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Foreword

Over the past year, the problems existing in the West Bank and Gaza Strip since the outbreak of the Al Aqsa Intifada have continued and intensified under the persistent Israeli occupation of these areas. It is the task of the *Social Monitor* to review the effects on indicators charting the Palestinian social environment and bring to public attention important trends and phenomena.

As a result of the strict siege and closure imposed by the Israelis, the West Bank is completely isolated from the Gaza Strip and both areas are separated from Jerusalem. The internal siege, closures, and military checkpoints employed by the Israelis over the past three years are now supplemented by the construction of a huge wall around Palestinian areas that effectively divides the West Bank into eight isolated cantons and the Gaza Strip into three cantons.

The regular imposition of curfews on Palestinian areas for prolonged periods of time has paralyzed and affected all aspects of Palestinian life, restricting the mobility of people and goods and undermining the modest achievements achieved with the support of international donors during the self-rule transitional period (1994-2000).

Large numbers of Palestinians have been injured, disabled or killed and public and private property, including land, trees and agricultural crops, has been destroyed or damaged.

Although the quantitative indicators detailed in this issue of the *Social Monitor* reveal an alarming deterioration in Palestinian living conditions, they do not actually reflect the full impact over all aspects of Palestinian life. More in-depth research studies are therefore required to assess the full effects.

As usual, Issue 7 of the *Social Monitor* covers the main changes in the social environment during 2002 in comparison with 2001. It indicates a continued rise in population growth rates of approximately 3.6% in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The demographic structure remains youthful with 46.3% of the population under the age of 16. This fact highlights the need for national population and developmental policies that exploit the wealth of Palestinian human resources to accelerate the developmental process.

Palestinian unemployment in the West Bank and Gaza Strip was 41.2% in 2002 (38.1% in the West Bank and 48.1% in the Gaza Strip). Poverty is increasing dramatically and the number of households completely dependent on relief assistance has grown to 80%, although only around 60% of these actually receive limited assistance. The *Monitor* warns of the declining capacity to provide assistance to needy households due to growing financial restrictions on the Palestinian National Authority, the increasing UNRWA budget deficit, and the freezing and confiscation of NGO resources.

Data on public health indicate a decline in the number of doctors per population, the disruption of many health services, and the inability of the population to access these services as a result of Israeli siege and closures. In addition, 63.4% of Palestinian households face difficulties in providing food and 38% of children (aged 6-59 months old) and young women of reproductive age suffer from anemia. There has been an increase in stunted growth and emaciated children. These facts point to the dangers inherent in the decline in public health expenditures and the repercussions on human development.

In education, this issue of the *Social Monitor* highlights the emergence of alarming phenomena such as the decline in the number of kindergartens and in female enrollment. The relative importance of public expenditure on education has declined, along with investment, due to falling demand caused by the deterioration in Palestinian economic conditions. Education at every level has been hampered as a result of the persistent Israeli siege and closures.

In Palestinian cultural life, the number of museums dropped by half in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and cultural centers in operation declined from 69 in 2001 to 50 in 2002. The cultural activities organized by these centers also fell and the number of participants substantially declined.

Of particular importance, this *Monitor* highlights an alarming deterioration in Palestinian human rights, many caused by persistent Israeli violations. It warns of the risks of a tangible decline in performance by the Palestinian legislative authority as well as by the judicial system.

While it is important to bring to light the deterioration in various social indicators, credit must be given to a number of public and civil institutions for their efforts in preventing the total collapse of social services, especially in health and education. There have been considerable disparities in the performance of various governmental and non-governmental institutions during the Intifada. An objective assessment of performance would consolidate the successes and assist in bridging difficulties in order to enhance Palestinian survival and capacity to challenge the occupation and bring it to an end.

In my capacity as Director of MAS, I extend my appreciation and thanks to MAS and PCBS staff who worked as a united team and exerted considerable efforts under difficult circumstances to produce this issue on time.

Thanks are also due to the reviewers, experts, academics, researchers and representatives of official and civil society who participated in the workshop and enriched the final draft with their comments and suggestions.

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Ghania Malhis
Director

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CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) has adopted UN international standards to define the concepts and terminology used in its surveys. These terms and concepts were adjusted to meet the objectives of surveys and also to take into account the special circumstances surrounding the lives of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (WBGs).

Age-sex structure: The composition of a population as determined by the number or proportion of males and females in each age category. The age structure of a population is the cumulative result of past trends in fertility, mortality and migration rates. Information on age-sex composition is an essential prerequisite for the description and analysis of demographic data.

Age-specific enrollment rates: The number of students of a certain age group actually enrolled at school compared to the total population of that age group.

Crowding rate: Average number of individuals per room. This is calculated by dividing the number of individuals who live in the household by the total number of rooms occupied by that household.

Daily wage per employee: This is the total net wages paid to all employees divided by the total number of work days. Wages received in different currencies are converted into New Israeli Shekels according to the exchange rate in the survey month.

Dependency ratio: The number of dependents, including children under the age of 15 and the elderly over the age of 65, per 100 people of working age (those between the ages of 15-65).

Disability: Any long-term (lasting 6 months or more) physical or mental restriction or lack of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being. This could limit the ability to move freely, to interact comfortably with surroundings and community, inability to use public transportation or work, or any condition that might result in social isolation or staying in bed for a period of more than six months.

Dropout rate: Number of students who left school (basic and/or secondary education) and did not register at any other school during the scholastic year beginning in September and ending on the 31st of August the following year, compared to the total number of students registered.

Economic activity: The type of work carried out at an establishment where the worker is employed (regardless of his/her profession). This is in case of employment at an establishment. In the case where he/she is self-employed, then this refers to the type of work, goods or services that they produce or trade with.

Geographical divisions: According to current administrative divisions, the Palestinian Territories are divided into two geographic areas: The West Bank and Gaza Strip. The West Bank was divided into 9 governorates and sometimes into 3 districts.
North of the West Bank: including the governorates of Nablus, Jenin, Tulkarm, Qalqiliya, Tubas and Salfit.

Center of the West Bank: including the governorates of Ramallah/Al-Bireh, Jerusalem and Jericho.

South of the West Bank: including the governorates of Bethlehem and Hebron.

The exclusion of East Jerusalem in some sections is due to the nature of the data available on this area of the West Bank.

Household: One person or more (related or not) living together in the same housing unit or part of it who makes common provisions (arrangements) for providing themselves with food or other essentials for living.

Household expenditure: is defined to include the following:

1. Cash spent on the purchase of goods and services for living purposes.
2. The value of goods, services and payments or part of payments received from an employer.
3. Cash expenditure spent on taxes (non-commercial or non-industrial), gifts, contributions, interest on debts and other non-consumption items.

Household consumption is defined to include:

1. Cash spent on the purchase of goods and services for living purposes.
2. The value of goods, services and payments or part of payments received from an employer.
3. Own-produced goods and food, including consumed quantities during the recording period.
4. Estimated rent value of the household dwelling.

Infant mortality rate: The number of infant deaths in a given year per 1,000 live births.

Labor force: is defined as the economically active population. This consists of all persons aged 15 years and more, who are either employed or unemployed at the time of the survey.

Live birth: A birth is considered as live if the baby born has shouted, cried, or shown any sign of life at birth.

Occupation: The kind of work done during the reference period by the person employed, or the type of work done previously if unemployed, irrespective of the industry or employment status of the person. Occupations are grouped together mainly on the basis of the similarity of skills required to fulfill the tasks and duties of the job. Occupations are classified according to the International Standard Classification of Occupation (ISCO 1988).

Private schools: Any licensed, local or foreign, non-governmental educational institution or UNRWA school that is established, directed, run or financed by foreign individuals, groups, societies or bodies.

Sex ratio: The ratio of males to females, expressed as the number of males per 100 females.

Standard of living: this is calculated by dividing food consumption by total consumption (Engel's Law of Poverty). This indicator is based on the assumption that the standard of living is defined as the proportion of consumption on food out of total consumption. This indicator is divided into three categories:

- Well-off: whose food consumption to total consumption is less than 30%.
- Middle category: whose food consumption to total consumption is between 30%-44%.
- Worse-off: whose food consumption to total consumption lies between 45%-100%.

Total fertility rate: The average number of children that would be born alive to a woman (or group of women) during her life if she were to pass through her childbearing years conforming to the age-specific fertility rates of a given year. The total fertility rate is calculated by the sum of the age-specific fertility rates multiplied by 5.

Underemployment: This phenomenon exists when a person's employment does not match his/her occupational skills, education or when they are working fewer hours than they would wish. The underemployed are classified into two groups:

1. **Visible underemployment:** refers to insufficient working hours per week, that is persons working less than 35 hours during the reference week or working less than the normal hours of work in their occupation.
2. **Invisible underemployment:** refers to the existence of fundamental imbalances between human resources and other factors of production, such as insufficient income, under-utilization, poor working conditions, etc.

Under-5 mortality (child mortality): The proportion of children born who die before reaching their fifth birthday.

The unemployed: Unemployed persons are individuals who are 15 years and over who do not work at all during the survey's reference week, who are not absent from their job and are available for work and actively seeking a job during the reference week. Persons who work in Israel or are absent from work due to border closure are considered as unemployed.

Working age population: All persons in the West Bank and Gaza Strip aged 15 years and over.

Unemployment (According to ILO Standards): This group comprises all individuals who were within the work age during the period under discussion, and who were ready to work but did not, and who searched for work through newspaper advertisements, employment offices, asked friends and relatives for work, or through other means.

Unemployment (Expanded Definition): The expanded definition of unemployment includes those unemployed workers who were outside the labor force because they stopped looking for work, in addition to those unemployed workers accounted for according to the ILO standards.

Type of Population Center: Population Centers were classified in three categories: Urban, Rural, and Refugee Camps.

Urban Center: Any center with a population of 10,000 people or more. The definition includes all governorate centers, regardless of their size, all centers of 4,000 to 9,999 people, on the condition that at least four of the following services are available: a public electricity network, a public water network, a post office, a health center with a full-time physician available all days of the week, and a secondary school that grants General Secondary Certificates.

Rural Center: Any center with less than 4,000 people, and any center with a population of 4,000 to 9,999 but not having available at least four of the above-mentioned services.

Refugee Camp: All centers that are called camps and are run by UNRWA.

The Rest of the West Bank: The West Bank without Arab Jerusalem and its environs which were annexed by Israel in the aftermath of the June 1967 war. Jerusalem is excluded here due to the nature of available statistical data.

Private Household: One to which the above-mentioned definition is applicable.

Types of Private Households: One person Household: A household consisting of one person.

Nuclear Household: A household that consists of one nuclear entity composed of a childless married couple, or a married couple with one child (blood related, and not adopted) or more, or a father (head of the household) with one or more children, or a mother (head of the household) with one or more children, with no other relatives or non-relatives living with them.

Extended Household: A household that consisted of one or more nuclear households, with one or more persons in the household related to the head of the household (by blood or kinship), with no "other" non-relatives living with them. Extended households can also be of two or more related people, without any of them forming a nuclear household. In brief, in the extended family there should be a head of the household, at least one other relative other than the spouse or children, and no non-related people living within the household.

Types of Dwelling: This refers to the architectural design of a dwelling which could be a villa, a house, an apartment, a separate room or any other form (such as a barrack, a tent, etc).

Villa: A free-standing structure, usually built with clear stone, and ready to house usually one family. It consists of one floor with two wings, or two or more floors, wherein there is an internal staircase. One wing or one floor is set aside as the sleeping quarters, and another wing or floor is used for reception, kitchen and various other services. The villa often has a garden around it, regardless of its area, a wall that surrounds it from the outside, and a garage for the car. The upper roof of the villa is often covered with bricks. Within the villa limits there may also be another building or an annex that is one of its components.

House: A building that was originally built for one family, and it represents the traditional building in Palestine. The house may have one or two floors used by one family. If the house is divided into separate units, each of which includes private facilities and is equipped to house a separate family, then each such unit is considered an apartment.

Apartment: It is part of a house or a building consisting of one or more rooms with a kitchen and a bathroom, behind a private entrance, which is ready to house one family, and which can be accessed through a staircase or a passage that leads from a public street.

A Separate Room: A simple room, with no facilities, whose occupant usually shares such facilities as the kitchen and the bathroom with the occupants of other such rooms. It is originally prepared for living, and is normally located on the roofs of buildings or in the courtyard. It is part of the house.

Other: These include other cases like tents, barracks, huts, caves, and grottos, or any other place inhabited and is not subjected to any of the mentioned classifications.

Room: Any area of four square meters or more surrounded by walls and has a ceiling that separates its occupants from others. A glass-enclosed veranda is considered a room if its area equals four square meters or more, and is used for any livelihood purpose. The foyer is considered a room, but the kitchen, bathroom, and hallways are not. Areas designated for animals and birds, or used for work only are not considered rooms.

Number of Rooms: The number of rooms occupied by the household. It equals the number of rooms in a dwelling used by only one family. If the dwelling is used by two families then the number of rooms occupied by both families should be equal to the total number of rooms in the dwelling.

Dwelling Acquisition: It refers to the method in which a household is attached to a dwelling. This can be in one of the following cases:

1. **Rented:** If the dwelling is rented without furniture for a fee that is paid either every month or some other installment plan.

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2. **Ownership:** If the dwelling is owned by the household or any of its members who are living in the dwelling.
 3. **Free:** If the dwelling in question is free of any payments, such as that owned by a father, mother, or one of the relatives of the head of the household, or of one of its members who do not live in it, or offered by another party for free.
 4. **In Return for Work:** If the dwelling is offered to the household in lieu of payment by an employer for work performed by one of the household's members, and which the household occupies without any rental fees, whether this employer owns the dwelling or whether he/she is paying a rental fee to the dwelling's owner.

Availability of Durable Commodities for the Household: It is the availability of such long-lasting commodities as a private car, an electric refrigerator, a solar heater, a central heating system, a private library (which includes at least 10 non-school textbooks, used for developing cultural, religious and other aspects), a gas cooking range, a washing machine, a television set, a video system, a computer, a satellite dish, etc.

Building Ownership: It represents the status of ownership of a building, which could be one of the following:

1. **Private:** If the owner is an individual or an institution.
2. **Governmental:** If the owner is a PNA institution.
3. **Local Government:** If the owner is a municipality or a village council.
4. **Cooperative:** If the owner of the building is a cooperative regardless of its purposes.
5. **Charitable:** If the building belongs to a charitable society or institution.

Use of the Building: It means the way the building is used. It could be used as a residential building. It is considered residential if more than half its area is used for living. It could also be considered industrial, commercial, educational, health or other.

Crude Marriage Rate: The number of marriages per 1000 people in the middle of any given year.

Crude Divorce Rate: The number of divorces per 1000 people in the middle of any given year.

West Bank and Gaza Strip (WBGs) - Selected Social Indicators, 1996-2002

Indicator	Unit	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Population*	1000	2,630,8	2,783,1	2,897,5	3,019,7	3,150.1	3,299	3,472.0
Sex ratio	Men/100 women	101.9	101.9	101.9	102.00	102.0	102.1	102.2
Less than 15 years old	(Percent)	64.8	46.8	46.9	46.9	46.8	46.7	46.4
15-64 years old		49.7	49.7	49.7	49.7	49.9	50.0	50.4
65+ years old		3.5	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.2
Population growth rate**	(Percent)	5.80	3.97	4.08	4.14	4.27	3.6	3.5
Life expectancy at birth**	Years							
Male and female		71.18	71.35	71.50	6671	71.8	71.8	72.1
Male		69.59	69.76	69.93	70.10	70.3	70.4	70.6
Female		72.84	72.99	73.14	73.28	73.4	73.6	73.7
Infant mortality+ rate**	Per 1,000 live births	27.3	24.2	23.7	23.2	24		21.7
Male		-	26.9	26.3	25.7			24.1
Female		-	21.4	21.0	20.5			19.2
Maternity mortality rate (1995 statistics)	Per 100,000 live births	70-80 ////	-	-	-		-	-
Total fertility rate**	Births/woman	-	6.04	--		5.93	-	-
Use of contraceptives	(Percent)	45.2	-	-		51.4	-	-
Crude birth rate**	Births/1,000 persons	-	42.69	42.01	41.35	40.70	40.1	39.6
Crude death rate**	Per 1,000	-	4.78	4.65	4.51	4.4	4.3	4.2
Mean age at time of first marriage/males	Years	-	23	23.94	24.10	24.10	24.2	23.5
Mean age at time of first marriage/females	Years	-	18	18.70	18.8	18.9	19.0	18.4
Urban population	Percentage of total population	-	53.1	-	-	-	-	-
Refugee camp dwellers	Percentage of total population	-	15.9	-	-	-	-	-
Population of rural areas	Percentage of total population	-	31				-	-
Refugee population	Percentage of total population	-	41.4	-	-	-	-	-
Adult literacy rate	Percentage of population 15+ years	84.3 ////	86.1	-	-	89.2	90.2	91.0
Male		91.5	92.2	-	-	93.4	95.3	95.7
Female		77.00	79.7	-	-	83.9	85.0	86.4
Dropout rate at elementary level++	(Percent)	2.4	1.86	1.76	1.57	1.44	1.2	0.79
Dropout rate at secondary level++	(Percent)	6.98	5.83	6.24	5.26	5.9	4.5	3.13
Average number of students per teacher +++	Students/teacher	29.8	29.2	29.5	29.4	27.7	28.1	27.8
Average number of students per class - elementary level +++	Students/class	37.2	37.3	37.2	37.5	37.3	37.1	36.7
Average number of students per class - secondary level+++	Students/class	30.2	29.9	30.2	30.3	30.2	30.6	30.6
Connected to water network	Percentage of total households	84.1	83.7	85	-	98.8	-	93.9
Connected to sewage network	Percentage of total households	34	37.4	37.9	39.3	42.8	-	45.8
Connected to electricity network	Percentage of total households	98.1	94.7	94.6	-	99.2	-	-

Indicator	Unit	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Computer owner	(Percent)	-	4.0	7	-	9,2	13.1	12.6
TV owner	(Percent)	89.6	85.0	89	-	89.7	94.2	93.0
Housing density**	Persons/room	2.45	2.0	1.88		1,91	2.0	2.1
Family owning home library (ratio)	(Percent)	22.9	13.9	-		13,4	—	18.4
Public libraries ****	No.	295	-	13	20		—	—
Monthly personal expenditure	JD (according to 1996 prices)	84.1	84.4	82.6	-		—	—
Food expenditure as percentage of total expenditure	(Percent)	38.7	38.5	40.3	-		—	—
GNP per capita	US\$	1,774.4	1,762.8	1,889.6	1,641			
Beneficiaries of assistance from Ministry of Social Affairs	Percentage of total population	3.5	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.9	3.7	3.5
Beneficiaries of assistance from UNRWA	Percentage of total population	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.2		3.2
Active labor force	Percentage of population 15+ years	40.0	40.5	41.4	41.6	41,5	38.7	38.1
Unemployment rate	(Percent)	23.8	20.3	14.4	11.8	14,1	25.5	31.3
Male		24.5	20.3	14.4	11.6	14,4	27.3	33.5
Female		19.6	20.1	15.2	13	12,3	14.1	17.1
Employed in public sector	Percentage of total number of employed	17.6	17.6 ////o	16.4	17.9	19,8	23.2	
Employed in Israel and settlements	(Percent)	14.1	17.1	21.7	22.9	19,6	13.7	10.3
Agricultural labor force	(Percent)	14.2	13.1	12.1	12.6	12,7	12.0	14.8
Industrial labor force	(Percent)	16.8	16.4	15.9	15.5	19,7	14.0	12.9
Female share of adult labor force	(Percent)	13.9	14.2	13.6	15.4	12,7		10.4
Rate of labor force to population	(Percent)	20.8	21.5	22	22.6	22,1	20.7	19.9
Median daily wage***** (according to 1996 prices)	Shekels	46.2	46.5	50.8	57.7	53,1	61.5	60.0
Average daily wage (according to 1996 prices)	Shekels	54.3	55.1	60.3	63	59,3	72.7	74.0
Female wage/male wage *****	(Percent)	70.6	68.0	66.8	71.0	69,3	75	81.8
Hospital beds (ratio)	Beds/1,000 persons	1.00	1.17	1.13	1.27	1,3	1.4	1.35
Doctors (ratio)	Doctors/1,000 persons	-	99	114.9	128	140	134	150

Note: When making comparisons, it should be taken into consideration that population and housing data for the year 1997 are taken from the 1997 Population, Housing and Establishment Census. Data for other years are taken from sample surveys by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS). Some of the 1998 data are the result of assumptions on which PCBS based its population projections for 1998.

* PCBS population projections based on the results of the 1997 Population, Housing and Establishment Census.

** The 1998 and 1999 data are assumptions according to which the PCBS estimated population figures for the two years.

*** With the exception of the area of Jerusalem annexed by Israel following the 1967 War.

**** The number of libraries in 1996 includes libraries surveyed by a team supervised by the Ministry of Culture and includes all public libraries, including those in mosques. The figures for 1998 and 1999 are restricted to public libraries supervised by the Ministry of Culture.

***** Wages in the two regions of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, relate only to workers employed in each of them, while the wages of the total number of workers in the WBGS also include the wages of workers in Israel and the settlements.

//// = 1995 data

////o = The third quarter of 1997.

Health survey data revealed that the infant mortality rate estimated through direct means for the years preceding the survey (1995-1999) in the WBGS was 25.3 for males and 25.6 for females.

++ Data for scholastic years 1995/1996, 1996/1997, 1997/1998, 1998/1999 consecutively.

+++ Data for scholastic years 1996/1997, 1997/1998, 1998/1999, 1999/2000 consecutively.

1- GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This issue of the *Social Monitor* surveys the changes in trends in Palestinian social indicators in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (WBGS), almost two years after the outbreak of the Al-Aqsa Intifada, specifically during the year 2002. The year 2002 had witnessed a tangible escalation in Israel's aggressive policy aiming at crushing the Intifada and destroying the Palestinian national will. The year was the harshest and most difficult for the Palestinians since Israel's occupation of the WBGS began in 1967. The Israeli military and political aggression escalated to unprecedented levels, as the Israeli forces re-occupied, in the course of one year, all West Bank cities (with the exception of Jericho) using jet fighters, helicopter gun-ships, tanks, and military bulldozers to shell and destroy security and civil headquarters, factories, the sea- and airport in the Gaza Strip, radio and TV stations, prisons and detention centers, and public and private institutions. Also, Israeli forces demolished hundreds of homes, displacing thousands of their inhabitants, especially in the Rafah and Jenin refugee camps, and invading the privacy of thousands of other homes, into which occupation forces broke, and imposed strict curfews lasting several months on most cities and neighborhoods in the West Bank.

Israel's oppressive measures led to the killing and injury of thousands of Palestinian citizens, the destruction of farms, the bulldozing of thousands of fruit trees, and the confiscation of some water resources, all for the sake of the erection of the apartheid wall. The aim of this wall is to impoverish the Palestinians, degrade their dignity, and turn them into slaves, subjected to the whims and moods of the Israeli government and its racist policies, by gradually transforming population centers into collective detention centers whose occupants are forced to live under inhumane and degrading conditions. These conditions combined have led to exhausting the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), confusing its ministries and institutions or totally obstruction their performance, foiling its efforts for democratic reforms, and denying it the ability to provide assistance and services to the citizens who are in desperate need for them.

No doubt, these measures and their destructive effects have inflicted serious harm on various sectors of the Palestinian society, and on many of the modest achievements of the national governmental, non-governmental, and private institutions. Some of these negative effects appeared in the quantitative indicators monitored in 2002, compared with those of the pre-Intifada years. Other effects however were not tangibly reflected in the quantitative indicators, and are in need for a qualitative study that would explore change in the quality of services like health, education and others. The fact that many social indicators are slowly influenced and altered by surrounding conditions, compared with other indicators, such as the economic indicators for instance, was a reason why other negative effects were not apparent.

The apartheid separation wall which is being build by Israel in and around the Palestinian territories is also a new escalation of the Israeli oppressive measures and siege. Local and international surveys and reports highlighted the great dangers of the wall on the living conditions of the Palestinians and their future, in addition to its strategic effects. Such effects include imposing facts on the ground by force, controlling water resources which are of exceptional importance for the people and economy of the Palestinian territories. Some of the effects caused by the wall's construction are tackled in the current *Social Monitor* issue, for their extreme importance. Detailed effects will be included in the next issue.

The statistical outlook of various aspects of social life in the WBGS, as contained in this issue of the *Social Monitor*, points to continuing gaps and inequality within Palestinian society according to gender, geographic location, age group, and various population centers. Important differences appear

in education, health, cultural, and welfare services. These gaps may sometimes even be greater in certain regions, depending on the severity of the occupation forces' oppressive measures imposed on each region. There are some disparities for instance between the West Bank's northern regions, especially Jenin and Nablus, as compared with the central region. Data also show that even though services are still being provided to the population in the education and health fields, the quality of these services has deteriorated to below-standard levels, thus undermining the confidence of the principle beneficiaries. This situation highlights the importance of sound and effective emergency plans that can maintain the quality and continuity of services and their delivery to all social sectors and population centers, a step requiring effort, ability, and an efficiently run administration.

As in previous issues, this one includes comparisons of change and continuity in the social life in 2002 based on available data. The monitored indicators focus on the following fields: population, health, education, culture, social security and quality of life, standards of living, and legal environment.

1. Demographic Indicators

The demographic indicators still impose many challenges on the social and economic policy makers in the WBGS. Population growth rates between 1997 and 2002 point to an increase as a result of natural growth and expected immigration. The natural growth rate in the Palestinian territories in 2002 was 3.6% which makes it among the highest in the world.

Demographic projections prepared by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) confirm that the young make up the majority of Palestinian society in the WBGS; 46.4% of the total population was under 15 years of age in 2002. The data also confirm a continued rise in fertility rates in the WBGS to 6.8 births in the Gaza Strip and 5.5 births in the West Bank in 1999. Meanwhile, the death rate decreased and longevity rates increased. These factors together led to an increase in the population growth rate, which requires the formulation of social and economic policies adequate for this increase.

Demographic data related to marriage and divorce indicate that both marriage contracts and divorces decreased in the Palestinian territories in 2002, as compared with 2001. These data show that early marriage is still prevalent, especially for women, as is polygamy. Divorce rates increased among the less educated, among cases of early marriage, and during the first years of marriage.

Despite urging recommendations made in previous *Social Monitor* issues on the need for conducting detailed studies on these phenomena, with the aim of coming out with pertinent legislative policies and regulations, we still lack such studies, and our social policies are still too far from dealing with them.

2. Health

This section monitored the most important indicators through which it is possible to measure changes in this field during the past years. Available data show an increase in the general budget allocated to the health sector bringing it to about \$100 million in 2003, compared with \$73 million in 1995. This increase in expenditure however, did not reflect an increase in the health sector allocation within the total current public expenditure of 2003. The health allocation decreased continuously reaching only 9.5%, as compared with 14% in 1995.

As for reported live births, there was a noticeable increase of 2% within the Palestinian territories in 2002, as compared with 2001. The increase was limited to the Gaza Strip where reported live births increased by 9.6%, while the number in the West Bank decreased by 4% between the two mentioned years. Data show that the number of reported live births in the Gaza Strip in 2001 was less than it was in 2000. This change between the two periods however could be attributed to

major changes in birth registration, and not to the actual number of births itself, which points to the importance of improving and developing mechanisms for live birth registrations, as well as making them unified and standardized for various parties.

Life expectancy rates, according to PCBS estimates, increased in 2002 to 72.1 years (70.43 for males, and 73.57 for females), as compared with 71.97 in 2001 (70.43 for males and 73.57 for females).

Negative changes were monitored in infant and child mortality in the Palestinian territories. Reported infant mortality rate increased in the Palestinian territories in 2002 to 20.5 deaths per 1000 live births in 2002, as compared with only 14.5 deaths in 2001. The increase in the West Bank was much higher than in the Gaza Strip. Mortality of children under five years of age also showed a big increase, reaching 23.7 deaths per 1000 live births in 2002, compared with 18.5 in 2001. The increase was limited to the West Bank where this rate increased from 11.9 deaths per 1000 live births in 2001, to 21 deaths in 2002. This could be attributed to the closure and separation of various regions in the West Bank from each other by the Israeli occupation forces, which consequently denied the citizens accessibility to health centers and hospitals. In the Gaza Strip, the rate decreased from 27.9 deaths per 1000 live births in 2001, to 27 in 2002. In general however, the gap between infant and child mortality rates in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip decreased. This is due to negative developments in the West Bank resulting from the Israeli oppressive measures, not to positive developments in the Gaza Strip. It is also possible that some of these changes in the mortality of infants and children under five years of age are the result of an increase in the registration of such deaths. Pre-natal conditions are the main reason for the mortality of children under five years of age in the Palestinian territories, which is often related to the difficulty that pregnant women face in getting health care, due to the Israeli occupation measures.

The ratio of physicians to the total population, according to the available data, has decreased in 2002, reaching 141.5 physicians per 100,000, as compared with 145.6 in 2001. This decrease is attributed mainly to low registration of physicians. The rate of hospital beds per population remained unchanged at 1.4 beds per 1000 between the two mentioned years. This however indicates an increase in the number of beds that covered the increase in the population, without adding any improvement to their share of hospital beds, despite the huge burden on the health sector as a result of the Israeli suppression and aggression.

Available data show a big increase in the number of people with health insurance in 2002. The number now comprises three quarters of the population in the Palestinian territories, as compared with only 61% in 2000. This increase is attributed to the decision to provide free insurance to all those who became unemployed, as well as to the families of martyrs and the injured during the Intifada. The government health insurance covers the highest rate of insured people, as compared with other insurance providers (private and UNRWA insurances). The increase in the rate of people insured was in favor of the government's health insurance, while other providers declined. It is safe to say that the deterioration of the economic conditions was the main reason for the decline in the rate of people insured through private insurance companies. It is due to the high cost of this type of insurance.

The Palestinian health sector has been suffering suppressive Israeli measures against the Palestinian people following the outbreak of the Al-Aqsa Intifada. The sector suffered massive damages as a result of such measure, including to its infrastructure, and was hindered in providing health services to citizens. The burden shouldered by this sector is even made heavier by the distortions caused by the Israeli occupation's practices which had marginalized it before the inception of the Palestinian National Authority, and the continuation of the Israeli measures which deter the process of developing this sector. The number of martyrs is continuously

increasing, reaching 2,616 from the beginning of the Intifada until August 25, 2003, 21% of whom are children under 18 years of age. The number of injured people also continued to increase, with the total registered number reaching 36,737 during the same period.

Available data show major difficulties in accessing health services and food. Forty percent of households find difficulties in getting health services during the Intifada. Also, 63% of households faced difficulties in receiving needed food provisions during the Intifada. These difficulties were mainly the result of the siege, curfews, or the loss of the main income source. Data showed widespread malnutrition and anemia, especially among children and women. Among anemia cases, 33% were among women of childbearing age (15-49 years). Data also showed that 38% of children between 6 and 58 months suffer from anemia. The rate of malnutrition among stunted children has increased in 2002 by 12.5%, as compared with 2000 (just before the outbreak of the Intifada). The same applies to other malnutrition indicators, such as emaciation and underweight; increase rates in these two indicators reached 78.5% and 34.6% respectively.

3. Education

This section includes the most important indicators related to the Palestinian education sector. The indicators are treated in a way of comparison among a number of years to monitor the changes that occurred. Data showed an increase in the running public expenditure for the education sector in the period 1995-2003, from \$105 million to about \$185 million from year to year. While the bulk of the running public expenditure increased in the obligatory and secondary education in the period 1995-2003, the allocation to this sector in the general running public expenditure was changing from one year to the next. The allocation to the education sector at the beginning of the period in question was 20.4%, but decreased to 18.5% of the total running public expenditure in 2003, which indicates that the increase in the total public expenditure did not translate into an increase in the allocation to the education sector, as being a main sector in Palestinian society.

As for the educational characteristics of Palestinian society, literacy indicators showed a decline in illiteracy in Palestinian society, reaching only 9% among individuals aged 15 years and older in 2002, as compared with 9.8% in 2001. Data also revealed a continued big gender gap in the rate of illiteracy, even though the decline of this rate included both sexes, and carried with it some improvement in reducing this gap. Data show that the gap between both sexes becomes lower the younger the age group becomes, even disappearing in the youngest age group (15-19 years), which points to a noticeable improvement in female education within Palestinian society. As for the educational attainment, data showed a little improvement in both sexes. The rate of individuals 15 years and older who completed the first university stage was more than 6.4%. This is almost the same rate as in 2001. The rate of those who did not finish any educational stage decreased to 16.8% in 2002, as compared with 18.1% in 2001.

As for the educational institutions indicators, this issue monitored the changes that occurred in many educational indicators related to these institutions. These indicators showed an annual increase in the number of schools, both basic and secondary. This increase included kindergartens as well in the years that preceded the current Intifada. The number of these kindergartens however, started to decrease following the outbreak of the Intifada. The number of schools increased between the scholastic years 2001/2002 and 2002/2003, while the number of kindergartens decreased by 48 between the two mentioned scholastic years. Data also show that the increase in the number of schools included schools in all supervisory authorities (governmental, private, and UNRWA schools). The highest increase however was in the governmental schools.

The increase in the number of schools was accompanied by a natural increase in the number of students. The number of students increased by 3.2% between the two scholastic years 2001/2002 and 2002/2003, a rate which is about the same as the natural growth rate of the population in the Palestinian territories. Data show that the increase in the number of students was limited to schools, while the number of children in kindergartens decreased. This may be attributed to the strangulating economic crisis which the Palestinian society is passing through, as a result of the siege, suppression and other Israeli oppressive measures against the Palestinian people following the Al-Aqsa Intifada outbreak. The increase in the number of schools, and the decrease in the number of kindergartens reflected on the average number of students in their respective branches. The average increased in kindergartens, reaching 25.1 children in each branch in the scholastic year 2002/2003, as compared with 24.7 in the scholastic year 2001/2002. The average number of students in each branch in the basic schooling stage improved, reaching 36.7, as compared with 37.1. This average however remained unchanged at 30.6 students for each branch in the secondary stage between the two mentioned scholastic years.

Data show that the ratio of male to female enrollment in schools and kindergartens remained unchanged during the two mentioned scholastic years, where the rate of males enrolled in schools and kindergartens was 50.4% in both years.

Data also show that the government sector still comprises the largest percentage of students, reaching 65.2%, followed by UNRWA schools, with 23.7% of the total student population, and then the private sector schools, with 11.2% of the total number of students. The increase in the number of students enrolled in government schools was at the expense of UNRWA and private schools. This increase is opposite the pre-Intifada trend, which saw higher private school enrollments. This could be an indicator of the economic crisis which the Palestinian society is passing through, as a result of the Israeli oppression and siege, since the cost of enrollment in private schools is high, while the government education is free. The low rate of enrollment in private schools also points to the low rate of families capable of covering the cost of a private education, thus forcing them to enroll their children in the free governmental schools. Data show a steady ratio of female to male enrollment in the basic stage of education, reaching 98 females to every 100 males. The ratio in the secondary stage however increased, reaching 109 female students to every 100 male students in the scholastic year 2002/2003, compared with 108 female students to every 100 male students in the previous scholastic year.

As for the number of teachers in schools and kindergartens, their number increased by 4.3% which is higher than the increase in the number of students (which reached 3.2 %). This reflected on the average number of students per teacher, which decreased to 27.8 students per teacher in the scholastic year 2002/2003, as compared with 28.1 students per teacher in 2001/2002. This decline included the government, UNRWA and private schools. In the kindergartens, there was an increase in the number of children per teacher, translating into an acute decline of services in kindergartens in the Palestinian territories following the outbreak of the Intifada, as a result of the severe economic crisis caused by the Israeli oppression and siege against the Palestinian people.

Data on basic and secondary schools show a continued decline of drop-out and repetition rates. The drop-out rate in the basic stage decreased to 0.8% in the scholastic year 2001/2002, as compared with 1.2% in the scholastic year 2000/2001. This decline included both sexes. The drop-out rate in the secondary stage declined to 3.1% in the WBS for both sexes in the year 2001/2002, as compared with 4.5% in 2000/2001. The repetition rate also declined in the basic stage to 1.6%, as compared with 2% in the two mentioned scholastic years respectively. The decline included both sexes. The repetition rate in the secondary stage meanwhile remained unchanged at (1.1 %).

Data showed a high increase in the number of students in Palestinian universities. The increase rate was 18.1% in the two scholastic years 2001/2002 and 2002/2003. The rate of female students enrolling in local universities was much higher than that of male students, which greatly reduced the gap between the two sexes, making the student ratio of 97 female students for every 100 male students.

There was also an increase in the number of students enrolling in community colleges. Data showed their number increased by 10.9% in the two above mentioned academic years. The increase among male students was much higher than among female students. The number of male and female students has become almost equal in the last scholastic year, and the gap that existed between the two sexes in favor of female students for many years has shrunk.

With regards to the impact of the Israeli measures on the educational process and institutions, the Palestinian Ministry of Education's reports on the Israeli oppressive measures against the Palestinian education field in the period between 29/9/2000 and 15/12/2003 show an increasing hike in the number of student martyrs whose number has reached 420 in the mentioned period. The number of injured students in the mentioned period was 3,018. The reports also show that a large number of students were arrested during the same period.

Huge damages were also inflicted on educational institutions by the Israeli aggression. A large number of schools were shelled and raided, while others were turned into military encampments, and still others were shut down by military orders, thus denying the students and faculty the continuation of the educational process in a normal way. In addition, the policy of siege and segregation imposed by the Israeli occupation on the Palestinian territories has often led to the obstruction of the educational process by preventing students and teachers from reaching their schools.

The Israeli oppressive measures had their biggest impact on the educational process in universities and community colleges. The universities were closed for protracted periods during curfews imposed by the Israeli occupation on the Palestinian cities, in addition to closing some universities by unjust military orders, as was the case with the Hebron University. A number of universities were also broken into by the Israeli occupation forces, and student dormitories were repeatedly raided, and hundreds of students were arrested.

The Israeli occupation's oppressive policies in general affected the educational process altogether in the Palestinian territories, both at the qualitative and quantitative levels. It is also expected that these effects of the Israeli oppression will continue in the coming period, and this demands a well thought-out confrontation policy to limit the negative effects on the educational process, and consequently on Palestinian society in general. These Israeli oppressive measures, against the Palestinian people in general, and students in particular, are a deterring factor for the Palestinian educational process, and negatively reflect on the students' performance and their ability to join their schools, and educational institutions.

4. Cultural Indicators

Most cultural indicators monitored by the *Social Monitor* decreased. The number of functioning cultural centers decreased from 69 in 2001, to 50 in 2002. The number of cultural activities carried out by these centers also went down. Holding symposiums decreased by 54% in 2002, public courses by 45%, art exhibitions by 62%, artistic performances by 18%, while lectures slightly increased by 6% as compared with the previous year.

The number of participants in the activities of these centers also decreased. The number of art exhibitions' visitors decreased by 76% in 2002, as compared with 2001. The number of participants in public courses went down by 42% in 2002, as compared with 2001, the number of

participants in symposiums held by the cultural centers decreased by 42%, as compared with the previous year, and the number of participants in artistic performances also decreased by 19% in the year 2002, as compared with the previous year.

The number of newspapers published decreased by half in 2002 as compared with the previous year. The number of dailies did not change, remaining at three. The number of magazines published in the Palestinian territories decreased from 42 in 2001 to 33 in 2002.

The number of functioning museums went down from 9 in 2001 to 5 in 2002. The number of theaters and performed plays remained the same during the same period.

In 2002, a total of 15 radio stations and 32 local television stations were operating in the Palestinian territories, unchanged from 2001.

5. Social Security and Quality of Life

The escalation of the Israeli aggression in the Palestinian territories has increased the deterioration of the quality of life, and the number of Palestinians who count on relief assistance for living. The full-scale Israeli occupation war against the Palestinians left its negative impact on the quality of life in the WBGS, and brought the Palestinian economy to the verge of collapse, created regions, cities and governorates that are considered in a disastrous situation, suffering from enormous destruction, economic paralysis, and inability to meet the demands of daily life, as was the case in the Jenin Refugee Camp, in Nablus and in Rafah.

The occupation's oppressive measures obstructed the enactment of legislations and regulations for organizing the labor market and the field of social services. This has caused the hasty putting into action of the Palestinian labor law by completing by-laws which the Ministry of Labor worked hard on preparing and discussing with the concerned parties, and speeding up the implementation of the Social Insurance Law, as well as completing the implementation of the Civil Service Law, and the preparation of by-laws regulating the work of the Ministry of Social Affairs in various fields.

The year 2002 witnessed a huge rise in unemployment rates. More than 40% of the Palestinian labor force was unemployed. The average period of unemployment reached 15.38 months in the third quarter of 2002. Supporting parties focus on treating the issue of unemployment through emergency employment programs, and through providing relief assistance. The effectiveness of both ways is limited in treating the unemployment problem in the Palestinian territories, despite their importance, and their positive role in this field. The Employment Fund project is not yet activated, although budgets had been allocated for it by various parties.

Available data indicate an increase in the number of families who received assistance in 2002, rising to 58.3% of the Palestinian households receiving assistance during the Intifada, as of the first quarter of 2002. Data also show that 80% of the Palestinian households were in need of assistance in March 2003, and 7.4% of Palestinian households said that social assistance was the main source for their income in the first quarter of 2003.

The monthly average number of households that received assistance from the Ministry of Social Affairs was 35,953 households in 2002. The Ministry provided its assistance to 3.4% of the total WBGS population. Various Palestinian ministries and governmental institutions also provided assistance, especially the Institution of Martyrs' Families and Injured, the Ministry of Prisoners Affairs, the Ministry of Endowment, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Public Works, and the Ministry of Supply.

In 2002, UNRWA also provided periodical assistance to about 115,000 Palestinians in the WBGS; all are members of households classified as hardship cases. It also provided assistance to about 9% of the total number of registered refugees in the Gaza Strip, and to 5.5% of the total number of registered refugees in the West Bank. UNRWA also condensed its emergency assistance during the Al-Aqsa Intifada. The emergency programs included relief assistance in cash and in food provisions to a large number of Palestinian families.

The zakat (religious tax) committees also enhanced their services during the Intifada, especially during the month of Ramadan. Available data show that these committees took care of more than 18,000 orphans in the Palestinian territories within the program of "Kafalat Al-Yateem," or Care for the Orphan. These committees also provided assistance to more than 12,000 households, supplementing its various other programs in the fields of health and education, its hosting of collective dinners for the fasting people during Ramadan, and also donating the meat of the traditional sacrifices of the Feast of Sacrifice to the needy.

In the spring of 2002, the International Red Cross also started its relief program in the rural areas, and its Coupons Program in the cities. The rural areas' program aims to provide assistance to about 30,000 desperate households in 319 villages, and the urban centers program aims to provide assistance to 20,000 households.

Ways and mechanisms for the steadfastness of Palestinian families include measures which will have a negative impact on the living conditions of these families in the intermediate and long terms, especially since a high percentage of families have had to borrow and or to spend their savings, and sell personal property such as land or jewelry. Some forms of support provided by various local and international institutions may have negative effects on the Palestinian social fabric in general, and on the recipient groups in particular, especially since they leave important effects on the nature of relations that link beneficiaries with those who provide the service. They also have negative psychological effects on the large public benefiting from the services and assistance of various institutions, specially the emergency employment programs, and programs of food for work, which operate under bad working conditions that are detrimental to the psychological well-being of the beneficiaries, despite the fact that those who prepared and implemented these programs affirm that they are designed to overcome the negative effects they may leave on the beneficiaries. Such phenomena are in need of thorough studies in order to understand their ways of functioning, and restrict their expected negative effects.

Data show that water and electricity services are available to most Palestinian households: 93.9% of households in the Palestinian territories have a safe source of drinking water, with 78.3% of households linked to a public water network, and 45.8% of households are linked to public sewage utilities. Also, 60.4% of the households in the Palestinian territories have a mobile phone, and 36.1% of the households in the Palestinian territories have a telephone line.

Available data showed that a large number of population centers lack main public services. It became clear that 34% of the population centers in the Palestinian territories do not have a public water network, that 13% of the total population centers in the Palestinian territories lack electricity services, that 90% of the population centers get rid of waste water through septic tanks, and that there are only 63 population centers that have a public sewage network.

Data related to home furnishings in particular, and to the availability of public services in Palestinian population centers reflect the recent efforts of the Palestinian society to improve its living conditions. Some commodities and furnishings have become essential needs, such as refrigerators and televisions. The sharp rise in the use of some commodities comes as a response of the Palestinian society to the effects of the oppressive Israeli occupation measures, and to the conditions created by the siege, and the continued segregation of the Palestinian population

centers, which led to a very sharp rise in the use of mobiles. The increase in the number of people who own mobiles does not indicate an improvement in the standards of living, it is only a way of overcoming the siege, especially since the land-based telephone network has not yet reached a large percentage of the population groups and is continuously subjected to premeditated destruction by the Israeli occupation forces.

PCBS data show an acute deterioration in the number of licenses issued by local authorities for housing purposes in the Palestinian territories in 2002. A total of 785 building licenses for housing purposes were issued in 2002, as compared with 7,445 in 2000. This deterioration is attributed to the suppressive measures of the occupation forces.

The year 2002 had also witnessed large-scale destruction of the infrastructure and public and private buildings. The Ministry of Local Government estimated the tangible losses to local institutions in the Palestinian territories at \$215,135 in the period between September 28, 2000 and the end of 2002. The Israeli occupation also inflicted damages to 54,713 houses in the Palestinian territories between 28 September 2000 and August 15, 2003. This means that on average a total of 1,564 homes were damaged every month.

6. Standards of Living

The escalation of Israel's oppression led to a sharp decline in most standards of living indicators, and in the labor market in the Palestinian territories. Main Palestinian towns and "A" areas were subjected to massive Israeli military incursions and were put under protracted periods of curfew during which Israeli soldiers inflicted large-scale destruction and damage. Various walks of life were paralyzed in the West Bank for long periods of time that stretched for months in 2002 due to the escalation of Israel's war on the Palestinian people, and the re-occupation of the areas classified in the Oslo Agreements as "A" areas.

No data are available related to the standards of living in the WBGS in 2002, with the exception of a survey on the effects of the Israeli measures on the economic conditions of Palestinian households. Part of this survey was conducted in February and March 2002, on the eve of the Israeli incursions into Palestinian National Authority territories in the West Bank, and another part of the survey was carried out in April and May 2003. The survey of these two periods provides general indicators on the living conditions in the Palestinian territories in 2002.

Among the indicators of the deterioration of the living conditions of the Palestinian people is an income decline for 87% of the total Palestinian households in the Palestinian territories after the outbreak of the Intifada: 47.4% of those lost more than half of their income during the Al-Aqsa Intifada. The monthly household average income in the Palestinian territories decreased to 1,400 NIS in March 2003, and 69.7% of the households in the Palestinian territories resorted to reducing their expenditure on basic needs in 2002. The expenditure reduction was mostly in clothing and food. Of the Palestinian households in the WBGS, 63.3% were under the poverty line in March 2003, according to these families,¹ which means 2,48,000 people. On the eve of the Israeli incursions, 66.5% of the Palestinian households were under the poverty line in the WBGS. It is certain however that larger numbers than those given in the two surveys were under the poverty line in the period between these two surveys, especially between April and December 2002, a period which witnessed unprecedented escalation of the Israeli aggression, especially in the West Bank.

The labor market indicators in the Palestinian territories sharply decreased in 2002, as compared with previous years. The rate of the participating labor force in the Palestinian territories

¹ PCBS draws attention to the fact that these estimates are based on information provided by the households on their income. We use them here as general indicators for the Palestinian households' conditions. It is worth mentioning that these data are consistent with the estimates made by international organizations working in the occupied Palestinian territories, such as UNSCO and the World Bank

continued to decrease, reaching 38.1% in 2002 as compared with 41.6% in 1999. If the number of those individuals who are outside the labor force because they stopped looking for work after they lost hope of finding it is added to the number of participants in the labor force, then the participation in the labor force (the expanded definition) increases to 44.6% in the Palestinian territories. The rate of participation of both sexes in the labor force during the years of the Intifada decreased, and the rate of female participation remained low, in the range of 10%.

The standard unemployment rate continued to rise since 2000, as compared with previous years. The unemployment rate in the Palestinian territories increased from 14.1% in the year 2000 to 25.5% in the year 2001. Unemployment reached record level of 31.4% in 2002. The number of unemployed workers in 2002 increased, as compared with the previous year according to the expanded definition of unemployment. The expanded unemployment rate in the Palestinian territories reached 41.2% in 2002, rising from 28.6% in the previous year. The average economic dependence in the Palestinian territories increased to 7.1 persons per worker in 2002.

The rate of workers in Israel and in the Israeli settlements decreased continuously in 2002, as compared with 2001. The rate of those who work in Israel and in the settlements was 10.3% in 2002, as compared with 13.7% in 2001. The rate of waged workers in the Palestinian territories in 2001 was 62.2%, as compared with 59.2 in 2002.

The average daily wage of workers in all regions (WBGS, Israel and the settlements) increased noticeably by 1.8% in 2001 and 2002. Real wages decreased in 2002 in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Real wages decreased in the West Bank by 7.1% and by 1% in the Gaza Strip, as compared with the previous year. The daily average wage also decreased in all regions in 2002, as compared with 2001, going down to 60 NIS in 2002, from 61.5 NIS in 2001. This is an indication of the decrease in the wages of the lowest-paid half of the Palestinian workers.

7. Legal Environment

The state of Palestinian citizens' rights declined sharply and directly as a result of the continued and escalating Israeli violations through 2002, which affected most aspects of Palestinian life. This situation has also obstructed the function of all Palestinian institutions, and consequently no tangible improvement occurred in the performance of the three Palestinian authorities, and no serious steps were taken towards the separation of these authorities. The performance of the Legislative Council declined, as well as the performance of most executive and judicial institutions. Palestinian citizens still suffer the effects of the weak rule of law and the deterioration in the institutional work, although some important developments and achievements occurred in the Judiciary. Such achievements include the issuing of basic and judicial authority laws, and starting the process of reform and democratic reconstruction by the Palestinian National Authority.

Most important data related to crimes and victims were presented. These data provided a general picture of the state of crimes and victims in the Palestinian territories during the last years. Objective and subjective difficulties deterring the possibility of reaching exact data on this topic were taken into consideration. Israel's oppressive measures and all social, economic and political conditions which accompanied the Intifada contributed to reducing the reliability of the crime and victim data, which thus requires that they be dealt with carefully. As a result of the political and military conditions in the field, the ability of the security departments to follow up various cases and recording them suffered. Because of Israeli barriers, the difficult living conditions imposed by Israel's occupation, and the fact that the judiciary departments were out of action, crime reporting by citizens also declined. This situation demanded that households and local mediation committees take over as problem-solvers. The collected data therefore showed a decrease in reported criminal acts, and a decrease also in the number of arrests, and consequently a decrease in the number of cases brought to courts. These indicators may be misleading and should be dealt with very carefully.

2. DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS

This section monitors general demographic indicators that include population size, geographic distribution, age and gender composition, fertility rates, migration and its main trends, and special demographic indicators related to family, marriage and divorce.

2.1 Size and Distribution of Population

Statistics on the natural demographic growth rates in the period between 1997 and 2002 indicate a decrease, but they remained relatively high, due to continued high fertility rates and low mortality levels. The rate of natural growth in the Palestinian territories was 3.8% in 1997 and 3.6% in 2002, making it one of the highest worldwide. The estimated population in the Palestinian territories in mid-2002 totaled 3,472,000: 2,208,000 in the West Bank and 1,264,000 in the Gaza Strip.

The Hebron governorate is considered one of the largest in the West Bank in terms of population, estimated at 482,514 or 21.9% of the total West Bank population in mid-2002. The Jericho governorate, with a population of 39,055 in mid-2002 is the smallest in terms of

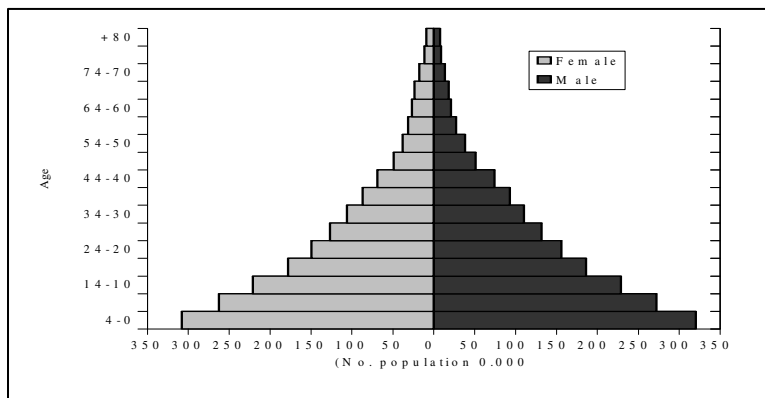
population, representing only 1.8% of the total West Bank population.

In the Gaza Strip, the Gaza governorate is considered one of the largest in terms of population, estimated at 447,346 in mid-2002, or 35.4% of the total population of the Gaza Strip. The Rafah governorate has the smallest population, estimated at 151,039 in mid-2002, or 11.9% of the total population of the Gaza Strip.

2-2 Palestinian Society continues to be Young

The demographic projections prepared by PCBS underlined the continued youthfulness of the Palestinian society. Of the total population, 46.4% were under 15 years of age in 2002: 46.7% male and 46.1% female. Children under five years old made up 18.1% of the total population in the Palestinian territories in mid-2002, ranging from 17.3% in the West Bank to 19.4 % in the Gaza Strip, which indicates that the Gaza Strip society is younger than the West Bank's. It was noticed that the number of individuals aged 65 and older was low, at only 3.2% of the total population in the Palestinian territories, (2.7% male, and 3.6% female) and broken down as follows: 3.5% in the West Bank and 2.8% in the Gaza Strip.

Figure 2-1: Population Pyramid in the WBGs: Mid-2002 Population



Source: PCBS, 2003. Revised Projections

It was also noticed that there are clear differences in the average age trends between

the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The average age in the Palestinian territories was

16.6, with 17.5 in the West Bank and 16.6 in the Gaza Strip for mid-2002. The expected trends of the average age indicate that the Gaza Strip population will remain younger than the West Bank population in the period from 2002 to 2010. The average age of the Gaza Strip population will continue to be under 16.3 during this period.

2-3 High Fertility Rates

The fertility rate is influenced by social mores, age at time of marriage, female reproductive behavior, the use of family planning methods, and the state programs and policies adopted for family planning. Despite a slight decrease in fertility rates, they are still high compared with other countries. The early age at which marriage takes place, the desire to have sons, the political conditions, and the prevailing customs and traditions in Palestinian society all appear to be factors contributing to high fertility rates. The results of the 2000 Health Survey indicate that the fertility rate in the Palestinian territories was 5.93 births, with 6.81 births in the Gaza Strip and 5.52 births in the West Bank.

Birth rates are affected by factors such as fertility and reproductive levels, the development of health services, the state's role in maternal and childcare, and the decrease in mortality rates. PCBS projections indicate that there was a decrease in crude birth rates in the Palestinian territories during the second half of the last decade from 42.7 per 1000 people in 1997 to 39.9 in 2002. This rate is expected to continue to fall to 34.7 by 2010. This trend of lower fertility rates may be attributed to the increase in the levels of education, especially among women, and to increased female participation in the labor force. Improvements in health conditions and the increased use of family planning methods in the Palestinian territories have also had a clear impact on fertility levels. This is supported by the fact that in 2000, 72.2% of women who were married had previously used a form of contraception. The rate of contraception use in the Palestinian territories was 51.4% in the same year. Despite the expected fall in fertility rates, Palestinian society will remain young for at least the next three decades.²

² Based on the final results of the Population, Housing and Establishment Census –1997, the highest total fertility rate in the West Bank was in the Hebron governorate at 7.1

2-4 Decrease of Mortality Rates

Mortality rates decreased in the Palestinian territories due to greater public awareness of health issues, better access to medical care and health insurance, and the adoption of and support for efficient healthcare plans. Mortality rates, particularly infant mortality, have fallen since the beginning of the 1990s. The crude mortality rate decreased from 4.9 and 4.7 per 1000 people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip respectively in mid-1997, to 4.4 and 4.1 respectively in 2002. The infant mortality rate for the period 1995-1999 in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip was 25.5 per 1000 live births (25.3 for males and 25.6 for females). In the period 1990-1994, in the Palestinian territories, infant mortality rates were 27.3 per 1000 live births, as compared with 35.2 per 1000 live births in the period 1985-1989.

This resulted in a rise in life expectancy from birth in the Palestinian territories to 70.6 years for males and 73.7 years for females in 2002. In the West Bank, life expectancy in 2002 was 71.1 years for males and 74.1 for females, and in the Gaza Strip, it was 69.8 years for males and 73 years for females. Mortality rates are expected to decrease gradually in the coming years, particularly the infant mortality rates, and a rise in life expectancy for both sexes is anticipated. This however is riding on the provision that current conditions become more stable, as there may be negative effects on mortality rates if conditions continue as they are at the present.

The Palestinian territories occupy a good position regarding mortality rates, when compared with neighboring Arab countries. The infant mortality rate in the Palestinian territories was 25.5 per 1000 live births in 1995-1999, as compared with 29 and 51 per 1000 live births in Jordan and Egypt respectively in 1999.³

births, as compared with other West Bank governorates. The lowest total fertility rate in the West Bank governorates was in the Nablus governorate at 4.8 births. In the Gaza Strip governorates, the highest total fertility rate in was in the Jabalia governorate with 7.5 births, and the lowest was in Dair Al-Balah governorate at 6.6 births.

³ It should be noted that the increase in fertility rates and the decrease in mortality rates in the Palestinian territories leads to the increase of natural growth. PCBS estimated the natural growth rate of the population in the Palestinian territories at 3.7% for the years 1995-2000. This rate is considered among the highest in the world, taking into consideration that the growth rate of the world population is less than 1.4 % annually.

2-5 Average Size of the Palestinian Household

The results of the PCBS 2002 Labor Force Survey show no significant differences between the average size of the Palestinian household in the Palestinian territories, remaining at the 1997 level of 6.4 person (6.1 persons in the West Bank and 6.9 persons in the Gaza Strip), as compared with the average household size in 2002 of 6.4 persons also (6.1 and 6.8 persons in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip respectively).

The average size of the Palestinian household is higher than in 2000 when it was 6.1 persons in the Palestinian territories: (5.7 and 6.4) in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip respectively. This may be linked to the prevailing conditions as many houses have been demolished or damaged, leading to some families taking refuge at their relatives' homes, within the framework of social solidarity. This may also explain the rise of the marriage age, particularly among males.

The percentage of households headed by females in the West Bank in 2002 was 12.3% of the total number of Palestinian households, and 9.9% in the Gaza Strip. The size of families headed by females is often relatively small, averaging 3.7 persons in the Palestinian territories in 2002, as compared with an average of 6.7 persons for households headed by males.

2-6 Emergence of a Phenomenon: Relocation of Palestinian Households Due to Oppressive Israeli Measures

A survey conducted by PCBS⁴ showed that about 56,000 Palestinians changed their place of residence as a result of the current Israeli measures, representing 1.7% of the total population of the Palestinian territories. Of these, 10,300 persons (18%) changed their place of residence permanently and 38,700 persons (69%) changed their place of residence temporarily. Some 7,000 people

⁴ PCBS 2001, Press Conference for the announcement of the results of the survey on the impact of the Israeli measures on Palestinian children, women, and households.

(12%) stated that they had changed their place of residence for an indefinite period.

The proximity of the place of residence to areas near Israeli army posts/settlements was the main reason cited by 60% of those who changed their place of residence (33,500 persons). Children represented 53% of the total population forced to change their place of residence, or some (29,600) children of both sexes.

2-7 Marriage and Divorce

2-7-1 Decrease in Marriage Contracts

Available data show that the number of marriage contracts registered in the Palestinian territories decreased in 2002 to 22,611, as compared with 24,635 in 2001, a decrease of 8.2%. The number of marriage contracts registered in the West Bank in 2002 totaled 12,319, a decrease of 2,164 or 17.6 % from 2001. Those registered in the Gaza Strip in 2002 were 10,292 with an increase of 140, as compared with 2001. Repeated Israeli incursions and closure of West Bank towns and villages in the first half of 2002 may have had a major impact on the decrease of marriages.

2-7-1-1 Highest Number of Marriage Contracts in July and August

Data show that the highest number of marriage contracts registered with the religious courts in 2002 was in July and August. There were 2,809 and 3,069 contracts in July and August respectively, or 12.4% and 13.6% of the total marriage contracts respectively. The lowest number however was in November with 1,089 marriage contracts, or 4.8% of the total.

The crude marriage rate in the Palestinian territories was 6.5 per 1000 people in mid 2002 (5.6 and 8.1 in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip respectively), close to the rates of previous years.

As expected every year, the Hebron governorate recorded the highest number of marriage contracts in the West Bank in 2002, with 3,287 contracts, while the Jericho governorate recorded the lowest number, with

only 234 contracts. In the Gaza Strip, the highest number of marriage contracts recorded in 2002 was in the Gaza governorate, where 3,814 contracts were registered. The lowest number of marriage contracts recorded was in the Rafah governorate, totaling 1,253 contracts. It should be noted that the Hebron and Gaza governorates are the largest in population in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip respectively, while the governorates of Jericho and Rafah are the smallest in population.

2-7-1-2 Early Marriage Still Prevalent

Data on marriage and divorce in the Palestinian territories from 1996 to 2002 indicate the prevalence of marriage at an early age, especially among women. The average age for the first marriage for that period was 18.4 for women and 23.5 for men. The average age for the first marriage for 2002 in the Palestinian territories was 19 years for women, and 24.2 for men: for women, it was 19.1 in the West Bank, and 18.9 in the Gaza Strip; and for men, it was 24.6 in the West Bank, and 23.7 in the Gaza Strip.

The average age at first marriage is noticeably higher among those with at least one university degree, registering at 24.2 years for women, and 26.9 for men. The average age for those with a preparatory stage certificate as their highest level of education was 17.1 years for women and 22.9 for men.

2-7-1-3 Polygamy Still Practiced

Polygamy is still a common phenomenon in the Palestinian territories. The rate of men already married to at least one woman and who got married again in 2002 was 7.3% in the West Bank and 7.4% in the Gaza Strip. It is noticed that the majority of these men (66.1% in the West Bank and 52.8% in the Gaza Strip) married women for whom the marriage was their first.

The number of men under the age of 30 taking a second wife made up 20% of the total in 2002, while 60.1% of the total were below 40 years of age. Men holding a BA degree or higher, who were married to at least one woman, and who got married again in 2002,

made up 14.0%, while 53.3% had less than a secondary education.

2-7-2 Decline in Divorce

The number of official divorces in the Palestinian territories in 2002 noticeably decreased, as compared with 2001. There were 3,046 official divorces in 2002, marking a decrease of 641 divorces or 17.4%, as compared with 2001. In the West Bank, there were 1,776 divorces in 2002, a decrease of 431 or 19.5%, as compared with 2001. In the Gaza Strip, there were 1,270 divorces, a decrease of 210 or 14.2%, as compared with 2001. Most of these official divorces in 2002 were in the governorates of Jerusalem and Gaza, reaching 381 and 428 divorces respectively. The lowest number of registered divorces was in the Tubas governorate in the West Bank and in Rafah in the Gaza Strip, with 38 and 149 divorces respectively.

2-7-2-1 High Crude Divorce Rates Continue in the Ramallah and Al-Bireh governorate

The crude divorce rate in the Palestinian territories was 0.88 per 1000 persons in mid-2002. The rate was 0.8 and 1.0 in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip respectively, which was close to the rates of the previous two years for the Palestinian territories. The crude divorce rate was highest in the Ramallah and Al-Bireh governorate, registering 1.83 per 1000 persons in mid-2002.

Data from 2002 show that the highest number of divorces was registered in September, with 324, while the lowest number was in April, with 139 cases.

It is also noticed that more than one third of divorce cases involved couples married for less than one year. There were 1,072 such cases, of which 638 were in the West Bank and 434 were in the Gaza Strip.

2-7-2-2 More Than A Quarter of Divorced Women Are under 20

Of all women divorced in 2002, 30% were under the age of 20, as compared with 4.4% of all men divorced and who were under 20. This supports the view that early marriage is

one of the main reasons for the high divorce rate, especially among women.

Age incompatibility may also be a reason for divorce. In 2002, there were 577 divorces, or 18.9%, in which the husband was at least 10 years older than his wife.

Men with a secondary school education or lower made up 73.2 % of all divorced men in 2002. The rate among divorced women was 79.2 %. The data do not necessarily suggest that a low level of education is a reason for divorce, especially if one takes into consideration that a high percentage of divorces involve people under the age of 25. It is likely that the age factor is more important than the level of education, although there is no doubt that education may have a positive effect on the success of a marriage. A difference in the levels of education between husbands and wives may also be an important factor in the occurrence of divorce. Divorced men with a bachelor's degree and whose ex-wives had only a secondary level education or lower, accounted for 62.2%, while divorced women who had a bachelor's degree and whose husbands had a secondary level education or lower accounted for 39.8 % of this group.

3. HEALTH

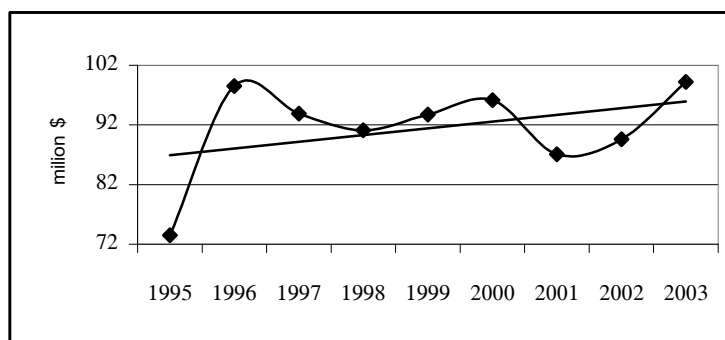
This section presents the most important health indicators and changes that took place

over the course of various years, especially between 2001 and 2002. It tackles both the quantitative and qualitative health indicators, based on official data and some surveys carried out by PCBS. Some indicators however were not updated for lack of data in the administrative records. It was not possible to update some data because no new surveys were conducted. In addition to the indicators related to the Palestinian health sector, this section includes a special part on the bulk of current public expenditure on the health sector in the Palestinian territories, and another part on the effect of the siege, oppression, and Israeli measures against the Palestinian health sector and on the population's health conditions.

3-1 Health Care Allocation from the General Budget

The bulk of the running expenditure on health care increased compared with the situation on the eve of the arrival of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). This increase however noticeably fluctuated, decreasing in 1997 and 1998 then increasing in the following two years, only to decrease once again in 2001, which is the first year of the current Intifada. The bulk of the running public expenditure allocated for the health sector increased in general from \$73 million in 1995 to \$100 million in 2003, which is the highest expenditure in the period studied (Figure 3-1).

Figure 3-1: Running Public Expenditure on the Palestinian, Health Sector 1995-2003
(in millions of dollars)

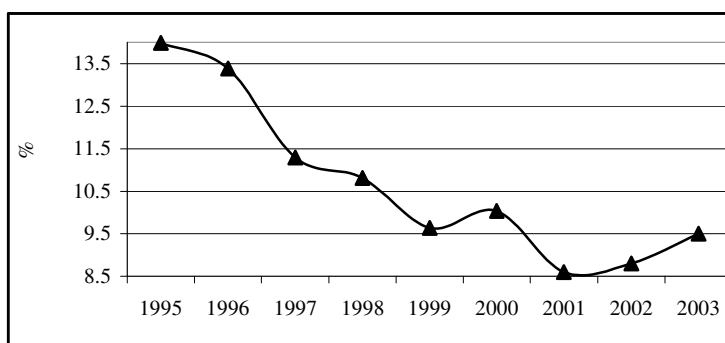


Source: Abdel Razeq, Omar (2002). Structure of the Palestinian General Budget. MAS-Ramallah

Despite the increase in the running public expenditure on the health sector, in the period between 1995 and 2003, this increase did not improve the health sector's share of the overall current public expenditure. Figure (3-2) shows a decrease in this share in the period between 1995 and 2001, from 14% to 8.5% respectively. The rate increased again,

reaching 9.5% in 2003, but remains low compared with the beginning of the period in question. The rate is also considered low in general because the Palestinian health sector needs development and advancement, in order to enable it to meet the health needs of the Palestinian society.

Figure 3-2 Health Care Allocation from Current Public Expenditure, 1995-2003 (%)



Source: Abdel Razeq, Omar (2002). Structure of the Palestinian General Budget. MAS-Ramallah

3-2 A Big Increase in the Reported Live Births in the Gaza Strip, and a Decrease in the West Bank

A noticeable increase of 2% was achieved in the reported number of live births in 2002, as compared with 2001. The total number of reported live births in 2002 was 94,406. The increase was limited to the Gaza Strip where reported live births increased by 9.6% in 2002, as compared with 2001. In the West Bank, there was a decrease in the number of reported live births by 4% between the two mentioned years. Data show that the reported number of live births in the Gaza Strip in 2001 was less than in 2000. This may be attributed to major changes in registration and not to the actual number of births, something that points to the importance of improving and developing the mechanisms for registering live births, and unifying the mechanisms used by various parties. (Annex, Table 3-1).

PCBS estimates indicate that the average life expectancy rose in 2002, as compared with 2001. The average life expectancy, which was 71.97 in 2001 (70.43 for men and 73.57 for women) rose to 72.1 in 2002 (70.43 for men and 73.57 for women).

3-3 Infant/Child Mortality

Ministry of Health data indicate a big increase in the reported rate of infant mortality in the Palestinian territories in 2002, as compared with 2001. The rate was 20.5% per 1000 live births in 2002, as compared with 14.5% per 1000 live births in 2001, (this increase may be due to an increase in reporting deaths). The Ministry of Health data also show that the increase in infant mortality rates is mainly due to the increase of mortality rates in the West Bank. The rate increased from 8.7 per 1000 live births in 2001 to 18.4 in 2002, or an increase of 52.7%. In the Gaza Strip, data showed a slight increase in infant mortality rate in 2002, compared with 2001 (23.3, as compared with 22.9) per 1000 live births (Annex, Table 3-3). It is noticed that the gap between infant mortality rates in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip shrank, but not due to positive developments in the Gaza Strip, but rather to negative developments in the West Bank. This is often because of Israel's oppressive measures against the Palestinian people, which lead to the deterioration of health conditions, especially in the West Bank which suffered several incursions and protracted curfews, as well as had to confront

military barriers on the roads linking various population centers, thus preventing the free movement of the people, and consequently obstructing their access to health services, especially for pregnant women.

In comparison with some neighboring Arab countries, the infant mortality rate in Palestine is higher than in Jordan where it was 20 per 1000 live births in 2000.⁵ This current situation is contrary to the situation which existed in previous years when the infant mortality rate in the Palestinian territories was less than that of Jordan. In Egypt however, the infant mortality rate was 51 per 1000 live births, which is higher than the rate in the Palestinian territories. The gap between the two countries however shrank due to the negative developments in the Palestinian territories resulting from Israel's oppressive measures. (Annex, Table 3-3).

With regards to the mortality rate among children under five years of age, Ministry of Health data indicate that it increased significantly in the Palestinian territories in 2002 (23.7 per 1000 live births), as compared with 2001 (18.5 per 1000 live births). The increase was limited to the West Bank, going from 11.9 per 1000 live birth in 2001 to 21.0 in 2002. In the Gaza Strip, this rate decreased from 27.9 per 1000 live births in 2001 to 27 in 2002 (Annex, Table 3-4). These figures related to children mortality indicate that the gap between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip has shrunk. The shrinking of this gap however was the result of negative developments in the West Bank because of Israel's oppressive measures, and not the result of any positive developments in the Gaza Strip, as was the case with the infant mortality rate. It is also possible that some of these changes in the rate of mortality among children under five years of age resulted from an increase in the registration of deaths.

Data released by the Ministry of Health also indicate that pre-natal conditions constituted the major cause for mortality in children under five years of age in the Palestinian territories: (52.6%) in 2002, as compared with (30.2%) in

2001. Congenital deformation came next, accounting for 16.1% of deaths in 2002, as compared with 21.9% in 2001, a decrease of 36%, and sudden death was the third greatest cause of death with 4.7% (Annex, Table 3-5). These figures indicate that deaths resulting from pre-natal conditions and congenital deformation are still the leading causes for mortality among children less than five years of age. This may be due to the difficulty of providing the necessary pre-natal medical care to pregnant women. It is certain however, that Israel's measures had a major impact, denying various Palestinian population centers, especially in the rural areas, access to health centers, especially the major ones which exist in the big cities.

3-4 Ratio of Physicians

According to available data, the average number of physicians per 100,000 people in 2002 was 141.5 physicians, and this is lower than in 2001 when it was 145.6 (Annex, Table 3-6). It is not possible to say however that there was a decrease in the ratio of physicians to population in the WBGs, since data are based on the number of physicians registered with the physicians' union. Any decrease may therefore be the result of failure by new members to register or by existing members to renew membership with the union.

Available data show that the average ratio of physicians to people in the Gaza Strip was better than in the West Bank, registering at 216 physicians per 100,000 in 2002, as compared with 98.5 physicians per 100,000 in the West Bank for the same year. There is therefore greater availability of medical staff in the Gaza Strip than in the West Bank, although both areas have lower ratios than some neighboring countries. In 1997, the average number of physicians per 100,000 in Jordan was 158, in Egypt 202, in Lebanon 191, and in Israel 459. These averages can be expected to have improved in subsequent years (Annex, Table 3-6).

3-5 Hospital Bed Capacity

According to Ministry of Health data, the ratio of hospital beds to every 1000 people did not

⁵ Save the Children, 2001. State of the World's Mothers 2001.

increase in 2002 when compared with 2001. The ratio was 1.4 beds for both years.

Data also show a slight improvement in the ratio of medical beds to people in the Gaza Strip, reaching 1.6 beds for 100,000 people in 2002, compared with 1.5 beds per 100,000 people in 2001. The ratio in the West Bank was steady at 1.3 beds for 100,000 people in the two years (Annex, Table 3-7). These figures indicate that the realized increase in the number of beds was not sufficient to improve its ratio to the population. This increase matched the natural growth of the population, taking into consideration the huge pressures placed on the health sector in recent years, due to the rise in the number of martyrs, injured and handicapped, which means that the rate of occupancy of these medical beds increased significantly.

3-6 Health Insurance

Data released by PCBS indicate a significant increase in the number of individuals with health insurance from 61.4% of the total Palestinian population in 2000 to 74.3% in 2002. As a result, only 25.7% of the Palestinians in the WBGs did not have health insurance in 2002 (Annex, Table 3-8), as compared with 39.6% in 2000. Although the use of health insurance has risen to unprecedented levels, there is a need for examining the quality and percentage of coverage offered by different insurance providers.

Government health insurance accounts for the vast majority of insurance coverage⁶, well ahead of other insurance providers, and the increase in the number of people with health insurance is mainly to the benefit of the government sector. The rate of people insured with the government insurance increased by

73.4% between 2000 and 2002, up from 27.9% of the total population in 2000, to 48.4% in 2002, the years of the Al-Aqsa Intifada. A decrease occurred in the number of people insured with private health insurance providers from 11% to 9.6% in 2000 and 2002 respectively. The number of people insured with UNRWA also decreased from 14.8% to 11.6% in the same period (Annex, Table 3-8).

It is safe to say that the deterioration of the economic situation was the main reason for the fall in private health insurance due to its high costs. It is noticed however that the number of people insured with the private sector was relatively increasing since the arrival of the Palestinian National Authority. Its sharp decline over the last year indicates the level of economic hardship within Palestinian families and the decline of their ability to afford this type of insurance. The increase in the government health insurance, on the other hand, can be attributed mainly to the fact that many households receive this insurance free once they are registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs as social cases deserving assistance. The number of social cases has increased during the current Intifada due to the increase in unemployment and the number of people killed who have families requiring support. Government health insurance may also have risen as a result of some households switching from the private to the government sector to cut costs.

3-7 Limited Increase in Primary Health Care Centers

Ministry of Health data show that the number of government primary health care centers in the Palestinian territories increased to 375 in 2002 (328 in the West Bank and 47 in the Gaza Strip), as compared with 373 in 2001. This increase was limited to the Gaza Strip where the number of centers increased by three, while the government health centers decreased by one in the West Bank. The number of health centers of the non-governmental organizations on the other hand, remained unchanged at 185 in the Palestinian territories (145 in the West Bank and 40 in the Gaza Strip). The number of UNRWA health care centers increased by two in 2002, to total

⁶ PCBS data on the distribution of health insurance among various sectors show the health insurance more used by the households, as some households have more than one health insurance from different parties, therefore the data includes the health insurance that is more often used by the household. Households with more than one health insurance available normally use the one that provides better services, which is usually the private sector health insurance. Therefore the data on the distribution of health insurance among various parties show a lower rate than that declared by the Ministry of Health on the rate of people insured with the Government Health Insurance.

55 (36 in the West Bank and 17 in the Gaza Strip), both in the West Bank, while the number of UNRWA health centers in the Gaza Strip remained unchanged (Annex, Table 3-9).

3-8 Impact of Israel's Measures on Health Conditions

The Palestinian health sector was the most affected among the social sectors by Israel's oppressive measures. This sector suffered damages to the infrastructure, as well as endured constant obstruction of its attempts at delivering its services to the citizens. The Israeli measures, which are on-going as of the writing of this report, are adding further to the burdens of this sector, which is still reeling from the Israeli occupation's attempts at sabotage aimed at destroying it beginning even before the arrival of the Palestinian National Authority.

3-8-1 Deaths

Ministry of Health data put the official number of Palestinians killed during the Al-Aqsa Intifada in the WBGs at 2,616, as of August 25, 2003. Another 14 Palestinians inside Israel were killed. The total number of people above 18 years of age killed by the Israelis was 2,078, while the number of children under 18 years old was 538. This means that 20.6% of the total number of people killed by the Israelis were children.⁷

3-8-2 Injured

Ministry of Health data put the number of people registered as injured at 36,737, as of August 25, 2003. The injuries are broken down as follows: 65.9% from live bullets, 12.4% from shelling, 8% from explosions, 0.5% from tear gas, 0.1% from rubber bullets, and 2.9% from other means.⁸

3-8-3 Difficulties in Obtaining Health Services and Food

No new data were available other than what was provided in the last issue of the Social

Monitor on the possibility of obtaining health services and food. PCBS conducted a survey on these issues in 2002. The Survey results showed that 40% of households faced difficulties in obtaining health services during the Intifada. Inability to pay for the costs of these services was the main reason, accounting for 78.4%. A rate of 37.2% of these households were not able to get health services due to the curfew imposed (Annex, Table 3-10). A PCBS nutrition survey conducted in 2002 showed that 63.4% of the households faced difficulties in obtaining the necessary food provisions during the Intifada: 86.8% of these households reported that the siege was the main reason, 40.8% said it was the curfews, and 57.1% said the reason was the loss of the primary income source (Annex, Table 3-11). Data also showed that the Palestinian households adopted mechanisms to adapt to the decrease of food: 38.8% of these households resorted to using their savings in order to obtain food provisions; 32.1% of the households in the Palestinian territories relied basically on the food assistance they received (Annex, Table 3-12).

3-8-4 Widespread Malnutrition and Anemia

PCBS and other institutions conducted surveys on nutrition in the Palestinian territories in 2002, but no new data were available on the situation of nutrition after these surveys were conducted. Due to the importance of this issue for public health in Palestinian society, it is necessary to refer back to the results of these surveys, even though they were mentioned in the previous issue of the Social Monitor.

The PCBS nutrition survey conducted in 2002 showed that anemia is widespread among 33.2% of women of childbearing age (15-49 years old) (31.4% in the West Bank and 36.4% in the Gaza Strip) (Annex, Table 3-13). Anemia among children aged six to 59 months was also prevalent. The results showed that 38% of them suffered from anemia (33.5% in the West Bank and 41.6% in the Gaza Strip). Severe anemia affected 0.2% and moderate anemia 15.3% (Annex, Table 3-14).

⁷ The Palestinian Ministry of Health, 2002, Intifada Data Base, the Electronic page of the Ministry-Gaza.

⁸ The Palestinian Ministry of Health, 2002, Intifada Data Base, the Electronic page of the Ministry-Gaza.

According to PCBS data, the prevalence of malnutrition-related problems among children aged six to 59 months was also apparent. The results indicated a 12.5% increase in the number of children suffering from stunted growth in 2002, as compared with 2000 (before the outbreak of the Intifada). An increase was also recorded in emaciation and low weight at 78.5% and 34.6% respectively (Annex, Table 3-15).

According to the 2002 PCBS survey, 9% of children suffered from moderate stunted growth (chronic malnutrition), and 2.5% suffered from moderate low weight (acute malnutrition). A study conducted on behalf of USAID by Al-Quds University in the same period showed that 11.7% of children suffered from moderate stunted growth (chronic malnutrition) and 7.8% suffered from moderate and acute emaciation. These different results may be attributed to the difference in sample sizes⁹ or the methodology of counting values.

sector, including data related to its running public expenditure and its share of the running public expenditure. It also includes indicators related to educational characteristics typical of individuals in Palestinian society, as well as data related to kindergartens, basic and secondary schools, and the higher education sector. The section also includes some indicators related to the effects of Israel's oppression and aggression on the educational sector in the Palestinian territories, it being one of the most important sectors in the Palestinian society.

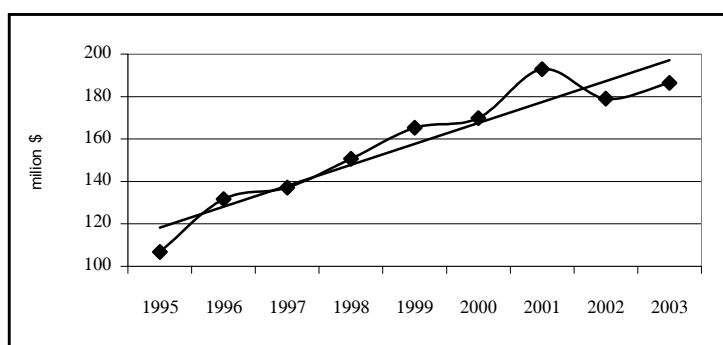
4-1 Budget Allocation for Education

Available data show an increase in the current public expenditure on the Palestinian education sector in the period between 1995 and 2003. Expenditure on basic and secondary education increased noticeably from the beginning of this period up to 2001, going up gradually every year from about \$105 million to \$190 million, then decreasing to \$180 million in 2002, only to increase once again in 2003 to \$185 million (Figure 4-1).

4. EDUCATION

This section includes the most important indicators related to the Palestinian educational

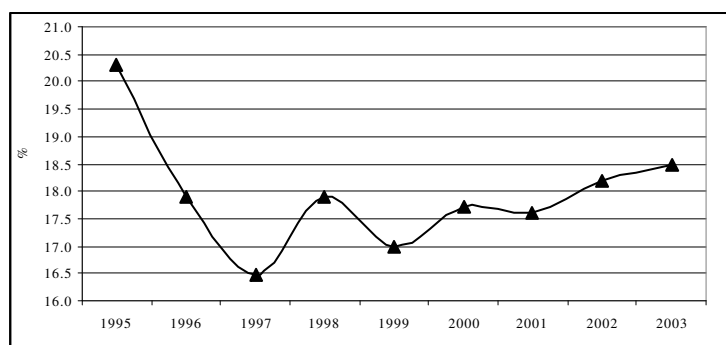
Figure 4-1: Public Expenditure on Palestinian Education Up to the End of Secondary Stage, 1995-2003 (millions of \$)



Source: Abdel Razeq, Omar (2002). Structure of the Palestinian General Budget. MAS-Ramallah

⁹ The sample size of the PCBS survey was 5,228 households, while the Al-Quds University sample included 1000 households.

Figure 4-2 Public Expenditure on Education Up to the End of the Secondary Stage 1995-2003 (%)



Source: Abdel Razeq, Omar (2002). Structure of the Palestinian General Budget. MAS-Ramallah

Although the current public expenditure on the basic and secondary educational sector increased in the period between 1995 and 2003, the allocation to this sector from the current public expenditure in general was changing from one year to the next. Figure 4-2 shows that the allocation to the educational sector in 1995 amounted to 20.4% of the total current public expenditure, and decreased in 1996 and 1997 amounting to no more than 16.5%, but then increased in the following years but with clear fluctuations. Figure 4-2 shows an increase in the last two years of this period (2002 and 2003), bringing the educational allocation up to 18.5% of the total current public expenditure. This rate however remained fluctuating compared with the first year of the period in question

4-2 Educational Characteristics within Palestinian Society

4-2-1 Literacy: A Closing Gender Gap

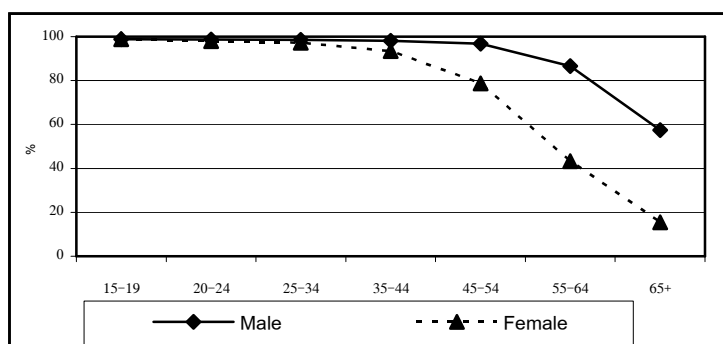
The results of the PCBS Labor Force Survey of 2002 showed that illiteracy among individuals aged 15 or older in the WBGs was 9.0%, as compared with 9.8% according to the same survey's results for 2001. The results of the Labor Force Survey of 2002 also showed a gender gap in illiteracy rates with 4.3% of men and 13.6% of women, as compared with 4.7% of men and 15% of women in accordance with the same survey's results for 2001. It is clear

that the decrease in illiteracy rates included both men and women (Annex, Table 4-1).

On the regional level, the illiteracy rate was close in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, with that of the West Bank lower at 8.8% than the 9.3% in the Gaza Strip. The lower rate in the West Bank is attributed to a higher illiteracy rate among men in the Gaza Strip than in the West Bank (5.2% in the Gaza Strip and 3.9% in the West Bank), although the illiteracy rate among women in the Gaza Strip is lower than in the West Bank (13.5% and 13.7 % respectively) (Annex, Table 4-1).

The 2002 Labor Force Survey underlines the fact that the illiteracy gap between the genders is widest mainly among the older age groups and is very limited in the younger age groups. Data show that literacy in the Palestinian territories among the 15-19 years age groups is equal between men and women reaching 98.8% in 2002. Literacy rates among people 65 years and older was 57.5% for men and 15.5% for women. Literacy rates among people 55 to 64 years of age were 86.6% for men and 43.3% for women in 2002. These rates reflect a non-existing gender gap in the young age groups and a large gap in the older age groups. These rates also indicate that the illiteracy rate among men and women increases as the age groups get older (Annex, Table 4-2, and Figure 4-3 below).

Figure 4-3 Literacy rates in the Palestinian population (15 years and older) in the WBS, by Age and Gender. 2002



Source: PCBS, 2003 Labor Force Survey Data Base. Ramallah-Palestine

4-2-2 Academic Attainment: Slight improvement

The results of the PCBS 2001 and 2002 Labor Force Surveys showed that the rate of individuals over 15 years old who completed a university degree or higher (BA and above) remained almost unchanged in both these two years, reaching 6.4% in 2002, as compared with 6.5% in 2001. Data also revealed that this stable situation included both genders. The rate of males who completed a university degree or higher totaled 8.8% in 2002, as compared with 8.7% in 2001, and the rate of women who completed a university degree or higher remained unchanged at 4.1% for both years. The rate of individuals who did not complete any educational level decreased to 16.8% in 2002, as compared with 18.1% in 2001. This rate was 12.0% among men in 2002, as compared with 13.2% in 2001, and 21.4% among women in 2002, as compared with 23.2% in 2001 (Annex, Table 4-1).

4-3 Indicators Relating to Educational Institutions

4-3-1 More Schools but Fewer Kindergartens

The database of the educational sector in Palestine shows an annual increase in the number of both basic and secondary schools, and an annual decrease in the number of kindergartens that began with the outbreak of the Al-Aqsa Intifada. The total number of

schools and kindergartens combined was 2,764 in the scholastic year 2002/2003, as compared with 2,724 in 2001/2002. The increase was limited to schools, while the number of kindergartens decreased from 806 kindergartens in 2001/2002 to 758 in 2002/2003. The number of basic schools increased from 1,364 in 2001/2002 to 1,404 in 2002/2003, and the number of secondary schools increased from 554 to 602 during these two years respectively (Annex, Table 4-3).

Data from the Database of the Educational Survey conducted by the Ministry of Higher Education show that the number of schools under various supervisory authorities increased in the last scholastic year (2002/2003). The number of governmental schools increased this year to 1,493 schools, as compared with 1,415 schools in the previous year, an increase of 5.5%. The number of private schools increased by 2.1%, from 239 to 244 schools in the same period. The number of UNRWA schools increased by 1.9%, from 264 to 269 schools. These figures show that the average increase in governmental schools was higher than UNRWA schools, which points to the financial crisis which UNRWA is suffering and which obstructs its ability to provide the necessary services to the Palestinian refugees, including education, health, and other services (Annex, Table 4-4).

4-3-2 Natural Increase of School Students and Decrease in Kindergarten Enrollment

The total number of students in schools and kindergartens in the Palestinian territories increased in the scholastic year 2002/2003 to 1,045,982 students of both sexes, an increase of 3.17 % compared with the scholastic year 2001/2002. This rate matches the population's natural growth. This increase however was limited to school students in both the basic and secondary stages, while the number of students in kindergartens decreased (Annex, Table 4-5).

Data show that the increase in the number of students in the secondary stage was highest, reaching 8.8% in 2002/2003 of all students enrolled in schools, as compared with 8.2% in 2001/2002. The rate of basic stage students remained almost unchanged. The students of this stage made up 85.3% in the 2002/2003 academic year, as compared with 85.2% in 2001/2002. The increase in the school student rate of the total students in schools and kindergartens resulted from the decrease in the number of kindergarten enrolled children. The children of this stage made up 5.9% of the total students at the beginning of the 2002/2003 academic year, a decline from 6.6% in 2001/2002 (Annex, Table 4-5).

Data show that the rate of male and female enrollment in schools and kindergartens in the 2001/2002 and 2002/2003 academic years were almost unchanged. Male students enrolled in schools and kindergartens made 50.4% in both these two years, while female students made up 49.6% in these two years.

Data also show that the government sector continued to absorb the majority of students, accounting for 65.2% of the total, followed by UNRWA schools which absorbed 23.7%, and finally private schools which absorbed 11.2% during the 2002/2003 academic year. Data also show an increase in students enrolled in government schools, and this increase is at the expense of the student rates in UNRWA and private sector schools. It is also interesting that this increase happened following the outbreak of the Intifada, while the general trend had previously been for greater student enrollment

in private schools (Annex, Table 4-6). This reversal is often attributed to the deterioration of the economic conditions of the population, which makes it difficult for some to send their children to private schools, contrary to the trend that had prevailed before the Intifada, namely the increase of student enrollment in private schools at the expense of government schools.

4-3-3 Male/Female Basic Stage Enrollment Unchanged

The ratio of female to male enrollment in the basic stage in 2002/2003 remained unchanged when compared with 2001/2002, staying at 98 female students for every 100 male students. The trend since the arrival of the PNA had been positively moving towards reducing the gap. Data also show that this steadiness included the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, keeping the gender gap in the two areas as it is. At the secondary education level there was a slight improvement in the ratio of female to male student enrollment, registering at 109 females to every 100 male students in the 2002/2003 academic year, as compared with the previous 108 female students to every 100 male students (Annex, Table 4-7).

Regarding the distribution of students in various educational branches, data showed the limited enrollment in vocational branches. Those students enrolled in vocational education made up 4.64% of the total number of students at the secondary education level in 2002/2003, and the rest were all enrolled in various academic branches. In 2001/2002, the rate of students enrolled in vocational branches was 4.67% of all students in the secondary education level. Data showed a decrease in the rate of male students enrolled in vocational branches, from 7.09% to 6.90% in the same period, while a slight improvement was registered among female students enrolling in vocational education, with an increase from 2.45% to 2.56% (Annex, Table 4-8).

4-3-4 An Increase in Teachers Exceeding the Increase of Students

The number of teachers increased in WBGS schools and kindergartens by 4.32% in the

2002/2003 academic year, as compared with the previous year. The total number of teachers in schools and kindergartens was 37,643 in 2002/2003, as compared with 36,083 in 2001/2002, an increase of 4.3%. This rate is higher than the student increase rate we mentioned earlier and which registered at 3.17%. Data show an improvement in the educational qualifications of the teachers in the last academic year. The number of teachers who have associate degrees or general secondary certificates decreased in the two academic years 2001/2002 and 2002/2003, while the number of teachers who have a BA degree or higher increased for the same period, something that reflects an improvement in the educational levels of teachers in the Palestinian territories (Annex, Table 4-9).

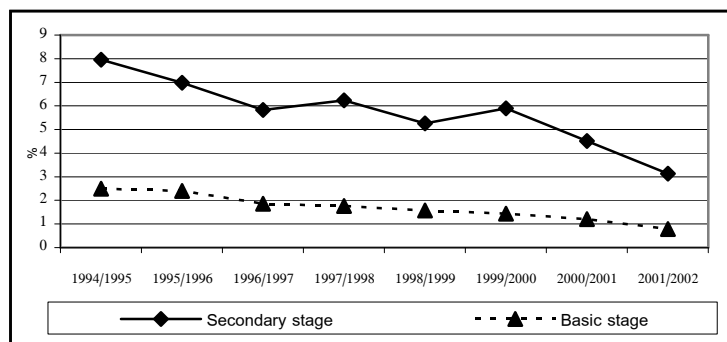
4-3-5 Decrease in Drop-Out Rates Continues

Drop-out rates at the basic level of education decreased according to available data to 0.79% for both sexes in the WBS for the 2001/2002 academic year, as compared with 1.20% in 2000/2001. The drop-out rate among

male students at the basic level decreased to 0.94%, as compared with 1.5% for both academic years respectively. The drop-out rate among female students also decreased at the same level to 0.63%, as compared with 0.89% for the same periods. Data show that the decrease in the drop-out rate at the basic level included both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip where the drop-out rates decreased in both and for both sexes at the same time (Annex, Table 4-10, and Figure 4-4).

The drop-out rate at the secondary level decreased to 3.13% in the WBS for both genders for the 2001/2002 academic year, as compared with 4.51% in 2000/2001. The drop-out rate among male students decreased to 2.32%, as compared with 3.47%, and it also decreased among female students to 3.87%, as compared with 5.46% in the above-mentioned period itself. Data also showed that the decrease of drop-out rates at the secondary level were in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and for both genders (Annex, Table 4-10, and Figure 4-4). This decrease may be partially attributed to shrinking job opportunities due to the prevailing conditions.

Figure 4-4: Drop-Out Rates in the WBS, by Educational Level, 1994/1995- 2001/2002



Source: PCBS and Ministry of Education (various years)-Ramallah-Palestine

4-3-6 Grade Repetition Rates: Improvement at the Basic Level, Decline at the Secondary Level

The rate of grade repetition decreased in the WBS. The decrease was limited to the basic level, while it remained almost unchanged at the secondary level. The repetition rate at the

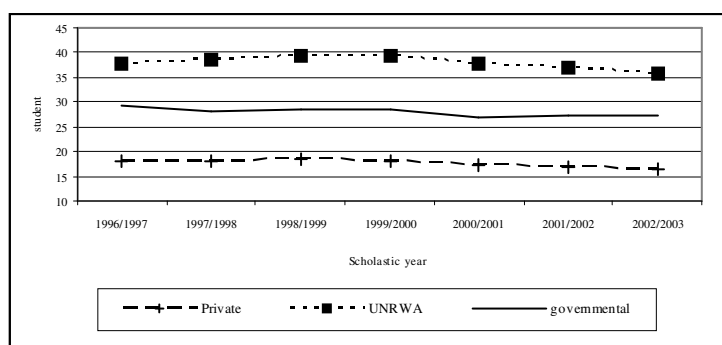
basic level decreased to 1.63% of students at this stage in the 2001/2002 academic year, as compared with 2.02% in 2000/2001. The decrease was reflected in both the West Bank and the Gaza strip and for both genders as well. The repetition rate at the secondary level was 1.10% in 2001/2002, as compared with 1.09 % in 2000/2001. This slight increase in

the grade repetition rate was limited to the Gaza Strip where the rate increased from 0.78% in 2000/2001 to 1.01% in 2001/2002. The rate however decreased in the West Bank from 1.30% to 1.15% in these two academic years. The increase in the repetition rate at the secondary level was limited to female students going up from 0.82% to 0.91%, and decreasing among male students from 1.38% to 1.30% in the two above-mentioned academic years (Annex, Table 4-11).

4-3-7 Student/Teacher Ratio Improved

The student /teacher ratio improved in the WBSGS to 27.8 students per teacher for the 2002/2003 academic year, as compared with 28.1 students per teacher in 2001/2002 (Annex, Table 4-12). The improvement was reflected in the governmental, UNRWA and private schools. Kindergartens on the other hand suffered an increase in the number of children per teacher. Figure 4-5 shows the trends of student/teacher ratios by supervisory authority for various years.

Figure 4-5: Student/Teacher Ratios by Supervisory Authority, 1996/1997 – 2001/2002 Academic Years



Source: PCBS and the Ministry of Education (various years)-Ramallah-Palestine

4-3-8 Class Size: Limited Change

The average number of students per class in kindergartens in the 2002/2003 academic year increase to 25.1 students per class in the WBSGS, as compared with 24.7 students per class in 2001/2002. At the elementary level, the average decreased slightly from 37.1 to 36.7. At the secondary level, the average remained steady at 30.6 students per class in the two mentioned academic years consecutively. Data also show that class size in the West Bank is generally lower than in the Gaza Strip, which means that more classrooms have to be built in the Gaza Strip than in the west Bank, even though the average number of students per class is high in both regions (Annex, Table 4-13).

Data also showed an increase in the average number of children per class in kindergartens, which almost all belong to the private sector. The average increased from 24.7 children per

class in the 2001/2002 academic year to 25.1 per class in the 2002/2003 academic year. This increase is contrary to an average decrease that had been registering since the 1994/1995 academic year, and until 2001/2002 (Annex, Table 4-14).

4-3-9 Higher Education

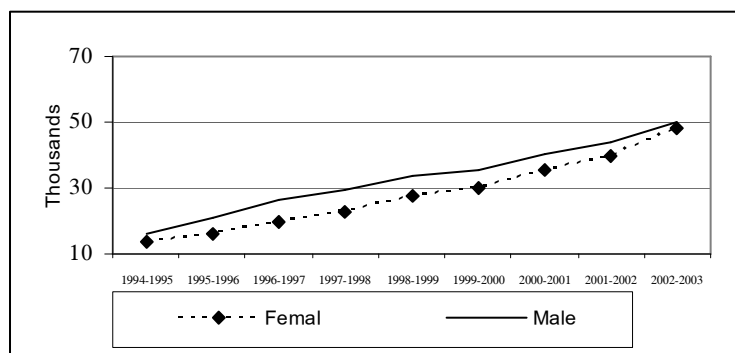
The number of Palestinian university students increased by 18.1% in 2002/2003, as compared with the 2001/2002 academic year, up from 83,408 students in 2001/2002 to 98,546 in 2002/2003. This rate is considerably much higher than that registered in previous years, when for example the rate of increase between 2000/2001 and 2001/2002 was about 10.4% (Annex, Table 4-15). The mentioned table shows that the increase rate in the number of Palestinian university students decreased in the first year that followed the outbreak of the Intifada, but then increased significantly in the last scholastic year. This

may be due to adaptive measures taken by the Palestinian universities and the Ministry of Higher Education, to cope with the emergency conditions resulting from the Israeli occupation's oppressive measures against the Palestinian people. Such adaptive measures had a positive effect in restoring the enrollment of large numbers of students in the Palestinian universities.

Data show that the relative increase in the number of female students was much higher than the relative increase in the number of male students. The increase rate among female students was 22.2%, but it was only 14.2% among male students during the two academic years 2001/2002 and 2002/2003 (Annex, Table 4-15). These data show that the overall

increase achieved in the number of students in local universities was higher among female students, which contributed to reducing the gap in the female/male student enrollment ratio in Palestinian universities. The female/male student ratio became 97%, which means 97 female students for every 100 male students. The data also show an annual trend of reduction in the gap between male and female students enrolled in Palestinian universities. It is important however to not that these data do not take into account those students enrolled in non-Palestinian universities abroad. The shrinking gap in local universities however is considered a positive trend within Palestinian society which is asserting the importance of educating women (Figure 4-6).

Figure 4-6 Distribution of University Students by Gender, 1994/1995 to 2002/2003



Source: PCBS and Ministry of Education (various years) Ramallah-Palestine

An increase was also achieved in the number of students in community colleges in the 2002/2003 academic year with a total number of 5,892 students, as compared with 5,313 students in 2001/2002, an increase of 10.9%, as compared with only 7.03% in both 2000/2001 and 2001/2002. The increase in the number of students included students of both genders in community colleges in the last academic year. The increase in the rate of male students however was higher than that of female students, reaching 22.5%, as compared with only 1.4% for female students. The big increase in the rate of male students compared with female students was reflected in the balancing out between the number of male students and female students in community colleges, contrary to the previous years when

the rate of female students was higher than that of male students in these colleges (Annex, Table 4-15).

4-4 Israel's Oppression Obstructs the Educational Process

The Palestinian Ministry of Education published reports on the Israeli aggression against the Palestinian educational system in the period between September 29, 2000 and December 15, 2003, showing an increase in the number of student martyrs, reaching 420 martyrs during this period. In the 2000/2001 academic year 96 students were martyred, another 151 students were martyred in 2001/2002, and another 131 students were martyred in 2002/2003. The number of

students injured in the same period was 3,018, of whom 2,151 were injured in the first year of the Intifada, 476 in the second year of the Intifada, and 362 in the third year.

In addition to the students killed or injured, there was a large number of students who were arrested, many of whom are still in detention centers. The number of students detained in the period included in the Ministry of Education reports was 166 students, all of whom were denied their basic right to an education.

Israel's oppressive measures were not limited to human beings. During the Israeli aggressions, major damage was caused to educational institutions. A large number of schools were subjected to shelling and raids, some schools were turned into military encampments, thus preventing students and staff from accessing their schools and the possibility of continuing their educational process normally. The Israeli occupation also closed a number of schools by military orders and denied students and teachers any access during the said period. In addition, Israel's policy of siege and of separating the regions from one another often hindered the educational process by preventing students and teachers from reaching their schools.

Israeli Violations against the Palestinian Education System Resulting from the Apartheid Wall

The Israeli occupation authorities are currently building a separation wall in the regions of Jenin, Tulkarem, Qalqilyia, Ramallah, Bethlehem and Jerusalem. This wall is expected to be 360 kilometers long, and is likely to reach 650 km with the expansion and the second wall. Ultimately, the length of this wall is expected to be three times that of the Berlin wall and twice as high.

The already built part of the wall in the north of the West Bank has led to the following: separating and isolating five population centers from one another in the Jenin region with a population of 4,100 people, four schools, and 890 students. A total of 177 school-boys and -girls in these areas are thus forced to move to other population centers' schools for study.

Four population centers were also separated and isolated from one another in the Tulkarem region. These centers have a population of 6,500 people, 10

schools with 1,728 students. Some 61 school-boys and -girls were forced to move to other population centers in order to enroll in the schools there.

In the Qalqilyia region, three population centers were separated and isolated from one another, with a population of 700 people, with one joint school for 133 students. 260 students were consequently forced to move to other population centers to continue their study.

(Report issued by
the Palestinian Ministry of Education-
from the Ministry's electronic page)

Israel's oppressive measures left their huge impact on the educational process at the universities and community colleges. The universities were closed for protracted periods during the curfews imposed on the Palestinian cities by the Israeli occupation. Some universities were also closed by unjust military orders, as was the case with the Hebron University. A number of universities were raided by the Israeli occupation forces, and student dormitories were repeatedly raided and a number of students arrested.

Israeli occupation policies impacted the whole educational process in the Palestinian territories both at the quantitative and qualitative levels. It is also expected that the effects of Israel's oppression will continue for a long time to come, a thing that requires adopting a well thought-out policy to limit the negative effects on the educational process and on Palestinian society in general. Israel's oppressive measures against the Palestinian people in general, and against students in particular constitute an obstructive factor for the Palestinian educational process, and negatively reflects on the students' performance and their access to their schools and educational institutions.

5. CULTURE

This section covers a number of cultural indicators that provide data for 2002, and give a general overview of the most important characteristics and trends in this area.

This section also deals with data from previous years, particularly data pertaining to individual participation in cultural activities. These recently published data clarify certain aspects of cultural life in the WBGS.

Unless otherwise specified, this section is based on statistical data provided by PCBS in its 2002 Report on Cultural Statistics in the Palestinian Territories.

5-1 Decrease in the Number of Active Cultural Centers¹⁰

The number of active¹¹ cultural centers in the WBGS decreased from 69 centers in 2001 to 50 in 2002. This decrease of 27.5% was mainly in the West Bank (16 fewer centers), but there were also three fewer centers in the Gaza Strip. The number of licensed cultural centers in the WBGS however remained unchanged at 199 centers in 2001 and 2002. Of these centers, 158 were in the West Bank and 41 in the Gaza Strip.

The number of licensed but closed centers and those which did not hold any activity was 149 centers in 2002, 123 of them were licensed in the West Bank and 26 in the Gaza Strip.

Data show that most active cultural centers are found in the Hebron and Nablus governorates where 25 of the 35 active centers in the West Bank are located. A rate of 37.1% of the active cultural centers in the West Bank is located in the Hebron governorate, and 34.3% in the Nablus governorate. In the Gaza Strip, active centers are found mainly in the Gaza and Dair Al-Balah governorates where 11 of the 15 active centers are located. In other words, of all active centers in the Gaza Strip, 33.3% and 40% of them are located in the Gaza and Dair al-Balah governorates respectively (Table 5-1).

Active cultural centers vary in terms of size and number of activities and effectiveness. The Ramallah and Al-Bireh governorate, especially the cities of Ramallah and Al-Bireh,

has a big share of a variety of cultural activities, including lectures, workshops, conferences, artistic activities, theatrical performances, cinema, children's recreational activities, and others. This is despite the fact that there are only three active cultural centers in the governorate, but the active centers in Ramallah and Al-Bireh are big, and there are a number of cultural institutions that are classified as government or private institutions, such as the Khalil Al-Sakakini Center or the Popular Art Center. In addition, some institutions not licensed as cultural institutions conduct a wide range of cultural activities, as does the First Sariyyah and the Baladna Cultural Center.

The decrease in the number of active cultural centers in 2002 reflects the negative impact of the occupation's oppressive measures on cultural activities in general, and on the ability of those running these centers to continue their activities. The big gap between the number of licensed centers and those actually active reflects an inefficient licensing process.

5-1-1 Drop in the Number of Cultural Activities

Activities at the active cultural centers in 2002 included symposia, lectures, general courses, artistic performances, and exhibitions. Cultural activities held at these centers were broken down as follows: 229 symposia, 115 lectures, 645 general courses, 239 artistic performances, and 47 artistic exhibitions.

In comparison with 2001, 2002 saw 54% fewer symposia, 45% fewer general courses, 62% fewer artistic exhibitions, and 18% fewer artistic performances. Lectures however increased slightly by 6%.

5-1-2 Drop in Attendance

Of all cultural activities, art performances attracted the largest audiences to these centers, a total of 35,366 visitors. The general courses brought in 33,031 participants. Artistic exhibitions attracted 26,199 visitors. Symposia attracted 13,414 participants, and lectures brought in 3,838 participants.

¹⁰ These data do not include the governmental cultural centers or the cultural activities of organizations not licensed as cultural organizations.

¹¹ By active, it is meant those centers which performed activities during the year.

These data show a decrease in the number of participants in cultural center activities in 2002, as compared with 2001.

The number of visitors to artistic exhibitions decreased by 76%, as compared with 2001, and totaled no more than 14% of all visitors in 2000.

The number of participants in general courses in 2002 decreased by 42%, as compared with 2001. The number slightly increased from the year 2000 (4%).

The number of participants in symposia in 2002 decreased by 42%, as compared with the previous year, and by 35%, as compared with participants in 2000.

The number of attendants of artistic exhibitions in 2002 continued to fall, decreasing by 19%, as compared with 2001, and 41%, as compared with 2000.

The number of participants in general lectures held by the cultural centers in 2002 decreased by 5%, as compared with 2001, and by 52%, as compared with 2000.

These data reflect the huge impact of the occupation's oppressive measures and of its incursions during the Intifada years on the cultural activities in the Palestinian territories in the second quarter of 2002. Public festivals which used to attract large audiences came to a complete halt, as did the International Book Fair, which had, in recent years, become an annual tradition.

The occupation's oppression, the Palestinians' ways of confronting it, and the ramifications of the continued state of conflict with the occupation during the Al-Aqsa Intifada were the main topics for the cultural activities in the WBGS. Most lectures, symposia and conferences held in 2002 were related to issues about the Intifada and Israel's oppression and its consequences. Children's activities were also linked to efforts aimed at alleviate the burdens of the occupation's oppression of children, especially those activities that were conducted within the framework of psychological and social support provided by governmental and non-governmental organizations in the WBGS.

5-2 Decrease in the Number of Daily Newspapers

Between 1998 and 2002, the number of daily newspapers remained unchanged at a total of three Arabic daily newspapers. In addition, there were 4 weekly and 1 bi-weekly (published once every two weeks) newspapers, for a total of 8 published newspapers altogether, but which is half the number of newspapers of 2001. There are 6 newspapers published in the West Bank, 5 fewer than 2001. Two newspapers are published in the Gaza Strip, 3 fewer than in the years 1998-2001. All newspapers published in the WBGS are political.¹² The number of licensed newspapers remained unchanged in 2001 and 2002, counting 25 newspapers in the WBGS, of which 19 in the West Bank and 6 in the Gaza Strip.

5-3 Decrease in the Number of Magazines

Although the number of licensed magazines in the WBGS increased in the period between 1998 and 2002, the number of published magazines decreased from 42 in 1998 to 33 in 1999, 32 in 2000, 30 in 2001, and then to 16 in 2002. Of the published magazines in 2002, 75% were mainly in the West Bank, in the governorates of Jerusalem and Ramallah and Al-Bireh. The remaining 25% were in the Gaza Strip, all but one were published in the Gaza governorate, and one in the Khan Yunis governorate.

The number of licensed magazines in the WBGS was 121 in 2002, which is the same number as 2001. Of these, 97 were in the West Bank and 24 in the Gaza Strip.

Most published magazines are published periodically. PCBS data for 2002 showed that there were 8 magazines published quarterly, 6 were monthly, 1 was weekly and 1 was bi-weekly.

The published magazines were classified as follows: 2 economic publications, 2 cultural, 1 political, 2 religious, 1 scientific, 5

¹² The total number of newspapers in the Palestinian territories was 16 in 2001, three of which were apolitical.

comprehensive and 4 dealing with other specialized subjects.

5-4 Museums

The number of licensed museums in the WBGS in 2002 was the same as in 2001, 13 of which were licensed in the West Bank and located mostly in the central and southern regions. Two other museums were licensed in the Gaza Strip. The number of museums actually operating decreased from 9 in 2001 to 5 in 2002, all of which were in the West Bank. Most operating museums specialized in antiquities, heritage and folkloric costume.

Data revealed a noticeable decrease in the number of museum visitors in 2002, from 15,751 in 2001 to 9,512 visitors in 2002.

5-5 Decrease in the Number of Theater-Goers

The number of licensed theaters in the WBGS in 2002 was 9, which is the same number as 2001, 8 of which were in the West Bank and one in the Gaza Strip. Only 4 of the theaters were operating however, and the other five were closed (all in the West Bank).

A total of 182 theatrical plays were performed in 2002, 179 of which were in the West Bank, and the other 3 in the Gaza Strip. These plays were classified according to the targeted audience as follows: 121 children's plays, 39 plays for adults, and 22 plays for both children and adults. The audiences for these plays totaled 24,119.

In comparison, there were 196 theatrical plays performed in 2001, 195 of which were in the West Bank, and one in the Gaza Strip. These plays were classified according to the targeted audience as follows: 98 children's plays, 88 plays for adults, 10 plays for both children and adults. The audiences for these plays totaled 45,681.

5-6 Number of Films-Screenings Decreased

The number of licensed cinema halls in 2002 was four, which is the same as 2001, all of

which were in the West Bank, and in the cities of Al-Bireh, Nablus and Tulkarem.

The licensed cinema halls screened 187 films in 2002, of which 31 were Arabic films and 156 foreign films. The audiences for these films totaled 23,932 people. In 2001, the number of screened films was 350, 28 of which were Arabic and 322 were foreign, and the audiences for these films totaled 41,257 people. Some cultural centers and institutions, such as the Popular Art Center and Al-Qasaba Center, also held film screenings regularly.

5-7 Radio/TV Stations

There were 15 radio stations in the WBGS in 2002, which is unchanged from 2001. This however represents an increase of 7 stations since 1998, and 4 since 1999. These stations included 14 local commercial stations based in the West Bank, and one national station, (Voice of Palestine – Sawt Falastin) broadcasting from Ramallah and which is the only government-run station.

The number of television stations running in the WBGS in 2002 remained unchanged at 32, compared with the previous two years, but an increase of two stations since 1998. No new stations opened in 1999. These stations included 31 local commercial stations, all based in the West Bank and one national television station (Palestine TV) based in the Gaza Strip, with branch studios in Ramallah, and which is the only government-run television station.

Available data show that 93% of Palestinian households had television sets in 2002, a rate of 95.1% in the West Bank and 89.2% in the Gaza Strip. Of all Palestinian households in the Palestinian territories, 54.2% have a satellite receiver, almost equally broken down between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (54.2% in the West Bank and 54.3% in the Gaza Strip) (PCBS, 2003 I).

Previous data show that television sets have become a necessary commodity for Palestinian households. Also, the increase in satellite ownership indicates an increase in satellite channel viewing.

Data also show that 16.7% of Palestinian households own a video system, those in the West Bank are double those in the Gaza Strip (20.2% in the West Bank and 10.1% in the Gaza Strip).

5-8 Ownership of Personal Computers Limited

In 2002, 12.9% of households in the Palestinian territories owned a computer. The rate is slightly higher in the West Bank, with 13.6%, as compared with 10.6% in the Gaza Strip.

Home access to the internet is still weak, at 1.8% of households in the Palestinian territories, 2% in the West Bank and 1.6% in the Gaza Strip (PCBS, 2003 I).

5-9 The Israeli Occupation Continued Targeting the Press

The Israeli occupation's forces escalated their attacks against journalists and press institutions in the WBGS in 2002, especially during their incursions into the main West Bank cities. They targeted the Palestinian media, setting the Voice of Palestine (Sawt Falastin) building ablaze, and destroying the main transmission tower. The Israeli forces also occupied the offices of some local television stations, such as the Watan and Amwaj television stations, for protracted periods, and damaged their facilities.

Legal reports indicated that the number of attacks against journalists by the occupation forces, since the outbreak of the Al-Aqsa Intifada on September 29, 2000 until September 30, 2002, was 459 cases.

The Palestinian Center for Human Rights in Gaza classified the documented attacks against the media and journalists as follows: five journalists were killed by the occupation forces, 128 cases where journalists were injured by a premeditated shooting by the occupation soldiers, and 61 cases where journalists were targeted but no casualties were reported. Also, journalists were beaten and harassed by the occupation forces in 60

cases, and were detained and interrogated in 138 cases. The occupation forces shelled radio and television stations in 21 cases, confiscated journalists' press cards in 43 cases, and raided the homes of three journalists.

6. SOCIAL SECURITY AND QUALITY OF LIFE

The year 2002 witnessed an escalation in the Israeli aggression against Palestinian National Authority areas. The Israeli army invaded PNA areas in the West Bank, and expanded the circle of destruction in all WBGS areas. Direct occupation was re-imposed on areas "A," and West Bank cities were put under strict and protracted curfews. Destruction and damage reached government institutions and facilities, civilian properties, and the infrastructure, including streets and sidewalks, water and electricity utilities and telephone lines.

The Israeli occupation also tightened its siege on the WBGS, and reinforced the separation and isolation of population centers from one another by besieging the main cities, and increasing the number of barriers between cities, governorates, and various population centers. These measures turned the Palestinian population centers into segregated enclaves. It is safe to say that there is not one city that one can leave and go to another population center directly in a car, even if that center was a neighboring village. The Palestinian civilian has to use more than one means of transportation to move from one city to a neighboring village, or to reach his/her work place, or to do anything in another population center. It has become a customary scene to see Palestinians walking across the occupation barriers, or riding on horses or donkeys, or using wagons for their movement.

The Israeli occupation's all-out war against Palestinian citizens left its negative effects on the quality of the Palestinians' lives in the WBGS. This war has also brought the Palestinian economy to the verge of collapse, has turned cities, regions, and entire

governorates into disaster areas, suffering from massive destruction and economic paralysis, and an inability to meet the population's basic daily needs, as was the case in the Jenin Refugee Camp, and in Nablus and Rafah.

In this section, we will focus on those indicators for which there are data available for 2002. Data related to previous years are also used for their importance in clarifying the complete picture of the WBS quality of life. When necessary, relevant data from 2003 will also be reviewed.

6-1 Civil Service Law Implemented

No changes took place in the field of legislation related to social security and the quality of life. The year was one of repeated and long-lasting incursions, curfews, destruction, and devastation perpetrated by the Israeli occupation, causing wide-spread suffering within the Palestinian territories and paralyzing most PNA institutions, including various ministries and the Legislative Council.

The year 2003 saw a serious development in this field, as witnessed by the beginning of the partial implementation of the Civil Service Law. The Ministry of Justice continued preparing the executive regulations of the Palestinian Labor Law, and the Ministry of Social Affairs continued the preparation of the by-laws that would regulate the Ministry's various functions. The Social Insurance Law was also endorsed but has not yet been put into practice.

The Public Health draft law is still on the Legislative Council's agenda, and was not yet discussed by the Council because of the occupation's measures, including the siege, and the isolation and separation of the Palestinian governorates and cities, which obstructed the PLC's work.

6-2 Unemployment Escalated

The year 2002 witnessed a sharp rise in the unemployment rates. More than 40% of the Palestinian labor force was unemployed. In addition, the periods of unemployment were

long, and a high percentage of the unemployed had not worked since September 29, 2000. The Palestinian Authority formed a committee made up of concerned ministries, chaired by the Ministry of Labor, to tackle the issue of unemployment in the WBS. The achievements of this committee however were limited.

The donor parties focused on treating the issue of unemployment through emergency employment projects, and by providing relief assistance. Although important and having a positive role in this field, the effects of both measures however are limited in treating the problem of unemployment in the Palestinian territories. The World Bank for instance, in its report on the Palestinian economic crisis, pointed out the limited effectiveness of the emergency employment programs. The World Bank noted that even if the donor parties had met all their financial commitments for financing the emergency employment programs in the Palestinian territories, programs which sought to create two million work days in 2002, this would have resulted in the employment of only 3 to 4% of the unemployed in the Palestinian territories (The World Bank, 2002:50).

Referring to the magnitude of the problem, the World Bank said that the levels of unemployment absorbed in the WBS would have damaged the social fabric of many other societies, had they had to endure the same conditions. Although social security networks are weak and dependency rates are high, at 18 per each worker in the Gaza Strip, direct abject poverty is still limited. The World Bank attributed the continued survival of the Palestinian economy, despite the brutality of the Israeli attacks, to three factors: (1) the presence of the Palestinian Authority, especially since it employs a high rate of Palestinian workers, and continues its relief programs; (2) donor assistance, which provided \$929 million in 2001, and \$1.051 billion in 2002; and (3) the cohesion of the Palestinian society and its resilience, especially a wide-spread reliance on borrowing, whereby families borrow from each other and develop partnerships among each other (The World Bank, 2003).

Donor parties increased their financing of employment projects, with PNA ministries and institutions taking part in their implementation, especially PECDAR, the municipalities and local government commissions, Palestinian NGOs, international organizations and institutions, and UNRWA.

Employment projects include the Work for Food Program, according to which the beneficiary is required to provide a certain amount of work in return for the food assistance he receives. This program is implemented by various institutions, such as the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees, which evaluated this program positively saying that “it contributed to providing 7.5 thousand tons of food provisions worth \$2.6 million. The food provisions were distributed to 12,500 households in 2002. The beneficiaries worked under the supervision of 162 popular committees, made up of volunteers in various projects, and did such jobs as cultivating house gardens, constructing terraces, rebuilding schools and public utilities, engaging in olive harvest campaigns and in cleaning campaigns, and maintaining archeological sites. This project also contributed to building up the administrative capacities, and activating the spirit of volunteer work within the supervising committees” (Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees, 2003).

The Employment Fund, which the Ministry of Labor called for in order to cope with the unemployment problem, was still inactive, despite the strong recent demands for the allocation of its funds, and for its activation.

Programs implemented in the Palestinian territories within the framework of emergency employment, raise important questions about their impact on the labor market, especially the work conditions of those included in these programs, and the psychological effects on the recipients of the relief assistance, or of those who are benefiting from the emergency employment programs, including the food for work program. These questions were highlighted by union activists in particular who are well aware of the work conditions for these workers in the emergency employment

programs and their psychological interactions. The temporary and short term effects of such programs on the Palestinian labor market, on the relations between the workers and the employers, and their psychological effects on the workers, all need to be evaluated.

6-3 More Families Receiving Assistance

The percentage of Palestinian families who received assistance during the Intifada, and until the first quarter of 2002, was 58.3% (PCBS, 2002, c). No data were available on the percentage of families who received assistance in 2002 only. The Survey of the Impact of Israeli Measures on the Economic Conditions of the Palestinian Households – Fifth Round used March 2003 as a point of reference, during which 41.5% of Palestinian households received assistance. The number of individuals who received assistance that month was 239,000 people, and 32.5% of the Palestinian households in the West Bank and 60.6% in the Gaza Strip received assistance that month (PCBS, 2003, d). It is expected that the number of households who received assistance in 2002 is higher than the figures mentioned in the results of the two survey rounds referred to earlier, especially during the second and third quarters of 2002, which is the period that witnessed a tight siege and a protracted curfew, massive destruction in all West Bank cities, with the exception of Jericho, and it is the period during which the economic activities were totally paralyzed in the West Bank.

Of all Palestinian families, 78.9% reported that they needed assistance in March 2003, which means that 37.4% of the Palestinian households believe that they deserved assistance but did not receive it. About 14% of Palestinian households said that their economic situation was very critical and that they do not know how to provide for their basic needs. The rate of these families was 20% in the Gaza Strip, and 10% in the West Bank. The assistance which households received was very little. Some 55.1% of these households reported that they received assistance valued at less than 100 NIS. The total value of the assistance that 85.7% of the

households received in March was less than 300 NIS (PCBS 2003, d).

Most of the assistance which Palestinian households received in March 2003 was in the form of food provisions, accounting for 58.9% of the total value of assistance given to Palestinian households in the WBGS. The rate of assistance in the form of health insurance was 22.1%, the rate of cash assistance was 16.2%, and the rest of assistance forms made up 2.8% including the assistance of employment (PCBS, 2003, d).

Some 7.4% of Palestinian households reported that social assistance was their main source of income in the first quarter of 2003. The rate was 10.7% in the Gaza Strip and 5.8% in the West Bank during that period. Some 10.1% of Palestinian households in the Palestinian territories relied on internal or external transfers of funds as their main source of income during the same period. The main sources of income for 26.7% of the households were from family projects, agricultural work and livestock breeding, while the main income for 24.4% of households was wages and salaries from the private sector. Another 15.4% of Palestinian households relied on governmental salaries as their main source of income, while 6% of households relied on work inside Israel (PCBS, 2003, d).

6-4 Un-Institutionalized Support

In March 2003, 14.4% of assistance distributed in the WBGS was provided by friends, neighbors and relatives of the recipients, while such assistance accounted for only 2% of the total distributed until the first quarter of 2002. Data show that 2.9% of Palestinian households had received transfers of funds from abroad between the start of the Intifada until the beginning of 2002, but in March 2003, 4.1% of Palestinian households reported that they received such transfers. In 2002, 23% of Palestinian households said they had relied on assistance from relatives, friends and neighbors as a means of survival (PCBS, 2003, d).

In March 2003, the average value of assistance provided by relatives, neighbors, and friends was \$63 (PCBS, 2003, d).

6-5 The Ministry of Social Affairs

The number of households and individuals who receive assistance from the Ministry of Social Affairs has increased progressively since the Ministry first assumed its responsibilities. The monthly average number of households who received assistance from the Ministry was 35,953 in 2002, of which 19,162 were in the Gaza Strip and 16,790 in the West Bank. The Ministry also provided assistance to 3.4% of the total population of the WBGS, a decrease from the previous year when that rate was 3.7%. In 1999, that rate was 3.5%.

The monthly average number of households who received cash assistance in 2002 decreased by 600, as compared with the monthly average of households who received cash assistance in 2001. The average monthly number of households who received cash assistance from the Ministry of Social Affairs in 2002 was 29,462 (Table 6-1).

At the end of 2002, the total value of the Ministry's monthly cash assistance program was 5.3 million NIS, paid out to 29,868 households or cases. The average cash assistance received by each family in the Palestinian territories in December 2002 was 170 NIS. The average in the Gaza Strip was 163 NIS for the same month, and 175 NIS in the West Bank.¹³ In addition to this, the Ministry also covered the costs of health insurance, food assistance, and services assistance, especially housing services.

The assistance is provided according to a progressive scale that starts at 110 NIS per individual. The Ministry is working on modifying this scale by trying to formulate a modified version of regulations for social

¹³ Three cases were excluded when calculating the average of cash assistance received by one family from the Ministry of Social Affairs. The three cases were excluded because they received large amounts of assistance that would affect the real average if included in the calculation, so they were excluded and the amounts they received were excluded from the calculation as well.

assistances that would take into consideration the needs of the poor, as well as the possibilities available to the Ministry. The Ministry of Social Affairs runs a conditioned program of assistance that is financed by the World Bank. According to this program, assistance is given to poorer households who receive assistance from the Ministry (the poorest 5% of the benefiting households). These households receive cash assistance, and health insurance conditioned on regular medical check-ups for their children and pregnant women, and on sending their children to school. These households also receive cultural and awareness services. The Ministry also started establishing two centers for the handicapped in the Gaza Strip, which are financed by the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia.

No data were available on the assistances provided by the Ministry's directorates functioning in various Palestinian governorates. These directorates assist in the distribution of food assistance in the

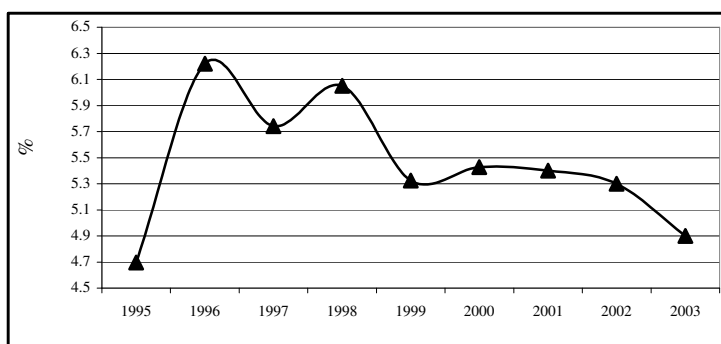
governorates, and take part in the governorates' emergency committees. Through these committees, they assist in the distribution of assistance to needy households. PCBS data show that, since the beginning of the Intifada and until 2002, the Ministry of Social Affairs provided some 2.9% of the total assistance distributed in the WBGS. The Ministry's assistance in March 2003 amounted to 6.6% of that total (PCBS, 2003, d).

The largest chunk of the Ministry's assistance goes to widows, the elderly, and the sick, accounting for more than three quarters of the Ministry's total assistance.

6-5-1 Decrease in Current Expenditures on Social Affairs

Data on the Palestinian budget show a decrease in the level of current public expenditure allocated to social affairs in the WBGS. The rate went down to less than 5% in 2003, as compared with more than 6% in 1996 (Figure 6-1).

Figure 6-1: Current Public Expenditures on Social Affairs, 1995-2003 (%)

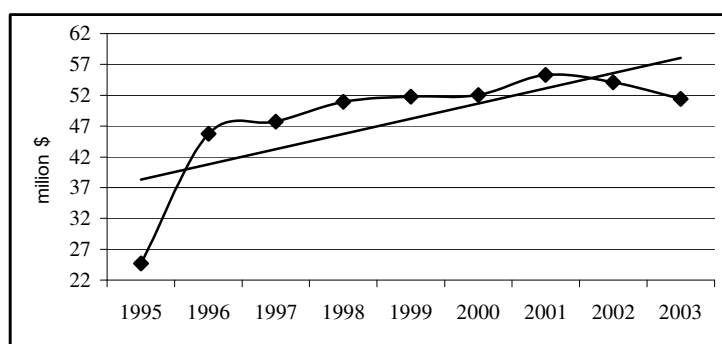


Source: Abdel Razeq, Omar (2002). Structure of the Palestinian General Budget. MAS-Ramallah

Figure 6-2 shows a huge increase in the current expenditure on social affairs in 1996, as compared with the year before. It is the year that witnessed a protracted closure of the WBGS, pushing unemployment and poverty rates high. A slow increase in current expenditures on social affairs continued in the following years until 2001, but then the social

affairs budget of 2002 decreased by 5%. This decrease continued through the 2003 budget, even though poverty and unemployment rates rose to unprecedented levels. This decrease was concomitant with a huge crisis facing the National Authority in covering its current budget (MAS, 2002, b).

Figure 6-2: Current Public Expenditure on Social Affairs, 1995-2003 (\$ million)



Source: Abdel Razeq, Omar (2002). Structure of the Palestinian General Budget. MAS-Ramallah

In addition to the expenditure of the Ministry of Social Affairs in the field, there is the assistance that is provided by ministries and governmental organizations, such as the President's Office, the Ministry of Islamic Endowment (Al-Waqf), the Institute of the Martyrs' Families and the Injured, and the Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs. UNRWA and NGOs also provided assistances and services in the field of social affairs in the WBGS. The UNRWA and the NGOs' share of expenditure on social affairs (social assistance and social welfare) increased compared with that of the Ministry of Social Affairs during the Intifada because they were mandated by the outside funding parties as channels for expenditure. The large number of parties offering social assistance and services in the Palestinian territories could be among the reasons for the decrease in the Ministry of Social Affairs' budget.

6-6 The Institute of the Martyrs' Families and the Injured

At the end of 2002, the Institute of the Martyrs' Families and the Injured gave financial support to 1,532 cases monthly in the WBGS, all products of the Al-Aqsa Intifada, among them were a total of 924 cases in the Gaza Strip. The total number of individuals who received assistance in the WBGS was 7,166, of whom 4,436 individuals were in the Gaza Strip. The total value of the assistance was 997,225 NIS monthly. By the end of 2002, a total of 1,425 Al-Aqsa cases had received cash assistance that year, all of whom

were injured. The monthly cash assistance value was 700 NIS for every injured Palestinian.

Monthly donations were also extended to 6,572 cases dating back to before the Al-Aqsa Intifada, benefiting a total of 21,931 individuals in the WBGS. Of these individuals, 12,358 were in the Gaza Strip at the end of 2002. The total value of these allocations was 2,524,561 NIS in the WBGS monthly. The Institute also extended cash assistance to 3,906 Al-Aqsa martyrs' families. The families of these martyrs received monthly payments of 410 NIS each at the end of 2002. At the end of 2002, a total of 1,313 injured people had also been receiving a monthly assistance from the institute, at an average of 333 NIS each. Also, a total of 445 families classified as social cases received monthly assistance from the institute at the end of 2002, at an average of 320 NIS each.

The Prisoners' Rehabilitation Program extends assistance to prisoners' families. It also trains prisoners in certain vocations after their release, or provides them with loans to establish small projects.

Available data show that the share of Authority institutions, including the Ministry of Social Affairs, was 11.7% of the total times of assistance distribution in the WBGS (PCBS, 2003, d). The percentage of households who received assistance from various Authority institutions, since the beginning of the Intifada and until mid-2001,

was 35.3% of the total households in the WBGS (PCBS, 2001: 78).

6-7 More Recipients of UNRWA Assistance

UNRWA is considered the second largest provider of social care services in the WBGS, second only to the PNA. It is responsible for providing care to the Palestinian refugees. UNRWA also provided its assistance to non-refugee Palestinians during the Al-Aqsa Intifada, as it was the main channel of support for the donor parties during the Intifada, which, according to PCBS data, makes it the major social assistance provider in terms of the times of assistance distribution. As of February 2002, UNRWA had provided 55.2% of all assistance distribution activities in the WBGS (PCBS, 2003, d).

UNRWA also provided its periodical assistance to about 115,000 Palestinians in the WBGS in 2002, all members of families classified as hardship cases. It also provided assistance to about 80,000 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, about 9% of the total registered refugees in the Strip. UNRWA has also provided periodical assistance to about 35,000 Palestinians in the West Bank, or 5.5% of the total number of registered refugees in the West Bank (UNRWA's electronic page).

UNRWA had also condensed its emergency assistances during the Al-Aqsa Intifada. The emergency programs included cash and food relief assistances, blankets, and cooking utensils. UNRWA also assisted in furnishing housing for the families of the handicapped, rebuilding or assisting in the rebuilding of homes demolished by Israel's occupation army, or repairing homes damaged during Israel's continued aggression. UNRWA also helped to relieve the high unemployment rates by supporting emergency employment projects.

During the first 9 months of 2002, UNRWA gave assistance to 9,336 families in the West Bank to enable them to repair the damage caused to their homes. UNRWA's reports indicate that it receives an average of 1,500 monthly applications for assistance in

repairing homes in the West Bank and 45 applications in the Gaza Strip

Urgent UNRWA Appeals for Assistance to the Palestinian People

UNRWA made a series of appeals to the international donor community for the funding of its emergency activities in the WBGS. The first urgent appeal was in October 2000 for \$4.83 million. This was followed by the first emergency appeal for \$39.1 million, which covered the period from December 2000 to February 2001. The second appeal was made in 2001, for \$39 million to cover the period until the end of May-2001. UNRWA then realized that the repercussions of the Intifada will continue on until at least the end of the year, and it appealed for the third time for \$77 million, to cover the period from June until 31 December 2001. The response of the international community to the first urgent and emergency appeals was very encouraging. The response to the second appeal however covered only 61% (\$24 million) of its needs. For the third appeal, the response increase to \$63 million, or 82%. UNRWA also appealed for \$117 million in January 2002 to cover its needs for the whole year, but the escalation of the conflict in March and April of that year very much increased the refugees' needs, which prompted UNRWA to request, in the form of a complementary appeal, an additional of \$55.7 million from the international community in July.

In accordance with the urgent appeal issued by UNRWA for support of the emergency programs in the WBGS in 2002, it sought to provide temporary employment, as part of its urgent emergency activities, for the unemployed family supporters. The food assistance also increased to a large extent targeting now some 220,000 families in the WBGS. The total number of food assistance units distributed by UNRWA was 1.5 million, each of which included 50 kg of flour, 5 kg of rice, 5 kg of sugar, 2 liters of cooking oil, 1 kg of powdered milk, and 5 kg of grains. In its emergency appeal of 2002, UNRWA estimated that it needed emergency food support for 127,000 families in the Gaza Strip, and another 90,000 families in the West Bank for that year, at an estimated value of \$24,938,742.

UNRWA had also to provide assistance to about 5000 refugees whose homes were demolished or destroyed during Israel's military operations. UNRWA provided tents, blankets, cooking utensils, medicines and potable water, as well as financial assistance in the rental of new homes for the families who were displaced. UNRWA also rebuilt and repaired homes. Rebuilding was mainly in Rafah, in the southern part of the Gaza Strip, and in the Jenin Refugee Camp, in the West Bank (Electronic page, UNRWA Emergency Appeal for 2002. www.un.org/unrwa/arabic.html).

6-7-1 Assistance to the Families of the Injured Who Became Handicapped

In 2002, UNRWA conducted a field survey in order to determine the number of people handicapped as a result of their injuries during the Intifada. After some 20,000 cases were examined, lists of people who were injured during the Intifada and of the types of their handicap were prepared. The preliminary results showed that 3,300 of these injured people had become permanently disabled, half of whom were refugees. Between February 2000 and September 2002, UNRWA provided assistance to 435 families of the handicapped to help them cover the expenses of making modifications to their homes to fit the cases of handicap.

6-8 Zakat Committees Still Provide Assistance

There are 60 *Zakat* Committees in the Palestinian territories that provide various services to large numbers of orphans and needy families. The activities and assistance of these committees varied, including providing monthly cash assistance to orphans and needy families, helping school and university students, providing medical services to thousands of patients through their health centers and hospitals, hosting Iftar (dinner) banquets during the fasting month of Ramadan, and running centers for teaching the Quran. These committees increased their activities during the Intifada and intensified their activities and assistances during the month of Ramadan.

Data of the *Zakat* Fund at the Ministry of Islamic Waqf showed that these committees provide care for more than 17,500 orphans within the *Kafalat Al-Yatim* (care for the orphan) program, which grants each orphan a monthly average amount of 20 JD, or 100 NIS. These committees also provided their assistance to about 12,000 families, some of whom received periodical assistance within the framework of a program called *From One Family to Another*, which is funded by various charitable parties (the Palestinian Waqf Ministry, electronic page).

Some *Zakat* committees provided their services to large numbers of citizens within their fields of operation. The *Zakat* committee of the Nablus governorate provided a total of 64,215 JD in assistance to 2,992 orphans. It also provided a total of 182,000 JD in monthly assistance to 8,000 needy families, and granted the amount of 15,000 JD in assistance to university students (the Palestinian Waqf Ministry, electronic page).

Some non-governmental organizations and charitable societies also provided relief assistance to large numbers of citizens within the framework of a program called *Care for the Needy Families*, which is funded by Muslim charitable societies in the Gulf, Europe and the US, or supported by *Itilaf Al-Khair*. For instance, the *Al-Salah Islamic Society* in Gaza takes care of 5,113 orphans in the Gaza Strip. It distributed assistance to about 1000 families, and in the current year, it has distributed 76,750 food parcels. Also, and in cooperation with the Ministry of Labor, it has distributed 20,000 food parcels to unemployed workers. The Society supervised the construction of 21 housing units for those families whose homes were demolished in Rafah. The construction of these units was funded by *Itilaf Al-Khair*, the United Arab Emirates Red Crescent, and the Job Opportunity Creation Program, in cooperation with the Ministry of Public Works and Housing, at a cost of \$23,000 each. The Society also built seven housing units to replace those homes demolished by the occupation in the area of Abul Huli barrier, and is currently working on rebuilding 40 homes in the Daraj neighborhood which were damaged by Israeli shelling (the Al-Salah Islamic Society, electronic page).

The General Federation of Trade Unions also provided cash and in-kind assistance to a large number of Palestinian workers' families. It also provided medical insurance for a symbolic cost to its registered members. The Federation's sources reported that about 300,000 people benefited from the cash assistance it provided, some 350,000 benefited from the food assistance, and 10,000 families benefited from the assistance provided by Saudi Arabia. PCBS data show that the

General Federation of Trade Unions was the largest party to provide assistance in March 2003.

6-9 The Red Cross: Several Relief Programs

In the Spring of 2002, the International Committee of the Red Cross started a relief program in rural areas and a coupons program in urban areas, following the escalation of the Israeli aggression in the Palestinian territories, and which worsened the state of deprivation in the West Bank, by severely restricting the movement of Palestinian families and consequently severely shrinking their income. In the relief programs for the rural areas, households receive food provisions and other basic necessities, while the coupons programs provided the needy in the cities with coupons that could be exchanged for certain commodities. These two programs assisted about 300,000 people. From a financial aspect, these two programs alone accounted for 65% of the 2003 budget of \$44.5 million (www.icrc.org/ar).

The Relief Program for the rural areas aimed to provide economic support in the form of food, sports or school supplies, and medical supplies for about 30,000 needy families in 319 villages. The program targeted the needy families including those who were registered as social cases with the Ministry of Social Affairs. Other beneficiaries are selected through village councils on the basis of being the neediest in a certain time. From October 2002 to May 2003, a total of 10,324 tons of food were distributed to 61,821 families. School and sports supplies were also distributed to 21,950 families, while 3,939 families received medical supplies (www.icrc.org/ar).

In May 2002, the International Committee took the initiative and introduced programs that enabled 20,000 needy families in the West Bank's urban centers to receive basic commodities that are beyond their current financial capabilities, through local food provision providers. Families received coupons valued at \$90 monthly, and which could be exchanged in certain groceries for

food provisions and other necessary home items (for more details see Table 6-2). The program aims to provide economic support valued at half the estimated average household expenses of a poor family, and to give them a choice in deciding the basic commodities they want to buy, while at the same time supporting the local economy through local merchants and increasing the purchase capacity of the beneficiaries. From October 2002 to May 2003, a total of 89,910 families received these coupons valued at \$10,203,075 (www.icrc.org/ar).

Relief teams of the International Committee monitor the implementation and the impact of the relief programs in the West Bank districts. In the rural areas, monitors conduct random visits to the beneficiaries to evaluate what they receive, and how it is used. They also decide whether the beneficiary meets the standards set by the International Committee, and whether the village councils carry out their role in the distribution of commodities in a transparent way. Monitoring teams in the urban program also conduct deliberate visits to beneficiary families to evaluate their conditions. Those who do not meet the International Committee's standards are excluded from the list. These teams also monitor the contracted grocery stores to guarantee the respect of the measures agreed upon. Finally, the teams also monitor the data provided by the grocery owners on the commodities acquired by the beneficiaries in exchange for their coupons (www.icrc.org/ar).

Voices critical of the way the International Committee of the Red Cross distributes its assistance are still heard, despite the previously mentioned clarifications underlined in the ICRC reports. The criticism, some of which was voiced in local newspapers and magazines,¹⁴ claimed that the assistance goes to people who do not really deserve it, benefiting the well-to-do families who then sell them for cheaper prices, or who buy luxury items instead. Some people also criticized the choice of using only certain

¹⁴ For instance, Al-Baidar, the publication of the Birzeit University Development Studies Program, dedicated much of one of its issues to this topic (Issue 36, May 28, 2003).

larger grocery stores for the coupon exchange, considering this discriminatory against them.

6-9-1 Relief Programs in Hebron

ICRC provides relief assistance in the form of food parcels for the families in the old city of Hebron who were affected by the protracted curfew imposed. In April 2002, the number of beneficiaries increased from 1000 to 2000 monthly. And during the 8-month period between October 2002 and May 2003, the ICRC was able to help 2000 families monthly as much as possible under the circumstances of limited access to people and of the restricted freedom of movement as a result of protracted curfews and closures. A total of 15,459 families received food parcels and other complementary food provisions (olive oil, wheat flour, and tuna) totaling 467,086 tons (www.icrc.org/ar).

6-9-2 Other Relief Programs

The program aims to provide persons whose homes were demolished or severely damaged with necessary items other than food, like tents, blankets, buckets, health items, and cooking utensils. During the last eight months, the ICRC provided such relief tools to 2,030 families whose homes were demolished in the Gaza Strip, and 353 households in the West Bank (www.icrc.org/ar).

In the period between October 2002 and May 2003, assistance was also distributed in the West Bank for exceptional cases that are not included in other programs, including certain schools, and elderly retirees. The materials included 7,370 food parcels, 191.7 tons of wheat flour, and 120 school or sports supplies. (www.icrc.org/ar).

As a result of the closures, villages not linked to the water networks and that get their water supply by tankers were denied their water supply. The International Committee of the Red Cross' water projects which started in 2002, aimed to achieve two objectives: one was delivering water (in the summers) by water tankers, and the second was increasing the capacity potential for water storage in those communities which depend on stored

rain water as their main source of water. In the western region of the Hebron district, the ICRC cooperated with a local non-governmental organization to build 24 traditional wells for water storage (www.icrc.org/ar).

The ICRC also supported the emergency medical services of the Palestine Red Crescent Society, by covering the running expenses of about 80 ambulances and paying the salaries of 260 medical technicians. This support also included supplying medical equipment, re-equipping the emergency medical stations, training, and lending assistance to the Emergency Response Program (Source: ICRC electronic page: 8/7/2003, www.icrc.org/ar).

6-10 Survival Strategies of Palestinian Households

In 2002, households in the Palestinian territories depended on several sources/ways for their economic survival. Some 77.8% of the households reported that they relied on their monthly income in order to survive during the last 12 months. Some 74.1% of the households reported that they resorted to reducing their monthly expenditures, 60.4% said that they delayed payment of their bills, 40% reported that they borrowed from individuals, 23% requested assistance from relatives, and 18.2% sold the family's jewelry in order to overcome the decrease or loss of the family income (PCBS, 2003, d).

The data from the Fifth Round of the Survey of the Effects of Israeli Measures on the Economic Conditions of the Palestinian Household show that about 17.5% of the households in the Palestinian territories relied on external or internal money transfers and on social assistance (20% in the Gaza Strip and 16.5% in the West Bank) as their monthly income.

As for the possibilities of economic survival during the coming period, 16.9% of West Bank households reported that they can survive economically in the coming period for more than one year, while 13.8% of the households in the Gaza Strip reported the same thing. Some 20.1% of the households in

the Gaza Strip are living under a critical economic situation and do not know how they are going to cover their basic needs. In the West Bank, that rate is 10.1% of households.

It is expected that coping measures taken by Palestinian households in the face of the effects of the Israeli oppression will have their negative impact in the short- and long-runs, especially since they included measures which depleted a sizable chunk of families' savings, and have caused many of them to lose their investments and their sources of income.

6-11 Housing and Housing Conditions

Statistics on housing represent an important part of the official statistics, because they review the population's situation and their standards of living related to housing and to the conditions of this housing. International experiences, and UN recommendations in this regard, point to essential indicators that should be covered in any statistics on the issue of housing and its conditions, including its basic characteristics, such as the type of housing, its ownership, over-crowdedness, etc.

6-11-1 Relative Improvement in the Average Number of Rooms and in Over-Crowdedness

Results of the 2000 Survey of the Labor Force, carried out periodically by PCBS, indicate that households whose residences consisted of three rooms made up 32.2% of the total households in the Palestinian territories, as compared with the 30.8%, 29.6%, 31.4%, and 28.8% in the years 2001, 2000, 1999, and 1997 respectively. Households whose residences consisted of one room made up 5.7% of the total households in 2002, as compared with 9.6% in 1997, as indicated in the Population, Housing and Establishment Census of 1997, and 7.2% of the total households in 1999. These data indicate an improvement in the housing conditions, and this is also reflected in the levels of over-crowdedness in the homes. In 2002, 20.2% of the households had three individuals or more in each room, as compared with 25.3%, 23.5% and 20.5% in the years 1997, 1999 and 2000

respectively. Households with 2 to 2.99 individuals per room increased to 33%, as compared with 1997, 1999 and 2000, when that rate was 29.1%, 30.8%, 30.8% respectively. It is important to note that the given rates for 1997 were taken from the 1997 Census, while those of the other mentioned years were taken from surveys. The overall results however point to a general trend of improvement in these indicators.

6-11-2 Prevailing Pattern: Home Ownership

Data of the 2002 Labor Force Survey indicate that 86.3% of families live in homes they own. This rate was 78.1% according to the 1997 Population, Housing and Establishment Census, and 85.6% and 88.4% in 2000 and 2001, respectively. In 2002, the rate of families living in rented homes was 8.3%, as compared with 6.8% in 2001. Detached homes represent the prevailing pattern in the Palestinian households' choice of housing, accounting for 60.9% of the households, according to the Labor Force survey of 2002. Apartment dwellings accounted for 37%, while only 0.5% of families lived in villas.

6-11-3 The Home's Links to Public Services Networks

Available data from PCBS' 2002 Nutrition Survey indicate that 93.9% of the houses in the Palestinian territories have a safe water source: 97.6% of houses in the West Bank and 86.5% in the Gaza Strip. Data also show that 78.3% of the houses in the Palestinian territories are linked to a public water network: 83.7% of houses in the urban areas; 64.0% houses in the rural areas; and 85.5% of houses in the refugee camps.

Data also indicate that 45.8% of the houses in the Palestinian territories are linked to public sewerage networks. In the Gaza Strip, 66.7% of houses are linked to such a network, while in the West Bank only 34.6% of houses are. In the refugee camps, 78.7% of the total houses are linked to a public sewerage network, while in the urban areas and in the rural areas only 56.9% and 7.0% of houses, respectively, are linked (PCBS, 2002, a).

6-11-4 Increase in the Rate of Households Owning a Mobile Phone

Data available from PCBS Nutrition Survey and Survey of the Impact of the Israeli Measures, both conducted in 2002, showed that 60.4% of Palestinian households owned mobile phones (66.0% in the West Bank and 48.4% in the Gaza Strip), as compared with 43.7% in 2000 (51.0% in the West Bank and 29.8% in the Gaza Strip).

Data also showed that 36.1% of the households in the Palestinian territories subscribed to telephone services (40.1% in the West Bank and 27.7% in the Gaza Strip) in 2002, as compared with 42.1% in 2000. The economic deterioration during the Intifada may be the factor that explains the decrease in the rate of households subscribing to telephone services. In addition there was a tendency to own mobiles as a way for people to better control their expenses (PCBS, electronic page).

Data from the Palestine Telecommunication Company showed that the number of subscribers to telephone services at the end of 2002 was 301,579. This means that the average prevalence of telephone services (telephone lines for every 100 people) was 9%, which translates into 9 telephone lines for every 100 people. The average prevalence of telephone services in the houses was 59.9% at the end of 2002, which means 60 telephone lines for every one hundred houses (Palestine Telecommunication Company, 2003:9).

Data related to housing showed an improvement in the indicators of housing conditions, despite the major deterioration of conditions in 2002 due to the Israeli incursions into the Palestinian cities and their direct reoccupation. Some of these data showed the dominant pattern in the Palestinian territories, such as the tendency of Palestinian households to own their homes. Other indicators showed a prevailing inclination in recent years to improve the housing conditions, and this was the result of investments in previous years in various fields, including improving the household density.

Data related to home furnishings showed that some durable commodities, such as refrigerators and television sets, have become necessities for the Palestinian household. The big increase in owning mobile phones represents a coping measure undertaken by individuals and families enabling them to better deal with the conditions of segregation and siege imposed on the Palestinian territories, and a response to the needs of the Palestinians to communicate, directly in particular, with relatives when other means are difficult. It is worth mentioning that a large percentage of the Palestinian population centers are still not linked to the telephone network. Just as important is the mention of the Israeli army's deliberate sabotage, especially during its incursions, of existing telephone lines.

6-11-5 Sharp Decrease in Housing Construction Licenses

PCBS data showed a sharp decrease in the number of licenses issued by local authorities for housing construction in 2002. For that year, a total of 785 licenses for housing construction were issued in the Palestinian territories, as compared with 8,982 in 1999, 7,445 in 2000, and 4,010 in 2001. This decrease is attributed to the Israeli incursions into the Palestinian territories, and to the deteriorating economic conditions. The absence of the authority may also have led to construction without permits (Table 6-3).

6-12 Many Population Centers Lack Public Services

In mid-2003, PCBS carried out a Survey of the Population Centers in the Palestinian Territories. Because of their significance, we report, in the following paragraphs, some of the survey's findings, even though they relate to 2003:

Survey data showed that 205 population centers in the Palestinian territories are not linked to a public water network, making up 34% of the total population centers in the territories. All these centers are located in the West Bank, with the exception of one in the Gaza Strip. It is worth mentioning that these

centers are rural and small in size, which explains the high rate of houses linked to public water networks. Water networks were extended to 42 centers after 1998, 35 of which were in the West Bank.

A total of 99 centers in the West Bank receive water from the West Bank Water Department, or 26% of all West Bank population centers that are linked to public networks. A total of 117 centers in the West Bank receive water from the Israeli Mikorot Water Company, or 31% of the centers linked to public networks. In the Gaza Strip, 21 centers get water from local artesian wells, and five locations get water from the Israeli Mikorot Water Company.

There are 76 centers in the Palestinian territories that lack electricity services, making up 13% of all population centers, and all are in the West Bank. Fifty-three centers were provided with electricity services after 1998.

A total of 165 population centers in the West Bank receive electricity from the Jerusalem District Electricity Company, 199 centers in the West Bank get electricity from the Israeli Regional Electricity Company, 22 centers get electricity through generators that belong to the centers' communities, 68 locations get electricity through local councils, and 16 centers in the Gaza Strip get electricity from the Israeli Regional Electricity Company.

The use of septic tanks is the most common method for disposing of wastewater in the population centers of the Palestinian territories. A total of 545 population centers in the Palestinian territories, or 90%, use this method. Another 63 population centers use public sewerage networks, 46 of which are in the West Bank. Some 25 population centers were linked to public sewerage networks after 1998, 18 of which were in the West Bank (Table 4-6).

The Palestine Telecommunication Company's data showed that 498 population centers in the Palestinian territories are linked to the telephone network, representing a big increase compared with the number of centers linked in 1997. The number of centers served at the

beginning of 1997 was no more than 48. During 2002 alone, this telephone service was extended to another 21 population centers (Palestine Telecommunication Company, 2003: 9-11).

6-13 Massive Destruction of Housing Buildings and Infrastructure

The Ministry of Local Government estimated the visible losses of the local commissions in the Palestinian territories at \$215,135,000 from September 28, 2000 until the end of 2002. These losses include the sabotage of electricity, water and sewerage networks, the destruction of roads, and the damage and destruction of public buildings. Also affected were the local councils which were subjected to major damages. The total losses to the water sector, including wells and water networks, were \$15,837,000 to the sewerage networks \$6,036,000 to electric generators and networks \$23,046,000 and to roads and sidewalks \$75,489,000. The total value of losses resulting from the destruction of public buildings was \$84,029,000 and losses resulting from the damage of garbage containers and means for solid waste disposal totaled \$10,698,000 (Palestinian Ministry of Local Government, 2003).

The Palestine Telecommunication Company estimated the losses to the telephone network at NIS 39,657,000 from September 28, 2000 until the end of 2002. The losses in telephone services and installations were estimated at 312 million NIS for the same period. The Company also estimated its losses in the regions of Jenin and Tulkarem, as a result of the damages inflicted on the network by Israel's construction of its apartheid wall, at 5.12 million NIS (Palestine Telecommunication Company, 2003:20).

The Israeli occupation damaged 54,713 homes in the Palestinian territories (39,327 in the West Bank, and 15,386 in the Gaza Strip), between September 28, 2000 and August 15, 2003, which translates into an average of 1,564 homes per month, a very high number, especially in a small country with a little more than 3.5 million people.

Since the beginning of the Intifada, and until August 15, 2003, the Israeli occupation army either completely destroyed or heavily damaged (to the point of making them unfit and unsafe for living) a total of 4,046 private homes in the Palestinian territories (2,345 homes in the West Bank, and 1,701 in the Gaza Strip). The Israeli occupation army also heavily damaged more than 548 governmental offices and public facilities, especially until August 15, 2003, and it completely destroyed most PNA offices.

The building losses in 2002 were mainly in the West Bank governorates of Jenin and Nablus, specifically in the Jenin Refugee Camp and the Old City of Nablus, where the Israeli occupation army inflicted heavy damages during the March-April 2002 incursion, demolishing 1,892 homes in these two locations. The total number of homes demolished in the West Bank was 2,345. In the Gaza Strip, the damaged homes were mainly in Rafah, where more than a third of the damaged buildings were located. Also, more than half the completely destroyed buildings in the Gaza Strip were located in Rafah (Table 6-5).

The demolition of homes escalated in Rafah to unprecedented levels over the last three years, with the number of the totally demolished homes by the Israeli military machine reaching 1,128 as of the end of October 2003. These homes provided sheltered to 1,484 families totaling 8,500 people. Another 600 homes were partially demolished. According to a report from the Rafah governorate, some 3,520 of those homes that are in the line of the Israeli shelling were damaged (from the Media and Information Center www.mic-pal.info. 30/11/2003).

7. STANDARDS OF LIVING

The year 2002 witnessed a grave escalation of the Israeli aggression in the WBGs against the Palestinian people. This escalation led directly to the continuation of the decline of the standards of living of the Palestinian

households, and available data from that year do show this grave and quick downward spiral in the standards of living in the WBGs. Data provided by the Labor Force Survey showed an increase in the unemployment rate, and a decrease in the daily and median wages. The data from the Survey of the Impact of the Israeli Measures on the Economic Condition of Palestinian Households also showed an increase in poverty rates.

This section relies mainly on data provided by PCBS surveys, particularly the Labor Force Survey, and the Survey on the Impact of the Israeli Measures on the Economic Conditions of Palestinian Households. These data were arrived at from information provided by the families themselves, and include the changes in the household average income, its food pattern, and poverty rates. Some of these data can, therefore, be general indicators that clarify the direction, severity, and speed of change.

7-1 Nearly Half of Palestinian Families Lost More Than Half Their Income

No data is available on the standards of living in the WBGs in 2002, with the exception of data provided by the Impact of the Israeli Measures on the Economic Condition of the Palestinian Households, which was completed over the course of several rounds. We will rely on data from two of this Survey's rounds, specifically the one conducted in February-March of 2002, on the eve of the Israeli incursions into the Palestinian National Authority areas in the West bank, and the other conducted in April-May of 2003. Together, these two rounds serve as general indicators of the conditions of these Palestinian families in 2002. It is worth mentioning that the two survey rounds were conducted under relatively better conditions than existed during the incursions when the Palestinians' lives were threatened by daily bombings, killings, destruction, demolition, and sieges and curfews which lasted for months in some cities.

Data show that 87.0% (501,000 families) of the total number of families in the Palestinian

territories saw their income decrease since the beginning of the Intifada, 47.4% of whom (237,000 families) lost more than half of it during the Al-Aqsa Intifada (50.8% of West Bank families [171,000 families] and 40.1% of the Gaza Strip families [66,00 families]).

Even though these data show that fewer families reported losing more than half their income – at the beginning of 2002, on the eve of the incursions, 56.5% of the surveyed families in the WBGs had reported losing more than half the income they were earning on September 29, 2000 (58% in the West Bank, and 53.6% in the Gaza Strip – what happened during the incursions justifies the reality that the conditions in 2002 were worse than what these figures indicate.

7-2 Decrease of the Median Monthly Income of Palestinian Households

Survey results indicate a decrease in the median monthly income of the Palestinian households from 2,500 NIS before the Intifada to 1,400 NIS in March 2003. In the West Bank, this income decreased from 3,000 NIS to 1,500 NIS, and in the Gaza Strip from 2,000 NIS to 1,200 NIS, in the same period. Compared with February 2002 data, the median monthly income increased by about 200 NIS, remaining unchanged in the West Bank, but increased in the Gaza Strip by 317 NIS (PCBS, 2003, d).

7-3 Family Expenditure

Available data indicate that 69.7% of families (401,000 families) in the Palestinian territories decreased their expenditure on basic needs in the 12 months that preceded the survey. The rate was 74.2% in the West Bank and 60.2% in the Gaza Strip, spending less mainly on food and clothing. The rate of families who spent less on clothing was 94.4% (94.6% in the West Bank and 93.8% in the Gaza Strip), and the rate of families who spent less on food was 85.8% (82.0% in the West Bank and 95.7% in the Gaza Strip).

Data show that there is a high rate of families in the Palestinian Territories who changed the pattern of food consumption to which they had been accustomed to before the Intifada. Some 89.5% of the Palestinian families reduced their consumption of meat, and 85.9% consumed less fruits. Some 83.2% of the families in the Palestinian territories altered their diet altogether, and 54.8% decreased the quantity of food.

Some data point to a little relative improvement in the level of the Palestinian families' income and expenditure according to the April-May 2003 round of the Survey of the Impact of the Israeli Measures on the Economic Conditions of the Palestinian Households, as compared with the February-March 2002 round. However, these data are still much lower than the data of the period before September 29, 2000. We can affirm that 2002 was the year during which the standard of living indicators hit their lowest since the arrival of the Palestinian National Authority. This is due to the intensified measures of oppression during that time in the West Bank, and to the policy of occupying the cities under PNA control, and imposing protracted curfews. All these measures, which were carried out throughout the West Bank cities (with the exception of Jericho, which is subjected to a tight siege, as are all other West Bank cities), have led to a paralyzed economic life in each governorate, whose major centers have been re-occupied.

7-4 Wide-spread Poverty

Data provided by round five of the Survey of the Impact of the Israeli Measures, carried out in April and May 2002, showed that 63.3% of the Palestinian households in the WBGs lived under the poverty line, according to the information provided by these families,¹⁵ or 2,483 families. According to the results of round four of the same Survey, carried out on

¹⁵ PCBS drew the attention of concerned people that these estimates are predicated on the information given by the families on their incomes. They are used here as general indicators to the conditions of the Palestinian families. It is worth mentioning that these data are consistent with the estimates of international organizations functioning in the occupied Palestinian territories, like UNSCO and the World Bank.

the eve of the Israeli incursions in February and March 2002, 66.5% of the Palestinian families in the WBGS lived under the poverty. It is certain however that a great many more families than reflected in these two rounds were living under the poverty line, especially during the period between them, and specifically between April and December 2002, which is the period when Israel's aggressions were at their most intense, especially in the West Bank.

The Gaza Strip is hit hardest by poverty. At the beginning of 2002, the rate of families living under the poverty line in the Gaza Strip was 83.6%, much higher than the rate in the West Bank, which was 53.7% of families (PCBS, 2003, d).

The World Bank's estimates and the UN Special Coordinator's (UNSCO) data agree with the PCBS data. The Bank estimated that 60% of the WBGS population are poor, and live on less than \$2.1 per person a day. The World Bank asserted that among the significant indicators of the deterioration of the standards of living in the Palestinian territories is the increase in malnutrition rates. The World Bank report indicated that these levels are similar to malnutrition levels in Zimbabwe and Congo. Data also show the decrease of a poor individual's daily consumption from \$1.47 in 1998 to \$1.32 at the end of 2002. According to World Bank estimates, the national per capita income decreased by 50% since the beginning of the Intifada until the end of 2002 (World Bank, 2003).

The report from UNSCO's economic unit confirmed these results, indicating that poverty rates had indeed reached 60% of the total population of the Palestinian territories in 2002 (55% in the West Bank and 70% in the Gaza Strip). This report also confirmed that the levels of income, expenditure and consumption decreased greatly during the Al-Aqsa Intifada, because of the increase in unemployment rates, which reached 50% of the total Palestinian labor force in 2002. Because this rate increases during times of curfew, especially in the major urban centers, then consequently there is an unprecedented

increase in the level of poverty in the occupied Palestinian territories (UNSCO, 2002).

7-5 Labor Market Indicators Point to Continued Deterioration

In the period between 1996 and the third quarter of 2000, the Palestinian labor market saw a continuously steady improvement trend in the main labor market indicators. As a result of the Israeli closures, which started with the outbreak of the Al-Aqsa Intifada in late September 2000, and which have prevented many workers from reaching their work places inside Israel, the Palestinian labor market witnessed a definite deterioration in its most important and crucial indicators: a quick and sharp rise in unemployment rates; a decrease in the participation rates; and a decrease in the daily average wage.

The labor force indicator is a measure of supply in the labor market, representing the number of people who are willing to work. In principle, the supply of work should be separate from the conditions related to closures and siege, as there is a percentage of the population that is considered outside the labor force because they stopped looking for work when they became frustrated at the prospects of obtaining it. This classification is based on the International Labor Organization's (ILO) definition, taking into consideration that there is a number of those who are outside the labor force but who could be considered inside it if we apply the expanded concept of participation, because their frustrations are born out of the current conditions. The decrease in the number of participants in the labor force in the fourth quarter of 2000 is an example of the fact that the demands on the labor force do affect supply. When someone understands that there is no possibility of finding work, then he or she would not look for it, and consequently that person will be classified as outside the labor force, as defined by ILO standards.¹⁶

¹⁶ This group comprises all members who are within the work age but never worked during the period examined. They were ready during that period to work, searched for job through one of the following means: reading news papers advertisements, registering at employment offices, asking friends and relatives, and other means.

This section uses primarily the concept of unemployment according to ILO standards. But because of the impact of the continuing Israeli occupation forces' aggression in the Palestinian territories, including a total siege since the end of September 2000, this section will also use expanded definition of unemployment,¹⁷ which gives a clearer picture of the reality in the Palestinian labor market.

7-5-1 Human Resources

Human resources (individuals 15 years old and above) in the Palestinian territories totaled 1,856,000 individuals in 2002, according to the PCBS, or 53.6% of the total population (1,221,000 or 55.4% of the West Bank population, and 635,000 or 50.3% of the Gaza Strip population).

The Labor Force between 2000 and 2002

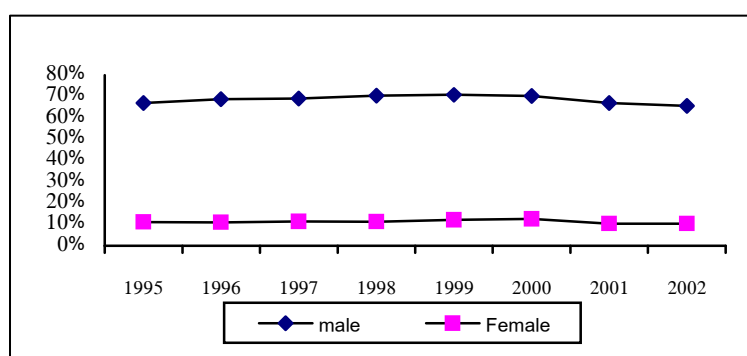
The main results of the Palestinian Labor Force Survey pointed to the continued decrease on the rate of the participant labor force in the Palestinian territories, from 41.6% in 1999 to 38.1% in 2002. There was an additional decrease for 2002, as compared with 2001 when the rate of the participant labor force was 38.7%, and with 2000 when the participant labor force was 43.6%. The number of individuals in the Palestinian labor force in the WBGS had increased from 682,000 in 2001

to 707,000 in 2002, as compared with 695,000 in 2000, prior to the Intifada (www.pcbs.org).

The rate of the participant labor force (according to the ILO definition) in the West Bank in 2002 decreased, as compared with the previous years. The rate of the participant labor force in the West Bank was 40% in 2002, as compared with 41.5% in 2001, and 43.4% in 2000. The number of individuals in the labor force in the West Bank in 2002 increased to 488,000, as compared with 482,000 in 2001. The rate of the participant labor forces in the Gaza Strip in 2002 remained at 34.5%, almost unchanged from the previous year, when it was 33.4%. It was however lower than in 2000 when it was 38%. The number of individuals in the labor force in the Gaza Strip was 219,000 in 2002, as compared with 200,000 in 2001, and 212,000 in 2000.

If the number of those individuals who are outside the labor force because of their frustration with the prospect of finding work is added to the participants in the labor force, then the rate of participation in the labor force (the expanded definition) would reach 44.6% in the Palestinian territories in 2002, rising to 46.3% in West Bank and to 41.2% in the Gaza Strip.

Figure 7-1: Average Participation in the Labor Force in the Palestinian Territories by Gender (according to ILO standards): 1995-2002



Source: PCBS, Labor Force Survey (1995-2002)

¹⁷ The number of the unemployed according to the expanded definition was counted by adding those outside the labor force due to their frustration of searching for work to the number of unemployed workers according to the ILO norms and standards.

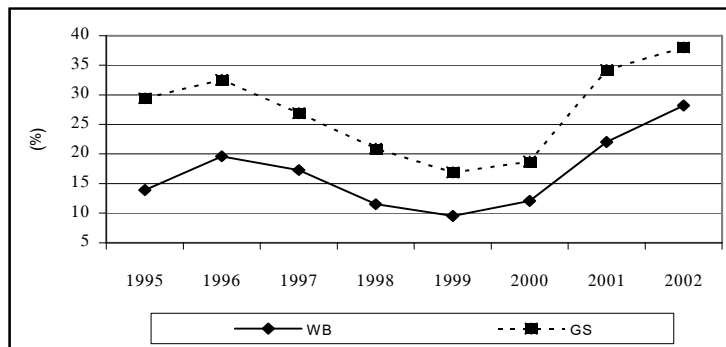
It is clear in Figure 7-1 that the rate of participation of both genders in the labor force had decreased in the years of the Intifada, with the rate of females remaining low, within the limits of 10%. The ratio of males in the labor force to males within the work age decreased in 2002 to 65.5%, as compared with 66.8% in 2001. No change occurred in the female participation in the labor force in 2001 and 2002, remaining at 10.4%.

7-5-2 Poverty Rates Increased During the Intifada

Poverty rates continued to increase since 2000, as compared with previous years. The poverty rate went up in the Palestinian territories from 14.1% in 2000 to 25.5% in 2001, and rose again to the unprecedented level of 31.3% in 2002.

As is shown in Figure 7-2, poverty rates in the Gaza Strip remained higher than in the West Bank between 1995 at 2002, reaching 28.2% in the West Bank and 38% in the Gaza Strip in the same year.

Figure 7-2: Unemployment Rates in the Palestinian Territories By Region (according to ILO standards), 1995-2002



Source: PCBS, Labor Force Survey (1995-2002).

The Palestinian territories suffered from long periods of unemployment, reaching a peak of 15.8 months in the West Bank during the third quarter of 2002 (MAS, the Economic Monitor, Issue no. 10, 2003).

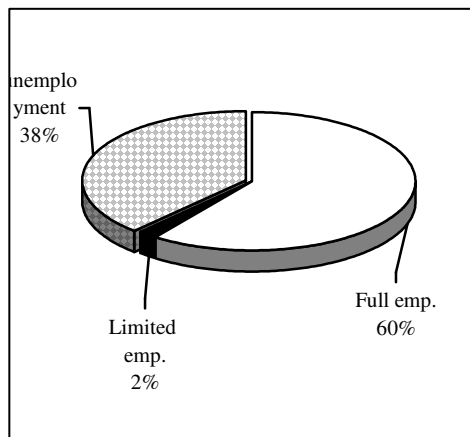
The number of unemployed workers in the Palestinian territories also increased sharply in 2002, as compared with 2000 and 2001, going up from 98,000 unemployed workers in 2000 to 174,000 in 2001, and increasing to 221,000 in 2002.

With regards to the geographic distribution of unemployed workers, the number of unemployed people in the West Bank sharply rose 2002, going up from 58,000 in 2000 to 106,000 unemployed people in 2001, and rising to 138,000 in 2002. In the Gaza Strip, the number of unemployed workers increased from 40,000 in 2000 to 68,000 in 2001, and rose to 83,000 in 2002.

As far as the individual governorates are concerned, their 2002 unemployment rates varied. In the West Bank, the governorates of Bethlehem and Jericho registered the lowest unemployment rate (17.9%), followed by the Tulkarem and Qalqiliya governorates (25.1%), then the Ramallah and Al-Bireh governorate (25.9%), while the Jenin and Tubas governorates registered the highest rates of unemployment (44.0%). In the Gaza Strip, the lowest unemployment rate was in the Gaza City (36%), followed by the northern region of Gaza (37.1%), while the highest rate was in the Rafah governorate (41.1%) (www.pcbs.org).

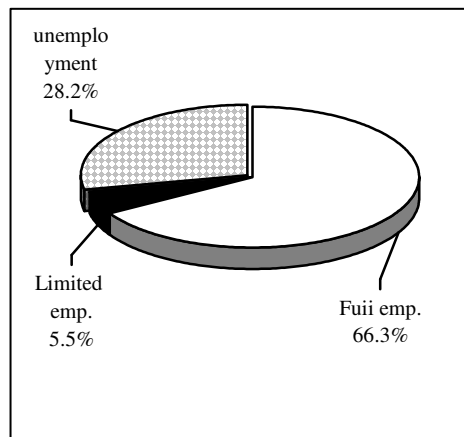
The breakdown of the unemployed workers by gender showed that the number of unemployed male workers increased from 161,000 in 2001 to 204,000, or 26.7%. The number of unemployed female workers increased from 13,000 to 17,000, or an increase of 30.8%. The rate of unemployment among women remained higher than among men.

Figure 4-7: Distribution of Workers in the Gaza Strip, by Relation to the Labor Force, 2002



Source: (www.pcbs.org)

Figure 7-3: Distribution of Workers in the West Bank, by Relation to the Labor Force, 2002



Source: (www.pcbs.org).

7-5-3 Increase in the Expanded Unemployment Rates

According to the expanded definition of unemployment, the number of the unemployed increased in 2002, as compared with the year before. The expanded unemployment rate was 41.2% in the Palestinian territories in 2002, as compared with 36.2% the year before. In 2002, the expanded unemployment rate was 38.1% in the West Bank and 48.1% in the Gaza Strip.

Also according to the expanded definition of unemployment (which counts among the numbers those individuals who are no longer looking for work because they lost hope of ever finding a job), the number of unemployed workers was 341,000 in the Palestinian territories in 2002, as compared with 288,000 in 2001. The number of unemployed individuals who did not search for work because they were frustrated at the prospect of finding a job increased from 114,000 in 2001 to 120,000 in 2002.

The geographic distribution of the unemployed workers shows that the number of unemployed in the West Bank in 2002 increased sharply from 115,000 in 2000 to 168,000 in 2001, and rose again to 215,000 in 2002. In the Gaza Strip, the number of unemployed workers was 80,000 in 2000, increased to 120,000 in 2001, and rose again to 126,000 in 2002.

The number of unemployed male workers increased from 261,000 in 2001 to 309,000 in 2002, or 18.4%. The number of unemployed female workers increased from 27,000 to 32,000, or 18.5%.

7-5-4 Decrease in the Number of Workers (Full- and Part-Time Employment) (According to ILO Standards)

Data indicated a decrease in the number of workers in the Palestinian territories in 2002, as compared with 2001. The number of workers decreased from 508,000 to 486,000, or a decrease of 4.3%.

The number of workers in the West Bank sharply decreased in 2002, as compared with the previous year, going down from 376,000 in 2001 to 350,000 in 2002, or a decrease of 6.9%. But the number of workers in the Gaza Strip increased, from 132,000 in 2001 to 136,000 in 2002, or an increase of 3.00%.

7-5-5 Increase in the Economic Dependency Rate¹⁸

Data provided by the 2001 Labor Force Survey indicated that the rate of economic dependency in the Palestinian territories was 6.5 (every employed Palestinian supported 6.5 unemployed persons in the WBGS in mid-

¹⁸ The rate of economic dependency was arrived at by dividing the total population (including the workers) by the number of workers.

2001). The rates were 5.6 per worker in the West Bank, and 9.1 per worker in the Gaza Strip. The rate however increased in 2002 to 7.1 persons (6.3 persons per worker in the West Bank, and 9.3 persons per worker in the Gaza Strip (www.pcbs.org).

7-5-6 Workers in Israel and in the Settlements (ILO Standards)

The rate of workers in Israel and in the settlements decreased in 2002, as compared with 2001, going down to 10.3% in 2002, as compared with 13.7% in 2001. The number of workers decreased from 70,000 in 2001 to 50,000 in 2002, which was opposite the general trend of a gradual increase from 16.2% in 1995, to 14.1% in 1996, 17.1% in 1997, 21.7% in 1998, 22.9% in 1999, 19.6% in 2000 (www.pcbs.org).

There was a huge decrease in the number of Palestinian workers in the Israeli construction sector. The number went down from 35,000 in 2001, to 6,000 in 2002, or a decrease 42.9%. There was also a decrease in the services sector and other branches during the two years, from 19,000 in 2001, to 5,000 in 2002. The number of workers in Israel and in the settlements, in the agriculture, forestry, and fishing sectors, decreased by 1000 workers. There was also a 2,000-worker decrease in the commerce, restaurant and hotel sectors between 2001 and 2002 (www.pcbs.org).

7-5-7 Decrease in Waged Workers

The rate of waged workers decreased from 62.2% in 2001 to 59.2% in 2002. It is noticed that this rate reflected on individuals who became self-employed, working in their own businesses, and their rate increased from 23.9% in 2001 to 26.8% in 2002 (see the table). This is due to the lack of employment opportunities in the local private sector, since it was targeted and subjected to a deliberate sabotage campaign the Israeli occupation authorities, and also because the number of those Palestinian workers who had worked in Israel and in the settlements decreased.

7-5-8 Main Professions (ILO Standards)

The rate of workers in primary professions decreased greatly compared with the period before the Intifada, going from 29.7% in 1999 to 14.2% in 2002. This decrease is due either to the fact that the tens of thousands of Palestinian workers in the Palestinian territories who lost their jobs in Israel were working in these primary professions, or to the lackluster performance of the Palestinian private sector.

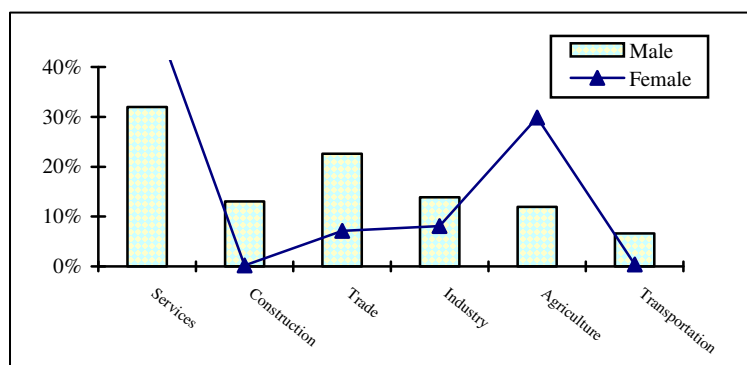
In 2002, the rate of individuals working as professional technicians was 23.8% of all workers in the Palestinian territories, followed by those who worked in the services field (18.9%), in crafts and similar jobs (17.5%), in primary professions (14.2%), in agriculture and fishing (12.6%), followed by machine operators and machine factory workers (8.5%), and finally legislators and managers (4.5%).

About half of the women workers in the Palestinian territories are mainly employed within the sector of the professions of specialized people, and their assistants and within the clerical and secretarial spheres. The skilled women workers in agriculture account for 29% of the total number of working women (PCBS, 2003, Labor Force Survey-Annual Report 2002, from the Electronic page).

7-5-9 Economic Activity (ILO Standards)

The rate of workers in the construction sector in the Palestinian territories decreased greatly, going down from 14.6% in 2001 to 10.9% in 2002. This decrease is a clear result of Israel's oppressive measures. In the West Bank, the rate decreased from 18.2% in 2001 to 12.7% in 2002, but in the Gaza Strip, the rate increased from 4.4% in 2001 to 6.3% in 2002. Figure 7-5 illustrates the distribution of Palestinian workers in various economic sectors. It is noticed that there is a major focus in the services and commercial sectors. The Figure also shows the concentration of women workers in the services and agriculture sectors and their low participation in the industry sector.

Figure 7-5: The Distribution of Workers in the Palestinian Territories, by Gender and Economic Activity (ILO Standards), 2002



Source: PCBS, 2003, Labor Force Survey-Annual Report 2002, Ramallah-Palestine

7-5-10 Increase in the Daily Average Wages

The daily average wage of Palestinian workers in all regions (WBGs, Israel and in the settlements) increased negligibly by only 1.8% between 2001 and 2002, while it had increased by 10.2% between 1998 and 1999. The gap between these two rates is due to the bad economic conditions which had affected all workers. This rate was 72.7 NIS daily in 2001, and increased to 74.0 NIS in 2002. Data showed that the average daily wage of waged workers in the West Bank increased by 3.3% in 2002 compared with the previous year, while the increase in the Gaza Strip was 0.9% for the same period.

The increase in the average daily wages of workers in the Palestinian territories may have resulted from the deterioration of the economic situation. The prevalence of unemployment mainly among low-waged workers in the local private sector, like workers in the primary professions, maintaining employment levels in the public sector, low rate of increase of workers in the Israeli economy, those who receive high wages compared with workers in the local economy, all are factors that led to the increase in the average daily wage. This however should not mean that the increase is an indication of improvement in the economic conditions, or in the Palestinian workers' work condition. Data mentioned above on the state of the work-places of the Palestinians, on the sectors they work in, their professions, and the

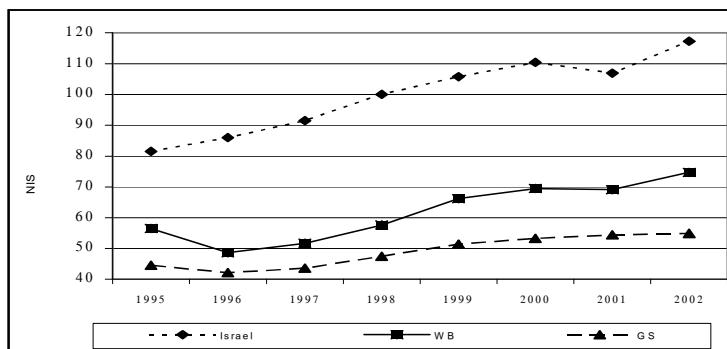
rate of waged workers, all shed light on the cause for the increase in the Palestinian workers' average daily wages. The data confirm that this increase does not indicate any improvement either in the work conditions, or in the conditions of the waged workers.

The average daily wage of Palestinian workers in the WBGs, in Israel and in the settlements increased by 9.7% between 2001 and 2002. It is noticed that the average began to gradually increase in 1995, when the average was 81.5 NIS, until it peaked at 117.3 NIS in 2002.

Higher prices in the Palestinian territories erased the achieved increase in the nominal average daily wage. Data show a 7.1% decrease in the real average daily wage in 2002 compared with the previous in the West Bank, and a 1% decrease in the Gaza Strip, while the real average wage of WBGs Palestinians working in the Israeli economy increased by 3.4% (MAS, The Economic Monitor-Issue no. 10, 2003).

On the other hand, there was a decrease in the daily average wage in all areas in 2002 compared with 2001. The daily average wage was 61.5 NIS in 2001 and decreased to 60 NIS in 2002. A huge increase however occurred in the daily average wage of workers in Israel and in the settlements, going up from 100 NIS in 2001 to 115.4 NIS in 2002, or an increase of 15.4%.

Figure 7-6 Average Daily Wages of Workers in the WBS, by Region (ILO Standards), 1995-2002



Source: PCBS, Labor Force Survey (1995-2002).

7-5-11 Gender-Gap in Wages

Data showed a sizable gap between the wages of male and female workers in the WBS between 1996 and 2000. This gap widened in the mining, quarries and transformational industries sectors, and shrank in other sectors.

The average daily wage of male workers in the West Bank in 2002 was 74.2 NIS, as compared with 62.1 NIS for female workers. The daily average wage of male workers in the Gaza Strip was 54.8 NIS, as compared with 56.3 NIS for female workers. The average daily wage of women in the Gaza Strip is higher because, on the one hand, female waged workers are relatively few in number and they are concentrated mainly in the services sector, and on the other hand, they do not work in such low paying economic sectors such as industry, for example. In 2002, the average wage of women workers in the services sector was less than their male colleagues, earning 56.5 NIS, as compared with 60.4 NIS for male workers.

8. LEGAL ENVIRONMENT

This section monitors Israeli violations of the Palestinians' rights during the second and third year of the Al-Aqsa Intifada. It also monitors indicators related to the performance of the three main PNA branches – the legislative, executive, and the judiciary – and evaluates their level of commitment to the protection of citizens' rights during 2002. The

section also covers the most important indicators of crime and victim in the Palestinian territories.

8-1 Israeli Violations of the Palestinians' Rights

Sharon's government used new more severe measures in 2002, against the WBS, thus violating international law and universal human rights standards in dealing with the Palestinian citizens in the occupied territories. These regions suffered under the most severe conditions, unprecedented since the beginning of the occupation in 1967. The Israeli authorities intensified their arbitrary measures against the Palestinian people in an attempt to crush the Intifada.

8-1-1 Reoccupation of the West Bank

On March 29, 2002, the Israeli occupation forces carried out incursions into most areas under the full control of the Palestinian National Authority as part of their "Operation Protective Shield." In doing so, Israel had in effect abrogated the distinction it created in the Oslo agreement between areas "A", "B", and "C." All of the West Bank, with the exception of Jericho, and a large chunk of the Gaza Strip were reoccupied for more than a year. And the rest of the Gaza Strip remains under the constant threat of aggression and incursion.

Regardless of various classifications of the Palestinian territories and of the various authorities linked to them, the West Bank,

including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, are considered, under international law, occupied territories. The Israeli authorities however continue to reject the implementation of the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian People in Time of War, despite their voiced commitment to do so following their occupation of the Palestinian territories in 1967.

8-1-2 Use of Excessive Force, Extra-Judicial Executions, and Massacres Against Civilians

The occupation authorities' use of excessive force against Palestinian civilians in 2002 resulted in the death of no fewer than 1,071 Palestinians, among them 178 children and 48 women. Also, the occupation forces escalated their extra-judicial execution of Palestinians, assassinating 82 Palestinians in 2002. They also committed massacres once they reoccupied PNA-controlled areas. The most abhorrent of these massacres were the one in the Jenin Refugee Camp and the one in the Old City of Nablus. At dawn, on April 3rd, hundreds of Israeli tanks invaded the city of Jenin and its refugee camp and the Old City of Nablus. Declaring these areas "closed military zones," they refused entry to anyone, including medical and humanitarian assistance and relief personnel. Jenin was completely closed off between April 4 and 14, and the Old City of Nablus almost all the time between April 3 and April 23. Electricity and water were disconnected from most of these regions, and strict curfews were imposed on the population inside the cities.

Amnesty International's report¹⁹ read as follows:

"In Jenin and Nablus a tight cordon of tanks, armoured personnel carriers and soldiers was thrown around the areas where the IDF carried out operations: Jenin refugee camp and Nablus old city. Houses were intensively attacked by missiles from Apache helicopters.

After the first day those killed or wounded in Jenin and Nablus were left without burial or

medical treatment. Bodies remained in the street as residents who ventured outside to collect or attend to the dead or injured were shot. Tanks traveling through narrow streets ruthlessly sliced off the outer walls of houses; much destruction of property by tanks was wanton and unnecessary. In one appalling and extensive operation, the IDF demolished, destroyed by explosives, or flattened by army bulldozers, a large residential area of Jenin refugee camp, much of it after the fighting had apparently ended.

In the four months between 27 February and the end of June 2002 – the period of the two major IDF offensives and the reoccupation of the West Bank - the IDF killed nearly 500 Palestinians. Although many Palestinians died during armed confrontations many of these IDF killings appeared to be unlawful and at least 16% of the victims, more than 70, were children. More than 8,000 Palestinians detained in mass round-ups over the same period were routinely subjected to ill-treatment(2) and more than 3,000 Palestinian homes were demolished."

Amnesty's report concluded:

'In Jenin and Nablus, the IDF carried out actions which violate international human rights and humanitarian law; some of these actions amount to grave breaches of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 1949 (The Fourth Geneva Convention), and are war crimes".'

8-1-3 Using Civilians as Human Shields

In 2002, during their incursions into what they considered "dangerous Palestinian areas," the occupation forces used a number of Palestinian citizens as human shields. The occupation soldiers forced a number of citizens to walk in front of some of the military contingents, as these prepared to raid certain institutions in the city of Ramallah and some homes in West Bank refugee camps and cities. In the aftermath of these incidents, a group of human rights organizations appealed to the Israeli High Court, requesting that it orders the Israeli army to desist from using Palestinian civilians as human shields. In

¹⁹ Amnesty International, *Shielded from Scrutiny: IDF Violations in Jenin and Nablus, Israel and the Occupied Territories*, 2002, pp. 3-5.

response, the Court issued an order preventing the use of Palestinian civilians as human shields, until it decides on the issue at a later date. But, despite this order, the occupation forces continued using citizens as human shields in several locations in the West Bank.

8-1-4 Detention and Raid Campaigns

The year 2002 witnessed an unprecedented escalation of detention campaigns perpetrated by the occupation forces against Palestinian citizens. A large number of Palestinians were put under administrative detention without trials or interrogation. The occupation forces also arrested the family members of those who carried out bombings, and deported some of them outside the West Bank. The Israeli occupation forces initiated a vast detention campaign during their incursions into the West Bank cities, refugee camps and villages. The arrests included thousands of Palestinians, after gathering all male civilians 15-45 years old in public squares, handcuffing and blindfolding them, then taking them to detention centers which were erected specifically for that purpose, in preparation for transferring them to detention centers inside Israel.

At the end of Operation Protective Shield, and once the occupation forces withdrew from the cities they invaded, they returned to some of these cities in order to arrest more Palestinians, alleging that they were about to conduct aggressive acts against Israeli targets. As of December 31, 2002, the occupation forces were still holding in their prisons and detention camps no fewer than 5,607 Palestinian prisoners. Among these were 1,118 administrative detainees, 53 women, and 123 children. The detainees were held various types of Israeli detention centers: 2,207 were in central prisons, 3,060 were in military detention centers, and 340 were in other types of detention centers²⁰. Among these detainees, there were a few members of the Palestine Legislative Council, such as members Marwan Al-Barghouthy, and Husam Khader, and PLO Executive Committee member Abdel Rahim Mallouh, and other leading political figures.

²⁰ According to the Mandela Institute for Political Prisoners.

8-1-5 Palestinian Civilians Deported

As a deterrent measure, the Israeli occupation forces deported a number of Palestinian civilians, even though deportation is considered a war crime, under the Fourth Geneva Convention and the statute of the International Criminal Court.

On May 10, 2002, the occupation forces deported 39 Palestinians, 13 of whom were sent to various European countries, and 26 to the Gaza Strip, after the 37-day Israeli siege of Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity ended. On September 3, 2002, the Israeli High Court issued a verdict allowing the deportation of two Palestinians from the city Nablus to the Gaza Strip, but only after Israeli forces assassinated their sister.²¹

8-1-6 Israeli Inhumane and Degrading Practices

The Israeli authorities escalated their inhumane and degrading practices against the Palestinian citizens, especially at the military barriers, and during arrests. Along with constant attacks against and harassment of the Palestinians, by both the soldiers and the settlers, as the formers went to or from work, the occupation soldiers forced citizens to wait long hours each day at Israeli barriers at the entrance of cities and villages, or forced them to walk long distances under the heat of the summer sun or the cold of the winter rain.

8-1-7 Violation of the Freedom of Movement

Throughout most of 2002, the occupation authorities tightened the siege and closure imposed on all Palestinian cities and villages, in a fashion unprecedented since the start of the occupation in 1967. Most West Bank cities and villages and a large part of the Gaza Strip became huge prisons isolated from one another. At any given time, the closures included the border crossings that link the occupied territories with the outside world, like the Rafah Border Crossing, which links the Gaza Strip with Egypt, the Gaza Airport, whose

²¹ Eighth Annual Report of the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizen's Rights, 1 January 2002-31 December 2002, Ramallah, p. 18.

runways were destroyed by the occupation forces, and the Karamah Border Crossing, which links the West Bank with Jordan.

Also, the occupation forces imposed curfews on Palestinian cities with the exception of the city of Jericho, in the West Bank for protracted periods. The total number of curfew days in the city of Ramallah in 2002 was 55 days, while in the city of Jenin it was 109 days, in the city of Nablus 127 days, in the cities of Bethlehem, Beit Jala and Beit Sahour 75 days, in the city of Hebron 59 days, in the city of Tulkarem 135 days, and in the city of Qalqiliya 63 days. The curfews completely paralyzed the civilian, social and economic life in the regions where it was imposed.²²

In its report, Amnesty International highlighted the effects of Israeli restrictions on the freedom of movement. The organization asserted that the hopes that the Road Map to Peace would lift the restrictions imposed on the Palestinians' movement in the occupied territories were dashed. Only a few, out of over 300 barriers and check points, were removed. Also, and because of Israel's on-going construction of the barrier/fence/wall inside the West Bank, more Palestinians found themselves imprisoned in enclaves and isolated from their lands. Israel's illegal settlements in the occupied territories are being expanded, in violation of international law, as are the so-called by-pass roads which were built for the sole benefit of and use by the Israeli settlers. All these measures have resulted in more restrictions on the Palestinians. Amnesty's report also added that the Gaza Strip suffers from "Closures as the movement of 1.3 million Palestinians is subordinated to the movement of about 5,000 Israeli settlers. Since October 2000, sections of these two main roads near Israeli settlements have been completely or partially closed by the Israeli army", (Israel and the Occupied Territories: Living Under Siege: MDE 15/001/2003, September 2003, Amnesty International Electronic page).

²² Ibid, p. 23

Excerpts from Amnesty International's report on the Apartheid Wall

The "Separation Barrier/Fence/Wall"

On 14 June 2002, the Israeli government announced that work would begin immediately on the construction of a wall/fence along the perimeter of the West Bank, and north and south of Jerusalem. Almost 400 km long and 30 to 100 meters wide, the barrier comprises – in addition to the fence or wall – a complex of obstacles, including deep trenches to stop vehicles, electric warning fences, trace paths, patrol roads and roads to accommodate armoured vehicles.

Most of the separation wall is being constructed on Palestinian land inside the West Bank – in some areas up to six or seven kilometers east of the Green Line – in order to include some 10 Israeli settlements which are nearest to the Green Line. The barrier cuts off several Palestinian villages and large areas of Palestinian agricultural land from the rest of the West Bank, and separates other Palestinian villages and towns from the land of their inhabitants. The land in these areas is among the most fertile in the West Bank, with better water resources than elsewhere, and agriculture in the region constitutes the main source of income for the Palestinians.

The barrier has very serious economic and social consequences for over 200,000 Palestinians in nearby towns and villages. The stranded Palestinian residents of these areas have to cross the barrier at designated checkpoints to reach the rest of the West Bank to go to work, to tend to their fields, to sell their agricultural produce, and to access education and health centers in nearby towns. Non-residents will require special permits to be allowed into these areas.

The city of Qalqiliya, home to more than 40,000 Palestinians, is completely walled in from all sides with a single checkpoint in and out of the city. This is in order for the barrier to encompass the Israeli settlements which lie to the north- and south-east of the city. On 8 May 2003, Amnesty International delegates visited Qalqiliya. As usual with checkpoints, there appeared to be no set time for its opening and closing. The Israeli soldiers manning the checkpoint told the delegates that the checkpoint is usually open until 7 or 7:30 pm, but on that day it would close at 5:30 pm. The delegates asked what would happen to the city's residents who had gone out and would come back after 5:30, expecting the checkpoint to be open. A soldier replied that they would have to stay outside until the following morning and added that most people know to come back early anyway, just in case.

Amnesty International
Israel and the Occupied Territories:
Surviving Under Siege (pp. 27-30)
8 September 2003

8-1-8 Attacks on Medical Teams, Journalists, and Media Institutions

The Israeli attacks on medical teams operating in the occupied Palestinian territories escalated during 2002. Israeli soldiers fired live bullets, tear gas, and shells at several medical teams, killing five people, injuring scores others, and damaging tens of ambulances. The occupation forces also denied the medical teams' access to some locations, such as the Jenin Refugee Camp and the Old City of Nablus, after the incursions, and prevented them from providing medical aid and assistance to the injured and dying.

Throughout 2002, the occupation forces continued their attacks against journalists and workers with both the local and international press agencies. Media personnel were shot at by the occupation forces, and an Italian and a Palestinian journalist were killed and about five others were seriously injured. The Palestinian radio and television stations were also destroyed in Ramallah and in Gaza, as were several other television and radio stations, such as Amwaj and Watan Television stations in the city of Ramallah.

8-1-9 Attacks on Palestinian Private and Public Property

During 2002, the occupation authorities escalated their attacks against Palestinian private and public property. Damages were inflicted on no fewer than 2,000 residential units, at least 900 of which were totally destroyed. Some 450 residential units were demolished in the Jenin Refugee Camp, and more than 150 residential units in the Rafah governorate in the Gaza Strip. Some 80 residential units, which belong to the families of individuals who committed military attacks against the Israeli forces or of those accused by Israel of having done so, were also demolished. The Israeli forces attacked most governmental facilities and ministries during its incursions into the West Bank cities and during the shelling which targeted various security departments in the Gaza Strip. Also, the Israeli forces shelled and destroyed many factories and shops throughout the WBGS,

under the pretexts that they were used as bomb-making factories.²³

Destructive attacks were also made against civil society institutions and facilities, which were raided and vandalized by the occupation army. During their incursions, the occupation forces raided the following institutions: Al-Haq, Al-Dameer, Mandela, the NGOs Network, Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees, Besan Center, YMCA, Muwaten, the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizen's Rights, Khalil Al-Sakakini Center, and Qattan Institution.

8-1-10 Bulldozing Agricultural Land, Uprooting Trees, and Confiscating Land for the Apartheid Wall

Attacks by the both Israeli army and the settlers against Palestinian farmers escalated in 2002. The occupation authorities continued to uproot fruit-bearing and forestry trees, and vandalized water wells, irrigation networks, green houses, and livestock barns. More than 225,930 fruit-bearing trees were uprooted, and more than 2,573 dunums of agricultural land were bulldozed since the outbreak of the Intifada and until 2002.²⁴

The bulldozing and confiscation of land escalated because Israel was building what it calls the "security fence," separating the Palestinian territories and Israel. PCBS' 2003 Survey on the Impact of the Separation Wall on the Palestinian Population Centers indicates that, as of the end of August 2003, Israel had so far confiscated a total of 64,783 dunums of Palestinian lands for the building of the wall, of which 40,460 dunums were PNA property, and most were in the Jenin region. The rest of the confiscated land is private property and is mainly in the Jerusalem region.²⁵

This Survey also indicates that the area of the PNA land that was bulldozed was 1,296

²³ Ibid. pp. 28-29

²⁴ According to the Ministry of Agriculture's statistics, in the Interim Report: Losses and Damages in the Agricultural Sector as a Result of the Israeli Practices. December 31, 2002.

²⁵ PCBS, 2003. Impact of the Separation Wall on the Palestinian Population Centers, 2003.

dunums, most of which are in the Jenin district. The area of private property land bulldozed was 21,002 dunums, most of which are in the Jerusalem region. The Survey also indicated that the total losses to the infrastructure of those population centers which were harmed by the construction of the separation wall was \$10,700,000, of which \$280,000 worth of losses to underground water well, \$4,417,000 worth of losses to road networks, \$119,000 worth of losses to water networks, and \$194,000 worth of losses to electricity networks. This systematic and rapid destruction of basic services in the areas where the wall is being built led to the migration of a large number of families, mostly from the Jenin area, where an estimated 402 families, or 2,323 individuals, have left.²⁶

In a protest statement against the building of the Apartheid wall, Amnesty International said:

"This fence/wall is having devastating economic and social consequences on the daily lives of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, separating families and communities from each other and from their land and water - their most crucial assets,"

"Israel is continuing the construction of the fence/wall, with the second phase running even more deeply than the first phase into the West Bank. This is cutting many more thousands of Palestinians off from their land and essential services in nearby villages and towns and further restricting the movements of all Palestinians in these areas."

"The Israeli authorities' claim that the fence/wall is being constructed to prevent potential Palestinian attackers from entering Israel to carry out suicide bombings and other attacks is not borne out by the reality on the ground. The fence/wall is not being constructed on the Green Line separating Israel from the West Bank, but mostly on Palestinian land several kilometers inside the West Bank, in order to isolate Palestinians

away from Israeli settlements illegally built in the Occupied Territories."

Amnesty said that "The construction of this fence/wall in its current location must be halted immediately," said Amnesty International. "As the fence/wall continues to snake through Palestinian land, more and more Palestinians find themselves trapped into enclaves and cantons, unable to have any semblance of a normal life." (Amnesty International electronic page).

8-2 The Palestinian Government and the Citizens' Rights: Performance Report

Throughout 2001, the PNA, along with its institutions and departments, was subjected to an intensive political and military offensive that hindered effective functioning and the operation of its development programs and projects. The Israeli campaign waged against the Palestinian people and the PNA undoubtedly led to the deterioration in the performance of various Authority institutions. However, the Israeli occupation and practices should not be held solely responsible for the state of retreat that hit the PNA's institutions, at a time when Palestinian society with all its sectors and institutions had become in desperate need for a tangible improvement in the performance of PNA institutions in order to support steadfastness and develop the ability to cope with the current political phase and critical challenges.²⁷

8-2-1 PLC Performance

The 2002 Annual Report of the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights indicates that the same problems and obstacles which accompanied the performance of the Palestinian Legislative Council since its establishment continued during the year. No improvement was noticed in the nature of relations with the Executive Authority. The PLC still lacks a clear and homogenous legislative policy or a specific plan for the endorsement of laws, in consistence with the

²⁶ Ibid, p. 3.

²⁷ This section relies on the Eighth Annual Report of the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights

priorities and needs of the Palestinian society. As a result, it is noticed that some laws of an urgent nature are marginalized in favor of less important laws. It is also the case that work begun on a certain legal matter is sometimes never carried through to the end, while PLC attention is turned to other matters and issues. This creates a series of useless and unenforceable laws that fall short of achieving whatever objectives may have been set of them.²⁸

In 2002, the PLC endorsed five laws, the most important of which is the Basic Law that was also approved by the President on May 29, 2002, and the Judiciary Law which was also approved by the President on May 18, 2002. Only three laws were endorsed by the PLC and not approved by the President, and two laws were approved in the first PLC reading.

8-2-2 PLC Monitoring Role Declined

Previous years witnessed a continued decline in the monitoring role of the PLC, and it has been almost paralyzed since the Intifada's first year. In 2002, the PLC was able to push the government to resign by threatening a vote of non-confidence, but the PLC neither carried out any significant monitoring activity, nor did it endorse the General Budget.

No doubt the difficult political conditions in the Palestinian territories during 2002 contributed to a large extent to obstructing the PLC work, which was not able even once to hold a normal meeting with all WBGS members present in the same place. The current conditions however should not be held fully responsible for the PLC's negligence in performing its monitoring job. Since its establishment, the PLC has been suffering from subjective shortcomings which restricted the impact of its monitoring on the Executive Authority. Among the most important reasons for this is the modest parliamentarian experience, the hegemony of the Executive Authority over the Legislative Authority, the

overlap of powers between the two authorities, and the conflicts of interest.

8-2-3 Despite Lingering Problems, Tangible Improvements in Judiciary

In 2002, there were important developments in the Judiciary, most important of which was endorsing the Judiciary Law and the Palestinian Basic Law both of which regulate the most important aspects of Judiciary activity, such as the establishing courts, defining their jurisdictions, enforcing their judgments, etc. Despite this however, the Judiciary still faces enormous difficulties, in light of the escalation of the Israeli attacks, the reoccupation of most of the Palestinian cities in the West Bank, and the destruction of Palestinian prisons, apprehension centers, and police and security forces' stations and headquarters, all of which made it difficult to enforce court decisions. Courts also became incapable of holding their sessions, thus contributing to increasing the backlog of cases to be dealt with, and shaking the citizens' confidence in the Judiciary and its benefits.

The interference of the Executive Authority in the affairs of the Judiciary also continued in various forms, including a suspension of the civil courts' powers in favor of State Security and Military Courts, an interference in the administrative proceedings of the Judiciary, contrary to the set laws, and a lack of sufficient cooperation to find solutions for the difficulties which may be solved, like housing judges, and providing budgets that can attract qualified judges and lawyers to work in the Judiciary.

8-2-4 Modest Increase in the Staff at Criminal Justice Departments

According to available PCBS data, there is an acute shortage of judicial staff, which slows down the processing of cases and encourages people to seek tribal or alternative adjudication solutions. The number of judges working in Palestinian courts therefore becomes important. While the number of male and female judges remained unchanged during the past years, ranging between 68 in 1997 and 69 in 1998, the number slightly decreased to 67 in 1999 and 66 in 2000. The number

²⁸ Those concerned with legislation point out the shortcoming of the relevant ministries in preparing executive regulations for some important laws, and this adds to the delays in putting them into practice. According to a PLC member, 96% of the endorsed laws have no ready executive regulations yet.

noticeably increased to 100 in 2001, eight of whom were female judges. This number remained unchanged in 2002. These new appointments in the Judiciary were not sufficient however, since they have to serve a population of 3,222,469 citizens in the Palestinian territories.

The total number of prosecutors increased from 44 in 1997, to 45 in 1998, 55 in 1999 and to 64 in 2000, all of whom are male prosecutors. It is noticed however that a slight increase occurred in 2001 and 2002, bringing the total up to 68 and 69 respectively.

8-2-5 Performance of Executive Institutions Worsened

The performance of ministries, governmental institutions and security departments were negatively affected by the occupation forces' incursions into the Palestinian West Bank cities. The performance of most ministries was hampered, most headquarters and offices of the security departments were destroyed, and their members were not able to continue their work for long periods of time. Some ministries however, like the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the Ministry of Health, were able to deal seriously with the crisis, succeeding in achieving an important part of their responsibilities. But the performance of other ministries was not up to the required level,²⁹ as many shortcomings were apparent in the performance of the governmental institutions during 2002. This was due to the absence of coordination among these institutions, a weakness in their financial and logistical capabilities, the human and financial losses caused by Israel's oppressive measures, and the rapidly deteriorating situation on the ground that hindered the functioning of most Palestinian institutions, depriving them of a major part of their abilities and resources needed for providing the minimum of services to the population.

²⁹ For more details on the experiences of PNA ministries and institutions with Israel's oppression and siege, see *Social Monitor No. 6*.

8-3 Crimes and Victimization³⁰

Statistical data on crimes and victimization provided by many statistical departments in the world are considered among the important social data. This is mainly because they are considered an indicator to the state of human rights, rule of law and the prevalence of internal security in the country under discussion. Therefore we will mention here the most important data related to crimes and victimization, which reflect the general picture of crimes and victims in the Palestinian territories in recent years, taking into consideration the objective and subjective difficulties that hinder the gathering of accurate data on this topic. Israel's oppressive measures, as well as the social, economic and political conditions which accompanied the Intifada contributed to the reduction of quality of data on crime and victimization. The ability of security departments to follow up and record various cases worsened. Crime reporting by citizens also went down, as crimes were often dealt with by the concerned families amongst themselves, or by local Islah (conflict resolution) committees. The following data should therefore be looked at with caution.

8-3-1 Decrease in Reported Criminal Acts (1999-2002)

Taking the current Intifada conditions into consideration, it is noticed that there is a decrease in the number of criminal acts reported in the Palestinian territories during 2002, going down from 14,947 crimes in 2001 to 12,233 in 2002. It is also noticed that during both these years, there was a noticeable decrease in the number of reported criminal acts, as compared with previous years. In 1999 and 2000 for example, the number of such criminal acts totaled 21,426 and 15,867 respectively. This decrease however is, to a large extent, the result of bad record-keeping and follow-up of criminal cases by competent security departments, and to the citizens' reluctance to resort to the judicial and security departments because of the political conditions.

³⁰ This section relies on PCBS' Database for Crime and Victimization, 2003, Ramallah- Palestine.

It is also noticed that the reported criminal acts in 2002 were mainly assaults, accounting for 32.5% of the total reported criminal acts. Burglaries accounted for 20.3%, and fraud and forgery 14.6% of the total crimes reported. The rest of the criminal acts included kidnappings, attempted kidnappings, beatings, threats, etc. It is noticed that assault crimes were also highest in past years as well reaching 36.7% in 2001, 36.6% in 2000, 29.9% in 1999, and 29.2% in 1998 (Table 8).

8-3-2 Decrease in the Number of Detainees in Palestinian Jails Between 1999 and 2002

The number of persons detained in WBGS jails during 2002 was 2,378, of whom 26% were being held for assault, and 22.3% for burglary, as compared with a total number of 4,339 detainees in 2001, of whom 22% were for assault, and 15.5% for burglary. The number of detainees in 2000 and 1999 was 5,243 and 7,575 respectively.

8-3-3 Decrease in the Number of Juveniles Accused of Criminal Acts

The number of juveniles accused of committing criminal acts in 2002 was 561, of whom 171 in the West Bank and 390 in the Gaza strip, and only one of whom was a female. In 2001, that number was 976 juveniles, 443 were in the West Bank and 533 in the Gaza Strip, and among whom females made up only 1.9% of the total. In 2000, the total was 1,054 juveniles, of whom 522 were in the West Bank and 532 in the Gaza Strip, with females accounting for 2.5%. In 1999, there were 1,404 juveniles, of whom 730 in the West Bank and 674 in the Gaza Strip, as compared with a total of 1,460 and 1,153 in 1997 and 1996 respectively. The juveniles held in approved reform institutions faced several problems, most important of which are the following:

There are no courts specifically dealing with juveniles only, and the various other courts act as juvenile courts when looking into juvenile cases. In other words, when the case is a juvenile case, then the court is held as a juvenile court. Also, these courts do not

respect privacy and confidentiality as mandated by international recommendations; Apprehended juveniles not yet convicted are not separated from convicted juveniles in these reform institutions. This is in violation of UN standards for the protection of juveniles;

Even though only courts can send juveniles to such reform institutions, many other parties send them to these centers.

8-3-4 Continued Decrease in 2002 in the Number of Cases Referred to and Adjudicated by the Courts

The number of cases referred to various regular courts in 2002 was 51,012 cases, as compared with 83,989 cases in 2001 and 153,760 and 147,281 cases in 2000 and 1999 respectively. The number of cases actually concluded in 2002 46,385, 96,129 in 2001, 139,376 in 2000, 140,101 in 1999, 148,053 in 1998, 152,232 in 1997, and 120,771 in 1996.

Despite the gap in the number of cases heard in court and those actually concluded between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the rate of cases concluded of the total cases received by the courts in the same year, added to those carried over from the previous year, had noticeably decreased in the past four years. These rates were 28.5% in 2002, 45.6% in 2001, 49% in 2000, and 51.8% in 1999.

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