



The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy

MIFTAH

2022 Annual Report

January – December 2022



## Contents

1.	Situation Analysis.....	4
2.	Introduction .....	6
3.	Results by Objective.....	6
1.1	Result 1: Thematic evidence-based research on laws, regulations and policies	7
1.1.1	Shedding light on hurdles facing women representation in decision making positions in the Public and third sectors.....	7
1.1.2	Fiscal Justice: Research paper on VAT draft law .....	7
1.1.3	Fiscal Justice: Citizens Budgets 2022- Social sector.....	7
1.1.4	Fiscal Justice: Spending Reports on the Social Sector .....	7
1.1.5	Financial implications of the implementation of the Family Protection Bill.....	8
1.1.6	Political Participation: Factsheet on Palestinian Local Elections .....	8
1.1.7	Documenting human rights violations against Palestinian women in the West Bank and Gaza Strip	8
1.1.8	Providing Evidence on Women Status in Jerusalem in light of CEDAW .....	9
1.2	Result 2: Public debate and joint actions for the enhancement of policies and practices are initiated	9
1.2.1	Opening national dialogue on the amended National Referral System .....	9
1.2.2	Opening dialogue on “Proposed amendments to the Local and General Elections Laws to promote the principles of equality and pluralism.” .....	10
1.2.3	Hearing session on VAT draft law in cooperation with CSOs and Ministry of Finance.....	11
1.2.4	Opening dialogue on the Gaps in the Local Elections Law and women’s visibility in election campaigns.....	12
1.2.5	MIFTAH opens dialogue on the views of electoral lists on promoting civic values. ....	13
1.2.6	MIFTAH open dialogue on implementation of the National Referral System (Takamul) in the Gaza Strip .....	13
1.3	Result 3: Relevant stakeholders are equipped to support in the realization of the amended policies and legislations.	14
1.3.1	Youth as advocates for social justice and human rights.....	14
1.3.2	Supporting women in Local Government Units.....	14
1.3.3	Supporting women candidates to run for local elections. ....	15
1.3.4	Raising public awareness about the electoral demands through social media.....	15
1.3.5	Training on monitoring and documenting Israeli human rights violations from a gender perspective	16

1.3.6	Training on human rights conventions as references for security services in coordination with Al Istiqlal University .....	16
1.3.7	MIFTAH releases guidebook on UN mechanisms for Women Peace and Security Agenda 17	
1.3.8	MIFTAH completes Phase Seven of its project 'Development of local communities through small income-generating projects' .....	17
2.1	Result 1: Content of the Palestinian public discourse is formulated and presented continuously	18
2.1.1	MIFTAH uses digital media to promote the Palestinian narrative .....	18
2.2	Result 2: Engagement in international advocacy dialogue is facilitated	18
2.2.1	MIFTAH organized a networking and advocacy trip to European capitals.....	18
2.2.2	MIFTAH Participates in Human Rights Council sessions.....	18
2.2.3	MIFTAH holds diplomatic briefings .....	19
4.	MIFTAH's Publications in 2022: .....	20

## 1. Situation Analysis

During 2022, Palestine witnessed major events at all levels. Occupied Palestine has gone through major challenges on the national and global arena and within difficult political, security and economic conditions. Under a coalition government made up of a broad range of right-winged political parties, Israeli authorities doubled down on their severe repression of Palestinians. Israeli authorities' practices, undertaken as part of a policy to maintain the domination of Jewish Israelis over Palestinians, amount to the crimes against humanity of apartheid and persecution. Israel continues to deprive 2-million Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip of their basic rights in freedom of movement and opportunities to better their lives through the 15-year long blockade. The blockade severely limit access to electricity, health care and water with a devastated economy where 80% of Gazans rely on humanitarian aid<sup>1</sup>.

In the West Bank, Israeli forces, continue to implement their policies of forced displacement and house demolitions, especially in occupied Jerusalem. According to OCHA<sup>2</sup>, Israeli authorities demolished 851 Palestinian homes and other structures in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, during the first eleven months of 2022, displacing 966 people. Most buildings were demolished on the pretext of lack of building permits, which authorities make nearly impossible for Palestinians in these areas to obtain.

<sup>1</sup> [Fifteen years of the blockade of the Gaza Strip \(unicef.org\)](https://www.unicef.org/gaza)

<sup>2</sup> [West Bank demolitions and displacement | November 2022 | United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - occupied Palestinian territory \(ochaopt.org\)](https://www.ochaopt.org/)

Further shrinking of civic space for Palestinians continued due to Israeli measures coupled with decisions from the Palestinian Authority (PA). In August, Israeli authorities raided the offices of and issued closure orders against, seven prominent Palestinian civil society organizations, following their decision in 2021 to designate six of these organizations as “terrorist” organizations under Israeli law, and as “unlawful associations” under military law, which is applicable in the occupied West Bank. As a response to this decision, several EU countries issued a statement stating that “*No substantial information was received from Israel that would justify reviewing our policy towards the six Palestinian NGOs on the basis of the Israeli decision to designate these NGOs as 'terrorist organizations'.*”

*Should evidence be made available to the contrary, we would act accordingly. In the absence of such evidence, we will continue our cooperation and strong support for the civil society in the oPT. A free and strong civil society is indispensable for promoting democratic values and for the two-state solution<sup>3</sup>.*

Palestinian civil society also faced restrictions from the Fatah-dominated PA in the parts of the West Bank where it manages affairs and Hamas authorities in Gaza. The Palestinian statutory watchdog, the Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR), received 120 complaints of arbitrary arrests against the PA and 87 against Hamas. Moreover, General Elections in Palestine were postponed indefinitely in 2021 and never took place. This also contributes tremendously to the shrinking civic space for Palestinians and hinders any democratic prospects.

However, the second phase of local government elections in the West Bank only took place. This was done despite civil society institutions’ rejection of dividing elections into two stages according to an Elections Law that does not support women and youth’s participation.

PA personal status laws discriminated against women, including in relation to marriage, divorce, custody of children, and inheritance. Palestine has no comprehensive domestic violence law. The PA has long been considering a draft family protection law, but women’s rights groups have raised concerns that it does not go far enough to prevent abuse and protect survivors.

Nevertheless, MIFTAH succeeded in realizing a number of achievements presented in this annual report. MIFTAH focused on fostering dialogue in a bid to influence public policies and reach consensus on political positions, in addition to supporting women and youth’s participation in elections, and to shed light on the Israeli violations against Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and promote the Palestinian narrative on an international level.

---

<sup>3</sup> [Joint statement on the Israeli designation of six Palestinian civil society organisations as terrorist organisations | Diplomatic statement | Government.nl](#)

## 2. Introduction

The year 2022 marked the first year in MIFTAH's strategic plan 2022-2026. Within this strategy, MIFTAH worked towards the realizations of three main strategic objectives:

Specific Objective 1: Enhanced policies and practices in line with civil rights and social justice in Palestine

Specific Objective 2: Enhanced promotion of the Palestinian narrative at the international level

Specific Objective 3: Improved effective institutional and human capacity development at MIFTAH

To achieve the above strategic objectives, MIFTAH works through two main programs:

1. **Good Governance and Democracy Program** with the following main interventions:
  - a. Conduct analytical research, financial analysis, reviews and opinion polls of different policies, laws and services.
  - b. Generate needed content and use media to reflect the findings and the data collected.
  - c. Open national dialogue with relevant stakeholders to reach consensus on proposed policies and procedures.
  - d. Provide capacity building opportunities for youth and women (and other relevant stakeholders) to support in the realization of the amended policies and legislations.
  
2. **Communication and Public Diplomacy Program** with the following main interventions:
  - a. Continuously develop and formulate public diplomacy content in addition to the development of oral and written statements and positions.
  - b. Deploy different social media outlets to disseminate the developed content
  - c. Facilitate the dissemination of the narrative through international platforms, exchange visits and camps as well as receiving international delegations
  - d. Conduct policy meetings (briefings) with diplomatic missions and delegates

During 2022, MIFTAH was able to achieve the following results:

## 3. Results by Objective

Specific Objective 1: Enhanced policies and practices in line with civil rights and social justice in Palestine

## 1.1 Result 1: Thematic evidence-based research on laws, regulations and policies

### 1.1.1 Shedding light on hurdles facing women representation in decision making positions in the Public and third sectors

MIFTAH issued a fact sheet on the gaps in policies and procedures that impede women's access to decision-making positions in the public and third sectors. Most notably the absence of policies protecting women in the work environment from exploitation, sexual harassment and violence, the lack of awareness of codes of conduct and the lack of transparency of employment procedures in the public sector, especially in the partial Interviews that follow the stage of the written examination are all main gaps that are preventing women from advancing in the workplace.

### 1.1.2 Fiscal Justice: Research paper on VAT draft law

MIFTAH prepared [a research paper](#), which sheds light on the gaps in the draft Value Added Tax (VAT) law and their impact on civil society organizations and marginalized sectors, especially those whose interests are represented by these institutions. The research paper, states that despite the importance of approving a Palestinian law for VAT that should contribute to the development process and meet the requirements of social justice, the proposed draft law, "despite its amendments," is not consistent with the concept of tax justice and does not meet the requirements of social justice. The law focuses on collection operations to mainly increase tax revenues and works to restrict and control the work of civil society organizations, in addition to the inclusion of loose and general articles, that can be interpreted in several ways. Additionally, the draft law refers many important issues to the judgment of the minister and the approval of the Council of Ministers. Moreover, there is no clear articles on the imposition of varying tax rates that is crucial to social justice. are very important issues, and they must be determined due to their importance in the enforcement of social justice.

### 1.1.3 Fiscal Justice: Citizens Budgets 2022- Social sector

MIFTAH for the 7th year in a row continues to provide financial data on government budget allocations for the social sector through the issuance of the citizen's budgets for the year 2022. These published data constitute a space for carrying out reform interventions and adjustments to financial policies and open dialogue to demand the promotion of social justice in spending allocations for the social sector. This specialized data (citizen budgets and spending reports for responsibility centers for the social sector, the Ministry of Interior and the General Budget) through the [Home | موازنة المواطن \(citizenbudget.ps\)](#) portal.

### 1.1.4 Fiscal Justice: Spending Reports on the Social Sector

As part of its follow up of public spending policies in decision-making positions in the social sector, MIFTAH published analytical reports on the expenditure stipulations of the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Education in 2021, based on their annual reports on annual actual expenditures. The reports indicated that the actual spending of the

MoH, MOSD and MOE has increased in 2021. However, MOSD in 2021 only disbursed one minimum installment of allocations for the poor out of the four installments the Ministry committed to at the beginning of 2021.

#### **1.1.5 Financial implications of the implementation of the Family Protection Bill**

MIFTAH provided a first of its kind analysis on the financial implications of implementing the Family Protection Bill once it gets adopted. The analysis provides in-depth fiscal reading into the financial requirements for implementing the law according to the roles associated with the relevant authorities, including the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Health, the Civil Police (Family Protection Department from Violence) and family courts (Prosecution for Family and Juveniles). This analysis aims to contribute to the development of policies and programs that must be taken and implemented within the framework of the different partners of the social protection sector. [Facebook](#)

#### **1.1.6 Political Participation: Factsheet on Palestinian Local Elections**

MIFTAH prepared a factsheet on women and youth representation in electoral lists and election campaigns during phase two of the local elections. The factsheet was based on data provided the Central Elections Commission (CEC) and shed light on the percentage of youth and women who ran for elections, won seats and their presence in electoral campaigns. The factsheet showed that there is a decline in the presence of youth in the second phase even though the candidacy rate for youth between 25-45 was higher. On the other hand, here was a noticeably higher presence of women in competing lists, especially in the larger districts, totaling 27% of the overall number of candidates. However, there was a decline in the percentage of women candidates who won through the ballot boxes. In the second phase, only 19% of women runners won by acclamation and voting: 18% by votes and 21% by acclamation. This was a decline from the first phase, where women won 20.5% through voting and 21.8% overall by voting and acclamation, meaning that these percentages confirm that women's presence in local councils was only maintained because of the women's quota.

#### **1.1.7 Documenting human rights violations against Palestinian women in the West Bank and Gaza Strip**

MIFTAH during 2022 documented 666 human rights violations committed by Israeli forces and settlers against Palestinian women in the northern Jordan Valley and the northern governorates of the West Bank. The documentation in the West Bank focused on the impact of night raids by the occupation army on women and girls. In Gaza, the documentation was in relation to women access to health services, particularly reproductive health services. These documented cases were analyzed in a specialized report and presented in fact sheets to be used in international and digital advocacy activities and programs. This contributes to the dissemination of the Palestinian narrative through international and digital platforms.



[Analytical Report of Documented Human Rights Violations Against Palestinian Women.pdf \(miftah.org\)](#)

### **1.1.8 Providing Evidence on Women Status in Jerusalem in light of CEDAW**

MIFTAH as part of its work on providing evidence for advocacy, prepared facts and figures with analytical data on Palestinian women's status in occupied Jerusalem through the preparation of five specialized fact sheets that highlighted the gaps of legislations and protection policies for Palestinian women's rights. The factsheets also provided evidence of human rights violation and discriminatory acts by Israel towards Palestinian women in occupied Jerusalem specifically in the health, education, employment, economic, public sphere and family reunification issues. The Five factsheets were drafted building on the main findings and data provided through the prepared five reports done by the organizations in Arabic and English and were published on MIFTAH website and other social media platforms in infographic pattern and shared among the different networks.

[Factsheet on impact of Israeli violations against the right of education for girls in Jerusalem](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/miftahpal/posts/pfbid035AT2wTtLP7eNgkH8vJaRx29rijQyzbHNDfNoKUK3mPXYbrq6e5ZJSmMBJvRN88mrl>

[Family rights for Jerusalemite women under discriminatory Israeli policies](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/miftahpal/posts/5634668599898967>

[Israeli violations and discriminatory policies against Palestinian women's political rights in Jerusalem](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/miftahpal/posts/5648827638483063>

[Health violations against Palestinian women and girls in East Jerusalem](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/miftahpal/posts/5622637157768778>

[Economic rights of Jerusalemite women...draining reality and grave violations](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/miftahpal/posts/5562053267160501>

## **1.2 Result 2: Public debate and joint actions for the enhancement of policies and practices are initiated**

### **1.2.1 Opening national dialogue on the amended National Referral System**

MIFTAH succeeded in collecting feedback on the updated NRS from civil servants (MoSD and MoH), PCP family protection units and protection service providers (CSOs and CBOs), by conducting 6 round table discussions at the district level and one policy session.

The feedback was collected and documented in a report and shared with MoWA and MoSD to be taken into consideration while working on the last modification on the NRS before publishing in the national gazette. The NRS was approved by the cabinet in November 2022 and lunched by MoWA in December 2022, but yet it is not yet published nor shared with ministries.

The annexed report summarizes the collected recommendations and the addressed needed policy reforms to be integrated in the NRS before its publishing. Recommendations included: 1) the need to harmonize the NRS with human rights conventions, 2) article (17) related to victims of violence with disabilities will not be applicable unless necessary policy reforms are taken out of article (29) of the Shelters procedures measures, 3) there are legal gaps in definitions that require work, 4) UNRWA needs to be included in the NRS as a main service provider for battered women and women at risk, 5) the need for to ratify the FPB to facilitate the role of protection service providers and the women's access to protection services ensured in the NRS.

MIFTAH is finalizing an online advocacy campaign highlighting on policy recommendations for a better, more efficient NRS.

<http://www.miftah.org/Display.cfm?DocId=26815&CategoryId=36>

### **1.2.2 Opening dialogue on “Proposed amendments to the Local and General Elections Laws to promote the principles of equality and pluralism.”**

MIFTAH continues to open dialogue with different national actors including women candidates and members of local council units on the proposed amendments to the Local and General Elections Laws in a bid to promote the principles of equality and pluralism. The dialogue sessions posed several core points, which impact the participation of women and youth as members of local councils. It also focused on the challenges these two sectors face, whether in terms of their candidacy, elections campaign or in conducting their tasks as elected members of their local councils. Most of these challenges are linked to social pressures and stereotypes of the role of women in society and family, in addition to the absence of laws and regulations that protect and support the participation and representation of women and youth in local councils.

**The most significant challenges women face are as follows:**

- The lack of political will to support the participation of women and youth.
- Lack of acceptance from the family and community of women representatives in local councils.
- Lack of acceptance of women's photos used in election campaigns, whereby some women were subjected to slander, pressure and threats.
- Reluctance to attend preparatory elections meetings and local council meetings.

- Limited scope of powers and roles for women in local councils as a result of male attitudes towards women's participation in the public sphere.
- Burdensome responsibilities of female members of local councils because of their participation in various committees, which drown them in multiple tasks.

### **Recommendations:**

- Stressing on the importance of periodical local and general elections and respect for constitutional foundations
- Adopting a law that reaffirms the principle of equality, protects citizens' rights and the representation of all social sectors, through initiating a social dialogue on the shape and form of the desired electoral system, with the participation of all parties as such:
- A law that protects civic peace and does not allow political corruption
- Determining the use of acclamation lists by social referendum.
- Lowering the candidacy age to offer opportunities for youth to engage in political life
- Adopting a 30%-minimum women's quota as a stepping-stone to equality in all local councils.
- Lowering the threshold to allow the participation of small parties and marginalized sectors.
- Direct election of the president, which calls for expanded dialogue

In light of the defunct PLC and slow pace in amending laws, there should be a focus on amending procedures that protect the participation of women and youth, through the following:

- Reconsideration of women's ranking in lists so they occupy advanced slots (Nos 2 and 4 as a minimum)
- Emphasizing respect for the spirit of the law through ensuring at least minimum representation of women inside councils. If a female member resigns, she should be replaced by another female member.
- Follow-up on the resignations and withdrawals of women from local councils.
- Stressing on commitment to the code of conduct for local councils and to the role of the council and regulating the relationship between members and the council president.
- Bolstering the empowerment of women and youth who wish to participate in the elections on issues pertaining to the law, dealing with the media and preparing electoral platforms.

### **1.2.3 Hearing session on VAT draft law in cooperation with CSOs and Ministry of Finance**

A hearing session was held at the Ministry of Finance to discuss the Value-Added Tax (VAT) draft law, based on a MIFTAH research paper, which sheds light on the gaps in the law and their impact on civil society organizations and marginalized sectors, especially those whose interests

are represented by these institutions. The objective of the hearing was to develop stipulations for a just VAT law, responsive to the needs of various social sectors. The Ministry of Finance explained that it had made a number of amendments since the first edition of the draft law, in meetings with representatives of the private sector, unions, chambers of commerce and CSOs. It said the law rested on the premise that it is not limited to collection regulation but “on our insistence to develop a contemporary Palestinian VAT law and its amendments, in place of Law No. 16 of 1963. The amendments to this law were based on military orders issued by the Israeli civil administration.

The participants stressed that the law must coincide with the concept of social justice and alleviate the financial burdens shouldered by limited and medium-income families given that the VAT is usually paid by the final consumer of the commodity. This, they maintained, makes it imperative to have zero or reduced taxation on commodities and essential services and for these to be distinguished from leisure or luxury goods to which the above tax rates are usually applied.

At the end of the session, the parties agreed to continue discussions and to carry out the following: a redrafting of Article 4 of the bill by CSO legal experts in cooperation with the Finance Ministry’s legal advisor, to ensure it coincides with Law 1 of 2000, which regulates the work of CSOs. Furthermore, the Ministry of Finance confirmed it would work within the Cabinet and with the relevant ministers to prepare a detailed list of VAT-exempted or reduced taxed commodities and services in order to ensure this tax is fairly imposed on services and distinguished from leisure and luxury goods.

#### **1.2.4 Opening dialogue on the Gaps in the Local Elections Law and women’s visibility in election campaigns**

MIFTAH discussed the gaps in the Local Elections Law and the extent of women’s visibility in election campaigns, based on a factsheet prepared by MIFTAH. Its results indicated that women candidates’ photos only appeared in approximately 28% of elections lists and campaigns. The highest percentage was in the Bethlehem district, at 60%, followed by Tulkarm at 56%. Meanwhile, some election lists in certain districts scored 0.0% visibility for women, or a complete absence of women’s pictures in election campaigns.

The dialogue stressed on the need to shed light on women’s social and political role, which is still largely associated with stereotypes and the predominant religious, social and cultural norms. This led to candidates and supporters of electoral lists absenting women’s photos and highlighting their male counterparts instead, thus allowing for traditional culture to dominate, which rejects the visibility of women and only seeks to meet the requirements of the Local Elections Law. The main recommendations included: safeguarding the right of citizens to choose their representatives, question them and hold them accountable since elections are a fundamental part of any democratic system and directly linked to sustainable development.

### **1.2.5 MIFTAH opens dialogue on the views of electoral lists on promoting civic values.**

MIFTAH held two dialogue sessions on the views of electoral lists regarding the second round of local council elections, that took place on March 26. Representatives of electoral lists from various West Bank districts participated in the dialogue, in a bid to create interactive spaces within the voter public through highlighting the topics covered by their platforms pertaining to youth and women.

The dialogue discussed several points, most importantly, how the different electoral platforms address women and youth issues, and the solutions posed by these platforms for the challenges facing marginalized sectors. The discussions also addressed the role of candidates in highlighting the role of local councils in promoting concepts of citizenship and civil and democratic values as a way of rising above tribal affiliations.

Participant presentations revolved around the importance of the role of women and youth in local elections, pointing to their most significant challenges. The absence of youth was at the top of the list of challenges electoral blocs are seeking to remedy. They are trying to increase the political participation of youth by raising awareness over the importance of these elections, investment in democratic spaces and promoting and integrating social sectors in planning and accountability committees to overcome the present gap between the public and local councils.

### **1.2.6 MIFTAH open dialogue on implementation of the National Referral System (Takamul) in the Gaza Strip**

MIFTAH opened discussion on the implementation and executive procedures of the National Referral System, “Takamul” for Battered Women, in the Gaza Strip. A team from the Ministry of Social Development in Gaza attended along with several CSOs working in the field of social protection and women’s rights in Gaza, in addition to like-minded institutions from the West Bank, via Zoom.

The discussion was based on MIFTAH’s report that shed light on the gaps in implementing the referral system in Gaza, calling service-provider agencies such as UNFPA, to work and coordinate with grassroots institutions in applying the forms for protecting battered women and offering them better services. They said the points in the report also apply to the Gaza Strip, but that the lack of clarity in the role of the Women’s Affairs Ministry was a hindrance since it is the party responsible for enacting the system, over and above the political division, which exacerbates the gaps in its policies and procedures. The system, furthermore, needs legal paperwork since it is an executive procedural system, making it imperative to push for the ratification of the Family Protection Law. This law would then constitute the legal backing needed

to enforce the National Referral System in all Palestinian districts and for all battered women and girls susceptible to violence, including disabled persons.

### **1.3 Result 3: Relevant stakeholders are equipped to support in the realization of the amended policies and legislations.**

#### **1.3.1 Youth as advocates for social justice and human rights**

MIFTAH worked with a group of youth to promote their involvement in public affairs and provide them with information and contacts on social issues, with a focus on social protection and legislation on domestic violence. The youth participated in a 3-day youth camp for law students at Palestinian universities, civil society and government representatives, the Palestinian Bar Association and the Family and Juvenile Protection Department within the Police. During the sessions, participants held discussions on the constitutional rights of Palestinian women and systems of social protection. The camp constituted a space for information and dialogue on the Family Protection Law and the National Referral System. The camp resulted in the creation of five campaigns and initiatives with targeted messages on family protection, varying according to group and district.

#### **1.3.2 Supporting women in Local Government Units**

MIFTAH capped held a meeting in Bethlehem for female LGU members from West Bank districts so they could share their experiences with one another and listen to the needs and challenges of fellow members in their respective local councils. The members shared their experiences before running in elections and the challenges they faced during the first and second phase of local elections. They also talked about their experiences inside their respective LGUs and discussed ways of increasing women's participation in the election process.

The women agreed that one of the biggest challenges they all faced was society's view towards women's participation and the pressing need to amend the elections law to support increased participation of women and youth in elections. They also stressed on the need for more female representation in LGUs including a higher women's quota. The women also maintained the necessity for a legal clause to make the replacement of any resigning female member with another female member, a binding obligation.

The women members called for ongoing support by increasing awareness on laws and measures pertaining to LGUs and mechanisms for decision-making within them, to guarantee active and effective participation. The meeting resulted in several recommendations, most significantly the need to network with the Ministry of Local Government and CSOs. Another recommendation called on members to continue to exchange experiences in a bid to overcome obstacles they may face at the various stages of the democratic process. Finally, they

recommended that it is important to include male LGU members in upcoming interventions so that they complement each other in their work.

### **1.3.3 Supporting women candidates to run for local elections.**

MIFTAH completed several training sessions aimed at empowering women and youth candidates for local council elections to increase their presence and participation in election campaigns. The training sessions were held in several West Bank districts and for groups of women and youth in the Gaza Strip, even though the current round of local elections does not include Gaza. The goal of their inclusion was to equip them with the necessary information and tools to prepare them for the election process should they be held in the Gaza Strip. The training included an intensive program to provide necessary information on election laws and regulations for the electoral process, focusing on the tools and mechanisms needed to impact electoral programs and promote the presence of women and youth candidates in campaigns. They also gave participants the necessary skills for connecting with voters in local communities.

### **1.3.4 Raising public awareness about the electoral demands through social media**

MIFTAH during 2022, through its field advisory team, conducted over 200 awareness sessions on political participation and citizenship rights across the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The town hall meetings stressed on the importance of pressing for legislative, presidential and local elections in all West Bank, Jerusalem and Gaza Strip districts. They also endorsed the demand for equality in electoral laws, starting with raising the women's quota to a minimum of 30%, raising the candidacy age and lowering the threshold. They urged Palestinian factions to assume a key role in the process of inclusion for women and youth in the public sphere and to prevent the progression of tribalism in the democratic process. The attendees emphasized the importance of monitoring the performance of LGUs in their interaction with local communities and the consistency of their meetings. Finally, they said female council members must be given the opportunity to exercise their role in their respective councils as equals to their male counterparts.

Moreover, MIFTAH focused, through the social media campaign, to raise people's awareness about the electoral system in Palestine and the election law in addition to a timeline of the elections process which begins with the voters' registration to the day of the results. MIFTAH, also worked through social media, on providing detailed information regarding the monitoring role of civil society on elections, the percentage of youth who are allowed to participate as voters and candidates, the percentage of youth and women's representation in the electoral lists, in addition to the main duties and responsibilities of the PLC according to the Palestinian Basic Law.

The different media material broadcasted on MIFTAH 's social media platforms surpassed 358 thousand viewers on average. The material was published on MIFTAH's Facebook page, Instagram, and Twitter. The animated videos targeted Palestinian citizens aged 18 and above, across the West Bank and Gaza.

### **1.3.5 Training on monitoring and documenting Israeli human rights violations from a gender perspective**

MIFTAH held a series of training workshops on the documentation of international humanitarian law violations and the use of tools it developed. The trainings targeting employees and volunteer members of local coalitions for the implementation of UNSCR1325 in the targeted districts, to update their skills and knowledge on documenting these violations, which could be used as evidence in international advocacy.

MIFTAH believes in the need to integrate monitoring and documentation within human rights work and based on international standards, given the importance of providing evidence of the violation and identifying the perpetrator and circumstance in which the violation occurred. It is also imperative to hear the story from the victims themselves through trained individuals, with a focus on objectivity, accuracy and reliability in conveying information.

### **1.3.6 Training on human rights conventions as references for security services in coordination with Al Istiqlal University**

MIFTAH empowered military, civilian and academic members of Al Istiqlal University, the Palestinian Academy for Security Sciences in human rights conventions, including The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), as references, for Palestinian security services. The training was based on a MIFTAH manual aimed at elevating the performance of the Palestinian security sector and developing policies and measures for its work to respond to the reality of gender discrimination against Palestinian women and girls. The training program included a presentation of gender-related concepts and their significance within the Palestinian context, as an analytical tool for the work of security services and at the level of organizational structures in military training academies, to guarantee equality, equity and non-discrimination based on sex, race or political affiliation. It also included a presentation on the development of women's rights within international conventions, particularly CEDAW and UNSCR1325 and the extent to which they are applicable to the case of Palestinian women.



### 1.3.7 MIFTAH releases guidebook on UN mechanisms for Women Peace and Security Agenda

MIFTAH held workshops in the West Bank, including Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, on a guidebook about UN mechanisms pertaining to the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS). The workshops included member institutions of the Women's Coalition for Implementing UNSCR1325, grassroots organizations and rights and community activists in the West Bank and Gaza. MIFTAH's objective for developing the guidebook is to support and enable Palestinian women and women's and rights organizations to utilize UN mechanisms as part of their efforts in international advocacy and visibility on global platforms in sharing information on the status of Palestinian women under Israeli military occupation. The workshops are part of efforts to enact UNSCR1325, subsequent resolutions and General Recommendations 30, 32 and 35 of the CEDAW follow-up committee.

The trainings revolved around the focal points of the guidebook in the Palestinian context, international humanitarian law and relevant international agreements. They also discussed the structure of the UN and explained about the Security Council, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). In addition, they briefed participants on contractual and non-contractual mechanisms and the Human Rights Council.

The trainings also explained how the guidebook could help in holding the occupation accountable through showcasing the main work and roles of UN bodies, using specific resolutions pertaining to Palestine as examples. They pointed to practical instructions on how to access information and submit complaints and statements to various UN bodies and mechanisms. These include individual cases, patterns of violations or collective violations. What's more, Palestinian women in exile can make use of the manual, given that more knowledge on how UN bodies operate will help them apply this knowledge to their reality. Furthermore, parts of the guidebook regarding the protection of women and girls from political violence could be used.

### 1.3.8 MIFTAH completes Phase Seven of its project 'Development of local communities through small income-generating projects'

MIFTAH capped off Phase Seven of its project, "**Development of local communities through small income-generating projects**", which was launched at the beginning of 2021. Throughout this project, 10 grants were given to 40 women in the Jerusalem district, with funding from the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development.

MIFTAH completed the executive phase of the project in 2021-2022 by holding a capacity-building workshop for 48 grant beneficiaries. The training focused on developing self-assertion skills for the women, with the objective of empowering them and enhancing their role in the

management of income-generating production projects, so they reflect positive patterns for women entrepreneurs in their communities. The project takes into consideration the needs of marginalized women categorized as vulnerable in their communities, by economically empowering them.

## **Specific Objective 2: Enhanced promotion of the Palestinian narrative at the international level**

### **2.1 Result 1: Content of the Palestinian public discourse is formulated and presented continuously**

#### **2.1.1 MIFTAH uses digital media to promote the Palestinian narrative**

During 2022, the program revived its digital input in terms of disseminating content on the Palestinian narrative, addressing various political, economic, social, and cultural aspects of the Palestinian cause. The content either emerged from pre-planned events, campaigns, and occasions or on an impromptu basis. The use of diverse multimedia has helped simplify messages, and make them easily shareable, which translated into increased growth of our content and followers.

### **2.2 Result 2: Engagement in international advocacy dialogue is facilitated**

#### **2.2.1 MIFTAH organized a networking and advocacy trip to European capitals.**

MIFTAH organized an advocacy trip during October 2022 to the Hague and Brussels, where a delegation from MIFTAH, including a young woman activist, conducted different meetings with EU parliamentarians, networks, officials from MoFA, diplomatic missions, political parties and representatives from INGOs. The discussion was focused on women status under occupation where evidence was shared based on documented data reflecting the realities of the gendered impact of occupation.

#### **2.2.2 MIFTAH Participates in Human Rights Council sessions**

MIFTAH holds special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations Human Rights Council since 2020. This allows addressing the United Nations Human Rights Council during its various sessions.

MIFTAH actively participated during the 49<sup>th</sup> regular session of the Human Rights Council (February 28th – April 1st). Under Item 2, MIFTAH followed up on the report of the High Commissioner and engaged in an interactive dialogue highlighting Israeli state-sanctioned settler terrorism through a recorded oral statement.

Addressing the Council under item 3, MIFTAH hosted young Palestinian Bedouin activist Adan Alhjooj, who delivered a recorded oral statement highlighting the latest Israeli human rights

violations in Al-Naqab, during an interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing.

### [Facebook](#)

Under item 7, discussing the ‘Human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories’, MIFTAH submitted a joint written statement briefing the Council on its documentation of Israeli state-sanctioned settler terrorism and its impact on women. Similarly, MIFTAH endorsed a joint statement submitted by a group of Palestinian and regional civil society organizations highlighting the rise in Israeli settler violence amid an expanding settlement enterprise in a culture of impunity.

MIFTAH also submitted a joint oral statement (delivered by Al-Haq) highlighting Israeli Apartheid, as part of the general debate under the same agenda. Finally, MIFTAH also engaged in the interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territories occupied since 1967, Michael Lynk, commending his conclusion report recognizing Israeli apartheid and highlighting its different manifestations.

Throughout the session, MIFTAH urged the international community to end Israel’s impunity and hold it accountable for its persistent war crimes and human rights violations and recognize and dismantle its apartheid regime imposed on Palestinians on both sides of the ‘Green Line’.

In the following 50<sup>th</sup> session, MIFTAH delivered a pre-recorded oral intervention during an interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression under item 3. We highlighted the political repression faced by Palestinian female activists in occupied Jerusalem among other relevant issues.

MIFTAH delivered three oral interventions at the United Nations Human Rights Council in its 51<sup>st</sup> session, highlighting Israeli state-sanctioned settler terrorism and its impact on women, the ethnic cleansing of Masafer Yatta, and Israeli attempts at Judaizing Jerusalem. All three oral statements requested an end to Israeli impunity and for the international community to hold Israel to account.

### **2.2.3 MIFTAH holds diplomatic briefings**

In March of 2022, MIFTAH organized and hosted a diplomatic briefing for diplomats stationed in Palestine from around the world, jointly with partner organization AMAN. We highlighted both issues emerging from the Israeli occupation as well as domestic issues vis-à-vis the internal political system.

In May of 2022, a Nakba Day event was organized in the village of Beit Iksa, commemorating the Palestinian Nakba with international diplomats but was later canceled due to the deteriorating security situation due to the killing of journalist Shireen Abu Aqleh.

### **Specific Objective 3: Improved effective institutional and human capacity development at MIFTAH**

MIFTAH during 2022, continued to work on developing its internal capacity and enhancing the principles of good governance and accountability within its work. MIFTAH depended on its internal capacities where possible but also relied on external expertise. To that end, MIFTAH has worked on the following issues:

- In-house **development of MIFTAH's Governance Manual**. The manual will be reviewed by an external consultant and linked to the development of the Administrative and Policies Procedures Manual.
- **Electronic archiving of all financial transactions**: MIFTAH has completed electronic archiving of all financial transactions of 2021. Additionally, monthly closing and posting of transactions is being made timely within the first week of the next month.
- Ongoing internal **review and update of Financial Policies and Procedures Manual** by the financial department team pending approval by the GA during their April 2023 meeting.
- Review and update of **the Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual**, however, to accommodate to the new structure, there is a need to review and update job descriptions of all staff and review annual performance appraisal system. This performance appraisal system will be linked to an incentive system along with the salary scale. This will be accomplished by end of 2022.
- Ongoing capacity building activities for staff on administrative and financial procedures in addition to programmatic and technical capacities.
- Review and update of staff job descriptions in line with the new hierarchy of the organization according to the new strategic plan 2022-2026. The job descriptions included clear and smart KPIs that were reflected in the annual performance evaluation forms to be implemented beginning of 2023.

#### **4. MIFTAH's Publications in 2022:**

##### **Special Reports:**

- [Specialized Training Manual on Elections and Women & Youth Political Participation](#)
- [A Guide on Using UN Bodies and Mechanisms to Promote Accountability: Women, Peace and Security Agenda in the Palestinian Context](#) Review Report on the

[Implementation of the Strategic Framework for Lobbying and Advocacy \(2021-2024\) for Palestinian Women's Coalition for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 - Semi-annual report](#)

- [Report on Settler Violence against Palestinian Women in the Northern Governorates of the Occupied West Bank during the First Half of 2021](#)
- [Analytical Report of Documented Human Rights Violations Against Palestinian Women in the West Bank including Jerusalem and Gaza Strip due to Practices of Israeli Military Occupation and Settler Violence](#)
- [Citizen's Budget General Budget for the Fiscal Year 2022](#)
- [Citizen's Budget 2022- Ministry of Interior \(Civil Services\)](#)
- [Citizen's Budget 2022- Ministry of Health](#)
- [Citizen's Budget 2022- Ministry of Education](#)
- [Citizen's Budget 2022- Ministry of Labour](#)
- [Citizen's Budget 2022- Ministry of Social Development](#)
- [Semi-Annual Comparative Report of Actual Spending of the Ministry of Social Development \(MoSD\) for 2021/2022](#)
- [Semi-Annual Comparative Report of Actual Spending of the Ministry of Education \(MoE\) and Ministry of Higher Education \(MoHE\) for 2021/2022](#)
- [Semi-Annual Comparative Report of Actual Spending of the Ministry of Health \(MoH\) for 2021/2022](#)
- [Semi-Annual Comparative Report of Actual Spending of the Ministry of Labor \(MoL\) for 2021/2022](#)
- [Annual Comparative Report of Actual Spending of the Ministry of Social Development \(MoSD\) for 2021/2022](#)
- [The Comparative Actual Spending Report on the Ministry of Education-2020/2021](#)
- [The Comparative Actual Spending Report on the Ministry of Social Development \(MoSD\) for 2020/2021](#)
- [The Comparative Actual Spending Report on the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research -2020/2021](#)
- [Annual Report for the Comparative Actual Spending of the Ministry of Health 2020/2021](#)
- [A research paper: 'The proposed draft Value-Added Tax Law' in relation to the work of NGOs and the perspective of social justice](#)

**Factsheets and Policy Papers:**

- [MIFTAH - Factsheet on impact of Israeli violations against the right of education for girls in Jerusalem](#)
- [MIFTAH - Family rights for Jerusalemite women under discriminatory Israeli policies](#)
- [MIFTAH - Israeli violations and discriminatory policies against Palestinian women's political rights in Jerusalem](#)
- [MIFTAH - Health violations against Palestinian women and girls in East Jerusalem](#)

- [MIFTAH - Economic rights of Jerusalemite women...draining reality and grave violations](#)
- [MIFTAH - Factsheet on Palestinian Local Elections – Phase Two 'Women and Youth presence in electoral lists and elections campaigns'](#)
- [MIFTAH - Factsheet on Palestinian Local Elections – Phase I 'Women in election campaigns'](#)
- [MIFTAH - Israeli torture of Palestinian prisoners: Systematic cruelty in a climate of total impunity](#)
- [MIFTAH - Beyond an illegal Occupation: 55 years of Full Impunity & Zero Accountability](#)
- [MIFTAH - Palestinian Prisoner's Day 2022](#)
- [MIFTAH - Israeli state-sanctioned settler terrorism: A gendered lens](#)

