



During a field visit to Lebanon Field Office, UNRWA Chief of Staff Ugochi Daniels met with Sahar Dahche, Amani Salah Chabayta, and Marwa Abo Jamous, all beneficiaries of LFO employment programmes. © 2021 UNRWA photo

## monthly updates on gender issues in unrwa and the region

may 2021 | issue no. 127

### update of the month

In May, UNRWA Chief of Staff (CoS) Ugochi Daniels conducted a field visit to Lebanon Field Office focused on Protection and Gender initiatives. The visit was a chance for her to meet UNRWA staff and beneficiaries of the Lebanon Youth Unit. In the coming months, we will be showcasing several success stories from the Lebanon Field Office Youth Unit to share these young women's stories.

### stories from unrwa

The Youth Unit in Lebanon runs various initiatives, including the Innovation Labs and the KFW Cash for Work Programme, which enable Palestine refugee youth to alleviate the burdens of the economic challenges they face.

#### Sahar Dahche

Sahar Dahche is a Palestinian refugee from Lebanon who lives in Ein El-Helweh camp in south Lebanon. She graduated from Siblin Training Centre (STC) in 2017 with a diploma in Architectural Engineering, and was able to explore her talent in graphic design in the STC Culture and Media Club. After graduation, she decided to pursue her passion in graphic design at the Lebanese university. She worked as a freelancer in graphic design during that time, to cover the costs of attending university.

In 2018, Sahar started her journey with the then-newly established UNRWA Innovation Labs, and participated in workshops on digital skills, life skills, and social entrepreneurship. During the Entrepreneurship course, Sahar introduced her business idea - designing and printing services - and moved it to the incubation stage. Her project was awarded a seed grant of US\$ 2,000, which ultimately helped her start her own business. During that time, Sahar was also provided with business coaching and mentoring, and she built many connections on both a personal and professional level.

Today, Sahar is interning with UNRWA and supported by UNICEF's GIL project. She is the graphic designer responsible for designing social media posts for the UNRWA Innovation

Labs to highlight youth success stories and achievements. She has also found employment through the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) as a graphic designer. Sahar says, "Although I was not expecting such a career path, which I do not regret, but I'm very grateful to what I already achieved".



Sahar Dahche meets with UNRWA Chief of Staff. © 2021 UNRWA

### may celebrations

- 15 May: International Day of Families
- 16 May: International Day of Living Together in Peace
- 17 May: World Telecommunication and Information Society Day
- 21 May: World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development
- 29 May: International Day of UN Peacekeepers
- 25 May -31 May: Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories

## inspiring story

### Young Palestinian Woman Revives Traditional Jewelry Heritage

Rawan Raafat, a Palestinian woman from East Jerusalem, makes traditional Palestinian jewelry using copper and silver. Rawan explained that "In the past, women used their own pieces of jewelry to expel negative energy from their bodies." thanks to these metals, and that they also have various healing properties. Her goal with this business was to 'revive traditional Palestinian jewelry and its heritage', as many of Palestinian traditions have been lost during the years of conflict. Read more about Rawan's work [here](#).

## events of interest

### 4th European Conference on Domestic Violence, 13-15 September 2021, virtual

This conference will be held online from Ljubljana, Slovenia, and will bring European researchers, academics, students, professionals, practitioners and policy-makers together to explore a wide range of issues related to domestic violence. The conference will explore different themes, including domestic violence in the context of migration, forced marriage, honor-based violence, as well as approaches to domestic violence prevention, intervention, and protection. Find about more about this event [here](#).

### Promoting a Gender-Responsive Recovery Through Social Dialogue, 1 June 2021, virtual

Following the Global Deal's [brief](#) 'The Contribution of Social Dialogue to Gender Equality,' which underlined that COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted women, the Global Deal is hosting a webinar to address recovery from the pandemic. Speakers will be presenting best practices to 'highlight the key contributions of social dialogue and sound industrial relations in promoting a gender-responsive recovery from the pandemic.' Find out more about this webinar [here](#).

## regional news

### Entrepreneurs Changing the Gender Narrative Against All Odds

Lama Sha'sha'a, a young Jordanian woman in the robotics industry, was a finalist in the 2018 United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Women in Business Awards. She co-founded the International Robotics Academy in 2014, which has trained more than 8,000 boys and girls in robotics, design, and coding. In a May 2021 [video](#) featured as part of UNCTAD's "Les 8 du Mois Until We're There" gender equality initiative, Lama shares the challenges she has faced as a woman in the robotics field. Find out more [here](#).

### Bicycling Program for Women Finds Both Supporters, Critics in Gaza

29-year-old Palestinian woman Rania al-Daour has launched the "Breathe Deeply" project to enable Gazan woman to ride bicycles inside the Yarmouk Stadium in the morning. Although the Gaza Municipality sponsors her project, many women have criticized "Breathe Deeply", highlighting that the morning slots allocated to the project are incompatible with women's schedules. Many have also noted that women should not be confined to a stadium to ride their bikes and have called for the "normalization of women's presence in the street." Read more [here](#).

## reports & resources

### Want Resiliency in MENA? Invest in Women-Led Startups

In this Atlantic Council article, Nadereh Chamlou suggests that investing in women-led startups would be a good way for the MENA region to 'build back better' after the COVID-19 pandemic. She underlines the different challenges currently faced by women-led startups, including lack of funding linked to gender bias and the fact that a majority of venture capital investors are men. Finally, the author concludes that 'women-led businesses strive to be financially lucrative and social impactful,' which should be all-the-more attractive to funders in a post-pandemic world. Read more [here](#).

### Femicide in the Palestinian Society

This In this joint submission to the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Cause and Consequences, the Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling and a collation of Palestinian women's organisations underline the 'limited progress made to reduce the rate of femicides' in Palestine. They point out that discriminatory laws, the absence of both a Family Protection Bill and a comprehensive protection system for victims of GBV and femicide, and prevalent patriarchal social norms remain challenges to combatting violence against women. Find out more [here](#).

## facts of the month

There are about 250 million fewer women online than men globally

Only 35% of STEM students in higher education globally are women



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

[www.unrwa.org](http://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.

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