

Social Determinants of Health Case of Palestine

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Social determinants of health

- Social determinants of health are the environmental conditions of the people in a population in which they are born, live, work, and play, that affect the person's health, risks, and quality of life.
- These include social, economic, and physical factors that have a significant outcome on the population's overall health, security, and well-being

SDs of Health

- “The conditions in which people live and work can help to create or destroy their health”.

Commission on Social Determinants of Health

SDs of Health

- WHO's Commission on Social Determinants of Health has drawn attention to the effects on health **of low income, inadequate housing, unsafe workplaces, and lack of access to health facilities.**
- **Conflict** is an additional hazard to health, not only because it causes injury, death, and disability, but also because it increases physical displacement, discrimination and marginalization, and prevents access to health services.
- **Constant exposure to life-threatening** situations in a conflict setting is an additional, specific social determinant of health, which can lead to disease

Palestine





Mediterranean Sea



- Area A and B
- Area C

Demographic Data

- Total Palestinian 14.3 million (inside and out side)
- 7 million are Refugees(inside and out side)
- 5.35 million in the state of Palestine
- 3.13 million in west Bank(25% are Refugees) and 2.17 (73% are Refugees)in Gaza
- People from 0-14 years are 38% of the total population
- People above 65 is 3% of the population
- Fertility rate 3.9 . in Gaza is higher than west bank

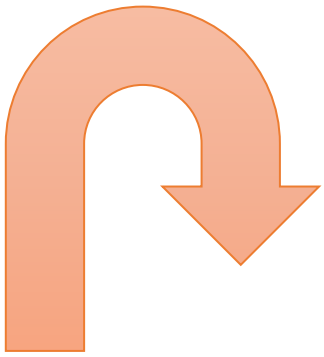
Demographic Data

- The life expectancy at birth is **74.4** years for the total population
- in the West Bank 76.12 and 75.14 years in the Gaza Strip.
- The maternal mortality rate is similar across the West Bank and Gaza strip, at 27 deaths per 100,000 live births. The infant mortality rate is also about the same between the regions at 15.6 deaths per 1,000 live births
- Family average size is 5
- Literacy rate 2.3%

Effect of occupation practices on health

Complexity of factors that contribute to Palestinian health and daily living :

- ❖ Ongoing colonization and continued land confiscation**
- ❖ Siege on Gaza strip (15 years) and several war**
- ❖ Building of Israeli settlements (illegal) on Palestinian land**
- ❖ Fragmentation of communities and land –Building the wall**
- ❖ Acute and constant insecurities**
- ❖ Routine violations of human rights(killing, dentation, beaten, searching ...)**



The population of Palestine has suffered incomparable hardship, injustice, discrimination, eviction, displacement, illegal settlements of Palestinian lands, isolation, war, and terror .

‘political polarization’ between the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as playing a central role in the creation and sustainment of an inefficient and inequitable structure of health care system and living condition with dignity















Restrictions on access and movement Implications

- ❖ The barrier in the West Bank and the permit regime limit access to the specialized hospitals in East Jerusalem. . . , in which six non-government hospitals are the main providers of routine, emergency, secondary and tertiary care for Palestinian from the West Bank and Gaza Strip**
- ❖ The Palestinian Ministry of Health faces particular difficulties in providing services to people living in rural areas of the West Bank, so-called “Area C.”**





The obstacles imposed by the presence of the Wall on the health and life aspect

- ❖ Economic effect- poverty- malnutrition
- ❖ Stress
- ❖ Destruction of the health and referral systems
- ❖ Increased costs
- ❖ Prevention of patients movement
- ❖ Prevention of health workers movement
- ❖ Cutting off communities
- ❖ Blocking ambulances
- ❖ Blocking vaccines & medical, supplies
- ❖ Blocking preventive care
- ❖ Decline in care for chronic patients

Impact of the Wall Seam Zone

The majority of the area between the wall and the Green Line has been designated a 'closed military area' or 'Seam Zone', where Palestinians have been obliged to obtain 'visitor' permits to access their farming land and water resources. Access is channeled through a particular gate designated on the permit. Restricted allocation of these visitor permits and the limited number and opening times of the wall gates have severely affect agricultural practice and undermined rural livelihoods.

Gaza blockade

The Gaza blockade has affected the functioning and development of the health care system in a number of ways:

- Health care has been hindered by restrictions on importation of medical supplies, equipment and spare parts.
- Limitations on movement of patients and health staff.
- Interruptions of power supply and impurities of water supply.
- Insecurity and the permit regime limiting access of Palestinians to health services as well as of the professional development of staff.

Effect of prolong occupation on Palestinian life-----Economic status

- Due to the movement and access restrictions, violent attacks, and the slow pace of the post conflict reconstruction, the economic conditions in the West Bank and Gaza have continued to deteriorate.
- Israel is especially restrictive in Gaza, resulting in a rise in unemployment and elevated poverty rates. The average unemployment rate in the Palestine is 26% (WB 18% and Gaza47%)
- .the poverty rate in Gaza 53% ,west bank 13.9%
- There is a greater population in Gaza that lives in impoverished conditions, with 18% of the population below the poverty line in the West Bank and 30% in Gaza

Nutrition

- Severe food insecurity is prevalent in the oPt, with about **68%** of households in Gaza and **12%** in the West Bank facing moderate to severe food insecurity (WHO, 2021).
- Malnutrition is a greater problem in Gaza than in the West Bank, with a rate of childhood stunting of **13%** in Gaza and **8%** in the West Bank, more common amongst children from refugee camps or low-income families (WHO, 2021)

Environmental factors

- **Water quality.** In 2018, an estimated 1 million women and 1 million children were at health risk “associated with poor water quality, poor waste water collection, and treatment, lack of storm water infrastructure,
- More than 25% of Gazans lived in areas without adequate sewage infrastructure due to the lack of treatment, plant capacity, lack of spare parts for repair, and inadequate electric power to operate the plants

Environmental pollution

- . Lack of regulatory enforcement has also resulted in the dumping of construction debris and sewage from Israeli settlements into Palestinian residential areas
- Housing is crowded in the oPt & Housing conditions such as crowding, dampness, and ineffective ventilation are very common in refugee camps and many homes of Palestinians. A study conducted in the Jalazone refugee camp in the West Bank found statistically significant connection between the poor housing conditions and the common cold, tonsillitis, ear infections, and cough

Environmental pollution

- **Another study found a significant relationship between the housing conditions in a refugee camp in Gaza and gastrointestinal symptoms/diseases such as intestinal parasites and diarrhea.**
- **Many Palestinians also face housing insecurity due to the loss of their home to the Israeli occupation. In 2018, Israel demolished 911 homes and building , resulting in the displacement of Palestinians (WHO, 2021).**

Psychological and psychosocial factors

- There have been many studies that examined the conditions of the oPt on psychological and social functioning. **They found that exposure to movement restrictions and violence significantly correlated with mental health disorders such as depression, trauma-related stress, and hopelessness.**
- it was reported that 42% of Palestinians stated that their physical health has limited their ability to meet financial, familial, or educational needs. It was also found that these limitations were significantly related to the loss/injury of a parent due to the conflict, unemployment, and threats to security and life
- After 15 years of siege on Gaza reports showd that one third of Gazan population need psychosocial support

Psychological and psychosocial factors

- In Gaza, more than half of the children who were conflicted with violence secondary to the occupation are afflicted with post-traumatic stress disorder (WHO, 2021).
- IN 2003, a study showed that about 93% of Palestinian children experience fear, feel threatened, or insecure in their lifetime. This is common amongst children in Gaza, more prominently in refugee camps .
- The oPt also has the highest burdens of adolescent mental disorders in the Middle Eastern region (WHO, 2021).

Health care limitations for Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons Healthcare

- The Israeli Prison is the provider of primary care services for Palestinian prisoners. Although it is very difficult for organizations to access prisons for monitoring services, it has been reported that Palestinian prisoners lack timely and appropriate treatment for prisoners.
- There is an estimate of 5500 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons . There are reports of inadequate medical care, nutrition, and access to psychosocial support (WHO, 2021).
- Aside from untreated diseases such as cancer and other severe conditions, prisoners also suffer mental health problems such as acute depression, severe introversion, suicide, psychological stress, anxiety, and insomnia. This is primarily due to care negligence of acute hysterical reactions secondary to the interrogation methods employed by the Israeli interrogators, as well as the denial of family visits and contacts

solution

