of how long we waited  
to come back There.  
Today and waiting.*

*Rafeef Ziadah is a third generation  
Palestinian refugee in Lebanon*