



THE HUMANITARIAN MONITOR

JULY 2009

July Overview

Barriers continue to afflict Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), impeding efforts to improve the humanitarian situation. The 9th of July marked the fifth anniversary of the International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion on the West Bank Wall. In this first legal opinion on the oPt issued by the Court, the route of the wall running inside the West Bank was declared illegal and contrary to international humanitarian and human rights law. While the Court recognized Israel's obligation to protect its citizens from attacks, including from the suicide bombings which had prompted Israel to build the Wall, the Court stated that Israeli steps must be in compliance with international law. It advised that Israel should freeze construction in the West Bank and dismantle or re-route the Wall to the Green Line. The Court also called for reparations to Palestinians harmed by the construction. The Advisory Opinion was overwhelmingly reaffirmed by the UN General Assembly.



Agricultural gate in the Barrier, Beit Ijza, Jerusalem governorate. Photo by Patrick Zoll.

Five years later, construction of the planned 705 km long route continues, with approximately 200 km built since the issuance of the Advisory Opinion in 2004. Fifty-eight (58) percent of the route has been constructed thus far. When completed, approximately 85 percent of the route will run inside the West Bank, separating Palestinian urban and rural communities from each other and from Palestinian land. OCHA has issued a new report

ISSUES COVERED THIS MONTH

West Bank, including East Jerusalem: Sharp decrease in Palestinian casualties • Settler violence on the rise • Demolitions and displacement in the West Bank • The humanitarian impact of the Barrier five years after the ICJ advisory opinion • Update on drought response • West Bank access issues

Gaza Strip: The blockade continues; imports reached the lowest level in 2009 • New report highlights the impacts of the two-year blockade on the Gaza economy • Ban on entry of construction materials continues to hinder reconstruction • Gaza tunnels continue to claim lives; thousand of children allegedly exploited • Sporadic violence continues; two children killed • Decline in the number of exceptional cases allowed in and out of Gaza • New assessments on the situation of the health system • Ongoing concerns over water quality

Other oPt issues: Thousands of students affected by the shortage of educational facilities • IMF: West Bank macroeconomic conditions have improved, Gaza situation remains difficult • Humanitarian Funding

highlighting the dramatic humanitarian impact of the Barrier. The report finds that 125,000 Palestinians will be surrounded by the Wall on three sides when the route is completed. Already, access to East Jerusalem, the major health, economic, religious and education center has been cut off by the Barrier, as well as access to agricultural land in the rural areas.

In protest of the Barrier's continued construction, Palestinians in the central and southern West Bank continue to conduct weekly protests. More than a third of all recorded injuries in the West Bank since 2005 occurred in these demonstrations. In July, the Israeli Border Police reintroduced the "skunk" bomb, a foul-smelling liquid first used in 2008, which induces nausea and vomiting, and causes anti-Barrier demonstrators to disperse in order to escape the smell. The Barrier has also affected UN operations, with agencies experiencing the majority of their access incidents at crossings in the Barrier.

The Barrier is but one element of Israel's West Bank closure regime, which is made up of multiple barriers to Palestinian movement and access, such as earth mounds, road gates and checkpoints, among others. While there were no significant improvements in Palestinian movement and access in July, the IMF announced that macroeconomic conditions in the West Bank had improved, in part, as a result of recent relaxation measures taken by the Israeli authorities. If such measures continue during the year, the West Bank economy could see its biggest growth in 2009 in years – up to seven percent. If not, the real GDP per capita would further decline.

The Barrier around the Gaza Strip, built in 1995, facilitates the ongoing Israeli blockade, which is collectively afflicting the lives of a million and a half Gazan residents. This month experienced the lowest amount of imports of basic supplies allowed into the Gaza Strip since the beginning of 2009. A new Paltrade report indicates that the blockade has led to the closure of 95 percent of private sector

enterprises and the unemployment of 120,000 workers. According to the IMF, unless the blockade is substantially relaxed, real GDP per capita in Gaza will continue its downward trend, with further increases in poverty and unemployment.

The blockade has led to the proliferation of a large tunnel economy with disturbing reports about the use of child labor to build and operate these very dangerous tunnels. Over 250 schools and kindergartens destroyed or damaged by the Israeli military during operation "Cast Lead", have yet to be rebuilt or repaired for the upcoming school year. In addition, according to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, 105 new schools need to be built to accommodate the growing student body. Construction materials needed for repairing "Cast Lead" damage alone include 25,000 tons of iron and 40,000 tons of cement. The right to learn and be educated is a fundamental child right that is central to every child's ability to realize his or her potential - and by extension, that of their communities. In the context of protracted conflict and occupation, safe schools also offer an unparalleled means of restoring a sense of normality and hope for children and their families.

As Barrier construction continues in the West Bank, so too does displacement of Palestinian civilians from their homes. Of particular concern are recent events in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood of East Jerusalem: on 2 August 2009, Israeli forces forcibly evicted nine families from their homes in two buildings, displacing 53 Palestinians, including 20 children. The buildings were immediately handed over to an Israeli settler organization, while the families' belongings were loaded on a truck and dumped in the street near UNRWA's headquarters in East Jerusalem. These events come in the context of settler attempts to construct hundreds of housing units in the heart of this Palestinian neighbourhood, placing hundreds of other Palestinians at-risk of future displacement.

West Bank, including East Jerusalem

Sharp decrease in Palestinian casualties

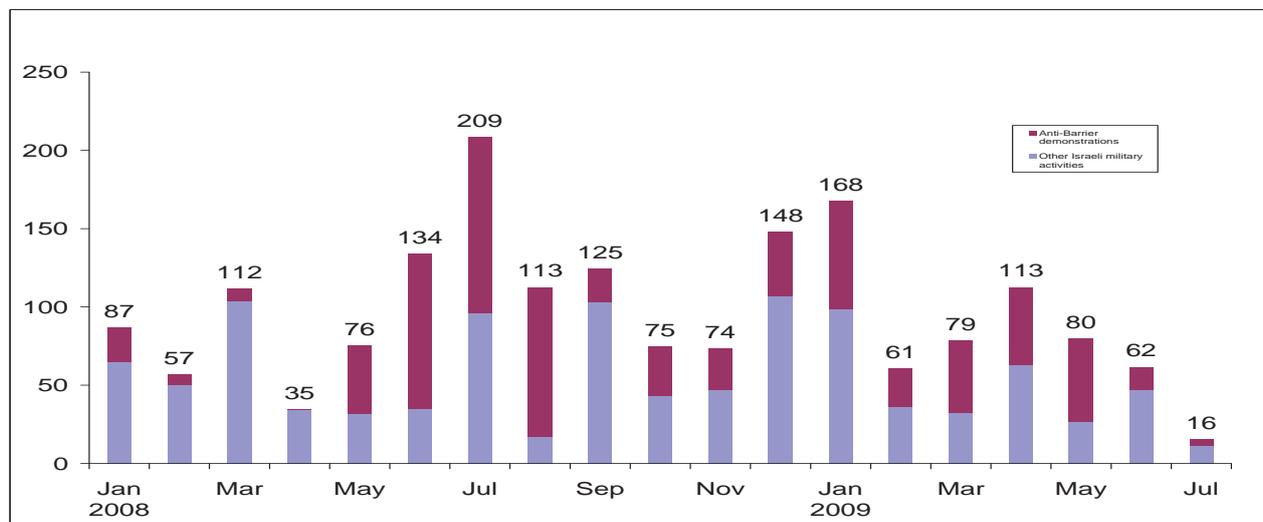
In July, there were fewer Palestinian casualties from Israeli military activities in the West Bank than in any month since February 2005; there were no Palestinian fatalities and injuries comprised roughly one sixth of the monthly average since the beginning of 2005. A total of 19 Palestinians were injured in July: twelve in confrontations with Israeli forces during demonstrations, including seven in anti-Barrier demonstrations; four, including three children, were shot and injured in the Nablus governorate after allegedly throwing stones at an IDF military jeep. One Palestinian was physically assaulted during an IDF search operation in Hebron, and the remaining two were injured at checkpoints: one was shot and injured with live ammunition, and the other was physically assaulted. Overall, four members of the Israeli security forces were injured in July during anti-Barrier demonstrations in Ni'lin and Bil'in.

An overall downward trend in Palestinian injuries has been observed since April 2009, in part due to a decrease in the number of injuries in anti-Barrier demonstrations beginning in the following month. Since 2005, anti-Barrier demonstrations have

accounted for nearly one third of all Palestinian injuries in the West Bank, and resulted in more injuries than any other incident type.

Last month, on 5 June 2009, an unarmed Palestinian demonstrator was killed by Israeli security forces in Ni'lin village after being hit by a high powered tear-gas canister. This incident followed the 17 April 2009 killing of another demonstrator in Bil'in village, who was directly hit by a tear gas grenade. Both incidents have triggered Israeli military police investigations, as well as public protests by human rights organizations. According to various sources in Bil'in and Ni'lin villages, following the second killing, a change in crowd-control tactics used by the Israeli forces has been observed. This entailed a reduction in the use of live ammunition, and a change in the manner in which teargas canisters are being used: rather than firing teargas directly into crowds of demonstrators, teargas canisters are fired from greater distances into empty areas between the Israeli forces and the demonstrators, creating an almost impenetrable teargas "barrier". The Israeli Border Police have also reintroduced the "skunk" bomb, a foul-smelling liquid first used in 2008, which induces nausea and vomiting, and causes demonstrators to disperse in order to escape the smell.

Palestinians injured from Israeli military activities - West Bank, Jan 2008 - Jul 2009



COURT ORDER FOR BARRIER REROUTING IN BIL'IN REMAINS UNIMPLEMENTED

Regular anti-Barrier demonstrations in Bil'in village, in the western Ramallah governorate, began in 2006 in protest of the Barrier's isolation of the village's agricultural land. In September 2007, the Israeli High Court of Justice (HCJ) partially accepted a petition submitted by the village's council and ordered the state to re-route the Barrier in order to reduce the harm to Bil'in residents. Since then, the IDF has twice submitted proposals of alternative routes, both of which were subsequently rejected by the HCJ after being considered insufficient in addressing the Barrier's humanitarian impact on the villagers. In the last rejection, the HCJ clarified that the alternative route should only take into account the security needs of the currently inhabited areas of the neighboring Israeli settlement (Modi'in Illit), and not the needs of a planned expansion area.

Settler violence on the rise

Data recorded by OCHA suggests that settler violence against Palestinians and their property is on the rise, for the third consecutive month. Though the number of Palestinian casualties resulting from settler violence decreased considerably in July, from 27 injuries in June¹ to seven in July, widespread reports of settler vandalism of Palestinian property continue, particularly in the northern West Bank. In total, OCHA recorded 43 settler-related incidents affecting Palestinians, up 43 percent from incidents recorded in June. Since the beginning of 2009, OCHA has recorded 188 incidents, a monthly average of 27 incidents, down 18 percent from the 2008 monthly average.

The majority of July incidents involved settlers' trespass onto Palestinian property (18) and damage to Palestinian property and land (14). Many of the July incidents are part of the "price tag" strategy announced by settlers, whereby they will retaliate against Palestinian civilians and their property for attempts to dismantle settlement outposts. For example, on 20 July, Israeli forces removed several structures from three settlement outposts². In response, Israeli settlers launched multiple attacks on Palestinian communities that continued for a week. According to the Nablus governor's office, settlers set fire to at least 1,500 olive trees in the villages of Tell, Madama, Burin, Asira al Qibliya and Jit. Settlers also threw stones at Palestinian cars and blocked several junctions, affecting movement to and from Nablus, Tulkarem and Qalqilya. Two Palestinian motorists were lightly wounded and six

vehicles were damaged. Of particular concern was an incident on 23 July, when more than 20 armed Israeli settlers from an outpost close to Yitzhar settlement attacked the nearby village of Asira al Qibliya with stones, after which the Palestinian villagers responded with stone throwing. The Israeli army arrived at the scene, but rather than dispersing the settlers, IDF troops fired sound bombs and teargas at the villagers.³

Also in July, the Israeli State Attorney decided to drop all charges against an Israeli settler who shot and wounded two Palestinians in the West Bank city of Hebron in December 2008, during the Israeli army's evacuation of the Rajabi House settlement. The charges were dropped after the defendant's attorney challenged the Prosecutors' decision to withhold classified evidence related to the case; in its ruling on the matter, the Israeli Supreme Court found that the defendant's right to a fair trial outweighed the harm to national security, if the evidence is disclosed. Though the shooting was captured on film, the State Attorney decided to drop the indictment altogether, stating that the benefit of protecting classified information for national security reasons was greater than that of proceeding with the case. Classified, or "secret" evidence, is regularly used by the IDF Military Prosecutor to hold Palestinians under administrative detention for prolonged periods of time.⁴

July's attacks give rise to serious concerns about the continued lack of adequate protection for Palestinian civilians from settler violence. In spite of clear legal

obligations, the relevant Israeli authorities have consistently failed to adequately enforce the rule of law when it comes to Israeli settlers' attacks on Palestinians. According to the Israeli human rights group Yesh Din, over 90 percent of investigations into settler violence are closed without an indictment filed against the suspect.⁵ By contrast, when Israeli civilians are the target of Palestinian violence, the IDF actively pursues Palestinian suspects; thousands of Palestinians are arrested and prosecuted through Israel's military court system each year.⁶

The ongoing failure by the Israeli authorities to enforce the law on Israeli settlers, along with media reports about Israel's intention to dismantle over 20 settlement outposts in the near future, in partial fulfillment of its Road Map obligations, raises concerns that settler violence may escalate.

Demolitions and displacement in the West Bank

In July, OCHA recorded the demolition of a total of 24 Palestinian-owned structures, five in East Jerusalem and 19 in Area C, displacing a total of 24 Palestinians, all living in East Jerusalem. Since the beginning of the year, OCHA has recorded the demolition of a total of 221 Palestinian-owned structures, including 90 residential structures, in the West Bank, which have displaced 513 people and affected a further 489. The monthly average

of demolished structures in 2009 (32) is 11 percent higher than the parallel figure for 2008, while the 2009 monthly average of persons displaced (73) is roughly the same as the monthly average in 2008. Eighty-two (82) percent of demolished structures and 62 percent of persons displaced in 2009 were located in Area C.

Tense situation in East Jerusalem following settler takeover of Palestinian homes

Tensions in East Jerusalem escalated considerably in July as Israeli settlers, accompanied by Israeli security forces, moved into an uninhabited home in the Ibn Haroun section of Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood. The affected property is the subject of a court case currently before the Israeli Supreme Court. The incident sparked protests by Palestinians, international and Israeli activists, resulting in multiple arrests.

In an adjacent section of Sheikh Jarrah, on 28 July, previously issued eviction orders against residents of two homes were extended until 10 August. The residences are home to two families, and are at the centre of a protracted legal dispute over ownership of the land on which the homes are built. The homes are part of a group of 28 buildings constructed in 1956 as a result of an agreement between UNRWA and the Jordanian government (which earmarked the land for the project) to house Palestinian refugees.⁷

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN SHEIKH JARRAH

On 2 August 2009, Israeli forces forcibly evicted nine families from their homes in two buildings in Sheikh Jarrah, displacing 53 Palestinians, including 20 children. The buildings were immediately handed over to a settler organization, which, according to plans submitted to the Jerusalem municipality, intends to build a new settlement of up to 200 residential units and/or public buildings in the area. The families' belongings were loaded on a truck and dumped in the street near UNRWA's headquarters in East Jerusalem. At least eight people were injured and 29 people arrested, including international and local observers, during the evictions and subsequent demonstrations. With no alternative residences, the families are currently camping out on the street in front of their former homes. Their appeal to overturn the eviction was rejected by local courts on 9 August. Another 24 buildings, currently home to around 300 people, most of them refugees, are at risk of forced eviction and displacement should the settlers' plans proceed. An additional 340 housing units are being planned in other parts of Sheikh Jarrah, bringing the total to at least 540 units.

Israeli security forces also distributed in July eviction orders in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Beit Safafa, affecting four houses. According to the affected families, they have been renting one of the houses on the land since before 1967. However, the property was subsequently sold and the current landowner, an Israeli settler from Kiryat Arba, is attempting to evict the family. If implemented, the evictions will displace more than 50 Palestinians. [*The eviction orders have been frozen pending review of the case by the Israeli High Court of Justice.*]



The belongings of several Sheikh Jarrah families, dumped in the street following eviction from their homes.

Also during the month, the Israeli authorities demolished two residential structures due to lack of the requisite building permit in Beit Hanina and Silwan neighbourhoods. In addition, there were three self-demolitions of structures that had previously received demolition orders. During the month, OCHA received reports regarding the distribution of demolition orders in East Jerusalem affecting eleven Palestinian-owned structures, including 10 residential structures, for being built without a permit.

Difficulties facing communities in closed military areas continue

On 15 July, the Israeli Civil Administration demolished 19 tents and animal barracks belonging to seven Bedouin families in an area declared closed by the Israeli military, south of road 449 (Al Mu'arrajat road) in the Jordan Valley. The structures were uninhabited at the time of the demolition, however, they serve as winter residences for 50 people, including 32 children. This is the second series of demolitions suffered by these families in the span of less than a year, as their winter residences were demolished in the same area in September 2008.

In 2009, 81 percent of demolitions and 82 percent displacement in Area C occurred in areas declared closed by the military for training ("fire zones").

Many of these areas, which amount to over 20 percent of the West Bank (and some 32 percent of Area C), have been "closed" for decades, though numerous residents report that they have never seen the Israeli military training in their vicinity. Many of the communities residing in these areas have been there since before 1967 and the declaration of the areas as closed. They are some of the poorest communities in the West Bank, relying on small-scale agriculture and herding for their livelihoods. The ongoing threat of demolition of their structures and displacement are key factors contributing to the extreme vulnerability of these communities.

Also this month, the Israeli authorities issued stop construction⁸ and demolition orders against at least 101 Palestinian-owned structures located in Palestinian communities in Area C in the Hebron, Bethlehem, Salfit, Nablus and Tubas governorates. Among the structures at-risk of demolition are 84 residential structures. Over 3,000 Palestinian-owned structures in the West Bank have pending demolition orders.

Change in type of permits issued to "seam zone" residents in the Hebron governorate

In July, there was a change in the types of permits issued to four Palestinians residing in the "seam zone" in the Hebron governorate. In January 2009, the Israeli authorities declared "closed" the area between the Barrier and the Green Line in the Hebron governorate, along with parts of the Bethlehem,

Jerusalem, Ramallah and Salfit governorates. These were the first areas to be declared closed since October 2003, when the Israeli authorities similarly closed areas in the northern West Bank governorates (Qalqiliya, Tulkarem and Jenin). Following the January declaration, all those residing in or entering the newly closed areas required permits from the Israeli Civil Administration, affecting one extended family in the Hebron governorate. Initially, 17 'permanent resident' permits were issued, enabling them to live in the closed area.⁹ In July, however, the permits of four of the residents were changed to 'worker' permits, which allow only entry (not

residence), between 5:00-17:00. The change affects a total of 12 Palestinians (the permit holders and their dependants), who are at risk of being displaced.

The humanitarian impact of the Barrier five years after the ICJ advisory opinion

9 July 2009 marked the fifth anniversary of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) advisory opinion on the Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. On this occasion, OCHA issued a new report, which provides an overview of the humanitarian impact

ISRAEL ANNOUNCED THE SEIZURE OF LAND ALONG THE DEAD SEA COAST

In late June 2009, the Israeli Civil Administration (ICA) placed twelve notices in the Palestinian daily 'Al Quds', announcing its intention to register as "state land" approximately 139,000 dunums of land, located along the West Bank section of the Dead Sea coast. The land in question constitutes around two percent of the total area of the West Bank. The advertisements gave any person claiming property rights over any part of this area 45 days to submit an objection.¹⁰

According to the Israeli media, the Israeli authorities have claimed that this land previously formed part of the sea floor of the Dead Sea, but was exposed due to the evaporation of water. The land's registration as "state land", according to these reports, is intended to prevent it from being illegally taken over by private parties. However, based on the general coordinates provided in the Al Quds advertisements, the Israeli organization Peace Now, asserted the likelihood that the area to be registered exceeds the area of land actually exposed by water evaporation.¹¹

At the beginning of the Israeli occupation in 1967, about 13 percent of the West Bank land was considered "state land" and registered in the name of the Jordanian government.¹² According to the Israeli State Comptroller, between 1979 and 1992, the ICA registered as "state land" 900,000 dunums of land – an additional 16 percent of the West Bank.¹³ To do so, the Israeli authorities relied on a specific interpretation of the Ottoman Land Law of 1858, according to which, unregistered land, not cultivated for three consecutive years, automatically becomes state land.

While under international humanitarian law, the occupying power is obliged to administer the public property of the occupied territory for the benefit of the local (indigenous) population, almost all "state land" (Jordanian and that declared by Israel) was subsequently included within the boundaries of Israeli settlements' local and regional councils and allocated for settlements' construction and expansion, as well as for military use.¹⁴

Based on the Israeli authorities past practice, there is concern that the registration of the Dead Sea coast as "state land" will effectively block any possible development of this area by Palestinians, particularly for tourism or industry. Most of the relevant area lies within the boundaries of the Bethlehem governorate, which has been affected by a variety of other Israeli measures that severely restrict the space available for its development.¹⁵ The Bethlehem Governor's office is reportedly in the process of compiling documentation of land ownership towards the filing of an objection with the ICA to the announced registration.

of the Barrier, highlighting the central role it plays in the system of access and movement restrictions and continuing fragmentation of the West Bank. It examines the impact on urban areas, on the closed area communities isolated between the Barrier and the Green Line, and on the rural communities, which are primarily affected by the permit and gate regime.

In summer 2002, following a campaign of suicide bombings by Palestinian militants, the Government of Israel approved construction of a Barrier with the stated purpose of preventing Palestinian suicide bombers from entering Israel. The ICJ advisory opinion recognised that Israel 'has the right, and indeed the duty, to respond in order to protect the life of its citizens [but] the measures taken are bound nonetheless to remain in conformity with applicable international law.' In analysing the Barrier route, the ICJ stated that the sections that ran inside the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, together with the associated gate and permit regime, violated Israel's obligations under international law. The ICJ called on Israel to: cease construction of the Barrier 'including in and around East Jerusalem'; dismantle the sections already completed; and 'repeal or render ineffective forthwith all legislative and regulatory acts relating thereto.

Five years on, Barrier construction continues with approximately 200 kilometres constructed since the ICJ advisory opinion. Approximately 58 percent of the 709-kilometre-long Barrier is complete; a further 10 percent is under construction and 31.5 percent is planned. When completed, the majority of the route, approximately 85 percent, will run inside the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, rather than along the 1949 Armistice Line (Green Line). The total area located between the Barrier and the Green Line amounts to 9.5 percent of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and No Man's Land.

Update on drought response

In response to the ongoing water scarcity crisis in the West Bank, a coordinated plan addressing the most

urgent needs was drafted and endorsed earlier this year by various humanitarian agencies, including UN agencies and international NGOs.¹⁶ During July, two positive developments occurred related to the planned response: the first is the drop in the price of fodder, which enables implementing organisations to include in their response additional communities that had been identified in the past as vulnerable, but were excluded from the program due to shortfalls in funding; the second development was a 17 July announcement that the Joint Palestinian-Israeli Water Committee had approved the installation of water filling points in nine vulnerable communities in the West Bank that are currently not supplied with piped water. The installation of another 11 is currently under review. The implementation date for the decision is unclear, however, so the impact on this year's response is uncertain.

The approved response plan includes the distribution of drinking water and fodder for a period of 60 days: each beneficiary-family will receive a daily amount of 25 liters of water per capita and nine liters of water per livestock head, along with one kilogram of fodder for each sheep, up to a maximum of 60 sheep. Some 90,000 Palestinians will receive water through the response. A total of 34 clusters of villages throughout the West Bank will benefit from the programme, which is set to begin by mid-August and does not entail financial contributions from beneficiaries.

West Bank access issues

There were no major changes in Palestinian movement and access in July; the easings reported over the course of the past few months continue, while the number of closure obstacles remained constant, with a total of 614 staffed and unstaffed obstacles in July, compared to 613 reported in June. According to the IMF, if the Israeli authorities would continue to ease movement restrictions, the West Bank economy could see its greatest growth in years, as high as seven percent (see related section herein).¹⁷

OPT CHILD PROTECTION FIGURES AT A GLANCE: JULY VS. JUNE 2009

Conflict-related casualties:

Palestinian children killed: 2 vs. 0

Israeli children killed: 0 vs. 0

Palestinian children injured: 8 vs. 18

Israeli children injured: 0 vs. 0

Displaced as a result of house demolitions: 15 vs. 98.

Palestinian children in Israeli detention by the end of the month: 342, including one administrative detainee, compared to 355 in June. (There are five current administrative detainees (all boys) who were under 18 when they were arrested and given administrative detention orders; they turned 18 while in administrative detention.)

Access restrictions continued to affect UN operations in the West Bank in July, however, there were significantly fewer incidents reported than in the previous month. In July 2009, UN staff members reported a total of 77 access delays or denials at checkpoints, affecting 716 UN staff members. As a result, the UN lost 527 staff hours, or the equivalent of 70 UN staff days. This is a 60 percent decrease in the number of lost staff days compared to June 2009 (173). However, there was an eight percent increase in terms of reported access incidents, compared to the parallel figure in June 2009.

While visual inspections of UN vehicles are the norm, insistence on carrying out more invasive, internal searches of UN vehicles accounted for the

majority (73 percent) of reported UN access delays or denials.¹⁸ Israeli forces at checkpoints, especially around the Jerusalem periphery, continue to insist on internal vehicle searches unless a diplomat is present in the vehicle. Qalandiya checkpoint, to the north, and the tunnels checkpoint, to the south, still prove to be the most problematic checkpoints, particularly when staff are entering Jerusalem. Most access incidents are a result of the insistence for search by the Israeli Military Police (48 percent) or Israeli Border Police (37 percent).

In the first half of 2009, there were 542 access incidents, amounting to 3,331 lost staff hours. This is approximately equivalent to the figures for the first half of 2008.

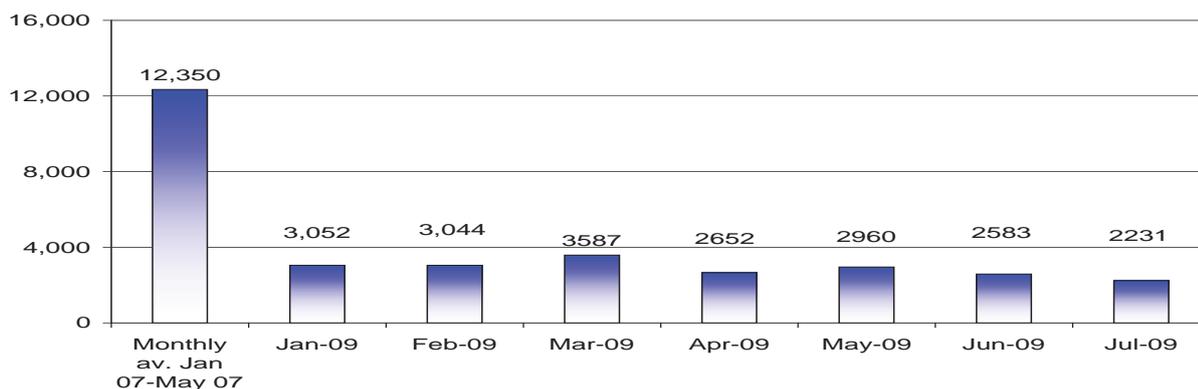
Gaza Strip

The blockade continues; imports reached the lowest level in 2009

This month, the number of truckloads allowed into Gaza (2,231) declined by 14 percent compared to June (2,583), reaching the lowest level since the beginning of the year. This amount constitutes only 18 percent of the monthly average of truckloads that entered Gaza in the first five months of 2007 (12,350), before the imposition of the blockade. Truckloads imported by humanitarian agencies constituted 18 percent of the imports, while the rest were imported by the commercial sector.

Similar to previous months, truckloads carrying basic food supplies have comprised the highest proportion of total truckloads (72%). Israel's 22 March 2009 decision to enable the unrestricted entry of all foodstuffs, provided that the source is approved by the Israeli authorities, remains unimplemented. Therefore, many market food items have remained restricted from entering Gaza, including, but not limited to, powdered milk, tea, beverages, jam, several types of canned food and coffee. The remaining truckloads consisted of fuel supplies (10%), hygiene/cleaning materials (7%), agricultural raw materials (4%), and others (7%).

Number of truckloads allowed entry into Gaza



During July, Israel allowed entry of seven truckloads of items that had been almost totally prohibited since the imposition of the blockade, including glass, aluminum and air conditioners. The entry of other major essential goods including materials for reconstruction, spare parts for water and sanitation projects, and industrial and agricultural materials, remain either restricted to limited quantities, or barred from entry. The UN proposal, submitted in June, to resume reconstruction activities in Gaza, focused on housing, health, and education, awaits a final answer. UN efforts to secure the entry of a number of armoured vehicles needed for UN operations in Gaza have been unsuccessful.

Also this month, Israel allowed the import of 40,000 litres of petrol and 22,000 litres of diesel allocated for private use, via the Nahal Oz fuel pipelines, the first shipment since 2 November 2008. According to the Gas Stations Owners Association (GSOA), this limited amount of fuel was allowed into Gaza at the request of local companies in order to test the market demand for Israeli fuel, although daily amounts of nearly 200,000 litres of diesel and petrol have continued to enter through the Rafah tunnels. Although Israel is reportedly ready to re-allow entry of petrol and diesel, restricted to 70,000 litres and 800,000 litres respectively per week, the fuel is less likely to be bought by local Gaza companies, as the price of Israeli petrol (5.9 NIS/litre) is around twice the price of Egyptian petrol (3 NIS/litre).

The amount of cooking gas allowed into Gaza during July increased by 77 percent (4,652 tonnes) compared to the previous month (2,631 tonnes). As a result, there were no reports of significant shortages of cooking gas during July. However, a total of 9.7

million litres of industrial gas for Gaza Power Plant were allowed entry into Gaza, constituting only 70 percent of the amount needed to operate the plant at full capacity (13.9 million litres). By the end of July, the Gaza Electricity Distribution Company announced that the amount of industrial fuel stored during maintenance activities, which temporarily enabled the plant to produce 70MWs, had been almost depleted, and the power plant will have to shut down one of the power generating units thus reducing output to 55-60 megawatts (MWs) (or around 70% of its capacity-80 MWs). Therefore, scheduled rolling blackouts will increase from 4-6 hours to 6-8 hour five days per week.

During July, no exports were allowed to exit Gaza. The last shipments of exports consisted of 15 truckloads of cut flowers (683,000 flowers) between 12 February and 27 April 2009. According to the November 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access (AMA) between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority, Israel should allow the export of 400 truckloads per day from Gaza.

New report highlights the impacts of the two-year blockade on the Gaza economy

In July, the Palestine Trade Centre (Paltrade) released a report highlighting the combined impact of the two-year blockade and the destruction of productive assets during Israel's "Cast Lead" military offensive on Gaza's private sector.¹⁹ According to the report, these two factors contributed to the closure of an estimated 95 percent of all industrial establishments in Gaza (i.e. 3,750 establishments) and reduced operations among virtually all of the remaining five percent. Moreover, approximately 94 percent

of the private sector workforce, including industry, commerce, construction, agriculture and services, has been laid off, a total of 120,000 workers.

The import restrictions imposed as part of the blockade are identified as a key factor contributing to the almost total halt in industrial activity. The volume of imports since June 2007 has constituted only one-quarter of the pre-blockade imports, with only 35 types of select goods, mainly limited to food commodities, allowed to enter Gaza, compared to 4,000 types before the imposition of the blockade. The proportion of goods imported by humanitarian agencies has continued to fluctuate at around 27 percent of total imports, compared to five percent before the blockade; imports from the West Bank has dropped dramatically from 19 to three percent of total imports. Furthermore, Gaza importers report that since the beginning of the blockade, they have incurred an estimated loss of USD 10 million, resulting from the refusal of the Israeli authorities to clear the entry of more than 1,700 containers, which are being held at warehouses in Israel and the West Bank.

Even if manufacturers were able to overcome the import restrictions, the vitality of many sectors depended on the ability to export their products. Goods regularly exported from Gaza in the past included 76 percent of all Gaza-manufactured furniture products, 90 percent of garments and 20 percent of all food products. Exports have remained barred since the imposition of the blockade with a total of only 138 truckloads of cut-flowers and strawberries exported during the two-year blockade. This is compared to a daily average of 70 truckloads, including furniture, garments, cash crops, vegetables, processed food, metal products and handicrafts that exited Gaza before the imposition of the blockade.

Ban on entry of construction materials continues to hinder reconstruction

As a result of the continued ban on the entry of construction materials into the Gaza Strip, no reconstruction or major repairs of houses destroyed or damaged during the Israeli "Cast Lead" offensive

in Gaza have been implemented. According to a joint UNDP-UNRWA survey, a total of 3,540 housing units were totally destroyed, 2,866 sustained major damage and 52,900 sustained minor damages during the offensive. These houses are estimated to have sheltered 52,400 families or over 300,000 individuals.

The survey indicates that there are approximately 20,000 people currently displaced, primarily the residents of the totally destroyed homes. Most of the displaced are living in rented apartments or with relatives; approximately 40 families continue residing in the six tent camps erected in North Gaza and Gaza governorates, down from 138 families during June; approximately 100 families are residing in tents next or inside their damaged homes, using the less affected parts of the buildings. Cash disbursements for those whose homes were destroyed (USD 5,000) or damaged (USD 3,000) are ongoing, enabling families to cover rental costs and living expenses until reconstruction and repair activities take place.

UNDP-led rubble removal of damaged buildings commenced in July and is expected to last for a period of one year, with an approximate cost of USD 12 million. While rubble can potentially be used to re-build homes and infrastructure, such use has been largely prevented due to the lack/shortage of other essential materials.

Gaza tunnels continue to claim lives; thousand of children allegedly exploited

During July, a total of 12 Palestinians were killed and 26 others injured in tunnel-related incidents. The majority of the casualties (8 killed and 16 injured) took place during the last ten days of July (22-30), following the collapse of several tunnels, one of which occurred when a fuel pipeline inside one of the tunnels exploded on 26 July, killing at least four people and injuring five others. Since the imposition of the blockade in June 2007, OCHA has recorded the death of 85 people in tunnel-related incidents. Of these, 36 were killed in 2009.

According to a recent study published by the Palestinian Centre for Democracy and Conflict Resolution in Gaza, over 1,000 tunnels operate under the Gaza-Egypt border, some of them are up to 700 metres long and 12 metres deep. Other sources estimate the number of tunnels to range from 600 – 800. According to this study, child labourers are employed to transfer goods through the tunnels and their conditions of work are exploitative. Children are considered as a particularly suitable labour force due to their smaller and more flexible bodies, enabling them to move easily inside the tunnels. According to the study, they are often paid less than half of the daily wage paid to adults (100 compared to 200-300 NIS).

While the tunnels have provided some short-term relief to the population through the supply of otherwise unavailable goods, economically, they do not constitute a sustainable alternative to lifting the blockade and the resumption of movement through the official crossings into Israel. In addition, as shown above, the ongoing situation has forced thousands of people affected by poverty to risk their lives on a daily basis to sustain their livelihoods.

Sporadic violence continues; two children killed

In July, two Palestinians, both children, were killed and six others were injured. One of the two fatalities was a 15-year-old mentally impaired boy, who was shot and killed by Israeli troops while approaching the border fence. The other fatality was a 17-year-old girl killed when an Israeli tank shell hit her house during clashes between Israeli troops and armed Palestinian militants east of Al Bureij refugee camp; four members of her family were also injured in the incident. The remaining injuries were armed Palestinians injured in a confrontation with Israeli forces in the eastern part of Gaza City.

Sporadic launching of rudimentary rockets and mortar shells from Gaza towards southern Israel by Palestinian factions continued during the month; no Israeli casualties were reported. However, two

Palestinian civilians, including a three-year-old child, were injured when a mortar fired towards Israel accidentally hit their house, east of Deir Al Balah.

Since the end of the “Cast Lead” offensive on 18 January 2009, a total of 38 Palestinians have been killed and 87 injured within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the Gaza Strip; in the same period, one Israeli soldier has been killed and two civilians and four soldiers injured in Gaza and southern Israel.

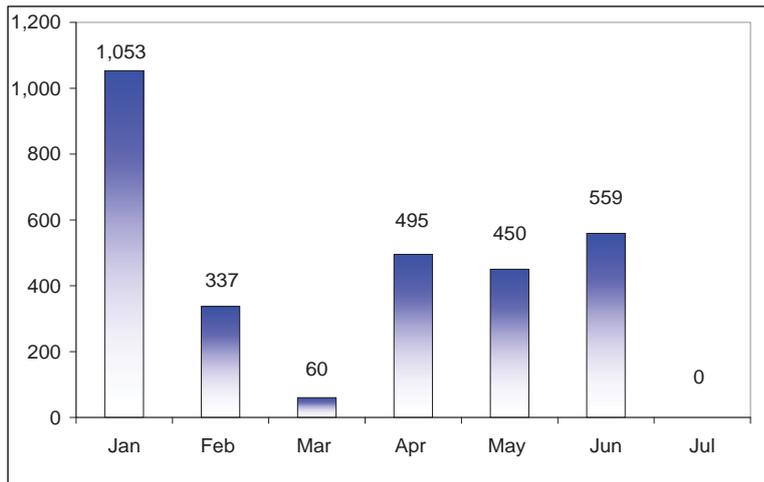
The Israeli military continued to enforce restrictions on Palestinian access to land and sea by opening warning fire towards farmers and fishermen. Restricted areas include agricultural land up to 300 metres from the Gaza-Israel border and fishing areas beyond three nautical miles from the shore. Palestinian fishing boats were forced to return to shore by Israeli naval forces on several occasions during the month.

Increasing lawlessness and internal Palestinian fighting continues to pose risks to the lives of civilians. During the month, seven Palestinians were killed and nine others were injured, most of them due to the reckless use of weapons. Since the end of “Cast Lead”, nine Palestinians have been killed due to the reckless use of weapons.

Decline in the number of exceptional cases allowed in and out of Gaza

Access for Palestinians into and out of the Gaza Strip has remained severely restricted. This month, a total of 916 Palestinians entered Gaza and 485 others left through the Rafah Crossing, a 75 and 79 percent decline respectively compared to June figures. The crossing, which is controlled by Egypt, was closed in June 2007 and since then it has been opened intermittently for 2-3 full days per month. In July, however, while the crossing was not open for a single full day, the Egyptian authorities allowed a small number of passengers to cross every day, including groups coordinated by international NGOs, political and diplomatic delegations and UN staff, but no patients. In May 2007, the month prior to its official closing, 9,100 people left Gaza and

Number of patients referred to Egyptian hospitals leaving through Rafah Crossing



9,400 entered Gaza through the Rafah Crossing.

The number of Palestinians allowed to cross Erez Crossing also declined in July, by 25 percent, from 2,698 in June to 2,026 in July. As in previous months, approximately half of those who obtained permits from the Israeli authorities to leave Gaza through Israel were patients and their accompaniers, while the remaining consisted of people who had permits to visit their families in the West Bank, Israel and Jordan.

Patients referred to specialized treatment outside Gaza

During July, there was a slight decrease in the number of referrals approved and issued by the Referral Abroad Department (RAD) of the PA Ministry of Health; 1,154 for patients in need of medical treatment unavailable in public hospitals in Gaza, compared to 1,356 in June. Of these referrals, 44 percent were for hospitals in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), Jordan and Israel, 25 percent to Egyptian hospitals, and 31 percent to NGO hospitals in Gaza.

Throughout the month, the Palestinian District Liaison Office submitted to the Israeli authorities, on behalf of patients, 735 applications for permits to exit Gaza through the Erez Crossing. Seventy percent of these applications were approved, two percent rejected, and 28 percent delayed. Having the application delayed means that no reply was received by the patient from the Israeli authorities by the day of the planned travel, resulting in a loss of the pre-arranged appointment at the relevant

hospital. When this occurs, the patient must seek a new appointment and subsequently submit an entirely new application for another permit, thus significantly prolonging the waiting period before he/she can receive the needed medical treatment.

Due to the closure of the Rafah Crossing throughout the month of July, no patient referred by the RAD was able to reach Egypt in July. Since the beginning of 2009, WHO confirmed the death of 20 patients, whose conditions

became critical while waiting for approval to exit Gaza through Erez and Rafah crossings.

New assessments on the situation of the health system

The World Health Organization (WHO) released in July three reports addressing different aspects of Gaza's health system.²⁰ One of the reports provides an update to the initial assessment of health needs in Gaza, performed in February 2009, following the "Cast Lead" offensive. The main findings indicate that most health services in Gaza have been functioning normally since the end of hostilities. Following the 18 January ceasefires, almost all primary health care (PHC) centres resumed the regular provision of services, including vaccination, antenatal care, chronic disease management, general medical consultations for children and adults, diagnostic services and dental care. Hospital services, including outpatient departments, elective surgical operations and in-patient admissions resumed as well, with activity levels matching or exceeding those for the same period last year.

Alongside the resumption of all health services, these reports suggest an overall decline in the quality of services, due to the combined effect of access restrictions imposed by Israel as part of the blockade and a number of significant deficiencies related to the internal management of the health system. The shortage of building materials, which has prevented the expansion of health facilities required to meet the needs of a growing population,

was identified as a key factor affecting the system. This has been compounded by the restrictions and delays in the import of critical goods considered by the Israeli authorities as having “dual-use”, that is, items that could also serve a military purpose (e.g. image diagnostic devices and batteries to operate electrical backup devices). The quality of services has been undermined also by the inability of doctors and technicians to upgrade their knowledge and skills through their participation in training outside Gaza.

Internal mismanagement is a contributing factor to the decline in the quality of health services, in particular, the adequate operation and maintenance of medical equipment. Among the main problems identified are: the lack of an inventory of medical equipment; a centralized procurement system based on rules and processes that are inefficient and obsolete, compounded by the political divisions between Gaza and the West Bank; a misguided and potentially harmful distribution of tasks among departments; and a lack of tools, workshop space and safety test instruments.

WHO also noted a number of significant problems related to the quality of hospital care for mothers and newborn babies, including the lack of updated knowledge of international standards; insufficient use of diagnostic and therapeutic protocols, even as far as simple rules for hygiene and sterility; lack of integration and continuity of care between professionals and services; and poor support to women during labour, delivery and breastfeeding.

Ongoing concerns over water quality

The Gaza Aquifer is the sole fresh water resource of Gaza for all domestic, agricultural and industrial uses.²¹ Over the past decades, the growing water needs of the population have led to an increasing over-use of the aquifer, with the quantity of water extracted exceeding natural replenishment. As a result, the aquifer has undergone a gradual process of salinization, caused by the emergence of brackish

water from deeper strata and the intrusion of sea water. The situation has been compounded as a result of the pollution of the aquifer by raw and partially treated sewage, which is daily discharged into Gaza’s streams, as well as by agricultural fertilizers.²²

While water extracted from the aquifer and supplied through the pipe network is regularly chlorinated and, therefore, free from bacteria, it contains high levels of chlorides, nitrates and other contaminants. Overall, only 5-10 percent of the extracted water is estimated to be safe for drinking by WHO recommended standards. In Khan Younis governorate, for example, the average level of nitrates detected in 2008 in water wells was more than three fold the WHO safe level (169 compared to 50 mg/L). High concentration of nitrates can lead, among other effects, to the potentially lethal “blue baby” syndrome (infants born with cyanotic conditions).

In addition, piped water supplied to Gaza’s households is very salty. As a result, virtually the entire population relies on desalinated water for drinking. There are estimated to be at least 100 private desalination plants using the reverse osmosis process and selling desalinated water, both wholesale by tanker and retail by jerry can. In addition there are seven plants run by Gaza’s water utility (Coastal Municipalities Water Utility) and more than 20,000 home plants.

While some of the commercial plants are licensed by the Palestinian Water Authority (PWA), there is no regulation or monitoring of this sector, or of the water quality. This situation is compounded by the common misperception by consumers that desalinated water is automatically safe. However, while the desalination process does successfully remove salts and other chemical pollutants normally present in Gaza’s groundwater, this process does not eliminate bacteria. A joint study by an Italian and a Palestinian NGO, for example, found that 45 percent of the samples, collected from household

water storage tanks or jerry cans supplied by private vendors, was contaminated with bacteria (faecal coliforms). These results are symptomatic of the lack of chlorination of water after desalination. The distribution process of desalinated water from reverse osmosis plants to households adds contamination threats.

Other oPt issues

Thousands of students affected by the shortage of educational facilities

As the 2009 – 2010 academic year begins, tens of thousands of Palestinian students in the West Bank and Gaza Strip will face a significant shortage of educational facilities due to restrictive policies implemented by the Israeli authorities.²⁴ This shortage has a negative impact on the educational opportunities available to these students.

In Area C of the West Bank, improved learning conditions are an increasingly urgent priority in marginalized and vulnerable communities. Many structures currently being used as schools, including tents, tin shacks and crude cement buildings, fall far short of basic safety and hygiene standards, and offer little protection from the elements. While the Palestinian Authority (PA) is responsible for the provision of educational services in Area C of the West Bank, its ability to adequately fulfill this role is severely curtailed by the restrictive policy implemented by the Israeli Civil Administration (ICA) regarding issuance of building permits.²⁵ There are at least 10 Area C schools that are currently facing difficulties because they were prevented from expanding their facilities due to the lack of permits, or they carried out construction without a permit and have subsequently been served stop work or demolition orders by the ICA. Among those affected are marginalized communities who have accomplished the difficult task of securing international funding to improve or build school facilities (e.g. Jahalin school in Jerusalem governorate, Ka'abneh school in the Jordan Valley).²⁶

To begin addressing this situation, already existing water legislation must be enforced, which requires, among other aspects, private reverse osmosis plants to be registered and to chlorinate water properly. In addition, truck drivers involved in the delivery of desalinated water should be assisted to improve hygiene practices.

As a result of these difficulties, hundreds of children living in Israeli-controlled Area C will return to over-crowded, substandard schools. For remote communities without a suitable educational facility nearby, families must choose between housing their children with relatives in another area, or having their children, frequently girls, drop out of school altogether. Others must walk long distances to reach school.²⁷

In East Jerusalem, the responsibility for the provision of public education lies with the Jerusalem Municipality and the Israeli Ministry of Education. Similar to Area C, Palestinian children are affected by the lack of sufficient and adequate educational space. According to a recent Israeli media report, an internal forum at the Jerusalem City Hall revealed that the Jerusalem municipality budgets five times more for each Israeli Jerusalemite student than a Palestinian East Jerusalem student.²⁸ The Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI) reports that there is currently a shortage of 1,500 classrooms for East Jerusalem students.²⁹ With too few classrooms, many Palestinian parents are forced to secure spaces for their children at private, UNRWA or Islamic Waqf schools or have their children drop out of school. According to ACRI, an estimated 9,000 students are not enrolled in any type of educational framework.³⁰ These factors contribute to the high drop-out rate among the East Jerusalem population, which stands at around 50 percent.³¹

In the Gaza Strip, the ban on the entry of construction materials, in the context of the blockade imposed by Israel in June 2007, has prevented the reconstruction,

rehabilitation or expansion of schools, particularly those destroyed or damaged during Israel's "Cast Lead" military offensive. Over the course of the offensive, at least 280 schools incurred minor or severe damage, including 18 schools that were destroyed. More than six months after the declaration of ceasefires, none of the schools have been rebuilt or repaired. Construction materials needed include 25,000 tons of iron and 40,000 tons of cement. However, since the end of "Cast Lead", only 10 truckloads carrying 471 tons of cement have entered Gaza, while no truckload of steel bars was allowed entry.³³ Due to the damage to educational

facilities, many students had to be re-located to other facilities, worsening already overcrowded conditions; during the past academic year, around 88 percent of UNRWA schools and 82 percent of government schools operated on a shift system to accommodate the high number of students.

In government schools, school attendance and performance have declined as a result of aging education infrastructure, overcrowding, and frequent disruptions caused by military operations. During the first semester of the 2007-2008 scholastic year, only 20 percent of 16,000 students enrolled in

EDUCATION IN GAZA, STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES

The American International School, founded in 2000, was completely destroyed by an Israeli air strike in January 2009 during "Cast Lead." The school provided education to 230 students from kindergarten to grade twelve and was well known for its large playground, a safe space for children in Gaza to engage in recreational play. Following the destruction of the school, its students were accommodated in an alternative space that was cramped and overcrowded. Today, less than one month before the start of the new school year, the American school remains a pile of rubble that has yet to be cleared or rebuilt.

Fifth grader Najah Zuroub, a student of the American school since kindergarten, spoke about what it meant to have her school destroyed: "I miss my school because it was big and beautiful. We had a library to read books and a yard to play and have activities. Our new schools are small. The classrooms are tight and small. It is too hot to learn ... I want to be a doctor to help Palestinian children – but how? How can I when my school is destroyed?"

Nineteen-year-old Amid Murjan enrolled in the 5th grade at the American International School in the year 2000 after receiving a full scholarship. During his eight years at the school, he was captain of the soccer team and excelled in his studies. After his graduation in 2008, he was accepted at the University of British Columbia in Canada. Unable to exit Gaza in the summer of 2008, he lost his place at the university and enrolled instead in the Islamic University in Gaza City. Amid is preparing to begin his second year of university where he is studying civil engineering: "I graduated from the American International School last year but I could not leave because of the siege," Amid explains: "The siege also affects students who are here and who want to stay and learn. The education system cannot develop because of the siege."

the sixth grade in Gaza passed standardized exams in math, science, English and Arabic, compared to around 50 per cent of their peers in Nablus and Jenin in the West Bank.

In addition to the shortage of facilities, the ongoing blockade has had a negative impact on the ability of Gazan students to pursue university degrees abroad. In 2008, only 70 students exited Gaza via Erez between July and September, leaving hundreds of students trapped as a result of the newly instated diplomatic escort requirement mandated by Israeli authorities. While others have been able to leave via Rafah, the number of students who can exit is severely limited by the sporadic openings of the crossing. Movement restrictions into and out of Gaza also constrains the ability of teaching professionals to upgrade their skills, thus affecting students abilities to acquire new knowledge and skills.

On 28 July, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator and the Association of International Development Agencies (AIDA) issued a joint statement to demand full and unfettered access into and out of the Gaza Strip and an end to the blockade, which has severely affected the provision of education to Gazan children and youth.

The right to learn and be educated is a fundamental child right that is central to every child's ability to realize his or her potential - and by extension, that of their communities. In the context of protracted conflict and occupation, safe schools also offer an unparalleled means of restoring a sense of normality and hope for children and their families. Despite the extraordinary odds stacked against them, going to school and becoming educated remains the single most cherished priority among Palestinian children.

IMF: West Bank macroeconomic conditions have improved, Gaza situation remains difficult

According to the findings of an IMF mission released in July, macroeconomic conditions in the West Bank have improved, reflecting a relaxation of Israeli restrictions on internal trade and improved security conditions. Continuation of such relaxation measures

could result in real GDP growth in the West Bank of seven percent for 2009 as a whole, representing the first significant improvement in living standards in the West Bank since 2006. If they do not continue, however, real GDP per capita would decline further. In the Gaza Strip, the situation remains difficult given the ongoing blockade. Unless the blockade is substantially relaxed, real GDP per capita in Gaza will continue its downward trend, with further increases in poverty and unemployment. The findings noted that the liquidity situation of Gaza banks has improved because of a modest easing of restrictions on the passage of cash into Gaza, though decisions by the Israeli authorities on cash entry are still being undertaken on an ad hoc basis. According to the findings, over the medium-term, sustainable increases in real GDP per capita will require not only the removal of internal trade restrictions, but also the removal of trade restrictions between the Palestinian territories and Israel.

Humanitarian Funding

The funding for the CAP 2009 (following the Mid Year Review in June) stands at approximately 63 percent, with funding worth USD 509 million received, out of USD 803 million requested.

In July, three projects, with a total value of USD 471,000, were approved for support from the Humanitarian Response Fund (HRF) to deliver emergency relief to the population of Gaza and the West Bank, including through the provision of milk and nutrition supplies to displaced and vulnerable families in Gaza; the renovation and rehabilitation of water and sanitation facilities at pre-schools that were damaged during "Cast lead" in Gaza; and the provision of drinking water to a community in the Nablus governorate that has no access to clean water for domestic use. Following a pledge to donors, the HRF balance stood at approximately USD 2 million, as of the end of July 2009.

The HRF balance now stands at approximately \$ 1 million, however two new urgent projects are due to receive funding in the coming weeks to the value of \$500,000, leaving the capacity of the HRF very low. OCHA oPt is requesting fresh support for the pool fund from existing and new donor partners.

Endnotes

1. Of June injuries, 20 occurred in East Jerusalem and seven in other parts of the West Bank.
2. Forces removed two containers from the Mitzpe Danny outpost, two booths from the Nofei Yarden outpost and a trailer from the Adei Ad outpost.
3. Several villagers were treated for gas inhalation and shock on the spot. One small Palestinian child was lightly injured by a sound bomb.
4. Al Haq press release, Impunity for settlers, prosecution for Palestinians: the two roles secret evidence plays in the Israeli justice system. 4 August 2009.
5. Yesh Din, A Semblance of Law: Law Enforcement upon Israeli Civilians in the West Bank, June 2006.
6. See Yesh Din, Backyard Proceedings: The Implementation of Due Process Rights in the Military Courts in the Occupied Territories, December 2007
7. Israeli law prohibits Palestinians from claiming property in West Jerusalem or in Israel that they owned prior to 1948. They are also not allowed to purchase property built on land owned by the Israel Lands Administration. For background, see Nir Hasson, Ha'aretz, "Most Arabs can't buy homes in West Jerusalem," 21 July 2009.
8. Stop construction orders precede the issuance of a final demolition order.
9. The total number of people actually residing in the closed area is higher (e.g. there are children who do not need permits and others who require permits, but have not yet been issued them).
10. Al Quds newspaper, 26 June 2009 edition.
11. Available at: <http://www.peacenow.org.il/site/en/peace.asp?pi=61&fid=495&docid=4304>.
12. B'Tselem, Land Grab, Israel's Settlements Policy in the West Bank, May 2002, p. 52-3.
13. State Comptroller, Annual Report 56A for the Year 2004, p. 206.
14. B'Tselem, Ibid. In addition to land declared as state land, the jurisdictional area of Israeli settlements encompass large tracts of land seized by other means, including confiscation, requisition for military purposes and declaration of land as abandoned property.
15. See OCHA, Shrinking Space: Urban Contraction and Rural Fragmentation of Bethlehem Governorate, May 2009.
16. Agencies and organisations include OXFAM, ACTED, ACF, FAO, CISP, UNICEF and UCODEP.
17. For example, see Yana Dlugy, "West Bank economy on the mend, says IMF," Agence France Presse, 15 July 2009, and Karin Laub, "West Bank economy can grow if Israel eases up," Associated Press, 15 July 2009.
18. According to the United Nations Convention on Privileges and Immunities (1946), UN property and assets are immune from search and, therefore, staff members are instructed not to allow internal searches.
19. Palestine Trade Center, Gaza Strip Two Years through Siege, Special Report, 7 July 2009.
20. WHO, Gaza Health Assessment; Medical equipment in Gaza's hospitals - Internal management, the Israeli blockade and foreign donations; Assessment of the safety and quality of hospital care for mothers and newborn babies in Gaza Strip: mission report.
21. The aquifer is the source for approximately 96 percent of the water consumed in Gaza, while the Israeli water company "Mekorot" supplies four percent from sources inside Israel.
22. See The World Bank, Assessment of Restrictions on Palestinian Water Sector Development, West Bank and Gaza, Sector note, April 2009. Report no.47657-GZ.
23. GVC and PHG study conducted under ECHO funding, 2008, and HRF funding 2009.
24. According to PCBS, there were 1,097,957 students in grades 1 through 12 in 2008. Almost 70 percent of them were attending 1,833 Government schools; 23 percent were in 308 UNRWA schools; and seven percent attended 288 private establishments.
25. Processing time for permit applications is lengthy and the likelihood of success is slim. In significant parts of Area C, there is virtually no possibility of Palestinian construction, due to the designation of an area as a closed military / fire zone or nature area, or because the land is taken up by Israeli settlements, military bases or related infrastructure. For additional details concerning the difficulties Palestinians face in obtaining a construction permit, see OCHA Special Focus, Lack of Permit Demolitions and Resultant Displacement in Area C, May 2008, available at www.ochaopt.org. Also see Bimkom – Planners for Planning Rights, The Prohibited Zone, Israeli Planning Policy in the Palestinian Villages in Area C, 2008.
26. See July Humanitarian Monitor for additional details. In early August, the Israeli High Court of Justice issued an interim order barring the ICA from demolishing a building constructed of tires and mud that was to serve as a school and kindergarten for the Jahalin.

27. The absence of suitable transport places children in some communities at great risk; as reported in the previous Humanitarian Monitor; at least four children were killed during the past two years while walking along a main road to the nearest school.
28. Nir Hasson, Ha'aretz, New in Brief, <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1103636.html>.
29. ACRI, The State of Human Rights in East Jerusalem, Fact & Figures, May 2009.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. There are 640 schools in Gaza; 383 government schools, 221 UNRWA and 39 private schools which together serve a total of 441,452 students.
33. Since the imposition of the blockade in June 2007, Israel has allowed a total of 5,727 truckloads of construction materials including 20 truckloads designated for aid agencies. The construction materials include 681 truckloads of cement (22,538 tonnes), 5,019 truckloads of gravel (185,754 tonnes) and 3 truckloads of steel bars (120 tonnes).

CONTRIBUTING AGENCIES

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), United Nations Office for the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Relief and Works Agency

for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO), World Food Programme (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO), Al Haq, Badil, Save the Children (UK), Defence for Children International – Palestine Section (DCI-PS), Oxfam GB, Palestine Hydrology Group (PHG), ACF-E, AAA, ACPP, ACAD, and members of the Temporary International Mechanism (TIM).

MORE INFORMATION: Mai Yassin, yassinm@un.org, +972 (0)2 5829962