**“Establishment, Rehabilitation and Activation of Eight Women’s Centres in the Gaza Strip and West Bank”**

**Report of the Final Evaluation**

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# Summary

In March 2009, UN Women received funding from the Saudi Committee for the Palestinian People Relief (SCPPR) to implement a project entitled “Establishment, Rehabilitation and Activation of Eight Women Centres in the Gaza Strip and West Bank”. The Project was conceived through a participatory approach in 2007 and benefitted from the lessons learned and recommendations of an external evaluation of the UN Women’s Sabaya Programme, which had been UN Women’s flagship programme since 2002. The project aimed to achieve the following results over its initially planned period of 18 months, later extended to 43 months:

* Project Goal: “To improve Palestinian women’s social and economic situation through training and development initiatives”.
* Project Outcome: “Women’s empowerment at the social, economic and political level is achieved’’
* Project Outputs: Six key outputs were envisaged, namely:
  + Output 1: Eight women’s community-based centres built or rehabilitated in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The newly constructed/rehabilitated buildings and the equipment and furniture provided to enhance the organisational capacity of women centres by providing them with the physical space needed to provide services to women.
  + Output 2: Women’s managerial and financial capacity built. This is to be done through the provision of trainings to a core group of women in each of the eight centres to enable them to effectively manage the established centres’ operations in accordance with good management practices and in line with the Palestinian laws governing the work of non-governmental associations. This output included the development of financial and administrative management manuals for each of the eight centres.
  + Output 3: A social network among targeted communities and within them established. This is to be done through mobilising women to become members and volunteers in the established centres, and supporting the creation of support networks for the centres’ at the local level.
  + Output 4: Women’s access to services and information (i.e. educational, legal, psycho-social and protection from violence against women) facilitated. This is to be done through training and counselling by external consultants and experts mobilised by implementing partners who would design and implement training programmes in their relevant areas of expertise according to a participatory needs assessment process with women.
  + Output 5: The community-based centres’ internal systems are well-established. This involved providing technical assistance to the eight centres to ensure that they obtain a legal status and work in accordance with local laws. It includes supporting and facilitating the registration with the relevant state authorities, organising elections and establishment of internal management and financial committees.
  + Output 6: Job opportunities for local labour force created. This output was to be realised through the creation of work opportunities in the construction and rehabilitation of women centres for the labourers from the targeted communities, as well as liaising with local implementing partners to employ trained women from the centres.

The external evaluation of the programme was carried out from September to October 2012 by two external consultants, Amer Madi and Shawkat Sarsour. The methodology used in this evaluation combined an initial desk/literature review and interviews with programme stakeholders.

**Findings**

The project documented a generally well-designed and a coherent project rationale and concept which was based on lessons learned and experience from implementing the Sabaya Programme. It responded to several priority areas outlined by UN Women for improving women’s conditions and enhancing institutional mechanisms for the advancement and empowerment of women; particularly: Increasing Women’s Leadership and Participation; Building Strategic Partnerships; and Enhancing Economic Opportunities for Women.

The project is clearly congruent with the Cross-Sectoral National Gender Strategy: Promoting Gender Equality and Equity (2011-2013), which focuses on enabling Palestinian women to enjoy full citizenship rights by bridging the gender gap in different aspects of life. By raising awareness of women on legal issues and building women’s centres capacity to facilitate women’s access to legal services, the project respond to the Cross-Sectoral Strategy’s first strategic objective: enabling women to exercise their legal and civil rights on an equal and equitable basis. Moreover, through strengthening women’s capacity to associate and supporting the establishment of institutional mechanisms for this purpose, the project directly contributes the Strategy’s fifth strategic objective: To facilitate women’s active political involvement and to activate their role in decision-making. It also builds on the National Strategic Plans of the Ministry of Women’s Affairs (MoWA) (2004-2007, 2008-2010, and 2011-2013) and its key areas of concern: women's marginalization in policy and decision-making position; poverty among women; training for girls as a tool for entering job markets; and protecting women against (gender-based) violence.

While it is still too early to objectively measure the impact of the whole project on women’s social and economic empowerment, the evaluation found that the project has made significant progress towards achieving its overall goal and outcome. At several levels, the project has demonstrated how building physical structures to serve as women’s centers can be a very effective entry point in bringing women to work together to improve their conditions. In doing so, UN Women has successfully mobilised external partners and specialists to build in-house capacity to provide the needed social and educational services to women.

As regards to outputs, the evaluation found that the project has met all of its targets. The project has built five buildings (4 in the West Bank and one in Gaza) and rehabilitated three others (all in Gaza) to serve as premises for women’s centres. Demonstrable progress has been achieved in positioning these centres as a well-known address for educational and social service delivery for women, including vulnerable mothers and children. The project has also succeeded in establishing training capacity with the technical facilities and expertise within women’s centres to raise women’s awareness of their rights and advise them on mental health issues. The project has contributed in a visible manner to enhancing women’s self-perception and ability to manage their family affairs, hence giving women the feeling of improved social status and power position. The project promoted and created excellent working relations between the women’s centres and local government officials in the eight targeted communities, thereby strengthening community networks in support of the project’s women’s empowerment agenda.

However, women’s centres still require continued building and strengthening of internal capacities, organisation, expertise and resources to effectively achieve such strategic objectives as improving women’s conditions and livelihoods. A central challenge is the capacity of the centres to generate sustainable income and provide employment opportunities for women. In the case of the established women’s centre’s in the Gaza Strip, further support is required to clarify the relationship between the centres and the CBOs that host them, including decision-making processes. Without further technical support and funding for establishing income generating projects, only half of the eight centres established are expected to be able to maintain some level of activity beyond the project. These centres (Ya’bad, Beit Fajjar, Beit Hanoun and – to a lesser extent – Jourish) do not only have strong and experienced leadership, but also income from social enterprises that were established with the support of UN Women through other projects.

While the project has met its intended target of creating job opportunities in connection with the construction and rehabilitation activities, these have benefitted to men only. Despite the commendable efforts of UN Women to leverage its MDG-F programme to provide training for women from the targeted communities on handicrafts and food processing, this additional support did not encompass the scale or the scope that was need to create sustainable income generating opportunities for women. It is the evaluation team’s opinion that this sub-performance is for a great part due to the fact that the project did not adequately plan, allocate resources or implement activities towards such a result.

**Recommendations**

Given the generally positive findings emerging from the above analysis, the central recommendation of this evaluation is for UN Women to plan for a new phase of the project. This new phase, which the SCRPP is strongly encouraged to support, should maintain the current project’s overall objective of improving women’s economic and social status, while reformulating its outcome and outputs towards greater focus on women’s economic empowerment on the one hand, and to reflect more clearly the specific results that will be achieved and the key performance indicators that will be used to judge the success of the project on the other hand. To this end, the new phase should make provisions not only for establishing new women’s centers, but also to provide additional financial and technical support to income generating projects for women in the eight centres. This, in our opinion, is crucial for the sustainability of the centers that were established under the current project. The revised project, including its performance targets and budget, should be done through a consultative process with the current implementing partners who should be retained under the new project as they have demonstrated considerable capacity effectiveness in supporting the project’s implementation.

Given the complexity of and level of effort and time involved in the selection of communities and women’s centers, the new phase of the project should carefully consider the time and resources needed for this purpose. A three-year planning time frame should be considered if UN Women decides to maintain the same scale of the current project.

Given the experience gained from the implementation of the current project, the first year of the project’s new phase should be allocated to providing the support needed for the eight centers that were targeted under the current phase to establish income generating activities, and selecting the communities and CBOs to be newly targeted. The second year should be allocated to the establishment of the centers; and implementation of capacity building activities, including the establishment of income-generating. The third year’s activities should focus on providing technical support and follow-up.

Much of the weaknesses related to the capacity building approach of the current identified in this evaluation have been a function of the lack of capacity building expertise in the project management structure and the changes that have occurred in the “Project Manager” function. Hence, the evaluation strongly recommends that UN Women makes every possible effort to appoint a dedicated Project Manager to the project for its entire duration. This person should ideally have high level of practical expertise in institutional development and training, and –to the extent possible- take part in the formulation of the new phase.

Significant improvements should be introduced to the capacity building approach of the new phase. These should include –at least- the following: i) clear linkages between the women’s and CBO needs assessment and capacity development objectives and results of the programme; ii) ensuring that the design and delivery of training materials is underpinned by adult-learning and best-practice methodologies (i.e. development of comprehensive and coherent training packages that are sufficiently customized to the identified needs of the trainees, and delivered using interactive approaches that ensure affecting changes in knowledge, practice and attitudes of trainees); and iii) putting a place a comprehensive system for monitoring and measuring the impact of training.

# I. Introduction

## 1.1. Background

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) works to advance women’s human rights and women;s empowerment in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt). UN Women office in the oPt has supported since 2002 community-based initiatives in rural areas. In 2004, in close cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme/Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (UNDP/PAPP), UN Women piloted a programme, the Sabaya Programme, that aimed to empower and protect rural women and promote their participation in decision-making through developing their skills socially, economically, academically and legally.

The Sabaya Programme became one of UN Women’s flagship programme in the oPt, addressing the interlinked protection and empowerment components of the human security approach adopted by UN Women worldwide. Between 2004 and 2009, within the framework of the Sabaya Programme, UN Women provided technical assistance to 18 Sabaya women’s Centres across the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The programme focused on building the managerial and technical capacity of the established centres to ensure effective and adequate provision of services and achieve social, economic and political empowerment of women in rural and marginalized areas. It included providing rural women with educational and livelihood development opportunities, notably through enhancing their networking and fundraising capacities on the one hand, and, on the other hand, targeting them through other programmes.

In March 2009, UN Women received funding from the Saudi Committee for the Palestinian People Relief (SCPPR) to implement the project “Establishment, Rehabilitation and Activation of Eight Women Centres in the Gaza Strip and West Bank”. The Project was developed in 2007 through a participatory approach and benefitted from the lessons learned and recommendations of an external evaluation of the Sabaya Programme, undertaken by Riyada Consulting and Training. By adopting and building on the Sabaya Programme’s approach, the project’s aimed to achieve the following results over its period of implementation, which was originally planned for 18 months and later extended to 43 months:

* Project Goal: “To improve Palestinian women’s social and economic situation through training and development initiatives”.
* Project Outcome: “Women’s empowerment at the social and economic level is achieved”
* Project Outputs: six key outputs were envisaged, namely:
  + Output 1: Eight women’s community-based centres built or rehabilitated in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The newly constructed/rehabilitated buildings and the equipment and furniture provided are to enhance the organisational capacity of women’s centres by providing them with the physical space they needed to provide services to women.
  + Output 2: Women’s managerial and financial capacity built. This was to be done through the training of a core group of women in each of the eight centres to enable them to effectively manage the established centres’ operations in accordance with good management practices and the Palestinian legislation governing the work of non-governmental associations. This output was to include the development of financial and administrative management manuals for each of the eight centres.
  + Output 3: A social network among targeted communities and within them established. This is to be done through mobilising women to become members and volunteers in the established centres, and supporting the creation of support networks for the centres’ at the local level.
  + Output 4: Women’s access to services and information (i.e. educational, legal, psycho-social and protection from violence against women) facilitated. This was to be done through training and counselling by external consultants and experts mobilised by implementing partners who would design and implement training programmes in their relevant areas of expertise according to a participatory needs assessment process with women.
  + Output 5: The community bases centres’ internal systems are well established. This involved providing technical assistance to the eight centres to ensure that they obtain a legal status and work in accordance with local laws, including in supporting and facilitating the registration with the relevant state authorities, organising elections and formation of internal management and financial committees.
  + Output 6: Job opportunities for local labour force created. This output was to be realised through the creation of work opportunities in the construction and rehabilitation of women centres for labourers from the targeted communities, as well as liaising with local implementing partners to employ trained women from the centres.

To account for the changes that may have happened since the project was conceived (2007) as well as the ever-changing political environment in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the project design did not include measurable performance targets and it did not specify the communities or the number of women that it plans to target. To ensure responsiveness to the needs of women and socio-cultural dynamics in the targeted locations, the project adopted a participatory, bottom-up approach in the communities targeted, from the assessment of development needs to the implementation of project activities. The project planned for the involvement of women at all the stages of the project implementation, as well as local authorities and Palestinian Authority institutions to garner local and national support to the project.

## 1.2. Evaluation Objectives, Scope and Methodology

In accordance with the contract signed with SCPPR, UN Women commissioned Amer Madi (Evaluation Lead) and Shawkat Sarsour to undertake an external evaluation of the project. The main objectives of this evaluation as set out in the evaluation terms of reference (ToR) were to:

* Evaluate to what extent the project responded to the needs and challenges of the women in the communities, based on the original project document;
* Asses to which degree the project attained developmental results for the targeted population at the level of the community, individual women, and women’s centres and/or partner community-based organisations (CBOs);
* Measure the implementation efficiency, quality of delivered inputs and outputs at the levels of the capacity and infrastructure development; and,
* Document and record lessons learned and good practices and/or success stories at the different levels of the project, including the community, individual women, family, women’s centres.

The evaluation, which adopted a quality methodology, was undertaken over the period 1 September – 15 October 2012. An initial review of key documentation, undertaken in early September 2012, served as a basis for an inception report which provided a detailed plan and elaborated the key issues and questions for the evaluation as follows:

Issues primarily relating to the relevance of the project:

* The extent to which the project has contributed to responding to the needs and challenges of women in the targeted communities, based on the original programme document and taking into account the previous evaluation of the Sabaya Programme; looking closely at:
  + Infrastructure development;
  + Management capacity building activities;
  + Legal and psycho-social training and counselling;
  + Computer literacy and English training; and
  + Networking and coordination activities.
* The key approaches and strategies adopted by the programme to achieve its outcomes? What worked and what did not and why? What can be taken further for the new/scaled-up programming and partners’ follow-up activities?
* The extent to which capacity development efforts were effective for mainstreaming gender and promoting gender equality and equity.
* The extent to which the project was relevant to the partner organisations’’ mandates and work experience.
* The degree of congruence between the project and the strategies of UN Women, the Palestinian Authority and donor.

Issues relating to the project’s effectiveness:

* To what extent the project reached the expected results and how the context influenced the final result/sustainability. What was not fully achieved and what could be recommended for the future to inform UN Women programming, and ensure necessary follow up from the Government, donors and CSOs.
* What are the unexpected results? What was achieved by the programme beyond the expected results? The responsiveness of the programme to emerging priority/strategic needs?
* What were the key approaches and strategies used by the programme in achieving its outcomes? What worked and what did not and why? What can be taken further for the new/scaled-up programming and partners’ follow-up activities?
* Did the project’s planning process, management, implementation and monitoring allowed solid ownership of all stakeholders? Were the stakeholders properly informed about the programme and their specific roles and responsibilities? If not, what could be done to improve this in a subsequent phase?
* The degree to which the programme attained the developmental results for the targeted population, including the women’s CBOs, the community, and individual woman?
* Assess the degree to which planned output targets were achieved and assess the fulfillment of performance indicators.

Issues pertaining to project efficiency:

* Measure the implementation, efficiency, quality delivered, outputs and outcomes in the process of project implementation. Specifically:
  + Adequacy of CBO selection and selection process.
  + Level of participation of key stakeholders in the design of project interventions and in the implementation thereof, with particular attention on the role of the Project Steering Committee.
  + Adequacy of the capacity-building approach to …… and quality of inputs (resources) provided.
  + Timeframe of the implementation and the measures that may have been taken to improve efficiency in this regard.
  + Quality of design and implementation of infrastructure development.
  + Quality of training and other capacity building activities implemented within the course of the project.
  + Quality of project follow-up, monitoring and evaluation processes.
  + Level of coordination between activities implemented in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and what else may have been done to improve efficiency?
* The extent to which project has been cost effective in delivering its intended results.
* The role of UN Women in leveraging other projects and programmes towards improving results delivered within the framework of the project.

Issues related to project sustainability:

* What is the likelihood that the project results will be sustained after the project completion?
* What lessons learned could be generated from the implementation of this project to improve project sustainability?
* What are the evaluation’s recommendations for improving sustainability?

The field work (9 – 25 September 2012) kicked off with initial meetings with UN Women to discuss the evaluation methodology and work plan, and was followed by in-depth interviews and group discussions with the following stakeholders and key informants:

* UN Women’s staff involved in the project implementation; including UN Women Head of Office, Programme Analysts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Project Assistant and Field Coordinators;
* Staff of implementing partner organisations and external consultants who were engaged in the implementation of project activities;
* The Project Manager at the Saudi Committee for the Palestinian People Relief, Mr. Reyad Al-Musa;
* Elected board members of and volunteers in the eight targeted women centres;
* Senior management personnel of the four community based organisations that are hosting the targeted women’s centres in the Gaza Strip;
* 92 women beneficiaries from the eight targeted centres.

Interviews with women’s organisations were followed with the visit of the sites wherein the evaluators inspected the general physical condition of the built/rehabilitated facilities to ascertain any positive or negative feedback that may have been provided during interviews.

Preliminary findings were presented to and discussed with UN Women at a round table meeting on October 3rd, 2012,and a draft report reflecting comments on the findings from this meeting was submitted on October 11th.  This final draft –which addresses comments received from UN Women was submitted on October 31, 2012.

# II. Evaluation Findings

## 2.1. Context

The protracted Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territory and the crisis that have been ensuing since the outbreak of the second Intifada in September 2000, has been having a great toll on the socio-economic situation of the Palestinian population in East Jerusalem, West Bank and Gaza Strip. This has been compounded by internal Palestinian conflict between political factions, leading to geographic disparities, both within and between the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which are now functioning under separate governing entities. In 2010, oPt’s human development index (HDI) gave it the rank of 97th out of 182 countries, placing it in the medium human development category, with poverty affecting 1 in 4 Palestinians, and 1 in 3 Palestinian households being either food insecure or vulnerable to food insecurity (1 in 2 in Gaza[[1]](#footnote-1)).

Although the oPt has potential to achieve long-term development goals as a result of its large human capital base and geo-political location, the volatility of the context, the Israeli occupation policies in the oPt and gender disparities make progress fragile and prone to regression. The recently produced National Development Plan (NDP) 2011-2013, “Establishing the State, Building our Future”[[2]](#footnote-2) highlights the lack of sustainability of economic development under the present circumstances and articulates a set of planned policies (based on the assumption that military occupation will end) focusing on human development, dignity and rights, but also recognizing the continuing need for humanitarian action to tackle immediate needs of marginalized communities and groups.

Figure 2: Percentage Distribution of Employed Persons in the oPt by Economic Activity and Sex 1995-2010

Figure 1: Labour Force Participation Rate of Persons Aged 15 Years and Above in the oPt by Sex 1999-2010

Women’s labour force participation rates in the oPt are amongst the lowest in the world, with 14.7% (12.2% in the Gaza Strip) in 2010 (despite a 50% increase in the last 10 years)[[3]](#footnote-3). The reasons for the low rate are rooted in local labour market structures and repeated shocks to them. Yet, this number masks informal and own-account activities, that, according to research conducted by the International Labour Organisation in 2008, account for six out of ten working women. Women’s enterprises, while growing in number at all levels, constitute only 5% of all enterprises in the oPt, and they are mostly concentrated in the agriculture and services sectors. The unemployment rate of men and women is generally equal, but women’s unemployment is significantly higher for those with higher education and for women in the Gaza Strip. Currently, in this process of responding to protracted crisis, normative gender roles and the dominant family model of male breadwinners is no longer an accurate representation of reality in the majority of Palestinian households; there is a growing gap between women’s greater economic responsibilities and limited economic rights.

The Electoral Law gives the right to women to vote and to stand for political office. Yet, in practice, women remain underrepresented in decision making bodies at various levels of public life. Women constitute 19% of the total number of current ministers. In the justice sector, women account for 11% of all judges, 5% of prosecutors and 15% of all lawyers.[[4]](#footnote-4) The latest national elections in 2006 brought the level of women members of the parliament (PLC) to 12.9%, compared to 5.6% in 1997, in part due to a quota system for women’s political participation, which also raised women’s representation to 18% in local councils. These gains are precarious in the face of political upheavals that have brought the parliament to a standstill and forced several cabinet reshuffles since 2007. With repeated periods of crisis and a lack of stability in office, communities revert to societal norms that exclude women, even elected women, from the public and political spheres.

Figure 3: Percentage of Women in Key Leadership Positions

The misrepresentation of women started before the Palestinian Authority came into existence, there are no women on the executive committee of the PLO, whose members are all men. By the end of 1996, women comprised 7.5% of the PNC the representative body of the PLO, which constitutes 744 members. Of the 100 members of the PLO’s Central Council only three are women. Women are also significantly underrepresented in the Central Committees of the political parties, 10% of the Central Committee of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, 19% of Fida’s Central Committee, 19.5% of the Central Committee of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and only 5% of the Central Committee of Fateh, the largest by far of the political factions and the main political party in power

Women’s participation in professional and trade associations is also very low. In 2006, women comprised only 10% of organized labour among professional unions like doctors, journalists dentists, lawyers, and engineers. Women are more visible in the non-governmental organisations’ networks, civil society organisations and informal grassroots where they have played an effective role in the national struggle and developed and enhanced a network of services for women to provide support and solidarity in the struggle and enhance their role in building the new state. A reluctance to prioritise these issues on the part of the legislative and executive powers, has meant that issues of gender equality in the law have been addressed, primarily by women activists and the Palestinian women's movement.

The Palestinian women’s movement has been devoting its efforts to an empowerment agenda for women emphasizing skills, leadership, and democracy through campaigns and workshops in all the regions of the oPt. Although these efforts were of benefit to the individuals and the capacity of the women’s movement, problems of centralism and nepotism in governing structures hindered new forms of participation and representation and women’s leadership, undermining women’s organisations capacities to represent women and provide them with the services they need to develop.

Women have lobbied for penal code reform and equal rights in the constitution, and have succeeded to a certain extent. Women’s groups have called for quotas for women candidates in the elections, 30% for local council elections (September 2004) and 20% for the legislative council. NGOs conduct community educational workshops in accordance with international standards on women’s rights and monitor the criminal justice system’s response to victims of violence. NGOs and lawyers also work with women to provide psychosocial support, legal assistance and vocational training to empower them and help them improve their livelihoods opportunities and social status.

The establishment of the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA) in 2003 was welcomed by many women’s groups but there were concerns that the relegation of gender issues to a separate ministry could isolate and further marginalize women. Aware of such fears, the Ministry has taken steps to ensure that gender issues are mainstreamed into all governmental institutions. The Ministry focuses on legal issues such as introducing and amending laws and addressing violence against women as a cross-cutting issue in all of its programmes. For example, MOWA worked with the Ministry of the Interior to train police on women's rights and to create police stations that facilitate women's access to support and advice.

The women’s movement has also been successful in lobbying for women to receive Palestinian

passports without the permission of a male guardian, as well as passports for their children, but as noted earlier, there is no general nationality legislation as yet that regulates citizenship and its rights.

Women suffer disproportionately from the current legislative framework, which falls under 4 different legal systems (Israeli, Jordanian, Egyptian and Palestinian) causing geographic disparities and placing some groups of women (including in East Jerusalem) at risk especially since communities tend to revert to the informal justice system, ruled by patriarchal norms. The situation is particularly acute because the PLC (parliament) has been unable to meet and govern since the factional division took place in 2007. Additionally, according to the Palestinian Justice and Rule of Law Strategy 2011-2013, among the main problems faced at the national level are: absence of specialized courts and prosecutions; absence of a court to decide on the constitutionality of legislations and conflicts in jurisdiction; case backlogs; and weakness of rehabilitation and detention centres.

The level of domestic violence against women (VAW) and girls in the oPt is high: 60% of married women in the West Bank and 77% in Gaza are psychologically abused; 23% of women in the West Bank and 53% in Gaza are physically abused; and 28% of married women in the oPt are sexually abused by their husband.[[5]](#footnote-5) Currently no specific laws or provisions in the oPt protect women against domestic violence. Although women can use existing gender-neutral laws like the penal code to achieve justice, for different reasons, ranging from socio-cultural norms to the lack of sufficient protective services, women do not invoke these laws against their abusers. However, the PA is making concrete efforts to tackle VAW; on 11 January 2011 the Palestinian Cabinet endorsed the National Strategy to Combat VAW and recently, the President signed a presidential decree amending articles of the Penal Code removing provisions for leniency with regard to murder in the name of so-called “family honour”.[[6]](#footnote-6)

The PA is not a state party and so, it cannot ratify or sign any international convention according to the United Nations’ system. However, in addition to national-level efforts such as the Cross Sectoral National Gender Strategy and the National Strategy to Combat VAW, to show commitment to gender equality and women’s empowerment, President Mahmoud Abbas symbolically endorsed CEDAW and the PA cabinet adopted Security Council Resolution 1325. For all these commitments to be translated into actions, there has to be a clear institutionalization of gender issues within the PA. There have been preliminary steps in this direction, firstly in the establishment of national institutions, such as MOWA, but also in terms of mechanisms, such as the establishment of gender units within line ministries and the endorsement of gender responsive budgeting. These represent great opportunities, but they require concerted attention and investment to ensure that they realize their full potential.

## 2.2. Project Design, Logic and Relevance

The project was designed based on the lessons learned from the Sabaya programme, which allow for the formulation of a strong, evidence-based concept and project rationale. The project responded to several UN Women’s priority areas for improving women’s conditions and enhancing institutional mechanisms for the advancement and empowerment of women; particularly: Increasing Women’s Leadership and Participation; Building Strategic Partnerships; and Enhancing Economic Opportunities for Women.

The project is congruent with the Cross-Sectoral National Gender Strategy 2011-2013 which aims to “enable Palestinian women to enjoy full citizenship rights by bridging the gender gap in different aspects of life”. By raising awareness of women on legal issues and building women’s centres capacity to facilitate women’s access to legal services, the project contributes to the Cross-Sectoral Strategy’s first strategic objective: enabling women to exercise their legal and civil rights on an equal and equitable basis. Moreover, through strengthening women’s capacity to associate and supporting the establishment of institutional mechanisms for this purpose, the project directly contributes the Strategy’s fifth strategic objective: To facilitate women’s active political involvement and to activate their role in decision-making. It also builds on the National Strategic Plans of MoWA (2004-2007, 2008-2010, and 2011-2013) and its key areas of concern: women's marginalization in policy and decision-making position; poverty among women; training for girls as a tool for entering job markets, and protecting women against violence.

The project’s intervention logic and change theory was sufficiently clear to provide direction for the planned project activities. Without providing a detailed account of the how the plans to build the capacity of the women’s centres and without explicitly specifying their mandate, the project document in fact envisaged that the project - as a means for gender empowerment and balance in the targeted rural areas- would in turn support the gender mainstreaming process and lay grounds for similar process across the oPt. The main areas where the project design could be improved in the future relate to strengthening the articulation of objectives and the causality linkages between some of the activities and outputs, as well as giving more attention to specifying key performance indicators and targets against all project result levels. The project intervention logic with regard to women’s economic empowerment could benefit from substantial development in particular.

The ambitious objectives of the project foresaw a series of complimentary actions to empower women socially and economically with the view of enhancing their livelihood conditions. The establishment and rehabilitation of centres for women marked a crucial step in the context of the rural areas and the country as a whole. It responded to women’s need for a more suitable and acceptable place to assemble than what was previously available to them, while allowing the women’s centres to strengthen their resource capacity and organisational legitimacy and power at the local level. The evaluators strongly believe that the creation and development of premises for women’s centres as a tool for promoting of gender equality and women empowerment is a strategic response to the practical needs of women.

Similarly, the building of the managerial and financial capacity of women’s centres was a necessary input to enable the women’s centres to design and implement effective programmes and services for women, and build and institutionalise the management practices and experience needed to mobilise external funding. Moreover, the provision of training to women on computer literacy, English language, and handicrafts; and to raise their awareness and skills to exercise their rights and improve their psycho social-health, effectively responded to the empowerment needs of the targeted women. During the interviews, the women highlighted the importance of such trainings and educational services to enhancing their ability to exercise their reproductive roles in a way that promotes their social status within their household. The women interviewed also highlighted how it enabled them to effectively challenge existing gendered power relations within their households.

The main weakness lies in the limited responsiveness of the project to women’s needs for employment and income-generating activities. Although it had planned and implemented activities to trainwomen on business feasibility and small enterprise management, these only partially responded to women’s practical needs for immediate employment opportunities. In particular, very little was planned to facilitate women’s access to the credit they need to establish such enterprises. The project’s strategies to create employment opportunities through the construction and rehabilitation of women’s centres and by encouraging local partners to provide employment opportunities for women didn’t meet women’s ever-growing practical needs for income and employment. Employment opportunities created through the construction and rehabilitation de-facto excluded women. Construction work was not seen as a culturally acceptable occupation for women and women generally did not have the skills needed for this type of work in the first place. There was also very little space made for implementing partners to provide relevant and sufficiently sizeable employment opportunities for women in rural areas. A more defined and thought through strategy based on the assessment of women’s capacities, needs and income-generating opportunities in the local market, coupled with either the allocation of resources for the establishment of income-generating projects or the facilitation for the access to the capital needed to establish them would have strengthened the project’s relevance to the priority needs of women in the targeted areas.

Another weakness, albeit less significant than the one noted above, relates to the lack of proper analysis of the risks in the project document. While no project can anticipate all risks that may arise during the implementation, the project document fell short of identifying several risks that may have been quite clear at the design stage. For instance, the very limited experience and exposure of the targeted women to the concept of gender mainstreaming, civil society building, creation and management of a CBO, feminist theoretical and grass-roots experience. Granted, the project identifies this as a need to be addressed through capacity building activities notably in-house trainings and awareness-raising activities. However the extent of the lack of experience demonstrates that it would have been advisable to characterise it as a challenge to successful capacity building and other outcomes and give it more attention within the project design. Another visible risk omitted from the project design was the likelihood that the project could not be implemented over its 18 month of planned lifetime, particularly given the complexity of the selection of women’s centres to be targeted within the framework of the project, and securing land for the construction of women’s centres. A more attentive assessment of the impact of this complexity on the project’s implementation schedule may have warranted the designers to reconsider their assumptions regarding the needed time for implementing the project on one hand, and on the other hand put a more realistic implementation plan (or at least explicitly state that the project may have to be extended up to a specific period beyond its planned timeframe). Luckily, the SCRPP understood the complexity of the project and the challenges faced during implementation in securing lands for the construction of women’s centres, and positively responded to UN Women’s request for the extension of the project on three different occasions.

## 2.3. Project Management

As the implementing agency, UN Women had the overall responsibility for the implementation and management of the project, including financial management, contracting local organisations and experts to execute the project activities, and project monitoring and reporting to the donors. As designed, the project management structure within UN Women would have included a Project Manager (responsible for overseeing the overall implementation of the project and ensuring that it is kept on track), a Project Coordinator (responsible to manage day-to-day activities of the project on the field in the West Bank), and two Programme Assistants (to assist the Project Manager in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip).

The project management plan was executed largely as planned, and the management structure was generally appropriate for delivering the intended results, despite an unanticipated high turnover in the Project Manager position and some staff capacity constraints. During the first six months of operation, there was no Project Manager and a UN Programme Analyst was responsible for project management. A Project Manager was recruited on the seventh month of operation, but resigned after three months of her appointment. A second Project Manager was recruited shortly thereafter, but also resigned after about six months of appointment. The post of Project Manager was re-advertised but a suitable candidate could not be found. Hence, the Programme Assistant who had been providing technical and financial backstopping support to the project implementation since it was launched assumed the responsibilities of the Project Manager function and dedicating a considerable amount of her time to the project.

While the evaluation found that the Programme Assistant did an exceptional job to ensure the continuity of the project activities in the absence of a Project Manager, including putting a substantial amount of time in following-up on the implementation of the project activities on the field and meeting with implementing partners and women beneficiaries, she had other work obligations which did not allow her to dedicate a sufficient amount of her time to a number of important technical issues associated with the Project Manager function. These related to fine tuning the capacity building approach to ensure its overall coherence, monitoring the project results beyond activity and output monitoring, and providing technical input into the design and delivery of training materials prepared by implementing partners. A dedicated Project Manager was needed for this purpose, as well as to provide leadership and programming support at the field level beyond what was possible through the efforts and expertise of the Programme Assistant.

A Steering Committee (SC) for the project was established composed of four members representingthe Ministry of Women’s Affairs (MoWA), the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG) and UN Women offices in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The SC met eight times during the the project period and played a major role in:

* Setting up criteria for the selection of the targeted communities;
* Reviewing and approving the selection of the targeted locations under the project;
* Interviewing and selecting a technical engineer to undertake the rehabilitation/building component; and
* Discussing the implementation strategy and required changes.

The construction and rehabilitation of the women’s centres was subcontracted to UNDP/PAPP, whose Engineering Department possessed a long track record in designing and managing infrastructure development projects. This was done after the engineer hired to supervise the construction and rehabilitation activities failed to deliver on his terms of reference, causing a significant delay in the project implementation.

The design and delivery of the management training was subcontracted to MAAN Development Centre, with whom UN Women had a well-established partnership under the Sabaya Programme. The English and computer literacy training was subcontracted to Universal Technical Institute (UTI), a private training institution specialised in vocational education and training. Psycho-social training and counseling was subcontracted to the Palestinian Counseling Centre (PCC), a Palestinian NGO specialized in developing and improving mental health concepts and services in the oPt. Legal awareness and training on women’s rights was subcontracted to two lawyers, one in the West Bank and the other in Gaza. Clear Letters of Agreement (LoA) governed the relationships between UN Women and its implementing partners on the one hand, and between UN Women and the CBOs hosting the women’s centres on the other hand.

## 2.4. Selection of Women Centres

UN Women was attentive to the targeting and proper selection of the women’s centres to ensure the success of the project and its sustainability, putting great effort and time and actively engaging the SC into the process. The project team (mainly the Project Coordinator and Programme Analyst) conducted visits to 40 marginalised rural communities in both the West Bank (34) and Gaza Strip (6) During these visits, meetings were held with local authorities, community organisations and women to assess their needs and support/adherence to the project. On the basis of these visits, CBOs in eleven communities that were deemed to having the greatest needs were shortlisted for further assessment, based on the following criteria:

* The geographic location of the village with p riority given to communities with closure-related and physical access problems and those near the Separation Barrier[[7]](#footnote-7);
* Economic, social and political situation of the village, with priority given to communities experiencing the most economic hardships (measured by poverty and unemployment rates) and having difficulties in accessing social services;
* Capacities and activities of women’s groups and centres, and the need for a women’s centre in the village. Communities in which existing CBOs were present and demonstrated initial acceptance to the establishment of women’s centres were given priority.
* Support of the village council for the establishment of the women’s centre and availability of land, with priority given to communities whose local authorities indicated ability to donate land for the construction of the women’s centres and willingness to relinquish control over the buildings to be constructed to the beneficiary CBOs.
* Internal social and political dynamics with the community. Priority was given to communities deemed to have least degree of social and political tension.

The project team undertook an organisational needs assessment of the 11 shortlisted CBOs using a rapid, participatory assessment tool that examined organisational capacity including governance, representation, programmes, services and human and physical resources. The assessment findings along with UN Women recommendations for the locations and CBOs to be selected were presented to the SC in two separate meetings, which culminated in the endorsement of the selected following CBOs in September 2009:

* Jurish Charitable Association for Development (Nablus Governorate, West Bank)
* Ya'bad Charitable Association (Jenin Governorate, West Bank)
* Yatta Women's Association (Hebron Governorate, West Bank)
* Beit Fajjar Women's Association (Bethlehem Governorate, West Bank)
* Ghassan Kanafani Association (Beit Hanoun, Gaza Strip)
* Palestinian Association for Development and Cultural Preservation (Beit Lahia, Gaza Strip)
* Al-Maghazi Cultural Association (Al-Maghazi, Gaza Strip)
* Al-Mawasi Neibourhood Development Committee (Rafah, Gaza Strip)

Although the process of community and CBO selection took significantly longer (7 months altogether) than anticipated in the project document, UN Women should be commended for the approach it has adopted for the selection of the communities and CBOs. The inclusive and participatory approach generated a great level of buy-in and support of all the key project stakeholders to the project. The Project Coordinator and the West Bank Programme Assistant played a quintessential role in the selection process and deserve applaud for their efforts.

In retrospective, the evaluation team would highlight two key observations regarding the CBO selection process that could have improved the overall efficiency of the process and strengthened the linkages with the capacity building interventions:

* The need assessment approach: UN Women was quite successful in ensuring the participation of all relevant key stakeholders in the assessment process. This was done through a public meeting-type of discussion organised within the framework of the project. However, more than just a public meeting and a few individual interviews with key stakeholders in the targeted CBOs was needed to assess gender inequality issues and capacity building needs of individual centres. The evaluation team strongly advises that future assessments follow a more diverse approaches involving multifaceted participatory assessment methods and gender analysis frameworks to assess needs more effectively.
* Resources allocated to the need assessment: The assessment was mainly put under the responsibility of the Project Coordinator who has a very good understanding of community development and gender issues, as a result of her experience as coordinator in one of the Sabaya Centres. While the Project Coordinator’s experience possessed the experience needed to undertake the CBOs selection process (i.e. which organisations to target), the needs assessment process would have greatly benefitted from additional expertise in gender analysis, development planning, and training. Such expertise may have enabled UN Women to fine-tune its planned capacity building approach in such a way that it becomes more coherent with the ambitious objectives of the project, while tailoring the capacity building interventions to the individual needs of the eight targeted women’s centres.

## 2.5. Achievement of Outputs

### 2.5.1. Output 1: Construction/Rehabilitation of Women’s Centres

With the construction of five women’s centres in the West Bank (4) and the Gaza Strip (1), and the rehabilitation of three centres in the Gaza Strip, the project has fully delivered its planned output of the construction/rehabilitation of eight women’s centres. The table below provides a summary of the work completed in each of the eight communities.

| **Community** | **Description of Works Completed** |
| --- | --- |
| Jourish | Construction of Jourish Women Community Centre. The building of about 155 square meters includes a multi-purpose hall/meeting room, two offices, a computer room, a small kitchenette, two bathrooms (one of which is handicapped accessible), and a staircase. |
| Ya’bad | The construction of Yabad Women Community Centre. The new building of about 160 square meters includes a multi-purpose hall/meeting room, two offices, a computer room, a small kitchenette, two bathrooms (one of which is handicapped accessible), and a covered terrace. |
| Beit Fajjar | Finishing works of the first and second floors of the space under the village water reservoir. The total area of the two floors is about 200 square meters and includes three offices, a medium size meeting room, a computer room, a multi-purpose hall, and small kitchenette. |
| Yatta | Construction of Yatta Women Community. The new building of about 185 square meters comprises a medium-sized office, a small meeting room, a computer room, a multi-purpose hall/training room, two bathrooms and a medium size kitchenette. |
| Beit Lahia | Construction of new building. The new building of about 120 square meters replaced an old mud building which was deemed structurally unfit for rehabilitation by UNDP/PAPP engineers. The building includes a large multipurpose hall/training room, a small kitchenette, and two bathrooms. The project activities included concrete works, block works, plastering, painting, tilling, and the installation of multi-lock doors, aluminum windows, and electrical and mechanical networks. |
| Al-Mawasi | Rehabilitation of the building of Al-Mawasi Community Centre, which is hosting a Sabaya Centre. Works involved the renovation of the existing building elements in two floors such as; doors, windows, paints, plasters, as well as adding some new elements like gypsum boards, boundary wall, cars shed, and ceiling fans. |
| Al-Maghazi | Rehabilitation of the building of Al Maghazi Cultural Centre, which is hosting the women’s centre. Rehabilitation activities included renovation of the existing building elements in the two floors and basement such as; doors, windows, paints, plasters, electrical network as well as adding some new elements like 22 KVA electrical package diesel generator, aluminum partitions, guard room and boundary walls. |
| Beit Hanoun | The project activities include rehabilitation of the building of Ghassan Kanafani Community centre which is hosting Sabaia Association – the women association who are providing social and physical services for women in Bait Hanoun area in the northern governorate. Under this intervention; UNDP will renovate the existing building elements in the three floors and basement such as doors, windows, paints, plasters, electrical networks and the external shed and boundary fence. |

The evaluation team was impressed with the high quality of the construction and rehabilitation works completed under the project, and the efficiency in the management process of the building and renovation undertaken by UNDP/PAPP. The following points summarize the evaluation team’s findings in this regard:

* Location of women’s centres: All the eight constructed and rehabilitated centres are located in easily accessible locations to women, often in the centre of town and with direct access to public transport routes. The evaluation team reviewed all the correspondence and meeting minutes between local authorities and UN Women regarding the allocation of lands for women’s centres. The evaluation team was impressed with the level of effort that UN Women has put into scrutinizing the locations proposed by local authorities through field visits and discussions with women from the community to ensure that the proposed locations were not only accessible to all women in the targeted communities but also acceptable to women[[8]](#footnote-8). While this process took significantly longer than expected at the time of the project design, it was necessary from a gender mainstreaming perspective.
* Adequacy of design in relation to the project objective: All of the eight women’s centres visited were found to be relatively well designed and appropriate for both the planned use of the buildings and the resources available for construction and rehabilitation. In all cases, women’s CBOs confirmed that they had been consulted regarding the engineering design and they approved the final design before they were tendered. The level of engineering, layout, design, drawings and specifications were at a level equal to or greater than expected by the beneficiary CBOs. However the evaluation team believes that the design quality could have been strengthened with a greater analysis of the practical and strategic growth needs of the women’s centres, particularly to leverage the buildings for existing and/or potential income-generating enterprises. Such an analysis would have, for example, prompted the designers to increase the kitchen spaces, since all women’s centres aspired to establish food production enterprises.
* Quality of tender documents and procedures: In all cases, the tender documents were prepared by UNDP/PAPP engineers on the basis of field visits and discussions with UN Women and CBO leaders. The tenders were then advertised and bids sought, primarily using FIDIC (International Foundation of Consulting Engineers) procedures which are internationally accepted. In the tenders reviewed by the evaluation team, all significant changes in the tender document and procedures were found to be well documented. Without exception, the process was open to the public and transparent.
* Quality of cost control and technical and financial management of infrastructure development works: This followed the standard procedures of UNDP/PAPP. In short, this involves the submission of a payment request by the contractor, which gets certified by the Site Engineer, the Supervision Engineer, the Procurement Unit and the project manager before the payment request is accepted and deemed accurate for payment. Overall, the evaluation found the quality of cost control and financial management of infrastructure works implemented within the framework of the project was well planned and executed; providing UN Women with a very cost effective way of implementing infrastructure development activities.
* Quality of site supervision: Overall, the site and field supervision appears to have been adequate as a site engineer was assigned to follow-up each of the construction sites of the project. Evidence shows that field supervision was done regularly.
* Quality of infrastructure and for use: In general, the infrastructure work and finishing materials were of good quality and conformed to the specifications set out in the tender documents. The durability of the finishing materials used seemed satisfactory. All women interviewed expressed a high level of satisfaction with the quality of the infrastructure and the durability of installed fixtures.
* Donor Visibility: Credits to the contribution of the SCPPR was duly acknowledged through signage in all newly constructed and rehabilitated centres. All interviewed women and community representatives knew that the works carried out in the centres were made possible through Saudi funding, which indicates that a fair level of effort was made by UN Women to ensure giving SCPPR its due visibility. However, these efforts could have been prolonged if resources had been allocated to the development and implementation of a communication and visibility plan in support of the women’s centres themselves.

### 2.5.2. Output 2: Women’s Managerial and Financial Capacity Built

Generally, the project can be said to have fully achieved its intended output of enhancing women’s managerial and financial capacities as envisaged in the project design. MAAN Development Centre delivered a total of 880 training hours to women from the eight targeted centres (i.e. 110 hours per centre) on topics related to organisational management that were identified before through the needs assessment process undertaken by UN Women (see above). The topics were covered through five different workshops on strategic planning, financial and administrative management, project cycle management, communication skills and report writing. The following table provides details on the number of training hours that were delivered for each of these workshops and the number of women who completed the training in each of these topics.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Hours** | **No. of Trainees** | | | | | | | | |
| Beit Fajjar | Yatta | Jourish | Yabad | Beit Hanoun | Beit Lahia | Al-Maghazi | Rafah | **Total** |
| Strategic Planning | 25 | 22 | 20 | 25 | 20 | 15 | 25 | 13 | 13 | **153** |
| Financial & Admin Systems | 25 | 20 | 22 | 25 | 22 | 13 | 22 | 13 | 14 | **151** |
| Project Cycle Management | 30 | 22 | 22 | 24 | 21 | 15 | 22 | 14 | 15 | **155** |
| Communication Skills | 20 | 25 | 18 | 25 | 25 | 14 | 23 | 14 | 13 | **157** |
| Report Writing | 10 | 19 | 20 | 24 | 21 | 14 | 24 | 13 | 14 | **149** |

In addition to the above training, UN Women leveraged the MDG-F Programme to provide training on leadership, strategic management and handicrafts to six groups of women in six of the eight targeted centres.

While it is unquestionable that the trainings delivered contribute to enhance women’s managerial and financial capacities, the evaluation team could not objectively ascertain the level to which this training has been effective in improving the management functions and organisational performance of the women’s centres as baseline data in this regard was lacking. The fact that training materials developed by MAAN were limited to power point presentations and practical exercises, did not help in this regard. However, the anecdotes gathered during the discussions with women strongly suggests that the training helped the women’s centres to identify their management weaknesses and to work on to improve their management performance. The most frequently mentioned improvements were: improved filing and record keeping, improved development of monthly plans of action, improved documentation of internal management processes, improved financial record keeping, and improved activity planning and reporting.

While generally satisfactory, discussions with women confirmed the evaluation team’s perceptions of existing weakness of the overall capacity building approach and training programme, which should be better considered during the design phase of future similar interventions:

* The capacity building approach was too narrowly focused on training delivery, while significantly more than just training was needed to develop the management capacity of women’s centres. While this could be understood as being the result of the lack of financial resources and limited timeframe, sufficient time should also be allocated to training and capacity building on complex topics such as strategic planning and project management.
* The training programme was inadequately tailored to the individual development needs of the eight centres, and particularly so when it comes to the centres’ needs for capacity to deliver project documents and strategic plans. While UN Women argued that all the eight centres have similar management weaknesses that justify a similar training programme, the evaluation team considers that more attention should have been given to customizing the training programme in such a way that its impact on organisational performance is measurable and much clearer than what was under the project.
* In relation with the previous point, the training programme does not seem to have been designed in a holistic manner. This was not only evident through redundant topics, but also through the lack of a clear description of the rationale for the selection of topics and their sequencing. Another shortcoming is the lack of a sufficiently detailed outline, learning objectives and consolidated training materials.
* The five to six-hour training sessions limited women’s participation in some communities and may have prevented some women with heavy homestead work burdens from participating. Given the objective of the programme - empowerment of women and, albeit indirectly, mainstreaming gender issues in development planning - the project should have considered the negative impact of such long sessions on the participation of women and accessibility of training, and considered longer implementation plan.

### 2.5.3. Output 3: A Social Network Among Targeted Communities and within them Established

The evaluation team could not ascertain the level to which this output has been achieved due to the vague formulation thereof, and the lack of indicators in the project document for measuring performance. In reporting against this output, UN Women highlighted the following achievements:

* Several monthly meetings with women’s groups at targeted locations and with members of the village councils organized to create solid partnerships with community members for enhancing ownership within the community.
* Signing of Memorandum of Understanding between the councils and targeted women's centres in the West Bank and between the women’s centres and the hosting CBOs in the Gaza Strip in which the local councils and CBOs declared their commitment to supporting the work of the women’s centres by providing support services and covering basic utilities thereof.
* Several meetings with women in the eight targeted communities organized to raise their awareness of the centres and mobilise them to volunteer and/or become members in the women’s centres. To this end UN Women reports increasing the membership in the eight organisations by some 102 women, and expanding the roster of their volunteers to more than 400.
* In the West Bank, organization of exchange visits between the women’s centres and engaging them in exchange visits to other women’s grassroots organisations supported by other UN Women programmes in their region.
* Linking the eight women’s centres with local NGOs and encouraging these organisations to enhance their outreach to women in the targeted communities.

The above reported achievements, in our opinion, do not go very far in demonstrating the establishment of a social network that supports women and the established women’s centres. At best, the above achievements can be considered de facto results of the project’s implementation strategy (for example, signing MoU with village councils and CBOs is a pre-requisite to the establishment of women’s centres). Thus, we believe that the project has had very limited success in establishing a social network in the targeted communities, and this is largely due to the lack of clear definition of what constitutes a “social network” and the lack of appropriate strategy to do so.

### 2.5.4. Output 4: Women’s Access to Services and Information Facilitated

The following training and counseling interventions were planned within the framework of the project to enhance women’s access to service and information:

* Legal Counseling: This involved the provision of 40 hours of training in each of the eight targeted centres on the legal instruments concerning gender equality and women’s rights as well as legal issues affecting Palestinian women; including the provision of individual counseling to women on need basis. The expectation from this counseling as set out in the Legal Counselors’ Terms of Reference was that beneficiary women would be able to demonstrate a better understanding of the rights granted to them under the international legal instruments and conventions as well as under the Palestinian legislation, as well as have the opportunity to receive direct legal advice and guidance on how to access legal representation on issues related to their rights.
* Psycho-Social/Mental Health Counseling: This involved the provision of 45 hours of training and counseling in each of the targeted centres on psycho-social health issues relevant to women with the key objective of enhancing women’s knowledge of mental health concepts and issues that affect it, as well as building the capacity of women volunteers from the centres to provide introductory training on mental health.
* English language training: This involved the delivery of 50 hours on training to improve women’s English language competencies, with a particular focus on business conversation and writing skills. The key objective of the this training was to enable women leaders from the centre to develop the basic language skills to promote their centres to Engish-speaking donors.

* Computer Literacy Training: This involved the delivery of 50 hours of training on computer literacy with the key objective of enabling women to gain the computer usage skills to pass the International Computer Driving License (ICDL) Test.

The project has fully achieved what it set out to accomplish in terms of enhancing women’s access to social and educational services, surpassing its targets in a number of instances. The following points summarize these accomplishments:

***Legal Counseling***

* A total of 320 training hours (40 hours in each centres) were provided in the eight centres, benefiting to approximately 160 women. Training sessions were implemented over the period December 2011-March 2012 and covered the following topics, inter alia: women’s rights in the context of human rights; international legal instruments and conventions (CEDAW, Resolution 1325, MDGs, etc.); women’s constitutional rights; Palestinian Civil Law and the rights of women; Palestinian Family Law and the rights of women; inheritance rights; marriage contracts and the rights of women; divorce and the rights of women under Palestinian laws; violence: forms, definitions and women’s rights; and legal recourse in Sharia courts.
* A total of 88 individual legal consultations were provided on a wide range of issues, resulting in assisting nine women (all in the West Bank) in obtaining free legal representation on cases related to alimony, inheritance and work compensation rights.

***Psycho-Social Counseling***

* A total of 360 training hours (45 hours in each centres) were provided in the eight centres, benefiting approximately 146 women (79 in the West Bank and 67 in the Gaza Strip). Training sessions were implemented over the period May 2011-October 2011 and covered a wide range of topics on mental health issues. Training initially focused on enhancing women’s knowledge on the definition of mental health and its importance to the healthy development of humans, and then focused on enhancing women’s knowledge and capacities to diagnose and deal with psychological disorders and mental health issues they face themselves or have to deal with as part of exercising their reproductive role. A significant part of the topics covered were identified through close consultations with women in an attempt to enhance the relevance of the training and its utility to women.
* A total of 60 individual counseling sessions (all in the West Bank, and mostly in Ya’bad and Jourish) were provided to women. These consultations resulted in six referrals to specialized counseling centres.

***English and Computer Literacy Training***

* A total of 194 women (102 in the West Bank and 92 in the Gaza Strip) benefitted from the English language training course (50 hours) which was conducted over the period October 2011-January 2012. The course focused on providing women with very basic English language conversation, reading and writing skills on the basis of a placement test that was conducted at the beginning of the course. Hence, the course focused on improving women’s use of basic grammar, basic conversation and writing skills, and basic vocabulary.
* A total of 167 women (112 in the West Bank and 55 in the Gaza Strip) benefitted from the computer literacy course (30-50 hours) which was also conducted over the period October 2011-January 2012. Like the English course, the computer literacy course focused on basic computer use skills which were deemed as most appropriate given the rudimentary computer skill level found to be common among the participating women.

### 2.5.5. Output 5: Centres’ Internal Systems Well Established

The activities that were planned to deliver this output have been carried out: Elections for the women’s centres’ management committee were organised in each of the eight locations with the participation of the majority of women members eligible to vote; administrative and financial committees were formed from the ranks of women who participated in the management training, and CBOs in the West Bank that were facing difficulties with renewing their registration with the PA or having difficulty maintaining an active legal status were assisted to resolve these issues. In the Gaza Strip, women’s centres continue to function under the umbrella of the hosting CBOs which was deemed by UN Women as being a more practical and less risky arrangement given the complexity of registration of NGOs in the Gaza Strip.

Despite the fact that all planned activities under this output were carried out, the evaluation team believes that significant additional support is needed in the eight centres to build and institutionalise their internal management and financial systems. An even greater support is needed to enhance the systems and culture of governance within these organisations, particularly in Gaza where they continue to have limited decision-making powers and functional autonomy on account of being part of the CBOs that host them. Without such support it cannot be said that the centres have “well-established internal systems”, regardless of what was meant by this in the project design. We find it somewhat unfortunate that so little attention was given to the establishment of such systems, especially within the framework of the capacity building training subcontracted to MAAN Development Centre.

### 2.5.6. Output 6: Job Opportunities for Local Labour Force Created

Notwithstanding the lack of target performance indicators regarding the number of employment opportunities that the project aspired to achieve, it can be generally concluded that the project has been successful in generating employment opportunities for labourers from the targeted communities through taking pro-active measures to ensure that construction and rehabilitation works implemented are carried out by workers from the communities targeted. As the table below shows, the project is estimated to have generated a total of 2,162 labour days for skilled labourers, and 2,297 labour days for unskilled labourers.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Beit Fajjar** | **Yatta** | **Jourish** | **Yabad** | **Beit Hanoun** | **Beit Lahia** | **Al-Maghazi** | **Rafah** | **Total** |
| **Skilled** | 258 | 495 | 329 | 329 | 148 | 384 | 136 | 83 | **2162** |
| **Unskilled** | 162 | 307 | 350 | 432 | 220 | 599 | 139 | 88 | **2297** |

## 2.6. Project Impact

While it is still too early to objectively measure the impact of the project as a whole on women’s social and economic empowerment, the evaluation found that the project has made significant progress towards this end.

As a result of the establishment of physical space for women, the project has substantially increased the outreach activities of the beneficiary CBOs since - until the establishment of the centres – women were reticent to engage in any activities organized by the CBOs as these activities were organised in places that women considered unwelcoming and lacking privacy. Also as a result of the establishment of these centres, particularly in the West Bank, the project has revived the CBOs who had been nearly dormant before the project, enhancing their status and credibility within the community they serve. The considerable efforts engaged to gain the support of the local authorities to the women’s centres in the targeted communities of the West Bank, including financial support, has enhanced local support for the beneficiary CBOs in general, and the women’s centres in particular.

The evaluation team was able to document an increase of 8% in women’s membership in the targeted CBOs, and field interviews strongly suggest this increase came as a direct result of the establishment of a physical space and the delivery of training through the centres. During the interviews, the new members said that the construction of a women’s centre gave them greater confidence on the capacity of the CBOs to serve better than before as there will be more control over resources and physical space. The establishment of the women’s centres in Gaza has elevated the priority of the beneficiary CBOs given to women’s empowerment activities, pushing their gender agenda further. In both regions, the evaluation team was impressed with the wealth of ideas that the beneficiary CBOs have developed to enhance opportunities for women to engage in social, political and economic activities. For example, Ya’bad Charitable Association made it explicit to the competing groups for local elections that it would only support the group that would explicitly meet its demands regarding the establishment of a park for women and children, the adding of a floor to the association’s building to serve as a kitchen for the association, and the establishment of a rehabilitation centre for persons with disabilities on its elections programme. Jourish Development Association was considering a similar approach at the time of the evaluation.

The project’s legal and psycho social counseling have also had what seems to be considerable impact on women. When asked about the impact of these trainings on them, women interviewed reported the following, inter alia:

* Increase sense of self-worth and confidence;
* Enhanced ability to defend and demand for its own rights;
* Enhanced ability to seek legal assistance when needed (“we know what to do and where to go if we face problems);
* Enhanced sense of mental health as a result of the ability to deal with stress and conflicts at home; and
* Improved ability and skills to support and deal with family members suffering from mental health problems, including early detection of psychological disorders;

While it is difficult to ascertain the degree to which the above reported impact can be generalized, the evaluation team believes that they reflect the general sentiment of the majority of women who participated in the project’s legal and psycho-social training and counseling activities.

Through the creation of employment opportunities for local labourers in its construction and rehabilitation activities, the project has had a positive secondary economic impact equivalent to US$ 144,663, which is equivalent to 11.4% of the project’s total budget. The basis for our calculation of the project’s secondary economic impact is depicted in the table below.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of Work Created** | **Total Work Days** | **Average Daily Wage (ILS)** | | **Estimated Wages Paid** | |
| **West Bank** | **Gaza Strip** | **in ILS** | **in US $** |
| Skilled | 2,162 | 200 | 120 | 372,320 | 97,979 |
| Unskilled | 2,297 | 100 | 50 | 177,400 | 46,684 |
| **Total** |  |  |  | **549,720** | **144,663** |

The other project’s activities have had very little, if any, impact on women and women’s centres. Networking activities have resulted in linking three of the eight women’s centres with local NGOs that provide social services, but these have not materialized in any formal coordination or cooperation arrangements. The impact of the computer literacy and English language training courses was found to be limited to women’s abilities to follow-up their young children’s studies and provide them with some help if needed. Finally, the evaluation found that the project has not had any impact on women’s economic empowerment. As noted earlier, significantly more than what was planned and implemented insofar as networking, computer literacy and English language training, and economic empowerment activities was needed for tangible impacts on women.

## 2.7. Sustainability of the Women Centres

The sustainability of three of the eight women’s centres established within the framework of the project (namely, Ya’bad, Beit Fajjar, and – to a lesser extent - Jourish) is likely due to the fact that these centres have a strong leadership and existing income-generating projects that can sustain their basic operations. The sustainability of the remaining five centres is unpredictable at best. While UN Women has planned and implemented several measures to enhance the sustainability prospects of these centres, such as the MoUs with local authorities and hosting CBOs in the case of the Gaza Strip (see above) and the enhancement of managerial capacities, they continue to lack the organisational capacity to generate income and mobilise external funding for core operations and activities. The four centres in the Gaza Strip face additional sustainability challenges due to their lack of independence and legal status.

The 2010 evaluation of the Sabaya Programme noted the following:

*“There are a number of facets of the sustainability question that should be factored into determining how Sabaya Centres should go about achieving their sustainability:*

*Management Structures: …the creation and strengthening of a middle management/leadership level structure could contribute to the Centres’ sustainability. Key to this is ensuring capacity development of the Centres’ members in leadership skills, fund-raising, programming, and financial monitoring.*

*Income Generating Activities: in assessing the financial sustainability of Sabaya Centres, it is necessary to consider the full costs of running these Centres beyond equipment, furniture and licensing. It is clear that no Centre is currently able to cover its full costs entirely from the thin streams of revenues generated through training activities despite the fact that some Centres are faring better than others...*

*Sustainability plans: sustainability plans should have been thought of during the establishment of the Sabaya Centres, including but not limited to a focus on Centres’ management structures, plans for capacity development of Centres’ members and Centres’ relations with hosting organizations.”*

The above quote is largely valid for the project currently under evaluation. A stronger emphasis on sustainability is thus needed in any future follow-up phase to the current project, while additional support is very much needed to enhance the sustainability prospects for the eight centers established by the project

# III. Conclusions and Recommendations

## 3.1. Conclusions

The project “Establishment, Rehabilitation and Activation of Eight Women Centres in the Gaza Strip and West Bank”, documented a generally well-designed and coherent project rationale and concept which was based on lessons learned and experience from UN Women’s previous experience in working with CBOs to empower women. It responds to several priority areas outlined by UN Women for improving women’s conditions and enhancing institutional mechanisms for the advancement and empowerment of women; particularly: Increasing Women’s Leadership and Participation; Building Strategic Partnerships; and Enhancing Economic Opportunities for Women. The project’s intervention logic and change theory was sufficiently clear to provide direction for the prescribed project activities, though it could have benefitted from some improvements in the way objectives were articulated, defining causality in the intervention logic, and better specification of key performance indicators and targets.

While it is still too early to objectively measure the impact of the project as a whole on women’s social and economic empowerment, the evaluation found that the project has made significant progress towards achieving its overall goal and outcome. At several levels, the project has demonstrated how building physical structures to serve as women’s centers can be a very effective entry point to bring women to work together to improve their conditions and achieve agency to represent women.

The project has been able to develop the basic premises: the creation and establishment of eight women’s centres in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in order to serve as a place for women to associate and to carry out the various long-term objectives of advancing women’s empowerment, and achieving gender equity and equality. It has successfully mobilised external partners and specialists to provide needed social and educational services to women and build the limited in-house capacity within the targeted centres.

However, the internal capacities and organisation, expertise and resources of the women’s centres still require further fine-tuning and development before they can be expected to achieve such strategic objectives as improving women’s conditions and livelihoods. A central element of this support is the capacity to generate sustainable income and provide employment opportunities for women. In the case of established women’s centre’s in the Gaza Strip, further support is required to clarify the relationship between the centres and the CBOs that host them, including in the decision-making processes. Without further technical support and funding to establish income-generating projects, only half of the eight centres established can be expected to be able to maintain some level of activity beyond the project. These centres (Ya’bad, Beit Fajjar, Beit Hanoun and –to a lesser extent- Jourish) do not only have strong and experienced leadership, but can benefit from the income generated from the activities of social enterprises that were established with the support of UN Women through other projects.

As regards to outputs, the evaluation found that the project has met all of its targets. The project has constructed five buildings (4 in the West Bank and 1 in Gaza) and rehabilitated three others (all in Gaza) to serve as premises for women’s centres. Demonstrable progress has been notably achieved in positioning these centres to be a well-known address for educational and social service delivery for women, including vulnerable mothers and children. The project has also succeeded in establishing training capacity with the technical facilities and expertise within women’s centres to raise women’s awareness of their rights and advise them on mental health issues. The project has contributed in a visible manner to enhancing women’s self-perception and ability to manage their family affairs, hence giving women the feeling of improved social status and power position. The project promoted and created excellent working relations between the women’s centres and local government officials in the eight targeted communities, thereby strengthening community networks in support to the women’s empowerment agenda of the project. The sections below provide more details with regard to the achievement of the project outputs.

While the project has met its intended target of creating job opportunities in connection with the construction and rehabilitation activities, these benefitted men only. As a result, the expectation that the project would meet women’s need for employment and income was largely not met, despite the commendable efforts by UN Women to leverage its MDG-F programme to provide training for women from the targeted communities on handicrafts and food processing. This sub performance is in no small part due to the fact that the project did not adequately plan, allocate resources or implement activities towards such a result.

## 3.2. Recommendations

Given the generally positive findings emerging from the analysis, the central recommendation of this evaluation is for UN Women to plan for a new phase of the project. This new phase, which the SCRPP is strongly encouraged to support, should maintain the current project’s overall objective of improving women’s economic and social status, while reformulating its outcome and outputs towards greater focus on women’s economic empowerment on the one hand, and reflect more clearly the specific results that will be achieved and the key performance indicators that will be used to judge the success of the project on the other hand. To this end, the new phase should make provisions not only for establishing new women’s centers, but also to provide additional financial and technical support to the eight centers that were established under the current phase, in particular regarding the establishment of income generating projects for women. This, in our opinion, is crucial for the sustainability of the centers that were established under the current project. The revised project formulation, including its performance targets and budget, should be done through a consultative process with the current implementing partners who should be retained under the new project as they have demonstrated considerable capacity effectiveness in supporting the project’s implementation.

Given the complexity of and level of effort and time engaged in the selection of communities and women’s centers, the new phase of the project should better assess the time and resources needed for this purpose. A three-year planning timeframe should be considered if UN Women decided to maintain the same scale of the current project.

Given the experience gained from the implementation of the current project, the first year of the new project’s phase should be allocated to providing the support needed for the eight centers that were targeted under the current phase to establish income generating activities, and selecting the communities and CBOs to be newly targeted. The second year should be allocated to the establishment of the centers; and implementation of capacity building activities, including the establishment of income-generating activities. The third year’s activities should focus on providing technical support and follow-up.

Much of the weaknesses related to the capacity building approach of the current project identified in this evaluation have been function of the lack of capacity building expertise in the project management structure and the changes that have occurred in the “Project Manager” function. Hence, the evaluation strongly recommends that UN Women makes every possible effort to appoint a dedicated Project Manager to the project for its entire duration. This person should ideally have high level of practical expertise in institutional development and training, and –to the extent possible- take part in the formulation of the new phase.

Significant improvements should be introduced in the capacity building approach of the new phase. These should include –at least- the following: i) clear linkages between the women’s and CBOs’ needs assessment and capacity development objectives and results of the programme; ii) ensuring that the design and delivery of training materials is underpinned by adult-learning and best-practice methodologies (i.e. development of comprehensive and coherent training packages that are sufficiently customized to the identified needs of the trainees, and delivered using interactive approaches that ensure affecting changes in knowledge, practice and attitudes of trainees); and iii) putting in place a comprehensive system for monitoring and measuring the impact of training.

# IV. Annexes

## Annex A: Evaluation Terms of Reference



**Terms of Reference**

**For the Final Evaluation of the UN Women Project**

**Establishment, rehabilitation and activation of eight women centers**

**In the Gaza Strip and the West Bank**

**23 March 2009 – 31 October 2012**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Location:** | occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) with ability to travel to all districts of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip |
| **Application Deadline:** | August 13, 2012 |
| **Additional Category:** | Women’s Economic Security and Rights |
| **Type of Contract:** | SSA |
| **Languages Required:** | English and Arabic |
| **Starting Date:** (date when the selected candidate is expected to start) | August 23, 2012 |
| **Duration of Initial Contract:** | 3 months |
| **Expected Duration of Assignment:** | 3 months |
|  | |

1. **Background, purpose and use of the evaluation**

The UN Women (UNW), grounded in the vision of equality enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, works for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls; the empowerment of women; and the achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security. Placing women’s rights at the center of all its efforts, the UN Women will lead and coordinate United Nations system efforts to ensure that commitments on gender equality and gender mainstreaming translate into action throughout the world. It will provide strong and coherent leadership in support of Member States’ priorities and efforts, building effective partnerships with civil society and other relevant actors.

UN Women has played an innovative and catalytic role in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) since its inception in 1997. UN Women oPt focuses its activities on one overarching goal, namely to support the implementation at the national level of existing international commitments to advance gender equality in line with national priorities. In support of this goal and thoroughly taking into consideration the specificities of the oPt context, UN Women concentrates its efforts and interventions toward the realisation of following strategic goals: Engendering governance, peace and security; Supporting women's economic security and rights; and Promoting women’s rights and protection against violence.

UN Women, through its work to enhance women’s economic empowerment and rights has adopted the Sabaya Programme model in the oPt through addressing the interlinked protection and empowerment components of a human security approach and deals with the main areas of concern to UN Women, which are reduction of feminized poverty, governance and women’s human rights. Therefore, UN Women targeted Palestinian women in marginalized rural communities that suffer from limited access to resources and services. The project “ Establishment, rehabilitation and activation of eight women centers in Gaza Strip and West Bank” provided technical support and guidance to 8 women centers in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and provided them with linkages and networking with other women’s centers, ensuring that the linkage and the network is supported by the local communities. Additionally, the women’s centers received capacity development in areas of their concern, after a needs assessment was conducted and henceforward training was tailored to complement the needs assessment results. (I.E legal awareness, management and financial skills, IT and English skills, psychosocial awareness, logistics, techniques and skills of running a woman center)

UN Women, funded by the Saudi Committee for the Palestinian People Relief, has built, established and registered four women’s centers in the West Bank in the villages of Joriesh, Ya’abd, Beit Fajjar and Yatta and rehabilitated and built four women’s centers in the Gaza Strip iincluding Al Mawasi Sabaya Center, Al Maghazi Sabaya Center, Bait Hanon Sabaya center and Bait Lahia Sabaya center. All the Sabaya centers targeted in the Gaza Strip are hosted in community based organizations.

In accordance with the contract signed between UN Women and the Saudi Committee for the Palestinian People Relief (referred to hereinafter as "Saudi Commission), the ‘Establishment, rehabilitation and activation of eight women centers in Gaza Strip and West Bank programme in the oPt, will undergo a final evaluation upon completion of programme activities. The final evaluation of this programme is intended to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and inclusiveness of the project. It looks at signs of potential impact and sustainability of results, including the contribution to national development objectives, and the Millennium Development Goals. The final evaluation also identifies/documents lessons learned and makes recommendations that programme partners and stakeholders (the eight women centers management board members, the Saudi Commission, Local Village Councils, the project partners and UN Women) might use to improve the design and implementation of other related projects and programmes, as well as Phase II of the programme in an effort to prepare for the replication of this mode/build on programme achievements.

UN Women oPt is planning to commission a final evaluation of the WRSC programme, funded under the Saudi Grant. The programme implementation began in 23 March 2009 and is expected to end in August 2012.This is an independent external evaluation. The evaluation is to be a powerful tool to explore the link between development effectiveness and gender responsiveness at large, in line with UN Women’s commitment to the ideas of the advancing development effectiveness and initiatives to achieve it in line with the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action, <http://www.oecd.org/document/18/0,3746,en_2649_3236398_35401554_1_1_1_1,00.html>.The evaluation is to be undertaken in accordance with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN System: <http://www.uneval.org/normsandstandards/index.jsp?doc_cat_source_id=4> and in line with the, ‘Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation – Towards UNEG Guidance,’:<http://www.unevaluation.org/HRGE_Guidance>; and the UNEG Handbook on Human Rights and Gender Equality, <http://www.unevaluation.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=980>.

1. **Specific objectives of the Independent External Evaluation are:**

The evaluation methodology will be reviewed and designed jointly between UN Women, local village councils and the evaluator. The evaluation will involve women and the local community to ensure a participatory approach. The evaluation will aim to measure the achievements of the project and provide an in-depth independent evaluation to assess the project impact in addition to documenting lessons learned. An exit strategy will be designed in partnership with partners’ organizations to ensure the sustainability of the eight women centers after the project is completed and that the women themselves are running the centers successfully.

The results of the evaluation will be shared with the donor by the end of the project.

1. Evaluate to what extent the project contributed to the needs and challenges of the women in the communities based on the original project document.
2. Asses to what degree the project attained developmental results for the targeted populationon different levels including for the community, for individual women, and the WCBO’s, etc.
3. Measure the implementation, efficiency, quality delivered, outputs and outcomes in the process of the project at the levels of the capacity development, enhancement of WCBO’s, building and rehabilitation and furnishing and running the women centers.
4. Document and Record lessons learned and good practices and/or success stories from different levels of the project, including the community, individual women, family, women’s centers.
5. **Social, economic and political context**

The occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) has been under Israeli occupation since 1967, which has kept the area in protracted crisis and directly affected the socio-economic situation of the Palestinian population. The Palestinian Authority (PA) was established following the Oslo Peace Accords in 1994, to govern the oPt in preparation for sovereignty. However, continuing conflict and political stagnation have obstructed the achievement of a peaceful end to Occupation. This has been compounded by internal Palestinian conflict between political factions, leading to geographic disparities, both within and between the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which are now functioning under separate governing entities. In 2010, oPt’s human development index (HDI) gave it the rank of 97th out of 182 countries, placing it in the medium human development category, poverty still affects 1 in 4 Palestinians, and 1 in 3 Palestinian households is food insecure (1 in 2 in Gaza[[9]](#footnote-9)). Although the oPt has potential to achieve long-term development goals, the volatility of the context makes progress fragile and prone to regression. This represents a complex environment for the work of international actors.

The recently produced National Development Plan (NDP) 2011-2013, “*Establishing the State, Building our Future”[[10]](#footnote-10)* highlights the lack of sustainability of economic development under the present circumstances and articulates a set of planned policies (based on the assumption that military occupation will end) focusing on human development, dignity and rights, but also recognizing the continuing need for humanitarian action to tackle immediate needs of marginalized communities and groups.

**Livelihoods and employment: Greater economic responsibilities but limited economic rights**

Women’s labour force participation rates in the oPt are amongst the lowest in the world, with 14.7% (12.2% in the Gaza Strip) in 2010 (despite a 50% increase in the last 10 years)[[11]](#footnote-11). The reasons for the low rate are rooted in local labour market structures and repeated shocks to them. Yet, this number masks informal and own-account activities, that according to an ILO research in 2008 account for six out of ten working women. Women’s enterprises, while growing in number at all levels, constitute only 5% of all enterprises in the oPt. The unemployment rate of men and women is generally equal, but women’s unemployment is significantly higher for those with higher education and for women in the Gaza Strip. Currently, in this process of responding to protracted crisis, normative gender roles and the dominant family model of male breadwinners is no longer an accurate representation of reality in the majority of Palestinian households; there is a growing gap between women’s greater economic responsibilities and limited economic rights.

**Political participation: Attaining critical mass**

The Electoral Law gives the right to women to vote and to stand for political office. Yet, in practice, women remain underrepresented in decision making bodies at various levels of public life. Women constitute 21% of the total number of current ministers. In the justice sector, women account for 11% of all judges, 5% of prosecutors and 15% of all lawyers.[[12]](#footnote-12) The latest national elections in 2006 brought the level of women members of the parliament (PLC) to 12.9%, compared to 5.6% in 1997, in part due to a quota system for women’s political participation, which also raised women’s representation to 18% in local councils. These gains are precarious in the face of political upheavals that have brought the parliament to a standstill and forced several cabinet reshuffles. With repeated periods of crisis and a lack of stability in office, communities revert to societal norms that exclude women, even elected women, from the public and political spheres.

**Access to justice: Falling between the cracks**

Women suffer disproportionately from the current legislative framework, which falls under 4 different legal systems (Israeli, Jordanian, Egyptian and Palestinian) causing geographic disparities and placing some groups of women (including in East Jerusalem) at risk especially since communities tend to revert to the informal justice system, ruled by patriarchal norms. The situation is particularly acute because the PLC (parliament) has been unable to meet and govern since 2007. Additionally, according to the Palestinian Justice and Rule of Law Strategy 2011-2013, among the main problems faced at the national level are: absence of specialized courts and prosecutions; absence of a court to decide on the constitutionality of legislations and conflicts in jurisdiction; case backlogs; and weakness of rehabilitation and detention centres.

**Violence against Women: A national focus**

The level of domestic violence against women and girls in the oPt is high: 60% of married women in the West Bank and 77% in Gaza are psychologically abused; 23% of women in the West Bank and 53% in Gaza are physically abused; and 28% of married women in the oPt are sexually abused by their husband.[[13]](#footnote-13)Currently no specific laws or provisions in the oPt protect women against domestic violence. Although women can use existing gender-neutral laws like the penal code to achieve justice, for different reasons, ranging from socio-cultural norms to the lack of sufficient protective services, women do not invoke these laws against their abusers. However, the PA is making concrete efforts to tackle VAW; on 11 January 2011 the Palestinian Cabinet endorsed the National Strategy to Combat VAW and recently, the President signed a presidential decree amending articles of the Penal Code removing provisions for leniency with regard to murder in the name of so-called “family honour”.[[14]](#footnote-14)

**Institutionalizing Gender: A Prerequisite to Equality**

The PA is not a state party and so, it cannot ratify or sign any international convention according to the United Nations’ system. However, in addition to national-level efforts such as the CSNGS and the National Strategy to Combat VAW, to show commitment to gender equality and women’s empowerment, President Mahmoud Abbas symbolically endorsed CEDAW and the PA cabinet adopted SCR 1325. For all these commitments to be translated into actions, there has to be a clear institutionalization of gender issues within the PA. There have been preliminary steps in this direction, firstly in the establishment of national institutions, such as MOWA, but also in terms of mechanisms, such as the establishment of gender units within line ministries and the endorsement of gender responsive budgeting. These represent great opportunities, but they require concerted attention and investment to ensure that they realize their full potential.

Together with the new National Development Plan and the potential it holds, there are general positive trends in the concurrent efforts at domestic reconciliation among political factions, as well as increasingly successful advocacy at the international level for recognition of an independent Palestinian state, including the recent submission for full membership in the United Nations. (not sure this last paragraph is necessary)

1. **Programme objectives and implementation**

UN WOMEN oPt has been involved in the last few years in advancing Palestinian women’s human rights and eliminating gender inequality through supporting community based initiatives in marginalized areas of the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt).

The Sabaya Programme was first conceptualized by UN WOMEN in 2002 to empower and support Palestinian women in marginalized areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip through activating community-based centers. The Sabaya model is now adopted by UN WOMEN to support women’s community based organizations (CBOs) with the aim of achieving social, economic and political empowerment of Palestinian women.

The current project, “Establishment, rehabilitation and activation of eight women centers in Gaza Strip and West Bank” has been generously funded by the Saudi Committee for the Palestinian People Relief. For the first time, UN Women has been involved in designing and distributing the space of these centres for women to receive the maximum benefit. This project is an expansion to the Sabaya programme in terms of covering new geographical locations and building the physical space for women’s centres instead of activating existing ones. This project provided women in remote areas with a wide range of services that are hard to reach such as: legal aid, psycho-social help, educational services, vocational trainings, etc., in order to meet women’s needs and achieve social and economic security.

Eight women’s centres were selected through a transparent bidding process under the full supervision of UN Women local, regional, and headquarters offices.

The project targeted the following locations:

West Bank women’s centres:

1. Yabad Town,
2. Jourish Village,
3. Beit Fajjar Village,
4. Yatta Town,

Gaza women’s centres:

1. Mawassi Rafah Sabaya Center,
2. AlMaghazi Sabaya Center,
3. Bait Hanoun Sabaya Center
4. Palestinian Society for Development and Heritage Centre, Beit Lahia

Through this project, UN Women has partnered with local companies/organizations during the construction/ rehabilitation phase of the CBOs to ensure maximum benefit to the local community. The following activities have been completed:

* the partners met with women at targeted locations to assess their managerial capacity and needs and developed a workplan for each location based on the needs assessment.
* A core group of women at each of the 8 centres was provided with institutional (managerial and financial) training.
* Women’s centres members were provided with educational services (computer skills, English language skills, vocational training on handicrafts.
* Women’s centres were provided with on-location counselling and awareness raising services on issues including: legal literacy, academic guidance, psycho-social assistance and violence against women awareness activities.
* Elections were organized for each woman’s centre to select their administrative and financial committees.
* Technical support was provided for the women’s centres ’ official registration at the PA organizations.

Through a bottom-up approach, the project worked closely with relevant village councils and/or municipalities, in order to build consensus within the target communities. The project also coordinated with the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Local Government to ensure partnership. UN WOMEN oPt has already finished the construction/rehabilitation component of Eight Women Program centers UNDP’sEngineering Department was hired to undertake construction and rehabilitation of the women’s centres, as an organization with expertise in this area.

At the beginning of the project UN Women conducted extensive field visits to locations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to assess women’s needs. A selection committee was be created which included UN WOMEN and representatives from the Palestinian Authority organizations (Ministry of Women’s Affairs) and civil society organizations, to review the profiles of the proposed locations and select the final list of locations to be shared with the donor. The criteria used in the assessment will included women’s needs and status, their willingness and the support offered from the local community in these locations.

**Four principle strategies that are interlinked have been applied to ensure the success of this programme:**

The programme is comprised of four major components that, combined, touch upon economic and social empowerment governance and women's human rights. By addressing the Palestinian context they enhance longer-term sustainability of the programme. The strategies below were adopted in the Sabaya Programme and proved their efficiency:

1. Decentralization: In order to counteract the effects of closures and blockades that have resulted in segregation of communities, the programme will undertake work at the grassroots level through NGOs with extensive outreach capacity or smaller local organizations working within the target areas. The programme will be implemented in a flexible manner that will allow the programme to absorb changes and re-mould its activities while ensuring linkages between the components to allow them to feed into each other.
2. Mobilization: Women will be encouraged to organize themselves into groups within their communities to counteract the compounded effects of isolation experienced by women due to the political situation and resulting social pressures. Women will set up a support system for themselves that will also allow them to continuously assess their needs and priorities. This type of mobilization will set the stage for the emergence of women's leadership. Another level of thsi strategy is resource mobilization, whereby development stakeholders will be encouraged to include women in existing programmes and/or develop special programmes to serve these women. In the longer term, more effective organization of women and their raised awareness should lead to their participation in local governance and political processes.
3. Networking: In tandem with mobilization of women, the programme will encourage networking among communities of women that have been segregated by the current conflict and to establish linkages between communities of women and civil society organizations working in the target areas thereby enhancing the sustainability of their initiatives.
4. Flexibility: This strategy aims to account for the ever-changing situation on the ground resulting from the political conflict. The ambiguity in defining specific geographic locations results from the fact that UN WOMEN formulated this project two years ago and some of the eight locations or all will need to be replaced. Close monitoring and rapid assessment of the situation on the ground will be carried out in order to identify difficulties and re-direct activities accordingly. For example, changes on the emphasis of service provision may take place as well as modifications in terms of partners, modality of execution/contract with NGOs, etc. The strategy, therefore, relies on ensuring that the programme does not impose activities on the target beneficiaries, but rather, responds to their needs and priorities, even if they change, while keeping with the programme objectives and general framework.

The project’s full cost is 1,273,200 USD started in March 2009 and is expected to end 31 October 2012; the project benefited the women and young girls in the targeted locations and surrounding areas, as well as the community at large within the targeted locations.

The project contributed to achieve the following outcomes and outputs:

* The eight women’s community – based centers built or rehabilitated
* Women’s skills and capacities improved
* A social network among targeted communities and within them established
* Women’s access to services and information (i.e. educational, legal and psycho-social) facilitated
* The CBOs’ internal systems well established
* Job opportunities for local labour force created

**The current programme is built to contribute to UN Women’s global outcomes and specific outputs harmonized with:**

* UN Women Global **Development Results Framework (DRF) 2: Increased economic empowerment of women, especially of those who are most excluded**;
* The Palestinian National Authority’s NDP, Social Sector Strategic Objectives 1. To support and empower the poor and other vulnerable citizens and their families; **Objective 2. To prepare our children and youth for a fulfilling life and productive work in Palestine**; and **Objective 6. To promote the full participation and empowerment of women in society**; and
* The Palestinian Ministry of Women’s Affairs **Objective 2: To increase women’s economic participation**

**Programme Management:**

This programme builds on many successful projects and incorporates long-term strategy and experience in developing long-lasting relationships in communities based on mutual trust, understanding and cooperation, with the common vision to make tangible positive changes such as empowering individual women and local women’s groups.

A steering committee was formed at the beginning of the project comprisingUN Women and representatives from local village councils at the 8 locations. The committee’s main role was to oversee and monitor the implementation process, discuss coming steps, challenges and obstacles and suggest solutions.

**The project’s main national partners** in implementation are:

* Through this project, UN Women worked closely with local village councils at each of the eight locations to maximize community partnership and ownership of the project.
* **Women-run Centers:** 8 women-run centers have been targeted through this programme, reaching 300 women in 8 districts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.
* **Ma’an Development Center (Ma’an):** MA’AN Development Center is an independent Palestinian development and training institution and it’s work with women in Palestine pursues the goals of:

1. Developing women’s leadership
2. Strengthening women’s organizations
3. Supporting women’s rights, equality and equity.
4. Creating political and economic opportunities

**Other partners include:**

The Palestinian Counseling Center (PCC), UNDP Engineering Department, Universal Technical Institute (UTI) and two local legal consultants.

1. **Scope of the Evaluation**

The evaluation of the programme is planned to be completed between August 05, 2012 – October 15, 2012 and the geographic area of the evaluation activity includes villages in 8 districts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, with additional travel to areas as defined by the evaluation needs. A participatory evaluation approach will be applied to ensure that all programme stakeholders and staff actively engage in decision-making and other activities related to planning and conducting the evaluation. The application of the participatory approach will provide a means to democratize the evaluation process through meaningful engagement of different voices in the evaluation process.

The evaluation will aim to measure the achievements of the project and provide an in-depth independent evaluation to assess the project impact in addition to documenting lessons learned. An exit strategy will be designed in partnership with partners’ organizations to ensure the sustainability of the eight women centers after the project is completed and that the women themselves are running the centers. The evaluation will involve women and the local community to ensure a successful participatory approach.

**Evaluation Methodology**

The evaluation will be based on a proposed methodology and validated by UN Women oPt in consultation with the UN Women Evaluation Unit.

By a broad use of the participatory evaluation technique, the final evaluation will ensure that key stakeholders, as well as Programme Management and beneficiaries will be engaged throughout the entire evaluation process. The participatory approach is thought to serve for facilitating the linkages and collaboration among various stakeholders: directly and indirectly affected by the programme results, thus making the process itself responsive and relevant to the stakeholders.

The evaluation will be results-oriented and provide evidence of achievement of expected outputs through the use of quantitative and qualitative methods. The methodology for the final evaluation shall include the following:

1. Preliminary desk reviews of all relevant documents for the programme, the programme document, Log Frame, implementation plan, monitoring reports, donor reports (inception report, progress reports), Programme Final Report; existing national and international reports on gender equality status, etc...
2. Preliminary discussions with UN Women senior management, programme staff from UN Women oPt Jerusalmen and Gaza offices Economic Security and Rights Unit, MDG-F Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Programme in the oPt, will also take place within this period. This will be done prior to any field visit, focus group discussion, or individual interviews.
3. Field visits at different stages of the process.
4. Individual and group discussions, in-depth interviews with key partners: a series of semi-structured interviews and focus groups with the programme management staff, national partners, counterparts, and beneficiaries are envisaged to be conducted under this stage. This can include survey among participants of various capacity building trainings and events undertaken by the programme since its start.

The consultative element of the evaluation is crucial for building up a consensus about the programme’s overall rationale and desired outcomes. Data from different research sources will be triangulated to increase its validity. Field visits will be organized to facilitate the process of evaluation. This stage of the programme aims for an overall understanding of UN Women’s programme contribution to engendering decision making in the oPt to ensure and promote women’s economic security and rights, and draw out key good practices that deserve replication, scaling up and will provisionally contribute to other future activities of the UN Women oPt.

The proposed approach and methodology has to be considered as flexible guidelines rather than final standards; and the evaluator will have an opportunity to make her/his inputs and propose changes in the evaluation design. It is expected that the evaluator and her/his evaluation team will further refine the approach and methodology and submit their detailed description in the proposal and Inception Report. In addition, the refined approach and methodology by the Evaluation Team should incorporate Human Rights and Gender Equality perspectives.

1. **Expected Results and Timeframe**

As a logical result of the completion of the desk review it is expected that the evaluator will submit an **inception report**, which contains evaluation objectives and scope, description of evaluation methodology/methodological approach, data collection tools, data analysis methods, key informants/agencies, evaluation questions, performance criteria, issues to be studied, work plan and reporting requirements.

As a result of the completion of the field visits and surveys and interviews with the partners, it is envisaged that several key products will be submitted, namely: **Progress Report** of the Field work to the UN Women oPt office and key internal and external stakeholders, **Power Point presentation and an outline**  on preliminary findings, lessons learned, and recommendations, **Draft full report** highlighting key evaluation findings and conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations (shall be done in a specific format). The report will also include the lessons to be learned in the future, the management of the programme and staff, and capacity development training provided. The draft report will be discussed with the national partners to ensure participation and involvement of the national stakeholders.

Afterwards **a Final evaluation report** and five-page **executive summary** are expected to be submitted to the UN Women oPt office incorporating all comments and feedback collected from all partners involved.

Format of the final evaluation report shall include the following chapters: Executive Summary (maximum five pages), Programme description, Evaluation purpose, Evaluation methodology, Findings, Lessons learnt, Recommendations and Annexes (including interview list, data collection instruments, key documents consulted, Terms of Reference).

The main evaluation findings highlight achievements and results, as well as gaps and shortfalls in the formulation and/or implementation of the programme. In addition to lessons to be learned in the future, the evaluation will consider management of the project, staff, capacity development training provided, the capacity of the women centers and how to utilize them to ensure maximum results to benefit women’s economic, social, governance and rights component. The utilization of equipment provided in the Women centers, and the economic and financial effect of the programme on the women and the family. Based on these findings, the evaluation also recommends steps for improvement and the way forward.

1. Draft detailed work plan indicating the work of the consultant. Within five days after signing the contract.
2. Inception report to be submitted 14 days after signing the contract with all the proper documents of the evaluation team or consultant and to be **approved** by UN Women oPt Head of Office, Programme Management Analyst and the Women’s Economic Security and Rights Unit Programme Coordinator prior to implementation of the other requirements stipulated.
3. Power Point Presentation of the preliminary findings to UN Women management team and relevant staff and stakeholders at the end of the evaluation of field work. (All comments by stakeholders will be incorporated in the Draft Report).
4. Submission of the draft final evaluation report in English language within 5 weeks of the completion of the field work.
5. Final evaluation report submitted in English and fully edited version and brief of the report in Arabic to be shared with partners within 10 days after reception of the final draft report with comments. The report will only be considered final after incorporating all comments and feedback into the report by UN Women and the project partners.
6. Properly file/ archive hard copies of all interviews, focus group discussions and questionnaires, and transcripts should be delivered as documents of evidence supporting the findings of the report. Interview lists/considering confidentiality/anonymity, data collection instruments, and key documents used.

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| **Product / Activity** |  | **Estimated number of working days** |
| **Stage 1 Key product – preliminary desk reviews, discussions with partners and inception report** | | |
| **Inception report** of the evaluation team, which includes the evaluation methodology and the timing of activities and deliverables | Within one week upon signing the contract, but not later than August 8, 2012 | 5 |
| **Stage 2 Key Product – Evaluation Report** | | |
| **Data collection** (including field work) | August 10, 2012 | 6 |
| **Progress Report** of the Field work to UN Women office and key internal and external stakeholders | August 20, 2012 | 10 |
| **Outline and a Power Point presentation** **in English and Arabic to share with stakeholders** on preliminary findings, lessons learned, and recommendations. | August 30 – 1 September, 2012 | 3 |
| **Draft full report and summary in Arabic and English** highlighting key evaluation findings and conclusions, lessons and recommendations.  Consultations by the evaluator with the key programme partners and stakeholders shall take place to validate the key findings of the report and collect feedback and recommendations to inform the final evaluation report. | September 2– September 23, 2012 | 15 |
| **Final evaluation report** and five-page **executive summary in English and Arabic (fully edited)** | September 26, 2012 | 10 |
| **TOTAL number of working days:** |  | 49 |

As this call is for a **local/national consultant**, all travel costs shall be incorporated in the financial proposal. For the purpose of participatory involvement of all stakeholders and partners, all questionnaires must be in Arabic and translated into English.

Language for all deliverables: English with the exception of questionnaires developed as identified above

The time-frame allocated for the completion of the indicated above deliverables is between August 23, 2012 until October 15, 2012.

1. **Composition, Skills and Experience of the Evaluator and her/his team**

An external local/national evaluator and her/his team will undertake the evaluation, having experience linked to evaluation, gender equality and economic policy with specific knowledge of gender responsive planning, budgeting and monitoring; knowledge of income generating and community-based initiatives; nutrition; economically feasible income generating schemes, and experience in conducting gender-sensitive and rights-based evaluations so to be also able to contribute to the substance of this evaluation.

**Competencies**

*Technical/Functional:*

* Extensive knowledge and experience in evaluation of development programmes and application of quantitative and qualitative methods.
* A strong record in designing and leading evaluations.
* Experience in gender analysis and human rights.
* Familiarity with the political, economic and social situation in the oPt.
* Experience in working with multi-stakeholders essential:  governments, civil society, community based organizations, and the UN/multilateral/bilateral institutions.
* Experience in participatory approach is a must as well as facilitation skills and ability to manage diversity of views in different cultural contexts.
* Experience in capacity development essential.
* Ability to produce well written reports demonstrating analytical ability and communication skills.
* Proven ability to undertake self-directed research.
* Ability to work with UN Women oPt and other evaluation stakeholders to ensure that a high quality product is delivered on a timely basis.
* Excellent writing skills, ability to write in a structured, lucid and concise manner, without losing the depth of the substance

*Corporate Competencies:*

* Demonstrates integrity by modeling the UN's values and ethical standards.
* Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability.

**Required Skills and Experience**

* At least a master’s degree; in social science and/or related areas
* 10 years of working experience in evaluation, and at least 5 in evaluation of development programmes
* Experience in evaluation of programmes with budget over USD 1million.
* 5 years of experience and background on gender equality and economic policy with understanding of gender responsive planning, budgeting and monitoring.
* Fluent in Arabic and English.

1. **Management of the evaluation**

The UN Women oPt Office will manage the final evaluation under overall supervision of the UN Women Head of Office, with guidance from Programme Management Analyst and the Women’s Economic Security and Rights Programme Assistant.

This is a consultative/participatory final evaluation with a strong learning component. The management of the evaluation will ensure that key stakeholders will be consulted. After the completion of the final evaluation, a final stage of the process will take place, including the dissemination strategy for sharing the lessons learnt, and the management response of the final evaluation results. The management response will be submitted within ten working days following submission. These activities will be managed by the UN Women oPt Office.

1. **Ethical code of conduct for the evaluation**

The following links form a crucial part of this ToR for the evaluator’s attention and review:

* UN Women Evaluation Policy: [http://erc.undp.org/unwomen/resources/policy/UN WOMEN%20Evaluation%20Policy.pdf;jsessionid=6F5255C6321C9D7F729CAE88DEF11D85](http://erc.undp.org/unwomen/resources/policy/UNIFEM%20Evaluation%20Policy.pdf;jsessionid=6F5255C6321C9D7F729CAE88DEF11D85)
* United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN System: <http://www.uneval.org/normsandstandards/index.jsp?doc_cat_source_id=4>
* ‘Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation – Towards UNEG Guidance, ’<http://www.unevaluation.org/HRGE_Guidance>.
* UN Women Guidance on ToRs, <https://intra.unwomen.org/Evaluation/SitePages/EvaluationIssues-ProcessManagement.aspx>
* The UNEG handbook on HR and GE evaluation,<http://www.unevaluation.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=980>
* Programme document : <https://www.dropbox.com/s/wxe2xhnl3gtv0ey/Saudi_PRODOC%20after%20PAC%20final%20.doc?m>
* UN Women RBM manual:<http://dl.dropbox.com/u/55776569/RBM_Essential_Guide_Feb_2005_PROFEM052.doc>

## Annex B: List of People Interviewed

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| **Trainees from Women's Centers** | |
| Mr. Ahmad Al-Kafarneh | Ghassan Kanafani Association-Beit Hanoun Sbaya Center |
| Mr. Akram Abu Odeh | Ghassan Kanafani Association-Beit Hanoun Sbaya Center |
| Ms. Abeer Farahat | Al-Mawasi Neibourhood Development Committee- Al-Mawasi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Ahlam Abu Harbi | Ghassan Kanafani Association-Beit Hanoun Sbaya Center |
| Ms. Ahlam Al-Kafarneh | Ghassan Kanafani Association-Beit Hanoun Sbaya Center |
| Ms. Amina Abu Qbaita | Yatta Women's Association |
| Ms. Amina Yousef | Beit Fajjar Women's Association |
| Ms. Anwar Al-Bahri | Palestinian Association for Development and Cultural Preservation-Beit Lahia |
| Ms. Anwar Al-Sherafi | Palestinian Association for Development and Cultural Preservation-Beit Lahia |
| Ms. Asma' Al-Za'anin | Ghassan Kanafani Association-Beit Hanoun Sbaya Center |
| Ms. Asma' Latayfeh | Jurish Charitable Association for Development |
| Ms. Asma' Mansour | Jurish Charitable Association for Development |
| Ms. Asmahan Al-Hadar | Yatta Women's Association |
| Ms. Azhar Al-Sherafi | Beit Lahia Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Basma Shaker | Beit Fajjar Women's Association |
| Ms. Fadwa Alhaileh | Al-Maghazi Cultural Association- Al-Maghazi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Falak Al-Birweeni | Palestinian Association for Development and Cultural Preservation-Beit Lahia |
| Ms. Fatema Kafarneh | Ghassan Kanafani Association-Beit Hanoun Sbaya Center |
| Ms. Fatema Rabi' | Yatta Women's Association |
| Ms. Faten Abu Odeh | Ghassan Kanafani Association-Beit Hanoun Sbaya Center |
| Ms. Fayzeh Shlouf | Al-Mawasi Neibourhood Development Committee- Al-Mawasi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Feda' Balbeisi | Ya'bad Charitable Association |
| Ms. Fida' Al-Zain | Palestinian Association for Development and Cultural Preservation-Beit Lahia |
| Ms. Firyal Taqatqa | Beit Fajjar Women's Association |
| Ms. Hamdeya Abu Odeh | Ghassan Kanafani Association-Beit Hanoun Sbaya Center |
| Ms. Hana Al-Nahal | Al-Mawasi Neibourhood Development Committee- Al-Mawasi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Hana' Odeh | Al-Maghazi Cultural Association-Al-Maghazi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Haneen Hreimat | Beit Fajjar Women's Association |
| Ms. Heba Thawabteh | Beit Fajjar Women's Association |
| Ms. Heyam Abu Baker | Ya'bad Charitable Association |
| Ms. Hiba Al-Nahal | Al-Mawasi Neibourhood Development Committee- Al-Mawasi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Hiba Bader | Palestinian Association for Development and Cultural Preservation-Beit Lahia |
| Ms. Ibtisam Al-Balbeisi | Al-Maghazi Cultural Association-Al-Maghazi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Ibtisam Al-Najar | Al-Maghazi Cultural Association-Al-Maghazi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Iffat Awwad | Jurish Charitable Association for Development |
| Ms. Iman Abu Baker | Ya'bad Charitable Association |
| Ms. Iman Ahmad Mansour | Jurish Charitable Association for Development |
| Ms. Iman Ajajer | Beit Fajjar Women's Association |
| Ms. Jamila Taqatqa | Beit Fajjar Women's Association |
| Ms. Jehan Al-Zawar'a | Palestinian Association for Development and Cultural Preservation-Beit Lahia |
| Ms. Jenan Latayfeh | Jurish Charitable Association for Development |
| Ms. Karima Thawabteh | Beit Fajjar Women's Association |
| Ms. Khalwla Abu Mreer | Yatta Women's Association |
| Ms. Khuloud Abu Jamous | Jurish Charitable Association for Development |
| Ms. Laila Al-Masri | Ghassan Kanafani Association-Beit Hanoun Sbaya Center |
| Ms. Maha Zu'rub | Al-Mawasi Neibourhood Development Committee- Al-Mawasi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Mahasen Rajab | Palestinian Association for Development and Cultural Preservation-Beit Lahia |
| Ms. Majeda Odeh | Beit Fajjar Women's Association |
| Ms. Manal Taqatqa | Beit Fajjar Women's Association |
| Ms. Manal Zeid | Ya'bad Charitable Association |
| Ms. Maysoun Awad | Al-Maghazi Cultural Association-Al-Maghazi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Mirvat Abu Qbeita | Yatta Women's Association |
| Ms. Muna Abdel Min'em | Beit Fajjar Women's Association |
| Ms. Muna Qassem | Ghassan Kanafani Association-Beit Hanoun Sbaya Center |
| Ms. Munira Al-Za'anin | Ghassan Kanafani Association-Beit Hanoun Sbaya Center |
| Ms. Muntaha Taqatqa | Beit Fajjar Women's Association |
| Ms. Nada Al-Masri | Ghassan Kanafani Association-Beit Hanoun Sbaya Center |
| Ms. Na'ela Ahmad | Palestinian Association for Development and Cultural Preservation-Beit Lahia |
| Ms. Najah Al-Niser | Al-Maghazi Cultural Association-Al-Maghazi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Najwa Farah | Jurish Charitable Association for Development |
| Ms. Nida' Al-Masri | Ghassan Kanafani Association-Beit Hanoun Sbaya Center |
| Ms. Nimeh Qattoun | Al-Maghazi Cultural Association-Al-Maghazi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Omayma Al-Nahal | Al-Mawasi Neibourhood Development Committee- Al-Mawasi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Raghda Shlouf | Al-Mawasi Neibourhood Development Committee- Al-Mawasi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Reda Al-Mur | Yatta Women's Association |
| Ms. Reham Ahmad | Palestinian Association for Development and Cultural Preservation-Beit Lahia |
| Ms. Reham Lasheya | Al-Maghazi Cultural Association-Al-Maghazi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Remah Faraj | Palestinian Association for Development and Cultural Preservation-Beit Lahia |
| Ms. Ruwa' Al-Najar | Al-Maghazi Cultural Association-Al-Maghazi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Sa'da Abu Jazar | Al-Mawasi Neibourhood Development Committee- Al-Mawasi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Sa'da Abu Saqer | Al-Maghazi Cultural Association-Al-Maghazi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Salam Abu Baker | Ya'bad Charitable Association |
| Ms. Samah Taqatqa | Beit Fajjar Women's Association |
| Ms. Samaher Al-'Omour | Yatta Women's Association |
| Ms. Samira Al-Mur | Yatta Women's Association |
| Ms. Samira Farhat | Al-Mawasi Neibourhood Development Committee- Al-Mawasi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Sawsan Taqatqa | Beit Fajjar Women's Association |
| Ms. Sbrin Al-Sufi | Al-Mawasi Neibourhood Development Committee- Al-Mawasi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Shahrazad Al-Mur | Yatta Women's Association |
| Ms. Sharifa Thawabteh | Beit Fajjar Women's Association |
| Ms. Sifras Haj Mohammad | Jurish Charitable Association for Development |
| Ms. Siham Musa | Ghassan Kanafani Association-Beit Hanoun Sbaya Center |
| Ms. Suha Abu Jamous | Jurish Charitable Association for Development |
| Ms. Sundus Zeid | Ya'bad Charitable Association |
| Ms. Suzan Huwaiji | Ghassan Kanafani Association-Beit Hanoun Sbaya Center |
| Ms. Tahani Darwish | Al-Maghazi Cultural Association-Al-Maghazi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Tahani Odeh | Al-Mawasi Neibourhood Development Committee- Al-Mawasi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Thana' Atatra | Ya'bad Charitable Association |
| Ms. Wadha Abu I'ram | Yatta Women's Association |
| Ms. Wardeh Hamad | Palestinian Association for Development and Cultural Preservation-Beit Lahia |
| Ms. Wijdan Deriya | Beit Fajjar Women's Association |
| Ms. Wurood Al-Uwaini | Al-Maghazi Cultural Association-Al-Maghazi Sabaya Center |
| Ms. Zaheer Al-Mur | Yatta Women's Association |
| Ms. Zakeya Sa'ad | Al-Maghazi Cultural Association-Al-Maghazi Sabaya Center |
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| **Management Staff of Women's Centers and Hosting Organisations** | |
| Mr. Anwar Maleeha | Executive Director, Palestinian Association for Development and Cultural Preservation-Beit Lahia |
| Mr. Bassam Abu Sharif | Executive Director, Al-Maghazi Cultural Association |
| Mr. Khaled Khader | Chairman, Al-Mawasi Neibourhood Development Committee-Rafah |
| Mr. Sa'adedein Zeyadeh | General Director, Ghassan Kanafani Association-Beit Hanoun |
| Ms. Amina Abu Qbeita | Board Member, Yatta Women's Association |
| Ms. Ayda Al-Sherafi | Sabaya Center Coordinator, Palestinian Association for Development and Cultural Preservation-Beit Lahia |
| Ms. Basma Shaker | Chairwoman, Beit Fajjar Women's Association |
| Ms. Iffat Ahmad Awwad | Secretary, Jurish Charitable Association for Development |
| Ms. Iktimal Abu Odeh | Sabaya Center Coordinator, Al-Mawasi Neibourhood Development Committee-Rafah |
| Ms. Iman Abu Baker | Vice Chairwoman, Ya'bad Charitable Association |
| Ms. Iman Ahmad Mansour | Chairwoman, Jurish Charitable Association for Development |
| Ms. Karima Thawabteh | Board Member, Beit Fajjar Women's Association |
| Ms. Khawla Abu Mreer | Board Member, Yatta Women's Association |
| Ms. Khuloud Abu Jamous | Board Member, Jurish Charitable Association for Development |
| Ms. Majeda Odeh | Treasurer, Beit Fajjar Women's Association |
| Ms. Maysara Al-Kafarneh | Sabaya Center Coordinator, Ghassan Kanafani Assoiction-Beit Hanoun |
| Ms. Nahla Al-Akhras | Sabaya Center Coordinator, Al-Maghazi Cultural Association |
| Ms. Salam Abu Baker | Chairwoamn, Ya'bad Charitable Association |
| Ms. Sharifa Thawabteh | Board Member, Beit Fajjar Women's Association |
| Ms. Thana' Atatra | Treasurer, Ya'bad Charitable Association |
| Ms. Wadha Abu 'Iram | Chairwoman, Yatta Women's Association |
| Ms. Wijdan Deriya | Board Member, Beit Fajjar Women's Association |
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| **Staff of UN Women and Implementing Partners** | |
| Mr. Abdel Munem Salem | Engineer, United Nations Development Programme/Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (West Bank) |
| Mr. Deya' Al-Baba | Engineer, United Nations Development Programme/Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (Gaza) |
| Mr. Hasan Zeyadeh | Trainer, Gaza Center for Mental Health and Counseling |
| Mr. Loai Al-Wuhaidi | Programme Manager, Ma'an Development Center (Gaza) |
| Mr. Nour Kharoub | CEO, Universal Technical Institute |
| Mr. Odate Hanna | Project Assistant, UN Women (West Bank) |
| Mr. Salah Malayshe | Trainer/Psycho-Social Couselor, Palestinian Counseling Center (West Bank) |
| Mr. Sameer Zaqout | Project Coordinator, Gaza Center for Mental Health and Counseling |
| Mr. Wesam Al-Mu'amar | CEO, Pioneer for Training and Consulting (Gaza) |
| Ms. Abeer Al-Kahlout | Trainer on Women's Rights/Lawyer (Gaza) |
| Ms. Feda' Amasha | Programme Analyst, UN Women (West Bank) |
| Ms. Heba Al-Zayyan | Programme Analyst, UN Women (Gaza) |
| Ms. Myassar Da'jan | Project Coordinator, UN Women (West Bank) |
| Ms. Samah Ibrahim Mahmoud | Trainer, Gaza Center for Mental Health and Counseling |
| Ms. Sana' Aranki | Trainer on Women's Rights/Lawyer (West Bank) |
| Ms. Shayma' Al-Mu'amar | Projects' Manager, Pioneer for Training and Consulting (Gaza) |
| Ms. Shurouq Hijawi | Programme Manager, Ma'an Development Center (West Bank) |
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| **Saudi Committee for the Relief of the Palestinian People** | |
| Mr. Reyad Al-Musa | Project Manager-Relief Committees |

1. OCHA, *Fact Sheet, Humanitarian Situation in Gaza,* July 2011. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Palestinian National Authority. *Establishing the State, Building our Future*, April 2011. ‘…The belief that social justice and equality, and that women and young people must play a greater role in building Palestine, are the keys to establishing a stable society and strong economy are guiding principles of the NDP…’ p. 10 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. PCBS (2011), “Labor Force Survey, 2010”. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. PCBS, Women and Men in Palestine 2010. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. PCBS, *Domestic Violence in the Palestinian Territory. Analytical Study,* Ramallah, 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The presidential decree has still not been published in the official Gazette and therefore not effective. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The separation wall is being constructed by Israel and has been determined as contrary to international law by the International Court of Justice (Advisory Opinion of 9 July 2004: Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory - <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/files/131/1671.pdf>) (last visited 24 May 2011). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. OCHA, *Fact Sheet, Humanitarian Situation in Gaza,* July 2011. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Palestinian National Authority. *Establishing the State, Building our Future*, April 2011. ‘…The belief that social justice and equality, and that women and young people must play a greater role in building Palestine, are the keys to establishing a stable society and strong economy are guiding principles of the NDP…’ p. 10 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. PCBS (2011), “Labor Force Survey, 2010”. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. PCBS, Women and Men in Palestine 2010. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. PCBS, *Domestic Violence in the Palestinian Territory. Analytical Study,* Ramallah, 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. The presidential decree has still not been published in the official Gazette and therefore not effective. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)