The Gender Section participated in the Annual Dialogue meeting between SIDA and UNRWA that was held remotely on the 16 of September. The meeting included discussion on UNRWA gender mainstreaming efforts, including in emergencies and during the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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**Stories from UNRWA**

**Success stories from UNRWA West Bank Field Office: Providing psychological support to vulnerable groups during COVID-19**

The Family and Child Programme in RSSP West Bank Field Office continued the provision of support to GBV survivors during the pandemic. They used newly established phone hotlines and WhatsApp messages to provide case management services. This is one of their success story narrated by a UNRWA case manager.

She had simple dreams and aspirations. She did not know where life was taking her and where she would eventually be. This is what the woman expressed to me over the phone on our first call almost two months ago. “S” was in her forties. She lived with her husband and five children in one of the refugee camps. She was referred to the UNRWA RSS Family and Child Protection Programme as she suffered from severe physical abuse as well as psychological trauma resulting from a murder attempt.

One day, “S”’s husband tried to kill her using a knife. She ran out of her home and took her children with her to her brother-in-law’s home, where they stayed until the next morning. She went to the UNRWA clinic inside the camp, where the psychosocial counselor transferred her to the RSS Family and Child Protection Programme. From here started our story with “S”.

“S”’s file was transferred to the Ministry of Social Development, which in turn asked her to file a complaint with the Family Protection Unit. Transferring her file did not negate our responsibility to continue providing her support and help find the best solution for her and her family. The Ministry of Social Development had, at the time, referred her husband to a mental health professional. It also contacted the Head of the Organization, where she worked, to accommodate her new situation. “S” responded positively to this intervention.

After almost one month under medication, her husband’s mental state and well-being stabilized when. He also signed a pledge with the Family Protection Unit not to hurt his wife and children. “S” agreed to live with her husband again.

Now, “S”’s well-being and her family’s condition have improved. She even told me during our last call: “Do not worry. I am in a better psychological and social situation”. I wished “S” and other women and girls that are facing violence and abuse in these difficult times, peace and tranquility.
UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and mandated to provide assistance and protection to some 5.6 million registered Palestine refugees. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and the Gaza Strip achieve their full human development potential, pending a just and lasting solution to their plight. UNRWA services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, protection and microfinance.

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