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UN WOMEN GENDER SENSITIVE RESILIENCE CAPACITY INDEX (GS-RCI) REPORT- PALESTINE



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The views and opinions expressed in this document do not necessarily represent the views of the donor.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ABS	Access to Basic Services
AC	Adaptive Capacity
AST	Assets
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CFW	Cash For Work
CSO	Civil Society Organization
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FHH	Female-Headed Household
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GS RCI	Gender Sensitive Resilience Capacity Index
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
IHRL	International Human Rights Law
MHH	Male-Headed Household
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
oPt	Occupied Palestinian Territories
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
PSCCW	Psycho-Social Counselling Centre for Women
SCI	Social Cohesion and Interconnectedness
ToC	Theory of Change
UCA	Unconditional Cash Assistance
UN	United Nations
UN WOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
USD	United States Dollars
WAC	Women's Affairs Centre
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The overall goal of this project funded by the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) was to effectively mitigate, prevent and respond to gender-based violence (GBV) amongst crises affected communities by ensuring their access to economic opportunities and effective multi-sectoral services, protection mechanisms and empowerment support. While this is part of a global programme implemented in Bangladesh, Cameroon, Colombia, Ethiopia, Myanmar and the Occupied Palestine Territories (oPt), the monitoring report details the results achieved in oPt over the 12 months duration of the project (April 2021-March 2022) and under the fourth pillar of the programme (livelihood assistance to women at risk or have experienced GBV). Throughout the project, UN Women worked in the oPt to provide immediate and essential services to women.

Under this CERF programme, UN Women Palestine examined the various results produced by the different interventions provided to women at risk or surviving GBV and how UN Women's approach to strengthening resilience improves not only their overall resilience but also improves their wellbeing and perceptions on gender equality, reduces their tolerance to GBV, increases their decision-making inside their households and improves their livelihoods. The project was implemented in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. UN Women's hypothesis is that protection and livelihoods support to women at risk or exposed to GBV will yield deeper and long-lasting equality outcomes and will have a spill over effect across multiple domains in a woman's life. The objective of this monitoring exercise was to generate evidence on the multiple dimensional impact of UN Women's programmes/assistance on women's livelihoods, wellbeing, tolerance to GBV and decision-making.

The monitoring approach is based on a primary data at the individual level collected at the

start and at the end of the project. Data was collected from a randomized sample of 732 vulnerable women who were tracked throughout programme implementation, using the same survey questionnaire. The sample was drawn by the monitoring team at the time of the baseline survey through a multi-stage sampling technique. Four groups were selected in total: two from the Gaza Strip and two from the West Bank. In each of the locations, UN Women tracked women who received protection assistance and women who received livelihoods assistance. The main data collection tool used under this approach was the Gender Sensitive-Resilience Capacity Index (GS-RCI) tool.

Below are some of the key results:

Overall, the programme results show that women in all groups experienced greater resilience at the end of the programme because of the interventions provided under the programme, however at varying degrees. This is evidenced by the increase in their GS-RCI values¹ from baseline to endline. Overall GS-RCI analysis suggest that women who received livelihoods assistance have experienced greater resilience than women who received protection assistance. The overall value of the GS-RCI increased by 19 per cent for women who received livelihoods assistance while women who received protection assistance only have experienced 6 per cent increase only.

When these results were also analysed by geographic location, result analysis indicate that the project had greatest impact on women from the Gaza Strip. Women from the Gaza Strip who received livelihoods assistance experienced the greatest improvement in resilience than any of the other groups.

Data analysis also suggests that this increase in resilience strengthened women's capacity to cope with adversity, which was witnessed in different

forms for the diverse groups (the multidimensional impact). Firstly, in terms of improving women's capacities to meet their needs and the needs of their family. The project significantly reduced the deployment of negative coping strategies² when women face adverse situations (for example, when they did not have any food or money to buy food). Women who received livelihood assistance in both locations experienced reduction in the deployment of these strategies more than women who received protection assistance only, demonstrating the direct and positive impact on women's livelihoods. When these results were compared geographically, the results were much more significant for women in the Gaza Strip more than women in the West Bank. This finding suggests that such model of assistance has strong correlation between the project's Theory of Change, the improvement in livelihoods outcome, and even more so in the context of the Gaza Strip.

Other forms of strengthened resilience were also noted in women's decision-making and their abilities to influence joint decisions to a large extent. While results analysis revealed that all women covered under the programme experienced an increase in their decision-making inside their households, the greatest increase was noted for women who received livelihoods assistance in the Gaza Strip, especially in relation to economic decisions. The increase stood at 41 per cent; twice as the increase noted for women in the West Bank who received the same type of assistance.

Furthermore, at the end of the programme, all beneficiaries reported an improvement to a large extent in relation to their wellbeing and their perceptions on Gender Equality. However, this improvement was slightly higher for women who received livelihoods assistance in the context of the Gaza Strip and women who received protection

assistance in the context of the West Bank.

The evidence collected in oPt to date using the GS-RCI continues to reveal that women's social cohesion and interconnectedness are a key driver of resilience for them in the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank. This finding suggests that social structures, networks, and tolerance levels in their community as well as their sense of safety and security are especially important components in the design of the programmes aiming at promoting their resilience through protection and/or economic empowerment. Moreover, data analysis in the context of the West Bank noted that women reported challenges accessing protection assistance slightly more than women in the Gaza Strip. Interviewed women identified access to protection services as another critical determinant of strengthening their overall resilience on the shorter term, emphasising the need to address protection elements within the design of similar programmes.

As for UN Women's evidence base with regards to resilience across the various demographic profiles, evidence generated in oPt under this CERF project continues to reveal that there are differences in levels of resilience across demographic profiles and when disaggregated by their communities of origin. While women from the Gaza Strip were found to be less resilient than women from the West Bank, widowed women, female-headed households and women who have four to six children were the least resilient at the start of the programme. UN Women's monitoring efforts will continue to disaggregate resilience results across different groups (community of origin, age, marital status, disability, etc). This evidence base will help UN Women in refining and re-shaping its targeting model.

INTRODUCTION

Project Background and Context

Women and girls in the oPt Palestine continue to experience various forms of violence³ in private and public spheres. Palestinian women have to face the consequences of occupation while struggling for more gender equal power relations and protection within their own society that is governed by traditional societal norms and attitudes. Outdated and discriminatory laws limit survivors' access to gender-responsive services and justice. According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) violence survey issued in November 2019, 59.3 per cent of women in Palestine have experienced some forms of violence by their husband. Of these, 57 per cent reported experiencing psychological violence, 20.5 per cent economic violence,⁴ 18.5 per cent physical, and nine per cent sexual violence.⁵

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased protection concerns. Domestic violence against women and children has increased during the emergency as a result of increased psychological and economic pressures.⁶ In fact, COVID-19 has left many victims of family violence trapped at home with a violent perpetrator at a time of severely curtailed contact with those outside the household. COVID-related measures have curtailed access to and availability of support services for people at risk and survivors of GBV. Significant gaps in response have resulted from the suspension of face-to-face interactions, the paralysis of the judicial system and the reduced access to primary health care centres and shelters. Women with disabilities who survived GBV have been particularly affected by these gaps.

The project aimed at assisting and mobilizing women who are most vulnerable in the oPt through improving their accessibility to multi-sectoral services, protection, and economic support. The project focused on mitigating the impact of the deteriorating humanitarian conditions on women and their families in the oPt through providing immediate and essential services to those who are most vulnerable including internally displaced women, women with disabilities and women survivors of violence. The project focused on solidifying the partnership with humanitarian actors in Palestine to ensure that humanitarian responses are gender focused and address the needs of women and girls equally and equitably.

Project Theory of Change

The project is designed to strengthen women, girls and their communities' resilience to shocks and stressors of conflict, displacement, and other crises. To this end, the proposed theory of change (ToC) is an extension of the comprehensive approach UN Women has adopted in its response by placing women and girls at the centre of the crisis response. The project aims to ensure that women and girls who are subjected or at risk of GBV benefit from provision of and access to quality services and are empowered to increasingly engage in decision making and leadership in GBV response, mitigation, and prevention.

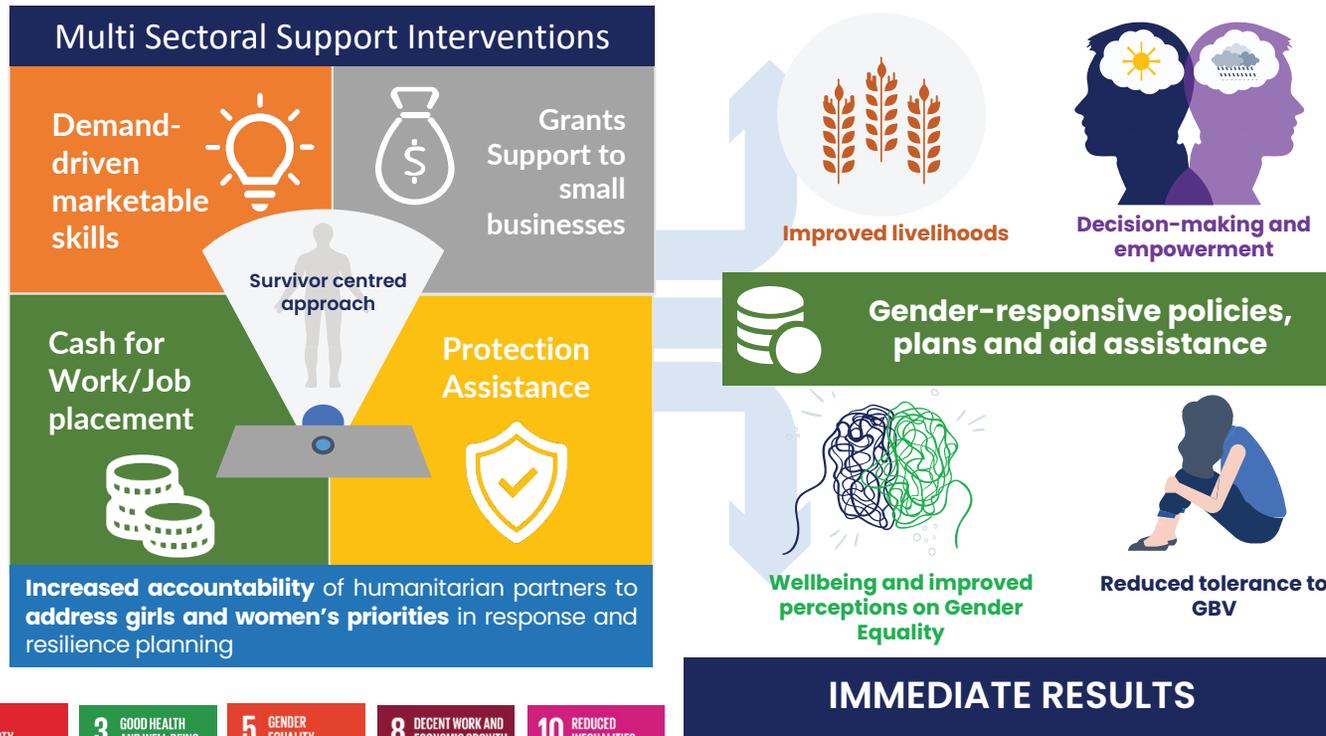
This project is part of a global programme funded by the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). This report comes under the fourth component of the programme (Livelihood intervention).

CERF Theory of Change

Women and girls who are subjected or at risk of GBV benefit from provision of and access to quality services and empowered to increasingly engage in decision making and leadership in GBV response, mitigation, and prevention

CONTEXT

1. Barriers accessing economic livelihood opportunities
2. Barriers accessing survivor centred protection support
3. Deterioration in the protection environment, increased risks of GBV against women and girls
4. Need for continued promotion of accountability to Gender Equality and Women Empowerment amongst humanitarian actors
5. Continued need for evidence and data on gendered impact of crises and displacement on women, girls and other groups



METHODOLOGY

Geographic Coverage/Areas of Programme/Project Implementation

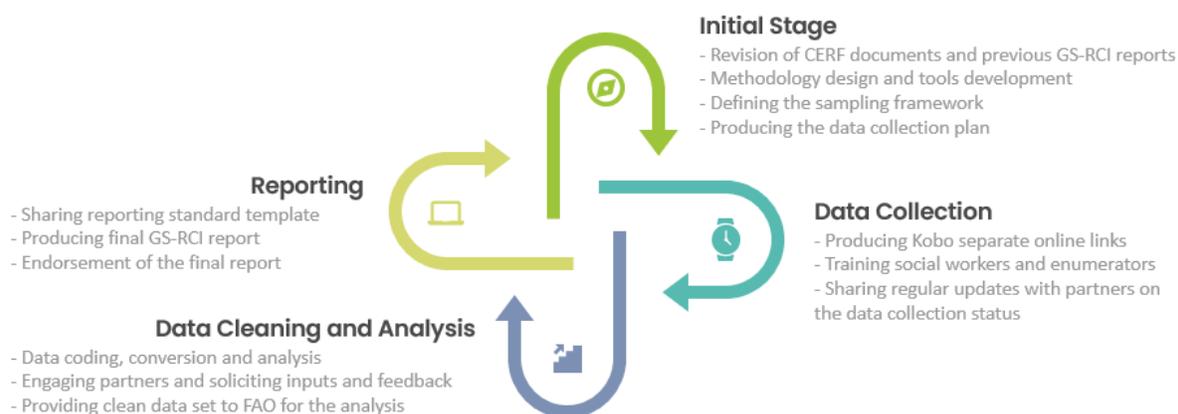
In Palestine, UN Women implemented the programme in two locations: the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. According to humanitarian needs estimates,⁷ the two districts are known to have the most severe needs across the country (1.57 million in Gaza and 883.6 K in the West Bank), 50 per cent of which are females. The COVID-19 outbreak and the unilateral measures taken by the Palestinian Authority (PA) in response to Israel's plans to annex parts of the West Bank have contributed to worsening the already dire humanitarian, economic and political situation in Gaza and impacted the socioeconomic situation in the West Bank as well. The protection space in Palestine remains of great concern where many Palestinians struggle to enjoy a dignified life.⁸ The reporting period continued to be characterised by lack of respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and International Human Rights Law (IHRL), and recurrent escalations of hostilities between Israel and Palestinian armed groups. Most of the impacted populations live in severely undermined living conditions across the country; forecasts by the World Bank suggest that by end of 2021, the local economy will continue to shrink by 8 per cent compared to 2019. This will worsen the living conditions; the proportion of households living under the poverty line in the West Bank will double and will increase by almost 10 per

cent for households in the Gaza Strip, challenging an already challenging situation.

Research Design, data collection tools, and sampling:

The research design deployed a quasi-experimental approach that was used to test the impacts of the livelihoods assistance on vulnerable women subjected or at risk of GBV. Panel data⁹ was used to track changes in the beneficiaries' lives. It comprised of longitudinal data derived from two repeated surveys (baseline and endline) with the same beneficiaries over time. Two groups were considered for this purpose: livelihoods and protection groups, in both locations (the Gaza Strip and the West Bank) where programme is implemented. A cluster sampling technique was applied to randomly select representative samples from both groups.

In commitment to Accountability to Affected Population Principles (AAP), a participatory approach was used in all phases of the programme monitoring. UN Women ensured that implementing partners and beneficiaries were engaged and consulted. Several meetings with UN Women implementing partners' technical staff and social workers were organized during the initiation stage of the project with the aim to strengthen the monitoring aspects of the CERF programme. The trainings also included a practical guidance to the (Do No Harm) principles of the programme



to ensure that programmatic monitoring does not expose any of the beneficiaries to violence, harm, stigma, or marginalization during any of the data collection efforts.

Furthermore, the monitoring plan, tools and detailed work plan were discussed and shared with the implementing partners. Programme monitoring utilised baseline and endline survey questionnaires to cater for relevant data to support the resilience analysis. The tools were designed and contextualised and took into consideration various components and dimensions of the resilience, which include:

Access to essential services, ownership of productive and non-productive assets, social cohesion and inter-community relationships, livelihood-based coping strategies, women’s empowerment and decision-making, overall wellbeing, perceptions on gender equality and tolerance to GBV. The data collection, aligned to the projects’ duration, was conducted twice during programme implementation period. The baseline survey was undertaken at the start of the programme (in November 2021) and towards the end of the programme, an endline was undertaken

(March 2022). Data collection was closely supported by UN Women’s Regional Monitoring and Reporting Specialist. Collective and bilateral meetings, consultations, and interviews with partners’ technical staff members were organized along the process to assess the progress of the data collection and take corrective actions when needed. Data collection and analysis were performed based on the data collection tools identified in the programme monitoring framework.

Sampling

The monitoring approach utilized a sample of beneficiaries that were surveyed at baseline prior to the start of the project. The sample was drawn through a multi-stage sampling technique at the time of the baseline survey. The locations and beneficiaries were purposively sampled and targeted based on project geographic coverage. Sample size has been selected to ensure that the targeted population is representative of the beneficiaries. Sampling frame was applied for beneficiaries of the third and fourth CERF outcomes - beneficiaries who have received protection assistance or livelihood opportunities. To ensure

PROTECTION GROUP

Protection services (Psycho-social support services*/ legal...etc)	Total Number of Beneficiaries	Location	Sample Size Baseline	Sample Size Endline
PSCCW	3,800	West Bank	105	105
AISHA	3,800	Gaza Strip	105	105
Total	7,600		210	210

LIVELIHOODS GROUP

Cash For Work	Total Number of Beneficiaries	Location	Sample Size Baseline	Sample Size Endline
YWCA	150	West Bank	86	86
WAC	150	Gaza Strip	86	86
Sub-Total	300		172	172
Cash Assistance				
YWCA	216	West Bank	125	125
WAC	216	Gaza Strip	125	125
Sub-Total	432		250	250
Grand Total	732		422	422

reliability and validity of results, sampling frame, confidence level and confidence interval were defined separately at the beginning of the process with the implementing partners for both groups.

Training of Enumerators and Data Collection

An effective and informative monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning (MEAL) system was designed during the initial stage of the project which put in place a robust data collection system and process to support evidence-based monitoring and learning throughout implementation. Particular attention was given to the quality of the data. Quality assurance played a critical role to ensure data integrity and validity of the results.

Data collection tools were carefully designed, contextualised, and rigorously piloted in close cooperation with local partners to ensure that enumerators communicate clearly with the selected respondents. The tools were faithfully translated into Arabic to maintain the precise meaning of the questions. Training of implementing partners (including social workers engaged in data collection) took place at the start of the programme, following the formal approval of the project cooperation agreements with the partners. In August 2021, two dedicated sessions were organized with the aim to strengthen the monitoring aspects of the CERF programme. The trainings also included a practical guidance to the (Do No Harm) principles of the programme to ensure that programmatic monitoring does not expose any of the beneficiaries to violence, harm, stigma, or marginalization during any of the data collection efforts. Training of enumerator was planned in advance to eight social workers (six females and two males) and several subjects related to data quality standards and effective data collection mechanisms.

In February 2022, another session was organized with the implementing partners to discuss challenges, lessons learned and the way forward in the data collection in the endline surveys. It is worthy to note that ad hoc support was also provided to the two implementing partners throughout the programme implementation period. In parallel, regular follow-up meetings were organized with

partners' project leads in order to provide up-to-date status on the process and discuss the way forward.¹⁰

Data Processing and Analysis

The Kobo platform was used to centralise data collection efforts. Following the training sessions, survey links were generated and shared with partners. Social workers/enumerators used various methods for collecting data which included the use of their mobile phones, tablets, or laptops to ensure real-time data entry.

Once the data collection was completed, data set was extracted from Kobo Toolbox for each partner and data cleaning was initiated. The main purpose of conducting the initial data cleaning was to remove incorrect, corrupted, duplicated, or incorrectly formatted data, as well as defining non-matching cases and incomplete data within the dataset. Furthermore, separate meetings with partners were conducted to conduct thorough revision for the dataset and agree on corrective actions and necessary modifications.

In purpose of improving and strengthening Civil Society Organizations' (CSO) internal capacities in data clean-up, conversion, actual calculation and index rescaling, sessions were delivered by Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and UN Women Regional Monitoring and Reporting Specialist to different country offices.¹¹ These sessions were also followed by other bilateral and one-on-one sessions and meetings with the Regional Monitoring and Reporting Specialist towards producing the final analysis. Data was then analysed by FAO's analysis focal point using STATA package 17.

Computation of Gender-Sensitive Resilience Capacity Index (GS-RCI)

What is Gender-Sensitive Resilience Capacity Index (GS-RCI)?

The GS-RCI is a quantitative approach aims at measuring resilience of women, based on FAO's econometrics, approaches and experiences. Through a constructed index, stakeholders are allowed to better understand how women deal or cope with shocks and stressors. The GS-RCI is constructed



Photo: UN Women/Gonzalo Bell

using a multidimensional approach. Specifically, four critical pillars are used (women's access to basic services, adaptive capacity, access to assets and social cohesion and interconnectedness) against a specific outcome (in this case indicators proxying protection/GBV, livelihood and women empowerment). The weighting of each pillar is response-dependent (in other words, it depends on how important women consider these determinants to be). In addition, each pillar is a composite index on its own and is developed based on a set of direct and proxy indicators. Each component contributes to the GS-RCI and is identified by value; though there are no predetermined thresholds. An increase in the GS-RCI value over time implies improved resilience. Since the calculation of the GS-RCI is based on the pillars and the weightings allocated to each of the pillars, the GS-RCI's structure and results are dynamic in nature.

How is Gender-Sensitive Resilience Capacity Index measured?

Changes in beneficiaries' resilience overtime, measured through the GS-RCI and as a result

of project interventions, requires substantial investment in collecting and analysing data at different points in time. For longer-term projects, three surveys are undertaken; one survey at the start of the project, which allows us to set a baseline, and followed by two surveys (a midline survey conducted three to six months after the start and an endline taking place six to nine months after the end of the programme). Under CERF project, UN Women and its partners carried out four surveys (two baselines and two endlines).¹²

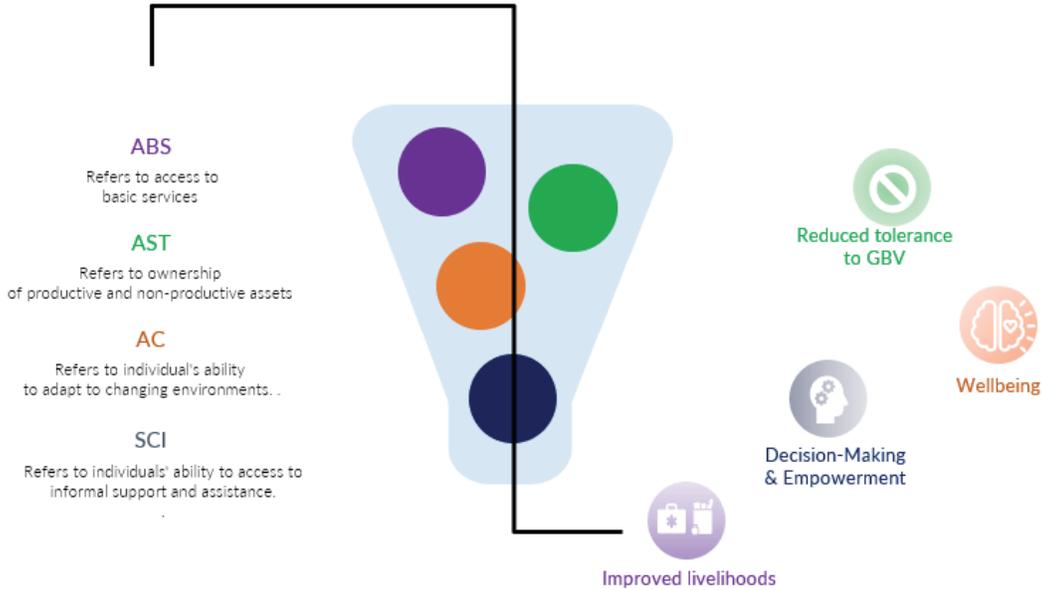
GS-RCI Pillars and Definitions

The conceptual framework for measuring the GS-RCI is built on the strategic approach adopted by FAO, which addresses the underlying causes that contribute to vulnerability, and seeks to understand and address long-term trends that affect people's exposure to risks and increase/decrease capacity to absorb or resist shocks. The core resilience components, namely pillars, are:

- Access to Basic Services (ABS)
- Assets (AST)
- Social Cohesion and Interconnectedness (SCI)
- Adaptive Capacity (AC)

The GS-RCI Model

Multiple Indicators-Multiple Causes Model



Access to Basic Services (ABS) refers to beneficiaries' ability to access services such as education, employment, health services, adequate shelter, political participation, and decision-making, and how critical is the access.

Assets and income generation comprise both productive and non-productive assets. Based on the assumption that higher income can lead to higher savings and ownership of assets, this has been used as a starting point in dealing with shocks and stressors. The ability of women to generate income will enable them to become more independent. Furthermore, their ability to spend on non-essential goods or to sell productive assets can be considered a proxy for wealth.

Adaptive capacity mainly considers the ability of women to adapt to changing environments. This pillar is primarily determined by complex inter-relationships and gendered dynamics related to decision making and the ability to influence decision making. There are other factors such as the demographic structures that affect the adaptive capacities like the dependency ratio (e.g., the number of adults in a given household and who is the household head, etc.) and the level of education of individuals within the household.

Social Cohesion and Interconnectedness. There is growing evidence that social infrastructure is one of the resilience drivers, mainly if social dimensions are considered. Social structures and relationships within the communities can reflect some of the underlying socio-economic disparities and affect some individuals/groups' resilience as opposed to others. The social infrastructure can also indicate individuals' ability to access (cash or in-kind), ask for support when shocks and stressors happen, and the higher the social network, the easier the access to informal assistance. Also, developing resilience capacities relies on protective factors within the households and the community. The feeling of safety and security within one's community lays the foundation that is at the core for strengthening resilience and provides opportunities that promote well-being and resilience. Access to transfers in many contexts make up a large part of poor households' annual income, and remittances generate additional income for individuals and households. Similarly, sharing of resources with neighbours/groups can be a proxy indicator of social cohesion and support networks that enable community-based social safety net measures to be put in place. The resilience monitoring is data driven, or in other words is response-dependant. Therefore, the analysis and structure of the GS-RCI structure is dynamic and may be different for each of the project targeted groups.

RESULTS

Demographic Profiles and Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic Profile and Characteristics of Respondents

Data collection

Across 4 protection centers



8 social workers were involved in the data collection
- 75% are females



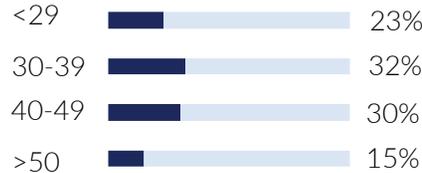
1. Community of Origin

61% are from the Gaza Strip

39% are from the West Bank

515 women impacted by crises and displacement were interviewed twice in 2021 and 2022 (baseline and endline).

2. Age Group



3. Disability

33%



33% of the women interviewed identified themselves with at least one disability in one of the following areas: vision, hearing, mobility, cognition, selfcare and communication



5. Educational level

5 in 10

Completed secondary education



4. Household Status



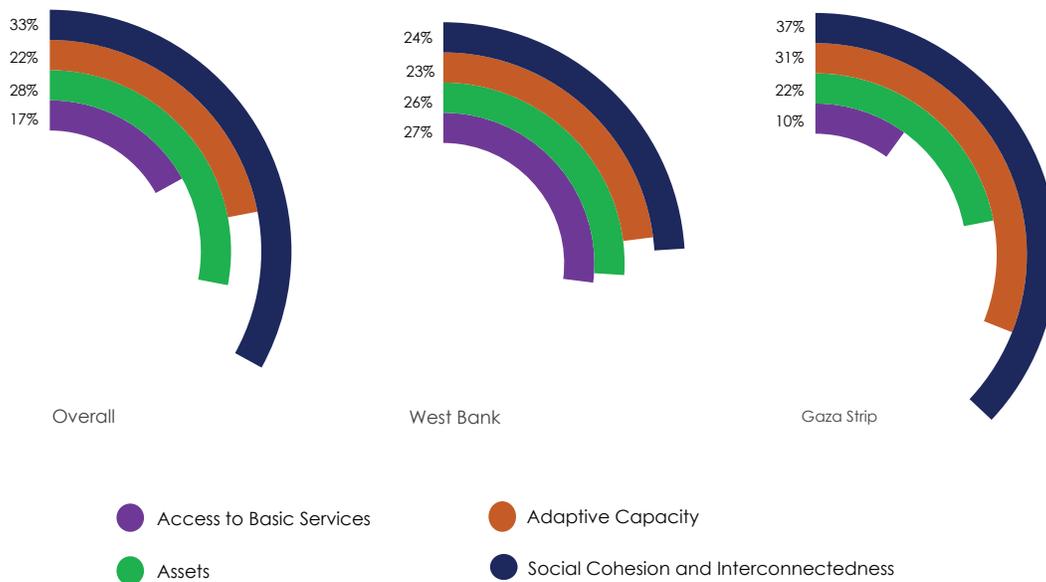
36%

Women-headed households

5. Marital Status



GS-RCI Structure by Community of Origin (key determinants of resilience)



The above graphs represent the contribution of pillars to the overall GS-RCI structure at the endline for all groups for both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. As seen in the above graphs, the social cohesion and interconnectedness (SCI) pillar has the strongest correlation among the four pillars, followed by assets (AST), adaptive capacity (AC), and access to basic services (ABS) respectively. The higher the value in the graphs is, the more important those determinants are for women's resilience on the short term, in their opinion. Lower values refer to needs on the longer term.

When the GS-RCI structure results were compared by geographical area (the Gaza Strip and the West Bank), significant differences in correlations were noted. This means that what women in the West Bank reported as critical determinants of resilience were different from those reported by women in the Gaza Strip, both on the shorter and the longer terms. In the Gaza Strip, the SCI pillar held the highest correlation and it is mainly driven by indicators related to feeling of safety and security within their communities, intercommunity relationships, sharing resource among neighbours/

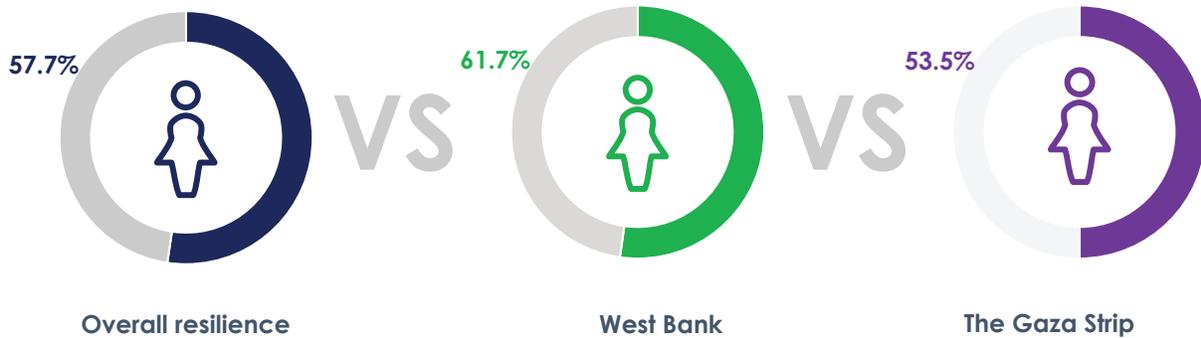
groups and social networks of individuals. This pillar was followed closely by the AC pillar which is determined by an individual's ability to apply flexibility in addressing challenges and balancing power among household members. Some of these characteristics can either promote (education or acquired skills) or inhibit resilience (having a particular disability, lack of household support to employment or tensions within households resulting from employment).

In contrast, the ABS for women in the West Bank held the highest correlation among the four pillars. Data collected under this pillar revealed that women are experiencing some challenges in accessing basic services. While overall, more women in the Gaza Strip reported challenges in accessing basic services than women in the West Bank, women in the West Bank reported more challenges accessing protection assistance slightly more than women in the Gaza Strip. The ABS pillar was closely followed by the SCI pillar for women in the West Bank. An increase in the number of women reporting engagement in distressing group and social activities are the leading indicators behind this correlation. These

pillars were followed by the AC and AST pillars respectively. An increase in the number of women reporting engagement in destressing group and social activities are the leading indicators behind this correlation. Additionally, women in the West Bank reported less dependency ratio and more supportive households, and ownership of assets

(including productive assets), as well as more ability to generate income, and spend on non-essential good/services than that of women in the Gaza Strip.

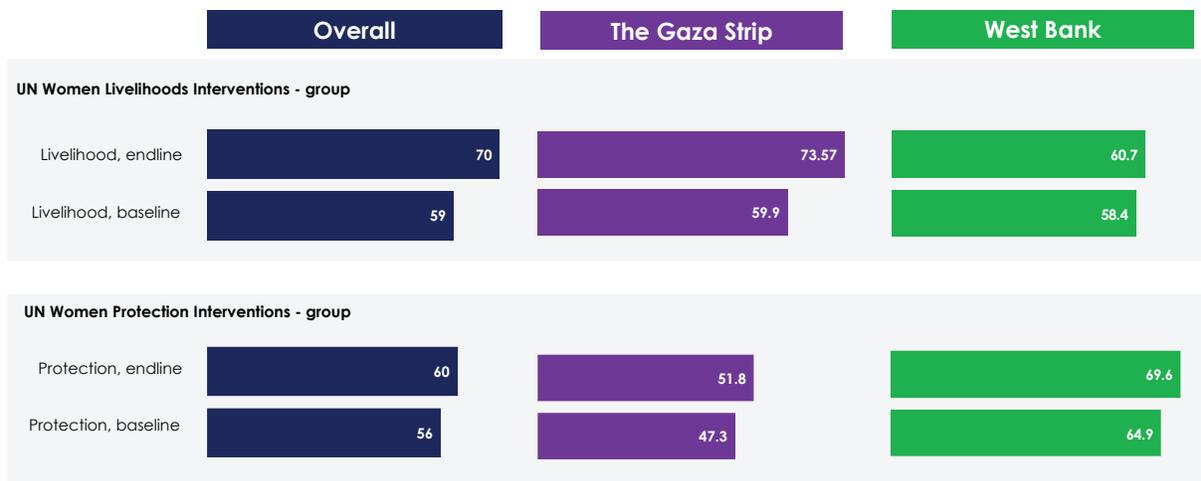
In general, women in the Gaza Strip were found less resilient than women in the West Bank at the time of the baseline survey. Women in the Gaza Strip



reported higher challenges accessing basic services; lower ownership of productive and non-productive assets; less ability to spend on non-essential goods and services; and lower possibility to save from income generation activities than women in the West Bank. On the other hand, women in the West Bank reported sharing resources with neighbours less than women in the Gaza Strip, they also reported stronger networks and participation in social activities. All women from the Gaza Strip and

the West Bank reported similar levels of education; only 50 per cent have completed secondary education in each of the locations. Furthermore, only 20 per cent of women in the West Bank and 6 per cent in the Gaza Strip were engaged in employment. It is worthy to note that only 14 per cent of women reported supportive households for women's employment in West Bank and none of the women in the Gaza Strip reported supportive households.

GS-RCI Progress by Community of Origin (livelihoods and protection groups)



At the end of the project, project beneficiaries experienced greater resilience evidenced by the improvement in the overall GS-RCI value from baseline to endline. When the GS-RCI values were compared by type of intervention, the results indicate that women who received livelihoods interventions have experienced greater resilience than women who received protection assistance. This is evidenced by the overall increase of 19 per cent in the GS-RCI value for women who received livelihoods assistance while women who received protection assistance have experienced 7 per cent increase only.

Furthermore, when the GS-RCI values were compared between women who received the different types of interventions (livelihoods vs protection) and across locations (the Gaza Strip vs the West Bank), the results varied. Nonetheless, the greatest difference noted was the livelihoods group in the Gaza Strip. This means that the project had the greatest impact on women from the Gaza

Strip who received livelihoods assistance. The Gaza Strip livelihoods group experienced twice as much progress (improvement in resilience) as women who received protection assistance.

When the GS-RCI values were looked at by protection assistance, women who received protection assistance in both the Gaza Strip and the West Bank experienced same progress (an increase of 4.5 per cent in the Gaza Strip and 4.7 in the West Bank).

However, when progress results in the West Bank were compared across groups (livelihoods and protection), it was noted that women who received protection assistance experienced greater resilience than those who received livelihoods assistance. While this finding needs to be further investigated by UN Women, it also suggests that in the context of the West Bank, protection assistance should be an integral component in resilience programming.

GS-RCI Overall Progress by Marital Status



When the GS-RCI results are compared with the marital status,¹³ widowed women were found to be the least resilient at the start of the project,

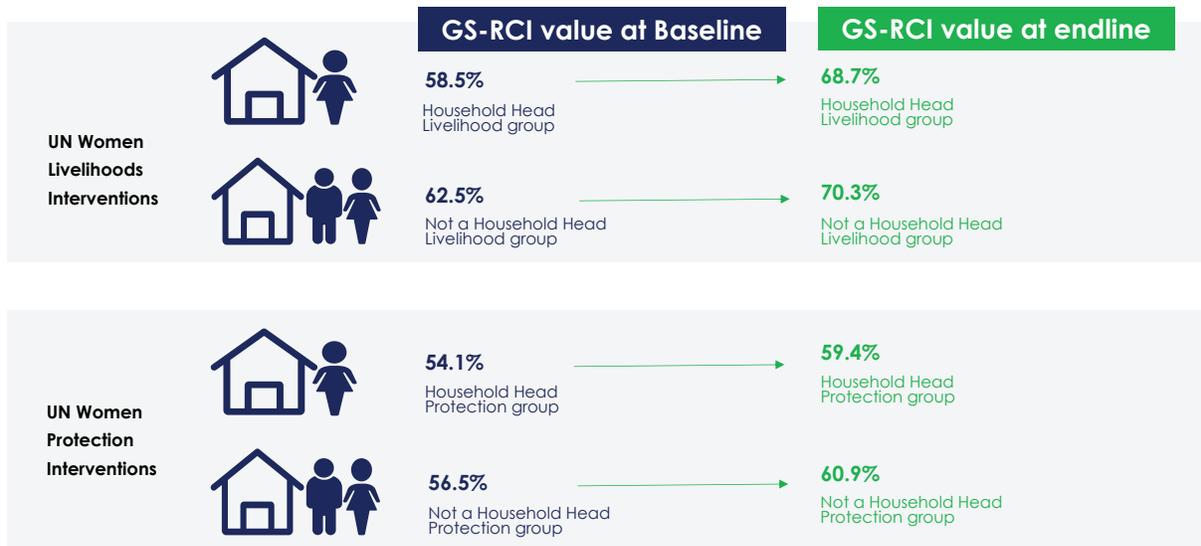
followed closely by married, single and divorced women respectively. The analysis of the baseline survey data suggests that widowed and married

women reported having debts more than the other groups¹⁴ (83 per cent of widowed women and 74 per cent of married women). When the amount of debt was reviewed, in proportion widowed women reported higher debts than married women, with an average debt of 1765 USD.

At the end of the project, all women with different marital status experienced greater resilience, as noted from the baseline and endline values of the GS-RCI. In addition, women who received livelihoods

assistance showed better progress in their overall GS-RCI values than women who received protection assistance. When the progress was compared across marital status, widowed women who received livelihoods interventions experienced greater resilience evidenced by the improvement in the overall GS-RCI value from baseline to endline (25.3 per cent), followed by married women (21.2 per cent), divorced women (17.3 per cent), and single women (12.9 per cent) respectively.

GS-RCI Overall Progress by Household Head Status



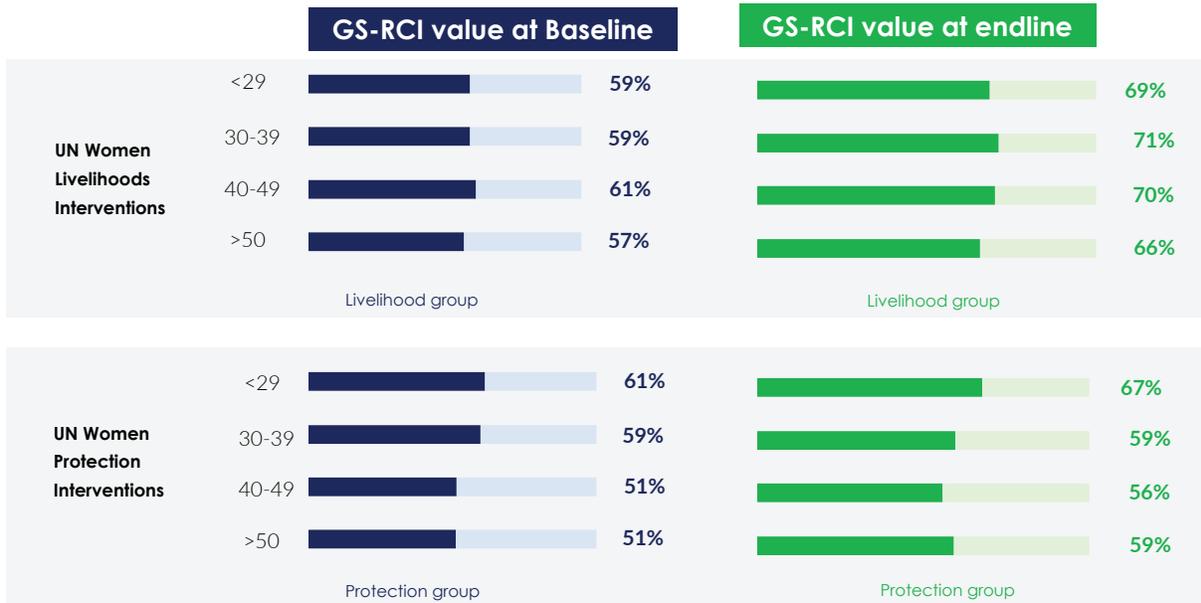
At the start of the programme, overall female-headed households (FHHs) were found to be less resilient than male-headed households (MHHs) and FHHs. Overall, female-headed households reported higher challenges in accessing basic services, less ownership of productive and non-productive assets as well as engagement in income-generating activities.

At the end of the project, both MHHs and FHHs experienced greater resilience evidenced by the improvement in the overall GS-RCI value from baseline to endline. The greatest difference was noted for FHHs who received livelihoods assistance. This means that the project had the greatest impact on women who were heading households

who received livelihoods assistance. This increase for women who were heading households can be attributed to the increased abilities to access income generation opportunities, strengthened social networks, engagement in community groups, and increase in ownership of assets.

While all project interventions resulted in greater resilience when compared by head of household status, livelihood interventions produced better results than protection interventions. However, when results for those who received protection assistance only were analyzed, comparable results were noted, with women coming from FHHs experiencing greater resilience than those coming from MHHs.

GS-RCI Overall Progress by Age Group



At the start of the programme, baseline data suggested that women aged between 40 and 49 and women above 50 were the least resilient. These two age groups reported slightly more obstacles and challenges in their access to basic services than women aged between 30 and 39 years and women aged between 15 and 29. Women aged 40 to 49 years also reported less ownership of productive and non-productive assets than that of the two other age groups as well as the least engagement in terms of social networks, especially participating in social group activities.

All four age groups of women who received livelihoods assistance showed higher progress than all age groups of women who received protection assistance. The greatest difference in the GS-RCI values was noted for women aged from 30

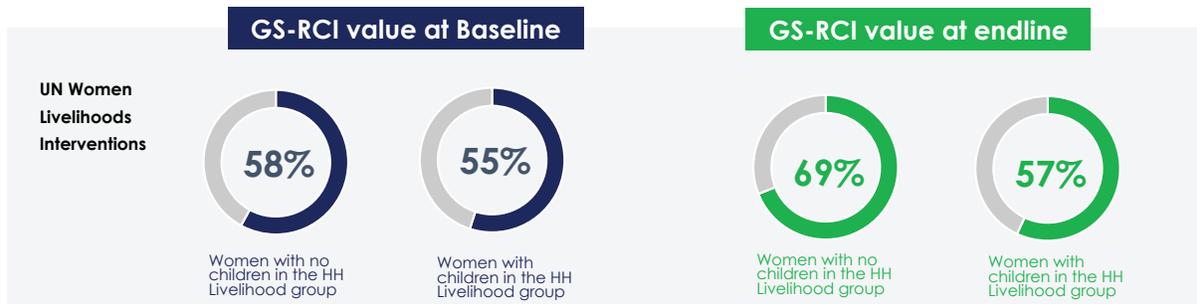
to 39 years who received livelihoods assistance. This means that the project had the greatest impact on women from this age group who received livelihoods assistance. As for the remainder of this age group in this category, women who received livelihoods support (aged from 15 to 29, from 40 to 49, and above 50 years), the improvement in the GS-RCI values was around 17 per cent.

As for women who received protection assistance, women above 50 years and aged women aged from 15 to 29 showed the highest increase in overall resilience, followed by women aged aged between 40 and 49 years. Women aged between 30 and 39 years did not experience any change in their overall resilience from baseline to endline. UN Women will further investigate this result.

GS-RCI Overall Progress by Presence of Children

When the GS-RCI results are compared by presence of children at the time of the baseline survey, project revealed contrasting results. Women and had received livelihoods assistance and had children were less resilient that women who did

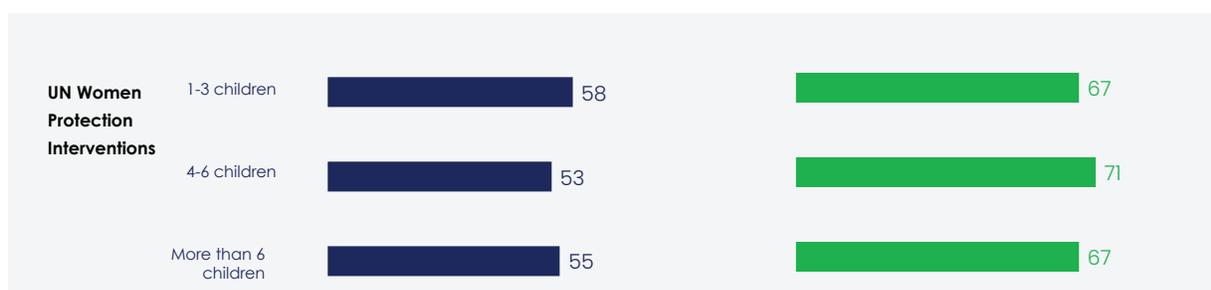
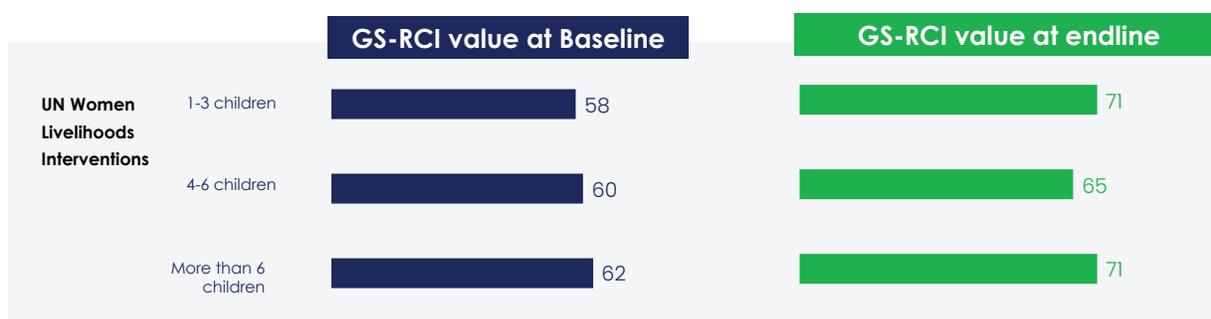
not have children at the start of the programme. On the other hand, women who received protection assistance and did not have children were the least resilient at the start of the programme.



In terms of progress, the greatest difference in GS-RCI values was noted for women who had children and received protection assistance (31.5 per cent increase). This means that in terms of presence of children, the project had the greatest impact on women who had children and received protection assistance. These were followed by women who

did not have children and received livelihoods assistance. This increase was five times higher than that of women who received livelihoods assistance and had children. This result is further investigated by the following section, progress by number of children.

GS-RCI Overall Progress by Number of Children

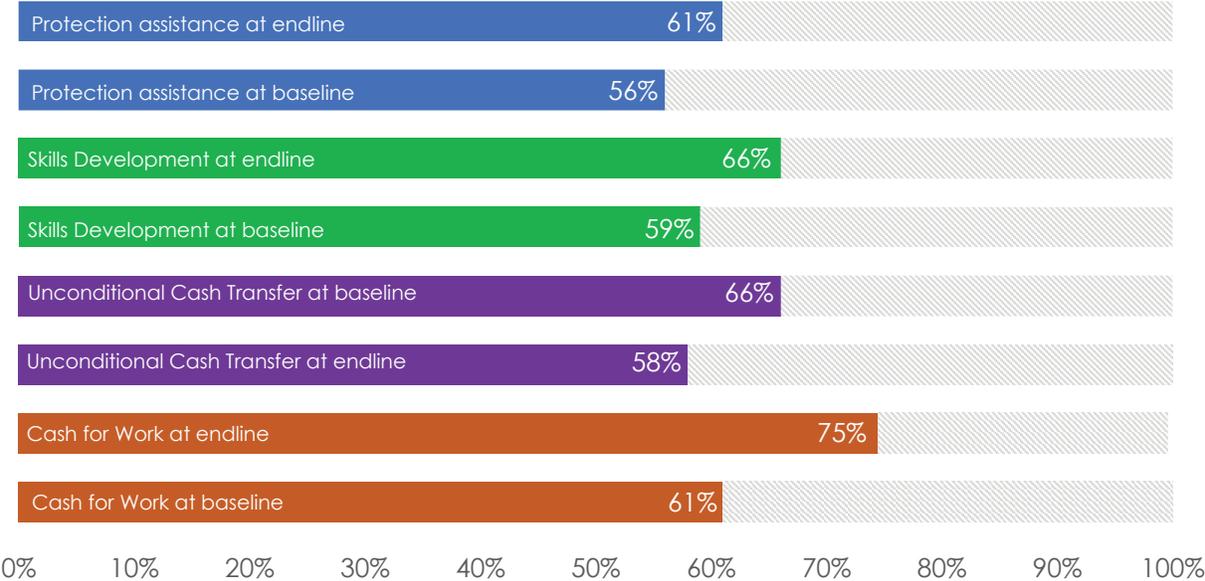


When the GS-RCI results are compared among women with children in their household, overall results indicate that women who had four to six children were the least resilience at the start of the programme. However, when results were reviewed between the two groups, women who had received protection assistance and had four to six children were the least resilient of all, followed by women who had more than six children in the same category of intervention.

In terms of progress, women who received protection assistance and had four to six children

also experienced the greatest change in their resilience. This means that in terms of number of children, the project had the greatest impact on women who had four to six children and received protection assistance. This group demonstrated the highest increase (35 per cent increase) when compared across all demographic profiles (marital status, age group, etc). This finding confirms how relevant and critical the protection assistance for strengthening the overall resilience of women. This result was closely followed by women who had more than six children within the same category. The same conclusion applies.

GS-RCI Overall Progress by Type of Intervention



When the GS-RCI results were compared with the type of assistance received, all types of interventions generated positive results and strengthened women’s overall resilience, but at varying degrees.

The greatest difference noted in the GS-RCI values between baseline and the endline of the resilience was for women who received cash for

work assistance (22 per cent increase), who were followed by those who received unconditional cash transfers and skills development opportunities (13 per cent and 12 per cent respectively). Women who received protection assistance also experienced increase in resilience, this increase was equivalent to 9 per cent.

Outcome 1. Improved Livelihoods for livelihoods and protection groups

Livelihoods-based coping strategies by type: stress, crisis, emergency



Livelihood-based coping strategies are longer term household measures deployed to cope with a lack of food, or money to buy food. These strategies are categorised according to severity. There are three categories: stress, crisis, and emergency.¹⁶

The deployment of these strategies indicates people's ability to deal with shocks. Stress coping strategies reflect a reduced ability to deal with future shocks and include spending savings, buying food on credit, etc. Crisis coping strategies reduce future productivity and includes selling productive assets and being unable to attend to health needs. Emergency strategies more difficult to reverse and more dramatic in nature. They include sending household members to engage in illegal, exploitative, or degrading jobs, removing children from school and sending them to work, etc. Although livelihoods and income are not synonymous, they are linked. The ability to generate income will determine the frequency and types of coping strategies individuals and households deploy in the face of shocks in the short term and long term.

At the start of the programme, data analysis of the baseline survey revealed that 25 per cent of women who received livelihoods assistance and 50 per cent of women who received protection assistance did not have enough food to eat in the past 7 days. The analysis further adds that 95 per cent of women who received livelihoods assistance and 78 per cent of women who received protection assistance did not have any source of income. As a result, women resorted to a range of negative livelihood-based coping strategies. However, women engaged in the livelihoods programme were deploying all types of negative livelihoods strategies more than women who were engaged in the protection assistance component of the programme. This was the case for all types of negative coping strategies. In terms of overall progress, women who received livelihoods assistance experienced reduction in terms of deployment of the three types of strategies more than women who received protection assistance, demonstrating the direct and positive impact on women's livelihoods.



Photo: UN Women/ Christopher Herwig

At the end of the project, women who received livelihoods assistance experienced a 20 per cent reduction in emergency-type coping strategies, 24 per cent reduction in crisis-type coping strategies and 20 per cent reduction in stress-type coping strategies. When these results were compared geographically, they were much more significant for women in the Gaza Strip more than women in the West Bank. This finding suggests that such model of assistance has stronger correlation between the project's Theory of Change, improvement in livelihoods outcome, and the context of the Gaza Strip. UN Women will further investigate the dynamics of the model in the West Bank.

The income generation opportunities provided under this programme have generated evidence again its positive impact on women's livelihoods.

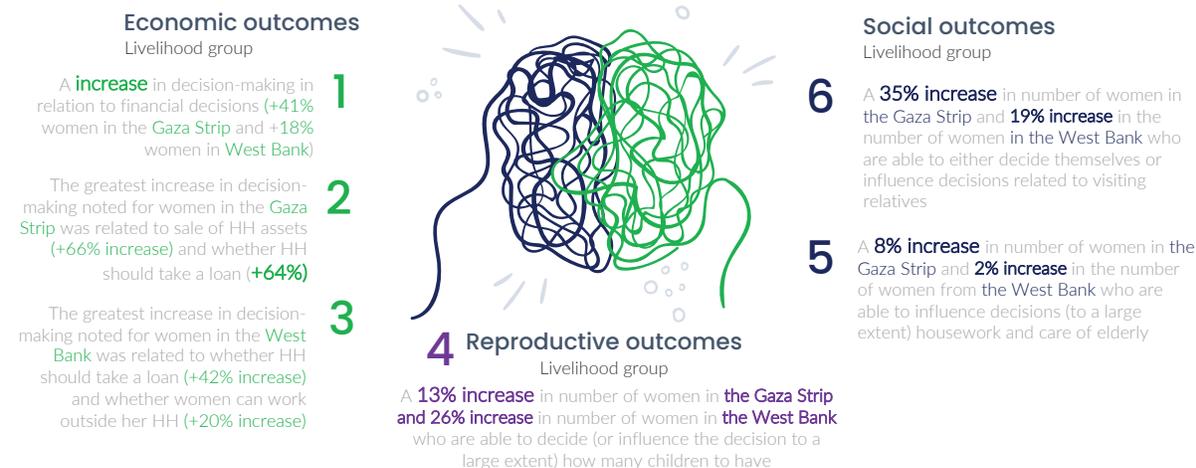
This is evidenced by the progress results when compared for women who received protection assistance, and within the context of the Gaza Strip. Women who received livelihoods assistance reduced the deployment of emergency type coping strategies 3.5 times more than women who received protection assistance only.

Alternatively, data analysis suggests a correlation between women's access to protection assistance and improvement in their livelihoods in the context of the West Bank, especially when it comes to deployment of emergency-type and crisis-type livelihoods coping strategies. For women who received protection assistance in the West Bank, an 8 per cent reduction was noted in their deployment of emergency-type and 16.4 per cent reduction in their deployment of crisis-type coping strategies.

Outcome 2. Decision-making and empowerment

Gendered dynamics within their households and women's autonomy in relation to social, economic, and reproductive outcomes

An overall **35% increase** in decision making and empowerment for beneficiaries in Gaza and **17% increase for beneficiaries in the West Bank** (women who received livelihood assistance – treatment group)



Discrimination in household decision-making is often rooted in patriarchal attitudes that favour men over women. There is growing evidence that indicates that household decisions are often made through a bargaining process that is more likely to favour men in particular in areas that include control over income, assets, food consumption, freedom of movement, and education of children. By changing discriminatory attitudes in their households, women can advance the rights of girls in the future and for generations to come. Women's empowerment within households will increase the likelihood that children, in particular girls, will not conform to 'traditional' or "societal' perceptions in relation to the roles of men and women. Therefore, monitoring decision-making dynamics within the household is critical to understanding whether there have been any changes to beneficiaries' bargaining power and in which areas.

The project indicator measures women's participation in decision making within their households (either themselves or jointly with others). There are three categories against which

decision-making indicators were organized: social, economic, and reproductive. For each of these categories, a set of statements or proxy indicators have been included that help measure women's participation in the decision-making process in relation to spending, food consumption, freedom of movement, how many children to have and the education of children. Each statement is given a score (1 if a woman makes the decision herself or she reports the ability to influence a decision taken jointly to a large extent). The higher the overall score, the greater the indication of gender equity in decision-making.

An increase in decision-making has been noted across all types of decisions (economic, reproductive, social and mobility) for women who received livelihoods assistance and women who received protection assistance. The greatest increase was noted for women who received livelihoods assistance in the Gaza Strip in terms of making economic decisions. The increase stood at 41 per cent and was twice as the increase noted for women who received both types of assistance from the West Bank.

Outcome 3. Reduced Tolerance to GBV

Below are some of the results noted under this project:

01

At the end of the project, 94% of women in the livelihood group and 87% of women in the control group indicated that they will NOT tolerate GBV against them.

02

A 7% increase in the number of women (Livelihood group) reporting they will NOT tolerate GBV against them in case they neglect their children.

03

A 6% increase of women (livelihood group) reached under the programme indicated that they will NOT accept GBV against them in case they spend money without his permission

04

96% of women from the West Bank (protection group) reached under the programme reported NO tolerance to GBV against them in any case.



UN Women’s entry point for targeting vulnerable women is the protection centres. The target beneficiaries are those women who are at risk or surviving GBV. Protection support and promotion of gender equality is part of UN Women’s regular programmes and is a first step to change behaviour. Monitoring acceptance levels to GBV is also of paramount importance to understand whether there have been changes in perceptions by women in relation to violence. These include statements reflecting several scenarios in which women would accept a violent behaviour against them by their husbands. Each statement is based on a Likert scale of 1-5 representing the extent to which they agree or disagree on the given scenarios.

At the start of the programme, data analysis of the baseline surveys for all groups indicated low levels of acceptance to GBV. The analysis of results for women who received livelihoods assistance revealed that 94 per cent of women in the Gaza

Strip and 89 per cent of women in the West Bank reported no tolerance to GBV across 11 given scenarios. While the results of the groups who received protection assistance in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank revealed comparable results, the greatest results noted were for women in the Gaza Strip as 99 per cent of them reported no tolerance at the end of the programme. An increase of 5 per cent in the number women was reported by the end of the project, highlighting that almost 100 per cent of women indicated that they will not tolerate GBV.

As for women in the West Bank who received protection assistance only also experienced a reduction in their tolerance to GBV. At the end of the programme, 96 per cent reported no tolerance to GBV (from 94 per cent at the baseline), the progress and number of women in this category reporting no tolerance to GBV was higher than women from the West Bank who received livelihoods assistance.

Outcome 4. Improved wellbeing and perceptions of Gender Equality

A reflection of self-image and perceptions of gender equality

Self Image

An average **increase of 14%** in the number of women in the livelihood group reporting on positive self-image

1. An average **increase of 74%** in the number of women from the Gaza Strip (livelihood group) reporting- I am able to provide for my family and meet my family's needs
2. An average **increase of 33%** in the number of women in the Gaza Strip (livelihood group) reporting- I am equal to my peers (friends and neighbors)
3. An average **increase of 29%** in the number of women in the West Bank (protection group) reporting- I am equal to my peers (friends and neighbors)
4. An average **increase of 33%** in the number of women in the West Bank (protection group) reporting- I am able to provide for my family and meet my family's needs



Gender Equality Perceptions

An overall **10% increase** has been noted in the number of women in the livelihood group who have positive perceptions on gender equality.

1. An average **increase of 5 per cent** in the number of women from the Gaza Strip (livelihood group) who disagree that- Married women should NOT be allowed to work outside the home
2. At the end of the programme, **99 per cent** of women from the Gaza Strip (livelihood group) who agree that having a job is the best way for a woman to be an independent person
3. **52 per cent increase** has been noted in the number of women who disagree that- when a mother works to earn money, the children suffer
4. **17 per cent increase** in the number of women who disagree - that when a mother works to earn money, the children suffer

This index is comprised of two indicators: the first indicator is a reflection of self-image, and the second indicator captures the beneficiaries' perceptions of gender equality. Both indicators consist of statements reflecting the five domains of wellbeing and gender equality perceptions. Each domain contains of statement(s) based on a Likert scale with 1-5 points representing the extent to which beneficiaries agree or disagree with these statements. Kindly note that in order to reduce/prevent social desirability bias, the technique used in the survey questionnaires included reversed statements to capture different opinions and allow free expression of any opinion.

Women who received livelihoods assistance in the Gaza Strip experienced an increase in wellbeing. This increase when compared with women who received protection assistance in the Gaza Strip was 10 times higher. At the end of the programme, 74 per cent of women in the Gaza Strip who received livelihood assistance reported an improvement in their overall wellbeing, as opposed to women who

received protection assistance only (56 per cent). The domains in which women reported the highest increase were related to the way they feel they are able to meet the needs of their families, and impact decisions in their households, feeling equal to their peers and looking forward to the future. As for the results in the West Bank, women who received protection assistance experienced greater wellbeing than women who received livelihoods assistance. The increase in women's wellbeing from the protection group in the West Bank stood at 6.3 per cent. This increase was almost four times higher for women who received livelihoods assistance in the West Bank.

In contrast, women who received livelihoods assistance in the Gaza Strip experienced an increase in gender equality perceptions. At the end of the programme, 81 per cent of women in the Gaza Strip who received livelihood assistance reported an improvement in their overall gender equality perceptions, as opposed to women who received protection assistance (59 per cent). The domains in



Photo: UN Women/ Christopher Herwig

which women reported the highest increase was in relation to the way women can have a job and be independent person and when a mother works children suffer.

As for the results in the West Bank, women who received protection assistance experienced higher

perception of gender equality than women who received livelihoods assistance. At the end of the programme, 65 per cent of women in the West Bank (who received protection assistance) reported an improvement in their overall gender equality perceptions.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion 1:

There are disparities in the GS-RCI structure between the two distinct groups of women in the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank as well as between different demographic profiles (female-headed households, women with or without children, marital status, and age groups). Data collection confirms that in terms of number of children, the project had the greatest impact on women who had one to three children who received protection assistance.

Recommendation:

UN Women should continue expanding its evidence base with regards to the profiling of women (demographically and geographically) in relation to resilience. This will enable an organizational growth of knowledge in relation to resilience programming and amplify results with available resources. Results achieved through protection, cash for work and unconditional cash assistance interventions can be further amplified if demographic (and in the case of Palestine) dimensions are taken into consideration in the design of the projects/programmes. The continuous deployment of this monitoring approach will also ensure that future programmes are designed in a manner that efficiently and effectively identify, recognise, and respond to beneficiaries' specific needs and represent best value for money.

Conclusion 2:

Resilience of Women in the Gaza Strip has been found to be highly influenced by social cohesion and interconnectedness. Women in the Gaza Strip reported having stronger social networks and higher dependency on support provided by aid agencies. They have also identified their feeling of safety and security as well as peaceful or tolerant inter-community relationships as two key factors to strengthening their resilience.

Recommendation:

It is important to consider social structures and networks within a community when designing resilience-focused projects/programmes.

As communities consist of intra-community groups with different interests and allegiances, the strength of networks and relationships can foster women's sense of security and tolerance and reduce their fragility within social spheres.

Conclusion 3:

While there are similarities in key determinants of resilience for women in the Gaza Strip and women in the West Bank, there are also key differences when the resilience structure is compared geographically. For instance, the leading pillars of resilience for women in the Gaza Strip are the social cohesion and interconnectedness pillar followed by adaptive capacity, while the leading pillars for the resilience of women in the West Bank is access to basic services, followed closely by social cohesion and interconnectedness. This conclusion is also backstopped by the different results produced by the programme when disaggregated geographically.

Recommendation:

As a result of these structural/contextual differences, programmes targeting different geographic locations at the same time (like this project) need to consider these contextual differences and what it identifies as enablers of resilience. UN Women is also recommended to further investigate mechanisms and forms of assistance more relevant to these contexts so programmes can amplify and achieve collective results.

Conclusion 4:

Women's resilience in the West Bank has been led by women's access to protection assistance.



Photo: UN Women / Christopher Herwig

Furthermore, beneficiaries in the West Bank who received protection assistance experienced greater resilience than women who received livelihoods assistance. Women's access to protection assistance has also been identified as a critical element to enhance their overall resilience.

Recommendation:

This finding revealed how the differences in context can directly influence results and to a large extent. While these results will be further investigated by UN Women, they also provide evidence of strong correlation between the project's Theory of Change and the needs on the ground, and highlight the need for continued provision of protection assistance in these programmes in the context of the West Bank.

Conclusion 5:

Project interventions had a multidimensional impact on women's livelihoods, decision-making, wellbeing, and perceptions of gender equality across geographic location. However, different

results were produced in the various locations and by the diverse types of assistance. While the project seems to have the greatest impact on women from the Gaza Strip, it did not have the same level of impact on women from the West Bank, suggesting that the model of assistance was more aligned to the enablers in the Gaza Strip than those in the West Bank.

Recommendation:

UN Women needs to continue expanding its evidence base in terms of enablers in the different contexts and further refine/shape the model of assistance based on what beneficiaries identify in meeting as their resilience needs. UN Women is recommended to further investigate with its implementing partners and women reached under this programme (through key informant interviews and focus group discussion) how the model of assistance in the West Bank can be improved to bring about better results and take into consideration the difference in the costs of living in each of the locations.

ENDNOTES

- 1 The GS-RCI is a quantitative approach to measuring resilience of women. The GS-RCI is constructed using a multidimensional approach that considers four critical pillars: women's access to basic services, ownership of assets, adaptive capacity and social cohesion and interconnectedness, against four specific outcomes: improved livelihoods, increased decision-making and empowerment, wellbeing (including perceptions on Gender Equality) as well as reduced tolerance to GBV. An increase in the GS-RCI value over time implies improved resilience.
- 2 Livelihood-based coping strategies are longer term household measures deployed to cope with a lack of food, or money to buy food. These strategies are categorised according to severity. There are three categories: stress, crisis, and emergency. The deployment of these strategies indicates people's ability to deal with shocks.
- 3 Various forms of violence such as domestic violence, sexual harassment, early marriage and femicide.
- 4 Economic violence is defined as any act or behaviour which causes economic harm, it can take many forms such as but not limited to, restricting women from employment, disposing of property or inheritance without consent, controlling decisions related to finances.
- 5 PCBS | Percentage of Currently Married or Ever Married Women (15 - 64 years) in Palestine who were Exposed (at least once) to One Type of Violence by their Husbands during the Past 12 Months by Background Characteristics and Type of Violence, 2019
- 6 [Effects_of_COVID_on_VAW_in_ARAB_STATES_July_08_V02 \(1\).pdf](#) (unwomen.org)
- 7 [hno_2021.pdf](#) (ochaopt.org)
- 8 [hno_2021.pdf](#) (ochaopt.org)
- 9 Panel data, also known as longitudinal data or multi-dimensional data, involves measurements over time. It is derived from a number of observations for the same subjects or units (individuals/households) over time.
- 10 Separate online reports (Excel formats) were produced from the online Kobo platform and communicated with partners on the number of collected surveys
- 11 Coding and Index actual calculation method and rescaling mechanism
- 12 2 baseline and endline for both groups
- 13 The total number of other (27 out of 595 respondents – 4 per cent out of the total population) female respondents is low in respect to the total population and not statistically significant. Therefore, the interpretation of results may not be fully accurate and conclusions cannot be drawn
- 14 Debts is the main reason, but it is not the only one since other factors affect resilience capacity of women
- 15 US\$150 Unconditional Cash Assistance for one month were provided for 432 women (divided equally between Gaza Strip and West Bank) while CFW opportunities were provided for 300 women (divided equally between Gaza Strip and West Bank) for a period of three months – each women get US\$300 each month
- 16 https://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/manual_guide_proced/wfp271449.pdf

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UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit women and girls worldwide. It works globally to make the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals a reality for women and girls and stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on four strategic priorities: Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems; Women have income security, decent work and economic autonomy; All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence; Women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience, and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts and humanitarian action. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.



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