



A young Palestine refugee patient in the UNRWA Balata Health Centre, West Bank.
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highlights

- UNRWA Health Department is leading on the Agency's COVID-19 response and continue to issue a [one-page daily sitrep](#) with the latest epidemiological figures.
- UNRWA COVID-19 Response Updates for 2020 are available [here](#).
- Across UNRWA Fields of operation, the Back to Learning model has not only varied but also individual Fields have faced changes since the beginning of the 2020/21 school year due to the ever-evolving impact of COVID-19.
 - In Jordan, schools initially opened on 1 September with a face-to-face learning modality but then moved to full remote learning on 17 September for grades 4-10. The decision on whether children in grades 1-3 would attend school was left to parents. On 9 October, Jordan Field, in line with the Host Government, moved to full remote learning until the end of the first semester in January 2021.
 - In Lebanon, the start of the school year was postponed from 19 October to 2 November, with a phased approach to blended learning to be adopted.
 - In Gaza, school reopening was also postponed until 24 October. Grades 7-9 students will transition to a blended learning model on 2 November while grades 1-6 will continue with remote learning.
 - In Syria, the schools opened to a full face to face model of learning on 13 September.
 - In the West Bank, the school year began on 6 September with a phased approach to blended learning, with grades 1-4 students being admitted first and then from 20 September grades 5-10 returned to school.
- With the delayed start of the 2020/21 school year and the different modalities of learning, the annual Class Formation process has yet to be finalized. Indications to date, however, are that the overall enrolment has increased across the Agency from 533,342 (2019/20) to a projected 541,649 (2020/21). This is understood to be due to the economic challenges that are being faced in all Fields leading to parents perhaps moving their children out of private schools.
- There are no Programme Budget funds for any additional teachers to ensure a COVID-19 socially distanced model of learning. Social distancing in classrooms will have to be achieved by the Field education programmes through approaches such as reducing the number of subjects taught and increasing the amount of time students spend learning remotely.
- The Education in Emergencies (EiE) response to the COVID-19 pandemic has led to valuable lessons that, together with proposed ways forward, are now being captured in the forthcoming 'Quality education in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic: lessons learned and future implications' guide. The document represents a useful and rich tool, as well as a significant contribution that UNRWA Education brings to the discourse on the delivery of education in times of health crisis. In order to support the return of children, whether it is for full face to face learning or for blended with part of the time only spent in the school, Education developed the Health protocol, 'COVID-19: Protocol for the safe and healthy re-opening of UNRWA educational institutions'.

jordan The Government of Jordan has imposed a nationwide lockdown every Friday until the end of the year. A night curfew (11 p.m. to 6 a.m.), operational since 17 March, remains in place. Border crossings with Palestine and Saudi Arabia reopened.

west bank The Palestinian Authority (PA) extended the State of Emergency until the end of October. The PA Ministry of Health (MOH) recorded a decrease in reported COVID-19 cases in October with 400-500 cases per day. However, the last week of October saw a 6.5 per cent increase over the previous week. As of 31 October, the infection rate was 10.7 per cent of the total number of people who had tested positive, the recovery rate reached 88.4 per cent and the case fatality rate was 0.9 per cent. Changes were made to the coronavirus testing with MOH and WHO only testing patients experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. Contacts of people who have tested positive are required to follow quarantine procedures and are only themselves being tested if they experience symptoms. The Government of Israel extended its State of Emergency for an additional 60 days from 5 November to 3 January 2021 to try to get infection numbers down.

gaza The majority of Gaza is a 'green area' allowing for movement inside each governorate before the curfew (8 p.m. to 7 a.m.). Movement between the five governorates and within 'red areas' remains limited. The Egyptian border remained closed with some news on social media announcing it will be opened early November. Kerem Shalom crossing is open for basic commodities and fuel. Erez terminal remained closed with controlled entry being facilitated for limited numbers of Gaza ID holders. In late October the MOH and Ministry of Interior announced that the authorities will no longer manage the quarantine centres for returning travelers. Instead, returning travelers will be required to quarantine for seven days at home.



syria The Ministry of Health (MOH) has confirmed 5,580 COVID-19 cases (278 fatalities, 1,861 recoveries); 193 are reported to be health workers, mainly in Damascus. Among the 303 confirmed cases among school children and school staff, one student, a teacher and a school cleaner have died. These cases highlight the challenges of preventing transmission in schools, particularly given the overcrowded classrooms, insufficient qualified teaching personnel and poor or damaged infrastructure. Given the limited testing capacity across Syria it is likely that the actual number of cases may far exceed the official figures. The MOH reported that, as of 27 October, approximately 47,500 samples had been tested in laboratories in Damascus, Aleppo, Homs, Latakia and Rif (Rural) Damascus governorates. Border crossings between Syria and Lebanon remain open at specific times. Commercial passenger flights at Damascus International Airport resumed on 1 October. On 12 October, local authorities in North East Syria announced that all internal crossings would open, although movement restrictions at some crossing points continue to be applied. The Government of Syria continues to maintain the general widespread easing of restrictions that were introduced in May, with ad hoc changes being made, including the closure of some schools and classrooms where students or teachers have been confirmed as COVID-19 positive.

Lebanon Since 3 October, the Ministry of Interior has imposed local lockdowns on dozens of villages and towns in response to localized COVID-19 outbreaks. The list of local lockdowns is updated every Sunday.

unrwa response



health

COVID-19 response activities

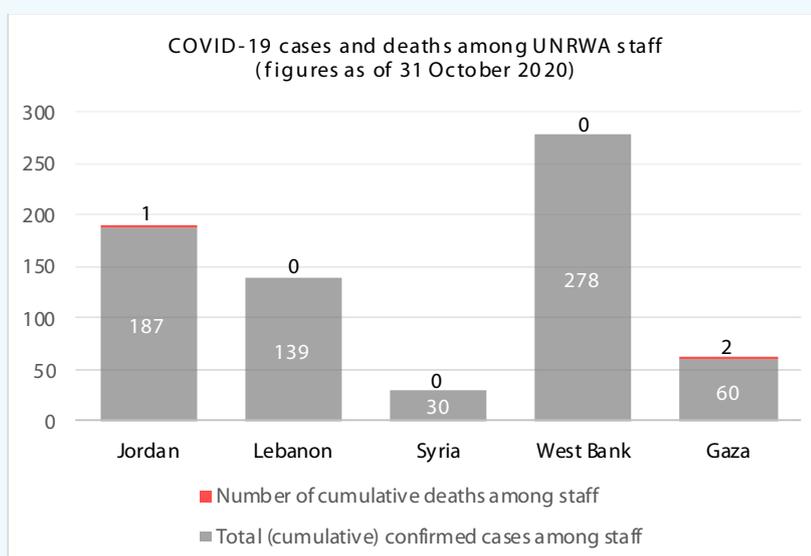
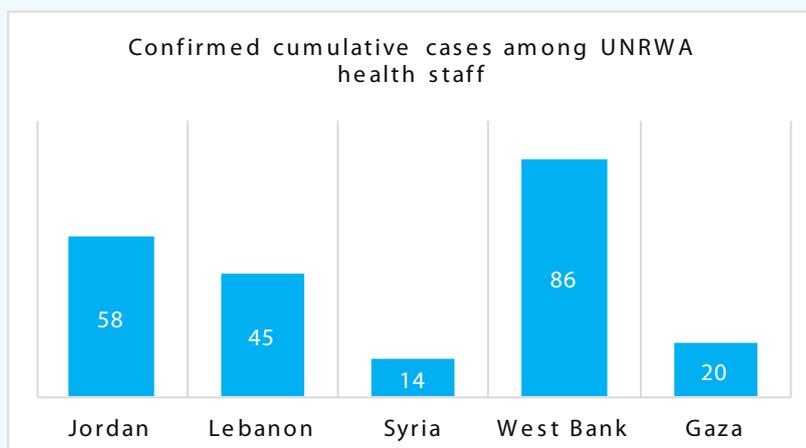
<p>Jordan (JFO)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 Cases: As of 31 October, the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Jordan was 72,607 (1,542 under treatment, 829 fatalities). In UNRWA, 181 staff have tested positive and one staff member has died. • Health Centres: Six Agency health centres (HCs) – Madaba, Amman New Camp, Irbid (New), Jerash, Souf and Zarqa – were temporarily closed due to confirmed COVID-19 cases among staff. All HCs reopened after a couple of days and after being thoroughly disinfected. The mobile dental clinic in King Abdullah Park (Irbid) refugee camp (for refugees from Syria) continued to operate on a weekly basis. • Telemedicine/Hotlines/NCD Mobile App: Telemedicine services began operations in all 25 HCs. • Community Outreach Campaigns: Health awareness messages, including the importance of social distancing, and the Agency’s operational updates continued to be distributed through social media channels.
<p>Lebanon (LFO)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 Cases: As of 31 October, LFO had registered 2,138 COVID-19 cases among Palestine refugees (1,531 recoveries; 59 fatalities), including 139 UNRWA staff members between 21 February and 31 October. In October alone, LFO registered 1,056 new COVID-19 cases and 31 new fatalities among Palestine refugees. • Health Centres: All 27 HCs continued to operate from 8.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. A family health team has been assigned, since 16 March, to work with patients with flu-like symptoms on a two-week rotation basis and triage facilities are in place in all HCs. Foot traffic at HCs continues to be between one-third and a half of pre-COVID-19 levels. • Isolation/Quarantine Centres: Siblin Isolation Centre (near Saida) admitted 27 new COVID-19 patients, including nine people living in camps and 18 from refugee gatherings outside the official camps. The new patients were 15 men and 12 women, including one Palestinian refugee from Syria (PRS) and 18 migrant workers of other nationalities. The isolation centres at Sammouh (Saida) and El Buss (Tyre) have not yet been activated. • Community Outreach Campaigns: COVID-19 awareness-raising sessions continue to be held inside HCs. In addition, the Ministry of Public Health continues widespread awareness raising campaigns.
<p>Syria (SFO)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 Cases: Twenty-three Palestine refugees have tested positive and six have died from the coronavirus. Thirty UNRWA staff have tested positive and 14 remain in quarantine. SFO has signed a contract, effective on 6 October, with the Government-approved Sabah Laboratory in Damascus where Agency staff can be given PCR tests on referral from the UNRWA Health Department. UNRWA will reimburse staff 95 per cent of the cost.

COVID-19 response activities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Health Centres: The Agency's 25 health facilities continued to operate a triage system for people with respiratory symptoms and 14,436 cases (non-COVID-19) were diagnosed during October (89,885 patients have reported respiratory complaints since reporting began in March). Phase II of SFO's emergency plan was implemented during October, resulting in the suspension of a number of health services requiring in-person consultations, including all screening activities, women's pre-conception care and pre-natal examinations (except for high-risk pregnancies and women in their third trimester), non-communicable disease (NCD) examinations, dental curative consultations and mental health and psychosocial (MHPSS) screening. · Isolation/Quarantine Centres: There have been no new developments since September. · Medication Home Deliveries: SFO carried out 129 medication home deliveries for vulnerable NCD patients over 65 years. Patients in Muzeirib and Jilin (Dera'a) continued to collect their medicines from the Agency HC due to ongoing insecurity in the area. · Telemedicine/Helplines: 9,110 telemedicine calls were received in October, bringing the total to 34,063 calls since the service became available in April.
<p style="text-align: center;">Gaza (GFO)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · COVID-19 Cases: The total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases, since the first local transmission case on 24 August, was recorded at 3,470, including 29 UNRWA staff. An estimated 10,000 people were in compulsory quarantine in October. · Health Centres: In-person health services were resumed on 5 October but with reduced appointment slots for antenatal care, preconception care, children's growth monitoring and vaccinations. Other services were resumed on 7 October, including NCD services except screening, laboratory services for maternal and NCD cases, physiotherapy services for critical cases and MHPSS services for urgent and critical cases. Dental services for emergency cases were resumed on 13 October. The number of patient visits to HCs during October, using the appointment system, was 92,896 and 131,117 remote consultations also took place. With an increase in the numbers of people attending HCs the challenge has been to manage appropriate distancing and to reduce over-crowding. Extra staff members are also now needed to maintain additional services (telemedicine, triage, respiratory unit). · Triage Points: The number of visits to triage points was 25,739. · Medication home deliveries: GFO carried out 3,113 drop offs of NCD medications from 1-7 October. The service was suspended from 7 October when in-person services were resumed in HCs.
<p style="text-align: center;">West Bank (WBFO)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · COVID-19 Cases: There was a spike in COVID-19 cases among refugees in the camps with an average of 100 cases a day and the total number reached 9,069 at the end of October: 2,706 in the Hebron area (30 per cent); 4,324 in the Nablus area (48 per cent); and 2,039 in East Jerusalem (22 per cent). As of 31 October, the cumulative COVID-19-related deaths among refugees reached 79. In the Agency there was 52 active positive cases among staff: 18 in the Jerusalem area; 12 in the Hebron area; 19 in the Nablus area; and three staff at the Field Office in East Jerusalem. · Isolation/Quarantine Centres: WBFO is supporting the isolation centres through providing maintenance and cleaning services, training for sanitation workers and providing supplies, including PPEs, hygiene kits and dignity items. The Agency is also procuring air conditioning units from the local market. Supplies were distributed to the isolation centres in Balata, Askar, Tulkarm, Jenin, Fawwar, Am'ari, Kalandia and Deir'Ammar camps from 20-29 October. The distributions were supported by Action Against Hunger (ACF) and funded through the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) managed by OCHA. Other items, such as mattresses, blankets and medical equipment (blood pressure devices, patient monitors) were donated by WHO-oPt and 90 per cent of supplies had arrived by the end of October. · Medication Home Deliveries: WBFO delivered medications to 1,136 patients, mainly NCD patients and patients with disabilities. · Telemedicine/Hotlines/NCD Mobile App: 192 calls were received through the toll-free HC hotline during October, while 39 home visits were made for pregnant women and elderly refugees. · Other COVID-19 Related Issues: The health programme's mental health supervisor carried out psychosocial training sessions for Relief and Social Services staff from 10-22 October.

COVID-19 response activities

• Three UNRWA staff members have died from coronavirus. The total cumulative number of affected UNRWA staff was 694 by 31 October, including 223 health staff across the five Fields (see Field breakdown below). Confirmed COVID-19 cases among Agency staff is reported to the unified United Nations Notification and Reporting System.



HQ Programme

• The e-NCD mobile application (Tatbiq Sahta ma UNRWA) (<https://encd-app.unrwa.org/>) was launched on 13 October. The Health Department, in cooperation with the Agency's Information Management and Technology Department (IMTD), designed the app to improve health information services to patients with diabetes and hypertension. The app, which is also supported by a website, gives NCD patients real time access to their electronic health records in the Agency's e-Health system. Patients are able to receive push notifications on, for example, the distribution of NCD medication, HC opening times and availability of services as well as awareness raising messaging on COVID-19 preventive measures. The development of the mobile app was made possible with financial support from the Government of Japan and the World Diabetes Foundation (WDF) in Denmark.

• Two 'living' documents have been produced that can be adjusted taking into consideration changing circumstances: 'Guidelines for UNRWA Staff to Make the Workplace Safe' and 'FAQs on Managing and Keeping Workplaces Safe During COVID-19'.

• The Health Department has introduced into its e-Health system a tool to monitor the number of patients who are triaged at HCs based on their respiratory symptoms, especially those at high risk such as the elderly and those suffering from several health issues. Data is gathered to monitor and support preventive actions at HCs by identifying patients with the potential to transmit respiratory infections such as COVID-19.

• The UNRWA Director of Health made a presentation on UNRWA's efforts to combat COVID-19 at the World Health Summit 2020 panel discussion on 'Migrant and Refugee Health: Towards an Agenda of Solutions', on 27 October.



UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini meets students in Yarmouk refugee camp on his first visit to Syria. © 2020 UNRWA Photo by Tagherid Mohammed



education

COVID-19 response activities	
Jordan (JFO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · School Closures/Self-learning: The Ministry of Education suspended school attendance for all students on 8 October. Students in UNRWA schools switched to the Agency's online lessons as well as TV and online lessons provided by the Ministry of Education. · Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET): Similar to the schools, all TVET institutions were instructed to suspend student attendance from 8 October, with the exception of practical classes, which will be conducted with blended learning.
Lebanon (LFO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · School Closures/Self-learning: LFO's accelerated online catch-up programme, which supported 26,508 students to review materials from the previous school year, ended on 10 October. UNRWA schools will start to receive children for the 2020/21 school year from 2 November onwards. Classes will be held using blended learning with some providing face-to-face teaching while others will use remote learning. To aid COVID-19 prevention planning in schools, in particular physical distancing in classrooms, no student will be registered for the 2020/21 school year after 6 November. · PSS, Safety and Hygiene: LFO's precautionary health measures and procedures for schools follow WHO and MOH regulations and UNRWA health protocols: physical distancing rules (chairs must be one metre apart at the front and back and two metres apart at the sides); face masks must be worn and hands regularly washed or sanitized to maintain good hygiene practices. There will be no breaks to prevent students and teachers mixing in the playground and school canteens will be closed. All schools have been disinfected. The Agency is hiring additional daily paid school attendants to carry out cleaning. Children will be monitored for signs of COVID-19 while in school and school principals are preparing rooms or isolation spaces for anyone showing symptoms. LFO is also coordinating with local transport providers to ensure that school bus drivers fully adhere to COVID-19 safety measures. · TVET: In October, 488 Siblin Training Centre (STC) trainees completed their practical training for the 2019/20 academic year and will be referred to local employers for on-the-job training.

COVID-19 response activities

Syria (SFO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Closures: All Agency schools have been open since 13 September. However, in October sections in one school in Qudsaya suburb in Rif Damascus were temporarily closed in line with MOH protocols when there are any confirmed cases among students and teachers. • Self-Learning: Self-Learning materials, which were finalized for the whole curriculum in September, were under review. • TVET: In October, an additional 436 students started their studies, bringing the total number of TVET students to 1,275 for the 2020/21 academic year, including 774 first year and 501 second year students. Health education sessions on COVID-19 prevention and control were held for all 1,126 students at the Damascus Training Centre (DTC) (597 male and 529 female students) and for all DTC instructors and administrative staff. Student health committees have been formed to support students with their daily hygiene practices and social distancing routine in the lecture rooms.
Gaza (GFO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Closures: Teachers were requested to report to their schools to support preparations for blended learning while continuing remote learning and communicating with their students until health conditions improved to allow schools to reopen. Teachers in elementary schools (grades 1-6) returned to schools on 17 October and those in preparatory schools (grades 7-9) returned on 20 October. • Self-Learning: Remote learning started on 24 October and will continue until new instructions on blended learning are issued. Students' textbooks and self-learning materials were distributed between 20-26 October. • PSS, Safety and Hygiene: Tele-counselling support services are provided by school counsellors and include: follow-up on existing cases, consultations and guidance for parents, teachers and students; and identifying new cases that need further screening. Since 25 August, at the beginning of the lockdown, to 25 October, school counsellors have provided 6,753 phone consultations to students, 3,411 consultations to teachers and administration staff, and 10,439 consultations to parents. As part of the Agency's efforts to provide a safe and COVID-free environment, GFO undertook preventive and precautionary measures, including disinfecting all schools, providing schools with cleaning materials and training school guards on the effective use of disinfectants. • TVET: Plans were underway for the reopening of TVET centres taking into consideration student and staff safety while ensuring quality education will be provided.
West Bank (WBFO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Closures: Forty Agency schools in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, out of 96 (41 per cent) were closed from 6 September to 18 October due to the rapid increase in the number of COVID-19 cases, including confirmed cases in schools among students, teachers and non-teaching staff. In East Jerusalem, UNRWA schools in Shu'fat camp reopened with blended learning for grades 1-4 students on 19 October. Classes for grades 5-9 in the boys' and girls' schools in Shu'fat remained closed in line with Israeli COVID-19 school regulations, which also apply in East Jerusalem, and self-learning continued. • Self-Learning: A Learning Student Assessment Plan was circulated on 15 October as a guide to help parents support their children's learning using the UNRWA Self-Learning Programme. Self-learning materials were distributed to students in isolated Bedouin communities in Area C. The Agency's education programme and protection unit, UNICEF and the Protection Cluster and community partners are collectively supporting Bedouin communities whose already scarce resources are being stretched by the COVID-19 pandemic. • PSS, Safety and Hygiene: A Psychosocial Support and Recreational Activities Resource Guide was made available for teachers and psychosocial staff. A referral system with case protocols is being prepared. Strict health protocols are implemented at schools with a focus on wearing face masks and social-physical distancing. Active confirmed cases or contacts with active cases are managed based on the Agency's guide 'Managing infected cases of COVID-19 in UNRWA schools'. • Community Campaigns: A community campaign, supported by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), was carried out in schools in Jalazone camp near Ramallah to promote awareness on health and social well-being in addition to COVID-19 health and safety measures.

COVID-19 response activities

HQ Programme

- The HQ Education in Emergencies (EiE) COVID-19 Task Force continues to support the Agency-wide COVID-19 EiE Response, working with the Fields in different ways, from strategic and operational direction, to the development of resources, to representing the programme in webinars and other fora. Weekly meetings of Field Chiefs and the HQ Education COVID-19 Task Force are key for sharing experiences, ideas and issues.
- There has been emphasis, led by the HQ Education Department working closely with the IMTD, on addressing the findings of the Agency-wide study on the use of technology to support students learning during the period of school closures and the challenges many students faced. Although the studies indicated the use of a mix of non-tech, low-tech and high-tech learning materials and modalities, the Education Department is working on a number of fronts with regard to extending the use of technology to support children's learning. To this effect, work is progressing very well on an Agency-wide Content Hub where all the Self Learning Material of each Field will be categorised and available. The need for children to have mobile devices, such as Tablets, is also crucial and the Agency is exploring every possibility for support with this.
- The Education Department continues to support fundraising with regard to three main areas: the need for additional staff (teachers, school attendants and school counsellors), PPE, cleaning supplies and equipment, devices and connectivity and printing of self-learning materials.
- The Education response to the COVID-19 crisis continues to be framed under the same five areas of focus:
 - **Learning Continuity:** The HQ curriculum team continues to review all self-learning materials developed by UNRWA Fields for student use at home, during Catch Up programmes or the 2020/21 school year for either remote or the blended learning modality. HQ Education has been following-up with the Fields on the availability of new school textbooks – and also on the initiation of subsequent reviews – for the 2020/21 school year, in particular, as the COVID-19 pandemic has caused delays in the production of textbooks in some Fields.
 - **PSS, Safety and Hygiene:** Over 7,356 students across the five Fields participated in the Drawing and Writing Initiative (Poetry, Poem Prose and Story) competition, launched by the Education Department in July. Submissions were registered on the Education Management Information System (EMIS) and 'judging' is ongoing. Some small 'prizes' will be given to students who made an outstanding submission.
 - **TVET:** TVET HQ continues to support and monitor the COVID-19 Emergency Response across all the Fields and has been following-up with the Fields to gather more input, particularly on Graduation, Practical Training, On-the-Job Training, Catch-up and the Reopening of VTCs and dormitories. TVET HQ is also working on synthesizing all the data and updates. TVET HQ is working to strengthen the online approach with an external expert to support the development of the capacity of instructors on the development of online TVET courses and materials.
 - **Monitoring and Evaluation:** A new Agency-wide COVID-19 Student Survey will be implemented across the five Fields to monitor students' experience of learning. The Director of Education and the Senior Education Specialist participated in a global consultation about COVID-19 and ICTs for an EdTech co-hub led by Professor Tim Unwin and the final version of the Guidance, 'Supporting the effective use of digital technologies for learning by refugee children and displaced persons' is now available (click [here](#) to view).
 - **Partnerships and Communication:** On World Teachers' Day the Education and Communications Division worked on an overall celebration of UNRWA teachers with short videos and Thank You messages from students to their teachers, which were recorded and posted on UNRWA social media platforms. A letter from the Director of Education to UNRWA teachers and all other education colleagues was distributed by each Field (click [here](#) to view). Teachers were given the opportunity to write tweets on their experience of supporting students and learning during school closures and these were sent through the Commissioner-General's Twitter Account. The Director of Education participated in a panel event, Educate A Child (EAC) webinar 'Keep Children Learning – Part IV – The Role of Teachers' on 7 October

COVID-19 response activities

<p>HQ Programme</p>	<p>2020. The Director Education also participated as a key speaker in a regional forum organized by UNESCO on Word Teachers' Day on 8 October. UNRWA continues to work with regional partners on the Back to Learning and here UNRWA co-organized and helped to moderate a Regional Ministerial Meeting on Back to Learning in the Arab States on 14 October, with UNESCO, UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR and the World Bank.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding: The support provided to the UNRWA COVID-19 EiE response by the Education Cannot Wait (ECW), through the First Emergency Response (FER) COVID-19 mechanism, has now been extended until January 2021.
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relief and social services (rss)

COVID-19 response activities

<p>Jordan (JFO)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency cash assistance: The distribution of COVID-19 one-time cash assistance of JD 182 for 20,277 Ex-Gazan families continued using the Jordan Post Company. An extra week from 26 October to 2 November was secured to allow those who did not have the chance to apply during the previous period to update their registration information and provide supporting documents. Once verified, eligible families will receive the cash assistance.
<p>Lebanon (LFO)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Cash Assistance: The distribution of emergency assistance to Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) continued, which included a monthly multipurpose cash assistance amount of US\$ 100 per family and monthly cash for food assistance of LBP 70,000 (US\$ 27 per person based on WFP's survival minimum expenditure basket). Separately, planning for a second round of COVID-19 emergency cash assistance for a larger segment of the Palestine refugee population (contingent on availability of funds) also continued.
<p>Syria (SFO)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Cash Assistance: Planning began for the third round of emergency cash assistance, which will start on 1 November for 416,000 persons. Refugees in the most vulnerable categories (including women-headed households, persons with disabilities, households headed by older persons and unaccompanied minors) will receive US\$ 70 and refugees from the remaining vulnerable caseload will receive US\$ 45 representing five months of cash assistance. • Emergency Food Distribution/Food Baskets: The second round of food distribution started on 7 October. Given the exceptional socioeconomic challenges faced by Palestinian refugees from Syria, this was a blanket food distribution targeting 415,000 refugees. As of 31 October, 24,647 families (47,870 individuals) received the food aid. • Community Awareness: Twenty awareness sessions on COVID-19 were organized for the 1,678 children registered in Early Childhood Centres at the Community-based organizations (CBOs).
<p>Gaza (GFO)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Basket Assistance: In October, 142,780 families received food baskets, including 416 families in quarantine at home. This is part of the large-scale food assistance programme supporting over one million families in Gaza. A number of pilot delivery schemes have been organized since early September, including using mobile distribution centres, collection points with enhanced safety measures and by utilizing schools as temporary distribution centres. • Hotlines: Hotlines received 4,738 calls and 553 emails with 85.4 per cent of enquiries relating to food distribution. • PSS Support: Twenty-six intervention cases were identified by the Area Social Work Supervisor through the hotlines and 82 active cases received psychosocial consultation services. Legal consultations were provided to 120 active cases and 112 active cases received case management



UNRWA staff in Beddawi camp, Lebanon gather information for emergency cash assistance disbursement. © 2020 UNRWA photo by Maysoun Mustafa

COVID-19 response activities	
Gaza (GFO)	<p>services. 1,331 elderly refugees (762 women and 569 men) were provided with psychological first aid in coordination with the health programme and eight cases were referred for social work interventions. Under the back to school project psychosocial consultation services were provided for 64 children's cases and case management services were provided for 27 children's cases. Seven Community Based Rehabilitation Centres (CBRC) provided special education services for 676 children with disabilities (291 girls and 387 boys).</p>
West Bank (WBFO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Cash Assistance: In October, as was the case in September, the Agency was unable to provide any emergency cash assistance to refugees severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic due to funding shortages. • Emergency Food Distribution/Food Baskets/NFIs (Hygiene Kits): Distributions to isolated communities in the Seam Zone included: 2,749 food baskets and 1,394 hygiene and 'dignity' kits for 394 children, 545 women/girls and 157 elderly people. • Emergency Hotlines/Psychological First Aid (PFA): The hotline continued to offer PFA support services and received calls from 435 refugees during October. Cases are referred for specialized services such as PSS, food assistance, protection and health. • Community Awareness: An online video explaining the process of online refugee registration was released on 29 October to encourage refugees to update their information to ensure that UNRWA has up-to-date accurate records, particularly given the difficulties in accessing Agency offices during the COVID-19 pandemic. • Staff Care: Fourteen staff care sessions were held for 101 local RSS staff (62 women, 39 men) in all three Area offices (North, Central and South) and received positive feedback from the participants. Two staff care sessions were also held for Area office supervisory staff and senior management.

COVID-19 response activities

HQ Programme	<p>Staff Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · A counseling service remains available to Area staff in all five fields and HQ Amman to provide additional support with issues arising from the COVID-19 context. This service is confidential and free of charge. · A counseling service for international staff continues to be available to international staff in all five fields and HQ Amman upon request. This service is provided by external clinical psychologists and is confidential and free of charge.
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protection

COVID-19 response activities

Jordan (JFO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Helplines: Twenty-eight protection cases were identified through JFO's helplines from 4-22 October. In addition, JFO continued to provide protection services (Child Protection, GBV and other general assistance) to Palestine refugees.
Lebanon (LFO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · GBV/Child Protection/MHPSS: 136 Palestine refugees participated in online psychological support sessions and 665 persons attended online sessions on GBV prevention and response. LFO has developed anti-bullying promotion materials, which will be launched at the start of the new school year in November. LFO also continued its standard practice of offering PSS support to everyone (refugee and non-refugee) hosted at the Sibling Isolation Centre to support them during their quarantine/isolation period. · Disability Inclusion: Two remote awareness sessions on disability were organized by women and girl committees under the guidance of UNRWA and partner Terre des Hommes. The sessions reached 32 members of the refugee community. · Community Engagement: Focus group discussions were organized with refugees, including Palestinian refugees from Syria, in nine camps to analyse the impact of Lebanon's economic, financial and political crises on the protection situation of refugees in the camps. · Monitoring and Evaluation: LFO began a light audit process across all programmes to assess their progress in key protection areas and agreed priorities. The audit process is expected to last until the end of 2020. · Legal Aid: Work continued with the refugee community to mitigate the socioeconomic effects of the COVID-19 crisis, including through legal referrals for representation in court cases on labour and family law, through multiple online sessions of right-to-work trainings (attended by 93 Palestine refugees), and by offering legal advice in response to 323 inquiries on Lebanon's labour law, civil registration, resettlement and other matters.
Syria (SFO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · GBV/Child Protection/MHPSS: Family support offices, with COVID-19 preventative measures in place, remained open to ensure the continuation of GBV and legal support services. During October, 357 refugees were provided with family support services. Remote PSS services were provided to the 870 refugees who contacted the service in September (including 196 women who received GBV-related PSS). Several yoga sessions were held for 80 male UNRWA staff in Damascus, Dera'a, Homs, Hama and Latakia. · Helplines: Very few calls were made to the protection helplines during October. Refugees with questions regarding entitlements and the food and cash rounds tend to use other channels and contact the HCs directly for health-related issues. In some camps refugees would rather directly approach UNRWA Chief Area officers rather than call a number in Damascus.

COVID-19 response activities

Syria (SFO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Engagement: In-person protection activities for particularly vulnerable Palestine refugees, focusing on women, children/UNRWA students and persons with disabilities continued throughout Syria. Activities for students focused on COVID-19 awareness raising and prevention, particularly on Global Hand Washing Day on 15 October. In-person activities for elderly refugees remained suspended, however there was regular remote communications with clubs for older persons. • Protection Trainings: In-person trainings for UNRWA staff focused on addressing violence against children (AVAC). • Monitoring and Evaluation: Monitoring of the protection situation, COVID-19 measures, and political developments affecting access for humanitarian assistance is ongoing.
Gaza (GFO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBV: Preparations began for the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence, which will start on 25 November. • Disability Inclusion: Planning also started for the International Day for Persons with Disabilities on 3 December, with an emphasis on access to Agency services during the COVID-19 pandemic. • Monitoring and Evaluation: The first draft of a protection dashboard was created. This initiative will enable a trend analysis to be carried out on protection cases during the pandemic.
West Bank (WBFO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBV/Child Protection/MHPSS: During October, the Child and Family Protection Programme received 338 new cases: 249 GBV cases and 88 child protection cases (268 women/girls and 70 men/boys). The reported protection incidents included: 92 cases of physical abuse; 82 psychological abuse; two cases of sexual abuse; 45 cases of denial of resources; 112 neglect cases; and five suicide attempts. • The Women Programme reached out to 42 families (242 family members) during October. Social workers found that women are most affected by the current pandemic. Cases were referred to specialized institutions, RSS's Hotline numbers and other programmes. • Disability Inclusion: The Disability Programme made 108 calls during October to refugees with disabilities to discuss needs, mainly in relation to food supplies, cash assistance, diapers, assistive devices, care giving and rehabilitation services — 39 calls to the North area (36 per cent), 18 to the Central area (17 per cent), and 51 to the South area (47 per cent). • Helplines: A partnership between the Hotline and CBOs, NGOs and International NGOs is being considered to provide the hotline service to include non-refugees seeking PSS support services from UNRWA. • Community Engagement: The Disability Programme organized an online meeting with CBRCs and Local Aid Committees (LACs) in the camps to strengthen their contribution to meeting the needs of persons with disabilities and their families during COVID-19.
HQ Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability inclusion: A UN Disability Inclusion Strategy COVID-19 Working Group-Humanitarian Working Stream Good Practices report featured the Agency's good practices, such as assessments on COVID-19 pandemic's impact on families in West Bank who have members with disabilities. The document highlights how UNRWA, through the CBRCs, has supported families with home deliveries of supplies, advanced cash transfers, deferred loans, provided assistive devices and remote MHPSS services, and tailored remote educational materials for children with disabilities in Jordan. It also highlighted the HQ Protection Division's development of guidance notes on disability inclusion in

COVID-19 response activities

in the COVID-19 response and the Education Department's guide 'Supporting students during the COVID-19 crisis: A guide to learning, health, safety and psychosocial resources'.

- **Gender and GBV:** Coordination for the 16 days campaign of activism to address gender-based violence started and the activities for this year will focus on raising awareness of GBV risks during the pandemic in all spheres of life (at home, work, in the streets and online). Field offices' best practices in mainstreaming gender and GBV in the COVID-19 response continues to be illustrated in the [UNRWA Monthly Gender Bulletin](#).
- **Addressing Violence Against Children:** The development of the AVAC Staying Safe Online campaign is ongoing.



infrastructure & camp improvement (icip)

COVID-19 response activities

Consolidated information from Fields and HQ Programme

- **SFO:** Construction and maintenance works, from the tendering process through to implementation, at UNRWA schools and other installations have been delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- **WBFO:** ICIP continues to face challenges with solid waste management activities in the camps and the collection and transportation of garbage, particularly regarding the breakdown of compactors. Discussions are ongoing between the Agency, the Ministry of Local Government and the Joint Service Committees in the camps to strengthen partnership and collaboration to support community services during the pandemic given the limited resources and uncertainties.
- **GFO:** Around 5,900 metric tons of solid waste from the camps and homes under quarantine were collected, transported and disposed.
- **GFO:** Construction, shelter repair and maintenance activities have all restarted, including the Camp Improvement Initiative construction of 10 multi-storey buildings in Deir El-Balah and three multi-storey buildings in Khan Younis. Tendering for construction projects has also resumed and a shared drive has been developed to upload/download tender documents in order to minimize direct contact between Agency staff and contractors.
- **ICIP HQ** continues to providing guidance and support to the Fields in implementing special COVID-19 measures to comply with Host government requirements.

Director of UNRWA Affairs in Gaza, Matthias Schmale, works alongside sanitation workers in Gaza. © 2020 UNRWA Photo



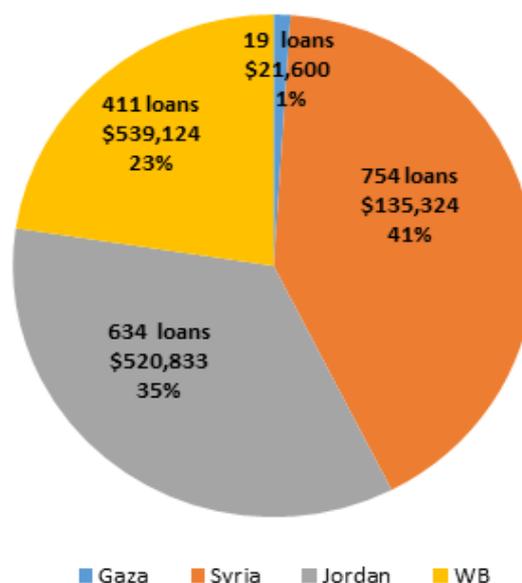


COVID-19 response activities

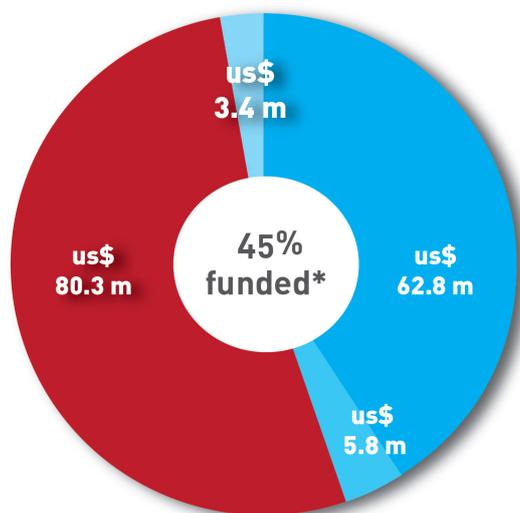
**Consolidated
information
from four Fields
and HQ**

- Microfinance Department (MD) branch offices in Jordan, Syria and the West Bank were open throughout October for the collection of payments, loan disbursements and low-profile lending activities. The Gaza offices were partially opened during the month.
- The MD operations team continued to monitor developments in the four Fields (Jordan, Syria, the West Bank and Gaza) to provide updated information on the most affected sectors of the local economies in order to adjust work plans accordingly.
- MD is gradually increasing loan disbursements for client groups in need of financing based on assessments of each Field's business sector. The proposal to set up a trust fund to expand outreach to targeted clients in the four area of operations is dependent on securing donor financing to support the initiative.
- During October, MD disbursed 1,818 loans valued at US\$ 1,216,881 in the four area of operations (Jordan 35 per cent; Syria 41 per cent; West Bank 23 per cent and Gaza 1 per cent). In terms of loan values this translates as: Jordan 43 per cent; Syria 11 per cent (due to the currency devaluation of the Syrian pound), West Bank 44 per cent and Gaza 2 per cent.

Microfinance loans disbursed in October 2020



covid-19 appeals funding



us\$ 94.6 million**
current appeal requirement



Funding status as of 31 October 2020

* Percentage of confirmed, non-disbursed pledges and received funds against the annual requirement.

** US\$ 94.6 million is needed for the COVID-19 Appeal from August through December 2020. The previous COVID-19 Flash Appeal that ran from March to July required US\$ 93.4 million and was 62 per cent funded. The Appeal overview includes pledges confirmed and received for both Appeals and since the onset of the emergency in March 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 5.7 million 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.

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