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Women's Studies Centre

**Promoting Youth Participation in Public life – Jerusalem,
Project
Analytical Documentative Study**

**Stories of Daily Resilience and Struggles from
Jerusalemite Women's Perspective**

July 2019

Analytical Documentative Study

Stories of Daily Resilience and Struggles
from Jerusalemite Women's Perspective

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Foreword

Sama Aweida

General Director/ Women's Studies Centre

In Jerusalem, the Women's Studies Centre started as an organization that engages in research activities to monitor the situation of Palestinian women and provide the relevant parties with credible information to work on developing the status of women in Palestine. The studies were the beginning upon which the Centre was given the name «Women's Studies Centre». Soon after, we decided that producing the studies is not enough, nonetheless, development of studies will be one of the strategies that will assist us in developing different programs that address women's needs on the one hand and enhances their status in the society on the other hand according to the international known humans rights.

In order to achieve that, it was necessary to work with more than one school from the change schools, and one of the important schools is the educational school of change, through which we worked through partnership with schools and the media to disseminate a new discourse against the gender discriminative discourse and the uneven distribution of roles between men and women, and what it promotion of values that distinguish between the status of women and men in the public and the private spheres, and how this reflects on their status, and what it results in specifically in oppression and exploitation of children, adolescents and adults of both sexes, and how this discourse is used by various bodies who work purposely and intentionally to destroy the structure of the Palestinian society in a way that makes it unable to confront the challenges that face them or to purposely exploit this to take down society's resilience.

«Bereaved Women» are among our targets in work, bereaved women are those who have lost a loved one due to arrest or killing, or had lost a house or an income source. and we realized this early and started to develop a program that works with bereaved women to empower them to resist and survive. Moreover, after working

in Nablus, Jenin, Bethlehem districts, it was evident that we had to work with the women in Jerusalem, the women who encounter special forms of suffering due to the political situation, so we worked with them and are still working to empower them to face the multiple violence: the violence of occupation and the violence of the society that both unite together to produce a difficult and bitter reality that women need multiple capacities to combat.

And after years of working in Jerusalem on the «Woman, Occupation and Bereavement» program, we realized that there is a need to integrate female youth with us in the aim of:

- 1. Preparing the Jerusalemite female youth to confront reality.*
- 2. Expanding the work with the Jerusalemite women by integrating the female youth in the work.*
- 3. Developing young Jerusalemite female leaders that will be involved in the leadership of the feminist movement.*
- 4. Conducting a real survey on the reality of women and developing programs to address these issues*
- 5. Raising the voices of the Palestinian women to convey their suffering to the world, so that way it would intervene in accordance with the Human Rights covenants that the international community developed and validated.*

In this study, we worked on training a number of young Jerusalemite women and raised their awareness on women's rights in particular, and the human rights in general. Then their capabilities in documentation were built, and finally, they were ready to go to neighborhoods, houses and to meet the Palestinian women to document their stories. The stories of their resistance and daily struggles in their own voices.... the voices of women as they live in this reality and as they are affected by it as a part of a people living under occupation on the one hand, and as women who were forced into these roles and values that need a lot of concessions and efforts, and thus a lot of suffering.

Furthermore, through engaging Jerusalemite female youth in this documentation, we were able to provide the Palestinian feminist movement with a number of female youth that were exposed to the triad of suffering that most of the Jerusalemites are exposed to which results from the gender based discrimination, and the suffering resulting from the discriminative Israeli occupation policies which is complex in Jerusalem as a targeted city, were it seeks to displace its residence in preparation

for for its annexation of the occupation state, and a third suffering resulted from the separation of Jerusalem from the other Palestinian territories especially the West Bank and Gaza strip, and the price that women pay if they reject any of these three challenges, and when these challenges come together, women challenge their gender realities and their reality under occupation, and the reality imposed by the occupation in the separation between the territories and choose a life partner from the forbidden areas (the West Bank and Gaza strip) and what this means is constant family suffering, while women have to bear the hugest burden of it all because they are the «weakest» according to the societal and legal definitions.

Today, as we publish this study, and there is no doubt that we are publishing it to spread the reality of the Palestinian women on the one hand, and to encourage the participation of young women in launching initiatives which will enhance their role as field leaders who are capable of creating change.

And finally while publishing this study, I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to every young woman who participated in the preparation of this study and to Yara Abweh, the project coordinator in Women's Studies Centre, and all the employees of the Centre, without forgetting the great gratitude to Oxfam's Novib's for funding this important project which we hope will continue until it provides the Feminist Movement with a generation of young women who will lead the Palestinian Feminist Movement soon.

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Palestinians in Jerusalem

Stories of Daily Resilience and Struggles from Jerusalemite Women's Perspective

Introduction on the Context and Current Conditions in Occupied Jerusalem and its Relation to the Work Methodology of the Study

The severe separation and isolation on the grounds in occupied Palestine has resulted in a state of economic, political and social fragmentation, which was reflected on the Palestinian reality in Jerusalem. Highlighting women's perspective on this reality to understand the general context in which Jerusalemite families live, in a colonial reality and environment, is important in terms of methodology and concept, as well as to understand the direct and indirect impact of such colonial policies on the Palestinian life in terms of class, age and gender.

As a result of the colonial environment that restricts the life of Jerusalemite families and violates all forms of rights, freedoms and necessities of life, which is also connected to formulas relating to gender relations, researching the reality of life in Jerusalem as a problem requires a methodology that is able to understand the existing political economy context. Particularly with relation to its impact of Jerusalemites' public freedoms, education, work, residency, freedom of movement, arbitrary taxation policies, and systematic prevention of construction or expansion and renovation of existing structures. The colonial state operated through daily agenda and policies in order to displace Jerusalemites from their residence as part of a system and policies aiming at increasing the burdens on Palestinians' social and economic lives. Through such practices, Palestinians lost many life essentials, such as social justice, the right to self-determination and emancipation from the occupation and its practices, particularly in light of that lack of national Palestinian policies that support Jerusalemites in having a dignified life.

The attempt to include the reality of Jerusalemite families and associate it to the lives, perspectives and experiences of women is structurally connected to the specifications of daily life, particularly in light of the colonial restrictions and practices and the exclusion, fragmentation and subordination policies, and in neighborhoods and geographic or socioeconomic suburbs, each of which has its own characteristics, conditions, logic and perspective to resist such policies as expressed by women. For example, the women of the old city have their own reality to address, which is

different from that of women in Al-Eisawiya, Sheikh Jarrah or Silwan, and so on and so forth. It is as if we are addressing segments living individually as a result of the isolation, siege and exclusion policies against different Palestinian neighborhoods. Demographically, Jerusalem is living in a colonial geopolitical reality that increases the power of settlers, as 35% of the city is now controlled by settlers, 21% is green land that is not allocated for construction and 30% is allocated for settlement expansion, which leaves 13% for Palestinian families who exceed 350 thousand people.⁽¹⁾

The extreme separation established in Jerusalem as part of the relations between the West Bank and Gaza Strip constitutes a state of chaos followed by daily fragmentation, fragile and hazy policies, which created a reality that includes an apartheid wall that limits movement and connection with Palestinians in Jerusalem, colonial checkpoints and siege through the constant closures in Jerusalem that impacted all forms of infrastructure and social and political structure in the holy city.

Palestinians in Jerusalem face compound challenges that impact different aspects of their social, economic, political and cultural lives. Such challenges impact the different daily details of Palestinian households. The degree to which they are affected depends on their class, gender and age; the poor, women and children are more exposed due to the existing colonial structure in their lives.

One cannot overlook the challenges connected to the structure of education, movement, residency, housing and taxation in Jerusalem. Through such challenges, the occupation attempts to displace Jerusalemites from their land using all available methods and means. On the other hand, Palestinians sometimes use their individual coping strategies, as well as other strategies and alternatives that promote their resilience in Jerusalem.⁽²⁾

Work Methodology

The research team was composed of different expertise from women's studies centers. The team adopted a participatory approach in their work through discussion, development of questions, dialogue and understanding based on the experiences and lives of women in Jerusalem. The methodology abided by scientific research ethics in terms of taking into account the privacy and freedom of women, confidentiality of information and the security, economic and political reality of Jerusalem. The

(1) <http://info.wafa.ps/userfiles/server/pdf/50years.pdf>

(2) For more information on the conditions and lives of Jerusalemites, please refer to the online reports in the following link: http://info.wafa.ps/ar_page.aspx?id=3590

meetings and documentation process were only implemented for the purposes of the study and research.

The research passed through the stages of participatory methodology between the team members and women in order to document cases through the perspective of women compared to the economic, social, political and cultural context women face in Jerusalem. Moreover, the extent, depth and consequences of the conditions Jerusalemite women and their families face in Jerusalem were demonstrated. Studying the social phenomena and relations from a historic context and in terms of the numerous political, economic, social, cultural and psychological interactions constituted an in depth understanding, since the social phenomena and behaviors tend to be individual that show the styles and type of life.

The analysis and conceptual titling were based on the stories that were documented from the experiences of women in Jerusalem, as well as the discussion of cases in detail from women's perspective. The life of women and family members, regardless of class, age and gender, cannot be understood without an in depth look into the details of their daily experiences and lives in both private and public spaces.

With regards to conceptual titling, it is important to note that experiences cannot be separated from their different contexts. Violations by the Israeli occupation are overlapping and impact different aspects of family lives, therefore titling is a means to put the reader in conceptual context.

A Methodology that Connects Work Structures Systematically with the Documentation Study was Developed:

The researchers were trained on research theories, documentation methodology and scientific research ethics from a gender perspective. There was focus on the case study approach through contextual approximation to the existing context in Jerusalem while respecting research ethics. This methodological framework provides a variation of tools and freedom for women to speak of their reality; the in depth interviews and experiences of women in different stages give a detailed and in depth analysis of the existing reality and its relation to the lives of Jerusalemites and women politically, socially, economically and culturally.

Categories Included in the Study:

- The research mainly focused on Jerusalemite women to document the reality of Jerusalem through their experience in the special domestic context and the

general social, political and economic contexts.

- 60 Jerusalemite women from different age groups, domestic conditions and various economic, social and political backgrounds were interviewed. The researchers conducted in depth interviews with them, and sometimes more than one interview was conducted for the purposes of the study.
- 35 questionnaires from the interviewed women were selected for the study.
- There was continuous meetings and coordination between the research team and the project coordinator from the Women's Studies Center (Yara Al-Ubwa) in order to develop the work methodology and analysis.

Key Variables of Interviewed Women:

Age: the age of interviewed women ranged between 21-63 years, the majority of them were in their forties, and the number of women in their thirties and fifties was relatively close.

Early marriage: 8 women were married at an early age.

Women's nature of work: the majority of interviewed women said that they are housewives. While the working women worked in lower professions that were connected to the family needs, such professions include assistant secretary, assistant at an old age home (over 8 women), informal work (trip organization), midwife, teacher at the municipality schools, assistant at a kindergarten, and accountant. Other women mentioned that they are seeking employment.

Residency: the women reside in different suburbs and neighborhoods of Jerusalem, Beit Hanina, Jabal Al-Mukabber, Mount of Olives, Sheikh Jarraj, the old city, Al-Musrara, Ras Al-Amoud, Al-Eizariyya, Al-Zu'ayyem, AqbatShaddad, Sheikh Sa'ed, Al-Eisawiya, Attour and Silwan.

Level of education: less than ten women had higher education (BA degree, and the remainder of women had high school education or less.

Number of family members: the average family is composed of 6 members, while one family was composed of three members and the largest family had 13 members.

Analysis of the Documentation Results

First: The Difficult Living and Economic Conditions of Jerusalemite Households

Palestinian households in Jerusalem live under extremely difficult economic, living and social conditions, particularly families in the old city. The tight spaces in which the families live have started to constitute a state of instability, confusion and pressure that impacts the security situation connected to their daily lives, such as the Israeli occupation and settler practices, including assaults and arrests; the tight space in the family residence, including prevention from renovating residences and the resulting lack of individual privacy and freedom of family members; in addition to the limited space in the house to accommodate the needs of different family members, particularly educational needs.

In light of the living conditions in the old city and the Israeli practices relating housing and residency status, Palestinian households in that area suffer from difficult family and living conditions, including the lack of a healthy environment and proper ventilation. That is not to mention the narrow passageways to access their homes. On the other hand, households suffer from the lack of complementary spaces such as bathrooms, kitchens and study spaces.

A Palestinian woman living in the old city describes her condition as follows:

“The house is composed of only one room, a kitchen and a bathroom. There is also an outside attic where the boys sleep and study. My daughter is a second year student at the university, we also have another daughter getting another degree in Turkey. I have a son sentenced for nine years in prison, and I have another son who has a child and is divorced.”

Another woman adds about the living reality in the old in terms of housing conditions and the lack of any gardens and recreational areas; as families are only faced by the adjacent stones and walls of houses. Moreover, the harassments of the occupation and settlers add to the difficult living conditions of households in the old city through the violence and unsafe environment created by settlers under the protection of the occupation forces, as well as the resulting practices that add to the pressures of daily life to Palestinian residents:

“There is always enormous pressure in the old city, we have no release. When you go out, there is always a wall in your face. You long to see something else, a tree, anything green in this life. To tell you the truth, if it wasn't for BurjAllaqlaq – an organization that provides free programs and trainings for the residents of the

old city – my children wouldn't have had room to breathe. Moreover, my house is as you see, a lot of alleys to reach it, which makes it difficult to move things to the house. That is not to mention the settlers who have been here for a year, Bab Hutta is now scary after he moved in. He was harassing everyone for a while and half the residents of the area were imprisoned in their own houses because of him. No one was safe from him. (The place is resided by a settler in his early thirties with his wife and son). Mariam said that he contributed to imprisoning a large number of the residents in the area by filing complaints against them, regardless of their age.”

One of the main issues that face Jerusalemites is the difficult economic conditions resulting from the occupation policies. Such policies include the imposition of restrictions, limited job opportunities and the taxation system, which are accompanied by challenges in movement and access to work due to the occupation checkpoints and difficult transportation. Such challenges also affect children's access to education and schools (the challenges related to education will be addressed in a separate section).

A Jerusalemite woman discussed the conditions of Jerusalemite families as follows:

“There are numerous difficulties that face the residents of Jerusalem; low income amongst families, high rent that nobody can afford, school expenses, taxes, etc. There is also the difficulty of movement, checkpoints and other difficulties. Transportation is also an issue. They restrict movement. My children also faced difficulties in transportation and are always late for classes. My son, for example, is never on time for the lecture at 8, he always cancels it (laughter), he never attends it because he doesn't arrive on time. One cannot guarantee how long the way will take with all the traffic.”

This woman continues to discuss her economic conditions and her children's education in light of the difficult economic conditions and challenges facing her children in finding job opportunities. She also said that there are limited opportunities for her husband as he works temporary jobs. As a result, there are additional burdens on Jerusalemite women in such conditions. This woman discussed her role in providing for two families, her own and her daughter's:

“My husband currently works when there are available jobs for him. He barely makes 6 thousand Shekels every 4 months. My daughter who works in physiotherapy spends on the house, and sometimes when I have the chance to organize a trip, I take the profit and spend it on the house. I educated all of them, but the first daughter got married at 17, the second got married at 19 and continued her university education at Bethlehem University after she was married. The third daughter studied skin treatment at a collage in Jerusalem and got married. The fourth studied physics at

Birzeit University and she cannot find any job, not even as a teacher. The fifth studied physiotherapy at a collage, she is currently working at the collage and provides for the house after me. My son is studying accounting and the remaining two daughters are still in school. Yes, we provide for two households, and we recently received a new notice from our son in law who has problems with our daughter and wants to hurt us this way. All the expenses spent on him are to no avail. I'm currently spending two days in Sheikh Sa'ed, two days in Jabal Al-Mukabber and the problems are following me. There is no break, I've been like this since November. I do not know when they might revoke our IDs. There are always concerns wherever we go."

In their description of the life of Palestinian households in Jerusalem, the view of women can be described as pessimistic. They described the situation as very tragic and miserable. From their perspective, this description applies to all aspects of economic life, living and educational life. They start their stories by addressing the issues of taxes and restrictions that prevent Palestinian households from doing any renovations or expansions to their already small houses. In this context, a Jerusalemite woman adds:

"We tried to fix the house and add just a wall to separate two rooms, they gave us 4 months to issue a license, but there were conditions that prevented us from doing so. So they fined us 350,000 NIS that we have been paying for 5 years now."

With regards to the living and economic conditions, another woman adds that there is an ever increasing and never ending list of challenges in terms of the pressures faced by Palestinian households in Jerusalem, including taxes, high rent, water, electricity, the occupation policies that prevent construction and licensing or renovation of existing buildings, in addition to the fragmentation and isolation practices against Palestinians:

"What can I say about the conditions in Jerusalem, the situation is very miserable. The pressures on Palestinian households are enormous. Living expenses exceed income, that is not to mention taxes, water and electricity, which are costly. Believe me people complain about them, but they are nothing compared to other expenses. The rent in Jerusalem is very high. Unfortunately, our people do not take into account the conditions of each other. We are plagued by greed. For example, my sister lives in an excellent house in Beit Jala for rent that does not exceed 1000 NIS. In Jerusalem, the Jews have divided the city and gave privileges to some people at the expense of others. They increase pressures on us. I don't want to only blame the Jews, but we are not helping ourselves either. They prevent us from building, they prevent us from renovation and the issuing of licenses is very costly, but this does not justify the greed of merchants and landlords... what logic is this? Is it not

enough that the occupation is pressuring us? We are increasing the pressures on each other.”

A Jerusalemite woman summarizes the reality in Jerusalem as a compound colonial and internal act by saying:

“You truly feel sad for the Jerusalemite community because we are unfair to ourselves, the society is unfair to us, and of course the great injustice from the occupation.”

Second: Residency and Family Reunion, Constant Threats

The daily geopolitical changes in Jerusalem impose patterns where Palestinians are forced to coexist with or emancipate from this reality towards establishing alternative residency policies, new neighborhoods in Jerusalem, or living in areas adjacent to Ramallah but under the administration of the occupation municipality in Jerusalem. The existing geopolitical system forces Palestinians in Jerusalem to stay at home out of fear from displacement, control over the house or violence against the house or family members.

In the section above, the key challenges facing Jerusalemites with relation to residency, housing and relevant conditions were mentioned. Residency and the related challenges, such as movement and access to resources and different organizations that the family needs daily or strategically to facilitate their life. Another problem is finding a place where the family can meet its needs and the individual needs of its members in terms of good and safe accommodation, in addition to their financial capacity to pay different expenses like the monthly rent and the high tax, which cannot be compared to the taxes in the other areas of the West Bank, electricity, water and other services and needs.

This is also connected to several issues, for example, if the family decides to settle down in accordance with their financial situation, such as construction, it will face many challenges, possibly the hardest of which is obtaining construction or renovation licenses and the relating fees, as well as the high rent and tight spaces at houses.

These conditions are close to the main challenge noted by the family which is relating to family reunion in marriages between Palestinians residing in Jerusalem and Palestinians residing in the West Bank (a Jerusalemite man marrying a woman from the West Bank and vice versa). Families in this case have to fight additional battles relating to family reunion. Until family reunion is obtained (if it is obtained), there are problems relating to the family residence. In many cases, the wife would

reside in a house in the West Bank and the husband in another house in Jerusalem or vice versa to prove residency and maintain their ID Card.

Colonial policies have impacted Palestinians in additional areas, the most important of which might be the emergence of different forms of exploitation; exploitation of those who need family reunion; they are exploited by lawyers with relation to their fees for case follow up, and such fees are subject to increase in order to maintain their Jerusalemite ID Card. Another issue in this context is the provision of the address, as families would have to provide several addresses; one to prove their presence in Jerusalem and another for the entire family to be together in the surroundings of Jerusalem (communities adjacent to Jerusalem and Ramallah), such as KufraQab, Al-Ram, Samiramis, Assalam suburb in Anata and some areas in Qalandia and Al-Eizariya.

There were varied stories from Palestinian women in Jerusalem on this topic. One woman told us the reality of her residence and family reunion situation in detail:

“I got married in late 2001 in Al-Eizariya. I was 25 and got pregnant a few month later. I gave birth to my first son in 2003, two years later I had a girl and then another son two years after that. I didn’t stay long with my husband, as two years after that I had to return to my mother’s house because I needed an address for myself and to issue birth certificates for my children. When I returned to Al-Eisawiya, I faced a lot of difficulty in issuing the birth certificates going back and forth between Al-Eizariya and Al-Eisawiya, between my family and my husband. I went to apply for the children’s birth certificates under the premise that my children are registered in my ID. I left my home and had to stay at my mother’s until they gave me the birth certificates for my three children together in 2008. My husband had difficult conditions, and I couldn’t do family reunion for him, he was too young and under the age that allows for family reunion. When I started the process to apply for the Ministry of Interior in order to issue birth certificates for the children, I appointed a lawyer who charged \$1500, \$500 per child just for the birth certificates. Of course, when I want to apply for birth certificates, I need to have proof that I live in Jerusalem, so I used my mother’s address. I stayed with her then and I used the electricity and water bills from her house, and my mother was exempted from paying the property tax because she was old, an then I filed the application at the Ministry of Interior. At that time, their office was located at the old address and I used to leave the house at 5am in order to stand on the line. Sometimes all the waiting was for nothing because some papers were missing, other times all goes well, sometimes there was strike at the ministry, and at times the line was so long that I wasn’t able to get a turn. I had so much trouble getting

the birth certificates. Every time I would leave, my poor mother would wait for me at the window. I had so much trouble to prove that I'm living in Jerusalem, particularly since my mother was exempted from paying the property tax. While I was waiting for the birth certificates, I faced great difficulty to register my son at a kindergarten. I had go all over the place to register him, but he didn't have a birth certificate. I went to the municipality and the national insurance, I also had difficulty registering my son at school. I was able to register him eventually because I know a teacher at a school who registered him under a temporary number and I brought her a document from the municipality that it accepts his registration under a temporary number. After I took the birth certificates and everything worked out, I went back to Al-Eizariya to my husband's house and registered my children at the schools there. In 2011, my mother passed away, and my brother registered my property tax at my old father's house, which was not resided, in order to become my address and keep the national insurance, because it was my source of income before I worked."

Residence in the old city is a challenge of its own. It is accompanied by lack of security and safety for the residents in the area, as well as other challenges relating to privacy and freedom of movement, particularly in light of the constant harassment and practices by settlers and the occupation army impacting the safety and movement of residents. Family residence is faces daily challenges that include settler attacks; Palestinian families residing in the "Jewish neighborhood" face daily lack of security and constant hassles in their lives and movement in order to displace them from their residence.

"They hurt us and intervene in our affairs a lot. For example, my second son Yazan, the twin, was going to buy some things and a settler bumped into him. The settler was holding a snack and dropped it and started swearing at him. My son kept going and didn't speak to the settler, but he followed my son to hit him, so my son hit him. They looked at surveillance tape and saw that the settler initiated, but they still detained my son for 5 hours."

Challenges relating to residency are even greater in areas where the occupation policies established settler outposts. There are surveillance cameras in the streets and alleys, which placed families and individuals, particularly women and girls, under constant surveillance. That is not to mention the constant presence and deployment of occupation soldiers and settlers and their different harassments:

"We feel that our every move is monitored. The cameras have a view of the entire house and the yard. Nobody can object to that in the old city, no one... and they are always standing there and in every corner, they harass us a lot."

The occupation policies are now publically practiced in supporting settlers in taking over Palestinian houses and turning them into racist religious institutes that aim to make daily life difficult for Jerusalemite households, where there are constant attacks day and night:

“They took Al-Nashashibi house below us and established a society for Jewish students who are trouble makers and smoke weed. They bring them here to the house below us to reform them. They throw their troubles our way. The students are always sitting on the stairs and our daughter cannot go up or down. My brother used to always fight them over this issue and they would call the police. The police would say that they are only at the entrance of the house and they make them acknowledge that they wouldn’t do such actions, but they always go back to their old behavior untouched.”

Restrictive Israeli policies are also imposed on Palestinian households in the old city who want to renovate their homes. This causes a miserable reality in their condition, as they live in unsanitary environment, particularly for children.

“When you want to renovate the house, the archeology departments visits, takes pictures and examines the place in order to ensure that you do not change anything. They want to keep the old stones. You cannot even open a new window. They photograph everything and have to approve anything. My brother added a room in his house because it was small, so they came and demolished it. However, Jews add extensions and make changes and nobody says a word.”

Confiscating Homes, another Challenge in Residing in Jerusalem (Sheikh Jarrah as a case study)

From one displacement to another, these are policies and maneuvers practiced by the occupation against Jerusalemite residents in order to confiscate their homes. This is implemented through several practices and procedures that start with harassments and house break ins as well as enormous fines. This story told by a Jerusalemite woman, which represents the case of 28 families residing in Sheikh Jarrah since the 1950s. The story demonstrates the different harassments against them over the course of 7 decades, including break ins, fines, preventing construction near old houses, and monitoring the daily details of those families’ lives. This historic documentation of Jerusalemite families cannot neglect the whole story, encase what is happening in Sheikh Jarrah is a historic document, as stated by the Jerusalemite woman.

The story of these families started in 1948 when they were displaced from Haifa to Jerusalem, where an agreement was signed between UNRWA and the Jordanian

Government (as the body responsible for the managing the West Bank in that period) to house them in Sheikh Jarrah. Since that time, the battle to prove ownership of the residence started and continued until the occupation of the remainder of Palestinian territories in 1967.

“The story started when my grandmother was displaced from Haifa in 1948 and resided in Jerusalem after the displacement. The Jordanian government and UNRWA made an agreement with 28 displaced families who resided in cities and not villages or refugee camps. One of them was my grandmother. They made an agreement with them to give them houses in Sheikh Jarrah and in return, they would waiver their rights as refugees. My grandmother agreed, and indeed she received a house in Sheikh Jarrah. They did a draw for distributing the houses to the 28 families and my grandmother took the house and lived in it. One of the terms in the agreement was that if those 28 families were able to create a classy and organized community and neighborhood, the houses would be registered to their names within 3 years. This agreement was in 1954 and was signed in 1954. My grandmother received the house in 1956 under the premise that it would be registered to her name in 3 years, 1959. However, the Jordanian government kept stalling the registration of the houses, and in 1967, Jordan no longer had any authority in Jerusalem and the houses were never registered in the names of the refugees.”

The issue is now at a stalemate with the Israeli government due to the harassment policies against Jerusalemites since day one of the occupation. The colonial policies have resulted in the control of settlers over these houses, and that is when the tormenting legal battle with the occupation started at the Israeli courts that favor settlers. These policies resulted in the gradual evacuation of these families.

“This issue remained unchanged until 1972, which is they year when two Jewish committees, I can get you their names if you want, went to the land registration authority (Tabo), forged documents and registered the land in their names. The land now is registered in the name of the Jordanian government or UNRWA, but I think it’s the Jordanian government. So, when the Jordanian government lost control, it is as if the land had no owner. Therefore, these committees seized the opportunity and claimed the land as their own and registered it at the Israeli Tabo as the land with 28 houses build on it. There have been numerous hearings at the courts from 1972 to 2008 regarding every house that the land belongs to these two settler committees and they want their land, but I’m not entirely sure about the dates. Anyhow, the first house to be evacuated was our neighbor’s, Um Kamel Al-Kurd. Then in late 2008 I think, Ghawi and Hannoun houses were evacuated. The

Ghawi family was composed of seven brothers living in the same house, which they turned into a small building, and each of them had an apartment. Hannoun family was composed of 3 brothers living next to each other. Therefore, 10 families were evacuated from Sheikh Jarrah together. This is the story in short.”

With regards to the necessity of expanding residences as a life necessity, an additional battle has started with the occupation municipality due to blocking licenses and expansion of residences. After the expansion, the occupation court would impose restrictions, such as closing the house and payment of additional fines. The household also faces the risk of the house being confiscated, thus paying an additional price as a result of such policies.

“This is the story of my house. My father of course stayed with my grandmother until he got married. The family grew bigger, so he had to construct a house and decided to do the construction next to my grandmother’s house. What happened is that my father went to the occupation municipality to issue a license in order to build a two bedroom house with all the necessary facilities; nothing big. The occupation municipality rejected because it is not in its interest for us to build in Jerusalem. My father was faced with rejection several times, so he had to build like the other people did. He built this house exactly next to my grandmother’s, only a wall separates us. It took him a year to finish the construction of the house, he put the windows and doors, he was finishing, there was some furniture but we weren’t living in the house yet, there were no beds. In 2000, an officer from the occupation came and closed the house, and declared that we cannot live in it. Indeed, the house remained closed until 2009. It remained closed for 9 years, and throughout this period, there were so many hearings at the court. The hearings are either adjourned or the judge issues a fine against us. We paid a total of 100 thousand NIS in fines for building without permit.”

The occupation policies did not stop at this end. The family started a new battle against the confiscation of the house. The assaults reached the extent that the grandmother, who is nearly one hundred years old, was arrested. The occupation court then issued a decision in favor of the settlers to take the house, and that they have property rights to the building. The decision was vaguely reasoned that the building had no permit, and that it is on a land that does not belong to the family, but rather belongs to Jewish families.

“They tried to arrest my grandmother several times because she does not attend to the court. She was 90 years then, 100 now. Anyway, after all the court hearings, in 2009 I think, the occupation court issued a decision that the settlers may take the keys to the house that was closed, our house, and live in it. Indeed, the settlers

came to the house and lived in it. Before the official decision was made, the settlers tried to break into the house twice or three times. The first time, my father and the young men in the neighborhood were able to block them. They went to the court, and the court decided that 2 guards stayed at the house. Imagine that, they stayed in the house to prevent us and the settlers from entering it. In 2009, the decision was issued to give the settlers the house. The decision was based on 3 points; first, that the house was constructed illegally according to the municipality because it was without permit, and illegal for the court and Israeli Tabo because it was constructed on a land that does not belong to the family, but allegedly to the Jewish committees. Accordingly, the court decided that since the land belongs to the Jewish committees, we had no right to live on the land. As such, the keys to our house was handed over to the settlers.”

The Jerusalemite woman continues her story on the restrictions and violence by settlers to force Jerusalemite families in Sheikh Jarrah to leave their house, an example on this is Al-Kurd family. The attacks ranged from burning the tents of people in solidarity with the family, preventing them from entering and leaving the house, to direct physical and verbal violence and sexual harassment through stripping down and standing on the windows of the house. These assaults were documented and presented to the court, but the court remained fixed on its decision that the property belongs to the settlers. The judicial system is part of the colonial regime that facilitates taking Palestinian houses, the Jerusalemite woman says:

“The house was not resided by a family like what happened in Ghawi, Hannoun and Um Kamel Al-Kurd houses, it was resided by young settlers aged 1630- years. They were 67- or 69- settlers living in the house. We saw them get paid for staying in the house and to [make us leave.]They did a lot of provocative acts to make us leave, we go out from the house we were staying in) my grandmother’s house (because of these acts .They would stand at the windows naked ,they would do bad gestures and swear ,and they would throw garbage around the house and were we would walk .In the yard of the house ,there was a tent were internationals in solidarity with us were sleeping ,the settlers would go out at night and throw garbage) urine and garbage (at the internationals while they were sleeping .The worst incident was when they threw a rat at one international ,and the bit the international’s nose .This might be shocking or funny ,but it really happened .They also burned the tent ,when the burned the tent ,B’Tselem was there ,which is an Israeli human rights organizations for Palestinians ,and documented the violations :they installed surveillance cameras around the house to document any violation by settlers in order to have a strong argument at the court .When the tent was burned ,it was clear on the cameras who burned the tent and at what time .We sent the CD to

the court ,but the court ignored the case .Another thing ,there were two dogs with the other seven dogs) settlers (in the house .One of those dogs bit my father in a sensitive area of his body .He was really hurt ,the worst part is that my father went to the doctor ,and the doctor called him the next day to ask about the dog .So you can see how they undermine our feelings and rights .They try in every way possible to make us move .One time when I was little ,I was playing under a window of the house that the settlers took .There was a piece of wood behind the window and I was sitting in front of it .One of the settlers pushed it on me and it hit me in my back and caused back problems .There were daily clashes and beatings ,I'm not ashamed to say that I was beaten and that I also hit settlers .They would assault us verbally and physically and they would make bad gestures at us .They pushed my grandmother several times while she was walking and she would fall down ,they did this to my aunt as well .They would go to the hospital and take medical reports, but for nothing ,nothing happens.

House Demolitions: A Colonial Policy to Evacuate Jerusalem and another Challenge Related to Residency

Confiscation of Jerusalemite houses is not the only policy. Apart from the above, houses are being demolished under vague allegations imposed by the colonial regime on the lives of Jerusalemites in order to evacuate the city from its original residents. One cannot imagine the hardship and pain of Palestinian families whose houses were demolished, as not only their homes were lost, but also their memories and different details of their lives and children's lives. The occupation imposes restrictions on obtaining building permits, while the number of Palestinian households in Jerusalem is increasing. This prevention of obtaining new building permits as well as renovation of existing buildings caused a structural challenge to live in Jerusalem. That is not to mention the additional challenges, such as arrests and restrictions on children, as well as policies that contribute to causing fear while the houses are being demolished.

“If only you could see the decorations that were in the house, the chandeliers, the curtains. If they had told use, we would have at least removed them. They were all crystal. In god we trust, I hope they have a taste of their own medicine... The house was demolished on 5/20/18/9/, there was a beautiful garden around the house with different plants and vine trees. The house was covered and didn't appear as a house. When the officer came, I asked him what brings you here? He said you brought me. I asked him how did I bring you? You are lying. He said, I was in my office and I received a phone call that nobody came to this house, nobody visited the house, so I came... When they came to demolish the house, I remembered one thing, I left my daughter in her bed. Al-Aqsa women called me that day to ask about

me, I told them that I wasn't going to Al-Aqsa that day because I had my daughter and her daughter over, and I said that when I got up that day I had a bad feeling. They told me not to worry. When they entered the house, I grabbed my phone and instead of calling my daughter I called Al-Aqsa women and told them that they are going to demolish my house and hung up. They came to me and told me to grab the baby and take him outside. My purse was hanging at the closet door, so I grabbed it and put my phone inside it. I also grabbed the drawer and the bags and went outside. I had the drawer with me and I wanted to put it in the room outside the house that was for storage. He started shouting at me telling me not to put anything there. I asked him, why? He said that it was going to be demolished too. I started shouting and screaming, Allah Akbar, you are here to demolish the house or the storage? I made a scene, and they all gathered around telling me Sheket (Shut up) don shout. So I said are you here to demolish the house or the storage? This is storage you dog son of a dog. They had a look inside and saw the mess, so they didn't demolish it."

With the demolishing of houses of Jerusalemite families, there is additional occupation oppression threatening families with arrest, prosecution and detention. Accordingly, families and mothers suffer from additional psychological and security pressure. The pain caused by the demolishing as part of the occupation policies is not enough; additional policies and practices are followed to terrorize Jerusalemite households by threatening the lives of children:

"I called my daughter back and told her they are here to demolish the house, my daughter and her brother Imad came running. They told Imad, you are detained, you are not allowed to move. He said, why? Is it not enough that you are demolishing my house? They asked him about the dog outside, he told them it was his. After a while, my son was worried about the dog and wanted to go around the house. They told he we want to put you in handcuffs, and they did. My son said, I want to ask you something, are you here to demolish the house or restrain my hands and legs? So my son refused to be handcuffed. They told him to remain still. When they took him outside and finished demolishing, they took my son and wanted to place him with the army. My son ran away and they started chasing him. They made a circle around him to catch him. I saw the army running but couldn't see my son. My son had went to houses asking for their protection. Thank god he returned to me and told me 'I'm here', I started uttering sounds of joy (Zaghradet). I asked him, where is Mutasem? Where is he? We can't find him. He said that he had a fight with them and they beat him and arrested him. He was sentenced for 3 months. They kept adjourning the trial because they had nothing on him. Tell me, is this security? A person's home is everything."

Moving from Residence to another:

A daily problem for Palestinian households relating to residency in order to overcome occupation policies

Palestinian families in Jerusalem use different strategies and policies to cope with the residency situation in the city, as well as their social and economic commitments between Jerusalem and neighboring cities, such as Ramallah, Bethlehem and suburbs. Residency of Jerusalemite families in the West Bank, for example, is connected to the marriage between Jerusalemites and persons from the West Bank. That is not to mention the responsibilities and commitments related to work and education of children.

“Two years ago, we received a letter from the insurance that we are living in the West Bank and they will be stopping the insurance and revoking our IDs. They claimed everything related to insurance, hospitals, birth... etc. It all amounted to around half a million Shekels that we were required to pay. So we moved to Al-Tour. It was a difficult week, I had a lot of pressure between clearing my things and work. We put some stuff at my sister’s house and other stuff at the office above us. We cleared the house because the insurance was coming to see that we are living in Al-Tour and to resolve the insurance issue.”

Due to the moving process to Al-Tour, the family started a new and difficult life because of the tight space, which barely met the different needs of the family, particularly due to the demographic and age difference in the family. This posed additional obstacles before meeting their different needs, since there was a lack of privacy between the family members and in the neighborhood where they lived. Accordingly, different problems started to emerge between the children, as the mother said:

“We moved to Al-Tour. The house was too small for us. My youngest daughters would sleep in the room with us and my sons would sleep in the living room right next to each other. The living room was too small and barely fit them. We stayed there for a year, year and a half. Of course, there was no privacy at all for me or my children. I had children of different ages, from 25 to 4. So imagine all the problems between the children during that time. Nobody could stand the other. That is not to mention the fights between my husband and I because he was not working and we had a lot of expenses and pressures. Moreover, in Z’ayem, the building had parking, but there is no parking here.”

The moving process had additional challenges, such as residing in a new and unsecure area for children due to the colonial policy that supports and protects drug trade and socially unsafe environments. That is not to mention the problems that happen and immoral practices, such as profanity and other actions.

“The environment in Al-Tour is terrible, weed and drugs, and you cannot make any trouble. Sometimes the children ignore things and sometimes they fight people. There were fights over parking because we were new to the neighborhood.”

This is an unsafe environment for the family, particularly for women who have to go through the trouble of meeting the family’s living and economic needs, such as husbands being sick, inability to enroll children in higher education, daily needs, and the husband’s inability to work. These are all responsibilities that were transferred to women “housewives” as additional economic responsibilities and challenges in the moving process and new residence. It is worth noting that these are new roles for women, which they were not prepared for according to the prevailing culture.

“Pressure of work, children working, preparing for my son’s wedding. My four sons and I work to provide the house expenses. My husband is an architect, but he had some accidents, heart attacks and diabetes, so he can no longer work. He hasn’t been working for 4 years. Of course, it is not as if he cannot move or anything, but he believes that he grew old and tired so he doesn’t want to work. Me and the children work. All my children paid for their education from their work, and if any of them needed some money they would borrow from their brothers or me and hive it back later. When we received the insurance letter, my son had finished high school and wanted to go to the university. We couldn’t enroll him because we didn’t have enough money.”

Due to the difficult life in Al-Tour. The family started thinking of moving to another area, where life would be easier. The mother’s conviction of this decision increased daily, particularly since she believed the environment was socially and psychologically unsafe. That is not to mention the financial and economic problems of the family, which the children started noticing by comparing themselves with others in the neighborhood.

“The situation became unbearable in Al-Tour. The house was too small and we had to leave. So we started thinking of renovating our house in Ras Al-Amoud. We needed all the money we could get from my work and the children’s work because it was too costly. There were many fights with my third and fourth sons on why they had to give all their money and not keep some to themselves to spend like others

of their age. However, it was difficult at that time, and there was barely enough spending money for them.”

In moving from Al-Z'ayem to Al-Tour, the family had assumed at least half a million Shekels of costs (\$140 thousand), in addition to other cost with an equal amount for moving from Al-Tour to Ras Al-Amoud (approximately \$280 thousand in a year and a half) that the family had to assume as a result of the colonial policies that add pressures on Jerusalemite families to limit their presence in Jerusalem.

“Apart from stopping the insurance for my children and husband... this moving process due to the notification from the insurance from Al-Z'ayem to Al-Tour to Ras Al-Amoud cost us at least half a million Shekels. The house in Ras Al-Amoud had nothing, not tiles or paint, we had to pay for it all. The children were working very hard at that period, they would leave to work at 5am and return at 7pm. Above it all, we were preparing for a wedding. We needed to furnish the house and pay for electricity, water and tax. The children all had to contribute, we wrote out cheques that we are still paying. We barely had enough to cover our expenses. At a certain period, my fourth son would take money that was not his. He didn't feel like the other 18 year olds. He used to tell me that all his friends had money and he didn't. all our income would go to finishing the house, cheques and bills. Thank got we passed through that phase, but we are still paying some of these costs, that is not to mention the money claimed by the insurance.”

Such displacement has resulted in additional deprivations and pressures on women and households. Particularly changing the lifestyle of the family and its different needs. They family went from a stable life in Al-Z'ayem to a life characterized by all forms of concern, fear, financial loss and social changes.

Third: Education in Jerusalem and the Israelization Policies

Education is probably connected to the different details and aspects of Palestinian family life in Jerusalem. Education is related to social, economic and political conditions. The family's economic and living conditions, problems of residency and family reunion, security conditions and constant restrictions on the movement of Palestinians, as well as the confiscation and demolition of homes impact the education of children. This impact varies in terms of the nature and quality of schools in which children are enrolled, accompanying children to the school, or in cases connected to house arrest, which will be address below.

Many reports and researches indicate that the challenges facing Palestinians in Jerusalem with relation to education are consequences related to the education

process as a whole. The concept of Israelization of education in Jerusalem has an impact on identity. In other words, Israelization starts with the language “Hebrew” as the official language and central condition according to Jerusalemites in education and pursuing education in the colonial institution. Another policy is the pressure exerted on Palestinian Schools and schools under UNRWA or Palestinian supervision in terms of infrastructure, such as old school buildings that are prevented from renovation, particularly since some are at risk of collapsing. In light of such a reality, the Palestinian or international system is forced to evacuate the school. Finally, the municipality “occupation municipality” controls schools and obliges them to follow the education policy adopted by the occupation municipality. Al-Qadisiya, Al-Omariya, Silwan Girls School, Refugee Girls School and Wadi Al-Joz Boys School are examples; part of these schools are old structures whose renovation is prevented, others were affected by the digging beneath Silwan and are subject to collapsing, some cannot construct restrooms for children, and some were evicted because of delayed rent pays by the school. That is not to mention the occupation policies of terrorizing boys and girls on their way to school and home.

“We suffer from the national curricula. The current generation is not aware of their condition; they do not have time for themselves let alone for us to raise their awareness. We need to reinforce their patriotism, we will have to educate our children about their identity. This generation is young and do not understand or know what their identity is. They do not know whether they are Israeli or Palestinian; they do not know whether they are from Jerusalem, the West Bank or Gaza Strip. Children these days have no identity, and the curricula does not address this issue. Even if this issue is addressed, it is in a very simplified manner. They are afraid that teachers would work on developing children’s identities or that they go back to history and teach them our origins, how we were, and the history of our country and land. This does not happen. So we as parents try as best as we could to give them this information. I cannot lie to you and say that I sit with my children to teach them about our country. I do not have the knowledge or time to do so. We lack information. I feel that my children are confused and do not know who they are! “They don’t ask you if there are clashes for example?” They watch the news like me and ask me why the Jews hurt and attack us. We are living a dual life; my son listens to national songs and goes to the Israeli mall to buy things the next day. Why do you buy from them when they are killing us? While we are buying things from their stores, my son would be swearing at them. I tell him to be quiet because we are at their stores. We even go to their hospitals to receive treatment. I once was saying curse the Jews when a Jew was right next to me! We are living a dual life everyday.”

Moreover, the occupation policies are dominant over children by leading them to dropout from school under the delusion of getting work for high pay. This has different consequences on the lives of children and their connection to the surrounding economic, social and political causes. The Israelization of education extends to dropping out from school and creates a negative perception on education amongst households and children.

“There is no education whatsoever, it is very bad. Forget about education, because the Jews take your 16 year old son out of school and give him what they call SherutAvoda. For example, they took my nephew at the age of 16. He now quit his education and is working for the Jews. He left school. What is their objective, taking them and giving them work. They give them 5000 Shekels, and the children would remain illiterate. All the children in the city are like this. The daughter: they make them forget about the cause. The mother: no, not forget about the cause, they children would remain illiterate. Yes, I’m telling you Ghada, the child would be tempted the 5000 or 6000 Shekels and become illiterate. Unfortunately the conditions of the city and the cost of living leads the children to accept. They want to make the Palestinian people illiterate. Children of the West Bank are receiving their education, while those of Jerusalem are not.”

Palestinian families in Jerusalem also face challenges relating to the mobility of their children in terms of easily accessing and receiving education. The sense of safety and security of children is a daily concern for Jerusalemite families. The occupation forces and settlers control the movement of people through checkpoints, surveillance cameras and the harassments and assaults of settlers in the old city. That is not to mention the financial challenges and high costs on families to ensure their children’s access to their educational institutions, and the impact it has on the dropout of girls from schools, because the fear for their safety is even greater.

“My sons are registered from elementary stage at Al-Aytam (Orphans) Schools, and my daughter at the Refugee Girls School and then she was moved to Young Muslim Women’s School. My older son studies at Al-Rashidiya. I had many problems with transportation. I didn’t want to enrol them in Al-Eisawiya because the municipality schools are not good and the environment is terrible. I have to spend over 100 Shekels a week for their transportation, that is not to mention the 10 or 5 Shekels allowance. But thank god the insurance pay covers school expenses, and the tuition is only 50 Shekels because they are at public schools as I cannot afford private schools. My son Yousef finished high school and would like to pursue university education, but I cannot afford it. If I want to enrol him in the university, I will not be able to help him with tuition. So he said he will work, but he cannot

work and study at the same time, so he decided to work and save some money. My daughter is current in her final year of school in the sciences track and would like to study nursing and go to the university. I swear she exerts a lot of effort and I would like to educate her, because a male can work any job but for females, education is their capital.

Youth face other challenges relating to higher education at Palestinian universities, including the challenges that involve their daily movement from Jerusalem to Birzeit, Bethlehem and Abu Deis. Female students also face challenges in accessing their universities due to the difficult transportation and movement between Jerusalem and other areas in the West Bank. They also face difficult options relating to student dorms, which are an extra cost, in addition to the concern from the family for their daughters' safety. Accordingly, early marriage became an option for some families to ensure the safety of their daughters⁽³⁾ (for details, please see the section on early marriage).

“Our house is really far from the main street. She has to walk for half an hour to reach the main street in order to get on the bus, she has to do the same when she comes home. There is an uphill climb. She uses Al-Wad bus and has to walk all the way uphill. She arrives home exhausted, poor girl. She always complains from exhaustion and I tell her there is nothing I can do. Back at the house they demolished, we were close to the checkpoint, she would cross the checkpoint quickly, but now she needs to walk for half an hour to get to the main street. Poor girl, but what can she do.”

An undergraduate student also addressed the challenges she faces in transportation in terms of the time she needs. She needs a long time to get to the university and back home. These restrictions add to the abovementioned long list of problems and Israelization of education, which clearly aims at increasing the number of dropouts from school and university education towards working lower class jobs in the Israeli labor market.

“I started university in September, and I never thought of renting a place. I never expected that the checkpoint would affect my movement and education. But it was becoming more difficult with time. I would waste two hours every day on the road. It was exhausting. I didn't know what to do when I arrived home, to relax or study. I would finish school at 5 and arrive home at 8. I barely had some time to eat. Then I would spend the rest of the night studying because I had no time... One time

(3) For further details on education and early marriage, you can refer to the studies of the Women's Studies Center on this issue on the following link:<http://wsc-pal.org/publications>

when I'm coming home from the university, it was very cold and we would have to stand in the cold to be searched at the checkpoint as usual, but that day, they kept us until seven thirty in the cold weather just because they felt like it and wanted to make our lives harder. That day, I really felt the humiliation of the checkpoint. There was no reason to keep us in the cold until seven thirty, they just wanted us to freeze from the cold weather."

All these restrictions reduced the opportunities of youth, particularly females, in getting higher education. Females were forced to enrol in Dar Al-Tifil "Al-Quds University", in very limited specializations related mainly to teaching and social services.

The education structure in Jerusalem has compound consequences on Palestinian students; the curricula and its role in the Israelization of the Palestinian identity, and the extra-curricular activities that are also based on Israelization policies through the type of education and visits that are related to the colonial state "visiting what is called mini Israel: YadShafim", which adopts the Israeli narrative regarding Palestine.

Extra-curricular activities also increase the gap between students and their Palestinian identity. The Israelization of identity is connected to the colonial narrative, and the spaces where activities are implemented use the colonial language. Moreover, some schools implement normalization activities to maintain their presence in Jerusalem (which is not a justification in any way for normalization). School education in Jerusalem faced Israelization challenges through the restrictions and/or the blockade on these schools and preventing their development.

Fourth: House Arrest

An Oppressive Policy against Palestinian Children in Jerusalem

I've had it, I swear to god I've had it, I'm devastated!!!! These words summarize the experience and life of a Palestinian mother of a fourteen-year-old residing in Jerusalem. He was arrested by the occupation forces and sentenced to house arrest in his grandfather's house away from her.

"They do not know the consequences of house arrest. They tell me your son is with his relatives and not in jail. They don't know my suffering to have to cook and take a taxi to deliver the food to my son. I can't just take food to my son. If you are going to your sister's house, would you take something only for your sister or for everyone at her house?"

There are numerous stories on Palestinian children in Jerusalem, and the documentation processes would never reflect the details through the parents or children. House arrest is considered repression of freedoms relating to movement and access to different rights of the child, such as education, playing and psychological, emotional and physiological completion. Different reports indicate that this policy has been implemented with dozens of children through two types of house arrest; first, house arrest at the family residence for a certain period without allowing the child to leave the house. Then they are allowed to enroll at school only if a parent accompanies them to and from school and the family is responsible for the details of the arrest. Second, house arrest where the child is removed from the family residence and placed at a relative's residence. This type of house arrest has numerous consequences, as it results in the dispersion of the family, which adds different challenges.⁽⁴⁾ The mother's story provides additional details and challenges in this regard, particularly since the mothers carry the burden of such colonial policies:

“I bailed him and he spent 6 months at his grandfather's. When he came here, I had to take him to Wadi Al-Joz juvenile center for a juvenile course that was provided at the Ministry of Interior and the university every Wednesday and Thursday. On Wednesdays it was at the Ministry of Interior office in Wadi Al-Joz and on Thursdays it was at the Hebrew University, and I had to take him and bring him back... this has affected me, I was very bored and exhausted. Where can I take my sick daughter, I called the juveniles officer and begged her to cancel the day because my daughter was sick, but she refused. This was imposed on me and I was tired, very tired. I yearned to stay at home, when there was any occasion, I wouldn't go. I was very relieved when he was allowed to go alone. It was enough, I want to stay at home, I'm tired... other than Wednesdays and Thursdays, sometimes there was an interview appointed on Sundays with the Ministry of Interior, I would go, but I didn't know what to do with my youngest children. I would go in the winter and the rain, the last time I got very sick. During the 6 months, he would only eat and drink if I feed him, he would call for me and I would follow him everywhere. I thank god for everything, it was a very difficult time. I started hating leaving the house. When the decision came that he was allowed to leave alone, I was delighted (Zaghradet).”

Both types of house arrest have psychological, social, political and economic consequences and burdens over Palestinian households in Jerusalem. Moreover,

(4) For further details, you can watch the following report: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIT1AtwrDCo>, or read the following article: https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.13169/bethunivj.34.2017.0033?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

this practice constitutes a violation of international laws, particularly those relating to childhood. Children are subject to all forms of psychological, social, cultural, educational and emotional repression. Additionally, it constitutes a burden on the family, particularly women, as they have to deal with the psychological, social, physical and spiritual consequences.

Mothers experience a state of psychological and social schizophrenia towards their children. On the one hand, they feel that it is less damaging than the occupation prisons, as their child is before their eyes. On the other hand, they see how this gradually destroys their child psychologically and socially. They see their child start to isolate himself and dropout from school, that is not to mention psychological reactions that affect their social and family relations. Mothers describe their children's lives as "paralyzed" in every way.

"He was also really affected like me and more. He would see mick sick and have to take him out, for sure he 'felt guilty'. He told me a hundred times that I'm doing this against my will. Although I would tell him I never said that, but I used to go with him against my will, but I never made him feel guilty. This is what god wants for him, so why would I make it even harder on him. He is still young. When he was in house arrest at his grandfather's house, he would ask me to come, I tell him that I came yesterday, but I do miss him and go see him. Sometimes I feel that he doesn't eat at night at his grandfather's house because he is shy. They gave him everything he needed and helped a lot, but my son s normally shy and doesn't eat outside the house. I would call him at night and ask him if he had dinner. Once I checked WhatsApp at one am and saw that he was online, I immediately sent him and asked him why aren't you asleep? He said he wasn't tired. I asked him if he was hungry, he didn't respond. So I woke his brother up and sent him to a bakery to get food for him, his brother has an electric bicycle. I would not sleep until I see the sandwich in his hands."

One of the main burdens on Palestinian women in Jerusalem resulting from house arrest of children is that all the follow up with the occupation institutions is their responsibility. As they are responsible for the child and for follow up with the counselor and evaluations in order to enroll in school again. Moreover, the mother guarantees the child before the occupation authorities and is responsible for all their affairs with the Ministry of Interior and for providing care during house arrest.

“During Mohammad’s arrest, I faced the most difficult period in my life. Although I have faced many difficult circumstances, this was the hardest. I was very attached to him more than anything else in the world. The arrest period was very hard on me, I would spend my time not able to think, I would feel that my head will explode. I couldn’t see or hear anything, people around me would be talking but I wouldn’t hear them. I could see faces, but in reality, it was as if I couldn’t see anything. No one consoled me on this issue, no one can ask me about my situation. I prefer that no one brings up this issue. I would be normal, but when someone asks about Mohammad, I would have a 180 degree turn. I don’t like for anyone to ask me about Mohammad. Hadn’t it been for my strong faith in god and belief that this was best for Mohammad, and if I didn’t feel that his house arrest prevented something worse, my situation would have been a lot more difficult.”

These issues in the life of Palestinian families in Jerusalem are considered turning points with connection to gender roles. Women started following up with official institutions, and this role became accepted due to the needs of the family and children. Some patterns have changed, but that was not accompanied by any changes in gender roles.

The most dangerous thing about house arrest is that children only see their parents as their jailors, and more often the mother is the jailor because they stay at home with the child. Children do not have detailed information on what the family had to agree with the occupation forces, and that any breach of such agreements, such as leaving the house or moving outside the house without being accompanied by the mother, would have consequences on them and the family in general. This is also accompanied by psychological and tense conditions in the family that would have reactions in the family environment and affects the child’s relation with the parents.

Fifth: Lack of Privacy

Women Lose Their Privacy and Freedom at Home on Many Levels

I swear to god women are suffocating: a woman from the old city

As a result of the colonial policies against Palestinians in Jerusalem, and women in particular, due to the security system imposed by the occupation authorities, particularly against residents of the old city; and as a result of the settler practices, the old city is now an area of siege and exclusion through the restrictions on social relations between Palestinian families, particularly women.

“At first it was the worst, even now, a lot of people used to be afraid to come like

my friends. They were worried and scared to come to our house, and their parents didn't let them, because next to "M's" house there are settlers. For example, when my aunt comes to Jerusalem, she is worried how she will visit us while there are settlers next to our house. Even the neighbors are afraid to come to our house."

The nature of the violations that affect the privacy of women, in the colonial context and practices of settlers and the occupation, and restricted space they live in, has social, cultural, political and economic consequences, which ought to be mentioned in two contexts:

The first context: the occupation practices that infringe the privacy of Palestinian women and young females daily. Surveillance cameras are installed by the occupation in the different streets and neighborhoods of the old city and other areas in Jerusalem. Women feel that their privacy and dignity are infringed by the constant surveillance from the occupation security cameras that record their every move. Every move counts, so they have to always be careful. Some women described this surveillance as a means of constant harassment by the occupation. The occupation also invades the privacy of families and women through the constant house break in. Such practices are implemented in the middle of the night without taking into account the privacy families and family members. Women also addressed the most common violations by the occupation with relation to house demolitions, as women are not allowed to arrange their affairs and needs before the demolition. The demolition takes place without prior notice, and, as one woman said, women feel embarrassed when the soldiers are rudely and indecently handling with their underwear. That is not to mention the provocation by settlers who "peek" into houses, which makes it nearly impossible to open the windows. Women believe that such an invasion of privacy is directly connected to the woman's body and is a direct act of harassment. Palestinian women also speak of the occupation violations when they visit relatives in prison and at checkpoints. Such violations of privacy include harassment when entering or leaving Jerusalem, documenting their personal information, harassing them with phone calls and invading their privacy. Women also addressed cases when the occupation threatened to harass their families and abuse detainees, as well as threaten sisters and mothers. Moreover, the occupation forces adopts the harassment of women as an approach and policy during demonstrations and protests in Jerusalem, particularly at Damascus Gate.

There are also consequences to the Israeli policies, particularly with relation to the demolition of houses. Families would have to live in tents, where women lose their privacy. The restroom is in public space, which is basically a small tent in the open. Sometimes women lose their privacy and the space to address their special needs.

The second context: which is the result of the colonial conditions in Jerusalem, including restrictions that prevent the development of the family home, particularly in the old city. Families live in tight spaces with only one room. This requires them, as quoted by some young women “you need to always wear decent clothes and not make any trouble”. There are social reactions connected to looking at the woman’s body and the need to protect this body in the colonial reality. The concept of protecting and safeguarding the body in the context of conflict is a motive for early marriage. As a result of the Israeli practices in invading the sanctity of women’s bodies, this concept was renewed and marriage in unstable conditions has become a means of defense and survival from the perspective of honor for some families. The low levels of security and safety have constituted a motive for families in promoting the idea of marrying their daughters off. For example, in Jerusalem, fear from Israeli practices and the societies perception on the “open culture” have constituted grounds for early marriage, particularly in light of the Israeli occupation practices of violating human rights, including the bodies of women, in searches, repressing peaceful demonstrations, arrest and at checkpoints. Such practices have increased recently.

Violence in light of the lack of privacy: *“all problems have different causes that differ from one home to another and from one mentality to another. Take my second residence in Silwan as an example, I was raised in the old city, you can say I’m a city girl, when I moved to Silwan 20 years ago, there was no supermarket there nor was there Kupat Holim (health clinic), nothing at all. Even for the smallest thing, I had to go to Damascus Gate. Of course, it was difficult for me because I’m not used to transportation. Someone had to take us and bring use back, that was before I got married, but after marriage, I faced difficulty. I had to go on my own to get my things or see a doctor. It is very far; it is difficult to do for the first time. There were several times (laughter) when I got lost on the way, so I would call my father to come pick me up. Moreover, as a village community, every time you go out people would be questioning you, and you would be questioned if you arrive home late.”*

Women also gave details on the invasion of privacy in light to the restricted space and freedom of movement in their home and using bathrooms for different purposes. Women are sometimes unable to leave the house in order to protect their daughters due to the limited space in the family home (or complex of houses where a number of families live). Thus, internal family and self control started, in addition to the aforementioned relation between the colonization and the body. This became a key self-defense strategy in Jerusalem. In this context, the male dominance was also promoted, which manifested in the smallest of details such as the unavailable spaces for women to even hang their clothes to dry.

“Living in the old city is not easy. The houses are small; you feel like you are living in the street. You hear everything; fights, profanity and youth swearing all the time, they are not well raised, they are always searing. We always live in fear from Jewish settlers. Work in Jerusalem barely covers the store rent and taxes. My husband cannot find work, I hope to god that he finds work. We have a lot of fines to pay, our great great grandchildren will still be paying the fines on us. We are paying in installments. Four months ago, the Jews stole our neighbor’s home, someone sold it to them. Now the neighborhood is full of cameras. We are now scared of our own shadows, they can do whatever they want, if you do anything to them it would be the end for you.”

Women believe that their homes are exposed in numerous ways to the narrow streets. There is only one window overlooking the street, and women can only get a breath of fresh air through that window. The window is normally closed because people on the street can see through it. Moreover, you have to walk long distances in the old city to access different resources and services, and you are subject to different looks on the way.

On the other hand, Palestinian women did not deny that the current context in Jerusalem has led to protective solidarity and social relations. Such actions include families hosting their neighbors, particularly during house demolitions, social solidarity if one of the family members is arrested as well as social solidarity and movement when people and property in Jerusalem are exposed to certain risks:

“The good thing here is we have good social relations, interruption – correct this, I love the city – we love visiting each other, we share our pains, we share the walls of our houses, despite all the difficulties and everything... interventions from the 3 women, she calls me saying she wants to stuff vine leaves today, the other one calls me to invite me for a coffee. Our neighborhood is the best, people here are awesome. If someone in the neighborhood gives birth, all the neighbors visit to congratulate. In all good and bad occasions, we are together. Um Hatem is our elder (laughter), she gathers us (smiles and laughter), she is the big boss. Wherever she goes, Um Hatem is welcomed. All the neighborhoods know her. Um Aziz adds, they ask me to talk to women and convince them with things, I’m a mediator because people listen to me. I don’t like to see anyone upset or sad. When I make someone happy, I am really happy from inside.”

Sixth: Early Marriage

The reality of Jerusalemite households is crosscutting with early marriage as a result of cultural, social, political and living factors. The compound conditions in the life of Jerusalemite families expose girls to early marriage. The conditions of girls married at a young age leads to deprivation of fundamental rights, such as education and childhood. Moreover, early marriage is a means of dominance, coercion and control over female children in different aspects of their lives, which means that children are turned into wives, mothers and housewives resulting in pain and suffering.

Deprivation from education is not connected to academic performance of girls, but rather is the result of a social culture and the relevant political and economic consequences. The concept of dominance takes new forms on girls married at an early age. The man's efforts lean towards dominance over the girl's body, a form of dominance and control that girls of this age do not understand. Such attempts at dominance and control lead in the sexual culture to additional degradation and rape, as well as other forms of male dominance through promoting the reproductive and childcare roles of women in their husbands' family. This creates an economic subordination that generates great control. Moreover, women are not involved in key decisions relating to the family.

This relation cannot be understood without addressing the power relations in the household and male dominance from the perspective of young women in accepting such dominance due to the lack of protection and support. Some of the interviewed women believe that the husband is the protector, supporter and life partner. They truly believe that with respect despite the lack of emotions, love and intimate relationship between them and their husband. When the majority of interviewed women were asked in the focus groups or the emotions documentation, most of the answers were that they feelings towards their husbands were not love, but rather marital respect.

“My daughter was married at an early age, so was I (let us talk first about you then your daughter). I got married because such were our habits and norms in the past (how old were you?) I was 15, but when I got older, I said that I didn't want my daughters to get married at such a young age. Indeed, my eldest daughter got married at the age of 20. However, we didn't have a say with the second daughter because our family and his are good friends and they pressured us and sent mediators, and they were upset. The young man wanted her when she was 13, and when elders and men are involved, even the mother has no say. She got married at 15, but thank god she is very happy (did this affect her education?) of course it did, she didn't complete her education (at what grade did she dropout?) the ninth grade. She was an average student, not the smartest, but she was very polite and

well behaved. She was always good with chores around the house, she was better at the house than she was at school. This was an opportunity for her. If she didn't get married, she would have continued her education because I sent all my daughters to school, but she knew that she wasn't going to do good at school. This is what god wants for her, and she has a very good family now. She told her husband that she wanted to learn how to make sweets, and he taught her. Now she makes delicious sweets, so this is what she wants and it is not a bad thing. You know that girls who get married like her don't have a successful marriage and many end up divorced, but my daughter is not like that, she loves her house, husband and daughter. She was able to succeed and adapt in her life. But in cases like hers, when the girl is 15 and the man is 20, there are many divorces and courts, because young men have no sense of responsibility, however, my daughter is a rare example... my youngest daughter is now 16, but I would never think of marrying her at this age, because she lacks the sense of responsibility, she is not yet mature. She would not be able to take care of a husband, house or children. Her personality is different. I wouldn't expect her to last a year with her husband."

Seventh: the Reality of Jerusalemite Women Additional Challenges in the Colonial Structure

The reader might question why allocate a special title on the reality of women in Jerusalem, while the conditions of women are part of the family conditions, and the main issues are clear due to their impact on the household as a whole and on women in particular. First of all, it must be noted that women are more vulnerable to the social, economic, living and political conditions. Such vulnerability is doubled in light of a colonial context and the social, economic and political conditions Palestinian women in Jerusalem live under.

Additional Responsibilities and Burdens:

Jerusalemite women believe that the responsibilities on them are increasing, as they are performing reproductive, productive and social roles.

"Women and girls now have greater responsibilities than before. In the past, men were men. Now men are staying at home and women are doing all the hard work. My husband lacks any sense of responsibility; he never asks about me or his children. I'm afraid my oldest son will grow up to be like him. We are raising the kids, educating them and working hard for them and their future. I try to save as much as I can to be able to provide for them, and the man has only one thing to say (manage yourself)."

Exposure to Colonial and Social Violence:

The increased burdens and responsibilities on women forced them to access public space for reasons relating to the conditions, needs and necessities of the family. Accessing educational institutions, schools or universities, is another dimension of accessing public space. There was no change in gender roles. Such changes and existence in public space for women and young girls is connected to the needs and necessities of the family. Moreover, public space started to cause concerns and fear in the family for their women and girls. A Jerusalemite woman says:

“We are always concerned for our daughters, even when they go to school I’m concerned. There could be a bombing, the roads could be closed or they could be shot at god forbids.”

Jerusalemite mothers are keen on ensuring their daughters’ security and personal needs, and such keenness generates restrictions on the movement of girls and their needs:

“Even when I send my daughters to trainings, I’m concerned about them from the surrounding environment. I fear for them, but I take the ‘risk’ and send them. We cannot keep depriving them (nothing is allowed; you cannot go anywhere). I have a driving license and I take my daughters wherever they want, but others do not and are concerned about the transportation. There are no safe or close centers in Jerusalem for women and girls, or clubs where they can do activities and sports. There is the Saraya in the old city, but they only do morning sessions and the sessions are educational not recreational.”

Colonial violence has its own practices and psychological consequences on children and women. This reality was reflected on their academic performance and their daily lives. The events in Jerusalem are daily and impact the details and structure of the family, and Jerusalemite women get the lion’s share of such exposure.

“We live in Al-Musrara. Things happen before our very eyes. Once we were sitting on the balcony and many young boys were dying here. One martyr really affected me because it was in front of our door (Mahmoud Elayyan) about 6 or 4 months ago. Our fear increased because my daughter saw him. It was Yom Kippur and everything was closed. They shot him at our doorstep. We even though that the bullets got inside our house. She “panicked” and the blood drained from her face and was in shock. I took her to the doctor and she couldn’t go to school for 4 days. My older daughter had the same reactions, but now she is older and more mature, and she can handle such situations... When events like these take place, I tell her to go to school, but she is afraid. Sometimes there are events and Damascus

Gate is closed in the morning, so she refuses to leave. I call the school, sometimes we wait for the situation to calm or I would take her to school. We are afraid for these young girls, the soldiers are now suspecting school bags (they think what they might be carrying in them). Girls are confused because of them.”

Harassment by Occupation Soldiers:

The colonial map is still controlling and impacting the movement of Palestinians from and to Jerusalem. Families and individuals have to cross through checkpoints surrounding the city from different locations. The daily travel from and to Jerusalem is characterized by harassments against all categories. A Jerusalemite student gives us further details:

“I feel at the checkpoint that when you don’t have anything metal on you, and the metal detector rings, they increase the sensitivity so that anything rings. Just so that they can harass you. Girls would go back and forth in the metal detector several times, and then would have to take their jackets and shoes off. If the metal detector still rings, they would take you to a room where a female soldier would body search you. Is there any more degradation than this? They make it ring even when you don’t have anything on you just to harass you. That is not to mention the verbal violence when soldiers scream or swear at them, and this happens a lot.”

The same university student adds that what happens at checkpoints and these daily interactions started to create a state identification with the colonial context in terms of the discourse used in discussion, particularly with the closure of Jerusalem and the restrictions on the movement of Palestinians in and out of the city.

“Everyone knows that this is not normal, but everyone got used to the situation. We are Palestinians, and because of the occupation, we have to pass through the checkpoint, face the traffic, get searched at checkpoints, take our shoes and jackets off and spend hours on the way. I sense that there are people who are very aware of the situation, but as I said, they got used to it. Others feel that this is normal and would say, why are you complaining at the checkpoint and when you pass through it, everyone has to go through the same process. As for change, I really try to change their perception of this issue. When I hear young men and women saying that the checkpoint is normal and what is happening is normal, I would say no this is not normal and you should not have to go through this. I try to make them understand as much as I can and explain the situation as best as I can.”

Increased Harassment with Greater Impact and Pain from the Local Community

Women addressed being subject to harassment in different environments, including violence and harassment against women in public space as well as violence in the private space (inside the family). Women and girls say that such harassments are not limited to the younger generation, but elders are also harassed.

“No one can control what our young boys say, they always comment on girls. A smart girl does not give them the opportunity. Sometimes girls are harassed by older men. Customs and norms control our life, and as an oriental culture, we are concerned about our homes, daughters and honor. Any mothers would see her daughter at any point subject to such acts, even when she is not at fault, she would be subject to violence... Some girls might even like this behind their parents back. Some parents address this issue with violence, and others understand. In the past, you wouldn’t see many girls on the street, but times have changed and girls have more freedom and education.”

There are also restrictions on the freedom and movement of young girls regarding the possibility of living elsewhere to continue their education, and sometimes as a result of the local culture in the areas where students might live to get higher education, including the stereotypes on girls and their bodies, which constitute additional challenges for them as women.

“At the university, I knew only a few girls who had a driving license. Those who don’t have one would have to use transportation. With regards to the library, as I said, the library closes late, so for young boys it is ok for them to stay late at the library ad study. But for us, if we leave our dorm and stay late at the library, people would be questioning why we are staying this late. Moreover, not all parents accept that their daughters live in dorms because they are concerned and that the girls might get hurt, and that they cannot defend themselves. So you either stay at a dorm or spend two hours on the way crossing the checkpoint because parents don’t want you to stay at a dorm, as they are concerned from the conditions in the country and all the violations against the people these times.”

Women believe that despite the enormous responsibilities they have, they are not included in decisions regarding the family. Male dominance excludes them from main responsibilities and is apparent in taking strategic decisions on behalf of the family. The marriage of daughters and handling of some properties, particularly in light of the unstable reality. Women believe that due to their knowledge of the details of their families, they are better able to take decisions and assess different issues.

“Yes of course, in everything, even in conclusive decisions, your husband and your father would hear what you have to say, but the final decision is theirs. There

are many issues that you cannot intervene in or have an opinion on. Even if there was a marriage proposal for your daughter, the woman is marginalized. Women are vulnerable and live in a state of weakness. Take the case that happened in Bethlehem as an example, the husband is a drug addict and receives treatment at a rehabilitation. He bailed himself out, and the woman left her house and went to her parents' house. Everyone is talking about her that she left her husband, and her family made her go back to him. He beat her in a chilling way!! But no one said anything about him... there are men who are only males and not real men, they do not have an opinion. These issues are huge, I'm educated and opinionated, but if I had a property and decided that I want to rent it for one thousand, would he listen? No he wouldn't rent it because he would think that I'm emotional. But I'm not like that, I look at the bigger picture. They do not understand this issue and just want to go with the flow, however, if the world is going into the abyss, why would I follow?"

Eighth: Coping Strategies

In light of the complex and compound reality and the different challenges and violence in Jerusalem, it is not easy to talk about strategies for change. Jerusalemite families try to adapt and cope through creating individual alternatives for their special issues, and collective strategies for general issues (such as surveillance cameras, defending holy sites and confiscations). Suffering generates challenges at both the personal and collective levels, sometimes they lead to finding non-costly alternatives for the family or lead to normalizing with life. Families live in a reality that interacts with the existing social, economic, political and cultural context, which might lead to creating strategies that assist in living in such a reality, particularly in light of the absent institutions and support in Jerusalem, and the feeling of isolation (individuality) sometimes.

Accordingly, basic coping strategies are connected to accepting reality with all its faults, without attempting to change it. The change process has many risks that may have consequences on the family's residency in Jerusalem. Maintaining residency in the city is the central strategy that women address and describe as "resilience".

The feeling of incapacitation against the colonial repression has resulted in keeping women imprisoned without the ability to do anything sometimes, particularly in issues involving the security of their family members. When some areas in Jerusalem are closed due to the numerous activities of the occupation, women are imprisoned in their wait. Some expressed that they are coping with this by providing the basic family needs:

“When there is any closure because of a bombing or a specific political event, the only thing on my mind is what is happening outside (I start whispering under my breath), the entire house goes in a state of confusion. If my children are outside, they are all I can think about until they get home. Sometimes I go down to the street to wait for them. I tell my daughters at the house that they cannot leave. If I was expecting closures, I buy all the supplies and food needed for the house so that I wouldn’t have to ask anyone from the house to go outside and by things and expose them to danger. I also prepare my children. If the closure is sudden, I manage with what we have, we have adapted to the situation.”

Another woman continues that going to safer places remains an option available to some families, particularly those with relatives living in a (relatively) safer area:

“When there are clashes or closure by the Jews, I lock the house and take my daughters to my parents’ house because my house is very close to the street and I’m very concerned for their safety. My parents’ house is far from the street and on the second floor.”

Women believe that the limited sources of social support constitute an additional challenge. There is also a gap in the organizations that support them and Jerusalemites in general. Women are unable to access the services of such organizations or do not have the information on how to do so:

“No one because there is no safety. If you go to anyone, they would not have a solution. Eventually, you will have to solve your own problems. Also, we never reached a point where we needed support from any organizations. Maybe others do need such support, but I do not know about such institutions.”

A Jerusalemite woman summarizes the situation using very touching words:

“I would love if there was any support to the schools in Jerusalem from the Palestinian Authority, Israel will not intervene because they are Palestinian schools. They need to fix the schools and give them better support. We really lack any extracurricular activities. If there was one school trip a year, the children would have fun. Even the smallest support inside the schools, such as paint or curtains or even psychological support for students is needed. All these things are done by the students themselves, such as painting and planting, but they are restricted in this area. These issues need to be taken care of by the adults and not children. As much as the students volunteer in renovating the school, they will not be able to do much.”

Ninth: Key Conclusions

Women used many terms to describe the reality of Palestinians in Jerusalem. Sometimes these terms are contradicting in the economic and political context of Jerusalem. Women used terms like injustice, oppression, degradation and repression by the colonial power against them, but at the same time there were terms referring to resilience, hope and seeking better life in Jerusalem at whatever the cost is for Palestinian households and women in the city. In another context, individuality, individual interests and the lack of social relations were addressed, but other women addressed the social solidarity in the political and social life of Jerusalemites, particularly since they feel that the supportive institutions are absent. Women also discussed the difficult economic conditions, but despite such conditions, Jerusalemite families attempt to cope and invest in the education of their children, as well as seek available options and promote them.

The Lack of a Stable Life:

The information collected and the interviews with Palestinian women indicate that families will not have a stable life in Jerusalem. The conditions imposed by the occupation authorities, including restrictions, blockade, taxes, difficult economic conditions and daily settler harassments are policies that restrict having a dignified life. Moreover, an unsafe environment is imposed on households, an environment of violence against different demographic classes and categories. The challenges of moving, changing residence in Jerusalem, limited work opportunities, house demolitions and confiscation, house arrest of children, the Israelization of education, colonial violence and other practices have become daily practices in the life of Jerusalemite households.

Exclusion, Marginalization and Exploitation:

Palestinian households and Jerusalemite women live in a reality of compound exclusion, marginalization and exploitation in different aspects of life. The results indicate that the state marginalization and exclusion in social, cultural and economic aspects is connected to accessing different resources, such as the freedom of movement, access to education and economic opportunities. Moreover, reality in Jerusalem imposed additional burdens on women in terms of assuming additional responsibilities and social, economic and political roles. This transformation has not resulted in any change in gender roles, the patriarchal environment and culture remained unchanged in light of the colonial reality and still controls the movement and freedom of women.

Restrictions on Movement:

Such are not normal restrictions, but are rather connected to the challenges of movement in daily life. From the moment they leave their homes, women and families are subject to all forms of harassment by settlers and the occupation using numerous means, such as surveillance cameras, checkpoints, settler attacks and prying inside homes. Every move made by Jerusalemite families, particularly women in the old city, counts. They live in an uncomfortable environment in terms of safety and security, during transportation and while accessing different resources, as well as having to walk long distances on foot in light of the narrow streets and crowding and in an unsafe environment.

The Israelization of Education in Jerusalem:

The occupation authorities practice all forms of violence against the education process in Jerusalem. Such violence impacts human resources and the infrastructure of education for the Israelization of the process and elimination of the Palestinian identity and nationality. The Israeli policies impose different restrictions on students through violence, arrest and other restrictions on their movement. On the other hand, the occupation is practicing all forms of violence against the physical structure of schools, such as the demolition and eviction of schools under vague allegations, as well as preventing the renovation of school infrastructure to ensure safety and suitability for the education process. Furthermore, the occupation policies impose curricula that leads to the Israelization of education in terms of awareness, culture, social aspects, ideology and politics.

Private and Public: Lack of Privacy

It is not easy for households to live in an exposed environment, as private matters become public and public matters become private. Families in the old city live in a reality where there is a lack of privacy, such as the lack of freedom for individuals, particularly girls, to find spaces that meet their personal and educational needs. That is not to mention the lack of any capacity to improve their economic reality, social relations and living. On the other hand, households are exposed to public space, as walls, windows and doors are adjacent and there is no possibility to get fresh air because they are on public streets. As such, people living in these houses are exposed to all the negative practices on the streets. This reality is practiced by the occupation and settlers through different forms of violations and violence that extend to prying on homes, nudity and invading the privacy of families in their home.

“I swear once a soldier caught a glimpse of us from the window and noticed

that there are girls in the house, so he kept glancing from the window. I closed the curtains, but in the end I shouted at him and told him to leave. When he left, I took my girls and went to my parents' house. There is no safety here, everything is scary.”

Widespread Compound Violence:

Different forms of violence are common, and violence has psychological and social repercussions as a result of the existing environment in occupied Jerusalem. The occupation regime and policies impose different forms of violence through deprivation of rights, imposing taxes, arrests, and physical and sexual harassment against women, particularly at the checkpoints surrounding Jerusalem. Women are also subject to another form of violence in the social environment encouraged by the occupation practices, particularly with relation to movement, entering Jerusalem and using public transportation.

Gaps in Safe and Public Spaces:

For a woman residing in Jerusalem to see only concrete walls, no fresh air and no green is stark proof of the lack of public spaces, particularly in the old city of Jerusalem. The lack of such public spaces creates a gap in living in a safe, healthy and social environment, particularly for women and children.

House Arrest: An Occupation Policy that Kills Childhood

The occupation policies violated international and humanitarian laws and conventions through restricting the freedom of movement for Palestinian children in Jerusalem. House arrest has many consequences on the family, especially when the arrest is in a relative's house, which creates numerous challenges on mothers, including follow up on the daily affairs of the child and accompanying him to school and rehabilitative counseling (provided by the occupation forces). Women suffer the consequences of house arrest in terms of visiting different departments and tending to the daily needs of the child. This reality creates additional psychological repercussions in light of the different circumstances of Palestinian families, and women in particular. Furthermore, this practice has different consequences on the children themselves in terms of their emotional, cognitive, sensual, educational and behavioral growth. This puts them in a state of isolation, violence and limited social and family relations.

Destruction of Memories and the Journey in Search of a Safe Place: Demolition of Jerusalemites' Houses

Jerusalemites find themselves facing an unjust decision to demolish their house, where they would have to live in the streets or tents losing their privacy and unable to keep memories, only some documents, whatever they can carry in the limited time they have and what women see important. House demolitions have social, economic and political consequences on the entire family and on the lives of individual family members. They find themselves forced to move their entire life to a different location just to prove residency in Jerusalem. This journey has financial, living and psychological costs, that is not to mention losing sources of support and social relations that have been existing for years. Sometimes, families move to a different environment that women believe is strange and unsafe for their children, as such, the moving journey in search for a safer place starts again. This journey has its impact on children who lose their friends, and women who lose all forms of support that are sometimes available to them.

A Gap in the Organizations and Supporting Bodies:

Women sometimes feel lonely. With the lack of any source of Palestinian support, be it social, familial or institutional, women have to face such burdens alone in order for them and their families to survive in these complex circumstances. Some women described this reality as resilience strategy.

The problem of trust in different factors created a complex of oppression, constant concern, fear and lack of trust in communication and relations with organizations, and as a result of the different experiences of women. Their lawyers were not able to protect her and her family from their home demolition. Women also believe that they alone carry the burden when a family member is arrested, when the family's economic conditions deteriorate they have to take the lead, when their husbands are sick, in divorce or when the husband is arrested. These are all challenges that accompany the lives of Jerusalemites in general and women in particular.