



A 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence 2020 campaign at UNRWA Syria © 2020 UNRWA photo

UNRWA Gender Section started the year preparing for various reports on the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy. The reporting process will include reflecting on the renewal of the UNRWA policy framework when it comes to gender equality and women's empowerment.

## stories from unrwa

### 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence : economic projects help GBV survivors' recovery. Activities in Gaza Field Office and Syria Field Office

UNRWA participated in the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence under this year's theme: "Orange the World: Safety from Violence is Everyone's Right". Despite the restraining COVID-19 context, UNRWA organized more than 35 activities across all five fields of operations with a view to raise awareness on gender-based violence (GBV), encourage Palestine communities to take a stand against violence and reduce its occurrence against vulnerable groups.

Gaza Field Office, in partnership with the Women Programme Centers (WPCs), organized an online advocacy campaign on eliminating violence against women and girls that welcomed 1,019 Palestine refugees, including 345 males. The screening of the TV series "[The Shop of Engineer Lina's Father](#)" led to discussion sessions on gender stereotypes, child marriages, the stigmatization of GBV survivors as well as the impact of GBV on the community. Furthermore, five radio episodes on disability-related topics were broadcasted on Forsan al Eradeh radio station, in addition to ten seminars on gender-based violence issues. A virtual art exhibition was organized under the slogan 'An artist's feather in the face of violence', empowering GBV survivors through art. Finally, the film "Legal Clinics Activities" was screened in some WPCs to enhance access to legal aid and services as well as showcase how small socio-

Syria Field Office organized numerous activities targeting a broad range of individuals, notably children and their parents, in the community-based organizations (CBOs). In Jaramana, Alliance and Qaber Essit CBOs, kindergarten children were taught about abuse, bullying and sexual harassment through puppet shows. Older students were also educated on child marriage and its devastating effects through discussion sessions and the screening of a movie. In Khan Eshieh and Qaber Essit, workshops on domestic abuse and stress management welcomed both male and female participants, in addition to a workshop on self-defense for women. The Syria team also organized more recreational activities, such as the screening of a movie on sexual harassment in Sbeineh, a marathon in Al-Hseinnyeh, and a creative painting session in Aleppo. Finally, awareness raising messages were sent through social media to reach the maximum of Palestine refugees.

### january celebrations

24 January : International Day of Education



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## inspiring story

### Broccoli lifts Palestinian women out of poverty

In Gaza, two women decided to get involved in agriculture. In the midst of the global pandemic crisis, Fatime Barakeh and Bisan Qadie have been harvesting broccoli in order to support their families. They work six hours a day and sell the vegetables at the local market: the success of their enterprise has encouraged them to continue and plant more broccoli now that the first harvest is over. For more information, click [here](#).

## events of interest

### 23-26 February 2021, Women and Gender in Development Conference, virtual

The Center for International Research, Education and Development at Virginia Tech is hosting this conference focused on the theme "Out of the Theory and Into the Field: A Dialogue on Gendered Approaches to Inclusive Rural Development." A range of speakers and panelists composed of gender experts and international agriculture experts will explore topics such as inclusive development, food system crises, gender equality and women's empowerment, and intersectionality. More [here](#).

### 18-20 March 2021, The Global Conference on Women and Gender, virtual

The Christopher Newport University is organising this virtual conference on the theme of "Gender, Politics and Everyday Life: Power, Resistance and Representation." Topics covered may include gender identity, reproductive rights, race and racism, violence, and leadership amongst many others. Find out more [here](#).

## regional news

### The Pandemic in the MENA Region, a Hardship but also an Opportunity for Women

"MENA women are at the core of the health emergency response", states the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). They are amongst those who have suffered most from the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. In spite of this hardship, countries in the MENA region could benefit economically from reducing gender inequalities: approximately 30 per cent of Egypt's, Iran's, the United Arab Emirates' and Lebanon's gross domestic product would increase if such policies were implemented. This crisis could thus be an opportunity to

overcome gender disparities. More [here](#).

### 10 Years from the Arab Spring, Remembering the Women Who Gave their Lives for Change

In December 2010, the Arab Spring was born. Women often led the protests and shed light on the abuses they were facing, like Amal Basha in Yemen, Mouna Ghanem in Syria, and Zahra Langhi in Libya. Besides fighting authoritarian regimes, women denounced being treated as being less capable than men. Women stood up for their rights and for their dignity, paving the way to a more equal society, sometimes at the cost of their lives, like in the case of Salwa Bugaighis. Learn more [here](#).

## reports & resources

### Violence against Women and Girls and COVID-19 in the Arab Region

This brief explores the gendered nature of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Arab region, including violence against women and girls and the risks they are facing due to the confinement, social isolation measures, widespread economic insecurity and lost of livelihoods. The brief also highlights the pandemic's detrimental effects on social support services, and makes recommendations to mitigate the new threats women and girls are exposed to. Learn more [here](#).

### Earned Income and Women's Segmented Empowerment: Experimental Evidence from Jordan

This study demonstrates that patriarchal norms can undermine the empowering effect of earned income by limiting those empowering effects to same-sex interactions, and by discouraging women's interest in and willingness to pursue income-earning opportunities. Women in patriarchal societies may find same-sex work environments more pleasant, empowering and rewarding. Given that most power remains male-dominated, confining women to same-sex settings may limit female empowerment. Learn more [here](#).

## facts of the month

In 2019, 96 per cent of the 2,838 cases of conflict-related sexual violence targeted women and girls.

In October 2020, a total of 88 countries and territories had national action plans for Women, Peace and Security, compared to 53 countries in 2015.



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UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and mandated to provide assistance and protection to some 5.7 million registered Palestine refugees. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and the Gaza Strip achieve their full human development potential, pending a just and lasting solution to their plight. UNRWA services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, protection and microfinance.

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