

- To develop and implement prevention and protection programmes in schools and communities aiming to enhance women and girls' protection and raise awareness, especially among men and boys, with respect to the issues of discrimination against women and girls and violence against women and girls.
- To implement capacity development programmes for governmental and non-governmental social protection services based on standards of human rights, especially for women and girl victims and survivors of violence.
- To ratify international treaties and covenants, especially the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, and put in place mechanisms to monitor their implementation and reporting.
- To take the necessary actions to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in terms of protecting Palestinian women from the effects of occupation and conflict.



*This information was compiled by UN Women on the basis of the Situation Analysis Report on Palestinian Women and Girls, commissioned by UN Women, the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development and conducted by the Women's Studies Institute of Birzeit University (publication pending) and the Review of the 2011-2013 Palestinian Cross Sectoral National Gender Strategy, conducted by the Ministry of Women's Affairs and facilitated by UN Women (publication pending). The data presented is extracted from these documents on the basis of the following sources:*

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## SOCIAL PROTECTION OF WOMEN: FROM PROTECTION TO EMPOWERMENT



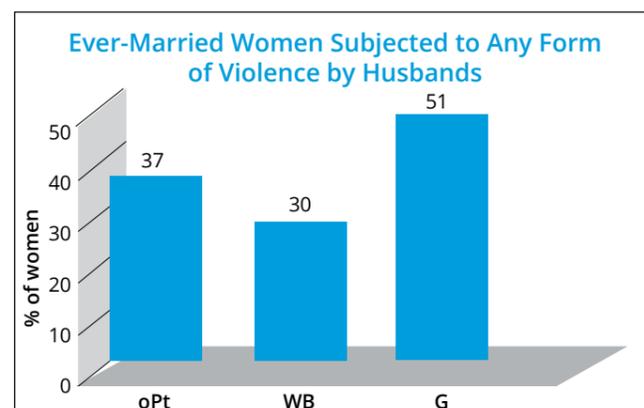
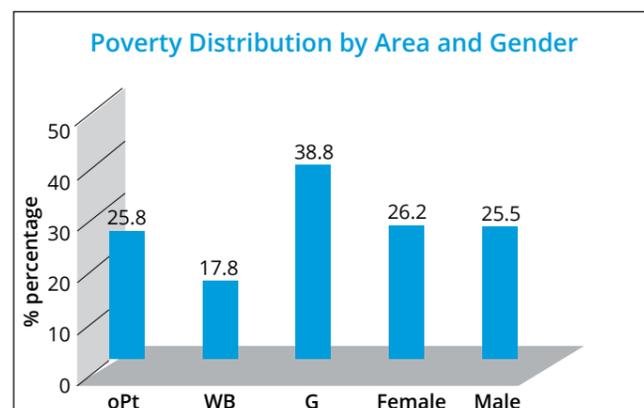
Several international instruments have emphasized the individual right to have access to and benefit from social protection services as an inherent human right and as a cornerstone in the alleviation of poverty and the realization of social justice without discrimination.

The Palestinian Basic Law emphasizes the contents of international instruments. Article (9) thereof provides that "Palestinians shall be equal before the law and the judiciary, without distinction". Article (10) of the same law provides that basic human rights and liberties shall be protected and respected, and it calls on the Palestinian Authority to act immediately to accede to international declarations and instruments that protect human rights.

In that vein, the government has announced its commitment to developing a comprehensive and complete system for social protection based on rights and ensuring a decent and dignified life for citizens, particularly the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups.

### Trends in Protection

- Social protection services principally target families below the poverty line, persons with disabilities, the elderly, children, and violated women. One hundred thousand families receive periodical cash aid from the Ministry of Social Affairs.
- The commitment of the Palestinian government has not translated into specific gender sensitive laws.
- Poverty rates are higher among females comparing to males, and are higher in Gaza than in the West Bank.
- Families with female-headed households account for 9.3% of all families in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), and comprise 43% of all the families that received aid from the Ministry of Social Affairs in 2011.
- Female-headed households are more vulnerable to food insecurity at 7%, as compared with male-headed households. Families with female heads of household account for 44% of families suffering from food insecurity in Gaza and 17% in the West Bank.
- Only 25% of beneficiaries of the Fund for Loans for People with Disability are women.



- Women account for 55% of the elderly; 14.2% of them are one-person families, compared to 2.4% of the male elderly. About 75.4% of elderly women suffer from at least one chronic disease, compared to 64.7% of males.
- About 7.3% of individuals aged 64 or more (7.9% of them females and 6.4% males) report being exposed to a form of violence by a family member.

### Trends in Violence against Women

The National Development Plan 2011-2013 emphasizes that the government is committed to protecting women from all forms of violence by performing a review of all applicable legislation in Palestine with a view to guaranteeing the rights of women and ensuring that public policies are based on non-discrimination.

- Domestic violence against women persists, with higher rates of violence against ever-married women in Gaza than in the West Bank.
- Murder is the most serious form of violence against women and girls. In 2012, 13 cases of femicide came to the attention of authorities in the West Bank and Gaza.
- Overall, about 5% of ever-married women report having been exposed to psychological violence, 1.3% report exposure to sexual harassment and 0.6% to physical violence.
- About 4% of ever-married women report experiencing psychological violence at the hands of service providers or other individuals present while receiving services.

- About 3% of ever-married females and males (1.8% of females and 5.1% of males) between the ages of 18 - 64 report being exposed to psychological violence at the workplace.
- Women prefer not to report violence they have been subjected to. As many as 65% of women say they would stay silent about violence, 30% said they would seek assistance with family (at the home of a parent, brother or sister), while only 0.7% of women opted to seek assistance with an institution.
- 3.3% of ever-married women report being exposed to psychological violence at barriers and inspection points from soldiers, 0.6% report exposure to physical violence, while 0.2% report sexual harassment.
- 8% of youth (2.3% for females and 13.4% for males) in the age group 18-29 years old report being exposed to psychological violence at barriers and inspection points. About 1% of female youth and 8% of males report being exposed to physical violence.
- 1.2% of female and 8.7% of male children in the West Bank were exposed to psychological violence from occupation forces and/or settlers, while 0.7% of female and 5% of male children report being exposed to physical violence.
- Domestic violence increases when unemployment occurs. Thirty per cent of women with unemployed husbands report being exposed to violence, compared to 21% among women with working husbands.

Cover image: Women in Shu'fat, East Jerusalem. Source: Ventura Formicone/UN Women

## Review of the National Cross-Sectoral Strategy for Promoting Gender Equality 2011-2013

The strategy sought to decrease rates of violence against women in all its forms. To achieve this goal, it defined one main policy and four political interventions that formed a framework for orienting the actions of various partners to combat violence against women. Review of the strategy indicates that achievements towards realizing this goal have been modest, and the extent of implementation for all interventions was partial.

Policy	Intervention	Fully Implemented	Partially implemented	Not implemented
Protection of women from all forms of domestic and sexual violence through deterrent laws and procedures	■ Enactment of a law on protection of women from domestic violence		X	
	■ Amending the Penal Code to remove any form of gender-based discrimination		X	
	■ Amendment to the Criminal Procedural Law with respect to articles related to the provisions of criminal prosecution that discriminate between men and women in filing complaints		X	
	■ Adopting all interventions of the national strategy for combating violence against women		X	

Slow progress in implementing the policy interventions was linked to several factors, including the inability to place the suggested laws high on the agendas of the legislative bodies and the lack of capacity of the Ministry of Women's Affairs to follow-up on the National Strategy for Combating Violence Against Women and its application. In addition, the incumbent environment of institutional actions does not consider violence against women as a national priority issue. The policy interventions continue to represent priorities for the coming stage, particularly for ensuring the national strategy is put into effect.

### Way Forward: Priorities for Promoting Gender Equality in Social Protection

- To review social protection legislation from a gender perspective and develop and enact new ones to increase recognition and enjoyment of women's rights, including but not limited to the Penal Code, Personal Status Law, Law on Family Protection from Violence and the Social Security Law.
- To ensure inclusion of gender equality and equity principles in ongoing social protection programmes, including targeting mechanisms as well as the design, implementation and monitoring of new programmes while placing special emphasis on the needs and human rights of vulnerable individuals and groups.
- To put in place regular and consistent data collection systems and mechanisms that make sex and age disaggregated data available as the baseline for social protection policies and programmes from a gender perspective, especially in the field of violence against women.
- To improve and standardize protection services, whether provided by governmental or non-governmental organizations, including but not limited to safe houses, medical care, social counselling, referral mechanisms, and social reintegration, and put in place a national mechanism for the review of critical cases.