

PEACE AND SECURITY

WOMEN AT THE HEART OF GAZA'S REBIRTH

Palestinian Perspectives on the
Reconstruction of Gaza

Walaa Abu Zaiter
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Even before the war, Gaza was described as uninhabitable. Conditions are worsening post-conflict, heightening public health risks. Women face severe post-war challenges leading to community tensions and social issues.



To mitigate all this, international actors must push for a ceasefire, expand humanitarian aid, and support Palestinian women-led organisations. Comprehensive recovery efforts should focus on equity, community engagement, education and psychosocial support.



Hope, driven by the resilience of Gaza's women, is essential for rebuilding efforts, necessitating further research to understand social impacts and develop effective recovery models.

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The UN declared that Gaza was uninhabitable in 2020. This has only been exacerbated as conditions have worsened due to more recent conflicts. Environmental degradation, unexploded ordnance, spread of disease and compromised WASH infrastructure are expected to increase the death toll even after a ceasefire. These issues significantly heighten public health risks, particularly for women, children and the elderly.



Women in Gaza, who have demonstrated strong leadership and resilience, will face severe challenges post-war, including PTSD and emotional trauma. The potential for internal conflict remains high, leading to increased internal violence, community tensions, rising divorce rates, early marriages and other adverse social norms. Prolonged conflict has altered gender roles, with men struggling to maintain traditional roles amid economic collapse, while women take on additional burdens, leading to social tensions.



To address these challenges, international actors must push for a ceasefire, expand access to humanitarian aid and provide funding to meet basic needs. Enhanced support for Palestinian women-led organisations is crucial for community engagement and investing equally in young people, women and men. Recovery efforts should focus on equity, community committees and substantial investment in education and psychosocial support. Hope, driven by the resilience of Gaza's women, is essential for rebuilding efforts, necessitating further research to understand social impacts and develop effective recovery models.

Further information on the topic can be found here:

<https://palestine.fes.de/topics/palestinian-perspectives-on-the-reconstruction-of-gaza>

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1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The ongoing war in Gaza has resulted in severe losses and suffering, disproportionately affecting women and girls. As of June 2024, at least 37,877 Palestinians had been killed (PCBS 2024), including 10,538 women, with many others experiencing displacement, widowhood and starvation. Over a million women and girls lack access to essential resources, such as food, safe water and hygiene products. Education has been disrupted, affecting 625,000 students since October 2023. The health sector is in crisis, losing 70 per cent of its bed capacity, and struggling with shortages of medical supplies and staff, impacting in particular pregnant and lactating women, children and people with chronic diseases.

Despite these challenges, women-led organisations in Gaza have participated actively in providing humanitarian assistance, even though they face significant operational and funding difficulties. This policy paper examines the crucial role of women in Gaza's post-war reconstruction from a feminist perspective, identifying key policy challenges and offering evidence-based recommendations to foster a more inclusive and effective reconstruction process.

BEFORE THE 2024 WAR: WOMEN'S STATUS IN GAZA

Women faced significant barriers due to social norms, limited access to rights and male guardianship. They were underrepresented in decision-making, for example in local councils. Gender-based violence was prevalent, with high rates of intimate partner violence and early marriage. Employment opportunities were limited by the blockade, with many forced to rely on NGO assistance. Access to basic needs was challenging, as women had less access to financial and communication resources.

IMPACT ON WOMEN OF THE 2024 WAR

HEALTH AND PUBLIC HEALTH

By June 2024, the Gaza conflict had caused more than 37,877 deaths, including 10,538 women and 15,821 children who comprise 70 per cent of the victims (PCBS 2024). Approximately 6,000 deceased women had left 19,000 orphaned children. Over a million women and girls have experienced

displacement, starvation and lack of access to essential services, leading to the spread of disease and exacerbation of gender inequalities. Collapse of Gaza's infrastructure has generated over 39 million tons of debris, and the health-care system is in ruins. UN Women reports high levels of insecurity, depression, insomnia and anxiety among women. Thousands of women are expected to give birth monthly, with many facing complications because of inadequate medical care.

ACCESS TO BASIC NEEDS

The conflict has severely impacted access to water and hygiene. Over 1.1 million people lack safe water, risking water-borne diseases. More than 540,000 women and girls face menstrual hygiene challenges because of product shortages and poor/crowded access to primitive WASH facilities. Overcrowded shelters increase infection risks. Acute food insecurity disproportionately affects women and girls, leading to malnutrition and health issues.

POWER AND SOCIAL DYNAMICS

The conflict has deepened gender inequalities, affecting access to food, mobility, poverty, education and employment. Family structures and gender roles are shifting, however, due to the loss of breadwinners. Women are taking on leadership roles, managing severe shortages and public health risks, and supporting each other through the conflict. The loss of working-age men will cause economic hardships. Palestinian women have become agents of survival, leading their families and communities amidst the crisis.

WOMEN'S ROLE IN RECOVERY AND RECONSTRUCTION

Women's role in leading the management of their families' access to basic needs means that after the war they will play a critical role in both the immediate and the medium- and long-term recovery. Efforts to enhance women's role post-conflict should take into consideration the broader social fabric and their interaction and complementary roles with men to achieve the maximum benefit.

In the immediate post-war situation, critical humanitarian programmes should continue, such as emergency employment programmes, provision of multipurpose cash assistance, and support for micro and small enterprises, which are crucial for economic recovery. Significant attention should be devoted to keeping women-led organisations engaged by means of protection mainstreaming.

MEDIUM- AND LONG-TERM RECOVERY

Rebuilding Gaza requires institutional investment and political will, focusing on human empowerment and focusing reconstruction efforts on women as key agents of survival and change. Women's recovery chances will be slim if they are marginalised in post-war planning and in immediate post-war interventions. Reconstruction must focus on the cornerstones of human development prior to physical reconstruction, investing in community empowerment, mental health services and economic opportunities for women, men and people with disabilities.

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BEFORE THE 2024 WAR: WOMEN'S STATUS IN GAZA

LIVING CONDITIONS

A Gazan friend once told me, “We are women without a past; all our belongings and memories were wiped out.” Reflecting on the period before the 2023–2024 war in Gaza helps us to understand how women were living and engaged in society, providing insights about their roles in early recovery until reconstruction begins.

Before the 2023–2024 war, Gaza was subject to several interventions aiming at recovery from multiple previous conflicts. Approximately 2.1 million Palestinians required humanitarian assistance (OCHA 2023), affecting every aspect of women's lives. Female literacy rates were slightly lower than male rates, but female school completion rates were higher. After the 2021 conflict emotional and psychological well-being had severely deteriorated, with adult females reporting the highest perceived decline, at 64 per cent (UN Women Palestine 2022). Social norms limited women's access to rights and opportunities, creating substantial barriers through male guardianship (according to Islamic heritage/narrative every woman must have a male guardian who has the authority to make a range of critical decisions on her behalf).

HOUSEHOLD AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND DECISION-MAKING

Social norms in Gaza valued women primarily for their reproductive and caregiving roles, often disregarding their economic and political leadership potential (US AID 2023). Women were underrepresented in local councils and faced significant barriers to participation in decision-making processes. According to a gender analysis conducted by USAID in March 2023, only 20 per cent of members of local councils are women compared with 80 per cent men.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

The UN overview of humanitarian needs in 2023 revealed that an estimated 1.9 million people in the Occupied Palestinian Territories were vulnerable to gender-based violence (OCHA 2023), 80 per cent of them women and 65 per cent residing in Gaza. Violence against women, particularly by in-

timate partners, was alarmingly high, exacerbated by the conflict. Early marriage¹ (child marriage, defined as a formal marriage or informal union before the age of 18) rates were also high, often used as a coping mechanism to protect females from various risks. Access to reporting channels for sexual and gender-based violence was extremely low.

Living in a time of conflict exacerbates the likelihood of increased internal community tensions and gender-based violence. After the 2021 war, 90 per cent of respondents reported heightened community tensions, 74 per cent noticed increased violence, and 72 per cent observed more family tensions (UN Women Palestine 2022).

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The blockade of Gaza severely limited livelihood and employment opportunities. Many households relied on NGO or charity assistance, and debt was widespread (OCHA 2023). Women faced increased safety and security concerns, prompting guardians to restrict their movement and access to work as a protection mechanism.

ACCESS TO SERVICES

Meeting basic needs was subject to significant challenges, with many households relying on humanitarian assistance (OCHA 2023). Female respondents reported less access to important resources such as bank accounts and mobile phones than men. Deficiencies in resources and services prevented women from realising their potential and hindered service providers from offering comprehensive support. Women were particularly impacted by the shortage of WASH services, as they were responsible for domestic chores (UN Women Palestine 2021) and securing water for the household.

Since 2007, environmental protection and ecosystem restoration in Gaza have been hindered by complex governance issues, including Hamas control, Israeli closures and import

¹ Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child establishes that a child is any human being under the age of 18.

restrictions. Despite these challenges, substantial international investments have been made in wastewater treatment and solid waste infrastructure over the past five years (UNEP 2024), increasing hope of improved access to a clean environment.

LAWS AND POLICIES

Gaps in laws and policies have left women at significant risk. Many laws lack a gender perspective (USAID 2023), and there has been a lack of political will to enforce protections and opportunities for women. Social norms and traditions have often prevented women from fully exercising their rights, including inheritance rights.

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IMPACT OF THE 2024 WAR ON WOMEN

HEALTH AND PUBLIC HEALTH

As of late June 2024, the conflict in Gaza has resulted in 37,877 fatalities, including 10,538 women and 15,882 children (PCBS 2024). Approximately 6,000 of the deceased women left behind 19,000 orphaned children (UN Women 2024b). Additionally, 85,911 persons have been injured, with women and children comprising 70 per cent of this number (PCBS 2024). Around 10,000 people, including 5,000 women and children, are still missing under the rubble.

Surviving women face displacement, widowhood and starvation. Over one million women and girls in Gaza lack access to food, safe water, latrines, washrooms and sanitary pads, leading to the spread of diseases and exacerbation of pre-existing gender inequalities. Most of Gaza's population has been forcibly displaced multiple times, with women facing risks of arbitrary detention and harassment during displacement. According to UN Women, 93 per cent of women in Gaza feel unsafe (The New Arab 2024), 80 per cent suffer from depression, 66 per cent are unable to sleep, and 70 per cent experience anxiety and nightmares. A psychologist friend from Gaza reported "Women who lost their children are losing their minds!"

ACCESS TO BASIC NEEDS

The ongoing conflict in Gaza has severely impacted women and girls:

- **Water access:** 1.1 million women and girls lack access to sufficient safe water, increasing the risk of water-borne diseases for 337,057 children under five.
- **Hygiene:** Over 540,000 women and girls of reproductive age face challenges in maintaining hygiene due to a shortage of menstrual hygiene products, forcing them to use improvised items (UN Women 2024b).
- **WASH barriers:** Women and girls with disabilities face additional barriers accessing water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities due to a lack of specialised tools and equipment.

- **Health risks:** Many use agricultural wells with water 30 times saltier than freshwater, posing severe health risks, especially for infants, pregnant women and people with kidney diseases.

In overcrowded shelters, poor access to WASH facilities means that hundreds of families have to share a single latrine. This lack of privacy and dignity exposes women and girls to significant protection concerns, while inadequate menstrual health management facilities expose women and girls to reproductive and urinary tract infections. Daily trips to find bathrooms and toilets pose further protection risks. With acute food insecurity, women and girls are hardest hit (IPC 2023), often deprioritising their own food intake. Pregnant and lactating women face higher health and malnutrition risks. Female heads of household, older women and women with disabilities face significant obstacles when accessing food distribution. Seven out of 10 women interviewed by UN Women reported weight loss in the past 30 days, and over half experienced frequent dizziness. Furthermore, 83.5 per cent stated that the assistance they received did not meet their household needs (UN Women 2024c).

Since 7 October 2023, conflict escalation has profoundly impacted Gaza's people and environment. Israel's bombardment has caused unprecedented destruction of infrastructure, productive assets and service delivery systems, including the collapse of sewage, wastewater and solid waste management systems. The destruction has generated over 39 million tonnes of debris, some contaminated with hazardous substances. To make things worse, human remains are buried within this rubble (UNEP 2024).

POWER AND SOCIAL DYNAMICS

Previous wars have taught us that conflict is far from gender-neutral (CARE 2023). Protracted conflicts such as the one in Gaza create multidimensional and intersectional vulnerabilities for diverse groups, disproportionately affecting women and girls across all categories. These vulnerabilities are particularly evident in areas such as access to food, mobility, poverty, education, protection and employment.

The crisis also impacts power dynamics and gender relations, which must be taken into consideration in humanitarian

ian aid delivery. The loss of families, parents, breadwinners, homes and communities leads to changes in family structures, shifting from nuclear and extended families to super-extended families. These changes impact gender roles and dynamics. Women increasingly fear that, due to food shortages, school closures and the loss of educational opportunities, families will resort to desperate coping mechanisms, including early marriage (UN Women 2024a), especially given the high number of young girls who have lost one or both parents.

Across the Gaza Strip, Palestinian women have been plunged into a war of survival and adaptation (Abdulfattah 2024) ever since Israel began its bombardment in retaliation for Hamas' 7 October attack. Women have become agents of survival (Nasruddin 2024), leading the survival journey for their families and communities.

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PRIORITIES FOR WOMEN IN THE POST-WAR SITUATION AND RECONSTRUCTION

Faria Nasruddin, a Program Associate with the Wilson Centre's Middle East Program, in her blog "Planning for Women in a Postwar Gaza", draws on lessons from the war in Afghanistan (2001–2021). The US presence in Afghanistan included an ambitious national reconstruction plan with substantial military forces aimed at re-establishing physical security, deterring the Taliban, revitalising the economy and establishing a functional bureaucracy. Despite such efforts, however, Afghanistan remained one of the most dangerous places for women because of ongoing airstrikes and the empowerment of local warlords with histories of human rights abuses. Israel's principal focus is its physical security. This will overshadow any need to address humanitarian concerns and support women's safety and empowerment. Lessons from Afghanistan suggest that a balanced approach, incorporating both security and humanitarian needs, is essential for effective post-conflict recovery and to ensure the well-being of all, especially women (Nasruddin 2024).

It remains uncertain how much more destruction and loss of life Gaza will have to endure before a ceasefire is achieved and what type of society will emerge from this ongoing conflict, which has lasted over 270 days (at the time of writing). Various reports and statistics indicate significant changes in the social fabric, with increasing numbers of widows, orphans and people with disabilities (PWDs). Further research is therefore needed to understand more deeply how these changes will affect social dynamics, particularly in overburdened communities, and to develop mitigation measures potentially to shorten the arc of recovery.

Rebuilding Gaza will be a multi-generational endeavour requiring both institutional investment and political will from all Palestinians, as well as the international community. As rebuilding begins, leaders must stay focused and centre the design of recovery and reconstruction on human empowerment. This approach should highlight the role of "agents of survival", as one Palestinian journalist put it, particularly emphasising the contributions of Gazan women.

IMMEDIATE POST-WAR SITUATION

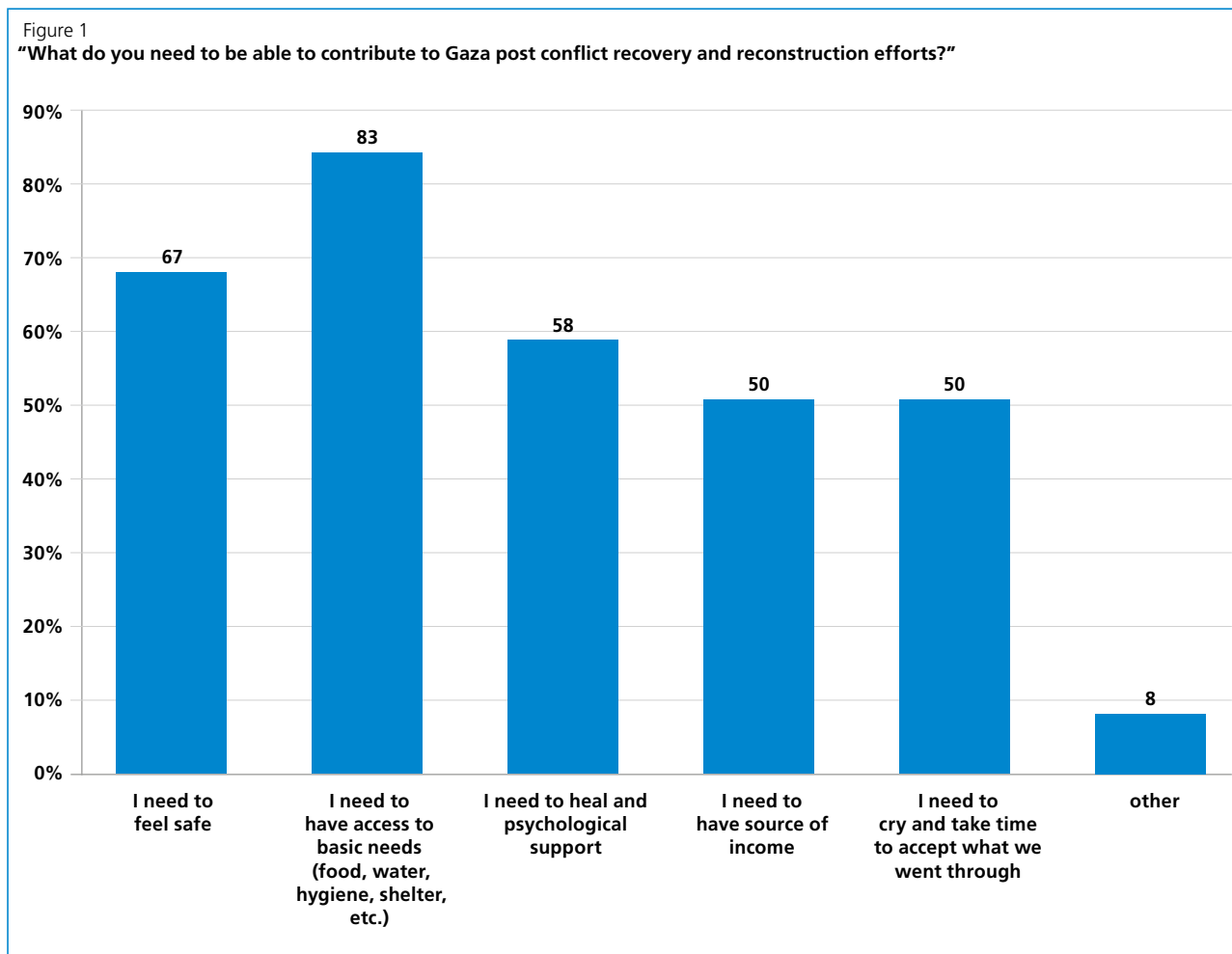
International and national actors, supported by the European Union and funding agencies, must sustain continuous humanitarian assistance to facilitate a seamless transition from the im-

mediate post-war circumstances to medium- and long-term recovery. The following intervention modalities are recommended for consideration during the immediate post-war period:

- **Emergency employment:** Emergency employment programmes, in the sense of Cash for Work and daily labour will be critical to provide income to women who have lost their source of income (main breadwinners), their jobs, livelihoods and belonging, to help them to support their families and children.
- **Multipurpose cash assistance:** Provision of regular multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA) for all affected populations to revive the market and increase cash liquidity.
- **Economic recovery:** Micro and small enterprises will need emergency grants and wage subsidies to restore activity and facilitate local economic recovery. Extensive skills development and vocational training will also be necessary, utilising and strengthening women labour.
- **Agriculture:** While small-scale farming may be relatively straightforward to restart, revitalising the commercial agricultural sector to its pre-7 October level will be more challenging (UN Geneva 2024).
- **Formation of community protection committees and support groups:** While many efforts are currently being undertaken by several women-led organisations, they should be reinforced with additional funding and integrated across other areas, such as livelihoods, WASH and shelter. Their primary role will be to act as agents of change within communities, facilitating access to knowledge and information, and transferring insights from grassroots levels to international and local NGOs and women-led organisations to enhance project effectiveness and learning.

MEDIUM AND LONG-TERM RECOVERY IN GAZA

Women's chances for medium/long-term social and economic recovery are slim if they remain marginalised in post-war planning. Their acute vulnerabilities only increase the likelihood of enduring harm.



New estimates indicate that rebuilding Gaza’s physical infrastructure will take between 16 and 80 years and cost up to USD 40 billion (Nasruddin 2024), which is conditional on sustainable funding, access to materials and lifting the blockade on Gaza. This multi-generational endeavour requires institutional investment and political will from Palestinians and the international community. Rebuilding efforts must centre on those most harmed, namely the women and children of Gaza.

Reconstruction and recovery must consider human capacities and shifts in social dynamics created by the war, which often demands shifts in the distribution of roles and responsibilities between men and women. Women, who are now in the middle of the war as agents of survival, are exhausted, traumatised and faced with the need to keep up their energy despite despair and lacking hope to survive. To give but one example, Eatimad Abbas, a Palestinian female public health specialist, in a social media post,² expressed hope for a ceasefire and time to grieve losses, believing that history will recognise Palestinian women’s resilience and connection to their land and home.

A reconstruction strategy should prioritise:

- **community empowerment:** Including marginalised groups and people with disabilities;
- **mental health services:** providing essential support;
- **continued emergency and relief support:** maintaining efforts to improve access to health and medical care;
- **economic empowerment:** offering cash assistance and economic opportunities.

These initial interventions will pave the way for physical reconstruction. Women, men and young people need support to actively engage in Gaza’s future. In a rapid assessment via social media and WhatsApp groups with around 13 women from Gaza, this research showed the following needs and priorities.

² https://www.linkedin.com/posts/walaa-zaiter-b4518568_calling-all-inspiring-and-strong-palestinian-activity-7204044728361771009-1bYj?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop

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WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT IN POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION AND RECOVERY

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCLUDING WOMEN IN THE RECONSTRUCTION PROCESS

1. REPRESENTATION IN DECISION-MAKING BODIES AND POLICY REVISION

- Include women in decision-making bodies at all levels, including local councils, planning committees and monitoring groups.
- Engage women leaders, experts, social influencers and representatives from women-led organisations in policy dialogues and reconstruction planning sessions to ensure that their voices and needs are adequately represented.
- Ensure that women's organisations participate meaningfully in humanitarian recovery and reconstruction, planning, implementation and monitoring.

2. ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVES

- Provide emergency grants, MPCA (multi-purpose cash assistance) and Cash for Work to restore or improve access to basic needs and facilitate local economic recovery, particularly targeting women from different groups, including those residing outside Gaza,³ as they will facilitate and support women inside and families.
- Offer extensive skills development and vocational training programmes for women and men to enhance their employment opportunities and economic independence.

3. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND AWARENESS

- Conduct social and community assessments and research to further understand the changes in social dy-

namics and fabric caused by the war, and how these changes could potentially alter community engagement interventions and practices.

- Engage men, boys, religious leaders, camp leaders and community influencers to promote gender equality and women's role in recovery and reconstruction and to support women's rights.
- Map communities' resources and identify the potential roles of women, men, boys and girls in the recovery process and humanitarian assistance.

4. ACCESS TO SERVICES AND RESOURCES

- Enhance access to food, water, nutrition, cash and health-care services, particularly for pregnant and lactating women, to reduce the risks associated with food insecurity and health crises.
- Accelerate learning and education programmes for school aged children to catch up with their education.
- Invest significantly in mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) using advanced research methods in trauma, healing and protection programmes for all population groups. Additionally, a multi-sectoral response with protection mainstreaming across all interventions should be encouraged.

MAKING THE EXPERIENCE OF WOMEN'S LEAD ORGANISATIONS FRUITFUL

1. OPERATIONAL AND FUNDING SUPPORT

- Provide operational support and secure funding for women-led organisations to ensure they can continue their crucial work in humanitarian response and recovery by encouraging partnership, localisation and protection mainstreaming.
- Establish dedicated funding streams and grants for women-led organisations to enhance their capacity to implement projects and provide services.

³ Many families, including women accompanying injured individuals, have left for Egypt during the war. These families are now facing critical challenges in accessing basic needs and support schemes outside Gaza.

2. ADDRESSING GBV

- INGOs, NGOs and diverse UN bodies should actively participate in GBV working groups and the protection cluster to facilitate ongoing exchange and ensure effective two-way communication and engagement.

3. CAPACITY BUILDING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Offer capacity-building programmes and technical assistance to women-led organisations to strengthen their operational capabilities and enhance their impact.
- Engage community members, women, men and community leaders in capacity-building activities.

4. INCLUSION IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

- Ensure that women-led organisations are included in decision-making processes related to humanitarian aid, reconstruction and development planning.
- Recognise and formalise the roles of women-led organisations as primary responders and significant humanitarian actors to increase the gender responsiveness of humanitarian programming.

5. ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS

- Support advocacy efforts by women-led organisations to promote gender equality and women's rights at local, national and international levels, and most importantly, engage active Palestinian women whether inside or outside Gaza as main speakers to ensure that their experience and reality are reflected.
- Conduct awareness-raising campaigns to highlight the critical contributions of women-led organisations in humanitarian response and recovery efforts, fostering broader societal support for their work.

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CONCLUSION

We are women without a past; all our belongings and memories have been wiped out.

Reema

Our mental health is crucial to be able to provide support and contribute ideas!

Etaf

The United Nations declared Gaza uninhabitable in 2020 (UNCTAD 2015), and current findings highlight a worsening situation that portends dire future living conditions. Even with a ceasefire, the death toll is likely to rise due to factors such as environmental degradation, unexploded ordnance hidden under rubble, the spread of diseases and the fragile state of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure. These conditions exacerbate public health risks, particularly affecting women, children and the elderly.

Women in Gaza have demonstrated strong leadership and resilience during the conflict, driven by their roles in nurturing and supporting their families. However, this strength will be severely tested in the wake of the 2023–2024 war, as women are likely to begin to experience post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and face the emotional collapse that follows prolonged trauma.

Analysing various narratives, it is evident that the potential for another internal conflict and tensions within communities remains high. The next war is likely to be even more challenging for Palestinians, who will face increased internal violence, community tensions, rising divorce rates, early marriages and other negative social norms.

To mitigate these significant challenges, it is crucial to focus on supporting women and local communities. The EU and other decision-makers must amplify their calls for a ceasefire, expand humanitarian aid access and allocate funding for the Gaza population to fully satisfy their basic needs. Enhanced access to cash and humanitarian assistance will help to alleviate the stress caused by scarcity and reduce violence.

Protection actors, especially Palestinian women-led organisations (WLOs) in Gaza and the West Bank, should receive additional support and funding to engage deeply with communities and invest equally in young people, women and men. It is critical to prioritise equity and equality in all recovery efforts. Recent years have shown negative effects from focusing solely on women and diminishing the role of men in Gaza. Prolonged conflict often results in a reconfiguration of gender roles. Men may find it challenging to maintain their traditional roles as providers and protectors due to armed violence and economic collapse. Meanwhile, women often take on additional responsibilities to ensure household survival. This shift can lead to tensions as it diverges from established gender norms. Women frequently shoulder increased burdens without corresponding gains in rights,

while men may struggle to adjust to new roles that challenge traditional ideals of masculinity (NRC 2015). This approach should be further enriched through research to gain a deeper understanding of the impact on the social fabric of Gaza communities and to identify the most relevant recovery and community engagement models.

Forming community committees as support agents who can disseminate knowledge and hope, and enhance knowledge exchange with international actors to keep the wheel of recovery going through their active engagement. Furthermore, the long-term negative impact on Gaza's children necessitates substantial investment in education and accelerated learning programmes to restore a sense of normalcy. These activities should aim at integrating psychosocial support both in classes and through parents/community engagement as part of the learning process.

Hope is the cornerstone of Gaza's rebuilding efforts. International and national actors must invest in "survival agents" – the women of Gaza – to restore life and bring hope back to Gaza.

As a Palestinian woman, I see my role as multifaceted. We are the backbone of our communities, providing support, education and leadership. Whether through advocacy, entrepreneurship, or social work, we have the power to drive change and rebuild our society.

Khadijah

I believe history will recognise how Palestinian women consistently nurture and sustain the deep connection to our land and home.

Etimad

I will work hard to raise my son and forget all that we are going through. I will rebuild my house and start with hope

Dina

I'm not sure if I'm one of the "resilient women" or not! We try our best to cope and keep going.

Nesma

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Walaa Abu Zaiter is an engineer with a postgraduate degree in Business Administration. She brings extensive expertise garnered from her wide-ranging experience collaborating with both local and international organisations, as well as engaging in national and international consultancy. Her professional journey encompasses diverse fields including development, research, emergencies, protracted crises, gender and protection, with a particular focus on human and women's rights. Walaa has spearheaded a plethora of research initiatives and undertaken independent monitoring and evaluation consultancies for various esteemed national and international agencies, such as the Norwegian Refugee Council, Women's Affairs Centre.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

»Palestinian Perspectives on the Reconstruction of Gaza« is a joint project carried out by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) and the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), the German Institute for International and Security Affairs. The papers published within the framework of this project focus on Palestinian needs and priorities with regard to a range of topics linked to early recovery and reconstruction of Gaza after the 2023/2024 war.

In this context, they do not regard the Gaza Strip as a separate entity, but as part of the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel since 1967. They also hold that all approaches, be they short or long term, should be compatible with the principle of Palestinian self-determination. The objective is to highlight key insights from Palestinian experiences and expertise and introduce them into the international debate. Papers cover aspects such as security arrangements, governance, the role of women and urban planning for recovery and reconstruction. They reflect the author's views only.

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