



ISSPCH Annual Meeting  
Beirut 2019

Living and practicing  
pediatrics in a conflict zone

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# Jerusalem ..... The Holy Land



# Samir Khalil ( 1949-2019)



# Palestinian Loss of Land 1947 to Present



# Overview

- The estimated population of Palestine is 4,780,978
  - 2,881,687 people living in the [West Bank](#) (5,655 sq. km)
  - 1,899,291 in the [Gaza Strip](#) (365 sq. km).
- The largest percentage of the population is under the age of 17 (43.9%).
- The average family size is 5.1 people per household (4.8 in the West Bank and 5.6 in Gaza).

(Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), 2017)

# Difficulties facing Palestinians

- Poverty, unemployment and food insecurity have increased in Palestine, where people continue to face severe limitations on access to essential services, and movement restrictions
- Around 27.2% is unemployed, and 5.8% is disabled  
(Palestinian central bureau of statistics (PCBS), 2017)
- 29% of Palestinians live in poverty, while 2.5 million are in need of humanitarian assistance (World Bank Report, 2018).

# Poverty, unemployment, and food insecurity



# Example of daily suffering

Men and women from all over the Southern West Bank stand in line for hours each morning on their way to work outside of Bethlehem



# Difficulties cont.

- Living under situation of conflict zone is an additional hazard to health, not only because it causes injury, death, and disability as a result of violence , but also because it increases physical displacement, discrimination and marginalization, and prevents access to health services.



# Health care system in Palestine

The main providers of healthcare in Palestine:

- The Palestinian Ministry of Health (MOH)
- United Nation relief and working Agency (UNRWA )
- Palestinian Red Crescent (PRC)
- Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
- The private sector.

# Hospital care

- Total hospital number in Palestine 81 hospital
- Bed per 10,000 population 12.8.
- 51 hospital in WB, 12 bed per 10000 population.
- 30 hospitals in Gaza, 14bed per 10000 population.
- Hospital type:  
47 general hospitals  
14 specialized, 16 maternity, 4 rehabilitation.

(MOH,2016)

MOH 54.1 % of hospital beds, 63 % PHC





**UNRWA** is responsible for Palestinians who have refugee status (and who carry a refugee card given by UNRWA).

Refugees make up 41 % of the Palestinian population  
UNRWA constitute 8.7 % of primary health care center

Many of them still live in refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

**NGOs 33.5 % hospital beds, and 25.9 PHC**



# The quality of health services.

- Lack of effective co-ordination
- Shortage of medical staff, patient beds, essential equipment and medications
- The Palestinian authority refers patients to non-ministry of health facilities, principally Palestinian hospitals in East Jerusalem and in some cases to the Israeli hospitals.

These patients are essentially referred for further investigation and treatment services, including special diagnostic procedures and medications completely lacking in the rest of the west bank and Gaza.



- Referrals for children under 18 years of age constitute approximately a quarter of all referrals.
- The cost of referral is a major challenge to the sustainability of health care delivery
- The initial estimated cost of medical referrals for patients in 2017 is approximately \$USD 120 million.

(WHO, 2017)

The main issues facing their referral are access restriction to the health services for patients, their companions, and health care providers

- One of the main constraints to the establishment of a functional healthcare system is the “Separation Wall”. This wall has contributed to the disruption of Palestinian access to land, education, as well as restricting the movement of patients, doctors, ambulances and medications within the area.



Patients and health staff must apply for permits to enter East Jerusalem through Israeli checkpoints within this wall, most of patients applications were either denied or delayed in response. Unfortunately, they face additional financial burdens, including costs of travel, as well as, the emotional stress of a process.



## WELCOME TO "ATAROT" CHECK POINT

- YOU ARE NOW ENTERING A MILITARY AREA. TO MAKE YOUR TRANSIT EASY AND TO AVOID UNNECESSARY DELAY FIRST READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS AND THEN OBEY THEM.
- DO NOT ENTER CARRYING ARTICLES MADE OF METAL OR OBJECTS DECLARED FORBIDDEN BY THE AUTHORITY.
- PREPARE YOUR DOCUMENTS FOR INSPECTION.
- YOUR DOCUMENTS MUST BE PRESENTED AT EACH INSPECTION POINT.
- COATS MUST BE REMOVED.
- PERSONS REFUSING TO FOLLOW INSPECTOR'S OR SIGNPOSTED INSTRUCTIONS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO COMPLETE THEIR TRANSIT.
- WE WISH YOU A SAFE AND PLEASANT TRANSIT.

May you go in peace and return in peace !

21 10 2007

Image © 2015 DigitalGlobe  
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Google earth

2002

Imagery Date: 10/21/2011 31°51'42.00" N 35°13'42.49" E elev 2477 ft eye alt 3669 ft

- The Palestinian Red Crescent Society, the main emergency service provider into Jerusalem experiencing “time consuming delays” at checkpoints due to Israeli security protocols. which clearly could make the difference between life and death in emergency cases.



# Attacks on health care

- Incursion into hospitals (Makassed as one of the example)
- On Friday 21<sup>st</sup> July, Israeli policemen and border guard entered Makassed



# Attacks on health workers



Trying to Overcome  
these  
Circumstances  
To Promote Child  
Health in Palestine

Medical Schools

National Pediatric  
Residency Program

Palestinian pediatric  
society

PALESTINIAN

A

Samir & RCPC group

الدخول على انفراد. الرجاء خلى بالصبر.  
הכניסה בבודדים, נא המתן בסבלנות.  
ENTRANCE ONE BY ONE - PLEASE AWAIT YOUR TURN PATIENTLY

دخول  
כניסה  
ENTRANCE

21 10 2007

# Annual Meetings

Scientific  
&  
Social



To Promote Child Health in Palestine  
**PSP**  
Annual Meetings

Scientific  
&  
Social



To Promote Child Health in Palestine  
**PSP**  
**Annual Meetings**

Scientific  
&  
Social



To Promote Child Health in Palestine

**PSP**

**International Cooperation**

Maximizing potential -  
Strengthening Responses to  
Childhood Disabilities, Palestine

Autism Project  
WHO &  
Autism Speaks Initiative

Subspecialties in pediatrics

**Programs  
&  
Projects**

