



A mural in an UNRWA school in Jordan, promoting UN values and principles. © June 2026 UNRWA Photo

Q2 Progress Report: Implementing the Colonna Report at UNRWA

April 2026 – June 2026

Safeguarding Neutrality,
Strengthening Trust

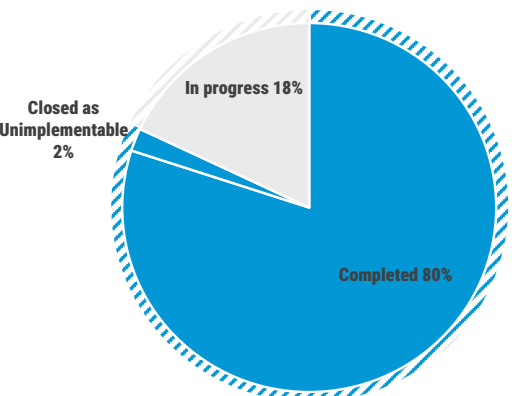


Quarterly Implementation Progress Overview

This Quarterly Colonna Progress Report provides a summary of major milestones and developments during the second quarter of 2026 in the Agency's implementation of the 50 recommendations of the Independent Review of Mechanisms and Procedures to Ensure Adherence by UNRWA to the Humanitarian Principle of Neutrality (the 'Colonna Report'). The publication of this report coincides with the completion of the second year of UNRWA's implementation of the Colonna recommendations.

Implementation status overview- June 2026

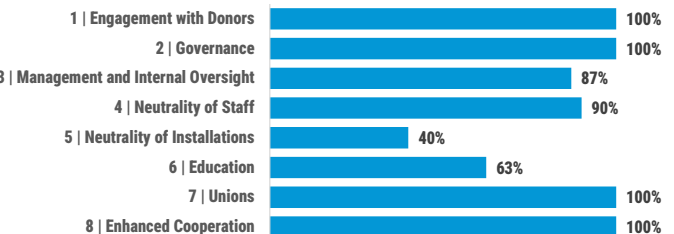
UNRWA continues to make significant progress in implementing the Colonna recommendations and embedding them as long-term institutional practices. During the Q2 2026 reporting period, the Agency closed one additional recommendation, bringing the total number of closed recommendations to 41 out of 50, representing an overall implementation rate of 82 per cent (see *Chart I: Implementation status overview*). The Agency is also advancing the integration and the institutionalisation of Colonna reforms within its policies and systems to ensure lasting organisational change.



The recommendation closed during Q2 relates to strengthening staff awareness of and compliance with the revised Neutrality Framework (Recommendation 20). The Agency established institutional arrangements to sustain neutrality training for the revised Neutrality Framework, including the delivery of training and awareness sessions across all five fields of operation (including dedicated sessions in Jordan and Lebanon), the update and institutionalisation of an associated training plan, and the completion of a regional Training of Trainers (ToT) Programme bringing together 34 colleagues from Headquarters and all five fields of operation. Together, these achievements have established institutional capacity to sustain the rollout of the Neutrality Framework and associated training across the Agency. Future training and awareness activities will continue as part of the sustainability of the reform.

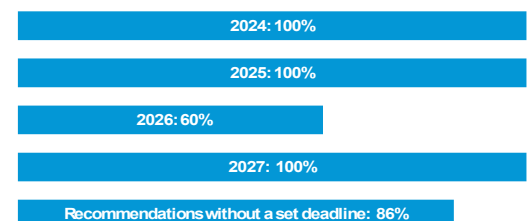
Completion status per category - June 2026

The Agency's implementation is on track with the High-Level Action Plan, as illustrated in *Chart III: Completion status per timeline*. The chart shows 100 per cent implementation of activities planned for 2024 and 2025, and 60 per cent progress towards closing the recommendations scheduled for 2026. In addition, UNRWA had already closed the sole recommendation (Recommendation 27), originally scheduled for completion in December 2027 by Q1 of 2026.



Each recommendation proposed for closure undergoes a formal review and validation process internally by the Agency's Neutrality Task Force and externally by the Advisory Commission's (AdCom) Working Group on Neutrality and Integrity. The recommendation closed during Q2 2026 was internally validated for closure by the Neutrality Task Force. The AdCom Working Group on Neutrality and Integrity convened its fourth meeting on 19 May 2026 to review the evidence supporting the eleven recommendations reported closed during the previous reporting cycle (Q1 2026) (Recommendations 3, 13, 16, 19, 24, 27, 42, 44, 45, 46, and 47). Their closure was subsequently acknowledged by the AdCom at its meeting on 18 June 2026.

Completion status per timeline- June 2026



More than 40 of the 50 Colonna recommendations include sustainability actions and/or associated resource requirements in the High-Level Action Plan. These measures promote the sustainability of completed recommendations through regular monitoring, integration into Agency policies and operational systems, periodic follow-up reviews, and sustained organisational ownership.



Highlights by Category

Category 1: Engagement with Donors (Recommendation 1)

Impact Headline: Through structured, transparent, and regular communication, UNRWA has strengthened donor confidence by providing Member States with timely updates on neutrality, integrity, as well as the Agency's financial situation and operational priorities.



Showcasing Impact: On 21 May 2026, the Deputy Commissioner-General for Operational Support delivered the Agency's fourth Integrity Briefing in New York, with a dedicated focus on neutrality in education, highlighting UNRWA's textbook review process, strengthened classroom safeguards, and training for education personnel on humanitarian principles and neutrality. The briefing was attended by over 60 Member States and Permanent Observers. In addition, UNRWA senior leadership held a series of bilateral meetings with key donors on the margins of the AdCom meeting on 17 and 18 June 2026. These Integrity Briefings have become an established platform for transparent dialogue with Member States, providing regular updates on the implementation of the Colonna recommendations, operational developments, and the Agency's financial situation, while strengthening trust, accountability, and partnership between UNRWA and its donors.

Status: 1/1 recommendation completed (as of Q2 2025).

Category 2: Governance (Recommendations 2–3)

Impact Headline: UNRWA has enhanced strategic oversight of neutrality through structured engagement with Member States, including dedicated neutrality sessions during AdCom meetings, the AdCom Working Group on Neutrality and Integrity, and ongoing dialogue on the Agency's future governance arrangements.



Showcasing Impact: Although both recommendations under this category have been closed, the governance arrangements continue to support structured dialogue between UNRWA and Member States on neutrality and integrity. During Q2 2026, the fourth meeting of the AdCom Working Group on Neutrality and Integrity was convened in Amman on 19 May, during which UNRWA presented evidence supporting the closure of eleven recommendations reported as completed in the [Q1 2026 Quarterly Colonna Progress Report](#), bringing the total number of recommendations presented to the Working Group to 40. In addition, neutrality and integrity remained a standing agenda item during the AdCom meeting on 17 and 18 June 2026. With regard to Recommendation 3, UNRWA remains ready to engage in any further dialogue the AdCom may wish to undertake regarding the governance proposal submitted following the Strategic Assessment or any alternative governance model.

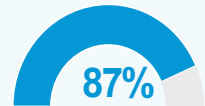
Status: 2/2 recommendations completed (as of Q1 2026).



Palestine Refugee students with visual impairments at the beginning of the second semester in Deir el-Balah, the Gaza Strip. © UNRWA Photo

Category 3: Management and Internal Oversight (Recommendations 4–18)

Impact Headline: UNRWA has enhanced its internal oversight, ethics, and accountability mechanisms, reinforcing neutrality, integrity, and transparency across the Agency's management structures, oversight functions, and project management systems.



Showcasing Impact: During Q2 2026, implementation focused on advancing the two remaining recommendations under this category while sustaining the reforms already completed. Recommendation 7 remains under implementation, with the external review of the Department of Internal Oversight Services (DIOS) investigation function expected to conclude during Q3/Q4 2026, while the independent UNEG/OECD-DAC peer review of the evaluation function remains underway. Under Recommendation 12, the Agency continues to explore options to further internationalise senior managerial positions, although progress remains contingent on the availability of additional funding.

During Q2 2026, DIOS further strengthened its oversight capacity through the deployment of a Quality Assurance Officer, additional investigative personnel, and surge support to address case backlogs. The Neutrality Investigations Unit operates under a centralised model, ensuring consistent handling of neutrality-related cases across the Agency. In 2025, the DIOS Neutrality Investigations Unit received 40 neutrality-related complaints. Following assessment and review, 31 neutrality investigations were authorised. During the year, the unit completed 22 investigations, of which 13 allegations were substantiated and proportional disciplinary measures were imposed. More broadly, the Neutrality Investigations Unit delivered a record number of investigation reports while reducing investigation timelines by more than 30 per cent.

The Agency also continued to strengthen staff awareness and managerial accountability for ethics and neutrality. The rollout of the Ethical Management Training Programme complemented ongoing delivery of the mandatory Ethics and Integrity Refresher Course, which achieved a completion rate of 90.28 per cent by June 2026, awareness sessions on the revised Code of Ethics, and tailored leadership dialogues on the Policy on Outside and Political Activities. Building on Recommendation 13, Department of Human Resources continues to monitor completion of mandatory neutrality and ethics training. In parallel, the Applied Crisis and Trauma-Informed Leadership (ACT) Programme was launched, building on the successful completion of the Leadership Excellence and Accountability Programme (LEAP), integrating leadership, accountability, staff well-being, and neutrality-related components tailored to UNRWA's operational context. Supervisory Skills Training (SST) was also expanded, with 56 supervisors trained in Jordan and Syria during the first half of 2026 and approximately 200 staff targeted by the end of the year.

Progress also advanced across the Agency's broader management and governance reforms. Under Recommendation 11, the Neutrality Policy and Implementation Unit (NPIU) was established within the Executive Office in April 2026, consolidating neutrality policy development, implementation support, reporting, analysis, coordination, and neutrality assurance under a single institutional structure. A draft Strategic Risk Register incorporating neutrality as a strategic risk was developed, Agency-wide risk management training was delivered to Headquarters Departments and Field Offices, and the Risk Management Policy and Framework are being translated into Arabic to support wider implementation. Gender Parity Portfolios were finalised across Headquarters Departments and Field Offices, providing a comprehensive overview of gender representation throughout the Agency. Meanwhile, implementation of the Project Procedures Manual (PPM) proceeded through Agency-wide capacity-building activities, including an Agency-wide project management workshop (see "Implementation in Action"). Technical enhancements are also underway to expand the Transparency Portal, which was launched in early April, to include emergency appeals and programme budget activities, while preparations continue for promulgation of a Technical Instruction on Third Party Monitoring.

Status: 13/15 recommendations completed; 2 in progress.

Implementation in Action: Project Procedures Manual

In June 2026, UNRWA brought together project managers and programme staff from Headquarters and Field Offices for an Advanced Project Management Workshop in Amman as part of the Agency's Project Procedures Manual (PPM) capacity-building programme. Through practical exercises and UNRWA-specific case studies, participants strengthened their ability to apply the Agency's project management procedures while exchanging experiences and good practices from across all five fields of operation. Reflecting on the training, one participant noted: "The course was highly engaging, well-structured, and helped me develop valuable knowledge and skills."

Following the promulgation of the Project Procedures Manual in June 2025 under Colonna Recommendations 16 and 18, UNRWA has rolled out a three-tier project management training programme comprising Project Management Foundations, Project Management in Practice, and Advanced Project Management. The programme aims to strengthen project design, implementation, and oversight across the Agency while promoting a more consistent, transparent, and results-oriented approach to project management. Feedback from participants is also helping shape future learning opportunities, including additional training on monitoring and evaluation, proposal development, and accountability to affected populations.



Participants in the Project Management Workshop in Amman. © June 2026 UNRWA Photo

Category 4: Neutrality of Staff (Recommendations 19–28)

Impact Headline: UNRWA has strengthened staff neutrality through enhanced awareness, regulatory reforms, strengthened monitoring systems, and robust prevention, screening, and accountability mechanisms.



Showcasing Impact: UNRWA has progressively strengthened staff awareness of and compliance with the Neutrality Framework through comprehensive training and awareness activities across all five fields of operation. During this period, the Agency delivered dedicated neutrality training sessions in Jordan and Lebanon, updated and institutionalised the neutrality training plan, and developed an official Arabic translation of the revised Neutrality Framework. UNRWA convened a Regional Neutrality Workshop in Amman on 20–21 May 2026, bringing together 34 colleagues from Headquarters and all five fields of operation with frontline responsibility for neutrality and Colonna implementation. The workshop served as a Training of Trainers (ToT), equipping field focal points to deliver neutrality training and awareness activities across the Agency while supporting the development of a Neutrality Training Handbook. Together, these achievements established mechanisms to ensure that neutrality training and awareness activities become a routine institutional function of the Agency, enabling the closure of Recommendation 20.

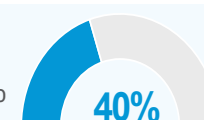
UNRWA further strengthened its three-pillar approach to staff neutrality through prevention, monitoring, and response. The Agency also enhanced its screening and verification arrangements across the employee lifecycle, including for new recruits, promotions, and transfers. This included adoption of the ClearCheck 2.0 and digitalisation of the Background Verification Unit's screening and verification processes. Separately, following completion of the commercial vetting pilot, the Agency developed a costed implementation plan and is now exploring options for the phased introduction of commercial vetting, subject to the availability of funding. UNRWA also further refined its social media monitoring capabilities. In parallel, the regulatory framework for addressing potential neutrality allegations was strengthened through revision of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on neutrality allegations in June 2026. The revised SOPs clarify roles and responsibilities and reflect recent developments in the Agency's approach to addressing misconduct and potential neutrality breaches by staff. The Agency is now working to bring these complementary policy, screening, vetting, monitoring, and accountability measures together within an Agency-wide system for managing staff neutrality risks.

With the closure of Recommendation 20, attention under this category is now on the final remaining recommendation, Recommendation 28, which calls for the recruitment of one international P3 Staff Care Specialist in each of the Agency's five fields of operation. The Staff Care Division was already established and is led by a P5, with additional staff care capacity in Jordan, Syria, and the Gaza Strip. Between January and May 2026, the division delivered 4,425 group-sessions and 542 individual counselling sessions across the Agency, demonstrating the significant demand for staff care services. Full implementation of Recommendation 28 remains dependent on predictable and sustainable funding to recruit the five international P3 Staff Care Specialists envisaged under the Colonna Report.

Status: 9/10 recommendations completed; 1 in progress.

Category 5: Neutrality of Installations (Recommendations 29–33)

Impact Headline: UNRWA has enhanced safeguards to protect the civilian nature of its installations through outreach to staff and communities, as well as reporting mechanisms on key findings.



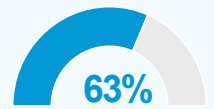
Showcasing Impact: During Q2 2026, UNRWA continued to strengthen staff and community awareness of the civilian nature of its installations. The Agency expanded both in-person and online training on humanitarian principles and the civilian character of UNRWA installations (i.e. neutrality and inviolability of installations), with the mandatory Humanitarian Principles e-course reaching more than 15,000 staff by June 2026. In parallel, more than 2,000 installation managers have now received in-person training on safeguarding the civilian nature of UNRWA installations. Community outreach also expanded across the fields of operation through awareness sessions, community engagement initiatives, and targeted outreach activities. To date, more than 6,000 awareness posters promoting the civilian nature of UNRWA installations have been distributed across the Agency, complemented by school-based activities and awareness campaigns in various fields of operation.

Implementation also progressed under the three remaining recommendations. Under Recommendation 31, Integrated Assessments of UNRWA installations continue to be conducted on a quarterly basis to monitor neutrality and protection risks, including potential military misuse of Agency installations. During Q2 2026, 599 Integrated Assessments were conducted across all fields of operation, except the Gaza Strip, where security and access constraints require an adapted monitoring approach. Sustaining this labour- and resource-intensive process requires continued financial support and dedicated staffing. Under Recommendations 32 and 33, the Agency is further strengthening communication and reporting on incidents affecting the civilian nature of its installations. Alongside the established practice of issuing formal protest letters and engaging bilaterally with host governments, work is underway to finalise regular Integrated Assessment Reports to Member States.

Status: 2/5 recommendations completed; 3 in progress.

Category 6: Education (Recommendations 34 – 41)

Impact Headline: UNRWA has strengthened education neutrality by reinforcing quality assurance mechanisms, textbook review processes, teacher capacity development, and digital learning in alignment with UN values and UNESCO standards.



Showcasing Impact: Implementation progressed across all remaining recommendations under this category. UNRWA maintains its systematic textbook review process to assess host-country curricula against UN values and UNESCO standards and shares the findings with relevant authorities upon request. To sustain implementation of Recommendation 34, the Agency further strengthens teacher capacity through regular training on humanitarian principles, neutrality, and human rights, supported by the Manara Community of Practice, which provides teachers with practical guidance, peer learning opportunities, and digital teaching resources. The Manara Community of Practice also supports post-validation discussions following textbook reviews, helping teachers integrate findings into classroom practice.

Quality assurance mechanisms across the education system also expanded. The dedicated hotline established under Recommendation 38 facilitates timely reporting of potentially problematic teaching content. In parallel, randomised classroom observations and teaching inspections strengthen oversight of classroom practices under Recommendation 39. The Agency also advances gender parity within education leadership through the implementation of the UNRWA Gender Strategy and Gender Parity Action Plan, with women holding 56 per cent of leadership positions within the Education Programme.

Completion of the remaining recommendations remains a priority, although several reforms require substantial financial resources. Under Recommendation 35, UNRWA applies its established policy prohibiting hate speech, incitement to violence, and antisemitic content in its classrooms. Under Recommendation 36, the Agency engages with UNESCO in line with the 2023 Recommendation on Education for Peace, Human Rights, and Sustainable Development, supporting dialogue on textbook review methodologies and broader education reforms. Progress also continued under Recommendation 40 through ongoing enhancements to the Digital Learning Platform (DLP), expanded ICT infrastructure across schools and vocational training centres, and expanded capacity-building for Tamkeen moderators and focal points. During the reporting period, neutrality and humanitarian principles training was delivered to 150 TVET teachers and staff in Syria, while improvements to the Digital Learning Platform strengthen the Agency's ability to sustain quality education during emergencies.

Status: 5/8 recommendations completed; 3 in progress.

Category 7: Neutrality of Unions (Recommendations 42 – 47)

Impact Headline: UNRWA has advanced neutrality, inclusiveness, and accountability within staff union structures while supporting reforms aligned with UN standards.



Showcasing Impact: Following the submission of the final draft of the revised Area Staff Union Statute to the Chair of the Inter-Staff Union Conference (ISUC), the Agency remains available to support any further dialogue requested by the staff unions. The revised statute strengthens alignment with UN standards through enhanced governance arrangements, measures to promote gender parity, term limits, streamlined governance structures, and strengthened neutrality safeguards. Responsibility for considering and formally adopting the revised statute rests with the staff unions.

During Q2 2026, the Agency further strengthened women's participation and representation through the Women's Advisory Forum (WAF). Building on the Rapid Gender Analysis completed earlier this year, the WAF advanced implementation of its five-phase capacity-building and coaching programme to further strengthen its governance, advocacy, and engagement with senior management. Following workshops held in April and May 2026, field-level workplans are being rolled out to promote gender parity and expand opportunities for women in leadership positions across the Agency, complementing broader reforms under Recommendations 14 and 37. The WAF maintains regular dialogue with senior management, including preparations for its next in-person meeting with the Commissioner-General in September 2026.

Status: 6/6 recommendations closed (as of Q1 2026).

Category 8: Enhanced Cooperation (Recommendations 48–50)

Impact Headline: UNRWA has advanced its engagement with the humanitarian coordination system, strengthened its capacity to pursue its work in emergencies, and enhanced partnerships within the UN system.



Showcasing Impact: During Q2 2026, the Agency remained actively engaged in humanitarian coordination mechanisms at the country, regional, and global levels, including participation in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), UN Country Teams (UNCTs), sectoral clusters, and regional emergency preparedness platforms. Through these mechanisms, UNRWA contributed to joint humanitarian planning, assessments, and operational response across its fields of operation, while further strengthening partnerships with other UN agencies, including WFP, UNFPA, and IOM. Internally, the Agency continues to promote a culture of humanitarian coordination by enhancing staff capacity on partnerships, inter-agency coordination, and pooled funding mechanisms.

Status: 3/3 recommendations completed (as of Q2 2025).

Looking Ahead

Two years after the publication of the Colonna Report, UNRWA remains firmly committed to the full implementation and long-term institutionalisation of all 50 recommendations, despite the exceptionally challenging political, operational, and financial environment in which the Agency continues to deliver its mandate.

The successful implementation of the Colonna Report has only been possible through the sustained political engagement and financial support of Member States and donors. UNRWA expresses its sincere appreciation to Germany, the United Kingdom, the European Union, Denmark, Finland, Canada, Japan, Norway, Switzerland, Luxembourg, and Austria for their continued support for the implementation of the Colonna recommendations. As *Table I* illustrates, the Agency has secured approximately US\$ 18 million in dedicated funding since 2024 through grants, complemented by in-kind contributions, and staff support. By June 2026, six of the thirteen grants had been completed, while the remaining projects will support implementation through late 2026 and into 2027.

As the Agency enters the final phase of implementation, the focus is increasingly shifting from completing recommendations towards ensuring their long-term sustainability and institutionalisation. While considerable progress has been achieved, several of the remaining recommendations remain highly dependent on predictable and sustainable financial support. These include the provision of full international staffing capacities for the Staff Care Division (Recommendation 28), the internationalisation of senior Area Staff positions (Recommendation 12), sustaining dedicated capacities for Integrated Assessments (Recommendation 31), and the continued digitalisation of education (Recommendation 40).

Member State	Project	Amount
Austria	Multiple categories	EUR 300,000
Canada	Multiple categories	CAD 1,000,000
Denmark	Multiple categories	US\$ 1,400,000
European Union	DIOS and Ethics	EUR 5,000,000
Germany	Multiple categories	EUR 1,500,000
Germany	NPIU staff support	US\$ 495,892
Japan	LEAP/multiple categories	US\$ 3,583,333
Luxembourg	NPIU staff support	In kind
Norway	HRD staff support	In kind
Finland	DIOS	EUR 500,000
Switzerland	Multiple categories	CHF 1,000,000
United Kingdom	Multiple categories	GBP 2,000,000

Annex I: Highlights on Colonna in two years

Two years after the publication of the Colonna Report, this annex provides an overview of the Agency's implementation journey and highlights some of the key milestones achieved since April 2024. Beyond implementing individual recommendations, UNRWA has established a comprehensive reform architecture comprising the High-Level Action Plan, dedicated implementation and coordination structures, regular monitoring and reporting mechanisms, strengthened engagement with Member States and donors, and sustained operational reforms across all five fields of operation.

As illustrated below, implementation has accelerated steadily over the past two years, increasing from zero completed recommendations at the outset to 41 completed or closed recommendations by the end of Q2 2026. This progress has been supported by 13 dedicated donor-funded projects worth more than US\$ 18 million, eight quarterly progress reports, regular stocktaking and governance processes, and extensive implementation efforts across the Agency. Together, these reforms have strengthened neutrality, integrity, transparency, and accountability while laying the foundations for the institutionalisation of the Colonna reforms.

Two-year Progress on Colonna Recommendations



8 reports

Colonna Quarterly Progress



48 Hours

of quarterly stocktaking meetings

13

grants

11

donors

\$18m

budget



4

Integrity Briefings in NY/Geneva



4

meetings of Advisory Commission Working Group on Neutrality & Integrity



5

Advisory Commission neutrality sessions



5,974

Integrated Assessments excl. the Gaza Strip



710

installations visited excl. the Gaza Strip



124

Community sessions on civilian nature of UNRWA installations



6,862

posters on humanitarian principles



1,251

Protection monitoring visits* in the Gaza Strip



161

installations visited in the Gaza Strip

*Protection monitoring visits are proposed alternative to the standard integrated assessments, currently implemented in the Gaza Strip.