

طاقم شؤون المرأة

Women's Affairs Technical Committee

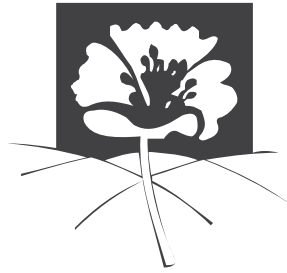


The Impact of House
Demolitions on Gender
Roles and Relations



**“We will come back to build in the same place,
we are here and we will stay here”**

2014



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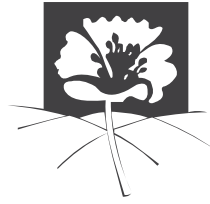
Women's Affairs Technical Committee

The Impact of House Demolitions on Gender Roles and Relations

**“We will come back to build in the same place,
we are here and we will stay here”**

Prepared by: Hanan Abu Ghosh for
The Women's Affairs Technical Committee – Ramallah

2014



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Foreword

This study is a part of the efforts of the Women's Affairs Technical Committee (WATC) to expose, understand, document and analyze the effect of the Israeli Occupation on Palestinian women and society. We hope such research will encourage awareness, advocacy, and action. Through this study specifically, we aspire to highlight the difficulties families face when their houses are demolished, paying specific attention to the way gender affects the experience of such trauma. We believe that this study will enable us to better support families facing house demolition and encourage international advocacy to stop housing demolitions altogether.

The diverse methods of the Israeli Occupation attack the existence and survival of Palestinian society on multiple levels, including its very social fabric, life itself, and Palestinians' sense of collective identity. This is because the feelings of insecurity and threat inspired by mechanisms of Israeli Occupation are not only experienced when directly encountering overt mechanisms of Occupation, but also throughout one's daily life – the way one conducts relationships and interactions and manages family dynamics. In effect, Palestinian people are forced to take into account the Occupation in every aspect of life. In this way, by targeting the land, Israeli Occupation has also clearly targeted the collective identity of Palestinians, personal lives, and culture to a disturbing degree. Thus, the reality of the Occupation marks the culture of Palestinian society as a whole.

Although the many pernicious effects of the Occupation are felt and articulated by many of us today, we have yet to fully communicate the extent to which Israeli Occupation effects our lives, culture, and perspectives towards social and political matters. Consequently, research that attempts to understand and analyze the effect of the Israeli military Occupation on Palestinian families is essential to determine how we might best make the occupation accountable for its violations of human Rights, International laws and humanity itself.

Israeli Occupation has developed many ways to displace and separate the Palestinian families, but we believe that house demolitions are one of the most cruel and violent ways. This is because house demolitions hit the physical, social and economic status of families. Such violence, like any other, undermines people's ability to lead normal lives, even in the most basic senses.

Under normal circumstances, "home" means safety and relief; it is a place where a person can relax and be themselves. While this is a common understanding of "home," "home" has different meanings different people. For instance, for the Palestinian people, the home, in its physical and moral meaning, is also a synonym for safety and restfulness. An important aspect of "home" for Palestinians is stability. Different groups within Palestinian society also experience the home differently. For instance, because Palestinian women sometimes live in a context where their access to public spaces is limited to short intervals, the home holds a particularly special meaning for her. It is the site for most of her activities and a place where she finds social, psychological and emotional fulfillment. On the other hand, because Palestinian men do not experience a restriction of movement in the public sphere, they have access to many alternative spaces. Consequently, men's activities are often more equally divided between the home, private space, and other, public spaces. Here, it is clear that gender roles play a significant part in determining how one is affected by housing demolitions.

This Study

First, this study demonstrates that family members affected by house demolition have many feelings in common in regards to the destruction of their homes. In this way, this study further exposes the hardships of living under Occupation for Palestinian people. The study also found that the sense of dispersion caused by house demolition is not limited to physical or spatial senses, but also disrupts peoples' thoughts, feelings and sense of purpose in life. Most basically, house demolitions destabilize peoples' safety and identity.

Our study found that some family members maintain unique concerns about the loss of their home that are not felt by others. We explore how gender can help explain the emergence of some of these unique concerns and further reveal the specific challenges that Palestinian women face under Occupation.

Throughout this study, the strength and durability of house owners whose houses were destroyed was readily apparent. The persistence to survive, maintain hope, and families' ability to resist through unity, support and love are discussed throughout.

Despite many families' inspiring resilience, our research maintains that formulating and executing plans to provide continuous support for families affected by house demolition is essential. This is because it is clear that these families have dire financial and psychological needs due to their spatial and emotional instability, especially for those who have no other place to live.

Furthermore, this study found that the imbalanced, patriarchal power relations present in situations of house demolition are reinforced by and inseparable from the effects of Israeli Occupation. We maintain that while there are clearly issues of patriarchy within Palestinian society, Occupation forces provide fertile ground for such power imbalances to take root within the home and hinder efforts to recalibrate them.

Soraida Abed Hussein
General Director

Introduction

House demolitions are a mechanism of the Israeli Occupation's colonization of Palestine. Israeli house demolition policies justify the arbitrary destruction of Palestinian homes. Justification for house demolitions include security concerns, proximity to settlements or bypass roads, lack of permits, or vague claims that some houses violate Israel's terms for legal housing construction. Other times, the Israeli Authorities destroy houses because there is someone they wish to arrest within the house, regardless of whether the home owners are aware of the person and their situation or not. Some houses are totally or partially demolished, while others are simply closed. Furthermore, houses are often destroyed without prior warning. Frequently people are given only 15 minutes to exit their property, leaving insufficient time for families to find and take with them important documentation or money, let alone valuables or keepsakes. To ensure complete destitution, following a housing demolition, owners are not allowed to rebuild on the property. The total economic loss to those affected by house demolitions is estimated to be about 3 million dollars, excluding the "construction violation" fines issued to those whose houses are demolished. Families affected by housing demolitions are in immediate need of practical assistance and humanitarian aid as they experience devastating loss.

The logic that informs house demolition policies is illegal. House demolitions are an obvious mechanism of the Israeli Occupation's overarching plan to expel Palestinians from their land and build more Israeli settlements, bypass roads, military bases, outposts, and fortify the Apartheid Wall. Overall, these practices aim to encourage ethnic displacement.

Displacement and house demolition policies have been implemented throughout the Palestinian people's history. The British first implemented house demolition policies as a form of displacement and collective punishment during the British Mandate over Palestine. In 1948, Israeli forces caused the displacement of between 750,000 and 900,000 Palestinians and many Bedouins. In the 1967 war, which resulted in Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Israeli Authorities again displaced a huge amount of Palestinians, with 325,000 Palestinians displaced in West Bank and Gaza alone. 1967 also marked the beginning of Israeli Occupation force's codification of policy that legalized the systematic destruction of Palestinian peoples' homes, paving the path for the continuous displacement of Palestinians for years to come. Thus, house demolitions have been and continue to be a way for colonizing forces to ensure Palestinian displacement and emigration on the one hand, and settlement expansion, settler violence, the Apartheid wall, and military closures on the other.

The amount of houses that have been demolished and people affected by housing demolitions since 1967 are astounding and occur across the Occupied Territories. According to Israeli human rights organizations, around 25,000 houses have been demolished thus far. The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions reported that between 2000 – 2009 more than 10,151 houses were demolished, averaging 1,011 houses a year. In 2008 alone, 1,151 Palestinians living in 156 housing units were forced to leave their homes.

Examining trends in the number of house demolitions in different areas of the Occupied Territories demonstrates the pervasiveness of the issue. The West Bank has seen an increase in house demolitions since the second Intifada. 350 houses in the West Bank have been destroyed, leaving 2,455 Palestinians without shelter. The Jenin Refugee Camp in the West Bank was particularly affected by housing demolitions during the Israeli Occupation's increased aggression towards the Jenin Camp in April of 2002. According to Amnesty International, 169 buildings containing 374 apartments were demolished in the Jenin Camp alone. In addition to instances of total destruction, many other houses in the Jenin Camp were partially demolished.

House demolitions in Jerusalem are similarly escalating in frequency. Overall, from 1967 to 2012, 1,501 houses units were destroyed in Jerusalem, affecting 7,413 people, 54% of them being children. Of the 1,151 housing units destroyed throughout all of the Occupied Territories in 2008, 56% of the demolished homes were in East Jerusalem. The neighborhood of Shaikh Jarrah has been particularly affected by Israeli house demolitions. In 2009, 53 Palestinian refugees were evacuated from their houses in Shaikh Jarrah when an Israeli court issued a judgment declaring Israeli ownership of the buildings they lived in. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that in addition to this 52,

475 other Palestinian residents of Shaikh Jarrah have been subject to evacuation and displacement as a result of settlement expansion in the area. Similarly, in the Al Bustan Quarter in Silwan, the Jerusalem Municipality approved a plan to destroy 22 houses out of 88 houses in that region in order to build the Jewish archeological park. But, demolitions in Jerusalem are not confined to individual housing units; huge amount of buildings have been destroyed in Jerusalem too. From 2000 to 2012, about 1,124 buildings in Jerusalem were demolished, resulting in 4,966 people being displaced, 2,586 of them children and 1,311 of them women.

In addition to the increased demolition of homes, 28% of Palestinians homes in East Jerusalem are deemed eligible for demolition by Israeli authorities due to their supposed violation of Israeli urban planning requirements. This means that 60 thousand Palestinians are constantly being threatened with forced eviction or house demolition. In Silwan, for example, 150 families have received demolition orders, making 1,500 people at risk of displacement.

Displacement and house demolitions plague Gaza as well. Over the course of the 22 Day War on Gaza in 2009, 200,000 people including 112,000 children were temporarily displaced from their houses. Furthermore, 3,900 houses were demolished. This constituted the largest number of houses demolition since the beginning of the Israeli Occupation, leaving many families chronically homeless. These families are now living with other families, as they remain unable to rebuild houses due to Israeli Occupation's imposed shortage of construction materials.

Furthermore, Occupation authorities are even forcing people to demolish their homes on their own, with their own hands. Data indicates that the number of self-demolitions has gradually increased since 2000 with 303 reported cases of people being forced to destroy their own homes. 2010 saw the highest frequency of self-demolition, with 70 cases. In 2009, there were 49 cases of reported self-demolition, 20 in 2011, and 14 in 2012. However, these numbers likely do not express the full extent of the problem as, according to the Almaqdisi Organization, in many cases the media, human rights and civil society organizations are not notified of instances of forced self-demolition.

As demonstrated above, displacement and house demolition policies directed at the Palestinian people have existed for years and continue to terrorize Palestinians across the Occupied Territories; this mechanism encourages the displacement of Palestinians daily, especially in the West Bank and Gaza. Displacement and demolition policies intend to expel and uproot Palestinians from their homeland by subjecting them to physical and psychological loss. Furthermore, these inhumane policies hold no regard for the way they affect the wellbeing of children, the elderly or women.

This study grew from considering the above information and realizing that there is insufficient information about the personal experiences of families who contend with house demolitions. It is essential to research and collate the individual experiences of families facing house demolition so that we can identify the best types of advocacy efforts and resources to provide them with in their time of need. This study will also pay special attention to the way house demolitions affect gender roles and relations within family units. We developed this focus because determining how house demolitions affect family members differently is crucial to ensure that advocacy efforts are able to support all members of affected households and thus resist the way the Israeli Occupation enhances hierarchical dynamics within families. To answer these questions our data set includes the voices, thoughts, and feelings of men and women who are living in the wake of extreme loss brought on by their house being demolished.

With this research and report, we hope to draw conclusions and generate recommendations that result in increased and higher quality support and advocacy, in both Palestine and abroad, for those affected by house demolitions. Ultimately, we hope that this information is utilized by decision-makers and specialists in official and unofficial institutions to generate programs and policies that can begin to ameliorate the many problems families face when contending with house demolitions and ultimately erode and eradicate house demolition policies altogether.

Objectiv and sub-objectives of this research

- **The main objective:**

This study aims to identify the impact of house demolitions on gender roles and relations in Palestine during 2002 - 2012.

- **The sub-objectives:**

- Identifying the impact of house demolitions on gender, reproductive, productive, political, and social roles.
- -dentifying human rights, relief, and media organizations' possible role in providing press coverage and humanitarian intervention around house demolitions.
- Analyzing the economic, educational, and psychological impact for family members affected by house demolitions.

Methodology

- **The preparatory stage**

A five-member committee from the Women Affairs Technical Committee was formed to discuss with the lead researcher details of the study, such as: the main and sub-objectives of the research, research sample composition and methodology. There were occasional in-person meetings and constant contact between the researcher and the committee. During such points of contact, topics discussed included: what had been achieved in the research process, what feedback the committee had for the researcher, and what support the researcher needed to be successful.

- **Data collection and analysis**

The data included in this study was collected between June and July 2013 by fifteen researchers from the West Bank, Jerusalem, and Gaza. Research participants were selected from families affected by house demolitions between 2002 and 2012. The research participants' houses were demolished for different reasons, over a range of time, and in different areas of the Occupied Territories.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were applied to primary data sets in this study. Firstly, information was gathered from participants through questionnaires. We analyzed this data with an analytical systems program to test our research questions. Secondly, we followed a qualitative method when analyzing individual interviews and focus groups where researchers posed questions and recorded participants' responses regarding housing demolitions. In all, ten focus groups were held in the West Bank and Gaza, with six discussion groups comprised of women, and four of men. The total number of participants in these discussion groups was 130 people (75 women and 55 men). Secondary resources such as studies, reports, and other research on house demolitions were also used as a qualitative method to contextualize our data.

Gathering and analyzing data via qualitative and quantitative methods assisted us in understanding the emotional and cerebral experience of family members whose homes faced demolition. It revealed whether and how views regarding issues related to house demolitions changed for family members after their homes were demolished. In this dual method approach, we also considered the relationship between responses given using the questionnaire versus in interviews or focus groups. Finally, we analyzed our data sets with previous research to identify any similarities or differences between our study and others. This allowed us to build on previous research and generate sharper recommendations as to how organizations might support these families overcome crisis. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the participants in this study are not a representative sample of the whole of Palestinian society or those affected by housing demolitions. The conclusions of this study are therefore somewhat limited.

– Data collection from primary resources

First: Focus group formation

Gaza:

Groups	The number of participants
Nusairat	10 women
South of Rafah	13 women
Alzaytoun Quarter	15 women
South of Rafah	14 men
Beit Hanoun	17 men

West Bank:

Groups	The number of participants
Jiftlik	13 women
Beit Dajan	14 women
Msafer villages - Yata	10 women
Kirbet Almifqer – Yata	14 men
Dura	10 men

Second: 30 individual interviews with men and women (10 interviews in the West Bank, 10 interviews in Gaza, and 10 interviews in Jerusalem).

Third: 120 questionnaires were completed (50 in the West Bank, 50 in Gaza, and 20 in Jerusalem) and were distributed equally between men and women. A foreign expert with significant experience in this type of research analyzed the questionnaires.

The research sample

The research sample in this study is comprised of men and women whose homes were demolished between 2002 and 2012 by the Israeli Occupation. They come from communities in the West Bank, Gaza and Jerusalem.

Moral standards

The field researchers had prior experience conducting this sort of research, such as experience interviewing diverse categories of people and protecting participants' privacy. The researchers were nevertheless trained and advised throughout the process. They were told to inform their interviewee about the research's objective, to resist promising participants any material assistance or otherwise, and to inform them that the study's results would be published and delivered to decision-makers and other officials.

Limits of the Study

The research sample is limited to the families whose houses were demolished during the period between 2002 and 2012, after the second Intifada. This is because over this time period there was an increase in Israeli invasions, house demolitions, wars in Gaza (in both 2008 and 2011), and martyrdom operations. Thus, it was a crucial time for the Palestinian people.

Obstacles of the Study

Focus groups weren't conducted in Jerusalem because the people who were invited to participate in the study could not attend for personal reasons. This missed opportunity was substituted by individual interviews in Jerusalem.

1.1 The right to adequate housing

Having access to adequate housing is a basic need that must be realized for humans to live with some integrity and without undue suffering. Adequate housing is when one has a private and safe place to live in. Having adequate housing, or a home, is essential for one to be active, healthy, and feel safe. But, home also is significant beyond being simply a private, physical place to rest. Home is where people spend most of their time and thus constitutes a significant social space. It is where one creates social and family ties and can have a social, political, and cultural effect on others. In this sense, people are not only healthier physically when they have access to an adequate home, but also socially, economically, politically, and culturally. Thus, adequate housing is a human right because it is essential for humans to both function in the most basic senses and have the opportunity to realize their potential. Furthermore, due to the absolute necessity of a home for one's physical and social wellbeing, it is also a prerequisite to enjoy other freedoms and rights. The International Convention of Human Rights affirms that adequate housing as a human right for these reasons and more.

Because a home holds such importance and is a human right, violating the right of housing leads to the violation of many other civil, political, economic, and cultural rights. For instance, a violation of the home is also a violation of family life, privacy, movement, safety, health, social security, etc. For these reasons, adequate housing for all citizens should be a goal that the international community and all governments strive for.

1.2 Forced internal displacement

Displacement occurs when people are forced to leave their homes involuntarily to avoid the armed conflict, violence, or man-made disasters. Someone is internally displaced when they are forced from their home, but do not subsequently leave their country. Rather, although they are displaced, they continue to live under the authority of their state, even though it is responsible for their displacement. Palestinians suffer from both external and internal displacement due to the Israeli Occupation.

Forced displacement is a longstanding issue that is becoming increasingly pressing. The Second World War produced millions of Internally Displaced People (IDPs), 80% of them being children and women, making internal displacement an international crisis for the first time. Since World War II the issue of IDPs has grown unabated. For instance, since 1986, 4 million people have been internally displaced in Sudan, 2 million in Uganda, 4 million in Mozambique, and more than half of the people in Liberia. Armed conflicts, patriarchal governments, weak legal structures, dictatorial regimes, gender-based violence and violations of human rights are thought to be only some of the factors that have resulted in approximately half of the IDPs coming from Africa¹⁸. The main reasons for forced displacement continue to be wars and armed conflicts, which often emerge due to political, social, economic, religious, cultural and ethnic frictions. Other times, forced displacement is caused by natural disasters such as flood, storms, or desertification. Development projects can also cause internal displacement.

Forced displacement negatively affects both women and development efforts. It leads to social exclusion and poverty, family fragmentation, and negatively affects gender relations. It has specific impact on women because it limits their access to the resources that can help them meet their families' needs, which increases their physical and emotional stress. Many demographic changes happen as a result of conflict and displacement, such as many more families headed by women. The impact of forced displacement depends on the political, social, economic, and environmental context. The effects vary according to gender, age, race, ethnicity, and social standing.

1.3 The impact of conflict and forced internal displacement on women and gender roles

Women's experiences of war and conflict differ from men, as does girls from boys. During times of conflict women, unlike men, are often subjected to violence directed at them due to their gender, such as domestic violence, sexual violence, and exposure to sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS. Women's roles within the home also shift during conflict, as they often adapt to take care of their family by taking on the roles and responsibilities of absent male partners.

Displacement affects women in different ways. In Sudan, for example, tribes and ethnic groups are marginalized due to their minority status and women are the primary victims of the situation. During war and conflict, women's responsibilities increase: she must take care of children, the elderly, and the sick in addition to maintaining the home. Consequently, there is no time for education. In these ways, forced displacement negatively affects women's social, cultural, and economic development and increases gender inequality.

Despite the increased hardships women face when contending with displacement, in times of crisis they also sometimes gain new skills. For instance, when a husband is incapacitated, goes to war, is killed, or simply cannot support the family on his own, women, in addition to taking on added care-work responsibilities, may take on responsibility for the economic situation of the family. When women take on economic responsibilities, notions of masculinity, femininity and gender's roles often shift, as women show that they too are capable of embodying roles traditionally held by men. Men sometimes feel frustrated by such changes and resort to alcoholism or violence against women. In these ways, forced displacement can surprisingly create new opportunities for women to exert agency within and outside of the home, although backlash to such developments does occur, and women's double burden of care-work and paid labor should not be minimized.

1.4 The impact of displacement & house demolitions on families

Displacement affects all aspects of life. Women, who were interviewed for the study by Abdo and Kevorkian, said that ongoing displacement disperses families and destroys people's economic and social life. The house is a main source of physical and economic safety for the family. Consequently, on a physical level, house demolitions destroy livelihoods, and shorten life by reducing access to the essential services such as water, education, health, and sanitation. House demolitions can also result in serious injury or death within the family. However, whether or not people are directly physically harmed in a house demolition or not, house demolitions indisputably affect people's psychological health. Furthermore, economic hardship is an inevitable consequence of forcing people to leave their homes.

A recent study about living conditions in Johannesburg researched the effect of housing conditions on 240 people. The first group lived in adequate housing and the second did not have sufficient space to live and lacked privacy. The study found that those living in cramped living conditions experienced heightened levels of insomnia, depression, addiction, and other risky behaviors. The study also indicated that this group needed psychological support and improved housing to ameliorate the negative impact of poor housing. Because families who have experienced house demolitions often relocate to cramped, inadequate housing it is likely that Palestinian families whose houses have been destroyed suffer from similar setbacks.

Women and children are also particularly affected by house demolitions. In the case of women, the loss of a home uniquely inhibits women's ability to participate in work, education, and economy due to the added responsibilities women take on within the home in the aftermath of house demolitions. Displacement also affects women's relationships between husbands, children and relatives, which can be especially distressing for women due to their primary location in the private sphere. Children also greatly suffer from house demolitions. They suffer socially, academically, and psychologically and sometimes even from post-traumatic stress syndrome. For children, losing a home means losing their bed, books, toys, clothes, neighbors, and friends³⁴. Thus, often the family members that yield the least power in the home are the ones most affected by its loss.

1.5 The significance of “home” for Palestinian Women

The home is the life center for most women in Palestinian society because it is the place where they primarily practice their social and economic activities. Home is a place to gather for socializing and celebrating; it is a place for relaxation; it is a place that gives her power and energy; it is where she raises her children; it is a place for resistance, survival, and a platform for her voice. Home is where she keeps the family's heritage, where memories and keepsakes are guarded. In these ways, home is not only a place to have shelter, but also holds a great amount of personal value for most people, and especially women.

The UN special reporter, in speaking on the importance of adequate housing explained that house demolitions fundamentally tear apart social relationships and cause intense psychological suffering.

1.6 The impact of house demolition for women

Because the home holds such special significance for Palestinian women, forced displacement is especially distressing for them. Nadera Kevorkian's study how house demolitions and the construction of the Wall affect women found that around these situations women lost feelings of safety, tranquility, and independence and many times economic independence. They expressed in detail their permanent feeling of fear of losing their homes or any of their family members. The women said that they slept while wearing their usual clothes, not in pajamas, in case their homes were targeted by the military at night. In this way, house demolitions affect women's physical safety, privacy, movement, lifestyle, social network, and physical and psychological health. Women also experience increased psychological strain in the aftermath of house demolitions because, in addition to dealing with their own psychological stress, they assume the added responsibility of emotionally comforting others, especially children.⁴⁵

Furthermore, losing one's home to house demolition is not just the loss of one place to live for another. Because, after house demolitions, families usually move in with extended family or into small homes, the loss of the home also constitutes the loss of a great deal of space and comfort.

1.7 Displacement and gender based violence

Women lives are particularly affected by conflict and displacement because such issues often result in increased violence against women. Patriarchal control and domestic violence tend to increase, as does rape. A study that interviewed over a thousand men and women indicated that 50% of the men who were forced to leave their homes were violent towards their partners, versus 37.3% of men who did not experience displacement.

A study conducted in Turkey on displaced Kurdish women indicated that women faced increased exposure to violence, control, and poor treatment after losing their homes because they relocated to the city, where men assume women are in danger and in need of more protection. Another reason violence against women increases in times of conflict and displacement is because men are exposed to violence and reenact it against women and children, thus creating a “cycle of violence.”

1.8 Internal displacement and women's coping mechanisms

Previous studies indicate women have many ways of coping with political turmoil to ensure survival and resistance to poor living conditions. Women are not victims or cons, but active resisters of the occupation.⁵¹

A study about the Kurdish women who were forced to move from their villages towards the city center as a result of the continuous armed conflict in Turkey between Kurdistan Workers Party (KWP) and the armed forces of the State identified some of these strategies. The study showed that many women who moved to the cities centers and became more responsible for their families as

a result of expressions of violence including death, disappearance, and internal displacement. In these difficult situations, women moved from being victims to empowered citizens through work, political organizing, collaboration with relief organizations, and strategies to avoid violence. For instance, some Kurdish women resolved to learn Turkish so that they could work more effectively with government agencies or secure low-wage labor. However, those who worked often faced unsafe working conditions, low wages, or seasonal employment due to their elementary Turkish skills and low education level. Women's groups also proved to be a powerful force in aiding women facing impossible situations, especially when women faced domestic violence or needed help accessing humanitarian aid. The "Mothers of Peace" feminist organization became one of the most active organizations fighting for women's rights and women transformed before the country from being victimized to strong citizens, active in state politics.

1.9 Accessing relief assistance

Displaced women have to cope with poverty and find solutions to help and support their families. One of the adaptation strategies used by displaced women living in cities, was finding humanitarian aid such as clothes, food and house wares, especially during the religious festivals. Women asked for help from the municipalities and also used informal social support networks. Women took the initiative to access these resources by themselves; at relief organizations 97% of the registered names were women. On the other hand, men felt lost and unable to take care of their families under such conditions.

1.10 Strategies to combat violence against women

Kurdish women who experienced violence in the home tended to encourage their husbands to join the political Kurdish party. They found this to be a better avenue to address domestic violence than going to the police, as they felt that the police would not support them and are an enemy to the Kurdish people. So, women asked for help from the local committees in their region. The committees consisted of male and female members in the party and would lead negotiations to find solutions to family violence. In cases where they could not find a solution, they would delegate a lawyer and go to court. If a solution still didn't arise, divorce was possible, but unpopular due to the good relations within communities.

1.11 Women's relationship to aid organization and programs

Although women shoulder all of war's burdens and sometimes even participate in combat, they are excluded or their participation is not given priority in discussions as to how to resist or solve a conflict. Consequently, their needs and concerns are often ignored. For instance, women are rarely represented in the determination of humanitarian aid, resulting in the obfuscation of their needs, even though they make up the majority of displaced people from conflict. In addition, the international officials who try to negotiate for peace are often uninformed in regards to gender issues, women rights and especially gender based violence. It is important to understand women's needs when making decisions about distributing resources during crisis.

When the world realizes that war affects men and women differently, post-conflict needs can be better met. Women should be able to effectively participate in the rebuilding the civil society, reorganizing of police and army, promotion of human rights, allocation of resources, and founding of committees for reconciliation.

This section presents themes addressed in the focus groups, interviews, and questionnaires.

2.1 Consequences of house demolition

The first phase of the study investigated changes in family life before and after house demolitions. Issues explored included the number of household members that resided in a house prior to it being demolished, the house's capacity, as well as the impact of house demolition on family relationships between both immediate and extended family.

2.1.1 Family life before and after house demolition

Prior to their homes being demolished, some households maintained a nuclear family structure, while other lived with extended families, usually with the husband's family. After their houses were demolished, these family structures shifted. Some nuclear families moved in with an extended family and some extended families broke off into nuclear families.

The home and its capacity:

In general, although some families' houses felt insufficient for their needs prior to being demolished, all families lamented comforts lost once their houses were demolished.

Some women lived in tents prior to their homes being demolished. They expressed that even prior to losing their homes there was still insufficient room for children to play and they felt their children were done an injustice in this way. Playtime was only conducted in dirt areas or in front of the TV. One woman expressed:

"our children are also maltreated in this country, [they have] no place to play, only the dust and dirt or... TV. [They have] no place to go to". She added: "we are a marginalized and neglected country. No one is concerned of us and no [looks] after us, even though we are the source of food for the West Bank. Why don't they look at us and [recognize] that farmers and their children have needs, talents, and hobbies [too]?"

On the other hand, some people used to live in brick houses. In these cases, mothers expressed that children had more space to sleep and play, but still insufficient to explore their interests.

After their houses were demolished, children lost the little bit of space they had, especially when families relocated to tents. Women's primary way of describing their life before and after their house demolition was in terms of a loss of space. A woman from Gaza said:

"we used to live in a big land where there were all kinds of fruits and vegetables. My brothers, sister and I used to play between the trees, [and] no one disturbed us because no one lived near us because the land was big. So, we used to play, laugh, and shout as much as we [wanted] [since] no one could hear us. We ate from the fruit of this land and did not worry about anything."

Another woman said:

"we lived in big and beautiful houses, in a block comprising of all family and relatives. We visited each other, stayed up late, shared food, and cousins used to play together. We felt that we and our children were safe."

Some women moved in with extended family following their houses being demolished. One woman said that after having moved in with extended family, she was left with only one room for her and her children. Other women explained that sometimes when living with extended family, they have separate rooms for the children, but still lack enough space. Children's rooms

would be fashioned out of a storage room or a living room people during the day. There were few places for them to play.

Families whose houses were demolished, but continued to live on their property often resolved to living in a smaller home without private rooms for children. This is because any house that is rebuilt after being demolished can be subject to demolition again at a moment's notice. Thus, to save money and because the family knows the house is likely not permanent, rebuilding efforts occur on only a small scale. This further restricts families' space, again leaving children to play in the dirt.

When families were forced to relocate to tents, the husband, wife and children would take a separate tent, living separately from extended family, with a small room for children to sleep. However, sometimes extended family members had to live with immediate families in these incredibly small spaces.

After the wars on Gaza, many families not only lost their homes, but were sometimes physically injured or became a martyr because of it. These families had to move into rented houses, relatives' homes, live in public schools or in tents while waiting for tin houses to be built for them. A woman from Gaza explained:

"we left the house after receiving bombing threat. We went to schools then to my parent's home. After the war, we restored our house by ourselves and moved to live there again. It was better than living with my parents because nobody can afford [to house] others for a long time. My children are of different educational stages, preparatory, elementary, or secondary"

Another woman from Gaza said:

"we lived in schools and with parents in Shaikh Zayed city. My married son is also living with me. I have two sons studying at the university and an unemployed one. We currently live in a house built by the UNRWA in the same place of our old house but it is not as good as the house that was destroyed."

Yet another woman from Gaza expressed a similar sentiment:

"my husband, children, and I were brought out from under the rubble and we were deeply injured. The house was made of tin and it was bombed at 5:00 am. We've lived in schools for eleven days and we are now living in a rented house. I am suffering a lot but I am working on some projects today."

Finally, a man from Gaza added:

"the army called through loudspeakers to come out of the house within minutes or they will destroy it on our heads. We came out quickly and frightened. Then, they separated men from women and asked us to go to the UNRWA schools. They have destroyed the houses with bulldozers and they did not leave anything"

One woman whose house was demolished from Gaza described the intense fear she experienced this way: *"I swear by God, we came out barefooted. Some of us forgot our babies because we were frightened, but then went back and brought them."*

Women speak in detail about the suffering caused by moving into such small, crowded places. Here are some of their words:

One woman from Gaza said:

"our family is suffering because we live in our son's house. It is small, the husband is sick and he underwent a surgery in his cartilage and we have two children studying at the university. The house [feels] like a market because [so] many people live here."

Another woman from Gaza said:

"we lived in schools for ten days. Then we went to live with my parents in Gaza and then we returned back to our damaged house because it is better than living with others, and my husband is sick."

Girls also suffer greatly from house demolitions. One girl said: *"the girl here cannot find even the bare necessities of life that we want at our age. We are separated from people, activities, and family visits. This causes a catatonic state."*

Furthermore, moving to the new place where basic necessities are absent created issues between family members. A woman from Gaza talked about how since being forced to relocate to a smaller home, she suffered from problems with her husband; she cannot do what she wants – she cannot even choose what food she eats or has time to sit with her husband. She said that her children cannot play freely inside the house and she and her children have to sit all day in a room until her husband comes back at night to sleep. She feels like a stranger at home. The husband suffers from leg injury and cannot see in one of his eyes. He has to take painkillers indefinitely as there is no hope of recovery.

To add insult to injury and emphasize the fact that the Israeli army is conscious of the great harm done by house demolitions, it should be noted that the Israeli army used to take photos of the houses after they were destroyed and show them to the house owners in prison to torture them. This caused unbearable stress and sorrow for the prisoners which manifested in physical symptoms like high blood pressure and diabetes.

Thus, regardless of whether the house is a tent or made out of bricks, whether it is a nuclear family or an extended family, the problems families contend with after facing house demolitions are similar. These include: lack of space, privacy, and dispersion and instability. Many of the families' rights are violated in this context such as the rights of privacy, movement, and comfort. Women had the added burden of becoming responsible for the family. Lack of suitable place for living causes many physical and psychological problems and additional responsibilities for women.

2.1.2 Prior notice of impending house demolition

Pursuant to interviews with thirty families whose houses were demolished, the replies were the following: 23 families said that demolition occurred without prior notice. The other seven families received some form of short notice. One family was notified a day before, another two weeks before, another a month before, and three others were notified six months before. However, most house demolitions occurred without any form of notice, especially in Gaza.

The Israeli justifications for house demolitions were mainly: construction without permit, collective punishment for the family of a martyr, or as a bombing casualty, as in Gaza.

2.1.3 Retrieving belongings

The participants agreed that in most cases, houses were demolished unexpectedly and early in the morning and that consequently it was almost impossible to evacuate and remove any important belongings before fleeing the home. Due to the lack of notice, their only concern at the time was getting all family members out of the house safely. Regardless, loss of a home and one's personal belongings is not easy to compensate because, as many participants have said, the house holds all of the families' memories. Losing a house means losing connection with the beautiful and happy events lived out and witnessed in the house, such as the birth of a new baby, children's graduations, marriage, and good times spent with friends and family.

2.1.4 Reactions to house demolition

The discussion groups held in the West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem mentioned that it was very hard to witness your house being demolished. Men, women and children all felt sorrow, sadness, worry, fear, anxiety, and frustration. They lamented what they had lost after having started their family from scratch; the sadness and sorrow that came with moving to live in a new house; their state of confusion and disappointment. They explained that they did not feel fully conscious during the demolition, that it happened at a bad time, that the help they received was insufficient and that they lost everything, but must find a way to adapt to such terrible conditions. One woman from Gaza explained the types of situations and emotions most people face:

"Feelings of sorrow and sadness for the past: the house is destroyed, the mother is dead, the father is suffering from cancer, two of the children are in the Israeli prisons, and nothing is the same as before. There are feelings of sadness, sorrow and grief around the past and memories."

Both men and women clearly suffered psychologically from house demolitions. However, there are also some important differences to their reactions. Sometimes participants noted that women were able to be more practical at dealing with the problems at hand. One woman said:

"At war, even the Red Cross could not coordinate for us and I used to go to my destroyed house and bring some items. I was stronger than my husband."

Other women said that men spent their time talking to one another while women had to take care of the children alone. In these situations, women felt that their husbands were only thinking of their own comfort and not putting their family first. But, others expressed that their connection to their husbands strengthened after experiencing such trauma together. Furthermore, overall men oftentimes try to hide their feelings, especially from children, so that the feelings of fear and anxiety do not spread to the rest of family members. Women, however, tend to directly express their feelings by screaming and wailing.

However, this was not always the case. For instance, in Gaza, people from both genders were able to express clearly and in detail their feelings of horror, pain, sadness, and shock following house demolitions.

Participants' descriptions of emotional states following house demolitions in Gaza included statements such as:

"I did not expect what was happening and I was shocked and surprised. Our house was bombed while we were sleeping and my brother was killed and another was severely injured. It was the worst moment of my life. Sure it was a feeling of fear and worry but the worst is the scene of killing people in front of our house."

"I felt pain, shock, and fear of what I saw in my eyes and I felt angry. My thinking was scattered."

"We were [more than] very shocked. I looked for the house and she gathered the children."

"Frankly, it was an action film – injuries, martyrs, and destroyed house on one hand, and on the other hand, fear and horror. It was very hard. Social relations are very important and they must be strong."

"The house was destroyed and my family was there. My mother, my wife, my children and my sister were inside the house. The bombing started from 10 pm to 3 am. Nobody expected that anyone will stay alive. This fear and horror was repeated every day. We weren't able to get the children out of one crisis before we entered a new one."

"I am still very afraid and I am psychologically destroyed and cannot feel comfortable."

These statements illustrate the deep sense of tragedy people felt in Gaza due to the abruptness and pervasiveness of the war and consequent house demolitions. Furthermore, people living in Gaza also clearly feel that the emotional affects of such trauma are long lasting. A few participants noted that because it was a collective disaster, it was easier to accept.

On the other hand, people from the West Bank did not seem to be able to express their personal feelings with such clarity and instead largely focused on their attitudes towards house demolitions. Men in the West Bank especially could not talk about this issue; their replies were somehow unclear and ambivalent. This may have to do with the feeling of being individually attacked by Israeli Occupation forces.

In the West Bank, bulldozers come to destroy the houses and both men and women would try to stop them from destroying their home, but the force of the army is usually too great. Men and women felt sad and incapable during these moments, but men especially so. This is because men felt that the destruction of their home humiliated their manhood, in the sense that their ability to provide protection, security, and shelter for their family was quashed. Women could recognize when men were feeling emasculated and would attempted to provide emotional support so that they would not collapse. Women tried to lessen feelings of emasculation by promising them that

they would resist the Occupation and support them. But, women too felt frustrated, incapable, and especially devastated from seeing the destruction of their homes. Some husbands who saw this would offer emotional support to their wives. In these instances, men became more sympathetic to their wives.

The differences between peoples emotional expressions in Gaza and the West Bank can be partially explained through the different ways that houses are destroyed. In Gaza, house demolitions were bombed as a war tactic. Therefore, because the event was more traumatic they are better able to express their feelings. On the other hand, house demolitions in the West Bank were experienced on a more individual level.

Experiences of house demolitions were also particularly hard on children. A man spoke about children's feelings of the houses demolition and said:

"I am very sure that if you make a psychological study on children, you won't find anyone in good sound. Imagine that a child wakes up frightened at midnight or sees the wall destroyed while he is sleeping in the street. We did not take care of the psychological side nor did the human right institutions. We were taking care of daily life hardships and almost forgot children's problems, and the institutions did the same. Everybody has problems, and many problems. The child... wants only to live. Children cannot forget and live apart of the occupation. When I was shot by Hamas, my child was only 3 years old, but today, when he sees the man, he says to me: dad here is the man who shot you and he points to him. Can you see his reaction?"

Thus, the reaction to any event will differ between people, as reactions to any event are shaped by one's own personal history. Nevertheless examining where reactions align and contradict can illustrate the barriers different populations uniquely face in the aftermath of house demolitions. What is very clear though is that the impact of house demolitions for Palestinians, whether from Gaza or the West Bank, is devastating.

2.2 The impact of house demolition on gender roles

This section discusses shifts in gender roles that occur around house demolitions. Gender roles considered include men and women's reproductive, productive, political and social behavior.

2.2.1 Men and women's reproductive roles

Reproductive activities include daily tasks that must be done to ensure families survival, such as: cooking cleaning, shopping, caring for children, organizing social visits, taking family to medical appointments, etc. It was clear throughout the discussions that the women in the home are mainly responsible for this role. Men do not assist with reproductive activities frequently, even though they recognize the wives responsibilities in home cultivation, and sometimes in agricultural activities as well.

Nevertheless, in the aftermath of house demolitions both parents' responsibilities towards the family increase. The questionnaire showed that out of 113 participants, 59% agreed that the father's responsibilities increased, 39% disagree and 12% were neutral. 63% agreed that the mother's responsibilities increased following house demolition. Furthermore, participants assigned more reproductive responsibilities to women in the house. 59% of participants agreed that it is the mother's responsibilities to take children to medical institutions to address the negative effects of house demolitions, 31% disagreed, and 38% agreed that this is the father's duty. Interestingly, 43% agreed that the father's responsibility taking family members to medical institutions increased following a house demolition. But, overall people were still twice as likely to think that it is the mother's duty, not the father's, to organize medical care after house demolitions. In this way, women's reproductive responsibilities increase at a greater rate than men's during such times of crises.

2.2.2 Men and women's productive roles

Throughout the interviews and focus groups, participants identified employment outside the home as mainly men's duty. But, women said that they also participate in this role, mainly at home through livestock breeding and home and agriculture cultivation. Some women expressed that after house demolition, they took on extra work hours so that they could help their husbands save money to rebuild their home. One woman whose house was demolished said, *"if I have the chance to work the land at night, I would not spare it."*

Women's productive activities vary according to what area they live in. If she lives in an agricultural area, then women work in livestock breeding and agriculture on their own land. Other times, they work in agriculture or in Israeli settlements cleaning houses, as like in the Jordan Valley, these are the most readily available sources of employment. In the Jordan Valley, often women and other family members work two jobs a day to try and recover economically from a house demolition.

Women from Gaza said that they wished to work outside the house, but that there are no available opportunities. Many of them applied for jobs, but couldn't get one because of a lack of opportunity. Thus, many women wanted to help their families' economic situation by taking on more work, but there are few compelling or well paying opportunities for women to do so.

So, did men and women's productive roles change after house demolition? Answers varied. Some women said that their productive role did not change: men were still the responsible for securing income, if he maintained his job. Other women said that productive responsibilities within the house did change; as result of house demolition, husbands and children had to work more, and therefore wives started working too.

People who have experienced house demolition look for extra work in order to fulfill their daily needs and build a new home. The questionnaire results showed that out of 121 participants, 53% agreed that the father had to look for another source of income, 43% disagreed and 4% were neutral. On the other hand, 15% agreed that the mother should look for additional income sources and 83% disagreed. Furthermore, 7% out of 110 participants agreed that girls had to look for additional income sources work, while 87% disagreed. However, 50% out of 113 responses agreed that boys needed to find additional work, while 45% disagreed. In other words, while women may take on extra work in the aftermath of a house demolition, father and the male children are still seen as primarily responsible for the family's economic situation.

Thus, while in interviews many women described how they would seek work following a housing demolition, the questionnaires indicated that the father and male children are still seen as the ones who are primarily responsible for fulfilling productive roles. There was not a clear agreement regarding women's productive responsibilities following housing demolition. Regrettably, the question "have women and girls looked for jobs after their houses demolition?" was not answered.

2.2.3 Men and women's political and social roles

The questionnaires results showed that 27% out of 107 responses, agreed while 50% disagreed and 23% were neutral in regards to whether wives' participation in politics, voluntary and charitable works should increase following house demolition. As for whether husband's political and charitable activities should increase, 32% agreed while 39% disagreed and 29% remained neutral. In this way, the questionnaire indicated that there is not a significant difference as to whether men or women's political, voluntary or charity work should increase following house demolitions.

In the discussion groups, it was apparent that both men and women's participation in politics, voluntary and charitable work is low. Participants indicated that this is because of a lack of institutional support for such activities. Men's participation in these activities was much higher than women. Women expressed that their responsibilities for taking care of the house and children prohibited their participation in the political sphere. These responsibilities were especially salient for women in Gaza as following the war their primary concern is the well-being of their children, not political or charitable activities. Women from Gaza also expressed that there aren't any stable

physical spaces for them to engage in these types of activities because of their continuous movement and instability. Women indicated that these issues show that it is very important to have strong institutions that are particularly concerned with the situation of women and can ameliorate some of the burdens that prohibit them from engaging in political, volunteer, and charity work.

Although both men and women's participation in political, volunteer, and charity work is low, men remain more engaged in the institutions, municipalities, and parents councils that organize these activities. Their attitudes point to another obstacle to women's participation in these activities: especially in Gaza, men consider such political, volunteer, and charitable activities as appropriate only for men. Men from Gaza explained:

"A woman's place is only home and men shall fulfill the political and social role."

"I am the one who finances my home and also participates in the institutions."

"I am responsible for everything, visits, engagements, and voluntary works."

"My wife does the house works such as cooking, washing, and taking care of children. [She is] not to participate in parties and institutions, because its men's role according to our society."

Thus, in Gaza men felt generally that it is not appropriate for women to participate in political or charitable activities outside of the home. On the other hand, men from the West Bank, especially in the Jordan Valley and Hebron, were more open to women being involved in activities outside of the house. This can be explained by the difference in available job opportunities for women in Gaza versus the West Bank: while, there are very few opportunities for women to work in Gaza, there are more in the West Bank, especially in agriculture and settlements. Thus, women and men's ability to participate in politics, charity, and volunteer work is low, although men's participation remains higher than women's. This fact is due to many factors such as women's lack of resources, opportunities, institutional support, and patriarchal attitudes.

2.3 Impact of house demolition on familial and community relationships

2.3.1 Familial relationships

In regards to whether a house demolition affected relationships between husbands and wives and other family members, responses varied. Sometimes participants reported that relationship dynamics changed while others said house demolition had no effect.

In response to questions about whether family stress increased following a house demolition, the questionnaires indicated that no one agreed that family relationships became more stressful, while 91% disagreed and 9% neutral. However, sometimes families were separated, and children lived with their mother, while the husband lived in another place. Moreover, different answers to this question came through in interviews. One woman from Gaza asserted that family relationships became more burdensome following the loss of her house because without her own home, her parents became more worried and controlling. They would not allow her to go outside or visit their neighbors. Another woman also said that once she moved into her uncle's house, her movement became very limited because she couldn't leave her room without a headscarf and long dress, and was no longer allowed to speak talk freely or loudly. Overall participants reported that men's control on women increased – even younger brothers suddenly sought to control their sisters' life.

When discussing if husband-wife relationships became tenser following the loss of one's home, responses also varied. One man attested that his relationship with his wife *"is strong,"* adding *"we only possess our love that makes us strong."* In this case, the husband actually gained more respect for the wife once she started working in agriculture. He came to recognize his wife, sister, and mother's responsibilities both at home and outside the house, where they would work the land with him and participate socially. Other women felt similarly, saying that that their husbands started supporting

them more when they saw them suffering, and came to better recognize women's many duties. Some women added that they became bolder in seeking help with the housework from their husbands. These responses are in-line with the assertion that family stress did not increase following house demolition.

However, curiously, when we asked about husband-wife relationships in particular, 55% agreed while 35% disagreed and 10% remained neutral in regards to whether house demolitions negatively impacted husband-wife relationships. The tough economic situations faced by families whose houses have been demolished likely had a negative effect on these relationships, especially if the husband is unemployed. Furthermore, some participants did say that sadness, shock and lack of space increased tension and problems between couples. One woman from Gaza asserted that her husband became much worse after losing their home, especially when they moved in with her parents. Their continuous disputes gave rise to questions of divorce.

There is a clear tension around the fact that most people did not think that stress between family members increased after house demolition, while more than half agreed that problems between couples increased. Husbands and wives successfully hiding their problems from other family members could explain this inconsistency. Furthermore, it is possible that problems occur between couples, but are ultimately manageable and do not affect the family dynamic as a whole.

Thus, it was clear that relationships between family members did shift following house demolitions. While, some families maintained good relationships filled with love, cooperation, and respect, other families' relationships became more difficult as economic loss and lack of space increased stress. In these situations, often women's movement became more restricted and husband-wife relationships deteriorated. Thus, although all family members were affected by stress to some degree following house demolition, females remained the most negatively affected by changes to family dynamics as this often manifested in increased patriarchal control, which limited their movement.

2.3.2 Decision-making dynamics

Both discussion groups and responses to the questionnaire revealed that following house demolitions, women's participation in decision-making increased.

Prior to house demolitions, husband-wife dynamics around decision making varied. Some expressed that the husband and wife had always made decisions collectively. One man from Gaza stated, *"thank God our relationship is integrative [and] decisions are made according to right opinion and experience."* Another man from Gaza asserted that his wife *"is sharing me from the beginning until the end."* Yet another said, *"each one of us has limits and we discuss all issues related to our family."* Finally, one man insisted that *"it is not wrong to consult your children and your wife, it is their right."* Women attested to the existence of these dynamics, saying that their husband will always share his concerns with his wife and important decisions, such as children's education, marriage, work, and housing, will be made together. However, some women indicated that around smaller issues the husband maintains sole discretion, such as in determining his own work, and where and when to go out. Furthermore, one man attested to a more ambivalent inclusion of wives in decision-making, saying, *"we live together the same life, women are emotional, I use my mind but the first and last decision is mine. We share each other in some issues because she helps me in everything, so it is unacceptable not to share her in the discussion."* Another man from Gaza expressed a similar sentiment saying, *"the first and the last decision is mine, but I can consult her in some matters."* Thus, to varying degrees, many husbands and wives, before losing their houses, had a habit of making decisions somewhat collaboratively.

However, in other homes, the man was the sole decision maker, and did not consult others. In these cases, the husband believed he controls all family members and thus is the sole arbiter of any decision, even if it is related to children getting married or is contrary to the wife's opinion. One man said, *"I am very bossy, we can discuss but after she [must] agree with me, otherwise there is no discussion even if she convinces me."* Some women didn't even want to discuss the dynamic of decision-making in the home at all. One woman who was willing to shed light on the particulars of

male dominated decision-making in the home added that it can be particularly bad when a man has multiple families and does not know much about their wives or children. She explained that in these situations, the husband won't wait for his first wife's consent before he marries a second woman, nor his second wife's if he wants to marry a third. In these situations, the husband may consult others, but is not interested in hearing his wife's opinion. Thus, prior to losing one's home, a diversity of behavior exists in regards to how decisions are made within the home.

Regarding the impact of house demolitions on spouses' approaches to decision-making, the discussion groups, interviews, and questionnaires showed that women's participation in decision-making increased after house demolition. In families where decision-making before the demolition was collaborative, women's participation in decision-making continued and even increased. More strikingly, in families where women's participation in the decision-making was limited, her participation in decision-making also increased. Participants explained that following house demolition, wives can discuss matters she previously wouldn't with her husband because she can no longer hide her thoughts and emotions, and thus will not accept any decision without a collaborative discussion first. One husband observed, *"the wife became bolder and stronger in resisting the occupation, and then bolder [in discussing and arguing with] her husband."* When women participate in decision-making, husbands' confidence in women's ability to meaningfully contribute also increases. The questionnaires analysis results are compatible these sentiments. The analysis results showed that 66% of the participants agreed that women's participation in the decision-making increased while 16% did not agree. 26% of those who did not agree were women. Furthermore, 19% agreed while 68% did not agree and 13% remained neutral in response to whether men should be the sole arbiters of decisions following house demolitions.

Thus, the war on Gaza and house demolitions in the West Bank and Jerusalem ultimately bolstered the ability of wives to contribute to decision-making within the home. It seems that feelings of solidarity and trust in women's opinion increase following the loss of one's home. For husbands, seeing their wives in such trying times proved that women are wise and have valid opinions.

2.3.3 Community relationships

All the participants in the discussion groups characterized their relationships with their neighbors and the surrounding community as one of love, intimacy and cooperation. They feel as one family and support each other in joy and sorrow. A participant from Gaza said: *"my best life was with my neighbors before the demolition of my house. We were living as one family."* Another participant explained, *"we visit each other, whether before or after house demolitions."* A participant living in a refugee camp stated: *"[if] any event happens in the camp, you will find everybody supporting you."*

Some said that their relationship with their neighbors became stronger following a house demolition. People explained that this was because house demolitions bring families together to share their housing and resources. A participant characterized his relationship with his neighbors before and after house demolition as one that *"was and still [is] excellent."* He continued,

"many times, relatives do not support each other. Hard times make you feel with [neighbors] because they live in the same conditions. Ah! I had loyalty to the place and I still have the same."

A participant from Gaza has recalled his neighbors' undying support when his house was bombed and his brother martyred:

"Neighbors are valuable. They helped us when our house was bombed and when my brother was martyred. They [are there on] all occasions. They deserve all respect. I love the place where I was born and live because this place contains all my memories."

The participants expressed that their relationships with their neighbors greatly helped them cope with the devastation of losing their home. One man said,

"the old relationship is good. Thank God this relationship is still the same. Today, God gave me neighbors, the best you can find"

Responses to the questionnaire supported these testimonies. 45% of participants believed that solidarity amongst neighbors increased after their house was demolished, while 29% of them disagreed and 36% were neutral. When asked if isolation from their communities increased after the houses demolition, only 17% agreed while 32% disagreed. Thus, families find neighbors to generally serve as a support system. As the interviews demonstrate, families develop their own traditions, histories, and relationships with neighbors. People want to maintain their relationships with neighbors, even if they must move to another place. A participant who was forced to relocate stated, *"we are still in contact with the old neighbors."*

Consequently, when families are forced to move and live with new neighbors, it can be difficult. A participant explained, *"the old neighbors are better than the new neighbors and we keep in contact with them."* The differences between old and new neighbors' customs can also be challenging. One woman, who recently moved into a new neighborhood following a house demolition, explained:

"we don't make relations with the neighbors because they are strangers and my husband does not accept me to talk with strangers because their customs are different. Every house we live in, we find different customs and none of us likes to mix with the others. We feel that we are not accepted by the local people."

Another participant expressed that rented houses and the community there, *"are not safe."* But while many families struggle with adjusting to their new neighbors, ultimately most want to settle in their new location and build strong relationships with these new communities. Some participants felt hopeful about having new neighbors. One said, *"new people may enhance our knowledge of other people."* Another participant expressed that *"there are links between people in everything, in joys and sorrow."*

Thus, the surrounding community means a lot to families experiencing house demolition. These communities are made up of a history of sharing resources, establishing deep relationships, and fond memories. Thus, house demolitions do not only mean the destruction of walls, ceilings, and properties, but also the termination of the traditions, histories of co-existence, and shared values that make up a community. Consequently, many families, even if they are forced to relocate, maintain past neighbor relations. In this way, while the home can be easily destroyed, it is very difficult to destroy the community that surrounds it. This is apparent in the fact that house demolitions seemed to bring neighbors closer in many ways. Nevertheless, house demolition also occasionally made the establishment and maintenance of communities difficult due to forced relocation.

2.3.4 Economic impact

The economic impact of house demolitions is devastating. For all families, their economic situation became worse following house demolition, as they not only lose their home but also all other material possessions. 98% of the interviewed participants agreed that the family economic situation was negatively impacted by house demolition.

To make ends meet following the loss of their homes, families had to loan money from others and sell women's gold sets or other lucrative property, such as sheep and bees. Some families even sold tin. One woman explained:

"we suffered a lot and we were dispersed. We lived in schools. Another time, we lived with our parents and a third time we rented a house, but finally I sold my gold set and we borrowed from someone in order to buy a small house that [was] worth nothing comparing to our previous house. It is a place to for my husband, my children, me and my disabled child with cerebral palsy, who needs private treatment. Parents can receive us for a period of time but not all the time"

But, some families did not even have these meager means of generating funds to find a new house because the house demolition simply destroyed everything. Furthermore, people had issues finding others who were willing and able to loan them money. Some families couldn't find anyone to borrow from due their surrounding communities' impoverished status, or in other cases, people wouldn't lend to them because they could not provide proof that they would be able to pay the borrowed funds back. Finally, especially in the case of Gaza, house demolition and punitive

policies of the Occupation combined to prevent men from working on their own agricultural land, disrupting many families' sole source of income.

Oftentimes family members tried to pick up extra work to make up for the economic loss inflicted upon them by house demolition. 53% of participants agreed that the father was forced to look for another source for living, while 50% agreed that male children were also forced to look for jobs. Many times families were forced to pull their children out of school to peruse paid work. Occasionally, women would also look for extra work. However, because of husbands' distaste for women working when male family members weren't, as well as a general lack of job opportunities for women, this happened relatively infrequently.

2.3.5 Impact on Education

66% of the participants agreed that house demolitions had negative impact on children's education. One participant said: *"none was affected until the academic achievement has been affected."* Another said: *"my son grades were always very good, but now he's getting zero."*

Participants attested that house demolition disrupted their children's psychological health. Children, before and after house demolition, experienced a sense of dispersion and distress as well as heightened anxiety, stress, fear and frustration. Such psychological distress greatly inhibited their ability to focus and succeed at school.

Furthermore, when families had to relocate, checkpoints and the distance between their school and their new neighborhood also prevented children from attending school. Participants in the Jordan Valley expressed that the Alhamra checkpoint and transportation costs resulted in many children dropping out of school.

Even if children can make the journey to their schools, some families had to stop sending children to school because they needed their help ameliorating the horrific economic situation they faced after house demolition. Families were primarily concerned with rebuilding the house or to least to securing a source of income to meet their basic needs.

Already, prior to house demolition, most families' incomes range from 1000 to 1500 NIS, which is too low to send a child to university. However, house demolitions make a university education even more unlikely for children. This is because due to the economic loss caused by house demolitions, the cost of university simply becomes simply for families, even if they were able to previously. One participant explained,

"I have two brothers studying at university and after the war. They stopped their study because they cannot pay the tuition. I, myself, should be registered at the university but couldn't because of the economic situation."

Another person chimed in: *"me too, my son also could not continue his university study because of our economic situation."* In this sense, house demolition prohibits children from attaining higher education because university fees are already very high and the added loss of losing one's home results in families being simply unable to fathom paying tuition.

2.3.6 Psychological impact

The interviews revealed that all family members suffered psychologically from house demolition. People experienced feelings of insecurity, despair, frustration, lack of hope, nervousness, stress, and anxiety accompanied by lack of sleep.

Children's psychological health was particularly affected. The participants said that children tended to cry and start wetting the bed, hearing voices, having nightmares, crying, and generally exhibiting a sense of perpetual fear. A small amount of participants said that they did not suffer psychologically because the parents were able to shield them from the trauma of house demolition.

2.3.7 Impact on the occurrence of domestic violence

Questions about house demolitions affect on issues of domestic violence in the home were only asked in interviews and questionnaires. 30 participants were asked about if domestic violence occurred in the house and, if so, whether their house demolition caused an increase in domestic violence. 27 of them said that houses demolition did not increase domestic violence. One participant said:

"No, enough, who will I be violent against, against the ones who are defeated and shocked! They are not free of fatigue or persecution without violence. None is practicing violence against anybody."

Three interviewees pointed to an increase of domestic violence after the house demolition due to lack of space, stress and nervousness. The questionnaire results showed that 68% of the participants agreed that violence against the wife did not increase as result of house demolition, while 25% agreed that violence against women had increased. The participants were also asked if they tend to marry the girls early as result of house demolition, since early marriage is an aspect of domestic violence. 59% of them did not agree while 25% agreed and 16% remained neutral. Twice the number of men than of women agreed that families prefer to marry their girls early following house demolition.

2.3.8 Impact on the occurrence of emigration

50% of participants did not agree that their father was ready to emigrate and 20% were neutral. 30% of those who thought that the father considered emigrating thought it was as a result of house demolition.

26 out of 30 interview participants expressed that they refused to emigrate even after facing house demolitions. Many asserted that the land they live on is the land of their fathers and grandfathers and thus their land and country. They are not willing to relinquish their land as it is connected to their identity and history. Because they refuse to leave their land, their only option is to resist Israeli Occupation. One person also said: *"I would not travel abroad even if I have the chance. We will stick to our land and we won't leave."* Another added, *"immigration and traveling is not a solution."* A third participant asserted, *"we will never leave the country. We were born here and here we will die."*

Four participants from Gaza did discuss the possibility of internal and external migration as a means to protect suffering children and women, especially due to the recent war. In an interview, one woman expressed frustration with the political situation. She stated:

"Yes, we often think of immigrating out of the country, not [because] of hating the country... we hate what we suffer in our country, [we] hate the governments, the nepotism and favoritism... [and] we are [the ones] affected, not the governments nor the politicians. People are the victims of policy".

2.4 Relationships with sources of institutional support

This section will discuss the coordination of human rights, media, psychological, social and relief institutions around housing demolitions. We asked participants about the extent to which these institutions assisted them and which family members manage these interactions.

2.4.1 Relationship with human rights organizations

The results showed that 42% of the participants thought it was the father's role to address human rights organizations while 14% think thought it was the mother's role. In response to whether it is women's role to address human rights organizations, 0% agreed that it while 9% disagreed and 91% remained neutral.

The discussion groups expressed similar opinions. The participants asserted that the husband should be the one to follow-up with legal issues related to house demolition. Husbands usually contacted legal departments in their district and the Red Cross in some areas. People described this as men's appropriate role as they have more experience navigating such institutions, which reflects women's primary location in the home. Occasionally, sons and daughters would also interact with legal institutions.

Usually, families would approach human rights organizations themselves, but sometimes the organizations would reach out to families. A few families were able to hire a private attorney, who would be managed by male family members. There was only one case in the discussion groups where the husband and wife both engaged with legal assistance. There were also three cases in which families sought no legal assistance.

2.4.2 Relationship with media institutions

The participants of these interviews replied that men were those who talked to the media, and in some cases, women also spoke to the media with their husbands. The results showed that 77% of the participants believed that it is the men's role to speak to the media, 15% agreed that it is the women's role, and 23% thought that this role is for both men and women equally.

Media should report on houses demolition and rally people to oppose them. They should document the suffering of these families and their reports all over the world to increase global pressure against house demolitions and the Israeli Occupation.

2.4.3 Relationship with psychological organizations

The participants did not reach out to organizations that could provide psychological help, nor did these organizations take the initiative to contact the families. In one case only, the Red Crescent offered psychological support for children and women impacted by house demolitions through ongoing meetings.

The complete lack of psychological support for these families illustrates that organizations are not offering sufficient assistance. As of now, no initiatives exist to offer families support even though it is clear that they suffer from psychological shock.

2.4.4 Relationship with relief organizations

Our data demonstrated that there is no clear, integrated policy to deal with the owners of destroyed houses. Families often had to approach many different organizations and ministries to seek assistance. People approached the Ministry of Work, Ministry of Housing, Ministry of Social Affairs, Awqaf, their districts, and the UNRWA. Usually, it was men approaching these organizations, as 36% agreed that this is part of men's role to go to these institutions while 13% agreed that this is women's role. In some cases, these organizations gave them small amounts of money, while in many cases they gave the families nothing at all. When money was provided it was very small in comparison to the families' loss. Money was usually given in the form of grants. The grants ranged from providing tents or barracks to 1,500 or 6,000 dollars. There was one case where a family received 200,000 shekels. Overall, only six families out of 30 received some form of compensation. It should be noted that some families did not seek help at all. This is because they knew that the Palestinian Authority was aware of their loss and, therefore, asking for help felt like a kind of humiliation.

Thus, in terms of institutional support, there is scant financial or psychological support for families affected by house demolitions. The Palestinian Authority is supposed to compensate these families so they can continue to live with some dignity, but it does not, and other organizations do not pick up the slack.

2.5 Odd and Ends

2.5.1 Values women seek to convey to future generations

Women expressed that adhering to the land is a principle of great value and thus teaching their children the importance their land is paramount. Women want their children to understand that they must protect the land from the Israeli Occupation. They have great loyalty to the land.

2.5.2 Perceptions of the future

People's views about their futures after their houses demolition varied. Some participants expressed optimism, strength, and an insistence to survive in spite of their situation. Statements that indicated hope about the future included:

"I became stronger than before."

"I am very optimistic and I want to live with my children the best life."

"I wish to continue my study and make a family."

"If we stop dreaming, we will die. We shall dream. Today we live in a society where dreams are forbidden. I expect the best in the future."

"Our country is unstable; I hope I can make a small house after my children [are married.] My old wife and I live a good life together."

And yet others fluctuated between optimism and confidence on one hand, and pessimism and hopelessness on the other. A man who participated in a group in Gaza said: *"thank God I am good now, but before... I wasn't because I saw my house yesterday and I wish to live there and educate my children."* Another added: *"all I want is a better future for my children, a state and good life for my children free of fear, insecurity, and frustration."*

Sometimes, there were feelings of apathy and indifference in the aftermath of house demolition:

"The shock gave me immunity; there is no difference of what is going to happen."

"What comes down from the sky, the land shall receive it, we have no choice and this is our fate."

Many understandably expressed desperation and frustration about the future:

"I am tired, so I will not be able to endure any more."

"I [have] many diseases, and I won't be able to endure any more."

"We're subject to danger at any time, and we won't feel better not now nor in the future."

"The future is very frustrating, I hope I can live with my children, educate them and respond to their needs."

"I wish to leave, immigrate to any country and take my wife and my children with me."

"I don't expect that the situation will be better, unemployment is increasing and there is no chance of having a job opportunity."

"The current situation is very bad... Before the house demolition, I looked for my husband and... [a] smile between the words. I searched [for] my rights as an educated woman, but [after] losing [my] right at work, losing [my] respect... [now I look] for safety and security for my children and for the coming child."

"We have no future; no one can help us whether officially or unofficially."

"I don't know what to do in the future, there is no hope to solve the crisis, and we don't plan for the future [due to] lack of safety, [and] fear of [our house being destroyed]."

Thus, participants' expectations for the future diverged, some were optimistic, others ambivalent, and many pessimistic. It is important to realize that people may experience a huge range of emotion in the aftermath of house demolition, and institutions should take these differences into consideration when offering support to families.

2.5.3 Planning for the future

For most of the families, their dream was to rebuild their house. One woman said:

"I wish I could build my house again. I always imagine my husband cultivating the land. He is the one who cultivated the land and did everything with his hands. I want to put up the swings for my grandchildren to play when they come to visit me"

Other families' main concerns involved how to pay back debt and improve their economic situation.

2.5.4 Participants' concluding thoughts

At the end of the discussion groups or interviews, we provided an opportunity for families to share any final thoughts on house demolitions. In each instance, families insisted on their resolve to return to their land and homes that were lost due to house demolition. Their houses hold many irreplaceable sentimental memories, but returning also signifies resistance to Israeli Occupation. This is why, in some cases, people would not accept any form of alternative compensation for the loss of their home. Here are a few participants' final words:

"I want to return to my home, it meant everything for me"

"I hope to go back home, all my beautiful memories are there, my happiness is gone away from the day I have lost it"

"I miss my land very much, I have to go there every day, I miss every moment being there, my love to the land is bigger than any time"

"Our land is irreplaceable, the UNRWA refuses to build for us on our land, it asks for another land but we want ours, God gives us the good life"

The group of women from Khirbet Almfaqqara added that staying in their homeland, even by living in caves, is an evidence of loyalty to the land and resistance. One added: *"staying in our land is resistance, loyalty, and patriotism."*

3.1 Data analysis and previous studies

The results of this study support the conclusions of other studies on the ramifications of house demolition. This study indicated that the right of families to adequate housing is violated in the context of house demolition and that this leads to the violation of other rights, such as privacy and movement. This study indicated that internal displacement brought on by house demolitions leads to instability and negatively affects all life aspects of peoples lives, including work, education, health, and financial stability.

People who go through house demolition experience an intense psychological deterioration. House demolitions brought on feelings of depression, frustration, sadness, injustice, and negatively impacted children's academic achievement. This is fully consistent with previous studies about house demolitions' impact on the mental state of family members. This also affirms the conclusions of the Women Affairs Center's on house demolition and Nadera Kevorkian's study on eviction.

In previous literature, as mentioned in Kevorkian and Abdo study, the home does not only represent walls and ceilings, but the place for the family members interaction, a place to build the individual and relationships, a place for joy and beautiful memories. Participants echoed these statements.

House demolitions and displacement also impacted family members' relationships. Previous studies indicated that domestic violence, especially the gender based violence, increased during displacement. This study did not confirm these findings. Participants disagreed that violence against women increased as result of house demolitions. In the questionnaire, there were some responses that agreed that violence against women increased, but they were not significant. Instead, this study showed great senses of cooperation, solidarity, and intimacy between the family members, in spite of families' difficult situation. It is possible that families increased solidarity to cope with the loss of their home.

Previous studies also showed that women and their families have many ways to assist their families economically following house demolition. Women borrowed money, sold women's gold assets, and sought job opportunities outside the home and in order to support the family in its time of crisis.

This study revealed that in spite of house demolition's negative impact on the lives of all family members, families did have some positive experiences in the process of coping with house demolition. In insisting on staying on their land and surviving in spite of losing their homes, families experienced a sense of empowerment. Women also gained an elevated status within the family following house demolitions, as reflected in their increased involvement in decision-making. This finding is consistent with previous studies. Despite the difficulties that women may face, they are able to turn weakness and oppression into strength.

Previous studies asserted that addressing relief organizations is considered usually to be the women role. In this study, discussions and interviews affirmed this finding, while the questionnaires results discredited it.

3.2 Study Results:

- Many Palestinian families whose homes or tents were demolished for the first or the second time resist without despair. The Israeli Occupation justifies houses demolition through a bureaucratic logic designed to unfairly target Palestinians. Such logic includes lack of permits, collective punishment due to a family being martyred or arrested, proximity to settlements or military camps, and other vague reasons. All these justifications aim to exile the Palestinians from their homeland.
- House demolition adversely affects all family members. House demolition is a real physical and psychological shock to families. This is because a home is not the walls and ceiling, but the heart of the family life and container of beautiful memories, history, and relationships. Many times, the house is a family's greatest achievement; therefore, its demolition also destroys families integrity, hope, and future.
- House demolition somewhat shifted gender roles. Most of women's responsibilities stayed the same, including taking care of children and housework, but occasionally her responsibilities drastically shifted. While, the productive role is usually men's role, after house demolition women also took up paid labor. Furthermore, while women and men's participation in social and political spheres was limited, men's participation remained higher.
- The relationship between family members changed after house demolition. Love, cooperation, and support increased, as did nervousness and anxiety. In some cases, controlling behavior directed at women increased, but the data did not suggest there was an increase in domestic violence. Women's participation in decision-making did increase, as did men's confidence in women's wisdom.
- Families' relationships with neighbors are affected by house demolition. Families occasionally lost their links to surrounding communities as a result of instability and relocation, but neighbors also provided an important source of support to those experiencing house demolition.
- Children's educational achievement deteriorates due to house demolition. Many children stop going to school or university as a result of the families poor economic situation or transportation issues brought on by the Occupation.
- Families' economic situations also deteriorated as a result of house demolitions. Families accrued debt while also struggling with a lack of job opportunities.
- In relocating after losing their homes, families experienced overcrowding, loss of privacy, and lack of adequate housing.
- Aside from the many negative developments brought on by house demolition, families solidarity, unity and ability to support each other remained strong.

The common factor that united those who participated in this research was a strong sense of inner strength. This is apparent in their resolve not to migrate even though their living situations are nearly impossible to manage. The principles of resistance, loyalty and love of the land combine to inspire them to resist Israeli Occupation. The families try to pass on these values so future generations can continue to stay in Palestine, no matter what happens. Many families plan for a bright future with a new home in their homeland.

3.3 Recommendations

Our recommendations are based on the thoughts, feelings and experiences of people directly affected by house demolition. We find this to be the most legitimate source to draw recommendations from because this population is fully aware of all of the consequences of house demolition and thus knows what forms of support are most beneficial. We hope that government and non-profit officials will take the following recommendations seriously generate solutions.

Firstly, participants felt that the Palestinian Authority should be more active in mobilizing international pressure and solidarity movements to stop house demolitions. There are many houses that are threatened to be demolished and there is a distinct lack of action by official authorities. In the same vein, participants recognized the importance of human rights organizations and wanted them to provide further assistance in bringing house demolition cases to courts, including international courts. In addition to an increase in international pressure and legal action, the participants also stressed the importance of financial support and compensation. They desperately need assistance in reconstructing their homes. Furthermore, many families attested to the importance of psychological help following the destruction of their homes, and our study showed that such help is almost non-existent.

Participants from the Jordan Valley submitted detailed recommendations to our researchers as to how institutions might better support populations subjected to house demolition. They stressed that organizations and government officials should be willing to meet with them and hear their concerns. Many of their recommendations touched not only on issues directly related to house demolition, but also the general marginalization of Palestinian communities living under Occupation. Recommendations included:

- Providing infrastructure projects to improve water tanks, wells, solar power, electricity as well as feed and fertilizers for farmers.
- Building a water network that can help them use the land for agriculture and construct greenhouses, so that they are not solely dependant on rainwater.
- Renovating the irrigation systems, providing modern technology for milking cattle, supporting cheese production and establishing a system for agricultural loans.
- Providing work and youth programs, better education and materials to build houses.
- Supporting women empowerment projects. In the local council in Beit Dajan, women gathered funds to establish a women association, but because of lack of money they were forced to close. They still dream of establishing a charitable women's association where they can learn profitable skills that can help keep them financially afloat when confronting house demolitions, land confiscations, or bad crops. They also want to develop the economy in their area so that children can stay in their hometown, and not relocate to cities for work. Furthermore, women expressed the desire for women's organizations because they provide respite from patriarchal family dynamics at home.
- Providing gas tanks so that women do not have to use wood for cooking.
- Exempting low-income farmers from taxes on cattle and feed.

These suggestions and recommendations reflect that despite the intense hardship those who have lost their home contend with, they want to stay and prosper on their land. They want their children to inherit their love for the land and resist the Israeli Occupation. Institutions should listen to their many practical needs and find ways to meet them.

3.4 Final recommendations

- Increasing international pressure and advocacy against house demolitions.
- Increasing efforts to meet the many practical needs of families affected by house demolition. This includes, but is not limited to: adequate alternative housing, education, work opportunities, health services, financial compensation, and psychological support.
- Developing a clear process for compensation for families who have lost their homes to house demolition. The relevant agencies should reach out to these families and find ways to meet their immediate financial needs.
- Human Rights Organizations should follow up the house demolitions cases and bring them to international courts.

4.1 Focus groups guidelines & questions

1. Describe your life before your house demolition, in respect to the family members' relationship, the husband and wife's relationship, men and women roles in the family and the duties of each member. What is your relationship like with surrounding, neighbors, parents, and friends?

Does the family live alone or within an extended family? Does any of the father's family members, the mother's or husband's sister live with your family?

Which of the family members have a job (father, mother, one of the family members)?

Number of rooms: Is the space sufficient? Is there a sufficient space for children to play? What are the family members' ages? What is their educational level? (In general, children at school or at universities).

How is the family's relationship with neighbors, parents and friends? Is it friendly? Are there mutual visits? Is there loyalty to the place where the family lives?

How is the relationship between husband, wife and family members? (Is it a relationship of love, cooperation, integrity and respect or a relationship of control and domination? does man exercise his masculinity on his wife and the other family members? Does he decide for and control others? Does he participate with his wife and his family members the discussion about decisions related to the family durability and fate?

How are duties performed within the family? Who plays the family different roles, such as taking care of the house and children? Who fulfills the productive role, that is, securing the family's income? Who fulfills the social and political role by doing work that benefiting the community, such volunteer works or activities that contribute to developing the local community? Is the father or the mother an active member in any charitable organizations, clubs, parents' councils, or political parties?

How your the relationship with your surroundings? (Mutual visits, cooperation, loyalty to the place grown in, support to the group where the family lives in, describe tangible things).

2. Describe your state when your house was demolished. How did men and women behave and what were their feelings? Is there difference in feelings between men and women towards the demolition? Which roles did men and women play when the house was demolished? How was the family members' relationship affected? Is there frustration between family members or is it a relationship of support, sympathy, and cooperation? Where did you go after your house was demolished? Was there a period of time between the notification and the actual demolition? Can you describe this period of time? Did you hire a lawyer? Who followed up the case? Have you met the media? If so, who did?
3. How is the family after the house demolition? How was your economic situation affected? Whose burdens have increased, men or women? Have any other family members been affected by the house demolition? How is the relationship between the family members, especially between husband and wife? Has this relationship changed? Why? How is the relationship with the surrounding, neighbors, parents, friends, and institutions? Does the family frequently asks for help from institutions or from parents (who follows up these issues, is it the father or the mother or any other member, which institutions are resorted to?) Did you meet the media to talk about the demolition? Who has met the media?

The same questions as contained in the first question.

Did the family move to another place? With whom do you live with -- the husband's family, the wife's, friends or other relatives?

Was the husband obliged to work for extra hours or look for another job? Did the wife or any of the other family members look for work?

Have any of the family members left school or university?

Have your relationship with your neighbors, parents, or friends been affected? How?

Were there any new roles for different family members or did they stay the same? How?

How do you see the future? Are you worried, safe, frustrated, or planning for better future?

Would you like to add anything?

4.2 Interview questions

An interview about any changes in gender roles and relations after the house demolitions.

• Demographic information

- Name
- Age
- Marital status
- Residence
- Type of house (brick/tent) before demolition
- Type of house (brick/tent) after demolition
- Number of family members
- Male Female
- Ages of family members
- The educational level of the interviewed woman
- The educational level of the family members
- Does the wife work outside the house?
- Occupation: (housewife/farmer/.....etc.)
- What's the husband's job?

• Special questions regarding conditions of houses demolition

- Is the house owned or rented?
- When was the house demolished?
- When were you informed that your house would be demolished?
- What were the given justifications or reasons for the demolition?
- Describe the demolition: what time did it happened, if there was enough time to take supplies from the house, who helped to take supplies out.

- What was found in the house? What tools and home appliances did you lose after the demolition?
- How did you live during the period between the notification and execution of the demolition? What was the family members relationship and mental state like?
- Where did you live after the demolition? With whom? Can you describe your situation during that period?

- **Previous housing conditions**

- How many rooms did you have? Was there water and electricity? Sanitation? Ventilation or lighting? Was there sufficient number of rooms for the number of family members?
- Did the family become larger or smaller after the demolition?

- **Current housing conditions**

- Same questions from the previous topic were asked.
- How were your family roles and relations affected after the demolition?

- **Addressing human rights organizations**

- Did you hire a lawyer or a legal entity to follow up with demolition order?
- Who followed up these issues, males or females, please specify? Why were they the ones who followed the issue?
- Did the family burdens increase? How? Specify whose burdens increased the most and the least.

- **Impact on the economic situation**

- Was the family's economic situation affected by the demolition? Were you obliged to sell some property or borrow money? Who initiated the borrowing, if any, males or females? Did you look for extra work in order to compensate the loss?
- Did any of unemployed family members look for job after house demolition, especially women?
- Were you obliged to stop your children from going to school? Was the priority of males family members work, not school, due to the economic situation?
- What are your thoughts on marrying girls early after house demolition?
- Were any of the family members obliged to travel abroad or stay outside the house for work after the demolition?
- Would you consider leaving your area and going to another town or even immigrating abroad if you had the chance? Or would you stay on your land?

- **Decision within the family**

- Did anything about decision-making change within the family after house demolition? How was this process done before and house demolition, especially in regards to the decisions around education, work, housing, buying, selling, and marriage? Do family members make decisions with equal participation or do the husband or male family members impose them? Have women become more effective in decision making within the family?

- Are women bolder in discussing/asking her husband for help with the children or at home? Has the house demolition made women more tender or accepting?

- **Roles and relations**

- How was the family members relationship before and after the demolition? Was it based on respect, cooperation, or sharing? What were each member duties before and after the demolition?

- **Domestic violence**

- Has domestic violence increased since the demolition? Who practices violence and against whom?
- Has there been polygamy since the demolition? Is it related to the demolition?
- Has there been a divorce since the demolition? Is it related to the demolition?
- Psychological impact
- What psychological changes occurred within family members after the demolition (for example, depression, anxiety, stress, bedwetting or other)?
- Have you addressed any medical or psychological institution for treatment?
- Who was the responsible for getting help in these cases?

- **Change in Roles**

- Were any of the family members active in social or political action? Did family members volunteer? Please specify who was active, male or female, husbands or wives?

- **Relationship with the institutions**

- Did you ask for help from a private or governmental institution, whether financial or legal, after the demolition? Who followed up with these institutions (male or female)? What kind of institution did you make contact with?
- Did any human rights organization or others come to you to offer any psychological help? What organizations? How many times did you meet them, if any?
- Did you get any compensation from any institution (government, private or other)?
- Did you speak to the media about the demolition? Who? (Male or female)

- **General questions**

- How do you see your situation now compared to before the demolition?
- What are your plans for future?
- In your opinion, what are the steps and actions that should be done, whether officially or unofficially, in order to stop house demolitions or reduce the negative effects of house demolitions?
- Any other remarks or comments?

4.3 Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions:

Name

Age

Residence place

Number of the family members

Mother's education

Father's education

Date of demolition

Father's job Mother's job

****Note: if any question is not applicable, put N/A**

Subject	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The cooperation between the family members has significantly increased					
Stress between the family members has significantly increased					
Problems between the family members have significantly increased					
Violence against women has significantly increased since house demolition					
Solidarity with women has significantly increased after house demolition					
Isolation of women of the surrounding community increased after house demolitions					
Isolation of men from their surrounding community increased after house demolition					
The father had the main role of addressing human rights organizations					
The mother had the main role of addressing human rights organizations					
The boys had the main role of addressing human rights organizations					
The girls had the main role of addressing human rights organizations					
The father had the main role of addressing institutions offering financial aid					
The mother had the main role of addressing institutions offering financial aid					
The boys had the main role of addressing institutions offering financial aid					
The girls had the main role of addressing institutions offering financial aid					
The father had the main role of addressing the medical institutions to follow up the negative effects of house demolitions					

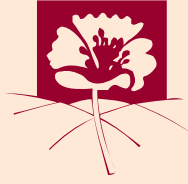
The mother had the main role of addressing the medical institutions to follow up the negative effects of house demolitions					
The boys had the biggest role in meeting with the media to talk about house demolitions					
The girls had the biggest role in meeting with the media to talk about house demolitions					
The boys and girls had equal role in meeting with the media to talk about house demolitions					
The domestic duties of the family members significantly increased					
The domestic duties of the mother significantly increased					
The domestic duties of the father significantly increased					
The mother had to look for another source of income after house demolition					
The father had to look for another source of income after house demolition					
Boys had to look for another source of income after house demolition					
Girls had to look for another source of income after the house demolitions					
The husband's participation in politics and charitable works increased after the demolition					
The wife's participation in politics and charitable works increased after the demolition					
Women's participation in decision-making within the family increased after the demolition					
Men became more individualistic in decision-making after the demolition					
The family's economic situation was adversely affected by the demolition					
Children's motivation to learn was adversely affected by the demolition					
Children academic achievement was adversely affected by the demolition					
The father's readiness for immigration has significantly increased since the demolition					
The family prefers to marry daughters early since the demolition					

We do not share the names of the men and women who to offered their information, feelings and experiences for this research. We did not ask for them to consent to the disclosure of their names in this report, and finding them and asking them again would be challenging.

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