

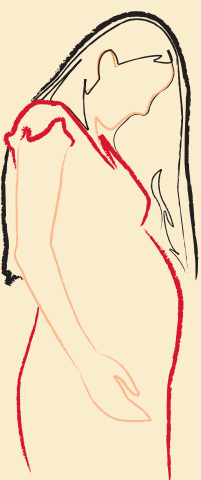
Occupied Palestinian territory

Reproductive health profile 2008



Health care system

Health services are delivered by the Ministry of Health (MOH), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), several nongovernmental organizations and private sector caregivers (Table 1). In 2006 there were 78 hospitals, 653 general clinics and maternal and child health centres, 130 specialized health clinics and 85 family planning clinics. About 60% of the population is covered by governmental health insurance. The total number of hospital beds in occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) has increased to 5014 beds in 2006. The Israeli/West-Bank wall and the fixed and removable checkpoints hinder the accessibility of the population to health services and enlarge the burden of mortality and morbidity. The barriers to movement have contributed to economic decline and rise in unemployment. Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita was about US\$ 1200 in 2006, of which 11% was spent on health. While health expenditure constitutes 11% of GDP, government health expenditure did not exceed 3% of GDP. In 2006, life expectancy at birth rose to 72.6 years (71.6 for males and 73 for females) while the infant mortality rate decreased to approximately 25.3 per 1000 live births.



Reproductive health

The Palestinian Authority adopted the recommendations of the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994, and developed these recommendations into comprehensive reproductive health services. In subsequent



years Palestine has made several achievements in reproductive health. In 2006, the estimated maternal mortality ratio was reduced to 70 per 100 000 live births; approximately 90% of deliveries took place in hospitals of which 56% were in government hospitals; 96% of all pregnant women received antenatal care although only 30% received postnatal care; and the caesarean section rate was 17.4% of all deliveries. In the government sector maternal health services and child health services for children under three years of age are offered free of charge to the population. Deliveries for insured women are free in government centres. Breast and cervical cancer screening have been introduced into reproductive health services. Contraceptive methods are included in the Essential Medicines List and are accessible to all Palestinian families for small co-payments in government health facilities. 50.2% of married women of reproductive age or their partners use modern contraceptive methods. The incidence of HIV and sexually transmitted infections is very low compared to other countries. High-risk pregnancies represent about 20% of all pregnancies. 26.5% of mothers exclusively breastfeed their children during the first five months, while the mean breastfeeding duration is 10.9 months.

Table 1. International donors and reproductive health programmes in Palestine

Donor	Programme
UNFPA	Increasing utilization of comprehensive quality reproductive health services: Antenatal care, high-risk pregnancy, postnatal care, counselling and health education, early detection of breast and cervical cancer, family planning, reproductive tract infections, sexually transmitted infections, gender, adolescents, secondary health care (maternity unit), emergency appeal, community awareness, capacity-building (renovation, upgrading of health providers and health system, medical equipment)
JICA	Maternal and child health, community awareness
UNICEF	Child immunization, iron supplementation, vitamin A and D supplementation, management information system, capacity-building
Italian Cooperation	Breast screening in Bethlehem

Table 2. Demographic and reproductive health indicators in oPt, 2000–2009

Indicator	Parameter	Year
Total population	3 761 646	2007
Population natural increase	3.3	2006
Crude birth rate	25.8	2006
Crude death rate	2.6	2006
Urban to rural population, ratio	64:36	2007
Number of women of reproductive age (15–49 years)	872 551	2006
Total fertility rate	4.6	2006
Percentage of pregnant women attended by skilled personnel	96.0	2006
Number of facilities with functional essential obstetric care per 500 000 persons	11.5%	2006
Percentage of deliveries attended by skilled personnel	100.0	2006
Percentage of deliveries undertaken in health facilities	90.0	2006
Percentage of caesarean sections	17.4	2006
Percentage of pregnant women with anaemia	35.7	2006
Percentage of newborn infants with low birth weight	7.1	2006
Maternal mortality ratio per 100 000 live births	70	2006
Perinatal mortality per 1000 live births	6.7	2007
Neonatal mortality per 1000 live births (reported)	9.4	2007
Life expectancy at birth female (years)	73	2006
Life expectancy at birth male (years)	71.6	2006
Contraceptive prevalence rate among married women of reproductive age (15–49 years), all methods (%)	50.2	2006
<i>Traditional methods (all)</i>		
Withdrawal	5.2	2004
Rhythm	3.8	2004
Lactational amenorrhea	4.2	2004
<i>Modern methods (all)</i>		
IUD	24.8	2006
Condom	3.8	2004
Pill	7	2006
Injectables	0.7	2004
Implants	Not used	2006
Female sterilization	2.7	2004
<i>Factors for not using modern methods among married women</i>		
Fear of side-effects	36.9	2000
Lack of knowledge	3.9	2000
Cost	0.6	2000
Lack of access	11.1	2000
Traditional misconceptions	23.4	2000
Partner opposes	n/a	
Unmet need for modern contraception	0.3	2000
Receipt of postpartum care and family planning counselling	n/a	
Incidence of sexuality transmitted infection (per 100 000)	224.8	2006
Syphilis	0	2006
Gonorrhoea	0	2006
Chlamydia	n/a	
Trichomoniasis	7.5	2006
HIV prevalence (%)		
Number of verified HIV cases (per 100 000)	64	2009

Source:

Palestine Central Bureau of Statistics, MOH