



Samaher Joha, engaging in embroidery works at Sulafa Centre. © 2021 UNRWA Photo by Aien Media

monthly updates on gender issues in unrwa and the region

april 2021 | issue no. 126

update of the month

Philippe Lazzarini, UNRWA Commissioner-General (CG), joined the International Gender Champions (IGC) in supporting the [IGC Panel Parity Pledge](#). He also made personal commitments toward reaching gender parity in senior positions during his tenure as UNRWA CG, and to strengthening an inclusive organizational culture that supports gender equality and the inclusion of persons with disabilities.

stories from unrwa

Samaher Joha

Last month, to celebrate International Women's Day, the UNRWA Relief and Social Services Programme (RSSP) in Gaza shined a light on Samaher Joha, a female Palestine refugee who works at the Sulafa Embroidery Centre. The Sulafa Centre was initiated by UNRWA to provide work for women in Gaza's refugee camps. This embroidery work allows women to earn a living, but also to preserve the important traditions and culture of embroidery within Palestinian communities.

After graduating from a training programme in dressmaking art, Samaher now specializes in sewing. She has been working with the Sulafa Centre for eight years and states that it is 'the home of creative women.' Indeed, she says that at Sulafa, she developed her skills, gained valuable experience, become more confident, increased her communication abilities, and improved her designs. In addition to her work with the Sulafa Centre, Samaher was able to establish her own business within her home. Learn more about the Sulafa Embroidery Centre [here](#).

Najwa Al-Zaalan

To celebrate the Agency's female staff in honor of International Women's Day, RSSP Gaza also published a [video](#) about Najwa Al-Zaalan, a social worker working in the Gaza Strip.

Najwa details the social, psychological, and economic support that she and her social worker colleagues carry out daily in the Gaza Strip. Najwa explains that 'women are (their) main target group,' as many are facing various forms of discrimination and violence – including psychological, physical, and economic.

She emphasized the need to listen to women and work with them to empower them to change their lives. Despite the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Najwa and her colleagues did not stop their work in the field in order to help vulnerable individuals through these unprecedented times.

april celebrations

- 2 April: World Autism Awareness Day
- 4 April: International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action
- 7 April: World Health Day
- 22 April: International Girls in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Day
- 24 April: International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace

inspiring story

Honey Thaljeh: First Captain of Palestine Women's Football Team

Honey Thaljeh, a former football player and the first Palestinian women's football captain, has become a role model to women and girls in Palestine through her advocacy for gender equality in sports. When she was a little girl, Honey played football with her male counterparts amidst war and occupation and overcame the challenges of playing in a society that does not value women in football. Today, she promotes football as an empowering sport for girls and boys alike. Learn more about Honey's inspiring journey [here](#).

events of interest

Gender-Based Violence Prevention in the Work with Male Refugees and Migrants: An Anti-Racist and Culturally Sensitive Approach, 11-19 May

This multi-disciplinary capacity-building program targets professionals who work with men within the migration context. Invited experts will share their knowledge and experience of working with men on gender, masculinity, gender-based violence prevention, and cultural sensitivity, among others. To register, click [here](#).

Women into Leadership, multiple dates

This year, the annual Women into Leadership conference will explore the enhancement of women's leadership opportunities and the enhancement of women's skills to improve their leadership capacities. In addition to hearing from a diverse range of leaders' experiences, attendees will benefit from hands-on advice and coaching. Learn more [here](#).

regional news

Palestinian Woman Using Fungus to End Unemployment Women, 86 per cent Absent from Jordan's Work Force, Are Left Behind

When Alaa Al-Masri struggled to find employment after her university degree, she decided to create her own team to set up different pioneering projects. As a result, Alaa started her own business – when she discovered that Gaza had a mushroom shortage, she decided to start growing her own. She now produces and sells her own oyster mushrooms at her home and hopes to expand her business to other types of mushrooms. Read about this [here](#).

Although Jordanian women have higher literacy rates than their male counterparts, and although more women than men graduate from university in Jordan, 86 per cent of them are unemployed. Jordan's conservative society, narrow definition of who the head of the household is, discriminatory legislation and great pay disparities make women's economic empowerment more difficult to achieve. Learn more [here](#).

reports & resources

COVID-19 and Women's Rights Organizations: Bridging Response Gaps and Demanding a More Just Future

The COVID-19 pandemic has compounded challenges for women's rights organizations through movement restrictions, a decrease in resources, and poor working conditions. This UN Women paper calls on all stakeholders to recognize the essential services and gaps that women's rights organisations have filled during the pandemic, meaningfully engage them in COVID-19 response decision-making, promote safe working conditions for women, and increase

funding to women's rights organisations. Read more [here](#).

Violence Against Women Prevalence Estimates, 2018

This World Health Organization (WHO) report compiles available prevalence data on both intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence from surveys and studies conducted between 2000 and 2018. For different types of violence, the report compares lifetime prevalence and prevalence in the past twelve months and presents this data globally, regionally, and nationally. Find out more about the results [here](#).

facts of the month

Women with disabilities are at least 2 to 3 times more likely than other women to experience violence

137 women around the world are killed by a member of their family every day



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 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.

For more information, please contact s.jelassi@unrwa.org