

MONITOR REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GOVERNMENT DECISION 3790 FOR INVESTMENT IN EAST JERUSALEM

COMPLETION OF EDUCATION AND TAILORING
PROFESSIONAL TRAINING: CONDITIONS FOR
INCREASING THE EMPLOYMENT RATE

SEPTEMBER 2021

WRITTEN BY:
NOA DAGONI & EREZ WEGNER



מען - نقابة عمالية (ج.م.)
מען - ארגון עובדים (ע"ר)
MAAN-WORKERS ASSOCIATION [R.A.]

עיר עמים
ir amim
عير عميم

Table of Contents

I. Lack of Programs for the Advancement of Training for Women Lacking or Having Little Formal Education	4
II. Lack of Formal Education: Paving the Way to Unemployment and Exploitative Employment	6
III. Lack of Education: Most Women are Outside of the Job Market; Most Men are in Employed under Exploitative Conditions	7
IV. The Key to Change: Addressing the Lack of Basic Formal Education and Appropriate Training Programs	9

The exclusion of female residents of East Jerusalem from education and employment is a central component of the socio-economic gaps faced by the Palestinian population in Jerusalem compared to the Jewish-Israeli population. It is also a significant factor in the high rate of poverty in East Jerusalem, which in the past decade has reached close to 80%.

As of 2019, 35% of the women in East Jerusalem in the target age range for employment had not completed 12 years of schooling.¹ From Ma'an – Workers Advice Center Jerusalem branch's field work, it transpires that many of the women seeking work in the Employment Office have completed less than nine years of schooling. Also in 2019, with the beginning of the implementation of Government Decision 3790 for the Reduction of Socio-Economic Gaps and Economic Development in East Jerusalem, only 17% of Palestinian women above the age of 15 participated in the job market, and about 23% of those women in the target age range for employment (25-64) participated.²

Section 2a of Government Decision 3790 for the Reduction of Socio-Economic Gaps and Economic Development in East Jerusalem defined the integration of female residents of East Jerusalem in the job market as a goal. This section is one of the only sections in the Government Decision in which quantitative goals were defined at the outset, i.e. an increase to 75% of the rate of participation of Arab women in Israel in the job market by the year 2023 of women in East Jerusalem within the target employment age range.³

However, the plan does not address one of the central roots of the problem: the lack of basic formal education among the women of employment age and particularly those in the main age range for employment.

¹ Jerusalem Institute for Policy Studies, Statistical Yearbook for 2001, table G/10, weighting of findings [Hebrew].

² *Id.*, table G/1.

³ For an expanded discussion of the employment chapter of Government Decision 3790, see the quarterly reports of Ir Amim and Ma'an – Workers Advice Center, for March and June, 2020.

I. Lack of Programs for the Advancement of Professional Training for Women Lacking or With Little Formal Education

The employment and welfare chapter of Government Decision 3790 allocates approximately 87 million NIS,⁴ out of a total investment of approximately 238 million NIS in the employment chapter, for professional training and assistance in finding employment for female residents of East Jerusalem. According to the status report of the Ministry for Jerusalem and Heritage, as of the end of 2020, only about 38% of the total budgets allocated for the employment chapter for the first three years of the plan (2018-2020) have been utilized.⁵ In addition to the failure to utilize the entire budgetary allocation, there is also the initial low allocation of resources for programs for training and education that will provide a professional address for women lacking basic formal education, defined as completion of 12 years of schooling or a matriculation certificate (according to the Palestinian or the Israeli curriculum).

As part of the Government Decision, two central programs are being operated that assist women and men in the main employment age range with professional training and finding employment – The Rian Center (a center for employment direction), and the Circles of Employment program of the Employment Service. Pursuant to Government Decision 3790, the program of the Rian Center has been granted a supplementary budget from the Ministry of Finance in the amount of 35 million NIS for five years. The center's programs are, by their nature, aimed at people possessing a basic formal education. Although formal, strict prerequisites are not set out, from conversations with women seeking employment, as well as with personnel from the Rian Center, it transpires that in fact, most of the available programs are not open or appropriate for those who have not completed at least nine years of schooling.

The Circles of Employment program, by contrast, does not set any minimum prerequisites in terms of formal education. It is offered to men and women seeking employment who have appeared at the Employment

⁴ The computation includes the investments mentioned in sections 2(a)1, 2(a)2, 2(a)3, 2(a)8 of Government Decision 3790. It may be that section 2(a)7, which relates to the welfare and employment programs, includes relevant investments, but that section does not detail the budgetary allocation in the section, in the Decision itself or in the status reports.

⁵ The Status Report for the Implementation of Government Decision 3790 for 2020 – The Standing Committee (hereinafter: 2020 Status Report), p. 5.

Service and who are entitled to a guaranteed minimum income. It is intended to promote the skills required for finding appropriate employment, with the objective of preventing participants from sliding into a lengthy period of unemployment with dependence on welfare payments. The Government Decision allocates 10.5 million NIS for each year of the five-year plan. Most of that allocation, 7.5 million NIS, comes from the budget of the Employment Service and 3 million NIS is a supplementary budget from the Ministry of Finance.⁶

The Rian Center program, which was intended to absorb at least 1,500 participants, 70% of them women,⁷ in fact absorbed more participants than expected in 2019-2020. The percentage of women participating exceeded the minimum required. In 2019, 1,635 men and women participated in programs. In 2020, there were more than 2,045 participants (as of Dec. 1, 2020) in the programs in spite of the COVID pandemic. Of the total number of participants during these years, 78% were women.⁸

The Circles of Employment Program, intended for 1,200 participants per year, 70% of whom are women, receives less than one-half of the allocation that the programs of the Rian Center receive.⁹ The program did not receive sufficient follow-up in the 2020 Status Report – the report does not present indices of success for the program nor the number of participants in it.¹⁰ According to many women seeking employment, the workshops offered as part of the program do not in fact include any professional training and therefore they do not expand their employment prospects. Rather, the program applies pressure to join the work force at any price in non-professional jobs.

In addition to these programs, the Government Decision allocates 26.5 million NIS, out of which 10 million NIS are supplementary, for programs to encourage employment of young women. The Decision does not define the targeted age range, but it can be inferred, on the basis of the offered programs, that they are intended for recent high school graduates. According to the 2020 Status Report, the programs actually offered were preparatory Hebrew courses and practical engineering training, and these did not meet the implementation targets or utilization of the budget that

⁶ The Status Report for the Implementation of Government Decision 3790 for 2019 – The Standing Committee (hereinafter: 2019 Status Report), pp. 33-34.

⁷ 2020 Status Report, p. 30.

⁸ *Id.*, p. 21.

⁹ The 2019 Status Report, p. 35.

¹⁰ The 2020 Status Report, p. 36.

were set forth.¹¹ From the description of the programs, it transpires that they are primarily intended for those who completed their high school education, and they do not address the need for basic education.

Additionally, the Government Decision directs the Ministry of Employment and Social Services to devote 15 million NIS of its on-going budget (without a supplementary budget allocation) to the “operation of tools for developing human capital,” through a program for professional training operated by the Employment Service. The program for professional training courses operated by the Employment Service also does not address the needs of those lacking a basic formal education. The program does refer participants to courses in Hebrew which are also suitable for participants with nine years of schooling, but with this exception, it offers training programs that require 10 to 12 years of schooling (e.g., computer operation support, inventory and acquisition management, car registration examiners). The status documents for 2019 and 2020 do not detail the actualization of this section of the Government Decision.

II. Lack of Formal Education: Paving the Way to Unemployment and Exploitative Employment

Basic or advanced formal education is the central means for high quality integration into the workforce.¹²

The school system in East Jerusalem suffers from serious difficulties, including budgetary and planning discrimination. The discrimination and neglect of the school system in East Jerusalem is evident in the serious shortage of classrooms (a shortage of 3,794 classrooms as of the 2019-2020 school year¹³), with very high dropout levels beginning in junior high school. There is also the phenomenon of the “invisible children” – approximately 27% of Palestinian children of mandatory school age as to whom neither the Ministry of Education nor the Jerusalem Municipality know whether they are registered in school or where they are registered, as of the 2020-2021 school year.¹⁴

¹¹ *Id.*, p. 38.

¹² The Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research, 2021 Statistical Yearbook, Table G/9.

¹³ Ir Amim, Report on Education in East Jerusalem, 2019-2020 Schoolyear – Discrimination in the Shadow of Corona (Sept., 2020).

¹⁴ The response of the Education Administration of the Jerusalem Municipality to the Freedom of Information request of Ir Amim, received on Aug. 21, 2021.

These failures have clear ramifications for the job market. The percentage of participation in the employment market among the total Jewish population (Jews and others) in Jerusalem is 77%, while among the total Palestinian population in the city the percentage is only 50%.¹⁵ Forty percent of Palestinians (men and women) in Jerusalem have not completed 12 years of schooling. Of these, only 45% currently participate in the workforce. Among the Jewish population of Jerusalem within the main employment age range, only 6.8% have not completed 12 years of schooling, and of these, 66% participate in the job market.¹⁶

The severe education gaps are expressed in the nature of the basic occupations and the professional level at which residents of East Jerusalem are employed. While the occupation¹⁷ of the largest group of Jews who are employed in Jerusalem is professional (39.4%), only 16.5% of Palestinian residents work in professional occupations. While a professional occupation does not completely guarantee that the employment conditions will not be of exploitative, it opens many more possibilities for socio-economic mobility and for fair wages. The occupation of the largest group of those employed in East Jerusalem (approximately 26.6%) is skilled labor in industry and construction, characterized by poor safety conditions, temporary jobs, and exploitative employment conditions. The third largest group of employed people among the Palestinians in Jerusalem (19%) work in non-skilled occupations. Among the Jewish population, only 2.2% are non-skilled workers.¹⁸

III. Lack of Education: Most Women are Outside of the Job Market; Most Men are Employed under Exploitative Conditions

Only 23% of all of the women residents of East Jerusalem of employment age participate in the job market (as of 2019). This rate is significantly lower both than the employment rate of men in East Jerusalem and the general

¹⁵ The Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research, 2021 Statistical Yearbook, Table G/1.

¹⁶ *Id.*, Table G/10, weighting of data.

¹⁷ "Occupation" refers to work that the employed person performs at his place of work, without taking into account the occupation he learned, if he is not working in it. The data presented according to occupation are in accordance with the Classification of Occupations of 2011 that were determined by the Central Office of Statistics. Thus, for example, a professional occupation includes a wide diversity of occupations dealing with the expansion of knowledge, e.g., the creation and presentation of art works, teaching, occupations in the field of law, health and information technology.

¹⁸ The Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research, 2021 Statistical Yearbook, Table G/10.

rate of employment of Jewish men and women in Jerusalem. Of the minority of East Jerusalem women who participate in the job market, 40.7% are employed in professional jobs (the great majority of them as teachers in the school system), 28.6% work in the sales and service sector, 10.3% are engineers and 8.8% are non-professional workers.¹⁹

Thirty-five percent of the women in East Jerusalem have not completed 12 years of schooling and their chances of integrating into the job market are about one in ten – only 11.3% of them participated in the job market as of 2019.²⁰ Alongside the lack of formal education, there are additional obstacles to the entry of women into the job market, including a lack of knowledge of Hebrew, which makes it difficult for many women to advance and to integrate even into jobs that do not require a basic education.

The employment data of male residents of East Jerusalem do not receive public attention and are not adequately addressed as part of the five-year plan set forth in Government Decision 3790. The percentage of male residents of East Jerusalem participating in the job market is indeed high – 78% of those in the primary employment age range.²¹ In terms of education, 45% of men in East Jerusalem have not completed 12 years of schooling. Of them, 73% are employed.²² However, the conditions in the workplace and salary terms of these employees are very difficult.

34.1% of men in East Jerusalem are employed as skilled workers in industry, construction and other fields; 22% are non-professional employees; 20.8% are employed in the sales and services sector and fewer than 10% (9.4%) are employed in professional fields. A significant portion of these jobs, especially those in the field of construction and non-skilled labor, are characterized by temporary status, without stability, benefits or a path for advancement; exploitative conditions and very low wages; and at times significant failures to ensure safety at the workplace. Therefore, employment in and of itself is not sufficient to promote fair living conditions and socio-economic mobility.

While the exclusion from education pushes women in East Jerusalem outside of the job market, the exclusion of men from

¹⁹ *Id.*, Table G/9.

²⁰ *Id.*, Table G/10.

²¹ *Id.*, Table G/1.

²² *Id.*, Table G/10, weighted data.

education pushes them into exploitative jobs that do not pay fair wages and perpetuates chronic poverty.

IV. The Key to Change: Addressing the Lack of Basic Formal Education and Appropriate Training Programs

Government Decision 3790 indeed allocates significant budgets in the field of education and employment, but it lacks frameworks that have the objective of addressing the lack of basic formal education among the population of employment age.

In the absence of basic education, many of the training programs offered at present are not effective for those participating in them. Without basic employable skills, and in view of the significant obstacle of not speaking Hebrew, workshops such as “Forming an Employment Identity,” “Resume Writing,” “Workshop for Seeking and Finding Work” (all of which take place as part of the Employment Circles program) – do not advance the female participants, but rather the opposite – it engenders a sense of frustration and is perceived as a waste of time. A further effect of the offerings focused on workshops for integration in the job market, without providing completion of high school education or substantive training in employment skills, is that it continues to pave the way to non-skilled jobs that continue the cycle of poverty.

In order to deal with this reality, significant programs should be developed for completion of basic formal education for adult men and women, alongside employment training programs that are appropriate to the current educational status, especially in basic areas which are feasible, such as study of Hebrew, computer skills, etc.

The programs for completing education already exist in various frameworks and the extent of their success differs from case to case. The 2020 Status Report refers to the adult preparatory programs, which are intended for men and women aged 18 and over who are interested in completing their matriculation examinations, and are accompanied by individual counseling and constructing an individual program. In the 2020-2021 academic year, 16 students entered a one-year program and 17 entered a two-year program.²³ It exists outside the purview of Government Decision 3790, but

²³ 2020 Status Report, p. 74.

is mentioned as part of the scope of relevant programs. On the basis of this knowledge and experience and with similar logic, there is a need to develop and promote programs for completing education, which are suitable for a wider range of ages, and of capacities that vary and are suitable to the demands of adult life.

In order for the programs for completing education for adults to be productive, they must include appropriate grants for the participants and they must be offered during appropriate hours, since their target population for the most part have families whom they must support and take care of in addition to participating in job training and education. Various levels of commitment should be allowed, various levels of study – which are not necessarily directed to completing matriculation examinations, in areas such as reading and writing in Hebrew and Arabic, computer skills, arithmetic, etc. We also recommend that high-quality employment placement programs be developed that will encourage parallel integration in programs for completion of education, through funds or grants intended for this.



Ir Amim is an Israeli nonpartisan organization that deals with the complexity of life in Jerusalem in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The organization acts to promote stability, equality and a consensual political future in Jerusalem.

Ir Amim thanks the organizations, the countries and the men and women who support its activity for a consensual and fair future for Jerusalem. The main portion of its funding comes from foreign state entities whose details appear on the internet site of the Registrar of Non-Profit Organizations. For support of Ir Amim, [click here](#).



The workers' organization WAAC-Maan is a general workers organization which unites workers in Israel. In addition, the organization unites Palestinian workers who work for Israeli employers in industrial areas in the areas of the settlements. For twenty years the organization has operated a branch in East Jerusalem which assists the residents there to realize their social rights and acts to promote fair employment for women.



This paper was produced with the support of the European Union.

The exclusive responsibility for the contents of this paper rests with the authors and it does not necessarily reflect the position of the European Union.