

## Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS)

### On the Eve of the International Day of Older Persons 01/10/2021

The world celebrates the International Day of Older Persons on October 1<sup>st</sup> of each year in recognition of their efforts and to highlight the significant contributions made by the elderly for the society, in addition to raising awareness of the problems, obstacles and challenges that the elderly face.

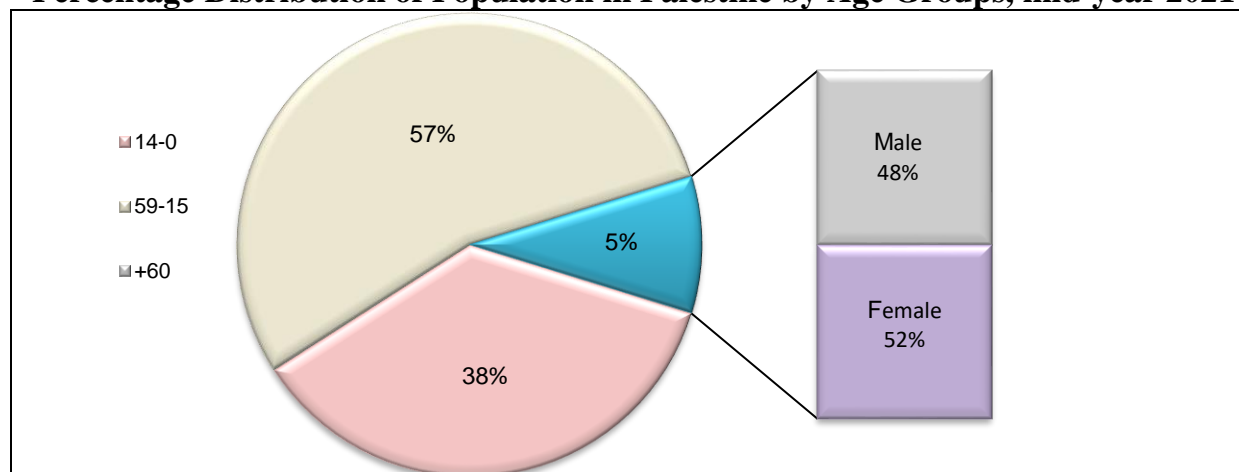
#### About Three of Every Four Deaths to COVID-19 are Elderly Persons

Although all age groups are at risk of getting infected of COVID-19, the elderly are at risk of death and severe diseases as complications to the infection. Data from Ministry of Health indicate that among 4,286 deaths to COVID-19 in Palestine, about 78% of deaths are among the elderly (60 years and above). The number of infected cases of COVID-19 among the elderly in Palestine reached 23,942 persons; (6%) of the total number of infected cases of COVID-19 in Palestine by the end of 25/09/2021.

#### 5% of the Population in Palestine aged 60 Years and above

The Palestinian society is considered a young society, where the percentage of young people is high and the percentage of the elderly is relatively low. In mid-year 2021, the number of the elderly aged 60 years and above reached 282,679 persons (5%): 186,804 persons (6%) in the West Bank and 95,875 persons (5%) in Gaza Strip. Even though the percentage of the elderly will be increasing during the coming years in Palestine, their percentage will remain relatively low and would not exceed 5% during the current decade. It is expected to start increasing after the mid of next decade.

**Percentage Distribution of Population in Palestine by Age Groups, mid-year 2021**



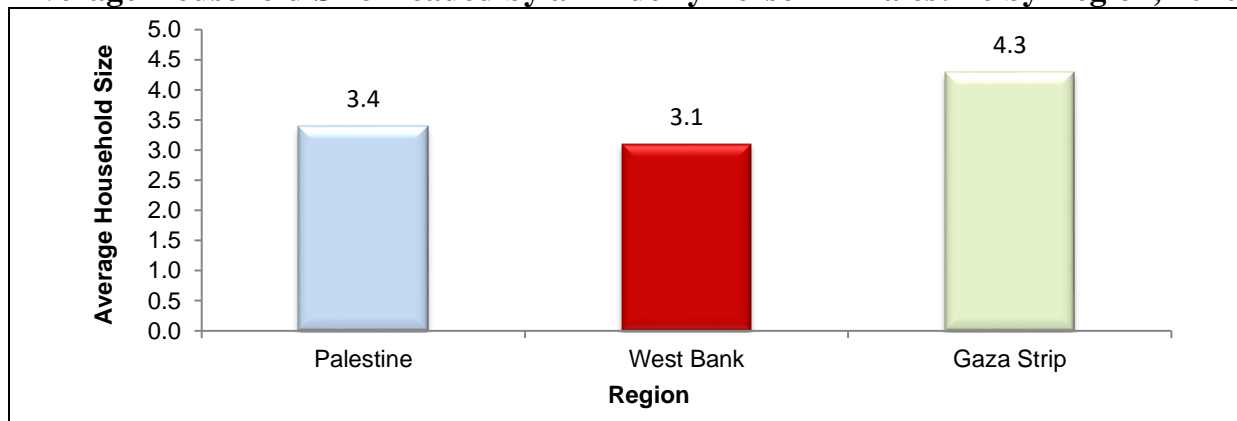
#### The Increase of the Female Elderly Percentage against the Male Elderly Percentage

The number of the male elderly aged 60 years and above reached about 136 thousand in mid-year 2021 in Palestine, representing 5% of the total number of the males in Palestine, compared to 146 thousand female elderly, representing 6% of the total number of females, with a sex ratio of 93 males per 100 females.

### **One Household out of Six Households is Headed by an Elderly Person**

21% of households are headed by an elderly person in Palestine in 2020 (23% in the West Bank and 17% in Gaza Strip). The data indicated that the average size of the households headed by an elderly person is relatively small as it reached 3.4 individuals compared to 5.5 for the households that are not headed by an elderly person.

**Average Household Size Headed by an Elderly Person in Palestine by Region, 2020**



### **More than One Third of the Female Elderly are Widows**

93% of the male elderly in Palestine are married compared to 49% of the female elderly who are married. The percentage of the elderly widowed males reached 5% compared to 42% of the elderly widowed females in 2020, knowing that the percentage of the elderly widowed males in 2007 in Palestine was 8%, compared to 43% among the female elderly.

### **About Half of the Elderly Have at Least One Difficulty/Disability**

About 48% of the elderly, in Palestine, have at least one difficulty in 2020: 45% in the West Bank and 54% in Gaza Strip. As for the types of difficulties, the most common difficulty among the elderly in Palestine was the mobility difficulty which reached 31%, followed by visual difficulty of 24%. On the other hand, 33% of the elderly in Palestine suffer from at least one chronic disease according to a medical diagnosis (36% in the West Bank and 27% in Gaza Strip). The percentage of the elderly who have health insurance reached (90%) of the total number of the elderly (97% in Gaza Strip and 86% in the West Bank).

### **%15 of the Elderly in Palestine Hold an Intermediate Diploma and Higher**

About 34% of the elderly who did not complete any educational stage reached 20% among males and 47% among females, whereas the percentage of the elderly who completed diploma degrees and higher did not exceed 15% in 2020.

Educational status data for the year 2020 showed that there is a marked difference in percentage between males and females regarding educational attainment levels. In a sense, the percentage of the male elderly who obtained diploma and higher in Palestine reached 24% compared to 8% of the female elderly. Also, the percentage of individuals aged 18 years and above who obtained diploma and higher reached 26% of the total population that aged 18 years and above in Palestine (24% for males and 28% for females).



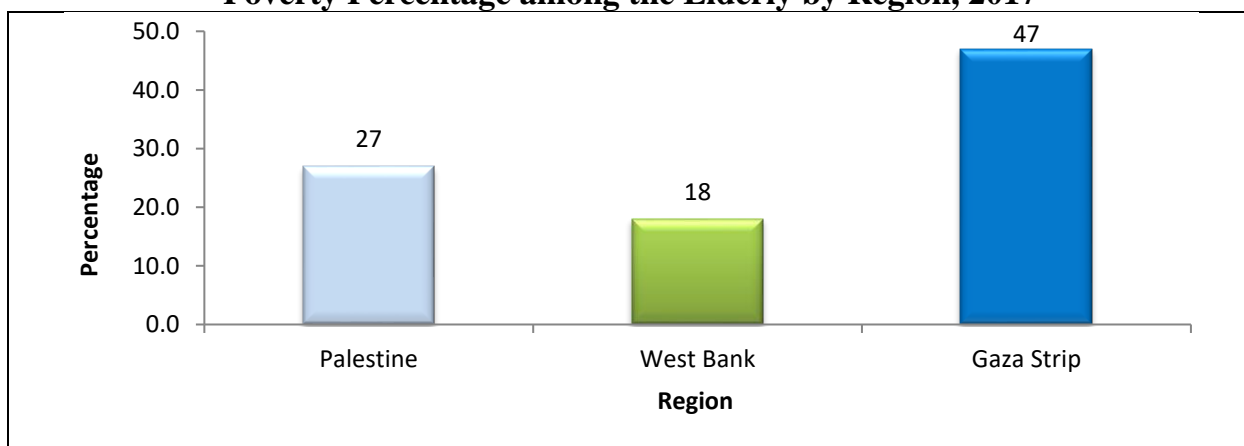
### **Variation in Participation Rates of the Elderly in Labour Market in the West Bank and Gaza Strip**

Data showed that the percentage of the participation of the elderly in labour force during 2020 was 13% (17% in the West Bank and 5% in Gaza Strip).

### **5% of the Poor in Palestine are Elderly**

Data indicated that the percentage of poverty among the elderly, in 2017, reached 27% of the total number of the elderly, representing 5% of the total number of the poor in Palestine. Noting that there is a variation in poverty rates among the elderly in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

**Poverty Percentage among the Elderly by Region, 2017**



Notably, the poverty percentage among individuals of households headed by an elderly person in Palestine was the highest compared to the other Palestinian households, where it was 32% among individuals of households headed by an elderly compared to 29% among other households.

The percentage of households, whose main income earners are elderly persons and received in-kind or cash assistance due to the emergency state declared during March – May, 2020, was about 14% out of the total number of households whose main income earners are elderly persons. However, the percentage of households whose main income earners are elderly persons, and had to borrow money or buy in debit to cover their household expenditures, was about 41% of the total number of households whose main income earners are elderly persons.

### **More than Two Thirds of the Elderly Own Mobile Phone**

Data of the Household Survey on Information and Communications Technology, 2019 showed that the percentage of the elderly who own a mobile phone reached 76% in Palestine (79% in the West Bank and 70% in Gaza strip). The survey results also showed that there is a gender gap regarding owning a mobile phone, where this percentage reached 86% for the male elderly compared to 67% for the female elderly. While the percentage of the elderly who own a smart phone was 33% in Palestine during 2019 (36% in the West Bank and 27% in Gaza Strip). According to sex, this percentage reached 36% for the male elderly compared to 30% for the female elderly.

### **About One Quarter of the Elderly Use the Internet**

Data of the aforementioned survey also showed that the percentage of the elderly who use internet from anywhere was 24% in Palestine during 2019 (24% in the West Bank and 22% in Gaza Strip). According to sex, this percentage reached 27% for the male elderly and 20% for the female elderly.

Data of the same survey indicated that the percentage of the elderly who use the social media or professional networks (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn... etc.) of total internet users reached 87% in Palestine during 2019 (91% in the West Bank and 78% in Gaza Strip). Moreover, there were differences in the percentage of using social media networks according to the sex of elderly users, as the percentage reached 90% among the male elderly compared to 83% among the female elderly.

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