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Empowering Midwives & Doctors with the basics of effective communication in the workplace

“The training was perfect. As a health educator, I have learned new information on Communication skills which made me develop my skills and change my way in communicating with beneficiaries,” Samia from Homs, commented after finishing the training.

Samia is one of forty midwives who attended the 3-days of training on Communication skills. Two series of Training of Trainers (ToT) took place in Damascus in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, entitled “Communication and Counselling Skills Workshop”. 40 Midwives from 10 Syrian governorates, i.e. Damascus – Rural Damascus – Aleppo – Homs –Hama – Lattakia – Tartous – Sweida – Dar’a – Qunaitra, attended the training.

The training workshops aimed to enable trainees to better communicate with different and various categories of clients, especially in the context of reproductive health and Gender Based Violence (GBV) services. The training further aimed to provide trainees with the appropriate and best techniques of communication and counselling skills.



Empowering Midwives & Doctors with the basics of effective communication in the workplace

The different sessions of the training covered a wide range of topics, including defining Communication skills and its importance, body language, the importance of good, effective and active listening, identifying difficulties and how to deal with problems, dealing with different categories of clients and adjusting one's approach, and finally conveying the acquired training to others.

“Communication skills are essential to every service provider, and to know how to efficiently communicate is to be successful”, Dr. Sanaa from AL Sweida stated after completing the 3 days of training workshop.

This series of training has been preceded similarly by a similar training targeting 20 Doctors from 10 Syrian governorates working at health centers and reproductive health clinics in the Ministry of Health.



First of its type, UNFPA- Syria leads the Organizing of Safe & Secure Approaches in Field Environment (SSAFE) Training

On Tuesday, April 18, 2017, UNFPA-Syria started for the first time facilitating the Safe & Secure Approaches in Field Environment (SSAFE) training jointly with UNRWA. The workshop was hosted in Damascus where 17 UNFPA and 15 UNRWA personnel attended and successfully completed it.

This is a 3-days intensive mandatory course for the UN personnel where Igor Kulga, UNFPA International Security Specialist and Ruba Farah, UNFPA Local Security Assistant were among the key trainers in addition to other international trainers from different UN agencies: UNRWA, OSE, OPCW and UNTSO .

“I’m happy to attend the security training for the first time and develop my knowledge on safety and security matters in such an interactive and friendly environment,” Hadeel, a recent addition to the UNFPA team, commented after the workshop in addition to expressing the importance of such training for all UN staff.



First of its type, UNFPA- Syria leads the Organizing of Safe & Secure Approaches in Field Environment (SSAFE) Training

The training covered a wide range of topics including an introduction on the personal security awareness, how to use Radio communication, preparation and procedures on travel & convoy planning. It also incorporated practical sessions on First Aid & stress management; casualty assessment & management; how to deal with cases of shock, bleeding control, trauma and burns.

The last day focused on practical scenarios in the field in case of hostage and kidnapping to prepare staff on the most appropriate actions to take.

It is mandatory for all UN staff to have basic knowledge on safety and security because workers in the humanitarian field are often the most vulnerable to incidents. “An individual's ultimate goal is to survive in case of incident. If you are not alive, you can't help others,” Ismet Bajramovic, the UNTSO trainer noted strongly during the workshop.



First of its type, UNFPA- Syria leads the Organizing of Safe & Secure Approaches in Field Environment (SSAFE) Training

“It is a very distinguished initiative from UNFPA team in Syria that shows the dedication and concern for the overall interest of the organization in the country”
Massimo Diana, UNFPA Representative in Syria proudly commented on this first initiative led by UNFPA.

It is worth mentioning that one of the United Nation's fundamental principles in security is that the primary responsibility for the security and protection of UN personnel and their dependents and property and the Organization's property must be well reserved.



TEDx MimasStreet

x = independently organized TED event



On April 22, 2017, Homs sees its first-ever “TEDxMimasStreet” conference; a whole-day locally organized by young Syrians which gathered captivating speakers and passionate people to speak about their success stories.

The day-long program took place in Homs- Syria and was organized around the theme: “Starting from Within.” 115 people attended the event; of whom 60 were female and 55 male, displaced from different locations in Syria. Topics were thought-provoking and varied, covering a wide range of issues from technical and educational to social and human interest success stories.

“Empowering young people to be more influential is part of our responsibility in mobilizing young people.” Massimo Diana, UNFPA-Syria representative stated on the eve of the event.

“TEDxMimasStreet” program featured talks of 8 exceptional individuals ranging in length from 10 to 15 minutes, networking activities, musical performances and social spaces where audience, partners and team members had the opportunity to talk, discuss and exchange ideas.

“TEDx platform has a huge influence on people. It represents ideas of many creative and innovative individuals and groups,” Ms. Afaf Atasi, one of the attendees commented during the event.

TEDxMimasStreet

x = independently organized TED event

“TEDxMimasStreet” aims to capture hope and success stories from Homs as well as to inspire and ignite ideas in youth in Homs and all over Syria. UNFPA- Syria provided a strategic level of partnership in addition to Al-Barake Bank- Syria who contributed as a golden partner as well as the SCS (Syrian Computer Society) as the educational partner.

Homs is a city like no other, it had been severely damaged and its infrastructure was dramatically affected by the Syria Crisis. Yet young people with their passion, dedication and love to what they are doing insisted on the need to deliver a message of hope and peace.

While the crisis caused already unspeakable human, social and cultural losses, “TEDxMimasStreet” team believes that rebuilding humanity is not any less than reconstructing high buildings and big establishments. Each of the 43 young volunteers fully contributed to the success of this event to launch a platform to share “Ideas Worth Spreading” called “TEDxMimasStreet.”



Despite Being Through The Pain Of War, Syrian Women Remain Confident, Optimistic And Hopeful.

Syria- Rural Damascus

UNFPA staff participated in the UN convoy to Bloudan, in rural Damascus, where an estimated 35,000 people are in-need; of them almost 8,750 are women. The approximately 7,000 families are in need of food, health services and medications.

Life in Bloudan today doesn't look any similar to life there seven years ago, when it was a lively touristic place. People from all around the world used to visit Bloudan in the summer for its cool climate and hospitality of the people.



Ruba Farah, a UNFPA staff member, joined the convoy and met several women from inside Bloudan. She told us Nivine's story.

“I wanted to catch my breath after walking for many hours. I sat at the nearest sidewalk alone. Moments later a lady in her forties, as her pale face and exhausted body indicates, approached me and offered a cup of coffee in her little shop. She said that she has a story and she wants to share it with me,” Ruba started telling us about Nivine's story.

“Perhaps you can write my story in your news as a success story. This way women can read it and be encouraged to stand up after falling. Exactly, like I did,” Nivine said.

“I didn't hesitate to enter the small room, or the boutique shop as she likes to call it. I was curious to listen to the woman. She seemed friendly and wore a smile. Her smile hid the pain that I found out about later after Nivine proceeded with her story”, Ruba continued telling us her memories from Bloudan.

Despite Being Through The Pain Of War, Syrian Women Remain Confident, Optimistic And Hopeful.

“What is your favorite name?” I asked. “You can call me Nivine,” she answered. “I have always loved this name.” Then she proceeded: “I left my house because of the heavy fight in my neighborhood in Al-Zabadani, Rural Damascus. When I left, 7 years ago, I was still engaged then I got married here.”

“Every night I recall memories about my life before the crisis and I compare it to how it looks like today. It is devastating to lose everything you had. I lived in the Gulf for a while, then came back to start a small business which grew through the years. Everything changed with a blink of an eye. Today, I only own a couple of cloth pieces that I aim to sell to earn money that I can later buy food with and medication for my sick mother,” she continued.



When you look at Nivine you know that there are more details hidden under her nice smile and consistent words. But I didn't want to push her to talk. In fact, she proceeded non-stop.: “Money could come and go any time. It doesn't bring happiness nor has the ability to generate it.

It might be a tool but not everything. However, kids do. After I got married, I wanted to have a baby and when I finally found out that I lost my baby by a gunshot while I was doing house work. I still remember that day, the sound and the fear that invaded my mind and body”, Nivine carried on her story with eyes full of tears.

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“Although the gunshot didn’t hit me, but it was strong and close enough to terrify me which caused bleeding and I had to abort the child at night. Due to the unhealthy miscarriage and my psychological situation, doctors keep telling me that I don’t need medical treatment but I need psychological support.” Nivine narrated.

I looked at Nivine’s eyes and I saw power and determination. It wasn’t only in her voice. It was also in her eyes. She affirmed to me that she will never give up and she will keep trying to see and hold her child. Ruba, UNFPA staff concluded telling us the story after coming back from the mission.

It is worth mentioning that approximately four million women and girls of reproductive age have been affected by the Syria crisis, including three million inside Syria. Nearly 400,000 Syrian women are expected to be currently pregnant.



During March 2017, working with our local partners, we were able to reach 111,000 women in Syria incl. 52,000 living in rural Damascus with reproductive health & Gender Based Violence services.

Our Services in Numbers

(April)

Reproductive Health



872 Deliveries

Ante-Natal Care **62,522**

Family Planning **22,471**

4,359 Post-Natal Care

Post-Abortion Care **365**

17,899 Awareness Sessions



Other Services **77,544**



Youth beneficiaries: **17,430**

Our Services in Numbers

(April)

Gender Based Violence

Awareness Raising Activities **12,515** 

2,496 Individual and Group Counseling

Legal Services for Survivors **472**



4,660 Recreational activities



Referral to medical services **6,685**

2,208 Specialized psychosocial support

Vocational Training **1,253**



Youth beneficiaries: **11,020**



UNFPA is the lead UN agency for delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

While UNFPA assistance must remain concerned with saving lives and safeguarding human dignity, preparing Syrian people for future recovery, reconstruction, reconciliation and stability, is equally a priority.

UNFPA Syria focusses on:

- Improving access to high-quality reproductive health care.
- Scaling-up gender-based violence prevention and response.
- Enhancing youth participation and inclusiveness.
- Supporting capacities to collect and use gender-and age-disaggregated data for tailoring response and recovery programming.

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