



Young Women's Christian Association of Palestine



Annual Report 2004

Dear Partners and Friends,

Another year has passed by and we are still living under the Israeli occupation, our region is longing for Peace and Justice and our children have almost forgotten what joy really is. But we have not lost our hope, and that is what guides us in our mission, going ahead with determination, working continuously in different ways to help empower women, children and youth and raise the voices of the Palestinian people who are aching for justice and peace to prevail in this holy land.

The year 2004 brought along with it some joyful and yet some sad events for the YWCA of Palestine. It has witnessed the opening of our new sports center “LilacY” in Jerusalem. A modern and up to date center that is open for women from different age groups, to enjoy the different kinds of sports and cultural activities. From Ballet dancing for young girls, to dabkeh (folklore dance) for youth, summer camps for teenagers and aerobics for women. It has expanded our membership and attracted women from all ages to join. This has allowed us to expand our services for more women, and provided an opportunity for these women to get a chance to live their own world for few moments, and escape the everyday pressure in this welcoming environment.

The “Witness Visit” was a historical event at the YWCA of Palestine last April. Fifteen representatives of the World Council and the executive committee made a visit to our organization to show solidarity with the Palestinian people in their struggle for peace with justice. The visit was held around Easter, and allowed members to both live the biblical events of the way of cross, as well as witness the daily sufferings and oppression of the Palestinian people as they carry the cross each day. The members were able to see for themselves the restrictions imposed on movement of people, trade, and cars, the newly constructed separation wall, continuation of land confiscation, and the escalating daily harassment and oppression. The delegation met with different Palestinian figures, including the late president Yasser Arafat, Dr. Hanan Ashrawi and others, in addition to representatives of Israeli peace organizations. The delegation also visited our branches and centers, and had a chance to understand better how our programs and activities contribute to alleviating the poverty in these communities, as well as empower women to cope with their increasing daily demands.

Our standard programs continued to grow and expand, with new activities added to respond to the changing situation in this country. This year we produced our strategic plan for the years 2004 to 2007. One of the most outstanding objectives in the strategic plan is to develop the capacity of the organization so that it can effectively, efficiently serve its target groups and communities and improve its sustainability by diversifying the funding sources, building local ownership and partnerships, and improving cost-effectiveness of these services. We endeavor to achieve this objective through the development of our internal procedural manuals, transparent administrative and managerial procedures, and upgrading of human resources skills, all of which are targeted for improving our governance and management practices. . This National Council takes pride in launching this process of organizational development and aspires to hand over all this for the new National Council to be elected this summer.

The Joint Advocacy Initiative with the East Jerusalem YMCA re-launched its “Good Earth Campaign” – Al Ard A Taybeh in July. The JAI continued planting olive trees through its Olive Tree Campaign –KEEP HOPE ALIVE, along with organizing different

activities, such as the Olive Picking program, the olive festival and the second Journey for Justice program for youth from different countries.

November of this year brought a sad ending to the life of our president Yasser Arafat, the symbol of the Palestinian struggle, who had dreamt of a free and independent Palestine. Our leader Mr. Arafat had to leave this world without accomplishing his dream. We are thankful for his life and his accomplishments, and we will continue working for Peace, the peace he called "Peace of the Brave".

Life in this part of the world is far from normal, hard to predict and almost impossible to plan ahead, but we have learned to cope. Our determination leads us to keep working for a better tomorrow and a better future for our children, we owe them this..

We thank you for helping us keep hope alive in those tough times. We hope that you will keep us in your prayers and that you will continue to support us in our work for Peace and Justice in our country, as well as other countries in the region and globally.

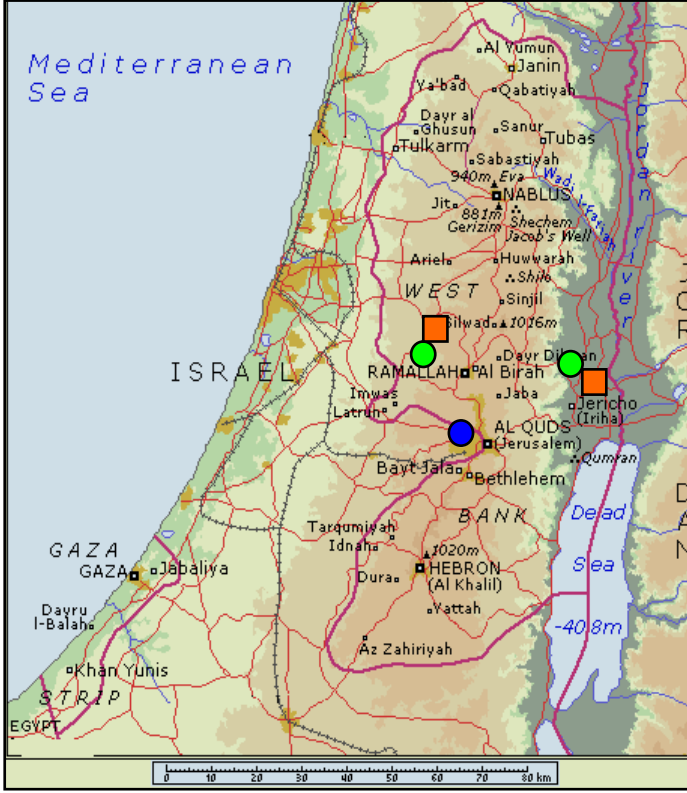
**MIRA RIZEK
PRESIDENT**

**ABLA NASIR
GENERAL SECRETARY**

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YWCA on the Map

●	Headquarter
●	Branch
■	Center

1- The YWCA of Palestine

Background and History:

The history of the YWCA of Palestine has been closely linked to the history of Palestine, and has been affected by the tumultuous events of the whole region. Like a solid rock, the YWCA has managed to withstand all political storms by shaping and molding itself to comply with the needs of women and the community. As early as 1893, informal groups of Christian women were meeting in Jaffa and Jerusalem as YWCA groups. In 1918, the YWCA of Palestine was established in Jerusalem, eventually expanding to nine branches throughout the country.



YWCA Headquarter - Jerusalem

1948 was a turning point in the history of Palestine, its people and the YWCA, as a result of the war between Israel and the Arab States, the creation of the State of Israel, and the subsequent uprooting of the Palestinians. The activities of the YWCA came to a complete halt until former members then living in Jordan and East Jerusalem decided to resume YWCA's

work. With the support of the World YWCA, which was one of the first NGOs to provide services for the Palestinian refugees, the YWCA established the Women's Training Center and Preschool in Aqabet Jaber Refugee Camp.

The YWCA of Jordan was formed in 1951, with branches and centers in the Refugee Camps on both the East Bank and West Bank of the River Jordan. But, with the occupation of the West Bank in 1967, the YWCA faced new challenges. Its programs reached out to more women and children in the Refugee Camps. UNRWA provided premises for pre-schools in the Kalandia and Jalazon Refugee Camps, which were later expanded to accommodate women's activities. When Jordan severed its ties with the West Bank in July 1988, the YWCA there re-established itself as the YWCA of Palestine. Elections were held in the West Bank branches and affiliation with the World YWCA was officially endorsed in July 1991.

Throughout the years the YWCA has developed a wide range of programs and projects aimed at empowering women and providing them with educational, cultural, and training opportunities to develop themselves, and actively participate in developing their families and their communities. The YWCA of Palestine currently provides its services through its headquarters in Jerusalem, its two branches in Ramallah and Jericho and its two multi-functional community-based centres in the Jalazon and Aqabet Jaber refugee camps.

2- YWCA – Jerusalem

2-1 Vocational Training Center:

The VTC in Jerusalem has provided a backbone of support to women in the community for more than 50 years. Housed in the main branch of the YWCA, which was built in 1967, the program offers three different programs and specialties from which an average of 120 young women graduate every year.



English class – VTC Jerusalem

The business secretarial program offers training for Palestinian women of all ages to become secretaries in all business fields. Alongside this program the executive secretary is offered every year. The Health program trains future public health workers and offers specializations in physiotherapy assistants, a pilot program that started the previous academic year 03-04. The home economics and food production program prepares women to start their own food production business or work in the field.

Below is the summary of the numbers of students graduated in October 2004, and the new students enrolled for the new scholastic year 2004/2005:

Number of graduates, 2003-2004	
Management and Secretarial Program	61
Health program	43
Assistant in Physiotherapy	14
Home Economics program	2

Total	120
Number of Students Enrolled in 2004-2005	
Management and Secretarial Program	56
Health program	40
Assistant in Physiotherapy	14
Home Economics program	3
Total	113

According to our statistics, 61% of the graduates from the Management and Secretarial Program are currently employed, 6% are enrolled in local universities, 9% left the country, and 24% are unemployed. This is mainly due to the current economic situation, and the weakened job market due to the crisis in the country and the stagnation of the tourism industry.

Of the students who graduated from the Public Health and Physiotherapy Program, 82% are currently employed, 7% enrolled at local universities after graduation, the remaining 11% got married and chose not to seek employment. These results are satisfactory and on track with the employment market needs. Every year new additions are made to the curriculum to keep our program up to date and at a high standard to ensure students graduate with the best training and qualifications.

To further motivate and empower our students, a series of lectures and workshops were organized twice a month, on issues relating to human rights and democracy, women's rights and roles, gender, life skills, as well as the current political situation.



VTC students- Jerusalem

Capacity building for staff and trainers is also a priority. Two workshops were carried out in cooperation with "Bread for the World" in communications skills and counseling. In addition, staff and trainers attended a three-day training program in "Planning Implementation and Evaluation" with the Jerusalem Center for the Near East Studies. The two computer teachers also attended an intensive Cisco certification "IT Essentials" course at Alquds University and another teacher attended a training course with the GTZ foundation, through which she got a diploma in teaching methodology.

This year, 15 computers were contributed by UNDP to fulfill the computer lab's need to update its equipment.

2-2 Short Courses:

As part of its outreach and community building programs, the VTC at the YWCA in Jerusalem offers a number of professional development courses. Throughout the year, two courses in Hebrew language were implemented, as well as a course in Front Desk Management.

In addition, there has been an ongoing food preparation and catering class for the students and employees in the food production program, to improve and maintain a high standard of quality for our products.

2-3 Youth Activities:

Our health club "**LilacY**" which in Arabic means "for me and for you", opened on April 2nd. This addition to our center in Jerusalem was made possible through the generous donations from the British Council and the YMCA/YWCA of Sweden. LilacY is one of East Jerusalem's biggest and best fitness establishments, providing an extensive variety of activities and programs for all ages. Our modern facilities and equipment of the highest standard can be enjoyed in a privacy of an "all women" environment and is aimed at improving the health of women and girls of all ages and is equipped for the physically challenged to facilitate integration with their peers in the community.



Our Facilities Include

- Our main gymnasium is a 100m2 room with wooden floor
- The 2nd gym's exercise machines are new and modern
- A dry sauna with a wooden floor and wooden walls
- A private massage room

Located on the fourth floor of the headquarters, participants can enjoy breathtaking views of Jerusalem as they exercise alone or take part in group classes, which include a variety of high and low impact aerobics, traditional, and modern dance classes as well as karate.



Machine Room - LilacY

The objective of establishing the health center was to attract young members to the YWCA and to offer facilities for youth activities that integrate the physically challenged.

Youth activities for the year 2004 :

- **Advocacy training course:** The YWCA of Palestine, in co-operation with the Jerusalem Center for Women-JCW, organized this course which took place at the YWCA in Jerusalem. Participants attended a total of 24 training hours between July 24-28 with the aim of improving communication skills to advocate for the Palestinian cause while on exchange programs or attending international conferences and seminars. Fifteen local youth members participated in the course which included a short history of the Palestinian-Israeli political problems, the uprising, international law, public speech, and media skills.



Visually challenged children at LilacY

- **Summer Camp:** This year, 53 girls aged between 12 and 17 years old, joined the summer camp that took place from July 4 to August 15. Activities included workshops on communication skills, problem solving and conflict resolution techniques. The program also included educational field trips, sports, arts, folklore dance, swimming and other entertainment activities.



Summer camp - Jerusalem

- **Dabkeh Group:** A Palestinian folklore dance group was formed last fall with 11 boys and 11 girls, aged 13-17. This traditional dance is one of the tools we use to connect young people to the Palestinian culture and reinforce their identity and belonging.
- **Art clubs:** Two art clubs were formed, one for the age group (8-12) with a membership of 19 young girls and boys, and another for the age group (13-16) with eight members.
- **Creative Thinking classes:** Twenty-two girls and boys, aged 10-12, attended different classes ranging from leadership and life skills training, to creativity and self development.

2-4 Income Generating Projects:

The YWCA Hotel in Jerusalem (Saris) strives to be a source of income. However, with the current situation and the stagnation of tourism in the area, it is barely breaking even. The food production unit, however, continues to be a success with its collection of Palestinian pastries and cookies which are enjoyed by both members and customers. It is a rapidly growing source of income and employment generation, as more varieties are added and more quality control is developed to ensure ultimate customer satisfaction. This year, the "LilacY" health club formed a distinguished addition to our income generating projects, and will hopefully generate income to subsidize more activities.

2-5 Membership Activities and Events:

Throughout the year, members of the YWCA organized a variety of activities. In February there was a workshop for the "Young Mothers" on the effect movement restrictions have on daily life. In March the membership celebrated International Women's Day, with a presentation on the separation wall and its effects on the Palestinian people, especially women. At the end of this event, the YWCA honored its active members, whose membership of the YWCA exceeded 30 years. In April the YWCA of Palestine joined the international YWCA movement in its Global Breakfast celebration, to advertise and fundraise for the global campaign. Sixty five members and friends of the YWCA attended this breakfast.

On November 20th the East Jerusalem YMCA and the YWCA of Palestine celebrated the International Day of Prayer at the YWCA headquarters in Jerusalem, with the theme of



“Prayers for Peace and Justice”. Fifty members of both movements attended. The celebration of Santa Barbara was held on December 17. Members were served the traditional sweet dish for the occasion and sold candles for the advent season.

Santa Barbara Celebration

3- YWCA - Ramallah

This year, renovations in the Ramallah branch added a reception desk, an office for the marketing manager, and six computers for the lab donated by the Australian representative. Furthermore, the Ramallah branch produced, with the help of an engineer, a development plan for its premises to pursue its plans to establish a family park which will be an income-generating project.



VTC student Ramallah

3-1 Vocational Training Center:

This was the third year of activity for the VTC in Ramallah. The secretarial and office management program graduated 41 students in 2004. For the scholastic year 2004/2005, 42 students are enrolled. The employment rate of graduates is in the range of 70 - 80% which is satisfactory. As in the Jerusalem center, a series of lectures and workshops were organized for the teachers to upgrade their skills, as well as for the students to empower themselves and raise awareness on different issues.

3-2 Short Courses:

The YWCA in Ramallah offered two short training courses during 2004 mainly related to food. The first was on food preparation and catering, including Italian and Mexican cuisines. It took place between March 2 and April 27, with 12 participants. Another course in preparing different kinds of sweets was attended by 13 participants.

3-3 Youth Activities:

- **Summer Camp:** One hundred and sixty eight young girls and boys aged between 4 and 13, joined the summer camp in Ramallah which lasted for 7 weeks from June 15 to August 5. Activities included sports, arts, swimming and entertainment.
- **Other youth activities** In October, 15 youth members were trained to become young leaders. A number of social gatherings and parties were organized by the youth at the branch.



Ramallah youth group

3-4 Membership Activities:

The activities of the membership in Ramallah included the following:

A workshop in October on “Racism and Apartheid” was attended by 40 members. A lecture on children’s health in conflict zones was also held. An Easter celebration for kids with face painting and egg hunting was organized on April 2. The Global breakfast celebration, on April 30, was attended by 80 YWCA members in Ramallah. In addition, Santa Barbara and Christmas parties were among other social events.

4- YWCA – Jericho

4-1 Training programs and workshops:

- 1) Twenty three women completed the “hairdressing and beautification” course, which lasted for six months.
- 2) Two intensive short courses in “hairdressing and beautification” were also organized, each lasting four months. The total number of participants was 22.
- 3) A 12-day training program on food processing was organized in co-operation with Save the Children and the Ma’an Development Center. Staff and workers in the food production program attended this training, which aimed to improve the quality of food production and food preserving techniques.
- 4) A two-month training course in computer skills, for programs like Windows was organized. Twenty four young men and women attended.
- 5) A training course in “Fundraising and proposal writing” was organized at the branch in co-operation with Ma’an Development Center.



Hairdressing class

4-2 Youth Activities:

- **Child Identity Program:** Forty-six youth (both males and females) in the age group 13–16 joined this program during 2004. Its aim was to create young leaders through identity-building and self-esteem workshops. Several activities were carried out with this group including visualizing a public project for the benefit of the local community and working towards its achievement.
- **Summer Camp:** Seventy young girls and boys, aged 5-14, joined the summer camp in Jericho at the Aqabet Jaber Center, which ran from June 29 to July 20. Activities included First-Aid training, raising awareness on Children’s Rights, visits to historic sites and major industrial factories, sports, arts, swimming and entertainment.
- **Jericho Youth Group:** A new youth group in the age 18 and above was formed in late 2004 by two youth members who participated in the regional meeting in Amman. The group is still small with about 8 members, but it is expected to expand during 2005. Different activities were planned by the group including a Christmas party for the membership in Jericho.

It is worth mentioning that the “Right to Play” has supported the branch with equipment and games to be used for the youth activities. Three of the youth members joined in training organized by the same



organization relating to leadership, self expression and stress release.

4-3 Job Creating Project:

The Food Production Project in Jericho continues to develop and upgrade its products ensuring its good quality. This year, the olive oil soap made a significant addition to the products of the branch, mainly as part of the “Good Earth Campaign” of the Joint Advocacy Initiative (JAI), along with the dried mint, sage and thyme. A new vacuum packaging machine was purchased this year, to be used for these products.

Six women are employed in this project on a full-time basis and three others on a part-time basis. Our plan is to increase the number of total employees to 15. Although marketing our products have been affected by the closure imposed on Jericho, we anticipate better marketing in the coming year. We have explored opportunities for exporting some of the products outside of Palestine and have had an order of 5 tons of Couscous, which we exported to Italy. We have also revised our local market strategy to enable us to distribute and sell our products in the Nablus and Bethlehem regions.

Processing dates

The list of products includes the following:

- Olive Oil Soap bars
- Different Jams and marmalades
- Dried herbs
- Cheese and Labaneh (traditional sour cream)
- Palestinian pastries
- Spiced Thyme (a traditional breakfast dish)
- Different types of Pickles
- Stuffed dates and Ground dates for traditional sweets
- Cookies and traditional sweets
- Lemonade and other preserved juices
- Couscous (traditional special pasta)



Different food products

4-4 Membership Activities:

Membership activities in the Jericho branch included a celebration of International Women’s Day on March 8, a Ramadan celebration for staff with a traditional “Iftar” meal, and a Christmas party. In addition, board members attended different activities and social events of the local community, representing the YWCA as an active member in the Jericho community.

The YWCA of Jericho, within its effort to develop its physical resources towards sustainable development, produced a well studied development plan for the lot of land it purchased three years ago, and is now seeking funding for this vital project.

5- Multifunctional Community Based Centers

The Community Based Centers in Jalazone and Aqabet Jaber Refugee camps continued to offer services to underprivileged women and children in those camps.

5-1 Kindergartens:

The Kindergartens in both centers form the main activity with about 120 children and five full-time teachers in Jalazone and 90 children and three full-time teachers in Aqabet Jaber. Both centers aim to create a nurturing environment where children can learn and grow. The English language has been added to the program for all ages in the Jalazone camp center, and our Norwegian volunteer Hanne Tommelstad has been helping the children with English classes. Updated assisting books were used by teachers in Aqabet Jaber, which proved to be fitting and developed.



KG kids in Jalazone center

5-2 Youth Activities:

- **Child Identity Program:** Three groups made of 120 young girls from the Jalazone Refugee Camp in the age group from 10-15 years old are participating in this program this year. The program aims to build identity and self-esteem through cultural activities, ranging from drama, dabkeh (Palestinian traditional dance), music, singing and game playing. It addresses an important psychological need and provides opportunities for self expression in a safe and encouraging environment.



Child Identity Program

- **Summer Camp:** One hundred and fifty-five young girls from the Jalazone Refugee Camp aged 8-15, joined the summer camp which took place from June 15 until July 15. Their activities included Class Based Intervention (CBI), a workshop on children's rights, health awareness as well as handcrafts, arts, reading, discussions, drama, swimming, dabkeh, trips and other entertainment activities.

5-3 Income Generating Project:

The traditional doll and puppet making project has been operating successfully in Jalazon since the 1970s; it originally started in Aqabet Jaber center in 1954. It provides training and income to about 20 young women from the camp. Two teachers help the young women learn and follow up on the quality control of the items. The products include dolls, puppets and a nativity set all in traditional customs, in addition to book covers, purses, bags and quilts with a traditional touch.



Women training program

5-4 Other Activities of the centers:

A variety of workshops and activities were held throughout the year targeting teachers, mothers of pre-school children, and young women in the Women Training Program. The training focused on dealing with children in difficult circumstances, and those in crisis at the Jalazone center. A workshop on puppet making was organized at Aqabet Jaber center for teachers in different pre-schools in the Jericho area.

A third workshop, aimed at integrating sports activities into preschool programs, was organized with the "Right to Play" organization. It was attended by teachers from both centers.

A training in "Class Based Intervention" was organized for the teachers, as well as training on leading summer camps in Jalazone center.

Both centers had extensive renovation and maintenance work; the spacious multi-purpose hall that was added to the building in Jalazone in 2003 has been functioning perfectly. Nine computers and a TV set were contributed to the Jalazone center this year and formed a valuable addition to the center. Also this year, the Kindergarten in Aqabet Jaber has been connected to the water supply system of the Jericho municipality.

6- The Joint Advocacy Initiative:

Building on the success and wide acknowledgment of last year, the Joint Advocacy Initiative (JAI) of the YWCA of Palestine and the East Jerusalem YMCA continues to prosper and reveal the truth to our partners and friends throughout the world.

6-1 Campaigns:

➤ **Olive Tree Campaign:** With the theme “**Keep Hope Alive**” the campaign’s goal is to replant 50,000 olive trees in the places where they have been uprooted, destroyed, or are threatened by land confiscation. The process of planting trees is carried out through sponsorships from partner YMCA’s and YWCA’s, organizations, churches, and interested individuals. This year, 3,940 young olive trees were planted in 24 fields throughout the West Bank and Jerusalem. This represents an 87% increase from the number of trees planted last season. Two newsletters were published and distributed to partners in May and October. Besides planting olive trees, the Olive Tree Campaign:

- Celebrated two international planting days on the February 5 and March 6 when volunteers from local and international communities joined staff in planting trees in selected fields.



**International Planting Day
5/2/2004**

- Organized a 10-day Olive Picking program, starting October 23, when olive-picking enthusiasts joined Palestinian farmers in harvesting.
- Organized an olive festival for two days (November 23-24), in co-ordination with other organizations, when cultural products and olive related items were sold. Cultural presentations were also featured.

➤ **Al-Ard A-Taibeh (Good Earth) Campaign:**

The objective of this campaign is to advocate on behalf of, and provide support for, economically-disadvantaged Palestinian people in their struggle for their livelihood and in achieving peace with justice. The campaign was re-launched in July and, since then, 400 campaign bags have been sold. Each bag contains a bottle of 250 ml extra-virgin olive oil, hand made olive oil soap, olive wood carving, and three kinds of dried herbs.



6-2 Researches:

With the help of international volunteers, the **Good Earth Campaign products** research:

- “Palestinian Christians in Struggle” by JAI volunteer: Jennifer Hojaiban from the USA whose research focused on the effect of Israeli occupation on Palestinian Christians. It includes stories and interviews featuring personal experiences.
- “Movement Restrictions effects on the EJ-YMCA and the YWCA of Palestine work” by volunteer Louise Hansen from Denmark. This research reflects the effect movement restrictions have on both organizations.
- “Concerning Peace and Justice” prepared by the Joint Advocacy Initiative staff. This research contains the World Alliance YMCA’s and World YWCA resolutions concerning the Palestinian case.

7- Local and International Networking

7-1 Witness Visit:

Following the 2003 resolution adopted at the World Council meeting in Brisbane, a delegation of 14 World YWCA Executive Committee members and YWCA National Associations representatives made a historical "Witness Visit" to the YWCA of Palestine in solidarity with the Palestinian people and their struggle for Peace with Justice in their homeland.



Their program included lectures, panel discussions and meetings with key Palestinian figures including former President Yasser Arafat and Dr. Hanan Ashrawi, as well as representatives of Israeli Peace organizations.

During their stay, the group was exposed to the daily sufferings of Palestinians living under the Israeli military occupation, from checkpoints, mobility restrictions and the newly built "Separation Wall" to the consequences of land confiscation and the torment of people who must cross through gates on a daily basis.

On Good Friday and Easter Sunday the group joined Christians in the old city of Jerusalem for special ceremonies and traditional activities.

7-2 Youth Exchanges and volunteers

- Journey for Justice "2"

This is an annual program that has been organized with two main partners; Y Global in Norway and YMCA/YWCA of Denmark. Through this program international youth from YMCA/YWCA movements worldwide journey to Palestine to experience the daily life under occupation and meet and interact with Palestinian youth through the JAI. This year 2004, the program took place from Oct 9th to Oct 17th, with Twenty-eight participants from Norway, Denmark, Panama, South Africa, USA and UK joined the program, in addition to Palestinians from YMCA and YWCA youth groups.



Journey for Justice 2

- GoCY- Intern

For the second year, the YWCA of Palestine participated as a partner in the GoCY-intern youth exchange program, with Y Global (Norway), YWCA of Bangladesh and the Africa Alliance of YMCAs. Through this program, the YWCA of Palestine sent a staff member (Mayadah Tarazi) to Norway for ten months and received two Norwegian volunteers; Hanne Tommelstad and Einar Seilskjaer for the same period of time.

- Other volunteers

Matilda Svenson from Sweden volunteered at the YWCA of Palestine for two months during summer 2004, updating the YWCA brochure and fulfilling other duties at the Advocacy Desk.

7-3 Visiting groups and individuals:

Receiving representatives of different YWCA movements and other partner international organizations:

- **12th to 14th Feb. 2004** Five women from the YWCA of Sweden visited the YWCA of Palestine. They made field trips to the branches and centers and were briefed on the different activities, in addition to witnessing the everyday life under occupation. They later made a publication about their visit that was circulated in Sweden.

- **4th of March 2004** Markus Marti from HorYzon, Switzerland, visited EJ YMCA and YWCA of Palestine, and met the Campaigns Officer Rami Bahbah at the YWCA in Jerusalem to discuss issues related to the Olive Tree Campaign.
- **24th Apr. 2004** Eilert Rostrup and Kjersti from Y Global (YMCA/YWCA of Norway) visited YWCA and the EJ YMCA to discuss the exchange programs, primarily GoCY and Journey for Justice, and Palestinian participation in the Global week and TT:04 youth festival in Norway.
- **10th Sep. 2004** a delegation from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) made a visit to Palestine. They were guests at the YWCA of Palestine and the East Jerusalem YMCA, in which they met with the association's administrators and board members and visited various programs and activity centers across the West Bank. A field trip was organized in the Bethlehem area, which included fields planted with new olive trees through the JAI Olive Tree Campaign, in addition to a close view of the Apartheid Wall.



NORAD Delegation visit

7-4 Conferences and Meetings:

YWCA representatives participated in meetings, conferences and events on the regional and International level, representing the YWCA of Palestine and advocating for Peace with Justice in Palestine.

- **16th – 21st Jan. 2004** The General Secretary participated in the World Social Forum meeting in Mumbai- India.
- **24th of June – 4th of July** Dan Church Days in Roskilde, Denmark upon the invitation of Dan Church Aid. The General Secretary made a presentation about the situation and effects of restriction on movement and the separation wall on Palestinian life. While in Denmark, she also participated in the YM/YW Youth Festival in Aulum and made a similar presentation to staff and leaders of the camp. The visit was followed by a trip to Norway upon an invitation to attend the national council meeting of the YM/YW of Norway and make a presentation on the work of the YWCA of Palestine and the JAI.

- **18th – 30th Jun. 2004**, eight teenagers from EJ YMCA and YWCA of Palestine participated in the Global Week and TT:04 festival in Norway. The group was selected, introduced to the event and prepared through the JAI. The group performed a sketch, gave presentations and speeches, told their personal stories and experiences under occupation, and participated in workshops, debates, songs, prayer, and races.



Participants in the TT Festival

- **6th to 12th September 2004** Rana Qumsiyeh the Advocacy Coordinator at the YWCA of Palestine, joined the World YWCA Governance

Task Force meeting in Nairobi/Kenya. She took the opportunity to discuss the situation in Palestine with the other participants and showed a documentary, "The Dividing Wall," and promoted the campaigns of the JAI.

- **6th to 16th October** The United Kingdom: an invitation by the United Reformed Church through Christian Aid.

- **19th to 25th October**, Nazar Halteh the President of Jericho board attended a conference and exhibition related to food products in Italy, where she showed some samples of our Jericho branch products.

- **25th – 29th October** the annual meeting of MEATRC (Middle East Association of Training and Retreat Centers) in Ayia Napa, Cyprus. The meeting included a regional training entitled "Towards a culture of nonviolence in the Middle East".

- **13th to the 16th of November** Six representatives from our youth groups (two from each branch), joined other YWCA youth from Egypt, Lebanon, and Jordan in a regional meeting that was held in Amman, Jordan, entitled "Globalization and Democracy in the Middle East – from a gender and youth perspective". One session was dedicated to advocacy, in which the Palestinian youth group gave a presentation about the JAI and its different campaigns. They also showed a documentary about the situation of Palestinian youth living under occupation. At the end the participants discussed ways to promote the JAI work and advocacy campaigns in the region through the YWCA youth.

- **5th to 18th December 2004** Pr/Advocacy Officer made an advocacy trip to California, USA. She gave several presentations to YWCAs in the San Francisco and Los Angeles areas, as well as at Claremont Graduate University and "Pilgrim's Place" – a Christian retirement home. In her presentations, Rana talked about the situation, showed a video, "The Dividing Wall," and promoted the JAI and its two campaigns.

- **9th to 16th December** Evangelical Academy in Bad Boll, Germany: A conference on "European Responsibility for Peace in Palestine and Israel". The General Secretary attended the conference and made a presentation about the Palestinian Christians and the YWCA as a Christian organization in Palestine. She also promoted the campaigns of the JAI. After the conference, the General Secretary participated in a number of smaller meetings scheduled for her to discuss the situation and the work of the YWCA in Palestine. Her trip was finalized with a partnership meeting at EED offices in Bonne.

8- Challenges:

❖ The Israel Occupation and its implications:

With the continued Israeli occupation and its different measures on the ground, like the closure of Palestinian villages and cities, restrictions on mobility and most-recently the "Separation Wall" which loops around



Palestinian land and isolates whole villages and cities, our ability to provide services is consistently threatened.

This is the main obstacle facing the YWCA and the implementation of its programs, since these restrictions hinder the movement of staff and volunteers as well as students. It makes it difficult to recruit students for the Vocational Training Centers and, due to the increased unemployment and poor economic situation, more and more students need our sponsorship. In our preschools at the multifunctional community based centers, the fees are not easy to collect from parents, with their continued lack of income. Moreover, the isolation and imprisoning of Palestinian people in their cities and villages hinders periodic meetings of council members and visits to various projects particularly in Jericho and Aqabet Jaber center, thus making it more difficult to co-ordinate and co-operate on the national level.

❖ **Restrictions from funding agencies:**

Locating and securing funds for different programs and services continues to be a big challenge for all the non-profit organizations in the area. Ever since the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority, most funds from foreign governments go to the PNA rather than the NGOs. Also, recently, all American funding sources are becoming conditional and patronizing, which makes dependence on them even more risky. Furthermore, since the economic situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is deteriorating, Jerusalem has become a lower priority and it has become more difficult to locate funding for our Jerusalem branch.

❖ **Striving for sustainability:**

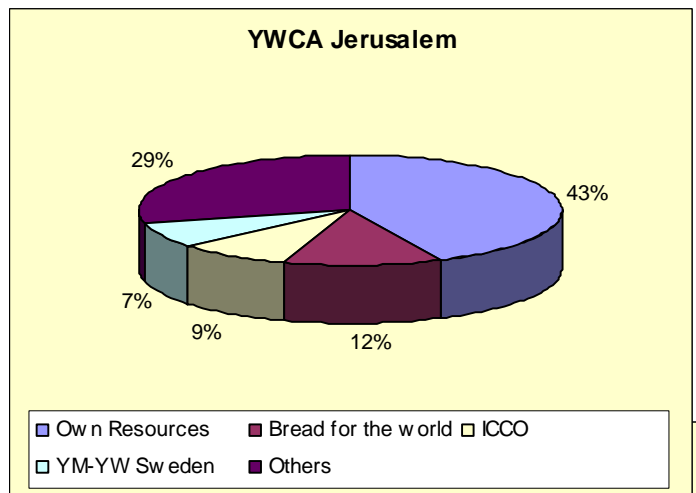
The YWCA has been working on resource mobilization, and trying hard to move slowly to self-financing.

1- Jerusalem

The headquarters in Jerusalem maintained 43% dependence on its own resources.

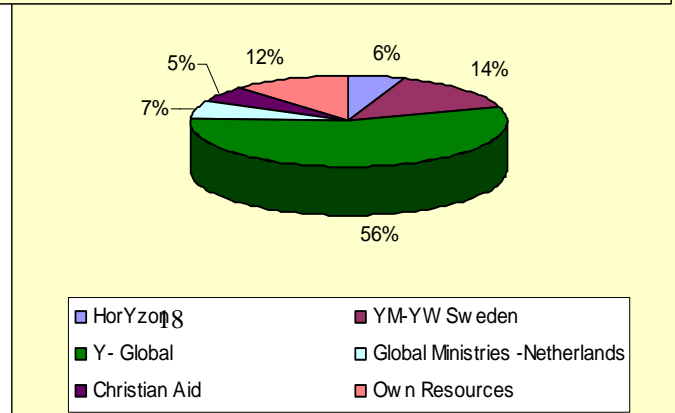
Main donors for 2004 were:

- Bread for the World
- ICCO
- YMCA/YWCA of Sweden



2- Centers in Jalazone and Aqbat Jaber:

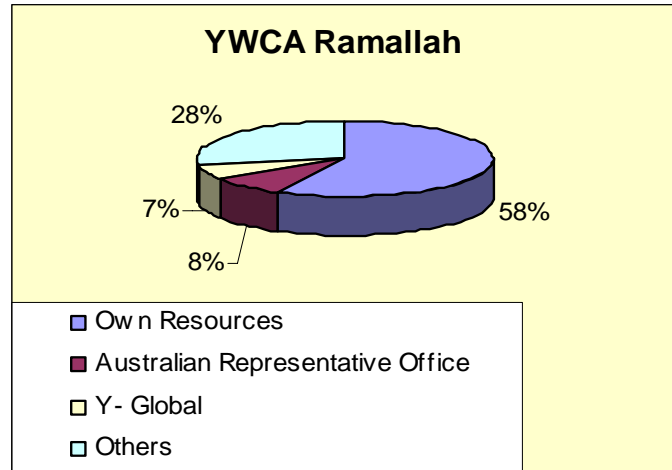
The YWCA centers' contribution to their financing increased to 12% this year. Main donors include;



- Y-Global (Norway)
- YMCA/YWCA of Sweden
- Global Ministries (NL)
- HorYzon
- Christian Aid.

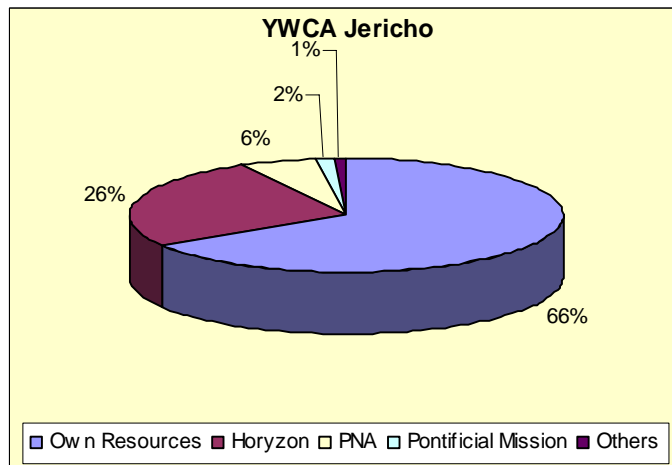
3- Ramallah Branch:

The branch in Ramallah has been moving steadily towards dependence on its own resources, this year it managed a 58% as compared to 41% last year and 24% in 2003. Main sponsors were the Australian Representative Office and Y-Global (Norway).



4- Jericho Branch:

The Jericho branch maintained a high 66% dependence on its resources, a slight drop from last year. Donations for the Jericho branch came mainly from HorYzon, the Ministry of Local Governance (PNA), the Pontifical Mission and others.



9- Looking Ahead:

This year we initiated our new strategic plan for the coming three years. Strategic planning has proved to be a great tool for us to stay focused and move forward with confident steps towards achieving our mission. We still aspire to respond to the needs of the communities we serve.

The main four goals that we strive to achieve in the coming three years are:

- **Enhance the accessibility of educational, cultural, and recreational activities.**
- **Create and develop women's economic opportunities.**

- ***Raise women's awareness and advocate for their individual and national rights at the community, national, and international level.***
- ***Develop the capacity of the organization so that it can effectively, efficiently, and sustainably serve its target groups and communities.***

A plan of action for the coming three years was drawn based on the strategic plan. The plan addresses the above mentioned goals in activities that will meet the goals we strive to fulfill.

To achieve goal number 4, the YWCA contracted the Continuing Education Center of Birzeit University to guide us through a restructuring process towards the development of a procedural manual. The manual will address the developments that have taken place within the association in the past five years. This process aims at better clarifying roles while maintaining the important contribution made by the voluntary bodies and making a clear distinction between governance and staff. This restructuring process and the development of a procedural manual aim at helping us to adopt the needed professional procedures to regulate our administrative and financial procedures and find the needed balance between the governing body and the staff. It will further clarify roles and lead us in our attempts to move from being a charitable organization to a more professional one; thus fulfilling our role as a civil society organization in contributing to the developing needs of our Palestinian community.

The initial stages of the process started with drawing the terms of reference for the work to be carried out. The executive committee of the council discussed and approved the TOR and the actual process will begin by the start of 2005.

It is true we are facing numerous challenges, serving in a context of harsh conditions, but that only makes us more determined to carry our message forward and be part in creating hope in these tough times.

Thanks to our partners, friends and sister movements all over the world, who provide us with all sorts of support to keep moving, towards a better tomorrow for women and children of Palestine:

Ford Foundation
Bread for the World
Union of Education – Norway
British Consulate in Jerusalem
ICCO
HorYzon
YWCA-YMCA of Sweden
Y Global (previously Delta International)
Global Ministries – the Netherlands
Presbyterian Church USA
Christian Aid
YWCA of Japan
UNDP
United Church of Christ USA
Welfare Association
Pontifical Mission for Palestine
Global Ministries – New York
World YWCA – Geneva
Church of Scotland

Center for Continuing Education – Birzeit University

In addition to individual contributions made by many friends of the YWCA of Palestine to support our work.



Thank You for helping us create those smiles!

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Nadia Tarazi	National Vice President
Abla Nasir	National General Secretary
Rene Khadder	Secretary
Suzan Khayyo	Treasurer
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Nisreen Khoury	Jerusalem
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Nazar Halteh	Jericho
Linda Ammar	Jericho

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