



State of Palestine
The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics

The Status of the Rights of Palestinian Children 2014



April/ 2015



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This document is a periodic report on the status and description of the rights of children in Palestine. It also aims to pinpoint most important lacuna in the data available in order to collect necessary information in the near future to draw a clearer and comprehensive picture of the reality. PCBS is committed to providing disaggregated data and ensuring that information on the most vulnerable and marginalized groups of children is made available in order to devise the necessary remedies

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Save the Children

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PCBS is also grateful to the members of the National Technical Committee who contributed to the publication of the first draft of this report, which is an updated version of the first report.

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Preamble

Children compose nearly half of the Palestinian population. Investment in this social group is important in order to guarantee children's rights and provide them with the opportunity to live in dignity and safety. Accurate statistics on this sector allow policy makers to develop plans that translate figures into programs that address the needs of Palestinian children in various areas of their lives. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), in cooperation and partnership with relevant ministries and institutions working with children, and with financial support and technical assistance from Save the Children, issues this national report on the status of the rights of Palestinian children.

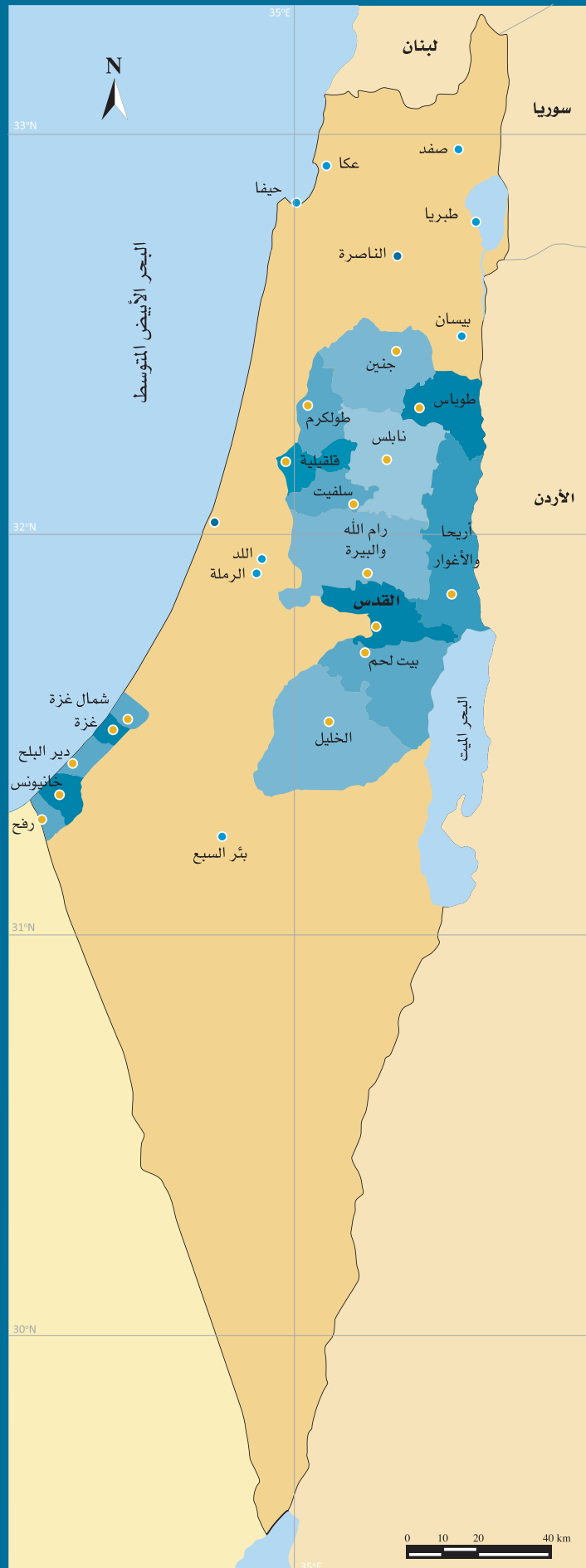
The publication of this report, which complements the 2013 report, is consistent with PCBS's policy of providing data within an integrated national statistical system that serves all sectors, including indicators related to the rights of Palestinian children. PCBS also aims to enable progress for indicators to be monitored by publishing data annually in order to maintain a current database for comprehensive national monitoring which can inform the development of policies and plans that address the wellbeing of Palestinian children.

The report presents an analysis and diagnosis of the status of the rights of Palestinian children, highlighting disadvantaged groups and the lack of access to basic services, namely education, health, security, culture and entertainment, as well as issues related to children under military occupation and early childhood development. Data for this report was derived from two main sources: household surveys carried out by PCBS and data from relevant ministries and institutions, including the Ministries of Health, Education, Social Affairs, Interior, Culture and the Higher Council for Youth and Sports.

We at PCBS hope that this report will be a starting point for effective mobilization and for the consolidation of efforts for the promotion of the rights of Palestinian children and for addressing the needs particularly of vulnerable and marginalized children. Investment is needed in the areas identified in this report in order to close the gaps in services for children and the lack of access by marginalized groups in the future. We hope that the annual publication of this report will provide a consistent record over time of the status of children which can inform reports by the State of Palestine to the United Nations on the status of children in Palestine.

April, 2015

Ola Awad
President of PCBS



Palestine in Figures

| | | |
|--|----------------|------------------|
| Estimated population* | 4,682,467 | Mid-2015 |
| West Bank | 2,862,485 | Mid-2015 |
| Gaza Strip | 1,819,982 | Mid-2015 |
| Estimated Demographic Growth* | 2.90 | Mid 2014 |
| West Bank | 2.59 | Mid 2014 |
| Gaza Strip | 3.41 | Mid 2014 |
| Population under 18 years of age | 46.2% | Mid-2014 |
| Number of Palestinian households* | 845,000 | Mid 2013 |
| West Bank | 554,000 | Mid 2013 |
| Gaza Strip | 291,000 | Mid 2013 |
| Average size of household ** | 5.3 | 2014 |
| West Bank | 5.0 | 2014 |
| Gaza Strip | 5.9 | 2014 |
| Percentage of households headed by a female | 10.6% | 2014 |
| West Bank | 11.7% | 2014 |
| Gaza Strip | 8.4% | 2014 |
| Illiteracy rate among males aged 15 years and over** | 1.6% | 2014 |
| Illiteracy rate among females aged 15 years and over** | 5.6% | 2014 |
| Labor force participation rate** | 45.8% | 2014 |
| Males | 71.5% | 2014 |
| Females | 19.4% | 2014 |
| Unemployment rate** | 26.9% | 2014 |
| Males | 23.9% | 2014 |
| Females | 38.4% | 2014 |
| Total fertility rate** | 4.1 | 2011-2013 |
| West Bank | 3.7 | 2011-2013 |
| Gaza Strip | 4.5 | 2011-2013 |

| | | |
|---|--------------|-------------|
| Fertility rate for female teenagers (births per 1000 women)*** | 48 | 2014 |
| West Bank | 35 | 2014 |
| Gaza Strip | 66 | 2014 |
| Women aging 20-49 years with median age below 18 years old ** | 24.2% | 2014 |
| West Bank | 21.4% | 2014 |
| Gaza Strip | 28.6% | 2014 |
| Women aging 15-49 years with a median age below 15 years old*** | 2.1% | 2014 |
| West Bank | 1.8% | 2014 |
| Gaza Strip | 2.6% | 2014 |
| Women aging 20-24 years with live births before reaching 18 years *** | 22.0% | 2014 |
| West Bank | 19.0% | 2014 |
| Gaza Strip | 25.1% | 2014 |

* **Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2014**. Population Estimates. Ramallah, Palestine.

** **Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2014**. Labor force survey 2014. Ramallah, Palestine.

*** **Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics 2014**. Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, 2014. Key findings Report. Ramallah-Palestine

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Chapter One

Introduction

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Children's Rights, Needs and Wellbeing

The Palestinian government takes its commitment to children's rights seriously. Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1991. In 1995, on the occasion of Palestinian Children's Day, the convention was legally adopted and was referred to in the special session on children of the General Assembly of the United Nations in May 2002. In 2004, the Palestinian Child Law No. 7 was adopted and the Palestinian Ministry of Planning drafted the National Plan of Action for Palestinian Children. In 2009, the Child Rights Protection Unit was transferred from the Ministry of Planning to the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA). The MOSA was tasked with implementing amendments to the Palestinian Child Law and ensuring compliance with the United Nations convention.

In 2010, the Palestinian National Authority issued its first report on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the occupied Palestinian territories by Palestinian institutions. The report reviewed the Palestinian legislative and legal framework, action plans and services from a human rights perspective and discussed significant Palestinian achievements in terms of addressing the requirements of the convention. The report also analyzed key obstacles and gaps that prevent Palestinian children from accessing their rights and presented recommendations to be addressed. A number of initiatives were taken in response to these recommendations. These included the drafting of legal opinions, the adoption of amendments to the Palestinian Child Law by President Mahmoud Abbas and new developments in terms of policy addressing education, health, disability, protection and participation for children, as well as the development of national indicators corresponding to the rights of the child. A program of the Independent Commission for Human Rights which monitored children's rights developed a special mechanism by which children could register their complaints.

In 2012, the General Assembly of the United Nations recognized and promoted Palestine to "non-member observer state" status. Subsequently, the formal recognition of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international conventions and their implications for the State of Palestine have been placed high on the agenda of the Palestinian Authority.

Despite international recognition of the State of Palestine and the existence of a national framework of laws, regulations, policies, plans, strategies and programs, Palestine continues to have limited sovereignty and control over its territory, borders and natural resources due to Israel's military occupation. Hostile actions on the part of Israel include the closure on towns and villages to restrict the movement of goods and people; further restrictions of movement within Palestinian territory through Israel's system of military checkpoints and electronic gates and the apartheid wall. These have had a detrimental effect on political, economic and social conditions and have adversely affected the rights of Palestinian children in terms of health, education, social protection, recreation, safety and security. Perhaps the most affected are children in remote, marginalized areas, poor children, children with disabilities, children without family care, children in conflict with the law, female children and younger children.

This increases the challenge faced by the Palestinian government to ensure equality and justice in terms of access to services and prioritization of vulnerable children in the implementation of the amended Palestinian Child Law and of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the Palestinian context. Greater efforts are needed in terms of monitoring the implementation and enforcement of the law, documenting violations against Palestinian children, collecting data and reporting on the status of Palestinian children, revising current laws and regulations to ensure consistency with the amended Palestinian Child Law and the CRC and defining responsibilities and accountability. The current adverse conditions and scarcity of resources do not exempt any governmental or non-governmental organization from their responsibility to ensure the wellbeing, rights and protection of Palestinian children.

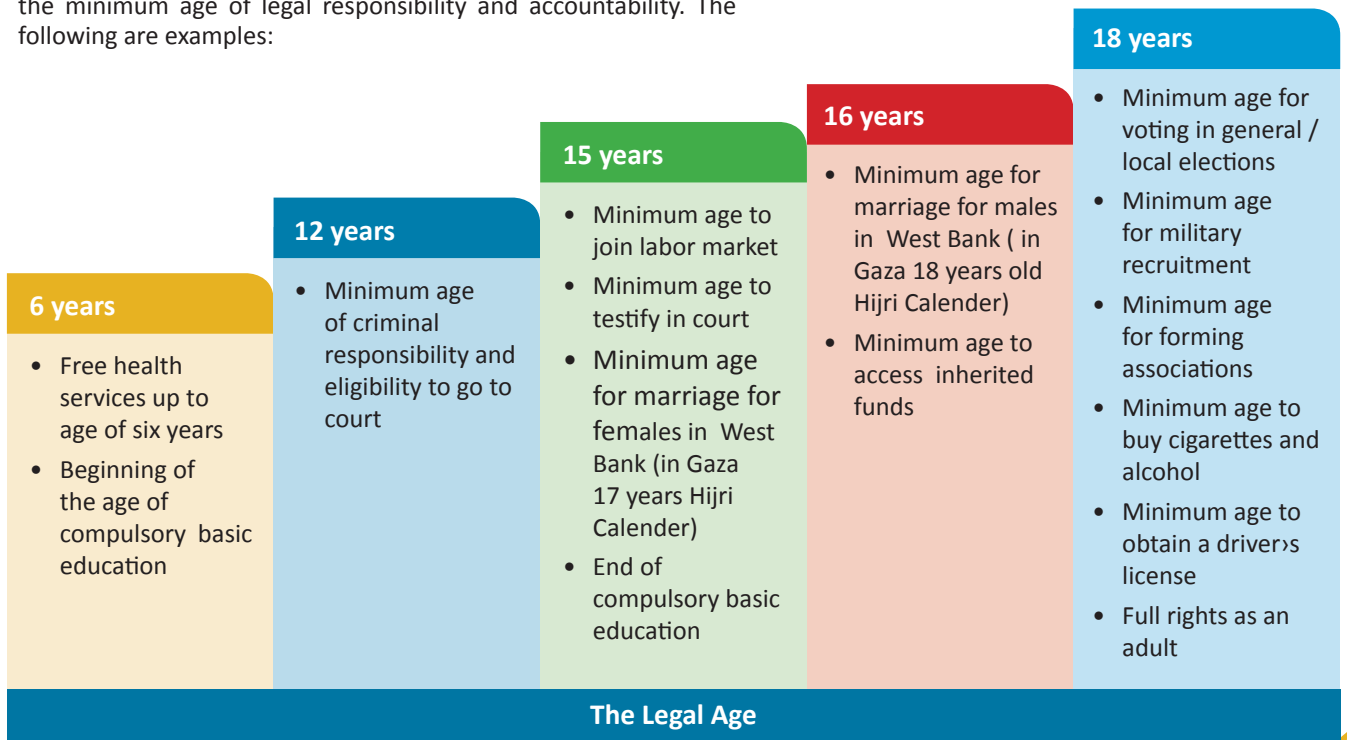
Purpose of this Report

This report is intended to describe the current situation of Palestinian children and their access to services, but it also highlights the situation of vulnerable and marginalized groups of children and their failure to access the available services due to geographical location, gender, disability or chronic illness (impacted by their social status and health), their inability to repay direct and indirect costs (impacted by their social and economic status) and their lack of awareness of networks and services which could assist them (access to information). Identification of gaps in the existing data will facilitate these being addressed more effectively and aid reporting to the United Nations on the status of children in Palestine. A better knowledge of the facts and realities on the ground will also provide a foundation from which decision-makers can develop national policies and plans and set national priorities. Existing data has typically been gathered when children have accessed services. House hold surveys are therefore needed in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of children's issues. The fact that no program exists which identifies and tracks marginalized and vulnerable children means results in some distortion of the overall picture in terms of the situation of children. This report describes trends in the direction of national indicators on the rights of children and not on the data itself. The data is made available through health reports, an annual report providing statistics on Palestinian children, annual statistics for monitoring and evaluation conducted by the Ministry of Education and the annual reports of the Ministry of Social Affairs.

This report reflects ongoing efforts to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Palestine through producing the first report in 2010 and to embody and institutionalize national indicators based on the rights of the child in various sectors within the framework of the role of PCBS in developing a system to monitor national indicators

1.2 Definition of the Child

According to the Palestinian Child Law No. 7 of 2004 and its amendments, the child is defined as any human being under the age of eighteen years, including the unborn. Other laws, however, are not necessarily consistent with this definition in terms of the minimum age of legal responsibility and accountability. The following are examples:



A child under the age of eighteen is considered a juvenile. International laws advocate raising the minimum age for criminal responsibility and for provision of free services, child protection and participation without specifying a minimum legal age of responsibility; governments have the freedom to set and define this age. Incongruously, the Palestinian child has the right to marry at the age of 15-16 years, but is not entitled to vote or obtain a driver's license until the age of 18. Children over the age of 12 years may be introduced to court hearings (criminal accountability), but cannot testify or bear witness before the court under the age of 15 years. Also, the age of legal responsibility and accountability varies from one law to the next, as in the case of the amended Palestinian Child Law and laws dealing with labor, public health, penalties, juveniles and education. Laws in force also vary between the West Bank and Gaza Strip. For example, the minimum age for marriage in Gaza Strip is 18 years for males and 17 years for females (according to the Hijri calendar). The age also varies according to Sharia or church laws. There is clearly a need for the legal age of responsibility to be standardized across Palestinian legislation.

1.3 Monitoring the Children Rights

Improved access to reliable data would enhance the ability of government and other players to monitor and protect children's rights. Henceforth, the government and other players shall be held legally and ethically accountable to ensure that Palestinian children's rights are addressed with transparency and accountability. Such a mechanism involves monitoring indicators measuring children's wellbeing, subsequently, such indicators may constitute a reference to all other children related indicators rather than the other way around. Children's rights are monitored primarily through the following mechanisms:

Monitoring Child Rights Indicators in the National Monitoring System

On the recommendation of its advisory council, PCBS established a statistical monitoring system in 2011 which maintains a comprehensive database. The Council of Ministers established, by decree, a national team to manage the system which is chaired by PCBS and includes representatives from several ministries, including the Ministries of Planning and Administrative Development, Health, Finance, Education, Women's Affairs and Social Affairs. The team is tasked with establishing a surveillance system and developing indicators, creating an inventory of data sources for indicators in the monitoring system, collecting required data from the records of public and private institutions, developing tools and methodologies for collecting data for the monitoring system, reviewing and overseeing activities implemented within the statistical monitoring

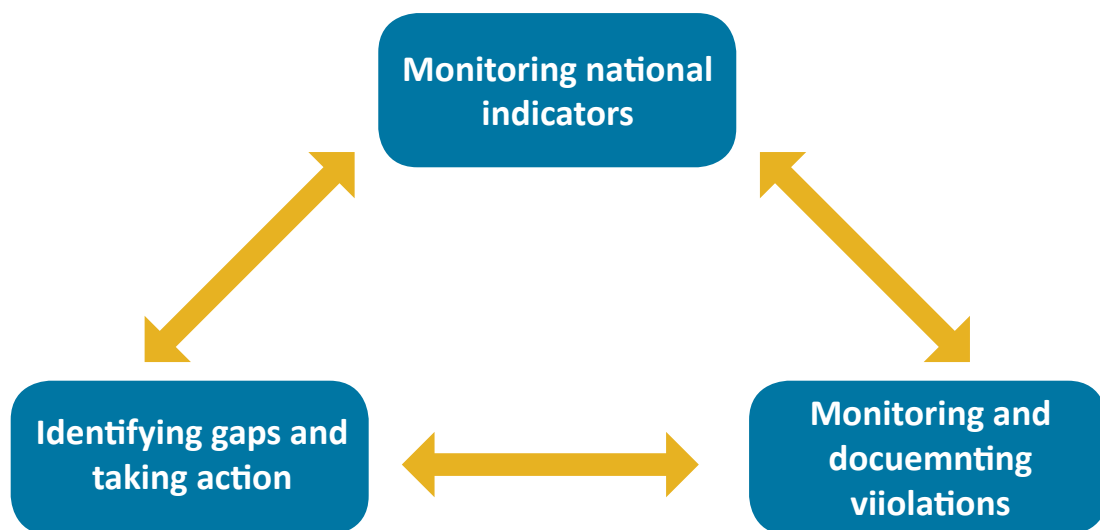
system, reviewing and evaluating outputs and outcomes and reporting on and controlling the flow of work. The team is also required to form taskforce committees on various sectors or topics covered by the system, including governance, security, justice, labor, economy and living standards, international cooperation, education, culture, health, population, children, women and young people, rights violations by Israel and the apartheid wall.

Monitoring of Violations of Children's Rights by the Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR)

The Independent Commission for Human Rights investigates complaints filed by members of the public and prepares periodic reports on human rights violations. In 2012, a special unit was established for complaints and the monitoring of violations of children's rights run by field researchers in 5 geographical areas: the northern, central and southern West Bank and the northern and southern Gaza Strip. In addition, The ICHR monitors the courts and reviews national laws and policies for their consistency with children's rights.

Documentation of Abuses by National and International Civil Rights Organizations

Numerous organizations monitor and document the violations of Palestinian children's rights by the Israeli occupation and settlers. Local civil society organizations document such violations in the shadow report and other periodic reports produced through the 1612 group monitoring system. Other international organizations including Save the Children, UNICEF and OCHA as well as Defence of Child International also document such violations; however, such organizations generally lack the political will to oppose these violations on the ground in any meaningful way and the United Nations failed to hold Israel accountable as an occupying authority for these violations. Sometimes neutral expressions are used to describe the violations. This level of monitoring and documentation is barely sufficient and ongoing reporting and strategic action at both local and international levels are needed to halt the violation of children's rights, regardless of who the perpetrator is.



1.4 Sources of Information and Statistics on Children's Rights and Information-Related Problems¹

The General Statistics Law No 4 of 2000 states that the PCBS is the sole national institution charged with producing comprehensive and consistent statistical analysis of demographics, social, economic and environmental services and conditions in Palestinian society in order to provide Palestinian ministries and institutions with data needed to effectively diagnose problems and evaluate progress. It is tasked with conducting population, housing and agricultural censuses every 10 years and a census of establishments every 4 years. Furthermore, since its inception in 1993, PCBS began collection of data from administrative reports and endeavored to improve the quality, timely and inclusiveness of such records. It implemented, for this purpose, a number of specialized workshops and signed MoU's with line ministries and institutions. PCBS yearly collects data from administrative records using 111 templates distributed to all concerned ministries and institutions covering 650 indicators on demographic and social statistics including children's rights indicators, geo-economic statistics and population registries. Data is published quarterly, semi-annually and annually to cover all previously stated topics. They also feed the report on the status of Palestinian children, which is published annually by PCBS.

Ministries within the Palestinian government collect data and monitor implementation and progress within their programs and track the indicators for their specific sectors. Data is collected at regional and national levels and are evaluated. PCBS receives sectoral data from partners in the private sector, civil society and UNRWA; moreover, the Palestinian institutions submit quarterly and annual reports to the Ministerial Council and the Palestinian Legislative Council to monitor their achievements and implementation of sector plans and programs and diagnose their weaknesses. The Ministry of Finance provides detailed information on the budget allocated per sector. International civil society organizations, UN institutions, Higher Education establishments and human rights think-tanks and organizations also contribute with information and data in their research and studies and by surveying children to nourish the national information system. Such information is then used to establish, analyze and monitor data.

¹ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2015. General Statistics Law No. 4 of 2000.

Chapter Two

General Procedures for the Application of the Rights of the Child

General Procedures for the Application of the Rights of the Child

2.1 National Plans, Strategies and Evaluation

The Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development (MOPAD) is responsible for national planning and the preparation of cross-sectoral plans. In 2010, MOPAD prepared 23 sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies for 2011-2013 in coordination and partnership with all relevant government institutions. National strategies were developed to combat violence against women and for social protection and juvenile justice. A plan was also drafted on the implementation of the Millennium Decade Goals. Children are not considered an independent sector and in many sectors, such as the rule of law, security and local government, are not even given specific mention. As a result, a focus on children as a group with special needs and priorities and as one of the most vulnerable groups in the volatile economic and social environment within Palestine is lacking. While the national and sectoral plans for 2014-2016, contain a planning framework and national strategy, these are not built on the premise of human rights. Many of the plans respond to urgent needs and priorities rather than focusing on long term development with a rights based agenda. This is frequently rationalized by the fact that the PA lacks financial resources and sovereignty and has inadequate control over its own territory (such as Area C and East Jerusalem, as well as border crossings and natural resources) and relies heavily on external support to fund salaries and development, with the result that it has limited control over its internal development agenda. For further information on all of the national policies and plans in different sectors, refer to the PNA report on the implementation of UN Child Right Agreement (2010).²

2.2 Legal Environment

Effective laws in Palestine are old and some are not consistent with international covenants or other

Palestinian laws. Save the Children funded recently a national legislative review to assess the status of children's rights from international standards' perspective. Other efforts focus on a revision of Handicapped Persons Law from international charter's point of view; numerous institutions are involved in this review including WHO, UNICEF, UNDF, UNESCO in addition to Palestinian line ministries. Notwithstanding the key role of the Ministry of Health in the area of disabilities, the Public Health Law does not address this issue. Laws also lack any modern view of disability that accounts for the social aspects rather than mainly focusing on the medical definition of disability. Such legal definition affects the formation of medical commissions charged with the diagnosis of disabilities since according to modern understanding, such commissions need to comprise social workers and special education experts.

Other laws in force in Palestine require review including the Personal Status Law of 1976, especially as relates to maiden age. The penal code among other laws also needs revision.

In 2012, President Mahmoud Abbas ratified the amended Palestinian Child Law No 7 of 2004; a juvenile protection draft law is being prepared with a draft family protection law. The Juvenile Protection Law and the Social Affairs Law have been approved by the Ministerial Council and await presidential endorsement. The Ministerial Council also ratified the regulation on custodian families No. 10 for the year 2013, and on foster families No. 4/2014. Executive regulations are being drafted for the amended Palestinian Child Law. The President also issued a decree to eliminate violence against women. Generally speaking, Palestine has a legal framework, but it still needs amendment and harmonization of different laws with human rights. Enforcement needs to be secured via distribution of roles

² Plans and policies are also available on the websites of the Palestinian Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education: <http://www.ldf.ps>

and responsibilities, accountability and transparency in the executive regulations. The Independent Commission for Human Rights is currently reviewing existing laws to ensure their consistency with child's rights. For further information, see PNA report on the enforcement of Child's Rights Convention in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, 2010.

2.3 Accession to International Conventions and Treaties

President Abbas's decision to adhere to a number of international organizations, conventions and treaties was highly welcomed at Palestinian and Arab levels.

The President's signature to such conventions and

treaties does not mean that Palestine will "automatically adhere thereto since it still needs to fulfill the special conditions for proper accession. It is thus the responsibility of the custodian agency to examine the Palestinian accession application. The UN General Assembly granted Palestinian an observer status, removing subsequently the main barrier to international conventions' accession."

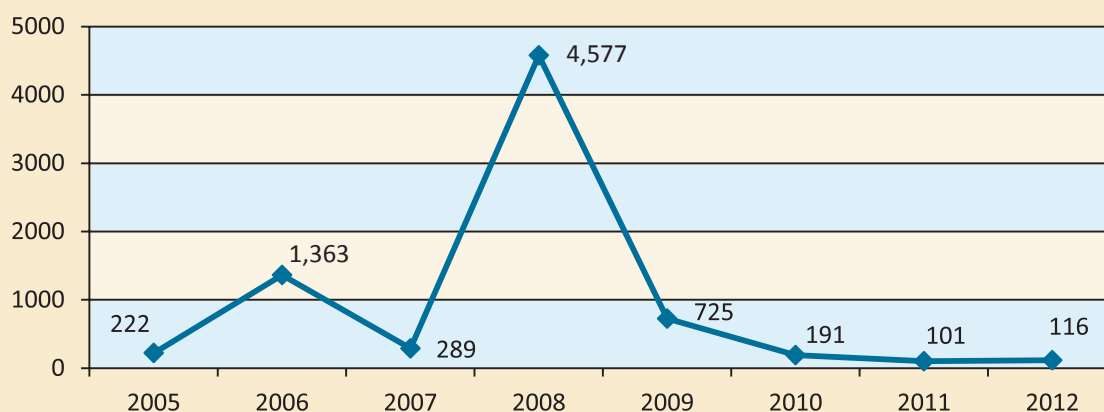
Accession by the State of Palestine to international conventions and treaties is a genuine right of the Palestinian people, which expresses the will of the international community and is consistent with international legitimacy decisions. The Convention on Child's Rights figures among the conventions and treaties ratified by President Mahmoud Abbas.

Flashes

Children in East Jerusalem

B'Tselem has investigated the implications of Israeli law governing citizenship and entry into Israel which prohibits citizens of Israel who marry someone from outside of Israel from residing with them within the borders of the country. As a result, children born in a Palestinian area or who have one parent from a Palestinian area but have one parent who is a citizen of Israel cannot obtain a permanent legal status in order to reside with that parent in Israel. Israel grants the child a temporary residence permit for two years provided that the family can prove that the center of the child's life is in Israel. These restrictions and policies serve to support the maintenance of a Jewish demographic majority in Israel and Jerusalem.³ The figures indicate that children were those most deprived in terms of the right to citizenship in 2008: 99 children in 4,577 cases, under the pretext of a population review and because the child had lived outside Israel for 7 years continuously.⁴

Figure 1: Number of Palestinians Deprived of Citizenship, 2005-2012



Source: http://www.btselem.org/arabic/planning_and_building/east_jerusalem_statistics

Data on house demolition in East Jerusalem, published by Betselem, show that the number of houses demolished by Israeli authorities in East Jerusalem in the period from 2004 – mid-2014 reached 545 dwellings. Subsequently, 2,115 persons, including 1,140 children lost their homes.⁵

3 www.btselem.org/arabic/jerusalem

4 OCHA. East Jerusalem. Key Humanitarian Concerns. Special Focus, March 2011. P.16.

5 http://www.btselem.org/arabic/planning_and_building/east_jerusalem_statistics

Several agencies supervise 198 schools in East Jerusalem including the Awqaf, the Private Sector, Ministry of Education, Municipality, semi-governmental semi-private schools and UNRWA. Schools serve a population of 86,590 students. 20% of teachers and students around Jerusalem cross through the Wall every day. Violence among students in East Jerusalem is escalating while their dropout rates mounted to 50% since they are absorbed as cheap labor in the Israeli labor market. Poverty rates are also on the rise while substance and alcohol abuse among young people reached 7.8%.⁶

Data from the Directorate of Education in Jerusalem indicated that 86,018 out of 88,845 children aged 6-18 years were enrolled in educational institutions in 2012. However, according to municipal data, there are 106,534 children in that age group; this may indicate that 20,516 children were not registered in records of the Directorate of Education and were not attending school. Also, 3,806 children were not registered at the compulsory school age of 5 years. The percentage of dropout from Jerusalem schools from seventh to twelfth grade was 17.3%, but reached 40% by the twelfth grade alone. There were approximately 32 students per classroom. Around 720 classrooms were of a poor standard. During the 2012-2013⁷ academic year, only 800 out of 15,000 children from Jerusalem were

enrolled in kindergartens of the municipality. The same source also reports lack of early childhood establishments. Over half of the students at school age are enrolled in municipal schools, which suffer overcrowdedness and dire financial situation. Over 90% of children aging 3-4 years old do not join any educational establishment.

The same source also indicated sharp deficiency in classrooms in East Jerusalem schools, reporting a lack of 2,200 classrooms. On the other hand, the occupation municipality built only 150 classrooms over the past five years. Flagrant discrimination is felt in educational staff between West and East Jerusalem. West Jerusalem schools for example have 250 counsellors, compared with merely 29 counsellors in East Jerusalem schools.

In 2009, 704 of the 1,360 classrooms in East Jerusalem were of a poor standard and 221 classrooms were located in unsuitable premises. Around 12.7% of school aged children in East Jerusalem (11,900 children) were not enrolled in any educational institution, especially during the 2009/2010 academic year. The Jerusalem municipality spent four times the amount on a child from Israeli West Jerusalem than on the education of Palestinian children in East Jerusalem. In 23 schools in East Jerusalem, there were 2,250 children whose home was under a demolition order from the Israeli authorities.⁸

Area C

The total area under Israeli security control is approximately 61% of the West Bank with about 150,000 Palestinians, 18% of whom were Bedouins or pastoral families.⁸

In the period from 2006 to 2014 Israel demolished at least 817 residential units of Palestinians in the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem), displacing thus 3,956 Palestinians including 1,925 minors. Israeli authorities repetitively demolishes houses in the Jordan Valley and southern Hebron as well as in the villages unrecognized by Israel. Until 15 December 2014, it had demolished houses displacing at least 556 Palestinians including 286 minors in these areas. Some of these houses were demolished several times. In the Governorate of Nablus, Israeli authorities demolished houses of 53 Palestinian citizens including 21 minors from the villages unrecognized by Israel⁹.

- 50,000 children enrolled in 183 schools suffer lack of access to education, insufficient schools and risk on the way to school not to mention school demolition orders.

A survey of 113 businesses conducted by Save the Children, UNICEF and the Ministry of Education produced the following results⁸ :

- 15% of communities stated that children were forced to walk in a crowded and dangerous manner when commuting to school on foot.
- 33% of localities (37 localities) stated that more than 1,700 children walked about 5 kilometers or more to school.
- 11% of localities (12 localities) stated that more than 700 children walked about 3-5 kilometers on foot to school.

⁶ Education in Jerusalem; Challenge and steadfastness . Dima Samman. MOEHE, April, 2012. + Education in Jerusalem and violation against Palestinian Curriculum, 2014

⁷ Tag: failure of the education system in East Jerusalem, August 2012 Ir Amim Foundation and Rights of Citizen, www.acri.org.il

⁸ Save the Children Fact Sheet: Children's Right to Education in Armed Conflict. October 2011

⁹ http://www.btselem.org/arabic/planning_and_building/east_jerusalem_statistics

- 31% of localities stated that around 2,500 children were forced to cross military checkpoints to reach school on a daily basis.
- 29% of localities (33 localities) said children had to cross the apartheid wall to reach school.
- 16% of localities (18 localities) reported harassment by the Israeli army during crossing the wall.
- 28% of localities reported violence by Israeli settlers.
- 26% of localities reported violence and harassment by the Israeli occupation army.
- 10,000 children were learning in tents, caravans and tin shacks that provided no protection against heat or cold.
- In 2010, 31% of schools lacked adequate water and sanitation systems.

Gaza Strip

In recent years the Gaza Strip has been subjected to an economic blockade and several military incursions, resulting in the deterioration of health, social, psychological conditions and of education and economic development. Numerous children have been killed, wounded or disabled. Anemia is common and chronic health problems result from lack of access to health services and shortage of safe drinking water. A UNDP report¹⁰ showed that 80% of households in Gaza Strip were reliant on aid while 70% suffered from food insecurity and unemployment rates scored 43.9%. The last incursion against the Gaza Strip resulted in the following:



Over 1.2 million people were deprived access to water during the war on Gaza.



One of every four Palestinians were forcibly displaced during the war.



600,000 dwellings were totally or partially destroyed.



77 health establishments were total or partially destroyed

Around half a million students were unable to begin the new school year in Gaza Strip.



10 UNDP-papp-research-damageassessment 2014

UNICEF reported that during the last war on the Gaza Strip (7/7/2014-26/8/2014)¹¹, 2,257 people, including 540 children (340 males and 200 females) aging 10 days to 17 years martyred. The war resulted in the following:

- 2,956 children (1,938 males and 1,018 females) were injured during the last assault on Gaza
- 89 families were killed and removed from population registry
- 1,500 children were orphaned
- 54,000 children became homeless

A report published by the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education¹² showed that 187 government schools and 91 UNRWA schools were damaged in addition to 3 governmental higher education establishments and 9 non-governmental higher education establishments. 49 private schools were also damaged, together with 199 kindergartens. 250 students and 15 teachers martyred and 856 students and 19 teachers were injured.

11 http://www.unicef.org/appeals/state_of_palestine_sitreps.html

12 Damages Caused by the aggression of the Israeli occupation against Gaza 2014. MOEHE. Gaza-Palestine

Chapter Three

Education Sector

Chapter Three

Education Sector¹³

An investment in education provides children with knowledge and skills without which they are unlikely to reach their highest potential. For children living in poverty or from marginalized areas, education may prove critical to survival and to breaking a cycle of poverty; it may also provide the opportunity for a child to thrive. The role of the government is to facilitate children's access to education by creating a supportive environment at all level: through legislation and legal support, policy planning, the development of budgets, programs and services and through building partnerships.

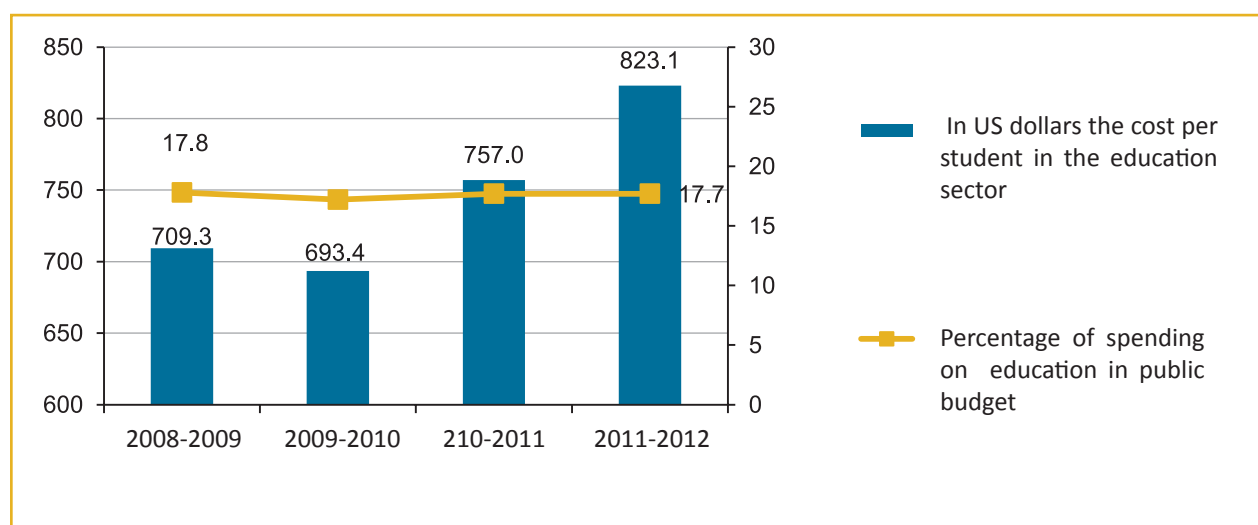
3.1 Public spending on Education

While the cost of education per student increased from USD 709.3 in 2008/2009 to USD 823.1 in 2011/2012, the budget allocation for education declined from 17.8%¹⁴ to 17.7%, slightly lower than in 2008/2009. Only 10.0% of the education budget was allocated to development, with operating expenses and salaries comprising the bulk of expenditure

3.2 Early Childhood Education¹⁵

Pre-school education following a well-planned curriculum or educational program plays an important role in preparing children for school. 26.4% of children aging 36 to 59 months were enrolled in preschool education. Differences were noticed according to age and geographic area. Regular attendance in kindergartens for children aging 36-47 months represented 8.2% of early childhood education population, compared to 45.5% for the age group 48-59 months. Enrolment in the West Bank was higher than the Gaza Strip, representing 27.2% and 25.5% respectively. Enrolment per geographic area

Figure 2: Percentage of Spending on Education Compared to Cost per Student in Selected School Years



Source: Ministry of Education, State of Palestine. Monitoring and evaluation report of the Strategic Development Plan 2008-2012.

13 Source: Ministry of Education unless is otherwise specified

14 Ministry of Education, State of Palestine. Monitoring and evaluation report of the Strategic Development Plan 2008-2012..

15 .PCBS, Multiple-Indicator Survey, 2014, (Unpublished Data).

was highest in Salfit and Tulkarem Governorates with an attendance rate of 49.0% each. The lowest enrolment rate was in Hebron Governorate with 11.0%. interestingly, enrolment was higher in rural areas with 31.0% in comparison to 25.7% in urban areas. Minor differences were found with regard to gender, with 27.2% males and 25.6% females. Clear differences were apparent according to socio-economic status however. 39.4% for children from richer households, while it remained as low as 20.7% for children from poorer households.

Figure 3: Percentage of Children Aged 36-59 Months Enrolled in some Form of Early Childhood Education Programs in Palestine by Various Background Characteristics, 2014

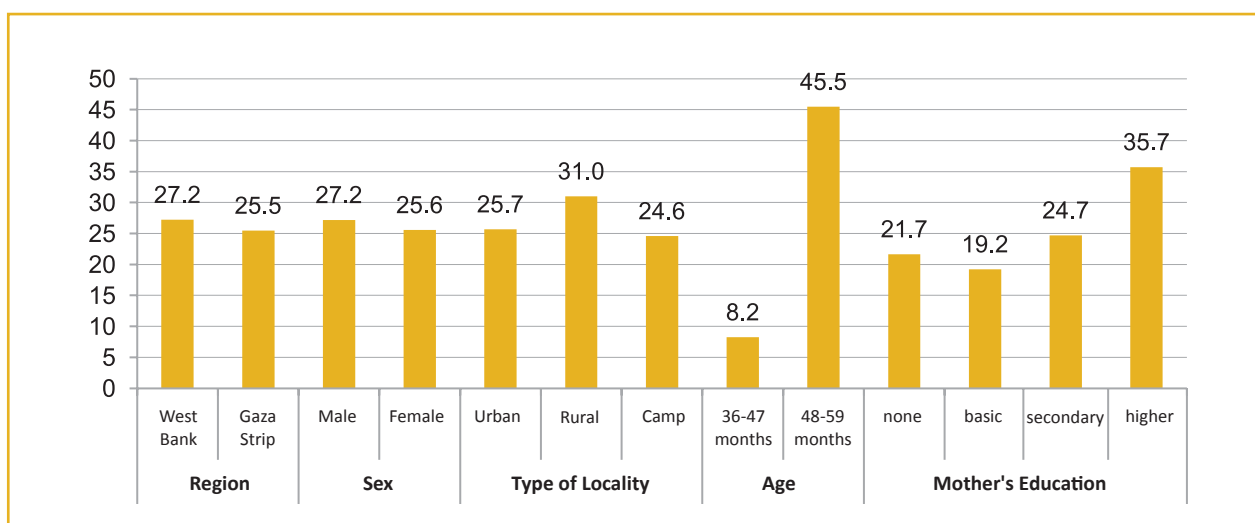
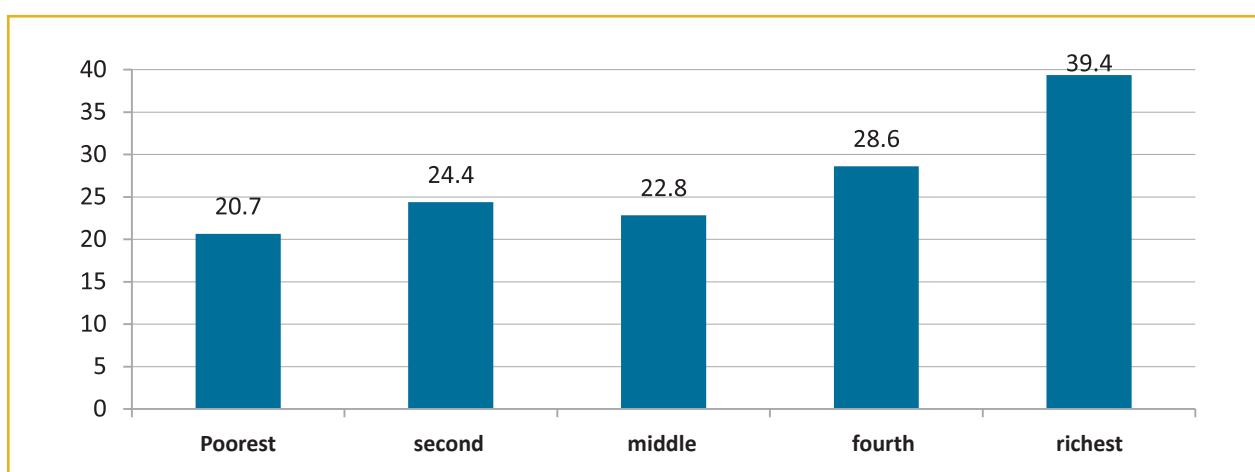
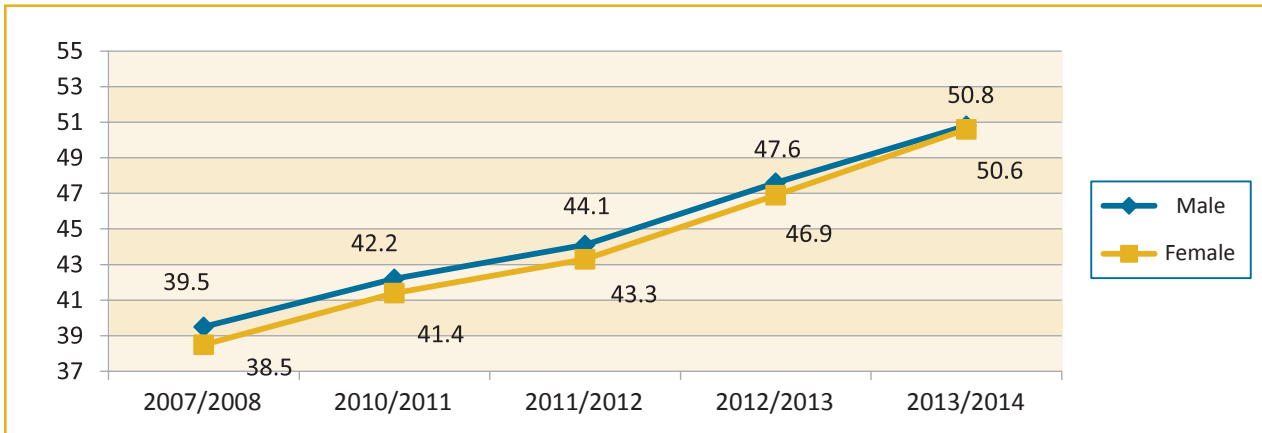


Figure 4: Percentage of Children Aged 36-59 Months Enrolled in some form of Early Childhood Education Programs in Palestine by Wealth Index 2014



According to data from the Ministry of Education for 2012/2013, the average number of preschool* students per class was 22.3 in the West Bank and 26.9 in Gaza Strip. The average number of students per teacher in the West Bank was 12.0 in comparison to 17.0 in Gaza Strip.

Figure 5: Enrollment Rates in Early Childhood Education (4-5 Years) by Sex for Selected Academic Years

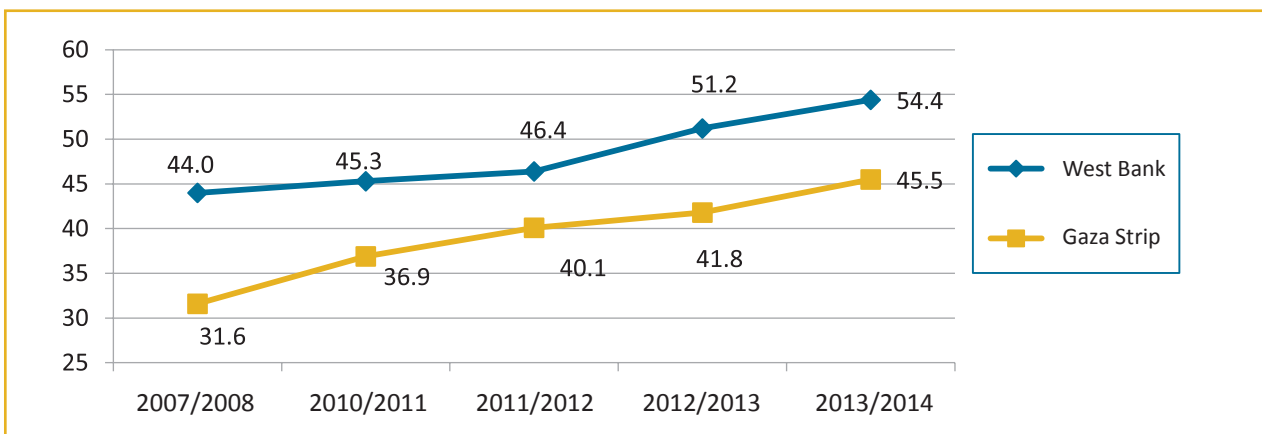


Source: Education Database, General Directorate of Planning, Ministry of Education.

*Kindergarten is a licensed and registered with the Ministry of Education

Differences in enrollment in early childhood education by sex were minimal, but higher between the West Bank and Gaza. Overall, there is a trend emerging that supports an increase in enrollment in early childhood and an increase in the number of licensed preschool programs due to strict follow-up by the Ministry of Education.

Figure 6: Enrollment Rates in Kindergartens in Selected Academic Years by Region



Source: Educational database: General Administration of Planning, Ministry of Education.

3.3 Enrollment Rates¹⁶

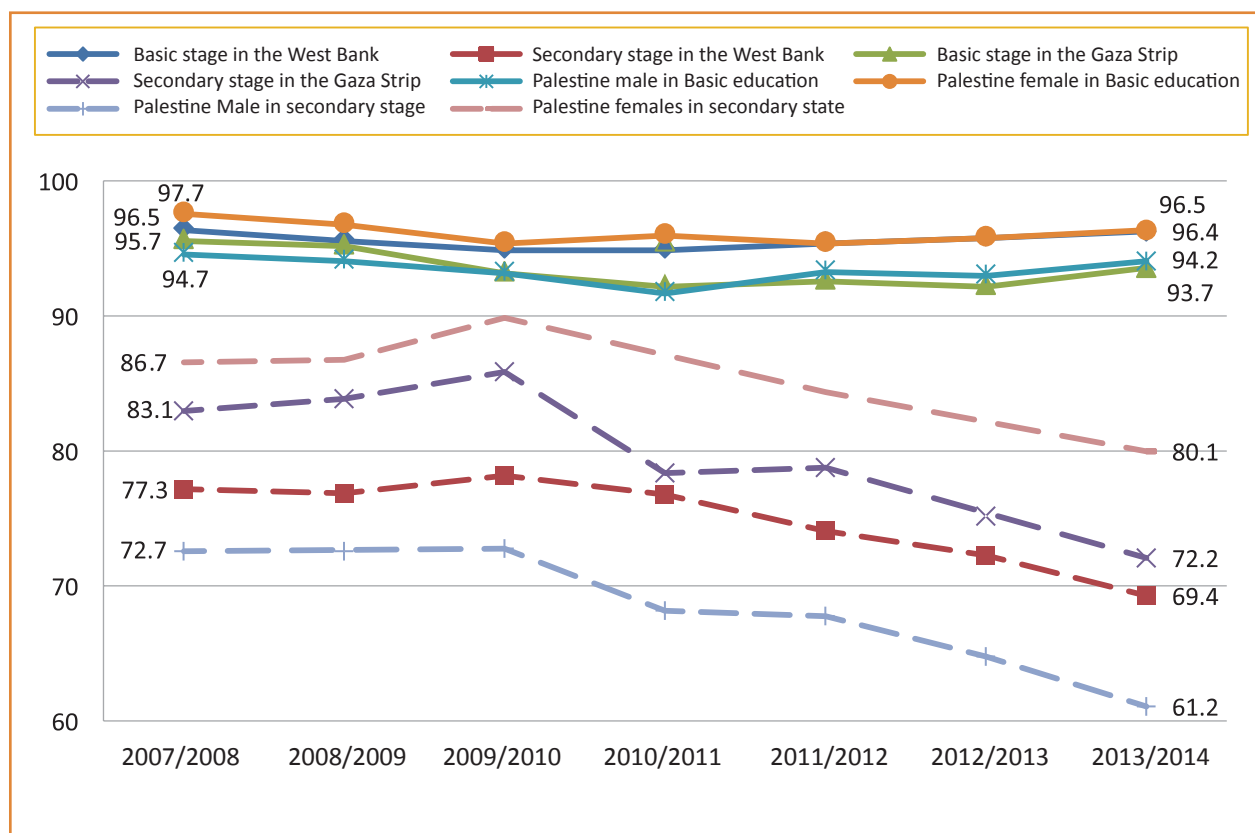
Calculations of enrollment are based largely on population estimates and projections, with Israeli statistics used in the case of Jerusalem, and are therefore subject to change. Enrollment rates are relatively high in Palestine and may be higher than calculated due to difficulties of estimating population which have arisen through the political division of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem. For example, among those who are registered and hold Palestinian identity a considerable number live abroad. In addition, there have been problems with the registration of births and deaths.

In general, female enrollment in secondary level education is higher than that of males in Gaza Strip compared to the West Bank. Enrollment by both sexes in basic education is higher than secondary level education. In the academic year 2013/2014, there was a relative decline in enrollment rates by males in the basic education compared with the academic year 2007/2008. Generally speaking, enrollment rates changes are minor

and are affected by population estimates and marginal statistical errors. Total enrollment in preschool rose among both males and females to exceed 50%.

Net enrollment rate is a more accurate indicated since it expresses the enrollment rate of a specific age group (6-15 years). The gross enrollment rate includes enrolled children from older age groups. Thus, the net enrollment rate is lower than the gross enrollment rate. Nonetheless, gross enrollment rates will be adopted for all of the population of the educational system. These rates do not reflect the children who are not enrolled in the educational system, nor their place of residence or reasons for lack of enrollment for follow up and provision of education services. Basic education in Palestine is compulsory by law, but MoEHE does not yet have any procedures in place for monitoring such children and compelling guardians to comply with the legal requirements of compulsory primary education.

Figure 7: Enrollment Rates by Stage, Region and Sex for the Academic Years (2007/2008 – 2013/2014)



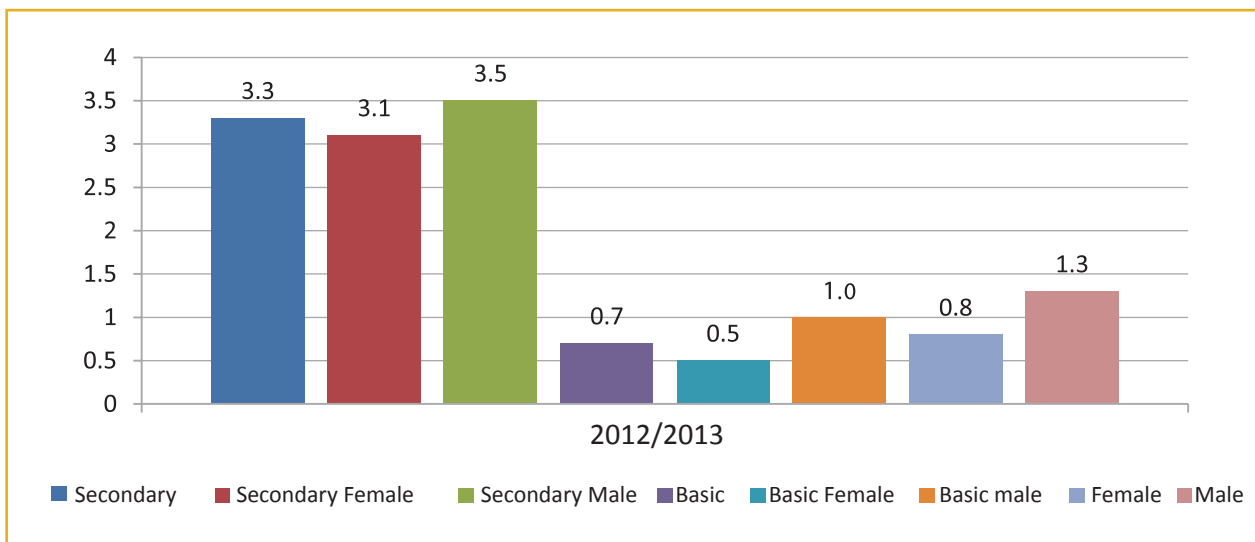
Source: Educational databases: General Administration of Planning, Ministry of Education.

¹⁶ This indicator covers school children under the supervision of the Israeli Ministry of Education in Jerusalem. PCBS population estimates and census of students conducted by MoEHE have been adopted.

3.4 Dropout Rates 2012/2013

Overall dropout rates were relatively low in Palestine. The dropout rate in government, private and UNRWA schools at the secondary level was 4 times higher than at the primary level. In the 2012/2013 academic year, the dropout rate was 1.0% in Palestine (1.3% for males and 0.8% for females), being 0.7% in the primary education (1.0% for males and 0.5% for females) to triple in secondary stage with 3.3% (3.5% for males and 3.1% for females).

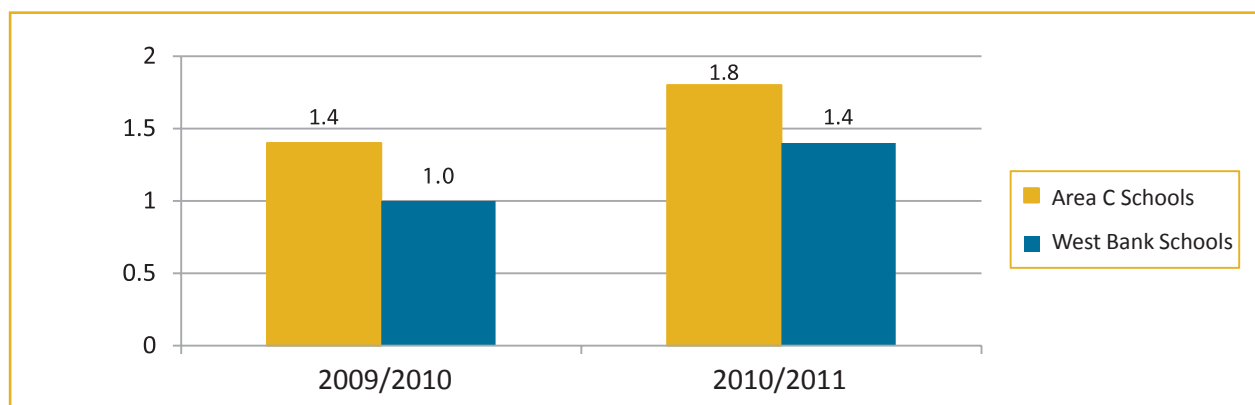
Figure 8: Dropout Rates by Sex and School Stage for 2012/2013



Source: Educational databases: General Administration of Planning, Ministry of Education 2012-2013

Dropout rates may be attributed to the inability to balance studying and working, especially among male students or between early engagement or marriage and studying for female students. Other reasons include recurrent failure, lack of desire to enroll in mixed schools or in a school far from the residential area in addition to disabilities including being visually impaired or suffering psychosomatic symptoms.

Figure 9: Dropout Rates in Schools of West Bank and Area C Schools, 2009/2010 and 2010/2011



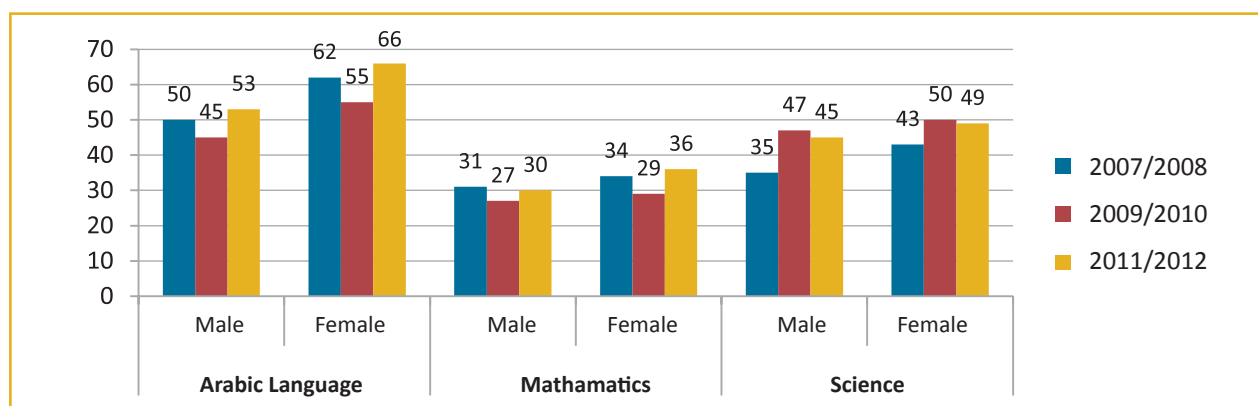
Source: Ministry of Education. Annual report to monitor and evaluate the Strategic Development Plan 2008-2012.

Some students who drop out of school may enroll at a vocational center for youth run by the Ministry of Social Affairs or another agency.

3.5 Students Performance in National Exams

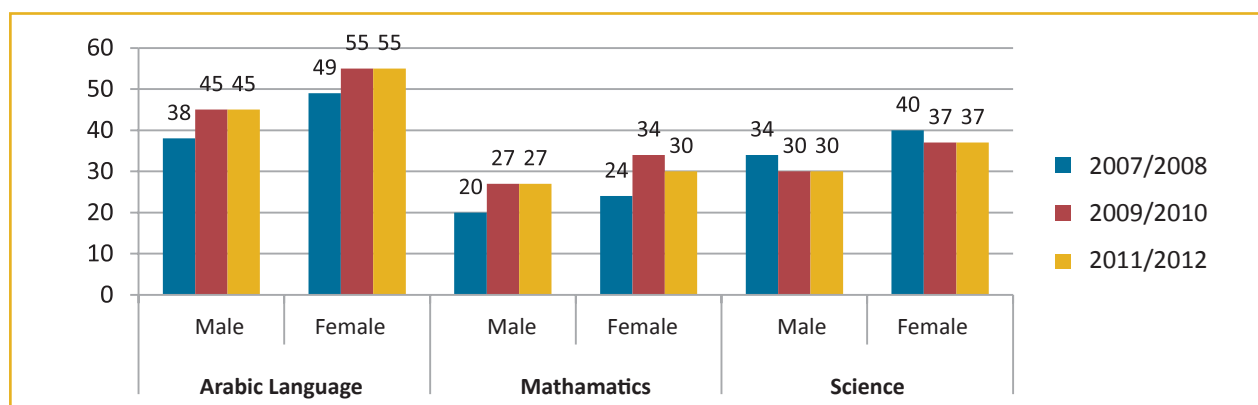
Dropout was found most frequently to be linked to poor academic performance. The results of the bi-annual national examinations showed an overall decline in the level of students in science and mathematics from 2007/2008 to 2009/2010 for fourth and tenth grades students. Results show decline in performance in comparison to previous years in maths and Arabic language and improvement in sciences for fourth grade students. Performance in science decline while it improved in Arabic language and maths for tenth grade students. Females performed better than males; still the academic performance is still low and may do not succeed; it is also noticed that performance of females declined in 2011/2012 academic year from previous years, knowing that the national assessment tests take place once every second year.

Figure 10: Academic Performance of Fourth Grade Students in National Examinations for Selected School Years



Source: Ministry of Education, 2013.

Figure 11: Academic Performance of Tenth Grade Students in National Examinations for Selected School Years



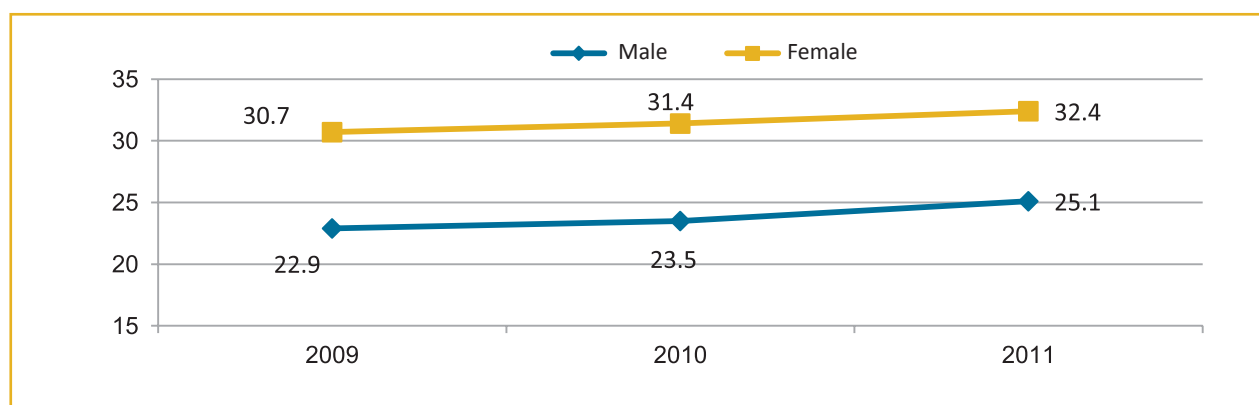
Source: Ministry of Education, 2013.

These results are alarming, as despite efforts by the Ministry of Education to raise the level of education in Palestine, the national performance of students remains very low. Determining the causes and areas of low academic performance is crucial to tackling these issues. There are many reasons behind low academic performance, some related to the social environment (poverty, unemployment, child labor, disability, disease, malnutrition) or the physical environment and education, such as the availability of a suitable school environment and buildings, overcrowded facilities, equipment, transportation, adequate qualified educational staff and appropriate curricula.

3.6 Qualified Teachers and Teachers' Training Strategy

The percentage of teachers whose qualifications meet the standards of the Ministry of Education may be one of the causes of low student academic performance. Just 29.3% of teachers had qualifications that met ministry standards in 2011. The figure was higher among females than males. This means that less than one-third of teachers have appropriate qualifications for the teaching profession. The percentage was 45.7% among teachers of grades 1-4, with twice as many females in that category as males. Other factors contributing to low student performance could be high student density in classrooms, the new curricula and inappropriate teaching methods. Data from the Ministry indicates that a large percentage of teachers and applicants for teaching jobs obtained low grades in their high school exam certificates and half would not want to continue working as teachers if they found better jobs.¹⁷ While in the past teachers were highly respected and had higher levels of satisfaction with their pay, teachers no longer receive the same respect and are not satisfied with their fees. Currently, due to the deteriorating economic and social conditions, teaching is considered as a last resort for most young people, many of whom rely on private tutoring or other after-school part time jobs to support their income. However, teaching remains one of the most socially acceptable professions in Palestine for women and suits a married woman with children due to the shorter work day and school holidays. 50.0% of the new teachers hired in 2011 were qualified as the Ministry of Education has adopted new standards and implemented a new strategy for the recruitment and training of teachers.

Figure 12: Percentage of Qualified Teachers by Sex, 2009-2011

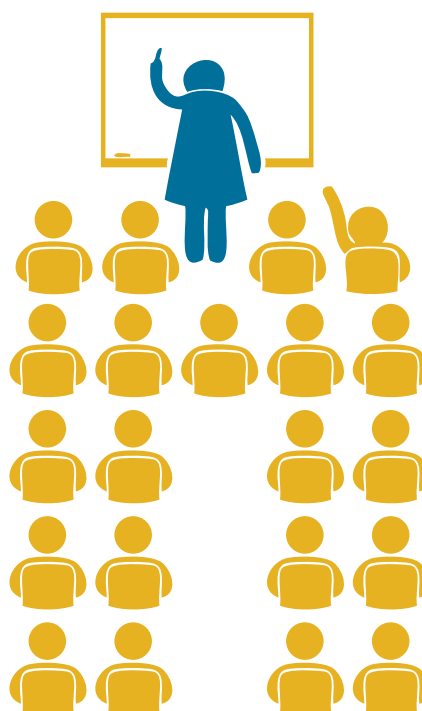


Source: Ministry of Education, 2013

3.7 Students per Teacher According to Supervising Agency 2013/2014

This indicator refers to overcrowding in the class and it is important to assess the educational environment in schools since high students per teacher averages increase the teachers' burden and their ability to focus on students individual potential and abilities, as well as having insufficient time for extracurricula or practical activities.

On average, there were 21.4 students per teacher for all stages in the 2013/2014 academic year, with 20.3 students per teacher in government schools, 28.8 students per teacher in UNRWA schools and 16.5 students per teacher in private schools. The average is relatively high when compared to OECD countries (2005), where the average is 16.7 for basic education and 13.4 for secondary education.¹⁸



¹⁷ Conference on Promoting Teachers on Feb. 20th., 2013.

¹⁸ Survey of knowledge, perceptions and practices in water, sanitation and school hygiene in the occupied Palestinian territories. The Ministry of Education. UNICEF, with support from the Australian government. December 2011.

3.8 Density of Students in Classrooms in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 2013/2014

Overcrowding in the classroom decreases opportunities for participation and interaction and impacts a teacher's ability to control the class, which in turn can impede understanding, comprehension and academic performance.

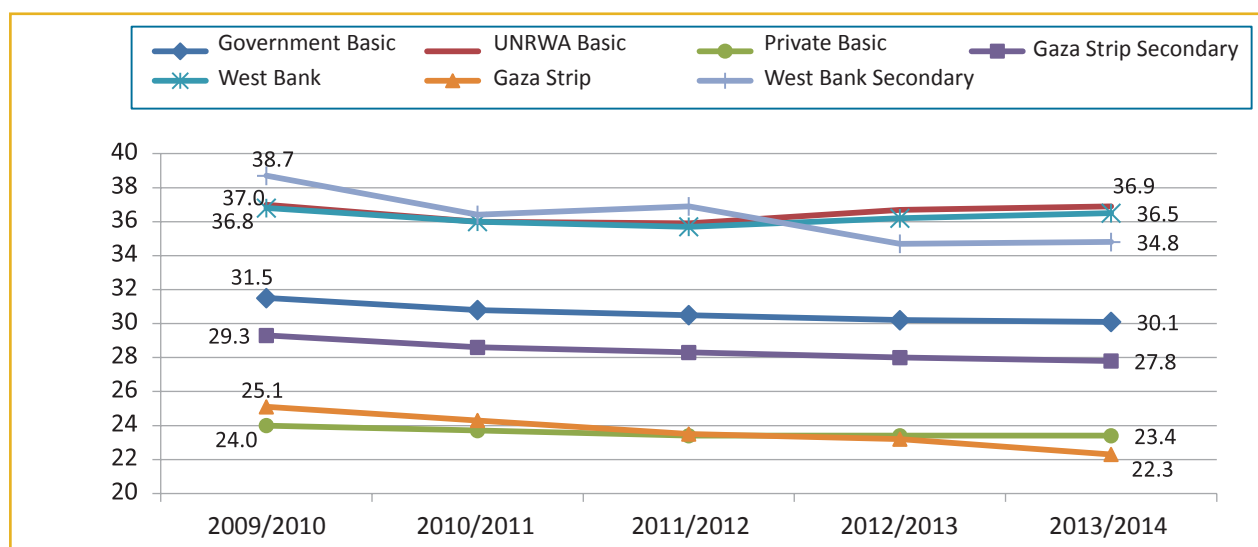
Density in classrooms is relatively high, particularly in UNRWA schools entailing the need to increasing the number of classrooms available to absorb the additional students. Classroom density in Palestine decreased from 2009/2010 up to 2013/2014, but classrooms in government and UNRWA schools mainly in primary stage. The average number of students per classroom in government and UNRWA schools for the 2013/2014 academic year stood at 30.8 in basic stage compared with 26.2 in secondary stage. Overcrowding is greater in Gaza Strip than the West Bank; UNRWA schools and schools in East Jerusalem and Gaza have shortage of classrooms. Average classroom density in countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development for 2005 were 21.7 students at primary school in government schools and 23.8 students in secondary schools. Density in Palestinian schools, therefore, is relatively high.¹⁹

3.9 Provision of Specialized Classrooms 2012/2013

The availability and use of technological laboratories and libraries are crucial indicators of the quality of education. Palestine has specialized classrooms including computer laboratories in 78.1% of schools, libraries in 76.1% of schools, science laboratories in 67.0% of schools. Distribution between the West Bank and Gaza Strip came as follows: West Bank (73.6%, 73.5% and 66.2%) respectively; and the Gaza Strip (91.4%, 83.6% and 69.3%) respectively²⁰

Although the percentage of schools with computers in Gaza is greater than in the West Bank, an average of 28.5 students share a computer (23.2 in West Bank and 42.4 in Gaza). The percentage of UNRWA schools with computer lab is higher than that of public schools, a comparison of the number of students sharing a computer in UNRWA schools is still high compared to government and private schools (being 43.3, 27.4 and 17.5 students per computer respectively). Generally speaking, the number of schools with computer labs and libraries is higher than the number of schools with science labs. In considering this indicator, it is important to determine the status of these laboratories in terms of availability of materials and equipment and their suitability and frequency of use by students and teachers. Most students in Gaza are run by UNRWA with the result that these two indicators are linked.

Figure 13: Classroom Density by Region, Academic Stage and Supervisory Authority for Selected School Years



Source: Ministry of Education, Education Survey Database for the years 2009/2010 – 2013/2014

19 Survey of knowledge, perceptions and practices in water, sanitation and school hygiene in the occupied Palestinian territories. Ministry of Education, UNICEF with funding from the Australian government. December 2011.

20 Source: Ministry of Education 2013, Educational Statistics Year Book for the school year 2012/2013, Ramallah-Palestine. P. 53- 56. Data do not include Jerusalem Schools run by Maaref and the Israeli Municipality Schools

Ministry of Education data for the 2012/2013 academic year show that 50.8% of elementary government schools in the West Bank have Internet compared with 43.0% in secondary stage. Almost all schools in Gaza Strip have Internet access and 99.0% of UNRWA schools in the West Bank and Gaza are connected to the Internet, while 68.0% of private primary schools are connected and 95.0% of private secondary schools have Internet access in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

3.10 Schools by Main Source of Water, Electricity and Wastewater Drainage 2012-2013²¹

The physical environment of the school affects the academic performance of students and the quality of education. Data indicate that basic infrastructure is available in most schools in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Electricity is not available in 0.3% of schools in the West Bank only, with the highest percentage of these schools (1.5%) in south Hebron, followed by Bethlehem (1.2%) and Jerusalem (0.9%). Most schools in Gaza Strip are connected to public water and sewage network and are all connected to public electricity network. Connection to infrastructure is higher than in the West Bank.

Table 1: Percentage of Schools by Main Source of Water, Electricity and Wastewater Drainage in 2012/2013

| Region | Public Water Network | Water Tanks | Public Electricity Network | Special Power Generator | Sewerage Network | Septic Tank |
|------------|----------------------|-------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| West Bank | 88.9 | 4.7 | 99.3 | 0.4 | 35.1 | 48.6 |
| Gaza Strip | 95.5 | 1.2 | 99.7 | 0.3 | 83.7 | 13.0 |
| Total | 90.6 | 3.8 | 99.4 | 0.4 | 47.3 | 39.6 |

Source: Ministry of Education 2013 Educational Statistics Year Book for the 2012/2013 Academic Year, Ramallah-Palestine, 2013

3.11 Students per Drinking Water Fountain, Toilet and Hand Basin 2012/2013²²

On average 42 students share a single drinking water fountain, 64 students share a toilet and 30 students share a washbasin. The rates were in Gaza Strip (58, 73 and 28 respectively) and in the West Bank (35, 31 and 59 respectively).



²¹ Educational databases. General Administration of Planning. Ministry of Education 2013.

²² Educational databases. General Administration of Planning. Ministry of Education 2013.

3.12 School Counseling²³

School counseling plays a vitally important role in protecting students from the negative social, economic and political consequences of their surroundings. Counseling empowers students with tools necessary for survival and development and reduces risks. It also enables students with social or psychological problems to be identified so that early intervention can be taken

During the 2012/2013 academic year 67.3% of public schools had a school counseling service with an average of 724 students per counselor. There were 1,053 counselors in this period. In Gaza Strip the number of school counselors in public schools reached 359 with an average of 703 students per counselor while in the West Bank the number reached 694 with an average of 775 students per counselor. This percentage is inadequate to meet the need for preventive work that is required under the current volatile circumstances.

3.13 Violations against Students and School

Children, mainly students, in Area C are exposed to abuse by Israeli soldiers and settlers (killing, arrest, detention, forced stay, injuries by bullets, delay at checkpoints, electronic gates and ad-hoc barriers....). In 2013, the Israeli army and settlers attacked 89 schools; 3 students martyred and 179 other were injured, 14 teachers were



wounded, 175 students were detained while 43 others were arrested. 31 male and female teachers were also arrested for long hours. As a result, 1,581 class periods were missed for 891 teachers. There was partial or total suspension of schools for 225 days. Monitoring and Evaluation System report for the years 2011 and 2012, published by the Ministry of Education, showed that children in Area C are subjected to harsh psychosocial conditions. Almost 9.0% of students suffer psychosocial problems as a result of living in a geographic zone under Israeli security control, namely Area C. 10.0% of schools in this area are not within Palestinian government control. Most children in this area face difficulties access health, educational and social schools and are subjected to abuse by settlers and Israeli soldiers. Results of the same report indicate as well high occurrence of psychological and behavior disorders among students in 2012, compared to previous year (69.2% and 38.0% respectively).

Table 2: Distribution of Schools in Area C by Location, 2012

| Schools in Area C | Number | Percentage |
|--|-------------------|------------|
| Schools affected by the wall | 30 | 16 |
| Schools affected by Israeli settlements | 34 | 18 |
| Jerusalem schools | 32 | 17 |
| Schools in the old town of Hebron | 31 | 17 |
| Remote schools | 12 | 6 |
| Schools affected by roadblocks and curfews | 48 | 26 |
| Total (10% of schools in West Bank, 9% of students) | 187 School | 100 |

Source: Ministry of Education, Educational databases. General Administration of Planning 2013.

23 Educational databases. General Administration of Planning. Ministry of Education 2013.

Table 3: Percentage of Students in Public Schools in Area C Experiencing Psychological or Social Problems, 2011-2012

| Psychological effects | School Year | |
|---------------------------------|-------------|------|
| | 2011 | 2012 |
| Withdrawn behavior | 40.0 | 66.9 |
| Fear | 39.0 | 68.2 |
| Low motivation /desire to study | 37.0 | 69.8 |
| Anxiety | 36.4 | 69.4 |
| Aggressiveness | 36.0 | 71.3 |
| Speech disorders | 35.0 | 71.1 |
| Deviant social behavior | 34.0 | 72.4 |
| Hyperactivity | 43.0 | 65.1 |
| Total | 38.0 | 69.2 |

Source: Ministry of Education. Educational databases. General Administration of Planning 2013.

As the figures from 2011 had almost doubled by 2012, this requires further investigation in order to determine whether there is a correlation with an increase in the number and severity of violations by Israel or whether this is due to the Ministry of Education targeting schools and different communities in Area C for the survey. The occupation remains a major obstacle to achieving national educational and qualitative goals as well as justice and equality in accessing services. Despite dedicated efforts on the part of the Ministry to raise the level of education in Palestine, some areas will continue to be marginalized due primarily to the Israeli occupation.

Chapter Four

Health Status

Health Status

An investment in children's health lays the foundation for a healthy society. A suitable legal environment, adequate policy planning and programs and dedicated budgets should support this. Education is needed to raise the awareness of children, families, society in general and also government of choices that support healthy patterns of living that prevent illness. Programs targeting children in general, with a focus on marginalized children and those at risk of marginalization, could reduce the impact of health and social issues among children in Palestine and ultimately reduce the financial burden of protecting children from disease, especially chronic diseases that may result in further complications and disabilities.

4.1 Expenditure on Health

The health sector spending accounts for approximately 11.0% of the public budget. Salaries form the bulk of the expenses of the Ministry, comprising 47.3% in 2011 but falling to 38.3% in 2012. Expenditure on curative/treatment services is ten times higher than that for preventive services. In 2011 the Ministry spent 65.0% of its budget on curative services compared to 6.6% on preventive services, which was lower than in 2010 (7.3%). Expenses for the treatment of chronic diseases comprise a significant percentage of the ministry's budget. Data of the General Directorate of Finance in the Ministry of Health show that the total actual expenses (payments) of the Ministry of Health reached 1,299.6 million Israeli Shikle, with salaries comprising 51.9% thereof. It should be noted that unpaid invoices from the year 2013 were shifted to 2014 and they amount to 697.7 million NIS.²⁴

In addition, the Ministry of Health does not provide any rehabilitation services, so these must be purchased from other providers. The Ministry has focused its policy on the health of the Palestinian child in terms of pre-natal and post natal maternal health, disease prevention, early detection and intervention of disease and disability, relieving suffering and the financial burdens resulting from chronic diseases, accidents and disability.

Spending on health in the years 2012-2013 increased to reach 1,261.9 million USD in 2012; it continued to rise until 2013 to amount to approximately 1,347.4 USD. Results on the sources of funding showed that contribution of households and government institutions (of all types) was the highest in the said period representing 37.7% and 43.3% respectively in 2013. The percentage of health expenditure from the GDP decreased from 11.8% in 2012 to 10.9% in 2013. The average per capita share of total expenses spent on health in Palestine was USD 304.8 in 2013.²⁵

²⁴ MoH, Palestinian Health Information Center – Annual Health Report, Palestine 2013

²⁵ PCBS, MoH 2015, National Health Accounts 2013, Main Results, Ramallah-Palestine

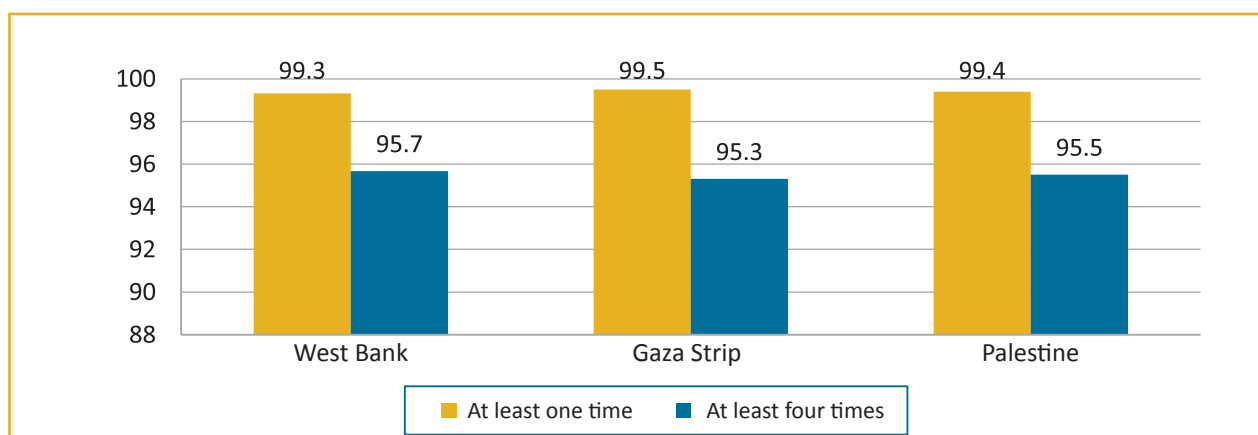
4.2 Antenatal and natal care

PCBS data show that most women aged 15-49 years who had given birth during the two years prior to the multi-indicator cluster survey of 2014 had received medical care during pregnancy at least four times (95.5%). The percentage in the West Bank was 95.7% compared to 95.3% in Gaza Strip. The highest percentage was in Tubas with 100.0%, and the lowest in Salfit with 93.1% in the West Bank. The highest percentage in Gaza Strip was in Rafah with 98.8% and the lowest in Khan Yunis with 91.6%.²⁶ The survey results also showed that delivery at home constituted 0.5% while all other deliveries were in medical establishments.



On another level, the percentage of women aged 20-24 years who delivered children when they were less than 18 years old reached 22.0%, and was highest in Gaza Strip with 25.1% in comparison to 19.6% in the West Bank.

Figure 14: Percentage of Women (15-49 years) who Received Antenatal care, 2014

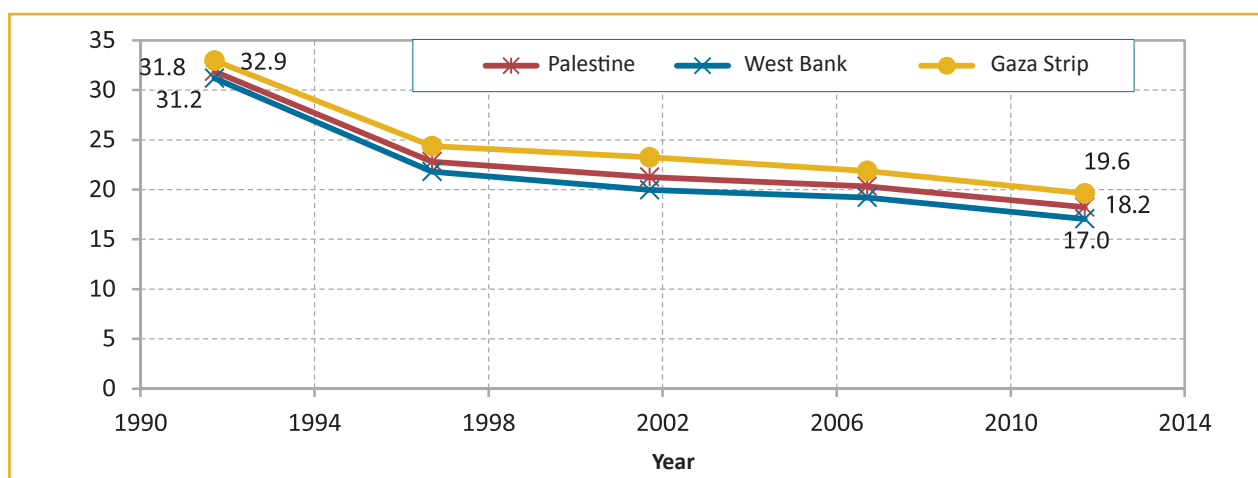


Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2015. Palestinian Multiple-Indicator Cluster Survey, 2014. Key findings Results

4.3 Child Mortality

Infant mortality is considered an indicator of social and health conditions in a country. In general, A decline in child mortality and children under five years of age was noticed in Palestine in the past two decades.

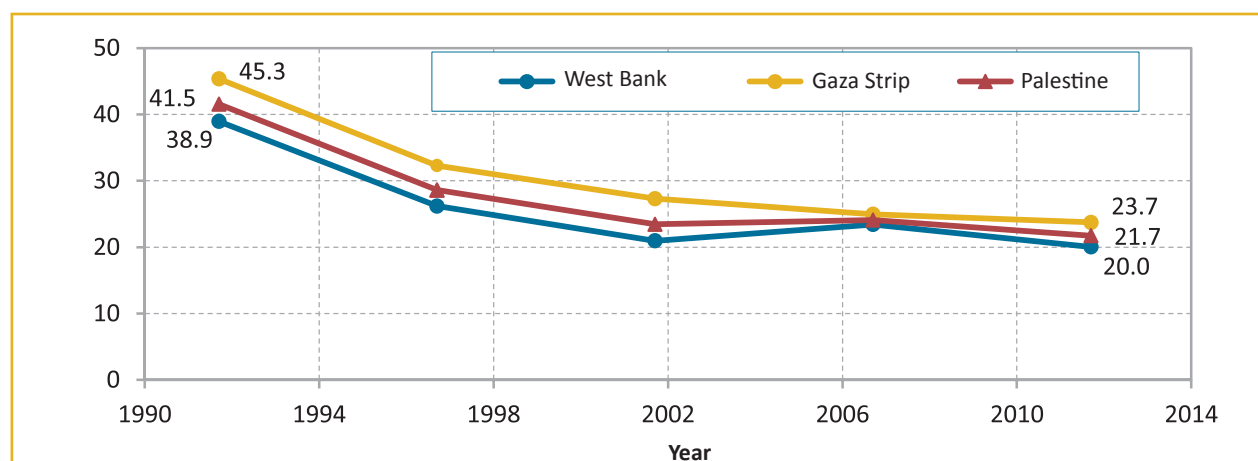
Figure 15: Infant Mortality per Region in Palestine in Selected Years



Source: PCBS 2015 , Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, 2014, Key findings Results.

26 PCBS 2015, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014, Key findings Results.

Figure 16: Mortality of Children Below Five Years by Region in Palestine in Selected Years



Source: PCBS 2015 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, 2014, Key findings Results.

Administrative records of the Ministry of Health indicate that congenital malformations were the main cause of infant mortality with a toll of 27.6%, followed by severe respiratory failure with 15.4%, blood poisoning with 13.1%, sudden infant death with 12.8%, stillbirths with 11.5% and premature births with 6.7%.²⁷

4.4 Traffic accidents

In 2009 the Ministry of Health implemented a program to monitor traffic accidents in the West Bank which introduced measures to reduce the incidence of traffic accidents and related injuries. These included fines for speeding, using a mobile phone while driving or not wearing a seat belt, fixing maximum speed limits in some areas, putting speed bumps on some roads, especially in front of schools, making adjustments to infrastructure to raise awareness about public safety on roads, and introducing vehicle inspection for licensing and insuring vehicles. An increase in reported traffic accidents may therefore be attributed to improved reporting and documentation in both governmental and non-governmental sectors. During the period May - December 2009, there was a total of 3,903 accident-related injuries. The highest number of injuries occurred in Nablus, Ramallah, Jerusalem and Hebron within the 5-17 age group.

In 2010, there were 7,412 registered traffic accidents; 19.5% of the cases involved children under five years. There were 41 deaths. Most of the accidents involved males in the governorates of Ramallah and Nablus. No disabilities resulting from traffic accidents were reported in that year.



In 2011, there were 106 deaths due to traffic accidents and the death rate due to traffic accidents in the 0-4 age group was 6 per 100,000 people and 3.2 per 100,000 people among children in the 5-14 age group. There were 8,132 injuries, 74 resulting in a mobility-related disability; 71 of these occurred in Ramallah, Nablus, Jenin and Hebron. At least 20 cases of disability involved children and the highest percentage of severe and medium injuries were among children under one year of age.²⁸

²⁷ MoH, Palestine Annual Health Report, 2013

²⁸ Annual Health Reports. Ministry of Health, 2009, 2010, 2011.

In 2012, about 9,203 injuries resulted from accidents, with the highest number occurring in Ramallah, Nablus and Hebron. These accidents resulted in 112 deaths (with at least 31 children died). In the West Bank, 1,661 children in the 0-14 age group were injured as a result of traffic accidents, representing 18.1% of total casualties from traffic accidents that year. Twenty-two children were left with disabilities: 19 involved physical/ motor impairment and another visual impairment.²⁹

In 2013, there were 8,069 registered traffic accidents causing 7,936 injuries and 133 deaths. Most accidents involved males who accounted for 74.1% of total registered traffic accidents.

It should be noted that the areas where the highest number of injuries occurred are not necessarily the areas where the most severe injuries occurred. For example, the highest severe injuries rate was in Hebron, Ramallah, and Al-Bireh and Tulkarm.

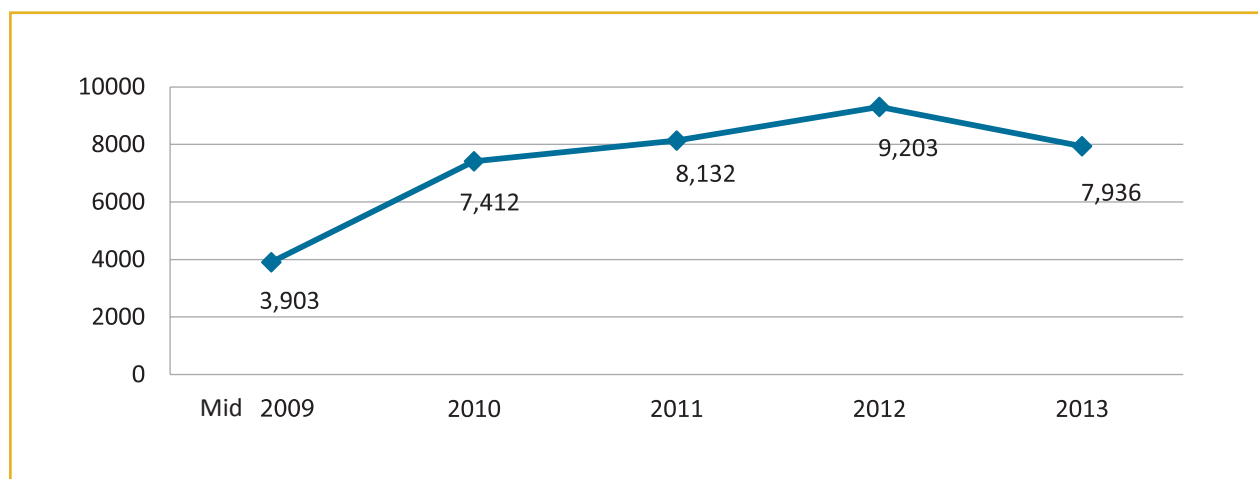
It is important that the site of an accident, such as city or village, be noted. The volume of traffic in Ramallah and Al-Bireh, the demographic hub, currently exceeds its capacity. The economic situation of its residents is relatively better than other cities with many families having more than one car. Causes of accident must also be defined, being excess of speed, inadequate infrastructure, lack of periodic car maintenance or non-compliance with traffic rules by pedestrians or drivers, including wearing a seatbelt.

4.5 Immunization against Infectious Diseases

Palestine is listed among advanced countries in terms of basic vaccination coverage with over 95.0% of children aging 24–35 months receiving full vaccination at any time against many of the preventable childhood diseases (94.2% in the West Bank and 95.6% in Gaza Strip).³⁰ This high vaccination rate contributed to the elimination of many infectious diseases. Available data, however, do not specify the incidence of infectious disease among the population in general and children in particular.

The last case of polio was reported in 1988, and one case of measles was reported in Jerusalem in 2010. No cases were reported in 2013. The Ministry of Health vaccinates children with two doses at the age of 12 months and 18 months. Pregnant women attending government clinics are vaccinated against tetanus. No case of tetanus among the newborns was reported in previous years, except one case in southern Hebron in 2009 and another in Ramallah in 2011. No tetanus cases were reported in 2013. There was a rise in the reported cases of mumps (reported cases of mumps in Palestine attained 1,931 including 40 in the West Bank and 1,891 in Gaza Strip).³¹

Figure 17: Number of Injuries in Reported Accidents in West Bank by Year



Source: Ministry of Health, annual reports of 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013

²⁹ Unpublished data, Health information Center, Ministry of Health.

³⁰ Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2015. Palestinian Multiple-Indicator Cluster Survey, 2014. Key findings Results.

³¹ MoH-Palestine, Annual Reports 2009-2013.a

4.6 Nutritional Indicators

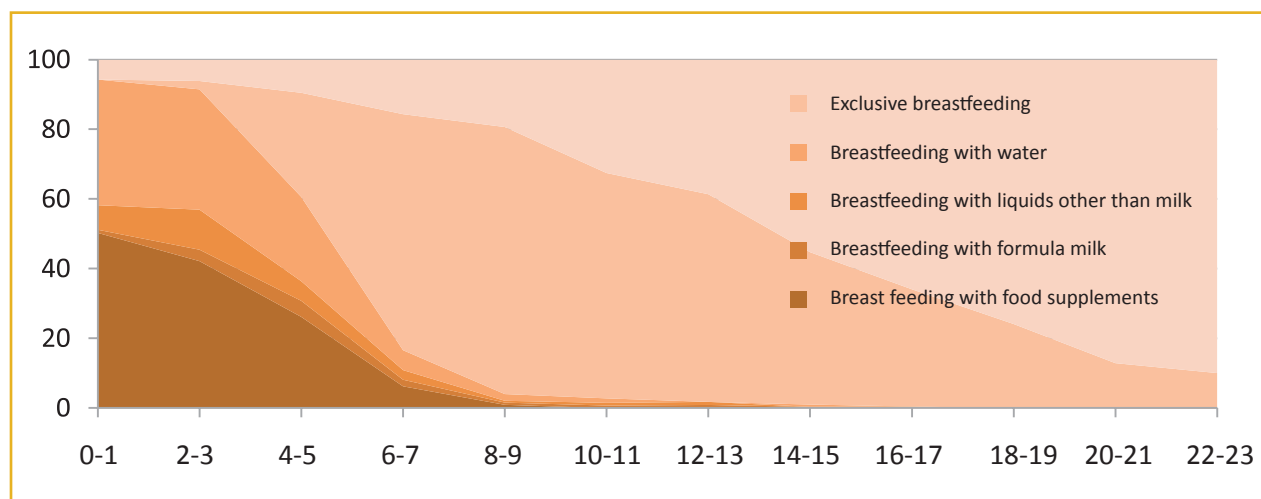
The right to adequate quantities and qualities of food is one of the basic rights of a child. Studies point to the importance of adequate nutrition for both baby and mother during pregnancy and to the importance of providing mothers with vitamins and supplements. Breastfeeding exclusively during the first six months of a child's life enhances an infant's immunity against disease. On the other hand, there is direct co-relation between Vitamin A deficiency, stunting, related growth, night blindness and increase in deaths when the body becomes susceptible to infections. Anemia due to iron deficiency may lead to increased rates of maternal and infant mortality, the chance of stillbirth, low birth weight, premature delivery, and the possibility of damage to the fetal brain. To prevent Vitamin A deficiency, mothers should be educated about the benefits of breastfeeding as mother's milk is a natural source of vitamin A and provides infants with adequate amounts of vitamin A at breastfeeding age.³²



4.7 Breastfeeding

The percentage of children below 6 months who were exclusively breastfed was 38.6% in 2014, while 52.9% of children (12-15 months) were continuously breastfed for one year and 11.5% of children (20-23 months) for two years. Exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months decreases with mother's education (36.0% among mothers with secondary education and higher compared with 62.0% among uneducated women). This may be partly attributed to working mothers returning to their jobs after the 70-day maternity leave, as per Palestinian Labor Law. Although the law allows mothers to leave for one hour for breastfeeding, most mothers prefer to use this hour to leave an hour earlier from work as it may be impossible to reach their child and return to the workplace within an hour especially when children are placed in care centers which are relatively far from the mother's workplace. Continuous breastfeeding up to the age of one year is frequent in rural areas (55.0%) and among the poorest mothers (65.1%), for male children more than female children. This is a clear indication of high level of awareness among marginalized groups about the importance of breastfeeding³³.

Figure 18: Infants' Nutrition Patterns by age in month of Age, 2014



Source: PCBS, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014, unpublished data.

32 <http://www.who.int/nutrition/topics/vad/en/>

33 PCBS, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014, unpublished data..

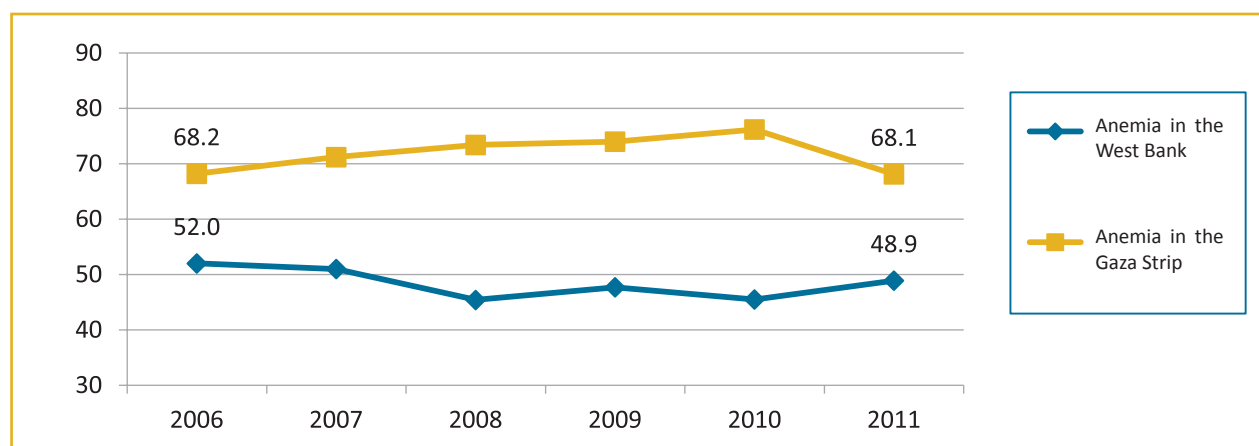
4.8 Underweight, Wasting, Stunting and Anemia

Underweight is a significant indicator of the nutritional, social and health status of children and is usually associated with acute malnutrition. Stunting is linked to chronic malnutrition, which may also reflect poverty. Anemia is associated with the availability of food (quantity and quality), the health status of the child in terms of healthy eating habits, or any problem that may affect the absorption of iron by the child.

8.3% of children in Palestine weighed at birth, weighed less than 2,500 grams. This was more common in Gaza Strip in comparison with the West Bank³⁴, although with minimal differences. Since 2006, anemia rates have decreased, the percentage still remains very high, especially in Gaza Strip. Other nutritional indicators are low and realtiely similar for the West Bank and Gaza Strip. There is an urgent need to identify the reasons for this, especially as the Ministry of Health and UNRWA distribute a free iron supplement at primary health care centers. Nutritional interventions have been in place for over 20 years. Figure (19) below illustrates the anemia is the nutritional indicator of greatest concern and that health situation in Gaza Strip is worse than in the West Bank in terms of nutritional indicators.

On another level, a study conducted by the Ministry of Health, in cooperation with UNICEF and the University of Vienna in 2013, showed that 18.0% of children aging 6-59 months have slight anemia, 6.0% have moderate anemia while no cases of severe anemia was diagnosed among the sample children. Prevalence is higher among male children and children in Gaza Strip.³⁵ Figure (19) shows that the prevalence of anemia among children aging 9-12 months is higher in Gaza Strip than in the West Bank in 2012 although the gap was reduced in 2010.

Figure 19: Prevalence of Anemia among Children Aged 9-12 Months by Region, 2006-2011



Source: MoH, Nutritional Monitoring Indicators Report 2012, p. 119.

Malnutrition indicators show that 1.4% of children under 5 years are moderately underweight in 2014; the figures are higher in the West Bank than in Gaza Strip (being 1.5% and 1.3% respectively). Around 7.4% of children below five years old suffer from moderate stunting, with higher prevalence in the West Bank than the Gaza Strip (7.7% and 7.1% respectively). 1.2% of children under 5 years

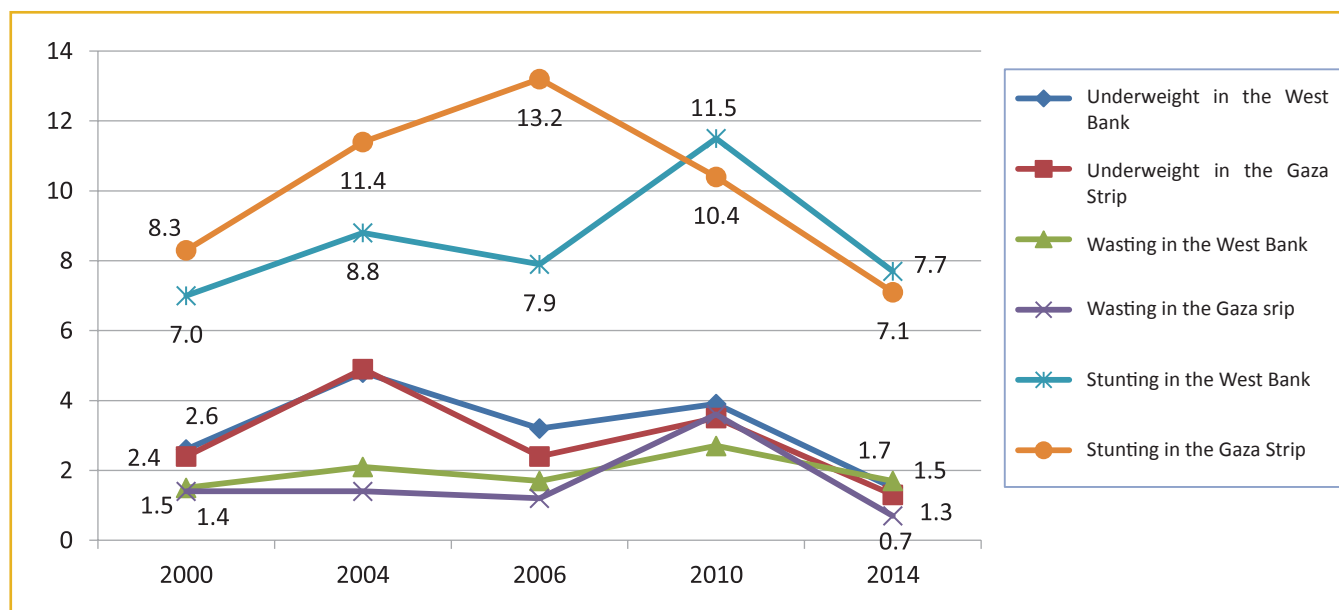
suffer from moderate wasting with higher prevalence in the West Bank (1.7%) than in Gaza Strip (0.7%). 8.2% of children under 5 years were overweight, which higher prevalence in the West Bank and urban areas than the Gaza Strip and refugee camps (9.8%, 7.9%, 6.5% and 6.1% respectively). The incidence was higher among males (9.1%) compared to females (7.1%).³⁶

34 PCBS, PMICS 2014, unpublished data.

35 MOH, Palestinian Micronutrient Survey, 2013.

36 PCBS, Multi-Indicator Survey, 2014, unpublished data.

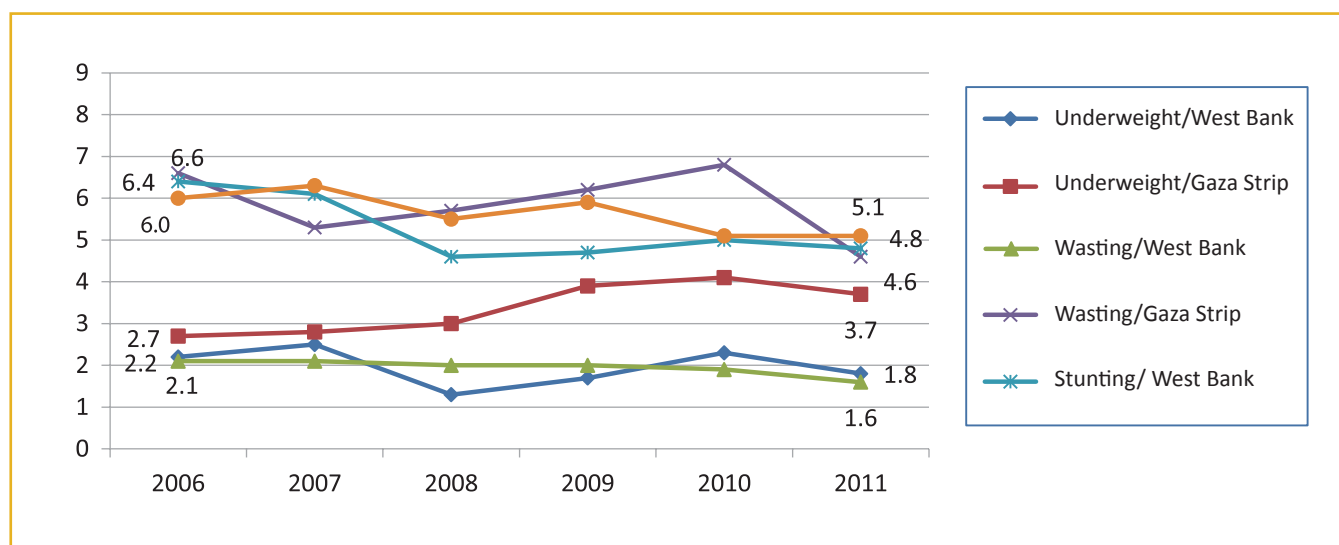
Figure 20: Prevalence of Malnutrition among Children under Five by Region, 2000 – 2014



Source: PCBS, PMICS 2014, unpublished data

Figure (21) below illustrates malnutrition among children aged 9-12 months as extracted from the data of monitoring conducted by the Nutrition Department in the Ministry of Health for the period 2006-2011

Figure 21: Prevalence of Malnutrition among Children Aged 9-12 Months by Region 2006-2011



Source: MoH, Nutritional Monitoring Indicators Report 2012, p. 119

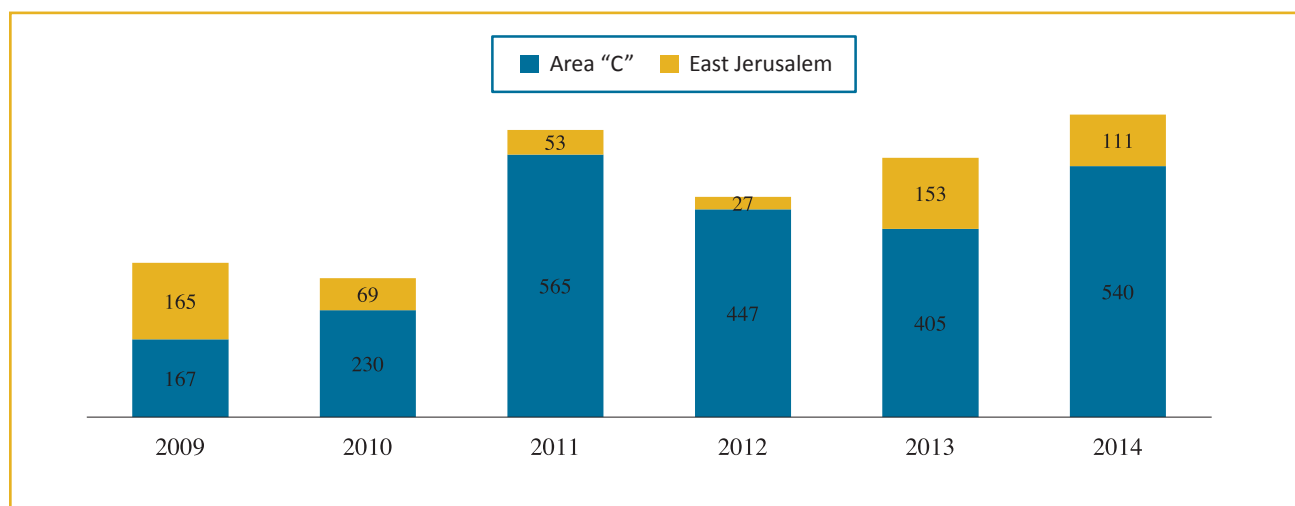
Chapter Five

Children under Occupation

Children under Occupation

UNICIF and Child Defense International document cases in which children are killed, wounded, forcibly displaced or recruited with an asserted intention of harm (for use as human shields or as informers) by Israel. They do not document some violations, such as traffic accidents caused by Israeli settlers in which the intention is proven³⁷. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) also documents all cases, regardless of intent. The different filters of these agencies result in some differences in figures. Child victims whose age group was unknown are designated Age 0. Statistics published by Betselem indicated that 545 houses were demolished in East Jerusalem between 2004 and end 2014. 817 housing units in Area C in the West Bank were demolished in the period from 2006 till end 2014. The figure below shows that 578 children were forcibly displaced in the period from 2009-2014 following demolition of their homes in East Jerusalem while 2,354 other children were displaced for the same reason in Area (c).

Figure 22: Number of Children Forcibly Displaced in Area C and East Jerusalem because of House Demolition by Israeli Occupation Forces, 2009-2014



UNICEF, 2014, Database on Children Harmed by Armed Conflict, Unpublished data

³⁷ DCI monitors and reports on violations of children's rights; in comparing figures, it is important to verify source of information and data gathering method.

5.1 Injured Children

The number of injured children tripled in 2014 compared to 2013, scoring its highest toll during the war on Gaza. 2,956 children were injured in 2014, with male children comprising 74.5% of the total number of injured children in 2014.

Table 4: Number of Injured Children by Sex and Year

| Sex | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | Total |
|--------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| Male | 342 | 393 | 639 | 1,206 | 3,167 | 5,747 |
| Female | 18 | 56 | 25 | 59 | 1,080 | 1,238 |
| Total | 360 | 449 | 664 | 1,265 | 4,247 | 6,985 |

Source: UNICEF 2014, Database of Children Harmed in Armed Conflict. Unpublished data

The causes of injury ranges from military action to mines to explosive remnants of war to settlers' violence to accidents... mainly in Area "c" and Jerusalem, Gaza and Hebron and some West Bank areas. The number of injured children increases by age, particularly among males. There was an increase in deaths and injuries among civilians, mostly children, because of mines and unexploded remnants of war.³⁸

5.2 Child Martyrs

Most martyred children were killed as a result of Israeli military action, mines and the remnants of war, especially in Gaza Strip and because of settlers' violence in the West Bank. Incidences of child killing increased, mainly among male children in 2014 compared to previous years. The number of child martyrs doubled in comparison to 2013 as a result of the latest Israeli war on the Gaza Strip.

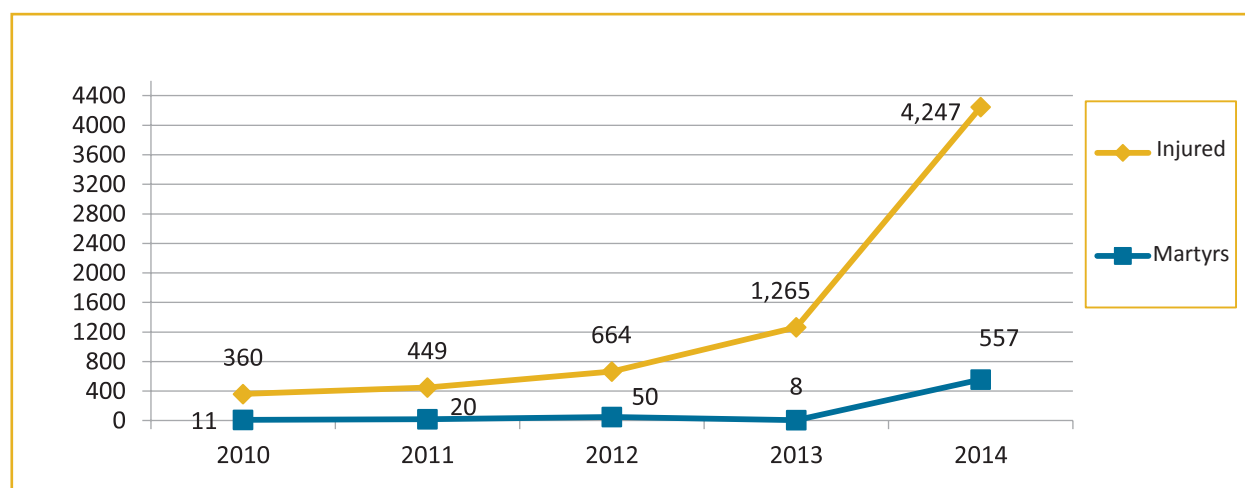
Table 5: Number of Children Martyred by Region, Year and Cause

| Year | Region | Number | Cause |
|------|------------|--------|--|
| 2010 | Gaza Strip | 7 | Mines, explosive remnants of war and military activities |
| | West Bank | 4 | Settler violence |
| 2011 | Gaza Strip | 18 | Mines, explosive remnants of war and military activities |
| | West Bank | 2 | Settler violence |
| 2012 | Gaza Strip | 46 | Mines, explosive remnants of war and military activities |
| | West Bank | 4 | |
| 2013 | Gaza Strip | 4 | Mines, explosive remnants of war, military action and armed groups |
| | West Bank | 4 | Settler violence and military action |
| 2014 | Gaza Strip | 544 | 540 in reason of the last war on Gaza and the other 40 because of mines and war remnants |
| | West Bank | 13 | Settler violence and military action |

Source: UNICEF 2014, Database on Children Harmed by Armed Conflicts. Unpublished Data

38 CAP 2013 Humanitarian Urgent Appeal - United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Figure 23: Number of Martyr and Wounded Children 2010-2014

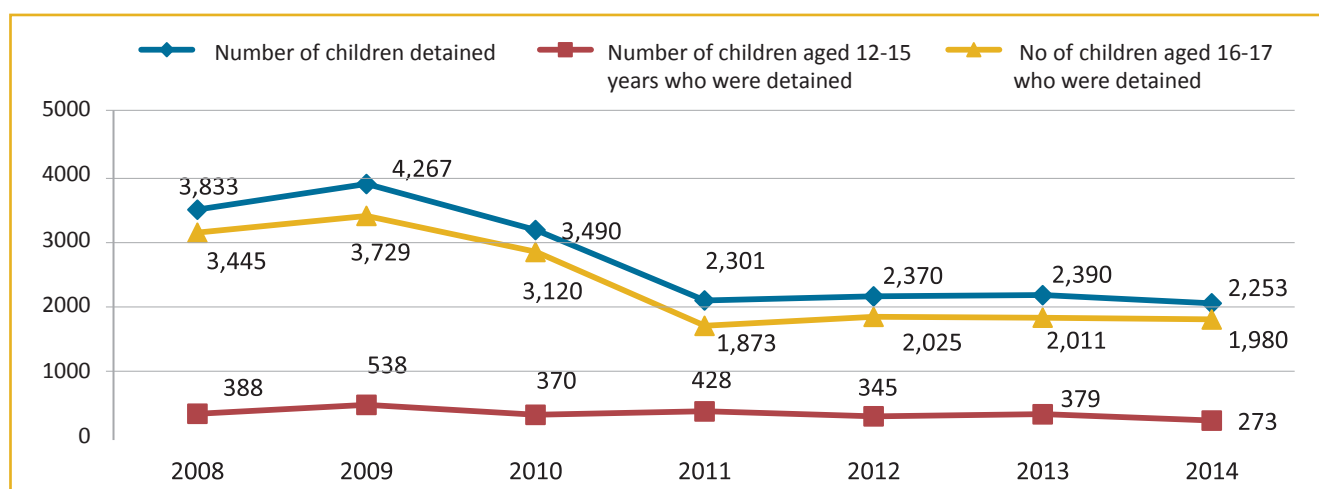


Source: UNICEF 2014, Database on Children Harmed by Armed Conflicts. Unpublished Data.

5.3 Child Detainees

Data from the Prisoners' Affairs Commission show that 3,755 children were detained in the past four years while the number of children detained in 2014 reached 1,266, showing an increase by 36.0% compared to 2013. PAC showed that the number of Palestinian children currently detained in Israeli jails reached 300 children³⁹. On another level, UNICEF reported that list of charges were prepared for most of the detained children aged 16-18 years old. Figures presented here-below show the annual arrest cases among children. The number of children arrested per month differ. Some of them may have been released a month after their arrest during a subsequent month. Therefore, it is more accurate to use the number of cases of arrest rather than the number of detained children. On the other hand, it should be noted that hundreds of detainees still in Israeli captivity were detained when they were under 18 years old.

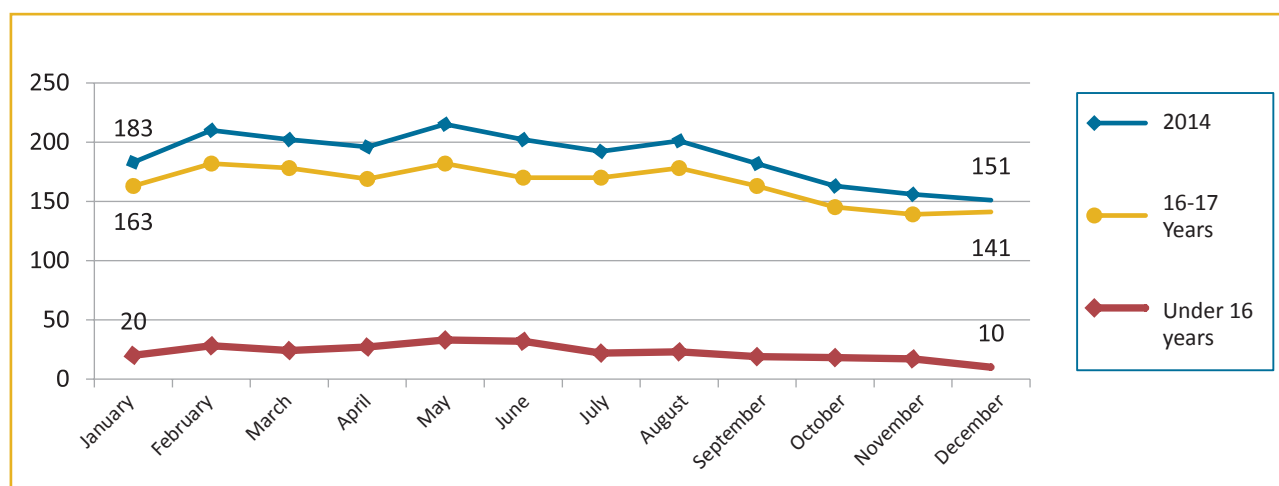
Figure 24: Number of Cases of Detention of Children by Age Group and Year, 2008-2014



Source: UNICEF 2014, Database on Children Harmed by Armed Conflicts. Unpublished Data

³⁹ <http://www.freedom.ps>

Figure 25: Number of Cases of Detention of Children by Age Group 2014



Source: UNICEF 2014, Database on Children Harmed by Armed Conflicts. Unpublished Data

A report published by UNICEF⁴⁰ showed that maltreatment of Palestinian children detained in Israeli jails still represents a systematic, widespread policy notwithstanding the latest amendments to the Israeli law. The report showed that in 2014 till July 2014, testimonies of 208 children detained in Israeli jails were collected to report on their maltreatment by prison officers. Testimonies of children (139 of whom are aged

16-17 years and 69 under 16 years) showed that they were subjected to various types of violence throughout their detention, transfer, interrogation and custody. The table below presents the types of violence and maltreatment they were subjected to.

Table 6: Number of Child Detainees According to Type of Violence and Maltreatment, 2013-2014⁴¹

| Type of Violence and maltreatment | No of cases | Type of violence and Maltreatment | No of cases |
|--|-------------|------------------------------------|-------------|
| Blinded during detention | 162 | Arrested after confrontations | 45 |
| Painfully handcuffed | 189 | Not informed of their legal rights | 163 |
| Physical abuse | 171 | Searched naked | 148 |
| Verbal violence and abuse | 144 | Solitary confinement | 28 |
| Placed on van floor upon transportation from detention center to police department | 89 | Forced to sign confessions | 63 |
| Arrested at night | 79 | | |

Evidence collected by DCI showed that more than three quarters of Palestinian children detained by the Israeli authorities in 2014 endured a form of physical abuse during their arrest and interrogation and that they were searched naked. 93.0% of cases of children were denied access to legal advice and seldom were they informed of their right not to incriminate themselves. The most worrying experience was long solitary confinement for interrogation purposes.⁴²

40 UNICEF 2014, Database on Children Harmed by Armed Conflict, Unpublished Data .

41 http://www.unicef.org/oPt/Children_in_Israeli_Military_Detention_-_Observations_and_Recommendations_-_Bulletin_No._2_-_February_2015.pdf

42 <http://arabic.dci-palestine.org/statistics>

5.4 The Recruitment and Use of Children as Informants or Human Shields

In general, the reports that are filed in this regard are insufficient to reflect the real situation on the ground. There is an urgent need to educate children who are being arrested and to debrief them in a child-friendly way to prevent them from being recruited as informants. DCI in Palestine started since April 2004 documenting cases of Palestinian children used as human shields by the Israeli army. The same source reports that that vast majority of documented cases were chained after a ruling was issued by the Israeli Higher Court in October 2005 deeming the use of civilians as human shields illegal. 19 out of 20 cases were documented in the period between May 2006 and February 2013. Cases varied between chaining the child to the front of a military jeep for four hours during confrontations and compelling others to lead soldiers upon their entry into houses to search or during confrontations. They were held near military operations for over four days especially during the 2009 war against the Gaza Strip.

Chapter Six

Protection

Chapter Six

Protection

6.1 Child Labor and Economic Exploitation

Article 14 of the Palestinian Child Law and Article 93 of the Palestinian Labor Law ban the employment of children under the age of fifteen years. Children aged 15-17 years may work subject to certain conditions, including limited work hours, the provision of semi-annual medical examinations and being banned from dangerous jobs. [The Child Law was amended to include children working with first-degree relatives as child labor. As amended, Article 14 of the Palestinian Child Law reads:](#)⁴³

1. Taking into account the standards and controls referred to in the Labor Law and the regulations issued there under, the employment of children before the age of fifteen years is banned.
2. The employment of children or using them or assigning any hazardous acts or occupations or other businesses and professions defined by the Ministry of Labor that would hinder their education or damage their safety or their physical or mental health, including work with first degree relatives, are prohibited.
3. Punishable by a fine of not less than one thousand Jordanian dinars and not more than two thousands Jordanian dinars for anyone who violates the provisions of this article, and with multiple punishments as per the number of children employed, and to be doubled in the case of repetition of the violation. In addition, in the event of repeat violations and upon the recommendation of the Minister of Social Affairs, the Minister of Labor shall, close the establishment partially or completely.



In contrast, Article 37 of the Child Law states that every child has the right to educate through secondary school (18 years old) and that the government should take the necessary measures to prevent children from dropping out of school. However, many children, especially students with low academic performance, tend to drop out of school to work, especially if payment is relatively high as it is in Israel, in Israeli settlements or in Jerusalem. The Ministry of Social Affairs is pursuing this issue in relation to children under the age of fifteen years, while the Ministry of Labor monitors actions with regard to children over the age of fifteen. Data is not available for children who work as beggars, but this does not undermine the importance of the issue, and more attention is needed in this regard.

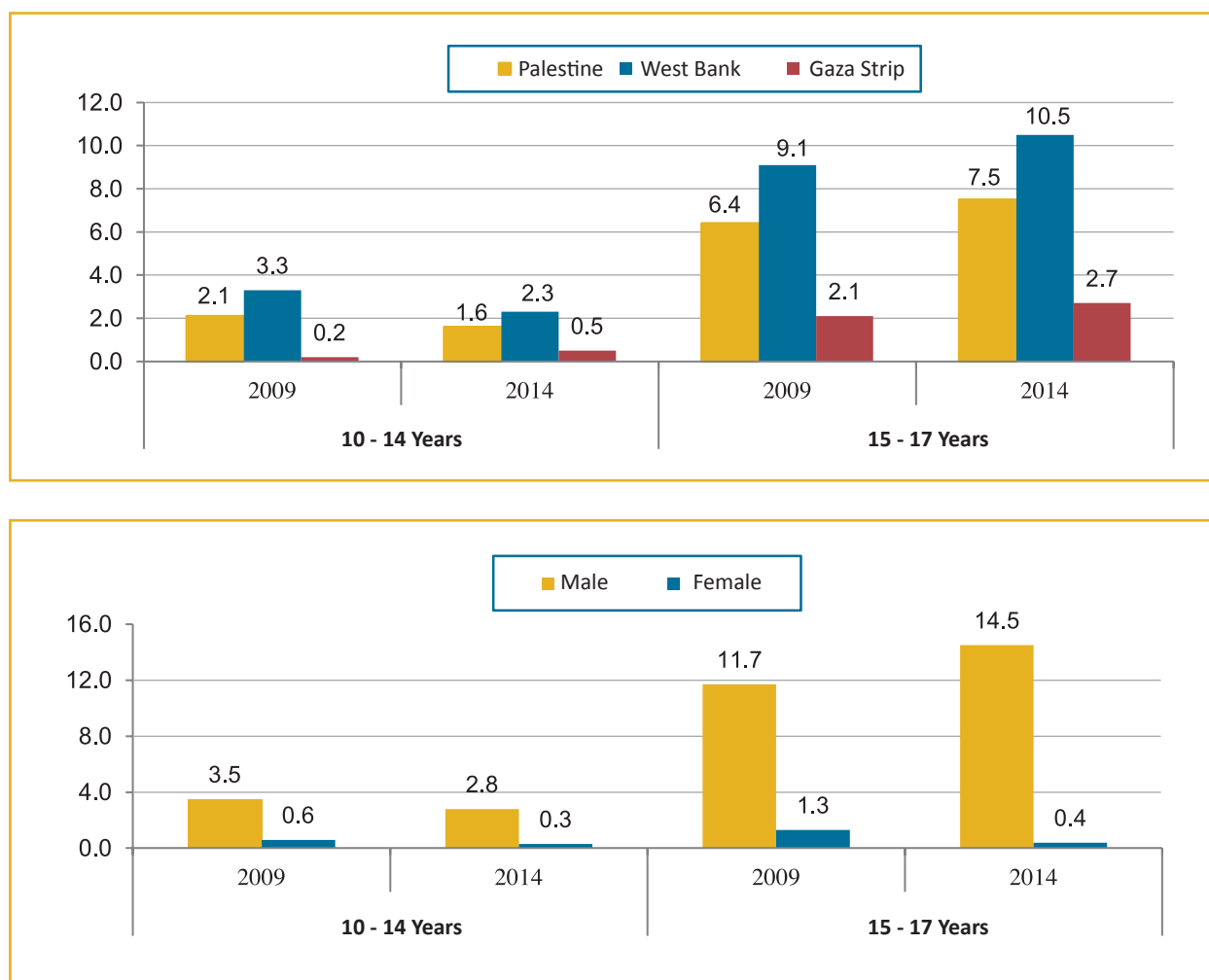
43 This article was amended under Article 4 of the Decree Law No. () of 2012 due to the amendment of the Palestinian Child Law No. 7 of 2004.

Working Children

Children work in different sectors including agriculture, fishing, trade, restaurants, hotels and others. The percentage of working children (10-14 years old) reached 1.6% in 2014 and was 2.1% in 2009. In the age group 15-17 years, it reached 7.5% in 2014 and was 6.4% in 2009. As for working children not enrolled in education, the rate for both age groups was 16.2% and 30.8% respectively in 2014. The percentage of children who work while still attending school was 1.3% for the age group 10-14 years in the same year and 2.8% for the age group 15-17 years.

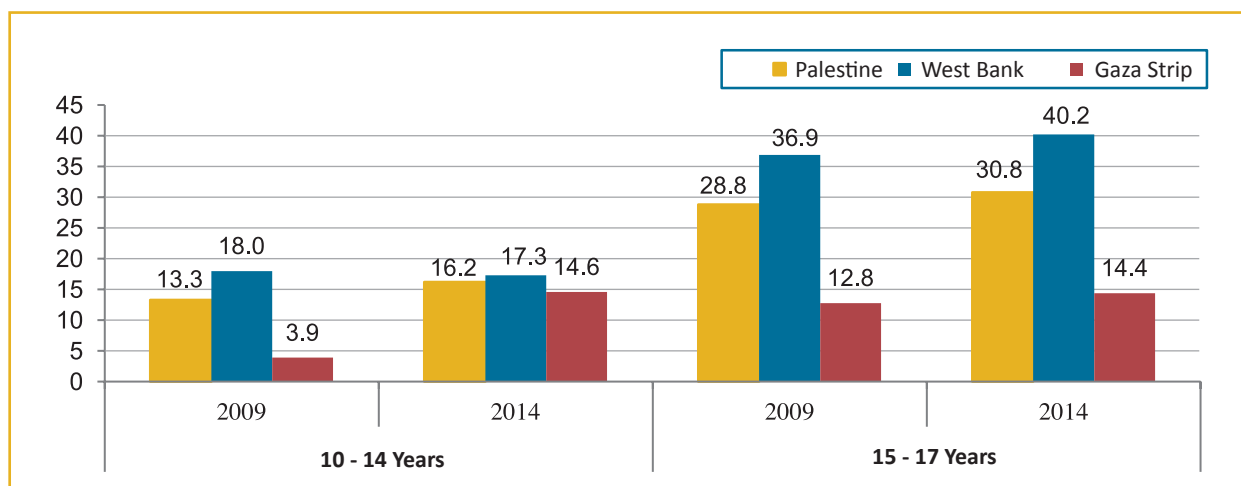


Figure 26: Percentage of Working Children 10-17 Years by Region, Age and Sex, 2009, 2014



Source: PCBS, 2015: Labor Force Survey Data, 2009 and 2014

Figure 27: Percentage of Working Children 10-17 Years who were not currently Attend in Education by Region 2009-2014

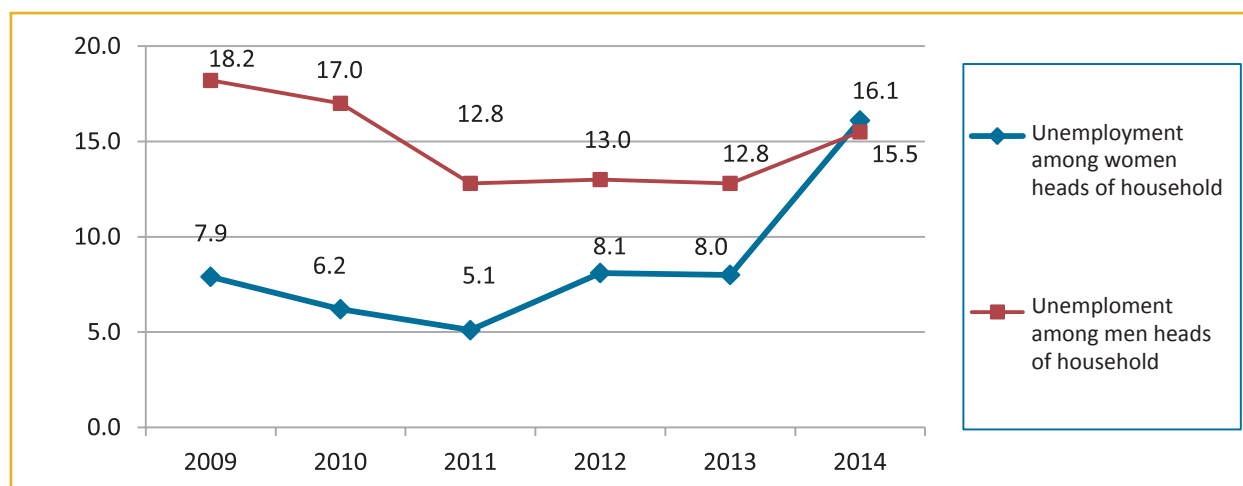


Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. Labor force survey data for 2009 and 2014

6.2 Unemployment

The unemployment rate in Palestine rose from 23.4% in 2013 to 26.9% in 2014. There is still a significant gap in unemployment rates for men and women, with 38.4% of women and 23.9% of men unemployed in 2014. Unemployment rate for women who head households was 16.1% in 2014 compared to 15.5% for men heads of households. A high unemployment rate is apparent in women with increased number of years of study, unlike among men. Data show that the participation of women in the labor force increased with increased years of schooling⁴⁴.

Figure 28: Unemployment Rate Among Persons Who Headed Households by Sex 2009-2014

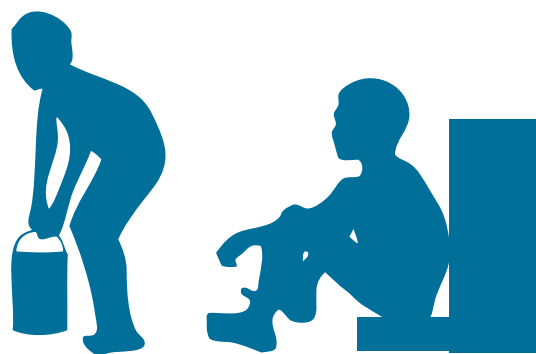


Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. Labor force survey data for 2009 and 2014

⁴⁴ Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. Labor force survey data for 2009 and 2014

6.3 Poverty

Poverty and deep poverty thresholds are determined based on the consumption patterns of households. An assessment of basic poverty looks at basic needs (food, clothing and housing) as well as health care, education, transportation and communication, personal care, furniture and other home accessories. deep poverty looks at basic needs only (food, clothing and housing). Poverty thresholds are calculated on the basis of family composition, family size and number of children. The reference household is one of five members (two adults and three children).⁴⁵



To define best indicators to measure poverty, PCBS reviewed the poverty methodology devised in 1997 and amended it as follows:

1. Analysis of household consumption based on price variances across regions (purchase power)
2. Calculation of poverty rates at individual and not only household levels in order to calculate the number of poor people
3. Use purchase power indicator to calculate poverty rates
4. In 2009 and 2010, there was a change in the composition of households in the Palestinian society. To reflect this change, instead of a reference household of two adults and four children, the reference household became one with two adults and three children (the most common household composition). Accordingly, 2010 was considered as a new base year for estimating poverty rates.
5. Methodological adjustments were applied to the time cycle 2004-2009 to enable comparisons and monitor change in poverty trends across time. It should be noted that the reference household for this period comprised 6 members (2 adults and 4 children).⁴⁶

Prevalence of poverty:

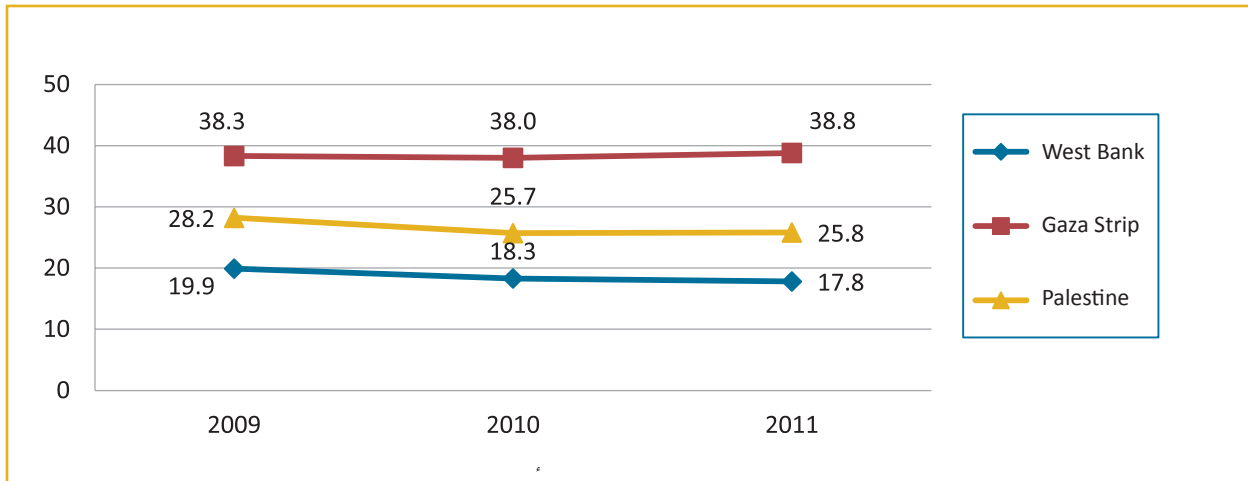
The percentage of poverty among individuals during 2011 based on consumption patterns was 25.8% (17.8% in the West Bank and 38.8% in Gaza Strip) compared to 25.7% in 2010 (18.3% in the West Bank and 38% in Gaza Strip). This means that the poverty rate in Gaza is twice that of the West Bank, but has not changed significantly compared to 2009 and 2010. When making comparisons, one should take into account errors in marginal statistical surveys and studies. The decline or rise in the percentage was very minimal and was not considered a significant change.



⁴⁵ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2011. Poverty in the Palestinian Territory. Main Findings Report, 2009-2010. Ramallah- Palestine

⁴⁶ PCBS, Press Statement of Poverty Prevalence, 2009, 2010

Figure 29: Poverty Rate Among Individuals 2009-2011



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2013. Expenditure and Consumption Survey 2009-2011.

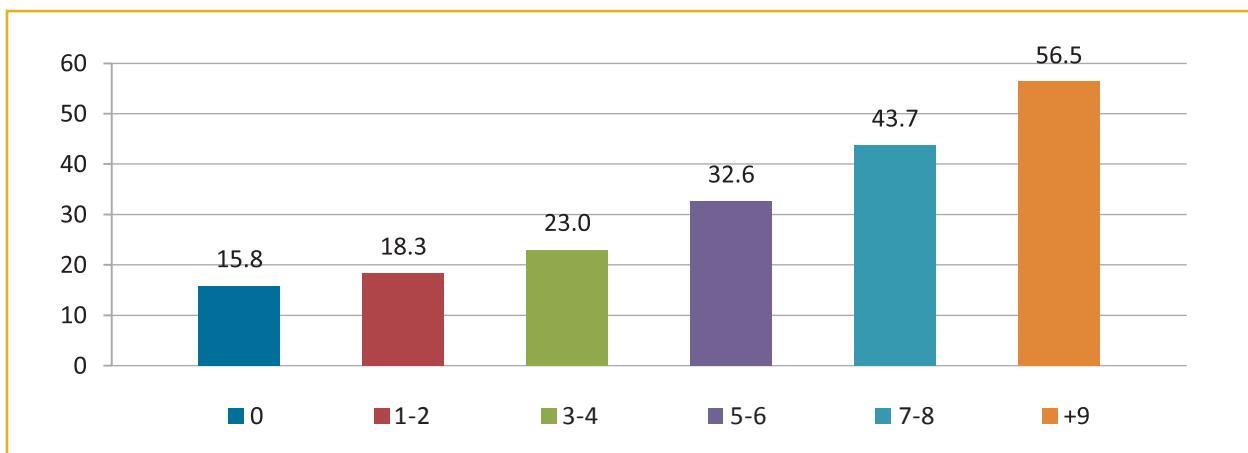
Poverty rates increase with increased size of households and number of children. Poverty rates of households with children reached 22.7% in 2011, compared to 13.2% for households without children. Accordingly, one of every five households with children lives in poverty. Poor households with children in Gaza Strip are double those in the West Bank. Poverty rates are also influenced by the main source of income. Individuals whose heads of households rely on agriculture as source of income represented the highest poverty rate (34.1%), followed by private sector workers (30.7%). The third highest rates was among households depending on money transfers (30.0%) whereas 20.4% of households depending on the public sector as source of income lived in poverty.



Poverty rates increase with increased number of children in households

A clear correlation is apparent between the number of children in households and poverty rates; households without children have poverty rates of 15.8% whereas this rate rises with the increase in the number of children.

Figure 30: Poverty Rates among Individuals according to Monthly Household Consumption Patters, 2011



Source: PCBS 2013, Database on Household Consumption and Spending 2011, unpublished data

Consumption by the richest was more than five times the consumption of the poor

Data show that consumption of the richest was more than five times the consumption of the poor in 2011. The consumption rate of the 10.0% richest people constituted 21.3% of the total consumption whereas consumption rate of the poorest 10.0% constituted only 4.4% of the total consumption.

Impact of Assistance on the Poor

Data in 2011 showed a decrease in poverty gap by 18.0% after receiving aid; assistance contributed to a reduction of poverty by 22.2% in Gaza Strip and 11.9% in the West Bank.⁴⁷

Poor children

Rate of poor children in 2011 increased mainly in Gaza Strip. Rate of poor children in 2011 was 27.2% (18.4% in the West Bank and 39.3% in Gaza Strip) This shows an increase in the rate of poor children by 1.1% compared to 2010. Deep poverty rates attained 26.9% while the rate of children suffering deep poverty fell by 4.8% between 2010 and 2011. Such rate was 14.6% in 2010 and fell to 13.9% in 2011. Inequality indicator in 2011 decreased slightly compared to 2010, falling from 41.0% in 2010 to 40.3% in 2011.

Over half a million poor children in 2011

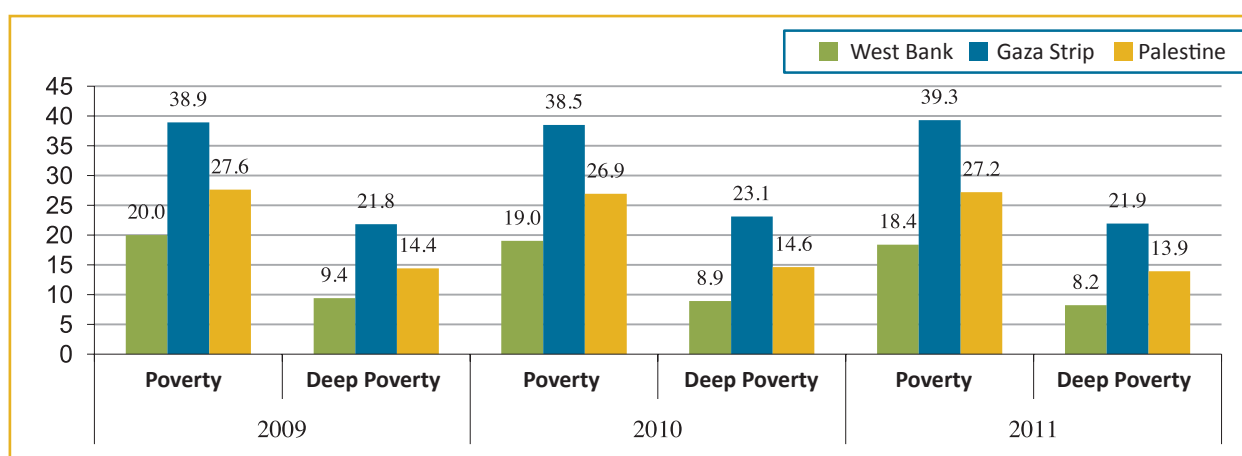
The number of poor children in 2011 was 546,000, which is an increase when compared to its 544,000 level of 2010.

Social Monetary Assistance

The Ministry of Social Affairs provides contingency monetary assistance to children and exemption of school donations for children registered in its programs. It also grants customs duties exemption for purchase of car for children with disabilities and provides health insurance for children registered for this purpose; it also provides in-kind assistance. UNRWA also offers refugee children in the West Bank with cash and food assistance. In some cases, MoSA also provides cash assistance to refugees. International organizations offer food and humanitarian aid but that is linked to the availability of support, as previously stated. There are also religious, charitable and social institutions like the Zakat Committee, which offer cash and in-kind assistance and food to needy families.

Databases of the Ministry of Social Affairs indicate that it provided 71,455 children in the West Bank and 178,284 children in Gaza Strip with cash assistance in 2014⁴⁸. The number of children with chronic diseases receiving cash assistance was 5,338 in the West Bank and 8,889 in Gaza Strip. Moreover, 4,924 children with disabilities in the West Bank receive cash assistance and 7,462 other in Gaza Strip.

Figure 31: Percentage of Poor Children by Region 2009-2011



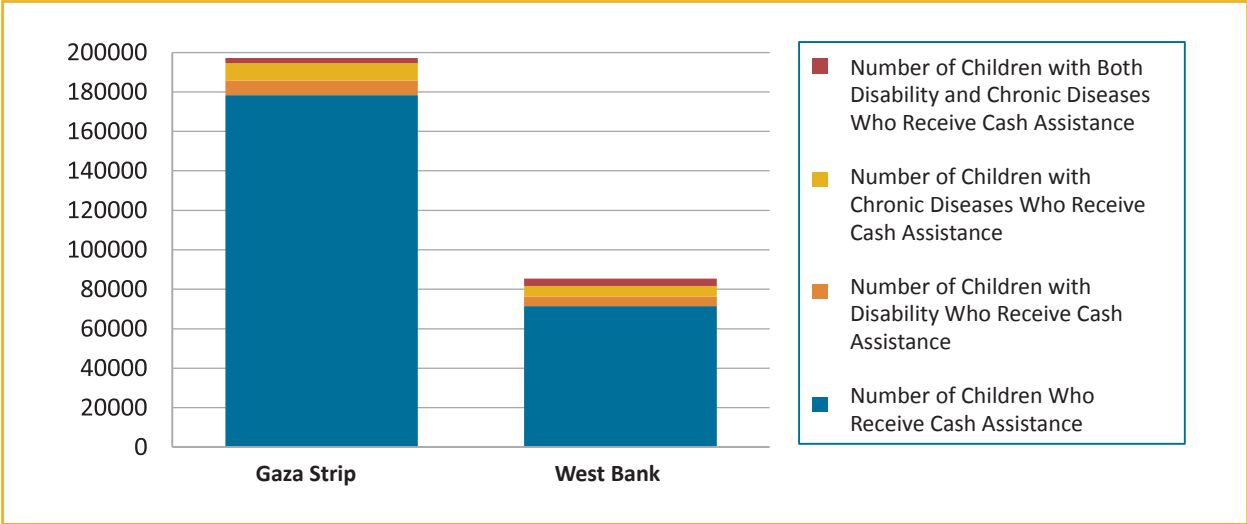
Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2013. Expenditure and Consumption Survey database 2011, (unpublished data..)

47 PCBS, Poverty in the Palestinian Territory, 2010-2011.

48 MoSA, Monetary Assistance Program, 2014.

The number of children of social hardship households receiving exemption of school fees attained 29,588 in the West Bank while the number of children of the same category receiving food assistance was 38,420 in the West Bank and the number of children covered by health insurance was 32,665 while families of 3,745 children received contingency assistance in the West Bank. Data was not available for the Gaza Strip.

Figure 32: Number of Children Receiving Social Assistance by Region and Health Status, 2014



Source, MoSA, 2014

6.4 Children in Conflict with the Law ⁴⁹

Children and juveniles form a fundamental part of the human resources of our people. In the context of the adverse changes and conditions experienced in Palestine, there is an urgent need to motivate juveniles to play a positive role in the building of the state. It is no exaggeration to say that the future of our people depends to a large extent on the investment made in children and juveniles in terms of cultural, educational, social, economic and psychological services. Numerous studies have indicated that juvenile delinquency as a social phenomenon is a growing problem in Palestine. Probation reports make clear that concerted efforts are required at national and local levels to reduce child delinquency.⁵⁰

Number of Juevenile Offenders 50

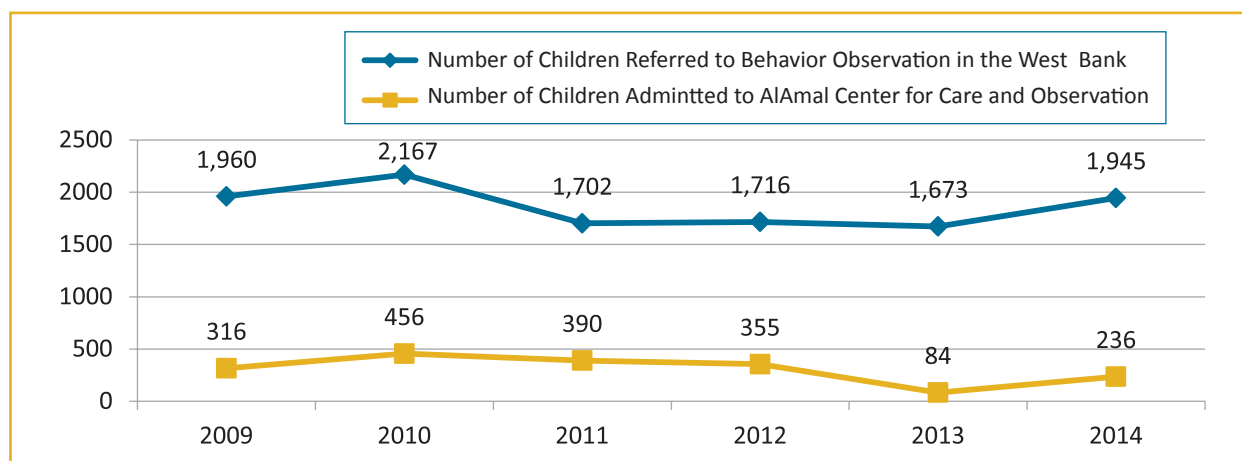
Since 2009, children who are found guilty of offences have been referred for rehabilitation. The numbers of children charged with offenses increases with age and is higher for males than females. Offenses relate to theft, vandalism and assault and offenders most often come from families with poor economic circumstances, followed by families with a middle income and large families. The highest percentage of offenders was from Ramallah and Al-Bireh. The influence of other offenders and difficulties in the home situation contributed to delinquency: around half of offenders are school students. Not sure that all cases reach a verdict , but for those got a verdict, the sentences ranged from fines, to admission to a rehabilitation center or other supervised facility, to imprisonment. In some cases, an acquittal was issued or the charges were dropped on a guarantee of good behavior. In most cases offenders were placed under supervision, with the imposition of fines or admission to a rehabilitation center less common outcomes.

⁴⁹ Ministry of Social Affairs - Department of Social Defense.
⁵⁰ Ministry of Social Affairs - Annual Report of the Department of Social Defense in 2010 .

Juvenile offenders can be stigmatized, resulting in difficulties reintegrating into school and the community. Although, these children got medical checks and medication, but this is not done on a regular basis and they are not followed up academically or receive regular education, it is required to rehabilitation and to be integrated in the community.

Children who face charges remain in special rooms in their confinement center without any rehabilitation process before returning to their homes, leaving their issues to be addressed by the police or the prosecution. In other cases, a child is placed in a rehabilitation center while awaiting a verdict.

Figure 33: Number of Children Admitted to AL-Amal Rehabilitation Center for Observation and Social Care in the West Bank 2009-2014



Source: MoSA, 2014.

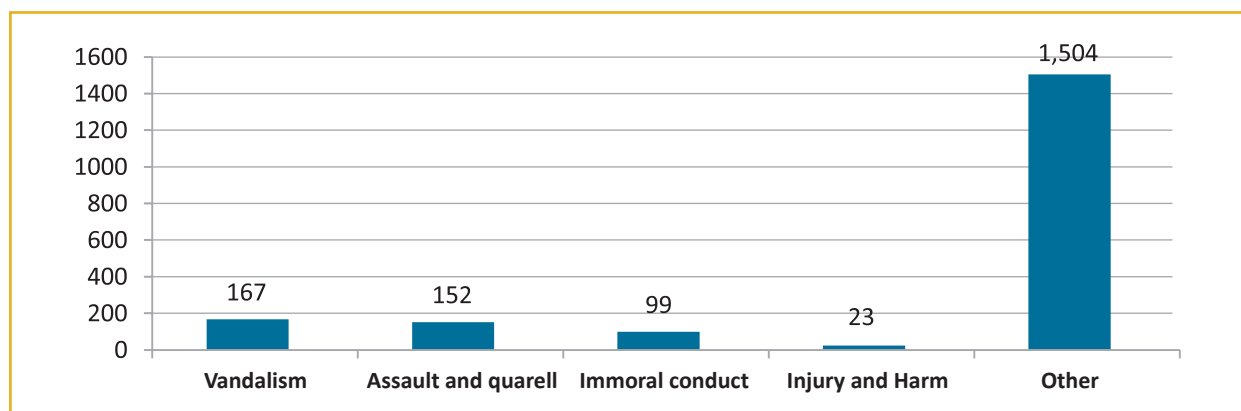
Health Care and Social Services

Children receive medical checkups in the child care centers and receive medicines in the form of social assistance depending on their needs, as reported by Dar Alamal for Social Care and Observation. All such assistance received by child care centers comprise mostly drugs.

Number of Children, Geographical Distribution and Motives for Delinquency

1,945 children were admitted to behavior surveillance in the West Bank in 2014, including 1,917 males and 28 females. The highest rates were in Qalqilia (312 cases), followed by Ramallah and Nablus and Tulkarem (270, 263 and 231 respectively). Most cases were male (98.6%) and the female cases represented 1.4%.⁵¹

Figure 34: Number of Children in Conflict with the Law by Type of Offense, 2014*



* others include substance/ drug use and other offenses

Source: Ministry of Social Affairs, 2014

51 Ministry of Social Affairs, Directorate General for Family Affairs, Department of Child Protection – Statistics 2014

Personnel Certified to Work with Children

Currently none of the personnel working with children in conflict with the law are licensed or specialized in this field. In Palestine, there is no legislation governing the practice of this profession. There are fourteen counselors who observe, evaluate and monitor young offenders and ensure that they receive services, support and guidance. These observers also accompany juveniles to court during a trial.



6.5 Violence, Abuse and Neglect⁵²

Information on the neglect, emotional or physical abuse or economic exploitation of children is limited to what is reported, but it can be assumed that hundreds of incidents occur which remain unreported.

Children with disabilities or who suffer from chronic illnesses are particularly vulnerable to emotional abuse or neglect. All reported cases are handled to provide protection either within the families or in a shelter home. Most cases are classified as neglect, abuse and economic exploitation; these issues are especially common in urban areas. Around 82% of cases involve the immediate family and 40% of these children are not enrolled in the educational system. Most protection measures are implemented within the family rather than in an institution.

The government and other parties have undertaken a number of initiatives to protect children. A family protection unit has been established within the police force and committees have been formed within the Ministry of Health. A national plan of action for the protection of children is being implemented and child protection networks put in place. In addition, standards are being set for the protection of children in day care centers and schools



Child Protection Mechanisms in Palestine

Child protection counselors study and evaluate the circumstances in which children live and evaluate threats in their environment. They draft an intervention plan for protecting the child which engages social, psychological, educational and legal services provided by relevant institutions. The General Administration for Family Affairs employs a corps of fifteen child protection counselors.

The 2013 action plan of the Ministry of Social Affairs put eight networks in operation to protect children in Jenin, Nablus, Ramallah, Salfit, Hebron, Qalqilya, Bethlehem and Jericho. The Ministry plans to create a national network to organize and integrate services and official strategies for the protection and care of children exposed to violence in all its forms and ensure optimal use of the available services by all partners and the local community in the child's best interests. Protection and care for children will be achieved through building a referral system and the provision of networking and supervision by the Ministry of Social Affairs. The Ministry plans to establish four additional protection networks for children in Jerusalem, Tulkarm, Tubas and Yatta. Subsequently, all governorates will be served by such networks and the national referral and monitoring system will be developed to comply with the Palestinian Child Law, as amended.

⁵² Ministry of Social Affairs, Directorate General for Family Affairs, Department of Child Protection – Statistics 2014

Child Protection Centers

The Ministry of Social Affairs operates two safe houses for children:

1. A center in Beitunia serves boys aged 5-18 who are referred by child protection counselors or the police and who require emergency and temporary protection. In 2014 the center received 61 children and had five employees.
2. A center in Bethlehem serves girls referred by child protection counselors or the police. In 2014, the center received 36 girls and had eleven employees.

1000 children who lost one of their parents live away from the living parent; they are mostly children who lost their mothers. This is an indication to the importance of the role of the mother in the family. An alarming sign is that some families place their children in orphanage because they cannot support them financially. Assistance is provided to orphan children by the Ministry of Social Affairs. The number of orphan children forms received until 31 December 2014 was as follows:

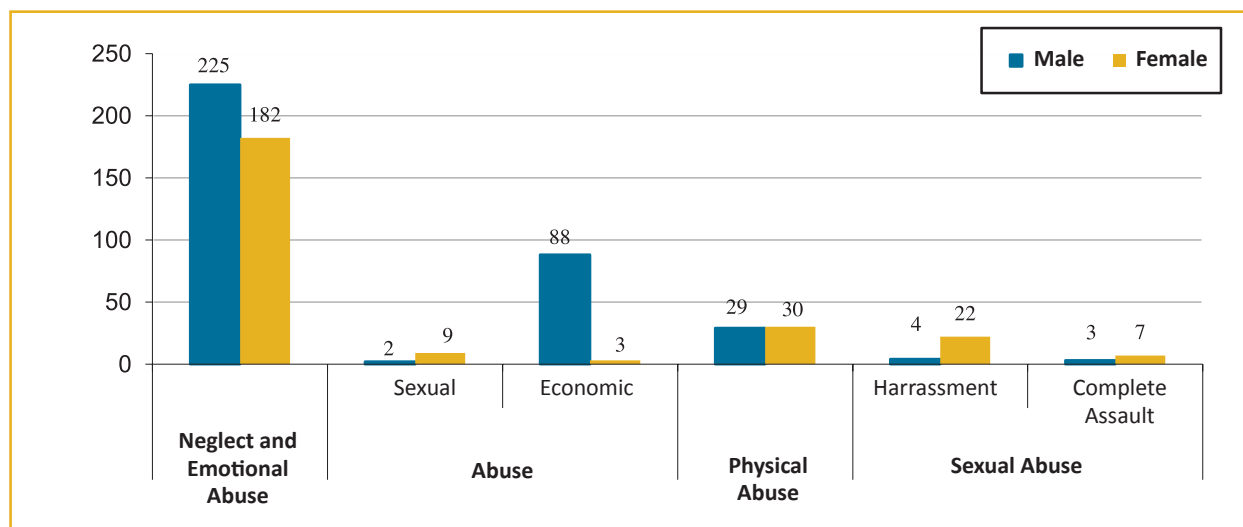
Table 7 : Number of Orphans Registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs, 2014

| | Both parents deceased | Only Father alive and living in the same dwelling | Only father alive and not living in the same dwelling | Only Mother alive and living in the same dwelling | Only Mother alive and not living in the same dwelling | Not Specified/ known |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------------|
| Total registered | 356 | 1411 | 258 | 15752 | 702 | 270 |
| Of which Beneficiaries | 281 | 1096 | 176 | 10521 | 515 | 213 |
| Registered/ Gaza Strip | 255 | 1060 | 144 | 9305 | 439 | 66 |
| Of which Beneficiaries | 218 | 945 | 129 | 7483 | 374 | 59 |
| Registered/ West Bank | 101 | 351 | 114 | 6447 | 263 | 204 |
| Of which Beneficiaries | 63 | 151 | 47 | 3038 | 141 | 154 |

Source: MoSA, 2014



Figure 35: Number of Cases of Violence, Abuse and Negligence against Children Reported by Type of Abuse and Sex, 2014

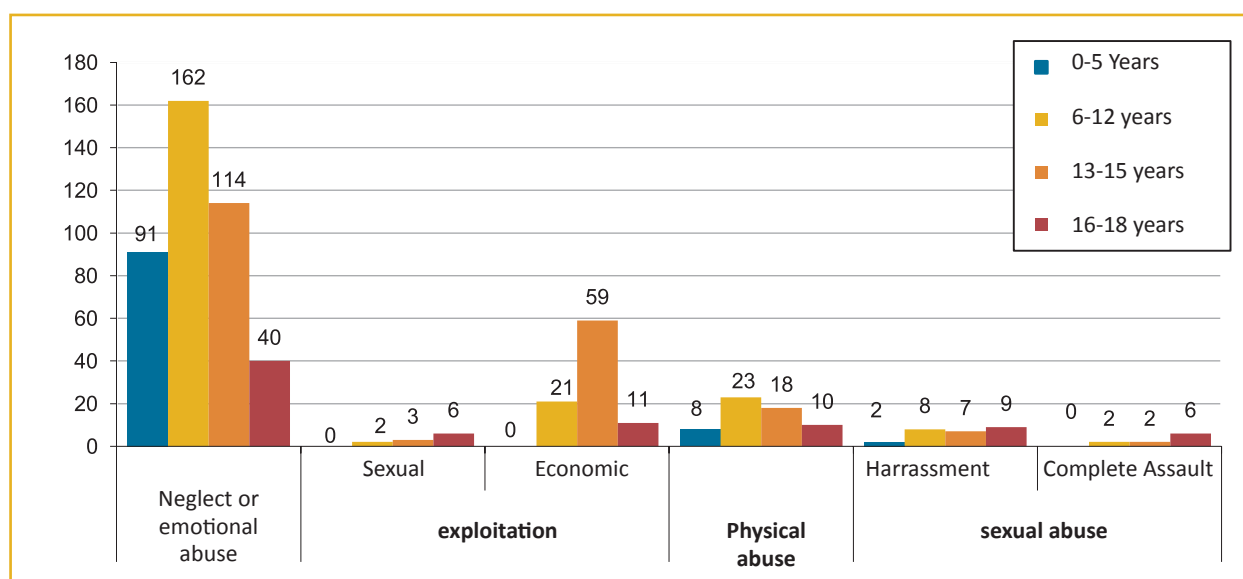


Source, MoSA, 2014

According to Violence Survey data in the Palestinian society for the year 2011, most physical and psychological violence to children was from parents and teachers, by the father more than the mother, and among males more than females, and psychological abuse is more common than physical abuse⁵³. The figure below shows that economic exploitation rises at the age of 12 years and therefore parents and children under the age of twelve need to be educated about child labor.

In some cases children are sexually exploited for economic gain, which means they are sexually exploited; whereas sexual abuse, it involves harassment in addition to full assault against of the child will, which causes emotional, physical and psychological harm.

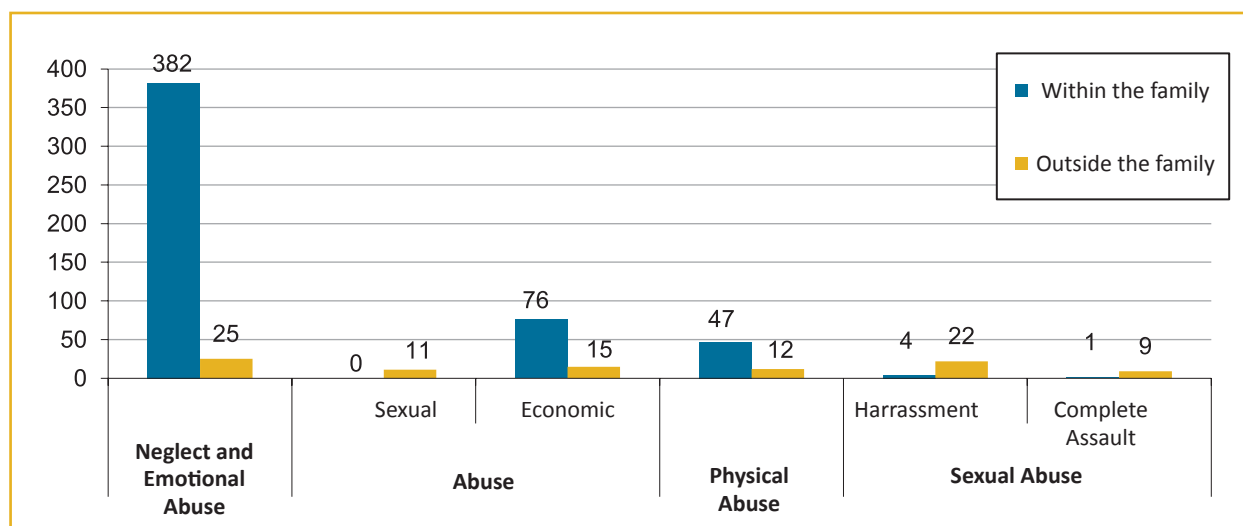
Figure 36: Number of Reported Cases of Violence, Abuse and Neglect Against Children by Type of Abuse and Age, 2014



Source: Ministry of Social Affairs. Department of Family Protection 2014.

⁵³ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. Survey of violence in Palestinian society, 2011. Report of main results.

Figure 37: Number of Cases of Violence, Abuse and Neglect of Children Reported by Type and Source of Abuse, 2014



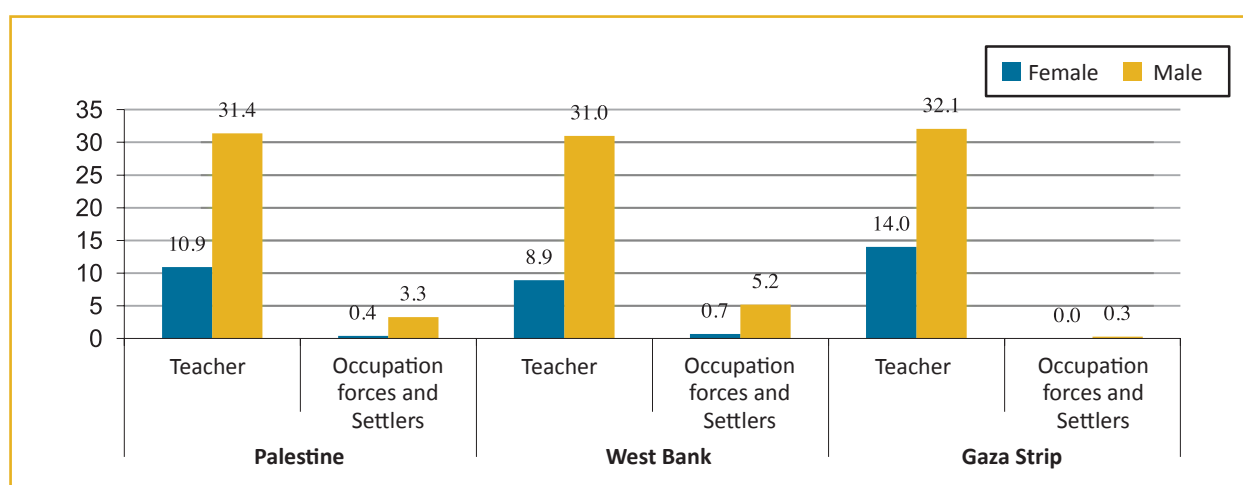
Source: Ministry of Social Affairs. Department of Family Protection 2014

According to the previous figure, it is important to raise awareness of children and families of child protection. Most cases of violence against children are perpetrated by family members and are difficult to control as it is not easy to access the internal environment of the home. As most cases of neglect and emotional abuse occur among children below the age of 12, the role of teachers, counselors, doctors and health workers in hospitals, maternity and child centers is vital in terms of observing children and intervening when necessary to protect them as per applicable national mechanisms.

Almost one in every five children in Palestine has experienced violence at the hands of teachers and one

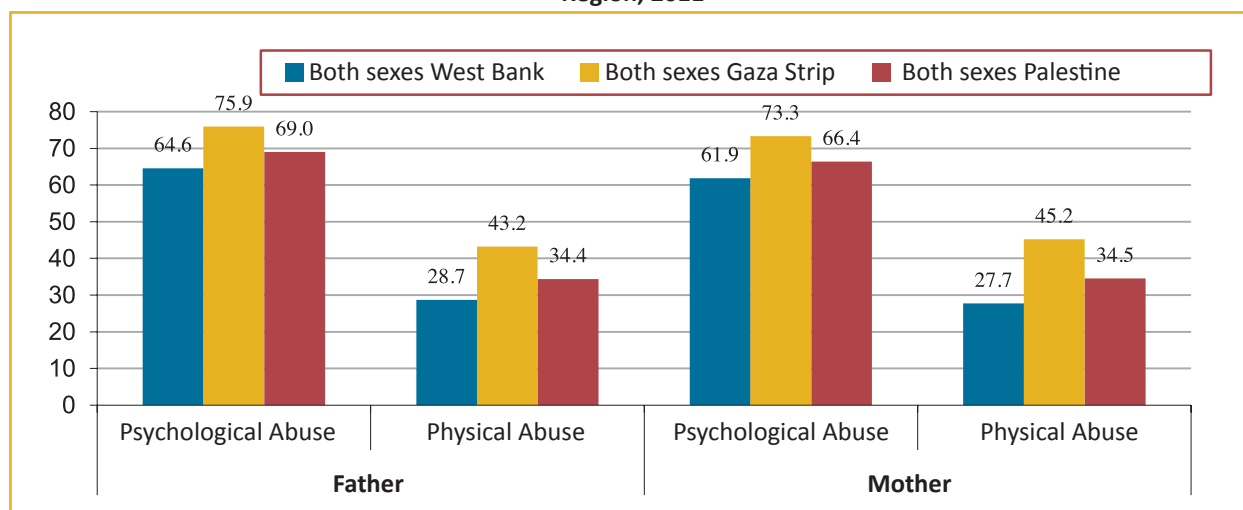
in every fifty children had been experienced violence by Israeli occupation forces and settlers, while almost all children exposed to this type of violence. In addition, 17 out of every 25 children in Palestine have been subjected to psychological violence by a parent and 7 in every 20 children has been subjected to physical violence by a parent. These figures were higher in Gaza Strip than in the West Bank and rates were higher for males than females. These results expose the importance of raising the awareness of parents of acceptable forms of discipline for children as well as the need for government intervention to improve the economic and social conditions which impact the psychological status of parents, children and teachers.

Figure 38: Percentage of Children Aged 12-17 Years Exposed to Physical Violence During the Previous 12 Months Prior to the Survey by Region, Sex and Aggressor, 2011



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2012. Violence Survey in Palestinian Society, 2011. Main Findings. Ramallah - Palestine

Figure 39: Percentage of Children Aged 12-17 Years Subjected to Violence by a Parent by Type of Violence and Region, 2011



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2012. Violence Survey in Palestinian Society, 2011.

6.6 Statistical Indicators of Children in Foster Families and Children Receiving Inadequate Family Care

Palestinian Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey data show that in 2014, 2.3% of children aged 0-17 years lost either one of their parents and that 2.1% of children aged 0-17 years live with their mothers while their fathers are alive in Gaza Strip, compared to 1.5% in the West Bank. Percentage of children living with their fathers and their mothers are alive reached 1.0% in Gaza Strip and 0.5% in the West Bank.

Table 8: Percentage of Orphan Children Aged 0-17 years in Palestine by region and sex, 2014

| Region and Sex | | One or both parents deceased | Living with either parent Deceased mother | Living with the Father | | Living with the Mother | |
|----------------|------------|------------------------------|--|------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| | | | | Mother alive | Mother deceased | Father alive | Father deceased |
| Total | | 2.3 | 0.6 | 0.4 | 0.7 | 1.7 | 1.7 |
| Region | West Bank | 2.0 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.5 | 1.6 | 1.5 |
| | Gaza Strip | 2.6 | 0.9 | 0.6 | 1.0 | 1.8 | 2.1 |
| Sex | Males | 2.2 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.7 | 1.6 | 1.6 |
| | Female | 2.4 | 0.8 | 0.4 | 0.7 | 1.8 | 1.9 |

Source: PCBS 2015, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, 2014 (unpublished data).

This signals the importance of the role of mothers in the household; it is alarming to note that some families place children in orphanages because they cannot support them financially.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) branch of the Red Crescent provided 3,212 orphaned children with financial support in 2014, with the highest rate of sponsored children in Hebron and the lowest in Salfeet.

Table 9: Number of Children Sponsored by the UAE Red Crescent by Governorate, 2014

| Governorate | No of Children | Governorate | No of Children |
|-------------|----------------|-------------|----------------|
| Jericho | 131 | Nablus | 273 |
| Hebron | 1099 | Yatta | 231 |
| Jerusalem | 209 | Salfeet | 28 |
| Bethlehem | 423 | Toubas | 78 |
| Jenin | 194 | Tulkarem | 321 |
| Ramallah | 170 | Qalqilia | 55 |

Source: MoSA, 2014

Number of fostered children in 2014 was 8 children compared to 7 children in 2010 and 4 children in 2009 and 2011 and one child in 2012.

Data on Foster Families

1. Number of applicants 13 families
2. Number of approved applications 7 families
3. No of rejected applications 2 families
4. Number of fostering families 7 families
5. Foster families per locality (5 in urban centers) (2 in rural areas)
6. No of fostered children is 8 knowing that one family fostered twins
7. Sex of fostered children: 6 male and 2 female.

6.7 Children with Disabilities

Palestinian laws and the Palestinian constitution emphasize the principle of non-discrimination and address the subject of disability. The Palestinian Ministry of Health provides the same health services to children with disabilities as to other children and provides medical checkups and preventive tests prior to marriage and for the child after birth, including thyroid gland tests and PKU, and follows up on children whose test results are problematic. It does not provide rehabilitation services for children with disabilities, although it sometimes provides support through the school health program with assistive devices for children with disabilities. Further amendments are required to the Public Health Law to specify children with disabilities and to include more preventive examinations within the health system. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education intends to promote inclusive education that would integrate



children with disabilities (mobility, hearing/auditory, visual and simple and moderate mental disabilities), where possible into the regular education system, with adaptations to the school environment as needed and the provision of some assistive devices. The Ministry of Social Affairs is also willing to provide social services (in-kind and cash, assistance, assistive devices, and some physical rehabilitation of homes, etc.) for people with disabilities, including children. It is also developing a disability card system and a case management system for children with disabilities.

The 2011 survey on individuals with disabilities indicated that 1.5% of children aged 0-17 years were disabled, with a higher incidence among males (1.8%) than females (1.3%).⁵⁴ The most common disabilities were physical/mobility, followed by slow learning, remembering and concentration. The survey indicated that 37.6% of children with disabilities aged 15 years and over had

never enrolled in education; 53.1% were illiterate and 33.8% had dropped out of school. This indicates that at least 40% of children who suffer from disabilities were not enrolled in the education system, and there is a need to address this issue and provide the necessary services to facilitate their inclusion within the educational system. In general there has been an increase in the number of students with disabilities enrolled in the formal education system over recent years, which may be due to an increase in awareness among both service providers and society. There were no specific procedures or mechanisms for the diagnosis of children who suffer from mild mental disabilities or learning difficulties.⁵⁵ It is possible that the number of children enrolled in the formal education system who suffer from total audio or visual disabilities is relatively low due to the availability of specialized centers and schools for these students.



Children with Disabilities in Ministry of Social Affairs Centers and Licensed Community Centers

The Ministry of Social Affairs has dedicated considerable effort to support children with disabilities through the development of programs, policies and regulations such as the Disability Law, the amended Palestinian Child Law, the disability card and the ministerial policy paper for the case management of children with disabilities. To operate this system, the current reality should be analyzed to determine the number of qualified staff required and to develop an action plan to develop and maintain human resources and capacities in this area. Currently, there are nine programs targeting children with disabilities within the Ministry, and nine policies and legislative documents.

The Ministry of Education collects data on children with disabilities in licensed community centers as shown in the following table:

Table 10 : Number of Children with Disabilities in Community Centers Licensed by the Ministry of Education 2012

| Sex | Visual disability | | Hearing disability | Mental disability | Total |
|--------|-------------------|-------|--------------------|-------------------|-------|
| | Partial | Total | | | |
| Male | 83 | 41 | 295 | 848 | 1267 |
| Female | 77 | 43 | 269 | 440 | 829 |
| Total | 160 | 84 | 564 | 1288 | 2096 |

Source: General Administration for educational counseling - Inclusive Education Department, July 2013.

⁵⁴ Males are genetically more vulnerable to disability and morbidity of diseases.

⁵⁵ Adjustments in education and evaluation of students with special needs - January 2009, Ministry of Education.

Distribution of Disabilities in West Bank Directorates for the Academic Year 2011/2012

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education established the Department of Special Education and Inclusive Education in 1997 to serve the needs of children with disabilities. However, the education system is not yet equipped to receive children with severe mental disabilities. The disability survey indicated that 23,825 children in the 6-17 age group had disabilities (15,780 children in the West Bank). Of these, 5,019 were enrolled in schools in public schools in the West Bank, 2,096 in private schools and 163 attended centers run by the Ministry of Social Affairs. In Gaza Strip, there were 8,045 children with disabilities who fell within the ages for compulsory education; 3,816 (47%) were enrolled in public schools. There is no unified national system for monitoring children in all other private and civil sector institutions.

Table 11 : Percentage Distribution of Children Aged 6-17 Years with Disabilities by Region and Sex, 2011

| Indicator | Sex | | Region | | Palestine |
|---|--------|--------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| | Male | Female | West Bank | Gaza Strip | |
| Percentage of children with disabilities (6-17 years) | 59.1 | 40.9 | 66.2 | 33.8 | 100 |
| (Number of children with disabilities (6-17 years) | 14,072 | 9,753 | 15,780 | 8,045 | 23,825 |

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. Database of Disabled Individuals Survey, 2011, (unpublished data). Ramallah-Palestine.

Table 12: Percentage of Children 6-17 Years with Disabilities who are Integrated into Formal Education by Region, 2011

| Indicator | Region | | Palestine |
|---|-----------|------------|-----------|
| | West Bank | Gaza Strip | |
| Percentage of children with disabilities who are integrated into formal education of the total number of school aged children with disabilities | 31.8 | 37.5 | 33.7 |
| Number of children who are integrated into formal education | 5,019 | 3,013 | 8,032 |

Source: Ministry of Education, 2012. Statistical Yearbook of the West Bank and Gaza.

It is necessary to identify the number of children with disabilities enrolled in special institutions per type of disability and explore the causes of their lack of integration into the educational system where possible in order to address this issue and identify children with disabilities who lack access to special education services in all sectors

Status of MoSA Services to Children with Disabilities ⁵⁶

MoSA Directorate General for Disabled Affairs is tasked with responsibilities specified in national laws and legislation and regulations applicable in MoSA. It represents the Ministry in national efforts on the affairs of disabled people. For this purpose, Law No 4 on the Rights of the Disabled entrusted MoSA with the task of supervising national public and private institutions working with disabled people and provide direct services to the disabled. As a result, MoSA started applying a number of procedures to fulfill this task namely the following interventions in 2014:

⁵⁶ MoSA, Directorate General For Disabled Affairs, 2014.

MoSA provides protection and care services to the disabled via the following centers:

Shiekh Khalifa Center

The Center provides vocational training to people with motor disability and dyslexia of both genders to the age group (15-35 years); they are trained to certain professions including aluminum works, carpentry, electronics, sewing, IT, and embroidery. The center served 17 children in 2014.

Casablanca Center

It provides shelter and physiotherapy and life skills to children with mental disabilities targeting male children aged 5-11 years and females of 5-15 years. 35 children benefited from such services in 2014.

Shiekha Fatima Center

It provides vocational training to disabled people of both genders for the age group (15-35 years) who receive training on aluminum works, carpentry, hairdressing, computer, maintenance, office and cellular phones. In 2014, this Center did not target any disabled child.

Alaiyay School

It provides academic services to visually impaired male students aged (6-15 years) and mobility counselling and life skills teaching. 10 students benefited from the school in 2014.

Municipal Support Project

This project aims to integrate the question of children with disabilities in the core responsibilities of municipalities in Jericho, Yatta, Alsumou', Idhna, Halhoul and Beit Fajar. In support of these centers, MoSA purchases services for children with disabilities and refers 130 disabled children to these centers. Their services include mainly rehabilitation of children with severe motor disabilities, moderate to minor mental disability. These centers apply the Move Method in learning and life skills, which aims to rehabilitate children with disability to speak, move, stand up and perform life skills.

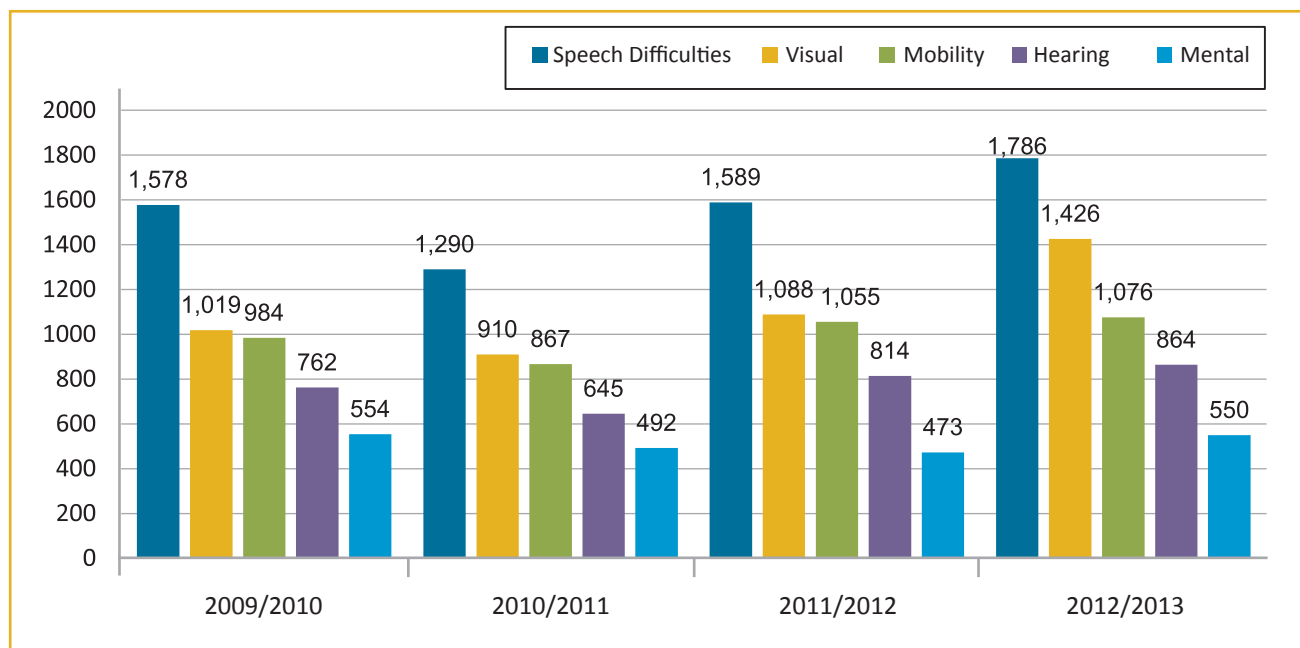
Support tools

As part of its emergency programs, MoSA offers support tools to children with disability; in 2014, with funding from the Japanese Government, 100 wheel chairs were distributed to centers providing services to children with motor disability.

Customs Exemptions

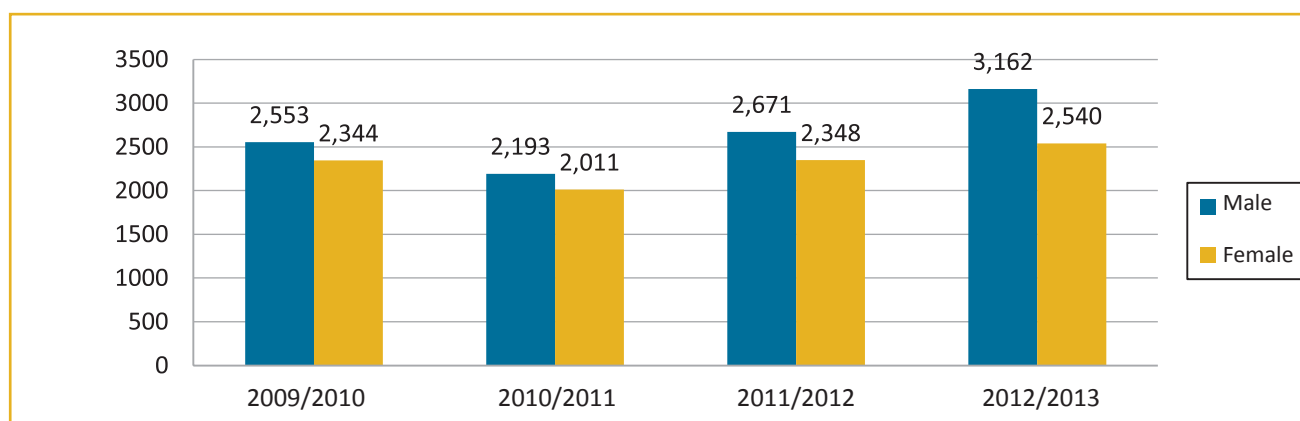
Executed regulation issued by Ministerial Council in 2006 and the amended regulation No (4) for the year 2010 exempts people with mobility disabilities from customs duties [on cars]; the number of children benefiting from this exemption in 2014 was 290 children with disabilities, knowing that either one of the parents drive on behalf of his/her children.

Figure 40: Distribution of Children with Disabilities in Educational Directorates in the West Bank by Type of Disability and Year



Source: Ministry of Education and Higher Education, 2013, Statistical Yearbook for the academic year 2012/2013, Ramallah- Palestine

Figure 41: Distribution of Children with Disabilities in Educational Directorates in the West Bank by Type of Disability and Year



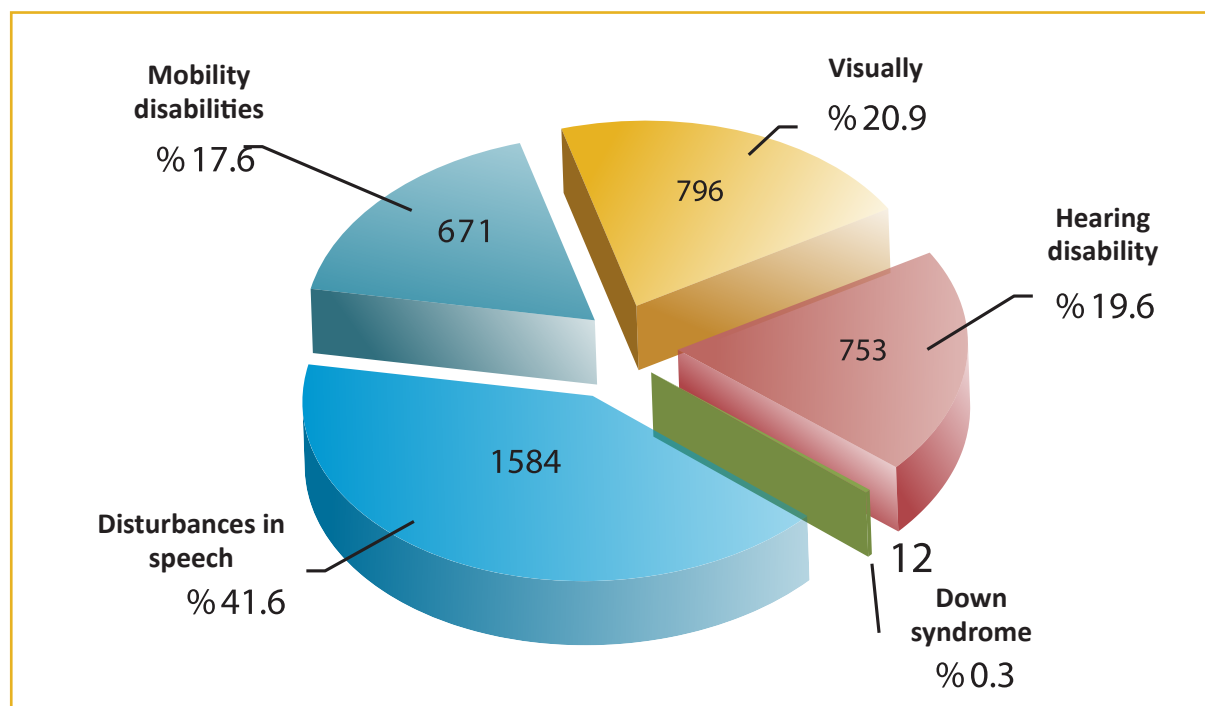
Source: Ministry of Education and Higher Education, 2013, Statistical Yearbook for the academic year 2012/2013, Ramallah - Palestine

The rate of enrollment of students with disabilities in education in the West Bank has remained relatively stable over the past four years (4,897 in 2009/2010 to 5,702 in 2012/2013). As children with severe mental disabilities are not integrated into the educational system and educational resources rooms serve students only until fourth grade, children who suffer from moderate to severe mental disability are effectively excluded from the educational system due to lack of capacity and financial and specialized human resources required to deal with them.

In Gaza Strip, 3,816 students with disabilities were integrated into public schools in 2012/2013. Disabilities were most frequently speech impediments (41.6%), followed by visual impairments (20.9%), hearing loss (19.6%), physical/motor disabilities (17.6%), and Down's Syndrome (0.3%).⁵⁷

57 Statistical Yearbook. General Administration for Educational Planning. Ministry of Education and Higher Education. Gaza 2012-2013

Figure 42: Number of Students with Disabilities Integrated Into Government Schools in Gaza by Type of Disability 2012



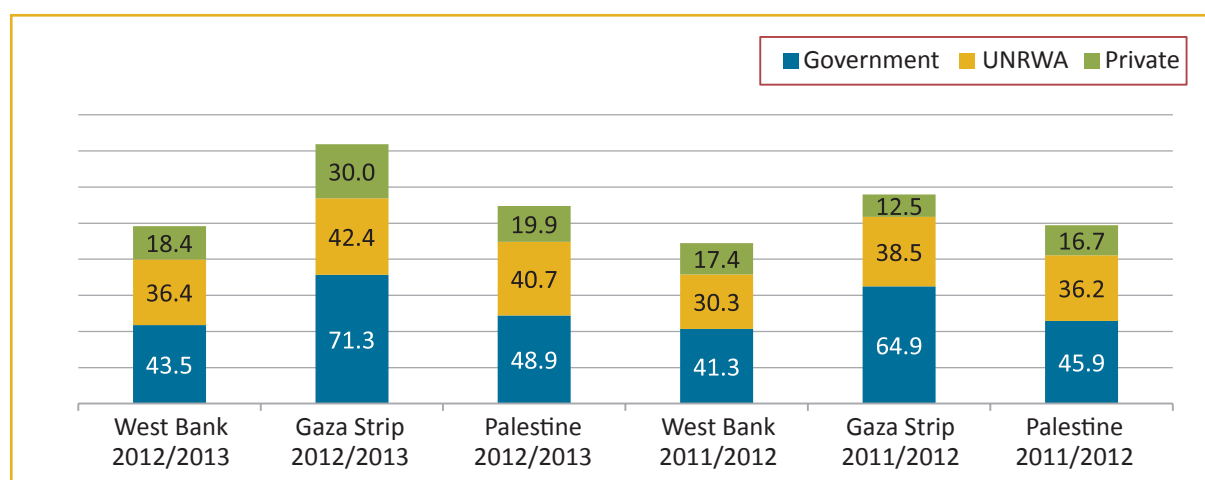
Source: Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Statistical Yearbook. General Administration for Educational Planning. Gaza 2012-2013.

The number of students with disabilities integrated into public education in Gaza doubled from 1,694 students in 2007 to 3,816 students in 2012. There are 89 special education employees.

Accessibility and Adaptations for Children with Disabilities in Schools

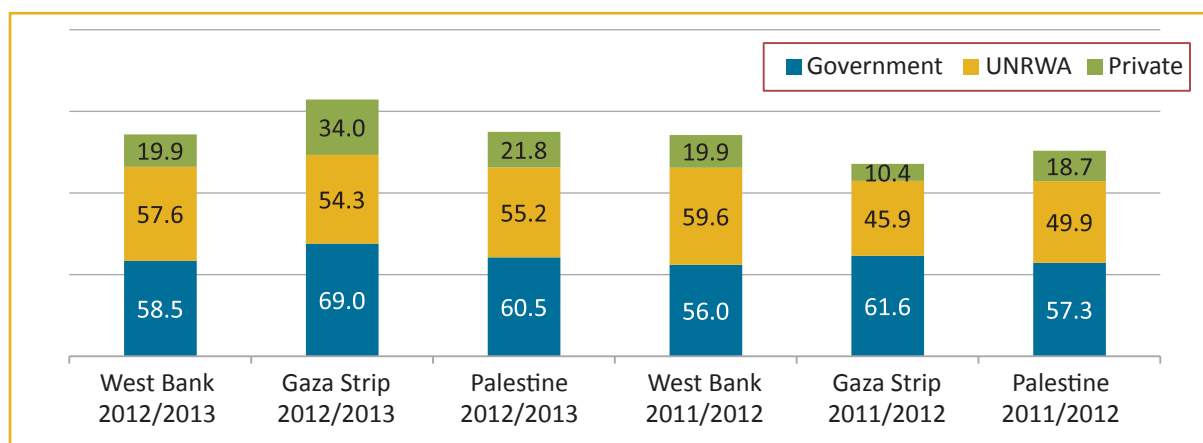
54.6% of schools in the West Bank and Gaza have adaptations for students with disabilities in terms of appropriate toilets and 44.0% have ramps. More public and UNRWA schools than private schools have these adaptations. Although half of the schools have appropriate toilets and ramps for children with motor disabilities, there are other types of disabilities that require special adaptations that are not available in schools. These include special transportation and classroom accessibility.

Figure 43: Percentage of Schools with Ramps 2011/2012 – 2012/2013



Source: Ministry of Education 2014, Statistics Year Book, Academic Year 2012/2013 .

**Figure 44: Percentage of Schools where Accessible Toilets are Available for Children with Disabilities
2011/2012– 2012/2013**



Source: Ministry of Education 2014, Statistics Year Book, Academic Year 2012/2013 .

While the Ministry of Education issued a decision to adapt all new schools for children with disabilities over seven years ago, and although the legal framework exists, with a special program on inclusive education since 1997, it is still necessary to better serve children with mental disabilities. A national strategy is needed for inclusive education to identify children with disabilities who are not enrolled in any formal educational system or in private rehabilitation institution.

Specialized resource rooms in the West Bank and Jerusalem: There are 82 rooms equipped with educational tools and professional teachers. There are 45 resource rooms in the West Bank and Jerusalem, but they do not have any staff. There are 40 resource rooms in Gaza Strip: 10 rooms equipped with specialized professionals and 30 equipped with resources and equipment but without any teachers. There are 22 integrated compacted rooms.

There are 32 specialist professional staff at the Ministry of Education in the West Bank, including 3 supervisors who oversee 16 directorates.⁵⁸

In the West Bank, there are 6,461 children with disabilities who receive cash assistance; 4,030 suffer from a chronic illness as well as a disability. In Gaza Strip, 7,979 children receive cash assistance; 2,712 suffer from both a chronic illness and a disability.

Gains are being made in the provision of an enabling environment for children with disabilities and in terms of increased awareness of the rights of children with disabilities. The efforts of Palestinian institutions deserve

appreciation in light of the existing political conditions and the scarcity of resources. Nevertheless, further efforts are needed in order to both protect children with disabilities and allow them greater independence so that they have the opportunity to maximize their potential. Staffing can be a problem, as social workers are sometimes appointed and then reassigned. There are also difficulties with the classification of disabilities. Some institutions use the international classifications, while others use an outdated system from 1958.

Most Palestinian governmental institutions do not allocate an item in the budget to provide assistive devices for people with disabilities. As a result, access to such devices usually depends on the availability of funding, which may be conditional. This issue also impacts on the sustainability of resource rooms, some of which have been closed due to the lack of financial and human resources. Despite serious attempts to integrate children with disabilities, the issue is more complex than simply adding ramps or some adaptations. Specialized professional personnel and equipment are urgently required, and some of the obstacles in terms of government regulations and systems need to be addressed. For example, if an overcrowded classroom is a problem to a student without any impairment, it will be a bigger problem to a student with a disability, especially in the absence of an assistant teacher in the classroom. The curriculum is often inappropriate to the situation of the student, especially in the absence of qualified professional teachers and specialists. The government should work with Palestinian universities to provide appropriate specializations and add social work in schools to university programs, especially in the schools which have children with disabilities, in order to support and assist teachers and students.

58 Baseline survey for support to the quality education project in the OPT. Save the Children, 2013.

Chapter Seven

Children and the IT Society

Chapter Seven

Children and the IT Society

Data from the Household Culture Survey conducted by PCBS in 2014 showed that 97.0% of households apply preventive measures to protect their children from the Internet as per the following table:



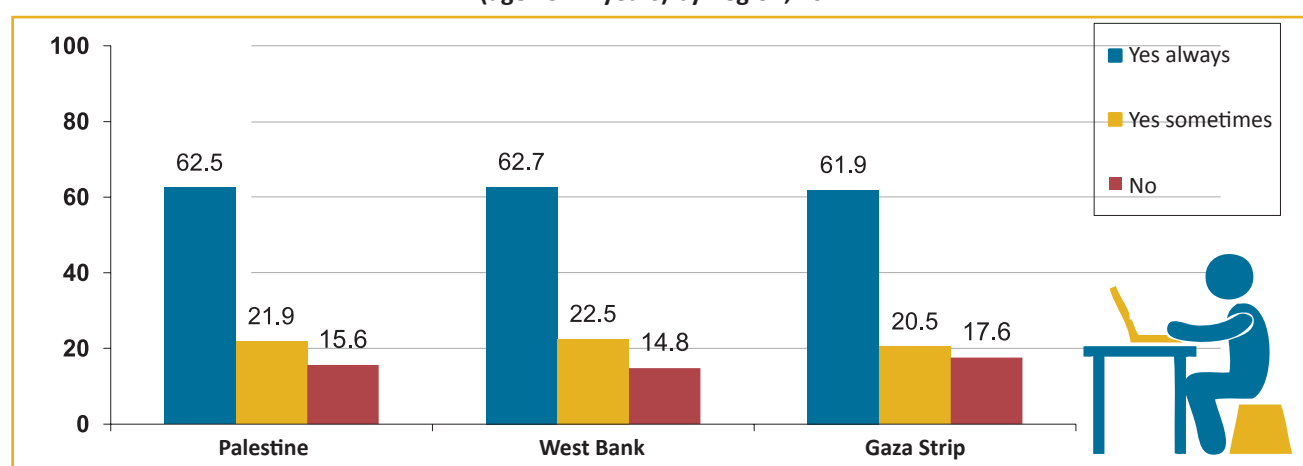
Table 13: Percentage of Households Applying Preventive Measures to Protect their Children (aged 5-17 years) from the Internet by Type of Procedure and Region, 2014

| Preventions | Palestine | West Bank | Gaza Strip |
|---|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Place computer in a common room in the house | 84.0 | 83.8 | 84.4 |
| Use of Internet safety/ filter system | 53.9 | 48.6 | 66.6 |
| Install PC monitoring programs | 22.5 | 24.0 | 18.7 |
| Dialogue with children about their activities on the Internet | 77.6 | 77.3 | 78.5 |
| Sit with the child during Internet use time | 73.7 | 73.0 | 75.2 |



Source: PCBS, 2014 – Household Cultural Survey, Report on Main Results, Ramallah-Palestine

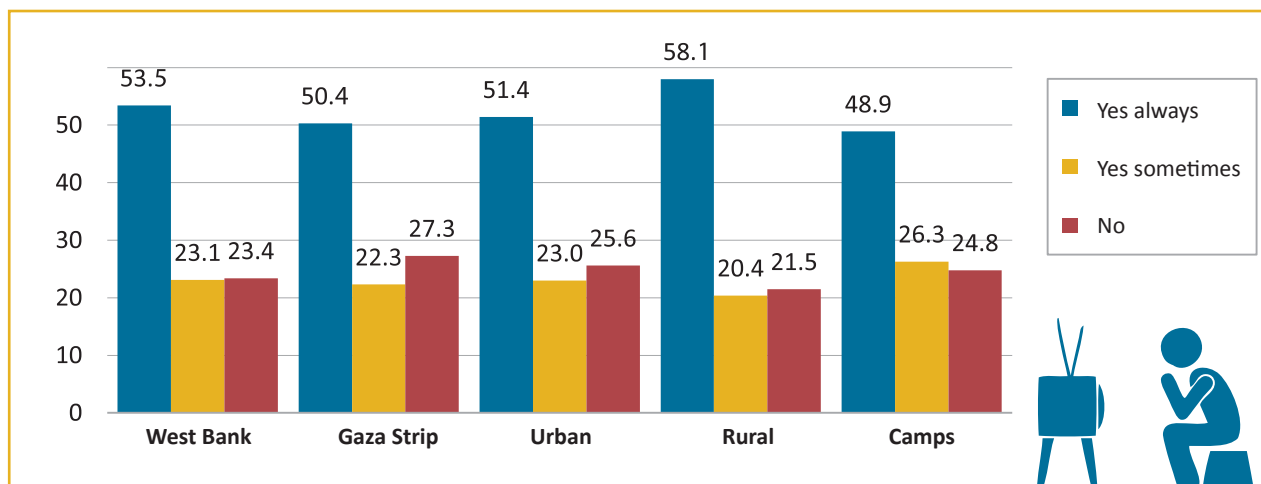
Figure 45: Percentage of Households by Monitoring the Number of Daily Hours of Internet Usage for Children (age 15-17 years) by Region, 2014



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2009. Household Culture Survey 2013, Main Finding Report. Ramallah – Palestine.

On another level, half of Palestinian households monitor TV watching hours of their children aged 5 – 17 years, with higher monitoring rates in rural areas compared to urban areas and refugee camps.

Figure 46: Distribution of Households by Monitoring the Number of Daily Hours of Watching Television by Children Aged 5-17 Years, Region and Type of Locality, 2014

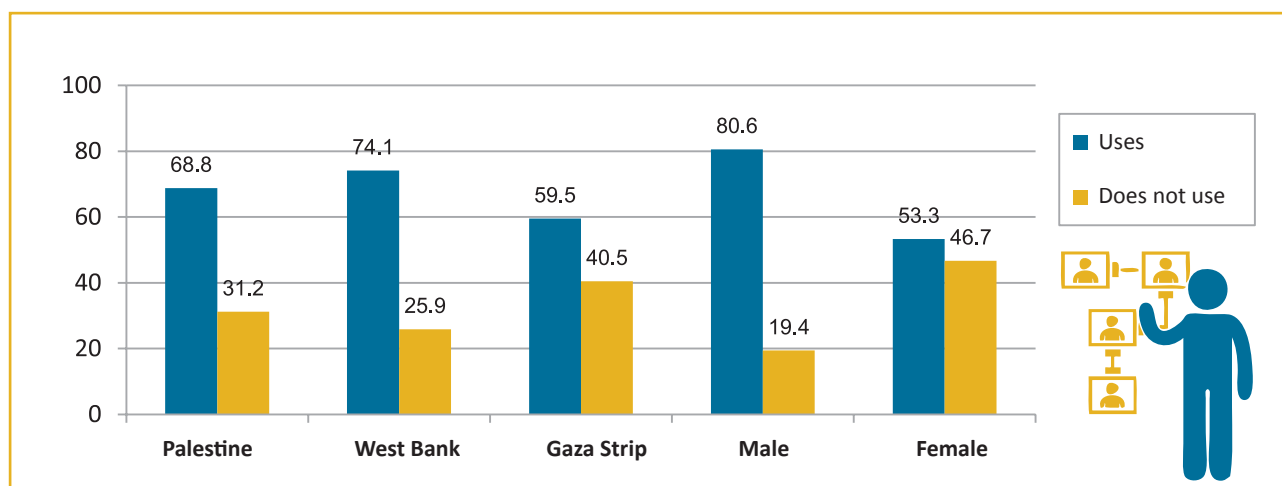


Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Household Culture Survey 2014, Main Finding Report. Ramallah – Palestine.

Guidelines for appropriate daily time limits on usage of the TV, computer and the internet could be beneficial. In addition, the survey found that while most parents had a general sense of what their children watched, content was not routinely monitored.

As regards social media, 74.1% of children (10-17 years) in the West Bank use social media, compared to 59.5% in Gaza Strip. The percentage of males using these media in Palestine was 80.6% of males compared to 53.3% for females.

Figure 47: Percentage Distribution of Children (10-17 years) using Internet per Use of Social Media and Selected Background Characteristics, 2014

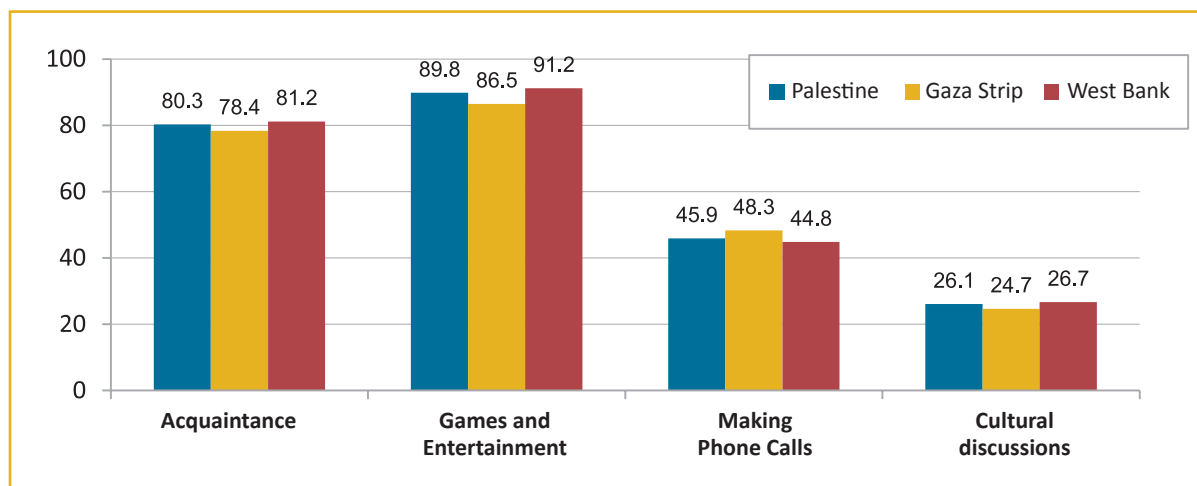


Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Household Culture Survey 2014, Main Finding Report. Ramallah – Palestine

Percentage of Children (10-17 years) using social media for games and entertainment in Palestine was 89.8% and 80.3% used it to make acquaintance while 45.9% and 26.1% use the social media to make phone calls or dialogue over cultural and literary topics.



Figure 48: Percentage of Children (10-17 years) Who Use Social Media by Type of Use and Region



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Household Culture Survey 2014, Main Finding Report. Ramallah – Palestine.

Chapter Eight

Early Childhood Development

Chapter Eight

Early Childhood Development⁵⁹

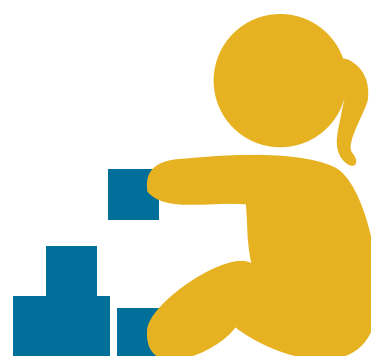


8.1 Early Childhood Development Indicators

Early Childhood Development is a predictable organized process through stages of development during which mobility, cognitive, speech, emotional and social milestones are achieved. Physical development, literacy and numeracy and social and emotional development, along with an eagerness to learn, are vital to the healthy development of a child and form the basis of all human development. An early childhood development index (ECDI). This index refers to measurements of the status of development of children with the objective of enriching public policy information on the status of development of children in Palestine with regard to literacy/numeracy, physical development, social/emotional development and learning. The indicators in

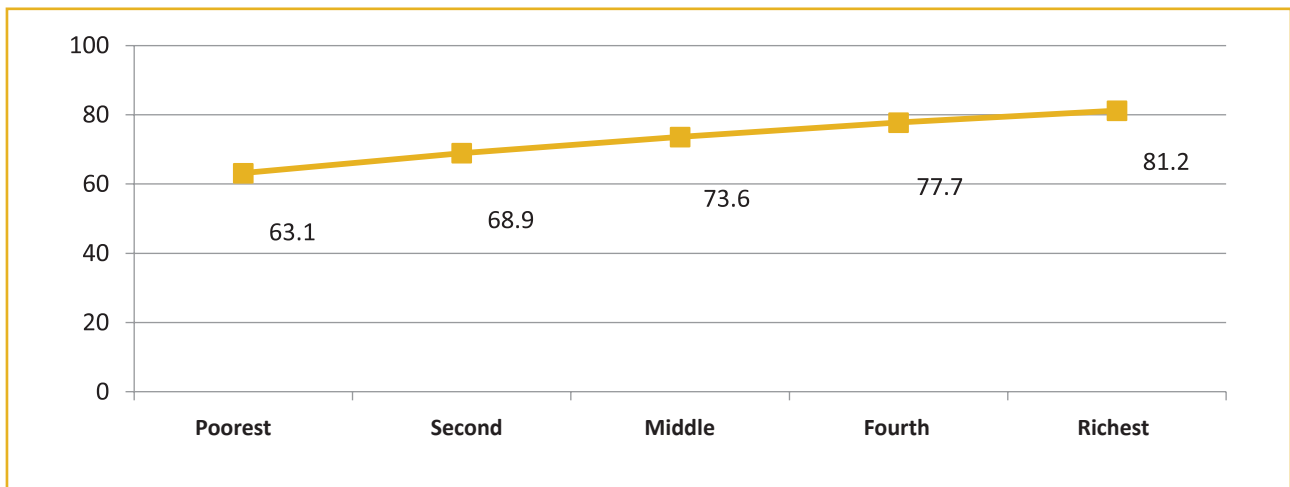
this manual show the percentages of children who are on track developmentally in at least three of these four areas.

72% of children aged 3-4 years are developmentally in track; analysis of the four areas of child development showed that 96.1% of children are on track for physical development while less than 91.7% are educationally on track in terms of literacy – numeracy (22.0%) and 71.3% are on track in terms of social-emotional development. The high progress rate in all areas individually is mainly due to children in the richer households who regularly attend preschool education and older children and among male children.



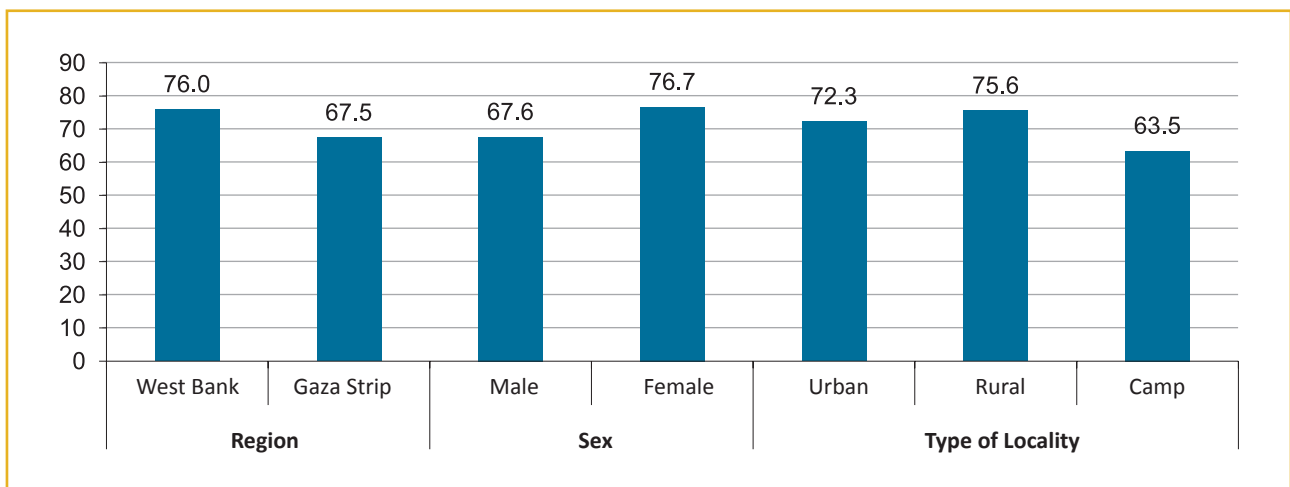
⁵⁹ PCBS 2015, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014, Unpublished Data

Figure 49: EDCI according to Wealth index, 2014



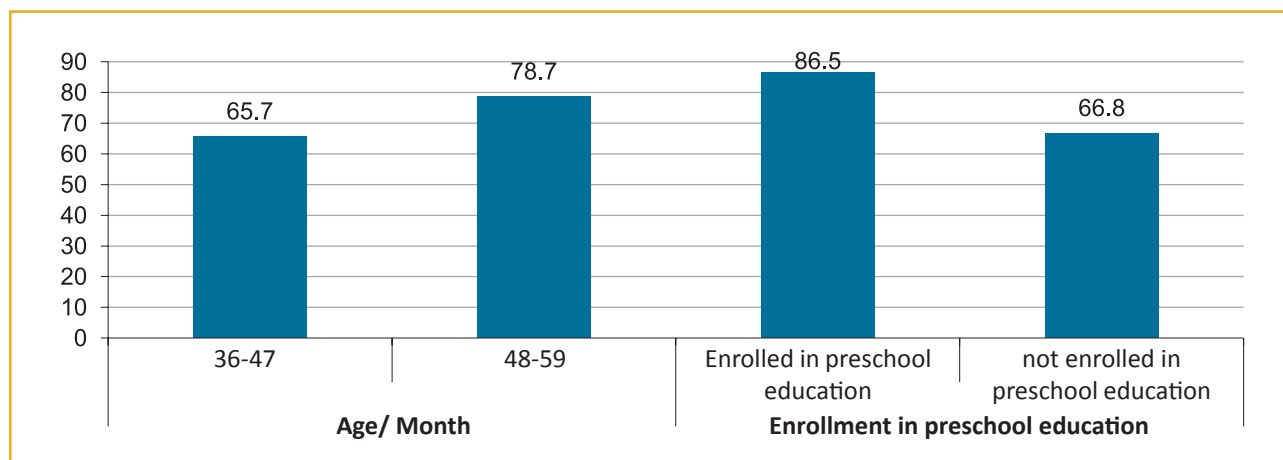
The following figures indicate the percentages of children aged 36-59 months who were on track with their development in terms of literacy and numeracy, emotional, physical and educational development. The indicators for early childhood development are shown for 2014 by region, gender, type of locality, maternal education, wealth index, age, and early enrollment in pre-school education.

Figure 50: Indicator of Early Childhood Development by Type of Locality, Sex and Region, 2014



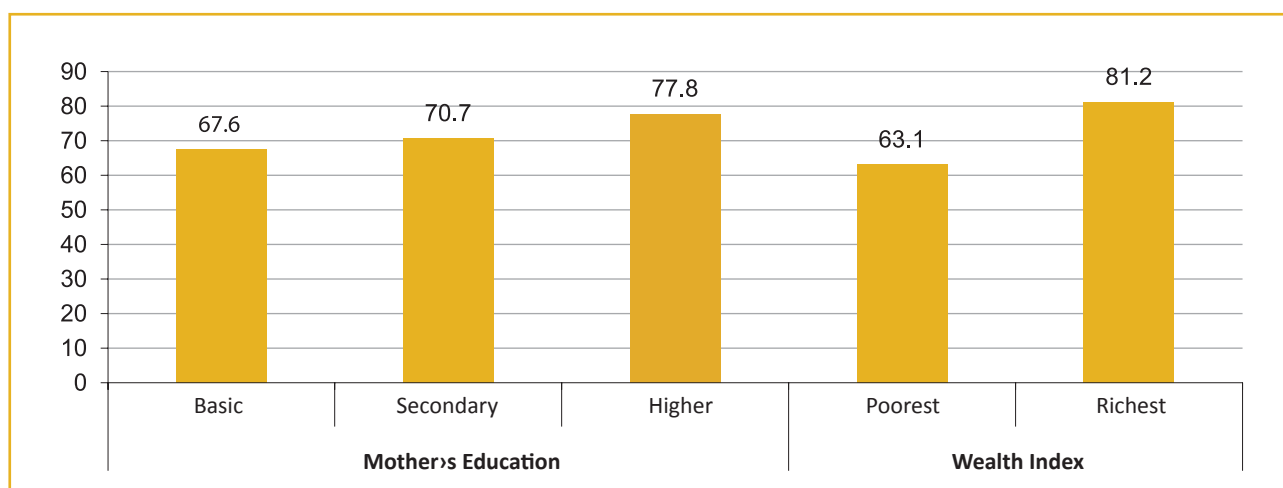
Around 72% of children aged 36-59 months were on track developmentally (76.7% of females and 67.6% of males). Figures were higher for children from the West Bank (76.0%) than children from the Gaza Strip (67.5%). Children from rural areas (75.6%) performed better than children in urban areas (72.3%) and refugee camps (63.5%).

Figure 51: Indicator of Early Childhood Development by Pre-School Enrollment and Age, 2014



As expected, early childhood development indicators were much higher for children in the 48-59 age group (78.7%) than for children in the 36-47 month age group (65.7%) as children acquire more skills over time. Figures were also higher for children who attended preschool (86.5%) than for those who did not (66.8%).

Figure 52: Indicator of Early Childhood Development by Wealth Index and Mother's Education, 2014



Fewer children among the poorest households demonstrated age-appropriate development (63.1%) than those from the richest households (81.2%). There was a strong correlation between competency in literacy and numeracy and levels of maternal education.

8.2 Support Children for Learning

It has been well-established that rapid brain development takes place within the first 3-4 years of a child's life and that quality of home care is a crucial factor in a child's development. As a result, the availability of books in homes, the engagement of adults in activities with children, and the conditions of care are important indicators of the quality of the home environment. Physical and mental health and emotional security are important prerequisites to a child being ready for social interaction and intellectual stimulation.

Information was collected on a number of activities that support early learning as part of the PMICS in 2014. This included information on adults interacting with children in the following activities: reading books or comics together, storytelling, singing songs, accompanying children outside of the home, playing with children and doing other activities together such as crafts or counting.

Eight out of every ten children under five (around 77.5%) had participated with one adult in more than four activities that develop learning and readiness for school during the three days preceding the survey. Data revealed variations on the basis of geographical regions (West Bank 82.7% compared with 71.5% in Gaza Strip). Findings were higher for children in rural areas (81.2%) compared to children in urban areas (77.6%) and camps (70.5%). Findings are also impacted by households' socioeconomic situation and figures were higher for richer children compared to poorer children, with clear differences across governorates.

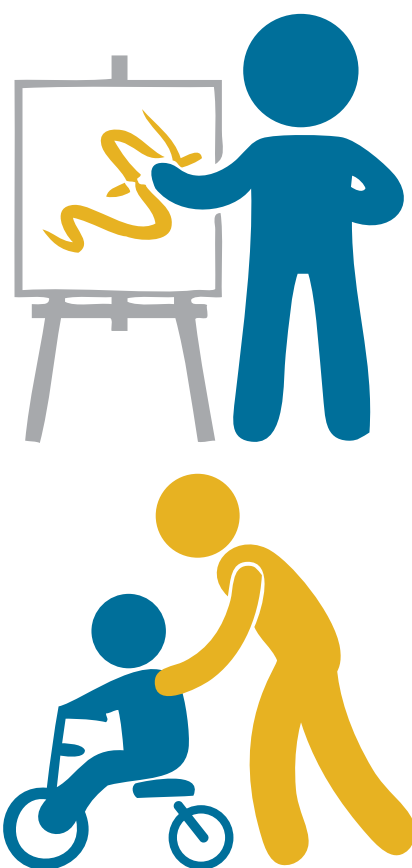


Table 14 : Percentage of Children Aged 36-59 Months who Participated with one Adult Member of their Household in Activities that Stimulate Learning and Readiness for School, 2014

| Background characteristics | Percentage of children who participated with an adult family member in four or more activities | Percentage of children who participated with their biological fathers in four or more activities | Percentage of children who participated with their biological mothers in four or more activities |
|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| Region | | | |
| West Bank | 82.7 | 14.1 | 59.2 |
| Gaza Strip | 71.5 | 9.7 | 48.9 |
| Sex | | | |
| Male | 77.4 | 12.0 | 54.2 |
| Female | 77.6 | 12.1 | 54.6 |
| Type of Locality | | | |
| Urban | 77.6 | 11.5 | 54.6 |
| Rural | 81.2 | 15.3 | 59.0 |
| Camp | 70.5 | 11.4 | 45.5 |
| Age in months | | | |
| 36-47 | 76.3 | 12.9 | 55.5 |
| 48-59 | 78.7 | 11.1 | 53.2 |
| Mother's education | | | |
| None | 68.2 | 7.7 | 39.5 |
| Basic/ elementary | 73.2 | 8.9 | 44.6 |
| Secondary | 77.2 | 11.5 | 55.5 |
| Higher | 82.4 | 16.0 | 63.7 |
| Father's education | | | |
| None | 59.6 | 5.6 | 30.3 |
| Basic/ elementary | 74.9 | 9.0 | 50.4 |
| Secondary | 77.8 | 12.4 | 53.8 |
| Higher | 82.2 | 17.2 | 61.8 |
| Wealth index | | | |
| Poorest | 68.8 | 8.1 | 45.2 |
| Second | 74.6 | 10.0 | 50.6 |
| Middle | 77.6 | 11.6 | 53.4 |
| Fourth | 83.4 | 16.4 | 60.0 |
| Richest | 87.5 | 16.3 | 68.0 |
| Palestine | 77.5 | 12.0 | 54.4 |

Adults engaged with children in an average of 4.5 activities. Table (14) shows that the percentage of children who participated with an adult family member in four or more activities was 77.5%. The average engagement of biological fathers with their children was 1.6 activities, as the percentage of children engaged with their biological fathers in such activities was 12.0%. Average engagement of biological mothers with their children was 3.6 with a percentage of 54.4% of children engaged with their mothers in such activities.

Children's exposure to printed material in their early years does not involve a high level of understanding, but it may give the child opportunities to watch others reading, such as watching older siblings doing their homework. Books are important for school performance in later life and exposure to books may positively impact IQ levels. Mothers caring for children under the age of five (who participated in this survey) were asked about the number of children's books or comics available to their child, the number of household or items, that homemade or manufactured toys available in the home.

Only 19.9% of children under 59 months lived in households that possessed at least three children's books. The percentage of children with ten or more children books dropped to 4.1%. While clear differences were not observed between the genders, children in



richest families had greater access to children's books than their peers in poor households. The percentage of children under five years of age who had three more children books reached 28.9% while this figures drops to 5.4% for households with children aged 0-23 months.



Table 15 : Percentage of Children in Palestine Under the Age of 5 years with Children's Books and Toys at Home, 2014

| Background characteristics | :Child plays with | | | | | Two toys or more |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|------------------------|--|------------------|
| | Three children's books or more | 10 children's books or more | Homemade toys | Bought toys from shops | Household objects/ objects found outside | |
| Region | | | | | | |
| West Bank | 20.2 | 3.8 | 16.1 | 88.8 | 70.8 | 71.9 |
| Gaza Strip | 19.5 | 4.3 | 17.0 | 82.8 | 70.3 | 65.9 |
| Sex | | | | | | |
| Male | 19.0 | 3.3 | 16.7 | 85.3 | 70.7 | 68.9 |
| Female | 20.8 | 4.8 | 16.3 | 86.8 | 70.4 | 69.3 |
| Type of Locality | | | | | | |
| Urban | 19.7 | 4.1 | 16.3 | 85.6 | 70.2 | 68.6 |
| Rural | 21.1 | 2.8 | 18.0 | 88.5 | 74.6 | 74.6 |
| Camp | 19.9 | 5.6 | 15.9 | 85.3 | 66.6 | 64.2 |
| Age in months | | | | | | |
| 23 - 0 | 5.4 | 1.4 | 10.5 | 74.2 | 51.5 | 50.5 |
| 24-59 | 28.9 | 5.7 | 20.3 | 93.3 | 82.4 | 80.7 |
| Mother's education | | | | | | |
| None | 7.9 | 0.0 | 17.0 | 64.3 | 71.5 | 53.3 |
| Basic/Elementary | 12.6 | 1.4 | 15.2 | 81.9 | 72.5 | 67.6 |
| Secondary | 16.4 | 2.6 | 16.2 | 85.8 | 69.8 | 68.2 |
| Higher | 29.6 | 7.8 | 17.9 | 89.9 | 69.7 | 71.4 |
| Wealth index | | | | | | |
| Poorest | 12.9 | 2.7 | 16.5 | 78.9 | 71.8 | 64.3 |
| Second | 21.6 | 4.4 | 17.9 | 86.0 | 69.9 | 68.3 |
| Middle | 16.6 | 2.5 | 18.1 | 87.7 | 69.6 | 70.6 |
| Fourth | 21.2 | 3.6 | 16.3 | 89.4 | 71.2 | 72.9 |
| Richest | 31.0 | 8.0 | 13.2 | 91.1 | 69.9 | 71.4 |
| Palestine | 19.9 | 4.1 | 16.5 | 86.0 | 70.6 | 69.1 |

Around 69.1% of children in the age group from birth to 59 months had two or more toys to play with at home. The Palestinian survey made a distinction between homemade toys (such as dolls, cars or other toys made at home), manufactured toys that had been purchased and household objects which could be used for play (such as pots and bowls or objects and materials found outside the home like sticks, stones, shells, animals or leaves). It is interesting to note that 86.0% of children played with toys that have been bought while homemade toys represented 16.5%. Children in the West Bank were more advantaged with 71.9% with toys, compared to 65.9% only for the Gaza Strip. Clear differences were observed in terms of level of wealth as 64.3% of the poorest household children had two or more objects to play with compared to 71.4% in the richest households.

8.3 Adequate Care

Leaving children alone or in the presence of other young children is a factor that increases risk of accidents. The PMICS of 2014 asked two questions to find out whether children aged 0-59 months had been left alone during the week that preceded the interview and whether they had been left in the care of other children under 10 years of age.

11.5% of children aged 0-59 months were left in the care of children under 10 years old while 4.2% of children were left alone in the week preceding the interview. By combining these two care indicators, 14.3% of children were left without adequate care in the week preceding the survey, either alone or in the care of children under 10 years old. Inadequate care was less prevalent in the West Bank, recording 13.1% compared to 15.6% in Gaza Strip. The percentage of children aged 24-59 months left without adequate care was 17.3%, that is 9.4% higher than the children aged 0-23 months.

Table 16 : Percentage of Children Aged 0-59 Months Left Alone or in the Care of Children Under the Age of 10 Years During the Week Preceding the Survey by Background Characteristics, 2014

| Background characteristics | Percentage of children aged 0-59 months | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|--|
| | Left alone during previous week | Left in the care of children under the age of 10 years during previous week | Left in inadequate care during the previous week |
| Region | | | |
| Palestine | 4.2 | 11.5 | 14.3 |
| West Bank | 4.6 | 10.4 | 13.1 |
| Gaza Strip | 3.6 | 12.6 | 15.6 |
| Type of locality | | | |
| Urban | 3.9 | 11.1 | 14.0 |
| Rural | 5.2 | 12.4 | 15.3 |
| Refugee camps | 4.4 | 12.5 | 14.9 |
| Age in months | | | |
| 0-23 | 3.1 | 7.1 | 9.4 |
| 24-59 | 4.9 | 14.2 | 17.3 |
| Sex | | | |
| Male | 3.8 | 11.1 | 13.5 |
| Female | 4.5 | 11.8 | 15.1 |

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. PMICS, 2014. Main Report. Ramallah-Palestine

