Key Outcomes from Zoom on 14/11/2026

- **Outcome:** The event served as a platform for Palestinian mental health workers and activists to share the reality of life under genocide in Gaza and the West Bank, emphasizing the need for international solidarity and systemic change.
- **Outcome:** Speakers highlighted the critical role of local, indigenous mental health services and the necessity of supporting them over large international NGOs.
- **Outcome:** The discussion framed the Palestinian struggle as a universal human rights issue, calling for professional and political action beyond "neutrality."
- **Outcome:** Several organizations shared specific ways for the audience to support their work, including funding, advocacy, and professional collaboration.

Gaza Team Testimonies

- **Omar (Field Supervisor):** Reported that the team continues to provide mental health services under critical conditions, despite personal losses including 11 family members in one airstrike. *1*
- **Manal (Psychologist):** Described the impact of constant electricity and internet outages on her ability to conduct individual and group sessions. *23*
- **Samar (Psychologist):** Stated that life in Gaza has effectively regressed "100 years," with severe shortages of cooking gas forcing families to use fire for food preparation. *45*
- **Alaa (Psychologist):** Shared her daughter’s struggle with meningitis and the lack of medical care, including a two-year wait for a necessary eye operation. *67*
- **Iman (Psychologist):** Described living in a tent after losing her home, facing flooding during heavy rains, and caring for her husband who has special needs. *89*
- **Dr. Yahya (Focusing Therapy Specialist):** Reported that his home was destroyed and he now lives in a partially destroyed rented house with severe water shortages, which often delays his work with children. *101112*
- **Dr. Said (Trauma-Focused CBT):** Shared that he lost his mother and three brothers and their families, and described the daily struggle of transportation, where a 10km journey can take three hours due to fuel shortages. *13*
- **Ahmed (Media and Communication):** Emphasized the importance of showing the truth of the suffering in Gaza without filters to highlight the difference psychological support makes. *14*
- **Niveen (Accountant):** Spoke from Istanbul about the lasting trauma of losing her home and family members, including her sister’s fiancé, and the persistent fear that follows her even outside Gaza. *1516*

Gaza Community Mental Health Program (GCMHP)

- **Yasser (Director General):** Reported that GCMHP has served over 190,000 people since the genocide began, with half being children, through psychological first aid, counseling, therapy, medication, and training. *17*
- **Yasser** emphasized that "coping" is not the right word; rather, it is a survival instinct and a commitment to agency in the face of powerlessness. *18*

- **Yasser** highlighted the importance of supporting indigenous services over international NGOs, which may be subject to "de-radicalization" requirements and political constraints. *1920*
- **GCMHP** continues capacity building, including training eight physicians in Gaza to meet UK-equivalent standards for psychiatric examinations. *2122*
- **GCMHP** is piloting "Self-Help Plus," a WHO-developed stress management technique, and has trained other organizations and Ministry of Health staff to deliver it. *2223*

Palestine Trauma Centre (PTC)

- **Dr. Mohammed:** Stated that PTC was established in 2007 and has 19 years of experience in providing therapeutic programs in Gaza. *2425*
- **PTC** operates eight programs, including family therapy, CBT, "Day of Joy," occupational therapy, focusing therapy, healing and recovery, sport counselling, and media/IT. *2526*
- **PTC** has developed manuals in Arabic and English and published articles to ensure evidence-based practice. *26*

Other Organizations and Initiatives

- **Palestine Play Project (Shireen):** Focuses on play-based interventions for children in Gaza and the West Bank, recognizing play as a fundamental right and a tool for emotional and mental release. *272829*
- **Children Not Numbers (Sarah):** A solicitor-led organization that has evacuated over 400 children for urgent specialist treatment and operates a school for 421 children in Egypt. *3031*
- **Logica Center (Warda):** A grassroots organization in Tulkarm, West Bank, providing basic needs, greenhouses, women-led bakeries, and mental health support through art, sports, design thinking, and theater. *3233*
- **Warda** also developed a staged narrative performance, "Why They Chose Life," to document and share testimonies of grief and resistance from the West Bank. *343536*
- **13 Rivers (Abu):** Operates a school in Cairo for Palestinian children who cannot access government schools in Egypt, providing education and trauma relief. *3738*
- **13 Rivers** also provides direct relief in Gaza and has supported the fitting of prosthetic legs for amputees. *3940*

Professional and Ethical Reflections

- **Gwyn** and **Heba** discussed the need for "anti-colonial therapy," which recognizes the political context of trauma and challenges the professional norm of "neutrality" in the face of genocide. *414243*
- **Heba** argued that neutrality in the face of genocide is a form of complicity and a betrayal of professional ethics. *43*
- **Heba** described "moral injury" as a systemic compromise of integrity that occurs when individuals are forced to be complicit in unjust systems. *44*
- **Heba** shared a case study of a mother in Gaza, Aya, whose baby was bitten by a rat, illustrating the extreme conditions and the limited, yet vital, role of psychological support in such contexts. *454647*

Actionable Suggestions for Attendees

- **Support local organizations:** Prioritize funding and collaboration with indigenous Palestinian organizations like PTC, GCMHP, and Logica Center. *2048*
- **Advocacy:** Write to MPs and the Foreign Secretary to demand an end to the genocide and the occupation. *49*
- **Professional solidarity:** Mental health professionals can explore ways to establish "apartheid-free zones" within their profession. *50*
- **Community action:** Join or replicate local groups like "Communities for Palestinians" to support Palestinian refugees in Egypt, Jordan, and Lebanon. *51*
- **Education and awareness:** Share information, support educational initiatives, and resist the normalization of the situation in Gaza. *525354*