



Q4 Progress Report: Implementing the Colonna Report at UNRWA

**Safeguarding Neutrality,
Strengthening Trust**

October 2025 – December 2025



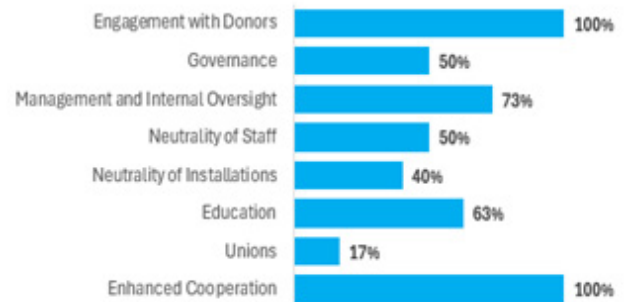
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QUARTERLY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS OVERVIEW

This Quarterly Colonna Progress Report provides a summary of major milestones and developments during Q4 2025 in the Agency's implementation of the 50 recommendations of the 'Colonna Report', formally known as the *Independent Review of Mechanisms and Procedures to Ensure Adherence by UNRWA to the Humanitarian Principle of Neutrality*¹. It also summarizes key developments across thematic categories and associated funding requirements.

Building on the steady momentum maintained following the first year of implementation, UNRWA continued to translate the Colonna Report's recommendations into concrete institutional reforms during Q4 2025. During the reporting period, the Agency completed an additional eight recommendations, bringing the total number of completed recommendations to 29 out of 50. The Agency's implementation is substantially on track with the High-Level Action Plan, having achieved 100% implementation of planned activities in 2024 and 80% implementation of planned activities in 2025. The recommendations completed during Q4 span multiple thematic areas, including Management and Internal Oversight, Neutrality of Staff, Neutrality of Installations, Education, and Neutrality of Staff Unions. The accompanying chart provides an overview of implementation progress across thematic categories.

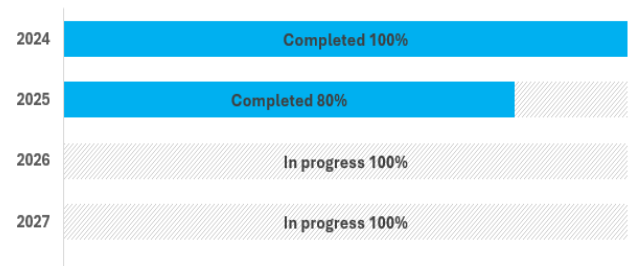
Completion Rate per Category



The eight recommendations completed during Q4 2025 focused on strengthening UNRWA's ethics framework, compliance mechanisms, management capacity, and safeguards for neutrality across staff, installations, education, and staff representation. Key achievements include the roll-out of the updated Code of Ethics, supported by in-person training and awareness activities for staff (Recommendation 9); strengthened compliance with the Outside and Political Activities Policies through updated policy guidance and awareness-raising (Recommendation 10); and the development and implementation of tailored training programmes on management and oversight for senior area staff serving as front-line managers and supervisors (Recommendation 15). The Agency also enhanced its capacity to detect public expressions of staff views on social media that are not in accordance with staff regulations (Recommendation 25), and strengthened whistleblower protection (Recommendation 26), enhanced community awareness of the civilian nature of UNRWA facilities through targeted outreach activities (Recommendation 30), strengthened textbook review capacities across the Agency including finalized reviews of host country textbooks (Recommendation 34), and reinforced the workforce representativity of staff unions by empowering the Women's Advisory Forum to increase women's representation (Recommendation 43). Collectively, these measures contribute to embedding neutrality, accountability, and inclusive governance more systematically across UNRWA's institutional and operational frameworks.

A small number of recommendations with an end-2025 target date were not finalized during the reporting period due to sequencing, funding, or external factors (explaining the 80 percent completion rate of 2025 recommendations in the graph). In particular, the second phase of the commercial vetting pilot (Recommendations 24/44/45) is progressing as planned and is expected to be finalized in Q1 2026, enabling closure in the next reporting cycle. Also during Q1 2026, the Agency expects to close Recommendations 42 and 47 on the exploration of further options for staff union representation. Implementation of the recommendation concerning the establishment of international staff care positions across all five fields (Recommendation 28) remains contingent on the availability of dedicated funding, which has not yet been secured. In addition, recommendations reliant on external technical inputs or consultations, including pay-setting functions (Recommendation 46) remain open pending responses from relevant partners. In all cases, implementation remains active, with clear next steps and indicative timelines communicated to Member States and donors through established reporting channels. In parallel, work on the updated Neutrality Framework, which underpins Recommendations 19 and 20 and is closely linked to increased managerial accountability on staff neutrality (Recommendation 13), has advanced. Endorsement is expected during Q1 2026, enabling subsequent implementation steps tied to required staff rule amendments and consultation processes.

Completion per Timeline



Each completed recommendation has undergone a formal review and endorsement process through both the internal Neutrality Task Force and the Advisory Commission (AdCom) Working Group on Neutrality and Integrity. The AdCom Working Group on Neutrality and Integrity convened its second meeting on 18 November 2025 to acknowledge the closure of one recommendation (#2) previously reported. Upon closure of the recommendation, related activities continue as part of broader institutional arrangements within the Agency including continuous monitoring and integration into policy and operational systems. It is noted that sustainability of certain reforms is largely contingent on sufficient funding and availability of dedicated human resources. Based on current projections, an additional six recommendations are expected to be completed by the end of Q1 2026, and a total of 45 recommendations (90%) are expected to be completed by the end of 2026.

HIGHLIGHTS PER CATEGORY

Category 1: Engagement with Donors (Recommendation 1)

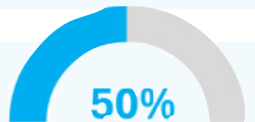


Impact Headline: UNRWA has strengthened strategic partnerships and trust with donors through structured, transparent and regular communication on integrity, neutrality and financial matters.

Showcasing Impact: UNRWA continues to deliver dedicated Integrity Briefings for donors and Member States, providing updates on neutrality measures, oversight, and the Agency's financial situation. On 24 November 2025, the Deputy Commissioner-General (Operational Support) delivered the third official Integrity Briefing (the second in Geneva), engaging a broad audience of donors and Member States with a particular focus on reforms related to staff neutrality. In addition, UNRWA also provided targeted bilateral briefings to donors on the margins of the meeting of the Advisory Commission in November 2025.

Status: 1/1 recommendation completed

Category 2: Governance (Recommendations 2–3)



Impact Headline: UNRWA has improved strategic oversight and donor engagement by embedding neutrality into the governance framework of its Advisory Commission.

Showcasing Impact: Neutrality remains a standing item on the agenda of the Advisory Commission's biannual meetings, ensuring sustained intergovernmental oversight of integrity and reform. In November 2025, the Advisory Commission convened its second dedicated meeting of the Working Group on Neutrality and Integrity, which reviewed evidence related to the implementation of Colonna recommendations and formally endorsed the closure of recommendations reported in earlier reporting cycles, as reflected in the Colonna Annual Implementation Report.

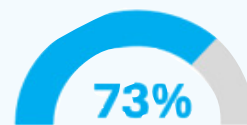
Under Recommendation 3, the Agency continues to engage with members of the Advisory Commission to explore alternative governance arrangements, as outlined in the United Nations Secretary-General's Strategic Assessment. In this context, the Agency plans to transmit a letter to members of the Advisory Commission setting out the governance options identified in the Strategic Assessment and inviting Member States to consider and take forward these options, as appropriate, with the aim of closing this recommendation in Q1 2026.

Status: 1/2 recommendations completed; 1 in progress



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

Impact Headline: UNRWA has continued to strengthen its internal oversight, ethics, and accountability mechanisms, reinforcing neutrality and integrity across the Agency, with a particular focus on management structures and operational processes.

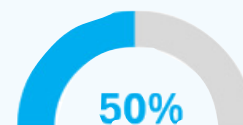


Showcasing Impact: During Q4 2025, the Agency closed an additional three recommendations within this category, reflecting continued progress in embedding ethics and oversight reforms. Under Recommendation 9, the Ethics Office advanced the roll-out of the updated Code of Ethics through sustained in-person outreach and awareness sessions across the Agency. Further progress was achieved under Recommendation 10, with the Ethics Office leading agency-wide awareness-raising on the new policy on Outside and Political Activities. This has been accompanied by a steady increase in annual declarations of eligible staff, from approximately 1,000 in 2023, when the policy was first issued, to around 3,000 in 2025. In addition, under Recommendation 15, the Human Resources Department completed the delivery of ten Supervisory Skills Training (SST) cohorts, reaching 189 supervisors across all Field Offices, except Gaza, and further embedding neutrality and integrity considerations into day-to-day management practice. To sustain impact, the Agency will institutionalize the delivery of SST through a Training-of-Trainers modality, with three cohorts planned annually in each Field Office. Trainings will be offered in Gaza once conditions on the ground allow. Progress remains ongoing in several areas within this category. Supervisory accountability for staff neutrality is being further conceptualized within broader accountability framework reforms linked to the updated Neutrality Framework (refer to Category 4). The Agency also continues to secure specialized expertise to advance the development of a project transparency portal planned for rollout in 2026, to support field intake assessments and the performance of the centralized Neutrality Investigation Unit within DIOS, and to undertake an external peer review of the investigation function in early 2026.

Status: 11/15 recommendations completed; 4 in progress

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

Impact Headline: UNRWA has continued to develop its systems to ensure that staff uphold neutrality throughout recruitment, employment, and conduct.

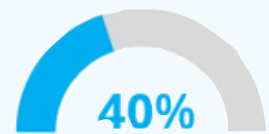


Showcasing Impact: During Q4 2025, the Agency closed two recommendations within this category, reflecting progress in strengthening safeguards related to staff conduct and accountability. Under Recommendation 25, a tool to support the monitoring of public social media expressions was completed and prepared for wider Agency use. Under Recommendation 26, the Ethics Office further reinforced existing whistleblower protections through sustained awareness-raising, training activities, and dialogue sessions across the Agency. Progress continued on additional recommendations where implementation requires careful sequencing, consultation, or external dependencies. Under Recommendations 19 and 20, work on updating and rolling out the Neutrality Framework advanced, with targeted training sessions delivered in Jordan and Lebanon and a regional workshop conducted to socialize the updated content. Finalization of these recommendations has been rescheduled to Q1 2026, including the completion of required institutional and procedural steps. Under Recommendation 24, a commercial option to support the Agency's screening capacity continues to be piloted; due to the complexity and sensitivity of this work, completion is expected in Q1 2026. Implementation of Recommendation 28, relating to the establishment of international staff care positions, remains contingent on the availability of sufficient and predictable funding, which had not yet materialized by the end of 2025. More broadly, the Agency continues to oversee and strengthen staff neutrality-related measures, including early-stage screening at recruitment, regular information-sharing with relevant counterparts, and reinforcement of disciplinary processes, ensuring that neutrality considerations remain embedded across the staff lifecycle.

Status: 5/10 recommendations completed; 5 in progress

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

Impact Headline: UNRWA has strengthened safeguards to protect the civilian nature of its installations through enhanced monitoring, staff training, and community engagement.



Showcasing Impact: Under Recommendation 30, the Agency completed community outreach activities to promote understanding of humanitarian principles and the civilian character of UNRWA facilities. During the reporting period, community awareness sessions and mural activities were delivered in Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon, while implementation in Gaza and the West Bank remained constrained due to the prevailing political and security context. Training for staff on the civilian nature of UNRWA installations continued, including through the mandatory e-course, which reached a completion rate of 52 percent by the end of Q4 2025 (9,499 completed with a further 3,157 in progress). Implementation of related recommendations within this category remains ongoing. Integrated assessments of UNRWA installations continue to be conducted on a quarterly basis using updated questionnaires and standard operating procedures, which now include systematic capture of incidents involving potential military misuse. Ensuring the sustained availability of humanitarian principles officers remains critical to maintaining the quality and timeliness of these assessments. In addition, UNRWA continues to engage with host countries on issues related to the inviolability of its installations, including through the regular issuance of protest letters and follow-up on reported misuse incidents. Similarly, progress is also underway to strengthen the provision of clear and transparent reporting to Member States on neutrality and inviolability breaches by external actors.

Status: 2/5 recommendations completed; 3 in progress

Implementation in Action: Civilian nature of UNRWA installations

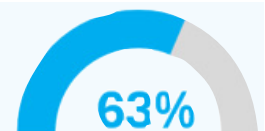
In Lebanon, under Colonna Report Recommendation 30, community awareness sessions accompanied by mural paintings were implemented to promote understanding of humanitarian principles, human rights, and the civilian nature of UNRWA installations, alongside other protection-related considerations. The sessions, complemented by mural paintings, were characterized by a “strong engagement, particularly when the civilian nature of UNRWA installations was linked to practical, day-to-day situations. As noted by one of the trainers, participants demonstrated an improved understanding of neutrality obligations and the distinction between personal expression and behavior within UNRWA premises.” Conducted across Central and North Lebanon, the Beqaa, and Tyre, the sessions reached a total of 315 installation workers (189 men and 126 women) and 88 youth (22 men and 66 women) during Q4 2025.



Mural from Northern Lebanon.

Category 6: Education (Recommendations 34 – 41)

Impact Headline: UNRWA has strengthened the adherence to neutrality of its education system in alignment with UN values and UNESCO standards through textbook reviews, enhanced teacher trainings, and expanded use of digital learning tools.

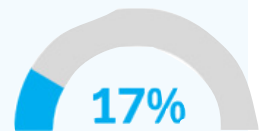


Showcasing Impact: As of Q4 2025, five recommendations within this category have been completed. In particular, Recommendation 34 on the review of content of all textbooks and supplements for which UNRWA is responsible has been finalized. The Agency has completed all actions within its control, including the systematic review of textbooks and mechanisms to share findings with relevant authorities upon official request. These are complemented by targeted capacity building initiatives of teachers and use of a Community of Practice for tailored guidance and peer learning opportunities on the Critical Thinking Approach and neutrality-focused pedagogy. Further development of UNRWA-owned teaching and learning materials aligned with UN values and UNESCO standards would require significant additional resources and has therefore been identified as a measure for longer-term institutionalization. Progress continues across several key areas. Internal regulations and policies remain in place to prohibit hate speech and inappropriate content within textbooks. Engagement with UNESCO remains ongoing to consolidate cooperation under the 2023 Recommendations on Education for Peace, Human Rights, and Sustainable Development, ensuring continued alignment with international benchmarks. The Agency is expanding use of its Digital Learning Platform to promote transparency, training teachers on digital tools, and exploring partnerships to integrate digital education in schools and educational practices. Similarly, reforms under closed recommendations are embedded within Agency systems, such as systematic teaching inspections in classrooms and regular trainings to teachers on humanitarian principles and human rights. A DIOS reporting hotline remains operating with dedicated messaging to report problematic teaching content. Additionally, semi-annual monitoring demonstrated incremental progress in women's representation in managerial positions in education over the past three years.

Status: 5/8 recommendations completed; 3 in progress

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

Impact Headline: UNRWA is advancing reforms to strengthen the neutrality, inclusiveness, and accountability of staff unions, in line with UN standards on staff representation and governance.



Showcasing Impact: During Q4 2025, one recommendation (#43) within this category was completed, marking progress in strengthening staff representation and governance and reflecting sustained efforts to strengthen workforce representativity within staff unions. Through implementation of its multi-year workplan, the Women's Advisory Forum (WAF) has played a key role in advancing gender balance in staff representation. During Q4 2025, WAF-led activities marking the 16 Days of Activism conducted focus group discussions to identify barriers and enablers to female staff's participation in decision-making and continued structured engagement with senior management. In addition, an external service provider has been engaged to further strengthen WAF's effectiveness and strategic engagement. Progress also continued during Q4 2025 across the remaining recommendations within this category, with a focus on laying the foundations for sustainable and consultative union reform, which relies on constructive collaboration with staff unions. Following the recruitment of an independent expert consultant in late November 2025, analytical work and structured consultations with relevant stakeholders commenced to support a phased revision of the 1990 Staff Union Statute. A first draft of the revised statute is expected in Q1 2026. Progress under this workstream underpins several interlinked recommendations within the category, including Recommendations 42 and 47, which are expected to be addressed in a coordinated manner once the revised statute is finalized. While several recommendations in this category were initially scheduled for completion by December 2025, extended consultations were required to ensure alignment with international standards and inclusive participation. Preparatory work is underway to explore options for independent neutrality vetting of union representatives, beginning with senior positions, as well as procedures to support continued vetting following elections, subject to further consultation and agreement. Under Recommendation 46, relating to the outsourcing of pay-setting functions, the Agency completed outreach to potential external partners and formally requested technical support from the International Labour Organization (ILO) in December 2025. Progress on this recommendation remains contingent on external engagement and guidance.

Status: 1/6 recommendations completed; 5 in progress

Category 8: Enhanced Cooperation (Recommendations 48–50)



Impact Headline: UNRWA has strengthened its engagement with the humanitarian coordination system, enhancing partnerships and redefining its role with inter-agency mechanisms.

Showcasing Impact: UNRWA has completed all recommendations within this category, reflecting strengthened integration into the humanitarian coordination architecture. The Agency continues to participate actively in cluster mechanisms, Humanitarian Country Teams, and Regional Emergency Preparedness working groups, supporting more coherent and coordinated humanitarian responses. Strategic engagement within the humanitarian coordination system is being further reinforced through the establishment of a Senior Humanitarian Affairs Officer function at the P-5 level, with recruitment currently underway. UNRWA also formalized partnerships with WFP, UNFPA, and IOM, and expanded staff trainings on pooled funding and coordination. Internally, these efforts have been accompanied by a shift towards more proactive engagement in joint planning, information-sharing, and collective response modalities, strengthening UNRWA's contribution to system-wide humanitarian action.

Status: 3/3 recommendations completed

Looking Ahead

UNRWA remains committed to the full implementation and institutionalization of all 50 recommendations of the Colonna Report, despite the complex contextual and operational challenges in which the Agency continues to operate. By Q4 2025, UNRWA has completed 29 recommendations and advanced implementation across the remaining reforms. Looking ahead, the Agency anticipates further progress during Q1 2026, bringing the total number of completed recommendations to approximately 35. UNRWA aims to complete 45 recommendations by the end of 2026, while ensuring that each recommendation, once closed, transitions into sustained institutional arrangements embedded in UNRWA's policies, systems, and operational practice.

Progress achieved to date has been enabled through the financial support and sustained engagement of Member States and partners. UNRWA expresses its appreciation to contributors, including Germany, the United Kingdom, the European Union, Denmark, Canada, Japan, Norway, Switzerland, Finland, Luxembourg, and Austria for their continued support to neutrality and integrity reforms. At the same time, implementation progress and funding coverage remain uneven across thematic categories. Certain areas, particularly Education, continue to require additional and predictable financial resources to support the long-term institutional embedding and sustainability of reforms.

As 2026 marks the mid-point of the Colonna implementation horizon, the Agency will maintain a strong focus on consolidating gains, embedding reforms within institutional culture, operational practices, and regulatory frameworks, and managing implementation risks proactively. Despite evolving challenges across UNRWA's fields of operation, the Agency remains committed to transparency, accountability, and sustained engagement with Member States through the AdCom Working Group on Neutrality and Integrity, the full Advisory Commission, the biannual Integrity Briefings, and additional fora.

Funding secured to date		
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
Finland	Multiple categories	EUR 500,000
Germany	Multiple categories	EUR 1,500,000
Germany	IST staff support	US\$ 240,000
Japan	LEAP	US\$ 250,000
Luxembourg	IST staff support	In kind
Norway	HRD staff support	In kind
Switzerland	Multiple categories	CH 1,000,000
United Kingdom	Multiple categories	GBP 2,000,000



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UNRWA is the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. The United Nations General Assembly established UNRWA in 1949 with a mandate to provide humanitarian assistance and protection to registered Palestine refugees in the Agency's area of operations pending a just and lasting solution to their plight. UNRWA operates in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. Tens of thousands of Palestine refugees who lost their homes and livelihoods due to the 1948 conflict continue to be displaced and in need of support, nearly 75 years on.