



United Nations Entity for Gender Equality
and the Empowerment of Women

The Mehwar Centre

EVALUATION OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES



2011



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Acronyms

CCTV	Closed-circuit television
CEDAW	The Convention/Committee on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
DD	Differenza Donna
HR	Human resources
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
Mol	Ministry of Interior
MoSA	Ministry of Social Affairs
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
oPt	occupied Palestinian territory
PA	Palestinian Authority
PCC	Palestinian Counselling Centre
TGC	Training and Guidance Centre
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund For Women
VAW	Violence Against Women
WCLAC	Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling



Executive Summary

The Mehwar Centre opened its doors in February 2007 with the mission to address the phenomenon of gender-based violence in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) in a holistic way. This included working to prevent violence through promoting a culture of gender-sensitive, violence-free family relations, as well as working towards the protection and empowerment of women and children victims of violence. It also sought to advocate for the adoption of national policies and laws to ensure women and girls victims of violence the right to live in safety and dignity, and to bring an end to impunity for perpetrators of violence. Governmental and non-governmental, national and international partners have worked tirelessly over the past ten years to successfully realise these goals. Since the Mehwar Centre's opening, it has sheltered around 150 women and 40 children victims of violence.

The Mehwar Centre project ultimately aims to set professional, human rights-based standards for protection policies and services addressing women and children victims of violence in the oPt. To help in reaching this aim, the Mehwar Centre's corpus of policies and procedures was originally developed between 2005 and 2006 as "a professional, initial reference for the Centre's team, open to future developments based on the needs of the actual work." The team of experts who first drafted it shared the "hope that these regulations will become a national guide for all organizations working in the field of protecting the Palestinian family from all forms of violence."¹

In 2010, after the first three years of the Mehwar Centre's operation, the oPt office of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, UN Women, and the Palestinian Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) agreed to conduct a comprehensive review of the Mehwar Centre's policies and procedures to assess their effectiveness, efficiency and compliance with human rights standards towards the broader goal of developing them into a model for the establishment of other centres supporting women victims of violence in the oPt. An independent, international consultant with specialised expertise in the field of anti-violence services and policies, Joanne Creighton, was hired to lead the evaluation process, with the support of a national evaluation specialist, Amer Madi.

The evaluation was carried out over a four-month period, from June to September 2010, and followed a comprehensive and participative mixed-method framework that included a literature review, organisational safety audit, dip-sampling of Mehwar Centre files, and evaluative fieldwork consisting of numerous site visits, meetings, interviews and focus group workshops. The main evaluation findings highlight achievements and results, as well as gaps and shortfalls in the formulation and/or implementation of the Mehwar Centre's policies and procedures. Based on these findings, the evaluation also recommends steps for improvement and revision.

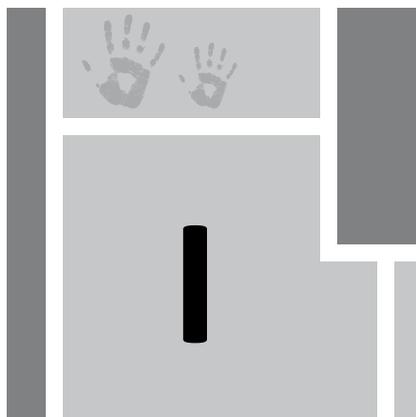
¹ From the introduction of the Mehwar Centre's Guide for Policies and Procedures.

The evaluation revealed a number of the Mehwar Centre's successes in assisting women victims of violence, including positive beneficiary feedback, the Centre's use of a woman-centred approach, and its highly skilled and professional staff team that both operates under significant pressure and deals with multiple challenges simultaneously. The evaluation showed that Mehwar has indeed assisted some women in obtaining justice, helped some women successfully reintegrate with their families, and found alternative ways to enable women to live free and independent lives outside of Mehwar when family reintegration has not been possible.

For the gaps discovered in the Mehwar Centre's policies, procedures and practices and identified in the evaluation's findings, comprehensive suggestions and recommendations were given for their improvement. However, among these, five priority areas were identified for focused action, review and amendment in the short term, including the Mehwar Centre's governance; management, administration and communications; case management; outreach and staffing.







INTRODUCTION

1. Violence against Women in the occupied Palestinian territory

Women and girls in the oPt constitute a particularly vulnerable group, affected by an integrated system of abuses which include political violence, a humanitarian crisis and gender-based domestic violence.

United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women*

The term “violence against women” means any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty; whether occurring in public or private life.

*UN General Assembly Resolution 48/104, 20 December 1993

Gender-based violence in the oPt, across age groups, can be categorized as follows:

- *Physical Abuse*, such as beating and hitting;
- *Sexual Abuse*, including harassment, rape, sexual assault and incest;
- *Psychological Abuse*, such as verbal assaults and insults, the intentional tarnishing of a woman or girl’s reputation through the spread of rumours and gossip, and reinforcement of negative gender stereotypes;
- *Threats and attempts to end life*, including “honour-related crimes,” which can translate into the extreme practice of murder for reasons of “honour,” and suicides resulting from situations of violence against women.

Comprehensive and updated figures on the number of cases of gender-based violence in the oPt are incomplete, due to a lack of accurate data collection and disagreements concerning the definition of violence and what it constitutes.

As reported by professionals working with women victims of violence and interviewed during the process of this evaluation, the incidence of gender-based violence in the oPt is particularly high among girls between 12 and 18 years old in regards to physical and sexual abuse. Male relatives, including fathers, brothers, cousins, husbands and husbands’ relatives, are the main perpetrators of violence against women and girls in the oPt. The young age and lack of financial resources of many female victims of violence, in addition to the prevalence of domestic violence, make it very difficult for women and girls to approach institutions for assistance.

Although witnessing violence is not officially classified as a form of abuse, children of women victims of violence also experience traumatic symptoms. This in turn, often increases the burden on many women victims of violence as primary care-givers.

Another compounding factor in women’s victimisation is the weakening of social networks as a result of violence, which contributes to stigmatising and isolating these women even further. When this is coupled with a deteriorating political situation, as exists in the oPt, immediate and effective interventions are often required to save women’s lives.

**Excerpts from the Report of the
Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and
Consequences***

“At the intersection of occupation and patriarchy, women experience a multilayered discrimination and multiple forms of violence.”

“Decades of Israeli occupation of the oPt, use of force and stringent security measures combined with the forms of resistance these provoke have contributed to the creation of an atmosphere of legitimised violence as a method of conflict resolution.”

“The death, imprisonment or unemployment of many adult male members of the community, which affects all areas of the oPt, have increased poverty and social tensions that contribute to increased domestic violence...Parallel to this, the use of land, water, food, the demolition of homes and the destruction of the general economy as a weapon against the occupied population have resulted in a deterioration of the living conditions in the oPt. Sixty per cent of the Palestinian population reportedly lives under the poverty line.”

*UN Economic and Social Council, February 2005

Gaps in Palestinian legal codes, difficulties in enforcing existing laws, and the current structure of the judicial system in the oPt expose women to various forms of discrimination, abuse and violence that seriously hamper their dignity and human rights. A lack of legal uniformity exists in the oPt, in which different laws (e.g. Turkish, British, Jordanian, Egyptian, Israeli) are applicable depending on one's location in the oPt, differing when in the West Bank versus the Gaza Strip. Secondly, women's rights are hindered by the persistence of a patriarchal culture in the oPt, where women are discriminated against despite the Palestinian Basic Law's provisions for democracy, equality and respect of individual freedom. Thirdly, the existing legal system provides judges with a large amount of discretion both in terms of how they evaluate cases and the legal measures that they decide to implement in various circumstances.

At the global level, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) has been widely utilized as a human rights tool. Around the world, UN Women has worked with women's groups and governments to map shortfalls in national implementation of the treaty, and put in place laws and policies to uphold it. In some Arab States, UN Women has drawn together a network of experts on women's human rights and CEDAW in an effort to advocate for the ratification of the Convention without reservations.

In the oPt, although the Palestinian Authority is not in a position to ratify international conventions because they do not have country status, President Mahmoud Abbas subscribed to CEDAW on 8 March 2009, thus stating the Palestinian Authority's official commitment to the respect of women's human rights and the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. Women's groups and organisations contributed to reaching this important milestone through many years of activism, especially activism focused on reforming the existing Palestinian "Family Law". Efforts are ongoing to enact changes through members of the Palestinian Legislative Council.



The UN Women office in the oPt has supported the efforts of the women's movement by backing the development of a Palestinian Women's Bill of Rights, based on the principles of CEDAW and other international human rights standards. This initiative is being implemented jointly by NGOs in partnership with the Ministry of Women's Affairs, with the aim of advising lawmakers on legal reforms and drafting legislation that protects Palestinian women's rights. However, due to the political instability in the oPt, these processes at the grassroots and policy levels have been temporarily halted. Consequently, Palestinian institutions, particularly at the government level, still have difficulties taking action and responsibility in cases of violence against women.

In a welcome development, the Palestinian Authority with the support of UN Women is, at the time of writing, in the process of developing a National Strategy to Combat Violence Against Women under the leadership of the Ministry of Women's Affairs and in consultation with all relevant line ministries, women's and civil organisations, Palestinian civil society at large, and women victims and survivors of violence.

2. The “Mehwar Centre for the Protection and Empowerment of Women and Families” Project

Before the Mehwar Centre Project started, there was a severe lack of effective and specifically focused facilities in the oPt for protecting and sheltering women and children victims of gender-based violence in a qualified, comprehensive manner in accordance with international human rights standards. In the absence of such services, girls, women and their children had very limited options. Often, the victims of violence were provided with counselling services, but no shelter. Shelter facilities did exist targeting younger age groups, but classified them as minors with juvenile problems or abandoned children rather than victims of gender-based violence. Older victims were sometimes kept in psychiatric hospitals, police offices or prisons as the only “safe” options available. Due to the lack of specialised expertise and facilities, previous efforts to establish small safe houses for women and girl victims of domestic violence have, so far, produced only partial and limited results.

The idea of the Mehwar Centre as a national, specialised and multipurpose centre addressing the phenomenon of gender based violence in a holistic way was proposed by the Palestinian Ministry of Social Affairs to the Italian Government in the year 2000. In 2001, the Italian Government commissioned a team of specialised Palestinian academics and professionals to produce a Feasibility Study for the project. The results of the Feasibility Study confirmed the strong need and high community expectations for the establishment of a specialised anti-violence centre to combat gender-based violence.

**Recommendations made by the
“Feasibility Study for the Establishment of a Counselling Center for Women in
Difficult Circumstances” ***

-  Establish a “Counselling Center for Women in Difficult Circumstances” in the Bethlehem Governorate
-  Establish a Palestinian national policy framework for the protection of abused women and children, including:
 - Legislation and laws against any kind of violence and abuse
 - Procedures for a referral system concerning cases of abused women and minors
 - Eligibility of the women victims for placement in a shelter
-  Ensure coordination and cooperation among ministries, NGOs and universities for a joint strategy and approach in combating violence against women
-  Promote major initiatives to upgrade the quality of professional services provided for abused women, particularly through training of professionals within the NGO and the ministerial sectors, working on innovative practices and prevention programmes
-  Develop better understanding of the broader consequences of gender-based violence on the whole family and society
-  Give special attention to the prevention of violence against minors
-  Assess and evaluate the work of existing women’s organizations and of services addressing abused women and children in the West Bank and Gaza Strip
-  Carry out interdisciplinary, focused and action-oriented research studies to provide descriptive maps of problems related to the abuse of women and children
-  Promote a special filing and documentation system for cases of women victims to be kept in the various organisations and institutions dealing with these cases

* V. Khamis, N. Shalhoub-Kevorkian, H. Salman, I. Masri, I. Feidi, June 2001

In 2001, a long process of consultation took place involving representatives of the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA), the Palestinian Civil Police, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Planning, and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, in addition to the group of experts who carried out the Feasibility Study, the Palestinian umbrella group for women’s organisations, the “Women’s Affairs Technical Committee”, and a delegation of experts from the specialised Italian NGO Differenza Donna. This consultation process aimed to determine a joint strategy for the establishment of the first specialised anti-violence centre in the oPt. A thorough evaluation of the specificity of the Palestinian context was worked out according to the feedback of all involved organisations and institutions. To guarantee community acceptance, it was decided to establish a centre composed of two sections: one internal section, to serve as a shelter for women and children victims of violence, and one external section, to provide various community services.



Following this assessment and consultation phase, upon approval of the Italian Government, a grant of approximately three million USD was donated and allocated through a trust fund with the World Bank for the construction and implementation of a “Counselling Centre for Women in Difficult Circumstances” in Bethlehem governorate, on a piece of land donated by the Bethlehem Municipality. According to the feasibility study, in fact, the Bethlehem area turned out to be the most suitable for achieving community acceptance, institutional sensitivity to the problem of gender-based violence and professional resources available. The project was implemented between 2004 and 2007 by the Palestinian women’s non-governmental organisation, the “Women’s Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling” (WCLAC), and the Italian women’s organisation “Differenza Donna,” specialised in the field of anti-violence centres management. The two NGOs worked in close cooperation and coordination with the Ministry of Social Affairs.

The project led to the establishment of a pilot anti-violence centre in the West Bank combining services for the protection and empowerment of women and children victims of violence with services addressing community awareness and well-being, as well as family counselling for the prevention of violent behaviours. A multifunctional, specialised facility of around 1,800 square metres was built upon a specific architectural design conceived of on the basis of the Centre’s goals. The Centre was inaugurated in February 2007 under the name of the “Mehwar Centre for the Empowerment of Women and Families”. In the Arabic language, “mehwar” means “the core” and was chosen as the Centre’s name to signify the centrality and importance of solving the problem of gender-based violence in the process of social growth for Palestinian society.

A group of 22 women from the community was carefully selected and trained for three months locally and in Italy, and started working in the field in October 2006. At present, the staff employed by the Mehwar Centre counts a centre director, a shelter responsible, an outreach programmes coordinator, an administrator, an accountant, four social workers, five social counsellors, two educators for children, two lawyers, one gym teacher, and other staff for maintenance, cleaning and security.

The Centre’s facility includes:

- A shelter for women (with their children) and girl victims of violence (bedrooms for around 35 persons);
- A counselling centre providing social, psychological and legal counselling, and professional counselling on parenthood and childhood for families in distress as well as for the children of women from the community;
- A small nursery for the children of Mehwar beneficiaries;
- A multipurpose hall (around 100 seats) for prevention programmes and various community activities (the hall is equipped with a screen, a projector, stereos, chairs, tables and computers);
- A small gym for community women;
- A cafeteria;
- Administrative offices.

In 2008, the Italian Government allocated a new fund of approximately two million Euros to be managed through a three-year project framework by UN Women for the implementation of the Mehwar Centre's services and activities. This subsequent project phase aimed to consolidate the Mehwar Centre experience as a professional, effective and sustainable protection system, while setting national human rights-based, standards for protection policies and services addressing violence against women in the oPt. On the basis of this goal, in February 2009, UN Women signed a Letter of Agreement with the Ministry of Social Affairs, in which UN Women became responsible

“The Palestinian Ministry of Social Affairs has a vision that is based on moving from relief to development, providing Palestinian society with social welfare services in the context of comprehensive sustainable social development, as well as adopting a rights-based approach... The [Mehwar] Centre aims to support and strengthen family relationships, reduce the phenomenon of domestic violence and defend the rights and dignity of women.”

Dr. Mahmoud Habbash
Former Palestinian Minister of Social Affairs

for executing the project and providing specialised technical assistance to the Mehwar Centre, as well as to the project partners, and the Ministry became responsible for offering institutional support to the Centre, as well as developing tailored policies for specialised protection services targeting women victims of violence.

3. The Mehwar Centre's Policies and Procedures

3.1 Initial Development (2005-2006) and First Overall Review (2010)

Mehwar's corpus of policies and procedures was developed between 2005 and 2006 by a team of national and international experts to be “a professional, initial reference for the Centre's team, open to future developments based on the needs of the actual work”, with the ambition “to become a national guide for all organisations working in the field of protecting the Palestinian family from all forms of violence.” The team of experts counted professionals from the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Palestinian NGO WCLAC and the international NGO “Differenza Donna,” specialised in the management of anti-violence centres. These institutions, which comprised the partners of the first project phase for the establishment of the Mehwar Centre (2004-2007), joined an official Committee approved by the former Minister of Social Affairs, Hasan Abu Libde. The process of developing Mehwar's policies and procedures was widely participatory and led to gathering information and lessons learned from various national and international experiences in the field of combating violence against women. Specifically, the following steps were undertaken:

- Consultation with the Palestinian Security Forces;
- Consultation with the Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs;
- Consultation with Palestinian NGOs working in the field of combating violence against women and promoting human rights;
- Consultation with national and international experts and academics in the fields of social work, psychology and law;



- Exchange of experiences with shelters in Israel and Italy;
- Revision of pertinent national and international literature, including guidelines and policy-related documents from other anti-violence centres.

In January 2006, the Mehwar Centre’s official policies and procedures were finalised with endorsement of the Ministry of Social Affairs to direct the Centre in its aim to “support and strengthen family relationships, reduce the phenomenon of domestic violence and defend the rights and dignity of women”.² This official document, sometimes referred to as the Mehwar Centre’s “by-laws,” but referred to in this publication as the Mehwar Centre’s Guide for Policies and Procedures, was intended to serve as a framework for the Mehwar Centre’s operations to be reviewed and revised based on the actual practices of the Centre and on emerging protection gaps and needs.

In 2010, after three years of the Mehwar Centre’s operation, the Palestinian Ministry of Social Affairs, under the lead of the current Minister Majeda Al-Masri, commissioned UN Women in the oPt to conduct a comprehensive review and evaluation of the Mehwar Centre’s policies and procedures in light of the Centre’s pilot field experience, to gauge their effectiveness, efficiency and compliance with international human rights standards.

More specifically, the evaluation process was carried out according to the following directives:

- **Review** the policies and procedures of the Mehwar Centre, in their original formulation and in their actual implementation, to ensure that they fit their purpose and meet the needs of the beneficiaries that they mean to serve and support;
- **Evaluate** the extent to which the Centre’s policies guide and inform its actual decision making;
- **Analyze** the degree to which the Centre’s procedures explain the specific actions taken by the Centre to implement its policies;
- **Assess and benchmark** the Centre’s policies and procedures against a human rights framework to ensure their compliance with international human rights standards;
- **Determine** the potential for using the Mehwar Centre’s policies and procedures as a national guide for the development of similar organisations in the oPt.

The evaluation ultimately aimed to develop the Mehwar Centre’s policies and procedures into a national guide for other organisations in the oPt working in the field of protecting women, children and families from all forms of violence.

After developing the evaluation’s tailored terms of reference and a joint recruitment process with input from MoSA and Differenza Donna, UN Women contracted an independent consultant, Joanne Creighton, an international expert on violence against women and policy evaluation, for this assignment. A national consultant, Amer Madi, was also brought on board to support the process as a recognised evaluation expert in the oPt.

2 Dr. Mahmoud Habbash, former Palestinian Minister of Social Affairs.

The evaluation was carried out over a four-month period, from June to September 2010. It followed a comprehensive and participative mixed-method framework involving a literature review of relevant background information and programme documents, dip-sampling files, data analysis, observation of current practices, and a safety audit. It also involved a number of meetings, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions with Mehwar staff and beneficiaries, project and institutional partners, and other relevant stakeholders. Key representatives from most of the institutions and organizations consulted during the initial draft of Mehwar policies and procedures were contacted for feedback and input (for the comprehensive evaluation plan, see Appendix 1).

3.2 The Evaluation Safety Audit

The evaluation included a standard organisational safety audit. The safety audit sought to understand how the Mehwar Centre's responses to a woman's lived experience of violence or abuse shaped that experience into a case that was then addressed through organizational responses. It then examined the responses used by the Mehwar Centre to address violence and abuse in comparison to their intended purpose. It aimed to pinpoint the specific strengths and weaknesses in these organisational responses, particularly in relation to safety, protection and international human rights standards.

The safety audit sought to answer fundamental questions about the Mehwar Centre's practices, policies, procedures and rules, such as:

- Do they enhance the safety of women victims of violence?
- Do they comply with internationally recognized human rights standards?
- Do they increase the accountability of perpetrators of violence?

The standards used for the audit were based on key human rights frameworks such as the CEDAW, the CEDAW optional protocols, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other international instruments (the Convention on the Rights of the Child, etc).

The safety audit did not aim to criticise individuals or individual competencies, but rather the impact of institutional processes on the lives of women and girls affected by violence and abuse. Thus, it examined Mehwar Centre forms, policies, procedures, training, inter-agency links, administrative practices, resource deployment, theories and organisational mission.

3.3 Evaluation Limitations

For the most part, the evaluation proceeded according to the evaluation plan. However, several substantial factors delayed and limited the evaluation process. Among these factors, the emergency ethos of the Centre sometimes caused delays in conducting the evaluation's fieldwork components within the Centre itself, sometimes resulting in delayed or incomplete qualitative and quantitative data extraction. There were other activities scheduled in the evaluation process that it became necessary to cancel for logical reasons, such as a workshop planned for child beneficiaries of the Mehwar



Centre, as most of the current child beneficiaries turned out to be under the age of six years old. The planned dip-sampling of case files was complicated by the lack of a current and comprehensive case filing system in which to perform the dip-sampling, as well as by the evaluator's lack of Arabic language proficiency, making it impossible to dip-sample all of the existing files available, as using an external translator to examine sensitive case files was determined unethical and inappropriate.

4. Facts and Figures from the Mehwar Centre's First Three Years of Operation

As of 7 March 2010, the Mehwar Centre had sheltered 148 women and girls from throughout the oPt having experienced a wide range of violence and abuse. They ranged in age from 14 years old to 40 years old. The large majority were under 25 years of age, with a worrisome proportion under the age of 18. These women and girls were referred to Mehwar by a variety of sources, including the police, MoSA, other organisations and self-referrals. They came to the Centre from villages and towns across the West Bank (including Jerusalem), with one woman even reporting to have come from Gaza. From 2007 to 2009, the highest concentrations of women and girls came from within and around Ramallah (21%), Bethlehem (21%), Hebron (15%), and Tulkarem (7%). Notably, the numbers of women and girls from refugee camps accessing the Mehwar Centre has been consistently low. From 2007 to 2009, Mehwar beneficiaries reported experiences of violence including domestic violence, rape and sexual abuse, general family problems, selling under pretext of marriage, death threats and sexual exploitation. Unrepresented in available Centre statistics is the high proportion of women and girls at Mehwar who reported experiencing multiple forms of violence.³

³ For more comprehensive data see Appendix 7.

About the Mehwar Centre's Partners Ministry of Social Affairs

The Ministry of Social Affairs, the governmental body responsible for delivering social services to the Palestinian population, has served as the institutional umbrella for the implementation of the Mehwar Centre project since its beginning. According to its institutional mandate and to the Letter of Agreement signed with UN Women in 2009, MoSA is responsible for developing, in coordination and cooperation with relevant Palestinian stakeholders, proper policies for the Mehwar Centre in line with national laws as well as with international human rights treaties and standards to which the Palestinian Authority has committed. MoSA is the deputy-chair of the "National Committee to Combat Violence against Women", established in 2008 by the Palestinian Ministries Cabinet and chaired by the Ministry of Women's Affairs. The Committee is the legitimate body responsible for supervising the implementation of the National Strategy to Combat Violence Against Women, of which the implementation of anti-violence services for women is an essential part.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women - UN Women

In 2008, the UN Women oPt office joined the Mehwar Project as its executive agency. In this role it manages the funds disbursed by the Italian Government, it provides overall technical assistance and guidance to the project partners, while ensuring the application of human rights standards within Mehwar-related services and policies. UN Women has been involved in the support of women's shelters in many areas of the world, including conflict zones such as Afghanistan and Iraq. It also has a strong regional presence through its Arab States Regional Office, which has gained credibility and support from Arab women's movements through its long-term focus on women's empowerment in the region. This experience, coupled with UN Women's global strategic objective to eliminate violence against women and long history of collaboration with the Italian government, uniquely positions it to support the Mehwar Centre's future development in the oPt. For the past 12 years, the oPt office of UN Women has worked at both the policy and grassroots levels, advocating for legal reform, building the capacity of national institutions in gender responsiveness, and supporting local interventions to empower and protect Palestinian women. UN Women mixed-method approach has allowed it to facilitate dialogue and partnerships between NGOs, government, and international agencies regarding the advancement of women's human rights, human security and the achievement of the third Millennium Development Goal to "promote gender equality and empower women".

Differenza Donna

Differenza Donna is the primary international technical assistance provider to the Mehwar Centre and its staff. Differenza Donna is an Italian NGO with extensive knowledge of and experience in managing anti-violence centres for abused women and children. It has been involved in the planning, development and implementation of the Mehwar Centre pilot project from its inception and has worked continuously and consistently to support the Mehwar Centre in an open partnership approach. It seeks to share its own experience with the Mehwar Centre staff, while also learning from the Centre's experience in the Palestinian context to better support and assist the Centre in the future. A dedicated member of Differenza Donna staff works on-site at the Mehwar Centre to assist in project implementation and provide technical support as desired and needed by the Mehwar Director and staff team. Differenza Donna has made numerous and varied contributions to the Mehwar Centre, including organising numerous training programmes through dedicated support missions.



5. Case Studies of the Mehwar Centre's Impact

Below are some qualitative examples of the ways in which Mehwar has been able to positively support abused women and girls in the oPt since its opening. These examples are drawn from interviews conducted with women formerly sheltered at the Mehwar Centre as well as written monitoring reports. These examples demonstrate the range of needs and experiences of women that come to Mehwar and the importance of assisting and enabling them to exercise their human rights as women.

Differenza Donna Technical Assistance Report, 28 Jan 2010

S.T. was a young girl from a village in the Hebron Governorate. One day while walking in the street with her sister, S.T. was kidnapped and raped by four men. Three of them left, while the fourth man took her back to the street, from where she was able to go back home. The news spread within the village, as the men themselves told others of the episode. Immediately, S.T.'s relatives and people of the village laid siege to her house. Her family tried to protect her by hiding and locking her in a room. Later, they turned to Social Services. S.T. was able to leave her house under the pretext of undergoing a virginity test. In reality, Social Services brought her to a shelter for girls and then afterwards to the Mehwar Centre.

It was a long path, but for the first time in S.T.'s life she found solidarity and professionalism in the Mehwar Centre's care. A customised project was conceived for her in order to provide her with specialised training to obtain a good job. Once S.T. was psychologically stable, she chose to attend a training course to become a nurse. The difficult times are not over yet for S.T., since this kind of job entails much voluntary work. Thus she is still facing financial problems. Around six months ago, Mehwar counsellors deemed S.T.'s project at the Centre to have come to an end. They found accommodation for her at the House of Girls. Currently, S.T. is still studying and shows strong determination to achieve her goals. Despite having learned how to cope with her past, she admits that she feels very lonely and that her life experiences affect her relationships, both social and with her family.

B. was a victim of domestic violence perpetrated by her brother-in-law after she rejected his sexual advances. A mother of four children, B. discovered that her brother-in-law had also raped her 12-year-old daughter. Later, out of jealousy and spite, her husband's family tried to pour hot oil on both B. and her daughter. B. fled to the Mehwar Centre, where she remained for two and a half years. After a long and arduous process, B. was finally able to gain legal custody of her children. B now lives independently. She works, provides and cares for her four children. She is now a respected member of her local community. Three years after her abuse, she tells us that she is now beginning to make friends.

E. was isolated and abused by her family over a period of several years. When she arrived at the Mehwar Centre she was extremely withdrawn and would not engage or speak about the abuse she had experienced. However, with Mehwar's care and support through a range of holistic interventions over two and a half years, she was finally able to leave the Shelter. During her stay in Mehwar, E. studied and learned many skills. She attended English language classes, yoga, and glass craftwork classes. She is now a hardworking and qualified medical secretary with hopes and dreams for her future.

UN Women First Progress Report to the Government of Italy, September 2008 - April 2009

In April 2009, a girl receiving shelter from the Mehwar Centre was attacked and abducted on her way back from a court session where she had given testimony, with support from the Mehwar staff, as a victim of domestic violence. By abducting the girl, her family intended to force her to withdraw the lawsuit against her uncle, who had raped her repeatedly since she was a child.

The girl was rescued by the police and accompanied safely back to the Mehwar Centre. In response to the event, UN Women published a letter to the pertinent Ministries thanking them for contributing to the success of the rescue intervention and calling on them to share in the responsibility of ensuring justice for the girl and for all women survivors of violence. Through this advocacy initiative, UN Women succeeded in bringing the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Palestinian Independent Commission for Human Rights and Al-Muntada, a coalition of Palestinian NGOs combating violence against women, on board to monitor trials involving gender-based violent crimes. Moreover, the Palestinian Police Force renewed its commitment to provide effective protection to guarantee women's access to justice.

Following the incident, the General Prosecutor approved a charge against the girl's uncle for the crime of rape and guaranteed the continuation of the trial.



UN Women Second Progress Report to the Government of Italy, July 2010

On the napkins distributed with the pastries at the graduation party, it was written: "It's all about the journey." G. was beautiful that day, with her long hair on the black graduation gown and a bright smile. She was sitting right there in the front row with her fellow students who attended, as she did, a two-year course to become a nurse at the Caritas Baby Hospital in Bethlehem.

G. is the second woman that was sheltered at the Mehwar Centre after its opening in 2007. In her early twenties and coming from a village close to Hebron, G.'s father threatened to kill her and she needed protection.

For more than one year, she did not share her difficult story with the Mehwar team. She challenged them with her obstinate silence and told them contradictory events, disorienting the social counsellors and making it impossible for them to know her true emotions and thoughts. But the Mehwar team did not withdraw their support from G., knowing that the path to rebuilding trust after being betrayed with violence by her loved ones was a very long path to take. With the staff's persistent support, G. was finally able to open up and reveal her tremendous story of abuse and violence, perpetrated first by her brother and then by her community.

Women subjected to sexual abuse at a very young age and within their families suffer deep emotional and relational damage. One of the most difficult things for them is to rebuild a sense of self-allowance for employing protective borders in social and affective relations. It is very hard for them to believe that love and recognition do not pass first through abuse and violence.

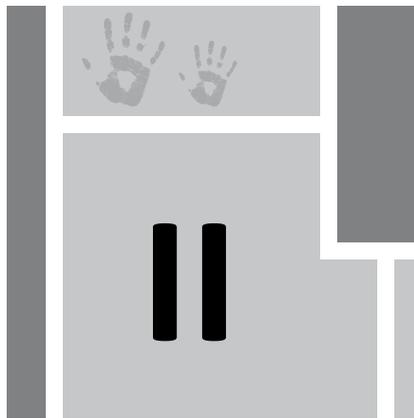
At first, G. did not want to study. She had problems in concentrating and self-discipline. Her psychological and emotional balance was very precarious. Then she became convinced to try. She attended a one-year course for medical secretaries. Yet, afterwards, she started working in a shop to earn some money.

Through a long and delicate negotiation and careful rapprochement, the Mehwar team convinced G.'s father that the best thing for his daughter and for the family's credibility was to give G. a chance to get an education and a qualified job. He finally agreed to let G. enrol in a nursing course in Bethlehem, while living in a students' house under Mehwar supervision. Throughout her two years of studying, the Mehwar team continued to offer G. not only psychosocial support and a safe place to go any time she needed it, but they also helped her financially by paying her tuition fees and a small contribution to the students' house.

On Thursday, 29 July 2010, G. finally graduated as a nurse. G.'s father and sisters attended the ceremony, their faces dressed with an air of incredulity and a strange mixture of pride and sadness.

After the ceremony G. and her father sat discretely in a corner. They talked a lot, and cried. Then they came to greet the Mehwar team who attended the ceremony. G.'s father thanked them several times, saying he was grateful that they took care of G.'s and believed in her when he had not. He also said he was sad that his wife could not see this day, as she had passed away a few months earlier; she had wanted very much for G. to succeed. G. smiled with a few tears in her eyes and said very proudly "now is the time for me to go to University."

It's all about the journey!



KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following findings are based upon the evaluation activities outlined in the introduction above and explained in detail in Appendix 2. Observation and analysis using the safety auditing process were integrated and synthesised into the findings, and wherever possible, the evaluator took steps to ensure that each of the findings could be verified from more than one source and ideally triangulated. The findings were then analyzed and recommendations given under each section for the improvement of Mehwar’s policies and procedures. Also from the findings, monitoring and evaluation indicators and a new structure for the revision of Mehwar’s policies and procedures were devised.

1. The Mehwar Centre’s Guide for Policies and Procedures

1.1 Brief Review of Mehwar’s Existing Guide for Policies and Procedures

1.1.1 Key Findings

A thorough examination and review of the Mehwar Centre’s current Guide for Policies and Procedures document was carried out to determine the extent to which written policies and procedures exist and comply with human rights standards. The existing policies and procedures outlined in the Guide for Policies and Procedures document were then compared with their implementation on the ground in the Mehwar Centre’s everyday operations as observed by the evaluator over the course of the entire evaluation process. The table on the following page summarizes these findings according to the four main chapters of the Mehwar Centre’s written Guide for Policies and Procedures.

1.1.2 Recommendations

The structure, format and content of the Mehwar Centre’s written *Guide for Policies and Procedures* should be thoroughly reworked for greater efficiency, effectiveness and compliance with human rights standards. Furthermore, Mehwar Centre management and staff should conduct a basic review of the Centre’s *Guide for Policies and Procedures* on an annual basis and a more comprehensive review and overhaul of the policies and procedures every three years. Both the basic and comprehensive review processes should aim to ensure that the Centre’s policies and procedures are still fit for purpose, meaning they remain efficient and effective while protecting and empowering women and girls in the oPt who have been victims of violence or at risk of becoming so, and enable them to exercise their human rights. External technical support and advice for carrying out these reviews should be sought and utilized as necessary.

Summary table of findings in relation to the current Mehwar Centre written *Guide for Policies and Procedures*

v = Policies’ and Procedures’ Compliance with human rights was developed and is in place in the written Policies and Procedures of the Mehwar Centre

~ = Policies and Procedures are partially developed and put in place, but could be improved; compliant with human rights in content/intention, but not adequately referenced with human rights frameworks. Minor revision required.

X = Policies and Procedures are not developed or in place; not grounded in a human rights framework. Major revision required.

Pg	Policies	Procedures	Human Rights Compliance	Agreement of written policies and procedures with the Mehwar Centre's actual current practices
Chapter 1: Defining the Centre				
Vision and Objectives of the Centre				Some ambiguity with the definition of the target group. Reference to human rights is clear.
7	√	X	√	
Principles of the Centre				The chapter do not adress procedures. Reference to human rights is clear.
7-11	√	X	√	
Services provided by the Centre				This section is simply an explanation/overview of what is provided. It does not cover the full range of the Mehwar Centre activities.
11	X	X	√	
Chapter 2: The Protection and Counselling Department				
12-17	X	~	~	In practice no one refers this department by this name, but commonly as the Shelter or internal section. Restructuring this section should be considered as it is more like a statement of intent/overview and lacks full details on procedures (e.g. risk identification, detail on implementation plan, etc).
18-39	~	~	X	The name of this section should perhaps be simplified to Shelter Policies and Procedures. It lacks detailed explanation and there are gaps (e.g. in risk identification procedures). The structure requires reworking and the content requires updating to reflect the actual services currently provided. It needs to detail the procedures to be followed more accurately. The policies and procedures in this section are not adequately based on human rights protection and respect.
Chapter 3: The Social Services Department				
40-42	√	X	√	This is actually more commonly referred to by the staff and some partners as the Centre's 'outreach' work. It omits detail on the activities that the outreach section arranges for the sheltered women and lacks detail on how "outreach" services are delivered. It complies with human rights, but does not reference the relevant human rights frameworks to back this up.
Chapter 4: General Policies of the Centre				
43-55	~	X	~	This section is a jumble. It is unclear why this title is used and why it is not integrated within the sections relating to services above or alternatively appended to the document. There are many omissions (e.g. relating to communications/media; administration, human resources, security, building maintenance, partnership, etc). While much of the content complies with human rights, it does not adequately base the policies and procedures within a human rights framework. Requires updating and amendment.



2. Centre Governance

2.1 Guiding Principles, Vision, Mission and Target Group

2.1.1 Key Findings

Under Chapter One “Defining the Centre” of the current Mehwar Centre Guide for Policies and Procedures, the Centre’s vision, objectives and guiding principles are highlighted.

The Mehwar Centre’s guiding principles are evidently grounded in human rights concepts and provide a strong rights-oriented framework for the Centre’s approach to women victims of violence, as well as to families in distress. This framework appears in line with international anti-violence centres most advanced practices, also valuing the woman-to-woman approach as a key aspect of the centre’s methodology. The evaluation process showed that the Mehwar team does clearly follow these principles and their associated vision while performing their work, though their implementation is problematic at times, mainly due to conflicting positions taken by other parties involved in case-management. For this reason, the responses given during a workshop aimed at analysing Mehwar’s vision and mission through the team’s field experience, sometimes conflated the Centre’s vision, mission and activities in some respects. While the original principles of the Mehwar Centre should definitely be maintained within the corpus of policies and procedures, further support could be offered to the Mehwar team through developing more accurate case-management procedures to translate these principles into concrete intervention plans and tools.

Mehwar Centre Guide for Policies and Procedures (2006), Chapter One “Defining the Centre”

-  All persons have the right to lead secure and non-violent lives (UDHR Articles 3 and 5 / CEDAW Article 3)
-  Women and children have the right to be protected (UDHR Articles 3,5,7 and 8 / CEDAW Article 3)
-  Family members have the right to live in a safe and healthy family environment based on mutual respect and on rejection of all forms of violence (UDHR Article 16 / CEDAW Article 16)
-  Every woman, as human being, has the right to determine her destiny (UDHR Articles 1,2,3 and 19)
-  Women have the ability to lead a dignified life free from violence (concept of Empowerment)
-  Women have the ability to support each other through solidarity networks

Strictly interlinked with the guiding principles, the Mehwar Centre’s overall vision is quite progressively based on the “belief that every human being is entitled to a safe and non-violent living”. The Centre’s vision further develops the assumption that violence against women is a social problem demanding social responsibility for change. It clearly addresses “all forms of violence and abuse against women”, though

specifying that its protection and empowerment services target especially women victims of domestic violence. This particular formulation using both approaches of “fight[ing] against all forms of violence against women” and “support to women victims of domestic violence” has led to some ambiguity as to the Mehwar Centre’s target beneficiaries. Various participants throughout this evaluation process raised questions regarding Mehwar Centre’s target group. More specifically, does the Mehwar Centre’s primary target group comprise only victims of domestic violence, or is it also inclusive of all women and girls who are victims of any form of violence or abuse?

Mehwar Centre Guide for Policies and Procedures (2006)
Chapter One “Defining the Centre”

The Centre for the Protection and Empowerment of Women and Families “Mehwar” is a social organisation that aims to support and empower family and social ties that are based on dialogue and acceptance of the other, alleviate and decrease all forms of violence and abuse against women, and empower Palestinian women, especially those who are victims of domestic violence, in order to contribute to the society and the family on the basis of justice, equality and respect for human dignity. The Centre aims to make a social change through the provision of shelter, counselling, social, legal and rehabilitative services, in addition to many and different prevention and social programmes that benefit women, children, families, and the society as a whole.

It is noteworthy that at the time of the evaluation⁴, domestic violence was the primary reason for admitting and sheltering only two of the 16 women sheltered at Mehwar, or just 12.5%⁵. From interviews it became clear that the women accessing the Mehwar Shelter generally have or are experiencing multiple levels of violence and abuse, some of which may or may not fit into the category of domestic violence. The quantitative data⁶ that exists on the types of violence and abuse faced by the women sheltered at Mehwar also seems to support the finding that the women accessing the Mehwar Shelter and services face a range of violence that does not necessarily qualify as domestic violence. This data does not, however, capture women’s multiple experiences of violence, as the Mehwar Centre does not currently collect such data.

Anecdotal evidence also supports the trend at Mehwar that many of the women accessing its Shelter and services experience multiple forms of violence and abuse. As such, Mehwar’s vision as it is currently written does not fully represent the reality of the target group it serves. Despite the present lack of data available on violence against women in the oPt, it is an endemic problem, as evidenced by the PA planned formulation of a National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women (in draft at the time of writing). The Mehwar Centre’s social change model, which focuses on the needs and realities of women victims and survivors of violence, is fundamental to ensuring that women’s human rights are upheld and protected in the oPt, but is not adequately articulated in Centre’s mission statement.

4 At time of staff workshop in July 2010.

5 Women victims/survivors of violence and abuse have often experienced multiple forms of violence and abuse. The term primarily is used in this instance as a basic marker to establish a prime reason for being sheltered at Mehwar.

6 For all quantitative data available on the profile of the Mehwar Centre’s beneficiaries, see the charts in Appendix 7.



Given that the Mehwar Centre is currently the only large-scale specialised centre and shelter in the oPt responding to problems of violence against women in this way, its written vision should unequivocally represent the women actually accessing and in need of its services by defining its target group to explicitly cover victims of all forms of violence against women as defined by the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993)⁷, including women victims of sexual exploitation.⁸

The original Mehwar Centre Guide for Policies and Procedures mentions Mehwar’s mission as a translation into practice of the defined vision.

Mehwar Centre Guide for Policies and Procedures (2006)

Chapter One “Defining the Centre”

To realize this vision, the Centre is working:

-  To support, protect and empower women and children in distress, promote their self-confidence, and develop their abilities and skills to lead a dignified life
-  To protect and support girls in distress
-  To empower and support family ties based on respect for the rights of all individuals within the family
-  To contribute to amending the current legal and social laws through professional legal and social interventions, preventing violation or abuse of women’s rights
-  To work on changing stereotypical conceptions within society about the issue of domestic violence, still considered a private issue within the family and not a public issue that concerns the whole society. This can be achieved through the provision of prevention and awareness programmes about violence and its effects on the society as a whole, and through focus on awareness programmes, practice of pressure and provision of defence, in addition to documentation to encourage research while ensuring confidentiality of all cases at hand

The mission of the Mehwar Centre, as expressed by the staff during an ad hoc workshop conducted during this evaluation process, was quite comprehensive. While aspiring to such a comprehensive and holistic mission is commendable, it poses the question of whether the Centre can actually achieve this wide range of goals within its current resources.

Offering holistic needs-based activities to the Centre’s primary target group is important, but is it SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely) for the Mehwar

7 There is another shelter operated by WCLAC, an emergency shelter in Jericho. This shelter, however, is by its name and function, only intended and offers a short-term shelter facility for women in crisis.

8 The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 1993 defines violence against women as ‘any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in sexual or mental harm of suffering to women, including threats such acts as coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in private and public life.’ The declaration elaborates that violence against women is divided into three categories: physical, psychological and sexual. There has been much discussion amongst staff and stakeholders on the issue of women who may be sexually exploited. This evaluation report recommends these women always be given equal access to Mehwar’s facilities and support.

Mehwar Staff on the Centre's Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles (July 2010)

 *"Mehwar's vision is to achieve legal and social equality for women, to decrease violence against women and for the person who is in the wrong (the abuser/perpetrator) to be held accountable and be punished by the law."*

 *"Mehwar's vision is to reach a society where women are free to choose their life and are respected for their desires and needs, a society in which everyone is valued for their diversity and no one can oblige someone else with violence to do something."*

 *"I see Mehwar in five years time as a great centre to protect women from all kinds of violence, where we as a staff team and social counsellors are able to give and share our experience with other people and professionals in the Middle East."*

 *"Mehwar supports women socially, legally and psychologically and is able to empower women, especially abused women. The shelter leads projects inside and outside to improve the reintegration of abused women and promotes their financial independence."*

 *"Mehwar aims to end violence against women by protecting women victims whose lives are in danger, supporting women's empowerment, raising awareness in the community about violence against women, and networking with governmental and non-governmental organisations to support women victims of violence."*

 *"Mehwar's protection mechanism aims to provide protection by hosting victims of violence; providing them with main necessities, like food and clothes; offering them access to medical care, psychological support, and social counselling also related to the acquisition of life skills so as to be equipped to protect themselves in the future."*

Centre to aspire to this full range of activities, given its current financial and human resources?

A "holistic approach" in the delivery of anti-violence services to women and children victims differs from a "holistic provision of services" to address violence against women.

While a holistic approach is suitable for Mehwar's innovative core vision and mission, a holistic provision of services is perhaps outside of the centre's current scope operating in an environment where, for example, staff members work without a continuous supervision programme and several key staff positions have been vacant for some time. Rather, clearly identifying the Mehwar Centre's specificity and added value vis-à-vis other organisations and institutions would allow the Centre to more accurately direct its core work and services towards the sheltered beneficiaries and their families. Additional service provision need not to be forgotten, but does not require equal priority at at the current stage.

2.1.2 Recommendations

The Mehwar Centre's vision and mission should be revised within the framework of the existing guiding principles, while maintaining and strengthening a rights-oriented and holistic approach to violence against women, but also taking care to better define Mehwar's target group and primary services with a focus on protecting and empowering women victims of all forms of violence. Particular target groups of vulnerable women in the oPt, such as women who have been detained or imprisoned, will



thus fall under the Mehwar Centre's target group. Explicit reference should be made to "women victims of violence" as defined by the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993), also including women at risk of such violence. The Mehwar Centre's vision and mission should also be further clarified in the spirit of simplicity and effectiveness. Furthermore, the Mehwar Centre's management team should conduct a full strategic planning process for the organisation on a cyclical basis that would include overall staff consultation.

2.2 Governance Structure and Legal Status

2.2.1 Key Findings

The current governance structure of the Mehwar Centre directly coincides with a specific project framework, which is unusual and unique for a shelter of its kind. The evaluation found that the Mehwar Centre is currently under the institutional umbrella of MoSA, which affords the Centre national support and profiling for its vision and work. Differenza Donna serves as the Mehwar Centre's main provider for international technical assistance and support, acting as a resource for external perspectives and expertise. UN Women then manages and oversees the Mehwar Centre Project, helping the Centre frame its services and response work to violence against women within a global framework and understanding. UN Women also uses its role and position in working with other institutions to connect and support the Mehwar Centre's work.

This multi-tiered project framework structure clearly has both advantages and disadvantages for the work that Mehwar aims to achieve with its beneficiaries. There is evidence of ways in which all of the partner relationships above have clearly supported and contributed to the success and development of the Mehwar Project. MoSA, Differenza Donna and UN Women have benefited the Mehwar Centre in fulfilling its mission through their energy, commitment and resources. However, this project management structure was brought into being in a specific time and context in which the Mehwar Centre was a fledgling project facing uncertainty and instability. It must be acknowledged and recognised that there is a need for Mehwar and its partners to work on transitioning Mehwar's current project management framework to a permanent Centre governance structure, including formalising the Mehwar Centre's legal status.

Effective Governance means having fair and consistent management, cohesive policies, guidance, processes and decision making and taking. Clarifying the specifics in relation to Mehwar and establishing a clear governance structure for the Mehwar Centre is a pre-requisite for the application of effective policies and procedures.

A range of options exists for the potential reconfiguration of the Mehwar Centre's governance structure, including becoming an official governmental, semi-governmental, or non-governmental organization.

2.2.2 Recommendations

The evaluator recommends the development of a simple, effective, efficient and independent governance structure for the Mehwar Centre as an absolute priority and

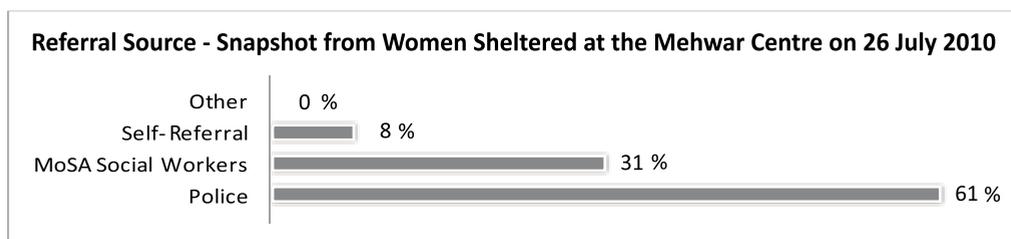
essential foundation for supporting the Centre’s mission and function as it enters its next phase. A scoping exercise should also be conducted to assess governance options for Mehwar Centre.

To do this, the Centre staff, MoSA, UN Women, Differenza Donna and the Italian Cooperation should form a “Governance Action Group” to immediately commence in a dialogue and decision-making process about the current project management structure’s strengths and weaknesses. This partner dialogue should result in an agreement and conclusions for a permanent Mehwar Centre governance structure that will ensure the stability and sustainability of the Centre beyond the end of the current Mehwar Centre project phase slated to end in August 2011. The outcome should ensure that Mehwar can maintain its professional, independent role in meeting the needs and interests of all abused women, children and their families who have suffered from violence or are at risk of violence.

3. Shelter Services and Case Management

3.1 Referrals and Admission

3.1.1 Key Findings



Source: 13 women sheltered at Mehwar on 26 July 2010.

At the time of the evaluation, there were 16 women and girls sheltered at the Mehwar Centre.⁹ Of these, 13 (81%) were able to participate in a group workshop to discuss their pathways of referral to the Mehwar Centre.¹⁰ As depicted in the diagram above, the most common route of referral to the Mehwar Centre for these women was via the police (eight women/62%), followed by referrals through MoSA social workers (four women/31%). One woman (8%) came to Mehwar of her own volition without referral. This sample, although small, is an indicator of the general referral sources for the Mehwar Centre’s Shelter (not including beneficiaries of outreach services of Mehwar).

Throughout the course of the evaluation process, it was discovered that Mehwar does not routinely record data on its referrals or regularly collate this data for monitoring purposes. From the workshop results with the women sheltered at Mehwar at the time of the evaluation, it is clear that the police and MoSA have an understanding of Mehwar’s purpose and function, as evidenced by their referrals to the Centre. However, no assessment or analysis exists on the “appropriateness” of these referrals. Data and processes are lacking to determine whether the women referred to the Mehwar

9 Accurate on 26 July 2010.

10 Three other women were unavailable due to employment commitments or other appointments.



Centre fit within Mehwar’s mandated target group, and similarly, no information exists on whether the Mehwar Centre is the “best” place for a woman after Mehwar staff have conducted their professional intake assessment.

The evaluation also found that additional gaps exist in the Centre’s procedures for providing referral agencies with feedback and suggestions for alternative support services for women in cases where Mehwar is deemed an inappropriate fit. Crucially, there seems to be no standardized or consistent method for identifying and networking with potential partners and referral agencies, such as doctors, nurses, religious leaders, rehabilitation centre officers, community leaders, teachers, and NGOs that are not already making referrals to Mehwar, but that are likely to come across women victims of violence in their work. Improved record-keeping and data collection is important not only for ensuring efficient and effective treatment of the women seeking access to the Mehwar Centre, but also because more effective referral pathways could have significant financial implications for service providers in the event of increased referrals, including for the Mehwar Centre itself.

3.1.2 Recommendations

In the coming months, the Mehwar Centre should conduct specific analysis of its referral data, including the source, appropriateness and steps taken after intake assessment for all referrals made to the Centre. The Centre’s policies and procedures must be revised to clearly define referral criteria as well as stipulate how such data will be routinely recorded in a woman’s case file and the data collected and analyzed on a regular basis for monitoring and oversight purposes. Mehwar should then develop a standardized referral pathway system and strategy for engagement with other potential referral agencies to ensure that all women and girls who are victims of violence and abuse, not only those referred by state agencies such as MoSA and the Police, are able to access safety and shelter, in line with an open access shelter policy.

3.2 VAW Emergency Referrals

3.2.1 Key Findings

Throughout the evaluation process various agencies and organisations have used the term “emergency shelter” or referred to “emergency shelters” in the oPt. The evaluation also included a visit to a shelter in Jericho run by the Palestinian NGO WCLAC that was referred to as an “emergency shelter”. Given the frequency of this term’s use, it is important to distinguish what the meaning of emergency means and whether or not it is in fact an accurate or helpful term to describe shelters catering to women victims of violence in the oPt. Emergency generally implies an imminent risk to life, or a crisis situation. Given that the primary purpose of a shelter for women victims of violence is to protect them from immediate and future risk of harm, the use of the term “emergency” in reference to these shelters may be a misnomer. Recovery from violence and abuse is often a long process requiring space, time and support to heal both physically and emotionally. The evaluation found that many women victims of violence in the oPt are first referred to “emergency shelters” rather than being referred directly to the Mehwar Centre. However, each woman or girl that has experienced violence or abuse represents a unique case with specific needs. If these

specific needs are properly prioritized, then cases may exist in which direct referral to the Mehwar Centre may better ensure a woman's protection and recovery than referral to an "emergency shelter." While it does not classify itself as an "emergency shelter," the evaluation found that the Mehwar Centre staff is in fact trained to work on VAW emergencies.

3.2.2 Recommendations

The prevalent practice of initially referring women victims of violence to "emergency shelters" should be further investigated. The Mehwar Centre should review its capacity for handling VAW emergency cases, and if it deems appropriate, consider revising its policies and procedures to include emergency referrals. The policies and procedures should also outline steps for informing and cooperating with referring agencies and authorities about the Centre's capacity and willingness to receive direct VAW emergency referrals.

3.3 Risk Identification and Assessment

3.3.1 Key Findings

The evaluation found that staff members at Mehwar are skilled in identifying the risks faced by women victims of violence. They assess these risks at the intake stage as well as at various other stages and meetings throughout a woman's contact with the Mehwar Centre. However, the evaluation process revealed that there is currently no standard, formal tool or mechanism embedded in the Mehwar Centre's policies and procedures for recording and reviewing risk identification and assessment. Reliance on current staff knowledge is not a valid substitute for a standardized risk identification and assessment system. At the time of the evaluation Mehwar's staff could not track the levels of risk to a woman over time by searching records from case reviews. From the lack of an evidence-based risk assessment tool, Mehwar staff could not efficiently coordinate efforts with other relevant partners and professionals, for instance giving them the ability to inform a police officer investigating a complaint that the woman in question is at "high risk" of violence.

3.3.2 Recommendations

The Mehwar Centre must develop formal, standardized risk identification and assessment tool based on researched risk factors and embed this tool in its policies and procedures. The evaluator has drafted a proposed risk identification tool for Mehwar to use and submitted it to Mehwar's Director for feedback and adjustment so that it can be specially tailored to the particular experiences of violence and abuse relevant to Palestinian women and service users of the Mehwar Centre.

3.4 Case Management Documentation System

3.4.1 Key Findings

The Mehwar Centre does operate a paper-based case file system for its beneficiaries. However, dip-sampling the case file system during the evaluation revealed that it can be *ad hoc* and is not always consistent. Examples were discovered in which information



was missing from files, whole case files were missing altogether and information relating to certain cases was found to be kept in locations other than in the appropriate case file. Together with UN Women, Mehwar management had already identified the need to develop an improved case file management system to better support its work with beneficiaries. The evaluation found that a workshop had been coordinated by the former Shelter Responsible to present a suggested revised format for such a case file system, but staff felt that the proposed system was not practical or user-friendly.

In light of these previous efforts, the evaluator discussed with both UN Women and Mehwar's Director the option of developing a secure, web-based case file management system for the Mehwar Centre. If designed in consultation with management, social workers, social counsellors, UN Women and violence against women specialists, such a system has the potential to give the necessary structure to case records to prevent the omission of important information. It could improve communication and handover amongst caseworkers and free up staff time (if typed data entry is minimised) for more direct work with beneficiaries. It also has the potential to reduce the risk of lost institutional knowledge of women's cases resulting from insecure record-keeping (e.g. in the event of fire, theft, etc) and additionally, reduce the risk of confidential information being shared inappropriately, although no case management system is one hundred percent secure. Some financial resource implications exist to developing such a system and relevant staff, including all caseworkers, social counsellors and social workers, would require mandatory training on the system's use and implementation. Individualised login accounts and profiles for staff would also be essential for ensuring the system's security.

However, if the Centre management decides to retain its current paper-based system, then according to the evaluation findings, attention is required to the system than is currently given. Completion of records must be mandatory for all caseworkers and data must be kept securely. If caseloads are heavy then it would be necessary for management and partners to identify and locate resources for administrative and secretarial support to be provided in order to input case notes and data onto a centralized system. If a paper-only system continues to be used, then files must be kept in good order and summary sheets of key information kept at the front of the files for easy access in event of an emergency.

3.4.2 Recommendations

The Mehwar Centre's case management system should be revised for efficiency, effectiveness and security to best serve the Centre's beneficiaries and staff. The Centre's policies and procedures should explain the purpose, function and structure of the Centre's case management system, including its relevance to Mehwar's beneficiaries and use by Mehwar staff. At a minimum, the proposed baseline monitoring data below should be regularly collected, reviewed and evaluated internally via Mehwar's case management system, preferably on a quarterly basis, to inform the Mehwar Centre's policies, procedures and practices. In time, additional information should also be added, such as recreational activity logs, disabilities). Anonymous data and statistics should be compiled from this monitoring and evaluation data to regularly inform partners and assist in the completion of quarterly reports for donors.

Monitoring Data for Proposed Systematic Collection and Review via the Mehwar Centre's Case Management System

-  Age of women / girls sheltered at Mehwar
-  Where sheltered beneficiaries report to be from
-  Who referred Mehwar's beneficiaries to the Centre (MoSA, self-referral, police, etc)
-  All types of violence and abuse experienced by each beneficiary at Mehwar
-  Duration of beneficiary's stay at Mehwar's Shelter
-  Primary perpetrator / abuser of Mehwar beneficiary (e.g. father, brother, etc)
-  Additional secondary perpetrators / abusers of Mehwar beneficiary
-  Mehwar legal cases (number, type, court type and outcome)
-  Educational attainment level of Mehwar beneficiaries (e.g. basic, secondary, university, etc)
-  Mehwar beneficiaries' educational / re-training support needs met
-  Mehwar beneficiaries' educational / re-training support needs unmet (as defined/expressed by the women themselves)
-  Current employment status of women sheltered at Mehwar
-  Beneficiary assessment of their treatment / experience at Mehwar (e.g. victim dis / satisfaction on the services received at Mehwar) obtained during one-on-one sessions
-  Mehwar beneficiaries' resettlement locations (e.g. live-in job, living with other women, returned to husband, returned to family)
-  Mehwar beneficiaries' follow-up contact records (provided at one, three, six or 12-month intervals post departure from Mehwar's Shelter, and more or less frequently as desired by the each woman) and records of any further victimisation (subject to staff resources)

3.5 Access to Justice: Legal Support and Legal Casework

3.5.1 Key Findings

The evaluation revealed that Mehwar's Legal Team does have structures and recordkeeping procedures in place. In terms of the Legal Team's effectiveness, it is clear from the qualitative evidence collected over the course of the evaluation process, including reports, meetings and interviews with a range of sources, that Mehwar has facilitated positive legal interventions for some women and thus, enabled their access to justice. Mehwar has had considerable successes in this regard, including setting legal precedents in the oPt through its efforts to defend and uphold women's rights.

While Mehwar's successes are admirable and should be celebrated, Mehwar's beneficiaries and Legal Team still face many challenges and obstacles in accessing justice. Such challenges include the legal frameworks and normative judiciary systems in the oPt. While these systems should support women's rights and ensure their protection, as well as punish perpetrators of violence against women, qualitative



evidence collected over the course of the evaluation suggests that these systems lack effectiveness. Judges and prosecutors lack training and knowledge about gender-based violence and the specific needs for protection and justice of women who are experiencing or have experienced violence. From the qualitative evidence collected during the evaluation, it is clear that in some cases women continue to be denied justice, or worse, criminalised for speaking out and approaching institutions about their experiences of violence and abuse. Information collected during the evaluation revealed that women are also subjected to acts that violate their right to privacy and personal dignity, such as forced virginity tests, and are sometimes detained “for their protection” without evidence or trial.

3.5.2 Recommendations

The Mehwar Centre’s existing processes and procedures for legal support and casework should be documented and integrated into the Centre’s revised policies and procedures for ensuring women’s access to justice. Additionally, Mehwar’s policies and procedures should outline the Centre’s cooperative role with other institutional partners in efforts to lobby for legal reforms and specific training and sensitization for judiciary and security officials on how to protect women victims of violence and abuse in accordance with human rights standards (e.g. through assistance in organising an international conference on key issues such as forced virginity tests).

3.6 Mental Health: Psychological Support and Expertise

3.6.1 Key Findings

Violence and abuse affect each woman differently, including her mental health. Thus, Mehwar Centre staff workers must pay particular attention to beneficiaries’ potential needs for and use of the Centre’s mental health services. Over the course

Mehwar Shelter beneficiaries

“Previously I struggled to say ‘no’ when I needed to. Now I can say ‘no’ when I need to and mean it.”

“ I like the empowerment of women and the availability of protection here. [They] listen to me and I can say my opinion freely, and this gives me support and confidence. I feel they are compassionate. I feel secure towards them because I [had] lost what safety means and I like the psychological support [they give me]; how to deal with life and how to face others. I feel developed and changed in myself in all aspects. I feel comfortable and safe, but I need a better life and freedom, to live independently and to have freedom of expression, to be responsible for myself. “

of the evaluation, many Mehwar Centre staff members, especially the Social Counselling and Social Work staff, expressed that they felt challenged in addressing beneficiaries’ mental health needs, as Mehwar staff members are not specialized in clinical psychology so as to be able to deal with severe mental health problems of some of their “cases”. This is understandable, as they are not employed as clinical psychologists or psychiatrists. However, the evaluation found that Mehwar staff members, with their specialised expertise in supporting women and children victims and survivors of violence,

do have an undoubtedly positive effect on the mental and emotional health of the women that Mehwar serves. This was confirmed over the course of the evaluation process, particularly in a workshop held with Mehwar Centre beneficiaries. When asked to identify new things or skills that they had learned while at the Mehwar Centre, women beneficiaries responded that Mehwar had helped them to “reconstruct and develop my personality” and “increase my confidence”. One woman responded that Mehwar had helped her “resolve anger and heal without the need to take revenge. I have turned a page”.

However, Mehwar’s staff members are correct in that their knowledge and skills are no substitute for real clinical psychological and psychiatric mental health services when they are truly needed. Therefore, an expert clinical psychologist from Differenza Donna visits the Mehwar Centre several times per year to provide support and assistance to the staff with cases. There are also two local psychologists who have provided mental health support to the Centre. Yet, the general assessment of Mehwar’s staff is that more needs to be done in the Centre to assist with women’s mental health issues.

In response to these concerns, the Mehwar management and staff have already begun taking steps to increase their capacity to support women with mental health problems. Mehwar has recently engaged the services of two external counselling providers: the Training and Guidance Centre (TGC) and the Palestinian Counselling Centre (PCC). These two centres will provide clinical psychological support to some of Mehwar’s beneficiaries and also provide some clinical supervision to Mehwar’s Social Counselling and Social Work Team. At the time of the evaluation, TGC was already providing services and a process had begun to determine the terms of agreement with PCC. These steps are commendable and will hopefully lead to the intended outcome of providing the desired mental health assistance to the Mehwar Centre’s staff in their work with women victims of violence and abuse.

3.6.2 Recommendations

Mehwar should also revise the details on mental health, psychological counselling and psychiatric support within its policies and procedures. This section must be framed within the human rights of women, including their protection and dignity. Greater clarity and guidance should be given on mental health conditions vis-à-vis violence against women and working with mental health services. Furthermore, both the separate and complementary roles of the expertise and services provided by the Mehwar Centre, as a specialised anti-violence centre, and other organisations working in the field of mental health, should be clearly defined.

3.7 Activities for Sheltered Beneficiaries

3.7.1 Key Findings

As part of the evaluation, a workshop was conducted with women beneficiaries of the Mehwar Centre about their thoughts on being at Mehwar. Many of the positive responses were related to participation in Centre activities. Many of the women reported learning a range of new skills that included sewing, French language, and study skills. They reported enjoying Mehwar activities, such as musical events, language lessons, drama classes, computer classes and trips with the Centre.



However, it was clear from discussions with the women that days can feel long in the Mehwar Centre, especially given the restrictions on their movement that are sometimes imposed due to risks or threats on their lives. One woman said she “hated the empty time,” and it was clear that the women value the activities provided by the Centre and are eager for more. Future activities suggested included classes on music, dance, accounting, cooking and art.

From the evaluation process, it was also clear that the Mehwar Centre makes efforts to respond to the women’s needs and requests for activities. When the women identified their desire for English lessons, for instance, the Mehwar Centre arranged a class to meet their request. Other steps towards improving the Centre’s activities include a recent donation of books to stock the Mehwar Centre’s library.

While the activities at the Mehwar Centre are undoubtedly successful with the beneficiaries, their place within the organizational structure is not clear. At the time of the evaluation, the Outreach Team was responsible for organizing most of the activities for the women sheltered at Mehwar. However this attribution of duties does not logically fit within the Outreach Team responsibilities, as tasks related to the women in Mehwar’s Shelter (internal beneficiaries) logically lie within the remit of the Shelter staff, as they have greater interaction with and knowledge of these women and their needs.

3.7.2 Recommendations

The Mehwar Centre’s activities are clearly successful with its beneficiaries and should therefore be further embedded and explained within the Centre’s policies and procedures than they are currently. Revisions to the policies and procedures for Centre activities should specify that the activities for women sheltered at Mehwar (internal beneficiaries) are the primary remit of the Shelter Team, not the Outreach Team. If staff resources and expertise require that the Outreach Team be responsible for organising and arranging both internal and external activities, then the title and job descriptions of the current Outreach Team should be revised in the Centre’s policies and procedures to more accurately reflect the actual work required of and carried out by the team. The Centre’s policies and procedures should also take into account the flexibility and creativity necessary for arranging activities with community partner organizations and include the incorporation of activity logs for each beneficiary as standard procedure to enable them to keep track of their achievements.

3.8 Government Financial Support for Sheltered Beneficiaries

3.8.1 Key Findings

Of the beneficiaries at Mehwar during the evaluation period, very few were receiving regular financial support from the Ministry of Social Affairs; at the beginning of July 2010, only two out of 32 women at Mehwar were receiving government hardship aid. Rather, the needs and expenses of Mehwar’s beneficiaries are usually met entirely from Mehwar’s core budget. This is highly unusual, as in most circumstances a woman in a shelter like Mehwar would be deemed “in need” by her very presence in such a facility, which would usually qualify her for government assistance in the form of a stipend that could be given either directly to her or to the Centre to manage for

her. Given the circumstances of the current Palestinian context, it is understandable that financial pressures on the government make it difficult to fund projects and services like Mehwar in their entirety. However, it would be a welcome recognition from the Palestinian Authority of Mehwar and the importance of its work if it could provide a basic allowance for each woman in Mehwar’s Shelter. This would improve the women’s quality of life and give them freedom to spend some money according to their individual needs. The evaluation found that some Mehwar beneficiaries do have unmet needs, which could be helped by the introduction of such a scheme. The number of beneficiaries sheltered at Mehwar at any given time is not large enough to make such an initiative unreasonable, and thus it would be very welcome.

3.8.2 Recommendations

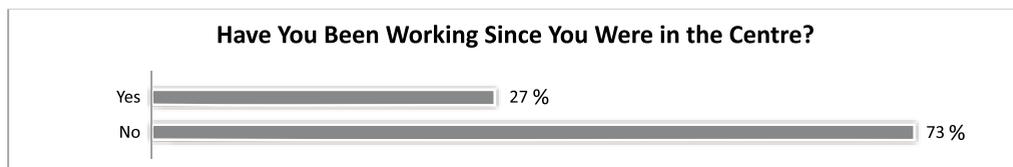
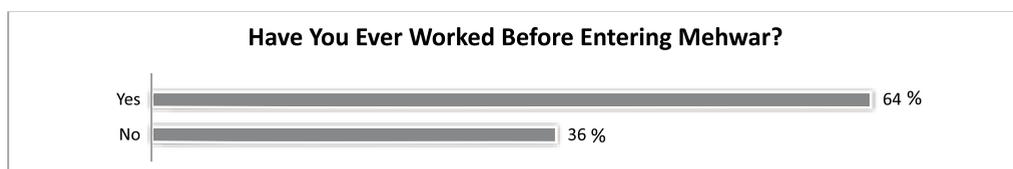
Mehwar’s policies and procedures should outline the development of strategies for raising money to provide its beneficiaries with stipends that would both help cover their needs and expenses, and allow them some individual say in how to spend their money. Lobbying for Mehwar beneficiaries to automatically qualify for hardship aid from Palestinian Social Services should be included amongst potential strategies in this regard.

3.9 Job Opportunities for Sheltered Beneficiaries

3.9.1 Key Findings

One of the issues consistently raised by all involved in the evaluation process was the need for women sheltered in the Mehwar Centre to have access to job opportunities.

In a survey conducted of the 11 women sheltered at the Mehwar Centre in August 2010¹¹, 64% reported that they had worked at some point before arriving at the Centre. However, only three women (27%) reported that they had worked since their arrival, while the vast majority, the remaining 73%, reported that they had not worked at all since their arrival at the Mehwar Centre.

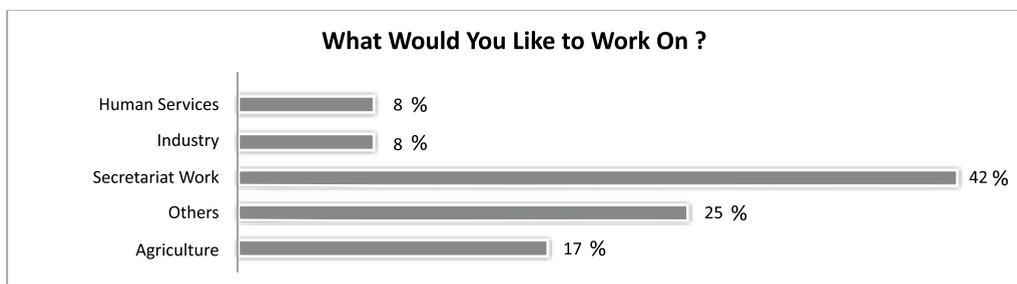
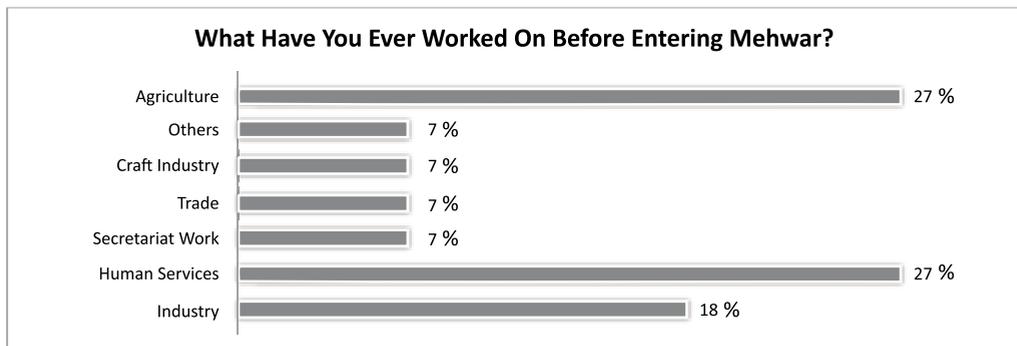


When asked what type of work they would like to do if able to work during their time at the Mehwar Centre, more than one third of the women surveyed (42%) expressed a desire for secretarial work, despite the fact that only 7% had experience in this field. Only 17% of the women surveyed sought agricultural work, although 27% reported previous agricultural

11 Rochet Beatrice. Report: Background and daily life in Mehwar (August 2010).



experience. Eight percent of women reported that they would like to work in industry, and another 8% in human services. While these were these least desired sectors for potential work, they were also the sectors in which the women had the most experience, with 27% of the women having previously worked in caring services and 18% in industry.



In terms of the Mehwar Centre’s policies regarding women beneficiaries’ employment, under certain circumstances, some of the women sheltered at Mehwar can be allowed to work outside of the Centre. There have been several success stories at Mehwar where a number of women have done just that. However, there have also been some instances in which women were exploited for low pay or endangered as a result of contact with unscrupulous employers or other members of the public encountered in their jobs. For some women in Mehwar, working outside of the Centre is not even an option, due to the level of threat or risk involved. For these women, many of whom want to work but cannot do so outside, cash-for-work projects within the Centre itself are a potential alternative. Such projects might involve growing and selling produce from a vegetable garden at Mehwar, selling ice cream or traditional Palestinian dishes to the local community, or making and selling handicrafts.

However, it is important to remember that, whether employment opportunities are available to the women in Mehwar or not, the primary reason for their presence at the Mehwar Centre is to give them a safe space in order to start a process of healing and recovery from abuse. This process is different for every woman. Some women may want to work, while others may be physically and mentally unable to do so as a result of their experiences. The Mehwar Centre has equal responsibility to recognise and work with both types of beneficiaries. Over the course of the evaluation, a gap in the Mehwar Centre’s employment policies and procedures was discovered in the lack of an explicit guarantee that, for as long as a woman is sheltered at the Mehwar Centre, she can never be forced or pressured to work to cover her basic needs, even if she is mentally, physically and safely able to do so.

3.9.2 Recommendations

The Mehwar Centre's policies and procedures should be revised to reflect the range of its women beneficiaries' employment needs and to give them the opportunities they deserve to access rewarding work. They should also include explicit provisions for protecting women from exploitation and abuse in the workplace. Additionally, a principle for inclusion in any revision to the policies and procedures should be based upon a consensus of views that women at Mehwar should never be pressured or forced into work to pay for items to meet their basic needs.

3.10 Resettlement and Reintegration of Mehwar Centre Beneficiaries

3.10.1 Key Findings

Throughout the course of the evaluation, resettlement and reintegration were consistently raised as complex and often problematic issues for Mehwar staff, requiring both careful consideration and considerable efforts.

Given the level of threat faced by some of the women sheltered at Mehwar combined with the general local Palestinian cultural context, Mehwar staff reported difficulty in many cases in successfully resettling and reintegrating women having experienced violence abuse back into their communities. Difficulties have arisen for Mehwar staff in gathering sufficient and trustworthy community information about the living conditions to be expected in resettlement locations necessary to ensure women's safety and human rights. Coordination with MoSA and the Police on beneficiary resettlement and reintegration has sometimes resulted in Mehwar staff being pressured into taking a course of action contrary to their professional opinions regarding the beneficiaries' safety and best interest.¹² Such cases have endangered the safety of beneficiaries, exposed them to further abuse, and sometimes risked their lives. This is clearly unacceptable.

Given the challenging nature of finding suitable resettlement and reintegration options for some of its beneficiaries, Mehwar has experienced greater pressure on bed space and staff capacity in recent months; new women have arrived at the Shelter, but not enough of those women ready to leave have been able to do so. Some women have been sheltered at Mehwar for long periods of time. Of the 16 women sheltered at Mehwar during the evaluation, four (25%) had been resident for two years or more and two (12.5%) had been resident for a year or more.¹³ In some instances, women have remained at Mehwar after the staff and the women themselves agreed that they were actually ready to leave. Thus, the lack of available options for resettlement and reintegration into society after Mehwar could increasingly put pressure on Mehwar's facilities and services in the future.

As part of the evaluation, a workshop was conducted with Mehwar staff to solicit their opinions and experiences working with families, including in the context of resettlement and reintegration.

12 Three instances were noted during the course of the evaluation period.

13 Please note it is likely that until recently the percentage of women staying for longer periods at Mehwar was higher. As at the beginning of July there were 32 women resident at Mehwar, many of whom have since been returned to their families.



👋 “It can take a long time until it is safe and a woman is ready and able to return to her family.”

👋 “Sometimes there is a lot of pressure on Mehwar staff for a woman to return to her family, even if it is their professional opinion that it is not safe for the woman and the woman herself does not want to return.”

👋 “Sometimes if a woman agrees and it is in her best interest, Mehwar staff decides to pause legal proceedings against families and try to mediate dialogue and conflict resolution between the woman and her family.”

👋 “Sometimes it is simply not safe for a woman to return to her family and whilst this is regrettable, we need to put the safety of the woman first.”

Mehwar Center Staff

They reported that, after time, some women and girls who have been victims of violence can be reintegrated back into their families. However, such reintegration is always conditional on whether a woman can be re-housed with specific non-abusive family members, also in keeping with religious and cultural norms, and whether or not these family members can provide adequate assurances for the woman’s safety and protection. Considerations include whether a woman will be able to live free from fear of violence and abuse and whether she will have access to healthcare and other required services. In cases where these conditions were met, Mehwar has successfully managed to reintegrate some women back into their families.

When staff were asked about how the decision to reintegrate a beneficiary into her family is made at the Mehwar Centre, they responded that family visits are first conducted

by appropriate professionals, including Police from family protection units, MoSA social workers and members of Mehwar’s legal team. On these visits the professionals assess the family situation to determine the level of threat to the woman from her family members and, conversely, their ability to support and protect her if she were to return to the family.

The professionals who conduct these family risk assessments usually come to a group consensus about whether it is safe and appropriate for a beneficiary to return to her family. In cases where consensus cannot be reached regarding whether family reintegration is indeed in a beneficiary’s best interest, the Mehwar Centre often requests that another family visit take place in the future, with the beneficiary remaining at the Mehwar Centre in the meantime. Mehwar staff reported that they also investigate alternative forms of protection for each beneficiary and discuss them with her so that she can make an informed choice about her future. Ultimately, they emphasized, the beneficiary decides whether to return to her family or not. In some cases, women themselves have not provided full disclosure to Mehwar staff when relating the extent of their experiences of violence and abuse, highlighting the importance of trusting and respecting women’s opinions and decisions regarding their own potential resettlement and reintegration plans.

Some beneficiaries do not have family members with whom they can be reintegrated after their time at Mehwar. For others, the reality must be faced that it will simply never be safe for them to return to their families. Both such cases pose a different kind of challenge for Mehwar staff when trying to arrange alternative and suitable accommodation for these beneficiaries when they are finally ready and want to leave the Mehwar Centre. It is generally not socially or culturally acceptable for women to live alone in the oPt, and to do so may put a woman at increased risk of further violence or abuse. The evaluation found that Mehwar staff is extremely creative and resourceful in devising opportunities to enable women beneficiaries to live safe, happy and independent lives post-abuse, but even so, certain cases remain insoluble within the scope of Mehwar's current options and resources.

3.10.2 Recommendations

The Mehwar Centre's policies and procedures for dealing with the resettlement and reintegration of beneficiaries require significant attention, review, and revision. While Mehwar management should investigate long-term initiatives for improving its resettlement and reintegration approach, current revisions to Mehwar's policies and procedures should focus on more fully explaining the Mehwar Centre's current system.

First, revisions to Mehwar's policies and procedures must clearly outline the necessary steps for ensuring that careful and systematic assessments are made regarding the risks and threats posed to women by both the process of resettlement and reintegration, as well as the suitability of potential resettlement locations. Ideally, a standardized risk identification and assessment tool should be used for this.

Mehwar Centre policies and procedures regarding resettlement and reintegration must not compromise a woman's agency or further opportunities to benefit from therapeutic work by encouraging her reintegration or resettlement earlier than she feels ready. This may happen for a range of reasons: pressure on bed spaces, a woman's difficulty in settling into the shelter environment or staff burnout, among others. However, it is essential that Mehwar policies and procedures ensure that staff decisions do not override a woman's own choice for herself and her future, especially not in a way that might replicate the behaviour of the abuser or perpetrator of violence that she has come to Mehwar to escape. The policies and procedures should also include provisions for preventing and dealing with staff burnout, including flexibility in hiring additional staff when necessary to compensate for unusually heavy or overly demanding staff workloads.

Similarly, when a Mehwar beneficiary determines that she is ready to leave the Centre, policies and procedures should stipulate that she be informed of all details pertaining to her potential resettlement, and that her opinions and decisions regarding her own safety and the suitability of her resettlement options be ultimately respected. If a woman refuses a resettlement plan, for whatever reasons, her wishes must be respected, as in some cases she may have experienced previous abuse from certain family members that she did not disclose to Mehwar staff.



Likewise, policy and procedure revisions must clearly state that Mehwar staff decisions regarding its beneficiaries' readiness for resettlement and the appropriateness of resettlement locations be respected by all other authorities and agencies involved in a woman's resettlement and reintegration process, as Mehwar staff may know confidential information regarding the woman's situation. Therefore, if Mehwar staff decides that it is not safe for a woman to be resettled in a particular situation, their professional judgement and report should be final and they should not be pressured into going against their professional judgement by authority figures. The independence and expertise of the Mehwar professionals should be respected. Revisions should ensure that personal connections and power cannot be used to pressure Mehwar staff or the beneficiary to contact or return to her family when it is not safe to do so.

Additionally, Mehwar's revised policies and procedures should adequately consider and explain strategies to address the reintegration needs of women without family members, or women unable to return to their families. Alternative options for beneficiary resettlement should be considered and developed, such as a "half-way house," or other suitable accommodation projects.

Lastly, revised policies and procedures should ensure effective, safe and timely coordination between all partners involved in working on Mehwar beneficiaries' cases. A memorandum of understanding should be developed between Mehwar and MoSA regarding the prioritisation of women's safety as well as to clarify roles and responsibilities in relation to beneficiaries' release, reintegration and follow-up.

3.11 Follow-up with Beneficiaries After They Leave the Mehwar Centre

3.11.1 Key Findings

Mehwar staff identified beneficiary follow-up as a gap area. Staff reported that on certain occasions, some individual staff members make personal enquiries about women after they leave the Mehwar Centre out of personal concern for their welfare. Staff stated that sometimes they feel that their concerns for women's safety after they leave Mehwar are not taken seriously nor adequately investigated. Staff also expressed hope for improving this situation in the future.

Reasons mentioned for this gap in beneficiary follow up post-Mehwar included a general sentiment among staff that they currently lack adequate resources to conduct proper beneficiary follow-up. Mehwar's staff also cited heavy workloads and staff burnout as contributing factors. The evaluation found that despite increased demands on Mehwar's staff, staffing levels have remained the same.

Different objectives among the various professionals involved in a woman's case were also mentioned as a factor affecting beneficiary follow-up. For example, some staff members described MoSA professionals as more family oriented, whereas the safety and needs of the beneficiary herself are always the top priority for Mehwar staff. In cases where these perspectives clash, Mehwar staff members reported that the power balance in final decision-making ultimately favours MoSA social workers, as they represent a government institution. Because of this, Mehwar staff felt that their professional opinions are not always respected by MoSA social workers. At the same

time, they also recognized that MoSA social workers have their own pressures and constraints that affect their capacity to conduct thorough follow-up in all cases.

Lastly, Mehwar staff reported that geographical distance can also be a barrier to following up with beneficiaries that have returned to their families. Mehwar hosts women from all over the West Bank and therefore, if women resettle far from the Mehwar Centre, it is harder for Mehwar staff to conduct regular follow-up visits.

3.11.2 Recommendations

Mehwar's policies and procedures should also include a plan for follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of women and their situation after resettlement. For both operational and regular monitoring and evaluation purposes, Mehwar's policies and procedures should stipulate that the destination of a woman and her children after leaving the Mehwar Centre be recorded on her case file. Regular follow-up visits should be made to resettled beneficiaries' homes, or the beneficiary should regularly visit the Centre, as needed, to check that she remains safe. If a woman is found to be exposed to further violence or abuse, then steps should exist to, with her consent, move her to safety and reassess her case. The policies and procedures should also ensure that the Centre's doors remain open to women beneficiaries after resettlement, guaranteeing their ability to access the Centre's external facilities and services as needed. Revisions should also address additional support needs for beneficiaries post-Mehwar, such as joint activities with other agencies like peer support groups, budgeting skills training or personal safety workshops.

4. Outreach and Community Services

4.1 External Work with Families in Distress

4.1.1 Key Findings

Mehwar's current policies and procedures lack detail on how the Mehwar Centre already works with families. From the evaluation process, including the literature review and interviews with Mehwar staff and stakeholders, it is clear that working with families is recognised as an important part of Mehwar's work. Staff and stakeholders disagreed, however, on the focus of Mehwar's family work. Some expressed a firm desire for Mehwar to prioritise work with families, whilst others recognised family work as secondary and not always compatible with the Centre's primary work with women victims of violence themselves. Although not stated in the Mehwar Centre's Guide for Policies and Procedures, according to Mehwar's 2008 Annual Report: *"Mehwar Centre is committed to working toward and preserving family unity as long as family members show and demonstrate their clear rejection of violence and abuse and express commitment and willingness to lead non-abusive lives and conduct non-abusive relationships with the woman. Mehwar asks of the family members that they consider and care for each family member's needs and rights, particularly women and children"*.

In a workshop conducted as part of the evaluation, Mehwar staff members were asked to outline the Centre's current work with the families of beneficiaries. Staff members reported that overall, there is no standard protocol for working with families at



present, because each case is different and must be guided by the wishes and needs of the woman involved. However, they did list a number of activities generally carried out with beneficiaries' families.

Their responses included:

- To inform MoSA of the woman's presence in the Shelter so that MoSA can monitor the situation in the victim's household;
- To gather information about the woman's family situation and relationships upon her arrival at the Mehwar Centre and Shelter (an initial assessment);
- To conduct family counselling sessions with MoSA if safe and appropriate;
- To receive and facilitate family telephone calls for women in Mehwar's Shelter with non-abusive family members if safe and appropriate to do so;
- To identify and maintain relationships with family members who support the woman's needs and wishes by trying to facilitate contact and good relations between them;
- To conduct family visits with other appropriate professionals (police from the family protection units, MoSA social workers, and members of Mehwar's legal team) to assess the potential risk involved in a beneficiary's reintegration with her family, including determining the level of threat to the woman from her family members and conversely, their ability to support and protect her if she were to return to the family.¹⁴

Gaps and areas of interest for future work with families included:

- Awareness and prevention activities with families in the community;
- Better coordination, based on professional protocols of intervention, of the work with other professionals, such as MoSA social workers and police officers;
- Provision of support to MoSA social workers, perhaps through events or training exchanges, to increase their understanding of VAW as a specialist area and ways in which they can utilise Mehwar social workers' specialised skills to support Palestinian women and families.

4.1.2 Recommendations

Revision to Mehwar's policies and procedures should explain the Centre's policy for working with families in a way that both reflects and enhances the range of work already done by the Centre's external section. Family relations are fluid and change over time as we change and develop as people. The Mehwar Centre's working relationships with family members (casework approach, interventions and work model) should reflect this by integrating regular reassessments of family relationships into Mehwar's policies and procedures.

¹⁴ More detail on Mehwar's work with families in the context of beneficiary resettlement and reintegration after leaving the Mehwar Centre is given in Section III.5.

4.2 Children's Nursery and Kindergarten

4.2.1 Key Findings

The evaluation found that the nursery section is an evident success for the Mehwar Centre in its attempt to work with and gain the acceptance of the local community. The nursery offers subsidised places for the local children in Beit Sahour and Bethlehem. The facility is popular and normally operates at its maximum capacity. It also provides care and support for the children of some of the staff at the Mehwar Centre. This is an important function, as it assists Mehwar staff in dealing with their demanding work at the Centre by giving them peace of mind knowing that their children are being cared for by colleagues that they know and trust, and importantly, that can be flexible and take care of the children for longer periods of time if staff members need to stay late to complete their work. This encourages women to return to their work at Mehwar after giving birth, helps with staff retention, and enables women to continue contributing to society through their work.

At the time of the evaluation, the nursery had two staff educators. From observation and interviews the nursery service appeared to have logical procedures for its operation. The nursery staff also reported that there is a record keeping system in place. However, these are not currently reflected in Mehwar's Guide for Policies and Procedures.

Another issue to be noted is that, at the time of the evaluation, the nursery was not hosting any children of the women sheltered at the Mehwar Centre. This reality represents a divergence from the nursery's original conception, as laid out in the objectives for the nursery in Mehwar's Guide for Policies and Procedures, where "priority for the nursery and kindergarten is given to the children of mothers referred to the Internal Protection Department." While the evaluation found that it does perform this function on occasion, it does not do so frequently.

Other differences were also found to exist between the nursery and kindergarten's original objectives as laid out in Mehwar's Guide for Policies and Procedures and the reality on the ground at the time of the evaluation. For example, the age range of the children catered to by the nursery was more restricted than originally foreseen. The children hosted at the nursery at the time of the evaluation were infants up to the age of three years old. There were no children older than this, and thus, the workshop scheduled as part of the evaluation to discover the children's views about the Mehwar Centre was cancelled. Overall, the Centre's programme of work with young people, including its engagement and activities with children over the age of three and teenagers, was unclear. While parenting programmes and parenting support services are included in Mehwar's current work plan, at the time of the evaluation, none of the planned work had yet to reach fruition, largely due to the many competing demands upon staff time and capacity.

4.2.2 Recommendations

Details on the logical procedures and practices that have evolved and are being used on a daily basis in the nursery service should be integrated and explained in revised policies and procedures for Mehwar. Within the Centre's policies and procedures there should also be a regularised system for assessing children's current needs, abilities and



development, both in terms of education and play, and also for monitoring that there are adequate and appropriate educational and play aids (e.g. books and toys) at the nursery to meet these needs. Mehwar should also consider whether a programme of engagement and activities with children over three and teenagers is possible within its current capacities, and if so, adequately elaborate this plan in its policies and procedures.

4.3 Gymnasium

4.3.1 Key Findings

The Mehwar Centre's current policies and procedures make reference to the gymnasium facility. Physical activity is very important for helping women and girls take care of themselves physically, as well helping them release some of their pent-up feelings and tension. Recreational activities, such as yoga and relaxation, can also be beneficial for staff members, to both prevent and alleviate staff burnout. The evaluation found that the Mehwar Centre's gymnasium is also another means through which the Mehwar Centre can work with and gain the acceptance of the local community, by providing an open space for improving the health and well being of local community members. However, at the time of the evaluation, the position of fitness instructor at the Mehwar Centre remained vacant, meaning that fitness and recreational activities were not taking place in the gymnasium.

4.3.2 Recommendations

The successful practice of the Mehwar Gymnasium should be recorded and standardized in specific policies and procedures. A qualified fitness instructor should finalise the policies and procedures to ensure their feasibility and appropriateness for the Mehwar Centre.

5. Management, Administration and Communications

5.1 Administration and Management

5.1.1 Key Findings

There are many and various difficulties and challenges faced by the Mehwar Centre's Administrative and Management Sections. At the time of the evaluation, the Director of the Mehwar Centre was relatively new in the post, but active and dedicated in trying to establish the new management team and address the challenges inherited with the position. There were also experienced staffs working in Mehwar's Administrative and Management sections consistently working to understand the range of MoSA systems and structures within which they must work and be in compliance. However, despite these efforts and generally good cooperation between MoSA and Mehwar, there remain some key obstacles that require clarification and change as part of this review of Mehwar's policies and procedures.

In an effort to address its administrative and management challenges, a number of suggestions for improvement and change were made through the Mehwar Staff Annual Evaluation Report, completed in April 2010.

Administrative and Management Recommendations from the Mehwar Staff Annual Evaluation Report, April 2010

-  In the lack of sufficient staff at the Mehwar Centre, instability on the administrative level led to both deficiencies and duplicity in specialization; roles, duties and responsibilities were ambiguous on the operational level. Therefore it is crucial and necessary to revise the job titles, contracts, and job descriptions for the Mehwar Centre's employees, starting at the administrative level. Redefining more precise and accurate job titles and roles will lead to more specialization within the staff's roles and responsibilities and guard against duplication of work*
-  It is essential to activate the existing facilities and resources available at the Mehwar Centre. For instance, the Centre must activate and make better use of its available car, so that rather than contracting with a taxi agency and paying extra fees, the Centre can make the best use of both the car and driver already employed, and thus reduce the financial burden of transportation costs
-  It is essential to continue the individual and group supervision of all Mehwar employees
-  In regard to new employees who have not yet received training, we recommend that the training be carried out as soon as possible**
-  There is the need to organise a specific training programme for a group of lawyers from different parts of the oPt in order to have a core group of trained lawyers ready to support the cases referred to Mehwar through a shared methodology for defending women. After being trained, this group should meet regularly to assess its work with the Centre
-  Clear and stable memoranda of understanding should be defined between Mehwar and other institutions like courts, the police, general attorneys, hospitals, schools and other ministries in order to avoid having to repeat the presentation of Mehwar's goals and objectives to different actors
-  We propose checking to see whether the parents of the children attending Mehwar's nursery / kindergarten are interested in having their children's food prepared by the Centre. The women hosted in Mehwar's Shelter could prepare the food on a regular basis as an income generation project
-  We recommend a revision and adjustment of the Mehwar Centre's night shift procedures and implementation. Based on the nature of work at the Mehwar Centre, we recommend amending the night shift policy to include an on-call shift strategy for backup to the night shift staff in case of emergency situations
-  The mode of staff evaluation should be modified using different criteria and tools to better suit the nature of the Mehwar Centre and the different roles carried out by Mehwar staff during the implementation of their duties

* Following the staff annual evaluation, job titles and job descriptions were revised according to the evaluation recommendations.

** Following this recommendation, training programmes were carried out both locally and in Differenza Donna's shelters in Italy between April and June 2010.



5.1.2 Recommendations

The evaluator supports and endorses the recommendations made in the recent Mehwar Staff Annual Evaluation completed in 2010 and encourages all relevant parties and partners to implement these recommendations as soon as possible. Therefore, Mehwar's policies and procedures should also be revised to reflect and incorporate the changes recommended in the Mehwar Staff's 2010 Annual Evaluation.

5.2 Staffing

5.2.1 Key Findings

From the evaluation it appears that challenges with recruitment and retention of staff seem to have had adverse effects on the Mehwar Centre's ability to fulfil its vision, mission and work to their full potential.

At the time of the evaluation in August 2010, Mehwar employed 24 staff members. There were three staff vacancies for the positions of Shelter Responsible, Gym Teacher and Maintenance employee. From examining the chronology of Mehwar's senior staffing since the Centre opened in 2007 (see the chart on the following page), it can be seen that, in general, Mehwar has had difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff. The key post of permanent Shelter Responsible at Mehwar has been difficult to fill and retain. Indeed, during the course of the evaluation, the Shelter Responsible resigned, leaving the post vacant and covered by other staff members on a rotational basis. Such leadership and managerial gaps can adversely impact the Centre's ability to develop or adhere to clear policies and procedures in its internal Shelter section. At the time of the evaluation, UN Women had begun, building on past successful experiences, a separate process aimed at standardizing Mehwar's recruitment policies and procedures.

Similarly, the evaluation found that there has been a considerable gap in recruitment between the Centre's first and second Outreach Programmes Coordinator. During this gap, understandably, the Mehwar Centre's range of outreach activities lessened significantly. With a relatively new Outreach Programmes Coordinator at the time of the evaluation, the general consensus among Mehwar staff was that they feel they are starting from zero. Outreach work requires constant communication and effort to maintain relationships with both the community and other organizations, which could not be done during the long period without an Outreach Programme's Coordinator. On top of this, records from the previous post holder could not be found at the time of the evaluation.

In terms of staff structure, an out-of-date organigram was found during the evaluation, which if updated, would provide a useful tool for explaining and ensuring staff understanding of the Mehwar Centre's organisational structure. The Mehwar Centre's existing policies and procedures were also found lacking in terms of detail on staff training and development, which is integral for Mehwar staff's ongoing professional development and the Centre's operational improvement.

Gaps were also discovered during the evaluation in the Mehwar Centre's policies and procedures concerning staff rotations and shifts. While staff rotations and shifts have been developed as a consolidated practice over the Mehwar Centre's three years

of operation, they were not formally outlined and documented. Furthermore, the evaluation revealed that Mehwar staff tends to prefer day shifts to night shifts, making it a challenge to ensure adequate night shift coverage at the Centre.

Year	Event	Centre Director	Shelter Responsible	Outreach Programmes Coordinator
2006	Before Mehwar's Opening	Director 1 Jun - Sep 2006		
		Vacant	Shelter Responsible1 Aug 2006 – Dec 2007	Outreach Programmes Coordinator 1 Aug 2006 – Sept 2008
2007	After Mehwar's Opening February 2007	Director 2 Feb 2007 – Aug 2008		
2008		Director 3 Former Director 1 Aug 2008 – July 2009 Officer in Charge Aug 2009 – April 2010	On rotation	
2009		Director 4 April 2010 - present	Shelter Responsible 2 Apr – July 2010	Outreach Programmes Coordinator 2 April 2010 – present
2010				

5.2.2 Recommendations

The recommendations from Mehwar's previous staff evaluation related to staff supervision and the need for technical support should be embedded and explained in detail within Mehwar's revised policies and procedures. Similarly, the guidelines for Mehwar staff recruitment should be incorporated in the broader staff-related revisions. The policies and procedures should ensure that the Mehwar Centre's staff organigram is updated and maintained by the Centre's administrative section and a range of mechanisms should be put in place to support continuous and adequate staff training and development.

Revised policies and procedures should formalise staff requirements for staff rotations and different shifts, with particular attention paid to ensuring that all staff fulfil their responsibilities in working the required night shifts. Provisions should also be put in place to ensure that night shifts always have at least two staff present in the internal Shelter section. The revised policies and procedures should incorporate the development of a pool of need-based workers to be available upon request at a basic daily or nightly rate to cover gaps in staff coverage, particularly staff vacation or sickness. If financial resources prevent the development of a pool of flexible, need-based staff, then a pool of trained volunteers should be developed in its place.



5.3 Code of Conduct and Ethics for All Staff

5.3.1 Key Findings

While the Mehwar Centre's existing *Guide for Policies and Procedures* document does have a section on the "professional ethics of the Centre's work team", it does not have a specific code of conduct and ethics in place to which staff can be held formally accountable for their behaviour and actions. The existing policies and procedures also do not adequately differentiate between appropriate staff conduct in relation to Mehwar's range of functions as both a private shelter for women and girls, as well as a public access facility in terms of its nursery, cafeteria, gym, etc. Furthermore, specific provisions do not exist for Mehwar staff members that may be or become victims of violence themselves, or to the contrary, for Mehwar staff members that may be discovered to perpetrate or have perpetrated violence.

5.3.2 Recommendations

Mehwar's policies and procedures should include a basic code of staff conduct in the workplace that takes into consideration Mehwar's position as both a private and public access facility. All staff should be required to commit and conform to this code of conduct and ethics for staff in order to ensure that professional boundaries are maintained and that Mehwar's reputation is protected. The Centre's policies and procedures should also outline consequences for staff breaches of the code of conduct in order to ensure accountability.

Additionally, Mehwar should develop internal policies and procedures to explain the provision of support for staff members that may be or become a victim of violence. This policy should incorporate the consideration that aspects of a staff member's work on the issue of violence and abuse may compound or complicate the effects and responses to supporting that staff member. In order for Mehwar to take its responsibilities to all victims and survivors of violence seriously and demonstrate its commitment to protecting the safety of the Centre's beneficiaries, its policies and procedures for Centre staff should give a clear message that violence and abuse is not acceptable and will not be tolerated by outlining the steps to be taken if a Mehwar staff member is identified as a perpetrator of violence, including a clear process for reviewing the staff member's employment status with the Mehwar Centre.

5.4 Working with Partners

5.4.1 Key Findings

The evaluation found that Mehwar's existing policies and procedures require further explanation and elaboration on partnership and community engagement in order to better reflect the Centre's current activities and work plan in these regards. Partnership and community engagement should serve to enable the achievement of Mehwar's vision and mission. From visits and interviews throughout the evaluation process, it was clear that in the oPt there are local, national and regional bodies that could be working more closely and specifically with Mehwar in achieving its vision and mission.

For instance, the evaluation found that the Tawasol Networks of Local NGOs, in their involvement with the Women's Empowerment and Local Development Project, have the potential for closer links with the Mehwar Centre in terms of beneficiary referrals and offering opportunities for women's education and development. Great potential also exists for reciprocal Centre Management peer support and opportunities for sharing resources and contacts between Mehwar and the local House of Girls in Beit Jalla.

From attending the inaugural meeting of Mehwar's Supportive Committee, it demonstrated potential usefulness as a partner forum for exchange, assuming that it continues to meet and channel its focus towards Mehwar's vision, objectives and work priorities. Avoiding duplication of individual organisations' work and declaring potential conflicts of interest will be important for the Supportive Committee's success.

In addition to the Supportive Committee, Mehwar currently provides input to the local Bethlehem District Committee. However, Mehwar's participation in committees and bodies at the national level could be improved. As a key body in the oPt with knowledge of interventions for working with women victims of violence and abuse, the Mehwar Centre would be a valuable addition to relevant national level groups and bodies working to combat violence against women, such as the National Committee to Combat Violence against Women. Mehwar also has a stake in becoming a member of relevant technical implementing groups involved with the Palestinian Authority *2011-2019 National Strategic Framework to Combat Violence against Women in the oPt*. Additionally, relevant opportunities for international exchange could help Mehwar maximise its ability to fulfil its vision and mission. However, potential opportunities for collaboration like these are not detailed in the Centre's existing policies and procedures.

5.4.2 Recommendations

The Mehwar Centre's policies and procedures should also clarify the criteria and mechanisms for engaging and working with partners towards its vision and mission.

5.5 Volunteers and Interns

5.5.1 Key Findings

At the time of the evaluation, the Mehwar Centre had hosted one international intern in 2010, but had not hosted any national interns or volunteers so far in 2010. While volunteers are mentioned in the Centre's current *Guide for Policies and Procedures*, not much detail is provided about the recruitment and role of volunteers and interns at the Mehwar Centre, nor are there rules regulating their relationship with the Centre.

5.5.2 Recommendations

More detail should be provided in the Mehwar Centre's policies and procedures on the role of volunteers and interns in supporting the work of the Mehwar Centre. The existing volunteer recruitment and training procedures should also be reviewed and amended as necessary. The evaluator can supply supplementary information regarding volunteers and interns to the Mehwar Centre for consideration.



5.6 Communication Systems

5.6.1 Key Findings

The evaluation found that Mehwar's existing policies and procedures do not cover how information is to be transmitted internally and externally or what mechanisms should be used for different types of communication. Several fundamental communications gaps were identified within Mehwar's operations over the course of the evaluation.

From observations throughout the evaluation process, there appears to be a need to enable two-way communication between the internal Shelter section and the Centre's external section, such as through a video-intercom system or something similar, so that women and staff do not feel trapped and unanswered within the Shelter.

The telephones within the Shelter were not operational at all times during the evaluation, but need to be. As the mobile phone signal coverage is poor throughout Mehwar's premises, an alternative method of contacting staff, such as through pagers or beepers, is essential in case of an emergency.

There were times during the evaluation process when the central telephone line to Mehwar would ring and go unanswered. This is concerning given that women victims of violence may be trying to call Mehwar to access shelter and safety. At the time of the evaluation, there was no dedicated staff person to answer the main telephone line. The Internet connection and corresponding Internet-based communications systems were not always connected and functional. Some staff was even found to be using personal email accounts rather than professional, standard Mehwar accounts, as they were not available.

5.6.2 Recommendations

Revisions to the Mehwar Centre's policies and procedures should also address the Centre's communications gaps, including the necessity of two-way communication between the Centre's internal and external sections and consistent and functional mechanisms for communication throughout the Mehwar premises. The policies and procedures should also include monitoring and oversight to ensure that Mehwar's existing and future communications systems, such as phone lines and Internet connections, are always functional and used appropriately by Mehwar staff, such as restricting staff to the use of professional Mehwar email accounts for any and all work-related email correspondence. Policies and procedures also need to clearly delegate the task of ensuring that all incoming calls are answered either to an existing or new staff position. For a trial period of, for example, three months, and until an alternative solution is found, Mehwar's Head of Administration should serve as the focal point for telephone calls at Mehwar, as she has oversight on all staff movements and enough experience at the Shelter to properly transfer calls to relevant members of staff depending on the nature of the enquiry. The revised policies and procedures should also explain the importance and need for regularly backing up data on the central Mehwar server.

5.7 Information Sharing and Confidentiality

5.7.1 Key Findings

Over the course of the evaluation, gaps were identified in the Mehwar Centre's policies and procedures regarding information sharing and confidentiality. As currently written and in practice, the Mehwar Centre lacks clearly defined protocols for sharing information about cases. While confidentiality is mentioned in Mehwar's *Guide for Policies and Procedures*, it is not clearly defined in regards to beneficiaries' protection and dignity in accordance with human rights standards.

5.7.2 Recommendations

The Mehwar policies and procedures require more detail and clarification of the circumstances in which information about beneficiaries can be shared, including what, when, how and with whom such information is to be shared. Furthermore, the policies and procedures should reiterate the importance of confidentiality and clearly define confidentiality standards for protecting women's safety and ensuring their treatment with dignity and respect in accordance with human rights standards.

5.8 Media

5.8.1 Key Findings

At the time of the evaluation, there was no Mehwar Centre policy for dealing with media enquiries or protocol for responding to negative coverage or unfounded allegations towards Mehwar in the media. It is important to address this issue and provide clarity on how Mehwar can respond to requests from the media for information. There was also no media strategy detailing Mehwar's engagement with the media for raising awareness around its activities with beneficiaries or more generally, around violence against women and efforts to combat it. The evaluator shared a sample media policy with the Mehwar Centre for its consideration in developing its own.

5.8.2 Recommendations

Mehwar must develop and integrate a media policy into its corpus of policies and procedures to guide its engagement and advocacy work with the media for awareness raising on issues related to violence against women and the Centre's activities, services and achievements. This media policy must also ensure the protection of the women and girls that access Mehwar's services.

5.9 Financial Systems

5.9.1 Key Findings

Despite Mehwar's best efforts to understand and be compliant with the PA financial policies and procedures, the system in place at the time of the evaluation was unworkable and requires urgent remedial action.



Numerous examples were discovered of lengthy delays in the procurement of basic goods and services for the Mehwar Centre, such as photocopier cartridges, and authorisation to buy goods for the Centre's women beneficiaries. The delays discovered were often serious, for example, contributing to a building's crumbling infrastructure through month-long delays in the materials needed to repair water leakages and broken door handles. Non-payment of telephone bills as a result of slow, bureaucratic financial processes has caused the Mehwar Centre's phone to be disconnected for periods of time. However, effective and functioning communications systems are absolutely essential for an emergency shelter operating 24-hours a day to deal with women in crisis situations. Such financial delays were also shown to directly impact the quality of life for the women and girls sheltered at Mehwar, distracting them with mundane concerns rather than allowing them to focus on their recovery and self-esteem work in meetings and sessions with Mehwar staff.

The Mehwar Centre's financial processes, tied with those of the Palestinian Authority through its relationship with MoSA, appear long, bureaucratic and often mean that the Mehwar Centre cannot support cheaper, local suppliers due to governmental procurement procedures. The Mehwar Centre must be able to manage its financial resources in a timely and effective manner in order to meet the needs of its beneficiaries.

From the evaluation it also seemed that the Mehwar Centre's petty cash system, intended to assist in avoiding bureaucracy, was failing to do so, as the permissible amount for spending was too low and the necessity of submitting numerous receipts made the system overly onerous.

As currently written, *Mehwar's Guide for Policies and Procedures* document does not include any details on financial policies and procedures. This is not surprising given that the Mehwar accountant initially developed all of the Centre's financial systems from scratch in the early lifespan of the Centre. After the project situation changed and the Mehwar Centre was incorporated under the institutional umbrella of the Palestinian Authority's Ministry of Social Affairs, written amendments were not integrated into the policies and procedures.

At the time of the evaluation, the need for the Mehwar Centre to address the issue of financial procedures to enable efficient, effective, transparent and accountable use of donor funds had been raised with the Minister of Social Affairs and MoSA's General Director for Family Affairs. MoSA's General Director for Family Affairs has since given a verbal agreement to follow-up on the matter.

5.9.2 Recommendations

To address the PA standard operating financial policies and procedures in meeting the operational needs of the Mehwar Centre, all necessary partners, in particular MoSA, the Mehwar director and accountant, the Ministry of Finance, UN Women and the Italian Cooperation should meet, clarify the main challenges to smooth financial operations and identify mechanisms of implementation of financial policies and procedures to effectively, efficiently and transparently fulfil the Mehwar Centre's operational needs.

5.10 Fundraising and Financial Sustainability

5.10.1 Key Findings

The evaluation found that there is currently no mention of the need for fundraising and income generation for the Mehwar Centre in its existing policies and procedures. The Mehwar Centre has been extremely fortunate that it has not yet had to consider the need for a fundraising strategy due to the continued generosity of its existing donor, the Italian Cooperation. However, this is an extremely rare situation that requires a contingency strategy for future changes in Mehwar's financial position. Notwithstanding this, no contingency strategy existed at the time of the evaluation. The current funding cycle for the Mehwar Project ends in August 2011. It is important that all partners consider the need to sustain Mehwar's operations and maintain its high quality of work so that it can continue to meet the needs of women victims of violence in the oPt.

Along these lines, the Mehwar Centre may need to consider charging fees for some of its activities in the future, especially to ensure the sustainability of some of its services and activities that are open to the community. It already does this for the nursery, even though it only charges a subsidised rate. However, this decision should be taken only after other options are explored and should not be taken lightly. The primary function of Mehwar is to offer access to safety for vulnerable and abused women. Thus women's access to safety should not be compromised by any income-generating initiatives. If it becomes necessary to charge for some services or events, then the fees charged for services should be reasonable and operate on a sliding scale according to ability to pay. This would ensure that the most vulnerable can still access services for free at the point of delivery.

Additionally, as part of its strategy in building relations with the local community and raising awareness about violence against women, the evaluation found that the Mehwar Centre does not approach specific, targeted and appropriate organisations for in-kind donations of support, expertise or basic goods for Mehwar's beneficiaries, but could.

Gaps in Mehwar's policies and procedures relating to fundraising and financial stability are also linked to the project management and organisational governance recommendations made elsewhere in this evaluation. The evaluator has also provided Mehwar with sample materials to assist the Centre in developing a plan for its financial sustainability.

5.10.2 Recommendations

Principles, strategies and rules for fundraising, income generation and donations to support the sustainability of Mehwar's operations should also be integrated into the Centre's revised policies and procedures.

5.11 Insurance and Liability

5.11.1 Key Findings

From the evaluation it was discovered that the Mehwar Centre is currently without insurance or liability coverage for its building. MoSA, as the responsible party, has been requested to resolve this issue, but at the time of the evaluation it had yet to



be resolved. This is a serious matter that must be urgently addressed so that there is coverage in place. The Mehwar Centre is open to the public and is a residential home for women victims of violence. In the event of fire, theft, or other damage, the Centre must have insurance and protection for its service users and staff. MoSA has a duty of care to protect the staff and service users of the Shelter.

5.11.2 Recommendations

Mehwar's policies and procedures should be revised to explicitly ensure that administrative systems include internal checking mechanisms to make sure that all necessary insurance coverage for the Mehwar Centre (e.g. building insurance, accident insurance, etc) is in place and up-to-date.

5.12 Security

5.12.1 Key Findings

Based upon interviews with Mehwar's security staff as part of the evaluation, it seems that the security team does follow a logical, but undocumented, model in performing its work. However, this model relies heavily on oral handover from one shift to the next, and written records of incidents are not routinely recorded or kept. Mehwar's security guards also reported that they do not receive training on the closed-circuit television (CCTV) system used for the Centre's security surveillance.

Mechanisms were also found lacking for effective communication between the guards and the internal Shelter section. This is a major gap, as lives may depend on swift and clear communication between the guards and the internal Shelter in the event of a security incident. Given that internal Shelter staff may be in meetings or counselling sessions, and that mobile phone signal coverage is very poor on Mehwar premises, a consistent alternative means of communication, such as a paging or intercom system, is needed at the Mehwar Centre.

Other security and policing issues at Mehwar, particularly those involving partner coordination, were inadequately developed at the time of the evaluation. However, partner dialogue around security issues relating to specific cases had commenced between Mehwar and the institutional bodies of the Ministry of Interior and MoSA, in the form of case conferences facilitated by UN Women. Lastly, a number of security concerns that still require attention and follow-up were highlighted in the Mehwar Staff Annual Evaluation Report in April 2010.

Despite the identified gaps, the security team reported that no major security breaches or community incidents had yet occurred.

5.12.2 Recommendations

A clear work model for the Mehwar Centre security team should be embedded and outlined in the Mehwar Centre's revised policies and procedures, including a written system for note keeping and reporting on security issues and incidents to supplement

the guards' current oral reporting. Policies and procedures should also be developed for the Centre's use of CCTV security surveillance systems, including protocol for handling CCTV footage and mandatory CCTV systems training for all Mehwar security personnel. Additionally, revised policies and procedures should incorporate a consistent mechanism for communication between the security team and the internal Shelter team, such as a paging or intercom system. Revisions to Mehwar's policies and procedures should also integrate any results from the ongoing dialogue on security coordination between Mehwar and its partners, as well as the security recommendations made in the Mehwar Staff Evaluation Report in April 2010.

5.13 Cleaning

5.13.1 Key Findings

The evaluation found that the Mehwar Centre is generally kept clean and tidy by the cleaning staff. However, no formal policies and procedures exist to outline this essential function.

5.13.2 Recommendations

Policies and procedures should be developed and formally documented regarding the Mehwar Centre's cleaning.

5.14 Building Maintenance

5.14.1 Key Findings

As already mentioned elsewhere in this document, the Mehwar Centre's building requires urgent maintenance and refurbishment. No formal policies and procedures were found during the evaluation to ensure that Mehwar's building remains functional and safe.

5.14.2 Recommendations

Policies and procedures should be developed to ensure regular evaluation and maintenance of Mehwar's building and other infrastructure, including standardised mechanisms for keeping inventories, work schedules, and maintenance records.

5.15 First Aid and Emergencies

5.15.1 Key Findings

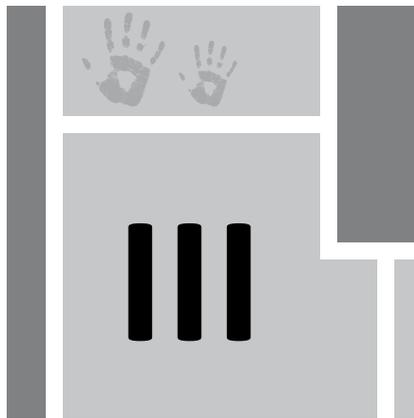
The evaluation found a gap in Mehwar's policies and procedures regarding first aid and emergency procedures, as these issues are not covered in the Centre's existing *Guide for Policies and Procedures*, nor are they in place in practice.

5.15.2 Recommendations

Mehwar's policies and procedures should detail what to do in the event of an emergency, such as a medical emergency, fire, etc.







PROPOSED STRUCTURE FOR MEHWAR'S REVISED GUIDE FOR POLICIES & PROCEDURES



Based on the evaluation findings, the following structure is proposed for organising the Mehwar Centre’s revised policies and procedures into an updated publication of the Centre’s Guide for Policies and Procedures. Each chapter of the revised *Guide for Policies and Procedures* should outline a policy, the procedures to be followed that link to that policy, and an explanation of how both comply with human rights standards.

Proposed Chapters of the Revised Mehwar Centre Guide for Policies and Procedures

(Related formats and reference documents should be developed and included as Annexes)

1. Introduction “Defining the Centre”

- i. Vision
- ii. Mission
- iii. Target group
- iv. Guiding principles: “Mehwar approach”
- v. Services offered (with specifications of target group per service)
- vi. Facilities available

2. Governance

- i. Principles and policies for a “woman-centred” governance
- ii. Legal status
- iii. Governing body, membership
- iv. Decision-making mechanisms
- v. Transparency
- vi. External evaluation
- vii. Advocacy for the Centre’s vision and mission
- viii. Policies for the support of the Mehwar Centre by partner institutions

3. Management

- i. Management style
- ii. Director’s role and responsibilities
- iii. Support system for the Director
- iv. The Senior Management Team members, their roles and responsibilities
- v. Senior Management Team coordination and cooperation
- vi. Staff meetings
- vii. Accountability mechanisms (also concerning Director and Senior Management Team) / Disciplinary measures in cases of staff not fulfilling the assigned duties and responsibilities
- viii. Transparency
- ix. Strategic and regular planning
- x. Monitoring (including monitoring and evaluation of administrative functions and systems)
- xi. Reporting
- xii. Beneficiaries’ reception system (face-to-face, on the phone)
- xiii. Media and public relations
- xiv. Internal / external communication arrangements and management

4. Administration and Finance

- i. Administrative staff roles and responsibilities
- ii. Accounting
- iii. Financial monitoring, auditing and reporting
- iv. Fundraising
- v. Record keeping
- vi. Data archive management
- vii. Timesheets

- viii. Facility¹⁵ maintenance, both regular and extraordinary (including roles and responsibilities of administrative / management staff, inventory, maintenance checklist, maintenance review and schedule)
- ix. Security (including special roles and responsibilities of security staff, security staff specific training, incident / near-miss incident recording system and reviews, use and retention of CCTV footage data policy, security systems maintenance and review)
- x. Transportation (including special roles and responsibilities of driver(s), external transportation arrangements, security escort, vehicle maintenance, vehicle insurance and accidents policies)
- xi. Cleaning and housekeeping

5. Staff

- i. Organigram
- ii. Staff recruitment¹⁶ (including detailed job descriptions, new employees' probation period)
- iii. Staff employment / end of employment (including retention, resignation, termination of employment, exit interview, appeals process)
- iv. Staff record keeping and storage of human resources records
- v. Shift and rotation system
- vi. Technical supervision (principles, guidelines, format, criteria for the selection of the staff supervisor)
- vii. Avoiding staff burnout
- viii. Staff annual appraisal and regular performance review (including self-evaluation)
- ix. Annual leave/sick leave/maternity leave
- x. Medical insurance / hazard insurance
- xi. Code of Conduct and Ethics (including procedures for signing and procedures and disciplinary measures in cases of breaches)
- xii. Confidentiality arrangements (including procedures and disciplinary measures in cases of "breaches of")
- xiii. Staff grievances and complaints
- xiv. Staff induction and benefits (including guiding principles, duties and responsibilities of line managers / inductees)
- xv. Continuous learning, training and development
- xvi. Volunteers and Interns (recruitment and selection, training, agreement, supervision arrangements, confidentiality policy, volunteer and intern induction, cessation/ termination of the volunteer and internship agreement, review of volunteer and internship placement)

6. Counselling and Sheltering Services for Women and Children

- i. Guiding principles and overall approach: protection and empowerment, counselling, holistic support, horizontal management / team work, reintegration and resettlement
- ii. Staffing capacity and arrangements
- iii. Shelter logistics arrangements (supplies, housekeeping shifts, kitchen management, regular maintenance, etc)
- iv. Administrative filing system
- v. Referral system (policy, process, criteria)
- vi. Case intake (for sheltering purposes, for external counselling purposes)
- vii. Case assessment (including risk assessment)
- viii. Rights and duties of sheltered women / agreement with sheltered women
- ix. Welcoming a woman to the shelter
- x. Confidentiality / information sharing
- xi. Assignment of Social Worker and Social Counsellor

15 The term 'facility' refers to: buildings, equipment, furniture and systems.

16 All sections relating to staff aim to be coterminous with the findings of UN Women's in-progress evaluation and project for Mehwar's staff recruitment.



- xii. Social (group and individual) counselling with sheltered women (methodology, system and schedule)
- xiii. Social counselling (group and individual) with non-sheltered women (methodology, system and schedule)
- xiv. Social counselling with sheltered women's family members (methodology and approach)
- xv. Child support interventions and activities: counselling, educational, recreational and therapeutic interventions (including children's needs assessment, rebuilding the mother-child bond post-abuse, child contact with abusive parent/relative assessment)
- xvi. Risk identification and assessment
- xvii. Intervention plan and review policy
- xviii. Shelter team case-conference (policy, procedures, record-keeping, decision making mechanism, action implementation and follow-up)
- xix. Multi-agency case conference/risk assessment (policy, procedures, decision making mechanism, action implementation and follow-up)
- xx. Physical health support services (including role of Shelter staff in case referral, consultation and coordination with external professionals and intervention plan follow-up)
- xxi. Psychological support services (including role of Shelter staff in case referral, consultation and coordination with external professionals and intervention plan follow-up)
- xxii. Family and friend visits
- xxiii. Legal assessment and support (see legal section for further detail)
- xxiv. Educational and recreational activities
- xxv. Vocational training
- xxvi. Provision of life skills
- xxvii. Orientation to the job market and employment opportunities
- xxviii. Case follow-up (during and after sheltering period)
- xxix. Case discharge from the Shelter
- xxx. Returning to Mehwar for further sheltering and support
- xxxi. Case evaluation
- xxxii. Case filing system (including case data collection and management, case file retention and destruction policy)
- xxxiii. Emergency evacuation from the Shelter

7. Legal Services

- i. Guiding principles and overall approach
- ii. Staffing arrangements
- iii. Legal orientation, advice and representation for sheltered beneficiaries / external cases
- iv. Criteria for intake of external legal cases
- v. Legal case management and documentation
- vi. Testimony gathering
- vii. Cooperation with Social Workers / Counsellors and other relevant professionals (physicians, psychologists, etc)
- viii. Cooperation with Security Forces and Justice Sector Officials (including communication modalities, criteria for information sharing, confidentiality arrangements)
- ix. Building a legal case
- x. Preparation for submission of evidence in courts / evidential tests
- xi. Legal case outcome and follow-up
- xii. Legal case review meetings for internal institutional learning

8. Family Support Counselling Services

- i. Guiding principles and approach: centrality of victim's protection, counselling, holistic support, commitment to non-abusive and non-oppressive practices, reinforcing healthy family ties, holding perpetrators of violence accountable
- ii. Mehwar role and responsibilities in working with families
- iii. Staffing arrangements

- iv. Referral system
- v. Criteria and assessment for providing family services (including risk assessment)
- vi. Behavioural changes assessment tools
- vii. Family support services agreement
- viii. Confidentiality / information sharing
- ix. Assignment of Social Worker and Social Counsellor
- x. Social (group and individual) counselling with families in distress (methodology, system and schedule)
- xi. Risk identification and assessment
- xii. Intervention plan, review policy and case follow-up
- xiii. Shelter team case conference (policy, procedures, record-keeping, decision making mechanism, action implementation and follow-up)
- xiv. Multi-agency case conference / risk assessment (policy, procedures, decision making mechanism, action implementation and follow-up)
- xv. Cooperation and coordination with MoSA District Offices, Security Forces and Justice Sector Officials

9. Outreach Community Activities and Services

- i. Guiding principles and approach: prevention of violence, raising community acceptance and cooperation in support of victims / survivors of violence
- ii. Mehwar's role and responsibilities in working with the community
- iii. Working off-site
- iv. Monitoring and evaluation of outreach community activities impact
- v. Events planning and management (at the Centre and off-site, management of multipurpose hall programmes and schedule)
- vi. Networking
- vii. Nursery:
 - a) Child protection principles and approach
 - b) Staffing arrangements
 - c) Supervision and management
 - d) Intake and assessment procedures (including risk assessment)
 - e) Educational and recreational needs assessment
 - f) Activities programme and publicity
 - g) Equipment inventory, maintenance and cleaning log and reporting
 - h) First aid and medical support
 - i) Parents' drop-off and pick-up
 - j) Parental permission for activities taking place off-site
 - k) Cooperation with the Shelter
- viii. Gymnasium:
 - a) Women's well-being principles and approach
 - b) Staffing arrangements
 - c) Supervision and management
 - d) Criteria and conditions for admission
 - e) Health and safety policy for using gym equipment
 - f) Gymnasium use disclaimer
 - g) Activities programme and publicity
 - h) Cooperation with the Shelter
- ix. Cafeteria :
 - a) Aim and strategy of the service
 - b) Staffing arrangements
 - c) Supervision and management
 - d) Publicity
 - e) Food hygiene and preparation standards
 - f) Kitchen use, health and safety
 - g) Income/accounting records system
 - h) Customer satisfaction review





CONCLUSION AND PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS



The evaluation found both successes and shortfalls in the formulation and/or implementation of the Mehwar Centre's policies and procedures. The Centre's successes in assisting women victims of violence included positive beneficiary feedback, the Centre's use of a woman-centred approach, and its highly skilled and professional staff team that operates under significant pressure while dealing with multiple challenges simultaneously. The evaluation showed that Mehwar has indeed aided some women in obtaining justice, helped some women successfully reintegrate with their families, and found alternative ways to enable women to live free and independent lives outside of Mehwar when family reintegration has not been possible.

Overall, however, the evaluation found that the Mehwar Centre's policies and procedures require further development and revision in order to fill the gaps identified in this document. While the Centre's written Guide for Policies and Procedures provided a useful foundation for the Mehwar Centre at its inception, it no longer reflects many of the actual policies and procedures that have developed through the Centre's daily operations over its first three years, which need to be formally written down. The original policies and procedures do present a strong, principled case for the Centre's support of women victims of domestic violence, but key omissions prevent the Centre from maximising its potential for effective and efficient work towards its aim. As currently written, the Mehwar Centre's policies and procedures do not express or address all aspects of the Centre's holistic support for women and girls in the oPt who have been victims of any form of violence or at risk of becoming so. Lastly, the Mehwar Centre's policies and procedures must be brought into full compliance with human rights standards.

Because the task ahead of the Mehwar Centre in revising its policies and procedures is likely to require a great deal of the Centre staff's time and efforts, which are already stretched by the responsive and needs-based nature of their work with victims of violence and abuse, the revision process may need to occur in phases and with the technical support and cooperation of Mehwar's key partners. With this in mind, five areas for prioritisation in the short to medium-term are listed below. While all of the recommendations of this evaluation should be implemented in the long-term, these five priority areas should be addressed immediately.

1. Centre Governance

As the undefined status of the Mehwar Centre and lack of a clear accountability chain impedes the staff's ability to properly implement policies and procedures, defining and putting in place a fair, clear and effective governance structure in accordance with Mehwar's objective as a specialised anti-violence centre should be the Centre's top priority. To do this, the Mehwar Centre and its project partners should:

- **Form** a Governance Action Group from Mehwar management, staff and project partners;
- **Build** a customised governance structure and the mechanisms necessary for Mehwar to become an independent organisation working in accordance with human rights standards;

- **Define** official Mehwar Centre by-laws that include tailored governance, management and monitoring systems for the Centre;
- **Expand** and more clearly outline the Centre’s mission, vision and target group;
- **Seek** relevant authorities’ endorsement of the Mehwar Centre’s by-laws to officially define the Centre’s legal status;
- **Develop** and **activate** an external (independent), human rights-based monitoring system for the Mehwar Centre.

2. Management, Administration and Communications

To improve the Mehwar Centre’s effectiveness and ensure accountability, it should also immediately review and develop its management systems in line with its objectives and governance structure as defined in the Mehwar Centre’s by-laws. To do this, the Mehwar Centre should:

- **Develop** monitoring and reporting systems in line with professional and human rights standards;
- **Build** consistent and functional internal and external communications systems and policies based on clearly defined principles of confidentiality;
- **Develop**, adopt, implement and monitor minimum human rights-based standards for the Mehwar Centre;
- **Develop** and implement consistent policies and procedures for both technical and managerial supervision of Mehwar Centre staff;
- **Outline** a clear chain of accountability for Mehwar management and staff;
- **Update** the Mehwar Centre’s staff organigram according to defined staff roles, responsibilities and chain of accountability, based on efficiency and professionalism;
- **Define** and implement policies and procedures outlining the Mehwar Centre’s relationship with and use of media and public relations in line with the Mehwar Centre’s mission and vision.

3. Case Management

Priority should also be given to revising and further developing all aspects of the Mehwar Centre’s policies and procedures related to the case management of its sheltered beneficiaries. To do this, the Mehwar Centre should:

- **Provide and require** that all Mehwar staff takes specialised training on standardised intake, risk and general case identification and assessment according to up-to-date knowledge and skills in line with international human rights standards;
- **Develop** and **implement** standardised intake procedures and standard case assessment tools to be used for all women sheltered at the Mehwar Centre;
- **Ensure** the regular and fair application of the standardised intake procedures by Mehwar staff;
- **Ensure** that the Shelter Responsible monitors the implementation and application



of this standard case assessment tool through regular supervision meetings with Centre social workers;

- **Revise** the Centre's case management documentation system for efficiency, effectiveness and security;
- **Update, keep secure** and **use** beneficiary case files on a consistent basis, with regular dip-sampling of case files by the Shelter Responsible and Mehwar Centre Director for oversight;
- **Conduct** regular technical supervision sessions with Mehwar's social workers and other staff working directly with the sheltered women, as required;
- **Review** and **share** experiences and lessons learned from incidents and cases at Mehwar team meetings for collective team learning and communicating risks with relevant Mehwar team members;
- **Ensure** that each Mehwar beneficiary be informed and involved in all details pertaining to her potential resettlement and reintegration, and that her opinions and decisions regarding her own safety and the suitability of her resettlement options be ultimately respected;
- **Develop** and **implement** case-monitoring mechanisms, including specific measures for follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of women and their situation after resettlement.

4. Outreach

Another priority is an internal review and further development of the Mehwar Centre's outreach functions, policies and procedures. To improve the Mehwar Centre's outreach programme and activities, the Mehwar Centre should:

- **Clarify** the definition and scope of the Mehwar Centre's outreach and community engagement work;
- **Ensure** a clear division of staffing strategies between the Mehwar Centre's Shelter (internal) and Outreach (external) sections;
- **Redeploy** regular staff rotations for all staff to Outreach programmes as required to ensure equal staff competencies and prevent staff burnout, distinguishing between staff roles during Shelter and Outreach rotations;
- **Define** the specific mission, mandate and specific skills and strengths of Mehwar's Outreach capacities not covered by other organisations in community outreach work;
- **Coordinate** and **develop** memoranda of understanding with partner organisations to define and agree upon complimentary outreach roles and cooperation to improve efficiency and effectiveness;
- **Develop** clear and stable memoranda of understanding for cooperation between Mehwar and other institutions like courts, the police, general attorneys, hospitals, schools and other ministries;
- **Develop** and regularly **monitor** a Mehwar Outreach strategy.

5. Staffing

Lastly, priority should be given to developing and implementing policies and procedures for Mehwar staffing. To do this, the Mehwar Centre should:

- **Incorporate** ways to avoid and alleviate staff burnout in the Centre's policies and procedures;
- **Identify** resources for backstopping staff rotations, including recruiting and training a pool of temporary staff and volunteers to fill in or provide backup support for staff rotations as necessary;
- **Amend** the night shift policy to include an on-call shift strategy to provide backup support for the night shift in the case of an emergency;
- **Ensure** proper technical and managerial staff supervision;
- **Provide** opportunities for continuous staff training, professional development and advancement;
- **Develop** a Code of Conduct and Ethics to which all Mehwar staff must commit and conform, including consequences for staff breaches of the Code of Conduct and Ethics;
- **Outline** policies and procedures for the provision of support in cases where staff members become victims of violence;
- **Detail** policies and procedures on the role of volunteers and interns in supporting the work of the Mehwar Centre, including their recruitment and training.

With the evaluation process complete and five areas highlighted for prioritisation, the next steps for the Mehwar Centre include circulating the evaluation to Mehwar staff, partners, donors and stakeholders. Mehwar and project partners must then join efforts to produce revised policies and procedures according to the report's proposed structure and consider the suggested monitoring and evaluation indicators for case files, as well as the development of minimum standards for shelters serving victims of VAW in the oPt. The end result will hopefully yield improved policies and procedures not only for the Mehwar Centre, but also to serve as a model for the creation of other such centres throughout the oPt.





APPENDIX 1

Evaluation plan for the review of the policies and procedures of the Mehwar Centre

Purpose: To carry out a review of the effectiveness of the policies and procedures of the Mehwar Centre and to measure their compliance with human rights standards.

Methodology: Comprehensive mixed method. Incorporates well-established technical tools of safety auditing and training auditing (this will be based on the recommendations of the recent evaluation of Mehwar staff) to analyse a violence against women's service's effectiveness by collecting and analyzing data, including looking at files, reading policies, observing practices, and conducting interviews with staff, service users, stakeholders and partners, and recording findings and progressing towards recommendations. All safety audits are trying to answer the fundamental question: "How does this (practice, policy, procedure, rule, etc) enhance victims'/women's safety (in compliance with human rights standards) and increase the accountability of the perpetrator?" The concept of safety and protection in the safety audit is defined in relation to protection of human rights; key reference documents include CEDAW, CEDAW optional protocols, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, MDGs, other international instruments (e.g. Convention on the Rights of the Child).



Task/Activity	Rationale	
Introductory visit to the Mehwar Centre to meet Director and staff.	To introduce and identify key issues for the Mehwar Centre Director and staff relating to the review of the Centre's policies and procedures and to get an overview of the Centre facilities and services.	
Visit to other violence against women facilities in oPt and Israel.	To gain context and understanding of facilities in the region, how they function and how they may link with the purpose and function of the Mehwar Centre. To visit key regional facilities and services, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helpline • Emergency Shelter (Jericho) • Shelter for Girls (Beit Jalla) • 48 Shelter • UN Women partners • Any other additional relevant site visits. 	
Draft evaluation plan.	To structure the evaluation of the policies and procedures of the Mehwar Centre in a way that is woman-centred and designed to be compliant with and human rights standards.	
Identification and gathering of relevant legal/policy documents related to MoSA and other key stakeholders working in the field of combating VAW and attendance of a Consultative Committee meeting (if feasible).	To identify current legal instruments and how they relate to the Mehwar Centre's policies, procedures and practices.	
Inception meeting with the Minister of Social Affairs and key officials from the Ministry of Social Affairs.	To identify key issues for the Ministry of Social Affairs in relation to the evaluation of the Policies and Procedures of the Mehwar Centre. To discuss human rights as they link to the Mehwar Centre users.	
Inception meeting with the Minister for Women's Affairs (MoWA) and key officials from the Ministry of Women's Affairs.	To identify key issues in relation to the evaluation of the policies and procedures of the Mehwar Centre. To discuss human rights as they link to the users of the Mehwar Centre.	
Identification of Palestinian Authority (PA) Ministry Departments, their Ministers and Senior Officials. Listing of key persons/institutions to be consulted.	To identify key responsibilities of PA Ministry Departments so that the International Consultant has clarity on the ways in which the PA can champion the Mehwar Centre and to analyse the role it can play in supporting new policies and procedures for the Mehwar Centre.	
Brainstorming and identification of key organizations and stakeholders to be involved/consulted in the evaluation process. Listing of key persons/institutions to be consulted, with their contact information.	To establish who needs to be involved in the evaluation process and to map relationships in the violence against women sector in the oPt.	
Literature review: by- laws of the Mehwar Centre.	To read, review and analyse the existing by-laws (policies and procedures) of the Mehwar Centre.	
Literature review: Mehwar Centre Annual Report 2007.	To read, review and analyse the Mehwar Centre's Annual Report 2007.	
Literature review: documents relevant to work with abused women and children in the oPt.	To read, review and analyse any other relevant reports, research, or statistical information relating to the Mehwar Centre or abused women and children in the oPt.	
Production of a literature review list and collation of findings of the literature review.	To produce a literature review list and a summary of findings to be integrated into the first draft of the evaluation.	
Follow up meeting/interview with the Director of the Mehwar Centre.	To further discuss/cover policies and procedures for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management and supervision of Mehwar staff • Staff list and organigram • Training and development of staff: training audit based upon the recommendations of the recent Mehwar staff evaluation • Shelter: all aspects of service provision from referral and admission to rehabilitation/resettlement. (To include record keeping process and procedures) • Family support services • Recreational/rehabilitation services: gym, educational activities, kindergarten • Financial/budgetary data and information • Security • Building maintenance. 	

Who (including roles)	Timescale	Output	Completed
Consultants, UN Women, Mehwar Director and Mehwar staff.	Week 1.	Visit completed and key issues for Director and staff identified to feed into evaluation plan.	
UN Women and MoSA to organise.	Week 1,2.	Visits completed and key issues relating to the Mehwar Centre identified to feed into evaluation.	
Consultant(s).	Week 1,2.	Draft evaluation plan submitted to UN Women .	
Consultants, MoSA, MoWA, Security Forces.	Week 2 and ongoing throughout the evaluation process.	Legal documents and policy documents received and linkage to Mehwar Centre policies, procedures and practices identified. Consultative Committee meeting attended, if feasible.	
Consultants, MoSA, and UN Women to facilitate meeting.	As soon as possible, depending on Ministerial availability.	Meeting held and analysis made of the Ministry's view. Analysis completed on MoSA's perspective in relation to the governance and management structures of the Mehwar Centre.	
Consultants, MoWA, UN Women to facilitate meeting.	As soon as possible, depending on Ministerial availability.	Meeting held and analysis made of the Ministry's view in relation to Mehwar's policies and procedures. Awareness increased on initiatives that could lead to further development of Mehwar's policies and procedures.	
Consultants, Un Women and MoSA.	Week 1.	List of ministries, ministers, officials and their portfolios obtained. Analysis conducted of the ways in which ministries can assist the Mehwar Centre evaluation and its practice.	
Consultants, UN Women staff, key Mehwar staff, and Differenza Donna Local Technical Coordinator. UN Women administrative support (to obtain contact information).	Week 1, 2.	List of stakeholders developed and contact list for them finalized.	
Consultants.	Week 2.	An analysis of current by-laws (policies and procedures) conducted. Positive aspects of the by-laws identified, along with areas for improvement and gaps that will require further exploration. Analysis review report produced and submitted to UN Women.	
Consultants.	Week 2.	Report analysed and relevant aspects relating to the Mehwar Centre's establishment identified to help inform the evaluation of the Mehwar Centre's policies and procedures.	
Consultants with support from UN Women, MoSA, MoWA, DD, and stakeholders (to identify and supply relevant publications).	Week 2,3.	Relevant documents analysed and relevant aspects for evaluating and reviewing Mehwar's policies and procedures in relation to the needs of Palestinian women and children identified.	
Consultants.	Week 3.	Literature review produced. Analysis integrated into draft evaluation.	
International/National Consultants and Mehwar Centre Director.	Week 2 and ongoing over weeks 3, 4 and 5. (with aim to secure information as soon as possible).	Staff team and responsibilities identified. Copies of key forms/ template documents obtained and a clear understanding gained of the systems currently in place at Mehwar, leading to an assessment of issues for further development. Director's view of Centre's successes, gaps, areas for improvement and possible solutions analysed. Schedule agreed for meetings with staff.	



Task/Activity	Rationale	
Scheduled meetings/interviews with Mehwar staff members by department.	<p>To interview Mehwar staff and get viewpoints from social counselling, counselling, children's nursery, receptionist/administration staff (i.e. all staff) on current policies and procedures, including what works for them and what does not work for them.</p> <p>To obtain qualitative and quantitative data from staff specific to their service area (department) in relation to the evaluation (e.g. current caseload figures, client needs, etc).</p>	
Discussion with UN Women and Mehwar about appropriate ways to recognise women for their input to the evaluation process.	<p>To identify remuneration/benefit(s) for the women participating in the review of the Centre's policies and procedures in group workshops (e.g. remuneration fee, donation of goods such as clothing or food, or an event such as a film night, etc).</p>	
Focused discussion/workshop with Mehwar Centre staff (team meeting).	<p>To make introductions to the Mehwar Team explaining the purpose and structure of the evaluation process and to observe and analyse the Mehwar team dynamic.</p> <p>To identify areas of shared/common agreement on the successes of the Centre's policies, procedures and practices.</p> <p>To collectively identify areas where the staff team sees gaps or room for improvement in Mehwar's current policies, procedures and practices and to encourage the staff team to collectively identify possible solutions to any difficulties.</p> <p>To identify additional qualitative and quantitative data relating to Mehwar's service provision using collective knowledge and institutional memory.</p> <p>To discuss in partnership with staff who have close contact with women in the shelter (e.g. social counsellors, counsellors and the Mehwar Director) and obtain their suggestions for optimum times for both the women and the staff to hold several group sessions with the women shelter residents.</p> <p>To discuss a proposal to have four half-day sessions with the women to give them the opportunity to share their experiences of interaction with the shelter and to:</p> <p>(Session 1) give introductions and discuss the reasons for this evaluation and workshops with them, which is to ensure that the Mehwar Centre operates in ways that support their human rights</p> <p>(Session 1) explain that women will not be named/identified in the report. The information (data) they provide will be kept anonymous so that their safety is not compromised</p> <p>(All sessions) agree and reaffirm 'ground rules' as a group (for example, to be supportive of one another, not to judge one another, not to interrupt one another, etc)</p> <p>(Session 2) discuss universal human rights, what they mean to the women and ask them to express their thoughts and feelings about human rights through art/drawing or words (either orally or written): 'In my world/life I want human rights to mean...'</p> <p>(Session 2) identify through art, words, or written language ways in which the Mehwar Centre works or operates that has been useful/beneficial to them: 'The Mehwar Centre has helped me by...[giving me] [enabling me] [empowering me] [helping me] to...'</p> <p>(Session 3) identify ways in which the woman's process of getting support and services from the Mehwar Centre was problematic, if this was the case (e.g. referral process, settling into and adapting to the new environment) and to explore difficulties with 'rules' according to service areas (e.g. legal, counselling, etc): 'I found it difficult being here when [...]' 'I found it hard when I was here because of [...]'</p> <p>(Session 4) identify any additional support needs that the women think they and their children have which the Mehwar Centre may be able to support using the existing policies, procedures and practices or to consider in the evaluation and revision of the policies, procedures and practices: 'I would like the Mehwar Centre to help me/my child to...,' 'In an ideal world I would like</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Mehwar Centre to help me/my child to...,' 'I would like the Mehwar Centre to support me/my child by...' • (Session 4) Discuss as a group at the end of the session ways 'we' shelter residents can also respect and support each other and ensure the Mehwar Centre is a positive environment. Discuss as a group ways in which staff and shelter residents can come together to resolve issues and support one another to respect human rights. <p>To, with staff, identify women to participate in the group workshops and obtain staff support to encourage and support women's attendance and participation in the group workshops.</p>	
Dip sampling of Mehwar files.	<p>To dip sample Mehwar files (both administrative and case) for information and to check compliance with current policies, procedures and human rights standards.</p>	
Meeting/interview with representatives from Differenza Donna (DD) .	<p>To discuss the current policies, procedures and practices of the Mehwar Centre and to identify successes, gaps and issues.</p> <p>To focus on human rights and how they are integrated within the policies, procedures and practices of the Mehwar Centre.</p> <p>To obtain copies of and details about any partnership agreements between DD and the Mehwar Centre to establish the nature, type of relationship and deliverables agreed.</p> <p>To obtain existing relevant documentation/information relating to Mehwar policies and procedures that DD has as institutional knowledge as a partner and supporter of the Mehwar Centre.</p> <p>To discuss all areas covered with the Mehwar Director [see p5/6 above] to obtain DD perspective and to obtain further data for the evaluation.</p>	

Who (including roles)	Timescale	Output	Completed
Consultants, the Mehwar Centre Director and Mehwar staff members.	Week 2,3 (according to staff availability).	Meetings held, notes taken, and data analysed on relevant issues, including successes, gaps and areas for improvement. Any required follow-up conducted on a one-to-one basis.	
Consultants, Mehwar Centre Director, UN Women (to lead on obtaining benefit/s).	Week 2,3.	Agreement reached on suitable/appropriate benefit for participation in group sessions and how/when this will be distributed. Donations/benefits secured and distributed post group to all the women who participated in the workshops.	
Consultants.	Week 3,4.	<p>Key success areas, areas for improvement and solutions identified for the policies, procedures and practices, for inclusion into the evaluation.</p> <p>Workshop plan discussed and professional feedback from staff considered, with necessary revisions integrated for the group sessions with women service users.</p> <p>Workshop times and locations agreed with the Mehwar Staff Team and approved by the Mehwar Director.</p> <p>Agreed that the Mehwar Team and Director will publicise the dates and times of group sessions and the reasons for attendance to them and encourage their attendance, at all possible opportunities (each one-on-one session, each group session, each 'centre' shelter meeting, etc).</p> <p>Support staff (from a range of teams (e.g. legal, counselling, etc) identified and ensured to be available for women shelter residents post-group in case issues relating to their situation are triggered by the group discussion.</p>	
Consultants.	Ongoing throughout evaluation process Weeks 1-9.	Information established regarding adherence to policies and procedures of Mehwar and recommendations made for change (if required).	
Consultants and Differenza Donna representatives.	Week 3-4 -5-6.	Meeting held, notes taken, analysis made of information and data received for input into draft evaluation.	



Task/Activity	Rationale	
Produce workshop content, facilitation plan and guidelines for working with women shelter users.	To obtain information from a range of sources and produce workshop content and facilitation plans; to determine what to focus on and set questions; to raise key questions as per the Terms of Reference and define a final set of questions. (Workshops to be delivered in Arabic).	
Workshops with women shelter users conducted (in Arabic).	To hold a series of workshops with women shelter users to obtain their views in relation to the current policies and procedures of the Mehwar Centre and also to obtain their views about how these may be improved. Note: Workshops to be delivered in Arabic by the national consultant, who will translate for the International consultant so that input can be given to process (e.g. follow-up questions asked), as needed.	
Follow-up discussion/meeting with Mehwar Centre Director and Shelter Responsible post-women's group discussions (in the event of urgent safety concerns).	To discuss any urgent practice safety/issues arising from the women's support groups (if they should arise) with the Mehwar Centre Director.	
Writing of inception report.	To write an inception report that describes progress made, meetings held, initial findings and areas for further investigation.	
Presentation meeting /inception workshops with key stakeholder/partner organisations.	To discuss the purpose of the evaluation, its aims and objectives, and to obtain key stakeholders' views on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The successes of the Mehwar Centre and specifically, the way its policies and procedures operate Any problems/difficulties they identify with the current Mehwar policies and procedures Any gaps in the Mehwar Centres policies and procedures Any solutions they can identify to problems/gaps. Note: National consultant to lead delivery in Arabic and translate for international consultant for input and facilitation purposes.	
Meeting with Children's Nursery Staff and Centre Director (if available).	To discuss and determine feasibility of conducting workshop with the children using the nursery and to agree on content (this may be depending on current ages of infants/children using the service). To conduct an art session (proposed) and ask children using the nursery to draw diagrams based on the following: 'I feel X about coming to the Mehwar centre,' 'I like coming to the Mehwar Centre because...,' or 'I would like to do X at the Mehwar Centre...'	
Workshop(s) with child users of the Mehwar Centre.	To find out about the experience of Mehwar's child beneficiaries in accessing the Mehwar Centre and the impact of how the Centre operates (policies, procedures and practices) on their lives. Note: If low numbers of children are accessing the service or nearly all are infants, this may not be feasible to integrate into the evaluation process.	
Follow-up discussion/meeting with Mehwar Centre Director and Outreach Programs Coordinator post-children's workshop (in the event of urgent safety concerns).	To discuss any urgent practice safety/issues arising from the children's workshop (if they should arise) with the Mehwar Centre Director.	
Development of semi-structured interview/questionnaire format for stakeholders/partners of the Mehwar Centre.	To produce a semi-structured interview format for stakeholders/partners of the Mehwar Centre (referencing previous brainstorming/contact list and data from inception workshop, and building upon information and data received in the evaluation process to date). To produce a written questionnaire in Arabic for stakeholders/partners of the Mehwar Centre (referencing as above).	
Conducting of interviews and distribution of questionnaires (face-to-face, telephone, skype, email correspondence; mixed method, according to need and project timetable constraints).	To seek the views of Mehwar Centre partners/stakeholders on the policies, procedures and practices of the Mehwar Centre and to obtain data/information about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The specific role of the partner/stakeholder Activities/joint-working arrangements between the partner/stakeholder to date Successes of the Mehwar Centre policies, procedures and practices Areas of difficulty in the current Mehwar Centre policies, procedures and practices Gaps in the current Mehwar Centre policies, procedures and practices Relevant quantitative data specific to agency/stakeholder (e.g. on the number of referrals made to Mehwar (as appropriate)) Possible solutions to the identified gaps/difficulties Specific information/views about ways in which joint working between the specific agency and the Mehwar Centre can be enhanced and developed. 	
Analysis of stakeholder/partner responses to interviews and questionnaires.	To analyse the data and feedback from Mehwar Centre partners and to integrate this analysis and relevant data into the draft of the evaluation.	

	Who (including roles)	Timescale	Output	Completed
	Consultants.	Week 3.	Workshop plan submitted to UN Women and approved.	
	International and national consultants lead with organisational support from UN Women (in terms of workshop materials, like paper and pens) and Mehwar Centre staff support (in arranging women's attendance and post-group support).	Weeks 4 (x2) and Week 5 (x2). Findings Week 6.	Workshops held and information/data obtained from women analysed and integrated into draft report.	
	Consultants with Mehwar Centre Director and Shelter Responsible .	Week 4 and Week 5 (post groups).	Any urgent safety issues raised with Mehwar Centre Director immediately post-group (if they arise).	
	Consultants.	Week 5.	Report written and any necessary adjustments made to work plan, as required.	
	Consultants (to deliver presentation) with organisational support from UN Women; Mehwar Centre Director (to introduce the Centre and its work). MoSA and MoWA (support and endorsement); All stakeholders, including NGOs.	Week 5,6,7,8.	Presentation meeting and workshop held and findings analysed for integration into the draft report.	
	Consultants, Mehwar nursery staff educators and Mehwar Centre Director. UN Women (to supply resources for children's workshops, such as art materials).	Week 4.	Meeting held and feasibility determined. If feasible, then content agreed and proposal submitted to UN Women.	
	Consultants with essential support from nursery staff (so that children feel safe and secure and are adequately supervised).	Week 6.	Workshop held (if feasible).	
	Consultants with Mehwar Centre Director and Outreach Programs Coordinator.	Week 6.	Any urgent safety issues raised with Mehwar Centre Director immediately post-group (if they arise).	
	Consultants. UN Women.	Week 5,6.	Semi-structured interview format finalised. Questionnaire format finalised.	
	Consultants administrative support from UN Women, MoSA and Mehwar (to distribute the questionnaires by email for return by mid-week 7. (Short turnaround due to project timetabling constraints).	Week 6.	Face-to-face meetings held and questionnaires distributed to all stakeholders/partners identified.	
	Consultants.	Mid-week 7 to early Week 8.	Analysis finalised and data/information integrated into the evaluation.	



Task/Activity	Rationale	
Draft evaluation.	<p>To produce a written draft evaluation that integrates the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Findings of the evaluation of Mehwar’s policies and procedures (and where relevant to these, the practices of the Mehwar Centre) with key recommendations for the Mehwar Centre and relevant stakeholders and partners • Proposed revised policies and procedures for the Mehwar Centre which indicate compliance with human rights standards • Process for developing indicators based upon the recommendations and to suggest indicators • Suggested baseline for future evaluations of the Mehwar Centre policies and procedures • Proposed monitoring and evaluation process and mechanism for the Mehwar Centre to use on an ongoing basis which links to the proposed policies and procedures • Details on the level of compliance to human rights standards and ways in which the Mehwar Centre, in its practices and procedures, can enhance its effectiveness further • Details on the major achievements and challenges that the Mehwar Centre has faced on the procedural level • Submission of a recommended plan for staff training and development based upon the findings of the training audit (for internal Mehwar Centre/UN Women/ MoSA purposes only) • Suggestions/recommendations for any additional resources that may be of benefit to the Mehwar Centre, its policies, procedures and practices. 	
UN Women comments on draft and submission to consultants for revision.	To have UN Women comment on draft received and make changes accordingly to ensure compliance with terms of reference for the evaluation project.	
Distribution of draft evaluation to Mehwar Centre Director, MoSA focal point and DD Local Technical Coordinator.	<p>To present the draft evaluation with findings to the Mehwar Centre Director and MoSA focal point in a meeting.</p> <p>To receive feedback from Mehwar Centre Director, MoSA focal point and DD local technical coordinator for integration into the draft by the consultants.</p> <p>To agree on a time with the Mehwar Centre Director for the end of week 10 to present the draft evaluation to the Mehwar staff team.</p>	
Presentation of draft evaluation to Mehwar staff.	To deliver a presentation to the Mehwar staff team on the content and findings of the draft evaluation, with copies of the draft available to staff so that they can provide input to the final document.	
Presentation of draft evaluation to MoSA and MoWA staff and additional PA departments.	To deliver a presentation to MoSA and MoWA, with copies of the draft evaluation available to Ministers and officials so that they can provide input to the final report.	
Emailing of presentation on draft report to all stakeholders/partners of the Mehwar Centre.	To email a PowerPoint presentation outlining the headline findings (executive summary) of the draft report together with the full draft to all Mehwar Centre partners/stakeholders so that they can provide input to the final document.	
Analysis of feedback for the final evaluation, including amended policies and procedures document in English and Arabic (annex to the report).	To collate and analyse all feedback and further submissions and produce a final evaluation.	
Feedback and closure presentation to women shelter users and Mehwar Centre staff.	To explain to Mehwar’s women shelter users and staff in Arabic about the key ways in which their contributions have helped to shape/form the recommendations of the final report and to express thanks for their contributions to the process.	

	Who (including roles)	Timescale	Output	Completed
	Consultants.	Week 9.	Draft evaluation written and submitted to UN Women.	
	UN Women and consultants.	Beginning of Week 10.	Draft integrating UN Women feedback completed.	
	Consultants. UN Women, Mehwar Centre Director, MoSA focal point and DD Local Technical Coordinator.	Mid-week 10.	Draft evaluation given to Mehwar Centre Director, MoSA focal point and DD Local Technical Coordinator for feedback in meeting and in writing by end week 10. Time and format of the meeting for the presentation to staff agreed and scheduled.	
	Consultants and Mehwar Director.	End of week 10.	Presentation delivered. Staff invited to respond directly to draft evaluation in presentation session (due to project time constraints).	
	Consultants, MoSA, MoWA, UN Women and Mehwar Director.	End of week 10.	Presentation delivered. MoSA, MoWA, Ministers and officials invited to directly respond to the draft after the presentation (due to project time constraints).	
	Consultants with UN Women administrative support.	End of week 10.	Presentation emailed to all Mehwar Centre partners (due to pressure of time for project) and partners/stakeholders invited to respond and submit by email written feedback on the draft report by mid-week 11.	
	Consultants with UN Women support.	End of week 11.	Final evaluation submitted to Mehwar Centre Director and staff, UN Women, MoSA, MoWA and all stakeholders/partners.	
	Consultants, Mehwar Centre Director, Mehwar staff, women shelter users, UN Women and Differenza Donna.	End of week 11.	Presentation session completed.	





APPENDIX 2

Evaluation Activities List

Activities carried out during the Evaluation of the Policies and Procedures of the Mehwar Centre between 7 June and 20 August 2010, inclusive.

Activities listed in the order in which they were conducted:

- Orientation meeting: obtained a copy of Mehwar policies and procedures for review and analysis
- Introductory meeting with Maysoon Ramadan, Director of the Mehwar Centre, and tour of the Mehwar Centre
- Visit to Israeli shelter
- Meeting focusing on security issues relating to women victims of violence
- Introductory meeting/interview with Dr. Kawther Moghrabi (MoSA, Director General for Family and Child Protection) to discuss draft evaluation plan
- Introductory meeting/interview with Carla Pagano (Gender Advisor, Italian Co-operation)
- Meeting at Mehwar with the Centre's Management Team to discuss the draft evaluation plan
- Attended case meeting at Mehwar Centre
- UN Women internal meeting to discuss draft evaluation plan
- Visit to House of Girls, Beit Jalla and MoSA
- Meeting with Mehwar, MoSA and UN Women to discuss evaluation and emergency shelters, shelter standards and importance of not segregating women in shelters by type of violence/abuse experienced
- Interview with Mehwar Administrative Manager (x2)
- UN Women Women's Human Rights Unit Team meeting
- Visit to WCLAC to discuss Takamol referral project
- Meeting with potential national consultant candidate
- Telephone conference with Amer Madi (national consultant)
- Meeting with Alia El Yassir, Head of the UN Women office in the oPt
- Visit to Bailasan Girls Shelter and Ministry of Social Welfare in Nazareth
- Meeting with MoSA, Ministry of the Interior and UN Women
- Attended UN Women team meeting with Ines Alberdi (former UNIFEM Executive Director)
- Bethlehem Police Family Protection Unit tour, meeting and interviews
- Supportive Committee of the Mehwar Centre
- Mehwar Centre Director and Differenza Donna Local Technical Coordination to discuss and agree fieldwork arrangements at the Mehwar Centre



- Drafting and presentation of risk identification tools for Mehwar, Police and Security Services
- Interview with Carla Pagano (Gender Advisor, Italian Co-operation)
- Interview with Differenza Donna Local Technical Coordinator, Sabrina Frasca and with Differenza Donna psychologist, Irene Agnello
- Workshop and interview preparations
- Differenza Donna workshop for staff on support for case work and mental health (x2)
- Workshop conducted with sheltered women at Mehwar
- Emergency case meeting
- Meeting with Mehwar Management Team, Italian Cooperation and UN Women (x2)
- Visit to the Holy Family Children's Home, Bethlehem
- Interview/meeting with Shelter Director
- Interview with Mehwar Lawyer
- Mehwar work plan meeting with Mehwar Director, Differenza Donna and UN Women
- Interview with Mehwar Centre nursery staff
- Interview with Mehwar Centre Social Counsellor
- Attended Mehwar Shelter Staff case meeting
- Assimilation and analysis of interviews conducted by this point for inception report
- Production of inception report
- Revisions to inception report
- Meeting with Amer Madi and UN Women
- UN Women internal meeting to discuss evaluation of Mehwar Policies and Procedures and key aspect of family work
- UN Women meeting and presentation of initial evaluation findings to Majida Al-Masri (Minister of Social Affairs) and Maysoon Ramadan (Mehwar Centre Director), in attendance of Alia El Yassir (Head of the UN Women office in the oPt), Dr. Kawther Moghrabi (MoSA, Director General for Family and Child Protection), Fabrizia Falcione (Project Manager, UN Women office in the oPt), Elena Gentili (Technical Advisor, UN Women office in the oPt), Amer Madi (National Advisory Evaluation Consultant) and Kholoud Abed Al Khalek (Legal Advisor, MoSA)
- Meeting with Mehwar, MoSA, Palestinian Civil Police and Ministry of Interior, Differenza Donna and UN Women intended to discuss draft Mehwar and MoI risk assessment and identification tools, as well as activities for sheltered women at Mehwar (due to the fact that MoI was not able to attend the meeting, discussions were limited to overview of risk assessment processes)
- Workshop with Mehwar Staff on the initial findings of the Evaluation of Mehwar's Policies and Procedures and to gather further qualitative data for the evaluation
- Mehwar Staff Interview: Outreach Responsible
- Mehwar Staff interview: Social Counsellor

- Mehwar Staff Interview: Accountant
- Interview with Bethlehem Governor, Abed El-Fatah Hamayel
- Emergency Case Conference at Mehwar
- Interview with woman previously sheltered at Mehwar
- Meeting about emergency case intervention, staff support
- Interview with woman previously sheltered at Mehwar
- Interview with Mehwar Intern
- Case and staff support meeting with Technical Assistance provider Differenza Donna
- Case management systems discussion and demonstration given by UN Women Evaluation Consultant to UN Women Project Team
- Interview/support session with Mehwar Director
- Case Management systems discussion and demonstration given by UN Women Evaluation Consultant to Mehwar Centre Director
- Interview with Dr. Kawther Moghrabi, MoSA, Director General for Family and Child Protection
- Interview with Maha Abu-Dayyeh, General Director of WCLAC
- Submission of Shelter data for 2009/2010 in Arabic
- Submission of Legal case data for 2007 – 2010 in Arabic
- Submission of financial data reports
- Staff interview with Mehwar Security Guard
- Staff Interview with Mehwar Driver
- Staff interview with Mehwar Social Worker
- Interview with SAWA, All the Women Together Today and Tomorrow (scheduled but did not occur)

This is not to be intended as an exhaustive list. Additional administrative duties (e.g. ongoing literature review, email communications etc) and tasks have also been undertaken throughout the evaluation period.





APPENDIX 3

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APPENDIX 4

Interview Format with Mehwar Stakeholders

Evaluator's Guidance/Intro script:

Firstly, thank you very much for your time today. As you know, I am currently in the process of evaluating the policies and procedures of the Mehwar Centre. As part of this process, it is very important to speak to key **contacts/stakeholders/donors** of the Mehwar Centre and, of course, this includes yourself – **INSERT NAME**- in your role at **INSERT ORGANISATION**.

This interview will be semi-structured and by this I mean, I would like to be able to ask you a series of ready prepared questions (which will be asked of all key contacts) that seek to find out information that is relevant to the evaluation of Mehwar's current policies and procedures. In addition, to the standard/formulated questions there will also be an open session at the end of this interview where we can follow up on some of the points you have raised that may be specific to your organisation's role and you will also have the opportunity to share with me any additional information that you feel is relevant to this evaluation.

This interview should take approximately 1 hour (possibly longer if you have more information you would like to share).

So, if it is ok with you can we please begin?

Name:	
Job title:	
Organisation:	
Email:	
Telephone:	

1. Please can you describe in your own words your role and your professional relationship to the Mehwar Centre?
2. A) How long have you personally had this relationship with the Mehwar Centre?
B) And, how long has your organisation been involved in the work of the Mehwar Centre?
3. How much contact do you currently have with the Mehwar centre? (Approximation is fine).

Daily	
Weekly	
Monthly	
Yearly	



4. Would you describe your contact as being in relation to: (select all that apply).

Operational matters e.g. case work, referrals	
Maintenance issues	
Rehabilitation	
Learning and development for the beneficiaries	
Technical support on VAW	
Strategic issues	
Partnership matters	
Legal support	
Monitoring and evaluation	
Financial / Donor matters	

5. Have you read and are you familiar with the Mehwar Centre's current policies and procedures and what they cover?

Yes	
No	
Don't Know	

A) If yes – what do you think they cover?

If no – why not?

B) If you are unsure, why do you think that is?

6. In summary, the current policies and procedures cover the following:

- *Defining the Centre – vision, objectives, etc*
- *The Protection and Counselling Department*
- *Social Services Department*
- *Professional ethics of the Centre's work team*
 - *Clarity of the roles and responsibilities of the work team*
 - *Supervision and provision of support for the work team*
 - *Policy for volunteers*
 - *Policy for evaluation*
- *The Centre's Organisational Structure and Work Team*
- *Forms: Agreement with the resident of the Shelter*
 - *Release from the Shelter*
 - *Agreement to information sharing*
 - *The main file (social, legal, psychological and health)*
 - *Registering phone calls*
 - *Reporting sessions*
- *Appendices*
 - *Evaluating danger*
 - *An introductory bulletin about the shelter*
 - *Legal and social report*

Do you think this is a comprehensive list?

Yes	
No	
Don't know	

7. A) If yes –why?

B) If no? Why is it not? What is missing in your opinion?

8. A) Would you describe the current policies and procedures of Mehwar as:

Excellent	
Good	
Ok	
Poor	
Very weak	

B) Please give a short explanation for your view:

9. What do you think the successes of the implementation of the policies and procedures of the Mehwar Centre have been? [open text]

10. Please specify whether in your opinion the policies and procedures have:

	Agree and why	Disagree and why	Don't know and why
Helped abused women be protected from violence a abuse			
Helped abused girls be protected from violence			
Helped the children of abused women			
Improved abused women and girls self esteem and helped them to recover from their experiences			
Enabled abused women and girls to learn new skills and be able to live independent lives			
Helped families to understand that violence against women is not acceptable			
Helped abusive men to realise that violence is not acceptable			



Helped the local Palestinian community (e.g. close to Mehwar, such as Beit Sahour, Bethlehem, Beit Jalla) to recognise that violence against women is an issue in their community			
Helped the wider Palestinian community/society (beyond immediate local vicinity) to understand that violence against women is not acceptable			
Helped more professionals (e.g. police, social workers, health workers, lawyers, judges etc) to realise that it is important to work to stop violence against women			

11. Are you aware of any gaps in the current policies and procedures of the Mehwar centre?

Yes	
No	
Don't know	

12. A) If yes, please can you specify what you think the gaps are and
 B) how they could be addressed?
 C) If no, please can you say why you feel the current policies and procedures are so comprehensive?

13. What challenges have you experienced in working with Mehwar's policies and procedures, if any?

No challenges experienced	
Yes, I have experienced the following challenges:	

Were you able to overcome these challenges?

Yes – by...	
No	

14. The evaluator has identified the following as some gaps or areas which require further development in the current policies and procedures (at this point in the process). Please say for each if you agree/disagree these gaps should be addressed:

	Agree	Disagree	Don't know	Additional comments
Referral policy				
Staff roster and rotation				
Media policy				
Policy and system for case work management				
Risk assessment identification				
Partnership working/interventions specifically for high risk cases				
Clinical psychological support for beneficiaries				
Clinical supervision of staff (Social Workers and Social Counsellors, Shelter Director and Director)				
Supervision of staff				
Data collection system and monitoring system				
Policy for staff care, self care to avoid burn-out				
Training and development for beneficiaries				
Training and development for Mehwar Staff				
Outreach programme strategy and procedures				
IT and data policy				
Financial policies and procedures				
Governance policies and procedures and review mechanism				
Management Team support structures and procedures				
Complaints procedures (beneficiaries to staff)				
Complaints procedures (external to staff)				
Complaints procedures (staff to staff)				
Building maintenance				
Security				
Cleaning				
Mehwar Training programme development				
Event hosting policies and procedures				
First Aid/Medical emergency				
Volunteers and internship				
Staff recruitment and retention				
Visitors/reception				



15. Can you identify any other areas which need to be addressed which will also help Mehwar’s compliance to human rights standards?

No	
Yes, please specify	

16. A) Do you think that there should be minimum standards for the operation of shelters in Palestine?

Yes	
No	
Don’t know	

B) If yes, why and what do you think they should cover?

C) If no, why don’t you think there should be standards?

Open section

In your role as.....at..... please would you like to make any further or specific comments on:

A) the Mehwar Centre and B) its policies and procedures or C) this evaluation?

- A)
- B)
- C)

For example, are there any specific aspects of the policies and procedures you would like to:

- A) Praise?
- B) Critically analyse?
- C) Offer suggestions/solutions for improvement?

Do you intend to maintain your relationship with the Mehwar Centre in the next 12 months?

Yes	
No	
Don’t know	

If yes, please can you describe how you intend to work with the Mehwar Centre?

Do you think there are any additional ways in which you could support the Mehwar Centre in its work, during the next 12 months?

For example:

	Yes	No	Don't know
Sharing useful contacts			
Providing referrals			
Working together on projects to support women at Mehwar			
Working together on family support work projects at Mehwar			
Working together on children's support work projects at Mehwar			
Financial support			
Linking to potential donors			
Training provider			
Retraining opportunities/recreational activities for women			
Community awareness raising activities/campaigns			
Peer support to management team			
Other – please specify			

Thank you very much for taking the time to speak to me to today.

Your views will be taken into consideration as part of the evaluation of Mehwar's policies and procedures and their review.

Please indicate if you would like to receive a copy of the draft and final reports by email, when available?

Yes, email address (draft and final)	
Yes email address final only	
No, I would prefer not to receive the report	





APPENDIX 5

Interview Format with Mehwar Staff

Evaluator’s Guidance/Intro script:

Firstly, thank you very much for your time today. As you know, I am currently in the process of evaluating the policies and procedures of the Mehwar Centre. As part of this process, it is very important to speak to key **staff and key contacts** of the Mehwar Centre and, of course, this includes yourself – **INSERT NAME**- in your role at **INSERT ORGANISATION**.

This interview will be semi-structured and by this I mean, I would like to be able to ask you a series of ready prepared questions (which will be asked of all key contacts) that seek to find out information that is relevant to the evaluation of Mehwar’s current policies and procedures. You will also be asked some questions which relate to your role here at Mehwar. In addition, to the standard/formulated questions there will also be an open session at the end of this interview where we can follow up on some of the points you have raised and you will also have the opportunity to share with me any additional information that you feel is relevant to this evaluation.

This interview should take approximately 1 hour (possibly longer if you have more information you would like to share)

So, if it is ok with you can we please begin?

Name:	
Job title:	
Organisation:	MEHWAR
Email:	
Telephone:	

1. Please can you briefly describe in your own words your role and your professional relationship at the Mehwar Centre?
2. In your own view what areas of Mehwar’s work are you involved in: (please select all that apply).

Operational matters e.g. case work, referrals	
Maintenance issues	
Rehabilitation	
Learning and development for the beneficiaries	
Outreach	
Technical support on VAW	
Strategic issues	
Partnership matters	



Legal support	
Monitoring and evaluation	
Financial / Donor matters	
Management of Centre	
Management of staff	

3. Have you read / are you familiar with the Mehwar Centre's current policies and procedures and what they cover?

Yes	
No	
Don't Know	

- A) If yes – what do you think they cover?
- B) If no – why not?
- C) If you are unsure, why do you think that is?

4. Do you refer to/use the policies and procedures when doing your job?

Yes	
No	

If you answered 'yes', how often do you think you refer to them:

Daily	
Weekly	
Monthly	
Yearly	
N/A	

5. As you would probably expect the current policies and procedures cover some of the key aspects of the Mehwar Centre's operational/service aspects. In summary, the current policies and procedures cover the following:

- *Defining the Centre – vision, objectives, etc*
- *The Protection and Counselling Department*
- *Social Services Department*
- *Professional ethics of the Centre's work team*
Clarity of the roles and responsibilities of the work team
Supervision and provision of support for the work team
Policy for volunteers
Policy for evaluation
- *The Centre's Organisational Structure and Work Team*
- *Forms: Agreement with the resident of the Shelter*
Release from the Shelter
Agreement to information sharing
The main file (social, legal, psychological and health)

Registering phone calls

Reporting sessions

- *Appendices*

Evaluating danger

An introductory bulletin about the shelter

Legal and social report

Do you think this is a comprehensive list?

Yes	
No	
Don't know	

6. A) If yes –why?

B) If no? Why is it not? What is missing in your opinion?

7. A) Would you describe the current policies and procedures of Mehwar as:

Excellent	
Good	
Ok	
Poor	
Very weak	

B) Please give a short explanation for your view:

8. What do you think the successes of the implementation of the policies and procedures of the Mehwar Centre have been? [open text]

9. Please specify whether in your opinion the policies and procedures have:

	Agree and why	Disagree- and why	Don't know and why
Helped abused women be protected from violence a abuse			
Helped abused girls be protected from violence			
Helped the children of abused women			
Improved abused women and girls self esteem and helped them to recover from their experiences			
Enabled abused women and girls to learn new skills and be able to live independent lives			
Helped families to understand that violence against women is not acceptable			
Helped abusive men to realise that violence is not acceptable			
Helped the local Palestinian community (e.g. close to Mehwar, such as Beit Sahour, Bethlehem, Beit Jalla) to recognise that violence against women is an issue in their community			



Helped the wider Palestinian community/society (beyond immediate local vicinity) to understand that violence against women is not acceptable			
Helped more professionals (e.g. police, social workers, health workers, lawyers, judges, etc) to realise that it is important to work to stop violence against women			

10. Are you aware of any gaps in the current policies and procedures of the Mehwar centre?

Yes	
No	
Don't know	

11. A) If yes, please can you specify what you think the gaps are and
 B) how they could be addressed?
 C) If you answered 'no', please can you say why you feel the current policies and procedures are so comprehensive?

12. What challenges have you experienced in working with Mehwar's policies and procedures, if any?

No challenges experienced	
Yes, I have experienced the following challenges:	

Were you able to overcome these challenges?

Yes – by...	
No	

13. The evaluator has identified the following as some gaps or areas which require further development in the current policies and procedures (at this point in the process). Please say for each if you agree/disagree these gaps should be addressed:

	Agree	Disagree	Don't know	Additional comments
Referral policy				
Staff roster and rotation				
Media policy				
Policy and system for case work management				
Risk assessment identification				
Partnership working/interventions specifically for high risk cases				
Clinical psychological support for beneficiaries				
Clinical supervision of staff (Social Workers and Social Counsellors, Shelter Director and Director)				
Supervision of staff				

Data collection system and monitoring system				
Policy for staff care, self care to avoid burnout				
Training and development for beneficiaries				
Training and development for Mehwar Staff				
Outreach programme strategy and procedures				
IT and data policy				
Financial policies and procedures				
Governance policies and procedures and review mechanism				
Management Team support structures and procedures				
Complaints procedures (beneficiaries to staff)				
Complaints procedures (external to staff)				
Complaints procedures (staff to staff)				
Building maintenance				
Security				
Cleaning				
Mehwar Training programme development				
Event hosting policies and procedures				
First Aid/Medical emergency				
Volunteers and internship				
Staff recruitment and retention				
Visitors/reception				

14. Please can you identify any other areas which need to be addressed which will also help Mehwar’s compliance to human rights standards?

No	
Yes, please specify	

15. Do you think that there should be minimum standards for the operation of shelters in Palestine?

Yes	
No	
Don’t know	

16. A) If yes, why and what do you think they should cover?
 B) If no, why don’t you think there should be standards?

Open Section

Would you like to make any further or specific comments on A) the Mehwar Centre and B) its policies and procedures or C) this evaluation?

- A)
- B)
- C)



For example, are there any specific aspects you would like to

A) praise?

B) critically analyse?

C) offer solutions/suggestions for improvement?

END: Thank you very much for taking the time to speak to me to today.

Your views will be taken into consideration as part of the evaluation of Mehwar's policies and procedures and their review.

Please indicate if you would like to receive a copy of the draft and final reports by email, when available?

Yes, email address (draft and final)	
Yes email address final only	
No, I would prefer not to receive the report	

APPENDIX 6

Interview Format For Current And Former Mehwar Beneficiaries

Evaluator’s Introduction:

- Thank you for coming today
 - Introduce myself and my role at UN Women and to Mehwar
 - Purpose of the interview and evaluation process
 - Confidentiality – Identity not revealed
 - Details you give will be to inform the evaluation process not for any personal purpose
1. I appreciate that it is difficult to tell a stranger about these matters, so if you want to stop at any time or ask me any questions, then please feel free to do so. How long did you stay at Mehwar?

1 month or less	
1 - 3 months	
3 - 6 months	
6 - 12 months	
12 months - 2 years	
2 years plus	

2. During what time period was this?
3. What was the reason you went to Mehwar? (Briefly, just the reason, you do not need to give me all your details/your story unless you want to tell me. For example, family problem, etc).
4. How old were you when you went to Mehwar?
5. How old were you when you left Mehwar?
6. Did you have any children at this point? If so, were they also sheltered at Mehwar?
7. Who brought you to Mehwar? Which agency e.g. police, social affairs, etc? Or did you bring yourself?
8. What did they tell you about Mehwar before you arrived?
9. Did what they say match with how Mehwar really was for you?
10. What did Mehwar do that helped you?

(If need guidance prompt using this checklist)

Counselling	
Empowerment	
Understanding and making sense of what happened to you	
Safety and protection	
Education/learning opportunities	
Job/Employment opportunities	
Help finding a new place to live after Mehwar	

Why was this helpful?



11. MEHWAR CENTRE – QUESTIONS FOR PREVIOUSLY SHELTERED WOMEN

How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the following aspects of the Mehwar Centre’s service?

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Don't know / doesn't apply	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Concern for your safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concern for your children’s safety & wellbeing, if applicable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acted professionally	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consideration of your individual needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Knowledgeable about violence and abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Knowledgeable about their services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Knowledgeable about the services of other agencies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Able to offer you the services you needed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Able to refer you to another appropriate service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Efficiency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Timely (service when you needed it)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keep/kept you regularly informed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Discrete and confidential	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helpfulness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friendliness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice consistent with other organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

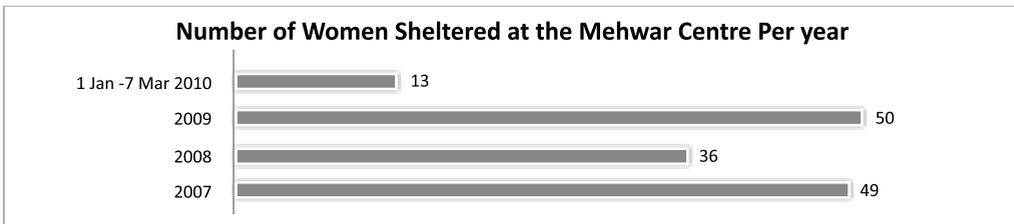
12. Did Mehwar do anything that did not help you/ was difficult for you? Why was that?
13. If you could give people in power/decision makers one message about Mehwar what would it be?
14. If you could give the staff at Mehwar one message what would it be?
15. A) Have you received follow-up care from Mehwar?
B) If so what form does this follow-up take?
C) And how often does this follow-up happen?
16. Is this enough contact for you (too much, about right, not enough)?
17. Is there anything more that you need from Mehwar? Yes/no? what?
18. Is there more that you need from other organisations e.g. governmental, NGO, etc? Yes/no? What?
19. What does safety mean to you now?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS PROCESS. YOUR VIEWS WILL ASSIST IN THE EVALUATION OF MEHWAR'S CURRENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.

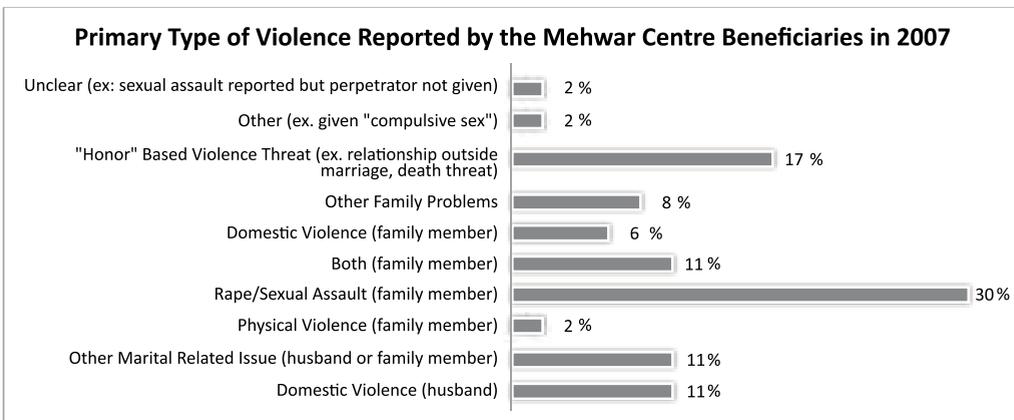


APPENDIX 7

Mehwar Centre Data Charts

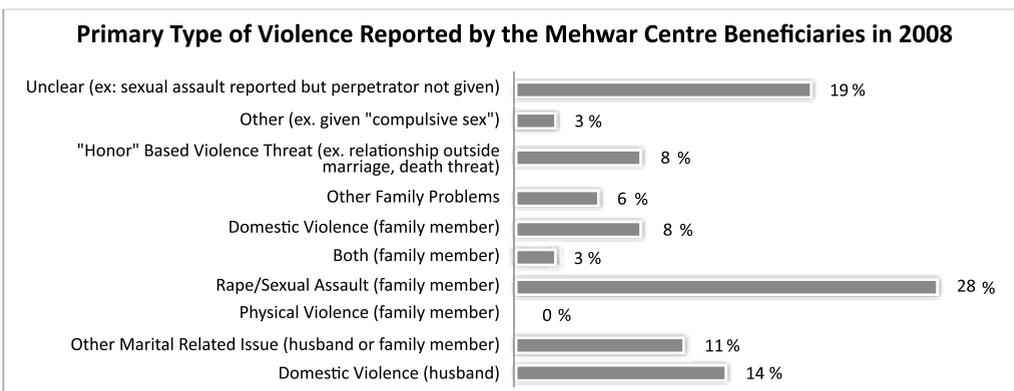


The total number of women beneficiaries sheltered at the Mehwar Centre from its opening in February 2007 until 7 March 2010 was 148. There was no meaningful data available on women's average length of stay, however this data should be collected as an indicator for ongoing monitoring and evaluation and staff tracking as part of effective case management in helping the Mehwar Centre attune to beneficiaries' needs at various points during their stay at Mehwar.



49 total cases represented.

Adapted from source data from the Mehwar Centre's 2007 Annual Report.

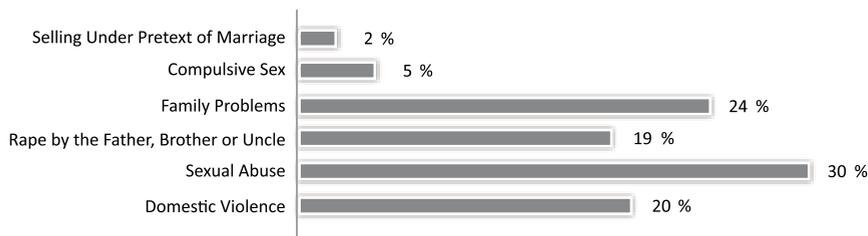


36 total cases represented.

Note: The 'other' category includes 4 cases coded as sexual violence and 2 as physical violence, but with no perpetrator relationship given.

Adapted from combined source data from the 2008 Mehwar Annual Report and internal reports.

Primary Type of Violence Reported by the Mehwar Centre Beneficiaries in 2008 Data from the 2008 Mehwar Centre Annual Report (2007-2008)

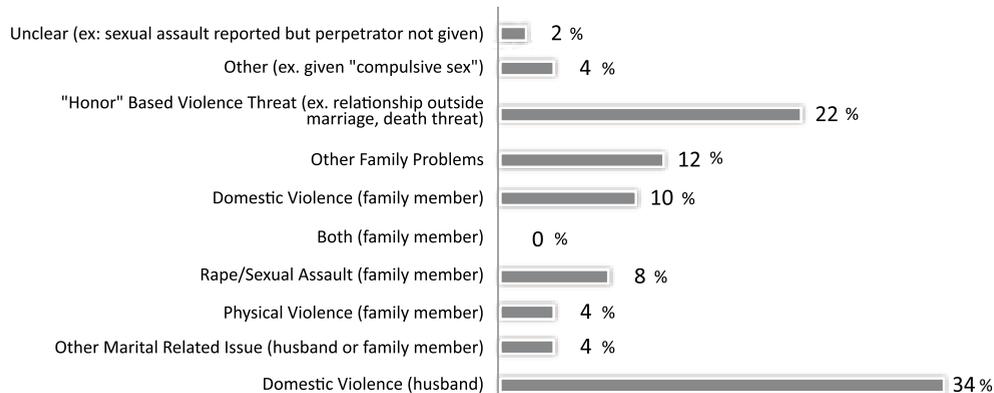


Note: 2008 cases sheltered at Mehwar according to the categories provided by Mehwar in the Centre's 2008 Annual Report for comparison.

Type of Violence	Number of Cases
Domestic Violence	17
Sexual Abuse	26
Rape by the Father, Brother or Uncle	16
Family Problems	21
Compulsive Sex	4
Selling Under Pretext of Marriage	2

Sample size = 86 cases of women hosted in the shelter during 2007 and 2008.

Primary Type of Violence Reported by the Mehwar Centre Beneficiaries in 2009

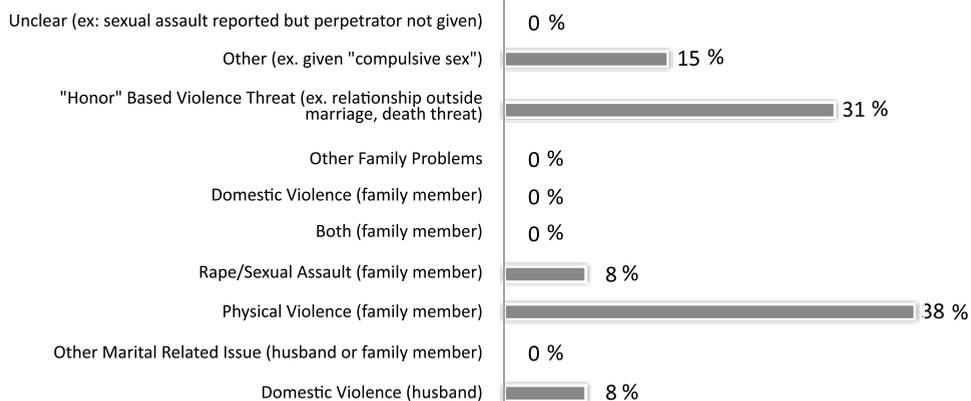


50 total cases represented.

Adapted from source data from the Mehwar Centre's 2009 Annual Report.



Primary Type of Violence Reported by the Mehwar Centre Beneficiaries in 2010

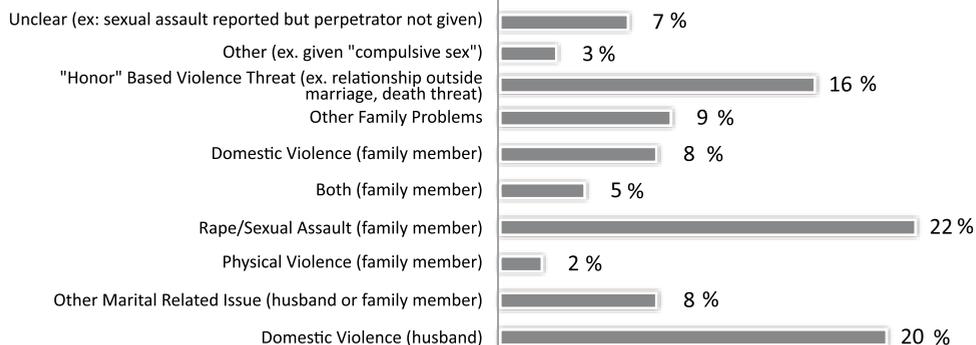


13 total cases represented.

Adapted from source data from internal Mehwar documentation, 2010.

Note: At the time of the evaluation, 2010 data was only available for the period between 1 January and 7 March 2010.

Data Combination of the Primary Type of Violence Reported by the Mehwar Centre Beneficiaries (2007-2009)

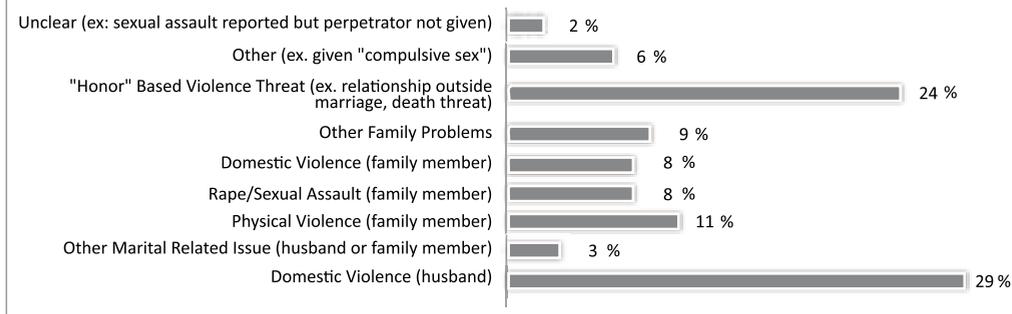


Sample size =135 for period of 2007 - 20 December 2009.

Total obtained by adding up types of cases.

Note: a high proportion of Mehwar's beneficiaries experienced more than one form of abuse, however this data represents the primary form of abuse as recorded by Mehwar staff. Thus, the chart above represents an overall picture that does not capture beneficiaries' multiple experiences of violence, abuse and exploitation. Also, in some cases it was unclear who the perpetrator or primary perpetrator of the violence/abuse was and in these cases, the term 'unclear' has been used.

Types of Cases Sheltered at Mehwar as of 7 March 2010



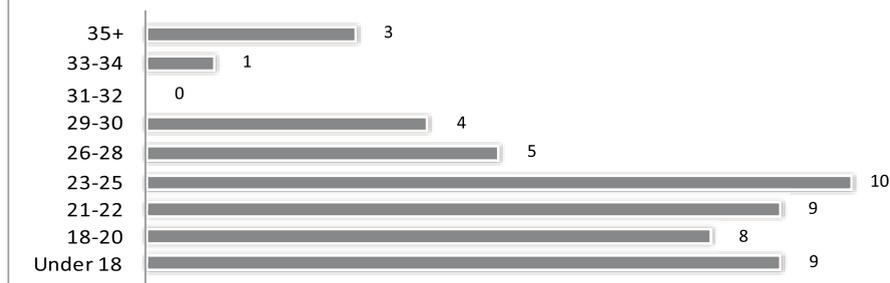
148 cases represented.

Total obtained by adding up types of cases.

Observation: It is clear from the tables above that women accessing Mehwar are not exclusively victims of domestic violence, in fact women have often experienced multiple forms of violence and abuse and often from a range of perpetrators.

The chart above represents the primary source of violence as recorded by Mehwar staff, but does not reflect the high proportion of women and girls' multiple experiences of violence, abuse and exploitation.

Age of the Mehwar Centre Beneficiaries in 2007

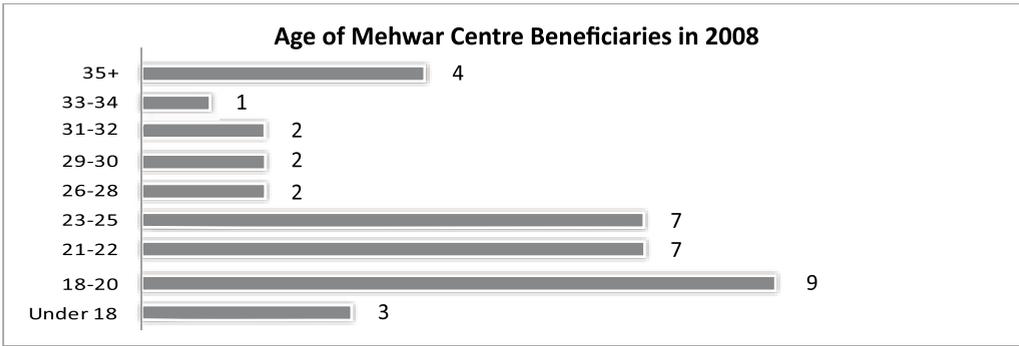


Sources: Mehwar 2007 and 2008 Annual Reports.

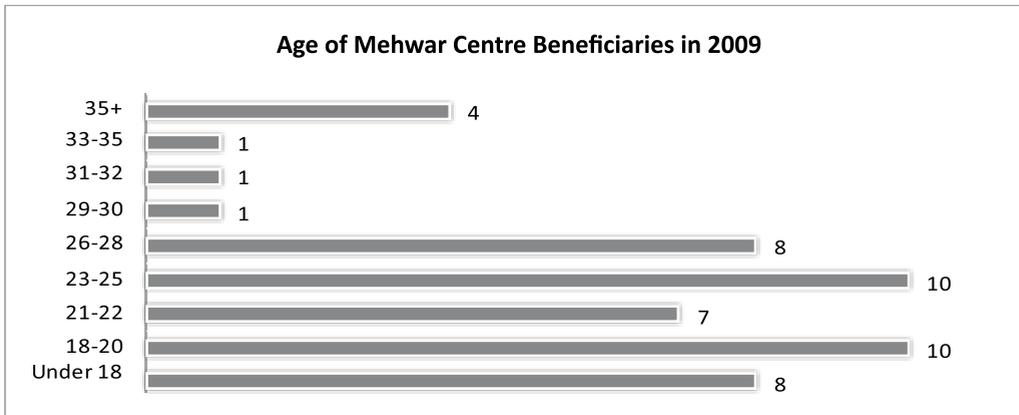
Note: In this time period it would seem that there are several (approx. 11) cases where women were noted as having differing ages. Sometimes by as much as up to a decade's difference. So these figures should be read with this in mind, as this could skew the data set. For these 11 cases a decision was taken to include the figure which was originally recorded in the 2007 Annual Report. These discrepancies highlight the need for more accurate information gathering and consistent recording on a case management system by Mehwar staff.

The average age of women sheltered at Mehwar during 2007 was 23 years of age. As can be seen above, a high proportion of Mehwar's sheltered beneficiaries in 2007 were under 30 years old, and most were under 25. It is of concern that eight of the 49 women/girls sheltered at Mehwar in 2007 were under the age of 18, particularly given the severity and often multiple forms of abuse that these women/girls have experienced. The youngest woman sheltered during this period was 14 years old and the oldest was 37 years old.



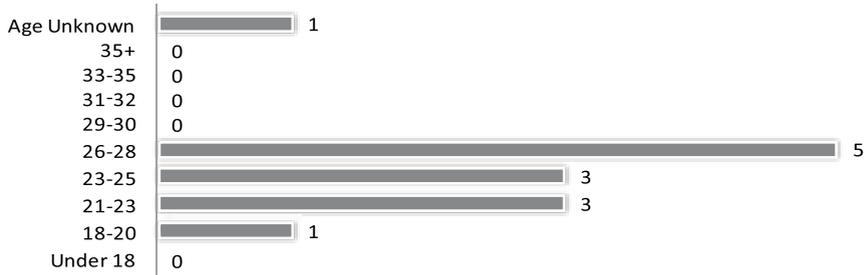


The average age of women sheltered at Mehwar during 2008 was 25 years of age. However, as can be seen above, this is somewhat misleading and in actual fact the largest age range category was for 18-20-year-olds (nine out of 37 women/girls sheltered at Mehwar that year fall into this age bracket). The youngest woman sheltered at Mehwar during 2008 was 14 years of age. The oldest woman hosted in the shelter that year was 40 years of age.



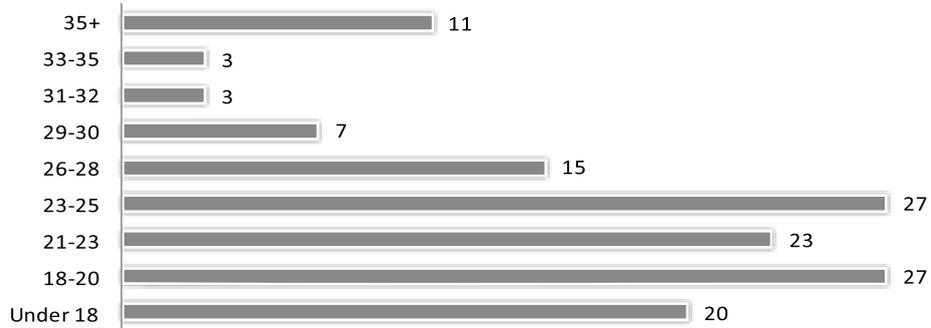
The average age of women sheltered in Mehwar during 2009 was 23 years of age. However, as can be seen above, an equally large category of women fell into the 18-20-year-old category in keeping with previous trends for young women accessing shelter at Mehwar. The youngest woman sheltered at Mehwar during 2009 was 14 years of age, although during this year there were also several other girls around that age group (15-16-year-olds rather than 17-year-olds needing assistance). It is recommended that this be monitored to see if it becomes a future trend with the age of girls accessing Mehwar and needing shelter getting younger and younger. The oldest woman hosted in the shelter that year was 39 years of age.

Age of the Mehwar Centre Beneficiaries During the Period 1 Jan 2010 - 7 Mar 2010



The average age of women (based upon the 12 women with reported ages) sheltered in Mehwar during 1 Jan 2010 – 7 March 2010 was 24 years of age. Of the 13 women who stayed at Mehwar, ages were only recorded for 12 women, as one woman’s age was not recorded before she ‘escaped’ from the Centre. As can be seen above, all 12 women were between the ages of 18-25. There were no women over the age of 28 or under the age of 18 sheltered during this period. The youngest woman sheltered during this period was 19 years old and the oldest was 28 years of age.

Combined Age Group Figures of the Mehwar Centre Beneficiaries for 2007-2009



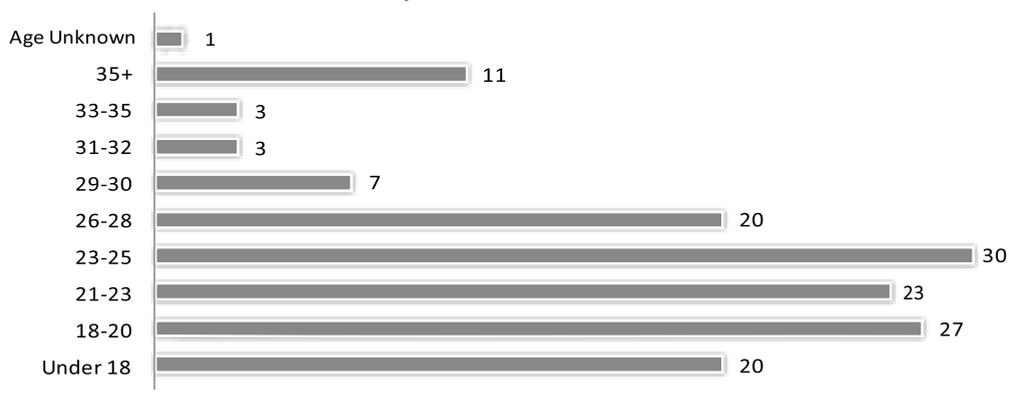
Figures were added together for each age group across years to give totals for women in each age bracket for 2007, 2008, 2009.

As can be seen above, the most common age groups during this time period were 18-20 years of age and 23-25 years of age.

The youngest girl to stay at Mehwar during this time frame was 14 years old and the oldest was 40 years old.

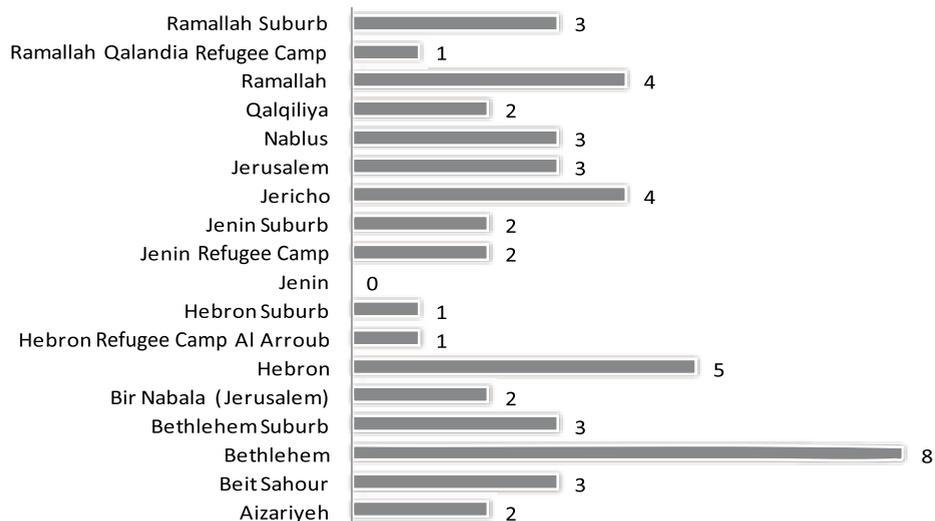


Combined Age Group Figures of the Mehwar Centre Beneficiaries Since its Opening in February 2007 until 7 March 2010.



Figures were added together for each age group across years to give totals for women in each age bracket.

Locations Where the Mehwar Centre Beneficiaries Reported to Come From in 2007



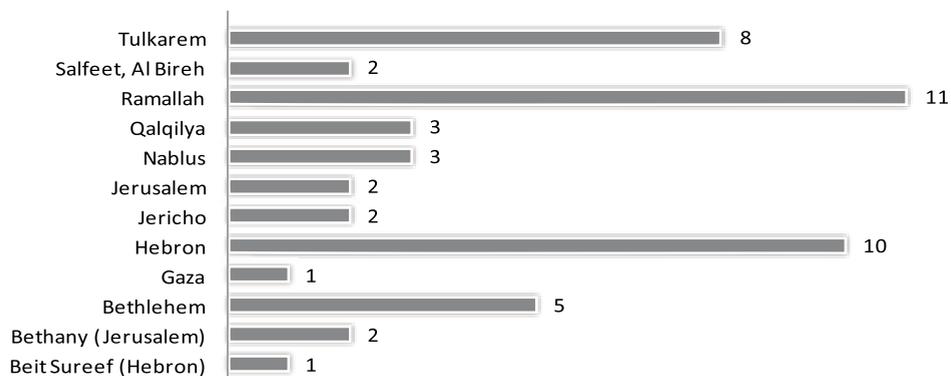
As can be seen from the chart above (sample size: 49 women) it appears that in the first full year of the shelter being operational, the highest number of women came from the surrounding area of Bethlehem (eight, or if including Bethlehem's suburbs and Beit Sahour, 14). We can speculate that perhaps this is because in its first year of operation word of mouth spread locally to women in need of assistance about the Mehwar shelter and centre's existence. The next highest number of women came from Hebron (five, or if we add its suburbs and refugee camps, seven) and Ramallah (four, or with its surrounding areas and refugee camps, eight).

Locations Where the Mehwar Centre Beneficiaries Reported to Come From in 2008



As can be seen from the chart above (sample size: 37 women) it appears that in the second full year of the shelter being operational, the highest number of women came from Ramallah (9), closely followed by Bethlehem (8) and the surrounding area of Bethlehem (8). It is interesting to note that the following locations had not featured in the previous years: Beit Jalla, Jenin, Tubas and Tulkarem. We can speculate, therefore, that there is growing awareness across the West Bank of Mehwar's existence, perhaps as a result of awareness raising activities or word of mouth. It is possible that less detailed locations of where women were from were given in this year's figures. Based on the information supplied, it does not appear that women from refugee camps accessed the Mehwar Centre shelter during 2008.

Locations Where the Mehwar Centre Beneficiaries Reported to Come From in 2009



As can be seen from the chart above (sample size: 50 women) it appears that in the third year of the shelter being operational (data covers period 1 Jan 2009-20 Dec 2009) that the highest number of women came from Ramallah (11), closely followed by Hebron (10) and with Tulkarem not far behind (8). This shows some slight variation from the previous years. It is interesting to note that the Mehwar Centre was able to give shelter to a woman from Gaza in 2009 when she needed it. It is also interesting to note the relative decline in numbers of women from the Bethlehem area and lack of women from Jenin accessing the Centre in this year. Based on the information supplied, it does not appear that women from refugee camps accessed the Mehwar Centre shelter during 2009.



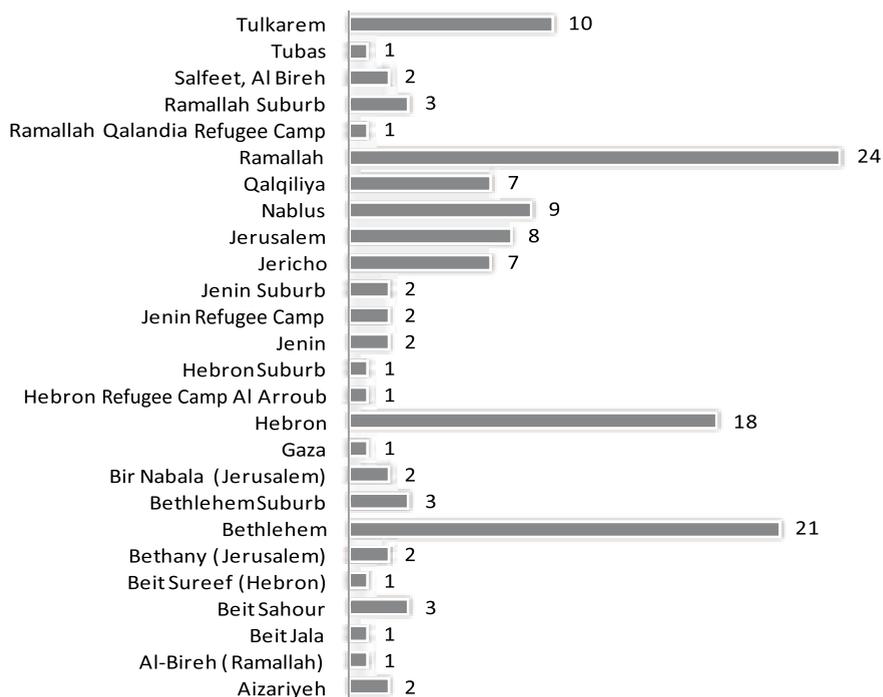
Governorates Where the Mehwar Centre Beneficiaries Reported to Come From During the Period 1 Jan 2010 – 7 Mar 2010



Note: The data for 2010 was incomplete at the time of the evaluation and was only available for 1 Jan - 7 March 2010. It was also not possible to compare this years data using towns, cities and villages, as this information was incomplete for 4 out of the 13 women. However, information had been recorded for all 13 women on which Governorates they came from, so it was decided to chart this information to give a snapshot of the situation at the beginning of 2010. Because of this difference in the type of location recorded, it was not possible to draw any meaningful conclusions or trends for 2010.

As can be seen from the chart above (sample size: 13 women) it appears that at the beginning of the Shelter's fourth year operation, the highest number of women came from the Hebron Governorate (5), with a relatively even spread across the other recorded governorates. It is interesting to note that no women accessed the Shelter from Tubas, Qalqilya, Salfeet, Ramallah and Al-Bireh, Jericho or Jerusalem Governorates during this time period, although clearly this may change over the remainder of 2010. No women were reported as being from Gaza Governorates.

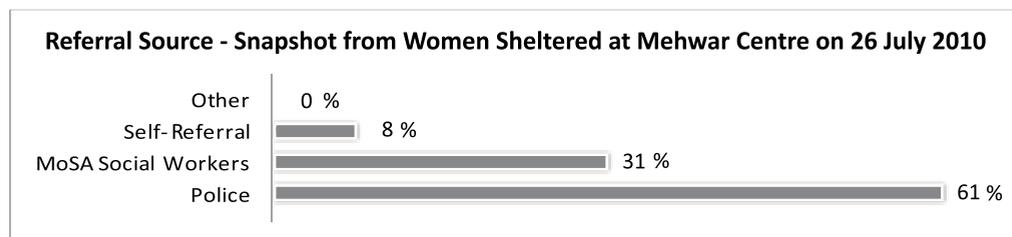
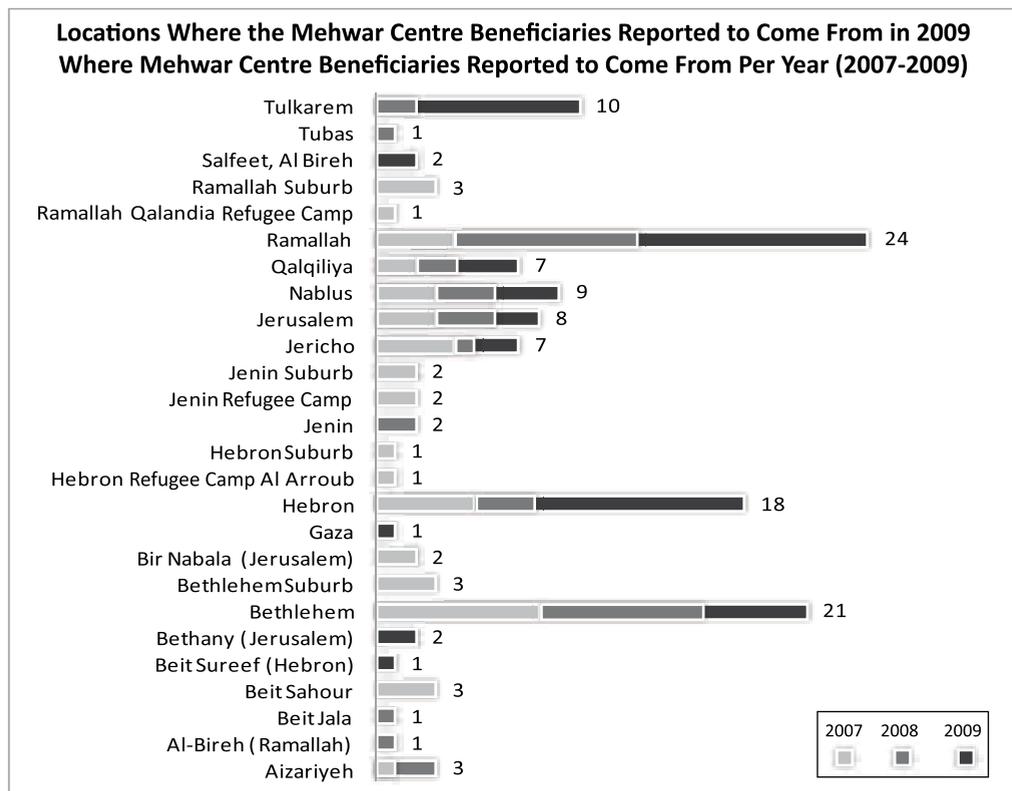
Data Combination of the Places Where the Mehwar Centre Beneficiaries Reported to Come From (2007- 2009)



Trends: The number of Mehwar beneficiaries hailing from Bethlehem and Jericho decreased over the time period, while the number of beneficiaries from Nablus and Qalqilya remained stable and and from Ramallah and Tulkarem grew.

During this three-year time period, a high proportion of beneficiaries sheltered at Mehwar came from Ramallah and its surrounding areas (21%), Bethlehem and its surrounding areas (21%, including Beit Jalla and Beit Sahour) and Hebron and its surrounding areas (15%). Tulkarem featured heavily in 2009 data, representing seven percent of the overall number of beneficiaries, and it may be that increasing numbers of women will continue to access Mehwar's Shelter from Tulkarem in the future.

Clearly this is a snapshot and requires ongoing monitoring and analysis, both internally at Mehwar and with key partners such as UN Women, MoSA and possible referral agencies. It is important that Mehwar staff accurately record where women say they are from to assist in knowing where gaps may be for raising awareness of violence against women, and also for noticing where there are areas of high numbers where more work may be needed with local partners and other support agencies and institutions to address violence against women.



Source: 13 women sheltered at Mehwar on 26 July 2010.



APPENDIX 8

Summary of Key Findings and Recommendations

Priority Area	Standards / Benchmarks	Requirements
Centre Governance	A fair, clear and effective governance structure of the Mehwar Centre in accordance with the Centre's objective as a specialised anti-violence centre to keep women and children victims of violence safe.	Written by-laws (including Centre's mission, vision, target group, guiding principles, governance structure and mechanisms) that demonstrate and detail a clear commitment to supporting all women and children victims of violence. Effective and strong institutional leadership and organisational support structures and mechanisms in place. Transparency and regular reporting mechanisms between Mehwar's governing body and the Mehwar team. Effective and transparent financial policies, procedures and reporting mechanisms. Commitment to and demonstrable mechanisms for regular partnership working with women's organisations and other partners.
Management, Administration and Communications	Clear, effective and fair management of the Mehwar Centre. Clear, effective and fair leadership for the Mehwar team (The Mehwar team is fairly represented and guided by the Mehwar management team). Minimum standards for the Mehwar Centre in place and adhered to. Clear and effective internal and external communication amongst Mehwar's management team members and all Mehwar staff teams built on principles of confidentiality. Positive profile in local and national media that does not jeopardise the safety of women and children at Mehwar.	Appropriate staffing levels and effectively managed staff rotation system. Trained temporary workers or volunteers available to fill in or provide support for Mehwar staff shifts as needed. Frequent and regular supervision of all staff by line managers. Clear, fair and consistent implementation of Mehwar policies and procedures by management. Staff assistance provided in the form of guidance and advice, as required. Effective supervision/support mechanisms in place and used regularly (at least once per month) for Mehwar's management team and Director. Regular (at least once per month) staff meetings held. Internal and external communications systems and policies exist, based on clearly defined principles for confidentiality. Development, implementation and monitoring of a Mehwar media policy that continues to foster and build positive relationships with media so they understand the purpose of Mehwar and are able to assist in challenging VAW in the oPt. Internal monitoring and reporting mechanisms ensure transparency, respect of human rights, adherence of staff performance to Mehwar's mission and vision, as well as comprehensive and fair documentation of Mehwar's work.
Case Management	Safe and effective case management that protects women from re-victimisation and abuse and which is woman-led and focuses on women's individual needs. Women victims of violence and abuse, and those requesting or in need of protection and support, are ensured access to the Mehwar Centre's services. Women's risk of re-victimisation is assessed, managed and mitigated (whenever possible) on an ongoing basis. Clear, accurate and secure case records are kept for all women and children at Mehwar. Fewer instances of repeated victimisation of women occur whilst at and after leaving the Mehwar Centre. Fewer murders and cases of serious harm to women occur whilst at and after leaving Mehwar.	Experienced and qualified staff who understand how to respond effectively and offer support to women and girls who are victims of violence and abuse. Regular and comprehensive case supervision of social workers by Mehwar's Shelter Responsible. Regular technical, gender-based supervision of social workers and other Mehwar staff (as necessary) who work with women and children victims of violence and abuse. Clear intake procedures facilitating women victims' immediate access to Mehwar Centre services in accordance with human rights standards. Intake procedures applied in all cases by Mehwar Centre staff. Shelter Responsible has management responsibility for ensuring that proper intake is embedded in practice and that compliance to the intake system is monitored. A standard risk assessment procedure and risk tool is used across Mehwar for all women. Risk is assessed, recorded and communicated internally (and externally as appropriate). Risk is monitored regularly, reassessed and actions taken to mitigate risks to women and children. Longer-term development of protocols and procedures for multi-agency risk assessment case conferences for high-risk cases.

Current Status of Mehwar's Policies, Procedures and Practices	Evaluation Recommendations
<p>A governance structure is not defined or in place.</p> <p>The undefined status of the Mehwar Centre impedes the staff's ability to properly implement many of the Centre's existing policies and procedures, as there is no clearly defined chain of accountability.</p>	<p>Form a Governance Action Group from Mehwar management, staff and project partners to carry out the tasks listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a customised governance structure and the mechanisms necessary for Mehwar to work in accordance with human rights standards. • Define official Mehwar Centre by-laws that include tailored governance, management and monitoring systems for the Centre. • Expand and more clearly outline the Centre's mission, vision and target group. • Seek relevant authorities' endorsement of the Mehwar Centre's new by-laws to officially define the Centre's legal status. • Develop and activate an external (independent), human rights-based monitoring system for the Mehwar Centre.
<p>Management systems are in place and partially responding to needs, but all require review. A staff rotation system is in place, however backup support is needed from trained temporary workers or volunteers at times. Currently no minimum standards are in place for the Mehwar Centre.</p> <p>Regular supervision is lacking for all staff, including Mehwar's management team, and support structures have yet to be identified and implemented for Mehwar's Director. Monitoring and reporting systems are mostly lacking. Staff meetings currently occur.</p> <p>Mehwar does have existing media relationships, but no media policies and procedures exist.</p>	<p>Review and develop the Mehwar Centre's management systems in line with its objectives and governance structure as defined in the Mehwar Centre's by-laws. Develop monitoring and reporting systems in line with professional and human rights standards.</p> <p>Build consistent and functional internal and external communications systems and policies based on clearly defined principles of confidentiality.</p> <p>Develop, adopt, implement and monitor minimum human rights-based standards for the Mehwar Centre.</p> <p>Develop and implement consistent policies and procedures for both technical and managerial supervision of Mehwar Centre staff.</p> <p>Outline a clear chain of accountability for Mehwar management and staff.</p> <p>Update the Mehwar Centre's staff organigram according to defined staff roles, responsibilities and chain of accountability, based on efficiency and professionalism.</p> <p>Define and implement policies and procedures outlining the Mehwar Centre's relationship with and use of media and public relations in line with the Mehwar Centre's mission and vision.</p>
<p>Mehwar staff demonstrate awareness of risk, but not formally applied to all cases according to standardised assessment criteria and procedures, and recorded on case files.</p> <p>No standard risk assessment tool currently in use and applied to all cases.</p> <p>No regular case supervision system currently in place, although case conference meetings have been held with varying results.</p> <p>Unclear intake procedures resulting in some cases being denied access to Mehwar protection and empowerment services.</p>	<p>Provide and require that all Mehwar staff take specialised training on standardised intake, risk and general case identification and assessment according to up-to-date knowledge and skills in line with international human rights standards.</p> <p>Develop and implement standardised intake procedures and standard case assessment tools to be used for all women sheltered at the Mehwar Centre.</p> <p>Ensure the regular and fair application of the standardised intake procedures by Mehwar staff.</p> <p>Ensure that the Shelter Responsible monitors the implementation and application of this standard case assessment tool through regular supervision meetings with Centre social workers.</p> <p>Revise the Centre's case management system for efficiency, effectiveness & security. Update, keep secure, and use case files on a consistent basis, with regular dip-sampling of case files by the Shelter Responsible and Mehwar Centre Director for oversight.</p> <p>Conduct regular technical supervision sessions with Mehwar's social workers and other staff working directly with the sheltered women, as required.</p> <p>Review and share experiences and lessons learned from incidents and cases at Mehwar team meetings for collective team learning and communicating risks with relevant Mehwar team members.</p> <p>Ensure that each Mehwar beneficiary be informed and involved in all details pertaining to her potential resettlement and reintegration, and that her opinions and decisions regarding her own safety and the suitability of her resettlement options be ultimately respected.</p> <p>Develop and implement case-monitoring mechanisms, including specific measures for follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of women and their situation after resettlement.</p>



Priority Area	Standards / Benchmarks	Requirements
Outreach	<p>Clear understanding of the Mehwar team that outreach is work done in the 'external' community, not inside the Mehwar Centre.</p> <p>Clear strategy and work plan for the Mehwar Centre's outreach, community engagement and partnership working.</p> <p>Clear and tailored role of the Mehwar Centre in terms of outreach vis-à-vis other organisations working to end violence against women.</p> <p>Increased acceptance and support from the community for women victims of violence, including during the reintegration phase (after sheltering periods).</p>	<p>Regular and positive Mehwar Centre engagement to raise awareness in the local community, while challenging the acceptability of VAW.</p> <p>The complementary roles of Mehwar and other organisations is established and acknowledged by the community (duplication of resources avoided).</p> <p>Increased positive partnership working with other women's and community organisations.</p> <p>Innovative practices and resources to support women victims' reintegration into society are identified, used and shared with partner institutions.</p>
Staffing	<p>Productive and qualified staff team able to support and advocate for the rights of women and children victims of violence and abuse at Mehwar.</p> <p>Staff able to fully represent and be held accountable for the Mehwar Centre's mission and vision.</p>	<p>Staff are not burnt out (low sickness and stress levels amongst staff team). Staff retention rate is good and in proportion with the type of work undertaken (e.g. a guide might be social workers staying in the post for one year to 18 months).</p> <p>High staff job satisfaction levels.</p> <p>Staff members receive regular re/training opportunities, as their roles require.</p> <p>All staff members can equally and properly represent the Mehwar Centre's mission and vision.</p> <p>Staff are held accountable for their work in line with a clear code of ethics and policy for confidentiality.</p>

Current Status of Mehwar's Policies, Procedures and Practices	Evaluation Recommendations
<p>Outreach is a gap within the current policies and procedures.</p> <p>Mehwar staff members have different understandings of the Mehwar Centre's role in terms of outreach.</p>	<p>Conduct an internal review and further development of the Mehwar Centre's outreach functions, policies and procedures.</p> <p>Clarify the definition and scope of the Mehwar Centre's outreach and community engagement work.</p> <p>Ensure a clear division of staffing strategies between the Mehwar Centre's Shelter (internal) and Outreach (external) sections.</p> <p>Redeploy staff rotations for all staff to Outreach programmes as required to ensure equal staff competencies and prevent staff burnout, distinguishing between staff roles during Shelter and Outreach rotations.</p> <p>Define the specific mission, mandate and specific skills and strengths of Mehwar's Outreach capacities not covered by other organisations in community outreach work.</p> <p>Coordinate and develop memoranda of understanding with partner organisations to define and agree upon complimentary outreach roles to improve efficiency and effectiveness.</p> <p>Develop clear and stable memoranda of understanding for cooperation between Mehwar and other institutions like courts, the police, general attorneys, hospitals, schools and other ministries.</p> <p>Develop and regularly monitor a Mehwar Outreach strategy.</p>
<p>Mehwar benefits from a qualified and highly motivated staff team.</p> <p>Comprehensive policies to avoid staff burnout are lacking, though some mechanisms are implemented, such as staff rotations.</p> <p>Staff supervision policies and practices (both managerial and technical) are lacking, though the need for both has been clearly identified by staff.</p> <p>The Mehwar staff team has experienced and benefited from a specialised training programme, however, staff training and the upgrading of policies and procedures related to staff are lacking.</p>	<p>Incorporate ways to avoid and alleviate staff burnout in the Centre's policies and procedures.</p> <p>Identify resources for backstopping staff rotations, including recruiting and training a pool of temporary staff and volunteers to fill in or provide backup support for staff rotations as necessary.</p> <p>Amend the night shift policy to include an on-call shift strategy to provide backup support for the night shift in case of an emergency.</p> <p>Ensure proper technical and managerial staff supervision.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for staff training, professional development and advancement.</p> <p>Develop a Code of Conduct and Ethics to which all Mehwar staff must commit and conform, including consequences for staff breaches of the Code of Conduct and Ethics.</p> <p>Outline policies and procedures for the provision of support in cases where staff members become victims of violence.</p> <p>Detail policies and procedures on the role of volunteers and interns in supporting the work of the Mehwar Centre, including their recruitment and training.</p>



