



PALESTINIAN CENTRE
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Israeli Violations and International Inaction: Women in Gaza Shattered by Compound Violence



January - 2025

■ Introduction

After 07 October 2023, women in the Gaza Strip are experiencing unprecedented levels of bitter suffering and most damaging forms of compounded violence as a result of the brutal Israeli genocidal campaign that have mercilessly targeted civilians without any protection. Although the Israeli genocide has affected everyone, women suffer disproportionately due to social and cultural circumstances that exacerbate their vulnerability during times of war.

The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) works tirelessly to document grave violations committed by the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) against women in the Gaza Strip. PCHR utilizes many mechanisms to ensure the effectiveness of its efforts, focusing on building legal files to ensure prosecution and accountability before international courts in pursuit of justice and hold perpetrators of international crimes accountable. Additionally, PCHR relies on collecting firsthand testimonies from women who have endured the most horrific forms of Israeli crimes. These testimonies are meticulously documented to reflect the scale of IOF's extensive violations committed against them.

In this context, a survey was used as a primary research method to monitor and document the systematic Israeli violations faced by women in the Gaza Strip. It only reflects part of the severity of the crimes committed against them and their devastating impact on their physical, psychological, economic, and sexual well-being. The survey reveals that these violations are not isolated incidents, but part of a systematic policy aimed at the long-term destruction of the population of Gaza, including women, in an effort to erase their identity and obliterate their existence.

This brutal policy is starkly reflected in statements by Israeli leaders, most notably by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who described the residents of Gaza as “animals and monsters”, in a deliberate attempt to dehumanize them and thereby strip civilians, including women, of any legal protection. He stated, “ My passion is unlimited for justice and for truth, and to place blame on Israel that is fighting these animals and monsters, is just sheer folly¹”. This and dozens of similar statements from Israeli leaders not only convey an inhumane rhetoric but also reveal an organized approach aimed at justifying and legitimizing the heinous crimes committed against Gaza Strip population.

¹- NPR's Interview with Benjamin Netanyahu on 17 November 2023: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZOW_rQRel6c&t=123s

These statements were followed by unimaginable bloodiest crimes, including the killing of approximately 12,000 women over more than a year of Israeli military attacks on the Gaza Strip. This grim toll represents more than just the loss of lives; it signifies the complete destruction of Gaza's social fabric. Working women, journalists, doctors, breadwinners, and wives have been targeted, leaving thousands of children without their mothers. Over 6,000 families lost their mothers, leaving irreparable voids in their lives.²



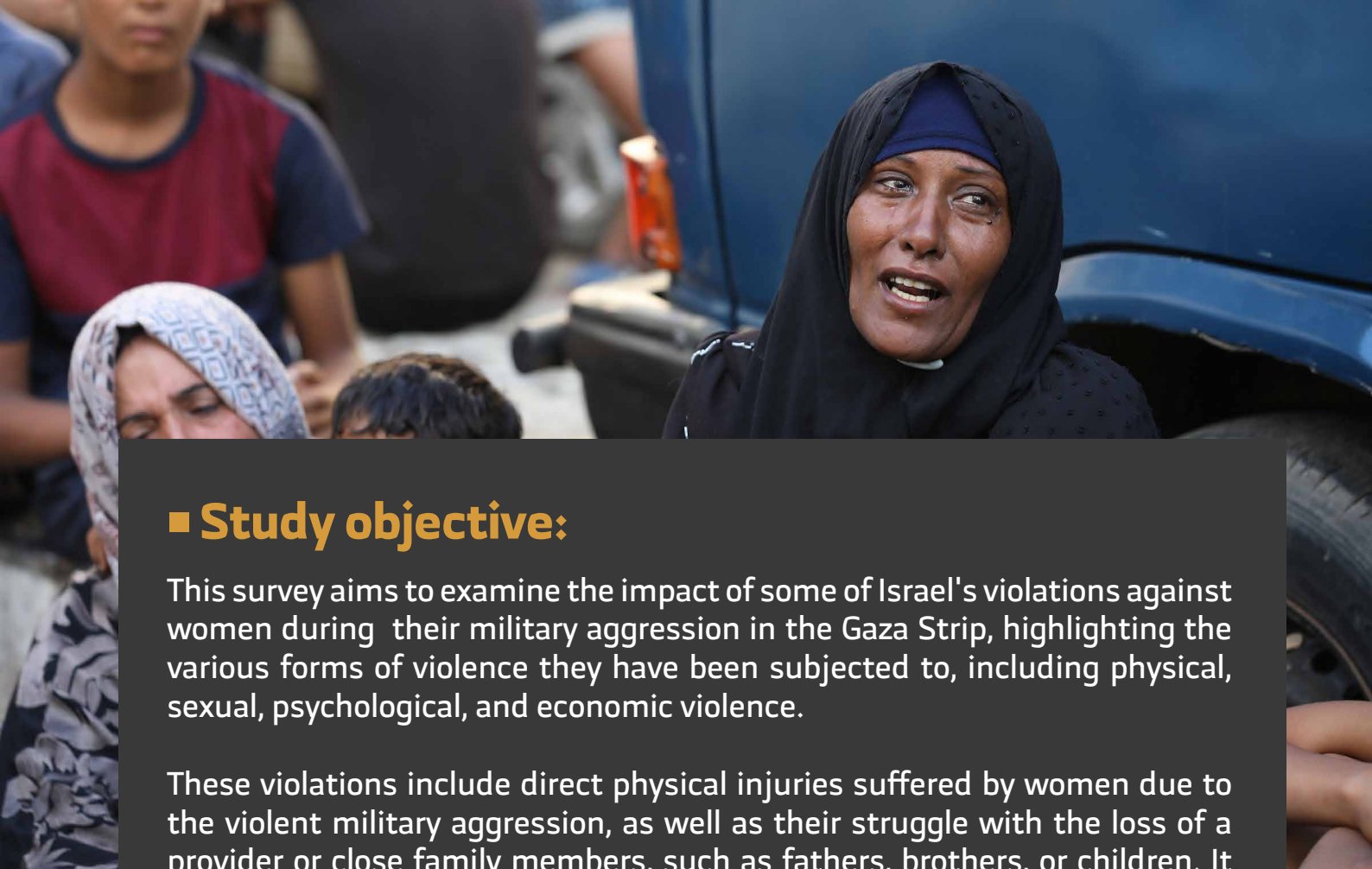
Fellow lawyer Nour Abu Al-Nour



Fellow lawyer Dana Yaghi

One of the most harrowing testimonies documented is the targeted killing of two of our colleagues from the PCHR staff, lawyers Dana Yaghi and Noor Abu Al-Nour. Noor had contributed to collecting the survey data before she and her almost 2-year-old baby girl, Kenzi Jumaa, were killed in February last year. An Israeli airstrike hit her family home without warning, claiming the lives of three generations of her family. Just two days after this tragedy, another horrific crime was committed by Israeli forces when our colleague, lawyer Dana Yaghi, was killed in an airstrike targeting her family' home in Deir al-Balah, where she had sought refuge after being forcibly displaced from the Tel al-Hawa area. Dana had been providing legal consultations to displaced women in shelters.

²- Media briefing at the UN Headquarters by Maryse Guimond, UN Women Special Representative in Palestine about her visit to Gaza : <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/media-briefing-unwomen-18jul24/>



■ Study objective:

This survey aims to examine the impact of some of Israel's violations against women during their military aggression in the Gaza Strip, highlighting the various forms of violence they have been subjected to, including physical, sexual, psychological, and economic violence.

These violations include direct physical injuries suffered by women due to the violent military aggression, as well as their struggle with the loss of a provider or close family members, such as fathers, brothers, or children. It also emphasizes the negative effects of family fragmentation and the inhumane conditions in displacement shelters. Additionally, the survey sheds light on the systematic destruction of women's economic resources, as their businesses were halted or entirely destroyed during the military assault. The study further monitors the impact of Israel's systematic starvation policy against the population of Gaza, including women, which has created an environment of relentless violence and compounded their humanitarian suffering.

On another level, the study aims to document the challenges facing women in access to essential services, such as medical, psychological, and legal support. It identifies barriers depriving women of benefiting from these services, such as lack of awareness about their availability, fear of social stigma, or insufficient transportation.

Through analyzing the collected data, the survey seeks to raise local and international awareness on the Israeli violations against women in Gaza. The ultimate goal is to push for a ceasefire in Gaza, support the development of impactful policies and strategies, and provide sustainable solutions that uphold women's fundamental rights, ensure their dignity and safety, and protect them from further Israeli violations.

■ Study Methodology:

The study has relied on different quantitative and qualitative research methods to reflect the Israeli violations against women in Gaza and their impact on them amid Israel's ongoing military aggression. The research methods used for this purpose were as follows:

- **Survey:** The survey sample consisted of 800 women and girls from various governorates across the Gaza Strip, including North Gaza and Gaza City in addition to Khan Yunis and Rafah in the south, as well as Deir al-Balah and Nuseirat in the central areas. The sample was selected using a simple random sampling method from 2602 participants in legal awareness sessions organized in various displacement shelters.

This diverse and inclusive sample was chosen to ensure a realistic representation of different segments of women and girls in the Gaza Strip. Between January and December 2024, PCHR's Women's Unit staff individually administered the surveys with each participant to ensure the highest level of accuracy and confidentiality in data collection. The main objective of the survey is to collect field data on the scope of specific Israeli violations and forms of violence against displaced women in the Gaza Strip within the Israeli ongoing military aggression.





- **Testimonies:** Throughout this process, the team documented 32 testimonies detailing the Israeli violations against women, including testimonies of female detainees released from Israeli detention. These women were chosen from 800 women who administered the survey, and their testimonies were taken after signing a consent form with aim of collecting more in-depth information on these violations.
- **Field observations:** the study has relied on daily field observations from PCHR's staff based on what the 2602 women have said during the legal awareness sessions. These observations are frequently shared with our researchers throughout the year as the latter monitor the violations committed against women in their various places of displacement due to the ongoing military aggression. Also, the researchers document the forms of violence women experience and the challenges they face as well as tracing their root causes.

Demographic profile of participants:

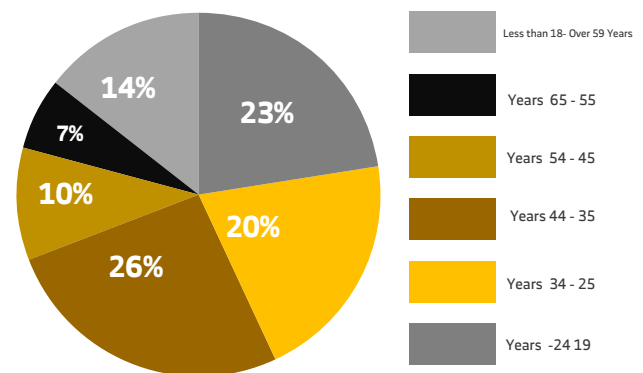
Geographic Distribution

The survey results have revealed that 220 participants were resident or displaced women and girls from Gaza City and northern Gaza. Additionally, 580 participants were resident or displaced women and girls from the southern and central governorates of the Gaza Strip. This resultant discrepancy is due to the number of displacement shelters that are more in southern Gaza than the south in addition to the recurrent and ongoing military ground invasions in northern Gaza that have restricted movement of PCHR's staff.

Age Groups:

The survey results have revealed that 22.75% of the participating women were young adults aged 19 to 24 years, while 20.38% were 25 to 34 years old. Additionally, 26.12% of the participating women were aged 35 to 44 years, whereas 10% fell within the 45 to 54-year-old category. The percentage of women aged 55 to 65 years was 6.5% with the remaining 14.25% included participants who were either under 18 years old or over 59 years old.

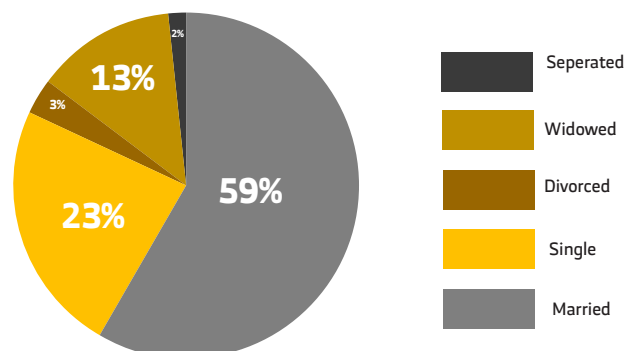
Age ratio of participants of the survey



Marital Status:

The results have revealed that 58.63% of the participating women were married while 23.5% were single. Additionally, 3.31% were divorced, 13.25% were widowed, and 1.5% were separated from their spouses.

Marital Status of Participants



A photograph showing a woman in a patterned headscarf and a green dress holding a young child in a pink shirt. They are standing in a severely damaged, dark interior space, possibly a destroyed home. Debris is visible on the floor, and a large black bag hangs from a metal structure on the right. The scene is dimly lit, with strong shadows.

**Findings on Israeli Violations
Against Women documented
in the Study:**

The survey reveals IOF grave violations against women in Gaza. These include physical injuries resulting from military attacks, the loss of breadwinners or close family members, and the fragmentation of families due to displacement. Additionally, women have suffered the loss of their income sources, compounded by the devastating effects of Israel's systematic starvation policy.



1 Physical Injuries from Military Attacks

Following 07 October, women found themselves at the epicenter of military assaults without any protection, leaving them vulnerable to severe physical injuries and disfigurements caused by indiscriminate bombings and direct targeting of residential areas. According to PCHR's documentation and testimonies, these injuries included limb amputations, severe burns, head and facial injuries, and eye damage leading to partial or complete blindness, among others. These injuries were compounded by the systematic destruction of Gaza's healthcare system, which rendered 23 out of 35 public and private hospitals inoperative, leaving only 17 hospitals partially functioning. Also, 80 out of 90 health centers have gone out of services while at least 130 ambulances have been destroyed. Such attacks have killed 1054 medical staff members and arrested 330 others, including 3 doctors who died in detention.³

³- Health Sector Emergency Situation Report, Day 433 of the aggression, Wednesday 11 December 2024, page 2.

The physical injuries inflicted upon women have had profound consequences, stripping them of their ability to care for or protect their children. The physical incapacitation also deprived them of their natural roles as mothers, creating immense emotional and psychological strain. Additionally, the loss of physical appearance or body parts led many women to experience a profound sense of estrangement from themselves, with some expressing feelings of losing their femininity. This complex suffering, combining acute pain, the inability to fulfill maternal roles, and the sense of self-loss, is expected to leave long-lasting and hard-to-heal physical and psychological scars for many injured women.

The survey found that 55 out of the 800 women participants sustained severe physical injuries as a result of the Israeli military aggression. Several of these women shared their testimonies with the PCHR's team, vividly describing the immense suffering caused by their injuries and the profound impact on their daily lives. These injuries not only affected their physical health but also led to deep psychological distress, exacerbated by the harsh living conditions they continue to endure.





As Manal Juha stated to PCHR's staff

“I am a mother of three daughters and three sons and lived in the Al-Tuffah neighborhood of Gaza. Our home served as a refuge for displaced families from various areas, as we lived together in our building. Since the start of the war on 07 October 2023, we lived under the constant sounds of shelling and explosions. Despite the harsh conditions, we managed to adapt somewhat, especially given the scarcity of resources. However, everything changed on the morning of 06 December 2023. Our building was subjected to a violent bombardment by Israeli warplanes, leveling it to the ground. Around 95 family members were killed, and only 12 survived, including me. At the time, I was reading the Quran when suddenly I found myself trapped under the rubble, with fire engulfing my leg. After about 15 minutes, neighbors rescued me and took me to Al-Maamadani Hospital. Due to the huge number of injuries and the severe shortage of medical personnel and resources in northern Gaza, no surgery was performed on my burned leg for several days. The delay in treatment caused maggots to infest the wound, forcing doctors to amputate my leg below the knee. Because of my severe injury, I can no longer look after my children. Thankfully, my husband and eldest son stand by me, supporting me during this difficult time. However, I feel an overwhelming sense of helplessness. All my life, I have been the mother who takes care of her children, but now they are the ones taking care of me. I cannot give them anything, not even the simplest things that used to be a part of our lives.”⁴

⁴- Ferial Ibrahim Suleiman Al-Jamal (33), a widow who is displaced in Sheikh Radwan, stated to PCHR's staff:

Ferial Ibrahim Suleiman Al-Jamal (33), a widow who is displaced in Sheikh Radwan, stated to PCHR's staff:

"I used to live in Al-Shati Refugee Camp in Gaza until the war began on 07 October 2023. On 20 October, I was displaced with my family to an UNRWA clinic that had been turned into a shelter. On 05 November 2023, I returned to our home with my brother and nephew where we were suddenly subjected to a direct airstrike by Israeli warplanes without any warning. As a result, I sustained critical injuries all over my body causing me serious disfigurements, including burns on my thighs, legs, and face, and shrapnel wounds in my back, shoulders, and legs, along with injuries to my head, eye, and right hand. I completely lost my vision for two months due to the eye injury. I was taken to Al-Shifa Hospital, where I underwent a stitching procedure requiring approximately 80 stitches in my head, hand, and back. Despite this, the struggle with the shrapnel embedded in my body continues, as it remains there to this day. My injuries were not limited to physical wounds. I lost my hair due to the head injury and developed bladder issues, leading to urinary incontinence, which persists to this day. After receiving treatment, I returned to the shelter, where I continue to live under dire conditions. My health has deteriorated, and my treatment has been prolonged due to pre-existing hepatitis, which weakens my immune system. The severe shortage of essential food for my recovery in the north, caused by the Israeli siege, has worsened my situation. I feel like my life is no longer the same after my injury. The wounds and disfigurements have not only scarred my body but have left a deep mark on my soul that will remain with me for a long time. I now live with constant pain—not only from the health I have lost but also from the harsh feeling of helplessness and weakness that haunts me every day, as if I have lost myself."⁵

⁵- PCHR's staff received this testimony at Asmaa Bint Abi Bakr School in Sheikh Radwan neighborhood in Gaza City on 11 December 2024.



2 Loss of Breadwinner or Family Members

Women and girls in the Gaza Strip are facing complex social, economic, and psychological challenges as a result of the Israeli military assault. The loss of a breadwinner or a family member, particularly a primary provider, places women in a critical position where they must shoulder the responsibility of supporting their families alone. This includes caring for children, the elderly, and other dependents. This forced shift in roles coincides with the collapse of economic institutions and the weakened capacity of local communities, leaving employment opportunities nearly nonexistent and compelling women to seek any means of livelihood, which are often insufficient or unsustainable.

Moreover, the loss of family members—such as fathers, husbands, sons, or brothers—leaves profound psychological scars on women in Gaza. Many experience psychological trauma ranging from depression to chronic anxiety, often accompanied by feelings of isolation and profound grief. Under such circumstances, women face significant challenges in managing their daily lives, from securing basic needs to coping with the emotional burdens caused by their loss.

The unprecedented Israeli military assault on Gaza has systematically destroyed essential components of life, targeting infrastructure and the local economy. This devastation has disrupted support networks that previously provided protection and assistance to women, such as organizations offering social and psychological support to widows and those providing vocational training and economic aid. Direct targeting, coupled with the Israeli siege and repeated displacement, has rendered these networks partially or entirely nonfunctional, further complicating women's lives and restricting their access to vital resources.

In addition, cultural norms and traditions in Gaza significantly limit women's opportunities in the labor market. Gender-based social perceptions enforce traditional roles that restrict women's ability to expand into sectors typically seen as male-dominated. Consequently, women who become primary breadwinners face heightened social, economic, and psychological pressures. They find themselves trapped between societal constraints that hinder their mobility and economic demands that require them to meet their families' basic needs. This reality exacerbates women's psychological distress, amplifies their sense of isolation in the absence of adequate community support.

The survey documented that 113 women lost their husbands, the primary breadwinners of their families, after being either killed, detained or torn apart between northern and southern Gaza after IOF have divided the two parts with a military checkpoint. Meanwhile, 193 women have lost other family members. PCHR staff has taken numerous testimonies that reflect the daily struggles these women face as a result of such losses.



Israa Atef Khamis Abu Al-Ata (27), a widow and mother of two daughters, Hoor (3.5) and Noor (1.2), shared her story with PCHR's team: **“My husband, Mohammad Abu Asr, and I, along with our children, were displaced to Gaza Girls’ School after losing our home. But my life completely fell apart on 25 October 2024. That day, my husband, who was a fisherman, went out fishing with his friend. After finishing, he left the boat with his friend. Suddenly, his friend was targeted, and when my husband went to check on him, another missile struck them both, killing them instantly. When I received the news of my husband’s death, I was in shock. I couldn’t stop crying, and all I could think about was: How will I take care of my daughters? Today, I am both their mother and father, bearing all the responsibilities that my husband used to carry alone. We now have no source of income, and I can’t provide for our basic needs. I gather firewood and wait in line for hours to get drinking water. The food is scarce and limited, mostly canned food. I rely on aid and the food provided by charity kitchens, which is mostly pasta and lentils. It’s not enough to meet my needs or those of my children. My mental health has drastically deteriorated since losing my husband. He was the backbone of our family, providing everything we needed. Now I live in constant fear; we have no income and no support. All I wish for is to secure a decent life for my daughters, to provide them with the healthy food they need to grow in peace and safety.”**⁶



⁶- PCHR's staff received this testimony in Gaza Girls School in Gaza City on 06 December 2024

Iman Awad Ismail Abu Ismail (23), a resident of Khuza'a, stated:

"I left my home in Khuza'a on 09 October 2023, with my family due to the intense shelling and fire belts that surrounded us. We left on foot, taking nothing with us, and sought refuge at Nasser Medical Hospital, where we stayed for a month. My father, who had a history of strokes, suffered greatly from the stress and overcrowding in the hospital. On 08 December 2023, he suffered a fatal stroke right before my eyes and passed away instantly. At that moment, I collapsed over my father's body and experienced partial paralysis in my right hand and foot, which lasted for eight days. The doctors diagnosed my condition as a mild stroke. To this day, I continue to suffer from sudden weakness and numbness in my hand and foot, without a clear explanation for the cause. During our stay at Nasser Hospital, we faced severe food shortages, receiving only one meal a day, and sometimes going without food entirely. At the beginning of January 2024, my sister Maysar (45) passed away due to malnutrition and vitamin deficiencies. The food was limited to za'atar, chili, and duqqa, often without bread. Maysar did not receive adequate medical care due to the lack of resources caused by the Israeli siege and the overwhelming number of war casualties at the hospital, where priority was given to the injured. Maysar spent three days at the hospital before she passed away. Shortly after her death, IOF ordered us to evacuate the hospital via loudspeakers on a quadcopter drone. The evacuation process via turnstile barriers took from 08:00 to 17:00, during which I endured intense pain in my hand and foot, standing under the sun, exhausted and carrying heavy belongings, without any food. When we arrived at Al-Mawasi in Rafah, generous individuals provided us with a tent to sleep in. I was so exhausted that I didn't wake up until the evening of the next day. On 25 February 2024, my brother Hossam (35) was killed during the siege of Nasser Hospital. He had chosen to stay behind to care for elderly men abandoned by their families. His body remained in the hospital and could not be buried until over a month later, after the Israeli soldiers withdrew. By then, his body was decomposed, and we couldn't even see him. Eyewitnesses told us that animals had scavenged his corpse before he was finally buried, as if death had pursued him even after he was gone. When I received the news of Hossam's death, I felt utterly numb. I couldn't cry—I had already shed all my tears when my father and sister died. It felt as though I had lost all my senses. Death had become so familiar to me that it no longer shocks me anymore. The pain seemed endless, and I became certain that sorrow would inhabit me forever." ⁷

7- PCHR's staff received this testimony in Khan Yunis on 07 July 2024.

Azhar Imad Abu Al-Ata- Jundia (32) a widow and mother of two daughters, Jouri (3) and Jana (1.8), stated:

“I was married to Yousef Jamal Khaled Jundia. On 12 October 2024, at 09:00, I lost everything. My husband was killed in a sudden airstrike that targeted our neighbor’s house in the Al-Muntar area, east of Al-Shuja’iyya. Yousef was the sole provider for our family. He ensured we had food, water, clothes for the children, and even milk and diapers for our two daughters. He collected firewood and took care of our daughters’ health whenever they got sick. After his death, I moved with my two daughters to a shelter at Gaza Girls’ School, where I now live with my mother. My life has been turned upside down. I never imagined I would have to shoulder all this responsibility alone. Now, it is up to me to provide food, clothing, and milk for my daughters and to monitor their health. It is extremely difficult, and I feel unbearable pressure. The conditions here are incredibly harsh. The aid we receive from UNRWA is insufficient. We only get some canned goods and legumes, but there is no milk for the children or diapers. I am unable to provide these essentials due to the lack of income, which makes the burden even heavier. The weight of responsibility has become unbearable. I live in constant fear and anxiety. I feel incapable of meeting my daughters’ needs in the way they deserve, especially with the lack of suitable and necessary food for nursing my younger daughter. My mental health has deteriorated significantly. I have become very irritable and feel helpless every single day. All I wish is to provide a safe and stable life for my daughters, to raise them without fear or deprivation. All I want is to see them grow up in peace and to be able to meet their basic needs without this crippling sense of helplessness.”⁸

⁸- PCHR’s staff received this testimony in Gaza Girls School in Gaza City on 06 December 2024.



3 Loss of Women's Sources of Income

The ongoing military assault on Gaza has devastated the economy on a massive scale, as Israeli airstrikes systematically and deliberately targeted essential infrastructure and economic facilities. This destruction included markets, factories, farms, fuel stations, shops, and infrastructure such as electricity, water, sanitation networks, and roads, leading to the complete paralysis of productive and service sectors. Continuous border closures further exacerbated the situation, preventing the entry of raw materials and essential goods, deepening the crises of unemployment and poverty in a region already suffering from years of blockade. This systematic destruction extends beyond physical damage, reflecting a strategy aimed at undermining Gaza's economic resilience and capacity for recovery.

The destruction of Gaza's economy during the ongoing military assault has had a catastrophic impact on women's lives, particularly those who relied on small-scale projects as their primary source of income. Israeli airstrikes targeted vital establishments, including markets, farms, and shops, causing thousands of women to lose their businesses and livelihoods, which had been main source of income for themselves and their families. This devastation also deprived many women of financial independence, inevitably forcing them to rely on humanitarian aid and significantly limiting their ability to rebuild their lives after the war.

after being either killed, detained or torn apart between northern and southern Gaza after IOF have divided the two parts with a military checkpoint. Meanwhile, 193 women have lost other family members. PCHR staff has taken numerous testimonies that reflect the daily struggles these women face as a result of such losses.

The effects of this destruction are not limited to the economic sphere but extend to women's mental health. Losing their jobs has left many women feeling helpless and stripped of financial independence at a time when alternative opportunities and paths to economic recovery are almost nonexistent. This harsh reality imposes immense economic, social, and psychological challenges on women in Gaza, further complicating their lives and compounding their suffering under unbearable circumstances. The survey results revealed that 286 women participants lost their sources of income during the military assault. The economic and psychological effects of this loss were reflected in the testimonies of several participants shared with the research team.

Wafa Abdullah Hassan Al-Majdalawi (46), married, a resident of Al-Shati Refugee Camp, displaced to Al-Maghazi Boys Preparatory School A, stated:

“On 10 October 2023, we were forced to leave our home in Al-Shati Camp after intense Israeli airstrikes targeted the area with missiles and heavy fire belts. We left everything behind and moved south toward Al-Maghazi. We were displaced from one place to another until we ended up at Al-Maghazi Boys Preparatory School A, where we now live under extremely harsh conditions. Before the war, I owned a small factory for pastries and sweets in Al-Shati Camp, which I had started in 2012 with modest resources from my home. Over time, my efforts helped the business grow, allowing me to purchase modern equipment and ovens. I produced a variety of items such as pastries, cakes, and oriental sweets and even had contracts with some institutions. At the height of my activity, I provided job opportunities for around 13 women. Unfortunately, the war completely destroyed my project, and I lost the source of livelihood that I had built over more than 11 years. This project was my family’s economic security, and now there’s nothing left. I tried to start a small project with modest resources in the shelter, but the harsh conditions made it nearly impossible. The lack of raw materials due to the severe blockade and repeated displacements caused by Israeli evacuation orders prevent any form of stability. Nothing can compensate for what I’ve lost. The war didn’t just destroy my home and my project; it stole my stability and tore me away from a life I once thought was secure, leaving behind deep wounds and an unbearable burden.” ⁹

⁹- PCHR’s staff received this testimony at Al-Maghazi Boys Preparatory School A on 08 September 2024.



Hanaa Al-Wakeel (35), a resident of Tal Al-Hawa, displaced to Khan Younis, stated:

“Imagine spending your twenties working tirelessly without rest, deprived of the simplest joys of life, just to scrape together enough to achieve your dream of starting your own project. Then, you enter your thirties filled with happiness and hope because you’ve finally turned your aspirations into a tangible reality. I dreamed of promoting a new concept that supports healthy eating and encourages a healthier lifestyle. Since graduating from university, I devoted myself to learning the art of healthy cooking, striving for a better and more productive life. I focused on helping patients, especially those with diabetes and others whose illnesses prevented them from enjoying food. Despite the immense challenges, including the scarcity of equipment and raw materials in Gaza due to the Israeli siege, I persevered with passion and hope. Eventually, I succeeded in establishing my own project—a space dedicated to promoting healthy living. But everything I had built over years of sacrifices and effort vanished in an instant. On 01 December 2023, Israeli airstrikes destroyed the building that housed my project, reducing it to rubble. The dream I had fought for was gone in minutes. I lost my work, my home, and everything I owned. I had aspired to spread a new culture and deliver a message of change in my homeland, Gaza. But everything was wiped away by Israeli forces. It feels as though part of my soul was buried with my dream under the rubble. The pain I endure isn’t just about losing my source of income; it’s the inability to reclaim the years I spent struggling and persevering. My dream is no longer just a faded memory—it has become a deep wound, reminding me daily of the harshness of life under Israeli occupation. And of this painful truth: In Gaza, we don’t even have the right to dream like the rest of the world.” ¹⁰

¹⁰- PCHR’s staff received this testimony in Khan Yunis on 12 December 2024.



4 Israel's Starvation Policy

Since the onset of the Israeli military assault on the Gaza Strip, Israel has pursued a systematic starvation policy targeting every aspect of residents' lives. This has resulted in widespread destruction of infrastructure and exacerbation of humanitarian crises. Water supplies have been catastrophically affected, with daily per capita water access reduced to as little as three liters in some areas, and, at times, water has been entirely unavailable, forcing residents to rely on contaminated water. Agricultural lands and livestock have been destroyed, along with industrial and food facilities, including bakeries and markets, deepening the food crisis.

Amidst the dire humanitarian crisis, IOF has imposed tightened restrictions on the entry of humanitarian aid into Gaza. Each truck undergoes complicated inspections and conditional approvals under the pretext of "security", hindering relief efforts and delaying the arrival of aid. Although limited aid is occasionally allowed, the quantities permitted are grossly insufficient compared to the enormous humanitarian needs of the population.

Women in Gaza are disproportionately affected by Israel's starvation policy due to gender-based social roles. They bear the primary responsibility for caring for children and the elderly and are often tasked with preparing food. Many women reduce their own food intake to prioritize their children's nutrition. Pregnant and breastfeeding women face even harsher challenges, as their increased nutritional needs to ensure their health and that of their children are unmet. Malnutrition and extreme hunger exacerbate their suffering, causing constant anxiety about the survival and growth of their unborn babies. With the escalating difficulty of obtaining necessary food, their hardship intensifies as they often sacrifice their own nourishment to provide for their children, putting their health and lives, as well as those of their children, at greater risk.

As a result of Israeli policies, many women experience severe hunger and intolerable hardships, consuming only minimal amounts of food that fail to meet their basic daily caloric needs. In some cases, women endure prolonged periods without food, lasting several days. According to the survey, 315 women among the participants reported experiencing severe hunger and food shortages. Additionally, 485 women suffered from malnutrition due to the limited availability of essential nutritious foods such as fruits, vegetables, and meat, which have largely disappeared from local markets or are prohibitively expensive when available. These conditions highlight the devastating impact of the starvation policy on women's health and well-being, compounding the already overwhelming burden they carry.



Makram Salim Mohammad Abu Beid (42) a mother of two children: Amjad (9) and Huda (8) stated:

“In northern Gaza, we were suffering from severe hunger due to the Israeli siege. We were forced to buy ground corn meant for livestock, which was full of impurities and difficult to swallow. Our food consisted of only one meal of these grains, and my children would cry and refuse to eat it, but hunger eventually forced them to. One day, a neighbor gave us some flour, but it was contaminated with kerosene. We had no choice but to knead it and feed it to the children, who ate it while crying. My heart broke as I watched them in this state, spending sleepless nights crying out of helplessness and pain. On some days, my husband and I would go out to pick wild greens like chard and mallow to feed the children when no flour was available. But I will never forget the day my neighbor was baking white flour bread, and my children smelled it and began crying, begging for some. I went to ask my neighbor for a little bread, but she apologized because what she had wasn’t enough for her own children. At that moment, it felt like a dagger pierced my heart. Due to malnutrition, my children have become severely underweight, with their bones visibly protruding and their skin turning yellow. They’ve also developed infections caused by drinking salty water and eating unhealthy food. I feel powerless to protect them and cannot provide anything to save them from this suffering. We currently rely on aid from UNRWA, but it’s insufficient to meet our needs. Sometimes, we turn to charity kitchens for lentils or pasta, but I constantly feel helpless as I watch my children suffer. I give them priority over myself when it comes to food, leaving me weak and dizzy from the lack of sustenance. I wish I could restore the healthy and dignified life we once had.”¹¹

Sabrin Rahmi (32), a pregnant woman, and a mother of three children stated: **“I am currently four months pregnant. The doctors have diagnosed me with malnutrition and informed me that my health is poor because I’m not consuming healthy and suitable food for a pregnant woman. Our food at home is limited to some canned goods and the lentils or pasta provided by charity kitchens. I can’t eat these foods in large quantities, and there’s no alternative. I cannot afford fruits, vegetables, or meat, which I’m supposed to eat to strengthen my body and nourish my baby. These items are unavailable due to the Israeli siege, and when they are available, their prices are too high for us to afford. I feel extreme fatigue and exhaustion due to the combination of pregnancy and malnutrition, and I suffer from constant dizziness. I am deeply worried about losing my baby and pray to God that my child is born healthy and safe. I hope this war ends so we can have access to proper food and water and live under better conditions.”**¹²

¹¹- PCHR’s staff received this testimony at Gaza Girls School in Gaza City on 21 November 2024.

¹²- PCHR’s staff received this testimony at Al-Daraj School in Gaza City on 11 December 2024.

Wafa Mohammad Abu Ouda (47), a mother of six children stated: **“After facing death numerous times in northern Gaza, we fled south, walking for hours under bombardment and destruction, searching for shelter. We thought we had reached safety, but we entered another phase of suffering. We stayed at Al-Mufti School in Al-Nuseirat. Every day, I would wake up before dawn, leave at first light, and stand in line at the bakery until sunset. Often, I would return empty-handed, feeling an unbearable sense of defeat. I endured this because my husband stayed behind in the north and didn’t flee with us. The bakery was far from the school, and the road to it was fraught with danger. I walked every day despite the excruciating pain in my back caused by a herniated disc, while the bombing shook the ground and the sky. On November 5, as the bombardment intensified, we realized staying was no longer possible. We left behind everything we had in Al-Nuseirat and moved to Rafah, thinking we had reached the peak of our suffering, only to find a new chapter of hell. We stayed in another school, without food, water, or even warm clothes to shield us from the piercing cold. We relied on a little rice and pasta if they were available and went an entire month without seeing flour or bread. Prices were unbearably high, beyond what we could afford. I and my children survive on one meal a day, and sometimes we don’t even have that. My children go to bed hungry unless we receive a small amount of aid. We were once poor laborers who lived on our daily earnings, but we’ve lost everything and have no income. I fast daily due to the lack of food to prioritize my children, but even then, I can’t provide enough for them. Sometimes, I collect leftover food from others and give it to my children to eat. My heart shatters when I see them eating with tears in their eyes.”**¹³



¹³- Documented by PCHR’s lawyer Nour Abu Al-Nur on 12 February 2024 in Khan Yunis before she was killed in an Israeli airstrike on her family house.



5 Displacement Challenges and Shelters:

Since the onset of the Israeli aggression, forced displacement has become an integral part of women's collective suffering, aimed at their psychological and physical destruction. Under relentless bombardment, women have repeatedly been forced to evacuate places they sought refuge in, carrying their belongings and children and embarking on another journey of displacement to an unknown destination, where they will face nothing but death and agony, as there is no safe place in the Gaza Strip.

Women in the Gaza Strip were forced into overcrowded shelters under dire conditions, turning their daily lives into an endless struggle for survival. They lack essentials for life, including clean water for drinking, cooking, or daily use. Some are forced to stand in long lines to fetch small amounts of contaminated water. Additionally, women bear additional burden such as gathering firewood for cooking and spending long hours in front of the fire, which exposes them to severe health risks.

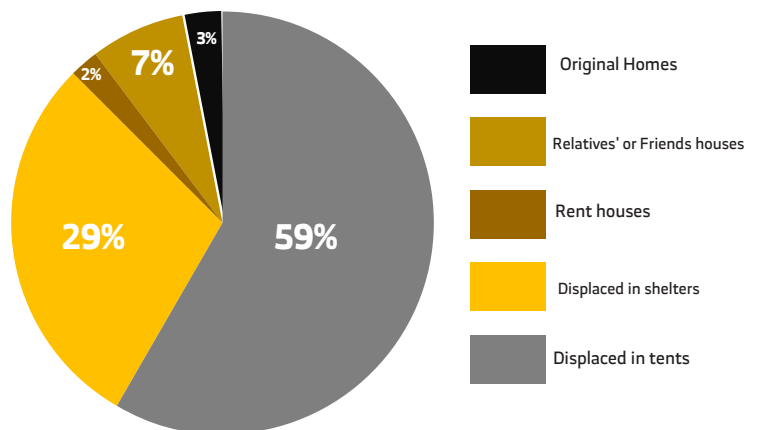
Seasons change, but the miserable situation never does. Under the scorching heat and dryness of summer, women collapse, while winter becomes another enemy amid lack of blankets and clothes to warm them up in the bitter cold weather, as they give priority to providing the available blankets for their children. These conditions have created a breeding ground for respiratory diseases such as colds and pneumonia.

to the mass displacement caused by repeated evacuation orders. Amidst this overcrowding, life becomes a constant nightmare, as flimsy tents are sticking together with no sound or visual barriers, leaving women's lives exposed to everyone. Additionally, using shared bathrooms forces women to wait in long lines, inflicting further feeling of embarrassment and psychological stress. Moreover, many makeshift camps lack adequate restroom facilities, which are often either too close to or too far from the tents, exposing women to embarrassment and fear, especially at night.

These inhuman conditions impose a bitter reality on women, who find themselves facing daily challenges that exceed their ability to bear, in the absence of any solutions or interventions that provide them with even the minimum requirement of a decent life. The survey results have revealed that 749 of participating women are displaced, constituting 95.9% of the survey sample, are displaced.

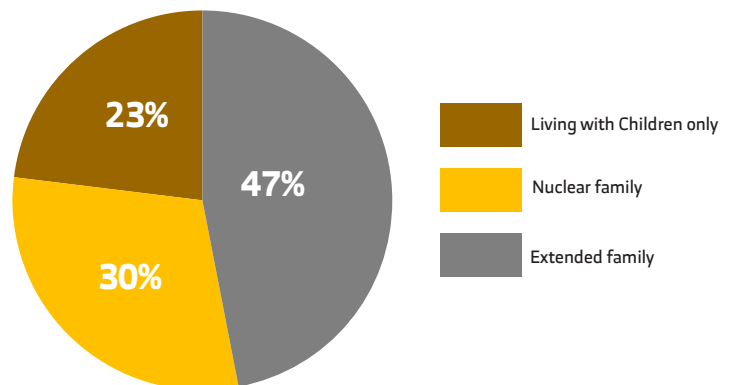
Displacement status of participants on the the survey

The study results have shown that most participants, numbered 467 women (58.59%), are displaced in tents with 29.11% displaced in shelters, 2.26% in rented houses, 7.03% in relatives' or friends' houses, and 3.02% remain in their own homes.



Family structure of participants of the survey

Regarding the family structure after repeated displacement, it was found that 369 women (46.42%) live within extended families, while 237 women (29.81%) live with nuclear families. Additionally, 179 women (22.52%) live with their children without their husbands.



Manar Hamdi Abu Beid (36), married and a mother of four children: Eyad (15), Saleem (14), Hadeel (13), and Nadeen (11), said to PCHR's staff: **"On 07 October, we were forced to evacuate our house located in a border area, east of al-Shuja'iyia neighborhood. My children were terrified as we were fleeing to an unknown destination. We initially sought refuge in my sister's house in the stalls market, but after a week, the security situation in the area became extremely dangerous. This forced us to move to Gaza School for Girls, where we set up a small tent made of fabric. As the situation drastically escalated, we sought refuge at al-Shifa Medical Complex in November 2023, searching for safety. Unfortunately, the complex was besieged and bombed, and we fled away. On our way, women and children were targeted and all of them were killed in front of us. My children were in shock, crying out of fear. For a moment we were separated, but I managed to gather them again. We returned again to Gaza School and set up a new tent, but it did not provide us safety, as artillery shells fell close to us and shrapnel penetrated our tent, forcing us to take refuge in an abandoned bathroom. I cleaned the bathroom and prepared it to sleep inside. It was cramped, and we had only one blanket that did not protect us from the cold. Our displacement does not only mean the loss of home but also loss of every sense of security and dignity. We left home without taking any of our belongings. We had no clothes, no blankets, no mattresses. We moved from place to place, living in constant fear and not knowing our fate. All I could think about was how to protect my children from this nightmare. Even access to water became a daily struggle. Salty water is available for only two hours a day, during which, my children fill water jerrycans and carry them back to the tent to meet our basic needs. As for clean drinking water, it is an even greater challenge, and my children fetch it from a desalination plant 500 meters away from our school. They carry the water jerrycans all the way until they reach the school completely exhausted. I see them struggling with back pain from carrying water for long distances, which makes me feel so sad as I can't take this burden off them. With the coming of winter, our suffering has increased as rainwater floods the place where we live. The blankets and mattresses get completely soaked, and on some nights, we are forced to sleep on cardboard because everything is wet. My children and I constantly suffer from colds and headaches, and my children's clothes are very light and do not protect them from the bitter cold. As for medicines, they are scarce and not easily available. If one of us needs to change clothes, everyone must go outside to make enough space. We don't have well-equipped bathrooms, which makes my daughters and I feel unsafe. We always try to find alternative solutions to maintain our privacy."**¹⁴

14- Testimony obtained by PCHR's staff on 25 November 2024 at Gaza School for Girls in Gaza City.

Haneen Shakhsa (25), a resident of al-Shuja'iyia neighborhood currently displaced in Deir al-Balah, told PCHR's staff: **"We arrived in Deir al-Balah with no money. We set up our tent on the roadside along the sea street. We don't have enough blankets, and the weather is extremely cold, especially since we are so close to the sea. Additionally, we don't have a bathroom. We use a plastic container to relieve ourselves, and I clean it with chlorine after each use ."**¹⁵

Fatema al-Jammal (39), a resident of al-Shuja'iyia neighborhood, said to PCHR's staff: **"We evacuated and moved from place to place several times. One of the places we sought refuge in was al-Shifa Medical Complex. During that time, we could only bathe once a month, after our period. The bathroom was communal and offered no privacy, so one of the men had to stand as a guard until we finished. My family and I suffered from diseases and epidemics caused by the lack of clean drinking water, overcrowding, and the unsanitary environment. "**¹⁶



¹⁵- Testimony obtained by PCHR's staff on 04 March 2024 in Deir al-Balah.

¹⁶- Testimony obtained by PCHR's staff on 12 February 2024 at al-Shifa Medical Complex in Gaza City.



6 Women Stricken with Epidemics:

PCHR's staff, through the survey, has monitored that about 267 women in the Gaza Strip have suffered from various epidemics and diseases especially with the drastic deterioration of the health situation in the Gaza Strip, particularly in displacement shelters. As mentioned above, these shelters are severely overcrowded, lack minimum hygiene standards and sanitation facilities amid scarce cleaning supplies, inflicting conditions ripe for infectious diseases. Prolonged daily exposure to cooking smoke, limited access to clean water, and poor ventilation are among the key factors exacerbating these conditions. The most common epidemics raging through the Gaza Strip are respiratory infections, skin diseases such as scabies and fungal infections, as well as waterborne diseases like diarrhea and hepatitis.

A 73-year-old widow, Fakhriya 'Abed al-Majeed Suliman al-Ghalayini, talked to PCHR about her infection with communicable diseases: **“Diseases widely spread during the war. I suffered from rashes and itching all over my body, which turned out to be allergies caused by mosquito bites (skeeter syndrome) and fungal infections. I was not the only one who got infected, everyone inside the tent got infected, especially with the lack of water and the difficulty of maintaining personal hygiene. Soap and cleaning supplies like chlorine were not available, and even if available in the markets, we could not buy them because of their high prices, as we did not have enough money and there were no job opportunities. Additionally, there were no nearby medical points, and we had to walk for long distances to reach the UNRWA clinic in Deir al-Balah. When transportation was available, it was usually a horse-drawn cart. Once, I had to use this means of transportation, but I fell and sustained bruises and minor injuries. Even accessing these medical points was fraught with danger, and simply seeking treatment became a struggle itself .”**¹⁷

Eman Abu Beid (44), single, said to PCHR’s staff: **“Since the onset of the war, we sought refuge in al-Daraj school after our house was bombed, my parents, my brother and their families, and I live together in a tent. Since December 2023, I have been suffering from constant itching all over my body, and it has spread in the form of rashes and bleeding, leaving scars on my skin. I tried to consult a dermatologist, but I faced difficulties in reaching him due to the lack of transportation and the challenge of finding a specific place for follow-up. Currently, I am being treated by doctors at the shelter who informed me that the cause of this condition is the environment we live in where there are no minimum essentials for life amid the spread of sewage, epidemics, and mosquitoes. The proper treatment for my condition is unavailable. The doctors only gave me baby powder to alleviate the symptoms. Additionally, I have diabetes, and this skin disease negatively affects me because the wounds caused by it take a long time to heal. I also cannot afford diabetes medication as it is unavailable. I feel intense pain and sadness every day because of the suffering caused by this epidemic.”**¹⁸



17- Testimony obtained by PCHR’s staff on 10 December 2024 in Deir al-Balah.

18- Testimony obtained by PCHR’s staff on 11 December 2024 at Gaza School for Girls in Gaza City.

Majdah Muhy al-Deen al-Jammal (32) said to PCHR's staff: **“on 05 January 2024, part of my house was bombed, so I went to clean it as much as possible. The following day, I suffered severe itching on my hands and legs, which led to rashes appearing on my skin. I took the appropriate treatment to remove the rashes, but marks and spots remain on my skin, and the rashes keep reappearing. After a long period of suffering, I finally managed to reach the only dermatologist in the northern Gaza Strip, as he moves from one clinic to another, making him difficult to reach because of the large number of patients waiting for their turn. The doctor confirmed that the cause of the itching is the environment we live in, as I live in a shelter where sewage spreads around us. There are no cleaning supplies to maintain hygiene. I have been suffering from this condition for almost a year and cannot get rid of it. I need treatment, but it is often unavailable. The doctor advised me to leave the shelter and live in a clean environment, but this is impossible due to the war circumstances, especially after I lost my home.”**¹⁹



¹⁹- Testimony obtained by PCHR's staff on 11 December 2024 at al-Daraj School in Gaza City.



7 Family Separation:

Since the Israeli military aggression began on 07 October, families in the Gaza Strip have been tragically torn apart. The survey has revealed that 339 women suffer from family fragmentation for various reasons. Many families had to evacuate to the south, fleeing indiscriminate bombing and seeking a haven, while others remained in northern Gaza, constantly facing danger. The crisis worsened after the IOF raided Palestinian homes and temporary shelters, including hospitals and schools, forcing those inside to evacuate to the south.

On a different note, many families have been torn apart for one of their members being either arrested by the IOF or being released from detention and to the south while their families remained in the northern Gaza Strip, further increasing their suffering. Additionally, there are numerous cases of enforced disappearance in Gaza, as well as others whose fate remains unknown to this day. The hellish conditions of displacement and fleeing under intense bombing have caused further family separation and fragmentation, making it difficult to know the whereabouts of many family members or establish contact with them, thus exacerbating the tragic situation.

The suffering of women in the Gaza Strip has intensified after being separated from both their extended and nuclear families, deepening feelings of loss, loneliness, and isolation. They also felt sad and confused after losing contact with their beloved ones and never knowing their fate. Women have lost the essential bonds that provide them with a sense of security and reassurance, making this separation a continuing psychological burden, especially in the absence of alternatives or a social support system. This makes coping with psychological stress even more difficult. For many, family members are their support system in the face of military aggression crises, and when this support system disappears, dealing with war challenges becomes more complicated.

Amina Fawzi al-Wakeel (37), a resident of al-Rimal neighborhood in Gaza City, said to PCHR's staff: "I miss my family very much, especially since we spent most of the war together, sharing all the fear and hunger. My mother, a cancer patient, had to travel abroad for treatment due to the lack of medical resources amidst the complete collapse of Gaza's healthcare system. Being away from our mother was very difficult, but we knew she was in desperate need of treatment. At that time, we were besieged inside al-Shifa Medical Complex and endured the famine that has stricken everyone in Gaza, while constantly fearing bombing and destruction. My father's health significantly deteriorated after he inhaled white phosphorus smoke when we were trapped inside al-Shifa Complex. My father's health significantly deteriorated after inhaling white phosphorus smoke while we were trapped inside al-Shifa Complex. His treatment was unavailable in Gaza, forcing most of my siblings to travel with him for treatment. Being without my father and siblings was incredibly difficult, as they were my support system during the war. My father was silently struggling but death did not give him much time. One day, I received the heartbreaking news that my father had passed away. At that time, I was alone without my mother or brothers. I had no one to stay by my side or support me. My heart remains heavy with grief and sadness to this day, but I live with the hope that this war will eventually end, and that we will be able to rebuild our lives and reunite our family once again." ²⁰

Do'aa Nabil Khas (34), married and a mother of 5 children, said to PCHR's staff: "I am married to Fadi Khas, and we have five children: **Suhaib (16)**, **Rafeef (15)**, **Sabah (12)**, **Rahaf (10)**, and **Raghad (6)**. Since the onset of the war, we lost our house, forcing us to seek refuge in al-Daraj School used as a shelter. My husband was at al-Shifa Medical Complex with his brother, who had been injured in his shoulder and needed treatment abroad. In March 2023, the IOF besieged al-Shifa Medical Complex, and my husband was at the hospital. The last time we spoke was on 18 March 2024. During that call, he was crying and told me, 'Take care of our daughters.' After the IOF withdrew from the complex, we learned that the IOF arrested my husband, while my brother-in-law was not arrested. Currently, I live under harsh conditions without my husband and bear heavy responsibilities. My children have many needs, but I cannot meet all of them as I have no source of income. We rely on aid and food provided by community kitchens. My son Suhaib (16) fled to the southern Gaza Strip due to the famine that hit northern Gaza, increasing the burden on me. At that time, our food was ground animal feed. Suhaib was my backbone after his father was arrested, but he fled in fear from bombardment and famine. Now, Suhaib is crying, wishing to be with us, and I miss him and my husband. I hope we will reunite again, and this war will end." ²¹

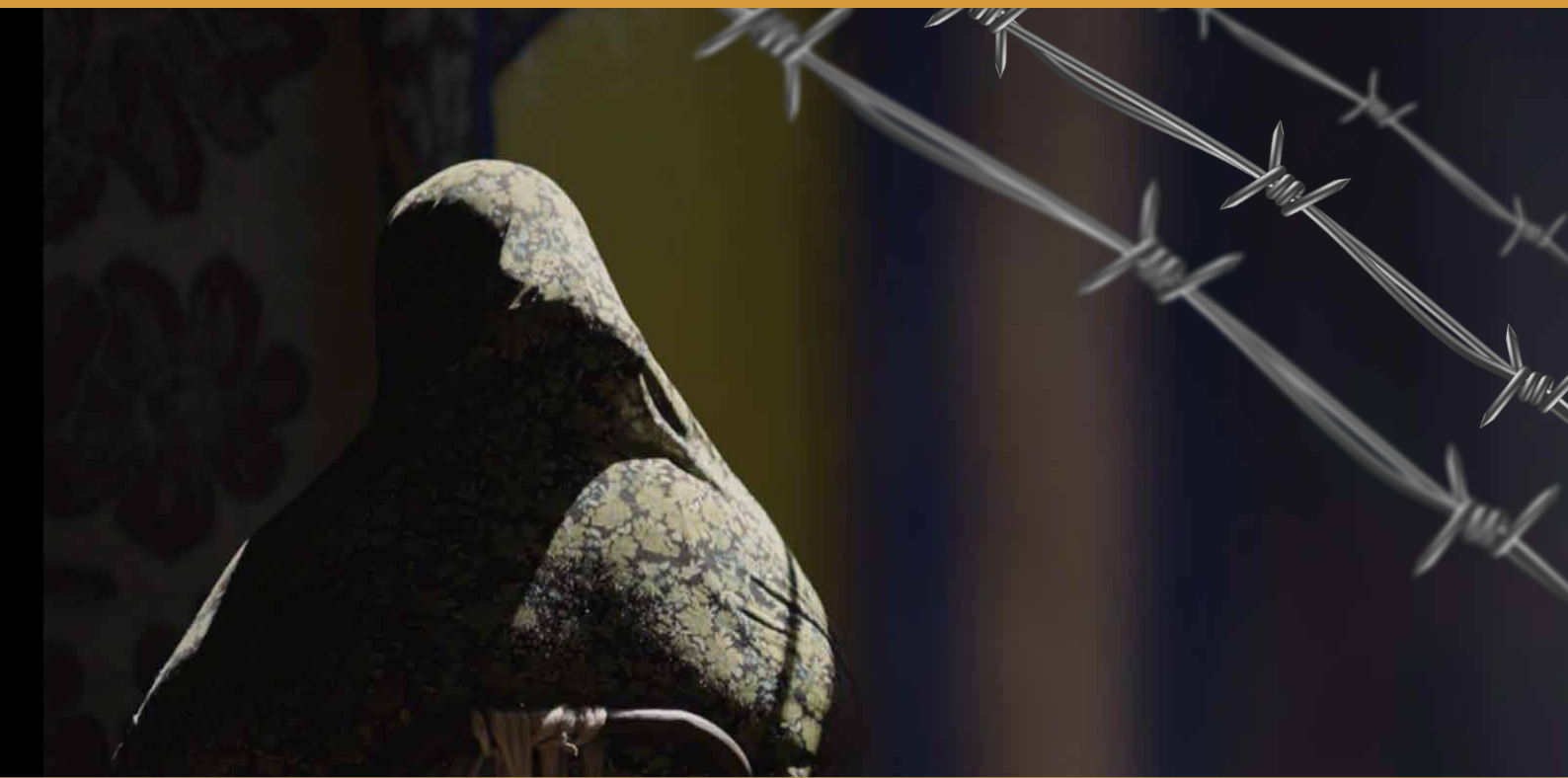
²⁰- Testimony obtained by PCHR's staff on 04 December 2024 in Gaza City.

²¹- Testimony obtained by PCHR's staff on 11 December 2024 at al-Daraj School in Gaza City.



(G. A.), 17, said to PCHR's staff: **"My mother, my siblings, five other people, and I live in a 2x3 meter room inside a shelter. We have been here since the start of the war after we lost our house in December 2023. My father is currently in the West Bank. Before the war, he worked in Israel, but after the war began, he couldn't return to Gaza and got trapped in the West Bank. I cannot contact him regularly due to the communications difficulties having to wait too long between each call. We also have a brother who is married and displaced in southern Gaza. I hope for thing longing to end and I reunite with my father and brother as I miss them so much. I feel helpless and sad that I have lost my backbone and support, especially since our father cannot be with us during this difficult time."**²²

²²- Testimony obtained by PCHR's staff on 10 December 2024 at al-Daraj School in Gaza City.



8 Arbitrary Arrests:

PCHR's staff, through the survey, has documented cases of arbitrary arrest of women in the Gaza Strip. During their arrest, women endured hellish humanitarian conditions inside the Israeli prisons, including strip searches, horrific physical torture such as beating, tying their hands and feet, and blindfolding them for long time in inhuman and painful positions. They were also subjected to threats of sexual assault and rape, as well as retaliatory threats against their family members or children, further exacerbating their psychological suffering. Also, women were subjected to constant verbal abuse along with degrading treatment and humiliation while they were deprived of their fundamental rights, including access to adequate food and necessary health-care, even in critical cases that require urgent intervention. Women were denied contact with their families.

(W. S.) (29), a former detainee in Israeli prisons, said to PCHR's staff: **"On 10 December 2023, we received news that the IOF had begun their ground invasion and advanced into our residential area. At the time, we decided to stay at home because of my father's health condition. Around 16:00 on 13 December 2023, the IOF, accompanied by sniffer dogs, violently raided our house. My brother tried to tell them we were civilians, but one of the dogs bit his hand. After storming our house, the soldiers forced men out onto the street after handcuffed and blindfolded them, while ordered women to stay in the house and raise their hands. The soldiers then took me to one of the house rooms and ordered me to take off my clothes, but I refused. Afterwards, three female soldiers came, forcibly searched me and lift my clothes to expose my abdomen. I was then interrogated. During the investigation, one of the soldiers asked me about tunnels and members of armed groups. When I insisted that I knew nothing, he threatened me, saying, 'You will pay the price.' He then asked me embarrassing and humiliating personal questions, such as why I was not married, and if I was a virgin. He then laughed and said, 'We can know that through the soldiers.' I was surrounded by several soldiers who pointed their weapons at me. I was terrified but tried to stay strong. A soldier then dragged me out, blindfolded me, and handcuffed me. We walked until we reached an inhabited building. The soldiers tried to harass and touch me, but I resisted with all my strength and managed to push them away. Afterwards, we were taken through an armored personnel carrier to Zikim training base. I was detained until 14 December 2023. During my detention, I was severely assaulted, as a female and a male soldier beat me on my head with their boots, removed my hijab, beat me with batons and gun butts, threw a wooden chair that hit my head, and insulted me. This assault continued for more than two hours. I was then taken to a prison, where I was forced to take off my clothes for search. They gave me gray pajamas without underwear. When I asked for my hijab, a female soldier threw it at me, mocking, "Take it you terrorist". During my detention, I was handcuffed and blindfolded all the time, even when I was eating or using the bathroom. They refused to unhandcuff us. After seven days of detention, the soldiers decided to transfer me to Damon prison. Upon arriving there, they forced me again to take off my clothes for another search. In prison, the food was very bad, consisting of stale bread or rice and burnt eggs. Interrogations lasted for more than three hours, and insults and degrading treatment were a part of our daily psychological and physical suffering. On 01 February 2024, I was released at Karem Shalom Crossing, but I was threatened not to speak to the media about the beatings I endured. My family remains in northern Gaza, while I am in the south. I feel lost and unable to lead a normal life. Despite my release, the painful memories haunt me. I hope to return to my life before, to the days of peace and safety. But the harsh reality is that I have lost so much, especially my physical and psychological dignity degraded by the Israeli soldiers. It is hard to cope with this painful reality fraught with suffering and fear."**

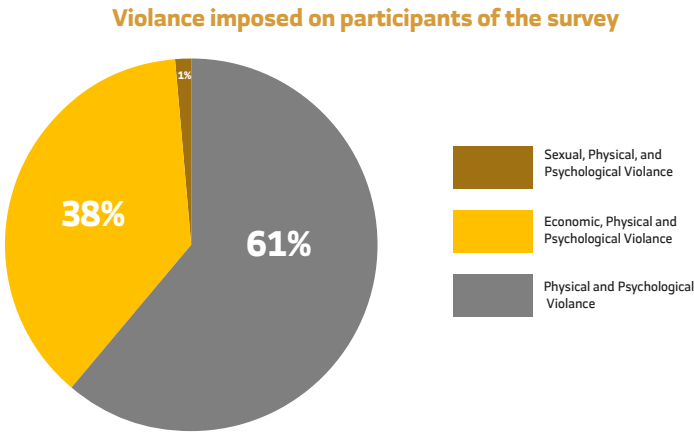


**Devastating Impact of Israeli
Violations on Women in the Gaza Strip**

Violence experienced by women in the Gaza Strip during the ongoing military aggression is a form of compounded violence, subjecting them to an endless cycle of pain and suffering. The various forms of Israeli violations intersect and interact in an inseparable manner, creating a harsh reality where women endure constant and unabated violence and as such intensifying their suffering in multifaceted way.

The survey results have revealed that women in the Gaza Strip are subjected to at least two forms of violence, with no cases reported of exposure to only one type. According to the results, 61.12% of participants suffer from both physical and psychological violence. At least all participating women experience varying degrees of physical violence due to the Israeli-imposed starvation policy on the Strip. In some cases, women endure compounded physical violence due to injuries from military attacks or the spread of epidemics amidst the collapse of the healthcare system. At the same time, all participants experience continuous psychological violence caused by fear of death or losing beloved ones, forced displacement, loss of home, breadwinner, or livelihood, as well as family separation, as explained above in the study.

Moreover, the survey has revealed that 37.63% of women experience economic violence alongside physical and psychological violence due to loss of their sources of income during the ongoing military aggression. Additionally, 1.25% of the participants reported exposure not only to psychological violence but also sexual violence during their detention in Israeli prisons. Those women endured unimaginably dire and inhumane conditions, including strip searches, sexual harassment, and threats of sexual assault or rape. They were also subjected to constant verbal abuse, humiliation, and retaliatory threats against members of



Physical torture included beatings, tying their hands and feet, and blindfolding them for a long time in inhuman and painful positions. Additionally, they were deprived of their fundamental rights, such as access to adequate food and necessary healthcare even in critical cases.

The survey has addressed Gaza women's knowledge of the available legal, medical, and psychological support services in their areas. Despite limited access to these services due to insecurity, multiple displacements and strangulating siege on Gaza, the survey has revealed that 459 women out of 800 (i.e. 57.38%) were unaware of these services. On the other hand, it has been found that percentage of women who were aware of these services and benefited from them was 57% while 43% were unable to access them.

Women have faced multiple barriers to accessing available services, as the issue was not only limited to lack of awareness about their availability but also extended to other difficulties. A total of 26.97% of participants cited the unavailability of transportation or difficulty accessing services as a main obstacle. Additionally, 4% of participants were concerned about social stigma, which restricted their access to services. For the remaining participants, the obstacles they encountered were a combination of two or more factors, including not knowing about the services, fear of stigma, and lack of transportation.



■ Recommendations:

The Israeli violations monitored by the survey have had devastating impact on women's physical, psychological, economic, and sexual well-being. The survey results that these violations are not isolated incidents, but part of a systematic policy aimed at the long-term and severe destruction of the population in Gaza, particularly women.

In light of the above, PCHR:

- 1- Calls upon the international community to assume its legal and moral obligations by fully complying the ICJ ruling in the South Africa v. Israel case, which requires immediate action to halt the ongoing Israeli violations against the Palestinian people. The international community must exert pressure on Israel to implement an immediate ceasefire and take urgent and impactful action as ordered in the ICJ provisional measures. Failure to take such actions will perpetuate human suffering in a way that will not ensure protection for women or provision of urgent and effective services they need under the current circumstances.
- 2- Calls on the international community to fully abide by the general principles of the international criminal law and international justice, hold Israel, its leaders, and those responsible for committing grave international crimes against the Palestinian people accountable, and bring them to justice before international and local courts. Failure to take such action entrenches impunity and undermines the rule of law worldwide.
- 3- Calls on states, particularly European States, to abide by their legal obligations under the Rome Statute by executing the arrest warrants issued against Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Galant, based on the decision of the Pre-Trial Chamber I of the International Criminal Court on 21 November 2024 to issue arrest warrants against them. This obligation stems from the significant role of these states due to their location, military and economic relations with Israel, and the potential visits of Israeli officials to their territories. PCHR also calls on these States to close off their land air and sea for the transit of Netanyahu and Gallant to international travel, to arrest them and facilitate their transfer to the Hague.

- 4- Calls upon the international community to take crucial steps against the unlawful occupation of Palestinian territory, in accordance with the Advisory Opinion of the ICJ on the legal consequences arising from the policies and practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. These steps include reconsidering relations with Israel to ensure they do not support its unlawful presence in the OPT and canceling or suspending treaties that reinforce the occupation or apartheid regime there. Additionally, PCHR further calls for investigations and prosecutions against those involved in crimes in the OPT, particularly dual citizens serving in Israel's military or involved in settler violence, to ensure accountability and justice.
- 5- Calls on the international community to exert all efforts to ensure an inclusive and sustainable long-term plan aimed at providing effective solutions to support women in the Gaza Strip and ensure realization of their fundamental rights amid the dire conditions they are living under. This plan should be inclusive and integrated, combining urgent support with long-term needs, and should rely on a thorough and realistic assessment of the psychological, health, social, and economic wellbeing of women in the Gaza Strip.
- 6- Calls on local and international civil society organizations (CSOs) to initiate a comprehensive and extensive database for women who have been subjected to Israeli violations in the Gaza Strip. This database should be updated periodically to ensure its effectiveness and constant responsiveness to the changing needs of these women. Women must be involved in all developing stages of the database to ensure its alignment with their actual needs and at the same time the consistency of services that reflect their unbearable circumstances. The database should include accurate details about each case of abuse, such as the type of abuse/violation, its psychological and physical impact on women, and the social and economic challenges they face. Furthermore, the database should be protected by advanced security mechanisms to ensure confidentiality and women privacy protection, while establishing secure communication channels between women and relevant authorities.
- 7- Calls upon the local and international CSOs to solidify efforts aimed at raising women awareness in the Gaza Strip on the available legal, medical, and psychological support services in their areas. Comprehensive and intensive awareness campaigns shall be held to meet their special needs and dire conditions. Additionally, CSOs should collaborate to provide practical mechanisms that facilitate women's easy and effective access to these services through ensuring safe and free transportation or distributing service points in multiple locations to reduce the burden of transportation and security challenges. All efforts should be exerted to overcome social stigma by ensuring complete confidentiality when dealing with cases and guaranteeing the non-disclosure of the identities of female beneficiaries in certain services, thereby enhancing their sense of security and confidence in seeking support.