



**Development Studies Programme**

**WOMEN  
&  
WORK IN PALESTINE**

**1998**

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&  
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**A Briefing on the Situation of Women in the Employment  
Sector in Preparation for the International Labor  
Organization Mission**

**“ More and Better Jobs for women”**

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## **Preface**

The Development Studies Programme (DSP) is pleased to present this study to those individuals and institutions interested in the subject of "Women & Work in Palestine". The current "Briefing" includes sections on the following:

Post - Beijing activities, PNA interventions, NGOs and PVOs, Unions, and UN agencies. It also included a statistical summary of gender gaps in employment, and a brief list of recommendations on the subject. The bulk of the "Briefing" consists of an annotated bibliography of women and work in Palestine to complete this study, DSP researchers conducted a large number of interviews with experts in the field. They visited various institutions and collected relevant material.

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Dr. Nader I. Said  
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*For large parts of the population, the economic situation depends as much on ‘high policy’ and political events outside their control as on their own efforts and actions. In the present state of occupation, living conditions are thus not only threatened by adverse effects on income and employment, but also by the fact that the population has been deprived of control over basic factors that influence its situation. (FAFO 2, p.130)*

## **A. Introduction**

This report has been written to assist an ILO mission to formulate a national Plan of Action in Palestine for “More and Better Jobs for Women,” part of a global ILO programme to encourage the integration of women in the employment sector.

This paper is an attempt to identify the existing “post-Beijing” institutions and mechanisms for advancing women’s employment status, and to highlight interventions. Recommendations made by the public, private and NGO sectors and unions on how to increase the quality and quantity of work available and accessible to women and to improve their conditions of work are listed and summary statistics drawn from current research identify some gender gaps.

Information was gathered through interviews with government and non-government actors involved in women’s employment and income-generation from a training, project implementation, financing, policy planning and social rights perspective, and through accessing available current research (see **Annotated Bibliography**). An attempt was made to include criticisms and major points made by various individuals in interviews in the Discussion sections.

## **B. Summary of Post-Beijing Activities and Interventions**

### **1. Institutional structures**

An interministerial coordinating committee for the Advancement of Women, composed of the highest levels of women in ministries, was established in March 1996 with UNIFEM cooperation and has evolved into a national government policy-making and planning body. The committee meets regularly and has largely been responsible for strengthening gender consciousness within ministries and planning gender-specific projects. Called “gender focal points,” six women hold the position of Director-General (within ministries of Planning, Youth and Sport, Health, Local Government, Culture and Social Affairs), two women are Directors (Agriculture and Information) and two others hold gender portfolios in their respective ministries (Industry and Economics and Trade).

A National Strategy and ten women-specific interministerial projects were described in detail in a document distributed by the committee to funders in July.

The General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW) along with the Women’s Affairs Technical Committee (WATC) and various women’s committees, societies and unions make up the NGO “post-Beijing” machinery for following up non-government

initiatives and formulating a national strategy for women. The national strategies of the PNA committee and NGOs were integrated into a single *Performance Document: Palestinian Women's Advancement* and formally presented to the government in June 1997 along with project proposals requiring funding. The launching of rural centers to promote skills among young, rural women is a major feature of GO/NGO post-Beijing plans. A model parliament is in preparation to organise women's lobbying efforts and promote issues with members of the Palestinian Legislative Council.

The interministerial committee made a formal intervention to include a gender perspective in MOPIC's 3-year national development plan (PDP) which members of the interministerial committee had not seen until the final stages. "Bridging the gender gap in all aspects of life," was suggested by the committee to be added as a fifth objective of the PDP. A National Committee for the Advancement of Women has been suggested to formalize national planning. (Recommendations for a line ministry or Higher Council were not approved by the executive authority.)

**Discussion:** The composition of this committee appears to be loose, with different lists given by different sources and entirely West Bank-based due to travel restrictions. There is also confusion within ministries as well as outside among the various roles manifested by different titles given gender departments, alternatively women's affairs, women's department, women's development, gender unit. Some members of the committee were opposed to the idea of gender focal points and argued for the integration, rather than isolation, of women decision makers within ministries as a way to increase effectiveness and ensure a gender dimension in all ministry programs and plans. The PDP formulation is a case in point of how the committee, and gender concerns in general, are easily by-passed at a national level. Gender planning is not clear within the PNA, much is donor-driven, some committee members report, directly or indirectly.

Women could better be targeted through specific projects rather than through specific personnel. The creation of separate units was also felt to decrease professional promotion opportunities for women within ministries by excluding them from positions unrelated to women's services. It reinforced the identification of women employees as belonging to a special interest group.

There was discomfort expressed by some NGOs concerning the role of the GUPW in the NGO committee as being too closely identified with government rather than non-government interests. The committee itself was viewed as barely functioning and in need of being broader-based to more accurately express the range of NGO political positions.

The de facto suspension of UNIFEM activities in the West Bank due apparently to the agency's own budgeting problems has left its ability to promote and follow-up the mainstreaming phase of post-Beijing activities in doubt.

## **2. PNA interventions**

*Employment in Government:* With a target of 30% female employment within the government, the breakdown at lower staff levels is reported to be as high as 70%. There are 2 women as ministers out of 24, zero deputy ministers, and 25 Director Generals out of 177 across 15 ministries. For the first time eight women occupy positions in local government, all are appointees. Among employees of local councils, only 4% are female, one fourth of which are professionals in engineering, computer and accounting. No information was available on women staff and conditions in the police.

Maternity leave was recently increased under civil service regulations from 6 to 12 weeks.

*MOPIC:* Out of 206 employees, 45 are women (1/8 Director General, 9 Directors, 3 Assistant Directors, 10 Heads of units, 5 sections heads, 7 Executive secretaries, 3 secretaries, 2 office managers). The Ministry's Gender Planning Directorate is currently developing a project for the next 18-months on women and employment, focusing on training, business credit and employment. A gender-training workshop in the near future is to analyse the PDP projects in terms of their gender components.

*Ministry of Labour:* Six months ago the MOL established a women's unit. Despite the fact that 19% of staff, and 13% of directors are women, current programmes and new booklets on trade skills show no gender focus although reforms have been suggested, especially in the vocational training programmes. According to women's committees, one important new service of local labour offices (in Ramallah) is to supervise contracts between employer and women when requested by workers; 15 have been supervised so far.

*Interministerial:* A rural development vocational center in Jenin district has been developed for research, health education and teaching folklore industry skills. 35 extension workers are women.

*Ministry of Trade:* The MOT reports gender mainstreaming and "good support for gender programmes"; within ministry more than 50% of newly hired staff are women. Senior staff say they are waiting for "better conditions" to recruit qualified women for public sector. PNA is considering lowering credit rates for women to 3.5% according to one senior official; 2 to 3 solid projects are needed to promote women's employment.

*Ministry of Industry:* small size credit to be given to small size enterprise projects, according to one of 9 ministry plans in PDP-small business equity fund has \$10,000 for planning only for small business promotion such as industrial washing units, domestic and office cleaning, cotton weaving mills.

*PECDAR:* No gender dimension seen in any PECDAR projects; 2-year donor matrix (1996) is gender blind.

*Ministries of Agriculture and Social Affairs:* Plans for credit programmes for women. There are female extension workers but no specific outreach or programmes to women farmers.

*Ministries of Education and Health:* Both ministries have analysed representation of women in staff positions.

**Discussion:** The highest level of positions in ministries requires a presidential appointment letter, to which women are unlikely to have access. Rarely are women appointed to higher positions not directly related to women and children. Women tend to leave government jobs for home or better-paying private sector jobs.

Within the higher levels of ministries considerable attention has been paid to gender sensitivity training of staff. Applying concepts used in training, however, is still problematic. Gender awareness in projects varies considerably among ministries.

The Ministry of Labor was criticized by women in other ministries as being particularly gender-blind in its training activities although a new women's affairs unit may improve the situation. Workplace inspectors have been criticized for not acting as impartial monitors, lacking knowledge of laws and for being "easy" on owners.

Most government programmes, especially credit programmes, for women have an anti-poverty approach rather than an improvement of employment skills or opportunities. At the same time, there are suggestions for the government to operate, or encourage the private sector to operate, low-interest loan programmes for women in business, at 3.5% interest, which would probably target poorer women. The PNA was also urged to be involved in assisting middle income women with businesses.

### 3. NGOs/ PVOs

*Youth centers:* of 315 active youth centers in the WBGS, only 27 have functioning women's centers.

*WATC:* Focuses on training in gender awareness, personal status law and working women's rights, lobbying, advocacy, media work, networking; 3-year pilot project in Hebron and Gaza working with rural women in self-development and rights. Sponsors exhibits of handicrafts and stores in rural areas. Women have approached WATC for information and referrals on how to start their own businesses, kindergartens, and loan sources. Suggestions of training women in "new jobs" such as telecommunications, marketing.

*MAS:* currently examining UN-sponsored community development programmes and local rural development fund for a gender component.

*Inash al-Usra:* gives loans to 60 women for business enterprises; 5000 women make embroidery but JD100,000 is in storehouse, unsold (high quality, high prices, no market). Operate 6 training centers for girls in hairdressing and other traditional skills. All but 4 of its rural agricultural production centers have closed down over the years due to poor finances and harassment.

*Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees:* PARC has a women's unit which trains women in management skills, small scale business in bee keeping, marketing and financial issues; women's clubs in rural community; many businesses cannot be supported in small rural communities due to small population. Women do not own capital; land reclamation projects cannot help them. 3-Year gender focus plan concentrates on internal administration; need extension workers to reach rural women.

*Bisan:* Bisan teaches administrative skills (marketing, finance, management) to women in community centers, employ female librarians, 60 women received credit in loan programme for new or existing businesses (with Oxfam).

*Democratic Workers Rights Center:* Minimum wage not a local issue because of disparities in work places and generally bad economic situation. The issue of conditions is more important: especially harassment and violence against women workers. Textiles and services are the worst sectors. Industrial zones may improve women's participation in labor market, as cheap labor, along with children. One-third of trainees in legal rights are women. A problem is how to reach women in the informal sector. DWRC monitors 40 workplaces with the Ministry of Labour.

*Save the Children:* 5000 women are active in the group guaranteed lending programme of short-term micro-loans which are given at 22% interest, with immediate payback. Loans are for existing rather than new businesses and tend to support petty trading. The women avoid problems of no collateral, heavier merchant debt buying and social isolation of self-enterprise. A local microfinance institution is now being established to administer the credit programme independently. The impact on women cannot be assessed for another year; there is some concern that the destination of loans may not be for women's businesses. 55 women are "local promoters" working on commission.

*Welfare Association:* Staff report there will be an extensive gender focus in the WA's recommendation of World Bank funds it is administering to NGOs. It is undertaking a needs assessment for poverty alleviation programme, improving target groups. One-third of regular annual budget is for women's NGOs.

*Oxfam Quebec:* "Economic enhancement for women" programme funds credit, training (with Bisan) and research. Loans of \$2-3,000 given at very low interest.

**Discussion:** There is wide criticism of too low interest loans as being a glorified welfare policy and encouraging unsustainable projects. Loans which are above bank interest rate of 13-15% are too high interest and can burden women active in very small or low-profit projects with financial pressure., causing social problems within the family. The effect of current loan programmes have not been studied in terms of their impact on women's lives and businesses.

Donors are increasingly interested in rural community projects for women, in the same way that micro-credit dominated programmes of two years ago. Aspects that

need study are what is the impact of training, what are the employment opportunities for women in rural areas, possible marketing strategies for agricultural products and social difficulties such as illiteracy and poor health care that must be overcome.

#### **4. Unions**

Gender focus for unions has always been problematic. Once separate sectoral unions, now women workers' interests are represented in a new women's affairs department (one year old) in General Federation. Union enrollment has increased due to subsidization by government to unions of half of workers' paid benefits from Israel. (9% of gross salary). Unions pay 50% of health insurance for members and assist in getting work permits. Women's department estimates that 2% of union members are women and 8% of women workers are unionized. Union identifies problems as: no on-the-job training, no non-traditional vocational skill training in technical fields (proposed project with Ministry of Labor), no specific job training in health, agriculture, medical sciences. Issues of contracts and wages show substantial regional differences.

Women's committees which function as women's rights lobbying groups have held recent rights awareness workshops, a "face-to-face" session between women workers and union leaders, and use one hour weekly allowed by some factory owners for labor law discussions among staff.

**Discussion:** The role of unions as independent organisations representative of workers' interests has been blurred, say critics, due to their acceptance of workers' benefits deductions which are partially returned to the PNA as health insurance payments. Real union work of activism for better working conditions is not carried out. There is clearly gender discrimination even within the union, weakening the role of the women's affairs department in championing the rights of female workers or even raising the issue of women learning non-traditional skills similar to men.

#### **5. UN Agencies and Donors**

(The UN donor matrix of relevant projects, coordinated by the MOPIC, will be available on December 6.)

*UNRWA:* Income generating programme (about 900 small enterprises receive loans at 15% interest and \$500 loans) and poverty alleviation programme primarily target poor refugee women. UNRWA suggests:

- community-based finance schemes which could be institutionalized within communities, linked to NGOs;
- apprenticeships rather than vocational workshops
- soft mini-loans should be linked to basic business extensions

*Donors:*

German bank to begin "Business Start-up" programme for women.  
Canadian government is also to begin credit programme for women.

## **C. Statistical Summary of Gender Gaps in Employment**

The subject of women and work invites discussion, since it can involve widely differing concepts of what exactly constitutes work, as well as arguments for and against the usefulness of segregating out women's working role from her other roles and of discussing women and work separately from men given current conditions of very high unemployment and underemployment caused by border closures. In the Palestinian context, it also generates discussion about gender and class issues and national subordination as root causes of women's low participation in the paid labour force.

Quantitative aspects, by gender (PCBS Round 6, April-June 1997)

	Female			Male		
	Total	WB	GS	Total	WB	GS
Not in Labour Force %	87.4	84.2	93.1	31.3	29.2	35.1
Labor force participation %	12.6	15.8	6.9	68.7	70.8	64.9
Age group of highest participation	25-54 years	45-54	25-34	25-54 years	25-44	25-44
Full employment %	78.8	80.5	71.6	69.9	70.2	69.2
Under-employment %	3.7	4.5	0.8	10.9	14.1	4.6
Unemployment %	17.5	15	27.6	19.2	15.7	26.2
Educational level most in labour force		13+	13+		1-13+	1-13+
Married/in labour force		54.2	61.1		64.1	71.9
Unemployed/educational level	13+= 54.2%			1-12= 86%		
Reason outside labour force		home-making 2.2%	home-making 74.8%		study 44.7%	study 46.2%
Average daily wage (1995)	54.5X			58.5		
Average paid work hours (1994)	150			163		
Average monthly wages (1994) in JD	264			294		

Occupational segregation, % of female workers of total

agriculture	32.3
mining, manufacturing	13.5
construction	0.4
commerce, hotels, restaurants	5.5
transport, storage, communi.	1.7
services, other	23.4

PCBS, Round 3

**Percentage of females by occupation**

Legislators, senior officials, managers	10.8
Professionals, technicians, clerks	31.1
Service, shop, market workers	6.9
Skilled agricultural workers	36.9
Craft and related trade workers	8.2
Plant and machine operators, assemblers	1.3
Elementary occupations	5.2

PCBS, Round 3

**Location of jobs**

	All jobs %	Local jobs %
City	50	71.5
Village	30	21.3
Camp	5	7.1
Israel and settlements	15	-

PCBS; Ministry of Labour, Labour Market Features

**Sectors rated by average daily wage, NIS**

	Total average	Male average	Male average in Israeli workplaces
services	66.5	70.4	78.2
construction	59.5	60.0	89.5
transport, comm.	57.5	59.8	85.1
mining, manufact.	45.8	51.2	81.4
commerce, hotels	43.3	44.5	82.7
agriculture	33.0	33.8	47.2

PCBS Round 3

**Total Labour Force Participation, by Gender, by Region**

	Female			Male		
	Total	WB	GS	Total	WB	GS
Labour Force Survey						
1. September-October 1995		12.8	7.6		68.6	62.8
2. April-May 1996		13.3	9.3		71.3	67.6
3. July-October 1996		13.5	6.4		71.4	65.8
4. October 1996-January 1997		13.0	5.5		70.3	64.4
5. February-March 1997		12.4	6.2		68.9	64.4
6. April-June 1997	12.6	15.8	6.9	68.7	70.8	64.9

**Informal sector female participation** (estimates, FAFO study):

Gaza Strip 55.6%

West Bank 60.6%

**Employment Status (Males and Females) (PCBS Round 3):**

Employer	0 5.8%
Self-employed	22.6%
Wage employee	61.8%
Unpaid family member	09.8%

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Following statistics are taken from Ministry of Labour, Labour Market: Basic Features.

### **Establishments:**

20% were created since 1993  
 92% are owned by local Palestinians  
 70% are family owned  
 86.2% of owners are the managers  
 75% are services and commerce establishments  
 65.7% did not recruit any new workers in 1996

### **Employed persons**

	<b>Female %</b>	<b>Male %</b>
<b>Administrative jobs</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>19</b>
Productive jobs	72	64
Supportive jobs	12	17
% by gender	22.7	77.3
high administrative	6%	9%
specialized administrative	18	14
supportive administrative	12	8
skilled labour	46	47
unspecialized skills	10	13
supportive jobs	8	9
Age: >15	1	1
15-24	30	20
25-34	43	42
35-44	17	23
45-54	7	10
55-64	1	3
65+	1	1
Illiterate	3	3
1-6 years schooling	12	18
7-12 years schooling	28	38
13+ years	57	41

### **Female employees**

One-third of employees work in education  
 One-fourth work in manufacturing (garment industry)  
 One-fifth in health and social work

### **All employees:**

80% have no written contract  
 69% have no health insurance from employer  
 8% receive in-service training/17% are trained outside  
 77% of establishments pay wages of less than \$300  
 40% of workers recruited are skilled labourers/50% of workers who leave are skilled  
 55% of workers leave at their own initiative/40% are terminated

62% are recruited through family or social contacts  
15% net increase of workers in 1996

#### **Wages Differentials by Gender:**

35.5% more for males in skilled labour  
20% more for males in unskilled labour  
22% more for males in secondary jobs  
14% more for males in specialized management

<b>Size of establishments by number of workers</b>	<b>Distribution of establishments by number of workers (%) (Table 4)</b>	<b>Ratio of females to total of females employed in establishments (Table 6)</b>
1-5	51.5	10.9
6-10	16.5	11.8
11-20	12.0	15.2
21-50	14.0	38.1
51-100	6.0	16.4
100+	---	7.6
	100	100

#### **D. General Recommendations Made by Reviewees/Literature:**

##### Support for Working Mothers

Flexible working hours or job-sharing  
Child care support systems (on-site for large establishments)  
Housing projects for working women

##### Support for Self-employed

Access to credit for small and medium businesses  
Access to markets, market organizations  
Integration in unions of all sectors  
Creation of market research centers  
Satellite business centers in rural areas  
Rentals of business machinery for women (sewing, construction, tools, etc.)

##### Legislative Reform

Inheritance land and property rights  
Equal pay and promotion opportunities  
Protection for domestic labour and informal sector workers  
Health insurance benefits; Leave without pay arrangements; Maternity leave  
Regular workplace monitoring  
Affirmative action programme for women in government

##### Job Creation

Job bank for women  
Job placement programme for graduates of training programmes

Inclusion of women into direct hire programmes  
Inclusion of women into industrial park plans

### Social Entitlements

Universal system of social security

### Education and Vocational Training

Career guidance programme for secondary school girls  
Gender sensitivity education in secondary schools  
Discontinuing of “streaming” in secondary school  
Training in non-traditional, technical and male-dominated areas  
De-genderizing occupations in vocational training programmes  
Retraining of older women reentering job market  
Linking vocational training with market needs  
Encouragement of apprenticeships and on-the-job training  
Placement programme for graduates and follow-up

### Public Sector

Raising number of women in agricultural schools  
Agricultural extension to women farmers

### Further Research Areas

Occupational preferences of female tawjiji students and follow-up studies  
(*Impact of career counseling on student choices*)  
(*Range of opportunities for female students*)

Follow-up studies on male and female university graduates regarding employment

Assessment of working conditions of women in various employment sectors and subsectors  
(*Physical conditions, social support, work environment, promotion and training opportunities, wages*)

Investigation of visible and invisible unemployment among females

Attitudes towards work among female civil servants/attitudes among government workers toward equal job opportunities and pay equity for women  
(*Job satisfaction, conditions, environment, etc.*)

Problems encountered by women in the workplace  
(*Harrassment, violence, interference in personal life, political pressure, poor health conditions, exploitation in wages or work hours*)

Informal sector surveys  
(*Research into the full range of women's work activities, inside and outside of home*)

Indepth study of women's contribution in agriculture

Investigation of impact at household level of income-generating activities  
(Effort versus profit studies, social impact, length of projects, measurable indicators of contribution to individual, family or community development, effect of credit)

Feasibility of part-time and flexible-time employment

Evaluation of union work for women workers

The potential of small-business projects in rural areas

## **An Annotated Bibliography of Women and Work in Palestine**

In contrast to the few isolated micro-level studies of working women undertaken in the period 1980-1995, the quantity and quality of very recent research represents a quantum leap forward in gender analysis in Palestine. Here we are specifically concerned with women in the employment sector, but the burgeoning and improvement of research is obviously important for other sectors as well, expanding understanding of gender roles and encouraging policies which maximize human development potential. The body of Palestinian research can also serve to increase international understanding about the ordinary as well as the extra-ordinary constraints on development in the Palestinian context.

The status of current research owes much to the establishment of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and its generation of national baseline data, gender disaggregated, which has made available regular and more reliable measurement of population, labour force and wage levels, business and agriculture activities, household consumption, and education and health indicators. The existence of a Palestinian government and the increase in involvement of the international community in Palestinian development has given an impetus for more focused and critically constructive research with a practical, community-oriented purpose. By exposing gender and other gaps and investigating their causes, such research has the possibility of making policies and programmes gender-informed and affecting change toward equal access and opportunity. The availability of statistics and analysis which reveal otherwise invisible problems in society is also useful to non-government organizations active in advancing social and economic rights.

This annotated bibliography was compiled in November 1997 from documents obtained directly from Palestinian ministries, NGOs, international PVOs and UN agencies and from material available in specialized libraries in the central Jerusalem-Ramallah area. The listing should be considered a partial compilation *in progress* of the most recent research, statistics and writing on Palestinian women in the employment sector, both formal and informal, and on the household economy. Larger studies, for example, on education and development issues have also been included if substantive information appeared related to women in the work force or conditions impacting on their labor participation. Several documents that dealt with the employment sector as a whole or with macro-economic issues completely lacked a gender focus but were included here to illustrate the currency of gender-blindness in some plans and programmes in the Palestinian government and in UN agencies.

A number of important documents, among them the draft Palestinian Development Plan for 1998-2000, were not yet available for review at the time this bibliography was compiled and are not included.

Whenever possible, tables which represent gender disaggregated data are highlighted. Original analysis that furthers discussion and major recommendations, if any, are also summarized. Works in English and in Arabic are listed separately. The material has been organized according to arbitrarily selected topics for easier identification: ***Education/Vocational Training; Gender and Development Issues; Labour Force Studies; Labour Legislation; PLO/PNA Plans and Policies; Project Evaluations; Rural Studies/Women in Agriculture; UN Agency Documents; Statistical Resources; Other Resources.***

Some major areas neglected in research concern women and men in the informal sector, unpaid work, attitudes toward occupations, unemployed and underemployed women, working conditions by sector, the impact of training and retraining programmes, women in NGOs, women and unions, and adult education.

## **EDUCATION/ VOCATIONAL TRAINING**

Abu Nahleh, Lamis. *Gender Planning, Vocational Education, and Technical Training (VETT) in Palestine*. Women's Studies Department, Bir Zeit University, September 1996.

A gender analysis and critical evaluation of the VETT system based on secondary sources and interviews with relevant personnel and a survey of 854 12th graders who represented the potential target group. It looks at the interaction between political, organizational, technical and research spheres as well as the impact of family and the educational system on students' life opportunities and reinforcement of gender roles. The author's conclusions were that research on VETT is not gender informed and policy recommendations do not serve to implement stated objectives; students have a narrow, gender-strict view of available opportunities; streaming further restricts student opportunities; regionally, the south is more disadvantaged in resources. She urges a systems and market analysis of VETT that integrates gender and Palestine's economic potential. VETT reform policies should address streaming, gender and region disparities. Tables in Appendix show distribution of females/males staff and students by training programs and VE schools.

Ghali, Mona. *A Gender Profile of the Determinants and Outcome of Schooling in the West Bank and Gaza Strip*. Women's Studies Department, Bir Zeit University, November 1997 (draft).

An examination of gender trends in education from gender disaggregated data on formal schooling and of their impact on gender roles in society. Both in-school and out-of-school factors such as the family and labour market are analysed. Policy recommendations include: maintaining funding levels for education to allow prioritizing of gender, supporting gender research in education to identify gaps and biases, developing a gender-sensitive educational philosophy, institutionalizing gender sensitivity and linking the educational curricula with market needs. The author also suggests a redefining of productivity to include non-wage productive processes

and of education generally to embrace the importance of analytical skills and independent thought. *Appendix: Table A:* School enrollment by level and gender, 1975-1995.

Palestinian Ministry of Labour, Meeting the Challenge: Vocational Training, current status and future perspective, June 1996. Palestinian-Swiss Cooperation Project. Expert Team on Vocational Training. Hashweh, Mazen et al.

An overview of the VETT system in Palestine, which comprised of community colleges, vocational secondary schools, vocational training centers, and the VTCs of the Ministry of Labour and results of research into employer and employee attitudes and hiring practices. The study lacks any gender focus, except in listing the average monthly salaries of hairdressing, which shows that males receive almost three times a female's monthly wage. Females constituted about 28% of students admitted, with sewing representing 60% of female trainees.

## GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

Gender and Development. Gender and Society Working Paper #3, Women's Studies Program, Birzeit University, September 1995. Essays by Valentine Moghadam on "WID, WAD, GAD" and by Nahla Abdo on "Women and the Informal Economy in Palestine" which critically look at theoretical and practical approaches to women's integration into the economy and the development context. Commentaries by Eileen Kuttab, "Fixed Paradigms, Changing Realities," and Rita Giacaman, "International Aid, Women's Interests, and the Depoliticization of Women," challenge the usefulness and applicability of traditional as well as newer gender sensitive, donor-driven concepts in dealing with the experience of Palestinian women in class, social and national struggles.

Giacaman, Rita. Population and Fertility: Population Statistics, Women's Rights and Sustainable Development. In Palestinian Women: A Status Report 2. Women's Studies Program, Bir Zeit University, 1997.

The author argues that the reasons for high fertility in Palestine are complex and need to be examined in terms of social, economic and political structure and processes in society, as well as in gender and regional terms. The current total fertility rate of 6.24 represents one of the highest in the world but a slight decline from the early 1970s, primarily among educated women. Regional differences, however, indicate that fertility remains high in refugee populations, even with high education, probably due to lack of access to job opportunities in the area. The preference for male children, seen as economic security and income providers, has had an effect on fertility levels as a family survival strategy. The author notes the absence of a national level population policy or consensus about collective welfare strategies. She argues for sustainable development policies that are based on rights and welfare and equal opportunities in education and employment as the mechanism to decrease the subjective and objective need for higher fertility.

**Table 3:** Fertility trends since 1980.

Palestinian Women and Development. London: CAABU, No. 5.

Heiberg, Marianne and Geir Ovensen. Palestinian Society in Gaza, West Bank and Jerusalem: A Survey of Living Conditions. FAFO. Report 151. Oslo: 1993.

This household survey predates the closure and the results must be considered in that light. Unemployment was measured at only 7% at the time. However, it represents the first attempt at deriving Palestinian-sourced statistics of labour and households, prior to the establishment of the PCBS.

**Chapter 7: Employment and Under-utilization of Labour:** Female labor force participation in the WBGS is slightly higher than among “non-Jews” in Israel (14% to 12%). Regionally, the West Bank and Jerusalem have more than double the female participation rate as Gaza (8% to 18%). Differences in employment opportunities and cultural inhibitions are used to explain the contrasts. The author divides unemployed and underemployed into visible and invisible to distinguish the large number of discouraged workers who may no longer be seeking work and thus not included statistically in the work force. Young educated women were the typical “discouraged worker” in this survey. The survey uses full-time and part-time to view visible underemployment. A separate section on **Female Labour Activity** divides female employment in family sphere and outside family sphere. Out of house employment (10% of women) is found mainly among the highly educated, young unmarried, widows, divorcees and women without children, and linked to objective socio-economic background factors. Another 10% were engaged in income-generating activities. Women were found to be “employed” more than full-time with productive and reproductive activities occupying more than 60 hours per week.

**Attitudes on the Status of Women:** 78% of women compared to 44% of men found work outside the home for women acceptable. While men’s attitudes are unaffected by age, younger women were less inclined to view outside work as acceptable. With reference to married women, 95% of both men and women found childcare and homemaking a more appropriate role.

**Women, Property and Access to Economic Resources:** About 40% of women claimed no saleable assets of their own; 47% reported they could sell their personal jewelry, usually received as dowry, in emergencies. Women had dwindling amounts of other property, such as animals or tools and low amounts of savings or land and depend on husbands for financial support. **Tables 10-22-10.25** indicate women’s attitudes toward work, day care, and occupations.

Gender disaggregated statistics are available in **Appendix A.7**, comparing Israeli and FAFO statistical data on labour.

Holt, Maria. Women in Contemporary Palestine: Between Old Conflicts and New Realities. PASSIA: Jerusalem, 1995.

A brief sectoral assessment of women’s gains and losses following their mobilization during the intifada. In a narrative entitled Women and Work, Holt makes the point that economic forces rather than tradition may have defined their work roles.

Johnson, Penny. Social Support: Gender and Social Policy. in Palestinian Women: A Status Report 5. Women’s Studies Program, Bir Zeit University, 1997. An investigation of gender implications of current social support systems. Traditional systems which link social entitlements to employment tends to exclude women as a

social group and other vulnerable groups not active in the formal economy. The author argues for a universal entitlement system rather than limited social safety nets as an appropriate social policy to meet the needs of women.

Moghadam, Valentine. *Modernizing Women: Gender and Social Change in the Middle East* (Lynne Rienner Publishers: Boulder, 1993).

A critical look of the impact on women of economic development in the Middle East.

Palestine: Human Development Profile, 1996-1997. Human Development Project, Bir Zeit University, 1997. While gender is analysed in the health and education sectors, in the section on Employment and Labor, there is no discussion of females in the labour force. Under “vital issues,” some trends regarding women and work are noted. Box 2.20 ( p.71) “Women and Work.”

**Appendix 1. Table 7:** Gender and HD indicators.

**Table 11:** Income and employment indicators (share of women in the labour force, 16.1 West Bank and 10.9 Gaza Strip)

Roy, Sara et al. West Bank and Gaza Gender Assessment. Sub-section Four: The Private Sector. West Bank and Gaza Technical Support Project. USAID, December 1994.

Findings and recommendations of an expert group’s assessment of gender and the private business sector, specifically of gender and policy, access to credit, access to business/marketing. Recommendations focus on USAID’s role in intervening with NGOs, the PNA and the private sector to support full gender integration, including in senior staff positions for international PVO’s which receive USAID funding. Other recommendations aim to support and increase women’s involvement in professional associations, in the tourism industry, in chambers of commerce, and to provide marketing information, technical transfer to businesswomen, satellite business centers, support optometry and telecommunication training for young girls (through the YMCA), upgrade selected vocational training centers, send a marketing expert for embroidery, support community based market research centers and increase credit to small and medium businesses.

Salman, Hind Kattan. *Palestinian Women and Economic and Social Development in the West Bank and Gaza Strip*. UNCTAD, 19 October 1993.

This is a post-intifada review of women’s status. In the most relevant section, the author argues that the home economy projects popular during the intifada lacked a progressive social content other than nationalist value and did not result in changes in gender division of labor, as some proponents had assumed. Salman reviews the factors restricting women to cheap unskilled or partly-skilled labor and remarks on past and future interventions for women’s development.

**Table 3.11:** Main reason for wife’s unemployment, 1989-1990. (Survey of 13 areas)

Women in Business: The Case of Palestinian Women in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. International Center of Bethlehem. Department of Women’s Studies. 1993.

A review of women in business education in area universities, and a list of actions to support business activities, problems, conclusions and recommendations.

Taraki, Lisa. *Palestinian Society: Contemporary Realities and Trends in Palestinian Women: A Status Report*. Women's Studies Program, Bir Zeit University, 1997. A description of major trends in all sectors affecting society, and contradictions and linkages between them that impact on women's status.

## LABOUR FORCE STUDIES

Abu-Shokor, Abdelfattah. *Review of Labour and Employment Trends in the West Bank and Gaza Strip*. UNCTAD.

In this overview, the author argues that domestic needs of the Palestinian economic and social sectors should be given priority in planning education, vocational training and employment generation programs to alleviate structural unemployment. Affordable and suitable housing, adequate health care and a technically trained workforce is necessary for an integrated human development program. The author points out the need to increase female participation especially into technical and vocational areas through appropriate training.

See Appendix, **Tables 3 and 4**: West Bank and Gaza Strip female labour force in numbers and percent, and female crude activity rate, 1968-1989.

**Table 10:** West Bank and Gaza Strip: Employed females by sector, 1970-1989.

**Tables 11-12:** West Bank and Gaza Strip: Employed females by occupation, 1972-1989.

**Table 22:** West Bank and Gaza Strip female unemployment, 1968-1989.

Hammami, Rema. "Labor and Economy: Gender Segmentation in Palestinian Economic Life," Women's Studies Program, Bir Zeit University, 1997.

This separately published chapter of **Palestinian Women: A Status Report** argues that women's low rate of labor force participation, measured by conventional surveys of formal labor, ignores the full range of female economic activities which the author classifies into five different labor markets. Gender is used as an organizing category in the economy to investigate the structural, rather than cultural, problems preventing women's full integration. PCBS data is used to analyse women's participation within employment sectors which are highly gender segmented. Women dominate the more marginalized sectors, informal and domestic work spheres, and outside work is linked to the life cycle. Access is narrowing in the formal sector due to displacement by males after the closure. At all levels and sectors, wages are unequal with male counterparts and females suffer from a lack of benefits, poor working conditions and union representation. The author suggests appropriate policies to ensure women equitable access to jobs focusing on the formal sector, beginning with sectoral analyses, informational and material support (access to cheap credit, greater access to markets, inheritance rights), flexible workhours, childcare support, and other legal interventions. She also suggests measures to encourage educated women to find work such as retraining and job placement and to retrain older women who want to reenter the work force.

**Table 1:** Female labor force participation rates, by region, 1968-95.

**Table 2:** Population in WBGS by sex and labor force status, 1995.

**Table 3:** Labor markets and data quality on women.

**Table 4:** Females in five labor markets, % of total.

**Table 5:** Women as % of agricultural workers, PCBS Rounds.

**Table 6:** Women as % of agricultural workers, 1970-1984.

**Table 7:** Employment status in agriculture, by sex.

**Table 8:** % of workers by economic sphere and sex.

**Table 9:** Manufacture and industry subsectors, by sex and region.

**Table 10:** Service subsectors, by sex and region.

**Table 11:** Teaching staff, by sex and educational level.

**Table 12:** Trade subsectors, by sex and region.

**Table 13:** Construction sector, by sex and region.

**Table 14:** Occupational status of formal labor force by sex and region.

**Table 17:** Women in the informal economy (data from various microstudies).

**Table 18:** Labor force entry, drop-outs and unemployment, 1995-96.

Hindiyeh el-Mani, Suha. *"Conditions of Female Wage Laborers in Palestinian*

*Factories in the West Bank and Gaza."* Women's Studies Center: Jerusalem.

June/September, 1996.

This micro-survey which was completed in 1990 and updated in 1994 looks at the social background, motivation, work history, union activity and sector participation of a sample of women workers. It found that one-fourth of the women were the sole income providers for their families and 62% work to pay for basic needs; most workers were engaged in textile manufacturing (70%).

Hindiyeh-Mani, Suha and Afaf Ghazawneh, Subhiyyeh Idris. *Women Street Peddlers: The Phenomenon of Bastat in the Palestinian Informal Economy*, in **Women and the Israeli Occupation**, Tamar Mayer ed., (Routledge: London, 1995), pp. 147-163.

A micro-study based on interviews with 32 women peddlers in Jabalya and areas around Jerusalem investigating their backgrounds, motivations for engagement in street peddling, kinds of trade, division of labor among family members, and involvement in agricultural production. The authors imply that while women's entry into the informal economy has the potential of changing gender relationships, in practice it has reinforced traditional gender perceptions.

Lang, Erica and Itimad Mohanna. *"A Study of Women and Work in Shatti Refugee Camp of the Gaza Strip."* Arab Thought Forum, 1992.

One of the first field studies to evaluate the economic importance of informal work especially to the household economy of disadvantaged women. The authors surveyed about 100 women in an urban Gaza refugee camp and found 11.2% who described themselves as employed. Of these, three-fourths worked within the camp, 20% worked in Gaza city and one woman worked in Israel. The work was generally for a short duration, less than full-time and paid by piece, and was either professional or home-based work. The study looked at the influence of economic and social factors on women and work, including family commitments, marital status, the number and age of children, attitudes and economic circumstances.

Ministry of Labour, Department of Planning. *Labour Market in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Basic Features*, July 1997.

A survey of 2506 establishments in order to investigate labour market trends, vocational training needs and the ability of local establishments to generate employment opportunities. Only findings concerning the socio-economic background of employees were disaggregated by gender (22.7% female to 77.3% male).

Ovensen, Geir. *Responding to Change: Trends in Palestinian Household Economy*. FAFO No. 166, 1994.

A follow-up to an earlier more comprehensive FAFO study, this survey of 7,000 individuals is confined to Gaza and West Bank refugee camps and is specific to conditions of employment and aspects of the household economy. It measures long-term effects of occupation, medium-term effects of the intifada and short-term direct and indirect effects of the 1993 closure on employment, and looks at employment characteristics by gender, which shows large differences. **Employment Patterns:** Fewer females were labor force participants after the closure. As in the previous studies, far more professional workers are seen among women, and receiving monthly wages and higher job stability than among men. Income-generating activities are divided into food-processing and “other” and show high participation by women which increases with age (Figures 2.43-2.47) In comparing labor activity levels, informal sector activities seem to complement rather than substitute for formal labor participation; that is, the unemployed or underemployed were found less likely to engage in income-generating activities than the formally employed. This study attempted to employ the expanded ILO definitions of labor force participation in order to include (non-food processing) household income-generating activities. The results quadrupled female labour force participation rates, while increasing male rates by only 10%. Figure 2.48 shows the Gaza labour force by age and sex and where such expansions occur. **Chapter 3: Household Economy:** Household production was not seen as playing a compensatory role for the loss of income at a household level since no increase was seen after closure. The authors use the constraints in production hypothesis to explain this. Concerning the future, 1 in 8 Gaza households said they planned to start new household income-generating businesses and 1 in 3 West Bank camp households. The prevalence of household production increases with household size, probably due to its reducing consumption expenditures. The presence of other income-earners in the household is important for the economic welfare of individuals who lose their employment.

**Table 2.2:** Gaza labour force participation, by gender and subregion. (FAFO1and2)

**Table 2.5:** Gaza labour force participation, by gender and age.

**Table 2.6:** Gaza labour force participation, by gender and education.

**Table 2.7:** Gaza labour force participation, by gender and marital status.

**Table 2.8:** Average age, by region, gender and labor force status.

Salman, Hind Kattan. *Case Studies in Palestinian Enterprise*. Villanova University Press: 1996.

Case Study No. 4, entitled Palestinian women entrepreneurs, is a microstudy through in depth interviews with 21 women in the West Bank who run their own businesses,. The study explores the social background and personality characteristics of the businesswomen and the type and management of the business.

Rockwell, Susan. *Palestinian Women Workers in the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip*, No. 54 (Winter 1985). In one of the first analyses of female wage labour in Gaza, the author looks at sex discrimination and class discrimination as causes of women's subordination in the workforce. The author argues that occupation's restriction of

education and job opportunities determines where women work and the kind of jobs they perform as well as who works. Of the 156 working women sampled in this survey, only one woman was married, supporting the view that only the poorest women enter the labor force as wage labourers.

Samed, Amal. "The Proletarianization of Palestinian Women in Israel," in MERIP, No. 50 (August 1976).

Written under a pseudonym by a Palestinian woman living in Israel, this theoretical essay is the first exposition of the structural disparities of Palestinian women in the employment sectors in Israel and has become a classic among studies of the Palestinian woman laborer.

Self-Employed Women in the Informal Economy of the Occupied Palestinian Territories: A joint study about the commercial needs of female micro-entrepreneurs in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Women's Affairs et al., February 1994.

The publication of this collection of five regional micro-studies of women workers in small home-based enterprises, peddling and agriculture, was intended to provide data for the improvement of credit facilities for working women. The studies were coordinated among five women NGOs using similar methodology investigating the social, financial and marketing problems of the businesswomen.

Semyonov, Moshe. Trends in Labor Market Participation and Gender-linked Occupational Differentiation, in Women and the Israeli Occupation: The Politics of Change, ed. Tamar Mayer, (London: Routledge: 1995), pp. 138-146.

An analysis, based on Israel Central Bureau of Statistics data, of trends in women's employment patterns in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the first 20 years following occupation. The author notes a decrease in the rate of female labour force participation in contrast to an increase in male participation at five points in time. The author argues that women have substituted for men in the agricultural sector, after males sought wage labor in Israel. Over time, Semyonov found that women are increasingly overrepresented in the professional and semi-professional fields and underrepresented in managerial, sales, service and manual work, a probable result of the impact of occupation.

**Table 8.1** Labor force participation of the Arab population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 1970-1989 (by gender).

**Table 8.2** Occupational distribution of labor force, 1970-1989 (by gender).

Siniora, Randa. Palestinian Labour in a Dependent Economy: The Case of Women in the Sub-contracting Clothing Industry in the West Bank. American University in Cairo, Master's Thesis, 1987.

This small sectoral study found that women textile workers were employed for a short duration, 2-3 years, and 95% were single. Most women, 72%, spent 52% or more of their income on household needs.

## LABOUR LEGISLATION

Barghouthi, Hassan. Critical Observations on the Draft Palestinian Labour Law, Democracy and Workers' Rights Center. Ford Foundation: Ramallah. No date.

The DWRC executive director questions a number of the articles in the draft

Palestinian labor law from the point of view of workers' rights and suggests alternative texts. The non-inclusion of domestic workers, immediate family members, maternity benefits, childcare provisions, clarity over dismissals and compensation are some of the issues raised of particular relevance to women.

Johnson, Penny. *Women and Law*. (Draft) in **Palestinian Women: A Status Report**. Women's Studies Program. Bir Zeit University. November 1997.

The author gives a detailed review of women's rights in relation to personal status, family law, labor legislation and social security legislation and points out problems and gaps both in law and current practice. It includes statistics on women in the judiciary and legal profession..

Rishmawi, Mervat. *Women Workers' Rights and Equality in Employment*, al-Haq, 1996.

An examination of discrimination and lack of legal protection of women workers. 87% of establishments in the West Bank fall outside of the Jordanian law's definition of a workplace, employing 5 or more employees. The author's recommendations include a strengthening of the draft Palestinian labor law, better research on women and work and greater female participation in training and in union activities.

Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counseling. *Towards Equality: An Examination of the Status of Palestinian Women in Existing Law*, June 1995.

This is the discussion results of a series of workshops for women activists and professionals on the role of existing Jordanian law and Israeli military orders on women's rights. Workshop No. 1 discussed women and labor law and made general recommendations for improving women's labor rights.

## **PLO/PNA PLANS AND POLICIES**

Department of Economic Affairs and Planning. Palestine Liberation Organization. Programme for Development of the Palestinian National Economy for the Years 1994-2000: Executive Summary, Tunis, July 1993.

The PLO document summary calls for equal access for women and men to education, training and work opportunities but does not have a specific gender focus in its plans. This early economic blueprint assumed that by the year 2000, there would still be 10% unemployment and possibly more as the anticipated construction boom normalized. It calls for addressing the needs of the unemployed through the public and private sectors but the summary does not include detailed proposals.

a) Inter-Ministerial Coordinating Committee and the General Union of Palestinian Women. A National Strategy for the Advancement of Palestinian Women. June 14, 1997.

b) Inter-Ministerial Coordinating Committee and General Union of Palestinian Women. Performance Document: Palestinian Women's Advancement, 14 July 1997.

Both documents represent the outcome of joint meetings to define a strategy and specific goals of a national plan of action for women. The documents present brief sectoral analyses of women's needs and lists gender-focused projects in the government and non-government sectors for donor funding. Government projects were proposed specifically by gender units rather than the ministry as a whole and

were not necessarily included in the PDP for 1998-2000.

Inter-Ministerial Women's Committee, Executive Summary of Project Documents for Donors, 1 July 1997, 34 pp.

A detailed description of 10 project proposals specifically designed to improve health, education and employment services for women, spanning seven ministries in integrated projects. The document is intended as a guideline for donors.

Kamal, Zahira. A brief report on the development and changes in Palestinian women during the last year, October 1996-September 1997. Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation. Directorate of Gender Planning and Development. October 27, 1997.

An outline assessment of the current status of women in government, gender in government plans, gains in employment rights, education and law with respect to women and development, new publications and gender awareness in the media.

Ministry of Trade. Project Idea: Trade Development Support for Palestinian Women Entrepreneurs. November 1997.

A Ministry proposal submitted for inclusion in the Palestinian Development Plan which aims to improve the capacity of self-employed women entrepreneurs.

## **PROJECT EVALUATIONS**

Botmeh, Samia and Edward Sayre. Employment Generation Schemes in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Palestinian Institute for Economic Policy Research (MAS) November 1996.

Of the five major emergency job creation programmes of the World Bank, PECDAR, UNRWA and Sectoral Working Group implemented after the spring 1996 closure and analyzed here, the authors noted that they could make no gender analysis since virtually none of the 25,000+ jobs were accessible to women (except for 30 short-term UNRWA jobs as cleaners). The main author suggested that the nature of the work, which was geared toward construction skills and heavy manual labor, tended to exclude women, possibly for justifiable reasons, related to the purpose and implementation of the programs.

Nabris, Khaled. Group Guaranteed Lending and Savings Program in the West Bank and Gaza: Baseline Survey. Save the Children: West Bank and Gaza Strip, September 1997.

The GGSP program gives small, short-term loans (at high interest and immediate payback) to disadvantaged women with existing income-generating businesses, mostly home-based. About 5000 women have benefitted from the program in the WBGS. This is an extensive impact evaluation of the GGSP, investigating the social and economic aspects of 411 participants, as well as dropouts, families of borrowers and community promoters. The typical borrower is married, of an average age of 34 and with four children, and lives in a large family in a densely populated home and under stressful conditions. The majority of borrowers have not completed 10th grade. About 7.5% completed 13 or more years. The women come from families who are twice more economically active than the national average. 84% of the borrowers expressed interest in community childcare arrangements. 73% of the projects were

home-based, and 18% were both home and market-based. Trade in clothes, food and chickens and raising animals were the most popular businesses and sewing was the least profitable. About half the projects were found to be new, despite eligibility that only 20% of each group could be new. Most project which made little or no profit were new. More than half the projects had a capital stock of less than \$300. Profit was mainly spent on food for the family and health care expenses. About 2% of borrowers had participated in any project management training; 13% indicated they would like this type of training. The conclusions were that the program was very important to the economic and social well-being of the families. A range of community level activities was proposed to provide support to the borrowers, their husbands and children.

The GGLS program administrators have proposed an independent **Micro-Finance Program** for the WBGS built upon their experience. A separate document outlining the program is attached.

Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees PARC: Gender Focus Program Plan of Action, 1997-2000, March 15, 1997.

PARC intends to implement many activities with a gender focus, primarily targeted at internal staff, publications and programs, with some research proposed on gender relations in agriculture, a gender disaggregated data base on agriculture with the Ministry of Agriculture, and gender sensitivity training but no special emphasis on women farmers or rural women.

. Report of the Evaluation Team for Women's Cooperatives. April 1995.

Organizations which deal with rural women are classified into those offering specialized extension, general health services, local charitable societies, grassroots activist organizations such as women's committees, and development organizations which operate in the region and offer services to women, directly or indirectly. PARC's women's unit evolved from the Household Economy Program which attempted to increase home production of basic foodstuffs through agricultural extension and production instruction and support, and to affect comprehensive development as well, usually in partnership with other organizations. A "Women's Livelihood Extension" developed to upgrade the technical abilities of rural women to earn an independent income (sewing, hair-dressing, crafts and ceramics and bee-keeping and household gardening), also legal and social rights, health and education issues; a credit program offers loans for women's income-earning projects; small women's cooperative programs (40 women in all) to encourage cooperative work for increasing women's living standards (seasonal, small workshops); fruit tree and medicinal herbs support program. The Women's Unit Director participates in PARC's overall planning and policy and there are 30 female agronomists and agricultural extension workers. Among suggestions are that training should be followed by offering loans for new income-generating projects.

. Report of the Evaluation of PARC's Women's Unit. September 1994.

Despite positive social effects for women, 75% of the cooperatives stopped production and others remain dependent on outside support. The projects are characterized by low production volumes, high cost of raw materials, low competitiveness of products, and low profit not compensating for the labor and risk involved. There is considerable wastage due to poor technology and techniques as a

result of a lack of training. Marketing problems are a major constraint as is the poor distribution system. The highly seasonal production schedule has also hampered profits and production levels. Many of the women were unable to put the training they did receive into practice and rural women are not actively involved in the decision-making process for their projects. Recommendations follow.

Palestinian Working Women Society, *The Annual Report of the Activities of PWWS, East Jerusalem, 1996.*

Raises consciousness about the role of women in society, legal rights and labor rights by targeting women in the labour market, urban areas and poor women in rural areas.

UNRWA. *A Final Report on the Efficiency and Effectiveness and Evaluation of the Relief and Social Services Department. Poverty Alleviation Programme, West Bank. 1996.*

UNRWA has given 74 grants of an average of \$6,000 each over a 10-year period to hardship families in the West Bank. The program has made some training available both to social workers and to households to start their own businesses. More recently, a soft loan revolving fund for special hardship families, the poor and disabled has operated in the West Bank as a poverty alleviation initiative. About 600 children, male and female aged 14-25, of poor families have been trained in marketable and income-generating skills and offered apprenticeships; some upgrading of training was also given. 20% of graduates found immediate employment. A group lending scheme also offers cheap credit to poor refugees operating in the informal sector who cannot qualify for bank loans. About 75% of the apprenticeships go to females and about 80% of the trainees are female. Tables by sex, region and type of training/apprenticeship.

## RURAL STUDIES/ WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

A Study of 22 Palestinian Villages in the Jenin District with Special Reference to the Needs of Persons with Disabilities. The Northern Regional Committee for Rehabilitation, August 1994.

In this survey of 7232 households in the northern West Bank, 18% of female heads of household worked as farmers or in jobs other than homemaking; 38% had no education and another 29% from 1-6 years only. 12% of households had no one working and 20% reported they were "unable to manage" with their financial situation. The level of disabilities were similar to that of other regions surveyed later.

Farah, Nadia Ramsis. "Situation Analysis and Plan of Action of Gender in Agriculture in Palestine." January 1997.

An outside consultant's overview using PCBS statistics of characteristics of the rural population, and the gender division of labor in agricultural areas, based on PRA in a number of regions. She suggests four main strategies for narrowing the gender gaps in agriculture: mainstreaming gender in MOA plans, increasing women's access to credit and technology, empowering women in resource control and improving women's productivity in agriculture. Specific activities are listed for achieving these goals. Tables are borrowed from PCBS and give gender disaggregated data for rural areas regarding Literacy Rates, Enrollment Rates, Drop-out Rates, Educational Level Completed and Marital Status by Sex. (*Source for statistics in executive summary on women and agriculture not identified.*)

Tamari, Salim and Rita Giacaman. Zbaidat. The Social Impact of Agricultural Technology on the Life of a Peasant Community in the Jordan Valley, BZU, 1997.

An updated and republished view of the agrarian system and health conditions in Zbaidat, with an attention to gender division of labor in a rural community, and women's outside work.

## UN AGENCY DOCUMENTS

Emergency Assistance Program for the Occupied Territories. World Bank, 1994. Among the technical assistance projects described here is a "tracer study" of vocational school graduates, curriculum review, identification of skill shortages and new training activities. There is no gender awareness obvious in the EAP program, other than a commitment to support NGO-generated programs for women and youth.

International Labour Organisation. Capacity Building for Social Development: A Programme of Action for Transition in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Report of the ILO Multidisciplinary Mission to the Occupied Palestinian Territories (6-19 December 1993), Geneva, January 1994, 117 pp.

This blueprint outlined four areas for immediate action in the area of employment and equality for women addressing labor policies, subcontracting, entrepreneurship and poverty alleviation. The plan, which intended to build upon the capacity of the WATC, was not acted upon due to lack of funding.

Report on the Situation of Workers of the Occupied Arab Territories. Report of the

### Director-General, 1996.

The ILO was completely gender blind in its mission report on the employment situation. The only mention of women was in relation to illiteracy, where the mission noted a 76.4% literacy rate. Recommendations focused on encouraging the set-up of a Small Business Council, an Improve Your Business Programme, and a Palestinian team within the Ministry of Labour to implement reforms in training for employment.

### UNSCO. Employment Creation: Sectoral File. 1996.

The Sectoral Working Group on Employment Creation, “shepherded” by Sweden, PECDAR is the Gavel-holder, and the Secretariat shared by the ILO and UNDP, was established in January 1995 and immediately began planning employment creation projects with visual impact (sweeping and cleaning) which could rapidly absorb unskilled labor in Gaza. A second generation of projects was presented in June 1995 (sidewalk creation, small construction). A third generation of projects to support sustainability was presented in March 1996 coinciding with the total closure and extending the program to the West Bank and implemented in two phases. There is no gender focus in these projects and only a negligible number of females were employed, primarily in cleaning of government offices. **Chart of Employment Creation Projects**, by donor country, description, UN agency implementer and Ministry counterpart.

## **STATISTICAL RESOURCES**

### Palestinian Women in Statistics, Women's Affairs Technical Committees, 1996.

Health, education, employment statistics.

### PCBS. The Demographic Survey in the West Bank and Gaza Strip: Preliminary Report, March 1996.

**Table 3.1.3.2:** Literacy levels by age, sex and residence

**Table 3.1.3.3:** Highest educational level completed, by age, sex and region

**Table 3.1.3.4:** Highest educational level completed, by age, sex and residence

**Table 3.1.4.1:** Occupation by sex and region

**Table 3.1.4.2:** Occupation by sex and residence

**Table 3.3.2:** Sex of head of household by region and residence

**Figure 3.1.3.1:** Persons over 15 who finished preparatory and secondary level, by sex and region

**Figure 3.2.1:** Age-sex distribution of WBGS population

**Figure 3.2.2:** Age-sex distribution of WB

**Figure 3.2.3:** Age-sex distribution of GS

a) PCBS. Educational Statistical Yearbook, 1994-95, September 1995.

b) PCBS. Educational Statistical Yearbook, 1995-96, October 1996.

Gender disaggregated statistics of students, teachers, classes and staff for all levels: KG through university and cultural centers, including East Jerusalem. Student populations are about 52-48 male/female which widens somewhat at higher levels. There are more female than male students and graduates at intermediate community colleges, more females attending cultural center sessions and more female school administrators.

### PCBS. Industrial Survey 1994: Main Results, Report No. 1, October 1996.

In the main findings of the survey, 5,781 females and 44,751 males were engaged in the industrial sector.

a) PCBS. Labor Force Survey: Main Findings (September-October 1995) Round. PCBS Labor Report Survey Report Series (No. 1).

b) PCBS. Labor Force Survey: Main Findings (April-May 1996) Round. August 1996.

c) PCBS. Labor Force Survey: Main Findings (July-October 1996) Round. PCBS Labor Report Survey Report Series (No. 3).

d) PCBS. Labor Force Survey. (October 1996-January 1997). Round.

Gender disaggregated statistics for labor force status, age, region, residence, years of schooling, marital status, place of work, industry, occupation, weekly work hours, monthly work days, average daily wage, unemployment, outside labor force and reason. Main findings, however, do not reflect a gender focus, other than to give data on labor force status: in the last year, females show lower rates of labor force participation in both Gaza Strip and West Bank, dropping from 13.3/9.3 in WBGS in April-May 1996 to 13.0/5.5 in October-January 1997.

### PCBS. Survey of Wages and Work Hours, 1994, Main Findings, December 1995.

Findings include a comparison of wages and work hours between male and female employees, with females receiving 90% of the average male wage.

## **OTHER RESOURCES**

Annotated Bibliography on Palestinian Women. Arab Thought Forum,  
Jerusalem:1993

A listing of available titles in research and writing, in Arabic and English, on Palestinian women. Successive editors have made comments on the usefulness of the specific studies and some of the author's major conclusions.

An introductory essay by Pari Baumann on research problems in analysing gender in development is of particular interest.

Directory of Palestinian Women's Organizations, Women's Studies Committee, Bisan Center for Research and Development, 1993.

A detailed and comprehensive listing of 174 local organizations administered by women and providing services for women, including charitable societies, cooperatives, productive organizations and committees, and organized by region. Descriptions give information on background, projects and activities and future plans.

## **Resources in Arabic**

Abdul Shafi, Salah. Socio-economic Role of Vocational Training Centers in the Gaza Strip. (A Field Study) Arab Thought Forum, Jerusalem. September 1992.

Abu Shukour, Abdelfattah, Al-waqa' wa mustaqbel. Arab Economists Association. June 1996.

From 1968-1994 women's labor participation rate increased by only 5.8% for West  
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Bank; for Gaza the rate until 1992 increased only 1.9%. The author sees no improvement in the future due to the high unemployment in the Palestinian territories, drop in level of women's education and social and general education conditions.

Awad, Samir. *Al Mara' al-Filastiya wa Suq al-Amal*. (The Palestinian Women and the Labour Market), *Work and Workers' Magazine*, July 1996.

The problems women face are summarized as institutional (unions), educational (training), social/cultural, legal and structural, since only women in the formal sector are recognized as workers.

Democratic Workers' Rights Center. *Current Situation of Working Women: Survey, 1996*.

A study of working women's social and legal situation, taken from a survey of attitudes, identifies four factors as leading to low labour force participation among women: lack of legal protection of women workers, lack of social support systems, lack of training opportunities and lack of job access for women. Specific recommendations are made dealing with the role of unions, training and legal protection.

Al-Haq. *Comments on the Palestinian Draft Labour Law, 1997*.

This critical study of the draft law (June 1997) concludes that the proposed law will not improve the situation of working women neither in theory or in practice. Draft does not reflect problems seen in recent studies of working women, nor role of women in development, nor legal protection for how to achieve gender equity; it reduces some gains for women given under previous Egyptian and Jordanian laws. Law excludes women from the informal sector in its limited protections and does not adequately specify reasons for dismissal and compensation arrangements.

Khader, Asma. *Recommendations on Legislating for Women Workers*. (draft) Women's Center for LegalAid and Counselling, November 1997.

Ministry of Labour. *Mashru' Qanoun al-Amal*. Draft Labour Law. (April, 1997)

Said, Nader and Reema Hammami. *Analytical Studies on Social and Political Attitudes in Palestine*, Nablus: Center for Palestine Research and Studies, 1997.

Chapter on "Political, Social and Economic Rights in Palestinian Public Opinion" reports that 78% of the 1500 adults surveyed in the WBGS were in favour of women working outside of the home, with women in general but particularly educated women, the most in favour. Eight percent of those surveyed supported equal work opportunities and equal pay for women although the approval rate for pay equity was the least among educated men and illiterate women.

Samara, Adel. *Poverty, Work and Women*. General Union of Palestinian Women, Ramallah, 1996.

An overview of the conditions necessary for women in the Gaza Strip to join the formal sector. He suggests locating workplaces in residential areas, providing childcare support and recreational activities especially in rural areas, providing credit to women through women's organisations, locating development organisations in rural areas (decentralising), integration of women in the tourism sector, activating unions and other organisations to protect women's rights, and promoting direct rather

than subcontracting.

Shabaneh, Louay, Waga' Suq al-Amal al-Filastiniya. The Current Labour Market in Palestine, Work and Workers' Magazine, July 1996.

An investigation of the current situation and areas of probable expansion of the market. By the year 2000, the author expects female employment to increase to 16% of work force, based on a 2% increase overall annually and 1% participation rise for women).

Women's Affairs Technical Committee. Palestinian Women in Local Governing Councils: Development and Elections. September, 1996.

This study looks at women and development in relation to local councils by evaluating the gender component of 200 projects implemented since 1976 by 29 councils. The projects were assessed in terms of objectives, integration of women in decision-making and impact for women in services, income-generating, training and jobs. Most projects benefited women only indirectly. The 14% which had some gender components tended to be initiated by NGOs or donors and implemented by the local councils. Less than 4% of local government employees are women, 27% of whom are professionals in engineering, computer science and accounting.

Women's Studies Center. Marketing Experiments in Women's Manufacturing and Cooperative Projects. 1991.

Women's Studies Center. Women and Men in the Non-Formal Sector in the West Bank. December 1996.

World Bank and MAS. Development Despite Difficulties? The Palestinian Economy in the Transition Period. (Draft Executive Summary), October 1997.