



مجموعة العمل من أجل فلسطينيين سورية
Action Group For Palestinians of Syria

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الخاص بأوضاع اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في سورية

Daily report on the situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria



"Palestinian Refugees with Special Needs Facing High Marginalization in Syria"

- UNRWA Staff Union Denounces Mistreatment
- Property-Theft Reported at UNRWA Schools in Yarmouk Camp
- AlHusainiya Camp for Palestinian Refugees Gripped with Power Crisis

+442084530978

/Actgroup.palsyria

reports@actionpal.org.uk

www.actionpal.org.uk



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Latest Developments

Palestinian refugees with disabilities have been grappling with dire conditions in camps and shelters across the Syrian territories due to medical neglect and the absence of vital services.

UNRWA said the Covid-19 global pandemic highlighted the deep inequalities that exist in our world. Over the past year, the international community collectively witnessed the world's most vulnerable populations fall through social safety nets and face increasingly insurmountable barriers to basic services. Persons with disabilities have been amongst the most negatively impacted, with new barriers added to pre-existing ones: they have had more difficulty exercising preventative measures due to inaccessible communication and barriers to accessing WaSH facilities.

In many contexts, persons with disabilities have not been adequately considered and prioritized to access health care due to a lack of understanding of the heightened risk they might face and negative perceptions about their value in society.

Children with disabilities have also struggled to keep up with remote learning due to inaccessible platforms that are not always customized to their specific needs. These are just some examples of the factors that have compounded the lack of access to services faced by persons with disabilities, increasing their invisibility, and further deepening their exclusion from society.



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Often trapped in a vicious cycle of poverty and disability, many persons with disabilities were already in a vulnerable situation pre-COVID. Many were, therefore, unprepared for the pandemic and associated movement restrictions as they lacked the resources to stock up on food supplies and essential medicine. Findings from an UNRWA assessment conducted in Syria revealed that surveyed Palestine refugees with disabilities lacked access to basic medical supplies and services.

UNRWA called for conscious steps to empower those who are most at risk of exclusion, creating a space in which voices are heard and equal participation is possible. We cannot move toward an inclusive, accessible, and sustainable post-COVID-19 world without the leadership and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities.

UNRWA assists more than 2,300 Palestine refugees with disabilities in Syria, who have had their lives marred by the unabated warfare and bloody strife.

Assistance to the most vulnerable Palestinian refugees, including persons with disabilities, is provided by donors like the European Union. The European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid department (ECHO) has funded assistance to those with disabilities, as well as female-headed households.

AGPS renews its calls to the international community, human rights institutions, UNICEF, UNRWA, and all concerned bodies to work on protecting Palestinian refugee children and people with disabilities in embattled Syria and to provide those who fled the



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war-torn country with physical and moral protection in the host countries.

Along similar lines, the Union of UNRWA Staff Workers in Syria has slammed the agency over its apathy regarding their appeals for salary transfers and for better working conditions.

“Our dignity is priceless; Our salaries are a right and not a privilege”, the Union said in a statement, adding that workers’ salaries should not be withheld under the pretext of financial crunch.

The Union threatened to escalate protest moves if workers’ salaries are not immediately paid.

In another development, families that returned to Yarmouk Camp for Palestinian refugees, in Rif Dimashq, said property and equipment at UNRWA schools in the camp have been stolen by unknown thieves.

In photos circulated on social media, schools in Yarmouk Camp appear to be ravaged and furniture thrown outdoors.

Reports of burglary continue to emerge in Yarmouk Camp, south of Damascus, where hundreds of Palestinian refugees had been taking shelter.

Members of pro-government groups have reportedly stolen furniture from abandoned buildings in and around Yarmouk neighborhoods.



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Palestinian families displaced from the area continue to call on the concerned authorities to allow them a safe return to their homes and to press ahead with reconstruction projects.

UNRWA was able to return to the camp to conduct a needs assessment in October 2018. Of the 23 UNRWA premises in the camp and nearby Hajjar al Aswad, including 16 school buildings, all have been affected by the conflict.

In the meantime, Palestinian refugees in AlHusainiya Camp, in Rif Dimashq, continue to denounce the chronic power blackouts rocking the area, saying power has been cut across a number of residential neighborhoods for over 20 hours daily.

Civilians slammed the apathy maintained by the concerned authorities as regards their appeals for urgent action, saying power distribution has been manipulated by the local emergency response office which obliges civilians to pay money before showing up in the area for maintenance works.

They further expressed concern over the uncontrolled explosion of power cables which result in electricity-borne threats and over their children's safety as child kidnappers and gangsters have been operating in the darkness of the night.

Over recent years, residents of AlHusainiya camp have denounced the absence of vital services in the area. The transportation crisis, price leap, absence of relief assistance and healthcare, power and water crises, and high rates of unemployment have made survival quite difficult for dozens of displaced Palestinian families.



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