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syria regional crisis emergency appeal progress report

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About UNRWA

UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 with a mandate to provide humanitarian assistance and protection to registered Palestine refugees in the Agency's area of operations, namely the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, pending a just and lasting solution to their plight. Thousands of Palestine refugees who lost both their homes and livelihood because of the 1948 conflict have remained displaced and in need of significant support for over seventy years. UNRWA helps them achieve their full potential in human development through quality services it provides in education, health care, relief and social services, protection, camp infrastructure and improvement, microfinance and emergency assistance. UNRWA is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions.

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Cover photo: Palestine refugee children wear face masks in all UNRWA schools. Majedo School, Beddawi camp, Lebanon.
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acronyms and abbreviations

AVAC	Addressing violence against children	PDM	Post-distribution monitoring
CBO	Community-based organization	PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
DLP	Digital Learning Platform	PRI	Palestine refugees from Iraq
EA	Emergency Appeal	PRJ	Palestine refugees in Jordan
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War	PRL	Palestine refugees in Lebanon
FESA	Faculty of Educational Sciences and Arts	PRS	Palestinian refugees from Syria
FSRM	Field Security and Risk Management	PSS	Psychosocial support
GBV	Gender-Based Violence	RSS	Relief and Social Services
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview	ROCA	UNRWA Representative Office in Cairo
HQ	Headquarters	SEN	Special Educational Needs
IOM	International Organization for Migration	SFO	Syria Field Office
JHAS	Jordan Health Aid Society	SLP	Self-Learning Platform
JFO	Jordan Field Office	SSF	Safety and Security in the Field
KAP	King Abdullah Park	SSNP	Social Safety Net Programme
LAF	Lebanese Armed Forces	SYF	Syrian Pound
LBP	Lebanese Pound	TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
LFO	Lebanon Field Office	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support	UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
MoH	Ministry of Health	UNICEF	Palestinian refugees from Syria
NCD	Non-communicable disease	UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
NFIs	Non-Food Items	VTC	Vocational Training Centre
NPU	Neutrality and Protection Unit	WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
PCR	Polymerase chain reaction	WFP	World Food Programme

executive summary

During the first half of 2021, an estimated 438,000 Palestine refugees in Syria, 28,017 Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) in Lebanon and 18,164 PRS in Jordan entered a more serious state of poverty and vulnerability as the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic worsened and unemployment rates soared across the region.

In Syria, the devaluation of the Syrian pound (SYP) and rapidly rising inflation pushed the prices of basic commodities upwards. Food security was further impacted through: (i) a tightened regime of international sanctions that continued to affect a wide range of economic sectors and the importation of daily necessities, including food and medicines; (ii) an escalation of the fuel crisis, leading to inconsistent petrol and electricity supplies; and (iii) the financial and banking crisis in neighbouring Lebanon that severed Syria's link with its last remaining financial gateway. Taken together, these developments served to negatively affect the daily lives of people in Syria, including Palestine refugees, at every level.

According to the World Food Programme (WFP), by June 2021 "The national average food basket price was 49 per cent higher than that of December 2020 (six months ago) and was 102 per cent higher compared to June 2020."¹ Prices for basic food items such as sugar and fresh eggs increased by 3 and 12 per cent between May and June 2021. In addition, water shortages along the Euphrates River resulted in a reduced wheat harvest and price increases for staple vegetables.

A May 2021 UNRWA Syria Field Office (SFO) crisis monitoring survey² found that 82 per cent of the individuals in the 503 Palestine refugee households interviewed (representing 2,000 refugees) now live on less than US\$ 1.9 per day (at the rate of SYP 3,250/US\$), which includes the cash assistance received from UNRWA. This represents an 8 per cent increase on findings from the UNRWA 2017/2018 socio-economic household survey. The survey also found that 48 per cent of total household expenditure was spent on food, a disproportionately large amount that indicates severe distress within families to manage household budgets and secure food intake.

Surveys by WFP, UNFPA and other humanitarian organizations indicate that overall, women, particularly those heading households, have been especially hard hit with rising care responsibilities and loss of livelihoods for those who have to work.³ According to Care International, "the income generated from women's labour is not sufficient to meet the needs of their households"⁴

While active conflict in Syria declined as the country entered its tenth year of conflict, the situation remained volatile in Idlib

and Aleppo governorates in the northwest and in Dera'a in the south where reconciliation agreements remained fragile. Overall, it is estimated that 40 per cent of Palestine refugees in Syria remain in protracted displacement. The psychological impact of leaving their homes and neighbourhoods amidst violent clashes, and the disintegration of their social fabric and coping mechanisms, is profound.

The COVID-19 pandemic added to the hardship faced by Palestine refugees in Syria, pushing yet more families into poverty and an increasing dependency on UNRWA. The crisis has also impacted the number of refugees returning to Syria as a result of preventative restrictions at the borders. UNRWA estimates that 443 Palestine refugees returned to Syria in the first half of 2021, compared to 3,705 refugees who returned in 2019, suggesting that the deteriorating socio-economic situation in Syria was also a determining factor.

As of the end of May 2021, over 1,000 families received approvals to return to Yarmouk camp in southern Damascus, although only a little over 400 families were actually resident in the camp by June 2021 due to the high level of destruction, limited availability of basic services and economic deterioration. Preliminary government approvals to open and renovate commercial shops were also provided and the first vegetable shop opened in February 2021 inside the camp.

In Lebanon, multiple overlapping crises, including a rapidly deteriorating socio-economic and financial situation, exacerbated by the impact of COVID-19 and the repercussions of the 2020 Beirut Port explosion, worsened in the first half of 2021 with widespread fuel and electricity shortages and soaring food prices. Political instability and the failure to form a government during the reporting period pushed the informal market exchange rate up from 8,000 Lebanese pounds (LBP)/US\$ to LBP 17,000/US\$, which contributed to worsening economic conditions from April onwards.⁵ The Food Security Cluster in Lebanon reported that the revised food survival minimum expenditure basket (SMEB) recorded a 14 per cent increase between May and June 2021 at LBP 268,258, "more than five times the cost of the basket back in October 2019 (404% increase)"⁶ At the same time, the Lebanese pound continued to depreciate against the US\$, making basic goods more out of reach for many people. Lebanon Central Bank announcements on the planned lifting of fuel subsidies and price uncertainty led to the closure of pharmacies and reduced access to medicines. The World Bank has warned that the "social impact of the crisis, which is already dire, could rapidly become catastrophic".⁷

The condition of PRS in Lebanon remains of particular concern. Data from internal UNRWA monitoring mechanisms indicates

that an increasing number of PRS were unable to cover their basic needs in 2021. Compounded by the socio-economic impact of COVID-19, mounting food insecurity has meant that many are forced to employ increasingly negative coping mechanisms to meet their families' basic needs. Many refugees reported losing their jobs due to shop and restaurant closures and within the transport and construction industries that have ground to a halt due to fuel shortages. Those still in work have reported that the lack of transport, due to the hike in fuel prices, has meant they are struggling to keep their jobs. The deterioration in socio-economic conditions has particularly impacted women and children in Lebanon, putting them at increased risk. High levels of domestic and intimate partner violence, increasing child labour, and involvement of children in dangerous activities, including drug dealing and with armed groups, have all been reported.

In Jordan, the situation remained relatively stable during the first half of 2021. However, an unprecedented 50 per cent youth unemployment rate at the end of 2020 did not serve as an encouraging sign for the year to come.⁸ In the first quarter of 2021, the overall unemployment rate in Jordan reached 25 per cent with deteriorating socio-economic conditions particularly affecting the most vulnerable and marginalized,

including Palestine refugees, PRS, those enrolled in the Agency's Social Safety Net Programme (SSNP), and ex-Gazan refugees. In early 2021, a steep rise in COVID-19 cases started to overwhelm Jordan's national health system; however, government restrictions to stop the spread were lifted at the end of April as conditions improved. The protracted impact of the pandemic continues to affect the economy and further exacerbated deteriorating socio-economic conditions (public sector debt increased from 96 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in 2019 to 105 per cent in 2020). Conditions in the King Abdullah Park (KAP) refugee reception facility near Irbid for 637 PRS remained of particular concern, with movement restrictions and the risk of refoulement affecting the well-being of the already vulnerable refugees there.

the unrwa response

Through this Emergency Appeal (EA), UNRWA continued to provide humanitarian assistance, including emergency cash, food, non-food items (NFIs), health, education, livelihoods, and protection to Palestine refugees in Syria, and PRS in Lebanon and Jordan. The Agency continued to apply COVID-19 preventive measures while adapting the delivery of its services to ensure the safety of both UNRWA staff and refugees.

During the first half of the year, emergency cash assistance was provided to 417,474 Palestine refugees in Syria (of whom, 52 per cent were women), 27,421 PRS (52 per cent women) in Lebanon and 18,096 PRS (52 per cent women) in Jordan. The Agency also provided the 637 PRS residing in KAP in Jordan with a range of humanitarian assistance, including emergency cash assistance, basic education, health and protection services.

Due to the socio-economic and COVID-19 crisis in Syria, in-kind food assistance was expanded to provide all 404,586 Palestine refugees (52 per cent women) with food baskets by February 2021.⁹

UNRWA continued to deliver primary health care (PHC) in accordance with COVID-19 preventive measures to ensure

the health and safety of Palestine refugees and Agency health staff. In Syria, 345,416 PHC consultations were provided through the Agency's 23 health centres/health points and two mobile clinics. A range of COVID-19 preventive measures were maintained across all programmes in accordance with World Health Organization (WHO) and Government of Syria guidance, including telemedicine and the door-to-door distribution of medications for vulnerable older persons with pre-existing medical conditions. In Lebanon, 27 Agency health centres and mobile health points provided 23,567 PHC consultations for PRS, although civil unrest and COVID-19 restrictions impacted the availability of services. In Jordan, health consultations were provided to 7,215 PRS through 25 health centres and 437 PRS were supported with hospitalisation assistance. In coordination with Jordan's Ministry of Health (MoH), UNRWA supported the national COVID-19 PCR test campaign and the roll-out of COVID-19 vaccinations. Starting in March, MoH medical staff provided PCR tests at seven designated Agency health centres and UNRWA medical staff administered MoH supplied vaccines in the three health centres designated as COVID-19 vaccination hubs. By the end of June, over 20,000 people had received their vaccinations at the Agency health centres, of whom 75 per cent were Palestine refugees,

including 932 PRS. Mobile health services were also made available for PRS residing in KAP.

The Agency's three field education programmes adapted basic education service provision to respond to the different COVID-19 conditions prevailing in their fields of operation and in line with Host Government requirements. Schools in Syria remained open during the reporting period and UNRWA was able to provide face-to-face education and psychosocial (PSS) support to 49,184 students through its 102 schools. This was facilitated by a reduction in the classroom occupancy rate and through the provision of self-learning materials, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), COVID-19 awareness sessions and the regular disinfection of schools. Short-term courses were also organized for 182 youth (all female) through the SFO's Technical and Vocational Education Training programme (TVET).

Similarly, in Lebanon the provision of basic education was maintained through a mixture of blended and remote learning for 37,590 students, including 4,654 PRS, in 65 UNRWA schools. In addition, 803 students (57 PRS and 746 Palestine refugees in Lebanon [PRL]) benefited from various trade and semi-professional vocational training courses at the Siblin Training Centre during the 2020/2021 school year.

In Jordan, 1,063 PRS and Syrian students were enrolled in UNRWA schools for the 2020/2021 academic year, and 13 PRS students attended the Wadi Seer and Amman vocational training centres (VTCs) and the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Arts (FESA). When schools closed in mid-March due to a rise in COVID-19 cases, education programming continued to operate remotely, as supported under the Self-Learning Platform (SLP) and a Digital Learning Platform (DLP) that was launched in April 2021. By the end of May, learning materials for the four principal subjects (Maths, Science, Arabic and English) were made accessible through this platform.

During the reporting period, protection monitoring and advocacy continued across all three fields of UNRWA operation, although this was limited due to COVID-19 restrictions. PSS and legal support were ensured for Palestine refugees in Syria with six UNRWA-supported Family Support Offices providing legal assistance and referrals to 2,360 individuals. Matters regularly handled included responses to gender-based violence (GBV), birth, paternity and death registrations, marriage, separation, divorce and alimony registrations and document authentications. Agency staff trainings on protection

mainstreaming, disability inclusion, Addressing Violence Against Children (AVAC), protection case identification and Mine Risk Awareness were all delivered during the first half of the year. Legal information and assistance was provided to 1,569 PRS in Lebanon who continued to face protection concerns related to their precarious legal status and lack of access to livelihood opportunities because of restrictions on their right to work. Protection support provided to 131 PRS in Jordan focused on a range of issues including documentation and legal status, child protection and GBV.

During the first half of 2021, NFIs were provided in Syria to 1,673 Palestine refugees, and 22,718 refugees in need, including refugees spontaneously returning to newly accessible areas, and newly displaced persons received water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) items. The provision of basic services resumed in the Ein el Tal camp (near Aleppo in Northern Syria), where approximately 110 returning families were living as of June 2021. UNRWA supported these families through weekly mobile health care services and visits from a social worker, the transportation of students to nearby Agency schools and the distribution of food and NFIs. In Dera'a camp in the south, plans are in place to rehabilitate the health centre and part of the camp's sewerage network. UNRWA is also partnering with UN-Habitat to launch a self-help project that will initially support minor repairs for camp shelters to assist refugees returning to their homes. The Agency resumed the provision of limited services in Yarmouk, including by deploying two mobile clinics to Yalda, next to the camp, and through the distribution of emergency assistance.

Solid waste collection and disposal remained a critical intervention for the Agency's response to COVID-19, aimed at protecting the health and safety of refugees in the Palestine refugee camps in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan.

Throughout its interventions, in particular in relation to the COVID-19 response, UNRWA continued to adopt a number of measures to minimize negative impacts on the environment. This included proper and efficient use of PPE; use of fabric re-usable masks for non-medical staff; treating medical waste through safe and environmentally sound methods and disposal of items in designated sites; and applying clear guidelines for the cleaning and disinfection of HCs, schools and offices using the minimum concentration of sodium chlorite (0.1 per cent) for non-medical premises, amongst others.

impact of underfunding

By the end of the reporting period, the UNRWA Syria regional crisis EA was only 31.3 per cent funded. A total of US\$ 99.7 million was received during the first half of the year against a total ask of US\$ 317.9 million, leaving a shortfall of US\$ 218.2 million and limiting the implementation of a number of essential interventions. In Syria, limited funding resulted in the amount of cash assistance per person being reduced from US\$ 27 to US\$ 13 for the most vulnerable and from US\$ 16 to US\$ 9 for remaining vulnerable refugees. In Lebanon and Jordan, cash assistance for PRS could only continue thanks to the availability of carry forward funds from an earmarked multi-year agreement. Only limited funding was received in support of PRS top-up cash assistance to mitigate the effects of COVID-19. Funding shortfalls also prevented the provision of emergency cash assistance to vulnerable PRL affected by the overlapping impacts of the socio-economic crisis and the pandemic. Vulnerable Palestine ex-Gazan refugees and Palestine refugees from Iraq (PRI) in Jordan were also not assisted with cash subsidies during the reporting period due to limited availability of funds.

Funding gaps also limited the delivery of some education interventions in Jordan, such as hiring additional daily paid teachers and school attendants, as well as the procurement of tablets to support vulnerable students during remote learning, and the home internet access subsidies for students and teachers in need. Environmental health interventions in Lebanon were provided through a combination of the Agency's programme budget and project funds, as no EA funds were received to cover the costs of these services. Field security training and repairs of UNRWA installations were also affected in Syria and Lebanon.

UNRWA appeals to all its donors that have generously contributed to this appeal during the first half of the year for increased and sustainable funding for the remainder of 2021. These contributions are vital to ensure the continued availability of essential services to Palestine refugees struggling with unprecedented humanitarian crises.



Rehabilitation work in the UNRWA Tiberias/al-Safsaf school in Dera'a camp that was damaged during the conflict. © 2021 UNRWA Photo by Noorhan Abdulhafeez

funding summary: 2021 syria regional crisis emergency appeal progress report

Funding table: Syria regional crisis emergency appeal funding summary by field 1 January – 30 June 2021 (US\$)¹⁰

Programme Interventions	Amount	Total	Allocation Syria	Allocation Lebanon	Allocation Jordan	Allocation Regional
Cash assistance for essential needs	<i>required</i>	183,923,824	121,658,934	39,870,898	22,155,124	238,868
	<i>received</i>	59,823,376	38,303,248	15,707,828	5,812,300	0
	<i>difference</i>	124,100,448	83,355,686	24,163,070	16,342,824	238,868
Emergency food assistance	<i>required</i>	32,382,300	32,382,300	0	0	0
	<i>received</i>	16,947,506	16,947,506	0	0	0
	<i>difference</i>	15,434,794	15,434,794	0	0	0
Non-food Items (NFIs)	<i>required</i>	7,042,094	7,042,094	0	0	0
	<i>received</i>	695,970	695,970	0	0	0
	<i>difference</i>	6,346,124	6,346,124	0	0	0
Emergency health	<i>required</i>	36,435,562	4,779,376	27,212,080	4,399,706	44,400
	<i>received</i>	4,674,413	2,055,491	2,249,839	369,083	0
	<i>difference</i>	31,761,149	2,723,885	24,962,240	4,030,623	44,400
Education in emergencies	<i>required</i>	35,299,032	12,797,026	15,045,584	7,456,423	0
	<i>received</i>	6,721,793	2,835,343	3,853,150	33,300	0
	<i>difference</i>	28,577,239	9,961,683	11,192,434	7,423,123	0
Livelihoods and vocational training	<i>required</i>	3,448,628	2,840,934	185,894	421,800	0
	<i>received</i>	946,744	796,744	150,000	0	0
	<i>difference</i>	2,501,884	2,044,190	35,894	421,800	0
Protection	<i>required</i>	3,270,182	1,203,571	1,680,055	386,556	0
	<i>received</i>	616,570	471,951	144,619	0	0
	<i>difference</i>	2,653,612	731,620	1,535,436	386,556	0
Environmental health	<i>required</i>	6,048,151	2,619,035	1,594,226	1,834,890	0
	<i>received</i>	1,306,402	1,171,789	0	134,613	0
	<i>difference</i>	4,741,749	1,447,246	1,594,226	1,700,277	0
Safety and security	<i>required</i>	1,566,535	1,283,707	171,828	111,000	0
	<i>received</i>	1,151,970	1,130,773	21,197	0	0
	<i>difference</i>	414,565	152,934	150,631	111,000	0
Emergency repair and maintenance of UNRWA installations	<i>required</i>	2,722,941	1,868,241	972,744	0	0
	<i>received</i>	387,068	387,068	529,046	0	0
	<i>difference</i>	2,335,873	1,481,173	443,698	0	0
Capacity and management support	<i>required</i>	5,742,480	3,392,777	972,744	1,027,420	349,539
	<i>received</i>	3,260,272	1,880,690	529,046	800,536	50,000
	<i>difference</i>	2,482,208	1,512,087	443,698	226,884	299,539
To be allocated		3,118,870	-	-	3,100,000	18,870
Total (US\$)	<i>required</i>	317,881,730	191,867,995	87,588,009	37,792,919	632,807
	<i>received</i>	99,650,954	66,676,572	22,655,679	10,249,832	50,000
	<i>difference</i>	218,230,776	125,191,423	64,932,330	27,543,087	582,807

syria

Political, economic and security developments

Although active conflict has subdued in most of Syria, the situation remains tense in the northwest and in Dera'a in the south where reconciliation agreements remain fragile. A decade of hostilities has damaged a wide range of economic sectors, including industry, agriculture and tourism. The tightening of sanctions since mid-2020¹¹ has made it more difficult for small businesses and merchants to import goods, receive remittances and/or transfer funds. The devaluation of the Syrian pound and rapidly rising inflation pushed the prices of basic commodities upwards in 2021. The financial and banking crisis in neighbouring Lebanon is having a ripple effect as it serves as Syria's last remaining financial gateway.

During the first half of 2021, the economic situation in Syria deteriorated rapidly driving the population, including Palestine refugees, into further vulnerability on an unprecedented scale. Imports of daily necessities, including food and medicines, became more difficult, which further impacted the food security of Palestine refugees. In addition, the fuel security crisis escalated, leading to rationing of petrol while electricity supplies became increasingly inconsistent. Taken together, these developments served to negatively affect the daily lives of people in Syria, including Palestine refugees, and vital UNRWA operations. The estimated 438,000 Palestine refugees remaining in Syria continue to endure the impact of these developments. Overall, it is estimated that 40 per cent of Palestine refugees in Syria remain in protracted displacement. In addition to the psychological impact caused by leaving their homes, neighbourhoods and close social networks, rising rents and the disintegration of their social fabric and coping mechanisms have left Palestine refugees overburdened under increasingly difficult living conditions.

COVID-19 has added to the layers of complexity and hardship faced by Palestine refugees in Syria. As reported in the Syria Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) 2021, an online survey of protection actors was conducted in government-controlled areas to better understand the impact of the pandemic on vulnerable groups. The survey found that 76 per cent of respondents suffer from COVID-19 related psychological trauma, stress and anxiety. The HNO also reported that the number of households reporting signs of psychological distress in children was almost double that of 2020; however, services capable of addressing these issues were severely limited.¹² Movement restrictions to reduce or stop the spread of COVID-19 during the initial phase of the pandemic have had a severe impact on the refugees. The measures heavily impacted employment opportunities across the country, pushed up prices, further eroded household coping mechanisms and worsened the already dire socio-economic situation. The pandemic has also impacted the number of refugees returning to Syria as a result of preventative restrictions at the borders;

it is estimated that 443 refugees returned during the first half of 2021, compared to 3,705 refugees who returned in 2019.

By the end of May 2021, over 1,000 families had received approvals to return to Yarmouk camp in southern Damascus; however, only a little over 400 families (an estimated 1,600 individuals, 15 per cent of whom are Syrian families) were actually resident in the camp by June 2021. The remaining families were unable to return due to delays in the rehabilitation of their homes. Preliminary government approvals to open and renovate commercial enterprises were also provided and the first vegetable shop inside the camp opened in February 2021.

In March 2021, UNRWA secured government approval to undertake damage assessments and rehabilitate its facilities in Yarmouk. In addition, the authorities also approved an Agency/UN-Habitat request to conduct a rapid damage assessment of camp conditions/shelters.

UNRWA has resumed the provision of some basic services in the Ein el Tal camp (near Aleppo in Northern Syria), where approximately 120 returnee families were living as of June 2021. The Agency supports these families through weekly mobile health services and social worker visits, group transportation of students to nearby Agency schools, and the distribution of food and NFIs.

In Dera'a camp in the south, plans are in place to rehabilitate the health centre and part of the camp's sewerage network. UNRWA is also partnering with UN-Habitat to launch a self-help project that will initially support minor repairs for camp shelters to assist refugees returning to their homes. These plans could be impacted by the deteriorating security situation that was unfolding at the end of June in Dera'a.

Operational developments

Through the EA, UNRWA continued to provide humanitarian assistance, including emergency cash, food, NFIs, health, education, livelihoods and protection to Palestine refugees in Syria, within an operating environment strongly affected by the protracted conflict, the socio-economic and fuel crises and exchange rate fluctuations.

During the reporting period, cash assistance was provided to 417,474 Palestine refugees, although the amount of cash per person had to be reduced due to funding gaps. SFO initially planned to distribute US\$ 27 per person for the most vulnerable refugees and US\$ 16 for the remaining vulnerable refugees; however, these amounts had to be reduced to about US\$ 13 and US\$ 9 respectively.¹³

In response to the increased vulnerability of all refugees in the context of the current socio-economic crisis, at the end of 2020, UNRWA expanded its in-kind food assistance intervention to target all 418,000 refugees as opposed to providing this assistance only to those refugees in the “most vulnerable” category. During the reporting period, 404,586 refugees received food baskets through the last completed round of food assistance from 2020.¹⁴

During the first half of 2021, UNRWA provided basic education and PSS to 49,184 students (24,388 girls and 24,796 boys, including 2,413 students with disabilities) in its 102 schools and extended short-term courses to 182 youth (all female) through its TVET programme. A total of 345,416 PHC consultations (209,475 females, 135,941 males) were provided through 25 health facilities, including two mobile clinics deployed to remote locations and areas where Palestine refugees face particularly difficult movement restrictions. Protection monitoring and advocacy continued and PSS and legal support were ensured for Palestine refugees across the country. The six UNRWA-supported Family Support Offices provided legal assistance and referrals to 2,360 individuals (1,699 females and 661 males). Matters regularly addressed included responses to GBV as well as other gender and age specific issues such as birth, paternity and death registrations, marriage, separation, divorce and alimony registrations and authentications. The Agency also delivered trainings on protection mainstreaming, disability inclusion, AVAC, protection case identification and Mine Risk Awareness. NFIs and WASH items were provided to those in need, including returning refugees and newly displaced persons. In this regard, 1,673 Palestine refugees (860 females, 813 males, including 33 persons with disabilities) received NFIs and 22,718 (12,961 females, 9,757 males, including 2,321 persons with disabilities) received WASH items. Repair, rehabilitation and sanitation works continued in the 10 Palestine refugee camps.

UNRWA continued to apply COVID-19 preventive measures while adapting service delivery to ensure the safety of both refugees and UNRWA staff. These preventive measures included telemedicine, the door-to-door distribution of medications for vulnerable older persons with pre-existing medical conditions, reduction of classroom occupancy rates, distribution of PPE and Self Learning Materials, the regular disinfection of Agency facilities, and COVID-19 awareness sessions.

UNRWA has gradually restarted services in Yarmouk, Ein el Tal and Dera’a camps, which were almost entirely destroyed during the conflict. Examples include the rehabilitation of a school building and the health centre in Dera’a camp, the deployment of mobile health clinics and food and NFI distributions in Yarmouk and Ein el Tal camps and transporting students from Yarmouk to a school in neighbouring Al-Zahra and from Ein el Tal to a school in Aleppo city. The reconstruction and/or rehabilitation of UNRWA installations is needed to provide quality services and to ensure Palestine refugees currently residing in or considering a return to those camps can have access to essential assistance. The deterioration of the security situation in Dera’a since late June is a significant concern and may affect UNRWA’s access to the area in the second half of 2021.

syria: sector-specific interventions

Strategic priority 1: preserve resilience through the provision of humanitarian assistance, ensuring that the most vulnerable refugees meet their basic needs

Humanitarian assistance for basic needs (cash assistance, in-kind food, shelter and NFIs)

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Outcome			
Palestine refugees are able to meet their life-saving needs and cope with sudden crises	Percentage of households reporting an improved food consumption score ¹⁵	N/A ¹⁶	90%
Outputs			
Palestine refugees in Syria are provided with relief assistance	Number of individuals receiving cash assistance during the last completed distribution round (disaggregated by sex and disability)	417,474 218,900 females, 198,574 males), incl. 6,237 persons with disabilities	418,000 (219,110 females, 198,890 males), incl. 6,000 persons with disabilities
	Number of the most vulnerable Palestine refugees provided with cash assistance during the last completed distribution round (disaggregated by sex and disability)	141,160 (84,149 females, 57,011 males), incl. 6,237 persons with disabilities	140,000 (83,815 females, 56,185 males), incl. 6,000 persons with disabilities
	Number of Palestine refugees provided with food assistance during the last completed distribution round (disaggregated by sex and disability)	404,586 212,022 females, 192,564 males), incl. 6,133 persons with disabilities	418,000 (219,110 females, 198,890 males), incl. 6,000 persons with disabilities
	Number of Palestine refugees receiving NFIs (disaggregated by sex and disability)	1,673 (860 females, 813 males), incl. 33 persons with disabilities	27,000 (13,694 females, 13,306 males) incl. 790 persons with disabilities
	Number of Palestine refugee families receiving one-off cash winterization support	0	55,000
	Number of shelters repaired using the self-help approach	0 ¹⁷	500

During the first half of 2021, UNRWA continued to provide cash assistance to Palestine refugees in Syria to help them meet their most basic needs. In this regard, the Agency completed one round of cash assistance using a two-tier approach, prioritizing the most vulnerable refugees, including: (i) women-headed households; (ii) families headed by persons with disabilities; (iii) families headed by an elderly person; and (iv) unaccompanied minors (orphans). A higher amount of cash was provided to prioritized groups in comparison to other vulnerable groups.

The first cash round started on 10 March and finished on 10 June for 417,474 refugees (218,900 females and 198,574 males). Each of the most vulnerable refugees received SYP 86,000 (approximately US\$ 40)¹⁸ and each refugee in the other

vulnerable categories received SYP 60,000 (approximately US\$ 28) to assist in covering their basic needs for three months. Due to funding constraints under the EA, UNRWA had to reduce the amount of cash provided to each refugee from US\$ 27 to US\$ 13 for the most vulnerable and from US\$ 16 to US\$ 9 for remaining refugees.

At the end of 2020, following increased Palestine refugee vulnerability as the COVID-19 and socio-economic crisis in Syria worsened, UNRWA expanded its food assistance intervention to target all 418,000 refugees. One round of food assistance was completed during the reporting period, which was the second round launched in 2020 (starting on 7 October 2020 and ending on 10 February 2021). This food assistance distribution round reached 404,586 Palestine refugees

(212,022 females and 192,564 males). The first food assistance distribution round for 2021 started on 19 April, reaching 163,480 beneficiaries (68,200 families) as at 30 June 2021. UNRWA expects to complete this distribution round by September 2021. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Agency was unable to carry out its scheduled post-distribution monitoring (PDM) during the reporting period but plans to conduct a PDM for cash and food following the completion of the first food distribution round of 2021.

Between January and June 2021, UNRWA provided NFIs, including mats, mattresses, blankets, kitchen kits, jerry cans and tarpaulins to 1,673 of the most vulnerable refugees (860 females and 813 males, including 33 persons with disabilities) based on acute emergency needs, including in relation to the newly displaced and those spontaneously returning to newly accessible areas. Funding constraints meant that UNRWA was unable to meet its full target for NFI provision.

UNRWA did not receive any funds to provide winterization support in early 2021; however, the Agency is planning to implement this intervention from October to December 2021.

During the reporting period, UNRWA conducted a detailed technical assessment in the southern part of Dera'a camp, focussing on families' vulnerability, the structural safety of 226 shelters and general living conditions, including overcrowding, dampness and WASH facilities. Based on assessment findings, 170 families were identified as eligible for shelter rehabilitation support to be provided in partnership with UN-Habitat. The exact number of families assisted will depend on funds available through this partnership in the second half of the year.

Strategic priority 2: contribute to a protective environment for Palestine refugees by maintaining access to basic services

Emergency Health

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Outcome			
The impact of the crisis on health services for refugees is reduced	Number of visits and/or consultations supported by UNRWA (primary, secondary and tertiary health care) (disaggregated by sex and disability)	345,416 (209,475 females, 135,941 males) ¹⁹	822,000 (493,000 females, 329,000 males, 8,200 persons with disabilities)
Output			
Palestine refugees have access to primary health-care services.	Number of Palestine refugee visits to UNRWA health facilities (disaggregated by sex and disability)	342,194 (207,546 females, 134,648 males) ²⁰	810,000 (486,000 females, 324,000 males, 8,100 persons with disabilities)
	Number of operational Agency health centres, health points and mobile clinics	25	25
	Number of UNRWA hospitalizations accessed by Palestine refugee patients (non-COVID-19 treatment)	3,222	10,000
	Number of UNRWA hospitalisations accessed by Palestine refugee patients for COVID-19 treatment	84	2,000
	Percentage of health facilities supported by UNRWA with no stock-out of 12 tracer items	65.96%	100%
	Number of non-communicable disease (NCD) patients receiving home delivery of medicines	409 (221 females, 188 males), incl. 68 persons with disabilities	2,000 (1,200 females, 800 males), incl. 200 persons with disabilities
	Number of COVID-19 tests for Palestine refugees subsidized by UNRWA (disaggregated by sex and disability)	1,074 (591 females, 483 males) ²¹	4,400 ²²



UNRWA health facilities in Syria, like the Damascus Polyclinic, provide comprehensive laboratory services. © 2021 UNRWA Photo

From January to June 2021, UNRWA delivered PHC services to Palestine refugees through 25 health facilities, including 15 fully equipped health centres, eight health points and two mobile clinics, which were deployed in areas with restricted access and locations experiencing emergencies. The Agency triage system, established at the beginning of the pandemic, was maintained in all its health facilities to provide a clear patient pathway for those experiencing respiratory symptoms.

During the reporting period, UNRWA provided 345,416 primary, secondary and tertiary health care consultations in Syria (for 209,475 females and 135,941 males). This number is lower than expected due to the rationalization of health service provision to protect both Palestine refugees and UNRWA staff from COVID-19. Priority was extended to the treatment of emergency and critical cases, while non-critical health services, including interventions on disease prevention, such as non-communicable disease (NCD) screening, were temporarily suspended or provided by phone (telemedicine). The Agency also provided preventive and curative dental care services, including to children in schools, through 22 of its health facilities. These services were also impacted by COVID-19, as preventive consultations were partially suspended. Two mobile health clinics were deployed to Yalda (beside Yarmouk camp) and Ein el Tal (near Aleppo) to provide essential health services to over 3,500 refugees.

During the first half of the year, UNRWA subsidized referrals to hospitals and specialized clinics to facilitate access to secondary and tertiary care, including for advanced laboratory tests, specialized medical consultations, the treatment of cancer patients, childbirth and other services. In this regard, UNRWA supported 3,222 referral requests for hospitalization (for 1,929 females and 1,293 males). The number of cases supported was slightly below target, primarily due to delays in processing hospital invoices. UNRWA also supported 84 hospitalizations for COVID-19 treatment.

The Agency faced shortages of essential medications in some of its health centres due to increased COVID-19 related demand and increased costs in the private market due to the

economic crisis. Only 65.96 per cent of UNRWA health facilities had no “stock-out of 12 tracer items” (a continuous adequate supply of 12 essential medications that should never be out of stock) while the target was 100 per cent.²³ Medicines have now been procured for the second half of the year and it is expected that there will be no further shortages.

A number of measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmissions in Agency health centres continued, including the provision of a two-month prescription to NCD patients; home delivery of medicines to older persons with pre-existing medical conditions; and the activation of a telemedicine system. Reducing foot traffic at health facilities, during the reporting period, the Agency reached 409 NCD patients (221 females, 188 males and 68 persons with disabilities) through home-based deliveries of medicines. Due to the ongoing insecurity, UNRWA could not provide the home deliveries in Dera’a Governorate – patients in Muzeirib and Jilin towns continued to collect their medications from the Agency’s health centre. During the reporting period, UNRWA subsidized 1,074 COVID-19 tests for Palestine refugees (591 women, 483 men), underachieving against the target because the epidemiological situation was slightly better than expected.

The Agency was also responsible for vaccinating all UN staff in Syria as part of the ongoing UN vaccination campaign, which contributed significantly to the inter-agency COVID-19 response. The campaign started on 30 May with Agency health teams providing AstraZeneca vaccinations to 1,343 UN staff and their dependents in six health centres (Damascus, Dera’a, Hama, Homs, Aleppo and Latakia) and in two missions to Deir Ezzor and Qamishli.

Health programme coordination with the education and protection teams continued for trainings on mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), although most were organized online due to the pandemic. Combined with the impacts of the socio-economic crisis, COVID-19 has increased the pressure on public health services as well as on the health services provided by the Agency. UNRWA continues its fundraising efforts to ensure that sufficient funding is available to cover essential refugee health needs until the end of the year.

Education in Emergencies

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Outcome			
Palestine refugees in Syria continue to access quality, inclusive and equitable education despite the crisis	Number of students graduating from basic education (Grade 9) (disaggregated by sex and disability)	4,535 (2,271 girls, 2,264 boys), incl. 210 students with disabilities	4,000 ²⁴ (2,100 girls, 1,900 boys), incl. 165 students with disabilities
	Number of school-age children enrolled in regular classes in UNRWA schools (disaggregated by sex and disability)	49,184 (24,388 girls, 24,796 boys), incl. 2,413 students with disabilities	51,000 (25,200 girls, 25,800 boys), incl. 3,500 students with disabilities
Outputs			
Palestine refugee students are provided with PSS	Number of students who have attended at least one counselling session (individual or group counselling) (disaggregated by sex and disability)	47,043 (23,601 girls, 23,442 boys) ²⁵	51,000 (25,200 girls, 25,800 boys), incl. 3,500 students with disabilities
Barriers to accessing education are reduced	Number of students provided with at least one item of material support (back-to-school kits and/or stationery) to enable them to access education at an UNRWA school (disaggregated by sex and disability)	0 ²⁶	51,000 (25,200 girls, 25,800 boys) incl. 3,500 students with disabilities
UNRWA students continue to access education despite the COVID-19 pandemic	Percentage of students accessing remote learning at least once weekly	N/A	100%
	Percentage of schools for which materials for improved hygiene routine have been procured and delivered	0 ²⁷	100%

During the reporting period, UNRWA continued to provide basic education (grades 1-9) to refugee students in 102 schools, the majority of which operated on a double-shift basis. Sixty schools were operated in UNRWA school buildings, while 39 schools operated as a second shift in buildings on loan from the Ministry of Education (MoE) and three schools used rented facilities. Schools were open for students in grades 1-8 until 3 April 2021 when the MoE ended earlier the 2020/2021 academic year early due to the rise in COVID-19 cases. Grade 9 students continued classes until the end of May to enable them to sit their final exams.

A total of 49,184 students (24,388 girls and 24,796 boys, including 2,413 students with disabilities) enrolled in Agency schools in May 2021 for the academic year 2020/2021, compared to 49,145 in May 2020 and 48,883 students in May 2019. This trend reflects a certain stabilization in the number of students attending UNRWA schools, which can be attributed to the relative calm in areas where UNRWA operates and a

slowdown in the number of refugees returning to Syria as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and other factors.

As UNRWA schools remained open for in-person learning until the end of the school year on 3 April, remote learning was not needed. All necessary measures were taken to limit the potential for a COVID-19 outbreak in schools by applying physical distancing, where possible, facilitating and subsidizing access to PCR tests for suspected cases amongst staff and teachers, closing sections of schools where cases were confirmed (91 teachers and 3 students from January to June), in line with MoH guidelines, and providing hygiene materials and masks in all schools for students and teachers. These materials were procured and delivered during the first semester of the academic year (September to December 2020) and therefore do not appear in the related indicator for this reporting period (January to June 2021). Similarly, back-to-school kits were provided to students during the first semester of this academic year.

Grade 9 refugee students performed exceptionally well in their 2020/2021 end of year exams. In this regard, 4,535 students (2,271 girls, 2,264 boys), including 210 students with disabilities, passed their ninth-grade exam, achieving an 89.9 per cent success rate (94 per cent for girls and 86 per cent for boys) compared with the national average rate of 76.23 per cent. This achievement is all the more significant given that it occurred during a period of increased stress for students and teachers related to the health and psychological impact of

COVID-19. In early June, UNRWA provided 16 days of support classes to students sitting these exams, which may have contributed to the remarkable success rate.

During the first quarter of the reporting period, the Agency provided 47,043 students with psychosocial and recreational activities to help them cope with the trauma associated with the pandemic and ongoing conflict. This number dropped to 17,340 students (8,892 girls, 8,448 boys) during the second quarter due to the closure of schools from 3 April.



Palestine refugee students receive their self-learning materials at the UNRWA al-Ramleh School, Homs, Syria. © 2021 UNRWA Photo by Suzanne Leuenberger



Disinfecting an UNRWA school in Sbeineh camp, rural Damascus, Syria. © 2021 UNRWA Photo

Livelihoods and Vocational Training

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Output			
Young Palestine refugees in Syria receive vocational training	Number of students completing short-term courses (disaggregated by sex and disability)	182 (182 females) ²⁸	800
	Number of short-term courses conducted	10	40
	Percentage of VTC students accessing remote learning at least once weekly during COVID-19 closures	85.78%	100%
	Percentage of TVET centre for which materials for improved hygiene routine have been procured	100%	100%

The UNRWA TVET programme in Syria provided 10 short-term courses (two to four months) in the Damascus Training Centre to increase livelihood opportunities for young Palestine refugees on subjects with high market demand, including graphic design, web design, 3D printing and accounting. During the reporting period, 182 students, all female, completed short-term courses that were specifically aimed at increasing employment opportunities for young women in Syria. Although funds are limited, additional short-term courses, open to both young women and men, are planned for the second half of the year, not only in Damascus but also in Dera'a (security permitting), Homs, Aleppo and Latakia.

Building on the 2020 learning and good practice in response to COVID-19, short-term TVET courses were delivered through

mixed (in-class and online) modalities to avoid classroom overcrowding. Self-learning resources were made available to students and 85.78 per cent accessed remote learning at least once a week during COVID-19 related closures. Slight underachievement against the target is due to a combination of factors, including extended TVET closures in April and May due to a MoE decision, and the lack of internet access and electricity cuts affecting the ability of some students to regularly access remote learning resources.

Hygiene measures and physical distancing was ensured across all TVET premises (six locations) through the procurement of a range of materials in support of improved hygiene practices.

Protection

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Output			
Palestine refugees are supported through protection programmatic interventions	Number of Palestine refugees who received PSS support (disaggregated by sex, age and disability)	18,937 (1,572 adult females, 689 adult males, 7,891 boys, 8,785 girls), incl. 934 persons with disabilities	5,680 ²⁹ (450 adult females, 450 adult males, 2,438 boys, 2,342 girls), incl. 350 persons with disabilities
	Number of Palestine refugees provided with legal assistance and referrals (disaggregated by sex and disability)	2,359 (1,699 females, 660 males), incl. 11 persons with disabilities	4,000 (2,800 females, 1,200 males), incl. 50 persons with disabilities
Awareness raising is conducted to strengthen prevention and response	Number of individuals trained on mine risk awareness (disaggregated by children, staff and community members)	22,992 (22,942 students, 10 staff, 40 community members)	52,700 (51,000 students, 200 staff, 1,500 community members)
Capacity of staff and volunteers is enhanced on protection related topics ³⁰	Number of UNRWA staff members trained on protection (disaggregated by sex and disability)	296 (164 females, 132 males, 0 persons with disabilities)	800 (480 females, 320 males)

Various psychological shocks and trauma over more than a decade continue to severely affect Palestine refugees' mental wellbeing, particularly for the most vulnerable, including children, older persons and persons with disabilities. Against this backdrop, UNRWA has already exceeded the annual target, providing PSS activities in schools and community-based organizations (CBOs), reaching 18,937 refugees (1,572 women, 8,785 girls, 689 men and 7,891 boys) across Syria. Activities organized for community groups and individual refugees included: crafts, visual arts (drawing and painting), music, drama (where Palestine refugees could express themselves through role-play and acting), games aimed at presenting particular challenges or exercises to work through, and puppetry to encourage students to explore their thoughts and feelings. Puppets were also used in awareness-raising sessions, relaxation activities and for self and group expression sessions.

Demand for PSS activities was exceptionally high in early 2021, particularly from schools and CBOs running UNRWA activities. This was expected given the impact of COVID-19 coupled with a deteriorating socio-economic situation in Syria. A larger than usual number of PSS activities was conducted for children in UNRWA schools during the first quarter before they were closed in early April. The demand for PSS activities from different vulnerable groups, particularly older persons, persons with disabilities, women at risk and

children, remained high throughout the reporting period. For the first time in years, project funding was available to address PSS needs. The availability of non-EA funding to complement emergency resources, in-person attendance at schools until April, (allowing the Agency to reach more students) and the high demand for PSS services stood as some of reasons for the overachievement of the planned target for this intervention.

During the reporting period, the six UNRWA-supported Family Support Offices provided legal assistance and referrals to 2,359 Palestine refugees (1,699 females and 660 males). This support included the provision of legal advice, convening legal awareness raising sessions on significant legal issues, referrals to external service providers and, where necessary, the payment of legal fees and expenses. Matters frequently addressed included birth, paternity and death registrations and authentications, as well as marriage, separation, divorce and alimony registrations and authentications.

The Agency developed and/or delivered trainings on protection mainstreaming, disability inclusion, AVAC, protection case identification and Mine Risk Awareness (Training of Trainers-ToT) in collaboration with the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), reaching 296 staff members (132 females and 164 males) during the first half of the year. Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) awareness sessions were also carried out, reaching 22,992 individuals (12,708 females and 10,284 males), including 22,942 children, 10 community members

and 40 staff. Particular emphasis was placed on delivering these awareness sessions for Palestine refugees living in highly contaminated areas, including Yarmouk, Ein el Tal and Dera'a camps. ERW awareness sessions for students are expected to increase when planned sessions, interrupted with the early closure of schools on 3 April, resume at the start of the new 2021/2022 academic year. It is expected that all targets will be reached by the end of the year.

In the first six months of 2021, UNRWA verified a total of 443 Palestine refugee individuals who recorded themselves as having returned spontaneously from abroad to their

place of habitual residence in Syria. The reasons for return varied, including the perception of an improvement in the security situation, family reunification, lack of employment opportunities in the countries they had taken up residence in, and loss of legal status. Returnees are entitled to the same services provided to all Palestine refugees in Syria, including cash and food assistance and NFIs, education, health, relief and social services, protection support and microfinance. Any additional support is provided on the basis of need and the availability of funds.

Environmental Health

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Outputs			
Palestine refugees in need are provided with WASH items (hygiene kits, baby kits, diapers)	Number of Palestine refugees receiving WASH items (disaggregated by sex and disability)	22,718 (12,961 females, 9,757 males), incl. 2,321 persons with disabilities	30,500
Palestine refugees living in camps are provided with basic WASH services and support	Number of Palestine refugee camps receiving repair, rehabilitation and sanitation works	10	12

During the first half of 2021, UNRWA continued to provide essential WASH services in all Palestine refugee camps in Syria except in Yarmouk and Ein el Tal camps (where operations have only been partially restored). WASH services included the maintenance of the existing sewerage, storm water drainage and water supply networks. They also included: (i) solid waste management; (ii) the control of insects and rodents; and (iii) the regular disinfection of UNRWA installations, main streets and landfills in the camps in response to the pandemic. Through EA funds, the Agency deployed 37 sanitation labourers on a monthly basis to strengthen the provision of environmental health services in Palestine refugee camps. All sanitation workers were provided with PPE to mitigate the risk of contracting COVID-19.

Between January and June 2021, UNRWA provided essential WASH items to 22,718 refugees (12,961 females, 9,757 males), including 2,321 persons with disabilities. Items provided included hygiene kits (containing soap, clothes washing powder, dishwashing liquid and sponge, chlorine disinfectant, a plastic bucket, cleaning cloth, spray bottle, and reusable gloves), diapers for babies and incontinence pads for adults.

Most of the hygiene kits distributed during the reporting period were delivered to vulnerable refugee households to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 through improved hygiene and sanitation practices. Targeted households were among the most vulnerable, including families with persons with disabilities, families headed by an elderly person (over 60 years old) or those with elderly members suffering from chronic disease. Hygiene kits were also provided to Palestine refugees who have returned to newly accessible areas, those facing access constraints and those displaced from Yarmouk and Yalda, Babila and Beit Sahem (YBB), to help safeguard their personal and domestic hygiene. The Agency ensured that most Palestine refugees could receive their WASH items from the distribution branch/outlet closest to their current residence. Protective measures were maintained to ensure that WASH items were provided in conditions of occupational safety.



UNRWA provides hygiene kits to Palestine refugees to support personal and domestic hygiene. UNRWA distribution centre, Alliance, Damascus, Syria. © 2021 UNRWA Photo

Strategic priority 3: improve the effectiveness and efficiency of emergency programme delivery

Safety and Security

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Outcome			
UNRWA is able to provide services to Palestine refugees with appropriate security arrangements	Number of UNRWA installations with completed security risk assessments	24	48
Output			
Enhanced safety and security of UNRWA staff to facilitate the provision of humanitarian aid to Palestine refugees	Number of staff trained on UNRWA Safety and Security in the Field (SSF)	31	300
	Number of staff trained through the UNRWA Personal Security Awareness for Women (PSAW)	21	200

During the reporting period, the Field Security and Risk Management (FSRM) team in Syria conducted security risk assessments of 24 UNRWA installations. In addition, 31 staff members (21 females and 10 males) were trained on SSF and 21 female staff received PSAW training.

Due to the limited availability of funds, UNRWA prioritized the use of EA resources to ensure the continued availability of security staff and guards over other needs (e.g. security training). The lack of a dedicated training budget, on top of the COVID-19 restrictions, affected FSRM training numbers.

The security team continued to support a large number of field missions by Agency programme staff delivering humanitarian

clinics. UN staff movement in Syria is conditional on receiving approval from the Government of Syria, the United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS) and the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF). In various cases, field mission requests were rejected due to changes in the safety and security environment in locations such as Dera'a Governorate. The FSRM team works closely with all counterparts to assess the security situation to guarantee the safety and security of UNRWA staff carrying out essential programme activities.

Emergency Repair and Maintenance of UNRWA Installations

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Outcome			
UNRWA installations repaired or maintained	Number of UNRWA facilities that are maintained through minor repairs	0	40

During the reporting period, only limited funds were received for this intervention. With the resources available, UNRWA prioritized the rehabilitation of the Agency's Tiberius School

in Dera'a, which was ongoing as at the end of the reporting period. The planned repairs on other facilities were not conducted with EA funds.

lebanon

Political, economic and security developments

Lebanon's multiple overlapping crises, including a deteriorating economic and financial situation coupled with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the repercussions of the 2020 Beirut Port explosion, worsened during the first half of 2021 with widespread fuel and electricity shortages and soaring food prices. Political instability and the failure to form a government during the reporting period pushed the informal exchange rate up, from LBP 8,000/US\$ to LBP 17,000/US\$, and contributed to worsening economic conditions from April onwards.³¹ The Food Security Cluster reported that the revised survival minimum expenditure food basket had increased to LBP 268,258 by the end of June 2021. At the same time, the Lebanese pound continued to depreciate against the US\$, making basic goods more out of reach for many people. Lebanon Central Bank announcements on the planned lifting of subsidies and price uncertainty led to shortages of fuel, the closure of pharmacies and reduced access to medicines. The World Bank warned that the "social impact of the crisis, which is already dire, could rapidly become catastrophic".³²

Multiple and overlapping crises in Lebanon have severely impacted vulnerable groups, including Palestine refugees, approximately 45 per cent of whom live in 12 Palestine refugee camps. Living conditions in the camps are dire with chronic over-crowding, poor infrastructure and increasing levels of poverty and vulnerability. In Southern Lebanon, restrictions on the freedom of movement of Palestine refugees continued, enforced by Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) checkpoints at camp entrances (most notably at Ein el Hilweh in Saida and Rashidieh south of Tyre).

The condition of PRS remains of particular concern. A socio-economic survey conducted by UNRWA in 2020 found that 87.3 per cent of PRS live below the absolute poverty line and 11.3 per cent exist in a state of abject poverty.³³ Data from the Agency's internal monitoring mechanisms indicated that an increasing number of refugees are unable to cover their basic needs in 2021. Basic and essential commodities are becoming increasingly out of reach for most, food security is deteriorating and PRS are being pushed into increasingly negative coping mechanisms to survive.

As of June 2021, UNRWA recorded 765 PRS arriving in Lebanon during the first half of the year, the highest number of arrivals since 2017. During the same period, returns to Syria dropped, with 277 individuals approaching the Agency to re-register after returning from Lebanon, compared to 2,240 in 2019. Unlike in previous years, the improved security situation in Syria was not the primary reason cited by returnees, but rather the deteriorating economic situation in Lebanon.

According to UNRWA, an estimated 51 per cent of PRS surveyed in 2021 have not yet been able to obtain residency in Lebanon,

an increase from 34 per cent in 2019. This has a significant impact on their ability to find work, access services such as education, or move freely, particularly in southern Lebanon where foreigners need a permit to access Palestine refugee camps. Only 35 per cent of those surveyed who reported getting married since arriving in Lebanon advised that they had been able to fully register their marriages and only 23 per cent reported that they had been able to register births with the Syrian embassy. This has implications for children's future access to identity documents, public services and, potentially, their return to Syria.

Suffering from high levels of unemployment before the onset of national economic crisis and COVID-19, these developments resulted in further obstacles to securing safe and healthy livelihood opportunities for Palestine refugees. Many reported losing their jobs due to shop and restaurant closures and within the transport and construction industries that have ground to a halt due to fuel shortages. Those still in work have reported that the lack of transport, due to increased fuel prices, has meant they are struggling to keep their jobs. The deterioration in socio-economic conditions has particularly impacted the vulnerability of women and children in Lebanon, putting them at increased risk. High levels of domestic and intimate partner violence, increasing child labour, and children involved in dangerous activities, including drug dealing and with armed groups, have all been reported.

As a result of the economic decline and COVID-19, the protection situation for many Palestine refugees has sharply deteriorated. During the first half of the year, there has been an increase in interpersonal disputes escalating into violence in the camps as people become more frustrated and desperate. Violence against women and children has continued to increase, closely linked to people's mental well-being and their ability to constructively cope. Child labour, children associated with armed groups and children and youth taking drugs and/or involvement in related networks has also reportedly increased.

Between February 2020 and 30 June 2021, UNRWA recorded 12,404 COVID-19 cases amongst Palestine refugees (PRS and PRL) resulting in 350 deaths.



Palestinian refugee mother from Syria preparing a family meal in Beddawi camp, Lebanon. © 2021 UNRWA Photo

Operational developments

During the first half of the year UNRWA provided monthly cash assistance to 27,421 PRS. The physical presence of PRS families in Lebanon was monitored through monthly visits by the Agency's Lebanon Field Office (LFO) social workers. Twenty-seven health centres and mobile health points served PRS medical needs during the reporting period, through the provision of 23,567 PHC consultations while 37,590 students, including 4,654 PRS, received basic education services in 65 UNRWA schools. A total of 803 students (367 females, 183 males) benefited from various vocational training courses at the Sibli Training Centre during the 2020/2021 academic year. At the camp level, field infrastructure and camp improvement works were negatively impacted due to movement restrictions, civil unrest, road closures, fuel availability, and limits on the number of staff in the field, in line with COVID-19 preventive measures. In addition, currency fluctuations delayed the signing of new contracts and procurements by pre-selected firms.

PRS continued to face protection concerns related to their precarious legal status and lack of access to livelihood opportunities due to restrictions on their right to work in Lebanon. The impact of COVID-19, coupled with significant socio-economic deterioration in 2021, has particularly impacted the vulnerability of women and children, putting them at increased risk of domestic violence and increasing reliance on negative survival coping strategies. In response, UNRWA supported 127 Palestine refugees (including 61 females) experiencing a protection risk, while legal aid was provided to 3,799 refugees (1,569 PRS). When needed, Palestine refugees were referred by the Agency to external partners for possible legal representation. Moreover, 1,093 refugees participated in community based-protection activities to strengthen community prevention of, and response to, GBV.



UNRWA cash assistance is a lifeline for Palestinian refugees from Syria during the economic crisis in Lebanon. © 2021 UNRWA Photo

lebanon: sector-specific interventions

Strategic priority 1: preserve resilience through the provision of humanitarian assistance, ensuring that the most vulnerable refugees meet their basic needs

Humanitarian assistance for basic needs (cash assistance, in-kind food, shelter and NFIs)

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Outcome			
PRL and PRS are able to meet their essential life-saving needs and to cope with sudden crisis	Percentage of targeted PRS receiving one or more UNRWA emergency assistance interventions	98.6%	100%
	Percentage of targeted PRL, PRS and other persons eligible for UNRWA assistance receiving one or more UNRWA emergency assistance interventions	0% ³⁴	100%
Output			
PRS are provided with relief assistance (food assistance, NFIs and shelter assistance)	Number of PRS individuals receiving cash assistance for food and multi-purpose cash assistance during last distribution round (disaggregated by sex and disability)	27,421 (14,298 females, 13,123 males), incl. 1,356 persons with disabilities (585 females, 771 males)	27,700 PRS (14,343 females, 13,357 males); 8,450 families
	Number of PRL, PRS and other persons eligible for UNRWA assistance receiving emergency cash assistance (disaggregated by sex and disability)	0 ³⁵	257,000
	Total amount of cash distributed to PRS during last distribution round	US\$ 2,107,848.56	US\$ 1,555,228
	Total amount of cash distributed to PRL, PRS and other persons eligible for UNRWA assistance	0 ³⁶	US\$ 10,280,000
	Number of families provided with winterization assistance	0	8,450 PRS 16,193 PRL

During the first half of 2021, UNRWA continued to provide cash for food and multi-purpose cash assistance to all PRS families residing in Lebanon. In April, the Agency signed an agreement with a new financial service provider, Liban Post, and April/May multi-purpose cash payments to PRS were distributed as a one-off payment through this new service provider. For these payments, UNRWA was able to secure a preferential exchange rate of LBP 12,150 for US\$ 1. The total amount of cash provided to PRS families during this last distribution was US\$ 2,107,848.56.

In total, 8,122 PRS families (27,421 individuals, including 14,298 females and 13,123 males and 1,356 persons with disabilities) received cash for food in the amount of LBP 100,000 per person per month and multi-purpose cash assistance (US\$ 100 per family per month).

During the second quarter of the year, 467 PRS families (1,092 individuals) were added to the UNRWA registration records in Lebanon, representing new births and marriages and new refugee arrivals. During this same period, 191 families (516

individuals) were taken off these records due to death, return to Syria, or because they travelled to a third country.

During the reporting period, due to funding gaps, LFO was unable to distribute emergency cash assistance to PRL and the planned top up to PRS to help them cope with the effects of the socio-economic crisis and COVID-19. With limited funding, LFO was only able to distribute a total of US\$ 2,400 (US\$ 300 per family) to eight PRL families whose breadwinner was affected by COVID-19.³⁷ During the second half of 2021, one-off relief cash assistance will be provided to all PRS and eligible PRL identified as being most in need, such as refugees with chronic illnesses, older persons, people with disabilities and families with children, amongst other targeted groups. The assistance will be distributed in phases and verifications will be conducted following each phase to ensure that those eligible and in country benefit from this assistance.

No winterization assistance was provided during the reporting period, however UNRWA plans to distribute this assistance in the fourth quarter of 2021.

Strategic priority 2: contribute to a protective environment for palestine refugees by maintaining access to basic services

Emergency Health

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Outcome			
The impact of the displacement crisis on health services for refugees is reduced	Number of PRS consultations supported by UNRWA (primary and hospitalization) (disaggregated by sex and disability)	23,566 (14,593 females, 8,973 males)	58,000
	Percentage of health facilities supported by UNRWA with no stock-out of 12 tracer items (i.e. a continuous adequate supply of 12 essential medications that should never be out of stock)	100%	100%
Output			
PRS have access to primary health-care services at UNRWA health centres	Number of PRS visits to health centres (disaggregated by sex and disability)	21,957 (13,690 females, 8,267 males)	56,000
	Number of Agency health centres and mobile health points that are operational	27	27
PRS have access to hospital care (secondary and tertiary)	Number of UNRWA-supported hospitalisations accessed by PRS patients for non-COVID-19 treatment (disaggregated by sex and disability)	1,609 (903 females, 706 males)	2,000
Contain the spread of COVID-19 and decrease morbidity	Percentage of UNRWA health workers receiving personal protective equipment (PPE)	100%	100%
	Number of additional health workers hired	393 (183 females, 210 males)	120



UNRWA pharmacist provides medicines to a Palestinian refugee patient from Syria at the UNRWA health centre in Beddawi camp, Lebanon. © 2021 UNRWA Photo

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Output			
Contain the spread of COVID-19 and decrease morbidity	Number of COVID-19 tests for Palestine refugees paid for by UNRWA	4,480 (2,233 females, 2,247 males)	21,000
	Number of Palestine refugees using UNRWA isolation centres (disaggregated by sex and disability)	74 (18 females, 56 males)	500
	Number of UNRWA-supported hospitalizations accessed by Palestine refugee patients for COVID-19 treatment (disaggregated by sex and disability)	1,540 (841 females, 699 males)	3,150

During the reporting period, PRS benefited from 23,566 (14,593 females, 8,973 males) consultations, encompassing primary, secondary and tertiary health care. All UNRWA 27 health centres and mobile health points remained open, even during lockdowns, with a range of COVID-19 mitigation measures in place, including: (i) a triage system to segregate patients displaying respiratory symptoms; (ii) the provision of PPE for all health staff; and (iii) the bridging of staffing gaps to avoid any gaps in service coverage. In this regard, 393 temporary staff (183 females, 210 males) were hired to cover staff absences due to COVID-19 and leave periods.

At the beginning of 2021, COVID-19 infection rates peaked with more than 5,000 positive cases recorded on 14 January. To control the spread of the virus, the government enacted preventive measures and imposed a country-wide lockdown. In parallel, the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) secured vaccines for a national vaccination campaign that was launched on 14 February, targeting medical staff, people over 75 years and patients with chronic illnesses as priority groups. By mid-April, the numbers of positive cases had decreased to around 1,000 per day. The percentage of Palestine refugees vaccinated was relatively low; however, targeting the elderly and people with chronic illnesses significantly reduced

COVID-19 hospital admissions nationally and there was also a decrease in the number of UNRWA-supported pandemic related hospitalisations for Palestine refugees. At the same time, there was also a gradual increase in hospital admission rates for Palestine refugees with non-COVID-19 related illnesses and 1,609 PRS were supported with non-COVID hospitalisations during the reporting period. This trend is expected to continue as people become more confident that they will not be infected with COVID-19 if they seek hospital care.

UNRWA also continued to support Palestine refugees to cover the cost of COVID-19 tests, with 4,480 tests paid for by the Agency during the reporting period. Most of the COVID-19 cases identified during the reporting period, especially amongst young people, were mild and involved self-isolation at home, which also contributed to the low hospital admission rates for COVID-19 treatment (with 1,540 Palestine refugees supported by UNRWA for COVID-19 hospitalisation) and to the low numbers of people admitted into quarantine/isolation centres (74).



Palestine refugee children studying at home through UNRWA self-learning programme during the COVID-19 lockdown. Beddawi camp, Lebanon. © 2021 UNRWA Photo

Emergency Repair and Maintenance of UNRWA Installations

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Output			
Palestine refugee students continue to access quality, inclusive and equitable education despite conflict and displacement or the emergency situation	Number of school-age Palestine refugee students enrolled in UNRWA schools (disaggregated by sex and disability)	PRS and PRL 37,590 (19,576 girls, 18,014 boys), incl. 464 with disabilities PRS: 4,654 (2,362 girls, 2,292 boys), incl. 123 with disabilities; PRL: 32,936 (17,214 girls, 15,722 boys), incl. 341 with disabilities	PRS (2,462 girls, 2,350 boys); PRL (16,717 girls, 15,288 boys)
	Number of students provided with at least one item of material support to enable them to access education at an UNRWA school (disaggregated by sex and disability)	PRS and PRL 37,590 (19,576 girls, 18,014 boys), incl. 464 with disabilities PRS: 4,654 (2,362 girls, 2,292 boys), incl. 123 with disabilities; PRL: 32,936 (17,214 girls, 15,722 boys), incl. 341 with disabilities	PRS (2,462 girls, 2,350 boys); PRL (2,900 girls, 2,100 boys)

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Output			
Palestine refugee students continue to access quality, inclusive and equitable education despite conflict and displacement or the emergency situation	Number of UNRWA students who have received printed self-learning materials to use when they are unable to attend school due to conflict or emergency ³⁸	32,016 PRS 4,227 (2,090 girls, 2,137 boys) PRL 27,789 (14,073 girls, 13,716 boys)	32,159 (16,084 girls, 16,075 boys)
	Number of PRS and PRL students with access to formal vocational courses whose registration fees are fully subsidized (disaggregated by sex and disability) ³⁹	Total: 803 (289 females, 514 males) PRS: 57 students (27 females, 30 males) PRL: 746 (262 females, 484 males)	PRS: 52 (27 females, 25 males); PRL 808 (335 females, 473 males)
	Percentage of Siblin Training Centre students accessing remote learning at least once weekly during COVID-19 VTC closures	90.5% (out of 770 enrolled in the E-Learning) (94.5% females, 88.2% males)	90% (PRS and PRL)
Palestine refugee students are provided with targeted psychosocial support	Number of students who have been reached with PSS support (disaggregated by sex and disability)	4,580 PRS: 1,252 (607 girls, 645 boys) PRL: 3,328 (1,765 girls, 1,563 boys)	4,792 PRS: 965 (555 girls, 410 boys); PRL: 3,827 (1,828 girls, 1,999 boys)
	Number of VTC students reached with PSS activities (disaggregated by sex and disability)	PRS: 1 male; PRL: 39 (7 females, 32 males) ⁴⁰	PRS: 20 (10 females, 10 males); PRL: 130 (97 females, 33 males)
Palestine refugee students are provided with additional learning support, recreational activities and partners' support	Number of school students who have attended at least one UNRWA catch-up class (disaggregated by sex and disability)	N/A ⁴⁰	PRS: 1,257 (677 girls, 580 boys); PRL: 8,411 (4,351 girls, 4,060 boys)
	Number of Special Educational Needs (SEN) students who benefit from referral to SEN initiatives (disaggregated by sex and disability)	1,575 out of 2,595 (814 females, 761 males, incl. 484 persons with disabilities) PRS: 201 PRL: 1,374	PRS: 40 (20 females, 20 males); PRL: 50 (30 females, 20 males)

During the 2020/2021 academic year, 4,654 PRS students were enrolled in UNRWA schools compared to 4,812 for the 2019/2020 school year.⁴² During the first five months of 2021, learning continued through a remote modality until schools reopened for all students in mid-May through blended (classroom and remote) learning.

At present, UNRWA is on track to overachieve its emergency education targets during the second half of the year in relation to material support, self-learning materials and PSS. Due to the evolving epidemiological situation, it is likely that the 2021/2022 academic year will involve a remote and/or blended learning modality and students and their families will face even greater challenges due to the stress of partial home schooling whilst coping with evolving and uncertain conditions in the country. All students in elementary and preparatory classes will receive printed materials and separate PSS kits and back-to-school kits, which it is hoped will enable the achievement of set targets. The most vulnerable families will receive internet access and transportation assistance – these interventions will be covered under a combination of EA and project funds.

During the reporting period, TVET registration at the Siblin Training Centre was lower than planned (803 PRS and PRL enrolled compared to a target of 860) due to the socio-economic situation and COVID-19 lockdowns, which resulted in the continuous closure of educational institutions and many businesses. This forced 32 youth (29 males, 3 females) to drop-out of their studies, either due to gaps in motivation or to search for gainful employment.

TVET materials and teaching tools were revised and individual follow-up was carried out with trainees who experienced difficulties in actively participating in e-learning. UNRWA

also procured phone recharging cards for distribution to the families of 100 students (40 females, 60 males) who were identified as particularly vulnerable and therefore unable to guarantee to pay the cost for online participation. This combined support enabled most students to continue with their studies.

The lockdowns and closure of institutions due to COVID-19 prevented several in-person activities from taking place, including the provision of PSS for TVET students. Conditions permitting, these activities will resume in September 2021, pending the Ministry of Education and Higher Education's (MEHE) decision on the reopening schools and higher education institutions.

More students with special education needs (SEN) were supported as a result of the education programme's strengthened identification and referral pathway system, including coordination mechanisms with existing UNRWA services and external partners.

The current fuel crisis, electricity shortages, inflation and deteriorating economic, security, and political conditions, as well as the emergence of the Delta coronavirus variant, are expected to have a negative impact on the provision of education, since it will become increasingly difficult to circumvent and address the multiple learning barriers that students face. UNRWA education programming is committed to providing quality, inclusive and equitable education and TVET has plans in place to accommodate the different potential learning modalities. Despite this, it is anticipated that student needs will substantially increase in relation to transportation and communication assistance, and PSS.

Livelihoods and Social Cohesion

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Outcome			
Improved access to livelihood opportunities for PRS and PRL	Number of PRS/PRL (15-24 years old) reached through formal and non-formal skills trainings (disaggregated by sex and disability)	550 (367 females, 183 males), incl. 16 with disabilities (PRS 31, PRL 519)	440 (34 PRS, 406 PRL)

As part of the Generation of Innovative Leaders (GIL) programme,⁴³ implemented in partnership with UNICEF, UNRWA operates two Innovation Labs that provide non-formal, non-accredited short-term skills training that is more accessible to young refugees who are unable to participate in the longer vocational and educational training offered at the Siblin Training Centre. During the reporting period, 550 youth received training in a range of topics, including digital skills, social entrepreneurship, life skills for employability, positive leadership and economic engagement, overachieving the planned target.

Taking into consideration cultural and social sensitivities, UNRWA has encouraged female participation in the GIL programme by: (i) facilitating safe transport; (ii) offering flexibility with course timings; (iii) providing a safe and secure learning environment; and (iv) developing trust within the community.

Protection

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Outputs			
UNRWA staff are able to identify and refer protection cases and are better able to ensure safe and dignified access to services for all refugees Individuals' protection needs are supported	Number of UNRWA staff trained on protection (disaggregated by sex and disability)	479 (256 females, 223 males)	600 (400 females, 200 males)
Individuals' protection needs are supported	Number of individuals experiencing a protection risk (general protection-access to services) identified by UNRWA (disaggregated by sex, age and disability)	127 (48 PRS, 79 PRL) (61 females, 66 males), incl. 2 with disabilities	400 (250 PRS, 150 PRL: 200 females, 200 males)
	Number of protection cases supported through emergency protection cash (disaggregated by sex and disability)	15 (3 PRS, 12 PRL) (8 females, 7 males)	40 (16 PRS: 8 females, 8 males; 24 PRL: 12 females, 12 males)
	Number of Palestine refugees provided with legal aid services (disaggregated by PRL/PRS and by sex and disability)	Total 3,799 1,569 PRS (654 females, 915 males) 2,230 PRL (1,070 females, 1,160 males)	3,500 PRS 3,500 PRL ⁴⁴
Communities' capacities to prevent and respond to GBV and violence against children are strengthened	Number of GBV survivors assisted (disaggregated by age, sex and disability)	Total 17 3 PRS (3 females) 14 PRL (11 females, 2 girls, 1 boy)	80 (30 PRS; 50 PRL)
	Number of women/men/girls/ boys engaged in community-based protection activities (disaggregated by sex and disability)	Total 1,093 128 PRS (95 females, 33 males) 965 PRL (652 females, 308 males, 4 girls, 1 boy)	4,000 (2,000 PRS: 1,000 females, 1,000 males; 2,000 PRL: 1,000 females, 1,000 males)

During the reporting period, COVID-19 lockdowns and the economic crisis contributed to increased stress and frustration within the Palestine refugee community. Men, in particular, have been unable to find regular secure employment, resulting in both increased mental health issues and sporadic incidents of violence in the community. In addition, high levels of domestic and intimate partner violence, an increase in child labour and children involved in dangerous activities, including drug dealing and with armed groups, have all been reported.

The number of PRS with legal residency in Lebanon appears to have sharply decreased as people are no longer prioritising the filing of their applications. This is having a severe impact on their ability to access services, particularly in the South where residency documents are required to cross LAF checkpoints – necessary to enter camps and access education and workplaces.

During the reporting period, the UNRWA Protection and Neutrality Team in Lebanon supported 127 Palestine refugees facing general protection risks, including the risk of eviction, difficulty in accessing services and threats or actual violence from duty bearers. Unfortunately, COVID-19 related movement restrictions and civil unrest limited the Agency's presence in refugee communities and resulted in underachievement against EA protection targets during the first half of the year. The Agency will continue to adjust its operations to ensure that protection assistance remains available to those in need.

The Agency continues to receive a high number of legal cases involving labour law, residency and divorce cases and responses are currently in progress. During the reporting period, a total of 3,799 Palestine refugees, comprising 1,569 PRS (654 females, 915 males) and 2,230 PRL (1,070 females, 1,160 males), were provided with legal aid services.

It has been extremely challenging to provide emergency cash to refugees with urgent protection needs due to limited resources and enormous need, meaning that the provision of support can appear arbitrary. A strategy is currently being developed that will result in enhanced cross-programmatic collaboration, better identification of those in need and the provision of assistance based on clear criteria.

The number of GBV cases referred to UNRWA is quite low despite rising case numbers at the community level. Based on concerns about confidentiality and related stigma, the Agency will seek to bridge this divide as the RSS reform, including a communication plan that will introduce the role of social workers at the community level, is rolled out. The target for the number of Palestine refugee community members reached through GBV and MHPSS awareness raising activities was underachieved due to ongoing COVID-19 related difficulties in organising both mass awareness campaigns and individual meetings at the camp level. Online meetings are less effective as an awareness raising tool and have become increasingly difficult to sustain given the frequent electricity cuts. It is therefore unlikely that the community-based protection activity target will be met this year.

UNRWA operations in Lebanon are working to improve data collection in relation to persons with disabilities, including through an assessment on the use of the Washington Group questions.⁴⁵ Requiring an Agency-wide approach to make it effective, two training initiatives will be convened in July to increase staff awareness and capacity in using this approach to identify disability.

Environmental Health

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Outcome			
Basic environmental and public health needs of the affected population are met	Percentage of PRS in camps who have safe and equitable access to WASH resources and facilities	0	97%
Outputs			
Improved solid waste management inside the Palestine refugee camps	Percentage of PRS benefiting from garbage collection inside camps	0	94%
Safe and adequate water supply provided inside Palestine refugee camps	Percentage of PRS in camps provided with safe water for their basic needs	0	97%
Improved wastewater and storm water drainage systems	Percentage of PRS in camps served with adequate wastewater and storm water drainage systems	0	97%
Improved medical/infectious waste collection in health facilities and improved solid waste collection in the Palestine refugee camps	Number of additional sanitation labourers hired	0	42

During the reporting period, no funds were received under the EA for environmental health activities. However, the UNRWA Infrastructure and Camp Improvement Programme (ICIP), under programme budget and project funds, continued to provide vital environmental health services, including the maintenance of water boreholes, the rehabilitation, maintenance and management of water supply systems, wastewater and storm water networks, and the repair of damaged roads in camps. The Agency also organized solid waste collection, transportation and disposal in private landfill sites (due to the lack of capacity in municipal sites), and the sweeping and cleaning of camp roads. Regular vector control campaigns were carried out in all 12 Palestine refugee camps.

The rehabilitation and repair of sewerage and storm water networks in Beddawi, Dbayeh and Burj Shemali camps was achieved (97 per cent completed) and water supply improvement activities were implemented (96.57 per cent completed) in Beddawi and Nahr el-Bared camps. The national

electricity crisis affected the achievement of some planned WASH activities in Rashidieh, Burj Shemali and Mar Elias camps.

In support of enhanced solid waste management, 72 additional sanitation labourers were recruited utilising other Agency funds to work on improving hygiene conditions in the camps through the collection and safe disposal of medical and other waste. Unfortunately, the national solid waste crisis continues to prevent major improvements in this sector. To maintain supplies of clean water to all refugee camp residents, a stable supply of fuel is required to operate water plant backup generators (often in use due to the national electricity crisis). Additional sanitation labourers, PPE, disinfectants and cleaning supplies are also required to ensure the continued safe availability of services under pandemic operating conditions.

Strategic priority 3: improve the effectiveness and efficiency of emergency programme delivery

Safety and Security

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Output			
Enhanced safety and security of UNRWA staff to facilitate the provision of humanitarian aid to Palestine refugees	Percentage of front-line staff provided with safety, security and awareness trainings	0	100%

During the reporting period, COVID 19 restrictions and the limited availability of funds prevented the implementation of safety, security and awareness trainings for front line staff. This intervention remains critical with the increased possibility of growing civil unrest towards the end of 2021.

Emergency Repair and Maintenance of UNRWA Installations

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Output			
UNRWA installations repaired or maintained for continued service provision	Number of UNRWA facilities rehabilitated or repaired	0	50

Due to funding gaps, this intervention could not be implemented during the reporting period.

jordan

Political, economic and security developments

Despite the protracted conflict in Syria, political and economic crises in Lebanon, the hostilities in Gaza in May 2021, and domestic political turmoil in mid-2021, the situation in Jordan has remained relatively stable.

On 13 January, the COVID-19 vaccination rollout started for all Jordanian residents regardless of nationality. Jordan was also amongst the world's first nations to offer vaccines to refugees.⁴⁶ Despite these efforts, Jordan started to experience a major surge in infections – by 21 March, daily infections reached a peak at 8,789 new cases and by 2 April daily deaths reached 99.⁴⁷ The steep rise in COVID-19 cases overwhelmed the national health system. In response, the government re-introduced Friday lockdowns on 26 February and extended night curfew hours from 14 March. In April, pandemic conditions began to improve with test positivity rates declining from 15 per cent to less than 5 per cent. By the end of June, new daily infections had dropped to 518 and deaths to seven.

Friday lockdowns and night curfews were lifted on 28 April and the government announced a phased approach to the lifting of restrictions, including the gradual reopening of all sectors, starting with the most essential ones from 1 June, and the resumption of face-to-face learning in schools for the new academic year in September. By the end of the reporting period, there was still active community transmission, albeit in lower numbers, and concerns that a third wave would emerge during the summer. However, the vaccination campaign gradually improved and by the end of June 2021, 2,449,642 people had received their first dose of the vaccine and 1,378,395 had received two doses.⁴⁸ The government has made vaccinations a mandatory condition for returning to work in many public and private sector workplaces.

UNRWA, together with other UN agencies and civil society organisations, jointly advocated with the Government of Jordan for the reopening of schools to prevent further learning loss for students. This was also motivated by concern for children at risk of dropping out of school as well as to conduct a robust catch-up programme for students, especially those in the lower grades. For safe school reopening, the MoE designated days and venues for COVID-19 vaccinations for teachers, their spouses and school support staff.

Throughout the reporting period, COVID-19-related restrictions continued to affect the economy and further exacerbated deteriorating socio-economic conditions (public sector debt increased from 96 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in 2019 to 105 per cent in 2020).⁴⁹ Unemployment rates in 2020 rose from 19.3 per cent to 24.7 per cent by the end of the year,⁵⁰ with youth unemployment reaching up to 50 per cent.⁵¹ During the first quarter of 2021,

the unemployment rate in Jordan reached 25 per cent.⁵² The deteriorating socio-economic conditions have particularly affected the most vulnerable and marginalized, including Palestine refugees, PRS, those enrolled in the Agency's SSNP, and ex-Gazan refugees and PRI, and has increased their dependency on the Agency's services.

At the end of June 2021, 637 PRS (165 women, 158 men, 142 boys, 158 girls, including 14 people with disabilities) were residing in the KAP refugee reception facility where very limited permission is granted for movement outside due to security concerns. Movement restrictions and the risk of refoulement is affecting the well-being of the already vulnerable refugees there.⁵³

Operational developments

By the end of June 2021, 18,164 PRS (9,468 females, 8,628 males) were registered with UNRWA in Jordan. The Agency's health programme continued to provide PHC through its 25 health centres during the reporting period, operating under a series of COVID-19 preventive measures to ensure the safety and health of refugee patients and health staff. UNRWA was also able to provide health consultations to 7,215 PRS and supported the hospitalisation of 437 PRS (244 females, 193 males).

The Agency continued to coordinate with the Jordanian MoH, including through involvement in the national PCR test campaigns and the roll-out of COVID-19 vaccinations. In December 2020, MoH medical staff started providing PCR tests at three UNRWA health centres, which increased to seven during the first half of 2021 to include Zarqa, Baqa'a (main), Irbid, Amman New Camp, Awajan, Amman Headquarters (HQ) and Jabal Hussein health centres. In March, the MoH designated Agency health centres in Baqa'a, Zarqa and Irbid camps as COVID-19 vaccination hubs due to the population size in these camps and the available space in these facilities. Vaccines were supplied by the MoH and administered by UNRWA medical staff. By the end of June, more than 20,000 people had received their COVID-19 vaccinations at Agency health centres, of which 75 per cent were Palestine refugees, including 932 PRS.⁵⁴

During the reporting period, 1,063 PRS and Syrian students were enrolled in UNRWA schools for the 2020/2021 academic year, and 13 PRS students were enrolled in the Amman and Wadi Seer VTCs and the FESA. The education programme continued to operate through a remote learning modality featuring the SLP for students and launched a DLP in April 2021 that provides a safe place for UNRWA students to access self-learning material that is quality assured to be in line with

for the four core subjects (Maths, Science, Arabic and English) were made accessible through this platform.

During the reporting period, UNRWA distributed unconditional cash assistance to 18,096 PRS registered with the Agency in Jordan, in addition to emergency cash assistance for 352 PRS households. Due to limited funding, cash assistance could not be extended to ex-Gazan refugees and PRI to mitigate the additional hardship caused by COVID-19.

Protection support provided to PRS included general protection and issues relating to documentation and legal status, child protection and GBV. The Agency continued to ensure protection mainstreaming in and through its service delivery by meeting its minimum protection standards.⁵⁵

The collection and disposal of solid waste continued on an uninterrupted basis and remained a priority intervention in the Agency's response to COVID-19, aimed at protecting the health and safety of refugees in the ten Palestine refugee camps in Jordan.

Despite a challenging operating environment, through emergency funding UNRWA also provided 637 PRS residing in KAP with a number of humanitarian interventions, including emergency cash assistance, basic education for 146 children (77 girls, 69 boys) registered in UNRWA schools, and health and protection services (for 170 women, 167 men, 158 girls, 142 boys), including 14 persons with disabilities (5 females, 9 males).

Since the re-opening of the Nasib Border Crossing with Syria in October 2018 through June 2021, 310 PRS families (884 individuals) returned to Syria from Jordan. During this time period, 204 families (representing 709 individuals) had come back to Jordan and had their files reactivated with UNRWA. An intention survey, carried out in March 2021 by the Agency's Neutrality and Protection Unit (NPU) on a sample of 155 PRS, found that 82 per cent did not intend to return to Syria. Hence, the level of dependency on UNRWA services remains high.

During 2020, UNRWA conducted an analysis of internal data from a range of internal surveys (winterization and COVID-19 PDMs, emergency cash requests and appeals), and a review of the numbers of women-headed households, children and persons with disabilities. Based on this review, it was concluded that the socio-economic conditions of PRS families, who previously did not meet the criteria of eligibility for assistance, had deteriorated substantially since the initial assessment in 2018. By way of response, the Agency's Jordan Field Office (JFO) revised its targeting approach and eligibility criteria for 2021 to include all PRS families in its regular unconditional cash assistance programme and approximately 2,000 PRS became eligible to receive this assistance.



Umm Amjad, a Palestinian refugee from Syria, and her family receive UNRWA unconditional cash assistance to help with their basic needs. Amman, Jordan. © 2021 UNRWA Photo by Suliman Al-Adham

jordan: sector-specific interventions

Strategic priority 1: preserve resilience through the provision of humanitarian assistance, ensuring that the most vulnerable refugees meet their basic needs

Cash Assistance for Essential Needs

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Outcome			
PRS, ex-Gazans and PRI are able to meet their essential life-saving needs and to cope with sudden crisis	Percentage of targeted PRS, ex-Gazans and Palestine refugees from Iraq (PRI) receiving one or more UNRWA emergency assistance interventions	PRS: 100% ex-Gazans: 0% PRI: 0%	PRS: 100% ex-Gazans: 100% PRI: 100%
Output			
PRS are provided with relief assistance (food assistance, NFIs and shelter assistance)	Number of PRS provided with unconditional cash assistance during the last distribution round (disaggregated by sex and disability)	18,096 PRS (9,468 females, 8,628 males), incl. 492 persons with disabilities	17,800 (9,256 females, 8,544 males), incl. 453 persons with disabilities
PRS cases identified as facing major crises are provided with emergency cash assistance	Number of PRS families receiving one-time emergency cash assistance	352	700
PRS in Jordan are provided with winterization cash assistance to better cope with the hardships of winter season	Number of PRS families provided with winterization assistance	0	4,500
PRS, ex-Gazans and PRI are provided with COVID-19 cash assistance to mitigate the negative impact of the pandemic	Number of PRS, ex-Gazans and PRI provided with COVID-19 cash assistance (disaggregated by category: PRS/PRI/ ex- Gazans–SSN/non-SSN, sex and disability)	PRS: 0 ex-Gazans: 0 PRI: 0 ⁵⁶	PRS: 17,800; ex-Gazans and PRI: 138,340 individuals (27,635 households) comprising 10,380 SSN ex-Gazans (1,997 households), 127,804 non-SSN ex-Gazans (25,603 households), 156 PRI individuals (35 households)

In March 2021, UNRWA distributed the first round of unconditional cash assistance to 18,049 PRS (9,421 females, 8,628 males, including 484 persons with disabilities), while an additional 115 Palestine refugees will receive their payments retroactively in August. Out of the total population assisted, 6,738 PRS categorized as the most vulnerable, including PRS residing in KAP, received US\$ 40 per person per month and 11,311 individuals categorized as vulnerable each received US\$ 25 per month. In June, 18,096 eligible PRS (9,468 females, 8,628 males, including 492 persons with disabilities) received the second disbursement of cash assistance. Here, 6,679 individuals received US\$ 40 per person per month and 11,417 PRS each received US\$ 25 per month.

During the reporting period, UNRWA carried out four PDM surveys: two related to the distribution of unconditional cash assistance and winterization assistance in December 2020; one followed the distribution of unconditional cash assistance in March 2021; and the fourth related to the pilot e-wallet distribution mechanism that took place in late 2020. The aim of the first three PDM surveys was to collect PRS feedback on the assistance provided and to assess the effectiveness of cash grants, spending trends and expenditure priorities. With regard to the fourth survey, the aim was to assess the relevance and effectiveness of the e-wallet approach⁵⁷ and PRS satisfaction levels compared to the bank transfers accessed through ATMs.

The PDM of the 2021 first quarter (March 2021) unconditional cash assistance targeted 641 PRS households (2,407 individuals: 764 women, 573 men, 504 girls and 566 boys, including 51 persons with disabilities: 31 males, 20 females), representing approximately 15 per cent of those who received this assistance and had not been included in any surveys in the previous year.⁵⁸ Findings revealed that 99.7 per cent of respondents had partially or fully spent the cash received; 14.5 per cent reported that, combined with other sources of income, the cash assistance was enough to cover their basic needs; rent and food were reported as the highest-ranking expenses; 91 per cent reported that the cash distribution was very reliable; 56 per cent stated that it had moderately helped to improve their living conditions; and 58 per cent confirmed that the cash assistance had moderately reduced their overall financial burden.

The PDM related to winterization assistance targeted 595 PRS households who had not been included in the previous year's surveys (2,376 individuals: 699 women, 600 men, 518 girls and 559 boys, including 67 persons with disabilities). Findings indicated that respondents had used various heating options during the winter: gas heaters (63 per cent), kerosene heaters (27 per cent), electric heaters (7 per cent), other heating methods (2 per cent). An additional 1 per cent reported they had no heating in their shelters. Forty-four per cent of respondents advised that the cash assistance helped them cope with half of their heating costs during the winter months (the average monthly heating cost was JOD 30/US\$ 42). Rent ranked as the most important expense, with food second and

debt third (the average monthly rent among surveyed PRS was JOD 150/US\$ 212, while the average monthly cost for electricity, water and gas was JOD 44/US\$ 62).

The third PDM survey covering the e-wallets targeted 297 households (1,327 individuals: 370 women, 326 men, 320 girls and 311 boys). A full 13.8 per cent of respondents reported that they were living with someone with a physical disability (41.5 per cent) or mental disability (17 per cent). One hundred per cent of respondents confirmed that they had been provided with clear information about the process of creating a new wallet; 38 per cent had found the process to be easy, while 62 per cent had faced challenges. Some 54 per cent declined to receive cash assistance through e-wallets, mainly because they considered ATMs to be an easier option.

During the reporting period, 352 PRS households (92 headed by women, 260 headed by men), including 34 families headed by a person with a disability, benefited from a one-time emergency cash assistance that was distributed on a case-by-case basis following a thorough verification. The total number of individuals who benefitted from this support was 1,493 (475 women, 347 men, 342 girls and 329 boys), including 64 persons with disabilities. This cash support assists PRS in meeting acute emergency needs and/or address protection concerns to prevent a deterioration in their overall humanitarian situation. Each family/case received an average of US\$ 275 to cover costs relating to: risk of eviction (18 per cent) (excluding those relating to court warnings); overdue utility bills (51 per cent) (excluding electricity and water); cost of official documents to legalize their status in Jordan (4 per cent); food and essential non-food items (26 per cent); and sudden death within the family (1 per cent).

During the reported period, only limited funding was received for PRS top-up cash assistance, and cash-assistance to ex-Gazans and PRI to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Pipeline funding is expected to be available during the second half of the year, allowing UNRWA to implement this intervention.

Similarly, no funding was received during the first half of 2021 to cover cash assistance top-ups for vulnerable ex-Gazans and PRI in Jordan. If funding becomes available, and following a revision of the JFO's priorities, a decision will be made regarding the likelihood and the level of this cash assistance measure.

Under this appeal, JFO had planned to join an inter-agency Joint Comprehensive Vulnerability Assessment (JCVA) to enhance the availability of data on the situation of Palestine refugees and better inform programming. As this activity has yet to commence, UNRWA continues to coordinate with relevant partners to include Palestine refugees in upcoming surveys and studies.

Strategic priority 2: contribute to a protective environment for Palestine refugees by maintaining access to basic services

Emergency Health

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Outcome			
The impact of the displacement crisis on health services for refugees is mitigated	Number of PRS consultations supported by UNRWA (primary, secondary and tertiary health care) (disaggregated by sex and disability)	7,215 PRS (4,094 females, 3,121 males)	15,840 PRS
Outputs			
PRS have access to primary health-care services	Number of PRS visits to UNRWA health facilities (disaggregated by sex and disability)	3,983 PRS (2,451 females, 1,532 males)	10,000 PRS (5,750 females; 4,250 males)
	Number of operational Agency health centres and mobile health points	29	29
PRS have access to hospital care (secondary and tertiary)	Number of UNRWA non-COVID-19 hospitalisations accessed by PRS patients (disaggregated by sex and disability)	437 PRS (244 females, 193 males)	500 PRS (200 females, 300 males)
Palestine refugees in Jordan (PRJ), including PRS, have access to essential drugs and medication supplies, both at UNRWA health centres or through telemedicine	Number of NCD patients receiving home delivery of medicines (disaggregated by sex and disability)	0	1,600 PRS 77,417 PRJ
	Number of NCD patients benefiting from UNRWA telemedicine services (disaggregated by sex and disability)	303 PRS (179 females, 124 males) PRJ: 22,892	1,000 PRS 35,000 PRJ
PRS in KAP receive comprehensive healthcare	Number of PRS consultations provided by Jordan Health Aid Society (JHAS) clinic	2,648 PRS (1,337 females, 1,311 males)	5,000 PRS (2,500 females, 2,500 males)
	Number of PRS consultations provided by KAP mobile dental clinic	147 (62 females, 85 males)	340 PRS (157 females, 183 males)
UNRWA healthcare workers are protected while providing health services	Number of UNRWA healthcare workers receiving PPE and hygiene supplies	615 (395 females, 220 males)	680
Public health threat at UNRWA facilities, including health centres, is reduced	Number of UNRWA facilities including health centres provided at regular basis with disinfection and hygiene materials	220	210

During the reporting period, UNRWA provided unrestricted and free-of-charge access to Agency PHC to 7,215 PRS (3,350 women, 2,500 men, 744 girls and 621 boys) through its 25 health centres, four mobile dental clinics and the Jordan Health Aid Society (JHAS) clinic for the PRS residents in KAP. Attendance numbers at health centres were lower than anticipated due to the need to minimize potential exposure to COVID-19, in line with national public health measures. Full PHC services at all UNRWA health centres resumed on 5 June 2021. Critical health services that had been suspended until that time were curative oral health services, infant and child growth monitoring and cold curative services, while follow up

visits for NCD patients and for mother-and-child health (MCH) were limited.

UNRWA facilitated PRS access to secondary and tertiary health care and covered hospitalisation costs for 437 PRS (181 women, 111 men, 63 girls and 82 boys). Of these, 282 were KAP residents who were referred to hospitals by the JHAS clinic (154 females, 128 males) and 52 were PRS facing a protection concern who received private hospital care. Eight PRS (3 females, 3 males and 2 boys) were provided with eyeglasses and seven PRS (5 females, 2 males) were provided with prosthetic devices.

An UNRWA doctor explains the benefits of wearing a face mask to a Palestinian refugee from Syria in Jordan. © 2021 UNRWA Photo by Lubna Hashem



The JHAS/UNRWA partnership enabled the continuation of PHC services to PRS in KAP. During the first six months of 2021, 2,648 (891 females, 1,011 males, 446 girls and 300 boys) consultations were provided at the JHAS clinic and 147 oral health consultations (62 females, 85 males) were provided by the Agency's mobile dental clinic. A total of 69 KAP PRS residents received COVID-19 vaccines during the reporting period.

During the reporting period, NCD medicines remained available for collection at health centres, hence no home deliveries were conducted. Telemedicine services continued to be offered to minimize foot traffic at health centres, benefitting 23,195 NCD patients.

Two additional hotlines were set up in April, as part of the Agency's "First Line of Defence" (FLoD), to carry out COVID-19 tracing amongst staff and to respond health queries by medical professionals. JFO also continued to monitor adherence to workplace health protocols through spot checks at UNRWA installations. By the end of June, 95 per cent of UNRWA installations had been inspected and a high-level of commitment to preventive measures was confirmed.

During the reporting period, the Agency ensured that there was an adequate supply of PPE for all its 615 front line health staff (395 females, 220 males). In addition, hygiene supplies were supplied to all health centres to mitigate the risk of staff and patient infections and the spread of the virus. All UNRWA facilities were regularly disinfected.

Education in Emergencies

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Outcome			
Palestine refugee students in Jordan are able to continue their education despite the crisis	Percentage of PRS and Syrian ⁵⁹ students graduating from basic education (disaggregated by sex and disability)	100% (55% girls, 45% boys)	100% (56% girls, 44% boys)
Outputs			
The quality of teaching and learning is sustained even during emergencies	Number of PRS and Syrian students enrolled in UNRWA schools (disaggregated by sex and disability)	1,063 (531 girls, 532 boys)	1,063 (531 girls, 532 boys)
	Number of PRS students admitted to vocational training centres and Faculty of Educational Sciences and Arts (disaggregated by sex and disability)	13 (9 girls, 4 boys)	20 (12 girls, 8 boys)
	Number of daily paid teachers hired to ensure continuity of services (disaggregated by sex and disability)	0 ⁶⁰	240 (120 females, 120 males)
	Number of daily paid school attendants hired to ensure continuity of services (disaggregated by sex and disability)	0 ⁶¹	43 (20 females, 23 males)
The psychosocial well-being of students affected by the crisis is supported	Number of PRS and Syrian students who have attended at least one counselling session (disaggregated by sex and disability)	560 (324 girls, 236 boys)	1,063 (531 girls, 532 boys)
	Number of newly appointed school counsellors trained on the Agency's PSS framework (disaggregated by sex and disability)	7 (5 females, 2 males)	43 (20 females, 23 males)
	Number of PRS and Syrian students participating in at least one recreational (and/or) extra-curricular activity during the year (disaggregated by sex)	524 (283 girls, 241 boys)	1,063 (531 girls, 532 boys)
Barriers to accessing education are reduced	Number of students provided with tablets (disaggregated by sex and disability)	0	3,555 (1,778 girls, 1,777 boys)
	Number of students provided with educational/recreational materials (back-to-school kits, PSS/recreational kits, stationery) (disaggregated by sex and disability)	PRS: 1,063 (531 girls, 532 boys) PRJ: 337 (169 girls, 168 boys)	PRS students 1,063 (531 girls, 532 boys); PRJ students 119,056 (57,691 girls, 61,365 boys)
Most vulnerable students enrolled in UNRWA schools and VTCs have unrestricted access to distance learning	Number of students and teachers provided with internet access and devices to enable remote learning (disaggregated by sex and disability)	0 ⁶²	27,255 students (13,627 girls, 13,628 boys) 399 teachers (206 females, 193 males)
	Number of VTC SSN students provided with laptops (disaggregated by sex and disability)	0 ⁶³	600 (439 girls, 161 boys)
	Number of students provided with self-learning materials (disaggregated by sex and disability)	0 ⁶⁴	27,255 (13,627 girls, 13,628 boys)

During the first half of 2021, 129 Agency elementary and preparatory schools in Jordan provided basic education to 1,063 PRS and Syrian refugee students: 801 PRS (404 girls and 397 boys); and 262 Syrian refugees (127 girls and 135 boys). Through project funds, 1,063 PRS and Syrian refugee students and 337 vulnerable Palestine refugee students from Jordan were provided with school bags and stationery (in February 2021).

All UNRWA students, including PRS, sat for their final exams between 3 and 15 June. Students who had access to computers and the internet at home sat their online exams there. Students who had no access to IT equipment and/or the internet, sat their exams in schools while observing social distancing. PRS students achieved excellent results in their Grade 10 exams with a 100 per cent success rate (55 per cent girls and 45 per cent boys).

In preparation for the start of the 2020/2021 second school semester on 7 February, the Agency followed strict COVID-19 prevention procedures which included: (i) the provision of hygiene supplies and disinfectant cleaning materials; (ii) disinfecting all classrooms and school common areas; and (iii) ensuring that all students and staff wear face masks. Schools adopted a blended learning approach whereby students studied in school for 2.5 days each week and carried out remote learning for the remaining 2.5 days. During the first two weeks of the second semester, Grade 1-3 students attended school, while Grade 10 and Grade 4-9 students returned to school on 21 February and 7 March respectively. Due to a deteriorating COVID-19 situation, the MoE requested all schools to move to full remote learning from 15 March onwards.

During the reporting period, UNRWA provided PSS training to 48 school counsellors (25 females, 23 males), including seven new appointees (5 females, 2 males). In all, 560 students (324 girls, 236 boys) attended counselling sessions while 524 students (283 girls, 241 boys) participated in recreational and extracurricular activities. Due to COVID-19, there was a need to provide additional counselling sessions, including individual

and group PSS sessions that covered a range of issues, including school drop-out risks and dealing with stress. Some interventions took place on school premises at the beginning of the second semester and were moved to an online platform when the schools closed.

During the first half of the year, no funds were made available to: (i) hire additional daily paid teachers and school attendants; (ii) procure tablets; and (iii) subsidise home internet access for those in need. UNRWA teachers continued to use school facilities to have uninterrupted access to computers and the internet. Moreover, students who did not have an internet connection at home sat their exams in schools.

UNRWA anticipates that the schools will reopen for the new academic year in mid-August 2021 and has set strict procedures to ensure adherence to COVID-19 health protocols by school staff and for awareness-raising among students. A catch-up programme, in line with MoE guidelines, is scheduled to start on 15 August to help students recover from lost learning.

Given the expected impact of the long school closure, it will not be possible to compensate for the entire learning loss with catch-up classes over the period of a few weeks, particularly for younger students in lower grades. This will require a thorough review of the whole curriculum for every grade where some subjects may have to be given priority. UNRWA will continue its coordination and collaboration with the MoE on this issue.

In 2021, 13 PRS youth (9 females, 4 males) were enrolled in various vocational training courses provided at the Amman and Wadi Seer VTCs. Following government guidelines, UNRWA VCTs and the FESA continued online education during the reporting period, except for practical subjects, which were conducted in workshops with reduced numbers of students. Internship programmes also continued. Although the employability rate of VCT graduates dropped by almost 10 per cent in comparison to the previous year, an 84.9 per cent rate was still achieved despite the nationwide economic recession.



A young Palestinian refugee from Syria studies from home in Amman, Jordan. © 2021 UNRWA Photo by Sally Al-Akhras

Protection

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Outputs			
Strengthened prevention and protection response for PRS/PRJ.	Number of PRS/PRJ individuals referred to external partners for legal counselling (disaggregated by sex and disability)	131 PRS (30 females, 33 males, 36 girls, 32 boys), incl. 1 person with disabilities	75 PRS 22 PRJ
Protection mechanisms targeting Palestine refugee children, women and men (general protection, child protection and GBV cases) are strengthened, through identification and referrals	Percentage of GBV survivors assisted (PRS and PRJ)	100% (38 GBV survivors) (12 females, 25 girls and 1 boy), incl. 6 PRS and 32 PRJ	100%
	Percentage of child protection cases recorded that received assistance (PRS and PRJ)	100% (29 child protection cases) PRS (16 boys, 13 girls)	100%
PRJ, including Palestine refugees from Syria, receive psychosocial support, through medical consultations, by educational staff and other frontline staff, including remotely	Percentage of PRJ and PRS in need receiving psychosocial support	100% 103 individuals receiving PSS (64 females, 39 males) 50 PRS, 49 PRJ, 4 Syrians (mixed marriages)	100%

During the reporting period, UNRWA NPU registered 114 general protection cases involving PRS, PRJ and ex-Gazan refugees: 114 cases required legal consultations and judicial reviews; 49 cases concerned 131 PRS (30 adult females, 36 girls, 33 adult males, 32 boys), including one person with disabilities. This is an increase over the 107 protection cases reported in 2020 and is due to UNRWA's engagement of a legal firm to provide advice and support and to advocate for PRS facing protection issues in Jordan.

The 49 protection cases (affecting 131 PRS) included the following: correction of marriage contracts in order to determine lineage (parenthood of children); issuance of birth certificates; correction of nationality and birth certificates handled by Jordan's Civil Status and Passports Department; contesting barriers to access Jordanian services; and the waiver of residency permit fines through interventions mainly with the Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate (SRAD).

The NPU recorded 38 GBV cases (12 women, 25 girls and 1 boy), including 6 PRS and 32 PRJ consisting of: child marriage (15); sexual harassment (6); physical assault (10); emotional and verbal abuse (3); and denial of resources (4). None of these cases involved persons with disabilities. During the same period in 2020, 83 GBV cases were recorded. The decrease in the number of cases in 2021 can be partly attributed to the

gradual lifting of strict COVID-19 restrictions throughout the reporting period compared to the previous year. This brought an end to long periods of home confinement with intimate partners (often the abusers) and renewed access to employment (especially for men). GBV mainstreaming through capacity building and training of frontline staff and the ongoing re-establishment of GBV focal points in JFO and area offices will result in increased information sharing and the documentation of cases by GBV networks.

During the reporting period, the NPU also handled 29 child protection cases for PRS children (13 girls, 16 boys) concerning education, health and legal issues (such as the lack of birth registration). Out of these, 11 girls and 14 boys were referred internally to other Agency programmes and two girls and two boys with disabilities were referred to external partners for special education services. A further 103 individuals (64 females, 39 males) were provided with PSS. Of these, 50 (25 females, 25 males) were PRS; 49 (35 females, 14 males) were PRJ, and four females were Syrians (in mixed marriages).

UNRWA estimates that the target related to the number of legal cases referred externally will be overachieved by the end of 2021 as a result of: (i) improvements in internal mechanisms that assess protection cases; and (ii) the provision of legal support by an external law firm. This means that a higher

number of refugees will have their cases referred for legal support.

Assistance was provided to all the reported protection cases (GBV, child protection) in the form of emergency PSS, and service provision referrals and/or materials. It is expected that all additional cases will be addressed by the end of 2021.

The possibility that Palestine refugees might not receive appropriate PSS because of limited staff capacity was identified

during the reporting period. To mitigate this risk, Agency's RSS staff are currently undergoing intensive training to be able to provide general MHPSS, in addition to the emergency PSS services already being provided. In addition, eight emergency social workers are being trained by the International Medical Corps (IMC) to provide case management for child protection in KAP.

Environmental Health

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Output			
WASH services are enhanced to mitigate additional public health hazards during COVID-19	Number of Palestine refugee camps benefitting from continued and increased regular solid waste and/or water supply management services	10	10
	Number of additional sanitation workers hired	80	90

UNRWA sanitation labourers continued to maintain regular environmental health services for over 411,000 Palestine refugees in the ten recognized Palestine refugee camps in Jordan. Through its waste management operations, a daily average of 367 tons of refuse was removed to mitigate health and safety hazards. The disinfection of camp main streets, refuse collection points and of UNRWA installations also contributed to securing a healthy and safe environment for refugee communities. Eighty additional daily paid sanitation labourers were hired to strengthen the existing workforce during the month of Ramadan and the Eid al Fitr and Eid al Adha holidays. To further support the work of frontline staff, 16 additional vehicles, including trucks, pickups and

compactors, were engaged during this period to cope with transporting higher amounts of refuse to municipal landfill sites. The Agency recorded a 22 per cent increase in the quantity of refuse produced and collected in April (32,405 cubic metres compared to 25,244 cubic metres in April 2020).

To further protect frontline environmental health staff, UNRWA provided all 407 sanitation labourers with PPE on a regular basis. Items included disposable masks, protective gloves, protective eye goggles and spraying suits, safety shoes and hygiene kits with hand sanitizer. Disinfectants and other cleaning and hygiene materials were also made widely available.

UNRWA sanitation worker keeps the main streets clean in Amman New Camp, Amman, Jordan. © 2021 UNRWA Photo by Lubna Hashem



Strategic priority 3: improve the effectiveness and efficiency of emergency programme delivery

Capacity and Management Support

During the first half of 2021, additional support staff were recruited to facilitate the efficient delivery of services and the overall management of the appeal. These included five Education Management Information System (EMIS) administrators, a COVID-19 specialist and an Associate Donor Relations and Project Support Officer. Four mobile security officers will be recruited during the second half of the year to ensure timely liaison with the Jordanian authorities inside and outside the ten Palestine refugee camps and in the three unofficial refugee gatherings in Jordan.

regional response

Outcome/Output	Indicator	Actual	Target (2021)
Output			
The response, as funded, is effectively implemented and managed	Number of times EA implementation is reviewed within the context of mid-year and annual results reviews	1	2
	Number of days from the end of the reporting period until the issuance of the mid-year EA progress report	95	120
	Number of days from the end of the reporting period until the issuance of the draft annual EA report	N/A	120

The UNRWA Department of Planning remained responsible for the planning and coordination of emergency response activities, including the regional component of the Agency's Syria regional crisis response. The online results-based management (RBM) system allowed the Agency to track actual results against planned priorities on a quarterly basis, facilitating regular consolidated reporting.

During the reporting period, coordination was maintained with the humanitarian system at the regional level in Amman on programming, advocacy and fundraising, as well as on the development, monitoring and reporting against key documents and appeals.

The Agency also continued to participate in the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) for the Whole of Syria, the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) and related technical and senior-level working groups.

UNRWA continued to fundraise for the provision of emergency cash assistance for 169 vulnerable PRS families in Gaza. Due to unavailability of funds, the Agency could not provide such assistance during the first half of the year. Efforts are on-going to identify a source of funding in support of this effort during the second half of 2021.

When PRS are reported outside of the Agency's fields of operations, UNRWA liaises with, and refers cases to, relevant partners for follow-up in accordance with their mandates and the status, under international law, of PRS who are no longer receiving protection or other assistance from the Agency. During the reporting period, the UNRWA Representative Office in Cairo (ROCA) continued to coordinate support to some 3,000 PRS who had travelled to Egypt. Effective February, ROCA entered into a partnership with the International Organization

for Migration (IOM) through which PRS can register and receive most of the services provided to immigrants in Egypt. Such services include medical assistance, including COVID-19 treatment, psychosocial and livelihoods assistance and food and non-food items. Furthermore, PRS with legal residency receive education assistance and limited housing assistance.

During the reporting period, a Senior Emergency Officer⁶⁵ continued to oversee the planning, monitoring and reporting of emergency activities. In view of the deteriorating situation in Lebanon, specific emergency management mechanisms were activated to support LFO, ensuring closer follow up and guidance from HQ. Due to EA funding gaps, support and coordination functions could only continue thanks to a combination of EA funds and other sources of funding. UNRWA also maintained additional headquarters functions in support of emergency operations, including data analysis for emergency programming. The recruitment of a regional cash assistance specialist was also conducted to reinforce the Agency's technical capacity on cash transfers, but unfortunately the candidate cancelled the contract shortly before taking up the position due to other job offers. It has been challenging to recruit on a short-term basis for such a technical position that is in high demand across the humanitarian system.

During the reporting period, UNRWA continued to ensure that health standards were met at its HQ premises to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The Agency continued to use a mix of working modalities, including in-person and telecommuting modalities to ensure business continuity while keeping the environment safe. Special efforts were also put in place to raise awareness about the importance of vaccination and to address concerns and questions from staff.

annex 1: list of contributors to the 2021 syria regional crisis emergency appeal

Canada

Education Cannot Wait Fund

France

Germany

Ireland

Italy

Japan

Norway

OCHA

State of Palestine

Private Sector Funding

Spain, Andalusia Government

Spain, Andalusia Parliament

Spain, Basque Government

Spain, Bilbao City Council

Spain, Navarra Government

Spain, Zaragoza City Council

Sweden

The Royal Health Awareness Society, Jordan

UNHCR

UNICEF

UNRWA USA National Committee

United States of America (USA)

WFP

footnotes

1 WFP. 2021. Syria Country Office Market Price Watch Bulletin Issue 79, June 2021. <https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/syria-country-office-market-price-watch-bulletin-issue-79-june-2021>

2 UNRWA. 2021. Socio-economic Situation of Palestine Refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic Crisis Monitoring Report – High Frequency Survey Results – May 2021. Prepared by the UNRWA Syria Field Office Relief and Social Services Department. May 2021.

3 UNFPA. March 2021. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2021/3/speech-ded-regner-brussels-v-conference-on-syria-and-the-region>

4 CARE International. March 2021. 'If we don't work, we don't eat'. Syrian Women Face Mounting Food Insecurity a Decade into the Conflict. https://www.care-international.org/files/files/CARE_Syrian_Women_Face_Mounting_Food_Insecurity_FINAL_Web.pdf

5 It merits note that in 1997, the LBP was pegged to the US\$ at the rate of 1,500 to 1, and the two were used interchangeably on that basis until the October 2019 economic crisis.

6 2021 2nd Quarter Sector Dashboard. Food Security and Agriculture, Lebanon. https://fscluster.org/sites/default/files/documents/q2_dashboard_-_food_security_fv.pdf

7 World Bank. Spring 2021. Lebanon Economic Monitor: Le Naufrage du Liban (au numéro 3)/Lebanon sinking (to the top 3). <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/394741622469174252/pdf/Lebanon-Economic-Monitor-Lebanon-Sinking-to-the-Top-3.pdf>

8 <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/jordan/overview>

9 The provision of food baskets in February 2021 was part of the final distribution round of 2020. The first food assistance distribution round of 2021 was on-going as at the end of the present reporting period.

10 Figures refer to funding received in 2021 and do not include carry forward.

11 The tightening of US sanctions law came into effect with the signing of the Caesar Syrian Civilian Protection Act (also known as the Caesar Act) in June 2020. For reference, please see: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=26630&LangID=E>

12 Please see: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/whole-of-syria/document/2021-humanitarian-needs-overview-syrian-arab-republic>

13 The official exchange rate was adjusted from SYP 1,250/US\$ to SYP 2,500/US\$ on 22 March 2021, during the first round of UNRWA cash assistance. By way of response, cash transfer

value in SYP was adjusted to reflect the exchange rate gain (noting that the average cash transfer value in US\$ is based on the combination of the two exchange rates).

14 The first food assistance distribution round of 2021 was on-going as at the end of the reporting period.

15 UNRWA measures food consumption through a methodology aligned with WFP and following the Food Security Sector's recommendations. The measurement of food consumption measuring is part of Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM), introduced by the Agency in 2018. It includes the following categories: (i) poor food consumption: households that are not consuming staples and vegetables every day and never or very seldom consume protein-rich food such as meat and dairy; (ii) borderline food consumption: households that are consuming staples and vegetables every day, accompanied by oils and pulses a few times a week; (iii) acceptable food consumption: households that are consuming staples and vegetables every day, frequently accompanied by oils and pulses and occasionally meat, fish and dairy.

16 The planned PDM survey could not be conducted due to COVID-19 restrictions.

17 Shelter repair using the self-help approach, in partnership with UN-Habitat, was in preparation during this reporting period and some activities are expected to be implemented during the second half of the year based on availability of funds.

18 The official exchange rate was adjusted from SYP 1,250/US\$ to SYP 2,500/US\$ on 22 March 2021, during the first round of UNRWA cash assistance. By way of response, cash transfer value in SYP was adjusted to reflect the exchange rate gain (noting that the average cash transfer value in US\$ is based on the combination of the two exchange rates).

19 The number of persons with disabilities reached through this intervention is not available.

20 Idem.

21 The number of persons with disabilities reached through this intervention is not available.

22 Additional identified vulnerable cases comprised of former SSNP cases who were not included in the four most vulnerable categories, PRS living in areas with restricted movement (such as Yalda), new displacements and vulnerable returnees.

23 During the reporting period, delays in restocking were due to shortages in the local market and import delays due to the temporary closure of the Suez Canal.

24 This target was underestimated at the time of drafting the 2021 EA and will be reviewed in future planning cycles.

25 Data on students with disabilities is not available.

26 Students were provided with material support (back-to-school kits) at the beginning of the 2020/2021 year under the 2020 EA.

27 The procurement and delivery of hygiene materials to schools was completed at the beginning of the 2020/2021 academic year in 2020; enough materials were still available in the first half of 2021.

28 Data for students with disabilities is not available.

29 For the first months of 2020, UNRWA implemented PSS support activities targeting large groups, however, COVID-19 precluded this possibility in 2021. At the end of 2020, the target for this intervention was adjusted downwards to reflect the operational context at the time of planning for the 2021 EA.

30 These include protection mainstreaming, disability inclusion, AVAC and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA).

31 It merits note that in 1997, the LBP was pegged to the US\$ at the rate of 1,500 to 1, and the two were used interchangeably on that basis until the October 2019 economic crisis.

32 World Bank. Spring 2021. Lebanon Economic Monitor: Le Naufrage du Liban (au numéro 3)/Lebanon sinking (to the top 3). <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/394741622469174252/pdf/Lebanon-Economic-Monitor-Lebanon-Sinking-to-the-Top-3.pdf>

33 UNRWA defines those in a state of abject poverty as individuals who cannot meet their basic food needs.

34 This indicator monitors progresses against: i) the provision of one round of cash assistance to eligible PRL; and ii) the provision of a top up to all PRS in Lebanon (in addition to their regular cash assistance). Due to funding constraints, neither emergency cash to PRL nor the top up to PRS could be provided.

35 Supra.

36 Supra.

37 While this assistance was provided through EA funds, it is not included in the target of US\$ 10,280,000 to be distributed to PRS, PRL and other eligible persons to mitigate the effects of multiple emergencies. Hence the amount of US\$ 2,400 is not reported against this indicator.

38 The wording of this indicator was updated to better reflect the operational context.

39 Disability breakdown is not available for all of the indicators, hence is only reported when the data is collected.

40 Disability information regarding PSS support was unavailable due to the use of offline reporting tools instead of the online reporting tools. For future reporting periods, disability data will be added to the offline reporting tools.

41 No catch-up classes were provided during the reporting period.

42 The decrease in the number of PRS students at UNRWA schools can be attributed to a number of reasons. The overall decrease in the number of PRS living in Lebanon over the past few years has impacted enrolment rates. In addition, PRS students continue to face other school retention barriers, such as the costs associated with remote learning (lack of internet, smart devices, digital skills and capacity) and fuel and electricity cuts, which have made remote learning even more difficult. As the socio-economic situation of PRS families deteriorates, more children are at risk of dropping-out of school to engage in paid labour.

43 EA funds are used to support Palestine refugees' enrollment in this programme funded by UNICEF.

44 This target was wrongly calculated and it has been corrected to better reflect the operational context.

45 <https://www.washingtongroup-disability.com/>

46 <https://en.royanews.tv/news/28056/2021-05-17>

47 <https://corona.moh.gov.jo/en>. <https://graphics.reuters.com/world-coronavirus-tracker-and-maps/countries-and-territories/jordan/>

48 Ibid.

49 UN Jordan, 2021. Socio-Economic Framework for COVID-19 Response, p8.

50 <http://dosweb.dos.gov.jo/category/unemployment-rate/>

51 <https://en.royanews.tv/news/28333/28333>. Government measures allowing female staff more flexibility in their working hours under the pandemic has demotivated some employers from hiring women.

52 Jordan's unemployment rate is available at <https://tradingeconomics.com/jordan/unemployment-rate>

53 KAP is a closed refugee reception facility that was set up by the Government of Jordan in 2012 near Ar-Ramtha (Irbid Governorate) to receive refugees from Syria, including PRS. There is a limited presence of humanitarian actors in KAP due to reduced funding and UN Agencies (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNRWA, WFP, UNICEF) and their implementing partners are only able to provide minimal services. The prefabricated shelters are too small for large families and the facility is overcrowded with no space for additional units. KAP also lacks several essential facilities and has only one shop.

54 The UNRWA hubs only received people who were referred to them by Jordan's Coronavirus Crisis Cell and refugees were also sent to MoH vaccination hubs.

55 UNRWA minimum protection standards include guidelines to minimise the potential of causing harm to Palestine refugees through Agency interventions, ensuring access to services and accountability and participation to support refugee empowerment.

56 Due to only partial availability of funds during the reporting period, this assistance measure will be distributed in the third quarter (Q3) of 2021, including through additional contributions received during the second half of the year.

57 The e-wallet scheme was piloted at the end of 2020 in order to: (i) have a contingency plan in the event that banks closed during lockdowns; and (ii) ease PRS access to cash assistance.

58 The PDM covered PRS in the areas served by all four UNRWA area offices (South Amman, North Amman, Irbid and Zarqa) with each social worker able to complete an average of 40 remote surveys.

59 Syrian (non-Palestine) refugee students were enrolled in UNRWA schools at the beginning of the crisis in 2011 in a spirit of solidarity with the refugees, however, this practice was halted in 2013 due to the strain on Agency resources. Non-Palestine refugees who were already enrolled in Agency schools will continue their education until the completion of Grade 10.

60 No funding was received under the EA for this intervention.

61 Idem.

62 Idem.

63 Idem.

64 Idem.

65 Funding for this position is cost-shared between the oPt and Syria regional crisis EA.



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وكالة الأمم المتحدة لإغاثة وتشغيل اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في الشرق الأدنى | united nations relief and works agency for palestinian refugees in the near east