

SAWASYA

PROMOTING THE RULE OF LAW IN PALESTINE

ANNUAL PROGRAMME NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT

REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2020



Photo 1: A clinical training session, Nablus © An-Najah National University.

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Programme Title & Project Number	Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme Title: “<i>Promoting the Rule of Law in Palestine</i>” (<i>Sawasya II</i>) MPTF Office Project Reference Number: 00111750 	<p>State of Palestine</p> <p><i>Agenda 2030: Goal 16:</i> Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels; <i>Goal 5:</i> Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</p> <p><i>2018-2022 UNDAF: SP2:</i> All Palestinians, especially those exposed to vulnerabilities, have equal access to accountable, effective, and responsive democratic governance, in line with international human rights standards</p> <p><i>2017-2023 National Policy Agenda: Pillar 1:</i> Path to independence; <i>Pillar 2:</i> Governance reform; <i>Pillar 3:</i> Sustainable development</p>
Participating Organization(s)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNDP/UN Women/UNICEF 	
Programme Cost (US\$)	Programme Duration
Total approved budget as per project document: MPTF /JP Contribution: Agency Contribution USD 50,000,000 / UNDP BPPS: USD 945,000	Overall Duration: 60 months Start Date: 01.07.2018 Original End Date: 30.06.2023 Current End Date: Extended until 30 June 2023.
Government Contributions Netherlands: USD 10,206,120 SIDA: USD 6,411,090 Spain (earmarked/non-MPTF): USD 1,197,565	
TOTAL: USD	
Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.	Report Submitted By
Assessment/Review - Available here X Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date: 19.01.2021 Mid-Term Evaluation Report – Available here X Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date: 19.01.2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name: D. Christopher Decker Title: Joint Programme Manager Participating Organizations: UNDP/UN Women/UNICEF Email address: chris.decker@undp.org

SUMMARY OF PROGRAMME

Sawasya II represents the primary programmatic vehicle of the United Nations (UN) for advancing the rule of law, gender justice, justice for children and human rights in the State of Palestine for the period 2018-2021 (extended for two additional years). *Sawasya II* is designed to contribute to key priorities of the five-year United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the State of Palestine (2018-2022), to the realization of the 2030 Agenda and of its sustainable development goals (particularly SDG 16 and SDG 5) and to the implementation of the National Policy Agenda of the State of Palestine (2017-2023).

Bringing together the main UN entities mandated and invested in these areas – the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and the United Nations’ Children’s Fund (UNICEF) - in an integrated Programme framework, *Sawasya II* seeks to support the Government of Palestine (GoP) in building a progressively functioning and increasingly inclusive rule of law system that respects, protects and fulfils human rights and gender equality and, in parallel, promotes peace and security.

Sawasya II targets specific bottlenecks in justice and security service provision. Security and justice institutions are supported to strengthen the quality and efficiency of the services they provide to Palestinian rights holders. Moreover, *Sawasya II* supports all relevant Palestinian government institutions and civil society organizations in providing legal aid to the Palestinian population. This support is developed and tailored to respond to the specific needs of the different areas of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip.

Acknowledging that the ability to access justice is a human right in itself and is key to the realization of all other human rights, *Sawasya II* also addresses gender justice gaps and discrimination against women, which are deeply entrenched in the Palestinian justice and security systems. Finally, *Sawasya II* works with relevant national partners in strengthening the services provided to children in contact with the law as offenders, victims and witnesses by promoting effective partnerships and integrated constructive work among constituent entities of the child protection sector.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report sets out achievements of the Joint UNDP/UN Women/UNICEF Programme “*Sawasya II: Promoting the Rule of Law in Palestine*”¹ realized in 2020. By every measure, the operational context proved exceptionally challenging. By the end of the year, more than 155,000 Palestinians had been infected with COVID-19. Thousands of Palestinian women, children, and families were simultaneously faced with the shadow pandemic of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and hindered access to justice. Seventy-five per cent of Palestinians in Gaza experienced food insecurity as the economy contracted by 11.5 per cent following a series of lockdowns aimed at limiting virus transmission. The immediate threat of annexation made years of fading prospect for a two-state solution even less probable. It culminated in the suspension of civilian and security coordination for six months, with millions having to cope with major income losses and a further complicated access to essential services.

Despite these considerable challenges, the COVID-19 crisis has presented unparalleled opportunities to advance digitalization and harness key progress for a more inclusive, transparent, and efficient rule of law system. **Palestinians were able to access the first e-Justice service** and no longer must commute to the court to initiate the notarization of their documents. While **critical administrative barriers continued to be removed**, an **e-Notification feature built into the Mizan II case management system was developed for lawyers**. Once rolled out, this will considerably reduce the duration of court proceedings. In parallel, the **capacity of justice and security actors to enforce judgements and warrants or deliver notifications continued to be strengthened** in Hebron, thereby contributing to a **18 per cent increase in the number of judgements enforced by conciliation courts** and a **15 per cent increase by first instance courts**.² This builds on the Mizan II technology and on **new features that further link the databases in the High Judicial Council and the Attorney General’s Office with the judicial police**. More progress is anticipated on this front **with the expansion this year of Mizan II to all enforcement departments in family courts**. Moreover, **prison monitoring processes were digitalized**, hence systematizing the identification of human rights violations, and greatly reducing tampering vulnerabilities with information being instantly synchronized on a central database. In addition, evidence-based planning was further strengthened, with the **first automatically generated reports produced this year by the Attorney General’s Office**, thereby reporting, at any point in time, progress against key targets of the Justice Sector Strategy and the National Policy Agenda for 2017-2023. Standardization of M&E and best planning practices across justice institutions was also pursued with the **National School of Administration rolling out its first dedicated programme in this area for all justice institutions**. To further support the provision of inclusive, transparent and efficient services, **30,000 Palestinian citizens**³ **accessed digitalized content on Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms** in the framework of broader efforts to promote and operationalize complementary avenues of justice. Institutions also improved their public communication to make it more accessible to the public, particularly under COVID-19. To this end, a [joint Facebook page](#) was set up by justice and security actors, with an average of **more than 244,000 social media users directly engaging on video content on the work of the judiciary** over the past few months.

¹ The “Programme” refers to the *Sawasya* Programme. Both *Sawasya* and the “Programme” are used interchangeably.

² Against annual targets.

³ Disaggregation unavailable.

COVID-19 has compelled the judiciary to strengthen diversionary measures for children. Eighty-five per cent of children in detention were released during the period, which positioned the State of Palestine as a regional leader on this issue. As a result, **31 per cent more children accessed alternatives to detention** than in 2019 and **23 per cent more accessed mediation**, building on previous work to identify suitable organizations at the national level. The Programme's capacity to **scale up interventions in this area** and **rapidly establish safeguards for child protection in the piloted centres** proved crucial in responding to needs for alternatives to detention.

Despite indicators that the impact on the investigation, prosecution, and conviction of violence against women perpetrators has been limited (respectively 8 per cent decrease, 5 per cent increase and 14 per cent increase),⁴ the continuous and strong progress observed over the past year was considerably slowed in the shadow pandemic of SGBV. Cognizant of the importance to maintain and expand services under emergency, a **cross-sectoral protocol was established to organize the safe referral of survivors of violence to shelters**. This is providing a critical template for enhanced policy coordination on the longer term. In line with this, **emergency plans were developed across the justice and security chain** to ensure the provision of responsive SGBV services. This also led to the identification of more than 30 new gender champions who advocated within their respective institutions for the better protection of women and girls. Further, a **police helpline was established for SGBV victims** to limit instances of under-reporting. **Risk Assessment Templates were implemented** allowing for a meticulous review of the factors that can jeopardize a woman's safety and consistent decision making across the specialized prosecution. In line with this, judicial actors further **mainstreamed progressive approaches** with the development of **standard operating procedures for the adjudication of violence against women cases** and **instructive guidelines for SGBV prosecution**. The **first standardized training for family judges was also rolled out**, thereby further legitimizing the Palestinian Judicial Institute as the primary judicial education institution for both family and regular judiciaries. Work was also pursued on the digital front, with the upgrade of the **online portal and the development of six e-Courses on family law**.

The COVID-19 crisis also incentivized progress on the accountability front. The **court monitoring pilot was successfully completed**. This was hailed by mid-term evaluators as one of the most successful initiative that enables civil society to play, its access-to-justice 'watch dog role' on such a large scale for the first time. Likewise, **joint recommendations on justice sector reform were produced by a coalition of civil society organizations** invested on this front. This may prove critical in accompanying advocacy efforts going forward, particularly following the one-sided passing of Law-Decrees No. 39 and No. 40 of 2020 that amended the Judicial Authority Law. Synergies between civil society and institutional actors were also further built with the development of a **dialogue platform with the Human Rights Unit at the Attorney General's Office for the monitoring of complaints by citizens**. In step with this, the Ministry of Interior endorsed a **unified disciplinary code for police forces** and the **accountability taskforce within the Palestinian Civil Police was reactivated**. This is crucial as the period witnessed the emergence of non-state law enforcement actors in the West Bank in parallel to governmental forces. Although hindered by the emergency, progress continued to be made on community policing, with **security and training plans developed** for the identified members of the Local Advisory Committee. **Court inspection procedures were also unified, and standard operating**

⁴ Against annual targets.

procedures for the Human Rights Unit of the Attorney General's Office were developed, thereby contributing to a system that is consistent, predictable, and accountable to the citizenry. Further, increase in female representation across the justice and security chain⁵ also coincided this year with the **rollout of the gender training programme by the Palestinian Civil Police at the level of the police academy** with joint support from EUPOL COPPS.

With equal access to justice for all being the central element of a rule of law system that respects, protects and fulfils human rights and gender equality, **22, 079 (70 per cent women, 4 per cent boys, 0.2 per cent girls) vulnerable Palestinians accessed legal aid services by civil society organizations and the Palestinian Bar Association** with support from *Sawasya*. This 6 per cent increase substantiates the reported growing number of citizens seeking support from specialized organizations to access justice and exercise their rights, especially in the area of family law. With reference to system-level improvements, key progress was also made. **Legal aid standards for children in contact with the Palestinian criminal justice system were developed** and provide for the representation of children at all stages of a case proceedings and even in the absence of a state-sponsored scheme. Further, the digitalization of the referral system for service providers within the AWN Access to Justice Network was pursued in the framework of the **online legal aid database developed this year**. With **thousands of Palestinians having had access to digitalized legal awareness**,⁶ such interventions were among the fastest areas of transformation under COVID-19. This not only compensated the 3 per cent decrease in Palestinians accessing in-person services during the period,⁷ but proved to be a **valuable platform for citizens to directly engage with their duty bearers**. These results were supported by **hundreds of law students engaged in clinical education across the State of Palestine**, as well as the six trainee lawyers who accessed placement and on-the-job mentoring in East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. In line with improved legal education, more than **360,000 school students were also educated on their rights as citizens**, as part of a new partnership between the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Education and Higher Education for the introduction of e-Learning material in middle schools' curricula.

In parallel, advocacy efforts continued to be geared towards a strengthened rule of law culture. In view of this, the ***Reconciliation Survey*** was finalized by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and four joint position papers were produced by civil society to advocate for a human-rights based transitional justice process. Such work is anticipated to be pivotal in the year to come in view of the announced national elections and the range of new possibilities that are anticipated. In line with this, **about 65,000 social media users were sensitized on the need to adopt the Family Protection Bill and access to legislation and jurisprudence was further automated** as new impetus for legislative work is likely to develop. At the programmatic level, adjustments made early into the COVID-19 crisis and proactive engagement to mitigate the consequences of the degradation of the operational environment translated into financial delivery of 88 per cent by the end of the year. Based on the recommendation of the mid-term evaluation conducted this year on the Programme, development partners decided to extend *Sawasya* for an additional two years.

⁵ Not to be solely attributed to *Sawasya*.

⁶ Disaggregation unavailable.

⁷ 12,862 individuals (56 per cent women, 7 per cent boys, 13 per cent girls) accessed in-person legal awareness.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
A2D	Alternatives to Detention
AG	Attorney General
AGO	Attorney General's Office
CBO	Community Based Organization
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women
COGAT	Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories
COM	Council of Ministers
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EJ	East Jerusalem
EUPOL	EU Police Coordinating Office for Palestinian Police Support
COPPS	
FJPD	Family and Juvenile Protection Department
FJPU	Family and Juvenile Protection Unit (PCP)
SGBV	Gender Based Violence
GLC	Gender Legislative Committee
GPC	General Personnel Council
GoI	Government of Israel
GoP	Government of Palestine
HJC	High Judicial Council
ICHR	Independent Commission for Human Rights
IG	Inspector General (PCP)
IS	Internal Security (PCP)
JAL	Judicial Authority Law
JSS	Justice Sector Strategy
LAB	Legislative Advisory Bureau
LoA	Letter of Agreement
LHC	Legal Harmonization Committee
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOI	Ministry of Interior
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MOSD	Ministry of Social Development
MOWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
OPT	Occupied Palestinian Territory
OSC	One Stop Centre
PA	Palestinian Authority
PBA	Palestinian Bar Association
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
PCP	Palestinian Civil Police
PG	Palestinian Government





PJI	Palestinian Judicial Institute
PMF	Palestinian Maintenance Fund
PMO	Prime Minister Office
PPMU	Planning and Project Management Unit
RAP	Results Action Plan
SJD	Supreme Judge Department
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SRF	Strategic Results Framework
TOR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of trainers
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VAW	Violence Against Women
VAW SPPs	Specialized Public Prosecutors on Violence against Women
WPC	Women's Protection Counsellors






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I. Progress Against Key Targets

Outcome 1: Rule of Law Institutions are Strengthened and Reunified by Legal, Regulatory and Policy Frameworks in line with International Standards

	Progress Against Outcome 1 Targets		
	Ind.	Annual target	Results
	O.1.1	2 (unmet)	0 : There was no new/existing laws that were adopted/amended in line with international standards. However, 65,000+ citizens accessed social media content as part of efforts by civil society to leverage public mobilization on the need to adopt legislation aligned with international standards, and particularly the Family Protection Bill.
	O.1.2	2 (met)	3 : One protocol adopted to organize the safe referral of women to shelters*. Two emergency plans developed at the Ministry of Social Development, and the Palestinian Civil Police. The protocol/plans further align the policy framework with obligations contained in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (particularly General Recommendation No 19). *Not to be solely attributed to Sawasya
	O.1.3	2 (unmet)	0 : There were no adopted policies/harmonized laws/plans linked to the Gaza Strip/West Bank reunification process.

	Progress Against Output Targets				
	Annual target	Results		Annual target	Results
	2 (unmet)	o.1.1.1: 0 new/existing laws were adopted/amended, but 65,000+ were sensitized on social media as part of efforts by civil society to leverage public mobilization on the need to adopt legislation aligned with HR standards.		2 (met)	o.1.1.2: 7 annual integrated workplans were adopted in the framework of the Justice Sector Strategy for 2017-2023 by the Ministry of Justice, the Attorney General's Office, the High Judicial Council, the Palestinian Judicial Institute, the Supreme Judge Department, the Legislative Advisory Bureau and the Constitutional Court.
	2 (met)	o.1.1.3: 4 position papers were developed by civil society during the reporting period, as part of the report entitled "Civil Society Organizations: Vision on Integrating Transitional Justice Mechanisms in the Reconciliation Process."		2 (met)	o.1.1.4: 3 monitoring reports developed and published in the second half of the year: "Advocating for Justice Sector Reform through inclusive Consultation and Mobilization"; "Criminal Trials before the Serious Crimes Court and First Instance Courts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip"; "Trials before the Juvenile Courts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip"

Output 1.1: Key Legislations are Revised to Strengthen the Independence of the Rule of Law Institutions and Ensure their Consistency with International Standards



Family Protection Bill reviewed from a human rights perspective



Access to legislation and jurisprudence further automated

Progress observed thus far on the legislative front was hindered, with no new laws amended or adopted in furtherance of international standards (*Indicator Output 1.1.1*). In light of this and of the shadow pandemic of SGBV⁸ that unfolded alongside the COVID-19 crisis, **priority of focus was given to the review of the latest draft of the Family Protection Bill (FPB) by civil society and governmental actors** (*Indicator Outcome 1.1*). To accompany the process, which culminated in the submission of the FPB by the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA) and the Ministry of Social Development (MOSD) to the Council of Ministers (COM) in May, legal analysis was produced by the Programme highlighting its lack of alignment with international standards (*see Annex I*). It formed the basis of the work of the technical committee tasked with the development of the Bill. In parallel, about 65,000 citizens⁹ accessed social media content on the need to adopt the FPB and to combat SGBV. The campaign was led by a coalition of 17 civil society organizations (CSOs). This took place against renewed efforts to delegitimize women's rights and particularly the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) to which the State of Palestine is a party.¹⁰ This shift in approach aims at leveraging public mobilization given the lack of political impetus to translate international commitments into applicable legislation. Further effort was invested in ensuring that the development partner community has access to robust policy analysis in support of joint advocacy work as taken forward during the international campaign of "16 Days of Activism". The Gender, Human Rights and Legislation sub-group¹¹ led by the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) was also a key platform of dialogue for non-institutional and international actors to address gender justice gaps with institutional representatives over the course of three meetings organized this year.¹² Such work will be complemented in 2021 with an impact assessment and violence against women (VAW) costing study in the State of Palestine as well as technical support on the review of the Personal Status Law by national partners and further capacity building for legal staff on gender justice. Such activities were not conducted in 2020 due to COVID-19 induced restrictions on international travel and the reallocation of resources. A strong focus will also be put on better understanding blockages to the passing of the FPB and ways to address them as highlighted by the mid-term evaluation.

In parallel, work focused on **further automating access to legislation and jurisprudence**, particularly in a context marked by legal pluralism and persistent conflicts of laws. In view of this, 246 new legal principles and 30 consolidated pieces of legislation were added by the Birzeit University's Institute of Law to the *Al-Muqtafi* database. This allows any citizen to access various legal amendments as well as the jurisprudence, laws and commentaries pertaining to a key

⁸ See UN Women (May 2020), "Justice for women amidst COVID-19." available [here](#).

⁹ Disaggregation unavailable.

¹⁰ For more information, see "Hebron tribes oppose UN pact, 'suspicious' feminists", (5 January 2020), *Al Monitor*, available [here](#).

¹¹ It is a sub-group of the Justice Sector Working Group. *Sawasya* co-deputy chairs the sub-group with OHCHR.

¹² Activity reported under 1.2 in the annual work plan.

principle in one click. To underpin automated access, 3,228 judgements along with 26 legal commentaries were added to the database. This is in addition to 243 new laws,¹³ which were linked with court judgements and thereby contributed to optimizing existing search tools.¹⁴ Such automation is key to building long term linkages with and academic support for legislative work, particularly in view of the anticipated resumption of the activities of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC)¹⁵ and the renewed prospect for legal domestication it entails. Despite the nomination of a new management team, planned activities with the Legal Harmonization Committee (LHC) were postponed until after institutions can operate in full capacity. In anticipation of this, preliminary meetings with CSOs were organized to prioritize harmonization efforts moving forward and guide *Sawasya*'s technical engagement in 2021. Direct support to the work of the interim High Judicial Council (HJC)¹⁶ on the reform of the judiciary was not resumed in 2020. This was due to the reprioritization of efforts towards addressing the impact of COVID-19 on court functioning, but also in light of the limited political impetus to engage with civil society on the revision of the Judicial Authority Law (JAL) (*see Output 1.4*).

¹³ The issues 154-172 of the Palestinian Official Gazette were added to the database.

¹⁴ In addition, 140 translated laws were made available through the database.

¹⁵ "Fatah, Hamas say deal reached on Palestinian elections" (September 2020), *Al-Jazeera*.

¹⁶ In the report, interim High Judicial Council and High Judicial Council designates the same institution.

Output 1.2: Evidence-Based Planning and Policy Development in the Justice and Security Sectors are Strengthened



M&E and evidence-based planning practices streamlined



Protocol for the protection of victims of SGBV victims established



244,000+ citizens informed about judicial work



First automatically generated reports produced by AGO

Support to the implementation of justice and security plans

Knowing more about the global shadow pandemic of SGBV

Sixteen thousand four hundred and sixty-two respondents (30 per cent women)* from across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region took part in the “*Rapid Assessment: The Effects of COVID-19 on Violence Against Women and Gendered Social Norms*” (Annex II). It revealed that COVID-19 increased the burden of unpaid care and domestic work for both women and men in the region. It also showed that women are at higher risk of violence - including online - and that the lockdowns led to under-reported instances of VAW cases. More alarming, nearly 1 in 3 respondents consider that women should tolerate violence during such times in order to “keep the family together.” The “*Rapid Assessment: Impact of Covid-19 on violence against women and girls in the Arab states through the lens of women’s civil society organizations*” (Annex III) revealed similar trends, particularly increased VAW both at home and online and disrupted access to services for women victims/survivors of violence. UN Women received inputs from over 220 CSOs from 15 countries across the Arab States region, including Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia. *Sawasya* provided support in the production of both rapid assessments.

*Data was collected virtually, which explains i.a. the discrepancy in the number of female and male respondents.

In the context of a sharp increase in SGBV,¹⁷ a **protocol was established by the COM to secure the placement of women victims of violence in quarantine centres** and organize their testing for COVID-19 and longer-term referral (*Indicator Outcome 1.2*). In the early days of the pandemic, women who were escaping from their abusers, did not have the possibility to remain in shelters, owing to the transmission risk they represented for other survivors. This resulted in many returning to violent households or relying on traditional justice mechanisms, which do not present sufficient guarantees in terms of equal protection of the rights of women. The development of the protocol, led by the MOSD, builds on existing synergies with the

¹⁷ The increase in the number of women seeking help from specialized organizations ranged from 20 per cent to 69 per cent during the lockdown. Source: [OCHA](#).

Palestinian Civil Police (PCP), the Attorney General's Office (AGO) and newly established coordination with the Ministry of Health (MOH), thereby providing a template for longer term policy production and further operationalizing key elements of CEDAW (*Indicator Outcome 1.2*). Rapid involvement by *Sawasya* and other actors played a pivotal role in such policy development and on the establishment of multisectoral coordination to tackle SGBV gaps in this context. It included the co-production of a *Brief on Emergency Sheltering Services for Women Victims and Survivors of Violence* (see Annex IV), a *Brief on the Impact of COVID-19 on Women's Access to Justice* (see Annex V) as well as of a *Rapid Assessment on the Impact of COVID-19 on Women and Girls Victims of Violence* (see Annex VI), based on interviews conducted with 59 service providers. It contributed to determining that women locked in with their abusers are less likely to report instances of domestic violence to the police, even when they are increasingly seeking out support from anonymous helplines. This was substantiated by the 18 per cent decrease in complaints filed with Family and Juvenile Protection Units (FJPUs) as compared to 2019. Cognizant of this, the MOSD, PCP (FJPUs), HJC (VAW judiciary), AGO (VAW specialized prosecution) and Supreme Judge Department (SJD) initiated the development of emergency response plans to better address SGBV protection gaps. The MOSD and the PCP were able to implement their plans in the second half of the year (*Indicator Outcome 1.2*).

To further strengthen policy development, efforts continued to be invested for the streamlining of knowledge management. **The first automatically generated reports against policy targets were produced this year** by the AGO. This allows the public prosecution to generate reports that inform, at any point in time, progress against key targets of the Justice Sector Strategy for 2017-2023 (JSS) and the National Policy Agenda for 2017-2023 (NPA).¹⁸ This is a first critical step towards the digitalization of the Strategic Results Framework (SRF) that operationalizes policy instruments at the level of all justice institutions. Key progress was also made this year with the **streamlining of M&E and evidence-based planning practices across justice institutions**. Twenty-four participants (66 per cent women) completed the National School of Administration's (NSA) first standardized programme for M&E and planning staff of all justice institutions.¹⁹ Standardized training is key to ensuring institutional continuity in Planning and Project Management Units (PPMUs) as participating staff can now obtain recognition by the General Personnel Council (GPC), and hence capitalize on acquired skills to advance their career within the PPMUs. Despite COVID-19, participants demonstrated high levels of commitment, systematically joining sessions online when in-person modalities were not available. To this end, the NSA's online portal was upgraded, and built-in Zoom components were developed to accompany this rapid digital shift. In line with such work, the mid-term review of the JSS was completed with technical support from *Sawasya* to ensure synergies between the PPMUs and the MOJ in the process. It particularly focused on risk management and contingency planning in the framework of the COVID-19 pandemic and the overall political environment. Further, seven annual integrated workplans were adopted in the framework of the JSS for 2017-2023 by the MOJ, the AGO, the HJC, the Palestinian Judicial Institute (PJI), SJD, the Legislative Advisory Bureau (LAB) and the Constitutional Court (*Indicator Output 1.1.2*). Finally, and to further foster accountability in policy development, seven justice sector institutions and the judicial police²⁰

¹⁸ The JSS and NPA were also extended until 2023, instead of 2022 as initially envisaged.

¹⁹ It focused on planning and budgeting, project management, M&E, basic legal educations and draws on a need assessment conducted in 2018 by *Sawasya*. See *Sawasya* (2018), "Annual Programme Narrative Report" available [here](#).

²⁰ The outreach campaign committee is comprised of the seven justice institutions as well as the judicial police.

launched a [unified communication platform](#) on Facebook in June, through the newly formed Outreach Campaign Committee. On average, more than **244,000 citizens directly engaged**²¹ (**30 per cent women**) on video content related to judicial work, with women showing a stronger preference for content pertaining to family rights and legislative work. Such a platform proved crucial under COVID-19 to disseminate critical information. These efforts aim to secure public ownership accountability frameworks, through unified, accessible and citizen-oriented communication, and will be further pursued in 2021. The “Rule of Law and Access to Justice” Survey will be conducted in 2021 due to the impossibility of conducting fieldwork this year under COVID-19 (*Indicator Outcome 2.1/2.2/2.3/3.1/3.2 Output 2.1.3*) along with anticipated gender mainstreaming support activities initially planned for 2020.

Monitoring and implementation of SDG 16[+]

The national team successfully finalized the SDG16 survey commissioned by the Global Alliance for Reporting Progress on Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies with a particular focus put on the localization of indicators within existing data-management structures established by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS). Further to this, 18 members of the PPMUs (61 per cent women) accessed a two-day training on SDG16, which was delivered by the SDG16 national team leader and a trainer from Al-Quds University. The training material was incorporated in the PNSA standardized course offerings. This activity was organized due to the impossibility to conduct outreach activities in the Gaza Strip and to attend international events under COVID-19 circumstances.

Output 1.3: West Bank and Gaza Rule of Law Institutions are Reunified



“Reconciliation Survey” finalized



4 position papers on reconciliation produced

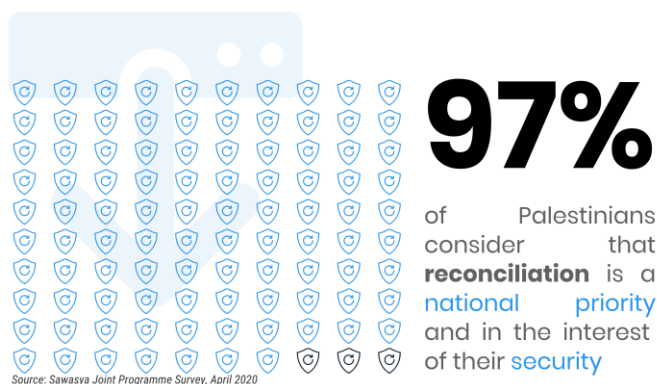


Photo 2: Infographic representing Palestinians’ perceptions on the national divide according to the “Reconciliation Survey”. © Sawasya

During the reporting period, progress was made with the **finalization by the PCBS of the “Reconciliation Survey”**.²² It focuses on the perception of Palestinians on the impact of the long-drawn-out national division and on their expectations *vis-à-vis* the reconciliation process.²³ As June marked the thirteenth year of national division, the *status quo* continued to prevail against the background of a continued degrading

²¹ They either clicked on, liked, commented or shared the post.

²² With the joint support of Sawasya and UNDP’s *Shufuna* and *Tamkeen* projects.

²³ Based on a representative sample of 2,339 individuals aged 16 years and proportionally distributed by geographic location (West Bank: 62 per cent; Gaza Strip: 38 per cent), gender (49.5 per cent of women) and educational attainment.

humanitarian situation. However, no policies, harmonized laws, or plans linked to the Gaza Strip/West Bank reunification process were adopted (*Indicator Outcome 1.3*), Fatah and Hamas effectively came to an agreement, in late September, for holding the first elections in nearly 15 years.²⁴

In the build-up to such momentum, **four position papers were produced by a coalition of CSOs with a focus on prosecution, reparations, vetting and institutional reform** (*Indicator Output 1.1.3*). This is part of a larger report entitled “*Civil Society Organizations: Vision on Integrating Transitional Justice Mechanisms in the Reconciliation Process*”. The production of the report was part of a larger policy dialogue on transitional justice that brought together 546 CSO representatives and

other actors (39 per cent women).²⁵ For participants, transitional justice in the context of Palestine must be premised on a nationally-developed strategy and on the establishment of a “community coalition for transitional justice” to help secure public support. Going forward, efforts will be intensified to develop a national transitional justice strategy in continuation of the work undertaken by CSOs, including a meeting they held with representatives from the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) and the MOJ in late 2020. Cognizant of the current window of engagement, *Sawasya* will scale up support for the implementation of the report’s recommendations, starting with the production of an up-to-date assessment on the capacities and limitations of justice institutions in Gaza and the West Bank,²⁶ which will constitute a basis for discussion with national partners along with the “*Reconciliation Survey*”.

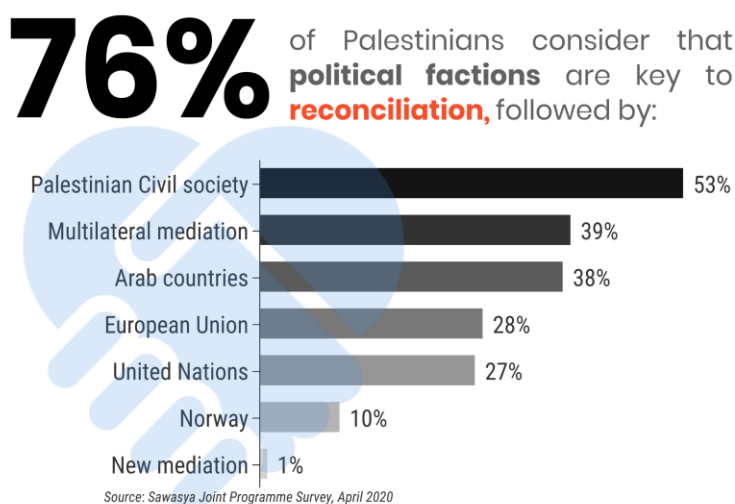


Photo 4: Infographic on Palestinians’ perceptions on reconciliation, according to the “Reconciliation Survey”. © Sawasya

²⁴ “Fatah and Hamas reach deal on Palestinian elections” (24 September 2020), *Al Jazeera*.

²⁵ Representing 92 CSOs.

²⁶ This will be more comprehensive than the update on the justice sector reintegration report.

Output 1.4: Advocacy on Strengthening Rule of Law Institutions and Promoting Human Rights is Reinforced



3 accountability reports produced by civil society on court monitoring and justice reform



Coordination platform developed between AGO and civil society

Key progress was made in the area of accountability, with the **development of a dialogue platform between CSOs and members of the AGO Human Rights Unit** tasked with monitoring citizens' complaints and prosecutorial performance, which will be operationalized in 2021. In line with this, important strides were made in 2020 towards robust civilian oversight with the **publication of the first two court monitoring reports²⁷ covering the State of Palestine in its entirety (12,924 criminal hearings)²⁸ (Indicator Output 1.1.4) (see Annex VII)**. More than 500 citizens²⁹ took part in the reports' online launch by the Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR) in the presence of the 23 CSOs invested in their production. The project proved efficient in strengthening the accountability role of civil society as highlighted by the mid-term evaluation. Through the work of the 9 researchers (6 women)³⁰ deployed by a 24 member-CSO coalition³¹, the main bottlenecks that stand in the way of Palestinians accessing justice across the West Bank and Gaza were identified and analysed. Informing work going forward, the coalition recommends:

- ▶ Two-year limitation on pre-trial detention;
- ▶ Imposition of fines on 'no-show' witnesses;
- ▶ Expansion of current court facilities;
- ▶ Binding schedule system for judges;
- ▶ Systematic reporting of torture cases;
- ▶ Timely transfer of detainees;
- ▶ Proper training of juvenile judges;
- ▶ Due process, particularly in juvenile cases;
- ▶ Presence of child protection officers in trials
- ▶ Review of judges' remuneration;
- ▶ Three-week limitation on the adjournment of trials;
- ▶ Expansion of current court facilities;
- ▶ Binding schedule system for judges;
- ▶ Court rooms for juveniles;
- ▶ No criminal proceedings for children under 12;
- ▶ Child protection officers' mandatory reports.

In 2021, emphasis will be placed on advocating with decision makers for the implementation of above recommendations, while initiating the rollout of the second phase of the project based on the main findings of the pilot phase's evaluation, including the need for conducting monitoring over longer periods of time and for enhancing the capacity of monitors to focus on qualitative outcomes. Moving forward, focus will also be put on strengthening the gender component of the project in anticipation of the improved operational environment (*see Output 4.1*).

²⁷ Two analytical reports on were produced during the reporting period entitled "*Criminal Trials before the Serious Crimes Court and First Instance Courts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip*" and "*Trials before the Juvenile Courts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip*." In the annual work plan, the latter appears on under 2.1.8.

²⁸ The number was adjusted after final verifications.

²⁹ Through Facebook live. Disaggregation unavailable.

³⁰ An additional two volunteers, recruited by the coalition, joined the team.

³¹ The coalition is composed of 24 CSOs; however, *Sawasya* partnered with 9 of them on this project.

In addition, the **report on “Advocating for Justice Sector Reform through inclusive Consultation and Mobilization”** was produced by a coalition of civil society partners (*Indicator Output 1.1.4*) (see *Annex VIII*) and will be presented during a virtual conference to be held in January 2021. This builds on consultations held in 2019 and 2020 with more than 240 citizens (about 60 per cent women) across the Gaza Strip³² on ways to improve access to justice. A platform where citizens can freely express their views is essential in a context where only 6 per cent of the general public (4 per cent women) is aware of the existence of the JSS³³ and with local actors and civil society being traditionally excluded from institutional forums. Moving forward, the report recommends:





- ▶ Professionalization of the judiciary;
- ▶ Proper oversight mechanisms;
- ▶ Strengthening of inspection;
- ▶ No trial of civilians in military courts;
- ▶ Operationalization of state legal aid
- ▶ Timely transfer of detainees;
- ▶ Proper training of juvenile judges;
- ▶ Decriminalization of minor financial offences;
- ▶ Rollout of e-Notification;
- ▶ Revision of procedural laws










With the passing of Law-Decrees No 39 and 40 of 2020 that amended the Judicial Authority Law without due consideration for the positions of civil society, a further shrinking of the civic space to engage on justice reform was witnessed, which translated into reduced support to the interim HJC, whose mandate will expire in January 2021. With public opposition to the Law-Decrees mounting, the unified position of civil society on this front will serve as basis for advocacy engagement moving forward.

³² Two consultations were conducted in late January in the cities of Gaza and Khan Yunis, covering all five governorates of the Gaza Strip (i.e., North Gaza, Gaza City, Deir El Balah, Khan Yunis, Rafah).

³³ According to the ‘*Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey*’ conducted by the PCBS in 2018.

Outcome 2: Service Provision by Rule of Law Institutions is Effective, Accountable and Inclusive

	Progress Against Outcome 2 Targets		
	Ind.	Annual target	Results
	0.2.1	Decrease of 1 per cent yearly (met)	4 per cent decrease of unsentenced detainees as a proportion of overall prison population against the annual target.
	0.2.2	Decrease of 3 per cent yearly (met)	48 per cent decrease in children in conflict with the Palestinian law detained at the Family and Juvenile Protection units against the annual target.
	0.2.3	Increase of 10 per cent by 2020 (N/A)	N/A data on "Level of confidence that you will receive a fair trial if you were charged with committing a criminal act/delinquency" given the impossibility to proceed with fieldwork during COVID-19. The 'Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey' will be conducted in 2021.

	Progress Against Output Targets				
	Annual target	Results		Annual target	Results
	Increase of 10 per cent in pilot areas by 2020 (N/A)	o.2.1.1: N/A data on "public aware of the Palestinian Civil Police community policing strategy". The 'Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey' was postponed to 2021 due to COVID-19.		Increase of 1 per cent in the pilot areas yearly (met)	o.2.1.2: 18 per cent increase in the number of judgements enforced at the level of conciliation courts and 15 per cent increase at the level of first instance courts in Hebron pilot area.
	Increase of 2 per cent by 2020 (N/A)	o.2.1.3: N/A data on "justice sector users satisfied with Mizan." The 'Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey' was postponed to 2021 due to COVID-19.		Decrease of 1 per cent yearly (unmet)	o.2.1.4: 56 per cent increase in the number of children who received a custodial sentence as compared to 2019 (N/A data against the annual target).
	Increase of 1 per cent yearly (met)	o.2.1.5: 5 per cent increase in the number of children who benefitted from alternatives to detention against the annual target (31 per cent increase as compared to 2019).		Increase of 1 per cent yearly (met)	o.2.1.6: 72 per cent increase in the number of children who benefitted from mediation in the investigation process as alternative to detention against the annual target (23 per cent increase as compared to 2019).
	Increase of 1 per cent in the pilot areas yearly (met)	o.2.2.1: 15 per cent increase in the number of judgements enforced in unserved areas against the annual target. (11 per cent increase as compared to 2019).		5 yearly (unmet)	o. 2.2.2: 0 . Services remain to be rolled out, as implementation was hindered by COVID-19. However, strides were made towards the establishment of the Local Advisory Committees during the period with the development of local security and training plans.

Output 2.1: Quality and Efficiency of Security and Justice Services Provided to the Palestinian Citizens Are Improved



Support to inclusive and accountable policing

Security and training plans were developed by the PCP as a first step towards the operationalization of the Local Advisory Committees and community policing services. This represents critical progress towards citizen-centred policing, particularly in areas that most bear the brunt of territorial discontinuity. Members of the three Local Advisory Committees were also identified in the pilot areas of Jericho, Al-Ouja and Aqabat Jaber camp (Jericho's governorate), in close collaboration with the PCP. However, due to COVID-19, identified community members could not access training on security planning and alternative dispute resolution (ADR) approaches, thereby postponing the rollout of community policing services to 2021 (*Indicator Output 2.2.2*).

The progress witnessed in 2020 was realized in a context that commanded robust engagement from *Sawasya* to ensure that the community policing agenda is part of the larger COVID-19 response and institutional legal empowerment strategies. In line with this, the PCP unified disciplinary code was endorsed by the Ministry of Interior (MOI). Moving forward, 10,000 copies of the PCP unified disciplinary code will be disseminated with support from *Sawasya*, including the regulations on

the use of force and firearms by police staff and disciplinary and investigation procedures. In addition, the PCP-CSO accountability taskforce was reactivated to identify ways to take forward joint work, including based on the recommendations of the assessment produced in 2019 by the Programme. During a workshop held between the PCP accountability and complaints units as well as the PCP Planning and Development Office, Legal Advisors to the Chief of Police, the Deputy Chief of Police and the Disciplinary Council Unit, they agreed on prioritizing the measurement of complainants' satisfaction going forward as a first step towards the institutionalization of effective, efficient and transparent complaint mechanisms. The above is in line with *Sawasya's* COVID-19 programmatic response³⁴ (see *Annex IX*) developed in April that explores the opportunities brought about by the crisis in terms of institutional change. Support to inclusive and accountable policing will be measured next year against indicators of the 'Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey', as the completion of fieldwork was postponed to 2021 due to COVID-19 (*Indicator Output 2.1.1*).

Support to fair and equitable judicial procedures

An e-Notification feature for lawyers built into the Mizan II case management system was developed during the reporting period. While this represents an important milestone as it contributes to eliminating substantial procedural bottlenecks³⁵ - particularly under COVID-19 - its full rollout was hindered due to concerns on the legality of introducing e-Notification by means of regulatory changes. Although progress on the policy front was limited as amendments to the

procedural law remain to be passed, 150 lawyers (25 per cent women) already received training on e-Notification to ensure the rapid implementation of the feature once an adequate legislative framework is in place. Renewed impetus for the digitalization of judicial procedures during the COVID-19 crisis was underpinned by robust technical and advocacy support³⁶. While the PJI substantially increased its digital educational offer as a response to COVID-19 (see *Output 4.1*), the HJC, in consultation with *Sawasya*, opted for the development of an in-person training programme delivered by Jordanian High Court judges. Due to COVID-19, this activity was postponed to 2021. Likewise, the implementation of the model court system was postponed to 2021 due to a reallocation of resources under COVID-19.

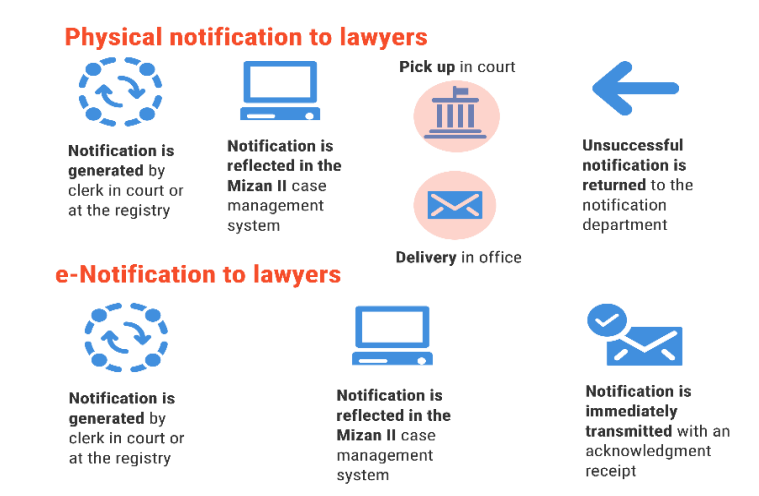


Photo 5: Visual on the differences between physical and e Notification for lawyers. © *Sawasya*

³⁴ The Joint UNDP, UN Women, UNICEF *Sawasya* Programme (April 2020), "A Forecast on the Effect of COVID-19 on the Justice Sector: Prospects and Possibilities".

³⁵ This was identified in the "*Hebron Assessment*" (entitled "*The District of Hebron: Access to Justice, Courts and Public Prosecution Assessment*") conducted by *Sawasya* in 2018.

³⁶ In 2019, a draft law was submitted to the President's Office to give legal force to electronic notification modalities.

Support to inspection mechanisms

Significant progress was made in 2020 with **digitalization of prison monitoring processes** and the development of a user manual, thereby further strengthening accountability and reporting at the level of the AGO/HJC. By fostering consistency, incentivizing inter-institutional collaboration and offering in-depth analytical insights, digitalized prison monitoring processes contributed with systematizing the identification of and early warning on human rights breaches, while allowing for the implementation of rapid corrective actions, essential to safeguarding the dignity of those deprived of liberty. It also increases the transparency of rule of law institutions as information will be immediately synchronized and accessible through the data management centre. Such work is essential as the proportion of unsentenced detainees is estimated at 48 per cent, although this represents a 4 per cent decrease against the annual target (*Indicator Outcome 2.1*). To further operationalize the mechanism, 22 prison monitors (28 per cent women)³⁷ from the AGO Human Rights Unit were equipped with 10 electronic tablets by the Programme, while training on software modalities by *Sawasya* will be available in 2021. This is in accordance with priorities highlighted in the AGO emergency plan.³⁸

In line with such progress, **unified court inspection procedures were established and operationalized** during the reporting period. The joint inspection manual was adopted in congruence with international standards, thereby contributing to a system that is predictable, able to evaluate itself, and towards which citizens can turn to seek objective recourse. Further, 13 judges and prosecutors (15 per cent women) from the HJC and AGO inspection departments attended an online training held by an international expert supported by *Sawasya*. For six days, small mixed teams of inspectors explored real life situations through role play where they produced harmonized responses to complex inspection situations. With the training conducted at the end of 2020 due to the COVID-19 crisis, the development of new Mizan II modules, including to operationalize the complaint processing mechanism, was postponed to 2021. Likewise, joint strategic planning between judges and administrative staff to identify entry points for human rights mainstreaming that factor in early lessons learned from the COVID-19 crisis will be conducted next year.

Human rights continued to be mainstreamed in prosecution work, with the **creation of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the AGO Human Rights Unit**. Twenty-two prosecutors (36 per cent women) of the AGO Human Rights Unit accessed training on them. The Unit is the entity tasked with ensuring compliance with human rights standards, including in detention facilities. This takes forward the commitments of the State of Palestine under the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT). Furthermore, **360,000 school students (51 per cent girls) were educated on their rights as citizens**, as part of a new partnership between the MOJ and Ministry of Education and Higher Education for the introduction of e-Learning material within grades 6-9 curricula. Such work was the focus of the International Human Rights Day celebration held in December 2020, where the 11 e-Learning courses, developed with support from the Programme, were presented.

Support to enforcement and notification mechanisms

The **enforcement of judgements in the Hebron governorate (pilot area) increased by 18 per cent for conciliation courts and 15 per cent for first instance courts** against annual targets

³⁷ Each prison monitor is tasked with visiting two places of detention per month.

³⁸ See Attorney's General Office of the State of Palestine (April 2020), "Emergency Plan of the Public Prosecution: Priorities and Needs".

(Indicator Output 2.1.2). **At the level of family courts, a 228 per cent enforcement rate in the Hebron pilot area** was witnessed over the period (Indicator Output 2.1.2).³⁹ Such salient progress reflects the **expansion of Mizan II to enforcement departments in all West Bank governorates in 2020**. While important strides were made since the launch of *Sawasya II*, the COVID-19 crisis has slowed progress on this front. To illustrate, the enforcement of conciliation court judgements in the Hebron pilot area increased by 6 per cent (compared to 2019) and decreased by 30 per cent in first instance courts. This is anticipated to be compounded by the notification backlog estimated at 47,356 in 2020.

Recognizing the need to provide continuous support on this issue, 26 enforcement department staff (27 per cent women) were trained on the utilization of the Mizan II case management system and additional hardware capacity was accessed by family and regular courts in Hebron. To ensure that gains made thus far are further maintained, the **judicial police in Hebron⁴⁰ were provided with six electronic tablets** with support from *Sawasya*. With notifications being digitally accessible through the Mizan II case management system, any judicial police officer equipped with an electronic tablet can now deliver a warrant or a judgement decision to a resident of the Hebron pilot area, irrespective of the area s/he is living in. This builds on the Mizan II technology where development and continued enhancement of features⁴¹ further link the HJC and AGO databases with the judicial police in 2020. Such interventions are crucial considering the prevailing enforcement environment that was only compounded by the COVID-19 crisis and the six-month suspension of security and civilian coordination between Israel and the State of Palestine. To make the notification of decisions more efficient in areas served by the Government of Palestine, **regular and family courts in Hebron were given 12 electric bikes** with support from the Programme. The procurement of four motorcycles for regular and family courts in Hebron and two motorcycles for the judicial police was also initiated in 2020 and will be completed in 2021. Prior to having the electric bikes, notifiers were only able to deliver on 30-40 per cent of the daily notification demand⁴² as they had to resort to unreliable means of transportation, including buses or taxis.

In addition and as part of the joint Facebook campaign by justice institutions and the judicial police (see Output 1.2), **936,000+ Palestinians viewed video content (32 per cent women) on enforcement under COVID-19** and 305,000+ (31 per cent women) on the work of the judicial police. In 2021, focus will also be put on complementing the work initiated by GIZ to enhance the judicial police digitalized system (Epsilon) with a view to systematically collect data on main enforcement bottlenecks. Such work was initially planned for rollout in 2020 but was postponed due to the six-month suspension of the security and civilian coordination.

Support to the development of the e-Justice strategy

Developments within e-Justice was one of the most salient areas of progress of 2020. The **first e-Service was rolled out**, following the formal adoption of the e-Justice matrix in February by 12 heads of institutions.⁴³ Millions of Palestinian citizens are now able to initiate and track online the authentication of their documents, on their laptop or through the dedicated mobile app that was

³⁹ Progression cannot be calculated as data on this front were not available prior to 2020.

⁴⁰ It refers to the Governorate, unless specified.

⁴¹ Including at the level of the specialized prosecution.

⁴² *Sawasya II* (2019), "The District of Hebron: Access to Justice, Courts and Public Prosecution Assessment".

⁴³ The e-Justice committee is comprised of the MOJ, HJC, AGO, SJD, PJI, Constitutional Court, LAB, PBA, Palestinian Anti-Corruption Commission, judicial police, the military judiciary as well as the Palestinian Maintenance Fund.

upgraded this year. Prior to this, citizens had to physically initiate such processes with front desk officers, frequently resulting in several commutes to the court. With the launch of the e-Justice service, Palestinian citizens can now make such requests online, and only commute to the court when they have been notified that their documents are ready for collection and signature. This greatly contributes to improving access to effective, inclusive and accountable services – through strengthened oversight, while freeing up critical human resources at the court level, thereby reducing costs to citizens. Mizan II-based enhanced connectivity between governmental agencies also contributed to removing critical administrative barriers, through linking the Ministry of Transport and Communications with the HJC, and making the former able to directly generate “no-fine certificates”, thereby reducing the number of steps that citizens must undertake in order to obtain or renew their driving license.

To support the rollout of e-Services, security protocols of the 12 institutions that compose the e-Justice Committee⁴⁴ were fully streamlined and the hardware capacity of the MOJ, HJC and SJD was enhanced. In support of this, 17 IT staff (24 per cent women) from across institutions of the e-Justice Committee were trained on IT security and networking. In parallel, frontline court staff accessed sensitization on customer services and digital work. Similarly, steps will be taken in 2021 towards case management technology transfer in the MENA region in anticipation of the resumption of international travels. Levels of satisfaction of Mizan II users will be assessed in the PCBS-led “*Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey*”, which will be conducted in 2021 (*Indicator Outcome 2.1/2.2/2.3/3.1/3.2/Output 2.1.3*). With regard to the establishment of a customer service centre in Qalqilya, the activity was postponed until 2021 in light of the reprioritization of resources by the MOJ.

Support to the development of child-friendly justice procedures

The severity of the COVID-19 crisis has provided opportunities to accelerate change in child justice. While efforts need to be maintained as children having received custodial sentences increased by 56 per cent this year (*Indicator Output 2.1.4*), a **72 per cent increase in the number of children who accessed mediation was observed against annual targets** as well as a **5 per cent increase in the number of children having accessed alternatives to detention (A2D)** (*Indicators Output 2.1.6/2.1.5*). This represents respectively a 23 per cent and a 31 per cent increase as compared to 2019. This is consistent with the global call by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, as well as by the UNICEF Executive Director to release children in detention due to the risk of transmission of COVID-19 and in order to take forward restorative justice measures. With 85 per cent of child detainees (112 out of 132)⁴⁵ released during the period, and a 48 per cent decrease in the number of children in FJPU (*Indicator Outcome 2.2*), the State of Palestine established itself as a leader in the region. Fifty-eight (58) of the 87 children detained following case management support from *Sawasya*’s CSO partners returned to their families during the period. Since their release, lawyers and social workers monitored the situation of those children at their homes to ensure they are well integrated and protected. In light of COVID-19, a hotline was established, and the details of the hotline were shared on social media platforms to encourage families and children to report on child rights violations during the emergency (*see*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Seventy-five (75) children out of 87 were released in the West Bank; 37 out of 45 were released in the Gaza Strip. All children in conflict with the law awaiting court rulings were released and all those who are serving time in detention were assessed and released after two weeks of quarantine.

Output 3.1). The case of Palestine was identified as one of the best practices in the MENA region and accordingly featured in the [UNICEF Child Protection e-Bulletin](#).

During the same period, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child adopted concluding observations on the initial CRC State of Palestine Report that was submitted in 2018. This also constitutes an important milestone for the advancement of children's rights in 2020 as it highlights the need to remove all exceptions that allow marriage under the age of 18 years and to improve access for justice to child victims of sexual abuse, including by combatting the impunity of abusers. It also underscores the need to promote non-custodial and non-judicial measures, such as mediation, and to further support and prioritise family.

Under COVID-19, rapid alternatives to detention (A2D) solutions were deployed, building on work previously achieved in the framework of the Juvenile Protection Law of 2016 (JPL). In the West Bank, **222 children (all boys) accessed A2D interventions implemented by the accredited A2D institutions and centres** identified in 2019. Five pilot initiatives were rolled out in the locations of Ramallah, Nablus, Tubas, Tulkarem and Hebron. They accessed drama and art therapy, life skills and vocational training as well as community work. Given the increase in demand for A2D, the pilot initiatives were expanded to two additional governorates and will be further explored in 2021. In addition, **guidelines for child protection were developed, endorsed, and disseminated** in A2D institutions and centres. These guidelines provide unified standards of child protection for focal points and service delivery. They aim to ensure respect for the best interest of the child and safeguards enshrined in national laws and international standards. Thirty-two (32) site visits to A2D centres were conducted to ensure compliance and proper follow up with children enrolled in the programmes. In addition, 19 institutions and centres were identified as suitable for implementing A2D programmes in the Gaza Strip during the period. COVID-19 has compelled the judiciary to find innovative alternatives to detention and has potential to strengthen deinstitutionalised care in communities. However, in the longer-term, the limited number of rehabilitation and reintegration programmes will not be able to accommodate the increase in children that have been released from detention as a result of the COVID-19 response. This has raised the importance of prioritising alternatives for detention for children.

In parallel, 24 boys from the Dar Al Amal Rehabilitation Centre and 11 girls from the Girls Care home in Bethlehem received psychosocial support. Earlier this year, a needs assessment was conducted that highlighted the need for refurbishing a mobile lab, establishing a dry-cleaning facility as well as ensuring the presence of sports and recreational equipment. The assessment duly incorporated the needs of children and staff. However, COVID-19 delayed the procurement of equipment, which was further compounded by the accidental fire that partially destroyed the Girls Care home in Bethlehem, during which a girl tragically lost her life. The remaining girls and staff were transferred to the Mihwar women's shelter, with rehabilitation work intended to begin in 2021 with support from *Sawasya*. In Gaza, 30 child detainees (boys) at the Al-Rabe'a Rehabilitation Centre accessed several services, including individual psychotherapy, group counselling and life skills education. Thirty-six (36) newly released boys and their families also accessed case management support, as well as family therapy, positive discipline sessions, and psychodrama. This is in addition to the 205 boys released from Al-Rabe'a Rehabilitation Centre in Gaza who continued to benefit from psychosocial services this year.

Another key area of progress in 2020 was the **development of legal aid standards for children through the National Juvenile Justice Committee** tasked with implementing the JPL of 2016. Produced in close partnership with the Palestinian Bar Association (PBA) and civil society, the standards contribute with operationalizing key elements of the National Legal Aid Strategy (NLAS) and constitute a key instrument to ensure that children are represented at the different stages of case proceedings even in the absence of a state-sponsored scheme. Work in view of the endorsement of the standards will be continued into 2021. The standards will be complemented by the development in 2021 of a justice for children action plan in Gaza (*see Output 2.2*) and a comprehensive justice strategy for children in the West Bank as well as corresponding action plans. While intended to be conducted this year, these activities will be rolled out in 2021 in order for COVID-19 lessons learned to be duly capitalized on and to produce a stronger focus on longer term restorative justice outcomes.

With reference to capacity building activities, progress was slowed by the COVID-19 crisis as in-person interactions were reduced and emergency work was primarily supported. In view of this, training on the mediation guidelines finalized in 2019 and adopted in 2020 by the MOSD and the AGO was postponed to 2021. Despite this, 12 juvenile police officers (17 per cent women), five women Child Protection Counsellors (CPCs), and five CSO staff (4 women) enrolled in the 18-month supervision professional diploma of the Birzeit University Continuous Education. They completed their theoretical training sessions and entered the practical phase of the training, consisting of a 100-hour supervision practice and the production of a research paper. In addition, the development of a professional diploma on child sensitive interrogation and child protection principles (including remote modalities) for juvenile prosecutors is underway with support from the Chief Juvenile Prosecutor. Partners were also encouraged to explore online-based alternatives for the continuation of the on-the-job training for the 33 CPCs (60 per cent women). Work will focus in 2021 on adapting Mizan II to the challenges unveiled by the COVID-19 crisis, particularly on developing remote-based case management, and on ensuring access to training for juvenile justice professionals. This was initially planned for 2020 but due to a shift in priority to meet emergency needs it was postponed to 2021. Finally, and following the successful completion of the pilot court monitoring phase at the end of 2020 efforts will focus on advocating for and programming to include the main recommendations of the report (*see Output 1.4*).

Output 2.2: Quality and Efficiency of Security and Justice Services Provided to Areas Unserved by the Palestinian Government (Gaza, Area C, Hebron 2 And EJ) are Improved

Support to enhanced access to justice and security service provision in Area C

During the reporting period, a **15 per cent increase in enforcement in the Hebron pilot governorate (Area C) was observed against annual targets** (*Indicator Output 2.2.1*), this represented an 11 per cent increase as compared to 2019. This also indicates a reduction of the court backlog at a time when case intake was low. Such progress can be attributed, in part, to Mizan II further linking the judicial police and the HJC/AGO and thereby allowing for the digitalization of warrants and justice decisions that can now be directly handed over electronically by police officers on any routine controls conducted on residents of areas B and C (*see Output 2.1*). While community policing services were not rolled out in 2020 due to COVID-19 and the restrictions it placed on the training of local advisory members (*Indicator Output 2.2.2*), local security and training plans were developed by the PCP. Members of the three Local Advisory

Committees were identified in the pilot areas of Jericho, Al-Ouja and Aqabat Jaber camp (Jericho Governorate) by the PCP in close collaboration with *Sawasya*.

Support efforts to enhance security and justice in the Gaza Strip

In 2020, important efforts were invested towards strengthening the capacity of the judicial sector to ensure the continuity of justice services under COVID-19, particularly for women and children. In view of this, 762 judicial and public health responders (20 per cent women) were trained on ways to enhance their technical capacity, particularly in the fields of gender responsive emergency planning, child and gender justice and accountable law enforcement. This was done in close collaboration with ICHR and civil society, based on the conclusions of a technical workshop conducted during the first semester.⁴⁶ Emphasis was placed on international and national legal frameworks in the litigation of VAW cases, SGBV and referral pathways, evidentiary mechanisms in SGBV, femicide and cybercrime cases, the prevention of secondary victimization and forensic medicine as well as child friendly approaches.

Support to the development of Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanisms



Photo 6: Training of arbitrators and other actors invested in this field, Ramallah. © Sawasya

Key progress was made in 2020 towards promoting ADR mechanisms. 30,000 Palestinian citizens (40 per cent women) accessed content on ADR mechanisms through 10 radio episodes and social media posts on drawing a distinction between the latter and tribal/clan-based justice. In addition, 188 Palestinians (35 per cent women) were trained on ways to activate ADR mechanisms across the West Bank. It focused on promoting rule of law-based conflict resolution that fosters gender equality. To accompany awareness raising efforts, 22




arbitrators and other actors operating in this field (41 per cent women) attended ADR training by *Sawasya*'s CSO partner in close collaboration with the MOJ. Such institutional collaboration is instrumental to develop synergies that can underpin longer term strategies for the development of the ADR sector which has been cited as a key means to foster access to justice that focuses on restorative outcomes, particularly under COVID-19.⁴⁷ While ADR mechanisms tend to be conflated with informal justice, emphasis was placed on raising the awareness of the Palestinian public on the existence of such instruments that have proved to be resource efficient for both justice







⁴⁶ Twenty-five civil society actors and representatives from ICHR (60 per cent of women) took part in a technical workshop, which highlighted the need to further promote access to justice, the protection of human rights during proceedings, human rights based development of family court officials on women's rights in national and international legal frameworks as well as on gender justice, SGBV and existing referral pathways. This was conducted in close collaboration with OHCHR, the ICHR and 10 CSOs invested on this front.

⁴⁷ UNDP & UNODC (May 2020), "Guidance Note: Ensuring Access to Justice in the Context of COVID-19".

clients and duty bearers. However, ADR tends to be perceived as not offering the same safeguards as court proceedings.

Outcome 3: All Palestinians, Especially Children and Vulnerable Groups, Have Access to Justice, Security and Protection Without Discrimination

	Progress Against Outcome 3 Targets		
	<i>Ind.</i>	<i>Annual target</i>	<i>Results</i>
	O.3.1	Increase of 2 per cent by 2020 (N/A)	N/A data on “public aware of the existence of legal aid services supported by the GoP” is unavailable given the impossibility to proceed with fieldwork during COVID-19. The ‘Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey’ will be conducted in 2021.
	O.3.2	Increase of 2 per cent by 2020 (N/A)	N/A data on “public satisfied of the legal aid services provided by the GoP” is unavailable given the impossibility to proceed with fieldwork during COVID-19. The ‘Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey’ will be conducted in 2021.

	Progress Against Output Targets				
	<i>Annual target</i>	<i>Results</i>		<i>Annual target</i>	<i>Results</i>
	Increase of 1 per cent yearly (unmet)	o.3.1.1: 76 per cent decrease against the annual target. 859 vulnerable Palestinians (34 per cent of women, 21 per cent of boys, 3 per cent of girls) residing in areas served by the Government of Palestine have accessed legal aid services by CSOs.		Increase of 1 per cent yearly (met)	o.3.1.2: 649 per cent increase against the annual target. 3,539 individuals (49 per cent of women, 10 per cent of boys, 34 per cent of girls) living in areas served by the Government of Palestine have accessed legal awareness services.
	Increase of 1 per cent yearly (met)	o.3.2.1: 216 per cent increase against the annual target. 21,220 individuals (72 per cent women; 3 per cent boys and 0.1 per cent girls) living in areas unserved by the Government of Palestine have accessed legal aid services.		Increase of 1 per cent yearly (met)	o.3.2.2: 106 per cent increase against the annual target. 9,323 (62 per cent women; 5 per cent boys and 5 per cent girls) living in areas unserved by the Government of Palestine have accessed legal awareness services.
	Increase of 1 per cent yearly (met)	o.3.2.3: 196 per cent increase against the annual target. 631 children (2 per cent girls) living in areas unserved by the Government of Palestine have accessed legal aid services.			

Output 3.1. Vulnerable Populations Have Access to Justice, Security and Protection



859 Palestinians have
accessed legal aid services
in served areas



3,539 Palestinians have
accessed legal awareness
services in served areas

Support to the development of a sustainable legal aid system

149 individuals (0 per cent women, 1 per cent girls, 73 per cent boys) have accessed legal aid in front of Palestinian jurisdictions through the GoP-resourced court fund for criminal cases. This represents a 46 per cent decrease as compared to 2019 (*Indicator Output 3.1.1*). The limited number of Palestinians accessing the defence fund in criminal cases is the result of the lack of progress realized towards the establishment of a national legal aid mechanism. While strides were made with the development of legal aid standards for children this year that operationalize, in part, the NLAS (*see Output 2.1*), further progress has been hampered by an absence of impetus to take forward the work of the National Legal Aid Committee (NLAC) and shifting political priorities, particularly in the COVID-19 context. Attempts were made by the Programme to resume dialogue, including through joining forces with the development partner community in October to advocate for the adoption of the NLAS by the COM. Such efforts did not yield tangible results and have therefore resulted in reduced programmatic investments during the reporting period, including in relation to the development of a legal aid database. Based on the mid-term evaluation's recommendations, *Sawasya* initiated a review of its strategic engagement with the NLAC that are anticipated to lead to substantial adjustments moving forward (*see Implementation Challenges and Lessons Learned*).

Support legal education through university legal aid clinics and law firm incubators

Support to affirmative legal education is key, not only to enhancing the quality of the legal practice but to also fostering a culture of social responsibility. Such a culture is a necessary condition for the emergence of state-administered legal aid systems operational in the long term that adequately respond to the needs of the community.

While system-level progress has been limited (*see Implementation Challenges and Lessons Learned*), 273 vulnerable Palestinians (58 per cent women) accessed legal aid services and 540 (56 per cent women, 7 per cent boys) have become more aware of their rights as a result of the clinical/apprenticeship education programmes implemented across the State of Palestine and the adaptive work of the clinics during the COVID-19 crisis.⁴⁸ The provision of such legal aid services was supported through the work of hundreds of law students and focused on cross-jurisdictional legal matters - including family law, labour law, children's rights, residency rights - with the objective of strengthening students' lawyering skills in dealing with complex cases. This

⁴⁸ In the West Bank, the clinical/apprenticeship programme is implemented through the An-Najah National University (Nablu) and the Al-Quds University (Jerusalem). In the Gaza Strip, it is implemented by the Islamic University of Gaza and Al-Azhar University, both located in Gaza city. Legal aid service provision by students was only ensured in the West Bank.

commanded the utilization of remote means of communication - including WhatsApp and social media platforms, thereby contributing to harnessing digital transformation within the clinics.



Photo 7: Ceremony for the awarding of the best videos produced by the An-Najah National University's legal clinic, Nablus. © Sawasya

To achieve such results, clinical work required to be adapted to the challenges brought about by COVID-19 to ensure the continuity of services for both communities and students. One example of this was the production of high-quality videos by the An-Najah National University's legal clinic to sensitize vulnerable members of their communities on their rights. The students initiated and produced the videos in response to the cancellation of in-person awareness raising activities initially planned.

Such initiative resulted in more than 17,600 social media viewers⁴⁹ accessing high-quality content on a range of legal issues relevant to the emergency context. It also contributed to harnessing the digital potential of legal clinics and of their students who developed a strong communication skillset that will strengthen their work in the long term. In order to further incentivize such practices, a ceremony was organized to award the four best videos, which focused on gender justice, with an emphasis on women's financial and labour rights (learn more about them [here](#)). Complementary in-person legal awareness sessions were also accessed by 137 vulnerable Palestinians (72 per cent women, 28 per cent boys) once adequate safety protocols were established by An-Najah National University in line with governmental guidance. During such sessions, the students focused on making information related to family rights and cybercrime legislation easily accessible to community members. Such work was underpinned by the production and broadcasting of radio spots and episodes by the legal clinic team on cybercrimes, custody rights, land and water settlement law, VAW and rights and obligations that results by marriage contracts. In line with using clinical training as a primary educational tool, the An-Najah National University's legal clinic also launched a legal research competition that awarded six female students for their work.⁵⁰ At the Al-Quds University (East Jerusalem), focus was put on both clinical and apprenticeship education as well as direct service provision by accredited lawyers. In support of service provision, an additional female trainee lawyer accessed placement this year

⁴⁹ Disaggregation not available.

⁵⁰ Criminal mediation for juvenile justice in the Palestinian legal system; Enforcement of international treaties in the Palestinian internal system; Integration between Palestinian law schools and the Bar Association in teaching law; Criminal policy and the Palestinian media; Criminal policy in medical errors; Trading the shares of public joint-stock companies in the stock market in light of the Corona crisis.

(learn more about her story [here](#)) under the supervision of an accredited lawyer,⁵¹ which will qualify her for the Israeli bar examination once completed. The first trainee lawyer recruited in 2019 completed her apprenticeship during the reporting period and is due to take the final examination shortly. These placements proved particularly beneficial to East Jerusalem communities as the case intake increased by at least 46 per cent during the reporting period.⁵² This was caused by the fact that many Palestinians were unable to access their social welfare rights due to administrative and language barriers. In parallel, 77 students (40 per cent women) pursued their 40-hour clinical training on the documentation of human rights violations delivered by human rights organizations invested on this front.

In the Gaza Strip, 1,596 law students (51 per cent women) attended clinical training on arbitration, personal status, enforcement law, evidence law, labour law and family procedural law both online and in-person. Eighty-two per cent (82 per cent) of the students (41 per cent women) who took part in the programme improved their GPA by 20 points,⁵³ and 80 per cent (40 per cent women) expressed their satisfaction with this approach. In addition, 330 students (44 per cent women) from the Islamic University of Gaza received court-based training on enforcement law for civilian and criminal matters, through 24 visits organized in regular jurisdictions. From June onwards, activities were resumed online with 110 students (68 per cent women) participating in practical training facilitated by legal aid lawyers on cross-jurisdictional court cases involving women in front of regular and family courts in Gaza. Such training is critical to leverage clinical education to make the nexus between family and civil/criminal law in a manner that ensures better access to justice for women and will be taken forward through support to the establishment of a law firm incubator targeting female practicing lawyers in the Gaza Strip.

Support the establishment of a legal information centre in Hebron

Due to COVID-19, this activity was postponed to 2021.

Support to the provision of legal aid services in conformity with the NLAS

In the West Bank, **859 vulnerable Palestinians (34 per cent of women, 21 per cent of boys, 3 per cent of girls) residing in areas served by the GoP⁵⁴ accessed legal aid services**, during the reporting period. Among those who accessed legal aid services, 139 were Palestinian minors in conflict with Palestinian law (3 per cent girls). The total number of Palestinians who received legal

⁵¹ The Al-Quds University houses the Al-Quds Community Action Centre and the Al-Quds Human Rights Clinic. The former focuses on the provision of legal aid services of interest to the community and the latter places the emphasis on the documentation of human rights violations (in addition to the provision of legal aid services).

⁵² Comparison was made over a six-month period as the *Sawasya*-Al-Quds University partnership only covered one semester in 2019.

⁵³ Out of 100.

⁵⁴ Areas A and B.



Photo 8: Training of family court lawyers on progressive litigation (prior to COVID-19), Ramallah. © WCLAC.

aid services decreased by 16 per cent as compared to 2019 (*Indicator Output 3.1.1*). This is attributable to the non-renewal of the Sawasya-PBA partnership in the West Bank⁵⁵ due to substantial divergences in approaches and vision.⁵⁶ In addition, efforts were recalibrated during the first semester to address the most immediate needs brought about by the COVID-19 crisis. With the number of employed Palestinians having decreased by 55 per cent during 2020,⁵⁷ part of Sawasya's support was hence re-channelled to ensure

that the GoP is able to offer quality legal assistance for workers in accessing their rights. In line with this, the groundwork was also laid for the upcoming provision of legal aid services to vulnerable women in front of family courts in the West Bank, particularly as important gaps were reported in the governorates of Ramallah, Hebron, Tubas and Nablus following the COVID-19 crisis.⁵⁸ It translated into 16 freshly graduated family lawyers (94 per cent of women) being trained on responsive litigation and ways to advance women's rights through progressive legal arguments over the course of five in-person and online sessions.

In complementarity of this, **3,539 individuals accessed legal awareness (49 per cent of women, 10 per cent of boys, 34 per cent of girls)** (*Indicator Output 3.1.2*). A stronger focus was put on awareness raising for children this year considering the shadow pandemic of SGBV. This directly resulted in a 455 per cent increase in service delivery as compared to 2019 and a 649 per cent increase against the annual target. To provide further support, a CSO-managed hotline was established to report violation of children's rights and it was publicised through social media. During the pandemic there was an increase in reported ill-treatment of children by different Palestinian security and police forces. A CSO partner collected 126 affidavits/questionnaires from children. Forty-six (46) per cent of them were subject to ill-treatment and violations. It is worth noting that of that 46 per cent, a third of them were there because they allegedly broke the curfew during the COVID-19 emergency period (*see Annex X*). In the continuity of efforts to fully operationalize the State of Palestine's obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the National Juvenile Justice Committee - mandated to implement the JPL - partnered with the MEHE on a nation-wide school campaign to promote children's rights.⁵⁹ Due to COVID-19, the campaign's kickstart was pushed to the 2020-2021 school year in the expectation of rolling it out

⁵⁵ The PBA is officially regarded as a single entity with headquarters in Ramallah and a branch office in the Gaza Strip. However, it has been operating, in practice, as separate financial and administrative systems since 2006.

⁵⁶ See Sawasya (2019), "MPTF Office Generic Annual Programme Narrative Progress Report".

⁵⁷ Democracy and Workers' Rights Centre (2021), Labor and Trade Union Newsletter.

⁵⁸ Sawasya (2021), "Legal Aid: Lessons Learned and Prospect for Engagement".

⁵⁹ The campaign is implemented through UNRWA schools in the Gaza Strip.

in the second semester. However, considering the various lockdowns that were reordered in the second half of the year, the campaign's implementation was postponed to 2021.

Output 3.2. Vulnerable Populations in Areas Unserved by the Palestinian Government Have Access to Justice, Security and Protection



21,220 Palestinians accessed legal aid services in unserved areas



9,323 Palestinians accessed legal awareness services in unserved areas



Legal aid database developed in the Gaza Strip



Referral platform digitalized in the Gaza Strip

Support the Government of Palestine in providing and coordinating legal aid

In 2020, progress was made towards the realization of the platform for the coordination of legal aid in areas unserved by the GoP, bringing together CSOs engaged on this front as well as governmental institutions. TORs that envisage the mandate, membership, implementation mechanisms as well as governance and funding modalities of the platform were developed. They were conceived as a quality assurance guidebook for the provision of unified services in a space characterized by its fragmentation and envisage directions for the establishment of a legal aid database and for research interventions. The establishment of the platform was formally endorsed in March by the provisional members, following sound advocacy efforts by the Programme. However, internal restructuring within governmental institutions as well as shifting political priorities due to COVID-19 stalled progress in the second half of the year. In view of this, *Sawasya* plans to review its strategic engagement on this front with the objective of further incentivizing coordination, while resuming dialogue with the new institutional leadership (*see Implementation Challenges and Lessons Learned*).

Provision of legal and psychosocial services to unserved vulnerable population in East Jerusalem/Area C

Nine thousand one hundred and fourteen (9,114) Palestinians (62 per cent of women, 3 per cent of boys)⁶⁰ accessed legal aid services in East Jerusalem, Area C and Hebron H2 (*Indicator Output 3.2.1/3.2.3*). While legal aid delivery increased by 27 per cent during the first semester, the various closures that occurred in the second half of the year negatively impacted services, thereby resulting in a 3 per cent decrease over the period in East Jerusalem and Area C as compared to 2019. Demand and provision of human rights-centred legal aid particularly pertained to residency rights (including family reunification, economic and social rights), access and movement, family rights and child justice when in contact with Israeli law. A strong focus was also put on ensuring access to justice for women victims and survivors of violence as the severity of SGBV cases noticeably increased throughout the year.⁶¹ Methodology was adjusted at the onset of the COVID-

⁶⁰ There was 34 per cent men and 0.01 per cent girls.

⁶¹ Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling (2021), "Compounded threats: How COVID-19, Occupation and Patriarchy Have Impacted Palestinian Women in 2020".

19 crisis mobilizing all available remote means, including through the setting up of WhatsApp and Zoom accounts and leveraging social media capability. Such platforms were utilized to grant Power of Attorney, testify as well as receive and answer urgent queries, including assistance in submitting unemployment files.

One thousand five hundred and ten (1,510) vulnerable Palestinians (43 per cent women, 2 per cent girls, 9 per cent boys) (*Indicator Output 3.2.2*) received in-person information on their rights⁶² in adherence to UN standards and best practices.⁶³ In light of COVID-19, such support proved essential to ensure access to information on various measures introduced and provide safeguards against arbitrary practices, particularly those affecting children. Over the period, 283 Palestinian children (1 girl) aged between 13 and 17 years, entered in contact with the Israeli law and more than 70 per cent accessed



Photo 8: Awareness session on rights when in contact with the law (prior to COVID-19), East Jerusalem. © Mada.

the services of a lawyer with support from *Sawasya*. Early counselling and representation are pivotal in limiting the exposure of children to criminal justice systems and their potential harmful impact in the long term. While COVID-19 prompted lawyers to conduct legal counselling through the phone with children in line with applicable procedures in police stations and courts, such interventions remained crucial in securing their early release. Accordingly, 233 community members (30 per cent women, 14 per cent girls, 61 per cent boys) from Al-Issawieh, Silwan, the old city of Jerusalem, and Kfur Aqab neighbourhoods of East Jerusalem⁶⁴ were sensitized in-person and via Zoom on their rights when in contact with the law. In addition, 8,900 social media viewers⁶⁵ accessed content dealing with the rights of children, including under COVID-19. Additionally, a live session was organized with a lawyer in which community members were able to obtain information on emergency regulations introduced by the GoI.⁶⁶

⁶² Over the course of over 240 sessions.

⁶³ UNODC (2013), “United Nations Principles and Guidelines on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems.”

⁶⁴ The majority of child arrests (65 per cent) occurred in Al-Issawieh (83 cases) and Silwan (48 cases) neighbourhoods of East Jerusalem.

⁶⁵ Disaggregation is not available.

⁶⁶ The GOI issued an emergency regulation in March 2020, preventing lawyers from accessing detainees in civil or military detention sites, with detainees only permitted confidential telephone contact with lawyers for the purpose of legal advice once prior and once after hearings.

Legal aid provision to unserved vulnerable population in the Gaza Strip

The severe disruption of court work,⁶⁷ and the judicial vacuum it created prompted legal aid providers to join forces in advocating for responsive policies and ramping up service provision for better protection of women and children. While [reports](#) began to emerge of fathers increasingly denying former spouses' custody rights, partner legal aid providers changed their *modus operandi* and took to social media to offer a platform to directly engage with judicial decision makers. During one of these Facebook live sessions, a woman whose son had been abducted by his father, was able to bring her case to the attention of the Chief Justice of the Family Court. She obtained a meeting with him on the following day, which led to the enforcement of her custody rights and to her being reunited with her son six days later. The Chief Justice also introduced emergency



Photo 9: Legal awareness live-streaming session during the COVID-19 lockdown, Gaza. © CSO partner

measures for Family Court work to resume for urgent cases (i.e., child custody, visitation, and alimony). Following this successful policy intervention, a second live Facebook session was organized with the Director of the Family and Child Section of the Civil Police Public Relations Office to discuss access to justice for victims/survivors of violence.

The COVID-19 pandemic provided an unprecedented opportunity to harness digital transformation in the field of legal awareness. To illustrate, more

than 415,000 social media users accessed dozens of live-streaming sessions via CSO Facebook pages⁶⁸ that informed them on their rights and on the availability of services. They were able to interact and ask questions in a manner similar to what they would during face-to-face interactions. With more than 63,400 views on a single streaming, such content also proved critical in disseminating information related to access to legal services for SGBV victims/survivors, particularly at a time where women were in the same household with their abusers. To tackle the shadow pandemic of SGBV, legal awareness resources were further mobilized and digitalized including during the #Fi_Zamn_Al-Jaihat⁶⁹ *Tweeting Day* for the benefit of 870,804 individuals⁷⁰ who had access to content on judicial challenges during emergency times and on the need to adopt the FPB. In parallel, **7,813 individuals (62 per cent women, 5 per cent boys and 5 per cent girls) accessed legal awareness** through sessions conducted across the Gaza Strip before and during the COVID-19 outbreak (*Indicator Output 3.2.2*) once safety measures were in place. To enhance legal awareness among parents of children currently or previously detained in Al-Rabe'a in Gaza, *Sawasya* and its partners conducted structured legal awareness sessions for 246 parents (68 per cent women). Each group attended four awareness sessions addressing topics related to children

⁶⁷ From 22 March to 20 April. Regular courts began to operate at a reduced capacity on 22 March; family courts were shut down on 25 March.

⁶⁸ In addition to 34 radio episodes and two radio spots. Disaggregation unavailable. Data collection methodologies are being adapted to enable further analysis.

⁶⁹ In English, "in the time of the pandemic".

⁷⁰ Gender disaggregation is not available.

legal rights when they come into contact with the Palestinian Law, access to legal services as well as ways to protect their children. Further to this, some parents asked for more in-depth sessions and were referred to one- to-one counselling support, others sought legal advice.

As a result of legal aid providers ramping up efforts to ensure the uninterrupted provision of services, **12,106 Palestinians (79 per cent of women, 0.1 per cent of girls, 3 per cent of boys) accessed legal aid with a specific focus on family cases.**

Interventions also continued to address most pressing legal aid needs for criminal cases. Regarding the latter, 369 Palestinians (28 per cent women, 0.4 per cent boys) facing movement restrictions to and from the Gaza Strip or detention in Israel accessed legal aid services; 18 men among them were released. Targeted interventions by specialized CSOs also led to the introduction of biweekly 10-minute parental phone calls for children detained in Israel and the issuance of an internal recommendation to allow detainees to make phone calls for humanitarian emergencies. In line with this, 226 children (26 per cent girls)⁷¹ were released from pre-trial detention through free early representation. This follows concerted engagement by partners and other stakeholders to heed the UN's call to release children including the UN

Committee on the Rights of the Child. The UN in the State of Palestine released a joint statement for the immediate release of all children in detention in May.⁷² Overall, 2020 witnessed a 20 per cent increase in service provision as compared to 2019 (*Indicator Output 3.2.1/3.2.3*), thereby substantiating the observed growing demand for legal aid for women in front of family courts in other parts of the State of Palestine (*see Output 3.1*).⁷³ Service provision during the period capitalized on the work of the AWN Access to Justice Network (AWN Network) and benefitted from *Sawasya's* well-defined partnership with civil society. In this regard, the referral mechanisms established by the PBA with the police, the AGO, the HJC and Reform & Rehabilitation Centres as well as within the AWN Network in 2019 contributed to securing the release of 185 detainees

"Since I was appointed a judge, this is the first time I come across a woman who gets 6,000+ JOD in cash!": Advancing women's rights in the time of COVID-19

When Hadeel married Ahmad, she was ready to travel to Saudi Arabia where her husband had been based for work. When Ahmad returned there right after their wedding took place in Gaza, she thought she'd be able to travel as soon as Ahmad secured her documents. This never happened, and only two months after their marriage, Hadeel found out that his new marriage to another woman was the reason behind her unanswered calls. She immediately informed Ahmad of her intention to divorce him, but he refused.

"I had no hope to get divorced or get any money from him because he was abroad."

This is when she decided to visit the legal aid clinic of the Women's Affairs Centre (WAC). A lawyer strategized with her the best way to obtain a rapid settlement at a time when court operations were severely disrupted by COVID-19. Together they filed two lawsuits: one on alimony and one on furniture settlement. They decided to wait until courts fully reopen to file for judicial separation. This strategy bore fruit and Hadeel obtained a compensation of USD 5,100 (JOD 3,640). To ensure enforcement of the decision, the WAC's lawyer obtained a judicial order according to which the assets of Ahmad were frozen. This move proved crucial as, unable to access his Palestinian bank account without Hadeel's permission, Ahmad asked his lawyer to enter in contact with WAC to seek a solution.

But Hadeel and her lawyer did not settle easily. They engaged in an additional five months of negotiation over the course of which Hadeel obtained her deferred dowry for an additional USD 3,526 (JOD 2,500). This brought the total settlement amount to USD 8,660 (JOD 6,140).

"Since I was appointed a judge, this is the first time I come across a woman who gets 6,000+ JOD in cash, where most of them are paid in instalments over years and years."

Since then Hadeel cannot help but rejoice:

"I cannot believe this happened. My problem was unexpectedly solved, thanks to WAC's legal aid lawyers."

⁷¹ Numbers submitted at mid-year were revised.

⁷² See <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/light-covid-19-crisis-un-officials-call-immediate-release-all-children-detention>.

⁷³ Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling (2021), "Compounded threats: How COVID-19, Occupation and Patriarchy Have Impacted Palestinian Women in 2020".





(5 per cent women) following the provision of legal aid services to 751 inmates (11 per cent of women). In line with this, the referral system was further digitalized in the framework of the online legal aid database newly developed for AWN Network supported by *Sawasya*.⁷⁴ To enhance coordination, the PBA, in the framework of the AWN Network, conducted six meetings for the operationalization of the complaint system, quality assurance tools and eligibility criteria in line with the NLAS and best practices.⁷⁵ A strong focus was also put on bridging the gap between legal counselling and referral to other actors, particularly in view of the growing number of women victims/survivors of violence. To illustrate, 452 individuals (54 per cent women) accessed psychosocial and mental health support in quarantine centres in the framework of the ‘Back to Home’ initiative conducted in partnership with Save the Children International. Furthermore, 16 female lawyers were able to engage with women survivors of violence - during a 5-day workshop - on the provision of more responsive legal services. With reported improvements in the litigation of such cases following the workshop, the two-fold approach proved crucial for the identification of unresponsive practices by the lawyers, and to support SGBV victims/survivors in being more assertive in the court room. In line with comprehensive approaches to legal aid, 235 boys accessed psychosocial support, including 30 boys at Al-Rabe’a Rehabilitation Centre with 10 children also benefitting from family group conferencing services. Furthermore, 239 individuals (50 per cent women) who accessed legal aid services were referred to the MOSD for temporary cash relief assistance.⁷⁶







⁷⁴ Twenty-three lawyers were trained on it.

⁷⁵ See UN General Assembly (2012), *United Nations Principles and Guidelines on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems*.

⁷⁶ In addition, seven women benefitted from SGBV protection, while another eight accessed mediation for cases relating to child custody, visitation, and family counselling.

Outcome 4: Women's Access to Justice and Security Improved through Gender-Responsive Service Delivery and Empowerment of Women

	Progress Against Outcome 4 Targets		
	<i>Ind.</i>	<i>Annual target</i>	<i>Results</i>
	O.4.1	<i>Increase of 1 per cent yearly (unmet)</i>	8 per cent decrease in the number of cases on violence against women filed with Family & Juvenile Protection against the annual target (3177)
	O.4.2	<i>Increase of 1 per cent yearly Ongoing (met)</i>	5 per cent increase in the number of violence against women cases transferred by the public prosecution to the courts against the annual target (2,450)
	O.4.3	<i>Increase of 1 per cent yearly Ongoing (met)</i>	14 per cent increase in the number of perpetrators of violence against women convicted against the annual target (750)

	Progress Against Output Targets				
	<i>Annual target</i>	<i>Results</i>		<i>Annual target</i>	<i>Results</i>
	<i>1 yearly (met)</i>	o.4.1.1: 1 : The risk assessment templates were operationalized to deal with VAW cases in line with international standards.		<i>Increase of 5 per cent yearly (met)</i>	o.4.2.1: 28 per cent increase against the annual target. 31 new gender champions (65 per cent women) were identified in the police (6), among regular judges (7), among judges and staff of family courts (6), among family lawyers in Gaza (4), among journalists in Gaza (5), among staff at the MOSD and the HJC (3).
	<i>Increase of 1 per cent yearly (met)</i>	o.4.3.1: 154 per cent increase against the annual target. 15,518 women and girls benefited from legal aid services supported by the project.		<i>Increase of 1 per cent yearly (unmet)</i>	o. 4.3.2: 2 girls (0 women) benefited from legal aid services supported by the Government of Palestine. (N/A data against the annual target).
	<i>Increase of 1 per cent yearly (unmet)</i>	o.4.3.3: 64 per cent decrease against the annual target. 12,862 individuals (56 per cent women; 7 per cent boys and 13 per cent girls) were targeted with in-person awareness and sensitization interventions on women's rights. However, 648,250 had access to online sensitization content on women's rights.			

Output 4.1: Technical and Institutional Capacities of Rule of Law Institutions to Respond to the Needs of Women are Improved

	Risk Assessment Templates operationalized		170+ front line service providers accessed PPE and hygiene products
	Emergency plans across the justice and security chain developed		First standardized training for family judges rolled out and digitalized
	Police helpline for SGBV victims established		+50 regular and family judges' legal skills strengthened on VAW litigation in civil and criminal jurisdictions
	Progressive instructive guidelines for SGBV prosecution developed		SOPs for the adjudication of VAW cases developed

Support effective, operational, multi-sectoral services for SGBV victims

The COVID-19 crisis and its shadow pandemic⁷⁷ shed harsh light on pre-existing service provision gaps, particularly on the lack of adapted emergency protocols to efficiently protect SGBV survivors. Over the reporting period, it is estimated that SGBV increased by at least 20 per cent,⁷⁸ which was met by a 18 per cent decrease in the number of VAW cases filed with FJPU as compared to the previous year, thereby materializing in decreased levels of prosecution (-22 per cent) and conviction (-33 per cent). Although this demonstrates the considerable impact the emergency situation has had on the safety of women, longer term losses in terms of access to justice for survivors of violence can be mitigated, particularly if focus is put on improving case reporting. This is what data against annual targets indicate as only the number of cases filed with the FJPUs seem to have reached pre-*Sawasya II* levels with an **8 per cent decrease observed over the period** (*Indicator Outcome 4.1*), as opposed to a **5 per cent increase in the number of prosecuted VAW cases and 14 per cent in convicted VAW perpetrators** (*Indicators Outcome 4.2/4.3*).

In view of the hampered ability of women to access providers, immediate priority was given to the **development of emergency plans by the MOSD, PCP (FJPUs), HJC (VAW judiciary), AGO (VAW specialized prosecution) and SJD** to ensure continuous and responsive services for SGBV victims/survivors.⁷⁹ Given the urgency of the situation, the MOSD and the FJPUs operationalized their protocols in the second half of the year,⁸⁰ including a specialized police helpline to incentivize reporting of SGBV instances (*see below*). Based on COVID-19 local and global lessons learned, they

⁷⁷ See UN Women (May 2020), "Justice for women amidst COVID-19." available [here](#).

⁷⁸ The increase in the number of women seeking help from specialized organizations ranged from 20 per cent to 69 per cent during the lockdown. Source: [OCHA](#).

⁷⁹ 15 Women Protection Counsellors (all women) accessed PPE and hygiene products.

⁸⁰ The HJC, AGO and SJD will operationalize them in the second half of the year.

establish clear standards and referral mechanisms for emergency service provisions according to levels of public health restrictions. They also establish district-based coordination mechanisms between governmental entities and CSOs under the National Referral System. At the policy level, a proposal was submitted to the Chief Justice for holding remote court hearing sessions in VAW cases supported by the Mizan II technology. The above work was complementary to the establishment by the COM of an MOSD-led protocol for the safe testing and placement of survivors of violence in quarantine centres and their longer-term referral (*see Output 1.2*). This is also in line with the issuance of instructions by the VAW specialized prosecution for the systematic referral of SGBV cases by FJPUs. The latter was part of the recommendations made during the four virtual dialogue meetings, which took place in April and May. Key service providers (65 per cent of women) from the FJPUs, public prosecution, specialized and family prosecution, the specialized judiciary, MOSD as well as CSO service providers discussed the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 crisis and formulated recommendations to address knowledge and procedural gaps.

At the operational level, the **police and the prosecution successfully rolled out the Risk Assessment Templates (RATs) for the identification of additional threats to women's safety** (*Indicator Output 4.1.1*). With the operationalization of the RATs, SGBV risks are assigned a score and communicated to the VAW specialized prosecution according to the nature of the case (i.e., sexual or physical violence, electronic blackmailing, attempted suicides or runaways). It is based on this meticulous and victim-centred review that the prosecution orders *i.a* protection measures, thereby allowing women whose safety is at risk to take an integral part in the process. In view of their cross-cutting nature, the RATs are a key instrument to enhance coordination across the security, prosecutorial and social service chain on SGBV cases and have been made an integral part of the safety plans.⁸¹ To further operationalize the RATs, a joint two-day virtual workshop was organized in June for 18 VAW Specialized Prosecutors and FPJU officers (28 per cent women) across the West Bank.⁸² This was the opportunity to enhance synergies between the police and the judiciary and to help participants better understand the utilization and value added of the RATs for the various actors involved. Additionally, a capacity building plan for Women's Protection Counselors (WPC) was developed by the MOSD and implemented in 2021 with support from *Sawasya*. It promotes better VAW case management practices and focuses on increasing WPC's understanding of women's trajectories across the investigatory, prosecutorial and litigation chain. It also places emphasis on sexual violence cases to support service providers in better responding to the specific needs of survivors.

As increased number of cases of crimes perpetrated online against women are reported across the region (*see Output 1.2*), work continued to be invested to operationalize the AGO/PCP cybercrime guidelines. Following intensive lobbying efforts, six police officers, who possess strong IT skills, were assigned to the Family and Juvenile Protection Department (FJPD) in the PCP.⁸³ At the level of the One-Stop Centre (OSC), organizational development was pursued with the production of a capacity building plan and a capacity assessment report highlighting women's admission to shelters, suicide attempt reporting, forensics in SGBV cases and the referral of cases to the specialized prosecution as the four priority areas. To take this forward, a protocol was developed in close collaboration with

⁸¹ The safety plan has been developed by the MOSD and the PCP in close collaboration with survivors of violence and includes critical information such as contact persons and emergency helplines.

⁸² Follow-up meetings were organized to with actors involved in the risk assessment process.

⁸³ In 2020, the Cybercrime Unit became the Cybercrime Department, which resulted in an increase in the resources allocated.

service providers which establishes a new division of roles and responsibilities. This was agreed on during a workshop held with 8 senior officers (4 women) operating the OSC's services. In 2021, the Programme will build on the protocol to further formalize improved case management mechanisms between MOSD, AGO and PCP in an MoU. Groundwork was also conducted for the scaling up of the OSC model in Nablus and Hebron.⁸⁴ In line with efforts to improve multisectoral services, existing platforms between the FJPU and the specialized prosecution were further supported especially in light of COVID-19. Such efforts will be supplemented by capacity building interventions to foster the capacity of MOSD counsellors in the management of VAW-related cases, including on how to best utilize the information generated by the RATs. Support will continue to be provided for the operationalization of the AGO/PCP guidelines for the provision of services to women and girls victims of cyber violence.

Improved capacity of security institutions to respond to the needs of women

In view of the need to improve access to security services for women victims of violence, a **helpline operated by the FJPD was set up in June**. However, referral mechanisms remain to be improved. Therefore, efforts were invested, through expertise supported by the Programme, to further define the scope of interventions, identify capacity building needs of operators and enhance case management. This was initiated in the second half of the year and will continue into 2021. This will build on the work done by EUPOL COPPS, with technical support from *Sawasya*, to raise the awareness of communities on the helpline. In parallel, 100 FJPU staff (30 per cent of women) accessed PPE and hygiene products to further ensure their safety and that of citizens⁸⁵. The Gender Mainstreaming Administrative Programme of the Security Sector Strategic Plan (AP9) also proved to be a critical platform for taking forward the gender justice agenda. Hence, the 2021 AP9 annual workplan adopted by the PMO this year focused on further ensuring gender representation and balance in the security sector. It does so through securing the buy-in of the security community on this front, while seeking policy-level change that incentivize better representation (e.g. dorms for women in training centres). Interventions are also geared towards better leveraging the work of the Gender Units within security institutions in terms of their ability to provide technical and logistical support. In this regard, critical funds from the United States Security Coordinator for Israel and the Palestinian Authority (Canada) and the British Support Team were secured by the MOI Gender Unit for its implementation with support from *Sawasya*⁸⁶.

In line with this work, the mid-term review of the PCP gender strategy (2017-2022) was successfully conducted and underpinned by the work of the Security Sector Technical Working Group in which *Sawasya* plays a critical advisory role. While the mid-term review highlighted substantial progress in the areas of human resources and community outreach, it also underscored the need to enhance gender sensitive budgeting and monitoring practices. This was duly incorporated in the PCP Gender Unit's annual work plan that was developed with technical support from the Programme.⁸⁷ Efforts were also invested to strengthen the FJPD's process of learning from the COVID-19 crisis. As a result, 15 field officers (7 per cent women) were able to provide inputs for the review of policies underpinning the National Referral System as they are currently being revised by MOWA. Moving forward, efforts will

⁸⁴ Two buildings were already identified.

⁸⁵ Including 12,000 masks, 200 handgels, 200 pairs of gloves, 110 disinfectant solutions, 400 soaps.

⁸⁶ It included the facilitation of key meetings with the broader development community with a focus on capacity development and the presentation of the Gender Mainstreaming Administrative Programme 2020 work plan of the Security Sector Strategic Plan (AP9) to various actors.

⁸⁷ Support to knowledge transfer with the new head of the GU at the PCP was also ensured by the Programme.

be geared towards further supporting the FJPD in fully operationalizing its emergency plan and improving its infrastructural capacity to better respond to the specific needs of women and girls.

Improved capacity of prosecution services to respond to the needs of women

Work continued to focus on leveraging prosecution to better protect women from violence and to prevent re-victimization for those who bring a complaint into the criminal justice system. While CEDAW remains to be ratified, the **development of responsive legal instructive guidelines with VAW Specialized Prosecutors** is offering an alternative pathway for the implementation of the State of Palestine's obligations. The legal instructive guidelines explore ways to form legal arguments that strategically mainstream constitutional and international law principles with the objective of improving the current litigation framework for VAW cases and enhance the efficient prosecution of SGBV cases. The quality of prosecutorial services for women is highly contingent upon the credibility of the criminal justice system to offer avenues to seek and achieve justice for women and girls victims of violence. In this context, the process of developing such guidelines - which will be finalized in 2021, was inclusive of lawyers and judges to ensure that the improved prosecutorial environment factors in all elements of litigation. Further, the AGO accessed organizational support on the implementation of the VAW SPP mandate and SOPs on the investigation of VAW cases to improve referral and resource-efficient coordination across the prosecutorial chain and at all levels of jurisdiction. The need to improve coordination on this front was highlighted during a workshop in which 8 representatives (2 women) of the chief prosecution, specialized prosecution and Planning Unit participated. Following this, a mapping report was produced and presented to the Attorney General as well as to the VAW specialized prosecution and Planning Units.⁸⁸ In a context heavily marked by disrupted service provision, emphasis was also placed on ensuring that the 25 VAW Specialized Prosecutors (40 per cent of women) have access to PPE and hygiene products⁸⁹ and executing the emergency plan at the level of the AGO. In line with *Sawasya's* strategy under COVID-19 (*see Annex IX: A Forecast on the Effect of COVID-19 on the Justice Sector: Prospects and Possibilities*) and in view of public health restrictions, capacity building and organization development activities at the level of the Gender Unit were postponed to 2021.

⁸⁸ Including the VAW specialized prosecution and the Planning Unit.

⁸⁹ Including 5,000 masks, 100 handgels, 50 pairs of gloves, 189 disinfectant solutions, 50 soaps.

Improved capacity of the judiciary to meet the needs of women

Women and COVID-19: The Impact of the Closure of Family Courts

Women have particularly borne the brunt of the closure of family courts during the COVID-19 crisis. Activities came to a virtual halt from 22 March to 26 May. While family courts were reopened following intensive advocacy efforts by UN Women - including through the *Sawasya* Programme - their operational capacity was reduced by 70 per cent, thereby creating critical delays and backlog. This situation has disproportionately impacted Palestinian women and only contributed to compounding the shadow pandemic of SGBV as many women faced additional hurdles to access divorce. In addition, women experienced substantial revenue losses as spouses and former spouses took advantage of the enforcement vacuum to deny maintenance and alimony payments as well as custody and visitation rights. Expectedly, the reopening of family courts coincided with an upsurge in women seeking support to file for and expedite divorce proceedings, hence further limiting the capacity of family courts to cope with the caseload.

See *Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling* (2021), "Compounded threats: How COVID-19, Occupation and Patriarchy Have Impacted Palestinian Women in 2020"

The current situation has provided renewed impetus to make the nexus between the family and regular judiciary ensure better access to justice for women victims/survivors of violence. While women's demands during COVID-19 tended to focus primarily on access to family rights (i.e., divorce, custody, visitation, maintenance, alimony), emphasis was placed on the **development of an emergency plan for family courts** that can provide a pathway for VAW cases to be brought into the criminal justice system. Based on the findings of the "*Rapid Appraisal of the Shari'a Courts' Effectiveness in Realizing Women's and Children's Rights*"⁹⁰, produced by the Programme this year, the plan was conceived to ensure that structural progress is made on this front. In close cooperation with institutions of the VAW-response chain (i.e., MOSD, FJPD, HJC, AGO, Palestinian Maintenance Fund (PMF)), it envisages a reinforced role

for the family judiciary and prosecution within the National Referral System, particularly in cases of children born outside of wedlock or *Orfi* marriages. It also provides a roadmap for building institutional capacity for responsive and comprehensive adjudication in family cases. In congruence with the emergency plans,⁹¹ 200 family judges and court staff (60 per cent women) as well as 32 VAW judges (44 per cent women) accessed PPE and hygiene products⁹². In addition, 20 regular courts in the West Bank were equipped with thermometers.

To further bridge legal gaps between the family and regular judiciaries, **32 regular judges and two representatives of the HJC's Gender Unit (50 per cent of women) along with 20 family judges and court staff (40 per cent of women) accessed the two PJI training programmes rolled out throughout the year.**⁹³ This represents important progress as it furthers centralizes

⁹⁰ Referred to as the family court assessment.

⁹¹ See *Output 4.1 – Support effective, operational and multisectoral services in place for SGBV victims*.

⁹² Including 15,000 masks, 100 handgels, 100 pairs of gloves, 100 disinfectant solutions, 200 soaps.

⁹³ This was implemented in close partnership with the Birzeit University Continuous Education Institute.

judicial education in a manner that takes forward a more progressive and human-rights based application of the Palestinian legislation. The prevailing culture often leads judges to adopt rigid and gendered standards that negatively influence their ruling and sometimes penalize women who do not conform to such stereotypes, particularly in VAW cases. In view of this, the programmes specifically place emphasis on strengthening litigation linkages between the Personal Status Law and the Penal Code and on systematizing responsive adjudication for VAW cases in line with international law and jurisprudence as well as best evidentiary practices.

Important strides were also made with the **development of VAW SOPs by the HJC that unify standards and procedures for case management and adjudication**, thereby further operationalizing the work of the specialized judiciary. Following a victim-centred approach, the SOPs specifically address challenges faced by women in seeking justice within current domestic and international frameworks. The Chief Justice identified Nablus as the pilot location for the establishment of a specialized VAW court. It will offer a safe and responsive environment for survivors of SGBV and hence protect survivors against secondary victimization in their interactions with the criminal justice system. With support from *Sawasya*, the specialized court will be refurbished and equipped in 2021. While the pandemic provided a room to foster structural change, the worsening of the COVID-19 crisis observed during the second semester also prompted the Programme to readjust some of its interventions. As a result, capacity building activities for family judges on cybercrimes, the production of a research on family arbitration and the adding of new features to the Mizan II case management system were postponed to 2021.

Human rights based organizational development at the levels of family courts

The further professionalization of the family judiciary is key to harmonizing legal practice with the rule of law and to taking forward the state building enterprise. Important strides were made on this front in 2020, with the **rollout of the first continuous standardized training (18 months) for family judges** at the PJI. On this front, the COVID-19 crisis presented an important opportunity to harness digital transformation within the PJI. Given the impossibility of rolling out face-to-face training modalities, the **PJI's digital portal was upgraded and two e-Courses on family law were developed** with support from *Sawasya*. They focused on prosecution and enforcement of family court decisions and were developed by an expert Jordanian judge. This is important progress as it is enabling knowledge development and consolidation within the PJI in relation to family law. Due to the impossibility of resuming the standardized training in November as initially intended,⁹⁴ the e-Courses will be rolled out in 2021, together with training for PJI staff in this area. The development of a draft bylaw and SOPs for the SJD's Inspection Department to enhance complaint processes and procedures was finalized in the second half of the year and establishes responsive evaluation methodology and criteria for inspection. In view of this, the upgrade of the *Adalah* case management system⁹⁵ for the digitalization of inspection procedures was initiated. Capacity building interventions aiming at addressing service provision bottlenecks highlighted in the family court assessment were postponed to 2021.

⁹⁴ Due to the implementation of the emergency plan with judges being assigned to different governorates considering the COVID-19 situation in their court of attachment.

⁹⁵ The current cases management for family courts, to the exception of enforcement departments, which utilizes Mizan II.

Enhanced security and justice services for women in the Gaza Strip

During the period, 9,545 vulnerable women and girls accessed legal aid in front of family courts and regular courts (including female inmates)⁹⁶ through the AWN Network in the Gaza Strip, which provides integrated services in line with key elements of the NLAS (*see Output 3.2*). In addition, 762 judicial actors (20 per cent women) improved their delivery of responsive services to women and girls in contact with justice systems (*see Output 2.2*). Work also continued to focus on enhancing the practice of lawyers catered to the needs of women in the Gaza Strip, including those brought about by COVID-19. 25 female family lawyers were trained through *Sawasya*, with 22 among them having obtained their certification from the SJD during the reporting period. Four of the successful candidates accessed traineeship placement within the AWN Network, which further ensures sustainability of the action. Seven hundred and sixty-five (765) women accessed legal consultation and representation by the four-trainee lawyers on cases pertaining to alimony, child visitation and custody rights, which considerably increased during COVID-19 (*see [AL-Monitor](#)*).

Efforts were also invested towards making the nexus between criminal and family legislation in step with the work undertaken at the level of the Palestinian judiciary. As a result, 86 PBA lawyers (59 per cent women) developed a better understanding on the Personal Status Law and the existing space to take forward VAW protective mechanisms and international human rights in legal arguments. To further promote progressive litigation, 21 freshly graduated lawyers (67 per cent women) were able to engage in a conversation with judges, prosecutors and social workers on women's access to justice and participation in the justice sector in the framework of the *Genderstine* campaign implemented by the PBA with support from *Sawasya*. In addition, 25 freshly graduated lawyers (60 per cent women) set up the *Gender Lab*, a platform aimed at taking forward women's representation in professional and leadership positions. Such a platform is in line with the Gender Strategy adopted, during the period, by the Women's Unit within the PBA for the years 2020-2022 and which envisages four areas of interventions: capacity building on gender equality, gender responsive governance, legal literacy and high-quality services for vulnerable women as well as support to female lawyers' marketability. The implementation of the strategy was initiated with 21 newly graduated lawyers (71 per cent of women) having gained knowledge on international human rights law and the Agenda 2030 during the *Legal Camp* organized by the PBA Women's Unit. Supported by *Sawasya*, the *Legal Camp* represented an important opportunity for the lawyers to hone their skills to plan, lead on and advocate for the advancement of women's rights.

⁹⁶ See also Output 4.3.

Output 4.2: New Practices of Justice and Security Service Providers are Supported to Transform their Attitudes and Behaviors Towards Women and Girls



25+ per cent increase in women officers across police, prosecution, and justice institutions



40+ PBA members equipped to advocate for fair gender representation



31 additional gender champions identified

Important strides were made this year with a respective **increase in female representation at the level of the PCP, AGO and HJC of 63 per cent, 24 per cent and 26 per cent** as compared to 2019 (not to be solely attributed to *Sawasya*). This is in congruence with the rollout of the gender training programme by the PCP at the level of the police academy with joint support from EUPOL COPPS and *Sawasya*.⁹⁷ The identification of **31 additional gender champions (65 per cent women) contributed to consolidating behavioural change over the period (Indicator Output 4.2.1)**.⁹⁸ They proved pivotal in bridging important service delivery gaps uncovered by the COVID-19 crisis and the worsening of pre-existing vulnerabilities. For instance, this contributed to ensuring that the needs of women in conflict with the law are included when developing emergency protocols after being highlighted as a key priority by the HJC Secretary General.

Further to this, **42 members of the Women's Units within the PBA (71 per cent of women) are better equipped to advocate for the promotion of women in leadership positions** as a result of the specialized trainings organized in the West Bank and Gaza Strip with support from *Sawasya*. They focused on evidence-based advocacy strategies for better representation of women in executive positions in the PBA ahead of the general elections due to take place in April 2021. Emphasis was also placed on leveraging the PBA's General Assembly's influence, which is comprised of 40 per cent of women, to ensure that the Council's composition better reflects this reality. As a result, 186 lawyers (60 per cent women) members of the General Assembly⁹⁹ were sensitized on quota policies to achieve women's representation in institutional decision making. Breaking the glass ceiling remains a major concern for professional women across the justice sector, including within the judiciary. This was highlighted during the workshop organized last year by the PJI and the International Association of Women's Judges with support from *Sawasya*. However, progress on this activity was delayed due to the impossibility for international experts to travel into Palestine and was hence postponed to 2021.

⁹⁷ Developed by the PCP's training department and the PCP's Gender Unit in collaboration with *Sawasya* and EUPOL COPPS. 17 gender district coordinators (59 per cent of women) were trained to roll out the programme in 2020.

⁹⁸ Two from the MOSD, one from the PCP and one from the HJC.

⁹⁹ In the West Bank.

Output 4.3: Women and Children Have Access to Justice, Security and Protection (partly reported under 3.2)



15,518 women and girls accessed legal aid services



12,862 Palestinians accessed legal awareness



140+ female inmates accessed legal and psychosocial services



648,000+ Palestinians sensitized on women's rights

Support to legal representation services for women

15,518 women and girls accessed legal aid services by CSOs during the period (*Indicator Output 4.3.1*), while no women and two girls accessed legal aid services through the state-sponsored court fund in the West Bank for criminal cases (*Indicator Output 4.3.2*).

A female inmate's journey towards reintegration amidst COVID-19 in Palestine

Date: Tuesday, November 24, 2020

The provision of mental health and reintegration support services for women in detention is critical to ensuring their rehabilitation. A joint programme by UN Women, UNDP and UNICEF in Palestine is supporting such interventions in a manner that empowers women and make them able to cope with new challenges - such as the COVID-19 crisis- in constructive and positive ways.



Photo 10: [The story of Nada and other female inmates during COVID-19](#), West Bank. © UN Women/Brady Black

Women in detention are most at risk of marginalization and of denial of justice. This is particularly the case when a woman in conflict with the law files a case in the civil court system, as she is more likely to be penalized for not conforming to gender stereotypes. In view of this, **144 female inmates from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank accessed legal aid** through partner organizations supported by *Sawasya*. Due to the exceptional vulnerability of women in detention to COVID-19, female inmates from the various rehabilitation and reform centres accessed PPE and hygiene kits through the Programme and were sensitized on virus transmission and prevention. The various lockdowns have further pushed female inmates into isolation, thereby exacerbating pre-existing mental health vulnerabilities. In view of this, 123 female inmates accessing vocational training, arts, sports and evidence-based therapy.¹⁰⁰ With

women being cut off from the external world for months at a time since the beginning of the

¹⁰⁰ In the West Bank, psychological first aid would first be provided and determine what therapy methodology would be employed: narrative therapy, cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) as well as eye movement desensitization and reprocessing therapy (EMDR). This is in addition to the events organized in the various Reform and Rehabilitation Centres of Ramallah, Jericho, Jenin. In the Gaza Strip, it included group and individual sessions as well as family therapy sessions.

COVID-19 crisis, efforts were focused on making sure that they can keep contact with their support system outside detention. As a result, *Sawasya* provided 43 top-up phone vouchers. Psychosocial support was also scaled up with the holding of remote sessions that focuses on equipping female inmates with the skills necessary to address and manage the stress and anxiety caused by the crisis. This translated, among other things, into the inmates setting up and running a fitness class (learn more about their story [here](#)). To ensure that protection gaps are addressed in a coordinated manner, *Sawasya* also took an active part in the EUPOL COPPS-led prison coordination group and the detention monitoring group hosted by OHCHR. Such platforms were critical in highlighting needs as well as coordinating joint advocacy for identified humanitarian cases, such as pregnant women in detention.¹⁰¹

The COVID-19 crisis contributed to unveiling the challenges faced by women in conflict with the law in accessing justice. In response, a policy dialogue was organized with the PCP, MOSD, OHCHR, ICHR and CSOs by the Programme to spark a broader conversation on ways to improve the living and legal conditions of female inmates. Further conversations will be pursued in 2021 with a focus on guaranteeing access to legal aid in detention. In line with this, the six-month training plan developed this year to strengthen the capacity of MOSD prison counsellors to provide responsive services to female inmates will be rolled out in the upcoming months. This is in complementarity to efforts invested with the PBA to make the work of lawyers more aligned with the interests and needs of marginalized women (*see Output 4.1*), including through the work done in close collaboration with EUPOL COPPS for the development of an MOU between the PBA, the PCP and the AGO on early representation that will be finalized in 2021.

Support family court lawyers in Gaza on human rights standards of litigation

Reported under Output 4.1

Addressed legal needs of Palestinian women in unserved areas

Community-based legal aid providers played a key role in identifying, addressing, and organizing service provision particularly under COVID-19. With such work, West Banker and Gazan women married to men from the Negev accessed safe legal and psychosocial services, through the helpline, social media and newly set up WhatsApp groups. Among them more than 300 women took part in 18 face-to-face awareness sessions which were organized before the lockdown measures were imposed and after they were lifted. Thirty-four per cent (34 per cent) marginalized women learned about the existence of services through such sessions, followed by information disseminated through stickers (26 per cent), social media (15 per cent), legal centre (11 per cent), local welfare (10 per cent) and hospitals (3 per cent). Over 30 per cent of women who reached out to providers reported instances of physical – including sexual, and psychological violence, while the number of those who sought assistance more than doubled in May and tripled in June.¹⁰² This trend was also observed after restrictions were gradually lifted, thereby substantiating an increase in Palestinian women having sought divorce in the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis.¹⁰³ The hotline and WhatsApp groups became the main platforms for information on COVID-19 and the

¹⁰¹ *Sawasya* was also part of dedicated regional platform. Such support will be complemented moving forward through further building the capacity of prison counsellors on the provision of gender responsive services.

¹⁰² Including three women who were in need of urgent protection orders and custody. As a point of comparison, 106 women received legal aid over the year 2019, while 247 received legal aid only for the first 6 months of 2020.

¹⁰³ Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling (2021), "Compounded threats: How COVID-19, Occupation and Patriarchy Have Impacted Palestinian Women in 2020".

identification and transfer of cases to the legal centre (40 per cent), which continued to operate remotely with lawyers holding consultations via telephone. Volunteers operating the hotline also attended training and supervision sessions to help them better respond to VAW cases in emergency settings.

Support to legal awareness on women's rights across the State of Palestine

In parallel, **12,862 Palestinians (56 per cent women, 7 per cent boys, 13 per cent girls)**¹⁰⁴ have accessed legal awareness on the rights of women and family related matters (*Indicator Output 4.3.3*), in addition to **more than 648,000 Palestinians**¹⁰⁵ **who had access to sensitization on women's rights** online,¹⁰⁶ and on the availability of services during COVID-19 (*see Output 3.2*). As part of these awareness efforts, 774 parents and students (58 per cent women and girls) accessed civic education modules in the Gaza Strip supported through *Sawasya*. Such modules aim to make the educational system part of the VAW preventive response, making parents and students agents of change able to identify instances of SGBV violence and provide essential information to victims/survivors. In line with this, 40 school counsellors (38 per cent of women) were trained to provide early warning for children that may be facing intra-familial violence in the Gaza Strip. Over the course of a 45-hour online training,¹⁰⁷ the school counsellors have enhanced their knowledge¹⁰⁸ on protection and on providing initial psychosocial and hygiene care, particularly considering COVID-19. The activity initially targeted 40 UNRWA teachers but required adjustments due to school closures. However, the revised activity proved crucial as school counsellors were redeployed to quarantine centres hosting parents and children.

In a context that sheds light on the necessity to have legislation protective of women and girls in placed, about 65,000 Palestinians were reached on social media with key messages on VAW and the criticality to adopt the FPB.¹⁰⁹ This was organized by a network of 17 CSOs supported by *Sawasya*, which advocates for the prompt adoption of the FPB in line with international standards (*also see Output 1.1*). Such work is essential to gain broader support in Palestinian society, particularly amid pervasive efforts to prevent support for CEDAW¹¹⁰ at the grassroots level, including through tribal and religious local networks. To more efficiently fight propaganda and fake news, a national coalition of CSOs was formed and reviewed its strategy to shift focus towards social media, the strengthening of alliances across the oPt (including the Gaza Strip) and the centring of communication around notable SGBV cases. This was done with support from a Lebanese expert who specialized in result-based advocacy for more responsive policies and laws. In line with such strategy, 147 (93 per cent women) activists and key civil society actors further gained knowledge on the FPB over the course of six dedicated workshops (online and in-person). Taking this forward, the network of CSOs advocated with 171 senior decision makers and governmental officials (91 per cent women) to push for the expedited adoption of the FPB in a

¹⁰⁴ This number refers to the number of individuals that were directly targeted by interventions relating to women's rights and family-related matters.

¹⁰⁵ Disaggregation unavailable.

¹⁰⁶ Including through the broadcasting of radio spots.

¹⁰⁷ Due to COVID-19, the training of 40 schoolteachers in UNRWA schools had to be adjusted, as most of them were not equipped to access the online platform.

¹⁰⁸ Following observations by the CSO partner.

¹⁰⁹ Disaggregation is not available. The campaign included short video clips, infographs, a documentary as well as the production of 1,450 notebooks with key message on SGBV and the adoption of the FPB.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

manner that aligns with international standards, including the Istanbul Convention.¹¹¹ The coalition also joined forces with the General Union of Palestinian Women and successfully mobilized hundreds of demonstrators¹¹² in Ramallah to protest against the failure of child protection in sexual abuses cases.¹¹³ It also worked closely with youth activists who established six community-based initiatives to sensitize their peers on social media¹¹⁴ on women's rights and the FPB.

To further foster evidence-based advocacy, the court monitoring component focusing on women in contact with the criminal justice system was rolled out this year.¹¹⁵ It places emphasis on women's trajectories within the criminal justice system whether victims (SGBV cases) or perpetrators (serious crimes). Fifteen (15) monitors (73 per cent women) were deployed across West Bank courts and reported against *Sawasya*'s developed guidelines for the monitoring of cases from a gender perspective. One femicide case was initially monitored this year; however, considering the various court closures, court monitoring was halted, and activities were re-gearred towards the analysis of court judgements from a human rights and gender perspective. Twenty-four (24) cases were analysed and informed a review of evidentiary and litigation proceedings, which will be ready for publication in 2021. The draft report of court case analyses procedural and legal gaps in the adjudication of VAW cases and suggest ways to address them. The recommendations emphasize the need for legal reform in the area of VAW, most importantly the revision of the 1960 Penal Code and adoption of the FPB. It also includes specific recommendations related to litigation practices by both judges and prosecutors to improve VAW sentencing. Additionally, a first draft of the court monitoring manual on VAW cases was developed and will be ready for publication in 2021. The manual outlined the main guarantees for the right to fair trial for defendants and the guarantees of the rights of victims/survivors for protection and dignified treatment.

¹¹¹ Council of Europe (2011), *Convention on Preventing Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence*.

¹¹² The exact number of demonstrators is unavailable.

¹¹³ Demonstrators also demanded that women's rights activists are better protected.

¹¹⁴ Including through the production of video content.

¹¹⁵ It will be first introduced in the West Bank.

Implementation Challenges and Lessons Learned

Main highlights: The considerable disruptive effect of COVID-19 on the work of regular and family courts, particularly in the early days of the pandemic, resulted in substantially reduced access to justice particularly for women (*see Outcome 1, 3 and 4*). Many women have found themselves in limbo with their basic family rights denied or under the inability to access judicial separation while cohabitating with abusers. This considerably compounded pre-existing socio-economic vulnerabilities for women and girls across Palestine and uncovered larger legal and psychosocial needs for services in the West Bank, particularly in light of the growing number of women filing for divorce.¹¹⁶ While COVID-19 has also allowed for temporarily reducing the accumulated enforcement backlog in view of the low court case intake, the period already witnessed the formation of a 47,356 notification backlog, which is likely to be further aggravated in the upcoming year. This entails a risk of upending years of progress and to materialize in heightened interest for the informal justice sector. The judicial vacuum observed in the early days of the pandemic, especially in the absence of institutional emergency protocols to maintain essential services for women, left local leaders to assume a mediation role in certain locations, including through organizing community-secured “returns” of survivors of violence to their abusers.¹¹⁷ The degrading human rights situation for Palestinians, coupled with a fast-deteriorating economic situation and the unravelling of the Israeli-Palestinian relationship is likely to compound such risks as the COVID-19 crisis continues to unfold. However, while the epidemiological picture continues and a concrete timeline for access to vaccination is uncertain, signs of improvements also materialized at the end of the year, especially with the anticipated resumption of US relations with the Palestinian government and the foreseen holding of the first Palestinian national elections in over 15 years.

Degrading human rights situation: Over the period, the human rights situation has continued to deteriorate. Human rights violations have been widely reported and have affected large segments of the Palestinian society within and outside of Palestine. For Palestinians living and/or working in Israel and East Jerusalem, access to social welfare or unemployment benefits has been largely hindered, and for some 20,000 permit-based workers in Israel uninterrupted employment has translated into degraded working and even living conditions, after workers were instructed to temporarily remain at their workplace.¹¹⁸ Of concern was also the situation of Palestinian prisoners, with a ban placed on family visits and restricted access to lawyers.¹¹⁹ Furthermore, deteriorating conditions inside Israeli prisons and detention centres contributed to more than 300 prisoners being infected with COVID-19.¹²⁰ With regard to settlement expansion, the Higher Planning Council for Judea and Samaria advanced 5,000 units concurrently to the passing of the Abraham accords by the Knesset in October. This is a significant development as the vast majority of these units are situated in areas that jeopardize the continuity of a future State of Palestine and

¹¹⁶ Women’s Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling (2021), “Compounded threats: How COVID-19, Occupation and Patriarchy Have Impacted Palestinian Women in 2020”.

¹¹⁷ Source: *Sawasya*.

¹¹⁸ H. Shezaf (20 April 2020), “Israel doesn’t oversee Palestinian workers’ health amid coronavirus”, *Haaretz*.

¹¹⁹ United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (24 April 2020), “COVID-19: Israel must release Palestinian prisoners in vulnerable situation, say UN experts”.

¹²⁰ United Nations General Assembly (February 2021), “Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General - Joint written statement* submitted by Al-Haq, Law in the Service of Man, Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, non-governmental organizations in special consultative status”, A/HRC/46/NGO/90.

go beyond the Trump administration's Peace Plan's earmarked territories.¹²¹ It also puts an end to the freeze that had prevailed for over eight months and indicates renewed political impetus to take forward settlement expansion in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. In step with this bleak picture, demolition activities reached alarming levels that had not been witnessed over the past four years.¹²² This has included the demolition of 76 structures that left 73 Palestinians homeless in Jordan Valley's village of Khirbet Humsa on 5 November.¹²³ Finally, the law enforcement gaps brought about by the halting of coordination between Israel and Palestine and the reallocating of public order resources to the management of COVID-19 restrictions have resulted *i.a.* in the establishment of Fatah-only so called "emergency committees" in the West Bank. Such committees – vested with providing support, at the community level, for the implementation of security and policing missions – have operated outside any accountability framework,¹²⁴ thereby further weakening Palestine's institutional environment. In addition, a number of political activists were reportedly arbitrarily arrested in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis,¹²⁵ while an increased number of children were subjected to ill-treatment at the hands of police forces (*see Output 2.1*). In parallel, accounts of growing tribal justice resolutions have been reported. Such resolutions occurred in relation to instances of gender-based violence and forced marriages, particularly in the Gaza Strip, in the West Bank (especially East Jerusalem and Area C) as well as among Bedouin and refugee communities.¹²⁶

Deteriorating financial and economic situation: Lockdown measures were introduced on 22 March by the Palestinian government¹²⁷ and the *de facto* authorities in Gaza. These measures were partially/locally reinstated in June and throughout the second half of the year. This occurred against the background of COVID-19 sharp spikes starting from July and culminating in September, thereby reversing the flattening of the virus transmission curve witnessed during spring.¹²⁸ This had considerable consequences on the Palestinian economy, with an annual contraction set at 11.5 per cent¹²⁹ in a year that witnessed one of the worst economic performance since the Palestinian Authority (PA) was established.¹³⁰ This also led to an abyssal financing gap of USD 1.5 billion that was matched by a series of compounding factors, and which created a liquidity and fiscal crisis of USD 1.1 billion.¹³¹ This was also due to the suspension of security and civilian agreements between May and November and the non-acceptance of the transfer of tax clearances by Israel, which stripped the Palestinian government of its main source of revenues.¹³² Furthermore, the 20 per cent decrease in donor mobilization witnessed in 2020 prompted the Palestinian government to deplete core financial resources.¹³³ In view of this, the capacity of the Palestinian government

¹²¹ T. Lazaroff (15 October 2020), "Israel advances plans for 3,122 settler homes on day of Israel-UAE vote", *The Jerusalem Post*.

¹²² UNSCO (November 2020), "Socioeconomic Report".

¹²³ "UN and EU slam Israel after West Bank demolition leaves 73 Palestinians homeless" (5 November 2020), *CNN*.

¹²⁴ A. Abu Amer (5 May 2020), "Fatah 'monopolises' emergency committees in the West Bank excludes Hamas", *Middle East Monitor*.

¹²⁵ Amnesty International UK (May 2020), "Palestine: Critics of Hamas and Palestinian Authority Arrested During COVID-19 Pandemic".

¹²⁶ UNSCO (November 2020), "Socioeconomic Report".

¹²⁷ A state of emergency was declared by the PA on 5 March, followed by the introduction of lockdown measures on 22 March by the PA in the West Bank but also by *de facto* authorities in the Gaza Strip.

¹²⁸ World Health Organization, "*Coronavirus disease 19 (COVID-19) in the occupied Palestinian territory*", available [here](#).

¹²⁹ World Bank (23 February 2021), "Economic monitoring report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee".

¹³⁰ Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (23 February 2021), Report to the Ad-Hoc Liaison Committee.

¹³¹ World Bank (23 February 2021), "Economic monitoring report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee".

¹³² "Israel transfers over USD 1 billion in tax revenues to Palestinians" (2 December 2020), *Al-Monitor*.

¹³³ World Bank (23 February 2021), "Economic monitoring report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee".

to respond to and mitigate the effects of COVID-19 was hampered and prompted it to introduce stringent austerity measures, including considerable salary cuts for civil servants from May through November.¹³⁴ This prolonged context is only compounded by UNRWA's colossal financial crisis, with Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini announcing on 9 November that the Agency needed to raise USD 70 million to be able to pay the salaries of some 28,000 staff until the end of the year and continue services for 5.7 million refugees.¹³⁵ In addition, the COVID-19 household survey conducted by PCBS in November revealed that over 40 per cent of Palestinians reported that they lost more than half of their monthly income between March and May, with a disproportionate impact on the industrial and construction sectors.¹³⁶ Rates of food insecurity also heightened, with 75 per cent reported in the Gaza Strip and 28 per cent in the West Bank.¹³⁷

Worsening epidemiological situation in the second semester: The flattening of the virus transmission curve in spring did not prove sufficient to stem the spread of COVID-19. By the end of December, 1,500 Palestinians had died from COVID-19, 154,097 Palestinians had been infected and 21,835 were considered active cases.¹³⁸ This situation has considerably disrupted the delivery of essential health services, including pre and post-natal care and the treatment of non-communicable diseases as access to health services for humanitarian cases was further compounded by the suspension of civilian and security cooperation.¹³⁹ Furthermore, access to essential health equipment proved insufficient, in view of restrictions imposed by Israel on the movement of goods.¹⁴⁰ On the vaccination front, Israel's non-fulfilment of its obligations under international humanitarian law (IHL)¹⁴¹ has led to asymmetrical access to critical resources and to accrued difficulties for the Palestinian government and *de facto* authorities to implement long term recovery strategies.

Political instability: On 28 January 2020, the Trump Administration's Peace Plan was finally made public.¹⁴² This was met by the Israeli government's vow to unilaterally advance the Plan, including through making it part of its coalition's "Unity Deal" that brought an end to a 500-day political paralysis in the country in April 2020. In response, the Palestinian government announced the suspension of the civilian and security cooperation with Israel as well as the decision to no longer accept any tax revenue returns (USD 190 million per month on average), unless emergency funding is secured.¹⁴³ Following several weeks of uncertainty surrounding the status of a Peace Plan-premised annexation, the PA/Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) received assurance on 11 August from the Trump administration that support to annexation was no longer considered a priority,¹⁴⁴ as foreign policy focus shifted towards the pursuit of wider regional peace making. While this development led the Palestinian leadership to announce the resumption of coordination

¹³⁴ M. Khabeisa (02 July 2020), "Palestine cuts staff in half amid financial crisis", *Andalou Agency*.

¹³⁵ "UNRWA says it needs \$70m to pay its 28,000 staff, continue education and health services for 5.7m refugees" (9 November 2020), *Wafa News Agency*.

¹³⁶ 46 per cent in the West Bank and 38 per cent in the Gaza Strip. UNSCO (November 2020), *Socioeconomic Report*.

¹³⁷ UNSCO (November 2020), *Socioeconomic Report*.

¹³⁸ Disaggregation is not available. Data World Health Organization, available [here](#).

¹³⁹ World Bank (23 February 2021), "Economic monitoring report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee".

¹⁴⁰ World Bank (23 February 2021), "Economic monitoring report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee".

¹⁴¹ See Diakonia, "COVID-19 Vaccines for the Palestinian Population: Who is Responsible under International Law?" available [here](#).

¹⁴² "US-led Bahrain meeting on Palestine: All the latest updates" (26 June 2019), *Al Jazeera*.

¹⁴³ "Palestinian Authority to pay civil servants half their monthly wages amid cash crunch" (2 July 2020), *Al Monitor*.

¹⁴⁴ D. Williams & A. Cornwell (17 August 2020), "U.S. won't approve Israeli annexations for 'some time', Kushner says", *Reuters*.

with the US,¹⁴⁵ a diplomatic rift broke out with the UAE and the Arab League states after the former announced, on August 13, the forthcoming signing of an agreement with Israel to normalize relations. It was further deepened a month later, after Bahrain announced its decision to also engage in formal diplomatic relations with Israel,¹⁴⁶ which was then followed by Sudan and Morocco. However, the results of the 2020 presidential elections, which saw Joe Biden and Kamala Harris emerge as the race's winning ticket, are anticipated to translate into the resumption of US aid to the PA as well as into renewed peace process efforts, underpinned by the reigniting of the so-called 'Munich Group' comprised of France, Germany, Egypt and Jordan.¹⁴⁷ Steps were taken in this regard, with President Abbas calling for support for the holding of an International Peace Conference and the initiation of consultations on this front with the EU and the permanent members of the UN Security Council on 25 September.¹⁴⁸ The new configuration seems to have pre-emptively borne fruit, with the announcement on 18 November 2020 by President Mahmoud Abbas of the resumption of security and civilian cooperation with Israel. It was also followed by the taking of concrete steps for the organization of long overdue Palestinian national elections, including legislative, presidential and Palestinian National Council's elections.¹⁴⁹ Although this can potentially offer improved prospects, it is also contributing to political volatility, including as the Israeli Knesset was dissolved in December and general elections anticipated to be organized in the first quarter of 2021.

Key lessons	
1	Not integrating international epidemiological factors within risk frameworks weakens risk management. Whether at the level of the <i>Sawasya</i> Programme or that of service providers, not integrating international epidemiological factors within risk frameworks weakens risk management as it does not allow for their systematic review and the development of appropriate mitigation measures.
2	Gender and age sensitive contingency planning is crucial for the implementation of comprehensive emergency responses. The absence of contingency plans, including of emergency protocols and SOPs, at the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, resulted in important service delivery gaps, particularly for women and children victims of violence, that hindered access to justice and reinforced informal pathways.
3	The provision of gender and age sensitive knowledge-based expertise is critical for the pre-identification of gaps and vulnerabilities. Sustained daily contact with key actors of the service delivery chain and knowledge-based expertise is key to reducing the impact of the crisis on vulnerable segments of society, especially women and children, and in supporting the development of adapted assessment and implementation tools, as observed with the development of an inter-institutional protocol for the safe referral of survivors of violence to shelters, following a 14-day quarantine.
4	Direct advocacy by citizens with duty bearers yields positive results. The organization by civil society actors of online sessions where citizens were able to directly express concerns and demands in relation to access to justice was key to initiating the resumption

¹⁴⁵ N. Khalil (19 August 2020), "EXCLUSIVE: Palestinian Authority set to resume security coordination with US", *The New Arab*.

¹⁴⁶ "Israel and Bahrain formalise relations at ceremony in Manama" (18 October 2020), *Al-Jazeera*.

¹⁴⁷ Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères (7 July 2020), *Joint Statement of the Foreign Ministers of France, Germany, Egypt and Jordan*.

¹⁴⁸ "Palestine starts diplomatic steps to hold int'l conference for peace process with Israel" (27 September 2020), *Ahram Online*.

¹⁴⁹ "Fatah-Hamas agree to hold first Palestinian elections since 2006" (24 September 2020), *France 24*.

	of responsive judicial services. It provides a template for future programmatic interventions that can further bridge the gap between service providers and citizens.
5	Emergencies tend to reactivate networks of justice and security actors that operate outside of any accountability frameworks. The emergence of Fatah-affiliated “emergency committees” and a reported increase in non-formal justice resolutions demonstrate that a security and judicial vacuum tends to coincide with the reactivation of informal networks of justice and security and losses on the accountability front.
6	Lockdown periods are correlated with an increase in VAW and VAC cases. Domestic violence has been on the rise during the reporting period, which has been substantiated at the global level. This seems to indicate that lockdown periods are associated with a rising number of VAW and VAC cases.
7	An increasing number of women need to access services in front of family courts, particularly in the West Bank. The shadow pandemic of SGBV has resulted in an increased need for access to legal services and comprehensive support for women who are <i>i.a.</i> seeking to separate from partners. This is particularly the case in the West Bank, where the lack of progress on the NLAS front translated into service provision gaps. Such support is essential to further ensure the protection of women from SGBV.
8	There is an immediate need for state-sponsored legal aid. The COVID-19 crisis further revealed the necessity to accelerate system-level reform, particularly on the legal aid front. In view of the minimal progress made thus far by the NLAC on this, <i>Sawasya</i> may need to seek alternative solutions for the establishment of sustainable mechanisms on this front.
9	Diversitary measures for children can be implemented on a large scale when supported by strong leadership. The release of 85 per cent of detained children as a direct consequence of the COVID-19 crisis provides evidence that A2D can be readily and safely implemented in the framework established by the JPL. It also highlighted the critical need to divert children at the early stages of them being in contact with the criminal justice system, including through the further operationalization of mediation.
10	Pre-existing interagency coordination ensured speed and efficiency in the implementation of responsive measures. The National Juvenile Justice Committee was a key coordination platform and facilitated rapid individual assessment and action for each child. Similarly, the pivotal role played by UN Women and UNICEF in thematic forums proved essential for the provision of evidence-based expertise and technical support.
11	Although essential to ensure business continuity, online-based modalities can lead to efficiency losses when not adapted. Online-based modalities proved essential to ensure implementation continuity throughout the pandemic. However, further adaptation of methodology when implementing such activities are to key to avoiding ‘online fatigue’ and maintaining efficiency gains. This could translate into reduced training hours or incremental exposure to digital instruments, including in non-emergency settings.
12	IT mainstreaming in programmatic activities is key to taking forward long-term digital transformation. The COVID-19 crisis has exposed pre-existing digital and capacity vulnerabilities in governmental and non-governmental institutions. While availability of a pre-existing, operational and computerized justice case management system facilitated the option of remote working - particularly for juvenile judges and prosecutors - digitalization efforts need to be maintained and accelerated not only in the

	field of advocacy and legal awareness but also for legal aid services and judicial/administrative education.
13	Flexible programmatic frameworks enable effective results. The flexible programmatic framework within which <i>Sawasya</i> operates has enabled strategic adjustments that led to an 88 per cent programmatic delivery. Flexible working arrangements and the reprogramming of some activities in close coordination with partner organizations resulted in the completion of key project activities in a manner consistent with public health restrictions.
14	It is essential to factor in the volatility of the economic/political situation into programming. While delays were caused in procurement due to the suspension of security and civilian coordination for six months, the rental of new premises for the implementation of the model court in Ramallah was also hindered by the reallocation of governmental resources during the period (<i>see Output 2.1</i>). Therefore, it is essential to factor in the volatility of the economic and political situation particularly in activities contingent upon external factors.
15	Regular political analysis at the programmatic level is key to anticipating implementation challenges. The regular review of the risk framework in light of latest political developments is key to anticipating their potential programmatic impact and to set in place mitigation measures that would ensure that gains made thus far are maintained and that emerging needs are proactively addressed.

II. Monitoring & Evaluation

Following a robust participatory methodology, the third Programme Board Meeting was organized in January. On this occasion, the 2019 main achievements were reviewed, and the 2020 annual work plan was approved. In parallel, a **mid-term evaluation was conducted on the Programme**, which highlighted the pivotal role played by *Sawasya* in improving access to and the delivery of justice for the Palestinian people. It also found that the COVID-19 response (*see Annex IX*) has been strongly positive and managed to adapt and maintain programmatic efforts. Although additional emphasis needs to be placed on underlying system level reforms and sustainability of *Sawasya*'s action, the mid-term evaluation views the Programme as an enabler of positive

change in the justice and security sectors. Based on this (*see Annex XI*), *Sawasya* received confirmation of its extension until 30 June 2023 as intended in the Programme Document. In



Mid-term evaluation Key recommendations

- ▶ Extension for an additional two years;
- ▶ Priority of focus to underlying system level reforms;
- ▶ Advocacy efforts centred on tackling reform blocks;
- ▶ Advocacy efforts centred on building alliances at the socio-political level;
- ▶ Promotion of the Programme's M&E approach withing UN offices;
- ▶ Leveraging of the M&E system for in-depth data analysis;
- ▶ Documentation of sustainability requirements for digital expansion.

parallel, capacity building efforts in M&E and reporting continued to be pursued both within *Sawasya* and with partners, including through in-person and on-line sessions. Furthermore, the ‘Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer’ framework was rolled out this year for 14 organizations in adherence to UNDP/UNICEF’s corporate procedures. Although a number of indicators could not be measured due to COVID-19 and the postponement of the biannual PCBS “Rule of Law and Access to Justice” Survey to 2021, the learning process continued to be strengthened this year. Two political analyses on domestic, regional, and international developments that have the potential to affect the operational environment were produced. Similarly, an in-depth analysis of data collection and analysis within the current M&E framework was undertaken and will inform programmatic adjustments going forward. In line with this, ongoing evaluation of results from the perspective of beneficiaries continued to inform programming efforts (*see Annex XII*).

III. Research and Communication Products



Access to Justice for the Most Vulnerable in Gaza | UNDP in Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People

Poor and illiterate women are the most vulnerable when it comes to accessing the justice system. *Sawasya*, through a firmly established partnership with an integrated network of legal providers, was able to ensure that the farthest left behind can access the Family and ordinary court systems and have their rights safeguarded.

www.ps.undp.org

Photo 13: The story of Arwa, a mother of four, who accessed Sawasya’s support, Gaza, © UNDP

On the occasion of the International Women’s Day, *Sawasya* published the story of [Arwa](#), a mother of four from the Gaza Strip, who obtained her divorce through one of the partner legal aid clinic. The story gained much coverage, having been retweeted by UNDP’s Administrator Achim Steiner.

Another two stories were published with support from UN offices, including the story of [Nada](#) - a West Bank female inmate - and the story of [Haya](#) on access to justice under COVID-19 in Gaza and as part of the “16 days of activism”. One of the trainee lawyer supported by the Programme was also featured in a [video](#) produced by UNDP/PAPP. [Various products](#) were also developed during the justice sector media campaign (*see Outcome 1*). This was complemented by the launch of a digital campaign to raise awareness on early marriage in the Gaza Strip. Six female journalists previously trained by *Sawasya* led the campaign (including the production of video, infographs, messaging), which received a wide coverage. During the reporting period, a special emphasis was placed on supporting partners’ ramping up their online communication. As a result, thousands of social media users were sensitized on a variety of topics, including *i.a.* human rights, SGBV and the need for laws more protective of women and girls, women’s rights, social entitlements as well as access to services under the COVID-19 emergency (*see Outcome 3 & 4*). Innovative interventions were also supported such as the *Genderstine* and *Gender Lab* campaigns (*see Outcome 4*), which put a strong focus on stirring up a conversation that can help improve gender equality within the legal profession and practice. In view of COVID-19 and of the overall political picture, the Programme developed research products intended to guide strategic engagement and to support partners in rolling out emergency interventions (*see Outcome 1*). The Programme also engaged with the main justice sector stakeholders with a view to optimize resources in light of COVID-19, while aiming at ensuring

that synergies are built and leveraged among invested actors. It has been outlined in a strategic paper entitled “*A Forecast on the Effect of COVID-19 on the Justice Sector: Prospects and Possibilities*” (see Annex V) produced in April and endorsed by national partners in June. It was influenced by an “*Update on the Impact of Covid-19 on Justice and Security Sectors*” completed in late March 2020, at the onset of the pandemic. Similar strategic efforts were invested with a view to assess and anticipate potential changes in programmatic engagement, with the production of prospective research papers on local, regional, and international political developments. Research support was also provided with regard to informing the ongoing justice sector reform dialogue, with the finalization of a report entitled “*Advocating for Justice Sector Reform through inclusive Consultation and Mobilization*” - which compiles the main findings of the civil society led consultations organized last year and in early 2020. It was complemented by the court monitoring reports (*Outcome 1 & 4*). In view of the long-drawn-out national division and the need to better represent the views of citizens to inform civil-society driven advocacy, the “*Reconciliation Survey*” jointly commissioned by Sawasya and UNDP’s Shufuna and Tamkeen projects was finalized during the period as well as the “*Civil Society Organizations: Vision on Integrating Transitional Justice Mechanisms in the Reconciliation Process*” report (*Outcome 1*). Finally, the Programme proceeded to update the “*Analysis of the Family Protection Bill*” in view of latest developments on this front (*Outcome 1*).

Annexes

Annex I: Gendered Legal Analysis of the Family Protection Bill

Available [here](#)

Annex II: Rapid Assessment: The Effects of COVID-19 on Violence Against Women and Gendered social norms

Available [here](#)

Annex III: Rapid Assessment: Impact of Covid-19 on violence against women and girls in the Arab states through the lens of women's civil society organizations

Available [here](#)

Annex IV: Brief on Emergency Sheltering Services for Women Victims and Survivors of Violence

Available [here](#)

Annex V: Brief on the Impact of COVID-19 on Women's Access to Justice

Available [here](#)

Annex VI: Rapid Assessment on the Impact of COVID-19 on Women and Girls Victims of Violence

Available [here](#)

Annex VII: Criminal Trials before the Serious Crimes Court and First Instance Courts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

Available [here](#)

Annex VIII: Report on “Advocating for Justice Sector Reform through inclusive Consultation and Mobilization”

Available [here](#)

Annex IX: A Forecast on the Effect of COVID-19 on the Justice Sector: Prospects and Possibilities

Available [here](#)

Annex X: Ill-treatment of children during the reporting period

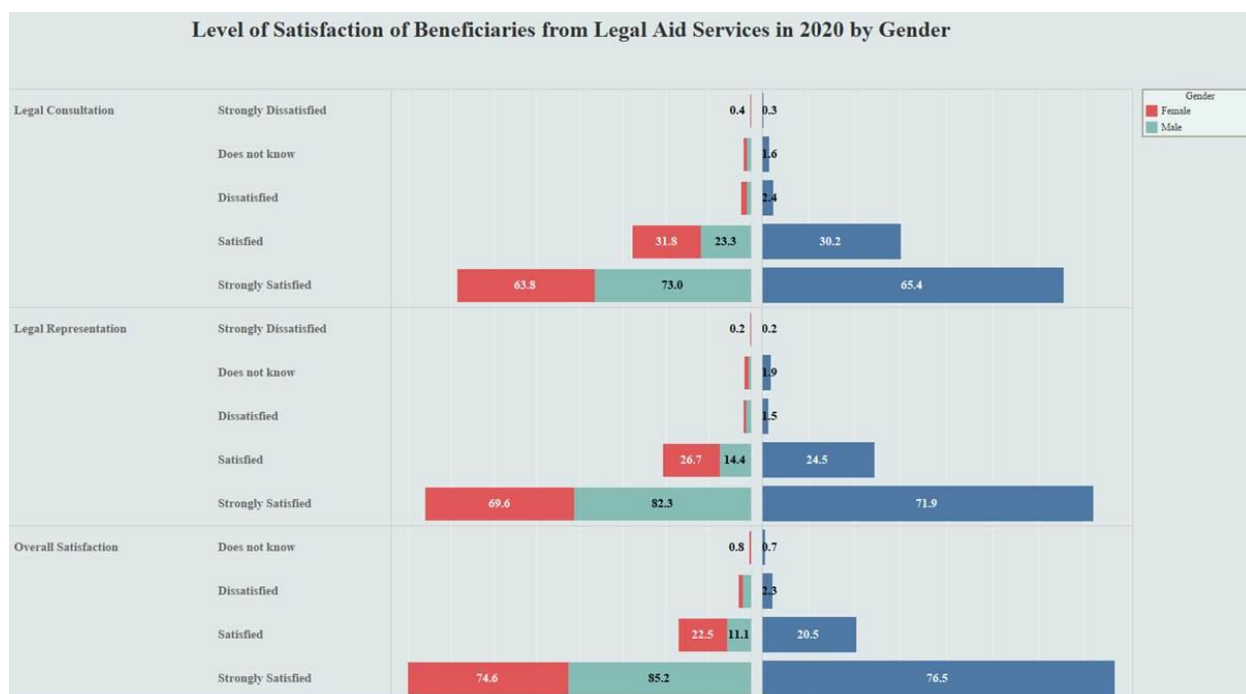
Ill-treatment form (59 children)	Number	Percentage
Hand ties	59	100 per cent
Leg ties	2	3.5 per cent
Blindfolded	2	3.5 per cent
Physical Violence	32	54 per cent
Verbal Abuse	15	25 per cent
Position Abuse	5	8 per cent
Denial of adequate food and water	4	6 per cent

Solitary Confinement	6	10 per cent
Confinements with Adults	35	59 per cent
Arrested by unspecialized Police units	31	52.5 per cent
Arrested by unauthorized security forces	22	37 per cent

Annex XI: Mid-term evaluation

Available [here](#)

Annex XII: Satisfaction of legal aid beneficiaries



Result and Resource Framework			
	Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)	Source of Verification
SAWASYA II OVERALL GOAL: A FUNCTIONING AND INCLUSIVE RULE OF LAW SYSTEM THAT RESPECTS, PROTECTS AND FULFILLS HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY, AND PROMOTES PEACE AND SECURITY			
Indicator: Percentage of public who have trust in the Palestinian Civil Police. <i>Disaggregated by sex and age</i> Baseline: 64.1 per cent (Men: 65.3 per cent, Women: 62.9 per cent). Public perception survey (2018) ('Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey'/PCBS) Planned target: Increase of 1per cent by 2020	N/A	Given the impossibility to proceed with fieldwork in light of COVID-19, the 'Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey' will be conducted in 2021.	PCBS
Indicator: Percentage of public who have trust in the judiciary. <i>Disaggregated by sex and age</i> Baseline: 57.7 per cent (Men: 60.2 per cent, Women: 55.1 per cent). Public perception survey (2018) ('Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey'/PCBS) Planned target: Increase of 1per cent by 2020	N/A	Given the impossibility to proceed with fieldwork in light of COVID-19, the 'Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey' will be conducted in 2021.	PCBS
Indicator: per cent of Palestinian public who are satisfied with the performance of the police. <i>Disaggregated by sex and age.</i> Baseline: 56.9 per cent (Men: 57.1 per cent; Women: 56.7 per cent). Public perception survey (2018) ('Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey'/PCBS) Planned target: Increase of 2per cent by 2020	N/A	Given the impossibility to proceed with fieldwork in light of COVID-19, the 'Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey' will be conducted in 2021.	PCBS
Indicator: per cent of Palestinian public who are satisfied with the performance of judges. <i>Disaggregated by sex and age</i> Baseline: 44.9 per cent (Men: 47.1 per cent, Women: 42.6 per cent). Public perception survey (2018) ('Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey'/PCBS) Planned target: Increase of 2per cent by 2020	N/A	Given the impossibility to proceed with fieldwork in light of COVID-19, the 'Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey' will be conducted in 2021.	PCBS
OUTCOME 1: RULE OF LAW INSTITUTIONS ARE STRENGTHENED AND REUNIFIED BY LEGAL, REGULATORY AD POLICY FRAMEWORKS IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS			
Indicator: Number of existing/new laws amended/adopted in line with international standards Baseline: 1 (2017)	0	In view of the lack of political impetus on this front, +59,000 citizens were sensitized on social media as part of efforts by civil	Palestinian Official Gazette

<u>Planned Target:</u> 2 (yearly)		<i>society to leverage public mobilization on the need to adopt legislation aligned with international standards, and particularly the Family Protection Bill.</i>	
<u>Indicator:</u> Number of policies/regulatory framework/plans adopted in line with international standards <u>Baseline:</u> 0 (2017) <u>Planned Target:</u> 2 (yearly)	3 1 protocol established by the Council of Ministers (COM) to organize through the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the MOWA the testing and safe placement of women and children victims of violence in quarantine centers before they are referred to shelters. <i>This protocol further aligns the policy framework with obligations contained in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (particularly General Recommendation No 19).</i> 2 emergency plans for MOSD and PCP on the efficient response to GBV in emergencies.		Institutional partners
<u>Indicator:</u> Number of policies/harmonized laws/plans linked to the Gaza/WB reunification process adopted. <u>Baseline:</u> 0 (2017) <u>Planned Target:</u> 2 (yearly)	0	<i>Given the lack of political impetus on this front, efforts were geared towards the development of evidence-based knowledge products that will inform the position of civil society moving forward. In this regard, the Reconciliation Survey was finalized by PCBS.</i>	Institutional partners
Output 1.1: Key legislations are revised to strengthen the independence of the Rule of Law institutions and ensure their consistency with international standards			

<u>Indicator:</u> Number of laws reviewed/revised to align with HR standards <u>Baseline:</u> 2 (2017) <u>Planned Target:</u> 2 (yearly)	0	<i>In view of the lack of political impetus on this front, +59,000 citizens were sensitized on social media as part of efforts by civil society to leverage public mobilization on the need to adopt legislation aligned with international standards, and particularly the Family Protection Bill.</i>	Palestinian Official Gazette Institutional partners
Output 1.2: Evidence-based planning and policy development in the justice and security sector is strengthened through enhanced data collection, monitoring and evaluation (in alignment with SDG/HR indicators)			
<u>Indicator:</u> Number of annual integrated work plan adopted in the framework of the justice and security sector strategies <u>Baseline:</u> 0 (2017) <u>Planned Target:</u> 1 (yearly)	7 annual integrated workplans were adopted in the framework of the Justice Sector Strategy for 2017-2023 by the Ministry of Justice, the Attorney General's Office, the High Judicial Council, the Palestinian Judicial Institute, the Supreme Judge Department, the Legislative Advisory Bureau and the Constitutional Court.		Institutional partners
Output 1.3: West Bank and Gaza Rule of Law institutions are reunified			
<u>Indicator:</u> Number of policies, harmonized laws, plans linked to the Gaza/WB reunification process developed <u>Baseline:</u> 0 (2017) <u>Planned Target:</u> 2 (yearly)	4 position papers were developed by civil society during the reporting period, as part of the report entitled "Civil Society Organizations: Vision on Integrating Transitional Justice Mechanisms in the Reconciliation Process."		Institutional partners
Output 1.4: Advocacy on strengthening rule of law institutions and promoting HR is reinforced			
<u>Indicator:</u> Number of monitoring reports on the justice and security sectors published and supported by the project <u>Baseline:</u> 0 (2017) <u>Planned Target:</u> 2 (yearly)	3 monitoring reports developed and published in the second half of the year: "Advocating for Justice Sector Reform through inclusive Consultation and Mobilization"; "Criminal Trials before the Serious Crimes Court and First Instance Courts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip"; "Trials before the Juvenile Courts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip"		CSOs

OUTCOME 2: SERVICE PROVISION BY RULE OF LAW INSTITUTIONS IS EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE AND INCLUSIVE			
<u>Indicator:</u> Unsentenced detainees as a proportion of overall prison population. <i>Disaggregated by sex and age</i> <u>Baseline:</u> 52.3 per cent (2017) <u>Planned Target:</u> Decrease of 1 per cent (yearly)	48.2 per cent 3.6 per cent decrease against the annual target.		FJPU
<u>Indicator 2.2:</u> Number of children in conflict with the Palestinian law detained at the Family and Juvenile Protection units. <i>Disaggregated by sex and age</i> <u>Baseline:</u> 386 (385 boys and 1 girl) (2017) <u>Planned Target:</u> Decrease of 3 per cent (yearly)	176 (172 boys and 4 girls) 48 per cent decrease against the annual target		FJPU
<u>Indicator:</u> Public perception of a free trial: "Level of confidence that you will receive a fair trial if you were charged with committing a criminal act/delinquency". <i>Disaggregated by sex and age</i> <u>Baseline:</u> 39.8 per cent (Men: 41.2 per cent; Women: 38.5 per cent). Public perception survey (2018) ('Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey'/PCBS) <u>Planned Target:</u> Increase of 10 per cent by 2020	N/A	<i>Given the impossibility to proceed with fieldwork in light of COVID-19, the 'Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey' will be conducted in 2021.</i>	PCBS
Output 2.1: Quality and efficiency of security and justice services provided to the Palestinians are improved			
<u>Indicator 2.1.1.:</u> Percentage of public aware of the PCP community policing strategy <u>Baseline:</u> Jericho pilot district: 15.9 per cent (Men: 21.4 per cent; Women: 9.0 per cent). [General: 10.9 per cent (Men: 13.6 per cent; Women: 8.2 per cent)]. Public perception survey (2018) ('Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey'/PCBS) <u>Planned Target:</u> Increase of 10 per cent in pilot areas by 2020	N/A	<i>Given the impossibility to proceed with fieldwork in light of COVID-19, the 'Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey' will be conducted in 2021.</i>	PCBS
<u>Indicator 2.1.2.:</u> percentage of judgements enforced. <i>Disaggregated by criminal and civil, including family courts and pilot/non pilot areas</i> <u>Baseline:</u> For Family Courts: N.A (2018) For Reconciliation Courts: 62.7 per cent (2018) For First Instance Courts: 69.2 per cent (2018)	<u>Non-pilot areas:</u> For Family Courts: 1572.8 per cent For Conciliation Courts: 113.0 per cent (76.5 per cent increase against annual target) For First Instance Courts: 94.6 per cent (33.9 per cent increase against annual target)		Mizan II

<u>Hebron pilot area:</u> Baseline for 2017 N/A <u>Baseline:</u> For Family Courts: N.A (2018) For Reconciliation Courts: 60.6 per cent (2018) For First Instance Courts: 66.1 per cent (2018) <u>Planned Target:</u> Increase of 1 per cent in the pilot areas (yearly)	<u>Hebron pilot area:</u> For Family Courts: 227.9 per cent For Conciliation Courts: 72.7 per cent (17.6 per cent increase against annual target) For First Instance Courts: 77.6 per cent (15.1 per cent increase against the target) <i>*The high number of enforcement of family court cases is due to the expansion of Mizan II to SJD's enforcement departments.</i>		
<u>Indicator 2.1.3.:</u> percentage of justice sector users who are satisfied with the performance of HJC Mizan IT system. <i>Disaggregated by sex and age</i> <u>Baseline:</u> 88.9 per cent (Practicing lawyers: 84.4 per cent; Prosecutors: 91.6 per cent; Regular Judges: 90.7 per cent). Direct users' perception survey (2018) ('Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey'/PCBS) <u>Planned Target:</u> Increase of 2per cent by 2020	N/A	<i>Given the impossibility to proceed with fieldwork in light of COVID-19, the 'Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey' will be conducted in 2021.</i>	PCBS
<u>Indicator 2.1.4.:</u> percentage of children sentenced receiving a custodial sentence <u>Baseline:</u> N/A (2017) <u>Planned Target:</u> Decrease of 1 per cent (yearly)	24.9 per cent		Mizan II
<u>Indicator 2.1.5.:</u> percentage of children who benefit from alternatives to detention <u>Baseline:</u> 58.1 per cent (2017) <u>Planned Target:</u> Increase of 1 per cent (yearly)	62.7 per cent 4.7 per cent increase against the annual target.		Mizan II
<u>Indicator 2.1.6.:</u> percentage of children who benefit from mediation in the investigation process as alternative to detention <u>Baseline:</u> 31 per cent ¹⁵⁰ (2017). <u>Planned Target:</u> Increase of 1 per cent (yearly)	55.0 per cent 72.2 per cent increase against the annual target.		Mizan II
Output 2.2: Quality and efficiency of security and justice services provided to areas unserved by the Palestinian government are improved			
<u>Indicator 2.2.1.:</u> percentage of judgements enforced in area unserved by the PA. <i>Disaggregated by pilot/non pilot areas</i> <u>Baseline:</u> (2018)	<u>Non-pilot areas:</u> All Areas including Area C: 83.0 per cent (17.3 per cent increase against annual target) Area A&B: 83.3 per cent (15.2 per cent		Mizan II

¹⁵⁰ An error in the baseline reflecting year 2017 was identified; previously 60.6%

<p>Palestine: 61.3 per cent Hebron pilot district: 72.5 per cent (69.2 per cent Area C) (data from criminal/family cases N/A) <u>Planned Target:</u> Increase of 1 per cent in the pilot areas (yearly)</p>	<p>against annual target) Area C: 80.8 per cent (41.0 per cent increase against annual target)</p> <p><u>Hebron pilot area:</u> All Areas including Area C: 71.2 per cent (0.7 per cent decrease against annual target) Area A&B: 70.8 per cent (1.4 decrease against annual target) Area C: 80.5 per cent (14.6 per cent increase against annual target) <i>*Hebron has been one of the most affected governorate under COVID-19, which may have impacted enforcement.</i></p>		
<p><u>Indicator 2.2.2.:</u> Number of security and justice related community services provided with the support of the project in the pilot areas <u>Baseline:</u> 0 (2018) <u>Planned Target:</u> 5 (yearly)</p>	0	<p><i>Services remain to be rolled out, as implementation was hindered by COVID-19. However, strides were made towards the establishment of the Local Advisory Committees during the period with the development of local security and training plans.</i></p>	Institutional partners
<p>OUTCOME 3: ALL PALESTINIANS, ESPECIALLY CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE GROUPS, HAVE ACCESS TO JUSTICE, SECURITY AND PROTECTION WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION</p>			
<p><u>Indicator:</u> Percentage of public aware of the existence of legal aid services supported by the PG. <i>Disaggregated by sex, age and Palestinian/Israeli jurisdictions</i> <u>Baseline:</u> Percentage of public aware of legal aid services provided by the following PG's institutions: <i>The Prisoners Affairs Committee: 39.8 per cent</i> <i>Colonization and Wall Resistance Committee: 21.5 per cent</i> <i>The Ministry of Jerusalem Affairs: 17.9 per cent</i> <i>Prisoner Club: 39.4 per cent.</i> Public perception survey (2018). ('Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey'/PCBS) <u>Planned Target:</u> Increase of 2 per cent by 2020</p>	N/A	<p><i>Given the impossibility to proceed with fieldwork in light of COVID-19, the 'Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey' will be conducted in 2021.</i></p>	PCBS

<p>Indicator: Percentage of public satisfied of the legal aid services provided by the PG. <i>Disaggregated by sex, age and Palestinian/Israeli jurisdictions</i></p> <p>Baseline: 41.3 per cent. Public perception survey (2018).</p> <p><i>(‘Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey’/PCBS)</i></p> <p>Planned Target: Increase of 2 per cent by 2020</p>	N/A	<i>Given the impossibility to proceed with fieldwork in light of COVID-19, the ‘Rule of Law and Access to Justice Survey’ will be conducted in 2021.</i>	PCBS																								
Output 3.1: Vulnerable populations have access to justice, security and protection																											
<p>Indicator 3.1.1.: Number of individuals living in area served by the PG who benefited from legal aid services supported by the project. <i>Disaggregated by age, gender, geographical area, type of jurisdiction (Palestinian/Israeli) and type of legal aid providers (CSO or PG)</i></p> <p>Baseline: Provision of legal aid services by CSOs (area A/B)</p> <p>Total: 3622 (2018)</p> <p>Provision of legal aid by PG: 608</p> <p>Provision of legal aid by CSOs: 3014</p> <p>Planned Target: Increase of 1per cent (yearly)</p>	<p>CSOs: 859 (357 men; 295 women; 184 boys and 23 girls)</p> <p>72.1 per cent decrease compared to annual target of 2020.</p> <p>PG: 149 (38 Men, 109 Boys, and 2 Girls) <i>Not supported by the Programme</i></p> <p>76.0 per cent decrease compared to annual target of 2020.</p> <table><tr><th>Type of services provided</th><th>Gender</th><th>No. of Beneficiaries</th></tr><tr><td rowspan="4">Legal Consultation</td><td>Male</td><td>98</td></tr><tr><td>Female</td><td>138</td></tr><tr><td>Boys</td><td>14</td></tr><tr><td>Girls</td><td>16</td></tr><tr><td rowspan="4">Legal Representation</td><td>Male</td><td>259</td></tr><tr><td>Female</td><td>157</td></tr><tr><td>Boys</td><td>170</td></tr><tr><td>Girls</td><td>7</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td></td><td>859</td></tr></table> <p><i>Cases in the Israeli judiciary = 553 (110 consultations, 443 representations)</i></p>	Type of services provided	Gender	No. of Beneficiaries	Legal Consultation	Male	98	Female	138	Boys	14	Girls	16	Legal Representation	Male	259	Female	157	Boys	170	Girls	7	Total		859		CSOs
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<p>Indicator 3.1.2.: Number of individuals living in area served by the PG who benefited from legal awareness services supported by the project. <i>Disaggregated by gender, geographical area</i></p> <p>Baseline: 463 (2018)</p> <p>Planned Target: Increase of 1 per cent (yearly)</p>	<p>3539 (263 men; 1718 women; 364 boys; 1194 girls)</p> <p><i>649.3 per cent increase compared to the annual target of 2020</i></p>		CSOs																																																			
Output 3.2: Vulnerable populations in areas unserved by the Palestinian government have access to justice, security and protection																																																						
<p>Indicator 3.2.1: Number of individuals living in areas unserved by the PG who benefited from legal aid services supported by the project. <i>Disaggregated by age, gender, geographical area (area C, H2, EJ, Gaza), type of jurisdiction (Palestinian/Israeli/Gaza de facto) and type legal aid providers (CSO or PG)</i></p> <p>Baseline (2018): 6583</p> <p>Planned Target: Increase of 1 per cent (yearly)</p>	<p>Total: 21,220 individuals (5,405 men; 15,184 women; 615 boys and 16 girls)</p> <p>62.3 per cent of cases were related to Palestinian Jurisdiction.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Type</th><th colspan="2">Female</th><th colspan="2">Male</th></tr> <tr> <th></th><th>Adults</th><th>Girls</th><th>Adults</th><th>Boys</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Cons.</td><td>9,855</td><td>14</td><td>3,229</td><td>128</td></tr> <tr> <td>Rep.</td><td>5,344</td><td>1</td><td>2,191</td><td>488</td></tr> <tr> <td>Total</td><td>15,199</td><td>15</td><td>5,420</td><td>616</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Gaza: 12,106 (2,264 men; 9,516 women; 311 boys and 15 girls)</p> <p><i>97.0 per cent of cases were related to Palestinian jurisdictions</i></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Type</th><th colspan="2">Female</th><th colspan="2">Male</th></tr> <tr> <th></th><th>Adults</th><th>Girls</th><th>Adults</th><th>Boys</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Cons.</td><td>6,810</td><td>14</td><td>1,727</td><td>47</td></tr> <tr> <td>Rep.</td><td>2,706</td><td>1</td><td>537</td><td>264</td></tr> <tr> <td>Total</td><td>9,516</td><td>15</td><td>2,264</td><td>311</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>EJ: 8,916 (2,954 men; 5,657 women; 304 boys and 1 girl).</p>	Type	Female		Male			Adults	Girls	Adults	Boys	Cons.	9,855	14	3,229	128	Rep.	5,344	1	2,191	488	Total	15,199	15	5,420	616	Type	Female		Male			Adults	Girls	Adults	Boys	Cons.	6,810	14	1,727	47	Rep.	2,706	1	537	264	Total	9,516	15	2,264	311	<p><i>All legal aid services were provided by CSO, as data on PG-provided services were not available for the period.</i></p>	CSOs	
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<p><u>Indicator 3.2.2.</u>: Number of individuals living in areas unserved by the PG who benefited from legal awareness services supported by the project. <i>Disaggregated by gender, geographical area (area C, H2, EJ, Gaza)</i></p> <p><u>Baseline (2018)</u>: 4444</p> <p><u>Planned Target</u>: Increase of 1 per cent (yearly)</p>	<p><u>Total</u>: 9,323 (2,924 men; 5,458 women, 494 boys and 447 girls)</p> <p>Social media users who were sensitized online: 436,226 (Disaggregation N/A)</p> <p><u>Gaza</u>: 7,813 individuals (2,224 men; 4,815 women; 355 boys and 419 girls)</p>	<p>Results against annual targets only reflect the first semester of 2020.</p>	CSOs																																																		

	<p>Social media users who were sensitized online: 415,226 (Disaggregation N/A)</p> <p><u>EJ</u>: 763 individuals (250 men; 346 women, 139 boys and 28 girls)</p> <p>Social media users who were sensitized online: 21,000 (Disaggregation N/A)</p> <p><u>Area C</u>: 747 individuals (450 men; 297 women, children 0)</p> <table><tr><th>Type</th><th colspan="2">Female</th><th colspan="2">Male</th></tr><tr><th></th><th>Adults</th><th>Girls</th><th>Adults</th><th>Boys</th></tr><tr><td>Gaza</td><td>4,815</td><td>419</td><td>2,224</td><td>355</td></tr><tr><td>EJ</td><td>346</td><td>28</td><td>250</td><td>139</td></tr><tr><td>Area C</td><td>297</td><td>0</td><td>450</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>5,458</td><td>447</td><td>2,924</td><td>494</td></tr></table> <p><i>105.7per cent increase against the annual target of 2020.</i></p>	Type	Female		Male			Adults	Girls	Adults	Boys	Gaza	4,815	419	2,224	355	EJ	346	28	250	139	Area C	297	0	450	0	Total	5,458	447	2,924	494		
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OUTCOME 4: WOMEN’S ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND SECURITY IMPROVED THROUGH GENDER-RESPONSIVE SERVICE DELIVERY AND EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN																																		
Indicator: Number of cases on violence against women filed with FJPU annually Baseline: 3,346 (2017) Planned Target: Increase of 1 per cent (yearly)	3177 7.8 per cent decrease against the annual target.	Data are only available on an annual basis	PCP																															
Indicator 4.2: Number of cases on VAW that were transferred by public prosecution to courts. Disaggregated by type of case and age. Baseline: 2,263 (2017) Planned Target: Increase of 1 per cent (yearly)	5.1 per cent increase compared to the annual target. <table><tr><th>Age Groups</th><th>Type of Crime</th><th>N. of Cases</th></tr><tr><td rowspan="2">18 and less</td><td>Felonies</td><td>16</td></tr><tr><td>Misdemeanours</td><td>93</td></tr><tr><td rowspan="2">19-29</td><td>Felonies</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>Misdemeanours</td><td>659</td></tr><tr><td rowspan="2">30-44</td><td>Felonies</td><td>21</td></tr><tr><td>Misdemeanours</td><td>933</td></tr><tr><td rowspan="2">45 and above</td><td>Felonies</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>Misdemeanours</td><td>710</td></tr><tr><td rowspan="2">Sub Total</td><td>Felonies</td><td>55</td></tr><tr><td>Misdemeanours</td><td>2,395</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td></td><td>2,450</td></tr></table>	Age Groups	Type of Crime	N. of Cases	18 and less	Felonies	16	Misdemeanours	93	19-29	Felonies	8	Misdemeanours	659	30-44	Felonies	21	Misdemeanours	933	45 and above	Felonies	10	Misdemeanours	710	Sub Total	Felonies	55	Misdemeanours	2,395	Total		2,450	Results against annual targets only reflect the first semester of 2020.	Mizan II
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Indicator 4.3: Number of VAW cases that are convicted (including types of cases, types of sentences) Baseline: 638 (2017) Planned Target: Increase of 1 per cent (yearly)	14.3 per cent increase compared to the annual target of 2020. <table><tr><th>Age Groups</th><th>Type of Crime</th><th>N. of Cases</th></tr><tr><td rowspan="2">18 and less</td><td>Felonies</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Misdemeanours</td><td>38</td></tr><tr><td rowspan="2">19-29</td><td>Felonies</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Misdemeanours</td><td>215</td></tr><tr><td>30-44</td><td>Felonies</td><td>2</td></tr></table>	Age Groups	Type of Crime	N. of Cases	18 and less	Felonies	3	Misdemeanours	38	19-29	Felonies	3	Misdemeanours	215	30-44	Felonies	2	Results against annual targets only reflect the first semester of 2020.	Mizan II															
Age Groups	Type of Crime	N. of Cases																																
18 and less	Felonies	3																																
	Misdemeanours	38																																
19-29	Felonies	3																																
	Misdemeanours	215																																
30-44	Felonies	2																																

		Misdemeanours	269		
	45 and above	Felonies	3		
		Misdemeanours	217		
	Sub Total	Felonies	11		
		Misdemeanours	739		
	Total		750		
Output 4.1: Capacity of Rule of Law institutions to respond to needs of women are improved					
Indicator: Number of tools (policies, strategies, SOPS, etc) developed to deal with VAW cases in line with international standards Baseline: 0 (2017) Planned Target: 2 (yearly)	1	- Operationalization of the Risk Assessment Templates		Results against annual targets only reflect the first semester of 2020.	Institutional partners
Output 4.2: New practices of justice and security service providers are supported to transform their attitudes and behaviours towards women and girls					
Indicator: Number of gender champions (e.g., focal points, agents of change, leaders, etc) and role models identified and promoted within justice and security institutions Baseline: 22 (2018) Planned Target: Increase of 5 per cent (yearly)	31 gender champions (65 per cent women) 27.8 per cent increase against annual target. 6 from police. 7 VAW Judges. 6 Judges and admin staff in Sharia Court. 4 female Sharia lawyers in Gaza. 5 journalists in Gaza. 2 admin staff in MOSD. 1 admin staff HJC				N/A
Output 4.3: Women have access to justice, security and protection					
Indicator 4.3.1: Number of women who benefited from legal aid services supported by the project. Disaggregated by age, geographical area and Palestinian/Israeli/Gaza de facto jurisdictions Baseline: 5,938 (adults: 5401, juveniles:537) (2017). Consultations: 3,408 (adults: 3,197, juveniles: 211) (2017). Representations: 2,530 (adults: 2,204, juveniles: 326) (2017) Planned Target: Increase of 1 per cent (yearly)	Total: 15,518 (15,479 women; 39 girls) (reported under 3.1/3.2) 153.7% increase compared to the annual target of 2020.				CSOs
	Type	Gender			
		Women	Girls		
	A&B	295	23		

	<table><tr><td>EJ</td><td>5,657</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Gaza</td><td>9,516</td><td>15</td></tr><tr><td>Area C</td><td>11</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>15,479</td><td>39</td></tr></table>	EJ	5,657	1	Gaza	9,516	15	Area C	11	0	Total	15,479	39		
EJ	5,657	1													
Gaza	9,516	15													
Area C	11	0													
Total	15,479	39													
<u>Indicator 4.3.2.:</u> Number of women who benefited from legal aid services supported by the PG. <i>Disaggregated by age geographical area and Palestinian/Israeli jurisdictions</i> <u>Baseline:</u> N/A <u>Planned Target:</u> Increase of 1 per cent (yearly)	Total : 2 girls		N/A												
<u>Indicator 4.3.3:</u> Number of people (disaggregated by sex) targeted with awareness and sensitization interventions on women’s rights <u>Baseline:</u> 35,334 (women: 9,574, men: 5,432, children: 20,484) (2017) <u>Planned Target:</u> Increase of 1 per cent (yearly)	<u>Total (GS):</u> 12,862 individuals (3,187 men; 7,176 women; 858 boys and 1641 girls) (reported under 3.2) <i>64.3 per cent decrease compared to the annual target of 2020.</i> Social media (GS): 648,250 (Disaggregation N/A)		CSOs												