



Concept Note

Title	A Holistic Approach to Sheltering Services for Women Victims and Survivors of Violence in Palestine
Duration	1 October 2016 – 30 September 2017
Key Implementing partner/s	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Centre For Women's Legal Research & Consulting/Hayat Centre (Gaza) 2. Mehwar Centre for the Protection and Empowerment of Women and Families 3. Nablus Safe home 4. Emergency shelter in Jericho (WCLAC) 5. The Culture and Free Thought Association “CFTA”- Through the Women’s Health Center (WHC)-Bureij
Other Partners (if any)	Ministry of Social Development (previously MoSA)
Estimated Budget	Euro 500,000

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the oPt, women and girls continue to experience multiple forms of violence, based on continuing military occupation, human rights violations, and a growing humanitarian crisis in Gaza, compounded by conservative traditions, religion and patriarchal norms. The level of violence against women and girls (VAWG) remains high¹ and a culture of silence and stigma persists around the phenomenon. Recently, cases of reported femicide have increased, with several of the killings occurring brazenly in public places such as streets, markets and recently in court. Access to protection and associated services remains challenging. Limited access of women to employment opportunities and sustainable financial income, an overwhelming burden of care responsibilities, as well as the marginalization imposed due to geographical fragmentation and associated movement restriction, exacerbate women’s vulnerability to violence and hinder opportunities to access protection, justice and security services.

In this one year project (estimated at € 500,000) and in response to request from civil society partners to support and maintain provision of services to women victims and survivors of violence and to expand services to vulnerable women and girls, UN Women aims to respond to the social, protection and economic needs of vulnerable women and girls in the oPt that remain deeply

¹ The main findings of the 2011 survey indicate that 37 percent of ever-married women were exposed to one form of violence by their husbands, 29.9 per cent in the West Bank compared to 51.1 per cent in the Gaza Strip.

affected by the longstanding impact of the Israeli occupation and political siege of Gaza where political violence is closely associated with domestic and spousal violence².

In alignment with UN Women’s strategic framework: Impact Area 3” *Preventing violence against women and girls and expanding access to services*”: Outcome 3.2 “Specialized, quality, multi-sectoral survivors-based services available and accessible to women and girls victims of violence”; the National Strategy to Combat Violence Against Women 2011-2019, specifically referring to the need to “*increase the number and develop services of safe homes and institutions offering legal and social protection services and ensure their wide geographic distribution throughout the oPt*”; the Cross Sectoral National Gender Strategy 2014-2016: Policy 5: “Developing social services for battered women and the most vulnerable to marginalization”; and building on its long time programmatic support to anti-violence centres (also shelters for women victims and survivors of violence) in Palestine, UN Women will maintain and upscale its support to anti-violence multipurpose protection centres in the West bank and the Gaza Strip with the aim of standardizing sheltering services among the centres/shelters and improving vulnerable women’s access to VAWG protection, psycho-social support, economic support and legal services.

II. BACKGROUND

The situation in the oPt is characterized by a state of political instability which has devastating consequences on the Palestinian population as a whole, with differentiated impact on men, women, boys and girls. The situation on the ground in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, remained volatile with heightened tensions and violence surrounding the vicinity of the Old City of Jerusalem³. Palestinians continued to be subject to a range of violent attacks from Israeli settlers which is perpetrated with almost total impunity. The eight-year long closure on the Gaza Strip has had a devastating effect on the lives of all Palestinians, particularly in their access to work, food, health care and freedom of movement. Key concerns linked to women in particular include access to housing, land and property rights, gender-based violence (GBV), and limited access to health care including prenatal and neonatal healthcare, limited employment opportunities and limited access to higher education.⁴ As the primary caregivers in Gaza, women are faced with acute challenges in coping with the large number of families with members killed or injured, the long-term impact of damaged infrastructure and reduced services.⁵ Psychosocial distress levels, already high among the Gaza population, have worsened significantly as a result of the conflict and will require specialized support, specifically for children, adolescent girls and women. Female-headed families, including new widows, are a priority group in need of protection and support⁶. Furthermore, there is limited

² Building Ties: Towards Integrated Strategies & Policies for Empowering Palestinian Women, UN Women, 2014

³ SG report on the Situation of and Assistance to Palestinian women: 1 October 2014 to 30 September 2015

⁴ Protection in the Windward. UNFPA. Culture and Free Thought Association October 2014

⁵ Gaza Gender Alert, UN Women-OCHA, August 2015.

⁶ SG report on the Situation of and Assistance to Palestinian women: 1 October 2014 to 30 September 2015

capacity to respond to the over 3000 Palestinians left with a disability after the latest military offensive. Women with disabilities face additional challenges and discrimination. Married women with disabilities continue to be responsible for house chores and have reported reverting to their daughters and other female family members to assist them in their caring responsibilities with little help from their husbands.

Gender-Based Violence cannot be seen as a private problem only that results from social patriarchy, male dominance within the extended and nuclear family, or other social inequalities. It is often interrelated to conflict-related violence existent in the environment. The daily deprivation of social and economic security at the household level; the threat and insecurity of living in continuous crisis; the loss of private spaces such as homes and lands through confiscation or demolition; and the inability to secure a job, shakes the social fabric of the household and heightens the loss of self-identity and social space of women, which in turn, leaves them more vulnerable⁷. The inter-relatedness of the forms of violence resulting from the conflict coupled with the different forms of violence resulting from traditional patriarchal family structures have always been voiced by women and girls⁸. According to PCBS in (2011), The main findings of the 2011 survey indicate that 37 percent of ever-married women were exposed to one form of violence by their husbands, 29.9 per cent in the West Bank compared to 51.1 per cent in the Gaza Strip.

Shelters to protect women from violence, especially women whose lives are in danger, are available. There are three centres in the West Bank; two of them are supervised by the Ministry of Social Affairs (following different models of supervision) and the third, which is an emergency centre, is supervised by the Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counseling (WCLAC)⁹. There is one centre in Gaza that is supervised by the Centre for Women's Legal Research and Consulting (CWLRC).

The "Mehwar Centre for the Protection and Empowerment of Women and Families" represents the first centre in the oPt offering specialized anti violence- services for women and their children, including a shelter, as well as services for the community at large and it operates under the institutional umbrella of the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA)¹⁰. In collaboration with Italian Cooperation and WCLAC, UN Women has supported the "Mehwar Centre" since 2008 to build capacity and case management skills among its staff. In addition since 2015, the Italian Cooperation has been supporting the Mehwar Centre through the WELOD programme to build its capacity also on reintegration services.

In 2014, UN Women provided support to "Mehwar Centre", and the NGO-run Nablus Safe Home as a continuation and up-scaling of the "Mehwar Centre for the Protection and Empowerment of Women and Families" Project, executed by UN Women through funds provided by the Government of Italy (2008-2012), while applying the model developed through the Mehwar Centre experience to the anti-violence shelter based in Nablus.

⁷ Gender-Based Violence in the oPt, Bisan Centre, 2011

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Building Ties: Towards Integrated Strategies & Policies for Empowering Palestinian Women, UN Women, 2014

¹⁰ Recently renamed as Ministry of Social Development

The “Nablus Safe Home” was established in 1999 by a local NGO named the “Family Defence Society”. The shelter in Nablus has been working on protection of women victims for 20 years including more recently through the provision of hotline and shelter services. The shelter accepts women of all ages, including their children. Beneficiaries receive shelter services, psychological counselling, legal counselling and coordination with different civil society organizations and formal institutions. The period that a woman may stay in the shelter ranges from 24 hours up to six months, and sometimes even longer, depending on the social, and psychological needs and rehabilitation plan and the ability to find solutions for reintegration of the woman into the family and/or community.

The Jericho shelter initially opened in 1996 but was closed in 2011. It reopened in May 2013 with support from the Australian Consulate. The centre is administered and run by the Women’s Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling (WCLAC) and conforms to and abides by the regulations and by-laws that govern the operation of women’s shelters. WCLAC was established in 1991 and due to the lack of availability of shelters, offered safe havens for women in private schools and shelters. The organization initially started the Bethlehem shelter after which its administration was taken over by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA). The Jericho shelter is meant to act as an Emergency shelter and filter for all cases in the West bank but it does not currently work as it should. The shelter can cater for up to 8 people in two bedrooms and has dealt with approximately 85 cases since it reopened. All of those cases have been referred from MoSA. Approximately 15% of those have been referred on to one of the other shelters in Bethlehem or Nablus for a longer stay. The shelter employs seven staff, the Director, a social worker and five ‘house mothers’. Legal services are provided by WCLAC independently of the shelter. The terms of the shelter mean that women received there can stay for up to one month although this has in the past been relaxed and four or five cases have stayed there for up to three months because of the time taken in administering the procedures.

In order to respond to the demand from women’s organizations in the Gaza Strip, which later became the Amal Coalition to Combat VAWG¹¹, UN Women and UNDP, through the MDGF¹², had established the Hayat Multipurpose Centre for the Protection and Empowerment of Women and Families¹³ in the Gaza Strip as a shelter for women victims of violence. Modelled after the Mehwar Centre in Bethlehem, the Hayat Centre was conceived¹⁴ to respond to VAWG cases through an integrated, human rights-based approach, working on prevention by promoting a culture of gender-

¹¹The Amal Coalition was established in 2009 by a group of human rights and women’s organizations in partnership with the UN-Women. Al Amal’s steering committee is composed of 12 CSO members.

¹² The Millennium Development Goals Fund on Promoting Gender’s Equality and Empowering Women (MDG-FG), funded by the Government of Spain was the first joint programme to be implemented in the oPt by six UN Agencies over the period 2009-2012. The MDG-FG had three main components: reducing gender-based violence against women and girls; increasing the representation of women and women’s issues in decision-making bodies and advancing equal opportunities for women’s economic participation.

¹³ Hayat centre was inaugurated in December 2011 and is currently run by the Centre for Women’s Legal Research and Consulting (CWLRC) with Amal coalition playing an advisory role in the Steering Committee. The centre does not receive any public funding

¹⁴ Upon the inauguration of the centre in December 2011, the managing organization, the Centre for Women’s Legal Research and Consulting (CWLRC), received a communication from the de facto Ministry of Social Affairs in Gaza that limits its functioning as a shelter.

sensitive and violence-free family relations, as well as protection and empowerment of women, girls and children victims/survivors of violence. Since the beginning of 2012, the Hayat Centre has been providing day services as an anti-violence centre, providing case management, psychosocial and legal counseling to women victims of violence as well as child visitation facilities for children and divorced couples.

Under the project support “To Sustainable Protection and Empowerment Services For Women Victims And Survivors Of Violence”, UN Women is currently supporting the anti-violence centres in Nablus and Gaza to provide protection and reintegration services to women victims and survivors of violence.

The Women Health Centre (WHC) –Bureij was established as a multipurpose centre in the middle area of the Gaza Strip to contribute to the improved health of men and women in the target communities. It offers an array of services including RH services such as family planning and anti and post- natal care services, It also works on legal counselling, court representation, awareness raising, and advocacy with the overall objective of combating GBV against women and adolescent girls.

III. JUSTIFICATION

Continuous efforts have been made by a number of actors to make “Mehwar Centre” a knowledge hub for other service providers in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip, also to secure a holistic approach to sheltering services for women particularly with regards to the establishment of Minimum Standards for sheltering services. UN Women, in partnership with MoSA, has worked, and continues to do so, to ensure that lessons learned and good practices developed upon the “Mehwar Centre” experience are disseminated and form the basis for other actors providing services for women victims as well as to inform national protection standards. There has yet to be a consolidated review and comparisons of the services and functioning of the Nablus shelter, an NGO run service, and the Mehwar Centre, administered by the Ministry of Social Affairs. Such a review would provide valuable lessons learned on improving the efficiency and quality of the delivery of multi-sectoral essential services as well as provide an evidence base for advocacy and development of policy choices on how to improve sheltering services in Palestine.

Through the Japan funded project “Improving Holistic Protection Services for Women and Girls in the Conflict Affected Context of the Gaza Strip (2015/2016)”, UN Women continued its support to the Hayat centre and also to Aisha and Wifaq Associations to implement a large scale case management, outreach, and referral programme targeting women and men living in overcrowded households with the aim of providing psychosocial assistance, SGBV case management and awareness raising. UN Women will work to maintain and scale up this intervention, ensuring that, *despite funding challenges*, the Hayat centre will continue to provide its support to the most vulnerable women and girls in Gaza while advocating to fully function as a shelter for women victims and survivors of violence.

In its efforts to continue combating VAWG in the oPt and focusing on supporting anti-violence centres services, anti-violence centres staff capacity building, development of minimum sheltering standards and advocacy for the sustainability and effectiveness of sheltering services, UN Women is proposing to provide support to existing shelters and the Women’s Health Centre in Bureij building on the achievements and lessons learnt in the West bank and the Gaza Strip. UN Women’s approach will involve interventions that are designed to increase knowledge of

VAWG issues and change attitudes and behavior while at the same time improving access to services for survivors, including medical/healthcare and psychosocial support to deal with trauma, as well as improved access to legal services and security. Awareness-raising initiatives will be implemented aiming at changing attitudes and behavior towards gender-based violence in partnership with economic interventions that can change community attitudes and perceptions in a number of ways. Through increasing the capacity of shelters' staff to understand, coordinate and refer GBV/VAW survivors to relevant services, women will have an increased access to holistic protection services including psychosocial and socio-legal support.

IV. EXPECTED RESULTS

Overall, the project aims to contribute to the national outcome as set in the Palestinian National Strategy to Combat VAW: **“Victims of violence obtain the protection and support necessary for their rehabilitation in the community”**¹⁵ and to UN Women’s strategic framework: Impact Area 3” Preventing violence against women and girls and expanding access to services”: Outcome 3.2 “Specialized, quality, multi-sectoral survivors-based services available and accessible to women and girls victims of violence”.

Proposed Outcomes, outputs and activities:

Outcome 1: Women and girls who experience violence are empowered to use available, accessible and quality essential services and recover from violence.

Output 1.1: Availability and accessibility of services to women and girls who were subject to violence improved

- Activity 1.1.1– Hayat centre running costs for one year are covered to ensure services available and accessible to women victims and survivors of violence in Gaza.
- Activity 1.1.2. The Hayat centre will provide case management support for at least 200 women including provision of specialized psychosocial support (through individual and group counseling) and socio-legal support including individual counseling and court representation.
- Activity 1.1.3 The Hayat centre will provide women in conflict with the law (estimated to be a total of 60 women kept in prison on criminal charges, many without a fair trial) with individual psychosocial and legal counselling as well as court representation; along with developing plans of rehabilitation and reintegration of this vulnerable group in the community upon release.

¹⁵ National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women 2011 – 2019.

- Activity 1.1.4. The Hayat centre will provide child visitation services for at least 20 families (divorced couples) and their children which entails biweekly visits to the centre to enable the parent (can be the mother or the father) who does not have custody over the children to see them in a supportive child-friendly environment. The visitation services are coupled with counselling for parents on how to deal with the children to minimize the impact of divorce on the wellbeing and psychosocial status of the children. It also avails regular support (mainly psychosocial and legal) by the social workers and lawyers to the divorced spouses and their children.
- Activity 1.1.5. The Hayat centre will Implement 150 community outreach workshops on available protection facilities (including the Hayat Centre), targeting 3750 women and men (3000 women and 750 men) in marginalized areas and areas affected by the current crisis. The workshops will focus on increasing the target groups' awareness of VAWG, VAWG prevention, the importance of seeking protection centres and services.
- Activity 1.1.6. Hayat Centre will refer cases in need of professional multipurpose protection services identified from among the community outreach target groups, to the Hayat centre for deepened support and refer cases to other service providers¹⁶ such as health (including WPC), mental health, and child protection actors.
- Activity 1.1.7. The Hayat Centre to assess the economic feasibility for the establishment of an economic empowerment model for women survivors of violence¹⁷ as well as reintegrated women, factoring in the economic limitations and opportunities available for women's economic participation in Gaza. Based on the assessment, the Hayat centre will design and implement the economic empowerment model for women survivors of violence who receive multipurpose support at Hayat.
- Activity 1.1.8. The Women Health Centre will implement 120 group counselling sessions on psychosocial support and peer- to -peer support targeting 1800 female and male adolescents¹⁸ and their parents living in the middle area of the Gaza strip. The WHC will also refer cases to the Hayat centre for further follow up as identified needed.
- Activity 1.1.9. The Women Health Centre will conduct outreach visits (a total of 200, average of 20 monthly) to the families and schools of female and male adolescents to follow up on some of the issues that had emerged in the group counselling.

¹⁶ Hayat Centre had signed 9 referral agreements with 9 different CSO actors

¹⁷ Hayat is currently piloting a small scale economic empowerment model for women victims of VAW in partnership with UNW (funded by Spain).

¹⁸ Due to the war, displacement and impoverishment in Gaza, adolescent boys and girls are especially vulnerable to school drop out and significant protection concerns including physical and emotional violence, sexual abuse, arrest and detention, child labour, recruitment and use by armed groups, and early marriage (Gender Alert, UNW and OCHA, 2015).

- Activity 1.1.10. The Women Health Centre will provide reproductive and sexual health services to 600 women victims and survivors of violence (some will be referred by Hayat). This will include counselling and also medical services that may include lab tests, pharmaceuticals, supplements etc.
- Activity 1.1.11 The Women Health Centre will Organize 6 recreational activities (sports, open days etc) for female and male adolescents and their partners.
- Activity 1.1.12. The Women Health Centre will support five female and male adolescents' led advocacy initiatives to discuss/raise some adolescents' related issues i.e. violence in public places, violence in schools (using creative tools such as social media etc).

Output 1.2: Capacity of service providers to provide quality, coordinated anti- violence services is strengthened

- Activity 1.2.1. Organize two training courses (40 hours each) for the Hayat Centre team and the WHC team on the newly developed “Interagency Standard Operating Procedures For Prevention of and Response to GBV and child protection in Gaza- Palestine”¹⁹ and on referral pathways.
- Activity 1.2.2. Organize two knowledge exchange missions among multipurpose Centres/shelters in the Gaza Strip and the West bank to support the exchange of knowledge, know-how, best practices, and lessons learned between all four centres and to strengthen staff capacity in shelter management and VAWG protection services²⁰.

¹⁹ The Inter-agency Standard Operating Procedures for Prevention of and Response to Gender-Based Violence and Child Protection in Gaza - Palestine was developed by the Standard Operating Procedures Technical Working Group (SOPs TWG) under the umbrella of the Child Protection and GBV sub-Working Groups. The SOPs TWG was led by NRC and composed of the Ministry of Social Affairs, UNICEF, UNFPA, Tamer Institute, Ma'an, SoS, and Alianza por la Solidaridad.

²⁰ In March 2016 and with support from Japan, the Hayat centre staff – a long with other NGO partners' representatives – have completed a successful knowledge exchange visit to Mehwar Centre in Bethlehem; the first comprehensive anti-violence centre established in Palestine, and to Nablus Centre to learn from their experience and expertise with regards to combating gender based violence and providing sheltering services to women victims and survivors of violence. Mehwar, Nablus and Hayat Centres; being anti-violence centres and shelters, had much to share on case management models, referrals, policies and procedures, and institutional and social challenges. Besides building the Hayat centre staff capacity, the visit was important to developing clear coordination mechanisms among the three anti-violence centres in Palestine at an effort to standardize sheltering services at a national level.

- Activity 1.2.3. Provide regular professional coaching, supervision and mentoring (180 hours) to the Hayat Centre team and WHC team on case management, follow up, and reintegration support, in addition to coaching related to staff burnout/debriefing.
- Activity 1.2.4. Organize five meetings at a governorate level in Gaza to sensitize the police on the services of the Hayat Centre to strengthen police's referral to the centre.

Output 1.3. Data and information on provision of sheltering services in Palestine is available for evidence based programming and policymaking

- Activity 1.3.1. Conduct an evaluation of the Mehwar centre services effectiveness compared to Nablus and Jericho. The evaluation will help identify gaps and lessons learnt with regards to the shelters' governance system and service delivery. The evaluation will advise forward the work of all three centres in addition to Hayat.
- Activity 1.3.2. Produce ad hoc data briefings and analysis for key protection needs and services offered on the base of the shelters' records which can be used to advise the work of the Gender Based Violence working group and strategic planning processes such as the UNDAF and the humanitarian programme cycle (HPC).
- Activity 1.3.3. Develop case studies and good practices to be shared among anti-violence Centres as well as abroad.

Output 1.4. Evidence based advocacy to strengthen and support the work of anti-violence centers is carried out

- Activity 1.5.1 An Evidence based advocacy campaign is organized targeting various stakeholders (mainly MoSA) to make Hayat fully operational²¹.
- Activity 1.5.2. An Evidence based advocacy campaign is organized targeting various stakeholders (mainly MoSA) to make Mehwar semi-governmental.

V. PARTNERSHIPS

The project's civil society partners include CWLRC/Hayat, CFTA/WHC, Mehwar Centre, Nablus Centre and Jericho Centre/WCLAC.

The project will be implemented in full consultation and coordination with the Ministry of Social Development (previously MoSA) in the West bank and Gaza.

²¹ Following extensive advocacy efforts of the Hayat Centre with MoSA, there is a new draft decision issued that would enable CSOs in Gaza to run sheltering services. If put in effect, the Hayat centre sheltering services will be soon operational.

Responsible Parties: will be responsible for implementation projects activities at the output level, as per their approved submitted concept notes and workplans. They will be responsible for regular cooperation among them through meetings and correspondence to ensure standardization of approaches and to avoid duplication. The Project Team in each organization will be responsible for direct follow up on project implementation.

The partners will utilize/activate the Technical Shelters Committee as forum for discussion and knowledge sharing with regular participation of MoSA.

UN Women will be responsible for the overall management and monitoring of project implementation by the responsible parties, making sure that it is implemented according to project workplan, logframe and set indicators and targets. The Programme Officer in Gaza will be responsible for the overall coordination of the project and for supervision of project staff. For the project smooth implementation; a strengthened UN Women field presence will be required. The project team will include: one Project Manager and a driver.

VI. MONITORING MECHANISMS

A composite of various M&E approaches, quantitative and qualitative will be used. UN Women will utilize result based management frameworks to manage, monitor and evaluate the execution of project's activities. UN Women will employ various M&E tools applying its internal oversight mechanisms including the internal monitoring and reporting mechanisms such as the quarterly reporting to its HQ, the regular monitoring activities by its monitoring/project officers. UN Women will regularly convene project teams meetings, donor coordination meetings, field visits and regular meetings and discussions will national partners and UN counterparts to assess progress via set objectives, risks and mitigation plans. All partners will be asked to conduct an end of project evaluation for their components. UN Women will also conduct an end of project external evaluation.