**Press Release** – Birzeit University, Institute of Women's Studies – December 15th 2016 - Presentation of the findings of the study "Re-integration of Women Survivors of Gender-Based Violence: Core Process for Combating Violence against Women in Palestinian Society"

On December 15th 2016, at the Institute of Women's Studies - Birzeit University - the study "*Re-integration of Women Survivors of Gender-Based Violence: Core Process for Combating Violence against Women in Palestinian Society*" has been presented in the presence of Ms. Cristina Natoli - Representative of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) Jerusalem Office, Ms Carla Pagano – Head of the Gender Sector at AICS Jerusalem, Dr. Asem Khalil, Associate Professor at Birzeit University, Ms. Saida Al-Atrash, Head of Gender Unit at MoSD, Mr. Amin Assi, Acting General Director of Planning and Policy Unit at MoWA and Ms. Eileen Kuttab, Director of the Institute of Women Studies at Birzeit University.

The study – conducted by Ms. Nida Abu Awwad in the framework of the WELOD Programme (Women's Empowerment and Local Development) funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation - defines the concept of re-integration and its strategic implementation from the perspective of women survivors in Palestinian society. The study focuses on experiences and stories of re-integration, alongside the perceptions of service providers engaged in combating violence. The study aims to promote deeper understanding of the meaning of re-integration from GBV survivors' perspective. "*We believe that women are capable of creating strategies that can help them to re-build their lives. This contrasts with the common belief that they are victims who need others to guide them and dictate to them how to behave*" comments the author, Nida Abu Awwad.

The representative of AICS Jerusalem – Cristina Natoli - has recalled in her statement that over the last decade the Italian Government has invested more than 11 Million Euros to support programmes to eliminate gender-based violence in Palestine and that there is an unceasing connection between gender equality and aid effectiveness that the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation maintains across its programmes and by acting as European Lead Donor on Gender Equality in Palestine since 2013.

In light of the above, Carla Pagano – Head of Gender Sector at AICS Jerusalem- added that - for the next year - the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation is committed in both a new gender programme named IRADA (in Arabic: Will) and in a contribution to UN WOMEN to support al-Hayyat anti-violence centre in Gaza and a budget support to MoSD for the management of the shelters in the West Bank.