



UNRWA

Camp Profile

Reports on the West Bank Wall/Barrier

JANUARY 2004

Profile of Shufat Refugee Camp



Shufat camp is located on the northern outskirts of East Jerusalem, and inhabited by 10,290 refugees (2,058 families). Out of these, 915 receive emergency assistance. Population density is high, as the cost of living in the camp is lower than in other East Jerusalem neighbourhoods. At the same time, so far Shufat residents have been entitled to hold Jerusalem IDs.

Construction of the separation wall will separate Shufat from downtown Jerusalem, therefore strongly impacting residents' access to education and health care services in town. Furthermore, access to services located inside Shufat will be made difficult to some residing outside the camp. This will be the case, for instance, of the community and rehabilitation centre, whose patients come from areas that will be 'inside' the wall in 20% of the cases.

It is reported that some common services enjoyed by Jerusalem residents may start being denied to Shufat camp dwellers. For instance, for the past two months the Israeli telephone company has been refusing to carry out maintenance services to camp households. It is feared that such trend will further deteriorate once the wall is built, that ambulances and other service providers will refuse to serve the area, on alleged security grounds. Given these fears, many camp residents may wish to move out of the camp and into other East Jerusalem neighbourhoods. However financial constraints and accommodation shortages make this a feasible solution for only a small minority.

The UNRWA girls' school in Shufat enjoys a very good reputation and is well used by the local refugee population, it currently has 1,480 students. They mainly reside in the camp and so currently only 13 girls will be affected by construction of the wall when making their way to school. However, around 90 girls graduate every year from the school on reaching the 10th grade, 80 of whom undertake secondary education in downtown Jerusalem. They will have their routes to school impeded by the wall.

Shufat Elementary and Preparatory Boys' school is attended by about half the number of students as attend the girls school, due to parental willingness to send boys to study outside of the camp. The presence of seven private schools close to the camp makes this a very common trend. Also sending children to Jerusalem schools fulfills one of the conditions required to satisfy the 'Centre of Life' policy, and therefore be entitled to keep ones' Jerusalem ID. A strong trend of boys returning to the camp school is envisaged once the wall is built, with great pressure on UNRWA facilities and educational arrangements.