



## Sit-rep/11 COVID-19 21 June 2020

### Background

As of 21 June 2020, there were 204 confirmed cases of COVID-19 reported in Syria, including seven deaths and eighty-three recoveries.

The Government of Syria Arab Republic (GoSAR) continues to progressively relax preventive measures first imposed in mid-march to contain the risks of COVID-19 transmission.

- The lockdown on the town of Ras Maara (Rural Damascus) continues.
- On 19 June, The Ministry of Religious Endowments (Awqaf) on Friday announced the suspension of prayers in all mosques of Jdeidet al-Fadel and Jdeidet Artooz al-Balad, Damascus countryside, until further notice. On 20 June, the Government Team has imposed a full lockdown on the town of Jdeidet Al-Fadel (Rural Damascus), following one death and ten confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the town.
- On 20 June, the Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection issued a circular extending the working and opening hours of all commercial and service professions, allowing them to operate until 10:00pm with immediate effect.
- As of 21 June, basic education and high schools exams started.
- The following measures remain implemented to prevent COVID-19 spread: elections remain postponed until 19 July; border crossing points to Lebanon and Jordan remain closed, except for cargo. Damascus Airport remains closed, except for repatriation flights.

UNRWA operates in line with the Government of Syria decisions in relation to preventive measures and in line with the wider guidelines and SoPs agreed by the UN system in Syria.

### UNRWA operations in Syria

- A gradual return of staff to work from the office was implemented in the past weeks following the UNRWA developed SOP on 'return to office'. Infrared temperature check devices are now being used in several UNRWA offices across Syria including the Field Office, Damascus Area Office, Alliance (Damascus), Dera'a and Central area (Homs, Hama, and Latakia). As of 21 June the devices were also delivered to Aleppo.



## Health

25 UNRWA facilities are operating a triage system, for people with respiratory symptoms, through a dedicated team of health staff. Since the onset of the COVID-19 response 17,757 patients at UNRWA facilities have reported respiratory complaints and have been examined following the triage care and related protocols. There is no reported instance of Palestine refugees positive to COVID-19.

Telemedicine support is being provided to refugees. A total of 897 telemedicine calls have been received across UNRWA health facilities during the reporting period. A total of 3,791 calls have been received since the service became available.

Provision of medicines to 8,000 vulnerable NCD patients for a two-month supply continues, through door to door visits. 998 home visits have been conducted, of which 56 were conducted during the reporting period. Patients in Muzeirib and Jillin collect their medicines directly from the UNRWA health facility, as the Agency is not able to conduct door-to-door delivery due to security situation.

UNRWA continued resuming some of the health services previously suspended. UNRWA is examining newly identified NCD patients and new pregnant women; providing dental consultation for 10 patients per day per facility and screening for limited MHPSS cases. Starting from 21 June, UNRWA will resume all health services previously suspended in its facilities.



UNRWA Homs health clinic



## Humanitarian Assistance

94% of eligible Palestine refugees have received the in-kind food basket.

61.6% of eligible Palestine refugees have so far received cash assistance.

During the reporting period, a 5 days mission to Yalda was carried out. UNRWA provided humanitarian assistance to approximately 2,397 Palestine refugee families (8,388 individuals) displaced from Yarmouk.



UNRWA distribution in Yalda



## Sanitation

Sanitation services in the nine official and one unofficial accessible camps are carried out daily in addition to disinfection activities.

Garbage collection points continue to be sanitized along with larger areas in the camps.

UNRWA installations are being regularly sanitized as necessary.



## Education and TVET

Support classes for 4,385 9th grade students continued during the reporting period up to 13 June.

National exams for 9th grade started on 21 June and are scheduled to take place until 13 July.

UNRWA Education Programme started the necessary preparation of the Academic Year 2020-2021 class formation, taking in consideration the necessary COVID-19 preventative measures.

UNRWA TVET centres are operating with more than 1,080 students attending classes. In compliance with the Ministry of Education decision, UNRWA continues to ensure the availability of PPEs for TVET students and instructors.



## Microfinance

UNRWA Microfinance department resumed its operations. The Microfinance team is now



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receiving loans repayments, renewing existing loans and disbursing new ones.

UNRWA Microfinance offices reopened to its clients, with preventative measures being implemented. Only essential field visits are carried out.



### Protection and Relief and Social Services

Following the testing stage, UNRWA has launched the Remote Registration Online Application which allows Palestine refugees to update their records and submit proof documents without having to approach the Agency's registration offices in person. 14 UNRWA registration assistants have received on-job training for the management of the Online Application, and to date a total of 19 refugees applications have been reported.

During the reporting period, the UNRWA supported Family Support Offices (for legal and GBV survivor support) have supported a total 34 beneficiaries with legal consulting services.

A total of 576 calls were received through the 8 established helplines during the reporting period out of a total of 2,973 calls received since the service became available. Helpline data continues to be collected with the vast majority of calls being inquiry for cash and food assistance.

PSS services continue to be provided remotely via phone for some 675 beneficiaries by WhatsApp and phone (including 386 older persons, 144 persons with disabilities and 145 GBV survivors).

A COVID-19 safety measures check-list has been created in order for in-person trainings to resume, while preparations for online protection trainings are still underway.



### Community Outreach and Awareness

The Agency continues to raise health awareness on COVID-19 in the health centers. Posters and awareness material, with WHO and Ministry of Health guidelines on infection prevention and control, continue to be distributed across UNRWA installations and in the camps. UNRWA Syria continues to disseminate awareness messages to the Palestine refugee community through social media and SMS.

The Director of UNRWA Affairs in Syria, Amany Michael-Ebye visited Dera'a on 18 June and met the refugee community. When talking to the refugee community, Mr. Amany underlined the significance of UNRWA's uninterrupted services to 438,000 Palestine refugees in Syria and updated the refugee community on the Agency's financial situation, priorities and plans. "UNRWA will continue to support refugees within its available resources, and education, health, social services and emergency assistance remain a top priority." Palestine refugees briefed Amany on their urgent humanitarian needs and how UNRWA's assistance supports them in a rapidly deteriorating economic situation.



*Director of UNRWA Affairs, Syria, meeting with the representatives of the Palestine refugee community in Dera'a.*



### UNRWA Staff

Support of professional psychosocial counsellors continues to be available remotely to all area staff. 15 counsellors are available to provide support. A total of 126 staff members (30 male; 74 female) accessed this service since it was made available.



### Fundraising

As of 16 June, the US\$ 93.4 million UNRWA [COVID-19 Flash Appeal](#) was 43.9% funded (including confirmed pledges), with the Syria portion being 7.8% funded (including confirmed pledges).

UNRWA Syria continues to engage with donor counterparts to advocate for funding support towards the Syria portion of the COVID-19 Flash Appeal to ensure essential relief services are provided in response to the ongoing crises and that modalities of service provision are adapted to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.



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