

Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling (WCLAC)

Heading towards achieving hope



Annual Report 2007

- **Summary Report**
- **Progress of Implementation**

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1. General Information:

Name of NGO: Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling (WCLAC)
Reporting period: January 1-December 31, 2007
Date of last report: July 20, 2007
Date of this report: February 25, 2008



2. Progress Summary:

The Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling started the third year of implementation of its five-year strategic program "Building Hope". The five main strategic objectives of this program are:

- Contribute to the development of legislation and institutional policies which support women and their rights.
- Develop Local Cultural and Moral Resources in Order to Eradicate Negative Social Attitudes/Practices Against Women.
- Build the capacity of relevant official and grassroots organizations that have direct impact on women's issues.
- Expose, locally and internationally, the practices of the Israeli occupation violations against women's rights.
- Develop WCLAC's own capacity, performance, and sustainability.

All activities conducted during this year are in line with the expected results for each specific objective as per the strategic plan. To a large extent, the planned activities have been implemented successfully and in accordance with the action plan 2007.

Again this year, the progress related to outputs involving political leaders and Members of the Legislature were obviously fewer than hoped, while activities at the

level of NGOs and grass-roots organizations, research activities, advocacy and networking, technical and legal services, were farther than originally planned.

The human resources needed for the implementation was higher than planned due to vacant positions (which have now been filled), wide geographical distribution of activities, and general work overload. This has led to the outsourcing of some activities and projects.

Two internal evaluations were carried out in 2007 by our Director on the Services Unit and the Capacity Building Unit. This exercise aimed to verify internal processes and procedures, as well as to identify the goal's achievements progress of the units. It was the beginning of an evaluation process that will continue in other units of WCLAC throughout 2008 and we expect to analyse all findings and apply the recommendations to our future strategic planning and reviews.

Finally, during 2007 half of WCLAC's staff moved into its newly acquired premises in Betn-EIHawa and the process happened smoothly. We have finalized the renovation of the first floor of the building and we hope to be able to start the renovation of our ground floor soon in order to gather all the staff in Ramallah in one main location.

3. Political Landscape



Even by recent Palestinian standards, 2007, one year after the democratically elected Hamas government took office, has been one of the most difficult. As a result of the withdrawal of international aid by major donors such as the US, EU, and Canada, as well as Israel's refusal to pay taxes collected on behalf of the Palestinian Authority, the economic and political situation has steadily deteriorated to the level of humanitarian crisis. According to a recent report by Oxfam International,¹ the impacts can be seen most dramatically in the following areas: increasing poverty, economic decline, and institutional collapse. Household incomes in Gaza and West Bank have fallen, and as incomes have fallen, families have had to do without essentials such as food and medicine,

sales in staples have dropped dramatically, and small businesses have gone bankrupt. Moreover, the already fragile infrastructure in some cases has reached near collapse. Health workers and teachers went on prolonged strike for non-payment of salaries; local police departments were not able to implement new domestic violence programs due to lack of funds. These serious developments were further exacerbated by the internal strife and violence between members of Fatah and Hamas, a direct result of the international shunning of Hamas as the legitimate governing party. The Mecca Agreement brought relief temporarily, but was not sustainable. The power struggles intensified during the year and ultimately resulted in the violent take-over of Gaza Strip by Hamas.

Equally disturbing, the Palestinian Legislative Council has stopped all operations. In this institutional vacuum, President Mahmoud Abbas has issued presidential decrees to bring order to a dysfunctional, sometimes chaotic, political landscape. Although these decrees on the whole have been fairly progressive, we are alert to the fact that we cannot allow *anyone*, regardless of political ideology, to rule autocratically. Democracy and democratic processes must be protected at all costs.

During this period, we have witnessed a steady rise in the militarization of the society that includes the glorification of violence, use of weapons to solve problems, and internalization of military values such as relationships of domination and subordination, and the identification of alleged "enemies." Of the most direct concern to the work of WCLAC is the promotion of "militarized masculinity" resulting in the acceptance of the marginalization and domination of women in both the private and

¹ Poverty in Palestine: the human cost of the financial boycott, *Oxfam Briefing Note*, April 2007. Retrieved 4 December 2007 from http://www.oxfam.de/download/Palestinian_Aid_Crisis.pdf

public spheres. Hence, we have already anecdotal evidence of an increase in violence against women, and this fact led us to carry out many team discussions on the importance of our fourth strategic objective: “Expose, locally and internationally, the practice of the Israeli occupation violations against women’s rights”. Out of these discussions emerged the need to review the theoretical framework of this objective, and to put into the equation the violation of Palestinian women within the private and public spheres, in addition to the violation from the Israeli occupation. The three of them together—Israeli occupation, private and public violence within Palestinian communities—represent the major sources of all forms of violence against women in Palestine. Thus an amended proposal to the strategic objective mentioned above was submitted to the General Assembly of the Board of Trustees, and was approved on November 12, 2007.

Due to the collapse of the PLC operations, we have been compelled to shift our advocacy activities to a more grassroots level aimed at education and awareness, rather than direct lobbying of PLC. The primary beneficiaries have been judges, lawyers, and other court officials. We also have strengthened the emphasis on educating and preparing civil society for what we envision will be a stronger claim to women’s human and economic rights in the future. On the one hand, we have been forced to change our activities but, on the other hand, we see this as a golden opportunity to build stronger ties with civil society through various educational and awareness campaigns, participation in research projects, capacity-building of organizations and individual, and the ongoing direct social and legal services to address women most vulnerable in our society.

Against this backdrop, we have carried out our work during 2007. This is in spite of cautious optimism about the recent Annapolis Conference, which marked the start of a new round of peace negotiations between Palestine and Israel.

Implications and context within which Non Governmental Organisations operate:



Palestine is witnessing one of the most difficult moments in its history, and civil society organizations are trying like everyone else to absorb and understand the prevailing conditions. Several factors have been overwhelming even to the most grounded, credible, development-oriented, and renowned organisations: the state of severe political polarization, political and armed fighting, the separation of Gaza from West Bank,

the hardening of positions between Fatah and Hamas, the complete paralysis of the PLC, and finally the absence of any prospects of a compromise in the near future, while still suffering from occupation measures and restrictions. While many saw this coming, the current events have exposed in many ways the inability of the civil society, including academics and intellectuals, to really affect the course of events. Thus, this calls for a real in-depth evaluation and re-examination of their programs, interventions, and development objectives. No one is left unaffected by these events, and certainly NGOs are feeling the heat of the current situation with the new decree demanding re-registration with the Ministry of Interior. NGOs are also not far from the state of polarization, while trying to maintain their objectivity, independence, and the need to remain true to the principles of human rights, rule of law, basic freedoms,

and the documentation of violations regardless of their perpetrators. One of the responses to this situation came from a group of NGOs that formed “The Palestinian Coalition to monitor human rights violations under the current conditions”. The Coalition held meetings, some of which involved meetings with officials at the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, and Ministry of Information.

In this context of political instability, no strong central authority to keep law and order, none ability for Palestinian authority to have jurisdiction over all Palestinians in their various areas of residence due to Oslo agreements that had divided jurisdiction over occupied Territory between Palestinian Authority and Israel, and due to separation of West Bank from Gaza, and finally due to Hamas take over of Gaza making implementation of any court orders almost impossible. In this situation of legal chaos, decentralization and dispersion of power and threatened masculinity women and children become the first victims. Already many cases of women bodies found in Gaza after Hamas take over have been reported. In such a political context that is short of an all out war, it is essential to ensure systems of protection of the weaker elements in society and in this case women and children.

All formal and informal institutions in the Occupied Territory are heavily dependant on donor aid, most of which is from international governments. Such donor assistance is very political and its availability, or not, usually depends on the political situation. Also said government aid gives priority to government projects and not typically available for NGOs for the protection of vulnerable groups.

Therefore, NGOs will also need to start thinking of potential shifts in funding patterns by donors as well as potential conflicting agendas and priorities especially in the post-Annapolis phase and after the Paris Economic Conference, which clearly had caused shifting of priorities.

We were able to implement most of our activities as planned. It is our long-term relationships with our donors, grass-root organizations, members of coalitions created and activated by WCLAC, with volunteers, civil society organizations, women organizations, and professional syndicates that allowed us to continue our work. Impact though should now be seen in a different light.

4. Cooperation Partners

Our partners and stakeholders have played an active role so far in the planning process of activities through regular meetings and discussions.

This was evident in all the coalitions that WCLAC have created, activated, or participated in. Together we have identified coping mechanisms and alternative strategies thus allowing the activities to be carried out at a healthy pace. This help also came in the form of hosting and coordinating activities, providing logistical support, sharing in the implementation of activities in remote areas, advocating WCLAC’s mission and objectives, media coverage, and others.

Regarding our partners and donors, they have helped us through their unwavering commitment and support to the mission and objectives in a completely voluntary

manner. A strong cooperation was maintained during 2007, and we would like to truly thank all our partners for their engaged and strong support towards WCLAC's objectives throughout the years.

5. Executive Summary

In 2007 WCLAC has achieved the following:

- Activated 3 new coalitions: Coalition for the Family Protection from Violence Law, Coalition against Capital Punishment and the Coalition for Monitoring Human Rights Violations and continued to participate into 6 existing bodies for support of key legislations: Criminal Law Coalition, Personal Status Law Coalition, Media Coalition to support women's rights OMQ, Coalition against Violence Against Women Al-Muntada, Civil Society Coalition for Impartial Justice and Just Judiciary, the Palestinian Coalition for Safe abortion, and the Coalition for monitoring human right's violations under the current conditions (International Humanitarian Law Forum).
- Built relations with 200 influential persons and maintained a database with 600 contacts.
- Initiated/continued/put the final touches on 5 analytical studies.
- Launched 2 media campaigns on the Family Protection Law and on the report of Israeli violations against Palestinian women.
- Implemented 204 awareness raising activities in 7 main locations (total of 42 sub-locations) in the West Bank, targeting 1612 people including 433 men. During these activities 336 legal and social counselling services were provided and 14 women were referred to the Service Unit within the Centre.
- Produced 9 awareness and counselling materials including a manual on the role of youth in combating violence, a leaflet on sexual abuse, 2 TV spots and 3 radio spots on family protection from violence, and a first version of the film on femicide.
- Trained 104 volunteers in women's rights issues.
- Supported 19 voluntary activities in 5 locations, three of them new (Hebron region, Salfit region, Tulkarem region)
- Trained 35 media professionals through the activities of the Media Forum to support Women's rights (OMQ), and trained 20 media professionals through the activities of the Coalition for the Family Protection from Violence Law.
- Trained 35 health professionals qualified to handle cases with women in distress.
- Trained 44 new graduates (educational counsellors/social workers).
- Provided practice training to 50 graduates (educational counsellors/social workers).
- Trained 33 police officers from six governorates in the West Bank.
- Trained 6 Shelter's staff.
- Provided services to 18 women in the Shelter.
- Provided social and legal services for 260 women (111 in Ramallah, 29 in Jerusalem, 120 in Bethlehem/Hebron Area)
- Provided one-time counselling sessions for 115 women
- Took 280 cases to court

- 6 of the 260 women were referred to the Shelter as they needed the services of a safe home.
- Handled 16 emergency cases during the reporting period.
- Conducted a community awareness campaign of 162 sessions in three main areas of Palestine and in three universities (Hebron, Abu Dis and Birzeit).
- Developed a legal self-help guide on alimony for wives and children.
- Conducted a media campaign (including the preparation of 4 press articles, the production of 4 TV spots, 4 TV episodes, 4 TV shows, the production of TV and radio consultation programs and 6 workshops for media students in Birzeit University).
- Provided introductory training to 20 women on documenting violations.
- Attended 6 international conferences on issues related to women's human rights and the international human rights laws.
- Developed a Management Information System (MIS) for the Centre.
- Trained and developed the capacity of the Centre's staff through 28 local and regional meetings/workshops.
- Developed written and electronic media materials such as the new website, newsletters, greeting cards for the 8th of March, files related to the Centre, pamphlet on the "Right to all women to live in dignity".

Main achievements, obstacles and lessons learnt:

First Strategic Objective: Contribute to the development of legislation and institutional policies which support women and their rights.

Specific objectives:

- 1- Establish coalitions and set up coordination coalitions and committees with influential organizations and individuals to rally support for the Centre's proposals for law reform.
- 2- Influence political and professional decision-makers.

In order to contribute to our first strategic objective, the Centre continued its efforts to consolidate its societal, institutional, regional, and international credibility as a point of reference for many coalitions and many organizations. The Centre was also proactive even under the current conditions where it initiated with 6 other NGOS the Coalition for documentation of human rights violation under the current conditions. This can clearly be



considered as an indicator of the credibility and leverage of the centre and its high level of professionalism.

Throughout the work achieved within the Coalition for the Family Protection Law, we learned that lobbying for changing a social behavior or amending a law should be sought through the creation of lobbying and advocacy groups in partnership with other institutions and coalitions, leading to a higher effectiveness of activities and outcomes. The project experience in this regard is reflected in the involvement of the NGO Forum against Violence Against Women (Al-Muntada) and the Media Coalition to Support Women's Rights (OMQ). In addition, we could observe a high level of consensus on the importance of the law because its absence is problematic and because the existing laws, such as the penal code, which deal with penal measures only, do not address the issue of protection and prevention of violence. Finally, the issue of family protection from violence law has been incorporated in other WCLAC programs, such as the public awareness program, as well as within the research department, which is currently preparing for a research on the concept of protection from women's perspective. The staff in charge of the Family Protection Law project has played a role in guiding the development of this research.

It is crucial to develop new mobilization mechanisms around the proposed law amendments/new legislation. We believe that it is necessary to hold an expanded meeting with other women and human rights organizations to discuss the feminist agenda and the current conditions. The purpose of such a meeting would be to come up with joint ideas and mechanisms to face the challenges in a more unified approach. Continuing work with grass-root organizations is crucial to discussions about proposed legal amendments. It is also important to include the rationale and awareness of the need for law reforms within our awareness raising community programs linking this issue to the political conditions and the impact of the fighting over power and the current situation in Gaza on obstructing the women's liberation and equality agenda at both the national and social levels.

Regarding our activities in the NGO Forum against Violence Against Women (Al-Muntada), we have learnt that a networking strategy in such forums creates a collective power to influence the official and community levels. The Forum brought in the importance of amending the laws such as the penal codes and in approving the law for Family Protection from Violence. This position has become an essential determinant of Al-Muntada actions and visions in all its workshops and conferences, correspondence and press releases. Our commitment and active participation in Al-Muntada allowed us to play a decisive role in all its activities. The coordinator seeks our advice on several significant issues such as issuing statements, participation in conferences, reporting and proposal writing. As an indication of our pivotal role, WCLAC will host the forum in the upcoming period.



On a different level, several media institutions resort constantly to the Centre in preparing for programs and events that address women issues. Among the media institutions that have expressed this interest are Al Quds Educational TV, Palestine radio and TV stations. The Centre attracts a high level of interest and coverage by media professionals, particularly those members of the Media Forum, through audio, visual, and written media outlets. The Centre has been receiving an increasing number of invitations to appear on TV or be interviewed on radio programs or even nominate guests for different programs to talk about the laws and the legislative reforms. Of course the indicators mentioned above bring WCLAC closer to the realization of its specific objectives and ultimately its overall objective. While the foundations are there, yet a lot of work lays ahead of us towards creating the real desired impact in the lives of Palestinian women.

Many activities took place under this strategic objective during 2007. However, and without downplaying the importance of meetings, regional and local networking efforts, preparation of position papers and assessment of potential supporters and opponents to the various proposed amendments/new legislation carried out, it is hard to talk about impact in terms of actual legislation reforms due to the on-going crisis of the Legislative Council, which is completely out of the control of the Centre.

We do not foresee any major changes in the status of the PLC in the coming few months. This poses big questions not only for WCLAC, but for the civil society as a whole. This will be a subject for further discussions during the next months and WCLAC will consult with partner/coalition members on possible actions and potential alternative scenarios. Meanwhile, WCLAC is going full-speed in all other activities and preparations to be well positioned to help move these reforms/new legislations when the Legislative Council resumes its normal functioning and operations. Changes in strategies and approaches to secure the desired changes might

be needed in the future depending on the new Council's reactions to the proposed reforms.

Second Strategic Objective: Develop local cultural and moral resources in order to eradicate negative social attitudes and practices against women.

Specific objectives:

- 1- Develop knowledge and dialogue mechanisms in the local community to empower women.
- 2- Develop effective local and voluntary community activists to promote positive cultural attitudes about women.

The Centre implemented in 2007 an important community awareness activities campaign. This achievement is viewed as part of the lobbying and advocacy mechanisms through which awareness programs are designed to target the various sectors within the society. WCLAC's strategy for this result is a two-pronged approach:

- Empowering women by providing them with the social, rights-based, and legal information.
- Convey specific messages that expose the existing discrimination and the need to change social or legal behaviours to ensure equity and fair treatment for women.

The awareness program was effective in terms of coverage. The increased popularity this last year will require to expand the program and increase the number of sessions. In fact we reached many more localities than planned initially and several communities, women institutions and centres requested that we hold more courses for other women group or that we extend the sessions and expand the discussed topics.

Several lessons were learnt during the achievement of the sessions: It is important to maintain the work in the same localities and build the capacity of local coordinators in order to meet the needs and encourage further development. Diversify awareness raising methods to include films, dramas, plays, images and brochures. In addition, it is necessary to build work plans that can allow the trainees to mobilize their communities and encourage wide participation of women in the effort for law amendments by lobbying with village councils and PLC members. Finally, the activities should be designed to respond to women's needs, identified locally through networking with other WCLAC units, such as the Services Unit and the Capacity Building Unit, or linkages with other developmental institutions. For example, the Advocacy Unit and the Research Unit held focus groups with women in Aqabat Jabr refugee camp and identified a need for orientation on laws and women's rights. Therefore, a course was organized on this topic and the Service Unit was asked to offer legal services in the locality on a biweekly basis.



As indicated above, WCLAC addresses its activities at various social sectors to achieve its interim objectives of developing mechanisms of knowledge and the law for women empowerment and developing an active and responsible culture to support positive cultural practices towards women. An example is that some women targeted by the awareness raising courses resumed their education after being away from school for years due to early marriage. We knew about 5 women doing so in the Jerusalem area. In addition, seven girls returned to school after dropping out. On the other hand, a number of women in different regions included in their marriage contract conditions related to education and employment in result of their participation and learning about their right to include such condition in their marriage contract. These indicators will be monitored systematically in the next year. As they reflect a direct impact of awareness programs.

In addition to the community awareness campaign, and as part of the achievements to contribute towards our second strategic objective, WCLAC carried out a whole program on training of volunteers on women's rights issues. This is another important result under this objective as it creates influence on two levels:

- Promotes voluntarism within the Palestinian community, a spirit which has started to decline in the last few years.
- Provides local communities with trained social actors who can spread awareness among the people of women's rights and legal issues so that they become real actors in their own lives.

The volunteer program was carried out successfully, as four new volunteer groups were formed and trained, and the previous groups' training was consolidated. The

training and follow up resulted in positive trends among the volunteers with regards to women's rights issues and the existence of unjust laws against women which need to be amended. Additionally, the concept of voluntary work was strengthened through an effort to connect our volunteer groups with grassroots organisations in order to support community work. A lesson learnt regarding this issue is that we should work on creating and develop these relationships in the future in order to reach a wider sector of the community and foment voluntary work. It was recommended after the evaluation of the field activities to implement more actions in the marginalized areas, as well as to provide additional training to the dedicated volunteers to empower them with skills that allow them to participate in lobbying campaigns.



Third Strategic Objective: Build the capacity of relevant official and grassroots organizations that have direct impact on women's issues:

Specific objectives:

1. Provide support to the Ministry of Social Affairs in developing shelter services.
2. Provide support to the Ministry of Social Affairs in developing shelter services in Bethlehem. (This is a specially funded project coordinated and planned with the Italian NGO Differenza Donna which will be completed in 2006)
3. Build capacity of grassroots women's organizations in governorates to provide services to women victims of violence.
4. Support referral institutions, such as police, dealing with women victims of violence.
5. Provide legal representation and abridgement services for women victims of violence whose problems are not addressed by social support programs

WCLAC's activities towards the completion of our third objective are organized on several levels of capacity building efforts: the governmental and institutional level, the grassroots organisations level, as well as the level of the individuals, in this case women in need of social and legal counselling.

At the governmental and institutional level, the Capacity Building Unit has continued the close collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) in relation to WCLAC's emergency Shelter. The agreement (MOU) between MOSA and WCLAC was not renewed this year for various organisational reasons: new staff within the Ministry, our main contact in the Ministry was absent for several months. However the work with MOSA continues despite the absence of a written agreement with them. A strategy of systematic working together on the protection project with WCLAC had demystified working on VAW issues, and MOSA felt more confident about adopting this work as a strategy. At present the protection project is one of the most important projects with the Ministry who voiced great interest in working with WCLAC because of the previous joint experience and vision on this matter. They also realized that they can secure raising the appropriate funds for it.

At the level of stakeholders, police and primary health care providers, the persistent and ongoing work has contributed to the institutionalization of policies within those institutions to deal with VAW. In the past work was done on subjective basis. Now the Palestinian police has a national plan to start family protection units, the first to be implemented is in the Bethlehem region. The primary health providers now have institutional support to deal with victims of abuse and have a clear referral system to the various relevant bodies to help the clients. The procedure manual developed together with these institutions is the base on which they have developed their own referral system. All of the above mentioned institutions are committed to pursue the development of their services, policies as well as internal bylaws and rules and procedures, an indicator of their commitment is their continued reference to WCLAC and shelter staff for support at the service level as well as at the policy development levels.

Regarding the work in the Shelter, it was conducted in accordance with the general objective of the program which is to build the capacity of the shelter in order to enable it to provide high quality and professional services in coordination with the ministry of social affairs, the police and the health organizations. It is all about the concept of protection and mechanisms of protection. We identified the need for an interdisciplinary approach to providing services to women and girls in crisis, the ongoing work and innovation around referral procedures and continuing education on issues related to service-provision to victims. These will help ensure greater likelihood that beneficiaries will receive quality services, from a highly qualified team of professionals, during all phases of the experience as survivors of violence—from crisis intervention to follow-up during recovery. Moreover, this approach will have a better chance of the assumption of legal and professional responsibility and accountability of those parties who deal with victims of violence. The Shelter this year received 18 women.

At the level of capacity building of grassroots organisations, WCLAC has continued the work with Women for Life Society and started working with Al-Najdah Society. In 2007, WCLAC contracted a consultant to survey women's organisations in the Tulkarem area. Visits to five organizations were conducted, and the consultant submitted a report indicating points of strength and weakness of every organization visited. Based on the report, WCLAC staff visited three organizations and with the consultant set forth the indicators for the final selection criteria. A decision about the organization was made as we selected Al-Najdah organization in Tulkarem. Meanwhile training and follow up activities with “Women for Life” Society were continued. This is an essential part of our work as grass-roots organisations are empowered and trained to provide services to victims of violence. As the Centre resources are limited, and thus services cannot be provided to all women in all places, the work with grassroots organisations is of particular importance. Additionally, this has helped WCLAC remain in touch with the popular bases through the people-centered capacity-building programs, the transfer of knowledge, and the mutual learning experience. Furthermore, the work conducted has helped promote good practices, and higher level of awareness among larger sectors of the community. The work with Women For Life Society was centered around supervision and empowering staff and building the capabilities of the organization particularly in community work within the vision, mission, and overall objectives of the

organization, avoiding fragmentation or derailing of its work. We helped build the services unit that provides legal and social services to women in the area with a rights-based feminist approach. The work with Al-Najda Society started effectively in the second half of the year by signing an agreement, hiring the lawyer and the social worker, providing them with intensive training, then moving to work with the Administrative Board and staff on the vision and mission statement of the organization. These constitute the essential first steps to lay the basic foundations for the organization.

At the level of social and legal services to women, the Services Unit provided legal and social counselling to 260 women, and one-time consultations to 115 women. The total number of legal cases received by the Service Unit was 388, focusing on the legal aspect and court demands. However, 280 cases were officially taken to court through women representation. As for the rest of the cases they were addressed through bridging and reconciliation with the other party to ensure women's rights without going to courts. These activities, together with the development of a self-help manual on alimony for wives and children, contribute to the empowerment of women at a social and legal level. For instance, the self-help manual has been designed and conceived for the women to use to go to court and obtain her alimony rights without having to hire a lawyer. This manual is an innovation in Palestine and it will be distributed widely at the beginning of 2008.

A major achievement this year at the legal level was related to cases on 'marital obedience', where husbands claim that their wife is disobedient depriving her from her right to alimony and her right to divorce. In most of those cases the husband takes possession of the wife's jewellery that belongs to her dowry, and might force her out of the house or beat her. In this case, the wife can oppose his claim if she is able to prove her husband's behaviour. But even doing so, if her husband drops the claim against her she loses any ground for her case against him, complicating, delaying, and raising the cost of her further judicial procedure. WCLAC having identified this problem, we submitted a letter to the Chief of Justice explaining this issue and requesting not to accept dropping the case if this is meant to harm the wife's defense. In result of this effort, the Chief of Justice was convinced and issued a statement # 61-2007 dated 24-10-2007 clarifying our above opinion which will save a lot of suffering, time, effort and money for women as well as for the judicial system.

Another achievement accomplished was regarding the endorsement of court rulings issued in Israel, in the Occupied Territories, or in Gaza and that need to be implemented in another jurisdiction than the one where they were issued. The current political situation affects the legal system in cases regarding marriage, divorce, alimony, child custody and inheritance. It has a negative impact on women trying to endorse such court decisions, as whatever rulings are obtained in one jurisdiction they remain on paper and can hardly be implemented in another one, for example where the husband lives. Having identified this problem, WCLAC submitted a letter of proposal to the Chief of Justice to solve this issue, exposing the particular political context that has negative legal repercussions, and requesting that Israeli Shari'a court rulings could be endorsed by Palestinian judges. The chief justice welcomed our proposal. The file of mutual endorsement of rulings between the Palestinian and the Israeli Shari'a courts (according to Oslo accords and legal cooperation provisions) was transferred to the Technical Office of Chief Justice in Gaza. We were also notified

that a protocol of legal cooperation between the Palestinian and Israel Shari'a courts would not be considered as foreign rulings and would not require filing a suit at civil courts. It was agreed to form a joint committee for legal cooperation between the two parties to exchange visits between judges. The agreement was endorsed by the Chief Justice and the Minister of Religion to start the implementation of such protocol according to the Oslo accord annex on legal cooperation between the Israeli and Palestinian sides. WCLAC will play a partner role with the Office of the Chief Justice in endorsing this protocol.

Fourth Strategic Objective: Expose, locally and internationally, the practices of the Israeli occupation violations against women's rights.

Specific objective 1: To monitor and expose the Israeli violations against the International Humanitarian Law.

During 2007, the Research Unit has carried out its work towards WCLAC's fourth strategic objective, aiming to expose nationally and internationally the practices of the Israeli occupation violations against women's rights.



We completed "If I Were Given the Choice": Palestinian Women's Stories of Daily Life during the Years 2000 - 2003 of the Second Intifada. This book documents the impact of the Israeli violations on the lives of 29 women. The 29 stories constitute a segment of the larger group of over 70 documented, and it was in both Arabic and English.

We firmly implemented our International Human Rights Project in 2007. This included developing a methodology and draft format of documenting International Humanitarian Law (IHL) violations according to the required standard but from a perspective that captures specific experiences of women. This new capacity is the result of studying IHL and other international laws from a feminist gender perspective and of systematic formulation of concepts that would enable such documentation. The work also included testing of the documentation format and recruitment and training of 22 community-based field workers to do the actual documentation. Since this project has become more fully integrated into the work of the Research Unit, we applied for and been approved a full-time coordinator/international human rights law expert through UNAIS to work for 2 years with the Unit to develop internal capacity and expertise. We disseminated findings from a preliminary round of documentation of the impact of Israeli violations of the International Humanitarian Law on Palestinian women. The report was presented to the public through three workshops in Nablus, Ramallah, and Jenin. WCLAC invited participants such as Governmental Organisations, NGO's, Women's organisations, Human right's organisations, university students, journalists, social workers and lawyers. Many recommendations came out of these series of workshops that will be used in our future activities: to continue and develop this documentation, to diffuse it through the media and to a

wider public, to disseminate the work at the international level through international human rights organisations, and to share the information with the Palestinian Authority.

In addition, we exposed the Violations of Israeli Occupation in a paper presented at a local conference that was held to discuss Violence Against Women at the political and social level. The conference that was organized by Al-Muntada Coalition Against Violence Against Women and the Palestinian Women Research Center of UNESCO.

At the international level, WCLAC met with Prof. John Dugard, the Special Rapporteur to the UN Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Occupied Territories. We shared with him our documentation on the impact that the Israeli violations have on women and their family. Dugard's 2007 report was submitted to the 4th session of the Human Rights Council.

Fifth Strategic Objective: Develop WCLAC's own capacity, performance, and sustainability.

Specific objectives:

1. Develop planning, evaluation, and monitoring system.
2. Build capacity of WCLAC staff.
3. Develop partnership relations with donor organizations.



During 2007, the Administration and Finance Unit has put all its efforts in developing WCLAC's capacity, performance and sustainability. One of the main results of this year was to finalize the bylaws of the Centre and have them approved by the Board. It was a very long procedure, during last year's General Assembly meeting the Board of Trustees strongly recommended that some additional changes and amendments were effected, which we did. The bylaws are now applied by WCLAC.

Regarding our Board of Trustees, several discussions took place during our meetings in order to better define their role and activities within WCLAC. The Members have expressed their will and interest to participate more proactively to WCLAC's

development, and many discussions have taken place on how their role can be developed, for example when they represent the Centre and advocate our vision, as well as in activities such as networking, fundraising, etc. This interest is very much appreciated by WCLAC's Administrative Direction, as it shows the engagement of our Board Members as well as their belief in our mission and vision.

Another achievement this year was the moving to the new premises of WCLAC in Betn-Elhawa. Many obstacles were encountered during the process: before moving to Ramallah from Jerusalem, already the restriction of movement for the staff holding Palestinian ID's was complicating our movements, the work flow, the organisation of meetings and the communication process between staff members. In addition, the Administration Unit had to deal with slow administrative issues regarding the purchase of the building, the loan and banking relations, as well as relations with providers, etc. This task delayed to some extent the general work of the Unit. Once the building was ready, half of the staff moved in, but until today the Research unit, Capacity building and Services unit are located in our other office in Ramallah.



Regarding the reporting and planning processes, the Admin Unit has made a strong effort in improving our systems through the creation of new formats as well as through the implementation of internal procedures for reporting and monitoring. In addition, our staff has been assisted in all the year-end reporting processes in order to improve their evaluation and analysis capacities in order to meet the reporting requirements of most of our donors.

The Management Information System (MIS) is being launched. This represents an important achievement for the Administration Unit as its implementation required a huge preparatory effort. During the implementation process we encountered many obstacles, as we are the second NGO in Palestine after PARC to adopt an MIS. The providers had to adjust to a new terminology, understand our specific NGO needs and concepts, etc. This issue delayed the process. But we have now started the technical implementation of the system that requires a tremendous amount of manual work to insert all our data into the system. Once this data is inserted, the development will continue its path and the system will be officially launched.

During 2007, WCLAC continued to develop its relationships with the donors in order to maintain the quality of our existing relationships as well as to develop new partnerships for the future. Many consultation meetings, workshops and field visits took place as well as the Consortium meeting where all partners were able to exchange ideas, suggestions and recommendations with us. Feed-back on our financial and narrative reporting was received and taken into consideration in our reporting procedures. It was noted through this process that our staff is in need of intense training on reporting and evaluation skills. Another lesson learnt out of our discussions with Donors is the fact that we need to strengthen the communication with Donors in order to facilitate and improve the collaboration processes. For example, information exchange on our activities and status on our work should take

place on a regular basis independently of the reporting and or financial-related communication.

6. Sustainability

The ability of WCLAC to continue its work under the current difficult political conditions can be viewed as a result of its socio-cultural sustainability, which is manifested in the acceptance and endorsement by the local community of its programs, mission, and activities. WCLAC conducted awareness activities and focus groups in more than 42 locations all over the West Bank and Gaza Strip, many of which are extremely conservative areas. The participation and commitment of participants in these activities and their willingness to share their ideas and be present at these activities was possible due to the excellent reputation of WCLAC as professional, transparent, and development oriented organization. Over the years, we continuously work on improving the conditions for women in Palestine. We were never an organization that conducted a one-time activity or event then left, and our beneficiaries know that.

Additionally, the coalitions that WCLAC has created/joined provide a more solid foundation for the sustainability of the positive effects and impact of its programs and activities, as its feminist vision is shared by an increasing number of governmental and non-governmental organizations.

Work with grassroots organizations in remote areas is helping us stay in touch with the people and serves as our compass, keeping us on track and in sync with our target groups' needs and priorities. This is extremely essential for our sustainability as we keep our feet rooted on the ground while our ambitions and goals keep us focused on the social change that we hope will contribute to the building of a democratic Palestinian society based on principles of equality and social justice between men and women

Financial sustainability can be viewed in the existence of a donors' consortium that is financially committed to WCLAC's mission and objectives. Furthermore, the participation of new donors in the consortium is yet another proof that our financial transparency, our accountability, integrity, and achievements are a guarantee of financial sustainability. In 2007 we received two core funding grant agreements which is another element of enhancing our sustainability, as opposed to the short-term project based funding agreements.

In addition, we also believe that our Board of Trustees could play an essential role in assisting in the development of a long-term sustainability strategy for WCLAC. Our Board Members' experience and competencies in such field could be a tremendous asset in the development of our future strategies.

Finally, we have bought our own premises with the approval of our donors. On the long-term this investment will increase our financial sustainability. Additionally, volunteers who assist in carrying out the work of the Centre can be seen as contributors to the financial sustainability of the Centre. We are also exploring ways to enhance our self-financing activities as part of our long-term strategy.

Progress of Implementation 2007

First Strategic Objective: Contribute to the development of legislation and institutional policies which support women and their rights.

Expected long-term results:

1. Existence of gender sensitive laws that do not discriminate against women and conform to international human rights standards.
2. Development of a culture of activism and civic responsibility in Palestinian society.
3. The Palestinian community considers gender sensitive laws more legitimate and necessary.

Specific objectives:

1. Establish coalitions and set up coordination coalitions and committees with influential organizations and individuals to rally support for the Centre's proposals for law reform.
2. Influence political and professional decision-makers.

In its on-going efforts to achieve the above first specific objective, within the framework of the overall specific objective as defined in the five-year strategic plan, WCLAC has been focusing on 3 key pieces of legislation that greatly impact the condition of Palestinian women, namely the Criminal Code, the Personal Status Law, and the proposed Family Protection Law.

The main strategies followed for achieving the planned outputs can be summarized as follows:

- Preparation/drafting of documents and distribution to potential coalition members.
- Regular meetings and visits to the concerned institutions.
- Conducting workshops with various relevant stakeholders and opinion makers.
- Consultations with relevant bodies and institutions.
- Exhibitions and media contests.

Specific Objective 1:

Result 1-1: Continue to support and establish three bodies created/activated through meetings and visits to institutions to rally support on proposals for reform/endorsement of: Criminal Law Coalition, Personal Status Law Coalition, and Family Protection Law Coalition.

Time frame: January-December 2007

Progress: 100%

During 2007, WCLAC established 3 new coalitions: the coalition for the Family Protection from Violence Law, the Coalition against Capital Punishment, and the coalition for Monitoring Human Rights Violations.

In addition, we continued to support 6 existing bodies: Criminal Law Coalition, Personal Status Law Coalition, Media Forum (Media Forum to support women's

rights (OMQ), Coalition against Violence Against Women (Al-Muntada), Civil Society Coalition for Impartial Justice and Just Judiciary, the Palestinian Coalition for Safe Abortion, and the Coalition for monitoring human right's violations under the current conditions (International Humanitarian Law Forum).

The progress under this result exceeds the original plan which envisaged the initiation and involvement in 3 coalitions. However, this expansion only serves the three main coalitions centred on proposals for law reform: Criminal Law Coalition, Personal Status Law Coalition, and Family Protection Law Coalition.

Additionally, the effectiveness and efficiency of fair and corrupt free judiciary is a top priority on the civil society's agenda in general and for the Centre in particular. A strong, fair, and transparent judiciary is the only safeguard for upholding the rule of the law and the revised laws, once adopted by the legislature. We see this as an integral part of our efforts for the lobbying and advocacy around law reforms.

1. Administrative Committee for the Personal Status Law:

This is an already existing body. Several meetings were held with the administrative committee on the terms of reference for the Personal Status Law (addressing articles in the law only) and the coalition's plans. Furthermore, the coalition discussed a regional proposal to work on this law in partnership with the Union of Jordanian Women. A meeting was held in Amman for this purpose. The regional project will be implemented in four countries (Palestine, Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon). It was presented to the administrative committee in the West Bank which agreed to designate WCLAC as the national coordinator. We also presented the regional plan to the coalition and obtained its approval. The plan has been finalized and the regional project was signed on 16-12-2007 and will start in the beginning of 2008.

An expanded meeting with the preparatory committee was not held because we were unable to meet with our counterparts in June as planned due to the political developments in Gaza. This meeting was expected to approve the final document by the administrative committee on the 5 provisions in the personal status law and to discuss the detailed plan for the forthcoming period as proposed by the administrative committee in the West Bank. The planned workshops were not conducted because we were unable to obtain consensus on the document from the preparatory committee, especially on the Gaza Strip. In the next period we will work through the regional project and the plan set by the preparatory committee.

2. Criminal Law Coalition:

A document was completed containing comments by the coalition on the draft Palestinian Penal Code. Due to the political situation, we were unable to meet with the PLC legal committee. We are waiting for the resumption of PLC functioning in order to meet with the legal committee and discuss the comments. In the meantime, 2 meetings were held with the coalition to discuss the latest developments of the draft of the Palestinian Penal Code. The draft code was approved in 2003 but it poses a legal dilemma. Awaiting for the resumption of PLC functioning, the coalition found it appropriate to work on amending some pressing legal provisions in the Jordanian penal law which is currently in effect. Provisions needing amendment were selected and legal justifications for the amendment were developed in order to be submitted to the Palestinian legislators and major stakeholders. These meetings and discussions were held in May and June 2007.

Central Seminar:

The central seminar scheduled for June was not conducted because of the political situation and the disruption of PLC activities. It is not possible to conduct this workshop under the current conditions.

Meetings:

In light of the current political situation and changes in the legislative laws with the President gaining the power to issue resolutions while the PLC is non functioning, the coalition held four meetings to examine the possibility of requesting a presidential decree to amend the legal provisions related to women's killing in the Jordanian Penal Code applicable in the West Bank. Two articles were selected from the aforementioned law and an alternative text was prepared to be submitted to the President in order to request a presidential decree. Through our thorough assessment of the situation we found that the Minister of Women Affairs is willing to support the work in this direction, which corroborates with the second interim objective. We sent a letter in this regard to the Minister and developed a draft paper with the justifications for the amendment and the request for the presidential decree. A meeting was held between the Minister and the Coalition in a positive atmosphere where the parties cooperated in rephrasing the amendment and submitting it to the Council of Ministers through the Minister of Women's Affairs, in order to be adopted by the Council of Ministers and submitted to the President.

Efforts are made to monitor the developments in the political situation as well as the situation of the PLC despite its non functioning.

3. Family Protection from Violence Law Coalition

This project is being implemented at the regional level in four Arabic countries (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine) with the support of Heinrich Boll Foundation. Locally the project was hosted this year by the NGO Forum against Violence against Women – Al Muntada, which is composed of 15 antiviolence NGOs. The following achievements were made according to the plan:

- A network in support of the family protection law was created.
- A legal committee was created to support the legal justifications.
- Workshops with Civil Society Organisations (human rights and women Ngo's), political parties and the police were organized.
- A media campaign was launched comprising a kit on domestic violence, TV and radio spots, and the preparation of a film on women's killing that should be ready for screening at the beginning of 2008.
- Meetings with decision-makers/political parties and structures were organized in order to mobilize them in support of the law, particularly since they have representatives in the PLC.
- Workshops for the media were held to train the participants on the concept and forms of violence, social and cultural factors behind domestic violence, and the penal code and how it addresses cases of domestic violence.
- Collaboration with the SALMA regional network, attendance at meetings and workshops.

4. NGO Forum to combat violence against women (Al Muntada)

We participated in 19 meetings of Al Muntada in order to maintain communication and plan for activities. One meeting was an evaluation session for the international campaign against violence of the year 2006 with the participation of member

institutions and others from outside the Forum, as well as UN agencies supporting the Forum.

WCLAC also participated actively to the following achievements:

A study on Femicide (2004-2006): WCLAC took part in every step of the preparation of the study, as well as participating in the planning and implementation of workshops on the Femicide report.

Statements: Four press statements were issued on the killing of women and girls. A letter was sent to the President demanding he uses his constitutional powers according to article 43 of the basic law, 2700 amendment, in protecting women from violence and killing by annulling provisions in the Jordanian penal code number 16 of 1960 that encourages the killing and relieves the perpetrator from penalty, namely by cancelling the reductive excuse (article 340), the anger provision (article 98), and child discipline (article 62). The President replied to the letter stating that it is in the PLC's power to make these amendments, indicating that the political leadership has such issues low on its agenda. Therefore, Al-Muntada decided to collect 10000 signatures on a petition demanding the President issue a decree as above. So far about 5000 signatures have been collected. This action by AL Muntada is coordinated and harmonized with the civil society coalition for the penal code.

International campaigns against violence: Al-Muntada planned for several events including a press conference, a report on women's killing in 2007, 3 TV shows and a sit-in strike. WCLAC was a member of the preparation committee.

5. Media Forum Advocating Women's Rights (OMQ):

The Media Forum was established in 2005 as a response to increased levels of violence against women and the low awareness level of journalists and reporters regarding coverage of women's issues and perspectives. Having been a completely unplanned outcome in 2005, the Media Forum has since then been playing a considerable role in the overall increase in media coverage of women-related activities undertaken by both WCLAC and other civil society organizations in Palestine. The Forum has also been raising the public profile of WCLAC.



The achievements for 2007 can be described as follows:

Five central meetings in West Bank and Gaza: Three central meetings were held in Ramallah and attended by an average of 35 media professionals from different regions. The plan was approved and five members were assigned the task of developing bylaws. In addition, three technical committees were formed: the bylaws training and monitoring committee, networking committee and PLC contact committee.

Joint program with Al Quds Educational TV (Ahwaluna – Our Affairs): The project aims at producing 12 TV shows on the provisions of the personal status law as well as building the capacity of 60 TV staff in issues of human rights, gender and personal status followed by advanced training in the techniques of TV production. During 2007 two training courses were held for participants selected from OMQ coalition. Topics focused on gender and women's rights in relation to the personal status law. In total 55 participants attended out of the planned 60, 25 male and 30 female professionals.

Training: 3 training courses were organized in the West Bank for media professionals on the role of media in combating violence against women, on the Personal Status

Law and on developing critical analytical skills in the coverage of women issues. In Gaza a two-day training course was conducted for media professionals on the issue of femicide.

Media coverage of women related events: These included several TV and radio broadcasts developed by the coalition with support from the unit.

OMQ bulletin: A leaflet was published to be distributed to media professionals and institutions.

Publications and Statements: A brochure and a book were printed to document the media context on the situation of women in the Penal Code. 5 Statements were issued in Gaza and the West Bank on violations against journalists, infighting and security chaos, threats against female media staff in Palestine TV, denunciation of attacks on media by Hamas security forces in Gaza and lastly denunciation of Israeli crimes against Gaza Strip.

Public relations and networking: A relationship was established with ACT association in Egypt which initiated the idea of establishing an Arab network on women's image in the media. Another relationship was established with the Institute of Arab Women for Gender Research and Training with the aim of cooperating in monitoring women's image in the media. Four OMQ members attended a workshop on Media and Violence Against Women which was held by SALMA Group in Amman on 8-9 November. The workshop discussed barriers and challenges facing the Arab media in its coverage of VAW.

Finally, OMQ strengthened its contacts and relations with 10 Women's rights and Media institutions in Gaza to promote the coalition and its role.

Monitoring of violations: A Palestinian monitoring network and committee was established to develop a report monitoring women's killing cited in the three major Palestinian newspapers. The report will be submitted at the beginning of 2008 and will be shared with the chief editors of the newspapers in order to develop a common policy towards these issues.

Review and assessment of gender sensitive media works: No special program has been developed for this purpose. Instead we decided to evaluate and provide incentives to media works that have been conducted in general. A radio presenter in Amwaj produced a very distinctive talk show on incest; he hosted social workers and lawyers from WCLAC and boldly discussed cases of incest in an unprecedented way, criticizing the law and social attitudes towards these issues. The coalition evaluated this talk show as outstanding and awarded the presenter in its last central meeting.

6. Civil Society Coalition for Impartial Justice and Just Judiciary

The coalition was established in 2006 and concludes 7 institutions from the West Bank and Gaza including WCLAC. It aims at enforcing the principle of separation of powers and independent judiciary and strengthening neutrality and integrity in the application of laws. We attended three meetings where discussions addressed the role of the judiciary and the proposed draft law on judiciary submitted by the PLC. We also participated in formulating a statement demanding the emergency government put the issue of judiciary within its priorities.

7. Coalition for mentoring human right's violations under the current conditions (International Humanitarian Law Forum)

Several institutions joined efforts to address emerging issues, especially human rights violations, following the escalation of infighting. The coalition was formed in June by Al Haq, WCLAC, Centre for Rehabilitation of Tortured Victims, DCI, Mandela, Al

Damir, and Jerusalem Center for Human Rights in order to detect human rights violations and contact the relevant authorities. In addition, the coalition visits Palestinian prisons, issues reports on violations, and receives complaints from citizens. The coalition issued a statement to explain its role and objectives and provide contact information for filling complaints in both West Bank and Gaza.

Member institutions developed bylaws and a secretariat made from Al Haq, Jerusalem Center for Legal Aid, and Al Damir, to manage its activities. The coalition held a meeting with the Minister of media and Minister of interior to discuss issues like decisions related to the work of NGOs, facilitation of visits to prisons and violations related to torture.

8. Coalition against death penalty

A regional conference was held on this issue in Jordan and attended by a number of Palestinian NGOs. In September, these NGOs met to discuss the creation of a coalition against the death penalty in PA areas, based on initiatives by the independent commission for citizen rights and Al Haq. In addition to these two institutions, the coalition membership includes DCI, Al Damir, Working Women Society, and WCLAC. A workshop was aired live on TV to publicize the coalition and discuss its rationale and the issue of the death penalty in general. The workshop was attended by political figures and civil society activists who signed a petition against the death penalty.

9. Coalition for Safe Abortion

This coalition was formed by an initiative of the Family Planning Association, and currently includes social, legal, and health NGOs and universities such as Bethlehem University, Al Quds University, Ibn Sina College, and MOH. The coalition aims at building consensus on the issue of abortion in Palestine and contributing to the amendments of laws on abortion, as well as raising awareness of the dangers of unsafe abortion. Three meetings were held and priority was given to data collection through research and institutional activities. The coalition developed its bylaws within a workshop and completed a study on abortion to be discussed in 2008.

Specific Objective 2

Result 2-1: Continue to support relationships with 600 influential personalities

Time frame: Jan-December 2007

Progress: 90%

WCLAC built relations this year with more than 150 influential persons² through its work with the coalitions and committees that were either activated or created and throughout the advocacy and lobbying campaigns. While it was difficult to build relations with politicians/policy makers during this year given the conditions that prevailed in Palestine, there is no doubt that WCLAC managed to establish contact and build relations with many individuals and organizations that are influential given their representation of various sectors of the society and their ability to provide and share feed-back, creativity, problem solving oriented methods and finally their expertise.

² Influential persons are decision-makers in the society and others who can influence those decision-makers, such as elected officials, heads of government institutions, judges, and so on.

We initiated new contacts and relations within some of the women organizations and with the General Union of Palestinian Women, with police officers and commanders, with directors of relevant departments within the Ministry of Social Affairs, and with PLC members, particularly members of the Social Affairs Committee. These relations were focused around support for the proposed amendments to legislation that we are working on, as well as the new proposed Family Protection Law.

Our database of influential personalities that have over the last two years been engaged/involved/supportive of our various activities and coalitions is expanding. Next year a form will be developed by the Advocacy Unit in order to update, renew and improve the database. Furthermore, our networks/coalitions/partnerships create an important social leverage for the organization that will definitely help promote our vision and mission and bring us closer to our strategic objective.

Specific Objective 2

Result 2-2: Complete 3 analytical studies on law reforms

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 80%

During 2007, WCLAC continued working on completing various analytic researches, studies and reports:

Publication of the oral history project report on impact on women of Israeli army violence: “If I were given the choice” The book was published in Arabic and English early January 2008 and was presented during a workshop. It will be distributed to relevant libraries and institutions.

A study on the Personal Status Law and a research on Women's Approaches and Needs:

The in-depth interviews that were scheduled to take place in Gaza were either postponed or cancelled due to inaccessibility and the prevailing conditions in the Gaza Strip. The work in the West Bank continued according to several steps that need to be followed such as conducting the in-depth interviews, transcribing the interviews, coding them, analyzing them according to main topics/themes prior to preparing conclusions and finalizing the two documents. The process of training field researchers as well as that of learning within the Centre and among its staff from various units has been most valuable, but meant also more time and efforts are needed to follow through with the feminist research methodology. This, in addition to some logistical problems, as well as overloaded staff who are members of the research teams, has led to some unexpected delays. Both studies have not been published yet. However the first drafts are prepared and translated and should be finalized at the beginning of 2008.

Report on Femicide: A report documenting 16 cases of femicide was prepared to be used by the Forum Against Violence Against Women for lobbying and advocacy work. Two workshops took place, one with civil society organizations and the second with governmental organizations and the PLC to discuss the roles of relevant ministries in adopting policies that deal with and fight violence against women, particularly Femicide. The Al-Muntada Forum published a very good report based on our data, and therefore we cancelled the publication of ours.

Alimony Fund: WCLAC attended meetings regarding the Alimony Fund. The purpose of our participation is to ensure that women's interests are taken in consideration according to WCLAC's vision but also to observe and document the processes and operations of the fund for the first year in order to prepare a paper on how the fund was established and what kind of impact it has on the lives of women. The Fund implements courts decisions and rulings in favour of women's right to receive alimony funds. The meetings aimed at discussing the work in progress of the Fund, the applications it received and the obstacles it faced. These obstacles included the resignation of the Fund manager for personal reasons, the lack of premises for the Fund, which is still hosted at the Shari' Judicial Council and which leads to the lack of independence of the Fund. Moreover, the Fund is still financed by the revenues of the Shari' courts fees, which aggravates its dependence on the Bureau of the Shari's Chief Justice. An internal workshop for WCLAC staff was conducted to brief colleagues on the Fund's activities, objectives and eligibility. It recommended the need to allocate a grant for the Fund in accordance with the Law, in order to reduce the hegemony of the Shari' Chief Justice and Chairman of the Board (Sheikh Tayseer Tamimi) over the Fund.

Study regarding the Constitution: This is a study of the Palestinian Constitution from a gender perspective. WCLAC has hired a researcher to carry out this study and has conducted two workshops with her to finalize the study. The English version has been finalized and sent to our editor. The study will be published during 2008.

Study on Violence Against Women/The relation of the occupation's violence to domestic violence: This study tries to discern the definition of the concept of protection (in cases of domestic violence) as understood and seen by the women themselves. The first phase of this project has been implemented through internal meetings on methodology, the training of the researchers on conducting focus groups, the conduction of focus groups and their documentation and the beginning of the analysis of the data collected. The second phase of this project will take place in 2008.

Specific Objective 2

Result 2-3: Launch/complete three media campaigns (Campaign for Personal Status Law, Campaign for Family Protection Law, Campaign on the report of Israeli violations against Palestinian women)

Time frame: January-December 2007

Progress: 70%

Personal Status Law campaign:

The campaign was not conducted because the work on the law was not completed with the civil society organization and as the project was not signed yet with the Union of Jordanian Women, it will be carried out in 2008.

Family Protection Law Media Campaign: (with support from Heinrich Boll Foundation):

Several activities took place towards the Family Protection Law Media Campaign.

Production of TV and radio spots: 2 TV and 2 radio spots were produced, in addition to a radio spot produced by the "Creative Group for Free". The spots addressed the

idea of rehabilitation for perpetrators of violence and the notion that violence is a public and not only private issue. The media materials were produced and the campaign will be launched in 2008.

Film on femicide: The production of the planned drama film on women's killing on the pretext of "family honour" was contracted through a production company and an advisory committee was formed by WCLAC staff. The committee reviewed and discussed the script with the producer and met with the actors to sensitize them about the impact of violence and women killing in the Palestinian society, as well as to provide them with documents and case studies prepared by WCLAC. A draft copy was developed and screened for the staff on December 5th, and feedback was given to the producer. The reason why the film is not out yet is that it will be screened for the Board of Trustees in January in order to get their feedback. We will use the occasion of the 8th of March (Women's day) to screen the film and will have roaming shows in several regions according to 2008 work plan.

TV and radio talk shows on the draft law:

- On 16 May 2007, a radio talk show was aired through the Voice of Palestine (within a program titled "People's Voice") on the importance of having a law to protect families from violence.
- A radio broadcast titled "In Women's Eye", Voice of Palestine, invited WCLAC to talk on the law, and the program "Good Morning, Palestine" invited us to talk on the law on 22nd May 2007.

The campaign on the report on Israeli violations against Palestinian women:



The plan for the campaign was to hold a press conference, workshops, and a TV show. The Advocacy Unit participated in meetings on the documentation projects and the construction review and analysis of the questionnaires as well as the writing of the reports. Three workshops were held with civil society organizations in Nablus, Hebron and Ramallah. The latter was conducted jointly with the General Union of



Palestinian Women on the occasion of 8th of March. In addition, a workshop was held on 13th of March in Bidya in cooperation with Women for Life Society, the workshops were attended by 222 participants. The workshops were attended and covered by media professional in local print and electronic press.

Finally, we participated in two evaluation meetings for the project and the report. The report was not published and distributed as there was an agreement in WCLAC to keep it for internal use only, the press conference and the TV show were not organized because we passed the deadline set by the donor and an extension was difficult to obtain.

Second Strategic Objective: develop local cultural and moral resources in order to eradicate negative social attitudes/practices against women.

Long-term expected results:

- 1- Palestinian community is more aware of women's rights and position of women in Palestinian society.
- 2- Development of a culture of activism and civic responsibility in Palestinian society in all regional areas, especially among the future generations of Palestinian society.

Specific objectives:

1. Develop knowledge and dialogue mechanisms in the local community to empower women.
2. Develop effective local and voluntary community activists to promote positive cultural attitudes about women

Specific Objective 1

Result 1-1: Organize regular group awareness activities around women's rights in 30 new locations

Time frame: January-December 2007

Progress: 140%

During 2007 more than 30 new locations were reached in the areas of Jenin, Ramallah, Jerusalem, Hebron, Bethlehem, Qalqilya, and Tulkarem organizing 204 awareness raising sessions. The activities covered 42 geographical locations within the 7 main targeted areas: 36 sessions were held in Hebron and Bethlehem, 117 sessions were held in Jenin, 51 sessions were held in Ramallah, Jerusalem, Jericho, Bidya and Tulkarem.

Following is a brief description of the main methods of intervention in implementing the group activities, main topics addressed and target groups.

Detailed description of activities per location can be found in Annex 1 to this report.

Overall Indicators for all awareness activities:

Number of activities: 204

Number of beneficiaries: 1612 including 433 men.

Number of social and legal counselling services: 336

Number of referrals to the Service Unit: 14

Methods of Intervention in Main Locations:

Lectures and debates, workshops/meetings, courses, legal awareness courses, TV and Radio Programs as well as national marches.

Topics addressed in the sessions:

Women's rights as human rights, laws related to women such as the penal code, personal status law code, and family protection from violence law.

Target Groups:

University students, members of local councils, members of women structures, housewives, members of administrative committees and general assemblies of women institutions, women activists, and PLC members.

Special Activities and Interventions:

1- Women's Rights are Human Rights Program:

This program is specifically designed for university students and consists of awareness raising sessions around women's rights from social, legal, and health aspects: 4 courses were held in Birzeit University, Hebron University and School of Community Health/ Medical Relief. 8 sessions were held for Birzeit University. 6 others for the School of Community Health and 10 for Hebron University. Total beneficiaries were 70 students including 7 males. Participants evaluated the courses positively and praised the useful information. In response to their demand, an additional course was held in Birzeit University, benefiting 37 students, including 16 males.

2- International Women's Day

Several events were organized on or around the International Women's Day on March 8th. These included the following:

- A workshop at the American University in Janine on women's rights in the effective laws and prevailing norms (11th of March).
- A seminar was held in Faquaa Women Center/Jenin (7th of March) on women's rights in the applicable laws. The meeting was attended by women from neighboring villages (Deir Abu Ghazala, Zababdeh, Deir Abu Daif).
- Events were arranged with the Consortium of Developmental Institutions in Bethlehem, including a festival on the 7th of March in Peace Center and participation in a conference in the same venue under the slogan 'Yes to a national unity government, no to infighting'.
- Our colleagues in Hebron participated in a celebration to honor women activists by health work committees and the Palestinian Women Committee.
- A festival was conducted by Women for Life Society in Bidya on 12th of March, which was attended by about 100 women. The report that documents the Israeli violations was presented in cooperation with the research unit.
- A festival was conducted with Jericho Women's Centre with the participation of 25 women. The festival included a seminar focusing on women's status and VAW.
- A workshop was conducted with the General Union of Palestinian women on the 3rd of March during which the report on Israeli violations against women was presented.
- In cooperation with Al Quds Open University, a workshop was held on 28th of March on the situation of Palestinian women. The 50 participants included 20 students.
- A workshop was held on 29th of March on Israeli violations against women and the effect of the war on women. The workshop was held in Sabaya Center/Kufr El Deek and attended by 55 participants, including 24 males.
- Participation in a march organized by the General Union of Palestinian Women and Palestinian centres, with the participation of 500 women. We contributed to the march with 600 dollars and our staff was interviewed on local TV and radio stations such as the Voice of Palestine, Al Manar, Al Sharq

- We also attended the honoring ceremony organized by the Palestinian Women Centre for Research and Documentation, on the 7th of March.

3- Media Education:

Radio and TV shows were held on local channels on issues related to women and VAW. Watan TV: A show on women, health and poverty; Amwaj radio: a show on women and decision making; Al Amal TV: a show on poverty and gender, Palestine TV: women's status in the personal status law and the penal code; Al Quds Educational TV: on the case of child trafficking in Ramallah, Amwaj radio on VAW and INCIST; A German magazine: two articles on women killing in Palestine, Bethlehem radio: two shows on early marriage, Amwaj radio: violations against Palestinian women; Voice of Palestine: on polygamy, Al Hayat newspaper: a report on women killing; Voice of Palestine: an interview with WCLAC activists on women's image in the Egyptian drama in the month of Ramadan.

4- International Campaign against violence:

- Four workshops were conducted in Jenin, Tulkarem, Hebron, and Bidya in cooperation with local women institutions. The main topics addressed were: violence and family protection law, femicide and the penal code and the family protection from violence law.
- We responded to invitations from institutions to talk about the international campaign including a lecture for 50 students from YWCA in Jerusalem on Women's rights and the law as well as a lecture for 30 women on women's rights in cooperation with Qalandia Health Center/Health work committees. This is in addition to activities with the NGO Forum against Violence (Al Muntada) and Media coalition OMQ which were previously described.

5- National Marches:

- We organized and participated in a march against security chaos, on behalf of the consortium of developmental institutions on the 3rd of February.
- Our colleagues in Hebron participated in march against security chaos on the 5th of February.
- We participated in a march against security chaos organized by the national parties in February.
- We participated in a march against infighting and security chaos organized by the Working Women Society in May.

Specific Objective 1

Result 1-2: Production of four awareness and counselling materials

Time frame: January-December 2007

Progress: 150%

WCLAC worked this year on several educational and counselling materials such as:

- The development of a manual on the role of youth in combating violence. This manual was developed in cooperation with the Women Studies Centre and the support of WHO. The manual was piloted in 3 areas: Allar village in Tulkarem, in Hebron city and Ramallah city, benefiting 65 participants distributed equally by gender. Topics covered in the manual included domestic violence, VAW, social health and psychological impacts of violence on the family, particularly on women, economic cost of domestic violence and the role of youth in combating domestic violence.
- The reprinting of the International Declaration against Violence Manual
- Leaflet on sexual abuse in 2000 copies
- We produced 2 TV and 3 radio spots within the campaign on family protection from violence law as well as the first draft of the film on women killing

Specific Objective 1

Result 1-3: Publication of a study on the Coverage of certain issues concerning Palestinian women in three local newspapers.

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 70%

Work continued on the study of media coverage of women and related social and legal issues. A paper was prepared on issues addressed in the study, and a first full draft of the study was completed and distributed within the Centre for review. Two drafts of the study were completed but the study has not been published yet because the recommendation of the review was to improve the quality on the analysis of the data gathered.

Specific Objective 2

Result 2-1: Training of 100 male and female volunteers in women's rights issues.

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 80 %

During the year 2007, 64 male and female new volunteers were trained in women's rights issues. In addition, a group of 40 previous volunteers in Bethlehem and Jericho received training in order to empower them to implement activities in their locations.

WCLAC was able to achieve this through the following activities:

Formation of a follow-up committee engaged in planning the activities for the volunteers.

- 4 preparatory meetings with the volunteers to introduce the groups to the objectives, vision, and programs of WCLAC, the volunteer's manual and the future program.
- Formation of a training team to implement the training courses for volunteers.
- Training courses: There were four training courses conducted for volunteers, divided as follows: two in the north of West Bank in Tulkarem and Salfit and two in the south in Bethlehem and Hebron. The main topics discussed covered various issues including: mechanisms used in the issue of torture against women, human rights law with focus on women, Palestinian laws and legislation, gender, skills in advocacy and lobbying and mechanisms used in analysis and planning activities.

- 16 evaluation meetings were held in 4 regions to plan the implementation of activities and educate volunteers in women's social and legal issues.
- 3 meetings were held to integrate the volunteers in the plans of WCLAC's units and assignment of volunteers among the Centre's activities.

All courses and meetings were documented, and a report is available upon request.

It is worth noting that the actual number of volunteers that have been trained exceeds by far the 40 mentioned here if we take into consideration that Media Forum members are actually volunteers and have received training through WCLAC. However, under this output reference is made to the specific volunteers program within the centre.

Specific Objective 2

Result 2-2: Supporting voluntary activities in 5 locations, three of them new.

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 90%

WCLAC was able to support voluntary activities in more than 5 locations that helped develop and reinforce the capabilities of some of the volunteers trained by the Centre. The activities took place mainly in three areas:

The Hebron Region:

- Three awareness raising and educational meetings were held in the women's centre in Soureef over violence and early marriage. 45 women attended.
- In Khilet Al Miyyet, 2 awareness raising and educational meetings were held at the local council hall. The meeting was attended by 45 women, housewives and beneficiaries of the food basket program at the local council. The most prominent problematic topics that appeared during the meetings were related to deprivation of women from inheritance and polygamy.
- A meeting of orientation with WCLAC on needs analysis and identification of women's expectations was held in the women's centre of Al Aroub refugee camp. The meeting was attended by 12 women and housewives, however, it was noticed that the women did not show attention and motivation for social and legal topics but rather were more interested in requesting basic needs and money.
- In the Bethlehem area two meetings were held to identify the needs and raise the awareness and educate the women in the village of Beit Fajjar over women's rights and violence against women. The first meeting was attended by 35 women, the second meeting by 37 women and the third by 38 women, mostly housewives.
- Another awareness raising and educational meeting was held in the village of Doha. The meeting was attended by 25 women (young ones and housewives)

The Salfit Region:

- A number of preliminary meetings were held in the villages of Rafat and Yasouf to introduce WCLAC and identify the needs of women and their expectations.

- Two awareness raising and educational meetings were held in Yasouf in the premises of the village council in October and November. Topics on violence, prisoners and early marriages were discussed. 25 women attended the meeting.
- Two meetings were held in the village of Rafat over inheritance issues and women's rights and violence against women. The meetings were held in the women's centre in the village. 28 women attended the two meetings.

The Toulkarem Region:

- A number of preliminary meetings with women were held in order to orient them with WCLAC, identify the needs and expectations. The meetings were held in the village's women's centre and were attended by approximately 28 women.
- Two activities were held in the village of Qafeen over early marriage and violence against women in August. 17 women and housewives attended the activities.
- An awareness raising activity was held in the Aras village over inheritance for a group of women in the Aras women's centre in August. The activity was attended by 22 women.

The above activities were meant to be directly linked with helping the volunteers in implementing the social activities. The volunteers have demonstrated a gradual development in the understanding of voluntary work as well as the goals and vision of WCLAC. We were able to reach out to women in marginalized areas that have never been provided with social and legal services. 292 women participated in the meetings. We have planned for 2008 to continue our work in these regions and on these target groups as it has been strongly requested by the audience and the partner organisations with whom we have worked.

Specific Objective 2

Result 2-3: Continue training of previous group of 40 volunteers

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2009

Progress: 50%

Work carried out with the previous group of 40 volunteers this year has encountered a slight delay in the process because the three new groups needed additional training to be ready to merge with the previous groups. However the Capacity Building Unit has managed to achieve the following:

- 2 evaluation meetings with previous Jericho volunteers in order to revise the manual of procedures and plan the future activities.
- Integrate the previous Bethlehem volunteer group with the new group.
- The activity regarding the 3 workshops completion could not be implemented due to lack of time and work overload.

The volunteers have shown full commitment towards the training programs as well as the implementation of their own activities with the support of the Centre.

Specific Objective 2**Result 2-4: Implement incentive system for volunteers.**

Time frame: July- December 2007

Progress: 85 %

WCLAC has been working on a manual for volunteers, which should have been finalized this year. A draft has been prepared but the printing has been delayed because of the work overload within the Unit. It will be printed at the beginning of 2008. The manual will include rules, procedures, expectations, WCLAC code of ethics, and other useful information for volunteers in addition to the structure of the incentive system. Once the manual is finalized, full implementation of the incentive system will take place.

In November 2007 the annual volunteer meeting was held to create a chance for exchanging experiences, listening to obstacles that they might face, and provide them when necessary with personal and professional support.

We also implemented the system of issuing certificates to volunteers following the completion of the training courses and certificates of appreciation in recognition of distinguished efforts and achievements.

Finally, the incentives were given in January 2008 for 12 volunteers, 5 from the previous group received 100\$ and the rest of the new volunteers received 50\$ each. Not all volunteers received the financial incentives, only those who could prove their commitment through documented evidence, i.e meeting minutes, activities with clients etc.

Third Strategic Objective: Build the capacity of relevant official and grassroots organizations that have direct impact on women's issues:**Long-term expected results:**

- 1- Palestinian women in all areas of the West Bank have access to professional social services.
- 2- More coordination and efficiency between institutions dealing with women victims of violence.
- 3- More women are encouraged to seek help.
- 4- Better statistics on the needs of women victims of violence, contributing to better coping strategies.

Specific objectives:

1. Provide support to the Ministry of Social Affairs in developing shelter services in Jericho.
2. Provide support to the Ministry of Social Affairs in developing shelter services in Bethlehem. (This is a specially funded project coordinated and planned with the Italian NGO Differenza Donna which was completed in 2006)
3. Build capacity of grassroots women's organizations in governorates to provide services to women victims of violence.
4. Support referral institutions, such as police, dealing with women victims of violence.
5. Provide legal representation and mediation services for women victims of violence whose problems are not addressed by social support programs

Specific Objective 1**Result 1-1: Continue training 6 staff including members of safe shelters proposed to work in the emergency centre, including a social worker, shelter mothers, and a shelter coordinator.**

Time frame: January-December 2007

Progress: 80%

During 2007, WCLAC continued training of shelter's staff as follows:

- Two meetings took place with the Shelter work team to set the schedule of work shifts and to perform an evaluation of their work.
- Two meetings were held with the WCLAC Finance Department contact person within the Shelter in order to set up the payments and the financial system.
- Shelter staff participated in the 11 meetings held with the Volunteer Group.
- A performance evaluation was carried out on the shelter's coordinator at the end of January 2007. The recommendation was the need to increase her professional training through WCLAC Services Unit. Regular training has been put in place for the Shelter's Coordinator with the Services Unit since March 2007; she has attended courses as well as has taken part in the staff supervising sessions every week.
- The Coordinator of the Shelter (a lawyer) was trained by the Services Unit as such:
 - 1- Participating in 2 sessions monthly of professional supervision for 2 hours each session – also group professional supervision with the Services unit spanning until December 2007.
 - 2- Receiving and following up on 4 legal issues related to arbitrary divorce, custody, alimony, and two types of maintenance.
 - 3- Attending 12 hearing sessions at court.
 - 4- Drafting legal briefs to be followed up by lawyers. The aim is to provide training to draft legal briefs related to issues named above.

The Shelter received 18 women from January 2007 to December 2007. 4 minors, 1 over 40, and the rest aged between 18 and 30. Among them, 3 were running away from familial sexual abuse, 2 were coming from jail, and the rest escaping their home because of several forms of domestic violence. The cases were referred to the Shelter as such: 8 from WCLAC Services Unit, 9 from the police, and 1 from "Women for Life" organisation located in Bidhya.

The details about the women's profiles and outcomes of the cases are documented in the Shelter's reports and are available upon request.

The number of cases coming to the Shelter demonstrates that the reputation of the Shelter providing quality services is growing. We believe that the impact the Shelter has had on women's lives, the reputation it acquired the last year of activities, as well as the major effort we made to create collaborations with other emergency assistance structures, have helped the women in distress and institutions in contact with these women to be aware of our existence.

All women welcomed at the Shelter were provided with protection and support in developing their self-confidence and analysing their problems and needs. It was noted in the internal reports the efficiency of the housemothers as well as the commitment of the staff in the different time shifts.

There is no documented failure in providing every woman who entered the Shelter with appropriate support. Was also demonstrated our ability to continue to offer services in the Shelter assuring high quality of services and capacity to receive and assist all cases.

Specific Objective 1

Result 1-2: Renew the agreement with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA), the Arab Society Project and to introduce the services of the emergency shelter

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 75%

At the level of strategic cooperation with MOSA, three meetings took place between WCLAC's Deputy Director with MOSA representatives discussing the MOU renewal and the modification and approval of the bylaws of the shelter. Also five meetings were held with the Deputy Minister of Social Affairs discussing the development of a national strategic plan for protection and empowerment of women victims of violence. A national proposal was developed to raise funds from the donors that will include safe houses throughout Palestine (Nablus, Bethlehem, Jericho and Gaza).

In this proposal also, a plan was included to establish a professional centre to train and develop professionals in the field of women's and girls' protection. Added to this is the effort being made to establish a research centre for women's studies in general and for the study of women's protection in particular. This centre is one of the biggest projects that we are currently working to materialize. The proposal also includes the formation and development of bylaws for a national committee that will oversee policy development and implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of all national activities regarding the protection of women.

Because of the complex political situation, relations with several MOSA departments have been affected thus the MOU between WCLAC and the MOSA has not been renewed as of date. Because there were several changes of Ministers, our contact person within MOSA was absent for three months, and the MOSA management structure was not clear, primary MOSA contact person had to be changed. These changes have required establishing new positive working relationships with MOSA.

Despite the fact that no written agreement has been signed, WCLAC and MOSA agreed to continue cooperating at a more informal level. Work and cooperation also continued with the Ministry to provide protection for women and girls at a national level. MOSA has been cooperating when needed by providing basic food supplies and health insurance for Shelter's clients, continuing in the spirit of the main agreement signed in the past. For example, when one guest was ill during her stay at the Shelter and was suffering from chronic health problems, the Ministry covered her health insurance and made provisions to provide her with adequate treatment.

It has been agreed verbally by the two parties that an external evaluation will be carried out to assess the new experience of cooperation in the operation of the shelter. This evaluation is expected to happen in 2008.

MOSA is an essential stakeholder in the issue of protection of women and girl victims of violence because they have the power to implement national plans. Accordingly, they have to develop and pass policies, help ensure sustainability of services, and liaise with other state institutions, e.g. other ministries, the police, etc. all in service to

women victims of violence. In addition, WCLAC sees MOSA as the responsible body for such work, thus the ones to be held accountable for the protection of women.

Specific Objective 1

Result 1-3: Train 40 health professionals qualified to handle cases of violence

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress 65%

Two training sessions for 35 members of health-related institutions were held in May and June comprising an 8-day, 40-hour programme of courses. The objective was to learn to identify and handle specific cases and how to deal with women in harmful situations, with an emphasis on issues such as developing a gender-sensitive perspective within the workers and their awareness on women-specific matters. The institutions that participated were: UNRWA (Health Department), UPMRC, Health Worker Committee, Family Planning Association, Palestinian Red Crescent, and the Ministry of Health. The main outcome of this training was the identification of a major obstacle in pursuing our objectives: many of the workers in health care institutions perceive the definition of health as purely medical. They were then introduced to a new approach for psychological approaches related to women's cases and to the concept of "well being," an overall sense of wellness including physical, mental, and emotional.

These workshops targeted essential institutional stakeholders in the health service provision as well as primary health service providers all with the intention of developing institutional and individual capacity of health service providers to give more professional support to women and girl victims of violence.

Specific Objective 1

Result 1-4: Developing systems and policies (bylaws) for the Shelter.

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress 65%

One meeting took place between our Deputy Director and the Head of Women's Department and it was orally agreed that the MOU should be renewed and some rules should be modified. No written agreement is in place as per the several tensions between the parties to which we have referred to earlier.

Three meetings were held with shelter's staff and volunteers to discuss the rules and procedures and prepare new forms to be printed in December. The 200 copies of the manual have not been printed until today because they need to be modified.

The 500 pamphlets will be printed after they are renewed. The application forms for the clients are now being printed inside the Shelter as planned.

The results expected related to modifying the rules and bylaws of the Shelter in collaboration with MOSA have not been completed for a main reason: no agreement has been found between WCLAC and MOSA until now, the planned modification then must be postponed until a future understanding between the parties, especially as the MOSA has expressed the will to reach an agreement in the future. However internal meetings took place to discuss the changes needed and the printouts will finally take place as planned.

Specific Objective 2 – Shelter services in Bethlehem

The Shelter in Bethlehem was handed to MOSA in May 2007 and a separate report on this issue is available upon request.

Specific Objective 3 – Build Capacity of grassroots women’s organizations to provide services to women victims of violence.

In 2007, WCLAC contracted a consultant to survey women organizations in Tulkarem area. Visits to five organizations were conducted, and the consultant submitted a report indicating points of strength and weakness of every organization visited. Based on the report, WCLAC staff visited three organizations and with the consultant set forth the indicators for the final selection criteria. A decision about the organization was made as we selected An Najdah organization in Tulkarem. Meanwhile training and follow up activities with “Women for Life” Society were continued during this reporting period.

This specific objective is particularly important as grass-roots organizations are empowered and trained to provide services to women victims of violence. As the Centre's resources are limited, and thus services cannot be provided to all women in all places, the work with grassroots organizations is of particular importance. Additionally, this has helped WCLAC to remain in touch with the popular bases through people's centred capacity building programs, the transfer of knowledge, and the mutual learning experience. Furthermore, the work conducted has helped promote good practices and higher levels of awareness among larger sectors of the community.

Below are detailed our achievements per result, and for each of the organisations: Women for Life and Al-Najdah Society.

A: Women for Life Society

Specific Objective 3

Result 3-1: Train the staff of “Women for Life” Society

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 100%

Following are the main activities accomplished in 2007 regarding the training of the staff:

Meetings:

11 meetings were held with the Administrative Board and the staff of the Society to follow up on the work of the Society, allow the Administrative Board and the staff to share problems faced in their work, to empower and strengthen all staff to serve the best interest of women in the area, to discuss the vision mission statements and objectives of the Society, and to prepare for the election of a new Administrative Board. During these meetings, the existence of effective Administrative Board and staff members with a clear vision and conviction in women's rights has been stressed.

This was highlighted during the discussions and the preparations for the election of a new Administrative Board.

An internal evaluation of the Society's staff was conducted by WCLAC. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the level of capabilities of staff and the effectiveness of follow up and internal work mechanisms to build the capabilities of the organization. The results of the internal evaluation will be taken into consideration in the activities to be performed in the next stage. The evaluation also addressed the role of the new administrative board in practicing its powers and authorities.

Supervision sessions:

Monthly supervision sessions were held during 2007 (12 sessions) at the Women For Life offices in Bidya. The social worker and the lawyer participated in these meetings together with WCLAC's capacity building staff responsible for professional supervision. The purpose of the meetings was to review the reports and the plans of the social worker and the lawyer, review the community action plan, train the social worker at WCLAC and finally to discuss cases followed up by the social worker and the lawyer. These supervision sessions benefited the quality of services provided by the Society during 2007: 182 women received social and/or legal services by supervised staff.

Training:

- The social worker received 300 hours of training with WCLAC Services Unit. The training focused on individual counseling, filling out the questionnaire, methods of conducting the interview, writing the reports on the individual cases, and identification of files in terms of work procedures. The social worker completed her training and was able to follow up successfully on cases referred to WCLAC as well as the Society itself, under the supervision of WCLAC relevant staff.
- The lawyer and the social worker participated in collective supervision sessions conducted by a supervision specialist from WCLAC's Services unit for a total of 60 hours. The outcome of this training is the ability to prepare a therapeutic plan and follow up on the cases, in addition to the ability of dealing with cases in a professional and objective manner. The training developed their ability to work with a feminist approach toward women's issues. This became apparent through the follow up and the legal and social counseling sessions as well as their developed capacity to manage different situations particularly in emergency cases.
- Gender related training course for the administrative board and staff (15 participants) of Women for Life Society. The training was conducted during 15 hours by the Capacity Building Unit. The purpose of the course was to introduce the concept of gender and the difference between gender and the biological nature, provide orientation on gender roles, as well as provide orientation on gender needs.
- Training course on strategic planning for the Administrative Board and the staff of the Society. The 3-day training course was based on building the capabilities of the staff in the field of strategic planning, and it included information about planning, steps of planning, and the problems that the Society encountered in strategic planning issues in the past, as well as the drafting of the specific and overall objectives of the Society's work.

- Training course (15 hours) on report writing for the Administrative Board and staff.
- The topics that were addressed during the course were: definition of a report, types of reports, to whom the reports are submitted, the importance of reports, the different sections of the report, organizing and coordinating the report.

Workshops:

- 67 community workshops and educational meetings were held in 2007 in 4 villages (Qeera, Zawwyeh, Bidya and Iskaka) and benefited 100 women. The main topics discussed were violence against women and laws related to women. The program was designed and implemented by WCLAC. The topics addressed in the program were: Women’s Rights, Personal Status law, and Criminal Law. Please refer to Annex 3 of this report for further details.
- Our capacity Building Unit together with the Society's social worker and lawyer conducted a community activity in Zawwyeh village for a Women Society. The theme of the meeting was divorce. The purpose was to evaluate the awareness workshops that are implemented by the lawyer and the social worker and assess the capabilities of the staff in the field of raising the awareness of the community. It became apparent through this evaluation that there is a need to train the staff on communication skills to convey the vision and the mission to the target group and that WCLAC should focus on these skills in its training program.

Specific Objective 3

Result 3-2: Review the financial and administrative system of “Women for Life” Society

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 0

The activities regarding this result were postponed to 2008 until the new Administrative Board of the Society is elected.

Specific Objective 3

Result 3-3: Develop external relations for the Society

This was completed in 2006. The society was able to initiate the formation of a feminist coalition of 10 women's organisations in Salfit district that will support and endorse activities in favour of the women in the region. The Society’s website will be developed through funding from a new donor with help from the Centre.

Specific Objective 3

Result 3-4: Develop programs for “Women for Life” Society

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 100%

Regarding this result, WCLAC assisted in developing programs for "Women for Life" Society as follows:

- Through our work with the Society, the 2008 plan was prepared and the 2007 report was drafted. We also assisted and supported the organization in submitting proposals for two projects related to providing legal and social services and providing legal, social, and psychological services to be submitted to different donors.
- We participated with the Society in activities implemented in their area such as the graduation ceremony of 50 participants from the awareness-raising workshops, as well as the closing ceremony for the community awareness raising workshops (UNIFEM project) at Sbaya center in the village of Salfit. WCLAC participated also in the first Society's festival in Bidya which was planned and implemented by the Society. The festival lasted for three days and was an artistic, recreational, and cultural festival for the whole governorate with several different groups within it. The festival was implemented under the auspices of Salfit governor and the Municipality of Bidya.

B: The “Al-Najdah” Society

Specific Objective 3

Result 3-1: Train the staff of “Al-Najdah” Society

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 80%

Meetings:

4 meetings were conducted between the Capacity Building Unit and the Administrative Board and staff of the Society. The purpose of the meetings was to discuss the objectives behind working with Al-Najda Society, the Capacity Building Unit's work plan with the Society, to discuss the role of the Administrative Board and its importance, to discuss the problems encountered by An Najda Society, to identify the needs and problems of the women in Tulkarem, as well as to discuss the importance of working and addressing women's issues in the area.

Training courses:

- A 3-day training course on the vision and mission of the organization was conducted at the Society with a total amount of 15 training hours. The training course targeted the Administrative Board and staff of Al-Najda Society. The objective of the training course was to reach a clear and agreed upon feminist vision, mission, and specific objectives for Al-Najda Society. The result of the training was the agreement on a vision for the organization and the drafting of the Society's mission.
- Training of the lawyer: Al-Najda's lawyer was connected with the lawyer from the Women For Life Society through field training. A training plan was prepared which included accompanying the other lawyer during visits to courts, follow up with police and public prosecution, and legal mechanisms.
- The Capacity Building Unit assisted Al-Najda Society in preparing its annual work plan and the annual report. WCLAC helped in preparing the annual plan for 2008 as well as the Society's report particularly the report of the lawyer and the social worker.

Supervision sessions:

Four supervisory sessions were held at Al-Najda organization's offices. The purpose of these sessions was to: review the reports and plans of the social worker and lawyer, review the community outreach work plan, train the social worker at WCLAC, train the lawyer with the Women for Life Society's lawyer, discuss cases that were being followed up by the social worker and the lawyer, and provide professional advice and consultation to the social worker and the lawyer. Through the supervision sessions, it was possible to identify the need of the organization's staff for further development of their counseling sessions management skills, particularly the main themes of focus during such sessions, such as mechanisms of receiving the information from the clients, methods of intervention, and examination of supportive and non-supportive frameworks, and other skills that require concentration and further development during the year 2008.

Workshops:

- 3 workshops for the Administrative Board, members of the General Assembly, and organization's staff were conducted and were focused on Palestinian laws and legislation and violence against women. Staff from the Lobbying and Advocacy Unit and the Capacity Building unit from WCLAC conducted the training. The purpose of these workshops can be described as follows: to raise the awareness of the Administrative Board and the General Assembly on Women's issues and to discuss women-related laws (Personal Status Law, Criminal Law).
- 8 awareness raising workshops (24 hours) were conducted for 17 students from Al Quds Open University in Tulkarem. The workshops were held at Al-Najdah's offices and focused on topics such as domestic violence, negotiation skills, types and conditions of marriages, social problems, and gender.
- 4 awareness raising workshops were conducted at Izzbet Shufa village. The workshops targeted 19 housewives. The first workshop examined the needs of the women in this village. The second workshop discussed the issue of early marriage and its different effects. The other two workshops discussed different types of marriages and the health-related, psychological, and social effects.

<p>Specific Objective 3 Result 3-2: Review the financial and administrative system of “Al-Najdah” Society</p>	<p>Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007 Progress: 70 %</p>
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Two out of three planned meetings were held between Al-Najdah staff and WCLAC's accountant. The purpose of these meetings was to establish a financial and administrative system for Al-Najdah Society. During the meetings several financial issues related to the Society were discussed, including methods of managing and announcing tenders, methods of financial disbursement, review of invoices, financial statements and society expenditures. As a result, the society initiated special financial statements for expenses, has now a basic simplified financial system, and has acquired knowledge about soliciting and opening tenders.

Specific Objective 3**Result 3-3: Develop external relations for the “Al-Najdah” Society**

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 80%

This result was achieved through introductory meetings, the purpose being to introduce the Society and its legal and social services to women in the governorate as well as to network with institutions to create a unified feminist entity in the governorate.

- A workshop was conducted with a community based organization in Shufa village with the participation of 20 women. The purpose of the workshop was to introduce Al-Najda Society and the types of services provided by it, to announce to the women in the area the possibility of accessing legal and social services, and to develop a relation with the community based organizations.
- The social worker and the lawyer visited several governmental and non-governmental organizations. Among the governmental institutions visited were: Ministries of Social Affairs, Local Governance, Labor, and Culture, in addition to the Governorate and the Ministry of Interior. The non-governmental organizations visited were: PRCS, YMCA, Development Center for Palestinian Women, Al Fajr TV, Working Women Society, Center for Peace and Democracy, Women Committees for Social Work, Al Ayyam, Al Quds, and Al Hayat Al Jadida daily newspapers. As a result of the meetings, several cases were referred to the Society. Also, the organizations visited cooperated with the Society in community activities through the participation of a number of governmental institutions (PLC Members, governorate representatives, and Ministry of Interior) and non-governmental organizations (Development Center for Palestinian Women, Working Women Society, Center for Peace and Democracy) in addition to coverage of the events by Al Fajr TV, and reporters of Al –Ayyam and Al Hayat Al Jadida, particularly for events held to celebrate fighting violence against women week . Finally, another outcome was the implementation of joint community awareness-raising activities conducted by Al- Najdah Society at its headquarters in cooperation with the Working Women's Society.

Specific Objective 3**Result 3-4: Develop programs for “the “Al-Najdah” Society**

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 90%

The Society, in cooperation with WCLAC Lobbying and Advocacy Unit, conducted an event on the occasion of Fighting Violence against Women week at the hall of the Tulkarem Chamber of Commerce. Al-Najda Society undertook fully all logistical preparations for the event in addition to the welcoming notes and the presentation of the event. It was the first official activity for A-Najda Society in the area and the first in cooperation with WCLAC. It posed a challenge for the Society's staff to implement a central event when it is still in the stage of introducing itself and its activities and services. It was also especially challenging given the theme of the event, namely violence against women, which is a sensitive topic that cannot be easily addressed in the community. Another result was announcing the existence of the Society and its social/legal services to women in the area in front of a large number of organizations.

WCLAC also contributed in developing the infrastructure of the Society, including renovations of the Society's facilities, as well as the furnishing and equipping of the social worker and the lawyer's office to properly accommodate and receive clients and cases. WCLAC bought also stationary and two workstations for the Society.

Fourth Specific objective: Support referral institutions, such as police, to deal with women victims of violence.

Specific Objective 4

Result 4-1: Train staff of referral institutions.

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 80%

1- Police Workshop:

A central workshop was conducted with 33 policemen/women from six governorates in the West Bank. The objective was to discuss and improve the internal police procedures in handling cases of women in distress, introduce the Shelter's activities and discuss the Draft of referral system. The direct result of the workshop was the creation of the Draft of internal procedures that discussed matters such as dealing with women's cases, special handling as well as how to refer the cases if appropriate.

The police representatives that were chosen to participate were members of the criminal investigation department, interrogators because these are the members who are directly involved with cases of victims of violence. The training and workshop is intended to introduce gender sensitivity to their investigative methodologies, and in addition to hoping to influence their own often patriarchal attitudes towards women.

2- Train and qualify 40 health workers to handle cases of violence (Manual of Reproductive Health)

This is a new important component that was launched this year and involves the creation of professional relations with organizations that provide medical services, to train their staff in dealing with cases of domestic violence.

Two training sessions for 35 members of health-related institutions were held in May and June comprising an 8 day program of 40 hour courses. The objective was to learn to identify and handle specific cases and how to deal with women in difficulty. Some issues as building a gender vision within the workers and develop their awareness on women-specific matters were discussed during the course. The Institutions that participated were: UNRWA (Health Department), UPMRC, Health Worker Committee, Family Planning Association, Palestinian Red Crescent, and the Ministry of Health. The main outcome of this training was the identification of a major obstacle in pursuing our objectives: many of the workers in health care institutions perceive the definition of health as purely medical. They were then introduced to a new approach for psychological women's related cases.

These workshops targeted institutions that represent essential stakeholders in the health service provision as well as primary health service providers. The intention was to develop institutional as well as the professional capacity of individual health service providers to give more professional support to victims of violence. The participants have received tools in order to better serve specific women's needs that they will be able to apply in their daily activities. They have also been introduced to

the Shelter's activities in order to be able to refer cases to us if necessary. The obstacles they encounter have also been identified within their own organisation in order to work towards an efficient handling of women's specific cases. These include internal procedural structures and lack of training in women's related issues. On another hand, we have managed through these activities to put in place an important new network of health-related institutions that can collaborate towards our objectives in the future.

3- Support of new Social work graduates and counsellors employed by the Ministry of Education (unplanned project)

This project came as a result of cooperation between WCLAC and UNFPA and though unplanned, it was decided that influencing newly credentialed social workers and counsellors early in their careers towards feminist human services practice would be a very worthy goal. The program involved the designing and implementing of a series of training workshops and courses with fresh university graduates who specialized as social workers in Hebron, Jerusalem, Nablus, and Gaza. The program also involved support to the department of counselling within the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, as well as their involvement in the training and evaluation activities. The program involved practical training as the new graduates were able to work in public schools for four months under the supervision of the school counsellors (a total of 12,000 training hours for the graduates). The project was completed during the first half of the year. A detailed report on this project is available and can be provided upon request.

This result is crucial in developing professional skills among staff of referral institutions in handling cases of violence against women, and providing high-quality counselling services. Also as an effective referral tool. Additionally, this would help promote more supportive cultural attitudes towards women's right and issues.

Specific Objective 5

Result 5-1: Provide social and legal services for 160 women

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 90%

This result constitutes a very important core component of our work achieved by the Services Unit.

In 2007 WCLAC was able to provide social and legal services to 260 women (111 in Ramallah, 29 in Jerusalem, 120 in Bethlehem/Hebron Area).

Additionally, 115 women received a one-time counselling session and 10 other cases were referred to a lawyer in the North for follow-up.

The total number of legal cases received by the unit was then 388, focusing on the legal aspect and court demands. However, 280 cases were officially taken to court through women's representation. As for the rest of the cases they were addressed through bridging and reconciliation with the other party to ensure women's rights without going to courts. For the cases that were taken to courts, the technical assistance included preparing the case files, explanation of step-by-step procedures

and regulations of filing claims, and in a few cases legal representation of women before courts. This method was implemented as part of empowering women when they face possible relationships with the court system. Additionally the Centre finalized a manual on alimony which comes in the framework of awareness raising materials and the technical assistance provided.

109 files of beneficiaries have been closed by the end of 2007 in the middle and southern areas. They were closed after judgments were issued or after conciliation and returned to the marital home.

Finally, six of the cases were referred to the Shelter as they needed the services of a safe home. A social worker and a lawyer were designated to follow up on their cases with the police to ensure that verdicts are enforced.

To systematize the tracking of cases and to gather important data concerning women and families served, WCLAC designed a comprehensive questionnaire intended to gather data about demographics, nature of problems, service plan, implementation, and outcome, and follow-up. This system is being computerized and data available for various uses.

Details and analysis of the types of cases and the specific problems in the areas of legal and social counselling services are detailed in Annex 2 of this report.

Specific Objective 5

Result 5-2: Provide 70 legal and social counselling (one-time sessions)

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 120%

The number of on-time consultations offered (social and legal consultations) were as follows: 80 for the middle area, 73 for the South, a total of 115. Eleven of them were transferred to the Services Unit.

The nature of the consultation issues that women raise are legal and social consultations focusing on inheritance issues, legal conflicts, sexual issues and extramarital relations, and family problems related to children. These were not transferred to the Services Unit's files because the beneficiaries have received the necessary consultation or were referred to specialized institutions. Some legal issues were not followed up according to the beneficiary's demand because of the long legal procedures and complexity at courts, sometimes taking as long as 3 years. Or because of high court fees or because the beneficiary decided not to continue with the case fearing of losing other familial rights or fearing of being threatened.

In spite of our attempts to support the beneficiaries to continue demanding their rights, our policy stresses that women should have the decision whether to continue or to stop and we have to abide by their decision.

This is in addition to economic reasons, since some of the cases such as inheritance and rights require a court fee reaching 60,000 NIS, which they can not afford and WCLAC is unable to provide. Hence women are forced to give up the case and limit the intervention to consultation only.

Specific Objective 5

Result 5-3: Conduct a Community awareness campaign

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 85%

1) During 2007, 127 community aware sessions were conducted by the Services Unit staff. The main topics addressed were icebreaking, teambuilding, concentration exercises, knowing oneself (Johari window), types of marriage, violence, domestic violence, sexual violence, sexual abuse in legal terms, marital relations, rights and duties, customary marriage, family relations, polygamy, wife rape, unacceptable behaviour in family lives, women's demand for their share in inheritance, adolescence, terms of marriage contract, personal status law and penal code.

The group sessions were divided by area as follows:

Middle area: Mazraa Qibliya, Teacher's College, Palestine Technical College, Ein Dyuk/ Jericho, Qarawa Bani Zaid, Betunia, Beit Anan, Shoufat Camp/Jerusalem, Baladna Cultural Center/ Ramallah, Palestinian Counseling Center/ Jerusalem.

North area: Budros , Kufr Al-Dik

South area: Sheikh Neighborhood/ Hebron, Health Work Committees/ Hebron, Beit Ommar Women's Center/ Hebron, Harby and Om Ammar Schools/ North Hebron, PARC in Artas and Wadi Rahal/ Bethlehem, PARC in Shawawra and Zaatara/Bethlehem, Zuhur Al-Amal/ Bethlehem.

2) Individual sessions conducted in Hebron area:

5 individual sessions were held in response to requests from local institutions in Arrub camp, Dura city, Zaherya city and Halhoul city. They addressed the following topics: women and Personal Status Law, terms of marriage contract, marital relations, women and poverty.

3) 10 awareness sessions were conducted on human rights and women's rights in Hebron University and 10 in Abu Dis (Al Quds) University. A needs assessment session was held with students leading to the development of a program on women's rights as human rights, taking into consideration the academic and other characteristics of participants.

Hebron University:

10 sessions were held with female students from education and counselling departments. 15 students attended sessions on women's rights, international agreements, international protection mechanisms, local laws related to violence, personal status law, gender discrimination in applying the laws, communication skills and counselling skills. Following the sessions, 5 students applied to volunteer with us. Also, we used training methods such as slide presentations, flip charts, working in small groups, case studies, in addition to written and oral evaluation.

Abu Dis University:

The training course was coordinated with the legal clinic and attended by 15-20 law students. The course was made of 10 sessions totalling 21 hours. Issues addressed included: violence and gender, women in the international law, international protection mechanisms, local laws (personal status and legislations related to violence), discrimination against women in the application of these laws, and laws that protect women from violence. Training methods included slide presentations,

PowerPoint presentations, case studies, flip charts, and various animating exercises. References used in the training were women's rights manual, international agreements, as well as various books, and brochures published by WCLAC.

4) A brochure titled 'Every Woman has the Right to Life' was developed. The brochure was printed towards the end of the year and only a small number was distributed to 2 groups in 2 awareness raising sessions. It will be distributed widely to all planned activities and sessions in 2008. .

5) Training materials used in the awareness raising and training sessions at universities were compiled in a training manual to be available for other institutions. It includes training in legal rights, international conventions, and social economic and political rights of women. A social component will be added to the manual before sending it to the printing house.

6) We have started working in developing a syllabus to be included in courses on law and social work in Birzeit, Abu Dis and Al-Najah universities, Dar Al Tifl (Al Quds University), and Bethlehem University. For example, in Abu Dis University a suggestion was made to incorporate the training materials, especially on violence and international conventions, within law school courses. This would require from us to convince the university administration. Other issues to be added may include gender, counselling skills, qualities of a counsellor, and counselling and intervention mechanisms in family and domestic violence cases.

Specific Objective 5

Result 5-4: Work with officials, judges, lawyers and social workers at courts

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 65%

Coordination sessions through one or two meetings were conducted with officials of:

- Governmental institutions, including the police, governor office, courts, as well as Social Affairs (continuous coordination), office of Chief Judge, Alimony Fund, Family.
- NGOs, such as Women's Technical Affairs Committee, Social Work Committees, UNRWA, Women's Programs Department, Medical Relief, PARC, NGO Anti-Violence Forum (Al Muntada).

Moreover, contacts were made with other institutions as required by the nature of work, and international and regional organizations, such as the American Consulate and the Jordanian Women Union.

The awareness workshop for 12 female judges was not conducted because judges were busy with other training activities. In spite of our multiple contacts with the Higher Judicial Council, we were unable yet to make an appointment with the Head of the Council to obtain support in implementing the workshop, Therefore we plan to conduct an intensive workshop in 2008. In fact, the courts have gone through long periods of strike causing accumulation of cases, which required intensive work on part of the staff. In addition, new judges were appointed, including females, which required the provision of training. The political situation, the division of powers and the lack of rule of law have adversely affected the judicial status and undermined public trust in the judiciary.

Two workshops were conducted with the staff of the Family Reconciliation and Counselling Department at Shari'a courts in Ramallah. Topics discussed included: women's rights and human rights, counselling skills and mechanisms, and how to work with women in solving family conflicts. It should be noted that the Department's staff members have different academic backgrounds other than counselling. Therefore, it was necessary to improve their counselling skills and introduce them to the ethics and qualities that should be used by a counsellor. It was also necessary to present the concept of human rights to this group, since they work in religious courts applying legal provisions of the Personal Status Law. Although it was difficult to deal with this group especially men, the meetings went well. Oral and written evaluations were made reflecting a real need to work in depth with this group on the same topics. Therefore, we were asked as a specialized organization to provide supervision to the staff of family reconciliation department. Now they approached us for help in working with women. Sometimes they invite us to attend reconciliation sessions.

A meeting was held with the Chief Judge, when we presented the importance of maintaining computerized records in Shari'a courts especially in regards to marriage, divorce and other transactions. The Chief Judge informed us they have an incomplete study in this aspect, which we referred to a specialist for amendment. The Chief Judge's office had an expectation that we would provide them with computers and develop the network. This was beyond our project means.

Specific Objective 5
Result 5-5: Develop a legal self-help guide on alimony for wives and children
Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007
Progress: 100%

As a result of our work with women, we found that it is in the woman's interest to go to court in cases of alimony without having a lawyer, as the case may end in one session with the husband attending without a lawyer as long as the woman does not have one. The case would be solved and the woman would obtain her right to alimony at the first court session. Therefore we decided to develop a guide on alimony to help women to go to court without a lawyer. To achieve this goal, we keep contact with the women. If the husband assigns a lawyer, our lawyer would accompany the woman to the court and ensure that justice is being pursued.

The material was prepared by WCLAC lawyers and presented for discussions to all the staff. The staff from the Services Unit developed all contents including illustrations, which were developed by a staff member to provide very simple and clear representation from a feminist and women's rights perspective. A critical review of the first draft was conducted and changes proposed by WCLAC clients, lawyers, judges and social workers who are aware of WCLAC's objectives and the needs of women in crisis. The first draft was also discussed with Shari'a judges and external lawyers. Their feedback and comments were incorporated. The final version of the guide was prepared for layout and printing. After developing the final draft with all comments and feedbacks from all lawyers and judges, the draft guide was sent to a consultant in order to simplify the language and make it understandable to women irrespective of their background and to carry out final text editing. The material was sent for print in November and was ready by early January 2008.

During 2008, the guide will be distributed and 2 workshops will be conducted to publicize it. The distribution of the guide will take place in all areas especially in places of women's gathering such as courts, health centers and beauty salons.

Specific Objective 5

Result 5-6: Conduct a media campaign

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 100%

Several achievements can be underlined regarding the Media Campaign:

- We participated into the Media Forum on designing a strategy for 2007 and 2008 to convey messages to decision-makers and the public.
- 4 articles were prepared (targeting the public and addressing women's rights and human rights issues) on:

1. Abuse between the culture and the law addressing the concept of abuse, the perception of violated women in the law, discrimination against women in the law, and the reasons preventing women from resorting to courts to convict the offender.
2. Women's rights in the personal status law and the contradiction in the law which grants women the right to demand their rights on one hand and undermines such rights on the other.
3. Difficulties to prove divorce as in many cases a woman is divorced and does not have proof. When she goes to court to obtain proof, the husband denies this fact and keeps her 'on hold' (not married and not divorced).
4. The concept and reasons of family disintegration and ways of management and counselling.

The article on proving divorce was published on the electronic news website Ma'an and Aman website/International Institute for Solidarity with Women. The remaining articles were sent to the local newspapers Al Ayyam, Hayat and Al Quds and have not been published yet.

- We produced four TV spots addressed to the public, one per quarter to promote the importance of human rights and women's rights.
- Four TV episodes were produced by Al Quds Educational TV and Maan Network on the following issues:
 - One episode on inheritance, in response to our perception of the need for such topic especially through the awareness sessions with women in Mazraa Qibliya.
 - A second episode on alimony fund which was created to help women but which most of women were not aware of.
 - A third episode on the alimony guide to inform women about it.
 - A fourth episode on women's suffering in Shari'a and civil courts.
- An agreement was signed with Al Quds Educational TV to produce 4 TV shows on women's rights. The shows were aired through local TV stations in the West Bank: Al Amal TV/Hebron, Bethlehem TV, Watan TV/Ramallah, Nablus and Jenin. They were all aired at the same time, at 8 pm on Thursdays under the title ' Women Under the Law'. All shows included footings of interviews with experts and the public and live testimonies of persons talking about their problems in front of the camera.

- We were invited by all Palestinian TV and Radio stations to appear on talk shows and news programs to discuss women's rights, violence against women, and Personal Status Law. We participated in TV and radio episodes in Hebron, Ramallah and Bethlehem on issues related to women's rights, violence, women's killing, and domestic violence. These stations included Bethlehem radio, Hebron radio, Amwaj radio, Ajyal radio, Amal TV, Palestine TV, and Al Quds educational TV. In addition, a live program offering legal and social consultations was aired on Tuesdays for 2 hours hosting a lawyer and a social worker. WCLAC is considered a media resource for women's issues and rights, hence WCLAC received invitations to participate in several media outlets to talk on women and the law, discriminatory laws related to violence and personal status, violence against women inside and outside the family and women's killing.
- We produced several TV and radio programs, including a consultation program in April and May on Tuesdays, 9 pm -12 am on Dream radio/Hebron, which offered legal and social consultations on family relations, adolescence, rape, incest, women's killing and customary marriage. The program received live calls from the audience; it was aired in 8 episodes. In addition, we participated in a radio show in Amwaj on forced marriage and girls' trafficking, in a show on Voice of Palestine addressing legislation in relation to violence and in recording reports in the program Ahwaluna. We also participated in an episode on Palestine TV on special conditions in marriage contracts. We took part in a talk show on Bethlehem radio on femicide and another one on incest. These programs were aired live and targeted youth. Furthermore, we appeared on Al Amal TV/Hebron to talk about working women on the occasion of the 8th of March and another time to talk about women and the occupation. This is in addition to other programs on Amwaj radio, Jericho, Educational TV and Nablus radio.

Such events clearly illustrates the confidence of media institutions in WCLAC's role in public education and our staff's ability to address such issues. These issues were also presented in the press as we offered legal and social advice to journalists to be added in their articles in the local press. We participated in newspapers Al Hayat, Al Ayyam, Voice of Women, and Ma'an electronic network.

Finally, we offered 6 workshops to media students at Birzeit University and 3 workshops at Al Najah University/ Nablus on feminist approaches in coverage of women's issues.

Fourth Strategic Objective: Expose, locally and internationally, the practices of the Israeli occupation violations against women's rights.

Long-term expected results

1. UN international and national human rights and women's rights organizations have a reliable source of information on Palestinian women.
2. International community is more aware of the social implications of the occupation on Palestinian women and intervene on their behalf.
3. Dialogue on human rights principles and women's rights is stimulated within the Palestinian community.
4. Networks with international and national organizations allow for sharing of information and experiences which help develop strategies for their work.

Specific objectives 1: To monitor and expose the Israeli violations against the International Humanitarian Law.

Specific Objective

Result 1-1: Training of 10 women on documenting the violations.

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 150%

A very useful training course was conducted for researchers, whose impact shall be measured through follow-up of the quality of written affidavit, and comparison of researchers work before and after the course. 20 researchers were trained instead of the expected 10. A meeting was held on 18 December 2007 with the committee to set the main criteria for evaluation, to be able to measure progress for each researcher, identify weaknesses and enhance strengths.

Specific Objective 1

Result 1-2: Publish reports submitted to CEDAW.

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 100%

WCLAC is developing a database that will constitute a reliable source of information in preparing international reports, particularly relating to the CEDAW. To that effect, the Centre contacted research and documentation institutions to coordinate reciprocal acquisition of studies for the years 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2007. The publications were compiled by the Centre's librarian. All publications were classified and coded. They are ready to be used when the time of writing of the report comes.

Specific Objective 1

Result 1-3: Issue a report on Palestinian women's experience of suffering under occupation

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 100%

WCLAC finalized a comprehensive study on the impact of Israeli violations of the International Humanitarian Law on Palestinian women. The report was presented to the public through three workshops in Nablus, Ramallah and Hebron.

Specific Objective 1**Result 1-4: Study “The Exclusion of Women from the Protection of International Human Rights Law: Experiences from the Arab World”**

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 85%

The work continued on finalizing the concept paper initiated in 2005. Several meetings were held with the legal researcher to provide her with the information needed, addressing questions, providing legal studies, the Criminal legal texts relevant to the study, review and study of the Personal Status Laws, Criminal Laws, Citizenship Laws, and the Constitutions of Egypt, Jordan, and Lebanon for any changes or amendments.

Some of the obstacles that WCLAC faced in preparing this study could be summarized as follows:

- The original concept paper had old information that needed to be updated.
- Lack of internet resources with information regarding some of the specific aspects of the study.
- The general context at the time of the initial drafting of the concept paper does not meet the current needs and objectives of the study.

Researcher Lyn Welchman declined working on this study as she has taken up a new post. Consequently, we read the study and agreed that we will work on the necessary supplements. Hence, this will constitute one of our tasks for 2008, as our Director will write the section about the Arab World and we will seek additional support for the writing of the section that looks at cultural sensitivity/specificity and international standards.

Specific Objective 1**Result 1-5: Attend one international conference on women issues**

Time Frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 100%

In an attempt to contextualize the work of WCLAC within the larger global movement addressing the whole issue of women and conflict, and the role of women in peace building and peace making which is a new focus of WCLAC program work, WCLAC’s staff attended the following conferences:

April 3-5, 2007 in Casablanca, Morocco: a conference organized by Oxfam-Novib and Development Support Centre, "Networks and Networking" to discuss the problems facing networking in the Arab region and to develop strategies.

May 3-4, 2007 in Belgium, Brussels: convened by EU commissioner Benita Ferrero, "Towards a Renewed Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process: the Role of Europe".

May 29-31, 2007 in Galway, Ireland: organized by Nobel Women's Initiative, "Women Redefining Peace in the Middle East and beyond."

Dec 8-14, 2007 in Nepal, organized by Equality New, “How to deal with legal strategies to combat trafficking al the regional level”.

December 11-17, 2007, in Barcelona, Spain, organized by ACSUR in the context of the finally cancelled Social Forum.

Fifth Strategic Objective: Develop WCLAC’s own capacity, performance, and sustainability.

Long-term expected results:

1. WCLAC’s operations are more efficient and effective.
2. The staff is more involved in the planning process and directing the future activities of WCLAC, thus leading to less turn over and greater employee satisfaction.
3. The donors receive standardized reports which allow for better communication and understanding between WCLAC and donors

Specific objectives:

4. Develop planning, evaluation, and monitoring system.
5. Build capacity of WCLAC staff.
6. Develop partnership relations with donor organizations.

Specific Objective 1

Result 1-1: Revise and develop a strategic plan, annual activity plan, budgets, and annual reports.

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 75 %

During the first half of the year, WCLAC revised and refined the annual activity plans through meetings with Unit Heads.

The revision of the 5-year strategic plan was done through a two day workshop, and then five internal meetings with the participation of all Units.

The annual narrative and financial reports for 2006 were prepared by the administrative unit and approved by the Board of Trustees.

The Semi-annual report for 2007 was achieved.

Note on the reporting process:

The internal reporting process has demonstrated that many of our staff members needed training in evaluation and reporting skills, as we have received feed-back from our donors on required standards for the annual reports. Taking their comments and recommendations into account we have started assisting relevant Unit Heads in that field. The fact is, we do have many different donors with many different requirements in terms of format, reporting procedures and deadlines, which does not facilitate the

process. The administrative unit has then assisted the Unit Heads in organizing their respective reports depending on those factors, the main objective being to improve the quality standards of all WCLAC's reports.

The 2008 action plan and budget for 2008 was prepared and distributed.

One General Assembly meeting took place on November 12, 2007. Regarding the monthly meetings of the Board of Directors, only 4 out of 12 took place because of the tight schedules of all members this year.

Regarding the financial department, this year was launched the BISAN financial electronic system, which had a positive impact on the accountant's work and helped in showing the achievements accomplished towards the expected results. However an obstacle that the financial department encountered last year was the diversification of donor's requirements regarding the financial audits. Our financial system is based on our 5-five strategic plan, however some funders of special projects require special auditing in addition of our general external audit. For example in 2007 we will be revised by 4 different external auditors, which increases the workload on the department's staff. Finally, another requirement from certain partners has been to open different and new bank accounts for the purpose of a special project.

Specific Objective 1

Result 1-2: Develop and use the monitoring and evaluation matrix

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 75 %

The monitoring and evaluation matrix has been revised and was implemented. This result was completed in 2006. WCLAC has developed staff evaluation forms as well as evaluation guidelines that were implemented as a pilot project in 2006.

Additionally, and according to the revised strategic plan and the 2007 action plan, two of the five units within the centre have been evaluated by the Director of the Centre this year: the Services Unit and the Capacity Building Unit.

The objective of the evaluation for the Services Unit was defined as such: to evaluate the processes and procedures and verify if those in place serve the mission of providing services to women victims of violence.

Regarding the objective of the evaluation of the Capacity Building Unit, it was defined as a goal-based evaluation, i.e. to verify if the Unit has achieved its goals.

WCLAC conducted several brainstorming sessions and research to carry out the evaluation process. It was performed as an educational process for the staff, as the Director proceeded step by step with the relevant teams who participated actively in the whole process.

The main recommendations of the evaluations were as follows for the Services Unit:

- The Unit is still suffering from negative dynamics from the past in terms of management style.
- There is also tension between the two different approaches that social workers and lawyers have. However, major developments have taken place since those

For the Capacity Building Unit, the major findings were regarding management issues:

- There is duplication between two programs, the project on volunteers training and the special project (UNFPA) for the graduates training. This overlap was identified and we have started the process of merging those two projects in the future.
- Another finding was regarding the Shelter: should this program be transferred to the Services Unit?
- The training programs for the capacity building of grass-roots organizations have not been systematized.
- The Unit and the staff are new and there is no history in organisational experience.

Finally, the Drafts of the evaluation report have been prepared and will be submitted to the Board at the beginning of 2008.

Specific Objective 1

Result 1-3: Prepare and develop financial and administrative manuals

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 80 %

The complete revision of the Employee Manual was not completed by the end of the year due to a heavy workload; however the content and drafts are prepared and ready for last revision and final approvals.

1. Preparation of the employee's manual: the manual is still a draft; the process has been delayed because of workload.
2. The bylaws of the Centre were amended by the Board of Trustees, the Director, and Deputy Director.
3. The incentive system was discussed with the staff and a draft was prepared, still it needs to be revised and approved by the Board.
4. A financial and administrative system has been prepared and still needs approval of the Board.
5. The salary scale of full-time and part-time employees was endorsed by the Board and is now applied.

Specific Objective 1

Result 1-4: Develop an electronic database (MIS)

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress : 70 %

The electronic client database project initially planned for 2006 was replaced by the creation and implementation of a unified integrated information system for the Centre as a whole, with the database as an integral part of it.

During 2007, WCLAC conducted the following activities in relation to the Management Information System for the Centre:

- Several meetings with units for needs assessment purposes.
- The study was drafted, the plan prepared and approved by the Director.
- The launch of the MIS is taking place at the beginning of 2008

During the implementation process we encountered many obstacles, as we are the second NGO in Palestine after PARC to adopt an MIS. The providers had to adjust to a new terminology, understand our specific NGO needs and concepts, etc. This issue delayed the process. But we have now started the technical implementation of the system that requires tremendous amount of manual work to insert all our data into the system. Once this data inserted, the development will continue its path and the system will be officially launched.

Specific Objective 2

Result 2-1: Conduct training needs assessment.

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 15 %

No training needs assessment was conducted during 2007 due to time shortage, however contacts were done with Continuous Education Department at Birzeit University and it is planned to be achieved during 2008.

Specific Objective 2

Result 2-2: Train and develop the capacity of the Centre's staff

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 90 %

WCLAC's staff was able to participate in the following international and local workshops and training events:

- On-going: monthly meetings were held with WCLAC staff on Feminism and Nationalism
- A training course on the use of the database was provided to the Services Unit and Research Unit.
- Participation of WCLAC's staff in regional/local workshops, conferences, training courses:
- Workshop on the work of feminist organizations and media coverage at Birzeit University.
- Conference on Violence Against Women focusing on laws and the philosophy of the laws with Heinrich Boll Foundation.
- Meeting with Salma Group Against Violence.
- Training course on advocacy mechanisms in issues of reproductive health-Queen Zein Al Sharaf Development Institute in Amman, Jordan.
- Workshop on Media and gender in relation to the Personal Status law, a 7-day event organized by Al Quds Educational TV and Act organization in Egypt.
- One-week workshop on mechanisms of Lobbying and Advocacy with Dan Church Aid in Jericho.
- Seminar with Mu'assassat on "NGOs initiative to develop impact indicators".
- Training course with the Human Rights Commission in Ramallah regarding the Centre's experience with CEDAW Agreement.

- Training course by the Arab Council for Judicial and Legal Studies under the auspices of the American Bar Association in Amman Jordan.
- Training course by the Arab Council for Judicial and Legal Studies for policy dialogue on " Justice enforcement: legal help and its future in the Arab World- Legal clinics and community efforts for mediation" in Amman, Jordan.
- Workshop on " Honour related violence" in Alexandria, Egypt.
- Workshop on planning and follow up on lobbying campaigns in the Arab world in the field of privatization of basic services. Workshop was organized by the Centre for Development Consultation and Training and in cooperation with Oxfam-Novib. The training course took place in Egypt.
- Training course on enhancing the capabilities of services providers in the fight against violence against women. The training course was organized by the Arab Women Centre for Training and research and in cooperation with "Kawthar" UNIFEM. The training course took place in Tunisia.
- Conference on planning for sexual and reproductive health in Turkey.
- Regional meeting with the Union of Jordanian Women regarding the Family Protection Law in Amman, Jordan.
- Two-day Workshop – staff retreat for institutional capacity-building and review of 2007 action plan discussing progress and obstacles.
- 56 hours of professional supervision sessions carried out by professional supervisor with staff of the Services Unit during which cases and counselling skills were discussed, including to 12 training hour on work activities with the therapy groups.
- Workshop in Egypt about campaign planning funded by Oxfam Novib.
- Workshop in Jordan Karama Institute on the purpose to exchange experiences and strategies against violence against women.
- Conference in Jordan, supported by Heinrich Boll, about violence issues and how they are covered by the media.
- Workshop in Egypt about WCLAC’s experience in the amendment of the Personal Status Law.
- Training in Sweden on Human rights and Humanitarian Law “The original program on human rights and women in the middle east and north Africa.
- Conference in Egypt on Philosophy, strategy and practical training against violence against women.
- Conference in Egypt on Women and Media from ACT in Egypt.
- Workshop in Tunisia funded by UNIFEM on how to empower the services of those working on violence against women.

Specific Objective 3

Result 3-1: Evaluate WCLAC programs and partnership agreements.

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 80 %

WCLAC’s consortium meeting was held in April 2007 in order to discuss our partnerships agreements as well as receiving input from our donors on our programs and activities. WCLAC views the consortium meetings as a great opportunity not only to update its donors on the progress of the work, but also an important venue for the

exchange of ideas, for providing a different insight into our programs, in other words, a real partnership.

WCLAC conducted also individuals meetings with the following donors:

- NOVIB
- Dan Church Aid
- Dutch Representative Office
- UNFPA
- Belgium Consulate
- Mu'assasat
- Ford Foundation
- Heinrich Boell
- ACSUR
- Irish Aid
- European Union- Novib
- ICCO
- Kvinna Till Kvinna
- UNIFEM

We have received feed-back and comments on the financial and narrative reports from several donors and we have taken into consideration their input.

Finally, several field visits took place throughout the year (EU, NOVIB, Kvinna Till Kvinna, and Dan Church)

Specific Objective 3

Result 3-2: Develop written and electronic media materials

Time frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 90 %

1. Update the website.

The Arabic version of the website was redesigned and updated. The English version is still under construction and should be online at the end of February 2008.

2. Preparation of materials for publication

- One Arabic newsletter was published in April 2007 that showcased the Centre's main achievements for 2006.
- Issued a greeting card for the International Women's Day occasion.
- Printed files related to the Centre.
- Printed the pamphlet on the "Right to all women to live in dignity"

While the Centre's activities received wide coverage through the various media campaigns, the Media Forum, and the different awareness programs and special events and occasions, yet we have to say that the Centre is behind schedule and planned output for this result. We have been so busy implementing the wide range of activities as demonstrated above, that this component was overlooked. With an Arabic media and communications officer hired we hope that the media component will pick up and reflect the real amount of work done by the Centre.

We have now set-up a Media Committee meeting on a weekly basis that will aim to develop and implement a new media strategy in 2008.

Specific Objective 2

Result 2-3: Develop WCLAC's Library assets.

Time Frame: Jan-Dec 2007

Progress: 85%

A trainer was contracted to train the Centre's librarian on a 2 day/week basis. All books were reviewed and their classification and codification verified. We also acquired an internal ISBN for the Oral History Book.

The library has become a favourite destination of many researchers and university students, and is evolving into a valuable resource centre within the community. We received 109 visitors during 2007.