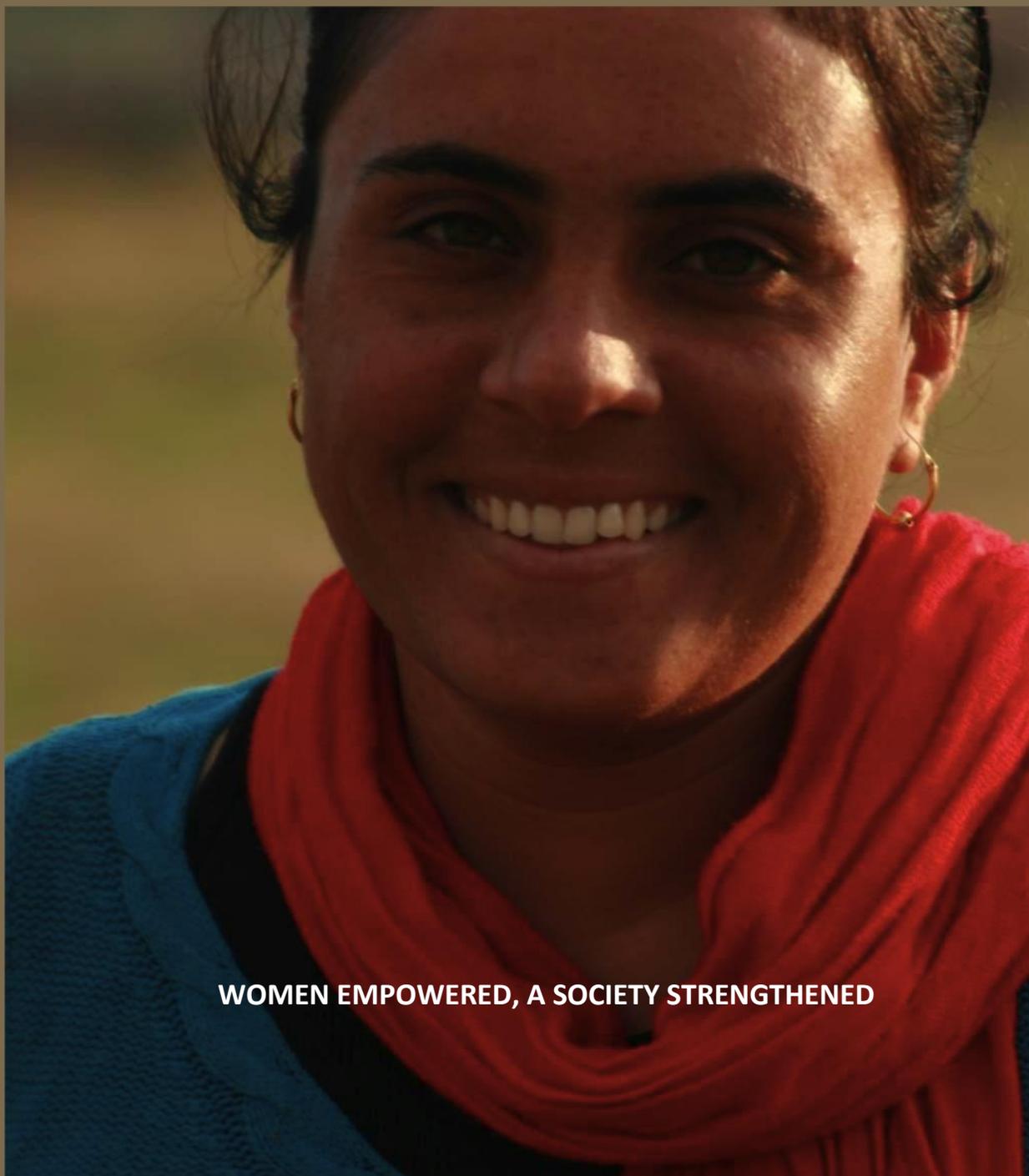


**WOMEN REHABILITATION ORGANIZATION**



**WOMEN EMPOWERED, A SOCIETY STRENGTHENED**

**Annual Report, 2015**

## Executive Summary

Women Rehabilitation Organization is a non for profit organization that has been providing women and children affected by violence, discrimination and lack of opportunities that impede their quality of life with greatly needed services and support. From the establishment of the organization in 2013 WRO has taken the critical role of first line responder in emergency and crisis displacement of communities by providing families destitute with non food items (NFIs) dignity kits, cooking and washing materials.



In stages of displacement when women and girls become isolated, lacking the social safety mechanism of their normal live, in their camp setting homes and homes among host communities WRO provide social services such as livelihood opportunities, women and children friendly spaces and critically needed psycho social support and gender based violence services. WRO projects provide community based protection and key information sharing and awareness of



women and children's rights and create channels to prevent and respond to acts of violence.

In 2015 alone WRO has reached 24,048 women, girls, boys and men through numerous GBV prevention and response, awareness campaigns, social cohesion, women empowerment, child protection and NFI distribution initiatives in Duhok

and Erbil governorates. As the organization grows, WRO continues to invest in building the technical capacity of all project staff, increasing their knowledge and techniques in providing support to refugee and IDP families.

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## Greetings from the Executive Director

I am a woman born and raised in Kobani, Syria where I have seen the great amount of suffering of communities and the increased vulnerability, marginalization and oppression that women in society faced.

Women, children and marginalized groups were in dire need were in need of increased access to transformative services that ensured quality of life and the space to move forward. Little existed or was being done to meet the need of women and children and communities at risk of exploitation and abuse. When a collective of like-minded and committed individuals worked together to meet the needs of communities in Kobani, great advances were able to occur. I saw hope, acceptance, tolerance, understanding. I saw change. With the support of community organizations, civil rights actors, people affected by violence and poverty were supported to reintegrate into communities and flourish. This was impactful. It was touching. It was beautiful. This experience had a great impact on me and I was very much inspired me to dedicate my life to continuing a life of work in support of providing vulnerable populations with the services, support and tools to create and live the lives they dream for themselves and empower others to do the same.

Seeing the need, several friends and I shared a common interest and a vision and we decided to found an organization with the goal of serving women and society. Our vision was and continues to be, that a society could change and advance more quickly if women were protected, empowered, and educated. Because we believe a woman is not only a mother, a sister, a daughter, but a school within herself who has the ability to change the course of society.

We made a commitment to work on all approaches to help, empower and protect women, foster the potential of children whose lives are affected and disrupted by conflict and promote social cohesion in mixed communities brought together by displacement. The diversity approach of our projects aims to mainstream gender equality and to nurture the key role women have to influence societies.

Sincerely,

**Jihan Mustafa Ibrahim**  
**Founder & Executive Director**



## Our History

Women Rehabilitation Organization (WRO) is a non-profit, non-governmental, voluntary and independent local organization working towards the protection and advancement of women's rights, child protection and social cohesion of mixed communities brought together due to displacement and armed conflict in Kurdistan, Iraq. In this context, women and children continue to be the most vulnerable populations left exposed to sexual exploitation, violence, abuse, disruption of education and opportunities to rebuild their lives and communities.

WRO is an instrumental local humanitarian organization that has been working on the ground to forward women and children's rights and fostering community dialogue and social cohesion in areas affected by armed conflict since 2003 and officially registered as an NGO in 2007 restoring hope, dignity and building unity.



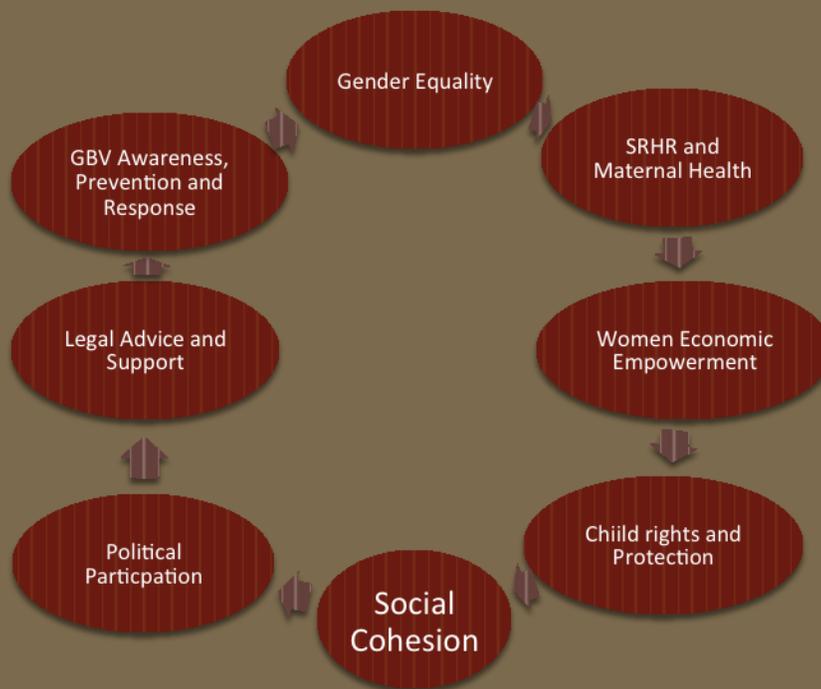
WROs work aims to increase the social, political, sexual reproductive health and rights (SHRH), economic participation of women in all aspects of society, ensure girls and boys have access to services to continue their development, and create spaces for IDP and refugees to meaningfully engage with their new communities. This is done through the provision of educational and awareness raising initiatives that focus on legal and political rights and capacity building development projects that promote the economic and political empowerment and participation of women and protect the rights and livelihoods of vulnerable children.

Since its establishment, WRO has delivered over 25 projects/initiatives on the areas of women's health, legal rights and political and economic participation, child protection and community restoration and social cohesion. WRO has a thirteen year history of collaborative work at the national, regional and international level working with organizations such as the UNHCR, UNICEF, Islamic Relief, UNFPA, UNOPS, USAID, DAI, UNOPS, the Global Fund, NDI, IRI, MISEREOR German Embassy, Canadian Embassy, Mercy Corps, Iraqi Red Crescent Society, World Vision International, US Embassy, ASODH, regional

reconstruction and Provincial teams and the Iraqi Civil Society Program Organization.

## WRO Mission

WRO advocates for the advancement and protection of women and children's rights, in countries affected by conflict where women and children are made vulnerable to sexual violence, economic disempowerment and lack of education. We work to strengthen the capacity of all women and children, regardless of ethnicity, to become equal and empowered members of society.



## WRO Vision

WRO is dedicated to collaborative and collective action of civil society, international organizations and individuals working to advance every woman and child affected by conflict access to quality education, empowerment, and higher quality of life, increasing their access to social justice, their right to be free from gender inequality in society, and live free from threat of violence or discrimination. WRO invests in the communal needs of refugee, IDPs and host communities to forge social cohesion of newly mixed communities and restore hope in civil society to rebuild homes and live in peaceful unity paving the way for greater future.

## WRO Areas of Focus

### Women's Health

Raise awareness on issues affecting women's health, including reproductive and maternal health, through training and educational materials. Establish mobile health clinics to tend to women's health needs in more rural and under-serviced areas.

### Economic Participation

Provide vocational training and income generating projects to work towards women's economic security, independence and the establishment of sustainable livelihoods.

### Legal Rights and Protection

Identify gaps in the existing legal system that either oppress women's rights or does not afford the necessary protection. Work with allies (both locally and internationally) to build strategies to ensure the establishment and enforcement of a legal system that protects women's rights and ensures their full participation in society.

### Political Participation

Raise awareness on the necessity of women's participation in the political process at all levels of government and advocate for the inclusion/participation of women in decision making forums.

### Women's Education

Lobby to ensure that regional and local governments are committed to girls' primary universal and post-secondary education.

### Capacity Building

Provide resources, strategies for allies to help further the advancement and protection of women's rights and full participation.

### Child Protection

Provide recreational, informal education, psychosocial support services and child friendly spaces for displaced girls and boys in need of continued education. Assisting refugee and IDP children reclaim their rights to childhood and milestone child development.

### GBV Awareness

Provide psychosocial support, legal support and referral services for women, girls and boys who have experienced or at risk of experiencing S/GBV due to displacement. Provide women, girls, boys and men with valuable information about understanding GBV, how to prevent it, legal pathways to report GBV and access justice. WRO also has a particular interest in engaging men and boys on challenging traditional norms that perpetuate harmful masculinities that lead to actions of GBV

### Community Based Protection and Social Cohesion

Create spaces for community dialogue among refugee, IDP and host communities to blend a harmonious mixed community among all groups brought together by conflict and migration. Support the building of community rooted mechanisms to protect women and children from experiences of violence they are vulnerable to due to displacement.

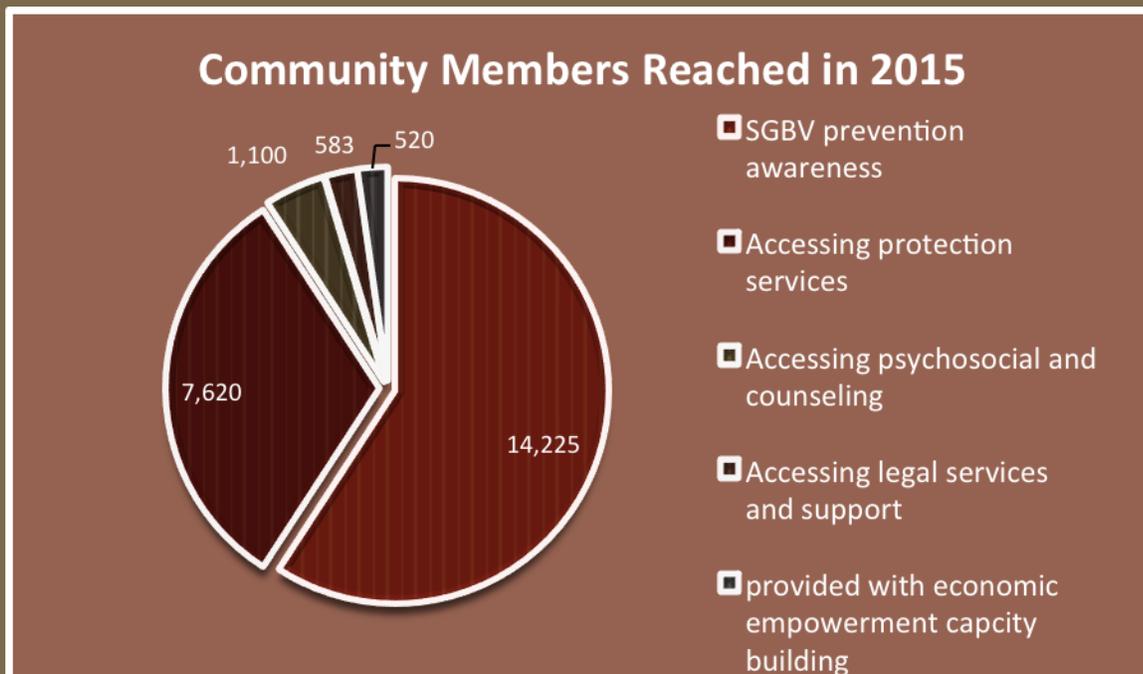
### Civil Society, Religious Tolerance, and Democracy Building

Provide support to communities affected by conflict and displacement to increase their direct and constructive engagement with local government actors, foster their abilities to live peacefully in mixed religious and ethnic communities and mobilize strong grassroots community engagement to speak for their own needs.

## WRO Impact 2015

In 2015 WRO has provided over **14,225** women, girls, men, and boys with information on SGBV prevention and response. WRO has also provided **7,620** women, girls, men and boys protection services through its existing 7 women centers and 1 child friendly spaces around the KRI including providing **1,100** community members with psychosocial support and counseling, **583** with legal services and support, and **520** with economic empowerment capacity building. In addition, WRO has trained 35 women and girls in the host community on SGBV prevention and response mechanisms, and WROs entire staff of 68 employees have been trained on SGBV prevention and response, and project objectives and PCM.

In Erbil Govenorate, WRO covered areas of high concentration of refugee, IDP and host communities providing social service needs such as PSS, legal assistance, GBV case management, community awareness on risk of early marriage, Female Genital Mutilation Awareness and Outreach in Koya and Gangan City district, Bahakre and Banslova district and Kawregosk Camp with projects in partnership with UNHCR, UNFPA and the Canadian Government . In Duhok, WRO provides refugee, IDP and host community populations residing in Shekhan Camp, Shekhan City and Sharia Camp with comprehensive PSS support, GBV case management, livelihood opportunities, awareness raising activities, and access to NFI distribution.



## WRO Impact 2015

In 2015 WRO conducted outreach campaigns to local and displaced communities throughout Erbil and Duhok governorates in partnership with the Gemran Government and UNHCR. 200 posters conveying strong messages about ending the practice of FGM were created with two distinct designs in which 100% have been distributed and posted in local centers and posters were also visible during the workshops.

2,500 brochures conveying the 2011 Anti Domestic Violence Law in KRI, which explicitly criminalizes FGM practice as an unlawful act of GBV against girls and women that is punishable by law, have been created and distributed by social workers and doctor during home visits and community workshops.



In partnership with UNHCR and the Canadian Government, WRO successfully supported the displaced communities in creating women's committees that increase political and societal participation of women to engage and create solutions for the issues they noted existed in their displaced communities. These women committees met with camp management, health personnel from the local clinic and aired their grievances about the issues they faced. Joint awareness sessions with WRO social workers, along with a lawyer and Mulla explained to families holistically the risks of GBV.



## Looking Ahead

WRO continues to provide the most vulnerable populations in the Kurdish Region of Iraq with life saving first line responding social services and livelihood initiatives that make a key difference in the quality of life of internally displaced persons, refugees and host community populations. As a organization focused on leaving behind a long lasting positive impact on the communities we aim to support, WRO sees the way forward for humanitarian, development and women's rights lies in increasing the engagement of women and girls, engaging policymakers and security forces to create the societal and legal framework that permits all communities to flourish, be protected and restore their communities.

Moving forward into 2016 WRO will extend its reach into meeting the needs of vulnerable women and girls in hard to reach areas, increase presence for returnee populations in newly liberated areas and strengthen coordination of multi-sectorial actors to ensure better service delivery for all beneficiaries. WRO will focus on GBV services, child protection, livelihood and cash initiatives, social cohesion and post conflict resolution and mediation, providing in need and newly displaced families with emergency materials. A key aspect of WRO's future engagement will engage more research centered analysis that lead to tangible and comprehensive societal recommendations for agencies and government actors. The way forward will increase WRO's reach and support to all.

With the knowledge and lessons learned of 2015, WRO will focus in 2016 to provide women and girls with more access to comprehensive livelihood and sustainability programming, ensure political participation and knowledge of women. WRO has seen the need to increase the use of awareness videos, clips and social media to spread understanding of GBV, child protection and human rights. The year of 2016 will mark WRO's greater engagement in engaging policy makers and government actors on the need of change in the legal framework to ensure full access of rights of women and girls and protection of children.



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