

Education Programme

1. Impact of current situation on programme delivery

- All UNRWA school installations remain closed, in line with the decisions of the Host countries, affecting 533,000 UNRWA school students and 8,000 young people in the VTCs, ESF and FESA.
- Work has begun about studying the accessibility of students to technology needs and on supporting Fields in monitoring and evaluating access and use of self-learning tools by students, and engagement of teachers and parents. Work also started with regards to harmonizing such M&E tools.

2. Response/Mitigation measures

A sense of common purpose in moving forward on the EiE response continues to be strengthened through meetings/structures, such as:

- The HQ **Education in Emergencies COVID 19 Task Force** that continues to support Fields with regards to four key EiE areas, reinterpreted for the COVID crisis: Self Learning, Psychosocial Support, Safety and Security – Health and Hygiene issues, TVET, and Monitoring and Evaluation.
- Regular meetings with the **individual Field Office education team** on key thematic areas including self-learning material, PSS, TVET, safety and hygiene issues, and monitoring and evaluation.
- **Weekly Chiefs' meetings** that facilitate discussions on current status, feedback on the work of the Task Force, and critical thinking around ways forward.

Progress/ Key Highlights:

New Education COVID-19 Funding:

- **Education Cannot Wait:** The regional EiE proposal submitted by UNRWA on 30 March for a total amount of **US\$ 1m was approved** on 3 April. The proposal covers a period of 6 months and complements the education elements in the Flash Appeal (FA) around the key areas of: a) access to self-learning for children in UNRWA schools and, in some Fields, also for youth below 18 in TVET Centres; b) psycho-social (remote) support; c) health and safety (prepositioning of cleaning materials); d) monitoring and evaluation. Particular emphasis was placed by all Fields on support for connectivity (equipment - mobile phones, computers, printers, etc.); access to communication channels (3g/4g, SMS, TV, etc.); dissemination of hard copy materials, where required, if safe and feasible.
- **Muslim League:** The donor has supported the potential use of the first trench of funds, amounting to US\$ 330,000 in support of the TVET emergency response in Jordan, if needed.
- The Education Department is reviewing its **COVID-19 UNRWA Flash Appeal** submission.

Self-learning

- The HQ Curriculum Team continues to review education materials made available by Hosts or developed by the UNRWA Field Offices with regard to five criteria: **Target grade; subject/s; nature of the approach; accessibility (printed/ online/ DVDs and how feasible this is); student support (by others); neutrality; student assessment.**

- The emphasis continues to be on a Self-Learning approach that supports students to utilize their school textbooks, prioritisation is for core subjects; and efforts are made to address the logistical challenges of disseminating the material (for example if the material is all online this may be challenging to some students). Emphasis is also on ensuring support to the student self-studying and student assessment.

Psychosocial Support

- HQA has developed and circulated a Booklet of sourced PSS resources that can support the children at this time: **COVID-19 Crisis: A Guide to Learning, Health, Safety and Psychosocial Resources**. The Booklet is a living document that comprises three sections: child protection, PSS (with resources in English and Arabic) and Health instructions in times of Covid-19.
- **A PSS sub-group has been established with three to four Counsellors from each Field**, and the first meeting was held to discuss how best to disseminate the ideas in the Booklet to students and their families.
- Efforts are being made in the direction of further systematizing the delivery of PSS assistance at Field level through the participation of all available resources, including school counsellors.

Safety and Security: Health and Hygiene

- The focus of Safety and Security in the COVID 19 crisis remains the prevention of the transmission of COVID-19 and this is addressed in a section in the booklet highlighted above.
- The **production work continues for an HRCRT animated video of school parliamentarians** and students of the school health committees planning to raise awareness of COVID-19 in their local community.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

- The efforts around the **TVET emergency response continue to be focused on access to and the development of self-learning materials**, ways to address psycho-social needs, and adapted monitoring and evaluation practices.
- Work is ongoing on the development of an **online shared space to enhance accessibility to materials**.
- **TVET emergency needs for Syria and Lebanon Fields were included in the ECW** proposal approved on 3 March and the TVET team continues to explore additional funding sources to cover remaining needs.
- The Plan addresses key components of required infrastructure, the self-learning approach, and prioritization of learners/courses.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

- The Education team continues to work on adjusting the existing EiE Bank of Indicators (developed in 2019 with input from other UN agencies and key partners) to extend its applicability to any crisis, regardless of cause. The Bank will be used for monitoring, evaluating, and measuring the impact of the EiE approaches and initiative implemented during the COVID-19 EiE response.
- Data continues to be collected from different existing studies on infrastructure and connectivity status. HQ Education team is also looking into technology solutions for M&E.

3. Priorities / way forward / next steps

- Strengthen the capacity to **monitor and evaluate the EiE response**:
 - HQ plans to compile all FO approaches and refine an Agency wide proposal.
 - HQ ED Research and M&E Unit to analyse the feasibility of an agency wide staff survey to assess Fields' responses to the COVID-19 crisis.

- Further improvement of the EiE response to the COVID-19 crisis, through:
 - Improved understanding of access to technology and data among students.
 - Revision or development of aligned COVID-19 EiE Response plans (for schools and TVET Centres) across all Fields
 - Identifying technological tools to support students studying at home
- Supporting Fields in M and E of access, use of tools by students, engagement of teachers and parents, and working to harmonise,
- Continued work of the Task Force on key areas, as listed above, and regular communication with the FOs, including weekly meeting of all five Chiefs of Education and of each Field education management team.
- Continued support to FOs on the delivery and expansion of equitable and sustainable access to Self-Learning and safeguarding of neutrality principles.
- Improved understanding, visibility, and coverage of EiE needs:
 - Identification of additional needs for education during the COVID-19 crisis.
 - Identification of additional funding sources and project revisions – either no cost extensions or reprogramming, depending on donor guidance and the funding outcomes of the Flash Appeal; revision of the COVID-19 Flash Appeal.
- Resource and planning for the 2020-2021 year that needs to start, despite uncertainty and lack of clarity regarding the 2019-2020 school year.

Health Programme

1. Impact of current situation on Programme delivery

- **Core services at Health Centres in the Fields:**
 - All health centres continued to be functional with full capacity most of the time, except for Jordan, only 19 HCs were open last week and for one HC in WB (Biddou HC, closed due to a confirmed case, and staff are on 14-day home quarantine). No services interruption happened except in rare cases. All Fields started to deliver medicines to NCD patients at their homes.
 - All essential medicines and support services at all functioning HCs remained available and functional
 - Risk mitigation measures were taken to protect health staff at all HCs from the risk of being infected by transmission from potential COVID-19 cases. Details are below.
- **Health Programme staff at HQA and Fields:**
 - Staff at HQA and Fields continued working normally, but remotely (telecommuting), and virtual meetings and communications using different channels continued with no disruption.
 - In cooperation with different programmes/departments at HQA and the Fields, a one-page daily Situation Report on COVID-19 disease continues to be issued on daily basis. In addition, the weekly report about programmes and departments activities concerning their preparedness for COVID-19 crisis is being annexed to the daily sitrep, to be on every Friday.

- HD at HQA prepared its business continuity plan, taking into consideration the BCPs of the Fields relevant to health services.
- Weekly meeting for Chiefs/ Field Health Programme, their deputies and Disease Control Officers (FDCOs), who are COVID-19 focal points, with all technical staff at HD, HQA is conducted to discuss the continuity of services, achievements and needs for each Field's HP.

2. Response/Mitigation Measures:

- **Flash Appels Proposals** for all the Fields in response to COVID-19 crisis are under finalisation to be presented to donors. HD, HQA in cooperation with the Planning Department, HQA is compiling, revising and sharing the final versions with the fields for their feedback.
- **Health Human Resources:**
 - **Telecommuting:** In mostly all Fields, Field Office and Area-office staff are telecommuting, and the same is true for HQ, Amman and concerned HQ, Jerusalem staff.
 - **Training:** All health staff at all health centres in the Fields received training on how to identify suspected cases of COVID-19 among patients showing with respiratory symptoms. In addition, they received training on different technical guidelines relevant to the current situation. In addition, cleaners at the HCs received training on health centres' cleaning and sanitization techniques.
 - **Health centres operations:** All health staff report to their health centres as usual in all Fields, with minimal exceptions (Jordan and one HC in WB).
 - **Protection of HC staff:** Health centres in the five Fields received Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (including masks, gloves, face-protection, gowns, head cover), and hand cleaning materials (liquid soap and alcohol gel sanitisers). Due to the shortage in the local markets in the five Fields, the HD, HQA, in cooperation with procurement (PLD), is exploring international markets for the purchase of 6-month quantities of all these materials.
 - **Health education and raising awareness of Palestine refugee communities:** The HD at HQA provided all Fields with awareness raising materials to post at HCs, and staff there continue to provide the patients attending their HCs with health education on COVID-19 disease.
 - **HC staff attendance:** Health Programme is reviewing if we would be able to reduce the number of medical staff working at HCs, which started in some Fields.
- **Renovations for triage and better workflow at HCs:**
 - In all Fields, health centres introduced triage (the separation of cases with respiratory symptoms, from other patients, for further investigation) based on WHO technical guidelines that were adapted to our individual HCs' contexts. Infrastructure renovations were done to facilitate effective triage process and safe patient flow. In Gaza, 17 schools near to HCs were prepared to be used, and are currently used, for triage.
 - All HCs introduced/are introducing hotlines to facilitate telemedicine modalities which need to be implemented so that crowdedness at the HCs is minimised.
 - HCs discourage, by proper channels of communication with clients, cases that are mild and do not need urgent health care from coming to the HC. All HCs in all Fields report various percentages of reduction in the numbers of patients who attend to them. This percentage reached 60% at HCs in Lebanon. E-Health is used to monitor the numbers of patients attending each HC in each Field, as total and per programme,

and graphs are built to see the trending in this regard. These are shared with the Fields to support their decision-making process.

- Actions to be taken for the HCs to reduce the stay time and contact time; by make more efficient the patient flow, and to increase social distancing between patients are being implemented at all HCs in all Fields.
- **Health services re-organisation:**
 - There are discussions in all Fields between Field offices' managements and the governments of host countries on the contribution by UNRWA to the efforts to prepare isolation facilities within UNRWA's installations in the Fields including educational institutions (schools and training centres) and warehouses. In Lebanon, Siblin Training Centre is being prepared as an isolation facility in cooperation with MSF.
 - NCD medications continue to be distributed for two months for NCD patients at their HCs, and to be delivered to them at their houses (currently in Jordan; more than 5,200 patients were reached by health staff supported by the community volunteers). Plans are in place to conduct this medicines delivery process in case the situation gets worse in any Field.
 - Several non-critical services were stopped to minimise the number of patients who attend the HC (e.g.: depending on the Field: maternal health services, dental services, family planning, etc. with exception given to special conditions). Immunization for children under 5 years was decided to be stopped at HCs in all Fields based on the consultation with host countries' authorities, in order not to compromise the health of children and mothers regarding COVID-19 potential transmission.
- **Sanitation at HCs:**
 - HCs' cleaners were trained on disinfection procedures and provided with PPE and needed equipment and materials to keep their HC clean.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E):**
 - The Health Department receives daily reports from the health focal points in the Fields (FDCOs) for follow-up and to include in the daily sitreps.
 - E-Health was used efficiently to monitor the numbers of patients of different categories who attend each health centre in each Field, the consumption and stock of medicines at each HC, and stocks of medical supplies available at each. Several decisions were/will be based on this monitoring.
- **Communication and public health response support.**
 - Currently, the HD at HQA is working with the IMTD staff to build a Chatbot on COVID-19 in Arabic to be used by Palestine refugees and UNRWA staff in the five Fields, and of course it will be also available to be used by anyone who has access to WhatsApp. The content was developed, and the development process is ongoing.
 - HR wellbeing colleagues provide continuous content for staff on how to cope with COVID-19 relevant matters. Their contributions are added to the daily sitrep that is widely distributed.

- Hotlines and outreach for refugees who want to inquire about health, hygiene and services issues are being operated in cooperation between RSSP and HP in Gaza, West Bank and Jordan. Preparations for the psycho-social support of affected populations in Gaza is underway in cooperation between the two programmes.
- Health education and health awareness efforts are undergoing at HCs by health staff for Palestine refugees attending these HCs.

3. Priorities / way forward / next steps

- Partnering with host countries' authorities to get prepared for facing further spread in the COVID-19 cases by different means, starting with making arrangements to support isolation facilities to be established or run by these authorities or by UNRWA staff in cooperation with them and/or with local and international NGOs.
- Making sure that health services continue with optimal level of quality for Palestine refugees in all Fields.
- Making sure that no confirmed cases of COVID-19 disease appear among Palestine refugees in all Fields, especially in the camps. If cases appear, measures to confine them and to prevent the spread of the disease will be in place.
- Continue the process of procurement of essential commodities and make sure that there are no shortages at any HC in any Field. These include, but not limited to medicines, medical supplies, PPE and other materials needed to make sure that staff are protected, and the health and wellbeing of Palestine refugees is preserved.
- Rationalise the health services provided at all HCs in all Fields to give more emphasis on properly managing cases with respiratory symptoms, and reduce the crowdedness that might potentially lead to the transmission of the disease from one patient to others or to staff.
- Work on proposals for donors to support the health programme especially supporting the procurement of PPE equipment and other commodities as needed.
- providing updates/overviews at the Agency level for partners and potential donors via daily sitreps in cooperation with other programmes and departments at HQA and the Fields.
- Continuous meetings regularly set on weekly basis or as needed with Fields' health programme senior managements for updates and agreeing on the way forward.
- Work with IMTD on the production of a Chatbot on COVID-19 disease for Palestine refugees and staff in Arabic (and may be in English later).
- Continue following up on updates of relevant technical documents on COVID-19 disease released by WHO.
- Continue the production of new awareness materials on COVID-19 disease for different audiences, including push notifications of health education message to the users of the E-MCH and E-NCD mobile applications among Palestine refugees.
- Communicate with donors supporting current projects that should be concluded by the end of March with no cost extension or by reprogramming.

Infrastructure and Camp Improvement Programme

1. Impact of current situation on Programme delivery

- **Human Resource Capacity:** Following the Host Governments' and respective Field office management's decisions, majority of the staff members are working from home. This had a major impact on the services, construction and maintenance works.
- **Construction Works:** In all Fields, most construction works especially new projects such as schools, health centre, solar systems, shelter, theatre etc. has been either suspended or stopped. In West Bank as well in Jordan, all UNRWA construction projects are currently suspended. However, site engineers are working from home and are preparing BoQ, measurements details, coordinating with contractors and amending/preparing detailed work plan to finish construction works, once situation allows. Some construction works continue in Syria in order to meet critical project deadlines.
- **Maintenance Works:** Delays in the preparation and response to maintenance requests in UNRWA premises. Due to restrictions of staff members movement, no maintenance assessment visits are currently been conducted. However, routine maintenance especially in Gaza is ongoing and increased in order to equip and adapt several schools to be used as health centres and distribution centres, as required. In West Bank, as to ensure business continuity in the HCs, mechanisms were put in place to address urgent repair requirements in Health centres and schools, as required.
- **Environmental Health & Sanitation:** As for the Environmental health activities, all work continue, with sanitation teams working in full capacity to keep cleanliness in the camps, in addition to spraying (with diluted chlorine) the open premises and equipment (health centre, sanitation offices, admin offices, sanitation trucks and areas surrounding solid waste containers) with disinfectants on daily basis. In camps, sanitation work is ongoing including cleaning of roads and alleys, solid waste collection and disposal along with operation of water wells in certain camps (In Gaza) to ensure supply of drinking water. Due to ongoing movement restrictions within the respective Fields, special efforts and daily coordination is required with respective authorities for solid waste disposal to dumping sites, as well as to ensure that sanitation labourers can mobilize as part of their work. The Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) has confirmed funding and accordingly Fields are in the process of procuring materials and tools required for public health. Also, Fields are either hired or in the process of hiring additional frontline staff and equipment to meet all demands during this emergency.
- **Shelter:** Follow up visits by site engineers and technical assessment have been suspended. Joint visits conducted by ICIP engineers and RSSP social workers to Social Safety Net (SSN) shelters were also stopped. The suspension of the technical follow up visits to ongoing shelter rehabilitation will have a negative impact on refugees, since the financial instalments for completed work that relate to these visits will also be delayed. In Gaza Field, payments to beneficiaries for shelters that were assessed earlier are expected to be transferred soon to their bank accounts. In some fields such as West Bank, special arrangements have been made to ensure that refugees who have completed their rehabilitation works can collect their payment. In general, it is expected that the completion of shelter projects will be delayed in all fields.

2. Response/Mitigation Measures:

- **Sanitation** labourers are cleaning and sterilizing UNRWA buildings. Spraying, cleaning and washing of the garbage containers, trucks is ongoing on regular basis. Operation of 9 water wells at three camps in Gaza strip is also ongoing. UNRWA is coordinating closely with the different authorities to facilitate the movement of essential ICIP staff (sanitation labourers, compactors staff) to avoid any delay in solid waste transfer to dumping sites.

- **Mitigation and precaution measures.** Sanitation labourers are using Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs), wearing masks and latex surgical gloves underneath the normal gloves as an additional precaution. These measures are enforced for all sanitation staff with no exception and close monitoring is conducted. Awareness for sanitation labourers and other staff is ongoing including visits and monitoring by supervision teams. In Fields, the procurement of PPEs for Sanitation Labourers is in progress so to avoid any health hazard.
- A safety COVID-19 plan was developed for contractors to apply on all on-going construction projects. The plan was shared with all engineers on site to ensure contractors compliance.
- ICIP in West Bank Field is coordinating with OCHA and has submitted a proposal for additional sanitation needs to the WASH cluster. FICIP is also working closely with shelter cluster to ensure that hygiene kits are procured in line with the sphere standards.
- Social workers in Fields have informed refugees that visits, and meetings are postponed and will resume after the current crises is over specially for camp improvement and shelter rehabilitation works.
- In Lebanon, FICIP team worked on modifying the design of dormitories in Siblin training centre for a possible use as quarantine centre, if required. Work is in progress and the contractor is executing the works under the supervision of FICIP team.

3. Priorities / way forward / next steps

- **Keep the environmental health services.** Maintain critical sanitation services, solid waste collection and disposal, water supply, rodents and insect control.
- **Sterilization** for sanitation offices, roads and alleys, garbage containers, solid waste trucks and some areas in the camps.
- **Procurement of emergency tools,** hygiene and protective equipment for front line staff especially sanitation labourers. Continue awareness raising actions on proper hygiene and sanitation practices. Procurement of material and tools are in process and expected to be received shortly.
- **Continue to coordinate** with the emergency work plans prepared by respective Fields. Monitor and follow up on the situation on the ground on daily basis. Weekly updates from construction sites to reflect the impact of COVID-19 on project implementation
- **Additional sanitation labourers** may be needed in future to increase capacity and improve quality of sanitation services at refugee camps. In Gaza and West Bank additional 22 and 36 sanitation labourers have been recruited on daily basis to improve sanitation services. Furthermore, in West Bank, based on requirements, sanitation team is also working on the weekend to ensure camps are clean against the outbreak of the COVID-19.
- **Coordination with other agencies,** WB Field is coordinating on sanitation issues and working on the proposal to contribute to the inter-cluster awareness campaigns with an objective to enhance the awareness within the refugee communities (may be through posters, SMS messages etc.)

Relief and Social Services Programme

1. Impact of current situation on Programme delivery

- **Relief assistance.** Cash and food assistance continue being provided to Palestine refugees in Syria, West Bank, Gaza, Jordan and Lebanon under the UNRWA social safety net programme and the emergency assistance as planned for 1.8 million persons.
- **In Syria,** the ongoing cash assistance to rural areas has been interrupted as cash transportation has been suspended due to the government's lock-down measures.

2. Response/Mitigation measures

- **Relief response.** Additional relief support for affected COVID-19 Palestine refugees will be aligned with ongoing national efforts where activated, and otherwise be focused on those excluded from such efforts and suffering most from the impact of public and economic shut-down.
- **In Lebanon,** preparations are underway to offer 76,000 persons in families with children under the age of 6 years an initial emergency transfer of US\$ 35 per person which is just under half of the minimum food expenditure requirements. An additional 61,000 persons that are clients of the UNRWA social safety net programme will be receiving a top up of the planned cash assistance to match the same amount per capita. This initiative is made possible through making available core budget reserve funding. It is hoped that additional funding becomes available for a second round that may also include elderly persons to ease the suffering of Palestine refugees in Lebanon that have already been suffering from the impact of the ongoing economic and financial crisis in the country, in addition to enforced further restrictive requirements on obtaining employment permits.
- **In Gaza,** food distribution through the usual food distribution centres has been suspended to be replaced by door-to-door deliveries of outstanding rations to 70,000 families to avoid contamination at potentially crowded distribution sites.
- **Communication and psycho-social support.** Hotlines and outreach for refugees to inquire about health, hygiene and services issues are being operated by relief staff in Gaza, West Bank and Jordan.
- **In Syria,** an initiative is underway by social workers to contact up to 16,900 elderly persons that are living on their own via phone calls. Syria has a particularly high proportion of elderly persons without family support as a result of the break-down of family networks, death and outmigration.

Microfinance Department

1. Impact of current situation on programme delivery

- All MD offices have closed their operations
- Deferring the collection of repayments from all clients
- Freezing the disbursement of new and repeated loans
- Generated income from operations is being ceased
- The Palestinian Monetary Authority (PMA) has decided to re-open the MFIs partially in Gaza & the West Bank.

2. Response/Mitigation measures

- Deferment of due repayments for the month of April
- Assessment of further deferment is undertaken on a month-by-month basis
- MD management team is periodically meeting to discuss changes on the ground
- Back-end operations of MD IT staff is underway to accommodate with the deferment (being a non-standard response)
- Enhance communicating with staff through available means of communications, through the e-mail, social media and telephones to monitor staff wellbeing and disseminating information and guidance
- Enhance communicating with clients through the operation staff to ask on their wellbeing and follow up on their loans
- Work plans are being developed for all organizational units. For this purpose, an Excel sheet was developed to ensure staff accountability on their tasks and action taken
- The PMA decision to re-open the MFIs partially in Gaza & the West Bank is currently under review by MD management in consultation with FO's management and coordination with MFIs in Gaza and the West Bank.

3. Priorities / way forward / next steps

- Continuous monitoring, assessment of the situation in each field
- Staff will continue telecommuting as efficient as possible
- Continuous communication and support to staff by field senior management
- Due to the delay in generating income, MD will be covering its operating costs during the coming month/s from its available capital (planned to be used for operations)
- The staff will work on updating the operational and financial manuals
- The MD team is currently discussing solutions to collect payments from delinquent clients in January and February 2020 to pay their past due payments.

Protection Division

1. Impact of current situation on programme delivery

- Most of the protection teams in fields and headquarters are working remotely.

2. Response/Mitigation measures

- The team in headquarters continues to provide support to processes related to the strategic planning and reporting, the integration of protection standards in the ongoing response at field level, and the management of ongoing projects that need re-programming.
- Teams in the fields are providing support to the fields' business continuity plans, focusing on coordination, reporting and ensuring that protection standards are in place.
- Concrete examples include:

- The development of guidance notes on integrating disability inclusion and protection standards in the response to the COVID-19 crisis. Guidance notes on gender and child protection will follow.
- In Syria the protection team is coordinating with the Programme Support Office for the real-time evaluation of the response to COVID-19.
- In the West Bank the protection team is leading on accountability to affected population, working with others on communication with communities, and with the Relief and Social Service Programme (RSSP) on the provision of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) support, and assessing vulnerable communities outside the camps.
- In Lebanon the protection team is working with the Front Office on the integration of protection standards in the current response, focusing on the possible establishment of the Siblin isolation centre.
- In Jordan, support to vulnerable groups (PRS in KAP) and ex-Gazans to access services safely.
- In Gaza, support is provided to programmes to ensure protection standards are mainstreamed.

3. Priorities / way forward / next steps

- Technical support will continue for the fields from headquarters, and to services delivery, including sharing resources on best practices, and access to the most vulnerable while abiding by safety rules.
- Further guidance on ensuring minimum protection standards will continue to be developed.