

Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics

Palestinian Children—Issues and Statistics Annual Report, 1999

September, 1999

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Unofficial Translation

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Presidential Decree No. (19/1999)
On the Expansion of PCBS' Mandate and Scope of Operation

**The Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization,
President of the Palestinian National Authority,**

Upon reviewing the Statistics Law No. (31/1947) which is effective in Gaza Governorates, the Statistics Law No. (24/1950) which is effective in the West Bank Governorates, the Presidential Decree No. (163/1994) on the establishment of the Palestinian Bureau of Statistics and the Presidential Decree No. (4/1995) on the transformation of the Palestinian Bureau of Statistics into the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics,

We decree the following:

Article (1)

[... *This article has to do with the changing the title of PCBS as stated in Arabic, The English title is the same. The change is effective as of May 4, 1999*]

Article (2)

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics is requested to compile, tabulate, and disseminate statistics on *all* Palestinians wherever they reside.

Article (3)

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics shall issue an annual statistical yearbook for Palestinian official statistics as of May 4th 1999.

Article (4)

All concerned parties, each in their respective field, shall enforce this decree as of the date of issue and publication in the official gazette.

Issued in Gaza City on June 24th 1999.

Yaser Arafat
The President of the Executive Committee
of the Palestine Liberation Organization
President of the Palestinian National Authority

Acknowledgement

Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics would like to acknowledge the help of many people in the presentation of this report.

Mrs. Dahab Musleh (Coordinator of the PCBS' Child Statistics Program) Led the efforts aimed at selecting the indicators included in this report as well as developed the general framework of its chapters. She supervised the preparation of the report material, including editing and finalization. Ms. Khitam Al-Bizreh and Mr. Ma'mun Al-Najar assisted her in accomplishing the task.

A number of researchers participated in developing the material of this report, including: Mrs. Aysha Al-Rifa'ii "Child Health"; Mrs. Muna Ghali (Education); Mrs. Cairo Arafat (Children in Need of Special Care); Mr. Salah Subani (Culture and Recreation); Mr. Luay Shabaneh (Socio-Economic Environment); Mr. Jawad Al-Saleh (Children Under Poverty Level); and Mr. Saleh Al-Kafri (Child Labour). Mr. Ahmad Abu Al-Heija, Mr. Mohammad Al-Omari, Ms. Inaya Daoud, Mr. Yousef Musa, and Mr. Mohammad Dreidi prepared the statistical tables essential for the report as well as reviewed the preliminary drafts of some chapters. Dr. Abdul-Rahim Barham (Director General of Population and Social General Directorate) directed the work team and commented on the final drafts of the reports.

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics would like to express its gratitude to all those involved in the actual materialization of this report.

The Swedish Government has provided, through the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), the necessary assistance for financing the activities of the Child Statistics Program.

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics expresses its deep gratitude and appreciation to the Swedish Government, SIDA and the Swedish Consulate–Jerusalem for supporting this project.

Preface

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics is pleased to introduce its second annual report on the socio-economic reality of the Palestinian child. This report is of significant importance because it constitutes the result of the joint efforts and coordination of all the bodies and institutions involved in the field.

The purpose of this report is to present, in analytical measures, all the relevant statistical data on the socio-economic environment of the Palestinian child. By doing so, we will be able to decipher the immediate deficiencies and gaps in the child's reality, especially in the fields of health, education, culture, recreation, poverty, and child labour. Although there is a scarcity of pertinent data and resources, we dedicate a special chapter for children in need of special protection. Due to the novelty of a Palestinian child database, however, it was not always possible to account for the gaps in the Palestinian child status and surrounding environment. We hope that our capacities undergo qualitative development in this field for the coming years.

Improving the reality of children's conditions and attempting to enforce children's rights cannot be done without the joined efforts of all the parties involved, nor can it be done without their proper implementation of their duties based on specialization and capacity. The database being built by the Child Statistics Program will comprise data essential for enabling all concerned bodies and parties to work on bridging the gaps in the child sector in accordance with scientific bases. It is note worthy to point, out that the database we are intending to construct is based - in terms of framework and content - on the nature of our own understanding of the monitoring role assigned to us by the Palestinian Children Plan as well as on our perception of the nature of the tools used for measuring child – related indicators, as adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

This report is the outcome of the tremendous efforts of the work team of the Child Statistics Program. The Most prominent efforts include the preparation of basic indicators, the selection of researchers, close work with selected academics, revision of their work, coordination with bodies and institutions concerned with child affairs, and organizing seminars and workshops aiming to identify users needs. The dedication and commitment of Mrs. Dahab Musleh (Coordinator of the PCBS' Child Statistics Program) and her team had the most impact on the report's timely preparation.

The PCBS hopes that this report will be optimally utilized in planning, policy making and strategic decision-making on the child sector in Palestine. Without doubt, the continuous flow of data on the reality of children's conditions is one of the basic pillars for bringing about changes in this reality. We will ensure the continuity of this flow, hoping that God blesses our efforts to successfully carry out this task.

September, 1999

Hasan Abu Libdeh, Ph.D
President

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Introduction

By the end of the 1st World War, Human Rights organizations all over the world started to pay special attention to child primary care. Those efforts were concentrated in the Declaration of the Geneva Convention of Child Rights for 1924. Through the Child Rights Conventions of 1959 and 1989, the United Nations reemphasized the child rights concerns of the international community. The latter convention, signed and approved by nearly all member countries, constitutes a reference and an international legal framework for monitoring progress made in meeting child's needs and requirements. The different countries translate their commitment to protect child rights through allocation of their own resources and implementation of child – oriented developmental programs.

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) protected the Child Rights Convention of 1989 and established at that time the Palestinian Higher Committee for Child care and annexed it – from an organizational viewpoint - to the Executive Committee of the PLO. With the inception of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), the National Committee of the Palestinian Child Plan was established and assigned the duty of developing the Palestinian Child Plan. With the adoption of the Palestinian Child Plan by the PNA, coupled with the establishment of the Higher Council for Childhood, the need for highly comprehensive and updated data is crucial for measuring progress made in implementing the child plan and monitoring the performance and enforcement of child rights–related laws. It is worth mentioning that the National Plan for Palestinian Child Rights set up a special monitoring system to develop a specific set of indicators throughout the years of implementing this plan. The success in applying the monitoring system is contingent on developing national data collection mechanisms through available traditional programs of the various bodies or new means developed especially for the purpose.

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics took upon itself the task of developing the monitoring process by establishing a special child statistics program. This program was designed to provide a statistical database on the Palestinian child and, thus generate the necessary information to help the parties involved ensure the rights of the child.

This report is issued for the second consecutive year with an emphasis on areas not tackled in last year's report. At the time of defining the contents and level of details, we relied upon the recommendations of the fifth chapter “Monitoring” of the Palestinian National Child Plan, in addition, the consulted relevant institutions to determine the main indicators essential for measuring progress. By collecting and analyzing statistical data, we aim to provide an enabling atmosphere, as well as promote awareness among policy makers, planners, NGOs, and other parties engaged in defending children rights and interested in bringing about sustainable and comprehensive developments for children. The database being built facilitates continuous revisions of pertinent plans, legislations, and practices in order to ensure optimal prioritization of children's requirements.



This report involves a set of indicators derived from the recommendations of the user–producer workshops organized by the Child Statistics Program in the different Palestinian governorates throughout 1998. The indicators cover seven main subjects, each of which constitutes a separate chapter, arranged in accordance with the material included in the international convention of children rights, which was adopted as the general framework for the indicators suggested at the workshops. Furthermore, the Palestinian National Child Plan adopted a special framework of defining indicators. The main recommendation raised in the workshops stressed the importance of collecting data on children below 18 years of age, as stipulated in Article I of the international convention of children rights. In presenting the indicators, we tried to categorize children into specific age groups in order to facilitate comparisons and follow ups.

The report sheds light on a number of crucial topics and aspects of the Palestinian child's life that suffer from a shortage of statistical data. Whereas some of these topics and aspects are considered highly important for the monitoring process, others constitute recommendations for the researchers to focus on more specialized issues and conduct more thorough research. The classification of these indicators constitutes the general objective of the Child Statistics Program, which strives to arrive at a basic list of measurable and comparable indicators capable of monitoring all child rights.

The report presents a set of selected indicators for 1999 on the socio–economic environment for the society, in general. Some chapters focus on certain sections of the International Convention for Children Rights. The first chapter sheds light on the socio–economic environment along with its direct and indirect effects on the levels of progress made in the fulfillment of children's rights and ensuring children a honorable life. The second chapter concentrates on child health, emphasizing the child's right to have access to appropriate health services. The third chapter discusses a child's right to appropriate educational and schooling systems along with an enabling educational environment. Chapter four discusses children's right to development and participation. The remaining chapters focus on a child's right to protection and special care. This years report also focuses on the child Labour phenomenon. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics carried out a special survey on this phenomenon at the national level. The report of this survey included a special report on poor children.

The statistical data essential for this report were obtained from various sources. Data obtained from the Population, Housing and Establishments Census of 1997 were used in most chapters. Other main sources include the Traditional Household Surveys conducted by the PCBS on a regular basis. Moreover, additional data were obtained from other sources that will be named in the appropriate locations. It is worthy to point that some statistics on population characteristics do not cover that part of Jerusalem annexed to Israel one year after the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967. This is due to the fact that the national team of the census was unable to carry out the census in all enumeration areas.



Chapter 1

Socio-Economic Reality

A child means every human being below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

(Child's Rights Convention, Article 1)

Children are an important sector in the society and one of its most important resources for sustained future development. Childhood is a critical life stage defining and shaping the child's future personality traits and characteristics. Therefore, many countries strive to provide their children with essential care providing the impetus for well-balanced mental, psychological, physical and social growth. Children refer to all humans under 18 years of age, as stipulated by Article 1 of the International Convention of the Rights of the Child (hereinafter CRC)¹ ratified by the UN General Assembly in 1989. The CRC outlines a set of principles to sustain survival, growth and protection for children, an objective requiring societal care, positive environments rich with incentives, and a consolidated effort by all those involved in child protection.

The surrounding environment represents a basic element in the child's physical, and psychological development, influencing the way children are raised and shaping their thoughts, beliefs, concepts, behaviors, and attitudes. This chapter introduces and discusses basic statistics on the environment surrounding children in the Palestinian Territory. The statistical figures provided revolve around the demographic structure of the population and the social conditions, including education and living standards, the economic environment and the sectoral structure of the Palestinian economy. The labor force is examined as well, in order to highlight the life framework in which children live and grow in the Palestinian Territory.

◆ Population Growth

An increase in population growth rates is expected periodically throughout the years 1997-2001 followed by a sharp decrease in these rates in time to reach 2.2% by the year 2025

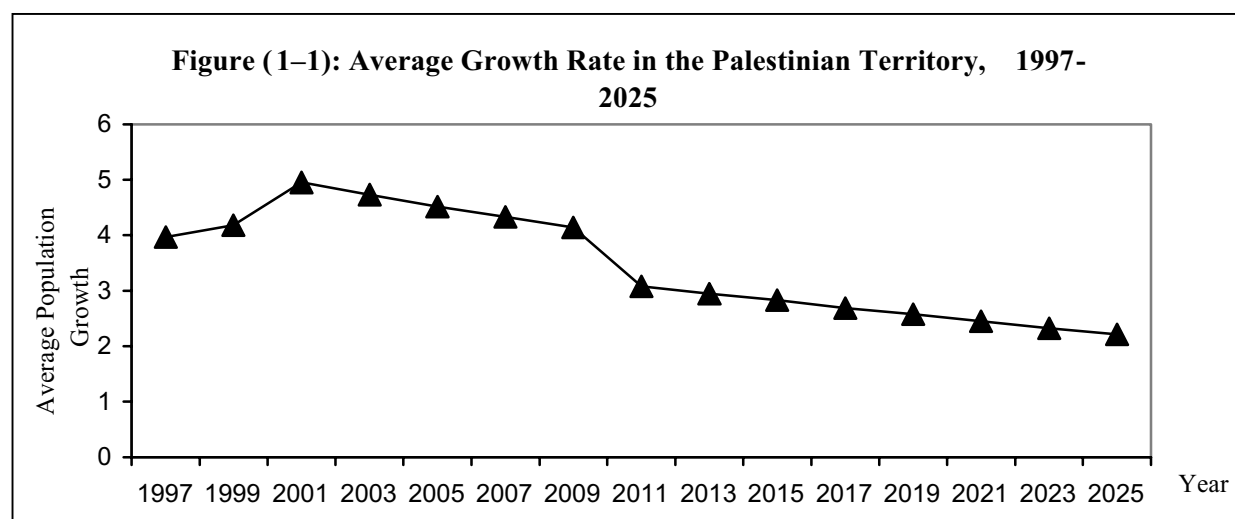
The analysis of population data in a society is made via a number of statistical methods. The descriptive method uses measures or criteria to indicate consistency and/or discrepancy among the basic variables. A time series is another method utilized to indicate general change trends in the basic constituents of each variable for further consultations when selecting developmental objectives. The most recent estimates show that the number of people residing normally in the

¹ United Nations Children fund (UNICEF), 1990. *Children First: The International Declaration for Child's Survival, Protection, and Development and the Action Plan*. New York, USA.



Palestinian Territory amounts to 2.8 million by mid 1997 distributed between the West Bank (1.7 millions), Gaza Strip (0.9 million), and Jerusalem (0.2 million). According to population projections, the population of the Palestinian Territory will reach 7.4 million by the first half of year 2025. Furthermore, the Palestinian Territory will need 18 years to double the size of its population to approach 5.6 millions by mid 2014. Gaza Strip population will double (exceeding 2 million) in 16 years compared to the 20 years required by the West Bank, (approximately 3.6 million).

The population increase is expected to endure in the remaining few years of this century and through the next decade, primarily due to the expected numbers of Palestinians in the Diaspora² returning to the Palestinian Territory as a results of the peace process. About half a million are expected to return during the period 1997-2010, whereas the emigration rate is estimated to stagnate in the period 2010 - 2025. The estimated decline in the population growth rate throughout the years 2011-2025 is accounted basically by the expected decrease in fertility rates from 4.7 to 3.1 in the year 2010-2025.



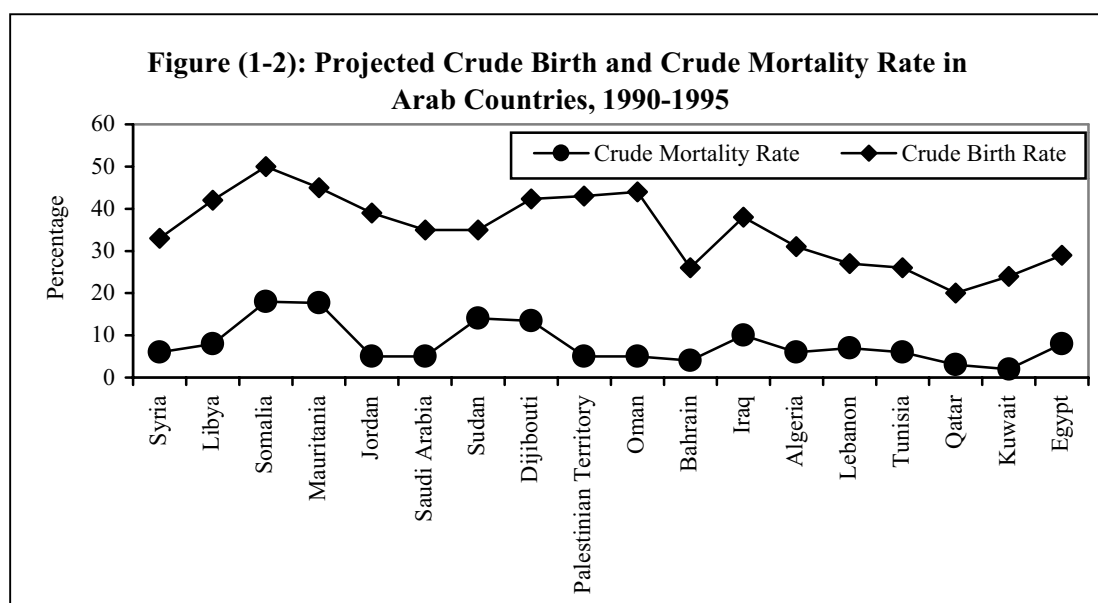
Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1999. Population Projections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (1997-2025). Ramallah-Palestine. Unpublished data.

Figure (1-1) shows the future trends in Palestinian growth rates. Population growth will increase throughout the period 1997-2010, but then gradually encounter a slow decline by the end of projection periods in 2025. A comparison with the other societies places the Palestinian Territory among the countries with the highest growth rates, both worldwide and among the Arab countries. The International growth rate is lower than the average rate in developing countries, estimated 1.5 and 1.8 respectively. The Palestinian Territory, however, showed a 4.1 rate in 1998 due to the estimated increase in presumed migration and birth rates.

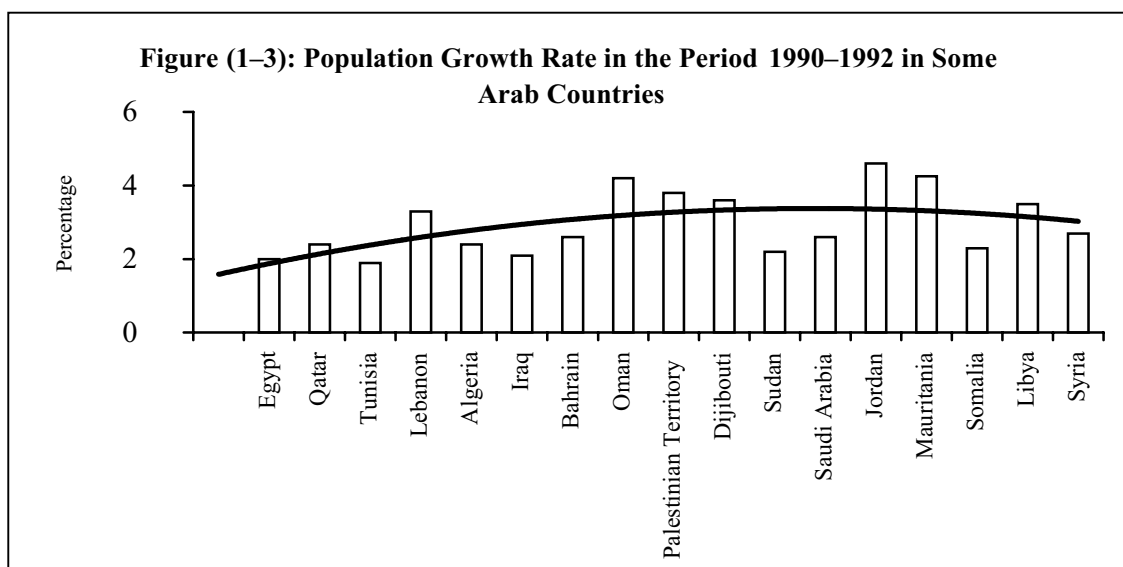
²Population estimates show that the crude international migration rate in 1997 was estimated to be 1.80. This rate is increasing so as to reach 13.64 in the year 2001, which will start to decline to 9.11 in 2010 and then drop to zero after that, by the end of the projection period in the year 2025.



As mentioned before, the crude birth rate in the Palestinian Territory is considered among the highest rates in the Arab world. Crude birth rates are higher than 35 per thousand in more than half of the Arab countries, (e.g. Jordan, the Palestinian Territory, Iraq, Oman, Libya). Lower crude birth rates (less than 30 per thousand) are reported in only eight Arab countries. On the other hand the death rate in the Palestinian Territory is declining to approach the lowest of the crude death rates among some Arab countries such as Kuwait, Qatar, UAE, Tunis and Bahrain. The improvement of health services and health education that occurred after the emergence of the PNA in the Palestinian Territory may have had a significant effect in reducing death rates, in general, and the infant mortality rate, in particular.



Source: United Nations, New York. Population of the World, 1996.



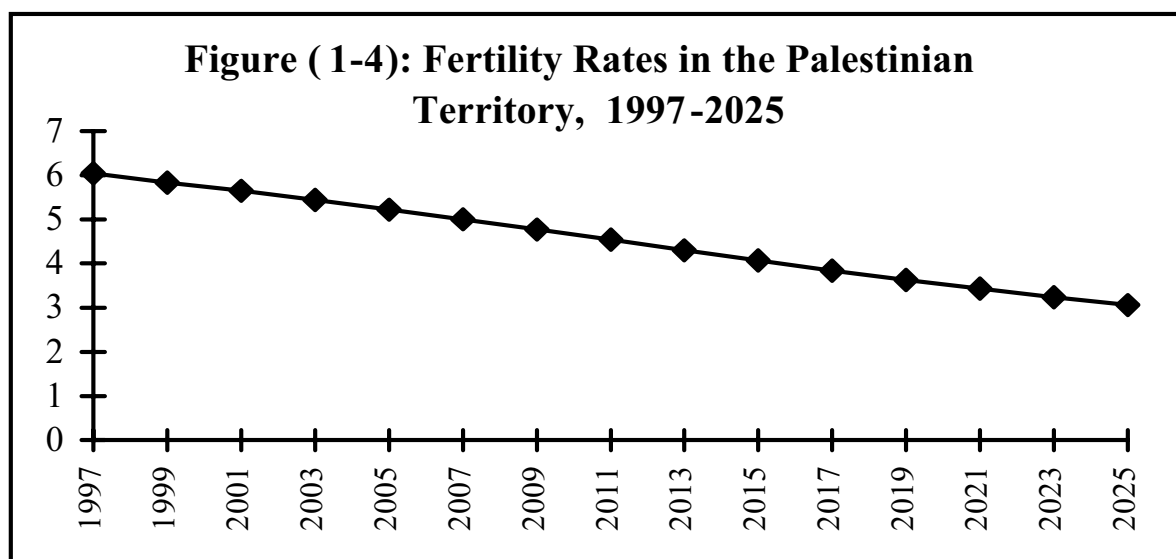
Source: United Nations, New York. Population of the World, 1996.



◆ Fertility

In 1998 the total fertility rate in the Palestinian Territory was 5.9 and is expected to reach 3.1 by the year 2025.

Fertility rates in a given society describe the relationship between the population growth rate and the social and economic developments present in that society. Societal norms, marriage age, and women's reproductive behavior, and the use of family planning methods influence fertility rate. Available statistics show that the 1998 total fertility rate in the Palestinian Territory was estimated at 5.94 births, which is expected to decrease, in time, to 5.75 births in the year 2000, and to 3.06 births by the 2025. Visible regional differences between the West Bank and Gaza Strip are present, for 1998, the Gaza Strip's total fertility rate was 6.84 compared to 5.49 in the West Bank. However, by the year 2025 total fertility rates are expected to shrink to 2.8 and 3.46 in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, respectively.



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1999. Population Projections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (1997 - 2025). Ramallah–Palestine. Unpublished data.

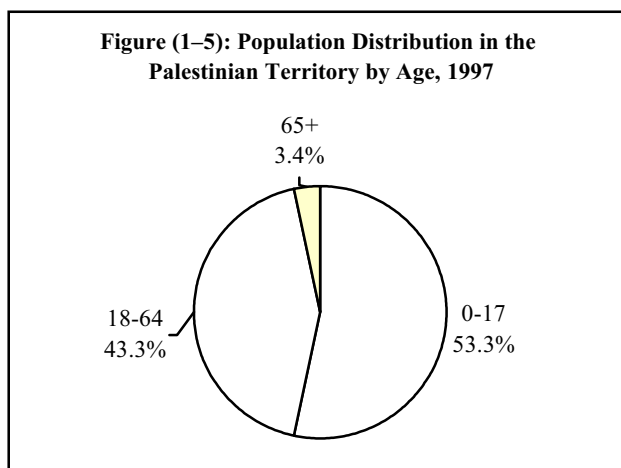


◆ **Age and Gender-Specific Childhood Structure**

More than half (53.3%) of the Palestinian society were children less than 18 years of age in 1998

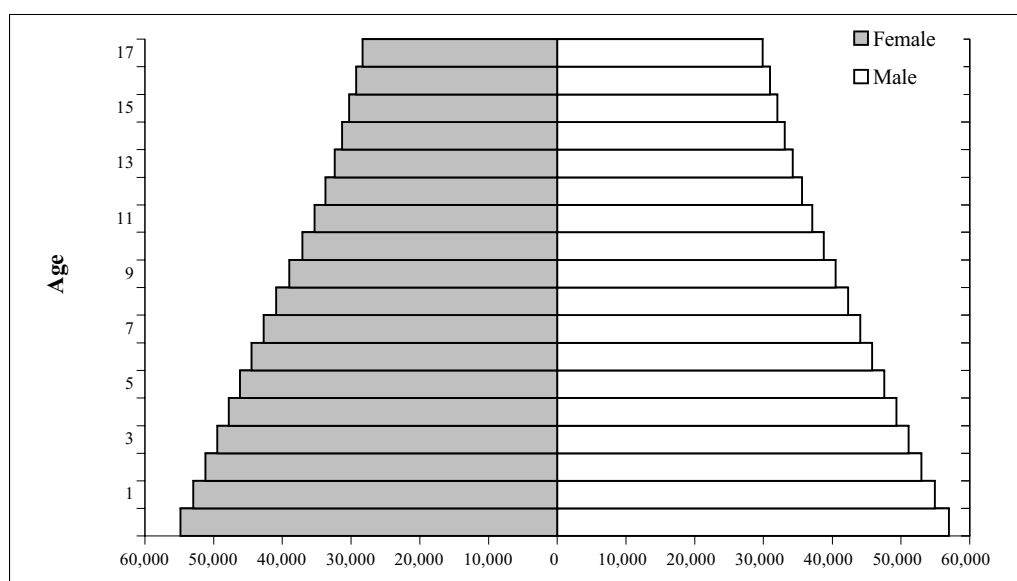
All persons under 18 years of age are defined as children. Studies on children are considered very important when studying the population age structure. The age and gender specific structure is a direct reflection of the interaction between birth, death, migration rates, and fertility rate: higher fertility rates lead to increase in the percentage of children under the age of 18.

The figure (1-5) indicates that 53.3% of the total population in 1998 was formed of children less than 18 years of age (1.546 million among which 49% were female). Though available data show that children constitute more than half of the Palestinian people, population projections expect a gradual decrease in this percentage to reach 43.1% by the year 2025.



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1998. Population, Housing and Establishments Census of 1997.

Figure (1-6): Distribution of Children (0-17 years) by (Single Years of) Age and Gender, 1997



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1999. Population Projections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (1997 - 2025). Ramallah-Palestine. Unpublished Data.



When attempting to study their demographic indicators, children should be classified into age groups according to the changes and developments of their needs by age. Higher proportions of children aged less than 5 years induces more burdens on the society in order to achieve sustainable or sufficient development levels and/or fulfillment of the needs of its children. The age group (0-4 years) comprises 18.7% of the total Palestinian population and 35.1% of the total number of children in our society. Female children under five years of age make up to 49.1% of the total number of children of the same age group. In 1990, the ratio of children of the total population in the Palestinian Territory was considerably higher than the general average for the developing countries³ (13.3%) and the Arab countries (16.5%) for the same year. Furthermore, Children (5-9 years) constitute 15.6% of the total population and 29.2% of total number of children. Female children in this age group comprise 49.2% of all children in the same age group. The percentage of children (5-9 years) in the total Palestinian population is higher than the general average for the Arab countries (13.8%⁴ in 1990).

Children (aged 10-14 years) are living through a peculiar stage that leads them to adolescence. It requires prior academic, psychosocial, and vocational preparation to develop productive individuals capable of assuming their future responsibilities in the society. Population estimates for 1998 show those children (aged 10-14 years) form about 12.5% of the total population in the Palestinian Territory, and about 23.6% of the total number of Palestinian children. The percentage of children in this age group (10-14 year) is also higher than the general average for Arab countries, which was 11.8% in 1990⁵.

◆ Social Environment

A child's social environment encompasses all aspects related to family nurturing of children, and any associated variable affecting the child's upbringing. The family surrounding, in which the child lives, include housing issues, available public services, and living standards. A child's personal development (education, culture, social care) is also factored in the social environment because these conditions affect a child's abilities, relationships, and social interactions.

³ Arab Council for Childhood and Development, and the Arab Research Center, 1996. Studies in Arab Childhood Needs –An Analytical Reading. Cairo date?.

⁴ Arab Council for Childhood and Development, 1995. Statistical Report on the Arab Child Reality.

⁵ ibid



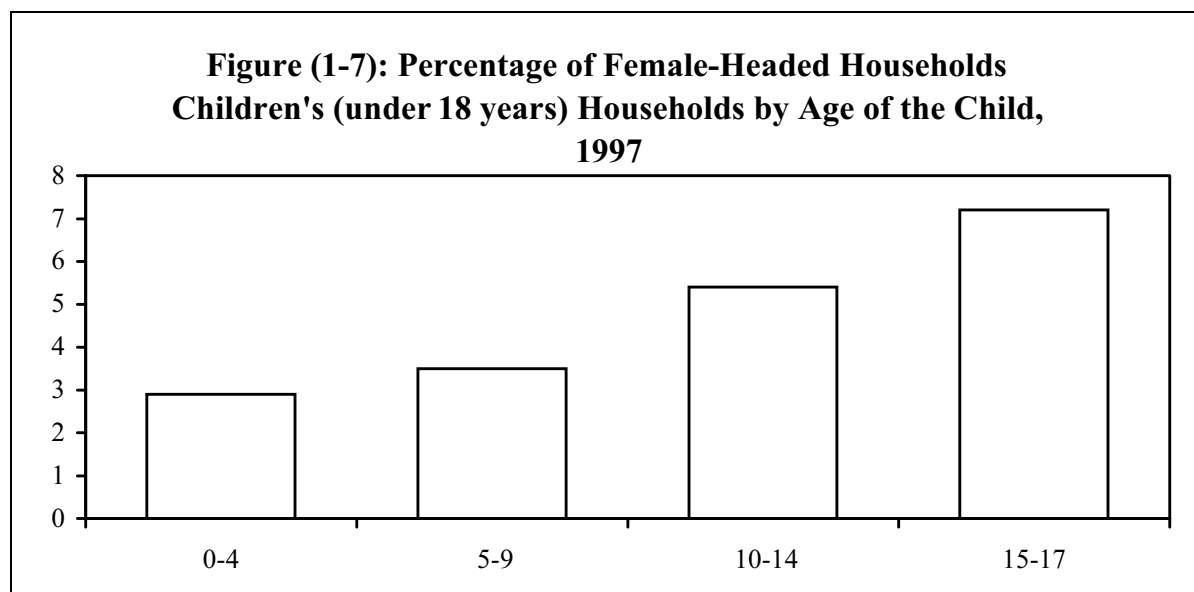
- **Early Marriage**

Two out of every five females married in 1997 aged less than 18 years

In the Palestinian Territory, the mean age at first marriage for females was about 18 years compared to 23 years for males. In 40.1% of all marriages in 1997 the women was under the age of 18, whereas only 2.7% of 1997 marriages involved a man under the age of 18.

- **Sex of Head of the Household**

Findings of the 1997 Population, Housing and Establishment Census show that 4.2% of the total number of children (less than 18 years of age) live in female-headed households. Interestingly, this percentage increases with the child age: while the percentage is 2.9% for under-five children, it increases to 3.5% for children aged (5-9 years), compared to 7.2% in children (aged 15-17 years). No significant variations are found between the West Bank and Gaza Strip in this regard.



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. Population, Housing and Establishments Census of 1997.



- **Children in Single-Headed Households**

43,627 children (3.1% of the total number of children) are living with one parent, 92.5% of which live with mothers and 7.5% with fathers

Available data reveals that 43,627 children (about 3.1% of the total number of children) were living with one parent⁶, of which 92.5% are living with their mothers and 7.5% live with their fathers. No essential differences are found between male and female children in this regard. Female children living with their mothers constitute 92.4% of the total number of female children living with one parent, compared to 92.6% of male children of the same group. The distribution of children living with one parent according to the child's age is as follows: 13.8% are under - five children, 25.2% age 5-9 years, 36.1% are in the age group (10-14) years and 25.0% are children aged (15-17) years.

The number of child-headed households in the Palestinian Territory was 380 of which 40 are headed by female children. Data revealed that around 60% of those children head households formed of 2-5 members, 22.0% head families larger than five members, and 18% are living on their own. This state of affairs negatively affects children's attainment of their usual rights to education and protection against economic exploitation. Available statistics on children's educational levels indicate that 46.1% children (head of household) had received only elementary school education or less, 45.2% had preparatory schooling and 8.7% attained secondary education. As for the employment status of children, about 47.9% of children were classified within the labor force (employed or unemployed) in comparison to 47.4% of children heading households who are enrolled at schools.

- **Educational Attainment of Heads of the Households**

About 23.9% of children (less than 18 years) heads of households attained less than an elementary level of education.

Heads of households have significant roles to play in guiding their families. Data shows that about 10.1% of children aged less than 18 years are living with illiterate heads of households, 13.8% live with heads able to read and write, and 30.0% live with heads who had completed secondary education or higher. This implies that a total of 23.9% of Palestinian children are living with heads of households whose educational attainment is less than elementary.

- **Head of the Household Participation in Labour Market**

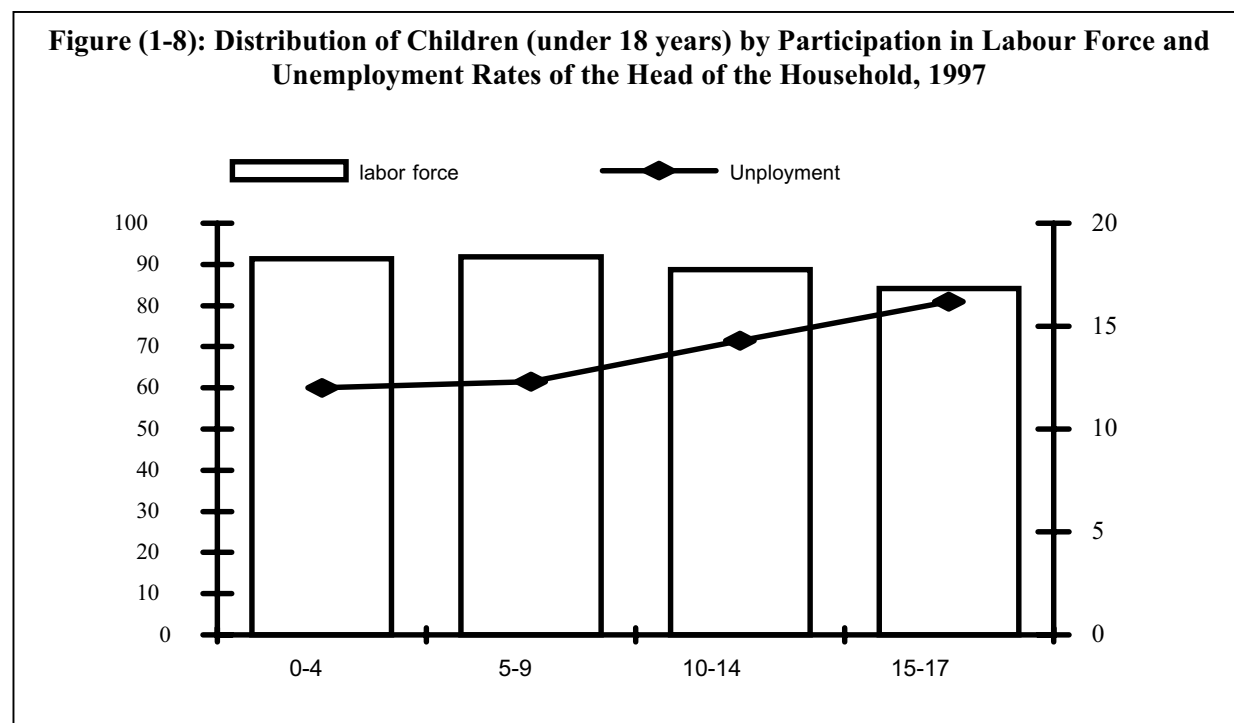
In order to define the characteristics of the labor market, it is necessary to include present dependency rates. The dependency rate for 1997 was estimated to be 94.3, i.e. for each 94 individuals aged (0-14 years) and 65 years or above, there are 100

⁶ Data includes head of household (mothers and fathers) whose marital status is either divorced or widowed.



persons in the labor age who belong to the age group (15-64 years). The dependency rate is 93.2 for females and 95.4 for males. Moreover, dependency rates are expected to decline in time to approach 81.0 in the year 2010 and 60.7 in the year 2025, as suggested by the hypothesis used for population projections that have been previously discussed in this chapter.

The census findings⁷ indicate that 90.1% of children less than 18 years of age belong to households with heads participating in the labor market. No notable variations were observed between the West Bank (90.7%) and Gaza Strip (89.3%), despite the usual regional differences in the economic activities of the labor force as a whole. The study of the socio-economic impacts of the heads of households' employment, which may affect the child too, is closely linked to the head's employment status. Findings arrived at by the 1997 census point out that children whose heads of households are unemployed totaled 11.8% in the Palestinian Territory (9.4% in West Bank and 15.3% in Gaza Strip). The findings revealed that the percentage of these children (whose heads of households are enrolled in the labor markets) decreases as the child grows older. By contrast, the percentage of unemployed heads of households increases with the child's age. 11.0% of heads of households children under 4 years unemployed. This statistic reclose 13.8% unemployment by the time children are between the ages of 15 and 17. On the other hand, unemployed heads of household with children aged 0-4 years reached 11.0% but increased by the child's age to 13.8% of the total children in the age group 15-17 years.



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. Population, Housing and Establishments Census of 1997.

⁷Children categorized as heads of households had their data classified as heads of household rather than children.



- **Housing Conditions**

About four out of every 12 children live in houses unconnected to public wastewater networks.

The Population, Housing, and Establishments census, 1997⁸, found that more than half of the Palestinian population (56.9%) live in independent housing units (*dar*). The percentage of children living in the same kind of housing units was 57.4% of the total number of children. Moreover, 41.0% of the Palestinian population and 40.5% of children live in apartments. Furthermore, the comparison between the general population and children shows that: 84.1% of children receive public water network services (similar to the total percentage of population receiving the same service), 95.0% of children receive electricity network services (94.8% of the total population obtained the same services), and 33.4% of children receive wastewater networks services (almost the same percentage of the total population receive these services). It is worth noting that only 32.6% of the inhabited houses in the Palestinian Territory are connected to water, electricity and wastewater networks. The total rate of public services connections is distributed between the West Bank (23.8%) and Gaza Strip (49.5%). About 49.3% of total Palestinian houses are supplied with water and electricity of which (53.6%) are located in the West Bank and (41.1%) in Gaza Strip.

- ◆ **Economic Status**

In this section, the economic situation of the Palestinian Territory is portrayed. The economic situation functions as a vital indicator of the society's level of wellbeing and reflects the expenditure level on education, health, and other service sectors. Optimal economic performance is considered a criterion for growth and development, and is a basic foundation for a national development strategy that addresses all social, economic and cultural needs.

- **Gross Domestic Product Per Capita**

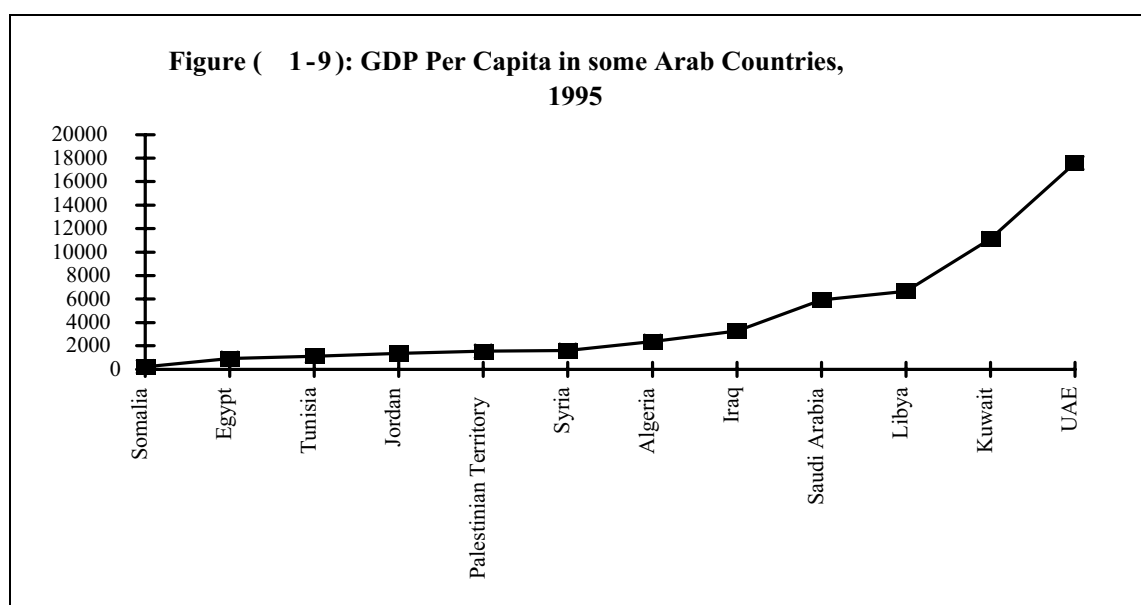
The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the final value of all services and goods produced in one year. The GDP is used as an indicator of the society's economic performance because it provides the total sum of state's production in all sectors. Available statistics on the national accounts of the Palestinian Territory show that the GDP in 1995 was estimated to be 3.575 million dollars and to have reached 3.897 million dollars in 1996⁹.

⁸ Census data cover those population who were actually counted during the period 10 - 24/12/1997, excluding population estimates resulting from the post - census study or population projections for that part of Jerusalem District annexed to Israel after 1967.

⁹ PCBS. 1998. National Accounts 1995 - 1998: Preliminary Estimates. Ramallah-Palestine.



GDP Per Capita in the Palestinian Territory is estimated to be 1,537 dollars per year, according to 1996 estimates. It should be noted in this context that national account estimates revealed a regional disparity in GDP Per Capita between the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The GDP Per Capita rate reached 1,232 dollars for Gaza Strip and 1,691 dollars in the West Bank, excluding that part of Jerusalem District annexed to Israel after 1967, and about 1,900 dollars in Jerusalem, due to the greater influence of the Israeli economy on Jerusalem. The purchasing power of the US\$ and the inflation levels in the Palestinian Territory should be taken into account in order for GDP Per Capita to be indicative of economic welfare of the individual. Income distribution between various social sectors is also significant arriving at a more precise illustration of the economic situation in the Palestinian Territory.



Source: Arab Council for Childhood and Development, 1995. *The Reality of the Arab Child: Statistical Report.*

For comparison between the Palestinian Territory and the Arab world, data provided by the *Statistical Report on the Childhood Reality in the Arab World, 1995*¹⁰, point out that the Palestinian Territory (with current prices) are classified in the second group with 1,200–3,000 dollars per capita GDP.

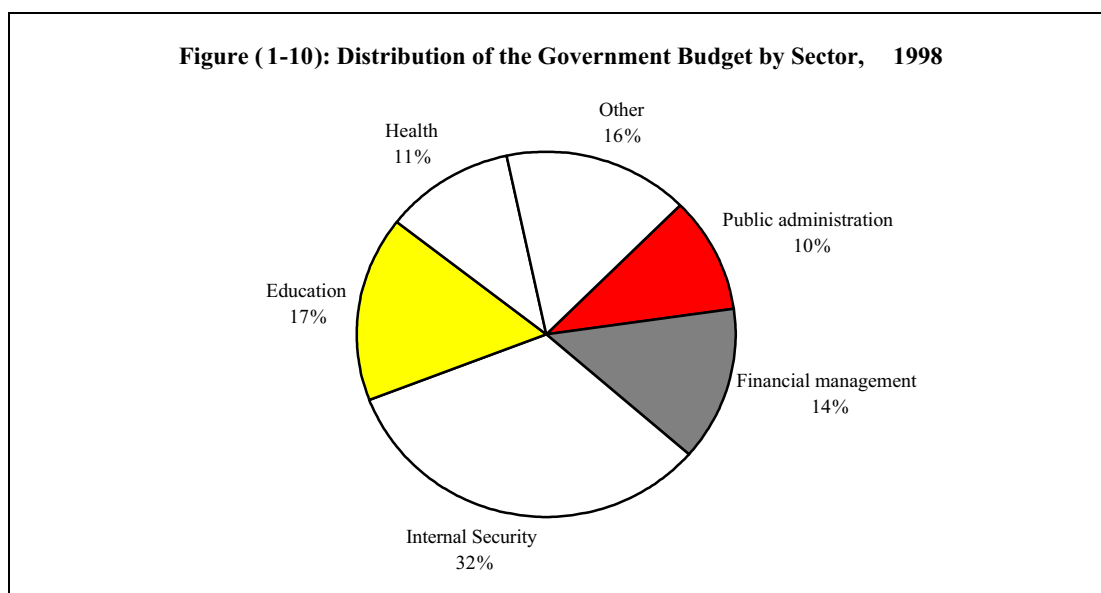
¹⁰ Arab Council for Childhood and Development, 1995. *Arab Child's Reality: The Statistical Report.* In this report, the Arab countries were classified into three groups according to the living standards and per capita GDP. The first group includes oil producing countries with per capita income ranging from 17,000 dollars (as in UAE) to 5,000 (as in Saudi Arabia), including Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Libya and Oman. The second group includes those countries with per capita income that ranges from 3,000 dollars (as in Iraq) to 1200 dollars (as in Tunis) including Algeria, Syria and Jordan. The third group includes those countries with per capita income less than 1,000 dollar, as in Morocco, Mauritania, Sudan and Somalia.



• Governmental\ Public Budget

There has been a decrease in the budget allocated to education (16.5%) and health (11.1%) in regards to the total sum of the public budget for the PNA.

Expenditures on human resources is a future investment. Human development occupies an important place among the priorities of many societies. However, data on PNA's public budget¹¹ show that the governmental allocations for education were as low as 16.5% of the total public budget. Moreover, governmental expenditures show that only 11.1% of PNA's budget was allocated to the health sector. The PNA spends the least percentage of its budget on health, education, and culture.



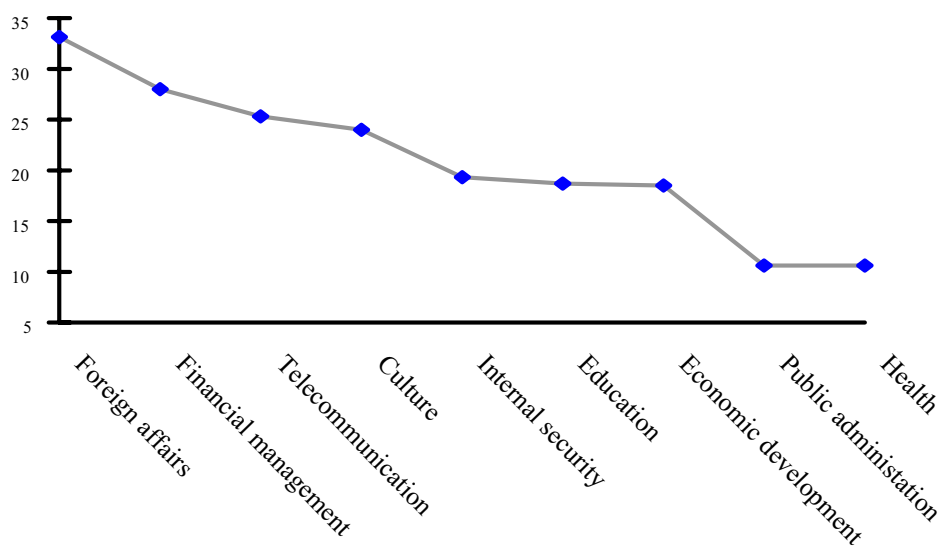
There is another dimension to the lack of funds and budgets dedicated to education and the health sectors. This lack is clearly demonstrated in the insignificant amounts dedicated to the growth of these two sectors over time, in comparison to other sectors. Data provided by the Ministry of Finance indicate that the total growth rate in the general budget between 1997 and 1998 amounted to 17.5%. Distribution of the growth rate by sector indicates that the education and health budgets grew by 18.7% and 10.6%, respectively. The budget of the National Committee for Culture and Science grew by 14.3%.

¹¹ Percentages and figures were calculated according to actual 1996 governmental expenditures, and its estimated expenditures for 1997 in addition to 1998 allocations, according to the comparative running expenditures registers for the period 1996-1998, issued by the Governmental Budget Department at the Palestinian Ministry of Finance.



As for the budgets of the internal security and foreign affairs, they grew by 19.3% and 33.1%, respectively, compared to 28.0% in the budget of the financial administration.

Figure (1-11): Average Growth in the Government Budget by Sector, 1998





Executive Summary

- Population statistics show that the number of Palestinians residing in the West Bank and Gaza Strip was 2.8 million in mid 1997 and will double to 5.6 million by mid 2015 and increase to 7.4 millions by 2025.
- Crude death rates are estimated to be 4.65 per thousand in 1998, but will decline in time and will be halved (2.3) by the year 2025.
- Total fertility rate in the Palestinian Territory is estimated to be 5.94 births, which will decrease in time to reach 5.75 by the year 2000 and 3.06 by the year 2025.
- The mean age at first marriage for Palestinian females was 18 years compared to 23 years for males in 1997.
- The number of married females aged less than 18 years was estimated to be 9338, according to statistics derived from court and church records for 1997.
- The number of children aged less than 18 amounted to be 1.546 million in the year 1998 of which 49% are females. This number of children constitutes more than half (53.3%) of the Palestinian society. Estimates show that this percentage will decrease in time to reach 43.1% by the year 2025.
- The census findings show that 84.1% of Palestinian children and similar percentage of the total Palestinian population live in households connected to wastewater networks, 95.0% of children and 94.8% of total population receive public electricity network connection service and 33.4% of children receive public wastewater network connection services.
- Statistics indicate that 4.2% of children aged less than 18 years live in female-headed households.
- There are 43,627 children living with only one of the parent (92.5% of whom live with their mothers while 7.5% live with fathers).
- The unemployment rate among the children that are heads of households amounted to 13.1% in 1997 (10.3% in the West Bank and 17.1% in Gaza Strip).
- The number of Palestinian children heading households in the Palestinian Territory amounted to 380 children, of whom 40 are girls. 60% of these children head households comprised of 2–5 members whereas 22% of them head households comprised of more than five members. The educational attainment level of 46.1% of these children was elementary or lower, compared to 8.7% who successfully completed the secondary education stage.
- The GDP per capita in the Palestinian Territory is estimated to be US\$ 1,537 per annum, according to the estimates of 1996. The national accounts distribute this



annual GDP per capita by area as follows: US\$ 1,691 in the Remaining West Bank; US\$ 1,232 in Gaza Strip and US\$ 1,900 in East Jerusalem.

- The percentage of the funds allocated to the educational sector from the public budget amounted to 16.5%. The public expenditure records show also that only 11.1% of the public budget was allocated to the health sector.



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Chapter 2

Child Health

Introduction

Both anecdotal observations and documented literature confirm that millions of deprived people still die due to unmet health needs. Of these, the vast majority is women and children of the developing world in particular.

Interestingly, it was as early as 1978 when Morsy¹² defined health and illness in terms of structures of power, wherein gender relations and male-female differentials are central to either condition, be it wellness or illness.

The sad situation of many female children around the world was totally invisible in the agenda of the first three world conferences on women that took place in Mexico City (1975), Copenhagen (1980) and Nairobi (1985). In 1989, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Since then, every UN Conference has to take children into account. During the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) the issue of the female child was clearly and precisely put on the agenda. In Section L of the Beijing Platform for Action, the blueprint for the advancement of women around the world, the female child was identified as the 12th critical area of concern.

Palestinian girls and boys are no exception to this and are only one part of the bigger construct. Yet, their particular situation rises from the political disposition and many years of Israeli military occupation.

In the following few pages some light will be shed over the health conditions of the Palestinian children. Available data will be analyzed and relationships will be established. Furthermore, the definition of “a Child”, as stated in article one of the Child Rights Convention (CRC), will be adopted for our operational purposes. It states that a child is “every human being below the age of 18 unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier”.

With regards to health, Article twenty-four of the same convention states that “the child has a right to the highest standard of health and medical care attainable. States shall place special emphasis on the provision of primary and preventive health care, public health education and the reduction of infant mortality. They shall encourage international cooperation in this regard and strive to see that no child is deprived of access to effective health services”.

¹² Morsy, S.A., Gender, Power, and Illness in an Egyptian Village. Doctoral Dissertation, Michigan State University, Ann Arbor, Michigan, University Microfilms, 1978.



Although the PA is not a sovereign state and therefore cannot ratify UN conventions, it has endorsed the Child Right Convention (CRC). In setting its strategy, the National Program for Palestinian Children¹³ have obviously used it as a foundation in preparing its package for a comprehensive set of child services. The proposed package revolves around the spheres of health, education, youth, culture, and social affairs. As per health, it envisages that all children and mothers will have access to a primary health care system in which trained staff provide proper diagnosis, treatment and referral for a defined set of priority childhood and maternal diseases, and where health promotion occurs through schools, clinics and the media. Secondary care of adequate quality will be provided for pediatrics, obstetrics and emergency department.

To assess the status of Palestinian child's health, relevant indicators are reviewed below, with special emphasis being placed on data related to infant and child mortality, in addition to selected child survival differentials.

◆ Child Mortality

Looking into available health literature, it was observed that most publications, official, and unofficial have narrowly defined the child to be a person under five years of age. Only occasionally can data on children above that age be found. This could be linked to the logic that assumes that most child mortality occurs within this age group. While this might be true, deaths within the other child age groups are highly significant as well. Firstly, because they take place at a comparatively stable life stage. And secondly, because anecdotal observations indicate that the vast majority of them are preventable deaths. The resultant data gap in the five and above years old health is huge and requires farther attention and concern, specially when child mortality is the subject matter.

Documented mortality figures such as those published in the UNICEF Annual Report 1997: West Bank and Gaza has registered the rates 28/1000 and 36/1000 respectively, as estimates for the infant mortality rate (IMR) and under-five mortality rates (U5MR) in the West Bank and Gaza. Both rates are slightly higher for Gaza (32/1000 and 41/1000 respectively) compared to those of the West Bank (25/1000 and 32/1000 respectively). An earlier report¹⁴, however, stated the values where 41/1000 for IMR and 51/1000 for the U5MR. In all cases, it is believed that a substantial extent of underreporting is quite likely in both regions. In spite of that, documented figures remain highly indicative of the progress that was made in the Palestinian child health status within an interim five years period. Among many other factors, free or state guaranteed health insurance which the PA made available for all Palestinian children aged three years and less, has probably been instrumental in this progress.

In contrast to this, the 1997 Israeli figures were equal to 8/1000 for the IMR and 9/1000 for the U5MR. This is according to the UNICEF Annual Report on the State of the World's

¹³ National Program of Action for Palestinian Children "Agenda for Social Renewal Secretariat for the National plan of Action for Palestinian Children, MOPIC, 1996.

¹⁴ UNICEF and JFPPA, A Survey of Infant and Child Mortality in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Interim Report, December 1992, p.41.



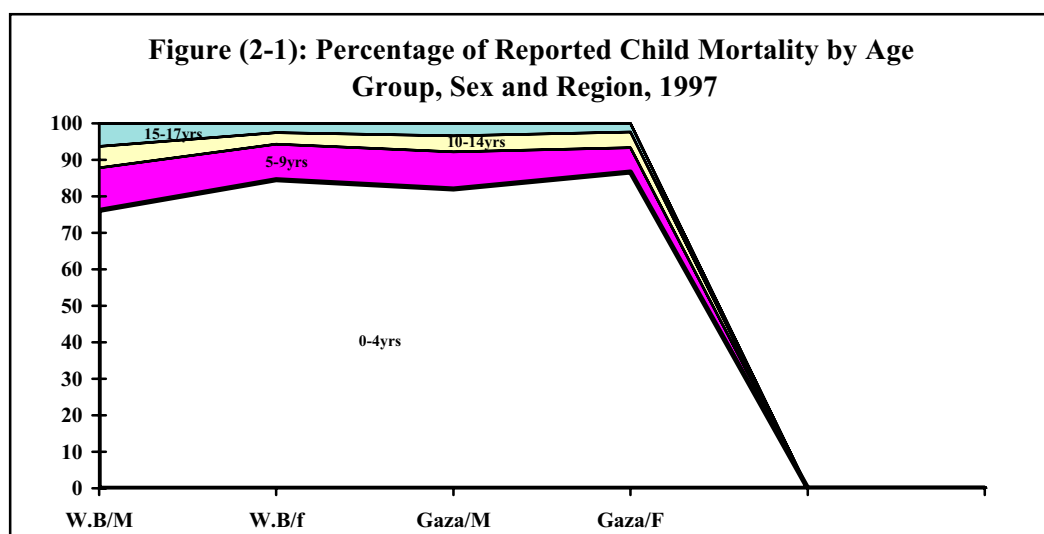
Children, 1998. The huge gap in the figures above is a manifestation of the detrimental effect of the Israeli occupation on the health status of Palestinian children.

- **Child Mortality by Age Group**

82.3% of total child mortality occurs amongst children within the age group (0-4 years)

Guided by the CRC definition of a child, the Palestinian Ministry of Health currently classifies and defines deaths between the age (0-17 years) as child mortality. The figure (2-1) illustrates reported child mortality as per the year 1997, with a total of 2117 deaths. Clearly, in the two regions, the West Bank and Gaza, most deaths (82.3%) occur within the age group 0-4 years, with a 6% difference between females (85.7%) and males (79.3%) However, the case reverses in the other three categories. Percentages of reported deaths for males are higher than those for females within the age groups; 5-9, 10-14, and 15-17, with an average of 2% difference in each category.

Most of the remaining 17.5% of the reported child mortality occurs for children within the age group 5-9 years (9.5%), while only 8% are equally shared by the age groups 10-14 and 15-17. Regional differences were quite negligible in this respect.



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1999. Infant mortality as reported by the Ministry of Health, 1997.

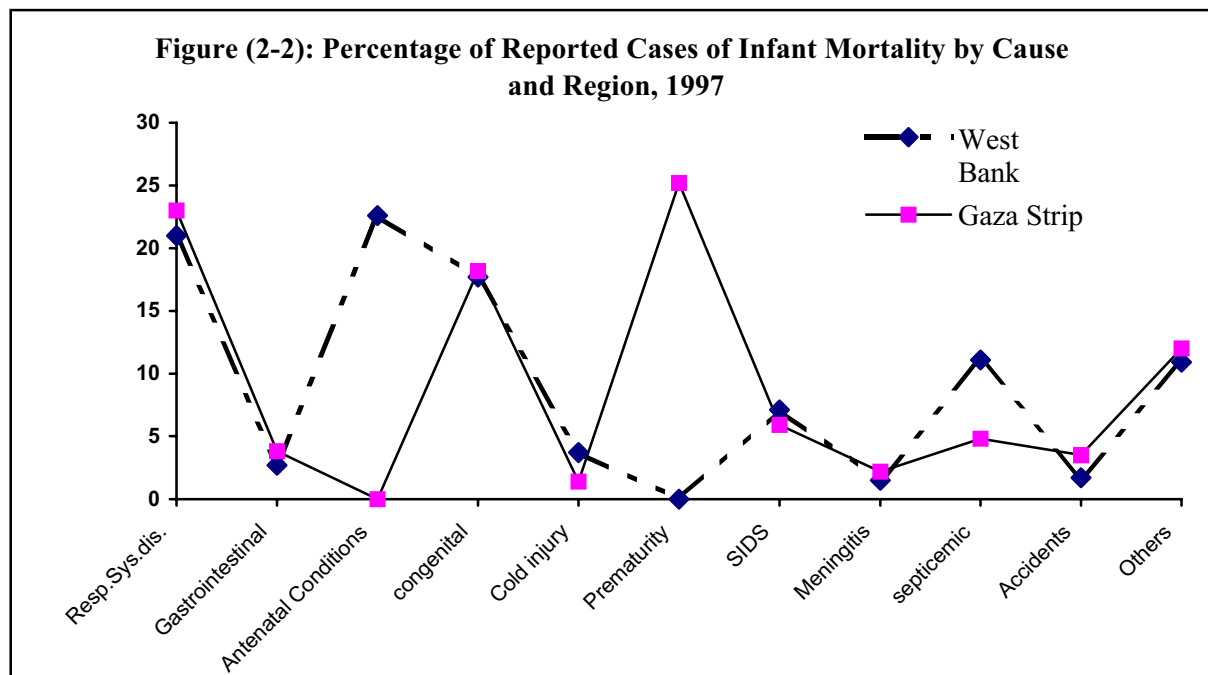
- **Causes of Infant Mortality**

Prematurity is the leading cause of infant mortality in Gaza, while prenatal conditions is the one in the West Bank

Data presented in the figure (2-2) show that the five leading causes of infant mortality in the West Bank are sequentially: antenatal conditions, respiratory system diseases including infections, congenital anomalies, septicemia, and SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome).



While those in Gaza are; prematurity, respiratory system diseases including infections, congenital anomalies, SIDS, and septicemia.



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1999. Infant mortality as reported by the Palestinian Ministry of Health, 1997.

Regional variations are most evidently reflected in the leading cause number one, being it antenatal conditions for the West Bank and prematurity for Gaza. Clearly, both causes are valid indicators of maternal health and the quality of health care pregnant women receives during their antenatal period, which is significantly questionable in this case. As per the rest of the causes the similarity is notable in spite of the differences in the rank of each cause. Looking back at similar figures for previous years, for example the UNICEF report on the situation of Palestinian Children and Women in the West Bank and Gaza, 1997¹⁵, the main achievement both regions markedly made was to bring down gastrointestinal diseases¹⁶ to as low as 2.7% in the West Bank and 3.8% in Gaza, making it no longer a leading cause of infant mortality in Palestine.

¹⁵ According to the UNICEF report causes of infant deaths in Gaza in the year 1995 were; Prematurity, pneumonia, congenital anomalies, gastro-enteritis, and septicemia.

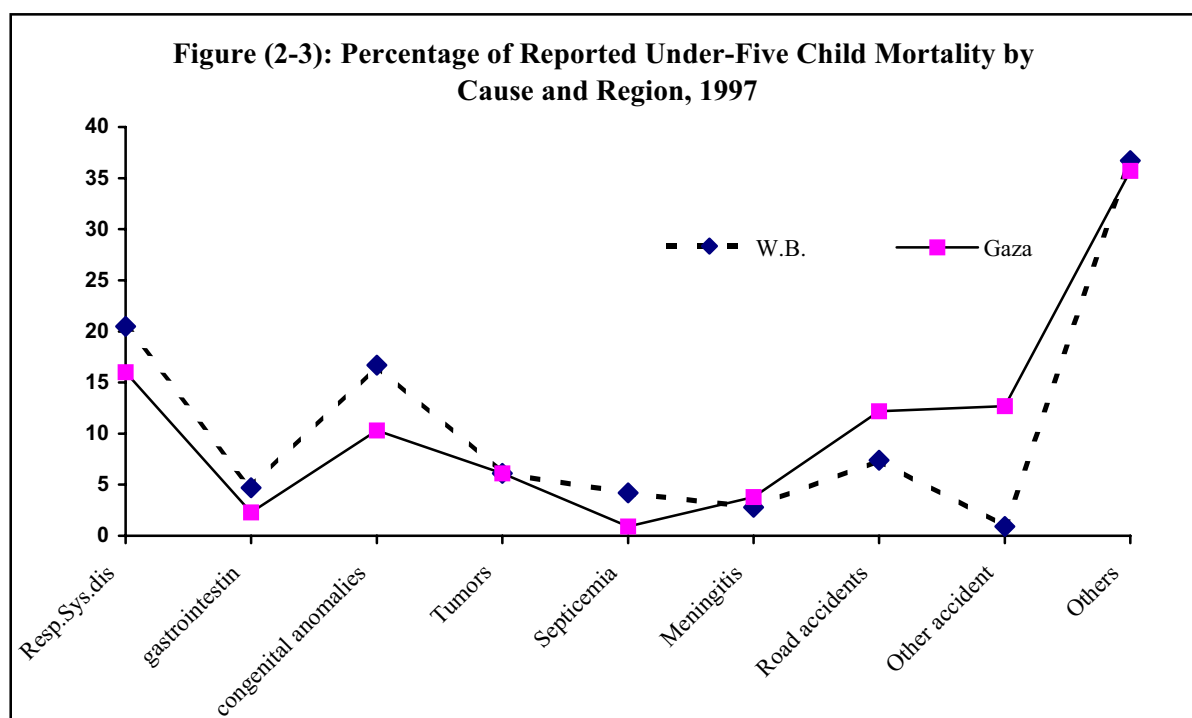
¹⁶ Better management of gastro-enteritis and dehydration largely led to the reduction. Awareness raising and health education on proper use of Oral Rehydration Salt (ORS) were valid assets in this process. This was one of the findings of a 1995 study.



- **Causes of Under-Five Child Mortality¹⁷**

Respiratory system diseases including infections are the leading cause of death amongst under-five years old children in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

As shown in figure (2-3) the regions of the West Bank and Gaza share respiratory system diseases as the leading cause of death amongst “under-five-years old” children. However, regional differences appear as per the subsequent four leading causes of death. These are sequentially: congenital anomalies, road accidents, tumors, and septicemia for the West Bank, and other accidents, road accidents, congenital anomalies, and tumors for Gaza.



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1999. Under-five Child Mortality rate as reported by the Palestinian Ministry of Health

¹⁷ In relevant figure (Figure 2-3), the seemingly high presentation of the “others” category encompasses a number of causes that were put together for analytical purposes. For that each is hard to stand by itself due to its trivial size.



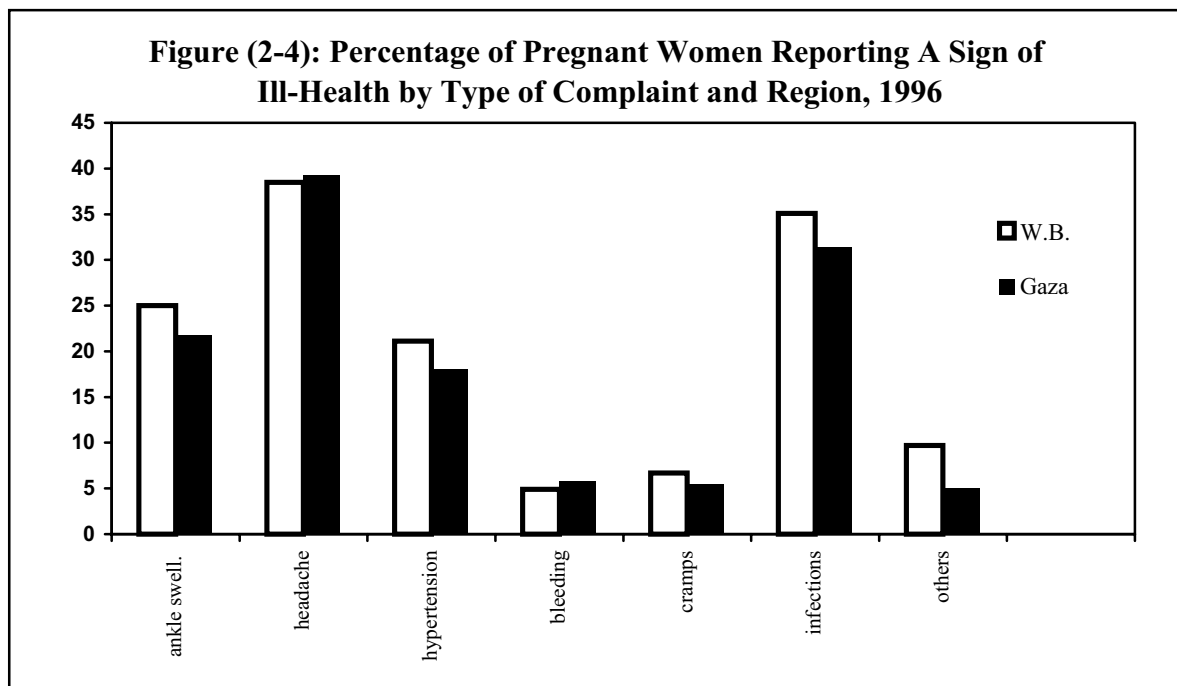
◆ **Selected Differentials in Child Survival**

- **Maternal Health related differentials**

- **Maternal Health during pregnancy**

Out of a total of 624 pregnant women surveyed, 38.8% reported having continuous headaches, 33.4% reported some kind of infection, 23.5% ankle swelling, and 19.6% hypertension during pregnancy. They have also complained of bleeding and cramps but to a much lesser extent. Although these might not seem that important relevant, yet these percentages must be taken serious; Each symptom could be an indicative sign of a serious complication. For example, a continuous headache might be a sign of anemia, while hypertension can be a sign of pre-eclampsia. Agreeably, both cases have a serious impact on the well being of both the mother and the fetus. This signifies the investment that should be made in health promotion and education on pregnancy and prenatal care .

Comparing the regions of the West Bank and Gaza, similarities are great between them. Figure 4 below provides a fuller view.

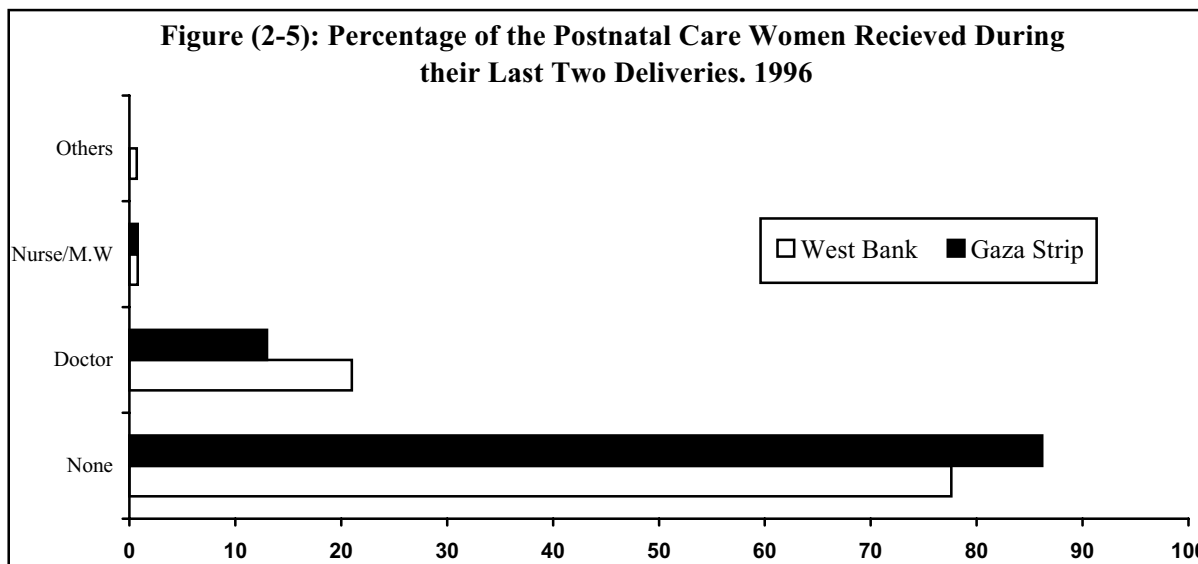


Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1999. The Health Survey in the West Bank and Gaza, 1996. Ramallah-Palestine



▪ Postnatal Care

In a sample of 3350 women, 77.6% and 86.2% of women in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, respectively received. No Postnatal Care after deliveries



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1999. The Health Survey in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 1996. Ramallah-Palestine.

In a sample of 3350 women drawn from the West Bank and Gaza in mid 1996 for a PCBS Survey, 40.2% did not receive postnatal care. Only 9.1% received it from a medical doctor, while only 0.4% received it from a qualified midwife or nurse¹⁸.

These numbers clearly point to inadequacy of care in addition to poor quality of health services. The substantiality of this lies in its bearing on significant maternal health indicators such as maternal morbidity and mortality rates. Postnatal conditions represent preventable major causes of maternal mortality; for example postpartum hemorrhage, puerperal fever, and puerperal sepsis.

As was stated in the National Program for Palestinian Children, this validates and asserts the need to improve the quality of services offered for both women and children as a prerequisite for improving child health indicators and child wellbeing.

¹⁸ Mean percentages of the two regions of the West Bank and Gaza were calculated and used in the analysis here. Bearing in mind the discrepancy in the sample weight for each region due to differences in their original size, for the West Bank this was equal to 2221 women, while it was 1129 for Gaza.

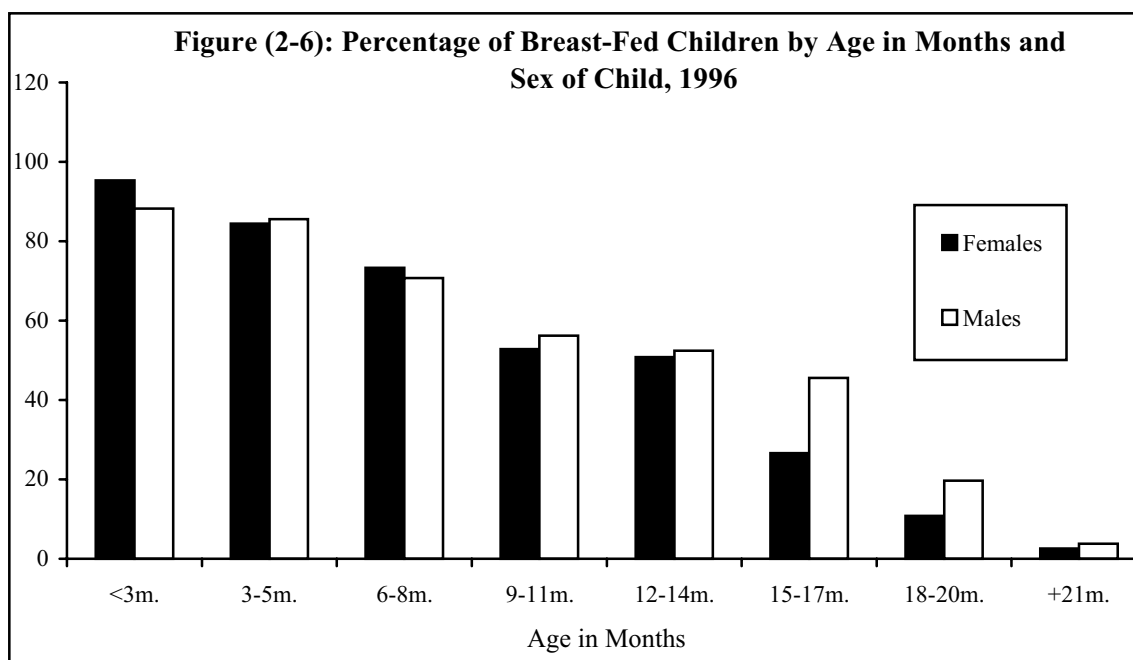


- **Child Health Related Differentials**

- **Breast Feeding Patterns**

Overall, the practice of breast-feeding in Palestinian society is quite satisfactory. As shown in figure (2-6), it is not until the age of eight months that the rate starts going below 72.0% in a survey of a sample size equal to 2,268 children.

Nonetheless, from the age of nine months and above, more boys are breast-fed than girls. Although insignificant in most instances, this is yet a reflection of son preference. Notably, the difference between the male and female breast-feeding is most evident within the age group 15-17 months. This is usually the weaning period when women start planning for the following pregnancy, bearing in mind that one of the cultural assumptions amongst Palestinian women is that breast feeding is an absolute barrier to pregnancy.



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1999. The Health Survey in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 1996. Ramallah-Palestine

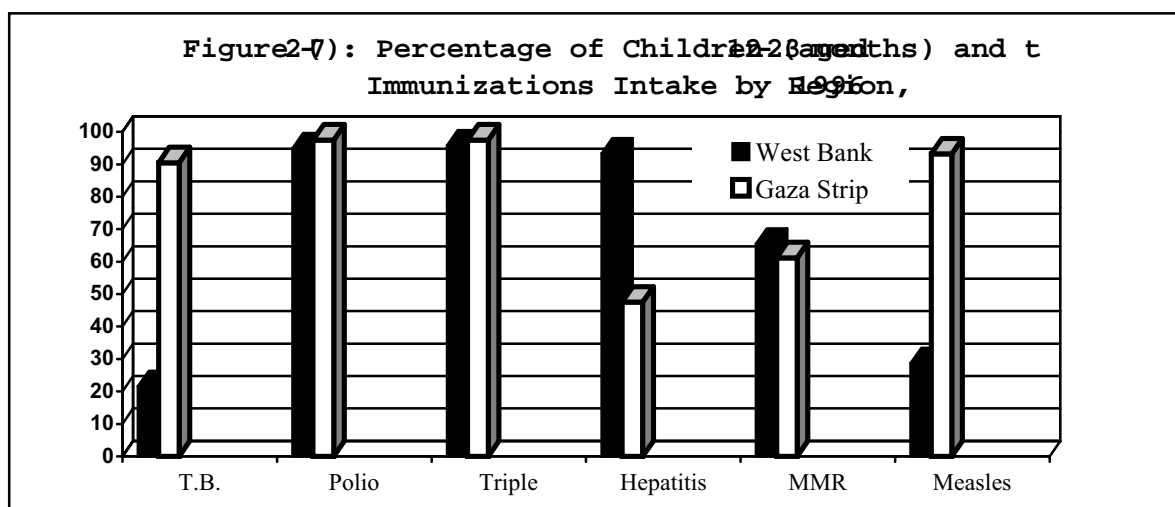
- **Immunizations Coverage¹⁹**

The Palestinian Ministry of Health's records show that immunization coverage for diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus (Triple), polio, measles and tuberculosis exceeds 95% of the target tetanus population. UNICEF reports similar findings, with even above 95% coverage for polio, triple tetanus and measles. In spite of that, measles continued to in interval of three to four year

¹⁹ Data presented in figure 2.7 applies only to children who have already completed their immunization schedule for the first year of their life. Furthermore, the field worker checked the immunization card of each child to collect relevant data the field worker.



cycle, starting in 1975 and ending in 1993. This may be linked to improper adherence to the boosters schedule during the second year of life. Therefore, in a substantial number of cases, the schedule is not adhered to. There were a number of differences between the regions of the West Bank and Gaza in the 1996 PCBS survey, wherein the sample size was equivalent to 708 children. The variations were most evident in respect to; tuberculosis (T.B.), hepatitis, and measles. Concerning tuberculosis, 90.5% of the children in Gaza were immunized compared to 21.6% of the West Bankers. Regarding hepatitis and measles, the percentages were respectively; 47.5%, 93.2% in Gaza and 93.3%, 28.7% in the West Bank. Per region, the overall immunization coverage was 94% for Gaza and 75.4% for the West Bank. Clearly, this is a manifestation of the lack of health education of parents in the first place, and absence of follow up measures at the health centers and clinics in the second place.



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1999. The Health Survey in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 1996. Ramallah-Palestine.

▪ Nutritional Status

Out of 717 sampled children (aged 2-11 months), only 38.1% were given Vitamin A and D supplements. Of these, 42.4% were males and 33.7% were females. 78.7% had it for (0-5 months) while only 4.7% had it for (9-11 months)²⁰

The nutritional status of Palestinian children is affected by a number of circumstances that hinder their obtainment of optimum health. These include; economic hardships, episodes of diarrhoeal diseases, parasitic infections due to poor sanitation facilities and inadequate sewage system, improper infant and child feeding patterns, and a high number of family members living within the household.

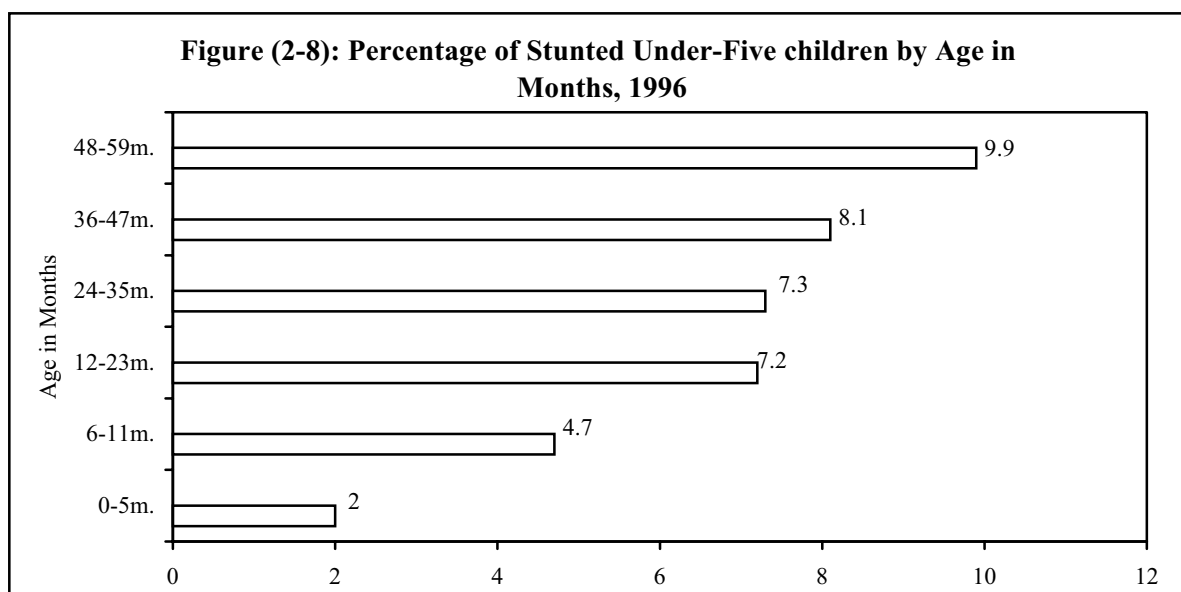
The fact that no standardized protocol is available for assessing the nutritional status of Palestinian children presents a fundamental problem in any assessment process of this kind.

²⁰ This was one of the findings of the PCBS Health Survey, 1996.



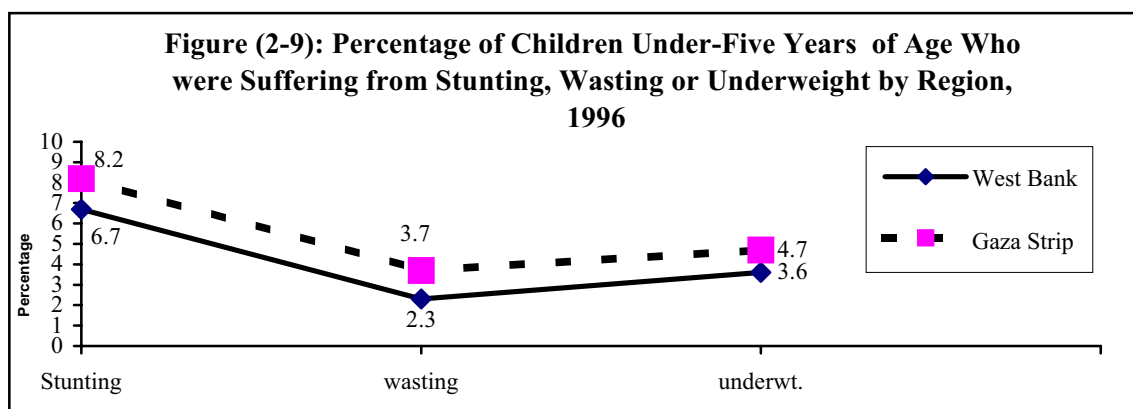
In its Health Survey for the year 1996, PCBS utilized the three indicators; underweight (below 2 standard deviations of the reference weight for age), stunting (low height for age), and wasting (low weight for height) for assessing the status of the 3991 sampled children in the survey with, 1959 girls and 2032 boys.

Overall, stunting was the most prevalent problem. A percentage of 7.2 children fell under this category. While 4% fell under the category of underweight, and 2.8% under that of wasting. Furthermore, as can be seen in figure 2-8 below, stunting became more prevalent within older age groups. Meanwhile, the reverse trend occurs in wasting. Gender differences were slight in the categories of wasting and underweight and considerable in stunting, with boys demonstrating lower rates than girls.



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1999. The Health Survey in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 1996. Ramallah-Palestine.

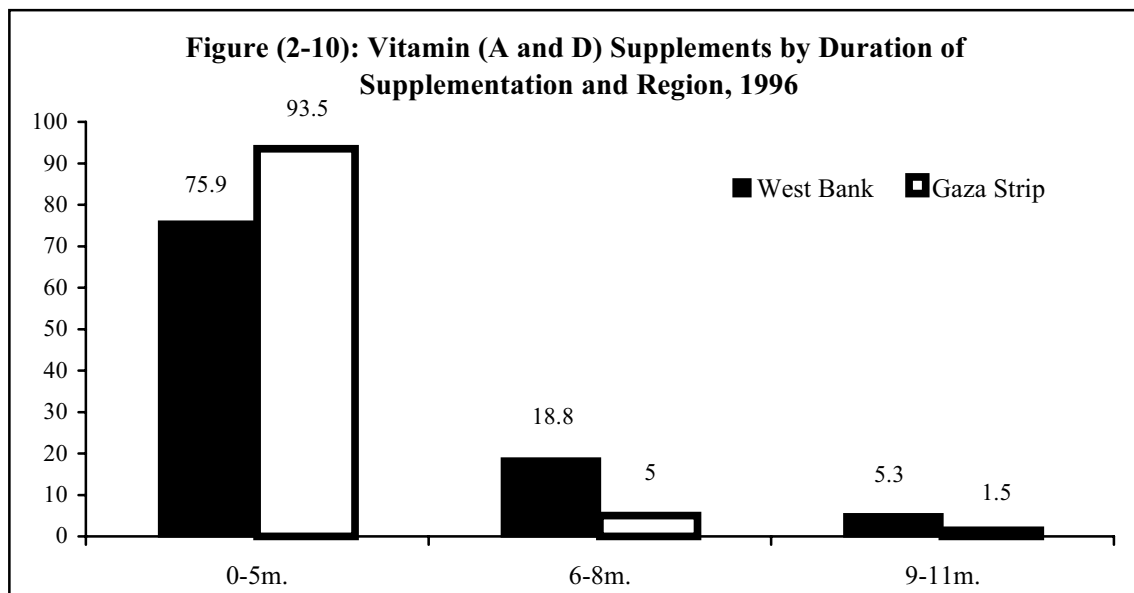
Conditions in Gaza Strip, concerning the three indicators, were found to be worse than in the West Bank. Figure (2-9) below provides a clear view.



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1999. The Health Survey in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 1996. Ramallah-Palestine.



Micronutrients disorders caused by deficiency in vitamins such as vitamin A or minerals such as Iodine is an area that deserves further attention. A recent survey on Iodine Deficiency in the West Bank and Gaza reported an overall prevalence rate of grades 1 and 2 goiter as 14.9%. This was 14.3% in males and 15.5% in females.



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1999. The Health Survey in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 1996. Ramallah-Palestine.

The figure (2-10) clearly shows the regional variations regarding the practice of vitamin A&D supplementation during the first year of life. The vast majority of surveyed women reported supplementing the feeding of their babies for a duration of five months. However, comparing the regions of the West Bank and Gaza, the latter fared better results than the former. For the period of 6-8 months, a dramatic decline is distinct in the two regions. So is the case for the duration of 9-11 months. Notably, the decline is greater for Gaza in both periods. This indicates that well planned public health education campaigns can have an immense effect on the well being of all Palestinian children.

▪ Accidents amongst Under-Five Years of Age Children

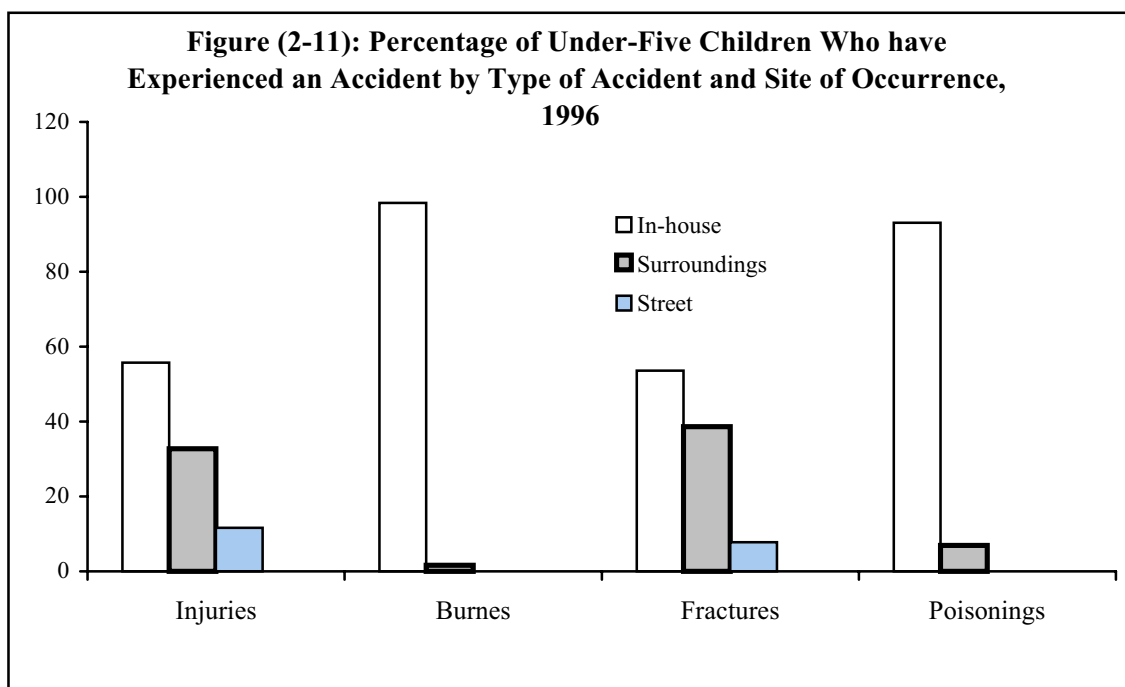
In the 1996 PCBS survey, a total of 214²¹ children were reported having an accident experience during the year 1996. The majority occurred at home, particularly burns (98.4%) and poisonings (93.1%).

To a lesser extent, the same pattern of occurrence applies to injuries (55.7%), and fractures (53.6%). These incidents can be due to factors such as mothers being preoccupied and overburdened with the domestic work and family responsibilities. However, as stated in the

²¹ An earlier PCBS report documented a total of 286 accident experiences during the year 1996. Nonetheless, categorized by type and place it was inevitable to exclude a certain sum of cases from the data presented and discussed above, yielding a total of 214 instead of the original 286.



National Program for Palestinian Children, public health education and primary health care are indeed key strategies for promoting the child's health conditions.



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1999. The Health Survey in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 1996. Ramallah-Palestine.

The same survey went a step further and traced the question of post-accidental long-term complications for children who have experienced an accident during the 12 months prior to the survey. Out of a total of 4229 surveyed children, 4.4%(186) experienced an accident of some kind. Of these, 13%(24) developed a long-term post-accidental complication. Of this later group were within the age group 6-11 months followed by that of 0-5 months and 48-59 months, respectively. As regards over all percentage of accidents 13.9% were girls and 12.3% were boys and 13.9% were from the West Bank while 10.6% were from Gaza.

Understandably, this is not meant to serve the purpose of generalization. Yet, its vitality lies in the social, psychological and economical costs of these 24 disabilities. Considering that they came into existence within a period as short as 12 months. Bitterly enough, almost all are avoidable personal and national losses.



Executive Summary

- 82.3% of reported children's (under 18 years) deaths occurs within the age group (0-4 years), with a 6% difference between females (85.7%) and males (79.3%) to the advantage of males.
- Antenatal conditions (22.6%) and prematurity (25.2%) are the leading causes of infant mortality in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, respectively.
- Respiratory system disease including infections is the leading cause of reported deaths amongst under-five years of age children in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.
- Out of 624 pregnant women, 38.8% reported having continuous headache, 33.4% reported having some kind of infection, 23.5% having ankle swelling and 19.6% hypertension.
- 77.6% and 86.2% of the women in the West Bank and Gaza Strip respectively received no postnatal care during their last two deliveries.
- From the age group nine months and above more males are breast-fed than females, the difference between males and females is most evident within the age group 15-17 months.
- Out of 717 child (2-11 months), only 38.15% were given Vitamin A and D supplements, 78.7% had it for (0-5 months) while only 4.7% had it for (9-11 months)
- 7.2%, 4% and 2.8% of under-five years of age surveyed children, fell within the categories of, stunting, underweight and wasting, respectively.
- Overall immunization coverage for children (12-23 months) was 94% in Gaza Strip and 75.4% in the West Bank in 1996.
- The majority of burns and poisoning accidents happening to children under-five years of age occurs at home, with 98.4% and 93.4% respectively, out of all cases of reported accidents.
- Out of the 4.4% of children under-five years of age whom experienced an accident of some kind, 13% developed a long-term post-accidental complications, 42.3% of these are within the age group (6-11 months).



Recommendations

Overall, both data and discussions indicate that substantial progress in child health has been achieved in the last few years. Yet, challenges ahead are still enormous. The recommendations proposed below are based on conclusions drawn from the data presented and discussed earlier.

Quality of Care

There is no doubt that since the PA took over the Palestinian land a sizable expansion in the health care services was achieved. Yet, this expansion was horizontal rather than vertical. In other words, focus was placed mainly on quantity rather than quality. Although both forms of expansion are desperately needed, caution must be exerted so that one is not on the expense of the other. Speaking of cost-effectiveness, and bearing in mind our limited resources, the PA should prioritize quality over quantity. Anecdotally, it has been observed that the Ministry of Health has already started this shift in health care provision. Yet, this process must be accelerated, and carefully monitored.

Regional Disparities

Although regional disparities are still a recurring observation, data shows that this inequality was limited and to a very great extent reduced. For that its size is very minor at this stage. Nonetheless, the West Bank has still better results in a number of indicators than Gaza, such as in child mortality and nutritional status indicators. It is recommended that the aim of reducing the gap between the West Bank and Gaza remains a priority matter of concern until its elimination.

Gender Inequalities

In congruence with the predominant cultural system, son preference is well translated into figures and percentages in the presented data. This was best reflected in breast feeding and weaning mode, nutritional status indices (stunting, wasting, and underweight), administering Vitamin A & D supplements during the first year of life, percentage of long-term post-accidental complications, and prevalence of goiter. Based on these findings, MOH and all other NGOs are urged to contribute to eliminating these gender-based inequalities through awareness raising and health education programs. Such programs should aim at highlighting the adverse effects of female early childhood problems on the short and long run. In addition to asserting the female child's right to be treated as an equal to the male child in health care. Furthermore, well-developed follow up mechanisms at the PHC level would be useful tools for motivating families to improve their health care behavior when it comes to the female child.

Accidents

Accidents contribute to a substantial percentage of preventable infant and child mortality in the two regions of the West Bank and Gaza. Notably, a considerable percentage of them occur at home, while another high percentage is caused by road accidents. Public health education



with a special emphasis on school health, in addition to properly equipped and efficiently staffed emergency departments is two strongly recommended measures to be taken.

Respiratory System Health Problems

Both in the West Bank and Gaza the leading cause of death for children under five years of age is respiratory system diseases, particularly ARI. This calls for an intervention of two dimensions. The first is community-directed while the second is health system-directed. According to MOH statistics, about one-third of these deaths occur at home. This points at a huge information gap in this regard at the public level. Therefore an awareness raising campaign similar to that of the ORS and control of diarrhea is expected to make a radical change. Ensuring optimum readiness of the operating medical services whether in terms of infrastructure or human resources upgrading is the second dimension of the suggested intervention. This applies mostly to Public Health Centers (PHC), emergency and pediatrics units at hospitals, noting that respiratory diseases contribute to 23% of the total admissions at the pediatric department of Maqassed Hospital, for example.

Maternal Health Differentials

Available data clearly shows that maternal health status is still poor and is not receiving adequate attention. Evidence is the quality of postnatal care both in the West Bank and Gaza, in addition to maternal morbidity and mortality figures. Therefore, all operating institutions are urged to work on improving the quality of care provided to women both at the PHC and secondary health care level. They are also requested to intensify their health education efforts. This is expected to improve health indicators of both women and children.

Future Research Direction

A considerable number of information gaps were identified during the review of available data. Firstly, age groups research bias was evident. Very few studies have targeted children between the age group of 5-17 years. Almost all were dealing with the under five age groups. This could be linked to the cultural definition of who the child is. Nonetheless, as the National Program for Palestinian Children has set its agenda for social reform it has adopted the CRC definition of a child causing a shift from the previous trend in reporting data and designing studies that investigate children's health status. This is not meant to claim that current data is perfect. On the contrary, this age groups bias mentioned earlier contributed to a whole lot of serious data gaps such as those on; violence amongst/against children, life style and detrimental habits, mental well-being, sexual abuse and all other forms of abuse in addition to dental health. Scarcity of data on certain areas is another observation. Nutritional status assessment and micronutrient deficiencies are examples of areas where data is very scarce. Filling in this information and data gaps is an inevitable need to be met, so that the Palestinian child health status is assessed on the grounds of a broader and firmer knowledge base, and to the greatest extent possible. The insightful goal is ultimately promoting and maintaining Palestinian child health.

²² This is according to Dudin's study, 1994, as was quoted in the UNICEF report on the Situation of Palestinian Children and Women in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 1997.

²³ See figure 2-5 for a review.

²⁴ See figure 2-4 for a review.



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Chapter 3

Children Educational Reality

During the first half of the decade international organizations and national education systems have emphasised the democratization of education. Successive international campaigns, conferences and human rights conventions have codified children's education as a right and contributed to significant progress in the expansion of basic educational services around the world.

Child's right Convention-Article 28

The Palestinian educational system has reflected international trends. Near universal enrolment for boys and girls at the basic level (Grades 1-10) has been achieved, and the gender enrolment difference has been eliminated at the basic and secondary (Grades 11 & 12) stages. As part of its restructuring program, the Ministry of Education (MOE) extended compulsory education from 6 to 10 years. It has also drafted a curricular reform plan to be implemented from 2000-2004. Staff development programs are ongoing. But the difficulty in educational reforms cannot be underestimated with more than 100,000 students are expected to enter Grade 1 each year. Such population pressures, in the context of political uncertainty and human and financial constraints, in all likelihood will limit the extent of reforms.

In light of the new forces underpinning the global economy, the effectiveness of planned educational change will contribute to the socio-economic development in the Palestinian Territory. Learning is no longer conceived as restricted to a finite period during childhood or early adulthood. The acquisition of knowledge is a continuous, life-long process.²⁵ The learning skills children potentially acquire at school such as critical thinking, analysis, problem solving and conflict resolution will service them throughout their lives, enabling them to be more effective parents and citizens. Therefore, the acquisition of knowledge is a prerequisite for long-term economic growth and social development. even more important, the ability to interpret information and to innovate will be important for progress in the 21st century, however, is the ability to interpret information and innovate ideas.

The following chapter reviews recent developments in the educational sector to identify areas of progress and to suggest some of the potential risks of educational reforms in the future. It examines three major components of the educational process: students, schools and teachers.

◆ Students

A total of 889,895 students participate in all educational cycles (pre-school, basic and secondary level education). As indicated by the table below, the majority of these children are enrolled in basic-level schools (Grades 1 through 10). Females comprise 49.20 percent of enrolled children.

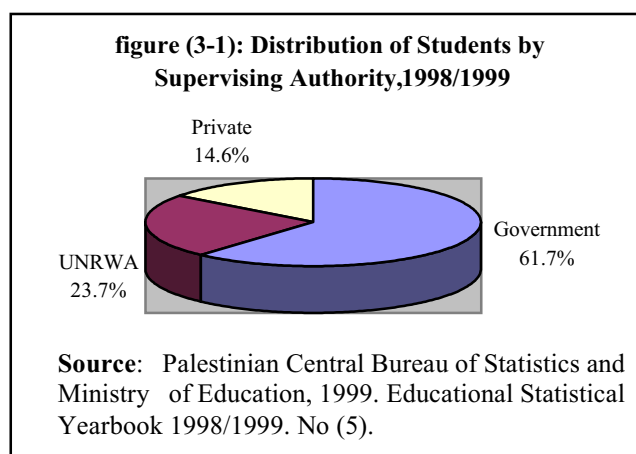
²⁵The 1998 World Bank Development Report is devoted to the importance of knowledge in the development process and how countries can close knowledge gaps and overcome information problems. World Bank, *World Development Report, Knowledge for Development*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

**Table (3-1): Distribution of Students by Stage and Gender, 1998/ 1999**

Stage	Female	Male	Total	Female %
Pre-School	36,927	40,246	77,173	47.85
Basic	945367,	378,969	746,914	49.26
Secondary	92632,	32,882	65,808	50.03
Total	798437,	452,097	889,895	49.20

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Ministry of Education, Educational Statistical Yearbook No. 4, 1997-1998, p.61.

The figure (3-1) shows the distribution of students according to the supervising authority. The government provides schooling to 549,404 (61.7%) of students. UNRWA services 210,759 students, or 23.7 percent of the total. The private sector is responsible for the remaining students. The majority of private school students (59.5%) are at the pre-school level. Therefore, the major burden for delivering educational services to school age children falls on the public sector.



However, there are significant regional variations. For example, the proportionately larger refugee population in the Gaza Strip results in a greater role for UNRWA in this region as compared with the West Bank.²⁶

- **Pre-school enrollment**

Pre-schools are operated exclusively by the private sector

Pre-schools are operated exclusively by the private sector but licensed by the MOE. In the scholastic year 1998/1999, a total of 77,173 children attended kindergartens. This represents more than a 3.8 fold increase from the 20,022 student enrolled in 1985/1986.²⁷ While these schools are intended for children four and five years, children as young as three and as old as eight years attend pre-school education. However, children at these ages comprise only a

²⁶ 53.7 percent of children at the basic level attend UNRWA schools in the Gaza Strip as compared with 11.7 percent in the West Bank.

²⁷ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, *Education Statistics in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Current Status Report Series No. 5* (Ramallah: August 1995), p. 117.



minority of total enrollment; 13.3 percent of kindergarten students are either older or younger than the official school age as shown in the table (3-2).

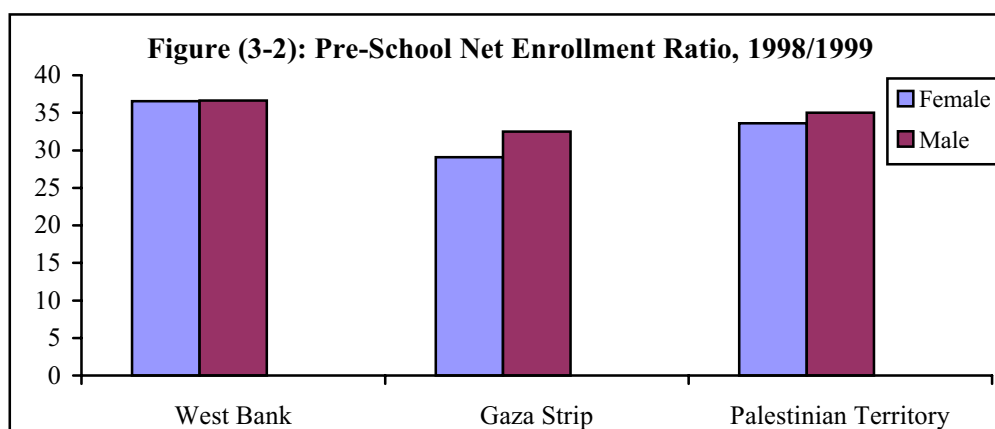
Table (3-2): Distribution of Children in Kindergartens by Gender, Age and Region, 1998/1999

Age in Years	West Bank (%)			Gaza Strip (%)			Palestinian Territory (%)		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
3	5.7	6.1	11.8	3.2	4.4	7.6	4.7	5.5	10.2
4	15.4	16.7	32.1	13.8	16.6	30.4	14.9	16.6	31.5
5	26.0	27.5	53.5	27.8	30.7	58.5	26.6	28.6	55.2
6	1.0	1.4	2.4	2.3	1.2	3.5	1.4	1.3	2.7
7+	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2
Total	48.2	51.8	100	47.1	52.9	100	47.8	52.2	100

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Ministry of Education, Educational Statistical Yearbook No. 4, 1997-1998.

Approximately 48 percent of the total number of children enrolled in pre-schools are female. Regional variations are minimal; the proportion of female students is 48.2 and 47.1 percent in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, respectively.

School enrollment ratios provide a useful measure for evaluating the state of education as well as for comparisons with other countries. Figure (3 - 2) shows net pre-school enrolment rates in the Palestinian Territory. About 34 percent of children (4-5 years) attend kindergartens, with boys slightly more likely to attend school than girls. A comparison of net enrolment ratios by region indicates a measure of geographic disparity; 37.1 percent of West Bank children aged (4-5 years) attend pre-schools as compared to 28.7 percent in the Gaza Strip.



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1999. Ramallah-Palestine. Unpublished Data



The table (3-3) indicates wide disparities in pre-school enrollment ratios across five selected countries. While Lebanon and Israel have gross enrollment ratios of over 70 percent, almost 40 percent of Palestinian children, about one-quarter of Jordanian children and 7 percent of Syrian children are enrolled in pre-school education. Several reasons may contribute to the comparatively lower proportion of children attending pre-school in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

16,538 children five-year old that attends Grade 1 and are therefore included in the enrollment ratios at the basic stage. Some families may be unable to afford the fees levied by service providers, particularly in light of lower GNP per capita levels in these areas. Some parents may be skeptical concerning the quality of educational programs and prefer that their children remain at home or make alternative arrangements for childcare. Also, women only represent 13-14 percent of the total Palestinian labor force.²⁸ Therefore, many mothers who do not engage in paid work outside the home may be full-time caretakers of their children.

Table (3-3) Pre-School Education: Duration, Population and Enrolment Ratios in Selected Countries²⁹

	Age group	Gross enrollment ratio (%)			Net enrollment ratio (%)		
		Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male
	1995						
Israel	2-5	71	--	--	--	--	--
Jordan	3-5	25	24	27	--	--	--
Palestinian Territory ³⁰	4-5	39.3	38.57	40.03	34.33	33.61	35.02
Lebanon	3-5	74	73	76	--	--	--
Syria	3-5	7	6	7	--	--	--

Source: UNESCO, World Education Report: Teachers and female teachers in a changing world, France, UNESCO, 1998, PP. 117, 130.

- **Basic school enrollment**

Enrollment levels decrease with increasing grade

Over 746,914 students are now enrolled in the basic stage, up from 404,237 students in Grades 1-10 who were enrolled in 1985/1986.³¹ Table (3-4) indicates that enrollment levels decrease with increasing educational levels. High fertility rates may contribute to the number of new school entrants in Grade 1, and declining enrollment at the upper basic grades is indicative of dropout.

²⁸ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Labor Force Survey, 1996.

²⁹ All Data is for 1995 except the Palestinian Territory (1998).

The gross enrollment ratio is the total enrollment in pre-school education for all mentioned countries, regardless of age, divided by the population of the age group that officially corresponds to pre-school education. The net enrollment ratio only includes enrollment for the age group corresponding to the official school age of pre-school education. All ratios are expressed as percentages. Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1998.

³⁰ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1998. Ramallah-Palestine. Unpublished Data.

³¹ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Education Statistics in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, p. 144.



Table (3-4): Distribution of Basic Stage Students by Grade, Gender and Region, 1998/1999

Grade	West Bank (%)			Gaza Strip (%)			Palestinian Territory (%)		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
1	12.9	13.0	13.0	12.8	12.9	12.9	12.9	13.0	12.9
2	12.6	12.8	12.7	12.7	12.7	12.7	12.7	12.7	12.7
3	11.8	12.0	11.9	12.5	12.3	12.4	12.1	12.1	12.1
4	11.1	11.4	11.2	12.0	12.2	12.1	11.5	11.7	11.6
5	10.7	11.1	10.9	10.7	10.9	10.8	10.7	11.0	10.9
6	9.3	9.6	9.5	9.6	9.6	9.6	9.5	9.6	9.5
7	9.1	9.2	9.1	8.9	8.9	8.9	9.0	9.0	9.0
8	8.7	8.4	8.5	7.7	7.7	7.7	8.3	8.1	8.2
9	7.5	7.0	7.3	6.8	6.7	6.8	7.2	6.9	7.1
10	6.2	5.7	5.9	6.2	6.0	6.1	6.2	5.8	6.0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Ministry of Education, Educational Statistical Yearbook No. 4, 1997-1998.

Gender parity in enrollment levels is apparent from both tables (3-4) and (3-5). Gender disparities in gross enrollment rates are slightly biased towards females. All five-educational systems in the selected countries reported in table (3-5) approaches to universal basic education and have eliminated the gender gap (with the exception of Syria). The Palestinian education system closely parallels the Jordanian system in terms of structure (duration of compulsory education) and enrollment ratios.

The difference in the net and gross enrollment rates cited below indicate that children younger and older than the official school age are enrolled in basic level schools. This may be due to several factors. They may be enrolled at 5 years, one year ahead of the official entry age. This is the situation with 16,538 of Palestinian students, or 1.9 percent of total students enrolled. The net-gross enrollment differential may also be attributed to repeaters.

In the Palestinian Territory, the number of students of 17 and 18 years is 3,593 students, or 0.4 percent of the total number of students. Typically, these students are at the upper basic grades of 9 and 10. Unlike the situation at other grade levels, female students are more inclined to repeat a year whereas boys drop out of school. The issue of school wastage (repetition and drop out) will be discussed in more detail below.



Table (3-5): Primary\ Basic Education: Duration, Population and Enrolment Ratios in Selected Countries ⁸

	Duration (in years)		Gross enrollment ratio (%)			Net enrollment ratio (%)		
	Compulsory education	Primary education	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male
Israel	11	6	99	--	--	--	--	--
Jordan	10	10	94	95	94	89	89	89
Palestinian Territory	10	10	93.6	94.1	93.1	89.8	90.1	89.6
Lebanon	-	5	109	108	111	--	--	--
Syria	6	6	101	95	106	91	87	95

Source: UNESCO, World Education Report: Teachers and female teachers in a changing world, France, UNESCO, 1998, pp. 117, 134. Data for the Palestinian Territory, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Ministry of Education, unpublished data.

- **Secondary School Enrollment**

Secondary school enrolment ratio drops sharply relative to the high enrollment levels at the basic cycle

In the scholastic year 1998/1999 a total of 65,808 students were enrolled in secondary schools, almost double the number of students in 1985/1986.⁹ Most students choose to follow one of two optional academic (Scientific or Literary) streams. In contrast, only 2,146 or 3.26 percent of secondary school students choose a vocational stream.

Almost 50 percent of secondary school students are female. However, this figure is somewhat misleading in that it presents a profile of relative gender parity. Gender-based differences are apparent in enrollment levels in each of the secondary streams as indicated in table (3-6). Females comprise 54.2 percent of total enrollment in the literary stream, and only 43.9 percent of students in the scientific track. Of those students in vocational and technical education, females make up only 21.6 percent of the total enrollment in this stream. They are excluded from agricultural and industrial studies and are admitted only to commercial

⁸ All data is for 1995 except the Palestinian Territory (1997).

The gross enrollment ratio is the total enrolment in basic (or primary education) for all countries excepting the Palestinian Territory, regardless of age, divided by the population of the age group which officially corresponds to primary schooling. The net enrolment ratio only includes enrolment for the age group corresponding to the official school age of basic (or primary) education. All ratios are expressed as percentages.

⁹ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Education Statistics in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, p. 144. The actual number is 31,520.



vocational secondary schools. Such gender disparities at the secondary level underlie the broad trends and patterns in fields of specialisation at the tertiary level¹⁰

Table (3-6): Distribution of Secondary Stage Students by Stream, Gender and Region, 1998/1999

Stream	West Bank			Gaza Strip			Palestinian Territory		
	Femal	Male	Total	Femal	Male	Total	Femal	Male	Total
Scientific	4,915	6,189	11,104	3,736	4,861	8,597	8,651	11,050	19,701
Literary	14,093	10,890	24,983	9,652	9,198	18,850	23,745	20,088	43,833
Shari'a	36	24	60	25	43	68	61	67	128
Commerce	385	118	503	74	0	74	459	118	577
Agriculture	0	81	81	0	98	98	0	179	179
Industry	10	1,380	1,390	0	0	0	10	1,380	1,390
Total	19,439	18,682	38,121	13,487	14,200	27,687	32,926	32,882	65,808

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Ministry of Education, *Education Statistical Yearbook No. 4, 1997-1998*.

Table (3-7) shows those secondary school enrolment ratio drops sharply relative to the very high levels at the basic cycle as mentioned above. The secondary school gross enrollment rates for the Palestinian Territory averaged 53.6 percent in 1998/1999, 52.1 percent and 55.1 percent for males and females respectively. Of the five countries selected, the Palestinian Territory ranked third, after Israel and Lebanon, but higher than the rates for Syria.

Table (3-7): Secondary Education: Duration, Population and Enrolment Ratios in Selected Countries, 1995¹¹

	School-Age population ('000)	Gross enrollment ratio (5)			Net enrollment ratio (5)		
		Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male
	1995						
Israel	612	89	--	--	--	--	--
Jordan	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Palestinian Territory	118.4	52	52	52	40	40	40
Lebanon	421	81	84	77	--	--	--
Syria	2161	44	40	47	39	37	41

Source: UNESCO, World Education Report: Teachers and female teachers in a changing world, France, UNESCO, 1998, pp. 117 & 142. Data for the Palestinian Territory. Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Ministry of Education. Unpublished data.

¹⁰ Refer to the tables in the annual report of the Ministry of Higher Education; MOHE, Statistical Yearbook of Palestinian Universities and Colleges, 1996-1997, October 1997.

¹¹ All data is for 1995 except the Palestinian Territory (1997).

The gross enrollment ratio is the total enrolment in secondary education for all countries regardless of age, divided by the population of the age group that officially corresponds to secondary schooling. The net enrolment ratio only includes enrolment for the age group corresponding to the official school age of secondary education. All ratios are expressed as percentages.



- **Students with Special Needs**

The proportion of children not attending school rises with increasing age regardless of gender. Disabled children in the West Bank appear to have greater educational opportunities at school than their counterparts in the Gaza Strip. Disabled females are underrepresented in the classroom, comprising less than 40 percent of children enrolled in school.

According to the 1997 Population, Housing and Establishment Census, 41.7 percent of children with special needs in the Palestinian Territory attend school. The data presented in the table (3-8) show disparities in school attendance according to age, geographical region and gender.

The proportion of children not attending school rises with increasing age regardless of gender. Disabled children in the West Bank appear to have greater educational opportunities at school than their counterparts in the Gaza Strip. Disabled females are underrepresented in the classroom, comprising less than 40 percent of children enrolled in school.

Several possible factors may contribute to these findings. There may be more schools or places made available for males as compared with females, or parents may be more inclined to enroll their male children in school given the roles of men and women in the society.

Table (3-8) : Distribution of Disabled Children 5-17 Years by School Attendance, Age Group, Gender and Region, 1997

	West Bank				Gaza Strip			
	Attend	Not Attending	Total	% not attending	Attend	Not Attending	Total	% not attending
Female								
5-12	885	1,073	19,58	54.80	535	921	1,456	63.26
13-15	233	381	618	61.65	118	324	442	73.30
16-17	99	276	377	73.21	45	193	235	82.13
Total	1,217	1,730	2,953	58.58	698	1,438	2,136	67.32
Male								
5-12	1,286	1,256	2,543	49.39	811	1,123	1,935	58.04
13-15	389	545	936	58.23	233	469	704	66.62
16-17	145	456	601	75.87	104	295	400	73.75
Total	1,820	2,257	4,080	55.32	1,148	1,887	3,039	62.09

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Census Final Results - Summary (Ramallah: PCBS, November 30, 1998).

The available data does not differentiate children attending school by the degree of disability. Furthermore, the data is ambiguous regarding the nature of the school – whether mainstream schools or specialized institutions. Given crowded conditions (discussed below) in the public and UNRWA school systems, large classes make it more difficult for disabled children to be educated alongside other children. This implies that children with special needs are mostly



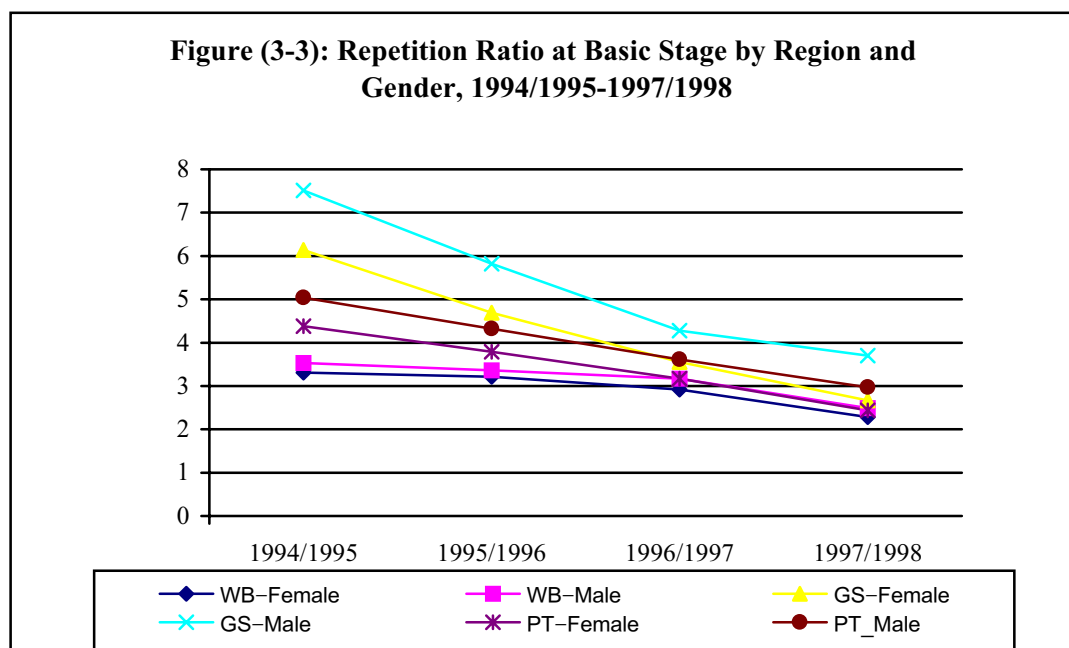
serviced by specialised institutions and are not yet integrated into the public school system as might be desirable.

- **School Wastage**

School wastage may be defined in several ways. According to UNESCO, it comprises those children who do not enrol in school. It also concerns pupils who complete the education cycle but fail to gain the intellectual, social, cultural and ethical knowledge and skills that schooling should provide. A more narrow but operational definition refers to pupils who do not complete their schooling in the prescribed number of years either because they drop out of school entirely or because they repeat one or more grades.³² It is this latter definition which will be used below to examine school wastage in the Palestinian Territory.

- **Repetition**

Repetition rates among schoolchildren at the basic cycle appear to be declining since 1994/1995



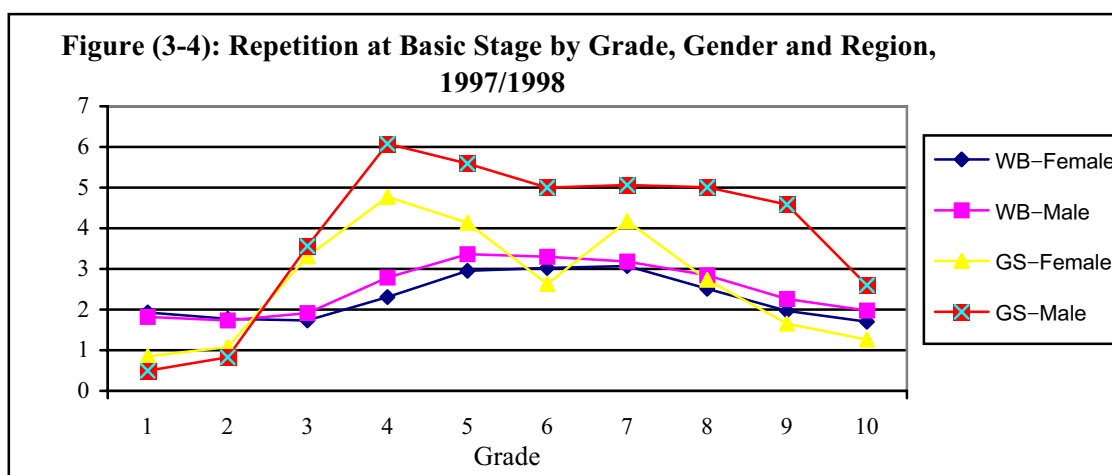
The figure (3-3) indicates that repetition rates among schoolchildren at the basic cycle appear to be declining since 1994/1995. By 1997/1998, 2.97 percent of male students repeated a year as compared with 5.04 percent in 1994/1995. Similarly, repetition among female students declined to 2.44 from 4.38 percent during the same period. The drop in the percentage of repeaters during this period was greater in the Gaza Strip, thereby closing the regional repetition gap.

³² UNESCO, *Wasted Opportunities: When Schools Fail* (France: UNESCO, 1998) p. 11.



At the basic level, about 2.71 percent of students were repeaters in the scholastic year 1997/1998, as compared with 8 percent of students enrolled in primary schools in the Arab states.³³

The difference is even more marked when considering that the estimated number of repeaters for the Arab States includes children in the primary cycle, whereas the data for the Palestinian Territory comprises pupils up to Grade 10.



The magnitude of repetition varies according to grade level, region and gender as indicated in figure (3-4). Repetition rates are highest at Grades 4 and 7. At the basic level, female schoolchildren in the Gaza Strip have higher repetition rates than their counterparts in the West Bank, but males in West Bank have higher repetition rates than their counterparts in Gaza Strip.

Repetitions are more significant among boys than girls except for those pupils in Grades 1 and 2. This may be attributable to the greater opportunities for truancy among boys, among other reasons.

Table (3-9) shows that repetition rates vary according to educational stage, declining at the secondary level, particularly among girls.

Table (3-9): Percentage of Repeaters by Stage, Gender and Region, 1997/1998

	West Bank %		Gaza Strip %		Palestinian Territory %	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Basic	2.72	2.93	2.74	3.76	2.44	2.97
Secondary	0.88	1.11	0.39	1.21	0.68	1.15

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Ministry of Education, Education Statistical Yearbook No. 5, 1998/1999.

³³ UNESCO, *Wasted Opportunities*, p. 17. Data for the Arab States around 1995.



Table (3-10) shows that repetition rates also vary according to supervising authority. Students at the basic level attending UNRWA schools are more likely than students in public or private sector schools to repeat a year. This finding may partially contribute to the regional disparities in repetition rates indicated above. Since proportionately more children are enrolled in UNRWA schools in the Gaza Strip, we would expect to find an overall higher repetition rate for the region. It is unclear whether these differences across supervising authorities are the result of individual advancement policies or other factors.

Table (3-10): Percentage of Repeaters by Supervising Authority, Gender and Region, 1997/1998

	West Bank %		Gaza Strip %		Palestinian Territory %	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Government						
Basic	2.34	2.60	1.94	2.39	2.23	2.54
Secondary	0.98	1.27	0.48	1.61	0.77	1.40
UNRWA						
Basic	2.80	2.78	3.35	4.87	3.19	4.42
Private						
Basic	0.94	1.43	0.21	0.28	0.88	1.33
Secondary	2.70	2.29	0.00	0.00	1.70	1.95

At the secondary level, students in public schools have lower repetition rates than their counterparts in private schools. The gap is particularly wide with respect to males. Private schoolboys may be inclined to repeat the final year prior to matriculating in order to improve their grades and increase their post-secondary opportunities, or repeater students at the second secondary grade at government school who transfer to the private schools in order to increase their opportunities.

- **Drop Out**

Drop out rates rise with increasing grade level among students in the basic cycle

The table (3-11) indicates that, as with repetition rates at the basic stage, dropout rates have declined since 1994/1995. Among females, the drop out rate fell to 1.47 percent in 1997/1998 as compared with 2.44 percent in 1994/1995. Among males, the rate declined to 2.04 from 2.56 percent.

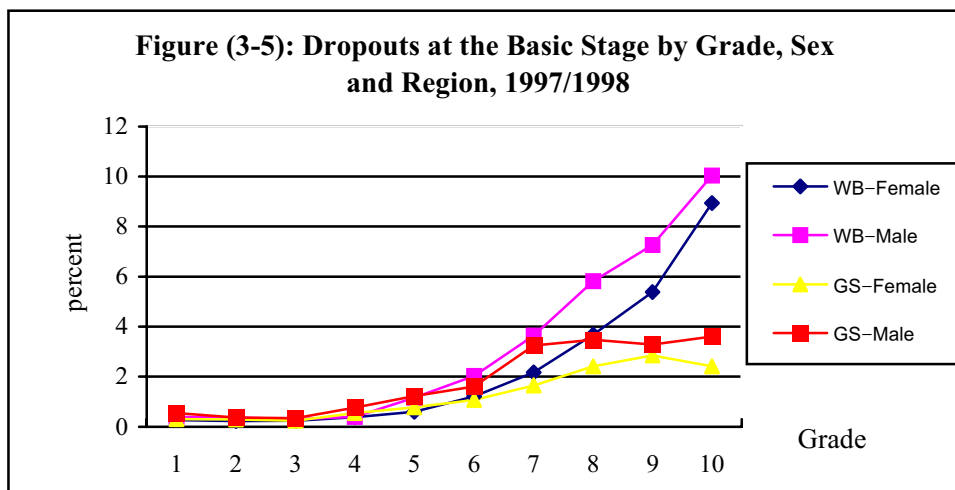
Table (3-11): Drop Out Rates at the Basic Stage by Region and Gender, 1994/1995-1996/1997

	West Bank %		Gaza Strip %		Palestinian Territory %	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
1994/1995	2.57	2.76	2.24	2.23	2.44	2.56
1995/1996	2.20	2.78	2.64	1.88	2.37	2.43
1996/1997	1.75	2.46	1.30	1.62	1.57	2.13
1997/1998	1.77	2.39	1.02	1.52	1.47	2.04

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Ministry of Education, (unpublished data).



The data illustrated in figure (3 – 5) shows that drop out rates rise with increasing grade among students in the basic cycle. The drop out of students before they complete Grade 4 is worrisome since at that age they have not yet reached a level of sustainable literacy. Drop out rates among West Bank students at the upper basic level are higher than the corresponding rates for their Gaza Strip counterparts, and the reverse pattern applies for repetition rates. Within each region, school drop out is higher among boys than girls.



According to the data shown in Table (3-12), drop out rates rise at the secondary level for both males and females. Rates for West Bank students are higher than the rates for their Gaza counterparts.

Table (3-12): Percentage of Dropouts by Stage, Gender and Region, 1997/1998

	West Bank %		Gaza Strip %		Palestinian Territory %	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Basic	1.77	2.39	1.02	1.52	1.47	2.04
Secondary	9.82	6.14	6.01	1.69	8.28	4.31

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics & Ministry of Education, Education Statistical Yearbook No. 4, 1997-1998.

According to the data shown in the table (3-13) students attending government schools at the basic level are more likely than their counterparts in the UNRWA or private school system to drop-out, regardless of gender. Dropout rates are highest among secondary school students, with the exception of private school boys. Dropout rates are higher for males at the basic level compared with females. In contrast, at the secondary level, female students are more likely to drop out of school than their male counterparts regardless of the supervising authority.



Table (3-13): Percentage of Drop-Outs by Supervising Authority, Gender and Region, 1997/1998

	West Bank %		Gaza Strip %		Palestinian Territory %	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Government						
Basic	2.00	2.74	0.98	1.41	1.71	2.38
Secondary	10.67	6.96	6.02	1.75	8.69	4.69
UNRWA						
Basic	1.10	1.84	1.49	1.86	1.38	1.85
Private						
Basic	0.50	0.34	0.00	0.00	0.46	0.31
Secondary	0.74	0.39	0.00	0.00	0.73	0.34

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. Education Institutes database 1998/1999, Ramallah-Palestine. Unpublished Data.

◆ Schools

Despite new school construction and the expansion of existing facilities, education infrastructure has not been able to accommodate expanding enrolment for some time.

In 1998/1999, there were a total of 2,514 kindergartens and schools in the Palestinian Territory.³⁴ Among these, 49 percent (1,230 schools) were operated by the government. The private sector ran a further 40.5 percent (1,019 schools and kindergarten, 7.8 percent are schools and 32.7 percent are kindergartens), and 10.0 percent (265 schools) were administered by UNRWA. The private kindergarten and schools were licensed with the MOE. Most were co-educational; only 12 were single-sex schools, all of which are located in the West Bank.

The number of schools has increased since the Palestinian Authority assumed authority in the sphere of education in 1994, reflecting a priority to expand the capacity of the school system. As for 1998-1999, there were 1204 basic level schools, up from 1,098 in 1995/1996, and 487 secondary schools, up from 372 in 1995/1996.³⁵

Single sex schools became much more important at the upper basic and secondary level. 64 percent of basic level schools and 77 percent of secondary schools are single sex as shown in the table (3-14). Private schools account for 27 and 37 percent of coeducational schools at the basic and secondary level, respectively.

³⁴ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Ministry of Education, *Educational Statistical Yearbook No. 4, 1997-1998*, p. 39.

³⁵ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Ministry of Education, *Educational Statistical Yearbook No. 2, 1995-1996*, p. 47. Includes schools with basic and secondary stages or secondary stages only.



Table (3-14): Number of Schools by Supervising Authority, Stage and Gender, 1998/1999

	Basic				Secondary			
	Female	Male	Co-ed	Total	Female	Male	Co-ed	Total
West Bank	285	269	327	881	163	157	107	427
Government	236	225	206	667	152	143	68	363
UNRWA	45	36	17	98	0	0	0	0
Private	4	8	104	116	11	14	39	64
Gaza Strip	94	124	105	323	29	27	4	60
Government	51	55	38	144	28	26	2	56
UNRWA	43	69	55	167	0	0	0	0
Private	0	0	12	12	1	1	2	4
Palestinian Territory	379	393	432	1204	192	184	111	487
Government	287	280	244	811	180	169	70	419
UNRWA	88	105	72	265	0	0	0	0
Private	4	8	116	128	12	15	41	68

Despite new school construction and the expansion of existing facilities, the country's educational infrastructure has not been able to accommodate the expanding enrolment of new students.

The former Educational Department under the authority of the Israeli military government and UNRWA Education Departments in the West Bank and Gaza Strip resorted to low-cost strategies such as the shift system. Palestinian educational authorities continue to operate some school buildings on double or even triple shift systems. But, the effect of school shifts on academic performance is still unclear.

• Learning Conditions

Providing a learning environment goes beyond bricks and mortar, and desks and chairs. The school should provide a healthy, safe and supportive environment. The availability of water and sanitation, electricity and heating may have an impact on learning outcomes. Also, the presence of a boundary wall serves to deter students from venturing outside the schools perimeter. For schools located in urban, high-traffic areas, such walls may lower the incidence of road accidents involving school children.

The results indicate that the majority of students attending schools have access to basic amenities such as electricity and a permanent water supply. At the same time, most of the schools are not heated, which may result in discomfort during the cold and wet winter months. Only 5.75 percent of government school students and 2.16 percent of UNRWA pupils have access to heated schools, as compared with more than half of private schools, and 47.3 percent of kindergarten pupils. Most schools are outfitted with a boundary wall, whether partial or whole. Less than 5 percent of all students attend schools without a wall.

In the double shift system the school building may be used by one school for two shifts per day with the same administration, or by two schools with separate administrations.



The school should also be a place where common childhood diseases can be detected such as parasitic infections and micronutrient deficiencies. If paramedical professionals are available and teachers are trained, the staff can also help in detecting visual and hearing impairments. Only government and private schools provide a room designated for a nurse. However, this does not necessarily imply that a full-time nurse will be available for the students on a daily or even regular basis. If we are to assume that the number of children attending schools with a room designated from a nurse is indicative of access to health services, the table (3-15) shows that boys are more likely to receive medical attention (2.64 percent), albeit only marginally, than their female counterparts (1.71 percent). Also, private school students have greater access than public school students.

Such services and facilities provide an environment more conducive to learning. However, students may require guidance and support in managing their school and personal lives. In 1998/1999, there were 276 student counsellors, of which 49.6 percent were female. These persons were distributed over 578 basic and secondary schools. In contrast, only 22 private schools provide students with a counselor.

Table (3-15): Distribution of Students Having Rooms Designated for Nursing by Supervising Authority, Gender and Region, 1998/1999

	West Bank		Gaza Strip		Palestinian Territory	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Government	1,489	432	2,112	2,496	3,601	2,928
UNRWA	0	713	0	0	0	713
Private schools	3,434	7,500	486	809	3,920	8,309
Private pre-schools	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	4,923	8,645	2,598	3,305	7,521	11,950

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Ministry of Education, Education Survey 1998/1999. (unpublished data).

- **Computer-Assisted Learning**

There are 5,968 computers installed in Palestinian kindergartens and schools in the scholastic year 1998/1999. Almost 7.7 percent of these computers are in private pre-schools. Although the majority of the 5,506 computers in schools are in public sector schools, 30.1 percent are in private schools, exceeding the proportion of private school students in the education system.

An examination of the number of computers by directorate indicates that the Ramallah directorate is unambiguously the leader in introducing computer-assisted learning to the classroom. This is due mostly to the concentration of private schools in this area, where 349 of the total 834 computers are reported.



◆ Teachers

More than half of all schoolteachers do not meet MOE teacher qualifications

In the scholastic year 1998/1999 there were a total of 2,701 kindergarten teachers. In the same time period, the number of basic and secondary schoolteachers increased to 27,461 from 17,561 at the beginning of the decade.³⁶

The growth in the total number of teachers in the formal educational systems can be regarded as a response to persistently high population growth rates in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

In the past, education administrators hired unqualified or untrained teachers with secondary school levels of education, or lower, in response to increasing student enrollment and teacher shortages. While such measures managed to improve enrollment ratios, it is generally assumed that they have negative impact on the quality of education. Acknowledging the importance of the teacher in the educational process, the MOE requires all new teachers for Grades 1 through 10 to have a minimum BA/BSc degree. Teachers now classified as under qualified under the new regulation must upgrade their qualifications through in-service training programs.

As the table (3-16) indicates, more than half of all schoolteachers do not meet MOE teacher qualifications. Only 11,9 percent of pre-school teachers hold a BA/BSc. Most hold only a secondary school degree, or lower, suggesting that the educational and social value of quality pre-school programs remains undervalued and the economic incentives to attract college graduates to the profession are low.

Table (3-16): Distribution of Teachers with BA or Higher by Supervising Authority and Gender in 1998/1999

Supervising Authority	total Teachers	Teachers with BA/BSc+	% Teachers with BA/ BSc+
Government	19,282	10,486	54.38
UNRWA	5,353	1,791	33.46
Private Schools	2,826	1,648	58.32
Private Pre-Schools	2,701	321	11.88
Total	30,162	14,246	47.23

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Ministry of Education, Educational Statistical Yearbook 1998/1999, No. 5. Ramallah-Palestine

Student-teacher ratios vary according to supervising authority and region. The highest ratios are reported for UNRWA schools where there are 39.4 students per teacher as compared with 28.5 or 18.6 students per teacher in government and private schools, respectively. This may reflect the Agency's general operating budget constraints. As aforementioned, UNRWA's schoolchildren have the highest repetition (but not dropout) rates, however, it is unclear whether crowding is a causal agent to poor academic performance. Differential population growth rates most likely account for the gap between the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

³⁶ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Education Statistics in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, p. 180.



Table (3-17): Average Number of Students Per Teacher by Directorate and Supervising Authority in 1998/1999

	Government	UNRWA	Private\ Schools	Private\ Pre- Schools	Average
West Bank	27.5	34.1	18.5	28.8	26.9
Gaza Strip	31.4	41.5	20.5	28.2	34.7
Palestinian Territory	28.5	39.4	18.6	28.6	29.5

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Ministry of Education, Educational Statistical Yearbook 1998/1999, No. 5. Ramallah-Palestine

Table (3-18) indicates that the proportion of female teachers decreases at higher educational levels. Although women comprise all pre-school teachers, they make up only half the staff at the basic level, and one-third at the secondary level.

Table (3-18): Distribution of Teachers by Supervising Authority, Stage and Gender in 1998/1999

	Pre-schools		Basic		Secondary		B+S	
	Number	Female %	Number	Female %	Number	Female %	Number	Female %
Government	0	0	14,238	48.43	1,686	38.73	3,358	43.39
UNRWA	0	0	5,353	48.74	0	0.00	0	0.00
Private	2,701	100	2,155	79.26	220	18.18	451	36.81
Total	2,701	100	21,746	51.56	1,906	36.36	3,809	42.61

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Ministry of Education, Educational Statistical Yearbook 1998/1999, No. 5. Ramallah-Palestine

The relatively low representation of women among secondary schools teaching staff results partly from admission requirements of teaching posts and lower enrollment of women in higher education institutions. The results, also, show that among the total schoolteachers with an MA degree only 22% are women. Out of the total number of schoolteachers with a Bachelor degree, 45% are women, whereas the represent 86% of the total number of teachers holding only a secondary degree is women. Such lower academic qualifications diminish women's ability to compete with their male colleagues for senior teaching and administrative positions.



Executive Summary

- For the scholastic year 1998/1999, a total of 889,895 students participated in pre-school, basic and secondary stage education. Females comprise 49 percent of children enrolled in all stages.
- The government provides schooling to 61.7 percent of the total number of students. UNRWA services an additional 23.7 percent of the total, and the rest of the students are enrolled in the private sector.
- In the scholastic year 1998/1999 over 77,000 children attend, pre-schools run exclusively by the private sector but licensed by the Ministry of Education (MOE). Approximately 48 percent of these children are female.
- About 34 percent of Palestinian children, from four to five years attend pre-schools. As compared with four neighbouring countries (Israel, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria), gross enrollment ratios in pre-primary education in the Palestinian Territory rank third-significantly lower than Israel and Lebanon, but greater than the ratios for Jordan or Syria.
- For the scholastic year 1998-1999, over 746,914 students are enrolled in the basic cycle. The net enrollment ratio at the basic level is almost 91 percent for both males and females.
- For the scholastic year 1998-1999, a total of 65,808 students are enrolled in secondary schools. Most students choose to follow one of two academic (Scientific or Literary) streams. In contrast, 3.3 percent of secondary school students choose a vocational education or technical stream.
- Almost 50 percent of secondary school students are female in the scholastic year 1998-1999. Gender-based differences are apparent in enrollment levels in each of the secondary streams. Females comprise 54.2 percent of total enrollment in the literary stream, but 43.9 percent in the scientific track. Females make up to only 21.6 percent of the total enrollment in the vocational stream.
- Secondary school enrolment ratios for the Palestinian Territory drops sharply relative to very high levels at the basic stage. Average secondary school gross enrollment rates for the West Bank and Gaza Strip exceeded 53 percent in 1998-1999. As compared with neighbouring countries, the Palestinian Territory ranked third, after Israel and Lebanon, but higher than the rates for Syria.
- According to the 1997 population census, 41.7 percent of Palestinian children with special needs in the Palestinian Territory attend school. The proportion of children not enrolled in school rises with increasing age regardless of gender.
- School repetition and drop out are sources of inefficiency in the system. Repetition rates among schoolchildren at the basic stage appear to be declining since 1994. At the basic level, about 3.4 percent of pupils were repeaters in 1996-1997, compared with 8 percent of student enrolled in primary schools in the Arab states. At the secondary



level, repetition rates dropped averaging 1.2 percent for females, and 2.5 percent for males.

- The percentage of drop-outs increases with educational stage. By secondary level, 8.28 percent of girls and 4.31 percent of boys leave school.
- For 1998-1999, there were a total of 3514 kindergartens and schools in the Palestinian Territory. Despite new school construction and the expansion of existing facilities, Palestinian's educational infrastructure has not been able to accommodate the expanding enrolment without resorting to strategies such as double shifting schools.
- For 1998-1999, there were a total of 30,162 teachers providing instruction at all levels. The growth in the total number of teachers in the formal education systems can basically be regarded as a response to persistently high population growth rates in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.
- Student-teacher ratios vary according to supervising authority and region. The highest ratios are reported for UNRWA schools where there are 39.4 students per teacher as compared with 28.5 or 18.6 students per teacher in government and private schools, respectively.
- The proportion of female teachers decreases at higher educational levels. Although women comprise all pre-school teachers, they make up only half the staff at the basic level, 34.4 at the secondary stage and 42.6 at the basic and secondary level together.
- The relatively low representation of women among secondary schools teaching staff results partly from lower enrollment of women in higher education institutions. Among schoolteachers with an MA degree only 22 percent were women. Out of the total number of schoolteachers with a bachelor degree, 45% were women, where as women represent 86 percent of the total number of teachers holding only a secondary degree.
- The introduction of new information technologies in the classroom remains highly restricted and the benefits of information technology in the school largely unfulfilled.



Recommendations

The data above indicate several features of the educational system, areas of progress, and potential risks to educational reforms, thereby highlighting areas for policy intervention. The most impressive progress is evident in the very high enrollment ratios among basic level students and the elimination of the gender gap at both the basic and secondary levels. Continued progress and educational change will be determined by a number of factors external and internal to the education system.

One of the most significant forces affecting education will continue to be the fiscal constraints of the PNA, and whether education sector budgets will facilitate the effective implementation of restructuring and reform programs.

Palestinian fertility rates are compounded by these fiscal constraints as indicated by increasing enrollment levels. Continued demographic pressures will compel authorities to allocate resources for providing adequate classrooms and teachers, possibly reducing funds available for educational policies and programs such as curricular reforms, improving teaching methods, and evaluation of academic achievements. Also, expanding enrollment levels will continue to produce teacher shortages, making it more difficult for the MOE to recruit highly qualified teachers in light of the profession's social and economic status. As a result, educational policies must be formulated as part of a national multi-sectoral development strategy that includes family planning programs.

Students

It is highly unlikely, in the short- or medium-term, that the pre-school stage will be incorporated into the public school system. It is more than likely that the private sector will remain the exclusive service provider, albeit regulated by the MOE. As such is it the role of the MOE, as the licensing agent, to ensure as high a standard of education as possible, by legislating and enforcing standards and providing guidelines for the physical environment, the curriculum and the teaching staff of pre-schools. As such, the public confidence in pre-school education may increase along with enrollment levels.

At the basic stage, the challenge for the MOE will be to maintain high enrollment ratios and to the lower the repetition rates and drop out rates witnessed in the past three academic years. In order to understand the contributing factors of school wastage, it is important for the MOE to continue and, whenever possible, to enhance its monitoring and research programs, so as to be able to recommend more specific policies and strategies to increase school completion rates.

Also, these high enrollment ratios signal it is time to examine student's achievement more closely. In other words, having achieved near universal enrollment, it is important to look at what exactly are these schoolchildren learning.

Despite the expansion of education, about half of secondary school age children still do not attend school. Moreover, gender-based disparities in the choice of subject's streams are evident at this stage. As a result, more concerted efforts are required to curb drop out rates at the upper basic level, and to support interventions designed to increase enrollment at the



tertiary level. Also, the socially prescribed roles of men and women continue to channel boys and girls into sex-stereotyped specialization at the secondary level (and higher). These roles are not static and are driven by economic and labor market conditions. Therefore, repeating a theme mentioned above, education should not be treated in isolation from other sectors, such as the labor market. The expansion of employment opportunities potentially has a profound impact on school enrollment. This, in turn, is to a large extent, part of a function of political conditions.

The recognition of the importance of educating and mainstreaming children with special needs has increased, as evidenced by new monitoring mechanisms at the PCBS and MOE, and the creation of a department designated specifically for this purpose at the MOE. It is obvious that these are still preliminary steps but hopeful steps to the integration of children with special needs. Efforts should be targeted at improving access to secondary and tertiary level education for such children.

Schools

There are differences according to the supervising authorities. The data suggests that the learning conditions among students in the private sector are more favorable than in the public or UNRWA sectors. Private school students have lower teacher-pupil ratios, greater access to basic amenities, more qualified teaching staff, more computers, and lower repetition and drop-out rates (except in graduating years). Given the absence of academic achievement test scores, it is unclear whether this differential access is related to learning outcomes. However, these advantages come at a premium in terms of higher tuition fees for parents, thereby potentially limiting educational access.

Public education in the Palestinian Territory is not free. Either according to MOE regulations, students must pay fees, buy uniforms, exercise books, and other materials. Tuition may be waived for children of social welfare recipients. UNRWA Education Department does not levy fees on its students, however, students must pay indirect expenses of uniforms and learning materials. Given the high enrollment ratios at the basic level, household expenditure on education appears to be manageable among the majority of families, at least at the basic level. It is important to maintain manageable levels of household expenditure on education. Increasing fees would allow for an increase in the quality of services, but, at the same time, it risks lowering public sector enrollment ratios. Therefore, any consideration of increasing school fees should factor into the analysis of possible outcomes.

Teachers

The teacher is one of the main characters in the educational process. A teacher's effectiveness in the classroom is determined by several variables including training, temperament, competence, and the status accorded to teachers and the profession by the public. The discussion above suggested some of the difficult working conditions which teachers must cope with daily including overcrowded classrooms and limited facilities. The data also suggested that a portion of the teaching staff is under qualified. Part of the problem may be attributed to the comparatively low financial status of teachers relative to other professional groups, which may dissuade young, ambitious graduates from entering the profession. Therefore, more resources should be devoted to improving teacher pay scales.



Finally, heterogeneous teacher qualifications have implications on effective teacher training and the introduction of new teaching methodologies. The various abilities of the teaching staff must be considered carefully when designing and implementing training programs.



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Chapter 4

Child Cultural and Recreational Reality

State parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the child age and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

(Child Rights Convention, Article 31-1)

State parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for artistic, cultural and recreational and leisure time activity.

(Child Rights Convention, Article 31-2)

The importance of children's education and culture is shown in the basic functions of culture as a social process of upbringing and transforming the newborn from a biological entity into a social being. Cultures go beyond socialization for they develop the child's personality and national identity. Solidification of cultural and recreational rights of Palestinian children have been made through the incorporation of these rights into the Palestinian child national plan, prepared by the national committee and endorsed by the PNA in 1995. The plan is in line with the international convention of the rights of the child sanctioned by the UN General Assembly in 1989. The child's cultural and recreational rights have since become inseparable parts of the child's rights as a human being, as stated in Article 31 of this Convention.

The culture of Palestinian children stems from Palestinian and Arabic, heritage, philosophy, religion, norms, values, traditions, the 1988 Declaration of Independence, and the national Palestinian, Arab and Islamic ambitions. Knowledge and information are acquired through Arabic through which interpersonal communication, self-expression, and an opening of the Arab cultures is possible. The child's knowledge is also enriched through arts, music, literature, technology, and investment in recreational activities and leisure time.

◆ Family Role in the Child's Culture and Recreation

Family is the foundation of the society and the first source of a child's culture. The family represents a social pattern and a cultural medium for the child, influencing the experiences acquired by the child in reflection to the family's cultural and economic reality. The family economic status is important because greater income results in a greater capability to provide educational and recreational means, such as a home library, TV, Computer, educational and cognitive toys, and visits to cultural institutions.



- **Availability of Educational Tools in the Home**

About 96.4% of (under 18 years) children's families do not have computers

Home libraries, computers and TVs are considered important potential cultural means that can provide the child with an advantageous educational and recreational material if utilized properly.

Table (4–1): Distribution of Children (Under 18 Years) by Availability of a Computer, TV and a Library at Home, 1997

Age Group	West Bank %			Gaza Strip %			Palestinian Territory %		
	PC	TV	Library		TV	Library	PC	TV	Library
4-0	3.4	88.9	13.9	2.0	84.2	9.5	2.9	86.9	12.1
9-5	4.3	90.5	14.9	2.4	85.4	9.8	3.5	88.4	12.8
14-10	5.1	90.8	15.4	2.8	85.7	10.2	4.2	88.8	13.4
17-15	5.7	90.7	16.5	3.4	85.3	10.9	4.8	88.6	14.3
Total	4.3	90.0	14.8	2.4	85.0	9.9	3.6	87.9	12.8

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. The Database of the Population, Housing and Establishments Census of 1997. Unpublished Data.

Figure (4 –1): Percentage of Children (Under 18 Years) by the Availability of Cultural Means (PC, TV, Library) at Home, 1997

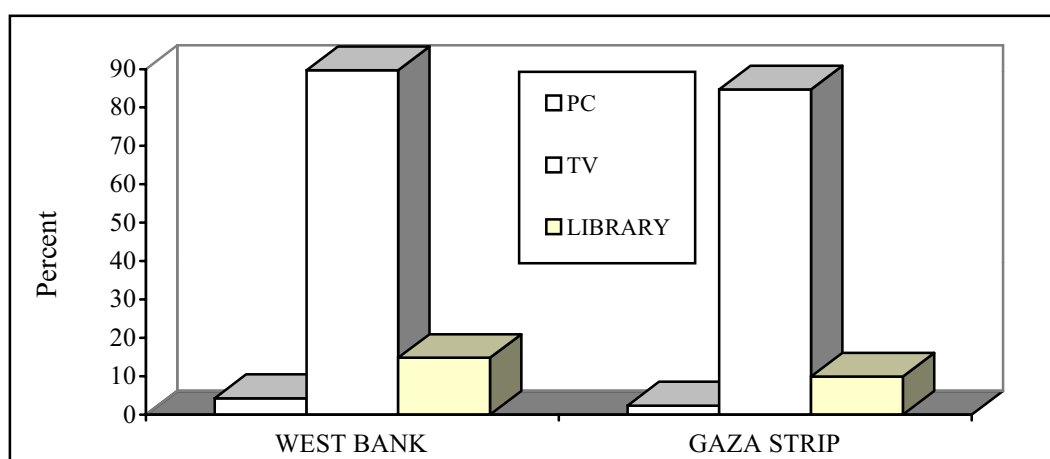


Table (4–1) shows that about 3.6% of all Palestinian children, under 18 years, have access to computers at home. Gazan families are less capable of affording computers for their children compared to the West Bank, where the ratio of



households with children that own computers in both areas was 2.4% in Gaza and 4.3%, in the West Bank.

The highest percentage of computers (4.82) were owned by families with children aged (15-17 years) old. Again, the West Bank contains the highest proportion (5.7%) and Gaza Strip (3.4%). The second group of children most likely to have computers at home is the age group 10-14 year, whilst the lowest rate of computers is found among families with children aged 9 years or younger.

Computer availability in households is an important for children and their families of knowledge, education and recreation.

Table (4-1) indicates that 87.6% of Palestinian children have access to a television, drawing attention to the fact that TV is the most prevailing source of media, culture and recreation in Palestinian society. This percentage also implies that a high percentage of children watches television and are influenced by its various programs. Table (4-2) indicates that 94.9% of children aged 5-17 years watch television daily.

The census findings show that the percentage of children (5-17 years) whose families own a library at home equals 12.8%, (14.8% in the West Bank and 9.9% in Gaza Strip).

- **Recreational Games/Toys**

Toys and games are basic educational means for children, and one of the most significant elements in the child's upbringing, education and recreation.

However, information is lacking on the nature of the toys used by Palestinian children, especially on popular games and manufactured toys. There is a need to collect and study information on the toys used by Palestinian children to determine the educational and recreational benefits they can provide it is also important to determine their appropriateness in maintaining child's physical and mental safety.

- **Children Habitual Activities**

As presented in Table (4-2), watching television and playing with friends are the most common activities performed by Palestinian children. The findings on child labor and activities (5-17 years), point out that 94.9% of children watch television daily, and 80.1% play with friends every day. It is worth noting, in this regard, that the percentage of male children (90.5%) playing with their friends is considerably higher than females (68.9%) performing similar activities.

Further more, Table (4-2) shows that 75% of female children aged (5-17 years) assist in daily household activities in comparison to only 27.6% of male children doing similar tasks. This reflects the traditional genders roles imposed on children



by the society from an early age. A total of 43% of children (aged 5-17) years in Palestine more over, adopt reading as a hobby with considerably higher numbers of female readers (49%) than males (38%).

Table (4-2): Distribution of Children (Under 18 Years) by the Activities they Daily Perform, 1998

Child Activities	Gender		Total %
	Male %	Female %	
Play With Friends	90.5	68.9	80.1
Perform Sport Activity	57.0	30.7	44.4
Assist in Household Works	27.6	75.0	50.2
Has No Time for Such Activities	2.3	2.0	2.1
Watch TV	95.1	94.6	94.9
Drawing Arts	30.9	37.6	34.1
Play Musical Instrument	2.7	2.5	2.6
Artistic Activity (Theatre, Dance Group, Acting)	7.2	8.1	7.6
Reading	38.2	48.8	43.2

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1999. Child Work and Activities Survey (5-17 Years). Main Results, (October-December 1998), Ramallah-Palestine.

◆ **A School role in the Child Educational and Recreational Reality**

School is the second institution to which the child belongs and which actively contributes to a child's growth, social development, and adoption of its culture. In order for schools to fulfill their role in social and educational upbringing, they should have access to resources to achieve the essential educational and recreational objectives.

● **Educational and Recreational Means Available in Kindergartens and Schools**

Kindergartens are a transitory stage, which function to a broad an the educational and recreational domain of the child. The kindergarten is a place to foster social adaptation and group play and a place to develop and enhance the child's cognitive, mental, emotional, and social abilities. Unfortunately, kindergartens in the Palestinian Territory are still playing a marginal educational and recreational role in regards to children. Preschool education at kindergartens is not integrated into the obligatory stage of education, but is used to prepare children for later schooling.

● **Kindergartens' Libraries**

Not much information is available on kindergarten libraries, as no studies were carried to provide indicators on children's use and benefit from these libraries.



Table (4-3): Percentage Distribution of Kindergartens with Libraries, by Region and Number of Books, for the Scholastic Year 1996-1997

Area	Less than 100 Books (%)	100 – 499 Books (%)	500 + Books (%)	Total (%)	No. of Kindergartens having Libraries	Total No. of Kindergartens for 1996/1997
West Bank	81.9	15.3	2.8	100	498	505
Gaza Strip	91.0	8.5	0.5	100	200	200
Palestinian Territory	84.5	13.3	2.2	100	698	705

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of Education, 1997. Education Statistics Yearbook, 1996 / 1997, Ramallah – Palestine.

As indicated in Table (4-3), the majority of kindergartens have libraries. About 84.5% of these libraries contain less than 100 books compared to 2.2% of these libraries that contain 500 books or more. This emphasizes the importance of investment in children's books at kindergarten libraries and calls for more studies to determine the extent to which children benefit from them.

- **School Libraries**

42.3% of West Bank schools have libraries of more than 1000 books, in comparison to 12% of schools in the Gaza Strip.

With the exception of 7 schools, all Palestinian schools in the West Bank and Gaza Strip had libraries on their premises in the scholastic year 1996/1997, but the number of books varies greatly from one library to another. As for venue, most school libraries are located in separate rooms, administration rooms, classrooms, or corridors.



Table (4-4): Percentage Distribution of Schools with Libraries, by Number of Books, Area, and Supervising Authority, for the Scholastic Year 1996/1997

Region & Supervising Authority	Less Than 100 books (%)	100-499 (%)	500-999 (%)	1000 + (%)	Total (%)	Number of Schools Having Libraries	Total Number of Schools for 1996/1997
West Bank							
Governmental	12.0	21.8	23.9	42.3	100	944	946
UNRWA	19.6	6.2	10.3	63.9	100	97	100
Private	39.0	19.9	8.9	32.2	100	146	147
Gaza Strip							
Governmental	18.7	36.1	33.2	12.0	100	166	167
UNRWA	1.9	5.6	7.4	85.1	100	161	161
Private	45.4	36.4	9.1	9.1	100	11	11
Palestinian Territory							
Governmental	13.0	24.0	25.3	37.7	100	1110	1113
UNRWA	8.5	5.8	8.5	77.2	100	258	261
Private	39.5	21.0	8.9	30.6	100	157	158
Gross Total	15.0	20.5	20.8	43.7	100	1525	1532

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of Education, 1997. Education Statistics Yearbook, 1996 / 1997, Ramallah-Palestine.

Furthermore, a total of 43.7% of Palestinian school libraries contain more than 1000 books. About 20.8% of libraries consist of between 500-999 books, 20.5% contain 100-499 books, and 15.0% of libraries have less than 100 books. Table (4-4), also reveals that more than three quarters of UNRWA schools own libraries with 1000 books or more, while 37.7% of governmental schools and 30.6% of private schools have a similar number of texts in their libraries. School libraries perform functions that are no less important than library functions in kindergartens. School libraries should be developed and their appropriateness to pupils' needs and benefits should be assessed.

Table (4-5): Number of Books Per School, and the Average Number of Books Per Pupil at Governmental Schools, By Region for the Scholastic Year 1996/1997.

Area	Number of Books (In Thousands)	Book / School	Book / Student
West Bank	1060.2	1121	3.3
Gaza Strip	105.7	633	0.8
Palestinian Territory	1165.9	1048	2.4

Source: Ministry of Education, 1997. Schools Libraries Database, 1997.

A wide regional gap is found in terms of the number of books in governmental schools between the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The average number of books per Gaza School were 488 books less than the average in West Bank schools.



School libraries contain 0.8 books per student in Gaza Strip and 3.3 books per student in West Bank

Children's utilization rate of school libraries does not exceed 15.9% of the total number of books found in the scholastic year 1996/1997. The percentage was 14% in the West Bank in comparison to 35.9% in Gaza Strip¹² schools. Despite the lower average number of books per school and the book per student ratio in Gaza Strip as compared to the West Bank, the reading demand of students is much higher in Gaza Strip than in the West Bank.

- **School Cultural and Recreational Tools**

Television, video, computers, and recorders are examples of educational tools used in Palestinian schools and kindergartens. Computer availability in kindergartens does not exceed 17.7% of the total number of kindergartens in the Palestinian Territory. The percentage of kindergartens having computers is 20.0% and 12.4% in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, respectively. The Palestinian Ministry of Education has encouraged private schools to introduce computers as educational and recreational means. Table (6-4) indicates that computers are available in 48.5% of total West Bank schools and 55.3% of the schools in Gaza Strip.

Table (4-6): Percentages of Schools and Kindergartens as for the Availability of Computers, VCRS, TS and Recorders, By Region for the Scholastic Year 1997/1998

	PC %	TV %	Video %	Recorder %	Number of Schools and Kindergartens for 1997/1998
Kindergartens					
West Bank	20.2	38.8	33.7	81.2	570
Gaza Strip	12.4	23.7	14.6	66.2	219
Palestinian Territory	17.7	34.6	28.4	77.4	789
Schools					
West Bank	45.8	45.2	42.8	94.5	1244
Gaza Strip	55.3	24.5	22.1	94.8	367
Palestinian Territory	48.5	40.5	38.1	94.5	1611

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of Education, 1998. Education Statistics Yearbook, 1997 / 1998, (No. 4), Ramallah-Palestine.

¹² Ministry of Education. School Library Database, 1997.



- **Festival, Cultural and Artistic Contests, Trips, and Sports**

School-organized activities for students, whether cultural, athletic, or artistic, represent one of the most important means for schools to enhance a child's social, cultural and recreational development.

At the cultural level, schools, district departments and the Ministry of Education arrange, yearly, student festivals and contests in Arabic calligraphy, chess, essay and short story writing, journalism, reading, recitation and memorization of Qura'n, poetry recitation, oratory skills, drawing, singing, and school theatre. These activities aim at developing the child artistic taste, talents and creativity.

- ◆ **Role of Social Environment in the Child's Education and Recreation**

Formal and informal social environments, other than family and school, enable children to freely participate in cultural and artistic activities, Examples of such environments can be found in sport clubs, attending theatre, watching television, media, galleries, exhibitions, museums, drawing and music.

- **Children's Favorite TV Programs**

About 76.7% of children (9-17 years) prefer artistic and recreational TV programs, reflecting their priorities. Child focused programs occupy the second most watched (66%) TV programs by children, and sports programs came in third (37.5%). On the other hand, news and educational programs attracted much less attention or interest.

Table (4-7): Percentage of Children (9-17 Years) in the Palestinian Territory, by Favorite TV Programs, 1996

Preferred TV Programs	Percentage of Children (9-17 Years)
Scientific	21.5
Cultural and Educational	30.3
Artistic and Recreational	76.7
News	29.1
Sports	37.5
Children Programs	66.0
Religious Programs	26.7

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1996. Culture Survey Database, 1996. Unpublished Data.



- **Children Radio Programs**

Children's educational, cultural or recreational radio programs broadcast by the Voice of Palestine, cover less than 0.9% of the total 6.923 transmission hours produced annually¹³

- **Children libraries**

There is about one public library per 15, 000 children (under 18 years)

A survey carried out in 1998, under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture, shows that the total number of children libraries in the Palestinian Territory equaled 97, of which 52 are independent children libraries and 45 are part of public libraries. About two thirds (61%) of these libraries were created after 1990. The ratio of libraries per child (the total population of Palestinian children was 1,484,313 in mid 1997) shows that there was one library per 15,000 children. This ratio reflects the serious shortage of children libraries, which suffer from severe negligence also.

Table (4–8): Distribution of Public Children Libraries by Type, 1998

Library Type	Percent
Independent Children Library	52.6
Children Library as Part of a Public Library	45.4
No Answer	02.0
Total	100

Source: Reality of Child Libraries in Palestine – Survey, 1998.

The major services provided by child libraries are reading inside the library lending books, presenting lectures, drawing activities, and library training (60-66%). Exhibitions and film shows constitute minor activities for child libraries (less than 32%).

¹³ Voice of Palestine Radio Station , from 1/1/1998 - 31/12/1998.



Table (4–9): Distribution of Children’s Libraries by Type of Services, 1998

Type of Service	Percentage
Lending	65.9
Internal Reading	95.8
Film Shows	28.1
Seminars and Discussions	61.1
Story Telling	57.3
Story Writing	46.3
Drama and Acting	40.6
Drawing	62.5
Exhibitions	31.3
Training on Library Use	60.4

Source: Reality of Child Libraries in Palestine–Study Survey, 1998.

- **Children Books and Magazines**

For the moment, no assessment has been made on the content of books read by Palestinian children. Children books written by Palestinian authors are estimated to number 867 books as shown by a bibliographical survey on books written since the start of this century. The indicated number of Palestinian children books includes 377 stories, 89 poetry books for children, and 106 plays. The remainder are books on general subjects and those designed for school curricula. The number of childrens books translated by Palestinians is limited to 44 books¹⁴.

- **Cultural and Recreational Institutions**

The percentage of male children visiting sports clubs is three times higher than the number of female children attending these clubs.

Updated information on cultural institutions focused on children in terms of numbers, objectives, and activities is not available. As shown in Table (4-10), a total of 15% of both genders (9-17 years) repeatedly visit cultural and sports clubs. The percentage of male children among this category is three times higher than females with a 28/100 of female to male ratio. The percentage of children aged (9–17 years) does not exceed 6.6%, irrespective of gender, while exhibitions are visited by 16.4% of children in this age group.

¹⁴A number of specialized librarians. The reality of children libraries in Palestine –a survey study, 1998.



Table (4–10): Percentage of Children (9-17 Years Old) Who Visited Cultural Institutions by Type of Institution, Gender and Age, 1998

Age & Gender	Sports & Cultural Clubs %	Exhibitions %	Theatres %	Museums %
Male				
9 – 13	18.4	14.6	6.7	5.9
14 - 17	28.3	18.8	7.7	7.4
9 - 17	22.5	16.3	7.1	6.5
Female				
9 – 13	6.1	14.0	5.5	6.1
14 - 17	6.3	20.0	3.7	7.2
9 - 17	6.2	16.6	4.7	6.6
Both				
9 – 13	12.9	14.3	6.2	6.0
14 - 17	17.8	19.3	5.8	7.3
9 - 17	15.0	16.4	6.0	6.6

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1996. Culture Survey Database, 1996. Ramallah–Palestine.

◆ Summer Camps

Summer camps are among the most common and popular cultural and recreational activities amongst children. Children travel in thousands to these camps, each year, in order to invest positively in their leisure time, pursue their social, educational, cultural development and promote health and environmental awareness among them.

Table (4 – 11): Number of Summer Camps and Participants during Summer 1998

Area	Boys Camps	Girls Camps	Number of Participants	Number of Trainers	Number of Supervisors
West Bank	35	11	15000	276	320
Gaza Strip	50	38	27000	396	1000
Palestinian Territory	85	49	42000	672	1320

Source: Ministry of Youth and Sports. Summer Camps Program's Report, 1998.

Table (4-11) shows the number of summer camps held by the Ministry of Youth and Sports in 1998. Out of the 134 camps organized by the Ministry, 85 were exclusively prepared for males, as compared to only 49 designed for females. The



number of participants totaled 42,000 in the entire Palestinian Territory in which Gaza participants (27.000) outnumbered their counterparts in the West Bank (15.000). A number of cultural and recreational activities were usually performed including radio programs, bulletins, and magazines symbolizing various events in Palestinian history. In addition, artistic activities included drawing, folklore, songs, dabkeh, acting and handicrafts trips, social and sport activities are also common at these class. Cultural programs comparing lectures on political, national, historical, religious, geographical, and health issues were also apart of the summer camps' agenda.



Executive Summary

- 96.4% of children's families do not own computers.
- 87.9% of children's families own TV sets.
- Watching Television and playing with friends are the most common activities for children (94.9% and 80.1%, respectively).
- Around 84.5% of Palestinian kindergartens have no more than 100 books in each of their libraries. The average number of books in governmental school libraries was 1121 books/school in the West Bank and 633 books/school in Gaza Strip for the scholastic year 1996/1997.
- The books/student ratio was 0.8 in Gaza Strip compared to 3.3 in the West Bank for the scholastic year 1996/1997.
- The percentage of governmental schools with available computers was 40.2% in the West Bank and 55.3% in Gaza Strip, for the scholastic year 1997/1998.
- Children-oriented radio programs produced by the Voice of Palestine [educational, cultural or recreational nature,] formed no more than 0.9% of the total annual transmission hours (6923 hours).
- There is one public library for about every 15,000 children (under 18 years).
- About 15% of all children visit cultural, sport and recreational clubs, of which 22.5% are male compared to 6.2% of female children.
- The Ministry of Youth and Sports organized a total of 134 summer camps in 1998, 85 camps for male children and 49 for females. The total number of participants neared 42 thousands from both of the West Bank (15,000) and Gaza Strip (27,000).



Recommendations

- A Child's culture emerges from early childhood, through particular sets of procedures and means. In order to stimulate a child's interest and talents a scientifically studied plan should be established, requiring:
- Provision of updated statistical data and information on the cultural and recreational realities of Palestinian children, pertinent to local child cultural centers, toys & artistic production companies, and media & publishing houses, in order to define prevalent child culture and demand levels for the aforementioned services.
- Studies and surveys on the benefits children gain from cultural and artistic overflows, and their impacts on children lives and futures.
- Statistical data and information on the substance of stories and conventional toys provided to the child in early life stages, for reclassification, reassessment and preservation.
- Performance assessment of cultural and recreational institutions and programs in order to prepare future plans that better serve Palestinian children.
- Harmonization of a child service provision, creating a comprehensive plan that outlines desired image of a child cultural formation for the 21 century.
- Attempt geographically based the research on cultural and recreational institutions in rural, urban, camps and under-served areas.
- Enforce special legislation for protection and promotion of Palestinian cultural and recreational heritage for new generations to come.
- Challenges facing the culture of the Palestinian children stem from the society's of ability to raise new generations of children with critical thinking abilities and an the ability of evaluation of, rather than unconscious reproduction of, culture. UNESCO report on child culture in primary education for the 21 century aims at assisting children to better understand their cultures, past and present. In broader societal frameworks, inter cultural opening and dialogue are the only means for greater cultural prosperity and positive interaction.



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Chapter 5

Children In Need of Special Protection

This chapter attempts to analyze data and information on a specific age group referred to as “children in need of special protection”. This group comprises a variety of children subgroups experiencing difficult life circumstances, hampering their mental and physical wellbeing. Sub groups are usually identified according to the type of difficulty they encounter:

- Children’s separation from their parents-due to institutionalization, hospitalization, family de-unification, adoption, or deprivation from family environment (*CRC, Articles 9, 10, 20, and 21*).
- Other subgroups in need of special protection are children subject to all kinds of physical, sexual and mental/emotional abuse (*CRC, Articles 19 and 34*).
- Disabled children (*CRC, Articles 23*).
- Poor children (*CRC, Articles 26 and 27*).
- Employed children (*CRC, Article 32*).
- Children exploited to use, sell and traffic drugs (*CRC, Article 35*).
- Children deprived of their liberty or receiving juvenile institutional care (*CRC, Articles 37 and 40*).
- Children afflicted by violence and armed conflicts (*CRC, Articles 38 and 39*).

Although many countries make serious efforts to ensure children’s full enjoyment of their rights, as stated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, this convention has not been yet fully implemented anywhere. This is a mission very hard to accomplish especially given the number of uncontrollable political, economic and social factors involved. Undoubtedly all these factors have negative effects on children in general, and those in need of special protection, in particular.

Furthermore, children experience a number of dramatic events resulting from their environments such as, negligence, abuse, exploitation, and violence from persons who should be their caretakers.

Clearly, due to their lack of control on their surrounding environment these children need special care and protection. It is likely, too, that these children do not exercise any control on the environmental, material, or physical resources required to ensure their attainment of the health, educational, social and cultural services essential to their child endured development. This chapter offers an analysis of available data on groups of children in need of special protection. It shall be noted that special independent reports were issued on child labor and child poverty, which have nonetheless been given special attention in various sections of this report.



◆ Children in Social and Health Care Institutions

A child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, or in whose own best interests cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the State.

(Child's Rights Convention, Article 20)

Articles 9, 10, 20, and 21 of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child address specific issues about the rights of those children separated from their parents, deprived from family environments or family reunification, temporarily or permanently placed in places other than home, and adopted children.

In many cases, children are separated from their parents because of political, economic and social conditions. In other cases, children are temporarily or permanently separated from their family environment because they are not provided with the appropriate care necessary for their development. This is applicable in particular to children neglected or abused by their parents, custodians, or caretakers. Children might also find themselves placed in social or health institutions because of the family's inability to secure essential shelter, food, warmth, care and education needs. Most cases are found within families living under extreme poverty and by those families with a disabled child, who are incapable of providing all of his\ her living needs.

In the majority of cases described above, children are placed in the custody of alternative care sources such as orphanages, or special homes for disabled children and children with special needs.

● Children in Need of Social Care

Table (5-1): Children (under 18 years) Living in Orphanages, 1998

Child Gender	West Bank-12 Orphanages	Gaza Strip- 3 Orphanages	Jerusalem-7 Orphanages	Total No. of Children
Male	501	75	519	1095
Female	620	43	222	885
Total	1121	118	741	1980

Source: Ministry of Social Affairs, 1998. Annual Report of the Household and Childhood Department-Activities and Accomplishments.

Within the Palestinian Territory, there are 22 special centers providing care for orphans and disadvantaged children. Twelve of these are in the West Bank, three in Gaza Strip and seven in Jerusalem. The total number of orphans residing in these centers was 1980 children since the first of December 1998, of which 57% were in the West Bank, 6% in Gaza Strip and 37% in Jerusalem. These children



comprise less than 0.13% of the total number of children in the Palestinian Territory.

The number of male children placed in orphanages totaled 1095 (55%) in comparison to 885 female children (45%), while in 1996 the total number of children placed in orphan care centers was 2800 children. Available data and records show that in the previous two years, around 1000 children were returned to their homes, adopted or placed under the care of foster families.

- **Children in Need of Health Care**

No data is presently available on children who were hospitalized for long periods in 1998. Nevertheless, policies followed by private and public hospitals allow parents or children's caregivers to stay with the child during hospitalization. This policy arises from the "child-friendly" approach that is fully endorsed by the Child's Rights Convention.

- ◆ **Children with Disabilities**

State parties recognize that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community.

(Child's Rights Convention, Article 23-1)

Children's disabilities are represented by deficiency or permanent inability in body movement, terminal movement, sensory or speech abilities, or a deficit in cognitive and mental health. In many cases, the child may suffer from one or more of these functional deficits. These kinds of deficits often result in health problems for the child, even in places where social and educational obstacles are not encountered by children free from such functional deficits. There is an urgent need to develop the appropriate indicators and procedures on children's disabilities that have not been adequately addressed or utilized in the Palestinian Territory so far. This problem stems from a number of reasons. First, criteria for determining and measuring children's disabilities, including type of disability, severity and effect on daily functioning, are controversial. Second, for social considerations, many societal norms hamper disability reporting because caretakers are inclined to hide or deny the existence of a disability or a disabled member. Third, it is possible that some individuals who reported disability cases might not have the sufficient knowledge or essential skills to adequately identify disabilities.



- **Kinds of Disabilities among Children**

One out of every four disabled children has a movement disability

Table (5-2) revealed the existence of 15,567¹⁶ children in the Palestinian Territory who have one or more permanent disabilities.

Table (5-2): Number of Disabled Children (under 18 years) by Age Groups in Full Years, Gender and Kind of Disability in the Palestinian Territory, 1997

Age Group and Sex	Optical	Hearing	Speech	Hearing\ speech	Movement	Fingers Use	Mental	Mental\ Movement	Multiple	Others	Total
0-4											
Male	155	66	172	152	539	65	115	181	188	179	1812
Female	130	65	127	119	472	44	95	147	189	159	1547
Total	285	131	299	271	1011	109	210	328	377	338	3359
5-9											
Male	289	118	320	241	650	75	382	213	284	203	2835
Female	198	205	268	222	481	64	326	194	228	135	2221
Total	487	223	648	463	1131	139	708	407	512	338	5056
10-14											
Male	251	135	287	263	594	77	507	209	228	175	2726
Female	188	92	163	197	380	37	392	147	187	123	1906
Total	439	227	450	460	974	114	899	356	415	298	4632
15-17											
Male	184	59	128	130	305	56	338	115	118	125	1558
Female	89	41	76	89	227	26	198	62	95	59	962
Total	273	100	204	219	532	82	536	177	213	184	2520
0-17											
Male	879	378	907	786	2088	273	1342	718	818	682	8871
Female	605	403	634	627	1560	171	1011	550	699	476	6686
Total	1484	781	1541	1413	3648	444	2353	1268	1517	1158	15567

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. The Database of the Population, Housing and Establishment Census, 1997. Unpublished Data

¹⁶ data does not include that part of the Jerusalem District annexed by Israel post occupation of the Palestinian Territory in 1967. This data covers the persons who were counted during 10 - 24/12/1997.



As for disability related causes, data explicitly suggests that the overwhelming majority (more than 60%) of disabilities are basically congenital in nature. Thus, most disabilities are detectable in the early years of life, and many congenital malformations are preventable nowadays. Table (5–2) reveals that movement disabilities constitute 23% of the total disability cases and is the most prevailing kind of disability among children, followed by mental disabilities (15%), speech/communicative (10%), compound (10%) and sight (9.5%).

Consequently, the disability prevalence rate among children is 1,120 disabled children per 100,000 (under 18 years). In fact, movement disability prevalence rates are higher in male children than in females if this percentage is added to the total number of children with movement disabilities and other kinds of disabilities, such as mental retardation. The number of movement disability cases is 3,648 children, but this increases to 5,360 children if the mental/movement cases and finger movement cases are added. This total amounts to 34% of total reported cases of children disabilities. It is important to note, though, that movement disorders are the simplest to diagnose and are more likely to be detected and reported than any other kind of disability. The number of mental disability cases comprises about 23% if added to cases of in body movement. Available data¹⁷ show that most needs of disabled individuals have not been addressed adequately. Most rehabilitation centers lack sufficient resources for service provision, placing many obstacles for children suffering from mental disorders. Further more, they do not fulfill even the most basic needs, and doubt reporting these kinds of disabilities on the part of families. Most parents resort to denying disability cases in their children due to the prevailing social attitudes towards mental and physical disabilities.

About 24% of total children with disabilities suffer from deficits in hearing and articulation/speech. Available¹⁸ data shows that the number of existing institutions is insufficient to provide the health, education, and social services needed to meet the needs of these children, and therefore, their disabilities severely limit their activities. A considerable increase in the number of auditory dysfunction is noticed in children aged 5-9 years. This may be due to the increased detection of hearing deficits in school enrolled children. It might also indicate that parents and health specialists are not detecting auditory disorders in a child's first stages during which the problem could be treated.

- **Causes of Children's Disabilities**

The major causes of disabilities in children are congenital

Table (5–2) reveals an increase in the disability rate among male children (1,252 cases to 100,000 ratio) over female children (980 cases to 100,000 ratio). By comparing the rates of each type of disability between the two genders, male

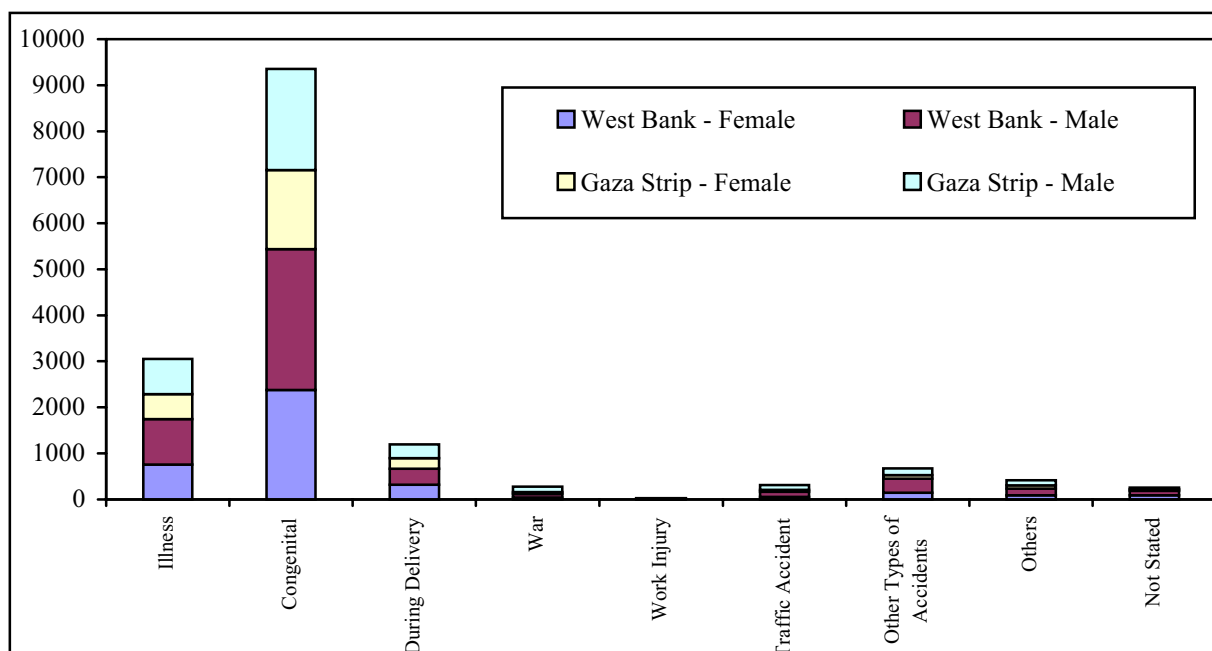
¹⁷PCBS. A study to develop rehabilitation services on the intermediate specialized level in the West Bank and Gaza Strip Districts, 1997.

¹⁸ibid



children appear to suffer from more disabilities than female children. This information is valuable for the consequences it imposes on program design, developments and definition of target groups. Fortunately, information on disability prevalence rates is available by governorate. This information is of great importance in order to ensure proper strategic planning for service provision and help providers address community needs.

Figure (5 –1): Disabled Children (Under 18 years) by Cause, Gender and Region, 1997



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. The Database of the Population, Housing and Establishments Census, 1997. Unpublished Data.

Figure (5–1) depicts a detailed presentation of disability cases classified by type, cause, region and gender. Congenital disorders constitute the leading cause of disability, irrespective of gender or location. Information is missing, however, regarding disability prevalence rates reported annually. This causes significant long term effects on programs and necessitates measures to be taken to diminish the disability prevalence rate in the Palestinian Territory.

More than 9,356 cases of disabilities (60%) resulted from congenital disorders, illness (9%), child-birth related factors (8%) and other reasons each accounting for 1-2% of disability cases. These reasons vary from war/conflicts, injuries, traffic and work accidents to some other unknown factors. Male children are more prone to disabilities than females attributable to traffic accidents, work injuries and other factors.



One out of five disabled children (10-17) is illiterate

Children in Gaza Strip are more prone to disability (1,154 to 100,000) than children in the West Bank (1,096 to 100,000). Available data on causes and reasons leading to the occurrence of disability shows similar trends in the West Bank and Gaza Strip relevant to congenital anomalies, diseases, and birth-related factors. A study on the hereditary, environmental and poverty factors would help in the identification of the reasons why Gaza Strip children are more at risk of disability occurrence than West Bank children. The PCBS' Population, Housing and Establishment Census carried out at the end of 1997 represents a source for data on these indicators for in depth study and analysis.

More than three-quarters (78.4%) of total children with disabilities are children in the age group of (5-17) years. The implications of such data are highly important because the majority of these children are at the stage of compulsory education. But data obtained by the study on rehabilitation services development²⁰ reveals that the majority of disabled children at this stage are not receiving any educational services. Provision of detailed data on the number of years since the detection of the child's disability will provide valuable information on the background required to reduce the prevalence of these deficits. About 22% of the total number of children with disabilities aged 10-17 years are illiterate in comparison to only 4% of the total number of children in the same age group²¹.

²⁰ Ministry of Social Affairs and Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1997. A Study on Rehabilitation Services Development at the intermediate specialized level in West Bank and Gaza districts first report: Central West Bank District. Ramallah, Palestine

²¹ PCBS: Population, housing and establishment Census data base, 1997. Ramallah - Palestine



◆ Juvenile Delinquents

State parties recognize the right of every child alleged as, accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law, to be treated in a manner consistent with the promotion of the child's sense of dignity and worth which reinforces the child's respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of others and which takes into account the child's age and the desirability of promoting the child's reintegration and the child's assuming a constructive role in society.

(Child's Rights Convention, Article 40-1)

Youth are likely to be exposed to violence on a more frequent basis than adults. This is due to a number of factors including their young age, lack of experience and power, and active involvement in society. As such, many youth become involved in the work force, in gangs, and hang out on the streets. This is likely to increase their chances of being victims to violence and abuse and of actually committing crimes, themselves.

Exposure to violence and participation in crimes has a negative effect on the physical and mental well being of all youth. This naturally indicates the importance of identifying indicators and measures to adequately portray not only who is committing crimes, but why, where and when. In addition, it is of the utmost importance that data also be gathered on the victims of crimes.

Both sets of information are of critical value in order to develop national strategies and plans to effectively reduce violence in our society. The increasing presence of youth violence in society is a general indication that insufficient actions are being taken to channel negative youth behaviors into acceptable behaviors and norms. It also indicates that additional efforts need to be taken by families, schools, peers, youth organizations, and religious institutions to support youth in general, and especially those who are likely to become victims or perpetrators of youth crimes.

Table (5-3): Number of Juvenile Offenders, In Custody and Convicted, by region, 1996 – 1997.

Status of Juvenile Delinquent	1996			1997		
	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
In Custody	100	193	293	816	493	1309
Convicted	13	12	25	141	160	301

Source: Ministry of Social Affairs (1996 & 1997). Juvenile Delinquents Department.

Table (5-3) indicates that the number of youth convicted for serious crimes increased thirteen fold between 1996 and 1997 (25 youth were convicted for committing serious crimes in 1996 compared to 301 youth convictions in 1997). It is unclear, from the sources available, if the increase is due to better follow up



and monitoring within the Ministry of Social Affairs record keeping system or if there was an actual increase in the number of convictions.

Greater convictions might either represent an actual increase in the number of crimes that are being committed by youth, increased police follow up and catching youth's offenders, higher incidence of youth who are being charged with crimes and being brought before the juvenile justice system, or one or more of the above. The importance of establishing solid baseline data is important in being able to elucidate if crime rates are increasing or decreasing annually.

Following the trends noted above, one notes a 20% increase in the number of youth accused of committing crimes in 1997 compared to those accused in 1996. These youth are accused of committing serious crimes including murder/ attempted murder, theft/burglary, and physical assault of others, public disturbances, immoral and sexual offenses, and other offenses. Between 1996 and 1997 the serious violent juvenile crime rate jumped from 1 per 1000 youths (1996) to 9 per 1000 youths (1997). Data for Gaza youth accused of perpetrating crimes is not available for 1997.

An analysis of available data provided by the Ministry of Social Affairs indicates that male youth are much more likely than female youth to be perpetrators and victims of serious violent crimes. Data indicates that less than 3.1% of all accused youth are female. In addition, older youth (15-17 years) are more likely to be perpetrators of violent serious crimes than younger children under 14 years of age. 85 % of all reported cases of juvenile crimes were perpetrated by 13-18 years old in 1997.

Table (5-4): Distribution of Juvenile Delinquents, by Type of Offence Committed, 1996-1997.

Crime / Offense	1996		1997	
	No.	%	No.	%
Damage of Public Property	40	3.5	720	49.1
Offense	480	41.6	390	26.5
Murder / Causing serious damage	31	2.7	43	3.0
Stealing / robbery	468	40.6	0	0.0
Drugs	6	0.5	2	0.1
Ethical Crimes	37	3.2	179	12.1
Go astray / Abandon home	80	6.9	7	0.5
Others	11	1.0	128	8.7
Total	1153	%100	1469	%100

Source: Ministry of Social Affairs (1996 & 1997). Juvenile Delinquents Department.

Data indicates that there were over 468 cases of robbery and theft committed by youth in 1996, yet none were reported for 1997. It is highly unlikely that there were no robberies and thefts by youth during this latter period. It is quite clear that the reports provided by the ministry were not complete and changed format



from one year to another. An eighteen- (18) fold increase in number of reported cases of vandalism was reported for 1997 compared to 1996. Vandalism accounted for 49% of all crimes perpetrated by youth in 1997 while this type of offense did not exceed 3% of total juvenile crime rates in 1996.

There was also an overall decrease in reported cases of violent crimes against others (assault, threatening with a weapon, murder, and complicity in murder) between 1996 and 1997. In 1996, 45% of all youth crimes were of a violent nature compared to 30% in 1997. It is hoped that this represents a true reduction in violent crimes. However, the data is incomplete and further analysis needs to be conducted to determine if the actual number of reported cases were fully documented and if other cases were not reported. In many instances, cases are dropped before reaching courts because the families of the youth come to agree upon manners of handling the offense outside of the courtroom and judicial system. It is hoped that future records will be able to adequately indicate the number of crimes that were perpetrated and means of resolution. It is important to note that Palestinian children in conflict with the law represent less than 0.3% of the population of children between the ages of (10 - 18 years).

◆ Children who are Abused, Neglected and Exploited

State Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

(Child's Rights Convention, Article 34 - 1)

State Parties shall protect the child against all other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child's welfare.

Child's Right Convention, Articles 36.)

The Ministry of Social Affairs has established a system of child protection social work. Twenty - five trained child protection social workers have now been working for over one and one half years to assist children in need of special protection to find safety and security as specified by the Convention of the Rights of the Child. They work on the basic principle that the family is the most suitable environment for raising a child. Hence, all efforts are taken to keep children with their families and providing the child and the family with the needed assistance and support to ensure appropriate parent-child-sibling relations.



Table (5–5): Distribution of Child Protection Cases Handled by the Ministry of Social Affairs, 1998.

Type of Problem Encountered by the Child	Number Of Cases
Exploitation /sexual violence	21
Physical damage	54
Psychological Problem (Suicide, Depression, ...etc)	88
Chronic Disease /Disability	270
Drop – Out From School	85
Escape From the House	63
Parents Addiction /Chronic Disease	138
Rehabilitation (Physical)	52
Other Types of Problems	148
Total	919

Source: Ministry of Social Affairs, 1998. Annual Report of the Household and Childhood Department– Activities and Accomplishments.

In Table (5–5), one notes that in 1998 the 25 child protection workers handled 919 cases of children encountering different problems. The vast majority of these cases were brought to their attention by the families themselves, police, school counselors, and community workers. It is interesting to note that these cases were forwarded to the Ministry of Social Affairs. It is anticipated that for next year child protection social workers will have in place proactive system-reaching children in need of special protection. These cases in no way represent the actual number of children who are living in abuse, exploitative, or neglectful life conditions. Global research has indicated that most social work systems deal with less than 25% of all children in need of special protection. Considering the newness of this child protection social work system in Palestine, it is likely that less than 5% of all children in need of special protection have been reached.



Executive Summary

- 1980 children (under 18 years of age) were residing in orphanages in 1998 whereas 2800 were recorded as institutionalized children in 1996.
- 57% of all institutionalized children are in the West Bank compared to only 6% in Gaza and 37% in Jerusalem.
- The overall rate of disabilities is higher in males (1,252 per 100,000) than females (980 per 100,000).
- Children in Gaza (1,154 per 100,000) have a higher rates of disabilities compared to children in the West Bank (1,096 per 100,000).
- High rates of illiteracy (22%) are reported for disabled children aged 10-17 years.
- The leading cause of disabilities is of a congenital nature, followed by illness and birth - related causes suggesting that many disabilities are preventable.
- Movement disorders (23%) are the most commonly reported disabilities for children followed by mental (15%), speech (10%), multiple (10%), and sight (9.5%) disabilities, respectively.
- The number of crimes recorded, committed by youth, increased from 25 in 1996 to 301 cases in 1997.
- There was a Four-fold increase in the number of delinquents accused of committing offence in 1997 in comparison to the number of those who were actually sentenced in 1996.
- There was a Eighteen-fold increase in the number of juveniles accused of vandalism in 1997 compared to 1996 (3% of total delinquent crimes annually)
- The Ministry of Social Affairs handled 919 child protection cases in 1998
- The 919 child special protection cases included cases of sexual exploitation, physical abuse, mistreatment, parents incapability to providing them with a safe environment or had insufficient financial resources to meet the physical and mental health needs of their children.



Recommendations

- Data should be compiled on the incidence and prevalence of each type of disability through comprehensive records that should be compiled by the Ministry of Health primary health clinics and hospitals.
- Research on “actual numbers of disabled children” should be conducted to determine if there is an “under” reporting of disabilities in our society.
- Comprehensive child centered statistics on institutionalized children should be obtained that indicate age, sex, duration of stay in the institution, and reason for institutionalization for each child annually.
- Comprehensive statistics on the number of children, age, sex, length of stay in the hospital, parental visits and care during hospitalization should be reported.
- Data on the number of parents (mothers and fathers) who are in prison should be obtained and the number of family visits that have been requested and denied. The same applies for juveniles who are placed in prisons/institutions and their right to family visits.
- Statistics on the number of families with children who have requested family reunification (including Jerusalem) should be made available.
- In order to ensure that data is compiled thoroughly and correctly, all ministries should take steps to put in place an efficient reporting and monitoring system that sets up a stable data - monitoring framework
- Detailed monitoring and reporting guidelines and protocols need to be agreed upon with the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Justice to ensure that similar reporting formats and contents are shared.
- Descriptions of types of crimes perpetrated, and means of categorizing crimes need to be agreed upon.
- Data on victims of crimes perpetrated by youth need to be obtained.
- A review of the juvenile justice system needs to be undertaken and monitoring and compliance of international standards supported by the Convention on the Rights of the Child need to be abided by.



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Chapter 6

Children Living Below the Poverty Line

State parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.

(Child Rights Convention, Article 27-1)

The parent(s) or others responsible for the child have the primary responsibility to secure, within their abilities and financial capacities, the conditions of living necessary for the child development.

(Child Rights Convention, Article 27-2)

Poverty is a complex, multi dimensional phenomenon that has economic, social political, and historical aspects. Poverty leads to a decrease in food consumption (quantity and quality-wise), decrease in accessibility to basic services such as health, education, appropriate housing, durable goods, material assets, and loss of financial savings to ensure the ability to meet hardship conditions such as illness, disability and unemployment.

Poverty symptoms are also reflected in the inability for labor market enrollment or the attainment of the conditions needed for this enrollment. Poverty is an issue dealt with by many UN international conferences since 1990. Most important were the World Summit on Social Development, held in Copenhagen in 1995, the World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, and the International Declaration on the Rights of the Child in 1989, (*as stated in Article 27 of this convention*).

In order to ascertain the scope of the child poverty phenomenon in the Palestinian Territory, this chapter aims to cover more than one area. Its main concern is to shed light on child poverty prevalence in the Palestinian Territory, provide a brief description of poverty in the Palestinian Territory, and clarify the impact of poverty on Palestinian children.

The “poor child” is defined as the child who belongs to a poor family (whose monthly consumption is lower than the national poverty line drawn in 1997²²). This report does not address other poverty-related issues, such as: health care, employment prevalence, education status (especially illiteracy), nutrition, deprivation, are social exclusion²³. Available data used in the derivation of the indicators used in this chapter are based on PCBS Family Consumption and Expenditure Survey, carried out throughout January- December 1997.

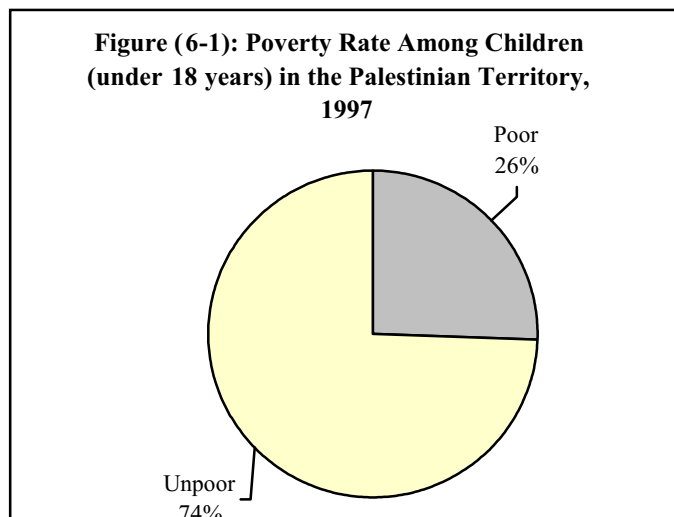
²² Based upon the poverty report in Palestine for 1997, the poverty line for a family of 6 members was 1390 NIS, i.e. about USD 400. For more details see: Palestine - Poverty Report 1998. National Team for Poverty Alleviation.

²³ These issues are not dealt with in this chapter to ensure that data and indicators quoted in this section do not recur in other chapters of this study.

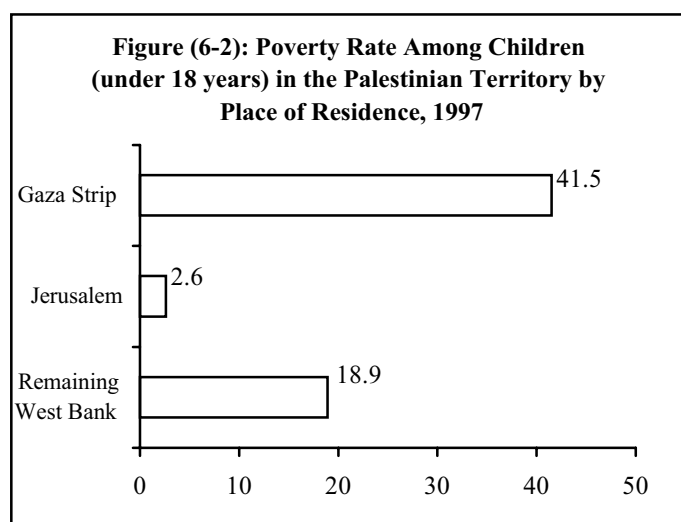


One out of four children live in poverty

Findings reveal that about one child out of every four children is suffering from poverty. This year, the child poverty rate amounts to 25.6% of the total (under 18 years old) number of children. The percentage of poor male children is estimated to be 50.4%, slightly higher than poor female children (49.6%). About 54% of the poor sector are children. In the West Bank, the percentage of poor children reaches 16.8% of its total population (48.7% in males and 51.3% for females). The poverty rate in the Gaza Strip²⁴ is 41.5% in total, (51.6% are poor male children and 48.4% are females).



The Jerusalem governorate was excluded from our analysis due to its peculiar situation, in comparison to the West Bank and Gaza districts. Jerusalem has greater social insurance and more freedom of movement, facilitating accessibility to Israeli labor market. The findings show that the child poverty rate in the remaining West Bank (excluding Jerusalem) is 18.9% showing a 2.1% increase of the total poverty rate.

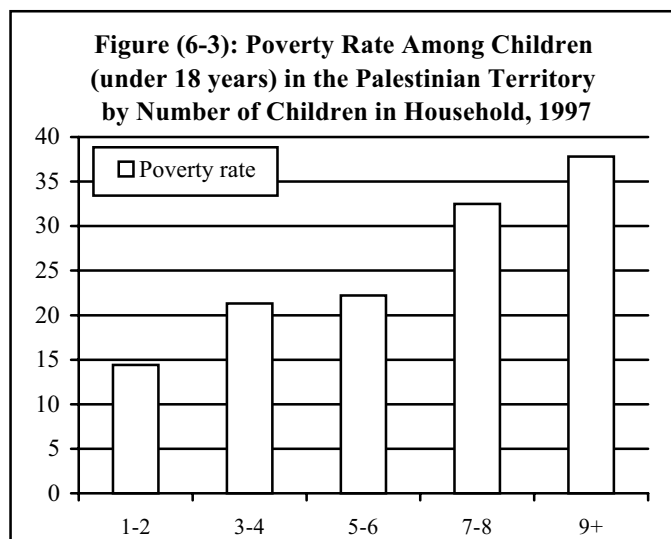


²⁴Poverty prevalence rates in Gaza Strip children are higher than in the West Bank due to the socio - economic structure of its population. The majority of Gazan families have: a larger size that aggravates the problem of poverty, lower standards of living, and higher unemployment rates (26.8% compared to 17.3% in the West Bank, based upon Labour Force Survey indicators, Annual Report, 1997), and lower wage rates. (The annual report on the 1997 Labour Force Survey shows that Gaza Strip wages constitute about (84%) of wage rates in the West Bank, which in turn are equal to 47.7% of wage rates of Palestinian workers in the various Israeli economic sectors). Another factor contributing to the spread of poverty in Gaza Strip is its labor force dependence on the Israeli employment sectors that are adversely affected by frequent closures and conditioned by work permissions issued by the Israeli authorities for Gaza Strip workers in Israel.



Moreover, a total of 16.8% of all children live below the poverty line, of which 38.6% live in the West Bank and 61.4% in Gaza Strip.

The findings show a proportional relationship between the number of children in a household, and the household's position relevant to the poverty line. Poverty increases consistently with the increase in the number of children in a household. The large number of children in poor families more over, creates poverty gaps among children themselves. The poverty rate is estimated to be 14.4% for families with (1-2 children) and 37.5% in larger families who have nine or more children.



One out of every three children residing in refugee camps lives in poverty

Available data suggests that the highest level of child poverty (35%) is seen in refugee camps, a rate greater than the level in towns (26%) and villages (22%).

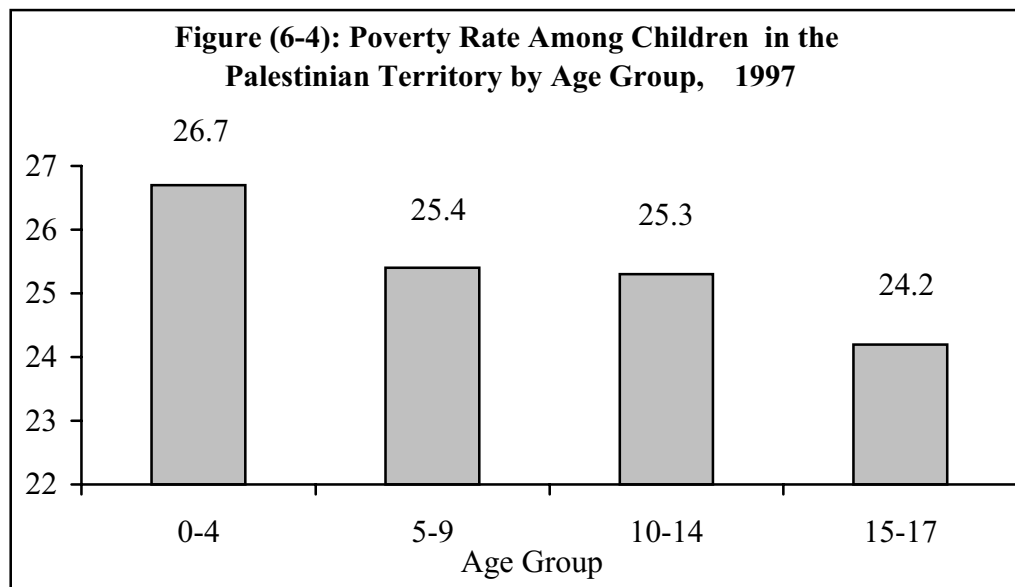
Child poverty rates in the refugee camps are increasing in Gaza Strip camps in general, irrespective of the locality.

The highest child poverty rates in the West Bank are reported in villages (19%), followed by cities (14%) and refugee camps (10%). High poverty rates in the West Bank areas could be due to the higher unemployment levels in the West Bank villages due to their dependence on agriculture as a main source of income on the one hand, and to resource misdistribution on the other hand.

In Gaza Strip the highest poverty rates prevail in refugee camps (44%) followed by villages (41%) and towns (40%).



Data shows that age groups do not influence the national child poverty rate. Child poverty rates per age groups are close to the national poverty rate (26%) with slight differences not exceeding 1-2%.





◆ Socio-Economic Characteristics of Poor Children's Households

Poverty levels and trends vary greatly by the differences in household sizes and structures, and by demographic features of the head of the household, including their gender and marital status. Child poverty prevalence levels also vary according to the demographic and social features of the head of the household. These variables represent human and social capital, the ability to earn wages, and the level of participation in the labor force.

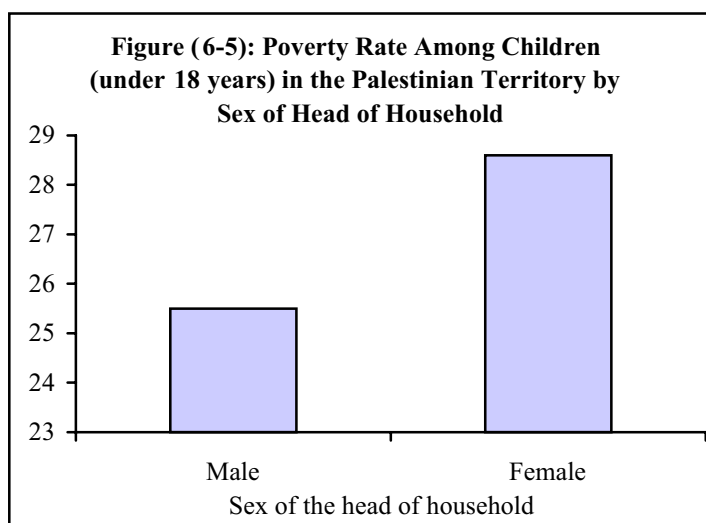
● Sex of Head of Household

29% of children who live in female-headed households live in poverty compared to 26% of children living in male-headed households

Female-headed households constituted 8%²⁵ of the total of Palestinian households in 1997. Although this group is one of the main sectors receiving public assistance in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, destitution rates among their children (29%) surpass those among male-headed households (26%).

About 24% of the children in female-headed households live in extreme poverty, compared to only 17% of children living in male-headed household.

This variation is due to some underlying factors including the low female labor force participation rate (in the formal sector), which constitutes no more than 12% of total employed population compared to a 69% rate of male participation.



Lower female income levels and low average daily wages (US\$ 12 per day) account for the rise in child poverty rate in female-headed households. Male-headed families receive an average of USD 18 per day²⁶.

Since most divorced or widowed women tend not to remarry, the largest part of divorced and widowed communities is composed of females. Thus, households headed by divorced or widowed females are especially vulnerable to poverty .

²⁵ PCBS. Population, Housing and Establishments Census, 1997.

²⁶ PCBS. 1998. Labor Force Survey. The annual report, 1997. Ramallah-Palestine.

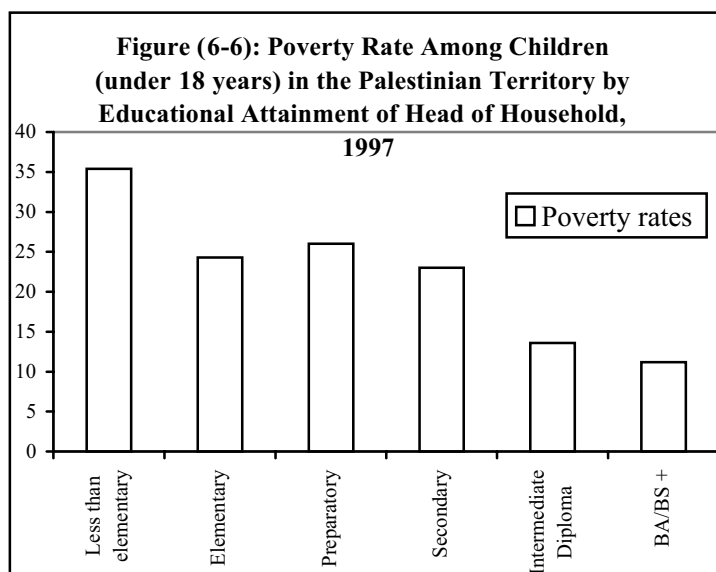


Available data shows that child poverty rates among the offspring of previously married female heads is 27% of the total number of poor children, compared to 25% among the children of male-headed households.

- **Education Levels of the Head of the Household**

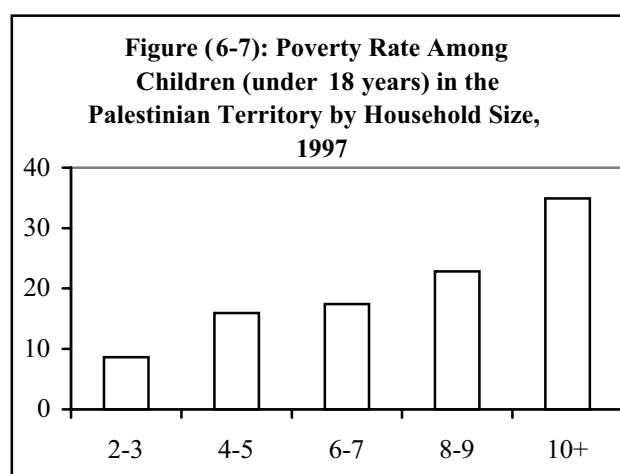
Higher education attainment levels of the head of household decreases the prevalence of poverty among children

Higher education is closely related to lower poverty prevalence. Child poverty rates decline steadily with the increase in higher educational levels attained by the head of household. Poverty is most widespread among children whose parents attained less than elementary school education, (35%). Those households whose heads attended two years at a community college (had a poverty rate of only 14%). There fore, as a rule, child poverty rates decline consistently with an increase in the education attainment levels of the head of household.



- **Household Size**

A household's size and the family's standard of living attest poverty levels. With the exception of families comprised of 1-2 members, that most often belong to the elderly sector²⁷, smaller households tend to enjoy better living conditions and standards than large-member households whose living standards deteriorate with the increase in family size.



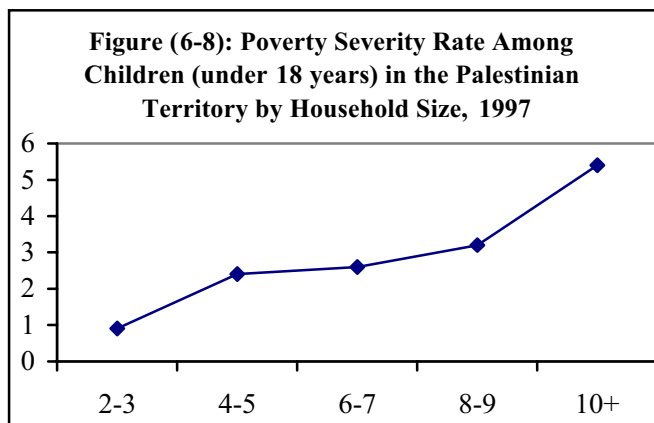
Based on the "poor child" definition, child poverty rates conform to the findings at the household level: child poverty rates increase with the household's size. For a family of 2-3 members, the

²⁷Source: PCBS, 1998. Living standards in the Palestinian Territory. Annual Report 1997. Ramallah - Palestine



poverty rate amounts to 8.6%, which increases to 34.9% for a household of 10 members or more.

Since the household's size is susceptible to household income distribution differentials, based upon gender, age, and responsibility, the indicator of the severity of poverty is used here instead, which measures gaps between the poor themselves. Thus, the previous conclusion is confirmed: severity of poverty increases with the increase in household size.

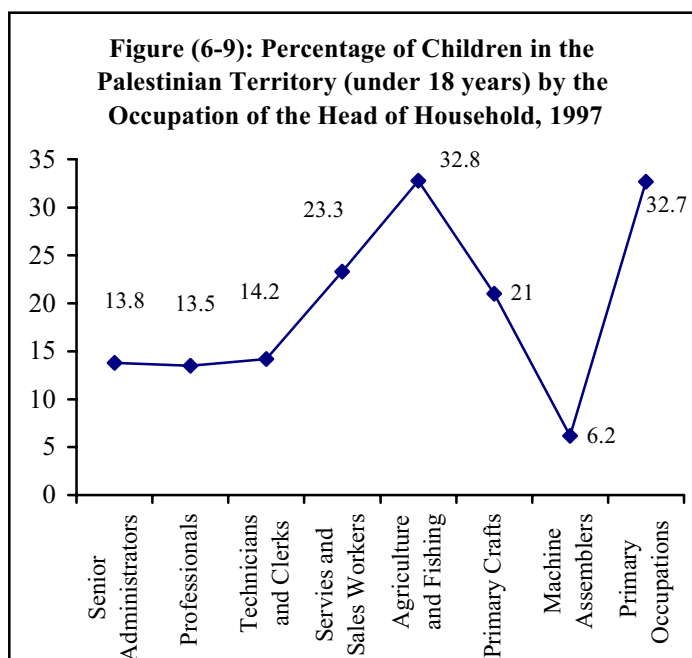


- Employment Status of the Head of the Household**

Children of households whose heads are employed in primary occupation contribute to the national poverty rate more than other groups

Labour force participation lowers poverty rates. Child poverty rates of households with un-employed heads equal 38%, compared to 24% for heads participating in the labour force.

Since labour force participants are not a homogenized group, employment type is more significant than employment itself in determining the household's position relative to the poverty line. Available data shows that there is one poor child out of every four children who belong to households with employed heads. The profession of the head also determines a child's position on the poverty line.



Child poverty increases among two communities of household's heads: unskilled laborers in primary occupations and skilled laborers employed in agriculture and fisheries. Both categories exhibit a poverty rate of 33% among their children. Poverty prevalence in other occupations is lower than the general average poverty



rate, depending on the vocation. Poverty rates range from 14% among directors and higher management level employees to 6.2% among machine assemblers and operators.

This is congruent with data presented in the chapter on child labor²⁸. The findings show that employed children aged (5-17 years), who belong to households with heads employed in primary occupations, go to work for various reasons. About 41% of these children reported that they work primarily to increase the families income, 28.5% said they work to provide assistance to a family enterprise, whereas 30.3% said they made their decisions on the basis of other reasons (self-reliance, independence, spending school vacation, had nothing to do after quitting school, etc.).

About 56% of employed children aged (5-17 years) who reported that they work to increase the family income also stated that their households' heads are working in primary occupations. Another 11.3% of the same group informed that they live with heads involved in agricultural and fishing activities. These children reported that their family heads are employed in primary vocations (20.3%), in service sector and sales (2.3%), in machine operation and assembling (4.3%), and in other professions (5.6%) such as directors and higher level management employees, specialized personnel, technicians and clerks.

- **Social Assistance Programs**

Data compiled by PCBS reveals that the child poverty rate in assisted families is twice the national child poverty rate level (52% and 26%, respectively) and the percentage of these children constitute around one third (32%) of total poor children. Taking into consideration the working mechanisms of most institutions in the Palestinian Territory, it is possible to note that most social work organizations adopt income - related criteria to define their target group, including lower or lack of family incomes. Their activities with poor families have relief/charitable rather than developmental approaches, with no poverty line to draw upon as a baseline for their programs. Rather, institutions adopt their own criteria and priorities stemming from ideologies, missions and terms of references. All parties active in the community (such as the PNA, trade unions, NGOs, public unions, UNRWA, Zakat committees, etc.), realize no joint developmental or jurisdictional strategies. For instance, the Ministry of Social Affairs runs a program identifying vulnerable families in need of assistance using a single criterion: lack or shortage in family income (except family of martyrs and detainees). Furthermore, the UNRWA social assistance program is restricted to refugee families and/or individuals classified (by UNRWA) as hardship cases. UNRWA criteria are: the lack of an able and income-earning male adult (18-60 years), and the total family income (of all sources) is less than two-thirds of the lowest salary paid by UNRWA (at the family place of residence). Zakat committees, on the other hand, provide assistance to a needy family in case the head or main breadwinner is partially or totally incapable of income generation.

²⁸PCBS. Child Labor and Activities Survey in the Palestinian Territory (October - December 1998). Ramallah - Palestine. Unpublished data.



Executive Summary

- One out of every four children in the Palestinian Territory is poor. Child poverty rates in the Palestinian Territory average 25.6%, of which 38.6% are in the West Bank and 61.4% in Gaza Strip.
- Poverty has a greater effect on refugee camp children, with a poverty rate of 35%. This rate is higher than poverty rates prevailing among urban children (26%) and rural children (22%). Poverty in the West Bank is a rural phenomenon reaching 19% in its highest rate and decreasing to 14% in urban areas. Children in refugee camps suffer the highest poverty rate (44%) in Gaza Strip.
- Child poverty is more widespread in female-headed households (29%) compared to a 26% child poverty rate in male-headed households.
- Marital status directly influences child poverty rates poverty in widowed or divorced-headed households is 26% compared to a rate of 25% in married households.
- Higher educational attainment on part of the head of the household decreases child poverty prevalence. Higher education levels of household heads lowers child poverty rates. Poverty rates among the offspring of family heads with less than elementary school education (35%) are more than double the child's poverty rate of children of two-year college educated heads of households (14%).
- Enrollment of the head of the household in labor force lowers child poverty in particular and national poverty rates in general. Child poverty rates in households with unemployed heads (38%) are considerably higher than that of households with employed heads (24%).
- Child poverty rate differentials vary with the main profession of the head of the household. Higher child poverty rates are more predominant in a family whose head is engaged in primary occupations, or is a skilled laborer in agricultural and fishing activities (33%) than in families whose heads are enrolled in other professions.
- The child poverty rate is three times higher in families receiving general assistance than in families receiving no such assistance.
- Hard Cash Poverty does not necessarily function as a good indicator on other forms of deprivation like un-attainability of, or inaccessibility to, public (health and educational) services.



Recommendations

- Poverty is a complex, multi-faced phenomenon involving monetary and non-monetary elements. As referred to in the definition of poverty, at the beginning of this report, it is necessary to pay considerable attention to the non-monetary elements. While studying child poverty phenomenon all (inter) relationships care (inter) should be taken into account. Poverty, in terms of shortage or lack of financial earnings, does not measure deprivation from basic services (such as health care, education, development rates, employment of job conditions, etc.) that are measurable through direct consumption.
- It is necessary to formulate policies that work with poor social sectors, especially with regard to social care systems, through an efficient social assistance system that adopts clear criteria based on a national poverty line.
- It is necessary to draw-up family planning (birth spacing) policies and educational programs given the direct relation between child poverty rates and the increase of household sizes
- It is necessary to draw-up policies that enable household heads excluded from the labor market. This is needed due to the fact that child poverty rates are lower among households whose heads are part of the labor force than households with unemployed heads.
- Poverty in households with employed heads must also be tackled since, as clarified in this report a large percentage of children of poor families do have employed heads although their type of profession influences the prevailing rates of child poverty.



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Chapter 7

Child Labour

State parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

Child's rights Convention, Article (32-1)

Countless numbers of children in the various parts of the world are threatened by hazards hindering the growth and development of their abilities, including child labour performed in difficult conditions and in labour jobs harmful to their physical abilities. This may cause grievous affects on these children. Children (aged 5-17 years) represent one third of the total population in the Palestinian Territory. A special consideration should therefore be given on the part of decision takers and policy makers to study the various living conditions under which employed children live, in order to ensure appropriate decisions and legislation for their protection. On this ground, this chapter presents data indicative of the size of the child labour phenomenon in Palestine, compared to other countries and investigates the actual impacts on their basic rights, such as education, and provides information on employment conditions and family's attitudes towards child labour as an indicator of the society's culture.

The findings presented in this chapter are derived mainly from the PCBS' Child Labour Survey, (carried out in the fourth quarter of 1998). The sample size amounted to 7631 households, 4546 households of which have children aged (5-17 years). The data was collected in the period between October 10, 1998 and December 7, 1999. It is worth noting that this survey was conducted as an annex to the Palestinian Labour Force Survey (the eleventh round) performed by PCBS, on a regular (quarterly) basis. The survey's questionnaire consisted of two basic parts: the first part involved questions answered by the head of the household on the child's behalf whereas the second part included the results of interviews with the child him/herself. All questions asked revolve around a twelve-month reference period proceeding the day of the interview.

- **What Is Child Labour²⁹?**

International debate on child labour draws a distinction between "acceptable" and "unacceptable" types of child labour. If all jobs carried out by children are viewed as equally unacceptable, the whole picture of the child labour phenomenon would be disturbed and would minimize its size which would necessarily place additional difficulties to the attempts of ending violations. Thus, the importance of making a distinction between beneficial types of employment and the unacceptable kinds. The extent to which employment affects the child's

29. Arab Resources Workshop "my right", Child Labour. 4th issue, Winter 1998. Nicosia-Cyprus.



development is the major criteria to determine when the job becomes a problem. Harmless adult jobs or activities might become extremely harmful if carried out by children. The following are some aspects of child development that could adversely be affected in case the child becomes a subject for exploitation:

Physical development, including child's general health, biological harmony, strength, sight and hearing. Cognitive development, including the ability to read, write and calculate, and acquisition of knowledge necessary for child's daily life. Emotional development, including self-esteem, family ties, feeling of love and recognition by others. Social and moral development, including feelings of belonging to a group, ability to cooperate with others, and ability to differentiate between right and wrong.

In this study, the term "employed child" refers to every child aged (5-17 years), who has worked, at least, for a period of one week at least during the reference period (the previous 12 months, between October, 1997 and December, 1998), whether in a waged employment or un-waged in a family enterprise, or through self-employment. This definition applies to all figures derived from resources relied upon by the Child's Labour Survey. There are nevertheless figures that were based on Labour Force Survey (October, 1997-December, 1998 round) where the reference period was the previous week preceding the interview date. Each child who had worked at least one hour with or without pay at a family enterprise or was self-employed during the reference period is considered an employed child.

◆ Size of the Child Labour Phenomenon

About 34,900 children are employed in the Palestinian Territory and 7,260 are ready for and seeking employment.

The total number of children aged (5-17 years) in the Palestinian Territory was estimated to be 1,025,900 children in the fourth quarter of 1998, forming 34.6% of the total population³⁰. Around 4.2% of this group (43,090 children) participate in the labour force, of which 82.8% are actually enrolled, and the rest are ready for and seeking employment. To determine the child's employment status, these figures are quoted from the Labour Force Survey whose methodology uses the week preceding the interview date as its reference period. In comparison to the same survey (same methodology) for another period (September-October, 1995), a 0.8% increase is noticed in the percentage of children aged (12-16 years) enrolled in the labour force. (The percentage of children aged (12-16 years) and participating in the labour force was 6.6% in the first³¹ round and 7.4% in the eleventh³² round of the same survey). There was also 1.8% increase in the percentage of employed children in the age (12-16 years) whose participation in the two rounds of labour force survey increased from 81.2% to 83.0%.

³⁰ PCBS. 1999. Population Projections for mid 1998. Ramallah - Palestine. Unpublished data.

³¹ PCBS. 1996. Labour Force Survey. (September - October 1995) Round. Main Findings on child labour among children aged (12 - 16 years). Ramallah - Palestine.

³² PCBS. 1996. Labour Force Survey (No. 11). (September - October 1998) Round. Ramallah - Palestine.



On the other hand, the Child Labour Survey findings show that the number of children engaged in paid or unpaid labour (unpaid family members) throughout the preceding 12 month period (October 1997-December 1998) amounted to 63,600 children, i.e. 6.2% of the total number of children in the same age group. The number of employed children was 48,000 in the West Bank and 15,600 in Gaza Strip (i.e. about 7.3% and 4.3% of the total number of (5-17 years old) children in the two regions, respectively).

The highest percentage of waged and unwaged family-employed children aged (5-17 years) concentrates in the North districts of the West Bank (10.1%), followed by the south district (5.8%), as Figure (7-1) depicts. The central districts of Gaza Strip witnessed the lowest percentage of employed children (1.8%). Similarly, the highest percentage of self-employed children or children employed by others in the same age group was found in the West Bank north districts, followed by the north district of the West Bank (3.8% and 3.7%, respectively). These figures are revealing a slight variation between these two areas despite their differences in the (paid or unpaid) children employment rates. This might be due to the agricultural activities prevailing in the north districts and families' need for child employment. The highest percentages of employed children concentrate in the West Bank due to the high proportions of children employed in Israel and settlements, and because of the relative movement facilitation between the West Bank and Israel. Apparently the low percentage of employed children in Gaza may be explained by the considerably higher rate of unemployment (21.1%) in Gaza Strip in comparison with the West Bank (9.4%)³³.

Figure (7-1): A Comparison Between the Percentage of Waged and Unwaged Employed Children, and the Percentage of Waged Children Only Who Worked in the Preceding Twelve Months Among Children Aged 5-17 Years in the Palestinian Territory by Region.

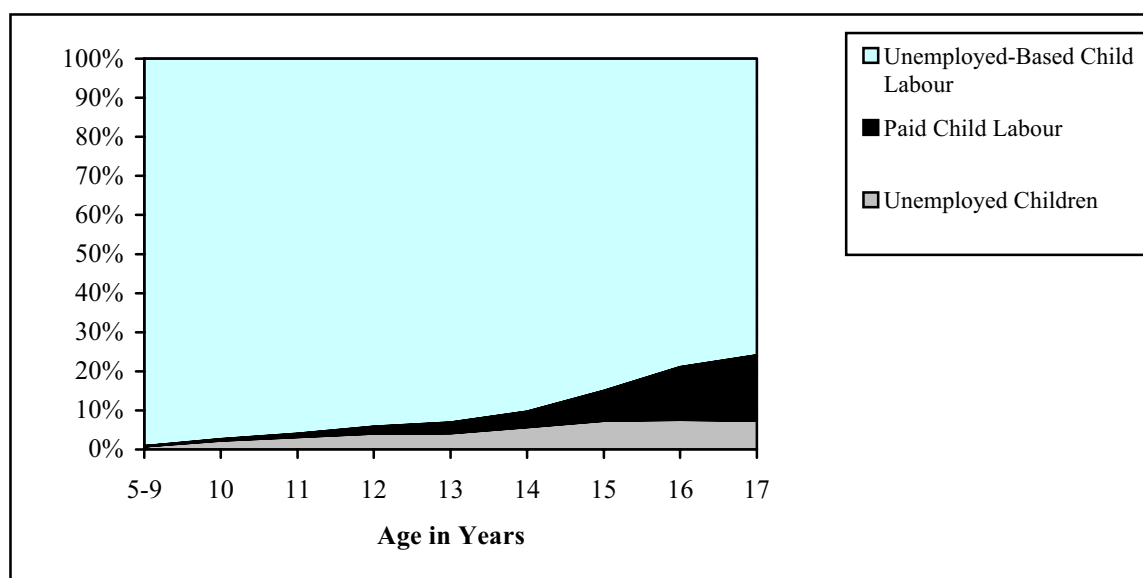


³³ PCBS. 1999. *Labour Force Survey: Main Findings; (October-December 1998) Round*. Labour Force Survey series (No. 11)/ Ramallah - Palestine.



The greatest percentage of female children engaged in household activities is not classified as employed children, as outlined by the international definition of child labour. On these grounds, the percentage of employed female children in the age group (5-17 years) is estimated to 1.6% compared to 10.5% of male children at the same age group. As the majority of employed children are older than 10 years of age, compared to children in the age group (5-9 years), the percentage of waged children increases among those in the age group (15-17 years), amounting to 12.5% of the total number of children at this age group. For a structure of all children aged (5-17 years) according to their employment status.

Figure (7-2): Distribution of Children Aged (5-17 years) in the Palestinian Territory by Significant Employment Features and Age.

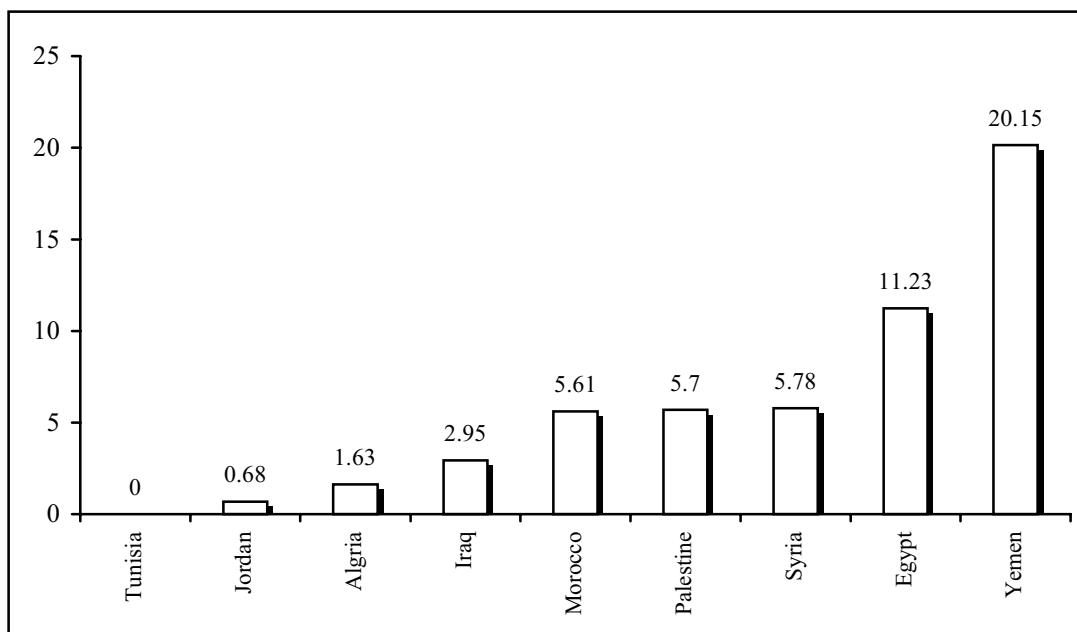


The size of child labour in the Palestinian Territory (5.7%) is considered relatively high compared to some Arab countries, as indicated in Figure³⁴ (7-3) bearing in mind that the Palestinian data were collected in 1998 while some comparative Arab data date back to 1995.

³⁴International Labour Bureau. 1995. A Special Report on Child Labour in the World. Geneva.



Figure (7-3): International Comparisons for the Percentage of Employed Children in the Age Group (10-14 years).



◆ Factors Underlying Child Labour

● Education-Related Factors

One out of every two employed children are not enrolled at an educational facility

The correlation between child education and labour is a very strong one³⁵, and is dependent upon the educational level and its attainability, the economic conditions of the household and the social attitude to education. Most frequently child labour entails school dropout, and school dropout necessitates child enrollment in labour force. Available statistics represented in Figure (7-4) show that 45.4% of employed children are not enrolled at schools. Lower educational attainment levels among employed children adversely affect their future leading to a vicious cycle of poverty and child labour. Early employment often is not financially rewarding, causing poverty and diminishing household means in the future. It is also more likely for child workers to force their own children to seek early employment at the expense of education. In some cases, families and children may agree that education is a waste of time. In other cases parents might be pressured to “sacrifice” one child or more to employment without education in order for the employed child to contribute to the education of the rest of the

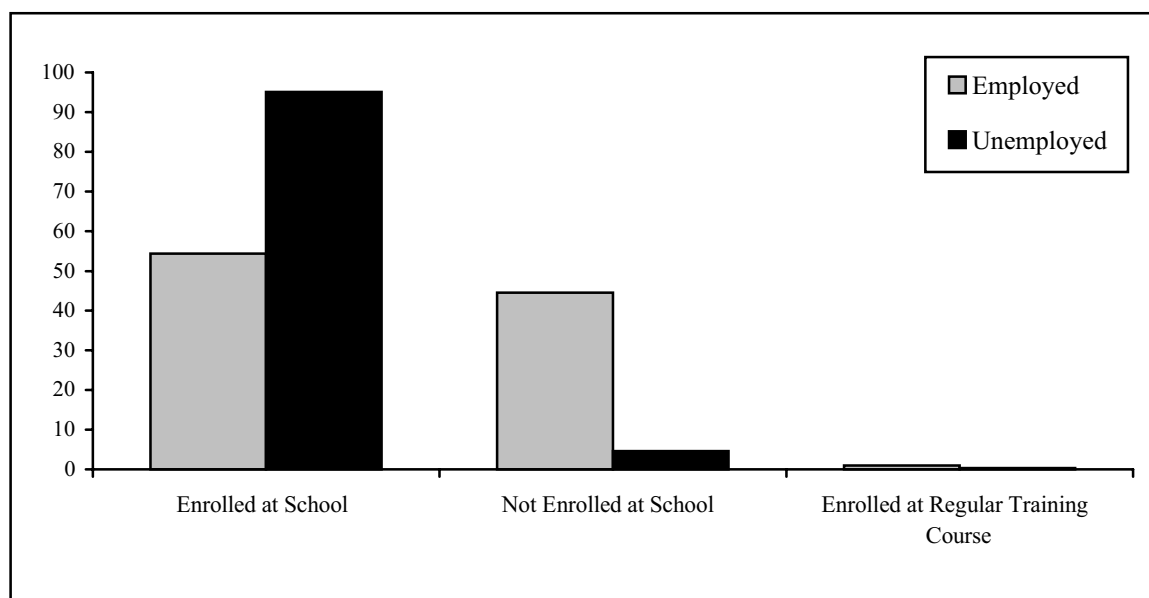
³⁵ Through statistical analysis and exploration of the relationship between the schools enrollment variable (enrolled, not enrolled) and employment status (employed, unemployed) using measuring coefficient Q. A strong relationship value (0.846) is found, bearing in mind that this value ranges between 0-1, the closer it is to 1, the stronger the correlation is.



children. To some families, education expenses are direct loses (fees, clothing, books) and indirect ones (earnings from child labour), which might make schooling children a heavy burden on their parents. Moreover, some children may not enroll in schools at all or they may drop out for many reasons³⁶ including:

- Class repetition (failure) may leave negative psychological effects and is financially unaffordable by poor families.
- Physical punishment or frequent beating of the child
- Unsuitable school hours to children employment hours (as in agriculture, for example)
- Long distances to schools (particularly for females) aggravated by lack of transport facilitation in remote areas.

Figure (7-4): Distribution of Children in the Palestinian Territory by Schooling Enrollment and Relationship to Work



The percentage of children aged (6–17 years) who left school reached 7.6% of all children at this age, 41.8% of them worked in the preceding twelve months period in comparison to 58.2% of these children who stayed unemployed after leaving school. Dropout among the West Bank children is estimated to be 8.0% and 6.1% in Gaza Strip districts³⁷. Reasons for leaving schools include child's unwillingness to study (30.8% of total dropout children), followed by frequent repetition or child's inability to succeed (27.8%), and the need to work due to economic hardships (2.4%). The total percentage of employed children among those who left school amounts to 88.5%.

³⁶ Arab Resources Workshop, "My right, Child Employment." 4th issue, Winter 1998. Nicosia: Cyprus.

³⁷ Dropout did not necessarily occur during this year. Rather the child's current status is described as a "dropout" regardless of actual dropout time.



91.3% of the total dropout children were employed mainly after leaving school due to reasons related to the educational system itself

The educational system is a determinant factor in the increase or decrease of child labour caused by school dropout. Findings show that about 91% of children who joined the labour force have done so in order to exploit the free time they enjoyed after quitting school. Children's specific reasons for dropout included: mistreatment by teachers, unwillingness to study due to the teaching methods applied, unavailability of sufficient and efficient vocational schools providing alternative and untraditional (*as seen by children*) educational opportunities for those children unable to achieve academic success, etc.

Table (7-1): Distribution of Children Aged (6-17 years), by Reasons for Leaving School, Region and Gender.

Causes of Leaving School	West Bank %		Gaza Strip %		Palestinian Territory %	
	Males	Females	Males	Female	Males	Female
Students Abuse or Fear From Teachers	1.1	0.7	2.9	1.6	1.7	0.9
Work	4.5	0.3	2.4	-	3.8	0.2
Marriage or Engagement	0.2	21.7	0.5	20.3	0.3	21.3
Family Choice	5.6	21.1	2.9	19.5	4.7	20.6
Unwillingness	40.4	20.4	31.1	21.1	37.5	20.6
Distance of School	1.1	4.9	-	0.8	0.8	3.7
Disability	7.0	6.6	9.6	9.8	7.8	7.5
Inability To Succeed	33.5	16.8	38.3	17.1	35.0	16.9
Criminal offenses-Education Schooling System	-	1.3	-	-	-	0.9
Others	60.5	6.3	12.4	9.8	8.4	7.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

• **Social and Economic Conditions of Households with Employed Children**

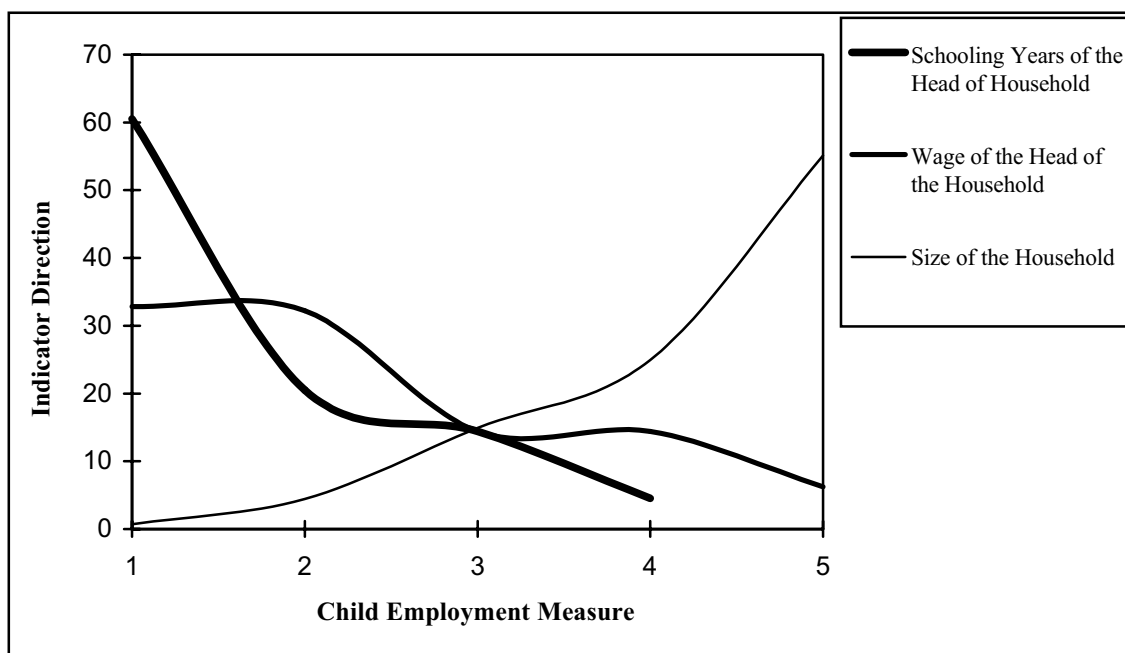
Several studies express the impacts of a family's social and economic situation on the child's growth. A Family's socio-economic status mostly determines a child's future. The most important indicators on the social and economic realities of employed children households include family size, basic housing conditions, levels of educational attainment, participation in labour force, professional distribution of family members, and wage and salary levels.

There is a strong correlation between family size and child employment. About three-quarters of employed Palestinian children (74.0%) belong to households larger than the average household size (6.4 members). Figure (5-7) illustrates the strong correlation between child labour and the size of the household, the number of schooling years successfully completed by head of the household, and the household salary or wage (in case the head of the household is a waged employee). Households with higher incomes and educational levels attained by the head of the household are less likely to allow their children to join the labour



market. The relationship is proportional between child employment and the size of the household so that the children of large-member households tend to seek early labour more often than the children of small-sized families.

Figure (7-5)³⁸: Measuring the Effect of the Number of Schooling Years of the Head of Household, and Family Size on Increasing the Percentage of Child Labour.



It is noted that four out of every ten employed children live in households with their heads employed in primary occupations. About 20% of employed children have farmers' household heads that own agricultural properties, a fact revealing a family's relegation to demand children's assistance. When compared to the findings on poverty prevalence among children, the correlation between poverty and increasing child labour is established. Poverty rates among households whose heads are employed in agriculture and primary occupations score the highest rates of child poverty (32.8% and 32.7%, respectively). The direct correlation between the percentage rate of employed children, aged 5-17 years and the household head's occupation is presented in Table (7-2). A comparison can be drawn between vocations of household heads that contribute to the increase in child labour, as it is the case in agriculture that manifests the highest rate of child labour over the other occupations, taking into account both percentages and rates.

³⁸ Measurement coefficient (1 - 5) represents the increase in the size of child labour; the larger the number, the number of employed children increases up to its highest value (5). The sectors used for each of the aforementioned variables in the table are ranked progressively: (schooling years of household head: 0-6, 7-9, 10-12, 13 or more), (wage groups: less than 39 NIS/day, 40 - 69, 70 - 99, 100 - 129, 130 or more), (family size: 1-3 members, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9, 10 or more). The percentage of employed children in each group/variable (x) as follows: $y = \frac{\text{the mean number of employed children among children aged 5-17 years for each group outlined above} \times \text{the number of employed children by the groups of each variable}}{\text{the total sum of Y values multiplied by 100}}$.



Table (7 – 2): Employment Rates among Children Aged (5-17) in the Palestinian Territory by Profession of Employed Head of the Household

Occupation of the Head of Household	Average Number of Employed Children Aged (5 – 17 Years)	Percentage
Legislatures & Senior Administration Staff	6.8	6.6
Technicians, specialists and clerks	3.2	6.1
Services and Sales Workers	3.3	1.2
Skilled Agricultural and Fishing Work	19.6	20.0
Crafts and Other Occupations	5.0	16.8
Machine Operators and Assemblers	4.6	6.5
Primary Occupations	6.2	42.7
Total	6.2	100

- **Reasons for Employment from the Child's Point of View**

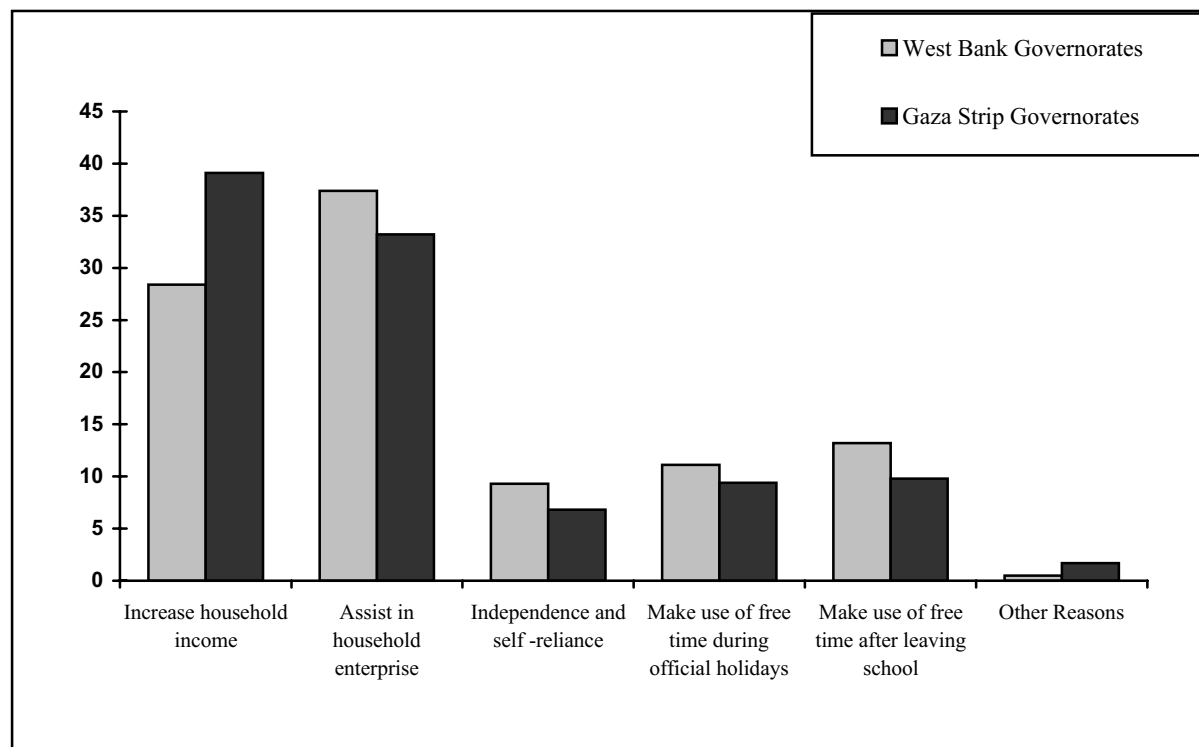
Two out of every three employed children joined the labour market due to financial need

The findings show two major reasons underlying a child's turn to employment: social and economic. About 67.7% of employed Palestinian children enter the labour market for economic reasons, either to participate in the household's income improvement (31.1%), or to assist in the household's enterprise (36.3%). The social factors leading to child labour totaled 31.9%, of which 8.7% are employed to achieve independence and self-reliance, 10.8% to spend schools holidays, and 12.4% to fill the abundant leisure time after leaving school.

Variations in regional child labour rates confirm that economic factors (72.3%) have a greater impact on a child's employment orientation when compared to the overall child employment rates in the West Bank (65.8%). Social factors are less prevalent the Gaza Strip. This shows the correlation between poverty and children's inclination to work. The findings of the National Poverty Report indicate higher poverty prevalence among households in Gaza Strip than in the West Bank (38.2% and 15.6% respectively).



Figure (7-6): Distribution of Employed Children by Reason for Employment and Region



◆ Unpaid Child Labour in a Family Enterprise

Half the number of working children are employed by their families

Engagement in agricultural activities for their households is the most common pattern of child labour. Most families expect their children to participate in family enterprises such as crop picking, husbandry, carrying water or other more difficult tasks. These types of activity may be fruitful and even desirable if children's responsibilities are limited to a moderate amount of household activity, or some light income-generating activities. Such participation may strengthen the child's sense of dignity and worth.

Contrary to this, long hours of child's participation in household activities are not always beneficial to children as they drain children's energies, oblige them to spend very long hours away from study, and hinder the development of their young bodies. Furthermore, this kind of child labour most often results in children's deprivation of their rights and full development opportunities. As shown by the Child Labour and Activities Survey, about half (51.2%) of these children are unpaid family workers, of which 80.3% are male children. The percentage of unpaid employed children was 50.3% in the West Bank and 54.0% in Gaza Strip. Of the same group of unpaid children employed at family enterprises, 43.8% left school because of an inability to succeed, 33.3% left due to an unwillingness to study and 7.3% left because of the family is unwillingness for the child to continue his/her education.



On the other hand, 67.1% of family-employed children are involved in agriculture, 17.5% in primary occupations, 10.5% in preliminary vocations and crafts, and 4.9% in other professions. It is noted, however, that 92.5% of family-employed female children also work in the agricultural sector. Due to regional disparities in family-employed children rates, relevant to the job type and place of residence, it was indicated that 74.4% are family-employed in the West Bank (mainly in agriculture) compared to 44.6% in Gaza Strip (also in agriculture). In the trade, hotel and restaurant sector, around 11.6% of family-employed children are in the West Bank 35.7% of total family-employed children in Gaza Strip are involved in this sector.

◆ **Child Labour Nature and Conditions**

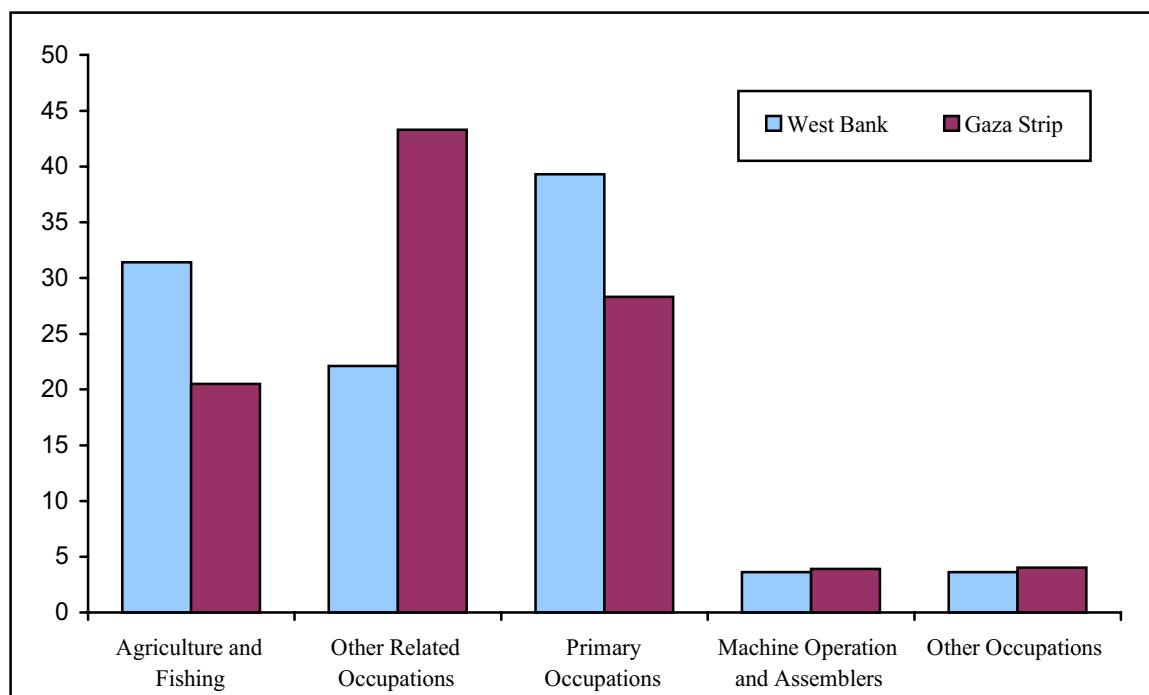
● **Profession, Economic Sector and Work Place**

Though child labour differs from adult employment, it is possible to find adults working alongside children despite the considerable differences in the tasks performed by each of these categories. Adult professions or sectors have different implications if performed by children. 36.7% of employed children work in primary occupations, which means that more than one third of employed children execute activities requiring more physical effort than academic qualification or expertise. In other words, employed children are demanded as unskilled labourers: 28.9% of employed children are farm workers or fishermen, 27.1% are engaged in crafts and related profession while a very minor percentage (3.7%) work as machine operators or assemblers. These findings show that the majority of employed children are utilized in professions requiring greater physical efforts rather than educational qualifications or training. Nevertheless, some occupations could host employed children, in case the child labour act is abided by, to ensure the children's rights in continuing their academic study and in receiving vocational training required, for a more dignified life. A number of professions that can better develop children's abilities are listed in the following sections of this study.

The nature of child employment differs according to place of residence, as noted above. About 39.3% of the West Bank employed children are enrolled in primary vocations (unskilled labourers), 31.4% are farmers and 22.1% are involved in crafts and related vocations. The largest proportion (43.3%) of Gaza Strip employed children falls under the later category, about 28.3% are engaged in primary vocations, and 20.5% are enlisted in agricultural and fishing sectors. Although the last three professions score higher than other professions, there are variations among professions and within regions.



Figure (7-7): Percentage Distribution of Employed Children in the Palestinian Territory by Profession and Region



Most employed children (52.6%) in the Palestinian Territory perform outdoor jobs. A different pattern of job location prevails at the regional level: about 43.7% of employed children in the West Bank work indoors and 56.2% of them outdoors. An opposite pattern of employment occurs in Gaza Strip where 58.3% of employed children are located indoors in comparison to 41.7% of outdoor jobs. This variation could be explained by the fact that most employed West Bank children are enrolled in the agricultural sector. Moreover, about half the number of this group of children are waged workers in an establishment employing less than 6 workers, bearing in mind that the percentage of waged employed children constitutes 40.4% of the total employed children. About 2.7% of employed children are irregular workers (i.e. changing places of work according to change in supply and demand (with no constant job address for these children). It was also indicated that 34.2% of the total employed children work in establishments employing 6-19 persons, and 6.5% of establishments with 20 or more employers. Only 1.1% of the latter establishments require their employed children to undertake a medical examination even though most employed children fall under the legal employment age (15-17 years). This lack of medical examination is especially present in establishments employing 10-19 persons. The degree of medical examinations among children employed at these establishments is one way to measure the percentage of establishments abiding to the child labour rules and regulations.



One third of waged employed children in the West Bank district work in Israel and settlements.

The total percentage of waged employed children in the West Bank is 46.7%, of which 68.2% work in the West Bank districts and 31.8% work in Israel and the settlements. In contrast, none of Gaza Strip children are employed in Israel or in the settlements. This is because (in direct contrast to the closed Gaza Strip area) the West Bank is considered an open area facilitating child labour smuggling into Israel to be subjected to cheap labour exploitation. These children are incapable of demanding suitable working conditions. The situation of Palestinian children employed in Israel is aggravated by the Israeli military regulations imposed on Palestinian workers in Israel, which leaves employed children under the mercy of Israeli employers. The same laws encourage Israeli employers to evade legal and material pursuance in regards to the rights of the employed Palestinian children.

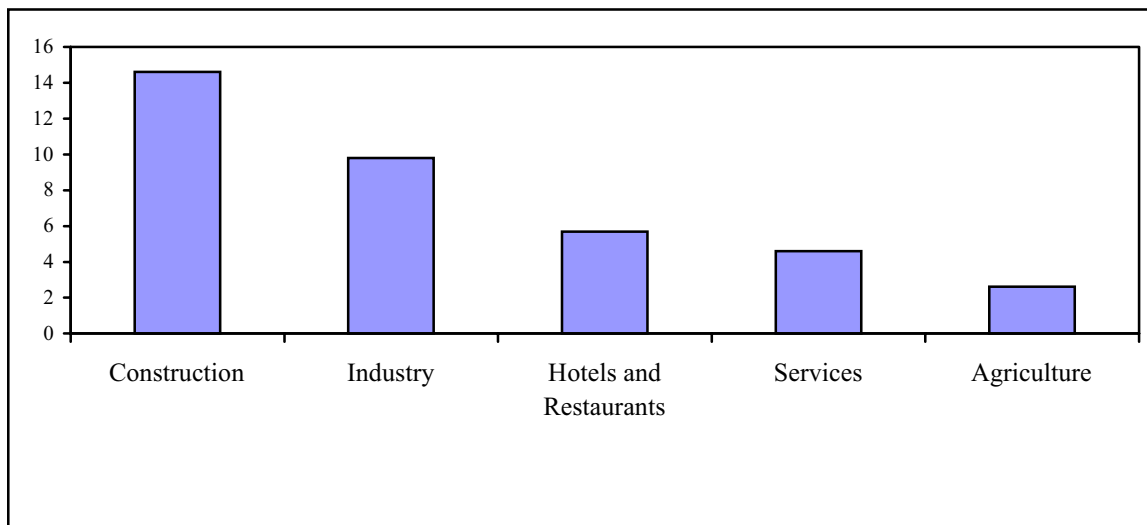
- **Work Injuries**

Exposure to work injuries is one of the most disturbing indicators of child labour. About 6.5% of employed children were prone to work injuries, more in the West Bank (77.8%) than in the Gaza Strip (22.2%). Work injuries vary from concussions, fractures, and wounds. According to the survey findings, almost half (49.2%) of employed children experienced job-related wounds, compared to 12.7% of fractures, and 9.5% of concussion cases. The remaining percentage refers to those employed children who suffered poisoning, breathing difficulties, bleeding and other types of injuries.

In more risky activities, work injuries and accidents increase among employed children, especially in construction (14.6%) and industry (9.8%), as reflected by Figure (7–8) designating the most threatening economic activities to the child's well-being. Bearing in mind that 20.6% of injured children were left untreated- all from the West Bank, the remaining percentage of injuries were treated and covered either by employers (38.0%), children's parents (30.0%) or the child him/herself (20.0%).



Figure (7–8): Percentage of Work Injuries among Employed Children (5 – 17 Years) by Economic Activity



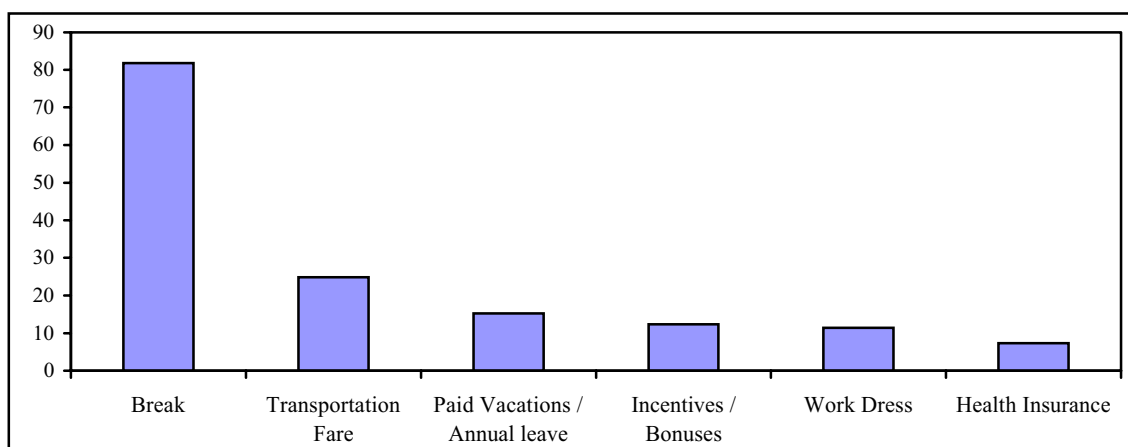
About 6.0% of these injuries were treated free of charge or covered by health insurance which is not likely to be arranged for the employed child by the employer. On the other hand, employed children might be hurt incidentally or inflicted on purpose. Self-employed children and/or children employed by others may become victims of physical or moral abuse by employers, employees or clients. The percentage of moral and verbal abuse reaches 11.7% among self-employed children and those employed by others. A small percentage of children were physically abused (0.6%) and the percentage of both kinds of abuse was 0.6% among all employed children.

- **Work Benefits**

Work conditions vary according to the benefits provided by the employer. The most important ones are paid leave, incentives, rewards, break time, and indemnities for transport expenses and clothing, in addition to health insurance contribution. Figure (7–9) shows that the percentage of children receiving positive work benefits among the waged and regularly employed children.



Figure (7-9): Percentage of Regularly Employed Children who Receive Work Benefits from the Employer



The most noted of these benefits is break time allowed for about 81.8% of the regularly employed children, compared to 7.3% of the same group who are covered by a health insurance system which unlikely to be granted by the employer.

The low percentage of health insurance coverage among regularly employed children is caused by the fact that insurance excludes children from its coverage.

Table (7-3): Distribution of Waged Employed Children in the Palestinian Territory by Nature of the Job, Safety Equipment, and Place of Work.

Nature of Work and Precautionary Tools (From Child Perspective)	of Work			
	West Bank Governorates	Gaza Strip Governorates	Israel and Settlements	All Areas
Dangerous Work	30.9	35.4	23.5	29.5
Safe Work	69.1	64.6	76.5	70.3
Total	100	100	100	100
<i>Among Children Employed In Dangerous Works</i>				
Use Precautionary Tools and Measures	30.4	35.3	21.1	29.3
Do Not Use Precautionary Tools and Measures	69.6	64.7	78.9	70.7
Total	100	100	100	100

Available data presented in Table (7 – 3), shows that 30.0% of waged employed children in the West Bank districts are performing risky jobs compared to 35.4% in Gaza Strip and 23.5% in Israel and settlements. Among the latter categories, about 69.6 % of employed children in the West Bank, 64.7% in Gaza Strip, and 78.9% in Israel and settlements do not use safety equipment during work.



- **Vocational Training**

Vocational training has a basic role to play in providing adequately trained or skilled workers. The interrelation between vocational training and child labour decreases the negative impacts of child labour. Higher numbers of decently trained children or children skilled enough to perform tasks requiring special skills increases the positive aspects of employment among children aged 15 years or older.

The percentage of children who had received on-the-job training reached 19.8% of waged children in the Palestinian Territory. About 60.2% of the waged group worked in crafts and related vocations, 28.0% in primary occupations, 5.4% in service and marketing and 5.4% in machine operating and assembling. Table 7-4 clearly indicates those professions providing employed children with the vocational training needed to improve their futures. The percentage of trained children was higher in the West Bank (21.1%) than in the Gaza Strip (15.7%), excluding family-employed children. More than half (58.8%) the number of trained children belong to older age groups (15-17 years) compared to 41.2% of total employed children aged (10-14 years).

Table (7-4): Distribution of Employed Children (excluding the family employed) in the Palestinian Territory by Training During Work and Profession

Child Occupation	Percentage Distribution of Occupations	Percentage of Trainees In Each Occupation	Percentage Distribution of Trainees
Other Occupations	0.4	-	-
Services and Sales Workers	3.0	35.7	5.4
Skilled Agricultural and Fishing Workers	1.7	12.5	1.1
Crafts and Other Occupations	32.8	36.4	60.2
Machine Operators and Assemblers	4.7	22.7	5.4
Primary Occupations	57.4	9.7	28.0
Total	100	19.8	100

- ◆ **Financial returns and Working Hours**

- **Financial Earnings and Wage**

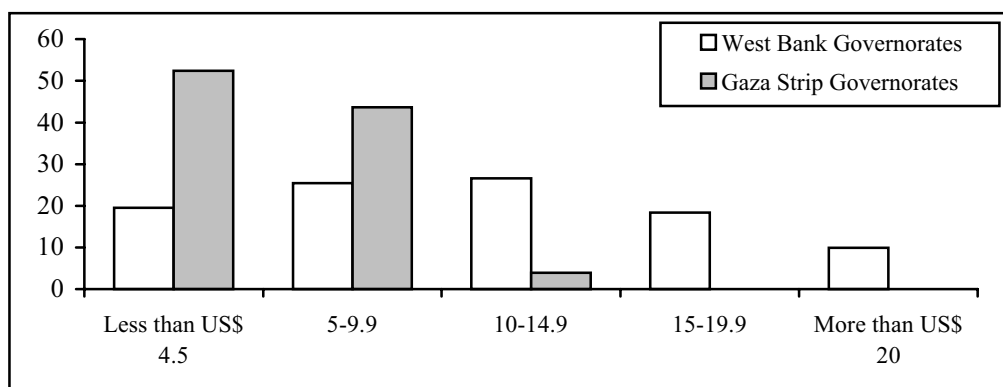
Children who are earning their living or are paid for their work form 48.8% of all employed children of which 49.7% are in the West Bank and 46.0% of which are in the Gaza Strip. The overwhelming majority (93.0%) is employed by Palestinians compared to 7.0% of children who are self-employed. Children receiving wages or returns for their work are formed mostly of West Bank children (94.5%) compared to a lesser percentage of Gaza children (88.0%).



Daily wage rates or financial earning for employed-by-others or self-employed children are estimated to be US\$ 9.1 a day at the national level, though a great discrepancy was revealed between the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The daily wage in West Bank districts is found to be equivalent to US\$ 10.5 a day, which is twice as higher than the average daily wage in Gaza Strip (US\$ 4.3). This is partially due to the fact that a higher percentage of West Bank children work in Israel and in the settlements (31.8%), which forms about one third of the total waged West Bank children. The daily wage for Palestinian children working in Israel averages US\$ 15.6 a day while the average wage for Palestinian children in the West Bank (excluding children employed in Israel or settlement) remains around US\$ 8.1 a day. Higher averages of daily wages for employed children are influenced by the higher living standards in the West Bank districts than in Gaza Strip.

Natural distribution of average daily wages earned by children in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (not exceeding US\$ 14.6 a day) reveals the economic exploitation Gaza-employed children are subject to (relative to the West Bank children) particularly when about 53.0% of Gaza Strip employed children receive less than US\$ 4.9 a day.

Figure (7–10): Distribution of Waged or Paid Children in the Palestinian Territory by Wage (payment categories in US\$) and Region



Findings also show that 87.1% of employed children receive their wages directly while the wages of about 11.2% of employed children are paid directly to their parents. Of the last group, 29.5% are among employed children in Gaza Strip compared to 6.9% of employed children in the West Bank districts. Another group of children who had their jobs located by parents or siblings (17.2%) had their payments directly made to their parents or household heads, which is another kind of child exploitation by the family in some cases. The survey addressed the issue of child spending of wages and financial returns from their jobs. The findings show that about half of children manage part of their money and hand the rest to their families, whereas 28.0% hand over to their families all the wages they earn. About 16.7% of children spend their earnings on personal needs compared to only 4.8% who save their earnings. The trend differs in Gaza Strip: most working children (53.3%) furnish their households with all their earnings, 24.4% of children spend parts of their wages leaving the remaining part to household use, 20.0% spend all earning on personal needs, and only 2.2% of children save their financial earnings.



- **Working Hours**

International and domestic child labour laws prohibit the employment of children, aged 15 or older, for more than 6 hours daily. Employment of children younger than 15 years is outlawed in all cases though this law is often not abided by. The survey findings point out to 57.2% of children who work more than 6 hours per day. Classified by their employment status, 88.8% of waged children employed by others, 63.6% of self-employed children, and 28.9% of family-employed children work more than 6 hours. The average number of working hours ranges from (8.2) hours/day for waged children to (7.1) hours/day among the self-employed children, and (5.1) hours/day among the family-employed.

The findings reveal that 93.5% of waged Palestinian children employed in Israel or settlements spend more than 6 hours/day compared to 86.4% of West Bank children and 94.7% of Gaza Strip children. The findings show the extent of child exploitation and violation of laws by employers who also enlist children at night (8.5% of waged children). Night employment reaches 10.0% among the self-employed children and 6.2% among the family-employed. Moreover, 8.4% of children work at night to support household income or to assist their family enterprise.

- **Child Attitude Towards Work**

The survey questioned employed children directly about their working conditions, the child's own attitude towards the work he/she performs, and its physical, and moral and material severity. The findings showed that 35.4% of the employed children pointed out that work is hard from a physical point of view, 15.4% think that they perform risky activities, and 46.0% noted that their work places are very hard to reach from their residence. When asked about their wages and level of satisfaction, 76.2% of employed children believe that they earn very low wages, and some noted that they are not in good terms with their employers (8.2%), or with the other employees (6.9%).

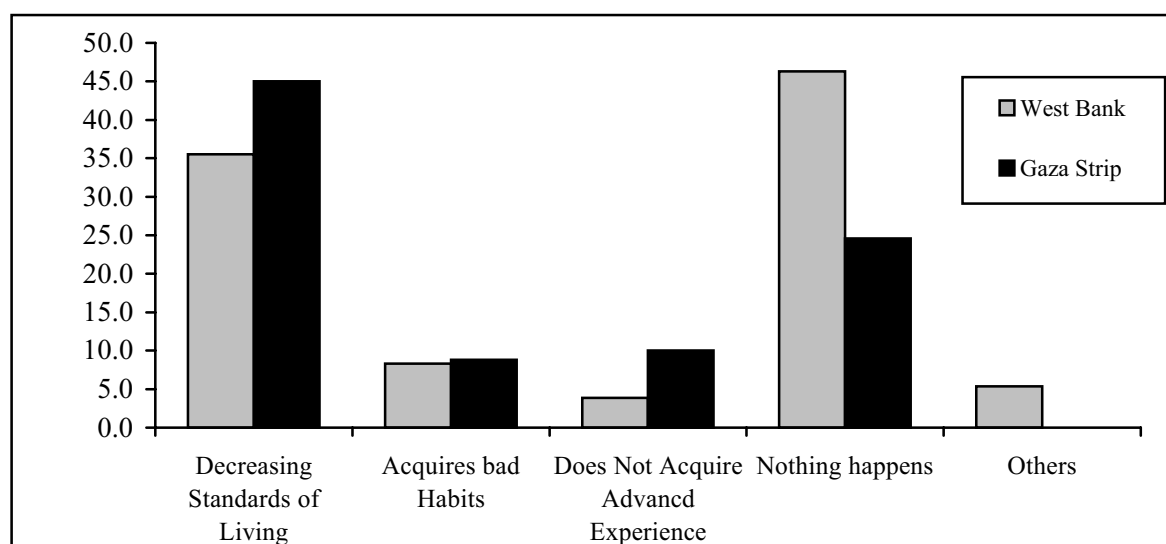
The findings exhibit the conformity between reality and children's views of the wages they earn. The average daily wage was USD 8.4 for those children, who indicated receiving low wages, whereas children who stated that their wages are not low receive an average of US\$ 11.3 per day. Similar results are found pertinent to jobs physical demands: the average daily working hours performed by those who believe they have difficult job was 9.2 hours, compared to 8.3 working hours per day for those who believe that they have untiring work. Further, only 30.1% of the group of children with risky jobs are using safety equipment, whereas about 15.9% of children who stated that their jobs are not risky are found using safety equipment.



◆ Child and Family Attitude towards Child Labour

A household opinion poll was carried out on the need of child labour. It was surprising to find that the percentage of households which stressed the essentiality of their child's labour amounted to 65.5% (63.1% and 72.9% of families with employed children in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, respectively). Among households with employed children, 41.0% did not think that any problem (not affected economically) would occur if their children stop working. About 37.8% of households with employed children responded that their standards of living will deteriorate if their children quit work, which indicates that more than one third of households with employed children are in need of income sources for survival and poverty defiance.

Figure (7-11): Distribution of Employed Children (5-17 years) in the Palestinian Territory by Impacts of Terminating Child Labour from the Households Points of Views, and Region



The above Figure presents families' perceptions of the impacts of child employment cessation on the families according to the geographic areas. A total of 46.3% of households with employed children in the West Bank districts and 24.6% of households in Gaza with employed children said that their living standards would not be affected if their children quit work. On the other hand about 45.0% of families in Gaza Strip with employed children responded that their living standards would deteriorate if children's earnings stopped. (35.5% in the West Bank) This illustrates the number of Palestinian families, especially in Gaza Strip (about 50%) utilizing children's incomes to raise and maintain the household's current standards of living.

The findings show that 68.3% of households with employed children would rather have their children go to school, 21.3% would prefer their children continue to work only, and 9.2% would prefer schooling and employment at the same time. Almost all households with no employed children (96.5%) expressed their preference for education as the main activity for their children.



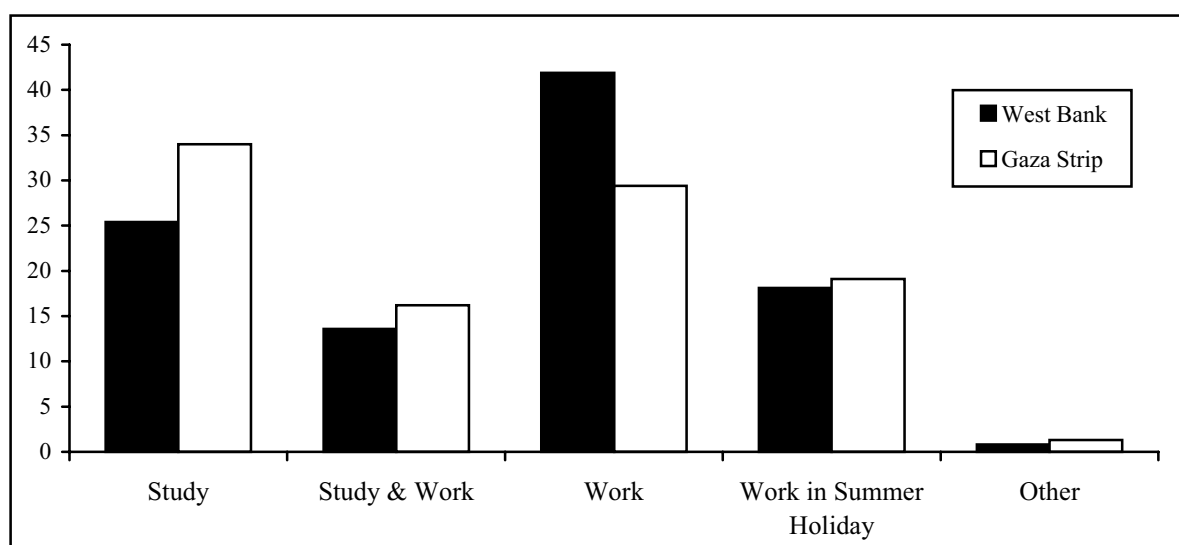
Table (7-5) indicates that 87.9% of families with employed child who are enrolled in school would prefer their child only to study. 10.1% of this type of family (their children both work and study) would like their children to continue both work and study. 60.6% of families whose children were neither employed nor enrolled would return to school. 30.4% of families with unemployed non-enrolled children had offer plans for the children, exclusive of education and employment.

Table (7-5): Distribution of Children (5-17 years) in the Palestinian Territory by Their Families Desire for the Child’s Future, Relation to Labour Force and School Enrollment.

Household Desire Concerning Child Future	Employed Children		Unemployed Children	
	Enrolled	Not Enrolled	Enrolled	Not Enrolled
Study only	87.9	44.8	99.0	60.6
Work only	1.9	44.6	0.7	7.6
Both	10.1	8.1	0.2	1.4
Others	0.2	2.5	0.1	30.4
Total	100	100	100	100

Children were interviewed on what they would like to do in terms of seeking work or studying. It was surprising to find out that 38.7% of these children responded that they would like to work only. On the other hand, 27.4% noted that they would like to go to school only, compared to 18.6% of the currently employed children who noted that they would like to work during official holidays. 14.2% of the interviewed children noted that they would like to work and study at the same time. As Figure (7-12) depicts, about 41.9% of employed children in the West Bank districts desire to work only, where as about one third (34.0%) of employed Gaza children desire to study only.

Figure (7- 12): Distribution of Employed Children by Their Future Willingness and Region





Waged and self-employed children attitudes towards employment status were reviewed: 62.1% of them would like to work only, 10.6 would like to study only, 15.7% would like to work during summer holidays, and 10.4% would like to study and work at the same time.

Findings recorded some variation dependent upon places of residence. Half of Gaza Strip employed children (self employed or waged) would like to work only, 17.6% would like to study only, 17.6% would like to study and work, and 10.2% would like to study but work during summer vacation. About 65.4% of employed children (self - employed or employed by others) in the West Bank districts would like to work only, 8.6% would like to study only, and 8.6% would like to study and work. 17.2% would like to study, but work during summer holidays.



Executive Summary

- The number of employed children aged (5-17 years) throughout the reference period October-December 1998 reached 35,700 children. Another 7,250 are ready for and seeking employment.
- The number of children who had worked in the period (winter 1997- end of winter 1998) amounted to 62,235 children (6.2% of all children aged 5- 17) of which 46,990 are in West Bank and 15,245 in Gaza Strip.
- The percentage of employed children aged 10-14 years consists 5.7% of the total children of this age group, children aged 15-17 form about 24.9% of total children of this age.
- 40.4% of employed children are waged employees (other than self-employed).
- 1.6% is the total percentage of female children (aged 5-17 years) who are waged workers or unpaid family workers in a family enterprise compared to 10.5% of male children.
- 45.4% of employed children are not enrolled in schools
- 37.5% of employed male children quit school due to unwillingness to study, and 35.0% because of the child's inability to succeed in studying.
- Similar percentages indicate the reasons for female children quitting school: getting married or engaged (21.3%), family decision (20.6%), or unwillingness to study (20.6%).
- The percentage of unpaid family members among employed children aged (10 - 14) is 94.8%. For children aged 15-17, 68.3% are unpaid workers in the family enterprise.
- 67.7% of school dropout children quit studying because of financial needs.
- 91.3% of children left school because of the educational institutional system.
- 74.0% of employed children belong to households with more than 7 members.
- Greater number of completed schooling years by the head of the household lessens the possibilities for child employment.
- Lower wages earned by employed household heads increases the possibility of child labour.
- 4 children out of every 10 employed children live in households with heads engaged in primary occupations.
- About half the number of employed children are unpaid family members.



- 19.4% of employed family members (children) quit school. 43.8% of this drop out rate is due to the child's inability to succeed in studying, 33.3% is due to an unwillingness to study, and 7.3% is due to family pressure.
- 67.1% of employed children are employed by their families in agricultural activities, and 17.5% in primary occupations.
- 36.7% of waged or unwaged employed children are working in primary professions, 28.9% work as farmers, and 27.1% work in handcrafts.
- 31.8% of the employed West Bank children work in Israel and in the settlements.
- Half the number of waged children are employed in establishments with less than 6 workers, 34.2% work in establishments with 6-19 workers.
- Only 1.1% of waged employed children were asked to undergo a medical examination by the establishments they work in.
- 6.5% of employed children were injured during work, of which 20.6% were not treated.
- 11.7% of self-employed children or employed by others were exposed to moral violence.
- 19.8% of employed children (other than the family-employed) had received on-the-job training, of which 60.2% are working in handcraft professions and 28.0% are working in primary occupations.
- A child employed by others earns US\$ 9.1 a day and the self-employed child makes US\$ 8.1 in the West Bank districts and US\$ 4.3 in Gaza Strip districts US\$ 15.6 per day children employed in Israel and in the settlements can.
- 87.1% of children employed by others directly receive their wages whereas 11.2% of the same group have their parents receive their wages.
- 17.2% of waged children who were employed through parents or siblings have their wages directly paid to parents or siblings.
- 50.1% of waged or self-employed children manage part of their earnings and provide families with the rest, compared to 16.7% who spend their earnings on only personal needs.
- 57.2% of employed children work more than 6 hours/day. 88.8% of children employed by others work more than 6 hours/day.
- Average number of working hours is 8.2 hours for waged children, 7.1 hours for self-employed children, and 5.1 hours for family-employed children.
- 65.5% of households with employed children perceive child employment as essential to the household.
- 41.0% of households with employed children see no problem resulting from their child quitting work.



- 37.8% of households with employed children stress the essentiality of child employment to raise the family's living standards.
- 68.3% of households with employed children (5-17years) prefer education for their children, 21.3% prefer child employment only, and 9.2% prefer education and employment at the same time.
- 27.4% of employed children prefer studying only, 38.7% prefer working only, 18.6% prefer school regular enrollment, but work during summer vacation, and 14.2% prefer working and studying at the same time.
- 62.1% of waged or self-employed children prefer to work only, 10.6% prefer to study only, 15.7% prefer to study and work in summer vacations, 10.4% prefer to work and study at the same time.



Recommendations

In this chapter, the reality of employed children aged (5-17 years) has been presented in addition to the legal opinion on child labour. The various statistics and indicators displayed throughout the chapter show that child labour in Palestine has three dimensions: education and culture, poverty, and family. We shall attempt to formulate some basic recommendations through which we aim to reduce the percentage of employed children aged 15 years or older, we also aim to improve the work conditions for the remaining proportions, and to illuminate the child labour problem among children under 15 years old. The Child Labour Survey provides other indicators for more analysis in order to arrive at recommendations more specific than the ones given below. The most important of the general recommendations are:

Education and Culture

- School curriculum should be improved to strengthening children's awareness on the importance of education for future opportunities.
- The availability of social workers at schools contributes to a better understanding of children, helps solve children's personal problems, and can show children who do not accept education easily other alternatives to continue their education social works can also direct these children to the alternatives most fitting their abilities.
- To establish vocational schools for those with little preference for academic education.
- To strongly adhere to the obligatory stage of education with the possibility of extending the obligatory stage.
- To raise public awareness on the necessity of education and vocational education through media lectures and promotional materials.

Poverty

- To work unceasingly towards the improvement of Palestinian living standards, to increase the family's income according to life expenses, and to increase community awareness as to the importance of education and its impact in the long term.
- To provide assistance to families incapable of educating their children.



Household

- To encourage family planning stemming from many family's in ability to secure their children's needs,
- To educate families on the means to protect children from exploitation.

Other recommendations

- To set up exhaustive inspection plans for establishments employing children and requiring compliance with this inspection law.
- Ensure protection for employed children.



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Concepts and Definitions

Total Fertility Rate	Average number of live births per woman or group of women during their reproductive life (by the age of specific fertility rate for a certain year). This rate is calculated by multiplying the age specific fertility rate by five.
Crude Births Rate	Number of births per 1000 population in a certain year.
Crude Mortality Rate	Number of deaths per 1000 population in a certain year.
Growth Rate	The average increase or decrease in a population during a certain year, due to natural increase and net migration. It is expressed by a percentage of the base population
Age at Marriage	The age of the individual in years at the time of his\ her actual marriage.
Child Dependency Rate	Number of children below the age of 15 years per 100 persons in the work age (15 – 64 years).
¹GDP Per Capita	It refers to the individual person's share of the gross domestic product. This share is calculated by dividing the gross domestic product by the number of population.
Gross Domestic Product	A measurement of production in a certain period of time. The GDP represents the value of total outputs divided by the number of population.
Level of Living	Food consumption divided by the total consumption. This definition is based on the following assumption: The level of living is identified by the proportion of consumption on food out of the total consumption (Engel's Law of Poverty). It was distributed to three categories: - Better-off: "Food Consumption equals less than 30% of the Total Consumption - Middle Category: "Food Consumption equals between 30-44% of the Total Consumption - Worse-off: "Food Consumption equals between 45-100% of the Total Consumption

¹GDP: Gross Domestic Product

Contraceptives (Family Planning Methods)	It is a methodology needed for delaying or stopping pregnancy.
Unemployment	This term refers to all persons in the work age who did not work at all during the reference period, who were not absent from a job and were available for work and actively seeking for work during the reference period in different ways, e.g. reading newspapers, registration in employment offices, asking friends or relatives, etc.
Remaining West Bank	It refers to the West Bank excluding that part of East Jerusalem annexed to Israel by force following the Israeli occupation of 1967.
Connection with Public Water Networks	<p>This term refers to a dwelling's connection to water supply systems classified as follows:</p> <p>Public network if the dwelling is connected to public water networks maintained by the municipalities or village councils.</p> <p>Private water installations if the dwelling is connected to a private water network for the dwelling or if the water supply is maintained by the municipalities or village councils.</p>
Connection with Sewage Disposal System	<p>Public sewage network if the dwelling is connected to public sewage networks maintained by the municipalities, village councils or any other entity.</p> <p>Cesspool: When the sewage disposal system inside the house is not connected to a public sewage disposal network.</p>
Connection with Electricity Networks	<p>This term refers to a dwelling's connection with an electricity supply systems classified as follows:</p> <p>Public network, if the dwelling is connected to public electricity network belonging to the electricity company or municipal or village councils.</p> <p>Private electricity generator if the source of electricity is a private generator owned by the owner of the house or a group of owners.</p>
Household	One person or a group of persons living together who make common provision for food or other essential items of living. Household members may be related, unrelated or a combination of both.
Head of Household	The person who usually lives in household and is recognized as the head of the household by its other members. Often, he \ she is the main decision-maker or responsible for the financial support and welfare of the household.

House	The house is a housing unit built for the living of one household and is mainly established in one floor. The house could consist of two floors, each of which includes an apartment for one household only.
Apartment	The apartment is part of a house or a building, comprised of one room or more along with other facilities, e.g. kitchen, bathroom, water closet ...etc, all of which are connected with the outside world through one main door. It is occupied by one household and is often reached through a common set stairs leading to the public road.
Age – Sex Structure	Population structure by the number of (or percentage) of males and females in a certain age group. The age – sex structure is the accumulative result of the aforementioned trends in fertility, mortality and migration rates.
Illiterate	A person who can not read and write a short abstract about his \ her life in any known language and does not have an accredited formal educational certificate.
Literate	A person who can read and write simple sentences with or without being accredited any formal educational certificate.
Health	A state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of diseases or infirmity.
Infant Mortality Rate	The number of infant deaths (aged less than one year) per 1,000 live born births in a certain year.
Under Five Years Child Mortality Rate	The number of deaths among children (aged less than five years) per 1,000 children during a certain year.
Death Causes	A state of illness, infirmity, incidence, or poisoning that directly or indirectly leads to death.
Breast-feeding	The child has received breast milk.
Immunization	It is one of the sharpest tools for cutting into the vicious injections cycle not a good definition and reducing the severity and frequency of set backs to the normal development of the child in its formative years.
Immunization Coverage	Immunization coverage includes three dosages against measles or (measles, mumps and rubella), three dosages against the triple, and three dosages against polio.
Polio Vaccine	This vaccine is given in a form of drops through the mouth or through injection. This vaccine is given to the child at the same time he \ she is given the Triple vaccine, i.e. in the second, third, fourth, sixth and twelfth months of age.

Measles Vaccine	An injection given once in life at the ninth month of age and over according to the UNRWA vaccination schedule or at the fifteenth month according to the governmental vaccination schedule.
Triple Vaccine	This vaccine is jointly given against three diseases, namely diphtheria, whooping cough, and Tetanus. This vaccine is given in a form of injection in the muscles at the age of two months, four months, six months and one year.
Stunting	Stunting refers to lack of height in comparison to weight. Chronic malnutrition constitutes one of the main causes of stunting and underweight. Other causes leading to stunting include hereditary factors, infectious diseases and socio – economic conditions.
(Supplements) Supplementary Feeding	Any liquid (including milk) or solid given while the child is still receiving breast milk.
Weaning	The process where the child becomes accustomed to take liquids or solids other than breast milk.
Weight	A measurement of the child’s total body mass.
Acute Respiratory Disease Infections	Are the most common illness suffered by children, no matter where they live. ARIs are caused by a wide variety of disease agents. These include the vaccine preventable tangent diseases: diphtheria, pertusis and tuberculosis. ARIs are traditionally divided into two main categories: those of the upper respiratory tract (the common cold) and those of the lower respiratory tract (primarily pneumonia). Their principal transmission factors are: high population density, crowded conditions, and seasonal changes that favor the spread of disease.
Traffic Accidents	Accidents occurring with vehicles driven in the public road that result in casualties.
Diarrhea	A clear change in the number of excretion episodes (more than three times a day). Diarrhea is characterized with aliquid – like stool. Fever and blood in the stool indicate severity of diarrhea episodes.
Health Care Provider	An individual or organization whose responsibilities involve on or more of the following: The provision administration, teaching, development of health services, activities or supplies. The provider may have direct or indirect interest in the health industry.
Primary Health Care	Primary health care refers to primary check up and the comprehensive health care including basic or initial diagnosis and treatment, health supervision, management of chronic conditions and preventive health services. The provision of primary health care does not necessarily require highly sophisticated equipment or specialized resources.

Malnutrition	The term malnutrition is used to cover a multiplicity of disorders, ranging from deficiencies of specific micronutrients such as vitamins and minerals to gross starvation or obesity. This discussion is largely limited to protein and calorie malnutrition, which is manifested primarily by retardation of physical growth in terms of height and weight.
Poor Child	The child belonging to a poor household (whose income is below the national poverty line).
Poverty	Poverty is defined as the absence of the minimum level of income or resources necessary for meeting the basic needs for living. It is also defined as “the inability to keep the minimum living level”. Two poverty lines were prepared, taking into account the requirements of the consumer basket (a basket comprising a set of the basic essentials) and a broader group of essentials. The first poverty line (referred to as the severe poverty line) was calculated in a way that reflects the basic living needs, e.g. food, clothes and residence. The second poverty line (referred to as the poverty line) was calculated in a way that reflects the budget of the basic living needs (food, clothes and residence along with other basic need such as health and personal care, education, transportation). As expenditures reflect the nature of the needs more than income, the monthly expenditure, instead of the monthly income, was adopted in order to define the poverty line in the Palestinian Territory.
Subsidies	The value of subsidies in kind or cash received by the household in the month, irrespective of whether they were provided by UNRWA, Ministry of Social Affairs, alms (Zakat) committees, charitable societies, or other parties.
Poverty Gap	This indicator measures the volume of the total gap existing between the incomes of the poor and the poverty line (the total amount needed to promote the consumption levels of the poor to reach poverty line). It is recommended to calculate this indicator as a percentage of the total consumption value for the whole population, when the consumption level for each of them is equal to the poverty line.
Poverty Severity	Besides reflecting the poverty gap, this indicator depicts the variations and differentials among the poor (this indicator equals the mean of the total relative squares of poverty gaps for all the poor).
Employed Child	The child performing work for an other in return for a wage, or for him \ herself, or unpaid family work.
Employer	A person who operates his\ her own economic enterprise or engages independently in a profession or trade, and hires one or more waged employees.

Self–Employed	A person operates his\ her own economic enterprise or engages independently in a profession or trade and hires no employees.
Waged Employee	A person who works for a public or private employer and receives remuneration in wage, salary, commission, tips, piece rates or in kind ...etc. This item includes persons employed in governmental, non-governmental and private institutions along with those employed in a household enterprise in return for a specific remuneration.
Unpaid Family Member	A person who works without pay in an economic enterprise (farm, undertaking ... etc) operated by a related person living in the same household.
Occupation	Occupation refers to the kind of work done during the reference period by the employed person, irrespective of the economic activity or employment status or the type of study or training the person received.
Economic Activity	Economic activity refers to the main activity of the establishment in which the employed person works or the kind of work done previously if he/she is unemployed.
Work Hours	The duration of time spent in performing a certain work.
Average Daily Wage	The total net wage paid to all waged employees divided by the total number of work days according to the average exchange rate for that month.
Violence	Unjustifiable use of force. Violence is not limited to the use of physical force; it extends to forcing an individual to perform certain work through propaganda or threats. Thus, violence is of two types: A – Physical violence B – Spiritual violence
Work Injury	Any form of physical harm or damage encountering the persons while he is in work (i.e. during work hours), irrespective of the degree of harm such as contusion, fractures, wounds, etc.
Work Time	It could either be during the day or the night. Whereas the day refers to the duration starting from sunrise to sunset, the night refers to the duration between sunset to sunrise.
Household Library	A set of extracurricular books, magazines, or periodicals available to the household, which is used for developing the cultural or religious aspects, provided it is not comprised of less than 10 books magazines, or periodicals.
Radio and TV Programs	The program is a complete package by itself that has a title and is transmitted (broadcast) through TV or radio in pre–announced periods.
Children Libraries	An organized set of books, magazines, periodicals, drawings, and

audiovisuals meant to offer services and facilities to the children upon demand.

Cultural Institutions	Institutions equipped with instruments and equipment used in the different artistic and / or crafts activities, including games and sports. Such instruments and equipment facilitate cultural activities.
TV Watching Habit	This term is used to describe the person who normally sits in front of the television to watch TV programs, irrespective of the type of the program, spent time and place of watching.
Reading Habit	This term is used to describe the person who regularly reads to enhance knowledge and awareness, regardless of whether the reading is part of the schooling or any other purpose and regardless of the material being read and the period spent reading.
Handicapped Child	A child incapable of performing normal activities due to a disability or handicap that limits or undermines his/her ability to perform an activity, in comparison to another child in the same age and under the same circumstances.
Juvenile delinquent	This term refers to an offender below 18 years of age.
Orphan	The child who lost one or both parents as a result of death.
Stealing	Seizing the fixed or moveable properties without the consent of the owner. It includes dwelling sneaking and invasion for the purpose and stealing cars. Minor offenses in the markets may and might not be classified under stealing.
Type of Handicap or Disability	<p>The disabled person is defined as the person suffering from a clear and evident weakness in performing certain activities due to continuous difficulties emanating from a physical, mental or health state that has lasted for more than six months. Disabilities resulting from a bone break or a disease lasting for less than six months are not considered disabilities that are classified as follows:</p> <p>Visual: It includes blind and one-eyed persons and any persons suffering from clear sight weaknesses even after using special devices, provided they do not suffer from any other disabilities.</p> <p>Auditory: It includes deaf persons and any persons suffering from clear auditory problems even after using special auditory devices, provided they do not suffer from any other disabilities.</p> <p>Speech disability: It refers to any person suffering from clear problems in speech. However, persons unable to correctly vocalize some sounds are not considered disabled, provided they do not suffer from any other disabilities.</p> <p>Fingers use: It refers to persons physically unable to use their fingers in their daily life, provided they do not suffer from any other disabilities.</p>

Mental: It refers to mentally retarded persons who do not suffer from any other disabilities.

Multiple disability: It refers to the disabled suffering from many disabilities other than (items 4 and 8.) It applies to persons suffering from complete disabilities.

School	Any educational institution other than kindergartens, irrespective of the number of students / pupils and grade structure, provided that the lowest grade is the first basic grade and the highest grade is the twelfth grade.
Kindergarten	Any educational institution licensed by the Ministry of Education to offer child education services two years prior to the basic stage (for 4-5 years old children). Kindergarten education is divided into two stages. First Grade: Offering educational services to four – year – old children & Second Grade: Offering educational services to five – year – old children
Governmental Schools	Any educational institution that is run by the Ministry of Education or any other ministries or governmental body.
UNRWA Schools	Any school run or supervised by UNRWA.
Private Schools	Any licensed local or foreign non – governmental educational institution, that is established, headed, run or financed by foreign or Palestinian individuals, societies or bodies.
Basic Stage	The first of ten scholastic years on which other educational stages depends.
Secondary Stage	The stage consisting of two scholastic years following the basic stage, (that is, years 11 and 12 of schooling).
Pupil / Student	Any one enrolled in an educational institution.
Teacher	A person with specialized qualification that is responsible for teaching students at an educational institution.
Gross Enrollment Rate	It refers to the percentage of pupils / students enrolled in a certain class to the total number of persons who are in the legal age for enrollment in that class.
Total Enrollment Rate	It refers to the total number of pupils / students enrolled in a certain class, whose ages are in the legal age designated for enrollment in that class as a percentage from the total number of persons in the society who are in the legal age for enrollment in that class.
Repetition	Repeating the same scholastic year for another year due to failure to accomplish the requirements necessary for promotion to next year.

Drop - Out

Leaving schools completely before completing a certain stage. This term refers also to leaving schools completely in the middle of or at the end of a scholastic stage.

Supervising Authority

The party responsible for schools from legal and administrative viewpoints, which could be either governmental, UNRWA or private.

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