Mrs. Woodward cites visiting housekeepers as Works Progress project for women.

Mrs. Ellen S. Woodward, Assistant Works Progress Administrator, today pointed to the work of a corps of visiting housekeepers organized under emergency homemaking projects in 43 States as one of the kinds of projects that will be undertaken for women under the Works Progress Administration.

The project has been eminently successful under the Women's Section of the FERA's Works Division and, with variations in accordance with the new Works Program, will be continued for needy women from the relief rolls in a number of States. It typifies the special attention that has been given to developing work projects suitable to the capacities of women and of value to communities.

Emergency homemaking projects have provided the special services needed in emergencies such as sickness or where the family has needed help to make the most of its relief allotment.

In the selection and preparation of food, care of the home and its furnishings, making and remodeling garments, laundering and cleaning, management of the household, monetary budgeting, routine care of children and the sick, approximately 6,000 of these visiting housekeepers and assistants, themselves taken from relief rolls have sympathetically aided thousands of women on relief throughout the country.

"It is obvious that the duty of aiding family heads in spending their funds to maintain, regain, or establish a satisfactory home life is of immeasurable value not only to the relief families
but to communities as a whole," Mrs Woodward said.

Assignments to families are made on recommendations of social service workers. The housekeeper then visits the homes and proceeds to do the type of work most needed. If the mother is ill, the housekeeper takes her place temporarily, caring for the children and doing the housework. Sometimes this help makes it possible for the mother to be cared for in the home, thus reducing hospitalization costs. If the case is one in which the mother needs instruction and encouragement, the housekeeper gives this kind of service. She strives to demonstrate orderliness and efficiency of home routine, giving advice as to inexpensive but healthful foods, care of clothing and household furnishings. Setting an example of how a home should be managed, she encourages the continuance of this systemized direction after her departure.

There is probably no phase of women's work which has struck deeper into the roots of human needs than the work of the visiting housekeeper, according to Mrs. Woodward.

"The visiting housekeepers themselves are taken from the relief rolls and can understand and appreciate the problems to be met in homes where resources are meager in the extreme," she declared. "They have gone into homes where conditions of dirt and disorder were almost unbelievable and without any expenditure of money have brought about a remarkable transformation."

Emergency homemaking projects, as they are set up in different places, naturally differ in organization and scope, depending upon the special needs of the families, local conditions, and available workers. They fall into two general types, manual and educational.

The manual project employs women to go into homes where there is illness or other emergency and actually do the housework and assist in the care of the patient. The educational project is designed to teach better housekeeping methods and to encourage those families on relief who need help to work toward a better home life. The teaching is carried on by means of discussions and demonstrations, either in the individual homes or in group meetings. In some projects the same worker carries on both functions.
While the name "visiting housekeeper" is often used to designate both the manual and non-manual worker, the former in some States is given the title which distinguishes her from the trained visiting housekeeper, such as "housekeeping aide," "home service worker," "home helper" or "mother's helper."

Careful consideration is given to the selection of workers on these emergency homemaking projects. A worker in the home of another person, even though she performs only routine household tasks, comes into close contact with members of the family. To be successful in her relationships with them she must possess tact, a pleasing personality and good judgment. She must, of course, be a good housekeeper.

Workers who serve as visiting housekeepers to teach and direct other women must be further qualified. They are selected on the basis of training in home economics, a knowledge of practical nursing, or because they are outstanding housekeepers who have managed their own homes satisfactorily on a relief budget, are intelligent and alert and responsive to the special instruction given them before they go into homes.

Competent supervision is given these emergency homemaking projects. In general, the State emergency relief administration home economist or a home economics specialist loaned by some other government agency acts as technical consultant for the work. Where possible, a supervisor who is trained in home economics and thoroughly familiar with the practical side of homemaking is directly in charge of each project.

The supervisor, who must have or must acquire a sympathetic understanding of the special problems of the low income group, is responsible for giving the workers adequate training before they are assigned to any duties. Classes are held with home economic specialists arranging courses in their particular fields. Where possible, instruction in home nursing, personal hygiene and sanitation is given by a qualified registered nurse. The housekeeping aides are given a brief preliminary course of instruction in order to develop techniques and common standards of work.
No. 4—-35

Reports from California state that the visiting housekeepers' project "has more than justified itself by filling a real need in the community." It was pointed out that while most of the housekeepers were generally placed in homes where there had been maternity cases, others were also advantageously placed. One was put in a home where a heart patient had been ordered "bed rest." One was with a blind woman whose sister is a chronic invalid; another was sent to a home where the mother and three children were suffering from poison ivy. One was placed in a home where there was a tuberculosis case and others sent to places where there was acute illness.

In many instances the housekeepers have not only cleaned the homes well but have gathered clothing and materials to be used in made-over garments or have even returned after service has been discontinued to lend a helping hand on their own time. Some have taken upon themselves to call upon real estate agents and owners to see if they would clean up some of the homes by having painting and repair work done. They are guided by the desire to have these families enjoy clean and comfortable homes where all of the luxuries have been denied. It is a project where one helps the other, physically, morally and mentally, at a time when needs are greatest and funds are lacking.

As an example of the type of visiting housekeeper employed on those emergency projects, the history of Mrs. T— in an Iowa county may be cited. Born in a farming family in 1896, Mrs. T— had to begin work when a girl of 16, as a helper in the home of a neighboring farmer. Married in 1915, she and her husband farmed for three years. When he left for the world war front, she moved to town to take care of an aged couple. After her husband's return, they lived in a small town for two years. Here Mrs. T— was active in Parent-Teachers Association circles, visiting homes, helping families, planning budgets and making constructive suggestions for home betterment. Since 1930, she has been forced to make her own living at any sort of housekeeping job she could find, in order to take care of her four children. This has meant mostly day work, such as house-cleaning, washing, ironing and the like.
For the past three months, as part of her job, she has been visiting the home of a relief family where the mother, who has had seven operations and is slightly psychopathic, was unable to manage her household.

Mrs. T--'s children are now in high school and she hopes she will be able to see them graduated. The relief supervisor reports that she has an attractive personality and has been very successful in her visiting housekeeper work.

From the Massachusetts supervisor a report was received that "the permanent good these projects have accomplished is little short of amazing and the work has been of absorbing interest." The report, in part, is as follows:

"For the most part we have gone where there are huge families and where there is illness, either of the over-worked mother or one of the children. Many of these homes were in a well-nigh unbelievable condition of dirt and squalor. All the surroundings of these homes were filthy, alleys strewn with tin cans, rubbish and garbage. And the swarming children, unkempt and uncared for, had not even the foggiest concept of personal cleanliness or obedience. The splendid part of this picture, however, is that not one of the housekeepers fails. They have worked like Trojans and they are grateful for the work which they have done well.

"In one family where there are nine children, all have been cared for and are registering normal weight for the first time in their lives. Yet they are eating nothing different, for they are fed on the commissary rations. The housekeeper is a fine cook and understands the value of variety in a menu. Many of the mothers did not know how to prepare a decent meal, nor sew or darn a stocking. All these lives we have contacted are being reconstructed in terms of decency, friendliness and encouragement."

From Missouri brief pictures of the types of families helped by the visiting housekeepers are contained in the following supervisor's report.

"Seven in family living in one room. Husband is blind and helpless. Daughter, 18, sole wage earner. Children all undernourished. Mother with young baby striving to keep family together and children in school.

"Six in family. Children are strong and cooperative. Family is thrifty. Everything spotless in home. Mother is intelligent and ambitious. She works away from home a great deal of the time. Father unable to work for a year because of leg injury. Family is helped along with what they get from relief work."
"Two in family, aged couple, very appreciative of any support given them. Until lately supported by daughter, but she, having undergone an operation, is unable to look after them at present. Home clean but very poorly furnished. The old man is sick most of the time. They have so much pride they would starve if we didn't look after them."

In the majority of the States the visiting housekeepers are asked to keep a diary. The following entries are taken from one working in a Montana county.

"Friday--Worked all day at the home of a sick case assigned to me. Cared for the sick lady, washed and fed the three children and sent them to school. The woman is an employee of the Mattress Factory and was quite ill from sinus trouble and a general breakdown. I cheered her up the best I could and completed the day's work after the children came home from school.

"Monday--During my home visits I came across a lady who was ill, so I stayed there all day and helped with the work. Cleaned the house good, cooked two meals and helped the four children go to school. Cooked the evening meal and washed the dishes for the lady.

Another diary contains the following entry:

"Helped the mother make a pair of trousers for her little boy. They turned out satisfactorily and cost practically nothing. Gave her a copy of the government bulletin obtained from the supervisor on 'Infant Care and Feeding'.

"Called at a number of homes where there was illness in the family. I cheered them up and helped with the heavy work. Gave one woman an alcohol rub to ease her back."

In Tulsa County, Oklahoma, there is an outstanding example of a visiting housekeeper project. There are 20 visiting housekeepers in the county. They have taught mothers how to spend their relief funds to advantage, how to plan wholesome meals and to prepare simple, nourishing dishes. They have ingeniously helped them make their homes more comfortable. For example, they taught many low-income homemakers how to provide privacy in a one-room house by screens made from wrapping paper or burlap and how to make furniture from barrels and fruit crates."
An outgrowth of the visiting housekeepers' work in the homes are clubs for women on relief. The women meet regularly for sewing, instruction in homemaking and recreation. A fine cooperative spirit has developed. The women work for each other as well as for themselves and often help those unable to get to the relief center.

A supervisor's report concerning one of the groups in Oklahoma states:

"On Friday, a special hat demonstration was given by the housekeeper's aide and 15 hats were blocked, reshaped and trimmed. Thirty women registered at this demonstration. At 4 o'clock our "Home Improvement" club met in regular session with 34 present. A special demonstration was given on "Glorified Burlap." Ten different Christmas gifts were exhibited at this meeting, all made from scraps of prints, cardboard boxes, burlap, orange crates, cigar boxes and tin cans."

A letter written recently to the supervisor from one of the women members of this club indicates, in a measure, the value of such projects to these women.

"I know you will be surprised to hear from me. I am a member of the Home Improvement Club. Mrs. O. W. is our supervisor. She can't be beat. I did not know what this club was all about until I happened by recently when they were having a meeting. I went in and fell in love with the club as soon as I saw what it meant to me. I've learned so many things, like how to make things from sacks, and inexpensive toys for children.

"Next comes how to garden. I lived all my life on a farm until two years ago. Always had a fine garden on the farm but never had a garden in town until recently. However, they are both worked just alike. My garden is so small here I didn't know how to plan to have enough ground to put in all I wanted. In going to the club I learned just what I wanted to know. Also, what I wanted to know about the irrigation, and through the club we are getting the water for our gardens at the minimum rate, of which we are very proud.

"I had almost forgot we have got some good receipts through the club. Different kinds of soap receipts, hominy and good meat receipts. The last demonstration on toilet soap was good and the sample bar we got was fine.

"You should see the pretty rugs some of the women made. I don't see how we could get along without our club. I don't get to attend the working days like I should. I enjoy every meeting. There is a meaning in the meeting. I most certainly enjoy the singing and devotional. Mrs. A-- has charge of the devotional at present. The women are all one big family. When we get to the club we help one another."
"Mrs. G--, this has been on my mind all through the letter. Now I'm going to tell you. Our daughter 17 years old in Junior High School had to quit on account of clothes and money to pay her typing bills. She was out for over three weeks. She started back to school this morning, I am glad to say, and I am very thankful today our daughter is in school and has enough clothes to go on to school and also has a job waiting for her after school hours. If it hadn't been for our club she couldn't have started back to school. I always will love the club members and the name of the club for what they have done for me and mine.

"I hope you don't get tired of this letter before you get it read. I hope to meet you some day. I hope you come to A-- some day and pay us a visit. (Signed) A Friend, Mrs. B-- H--"

A preliminary summary of the emergency homemaking projects State by State gives a partial picture of the scope of these activities. At the time the summary was made five States had either not reported or had not conducted such projects. They are Connecticut, Rhode Island, Delaware, New Mexico, and Oregon.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Projects</th>
<th>Employing Workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Eight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Ninety-two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Twenty-eight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>Sixteen</td>
<td>Seven hundred and twenty-eight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>Nine</td>
<td>Three hundred and fifty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>Seventy-five</td>
<td>Two hundred and sixty-one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>Twenty-three</td>
<td>Twenty-three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Sixty-two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>One hundred and three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>Twenty</td>
<td>Sixty-six</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>Ten</td>
<td>Eighteen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>Twenty-two</td>
<td>Six hundred and sixty-four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Fifty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maine</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Twelve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Seven</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Massachusetts --- One project, employing 47 workers.
Michigan --- Two projects, employing 24 workers.
Minnesota --- 26 projects, employing 313 workers.
Mississippi --- Three projects, employing 454 workers.
Missouri --- 43 projects, employing 143 workers.
Montana --- Three projects, employing 24 workers.
Nebraska --- 11 projects, employing 11 workers.
Nevada --- One project, employing seven workers.
New Hampshire --- 14 projects, employing 27 workers.
New Jersey --- 14 projects, employing 106 workers.
New York --- One project, employing 498 workers.
North Carolina --- 29 projects, employing 247 workers.
North Dakota --- Two projects, employing 31 workers.
Ohio --- 41 projects, employing 348 workers.
Oklahoma --- Eight projects, employing 85 workers.
Pennsylvania --- 13 projects, employing 21 workers.
South Carolina --- Three projects, employing 251 workers.
South Dakota --- 35 projects, employing 117 workers.
Tennessee --- One project, employing seven workers.
Texas --- Three projects, employing 88 workers.
Uta --- 14 projects, employing 88 workers.
Vermont --- One project, employing 100 workers.
Virginia --- 32 projects, employing 139 workers.
Washington --- Three projects, employing 4 workers.
West Virginia --- Three projects, employing 16 workers.
Wisconsin --- Seven projects, employing 28 workers.
Wyoming --- One project, employing 74 workers.

(Note: These figures are preliminary.)