



## PALESTINIAN REFUGEES IN LEBANON: A PHOTOPACK

### *Agreed Project Objectives*

- To present and describe the current status of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon through a selected camp - Sabra and Shatila
- To familiarise an international audience with key aspects of the Palestinian refugee question through the development and use of a non-violent, educational methodology at a variety of levels
- To highlight specific and unique aspects of 'Palestinian refugees'
- To use dialogue, discussion and education as one means of conflict resolution
- To highlight the important issues of the 'Right of Return' for Palestinian Refugees to their homeland – Palestine - and the debates surrounding the issue
- To acknowledge and highlight the suffering of many families in Sabra and Shatila as a result of the massacre.

Kids are playing on a hill of garbage where no one thinks to play. This hill is located at one of the western entrances of the camp and it a mixture of houses that were destroyed during the numerous wars that the camp underwent, and the garbage that people gather at that place.

**Keywords:** Children, Environment, Right to Play, Pollution, Health



Alley located in the northern part of the camp. People are on one of the camp's main streets on a typical day.

**Keywords:** Alley Streets, Daily Life, Internal Networks



Morning primary school for boys and afternoon for girls they switch around each month because of the large population in the camps - one primary school is not enough for all children.

**Keywords:** Education, Hope, Future, Gender



Hair Dressing salon for women in the Camp, where women go for beauty therapy as all other women in the world do. Not so highly developed technically but at least it serves the basic needs of beauty for women in the Camps.

**Keywords:** Beauty, Women, Business



## PALESTINIAN REFUGEES IN LEBANON: A PHOTOPACK

### Facts and Figures on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon

**P**ALESTINIAN REFUGEES IN LEBANON CAN BE DIVIDED INTO THREE GROUPS:

- REGISTERED REFUGEES (RR) ARE REGISTERED BY BOTH UNRWA AND THE LEBANESE AUTHORITIES
- NON-REGISTERED REFUGEES (NR) ARE REGISTERED ONLY BY THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT (AND NOT BY UNRWA)
- NON-IDENTIFIED REFUGEES (NON-ID) THOSE WHO ARE NOT REGISTERED WITH ANY AGENCY

#### Registered Refugees(RR) – 399,152

UNRWA figures for 2004 numbers claim that 399,152 Palestinian refugees (approximately 10% of Lebanon's total population) reside in Lebanon.

53% of this number (210,155) live in 12 registered refugee camps scattered throughout the country. The remaining number live in non-registered camps (also called gatherings) and Palestinian communities. (Originally, 16 refugee camps existed in Lebanon, 3 were destroyed during its civil war and were never rebuilt, 1 was voluntarily evacuated before the war.)

However, Palestinian the Lebanese sources claim that 415,000 Palestinian refugees reside in Lebanon. This number includes the 387,000 (approximate) refugees registered with the UNRWA, 35,000 non-registered refugees and 5,000 non-identified refugees. The last two categories – non-registered and non-identified, are defined below.

#### Non-Registered Refugees (NR) – 30,000-35,000

There are approximately 35,000 refugees unregistered by UNRWA (42,000 according to other international sources). Before 2004 they were able to benefit from some minor services provided by UNRWA (but none of the major services as hospitalisation). Since 2004, a temporary UNWRA project funded by the EU allows NR refugees access to hospital.

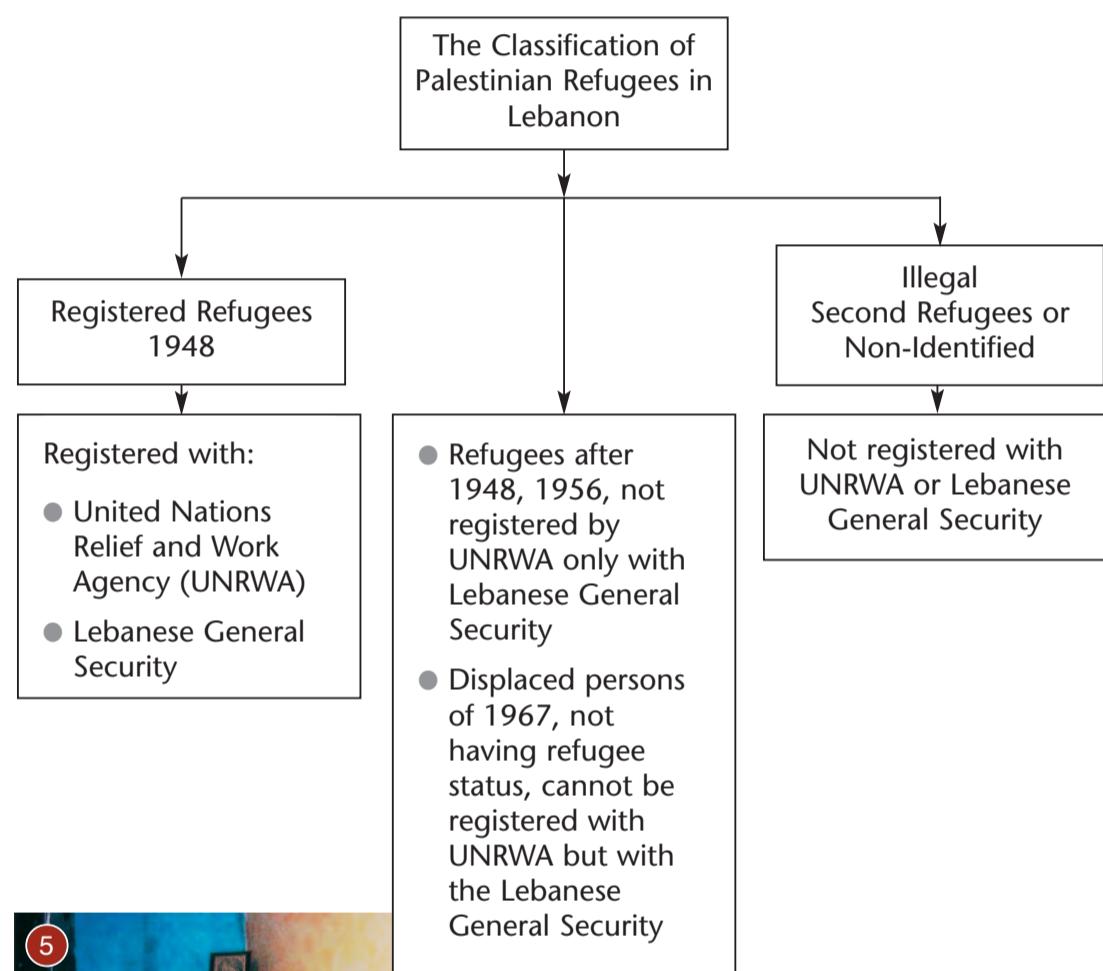
Nearly half of these refugees were registered by the Red Cross and, consequently, by the Lebanese Government, while the second half was registered by orders of former Prime Ministers (between 1969-1978).

#### Non-Identified Refugees Non-ID) – 4,000-5,000

This category includes around 5,000 Palestinians who do not possess any kind of ID. This group of refugees does not benefit from UNRWA services and does not receive any assistance from the Lebanese government.

Theoretically, the overall number of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon falling under the above three categories is around 430,000. However, less than two thirds this number actually live in Lebanon. The events of the Lebanese civil war (1975-90), the Israeli invasion (1992) and the camp wars (1985-87), the difficult economic conditions as well as the Lebanese laws against Palestinian refugees (defined as aliens within Lebanese law) have led to massive migration of Palestinian refugees towards Western Europe in general and Scandinavia in particular.

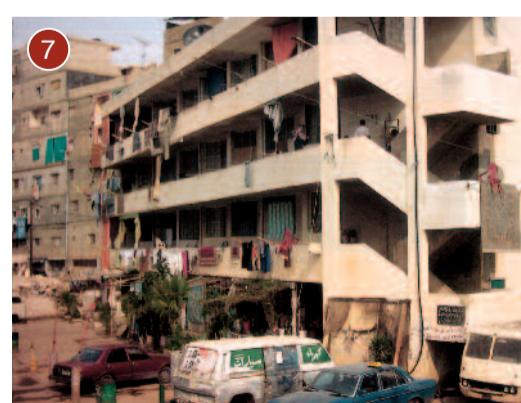
Though many of the immigrants to Europe have permanently settled down and those in Arab Gulf states have legal work permits, many of those in Europe and all of those in Arab Gulf states still retain their status as Palestinian refugees registered in Lebanon. While Non-ID refugees face the most difficult of circumstances, all Palestinians refugees are subject to discrimination at a variety of levels.



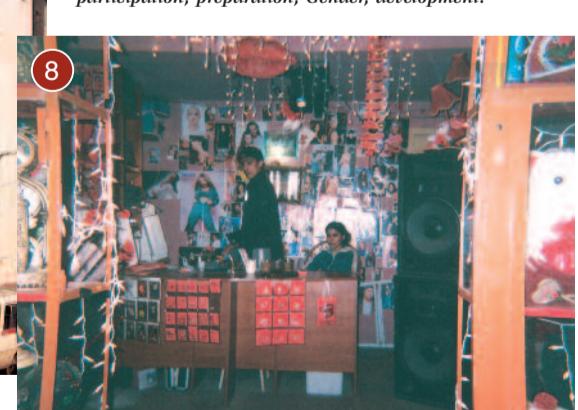
Internet and Video Games Café inside the Camp, young people use it as one means of communication and for spending time with friends in network games in addition to doing research related to school work. **Keywords:** Entertainment, Education, Business, Meeting People, Communication



Women working for different NGOs in the Camp discussing work related issues. **Keywords:** women at work, civil society, participation, preparation, Gender, development.



Entrance of the camp where Palestinian families live in buildings where they share the same balcony for each floor. Flats inside these buildings are small (2 rooms, kitchen and a bathroom) and each flat currently accommodates at least six people. **Keywords:** Living Conditions, Sharing, High Population, Privacy, Living Together



Music shop inside the Camp where people have access to the latest music in the world. The decorations (red) refer to celebrating Valentine's Day within the Camps. **Keywords:** Music, Valentine, Up to date, Celebrating, Business

# بَلْدَةِ

## PALESTINIAN REFUGEES IN LEBANON: A PHOTOPACK

### A Brief Look at the Legal Status of Palestinian Refugees

Their rights in the following areas are either restricted or prohibited:

- the right to work
- the right to own property
- the right to education
- the right to a fair trial
- the right to civil representation
- the right to social services



*Underground pipes during a maintenance period which sometimes takes months and may not be finished and which can lead to problems such infected water or even making it not available for months at a time.*

**Keywords:** maintenance, services, pollution, diseases



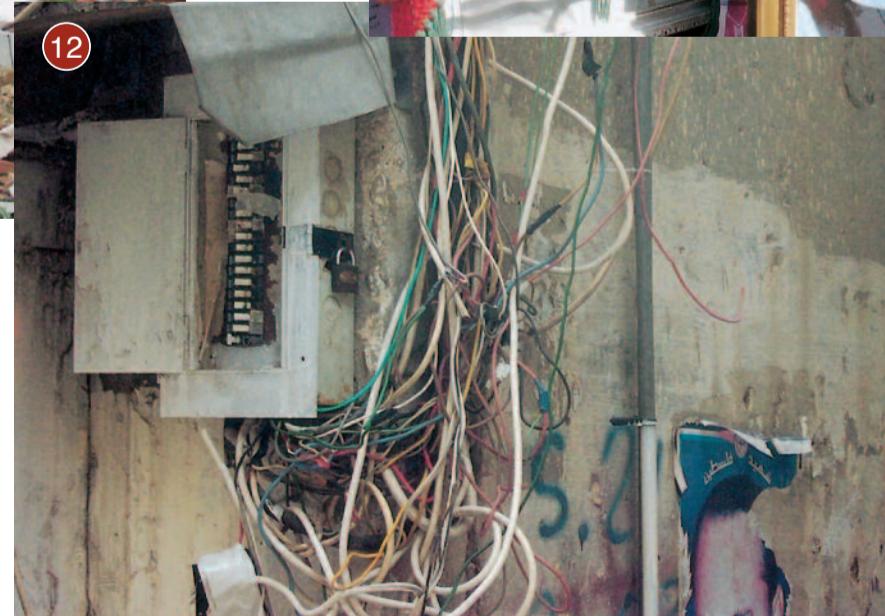
*Despite all children do what children do. A group of children are playing in the small "backyard" of their house which is not really a backyard.*

**Keywords:** Start with what you have, enjoy your life, Children, Right to play



*Remembering the Massacre, a woman is holding the photos of her three children and/or close relatives who were killed during the massacre in year 1982.*

**Keywords:** Remembrance, Pain, Tears, Missing



*The electric network in one alley of the camp shows the dangerous situation - lines enter between each other causing serious danger.*

**Keywords:** Electricity, sources, danger, organization, observation



## PALESTINIAN REFUGEES IN LEBANON: A PHOTOPACK

### Some Common Questions

#### **Who are the Palestinian refugees? How many are there?**

The United Nations defines Palestinian refugees as those people (and their direct descendants) who lived in Palestine for at least two years prior to 1948, and were displaced as a result of the 1948 war to Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank and Gaza.

Official refugee status is limited to people who were displaced to these five areas where the United Nations Relief Works Agency (UNRWA) was set up to provide humanitarian aid to the refugees.

This rather mechanistic definition excludes many others who were dispossessed by Israeli-Arab warfare and since barred by Israel from returning to their homes. They include those displaced to areas outside of UNRWA's jurisdiction in 1948 (numbering one million today), those displaced in the 1967 war (today, about 600,000) and those internally displaced inside Israel (about 250,000 today).

These groups, plus the 4.1 million refugees currently registered with UNRWA, bring the number of refugees to about five million, or roughly 70% of all Palestinians.

Israel only acknowledges about two million refugees, discounting those not registered with UNRWA and contending that UNRWA figures are greatly inflated. This is one reason there are often hear conflicting figures for the size of the refugee population.

#### **The Palestinian "Right of Return"**

The right of return is a prominent issue for all Palestinians, and by far one of the most complex. For the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, there are many interpretations of this right. For the outsider, the issue as a whole can be complicated to understand. In what follows, we will attempt to explain some of the key points on this issue expressed among the Palestinian refugee community in Lebanon.

#### **What is the Palestinian 'right of return'?**

The historical background of the Palestinian right of return is based on several periods of exodus experienced by the Palestinian people, mainly in 1947-1948 and again in 1967. Today, there are over 5 million Palestinians – Palestinians who were forced to leave as well as their descendants – who are refugees. The right to return to a Palestinian territory is by some Palestinians interpreted as going back to the 1948 status, while some others refer to the territorial status in 1967.

The self-determination and independence of the Palestinian people has been repeatedly endorsed by the international community. Specifically regarding the Palestinian right to return to their homeland, the United Nations General Assembly adopted UN Resolution 194 in 1948. Article 11 of the Resolution states that:

*[The General Assembly] resolves 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 and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible'*

#### **What does it mean?**

UN Resolution 194 guarantees the right of Palestinians to return to their homeland, and their choice to do so. If once this right is implemented they choose not to return, they must receive proper compensation. The significant point here is that Resolution 194 must be realised before any negotiations can take place regarding whether or not they will return to their homeland.

#### **What is the legal basis for the right of return?**

The strongest legal basis is UN Resolution 194, adopted in 1948. It states 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 ... compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return.'*

Resolution 194 offers refugees a choice between repatriation (return to their homes) and compensation (money paid for lost property), or simply compensation.

Resolution 194 has been affirmed by the General Assembly of the United Nations nearly every year since it was passed. A total of eight other UN Resolutions have called for implementation of the right of return.

Major human rights instruments, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Fourth Geneva Convention, the Hague Convention, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and several regional conventions all support the right to return and compensation.

Finally, Israel's acceptance into the United Nations in 1949 was explicitly conditioned on its willingness to implement UN Resolution 194

#### **What about the people living there now?**

There are a wide range of Palestinian perspectives on what are the effective solutions to this situation. Many Palestinians advocate a solution that will encourage mutual living. This is the most realistic and will encourage a long-term peaceful solution.

#### **Will the Palestinian Right of Return ever be enforced?**

While realising the reality of almost four generations of foreigners living in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, most Palestinians are unwavering about their right, and the right of their descendants, to live in their homeland. Once Resolution 194 is implemented and Palestinians can choose whether or not to return, then negotiations can take place that will address the reality. Until then, Palestinians will continue to advocate for their right to return to their homeland.



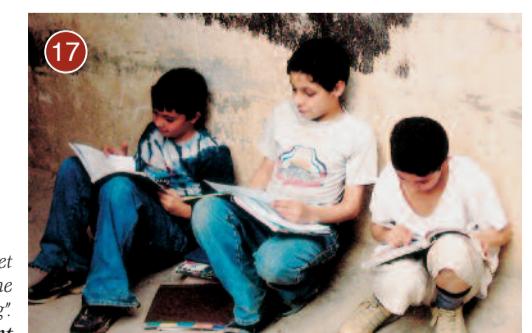
Children in summer are engaged in a recycling project inside the camp as a means of protecting the environment from more pollution. **Keywords:** Summer time, Children, Recycling, Environment, Child Labor



One over view of the camp shows its different sections and different shapes and the types of houses where the refugees live. Houses vary from those in buildings into those with zinc ceilings and in both cases the standard housing conditions are not of acceptable quality. **Keywords:** Over population, crowdedness



A shop for repairing and recycling fridges which could be sold again second hand. Repairing is one of the means that refugees use in order to fully consume what they and repair work is considered one of the active businesses inside the camp - others from outside the camp use such sources inside the camp since they are cheaper. **Keywords:** Repairing, Second hand equipments, unable to buy new, business



Students doing home work - reading and writing in the street since streets are considered the only places that kids use in the camp for everything "studying, playing and even working". **Keywords:** Education, Educational Environment

# بِلَادِي

## PALESTINIAN REFUGEES IN LEBANON: A PHOTOPACK

### Using the Photos to Explore the Issues

#### Why use photographs in learning?

Photographs are useful to use because they:

- are open-ended, people can interpret them in their own way
- can be read by everyone in their own way
- do not require high levels of literacy
- allow groups to determine for themselves what issues should be discussed
- encourage groups and individuals to recognise that not everyone sees the world in the same way or through the same lens
- when used well, they allow for creative learning outside a fixed agenda

Photographs provide a very rich source of exploration and discovery. In order to fully benefit from them, planning and organised investigation is needed, especially when it is pursued in groups. The activities presented in the following pages are designed to support such exploration and discovery as well as to stimulate discussion on many of the important issues and challenges introduced in Biladi.



One inhabitant of Shatila Camp who was killed during the 1982 Massacre - his swelled body - evidence of being dead for days. This photo was taken by the French Associated Press and is from Dr. Bayan Nowayhed Al-Hout (1982) Sabra and Shatila, September 1982 page 709. **Keywords:** Killed, Dead for days, Massacre, Genocide, Crime against Humanity



Mohammad Abed Al Salam was married from Arabia Hussien Al Hajj Hassan (Photo no.22), they were living in Palestine but due to 1948 Arab – Israeli conflict (Nakba) they left Palestine and moved to Beirut and settled in Chatila Camp where he continued to produce juice and sell it. Mohammad and his wife had nine children - Abed Al Salam, Ahmad, Wahida, Khodor, Abbas, Fatima, Abdallah, Salah, Mohammad. Photo no. 20 shows Khodor and Abbas where as Photo no. 21 shows Fatima, Abdallah and Wahida





## PALESTINIAN REFUGEES IN LEBANON: A PHOTOPACK

### Using the Photos to Explore the Issues

**Selecting**

Ask the group to look carefully at the whole set of photos, ask each individual or pair to choose one or two photos which they find particularly interesting or which raise important questions for them. People can choose up to four photos.

**What do you feel?**

Make a selection of photographs that, in your opinion, raise important or challenging questions. Display the photos. Invite everyone individually, to note those photos (identified by number) that raise important issues for them about refugees in general and Palestinian refugees in particular. Working in small groups, individuals explain to each other which photos they chose and why. What are the key questions they give rise to? Are the issues chosen by different people the same? Different? Each small group can then present the most important questions they identified to the whole group.

**Ranking**

Ask each group to rank their choice of four photos (by number) in a diamond pattern. Their ranking could be on the basis of:

- those they like most/least
- the images that surprise them most/least
- which situation is most/least fair?
- which situation best or least illustrates human rights and refugees?

Again, each group can share their choice and the reasoning behind it with the larger group and similarities or differences between groups can then be explored.

**Questioning**

Give each group or pair a piece of paper so that they can write down their questions as they can see the edges of the photo. If this is not possible, questions can be written on a large sheet of paper. Invite them to write down their questions as they can see the edges of the photo or to issues raised by the group. Encourage the group to ask questions that raise broader issues and challenge assumptions.

**Disagreement**

disagreement as to what might be happening in the photos?

Alternatively, ask each pair or group to display their photo on a piece of poster paper on a wall. They could then write keywords describing the photo on stickers which can then be added to the poster. In this way, the entire set of photos can be displayed and described. Ask the whole group to look at all the posters and then share agreements or disagreements on the words chosen to describe particular pictures.

**Storytelling**

Each group or pair can be invited to choose a photo and to then describe what might be happening through a story - they should include what happened before the photo was taken and what might happen afterwards.

**Identifying and Discussing Issues**

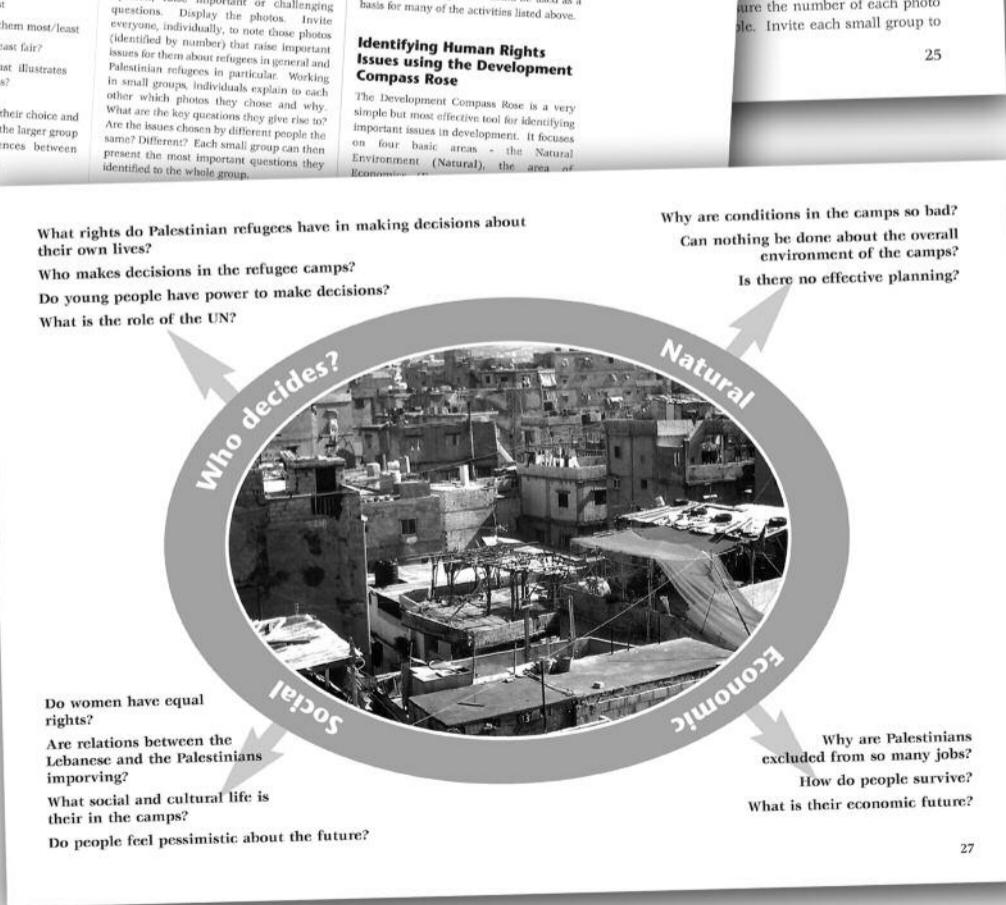
Once the group is familiar with the pictures and their content, it is easier to proceed to identifying and discussing the issues they raise. The activities below will help assist this process. Choose one or two activities that suit you or your group.



Mohammad Abed Al Salam was married from Arabia Hussien Al Hajj Hassan



In 1984 Abdallah got married to Iman and they had 3 children "Rasha, Mohammad and Yousef. This family lives in Chatila Camp. Their house is rented and consists of two rooms, a kitchen and a bathroom - The kitchen is shown in photo no 23 where Iman - the wife is preparing coffee for guests "us". Currently, Abdallah is works selling second hand shoes inside Chatilla Camp - he sells the shoes in one corner known as "Souk".



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