

# mural initiative 2018

lebanon

unrwa



UNRWA Ein el Assal school compound, Rashidieh Palestine refugee camp, Tyre

Each year since 2013, the UNRWA Operations Support Office team (OSO) in Lebanon has taken the lead on initiatives to paint colourful murals on the walls of UNRWA installations in Palestine refugee camps across Lebanon. Through these murals, the initiative aims to promote creativity in portraying positive messages, to increase community engagement in relation to the camp environment, and in addition preserving the neutrality of UNRWA installations in the camps and gatherings.

The mural painting included positive messaging related to water, sanitation and hygiene, sports, inclusion of all communities, friendship and peace. Artists from the community were selected by UNRWA OSO teams to design mural paintings, with the involvement of Palestine refugees in Lebanon (PRL) and Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) children to decide on the themes and designs. OSO teams gathered interested students to explain the mural painting project, the objective and the process, and reached out to their parents to obtain their consent for the students' involvement in the project.

Between October 2017 and November 2018, Palestine refugee children painted the walls of 14 UNRWA installations including 9 schools, 2 camp services office, 2 health clinic and 1 water tank and sanitation office across 6 Palestine refugee camps in Lebanon; Ein el Hilweh camp, Rashidieh camp, Beddawi camp, Burj el Barajneh camp, Mar Elias camp and Wavel camp.

This document enlists the 2018 mural initiatives completed in the four areas of operation in Lebanon (North Lebanon, Central Lebanon, Tyre and Saida) to address neutrality issues in the following installations: four UNRWA Schools (Sammou, Bissan, Safad and Naqoura) in Ein el Hilweh Palestine refugee camp, Saida; UNRWA health clinic in Rashidieh Palestine refugee camp, Tyre; UNRWA Ein el Assal school in Rashidieh Palestine refugee camp, Tyre; UNRWA Majeddo and Mazar schools in Beddawi Palestine refugee camp, North Lebanon area; UNRWA Water Tank and Sanitation office in Beddawi Palestine refugee camp, North Lebanon area; UNRWA health center in Burj el Barajneh Palestine refugee camp, Beirut; and the UNRWA Camp Services Office in Mar Elias Palestine refugee camp, Beirut.



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## Tyre:

In Tyre the mural initiative focused intensively on Rashidieh Camp, working with the community to improve the overall environment of the camp through the mural initiative, whilst simultaneously targeting UNRWA installations that had repeatedly experienced persistent neutrality issues. UNRWA installations are situated on the main roads in Rashidieh camp, and the 2018 mural initiative was comprehensive, targeting the external walls of five UNRWA premises: the Camp Service Office Compound, Health Clinic, and three schools (Ein Al Assal Elementary, Naqab Preparatory and Aqsa Secondary schools). Children, students and elderly persons selected key themes of protecting the environment, and celebrating cultural heritage to feature in the designs of the mural paintings. A well-known artist from Burj Shemali camp, trained a team of five youth from the camps in Tyre to undertake the work. Community feedback for the initiative was overwhelmingly positive.

## Saida:

In Saida, the 2018 mural project addressed large amounts of graffiti, including of a political nature, in a sizeable alleyway in one of the most sensitive areas of Ein El Hilweh. The alleyway, which opens onto Tawari street, has been an area of tension where clashes have taken place in recent years. The project involved painting some 530 square meters of wall between four UNRWA Schools (Sammou, Bissan, Safad and Naqoura). This design incorporated ideas provided by children from the four schools during brainstorming meetings. The painting includes countryside scenes, world landmarks and sea creatures. Approximately 15 children with a keen eye for art participated in the design and painting of the mural in the months of May and June 2018. The completed project provides a positive environment and safe space for the pupil's entry to school in an otherwise difficult area.

UNRWA Health Clinic – Rashidieh camp, Tyre



Before



After

UNRWA Ein el Assal school - Rashidieh camp, Tyre



Before



After

UNRWA schools – Ein El Hilweh camp, Saida



Before



After



After

## North Lebanon (Tripoli) :

In the second half of 2018 the OSO team in North Lebanon area coordinated two mural projects in Beddawi camp: the external wall of the UNRWA Water Tank and Sanitation office compound and the wall of Majeddo and Mazar schools compound. A local artist designed and painted the 20m<sup>2</sup> of the frontal side of the Water Tank and Sanitation Office. The murals in the Water Tank focus on water resources and care for the environment and add colourful, positive images to the camp's main road. In this occasion no children were involved in the painting due to the high level of traffic in that location. The 15m<sup>2</sup> outside wall of Majeddo and Mazar schools compound was transformed with cheerful murals about learning and family friendly schools. Students from both schools assisted in the design and painting of the images onto the outside wall. The mural projects addressed persistent neutrality issues of political posters and graffiti on the outside walls of the targeted UNRWA .

## Central Lebanon (Beirut) :

In the first half of 2018 the OSO team in Central Lebanon area coordinated two mural projects: the Camp Services Office in Mar Elias Camp and the Health Center in Burj el Barajneh Camp. A local female artist facilitated the participation of students from Haifa and Galilee schools in designing and painting murals on 50m<sup>2</sup> of external walls of the Health Center and 20m<sup>2</sup> of external walls of the Camp Services Office, both of which are in highly visible areas in the camps. The murals focus on the importance of the United Nations to the Palestinian community and add colourful, positive images to the camp environment. The outside wall of Burj el Barajneh Health Center was transformed with murals depicting UNRWA's positive role in the community. The Mar Elias wall includes the text of a United Nations resolution and a tree whose branches provide opportunities for human development. Both mural projects addressed persistent neutrality issues on the outside walls of the targeted UNRWA installations.

### UNRWA Majeddo and Mazar schools – Beddawi camp, North Lebanon



Before



During



After

### UNRWA Water Tank and Sanitation office – Beddawi camp, North Lebanon



Before



After



After

### UNRWA health center - Burj el Barajneh Camp Central Lebanon



Before



During



Before



After

## UNRWA Mural Initiatives in Lebanon 2013-2018:

Since 2013, UNRWA Lebanon has been implementing mural painting initiatives. Initially, the initiative only targeted a few Palestine refugee camps in Lebanon. As of 2018 the mural painting project has been expanded to reach all of the 12 official Palestine refugee camps and some gatherings in Lebanon. With the support of the Operations Support Office teams in the four areas, the mural paintings have engaged the Palestinian community to create positive messaging.

Since 2013, a total of 65 mural paintings were painted by Palestine refugee children, youth and artists. The murals were painted on UNRWA school walls, health clinics and UNRWA administrative offices. The majority of the murals remain in good condition, making the camp environment more colourful, preserving the neutrality of the UNRWA installation and promoting positive messages. Even though some murals painted in previous years have been partially damaged or covered with graffiti or posters, the mural painting initiative is considered a good practice introduced and supported by the Operations Support Office team in Lebanon.

# Palestine refugee children, youth and artists participating in the 2018 mural paintings initiative

UNRWA Camp Services Office, Mar Elias Camp



UNRWA Camp Services Office, Mar Elias Camp



UNRWA Majeddo and Mazar Schools, Beddawi Camp



UNRWA Ein El Assal School, Rashidieh Camp



UNRWA Health Clinic, Burj El Barajneh Camp



UNRWA Majeddo and Mazar Schools, Beddawi Camp



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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.