



Social work Day

The important thing is not what the villains do, but what the righteous people do not do

"And indeed, the matter is truly painful.."

## Why the matter is truly painful.."

We are talking about the pain and the history of continuous suffering that has extended over 76 years of killing, displacement, settlement, and the detention of children, women, and persons with disabilities, as well as political or administrative detention, house demolitions, uprooting of trees, siege, and checkpoints.

It is the continuous and cumulative pain because the world that supported the Israeli occupation politically, security-wise, militarily, and financially and helped it escape punishment, pursuit, and accountability.

It is the pain caused by genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes, aggression, ongoing violations, the absence of justice, and the double standards of the imperialist and colonialist world.

## On World Social Work Day – What are the working contexts for social workers in Palestine after the war?

- Social workers operate within an environment devoid of potable water, electricity, medication, or reliable communication networks, including the internet.
- They function in conditions lacking adequate food, heating, or sufficient shelter
- They work in areas without secure homes or adequate and safe shelter centers.
- They navigate through a mobile environment in search of safety, traversing from the north to the central regions and then to the south.
- They operate in an environment where over 30 medical facilities have been put out of service, resulting in the loss of more than 175 healthcare workers and 18 members of civil defense staff.
- They function in an environment where shelter centers and UNRWA schools have been targeted, leading to the deaths of 88 relief workers.
- They work in an environment where words and images are silenced, with more than 46 journalists killed according to the United Nations reports

# Social work in contexts

- The social workers are working with children who have been completely deprived of their biological families and homes, as well as with children who are separated from their families and without caregivers.
- They work in a context where the Israeli occupation dropped more than 25,000 tons of explosives, roughly equivalent to the power of two nuclear bombs similar to those dropped by the United States on Hiroshima at the end of World War II.
- They operate in a context of deliberate killings of civilians, with 70% of the victims being children and women.
- They are working in an environment that requires reconstruction at a cost of 90 billion dollars
- In the West Bank, there is fragmentation of geographical unity, and people live in separate cantons where there are more than 600 military checkpoints.
- They work in contexts filled with unemployment, poverty, and high prices, and they work in institutions threatened by conditional funding and misallocation.

# Context and psychological and social effects

## **Psychological Effects on Children:**

- Children have experienced psychological traumas due to the bombing and destruction they witnessed, which can have lasting effects on their mental and emotional health.
- Increased anxiety and fear among children about their personal safety and the safety of their families.
- Sleep disturbances and nervous tension, affecting their daily functioning and learning.

## **Social Effects on Women:**

- Higher rates of psychological pressure and depression among women due to humanitarian, economic, and social losses.
- Exacerbation of domestic violence and abuses against women and children amidst the harsh conditions they are facing.
- Reduction in women's opportunities for education and employment due to infrastructure destruction and economic disruption.

## **Effects on the Community at Large:**

- Increased poverty, unemployment, and deterioration of living conditions for citizens, affecting societal stability.
- Breakdown of families and loss of loved ones leading to increased social tensions and lack of social support.
- Deterioration of infrastructure and loss of basic resources impacting essential services such as health, education, and housing.



## The Impact of War on Social Workers:

1. Increased psychological pressure on social workers due to the focus on the services they must provide in these difficult circumstances to all affected groups.
2. Difficulty in reaching the targeted groups (the affected, victims, or survivors) in the specified time and place.
3. Psychological and emotional fatigue due to facing individuals' suffering, requiring additional support for self-care and individual and group supervision.
4. Fear and anxiety about the personal safety of social workers and the lack of protective clothing or identification signs similar to journalists, emergency responders, the Red Cross, or civil defense.
5. Difficulty in communicating with beneficiaries and ensuring their well-being due to their mobility and the inability to determine their addresses.
6. Focus on work in times of emergency
7. Working through coalitions and networks in order to organize work, reach affected groups, and prevent duplication in providing services.

# The impact of war on social services

Services have been greatly affected following the events of October 7th, as a result of the harsh conditions and significant challenges imposed by Israeli aggression, killing machines, and retaliation. Among the main effects:

- Infrastructure damage: Vital facilities such as hospitals, schools, and social centers, as well as economic infrastructure, suffered destruction or damage due to bombardment or clashes, leading to a reduced capacity to provide services.
- Disruption of essential services: Provision of basic services such as electricity, water, and sanitation was disrupted due to supply interruptions or damage resulting from war.
- Impact on transportation and communications: Destruction of roads, bridges, and communication networks led to the isolation of some areas and hampered efforts to distribute aid and provide services.



# The impact of war on social services

- Effects on the workforce: Employees in both government and private sectors were injured, displaced, or faced psychological pressures, negatively impacting their ability to provide services effectively.
- Economic deterioration: Disruption of economic activities and increased costs due to the war on Gaza led to reduced funding for social services and decreased effectiveness.

Overall, there is a problem with accessing and delivering social services effectively, affecting vulnerable and war-affected individuals. Emphasis is placed on interventions related to initial psychological first aid and emergency response. Inability to conduct field visits due to military barriers, closures, and the inability to communicate with families face-to-face. Issues with the referral system due to the irregularity of institutional public life.

## Leave no one behind - How can we help?

- We have a specialized institution in training and development, and we have a union for social workers through which we can exchange knowledge and expertise.
- We can conduct specialized training sessions on dealing with loss and ongoing grief issues.
- Providing specialized consultations for social workers in emergency situations.
- We can analyze the needs of social workers and develop a plan to address them.
- We can consider a joint project to work with children and families affected by wars, providing them with basic needs and supporting them individually and collectively.
- Organizing exchange visits between social workers in Palestine and worldwide to learn about different models and methodologies for working with survivors of genocide.
- Documenting violations and compiling reports and fact sheets on human rights violations and distributing them to the public.
- Coordinating and collaborating with the Irish Union or establishing an institution operating in Palestine to empower social workers