



ROMENA Newsletter

Quarterly Newsletter from the Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa

APRIL/JUNE 2018

UNODC establishes Strategy for Gender Equality and The Empowerment of Women (2018 - 2021)

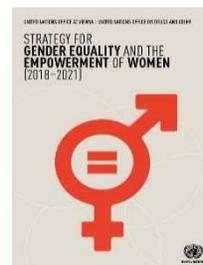
The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), as part of the United Nations System, is fully committed to ensure that a gender perspective is actively and visibly mainstreamed in all its practices, policies and programmes. In May 2017, UNODC established the Global Programme on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. The Programme aims to support the mainstreaming of gender equality into normative, operational and research work of UNODC and the pursuance of gender parity in staff at all levels.

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One of the key outputs of the Global Programme was the development of a Strategy for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (2018 - 2021).

This Strategy seeks to ensure that gender equality and empowerment of women are integral parts of all aspects of the work of UNODC to make the world safer from drugs, crime and terrorism. Also, the strategy supports Member States to systematically mainstream a gender perspective into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



Understanding the interrelationship between gender and security threats and crimes is vital to the overall effectiveness of any response. Women and men can play different but important roles in responding to and making decisions about crime prevention, building secure societies and developing fair, accessible, accountable, effective and credible criminal justice systems.

Making it Happen: ROMENA promotes an effective Gender Perspective in its work

ROMENA has been working on gender mainstreaming in the implementation of its

Regional Program in the Middle East and North Africa:

- **Palestine:** On 7 May 2018, UNODC launched a new flagship programme along with three partner UN agencies; UN Women, UNFPA and UN Habitat “**HAYA: Eliminating Violence Against Women in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (2018-2022)**” in an official ceremony at the Mahmoud Darwish Museum in Ramallah.

HAYA focuses on changing harmful practices and attitudes that contribute to violence against women and girls within targeted households and communities. Specific target groups include women from rural communities, Area C, East Jerusalem, as well as women from low income households, while men and boys will also benefit from the project by engaging in various outreach and awareness raising activities. **HAYA** will strengthen the capacity of the Palestinian Authority to develop and implement legal and policy frameworks to promote and protect the rights of women and girls who are subject to violence.

- **Egypt:** From 6-10 May 2018, UNODC in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior of Egypt conducted a training program for police officers to become trainers in investigating Crimes of Violence against Women. Ten female police officers attended the training. The workshop covered different measures to respond to the claims of violence against women and deal with vulnerable victims, witnesses and suspects. The officers who attended this training

programme will share the knowledge and skills they gained with their peers, which will result in a stronger criminal justice response to violence against women across the country.

- **Algeria:** From 27- 31 May 2018, UNODC organized a training workshop on “Profiling and Targeting of Suspicious Passengers”. The workshop aimed at strengthening the detection, interdiction and investigation capacities of law enforcement agents active at Algerian international airports to more effectively target suspicious passengers. Participants from the National Customs Directorate (Direction Générale des Douanes - DGD) and the National Safety General Directorate (Direction Générale de la Sûreté Nationale - DGSN) attended the training including a strong presence of women in line with AIRCOP advocacy for gender equality.



Supporting #SDG5

UNODC supports Member States to promote access to justice for women and girls; to develop legislation and policies that protect their rights and respond to violence against women and girls; to develop institutional and professional capacities relevant to respecting, protecting and fulfilling the rights of women and girls; and to create the conditions for women and girls to be able to claim their rights and be active agents of change.

Source: [SDG 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls](#)

First Female Forensic Doctor in Palestine: A Contribution to the Advancement of Women’s Rights

The first National Centre for Forensic Medicine (NCFM) opened in Palestine in 2017 with the financial support from the Government of Canada. Since then, seven freshly graduate forensic doctors have been operating the NCFM, proceeding with physical examinations and autopsies to help with criminal investigations and strengthen the Palestinian justice system. With the assistance of UNODC and prior to joining the NCFM, the forensic doctors studied at the University of Jordan from 2013 to 2017 towards an advanced degree in forensic medicine and undertook specialized trainings in handling cases of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). Dr. Hafsa Salameh is one of them. She is also the first Palestinian woman to work in this field; a matter of pride and a driver for change for her country.

When Dr. Hafsa Salameh was selected in 2013 by the Ministry of Justice to join the NCFM, she decided to seize the opportunity to become a specialist and support Palestinian women despite her fears and the challenges she would have to take up. At that time, being the first Palestinian woman to practice forensic medicine seemed to be a mountain to climb as no other women had ever worked in this field in Palestine. Her choice also had a direct impact on her life and professional

Hafsa Salameh is the first Palestinian woman to work in the National Centre of Forensic Medicine.

plans as she was already a mother working as a family doctor in Jenin.



Dr. Hafsa Salameh

The support she received from the Ministry of Justice, UNODC, and her husband especially, helped her make up her mind.

Apart from Hafsa’s training programme at the University of Jordan, UNDOC provided her with the chance to do work placements at St. Marry Sexual and Referral Centre in Manchester in the United Kingdom and at Victoria Hospital in Australia. The aim of these work placements was to improve her skills to examine sexual and gender-based violence cases, which concern 37% of women in Palestine.¹

¹ Data provided by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) through the PCBS 2011 Violence Survey.

Gender-based violence cases concern 37% of women in Palestine.

And Hafsa can see the relief on the faces of the women and girls who come to her office for forensic examination and discover that the doctor is a woman. *“Women feel more confident and freer to talk with a female practitioner”* she assures.

Subjected to traditional patriarchal norms and values, some of the women who experienced violence do not dare to press charges against their aggressors or often change their mind or testimony once interrogated or physically examined by a male practitioner.

Now that the foundations of quality forensic medicine services are set, Hafsa hopes to see a change in her country in the way the justice system handles SGBV cases but also a change in the mentality to encourage women to fight for their rights. *“There is a need to increase the awareness and confidence of women towards forensic medicine services. Recruiting more female forensic doctors can be a solution”* suggests Hafsa. *“Improving the privacy within the forensic clinics where the victims receive sexual assault examination must also be considered.”*

With the cooperation of her colleagues, Hafsa wants to redouble the efforts to contribute to the

development and improvement of the forensic medicine in Palestine and eliminate violence against women.

Conducting research on SGBV in Palestine to update or fill the

Hafsa encourages Palestinian women to study forensic medicine despite the challenges they may face.

gaps in national data is one of her top priorities.

Hafsa encourages Palestinian women to study forensic medicine despite the challenges they may face. Her experience could be summarized in one

advice she likes to share with others: *“don’t be afraid of trying new professional fields in Palestine. It can only bring positive changes to your life and our society.”*



Gender equality. In any language, for every person.



#GlobalGoals

UNODC celebrates International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

Every year, the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking is celebrated on 26 June as an expression of global action and commitment towards health-centered and human-rights based drug control policies. The celebration of the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking aims to raise

awareness of the major problem that illicit drugs represent to society.

On this day, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) joined the world in mobilizing support for the control of drugs. Building on the success of last year, UNODC continued the campaign titled: **“Listen First- Listening to children and youth is the first step to help them grow healthy and safe”**, aiming at increasing support for prevention of drug use that is based on science and is thus an effective investment in the well-being of children and youth, their families and their communities.



ROMENA Retreat April 2018: A Time for Reflection and Bonding

Around 75 staff from 10 ROMENA offices including colleagues from the regional section at UNODC HQ gathered for three days in Hurghada for the annual staff retreat. The discussion at this year’s retreat covered critical issues for UNODC and the ROMENA office, including UN reform, UNODC positioning, Sustainable Development Goals, gender mainstreaming, resource mobilization, programme management and communication and visibility. Country and thematic teams presented

their work in terms of programme implementation, outreach, impact, positioning and fund-raising. Also, cross-cutting issues such as financial and administrative issues as well as UMOJA processes were addressed in targeted group sessions as well as health, travel and security issues in plenary session. A half day team building exercise brought new teams together with the aim to unleash teambuilding talents across countries and projects.

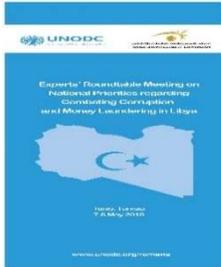


ROMENA Photo Gallery



Lebanon: Workshop for the Rehabilitation of Children in Prison

Egypt: Train the Trainers to bring Perpetrators of Violence against Women to Justice



Egypt: Awareness Day on HIV/AIDS among people who inject drugs

Tunisia: Consultation Workshop on the New Draft Ethics Code for Prison Personnel



Long Service Award: Recognition of Dedicated Service to UNODC

Algeria: Workshop on Profiling and Targeting of Suspicious Passengers



Palestine: The Launch of the Joint Programme HAYA

Egypt: Workshop on Obtaining Information from Social media and Internet Service Providers in Criminal Investigations

Sudan: Training Criminal Justice Practitioners to investigate and prosecute Human Trafficking Cases

Upcoming Events

- Training workshop on UNODC Procedural Manual on Childcare Quality Standards, Egypt, July 2018.
- World Day against Trafficking in Persons/ Launch of Blue Heart and National Strategy, Egypt and Tunisia, 30 July 2018.
- Workshop on “Enhancing the Financial Investigation and Prosecution of Corruption and Money Laundering Cases”, Tunisia, 13-15 August 2018.
- Training workshop on Criminal Analysis and Online Investigations in relation to Terrorism Offences, Iraq and Lebanon, August 2018.
- Regional Conference on International Judicial Cooperation Mechanisms to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Migrant Smuggling, Sharm el Sheikh, September 2018.
- Training workshop for Law Enforcement Officers on HIV Service Provision for People who inject Drugs, Morocco, September 2018.
- Gender-responsive HIV Services for Women who inject Drugs, Morocco, September 2018.

The activities described in this Newsletter were funded by the following partners:



Additionally, UNODC ROMENA receives also generous contributions from other partners/ donors under its Regional Programme for the Middle East and North Africa (2016- 2021)

For More Information

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