

gender bulletin



West Bank © 2013 UNRWA Photo by Guillaume Petermann

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update of the month

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 against women and girls that undermines their rights, dignity and human potential. [Read more](#)

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)

[Read more on their contributions to gender equality](#)

During the event, UNRWA Commissioner-General Pierre Krähenbühl emphasized how commitment to gender equality is not only imperative from a rights-perspective, but is also part and parcel of our commitment to the improvement of the services and assistance we provide to Palestine refugees.

Mr. Krähenbühl also noted how the absence of Muin and Aicha, colleagues from Gaza and Syria, respectively, who could not attend the ceremony in person, were a reminder of the very challenging context UNRWA staff work in due to conflict, blockade and ongoing occupation.

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.



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Inspiring Story

In Their Own Words

In Their Own Words is a compilation of inspiring stories from Palestinian women, some of whom are UNRWA staff. The booklet is based on a project that started in early 2015 to mark International Women's Day, highlighting stories from these women's lives and shedding light on their triumphs and, at times, losses. The stories vary in content, but all tell a story of courage, resourcefulness and a will to choose life and hope in the face of adversity. The stories represent the strength and resilience of these women and the ways in which they have chosen to cope. To mark IWD 2017, UNRWA posted the booklet and film on their website page, along with a message of appreciation to UNRWA female staff from the Commissioner-General.

[Read more](#)

Events of Interest

I Know Gender: How-to Series - Online module

UN Women Training Centre and the UN System Coordination Division launched the first module of the 'I Know Gender: How-to Series', titled 'Implementing Gender Equality Markers'. This a self-paced course and the first module provides a solid introduction to gender equality markers – what they are, what they can and cannot measure, and how to establish a gender equality marker in your organization (including dealing with challenges). [Read more](#)

Gender and Organizational Change- 24-28 April 2017 (Italy)

The International Training Centre is running a five-day course on Gender and Organizational Change. The workshop looks at how organizations have embraced gender mainstreaming, the successes and barriers, and how gender can be a part of an organizational change management strategy, rather than a 'stand-alone' agenda item. [Read more](#)

Regional News

oPT

The Palestinian Civil Police (PCP) Gender Strategy 2016 was developed by the Palestinian Civil Police (PCP), with the technical assistance of UN Women. The Gender Unit within the Palestinian police force was established in 2011 with the aim of integrating the principles of gender within the various police departments. The strategy was developed using a participatory approach with police administration and civil, governmental, and relevant local and international institutions. In the Palestinian context, there is a heightened need for a gender-sensitive police institutions to ensure respect for the security and human rights of both women and men and combat discrimination against women. [Read more](#)

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The Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs, in collaboration with the local media, is deploying major efforts to encourage the media to address social affairs, in particular women's affairs. Seventeen media outlets in the West Bank and nine in Gaza signed the

Charter of Honour prepared by the Ministry of Women's Affairs. This is an attempt to push the local media into assuming greater responsibility to improve the quality of content by supporting women's rights, promoting a culture to fight violence against women. [Read more](#)

Egypt

In preparation for International Women's Day, UN Women Egypt launched a new print campaign *Finding Her* to illustrate the lack of women in employment. The campaign consists of print advertisements where the audience is challenged to find the only woman in the different workplace settings, including technology, politics and science. Despite the rising educational attainment among women in Egypt, women's participation in the labour force has been low and stagnant at around 23 per cent over the years. The main message behind the campaign is to shed light on the importance of equal opportunities for Egyptian women to participate in the labour force and contribute to the development of society. [Read more](#)

Reports & Resources

OXFAM

The Oxfam report *Transformative and Feminist Leadership for Women's Rights* highlights the complex threats to women's rights today. Gender is the most significant predictor of poverty and powerlessness, particularly in societies dealing with conflict, poverty and inequality. There needs to be a shift in power dynamics and hierarchical and patriarchal structures. The report argues that this requires a critical mass of feminist leaders to lead the way in shifting oppressive power dynamics that keep harmful systems in place. [Read more](#)

UNHCR

Sexual violence against women and girls in conflict situations is often understood as a weapon of war. By contrast, sexual violence against men and boys is less understood and acknowledged, despite it being increasingly evident that this is a recurrent protection concern in situations of conflict and dis-

placement. The guidelines from *Working with Men and Boy Survivors of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Forced Displacement* focus on key messages for staff and survivors and key considerations for inclusive sexual and gender-based violence programming. [Read more](#)

UNFPA

The *State of World Population 2016* report focuses on the fact that at 10 years old, a girl arrives at a very vulnerable point in her life, with rapid changes in the body and brain and dramatic shifts in family and social expectations. Risks are present for both boys and girls, but gender discrimination makes these worse for girls. As a result, millions of 10-year-old girls end up with poor protection of their rights and well-being. In many ways, a 10-year-old girl's life trajectory will be the true test of whether the 2030 Agenda (for sustainable development) is a success – or failure. [Read more](#)

Facts of the Month

Only 28%

of employed women worldwide enjoy any paid maternity leave in practice. [Read more](#)

In 18 Countries

husbands can legally prevent their wives from working. [Read more](#)



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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.

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