



Press Release

Visit of the head of External Relations Office, Emilio Ciarlo

On November 14, the head of External Relations Office, Emilio Ciarlo, and the Representative of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation in Jerusalem, Cristina Natoli, visited together three initiatives funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation in Palestine.

The day started with a meeting with Dr. Ramlawi, Deputy Minister of Health, and a visit to the National Laboratory of Public Health in Ramallah. Bearing in mind that Italy is the EU lead donor in the field of Health, the parties took the stock of the ongoing projects aimed at strengthening the primary health care system in Palestine through development of infrastructures, provision of medical equipment, staff training and community activities as well as prevention and control of non-communicable diseases.

Afterwards, Mr Emilio Ciarlo and Mrs Cristina Natoli went to Bethlehem where they visited the Mehwar Center and they exchanged with Mr Daoud Al Deek, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Social Development and Ms Saeda Al Atrash, Head of Women and Gender Unit. The process leading to the establishment of a shelter started in 2001 and the Mehwar Center was inaugurated in February 2007 with the technical and financial support of the Italian Cooperation. The Center was built in the framework of a programme aimed at enhancing Government policies and actions to prevent and respond to gender-based violence. Together with the presentation of Mehwar activities and the issues raised by the survivors and by the personnel on Violence Against Women, the parties extensively discussed about the main challenges and opportunities encountered in Palestine by women.

The day ended at the Salesian Technical School in Bethlehem where VIS NGO is currently implementing a development project aimed at fostering youth employability in the district. During the visit Mr Ciarlo had the opportunity to appreciate the main results achieved during the project such as the continuous dialogue between private and public schools, the installation of solar panels on the STS rooftop and the wide range of professional courses offered by the Salesian Technical School.