

أخبارنا ثقافية - إخبارية - متنوعة

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monthly news bulletin issued by the women support unit and specialized in the public of women in northern syrian

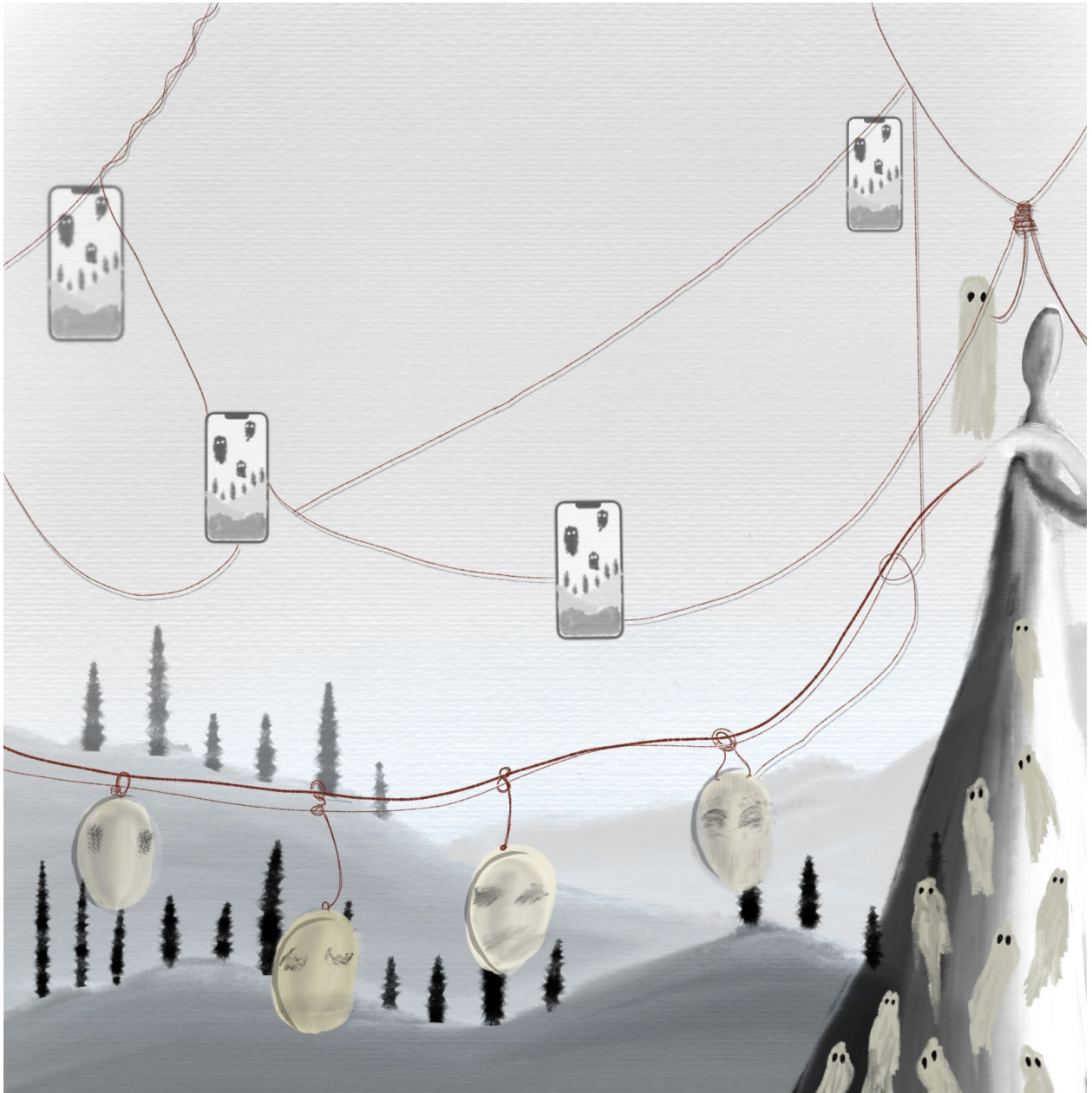
● opinion article

● my story

● excerpt

● Civil society

● Committee news



Psychological Effects of Online

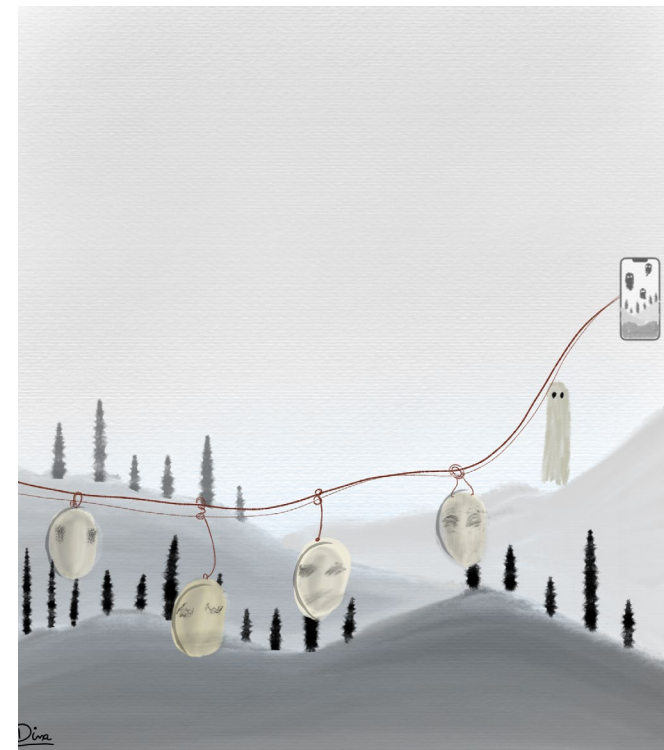
As the world has evolved during the course of time and as technology has entered people's lives, the Internet has become a tool, which contributes to connecting people and societies and helping them learn about other people and cultures. Unfortunately, there's a group of social media users, who started misusing social networking sites, deviating from the main goal of their establishment.

Whoever has an active account on social media, can be vulnerable to abuse, which often comes from close people (relatives, friends, neighbors) with the aim of defamation or assaulting the victim. Abuse can also come from strangers and unknown people, who seek entertainment or disturbance, whether through using their real names or aliases. This makes it hard to distinguish between the abuser's virtual and real personalities, and at the same time it allows the abuser to publish offense and cynicism and opens doors for more people to participate in these shameful acts. Such acts first originated in electronic forums on interactive electronic sites, which provided a space for dialogs and discussions and for raising views on certain issues. This is when abusers started impersonating victims and publishing inappropriate materials using the victims' names to discredit or offend them.

Cyberbullying is one of the most widely spread forms of abuse. It's based on utilizing the internet and some relevant techniques to achieve villain acts, mainly aiming at harming other people in a deliberate, repeated, and hostile manner. Such acts are attributed to the bully's poor awareness and prejudice against other people, in addition to the bully's feeling of superiority that he/she has better and more distinguishing characters than others. Abusers could be also people, who have problems with accepting others, or make a majority in the society, or are biased to a certain race, ethnicity, or religion.

Among the reasons for the prevalence of electronic abuse and cyberbullying are the weakness of Fear of reporting and publicizing cyber abuse, in addition to the lack of trust in accountability mechanisms have contributed to deepening the negative effects of cyberbullying on victims, resulting in a direct impact on mental or physical health, increased feelings of stress, anxiety and lack of self-confidence. This was exactly what happened to an Egyptian girl named Passant Khaled, who committed suicide earlier this year at the age of 17 after being electronically abused and blackmailed. She couldn't find support and care in her surrounding environment to face the abuser, which made her choose suicide over tolerating that miserable life.

Women make up the largest proportion of the reported cases on electronic abuse, blackmail and cyberbullying. Most of them are women political workers, journalists and humanitarian activists, who are subjected to safety threats because some people feel that there is no need for women to exist and get engaged in the society and therefore work to marginalize them and tarnish their image in these areas. A good and recent example is the image drawn by the caricaturist Ali Farzat, which included a direct abuse of Ms. Ruba Habosh. included a direct abuse of Ms.



It's crucial to draw people's attention to the importance of following digital protection and safety steps when creating accounts on social media platforms, not disclosing personal information to strangers, and not posting personal photos or selfies, especially women's photos. Moreover, it's important to shed the light on the dangers of electronic abuse to raise the society's awareness and eliminate such acts.

People should be encouraged to express themselves, in addition to promoting acceptance of different people and looking at this difference as an individual characteristic enjoyed by every person to express the beautiful aspects of their personalities.

It's also important to raise awareness on expressing opinions without prejudice to freedoms of other people, in addition to treasuring multiculturalism, which enriches the society and grants it unique fea-

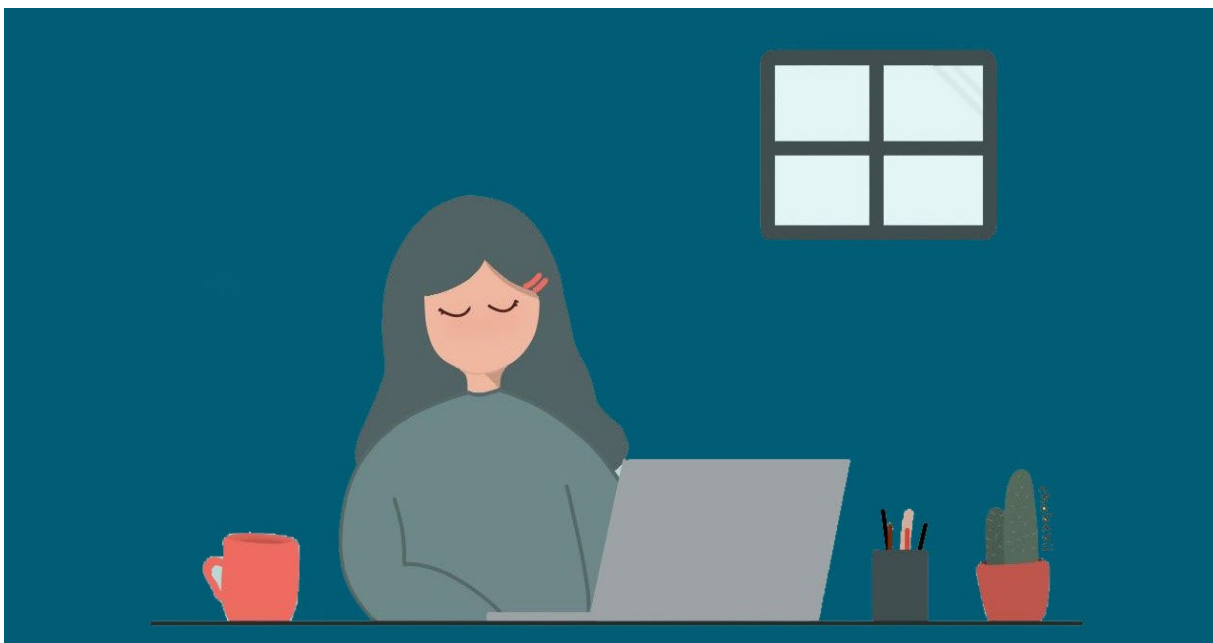
Written by: Thanaa al- Toumaa



My Story with Digital

Tamara al-Saaïd, (an alias), is a civil society activist who works in the media. She told us how she experienced digital violence and said: “It started when I had abusive comments left on my Facebook public page, in addition to messages and comments that mocked the content of my posts. Then, it developed to posting demands in other groups to stop me from continuing my work. I received many threats from fake accounts, which included promises to break my camera and cause harm to me or my family members, just because of the ideas raised through my media work. These threats directly and frighteningly affected my mental health. I started having negative thoughts about the risks I might encounter. Therefore, I decided to skip work and stay at home. In addition, the absence of security in our area, played an added negative role in this experience. Over time, I came up with strategies to cope with this scary situation and managed to overcome it gradually. I pursued my work with persistence and determination, which resulted in decreasing the number of threats that filled my inbox, especially when I turned a deaf ear to them.

When my personal Facebook account was hacked, I started looking for bodies that provided technical support to help me recover the account, and that’s when I learned more and understood how to deal with electronic blackmail and blackmailers, in addition to empowering my own and digital security. It’s important to maintain our privacy in the cyberspace and report abuse and defamation in order to restore our rights to the fullest. We also have to contact competent authorities to document all digital violations. Through my personal experience with digital threat, I have discovered the importance of strengthening our digital security and raising the society’s awareness about the digital risks we may face, in addition to drawing attention that personal information mustn’t be shared with unreliable people. I call all male and female media professionals to take all the threats they receive seriously and report them immediately. And I hope that we will soon have competent authorities that are concerned with protecting media professionals and journalists from threats and blackmails”.



Sensitivity of Digital Security

We had an interview with the digital security advisor in SecDev Foundation Institution, who is also the Chairman of Salama Tech Team, Mr. Mahran Uyoon.

Mr. Mahran said: “Wherever you are in the virtual world, there’s a possibility that your accounts will be hacked, and your privacy and personal information will be violated. Personal information don’t only refer to your name, email, or phone number, but also your geographical location, friends, political and religious positions, date of purchase on electronic commercial websites, cultural and sport interests, and whatever you have searched for within this virtual world. All of this information is considered the most expensive commodity in the present day. After searching hard for a certain product, we see advertisements about the same product on all our social media accounts. Even Google shows websites that finance their products. It is okay, because there’s always a tax for benefitting from free services, and the tax here is using the information and data collected by these websites about us. But, the most important question that we should ask ourselves is, what if a third party could have access to this information! By third parties I mean whoever/whatever tries to spy on the two communicating parties (for example: you and me on Facebook). Third parties have many forms, so they can be hackers, electronic gangs, or amateur hackers.”

Mr. Mahran adds: “Here lies the importance of raising digital awareness, which means downloading only the applications we need to use from official stores like Google Store or App Store, and avoiding being a victim for fake applications which claim helping you migrate, find a job, or make profits. Digital awareness means

thinking rationally before clicking on any links or downloading any applications. Salama Tech team choose beneficiaries based on the importance and priority level of their issues. We provide services for all groups/individuals and we cover all areas of activity (medical, educational, journalism, women, and all aspects of civil work). We publish information and evidence on our platforms and website within the widest possible range. Digital awareness is not exclusively important for one group of the society but for others. Women have been always the most vulnerable group in the society at different levels, and especially in digital safety. This is because of the circumstances women have to experience, including the inability to complete their studies in addition to the bad social and economic conditions, which result in making women an easy and fruitful target to get personal information and details from them and blackmail them. There is also a number of young men, who are blackmailed with information about their relatives in general, and female relatives in particular.

Many organizations have realized the importance of raising awareness on digital security not just at personal level (like security of employees and volunteers) but also at the level of entire institutions and the data and information they collect, especially because there are many organizations that have full information about their beneficiaries, ID card numbers, emails, phone numbers, place and date of birth, and place of residence, which is all considered as sensitive and personal information and therefore requires careful procedures while collecting, sharing, and storing it.

Salama Tech has a team of passionate trainers and trainees, who devote their time and efforts to work on raising awareness about digital security. They are always provided with up-to-date information from the virtual world, for example: updates for applications, changing ways and methods of using these applications, and the procedures followed during the training process. It cannot be generalized that digital security is absent from civil society. In fact, I like using the term (Digital Awareness and Safety), because digital security is a very massive area, which includes large and complex terms of reference, and what we do is raising awareness on digital safety, which is a modern activity in our region. Civil society is also a recent phenomenon, where some organizations do not take into account what can happen when they send personal photos or share sensitive information through fake applications. As a user, when I send or receive such information, I meet the main goal of using these applications. However, in the background of each application, there is a beehive that works on collecting as much information as possible about us, our electronic gadgets, photos, and records. Recently, there has been an increasing interest in the topic of raising awareness about digital safety, both for organizations and individuals. The quality of civil society's work is their ability to communicate, store and protect information and data in a secure, protected and transparent manner for beneficiaries”.



Ara.com

Being online on social networking sites has become one of life subsistence requirements, which must be accompanied by awareness and wisdom to be able to deal with the different situations we may encounter like digital gaps, personal information theft, and electronic blackmail

We addressed the followers of our web page with the following question:

“What are the optimal means to reduce electronic blackmail?”

Our aim with this question was to learn about some practical steps that can contribute to the elimination of electronic blackmail, and we received many answers, including the following:

Among the most important means comes the production of awareness raising videos and publishing them on social networking sites because they are excessively used by the new generation (people aged between 15 and 20). Teenage makes people act, interact, and decide in an emotional more than intellectual manner. The surrounding environment also plays a great role in affecting people. So, I would recommend holding online awareness raising workshops or preparing relevant videos.

Abeer

I recommend organizing awareness raising workshops that draws girls and parents' attention to the risks of electronic blackmail. Then, these workshops can be publicized via social networking sites to ensure that all the society benefits from them.

Dalal

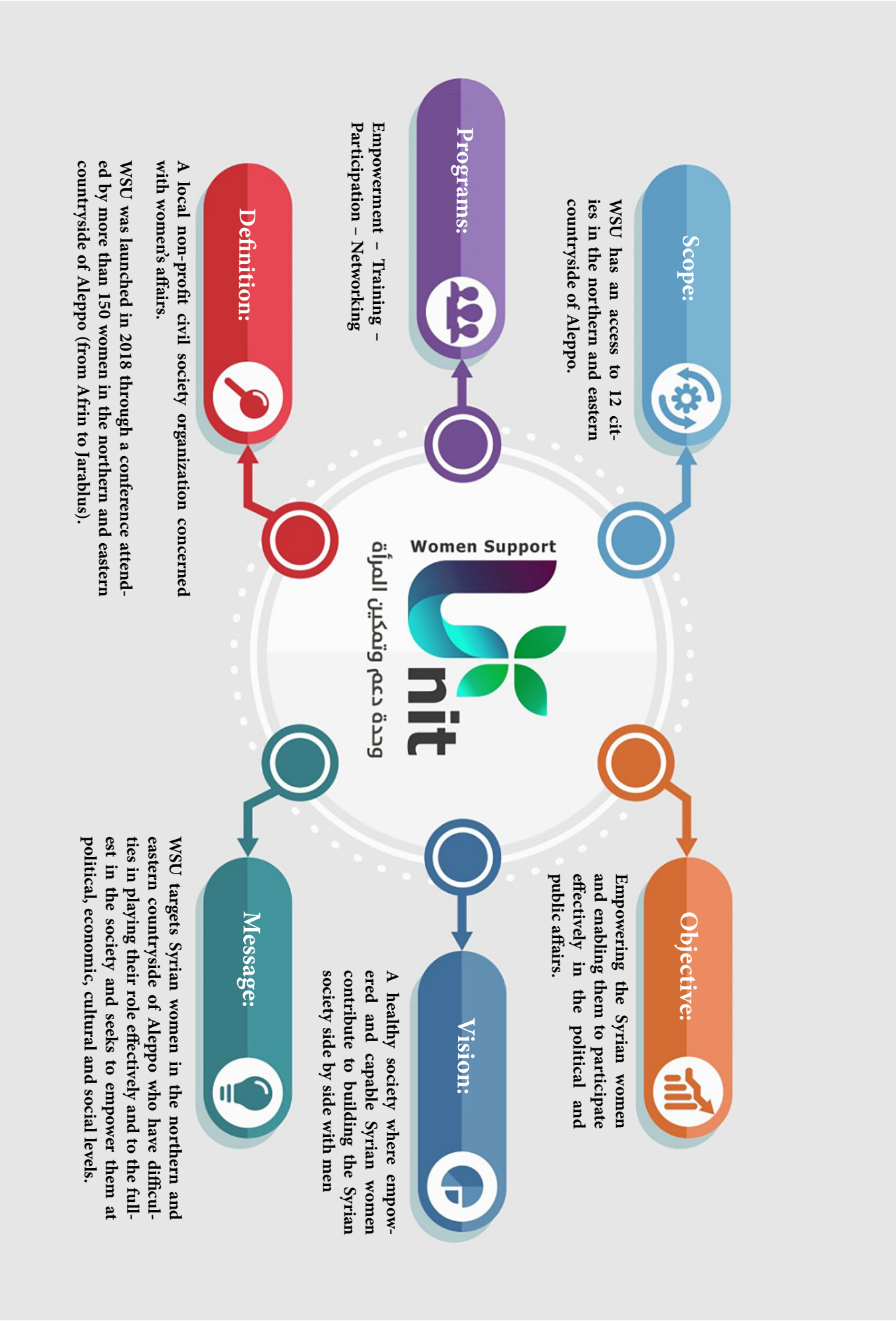
I believe that we should avoid talking/chatting with strangers and be careful when using social networking sites. This includes not sending video messages, not making video calls, and not accepting friend requests from strangers.

Hanaa

It's important to organize awareness raising workshops for girls to teach them about electronic blackmail, which is not necessarily practiced by strangers but sometimes by people we know. We should also report every blackmail act because this would be the first step towards eliminating such harmful practices.

Duaa





Qabbasin City Committee		
WSU's Sub-Committee in Qabbasin completed the following activities:		
- A session on "Management of Empathy Skills".		
- An awareness raising workshop on "Solemnization of Marriage".		
- The activities targeted 30 women.		
Bzaa City Committee		
WSU's Sub-Committee in Bzaa completed the following activities:		
- A session on "Negotiation Skills".		
- A session on "Self-Esteem".		
- A session on "Decision-Making Power".		
- The activities targeted 36 women.		
Al-Bab City Committee		
WSU's Sub-Committee in al-Bab completed the following activities:		
- A training on "Conflict Management".		
- A training on "Excel Skills".		
- A training on "Family Cohesion".		
- The activities targeted 41 women.		

The address

The geographical zone

of the WSY>S

Work: northern and eastern
countryside of Aleppo

Setup and design

Design: WSU

Preparation: shaghaf al-barri

Producer assisyant: subhia

Contact Information

Facebook: [وحدة دعم وتمكين المرأة](#)

Istagram: [womensupportunit](#)

Whatsapp: 00905357395463

Twittr: [unit_women](#)

Youtube: [Women Support unit](#)

