



IN BRIEF



# GENDER EQUALITY IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION AND CRISIS RESPONSE IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY (OPT)

Photo © UN Women/Ahed Izhiman

## What's the issue?

In the oPt, the humanitarian context remains largely tied to the impact of the occupation, which marked its 52nd year in 2019. A protracted protection crisis with grave humanitarian consequences continues and as a result, roughly 2.5 million people will need some form of humanitarian assistance in 2019.

The humanitarian crisis affects women, girls, boys and men differently. As a result, their needs and interests differ, as do their resources, capacities and coping strategies. Women are often the first responders to a crisis, and they play a central role in the survival and resilience of families and communities.

Responding to those needs relies on the continued efforts by humanitarian partners to ensure the protection of all members of the affected population and to guarantee that humanitarian response contributes to gender equality and addresses the needs and priorities of women, men, girls, and boys equitably and effectively.

The UN Economic and Social Council adopted resolutions E/RES/2012/3, E/RES/2013/6 and E/RES/2014/2 in 2012, 2013 and 2014. All three resolutions, recognize that humanitarian action can be strengthened by mainstreaming a gender perspective into all aspects of the humanitarian response. In 2014, resolution E/RES/2014/13 was adopted. It stresses on strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.

## Our Solutions

UN Women is committed to ensuring equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of humanitarian action. Our work in humanitarian action is guided by global norms and standards. Since 2013, collaboration between UN Women and OCHA has facilitated a process for strengthening gender focus in humanitarian action in the oPt. The collaboration between UN Women and OCHA was solidified in 2015 with the formulation of the first two-year joint action plan for mainstreaming gender in humanitarian action in the oPt. The plan was followed by another joint action plan “Strengthened Gender Focus in Humanitarian Action” (2018-2020). While efforts are ongoing to implement the plan, UN Women is also implementing different humanitarian interventions in the West bank and Gaza to support women’s protection from gender-based violence (GBV) and access to quality multi-sectoral services.



Photo: Gender in Humanitarian Action Training by OCHA and UN Women, funded by the Government of Japan © UN Women/Seung Deok Seo



## How We Make a Difference: Step by Step

UN Women's Approach on Gender in Humanitarian Action

### Multi-sectoral and gender responsive services to women and girls affected by conflict

UN Women has worked in partnership with women's organizations and key humanitarian partners to provide immediate and essential services to women and girls affected by conflict in the West Bank and Gaza through ensuring their access to economic opportunities, effective multi-sectoral services, protection mechanisms and empowerment support. Through its operational response, UN Women has also ensured that services are provided to women with disabilities and women internally displaced. Over the years, more than 20,000 women and 5,000 men have benefited from UN Women's interventions.

### Strengthened architecture and accountability on gender equality in oPt humanitarian country team

The partnership between UN Women and OCHA has effectively resulted in mobilizing action, accountability and leadership amongst humanitarian partners for strengthening gender focus in humanitarian coordination in Palestine. This is demonstrated by the increased visibility of gender related needs and concerns, inclusion of gender coordination mechanisms in humanitarian coordination architecture (the Humanitarian Gender Group (HGG)), and increased cluster capacity and response to humanitarian gender priorities.

### Increased capacity of humanitarian partners for mainstreaming gender in humanitarian action

UN Women organizes capacity building activities on a yearly basis that target cluster coordination teams and partners which focused on identifying and responding to cluster specific gender capacity needs (i.e. gender analysis, gender with age marker (GAM), gender in sectoral response). Besides, UN Women supported the clusters develop gender assessments and toolkits to strengthen the gender mainstreaming of cluster responses.

### Content of humanitarian needs overview and response plans better reflects gender priorities and action

UN Women has systematically provided technical support to humanitarian partners over the years to ensure the content of humanitarian needs overview and response plans highlight and address gender concerns. Those improvements are reflected through the inclusion of gender analysis of the impact of the crisis; definition of gender differentiated humanitarian needs; use of sex-disaggregated data; inclusion of gender sensitive performance indicators; prioritizing needs related to GBV, and the expansion of the scope of humanitarian response to include activities that address gender-based vulnerabilities.

### Strengthened participation of women's organizations in humanitarian processes

A number of activities implemented aimed at increasing the participation of women's organizations in humanitarian processes through providing them with information on humanitarian processes and planning cycles, identifying entry points for participation in humanitarian clusters and activities, and advocating for increased financing for humanitarian projects submitted by women's organizations. The result of this outreach to women's organizations was visible in the increased participation of women's organizations in cluster meetings, their inclusion in HCT advocacy activities, and their ability to access funding under the Humanitarian Fund.

### Increased visibility of the needs and rights of Palestinian women and girls in advocacy and communication

A number of resources have been produced targeting the humanitarian country team in order to inform the humanitarian response and highlight gender concerns in advocacy and communications. Resources developed include:

- Caught up between a Rock & a Hard Place: Occupation, Patriarchy and Gender Relations (A Case Study of Palestinian Women in Area C & H2) (2018)
- Gender Alert: A framework of analysis of gender-based vulnerabilities for the humanitarian response (2018)
- Restricted Lives: Women's Voices Under Blockade in Gaza (2017)
- Navigating through Shattered Paths: NGO Service Providers and Women Survivors of Gender-Based Violence in Gaza (2017)
- International Legal Accountability Mechanisms: Palestinian Women Living under occupation (2016)

#### BOX 1. Key partnerships

- The Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and the inter cluster coordination group (ICCG)
- The Humanitarian Gender Group (HGG)
- Humanitarian clusters (Shelter, WASH, Protection (including the GBV sub-cluster), Health, Education, and Food Security)
- National women's rights organizations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

For more information, please visit:

Website: <http://palestine.unwomen.org>

Facebook: <http://facebook.com/unwomenpal>