



#اليوم العالمي للنظافة الشخصية أثناء الحيض
#MenstrualHygieneDay

ASRO MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Issue May 2021

ASRO

Honoring midwives and women survivors' of fistula



Trust the evidence ... invest in midwife



On 5 May, UNFPA ASRO launched a [joint campaign](#) with Djibouti, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia country offices to mark International Day of the Midwife and show how midwives deserve greater investment in their capabilities, and workplaces that empower them and fully acknowledge their skills and contributions.

On 23 May, UNFPA ASRO, [Somalia](#) and [Yemen](#) country offices marked International Day to End Obstetric Fistula featuring stories of women who suffered from obstetric fistula for a long time and were able to restore their dignity and resume their lives with UNFPA support. Photo © UNFPA Djibouti (left) and UNFPA Yemen (right)

My First Period: A campaign to mark Menstrual Hygiene Day

What was your feeling when you got your first period?

"I had no correct information about it, that's why I was afraid, confused and sad. I did not accept my new 'me'. I did not like myself during the monthly period and felt tied up."

A girl from Egypt



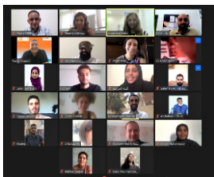
On the occasion of Menstrual Hygiene Day, UNFPA ASRO's virtual ambassador, Mariam, led a campaign revealing the results of a survey "My First Period" to highlight how the lack of reliable data and accessible menstruation hygiene tools can impact women's and girls' lives in many ways, limiting

their mobility, freedom and choices, affecting their attendance in schools and participation in community life, compromising their safety, limiting their contribution to the economy and causing stress and anxiety. In the survey, UNFPA ASRO asked Arab women and girls to share their experiences and feelings when they got their first period. 69 participants responded to the informal confidential online survey. 24 respondents said they had received no information about menstruation prior to experiencing their first period, 54 said their reaction to menstruating for the first time was shame, fear, anxiety or embarrassment. Some said they faced stigma and mistreatment.

Video of the campaign

You are limitless! Regional ToT on peer education

22 youth leaders and Youth Officers/Focal Points from six UNFPA country offices - Jordan, Tunisia, Iraq, Oman, Egypt and Somalia - actively participated in an online Regional Y-PEER Training of Trainers' workshop during the week of 23 May. UNFPA and WFP regional offices, the Centre for Public Health Practice of the American University of Beirut, and the Y-PEER International Coordinators supported the virtual workshop. The initiative's main goal was to empower youth and position them as key agents for sustainable development and peace. The workshop was one of the recommendations of the updated regional peer education manual developed and validated in 2020. More young people will be trained on the updated regional peer education manual through upcoming regional and national workshops. Stay tuned! Photo © UNFPA ASRO



Endorsing the Arab Health Friendly Budgeting Strategy

On 19 May, UNFPA ASRO and WHO EMRO participated in an Expert Group Meeting organized by the League of Arab States to present and discuss the Arab Health Friendly Budgeting Strategy in the presence of representatives of the Health Ministries of the Member States. The strategy - developed by LAS, UNFPA ASRO and WHO EMRO - was endorsed by the Council of Arab Health Ministers on 23 May and will be disseminated in the near future. Photo © UNFPA ASRO



ASRO KNOWLEDGE HUB



Did you know that one in four Syrian refugees in the region is a woman of childbearing age? And that adolescent girls between the ages of 10-19 years comprise 8-13% of Syrian refugees in the region?

UNFPA ASRO, in collaboration with UNHCR MENA, developed infographics highlighting the current demographic profile of Syrian refugees in **Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey**. This data, not previously released to this level of disaggregation, aims to better inform programmes and policies to ensure that the needs and rights of different population groups of Syrian refugees and asylum seekers are equitably addressed.

JORDAN

Celebrating midwives on their day



On the occasion of International Day of the Midwife, the UNFPA Jordan country office interviewed one of the distinguished midwives working in the UNFPA-IRC Azraq refugee camp to highlight the essential role of midwives and the importance of investing in them to help achieve zero maternal death and zero unmet need for family planning. Photo © UNFPA Jordan

Watch the interview

Improving case management services to women and girls survivor of violence

UNFPA and UNHCR - co-chairs of the Jordan Gender-based Violence Information Management System Task Force - led a coaching initiative that aims at improving the standard of case management services to gender-based violence (GBV) survivors among psychosocial support (PSS) actors in the referral pathways. The first phase of the initiative started in 2020 and concluded in May 2021. It included four monthly learning sessions and one specialized training for 30 case managers. According to the final assessment, 20% of the participants were above expectation, 72% excellent and 6% good. Participants recommended that this practical and applicable training should be maintained. They called on leaders to provide adequate staff care and remote supervision, and explore the possibility of accommodating case management for survivors coming from different backgrounds.



MOROCCO

Upholding the rights and well-being of adolescent girls



On 28 March, the President of the National Council of Human Rights co-chaired an event organized by UNFPA and the Project Soar to mark Menstrual Hygiene Day. Institutional departments, including education, health, youth and social development joined civil society to discuss ways to realize the rights of adolescent girls in Morocco, especially the right to access education and health services, including menstrual hygiene products and care. The event witnessed the launch of a joint initiative between UNFPA, Project Soar and partners that aims to empower young girls and ensure their

healthy transition from childhood to adulthood through promoting public dialogue on menstrual hygiene, conducting outreach sessions with vulnerable adolescent girls and launching a digital campaign to correct misconceptions about menstrual hygiene. *Photo © UNFPA Morocco*

Midwives call for more investments on their day

On 7 May, Over a 100 midwives and health professionals took part in a webinar organized by UNFPA and the Moroccan Association of Midwives under the theme 'Follow the Data: Invest in Midwives'. Midwives shared data and facts, including highlights of the 2021 *State of the World's Midwifery (SoWMY)* report to advance advocate for more investment in midwives to contribute towards universal health care and achieve the SDG agenda. UNFPA also launched a social media campaign to help Moroccan midwives raise their voices advocating for their rights and needs. *Photo © UNFPA Morocco*



First Hackathon to advance women and girls' sexual and reproductive health

40 young people, including 35 girls, participated in a Hackathon on women and girls' sexual and reproductive health launched by UNFPA and UNLEASH Innovation Lab. Young participants came up with many innovative ideas to facilitate the access of rural girls to reproductive and menstrual hygiene products and services and the access of young people to comprehensive sexuality education, improve the economic and social status of young women and help prevent gender-based violence. The Moroccan Centre of Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship (MCISE) and UNFPA will support Three innovative initiatives. *Photo © UNFPA Morocco*



SOMALIA

Urgent call to end period poverty



On Menstrual Hygiene Day, UNFPA called for an intensified action to respect, protect, and fulfil girls' and women's rights by ensuring their full access to menstrual hygiene products and information. UNFPA supported several youth centres in Somalia to mark the day and bring attention to the importance of menstrual hygiene.

"We need appropriate policy solutions to end period poverty. On Menstrual Hygiene Day, we call on authorities, humanitarian agencies and development partners across Somalia to work together to develop menstrual hygiene policies to educate communities and end period shaming and poverty," said UNFPA Somalia Representative, Anders Thomsen. *Photo © UNFPA Somalia*

Urgent support to women and girls affected by the cyclone

UNFPA sustained the provision of mobile health services to the survivors of the severe cyclone Gati amidst the response to the COVID-19 pandemic throughout May. Many families, including nomadic communities, continue to suffer after being hit by cyclone Gati last November. UNFPA delivered 1,000 dignity kits to girls and women displaced in Puntland. *Photo © UNFPA Somalia*



Empowering youth in Somaliland

150 young people in Somaliland received training in skills development, psychosocial support and counselling on sexuality, family planning and prevention of gender-based violence. They were trained through SOHASCO Youth Centre. On 28 May, the participants received a visit from one of UNFPA Somalia's donors, Finland, to encourage them on their quest. *Photo © UNFPA Somalia*



LEBANON

Menstruation is not a taboo : A call on Menstrual Hygiene Day



On the occasion of World Menstrual Hygiene Day, UNFPA, in partnership with the Women Integrated Sexual Health programme at the American University of Beirut Medical Centre, launched a campaign to break the silence about menstruation-related issues. Famous Lebanese actress and social media influencer, Rita Hayek, participated in the main video of the campaign to explain that menstruation is not shameful and that women and girls have the right to manage their monthly menstrual cycle in a dignified and healthy way. The video went viral on social media and was positively received. *Photo © UNFPA Lebanon*

[Watch the video](#)

Recognizing midwives' role during the pandemic

UNFPA and the Lebanese Order of Midwives (LOM) organized a virtual webinar entitled 'Midwifery in the times of Covid-19: Challenges, Opportunities and The Way Forward' under the patronage of the Minister of Public Health. The webinar



highlighted the regional and international midwifery response in the context of Covid-19, the role of Lebanese midwives during the pandemic, the experiences and lessons learned. The virtual webinar was featured through a [social media campaign](#) that included testimonies from several midwives across Lebanon. Photo © UNFPA Lebanon



Launching the Remote GBV Case Management Guide During Emergencies

UNFPA, in partnership with ABAAD and the Ministry of Social Affairs, developed and launched a [Remote Gender-based Violence Case Management guide](#) that serves as a comprehensive tool for organizations and caseworkers to meet GBV survivors' needs, even during emergencies. It will help them support survivors during mobility restrictions and in normal situations when women and girls at risk are unable to seek support in person.



YEMEN

Improving access to maternal health services



UNFPA received a contribution of USD 500,000 from the Republic of Korea to improve the access of vulnerable women and girls in the governorates of Aden, Al Mahwit and Dhamar to lifesaving maternal health services. The new partnership will support the provision of maternal health services, including antenatal care, safe delivery, post-natal care and family planning services, in three health facilities to reach more than 50,000 women and girls in the next 12 months. To keep reaching the most vulnerable women and girls, UNFPA requires USD 100 million in 2021. To date, only 30 per cent of this funding appeal has been received. Photo © UNFPA Yemen

Advancing the survivor-centered approach

58 female case workers and supervisors from 13 targeted governorates in Yemen received a two-day online case management training conducted based on the Inter-Agency GBV Case Management Training Guidelines. The aim of the training was to improve and build the capacity of the service providers to enable them deliver survivor-centered case management services to women's and girls' survivors of violence. UNFPA supports 51 safe spaces, eight shelters and eight specialized psychological care centres within its women's protection programme in Yemen. Since January 2021, more than 50,000 women have been reached with gender-based violence services. Photo © UNFPA Yemen



SYRIA

Enhancing services to GBV survivors



On 16 May, 25 frontline GBV case managers and