

# mural initiative 2017



Beddawi camp - Health Clinic

Each year since 2013, the Operations Support Office team (OSO) in Lebanon has led initiatives to paint colourful murals on the external boundary walls of UNRWA installations in Palestinian refugee camps across the country. The aim of the initiative is to generate community engagement in improving the camp environment, promote positive messages through artwork and, at the same time, preserve the neutrality of UNRWA installations and essential services, such as education and health.

Between December 2016 and July 2017, Palestine refugee children painted the external walls of 12 UNRWA installations [six schools, two camp services offices, three health clinics and one sanitation office] across the Palestinian gathering of Qasmieh (Tyre) and four camps in Lebanon: Burj Shemali, Ein El Hilweh, Beddawi and Shatila. Mural paintings covered themes such as sports, environmental health, caring and inclusive

communities or peace and friendship across the world. To enhance community participation, artists from the communities were selected in each area to facilitate the involvement of UNRWA students in designing, drawing and painting the murals. The OSO team conducted introductory meetings with interested students to explain the project, its aim, process and timing and ensured that consent was given by the parents for students to participate.

The present document provides an overview of the 2017 mural initiative across all areas of operation of UNRWA in Lebanon, profiling, in particular, the activities undertaken to address persistent neutrality issues in some installations: the camp services office, health clinic and Jabalia school in Burj Shemali camp; the camp services office and health clinic in Beddawi camp and Mansoura School in Qasmieh gathering.

## tyre

In the past year, the OSO team in Tyre area has coordinated four projects across the area, including three in Burj Shemali Camp – UNRWA health clinic, the camp services office and Jabalia School – and one in Qasmieh gathering, Mansoura School.

In the first quarter of 2016, the health clinic in Burj Shemali was the target of a campaign of threats against staff and intimidation during the protests against the revised hospitalization policy. Since the clinic reopened, reoccurring graffiti has been drawn onto the outside wall, and the area immediately in front of the clinic has been used to dump garbage posing a health and hygiene risk to camp residents. Similarly, the camp services office was repeatedly targeted, culminating in an attack in August 2016, when a beneficiary set the office on fire. The office was closed for nearly 5 months for repairs. The mural initiative targeted the health clinic and camp services office in order to build a more positive attitude from the community towards these installations and their staff. The outside walls of both installations are on the main road of Burj Shemali camp, and have a high impact in creating a more positive environment in the camp. The mural initiative was conducted in partnership with Al Ghad Social and Cultural Association, a child protection agency within Burj Shemali camp who hired a local artist to

work with 15 girls and 15 boys, aged between 11 and 15 years old. A ceremony was held in February 2017 and certificates and small gifts were distributed to thank the children involved.

In April 2017, the team commenced the largest project to date, covering 221m<sup>2</sup> of the inside walls of the Jabalia school playground area, which had repeatedly experienced graffiti and vandalism. To mark the World Environment Day, scenes promoting the nature and the importance of caring for the environment were drawn on the walls, with over 100 students from different grades participating in completing the paintings. The mural activity commenced on 27 April and was completed on 20 May 2017. A World Health Day celebration was held to launch the opening of the mural and thank the students and the community for their support and participation.

The fourth project, in Qasmieh gathering, was initiated when political graffiti was sprayed on the outside wall of Mansoura school during summer vacation at the end of June. As the school is located on the main road entering Tyre area, the OSO team prioritized the intervention, and coordinated with the artist to undertake a mural initiative to resolve the issue within two weeks in July 2017.

### Burj Shemali camp - Health Clinic



Before

After

### Burj Shemali Camp - Camp Services Office



After

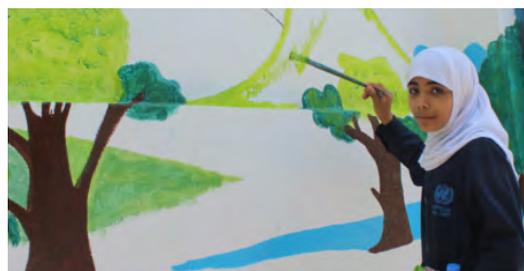


After

### Burj Shemali Camp - Jabalia School



Before



During



After

### Qasmieh Gathering - Mansoura School



During



After



After

## north lebanon

In the first half of 2017, the OSO team in North Lebanon area coordinated two mural projects in Beddawi camp: the external wall of the UNRWA health clinic and the walls between the camp services compound, the sanitation office and Nazareth Secondary school.

A local artist facilitated the participation of students from several schools in Beddawi camp, including Ramleh and Mazar schools, in designing and painting murals on 90m<sup>2</sup> of walls around the camp services compound. The murals focus on nature, culture, sports activities and care for the environment add colourful, positive images to the camp environment.

The 50m<sup>2</sup> outside wall of Beddawi health clinic was transformed with murals on healthy habits; a balanced diet, exercise and anti-smoking messages. Students from Nazareth Secondary school assisted in the design and painting of the images onto the outside wall along the main road in Beddawi camp.

Both mural projects addressed persistent neutrality issues of political posters and graffiti on the outside walls of the targeted UNRWA installations.

On 17 August the OSO team organized a celebration to thank the students for their work. The students were given drawing materials as gifts so they can further explore their talent after the end of the initiative.

### Beddawi Camp - Camp Services Office



Before



Before



Whitewashing



During



After



After

### Beddawi Camp - Health Clinic



Before



After



During



After

# palestine refugee children and youth participating in 2017 mural initiative

Ein El Hilweh Camp - Fallouja School



Shatila Camp - Health Clinic



Burj Shemali Camp - Health Clinic



Beddawi Camp - Camp Services Office



## 2013-2017: impact of unrwa murals

The mural painting initiative started in Lebanon in 2013 and it has progressively expanded to reach nine of the twelve camps (Mieh Mieh, Ein El Hilweh, Rashidieh, Burj Barajneh, Burj Shemali, Shatila, Wavel, Nahr el Bared and Beddawi) throughout all areas of operations of UNRWA Lebanon. In 2017, Operations Support Office teams reviewed all murals that were previously painted to ensure that this initiative, based on community engagement and positive messaging, was sustainable and accepted by the community.

51 murals were painted by children and artists from Palestine refugee camps between 2013 and 2017 in all areas of Lebanon.

Around 63 per cent are still in good condition, maintaining their objectives of promoting positive messages, making the camp environment more colourful and preserving the neutrality of UNRWA installations, while more than 20 per cent have faded or covered during maintenance works but were not vandalized.

Murals were painted mainly on school walls (67 per cent), but as well in health clinics, or administrative offices. Despite some of them having been partially covered with graffiti and posters or damaged by structural works, we consider the mural painting initiative amongst the good practices introduced by the Operations Support Office team in Lebanon.



united nations relief and works agency  
for palestine refugees in the near east

[www.unrwa.org](http://www.unrwa.org)



The mural initiative and this publication were made possible through the generous support of the United States Government.

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.