

**FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN
THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR
PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST AND
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
2021-2022**

I. Introduction:

This Framework for Cooperation (the “Framework”) sets forth understandings between the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (hereinafter referred to as “UNRWA” or “the Agency”) and the United States of America (hereinafter referred to as “the United States” or “U.S.”). Between 2005 and 2018, the United States and UNRWA (the “Participants”) worked in partnership through Frameworks for Cooperation to provide humanitarian assistance, human development, and protection to UNRWA’s beneficiaries in accordance with UNRWA’s mandate as approved by the United Nations General Assembly. This document reflects the renewed relationship between the two Participants, focusing on shared goals and priorities; continued support; monitoring and reporting; and communication and partnership.

It is understood that this document, in its entirety, including the attached Annex, constitutes policy commitments by UNRWA and the United States for calendar years 2021 and 2022. This Framework does not constitute an international agreement and does not create any legally binding obligations between the Participants under either international or domestic laws.

II. Shared Goals and Priorities

The United States and UNRWA are jointly committed to addressing the needs of Palestinian refugees through effective provision of humanitarian assistance and protection, and to promoting the enhanced human development potential of Palestinian refugees.

- The United States and UNRWA intend to work together to provide efficient and effective delivery of education, primary health care, relief and social services, and other humanitarian assistance to persons falling under the mandate of UNRWA, as well as promoting respect for human rights, improving living conditions, and supporting economic empowerment and livelihoods of Palestinian refugees, as outlined in UNRWA’s 2016-2022 Medium Term Strategy.
- The United States and UNRWA intend to cooperate to support continued provision of emergency assistance to Palestinian refugees.
- The United States and UNRWA intend to continue to integrate enrichment materials on human rights, conflict resolution and tolerance into UNRWA’s classrooms; to train and deploy UNRWA staff to uphold the Agency’s neutrality; to support UNRWA in reviewing its Financial Regulations within the framework of the Management Initiatives so that they are in line with UN best practices for management and oversight; to further enhance policies and procedures to prevent gender-based violence and address protection needs; and to advance other mutually identified priorities.

Conformance with conditions on U.S. contributions pursuant to section 301(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (hereinafter referred to as “section 301(c)”), and conducting operations consistent with UN humanitarian principles of neutrality, humanity, independence, and impartiality, remain shared commitments. The United States and UNRWA share concerns about the threat of terrorism, including within the context of the United Nations’ firm commitment to counter terrorism, and conditions under section 301(c) on U.S. contributions for UNRWA. Section 301(c) provides that, “No contributions by the United States shall be made to [UNRWA] except on the

condition that [UNRWA] take all possible measures to assure that no part of the United States contribution shall be used to furnish assistance to any refugee who is receiving military training as a member of the so-called Palestine Liberation Army or any other guerilla-type organization or who has engaged in any act of terrorism.”

Like all UN agencies, UNRWA and its staff cannot take sides in hostilities or engage in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature. The Agency utilizes a Neutrality Framework to clearly communicate the relevant standards, practices, and procedures required to ensuring a consistent and coherent Agency-wide approach to neutrality. The Framework details the neutrality requirements of: (a) staff members and personnel including guidelines on the use of social media; (b) UNRWA facilities; (c) UNRWA assets; and (d) other aspects of UNRWA operations such as donors and partners. UNRWA commits to communicate any serious neutrality violations with the United States in a timely manner and to address any such violations in line with the requirements of its Neutrality Framework.

Under the Department of State's Federal Assistance Directive, the Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) issues voluntary contributions to international organizations by issuing a contribution letter, accompanied by voluntary contribution terms and conditions. The language in PRM's contribution letters for UNRWA will continue to include the following:

“The Department of State seeks to ensure that none of its funds are used, directly or indirectly, to provide support to individuals or entities associated with terrorism. Consistent with numerous United Nations resolutions, including Security Council Resolutions 1269 (1999), 1368 (2001), and 1373 (2001) and General Assembly resolution 60/288 of 8 September 2006, both the Department of State and UNRWA are firmly committed to the international fight against terrorism, and, in particular, against the financing of terrorism. In furtherance of this international fight against terrorism, including terrorism financing, consistent with section 301(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and in accordance with the Framework for Cooperation between UNRWA and the Government of the United States of America for 2021-2022, it is fully understood and agreed that by accepting this contribution, UNRWA certifies that it is taking all possible measures to ensure that no part of the United States contribution is being used to furnish assistance to any refugee who is receiving military training as a member of the so-called Palestinian Liberation Army, or any guerilla-type organization or anyone who has engaged in any act of terrorism.”

UNRWA commits to take all possible measures to ensure funding provided by the United States to UNRWA does not provide assistance to, or otherwise support, terrorists or terrorist organizations. Further, the United States and UNRWA condemn without reserve all manifestations of religious or racial intolerance, incitement to violence, harassment or violence against persons or communities based on ethnic origin or religious belief, including anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, anti-Catholicism, anti-Arabism, or other forms of discrimination or racism against Palestinians, Israelis or other individuals or communities based on ethnic origin or religious belief.

Noting that UNRWA prepares an annual operational report, UNRWA is expected to provide an additional semi-annual report to PRM on activities to inform evaluation of conformance with conditions on U.S. contributions to UNRWA, based on the attached Annex to this Framework. Priority activities for 2021-2022 to facilitate conformance with conditions on U.S. contributions to UNRWA are expected to include, but are not to be limited to:

- Strengthening Agency oversight of its consistency with UN principles, which includes committing the resources necessary to maintain the neutrality of UNRWA facilities and staff and to monitor the protection of beneficiaries. This includes dedicated U.S. funding to rebuild

UNRWA's capacity to conduct four neutrality inspections per facility each year and support staff compliance.

- Improving the Agency's capacity to review local textbooks and quality assure education materials it uses to identify and take measures to address any content contrary to UN principles in educational materials. This includes:
 - Strengthening the capacity of the UNRWA HQ Education curriculum team, including to review educational materials, through the use of field-based education specialists.
 - Strengthening the Agency's capacity and processes to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the Teacher Centered Approach (TCA) in addressing problematic content in the classroom and, in addition, the further integration of human rights, conflict-resolution, and tolerance (HRCRT) education in each of the five fields. To this end, UNRWA HQ Education will provide further training and capacity-building in monitoring and evaluation to UNRWA Field offices on the implementation of the TCA at the school level.
 - Conducting an independent, programmatic evaluation of UNRWA's Education programme, including TCA and HRCRT by the end of FY 2022, to be shared with Advisory Commission members upon request.
 - Posting Self-Learning Materials for subjects taught in UNRWA's schools on UNRWA's Digital Learning Platform (<https://keeplearning.unrwa.org>) to promote increased transparency around education materials.
- Continued enhancement and implementation of its training of all UNRWA staff on humanitarian principles, including the principle of neutrality.
- Implementation of the UNRWA Management Initiatives (November 6, 2019) including:
 - UNRWA updates whistle-blower policy to align with UN best practice by Q1 2022 depending on the issuance of the updated UN Protection Against Retaliation Policy (ST/SGB/2017/2).
 - The Ethics Office provides guidance and confidential ethics advice for UNRWA staff under the competence of the ethics function. The Ethics Office establishes an automated Case Management System to record, monitor, and report cases regarding ethics by Q1 2022.
 - The Ethics Office launches in Q3 2021, three new blended trainings on: 1) Harmonious Workplace, 2) Ethical Leadership, and 3) Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption. An "Ethics Refresher Course" (in-person and virtual interactive course on key ethics issues), launched in May 2021, will be rolled out to all 5 fields of operations by the end of 2021.
 - UNRWA strengthens Department of Internal Oversight Services investigation function to establish a central intake unit and dedicated capacity to support field-level investigations by the end of 2021.
 - UNRWA uploads budgets and financial information quarterly on the International Aid Transparency Initiative website.
- Clear, consistent, and prompt administrative or disciplinary action for staff violations of UNRWA's Neutrality Framework, consistent with appropriate procedural safeguards and the Agency's regulatory framework.
- Take suitable action with respect to discretionary benefits to UNRWA beneficiaries determined to have engaged in inappropriate conduct, consistent with appropriate procedural safeguards and the Agency's regulatory framework.

The United States and UNRWA expect to continue to work in partnership to promote UNRWA's financial stability, both through efforts to control and contain costs, as well as to mobilize additional resources. Over the last five years, UNRWA reform initiatives have resulted in increased efficiencies, and a reduced budget through improved management capacity, increased program quality and efficiency, and increased financial sustainability and accountability of the Agency. Consistent with the priorities outlined in the 2016-2022 Medium-Term Strategy and the ongoing Management Initiatives, implementation of UNRWA's reform initiatives is expected to continue in 2021-2022. The Agency is sharply focused on efforts to expand the donor base and to develop partnerships with international financial institutions. The United States intends to continue its support to the Agency as it furthers these efforts in 2021-2022.

The United States and UNRWA assess that **priority reform and resource mobilization activities** for the Agency over the next two years may include, but are not limited to, the following activities, in which the United States intends to support UNRWA, as appropriate:

- Developing partnerships with international financial institutions.
- Continuing outreach to expand the base of donors who contribute to UNRWA, with a focus on securing sufficient, predictable, and sustained voluntary contributions, and early fulfillment of pledges. This includes outreach to non-traditional donors and restoring and expanding support levels from regional partners.
- Continuing to consolidate programmatic reforms in the health, education, and relief and social services sectors, and analyze efficiencies gained through reforms.
 - Developing vulnerability criteria for relief and social services (RSS) beneficiaries by the end of 2021 to enhance the Agency's ability to target assistance based on need.
- Managing the Agency's workforce to improve the quality and professionalism of staff, eliminate staff redundancies, and as resources permit, set compensation for staff that is adequate to occupational employment markets in comparable sectors and positions, commensurate with UNRWA's pay policy.
- Continuing to refine targeting and prioritization within UNRWA's budgeting process with regard to both its Program Budget and Emergency Appeals.
- Developing, through consultation between UNRWA and host countries, beneficiaries, donors, and staff, a strategic blueprint for improved efficacy through modernization of service delivery. The Agency will present this strategic blueprint at the planned international conference on UNRWA, co-chaired by Sweden and Jordan, in October 2021.

UNRWA intends to continue to strengthen the Agency's internal governance and oversight processes. The United States welcomes the establishment of a UN Regional Ombudsman's office in June 2021, which will exclusively serve UNRWA. UNRWA and the United States affirm the importance of constantly improving risk management, including increasing coordination across departments and programs on contextual, institutional, programmatic, fiduciary, and professional risk management. In addition, the United States encourages UNRWA to:

- Strengthen donor oversight of the Agency through regular bilateral and multilateral discussions between core donors and UNRWA leadership and through regular UNRWA reporting to core donors, including works by the Department of Internal Oversight Services, to ensure UNRWA's management is effectively delivering its mandate with transparency and accountability, while preserving UNRWA's agility and operational response capacity.
- Ensure effective people and results-based policies, procedures and practices, including meeting UN system-wide objectives in the pursuit of gender parity in senior management functions, delegated authorities for recruitment to decentralize authority - and accountability - across the Agency to empower senior managers and reduce recruitment timelines.

- Strengthen the Agency's Department of Internal Oversight Services, including through robust resourcing and staffing, to reaffirm operational independence of the functions and improve effectiveness, transparency and accountability within the Agency.
 - A dedicated investigative support function for field investigations will be added in 2021-2022, enhancing accountability in field operations.
- Undertake an independent review by third party experts of the organizational structures across HQ, the Fields and Programs to make non-binding recommendations on how to streamline, modernize and simplify operational and programmatic management structures, including regarding the most effective modus operandi for managing an organization of UNRWA's size and mandate, and to be shared with Advisory Commission members upon request.
- Review and as appropriate revise the Agency's financial regulations in light of best practice of the UN system, including in the area of procurement, by end of Q1 of 2022.
- Continue to disclose to UN Office for Procurement Services (UNOPS) for the elaboration of the Annual Statistical Report all of UNRWA's awards, including those below the \$30,000 threshold. This information is expected to be reflected in the Annual Statistical Report (ASR) published on the UN Procurement website (UNGM.org). The data concerning all UNRWA awards above \$30,000 are already made available by UNOPS on UNGM.org.
- Continue efforts to improve the safety and security of UNRWA's personnel, particularly those who do not fall under the purview of the UN Department of Safety and Security.
- Continue to uphold UNRWA's Code of Conduct and policy on Protection Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) in line with the 2003 UN Secretary General's Bulletin. UNRWA finalizes a strategy to guide UNRWA's work to combat SEA and sexual harassment by Q1 2022 and develops a corresponding implementation plan, including appropriate systems to train staff and investigative capacity to address allegations of staff misconduct, including PSEA.
- Build upon progress to date towards UNRWA's Grand Bargain commitments, particularly regarding transparency in the costing of humanitarian and reconstruction rehabilitation programs and more systematic accountability to affected populations.
- Implement recommendations in internal UNRWA audits and evaluations and the UN Board of Auditors' reports, as well as improve tracking and transparency with regard to implementation of recommendations. Finalize implementation of appropriate recommendations relating to UNRWA put forward by the UN Secretary General's Board of Inquiry investigation into incidents affecting the neutrality of UNRWA's facilities and operations during the Gaza 2014 conflict. Provide updates on implementation of recommendations every six months.
- Implement biometric registration of Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria by the end of 2022, where security conditions allow and with appropriate data protection safeguards in place, with an evaluation of the effectiveness, benefits, risks, and challenges of the initial phases of the roll-out to inform future roll-out in the West Bank and Gaza.

III. Continued Support

The United States is committed to continuing its partnership with UNRWA to assist persons falling under the mandate of UNRWA. The United States acknowledges the important role the Agency plays in maintaining regional stability.

Recognizing the need for early, sufficient, predictable and sustained funding, the United States intends to strive to provide flexible and early contributions to UNRWA for the Agency's Program Budget and Emergency Appeals. The United States is committed to providing, subject to the availability of funds, a fair share contribution to UNRWA's annual Program Budget, Emergency Appeal (EA) for West

Bank/Gaza, and EA for the Syria Regional Crisis, based on past practice and consistent with the Good Humanitarian Donorship principles of providing predictable and flexible funding. In addition, subject to the availability of funds, the United States intends to continue support for selected special projects mutually identified by the United States and UNRWA, including continued support for implementation of UNRWA's protection mandate, its neutrality, as well as the Agency's human rights, conflict resolution, and tolerance education curriculum. UNRWA understands that U.S. support depends on UNRWA's demonstration of needs and results.

IV. Monitoring and Reporting

The United States commends UNRWA for the use of the Annual Operational Report (AOR) as a performance tool and appreciates the ongoing consultative implementation of this initiative to ensure that organizational-level reporting on performance is consistent with donors' programmatic reporting requirements. Reflecting the principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship, the standardized reporting included in the AOR should satisfy the majority of U.S. reporting requirements for U.S. contributions to the Program Budget for 2021-2022.

UNRWA intends to continue to provide semi-annual section 301(c) reporting to PRM, as discussed in Section II of this Framework. UNRWA will also provide semi-annual fraud and losses reporting, including cases of fraud, presumptive fraud, and other cases with potential loss such as theft.

UNRWA intends to continue to provide reporting separate from the AOR on the following appeals and special projects, though the reports may reflect a harmonized approach to donors' reporting requirements where applicable:

- Semi-annual reports on UNRWA's Flash Appeals receiving U.S. funding.
- Semi-annual (or, as called for by contribution language, quarterly) reports on U.S.-funded special projects, if applicable.
- Semi-annual reports on visibility efforts, per the U.S.-UNRWA Visibility Plan that should be finalized by September 1, 2021.
- Quarterly (or, as called for by contribution language, monthly) expenditure reports on all U.S. contributions to Emergency and/or Flash Appeals and reconstruction projects.
- Quarterly reporting on aid diversion in Syria, per the enhanced monitoring plan for Syria, to be renewed by August 1, 2021.
- Quarterly reporting on aid diversion in Gaza, per the enhanced monitoring plan for Gaza, to be developed by January 2022.

Communication and Partnership

In pursuit of meeting the goals and achieving the results articulated in this Framework, the United States and UNRWA remain committed to continuous information sharing and cooperation at all levels. The United States has a close working relationship with UNRWA and is in frequent contact with the organization through UNRWA's Representative Office in Washington, D.C., UNRWA Headquarters, and in the Agency's fields of operation. UNRWA intends to work closely with the PRM Refugee Coordinator's Office in Jerusalem, PRM Program Officers in Washington, D.C., and other U.S. Embassy and Consulate staff in its fields of operation to inform the United States of developments, challenges, and achievements throughout the year.

The United States monitors UNRWA on an ongoing basis and in a number of ways, including by actively participating in the meetings of the Advisory Commission, regular meetings of the Commission's Subcommittees, regular meetings of the Harmonized Results Working Group, and other

ad hoc working groups; analyzing UNRWA's regular reports and updates; undertaking field visits by PRM Refugee Coordinators and Program Officers; and attending briefings by UNRWA staff.

UNRWA's Chief of Staff serves as the neutrality management focal point for the Agency, liaising with relevant Department of State officials on all relevant neutrality-related issues. Through regular reporting and dialogue, including on policy and program issues identified in this Framework, PRM intends to continue to monitor closely the organization's work, and also aims to ensure UNRWA is strengthening its capacity to monitor its own programs. The United States will continue to share with UNRWA the results of its monitoring and analysis and welcomes feedback from UNRWA in response to U.S. findings and recommendations.

PRM and UNRWA intend to hold at least annual consultations on the shared objectives identified in this Framework.

V. Conclusion

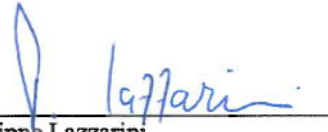
The United States and UNRWA confirm their commitment to remain strong partners in their efforts to address the needs of Palestinian refugees within UNRWA's five fields of operation. The United States and UNRWA intend to consult regularly on policy and program issues identified in this Framework. This Framework is intended to remain in effect until December 31, 2022.

Nothing in or related to this Framework is intended to be deemed a waiver, express or implied, of any of the privileges and immunities accorded to UNRWA under international law.

Signed on July 14, 2021, in the English language.



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Annex: Activities Related to Conformance with U.S. Funding Conditions Pursuant to Section 301(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

ANNEX:
**ACTIVITIES RELATED TO CONFORMANCE WITH U.S. FUNDING CONDITIONS
PURSUANT TO SECTION 301(c) OF THE 1961 FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT**

UNRWA is responsible for drafting and submitting a semi-annual report to the United States on progress towards activities below. PRM will also track progress towards activities below.

General

1. Commitment by the Agency to conform to, consistent with UN resolutions and rules, conditions on U.S. contributions for UNRWA as outlined in funding agreements with the U.S. Department of State.
2. Monthly meetings or conversations between UNRWA and relevant State Department officials in which conformance with section 301(c) is discussed.
3. Regular written communication between UNRWA and relevant State Department officials on section 301(c)-related issues.

Neutrality of UNRWA Staff/Personnel

4. Checks conducted and documented of all UNRWA staff against the Consolidated United Nations Security Council Sanctions List once every six months reported to the U.S. in a timely manner, with a summary of any action taken by the Agency.
5. Provision of lists of UNRWA staff members to host governments, including the Palestinian and Israeli authorities, on an annual basis and to other UN member states upon written request, consistent with Section 17 of the 1946 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations.
6. Written communication to staff about appropriate behavior consistent with UNRWA's neutrality rules/regulations at least once every year for each of UNRWA's five fields of operation and at least once every year to all staff, including Headquarters.
7. Consistent with appropriate procedural safeguards, prompt initiation of investigations upon receipt of credible information about alleged staff/personnel misconduct and appropriate action when misconduct is found.
8. Immediate efforts taken to seek information from host countries and other authorities when staff are detained/convicted, etc.
9. Confirmation that all new and existing UNRWA staff complete mandatory training that includes a module on neutrality and that UNRWA conduct annual tracking to measure and facilitate compliance.

Neutrality of Beneficiaries

10. Checks conducted and documented of Palestinian refugees against the Consolidated United Nations Security Council Sanctions List every six months.
11. Upon receipt of credible information that beneficiaries have engaged in conduct of concern, conduct fact-finding, assessment and denial of discretionary assistance to beneficiaries, as appropriate.

Neutrality of UNRWA Facilities

12. In 2022, UNRWA will inspect each UNRWA facility in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank, and Gaza to ensure appropriate use and neutral appearance in accordance with the Agency's standards and procedures at least twice every six months and more often in the case of facilities with repeated concerns as established by the Agency's neutrality database. In 2021, UNRWA is restoring staffing and rebuilding its capacity to meet this commitment to increase from two to

four inspections annually. Such inspections are to be conducted by appropriately trained UNRWA staff.

13. Immediate investigation of incidents of misuse of facilities and immediate steps taken to assure non-recurrence, including, in appropriate cases, through seeking third party assistance.

Neutrality of Contractors, Vendors, and Non-State Donors

14. Checks conducted and documented of all contractors, vendors, and non-state donors against the Consolidated United Nations Security Council Sanctions List every six months.
15. Inclusion of all appropriate Agency neutrality clauses in Agency contracts, as outlined in the Regulatory Framework, with mechanisms to respond to non-compliance with neutrality clauses, as appropriate.
16. Accurate, complete, and timely details of UNRWA procurement contracts for goods or services (including construction) of aggregate annual value greater than \$100,000 are made publicly available one month after the end of each quarter. Entries are based on consistent use of vendor names.