



**Funded by the European Union**



**PRESS RELEASE – for immediate release**

**Thanks to EU support, CARE International and its Palestinian partners raise awareness on violence against women and children in the Gaza Strip.**

CARE International has joined forces with the cooperation of the local partners Women Affairs Technical Committee (WATC) and Women Affairs Center (WAC) to launch a gender-equality promotion campaign that will begin on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010 and will run until June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

The campaign intends to tackle gender stereotypes and attitudes towards violence against women and children using various communication channels and media, and targeting the youth in the Gaza Strip. The campaign will last six months starting on January 2010 and ends in June 2010.

The campaign will be implemented under the EU funded project” Empowering Palestinian Women Transforming Communities- Bena’a.”

One of the highlights will be a forum theatre production to be performed 29 times throughout the Gaza Strip for the direct benefit of around 1500 members of different communities. Forum theatre is an empowering alternative theatre performance that allows the audience to influence the outcome of the play. The forum theatre focuses on how gender-based violence affects the overall health and integrity of the family and therefore the whole society. At the end of each performance, a workshop will be held in which a facilitator invites the audience to participate in channelling the plot of the story by physically replacing the “oppressed” character on stage and providing alternative behaviours, choices, and actions.

In addition, other tools will be used to highlight the benefits of gender equality and the positive impact that participatory decision making has on community development. In this campaign, well known and respected male and female community members will be mobilized through community based organisations and local partners to conduct four visits to universities and schools and give lectures about gender equality. These visits are expected to reach approximately 500 students.

Posters, brochures, and TV and radio spots will also be used during the campaign to highlight the negative consequences of violence on the society as a whole, and on women in particular.

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