

Woman Participation in the Palestinian Labour Market

Prepared by

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Introduction

The participation rate of women in the Palestinian labour market is measured by the labour force survey, which is considered one of the major surveys carried out periodically by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics since 1995. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics has so far conducted 51 rounds of labour force survey; the rounds have been conducted on a quarterly basis except for the first and second rounds which were conducted on a biannual basis. From the beginning of data collection for the labour force survey, PCBS has taken into consideration the gender perspective, so all data is published by gender according to users' needs.

This report highlights the methodology of measuring the participation rate of women in the Palestinian labour market and the changes that occurred on woman participation rate between 2000-2007, in order to monitor women's participation in the labour market, and to build a time series about the factors affecting the Palestinian labour market.

Survey Objectives:

The main objective of collecting data on the labour force and its components, including employment, unemployment and underemployment, is to provide basic information on the size and structure of the Palestinian labour force. Data collected at different points of time provide a base for monitoring current trends and changes in the labour market and in employment situation. These data, supported by information on other aspects of economy, provides a basis for evaluation and analysis of macro-economic policies.

In addition, the collection of information on the economically active population in the community aims to develop a database from which to measure employing of manpower in society in the process of economic production. The collection of such data provides an opportunity to evaluate the overall framework of policies that aims to develop the level of employment. Overall, the data collected on the labour market can be used for general information and for academic studies.

Methodology of Palestinian Labour Force Survey:

The sampling frame consists of a master sample of enumeration areas (EAs) selected from the Population Housing and Establishment census 1997. The sample size is about 7,563 households for each quarter, representing the Palestinian society, and can provide statistical estimation about labour market indicators. The sample is a two-stage stratified cluster random sample. The first stage represents a random stratified sample from 481 enumeration areas of all Governorates. The second stage is stratification by type of locality; urban, rural and refugee camps. In each enumeration area, about 16 households are selected. The target population consists of all Palestinians aged 10 years and over living in the Palestinian Territory, excluding persons living in institutions such as prisons or shelters.

The areas remain fixed over time, but 50% of households in the EAs are replaced each round. The same household remains in the sample over two consecutive rounds, rests for the next two rounds and is selected again in the sample for another two consecutive rounds and then is dropped from the sample.

Survey Questionnaire:

The questionnaire included four parts:

Part one: Identification information. This part is used for recording necessary elements for survey management control.

Part two: Quality control. This part aims to observe all of the fieldwork operations, and controls and monitors all the stages that questionnaires pass. The design takes into account the possibility of quality control from one round to another.

Part three: Demographic data. Covers demographic characteristics of household members, including data on demographic and social characteristics, such as age, sex, refugee status, education, marital status, and household relation of household member to the head of the household.

Part four: Employment part. This part includes the main item of the research, in which one questionnaire must be filled for each member of the household who completed 10 years and over in order to identify their relation to the labour market. It records their most important characteristics in terms of employment status, economic activity, occupation, place of work and other indicators of labour force. It should be noted here that the questionnaire is filled directly by a direct interview through the interviewer; also the survey is a proxy one, which means that any adult person in the household can respond to all questionnaire parts.

In this part, the sequence of questions is designed in order to identify the individuals relation to the labour force and the main characteristics of its components (Employed and unemployed); labour force comprises all persons aged 15 years and over who are employed or unemployed during the reference period, and calculated by dividing the number of persons who are employed or unemployed by total population aged 15 years and over (manpower) multiplied by 100.

Concepts and Definitions:

The concepts and definitions used in the Palestinian labour force survey are adopted according to ILO standards definitions taking in to account Palestinian society privacy. See our website: www.pcbs.gov.ps

Importance of measuring the economically active population (ILO standards):

The labour force participation rate is considered the main indicator of the extent of labour market activity and effectiveness in the provision of employment opportunities. In addition, it is important in understanding the behavior of the labour market in many ways, according labour force supply and demand, also labour force participation rate is used for forecasting for future supply to the labour force, and in developing policies for training needs for the development of skills and increasing human capital

Production according to the System of National Accounts -SNA 1993:

- The production of goods and services produced for sale. The price is usually determined in the market and covers the production cost.
- All other goods and services that are usually sold in the market at a specific price that covers the cost of the production, such as government services and private nonprofit services, paid house work for others.

- Certain types of goods produced for final household consumption or fixed gross capital for private use.

The relation between the production and work:

- Individuals are considered economically active only if they contribute in the production of goods and services within the production in the System of National Accounts. While the case in the labour force survey of considering economically active individual was inclusion of all types of employment, including work for short term and casual work, (by using the concept working at least for one hour to expand the domain).
- Household production for non marketing products. If this production is a core for the household, then the product enters the work domain and the National Accounts, regardless of its value, since the system of National Accounts include some types of non-market products.

Gaps in the Labour Force Survey:

- The Labour Force Survey is a proxy survey, which means the individual do not know whether the goods that are produced by other employed household members should be included in the answer.
- Lack of sufficient information on the economic, semi economic and non-economic activities that are practices within the household.

The comprehensiveness of the Labour Force Survey for Women's work:

- The concepts of the Palestinian Labour Force Survey are consistent in an integrated manner with the concepts of the International Labour Organization.
- A point of difference is when comparing the size of self -production of the household in accordance with the standards of International Labour Organization (ILO), and the production boundary of SNA, which is calculated for all goods produced for consumption by the household, regardless of their contribution to the total consumption of the household and the repetition of the production.

Status of the Palestinian Labour Market:

Before the year 2000 the Palestinian labour market witnessed a relatively stable development of the main indicators; the number and labour force participation rate increased constantly, and the unemployment rate decreased. Since the end of September 2000, the Palestinian labour market witnessed a sudden and substantial changes due to Al Aqsa Intifada. These changes included the main indicators of the Palestinian labour market during the year 2000, and the year 2007 compared to year 1999.

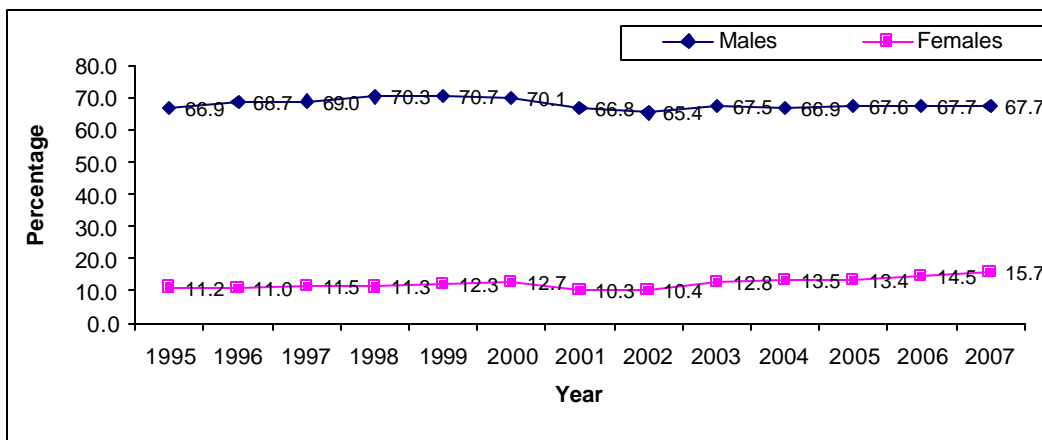
The prolonged closure imposed by Israeli military forces on the Palestinian Territory affected negatively the Palestinian labour market. Unemployment rate increased sharply reached 40% at the end of 2000, whereas was 10% in the 3^d quarter 2000.

Participation in the labour force:

The results of the Labour Force Survey, 2007 showed that the labour force participation rate of the population aged 15 years and over in the Palestinian Territory reached 41.9% (44.1% in the West Bank and 38.0% in the Gaza Strip). The male participation rate was 67.7% (69.4% in the West Bank and 64.5% in Gaza Strip), while the female participation rate reached 15.7% (18.3% in the West Bank and 11.0% in Gaza Strip). The female participation rate in the Palestinian Territory

is low when compared with other countries. Global development indicators showed that the woman labour participation rate in the Middle East reached 26.0%: the rate reached 25.4 % in Jordan, 31.0% in Lebanon and 21.7% in Egypt.

Figure 1: Labour Force Participation Rate of Persons Aged 15 years and Over in the Palestinian Territory by Sex: 1995-2007

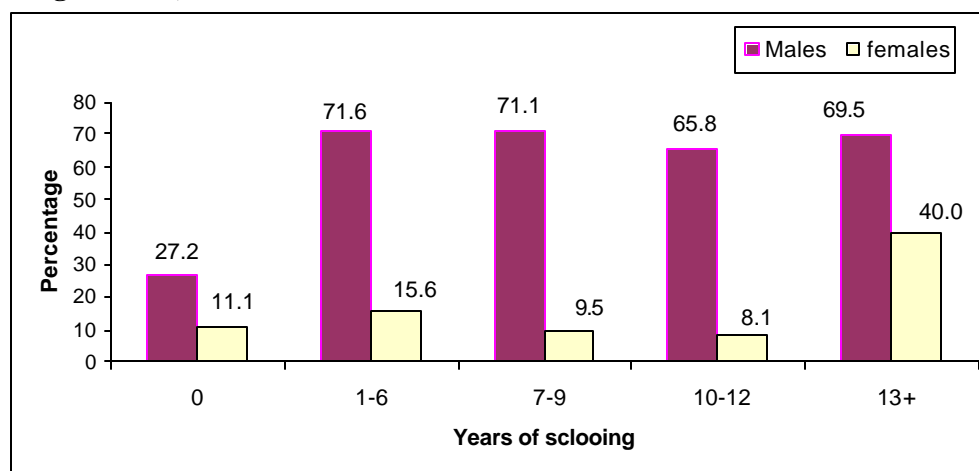


Characteristics of Labour Force

Education (Years of Schooling):

Labour Force Survey 2007 results showed that the highest participation rate of women aged 15 years and over was registered for those who completed 13 years of schooling and above: the participation rate reached 40.0% compared with 11.1% for women who did not complete any year of schooling of the total women participating in the labour force in the Palestinian Territory. The participation rate of women who completed 7-9 years of schooling reached 9.5% compared with 8.1% for women who have completed 10-12 of schooling. The results revealed the role of education in women's entry to the labour market, especially after the completing 13 years of schooling and more. This strong relation between education and participation was not found among men, especially among those who have completed 13 years of schooling and more.

Figure 2: Distribution of labour Force Participants Aged 15 Years and Over by Years of Schooling and Sex, 2007

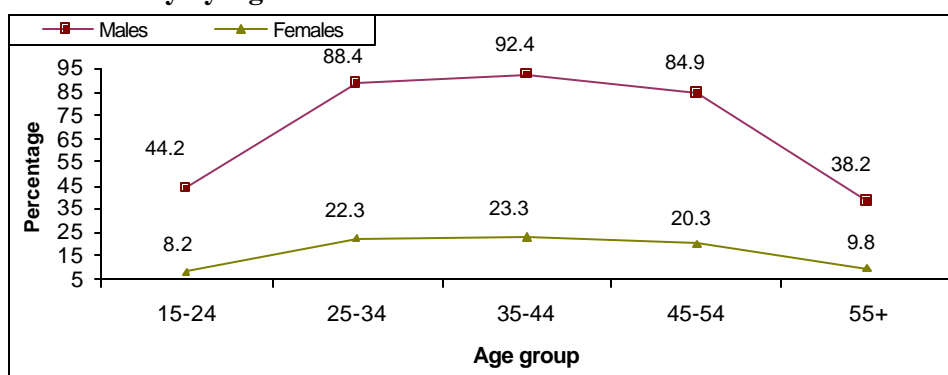


Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2008. Palestinian Labour Force Survey: Annual report, 2007. **Ramallah -Palestine .**

Age group:

The age groups 25-34 years, 35-44 years and 45-54 years represent the highest labour force participation rate of women in 2007 in the Palestinian Territory. The results showed that the woman labour participation rate in the age group 25-34 was 22.3%, this period considered the reproductive period, despite a widespread belief that reproductive responsibilities and high fertility rates are an impediment to the entry of women into the labour market. The participation rate of men of the same age group reached 88.4%. The labour force participation rate of women aged 35-44 years reached 23.3%, compared with 92.4% for this group of men. On the other hand, the labour force participation rate of women in the age group 45-54 years was 20.3%, compared with 84.3% for men.

Figure 3: Labour Force Participation Rate of Persons Aged 15 Years and Over in the Palestinian Territory by Age and Sex: 2007



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2008. Palestinian Labour Force Survey: Annual report, 2007. **Ramallah-Palestine .**

It is noticed that the woman participation rates followed the same trend of men participation rate: the rate increased for youth, vitality and activity period, in addition to enrollment in education, while labour force participation rates decreased in later life due to the fact that this older group accounts for a lower percentage in the community, and they move out of the labour force due to illness or old age.

Employment status:

Paid employment is the dominant pattern in employment in the Palestinian Territory for men (61.6%) and for women (51%), while unpaid household work is ranked second in the reality of women's employment, reaching 34.5%. On the other hand, self employment was second for men's employment, registering 26.8%. It should be noted that the reason why women practices unpaid work is that in Palestinian society considered that as additional or supplementary to the household income.

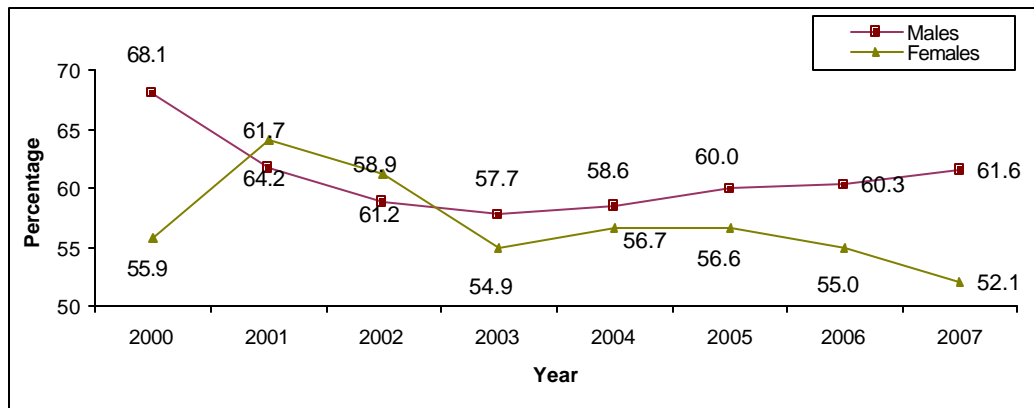
Figure 4: Percentage Distribution of Employed Persons in the Palestinian Territory by Employment Status and Sex, 2007



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2008. Palestinian Labour Force Survey: Annual report, 2007. **Ramallah-Palestine** .

Results showed that the percentage of wage employee's women decreased in the Palestinian Territory from 55.1% in 2000 to 52.1% in 2007. Also the percentage of wage employee's men decreased from 68.1% to 61.6% during the same period. employment.

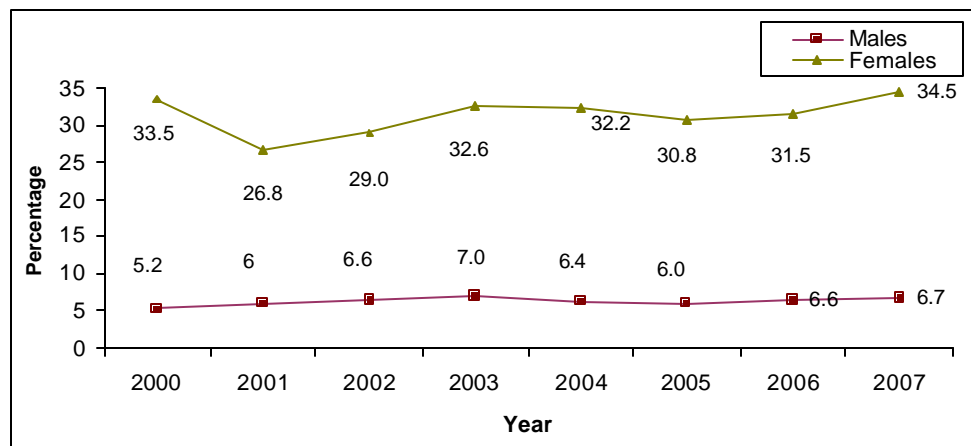
Figure 5: Percentage of Wage Employees in the Palestinian Territory by Sex: 2000-2007



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2008. Palestinian Labour Force Survey: Annual report, 2007. **Ramallah -Palestine** .

Meanwhile, the survey results showed that women working as unpaid family members in household projects increased, but with marked fluctuations; the proportion increased from 33.5% in 2000 to 34.5% in 2007. The work of unpaid domestic work is not protected.

Figure 6: Percentage of Unpaid Worker in the Palestinian Territory by Sex: 2000-2007



Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2008. Palestinian Labour Force Survey: Annual report, 2007. **Ramallah-Palestine .**

Results and Recommendations:

1. Women's participation rate is very low compared with the other countries in the region due to the Palestinian labour market being not stable (current political and economic situation) which does not encourage women to enter the labour market.
2. There is a need to increase women's participation in the labour market through, promotion programs that support working women.