



Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA

Evaluation of Early Education & Women's Empowerment (refugees from Palestine and Syria in Lebanon) Project

Palestinian Women's Humanitarian Organisation (PWHO) Beirut

Terms of reference for short-term consultancy

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA was established in 1984 by the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) as the Australian union movement's overseas aid arm. Our purpose is for Australian unions to work globally in partnership for the achievement of dignity at work, social justice, economic equality and the realisation of human rights. We work to achieve this through strong unions and social movements, sustainable development programs, global solidarity and support in times of crisis. We work through local partner organisations and unions in South East Asia, the Pacific, the Middle East and southern Africa.

History

The earliest project of APHEDA in 1984 was training nurses from the refugee camps in Lebanon. Since then we have maintained projects around health, disability, elderly, women, early childhood education, and vocational training in the refugee camps, with the group now known as the Palestinian Women's Humanitarian Organisation. It is APHEDA's longest partnership. This has been assisted with donations from Australia, from unions, and from the Australian government over many years through the ANCP program. Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA has assisted PWHO to gain funding for other projects from the Australian Embassy, and from other overseas agencies.

Purpose of the evaluation

In recent years the project resources have been devoted to early childhood education, and assisting integration of refugee children into school, in the context of advancing the situation of women in the camps. This is a strategic evaluation with a focus on the changing early education and after school education needs of children in the camp population, both those from long-term refugee Palestinian families and those from Palestinian and Syrian refugees from the Syrian civil war after 2011.

This evaluation will focus on the specific needs of children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those requiring referral for counselling in relation to trauma.

The evaluation will chart the emerging contextual constraints, such as poor Lebanese economy, drastic cuts to UNRWA and services, early marriage, drugs, security. The evaluation will be by an international or local team with appropriate qualifications and experience, using participatory methods. The evaluator should also consult with the relevant staff in the Australian Embassy.

The evaluation will be used to re-focus planning for future interventions, and for new strategy for ANCP in 2019-22.

Overview of current project

The project builds on Union Aid Abroad - APHEDA's long-term partnership with PWHO and its work to establish supportive and inclusive early childhood development. The project assists the Palestinian refugee camp community in Lebanon with quality access to education, support for children living with a disability and support for women and young girls at risk of gender based violence and early marriage. Palestinian and Syrian refugees in Lebanon are confined in densely populated urban camps under significant strain from the influx of refugees from the protracted Syrian crisis. Lack of education, work opportunities, disability support, high levels of trauma and a violent environment in the camp all contribute to high rates of family based violence. One key challenge in the camp is the increasing rates of early marriage among high school girls as parents have no alternative means to financially care for their children.

As the situation worsens in the camp, the project aims to provide programs of much-needed psychological and educational support for children, women and families through several avenues:

In the Burj al-Barajneh and Shatila camps in southern Beirut, PWHO provides high quality pre-schooling for 120 children tailored to the needs of refugee children for intensive educational and social support. The teachers receive additional training on how to identify the signs of trauma in young children and how to respond through care plans and, where appropriate, referrals.

The project works with children living with a physical or learning disability to improve their quality of life in partnership with their families across both camps. This will expand on the physical and learning disability activities that PWHO have been implementing in the camp in the preceding 10 years and will draw on their extensive learning in this area. One key aim is to help integrate children into the wider camp community by challenging stigmatisms and facilitating their inclusion into the wider education systems in the camps.

PWHO targets the increasing issue of early marriage in the camp and will work with high school girls in the UNRWA school system, as well as women in the camp to raise awareness about the risks associated with early marriage. The project social worker will also work intensively with families to ensure girls maintain their access to education and their right to a childhood. This avenue will also be used to educate young girls about the health and social risks drug addiction.

During the school holidays and specific religious period PWHO provides a safe and educational space for children through the early education centre so that their mothers can continue to work and earn incomes.

Objectives of the program/project

The project addresses the needs of children and women refugees in the camps in southern Beirut and aims to improve their social and economic situation, and develop resilience against gender violence. The specific project outcomes are:

1. Quality early childhood education ensures the success of refugee children entering the UNRWA school system.
2. The early education teachers have better skills to respond to early indicators of trauma and refer appropriately.
3. Refugee children with physical and learning disabilities are included in as possible in education.
4. Early marriage in the camp is minimised by raising awareness amongst high school girls, women and men through school and civil society networks.

5. Women are empowered through holistic casework, practical support and education. Peer safety networks among women reduce the risk of gender based violence.
6. Safe and educational spaces care for children during school holidays, allow women to work.

Evaluation objectives

1. Assess relevance, effectiveness, outcomes and outputs of project in years 2017-8 and 2018-9 against plans
2. Assess changing situation of refugees from Palestine and Syria in Lebanon and impact of cuts to services such as UNRWA.
3. Assess sustainable impacts on the refugee communities, in particular on situation of women, children and children with disabilities, and suggest new approaches to programming
4. Assess effectiveness and suggest enhancements to policy and procedures around child protection, counter-terrorism, fraud and sexual exploitation.
5. Suggest areas for research and policy development by PWHO and Union Aid Abroad - APHEDA
6. Outline emerging concerns and possible interventions, or other projects to be funded
7. Assist in suggesting key areas for a project design for the period 2019-2022.
8. Draw lessons from the long-term strategic partnership of Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA and PWHO and indicate areas to enhance cooperation.

Evaluation questions

- Is the set of early childhood education interventions still relevant to the needs of the camp community?
- What is the effectiveness of the early childhood education programs?
- Is the project value-for-money?
- Have relevant risks been identified and mitigated?
- What is the effectiveness of specific programs around learning difficulties, and disability?
- How has it changed to meet the needs of refugees from Syria?
- What are the likely needs over the next five years?
- How do these PWHO interventions actualize the rights of women refugees?
- How have the projects with PWHO impacted on the camp population in the long-term, in terms of status of women and children, behavior change, health, culture?
- What are the emerging issues that need to be addressed?
- Are there other project areas PWHO could initiate?
- In the refugee situation, how can we build sustainability?
- What are the capacities that PWHO wants to prioritise to build in the next 5 years?
- What are the lessons of the long partnership between Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA and PWHO?

Methodology

A balance of qualitative and quantitative assessment is required. Data is readily available for analysis on early childhood education, school integration and disability programs. Changes in attitudes and behaviors a culture, around the situation of children, and the status of women, require participatory and qualitative or action research methods. Contextual and emergent issues require stakeholder and key informant interviews.

Expected outputs

- a final methodology and planning before the start of the field research,
- a draft evaluation report, one week after the end of the field research,
- a final report

The final report should include the following:

- an executive summary
- a critical description of methods used (and potential limitations)
- findings of the study
- lessons learned
- recommendations

Selection criteria

The consultant should meet the following selection criteria:

- Strong international development project evaluation experience
- Substantive experience with refugees and Middle East
- Demonstrated experience with a range of evaluation methodologies
- Strong capacities in gender analysis in Middle East context
- Strong capacities in child rights and child protection
- Understanding of disability rights and inclusion programs
- Ability to communicate in basic Arabic and establish rapport with stakeholders and partners
- Ability to synthesise and communicate complex development project lessons
- Demonstrated capacity to use evaluation to enable strategic planning

Timeline

Submission of offers	15 April 2019
Selection of consultant(s)	22 April 2019
Submission of draft evaluation report	7 June 2019
Union Aid Abroad - APHEDA provides comments on draft report	14 June 2019
Submission of final report	24 June 2019

Logistics

APHEDA will facilitate the consultants’ access to project documentation, and work in Lebanon in particular with regards to organizing meetings and interviews with PWHO, and participant groups in the camps in Beirut. Note that the areas of the camps may be restricted in terms of security and insurance, and guidance from APHEDA, Embassy and PWHO is needed about security matters.

Applications should include:

- CV of evaluator(s)
- An evaluation plan to include (no more than 2 pages):
 - o Proposed methodology, scope
 - o Planning/timetable
 - o Budget (clearly indicating number of days)

Applications and queries should be directed to:

Ken Davis, International Programs Manager, 612 9264 9343 or kdavis@apheda.org.au