UNRWA and Palestinian Refugees
From Relief and Works to Human Development
Edited by Sari Hanafi, Leila Hilal, Lex Takkenberg
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Exploring the evolution of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), this book fills a lacuna in literature on the agency. UNRWA and Palestinian Refugees employs recent fieldwork in order to analyse challenges in programmes and service delivery, protection, camp governance, community participation, and camp improvement and reconstruction. The chapters examine the way UNRWA is adapting to a changing social, political and economic context, mostly within urban settings – a paradigmatic shift from understanding the Agency’s role as simply a provider of relief and services to one comprehensively supporting the human development of Palestinian refugees.

Examining the refugee debate using new disciplines and research frameworks, this collection aims to emphasise the centrality of the Palestinian refugee issue for Middle East peace-making and to contribute a better understanding of a unique agency. This book will be a useful aid for students and researchers with an interest in Middle East Studies, Politics, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

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Author Biography
Sari Hanafi is Professor of Sociology at the American University of Beirut and editor of Idafat: the Arab Journal of Sociology (Arabic). He is a member of the Executive Bureau of the International Association of Sociology and the Arab Council of Social Science. He is the author of numerous journal articles and book chapters on the political and economic sociology of the Palestinian diaspora and refugees; sociology of migration; politics of scientific research; and transitional justice. Leila Hilal is Director of the Middle East Task Force at the New America Foundation. She focuses on Syria, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and issues related to U.S. foreign policy, community-based change, constitution-making, and transitional justice in the broader Middle East and North Africa. Prior to joining New America Hilal served as Senior Policy Adviser to the Commissioner-General of the Palestinian refugee agency (UNRWA) and as a legal adviser to Palestinian negotiators from 2002-2008. Lex Takkenberg has worked in various field and headquarters positions with UNRWA since 1989, and is currently based in Amman where he occupies the post of Chief, Ethics Office at UNRWA Headquarters. Before joining UNRWA, he was the Legal Officer of the Dutch Refugee Council.

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