



UNRWA Implementation of Colonna Report April 2025

This quarterly Colonna Report provides a summary of major milestones and developments over the first quarter of 2025 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 ("Colonna Report"). It also includes an update on funding requirements.

Progress

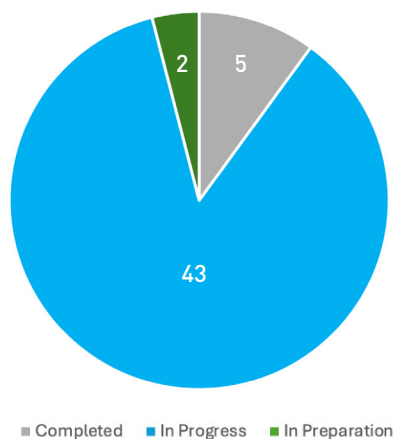
One year from the Agency's receipt of the Colonna Report on 20 April 2024, UNRWA continues its active implementation. The 50 recommendations were translated into a High-Level Action Plan that articulates specific actions, timelines, and resource requirements for their implementation. This High-Level Action Plan, which is updated regularly, is a key management tool for UNRWA for the implementation process.

As of April 2025, a total of 5 recommendations have been fully implemented:

- **Recommendation 5:** Expand the reach and presence of DIOS and the Ethics Office in UNRWA fields of operations.
- **Recommendation 8:** Pending an evaluation, create a centralized Neutrality Investigations Unit with international staff, that reports directly to the DIOS to oversee field office-led investigation.
- **Recommendation 23:** Reinforce the existing regular sharing of digital staff lists with host countries and Israel.
- **Recommendation 29:** Train staff on the civilian nature of UNRWA's facilities.
- **Recommendation 49:** UNRWA to enhance its participation in the humanitarian coordination system.

The implementation process continues to move forward at a steady pace. **It is expected that a total of 25 recommendations will be implemented by the end of 2025.** Changes in timelines of recommendations will be communicated in due course.

Implementation Progress



Management and Internal Oversight

Almost all recommendations in this category are well underway. Staff have been hired for Ethics and Internal Oversight, training in field operations is in progress, and relevant policies are being updated and rolled out. UNRWA continues efforts to enhance project management practices to ensure transparency and traceability of projects, and to train staff and managers on integrity issues. The newly established Risk Management unit is rolling out UNRWA's new risk management strategy, including through hands-on risk management support to field offices.

Additionally, since the last quarterly progress report, the implementation of several recommendations has been initiated, including:

• **ACTION on recommendations 22, 24, 27, 44, 45 (screening and vetting):** UNRWA's Human Resources Department is coordinating a range of measures aimed at strengthening human resource-based screening and discipline of staff, including: training on a new Personnel Directive about Disciplinary Measures and Procedures; preparing UNRWA Disciplinary Digests to reinforce management actions and increase transparency; piloting a Pre-employment Declaration Form for outside and political activities in the onboarding of international, area and complementary personnel; introducing advance use of the ClearCheck tool; and launching amendments to UNRWA's Code of Ethics for Daily Paid Workers, interns, and volunteers. Discussions are ongoing with external partners to explore the feasibility, including costs, of third-party support in the area of vetting to complement existing measures.

• **ACTION on recommendation 25:** Starting in March 2025, a tool developed by the UN's Office of Information and Communications Technology (OICT) for social media monitoring of public expressions of staff is being pilot tested;

• **ACTION on recommendation 46:** Discussions have been initiated with other UN offices to explore the feasibility of outsourcing issues related to pay and pay-related benefits;

• **ACTION on recommendations 3 and 47:** UNRWA is mapping governance and staff representation models across the UN to inform options for the Agency.

Implementation spotlight: Randomized Teaching Assessments and Integrated Assessments

Building on existing efforts, the Agency is taking significant action to implement recommendation 39 (Establish randomized teaching inspections in classrooms).

In coordination with the Protection Division, UNRWA's Department of Education is currently expanding its randomized teaching inspections through School Quality Assurance Team check ins. These checks are supplemented by dedicated support to UNRWA teachers, which includes visits by Education Specialists, who observe full lessons and provide feedback.

Each school is selected randomly in coordination with the Chief of the Field Education Programme (CFEP) and is visited at least once every year. If performance is found to be unsatisfactory, a follow-up visit is conducted within six months, to monitor improvement and provide continued support as required.

As part of this larger process of verification and oversight, UNRWA also conducts integrated assessments of installations to ensure that school facilities are maintained in line with humanitarian principles and protection standards. To this end, staff trained on humanitarian principles visit each installation quarterly. This allows UNRWA to improve its service delivery to Palestine Refugees, by upholding a safe and inclusive environment.



As with trainings on humanitarian principles, integrated assessments are also coordinated by the Protection Division.

Additional resources are urgently required to ensure the depth and breadth of support provided by the Protection Division to the Education Programme is sustained, as well as to enable the Education Department to continue to provide quality assurance oversight across all fields of operation, enabling additional commitments under the Colonna Report to be met.

Funding requirements

While several recommendations can be implemented within existing resources, the Colonna Report stressed that others require additional funding support for full implementation.

UNRWA is grateful to Member States and donors who have provided funding for the implementation of several recommendations so far. As of April 2025, just under US\$ 10 million has been received for the implementation of the Colonna Report recommendations.

Funding secured to date		
Member State	Project	Amount
Austria	Management and Oversight	EUR 200,000
Canada	Multiple categories	CAD 1,000,000
Denmark	Multiple categories	US\$1,414,000
European Union	DIOS and Ethics	EUR 5,000,000
Germany	Multiple categories	EUR 1,000,000
Germany	IST staff support	US\$ 240,000
Japan	LEAP	US\$ 250,000
Luxembourg	IST staff support	In kind
United Kingdom	Risk Management	GBP 1,000,000



However, as result from the liquidity crisis affecting the UN Secretariat, a number of Regular Budget posts designed to support the implementation of the Colonna Report recommendations may be subject to a recruitment freeze in 2025. This will affect the Agency's ability to implement several recommendations according to the timelines presented in the High-Level Action Plan. A more detailed update on the impact of the liquidity crisis will be provided in the next quarterly report.

As UNRWA departments and programmes continue to design the implementation of recommendations, and as donors demonstrate interest in contributing to implementation efforts, the funding overview, attached to this report, will continue to be updated to reflect evolving needs. Interested donors are invited to contact the Department of External Relations and Communications for further information.

Next steps

For the second quarter of 2025, UNRWA's on-going implementation of the Colonna Report recommendations will focus on:

- Completing all recommendations due by the end of Q2 2025 and continue the preliminary work related to recommendations that are in preparation;
- Providing the second Integrity Briefing to Member States on May 12th in Geneva;
- Monitoring and managing risks to UNRWA related to the Action Plan, considering developments in the external environment.



united nations relief and works agency
for palestine refugees in the near east

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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.