

**Refugee Review Tribunal  
AUSTRALIA**

**RRT RESEARCH RESPONSE**

**Research Response Number:** JOR34175  
**Country:** Jordan  
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**Questions**

**1. Please provide information on the discrimination and the severity of the economic hardship faced by Palestinian refugees from Gaza; their chances of securing employment in the private sector and any harassment they might face or restrictions imposed on them by the authorities.**

**RESPONSE**

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Twelve potential sources of expert opinion were identified, and they were contacted by email with the following question on dates between 9 and 17 December 2008:

A Member of the Tribunal is urgently seeking information about the status and treatment of Palestinian refugees from Gaza residing in Jordan. My research to date indicates that Gazan Palestinians living in Jordan are not entitled to Jordanian citizenship, receive temporary passports with no national ID number, are not able to gain government employment, and are not legally entitled to own land in Jordan. What this research has not provided is a sense of how these (and other) restrictions impact upon the day-to-day lives of Gazan Palestinians in Jordan. The Tribunal would be most appreciative if you could provide information on the discrimination and the severity of the economic hardship faced by Palestinian refugees from Gaza in Jordan, their chances of securing employment in the private sector, and any harassment they might face or restrictions imposed on them by the authorities (RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Mouin Rabbani: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 17 December – Attachment 1).

Emails requesting information were sent to the following sources:

1. Ibrahim Hejoj, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Jordan (RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Ibrahim Hejoj: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 9 December – Attachment 2).
2. Nidal Al-Azzah, BADIL Resource Centre for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights (RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Nidal Al-Azzah: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 10 December – Attachment 3).
3. Jon Pederson & Aage Tiltnes, Fafo Research Foundation, Norway (RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Jon Pederson & Aage Tiltnes: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 10 December – Attachment 4).
4. Wael Suleiman, Director, Caritas Jordan (RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Wael Suleiman: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 10 December – Attachment 5).
5. Oroub El-Abed (RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Oroub El-Abed: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 17 December – Attachment 6).
6. Dr. Jason Hart, Senior Research Officer, Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford (RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Dr. Jason Hart: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 10 December – Attachment 7).
7. Abbas Shiblak, Research Associate, Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford (RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Abbas Shiblak: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 10 December – Attachment 8).
8. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Regional Office for Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and the South Pacific, Canberra (RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to UNHCR: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 10 December – Attachment 9).
9. Matar Saqer, Public Information Officer, UNRWA Jordan (RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Matar Saqer: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 10 December – Attachment 10).
10. Rania Sabbah & Maisa Thweib, UNRWA Jordan (RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Rania Sabbah & Maisa Thweib: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 17 December – Attachment 11).
11. Mouin Rabbani, Senior Fellow, Institute for Palestinian Studies (RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Mouin Rabbani: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 17 December – Attachment 1).
12. Dr. Geraldine Chatelard, Research Fellow, *Institut français du Proche-Orient* (IFPO) / French Institute for the Near East, Jordan (RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Dr. Geraldine Chatelard: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 17 December – Attachment 12).

Responses containing relevant material were received from (in order of date of receipt) Mouin Rabbani, Nidal al-Azza of BADIL, Oroub el-Abed, and Maisa Thweib of UNRWA. Pertinent extracts follow below.

On 17 December 2008, Mouin Rabbani provided information on the general situation of Palestinians from Gaza in Jordan. This advice also details the disadvantages and discrimination suffered by Gazan Palestinians in regard to ownership of property and vehicles, employment, and freedom of movement:

To begin with I am a little unclear as to what you mean by “Palestinian refugees from Gaza in Jordan”.

The reason for my confusion is that this category of persons is sub-divided into two additional categories:

1. Palestinians who normally resided within the Gaza Strip prior to the 1967 Israeli occupation (whether 1948 refugees or not), and who subsequently were expelled or otherwise displaced to Jordan.
2. Palestinians who normally resided within the Gaza Strip more recently and have, particularly since 2000 or thereafter, sought to reside in Jordan.

To this may in fact be added a third category: Gazan Palestinians (whether 1948 refugees or not) who were normally resident within Iraq until 2003, and have since sought refuge in Jordan.

I can state the following with certainty regarding all of the above: unless the person in question is a woman married to a bona fide Jordanian citizen, or the child of a father who is a bona fide Jordanian citizen, they are not entitled to Jordanian citizenship unless there are exceptional circumstances pursuant to which the government of Jordan may choose to grant such citizenship. It is my understanding that dire humanitarian need does not in and of itself constitute such exceptional circumstance.

The official rationale for this reality is that Jordan never exercised nor claimed sovereignty over the Gaza Strip. The pertinent Jordanian legislation extending Jordanian citizenship to Palestinians in the wake of the 1948 War only applied to citizens of British Mandatory Palestine who at the time this legislation was passed resided in territory over which Jordan exercised or claimed sovereignty: namely Trans-Jordan and the West Bank (which collectively became the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan).

The largest group of Gazans in Jordan are those who sought refuge in Jordan in the immediate aftermath of the 1967 War and the Israeli occupation of the Gaza Strip, including Gazans who on account of their presence in Jordan during this period were denied the right of re-entry to the Gaza Strip by the Israeli occupation authorities. Individuals expelled or deported by the Israeli authorities by administrative decree between 1967 and 1993, as well as individual Gazans who during this period relocated to Jordan for e.g. family or educational reasons and were subsequently denied the right of re-entry to the Gaza Strip by the Israeli occupation authorities on account of a lapse of their residency status (an entirely separate subject), are typically counted among the members of this group.

As you note, members of this group are not entitled to citizenship, government employment, or property ownership. The latter includes for example vehicle ownership. Thus, displaced Gazans residing in Jordan who seek to own property, for example a vehicle, must register such in the name of a citizen or resident who is entitled to do so. Needless to say, this is an inherently insecure method of operation, and creates a variety of circumstances in which such dependency can be utilised to the legal and material disadvantage of the Gazan resident in question. I am not however in a position to provide you with an accurate assessment regarding the extent to which such relationships are abused. I do however know of cases

where Gazan residents in Jordan with the means to acquire such property have declined to do so in order to avoid the potential disadvantages of such relationships.

There is, to the best of my knowledge, no formal prohibition on the employment of Gazan Palestinians resident in Jordan in the private sector – though I encourage you to consult someone with more specialised knowledge for a definitive answer in case such restrictions do apply to for example certain sectors of the private sector. Their tenuous status, however, means that as a rule they do not qualify for benefits provided to residents of Jordan for which citizenship is a prerequisite. At a time of growing socio-economic hardship for ordinary Jordanians, this has meant that members of this group are disproportionately affected. Whether or not private sector employers additionally seek to avoid employing Gazans on account of their status is not a question I am able to answer. I do however know that Gazans as a rule view themselves as disproportionately disadvantaged, and discriminated against, not only relative to ordinary Jordanian citizens, but also in relation to other Palestinian refugees resident in Jordan. The root cause of this is their disqualification from various transactions involving governmental permission or registration.

The other categories of Gazan Palestinians noted above face more severe difficulties – first and foremost their highly restricted or simple inability to enter Jordanian territory, and thereafter to extend temporary visitor permits (Rabbani, M. 2008, Email to RRT Research & Information, ‘Re: Country Information Request JOR34175’, 17 December – Attachment 13).

Nidal al-Azza, the Resource Unit Coordinator for BADIL, provided information to the RRT on 17 December 2008. This advice suggests that the lack of permanent residency is the major cause of the disadvantage suffered by “Gaza refugees” in Jordan, as it limits their access to “health, education, and work”:

**First, concerning the status and treatment in Jordan of so-called “Palestinian refugees from Gaza”:** we see from your letter that you have already identified most of the characteristics of their situation. We would like to confirm that all experts agree that they constitute a particularly discriminated and vulnerable group of Palestinian refugees in Jordan, mainly because of:

a) their particular history of multiple forced displacement: so-called “Gaza refugees” in Jordan were initially displaced in 1948 from Palestinian villages and towns that became part of Israel. They had found shelter in the UN-serviced refugee camps in the Gaza Strip, an area which was administered by Egypt until 1967. As a result of the June 1967 war between Israel and Arab states, they were displaced for a second time, this time from the Gaza Strip to Jordan. They arrived in Jordan with Egyptian travel documents which did not entitle them to enter Egypt, while Israel prevented their return to the Gaza Strip (first place of asylum) and their return to their homes and villages of origin.

b) the very limited protection afforded to them by Jordan: so-called “Gaza refugees” are afforded less protection than any other group of Palestinian refugees in Jordan. Of particular impact on their daily lives are:

- the fact that they and their children do not enjoy a right to reside in Jordan, even if they were born there; temporary residency permits must be renewed and renewal may be denied. Renewal is denied, in particular if the person has travelled abroad, or on grounds of broadly defined public/national “security” (including membership in a political or religious group);

- the fact that limited residency rights in Jordan directly and immediately result in limited access to other basic social and economic rights, in particular the right to health, education and work. Jordanian law applicable to foreign nationals becomes applicable to

these stateless Palestinian refugees: health services and higher education are subject to special fees; access to higher education is limited by a quota system in place for foreigners; public sector employment is not available, etc (al-Azza, N. 2008, Email to RRT Research & Information, 'Re: Country Information Request JOR34175', 17 December – Attachment 14).

The advice received from Oroub El-Abed (El-Abed, O. 2008, Email to RRT Research & Information, 'Re: Country Information Request JOR34175', 25 December – Attachment 15) on 25 December 2008 contained information in two attachments. The first, an article written by El-Abed and titled 'Immobile Palestinians: The Impact of Policies and Practices on Palestinians from Gaza in Jordan', is sourced from *Mondes en Mouvements, Migrants et Migrations au Moyen-Orient au tournant du XXIème Siècle*, published by the *Institut Français de Proche Orient* (IFPO) in October 2005. This article states of Palestinian refugees from Gaza that they "cannot secure a stable living in Jordan, they do not have easy access to basic Jordanian government services, nor can they easily travel abroad to look for work". El-Abed also provides information on restrictions on education, employment, and mobility:

In Jordan, about 150,000 Palestinian refugees from Gaza share this vulnerability. In the form of temporary passports, they are granted only travel documents without citizenship rights and entitlements, with the result that they cannot secure a stable living in Jordan, they do not have easy access to basic Jordanian government services, nor can they easily travel abroad to look for work. Few countries admit them, because they have no official proof of citizenship. Furthermore, any delay in renewing the temporary passport or in applying for one puts an individual at risk of becoming undocumented with difficult implications. Mobility was the only option Palestinians had when they fled their homeland in 1948 or 1967. Today, some groups among the refugees – like the Gazans in Jordan – cannot even contemplate the option to escape the vicious cycle of vulnerability in which regional politics and administrative bottlenecks have caught them.

...The limited applicability of the 1951 Refugee Convention to Palestinian refugees and the conventions on statelessness has excluded Palestinians and Gazans from having basic human rights. It is important to note that Palestinians – refugees, displaced and stateless persons – have lacked a body to protect and enforce their rights, and to ensure that the proper legal instruments are implemented with regard to their legal status. Only recently, a reinterpretation of Article 1D of the 1951 Convention by UNHCR has led the agency to include in its mandate those Palestinians who have not been receiving assistance and protection from another UN body.

Thus, Gazans receive no protection from the Jordanian state since they are not citizens nor Jordanian nationals. They can neither seek the protection of UN bodies through the international legal instruments created to tackle statelessness. When applied to Gazans, all these international tools become contingent (thus OMIT). Thus, Gazans have lost their basic rights including the right to free mobility.

...Although Gazan refugees in Jordan are provided with relief, health and education services by UNRWA, not all of their needs can be met. For example, their lack of citizenship means it is difficult to find jobs or to go on to higher education. According to interviewed Gazans for the purpose of this paper, the word "Gazan" written on the passport affects the way they are treated by government officials. Applying for work is a major preoccupation for their survival especially that practicing professional work is not possible. Nor are they allowed to register with professional societies/unions or create their own offices, firms or clinics. In addition, work in the private sector is contingent upon security approval. Hence, work opportunities are very limited. The informal sector is an option but there is the risk of exploitation. For most Gazans, finding a way to leave Jordan so as to look for work abroad is a matter of survival, but the ever changing intricacies of their legal status restricts their mobility (El-Abed, O.

2005, 'Immobile Palestinians: The Impact of Policies and Practices on Palestinians from Gaza in Jordan', *Mondes en Mouvements, Migrants et Migrations au Moyen-Orient au tournant du XXIème Siècle*, October – Attachment 16).

The second attachment provided by El-Abed is an short 2006 article from *Forced Migration Review* by Dr. Jason Hart of the Refugee Studies Centre at the University of Oxford, which provides a case study of a young Gazan Palestinian living in Jordan (Hart, J. 2006, 'What future for young Palestinians in Jordan?', *Forced Migration Review*, No. 26, August, p.51 – Attachment 17).

The final response was received on 25 December 2008 from Maisa Thweib, of UNRWA Jordan, who provided four attachments with her email. The four attachments are sections of a research project undertaken in Gaza, or Jerash, refugee camp in Jordan, a camp mainly occupied by ex-Gazan Palestinians (Thweib, M. 2008, Email to RRT Research & Information: 'Re: Country Information Request JOR34175', 25 December – Attachment 18).

The first attachment summarises the position of ex-Gazan Palestinians in Jordan, and provides an overview of the findings of Thweib's research in the Gaza/Jerash Camp:

Ex-Gaza Palestine Refugees are one of the most vulnerable groups in Jordan. While most Palestinian refugees have been granted Jordanian citizenship and may enjoy the related full rights, the refugees who originally came from Gaza Strip and took refuge in Jordan after the Arab Israeli war of 1967 do not enjoy Jordanian citizenship. They are entitled to hold temporary Jordanian passports which are valid for two years only. In addition to serving as travel documents, these passports are used as an identification document and residency permit. The limited validity of their passports, which are expensive to obtain, severely limits the possibilities for these individuals to travel and gain employment abroad. Their lack of citizenship translates into several legal restrictions that limit their rights and contribute to their vulnerable living conditions (Kindly refer to Annex I- Legal Restrictions). Ex-Gaza refugees cannot vote, work for the government (except on a casual basis), and benefit from government services. Access to domestic employment by (larger) private companies may also be denied, as national Intelligence may not grant the required approval. Also certain government licenses, like public drivers' license, are not granted to ex-Gaza refugees. The ex-Gaza refugees often lack the skills, licences and resources to start their own small business. Further, they do not afford higher education, as they have to pay disproportionate tuition fees.

According to UNRWA's records there were 131,0881 Palestine Refugees from Gaza in Jordan in 2007. While detailed data on the economic conditions of ex-Gaza refugees in Jordan are not readily available, their under-privileged conditions are reflected by the fact that the percentage of ex-Gaza families identified by UNRWA as Special Hardship Cases is 4.3% of the ex-Gaza Refugees' population, whereas the average for Jordan as a whole is 2.5% of the refugee population. The level of vulnerability among the ex-Gaza refugees population in Jordan varies as other factors may play a role to exacerbate or reduce the impact of legal restriction.

A house-to-house survey that was conducted in Gaza/Jerash Camp could provide an overlook of the situation of ex-Gaza refugees in Jordan. The camp population is almost exclusively made up of ex-Gaza refugees (98% of the residents hold temporary Jordanian passports).

Unemployment rate in Jerash Camp is very high. It was estimated at 39%3 compared to 14% for Jordan and other Palestinian refugees in Jordan. The percentage of children (6-18 years) not enrolled in schools was estimated at around 10%. Illiteracy rate is very high, 13.8% compared to 7.5% for Jordan. Poverty is high, 27% of the camp residents live under the

poverty line of \$1 per equivalent individual per day, this percentage increases to 64% when a poverty line of \$2 per equivalent individual is used. The average monthly income of households in Jerash camp is \$217 compared to \$360 for other Palestine refugees in Jordan. Around 9.8% of Jerash camp population are registered with UNRWA as SHCs and receive financial and in kind assistance from the agency. Living conditions are overcrowded, under-maintained and very cold in winter. Shelters are in poor conditions; 65% have roofs of zinc or asbestos sheeting. Almost 80% of the households reported encountering severe problems in winter, including leaking roofs, water seepage through walls, and shelter flooding. As well, the lack of adequate sewerage is a health risk for refugees.

...The location of Jerash camp might have exacerbated the impact of the legal restrictions, most of the camp residents rely on income from the informal economical sector or seasonal labour in the surrounding areas (Thweib, M. (undated), 'Ex-Gaza Palestine Refugees – Jordan' – Attachment 19).

The second attachment provides a list of the restrictions faced by ex-Gazans in Jordan, broken down into the following categories: political sphere, protection, work, education, ownership of property, health, and social and financial support:

The main group of ex-Gazans in Jordan are refugees who were displaced twice, first by the 1948 war that led the creation of the state of Israel, and again as a result of the 1967 Israeli occupation of the Gaza strip, that had remained under Egyptian sovereignty since 1948. Upon arrival to Jordan, they were granted temporary Jordanian passports although not citizenship rights. The passport serves as documenting the ex-Gazans in Jordan as temporary residents and providing them with travel documents at the international level so that they may access countries other than Jordan. According to international law, since there is no Palestine state, Palestinian citizenship is non-existent today. Palestinians who have not acquired the nationality of a third state therefore continue to be stateless.

Ex-Gazans lack of citizenship is translated into several legal restrictions that limit their rights and contribute to their vulnerable living conditions. These restrictions include:

#### Political sphere

1. ex-Gazans cannot vote
2. are not represented in the parliament
3. cannot register in any political party

#### Protection

1. if the mother is from Gaza strip (holder Palestinian passports) and married to an ex-gazan refugee (holder of a temporary passport), children are removed from and/or not added to the father's passport. Rather, they are added to the mother's passport.
2. difficulties in obtaining approvals from the government

#### Work

1. are not allowed to work with the government. The government is considered the major employer in Jordan; 37% of those employed are working with the government.
2. are barred from practicing several professions such as law, agriculture engineering, journalism, certified accounting and health care professions (except for medicine and nursing for which license to practice the profession is given but should be renewed yearly and is limited for working with hospital or clinic for which it was originally issued) due to requirement of possessing Jordanian citizenship or to have reciprocal treatment in the country

of foreign national wishing to practice this profession. Due to the absence of even a Palestinian citizenship, the ex-Gaza refugees are thus disadvantaged to other foreign nationals seeking work in Jordan.

3. experience difficulties in obtaining licenses for establishing a private business outside the camp boundaries; special security clearance/approval should be obtained from ministry of interior and department of intelligence which is rarely granted. In this aspect as well, the ex-Gaza refugees are also disadvantaged to other foreign national seeking investment in Jordan, where the only restriction on the later is the size of capital and in some sectors partnership with a Jordanian national.

4. are not allowed to become members in cooperative associations which could enable them to establish an income generating project. This as well requires possessing a Jordanian citizenship.

5. experience difficulties in getting employed by private banks as they are rarely granted the requested security clearance

6. are not allowed to obtain public drivers license

7. are not allowed to work in 4&5 stars hotels the ex-Gaza refugees are also disadvantaged to other foreign national living in Jordan, where only a working permit is required from the latter.

8. are excluded from the training and employment programmes launched by the government to decrease unemployment rates in the country and equip young people with the skills and experience that will pave their road and enhance their access to the labour market.

9. access to domestic employment by (larger) companies may be denied, as national Intelligence may not grant the required approval. There are no written instructions regarding intelligence department approval; nevertheless, it is a requirement.

#### Education

1. laws and regulations treat ex-Gazans who wish to enrol in university for undergraduate or postgraduate studies, as an international student. This is translated into paying much higher fees. The only means by which a student may get a seat for which he/she can pay a Jordanian fee is by applying through the camp Royal Quota or through the Palestinian Embassy in Amman – the number of seats are limited and competition is high:

- the camp Royal Quota provides 5% of public university seats; a five percent which is divided between the 13 camps in Jordan
- the selection criteria or methodology followed by the Palestinian Embassy towards Jerash camp population is not clear. However, the Cultural Attaché at the Palestinian Embassy explained that priority is given to Palestinians residing in the West Bank and Gaza

2. as for enrolment in secondary education and vocational training, ex-gazans are treated like Jordanian, the only difference is that they are required to obtain an approval from Department Of Palestinian Affairs (DPA)

#### Ownership of property

1. ex-gazans are denied the right to own property, this include land and building

2. purchasing and registering a car needs a security approval from intelligence department which is obtained directly by the

3. when applying for obtaining driving license, ex-gazans are treated like foreigners in terms of paying high registration fees

#### Health

1. do not enjoy health insurance and are treated like able Jordanians (those without insurance) in the government hospitals and health centres

2. elderly are not allowed to be admitted in elderly caring centres

3. In March 2008, ex-gazans have been excluded from exemption granted by the royal court for treatment of chronic illnesses. However, the government has recently resume granting ex-gazans exemptions for kidney failure and cancel  
Children under 6 are treated as their Jordanian counterpart

#### Social and financial support

1. are not entitled for receiving social and financial support from ministry of social development and national fund aid, in contrary to other Palestinian refugees who receive support from the government and UNRWA through SHC programme
2. are not entitled to benefit from the royal housing fund for the poor
3. there is a draft law related to social security corporation which excludes non- Jordanian from pension, this of course affects ex-gazans if approved. Unless revised to treat ex-gazans like Jordanians (Thweib, M. (undated), 'Legal Restrictions on ex-Gazans in Jordan' – Attachment 20).

The third attachment provides the methodology for Thweib's assessment of the Gaza/Jerash refugee camp in Jordan (Thweib, M. (undated), 'Gaza/Jerash Camp Assessment Methodology' – Attachment 21).

The fourth attachment provides a statistical analysis of a survey carried out by Thweib in the Gaza/Jerash refugee camp:

#### POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

1. Population of Jerash camp is 20,000, 9.8% of the residents are registered with UNRWA as Special Hardship Cases (SHC).
2. Population density in Jerash camp is 23,602 persons/km<sup>2</sup> compared to 409.8 persons/km<sup>2</sup> in the Jerash governorate and 63.1 persons/km<sup>2</sup> in Jordan.
- ...4. The dependency ratio for Jerash camp is 88% compared to 68% for Jordan.

#### ...EDUCATION

Educational level of Jerash camp population who are above 15 years of age and currently not enrolled in the schools.

1. The illiteracy rate among this group (15 years age and above) is considered high, the percentage of illiterate in Jerash camp is twice that in Jordan (13.8% compared to 7.5% respectively). Illiteracy among females is much higher than that among males in the camp (20.3% and 7.4% respectively).
2. The majority of this group have either completed their basic education or left during the preparatory cycle (31%)
3. The percentage of those who pursue their post-secondary education is 13.2% in the camp compared to 22% in Jordan.

#### ...POVERTY

1. Relative poverty is the basic measure used in the report to define poverty
2. Relative poverty is based on median income, with the poor being defined as those who fall below 50% of the median income. The "very poor" are those occupying the lowest income quintile.
3. Absolute poverty measure is also used at the level of \$1 and \$2 per equivalent individual per day

4. The average monthly income of households in Jerash camp is \$217 compared to \$360 for Palestine refugees in Jordan. The average monthly income decreases by 14% if assistance through transfers is not included.
5. The average monthly income per equivalent individual for Jerash camp is much lower than that for refugees in Jordan (\$61 compared to \$91 respectively). The amount is less without transfer, \$47 for Jerash camp and \$65 for refugees in Jordan.
6. The ratio between the richest and the poorest deciles in Jerash camp is 11.6, this indicates the size of inequality in the camp.
7. When dividing the camp population into 5 income quintiles, the average income of the lowest and lower-mid income quintiles is \$80 and \$122 per household respectively.
- ...12. The relative poverty line for Jerash camp is \$33.24 per equivalent individual per month (50% of the median monthly income). Based on this, 33% of the camp population lives under poverty line, this number reflects the income of Jerash camp after transfer. Before transfer, the percentage increases to 44%.
13. Looking into absolute poverty, 64% of the camp residents live under the poverty line of \$2 per equivalent individual per day and 27% live under the poverty line of \$1 per equivalent individual per day.
14. Coping strategies do not vary among the different income quintile as the living conditions are poor for most of the camp residents.
15. The majority of families (97%) stated that they have no savings.

#### ...LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT RATES

1. The labour force participation rate of Jerash camp population (47%) is higher than that of Jordan (41%) and Jerash Governorate (41%). However, the rate is lower than that of Palestine refugees in Jordan (51%), the Middle East (56%) and worldwide. The participation rate of men in the camp is 3 times that of women (72% and 24% respectively).
2. Men and women cited different reasons for not participating in the labour force. The main reasons given by women are care for their household, preference not to work and disapproval by the family. On the other hand, men indicated that health problems and being too old are the two main reasons for not participating in the labour force.
3. Labour force participation is highest for the age groups 25-34 and 35-44.
4. Educational level has a relatively positive effect on labour force participation. For women, the positive relationship is clear cut which indicates the importance of education for women.
5. Unemployment rate for Jerash camp population is extremely high reaching 39% which is at least 2.8 times that of Palestine refugees in Jordan, Jordan and Jerash Governorate. Women are more exposed to unemployment than men (81% and 25% respectively).
6. With respect to the different age groups, unemployment rate is highest for Youth (around 60%).
7. There is no relationship between education level and unemployment rate.
8. Long-term unemployment for Jerash camp population is extremely high compared to that of refugees in Jordan (65% and 33% respectively). Women are more exposed to long-term unemployment than men.
9. The employment ratio of Jerash camp population is low compared to that of refugees in Jordan (29% and 44% respectively). Educational level has a positive effect on employment ratio. The employment ratio is highest for the age groups 25-34 and 35-44.
10. Looking into employment structure by education level for Jerash camp, the least educated constitute the highest proportion of those employed. This pattern is valid for men but not for women where the largest proportion is for those with bachelor degree.
11. Around 56% of the employed in Jerash camp are self employed, UNRWA and the private sector accounts for 31% of the Jobs. The percentage of women self employed is much lower than that of men (31% and 58% respectively).
12. 32% percent of those employed work on part-time basis, time related unemployment for men (17%) is higher than that for women (11%).

13. Discouraged workers constitute 7% of the economically inactive population in the working age.

## HOUSING CONDITIONS

1. Living Conditions in the camp are aggravated by the overcrowding; larger households are proportionally more likely to face overcrowding. 74% of the households that have at least 10 members are overcrowded.
2. Households located in the lowest and lower income quintiles are more vulnerable to overcrowding.
3. 45% of the households perceive their shelters as being in bad condition.
4. The percentage of households perceived as in bad conditions increases as we move from the highest to the lowest income quintiles.
5. Zink and asbestos sheets are by far the most commonly used roofing material in the camp (65%).
6. The percentage of shelters with Zink and asbestos roofing increases as we move from the highest to the lowest income quintiles.
7. The most frequent problems encountered by the households are roof leaking, water coming through the walls and shelter floods (67%, 57% and 39% respectively).
8. Electricity and water reaches most of the households.
9. When asked about the problems encountered in the camp, most of the camp residents reported the lack of proper sewage connection (84%) and lack of sufficient heating in the winter (64%) as the biggest problems. Furthermore 54% stated that they suffer from overcrowded shelters.

## EVALUATION OF UNRWA SERVICES IN THE CAMP

1. Around 47% of Jerash camp population is either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with UNRWA schools.
2. 52% of the camp population expressed their satisfaction with UNRWA health centre.
3. 53% of the camp population reported that they are either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the garbage collection and disposal services.
4. A higher percentage of the camp population is either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the WPC and CBRC services (63% and 65% percent respectively).

## PRIORITY NEEDS

1. 98% of the families identified “assistance in finding Jobs” as a priority. This was followed by “assistance in establishing a small business” (92%), “Legal counselling” (88%) and “a playground” (81%).
2. In another question where families were given the chance to identify their own needs, environmental and infrastructure ( i.e. sewage system, shelters, roads and streets, etc) and economic related issues (reduction of unemployment, living conditions and reduction of poverty, establishment of industrial projects, etc) were identified as priority by the respondents (Thweib, M. (undated), ‘Gaza/Jerash Camp: Summary of the Door to Door Survey Results’ – Attachment 22).

## List of Sources Consulted

Ibrahim Hejoj, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)  
Nidal Al-Azzah ,BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights  
Jon Pederson & Aage Tiltnes, Fafo Research Foundation, Norway

Wael Suleiman, Director, Caritas Jordan  
Oroub El-Abed  
Dr. Jason Hart, Senior Research Officer, Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford  
Abbas Shiblak, Research Associate, Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford  
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Regional Office for Australia,  
New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and the South Pacific, Canberra  
Matar Saqer, Public Information Officer, UNRWA Jordan  
Rania Sabbah & Maisa Thweib, UNRWA Jordan  
Mouin Rabbani, Senior Fellow, Institute for Palestinian Studies  
Dr. Geraldine Chatelard, Research Fellow, *Institut français du Proche-Orient (IFPO)* /  
French Institute for the Near East, Jordan

### **List of Attachments**

1. RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Mouin Rabbani: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 17 December.
2. RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Ibrahim Hejoj: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 9 December.
3. RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Nidal Al-Azzah: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 10 December.
4. RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Jon Pederson & Aage Tiltnes: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 10 December.
5. RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Wael Suleiman: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 10 December.
6. RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Oroub El-Abed: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 17 December.
7. RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Dr. Jason Hart: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 10 December.
8. RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Abbas Shiblak: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 10 December.
9. RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to UNHCR: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 10 December.
10. RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Matar Saqer: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 10 December.
11. RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Rania Sabbah & Maisa Thweib: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 17 December.
12. RRT Research & Information 2008, Email to Dr. Geraldine Chatelard: 'Country Information Request – JOR34175', 17 December.
13. Rabbani, M. 2008, Email to RRT Research & Information, 'Re: Country Information Request JOR34175', 17 December.

14. al-Azza, N. 2008, Email to RRT Research & Information, 'Re: Country Information Request JOR34175', 17 December.
15. El-Abed, O. 2008, Email to RRT Research & Information, 'Re: Country Information Request JOR34175', 25 December.
16. El-Abed, O. 2005, 'Immobile Palestinians: The Impact of Policies and Practices on Palestinians from Gaza in Jordan', *Mondes en Mouvements, Migrants et Migrations au Moyen-Orient au tournant du XXIème Siècle*, October.
17. Hart, J. 2006, 'What future for young Palestinians in Jordan?', *Forced Migration Review*, No. 26, August, p.51.
18. Thweib, M. 2008, Email to RRT Research & Information: 'Re: Country Information Request JOR34175', 25 December.
19. Thweib, M. (undated), 'Ex-Gaza Palestine Refugees – Jordan'.
20. Thweib, M. (undated), 'Legal Restrictions on ex-Gazans in Jordan'.
21. Thweib, M. (undated), 'Gaza/Jerash Camp Assessment Methodology'.
22. Thweib, M. (undated), 'Gaza/Jerash Camp: Summary of the Door to Door Survey Results'.