



Fast Facts

Country: State of Palestine

Duration: April 2005 to October 2007

Implementing UN Agencies: UNSCO; UNDP; UNIFEM; WHO; UNICEF; UNWRA; UNFPA

Other Implementing Partners: Local and international NGOs; Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling

Budget: \$5,276,745.90

Key Words: Conflict-affected communities; community empowerment; mental health; capacity-building

BACKGROUND

In response to the Palestinian intifada in 2000, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were subjected to intensive military operations, curfews and sieges, the expansion of settlements and the vast destruction of housing and public buildings. By 2005, after years of conflict and isolation, economic and social structures had collapsed with devastating consequences on the region as a whole as well as on the well-being of individuals. Conflict-related psychosocial complications such as chronic stress, domestic

violence, child abuse and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) were on the rise and the vast majority of Palestinian parents reported suffering from sleeping disorders or aggressive behaviours. Moreover, children and youth were particularly affected and demonstrated signs of PTSD and other trauma-related disorders, provoking frequent incidents of school violence directed towards teachers and fellow students.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Executed by seven UN agencies, the project aimed to assist the Palestinian authorities in meeting the growing demand for psychosocial assistance amongst populations exposed to conflict-related psychological trauma in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This was to be achieved by (i) strengthening capacities of local

authorities and communities to respond to psychosocial problems facing Palestinians, in particular the youth; (ii) stepping up psychosocial counselling in schools; and (iii) empowering women to take an active role in the rehabilitation of social infrastructure in their communities.

BENEFICIARIES

The project's direct beneficiaries included more than 5,250 students who received individual counselling and 9,200 vulnerable people who were sensitized on the psychological impact of armed conflict and violence. Moreover, mental health professionals and

teachers received training in psychopathology and psychosocial counselling, while 56,350 students attended in-class sessions on psychological health and well-being.