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COORDINATION FOR GENDER RESULTS

One of the core functions of UN Women is to lead, promote and coordinate efforts to advance the full realization of women's rights and opportunities within the UN system. Under this mandate, UN Women works to drive a more effective and efficient UN system through coordination and strategic partnerships. To this end, UN Women supports the resident coordinator system, maximizing comparative advantages and complementing the work of other United Nations entities, while stressing that the establishment of UN Women does not relieve any other part of the UN system of their responsibilities regarding gender equality and women's empowerment.

Working with UN Habitat

Bringing safety for women and girls in urban areas

While urban areas can provide avenues for socio-economic empowerment and growth, they can also create new vulnerabilities and safety issues for women and girls. Over the years, UN Women and UN Habitat have taken up this challenge globally, working together so that women, men, girls and boys all benefit from safe and sustainable urban environments. One of the most acclaimed examples of this partnership has been the [Safe Cities/Safer Cities](#) approach.

In line with this global strategic partnership and the positive outcomes already witnessed in other countries, UN Habitat and UN Women offices in Palestine have initiated discussions to explore opportunities for cooperation and coordination within their programmes as a way to improve Palestinian women and girls' lives. In March, UN Women's Gender Mainstreaming Officer participated in UN Habitat's office retreat to discuss the need to integrate a gender perspective in their activities and how specific policies and programmes can achieve gender equality and women's empowerment. Both agencies are now looking forward to expanding their partnership to ensure that urban planning and development in Palestine benefits all.

Working with FAO:

Women at the forefront of agriculture programmes

At the beginning of April 2014, FAO conducted a 4-day training for its Gaza programme staff to explore gender issues and concepts, as well as mainstreaming approaches and strategies. The training, developed jointly by UN Women and FAO, is directly tailored to FAO's agriculture projects' needs and is a direct follow-up to the recommendations of the gender assessment that UN Women conducted for the FAO office here in 2012. The training is intended to bolster FAO's work with Palestinian farmers, to ensure that interventions support the empowerment of women farmers as much as men farmers.

"Just giving women the same access as men to agricultural resources could increase production on women's farms in developing countries by 20 to 30 percent. This could raise total agricultural production in developing countries by 2.5 to 4 percent, which could in turn reduce the number of hungry people in the world by 12 to 17 percent, or 100 to 150 million people"

FAO, 2011, based on [The State of Food and Agriculture report](#).

Why gender matters in agriculture in Palestine?

The contribution of Palestinian women in agriculture is often under-reported. In Palestine, women's employment remains highly concentrated in two sectors, one of which is agriculture. Indeed 22.2% of Palestinian women in the formal labour force work in agriculture. Agriculture remains dominated by informal work as well as lack of security and benefits. The 2008 PCBS survey on the informal sector revealed that nearly 77% of the people working in the informal sector were in agriculture. According to the 2013 PCBS labour survey, the majority of the women working in agriculture are classified as "unpaid family members", which reflects that while women work, they do not have access to an independent income nor do they control or own agricultural assets. Lack of social protection, security, independent income, access to land, ownership and funding significantly constrain the potential for rural women's empowerment and a way out of poverty.

UN Women's mandate on engendering humanitarian response

UN Women's engagement in humanitarian action aims to ensure consistency and sustainability in addressing gender equality concerns across the humanitarian-development continuum as well as to improve awareness and commitment, enhance capacity and strengthen partnerships with national entities, civil society, regional institutions and the international humanitarian system. UN Women applies its corporate approaches to this area of work, namely:

- Working for and within a coherent UN system, using core comparative advantages, and complementing the work of other UN entities
- Promoting accountability, transparency and performance measured by results and outcomes;
- Being a strong advocate for the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment, and ensuring a strong voice for women and girls so that they can continue to shape the decisions that impact all areas of their lives;
- Generating knowledge and acting as a global broker of knowledge and experience, and sharing lessons learned on aligning practice with normative guidance.

Working with OCHA

Making gender visible in humanitarian action

Working on gender issues within the humanitarian context is a challenge since more often than not, "gender" is perceived as belonging solely to the development realm. Crises are not gender neutral and as such, humanitarian action cannot be either. Indeed, on 17 March, on the occasion of the launch of the 2014 Strategic Response Plan, Mr. James Rawley, as Humanitarian Coordinator, expressed concerns that less than 1% of the total budgets of humanitarian appeals for the occupied Palestinian territory in the last 3 years were devoted to projects whose purpose was intended to address gender-based discrimination and advance gender equality.

The UN Women office in the oPt has been working for several years to bring gender equality dimensions into humanitarian programming, response and assistance. Most notably, in response to the Israeli military operation Cast Lead, UN Women worked with the UN Country Team and the Humanitarian Country Team to produce a [guidebook](#) for humanitarian actors in addressing these needs. To ensure that gender equality commitments and dimensions are adopted and implemented in humanitarian programming, response and assistance, as well as in humanitarian structures, UN Women works within the UN system and the humanitarian coordination structure to support/provide gender expertise. In addition, UN Women works with civil society organizations to enhance their capacities and opportunities to engage in the humanitarian programme cycle.

Since 2013, UN Women office in oPt has strengthened its engagement and support in the humanitarian planning process, working in close partnership with OCHA, making available its in-house expertise and facilitating the deployment of a Gender Advisor to OCHA, with funding from the Governments of Spain and Canada, to support the new Humanitarian Programming Cycle.

[Read more:](#) Q&A with Nisreen Alami, Humanitarian Gender Advisor

Working with WFP

Engaging women to tackle food insecurity

UN Women office in the oPt has recently provided support to WFP for the development of training material on gender. In March and April 2014, WFP conducted a country-wide gender sensitization training in Palestine, with sessions tailored to address specific needs of the different departments and staff. For WFP, reaching gender equality is a key principle towards eradicating hunger and poverty, and the initiative falls directly within the development of a country gender strategy, which will operationalize WFP's corporate gender strategy in the oPt. Key and concrete recommendations, that will be used to inform the gender strategy, arose from the workshop, ranging from institutional support for women in leadership to the strengthening of WFP gender assessment tools, or reinforcing the commitment to gender-positive and family-friendly work policies.

WHAT'S FOR?

The Inter-Agency Gender Task Force (GTF)

The UN Inter-Agency Gender Task Force (GTF) is the country-level mechanism charged with integrating gender concerns into UN policies, programs, projects and activities and into those of their counterpart organizations. Bringing together the Gender Focal Points of the UN agencies operating in the occupied Palestinian territory, UN Women coordinates the GTF in its capacity as the UN entity mandated to lead, coordinate and promote the accountability of the UN system in its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Since 2007, UN Women has systematically consolidated the role of the GTF and Gender Focal Points. This has been achieved by providing training, ensuring proper networking and information exchange, and strengthening the relationship with the Ministry of Women's Affairs, as well as ensuring that the GTF plays a prominent role in its support to the UN Country Team (UNCT) on gender equality and women's empowerment, as notably demonstrated through its engagement in the UNDAF development process.

One of the tasks for the GTF this year is to ensure that UN joint programmes and initiatives, particularly those emanating from the UNDAF are gender mainstreamed.



Q&A with ...

NISREEN ALAMI,
Humanitarian Gender
Advisor

Why does gender matter in the humanitarian response?

Gender matters in humanitarian response because it helps various actors recognize the different approaches and interventions required in order to meet the needs of men, women, boys and girls in different contexts. We all know that people live different realities and have access to different resources and information due to their sex, age, and their physical abilities. Roles assigned by society to men and women within the family are central determinants of their realities as well as their experiences of conflict, humanitarian crises and emergencies. Protecting children will not be effective if we don't ask who cares for children, responding to restrictions in access to healthcare should identify who cares for the sick and elderly, addressing income based food insecurity requires that we know who carries out work for free, and who is facing multiple barriers to finding work or accessing their land. In addition, humanitarian response has the obligation to be proactive in addressing harmful impact of the conflict on gender equality such as the rise in gender based violence, or the increase in school drop out for boys and girls.

What do we mean by mainstreaming gender in humanitarian response and assistance?

What we seek to achieve is to support the achievement of the objectives of the oPt Strategic Response Plan (SRP) and the sector plans by ensuring gender sensitive results. This requires efforts at various levels. Primarily, working throughout the humanitarian programming cycle to ensure that gender gaps are identified and addressed in the definition of the strategic objectives of the SRP, the sector strategies, project design and implementation. Another level of work pertains to strengthening coordination around gender issues in country processes as well as at the cluster level. Thirdly, working to improve availability of gender sensitive data and analysis on the "hidden" gender differentiated experiences of the conflict. And finally, advocating for increased funding towards gender sensitive humanitarian interventions.

How are we doing this?

In the oPt this year, we are seeing progress. Gender issues are receiving significant focus in country and sector coordination processes. The close collaboration between UN Women and OCHA will continue to improve that. Also, there are serious efforts to ensure that needs assessments and research carried out by various humanitarian actors contributes to addressing the data gaps around gender differentiated needs. There is clear emphasis on strengthening accountability to gender equality given that the oPt 2014 SRP has introduced a number of performance indicators related to gender. In addition, analyzing the data from the application of the gender marker to the projects under the humanitarian programme. Finally, there is an ongoing dialogue with gender advocates from UN agencies, AIDA, national NGOs on ways to ensure their effective participation in humanitarian processes. I believe more can be done in engaging donors to increase funding for gender focused programming and also in working with key humanitarian partners to identify areas to improve project design, targeting and criteria for identifying beneficiaries which are sometimes gender biased.

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Paving the road ahead of Beijing +20 and the final negotiations on the post-2015 agenda

Outcomes of the 58th Commission on the Status of Women



Photo: UN Women

After two weeks of intense discussions, the 58th session of the Commission on the Status of Women closed on a positive note with the adoption of the [agreed conclusions](#) on the “Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the MDGs for women and girls”.

The outcome document urges States to tackle critical remaining challenges through a transformative and comprehensive approach, with a direct call for empowerment of women and women’s human rights to be reflected in a stand-alone goal in the new post-2015 development agenda, and to be integrated through targets and indicators into all goals of any new development framework.

Progress has not been enough - Despite achievements in some areas, progress remains slow and uneven. Historically and structurally unequal power relations between men and women have continued to hold back progress. Additionally, the lack of prioritization and sufficient funding for gender equality and women’s empowerment persist.

All critical issues must be addressed - The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) failed to directly address critical issues related to gender equality and the empowerment of women, such as violence against women and girls; child, early and forced marriage; women’s and girls’ disproportionate share of unpaid work; women’s access to decent work; women’s access to, control and ownership of assets and productive resources; women’s sexual and reproductive health; accountability for violations of human rights; and women’s full and equal participation in decision-making, among others.

Empowerment of women is crucial for realizing the MDGs - Empowerment of women is a critical factor in the achievement of the MDGs and inequality is a concern for all countries, with multiple implications for the realization of the economic, social and cultural rights of women and girls. Women’s poverty is directly related to the absence of economic opportunities and autonomy, lack of access to economic and productive resources, to quality education and support services and women’s minimal participation in decision making processes. Women’s poverty and lack of empowerment, as well as their exclusion from social and economic policies, can place them at risk of violence.

Call for action - The agreed conclusions call for the full realization of women’s and girls’ human rights; strengthening an enabling environment; maximizing investments in gender equality and the empowerment of women; strengthening the evidence-base for gender equality and the empowerment of women; and ensuring women’s participation and leadership at all levels in public and private sectors.

LAST MINUTE ...

- On 7 April 2014, the Palestinian Cabinet endorsed the Cross-Sectoral National Gender Strategy 2014-2016 – Learn more about the strategy in our next issue.
- In 2013, the FPU handled 3,662 cases, an increase of over 52% from 2011, when UN Women began its work with these units – Learn more in our next newsletter issue, with an exclusive interview with the Head of the FPU Units.

Who are they? What to do? Where to go? A database orients support to women members of local councils

When UN Women and the Women's Affairs Technical Committee (WATC) started their preparations for trainings to empower women members of local councils, they were confronted with an unexpected obstacle: there was no information on women members of local councils. Who are they? What do they want? What obstacles do they face? Driven by these questions, WATC, with support from UN Women under the EU-funded Spring Forward Programme, undertook a comprehensive mapping of these women to develop the first database on women members of local councils. The database encompasses key information on all women members of local councils, a total of 640 in the West Bank alone.

For more information, kindly contact WATC at [02 298 6497](tel:02-298-6497)

Doing better for women survivors of violence: UN Women contributes to the establishment of specialized groups of prosecutors and lawyers on violence against women

On 1st April, the Attorney General Office appointed 15 prosecutors specialized in dealing with cases of domestic violence and violence against women across the West Bank. These prosecutors will now be solely responsible for handling all cases of domestic violence and violence against women. These prosecutors were chosen from a pool of prosecutors who received tailored training through the UN Women Access to Justice programme, funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID). Furthermore, in parallel, UN Women conducted intensive, 3-month specialized training on violence against women for 20 lawyers – 10 women and 10 men – from the Palestinian Bar Association.

[Read more](#): Story from the field: From pleading to advocating.

Fund for Gender Equality: Giving grants to support Palestinian women's contribution to community development

Dalia Association was selected in 2012 by the UN Women Global Fund for Gender Equality, for a two-year project aimed at boosting women's participation in public life. Recently, Dalia Association selected 12 projects of community-based women organizations in the West Bank that will receive grants to promote and support local development priorities in their respective communities. Through this project, Dalia is not only supporting the participation of women as active agents for development, but also, enhancing the capacities of women organizations in managing programmes, and increasing the impact and sustainability of their projects.

PYALARA opens the debate: What's post-2015 and why should we care about it?



On 23 March, PYALARA kicked off its post-2015 media campaign with a special edition of its weekly TV talk show "Alli Sotak" on Palestine TV. UN Women was invited to the show as a special guest to discuss development priorities and women's empowerment, as well as a co-sponsor, with UNDP, of the campaign. Aimed at raising awareness and boosting participation of Palestinians in the debate on priorities for the post-2015 development agenda, the campaign was initiated by the UN Women Civil Society Advisory Group and will run until June/July. Through the street vox-pop, the show clearly demonstrated how the Palestinian public is far from the global debate, but also how much they care to have their voices heard. Education and violence emerged as recurrent priorities. The post-2015 discussions are a great opportunity for governments, organizations, civil society and individual citizens to participate in a global dialogue. One of the objectives of the campaign is notably to raise participation in the [My World Survey](#), as a tool for engagement and participation, which can reflect people's priorities and have their voices matter. To see current results in Palestine, click [here](#).

Watch PYALARA show on post-2015 [here](#).

GET TO KNOW ...



[Kharas Sabaya Centre](#) is located in Kharas village in the Hebron Governorate. Reflecting back on 8 years of intensive work experience, the Centre is proud of the range of services and products it offers today, which have helped it to fully sustain itself. If you are visiting Kharas village or need catering for your events in Hebron, do not hesitate to call the Kharas Sabaya Centre. You will be amazed by the quality and professionalism of their services and we highly recommend their pastries, sweets, dried herbs, jams, and pickles. There, you can also find Palestinian handicrafts such as embroidery and gift baskets produced and sold by the women of the Centre. And, if you need a new "make-over", the Centre has recently opened its own hair salon to diversify even more its range of activities.

Contact Kharas Sabaya Center at [0569226656](tel:0569226656)

Women’s Access to Justice and Security,

UN Women Fact Sheet, April 2014



The rule of law, a cornerstone of good governance and democracy in any society, requires that laws are in place to hold everyone to account without bias or discrimination. However, when it comes to women, the rule of law is lacking. Women's lack of confidence in the justice system stems from their unfair experiences.

In the State of Palestine, women and girls experience multi-layered forms of discrimination and violence due to both external factors such as the Israeli occupation, and internal factors such as tradition, religion, and normative gender conservatism. Rights violations occur in the private, as well as in the public sphere, affecting marriage/divorce, child custody, reproductive health and domestic violence, access to education, and economic rights, including the right to decent work and to inherit and control land and other productive resources. Making the rule of law a reality for women poses challenges at every stage: from inadequate and gender-biased legal frameworks, to ineffective implementation of laws and constitutional guarantees, from lack of accountability/oversight systems to gender-blind budgets and infrastructures. The “justice chain”, the series of steps that a person has to take to access the formal justice system, often breaks down for women. This is mainly due to lack of capacity within the justice and security sectors, discriminatory attitudes of service providers, and a lack of coordination of the barriers women face because of socio-political constraints, poverty and insufficient awareness. A high level of under-reporting and attrition impacts women's criminal justice cases.

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Making the rule of law work for women poses challenges at every stage, whether it is inadequate and gender-biased legal frameworks, ineffective implementation of laws, lack of accountability/oversight systems, or gender-blind budgets and infrastructure. The “justice chain”, which is the series of steps that a person undertakes to access the formal justice system, often breaks down for women. This is mainly due to lack of capacity within the justice and security sectors, discriminatory attitudes of service providers, barriers that women face because of socio-political constraints, poverty and insufficient awareness. Additionally, high levels of under-reporting and attrition impact women's criminal justice cases.

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Read the report [here](#)

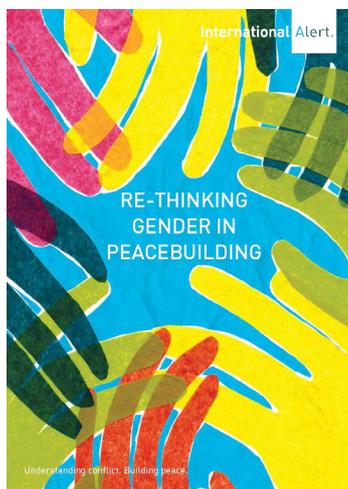
Measuring women’s empowerment and social transformation in the post-2015 agenda

OECD Development Centre, March 2014

As the development community takes stock of progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the gender gaps that still compromise women's rights and hinder their empowerment take centre stage. The question now is: how can we catalyze transformative change that can empower women and girls effectively and sustainably?

This report proposes that gender equality must be anchored front and centre of the post-2015 development framework and that only by tackling discriminatory social norms will we enable transformative change that empowers women to shape their own lives. Progress on data collection in recent years has allowed for proper assessment of social norms. The report outlines a set of transformative indicators under six key measurement areas that, taken together, would track changes in social norms that signal the growing empowerment of women and girls.

Read the report [here](#)



What do we mean by gender? Calling for a re-think on gender in peacebuilding

International Alert, March 2014

Re-thinking gender in peacebuilding highlights the need for a ‘gender-relational’ approach. This means not just moving away from equating gender with only women and girls, but also examining the complex relationships between gender and other aspects of people's identities, such as age, social class, sexuality, disability, ethnic or religious background, marital status and where they live. The report shows numerous possibilities for what a gender-relational approach can mean in practice and highlights the complexities of addressing gender identities and dynamics in peacebuilding – at the personal, local, national and international level.

Read the report [here](#)

FROM PLEADING TO ADVOCATING

How a group of lawyers came to join the fight to end violence against women and girls

It is a busy day at the Palestinian Bar Association. People rush in the corridors, going in and out to attend court sessions. It is Monday and Mondays are the day of court hearings. But today, a group of lawyers stands in a room, waiting patiently to tell a story. They are the first group of specialized lawyers on violence against women. Their story is about how a simple training went beyond classical learning and capacity building to change their perceptions and their lives; they hope it will change the lives of others as well.

At first glance, it seems simple: a group of lawyers attend a training to better understand violence against women, respond to the needs of women victims and survivors of violence and help them in accessing due process in line with their rights. However, in a context where 29.9% and 51% of ever-married women in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip respectively declare having been subjected to a form of violence within their household, while 65.3% of the women exposed to violence by their husbands prefer to remain silent [1], the story cannot be simple. Despite the fact that they had actually come across cases of domestic violence, the busy lawyers did not initially feel that they need to learn specific skills to deal with them. So, why enroll in a training that keeps you behind closed doors and away from your family most weekends for 3 months?

For most of the lawyers, the motive was career development. Ayman was not so interested in women's issues at the beginning: "I enrolled mainly with the idea that it will improve my economic situation" he tells us as he enters the room, but then he goes on to say: "still, attending the sessions, I understood quickly the importance of this work. I learnt about the situation of women, discrimination against them in society, the law and the justice system. My perspective started to change." And that is the story lawyers came to tell that day: "a change and restructuring of perspectives."

Amani says: "As a woman, I started reflecting on how we are

brought up, our education and why we remain silent in cases of violence. Among ourselves as women, during the sessions, we saw the distress that surrounds these issues that we all come across in our personal lives."

According to the lawyers, the training deepened their knowledge of laws, both national and international, and how to use them in courts. It also improved their understanding of how to deal with women victims of violence and address sensitive issues. There has already been a direct impact on their work, with the use of new tools, skills and knowledge in court. But what they mostly talked about is how the training went further than enhancing their skills and competencies, how it built their strength as individuals and as a group to bring about change. Fouad says: "A lot changed for me... I am now helping my wife. Things I was not doing before. You know, we live in a patriarchal society", he said partly as a joke, partly seriously.

"Vocabulary is crucial and the training really helped me to become conscious of this, most notably, our day-to-day expressions. These expressions have connotations and they reflect the traditions and norms we have inherited. Now I am talking about violence against women all the time, not only in court but also among my immediate circle of family and friends to the extent that my family asked me to stop because I seem to be obsessing about it" says Amani, while her other colleagues in the room wait impatiently to speak.

Listening to these lawyers, one perceives a new sense of commitment and responsibility, not only to ensure that women access their rights and that perpetrators are held accountable, but, as a group of advocates, to bring about change to their world and society. "Look at the PBA" says Fouad, "it starts here too. There is only 1 woman out of the 15 members of the PBA board". The others agree. This, somehow, is reflecting one of the most important lessons they learnt from the training: change comes from the inside.

[1] Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2012), Violence Survey in Palestine Society 2011. Ramallah.