Palestine - Leveraging Capacities in Drug Treatment and Forensics



In January 2018, the UNODC Regional Representative for the Middle East and North Africa, Ms. Cristina Albertin, undertook her first mission to the State of Palestine where she met with several UNODC partners, visited project sites and attended the launch event of the first Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Center of Palestine in Bethlehem.

During her three-days mission, Ms. Albertin discussed ongoing cooperation and future priorities with a broad range of partners: The Attorney General; the Minister of Justice; the Correction and Rehabilitation Services in the Palestinian Police and the Financial Investigation Unit; the Ministry of Health, the National Programme on Drugs, Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice; the Palestinian Police, as well as several development partners such as Canada, EU, Germany, Korea and Sweden. Her mission also included meetings with UNDP, UNFPA, UN Resident Coordinator and WHO.



UNODC has been partnering with the State of Palestine since 2007 supporting the development of comprehensive demand reduction interventions including the implementation of the ever-first opioid substitution treatment center, a drug use survey and the first drug treatment and rehabilitation center. The newly constructed center is the first Palestinian National Rehabilitation Center operated by the Ministry of Health. It has a total capacity of 58 beds for both men and women and is equipped with modern medical equipment, diverse facilities for the patients using the UNODC-developed TreatNet package which provides for comprehensive experts, guidance and advice in drug use prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and reintegration. The construction and holistic capacity-building support to the first public Drug Treatment Center was possible thanks to the Republic of Korea and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).



Another key intervention supported by UNODC in the State of Palestine is the establishment of the Forensic Science Laboratory at the Civil Palestinian Police. With the generous support of Canada, UNODC was able to provide the Civil Police with a modern, state-of art forensic laboratory where drugs, chemicals, firearms, tool marks and documents can be analyzed. The Forensic Science Laboratory is the first of its kind in the State of Palestine and it received more than 2,800 cases since its opening in November 2016. Within the framework of this project, forensic experts were intensively trained including study tours to other countries. The support also included the training of seven specialized forensic medicine doctors, among them the first female forensic doctor in Palestine. In this regard, evidence collection and analysis in violence against women cases is key to ensure successful court cases and female doctors are instrumental in ensuring these.



During her stay, UNODC signed a Business Plan with the Correction and Rehabilitation Services in the Palestinian Police to implement vocational training for inmates pathing the way for economic empowerment after their release from prison. This support is possible thanks to the Doha Declaration Global Programme, a UNODC global initiative for crime prevention and criminal justice supported by the State of Qatar.

These recent results of UNODC-State of Palestine partnership contribute into achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) under the 2030 Agenda, notably SDG3 by ensuring healthy lives and promoting wellbeing for all at all ages; SDG5 by achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls; and SDG16 by promoting just, peaceful and inclusive societies.