This month, UNRWA became a partner of the ‘Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Emergencies.’ The Call to Action is an initiative launched to transform humanitarian practice and end sexual and gender-based violence in emergencies. This underlines the Agency’s commitment to addressing a form of violence that undermines rights, dignity and human potential.

Stories from UNRWA

UNRWA Marks International Women’s Day 2017

Gender Champion Award & Launch of In Their Own Words Booklet and Film Town Hall Meeting

To mark International Women’s Day (IWD), a Town Hall meeting took place on Thursday, 9 March, at UNRWA HQ Amman. The meeting witnessed the launch of the Agency’s first Gender Champion Awards, a new initiative launched to recognize UNRWA staff from all fields who have contributed to advancing gender equality. Six Gender Champions were selected due to their leadership in advancing gender equality, both internally within the Agency, as well as externally in the course of their work. The Gender Champions are:

- Aicha Takhzant (Syria)
- Wafa Diyab (Gaza)
- Muin Moqat (Gaza)
- Samira Ammouri, (Jordan)
- Hadia Chanaa (Lebanon)
- Rasha Tarawa (West Bank)

Gender equality must not only be recognized and taken into consideration on International Women’s Day; rather, as the Commissioner-General highlighted, we must work on gender equality 365 days a year.

Each of the Gender Champions, including Muin and Aicha, presented powerful, inspiring speeches. Muin highlighted the fact that in our efforts to improve and develop, one should not be afraid of change. He added, "We should not be afraid of the community rejecting a new idea; we must engage them to be part of this change." Rasha, the Gender Champion from our West Bank Field Office, made reference to two of the thousands of women who benefited from an initiative that has contributed to women’s economic empowerment and allowed women to access income opportunities.

The event also included the launch of the booklet and film In Their Own Words, which is a compilation of Palestinian women’s stories, some of whom are UNRWA staff, that highlights women’s resilience in challenging circumstances.

IWD Activities Across the Fields

A variety of activities are taking place across the five fields to mark International Women’s Day. This includes a wide range of initiatives such as interactive theatre on child marriage, focus groups with both men and women about the role of women in society and equal opportunities in the work place, and workshops on the rights of female workers both in the formal and informal sectors.

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

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

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