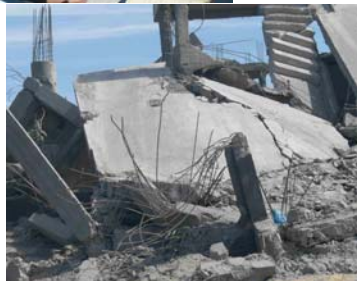


*We think Universally and Evolve Locally*

## Jesoor Annual Report 2007



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## ***Forward by the Board of Directors***



On behalf of the board Jesoor's Board of Directors I would like to extend my thanks and gratitude for the highly committed, dedicated and committed team members. Indeed, the team is small in number but has remarkable accomplishments. I am so proud to be the Board of Directors for such high potential young and open mindedness mental health professionals. I would like to extend my thanks and gratitude for all our partners who genuinely believed in alleviating Palestinian plight. On behalf of the Board, my thanks, and appreciation goes to KinderUS, IRCT, Oak Foundation, Rousing Trust for their generous support, solidarity and support. Many thanks for all individuals and organizations that supported Jesoor organization morally, and professionally and financially.

Working with traumatize communities who have been subjected to political violence for tens of years, like ours, is a hard work and needs a lot of courage and dedications. The effects of war and political violence on civilians, indeed, go beyond the obvious individual mental ill-health suffering associated with witnessing death and injury; the destruction of infrastructure and houses; torture and human rights abuses; exposure to series of multiple, repetitive, and continuous traumatic events including imprisonment, shelling and bombings from fighter jets, which have become a part of Palestinian daily life. The devastating consequences of political violence involve multiple psychological, social, economic, and environmental attacks on the integrity of individual, family and communal life.

When we talk about trauma, torture and human rights violations, we are talking about basic human rights where the link between health and human rights is obvious. This perspective goes beyond the purely medical aspect. Health and mental health professionals must take a proactive role and move from being providers of care to facilitators of care that enable victims to be actively involved in their community development.

Providing mental health services to traumatized and tortured populations implies the recognition of an inseparable bio-psycho-social link, which means that the design of interventions and the delivery of health services must include not only the biomedical but also the environmental, social and cultural dimensions of mental health. The holistic approach to rehabilitation interventions adopted by Jesoor's team constitutes an important model to be used in communities living in protracted conflict situations. The model embraces both preventive and therapeutic interventions, culturally sensitive

and community oriented approach where families, key community figures including religious and traditional leaders are involved in advocacy and lobbying activities.

Culture and social representation of traumatic experiences are very important dimensions for rehabilitation of trauma and torture victims. The way trauma and torture is perceived in a society and the way society looks at victims, has great influence on how the victim itself copes with it. Jesoor philosophy is based on understanding that human beings are transacting with surrounding environment and the level of wellness results in the feeling of hope and altruism.

We all know that an oppressive political environment is damaging to both individuals and communities, and that health professionals must have an active role in promoting basic human rights and in joining community struggle for fighting torture, impunity empowering their community and promote dignity and peace. This is truly reflects Jesoor's global understanding of transcultural trauma and ways to apply them to their local context.

Dr. Abdel hamid Afana,  
Jesoor's Board of Directors  
President of the IRCT



### ***Forward by Team Coordinator***



As a team coordinator for Jesoor organization, I would like to convey my thanks and gratitude for the Board of Directors for their endless support and encouragement, particularly Dr. Abed Al hamid Afana the president of Jesoor board of directors, who has been instrumental in developing and helping the team and for his moral, professional and in kind support.

Palestinian people have been suffering from political violence for more than 60, where trauma is transmitting from one generation to another. As one of a children, female 15 years, *“we inherited these traumatic experiences from our parents who were traumatized by the Israeli Army, forcing them to leave their homeland and now they are following them even to the refugee camps”*.

We are a group of high potential health professionals are interested in the field of trauma, recovery and the role of culture in presenting sufferings. The team members are highly committed to their work with children, traumatized and tortured people. Our approach is community based focusing on milieu of our clients and gives a reasonable role for families to be part of our work.

Jesoor organization understands that human beings are transacting with surrounding environmental so our efforts to built many bridges with other organizations, locally, universally and spread peace, promote dignity and empower our community.

**Mervat Mekbel**  
**Jesoor Team Coordinator**

### ***Forward by the Executive Director***



As Executive Director for Jesoor Organization for Trauma Recovery, I am happy to a short brief about the organizational activities that embraces social, economic, political and environmental factors to deal with trauma and contribute creatively to the regional and global right to health and trauma Recovery.

The team tries hard to provide different activities and interventions at both the individual and community level to help trauma and torture survivors. Jesoor contributions to community development, raising family and community awareness about trauma and torture, and making the services more accessible are key objectives of our work. Our psychosocial contributions to the field of torture and trauma have been appreciated by our community collaborative and partner organizations.

I kindly send my thanks to all those who supported Jesoor activities and made our professional help reach children, women, traumatized people and victims of torture and human rights abuse. Our thankfulness spread to all individuals and organizations who supported Jesoor team either in kind support, or through their voluntary work or through direct financial support particularly KinderUS, International Council for Rehabilitation of Torture Victims (TRCT), Oak Foundation/Sigrid Rausing Trust and for Dr. Abdel Hamid Afana for his endless support.

So I work with an enthusiastic team to provide professional community interventions and training programs to help trauma and torture survivors to live in dignity, peace and respect.

**Ali Amer**  
**Executive Director**

## ***Jesoor Philosophy and activities***

In Arabic language “**Jesoor**” means “bridges”. Jesoor is a bridge between biology of trauma and social and cultural representation of it; it is a bridge between victims and their communities; between health and human rights; between peace, dignity and health. Jesoor is a Palestinian non-governmental, non-profit organization. The organization aimed at strengthening the link between health and human rights, prevention of torture and human rights abuse through research, advocacy, community assistance and the training of health professionals. We seek to build bridges to health and peace in our community by engaging the social, economic, political and environmental contexts in all aspects of our work, and to contribute creatively to the global right to health movement.

Jesoor is deals with the consequences of human rights violations and offers holistic rehabilitative services for trauma victims and their families. Jesoor runs by a high potential multidisciplinary mental health team composed from mental health professionals with postgraduate studies in different specialties. They are equipped with knowledge, skills and experiences in the field of rehabilitation. The team utilizes various therapeutic approaches, such as supportive therapy, counseling, family counseling and home visits.

Jesoor administration believes in the importance of our role in the civil society as an organisation which promotes through its public awareness activities respect for human rights and which protects the victims of violations of human rights.

In order to explore further the effects of trauma and torture on its victims and on the community as a whole the team is going to study the social representation of traumatic experiences and cultural validity of PTSD among Palestinian community in addition to new methods of torture used and the various method of coping styles used by trauma and torture survivors.

The team members participated in the various local workshops, conferences and other educational circles. In addition to case presentations, the team runs journal clubs activities as methods of in-service education and knowledge sharing.



## ***The Gaza Strip Situation***

The Gaza Strip is a narrow piece of land, forty-five Kilometers long and only eight Kilometers wide lying along the south east corner of the Mediterranean Sea. It covers around 360 Square Km. It is a massively overcrowded and under-serviced region where approximately 1.5 million Palestinians live (PCBS, 2004). The average population density of 3.300 per square Km makes Gaza one of the most densely populated areas in the world. Two thirds (79.2%) of the population are refugees, of which approximately 54% of them live in the Strip's eight densely over-crowded refugee camps (UNRWA, 2005).

The Gaza strip is divided into five main regions with eight refugee camps; North Gaza; Gaza city; Middle region; Khan-Yunis region and the Rafah region. These camps are over crowded and the great majority of them function as permanent residential suburbs.

Since the start of the second Intifada the Israeli Military has conducted mass arbitrary arrests of Palestinians. Thousands of Palestinians were put in jail, upon their release, they faced enormous pressures as they attempt to reintegrate themselves into community and family life, many were subjected to systematic torture, and hundreds were killed and many thousands become disabled. The disruptive impact of all this was evident in every aspect of Palestinians' life.

As indicated in the UN Special Rapporteur, Mr. Johan Dugard (January, 2007), 779 Palestinian prisoners were released in 2007 out of 11,000 Palestinians prisoners who are still in Israeli jails. According to reports issued by international, Israeli and Palestinian human rights organizations, torture and mistreatment of Palestinian prisoners has been a systematic Israeli policy since first initiated by various Israeli "security" organs in 1967. Such illegal practices have led to the death of several prisoners and caused various physical disabilities and psychological consequences among other prisoners who managed to survive.

Although the Israeli Army and settlements are not physically present in the Gaza Strip since 2005, Israel remains an occupying power in the Gaza strip. When Israel declared Gaza as "hostile territory" in September 2007, the legal implications to that decision has become ambiguous. However, directly after , that decision Israel sealed the Gaza Strip, remarkably reducing the supply of fuel, gas, electricity and humanitarian supplies to Gaza, which constitutes collective punishment and caused widespread humanitarian damage, unfortunately the army decision was endorsed by Israeli High Court.

Indeed, the decision has implications on all aspects of Gaza people life; the Rafah crossing has become more sealed preventing thousands of Palestinians to enter Gaza back to their homes and they were trapped on the Egyptian side of the border, without adequate accommodation or facilities and denied the right to return to their houses. Over 30 people died while waiting. (These statistics, provided by B'Tselem, the Israeli information Centre for

Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, cover the period 1 September 2005 to 25 July 2007).

Cutting off fuel and electricity has endangered the functioning of health care settings, water services and sewage that is going to overflow. Health system almost collapsed where hospitals and health clinic are in short supply of medication, theater rooms are not adequately in operation because of the electricity and fuel. In the past, seriously ill patients were allowed to leave Gaza to receive treatment in Israel, the West Bank, Egypt, Jordan and other countries through the Rafah and Erez crossings.

Rafah is now completely closed and the Israeli authorities refuse passage through Erez to all but the most “severe and urgent cases This has resulted in a drastic increase in the number of patients who have died as a result .of restrictions: according to the Israeli NGO Physicians for Human Rights, since June 2007, 44 people have died as a result of denial or delay of access to medical care by the Israeli authorities and 13 died in November alone.

The strict Israeli restrictions on the transfer of individuals and goods into and out of Gaza – aimed at putting pressure on Hamas – are a form of collective punishment against the civilian population and are a violation of international humanitarian law. Israel’s decision to limit fuel, and potentially electricity, to Gaza in retaliation for rocket attacks also amounts to collective punishment against the civilian population and is worsening the humanitarian crisis .

The closure of Egypt’s border with Gaza in Rafah also contributed to the deteriorating humanitarian conditions in Gaza. The sudden breach of the border, a result of humanitarian conditions in Gaza, underlines the need for Israel to lift its restrictions on the flow of essential civilian goods, and for Egypt to keep open the Rafah crossing for humanitarian purposes.



## 1. Psychosocial Support for traumatized People in Gaza

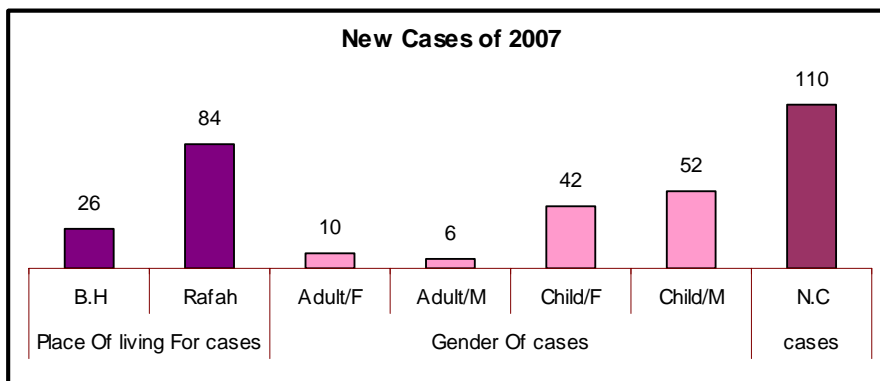
### 1.1 Therapeutic interventions

Jessor team for trauma and recovery provides a holistic rehabilitation activities for people who have been exposed to traumatic experience, torture survivors and trauma victims in most deprived areas of the Gaza strip namely Rafah, Biet Hanoun, Jabalia, Khany younise and Gaza city. These three areas are located on the borders of the Gaza Strip (southern and northern parts of the Strip), where they deprived basic mental health services and continuously exposed to political violence and trauma. The main objectives of Jessor are providing both rehabilitative and preventive interventions through three main branches located in Rafah, Gaza city and Jabalia.



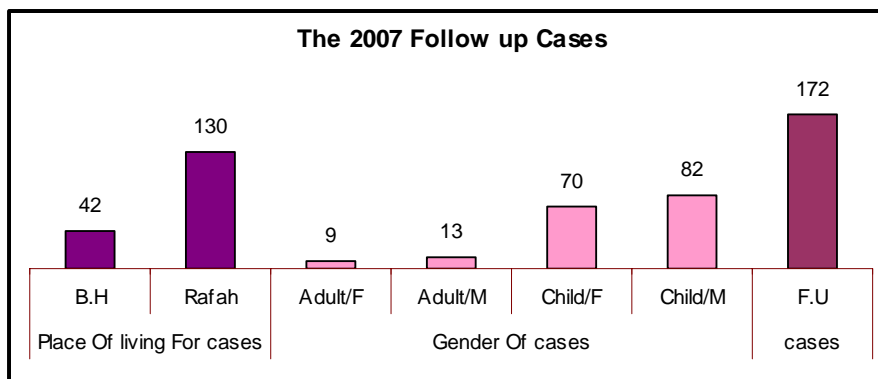
Supportive and counselling therapy at the individual level, family counselling and medical services to victims of torture and organised violence and their families. The rehabilitation intervention is a comprehensive approach adopts community based that include physical, mental and social interventions. The multidisciplinary team working at Jessor (mental health professionals, health professionals and legal advice and support) have experience and expertise to intervene at both the individual and community levels.

Through out Psychosocial Support programs for traumatized people particularly children and their families in the Gaza Strip, the team contribute to creation of culture of peace and respects where children would be raised and bring in a healthy child-parent relationships and feelings of security and self-esteem.



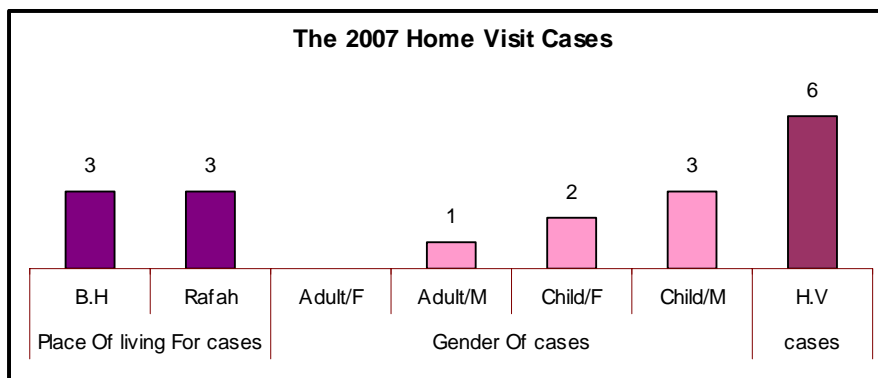
## 1.2 Follow up cases

The team is following up cases seen in different locations. The number of follow up session carried out through the year is **172** sessions. The cases followed are both family members, children and there parents. Family counseling sessions, relaxation techniques, cognitive –behavioral therapy, behavioral therapy by drawing and psychoeducation are the intervention techniques used with these cases.



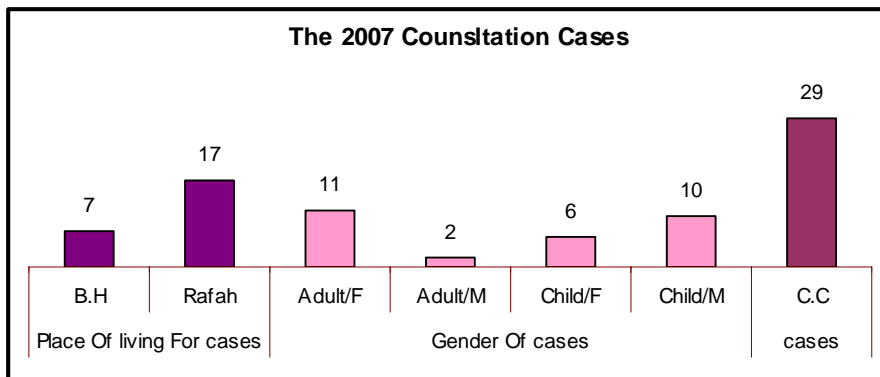
### 1.3 Home visits

The aim of the home visits is to make assessment for the family situation, communication between family members and to provide family counseling and psycho education. Not all our clients prefer to be visited at home. That was obvious because of stigma attached to mental disorders. A permission for family visit was asked by the therapist before any home visit is conducted. For those who refused home visits their request is respected. The number of Home visits cases are six

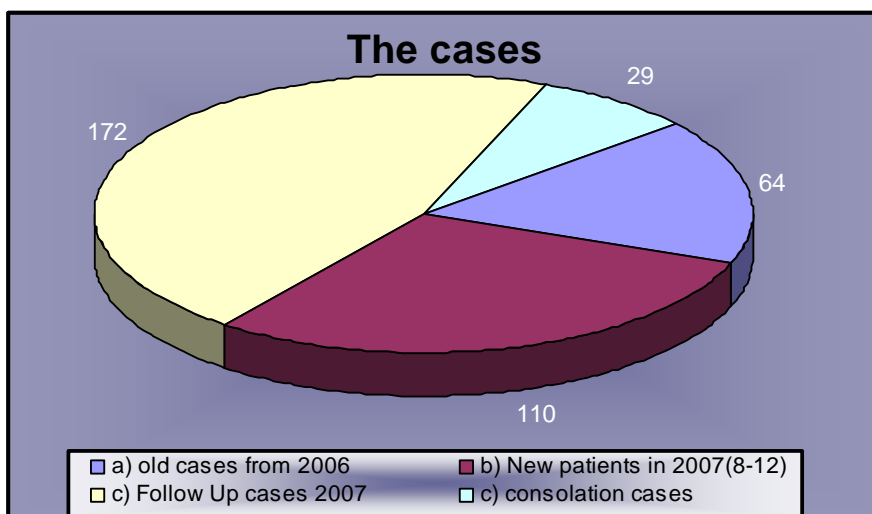


### 1.4 Consultations

Consultations are cases who feel they need interventions but not like to open files in the organization. Through out the year 2007, the number of cases came for consultations are **29**. but no files were opened. Three cases were females one from Rafah and two from Jabalia. Figure 5



Gender	old cases from 2006	New Cases in 2007	Follow Up Cases 2007	Consolation Cases
Male	7	6	14	2
Female	8	9	8	13
Children below 18	35	95	150	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>29</b>



## 2. Preventive Activities

### 2.1 Workshops

In response to the rising phenomenon of violence and the increase in trauma cases among children, and in an attempt to reduce the negative impacts of these experience, and equipping participants with the basic knowledge about trauma and its psychological consequences.

#### Workshop

##### Mental Health impact of trauma among children

Jessor Team was conducted a workshop about "the Psychological consequences of trauma among children in the Gaza Strip.". The workshop was in collaboration with the "Life and Hope Society" in the Northern part of the Gaza Strip. Around 30 participants both males and females attend the workshop. The workshop was for two days aiming at equipping participants with the basic knowledge about trauma and its psychological consequences. The topics of the workshop were Behavioral problems resulting from trauma in children , trauma and coping styles among children



The presenters are from Jessor team, where participants were divided into groups. Each group (three groups) talked one topic about trauma. The aim of the group discussion was to encourage participates to engage actively in the discussion and gain build on what they know about trauma and coping styles in the Palestinian community . At the end of the workshop, and evaluation

forms were distributed were participants indicated that such workshops has to be repeated for different groups particularly youth and parents . One of the good points stressed by participants is the gender involvements, which gave the participants chance to listen to other opinions about how trauma is talked by both males and females

## **Workshop**

### **Psychological consequences of trauma among children**

Jessor Team was conducted a workshop about " **Mental health impact of trauma among children** " in collaboration with SOS village in Rafah , and its considered as an activity of Community interventions. Participants were around 30 from the category of youth from different ages and genders .It covers four hours for a period of two days and aims at equipping participants with the basic knowledge about trauma, , and the lecturers from the medical team of Jessor were talked about various topics such as Behavioral problems resulting from trauma in children, trauma and coping ways to deal with in children(Tareq + Mohannad).



The participants took part during the workshop and took their ideas and information about the trauma, through divided into three groups individually as each group discussed their ideas, so as to encourage them to interact in society and activate in the lecture. At the end of the workshop, after the two days, evaluation forms were distributed to evaluate the first day of the workshop. And after asking about the workshop , they appointed to the importance of this workshop, and the importance of women's participation in such workshops for psychological trauma in children , and expressed benefit from significantly and that what our people are suffering from the scourge, and expressed a desire to repeat such workshops., and recommended to repeat the workshop for deferent subjects again .And they appointed to the difficult conditions experienced by the children under difficult circumstances and their need for multiple workshops and because of the acquired knowledge and methods of psychological trauma especially among children, and the workshop encourage the involvement of women and men in the society to solve the problems for their children.

### **Workshop Tortures and Human Rights**

a workshop about "**Tortures and Human Rights**" On occasion of "International child day" at Jessor location for Jabalia . Presented by Mervat Mekbel, Mohanad Hamdan "Medical Team" and Fardous El Katarey from Woman Health Center Jabalia, the workshop was for two days the participants were different ages and gender more than 20 person. the evaluation of this workshop were very good, it aimed at rising the a wariness about the various sociable cases.

At the end of the workshop evaluation form were distributed in order to generate feedback from. The participants the results indicated that the participants showed high interest in the workshop and asked for more workshops to be planned in the future.



### **Workshop Tortures and Human Rights**

a workshop about "**Tortures and Human Rights**" in Rafah . Presented by Mervat Mekbel & Wafaa youins and the Volunteers, the workshop was for two days the participants were different ages more than 34 lady.

At the end of the workshop evaluation form were distributed in order to generate feedback from The participants the results indicated that the workshop were very good, they were very cooperative of shared in discussion.



## 2.2 Community and public Meeting:

The aim of community and public meeting is to disseminate the knowledge and information for public institutions, lay people and community leaders to raise their awareness and get their involvement in combating torture and human rights abuse. Series of public meetings were conducted in different locations of the Gaza Strip for different target groups. The following are public meetings conducted by Jesoor team throughout the year 2007.



### Public meeting

#### Psychological Trauma and coping styles

The first public meeting was accomplished in September based on the action plan. The public meeting titled "**Psychological Trauma and coping styles**". The aim of the public meeting is to increase people awareness about mental health, illness, trauma and other psychological problems. Twenty (20) women from different age groups participated in the public meeting. Jesoor team talked about communication skills, networking and crisis intervention.

At the end of the public meeting, participants hoped that these meetings to be repeated in the future and for different groups such as religious leaders, students and others.



### **Public meeting**

#### **Psychological Trauma & Coping ways with it**

a public meeting about "**Psychological Trauma & Coping ways with it**" in collaboration with the SOS Village it was held in Rafah which located in the Southern Governate of Gaza. This meeting is one from many public meeting which will be held by Jesoor in both Beit Hanoun and Rafah, presented by Mervat mekbel and wafa'a Youins aimed at raising awareness of trauma among the local community. The participants were around 20 women from various age .It covers two hours for one day , and the lecturers from the medical team of Jesoor were talked about various topics such as Communication skills and networking and crisis intervention to resolve crisis and The participants took part during the public meeting took their ideas and information through communicating with the lecturer .At end of the public meeting , the participants appointed that it was positive and important meeting , and expressed a desire to repeat such meetings.



### **Public meeting**

#### **The Domestic violence against woman**

a public meeting about "**The Domestic violence against woman**" which aimed at raising awareness of the families about violence, By the medical Team "Wafa Yonies And Dr, Tareq Aldrdsawey" More than 30 person both gender. At the end of the public meeting the participants showed high interest in the workshop and asked for more workshops to be planned in the future.

### **Public meeting**

**Rafa:** Jesoor organized a public meeting about "**The Domestic violence against woman**" which aimed to raising awareness of the families about violence, By the medical Team Tareq Aldrdsawey & Mohannad Hamdan. More than 35 person both gender. At the end of the public meeting the participants showed high interest in the workshop and asked for more workshops to be planned in the future.

### 3. Advocacy and Networking Activities

The Advocacy and networking activities are considered complementary in order to reach a violence-free environment and promote children's and their families mental health, and in that context, many meetings were held with Palestinian associations and figures in order to network and coordinate with them, the networking include Visiting Local Organizations, Working with organizations.

Jesoor team that was composed from Mervat Meqbel, Mohannad Hamdan, Dr. Tareq Al.Drdsawy, and Wafaa Younis, and 5 volunteer, visiting those institutions during reporting period.

The list of all organization that the Jesoor Team worked with:

- Palestinian Red Crescent.
- Women Health center.
- Woman affairs.
- Gaza community Mental health program.
- Society Voice Foundation.
- Medecins Sans Frontieres.
- Social development Society.
- SOS Village.
- El Wedad Society Community Rehabilitation.
- Tammken Society.
- The Palestinian Commission for Development and Environment protection.
- S.O.I.R The Swedish Organization for Individual Relief.



#### 4. Sharing experience with other local institutions

Miss Mervat Meqbel had participated in a workshop which organized by Palestinian Red Crescent Association. entitled "**Women in Gaza strip in prison, poverty, Security uncontrolled**", around 40 participant, at Women Health Center in Jabailya Camp.

Wafa'a Younes "mental health professional " was conducted a lecture entitled "**Trauma and mental health, and behavioral problems in children**", 28 were participated from Ata Al.Shawwa school in Gaza City.

Mohanad Hamdan " mental health professional" attended a workshop entitled "**Media role in consolidation women in public and political life**" which organized by Gaza Community Mental Health Programme in Gaza city around 50

Wafa'a Younes was attended a conference entitled "**children of Gaza hope and future**", with 1000 person different age and gender, which organized by Palestinian Center for Democracy and Conflict Resolution at Gaza city "Royel plaza Hotel".

Merfat Meqbel was attended a workshop with which organized by Palestinian Red Crescent Society, entitled "**violence toward women**" in Gaza city, 50 person from different organization. In Red Crescent Society Hall.



## Ramadan Projects

With the generous support from KinderUS, Ramadan Project is implemented by Jesoor organization for trauma and recovery. The project had different aims, in addition to distributing food to needy families in the Gaza Strip particularly marginalized families in the southern and northern parts of the Gaza Strip, the project aimed at helping farmers in the Gaza Strip.



The average family members in each benefited families were around 8 members out of them around 4 children. The mean age of children in each family was around 10 years old.



Families were selected based on certain criteria namely first, poor families with large family members and have either low income that is very inadequate to feed the family. Second, live in marginalized areas and in refugee camps. The third criterion is families who have no income and or having some of members who are ill and suffering from diseases. Families were selected from Jesoor lists of patients who are in bad need for food and very poor families. Second, from list of poor families that is referred to Jesoor from our partner

organizations. Third families are nominated by reliable key informants in the community.



All families benefited from the Project were documented and kept in lists indicating their names, ID, place of living and number of family members. Home visits were conducted to these families to ensure that information given were correct. Family privacy, dignity and confidentiality were assured.



## 5. Publishing Articles and Press Releases

**Jesoor** published numbers of the Articles and Press Releases about mental health and human rights, local events, Through the internet Web.

- Interview with Dr. Abedel Hamid Afana entitled "Torture" & Torture victims held on 12 September by Toni Phanner, Editor in Chief of the International Review of the Red Cross.

- An Article about "Torture in streets" how Palestinian civilians have been systematically tortured while crossing the imposed check points, which made Palestinians' movement very difficult to move to their villages, schools, universities and to their work. (Reported by Al-Jazeera and Maan news, March 24).

- Report about Israeli violations against prisoners in occupation jails patients, explaining violations against Palestinian captive by the Israeli occupation forces.

**Jesoor** published an article about what took place at Om Al Nasser Village entitled "Flooding in Gaza" 29/3/2007.

- Implementation of General Assembly resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006 entitled " Human Rights Council" Jesoor Publication the Special Reporter on the situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories Since 1967 (John Dugard).

- On the occasion of re-elected Palestinian Psychologist Dr. Abdel Hamid Afana as President. He talked about torture victims rights entitled IRCT: Government must fulfill torture victims rights, Dr. Abdel Hamid called on all governments to honor their obligation to ensure torture survivors' right to reparation, including rehabilitation.



## Thanks and appreciations

Jesoor board of Directors and Jesoor team extends its gratitude for those who contributed to its activities and mad all these activities real. Thanks for all organizations, individuals and who contribute to help Palestinian victims of torture, trauma and human rights violations. Thanks goes to KinderUS, International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT) and Oak Rousing Trust for their generous contributions to Jesoor programs. Thanks and appreciation goes to those who survived trauma, torture and other human rights violations and to their families.

### Jesoor Partners

