Progress in preventing and ending violence against women and girls in the Arab States and North Africa is hampered by multiple challenges, including armed conflict. Nowhere is the link clearer between ending violence against women and ensuring women’s empowerment and the full enjoyment of all their human rights. Initiatives to end violence and to make sustainable progress towards the enjoyment of these rights are therefore reflected in the projects supported by the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund).

**EGYPT**

*Al Shehab Institution for Comprehensive Development* is working to address the underlying causes and intersections between the twin epidemics of violence against women and HIV/AIDS in Egypt. Its work focuses on women and girl survivors of violence, women domestic workers, women sex workers and women living with HIV in the marginalized informal communities of Ezbet El-Haggana and El-Marg in Cairo. The project has established a new drop-in centre providing legal and psychological services and reached more than 340 women at high risk in the targeted communities. Al Shehab seeks to engage community-based organizations, male partners, health professionals as well as National AIDS programmes in improving access to essential services.

**STATE OF PALESTINE**

In recent years there has been a steep increase in rates of gender-based killings, and sexual harassment and violence in public spaces in the State of Palestine. Levels of violence are exacerbated by violent conditions related to the occupation, discriminatory legislation and the deteriorating economic situation. *The Community Media Center* in Gaza is working to raise awareness of the pervasiveness of violence against women by training young women media students on how to report
gender-based violence in the media from a human rights perspective. So far, 30 students have completed the 85-hour course and helped create, among other things, this website http://www.ywjournalists.org/index.html. Using the media as its main tool, the Center is focusing on increasing knowledge and skills among journalists and women media graduates, as well as among community-based organizations and women.

MAURITANIA

An estimated 500,000 people continue to be subjected to slavery in Mauritania, despite laws criminalizing the practice. As a result of advocacy by SOS-Esclaves and other key stakeholders an anti-slavery law and a protocol/roadmap have recently been adopted. SOS Esclaves is delivering capacity development workshops to strengthen advocacy and case response skills. It also supports a survivors’ network in the implementation sites [Atar and Nema]. The project also assists in the release of victims of slavery; so far, 26 women and children victims of slavery have been identified and liberated. Survivors are supported by former slaves, trained by SOS Esclaves, to reintegrate into society and earn a living. The organization also provides emergency funds for former slaves and support if they wish to start a legal process against slave owners.

NOTE: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on the maps in this report do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

The UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women

The UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund), created in 1996 by the United Nations General Assembly, remains the only global, multilateral, grant-making body dedicated exclusively to addressing all forms of violence against women and girls.