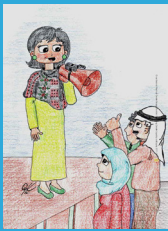


IN FOCUS



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LT. COLONEL Wafa MUAMMAR
Head of the Police Family Protection Unit



Mainstreaming gender in the Palestinian government's policies and plans

Based on the principle of men and women benefiting more equally from national public policies, domestic resources and international aid, UN Women engages with national governments, women's organizations and networks, and gender advocates to support gender-responsive national planning and budgeting processes, and develop capacities, systems and resources to plan, budget and monitor the functions of public institutions.

Over the years, UN Women has consistently supported the efforts of the Palestinian Government to implement its national commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment. The recent adoption of the Cross-Sectoral National Gender Strategy 2014-2016 and the adoption of the National Development Plan 2014-2016, offer opportunities for UN Women to intensify its efforts and expand partnerships to support ministries' capacities for the implementation of gender equality commitments contained in these strategies and plans.

To guarantee the effective implementation of gender equality commitments, UN Women also advocates for greater accountability of partners, both national and international, by focusing on the development of mechanisms to track and report on the use of aid and domestic resources allocated to gender equality and women's empowerment. To this end, UN Women is working with the Palestinian Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development to develop its aid tracking tool (DARP) and create a gender marker to enable aid stakeholders to allocate and track funds from a gender perspective, which will ultimately contribute to increasing financial resources for gender equality.

The Palestinian Cabinet adopts the Cross-Sectoral National Gender Strategy 2014-2016

With the endorsement by the Palestinian Cabinet of the Cross-Sectoral National Gender Strategy 2014-2016 on 1st April 2014, the Palestinian Government has taken another step forward in the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of Palestinian women. The Strategy focuses on tackling gender-based discrimination at all levels and increasing opportunities for Palestinian women's participation in public life, with specific priority interventions to reduce gender gaps in employment, decision-making and access to services. Developed in the context of the national planning process and with a view to informing the development of the National Development Plan 2014-2016, the Strategy provides a clear roadmap for government institutions to ensure integration and consistency in their interventions to achieve gender equality and the fulfillment of women's rights.

The Strategy, developed by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, with support from UN Women, builds on the achievements and lessons learned in the implementation of the previous Cross-Sectoral National Gender Strategy adopted in 2011, a Situation Analysis carried out by Birzeit University (which will be published shortly), as well as extensive consultations with partners and stakeholders from private and public sectors and civil society.

UN Women's support to the Palestinian national planning process

UN Women has actively engaged in Palestine in the development of gender-responsive 2014-2016 national strategies and plans. In cooperation with the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA), UN Women has supported capacity development in key line ministries on gender responsive planning and budgeting, with specific trainings for planning and budgeting teams ahead of the most recent planning cycle. In addition to the support provided to MoWA in the review of the Cross-Sectoral Strategy 2011-2013 and the development of the 2014-2016 Cross-Sectoral National Strategy, UN Women provided technical support at the request of the Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development (MoPAD) to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment policies and priority interventions are reflected in sectoral strategies as well as in the National Development Plan 2014-2016 itself. The National Development Plan 2014-2016 clearly reflects this partnership and commitment; gender mainstreaming is one of the five governing principles of the three year Palestinian National Development Plan 2014-2016 with 2 specific strategic objectives on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

UN Women/MoWA Strategic Partnership

Since its establishment in 2003, the Ministry of Women's Affairs has been UN Women's strategic partner in working to promote and realize gender equality and the empowerment of women within the Palestinian context. Through the Ministry of Women's Affairs, UN Women also cooperates with machineries for the advancement of women, namely gender units and national committees established to address gender equality and women's empowerment issues. In the past few years, the partnership between UN Women and the Ministry has expanded considerably with the development of the first-ever Cross-Sectoral National Gender Strategy in 2011. The partnership has continued to expand through the most recent national development planning cycle, as reflected in the concrete integration of gender priorities in sectoral plans and budgets.

What's next? Translating commitments into action

What's Gender Responsive Budgeting?

Gender-responsive budgeting is a government planning, programming and budgeting process that contributes to the advancement of gender equality and the fulfillment of women's rights. In concrete terms, it is the identification of needed interventions to address gender gaps in sector and local government policies, plans and budgets, and the analysis of the gender-differentiated impact of revenue-raising policies and the allocation of domestic resources and Official Development Assistance. Since 2009, the Palestinian Government has officially engaged in gender-responsive planning and budgeting, with a Cabinet decision on mainstreaming gender in budgetary processes. In 2013, a GRB National Committee was established as per the cabinet resolution. UN Women supports the Palestinian Government's efforts to translate this commitment into action, through providing technical expertise, building capacities and strengthening monitoring mechanisms.

Working for increased accountability of gender equality commitments

As the Palestinian Government stands ready to implement the National Development Plan 2014-2016, UN Women is expanding its support to ministries in strengthening their monitoring and evaluation capacities from a gender perspective. Building on the efforts during the planning period in integrating gender equality in the Palestinian National Development Plan, UN Women plans to implement training for line ministries on Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) to assist MoPAD as well as the M&E teams in their respective ministries, in monitoring progress in the implementation of gender commitments enshrined in the National Development Plan 2014-2016.

Partnering to institutionalize gender-responsive budgeting

Under its Financing for Gender Equality programme, funded by the European Union, UN Women is now engaging with the Ministry of Finance, in close cooperation with the Ministry of Women's Affairs, to support the implementation of Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) requirements. The programme supports the institutionalization of the partnership between the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Ministry of Finance. A draft Memorandum of Understanding, currently under finalization, will govern the relations between both ministries in relation to GRB, with clear roles and responsibilities assigned in this regard. UN Women is also seconding a GRB expert to support Palestinian ministries and working with the Ministry of Finance on amending the budget preparation system in line with GRB requirements, in addition to training budget teams in line ministries to build their capacities on GRB.

UN Women Special Representative in Palestine discusses gender implications of the Gaza context



From 16 to 17 April 2014, UN Women's Special Representative in Palestine met with UN Women's strategic partners in the Gaza Strip to discuss the latest developments in the Gaza Strip. UN Women's partners highlighted the deteriorating humanitarian situation, as well as recent political developments in Gaza and their current and potential gender-differentiated impact on women and girls. A Civil Society Advisory Group meeting was also held on 17 April with the participation of Ms. Nisreen Alami, Humanitarian Gender Advisor, to introduce her and her work to the group. During the meeting, the group discussed gender considerations in humanitarian assistance, as well as the State of Palestine's ratification of CEDAW and the post-2015 development agenda.

UN Women participates in the first Girls in ICT Day organized in the Gaza Strip



At the invitation of the University College of Applied Sciences (UCAS), UN Women participated in the first celebration of the Girls in ICT Day organized in Gaza on 24 April 2014. UN Women was invited to present its approach as the UN lead agency on gender equality and women's empowerment to discuss innovative approaches for women's economic empowerment. For UN Women, the ICT sector carries a huge potential for women and girls' employment. It is part of growing industries around the world in which women can play an important role and, in the Palestinian context, it represents

a trans-border employment sector that can provide opportunities beyond movement restrictions.

Mapping of UN work on gender in the Arab States region

How is gender equality and women's empowerment addressed by UN agencies in the Arab State region?

The changes brought about by the Arab Spring over the last two years have offered opportunities for advancing women's rights and women's empowerment, as well as opposing forces of resistance and backlash. In an attempt to assess the UN's contribution to progressive change and its commitment to principles of equality and rights in this context, UN Women, in cooperation with UNFPA, undertook a comprehensive mapping exercise of the UN's work on gender issues, across 16 UN Agencies and 16 Arab States. The mapping report, which was released in April, shows that although commitment to gender issues is clearly reflected in policies, strategies, research and guidelines at the global and regional level, this is not adequately reflected in the rest of the work of the organization. Work on gender equality tends to be conducted in parallel to other work and processes, without being properly integrated. For example, when it comes to addressing gender equality and women's empowerment in the Arab region, the range of development areas addressed remains narrow: health interventions focus on women's reproductive health; economic empowerment is restricted to income generation, small scale enterprises and micro-finance; and interventions to tackle VAWG focus on women and girls as victims rather than dealing with men as perpetrators. The main recommendation that emerged from the mapping exercise calls for change through initiating dialogue on UN Women's catalytic role in the region as well as redefining and improving communication related to critical concepts and approaches in the region.

ANNOUNCEMENT

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UN Women discusses women's access to justice with partners and stakeholders



Ahead of the launch of the Access Denied research, led by Professor Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian, UN Women convened partner institutions and organizations in the social protection, security and justice sectors to a workshop on 30 April to discuss the main findings of the research and elaborate some concrete recommendations. The research examines the sociopolitical and psychological factors that impact the access of Palestinian women to justice in the West Bank. General findings demonstrate that women's access to justice continues to be hindered by a system of spatial, procedural and behavioral challenges. The debate and discussions initiated during the workshop will support the finalization of the recommendations of the research report before its official launch and publication.

Public Prosecution takes initial steps in the development of SOPs

The Public Prosecution has taken initial steps in the development of its Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), with the development of the SOP outline. The SOPs, developed with the support of UN Women under the Access to Justice programme funded by DFID, will equip the Public Prosecutors with the procedures, mechanisms and tools to adequately address and handle cases of violence against women and girls. The development of the SOPs is part of UN Women's work to institutionalize a right-based and gender sensitive approach in responding and handling cases of violence against women and girls.

A consultant comes on board to start the development of the UN Gender Scorecard

Holding the UN system accountable for its gender equality commitments demands the use of planning and reporting tools to assess the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming (General Assembly resolution 67/226). One of these tools is the Gender Scorecard. Applied in more than 30 countries, the Gender Scorecard tracks the contribution of UN common country programming to gender equality and stimulates a constructive dialogue to identify areas where minimum standards are not met in order to collectively identify remedial actions and share good practices. UN Women, mandated by the UNCT to lead the process of development of the Gender Scorecard in relation to the first-ever Palestine UNDAF, has finalized the recruitment of a consultant who will be on board in June.

The caucus for Palestinian women's political participation prepares its next course of action

Members of the Caucus met with UN Women in April 2014 to discuss the finalization of the group's terms of reference and action plan. The Caucus, which has already engaged in the review of Palestinian political parties' by-laws, will be expanding its work in the up-coming months to offer trainings on women's rights and relevant laws for members of political parties, as well as engage more directly with Palestinian women and men on women's rights and women's role in the political sphere. Established by the General Union of Palestinian Women, under the EU and UN Women funded Spring Forward for Women Programme, the Caucus, the first of its kind, acts as a Palestinian advocacy and lobbying body for women's access to decision-making spheres. It directly engages political parties, unions, ministries, and women and youth advocates.

The database on women members of local councils to feed the MoLG database on the local governance sector

The Ministry of Local Government has requested to use the database on women members of local councils to feed its up-coming database on members in the local governance sector. The database was developed by the Women's Affairs Technical Committee under the Spring Forward programme, funded by the European Union in cooperation with UN Women, and contains the detailed profiles of the 720 women members of local councils. Following the finalization of the database in early April 2014, a detailed needs assessment report was generated, which will help to better orient support provided to women members of local councils.

The Women-Run School Canteens programme welcomes 9 new women centres and 45 new schools



Entering the second year of Phase III of the Women-Run School Canteens programme, UN Women, with Ma'an Development Centre and the Ministry of Education, have selected 9 new women centres and 45 schools that will enroll in the programme in May. The new women centres will join another 18 women centres being supported through the programme towards financial independence. In the course of the 5 years of the implementation of the programme, funded by the Government of Norway, 32 women centres have reached financial sustainability and 493 women provided with a secure monthly income to support their livelihoods and those of their family.

A design competition to support innovation in craft design and production



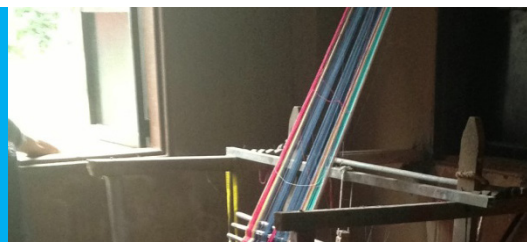
Al Mahatta Gallery has invited talented Palestinians to an open design contest. The contest, which is open until 15 May 2014, is organized under the Spring Forward Programme, funded by the European Union in cooperation with UN Women. The contest intends to promote innovation in craft design and production, while supporting sustainable income generation for women centres through improving the marketability and value of the handicrafts

produced. The 40 finalists will receive an award prize and the opportunity to have their design prototypes produced by UN Women-supported women centres. Find more information on Al Mahatta's Facebook page [here](#).

The Ministry of Local Government and UN Women partner under the Spring Forward Programme

Based on discussions held in April, the Spring Forward for Women Programme will support the ministry in the development of its strategic plan (2015-2017) to ensure that the development process, planned to start in July 2014, integrates gender equality considerations.

GET TO KNOW ...



Well-known for the quality and innovation of its handicrafts, [Al-Majdal Sabaya Centre](#) is located in the Beit Lahia area, north of the Gaza Strip. Alongside the direct services it offers to women, the Centre has also engaged in reviving and preserving cultural heritage. We urge you to take a tour of the Al-Majdal Centre and have a look at the innovative products and accessories manufactured by the women of the Centre. Worth noting, the Centre is currently working with professional designers specialized in computerized embroidery and sewing, to upgrade the Centre's design section, with prospects for new innovative products in the near future.

Contact Al-Majdal Sabaya Centre at [082475210](tel:082475210) or at csh_pal@hotmail.com.



Cross-cutting report on Women, Peace and Security

UN Security Council, April 2014

The report covers the period of January to December 2013 and analyses statistical information on women, peace and security in country-specific decisions of the Security Council. Furthermore, it examines five sanctions regimes as well as the Council-related work of UN Women and the Office of the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict. It includes reviews of gender expertise in UN missions and the implementation of the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse by UN personnel. Finally, it discusses Council dynamics and outlines possible options to improve the Council's effectiveness in this area.

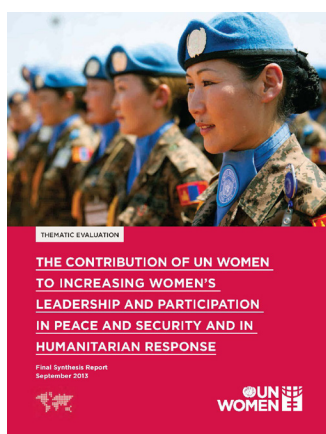
The overarching observation of this study is that the pushback trend at the thematic level continues. In 2013 there were difficult and protracted negotiations over whether the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict could engage non-state actors; attempts to narrow the reporting scope on sexual violence to only armed conflict and post-conflict situations; and differences over references to the ICC. However, these ongoing disagreements did not negatively impact the integrity of the women, peace and security normative framework as demonstrated by the adoption of resolutions 2106 and 2122. These were the first resolutions to be adopted on this agenda since 2010 and substantively codified many practical and concrete ways that women, peace and security agenda can continue to be implemented.

The past year also saw advancements in including women, peace and security elements in other thematic resolutions such dealing with small arms (S/RES/2117), counter-terrorism (S/RES/2129) and peacekeeping (S/RES/2086). In all three cases, there were extensive negotiations over how specific the linkages should be made and while some language could not be agreed upon, several important references were retained.

Read the report [here](#).

The Contribution of UN Women to Increasing Women's Leadership and Participation in Peace and Security and in Humanitarian Response

UN Women, September 2013



UN Security Council resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions (1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106, 2122) call for the urgent need to address women's participation in peace processes and peacebuilding as well as the need to protect them from violations of their rights during and after conflicts. UN Women supports the implementation of these resolutions and prioritizes the

area of increasing women's leadership in peace and security and humanitarian response in its Strategic Plan specifically under Goal 4 and through the intellectual leadership of the UN Women Peace and Security section that works hand in hand with the programmatic and coordination divisions.

The thematic evaluation, which covered the period 2008-2012, assesses what was the contribution of UN Women and its predecessor entities in this area.

Read the report [here](#).

Up-coming Publications

Building Ties: Towards Integrated Strategies and Policies for Empowering Palestinian Women

Commissioned in 2013 by UN Women, together with the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development, and conducted by the Institute of Women Studies to inform the development of the Cross-Sectoral National Gender Strategy 2014-2016 and the new National Development Plan, the study is an evidence-based policy brief on selected thematic areas identifying key trends, challenges, policy priorities, and a range of strategic opportunities. Thematic areas include health and population, education, social services, labor and employment, access to and control over assets, access to justice, political participation, access to the public sphere, and violence against women.

The summary report of the comprehensive study will be released end of May, while the full publication of the report will be available within the next few months.

INTERVIEW WITH LT. COLONEL WAFA MUAMMAR



LT. COLONEL WAFA MUAMMAR, the Head of the Family Protection Unit (FPU) of the Palestinian Civil Police, and highest ranking female officer in the Police, talked with us about the FPU and her experience as a female officer in the Palestinian Civil Police.

“Women must show solidarity with each other and support each other in order to achieve what we pursue, be it access to justice or realizing our aim to build state institutions”

The FPU has been specifically established to handle cases of violence within the family, including violence against women. However, studies have shown that women continue to distrust security and justice institutions, hindering women’s access to justice. How does the FPU, which deals mainly with women and children, ensure that it overcomes this lack of confidence and promotes women’s access to justice?

The Police force is somehow a reflection of the society, and traditionally, the society has tended to value women who endured abuses for the sake of keeping the family together. This mentality endured in the police and created a confidence issue, which was one of the reasons for the establishment of the FPU. With the FPU, the police established a specialized team of male and female police officers who are specifically trained to understand and deal with cases of violence within the family in a professional way, aligned to human rights standards, ensuring the confidentiality of the case and putting the needs and protection of victims at the centre of its actions. The establishment of the FPU has substantially contributed

“Protecting families and ending violence against women is a national cause, which is the concern of all of us”

to increasing trust in Palestinian security services, as evidenced in the number of complaints that are now lodged with the FPU. In 2013, 3,660 complaints were lodged with the FPU in comparison to just 15 in 2011. People now come to report abuses to the FPU. Even civil society organizations that used to tell women not to come to the police are now referring victims and survivors of violence to us. With the adoption of the FPU Strategy and SOPs last year, we have clearly sent another signal of professionalism and I have to say that it has also helped us to better understand and envisage our role in prevention, getting closer to the community and building confidence.

When a woman decides to report abuse and lodge a complaint, she is not only entering in contact with the FPU but comes to contact with all security and justice institutions. How do you ensure that all institutions apply and follow the same standards?

Protecting families and ending violence against women is a national cause, which is the concern of all of us. We have started seeing positive changes. As I said, the FPU is part of the police and as a result, our actions reflect on the police in general. We have integrated a compulsory inception course on gender and women's rights for all new staff who enter the police and we are working to have a specialized course for all units and departments in the police who deal with cases related to women's rights. If you take the public prosecution, we are now working with public prosecutors who have also been trained and know how to deal with these cases. In addition, the Public Prosecution has established shifts, which enables a constant contact, even at night. All of this is conducive to a fair treatment of the case. These have been changes that directly benefited women victims and survivors. But what I hope to see in the next few years is the establishment of independent FPUs, i.e. a place that gathers all service providers under the same roof, making it easier for women who come to us to find all the services in one place. The new UN Women project, in partnership with UNDP, envisages to have 3 pilot independent FPUs. Having such centres is going to be less costly, accelerate the procedures for women and improve efficiency.

On being a woman in the police ...

You joined the police 18 years ago, 2 years after the establishment of the first Palestinian police. At that time it was even less common than today to see women in the police. What did it mean for you when you decided to follow this path? Do you think it is easier today?

I come from a society that heralds the national struggle for independence and Palestinian women have always been involved in this national struggle. My decision to enter the police force stemmed from feeling part of the struggle that led to establishment of the Palestinian National Authority and the establishment of the first Palestinian police force in 1994, ultimately leading to the establishment of a

Palestinian State. I felt that I was continuing this struggle towards building state institutions. I was also lucky to have always been supported by my family and friends. However, it is true that Palestinian society was and is still ruled by certain traditions and norms that are rather patriarchal and the police force is a reflection of these norms and traditions. At the time, resistance came from both the community and the police force itself. In some cases, they viewed women police officers as outcasts, at best and as degenerates, at worst. Today, things are much better for women in the police force. In the FPUs for example, there is a much better representation of female police officers.

Among the 10 FPU branches throughout the West Bank, the most demanding FPUs in the governorates of Ramallah, Nablus and Bethlehem, are headed by women officers.

We are proud to say that among the 10 FPU branches throughout the West Bank, the most demanding FPUs in the governorates of Ramallah, Nablus and Bethlehem, are headed by women officers. This is already a big step forward and proof of how the police force values women officers. Still, women represent only 2.8% of the police force and the police force needs to make more efforts to better integrate women in its ranks.

When you look back at where the police force was and what you have reached, what do you say?

That it has not been an easy ride. It wasn't a path that was paved with silk carpets. It was a path filled with thorns. But this is also exactly what women, who try to access justice, say as well. That is why we as women must show solidarity with each other and help each other in order to achieve what we pursue, be it access to justice or realizing our aim to build state institutions. Women have to sacrifice a lot in order to achieve their wishes and their dreams and my path is characterized by these sacrifices and difficulties. Today, women in the police force are more accepted and even celebrated as leaders and I am proud to be one of those who led the way.