Gaza Community Mental Health Programme is a non-profit, non-governmental organization (NGO) founded in 1990. It works in the field of mental health and human rights and aims to deliver high quality mental health care to the Palestinian community of Gaza, through the provision of psychological and social services, training and research services. GCMHP also provides public awareness, and lobbying and advocacy for women, children and victims of violence and human rights violations. GCMHP and Dr. El Sarraj have been awarded several prestigious international awards in the fields of mental health and human rights in recognition of the work done and progress made over the past 25 years. The Programme has a strategic plan that is renewed every 3 years. It believes in the values of transparency, accountability, social responsibility and good governance.
Dr. Yasser Abu Jamei, Director General of Gaza Community Mental Health Programme, visits the United States, Britain and receives the Alumnus of the Year Award

Dr. Yasser Abu Jamei, Director General of Gaza Community Mental Health Programme visited the United States and Britain. The visits aim at updating the international community about the psychological impact of the siege and the offensives on the Palestinian people in Gaza and GCMHP’s work and the services provided to the Palestinian community. Furthermore, the visits aimed to build cooperation with professionals and institutions working in the mental health field at the international level.

During his visit to the USA, Dr. Abu Jamei visited the university of Yale, university of Pennsylvania, and he participated in the Harvard Arab Weekend in Harvard university, which is considered the largest annual pan-Arab conference in North America. Dr. Abu Jamei also met with a number of American organizations working in Palestine including PCRF. During his visit, Dr. Abu Jamei discussed the mechanism of distance learning which can link professionals in Gaza Strip with universities and hospitals in the United States.

Moreover, Dr. Abu Jamei visited the UK to receive «the Alumnus of the Year Award» from the University of Birmingham. The award is given yearly to an alumnus, who has made a significant impact around the globe in science, arts, medicine, sports, business and public life, for his outstanding contribution. During his visit, Dr. Abu Jamei met with Parliamentarians at the House of Common, in addition to professionals at the Royal College of Psychiatrists, the Council for Arab-British Understanding and Medical Aid for Palestine- UK.
Gaza Community Mental health Programme (GCMHP) participated in the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims 10th International Scientific Symposium.

The scientific symposium entitled “Promise of the Right to Rehabilitation” was held in Mexico, in New Mexico City. This event united around 450 professionals working in the mental health and human rights field.

During his participation, Dr. Abu Shahla spoke about GCMHP’s activities and the services it provides to the Palestinian community. He also explained the psychosocial, political and economic situation that people in Gaza are experiencing.

As a member of IRCT General Assembly, GCMHP participated in the Assembly’s annual meeting. During their participation Dr. Abu Shahla and Mr. Ghazali voted on IRCT’s narrative and financial reports for the year 2015, they also participated in the election of new Executive Council.
Gaza Community Mental Health Programme

Develops a Gender Mainstreaming Policy

Gender Mainstreaming Policy is considered one of the main deliverables of GCMHP’s activities in 2016. Since the begging of this year, GCMHP started the process in coordination with consortium of donors and some experts in the field. The aim of the Gender Mainstreaming Policy is to incorporate gender perspective into the organization’s different legislations, programs, services and daily work. Gender mainstreaming policy is considered a pioneer work in Palestine as it is the first time to be done among NGOs in Gaza. RAI Consult will be helping GCMHP in developing its gender mainstreaming policy.

The gender audit aimed at analyzing and assessing the extent of gender mainstreaming at the Programme. This process also aimed at recording the best practices in achieving equality and to identify areas that require development and challenges that have to be overcome. In addition to identifying available opportunities for the enhancement and institutionalization of gender mainstreaming at GCMHP effectively.

The audit adopted a participatory approach, which included a set of research and analysis tools. The auditing team conducted comprehensive reviews of GCMHP documents, and carried out a set of interviews with the managers of different units and projects. Interviews were also made with members from Board of Directors. Focus group meetings were arranged with GCMHP partner associations, employees and beneficiaries.

The first draft of the manual was issued and revised by GCMHP. After the accomplishment of phase three, GCMHP started with phase four which is training the staff on the manual policy. GCMHP conducted three days training on the policy. The trainees were members from the board of directors, the administration, heads of units and departments, the public relations and the projects unit in addition to a number of professionals working at the programme.
On the Occasion of World Mental Health Day GCMHP organizes a workshop entitled «Psychological First Aid»: the Palestinian Experience

Gaza Community Mental Health Programme «GCMHP» organized a workshop entitled «Psychological First Aid: the Palestinian Experience» in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme «UNDP» with generous support from Qatar Development Fund through Al Fakhoora, a program of Education Above All Foundation.

The aim of the workshop is to remark the occasion of the World Mental Health Day, which falls on the 10th of October of each year.

Press Release on World Mental Health Day

Today, the world is celebrating the World Mental Health Day which on the 10th of October every year. This day comes to remind the world with the importance of mental health and to raise awareness towards mental health issues around the world in addition to promoting the efforts to provide mental health services for all people, wherever they are.

As stated by the International Federation of Mental Health, the theme of this year is “Psychological First Aid”. The goal of this theme is to draw attention on the need to help victims who experience crises and to provide them with support in the proper time and manner. This occasion comes while Palestine in general and Gaza Strip in particular suffer from continuous deterioration of the political and humanitarian situation. The Israeli occupation continues its practices, violations, and tightening the siege on Gaza. All such measures increase the rate of poverty and unemployment and restrict the freedom of movement that lead to several forms of psychological distress, family problems, and community violence. These difficult circumstances affect the vulnerable groups especially women, children, and victims who bereaved their loved ones or their homes.

The last Israeli attacks had severe psychological impacts on the Palestinian residents in the Gaza Strip. Based on GCMHP’s experience, clinical observations and research results, it is indicated that 30 % of the total residents suffered from PTSD and 10 % still need advanced psychological interventions.
On the Occasion of World Day for Protection of Children from Violence and Abuse

GCMHP Organizes a Workshop Entitled «Besieged Childhood: The Mental Health Situation of the Palestinian Children Two Years After the Last Israeli Attack on Gaza Strip»

On the Occasion of World Day for Protection of Children from Violence and Abuse which is celebrated on the 19th of November of each year, Gaza Community Mental Health Programme organized a workshop entitled «Besieged Childhood: the Mental Health Situation of the Palestinian Children Two Years After the Last Israeli Attack on Gaza Strip».  

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Human Rights Day 10th of December

On the occasion of Human Rights Day which is celebrated on the 10th of December every year, Gaza Community Mental Health Programme (GCMHP) published posters calling for the respect of Palestinian People’s right. The posters carried the slogans “On the Occasion of Human Rights Day, GCMHP ensures that Justice and Equity are Rights for all”, “I wish to Live in peace”, “No to Violence and Discrimination against Women: Yes to Women’s Participation in Building the Society of Freedom and Justice”, the International Community Should Stop the Israeli Violation against Women”. On this occasion GCMHP broadcasted a radio spot which calls for the protection of women against violence and abuse.
International Day for People with Disabilities

On the occasion of the International Day for People with Disabilities GCMHP organized a campaign calling for “Justice and Equity for the People with Disabilities”
A Norwegian delegation from Land Info Centre Visits Gaza Community Mental Health Programme

A Norwegian delegation from Land Info Centre visited Gaza Community Mental Health Programme. The delegation consisted of Ms. Julie Grodal, Adviser, Mr. Alf Christensen, Senior Adviser and Mr. Gro Hasselknipee, Senior Adviser at Land Info Centre.

A Delegation from the French Consulate Visits Gaza Community Mental Health Programme

A delegation from the French Consulate visited Gaza Community Mental Health Programme. The delegation consisted of Mr. Pierre Cochard, French Consul General, Mr. Jean-Luc Lavaud, Head of Cooperation, Mr. Jean-Christophe Auge, Political Adviser and Ms. Suzanne De Bellescize, Attachee for Humanitarian and Development Cooperation.

Gaza Community Mental Health Programme meets with A Delegation from the Swiss Agency For Development and Cooperation (SDC)

Gaza Community Mental Health Programme met with a delegation from the Swiss Agency For Development and Cooperation (SDC). The delegation consisted of Ambassador Manuel Sager, SDC Director General, Dr. Thomas Oertle, Head of Middle East and North Africa Division (MENA) at SDC, Ms. Justine Hessler, Deputy regional coordinator - Middle East and North Africa Division, Mrs. Veronique Hulmann, SDC Director of Cooperation for Gaza and West Bank and other members from SDC team.
Project Manager for Middle East of Bread for the World (BFW) Visits Gaza Community Mental Health Programme

Mr. Jens Halve, Project Manager for Middle East - Bread for the World (BFW) visited Gaza Community Mental Health Programme. Mr. Halve met with Dr. Taysir Diab, Deputy Director General for Professional Affairs, Mr. Husam El- Nounou Director of External Relations and Resources Development, Mr. Yousef El-Ghazali, Head of Administrative and Financial Affairs, Mr. Hasan Zeyada, Director of Gaza Community Centre and Mr. Qusai Abu Ouda, Head of the Projects Unit at GCMHP. The visit aims at acquainting Mr. Halve about the joint project between GCMHP and BFW. The meeting took place at Gaza Community Center. The visit started with a tour at Gaza Community Center.

Then, The meeting started with a discussion on GCMHP’s achievements, as well as the plans and the budget for the future project, which will start next year and will last for three years. Moreover, GCMHP’s team highlighted the challenges facing Gaza Strip in general, and GCMHP in particular.

In his turn, Mr. Halve praised GCMHP for their great effort in enhancing the mental health and the human rights issues in Palestine. He also stressed on the importance of the partnership between BFW and GCMHP.

At the end of the meeting, GCMHP’s delegates thanked Mr. Halve for the support provided by BFW over the past years and for this visit. They also stressed on the need to continue with the partnership between the two institutions in order to help the Palestinian community to overcome the difficult conditions that people suffer from.

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An American Medical Delegation from «Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility» visits Gaza Community Mental Health Programme

An American Medical Delegation from «Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility» visited Gaza Community Mental Health Programme. The delegation was headed by Ms. Geraldine Haynes, Palliative Care Consultant and consisted of 5 specialists including: Cardiologist, Nurses and Psychologists.

A Delegation from Trócaire-Ireland Visits Gaza Community Mental Health Programme

A delegation from Trócaire-Ireland visited Gaza Community Mental Health Programme. The delegation consisted of Niall O’ Keeffe, Head of Trócaire - Asia & Middle East and Mr. Eoin Hamill, Programme Officer at the Occupied Palestinian Territory & Israel.
Gaza Community Mental Health Programme finalizes a training course on “Gender Mainstreaming Manual Policy”

Gaza Community Mental Health Programme finalizes a training course on “Gender Mainstreaming Manual Policy”. The participants in this training course were members from GCMHP’s board of directors, administration, in addition to a number of GCMHP’s staff. The training course which lasted for three days was conducted by Ms. Zeinab Al – Ghonaimy, Ms. Amal Seyam, and Mr. Abd Menam Tahrawi, and Mr. Salah Taha consultants at RAI Consult Company.

Gaza Community Mental Health Programme finalized a training course entitled «Family Intervention»

The Training and Scientific Research Department at GCMHP finalized a training course entitled “Family Intervention” which is part of the Post-Graduate Diploma in Community Mental Health. The participants were 14 male and female students.

Gaza Community Mental Health Programme Finalized a Workshop Entitled «Cognitive Behavioral Therapy CBT» and Research

The Training and Scientific Research Department at GCMHP finalized a workshop entitled «Cognitive Behavioral Therapy CBT» and Research. The participants were 20 professionals from GCMHP consisting of doctors, psychologists, social workers and nurses.
Gaza Community Mental Health Programme Finalized the Fifth Training Course on «Childrens Psychodrama»

The Training and Research Department of GCMHP finalized a training course entitled «Childrens Psychodrama». This training course is part of series of Children Psychodrama training courses which began on January 2014, where the participants receive a specialized Diploma in Children Psychodrama.

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Gaza Community Mental Health Programme Finalized Series of Training Courses on «Psychosocial Support for Adolescents»

In cooperation with the Palestinian Sport Academy (PSA) and in support of GIZ, the Training and Scientific Research Department of GCMHP finalized series of training courses entitled «Psychosocial Support for Adolescents». The participants were 18 football and volleyball coaches.

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Gaza Community Mental Health Programme started a training course entitled «Mental Health for Children»

The Training and Scientific Research Department started a training course entitled “Mental Health for Children» Which is funded by War Child Holland. The participants were 16 children animators and psychologists.

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Gaza Community Mental Health Programme starts a training course entitled «Mental Health GAP: Intervention Guide»

The Training and Scientific Research Department of GCMHP started a training course entitled «Mental Health Gap: Intervention Guide» through a project implemented in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with generous support from Qatar Development Fund (QDFD) through Al Fakhoora, a program of Education Above All Foundation.

Gaza Community Mental Health Programme Finalized a training course entitled «Mental Health GAP: Intervention Guide»

Gaza Community Mental Health Programme finalized a training course entitled «Mental Health Gap: Intervention Guide» through a project entitled «Enhancing the resilience of the school-age children and access to quality mental health services in Gaza Strip». This project is implemented in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with generous support from Qatar Development Fund (QDF) through Al Fakhoora, a program of Education Above All Foundation.

Gaza Community Mental Health Programme started a training course entitled «Psychological First Aid: Early Detection and Referral»

The Training and Scientific Research Department started a training course entitled «Psychological First Aid: Early Detection and Referral». The training courses target NGOs working in the field of psychosocial support within the project «Enhancing the capability of mental health and psychosocial sector to respond to crises and emergency events in the border and vulnerable areas at Gaza Strip» which is funded by the French Consulate General - Jerusalem.
Psychosocial Group Intervention Among War-Affected Children:
An Analysis of Changes in Posttraumatic Cognitions

Kangaslampi S1, Punamäki RL1, Qouta S2, Diab M3, Peltonen K1.

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Cognitive theories point to reduction in dysfunctional posttraumatic cognitions (PTCs) as one mechanism involved in recovery from posttraumatic stress symptoms (PTSS), yet research findings have shown individual differences in the recovery process. We tested the cognitive mediation hypothesis above in a previously published psychosocial group intervention among war-affected children. We also examined heterogeneity in children’s PTCs during the intervention. We used a cluster randomized trial of Smith et al.’s (2002) teaching recovery techniques (TRT) intervention among 482 Palestinians 13–10 years of age (n = 242 for intervention group, n = 240 for control group).
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