



monthly updates on gender issues in UNRWA and the region

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## update of the month

UNRWA is working on compiling inputs from field offices to feed into the *Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of, and assistance to, Palestinian Women*, an annual report which presents an overview of the assistance provided to Palestinian women by the entities of the UN system.

## stories from unrwa

### UNRWA Student among Highest Scoring in Lebanon

Fourteen-year-old Nour Kanan, a Palestinian student from Lebanon, was watching a television report on academic results when the Minister of Education in Lebanon suddenly mentions her name. Nour attends the UNRWA Al-Mazar Prefabricated School in Beddawi camp; the school was originally established to host displaced students from Nahr el-Bared refugee camp. It was announced that Nour scored 18.643 out of 20 on Lebanon's official exams for the ninth grade and that her score is the ninth highest nationally for her school grade. "We all froze in silence and looked at each other with amazement, wondering if what we heard was true! Moments later, the house was full of joy and jubilation!" exclaimed Nour's mother.

In response to her outstanding achievement, Nour added, "We should have a dream and a goal in life. Setting the goal is the first step on the road to success, regardless of how difficult the circumstances are. Human will is stronger than anything in this world. Learning is not only a means to get a job. Learning is much more than that – it strengthens our self-confidence and enhances our awareness and culture."

In Lebanon, UNRWA provided basic education to 36,549 students in 68 schools across the country in 2015/16; girls make up 52.9 per cent of the total number of students.

For more information, please contact: [n.said@unrwa.org](mailto:n.said@unrwa.org)

### Engaging Communities on GBV Prevention in Syria

On 18 July, 350 refugee children and their families from the collective shelter in Jdaidedt Artouz were invited to join in an activity in a nearby public park organized by the UNRWA relief and social services programme (RSSP). A group of social workers and volunteers from UNRWA RSSP organized this event as part of the Agency's wider work on GBV prevention.

Children contributed by writing messages on a large paper tree to express their thoughts on protection from violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect. The activity aimed to raise awareness about threats to child safety and spread useful information on the protection of children to the participating families.

This activity was a part of the Building Safety programme aimed at ensuring timely and effective humanitarian action in order to reduce the incidence of GBV and provide quality services for survivors from the very onset of emergencies.

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### Building Safety Update

Work on the development of an Agency-wide GBV Prevention Framework has been ongoing. As part of the process of ensuring the participation of all fields and concerned programmes, a workshop took place in Amman from 26-28 July, with the purpose of ensuring that existing experiences and practices in field offices inform the development of the framework towards a more systemized approach to GBV prevention.

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## inspiring story

Asmaa al-Ghoul is a reporter from Rafah, a city in Gaza that borders Egypt. Her work is highly critical of human rights violations in the Gaza, and she calls for an end to discrimination against women in Gaza. This has led to her work becoming recognized internationally, and in 2012 she received the 'Courage in Journalism' Award from the International Women's Media Foundation. She has written for the Ramallah-based newspaper Al-Ayyam and more recently for the Washington-based media site, Al-Monitor. Several weeks ago, she published a piece about her experience journeying from Gaza into Egypt during the Rafah crossing's brief opening in early June. "In July 2015, I applied for permission to travel at the Abu Khadra government complex in Gaza City, and found myself as number 10,962 in line..." [Read more](#)

## events of interest

### 1 September 2016 – Online

Applications are open until 1 September for contributions to a special edition of 'Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies' with the theme of 'Mapping Gendered Violence: Contemplating Conflict and Crisis in Contemporary Societal Struggles'. [Read more](#)

### 8-9 September 2016 – Seattle, USA

The University of Seattle is organizing its eighth Annual Domestic Violence Symposium with presentations on the topics of violence, trauma, culture, children and social justice from various speakers. [Read more](#)

### 11-12 November 2016 – Istanbul, Turkey

DAKAM (Eastern Mediterranean Academic Research Center) is holding an international conference on gender and women's studies. Themes explored will include gender discrimination, intersectional identities and changing gender roles across cultures. The deadline for contributing abstracts is the 5 August and for attendance registration is 30 September. [Read more](#)

## regional news

### Bahrain

On the 12 June, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between UN Women and the Bahrain Supreme Council for Women. It aims to ensure that countries, official agencies and organizations adopt non-discriminatory policies and ensure equal opportunities in all fields. The signing also marks the launch of a new Global Award for Women's Empowerment, which aims to praise institutional and individual efforts and initiatives for gender mainstreaming. [Read the article](#)

Civil society workers say that survivors of violence will bear the brunt of controversial funding cuts against women's rights groups following last year's oil price collapse. [Read the article](#)

### Saudi Arabia

The Saudi Ministry of Justice has announced the launch of a new alimony fund to support women and dependent children awaiting court decisions during divorce and other family litigation cases. This comes as part of the Saudi National Transformation Program, aiming to increase female participation in the workforce and in the national civil service. [Read the article](#)

This August in Rio, four female athletes, Sara Al-Attar, Lubna Al-Omair, Cariman Abu Al-Jadail and Wujud Fahmi, will become the second group of women Olympians ever to represent Saudi Arabia at the Olympic games. [Read the article](#)

## reports & resources

### UN Women

UN Women has released a document that outlines core actions and supporting case studies for 'Promoting the Rights, Needs and Agency of Women and Girls in Humanitarian Action'. [Read more](#)

### Freedom Fund

A study entitled 'Struggling to Survive: Slavery and Exploitation of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon' discusses the growing concern of forced marriage, trafficking and exploitation of refugees, including Palestinian refugees from Syria. [Read more](#)

### UNHCR

The 'Age, Gender and Diversity: Accountability Report 2015' identifies the key challenges and innovations surrounding the diversity of refugee experiences and how to effectively address the protection, assistance needs and capacities of individuals and communities experiencing displacement. [Read the report](#)

### International Commission of Jurists

The report 'Women's Access to Justice for Gender-Based Violence: A Practitioners' Guide' reviews global and regional legal standards of women's rights and suggests practical steps for women's legal empowerment. [Read the report](#)

### UNFPA

The resource 'Women, Faith and Human Rights' includes several discussion papers exploring the relationship between religion and women's rights, especially regarding sexual and reproductive health and rights. [Read more](#)

### Women's Refugee Commission

The WRC has put together 'Building Capacity for Disability Inclusion in Gender-Based Violence Programming in Humanitarian Settings: A Toolkit for GBV Practitioners'. This resource aims to support GBV staff to build disability inclusion into their work. [Read more](#)

## facts of the month

Women make up over

**2/3** of all survivors of intimate partner and family related homicide. [Read more](#)

**120** million girls worldwide have experienced sexual violence. [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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