1. Epidemiological situation (WHO data: as of 5 April 2020)

Number of cases including Palestinian refugees (PRs)

- Lebanon: 527 cases, (PRs: 135), 35 recovered, 18 deaths (local tests) *
- West Bank: 223 cases, (PRs: 341), 18 recovered, 1 death (PR) (local tests) *
- Gaza: 51 cases, (PRs: 159), 6 recovered, 5 deaths (local tests) *
- Syria: 19 cases, (PRs: 0), 2 recovered, 2 deaths (imported cases) *

ALL COUNTRIES AT HIGH RISK: COVID-19 PANDEMIC (* MoH confirmed, 2 suspected & under investigation)

2. UNRWA Fields of operations summary updates

Access/movement

UNRWA's operations

Gaza

Partial lockdown in effect. Erez crossing is shut down for passengers, except for humanitarian cases only. Rafah Terminal closed in both directions, opened for imported goods and for urgent medical and humanitarian cases. UNRWA vehicles were redeployed to staff as needed. UNRWA staff members received their food baskets via the new house-to-house delivery modality for food distribution, with positive feedback received by RSS M&E team from 8,613 families living in tents and all Microfinance branches remained closed.

West Bank (WB)

Curfews are in place across the WB, including to/from East Jerusalem, except for emergencies. Movement restrictions remain severe across the WB. Movement in Ramallah is allowed only during 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. Additional checkpoints and blockades were reported around Bethlehem (under 24 hrs. curfew) and surrounding areas and Aitas village is still under full lockdown. Most checkpoints are closed for health, emergency staff and press. The PA will continue to minimize working hours and staff numbers at the Ministries. Bibbod and Al Bireh Governorates remain under strict lockdown.

The state of emergency was extended for another month. All Governmental and UNRWA continue to carry out screening and testing of workers returning from Israel (with 14 days home quarantine) especially with the Passover (Pesach) feast dates (8-16 April) approaching.

Jordan

The overall security risk level is assessed low. All ports still are permitted to move on Sundays. Cars with diplomatic and medical staff are free to move. No restrictions are applied to yellow “7” or “UN” licences. Driver permit only are allowed to move vehicles, carrying a “7” or “UN” licence plate, are free to move. Assistance services, main services in urban and rural areas excluding those with foodstuffs, pharmacies, cleaning centres, and medical commercial activities until further notice, excluding ports are closed.

The overall security risk level is assessed low. Field (FO) and Office Area (OA) staff telecommuting until 15 April, except for Health staff. Critical staff are allowed to travel in and out of the country in case of emergency. UNRWA vehicles were redeployed to staff as needed. UNRWA staff members received their food baskets via the new house-to-house delivery modality for food distribution, with positive feedback received by RSS M&E team from 8,613 families living in tents and all Microfinance branches remained closed.

Lebanon

All borders are closed. The airport was opened today, and for this week, for returning Lebanese nationals stuck in some countries, who are quarantined in hotels rented by the government. The vehicles are only allowed on the road on alternate days from Monday - Saturday, and no vehicles will be permitted to move on Sundays. Cars with diplomatic plates are exempt from these measures, as are UN personnel, journalists, Lebanese staff outside Lebanon, and their vehicles. Lockdown of the country has intensified by General Security Forces and has been extended until 15 April. All citizens are requested not to stay outside their homes. A country wide general closure (curfew) is in place, controlled by security forces, from 7:00 pm until 5:00 am with some essential services (security, bakeries, medicines) exempted.

Syria

Country-wide curfew in effect from 6:00 pm to 6:00 am. All ports are closed except for cargo trucks. Closure of all commercial activities until further notice, excluding foodstuff, water, medical centers, and medical supplies. Government ministries reduced their work force. Movement is prevented between governorates, and between urban and rural areas excluding those with permits, emergency cases and health workers.

The overall security risk level is assessed high.

HCs are open between 8:00 am and 2:00 pm, FO and AOs are closed, all staff are telecommuting until 12 April except for health centre staff, sanitation workers and key staff from other programmes. Patients are required to make appointments by phone before coming to their health centres. Schools and training centres are closed. LFC and UNRWA staff in Lebanon will cover 50% of the hospital cost for confirmed COVID-19 PR cases.

In coordination with MSF, LFO is preparing STC’s dormitories for use as quarantine units for mild cases. All health centres are thoroughly disinfected by sanitation teams daily.

HQ (Amman, Jerusalem and Gaza)

Same as operations of

UNRWA Liaison offices

Staff are telecommuting as follows: Cairo Office until 15 April, NY and Washington until 30 April, and Brussels until 19 April (if there is no substantial change by then, measures will continue to be applicable until 3 May).

3. New Resources on COVID-19 from HR STAFF WELLBEING

The Human Resources Department is pleased to inform you that it has launched its “Well-Being Tips” page on UNRWA COVID-19 page, which includes tips for staff, their families and their children. Please click on the photo.

Please email us: unrwa-covid19@unrwa.org for any questions.