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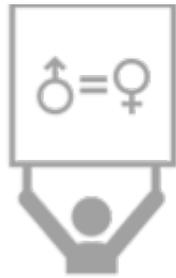
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What's At Stake:

Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls



Almost 50% of children at UNRWA schools are girls



Over 5 million medical consultations for women and girls in 2017



95% of all GBV survivors identified were provided with assistance in 2017



15,898 women received UNRWA microfinance loans in 2017

In a context of protracted displacement and acute emergencies, Palestine refugee women and girls are also affected by occupation, blockade and conflict. Their situation is frequently made worse by persistent legal and social discrimination. Women and girls are particularly vulnerable to poverty and gender-based violence (GBV), and face barriers to employment opportunities. The difficulties they face accessing quality health care and other services contribute to immensely challenging living conditions.

"Gender equality is alive across UNRWA and an integral part of our commitment to the welfare and human development of Palestine refugees. The Agency endeavors to translate this goal into reality through its services."

UNRWA Commissioner-General Pierre Krähenbühl
International Women's Day 2016

It is for these reasons that UNRWA is strongly committed to gender equality through the provision of its services and management practices. While remaining committed to this principled approach, the achievements of recent years are at risk if UNRWA is unable to fill its funding gap.

Gender Mainstreaming: In 2007, UNRWA adopted a Gender Equality Policy outlining its commitment to advancing gender equality. Eleven years on, UNRWA continues to affirm the importance of the promotion and protection of the human rights of women and girls in its humanitarian and human development assistance to Palestine refugees. The UNRWA Gender Equality Strategy emphasizes that change towards a more gender-sensitive organizational culture and inclusive management



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practices is inextricably linked to making progress towards gender equality at the programmatic level, aiming to improve the quality of services by reducing gender gaps. To date, UNRWA has been recognized within the UN system for its performance in the effective implementation of the United Nations System-Wide Action plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

UNRWA educates over 526,000 Palestine refugee children in 711 schools in Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and the West Bank. UNRWA is committed to quality, inclusive and equitable education for all Palestine refugee children in its schools, boys and girls. The Agency's education programme has had a transformational impact on four generations of refugee children, particularly for girls, achieving gender parity in its schools long before most national education systems in the region. For the scholastic year 2017/2018, girls represent about 50% of all enrolled students in UNRWA schools.

UNRWA provides primary health care to Palestine refugees, including maternal health care. In 2017, out of its over 8.5 million consultations, 60.5 per cent were to women and girls. UNRWA promotes the inclusion of men in family planning to increase men's understanding of its importance and empowering women to make decisions related to conception together with their husbands.

Gender-based Violence (GBV): Women across the world, regardless of income, age or education, are at risk and frequently are subjected to GBV. Palestine refugee women and girls are no exception. In the case of Palestine refugees, GBV risks are further exacerbated by conflict, displacement and occupation. Widespread social acceptance of GBV and numerous other barriers often prevent survivors from reporting and seeking support. Since 2009, UNRWA has developed a systematic multi-sectoral programme to respond and prevent GBV. The UNRWA GBV approach is rooted in its three main programmes - Health, Education and Relief and Social Services. Referral systems and response procedures have been put in place and an ambitious capacity-building plan was implemented resulting in over 10,000 staff trainings.

Due to concerns about the increased vulnerability of women and children during emergencies, in 2015 UNRWA launched the Building Safety project to strengthen its ability to respond to, mitigate and prevent GBV in emergencies. The Building Safety project ensures that interventions to combat GBV are integrated into UNRWA's response to humanitarian emergencies from the outset, so that we account for the varied risks facing Palestine refugee women, men, girls and boys. In 2017, UNRWA joined the global 'Call to Action on Protection from GBV in Emergencies' underscoring its commitment to prioritizing addressing GBV in emergencies.



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UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and mandated to provide assistance and protection to some 5 million registered Palestine refugees. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and the Gaza Strip achieve their full human development potential, pending a just and lasting solution to their plight. UNRWA services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, protection and microfinance.