



First Interim Report of the United Nations Economic Survey Mission for the Middle East

Letter from the Chairman of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine to the Secretary-General

New York, 16 November 1949

On behalf of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine, I have the honour to communicate to you, for transmission to the General Assembly, the first interim report of the United Nations Economic Survey Mission for the Middle East. The establishment of this Mission was described in paragraph C of the fourth progress report of the Conciliation Commission to the Secretary-General (A/AC.25/PR.4).¹

The Conciliation Commission considers that this report constitutes a constructive approach to the Palestine refugee problem and believes that the General Assembly will wish to give urgent consideration to it. The Commission is of the opinion that the Assembly will wish to obtain additional information concerning certain of the findings and recommendations contained in the report. In this connexion, in the light of the arrangements made by the Secretary-General with the International Red Cross organizations and the American Friends Service Committee (A/1060), particular reference is made to the recommendation that the number of rations issued should be reduced by one-third as of 1 January 1950.

(Signed) Hussein C. YALCIN
Chairman, United Nations
Conciliation Commission
for Palestine

United Nations Economic Survey Mission for the Middle East Table of Contents

	Page
Foreword	14
The problem	15
The Economic Survey Mission	15
Interim findings	16
Recommendations	16
Guiding policies for administration of proposed programme	17
Discussion of the findings and recommendations:	
The Palestine refugees	18
Prospects of employment	19
Appendices:	
A. Cost of programme	20
B. Analysis of refugees and relief recipients	22
C. Illustrative outline of works projects	25
D. Terms of reference	30

APPENDIX I

Forward

More than a year ago the United Nations embarked upon a programme of relief for the Palestine refugees. Acting upon the appeal of the late Count Bernadotte, the United Nations Mediator in the hostilities between Arabs and Israelis, and the report of his successor, Mr. Ralph Bunche, the General Assembly of the United Nations, through the Secretary-General, Mr. Trygve Lie, called upon the nations of the world to contribute funds to feed, clothe and provide temporary shelter for more than half a million homeless people. The appeal was answered and the funds obtained have averted added disaster in the Near East. But the funds so far subscribed will not last through the winter.

In the face of this emergency, the United Nations Economic Survey Mission, deputed by the Conciliation Commission for Palestine to examine economic conditions in the Near East and to make recommendations for action to meet the dislocation caused by the recent hostilities, has found it essential to concentrate first upon the refugees and to report without delay upon this distressing subject, leaving for a subsequent report other matters of longer term.

Recognizing that the plight of the refugees is both a symptom and a cause of grave economic instability, the Mission recommends in this report that steps be taken to establish a programme of useful public works for the employment of able-bodied refugees as a first measure towards their rehabilitation; and that, meanwhile, relief, restricted to those in need, be continued throughout the coming year.

These recommendations are intended to abate the emergency by constructive action and to reduce the refugee problem to limits within which the Near Eastern Governments can reasonably be expected to assume any remaining responsibility.

These measures, together with those which the Mission, in a subsequent and final report, will suggest for the greater use by the peoples and Governments of the Near East of the still undeveloped riches of their own lands, will not alone bring peace. But if the Palestine refugees be left forgotten and desolate in their misery, peace will recede yet further from these distracted lands.

Signed at Beirut, Lebanon, on 6 November 1949

Gordon R. CLAPP

Chairman

H. Cemil GÖKÇEN

Deputy Chairman

Eirik LABONNE

Deputy Chairman

Desmond MORTON

Deputy Chairman

The Problem

The Arab refugees — nearly three-quarters of a million men, women and children — are the symbol of the paramount political issue in the Near East. Their plight is the aftermath of an armed struggle between Arabs and Israelis, a struggle marked by a truce that was broken and an armistice from which a peace settlement has not emerged.

Before the hostilities in Palestine these families lived in that section of Palestine on the Israeli side of the present armistice lines. Abandoning their homes and villages, their fields and orange groves, their shops and benches, they fled to nearby Arab lands. Tens of thousands are in temporary camps; some are in caves; the majority have found shelter in Arab towns and villages, in mosques, churches, monasteries, schools and abandoned buildings. Some seventeen thousand Jewish refugees, too, fled from their homes in and around Jerusalem and territories on the Arab side of the armistice lines. They entered into Israel where most of them have now been absorbed.

The worsening plight of the refugees as an obstacle to peace in Palestine prompted the General Assembly of the United Nations, in November 1948, to appeal to the nations of the world for funds to provide food, clothing and shelter for the refugees.² This emergency relief programme was established with great despatch. Governments contributed in the hope that conciliation would produce peace and lay the basis for a permanent solution for the refugees.

On 11 December 1948 the General Assembly adopted a resolution stating: "that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return..."

The same resolution established a Conciliation Commission for Palestine to negotiate a settlement of outstanding differences between Israel and the Arab States of Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi-Arabia, Syria and Yemen.

No settlement has been reached.

The Arab refugees have not been able to return to their homes because Israel will not admit them. Israel has to date offered to repatriate only 100,000, and only as a part of a general peace settlement of all other issues.

The Arab refugees have not been able to gain a livelihood in the Arab lands where they are because there is insufficient opportunity for them to do so.

The Arab refugees have not received compensation for the property they abandoned, nor have the Jewish refugees in their turn.

The refugees are still on relief.

United Nations funds so far subscribed for the feeding of refugees will not last through the winter.

The Economic Survey Mission

In these circumstances the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine established the Economic Survey Mission on 23 August 1949:

"...to examine the economic situation in the countries affected by the recent hostilities, and to make recommendations to the Commission for an integrated programme:

"(a) To enable the Governments concerned to further such measures and development programmes as are required to overcome economic dislocations created by the hostilities;

"(b) To facilitate the repatriation, resettlement and economic and social rehabilitation of the refugees and the payment of compensation pursuant to the provisions of paragraph eleven of the General Assembly's resolution of 11 December 1948, in order to reintegrate the refugees into the economic life of the area on a self-sustaining basis within a minimum period of time;

"(c) To promote economic conditions conducive to the maintenance of peace and stability in the area."

The Economic Survey Mission assembled at Lausanne on 8 September 1949, where it received its terms of reference from the Conciliation Commission and met with each of the delegations representing the Governments of Egypt, Israel, Jordan and Lebanon. The Mission proceeded to Beirut, Lebanon, where it began its work in the Near East on 12 September 1949. The heads of the Mission have discussed the problems covered in its terms of reference with the members of the Governments in Alexandria, Egypt; Baghdad, Iraq; Tel-Aviv, Israel; Amman, Hashemite-Kingdom of Jordan; Beirut, Lebanon; and Damascus, Syria. The experts attached to the Mission have studied in the field the problem of the refugees, the economy of the areas in which the refugees are now centered, and, in extensive discussions with technical committees established by most of the above Governments, have considered measures which might remedy the "economic dislocations created by the hostilities".

Interim Findings

As a result of the Mission's studies, discussions with Governments and investigations in the field, the Mission finds that:

1. The refugees themselves are the most serious manifestation of "economic dislocation" created by the Arab-Israeli hostilities. The refugees represent about 7 per cent of the population in the countries in which they have sought refuge. About 65 per cent of the refugees fled to Arab Palestine and Gaza, almost doubling the population. Resolution of the demoralizing, unproductive and costly problem of the refugees is the most immediate requirement "conducive to the maintenance of peace and stability in the area".

2. The continuing political stalemate in the relations between the Arab countries and Israel precludes any early solution of the refugee problem by means of repatriation or large-scale resettlement.

The relief supplied by the United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees (UNRPR), the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the many local and foreign voluntary agencies of charity operating in the Near East has averted a worse calamity. Were all direct relief to be cut off now, many refugees would face a winter of disease and starvation. Were charity alone to be provided for another year, it would be more difficult and costly to take constructive measures later. Nevertheless, the extent of direct relief provided through United Nations funds should be stringently cut within the next two months. There is no doubt that, however commendable it may be to extend international charity to the needy, rations greatly in excess of the number justifiable within the original intentions of the General Assembly of the United Nations have been and are being issued.

4. Work in place of relief cannot be provided immediately for all. One thing, however, is clear. Rather than remain objects of charity, the refugees who are idle must have an opportunity to go to work where they are now: work which would increase the productive capacity of the countries in which they have found refuge. Until such work has been found, those refugees who are idle must remain a burden upon others, the United Nations, charitable societies supported by voluntary contributions, or the countries in which the refugees now find themselves.

5. Useful, gainful employment can, however, be found for all the refugees able and willing to work. There are many potential opportunities for useful and productive work to improve and reclaim the land, increase the supply and use of water, strengthen and extend road systems and improve sanitation and shelter. Suitable employment for the refugees can be provided in many places, especially in Jordan and Arab Palestine, where nearly half the refugees are located (see appendix C).

6. This and other similar work could begin as soon as funds can be found to finance it. But the resources of the Arab countries sheltering most of the refugees are inadequate to cope unaided with the present cost of emergency relief alone, much less to finance the cost of putting the refugees to work. Money for this purpose must be found from outside sources.

7. The inability of the refugees rapidly to find for themselves gainful employment in the Arab countries is but a symptom of the need for development of the unused resources of the Near East, where lack of available capital is responsible for much idle man-power. This is a task for the Near Eastern Governments to do in their own way, and in due course, with the help of competent counsel and substantial financial credits.

Recommendations

In the light of these findings, the Economic Survey Mission makes the following recommendations, which are explained later in the report.

1. The emergency relief for refugees made possible by voluntary contributions from Member Governments of the United Nations should be continued through the winter months, and until 1 April 1950, under the present UNRPR system; the present minimum ration should not be reduced, but the number of rations issued should be reduced by 1 January 1950 from the present rate of 940,000 to 652,000 (for an analysis of the number eligible for relief, see appendix B). This would cost \$5.5 million for the three months beginning 1 January 1950. Thereafter, further reductions should take place as men become employed in gainful labour and thus become ineligible for direct relief.

2. A programme of public works, calculated to improve the productivity of the area, and such continuing relief as will be needed should be organized as an integrated operation, in co-operation with the governments of the countries where the refugees are located. This programme should be planned and arrangements negotiated with the appropriate Near Eastern Governments to begin 1 April 1950.

No more rations should be supplied by the United Nations after 31 December 1950, unless otherwise ordered by the United Nations at the fifth session of the General Assembly, at which Near Eastern Governments concerned would have an opportunity to present appropriate proposals.

Meanwhile, the agency handling direct relief on behalf of the United Nations should be empowered to negotiate with Near Eastern Governments for the latter to take over as soon as possible, and at latest by 31 December 1950, responsibility for the maintenance of such refugees as may remain within their territories.

This programme, for the nine months from April through December 1950, would require \$27 million, which sum would include such relief as might be needed. The United Nations should be prepared to continue the works programme until 30 June 1951 (subject to review at the fifth session of the General Assembly). The works programme for the six months of 1951 would require \$21.2 million.

Of the total of \$53.7 million for the cost of relief and works projects for the eighteen months' programme, the Mission estimates that approximately 25 per cent, or \$13.3 million, represents the cost of the necessary work materials, tools and equipment. The Mission considers that a considerable proportion of this sum, perhaps up to one-half in certain cases, might be supplied by governments of the countries in which the refugees are now concentrated.

This would reduce the amount required from outside sources for eighteen months from 1 January 1950 for a programme of relief and public works to approximately \$48 million, or an average of \$2.7 million per month. This is the same as the present monthly rate of expenditure by the United Nations upon direct relief alone³ (see appendix A).

3. An agency should be established to organize and, on or after 1 April 1950, direct the programmes of relief and public works herein recommended. As a minimum requirement to the successful implementation of the relief and works programmes, the Economic Survey Mission urges that:

(a) Subject to rendering such reports of its activities and accounting for its expenditure to the General Assembly of the United Nations as may be required of it and within the policies established in its terms of reference, the agency should have full autonomy and authority to make decisions within the sphere of activities entrusted to it, including the selection of its subordinate staff and the administration of funds made available to it.

(b) The agency should be located in the Near East.

(c) The personnel and assets of the UNRPR should be turned over to the new agency on 1 April 1950, or as soon thereafter as possible, in order that the functions of direct relief may be directed by the new agency in appropriate relation to the works programme.

(d) The agency should be authorized to counsel with such Near Eastern Governments as may so desire concerning measures to be taken by such Governments in preparation for the time when United Nations funds for relief and works projects shall no longer be available.

Guiding Policies for Administration of Proposed Programme

The purpose of the proposed programme of relief and public works is four-fold: it will halt the demoralizing process of pauperization, outcome of a dole prolonged; the opportunity to work will increase the practical alternatives available to refugees, and thereby encourage a more realistic view of the kind of future they want and the kind they can achieve; a works programme properly planned will add to the productive economy of the countries where the refugees are located; the chance to earn a living will reduce the need for relief and bring its cost within the ability of the Near Eastern countries to meet without United Nations assistance.

With these purposes in mind, the work-relief programme, to be successful, must be planned and carried out in the closest possible co-operation with Near Eastern Governments concerned. Specific works projects should be selected and planned through negotiation and agreement between the national Government and the agency charged with administering the programmes. The actual execution of the programmes should devolve upon the national Government to the fullest degree possible, with agreement for audit, inspection and general supervision by the international agency. This arrangement will help to strengthen the administrations of the Near Eastern Governments concerned by the responsibility they thus accept and discharge. In this course lies the only possibility that the need for international relief will pass and that the refugees will ultimately be rehabilitated.

In pursuing this course it will be important to remember that no Government of the Near East, or any government anywhere, can indefinitely provide special benefits to a particular group, transient in its domain, while there is substantial unemployment among its own nationals. Negotiations of works programmes will have to take this into account.

The opportunities for employment on works projects will vary in quantity and duration according to local circumstance. Where refugees are unusually congested, individuals may be employed on an alternating part-time basis so that more may work. An understanding of the value of work as a chance to earn and restore self-respect together with concern for the low morale and debilitation condition of men long idle and undemourished will suggest policy and practice.

The amount of relief and the amount of employment in each family or village group should have a direct relationship. The formula is more work and less relief. Humanitarian considerations should temper administrative decisions, but the success of the works relief programme will inevitably be measured by the speed with which direct relief diminishes, as men and their families begin to earn a living.

The League of Red Cross Societies, the International Red Cross Committee and the American Friends Service Committee have, hitherto, by contract with the UNRPR, distributed relief supplies provided by the UNRPR from funds or equivalents supplied by voluntary contributions collected by the Secretary-General of the United Nations from Member countries. In addition, many unheralded charities have supplemented this United Nations relief.

None of these organizations is qualified to administer a works relief programme or to negotiate thereon with Near Eastern Governments. Such tasks require an agency of a different kind, equipped to plan in the field works projects in engineering and agriculture, and to visualize the relationship between these projects and the plans of each country for its own future development. Moreover, since the results of the work entailed will have an immediate effect on the policy of the agency organizing the distribution of food and other forms of direct relief, the Economic Survey Mission considers it imperative that the two activities be under the same direction. Since the programme of works relief must take precedence over that for direct relief, the latter decreasing as the former grows, the Economic Mission proposes that supervision and control of direct relief be a function of the agency undertaking the works relief programme.

Discussion of Findings and Recommendations

The Palestine Refugees

Their number. No one knows exactly how many refugees there are. After considering all available information, the Economic Survey Mission estimates that the total number of refugees does not exceed 774,000, including 48,000 in Israel, of whom 17,000 are Jews. Of this 774,000 it is estimated that 147,000 are self-supporting or otherwise provided for. This leaves 627,000 refugees at present dependent upon United Nations relief. In addition, the Mission recommends the inclusion of some 25,000 Arabs who, though living in their original homes in Arab territory, are destitute through being separated from their lands by the armistice agreements. This would bring the total figure of persons who are eligible for relief from the United Nations to 652,000 (see appendix B).

Their location. Where did the refugees go when they left their homes? About 70,000 crossed the Jordan River to the east and are now in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. About 97,000 fled into Lebanon, just north of Galilee. Some 75,000 are clustered near the south and western boundaries of Syria, and in and around Damascus and other towns. About 200,000 are crowded into the tiny coastal desert area called the Gaza strip, at present held by Egypt. About 280,000 are in that part of Palestine not occupied by Israel — west of the Jordan — from Jenin in the north to Jericho and the Arab portion of Jerusalem and on beyond to Bethlehem in the south. About 4,000 crossed the desert to Baghdad in Iraq, far to the east. In addition, some 31,000 Arabs and 17,000 Jews, classed as refugees by the international relief agencies, are in Israel.

The influx of these destitute families into already crowded areas, notably Arab Palestine, the Gaza strip and the western part of the Kingdom of Jordan, has aggravated the already depressed standard of life in these regions. This may help to account for the 940,000 rations now issued daily, as against the 652,000 recommended in this report.

Their effect on local resources. The effects of the influx of the refugees upon the resources of the Arab States can be suggested by comparing the numbers of refugees to the total population of the areas where they are now chiefly concentrated.

The population of the Gaza strip, before the Arab-Israeli hostilities, was about 70,000. Refugees have swelled the population to about 270,000 in an area of less than 150 square miles. Gaza is now cut off by the armistice lines from its normal trade area; most of the farmlands normally tilled by the villagers in the Gaza strip are now inaccessible to them, because the armistice line separates the farmer from his land. He can see his land across the line, but he enters upon it to tend his orange groves or harvest his crop at the peril of his life.

Arab Palestine, that portion of eastern Palestine not occupied by Israeli troops, had an estimated population of 460,000 before the outbreak of hostilities. To this has been added about 280,000 refugees, an increase of 60 per cent.

The refugees were able to bring few assets with them, and many of those who did have since used them up. They claimed and, in general, received the help of the countries to which they fled. For the first few months the Governments of the Arab States where the Palestine Arabs sought refuge provided relief as best they could. Nor have their efforts ceased since the United Nations relief programme started. Of the \$32 million provided by contributions to the United Nations for relief, \$6 million is credited to the Arab States.

An addition to the population, similar to that which has occurred in the Near East as a result of the influx of refugees, would imply, if occurring to the United Kingdom, an addition of 3,500,000 people, if occurring to the United States of America about 10 million, if to France nearly 3 million.

The refugees' dilemma. Why do not the refugees return to their homes and solve their own problem? That is what the great majority of them want to do. They believe, as a matter of right and justice, they should be permitted to return to their homes, their farms and villages, and the coastal cities of Haifa and Jaffa whence many of them came.

They are encouraged to believe this remedy open to them because the General Assembly of the United Nations said so in its resolution of 11 December 1948. For purely psychological reasons, easily understandable, the refugees set great store by the assurance contained in this resolution. Most men in their position, given a choice between working in a foreign land or returning to their homes and to conditions understood and experienced from youth, would strain towards their homes, even were they told that, in their absence, conditions had so changed that they would never be happy there again. They would be reluctant to believe it. They would suspect a trap to hold them in exile until it was too late for them to return. Even if they were told their houses had been destroyed, they would still claim that the land remained. This seems a final argument to farm people.

But, the repatriation of Arab refugees requires political decisions outside the competence of the Economic Survey Mission.

Why do not the refugees go somewhere else? Why not resettle them in less congested lands?

There are several reasons. The refugees do not take kindly to moving again — unless it be a return to their homes, a prospect they cling to because of the General Assembly's resolution. Moreover, the Arab Governments have made it dear to the Mission that they feel bound to respect the wish of the refugees. Resettlement of the refugees outside of Palestine is a political issue poised against the issues of repatriation, compensation of the refugees and a final territorial settlement. Finally, less congested lands are not available for the settlement of additional population until much money has been spent and work done to make the land suitable for cultivation or for industrial development.

In these circumstances, the only immediate constructive step in sight is to give the refugees an opportunity to work where they now are.

Prospects for Employment

Direct consultations between the Economic Survey Mission and Near Eastern Governments established that Governments were ready to support the principle of trying to find gainful employment for the refugees in place of relief. The Governments of Iraq and Israel had already begun to develop this idea in practice. The Government of Syria had recently passed a decree granting refugees equal rights with Syrians to be employed in that country. The Government of Jordan already had plans under active consideration with the same objects in view and has already offered to grant a Jordan passport to any Palestine refugee applying for one. All Governments gave their assent to a visit by the technical experts attached to the Mission for the purpose of examining, in collaboration with the experts of the Governments concerned, existing or additional projects of a local nature which might afford a further opportunity for employing refugee labour. The results of the general examination by the experts attached to the Mission of a number of possible projects in the different countries visited by them are summarized as appendix C to this report.

Conditions differ in each country. Egypt offers no opportunity for the employment of refugee labour, save in the Gaza strip. Ample labour for the great works already planned by the Egyptian Government for the development of the land of Egypt is immediately available from the ranks of Egyptian unemployed. On the other hand, certain works might usefully be undertaken in the Gaza strip. Unfortunately, this is the most congested area. Possible relief works in this small area can employ only a very small proportion of the refugees accumulated there, but soil and water conservation projects, important in their effects and value, can provide useful work for some. The Mission recognizes that the problem of the refugees in the Gaza area will not be solved, save by permitting the excess to farm their adjacent lands from which they are now cut off by the armistice lines, or to move to other regions where more work opportunities may be open to them.

In Jordan, relief works are envisaged which would soon absorb more than the breadwinners among the 70,000 refugees actually in Jordan territory. The Economic Survey Mission has learned with satisfaction that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom has already made to the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan an interest-free loan of one million pounds sterling. This loan is to be expended by the Jordan Government on development projects considered by the Jordan Government to be of value to their country and to the benefit of Arab refugees from Palestine. The Economic Survey Mission expresses the hope that the two Governments concerned will find it possible to begin work at an early date.

The Governments of Iraq and Israel are both engaged in finding work for the relatively small number of refugees within their territories, and advised the Mission that they do not immediately need external assistance to this end.

In Syria and Lebanon works projects are available, if means can be found to finance them, which would contribute materially to the solution of the immediate problem of finding gainful employment in lieu of relief.

The execution of such works projects, leading to improvements in the productive capacity of the areas in which they are undertaken, is bound to have a dynamic and cumulatively beneficial effect on the whole situation. It will gain time during which it may be hoped substantial progress will be made towards a settlement of the outstanding political issues by the agencies entrusted with that task.

Many of the small works projects envisaged in the public works programme for the employment of refugees, as noted in appendix C, can be the prelude to larger developments. For the immediate future, the refugees are viewed as a reservoir of idle manpower — of greater service to themselves and to the lands giving them asylum, if given work. The administration of the relief and public works programme for refugees, brought together under the initiative of one agency, can, in the considered judgment of the Economic Survey Mission, become a contributing factor for peace and economic stability in the Near East.

APPENDICES

(A) Cost of Programme

The estimated cost of the total programme of direct relief and work schemes for refugees considered eligible for aid from the United Nations, as recommended by the Economic Survey Mission, for the eighteen months from January 1950, is \$48 million.

This estimate includes \$29 million to finance works projects for the eighteen months, including wages, administration and 55 per cent of the cost of materials, tools and equipment. The remaining 45 per cent of the cost of materials, tools and equipment (\$6 million) it is assumed will be made available by the local Governments. The cost of direct relief for the calendar year 1950 (see recommendation 2) is estimated at \$19 million. This includes the cost of food, clothing, tents, necessary health measures, administration and a small reserve.

These estimates are based on the assumption that, for the quarter beginning 1 January 1950, the present ration load of 940,000 will be reduced to 652,000, thus eliminating refugees not in need and non-refugees. If it were decided to continue distributing rations to these ineligible, the additional cost in 1950 would be \$7.2 million.

It is assumed that the wages paid to refugees employed on work schemes, whether in cash or in kind, will be the locally prevailing rate, and that this wage will enable the worker to provide for three dependents, for whom no separate relief will be needed.

It is assumed that 25 per cent of refugees are able-bodied men and that the numbers available for work are therefore: in Jordan and Arab Palestine, 78,000; in the Gaza strip, 48,000; in Syria, 15,000; and in Lebanon, 22,000.

With regard to the amount of employment which can be provided, the Economic Survey Mission is satisfied that work can be found, on schemes of the types described in appendix C, for substantially all the able-bodied refugees in Jordan, Arab Palestine and Syria. In Gaza it appears that the schemes described in appendix C exhaust the possibilities. In Lebanon, employment of refugees on schemes of an agricultural nature is at present excluded. It is believed, however, that a substantial amount of employment can be found on engineering works. The actual amount of employment (at the peak) assumed for the purposes of estimating the cost is: in Jordan and Arab Palestine, 75,000; in the Gaza strip, 2,300; in Syria, 15,000; and in Lebanon, 8,000.

No account is taken in the estimates of refugees who may find gainful employment outside the works programme as a secondary effect of expenditures on that programme and who would, therefore, become ineligible for relief. In addition, it is to be assumed that some may obtain employment not generated by the works programmes, as many in the total figure of 726,000 have already done. The estimates do not attempt to take account of this possibility.

Of the total cost of \$48 million, \$5.5 million falls in the first quarter of 1950. This is all for direct relief because work schemes will not have started.

During the remainder of 1950, it is estimated that the number of people engaged on work schemes will increase steadily until it reaches 65,000 at the end of the year.

The total cost for the period is estimated at about \$25 million, made up of a diminishing expenditure on direct relief and a rising expenditure on work schemes.

In the first half of 1951, the cost is estimated at \$17.6 million, entirely due to work schemes since direct relief is assumed to cease at the beginning of the year.

Table I shows estimates of the numbers of refugees on work relief and direct relief, and table II shows estimates of the cost of work relief and direct relief, for each of the six quarters of the period from 1 January 1950 to 30 June 1951.

Table I. Estimated Numbers of Refugees on Work Schemes and Direct Relief in Arab Countries
(In Thousands)

	Number for Whom	Dependents of Workers	Maximum Number
--	-----------------	-----------------------	----------------

	Work Can Be Provided	Removed From Relief	Eligible For Direct Relief
1950 (quarters)			
1st	—	—	652
2nd	13	39	600
3rd	40	120	492
4th	65	195	392
1951 (quarters)			
1st	88	264	300 ^a
2nd	100	300	252 ^a

If the recommendations of the Economic Survey Mission are adopted, direct relief from United Nations funds will end at the end of 1950. The works programme would continue and such direct relief as may be required would become the responsibility of the local Governments.

Table II. Estimated Cost of Programme
(In millions of Dollars)

	1950 Quarters				1951 Quarters		Total
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	
Estimated Cost							
1. Direct relief	5.5	5.1	4.5	3.9	—	—	19.0
2. Work schemes							
(a) Labour and administration	—	0.9	2.8	4.6	6.2	6.9	21.4
(b) Material, tools and equipment	—	0.6	1.8	2.8	3.8	4.3	13.3
(c) Total cost to United Nations and local Governments	—	1.5	4.6	7.4	10.0	11.2	34.7
(d) Less 45 per cent of item 2 (b), assumed to be made available by local Governments	—	0.3	0.8	1.3	1.7	1.9	6.0
(e) Cost to the United Nation	—	1.2	3.8	6.1	8.3	9.3	28.7
3. Direct relief and work schemes:							
(a) Total cost to United Nations and local Governments	5.5	6.6	9.1	11.3	10.0	11.2	53.7
(b) Less item 2 (d), assumed cost to local Governments	—	0.3	0.8	1.3	1.7	1.9	6.0
(c) Cost to United Nations	5.5	6.3	8.3	10.0	8.3	9.3	47.7

A. NUMBER OF REFUGEES

The number of refugees, in the sense of persons who have fled from Israel and are unable to return, is estimated, from the most up-to-date data available, at 726,000. This figure is arrived at by taking the former non-Jewish population of the territory at present held by Israel and deducting therefrom the present non-Jewish population of that territory. Details of the calculation are given in section B below.

To this figure of 726,000 should be added some 25,000 people who still live at home, but are without means because they are separated from their lands by the armistice lines, the so-called "border-line cases". Therefore, the refugees considered by the Mission to be within its terms of reference number 751,000.

Not all these are in need. It is estimated that 20,000 are in employment and capable of supporting another 60,000. In addition, there are some 19,000 refugees who are presumed not to be receiving UNRPR rations (of whom 15,000 are of independent means and 4,000 are supported by the Iraqi Government). There are, therefore, 652,000 genuine refugees in need (including the border-line cases).

The UNRPR ration strength is now 940,000, but rations are in fact issued by the agencies to 1,019,000 recipients. Rations are allocated in bulk to the agencies, who stretch them to cover destitute and other needy persons as well as refugees.

These figures are set out below:

1. Refugees who fled Israel and are in need		627,000
2. Plus borderline cases		<u>25,000</u>
	Refugees in need	652,000
3. Plus refugees in gainful employment and not in need		<u>99,000</u>
	Total refugees	751,000
4. Minus refugees presumed not to be receiving rations		<u>19,000</u>
	Refugees receiving rations in Arab countries	732,000
5. Plus non-refugees in Arab countries receiving rations		<u>160,000</u>
	Total ration strength in Arab countries	892,000
6. Plus Arab and Jewish refugees in Israel		<u>48,000</u>
	Total UNRPR ration strength	940,000
7. Plus ration receivers in excess of UNRPR ration strength		<u>79,000</u>
	Total ration receivers	1,019,000

The number used by the Mission in estimating the cost of the recommended programme is 652,000, the estimated number of refugees in need, including the borderline cases.

The figure of 751,000 designated as "total refugees" in the above table is composed of 726,000 refugees plus 25,000 borderline cases.

B. Estimate of Number of Arab Refugees From Israeli-Held Territory (Prepared on the basis of population estimates by villages and religion as of 31 December 1946)	
	Thousands
1. Estimate of total non-Jewish population of Palestine on 31 December 1947	
Settled non-Jewish population on 31 December 1946	1,230 ^a
Nomadic population	127 ^b
Total non-Jewish population on 31 December 1946	1,357
Plus natural increase in settled population from 31 December 1946 to 31 December 1947	31 ^c

1947	
Total non-Jewish population estimated as of 31 December 1947	1,388
2. Estimate of total non-Jewish population who could have fled Israel (assuming that births since 31 December 1947 were offset by increased mortality)	
Settled non-Jewish population as of 31 December 1946 within boundaries of territory held by Israel Defence Army on 1 May 1949	736 ^d
Plus natural increase 31 December 1946 to 31 December 1947	18 ^e
Total as of 31 December 1947	754
Plus estimate of nomads	105 ^e
Total non-Jewish population within 1 May 1949 boundaries	859 ^f
Less: non-Jewish population still in Israel	133 ^g

Endnotes

^aObtained by subtracting 7,600 for non-Jews said to have been overstated in official estimate of 1,238,000, through under-registration of deaths.

^bEstimate of total Bedouin population of Palestine based on the partial enumeration which took place in May 1946. Figure taken from "Note on Bedouin Population of Palestine" presented by the representative of the United Kingdom.

^cComputed at 25 per 1,000 population, a conservative estimate of the natural increase rate based on observed average of previous years.

^dObtained by subtracting 52,000 nomads from total non-Jewish population as of 31 December 1946 in villages within boundaries held by Israel Defence Army on 1 May 1949. List of villages so held is given in appendix B of document Com.Tech./7/Add.1, and populations were obtained from map of villages. Sub-district totals are not strictly comparable with those given in "Supplement to Survey" because latter are "revised de facto" estimates, but total differs by only a fraction.

^eOf 127,000 estimated Bedouins (based on partial enumeration of May 1946), approximately 22,000 were said to have been normally resident in areas allocated to Arab State under UNSCOP (United Nations Special Committee on Palestine) majority plan, leaving 105,000 in Jewish State. Since boundaries of 1 May 1949 include a larger area than UNSCOP, it is estimated that 105,000 Arabs may be included. Loftus estimates 95,000 remaining within boundaries. If this figure is used, total "refugees" becomes 716,000 instead of 726,000.

^fAssuming no natural increase since 31 December 1947, this 31 December 1946 estimate would be the probable number of non-Jews who could have fled.

^gIn the *Statistical Bulletin of Israel*, vol. 1, No. 2, for August 1949, a total of 108,000 non-Jews in Israel is given, based on the results of the census of 8 November 1948 and an additional registration during January 1949 in the areas of Nazareth, Acre, Beersheba, and in the town of Majdal. This estimate is said not to include Arabs in remaining areas of the Negev, the Arab villages in the Sharon, or non-Jews accrued since registration. It is assumed here, however, that Arabs in these areas tended to flee, and that natural increase has been offset by increased mortality. An allowance of 25,000 is made for Arabs said to have entered Israel since the end of 1948 the figure having been taken from the answer made Jewish authorities as to the questionnaire circulated by the Technical Committee, 3 July 1949. This figure is given also in the Jewish Agency's *Digest of Press and Events*, No. 49.

C. Geographical Distribution of Refugees and of Relief Recipients

Estimates are available of the geographical distribution of the 1,019,000 relief recipients and of the 726,000 refugees. They are given in the table below.

Area	Alleged relief recipients 30 September 1949		Adjustment Factor*		Person who have fled from Israel	
	Number	Source	Per cent	Source	Number	Per cent of Israel
Arab Palestine	431,500	(1)	35	(5)	28,000	39
Egypt	--	--	--	--	7,000	1
Gaza	210,987	(2)	10	(2)	190,000	26
Iraq	4,000	(3)	0	(3)	4,000	1
Jordan	100,905	(4)	30	(6)	70,000	10
Lebanon	140,448	(4)	3010	(7)	100,000	14
Syria	83,403	(4)		(5)	75,000	10
Total	971,243				726,000	
In Israel	48,000					
(31,000 Arabs, 17,000 Jews)						
Grand Total	1,109,242					

*Based on the probable percentage of duplicate registrations, destitute persons and other non-repatriable relief recipients in the different areas.

Sources

(1) ICRC report dated 30 September 1949.

(2) AFSC, Schedule of refugee population, 30 September 1949, and information obtained 26 October 1949.

(3) UNRPR, as of 30 September 1949.

(4) LRCS report dated 30 September 1949.

(5) UNRPR, 1 August 1949. (For Arab Palestine 155,000 out of 432,000 consisting of 69,157 villagers being fed in Palestine and a 20 per cent duplication in remainder.)

(6) Report of the Technical Committee on Refugees of the Conciliation Commission for Palestine, 20 August 1949.

(7) Conservative estimate based on UNRPR estimate of 1 August 1949.

D. Characteristics of the Recipients of Relief

1. Family units

The average size of family among all recipients of relief, including non-refugees, is almost six persons. This would result in approximately 170,000 family units,⁴ or 121,000 family units of genuine refugees but only 109,000 family units of refugees in need of relief.

2. Employables

Although no accurate figures are available for the proportion of employable males among those eligible for relief, estimates range from 14 to 45 per cent. A conservative estimate would be 25 per cent. Females employable under certain circumstances might constitute an additional 10 per cent.⁵

For comparison it can be noted that the total settled Arab labour force in Palestine was given as 300,000, or 25 per cent of the total non-Jewish population in 1944.⁶ The census of 1931 reported that the ratio of earners to dependants was about 1 to 3 in the settled Arab population.

Of the employable males, 75 per cent is estimated to be able to undertake heavy labour. This estimate, derived from sample surveys conducted in camps, is based on the assumption that sufficient calories will be provided to permit heavy labour.

3. Occupation

Very little information is available as to the occupational capacities of the relief recipients. A census of population which included an investigation of occupation was conducted in 1931, but changes have taken place in the economy of Palestine since that time, which make it difficult to estimate the present situation. A survey of the occupations of skilled tradesmen conducted in 1943⁷ among 14,631 non-Jewish workers showed that 62 per cent of the skilled and semi-skilled were distributed as follows:

	Per cent
Mechanics and fitters	17
Carpenters	13
Shoemakers	8
Weavers	8
Blacksmiths	5
Tailors	5

Tinsmiths	3
Masons	<u>3</u>
	62

A survey conducted in June 1949 among 22,692 refugees in the Gaza area, which is well known to shelter mainly agriculturalists, gave the following percentage distribution by occupational categories:

	Per cent
Professional and proprietary	16
Clerical and supervisory	1
Skilled and semi-skilled	18
Unskilled	<u>65</u>
	100

Another survey, taken by the League of Red Cross Societies in the Zerqa camp in May 1949, analysed the occupations of 1,000 families. The results were as follows:

	Per Cent
Governments	13
Agriculture	28
Building	11
Craftsman	7
Street vendors	9
Food salesmen	9
Motor trade	8
Public services	10
Other	<u>5</u>
	100

The low proportion of agriculturalists in this sample may well be unusual in that the refugee families came from villages near Lydda. It may be said that the majority of the refugees are unskilled workers, but that there exist a number of skilled and semi-skilled workmen⁸ the probable distribution of whom, by detailed occupations, can be roughly estimated from the first table given above. It may also be noted that, according to P. J. Loftus,⁹ the pattern of employment among the Arab population changes according to the needs of the time and season, for example, much of the unskilled labour is supplied for construction work by the Fellaheen in the off season.

	Per cent
4. Rural-urban distribution¹⁰	
Rural settled Arab population (1944)	64
Urban settled Arab population	36
5. Age groups	
Under 1	5
1-15	45
16-50	40
Over 50	10
6. Number of dependants¹¹	
Children (0-15)	50
Aged (over 50)	10
Ill and infirm	5
Nursing and pregnant women	12
7. Religion	
Moslem	93 ¹²
Christian	5
Jewish	2

(C) Illustrative Outline of Works Projects

(This is a brief summary omitting calculations and technical detail contained in two extensive reports, one by Sir Herbert Stewart and associates, the other by William L. Voorduin and associates. The estimates of work project costs and employment loads in appendix A are based upon the data in these reports. The complete reports will be made available with the final report of the Economic Survey Mission.)

The first task of the agricultural and engineering consultants to the Mission has been to examine schemes which can provide early employment for the maximum number of refugees. This appendix embodies the principal conclusions of the consultants resulting from their examination.

1. Purpose

The purpose of the examination made by the consultants has been, in the limited time available and in harmony with the constituted Government authorities, to seek out useful works projects which might relieve the present situation of the Arab refugees. The aim was to select typical projects, to examine them in accordance with the criteria set out below, make an estimate of the funds required and ascertain approximately the amount and duration of employer lent which can reasonably be expected. The projects were thus approached with the object of ascertaining those categories of schemes which could be utilized. The references to specific projects made in this present appendix do not therefore indicate that these are the only ones either examined or contemplated but that they exemplify the type of project which should be developed.

2. Scope

The survey made by the consultants has been restricted in scope in two ways:

(a) Since the prime object is the finding of temporary work for Palestinian Arab refugees, the examination has not covered the whole of the Near East but has been limited to those countries or areas in which substantial numbers at present find shelter. These territories are Jordan, Arab Palestine, the Gaza Strip, Lebanon and Syria.

(b) Since the matter is extremely urgent and cannot await long-term decisions, attention has been concentrated on short-term projects.

There has been a natural division of the task of examination: the engineering consultants have considered projects which will employ labour usefully on road construction, housing schemes, water conservation structures and similar public works. While the agricultural consultants have examined the possibility of employing refugee labour on such phases of development as terracing and afforestation. But the survey has been joint throughout, and the two types of projects have been inter-related.

3. Procedure

The procedure adopted has been that the groups of engineering and agricultural consultants first visited the capitals of the countries concerned to discuss with senior and technical local officials the possible work projects in which these countries were interested, and to make further suggestions. After general tours of the

principal areas concerned further discussions were held with these officials in order to reach agreement on individual or typical projects, obtain data, and estimate the cost and absorptive capacity of schemes. Co-operation with the constituted authorities has therefore been continuous, and in particular existing plans and needs have been taken into account.

4. Criteria of Selection

The main object has always been kept in mind, viz., the provision of short-term engineering or agricultural projects which would provide opportunities for refugee employment and contribute to the welfare of the different countries, without conflicting with any long-term projects formed by individual States as the basis for a more complete economic development. Special criteria applied in selecting type projects were:

- (a) The presence of a high labour factor in the cost of the scheme, and the probability of the absorption in the work of a large number of persons over the whole period under review;
- (b) The possibility of early commencement;
- (c) The susceptibility of the projects to a unified development, i.e., the likelihood of constituting satellite and contributory projects round a nuclear development;
- (d) The place which the short-term works projects can take in leading to a more complete economic development.

5. General Considerations

The principal industry of the Near Eastern countries is agriculture, which is affected and restricted by certain major factors in the two great basic natural resources — soil and water. The former, except in the saline areas, is, in general, in the Near Eastern countries, highly productive, and the limiting factor is therefore frequently water supply. Rainfall in the Near East is normally sparse and is unevenly distributed; but other moisture sources may be found by the better utilization of surface waters or the exploitation of those underground. It is clear that no country in the Near East has sufficiently taken, in the past (except perhaps in remote antiquity), nor is taking at present, adequate measures for conserving either of its great basic resources. Consequently the soil is being eroded; water, which is the life-blood of agriculture, is wasted; land is not being used to the best advantage, nor for the purpose to which it is best suited, and the financial returns which are being obtained from it are insufficient.

It is evident that two directions in which refugee labour can be employed in a manner which will also give very material aid to the economy of the countries concerned are: conservation of the soil and the natural moisture in it, and the better utilization of existing water resources. Schemes of this type have the great advantage that labour forms an extremely high percentage of the total cost involved. Such schemes have the support of the Governments concerned.

It is considered, therefore, that the four major ways in which temporary refugee labour can be employed in quantity and at the same time promote the economic development of the Near Eastern countries by striking at the root of their greatest problems are:

- (a) The terracing of sloping land so as to retain the natural rainfall, protect the soil from erosion, and allow the growing of better crops or the planting of fruit trees, more particularly the latter;
- (b) The afforestation of land not suited to other purposes, partly as an erosion control measure and partly to contribute additional fuel and timber supplies;
- (c) The development of good roads to open up the area so as to allow materials for the construction of irrigation and similar works to pass in, and agricultural products, particularly fruits and vegetables, to pass out;
- (d) The construction of irrigation projects and water conservation works on a moderate scale.

Certain other projects not falling into these four categories have been specially selected, either because they are well advanced and it would be uneconomical not to complete them or for some special economic importance and labour absorptive power.

6. General Discussion of Types of Project

(a) Terracing

Terracing is not an innovation in Near Eastern countries; indeed, in many places it is already practised. The work to be done, therefore, is of two types — the reconstruction of existing terraces in a state of disrepair, and the construction of terraces on new ground. It is considered that in some cases, even on new land, relatively inexpensive terracing will be sufficient. Many areas to be planted with fruit trees will, however, require terracing with at least a single row of stones, and in really steep country stone walls will be required; such terracing is expensive but well justified because of the greater productive capacity of the treated land. As the effects of this work will last for many years it fits readily into any long-term economic development scheme. Moreover, terracing has the additional advantage that it can be commenced early.

(b) Afforestation

Very little practical action has been taken in the Near Eastern countries to extend the area under forest, although the importance of afforestation is now gradually becoming recognized. Afforestation can be carried out either by direct sowing of seeds (which results in large areas being treated in a short time), or by the planting of seedlings from a nursery. This is a comparatively slow process since seedlings may require two years to develop, and nursery production is thus a principal limiting factor in the rate of this type of afforestation. It is considered that schemes should include the "Gradoni" system of tree-planting, which is simple and effective, and offers good scope for the employment of labour. This, like seed sowing, has the advantage that it can be begun almost at once. Afforestation must be undertaken with the advice and guidance of forestry specialists, and the new plantations must be rigidly closed to grazing, and in particular be protected against the inroads of man for fuel and goats for fodder.

(c) Roads

Adequate highway communications are unquestionably necessary for full economic development in any country, the more so in an agricultural country, since produce must move freely to the markets. Road making is clearly a suitable work project, for the labour forms a high element in its total cost. It can be begun quickly and the materials are generally present in all too abundant quantities on the spot.

However, highways by themselves do not necessarily bring about an improvement in an economy. There must first be a sound base of agricultural development or some other economic reason before highways can be of much value. In some of the areas traversed by the highways proposed in plans drawn up by countries visited, such development has not yet reached the stage which will make highway construction economical.

The road projects selected are, therefore, of two types:

- (i) Highways which are missing or defective in the present system and which do have an economic justification since lack of them strangles the flow of normal traffic;
- (ii) New roads required for the unified developments discussed in the next paragraph.

(d) Utilisation of water resources

Schemes considered for the utilization of water resources fall in general into two types, of which the second is based on a special concept, regarded as fundamental. The first type of project consists in the construction, at various points, of irrigation and water supply works already planned or commenced. Projects of this nature include canals and drainage works in the Lebanon and in Syria. Such projects in the main involve construction works, but are also for the most part already planned so that they can be embarked on without undue delay. In many cases incomplete works already exist.

The conception of the second type of project stems from the view that such engineering developments as highway construction or dam building cannot be economically justified in isolation. Highways must be built simultaneously with improvements in agriculture, and agriculture cannot be improved without the simultaneous conservation and better distribution of water resources. It is, therefore, proposed for the short-term programme, to develop certain comparatively small areas intensively instead of proceeding with extensive programmes of highway development and the like. A typical area considered suitable for such development is the catchment basin of the Wadi Zerqa, the largest of the wadis east of the Jordan River. It is proposed that this area should at one and the same time be provided with roads, dam constructions, terracing, afforestation, etc.

(e) Other engineering schemes

Other engineering schemes selected include the improvement of certain airports. These have the advantage that plans can be prepared in a short time and that the work has a significant effect on the general economy of the Near East and may be of outstanding long-term importance. Work on a harbour has also been recommended for somewhat similar reasons.

7. Types of Projects Recommended, By Countries

(a) Jordan and Arab Palestine

The economy of Jordan is almost entirely agricultural, and crop production is dependent on winter rainfall, which rarely exceeds eighteen inches even in the best areas. An important physical feature of the country is the series of deep wadis running into the valley floor of the Jordan, which is far below sea level. The rain-fed areas produce cereals, but where the land is terraced and planted with horticultural crops it is highly productive.

Agriculturally, the present Arab area is probably not the best land in Palestine. It consists of a collection of hills, some eroded down to rock skeleton and others carrying shallow patches of soil which, somewhat surprisingly, produce cereal crops. The rainfall is in the main adequate in the hills, though in Jericho in the Jordan

Valley it is only six inches and is replaced by artificial irrigation. The region is predominantly fruit-growing.

Approximately half the refugees at present find shelter in Jordan and Arab Palestine, and in addition the refugee population in the latter so closely approaches the number of local inhabitants that it may be necessary for some to find work east of the Jordan river. It is necessary, therefore, to recommend extensive work projects in both areas. The types of such projects recommended are as follows:

(i) Unified Developments

A specific area selected for such development is, as stated above, the catchment basin of the Wadi Zerqa, which is located north of Amman. It is recommended that this area be developed completely as a unit, that is to say, that action be taken to build all necessary roads in the area, to provide water for perennial irrigation, to build the necessary small check dams on the principal gullies to minimize siltation, and to do all necessary afforestation work, etc. A centrally located village should also be made a part of the scheme in order to provide adequate housing facilities for the temporary refugee construction workers. At least four roads are recommended for improvement under this scheme; and surveys should be undertaken at once and completed within three months for the construction of a dam at a suitable site which exists in the deep valley of the river. It is considered that this dam can be of such a type as to provide for the maximum employment of hand labour, and that it can be raised as required. More intensive geological surveys can proceed parallel to construction, which should be well advanced before the high flow begins in December 1950. There is a suitable storage area in the wider part of the wadi above the dam site. At the same time a headworks structure, already envisaged by the Jordan Government as part of a scheme for completing headworks on several wadis — a scheme which it is now recommended should be revised — will be required where the wadi enters the Jordan Plain. Parallel to this engineering development, priority should be given to the terracing and afforestation of the area.

The experience gained in planning this first unified development will be invaluable in developing several other wadis both in Jordan and Arab Palestine. The limiting factor, however, is the capacity of the Jordan and Arab

Works Departments to absorb these heavy additional work loads, and to some extent the rate of progress will depend on the expansion which can be achieved by these Departments.

(ii) Highway Development

Considerable highway development can be undertaken in Jordan and Arab Palestine, provided the Public Works Departments can handle the heavily increased load.

(ii) Other Irrigation Projects

A scheme is now being investigated west of the Jordan for temporary refugee settlement on land irrigated from water obtained by pumping. It is considered that the irrigation water for this tract of land can better be obtained by conserving the surplus waters of the Wadi Qilt, and that this may, therefore, become a project similar to that described in (i) above.

(iv) Airport Improvement

This work is also considered as a short-term project and it is believed that improvements to Amman Airport, to Class D international standard, would not far anticipate the need.

(v) Afforestation

There are 2 million nursery seedlings available in Jordan for afforestation purposes, and it is proposed that this should proceed, but, at the outset, be concentrated in the catchment area of the Zerqa basin. At the same time there should be an extension of the present area under forests in Arab Palestine and restoration of several of the existing forest reserves. A scheme has been drawn up and is proposed covering fourteen such areas.

(vi) Terracing

It is proposed that terracing in Jordan should commence as part of the unified development scheme. In Arab Palestine there are already some good practical examples of terracing. The area is essentially a fruit-growing one. It is proposed, therefore, that extensive terracing should be carried out in Arab Palestine, continuing the policy of the former government, a work which will provide ample scope for the useful employment of refugee labour. Such work can make a valuable contribution in the preparation of land for new orchards and in the improvement of land already under fruit. The only limiting factor is the maximum labour force which can be controlled and supervised, which is said to be about 16,000 labourers a day.

(b) Lebanon

Lebanon is a mountainous country in which only a quarter of the land is cultivable, and most of this is already utilized. Taking into account the high existing utilization of the cultivable area, the importance of agriculture to the country and the possibility of further fruit-growing, it will be seen that it is vital to protect the soil against erosion and that an important means of increasing agricultural productivity is by better utilization of the water resources (which at the same time may create opportunities for industrial development by providing low-cost hydro-electric power). Some consideration is now being given to re-afforestation and several irrigation schemes are either commenced or planned.

It was understood that the Government did not wish to concentrate on employment of refugees on projects closely identified with the land; and for this reason alone, and not because there is no outstanding need for projects of afforestation, have the consultants concentrated on engineering works projects.

The following schemes for the employment of refugee labour are therefore visualized; these are all of the irrigation/water supply type. Harbour and railway improvements, which were suggested by Government officials, have, for the purpose of this report, been considered as long-term projects.

Irrigation and Drainage in the South Beqaa

Here detailed plans are almost completed and construction problems are simple; there is good land well situated for irrigation, and this project should be made an early priority.

Akkar Plain Irrigation

It is planned that this area in North West Lebanon will utilize water from each of the four rivers which cross it. This can also be made an early priority, for construction work is simple and consists mainly of concrete lined canals.

Completion of Tyr/Saida Irrigation Project

Most of the major works are already completed in this scheme for the irrigation of the strip of land adjacent to the sea coast in the Tyr/Saida area. The main source of water supply is the Nahr el Litani. Mainly secondary canals remain to be built.

Chekka/Tripoli Project

This is a more costly project involving tunnel construction to utilize an underground source of water supply for irrigation of the coast south of Tripoli and for eventual potable water for the Tripoli area. The project is partly planned and is recommended to be proceeded with.

(v) Minor Water Supply Projects

In addition, labour might be employed on a development of water supply systems for numerous villages in Lebanon.

(c) Syria

Syria, the largest of the countries under consideration, is divided physically into a number of rainfall and agricultural zones. In the mountain regions on the shores of the Mediterranean the rainfall is high, and there is a further zone of cultivable rain-fed land beginning at Jebel Druze and the Nauran, becoming very narrow or disappearing entirely east of the Anti-Lebanon, and reappearing as a broad band in the Aleppo area. Further east is a third zone where there is no rainfall and which is suitable for grazing only. To the north of this belt lies the Jezireh, where the rainfall is higher and cultivation is possible. There are many areas of hilly country with steep slopes.

Bearing in mind these considerations, the size of the country, and the fairly well advanced development projects of the Syrian Government, the consultants visualized works projects of the following types in Syria for the employment of refugees:

(i) Terracing

In some places terracing already exists but what has been accomplished is only a fraction of what is needed. Projects are, therefore, recommended for the terracing of a considerable area of land (up to 85,000 hectares) which can be used both for forest purposes and for growing fruit trees, particularly olives and figs.

(ii) Afforestation

Large areas in such regions of Syria as Mount Hermon, the Anti-Lebanon and part of the mountains of the Latakia area are unsuitable for cultivation for field or orchard crops, but would become, in time, a source of much economic value to the country if entirely planted under forest trees. Of the terracing programme above, 50,000 hectares are intended for afforestation. This should be done both by planting seedlings and sowing seeds. The utilization of the former method will be limited by the capacity of Syrian nurseries, and it is recommended that these be extended; the latter, while simple as an operation, is unfortunately unimportant for the absorption of labour.

(iii) Road Construction

Work is ready to start in Syria on a good many short-term projects of road construction, and the consultants have examined and selected a number of schemes for road construction and improvement which will greatly assist the linking of several important towns.

(iv) Irrigation and Drainage

The consultants consider that the reclamation of the Madkh swamp, which is partly completed, should be proceeded with as a works project for the employment of refugee labour.

General Public Works

A number of public works have been examined and it is considered that a considerable portion of refugee labour can be employed on the improvement of the Mezza Airport, the construction of Latakia harbour (which should, however, first be further studied), and the works for the Aleppo water supply.

(d) Gaza Strip

Of the former Gaza district of Palestine, an area of only about 50,000 acres now remains in Arab control in the form of a long narrow coastal strip, a few kilometres wide, extending from a little north of Gaza to the Egyptian border. Within it some 200,000 refugees and the 70,000 normal inhabitants are concentrated. A small proportion of the area is irrigated by wells from which are watered certain portions of intensive cultivation; but the greater part of the strip consists either of sand dunes along the sea coast or of a rain-fed area producing cereals as a winter crop.

It is clear that in the small area concerned there is no possibility of finding works projects to employ more than a small proportion of the large number of refugees concentrated there. Two types of projects are however considered advisable:

(i) Sand fixation of the dunes by the planting of trees to prevent further encroachment on the arable land. This should be a continuation of a scheme introduced by the Palestine Forestry Department, which in 1947 brought into effect a ten-year programme for fixing 1,000 hectares of sand dunes per year. This project should be revived, as it will confer an important long-term benefit on the agriculture and people of the tract.

(ii) Certain minor engineering works can be undertaken, viz., asphaltting of roads and the possible installation of drainage systems in Gaza.

From the foregoing summary it will be seen that useful projects, meeting the criteria set out above, can be initiated in every country. These projects will absorb a very substantial portion of the refugees in each area, with the exception of the Gaza strip. A summary of the numbers which can be absorbed even in the specimen schemes outlined above (all of which must be regarded as type schemes susceptible to expansion or repetition) and of the estimated probable cost is given in appendix A. It will be remembered however, in outlining the rate at which proposed projects can be brought into operation, that a number of other factors are involved.

* * *

Apart from the general organization required to supervise and carry on the whole programme for the Arab refugees taken together, changes will be required in the organization of the services of the Governments, to ensure adequate local execution of certain projects. It is strongly recommended in this connexion that terracing and afforestation be considered as one, and in conjunction with the conservation of water resources. The best course will probably be, therefore, for the Governments concerned to set up a soil conservation or land use division, either independent or under the appropriate existing Ministry.

(D) Terms of Reference of the Economic Survey Mission

The Conciliation Commission for Palestine, desiring further to implement paragraphs 10 and 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948, and to obtain information which will serve as the basis for recommendations for further action by the General Assembly, Member States, appropriate specialized agencies, and interested organizations, and

Having noted the declarations of representatives of Israel and the Arab States with respect to repatriation, resettlement and compensation of refugees:

1. Pursuant to the authorization granted to it under paragraph 12 of the foregoing resolution hereby establishes, under its auspices, an Economic Survey Mission to examine the economic situation in the countries affected by the recent hostilities, and to make recommendations to the Commission for an integrated programme:

(a) To enable the Governments concerned to further such measures and development programmes as are required to overcome economic dislocations created by the hostilities;

(b) To facilitate the repatriation, resettlement and economic and social rehabilitation of the refugees and the payment of compensation pursuant to the provisions of paragraph eleven of the General Assembly's resolution of 11 December 1948, in order to reintegrate the refugees into the economic life of the area on a self-sustaining basis within a minimum period of time;

(c) To promote economic conditions conducive to the maintenance of peace and stability in the area.

2. Instructs the Economic Survey Mission to include in its recommendations an operational plan for carrying out the recommended programmes together with the estimated costs and methods of financing.

3. Authorizes the Mission, pursuant to paragraph 14 of the General Assembly's resolution of 11 December 1948, to invite the assistance of those Governments, specialized agencies and international organizations which may be able to facilitate its work.

The Conciliation Commission recommends that the Survey Mission approach its task along the following lines:

In collaboration with the Governments concerned:

(a) Explore the measures which can be taken by the Governments concerned without outside financial assistance to achieve the objectives of paragraph 1 above;

(b) On the basis of existing plans and surveys, examine proposals submitted by the Governments concerned for economic development and settlement projects requiring outside assistance which would make possible absorption of the refugees into the economy of the area on a self-sustained basis in a minimum time with a minimum expenditure;

(c) Examine other economic projects which can, with outside assistance, provide temporary employment for the refugees not employed on the development and settlement projects of paragraph (b);

(d) Examine such other development and settlement projects requiring outside assistance which, though not associated directly with the employment and settlement of refugees, would serve to achieve the objective of paragraph 1;

(e) Estimate the number of refugees who cannot be supported directly or indirectly through the employment envisaged under paragraphs (a)-(d), together with the estimated period during which direct relief will be required and the cost thereof;

(f) Study the problem of compensation to refugees for claims for property of those who do not return to their homes, and for the loss of or damage to property, with special reference to the relationship of such compensation to the proposed settlement project;

(g) Study the problem of rehabilitation of refugees; including matters concerning their civil status, health, education and social services;

(h) Propose an organizational structure to achieve the objectives of paragraph 1 within a United Nations framework; to co-ordinate, supervise and facilitate measures for relief, resettlement, economic development and related requirements such as community service facilities, bearing in mind the interests of all Governments concerned.

1 September 1949

Endotes

¹Reproduced at Lake Success as A/992.

²Thirty-three Governments made voluntary contributions amounting to \$32 million, and the United Nations established an emergency organization, the United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees, with Stanton Griffiths, then American Ambassador to Egypt, as its director. The UNRPR purchased and scheduled materials and supplies, and through contracts with the International Red Cross Committee, the League of Red Cross Societies, and the American Friends Service Committee, supplied the refugees with food, shelter and other services. Many other charitable, religious and social agencies assisted in substantial ways.

³Should the United Nations decide to bring about a gradual reduction from 940,000 rations per day to 652,000 on 1 April 1950, through monthly reductions of 100,000, beginning on 1 February 1950, the cost of the alteration in schedule would amount to \$1.2 million. If the United cost within the ability of the Near Eastern countries to meet without United Nations assistance.

⁴This and subsequent estimates, except where otherwise indicated, are based upon figures provided by UNRPR and the three operating agencies and checked by field visits to camps and other refugee concentrations.

⁵These estimates, based on samples taken in various camps and upon opinions given by the operating agencies and refugee leaders, include a certain number of older children and adults over 50, as well as some persons listed as dependants.

⁶Under-estimated by omission of part-time family workers. *National Income of Palestine, 1944* by P. J. Loftus, Government statistician. No. 5 of 1946. Government Printer, Palestine.

⁷*Survey of Skilled Tradesmen, 1943*, compiled by the Department of Statistics on behalf of the Controller of Manpower No. S.2 of 1945. Government Printer, Palestine.

⁸*Survey of Skilled Tradesmen, 1943*, compiled by the Department of Statistics on behalf of the Controller of Manpower No. S.2 of 1945. Government Printer, Palestine. Age groups

⁹National Income of Palestine, 1944, by P. J. Loftus, Government Statistician. No. 5 of 1946. Government Printer, Palestine.

¹⁰Census of Palestine 1931 gives 65 per cent rural, 35 per cent urban for settled non-Jewish population, and 68 per cent rural and 32 per cent urban for total non-Jewish population.

¹¹A number of these dependants are employable, including some children under 15, and persons over 50.

¹²UNRPR report, 30 September 1949.

[Document in PDF format](#)