

This newsletter is an update on gender issues in UNRWA and the region. It is issued on a monthly basis for the gender network, the gender taskforce, and our external partners, with the aim of sharing information, tools, reports, and news on gender.

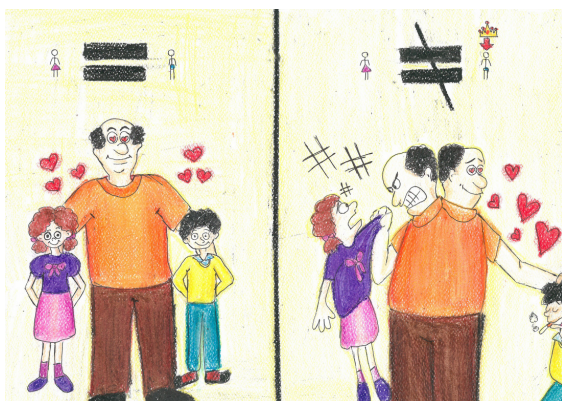
Coordinated by Sana Jelassi, Tamara Abu Nafiseh and Rebecca Kupferman

This month, the Gender Taskforce at UNRWA starts preparing the third report on the 2012-13 Gender Action Plans that will make up the Agency wide report. At the same time we are preparing for the "Gender in Emergency Response" workshop training that will take place at the end of July in Jordan. The workshop aims to improve UNRWA's emergency response through building the capacity of the staff involved in the Syria crisis. After Ramadan, the team will start preparing for the 16 days campaign to end Gender Based Violence and the day of the Girl Child. The theme of the latter will focus this year on "Innovating for the Girls' Education."

Student highlights gender inequality in drawing competition

An UNRWA student's drawing, depicting the issue of gender equality, has been chosen as the winner for a poster design competition set up by UNRWA's Human Rights Conflict Resolution and Tolerance (HRCRT) Programme. The Programme's goal is to build a culture of human rights in UNRWA schools.

UNRWA students from all five fields competed to answer the question, "what does human rights mean to you?" in the form of a drawing to increase human rights awareness in a fun manner.



The judges for this competition were very impressed with the depth of understanding in the children's knowledge of human rights and five winners were chosen from each field, with Shuruk Sa'adi from Marka Third Preparatory School in Jordan as the overall winner.

Sa'adi portrayed contrasting attitudes towards gender equality and shows a family in two scenarios. In one, the son has a crown placed upon his head and is adored by the father who excuses his transgressions while, on the other hand, scolding the daughter. In the other scenario, the son and daughter are treated with equal love and respect.

Through his work, Sa'adi communicates a simple yet impactful message and one that resonated with all of the judges.

For more information, please contact Ozlem Eskioçak at o.eskioçak@unrwa.org.

West Bank field officer creates proposal to help decrease gender gap in schools

Abrar Jaber of the West Bank Field office recently returned from a 20-week GEST training session at Iceland University. Abrar has developed a project proposal titled *Raising Boy's Achievement at the UNRWA School in the West Bank*, the goal of which is to raise the educational achievement of Palestinian boys at UNRWA schools in Nablus, Hebron and the Jerusalem Area.

Abrar explores various questions within her project: why do boys achieve poorly in school, why is there a gap between boys and girls in the same subject areas, what are the reasons and how can we help our students? A statistical analysis gathered in 2011-12 helps to answer and address these questions.

Abrar intends to put this proposal into action by using information discovered in target groups in each school. Some examples include offering incentives to improve attendance and to ensure discussions on gender in education with a special focus on boys, inclusive education, learner-friendly environments, strengthening counselling and guidance and facilitating an inter-sectorial approach to gender equality in education. Pursuing these various actions will hopefully have a positive effect in combating the widening gender gap, while ensuring that all children, boys and girls alike, can pursue their right to an education.

For more information, please contact Abrar Jaber at a.jaber@unrwa.org.



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Events of Interest:

- 21st June 2013 — London, England. The Shubbak festival will feature Palestinian rap artist Shadia Mansour and clothing designer Rabia Z, among many others: <http://bit.ly/12R9Hbn>
- 24-25 June 2013 — Cairo, Egypt. The “Development Challenges and Population Dynamics in a Changing Arab Region” will discuss population and how it impacts on women and gender equality: <http://bit.ly/19sWCoJ>
- 16-18 September 2013 — Oxford, England. INTRAC is holding a Gender Analysis and Planning course with an emphasis on gender mainstreaming: <http://bit.ly/1Qup75J>
- 11 & 22 November 2013 — Turin, Italy. ITCILO is launching a programme that focuses on gender in the workplace, highlighting labour standards, rights at work and gender equality: <http://bit.ly/11FPVcX>

Reports and Resources:

- UN Women extend an open invitation to any individual, NGO, or group to write about injustices and alleged violation of human rights against women in an effort to identify trends or patterns to better inform practices and policies. <http://bit.ly/aulbjz>
- The Security Council passed resolution 2106 on June 24th, 2013 which further condemns crimes of sexual violence and puts into place more rigorous investigation processes in an effort to prevent these crimes which are often perpetrated as a political or military weapon. <http://bit.ly/19lIWg1>
- A recent report claims that more than one third of all women are affected by physical or sexual violence. This report was the first systematic study of global data on the prevalence of violence against women. The study was conducted primarily by the UN World Health Organization. The goal of the report is to help countries improve their health sector's capacity to deal with these issues. <http://bit.ly/12960U1>
- The Women's refugee commission, along with The Statelessness Programme at the University of Tilburg, recently released a report studying the link between gender discrimination and statelessness. The study was conducted in Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco and Egypt. <http://bit.ly/19fC3uP>
- UN Women releases a policy paper that advocates a stand-alone goal for gender equality in the post-MDG agenda. The paper serves as a tool to mobilize and identify future goals. <http://bit.ly/11NNmmg>
- *Because Our Cause is Just* is a documentary about the struggle of women in countries experiencing the so-called “Arab Spring”. Produced by the Women's Learning Partnership, the film reveals how women in the MENA region continue to fight for the right to be part of their respective countries' evolving political systems. <http://bit.ly/1ayf3HV>

Regional News

Jordan

UNICEF calls attention to the increase of GBV against Syrian women and children in Jordan.

<http://bit.ly/11xxfsY>

A campaign was launched in 2013 to create awareness of the inability of Jordanian women married to foreigners to pass along their Jordanian citizenship to their children. The campaign has recently intensified in an effort to give women this constitutional right. <http://bit.ly/104lqpm>

Egypt

The Interior Ministry ordered the creation of an all female police unit after being criticized for its treatment of women who are harassed. The goal of the unit is to encourage and help women come forward and share their stories, in addition to helping women deal with the repercussions of harassment. <http://bit.ly/19yz8gJ>

Lebanon

Living with the constant fear and expectation of sexual violence and assault has driven many young girls living in Syrian refugee camps in Lebanon to marry in an effort to seek protection. <http://bit.ly/13fz3bz>

Iraq

Self-immolation amongst women in Iraqi Kurdistan is a trend that began after the fall of Saddam Hussein and continues to this day. While the women never admit it, most instances of self-immolation are suicide attempts, perhaps to escape from abusive relationships and societal constraints and injustices. Self-immolation is considered violence against women. <http://bit.ly/195VJi4>

oPT

Dr. Salem Abu Khaizaran is providing Palestinian women, with husbands in Israeli jail, fertilization treatments at his Nablus clinic. <http://ind.pn/14jaNWv>

Regional

The small percentage of women that enter the workforce in the Middle East face severe pay inequality and discrimination. The gender pay gap ranges from 20%-40%. <http://bit.ly/18eh0bt>

The G8 Deauville Partnership held a two-day Women in Business conference on June 25th and 26th in London. Arab business women from all around the MENA region met to discuss the important role of women in the business sector and challenges that they face. <http://bit.ly/12nT4i1>