

Voicing the needs of Women and Men in Gaza

Beyond the aftermath of the 23 day Israeli military operations



The UN Inter-Agency Gender Task Force (GTF), led by UNIFEM, is a mechanism for integrating gender concerns into UN policies, programs, projects and activities and into those of their counterpart organizations. As stated in the Beijing Platform For Action, the GTF *“shall be the catalyst for gender-responsive planning/programming, and coordinate its responsibility for implementing the platform for action (BPFA), as well as its expertise and working methods to promote the advancement of women”*. The GTF is comprised of representative Gender Focal Points of the respective UN agencies.

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Beyond the aftermath of the 23 day Israeli military operations



UNITED NATIONS

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GENDER SURVEY RESEARCH & WRITING TEAM:

Dr. Rema Hammami

Research Associate

Professor of Anthropology and Women's Studies

Sinta Dewi

Gender Standby Capacity (GenCap) Advisor

Inger Brodal (OCHA), Lubna Madyeh & Khaled Mansour (UNRWA), Heba Qedwa & Vanessa Farr (UNDP/ PAPP), Sana Asi (UNFPA), and Anne-Marie Goetz, Hanny Cueva-Beteta, Heba Zayyan and Yolanda Iriarte (UNIFEM)
UN Gender Task Force Core Advisory Team

Jamil Rabah & Naema Abu Hmeid

Near East Consulting (NEC)

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Lastly, we would like to reiterate that the publication of this survey would not have been possible without the participation of the population of Gaza. Special thanks is afforded to them for their willingness and participation in this survey report.

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Executive Summary



Based on a household survey conducted face to face with 1,100 adult men and women across the Gaza Strip in the first week of March 2009, the following main findings have been identified concerning the impacts, needs and perceptions of men and women in the aftermath of the 23 day military offensive launched by Israel in December 2008.

Food Security

Households report a rise in their expenditure following the war on the basics of food and water at the expense of perceived secondary needs such as clothing, education and health care. The one anomaly relates to households reporting as great a rise in expenditure on psychosocial health as on food and water.

Approximately 20% of households said that boys' needs are prioritized when there is a food shortage in the home. The least likely household members to get priority during a food shortage are elderly men and women. Households in deep poverty show the greatest degree of sharing scarce food equitably across all household members.

The largest change in men's daily activities following the war is in the much greater time they spend in search of domestic fuel. For women the greatest change is in the decrease in time spent cooking. This may be related to the lack of cooking fuel or may be a signal of a decline in food security.

Experience and Assessment of Emergency Assistance

While 60% of respondents claim to have received food aid since the end of the war, about half of them express dissatisfaction with the assistance received. The main reason for dissatisfaction is with the quantity of assistance but another 15% say that the aid is not appropriate to their needs. Women, the displaced and respondents in the Rafah area are most likely to assess the food assistance they received as not appropriate to their needs.

Only one third of men and women claim to have been informed about the relief and recovery assistance underway since the war and only half of those (15% of all respondents) say they participated in the planning or design of humanitarian assistance in their community.

Where women have been involved or consulted, it seems to be on "women only" programs or services. Otherwise, women overwhelmingly say that only male family members and community leaders participate in the planning and design of humanitarian assistance in their communities.

Livelihoods and Income Sources

All categories of respondents expressed acute feelings of economic crisis and hopelessness in the aftermath of the war, that cannot be accounted for by the discrete economic effects of the war alone. Women cite a greater decline in sources of primary household income after the war than men.

Even before the war, 20% of women and 10% of men said their households relied on charity and assistance from UNRWA as their primary source of income. Another 40% of men and women depend on UNRWA or charitable assistance as their main source of secondary income both before and after the war. The high number of respondents reporting reliance on secondary sources of income generally, signals a high rate of income poverty among Gazan households.

There is a significant gap of 10% in men's and women's perceptions of the male household head as the primary earner, while there is a consensus amongst them that wives carry a greater share of providing secondary income more than



primary income. There is also a significant perceptual gap between men and women regarding control of family income, with 8% more male heads claiming they control household income than reported by female respondents.

Two thirds of men and women responded that they heard about women in their communities searching for work after the war. Half of all respondents say that “home-industry” is the main economic activity for women to generate income.

Safety, Security and Gender-Based Violence

Respondents express a similar high level of concern over domestic violence as they do towards Israeli military violence. The highest perceived rise in domestic violence against women is among households displaced by the war and in the southern Gaza Strip, where there is also the highest level of perception of an increase of domestic violence against children.

While domestic violence was cited as the primary safety problem facing women and girls in their communities, public and political violence was cited as the main safety and security problem facing men and boys. Significantly, more male than female respondents cited men’s vulnerability to public violence – including internal violence – suggesting it is of critical concern to them.

There is a critical lack of legal and public mechanisms available to men and women victims of social and political violence in Gaza, as well as a potential distrust of the limited mechanisms available to them. At the same time, violence against men is more likely to be treated as a public crime, while violence against women is more likely to be treated as a private and tabooed family problem.

Female headed households are the social category perceived by other respondents as the most deprived of access to basic needs including protection from violence, a perception strongly at odds with how they perceive themselves.

Health, Trauma and Access to Health and Psychosocial Health Services

The highest reported health problem among all respondents is psychological trauma and stress. Men and women perceive themselves as suffering from it at a higher rate than each other – when in fact they seem to be equally suffering the traumatic effects of the war.

That households report as great a rise in expenditures on psychosocial health as on food and water suggests that it has become seen as a basic and urgent need. It also potentially points to a problem of self-medication with over the counter pharmaceuticals, in the absence of access to professional psychosocial and mental health services.

Throughout the survey findings, respondents regardless of gender, region, or social category consistently rate psychological trauma and stress as a main concern and express a critical need for psychosocial services. This is consistent with the findings on problems of access. Overwhelmingly, obstacles to getting access to psychosocial support are reported as material and informational rather than due to social reservations or taboos.

Distance to health services is the main obstacle cited to women’s access to health care. A third of women say that fathers or husbands make the main decision regarding a female household member’s access to health care.

The Displaced

Throughout the survey, the communities displaced perceived a heightened vulnerability among their women family members in relation to safety and security needs. In addition, displaced women were more likely than other women to say they felt unsafe using a bathing or latrine facility and also cited a greater lack of access to reliable sanitary materials. Half of the displaced respondents said their children had not returned to school after the war due to “lack of security”.



However, individuals from displaced households report higher knowledge of, access to and participation in the planning of relief and recovery assistance than those not displaced during the war.

Given that providing housing to their families is men's socially prescribed gender responsibility, it is significant that men in displaced households show greater uncertainty than women that they will be able to return to their homes in the future, signalling a heightened level of stress and anxiety amongst men regarding this fundamental issue.





Introduction



On the 27th December, 2008, the Israeli military launched a major offensive against the Gaza Strip resulting in a dramatic deterioration in the lives of the civilian population already in a state of deep deprivation following an 18-month-long blockade of the Gaza Strip. According to OCHA, the 23 day war led to the death of 1,366 people, of whom 430 were children and 111 women, as well as the injury of over 5,380 people, including 1,870 children and 800 women. The Israeli military offensive also led to large-scale internal displacement of civilians, made more traumatic by the fact that civilians could neither leave the field of war, nor find secure and safe haven within it from aerial bombardment, even in United Nations installations. About 100,000 people fled their homes in UNRWA shelters. During the military offensive, public infrastructure and essential services were either completely destroyed or partly damaged resulting in lack of shelter and fuel, as well as further deterioration in water and sanitation services. These have added to the effects of the lack of access to health services, food insecurity, and general psychosocial distress suffered by the population. All Gazans are once again experiencing the loss or injury of family members, relatives and friends. Given the casualty and injury statistics – the war has left in its wake 1,800 bereaved parents, more than 800 new widows and more than 5,000 injured family members who will have to be cared for, placing additional burdens within their households.

The social and economic repercussions of this state of acute and comprehensive crisis are shared across all of the society but are also mediated by men's and women's gender roles and identities. The focus of this report is in how men and women have been affected and have responded to the crisis; what are the urgent humanitarian needs they perceive in the present; as well as the best and most appropriate long term interventions for themselves and their households to live a better future. Women and men agree on many of the basic issues facing their households and communities but also diverge in their priorities and perceptions of them. Understanding these differences emanating from the way their experience and priorities are shaped by their different gender roles and responsibilities is crucial to ensuring that humanitarian interventions address the inter-connected but varying needs of all Gazans – women, girls, boys and men.

This survey report is based on the findings of a quantitative survey undertaken in the Gaza Strip between 28th of February to the 5th of March 2009 with 1,100 households. The survey interviewed adult women and men (over 18 years old) on a variety of issues of relevance towards understanding the short and long-term humanitarian situation of households and their needs, with sensitivity to the varying impacts gender plays in shaping these. The survey included questions on:

- Access to information and assistance before and after the war, as well as participation in the emergency assistance and relief process.
- General needs, survival mechanisms and differential access to food, non food items (NFIs), water and sanitation facilities.
- Impacts on livelihoods including impacts on household income sources and changes in livelihood strategies.
- Health and psychosocial needs and access to services.
- Security and protection concerns for women, girls, boys and men and access to protection and legal support.
- The needs of vulnerable populations including the injured and disabled, IDPs and female headed households.

The initial findings from the household survey are the basis for a second stage of focus group discussions. The survey provides a baseline of the concrete and specific situation of the affected population to better feed into humanitarian sectors' planning, implementation and monitoring; it also identifies gender related gaps across sectoral issues. The purpose of the focus group discussions as a second phase of a full gender needs assessment, is to better understand the issues raised amongst the specific populations in specific environments within the quantitative survey. In addition, the focus group discussions will serve to verify findings as well as provide a better understanding of required mechanisms to address the varying needs identified by different social groups across different communities.

Along with the focus groups, semi-structured interviews with key leaders and informants, women NGOs and humanitarian actors (the UN family and NGOs) will be undertaken to gather sex and age disaggregated data on aid distribution, gaps in addressing the different needs of women, girls, boys and men, and capacity in relation to the needs of diverse social actors. Spot checks will provide complementary information to supplement more in-depth discussions and help visualize particular problems. Finally, an impact assessment of the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance will be conducted one year after the military incursion.



The UN System has recognized the importance of understanding the gendered impacts of the humanitarian crisis and has committed to ensure that emergency and early recovery assessments and delivery are better targeted, accountable and relevant to the needs of the affected population. It is the hope of UNIFEM, the UN Inter-Agency Gender Task Force and GenCap Adviser that this report will contribute to achieving these ends in the context of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.







The household survey for this study was conducted in the Gaza Strip between 28th of February to the 5th of March 2009 using a representative sample of 1,100 men and women over the age of 18.

The questionnaire was drafted by the GenCap Adviser with substantial inputs from the advisory team of the UN Gender Task Force, and the sample design and survey implementation was undertaken by Near East Consulting (NEC).¹ The results of a comprehensive desk review of existing findings and assessment reports produced by the various UN Agencies involved in emergency relief and assistance to post-war Gaza was also undertaken by the GenCap Adviser and UNOCHA's gender focal point which contributed to the design of the survey instrument.

The sample was selected in three stages. In the first stage, 44 areas in 20 localities were specified using the probability proportional to size method. In the second stage, 25 households were interviewed from each specified area. The third stage was a selection of an adult (18 years or above) from the selected household to answer the questions in the questionnaire.

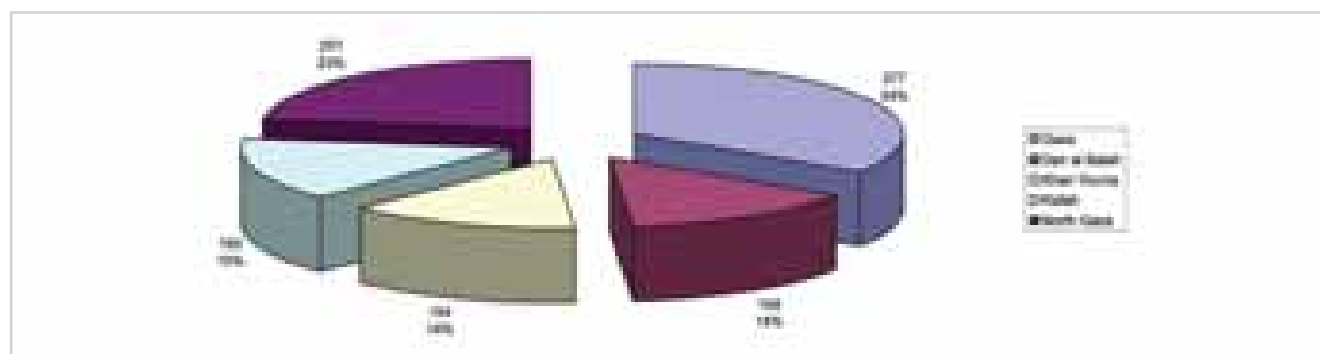
Households were selected using the zig-zag² method and the household members were selected on the basis of the adult member whose birthday comes first. The drafted questionnaire was piloted in forty households through face to face interviews in the northern and southern districts of the Gaza Strip. Minor adjustments were made and the fieldwork commenced immediately following them.

As noted in table 1, below, the sample aimed to achieve 1,100 respondents. In order to do this a total of 1440 households had to be approached due to a 17.8% refusal rate to participate in the survey.³ As such 239 additional households were included within the sample framework so as to achieve a final sample size of 1,100 respondents. Accordingly, the success rate of the original sample was 82.2%.

Table 1: Number of people who did not want to speak

Household Interview Result	Count	Percentage
Response rate	1100	82.2%
Non-response (refusal)	239	17.8%
Total	1339	100.0%

Figure 1: Governorate of residence



1 The advisory team consists of UNIFEM, UNOCHA, UNRWA, UNDP and UNFPA.

2 Interviewers were assigned specific locations and were requested to take a specific route and randomly select a housing unit according to a random table.

3 Fieldworkers noted that this high rate of refusal was due to two factors: (1) households not wanting to be surveyed regardless of the issues being addressed in the survey, (2) male household members refusing to allow female members to participate. The high refusal rate is a significant finding in itself – suggesting the degree to which the population in Gaza in the aftermath of the Israeli military operations are critical of interventions that do not immediately alleviate their circumstances.



Table 2: Number of female and male respondents

Sex of respondents	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Male	568	52%	52%
Female	532	48%	48%
Total	1100	100%	100%

Table 3: Age distribution of the respondents (Females and males)

Age category of respondent	Sex of respondent			
	Male		Female	
18 - 24 yrs	120	21%	129	24%
25 - 34 yrs	151	27%	134	25%
35 - 44 yrs	131	23%	151	29%
45 - 54 yrs	118	21%	76	14%
Over 55 yrs	44	8%	38	7%
Total	564	100%	528	100%

Figure 2: Educational level of the respondent

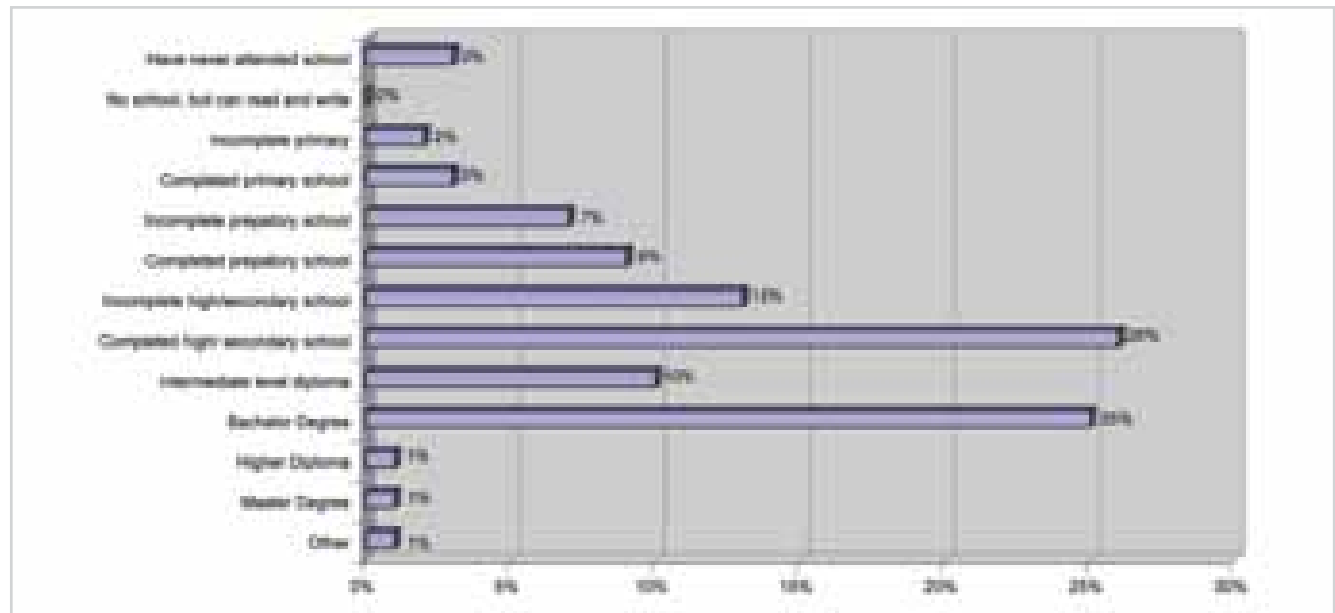


Table 4: Numbers of female and male head of households according to sex

Sex of the head of your household?	Count	Collected %
Male	926	84%
Female	172	16%*
Total	1098	100%

* This high rate of female headed households is larger than their actual representation within the Gaza population (at 9% of all households) and here is due to them being given a quota within the overall sample design in order to have enough numbers to allow analysis of this social category. In the analysis the category "women" is re-weighted to include only 9% of female headed households – the actual rate in the population).

Figure 3: Marital status of the head of the household

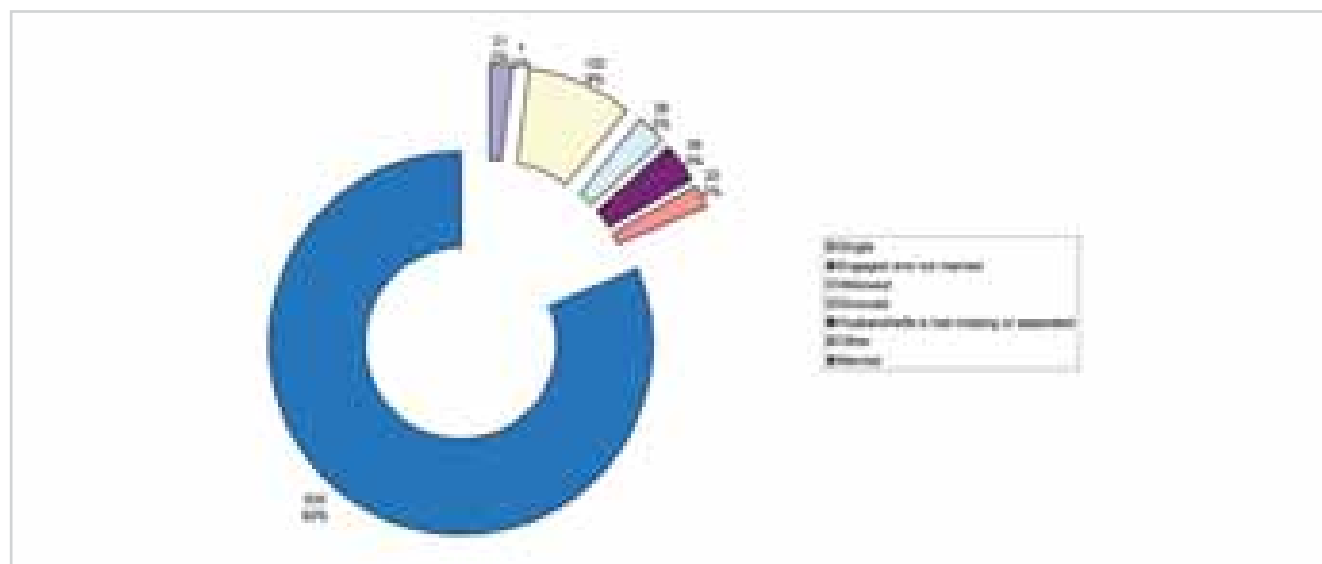


Table 5: Sex disaggregated data according to marital status

Marital Status	Sex of respondent			
	Male		Female	
Married	423	75%	335	63%
Single	116	20%	88	17%
Engaged	8	1%	18	3. %
Divorced	6	1.0%	16	3%
Husband/wife is lost or missing	0	0%	2	1%
Widowed	12	2.0%	71	13%
Other	3	1%	2	0%
Total	568	100%	532	100%

Table 6: Household age structure

	Mean
Average age of the head of household (whole numbers only)	43
Average age of respondent (whole numbers only)	36
Average age at the time of marriage of the respondents	22
Average age at the time of bearing of the first child	23
Average number of children per household	5
Average number of people per household before the war	8
Average number of people per household since the war	8
Average number of male adults	3
Average number of female adults	2
Average number of male adolescent (until 18 years)	2
Average number of female adolescent (until 18 years)	2
Average number of male children under 5	1
Average number of female children under 5	1
Average number of disabled male	1





Livelihoods and Economic Aspects



Livelihoods and the Impact of the War

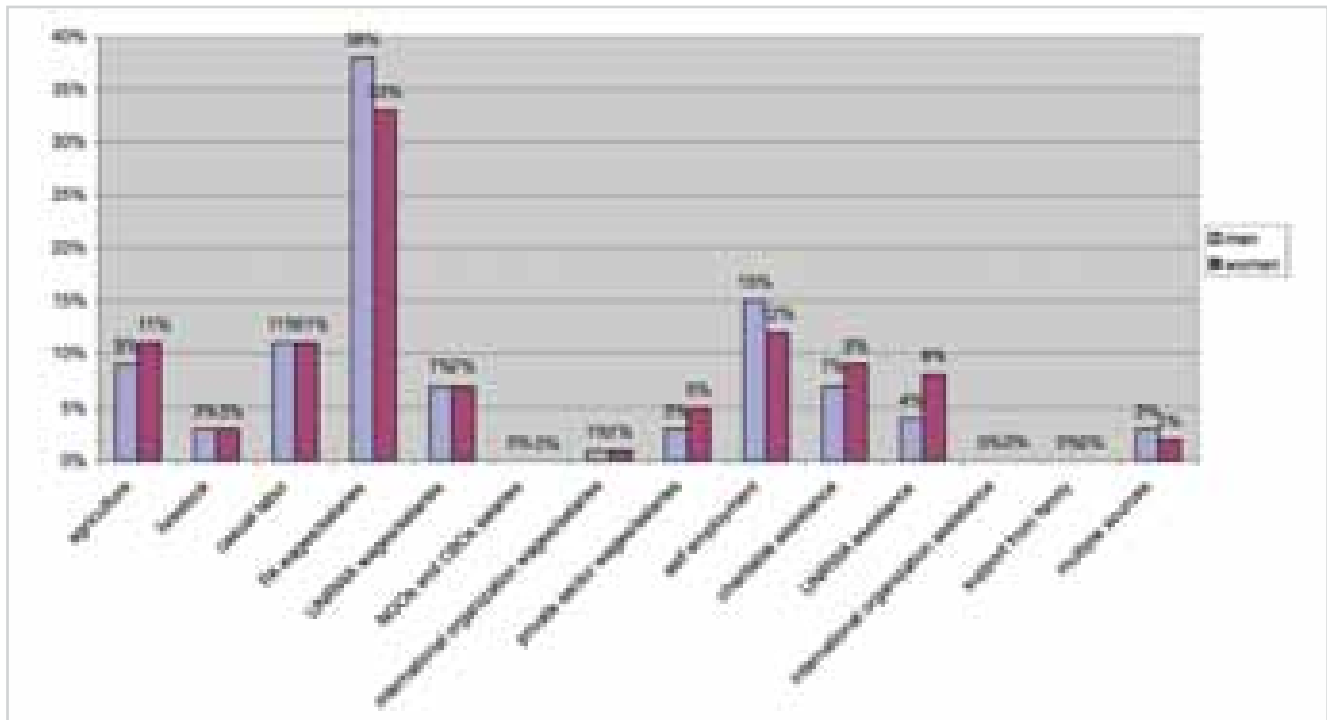
Heightened Feelings of Economic Crisis and Hopelessness In the Aftermath of the War

Male and female respondents alike expressed a high degree of anguish when discussing economic hardships faced by households after the war. Approximately 40% of respondents said a household member could no longer reach their job following the war, a similar 40% said they had suffered damage and loss of assets and a full 80% said they did not have cash to re-start a business. These overall numbers are very high, with many of them likely more general expressions of a sense of acute crisis and loss caused by the trauma of Israeli military violence. At the same time, they point indirectly to real material losses of many Gazan households. These could refer to the loss of wage labor over the past eight years for thousands of male breadwinners. However, they may still be felt as an ongoing loss expressed by respondents due to household members no longer able to reach their job after the war. The loss of economic well-being caused by the economic sanctions that Gazans have lived under for the past 2 years, added by the damage and destruction of property during the war could account for the high numbers citing loss of economic assets during the war. Finally, the high 80% of respondents stating that they do not have cash to “restart a business” alludes to the ongoing crisis of income faced by most Gaza households that precedes the war but has probably been heightened following it.

Primary Sources of Income

Women cite a greater decline in sources of primary income after the war than men

Figure 4: Sources of household income before the war (By sex of respondent)



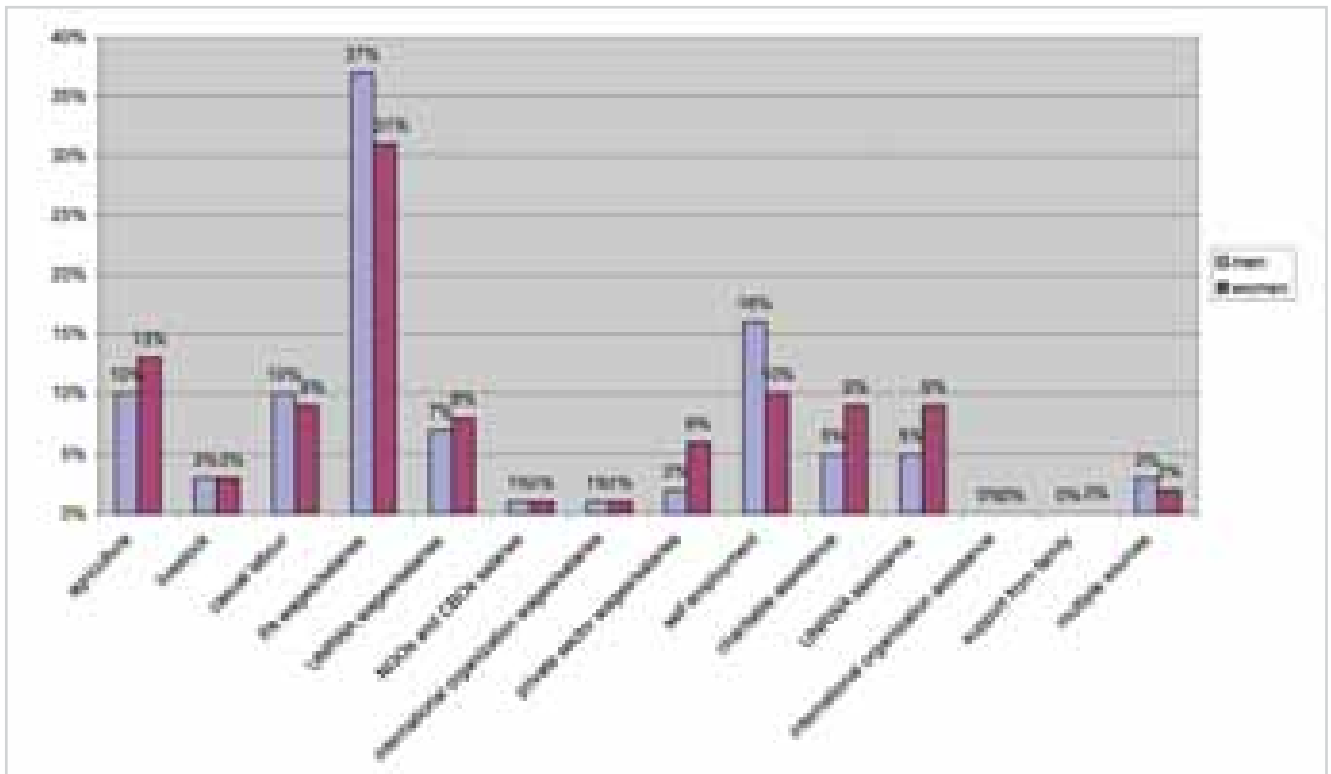
Before the war, five primary sources of income accounted for about 83% of all household income sources cited by men but only 77% of those cited by women. Women were more likely to cite agriculture as a primary source of income and less likely to cite PA wages than men.

After the war, there was only a 3% decline in these sources among men, while women cite a 6% decline among them. For men the greatest decline is in agriculture, while for women it is in two areas; PA wages and casual labor.

Table 7: Primary sources of income

	Men		Women	
	Before	After	Before	After
PA wages	38%	37%	33%	31%
Self employment	15%	16%	12%	10%
Casual labor	11%	10%	11%	9%
Agriculture/livestock	12%	10%	14%	13%
UNRWA wages	7%	7%	7%	8%
Total	83%	80%	77%	71%

Figure 5: Sources of household income after the war (By sex of respondent)



Charity and Relief as Primary Sources of Income

For another approximately 10% of men and 20% of women, welfare assistance from charities or UNRWA was cited as the main source of household income prior to the war. Widowed women and their households are prime recipients of PA and private charities, while UNRWA's welfare system of "special hardship cases" targets women without male breadwinners.

Table 8: Reliance on charity and relief for primary income

	Men		Women	
	Before	After	Before	After
Charitable assistance	7%	5%	9%	9%
UNRWA assistance	4%	5%	8%	9%
Total	11%	10%	17%	18%

Secondary Sources of Household Income

A high number of respondents reported reliance on secondary sources of income – signalling a high rate of income poverty among Gazan households. About 40% of households cite a reliance on charity or relief as their main secondary source of income before and after the war.

Approximately 2/3 of male and female respondents reported depending on at least one secondary source of income. Reliance on multiple sources of income is a crucial sign of income poverty and suggests the extent to which household members have to supplement main breadwinner income with other sources and activities.

Table 9: Sources of secondary income

	Men		Women	
	Before	After	Before	After
PA wages	11%	9%	9%	9%
Self employment	18%	16%	20%	18%
Casual labor	5%	3%	4%	3%
Agriculture & livestock	3%	2%	5%	4%
UNRWA wages	2%	2%	4%	3%
Total	39%	32%	42%	37%

Main sources of secondary income are much more variegated than those of primary income. The sources that provided more than 75% to 80% of primary income only provide about 40% of secondary income. Among these sources, women and men both cite self-employment as the main source of secondary income before and after the war and both say that it has dropped by 2% in the post-war period. Additionally, there is a greater drop in all of these sources of secondary income compared to them as primary income after the war. Accordingly, men cited an overall 7% decline and women cited an overall 6% decline.

Table 10: Reliance on charity and relief for secondary income

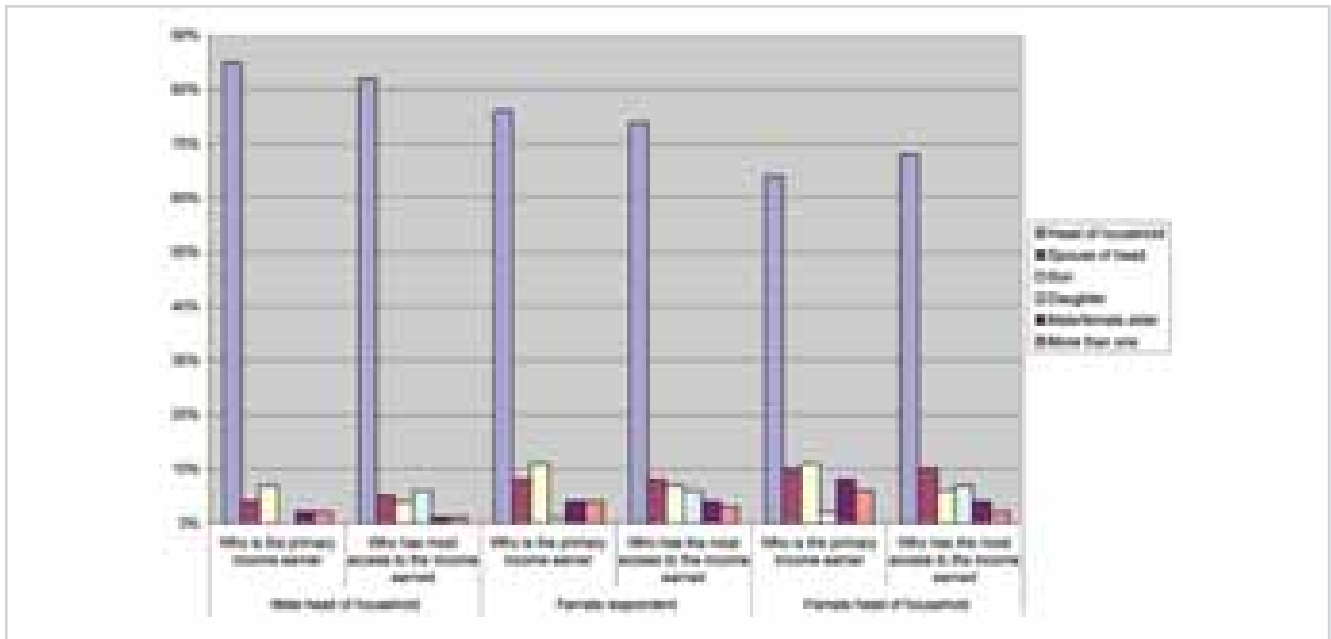
	Men		Women	
	Before	After	Before	After
Charitable assistance	10%	12%	11%	13%
UNRWA assistance	30%	30%	28%	28%
Total	40%	42%	39%	41%

A similar 40% of men and women cite UNRWA or charitable assistance as the main source of secondary income before and after the war. This means that a full one third of the households surveyed rely on charitable and relief assistance to achieve their household livelihoods. Both men and women state there is a rise in charitable aid post-war, while UNRWA assistance has remained at the same level.

Primary and Secondary Income Earners

There is a significant gap of 9% in men’s and women’s perceptions of the male household head as the primary earner. There is also consensus that wives carry a greater share of providing secondary income than primary income.

Figure 6: Primary income earners



Heads of households be they male or female are overwhelmingly the primary income earners. However, there is a significant gap in men’s and women’s perceptions of the male household head as the primary earner. A full 9% less women than men cite the male head as the main breadwinner. Four percent of male heads of households and 8% of women cite wives as the main income earners. In addition, women are more likely to cite “sons” as main income earners (11%) in comparison to male heads of households (7%). Similarly, female headed households cite a greater reliance on sons, but also on older males or females in the household. Women and female headed households are also more likely to cite a reliance on more than one main income earner.

Table 11: Who is the primary income earner?

	Male head of household	Female respondent	Female headed household
Husband	85%	76%	10%
Wife	4%	8%	64%
Son	7%	11%	11%
Daughter	0%	1%	2%
Male/Female elder	2%	4%	8%
More than one	2%	4%	6%

Men and women’s perceptions show much greater convergence in terms of who are secondary income earners. A little more than 40% of men and women say that the male head of household is also the primary breadwinner – attesting to the fact that many men probably undertake more than one income earning strategy to provide for their families. Approximately 20% of all three categories state “multiple persons” as the main source of secondary income, suggesting

the degree that households have to use multiple strategies to access enough income. Here, there is also consensus that wives carry a greater share of providing secondary income than primary income, with 11% of male heads of households and 13% of women citing wives as the main secondary income earner. Sons however, are more likely to be cited as secondary income earners than wives or daughters, cited by 17% to 19% of respondents.

Figure 7: Secondary income earners

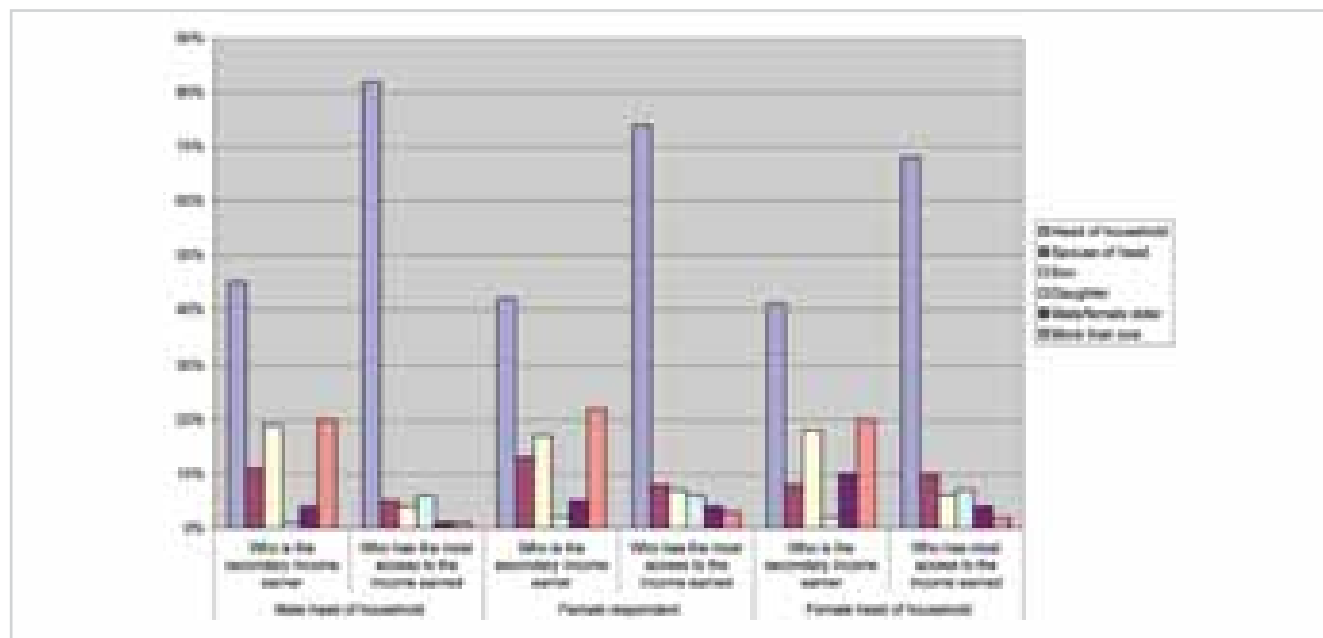


Table 12: Who is the secondary income earner?

	Male head of household	Female respondent	Female headed household
Husband	45%	42%	41%
Wife	11%	13%	8%
Son	19%	17%	18%
Daughter	1%	2%	2%
Male/Female elder	4%	5%	10%
More than one	20%	22%	20%



Control of Income

There is a significant perceptual gap between men and women regarding control of family income – with 8% more male heads claiming they control household income than reported by female respondents.

In terms of control over income earned, overwhelmingly the head of household be they male or female have the most control. However, once again there is a large perceptual gap between men and women, with 8% more male heads claiming they control household income than reported by female respondents. Instead, female respondents cite greater numbers of themselves, sons and elders controlling family income than male breadwinners. The one consensus between men and women is that 6% of both claim that daughters have the most control over family income. Given the low rate in which daughters were cited as primary or secondary income earners, this probably refers to daughters-in-law within the household married to the main income earner.

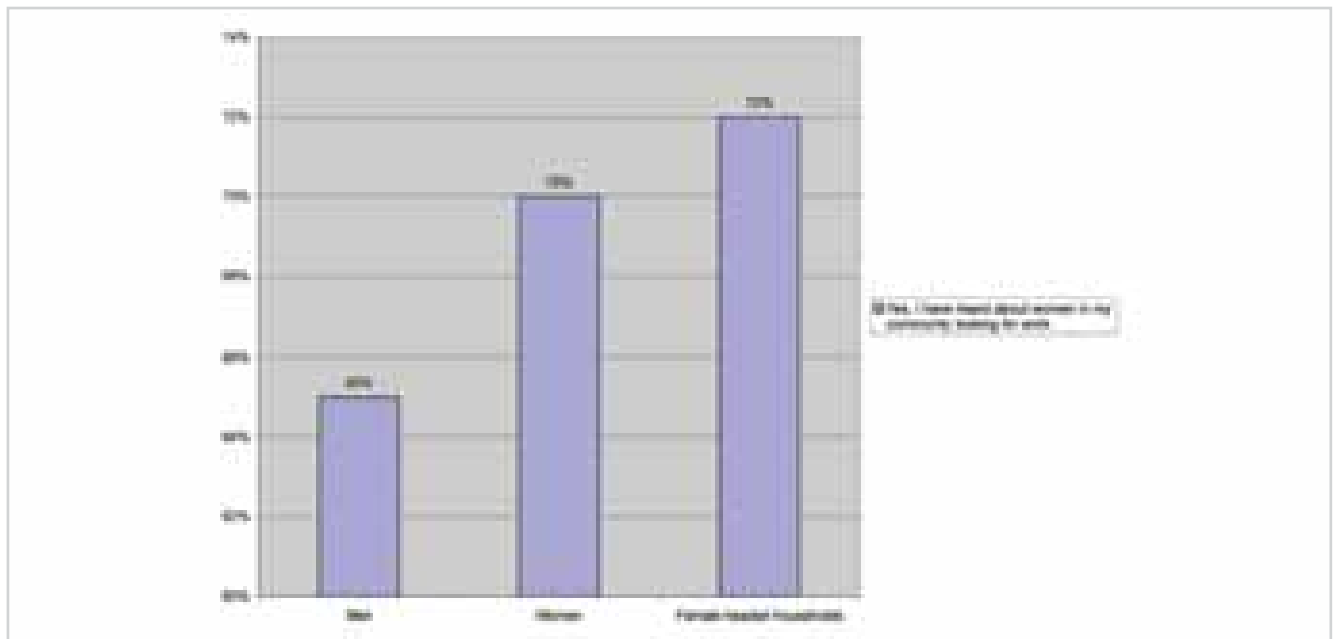
Table 13: Who has most access to the income earned?

	Male head of household	Female respondent	Female headed household
Husband	82%	74%	10%
Wife	5%	8%	68%
Son	4%	7%	6%
Daughter	6%	6%	7%
Male/female elder	1%	4%	4%
More than one	1%	3%	2%

War's Impact Motivating Women to Search for Work

Two thirds of men and women responded that they heard about women in their communities searching for work after the war. Half of all respondents say that "home-industry" is the main economic activity women do to generate income.

Figure 8: Have you heard about women in your community looking for work? (By sex)



An overwhelming two thirds of men and women responded that they heard about women in their communities searching for work after the war. More women than men and more female headed households reported they had heard of women searching for work after the war. Respondents were also asked about their social attitudes towards women's employment. More than 2/3 of either sex cited "the husband's or family's permission" as the most crucial factor affecting women's ability to enter the labor force, while a lesser 20% cited domestic and childcare duties as the most crucial factor. These responses reflect the prevailing social attitudes towards women's engagement in the labor force. Although respondents were not asked directly if there was a female in their household searching for work after the war, the contrast between a high perception that women are looking for work after the war versus the socially conservative attitude stated towards women's employment, suggests that the need for women to work for income outweighs any social reservations towards it.

Figure 9: What is the first factor affecting women's ability to work? (By sex and female headed household)

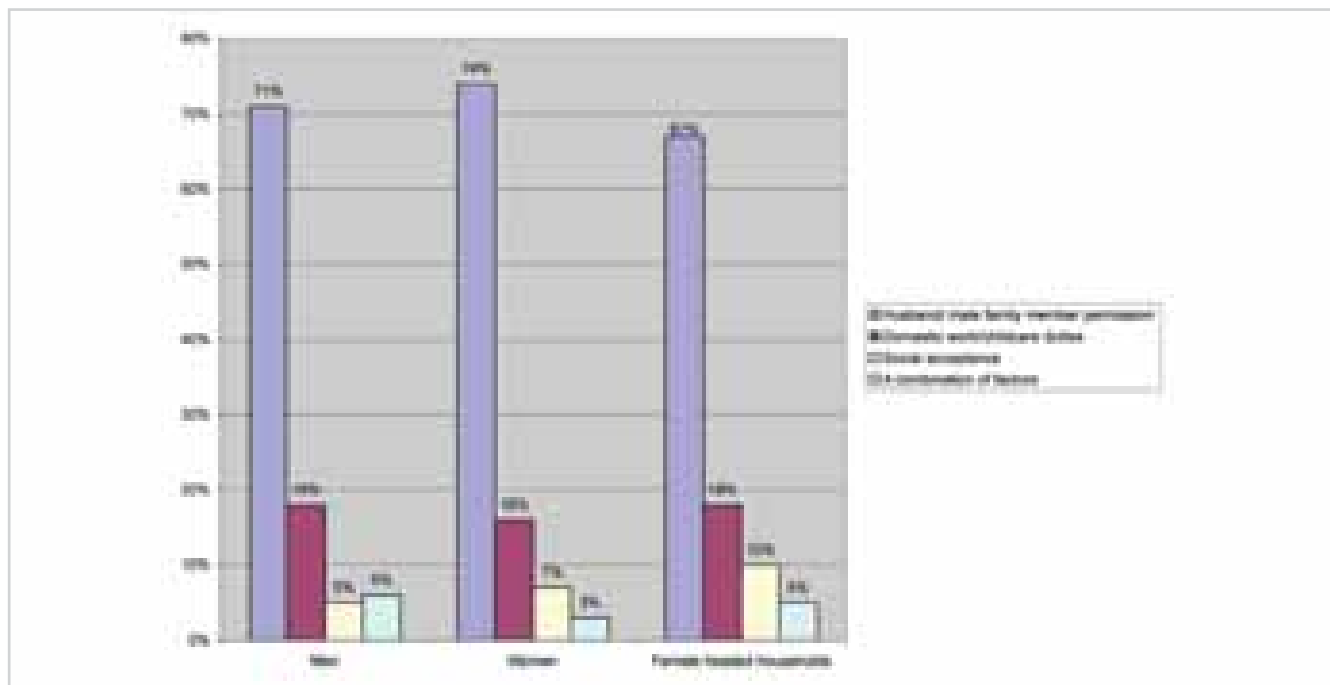
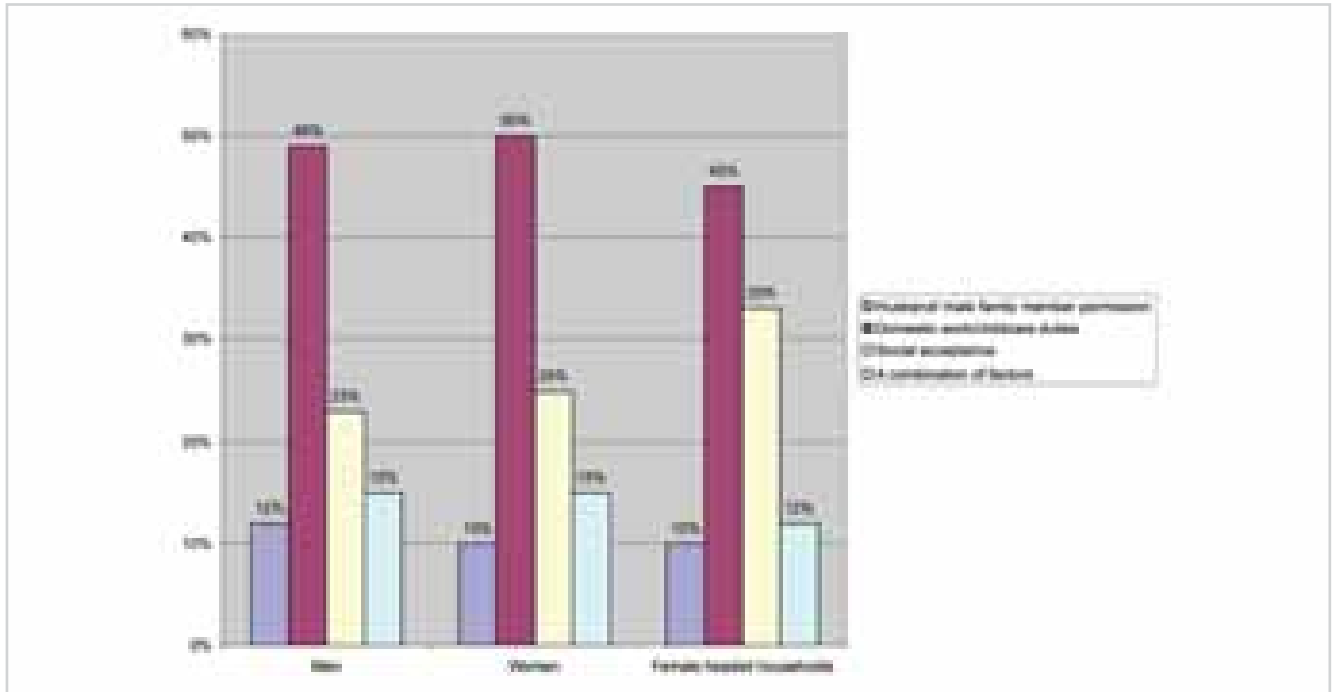


Figure 10: What is the second factor affecting women's ability to work? (By sex and female headed household)



When respondents were asked what women in their communities do for employment or income, more than half of the total respondents claimed it is “home industry”. By this, what is meant is home-based informal work that would include such activities as food preservation and production, hairdressing, sewing including doing piece work and various forms of home-based peddling and agricultural activities. Home industry is the most difficult aspect of labor activities for labor surveys to capture and is also a sphere of activities that is the main resort of married women with children in households suffering from income poverty. As such, there is a high likelihood that respondents are talking about an actual reality of women’s home- based income generation activities as a means to supplement family income. Respondents in Deir al Balah cited “home industry” more than any other area (at 70%), while Khan Younis stood out as the region most likely to cite “services” (at 20%) – the formal economic sector in which most employed women in Gaza are actually employed in.

Table 14: Women and wage work

	Men	Women	Female headed households
Yes, I have heard about women in my community looking for work after the war			
	65%	70%	72%
What is the first factor affecting women's ability to work?			
Husband/ male family member permission	71%	74%	67%
Domestic work/childcare duties	18%	16%	18%
Social acceptance	5%	7%	10%
A combination of factors	6%	3%	5%
What is the second factor affecting women's ability to work			
Husband/ male family member permission	12%	10%	10%
Domestic work/childcare duties	49%	50%	45%
Social acceptance	23%	25%	33%
A combination of factors	15%	15%	12%

Baseline Data Livelihoods: Employment

Comparing respondents' answers with findings of Palestine Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) surveys provides some useful insights and gaps into the data on livelihoods in post-war Gaza. The most recent and relevant available data is the PCBS Labor Force Surveys for 2007. While an overall 4% of men and another 8% of women in the March 2009 UN Gender Task Force survey cited a female household member as the primary income earner, the PCBS survey found that 11% of the Gaza labor force consisted of women. However, when we take unemployment into account, the 8% cited by women in 2009 is very close to the actual formal labor force figures for women found by PCBS in 2007. In 2007, Khan Younis had the highest female labor force participation for all governorates also suggesting why Khan Younis had the highest reporting of women in the service sector in 2009.

Figure 11: Percentage of male and female population in the labor force by governorate

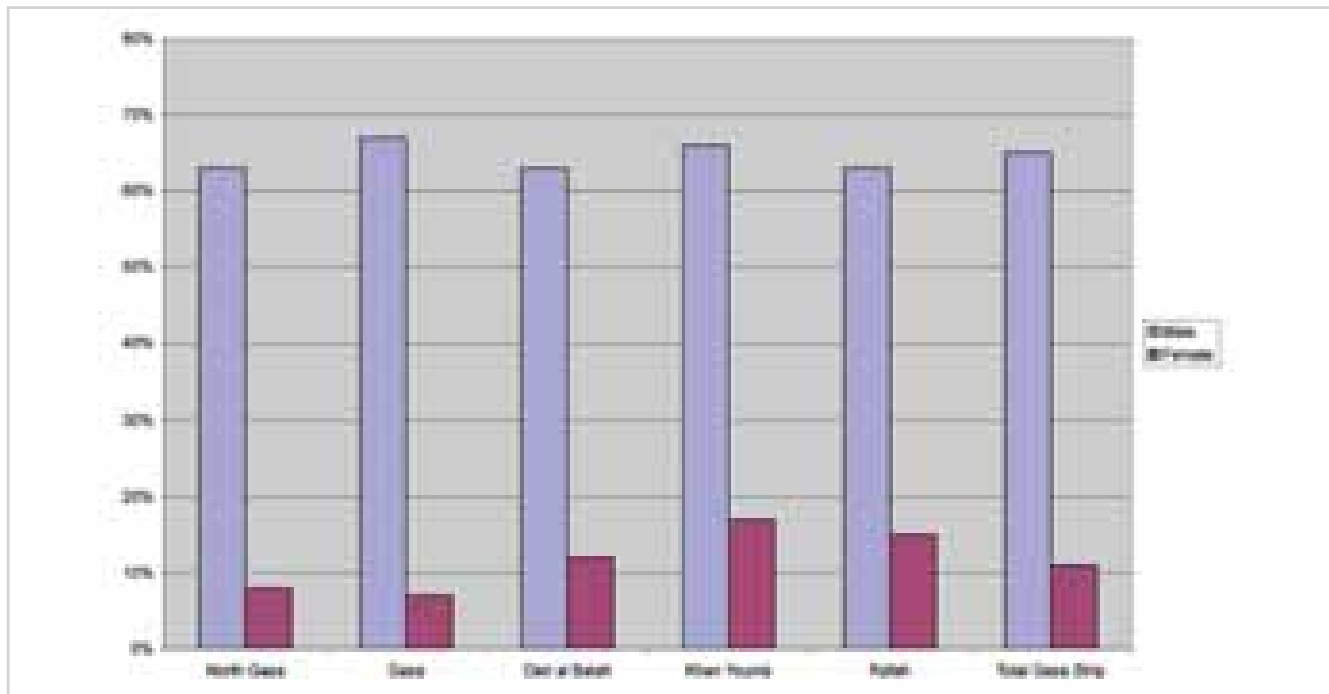


Table 15: Percentage of male and female population in the labor force by governorate

	Total Gaza Strip	North Gaza	Gaza	Deir al Balah	Khan Younis	Rafah
Male	65%	63%	67%	63%	66%	63%
Female	11%	8%	7%	12%	17%	15%

(Source: PCBS Labor-force Surveys 2007)

Male and female unemployment in 2007 was equally high at 30%. Women's share of unemployment is high compared to their overall numbers in the labor force. The highest region for female unemployment was Gaza City. Given that unemployment is a measure of those actively searching for work – it is clear that this region in 2007 had the highest number of female job seekers.

Table 16: Percentage of male and female labor force who are employed and unemployed

		Total Gaza Strip	North Gaza	Gaza	Deir al Balah	Khan Younis	Rafah
Male	Employed	70%	68%	76%	66%	63%	72%
	Unemployed	30%	32%	24%	34%	37%	28%
Female	Employed	70%	70%	62%	74%	75%	68%
	Unemployed	30%	30%	38%	26%	25%	32%

(Source: PCBS Labor-force Surveys 2007)

Figure 12: Employed females by economic activity and governorate

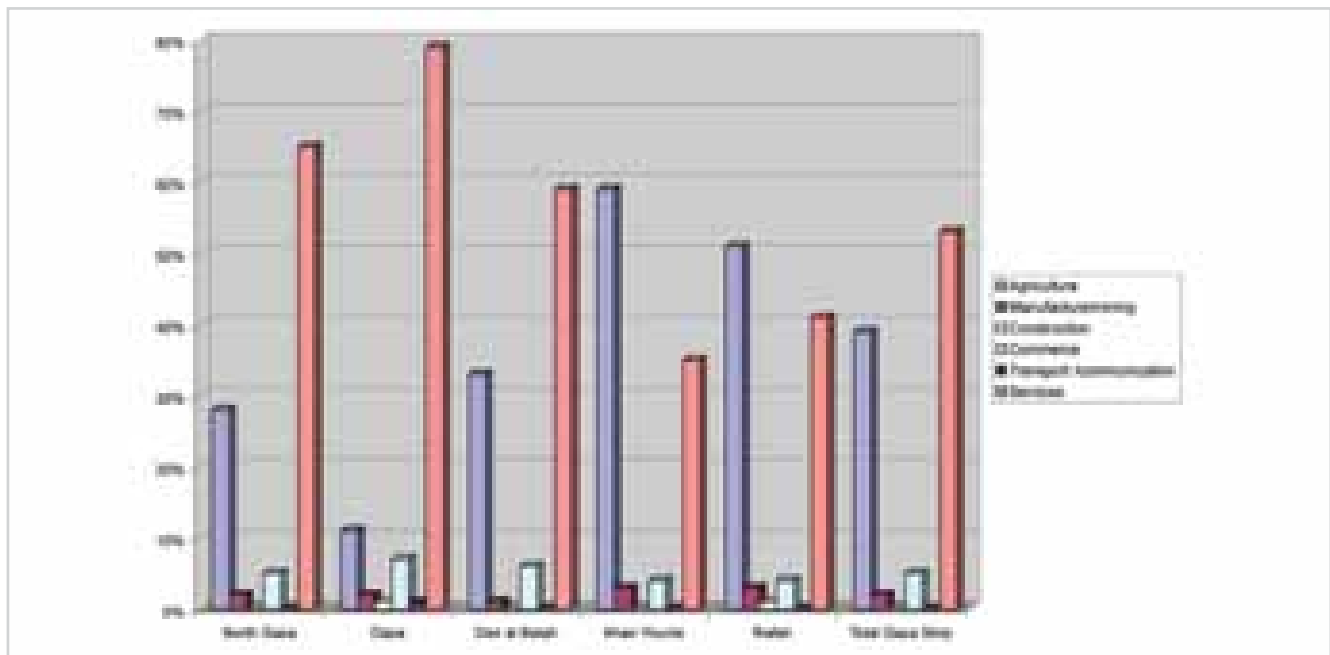
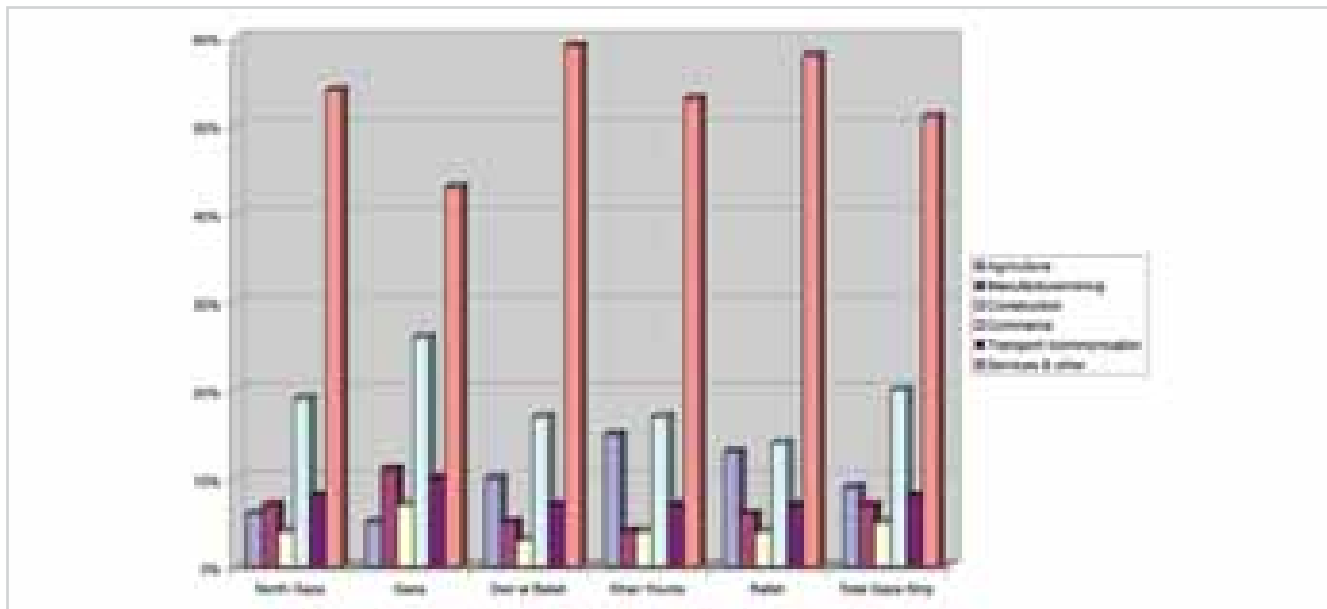


Figure 13: Employed men in Gaza by economic activity and governorate



The PCBS survey is unable to capture the category “home industry” that was stated as the primary activity that women do for work in 2009. Instead it shows that women in Gaza are highly concentrated in two economic sectors – agriculture that accounted for 40% of employed women and services that accounted for 53%. Services include professional and semi-professional work overwhelmingly in the public sector such as teachers, social workers, nurses and doctors. These jobs require women to have at least a junior college or post-secondary degree.

In comparison to men, agriculture takes up a high degree of women labor force participants – 40% of the female labor force compared to only 9% of the male labor force. Most women however work in agriculture as unpaid family workers. In response to various questions in 2009, women expressed a greater reliance on agriculture as a source of household income in comparison to men. It is in the southern Gaza Strip – Khan Younis and Rafah where more than half the women employed are employed in agriculture.

Table 17: Employed females by economic activity and governorate

	Total Gaza Strip	North Gaza	Gaza	Deir al Balah	Khan Younis	Rafah
Agriculture	39%	28%	11%	33%	59%	51%
Manufacture/mining	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	3%
Construction	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Commerce	5%	5%	7%	6%	4%	4%
Transport / communication	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Services	53%	65%	79%	59%	35%	41%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

(Source: PCBS Labor-force Surveys 2007)



Table 18: Employed men in Gaza by economic activity and governorate

	Total Gaza Strip	North Gaza	Gaza	Deir al Balah	Khan Younis	Rafah
Agriculture	9%	6%	5%	10%	15%	13%
Manufacture/mining	7%	7%	11%	5%	4%	6%
Construction	5%	4%	7%	3%	4%	4%
Commerce	20%	19%	26%	17%	17%	14%
Transport / communication	8%	8%	10%	7%	7%	7%
Services & other	51%	54%	43%	59%	53%	58%
	100	100	100	100	100	100

(Source: PCBS Labor-force Surveys 2007)

Changes in Household Labor and Time Use Following the War

The largest change in men's daily activities following the war is in the much greater time they spend in search of domestic fuel. For women the greatest change is in the decrease in time spent cooking. This may be related to the crisis in cooking fuel or may be a signal of a decline in food security.

An indirect way of understanding the impact of the war on household livelihoods and their members' general wellbeing is through looking at changes in the time spent on various domestic and income earning activities. Crisis can disrupt the usual routine of how various tasks are accomplished and by whom. In addition, new needs can arise as an outcome of crisis that add new burdens on the time and responsibilities of specific family members. Who undertakes what activity, is in any society predominantly shaped by gendered norms and expectations.

The largest shift in men's daily activities pre and post-war is the rise in those spending time looking for fuel (from 6% before to 14% of men after the war citing it as their main daily activity). The other shift has been the slight decline in men spending time collecting food – dropping from 8% down to 3% of men citing it as their main daily activity after the war. Working for income or looking for work collectively were the main activities of 56% of the men surveyed – with only a slight change to 1% less men searching for work after the war. In terms of time use, men report an average one extra hour involved in any of the major activities they undertook before and after the war.

For women, cooking, childcare and cleaning, make up the three main activities that account for about 60% of their daily activities. The shift in women's daily activities pre and post-war is broader than men's. A full 10% of women are spending less time on food preparation and cooking after the war, 4% are spending more time cleaning another 3% more on searching for fuel as their main activity. Looking for work and working have risen by 2% as main activities among women. The largest jump among women is in the increase in multiple activities, an 11% growth following the war.

While men's time has increased across almost all their main daily activities, women's has remained stable except in a few areas; of those citing looking for food and fuel as their main activity, women report that they are spending an extra hour on average per day doing so.

Clearly, for both sexes, the issue of fuel is of great urgency – and may explain why women are reporting less time spent on cooking – time that they has shifted into other areas of activity.





Health and Psychosocial



Impact of the War on Health and Mental Health

The highest reported health problem among all respondents is psychological trauma and stress. Men and women perceive themselves as suffering from it at a higher rate than each other, when in fact they seem to be equally suffering the traumatic effects of the war.

Figure 14: Percentage answering mental health as the primary health problem currently faced by boys and men

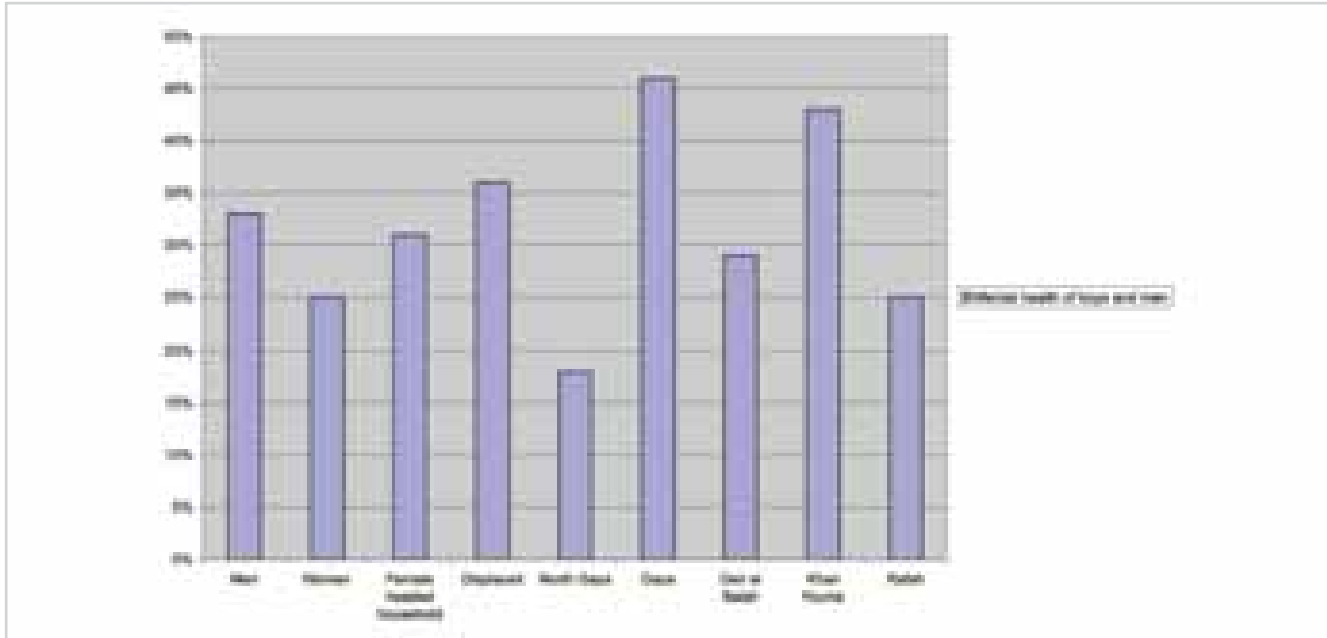
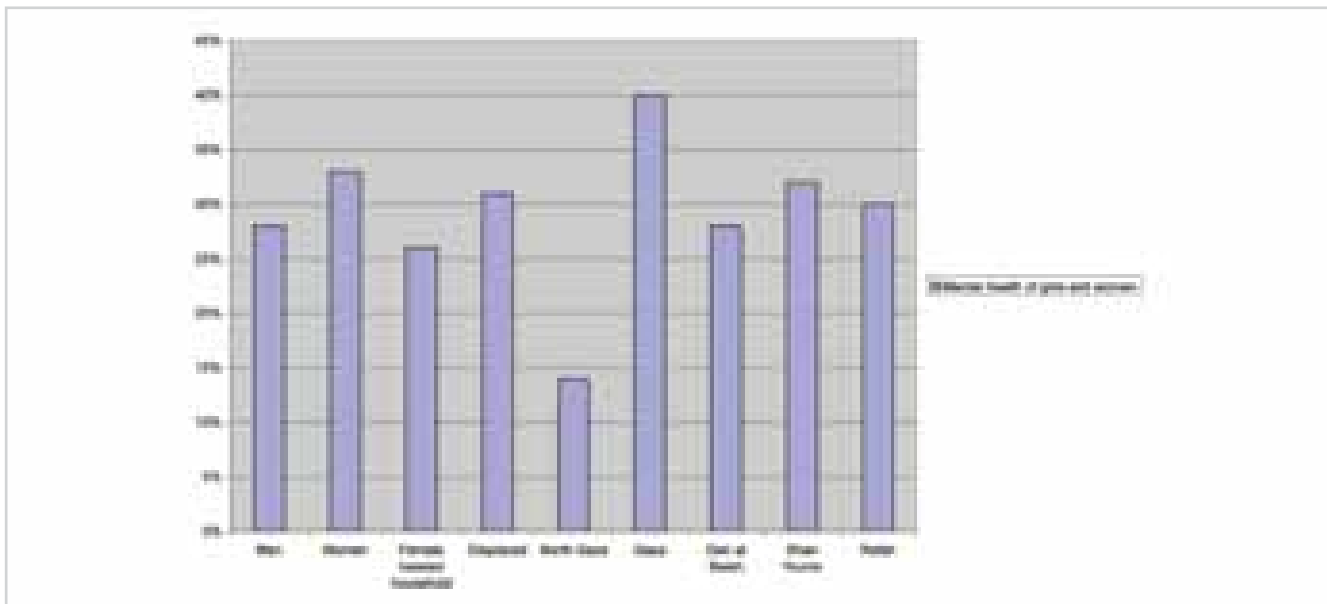


Figure 15: Percentage answering mental health as the primary health problem currently faced by girls and women



Approximately two thirds of respondents, (58% of male and 62% of females) report that their health is worse following the war, with the highest rate of worsened health expressed by residents in Rafah (at 80%). When asked about the nature of current health problems in their communities, the overwhelming response is “mental health, anxiety and stress” which accounts for a third of all responses. Men and the displaced report the highest levels of psychosocial trauma among men and boys (at 33% and 36% respectively), while women report the highest incidence among girls and women (also at 33%). Women and men seem to be suffering the same level of psychological trauma but do not recognize it in each other.

By governorate, men and boys are seen as having the highest level of post-war psychological trauma in Gaza City and Khan Younis (accounting for 46% and 43% of all health problems) , while for women and girls, it is also in Gaza City (40%) but much less so in Khan Younis (32%). These findings parallel those of an of initial health assessment conducted by the WHO in January 2009. That study concluded that mental health problems in Gaza were on the rise as a consequence of the war and the ongoing state of insecurity faced by the population, and also estimated that 20 to 50 thousand individuals would suffer from long term psychological effects of the war.

The response level on all other health problems was less than 5% for both sexes and by all respondents across the regions. The few significant differences were, 10% of respondents in Rafah citing anaemia and nutrition related problems among women and girls; and 13% of them also citing the same problem among men and boys. The WHO report warned of the slow deterioration in health as a consequence of poor nutrition arising from further decline in socio-economic and security conditions and quality of health care (WHO, 2009). Respondents in Rafah were also more likely to cite respiratory problems; with 6% citing it as a problem among males and 7% of them reporting it as a problem among females.

Table 19: Percentage answering mental health as the primary health problem currently faced by either gender

	Men	Women	Female headed household	Displaced	North Gaza	Gaza	Deir al Balah	Khan Younis	Rafah
Mental health of boys and men	33%	25%	31%	36%	18%	46%	29%	43%	25%
Mental health of girls and women	28%	33%	26%	31%	14%	40%	28%	32%	30%

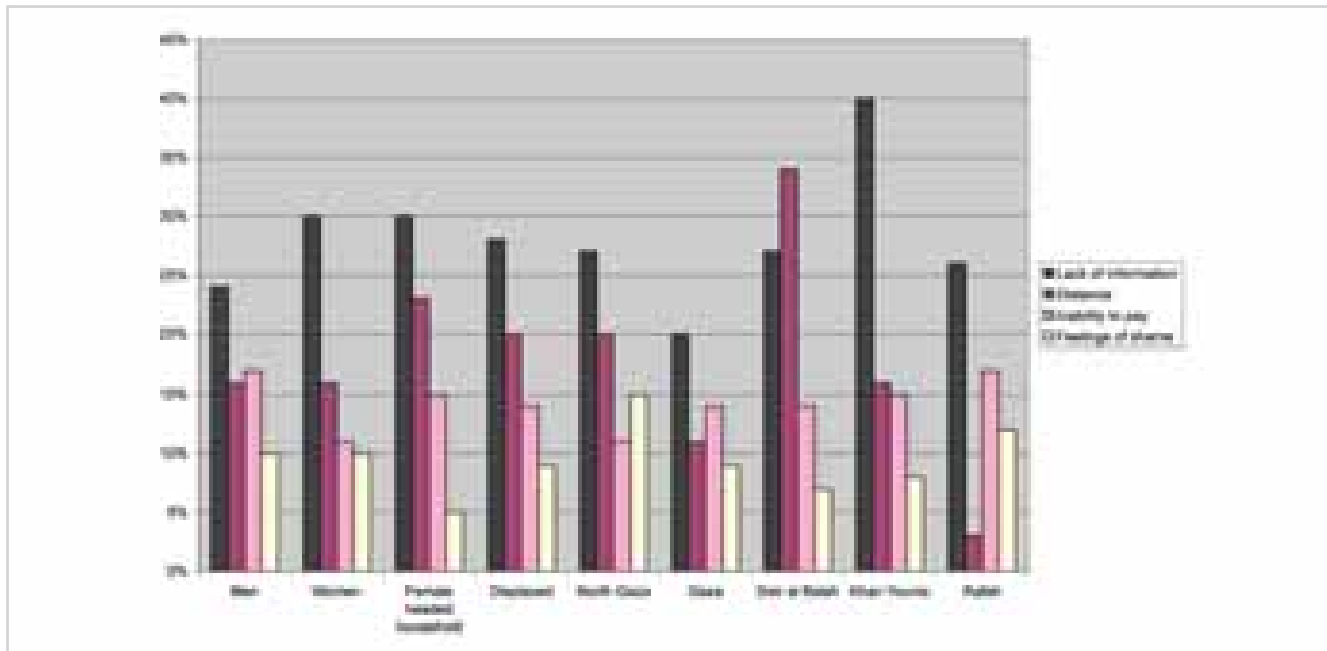
Increases in Risk Taking Behaviour

Sixty five percent of men and 52% of women cite an increase in risk-taking behaviours following the war. The highest rate of response is in Rafah (74%) and Khan Younis (72%) and the rate of response is also higher among those displaced during the war (67%). When asked what these were, three main responses were cited across the five governorates. In order of highest response these were: smoking at 38% to 52% (with the highest rate cited in Khan Younis and North Gaza); domestic violence against wives at 16% to 22%; and domestic violence against children at 10% to 19% (with the highest rate of response in Rafah (27%). An increase in drug abuse was also cited by approximately 8% of all respondents with women more likely to cite it than men (at 10% compared to 6%) and the highest level of reporting drug abuse is in Khan Younis (12%).

Access to Psychosocial support

Throughout the survey findings, respondents regardless of gender, region, or social category consistently rate psychological trauma and stress as a main concern and express a critical need for psychosocial services. Thus, the overwhelming obstacles to getting access to psychosocial support are material and informational rather than social reservations or taboos.

Figure 16: The main obstacles in accessing psychosocial support



The most significant obstacles that respondents gave concerning access to psychosocial support were lack of information of where they could access it (at approximately 25% of all respondents), distance to the closest location (16%), lack of ability to pay for it (14%), and feelings of shame (10%).

Women and female headed households report they have a greater lack of information of where to access psychosocial support than do men. In contrast, men cite an inability to pay and the issue of distance (which is also an economic reason given the high cost of transport due to the fuel blockade in relation to incomes). The issue of shame is most cited by respondents in North Gaza. Overall, the patterns of response show that the major obstacles are not lack of willingness to get psychosocial support but a lack of material means and knowledge of how and where to get it.

In the absence of available psychosocial services men and women throughout Gaza are clearly depending on other informal forms of support. Men and women both cite spouses as their main source of support and comfort in times of distress at about 30% for both sexes. However, given the percent of married men and women in the overall sample, this means that only approximately half of married men and women seek support in each other. In terms of secondary responses there is a strong divergence by gender. Men's second highest response is "friends" at 32%; a response cited by a much less 23% of women. Instead, women turn to older female family members (13%) and also have a higher rate than men of "I don't seek support from anyone" at 12% compared to a 10% response to the same question by males. Among all respondents, health clinics, NGOs and community centers, religious leaders and UNRWA all rate below a 4% response rate. One other significant finding is that the displaced are the most likely not to seek help from anyone at 16%. The patterns of response once again show that women's main route of recourse for support remains overwhelmingly within the family, while men even when it comes to psychological support are more likely to seek help outside of it.

Table 20: The main obstacles to access for psychosocial support

	Men	Women	Female headed household	Displaced	North Gaza	Gaza	Deir al Balah	Khan Younis	Rafah
Lack of information	24%	30%	30%	28%	27%	20%	27%	40%	26%
Distance	16%	16%	23%	20%	20%	11%	34%	16%	3%
Inability to pay	17%	11%	15%	14%	11%	14%	14%	15%	17%
Feelings of shame	10%	10%	5%	9%	15%	9%	7%	8%	12%

Access to Health Care for Women

Distance to health services is the main obstacle cited to women's access to health care. A third of women say that fathers or husbands make the main decision regarding a female household member's access to health care.

A full 39% of all women and 46% of female headed households cite distance as the main obstacle to women and girls getting access to health care. Another 12% of women and female headed households state, it is the lack of female health staff. These are followed by the inability to take time away from domestic duties at 14%, and the lack of ability to pay (11%). The question was only asked to female respondents (including female headed households) so comparisons to men's perceptions are not possible to make. By region, women in Khan Younis see distance as the most major obstacle (48%), while women in Rafah have the lowest rate of this response (21%). In terms of decision-making about women's health care, a question asked to both males and females, once again, there is a gender disparity in perceptions about decision making.

Table 21: Who makes the decision about girls and women's access to health care?

	Men	Women
Husband/father	29%	35%
Mother/wife	43%	37%
Both together	29%	25%

Men are much more likely to perceive the decision is made by women and vice versa. However, almost 30% of men say they take the decision, while 35% of women say they do. Men also perceive more cooperative decision making than women do at 29% versus women 25%.





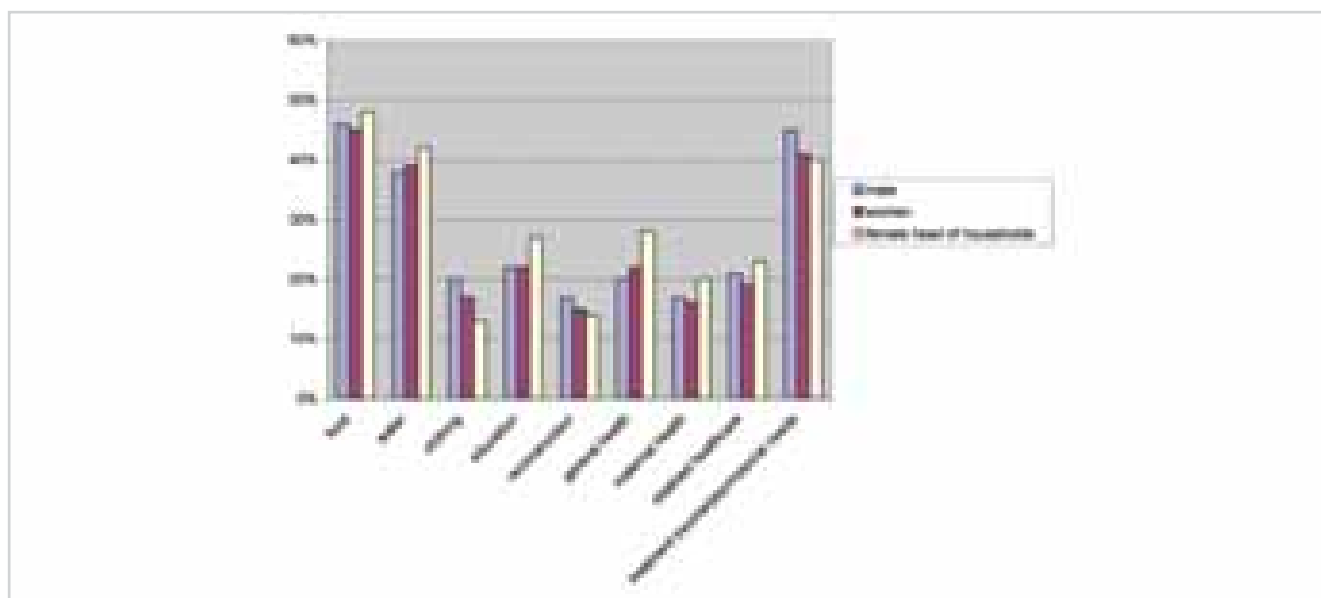
Food Security and Nutrition



Household Consumption and Food Security– Post-war Impacts

Post-war, households report a rise in their expenditure on the basics of food and water at the expense of perceived secondary needs such as clothing, education and health care. The one anomaly is households reporting as great a rise in expenditures on psychosocial health as on food and water, suggesting that it has become a basic and urgent need.

Figure 17: Increases in household expenditure after the war

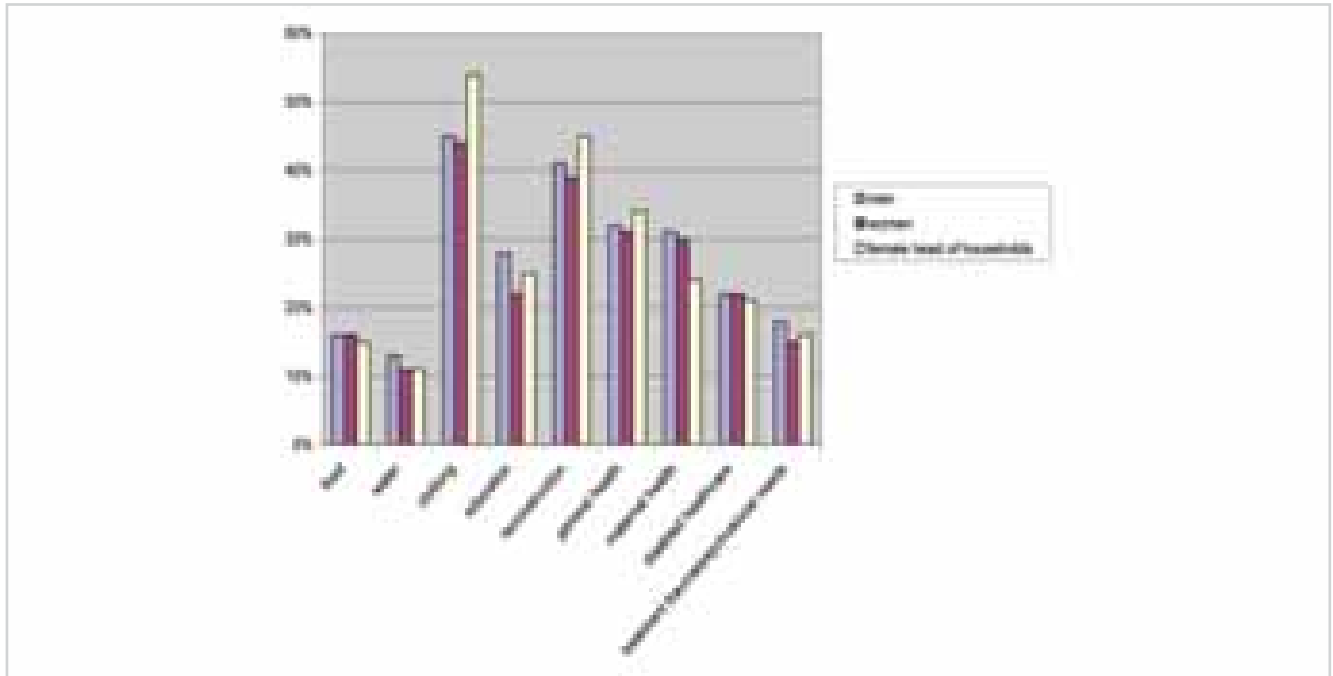


There is a strong consensus between men and women concerning changes in household expenditure after the war. The overall pattern is that expenditure has increased between approximately 40 to 45% on three basic needs; food, water and psychosocial health. The rise in expenditure in these has been at the cost of spending on education, clothing, and health care (including maternal health). The one area in which there is a relative lack of consensus between men and women is in terms of education. Men cite a 28% decline in spending on education while women cite a lesser 22% decline in spending on education.

Rather than see all the responses as reflecting actual changes in expenditure, it may be more useful to see them as expressions of urgent needs and priorities. Food and water (particularly bottled water, which according to a 2006 PCBS survey, 45% of Gazan families depend on) being the basic needs that low income households have to cover before anything else. The reported rise in expenditure on psychosocial treatment, given the limited amount of such services (and the fact that they are generally free), more likely suggests that families see this also as a basic and most urgent need. Women reporting a lesser drop than men in expenditure on education may also reflect women's greater emotional or material investment in their children's education.



Figure 18: Decreases in household expenditure after the war



Among female headed households the same pattern of increased expenditure on basic needs of food, water and psychosocial health at the cost of expenditure on secondary needs (of clothing education and general health) is similar but more dramatic. For instance, almost 50% of female headed households say they have increased expenditure on food and another 42% state they have increased expenditure on water.

Table 22: What effects have you felt on household expenditures after the war?

		Food	Water	Clothing	Education	Reconstruction	General health	Maternal Health	Disabled health care	Treatment/trauma/psycho-social needs
Men	Increase	46%	38%	20%	22%	17%	20%	17%	21%	45%
	Decrease	16%	13%	45%	28%	41%	32%	31%	22%	18%
Women	Increase	45%	39%	17%	22%	15%	22%	16%	19%	41%
	Decrease	16%	11%	44%	22%	39%	31%	30%	22%	15%
Female headed households	Increase	48%	42%	13%	27%	14%	28%	20%	23%	40%
	Decrease	15%	11%	54%	25%	45%	34%	24%	21%	16%

Food Allocation Within the Household – Who Loses When There Is a Shortage?

Approximately 20% of households said that boys' needs are prioritized when there is a food shortage. The least likely household members to get priority in a food shortage are elderly men and women. Households in deep poverty show the greatest degree of sharing scarcity across all household members.

Figure 19: If there is a shortage of food in the household whose needs are prioritized? (By male respondents)

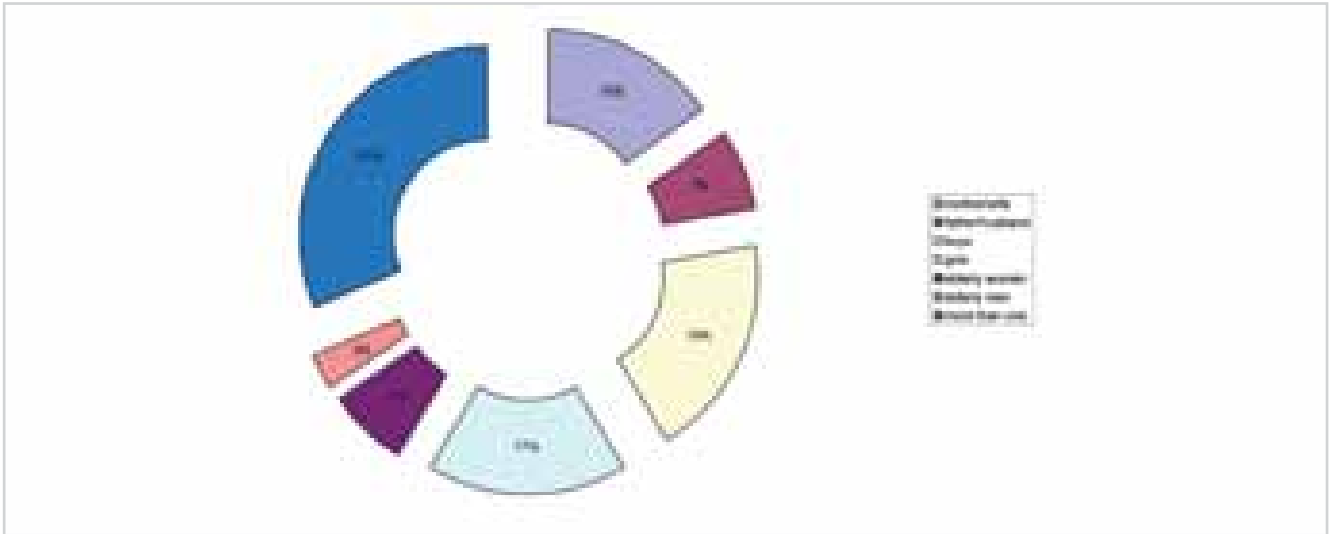


Figure 20: If there is a shortage of food in the household whose needs are prioritized? (By female respondent)

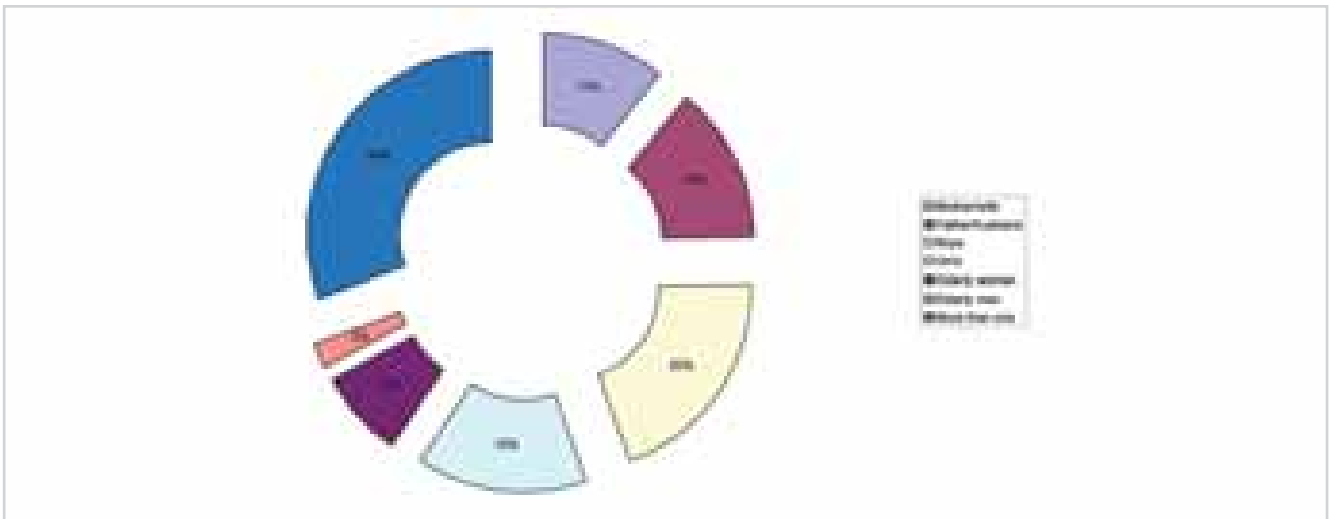


Figure 21: If there is a shortage of food in the household whose needs are prioritized? (By female headed household)



Figure 22: If there is a shortage of food in the household whose needs are prioritized? (Respondents living in deep poverty)



When resources are scarce, their allocation among various members of the household is often unequal and based on various biases; gender and generation being the two most prominent. In societies with a socially stated preference for boys (such as Gaza and the oPt generally), it is often girls who suffer in relation to brothers. The importance given to male breadwinners can also be translated into their receiving greater shares of scarce food at the expense of wives and mothers. Further, aged family members, if perceived as weak or not economically active, are also more likely to be disadvantaged in their share of food resources.

Across the four different categories of respondents, the highest response to “whose needs are prioritized when there is a shortage of food in the household” was “multiple household members”, stated by approximately a third of respondents. However, the next greatest response was “boys” cited by 19% of men, 20% of women, 21% of female headed households and 17% of those living in deep poverty. Men report only a slight prioritizing of boys’ nutrition over girls’ (a 2% gap), however, women state the gap is 5% more for boys; and among female headed households this rises to 7% stating that boys are favoured in relation to girls. The least likely household members to get priority when there is a shortage of food are the elderly – and among them – elderly men are cited as the most vulnerable.

Who Gives Up Food for Others

Looking at the issue of food allocation from the other side – in terms of who gives it up for others – we find a regular pattern. Those with power over distribution of food (husbands and wives) state that they themselves give up for other household members. However, once again there is a gender gap in perception. Men see themselves as making the main sacrifice (at 53%) while women similarly see themselves as the main family member sacrificing their share of food for others at an even higher 59% than men.

Figure 23: If there is a shortage of food in the household who is least likely to get food so others can eat? (Male respondents)

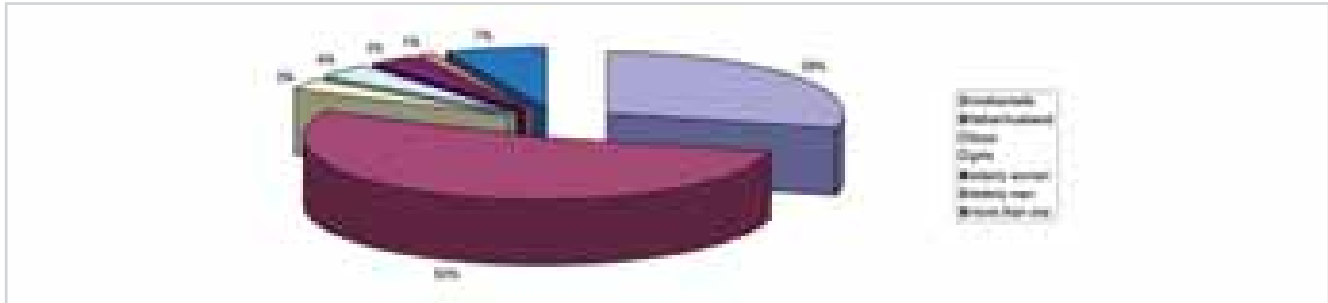


Figure 24: If there is a shortage of food in the household who is least likely to get food so others can eat? (Female respondents)

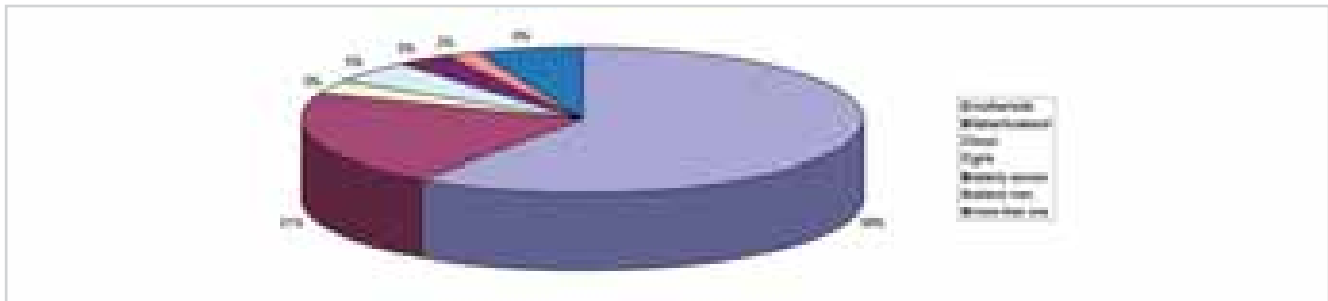
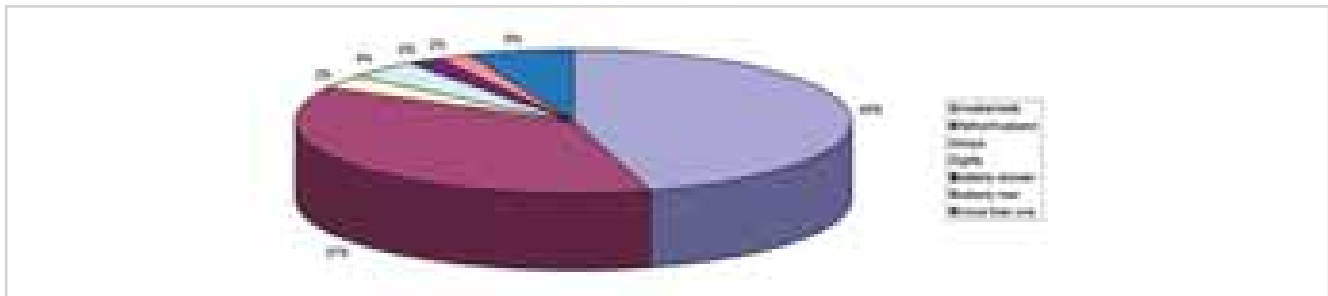


Figure 25: If there is a shortage of food who is likely to get food so others can eat? (Respondents living in deep poverty)



Given that women are overwhelmingly in charge of food preparation and thus have greater knowledge and control over distributing it to various family members throughout the day, it is likely that their perception is closer to the reality than men's more limited experience at meal times.

Surprisingly, the most equitable distribution of food when there is a shortage appears to be within households in deep poverty. In both the questions, their patterns of response showed a much greater rate of sharing scarcity across household members. This is especially significant given that households in deep poverty tend to have the greatest number of household members, in comparison to others.

Access To and Experience of Food Assistance

While 60% of respondents claim to have received food aid since the end of the war, about half of them express dissatisfaction with the assistance received. The main reason for dissatisfaction is with the quantity of assistance but another 15% say that the aid is not appropriate to their needs. Women, the displaced and respondents in the Rafah area are most likely to assess the food assistance they received as not appropriate to their needs.

In the early aftermath of the war, UNDP's survey (February 3rd, 2009) found less than 20% of the population they surveyed had received food assistance during the Israeli operations or after the ceasefire.

Table 23: Have you or your family received food assistance during the Israeli operations or after the ceasefire? (February 2009)

	Men	Women	Deep poverty	Below poverty line	Above poverty line
Yes	17%	16%	21%	17%	13%
No, we did not receive	83%	84%	79%	83%	87%

(Source: UNDP February 2009)

Figure 26: Have you or your family received food assistance? (First week of March 2009)

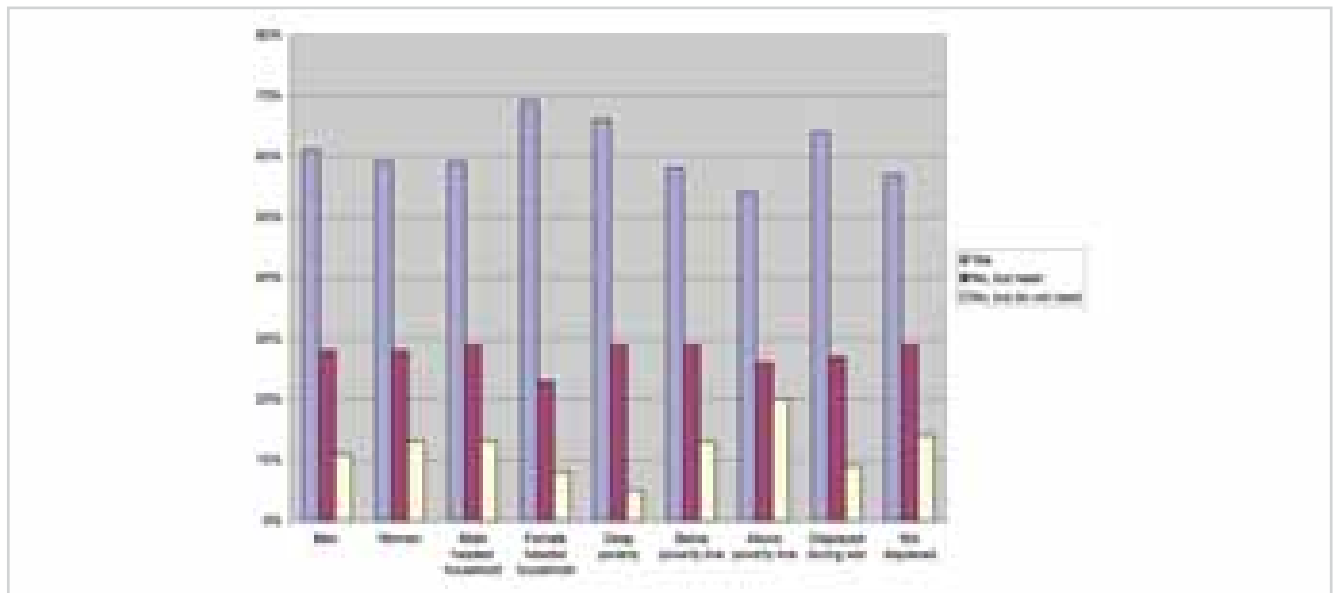
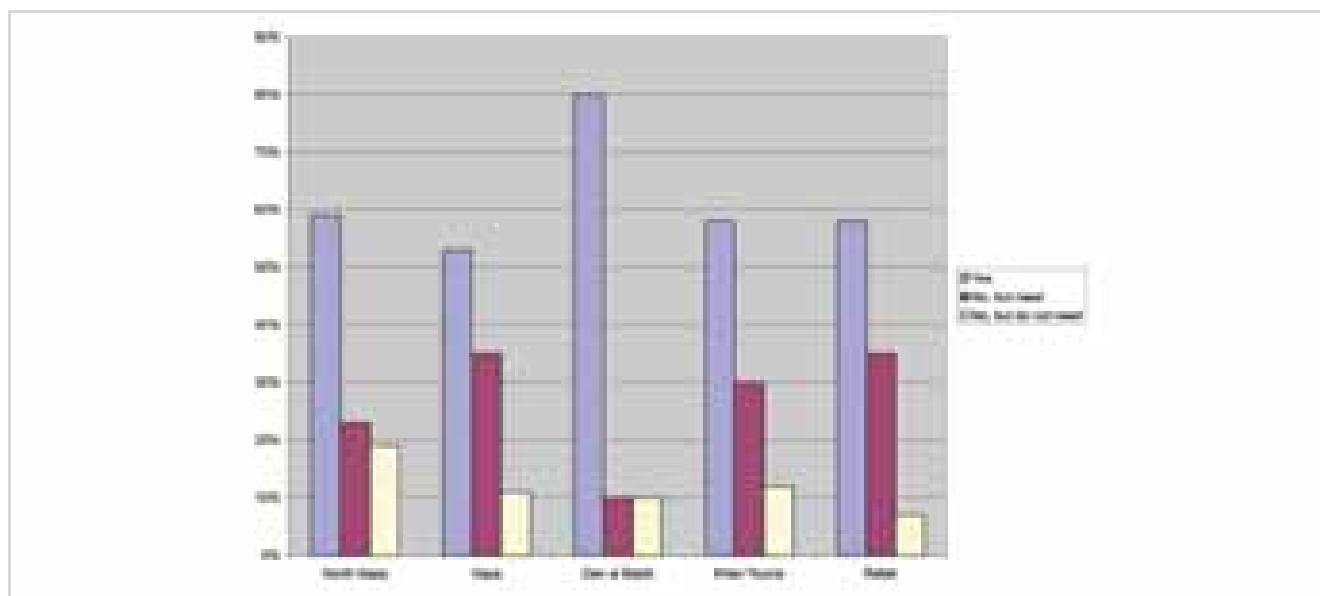


Figure 27: Have you or your family received food assistance? (First week of March 2009, by governorate)



By the first week of March when the UN Gender Task Force survey was undertaken, the situation had changed dramatically and approximately 60% of all of those surveyed stated that they had received some form of food assistance. However, approximately 30% of respondents said they needed food aid but had not received any. Four main populations were the highest recipients of food, these were: households in deep poverty (66%), households displaced during the war (64%), female headed households (69%) and respondents living in Deir al Balah governorate (80%). Overall, this suggests that the food aid that was distributed has been relatively well targeted at the most needy populations.

Table 24: Have you or your family received food assistance? (First week March 2009)

	Men	Women	Deep poverty	Below poverty line	Above poverty line	Displaced during war	Not displaced	North Gaza	Gaza	Deir al Balah	Khan Younis	Rafah	Male headed household	Female headed household
Yes	61%	59%	66%	58%	54%	64%	57%	59%	53%	80%	58%	58%	59%	69%
No, but need	28%	28%	29%	29%	26%	27%	29%	23%	35%	10%	30%	35%	29%	23%
No, but do not need	11%	13%	5%	13%	20%	9%	14%	19%	11%	10%	12%	7%	13%	8%

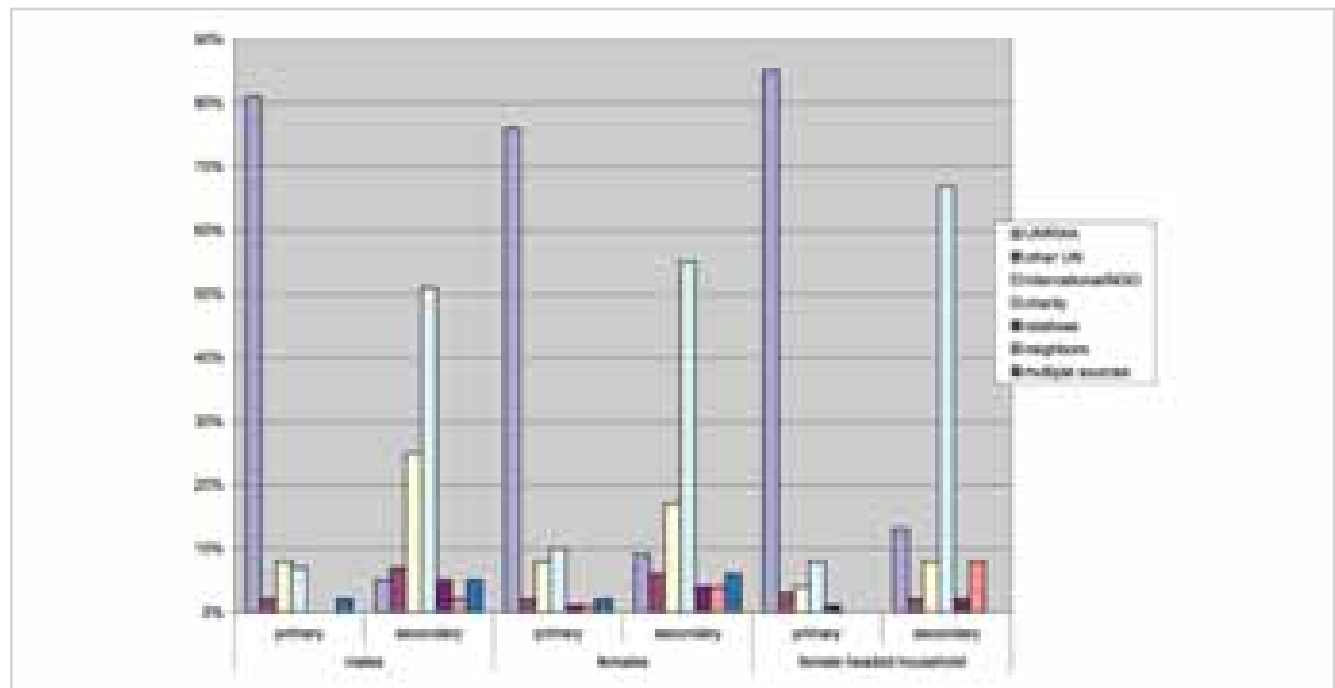
In terms of sources of the assistance, UNRWA is overwhelmingly the primary source cited by approximately 80% of respondents. However, female respondents were more likely to mention charities and international NGOs as primary sources than do either men or female headed households.

Table 25: Primary and secondary sources of household assistance

		Source of assistance						
		UNRWA	Other UN agencies	International/ NGO	Charity	Relatives	Neighbors	Multiple sources
Males	primary	81%	2%	8%	7%	0%	0%	2%
	secondary	5%	7%	25%	51%	5%	2%	5%
Females	primary	76%	2%	8%	10%	1%	1%	2%
	secondary	9%	6%	17%	55%	4%	4%	6%
Female headed household	primary	85%	3%	4%	8%	1%	0%	0%
	secondary	13%	2%	8%	67%	2%	8%	0%

What is also significant is the degree to which respondents cite secondary sources of food assistance – suggesting a pattern similar to that concerning sources of income – families rely on multiple sources of assistance to make up for food deficits like they rely on multiple sources of income to make up for income poverty.

Figure 28: Household primary and secondary source of assistance



Assessments of Food Assistance

Men's and women's level of satisfaction with the assistance received is similar at approximately 50% satisfied and 50%

not satisfied. Of those least satisfied are two of the populations who were main recipients of food assistance: households in deep poverty (61% dissatisfied) and respondents in households displaced during the war (63% dissatisfied). Another two of the greatest recipients of food aid express the most satisfaction (respondents in Deir al Balah governorate at 69% satisfied as well as 55% of female headed households). However, it is respondents in Khan Younis that express the least satisfaction in terms of food aid in comparison to any other region or social category (at 68% dissatisfied).

Figure 29: Are you generally satisfied with the food assistance you received?

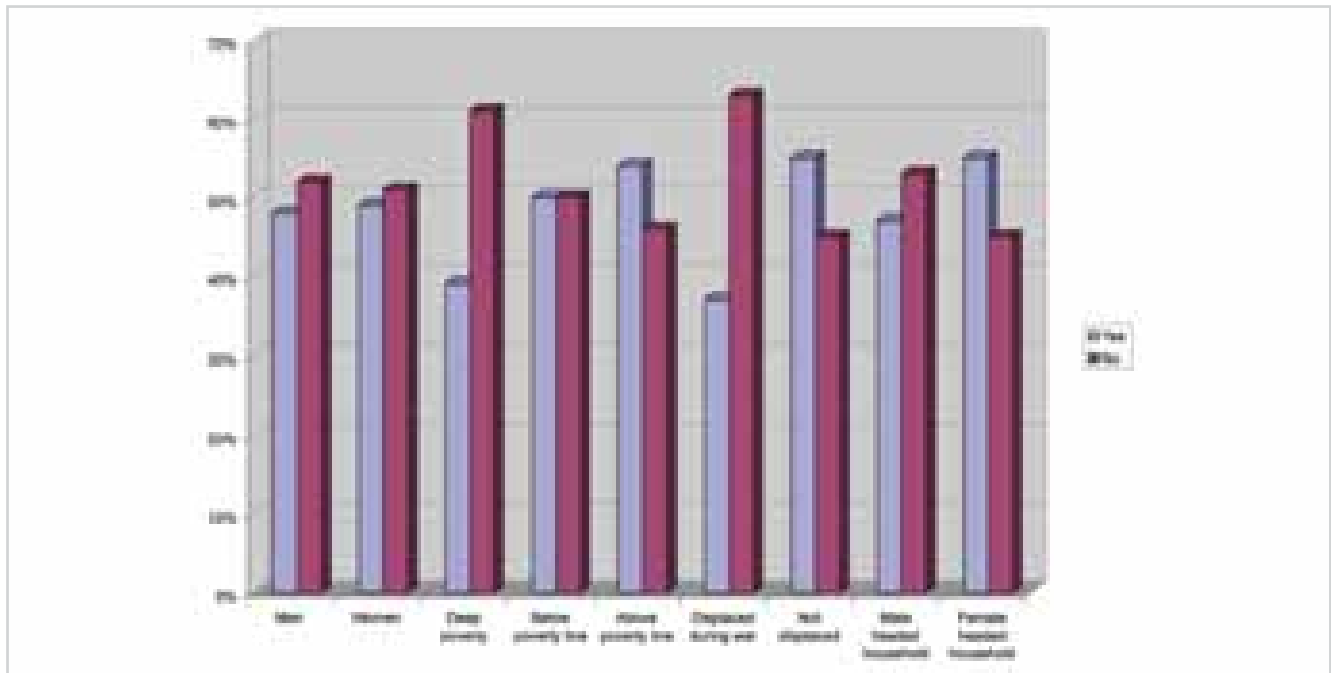


Figure 30: Are you generally satisfied with the food assistance you received? (By governorate)

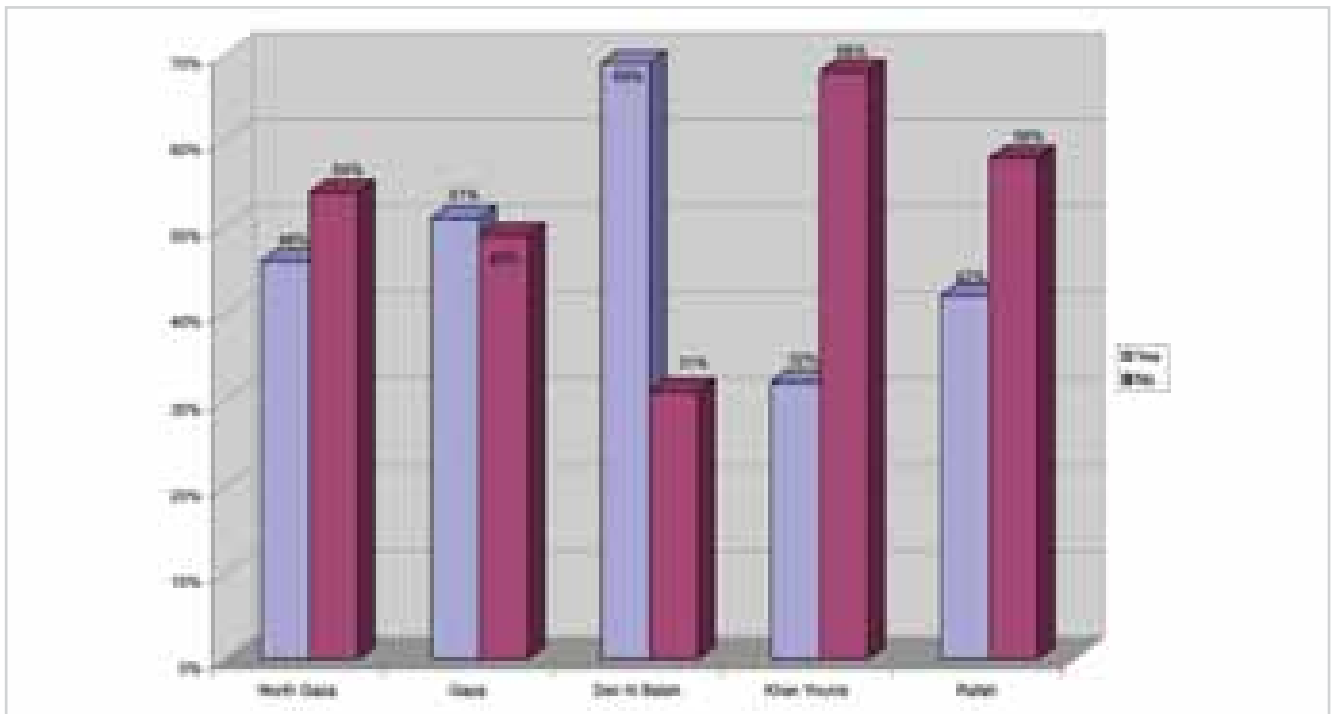


Table 26: Are you generally satisfied with the food assistance you received?

	Men	Women	Deep poverty	Below poverty line	Above poverty line	Displaced during war	Not displaced	North Gaza	Gaza	Deir al Balah	Khan Younis	Rafah	Male headed household	Female headed household
Yes	48%	49%	39%	50%	54%	37%	55%	46%	51%	69%	32%	42%	47%	55%
No	52%	51%	61%	50%	46%	63%	45%	54%	49%	31%	68%	58%	53%	45%

The main reason for dissatisfaction is with the quantity of food aid, with this being the main response given by approximately 50% of men and women. Low quantity as a source of dissatisfaction is highest among respondents in deep poverty. Given their large household size, this explains their high overall dissatisfaction with food aid. North Gaza and Deir al Balah, which are both rated relatively better in overall satisfaction are also where one finds the highest dissatisfaction in terms of quantity. The second main reason given by respondents is that the assistance is, "not appropriate to our needs". This is cited by greater numbers of women (17%) than men (13%); and greater numbers of the displaced (20%) and is highest amongst respondents in the Rafah governorate (28%).

Figure 31: Reasons for dissatisfaction of food assistance received (By sex)

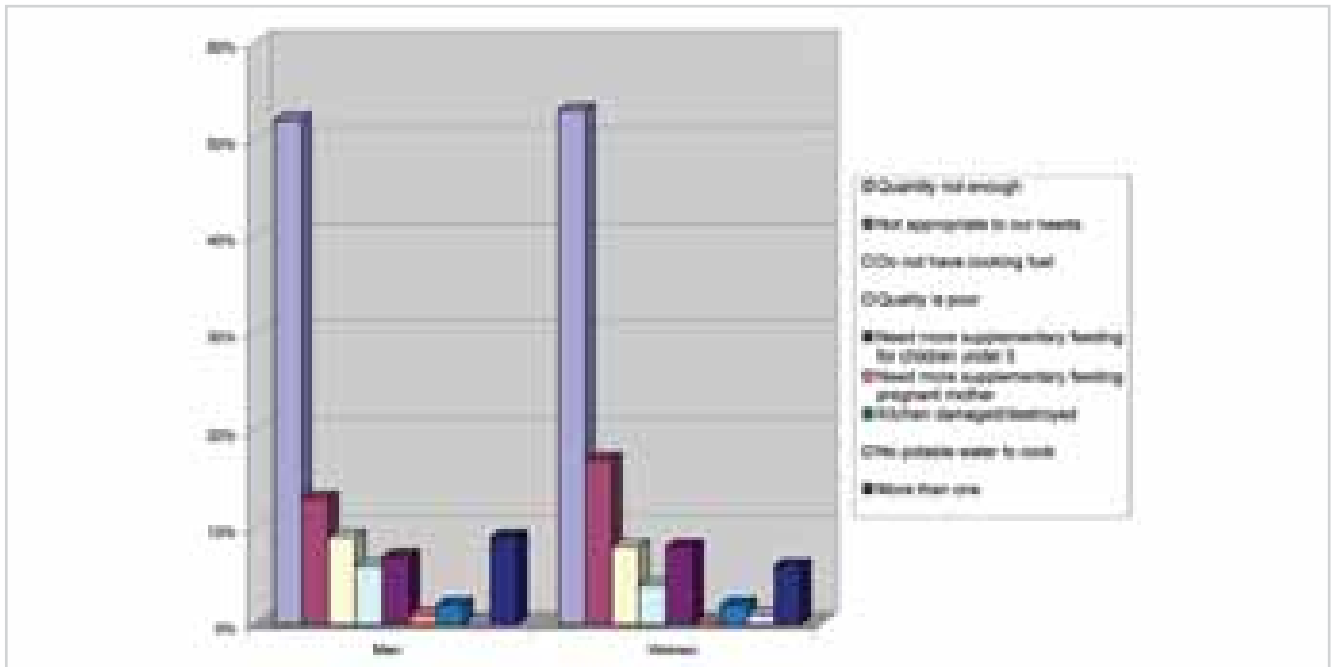


Figure 32: Reasons for dissatisfaction of food assistance received

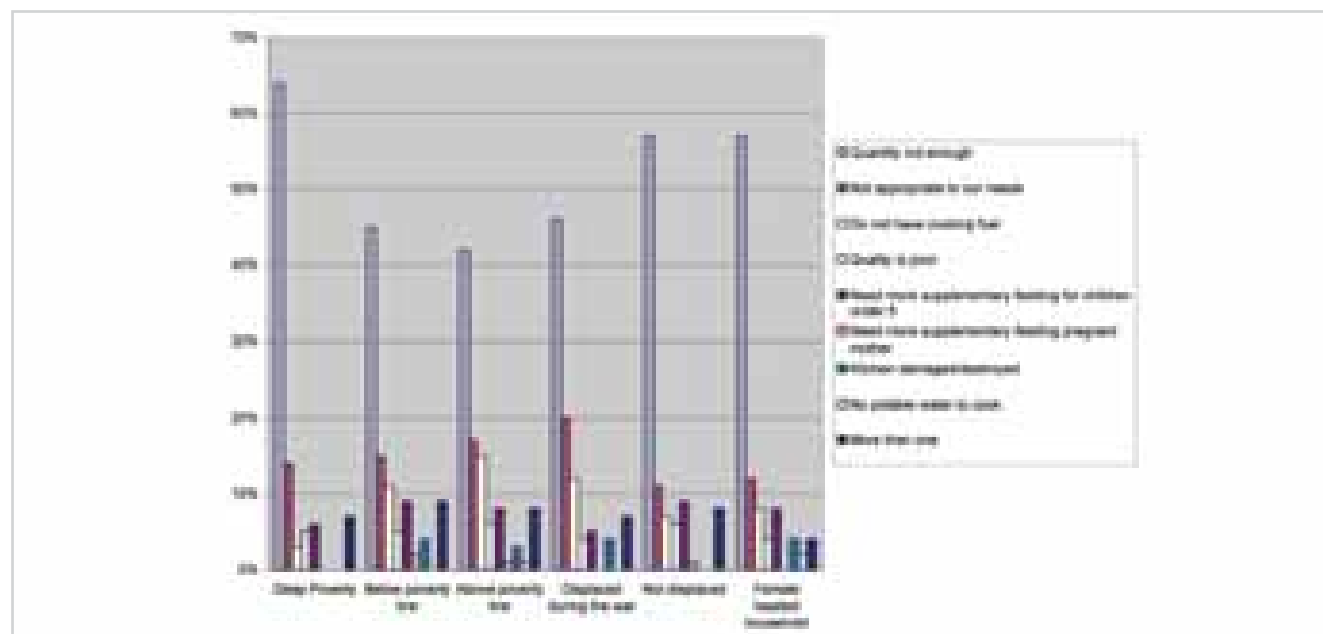


Table 27: If not satisfied with food assistance you received what was the reason?

	Men	Women	Deep Poverty	Below poverty line	Above poverty line	Displaced during the war	Not displaced	North Gaza	Gaza	Deir al Balah	Khan Younis	Rafah	Male headed household	Female headed household
Quantity not enough	52%	53%	64%	45%	42%	46%	57%	62%	54%	64%	48%	39%	52%	57%
Not appropriate to our needs	13%	17%	14%	15%	17%	20%	11%	14%	17%	9%	7%	28%	16%	12%
Do not have cooking fuel	9%	8%	3%	11%	15%	12%	7%	4%	5%	4%	23%	4%	9%	8%
Quality is poor	6%	4%	5%	5%	6%	4%	6%	4%	6%	4%	7%	4%	6%	4%
Need more supplementary feeding for children under 5	7%	8%	6%	9%	8%	5%	9%	4%	8%	5%	6%	15%	8%	8%
Need more supplementary feeding pregnant mother	1%	0%	0%	2%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Kitchen damaged/destroyed	2%	2%	0%	4%	3%	4%	0%	1%	1%	0%	3%	4%	2%	4%
No potable water to cook	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%
More than one	9%	6%	7%	9%	8%	7%	8%	12%	6%	13%	4%	7%	8%	4%

The meaning of “not appropriate to our needs” might be found in some of the other categories of response, where 15% of respondents in Rafah cite a need for more supplementary feeding for children under five, as do 9% of respondents under the poverty line and 8% of women overall. Lack of cooking fuel is cited by 12% of respondents in households displaced during the war and 23% of respondents in the Khan Younis governorate.



Water and Sanitation



The vast majority of respondents (96%) stated that they do have access to latrines and bathing facilities. However as was seen in the analysis on changes in expenditure following the war, water is among the three main commodities that households have increased their spending on (at more than 40% of all respondents). Thus, the primary problem of access to water seems to be most related to the issue of potable water rather than water for sanitary purposes.

However, while 75% of respondents said no one collects water in the household as they are connected to the mains supply, only 55% of all respondents said they had no problems with water and were connected to the water supply. Thus a problem remains for the 25% of households who have access to water mains and 20% who do not.

Twenty six percent of men and women and 33% of female headed households said their households suffered damage to the water network (with the highest response in Gaza City at 32%, followed by Khan Younis at 31%). Another 7% stated that they suffered from an insufficient supply with a slightly higher response rate from women and the highest response in Rafah (at 10%). As much as 4% cited the high price of water (highest in Rafah), though it is not clear whether this is for potable water or not, and 5% cited multiple causes of lack of access.

The majority of women said they have reliable access to sanitary materials. Less reliable access was reported by women in the poorest households as well among the displaced. It is telling that men in these households showed little awareness of this problem facing their female household members.

In Gaza, as elsewhere women are the key influencers of the public health of their household members. Thus the inclusion of women's perspectives at various stages of water and sanitation health programmes is a must. It is women who most immediately and on a daily basis are charged with responding to the problems and effects on their families of everything from household water supply issues to street drainage inadequacies in their immediate environment.





Changes In Access to Education



The displaced and residents of Khan Younis cite the greatest drop in school attendance with more than 50% saying that girls and boys have stopped attending school following the war. Overall 32% of respondents say there has been a decline in school attendance following the war. However, it is necessary to be careful with these responses given that they reflect general perceptions rather than statements that children from their own household have actually stopped attending. In terms of gender, the highest response that only girls stopped going to school was among female headed households (13%), among residents of Deir al Balah (12%) and Rafah (10%).

Table 28: War's affects on school attendance

	Men	Women	Female headed household	Displaced	North Gaza	Gaza	Deir al Balah	Khan Younis	Rafah
Boys and girls stopped going to school after war	34%	30%	33%	52%	8%	29%	30%	53%	41%
Only girls stopped	7%	8%	13%	6%	5%	7%	12%	5%	10%
Only boys stopped	4%	3%	5%	4%	2%	4%	5%	3%	4%

The main reason respondents gave for the decline in school attendance, was feelings of insecurity cited by more than 43% of respondents but higher among women (47%), the displaced and female headed households(44%), and highest among residents of Khan Younis (59%).

In order to ensure that all girls and boys benefit equally from education it is essential to understand the social, security and gender dynamics that might place constraints on them, and specially for displaced girls and boys.

Table 29: Main reason affecting school attendance after the war

	Men	Women	Female headed household	Displaced	North Gaza	Gaza	Deir al Balah	Khan Younis	Rafah
Feeling of insecurity	40%	47%	44%	44%	39%	43%	43%	59%	25%





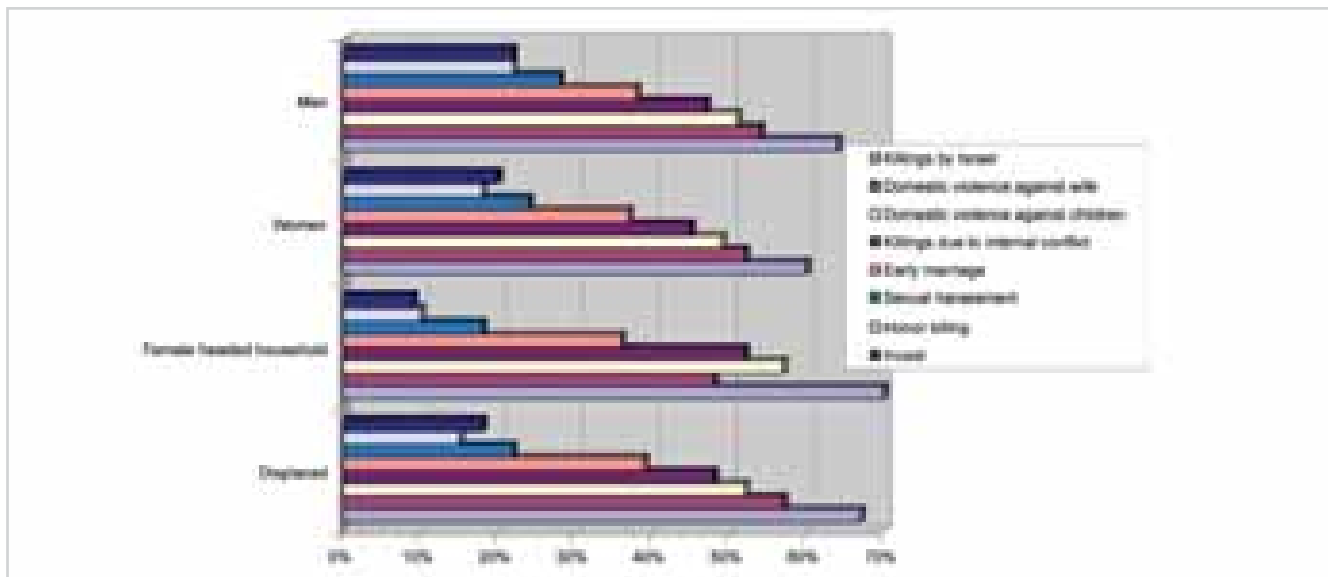
Protection and Access to Justice



Perceptions of a Rise in Post-war Violence including Gender-Based Violence

Respondents express a similar high level of concern over domestic violence as they do towards Israeli military violence. The highest reported rise in domestic violence against women is amongst households displaced by the war and in the southern Gaza Strip where there is also the highest reporting of an increase of domestic violence against children.

Figure 33: Perceived increase in forms of violence



Given the traumatic experience of violence during the Israeli military assault on Gaza, it is not surprising that respondents continue to perceive their communities as driven with multiple and rising forms of violence.

When asked about types and levels of violence in their communities following the war, four types received the highest level of response. These were Israeli violence (62%), domestic violence against wives (50%), domestic violence against children (50%) and imprisonment in Palestine (50%). What is significant is the degree to which domestic violence is seen as at an equally high rate as military and political violence, suggesting that domestic violence evokes an equally high level of concern as Israeli military violence. While “killings by Israel” in actual fact declined after the war, the high rate of respondents citing it as increasing should be seen as an expression about the experience of Israeli military violence during the war. It may also express a sense that while the actual physical war may be over, the trauma of it continues to dominate the lives of men, women and their families.

In comparison to Israeli military violence, domestic violence is a much less acceptable societal problem to talk about. Thus the high rate of respondents citing its increase in the post-war period, suggests that it is not simply a matter of perception but is rather a matter of real concern.

Women and men across the five governorates report this high increase in incidence of domestic violence against wives compared to before and after the war. Southern Gaza tends to be higher with almost 70% of respondents in Rafah citing



its increase, followed by Khan Younis at 61%. Individuals in households displaced during the war also report higher increases in domestic violence against wives (at 57%) in relation to those not displaced during the war.

To some extent these findings are borne out by a recently held focus group in Khan Younis. In discussions held with 71 women by the Culture and Free Thought Center in early March, 15% of the interviewed women said that they faced a rise in domestic conflicts during the war. Those displaced during the war, in particular stated that they faced an increase in family conflict (CFTA 2009).

Violence against children as part of domestic violence is also perceived to have increased sharply during the post-war period. Fifty one percent of men, 52% of the displaced and 57% of female headed households claim that domestic violence against children increased after the war. In terms of locality, those that claimed the greatest rise in domestic violence against women also expressed the greatest rise in domestic violence against children. Sixty-one percent of respondents in Rafah and 59% of respondents in Khan Younis stated that domestic violence against children has risen in their communities.

Again, the findings of the CFTA focus group in Khan Younis tends to support these overall perceptions regarding the rise in family violence towards children. Women in displaced households said that places where many families sought shelter, such as public schools, were prone to also cause conflicts between women and children. The report also shows that women become nervous, verbally and physically abusing children especially during the course of the war.





Table 30: Has there been an increase or decrease in the following types of violence following the war?

	Change in extent	Men	Women	Female headed household	Displaced
Killings by Israel	increased	64%	60%	70%	67%
	decreased	16%	15%	9%	9%
Domestic violence against wife	increased	54%	52%	48%	57%
	decreased	16%	16%	15%	13%
Domestic violence against children	increased	51%	49%	57%	52%
	decreased	19%	20%	20%	19%
Killings due to internal conflict	increased	47%	45%	52%	48%
	decreased	29%	30%	27%	26%
Early marriage	increased	38%	37%	36%	39%
	decreased	29%	27%	30%	27%
Sexual harassment	increased	28%	24%	18%	22%
	decreased	32%	33%	42%	40%
Honor killing	increased	22%	18%	10%	15%
	decreased	32%	33%	44%	38%
Incest	increased	22%	20%	9%	18%
	decreased	31%	34%	47%	31%

Baseline Data: Domestic Violence in Gaza 2005

In the immediate aftermath of the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza in 2005, a survey of women in Gaza found that 23% of married women suffered physical abuse from their spouse over the previous year, 10% suffered sexual abuse over the same period and another 50% suffered from psychological abuse. This survey undertaken by PCBS on the oPt in 2005 is the only one of its kind – so must serve as the baseline. Although the rates of domestic violence were relatively high in both regions, married women in Gaza reported lower rates on all three types of domestic violence than their West Bank counterparts. One explanation for this was the timing of the survey in Gaza. In the immediate aftermath of the Israeli withdrawal, other perception surveys showed that there was high level of optimism and relief among the population generally. This suggests the extent to which public and military violence and domestic violence are linked both as a perception and as an actual experience.

Table 31: Ever-married women by type and level of domestic violence experienced over the past year (2005)

Gaza Strip			
	Sexual Abuse	Physical Abuse	Psychological Abuse
Any incident	10%	23%	50%
Three times or more	0.4 %	10%	40%
Life threatening		3%	

Source: Birzeit Women's Studies/World Bank 2009 based on PCBS 2005

However, in terms of repeated acts and the actual severity of the physical abuse the levels were lower. Three or more incidences of sexual abuse were cited by less than 1% of married women, 10% of married women experienced three or more incidence of physical abuse and 40% experienced three or more incidence of psychological abuse. And in terms of specific acts of physical violence that could be considered life threatening, it was experienced by 3% of married women at the hands of their spouses. While interventions need to be developed to address domestic violence in any form, it is also important to target women in households who suffer from repeated acts of domestic violence as well as those who suffer from its most life threatening forms.



Analysis of the 2005 data also showed what drives domestic violence, as well as what lowers it. Causal links were found between male unemployment, as well as experiences of military violence. Mitigating factors against domestic violence were women's employment and to a lesser degree their higher education, as well as the extent to which their communities offered them an enabling environment – in terms of high levels of social participation and integration (Birzeit Women's Studies/ World Bank 2009).

Safety and Access to Justice

While domestic violence was cited as the primary safety problem facing women and girls in their communities, public and political violence was cited as the main safety and security problem facing men and boys. Significantly more male than female respondents cited men's vulnerability to public violence – including internal violence – suggesting it is of critical concern to them. Among the displaced, there was more fear for women from public violence than domestic violence.

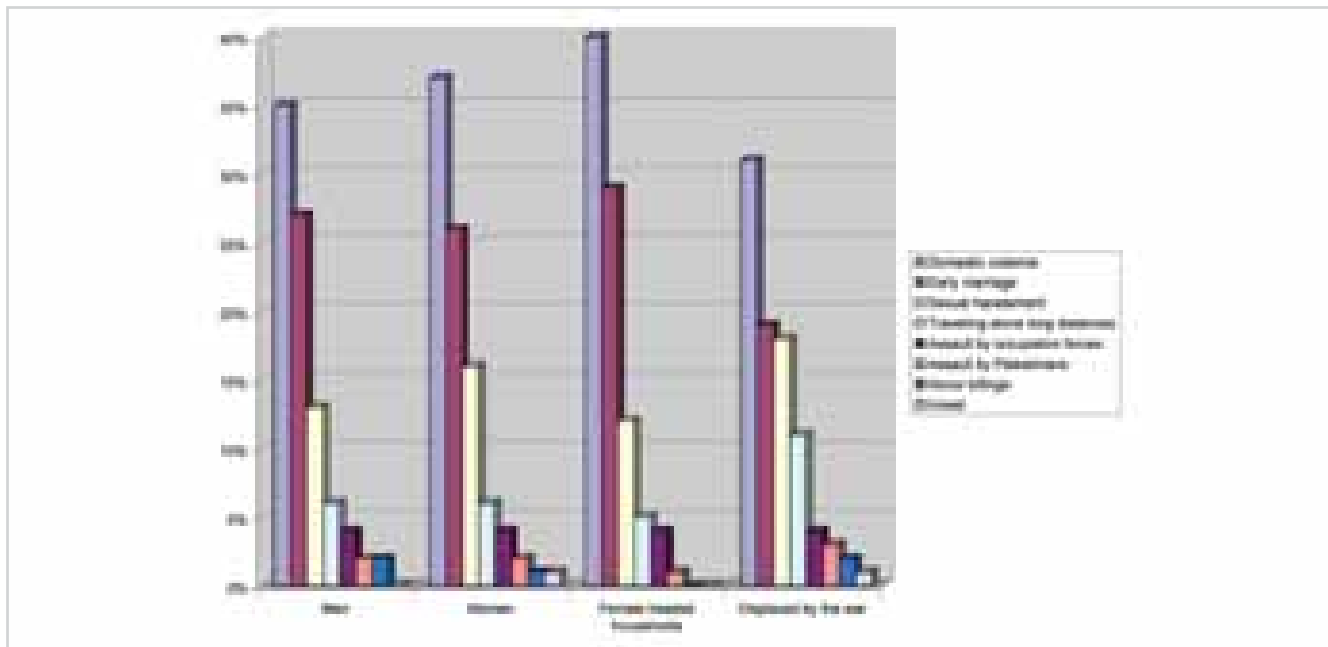
Domestic violence also comes out as the most prominent safety problem suffered by women and girls in their communities according to respondents. Interestingly, when posed as a safety problem faced by women and girls, it rates even higher than Israeli violence; 35% of men and 37% women, 40% of female headed households and 31% of the displaced citing it, compared to all of them only citing Israeli physical assault at a rate of 4%. By region, the range is 41% citing domestic violence as the main safety problem in Gaza city to a low of 24% in Deir al Balah. The second highest response was "early marriage" cited by 27% of men and 26% of women. Early marriage (considered marriage below the age of 18) is a longstanding issue in Palestinian society that has most consistently been linked with poverty. By governorate, Deir al Balah came out the highest in citing early marriage as the main safety problem (45%) and Khan Younis the lowest, at 15%.

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Sexual harassment, travelling long distances, assault by occupation forces and by Palestinians all came out under 15% –except among one category of respondents– those displaced by the war. The displaced are less likely to cite domestic violence and early marriage than those not displaced, and more likely than them to cite issues of security facing women and girls that are an immediate experience of the war and vulnerable living conditions. As such, on each of these just mentioned categories, their responses are higher to significantly higher than other categories of respondents.



Figure 34: Main safety/security problems faced by women and girls in the community

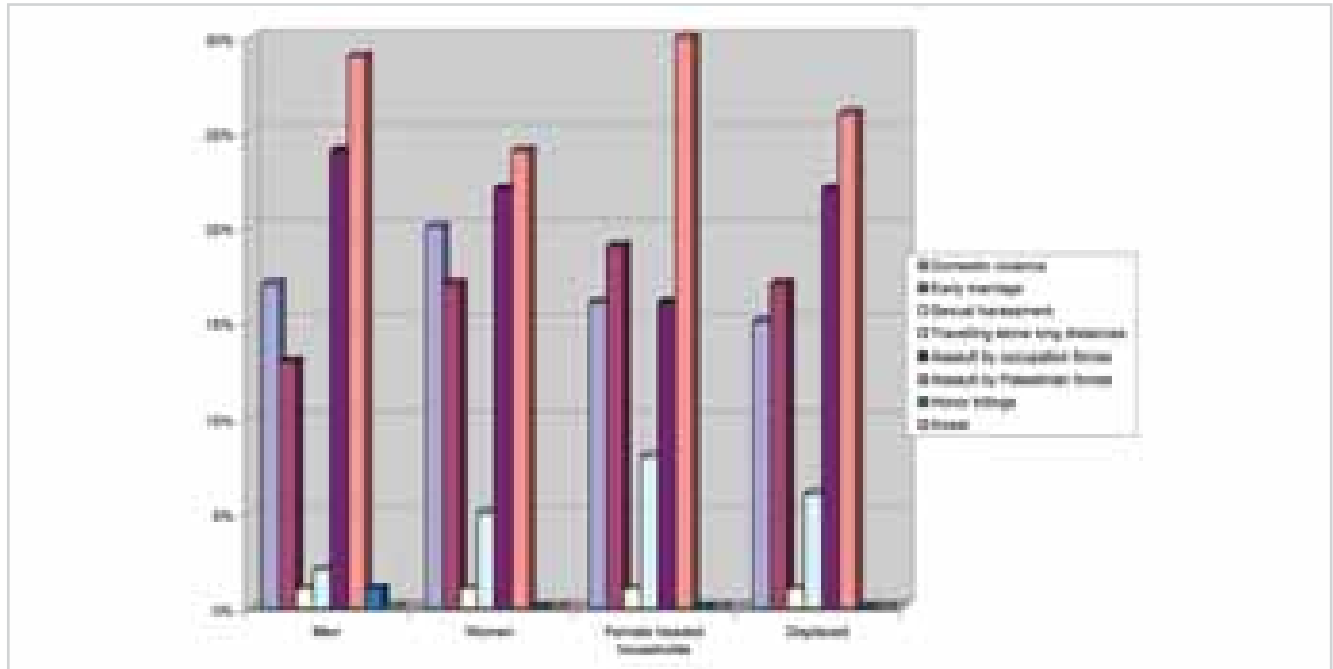


In comparison to women and girls the security issues that face men and boys most cited by respondents were forms of public violence rather than private and domestic. The two highest responses were physical assault by Israeli military violence or by Palestinians, the two accounting for more than 50% of the responses. Internal Palestinian violence is cited at an even higher rate than Israeli violence as the main safety and security problem facing men and boys in their communities. Men (at 29%) and female headed households (at 30%) expressing the most heightened concern about men and boys' vulnerability to internal Palestinian violence.



Young men and boys are the major target of all forms of political violence. The recent study by Birzeit Women's Studies/ the World Bank, shows that between 2000 and 2007, men but especially young men constituted 94% of those killed in the Second Intifada in the oPt and 99% of those imprisoned. Men and boys between 18-29 years old accounted for 55.3% or 2966 deaths from September 29, 2000 to March 31, 2008 (Birzeit Women's Studies/ World Bank 2009).

Figure 35: Main safety/security problems faced by men and boys in the community



After political violence, the second largest safety problem facing men and boys is domestic violence, cited by approximately 18% of all respondents. Women, female headed households and the displaced all cite it as an issue facing men and boys at a rate higher than men do. By region, 23% of Gaza City residents and 21% of North Gaza residents cite it as the main safety issue facing men and boys in their communities.

Table 32: What are the main safety/ security problems faced by women and girls in your community?

	Men	Women	Female headed households	Displaced by the war
Domestic violence	35%	37%	40%	31%
Early marriage	27%	26%	29%	19%
Sexual harassment	13%	16%	12%	18%
Travelling alone long distances	6%	6%	5%	11%
Assault by occupation forces	4%	4%	4%	4%
Assault by Palestinians	2%	2%	1%	3%
Honor killings	2%	1%	0%	2%
Incest	0%	1%	0%	1%



Table 33: What are the main safety/security problems faced by men and boys in your community?

	Men	Women	Female headed households	Displaced
Domestic violence	17%	20%	16%	15%
Early marriage	13%	17%	19%	17%
Sexual harassment	1%	1%	1%	1%
Travelling alone long distances	2%	5%	8%	6%
Assault by occupation forces	24%	22%	16%	22%
Assault by Palestinian forces	29%	24%	30%	26%
Honor killings	1%	0%	0%	0%
Incest	0%	0%	0%	0%

Where Does Violence Against Women and Girls Take Place?

The displaced and female headed households cite public places as the primary locations where violence against women is likely to take place.

Given that domestic violence is seen as the primary safety issue facing women and girls it is not surprising that “at home” elicits the highest overall rate of response to the question of where violent acts against women and girls are most likely to occur. However, female headed households and the displaced cite public locations as much or even more than the home. The highest response among the displaced was “at the workplace” eliciting a 41% response rate. They also perceive women as more vulnerable to violence at educational institutions, on the roads and in shelters.

Figure 36: Where are acts of violence against women and girls most likely to occur?

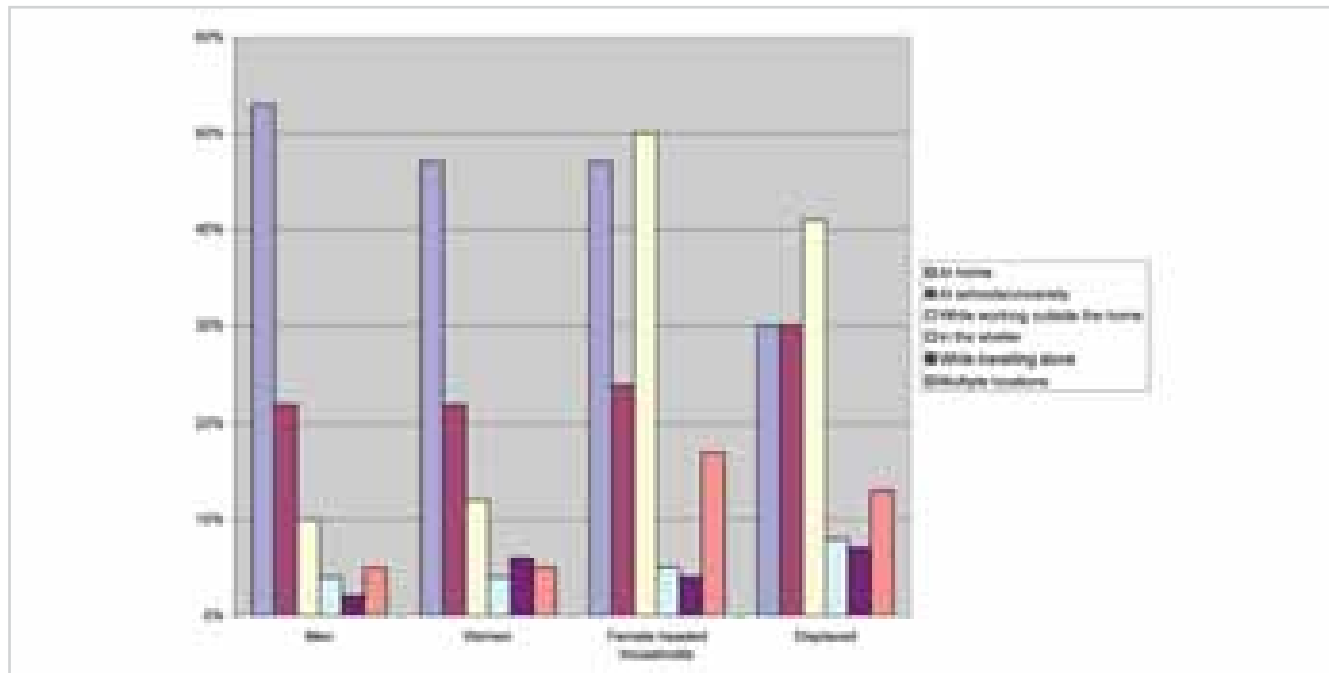


Table 34: Where are acts of violence against women and girls in your community most likely to occur?

	Men	Women	Female headed households	Displaced
At home	53%	47%	47%	30%
At schools/university	22%	22%	24%	30%
While working outside the home	10%	12%	50%	41%
In the shelter	4%	4%	5%	8%
While travelling alone	2%	6%	4%	7%
Multiple locations	5%	5%	17%	13%

Clearly, displaced households are expressing a high degree of physical vulnerability. The loss of the safe haven of home has also involved a heightened sense of the inability to protect female family members.

Where do victims of internal or gender based violence go for help?

There is a critical lack of legal and public mechanisms available to men and women victims of social and political violence in Gaza as well as a potential distrust of the limited mechanisms available to them. At the same time violence against men is more likely to be treated as a public crime, while violence against women is more likely to be treated as a private and tabooed family problem.

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Overwhelmingly the family is the only resort to protection and justice for victims of internal and gender-based violence, be they men or women. Among all categories of respondents, various family members were cited by more than 60% as the address for both women and men who suffer from violence to go to for help. This suggests the strong lack of legal and public mechanisms available to men and women victims of social and political violence in Gaza as well as a potential distrust of the limited mechanisms available to them. The lack or distrust of public mechanisms of protection and justice is more acute for women than men, with approximately 25% of respondents citing women's use of any form of them versus an overall 40% use of them by men.

In terms of women victims, there is a strong consensus among respondents that their mothers are their main address, cited by 46% of women and 50% of female headed households. In contrast, fathers are perceived as among women's last address at only 4% of respondents. This suggests the degree to which crimes against women are perceived as extremely sensitive and taboo, and better treated (or kept hidden) among female family members. Of all the public mechanisms available to women, the one that does exist, the police, comes out as the absolutely minimal and last resort they would use. The police as a mechanism garners a rate of 2% across the various respondents. Given that other public mechanisms receive a higher rate of response (though still minimal compared to the family), it is clear that there is an issue of distrust vis a vis the police as a place to access justice for women.

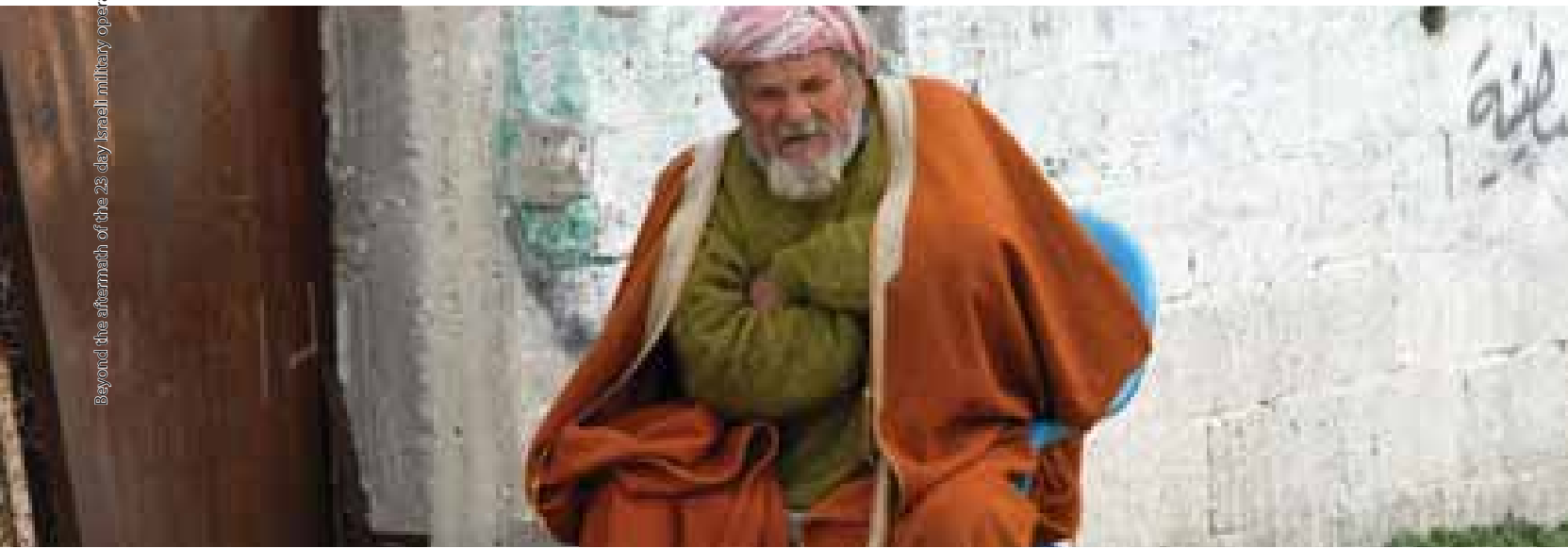


Figure 37: Where do female survivors of violence go for help in your community?

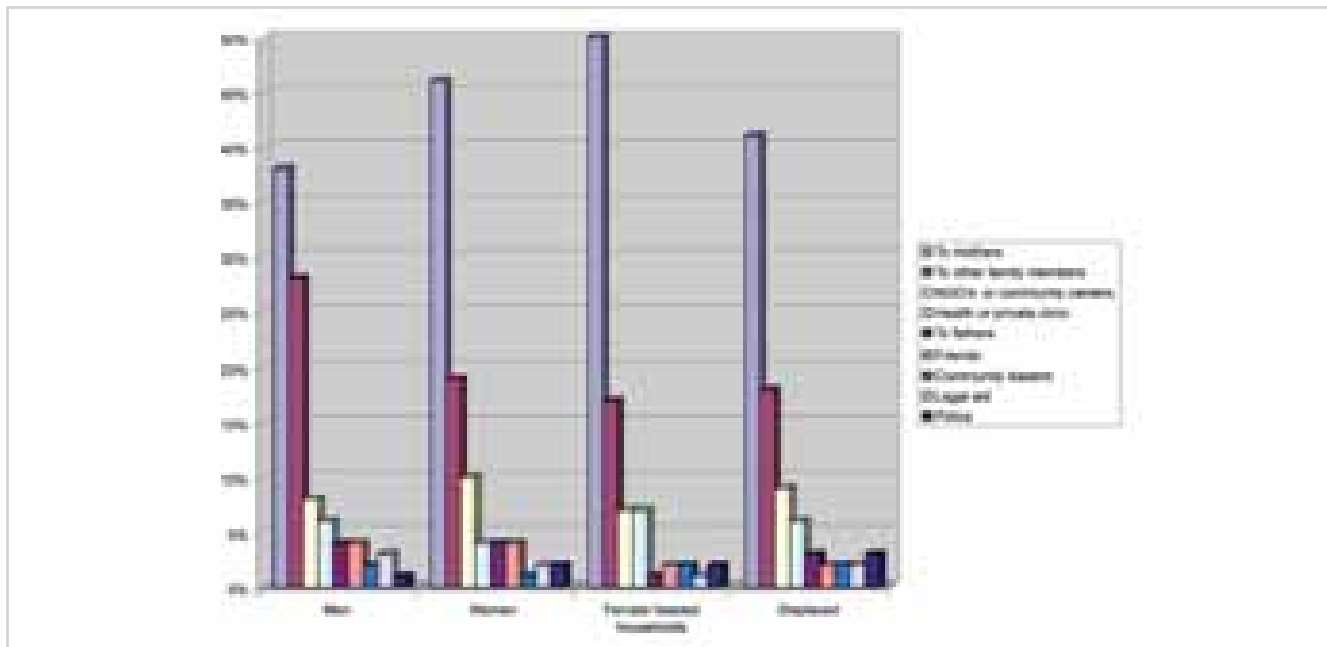


Table 35: Where do female survivors of violence go for help in your community?

	Men	Women	Female headed households	Displaced
To mothers	38%	46%	50%	41%
To other family members	28%	19%	17%	18%
NGO's or community centers	8%	10%	7%	9%
Health or private clinic	6%	4%	7%	6%
To fathers	4%	4%	1%	3%
Friends	4%	4%	2%	2%
Community leaders	2%	1%	2%	2%
Legal aid	3%	2%	1%	2%
Police	1%	2%	2%	3%

This is consistent with the findings of the recent Birzeit Women's Studies/World Bank report (2008) that found that only about 2% of women suffering physical violence from spouses sought any form of legal recourse. In the study, women in focus groups suggested that victims preferred talking to other family members or relatives and revealed a great reluctance to add to family tensions by seeking either medical care or legal recourse. In addition the report cited a lack of trust in police and the courts across the oPt as a place where women victims of domestic violence sought protection or justice (Birzeit Women's Studies/World Bank 2008).



Figure 38: Where do male survivors of violence go for help in your community?

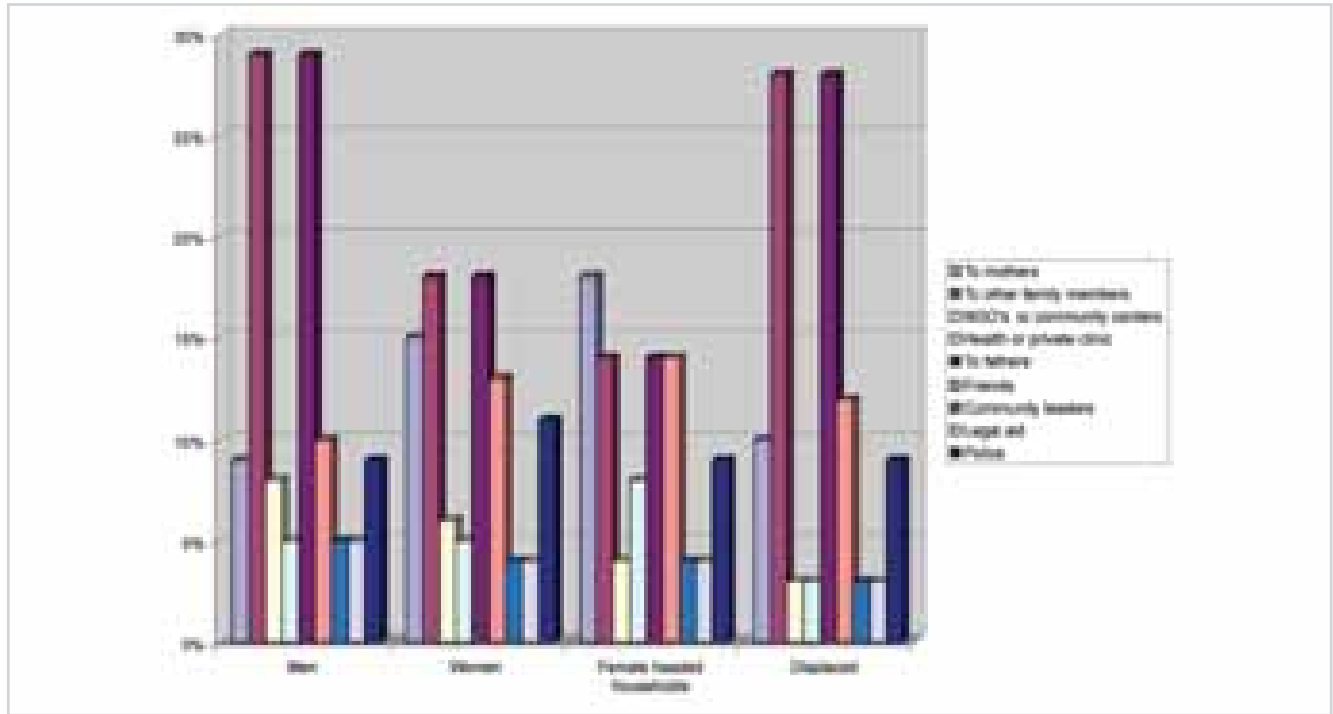


Table 36: Where do male survivors of violence go for help in your community?

	Men	Women	Female headed households	Displaced
To mothers	9%	15%	18%	10%
To other family members	29%	18%	14%	28%
NGO's or community centers	8%	6%	4%	3%
Health or private clinic	5%	5%	8%	3%
To fathers	29%	18%	14%	28%
Friends	10%	13%	14%	12%
Community leaders	5%	4%	4%	3%
Legal aid	5%	4%	4%	3%
Police	9%	11%	9%	9%

In contrast to females, male victims of violence are more likely to use public mechanisms in order to access protection and justice, although as already stated, various family members are still their primary address as well. Men are more likely to seek the help of fathers and other (probably male) family members, which were cited by almost 60% of male respondents. In contrast, mothers have a much lesser role in addressing the needs of male victims of violence at about 12% of all respondents. Male victims are ten times more likely to use the police than female victims according to respondents, although, the rate of recourse to the police among men remains low at approximately 10%.

Clearly, male victims of violence also suffer from a lack of public mechanisms for protection and access to justice. At the same time, the difference in findings vis a vis men and women victims suggest the degree to which violence against men is perceived in terms of crime and does not carry the same gender-based taboo that it does for women.

Gender Based Legal Issues and Access to Justice

Respondents were asked about the possibility of getting to access to justice across a variety of legal issues that concern men’s and women’s rights and responsibilities in prevailing family law. These issues which are of crucial concern to especially women are under the jurisdiction of the *Shari’a* courts in the oPt. Not surprisingly, the patterns of response towards the possibility of accessing justice on these “family rights issues” showed a strong gender variation. Men, as the gender both socially and legally (under family law) responsible for the provision of housing logically showed a much greater concern towards this issue than women – with the highest rate of response among men on lack of access to justice being towards housing and land ownership (33%) compared to only 23% among women. Among women the issues of divorce and domestic violence came first at 26% each (thus both accounting for 52% of all their responses). In prevailing family law, domestic violence is only grounds for court intervention if it is at a life-threatening level. Even then, as we have seen earlier, the courts and other public mechanisms are among the least likely recourse women victims seek for justice.

Figure 39: Main access to justice issues in family sphere

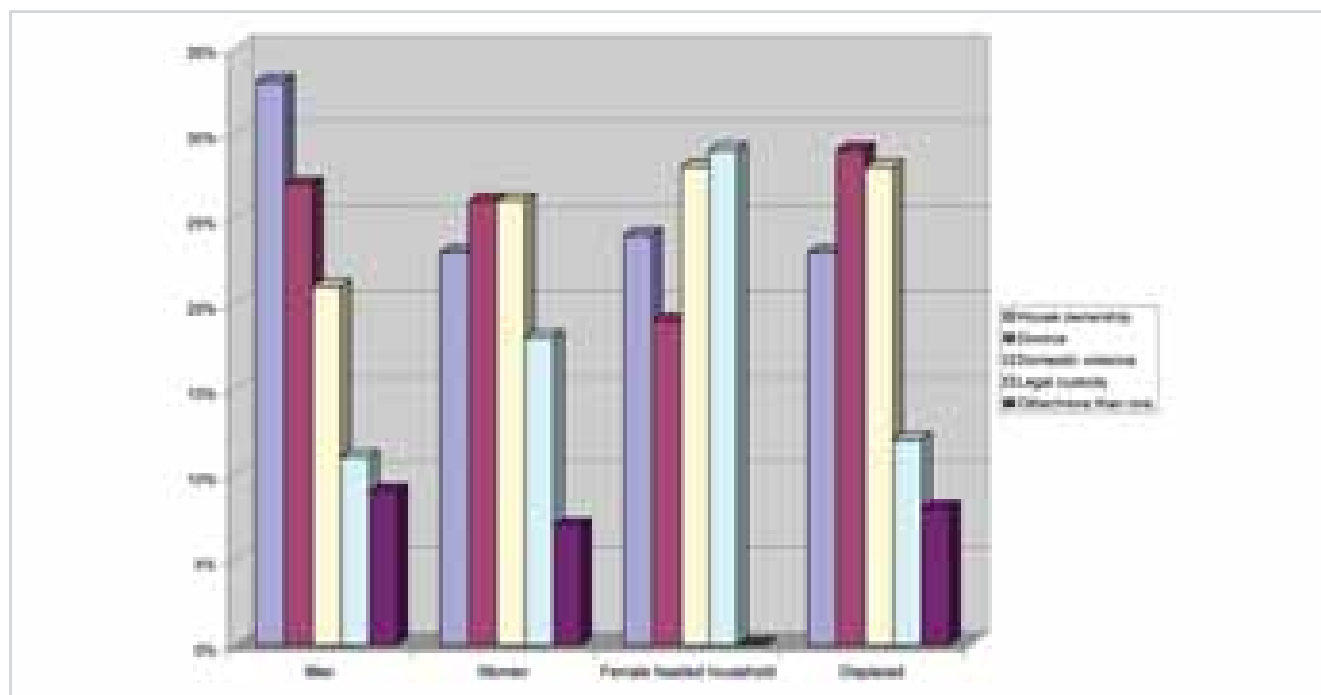


Table 37: Main access to justice issues in family sphere

	Men	Women	Female headed household	Displaced
House ownership	33%	23%	24%	23%
Divorce	27%	26%	19%	29%
Domestic violence	21%	26%	28%	28%
Legal custody	11%	18%	29%	12%
Other/more than one	9%	7%	0%	8%

Divorce is seen very negatively by both sexes in the oPt and the divorce rate has been historically very low. Women seeking divorce under prevailing family law have few grounds on which to request one directly from the courts and must seek their husbands agreement first. More significant for most women who face divorce is the loss of economic support. Courts award very low maintenance payments to women and there is an almost total lack of enforcement. In addition, is

the potential loss of child custody. Divorced women who re-marry completely lose even the minimal custody rights awarded by the law and often face major social obstacles in terms of visitation rights. The much higher emphasis put on lack of access to justice for legal custody among women respondents (18%) and especially female headed households (29%) in comparison to men (11%) attests to this as a crucial gender bias in both law and practice.







Participation of Women and Men In the Relief Process



Only one third of men and women claim to have been informed about the relief and recovery assistance underway since the war and only half of those say they participated in the planning or design of humanitarian assistance in their community.

A full 70% of male and female respondents state they have not been informed about the relief and recovery assistance in their community since the war. The group most likely to have received information are the displaced, dramatically higher than any other social category at 46%. In addition, 85% of men and 88% of women report that they have not been involved in any consultation on the planning or design of the humanitarian assistance in their community. The highest percentage is amongst females heads of household with 93% of them stating they have never participated in the relief process. By region, the highest reported lack of consultation is in Deir Al Balah (94%) and North Gaza (92%). Also significant, is the gap cited by the displaced, which despite 46% having been informed of the relief and recovery assistance, less than 20% had been consulted in its planning.

Figure 40: Knowledge and access to recovery assistance

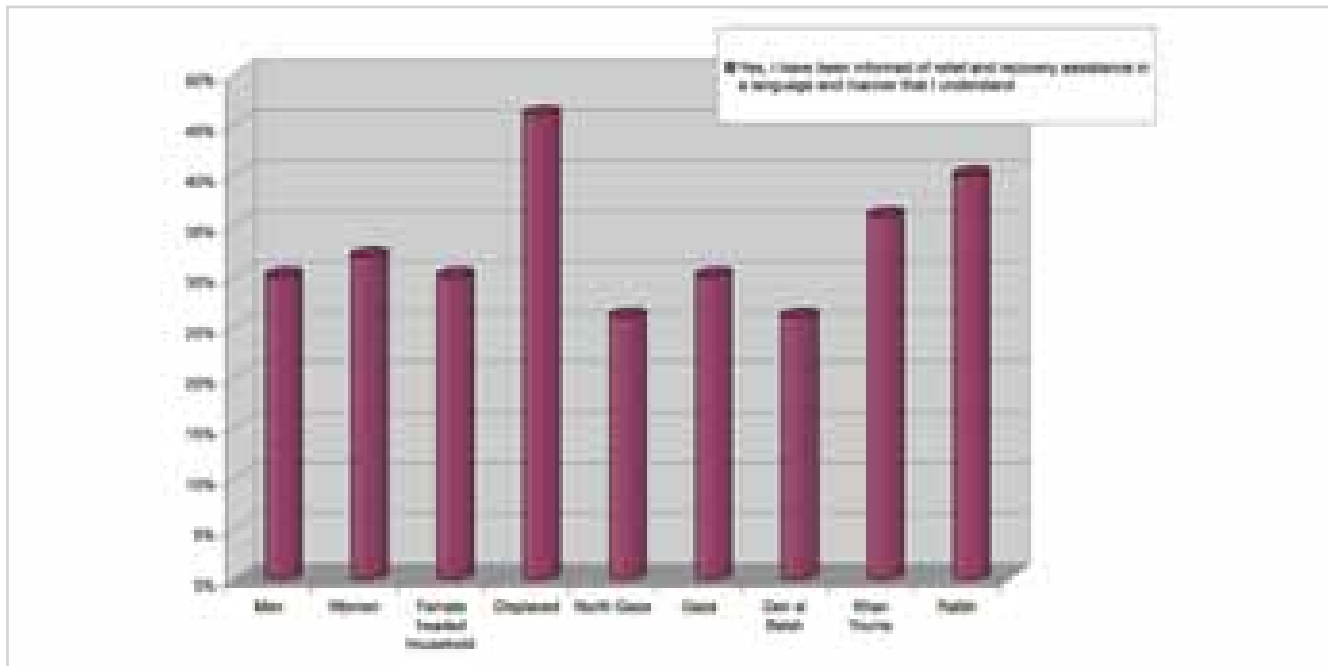
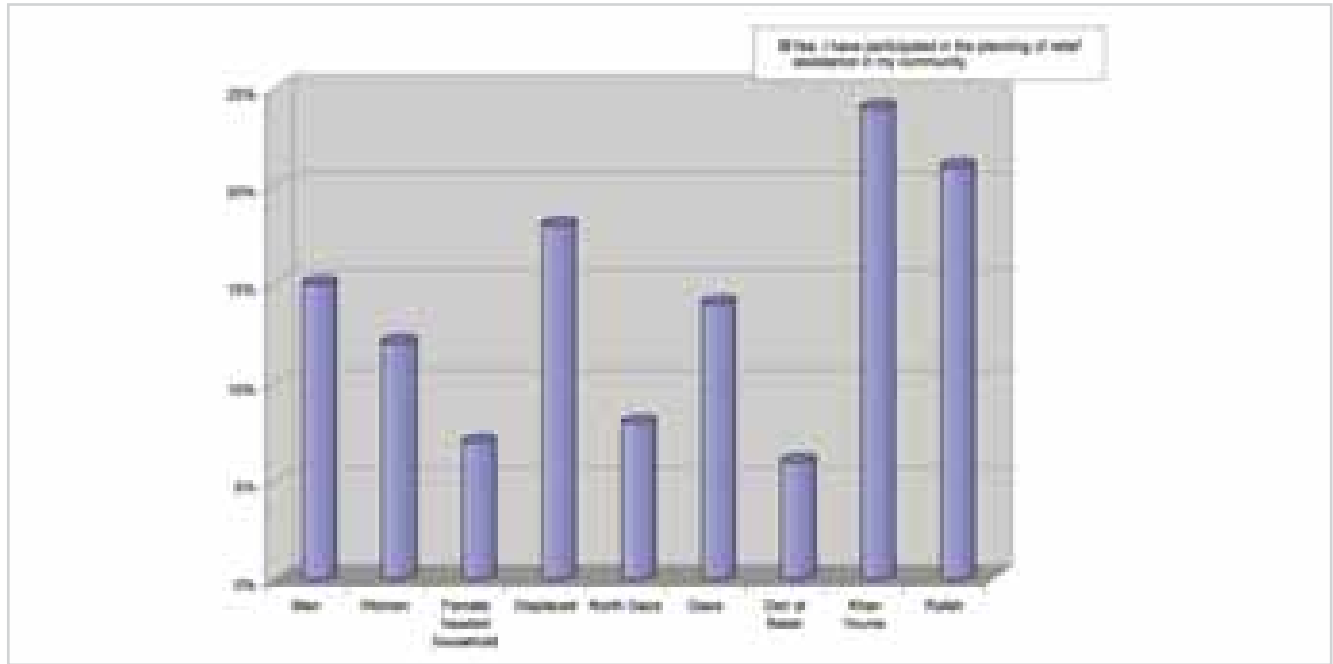


Figure 41: Participation in planning of relief assistance



When asked what are the reasons for lack of participation in the planning and design of relief, there are some significant gender differences. While the predominant answers for either sex are that only community leaders take the decisions (at 57% among men and 53% among women), nearly 30% of women and female headed households state that it is only male family members who participate. At the same time, given that both community and especially religious leaders tend to be male – it is clear that only when specific planning processes are targeted at “women’s concerns” are women likely to have a say in any planning of relief or recovery assistance.

Table 38: Knowledge and access to recovery assistance

Men	Women	Female headed household	Displaced	North Gaza	Gaza	Deir al Balah	Khan Younis	Rafah
Yes, I have been informed of relief and recovery assistance in a language and manner that I understand								
30%	32%	30%	46%	26%	30%	26%	36%	40%
Yes, I have participated in the planning of relief assistance in my community								
15%	12%	7%	18%	8%	14%	6%	24%	21%

Figure 42: Perceived factors affecting men's and women's participation in relief and recover assistance

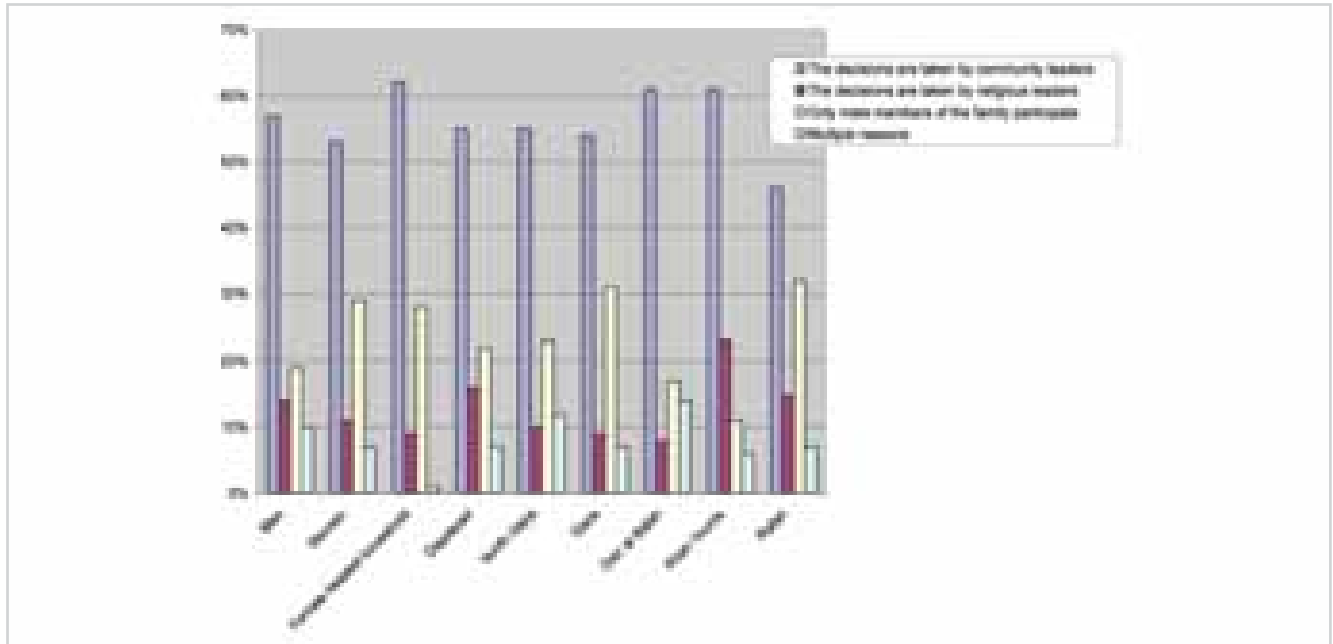
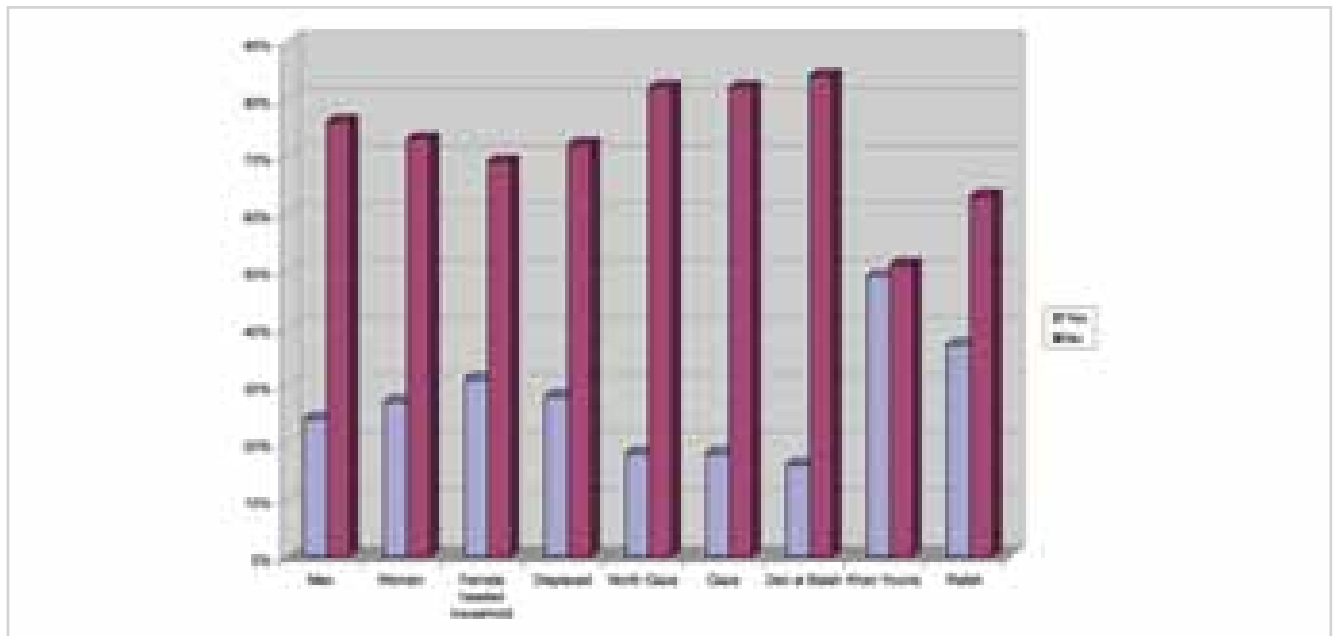


Table 39: What are the factors affecting men and women's participation in relief and recovery assistance in your community?

Men	Women	Female headed household	Displaced	North Gaza	Gaza	Deir al Balah	Khan Younis	Rafah
The decisions are taken by community leaders								
57%	53%	62%	55%	55%	54%	61%	61%	46%
The decisions are taken by religious leaders								
14%	11%	9%	16%	10%	9%	8%	23%	15%
Only male members of the family participate								
19%	29%	28%	22%	23%	31%	17%	11%	32%
Multiple reasons								
10%	7%	1%	7%	12%	7%	14%	6%	7%

When asked about the existence of community mechanisms to resolve problems and ensure the equitable distribution of assistance, only 24% of men and 27% of women responded positively. However, the way the question was posed (mixing ability to resolve internal security with ability to equitably distribute assistance) may have caused this low level of positive response. As seen elsewhere in the survey, there is a predominant feeling among respondents that their communities are not secure environments from external or internal violence. At the same time, a secure environment with high social cohesion definitely creates a likelier ability for communities to more equitably distribute social goods.

Figure 43: Can you and your community resolve problems stemming from the current situation including threats to your security and ensuring everyone receives aid equitably?



It is also significant that men – who elsewhere in the survey expressed greater apprehension about public security than women and female headed households – are more pessimistic about the ability of their communities to resolve problems and distribute aid equitably than women. By region, Khan Younis shows a dramatically higher rate of positive response than any other region or social category, at 49%. This is followed by Rafah at a 37% positive rate of response. This suggests that both communities have a higher sense of social cohesion than elsewhere in Gaza and possibly provide much better enabling environments to their populations to cope with the various impacts of the war.



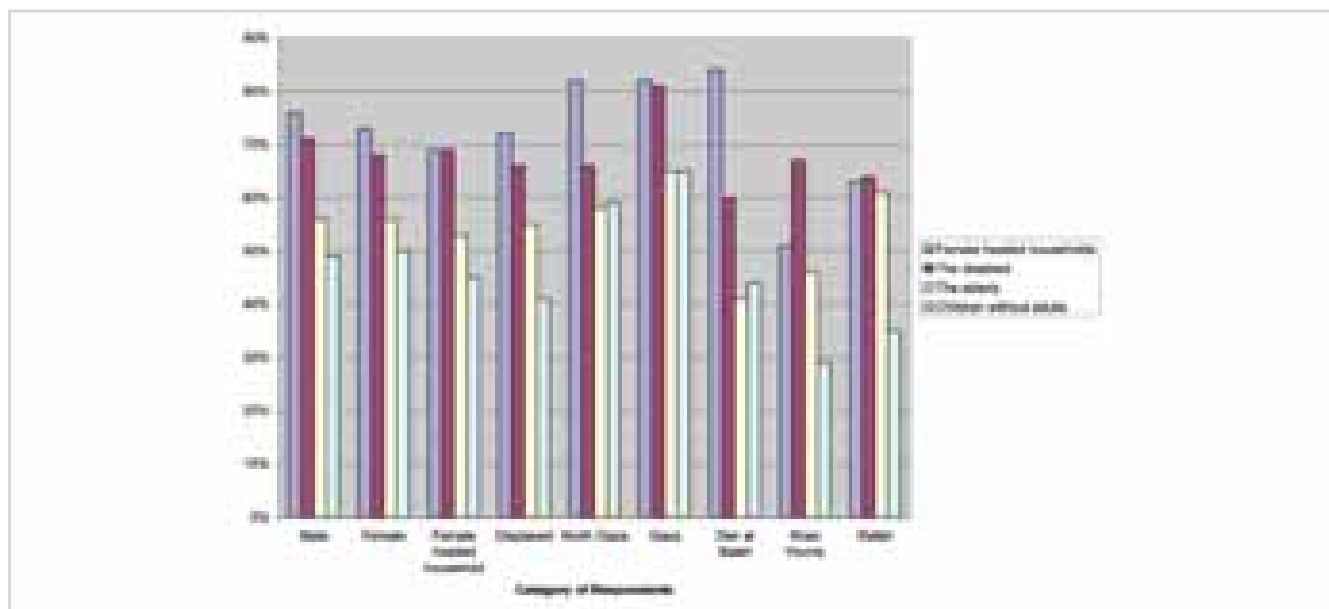
Table 40: Can you and your community resolve problems stemming from the current situation including threats to your security and ensuring everyone receives aid equitably?

	Men	Women	Female headed household	Displaced	North Gaza	Gaza	Deir al Balah	Khan Younis	Rafah
Yes	24%	27%	31%	28%	18%	18%	16%	49%	37%
No	76%	73%	69%	72%	82%	82%	84%	51%	63%

Access to Assistance and Relief Among the Most Vulnerable Sectors

Female headed households are the group perceived by respondents as the most deprived of access to basic needs including protection from violence, a perception strongly at odds with how they perceive themselves.

Figure 44: Percentage of respondents citing those without access to food, water, non-food items, education and protection from violence



Among a range of vulnerable sectors of the population it is female headed households who are perceived by respondents as the most deprived of basic needs including protection from violence. Significantly, this perception is not equally shared by female headed households themselves, who have a lower perception of their own deprivation and see it at the same level as that of the disabled. This overall perception towards female headed households (with male respondents more readily seeing them as most deprived) suggests the degree to which women without male economic support or protection are seen as the most vulnerable group by the Gazan population as a whole. Due to this very fact and as noted earlier, female headed households are actually the only social category who can count on ongoing social safety networks from either UNRWA or the Ministry of Social Affairs. Though slightly less, the disabled, are also seen as a highly deprived social group among respondents at almost 70% claiming they don't have access to basic needs, they are followed by the elderly at 56% and children without adults at about 50%.



Table 41: Percentage of respondents citing those without access to food, water, non-food items, education and protection from violence

	Male	Female	Female headed household	Displaced	North Gaza	Gaza	Deir al Balah	Khan Younis	Rafah
Female headed households	76%	73%	69%	72%	82%	82%	84%	51%	63%
The disabled	71%	68%	69%	66%	66%	81%	60%	67%	64%
The elderly	56%	56%	53%	55%	58%	65%	41%	46%	61%
Children without adults	49%	50%	45%	41%	59%	65%	44%	29%	35%



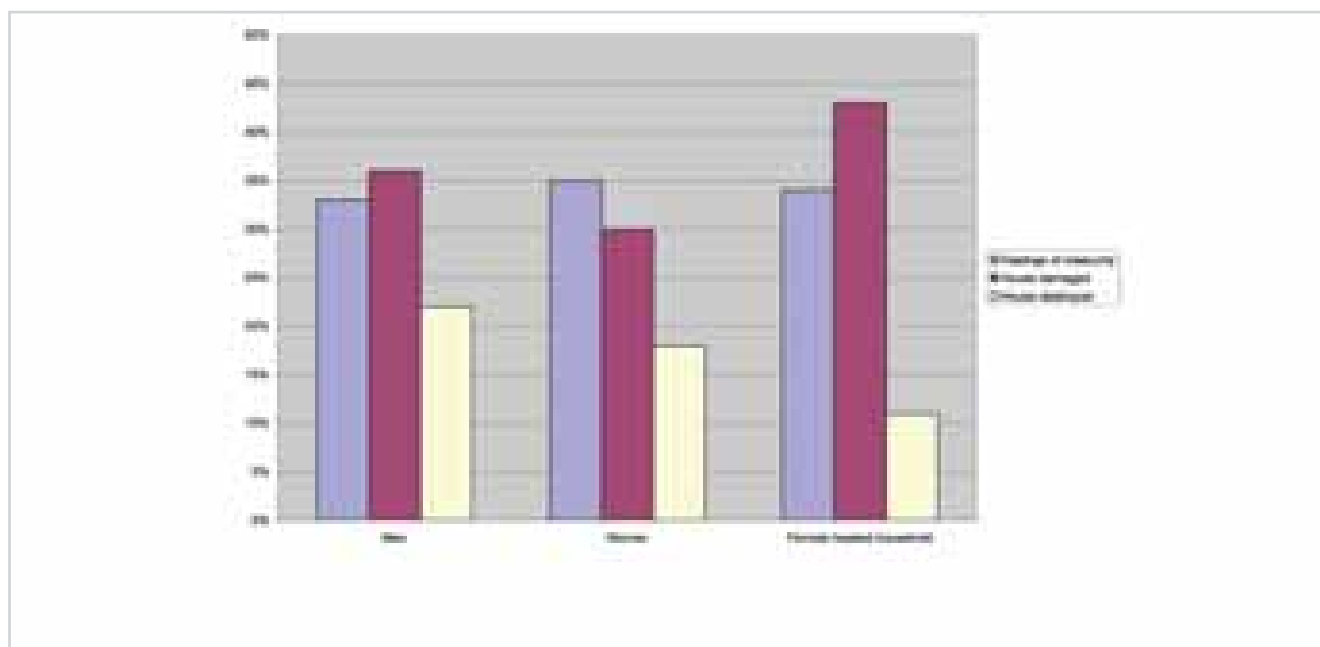


Additional Findings on Households Displaced During the War



Throughout the survey, the displaced exhibited a heightened vulnerability towards the safety and security needs of their women family members. Displaced women were more likely than other women to say they felt unsafe using a bathing or latrine facility and also cited a greater lack of reliable sanitary materials. Half of the displaced respondents said their children had not returned to school after the war due to “lack of security”.

Figure 45: Reasons for moving during the war



Thirty-two per cent of the population surveyed in the first week of March report being displaced during the war, a slightly 6% less than reported immediately after the war in February 3rd UNDP report. The perceptions and concerns of displaced household members towards the various issues and circumstances have been integrated throughout the various parts of this report. Here just a few issues that only apply to them or showed up as only significant to them will be addressed.

The main reason men cite for displacement is “house damage” (36%) while women’s main reason cited was “feelings of insecurity” (35%). In general men cite more house damage (36%) and destruction (22%) than women (with 30% of women citing house damage and 18% citing house destruction as the main reason for their displacement during the war). Men’s and women’s responses do not necessarily contradict each other, women, regardless of house damage may have seen the main motivation for the family to move as a quest for security.



Six percent of the displaced households are headed by females. A much higher number of these female headed households report housing damage (43%) as the main reason for moving during the war than did male headed households (32%). Another 11% of female headed households report housing destruction as the main reason.

A full 20% of male headed households and 29% of female headed households who were displaced say they will not return to their homes. The greatest response are amongst those living in heavily hit areas in Deir al Balah and Gaza governorates. Males, as primarily responsible for the family’s housing are also more likely to express a lack of certainty regarding returning home, with 16% of male displaced versus only 9% of female displaced unsure of whether they will return home.

As already noted the perception of a lack of security for female household members is higher among the displaced than any other group of respondents. Added fears are expressed in the 16% of displaced females stating that they do not feel safe using a latrine or bathing facility, a significantly higher rate than any other group. Additionally, 12% of displaced females say they do not have reliable access to sanitary materials, also a significantly higher rate than non-displaced females.

And finally, more than half of the displaced men and women surveyed state that boys and girls stopped going to school after the war – with feelings of insecurity being the overwhelming response cited.

Table 42: Reasons for moving during the war (By three main reasons cited)

	Feelings of insecurity	House damage	House destroyed
Men	33%	36%	22%
Women	35%	30%	18%
Female headed household	34%	43%	11%



Issues of Immediate Concerns

Among the findings that should be of immediate concern to humanitarian actors operating in Gaza are:

- ascertaining and rectifying the lack of appropriateness of certain types of food assistance cited by 15% of all respondents.
- assessing and rectifying the possibility of a food security problem for those already receiving assistance, including a need to provide more access to supplementary feeding for children under 5 years of age. Supplementary feeding programs for children should take into account indications that girls may be relatively disadvantaged when there are household food shortages.
- assessing the extent to which obstacles in access to domestic fuel (including high cost) are negatively affecting household food security.
- assessing and rectifying whether the elderly are more vulnerable to food security problems.
- The process of ascertaining and rectifying all food security issues should be undertaken in consultation with women in affected households. Given that food preparation and distribution within the household is their primary area of responsibility, it is also their particular area of knowledge and concern.

Health

- Ascertaining whether there is a rising problem of self-medication with unsupervised pharmaceutical therapies for trauma and stress in the absence of access to professional psychosocial services. If such a problem is identified, public awareness campaigns are the most immediate intervention that needs to be undertaken in the absence of an expansion in professional psychosocial services.

The Displaced

- Assessing the problems of access to continued schooling among children of families displaced in the war. Remedies to rectify problems of access need to take into account possibly differing social obstacles facing boys and girls.
- Undertaking actions to address the physical vulnerability of women and girls in displaced households. Women themselves and other family members express an acute level of anxiety over the bodily security of female family members. This includes a lack of secure sanitation facilities and products for displaced women, but is not limited to them.
- Assessing what are the conditions of displaced households that might lead to higher instances of domestic violence against women and children.

Medium and Long Term Interventions:

Along with the issues of immediate concern findings that should be addressed in medium term and long-term planning and delivery undertaken by humanitarian actors operating in Gaza are:

- The urgent need to expand access to and delivery of professional psychosocial services for the whole population. It is clear there is an urgent need and desire for these services across genders, ages and regions. Services need to be tailored to enable and ensure equitable and appropriate access across these affected populations.
- Greater involvement of all groups in the design and planning of humanitarian recovery and relief programs needs to be undertaken. Women's participation should not be limited to consulting on "women only" programs, especially given their greater practical role in family food provision and greater knowledge of the health needs and other issues of household members. In addition, male and female youth who constitute the majority of Gaza's population need to be given a voice in identifying their particular needs and priorities within relief and recovery planning and implementation.
- Domestic security for women and children needs to be addressed both through programs that target the needs of victims and the problems and environment that motivates perpetrators. Parental and other adult violence against children needs to address both parties. Similarly, domestic violence against women needs to ensure the safety of affected women, as well as to address the issues and environments that create male perpetrators. This is especially important since the dominant norm is to keep problems of domestic violence within the family.
- The material, psychosocial and personal security concerns of the Gaza population need to be addressed as an integrated whole. The domestic security issues faced by women and children and the public security concerns faced by men need to be integrated into overall relief and recovery responses. The potential and actual violence that women and children face in the household and that men face in the public sphere cannot be disconnected from the high levels of trauma and anxiety expressed by the population as a whole, nor separated from their ongoing experience of material deprivation.
- Finally, as much as possible, data collection and assessment of needs and programming across sectors should strive to be sex and age disaggregated. Integrating the differential circumstances and needs of men and women into program design, implementation and evaluation crucially depends on their initial identification at the primary stages of data collection.

Annex

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS



CFTA	Culture and Free Thought Center
GenCap Adviser	Gender Standby Capacity Adviser
GTF	Gender Task Force
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
INGO	International Non Governmental Organization
NEC	Near East Consulting
NFI	Non Food Items
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
oPt	occupied Palestinian territory
PA	Palestinian Authority
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
BPFA	Beijing Platform for Action
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP/PAPP	UN Development Program/ Program of Assistance for the Palestinian People
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
UNSCO	United Nations Special Coordinator's Office
WHO	World Health Organization



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