

## Terms of Reference

### Tailored Recruitment Guidelines for Anti-Violence Centers' Staff and Training Program for Newly Hired Anti-Violence Shelter Staff Gaza Strip in Partnership with the

#### Center for Women's Legal Research and Consulting

December 2010

#### Introduction

As part of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) on Promoting Gender Equality and Empowering Women in the occupied Palestinian territory, six UN Agencies, namely UNDP, UNIFEM, ILO, UNESCO, UNFPA and UNRWA, are implementing a Joint Programme on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, covering the period 2009-2012. The Program aims to achieve three major Outcomes: 1. Reducing gender-based violence and all forms of violence against women and the girl child; 2. Increasing the representation of women and women's issues in decision-making bodies; and 3. Advancing equal opportunities for women's economic participation, especially women survivors of gender-based violence.

Within the framework of Outcome 1, UNIFEM and UNDP are cooperating to establish a multi-purpose "*Center for the Protection and Empowerment of Women and Families*" in the Gaza Strip. For this activity, UNIFEM is specifically responsible to provide specialized technical assistance to national partners in the establishment of the Center, this including the provision of guidelines, procedures and criteria for the premises furnishing and finishing, as well as for staff recruitment, staff training and supervision, Center overall operation and governance.

The Center intends to address the phenomenon of gender based violence within an integrated, human rights-based approach, working on prevention - while promoting a culture of gender-sensitive, violence-free family relations - as well as protection and empowerment of women, girls and children victims and survivors of violence.

The Center also aims to function as an effective tool for community mobilization aiming to activate and coordinate resources and efforts to end violence against women within Palestinian society, and to support family relations while strengthening their supportive and protective interpersonal ties based on positive compartments such as caring, loving, honoring trust and preserving life.

## **1. Objectives**

### **Objective I.**

To ensure that staff who is selected and hired to work in the multipurpose "Center for the Protection and Empowerment of Women and Families" in the Gaza Strip holds the suitable competences, motivation, personality characteristics, as well as the proven ability to acquire and develop required innovative expertise.

### **Objective II.**

- ✓ To transfer knowledge on key topics relevant to anti-violence services vision methodology and management
- ✓ To provide practical guidelines on anti-violence services operation
- ✓ To raise empathy and solidarity among staff towards women victims of violence
- ✓ To develop team spirit
- ✓ To create sense of ownership towards the Center, its vision and mission

## **2. Timing**

The staff recruitment process should be initiated immediately after signature of the contract between UNIFEM and the implementing partner. The process will cover a minimum period of approximately 2 months, though the ultimate timeframe will be defined by the number of vacant posts advertised, the number of applications received and of candidates respondent to the minimum requirements set by the job descriptions.

The training program should be carried out immediately after the conclusion of the staff recruitment process. Newly hired staff members should be requested to attend the training during their working hours, as the first work commitment within their assignments. The training program is expected to cover a period of at least 6 months, including theoretical and on-the-job training, and introductory visits/contacts with key partner institutions.

## **3. Main criteria for the selection of Members of the Recruitment Committee**

The numbers of members of the Recruitment Committee can vary from a minimum of 4 to a maximum of 6. The Committee Chair will be chosen from the institution legally responsible to hire the selected staff. The other Committee members will include: national and/or international representatives of the project partners, as well as national and/or international independent experts. All Committee members, including the Chair, will have to abide to the below criteria:

- Minimum 5 years of professional experience in defending women's human rights and combating violence against women;
- Minimum 3 years experience in management and/or staff professional supervision and/or staff professional development;
- Experience in previous staff recruitment processes, an asset;

- Direct experience in supporting cases of women victims of violence;
- Familiarity with the Code of Ethics of National / International Union of Social Workers.
- For at least one Committee Member, extensive competences in regards to the Palestinian Legal Codes and System, in relation to women's rights.
- Proven ethical and professional integrity;

#### **4. Recruitment Process**

Tailored procedures, guidelines, materials and forms developed, within the framework of the Mehwar Center experience in the oPt, by relevant national and international partners throughout the past 5 years, have been proven successful in the selection of suitable staff members aimed to work in anti-violence centers for women, according to the criteria mentioned above under section 1 "Objectives".

The steps foreseen by the tailored recruitment guidelines for anti-violence centers staff are:

- a) Institutional decision to recruit vacant posts (specifying kind and number of vacancies);
- b) Formation of a recruitment committee (upon ad hoc membership criteria; the committee will be in charge of all the following steps; it will always document and officially endorse their collective decisions);
- c) Vacancies announcement (made upon agreed upon job descriptions setting minimum requirements for the post; applicants will be required to submit a specific application form, in addition to their CVs);
- d) Candidates short list (upon examination of CVs and application forms);
- e) Orientation program addressing short listed candidates (carried out by independent facilitators/evaluators identified by the recruitment committee; candidates will receive a first evaluation/score by the orientation facilitators);
- f) Front interviews;
- g) Final candidates evaluation and evaluation report;
- h) Employment contracts (specific issues related to the nature of the work in anti-violence centers, will be considered in drafting the contracts);
- i) Probation period (3 months) (accompanied by ad hoc supervision);
- j) Institutional decision to confirm employees' appointment (upon defined criteria);

The tailored recruitment guidelines for anti-violence centers staff have been recently documented by UNIFEM and are in the process to be finalized and published under UNIFEM supervision.

#### **5. Training Methodology**

The training methodology shall focus on the dissemination of best practices starting from actual experiences developed by the trainers in various fields relevant to the work of anti-violence services. A gender-based approach should be adopted throughout the whole training program, using, as privileged tool, a gender-oriented analysis of the phenomenon of violence against women. The training should also be implemented in a participatory manner, encouraging trainees to express and share with the other participants their experiences, their points of view, as well as their concerns and cultural

dilemmas. Encouraging "listening to the others" is also key in the training approach, as "listening" is one of the main skills required to anti-violence services staff in their work.

Specific methodological tools to be adopted are:

- case studies
- role plays
- in depth analysis of key topics from various professional perspectives
- group work
- follow-up discussion
- comparative analysis of experiences
- moments of sharing (emotional feedback, personal experiences "as women", etc)
- field visits to partner organizations providing VAW services (as they will be part of the Center's network).

The training shall incorporate best practices, as lessons learnt, developed by the Mehwar Center which operates, since 2007, in the West Bank as the only anti-violence shelter in the oPt responding to international human rights standards.

## **6. Criteria for the selection of Trainers**

In addition to extensive knowledge in the topic that the trainer intends to undertake within the program, in depth knowledge of the phenomenon of violence against women, as well as multi-year activism in combating the problem, should be among the core requirements for all trainers participating in this training program.

In specific, the following requirements should be met in the selection of trainers:

- Extensive knowledge in the topic of the teaching (minimum 5 years experience)
- Knowledge of gender and VAW (minimum 5 years of active experience in this field)
- Proven commitment towards women's human rights
- Track records as trainer / group facilitator
- Strong communication skills
- Proven capacity in knowledge management
- Direct experience in anti-violence shelters is indispensable for those topics related to shelter management and methodology
- Skills in evaluation of human resources, an asset

For very specific professions (i.e. physician) or in case institutional representatives are invited to present their experience in supporting and protecting women victims of violence, excellence in their field of work and gender sensitivity would be required.

## **7. Key topics (25 modules\*\*)**

- a) International Women's Movement – the Women's Movement in the Arab Region **(1 module)**
- b) Women's Human Rights and links between gender-based discrimination and violence against women – UDHR and CEDAW **(2 modules)**
- c) Violence Against Women – forms, causes, consequences, stereotypes **(2 modules)**
- d) The "National Strategy to Combat VAW" in the oPt **(1 module)**

- e) What is an anti-violence center: international human rights-based standards for anti-violence centers **(1 module)**
- f) The “Mehwar Center Project”: the first anti-violence center in oPt operating upon international human rights-based standards **(1 module)**
- g) What is a “woman-centered approach” **(1 module)**
- h) Ethics of specialized professionals working on VAW (focus on confidentiality, empathy, respect of women's choices and rights, accountability) **(1 module)**
- i) Anti-violence shelters' management – women's intake/exit, staff rotation, collective work *versus* division of roles, decision making regarding cases, the role of the director *versus* the role of the team **(2 modules)**
- j) How to conduct a case-assessment, including risk assessment **(1 module)**
- k) Social counseling methodology – approach, collective and individual counseling, thematic groups, self-help groups **(1 module)**
- l) How to build, implement and monitor an intervention-plan **(1 module)**
- m) Psychological consequences of violence on abused women and children **(2 modules)**:
  - i. PTSD
  - ii. Links between VAW and other mental disorders
  - iii. the role of anti-violence centers' staff
  - iv. the role of specialized mental health services
- n) Social counseling methodology – approach, collective and individual counseling, thematic Medical care in cases of abused women/children (what are the physical consequences of violence, overall health deterioration *versus* specific signs of mistreatments and abuse, consequences of sexual violence on women's reproductive health) **(1 module)**:
  - i. the role of anti-violence centers' staff
  - ii. the role of specialized health providers
- o) Defending legal rights in VAW cases **(3 modules)**:
  - i. positive aspects of Palestinian legislation and procedures
  - ii. constraints of Palestinian legislation and procedures
  - iii. approach to legal counseling for VAW cases
  - iv. legal strategies to defend abused women/children in courts
  - v. importance of psycho-social and medical reports to support women's defense in courts (how to collect and present evidence)
- p) Children victims/witnesses of violence - support to mother-child relationship in cases of violence **(1 module)**
- q) How to build service networks in support of women/children victims of violence (the propulsive role of anti-violence centers) **(1 module)**
- r) How to build a safety plan for women/children victims of violence **(1 module)**
- s) Reintegration of women victims of violence: possible strategies in oPt (some successful stories) **(1 module)**

\*\* Each training session has to be considered for 4 hours

Essential parts of the training program shall also be considered:

- **Sexual Education Course**
- **Visits to key institutions which will be part of the Shelter's network / meetings with representatives of key partner institutions**
- **Staff finalizing Initial Draft of Shelter Policies and Procedures**

- **Staff finalizing Shelter Premises Furnishing (according to agreed upon criteria)**
- **Mentoring (on-the-job training)**

## **8. "Mentoring": concept and practice**

The specific expertise required to professionals working in anti-violence services, particularly in shelters, is practice-oriented rather than based on theoretical knowledge. This is why exchange of experiences, case-studies, direct testimonies of professionals, as well as survivors of violence, are key tools of such specific training programs.

This is also why the tool of "mentoring" or "partnering" the new staff members by staff who already experienced working in an anti-violence center, is crucial during the first months of work of the new team. This methodology has been proven successful in the establishment of anti-violence shelters worldwide, as well as within the Mehwar Center experience in the oPt. Experienced staff joins the newly established team in their daily programs sharing with them tasks and duties, contributing to problem solving, sharing the analysis of cases and jointly developing plans of interventions. This methodology ensures, on one side, the quality of the interventions done and a competent assumption of responsibility towards the cases since their in-take, and it activates, on the other side, a continuous mechanism of critical and gender-based analysis of the case which represents the added value of any anti-violence center, differentiating it from traditional, assistance-oriented social services.

The application of this methodology in the Gaza Strip, will have to take into consideration the high limitations of movements from and in the Gaza Strip caused by the closure imposed by Israeli Military Forces. Creative methods of communication between the Gaza shelter team and experienced professionals in the West Bank or abroad could be considered such as video-conferences or communication via internet. However, it is highly recommended to organize short-term missions of experienced staff to Gaza to directly partner the newly hired staff during the first six months of experience.

UNIFEM will support CWLRC in regards to:

- Recruitment of staff for the Anti-Violence Centre in the Gaza Strip, under the direct supervision of the shelter's Advisory Committee and using Mehwar staff job descriptions (modified where required);
- Contracting specialized organizations and individuals to conduct training as stipulated above;

With reference to the above mentioned approved MDG-TF Programme on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, CWLRC will recover the following duties and responsibilities under the direct supervision of UNIFEM's (UN Women) Programme Officer in the Gaza Strip and the MDG-TF Programme Coordinator in the West Bank:

1. Provide UNIFEM with a detailed work plan covering the whole duration of the Programme;
2. Finalize job descriptions initially began with UNIFEM staff;
3. Advertise all recruitment posts and adhere to a transparent recruitment process, under the supervision of UNIFEM Programme Officer in Gaza and UNIFEM's technical Advisor;
4. Recruit the required staff as agreed to with the Advisory Committee and UNIFEM;

5. UNIFEM will ensure its implementing partner(s) in the Gaza shelter activity access to the Mehwar draft manual for further acquisition of information and materials necessary to carry out the staff recruitment process according to this ToR;
6. Contract organizations and individuals to conduct capacity building programme for staff in full compliance of all the steps and requirements as stipulated and detailed above;
7. Development, in coordination with UNIFEM, of a referral tree in coordination with members of the Amal Coalition and the shelter Advisory Committee;
8. Draft and submit to UNIFEM training reports including feedback of participants as per filled evaluation forms;
9. Ensure MDG visibility in the products related to the project, through the use of the MDG logo upon written approval from UNIFEM for each material produced;
10. Monthly meetings to discuss the progress of the project's work, obstacles and challenges encountered and decision to amend or correct where necessary; and
11. Submit quarterly and final financial and narrative reports to be approved by UNIFEM.