unrwa child protection framework
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About UNRWA
UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and mandated to provide assistance and protection to some 5 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, and microfinance.

Cover Photo: A widow with two of her eight children in Jaramana camp, located near Damascus, Syria.
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Introduction

1. Palestine refugee children face a range of child protection challenges across the region and frequently they are denied even the most basic rights. Addressing these concerns is crucial to ensuring their protection and supporting their human development. UNRWA is a direct provider of a range of services to more than 5 million Palestine refugees registered with the Agency in its five fields of operations (West Bank, Gaza, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan), including 2.5 million Palestine refugee children. UNRWA recognizes that a Child Protection Framework is imperative for the Agency and since 2013 has taken a number of steps – with the support of UNICEF – towards this end. In particular, an UNRWA Child Protection Mapping Report was completed in 2014 and validated at a workshop in November of the same year, which formed the basis for the development of this UNRWA Child Protection Framework.

2. The process to develop this Framework has aimed to be inclusive and participatory. An integral part has been an UNRWA Child Protection Task Force that was established in May 2015 and included staff from across the Agency’s five fields of operations. An external Steering Committee comprised of UNICEF, UNRWA and external experts has also provided guidance throughout the process. Internal consultations were held with over 300 staff from different field offices between April and June 2015 and an Agency-wide workshop was organized in November 2015 to discuss the draft Framework.

3. The aim of the Child Protection Framework is to outline the Agency’s intent and commitment to protect Palestine refugee children, as well as to provide a coherent approach to the diverse child protection activities being undertaken by programme departments and field offices. The Framework is viewed as a strategic policy guidance document for the Agency’s work on child protection relevant to all staff. It will be rolled out and implemented at Headquarters (HQ) and Field Offices from 2016 and throughout the course of the Agency’s Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) for 2016-2021.
Child Protection Systems

A ‘systems approach’ to child protection focuses on a comprehensive and sustainable approach to the protection of children. This approach focuses on strengthening the protective environment around children, as well as empowering children themselves. This involves working in partnership with the formal (government) and informal systems (community approach) to prevent and respond to violence, exploitation, abuse or neglect of children so that children are better protected in any situation.


Rationale and Justification

4. There are a number of important reasons why UNRWA requires a Child Protection Framework. Child protection is central to the service provision of UNRWA in the areas of health, education, and relief and social services. With over 30,000 staff and such extensive operations, the Agency recognizes its ‘duty of care’ to children and the need to provide child-sensitive service delivery. The Agency’s operations take place in over 900 facilities (including schools, health centres, and technical and vocational training centres) by 22,000 education staff, 3,300 health staff, 1,100 sanitation labourers, and over 370 social workers, many of whom have direct contact with children on a daily basis. Approximately 500,000 children attend some 700 UNRWA schools throughout the region, and by 2021 that figure is expected to reach 670,000. The Agency is a duty bearer with corresponding responsibilities vis-à-vis the children it serves and are placed under its care.

5. UNRWA has long been committed to the human development and protection of the Palestine refugee children that fall within its mandate. There are already many child protection activities taking place across the Agency as outlined in the UNRWA 2014 Child Protection Mapping Report. For example, the intersectoral Family and Child Protection Programme in the West Bank Field Office (WBFO) and the holistic ‘Inclusive Education’ approach to education include many key child protection elements. This Child Protection Framework builds upon these activities and provides an overarching Framework in which they should take place.

6. In 2012 the Agency adopted a Protection Policy framed around an internal (service delivery and programmatic) dimension and an external (advocacy) dimension to protection. As such, the Agency strives to realize the protection of Palestine refugees both in and through its service delivery and with private and public advocacy. The Protection Policy highlights the importance of protection mainstreaming and the determination to strengthen a ‘protection reflex’ in the Agency. The UNRWA Child Protection Framework reflects the Agency’s Protection Policy and operationalizes its higher-level commitments with respect to protecting Palestine refugee children.

7. The 2016-2021 MTS outlines the Agency’s priorities for the next six years and highlights protection in Strategic Outcome 1, entitled ‘Refugees’ rights under international law are protected and promoted’. Child protection is a priority theme within Strategic Outcome 1 of the MTS, which this Framework helps to take forward.

8. UNRWA already has a Gender Equality Policy operationalized through the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy and a gender-based violence programme, a Disability Policy, and an Inclusive Education Policy, and is also finalizing a Mental Health and Psychosocial Framework (MHPSS). The Child Protection Framework is complementary to these other policy and strategy documents and the Agency will address these interlinking issues in a holistic and comprehensive manner.

9. Re-enforcing the Child Protection System (see box above) is at the foundation of the UNRWA Child Protection Framework. UNRWA works with partners and host authorities as appropriate for the advancement of the rights of Palestine refugee children. The Agency is committed to re-enforcing the Child Protection System in each of its fields of operations within its programmes and by leveraging partnerships to support Palestine refugee children.

10. High-level international policy commitments and human rights standards relevant to children developed by the United Nations are of particular relevance to UNRWA. The post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), for example, make a renewed commitment (see box below) to protecting children, with an objective of zero tolerance to violence and a call for a world in which “every child grows up free from violence and exploitation.” This Framework underlies the Agency’s contribution to this SDG objective with respect to protecting Palestine refugee children.

“We envisage a world of universal respect for human rights and human dignity, the rule of law, justice, equality and non-discrimination; of respect for race, ethnicity and cultural diversity; and of equal opportunity permitting the full realization of human potential and contributing to shared prosperity. A world which invests in its children and in which every child grows up free from violence and exploitation…”

Outcome document of the United Nations Summit for the Adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, 12 August 2015.
Legal Framework

11. Children are rights’ holders, and these rights, essential for their protection and human development, are enshrined in international law, in particular human rights law. Host states have the primary responsibility to provide protection for Palestine refugee children in accordance with their obligations under international law, including international human rights standards and international humanitarian law during times of armed conflict.

12. The UNRWA Child Protection Framework is also guided by the General Assembly resolutions that set out the Agency’s mandate which is to help Palestine refugees achieve their full potential in human development under the difficult circumstances in which they live. The General Assembly routinely encourages the Agency “to continue making progress in addressing the needs and rights of children, women, and persons with disabilities, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, respectively”.

13. Domestic legislation relevant to child protection is also a key reference in addressing specific child protection issues, and where gaps in such legislation are identified, UNRWA will advocate for them to be addressed with respect to international standards. A compendium of national legislation and adherence to international norms was compiled and served as a reference document in the development of this Framework.

14. To the extent that UNRWA delivers services (for example the provision of education or primary health services) similar to those provided by States, the Agency has a duty of care and a corresponding responsibility to protect Palestine refugee children in accordance with international standards. As such a duty bearer, UNRWA recognizes its own responsibility to protect children and uphold ethical and protection standards when delivering services to children. The Agency notes existing obligations of all UNRWA personnel to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse and the prohibition on all forms of violence, including against children under the UNRWA regulatory framework. It is the duty of all UNRWA personnel to report suspected misconduct that comes to their attention as soon as possible after becoming aware of it.

15. Additional legal considerations under the law governing United Nations operations, in particular United Nations privileges and immunities, may apply when particular child protection issues relate to or involve Agency officials, premises or assets.

UNRWA Child Protection Definition

16. For UNRWA, child protection is defined as preventing and responding to violence, exploitation, abuse, and neglect against Palestine refugee children and encouraging their well-being and development. This internationally agreed definition of child protection derives from the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and is used by most child protection organizations including the Child Protection Working Group (CPWG), which is part of the Global Protection Cluster.

17. As per the CRC, ‘children’ refers to girls and boys under the age of 18 unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained before then. For the purpose of this Framework, considering that in the Agency’s fields of operations children are generally considered by law to become adults at the age of 18, children refers to girls and boys under the age of 18.

Vision Statement

18. Through the implementation of this Framework, UNRWA aims to contribute to the protection of Palestine refugee children who should be able to grow up in happy, safe and secure families; go to school; live in safe communities; access safe places to play; access justice and social services; and have possibilities for the future.

Mission Statement

19. UNRWA is committed to child-sensitive service delivery and programming, safeguarding Palestine refugee children, and advocating for their rights to be respected. The Agency recognizes that, by virtue of its mandate and with so many front-line service staff, it has responsibility as a duty bearer to protect the children it assists from harm. It is committed to empowering Palestine refugee children and their communities and, in partnership with others, re-enforcing the child protection system in each of its fields of operations.

Scope

20. The Framework covers the whole of the Agency’s operations and guides all UNRWA personnel (including staff members, consultants, day labourers and contractors) in all UNRWA fields of operations, especially those providing assistance to and in direct contact with children.

21. The Framework builds on the Agency’s regulatory framework and existing internal and external policies, guidelines and tools relevant to child protection (see Annex 2). It is applicable to and guides the Agency’s work at all times, whether in the context of development or humanitarian emergencies, conflict or peace, while appreciating that its implementation needs to be adapted to the local situation.

22. The Framework covers not only what the Agency can do to provide protection of Palestine refugee children, but also what steps the Agency must take to ensure that it does not cause harm to children through its own actions (hereinafter referred to as safeguarding children).
Key Child Protection Challenges

23. All children may face protection risks in the home, at school, in the community, or because of the context in which they live. Palestine refugee children are no different. Growing up in the West Bank, Gaza, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria, they confront a range of different protection challenges. The denial of even the most basic human rights is intimately linked to the plight of Palestine refugees across the region.

24. The priority child protection challenges noted below and addressed by this Framework were highlighted in the Child Protection Mapping Report and the Strategic Plans of each Field Office, as well as feedback from staff during the consultations held for the development of the Framework. Addressing these issues is part of a larger comprehensive approach to preventing violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect against children and working with partners to best protect children.

Freedom from Violence, Exploitation, Abuse and Neglect

25. All children should grow up free from violence. Children may be at risk of violence in their own home, from a parent, extended family member, in the community or when receiving services. Children witnessing violence in the home grow up in an unprotected environment and risk exerting this violence later themselves. Child abuse and neglect may also occur in the home, school or community.

26. Feedback from the Framework consultations underscored that violence in schools, namely corporal punishment and bullying (including peer-on-peer) are also serious issues in all UNRWA fields of operations. UNRWA has long been committed to ensuring a safe and welcoming learning environment, putting in place many initiatives to promote this, including the ‘Inclusive Education’ approach.

27. Consultations among staff noted the importance of underscoring the Agency’s commitment to protecting children from sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) in line with the UNRWA General Staff Circular No. 7/2010, which builds upon the directives in the Secretary-General’s Bulletin on SEA. UNRWA is committed to preventing SEA by staff against beneficiaries and to take timely action when incidents occur, including the duty to report concerns or suspicions of SEA of a beneficiary by a fellow worker. All sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited.

28. Palestine refugee children are also at risk of violence from ongoing armed conflict and military occupation. Children in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) are also at particular risk of detention. Palestine refugee children in the Agency’s fields of operations have faced long-standing armed conflict and military occupation and instances of sporadic violence. Syria has now been in a situation of armed conflict for several years, putting Palestine refugee children at great danger.

29. Palestine refugee girls and boys face the risk of gender-based violence (GBV), whether it is physical, sexual or economic in nature. GBV is defined as harmful acts perpetrated against someone based on socially ascribed differences between males and females. This includes rape, sexual exploitation and abuse, child marriage, sexual harassment, honour killing, and deprivation of inheritance or property.

Right to identity

30. Civil documentation and birth registration are an essential part of a child's right to identity and the ability to access basic social services, including health and education. Some Palestine refugee children lack legal status and civil documentation in the places where they live, such that they are denied certain human rights. Access to birth registration and efforts to secure or replace lost documents are critical. For example, Palestine refugee children born in Syria today face protection risks due to an increased incidence of non-registered births by the authorities in the context of ongoing conflict and internal displacement.

Lack of access to education and further opportunities

31. Palestine refugee children, including those children with special needs, have the right to education and to access primary and secondary schools and vocational training facilities. However, girls and boys are at risk of dropping out of school for socioeconomic reasons, including child labour or child marriage, and sometimes achieve poor academic results. The opportunities for children and youth to finish high school, attend university or tertiary training, and find a job are challenging in all UNRWA fields of operations and, in some instances, legal restrictions are placed on Palestine refugees when pursuing these options. Child labour is also an issue affecting both boys and girls in the Agency’s fields of operations.

Psychosocial needs

32. Palestine refugee girls and boys growing up in the Agency’s fields of operations may need additional psychosocial support because of the challenging context in which they live. Key to providing mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) is the development of a layered system of complementary support that meets different needs. Most children and adolescents will go back to functioning normally without professional support, while others may need additional assistance. Children's return to happiness and well-being is linked to a safe and supportive environment with different layers of support made available if needed.
**Children with disabilities**

33. Persons with disabilities face barriers to their participation as equal members of society in all parts of the world, including as a result of stigmatization associated with disability. Stigma keeps children with disabilities hidden, making them invisible and cut off from even vital services such as education, health and rehabilitation. Globally, children with disabilities are three to four times more likely to be victims of violence. Girls and women with disabilities endure violence, abuse and exploitation twice as often as non-disabled women, over a longer period of time, and suffer more serious injuries as a result of violence. In many countries where UNRWA works, children with disabilities risk never going to school or risk dropping out if they do attend. In the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), 37.6 per cent of all persons with disabilities aged 15 and over have never enrolled in school, while 33.8 per cent of the total number of persons with disabilities dropped out of school. Of all persons with disabilities, 53.1 per cent are illiterate.

**Forced displacement**

34. Increasing displacement across the region means that today, more than ever, Palestine refugees and their children are in need of protection. Children and their families in the oPt face the risk of house demolitions and displacement, and thousands of Palestine refugee families and their children have been displaced and forced to flee their homes because of armed conflict in Gaza and Syria in recent years.

**Lack of accountability for child rights violations**

35. Accountability for child rights violations of international human rights and humanitarian law against Palestine refugee children is critical and an ongoing challenge in all fields of operations. The monitoring and reporting mechanism (MRM) on grave violations against children in armed conflict is one of a variety of different mechanisms to highlight child protection concerns and need for accountability as set out in the UNRWA Framework for Effective Engagement with the International Human Rights System.

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**Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism**

In 2005, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1612 was approved, which called for the monitoring and reporting (MRM) of six grave violations against children in armed conflict: killing and maiming; abduction; sexual violence; attacks on schools and hospitals; recruitment and use of children; and denial of humanitarian access. All violations, except denial of humanitarian access, are ‘trigger violations’ for listing parties to conflict. The aim of the MRM is to gather timely, accurate, objective and reliable information on grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict, leading to well-informed, concerted and effective responses for their protection. Once parties to a conflict in a certain country are ‘listed’, an official process starts. The MRM is currently compiled for Israel and the State of Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon. UNRWA is an active member of the respective working groups in these areas.
**Guiding Principles**

36. UNRWA is committed to serving Palestine refugee children with professionalism, dignity and respect based on an ethically principled approach. The Agency is guided by international standards in this area, including, but not limited to: the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action and other Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Guidelines. Based on these broader standards, the following priority guiding principles will be respected throughout the Agency’s child protection activities:

**Do no harm**

37. The Agency is committed to the ‘do no harm’ principle whereby it will ensure that through its action it will not inflict harm on any child receiving services from UNRWA. This is a key element of the Agency’s 2012 Protection Policy. Actions and interventions designed to support the child, and his or her family, should not expose them to further harm.

**Best interests of the child**

38. The ‘best interests of the child’ shall be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children, including decisions by UNRWA staff that may affect their lives. This approach includes both a child’s physical and emotional well-being and should be the basis for all decisions and actions taken for the way in which service providers interact with children and their families.

**Meaningful child participation**

39. Children are rights holders and have a right to participate in decisions that affect their lives. UNRWA will make renewed efforts to involve children, and their families, in the planning and decision-making regarding their own care, which is critical to ensuring services provided are appropriate and effective. Meaningful child participation will be encouraged throughout the programme management cycle.

**Non-discrimination**

40. UNRWA is committed to ensuring that children are not discriminated against, denied services or poorly treated because of their individual characteristics or a group they belong to (i.e., age, gender, disability, socioeconomic background, ethnicity). This is a key protection principle that UNRWA and all humanitarian actors are committed to. It applies to all forms of discrimination, including denial of reasonable accommodation.

**Partnerships**

41. The protection of Palestine refugee children is not the Agency’s exclusive responsibility and UNRWA does not have the capacity to protect all Palestine refugee children. There are many actors with responsibility for protecting children, and experience shows that working in partnership leads to better protection outcomes. UNRWA is just one child protection actor and is committed to working in partnership with other partner organizations (governments, UN agencies, NGOs, and civil society) to better protect children.

**Sustainability**

42. UNRWA recognizes that sustainability of programming is crucial for long-term service delivery and programmes that better protect children. Developing and re-enforcing the child protection system is a multi-year initiative in collaboration with host governments, communities and other partners. Child protection interventions and safeguarding initiatives take time to develop, foster and implement, and therefore sustainability is of the utmost importance.
Key Commitments, Priorities and Ways Forward:

43. Building on existing good practice in relation to child protection across the Agency, the following key activities will be implemented as part of this Framework over the course of the Medium-Term Strategy 2016-2021, with relevant activities included in planning documents such as Annual Operational Plans.

44. This Framework will be rolled out through the development of specific action plans for each Field Office in order to implement the document. Child safeguarding initiatives will be led by Headquarters. Many of the following actions build upon existing initiatives and in some instances simply highlight ongoing child protection activities in the Agency.

45. The following three pillars lay out the Agency’s key commitments, priorities, and ways forward as part of the Framework.

- Pillar 1: Commitment to child protection and advocating for respect of child rights;
- Pillar 2: Safeguarding children;
- Pillar 3: Child-sensitive service and programme delivery.

Each pillar is equally important. UNRWA recognizes that these three pillars are interrelated, complimentary and mutually reinforcing. In particular, the Agency’s commitment to child protection underscores the need for child-sensitive service and programme delivery and the central responsibility to safeguard children.

46. Community engagement and a child-centred approach are at the heart of the Framework as reflected in the diagram on the following page, and they cut across the three pillars. They place the child and the family at the centre of all UNRWA child protection activities and demonstrate the importance of the community to better protect Palestine refugee children and promote their well-being and development.

47. Prevention is also a cross-cutting approach relevant to all pillars that is central to averting violence, exploitation and abuse towards children and is far better than waiting for incidents to occur before responding. Prevention activities and interventions not only seek to prevent children from being hurt or injured, but funds spent on prevention activities can bring down service provision costs associated with response.
UNRWA Child Protection Framework

Pillar 1: Commitment to child protection & advocating for respect of child rights
- Advocacy
- Capacity-building
- Staff safety & security
- Evidence-based CP programming
- Comprehensive intersectoral CP interventions
- Functioning CP referral mechanism in each field office

Pillar 2: Safeguarding children
- Accountability & enforcement
- Safeguarding procedures are respected and enhanced
- UNRWA installations are violence-free
- Allegations of misconduct are addressed in a timely, professional manner
- Complaints mechanism for staff & community
- Mainstreaming CP in service & programme delivery

Pillar 3: Child-sensitive service and programme delivery
Pillar 1: Commitment to Child Protection and Advocating for Respect of Child Rights

The Agency recognizes its responsibility as a duty bearer for the protection of Palestine refugee children and it reaffirms its commitment to child protection and advocating for the respect of their rights.

Accountability and enforcement

48. The Agency will systematize and institutionalize child protection throughout its service and programme delivery. The Agency has a role and responsibility to protect children in the way it delivers its services and programmes. For this to happen, UNRWA recognizes the importance of the Agency’s accountability and enforcement responsibilities and is committed to ensuring this Framework is operationalized in accordance with the MTS.

Advocacy

49. UNRWA recognizes its role to advocate for Palestine refugee children, and as such the Commissioner-General and senior management are committed to leveraging the Agency’s voice to speak out for the rights of these children and where possible providing the opportunity and platforms for them to express their own concerns and issues.

50. This will include private advocacy with relevant duty bearers and where necessary public advocacy on specific concerns. UNRWA will also utilize existing mechanisms, including the MRM and the international human rights system (IHRS), to advocate for the rights of Palestine refugee children in accordance with the Agency’s Framework for Effective Engagement with the IHRS.

Capacity-building

51. This Framework provides an overall approach to existing child protection activities being undertaken by the Agency. As such, UNRWA recognizes that meeting the commitment to do this work means by and large using existing financial and human resources to reach desired child protection objectives and outcomes. At the same time, UNRWA recognizes that safeguarding and child protection work requires properly trained and supervised staff and that this work is staff intensive and therefore requires dedicated funds for training, programme costs and staffing. These operational and technical coordination activities are envisaged as being rolled out over the forthcoming MTS period by putting in place systems and building capacities.

52. Where possible, UNRWA will tag child protection activities in the Agency’s annual budget and will direct resources where possible for safeguarding and child protection activities. In addition, UNRWA will seek funds to recruit Child Protection Officers in each Field Office and have a Senior Child Protection Officer in the Protection Division at the HQ level to provide technical guidance on programme delivery relating to child protection and to coordinate the implementation of this Framework.

Staff safety and security

53. UNRWA is committed to carrying out its mandate and fulfilling its child protection role, protecting children from violence, exploitation and abuse. Working in partnership with national child protection systems for children, their families, communities, host governments and other partners will be an integral part of the way the Agency will achieve its vision of children growing up in a safe environment and promoting their well-being.

54. When addressing child protection issues, UNRWA front-line staff frequently face threats and other risks to their safety and security from community members, family members or other actors. UNRWA recognizes that staff safety and security is vital, and staff must feel safe if they are to do their work properly. In addition, they must have adequate supervision and support in carrying out their responsibilities. UNRWA will work towards providing a safe and secure environment in which its staff can carry out child protection activities.
Pillar 2: Safeguarding Children

The Agency recognizes the important role it plays in the safeguarding of Palestine refugee children – that this is central to the Agency’s mandate and ways of working.

55. UNRWA acknowledges that in its capacity as a direct service provider, it is a duty bearer responsible for the children attending UNRWA facilities or receiving UNRWA services. Within the Agency’s care and by its own actions, there is a risk of putting children at harm through the delivery of services and assistance or by the actions of staff members. Staff must not engage in violent, abusive, exploitative or otherwise harmful relationships with children.

56. UNRWA staff have a responsibility to be aware of the risk factors for child abuse, including situations where others may pose a risk to children. The Agency recognizes its responsibility for this duty of care towards children and is committed to making sure its staff are aware of the need to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect, including allegations of corporal punishment or SEA against children.

Safeguarding procedures are respected and enhanced

57. Safeguarding procedures, including human resources screening and selection procedures, will be enhanced and mechanisms re-enforced to ensure they are respected. The Agency will also develop safeguarding training, including as part of induction and specialized training for all staff that will have direct contact with children.

58. UNRWA safeguarding procedures recognize that age, gender and disability further compound the vulnerability of children to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect, and that the Agency will be inclusive of and sensitive to these aspects.

59. UNRWA is mindful that working on child protection issues is often very sensitive, that families and communities can react adversely to actions taken, even if in the best interests of the child. UNRWA recognizes its responsibility to provide regular support supervision to its staff in this regard and will put in place additional mechanisms to support this.

UNRWA installations are violence-free

60. All Palestine refugee children should grow up free from violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect. Building on the Agency’s Protection Policy, the Tool for Incorporating Minimum Standards on Protection, and the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda, UNRWA has a policy of zero-tolerance to violence against Palestine refugee children in all of its installations (this includes schools, health centres, and centres for people with disability).

61. During the consultations for the development of the Framework, staff were particularly concerned about allegations of violence in UNRWA schools and called for continued efforts to combat corporal punishment, including prompt investigation into any allegations of corporal punishment, and swift disciplinary actions taken for any misconduct that was found to have been carried out.

Allegations of misconduct are addressed in a timely, professional manner

62. UNRWA is committed to acting in a timely and transparent manner on all claims of child abuse, neglect and violence, including staff misconduct towards children. This includes allegations of corporal punishment and SEA by UNRWA personnel. Allegations of violence towards children should be reported to the Department of Internal Oversight Services (DIOS) and Front Offices in Field Offices as necessary.

63. Allegations should be reported as soon as possible to ensure that important evidence may be preserved and the investigator(s) can assess the proper course of action, taking into account the totality of the circumstances. The Agency prioritizes investigations into allegations of misconduct that affect children.

64. Staff, children, family members or community members may have concerns about a particular child and suspect there is abuse or neglect. If staff become aware of cases of suspected child abuse or neglect from outside of the Agency, they should refer them to the relevant child protection referral mechanism in each Field Office. It is important that anyone with a concern about a child’s safety feels comfortable to come forward to discuss or report.

65. The Agency is committed to publishing, internally at a minimum, an annual digest of disciplinary measures, taking care to respect the confidentiality of alleged victims and staff members involved. Subject to the above, instances of corporal punishment and SEA may be specifically highlighted in the report, noting the disciplinary measure taken in response.

Complaints mechanism for staff and community

66. Building on existing procedures, the Agency remains committed to strengthening existing standards and time frames for the conduct of investigations as they relate to cases involving children, including feedback mechanisms and communication with complainants and Field Offices.

67. The Agency will work to strengthen its complaints mechanism, including a community-based focus, where children, parents and communities feel comfortable to come forward to discuss or report. The complaints mechanism will be public and transparent so that children, parents and communities know the process of reporting and understand how the complaints mechanism works.

68. The Agency recognizes its responsibility to provide a referral system for the alleged victims of SEA (medical, psychological, safety and support), which is linked to the broader child protection referral mechanism that will be put in place in each Field Office as part of Pillar 3.
Pillar 3: Child-Sensitive Service and Programme Delivery

The Agency recognizes child-sensitive service and programme delivery as a key component of ensuring Palestine refugee children are protected and properly served by the Agency.

Mainstreaming child protection in service and programme delivery

69. Child-sensitive service and programme delivery is a comprehensive approach which includes at the outset mainstreaming child protection in the Agency’s assistance in a way that supports child protection outcomes. This includes making sure qualified staff are recruited and that international and Agency child protection standards are applied. In particular, UNRWA will ensure the use of the global Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action and their supporting resources in preparedness and programme delivery.

70. Building upon the Agency’s Protection Policy, efforts to mainstream child protection initiatives in service delivery will be made using existing guidelines, such as the Agency’s ‘Tool for Incorporating Minimum Standards on Protection into UNRWA Programming and Service Delivery’. Child protection will also be included in the revision of the Agency’s protection standards and annual Protection Audits to measure compliance with the former. Explicit standards for child protection programming will be developed, shared and systematically used where possible.

71. Child protection actions must be designed and implemented with careful consideration of the vulnerabilities of children with disabilities and ensure that services and procedures accommodate any additional or specific needs they may have.

Functioning child protection referral mechanism in each field office

72. UNRWA will ensure that each of its Field Offices has a functioning referral mechanism to address child protection cases. This child protection referral mechanism will build on the experience of those already established for GBV and MHPSS and should be part of an overall referral system for dealing with all protection cases. Where possible, one referral pathway should be operationalized, although it is understood that the pathway might vary depending on the type of case – GBV, child protection or MHPSS. UNRWA will address child protection cases in a timely, dedicated and professional manner, respecting the ‘best interests of the child’ and requirements regarding confidentiality and informed assent and informed consent.

73. Key elements of a child protection referral mechanism include a comprehensive, holistic intersectoral approach focusing on both prevention and response to child abuse, child neglect and violence against children. Referral mechanisms in each Field Office need to be part of a broader child protection approach. A singular referral mechanism or pathway without proper management, sustainability or staffing risks doing harm.

74. For some cases, UNRWA staff will be able to respond by referring to other UNRWA programmes, while in others they will need to refer to partner organizations if the Agency does not have the capacity nor the expertise required to appropriately assist a child. Internal and external coordination in each Field Office is therefore important. Referring to other programmes and services, and participating in external coordination mechanisms, helps enrich and strengthen the overall child protection response. In addition, other partners may wish to refer child protection cases to UNRWA services. This should be supported and encouraged, where possible.

75. UNRWA recognizes that not all children need specialized services. When children grow up in a safe and happy home and community, there is less risk for their need for specialized services. UNRWA focuses on a life-cycle approach, where age (including the age of the child) and any specific needs, including disability, are taken into account. The diagram on the following page, based on the World Health Organization (WHO) and IASC diagrams for MHPSS, shows how prevention is key to mitigating violence against children and that not all children need specialized services.

76. A comprehensive referral mechanism with programme support behind it is key, including sustainable funding and proper staffing. Referral pathways must be part of comprehensive intersectoral programmes with sufficient staffing and budgets, not just one-off projects with a time-bound approach.

Comprehensive intersectoral child protection interventions

77. Key to child-sensitive programme delivery is an intersectoral approach, with the Agency’s different programmes working in synergy and collaboration. As an existing example, the WBFO Family and Child Protection Programme (see box on page 13), in place since 2009, has key elements of this intersectoral approach, including the use of Programme Budget funds (core UNRWA funds), with an explicit management structure, support to staff, clear referral pathways, the capacity to address critical child protection cases in a timely manner, strong links with the community and awareness-raising activities. Similarly, the Jordan Field Office (JFO) Family and Child Protection Project that started in Marka Camp in 2011 also has intersectoral elements and involves a multidisciplinary team with a focus on technical support and case management.
Both programmes have evolved and grown over the last several years, with useful experiences to learn from. Further evaluation and analysis will help the Agency plan and assess the roll-out of similar comprehensive and holistic child protection interventions and programmes in other Field Offices.

Children are rights holders and the Agency commits to children meaningfully participating in all stages of the programme cycle. UNRWA is committed to girls and boys, including children with disabilities and other special needs, meaningfully participating and being empowered by its programmes and service provision.

Emphasis will be placed on awareness-raising to prevent and mitigate violence against children. UNRWA will work together with partners to strengthen such prevention activities and carry out awareness-raising activities. Such initiatives will seek to address adverse social norms and the root causes linked to the challenging circumstances in which Palestine refugee children are growing up, surrounded by different forms of violence. Key partners for this will include children themselves, their families and communities, with a focus on community-based interventions. Other key partners are youth groups, women’s groups, community-based organizations (CBOs), international NGOs, religious leaders, elders, other UN agencies and host governments.

Evidence-based child protection programming

UNRWA is committed to evidence-based child protection programming, utilizing reliable data and statistics. UNRWA will work internally and with partners to increase its data on child protection issues in order to inform programming. The Agency recognizes that evidence-based programming needs to have concrete statistics and disaggregated data in order to adjust programming and advocacy initiatives to achieve the best results for Palestine refugee children.

The Agency will prioritize disaggregating data related to children (under 18 years of age), with particular emphasis on sex and disability. The Agency will work with partners to strengthen host government data collection on Palestine refugee children, including working to support research initiatives on the situation of Palestine refugee children.

Building on existing tools in the Agency and other data management mechanisms and procedures, further efforts will be made to streamline and disaggregate the data, assessing and analyzing the impact on children to improve programming so that it is evidence based.

Prevention and response activities are central to the Agency’s service and programme delivery. A large part of children’s well-being (including mental health and psychosocial support) comes from growing up in a safe and happy family and community. Not all children need specialized services, but ensuring that children grow up in a protective setting with basic social services and a supportive environment is key to their development and well-being. UNRWA recognizes the valuable role of children, families, and communities in this regard and is committed to working with and for communities to protect Palestine refugee children.
Coordination Mechanisms

84. UNRWA recognizes that coordination both internally and externally is key to the protection of Palestine refugee children, and therefore effective coordination mechanisms will be required to successfully implement this Framework. UNRWA is committed to re-enforcing the national child protection system in each of its fields of operations, engaging communities and government counterparts as required and other child protection actors.

85. Externally, UNRWA will contribute to government-led coordination mechanisms, for example sectoral working groups. UNRWA will also work in close collaboration with UN agencies and NGOs through IASC coordination mechanisms that exist in its field of operations, for example the Child Protection Sub-Cluster, the Protection Cluster, or the GBV Sub-Cluster, as well as Child Protection Working Groups.

86. In many instances internal referrals are made for individual child protection cases; however, inter-agency coordination and cooperation is also necessary when UNRWA refers cases to external partners. UNRWA will work in partnership with other organizations and where possible implement existing inter-agency standard operating procedures (SOPs) or guidelines that have been developed or contextualized.

87. Internally, within the Agency, a Child Protection Task Force comprising representatives from all five Field Offices and Headquarters has worked together to develop the UNRWA Child Protection Framework. Sharing and learning from best practice will be a key part of the roll-out and implementation of the Framework, as will the coordination of child protection activities of the Agency more broadly.

The Family and Child Protection Programme in the UNRWA West Bank Field Office

The Programme was established in 2009 to protect the rights of vulnerable groups in Palestine refugee camps from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. It is a holistic, multisectoral programme that integrates family and child protection into UNRWA services through systems building and staff capacity-building. The programme emphasizes quality counselling, case management and services. In addition, Critical Case Management Committees are convened during emergency cases that require rapid and direct intervention at the camp level. At the community level, Family and Child Protection Committees are a multisectoral network made up of community leaders, NGOs, and UNRWA representatives who meet monthly to coordinate prevention activities and interventions. The Committee develops quarterly action plans, which serves as a coordination tool for community-based organizations and other camp stakeholders. There are 10 child information centres, 18 mother-to-mother groups, 22 peer groups and 15 support groups for UNRWA sanitation workers.

The Child and Family Protection Project in Marka Camp in Jordan

The project was a pilot project Jordan Field Office initiated in 2012 that developed a new case management model. The project trained 12 UNRWA social workers on advanced case management skills to assess and provide appropriate interventions to address the complex needs of Palestinian refugees, including children. These case managers are supported by a multidisciplinary team that brings together staff from the Agency’s health, education, and relief and social services programmes who provide advice and make referrals. There is a focus on intersectoral coordination within the UNRWA programmes in Marka Camp to address the issues in a holistic way. Part of the strength of the project has been the establishment of a referral system and network of internal and external partners that links clients with essential services free of charge to help them address their needs. The project is now being expanded to four other camps, having received further funding from UNICEF Jordan.

Inclusive Education

The Agency’s inclusive education is a rights-based approach to education, one that appreciates the diversity of all children, including children vulnerable to exclusion and marginalization. It focuses on removing barriers as well as identifying and responding to the health, psychosocial and learning needs of all children. The Inclusive Education Policy promotes UNRWA protection standards by addressing barriers to accessing and participating in education and the right of all children to learn in a safe and stimulating environment without any discrimination or violation of their rights.
In relation to child protection, UNRWA recognizes it has an added-value when it prioritizes an intersectoral approach involving all programme departments. Each programme has a valuable role to play in responding to child protection needs and threats and in promoting a protective environment for children, but frequently need to implement interventions together to deliver desired outcomes for children. Building on the findings of the UNRWA 2014 Child Protection Mapping Report, the following two tables outline examples of the roles and responsibilities of the different programmes and parts of UNRWA in relation to the Child Protection Framework:

### Roles and Responsibilities in Relation to the Child Protection Framework

| Commissioner-General and Deputy Commissioner-General | • Strategic leadership, including commitment to roll out the UNRWA Child Protection Framework and key advocacy on child rights  
• Publish annual digest of allegations of staff misconduct and action taken with regard to children |
| Protection Division (HQ) and Protection Units in Field Offices | • Lead on the roll-out and implementation of the Child Protection Framework, including technical support to programmes  
• Development of accompanying guidance, including Protection Audits to further include child protection elements  
• Lead on providing guidance on a child protection referral mechanism for each Field Office |
| Spokespersons/Communications/Public Information Offices (PIOs) | • Advocate for Palestine refugee children, including human interest stories  
• Develop outreach plans to ensure all stakeholders, particularly refugees, receive information on the Framework including relevant materials and tools (e.g. UNRWA TV, staff portals, talk-back radio programmes, etc.) |
| Human Resources Department | • Carry out reference checks in relation to child protection on all staff and consultants hired by the Agency  
• Induction training for all new staff on safeguarding responsibilities and tiered training for staff who have direct contact with children  
• Human resources policies for staff members and personnel reviewed and updated to ensure that they are compliant with child protection related standards |
| DIOS | • Investigate allegations of staff misconduct as they relate to children |
| Department of Planning | • Increased data collection disaggregated by age, sex, disability, and key role in coordinating Agency’s participation in baseline studies |
| Department of Legal Affairs and Field Legal Offices | • Provide guidance on international law and domestic legislation as it relates to children  
• IHRS engagement related to child protection in accordance with the Framework for Effective Engagement with the IHRS  
• Provide legal guidance to programme colleagues, including on Privileges and Immunities |
| Programmes: Relief and social services (RSS)  
Education  
Health  
Infrastructure and camp improvement (ICIP) | • All Agency staff recognize their role in safeguarding children through the importance of how service and programme delivery is done, including child-sensitive service and programme delivery  
• Streamlined referral mechanism for protection cases (child protection; GBV, including child survivors; and MHPSS)  
• Internal intersectoral referrals of child protection cases. External referral done as needed, linking with national child protection system (government-led or IASC structures, etc.), including the Agency participating in these systems and using agreed-upon SOPs where appropriate  
• Work together and with partners on programmes that communicate for development and encourage adverse social norms to change  
• Meaningful child participation, prevention and preparedness in programme-cycle management  
• Ability to detect and respond to critical child protection cases  
• Preparedness and emergency response mechanisms in place with relevance to child protection |
| External Relations and Communications Department (HQ) | • Resource mobilization: seek funding for safeguarding and child protection initiatives |
This table below outlines examples across the Agency of how each programme plays a role in preventing and responding to violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect of Palestine refugee children as per the four priority task areas under the MTS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Protection Mainstreaming</th>
<th>Case Tracking and Referral</th>
<th>Protection Programming</th>
<th>International Protection</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td>The UNRWA ‘Inclusive Education Policy’: Teachers demonstrate positive and caring attitudes towards all students. Teachers use positive behaviour-management strategies. Education programme provides additional learning to support children with disabilities and those with learning difficulties, helping them to stay in school and reducing school dropouts.</td>
<td>Teachers, school counsellors and principals have the capacity to identify children who are victims of abuse or neglect, including child sexual abuse, or with additional MHPSS needs. School counsellors provide group counselling and individual support to students in UNRWA schools. Student Support Teams and teachers provide additional support as per the developed Individual Education Plan. When necessary, children experiencing child abuse or neglect are referred by education internally or externally for other services or additional support (e.g. psychosocial or mental health support or other services).</td>
<td>The ‘Education in Emergencies’ programme supports Palestine refugee children affected by conflict, including psychosocial support, interactive self-learning materials for children who cannot access schools and other practical measures to support continuous education during an emergency. Ensuring violence-free schools. Some initiatives include a needs assessment of protection threats and a coordinated protection plan to mitigate and prevent violence against children.</td>
<td>Monitoring and reporting on grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict and in particular the trigger violation related to attacks on schools. Promotion of the right to education as part of ongoing advocacy on the importance of education for Palestine refugees.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Health</strong></td>
<td>The Family Health Team (FHT) approach focuses on comprehensive, holistic primary health-care services for the entire family, emphasizing long-term doctor-patient relationships. It is currently integrating an MHPSS approach that includes a specific focus on prevention and children’s needs.</td>
<td>UNRWA health staff have regular contact with families and children, which includes the opportunity to promote key messages and share awareness-raising information. It also allows for the detection of possible child abuse or neglect, MHPSS and GBV concerns. When necessary, children experiencing child abuse or neglect are referred by health staff internally or externally for other services or additional support (e.g. psychosocial or mental health support or other services).</td>
<td>Health response as part of a comprehensive, intersectoral approach to family and child protection. Builds social safety networks through family and child protection committees. Empowers communities with prevention and advocacy. Ensures quality counselling, case management and services for victims of violence, abuse and neglect.</td>
<td>Monitoring and reporting on grave violations against children in situation of armed conflict and in particular the trigger violation related to attacks on hospitals. Promotion of the right to health as part of ongoing advocacy on Palestine refugees.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relief and Social Services</td>
<td>Relief and social services community workers have direct access to the homes of Palestine refugee children and their families. They carry out awareness-raising on social norms related to child abuse and neglect, MHPSS and GBV concerns. They have a valuable role to play in prevention and response and have a holistic, comprehensive approach to assisting the child and the family. They also have a long-term relationship with families, which allow them to better assist children and families.</td>
<td>RSS community workers detect possible cases of child abuse or neglect, MHPSS and GBV concerns. They may either follow up individually themselves and/or refer appropriately (internally and externally) for other specialized child protection services to be provided.</td>
<td>Through its Disability Programme, RSS partners with a network of CBOs and NGOs to provide rehabilitation, education, vocational training, etc., to children with disabilities. These CBOs run community-based rehabilitation centres offering services such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, assistive devices, etc.</td>
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<td>Infrastructure and Camp Improvement</td>
<td>Guidelines on Camp Improvement recommend carrying out focus groups with children in the programme design period for a child-sensitive approach to infrastructure and camp improvement.</td>
<td>Where necessary, ICIP staff will refer concerns of child abuse and neglect, MHPSS, or GBV internally for others to respond.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protection</td>
<td>Protection mainstreaming in programme, including leading protection audits and broader support to programmes to comply with recommendations, including through a child protection lens. Support individual child protection mainstreaming initiatives.</td>
<td>Enhance and support overall case referral system to address cases of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of vulnerable groups, women and children, and people with disabilities. Protection Unit/OSO teams may also detect possible cases of child abuse or neglect, MHPSS, GBV, or other child rights violations and refer them internally and externally to ensure a comprehensive response.</td>
<td>Providing legal aid services to families that might be experiencing protections issues, including those related to children, such as a lack of civil documentation and birth registration.</td>
<td>Monitoring and reporting of alleged child rights violations by OSO teams, including documentation of specific incidents and private advocacy with relevant duty bearers. Coordinate inputs to the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on grave violations against children in situation of armed conflict. UNRWA provides submissions to the international human rights system, including the Committee on the Rights of the Child when they review State Party reports on the CRC and its Optional Protocols.</td>
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annex 1: terms and definitions

**Abuse** is a deliberate act (single or persistent) of ill treatment that can harm or is likely to cause harm to a child’s safety, well-being, dignity and development. Abuse includes all forms of physical, sexual, psychological or emotional ill treatment.21

**Case management** is a way of organizing and carrying out work to address an individual child’s (and their family’s) needs in an appropriate, systematic and timely manner, through direct support and/or referrals, and in accordance with a project or programme’s objectives.22

**Child** in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) refers to anyone younger than 18 years, unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

**Child labour** under the Convention on the Rights of the Child is work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child’s education or to be harmful to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development (Article 32). Article 3 of the International Labour Organization Convention No. 182 elaborates on the worst forms of child labour including all forms of slavery; prostitution and pornography; illicit activities; and work likely to harm children’s health, safety or morals.

**Child marriage** is defined as a formal marriage or informal union before 18 years of age.22 Because child marriage occurs before the age of consent promoted in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, child marriage is considered as a form of forced marriage given that one or both parties have not expressed their full, free and informed consent.24

**Confidentiality** is the principle and legal obligation that requires service providers to protect information gathered about their clients and ensure it is accessible only with a client’s explicit permission, except in exceptional circumstances, such as when serious safety concerns are identified or where service providers are required by law to report abuse.25 UNRWA HQ Legal Instruction No. 1 of 2009, Revision 1 provides guidance on the permitted circumstances of disclosure.26

**Corporal punishment** is defined by the Committee on the Rights of the Child as: any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light. In the view of the Committee, corporal punishment is invariably degrading. In addition, there are other non-physical forms of punishment that are also cruel and degrading and thus incompatible with the Convention. These include, for example, punishment which belittles, humiliates, denigrates, scapegoats, threatens, scares or ridicules the child.

**Exploitation** is a general term referring to the use of children for someone else’s advantage, gratification or profit, often resulting in unjust, cruel and harmful treatment of the child. These activities are to the detriment of the child’s physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. This covers manipulation, misuse, abuse, victimization, oppression and ill treatment.27

**Informed assent** is the expressed willingness to participate in services. For younger children who are by definition too young to give informed consent, but old enough to understand and agree to participate in services, the child’s “informed assent” is sought.28

**Informed consent** is the voluntary agreement of an individual who has the legal capacity to give consent. To provide “informed consent” the individual must have the capacity and maturity to know about and understand the services being offered and be legally able to give their consent. Generally parents are responsible for giving consent for their child to receive services until the child reaches 18 years of age. In some settings, older adolescents are also legally able to provide consent in lieu of, or in addition to, their parents.29

**Neglect** is the failure of parents, caregivers, the community and society to meet a child’s physical and emotional needs when they have the means, knowledge and access to services to do so or failure to protect the child from exposure to danger.30

**Reasonable accommodation** means necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.31

**Referral** is described as the process of formally requesting services for a child or their family from another sector or organization (e.g. case management, cash assistance, health care, psychosocial, etc.) through an established procedure and/or form.32

**Violence** is defined as the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, that results or is likely to result in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation.33

**Vulnerability** refers to the physical, social, economic and environmental factors that increase the susceptibility of a community or individuals to difficulties and hazards and that put them at risk as a result of loss, damage, insecurity, suffering and death.34
annex 2: international and national standards and norms related to child protection

**International**

Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a Communications Procedure (2011)
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
Four Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols
INEE Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery
IASC MHPSS Guidelines (under revision)
IASC Guidelines on GBV
Inter-Agency SOPs for Child Protection and GBV, Jordan, 2011

**UNRWA-Specific**

Compendium of national legislation and adherence to international norms as they relate to Child Protection in each of the Agency’s areas of operations (2016, draft)
Tool for Incorporating Minimum Standards on Protection into UNRWA Programming and Service Delivery (2010)
Inclusive Education Toolkit (2013)
Human Rights, Conflict Resolution, and Tolerance Education Manual (2013), UNRWA Education Department
Family and Child Protection Programme Framework (June 2015), WBFO
UNRWA/ABAAD Resource Centre for Gender Equality, 4/20/2015, Responding to Child Sexual Abuse: A Practical Guidance for Counsellors in UNRWA’s Education Setting in Lebanon
UNRWA Protection Policy (2012)
UNRWA Gender Policy (2007)
UNRWA Disability Policy (2010)
UNRWA Mental Health and Psychosocial Framework (being developed)
Staff circular No. 1/2007 on Commitment to Eliminating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN and Non-UN staff
General Staff Circular No. 01/2013 on the Prohibition of Violence
endnotes


2. Each of the State of Israel, the State of Palestine, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the State of Lebanon have ratified or acceded to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

3. The Agency was established as a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly by resolution 302(IV) (8 December 1949). Since then the mandate of the Agency has been affirmed annually in relevant resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly, i.e. resolutions on the Assistance to Palestine refugees (latest GA res. 70/83, adopted 9 December 2015), Operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (latest GA res. 70/85, adopted 9 December 2015), and Persons displaced as a result of the June 1967 and subsequent hostilities (latest GA res. 70/84, adopted 9 December 2015).


5. UNRWA, ‘Compendium of national legislation and adherence to international norms as they relate to Child Protection in each of the Agency’s areas of operation’, 2016, internal draft document.


7. General Staff Circular No. 1 of 2013.


17. UNRWA, Department of Legal Affairs International Law Division, Endorsed by the UNRWA Management Committee in September 2011.

18. General Staff Circular No. 01/2013 “Prohibition on Violence”.

19. See UNRWA Handbook on Ethics and Standards; staff may report concerns of misconduct to different officials/departments.

20. Currently the Agency disaggregates data for under 19 years of age.


26. As set out in the HQ Legal Instruction No. 1 of 2009, Revision 1, information obtained by UNRWA staff members in the exercise of their functions will be inviolable and will generally not disclose information that relates to beneficiaries without their consent. However, on an exceptional basis, UNRWA may disclose information without such consent. Disclosure will require careful analysis of confidentiality obligations, protection implications (do no harm), and the safety and security of the Agency/staff members.


29. Ibid.


