

Local MDG Attainment Analysis Report

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“Local MDG Attainment” is a title of Tiri for the Pro Poor Integrity (PPI) Project. This is one of a series of case studies exploring the role of ethics and integrity as contributors to success in the conduct of local authorities.

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Case Study Written by Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem (ARIJ)

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1. Introduction

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are eight goals that respond to the world's foremost development challenges. In Palestine, the particulars of the current situation make development difficult to accomplish.

Palestinian authorities, national and local, claim that the progress of the MDGs is reliant upon establishing peace and terminating the closure. They declare that the current political crisis negatively affects the progress of the MDGs in two ways; first, the reversal of the progress achieved in human development over the past few years slows the pace of achieving further development. Second, the emergency situation created by the conflict takes precedence over the pursuit of long-term developmental goals. Consequently, the MDGs are shelved in the struggle to meet immediate relief goals.

While it is true that the political unrest has inflicted damage to the social and economic infrastructure and diverted the attention from development efforts into relief and humanitarian aid, Pro Poor Integrity (PPI) Project's experience in Palestine proves to be different. Through out PPI's first year in Palestine, one thing has been proven: lack of MDGs attainment is contributed largely to the misuse, mismanagement, and corruption of local authorities rather than lack of resources. In three out of the four targeted localities; inefficient authorities are more to blame than Israeli Occupation and unstable political reality. On the contrary, the Occupation is used as a cover-up for the deep-rooted corruption and dishonesty in Palestinian local authorities.

To achieve the MDGs all parties must work together in accord. Local and National Authorities have their important role to play, but just as important, the role of the people. If Authorities dominate without any feedback from the citizens, or if citizens refuse to carry their share, no development would ever happen. So what is needed, is a participatory approach that brings both parties together on equal footing so both can contribute to the achievement of MDGs. Equal footing means integrity, accountability, and transparency that build trust between the Authority and its community.

This report is an analytical, almost an investigative, view of MDGs attainment and possible further progress of MDGs attainment in Palestine. All information in this report is from Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) data and information for the year of 2007. All views and interpretations are based on ARIJ's (civil society partner) experiences and perceptions after implementing the first phase of PPI activities.

2. Assessment and Challenges of Current Condition

2.1 ALRAM

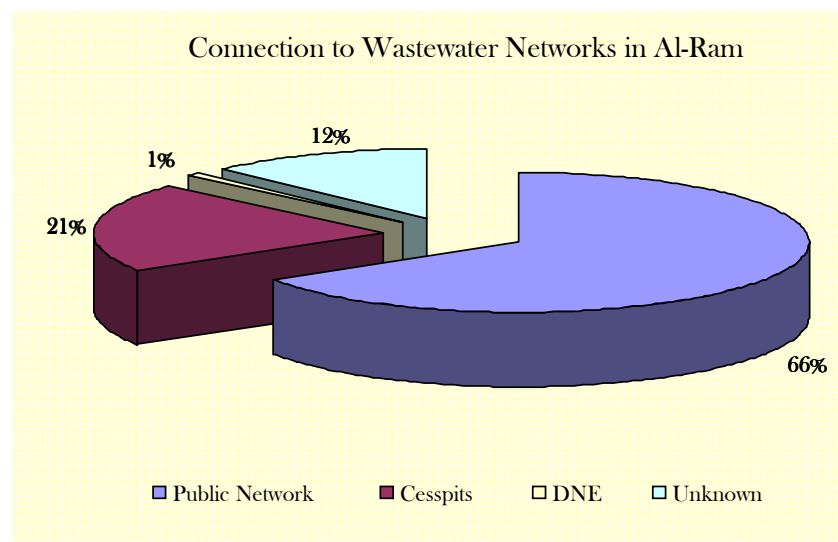
In PPI's four targeted localities in Palestine, Al-Ram has the most tentative position, and was chosen because of it. Al-Ram is a Palestinian locality in the disputed-upon Jerusalem district. Its biggest enemy is the Segregation Wall since it literally was built on the main vital street of Al-Ram cutting the city in half and shredding its life to pieces. Prior to the Wall, Al-Ram was an important commercial center for Palestinians. After the Wall, Al-Ram now lays forgotten by Palestinian Authorities.

Al-Ram city has 3740 households and is served by a Municipal Council that provides solid waste and wastewater management services. As for water services, it is undertaken by a private company, Jerusalem Water Undertaking. The water services sector does have its problems and inefficiencies, yet as it is not a service provided by Al-Ram Municipal Council it will not be discussed in this analysis.

As for the Municipal Council, it is a structure that lacks funds, resources, and authority. Al-Ram's households, not to forget its commercial buildings are serviced by fifty-five employees. Upon knowing this fact, the size and number of problems facing the city become immediately apparent and partially explainable.

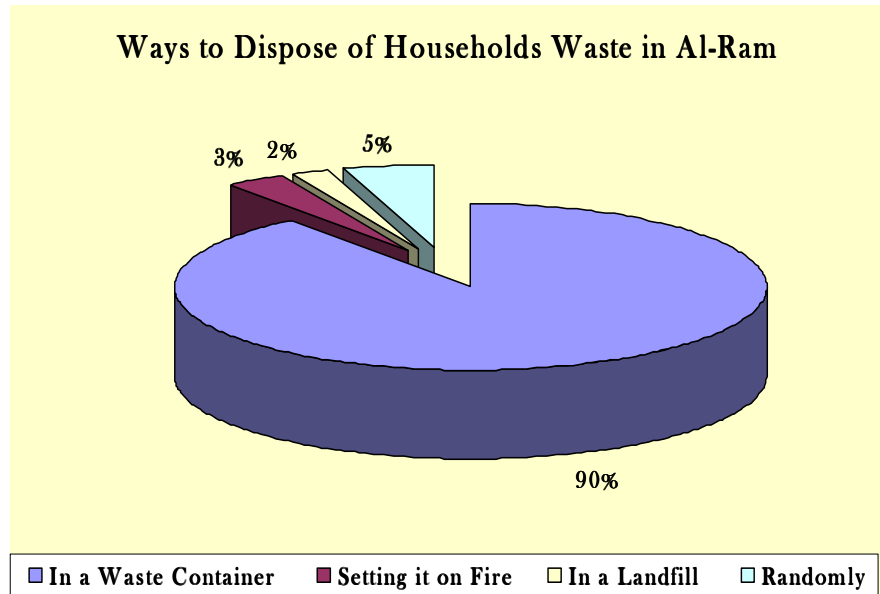
Al-Ram households vary in their wastewater disposal methods among public network, cesspits, and other undefined methods.

Al-Ram has been connected to the public wastewater network since 1980, but up until now it is not covered completely. Almost third of the households use other disposal methods, causing health and environment effects in terms of unpleasant odors, source of epidemics, and source of insects.

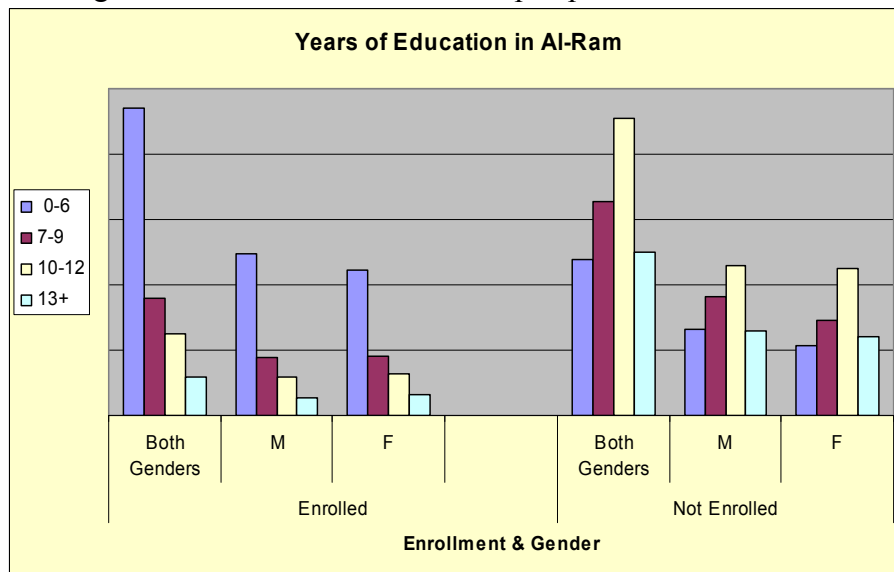


As for solid waste disposal, it also varies in methods.

Al-Ram shares its waste collection services with three other nearby localities; however it does have its own un-shared solid waste collection vehicles. Solid Waste is collected daily, then transferred to a rented landfill also shared with three other localities. In Al-Ram, there are no closed solid waste containers, there are 120 containers of the small size.



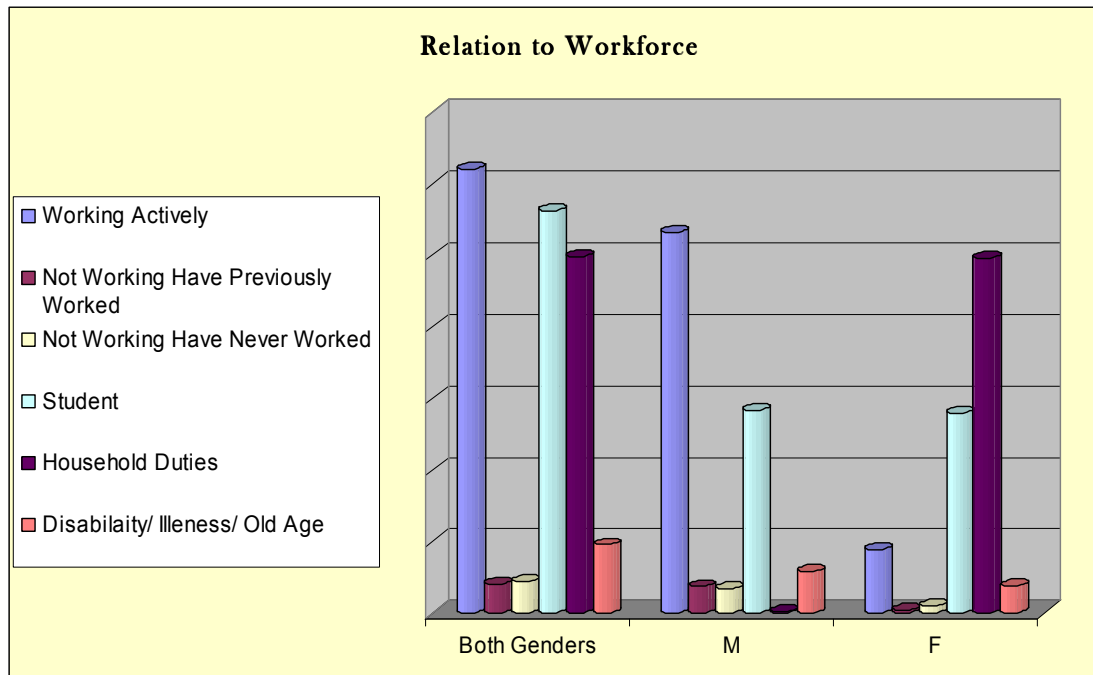
Looking at Al-Ram from a wider social perspective reveals several challenges.



In terms of education; the number of children not enrolled in any schooling exceeds the number of children enrolled, especially in later stages of schooling. However; there is no

clear segregation or inequity when it comes to boy: girl ratio in enrollment or un-enrollment. Un-enrollment affects both genders of children evenly. The number of children enrolled in elementary education (6-9years old) is the highest in school enrollment numbers. After elementary school, numbers of enrollment start dropping steadily and dangerously.

In terms of labor force; 86% of Al-Ram active labor force is males, while females are only 14% of the active labor force. Females in the labor force are mainly either students or housewives.



Al-Ram people believe that the Municipal Council is doing what little it can do, but they don't believe it can do much and don't place their trust in it. They prefer to do things on their own, rather than approach the Council with their problems. On the other hand, the Municipal Council is not doing anything to prove its people wrong. It is not approaching the citizens by any participatory approach method to involve them in the governing process for the development of Al-Ram.

Good governance is more than transparent financial records and equality in service delivery. Good governance is about integrity in performance, openness about weakness and strengths, accountability in conduct, and maximizing the available resources for best accomplishments. Al-Ram Municipal Council does none of that, it ties its own hands behind its back, blaming the Israeli Occupation and the Segregation Wall for its lack of good governance.

For Al-Ram to advance in its achievement of the MDGs, many things have to change. The Municipal Council has to build its capacity, capabilities, and increase its resources to assume its leadership role in guiding Al-Ram city to achieve the MDGs.

2.2 HEBRON

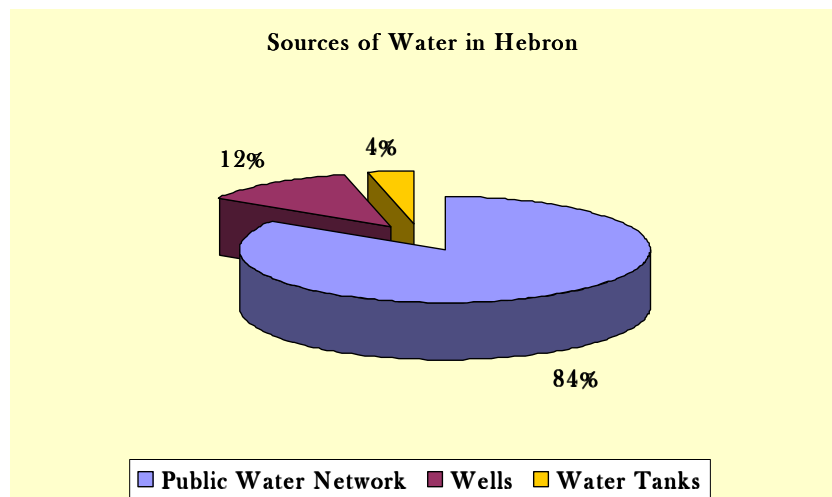
Hebron city and its Municipality have been the most difficult in implementing PPI. The Municipality has been very passive about the program. It appears that it is also passive regarding many other important issues to the community. In any kind of contact ARIJ PPI Team had with Hebron people, they were more than ready to talk negatively about the Municipality. The community firmly believes that the municipality is corrupt, dishonest, and that it is controlled by elite few that do what is in their best interest not the city's best interest. If there is any kind of relation between the Municipality and the people it is relation of mistrust, doubt and suspicions. No Hebron citizen would put his hands together with the Municipality to achieve any development goals.

Hebron Municipality is not elected but rather appointed thirty-four years ago. This gives the municipality a sense of assurance and security that they are not accountable to anyone, not even their own community. This sense makes them very careless and reckless in doing their duty and delivering the best services for the citizens.

It is a known and accepted fact that there are two areas in Hebron; one area, where the university is located and where all the well-off and Municipality employees live, gets the best service delivery available. The other area is where the poor and marginalized people of Hebron live with no service delivery what so ever. The University area could easily achieve all of the MDGs in time. As for the marginalized area, the Municipality would rather it disappears.

Hebron Municipality is responsible for delivering almost all of the services to its 27835 households; water, electricity, solid waste management, wastewater management, even schools and education. Some nickname it as Hebron Country. This overload might be a reason for some of the problems; too many service to deliver caused bureaucracy and inefficiency.

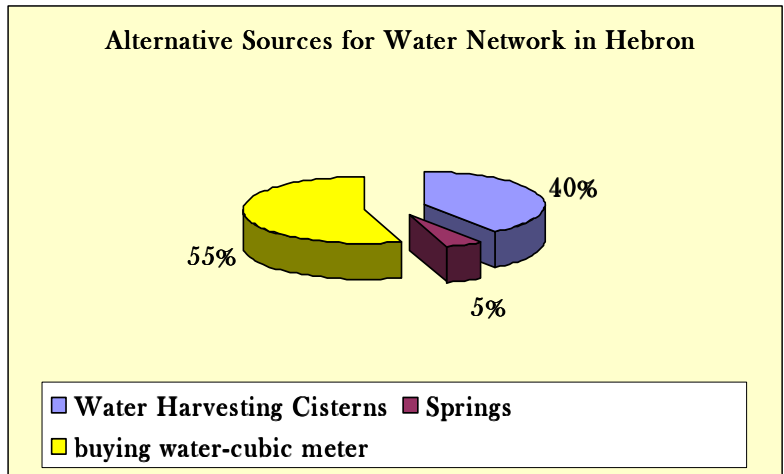
Water services in Hebron are a big headache for the municipality and a constant worry for citizens. In some neighborhoods of the city, water is not available for two to three weeks at a time, forcing residents to buy water from water tanks at outrageously high prices. Hebron has been connected to the public water network since 1965, and the Municipality buys water from West Bank Water



Department at 14,730,072 NIS/Year, whereas the cost of water distribution and maintenance of networks is 200,000 NIS/Year. The cost of sold water is 18,520,800 NIS/Year, meaning that Hebron Municipality makes profit of 3,590,728 NIS/Year out of one of the most basic and needed sources of human life.

In brief, the problems regarding drinking water are; old water network, un-serviced areas, and water shortage.

There are several development projects in the water sector needed in Hebron; construction of a water tank, extending of the water network, expansion of the network, (increasing the number of pipelines and number of participants), to improve the network, (to perform maintenance on the network such as changing pipeline.) For all of these

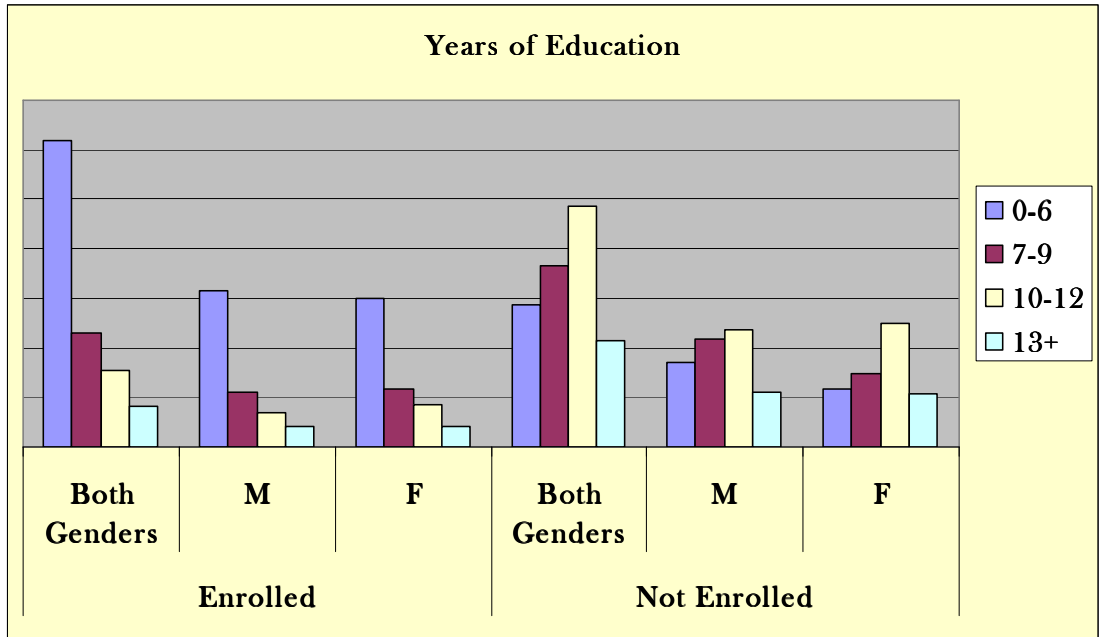


projects, the Municipality can provide any donor or implementing agency with study cases upon study cases of need assessments, budgets, feasibilities, timelines...etc. The unanswered question is why none of these projects are implemented yet.

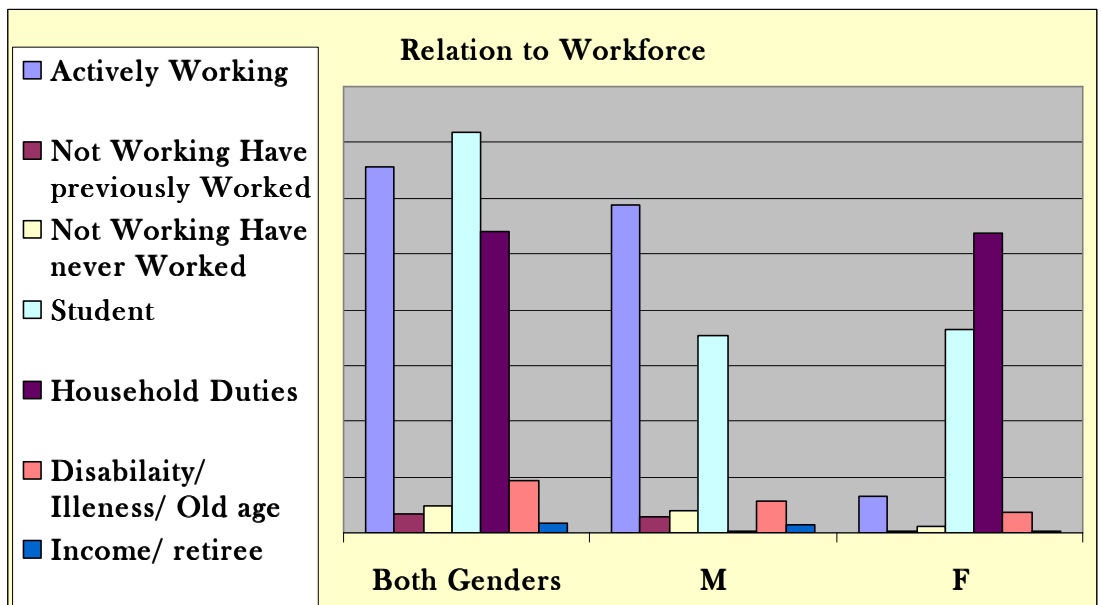
The public wastewater network has been up and running since 1900. 15% of Households dispose of sewage through cesspits, and the rest (85%) dispose of sewage through cesspits. In addition to Hebron's own swage, there are three Israeli settlements that dispose of their sewage nearby causing health and environmental effects in terms of contamination of underground water, contamination of crops, unpleasant odors, source for epidemics, and of insects.

As for the Solid Waste Management Service, Hebron Municipality collects solid waste and actually owns a landfill that it lets another 20 localities use. Hebron Municipality has 500 closed solid waste containers of the smallest size, and 800 open solid waste containers also of the smallest size. Hebron Municipality has no container bigger than the size (1-3) m³ but it collects waste daily.

When it comes to Education in Hebron, the numbers of enrolled children tip slightly towards females, especially in later stages of schooling. Even when it comes to un-enrollment, the numbers of un-enrolled females are slightly less than males.



However, these promising numbers don't translate to a large female role in the workforce. Rather, in Hebron workforce females are barely presented. Females in Hebron are either students or housewives. This reality is easily distinguished in the society; during meetings with Hebron community women were underrepresented and hesitant to speak up. The difference between women from villages nearby Hebron who had the confidence to voice their thoughts in public, and women from the city who were rather timid and bundled together was apparent. It is worth noting that women in Hebron had easy access to education for few decades now, but that has not raised their numbers in the workforce.



The prospects of this current Municipality achieving any of the MDGs are rather slim. There is nothing, no sort of evidence or proof, for any Hebron citizen to believe the intentions, and goodwill of this Municipality. This distrust eliminates any sort of participatory governing in Hebron. Is Hebron capable of achieving the MDGs? Yes, easily. Hebron does not lack the resources, capabilities, or capacities to accomplish them. It only lacks the harmony between the two sides of the MDGs equation.

2.3 NABLUS

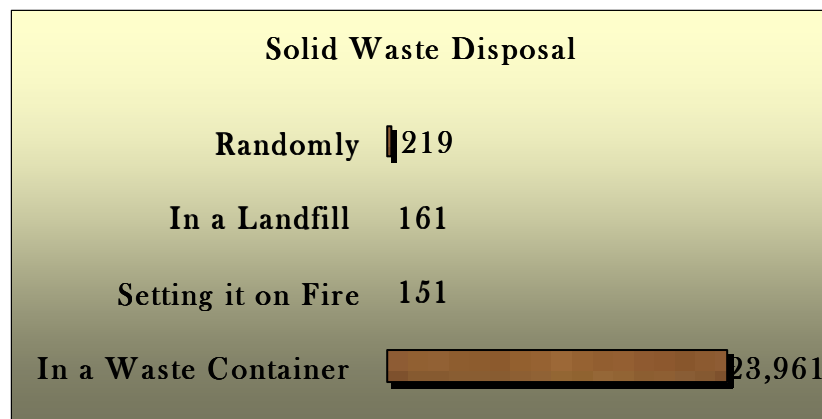
Nablus might be the least complicated and most cooperative PPI targeted city. Both Municipality and citizens have been very welcoming and responsive to PPI Program. Nablus Municipality unlike other municipalities has been transparent with PPI team. The Municipality as well as the citizens realizes the importance of MDGs and their achievements. However a big reason for the lack of achieving MDGs, is the lack of funds; Nablus Municipality is Hamas-oriented which means that all international funding and aid, whether financial capital or human capital, have been severed from the Municipality and in turn the city and its citizens.

In this city PPI is taking a somewhat different route. Nablus Municipality is the most sophisticated municipality in the four targeted cities. Moreover, the Municipality admits its shortcomings and the people are aware of it. Nablus problem is its solid waste, but not the service management or the service delivery. The Municipality is doing its best in managing the service, to the extent of collecting waste twice a day in certain parts of the city. The problem lies in the citizen who is not helping the municipality in its efforts, littering and destroying public parks and properties. Yet, this problem might have been generated at the Municipality not the citizen; it might show the lack of participatory approach in the city. If the citizens were more involved in governing their own city, they would be more devoted to it.

There are 24717 households in Nablus served by the Municipality in providing water, wastewater and solid waste management services. Nablus has been connected to the public water network since 1934, currently the entire city is connected to network, and its water sources are springs and wells. The cost of generating water from wells is 14,382,423 NIS/Year and the cost of water distribution and maintenance of networks is 47,899,355 NIS/Year, adding up to costs of 62,281,778 NIS/Year for the Municipality. The Municipality charges citizens 54,431,799 NIS/Year, meaning that the Municipality acquires a cost of 7,849,979 NIS/Year from water services. There are problems regarding water shortage and the old water network, however, development projects are being implemented to construct a water tank, and expansion of the network, (increasing the number of pipelines and number of participants.)

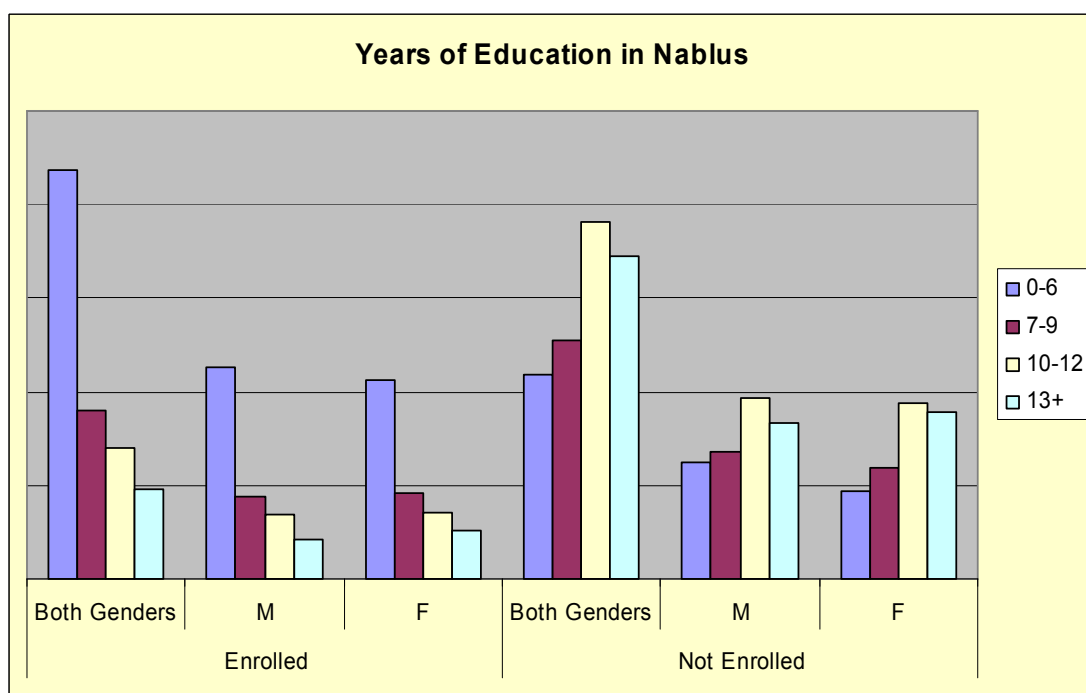
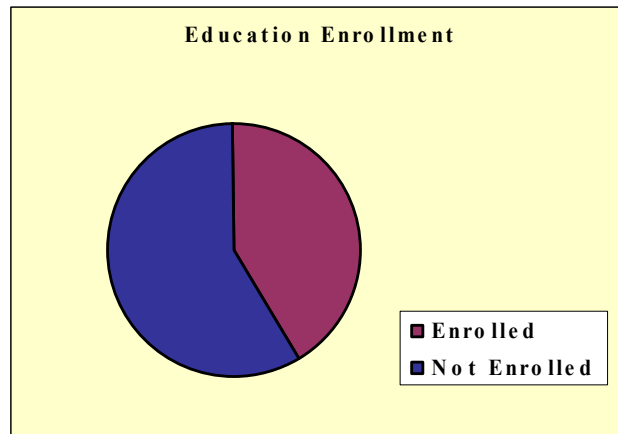
In Nablus, the public wastewater network covers 97% of the city. There is a site for the disposal of a settlement's sewage nearby causing health and environmental effects in terms of contamination of crops, unpleasant odors, source for epidemics, and insects.

When it comes to Nablus targeted problem, solid waste service management; the Municipality is a member of a Joint Service Council with another 8 localities, it collects solid waste daily or twice a day in certain areas, and has 304 closed waste containers of different sizes, and 80 open containers bigger than 6 m³.

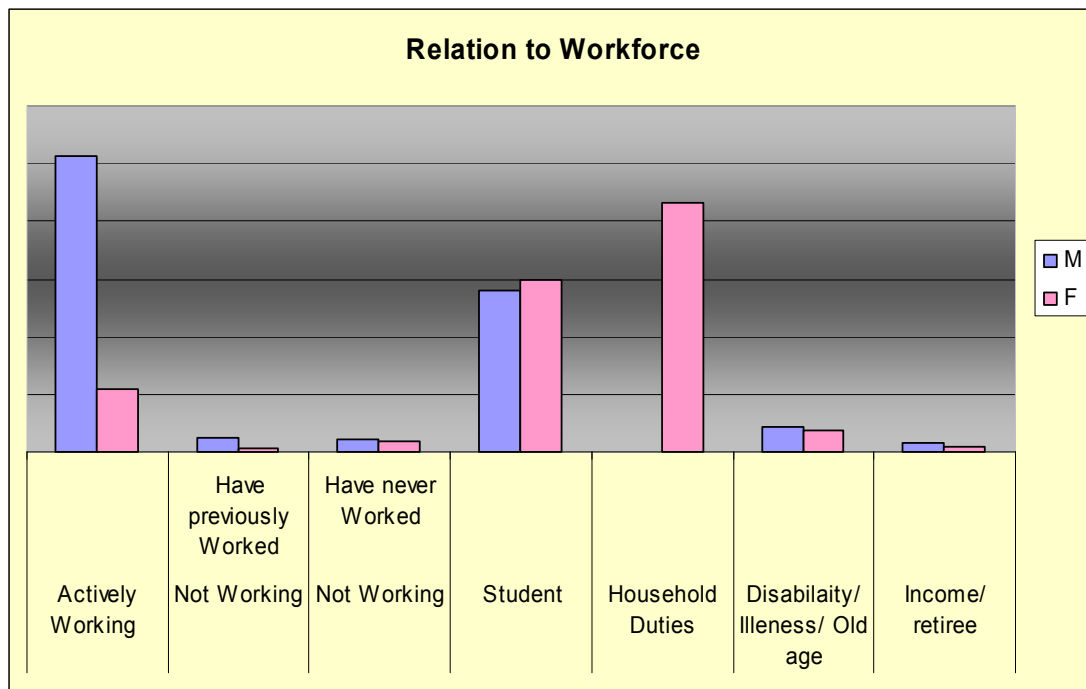


As for Education in Nablus, it is not as promising as it should be. The percentage of enrolled children (42%) is decidedly less than unenrolled children (58%).

In gender terms, enrollment and unenrollment effects both genders equally; there is no discrimination against or for one gender over the other.



As for the women's role in Nablus, it certainly is impressive. Women are equal to men in Nablus more than any other targeted city. Women know their role in achieving development and play it remarkably. Labor force Statistics do not reveal this significant trait, but it has been observable every time PPI team came in contact with Nablus community.



The lack of participatory approach and good governance in Nablus Municipality is not easily distinguished as in other targeted municipalities; the Municipality has a customer service department for its citizens, every Monday afternoon the Mayor comes to it and talks openly and freely with any citizen in there. However, how transparent is this approach in reality? The citizens are not taking part in governing their city, they have no authority over which projects to implement and which projects harm their city.

One incident of the lack of participatory approach in the Municipality had been shared by a Water and Environment Specialist in Al-Najah University in Nablus; Last year, for some technical reason, the amount of chloride the Municipality injects in drinking water was increased in certain quantities of water. The news spread in the city, and no one would use tap water for human consumption anymore. The labs at the University tested this water and found that although the chloride did increase, it was not a dangerous or lethal increase, and it is safe for human consumption. The Municipality never publicized these results or announced them. A great percentage of Nablus residents still buy bottled water till now.

PPI team could not find the reasons behind this silence from the Municipality. It only indicates that the Municipality does not view its citizens as partners in governing and developing the city.

2.4 JERICHO

In Jericho, PPI faced the interesting situation of very strong and capable civil society and unreceptive, inactive Municipality.

Jericho Municipality has received top marks from Palestinian National Authority Financial and Administrative Control Bureau in 2008, but PPI is discovering deep-seated and inherent mismanagement and abuse of power, authority, and Jericho's rich natural resources.

Jericho is not under the authority of its elected Municipality, but it is under the authority of very wealthy and influential few. Jericho's natural resources, especially water are controlled by some and whatever is given to the Municipality to distribute as household water is not managed efficiently or fairly.

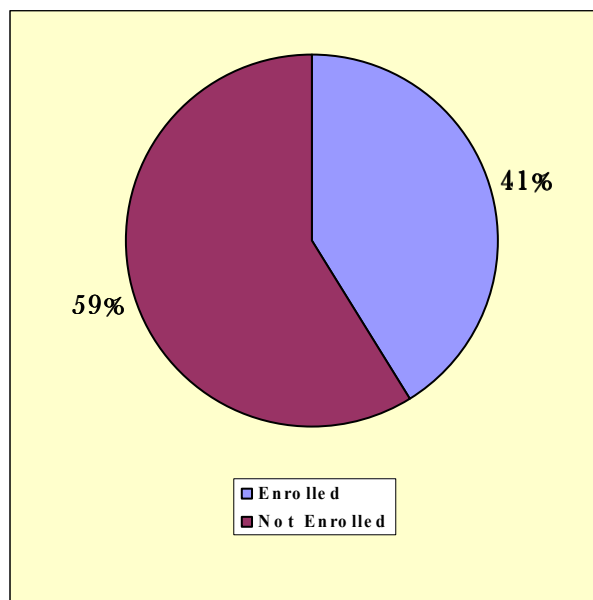
Moreover, the community views the Municipality as incapable and incompetent structure unable to deliver real, fast and sufficient services. The community at large believes that the employees are useless, unskilled, and was employed through favoritism and *Wasta*. The community is very eager for the local authorities' elections in July to change things.

One special feature of Jericho is the diversity of its citizens. Because of Jericho's location, climate, and abundance of water resources, many have homes or farms in the city that they occupy during winter only. Also, the Palestinian Authority was first established in Jericho therefore many outsiders took residence in the city. Native Jericho people feel as if they are considered and treated by the Municipality as second-class to these groups.

Jericho doesn't have a public wastewater network. Cesspits are the method of disposal causing health and environmental effects resulting from the use of sewage disposal place in terms of contamination of underground water, contamination of crops, unpleasant odors, source for epidemics, and insects. The Municipality claims that any wastewater network project is expensive and not feasible for any donor to implement.

As for solid waste management service, citizens claim that the municipality does its best at keeping the main streets that are always full of tourists and officials clean, while other smaller streets don't receive the same level of service.

The first public water network was established in 1999. There is abundance of

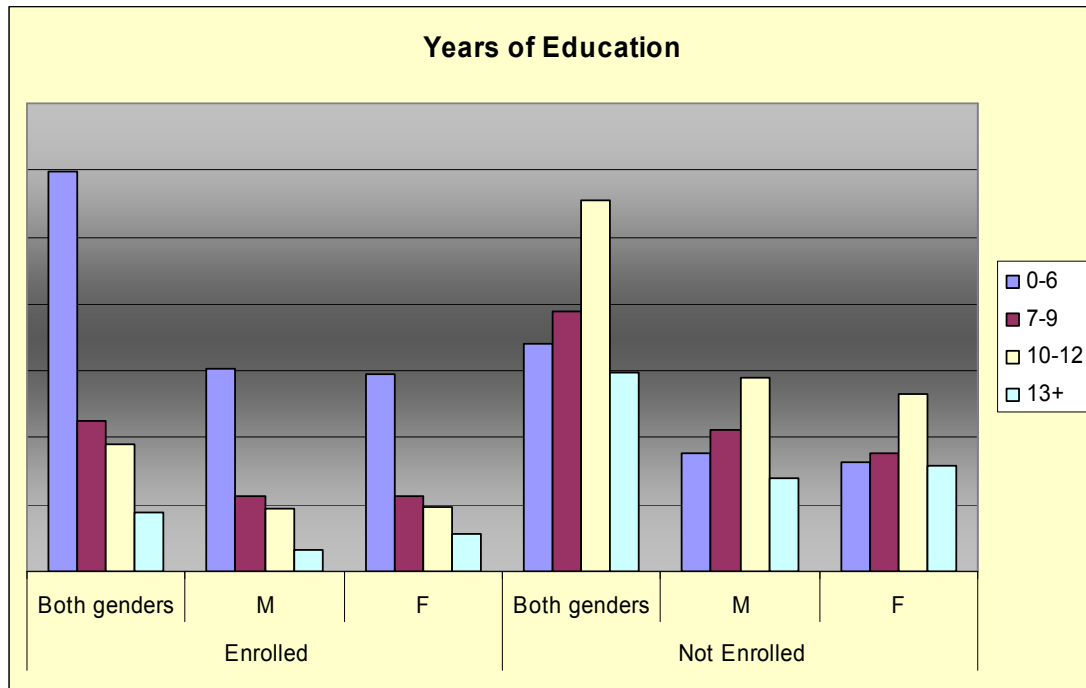


underground water resources but no strategic management for it. So far, PPI team is not quite able to pinpoint who is managing the water resources in Jericho. Several parties claim their rights to this valuable resource, but the team has found out that it is managed and controlled by few dominate families.

Education in Jericho is not as strong as it should be. Jericho only has one university campus, Al-Quads Open University, which is not known for

its credibility and quality education. As for education in schools; unenrollment of children is high.

Dropping out after elementary school (5-10 years) is also worrying. Almost half the children don't continue their education, even though Palestinians Public Schools are free.



As for the role of women, it is similar to other targeted cities. Women are underrepresented in the workforce and limited to Household duties. Although YWCA in Jericho is a shining example of what women could do if they put their mind to it. YWCA's board of executives and managers are all women, and it has the reputation of being one of the strongest and best civil society organizations in Jericho.

It turns out that in Jericho, the citizen is the least important on the Municipality's list of priorities. The Municipality wants nothing more than power and control over Jericho. Furthermore, the Municipality is not the only authority in Jericho. Strong families and influential individuals dictate what the Municipality can or cannot do. In fact, citizens declare that the Municipality has not done any real big-scale development projects in the last few years.

Never the less, the civil society in Jericho is quite competent and able to achieve so much. The solution is to bring the local authority and the civil society together to work together in developing Jericho.

3. Conclusion

Is MDGs achievement in Palestine possible? Yes

Is it possible without participation between Authorities and citizens? No

However there is a long way to go before achieving them. The first step is building trust between Palestinians and their Authorities, Local and National.

This analysis is a good example to consider. The data used in it is obtained from PCBS. PCBS has come a long way in short time; however, it is still not sophisticated to the desired degree. Collected data, while significant, doesn't necessarily reflect the complete picture of actual Palestinian society. Moreover, PCBS doesn't collect all types of data; it only collects certain foremost all-purpose data, like population, and number of residential or commercial buildings. However, more detailed and specific data like number of residential buildings to commercial buildings in one district is not known.

In this analysis, PPI team asked PCBS to provide them with certain data regarding the four targeted municipalities. The data was only available in Arabic, not in other languages like English or Spanish which is very important, since Palestine relies heavily on external fund and donors' projects. PCBS delivered the data in a timely manner in two sets. Each set had different information regarding the same items.

How is it possible to trust Palestinian authorities to make the best decisions, disseminate accurate information, and have the people's best interest in mind when all evidence points to the opposite?

For Palestine to achieve MDGs, collective governing between authorities and citizens is an obligation. For collective governing, participatory approach is the approach to take. For participatory approach, trust and good faith between authorities and citizens is the founding step. For trust to be built, integrity, transparency and accountability are three founding stones.