More than ever before, Palestinian workers need your solidarity & support on International Workers’ Day 2024

While Palestinian workers from the West Bank are affected by Israel’s harsh collective punishment measures & repression after October 7, it is impossible to imagine what workers in Gaza are going through after surviving +200 days of war. Most are malnourished or starving, without a home, without employment or income, & mourn multiple family members killed by Israeli bombing, shelling or ground troops, as nearly 10% of Gaza’s population have been killed, injured or are missing. In Gaza, no one is safe & no one is protected. The lives of health sector workers, aid workers, journalists & civil defense personnel are constantly under threat. So far, according to OCHA, at least 252 aid workers have been killed (183 UN staff, 27 PRCS staff and volunteers & 42 other aid workers), as well as 490 health workers, 67 Civil Defense staff (on duty), in addition to 141 journalist and media workers. 6 PRCS team members are still in a situation of enforced disappearance, with no news about their situation or whereabouts. It should also be mentioned that Frontline workers in Gaza, are facing significant mental health issues especially in view of pre-existing trauma from previous escalations. DWRC’s statement on the occasion of the World Day for Safety and Health at Work highlighted workers need for safety & protection.

“I was ill-treated and detained in the Kafr Laqif area and repeatedly detained at checkpoints” .... “I was attacked while heading to work on my agricultural land”...“I was assaulted by settlers”

Some of the ordeals faced by Palestinian workers have been documented through DWRC’s rapid assessment on the effects of Israeli measures after October 7, 2023, on Palestinian workers in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. The assessment indicates that 60% of surveyed Palestinian workers were affected by right violations related to wages, including non-payment of wages, decrease of wages, partial & delays in payments. 50.6% of the surveyed faced restrictions in seeking to reach their workplace or returning home due to Israeli checkpoints, and road closures.

24.6% of the surveyed have been targeted or deliberately attacked by Israeli soldiers & 10.6% of them have been assaulted by Israeli occupation soldiers at work/ in their workplace.

As for unemployment, ILO Bulletin No.3 on the “impact of the war in Gaza on the labor market and livelihoods in the Occupied Palestinian Territory” indicates that 507,000 jobs (201,000 in the Gaza Strip & 306,000 in the West Bank) have been lost across the OPT as a result of the hostilities, compared to an earlier job loss estimate of 468,000. Unpaid care work adds another challenges to women in Gaza, as women continue to be primarily responsible for caregiving and other unpaid work.

In normal circumstances, Women spend 2h15m taking care of children, the elderly or disabled family members in comparison to 57m spent by men. According to UNRWA, women and girls in emergency shelters are usually cleaning, cooking, and collecting water, while the majority of the men were observed to spend a large amount of their time in the company of other men, listening to news, and trying to find a suitable place for their families to live.

The aftermath of October 7, 2023, is expected to have a lasting impact extending far beyond any economic assessment

During the past decade, the Palestinian economy faced collapse after collapse due to repeated Israeli occupation aggressions and the ongoing blockade on the Gaza Strip. After October 7, the Palestinian economy has experienced one of largest shocks recorded in recent economic history, as the current situation has exacerbated the pre-existing humanitarian crisis in Gaza and enhanced the economic and development challenges in the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank. If the hostilities continue for a second quarter - until end of June 2024 - the annual unemployment rate is projected to rise to 45.5 per cent. According to the ILO Bulletin No.3: the estimated job losses all around oPt, translate into daily labor income losses of $21.7 million US dollars (USD). These increase to USD $25.5 million per day when combined with income losses due to the partial payment of wages to
An initiative to support women who lost their jobs and projects as a result to the ongoing war on Gaza

DWRC implemented a community initiative to mitigate the effects of the ongoing war on the Gaza Strip since October 7, 2023, and the difficult economic situation. Aiming to spread the spirit of cooperation and positivity among women, who lost their jobs in cooperatives and small businesses, 6 women were employed in making Eid cookies for three days. They prepared 180 kilos of cookies and distributed them to the families of displaced members of cooperatives and associations in Deir Al-Balah, and the Zawaida area.

Such interventions are important in the context of difficult living conditions faced by women & their families as a result to the war and the high prices.

Fathieh Abu Amrah, the owner of Al Amal Unit for food manufacturing said: “this initiative revived our work that we couldn’t do for more than 6 months, and contributed to restoring our strength to work”. She added: "such initiatives help women economically and provide families with their needs that they cannot fulfill". Eman Kali, was feeling positive as a result of this initiative, and said: “this initiative added joy to the lives of displaced families who were unable to make nor buy Eid cakes due to the high prices and the lack of Gas. I hope such initiatives would continue in the future to support our work".

This initiative is part of DWRC’s efforts to mitigate the effects of the ongoing war on Gaza, and the difficult economic conditions, and was made possible by the generous donations gathered by the Olof Palme International Center in Sweden to support its partner organizations.

Would you like to support DWRC’s initiatives in Gaza to help workers & their families? Contact us at extr@dwrc.org to discuss possible options.