

covid-19 fortnightly update 25 may – 7 june 2020 Providing assistance and protection to Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza Strip

and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem

#InThisTogether



highlights

- The COVID-19 Weekly Update has now moved to a fortnightly schedule for June.
- The UNRWA Health Department's COVID-19 100 Days Report, which summarizes the Agency's health response to the pandemic, is now available. The health system has shown flexibility and resilience in its response to the crisis at all levels and has been adapted to different circumstances in the five Fields of operation to continue to provide essential health services to Palestine refugee communities.
- The Health Department is leading on the Agency's COVID-

19 response and issues a one-page daily sitrep with the latest epidemiological figures.

All 709 UNRWA schools, with the exception of partial reopening for Grade 9 students in Syria, eight vocational/ educational training centres and two ESF (Education Science Faculties) remain closed (in line with Host Government decisions) affecting 533,342 school students, 8,270 VTC trainees and 1,840 university students. To ensure the continuation of students' access to quality, inclusive, and equitable education, the longstanding UNRWA Education in Emergency (EiE) programme has been reconceptualized in order to better respond to the challenging COVID-19 context.

jordan Curfew, in place since 17 March, has been modified (12 midnight to 6 a.m.) but extended until further notice. Movement restrictions have been eased and many business sectors have resumed limited work. Mosques, churches and hospitality services were opened on 6 June. Schools, universities and colleges, cultural centres, wedding halls, public parks and other public facilities remain closed. All borders/ports (air, land, sea) remain closed.

west bank State of Emergency extended until 4 July. Access restrictions have been eased. West Bank ID holders with valid international organization (Arbel) permits are permitted to enter Jerusalem/Israel. International staff are permitted to enter the West Bank without prior coordination, however staff holding Jerusalem IDs still require prior coordination to enter areas A&B.

gaza Israeli-controlled Erez crossing and Egyptian-controlled Rafah Terminal remain closed. Controlled entry is being facilitated for limited numbers of Gaza ID holders who must then enter 21 days' quarantine. Gaza Field Office (GFO) has started a limited return to office modality with a 20 percent ceiling on staff and taking all hygiene precautions.

syria As of 26 May, the daily curfew has been lifted, as has the travel ban between and within governorates. Public and private transportation services have resumed. Universities and institutions reopened on 31 May. All borders remain closed.

lebanon General closure and curfew from 7 p.m. to 5 a.m., with some essential services exempted, has been extended until at least 5 July. The Lebanon Field Office (LFO) has initiated a 30 percent occupancy return-to-office schedule on 1 June.

unrwa representative officies Brussels will continue teleworking measures until 8 June: Washington DC and New York until 30 June.



unrwa response



health

	COVID-19 response activities
	• The door-to-door delivery of medicines for non-communicable diseases (NCDs) has now ended and all health centres (HCs) are providing patients with their medications at the HCs.
Jordan (JFO)	• NCD case management and growth monitoring services resumed on 1 June. Aqaba HC resumed all services except its dental clinic from 30 May.
	• Community mobilization campaigns continue in the camps to disseminate up-to-date information about COVID-19 and to strengthen messages on the importance of social distancing.
	• As of 6 June, 1,312 cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed in Lebanon (768 recoveries, 28 deaths). Among these cases were 10 Palestine refugees, all of whom have recovered.
	• Any Palestine refugee with suspected COVID-19 and in need of medical care is transported to a suitable hospital by the Lebanese Red Cross in coordination with the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) and UNRWA area health officers.
Lebanon (LFO)	• In line with WHO recommendations, UNRWA continues to provide essential primary health care services, including: time-sensitive emergency health interventions; vaccination services; reproductive health services; distribution of medications and supplies for chronic and mental health illnesses; and services to prevent the spread of communicable diseases.
	• All 27 HCs are now open from 7.15 a.m. to 2.45 p.m. Various measures remain in place to reduce foot traffic at HCs In order to mitigate the risk of spreading COVID-19. This has resulted in a 72 percent decrease in daily visits since February 2020. LFO continues to adapt its HC staffing in line with the decrease in patient numbers.
	• All hospital referrals continue to be limited to life-saving and tertiary care services. All non-urgent and previously scheduled surgeries are temporarily on hold.
	• As of 6 June, 124 confirmed cases of COVID-19 were reported in Syria (53 recoveries, 6 deaths). 84 cases have come from outside the country, including Syrian nationals recently repatriated from Kuwait, the UAE, Sudan and Russia. The Ministry of Health (MoH) reported it has not registered any local cases of COVID-19 since 1 May.
	• SFO's 25 health facilities continue to operate a triage system to protect patients and staff. 2,348 cases were identified with respiratory symptoms (non-COVID-19) during the reporting period.
Syria (SFO)	• A total of 676 telemedicine calls were received during the reporting period and 2,565 calls have been received since the service became available.
	• Some health services have resumed, including: examination of new NCD patients, prenatal examinations, dental consultations for 10 patients a day, and activate screening for limited mental health and psychosocial (MHPSS) cases.
	• 87 home deliveries of NCD medications to patients over 65 years were made during the reporting period. This brings the total to 921 deliveries (out of a target of 8,000) since the start of the COVID-19 crisis.



	COVID-19 response activities
	• Eight new confirmed COVID-19 cases were reported in Gaza, bringing the total, as of 4 June, to 69 cases all detected in, and confined to, quarantine centres for returned travellers.
	• The total number of persons under compulsory quarantine for 21 days, as of 4 June, was 1,087; 374 cases have been able to leave.
Gaza	• 15,374 people had attended the Agency's COVID-19 triage points by 4 June. Eighteen triage points have been established in Agency schools to isolate patients with respiratory symptoms and another four have been established in HCs.
(GFO)	• By 4 June, 2,578 home deliveries of essential medicines to patients over 70 years and/or with diabetes had been carried out in cooperation with the RSS programme.
	• HCs are operating reduced services and 12,497 remote consultations have been carried out on recently established telephone hotlines. Following the Eid al-Fitr holiday there has been a significant increase in in-person visits to HCs resulting in a renewed emphasis on social distancing and other precautionary measures given the potential for crowding. The move to an appointment system is being considered.
West Bank	• On 26 May, all HCs resumed normal operations, including Biddou Health Centre which had been temporarily closed due to exposure to a COVID-19 case. Staff are now working at full capacity and the rotation system has ended. Emergency dental and physiotherapy services have also been resumed.
(WBFO)	• Health staff are recommending patients use the health advice service prior to attending surgeries and the triage system continues to operate in all HCs.
	Annual Report 2019
HQ Programme	• <u>The Health Department's Annual Report 2019</u> has been released online and in print. Summarizing the health programme's activities the Annual Report has been issued since the early 1950s and represents the history of the health services offered to Palestine refugees over seven decades.



education

	COVID-19 response activities
Jordan (JFO)	• Work continues on preparing catch up classes for school students and students in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and Faculty of Educational Sciences and Arts (FESA) in line with Jordanian government directives.
Lebanon (LFO)	• The Self-Learning Programme (SLP) ended on 31 May, and was followed by an assessment period for students. Student participation has fluctuated in recent weeks due to technical challenges and the Eid al-Fitr holiday. On 15 June, LFO will launch an online SLP catch up plan for students who were unable to participate due to lack of tablets or internet problems. In order to remedy this communication assistance and tablets will be provided to families in need of these.
Syria (SFO)from across Syria to help them prepare for measures are in place, including physical dis per class, the disinfection of classrooms and • The return of 1,084 TVET first and second-y (MoE) requirements that all students should personal protective equipment (PPE) is being	• 58 Agency schools have reopened for 15 days (from 31 May to 13 June) for 4,385 Grade 9 students from across Syria to help them prepare for their final exams on 22 June. Various preventative measures are in place, including physical distancing in class, reduction in the numbers of students per class, the disinfection of classrooms and distribution of sanitizer bottles.
	• The return of 1,084 TVET first and second-year students was delayed due to Ministry of Education (MoE) requirements that all students should wear face masks. The curriculum is being updated and personal protective equipment (PPE) is being procured for students in line with the government's guidelines. Counselling and career guidance continues through Facebook groups.
Gaza (GFO)	 The 276 schools and two TVETs remain closed. There have been 8,665 individual visits to the Interactive Learning Programme, 119,090 individual online visits to Self-Learning Material and 1,237 individual visits to online TVET materials over the reporting period. End of year certificates are being distributed to students online as an exceptional measure while registration for Grade 1 entrants is being done through parent visits under controlled conditions. To date, 28,068 new students (14,632 boys and 13,436 girls) are enrolled for the next school year.
	• As an exceptional COVID-19 measure to allow greater spacing of students, 43 UNRWA schools have been made available as testing centres for the secondary school Tawjihi exams.
West Bank (WBFO)	 TVET students who have been participating in distance learning started their online exams on 1 June. School principals continue to enroll Grade 1 students for the coming school year using social media channels. To date, 1,502 students have been enrolled in the Education Management Information System (EMIS), about 45 percent of the enrollment of the previous school year.
HQ Programme	apposed action is patimies is a specific of the catch up phase, which will involve school attendance to some level and crucially the Back to School phase. Underpinning all planning is the key principle of social distancing, through split classes, shifts, blended learning, and health and hygiene. With regard to the five key areas of the EIE COVID-19 response there was progress as follows:
	1. Self-learning: The HQ curriculum team continued working on reviewing Self Learning Material (SLM) developed by the Lebanon and Gaza field offices, as well as other materials developed by third parties in Jordan. The team is working now on the UNRWA guide to developing SLM, which will draw on examples from all Fields with regard to key elements of self-study material to support children's learning and contribute to their well-being.



	COVID-19 response activities
	2. PSS, Safety and Hygiene: HQ Education continues to hold meetings with the Agency-wide PSS Sub-group to share knowledge and experience on all aspects of the PSS, Safety and Hygiene strand of the COVID-19 response. An HRCRT (human rights, conflict resolution and tolerance) animated video featuring School Parliamentarians and students of the School Health Committees to raise awareness of students and the community on COVID-19 preventive measures will be finalized early June. The video will be shared with all schools and uploaded on the UNRWA YouTube channel.
HQ Programme	3. TVET: TVET HQ leads on the TVET emergency response during the COVID-19 crisis. TVET HQ is providing regular support to the Fields in implementing their Emergency Response Plans and monitoring needs and challenges. Alongside the work on the COVID-19 emergency response, the rolling out of the e-SRS (student registration system) is also in process as is the development of the Safety Education Technical Instruction (ETI).
	4. Monitoring and Evaluation: The collection of data for the Parent Survey is complete in all Fields and the data will now be analyzed by the HQ team and the analysis will be shared soon. The report on the Mapping of the various technological tools used in the UNRWA Fields for student self-study is close to finalization and discussions will follow on how to best deploy its findings.
	• Partnerships and Communication: HQ Education continues to engage in regional discussions on the COVID-19 response. HQ Education participated in a Global Partnership for Education webinar on 4 June where discussions centred on M&E approaches used for the COVID-19 Education response. The Director of Education led an internal Facebook live session on 3 June to discuss the Education response to COVID-19 in all phases, and respond to questions raised by the participants, before and during the session, on Catch Up and Back to School phases of schools reopening post COVID-19.
Key Constraints	Education Programme HQ • Financial limitations will affect the Catch Up and Back to School phases of the emergency response, phases based on key principles of social distancing and health and hygiene.



relief and social services

	COVID-19 response activities
Jordan (JFO)	• The cash distribution for ex-Gazans in Jerash camp was completed with 5,432 households and 35 PRI (Palestinian refugees from Iraq) households receiving the assistance.
Lebanon	 Emergency cash distributions were resumed after the Eid el-Fitr holiday on 28 May. By 4 June, 68,749 refugee families had received a total LBP 35,405 million. Under this Emergency relief assistance all beneficiaries eligible for UNRWA services in Lebanon received LBP 112,000 (US\$ 75) through Western Union/Bank of Beirut finance distribution points. Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) received LBP 640,000 (US\$ 425) per family through the Multi-
(LFO)	Purpose Cash Assistance programme, and LBP 162,000 (US\$ 107) per person in food assistance, which includes their usual April and May scheduled payments.
	• As part of the relief distribution, LFO had, by 6 June, received updated addresses and mobile phone numbers for more than 27,000 beneficiary families.
	• Regular social worker visits continue to be suspended. Remote emergency PSS is being provided.
Syria (SFO)	• The second emergency cash distribution for 2020 began on 21 May, starting with support for 10,000 persons who have access to ATMs. Distributions for other beneficiaries began on 31 May. This round will cover three months of assistance together with a top-up of US\$ 10 per person as additional assistance in view of the economic challenges due to COVID-19. Twenty percent of eligible refugees (24,886 individuals) have now received the cash assistance. Additional distribution outlets were established in order to speed up the process.
	• Family support offices are now open to receive and follow up on gender based violence (GBV) cases, including those in relation to civil documentation.
	• The opening of community-based organizations (CBOs) has been delayed in order to ensure appropriate protective measures are in place.
	• RSS offices remain closed and staff are working remotely with no home visits. Through remote working they have responded to 2,650 phone calls and emails from beneficiaries, mainly related to food assistance, over the reporting period.
Gaza (GFO)	• Around 53,533 families are scheduled to receive their food baskets under the new home delivery modality during the reporting period as part of the second food cycle distribution for 2020, which started on 17 May.
	• 679 children with disabilities received hygiene kits.
	• NFIs and food baskets were distributed to 33 quarantined households in the Jerusalem area and to 11 quarantined households in the Hebron area at the end of May. The packaging of NFIs and food baskets to support families under home quarantine is ongoing.
West Bank	• A GBV project, funded by the Government of Italy, has been extended for 10 months until the end of March 2021. Training plans for the Health and Education programmes will start later in June 2020.
(WBFO)	• The PSS first aid hotline received 114 calls during the reporting period.
	• The numbers of beneficiaries assisted through remote support by specialized programmes over the reporting week were: 13 (Women's Programme), 29 (Disability Programme), 44 (Child and Family Protection Programme), and 43 (Crisis Intervention Unit). The CIU team continues to process bank transfer payments for families affected by armed conflict.

COVID-19 response activities	
	Staff care:
HQ Programme	• A counselling service remains available to Area staff in all Fields and HQ Amman to provide staff with additional support while they are still working remotely and facing issues arising from the COVID-19 crisis. Additional support is being provided through a series of videos posted to the official UNRWA staff Facebook group.
	• A counselling service for international staff continues to be available to international staff in all Fields and HQ Amman upon request. This service is provided by external clinical psychologists and is confidential and free of charge.



infrastructure & camp improvement (icip)

COVID-19 response activities	
Syria (SFO)	 Sixteen additional labourers have been hired for environmental health duties in all the camps. All ICIP staff have now returned to working from the office.
Gaza (GFO)	 The total volume of solid waste collected from the camps over the reporting period was 3,141 tons. All shelter rehabilitation activities and construction works continue to be temporarily suspended.
West Bank (WBFO)	• All construction and maintenance projects are being closely followed to expedite works and to ensure that contractors are fully adhering to the Agency's COVID-19 health and safety instructions. There has been some progress with regards to the number of labourers now working on the project sites. Project managers have been asked to submit COVID-19-related time extension requests for review and approvals.
HQ Programme	 Guidelines for safe work practices and occupational health and safety for sanitation services and construction activities are under preparation. Coordination is ongoing with the Fields and technical support is being provided to ICIP teams on safely managing construction activities.
Key Constraints	• Due to the volatile economic situation in Syria, SFO is experiencing difficulties in procuring goods and securing contractors.



microfinance

COVID-19 response activities

Gaza Field Office:

HQ Programme
 The disbursement of loans restarted on 1 June, in order to help people earn an income (e.g. as construction workers) or to support them to manage their projects through the Microfinance programme. This is considered critical in order to help revive the local market and economic sector in general. MD loan officers made 479 calls to clients in the reporting period and 73 loan repayments were received.
 MD Gaza opened its three branches full-time from 31 May, although staff will work on a rotation basis and are being provided with face masks and sanitizer gel.



COVID-19 response activities	
Jordan (JFO)	 Five GBV and nine general protection cases were recorded and follow-up was made with psychosocial support and referrals to relevant programmes. GBV staff are networking with the Agency's GBV focal points around the country to find ways to address the low number of GBV cases being reported. Meetings have been held between the Agency's protection team, UNCHR, WFP, UNICEF, ICRC and ACTED regarding legal documentation issues for PRS residents in the King Abdullah Park refugee
	camp in Irbid Governorate in the north.
	• Family support offices are now open to receive and follow-up on GBV cases, including those relating to civil documentation issues such as registering divorces.
Syria (SFO)	Plans are being established to resume in-person and online protection trainings.
	•There is ongoing monitoring of the protection situation and political developments in the country, including those impacting access to Agency services.
	Limited neutrality inspections continued.
Gaza (GFO)	• Review of SOPs for remote critical case management is being undertaken.
West Bank (WBFO)	 The UNRWA COVID-19 Response Question and Answers Factsheet, produced by the Protection and Neutrality team in coordination with the programmes, was published on the WBFO Facebook page. Some in-person documentation has re-started on alleged human rights violations of refugees by both Israeli and Palestinian security forces, in addition to using the remote documentation approach.



human resources

COVID-19 response activities	
	The 'Return to Office' FAQs were updated and disseminated to all staff.
HQ Programme	• A Facebook session will be online in the second week of June on 'Going back to the office and resuming work in UNRWA after COVID-19'. The session provides guidance and tips for staff to follow to ensure a healthy and safe return to the office, and will explain control measures to mitigate the risks of spreading COVID-19.

priorities

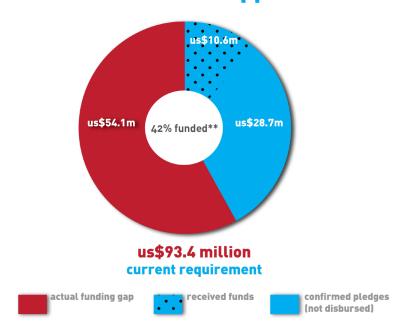
	COVID-19 response activities
Jordan (JFO)	• In line with the back-to-office plan, JFO in Amman and Area offices throughout the country ar gradually receiving staff, but on a limited capacity and for limited hours, to meet the needs of the community.
Syria (SFO)	 SFO's back-to-office plan has been operationalized and protective measures are in place to enable services to resume. In preparation for a rapid assessment on the impact of COVID-19 on Palestine refugees beneficiary questionnaire has been shared with the government's General Authority for Palestinia Refugees (GAPAR) for their input.
Gaza (GFO)	 Planning for education catch up sessions and the new school year with COVID-19 related measured being taken into consideration in relation to the usual class sizes of over 40 students. Planning for catch up registration of newborn babies after months of registration suspension. Planning for support to non-refugees with non-communicable diseases to help ease the burden of the public health sector, which is re-directing significant efforts to provide staff for the quarantin centres.
West Bank (WBFO)	 Preparation of food baskets and NFI kits for families under home quarantine. Ongoing measures to develop and disseminate SOPs relating to the return to work for nor frontline staff and the gradual return of staff holding West Bank IDs to the Field Office in Jerusaler from 4 June. Continuous development and HQ review of a phased approach to the return to normal operation for admin/support functions, construction and maintenance, registration, social services and the health programme.
HQ Programme	 Education Programme HQ Self-learning Finalizing the UNRWA Guide to developing Self Learning Material (SLM). Psychosocial, Safety and Hygiene Launching the HRCRT animated video to raise awareness on COVID-19 among students and the local community. TVET Disseminating the Emergency Response Grid to the Fields to support tracking of Fields' progress and identifying next steps. Launching the TVET Library for sharing learning materials and providing technical guidance to the Fields. Monitoring and Evaluation Analysis of data collected from the Agency-wide parent survey on students' access to technologia thome. Planning



funding

Updated COVID-19 UNRWA Flash Appeal

UNRWA has released an updated Flash Appeal, requesting US\$ 93.4 million to cover its humanitarian operations for COVID-19 response for the period March-July 2020. The Flash Appeal is available <u>here</u>.



covid-19 flash appeal*

* Confirmed pledges for the UNRWA COVID-19 Flash Appeal include US\$ 2.6 million in funds reallocated from previous pledges.

** Percentage of confirmed, non-disbursed pledges and received funds against the annual requirement. Funding status as of 10 June 2020



united nations relief and works agency for palestine refugees in the near east

www.unrwa.org

UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and is mandated to provide assistance and protection to a population of some 5.6 registered Palestine refugees. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and the Gaza Strip to achieve their full potential in human development, pending a just solution to their plight. UNRWA services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, microfinance and emergency assistance. UNRWA is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions