

Landlessness and rural unemployment were the subject of several official studies carried by the Mandate in the 1930's and 1940's (Johnson and Crosbie, 1930; Hope Simpson, 1931; Survey of Arab Villages, 1944; Survey of Palestine, 1946; etc.) usually corresponding to periods of intensified nationalist agitation. Already in 1930 the Johnson-Crosbie report found that the small size of average holdings and peasant indebtedness drove a substantial number of peasants and tenants to seek employment outside the village. The report, which included a survey of 104 villages, concluded that:

to provide the minimum cost of living for a family, a holding of 75 dunums seems to be necessary for an owner cultivator, while a tenant requires 130 dunums. The small holder or tenant who has not the necessary minimum holding must supplement his income either by hiring himself out as a labourer inside or outside the village or by engaging in transport work, in charcoal or lime-kiln burning or some such occupation (Johnson-Crosbie, 1930:22).

The survey revealed that a majority of the villagers resorted to wage work at least seasonally. The following table gives a breakdown of peasant households by size of holdings and ownership status:

Table 1

Village Households by Size of Holdings and Ownership Status
104 Villages, 1930

	<u>No. of Households</u>	<u>%</u>
1. Owner-occupiers living exclusively on their holding:		23.2
a. Over two faddans*	3,873	16.4
b. Between 1 & 2 faddans	1,604	6.8
2. Owner-occupiers who also work as labourers:		76.3
a. Between 1 & 2 faddans	1,657	7.0
b. Under one faddan	8,396	35.6
c. Trees only	1,103	4.7
3. Labourers Only	<u>6,940</u>	<u>29.5</u>
Total	23,573	100.0