

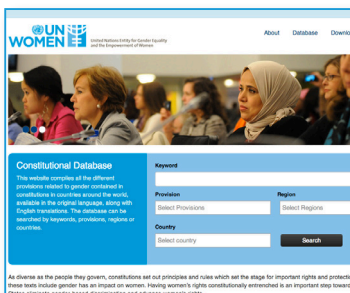
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IN FOCUS – Women's Access to Justice Programme

In Palestine, women and girls continue to be affected by an integrated system of violence. The lack of specialized laws, courts and prosecutions, sufficient protective services and the weakness of rehabilitation and detention centers continue to place some groups of women at particular risk. Under the "Support for the Delivery of Security and Justice Services for Women", Programme funded by the UK Government through the Department of International Development (DFID), UN Women is playing a leading role in enhancing the protection of women and girls through linking justice and security to the development of qualitative standards for protection and reintegration services, and supporting the Palestinian Authority and its institutions in building the capacity of police services, judiciary, social workers and civil advocates to ensure proper response to incidents of domestic violence.

Finalization of the training programme for the Police FPU staff

UN Women, with the technical support of EUPOL COPPS have worked intensively with the PCP and specifically the Training Department on the development of a gender-sensitive training program targeting the Palestinian Civil Police staff. Part of the training targets the Palestinian Civil Police staff, while another component targets the FPU staff more specifically. The development of the training programme is directly in line with the FPU Strategy. The manual will be submitted to the Chief of Police for adoption in January.



UN Women conducts workshops on the Police Risk Assessment Management Framework

On 17 December, UN Women conducted a training workshop on the Risk Assessment Management Framework, part of the Annexes of the SOPs, for 12 staff members of the Family Protection Unit (FPU) at the Police Training Academy in Jericho. This constitutes the first training workshop on the Risk Assessment Form which will be replicated during December and January for other members of the FPU and shelters, as well as the staff of relevant ministries.



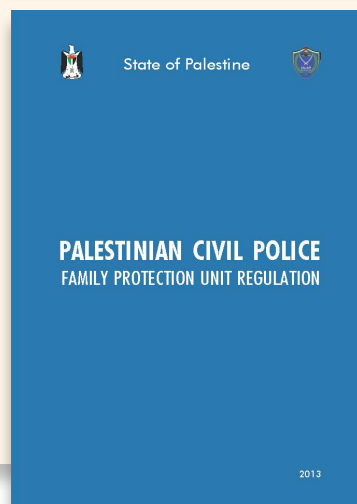
The Palestinian Police Family Protection Unit develops Standard Operating Procedures

Under the Access to Justice Programme, the Palestinian Civil Police with the technical support of UN Women and EUPOL COPPS, has finalized the development of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the Family Protection Unit, including its Annexes. The Annexes contain the forms and formats that will be used by the FPU in the field including the incident report, case management, complaint, victim referral, child victim referral, victim safety plans and safety guidelines, among others. The Annexes are also supporting standardization in the management of cases according to international standards. The SOPs will be submitted to the Chief of Police for adoption by end of December.

UN Women supports strengthening the capacity of the Palestinian Civil Police on domestic violence: PCP Family Protection Unit Strategy and Regulation

On 3rd June, the PCP launched the Family Police Unit Strategy and Regulation, which marked another important step as part of the continuous efforts of the Palestinian Government to effectively prevent and respond to domestic violence. The FPU Strategy and Regulation, developed under the UN Women project “Support for the Delivery of Security and Justice Services for Women Victims of Violence” – funded by the UK Department for International Development – represented the first pillar documents of the PCP clarifying Police FPU vision, mandate, approach and regulation in responding to complaints and incidents of domestic violence.

Aimed to ensure sound and safe families and full protection of women and children victims of violence, the FPU was established by PCP in 2008 as a specialized unit in family protection.



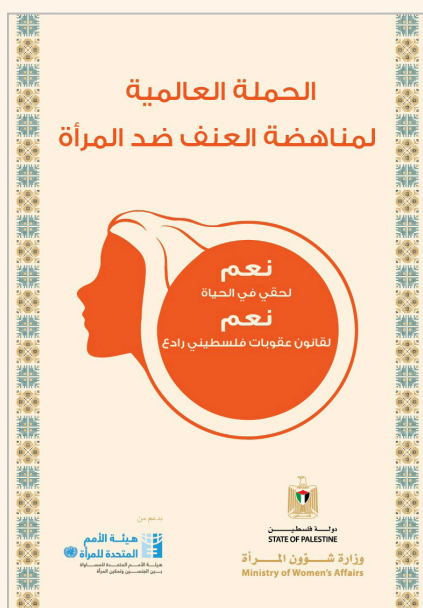
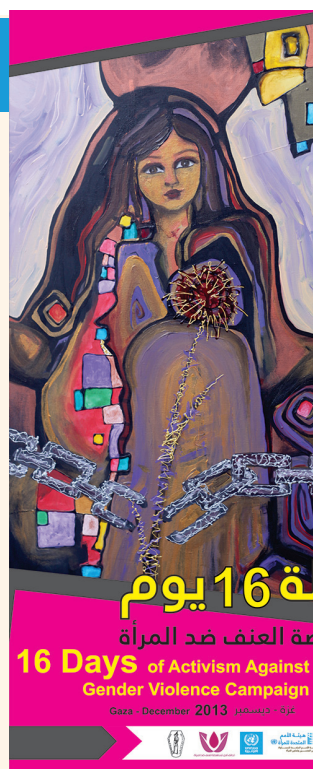
Responding to a growing community demand, the FPU has expanded in the last few years to cover all 10 districts of the West Bank, an expansion which translated in an increase reporting from 140 cases of sexual violence reported to FPU in 2010 to more than 2,500 domestic violence reports and a total of 1,755 complaints in 2011.

Under the Access to Justice project, which aimed to promote access to justice and security services for women victims of violence and others in a holistic manner, UN Women in partnership with EUPOL COPPS, continues to work on supporting the establishment of a clear framework and operating procedures and mechanisms to reinforce the capacity of the police and its FPU in responding to the needs of women and cases of women victims of violence.

MoWA kick-starts discussions on adopting the Serious Case Review mechanism

With the technical support of UN Women, the National Committee to Combat Violence against Women along with institutional stakeholders involved in the implementation of the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women and MoWA heads of sub-sectoral committees were invited on 16 December to discuss the Serious Case Review Mechanism that was developed by MoWA. This mechanism is part of the implementation plan of the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women to be officially presented during the up-coming national conference in January.

16 Days Campaign to Combat Gender Violence



This year, UN Women supported MoWA to launch the Global 16 Days Campaign's activities in Palestine. Under the slogan *"Yes to My Right to Life, Yes to an Effective Palestinian Penal Law"* MoWA organized different activities and workshops targeting different actors and stakeholders in the combat to end violence against women from the justice and security sector and the media, among others. Consolidated recommendations from the 16 Days Campaign's workshops will be presented in MoWA's final report on the Campaign. In the Gaza Strip, UN Women also supported the joint campaign *"From Peace at Home to Peace in Society: Let's Unite to End Violence against Women"* of the Amal Coalition and the General Union of Palestinian Women.

UN Women Special Representative participates in the joint MoWA/Civil Society Press Conference on launching the 16 days campaign in Palestine

The Minister of Women's Affairs (MoWA) organized a joint press conference in Ramallah on 25 November to launch the 16 Days Campaign against Gender Violence in Palestine. The Press Conference convened Ms. Rahiba Diab, Minister of Women's Affairs, Ms. Soraida Hussein, director of Women's Affairs Technical Committee and current chair of Al Muntada Coalition to Combat Violence Against Women, and Ms. Alia El-Yassir, UN Women Special Representative in Palestine. The focus of the 2013 campaign was the killing of women – femicide – including cases under the guise of "honor". A number of activities were organized by MoWA and Al Muntada to sensitize all actors, including citizens and representatives of the justice and security sector and ministries, on women's rights and violence against women.

National workshop on enhancing the protection of Palestinian women victims of violence

On 2 December, UN Women along with WCLAC, Birzeit University, PAGO, MoWA and Ministry of Justice, participated in a national workshop for stakeholders and service providers within the justice and security sector. Organized by MoWA as part of the 16 Days Campaign on Gender Violence, the workshop aimed at sensitizing the role of the justice sector in regard to the protection of Palestinian women, women's right to a life free of violence and the application of the international framework. During this workshop UN Women gave a presentation on the international human rights framework and how to ensure the application of international law to protect women and safeguard their rights.

National workshop for lawyers on women's access to justice and protection

With the support of UN Women and within the framework of the 16 Days Campaign, MoWA organized on 3 December a national workshop for lawyers in regard to protection of women victims of violence and the role of lawyers in the justice system. Presentations and discussions focused on the situation of Palestinian women, their access to justice and the international human rights framework and its application in the justice system in Palestine, as well as the specific role of lawyers. The discussions highlighted the difficulties faced by lawyers in protecting women, notably in regard to the lack of or inadequacy of existing laws to address cases of domestic violence.

Amal Coalition and the General Union of Palestinian Women hold the first-ever charity event to combat gender-based violence in the Gaza Strip

Supported by UN Women and OHCHR under the 16 days campaign, Amal Coalition and the General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW) organized on 10 December a charity dinner to support and mobilize Gaza society, including civil society and private sector, in combating violence against women. The amount generated from selling the tickets (about USD 2,000) was utilized to provide rapid humanitarian support to women and children who were severely affected by the flood and the winter storm in the Gaza Strip. Under the slogan From Peace at Home to Peace in Society: *Let's Unite to Combat Violence Against Women*, the 2013 campaign in the Gaza Strip will also see the organization of a Conference on Gender-Based Violence in Palestine – *Towards a Coordinated Response to Violence Against Women in Palestine*, and 22 awareness raising workshops on violence against women and protection mechanisms across the Gaza Strip.

UN Women support to Mehwar Centre and Nablus Safe House

Mehwar Retreat highlights the dignity and human rights of sheltered women

On 4 and 5 December, Mehwar Centre organized its annual retreat that aimed at strengthening team spirit and building on the work of Mehwar staff in dealing with cases of violence against women. Supported by UN Women, the retreat was facilitated by Najmoldolok Ibrahim, former director of Mehwar, and Dr. Mahmoud Baidoun. The main focus of the retreat was on the relation between Mehwar staff and women beneficiaries, notably in improving access of women to the center's services, ensuring respect of human rights and increasing the engagement and participation of women beneficiaries in Mehwar's daily life. The retreat has proved to be a successful tool in releasing pressure of staff in addition to re-analyzing cases, opening discussions about critical issues encountered during the year and adapting the response plan according to experiences and lesson learnt.

ZOOMING IN

Standardizing sheltering services in Palestine

Mehwar was the first comprehensive multi-purpose center in Palestine combining prevention, protection, empowerment and community-awareness activities, while offering social, psychological, and legal counselling services, in addition to being a shelter for women victims of violence and their children. Established with the support of the Italian Cooperation in 2007 and implemented by UN Women until 2012. The Center aims to set professional, human-right based standards for protection policies and services addressing women and children victims of violence, and advocate for the adoption of national policies and laws to ensure women and girls victims of violence have the right to live in safety and dignity. The Mehwar Centre has become the model for sheltering services in Palestine and, through the development of standards, is now being used by the Ministry of Social Affairs in up-scaling other shelters in the West Bank. Since 2013, Mehwar Centre, along with the Nablus shelter run by the NGO Family Defense Society and the only other anti-violence center in the West Bank providing long-term sheltering services, are supported by UN Women through the funding of the Government of Iceland. UN Women is also working with MoSA and the Mehwar staff on developing reintegration strategies that are fully supportive of women's empowerment and self-determination.

"Prior to the establishment of Mehwar, we could not provide protection services to women victims of violence. The only available alternative to protecting women was to place them in female prisons, mental hospitals, institutions that have protected hostels, or to temporarily place them with host families. Mehwar Centre was instrumental in providing the necessary means for protection."
(interview with a senior official at MoSA – Mehwar Evaluation Report)



Read also: Mehwar Evaluation in Publications
Read also: Story from the field

Spring Forward for Women Programme

Leadership of political parties gathers in a groundbreaking conference on political participation

Under UN Women's "Spring Forward for Women" Programme, funded by the European Union and UN Women, The General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW) held a national conference which called together representatives of all political parties (affiliated with the PLO), from the leadership to the base, as well as women's organizations, civil society, unions, student councils and ministries. The 150 participants at the Conference discussed the review of the by-laws of 9 political parties and engaged a large debate on what has to be changed in order to increase women's political participation within political parties' leadership structures and base. The 2nd session of the Conference was dedicated to the presentation of the recommendations and the way forward following the workshops – 5 focus groups of 40 to 60 people each drawn from political parties, ministries, student and teacher unions - were organized by GUPW across Palestine on gender issues related to political participation (review of internal by-law, elections, laws) during the past 2 months. The recommendations will serve the caucus



to be established to feed into the development of a media and advocacy strategy aimed at changing perceptions and stereotypes on women's political participation, and will be discussed within political parties themselves to initiate action and change. According to participants, the Conference managed for the first time to join leadership and base of all PLO political parties at once, as well as civil society, unions and government to discuss reviving and energizing political participation in general as well as women's political participation more specifically.

The Central Election Commission organizes its first "BRIDGE" training on Legal Reform and Electoral Law in Palestine

Following the recent signing of an agreement with UN Women in the framework of the "Spring Forward for Women" Programme, funded by the EU and UN Women, the Central Election Commission organized a 4-day "BRIDGE" workshop in Ramallah on Legal Reform and Electoral Law for 22 participants from various CSOs in the West Bank. A similar training workshop on elections and gender based on the "BRIDGE" methodology was organized for 22 participants in the Gaza Strip. The aim of this training is to raise awareness on elections among CSOs and increase women's awareness of their roles and electoral rights. Resulting from the trainings, 2 participants were accredited local facilitators for "BRIDGE" trainings in the West Bank.

Partners coordination meeting in the Gaza Strip

On 2 December, the first coordination meeting in Gaza took place for the "Spring Forward for Women" Programme, funded by the EU and UN Women. The Programme partners who met for the first time in Gaza included the Women's Affairs Technical Committee (WATC), the General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW), Al Mahatta Gallery and the Palestinian Association for Development and Heritage Protection (PADHP)- Al Mahatta Gallery's counterpart in the Gaza Strip. During the meeting, UN Women gave a presentation on the Spring Forward Programme and its objectives whereby it provided general guidelines related to the implementation of the programme. Each of the partners presented their interventions under the Programme highlighting successes and challenges. A general discussion took place among partners on networking and coordination of interventions. Successful examples were mentioned in relation to the current coordination between the GUPW and WATC. A similar coordination meeting was held in November for the West Bank Programme partners.

Financing for Gender Equality Programme

Roundtable meeting on Gender Responsive Budgeting to strengthen governmental capacity

On 5 and 6 December, UN Women's offices in the Arab region co-organized a roundtable meeting on Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) under the Financing for Gender Equality Programme funded by the European Union. Jordan, Palestine, Iraq, Libya, Bahrain and Yemen were chosen as focus countries for the roundtable as per their work on GRB. The event provided an opportunity for all participants to expand upon regional approaches (i.e. Egypt and Morocco) that succeeded in implementing peer-learning and increase capacity in adapting GRB tools; and thus increase national governmental institutions' understanding, implementation and advocacy on GRB approaches in their national context. The roundtable convened about 50 participants from national women organizations, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Planning, General Budget Department, other related ministries, national bureau of statistics and UN Women staff from each country. From Palestine Mr. Bassam Abu Rabee, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Ms. Lamis Hantouli from MIFTAH, as well as two staff members from UN Women office in Palestine participated in the roundtable meeting.

Development of the Gender Charter in the Local Aid Coordination Structure

Under the auspices of the Ministry of Planning (MoPAD), Ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA), UN Women and Local Aid Coordination Structure (LACS), the four members of the Gender Charter Steering Committee, a consultation workshop was held on the 25th of November with the donors to discuss the development of a gender charter in the local aid coordination structure. This workshop follows on a series of consultations organized with national partners and civil society actors. The workshop allowed discussion on how best gender equality and women's empowerment could be addressed and mainstreamed in the local aid coordination structure. The Charter is expected to be finalized and shared with key stakeholders during December.

UN Coordination

UN Interagency Gender Task Force holds its first retreat

Gender Task Force focal points gathered on 5 December in Jericho for a one day retreat to identify priorities for the GTF in the upcoming three years, in alignment to the first ever Palestine UNDAF. The main priorities identified were the implementation of the gender equality objectives of the UNDAF, improving coordination with internal and external UN partners and promoting the role of the GTF in advocating and communicating gender priorities. Among the participants, two of the GTF in Gaza were present at the retreat and supported the discussions on exploring ways to improving coordination of GTF actions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. A follow-up meeting will be held for the GTF gender focal points in the Gaza Strip to share the recommendations of the retreat and further discuss the identified priorities. The action plan of the GTF informed by the discussions of the retreat will be finalized in January and presented for endorsement by the UNCT.

Promoting the participation of women's organizations in the humanitarian coordination structure

Following the workshop organized on 7 October 2013 by OCHA, OHCHR and UN Women with 23 women's organizations in regard to their participation in coordination structures in Gaza, participants agreed on the need to improve information sharing and inclusion of women's organizations in humanitarian coordination structures in Gaza. During the meeting, participants expressed a unanimous feeling of lack of focus and inclusion of gender priorities and women's organizations in the work of clusters and sectors. In follow-up on the workshop participating organizations and UN agencies will explore possible ways of engagement and cooperation in cluster and sector working group. A follow-up meeting will take place to develop further a gender agenda in humanitarian action.

New training on HIV/AIDS and Gender Mainstreaming



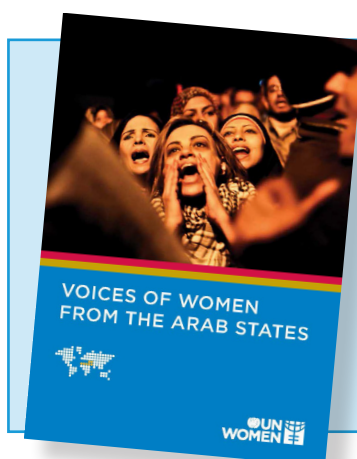
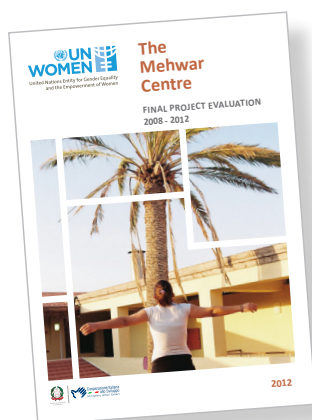
As part of its approach and methodology to integrate gender within the political and social context in Palestine to advance the recognition and enjoyment of women's rights, UN Women has recently partnered with UNDP under its HIV/AIDS programme to deliver training on Gender Mainstreaming. The training focuses on gender inequality and women's rights abuse in relation to HIV/AIDS. The methodology of gender mainstreaming and the rights-based approach to HIV/AIDS is aimed at promoting the integration of gender into HIV response in Palestine. To this end, UN Women delivered 2-day training workshops on Gender Mainstreaming and HIV/AIDS in the West Bank to a group of professionals drawn from the Ministry of Health, the National AIDS Committee, local public health NGOs and UN agencies involved in the HIV/AIDS programmes. The training is planned to take place in Gaza during January 2014.

PUBLICATIONS

Final Evaluation of the Mehwar Project 2008-2012

Despite global efforts from both governmental and non-governmental actors to promote gender equality and women's empowerment violence against women remains a widespread human rights violation, and regrettably the least prosecuted crime all over the world. The UN General Assembly in its Resolution 65/187 on the "Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women" has urged States Members to adopt a "systematic, comprehensive, multi-sectoral and sustained approach" also through establishing "integrated centers" where sheltering, psycho-social and legal support services, in addition to health care and economic empowerment of women victims, are provided.

The evaluation report demonstrates how the Mehwar Centre project has successfully delivered integrated anti-violence services to women and children victims of violence, as well as prevention services to families in distress and to the community at large. It highlights more particularly how the project has gone far beyond the initial project framework and significantly influenced the policy level, playing an important role in the development of national systems, standards and regulations not only in the field of social protection, but also in relation to women's security and access to justice.



UN Women Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS) has released its first ever success stories publication "Voices of Women from the Arab States". The publication is a compilation of true stories where the work and dedication of UN Women Projects and people in UN Women ROAS country offices made a distinctive difference in the lives of women all over the Arab World.

The United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women 2013 Call for Proposals

The United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women is accepting applications for its 18th grant cycle (2013) from civil society organizations and networks — including non-governmental, women's and community-based organizations and coalitions, and operational research institutions — government authorities, and UN Country Teams (in partnership with governments and civil society organizations). Applicants are invited to submit grant proposals for a minimum of US\$50,000 up to a maximum of US\$1 million for a period of two to three years. The application deadline is 22 January 2014. The complete Call for Proposals detailing criteria, eligibility requirements and application guidelines is available at: <http://grants.unwomen.org/> or via the UN Women homepage.

Scholarships for KIT Masters programs and short courses - deadline 4 February 2014

The Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) Master's program is offering for number of its courses scholarships from the Netherlands Fellowship Programme (NFP). The NFP application for the Masters and advanced courses is now open. Applicants from [NFP countries](#) are strongly encouraged to apply.

Application procedure: Applicants must apply at KIT for admission to the course. Application deadline: **10 January 2014**. Apply for the NFP Scholarship separately at [Nuffic](#). Application deadline: **4 February 2014**.

For more information and details on the scholarship: [Nuffic NFP website](#) & [NFP countries](#).

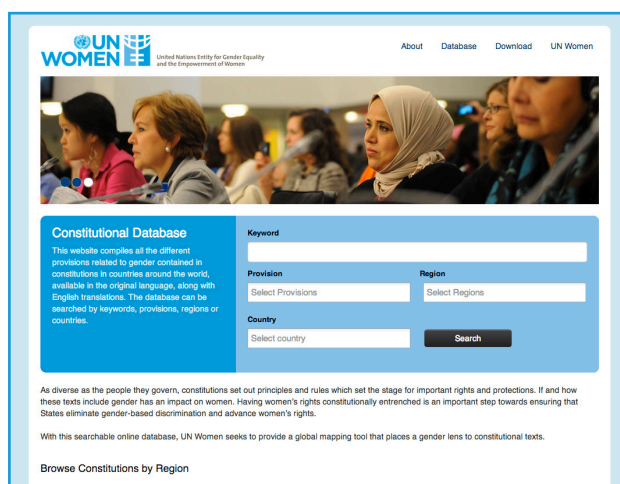
The United Nations General Assembly adopts the first resolution on protecting women's human rights defenders

During its 68th session the United Nations 3 Committee of the General Assembly adopted a resolution on protecting women's human rights defenders. The resolution calls on states to prevent and adopt laws and policies against violations and abuses against women human rights defenders and ensure, among others, the effective participation of women human rights defenders in all initiatives.

Launching of the first searchable database on constitutions through a gender lens

On 13 December, UN Women launched a [Constitutional Database](#). The database was developed with a generous contribution from the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and it is the first searchable database that compiles different provisions related to gender in the constitutions of countries around the world.

The provisions are grouped into 16 categories that were decided upon by looking at the content of these provisions from a human rights perspective. These provisions include equality; non-discrimination; rights of women; public authorities, institutions and services; political participation and freedom of association; citizenship and nationality; education; employment; equal before the law; marriage and family life; status of religious/customary law; status of international law (including human rights law); limitations and derogations; general human rights duties; right to property/inheritance; and reproductive rights.



The screenshot shows the UN Women Constitutional Database website. At the top, there is a header with the UN Women logo and navigation links: About, Database, Download, and UN Women. Below the header is a large image of a group of women. The main content area is titled 'Constitutional Database' and includes a description: 'This website compiles all the different provisions related to gender contained in constitutions in countries around the world, available in the original language, along with English translations. The database can be searched by keywords, provisions, regions or countries.' Below this description is a search form with fields for 'Keyword', 'Provision' (with a 'Select Provisions' dropdown), 'Region' (with a 'Select Regions' dropdown), and 'Country' (with a 'Select country' dropdown). A 'Search' button is located to the right of the Country field. At the bottom of the page, there is a link to 'Browse Constitutions by Region'.

STORY FROM THE FIELD

Coming from a village close to Hebron, May was 19 years old when her family threatened to kill her. She needed protection and arrived at the Mehwar Centre for the Protection and Empowerment of Women and Families. May was one of the early arrivals. She was the second woman sheltered at the Mehwar Centre, which opened in Bethlehem in 2007. Her transformation from a survivor of violence to that of a self-confident and educated woman was shaped in many ways by her stay at the Centre.

It took more than a year for May to open up to the Mehwar team. Women subjected to sexual abuse within the family at a very young age suffer deep emotional and relational damage. One of the most difficult things for them is to rebuild a sense of self-worth. They put up protective borders in social and affective relationships to prevent themselves from being re-victimized.

For May the staff's persistent support helped her to open up and reveal her horrifying story of abuse and violence perpetrated first within her family and then the community.

According to a 2011 survey of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) [i] 37 per cent of married women are exposed to violence by their husbands and 30 per cent of unmarried women between 18-64 years of age reported being exposed to physical violence and 26 per cent had experienced psychological violence.

The Mehwar Centre offers a space where women victims of violence can feel safe and access services needed to deal with their trauma. "The center offers activities that enhance women's awareness of their legal rights, and about social and health issues," explains Maysoon Ramadan, director of the Mehwar Centre. "It helps them increase their skills

and knowledge about resources available, which is something they lack prior to entering the center. Rehabilitation and vocational courses are also implemented to assist the women in acquiring skills to be fit for new job opportunities after leaving the center."

The road to rehabilitation and empowerment is a long one, and for many like May, studying was not an easy option. At first, May did not want to study, lacking concentration and discipline. Her psychological and emotional balance was precarious. But slowly she was persuaded to attend a one-year course for medical secretaries. But unsure whether she would be able to find a job with her current qualification and in need of financial security, she started working in a shop to earn some money. Even when she left the shelter, the Mehwar team continued to work with her. Focusing on her protection and reintegration within her community and family, they began a long and hard negotiation and a careful rapprochement which finally convinced May's father that the best thing for his daughter and for the family's credibility was to give

May a chance to get an education and a qualified job. He agreed to let May enroll in a nursing course in the Caritas Baby Hospital in Bethlehem while living at a students' house under the supervision of the Mehwar team.

Throughout her two years of studies, the Mehwar team continued to offer May not only psycho-social support and a safe place to go to any time she needed, but they also helped her financially by paying her tuition fees and supporting her boarding fees at the students' house. Finally, May graduated as a nurse.

On her graduation day, May smiled with tears brimming in her eyes, as stated proudly, "Now it is time for me to go to University". Her journey had just begun.

