

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics Issues A Press Release on the Eve of the World Health Day (April 7th , 2009)

Dr. Luay Shabaneh, President of PCBS, demonstrated the health status in the Palestinian Territory on the eve of the World Health Day (April 7th , 2009). Dr. Shabaneh pointed out that the press release is to reflect the significance of the occasion especially that the health sector, like other sectors, was experiencing a number of influential events. Dr. Shabaneh also stated that the press release was in line with the dissemination policy of PCBS; to emphasize the importance of providing up-to-date statistics for policy-makers in all areas of health.

Dr. Shabaneh described the health status in the Palestinian Territory as follows:

Development pace in of Health sector Human resources is still inadequate

According to PCBS data of 2008, the number of physicians who are registered at the physicians syndicate in the West Bank were 2,941 representing 0.8 doctor for every 1000 people. On the other hand, the number of the registered physicians at the physicians syndicate in Gaza Strip in 2007 were 3,452 representing 2.4 doctors for every 1000 people. Moreover, according to 2008 statistics, there were 1.5 nurses for every 1000 people in the West Bank; whereas there are 3.2 nurses for every 1000 people in Gaza Strip, according to 2007 data. The number of the registered midwives for every 1000 people in the West Bank were 0.16, according to the 2008 data, while the number of the registered midwives for every 1000 people in Gaza Strip were 0.1, according to the 2007 data.

A rise in the number of health insured people in the West bank during 2004-2007

The data of the Population, Housing and Establishments Census, 2007 showed that the number of people who have health insurance in the West Bank was 1,508,788 representing 75.6% of the total population of the West Bank; 42.9% have governmental health insurance, 11.5% have UNRWA health insurance, and 1.9% have private health insurance. Furthermore, 14.2% of the people have governmental and UNRWA health insurance while 1.2% have Israeli health insurance of the total population of the West Bank. whereas, in 2004, the percentage of health insured people in the West Bank was 65.8%.

Health services:

According to PCBS data of 2007, the number of operating hospitals in the Palestinian Territory were 77, 53 hospitals in the West Bank, and 24 in Gaza Strip. Data also showed that 24 hospitals were run by MoH, 25 hospitals were run by NGOs, 25 were run by private sector, 2 Military hospitals and one hospital was run by UNRWA. On the other hand, 2007 data showed that the number of hospital beds in the Palestinian Territory were 5,067, representing 1.3 bed for every 1000 people, 2,939 beds in the West Bank and 2,128 in Gaza Strip. 2007 data also showed that the number of primary health care centers were 665, 532 in the West Bank and 133 in Gaza Strip, the data showed that 414 centers were run by MoH, 198 centers were run by NGOs, and 53 were run by UNRWA.

107,785 persons in the Remaining West Bank have at least one disability

The final results of Population, Housing and Establishment Census 2007 showed that the number of persons in the Remaining West Bank who have at least one disability was 107,785 people (5.3%), 55,557 were males and 52,228 females. About 22.6% of the total number of persons who have at least one disability were from the Hebron governorate, while 1.7% were from Jericho & Al Aghwar governorate.

Census data showed that sight disability represented the highest number of disabilities in the Remaining West Bank with 60,041 persons, 29,562 males and 30,479 females. 21.5% of persons with sight disability were from Hebron governorate, while 1.7% of them were from Jericho & Al Aghwar governorate. On the other hand, cognition disability had the lowest number in the Remaining West Bank, totaling 14,781 persons, 7,899 males and 6,882 females.

The war and the health status in Gaza Strip

The recent war on Gaza left large numbers of martyrs, thousands of wounded people, in addition to the disabled people. A report by the UNFPA indicated that miscarriages increased by 40%. The 2005 and 2006 data of PCBS indicated that miscarriages in the Palestinian Territory reached 7.1%; 6.4% in the West Bank and 8.1% in Gaza Strip. The report also pointed out the increase in cesarean sections at the Al Shifa Hospital in December 2008 that reached 32.0% and 29.0% in January 2009 of the total deliveries occurred during these months –according to the Palestinian Family Health Survey of 2006, the average rate of cesarean sections in normal situations was 15.0%–. The report also pointed out an increase in the number of births in January 2009 registered an increase of 1000 births to reach 5000 births in January 2009 compared to 4000 before the war. The increase in births may be referred to the increase in premature births.

Premature and under weight births were the main cause of infant mortality. The prenatal conditions were the main cause of mortality among under five years children. Heart diseases were the main cause for mortality among the elderly (60 years of age and above) in 2007

According to the 2007 data of the Ministry of Health, premature and under weight births were the main causes of infant mortality; as they constituted 25.7% of infant mortality in the Palestinian Territory. The percentage rises in Gaza Strip in comparison with the West Bank at 36.2% and 13.4%, respectively. These causes of infant mortality are followed by respiratory system infections, which causes 24.1% of infant mortality in the Palestinian Territory; 40.1% in the West Bank, and 10.3% in Gaza Strip. On the other hand, the prenatal conditions constitute the main cause of mortality among under five years children that represented 44.1%; 46.7% in the West Bank and 41.9% in Gaza Strip. Heart diseases are the main cause of mortality among elderly (60 years of age and above) at 28.3% for the Palestinian Territory; 30.0% in the West Bank and 25.5% in Gaza Strip.

Majority of women (85.6%) who did not receive postnatal care indicated that having no health problems, was the main reason behind not receiving postnatal care

According to the data of the Palestinian Family Health Survey, 2006, 70.0% of women did not receive any postnatal healthcare. The main reason was having no health problems at 85.6%;

(89.6% in Gaza Strip and 83.8% in the West Bank). On the other hand, 38.6% of the women in the Palestinian Territory (44.0% in Gaza Strip and 10.8% in the West Bank) did not receive such care due to unavailability of healthcare services. 17.0% of the women; (13.5% in the West Bank and 25.0% in Gaza Strip) did not receive any postnatal healthcare because they had previous experience.

64.5% of the women it took them a maximum of 29 minutes to arrive to a health center for prenatal checkup, while 39.5% waited for one hour or more to receive the required service

According to the data of the Palestinian Family Health Survey, 2006, more than half of the women (56.7% in the West Bank and 77.4% in Gaza Strip) who received prenatal healthcare services it took them a maximum of 29 minutes to travel from home to the health center. On the other hand, 22.4% of women it took them 30-59 minutes to arrive to the health center. 13.2% of women it took them 60 minutes or more to travel from home to the health center. However, 39.5% of women waited for one hour or more at the health centers and clinics to receive healthcare services, no variations in this regard between the West Bank and Gaza Strip.