

10-14 April 2022

Documentation of the Work of The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) NMUN Simulation*



Conference B

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United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA)

Committee Staff

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| Director | Tara Kwan |
| Assistant Director | N/A |
| Chair | Nico Remmert |

Agenda

- I. Situation of and Assistance to Palestinian Women
- II. Providing Career Opportunities for Youth

Resolutions adopted by the Committee

| CODE | TOPIC | VOTE (FOR-AGAINST-ABSTAIN) |
|------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| UNWRA/1/1 | Situation of and Assistance to Palestinian Women | Adopted without a vote |

Summary Report

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNWRA) held its annual session to consider the following agenda items:

- I. Situation of and Assistance to Palestinian Women
- II. Providing Career Opportunities for Youth

The session was attended by representatives of 19 Member States and 0 Observers. On Sunday, the committee adopted the agenda of I, II, beginning discussion on the topic of “Situation of and Assistance to Palestinian Women.”

By Monday, the Dais received three working papers covering a wide range of sub-topics such as healthcare, maternal mortality, education, gender-based violence, employment, funding, partnerships, and data collection and monitoring which received the first round of edits. By Tuesday, worked closely to ensure consensus across their papers by merging their papers. The collaborative spirit of the committee was evident as multiple Member States contributed to different working groups in an effort to reach consensus.

By Wednesday morning, the working paper was accepted as a draft resolution. The draft resolution was adopted without a vote on Wednesday afternoon. The delegates proceeded to discuss the second topic on “Promoting Career Opportunities for Youth.” The committee submitted three working papers for consideration discussing education, digital learning, career opportunities, infrastructure, and internships before the end of the final committee session. The delegates’ ability to move the body through two topics was reflective of their overall commitment to diplomacy, consensus, and substantive accuracy that guided their work throughout the week.



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Code: UNRWA/1/1

Committee: United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East

Topic: The Situation of and Assistance to Palestinian Women

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East,

Appreciating the ongoing support and investments by Member States and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) while respecting the different financial capacities,

Noting with deep concern the lack of sufficient funding provided to United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), resulting in a \$50.08 million deficit in reserves as of 2019,

Bearing in mind the *UNRWA Gender Equality Strategy (GES) 2016-2021* that emphasizes UNRWA's commitment to gender mainstreaming,

Guided by utilizing gender mainstreaming into data gathering in line with how it involves the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels as stated by UNRWA's website and *The Peacebuilding Commission's Gender Strategy*, which is understood to be a key to ensuring that women's needs are met,

Approving how gender mainstreaming would enable the best practices to respond and cater to the data gathered based on Palestinian women's needs,

Emphasizing the collaboration of UNRWA's Advisory Commission, NGOs, and civil society in aiding gender mainstreaming to maximize its efficiency and effectiveness,

Noting with deep concern that Palestinian women are being denied proper socio-economic opportunities such as quality education and career development,

Deeply concerned with the accessibility to education and employment for Palestine refugee women in the Near East as according to The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), 60% of Palestinian women have secondary education, while only consisting of 12% for all executive and senior management positions,

Acknowledging the need to improve educational opportunities for Palestinian women and girls, while noting with appreciation the educational progress already made in Palestine, as according to United Nations Development Programme, overall female literacy in Palestine is 88% and is predicted to rise in the next decade,

Reaffirming the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (1979), which prohibits any discrimination against women,

Concerned by the high number of Palestinian women who believe they should not participate in the political landscape, as stated in the *Second National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security in Palestine*, despite the importance of women in political participation highlighted in the General Assembly resolution 66/130 (2011) and the Security Council resolution 1325 (2000),

Appreciating the efforts of organizations such as the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) in increasing the participation of women in politics, peacebuilding, and mediation,

Acknowledging the need for financial donations, volunteers, resources to battle gender-based violence, and further relevant resources for the UNRWA to assist Palestinians efficiently,

Bringing attention to the threat of violence in the Near East that exacerbates the current refugee crisis in the occupied Palestinian territories as seen in the escalation that occurred in May of 2021, killing hundreds of Palestinian women and leaving much more widowed, according to the World Health Organization (WHO),

Acknowledging the lack of labor market flexibility to reconcile the working and family life of Palestinian refugee women and that, according to UN Women, only 12% of senior management positions are held by women,

Recognizing that, according to UN Women, Palestinian women are still expected to be the household's caretaker even if employed, because a lack of child care hinders their ability to join the workforce,

Recognizing the vulnerability of mothers and children, who are entitled to special care under the Article 25 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR),

Noting further the role of COVID-19 in exacerbating the challenges UNRWA and Palestinian refugees face,

Remain concerned for the Palestinian women healthcare workers who, according to UN Women, make up over 70% of the frontline health staff in the occupied Palestinian territories, therefore experiencing an increased risk of COVID-19,

Recognizing the lack of vaccines for the refugee population and COVID-19's effects on human health leading to the deaths of hundreds of Palestinian women and girls, according to UN Women,

Reaffirming the need for improvement of current healthcare centers in the occupied Palestinian territories, 25% of Palestinian women are at risk of death when experiencing childbirth, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and Gaza has reported a 90% decrease in prenatal check-up attendance since 2020,

Further concerned by the reality that 40% of Palestinian women experience anemia in the third trimester of pregnancy, double the rate of Europe, according to the UNICEF mapping study,

Noting with deep concern the lack of accessible health care, as according to the World Bank, only 44% of all Palestinians have access to reasonable and customary healthcare,

Recognizing that health care centers have already been established in the occupied Palestinian territories and that the health care centers need improvements to be able to provide quality medical treatment,

Alarmed by how 37% of women in Palestine report gender-based violence in occupied Palestinian territories, according to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA),

Emphasizing the lack of access to gender-based violence resources based on the Gender Section Report conducted by the UNRWA, which showed that less than half of the survivors reported were able to utilize the resources readily available,

Recognizing that the One-Stop Centers already exist for Palestinian women and provide protection services, medical care, and legal aid within occupied Palestinian territories,

Acknowledging that additional funding for One-Stop Centers is needed to continue and expand on providing critical services to Palestinian women,

1. *Requests* Member States and NGOs to financially contribute to UNRWA's budget to help fund projects while respecting the different capacities of the donors;
2. *Recommends* the establishment of a data-gathering system to evaluate the impact of gender mainstreaming in UNRWA's programs for Palestinian women through:
 - a. Monitoring the current data gathering method through disclosure of data storage to ensure the sources of data are reliable and accurate;
 - b. Having an accessible data system that encompasses current data collection methods to be efficient;
 - c. Collaborating with other United Nations entities, NGOs, and other interested parties present in the occupied Palestinian territories serving Palestinian women refugees;

3. *Draws attention to* how the establishment of a data-gathering system intends to define the exact statistics of issues experienced by Palestinian women would:
 - a. Decrease fear of disclosure, causing false information that presently characterizes the data regarding issues that Palestinian women experience, such as gender-based violence and access to necessities;
 - b. *Encourage* the de-stigmatization of harmful social norms that cloud multiple issues experienced by Palestinian women;
4. *Further suggests* streamlining existing UNRWA monitoring and evaluating systems by utilizing the existing Advisory Commission and in consultation with the involved Observer States and other stakeholders;
5. *Proposes* stronger education initiatives for Palestinian women and girls to support access to education by:
 - a. Expanding the services of training centers by partnering with UNICEF and the Palestinian Ministry of Education;
 - b. Promoting gender mainstreaming and gender equality in UNRWA schools' curricula to spread awareness of these topics starting in schools;
 - c. Welcoming the expansion of Youth Peer (Y-Peer) Palestine, a youth education network created by UNFPA to supplement Palestinian schools via networking opportunities, humanitarian and leadership training, and workshops on community participation;
6. *Recommending* a WPHF partnership to promote Palestinian women's participation in peacebuilding, politics, mediation, and the economy wherein the WPHF provides six-month, short term, compensated internships with a focus on building entrepreneurship and political participation;
7. *Encourages* a partnership with UN Women, such as the Global Network on Young Women Leaders, to expand UNRWA's access to an inclusive educational curriculum that promotes political participation of women and economic self-sufficiency;
8. *Proposes* the construction of additional schools in Palestine and the provision of equipment and training to Palestine's Vocational Training Centers for youth and women;
9. *Invites* Member States and NGOs to continue advocating for Palestinian women's human rights;
10. *Encourages* NGOs and local institutions to partner to create additional skill training programs that facilitate entrepreneurship and support women's vocational opportunities;
11. *Recommends* collaboration with other UN entities, such as UN Women, to create initiatives providing career opportunities for Palestinian refugee women by establishing:
 - a. Informative workshops that will provide information regarding in-demand skillsets within the work field;
 - b. Job opportunities globally and within the region to further promote self-sufficiency;
 - c. Businesses to showcase their culturally inherited skills to operate efficiently in any marketplace;

12. *Endorses* the establishment of networking opportunities through UN entities, NGOs, and Member States to provide Palestinian women with additional career opportunities;
13. *Recommends* an expansion of the UNICEF Early Childhood care program through parental support frameworks, family planning, and subsidized childcare provision to support Palestinian women's careers;
14. *Encourages* businesses and companies sponsored by Member States hosting Palestinian refugees to offer time flexibility for Palestinian mothers to reconcile working and family life;
15. *Requests* Technical and Vocational Education and Training workforce training continue to establish Palestinian women as competitive candidates in the labor market by creating a quota of increasing enrollment of women by 20%;
16. *Continuing* existing UNRWA initiatives to mitigate the long-term implications of COVID-19 by:
 - a. Expanding upon the developed COVID-19 UNRWA App;
 - b. Promoting sanitary practices such as handwashing, social distancing, and quarantining;
 - c. Providing access to COVID-19 vaccines via reaffirming the existing WHO COVAX initiative;
 - d. Providing personal protective equipment to hospital staff;
17. *Suggests* that UNRWA's Health Programme to improve the quality of UNRWA's health care facilities to better serve Palestinian women and girls by:
 - a. Providing medical supplies and medication;
 - b. Educating staff on dealing with gender-based violence and promoting gender equality;
 - c. Partnering with the UNFPA on the topic of maternal and reproductive health to use their expertise and experiences and make the work more efficient;
 - d. Establishing plans for professional healthcare staff to administer and distribute resources pertaining to maternal and child care;
 - e. Partnering with NGOs and UN entities such as the UN Women's Men and Women for Gender Equality Regional Program to promote community-driven and gender-inclusive healthcare with an emphasis on women's safety and maternal healthcare;
18. *Establishes* specialized units within UNRWA's health care facilities that are specified on providing for women and their needs, including but not limited to:
 - a. Mental health care services specialized for survivors of gender-based violence;
 - b. Maternal and newborn health care to reduce the risk of newborn and maternal mortality, ensuring that also midwives take care of the patients and partnering with the UNFPA on that topic;
 - c. Proper nutrition for pregnant women;

- d. Sexual and reproductive health care services such as modern contraceptives to encourage women's self-determination and contribute to women's overall sexual well-being and education and, as a result, destigmatize it;
 - e. Public education workshops to bring awareness to the situation of disabled Palestinian women and discrepancies in equity;
 - f. Expansion of current telemedicine and teletherapy initiatives;
19. *Expands* the UNRWA Mobile Health Teams to reach more Palestinian women experiencing gender-based violence in areas of conflict or rural areas, where static services are not possible by providing:
- a. Emergency medical care to survivors;
 - b. Immediate mental health support to survivors;
 - c. Information services and a safe space, including legal advice and supporting survivors with further knowledge about gender-based violence and what it entails;
20. *Resolves* to increase funding for the revitalization of existing One-Stop Centers in areas with Palestinian refugee populations by:
- a. Designating five million a year from the UNRWA budget for the next two years;
 - b. Encouraging voluntary contributions in funds with a global development campaign organized through the UNRWA, specifically for One-Stop Centers;
21. *Ensuring* a universal standard of facilities across all safe spaces to further assist in the further expansion of underdeveloped safe places for Palestinian refugee women in the Near East;
22. *Recommends* the expansion of recruitment of Palestinian refugee women for employment within the UNRWA Young Women Leaders Programme (YWLP) program aimed at assistance towards women;
23. *Supports* the update of the UNRWA's Mother and Child Health application to assist Palestinian women with connecting to caseworkers, information about One-Stop Centers, and telehealth resources.