In 2019, UNRWA finalized the Building Safety Project on gender-based violence (GBV), conducted the end line study for its GBV prevention work, and drafted a transition plan to further mainstream GBV in its programmes. In terms of advocacy, UNRWA marked International Women’s Day, participated in the review of Beijing +25, and organized a myriad of activities for the 16 days of activism campaign. In 2020, UNRWA looks forward to reinforcing the implementation of its Gender Equality Strategy (2016-21).

16 Days of Activism Against GBV

UNRWA participated in the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence under this year’s theme: “Orange the World: Generation Equality Stands Against All Forms of GBV.” UNRWA organized and conducted around 120 activities across all five field of operations, with a special emphasis on the systemic use of the TV mini-series “The Shop of Engineer Lina’s Father.” In Gaza, GBV survivors organized a food bazaar, and students at Rimal prep school created a hand-printing mural to raise awareness about GBV. The West Bank Field Office coordinated a youth initiative activity that conveyed messages about GBV prevention through a play created and acted by youth. In Lebanon, the school counsellors implemented various activities including marches from “safe havens” in the community, art sessions, and open forum discussions on GBV. At the closing ceremony at Yarmouk School, UNRWA students performed theater plays and exhibited artwork related to ending GBV. UNRWA organized ceremonies to celebrate the campaign. The Syria Field Office facilitated workshop on women’s rights and family laws for 81 women and 9 men and rolled out puppet show to 1,500 children to raise awareness about violence and harassment. Closing the campaign, the Gender Section in HQ Amman and the gender team in Jordan Field Office organized the Fourth Gender Forum on “Generation Equality Stands Against Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.” Five Palestine refugee youth shared their touching personal stories and reflections about generation equality, gender equality, gender-based violence, and sexual exploitation and abuse. The youth, Rania, Dania, Fatima, Abdullah, and Eyad (students from UNRWA Faculty of Educational Sciences and Arts) directed questions to professional panelists and asked for support on gender equality for Palestine refugees youth. The panelists, Christian Saunders (UNRWA Acting Commissioner General), Reham Jaffal (head of health in Zarqa Area JFO), Arafat Awad (NGO Activist and Youth Advisor), and Wafa Al Khadhra (Dean of Faculty of Languages and Communication, American University of Madaba), shared the ongoing endeavors and future implications of their work in addressing the root causes of gender based violence, the support to the empowerment of youth from both sexes, and the zero tolerance in UNRWA to sexual exploitation and abuse.
UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and mandated to provide assistance and protection to some 5.5 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.

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