



PALESTINIAN WOMEN WORKING IN ILLEGAL ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS

DEPENDENCIES, EXPLOITATION
AND OPPORTUNITY COSTS



OXFAM BRIEFING PAPER—MARCH 2025

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This paper has been developed in collaboration with Oxfam's partners, including the Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS) and the Mother School Society (MSS), whose valuable research, data, and insights form the foundation of this work. The findings and recommendations presented here are based on a synthesis of a forthcoming MAS study and the MSS study,ⁱ which provides qualitative data through firsthand accounts and field research.

While this paper reflects Oxfam's analysis and advocacy objectives, it also incorporates partner contributions to ensure a comprehensive and grounded understanding of the issues. The content and recommendations do not necessarily represent the views of all contributing partners, and responsibility for any errors or omissions lies solely with Oxfam.

METHODOLOGY

This briefing note was prepared using data and case studies drawn from two key reports produced by Oxfam's partners: the Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS) report on "Policies to Eradicate the Employment of Palestinian Women in Illegal Israeli Settlements and the Mother School Society (MSS) report on the rights and conditions of Palestinian women working in Israeli settlements. These reports provided both qualitative and quantitative insights, including firsthand accounts, interviews, and field research, which we synthesized to highlight the most pertinent findings for international advocacy purposes.

The MAS report focused on policy gaps and recommendations to reintegrate women into the local economy, utilizing mixed-method approaches such as surveys, interviews, and economic analysis. The MSS report adopted a feminist methodology, emphasizing participatory research through focus groups and individual interviews with women workers and community stakeholders. Together, these reports form the foundation of this briefing note, offering a comprehensive lens into the challenges and systemic violations faced by Palestinian women working in illegal Israeli settlements.

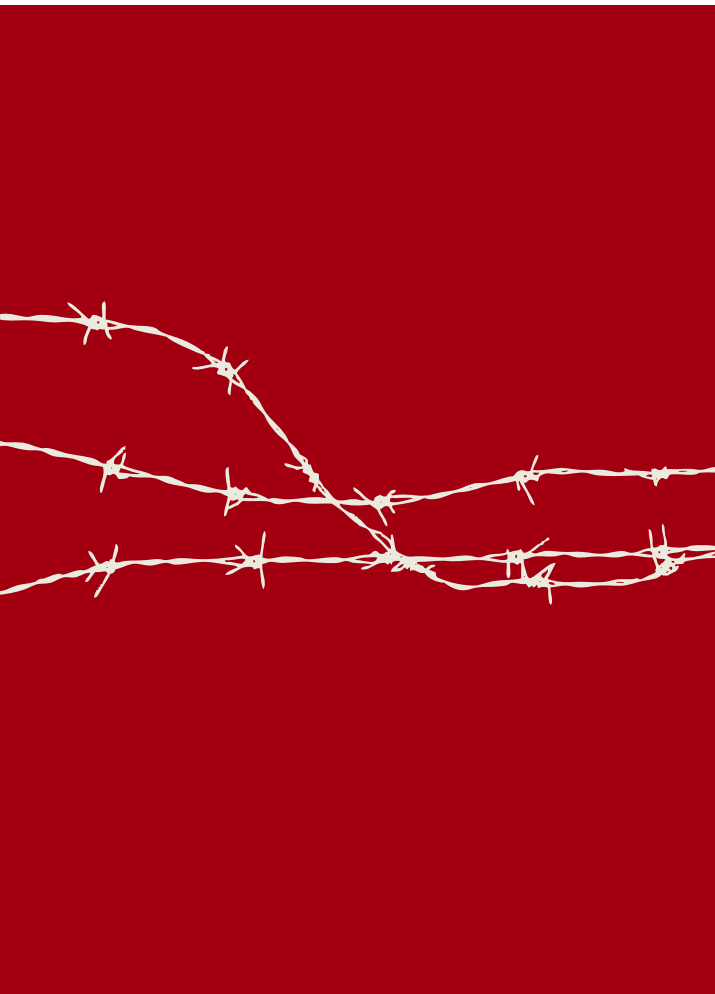
INTRODUCTION

An increasing number of Palestinian women are being forced to seek employment in illegal Israeli settlements due to the severe economic restrictions imposed by the Israeli occupation. With limited job opportunities in the Palestinian economy, women find themselves in precarious and exploitative conditions, working long hours for substandard wages and with no labor protections. Over 6,500 Palestinian women currently work in Israeli settlements, primarily in agriculture (65.5%) and manufacturing (33.3%), with the number steadily increasing over recent years.

They are part of a much larger labor force—approximately 29,000 Palestinians work in Israeli settlements, the vast majority of whom are men, reflecting a broader trend of economic dependency created by Israeli policies. In total, over 193,000 Palestinians work in Israel and Israeli settlements,ⁱⁱ with women making up only a small fraction, underscoring the particular vulnerabilities they face in these exploitative conditions.

This economic dependency on settlements is not incidental—it is the result of decades of policies that have eroded the Palestinian economy, leaving workers, particularly women, with no viable alternatives. Israeli settlement expansion, land confiscation, and restrictions on Palestinian trade, movement, and development have systematically created conditions of poverty and unemployment that push more Palestinians into exploitative labor. With more than 186,000 Palestinian men also forced to seek employment in Israel and its settlements,ⁱⁱⁱ the reliance on Israeli-controlled labor markets is a direct consequence of deliberate economic strangulation, reinforcing Palestinian dependency while stripping them of sustainable opportunities within their own economy.

The briefing highlights the vulnerabilities and exploitation faced by Palestinian women working in illegal Israeli settlements, the economic and social consequences of this growing trend, and the ways in which expanding settlements continue to devastate Palestinian livelihoods, particularly in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem).



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

THE EXPANSION OF SETTLEMENTS AND ECONOMIC SUPPRESSION

Since the Six-Day War in 1967, Israel has maintained a military occupation of the Palestinian territory. Over five and a half decades, Israel has systematically established and expanded settlements, in violation of international law. Today, the settler population in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, continues to grow, and now exceeds 700,000 Israeli settlers.^{iv} These settlements and settlement-linked infrastructure, combined with the repressive nature of Israel's ongoing unlawful occupation and policies including militarized control, have devastated the Palestinian economy, robbing Palestinians of land, resources and freedom.

Systematic land confiscations, exploitation of Palestinian resources, and near-complete Israeli control over Palestinian trade, movement and development, have entrenched high unemployment and poverty. These barriers severely restrict Palestinians' ability to fully realize their economic potential and engage in sustainable development, yet efforts continue, to create opportunities for economic development and growth.

The period since October 2023 has seen an alarming acceleration in settlement expansion, with devastating effects on the Palestinian economy and employment. According to Peace Now, Israel has illegally seized 23.7 km² of Palestinian land in the occupied West Bank in 2024 alone—more than the land confiscated over the previous 30 years combined.^v This includes the establishment of new settlement outposts, the expansion of bypass roads for Israeli settlers, and record levels of land confiscation, all of which directly undermine Palestinian livelihoods and often resulting in injuries, deaths, and the forced displacement of Palestinians, while critical infrastructure and hundreds of homes are being deliberately destroyed. These measures deny Palestinians access to critical agricultural land and natural resources, essential for farming and sustaining local economies. Increased movement restrictions, including new checkpoints and barriers, further isolate communities, restrict employment opportunities, and disrupt access to markets, deepening economic hardships for Palestinian businesses and workers.

Settlements and their associated infrastructure now occupy approximately 35 percent of East Jerusalem^{vi} and 10 percent of the West Bank.^{vii} For the millions of Palestinians under occupation, these developments are a stark reminder of their diminishing prospects for self-determination and their continued subjugation under a coercive environment designed to undermine their rights and resilience. The Israeli government's commitment to expansion was underscored in January 2024, when key Israeli cabinet members, including from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud party, attended a conference advocating for the rebuilding of settlements in Gaza and promoting the displacement of Palestinians.^{viii}

With limited local employment opportunities, many Palestinians have no choice but to seek precarious employment in illegal Israeli settlements. This reliance on settlement jobs weakens the Palestinian economy as businesses and agricultural producers struggle to retain a stable workforce, further reinforcing the cycle of economic hardship. Moreover, Palestinian workers in Israeli settlements have little to no labor protections, are forced to endure long working hours, harsh working conditions and frequent instances of verbal abuse, sexual harassment and physical violence.

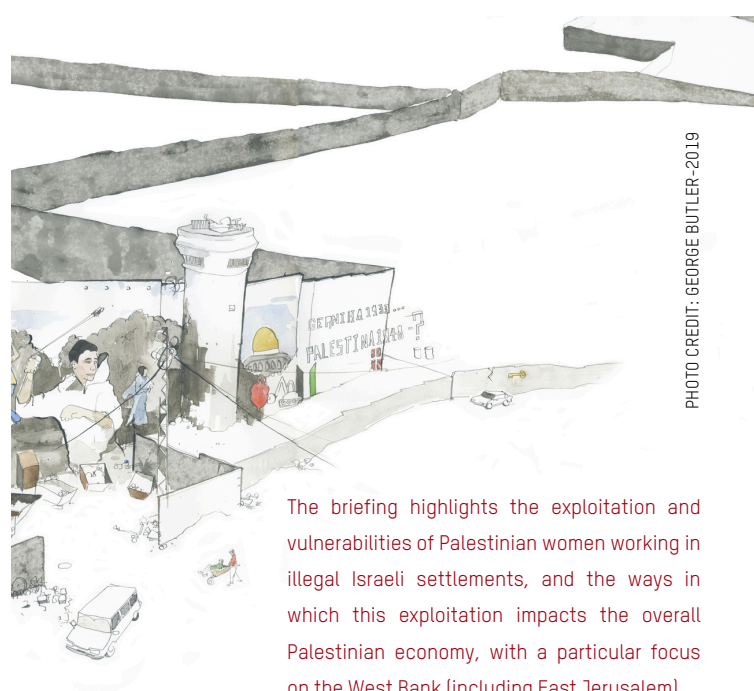


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The briefing highlights the exploitation and vulnerabilities of Palestinian women working in illegal Israeli settlements, and the ways in which this exploitation impacts the overall Palestinian economy, with a particular focus on the West Bank (including East Jerusalem).

PALESTINIAN WOMEN IN THE LABOR MARKET

In Palestine, as in many developing countries, women face significant barriers to participating in the labor market. In fact, Palestinian women's labor force participation is among the lowest globally,^{ix} due to structural restrictions, social norms, and economic constraints.

In the West Bank, employment rates among women in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) have historically been much lower than those of men with significant variations based on educational level and age. Prior to October 2023, unemployment rates for Palestinian women across the oPt ranged between 23% and 29% with a cumulative unemployment rate of 40% - double that of men. However, following Israel's military onslaught on Gaza in October 2023, the economic situation across the oPt has sharply deteriorated.

The West Bank has suffered an unprecedented economic decline, resulting in the loss of 306,000 jobs since October 2023.^x Between early October 2023 and the end of September 2024, the unemployment rate in the West Bank averaged 34.9 per cent, while in Gaza it tripled to a staggering 79.7%. While specific post-October 2023 unemployment figures for women are not readily available, it is evident that the economic downturn has affected both men and women, with men experiencing a more than 28% decline in employment and their unemployment rate tripling. Although women faced fewer job losses, concerns persist regarding their already low participation rates, challenging working conditions, and increased vulnerability to exploitation. The war's wider economic toll has also been substantial, with real GDP declining in the OPT by an average of 32.2% over the past year. The West Bank^{xi} saw a 21.7% contraction, while Gaza's GDP plummeted by 84.7%. These trends further exacerbate existing economic inequalities and highlight the urgent need for interventions that support Palestinian women's employment and economic resilience.^{xii}

THE REASONS BEHIND THIS HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE AND LOW LABOR PARTICIPATION FOR WOMEN ARE MULTIFOLD

Israeli movement and access restrictions, including checkpoints between cities, towns and villages and settlement-linked infrastructure, limit women's freedom of movement and access to the workplace, making travelling throughout the West Bank dangerous, unpredictable, and time-consuming. The number of checkpoints across the West Bank increased from 567 in early October 2023 to 700 by February 2024.^{xiii} Palestinian women, like men, also experience additional gender-specific challenges, including a heightened risk of sexual harassment, violence and an inability to access agricultural land or local markets—further driving unemployment.

Decades of Israeli military control, demolitions or confiscation of lands, farms, resources, and water reserves, and the exercise near complete dominance over Palestinian trade and development have systematically suppressed the Palestinian economy, stifling growth and driving up unemployment. Both men and women struggle to find work due to these structural barriers, but women face additional limitations due to restricted access to key economic sectors, including agriculture and industry.

Restrictive gender roles and unpaid care work also significantly impact women's labor participation. While men are more likely to enter the workforce despite economic constraints, women are often expected to take on the burden of unpaid domestic and care work, limiting their ability to seek formal employment. These social norms, combined with economic and mobility restrictions, further reinforce gender inequality in the labor market.

The Palestinian Authority (PA), which employs many Palestinian women, has a strong aid dependency and has suffered reduced aid and revenue cuts, significantly limiting its ability to provide services and to function as a government. PA employees have only received partial wages over the past three years.^{xiv}

These structural barriers, compounded by Israeli policies such as land confiscation, movement restrictions, control over resources, and limitations on trade and economic development, have left many women unable to find secure and dignified work locally, driving them toward exploitative jobs in settlements.

While Palestinian men have long been employed in Israeli settlements—predominantly in construction and agriculture— their numbers fluctuated significantly, peaking at around 25,000 in 2023 before dropping sharply due to post-October 7 closures.^{xv} Meanwhile, the number of Palestinian women working in settlements has grown significantly. In 2018, less than 0.7% of Palestinian working women were employed in settlements or Israel; today, that number has risen to 3.4%, reflecting a concerning trend of increasing economic dependency on settlement work.

PALESTINIAN WOMEN FORCED TO WORK IN ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS

Israel's military occupation of the West Bank and expansion of illegal settlements have devastated the local economy by restricting Palestinian access to land, water and resources, fragmenting markets, and severely limiting local industries.

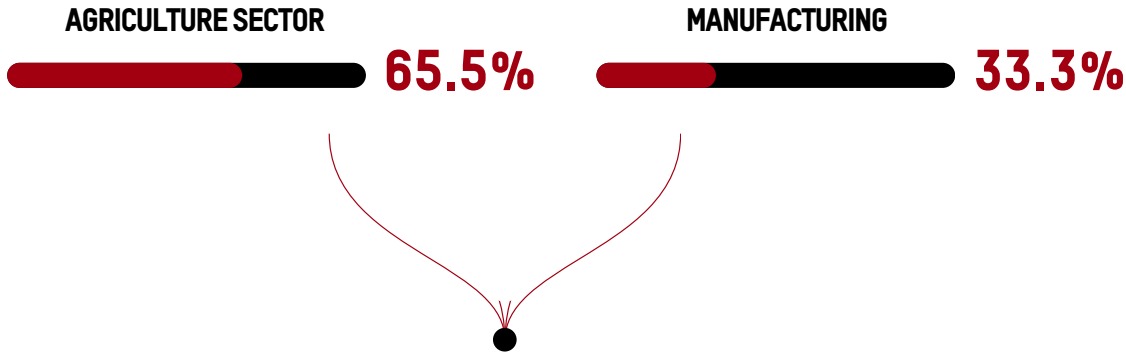
While Palestinian men have long been employed in Israeli settlements, women face distinct vulnerabilities in these workplaces. **There is a rising number of women forced into working in settlements. However, this employment is not an economic opportunity but a reflection of the economic coercion imposed by illegal settlement expansion.** Unlike men, who may work in more physically demanding sectors such as construction, Palestinian women are disproportionately concentrated in agricultural and food processing jobs, due to gender norms, mobility restrictions, and lower barriers to entry. These sectors also come with lower wages, fewer protections, and higher risks of exploitation, harassment, and wage theft due to informal, seasonal work and isolated conditions.

This shift is a direct consequence of Israel's systematic restrictions on Palestinian economic development, which have repressed local job creation and forced many women into precarious and exploitative employment in settlements.



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Over **6,500** Palestinian women currently work in illegal Israeli settlements throughout the West Bank, particularly in :



Mostly processing food and other agricultural products.

Women’s employment in Israeli settlements has grown significantly, with about 3.4% of the total of Palestinian working women now working in settlements or Israel, up from less than 0.7% in 2018.

Roughly 47.6% of Palestinian women working in settlement’s agricultural production and 19.6% working in manufacturing, previously worked for Palestinian businesses, but were forced to seek employment in illegal Israeli settlements due to a lack of alternatives.

ECONOMIC COERCION AND LABOR EXPLOITATION IN ILLEGAL SETTLEMENTS

WAGES



The average daily income of women working in settlements showed that the majority of women (65.5%) have a daily income of less than 100 shekels/day (less than US\$ 28)—which is less than half of the minimum wage in Israel proper. This wage disparity is particularly concerning given Israel's inflation rate, which stood at 3.5% in September 2024.^{xvi} This exceeded the government's target range of 1–3%, meaning prices for essentials are rising faster than expected. Despite the exploitative wages in Israeli settlements, due to the repression of the Palestinian economy and resulting depression of wages, this figure remains higher than the available local jobs – further illustrating how the economic hardship imposed by settlements forces Palestinians into exploitative labor conditions.

“Working in a settlement was terrifying for me, but there are no other work alternatives. The Palestinian labor market offers very few opportunities—almost none at all.”

Wafaa, 53 years old

NO CONTRACTS



The vast majority of women working in Israeli settlements (94%) do not have written contracts, leaving them acutely vulnerable to financial and labor exploitation, with no mechanisms to address violations of their rights.

HAZARDOUS WORKING CONDITIONS



According to Oxfam's partner, Mother School Society's survey of Palestinian women, a staggering 93% of these women reported working in unhealthy and unsafe conditions. Examples include working in fields exposed to hazardous pesticides without safety regulations or protective equipment.

LONG HOURS



Over 71% of women indicated long working hours^{xvii} as a major burden and challenge both for themselves and their families. Interviews with women working in settlements reported that a significant portion of them work two shifts (morning and evening) to earn enough money, resulting in chronic mental and physical stress and exhaustion.

JOB INSECURITY



Other major factors that women identified as challenges stemming from their work in settlements included long and costly commutes, the lack of health insurance, injury compensation and job security – especially in the absence of a written employment contract. Many also lacked Israeli-approved work permits, which are required to legally access jobs in settlements, leaving them more vulnerable to exploitation and sudden dismissal.

HARASSMENT



Women reported facing instances of wage theft and withholding of promised benefits, racial discrimination, as well as harassment, sexual assault and physical violence.

“We leave home at 3 am and spend one to two hours at checkpoints. Sometimes, it takes four to five hours to reach the settlement. Occasionally they send us back... I want this kind of work out of my life.”

Mariam, 19 years old



WHY DO PALESTINIAN WOMEN WORK IN SETTLEMENTS AND WHAT THEY ENVISION AS AN ALTERNATIVE?

Palestinian women do not “choose” to work in Israeli settlements out of preference but are driven by economic desperation and the lack of viable alternatives within the local economy. Israeli occupation policies have created an environment where local employment opportunities are scarce, particularly for women. Settlement work, despite its exploitative nature and low wages, often provides slightly higher pay than what is available in the Palestinian job market, making it a necessity for many. For Palestinian women, this economic coercion is compounded by social pressures, as they often act as primary or sole breadwinners in their households, with 60% reporting that their income is their family’s main source of livelihood.

Despite these challenges, Palestinian women overwhelmingly express a desire to leave settlement work if suitable alternatives were available. Many envision opportunities that offer security, dignity, and stability—qualities that settlement work fundamentally lacks. Women want jobs with fair wages, labor protections, and safe working environments, ideally located closer to their homes, to reduce the burden of long and unsafe commutes. They aspire to opportunities that align with their existing skills, such as agriculture, small-scale manufacturing, or handicrafts, and many express an eagerness to establish small businesses if provided with the necessary financial resources and training. Comprehensive social protections and programs to support female-headed households and those seeking alternatives to settlement work are also vital to enabling economic independence and strengthening community reintegration.

These exploitative conditions are not just a side effect of economic hardship but a direct result of Israeli policies that have crippled the Palestinian economy. By restricting Palestinian industry, land use and market access, illegal settlements create the very unemployment that forces Palestinian women into precarious, low-wage jobs. This cycle of dependence reinforces economic subjugation rather than offering real opportunities.



CASE STUDY

THE JORDAN VALLEY^{XVIII} VALLEY

The Jordan Valley serves as a stark illustration of how Israeli settlement expansion and economic suppression force Palestinian women into exploitative labor. Since 1967, Israel's policies of land confiscation, home demolitions, and movement restrictions have systematically displaced Palestinian communities, leaving them with few economic opportunities. Today, a small minority of Israeli settlers (approximately 12,788) control about 95% of the Jordan Valley, while the Palestinian majority is confined to a mere 5%.^{xix}

During the Six-Day War in 1967, approximately 88% of the Palestinian population in the Jordan Valley in the West Bank was forcibly displaced. Subsequent waves of land confiscations by the Israeli government and settlers have left the remaining 60,000 Palestinians in an increasingly isolated and precarious state.

Through a combination of official evictions, demolitions, land annexation, and state-sponsored settler violence, Palestinian families in the Jordan Valley routinely get their homes and land stolen. This forced displacement has pushed communities deeper into poverty, isolating them further from one another and making it difficult for farmers to access their land and critical resources. Severe movement restrictions imposed by Israeli authorities obstruct access to essential services, markets and farmland. In particular, Palestinian communities in the Jordan Valley suffer from grave water shortages due to these restrictions and policies, preventing communities from building water-related infrastructure. This systematic deprivation forces Palestinian families in the Jordan Valley to spend a large part of their income on water, destroying the foundation of their livelihoods but also violating the most basic rights of Palestinians and preventing them from carrying out sustainable agricultural practices.

The compounded impact of these restrictions and obstacles have forced large numbers of women to seek employment in Israeli settlements in the Jordan Valley where they face systemic exploitation. In the villages of Al-Jiftlik and Al Zubeidat in the Jordan Valley, over half of the total female workforce is employed on Israeli settlements rather than in the local economy, with 63% of working women from Al-Zubeidat and 50% from Al-Jiftlik working in these exploitative environments. Alarming, around 60% of these women working on Israeli settlements in the Jordan Valley report being the sole breadwinner for their families. This reliance on settlement-based employment makes them especially vulnerable due to the precarious and unstable nature of the work. Despite the challenges, many women express a desire to leave settlement work if suitable alternatives in the local market become available.

The instability of this reliance was starkly revealed following the beginning of Israel's military onslaught on Gaza in October 2023, when roughly 26% of women employed in these settlements lost their jobs. When these women were asked about the impact of losing their jobs on their family's source of income and standard of living, the vast majority (77.6%) indicated that the impact had devastating consequences because they are the primary or sole breadwinners in their households. The power imbalance leaves the population of the Jordan Valley and Palestinian workers at the mercy of their Israeli settler employers who can abruptly sever their livelihood, perpetuating cycles of insecurity and dependency.

“I’ve been working in the settlement for 8 years. I’m the sole provider for my family. Financially, things are tough and my husband is unemployed. If no one works, who will take care of the household expenses? We only earn 90 shekels a day (24 US\$), what can you buy with that?”

Dalal, 43 years old

CONCLUSION

Israel's military occupation of the oPt and the expansion of illegal settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem have systematically devastated the Palestinian economy. Through policies of land confiscation, movement restrictions, resource exploitation, and control over Palestinian trade and development, Israel has stripped Palestinians of their land, resources, and opportunities for self-reliance. These deliberate actions have forced many Palestinians, particularly women, into hazardous, exploitative, and unstable employment in illegal Israeli settlements. While both men and women face unsafe conditions, lack of labor protections, and the absence of written contracts, women are at heightened risk of gender-specific exploitation, including sexual harassment and assault, as well as additional social and cultural barriers that further restrict their options.^{xx}

This economic coercion is not incidental—it is a direct consequence of Israel's entrenched policies of occupation and settlement expansion. Unless the root causes of this repression are addressed, the Palestinian economy will continue to deteriorate, forcing more women into exploitative jobs and deepening their vulnerability. In rural areas like the Jordan Valley, Israeli policies have created conditions of economic desperation, restricting access to essential resources such as water and agricultural land, fragmenting markets, destroying infrastructure, and ensuring that local employment opportunities remain scarce and wages are suppressed.

Breaking this cycle of dependency requires dismantling the systems of occupation and repression imposed by Israel. This means confronting the structural barriers that perpetuate poverty and exploitation while creating opportunities that empower Palestinian women and strengthen communities. Revitalizing the Palestinian economy is not only necessary but urgent. It requires ensuring Palestinians' access to land and resources, ending the exploitation of their labor, and enabling them to build resilient local economies.

ONLY BY ADDRESSING THESE ROOT CAUSES AND HOLDING THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL ACCOUNTABLE FOR ITS ACTIONS CAN PALESTINIANS RECLAIM THEIR RIGHTS TO DIGNIFIED WORK, ECONOMIC SECURITY, AND SELF-DETERMINATION.



RECOMMENDATIONS

THIRD STATES AND INTERNATIONAL MUST

- Pressure the Government of Israel to comply with international law by dismantling illegal settlements, ceasing rights violations, and ending its unlawful occupation and complying with the measures outlined in the International Court of Justice (ICJ) Advisory opinion on the illegality of Israel's policies and practices in the oPt (July 2024) including:
 1. Halting economic activities that sustain illegal settlements, including trade in illegal settlement products
 2. Halt arms transfers and military assistance to Israel that enable settlement expansion and rights violations.
 3. The EU should suspend its Association Agreement with Israel under Article 2 until Israel halts settlement activities and complies with international law.
 4. Impose restrictions on imports of goods produced in settlements, prohibit financial transactions that directly or indirectly support settlements, and restrict the provision of services or technology that facilitate their growth.
 5. Implement measures to prevent companies within their jurisdictions^{xxi} from engaging in or profiting from labor rights violations in settlements.
- Ensure accountability for violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, including through reparations for affected individuals and communities including:
 1. Ensure that corporations and institutions operating within their jurisdictions are not complicit in settlement activities in accordance with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
 2. Support international bodies in their efforts to hold Israel accountable for violations, ensuring justice and the enforcement of international law, and ensuring the full implementation of the ICJ Advisory Opinion (July 2024).
 3. Support independent monitoring mechanisms, such as those led by Palestinian labor unions, human rights organizations, and UN-mandated bodies, to document and report labor rights violations in settlements.
- Adopt bold national policies to set a precedent for dismantling settlements and ensuring and advancing accountability for violations in the oPt.

THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY AND ITS LINE MINISTRIES MUST

- Develop and implement policies that create employment opportunities for women in local industries to reduce dependency on settlement labor.
- Establish business development centers in rural areas to support women entrepreneurs and provide vocational training tailored to market needs.
- Expand social protection programs to assist women transitioning out of settlement work and offer financial support for alternative employment opportunities.
- Strengthen employment programs that provide alternative work opportunities for women, particularly in sectors such as agriculture, handicrafts, and food processing.
- Develop rural economic initiatives to promote local job growth and sustainable livelihoods for Palestinian women.
- Develop and implement policies that create employment opportunities for women in local industries.
- Establish business development centers in rural areas to support women entrepreneurs.
- Expand social protection programs to assist women transitioning out of settlement work.
- Strengthen employment programs that provide alternative work opportunities for women.
- Develop rural economic initiatives to promote local job growth.

HUMANITARIAN, DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS AND DONORS MUST

- Establish emergency funds to provide temporary financial or in-kind support for women leaving settlement work. This would help cover basic needs while they seek alternative employment.
- Fund and implement vocational training programs tailored to sectors that align with the local market to equip women with employable skills.
- Support initiatives that improve girls' education and vocational training to enhance women's long-term economic participation and reduce dependency on settlements.
- Expand funding for women-led projects in agriculture, handicrafts, and food processing to create local job opportunities and foster economic independence.
- Fund and support the establishment of women-led cooperatives in sectors such as agriculture and handicrafts, providing a collective and safe work environment.
- Provide funding for transportation, irrigation, and market facilities to enhance the competitiveness of local economic activities and reduce dependency on settlement work.
- Advocate for the enforcement of international humanitarian law and the implementation of UN resolutions, ICJ provisional measures and advisory opinion, urge the EU to enforce Article 2 of its Association Agreement with Israel and suspend arms transfers contributing to rights violations.

NOTES

- i Policies to Eradicate the Employment of Palestinian Women in Illegal Israeli Settlements, MAS, forthcoming 2025
- ii Main findings of labour source survey, PCBS, 2022 <https://www.pcbs.gov.ps/post.aspx?ItemID=4421&lang=en&utm>
- iii Impact of the Israel-Hamas conflict on the labour market and livelihoods in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, ILO, November 2023 https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/wcms_901136.pdf
- iv Human Rights Council summary, UNHRC, 28 March 2023, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/human-rights-council-hears-that-700000-israeli-settlers-are-living-illegally-in-the-occupied-west-bank-meeting-summary-excerpts/>
- v Peace Now to Aljazeera, 3 July 2024, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/7/3/israeli-seizures-of-west-bank-land-for-settlers-peaking-watchdog-says>
- vi Report on Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem reporting period Jan-Dec 2023, Office of the European Union Representative (West Bank and Gaza Strip, UNRWA), 02 august 2024 <https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/One-Year-Report-on-Israeli-Settlements-in-the-occupied-West-Bank-including-East-Jerusalem-Reporting-period-January-December-2023.pdf>
- vii Settlements, Btselem, 11 November 2017, <https://www.btselem.org/settlements> N.B: Due to continuous expansion and encroachment, obtaining an exact, up-to-date figure on the west bank remains challenging, as comprehensive mapping requires significant resources and settlement growth is ongoing.
- viii Israeli Ministers Join Ultranationalist Conference Urging Gaza Resettlement, Reuters, 2024, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israeli-ministers-join-ultranationalist-conference-urging-gaza-resettlement-2024-01-29/>
- ix Factsheet on gender equality and women's empowerment, UN, 8 march 2023 <https://palestine.un.org/en/222284-fact-sheet-gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment>
- x <https://unctad.org/press-material/economic-crisis-worsens-occupied-palestinian-territory-amid-ongoing-gaza-conflict>
- xi A year of war, ILO bulletin, 17 October 2024 <https://www.ilo.org/resource/news/year-war-unemployment-surges-nearly-80-cent-and-gdp-contracts-almost-85>
- xii ibid
- xiii Economic crisis worsens in occupied Palestinian territory amid ongoing Gaza conflict, UNCTAD, 12 September 2024, <https://unctad.org/press-material/economic-crisis-worsens-occupied-palestinian-territory-amid-ongoing-gaza-conflict>
- xiv ibid
- xv The Occupation of Palestine: As Wages Fall, Poverty Rises, ITUC, 2021, https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/ituc_palestinereport_en.pdf; Labour Force Survey: Main Results, PCBS, 2023, <https://www.pcbs.gov.ps/post.aspx?ItemID=5734&lang=en>; The Situation of Workers of the Occupied Arab Territories, ILO, 2023, https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/%40ed_norm/%40relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_883198.pdf.
- xvi Israeli Ministers Join Ultranationalist Conference Urging Gaza Resettlement, Reuters, 2024, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israeli-ministers-join-ultranationalist-conference-urging-gaza-resettlement-2024-01-29/>
- xvii While the report does not specify exact working hours, a substantial number of women indicated working two shifts a day—one in the morning and one at night. Approximately 70% of women surveyed identified long working hours as a major challenge, suggesting excessively long and irregular workdays that contribute to significant physical and mental exhaustion.
- xviii The Jordan Valley and the northern Dead Sea constitute almost 30% of the West Bank. Nearly 65,000 Palestinians and some 11,000 settlers live there. Although the region serves as the Palestinians' most significant land reserve, Israel has taken over most of the land with a view to enabling its de facto annexation. Israel also endeavors to minimize Palestinian presence there: barring Palestinians from using 85% of the land, restricting their access to water resources and keeping them from building homes. Israeli authorities are also taking measures to drive out over 50 Palestinian communities across the Jordan Valley, by making their lives intolerable The Jordan Valley and the Northern Dead Sea: Land Annexation and Displacement, B'Tselem, [n.d.], <https://www.btselem.org/>
- xix The Jordan Valley comprises approximately 30% of the West Bank and is an important source of water. The Palestinians have limited areas where Israel allows them to build and live in small enclaves of about 5% of the Valley—in the Jericho area that is Area A, and in some small villages considered Area B. 95% of the Valley is considered to be Area C, under full Israeli control, and Israeli policy is not to permit any construction and development for the Palestinians. Construction in the Jordan Valley: 2019 Report, Peace Now, 2019, <https://peacenow.org.il/en/construction-in-jordan-valley-2019>.
- xx West Bank and Gaza: 2023 Article IV Consultation and Economic Monitoring Report, International Monetary Fund, 2023, <https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/journals/002/2023/147/article-A001-en.xml>; Gender Alert: Needs of Women and Girls in Humanitarian Action in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, UN Women, 2019, <https://palestine.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20Palestine/Attachments/Publications/2019/9/UNWPALCO6GenderAlert2019.pdf>
- xxi Under international humanitarian law (IHL), states must ensure respect for the Fourth Geneva Convention (Article 1) and avoid recognizing or assisting in violations of international law, including those linked to Israeli settlements (UNSC Res. 2334, 2016). This includes regulating businesses under their jurisdiction to prevent complicity in rights violations. The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (Principle 2) and OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (Chapter IV) outline state responsibilities for corporate due diligence. Several states have adopted laws to enforce these obligations, such as France's Duty of Vigilance Law and Germany's Supply Chain Due Diligence Act. UN Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016): Non-Recognition and Legal Obligations Regarding Israeli Settlements, United Nations, 2016, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/863850>.



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