gender section
unrwa

gender bulletin



monthly updates on gender issues in UNRWA and the region

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update of the month

UNRWA has recently adopted the new Gender Equality Strategy (2016-2021), *Integrating Gender, Improving Services, Impacting Lives*. The new strategy consolidates gender mainstreaming in the Agency's organizational processes and programmes and aims at improving service delivery and reducing vulnerabilities among Palestine refugee women, men, boys, and girls.

stories from UNRWA

UNRWA Participates in the 16 Days Campaign against GBV

Annually, UNRWA joins the rest of the UN system and the world in participating in the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Campaign. In so doing, UNRWA affirms its support for the UN Secretary General's UNiTE Campaign as well as the commitments made in the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically Goal 5 on Gender Equality. UNRWA further affirms its commitment to ending GBV against Palestine refugee women, men, as well as girls and boys.

This year, the campaign was launched under the theme 'From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Make Education Safe for All'. The campaign started on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and ended on 10 December, Human Rights Day, to emphasize GBV as a violation of basic human rights.

"Every act or form of violence against women and girls is an act of violence against humanity. It undermines their rights, dignity and human potential. Such violence is the worst manifestation of gender-based discrimination and a particularly appalling abuse of international human rights."

Pierre Krähenbühl, Commissioner - General of UNRWA

In a statement made by the UNRWA Commissioner-General Pierre Krähenbühl, he said, "Every act or form of violence against women and girls is an act of violence against humanity. It undermines their rights, dignity and human potential." He further added, "Such violence is the worst manifestation of gender-based discrimination and a particularly appalling abuse of international human rights." Similar statements were also made by the Directors of UNRWA Operations in Gaza, West Bank and Lebanon, (Bo Shack, Scott Anderson, and Hakam Shahwan respectively).

UNRWA organized an all-day symposium on 8 December in Amman, 'Education and GBV Prevention: What Works?' The symposium - which brought together UNRWA staff from all field offices, in addition to external guests, including UNICEF, NRC, and the Juzoor Foundation - consisted of two panel discussions, in addition to several learning sites. The symposium allowed space to encourage the sharing of knowledge and experience between different UNRWA fields, as well as between UNRWA and other actors. In so doing, UNRWA aimed at further consolidating the work happening on GBV prevention and highlighting best practices. In line with this, UNRWA field offices from Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Gaza and the West Bank each organized different activities for the 16 Days Campaign at the camp level. Activities in the fields focused on school-based awareness-raising in the form of theatre performances, film screenings, discussions and drawing activities with students. In Syria, some of the activities focused on targeting internally displaced Palestine refugees; in Jordan, activities were organized with community leaders; in Lebanon, the manual, *Community Workers' Guide to Understanding GBV and Child Protection Concepts* was launched; in West Bank, the film *My Story, Our Voices: A Series of Films on Child Marriage,* produced by UNRWA, was launched; in Gaza, activities included radio sessions on different topics related to GBV. For more information, please contact: t.abunafiseh@unrwa.org

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Building Safety Update

The workshop, *Mainstreaming GBV Mitigation in Emergencies,* took place in Amman from 6-7 December, bringing together UNRWA staff from field the offices to look into key issues to consider in the development of guidelines on mitigating GBV risks in emergencies. Following the workshop, UNRWA will integrate the gathered inputs and feedback to inform the first draft of the guidelines.

For more information, please contact: s.chirizzi@unrwa.org

Events of Interest

Bringing Down Legal Barriers to Women's Economic Empowerment: An Economic and Business Imperative

16 January 2017 - Geneva

This event, which is co-convened by the UN Global Compact, the International Trade Centre, UN Women, the East - West Center and International Gender Champions Geneva, will bring together global business leaders, UN Ambassadors, heads of business associations, UN agencies and civil society organizations to discuss the opportunity to spur economic development, propel business growth and advance the Sustainable Development Goals by removing legal barriers to women's economic empowerment. Read more.

Creating Opportunities for Economic Empowerment and Employment for Young Women

24 January 2017 - Online

This event is a webinar co-hosted by UN Global Compact, UN Women and Plan International and will highlight the opportunity and need for businesses to scale up action and invest in the future workforce to create economic opportunities for young women around the world. Read more.

Regional News

West Bank

The Miftah Organization conducted three training workshops as part of its project, *Support for Women's Protection* which focuses on reproductive health rights and GBV. It targeted community and religious leaders, namely imams, women community leaders and female preachers who are often consulted on cases of violence. Read more

Gaza

Gaza Sky Geeks, an organization that was founded in 2011 with a grant from Google to support startups and develop the tech industry in Gaza, is focusing on bringing in more women and girls. Currently, around half of the founders of startups are women, a number that the organization is planning to increase to 80 per cent to compensate for the gender gap in the tech industry. Read more

Jordan

A new facility is scheduled to be opened by the end of the year to act as a shelter for women whose lives are in danger due to issues related to what is referred to as 'family honor'. The shelter is intended to provide a safe space for women, who in the past were placed in women's correctional facilities, under what is called 'protective custody'. Read more

Egypt

The National Council for Women (NCW) is pushing for a bill to be passed by the government with regard to rape cases. The bill is set to adopt stronger penalties with the aim of reducing and preventing sexual crimes. Read more.

Reports & Resources

UN WOMEN

Why Money Matters in Efforts to End Violence against Women and Girls is a brochure that provides an analysis of how funding impacts efforts aimed at addressing violence against women and girls. It also sheds light on funding shortfalls and challenges in the funding landscape. Read more

Another recent publication by UN Women, *The Package of Essentials for Addressing Violence against Women,* is a series of briefs highlighting the essential strategies for addressing violence against women in general and preventing violence and providing services to survivors in particular. The brief aims at reaching out to GBV advocates and policymakers.
Read more.

UNFPA

The *H6 Annual Report 2015* is a report by the H6 Joint Programme with the collaboration of Canada and Sweden. The programme builds on the strengths and capacities of each of the six health agencies in the UN system to support countries in their efforts to improve the survival, health and well-being of women, newborns, children and adolescents. Read more

UNDP

The Arab Human Development Report 2016: Youth and the Prospects for Human Development in a Changing Reality has recently been published by UNDP. The report highlights issues facing youth in the Arab world, such as unemployment, lack of good education and insufficient representation in public life, to name a few. The report further emphasizes how despite some advancements towards gender equality, these issues are exacerbated in the case of women when they intersect with persisting gender-

Facts of the Month

7.2% Women worldwide have experienced non-partner sexual violence. Learn more

246 Million Children are subjected to gender-based violence in or around schools every year. Learn more

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UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and mandated to provide assistance and protection to some 5 million registered Palestine refugees. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and the Gaza Strip achieve their full human development potential, pending a just and lasting solution to their plight. UNRWA services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, protection and microfinance.

For more information, please contact t.abunafiseh@unrwa.org