



PROTECTION CLUSTER OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

NEEDS ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK, 2014-2016

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I. CAUSES AND DRIVERS OF PROTECTION CONCERNS AND NEEDS

It is well recognised that the context in the occupied Palestinian territory is a protracted protection crisis with humanitarian consequences, driven by lack of respect for international law. The situation is underpinned and exacerbated by the lack of accountability for violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, and the resulting culture of impunity fosters further violations.

The ongoing occupation and conflict adversely impact upon the equal enjoyment of a wide range of human rights by Palestinian women, men, girls and boys. These include the rights to self-determination; life, liberty and security; freedom of movement; an adequate standard of living, including housing, food and water; work; education; health and the right of children to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence.

Key drivers of protection concerns and humanitarian needs are:

- The ongoing imposition of the blockade, and related restrictions on the movement of people and goods, on the Gaza Strip. This includes the imposition and enforcement of the Access Restricted Areas on land and at sea, restrictions on the exit and entry of Gazans, and restrictions on the export and import of goods.
- The existence and expansion of settlements in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, which are illegal under international law.¹ Settlements, and related infrastructure, land expropriation, restrictions on access to and use of land and resources, movement restrictions, and violence, are the driving force behind the key protection concerns and humanitarian needs in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.²
- Fragmentation of the occupied Palestinian territory due to imposed restrictions on freedom of movement, including movement between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, between East Jerusalem and the rest of the West Bank, and within the West Bank.
- Lack of accountability for violations of international law, discriminatory application of laws and law enforcement, and failure to uphold the rights of Palestinians.

II. KEY PROTECTION CONCERNS AND IMPACTS

A. Gaza Strip

Key protection concerns in the Gaza Strip include conflict-related violence; the imposition and methods of enforcement of the Access Restricted Areas; and the blockade and restrictions on movement to and from the Gaza Strip.

Conflict-related violence

Military operations and escalations of hostilities in the Gaza Strip continue to pose a serious threat to life, liberty and security. For example, from 14 to 21 November 2012, during the Israeli military operation “Pillar of Defence” and escalation of hostilities in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel, over 174 Palestinians were killed in Gaza, of whom 101 are believed to have been civilians (including 14

¹ Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention prohibits the transfer of parts of the occupying power’s own civilian population into territory it occupies.

² Since 1967, the State of Israel has led and directly participated in the planning, construction and expansion of settlements, including through planning policies, support to and legalisation of “outposts”, seizure of land, provision of infrastructure and public services, and benefits and incentives to settlers (Report of the Secretary-General on Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, September 2013). From 1967 to 2012, Israel established about 150 settlements in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in addition to some 100 “outposts” erected by settlers in contravention of Israeli law (OCHA, *Factsheet on the Humanitarian Impact of Israeli Settlement Policies* (December 2012)). The expansion of settlements continues unabated: during the first three months of 2013, the construction of 865 settlement housing units commenced in the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem, marking a 355% increase compared to the last quarter of 2012 (Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics).

women and 36 children); another 1,046 Palestinians were injured; and 6 Israelis, including 4 civilians, were killed and 14 Israeli children were injured.³

In this context, priority concerns are:

- Accountability for violations of international law: Six months following the end of the Israeli military operation “Pillar of Defence” and escalation of hostilities in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel, the Protection Cluster highlighted serious concerns about the lack of effective investigations of violations by the Israeli military justice system, and legal and procedural barriers to victims seeking an effective remedy for harm suffered as a result of Israeli actions. Within six months of the end of the hostilities, no criminal investigations had been opened into any allegations of violations of international law.⁴ Ensuring accountability is an important deterrent to prevent the reoccurrence of violations in the future.
- Increasing casualties due to Explosive Remnants of War (ERWs): The number of deaths and injuries due to explosive hazards increased dramatically in the aftermath of the November 2012 escalation of hostilities. In the first six months of 2013 alone, the number of child casualties of ERWs left by all parties to the conflict already exceeded the total number of child casualties for the whole of 2012. Children were the overwhelming majority of casualties, with 21 children out of the total of 25 ERW victims. An emerging issue of concern is the number of children injured as a result of small arms and other weapons stored or made within homes.
- Increasing need for psychosocial support: Exposure to conflict-related violence in Gaza is having a devastating impact on the psychosocial well-being of children, adolescents and families. Two rapid assessments conducted following the November 2012 Israeli military operation and escalation of hostilities revealed a chronic need for psychosocial impact mitigation.⁵ Despite at least 180,000 children, adolescents and caregivers being reached in the first seven months following the November 2012 crisis, the demand for psychosocial interventions remains high.
- Displacement: Nearly half of those displaced by the destruction or major damage of their homes during Israeli military operations are continuing to live in rented housing, and 20% are living with extended family. Host families are no longer receiving humanitarian assistance and are at breaking point. Further, overcrowding is a major issue, and leads to increased protection concerns, including domestic and gender-based violence.

All parties to the conflict must respect international humanitarian and human rights law in the conduct of hostilities, in particular the principles of distinction, proportionality and precautions in attack. All credible allegations of violations must be investigated and those found responsible must be prosecuted. Further, victims must be provided with access to an effective remedy.

Required protection responses include monitoring and documentation of violations, including grave violations against children, legal assistance and advocacy in order to support efforts to seek accountability and an effective remedy for violations. Psychosocial support for victims and those affected by violations is also a continuing need, along with maintenance of the psychosocial response mechanism to respond in both the current and heightened humanitarian situations. Ongoing shelter-related assistance is also required. Further, there is a need for a disaggregated analysis of the direct and indirect impacts of conflict-related violence, to ensure that responses and interventions by the

³ Protection Cluster Update on accountability for reported violations of international law by Israel during the escalation of hostilities in Gaza and southern Israel between 14 and 21 November 2012 (21 May 2013).

⁴ See Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, *An Illusion of Justice* (March 2013), and Protection Cluster Update on accountability for reported violations of international law by Israel during the escalation of hostilities in Gaza and southern Israel between 14 and 21 November 2012 (21 May 2013).

⁵ The Inter-Cluster Initial Rapid Assessment found that immediate priorities for humanitarian assistance included psychosocial support, ERW clearance/legal assistance and shelter. The Psychosocial Rapid Assessment conducted by the Child Protection Working Group and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Working Group surveyed a sample of 545 children and adolescents and revealed significant levels of emotional distress.

humanitarian community address the specific needs of women, men and children, and of vulnerable groups such as female-headed households, older people and persons with disabilities.⁶ Families who have recently lost income earners, or have recently become female-headed, are particularly vulnerable. In order to address ERW risks, the institutionalisation of risk education in schools is required, in addition to the implementation of a sustainable system for the management of explosive hazards.

Access Restricted Areas and related violations

The Access Restricted Areas (ARA) on land and at sea are part of the restrictions on movement and access imposed by Israeli authorities in the Gaza Strip. Despite the slight easing of the access restrictions following the 21 November 2012 ceasefire understanding, the imposition of these restrictions continues to undermine the livelihoods of tens of thousands of Palestinians in Gaza, including fishermen, farmers and herders, and entry into newly accessible areas remains precarious. Further, the manner in which the ARA is enforced by Israeli forces, including the use of live fire and detention, puts at risk the lives and well-being of those who enter restricted areas or the vicinity of such areas.⁷ Recent developments along the maritime border with Egypt have exacerbated restrictions on access to livelihoods and protection risks for fishermen in Gaza.⁸

Priority concerns in the ARA are:

- Threats to life, liberty and security: In the first half of 2013, at sea, 5 fishermen were injured, 13 detained, and 95 shooting incidents were reported. This constitutes a significant increase in shooting incidents and injuries compared to 2012, but a decrease in the number of fishermen detained. In the ARA on land, 2 people were killed (including one person with intellectual disabilities) and 31 injured (including one child), and 58 shooting incidents were reported. This represents a marked decrease in killings and injuries compared to 2012.
- Destruction, damage and confiscation of property: In the first half of 2013, at sea, 8 boats were damaged or destroyed, 3 boats were confiscated and 12 incidents of destruction, damage or confiscation of equipment by the Israeli military were reported. This represents a six-fold increase in the number of incidents of destruction, damage or confiscation of equipment, but a decrease in the number of boats confiscated. These actions have a direct impact on the livelihoods of fishermen.
- Impact on livelihoods and services: While restrictions at sea were eased from 3 to 6 nautical miles from 21 November 2012,⁹ fishermen are still denied access to the most profitable fishing areas that start at 8 nautical miles from shore.¹⁰ Access to land has increased since November 2012, as restrictions are not enforced as far or frequently beyond 300 metres from the fence. While some farmers, herders and others are returning to use land they had not been able to access for years prior to November 2012, they continue to face significant physical and financial

⁶ For example, a recent study on shelter indicated that overcrowding was linked to increased family violence, fear of sexual violence, stress and anxiety, and negative impacts on children: NRC, *Overview of the Housing Situation in the Gaza Strip* (March 2013). In relation to the needs of older people, see HelpAge, *Needs assessment report with a special focus on older people in the Gaza Strip affected by the conflict* (June 2012).

⁷ For further analysis, see the six-monthly Protection Cluster Updates on the Access Restricted Areas in the Gaza Strip.

⁸ In July 2013, the Egyptian navy prohibited fishing activity off the coast of Northern Sinai, including Rafah, for security reasons. Two violent incidents involving the Egyptian navy were recorded on 30 August and 14 September 2013, resulting in the injury of 3 fishermen, arrest of 5 others, and destruction of the engine and fishing nets of one boat.

⁹ From 21 March to 21 May 2013, Israel halved the permitted fishing zone from 6 to 3 nautical miles, 'in response to rocket fire' for which a Palestinian armed group had claimed responsibility. These tightened restrictions were imposed during the height of the sardine season and were directed at and had a punitive effect on the civilian population. These measures formed part of the ongoing punitive measures imposed on the civilian population in Gaza in the context of the blockade, in violation of the prohibition on collective penalties under Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

¹⁰ Source: FAO and Fishermen Syndicate of Gaza.

risks in doing so. Moreover, the use, or risk of use, of live fire continues to undermine service provision and the ability of humanitarian organisations to provide assistance.¹¹

- **Lack of accountability:** The lack of criminal investigations into deaths and injuries caused by Israeli forces, and other violations in the ARA, remains a key concern.¹² Access of victims to an effective remedy for harm suffered as a result of Israeli actions is also a priority.
- **Protracted displacement:** The estimated 200 families¹³ whose homes have been destroyed or damaged in the ARA are unable to rebuild and return to their homes and land with any guarantee of safety and security. These families face long-term displacement and vulnerability: nearly 75% of heads of household of these displaced families are unemployed, and only 33% of them receive rental assistance.

Vulnerable groups include fishermen, particularly in light of recent developments along the maritime border with Egypt. On land, based on an analysis of violent incidents to date in 2013, families living in, or individuals working in, areas in the North (east of Jabalia, Beit Hanoun and Beit Lahia) and Middle Area (around Burej, Deir-El-Balah) are at particular risk.

As the occupying power, Israel is bound by its obligations under international human rights law in respect of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, including ensuring their rights to work, an adequate standard of living, including food, and to life, liberty and security. Israel must investigate deaths and injuries caused by its security forces in the ARA, and hold accountable those individuals found responsible.

Required protection responses include monitoring and documentation of violations, including grave violations against children, and of changes in access restrictions; legal assistance and advocacy in order to support efforts to seek accountability and an effective remedy for violations of international law through mechanisms in place in Israel; and support for increased and protection-sensitive humanitarian programming and assistance by the humanitarian community for at-risk communities in the ARA (in particular, for farmers newly accessing land since November 2012). There is also a need for an analysis of the impact of the imposition and enforcement of the ARA on women and children, including their access to land and services, and specific needs. Psychosocial interventions targeting communities in or affected by the ARA are also required, as is protective presence where possible.

Blockade and restrictions on movement to and from the Gaza Strip

The continued imposition of the blockade, and related restrictions on the exit and entry of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, is a key driver of humanitarian need. It also compounds the fragmentation of the occupied Palestinian territory. The ongoing restrictions on movement of persons and goods in and out of Gaza undermine the enjoyment of the rights of Palestinians in Gaza.

Priority protection concerns include:

- **Denial of permits:** Apart from a limited number of people meeting strict criteria imposed by Israel to obtain permits to travel through Israel to the West Bank or other destinations, Palestinians in Gaza are prohibited from leaving the territory through the Erez/Beit Hanoun crossing. This undermines freedom of movement for Gazans, particularly as the only alternative, the Rafah crossing to Egypt, is often closed or restricted.¹⁴ Of particular concern are the denial of

¹¹ See Protection Cluster Update on the Access Restricted Areas in the Gaza Strip, 1 January to 30 June 2013.

¹² Note in contrast, in the West Bank, since April 2011, military police investigations are automatically opened in every case of the killing of an “uninvolved” civilian by Israeli security forces.

¹³ Source: Shelter Sector, Gaza.

¹⁴ See OCHA, *Situation Report: Humanitarian impact of reduced access between Gaza and Egypt* (23 September 2013), for information on restrictions on freedom of movement through Rafah Crossing.

permits for humanitarian workers and civil society;¹⁵ denial of permits in 9% of urgent medical cases referred to Israel or the West Bank for treatment not available in Gaza; and restrictions on exit for families of prisoners from Gaza who are being detained in Israel.

- Lack of identification documents: Between 40,000 and 50,000 persons currently reside in the Gaza Strip without any identification documents issued or recognised by Israeli authorities, and are effectively “stateless”. Due to their lack of documentation, they are unable to travel outside Gaza, which impacts upon their access to health and education, and ability to visit family.¹⁶
- Separation of families: Many Palestinian families are separated as a result of the different identity documents and Israeli laws and policies that restrict the movement of Palestinians and limit the reunification of families.¹⁷ A Palestinian man or woman from Gaza whose spouse is from the West Bank is not entitled to live there; however Israel tends to allow West Bank residents to move to the Gaza Strip with their families. Permission to visit a seriously ill family member or attend their mourning rituals in the West Bank is limited to first-degree relatives.¹⁸
- Detention and interrogation of Palestinians seeking to leave Gaza through Erez/Beit Hanoun crossing: There are numerous cases of Palestinians being detained by Israeli authorities when leaving Gaza through Erez/Beit Hanoun crossing for medical, family or other reasons, after being granted permits. Also, women in need of specialised medical treatment outside Gaza have been called for security interviews as part of the permit application process, and families have refused to let them attend due to concerns about potential treatment during the interview process; this then affects their ability to access necessary health services. Persons with disabilities face additional obstacles due to inaccessible and inadequate security procedures where they are deprived of their assistive devices (e.g. wheelchairs) and treated without dignity.
- Detention of persons, including children, seeking to cross the fence to Israel: In the first six months of 2013, 46 Gazans, including 24 children, were detained by Israeli authorities while crossing the fence to seek work in Israel. Little information is known about the situation of these detainees.

As the occupying power, Israel is obliged to ensure the provision of food, medical supplies, public health and hygiene for Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.¹⁹ The blockade and related restrictions applied by Israel target and impose hardship on the civilian population, effectively penalising them for acts they have not committed, in contravention of the prohibition on collective penalties.²⁰

Monitoring and documentation, legal assistance and advocacy are required to address the above concerns. In the case of children detained while crossing into Israel for economic opportunities, targeted programming to provide them with preventative protection and alternatives should be explored.

B. West Bank, including East Jerusalem

Key protection concerns in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, are forced displacement, settler violence, and violations by Israeli security forces.

¹⁵ Members of Palestinian humanitarian and civil society organisations in the Gaza Strip are mostly unable to travel to the West Bank, while their colleagues are in turn barred from entering Gaza. In August 2013, Palestinian NGO members of the Protection Cluster were denied permits to travel from Gaza to Ramallah to attend an oPt-wide Protection Cluster meeting; and members of Gazan women's organisations were denied permits to travel through Erez/Beit Hanoun crossing to attend a conference seeking to address the separation of families as a result of the law and policies of the Israeli occupation.

¹⁶ B'Tselem, *Israel must take action to regulate the status of tens of thousands of Gazans living without IDs* (21 July 2013). Israel still controls the Palestinian Population Registry.

¹⁷ WCLAC, JCW, CWLRC, *Falling through the cracks: How the Israeli Occupation Breaks Palestinian Families* (August 2013).

¹⁸ Gisha, *Separation of Families due to the Separation between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank* (May 2010).

¹⁹ Articles 55 and 56 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

²⁰ Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Forced displacement

Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, are at risk of forced displacement, due to the interplay of multiple factors, including demolitions, forced evictions, settler violence, movement and access restrictions, lack of access to services, and lack of civil documentation in Jerusalem. These factors are driven by a number of Israeli policies and practices including the existence and expansion of settlements, the Wall, the discriminatory planning regime, the declaration of closed military zones, and the permit regime. These lead to “creeping annexation” and fragmentation and demographic changes within the oPt, undermining the right to self-determination.²¹

Priority concerns that directly cause or increase the risk of forced displacement are:

- **Discriminatory and unlawful planning regime:** The planning regime applied by Israeli authorities in Area C of the West Bank excludes Palestinians from the decision-making process, facilitates unlawful policies such as illegal settlements, the Wall and the annexation of East Jerusalem, and fails to meet Israel’s obligations under international law.²² In practice, the planning regime makes it almost impossible for Palestinians in Area C to obtain permits to build and repair residential and livelihoods structures, impedes the development of services and infrastructure, and puts Palestinians at risk of forcible transfer and forced evictions, in violation of Israel’s obligations under international law.²³ Less than 1% of Area C has been assigned for Palestinian development; in contrast, 43% of the West Bank is allocated to settlement local and regional councils.²⁴ In East Jerusalem, which was illegally annexed, Israel has likewise failed under its national planning institutions to provide Palestinians with planning that meets their basic housing and other needs in compliance with Israel’s human rights obligations.²⁵ Only 13% of East Jerusalem is zoned for Palestinian construction, much of which is already built-up; in contrast, 35% of land in East Jerusalem has been expropriated for Israeli settlement use.²⁶ Expropriation of property in East Jerusalem from Palestinians residing in Jerusalem as well as elsewhere in the West Bank, including through the potential application of the Absentee Property Law in East Jerusalem, further increases the risk of displacement.²⁷
- **Demolitions and forced evictions:** From 1 January to 16 September 2013, 521 structures (including 196 residential structures) were demolished in Area C and East Jerusalem, rendering 862 Palestinians, including 438 children, homeless, and affecting the livelihoods of another 1,455 people. This is an increase from the same period in 2012, when 461 structures (including 110 residential structures) were demolished, rendering 681 people, including 357 children, homeless. In Area C, the implementation of the discriminatory and unlawful planning regime and related emerging legal trends, such as new regulations applicable to agricultural structures and the criminalisation of building without a permit, are the primary driving factors behind demolitions. In East Jerusalem, the discriminatory urban planning policy (the so-called “demographic balance policy”), which aims to restrict the growth of the Palestinian population in the Jerusalem municipality to 30-40%, is the main driver for demolitions and forced evictions: lack of adequate

²¹ Report of the international fact-finding mission on Israeli settlements in the oPt, including East Jerusalem, A/HRC/22/63 (7 February 2013); Report of the Secretary-General on Israeli settlements in the oPt, A/67/375 (18 September 2012).

²² For a detailed legal analysis, see Diakonia, *Planning to Fail, the planning regime in Area C of the West Bank: an international law perspective* (September 2013).

²³ Under international humanitarian and human rights law, Israel, as the Occupying Power, has the primary obligation to provide for the welfare of Palestinians in the occupied territory, and to respect, protect and fulfil their rights, including the rights to adequate housing, health and education.

²⁴ OCHA, *Factsheet on the Humanitarian Impact of Israeli Settlement Policies* (December 2012).

²⁵ OCHA, *East Jerusalem: Key Humanitarian Concerns* (March 2011).

²⁶ OCHA, *Factsheet on East Jerusalem: Update of Key Humanitarian Concerns* (December 2012).

²⁷ For an analysis on the emerging legal trends regarding the possible application of the Absentee Property Law (1950) to property in East Jerusalem, see Civic Coalition for Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem, *Israel’s Absentees’ Property Law: A tool for taking control of Palestinian land* (2013).

housing and services are also contributing factors. An estimated 33% of Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem lack Israeli building permits, leaving at least 93,100 residents at risk of demolitions.²⁸

- Movement and access restrictions, and the permit regime: Restrictions on freedom of movement²⁹ and the permit regime impact on access to land, water, livelihoods and employment opportunities; restrict access to services, including education and health; and create separation from family and social networks. This greatly increases the risk of displacement. At particular risk are communities living in the Seam Zone and Wall-affected communities, especially in East Jerusalem.³⁰ Around 7,500 Palestinians live in the Seam Zone, a closed area between the Green Line and the Barrier, and require special permits to continue living in their homes.³¹ Some 150 Palestinian rural communities have land and water resources isolated by the Wall and must obtain “prior coordination” or “visitor permits” to access this area, severely undermining their livelihoods. The Wall also adversely affects communities in East Jerusalem, in particular communities who are “walled out” from the urban centre, and transforms their geography, economy and social life.
- Residency rights: The loss of legal residency, denial of family unification, and restricted registration of children increase the risk of forced displacement for Palestinians in East Jerusalem and their family members who hold West Bank or Gaza Strip identity documents. Under Israeli law, Palestinians in East Jerusalem are considered “permanent residents”: their residency is conditional on their proving that their “centre of life” is in East Jerusalem, and may be revoked for various reasons. Residency rights are not automatically transferred through marriage, nor acquired automatically at birth. The laws and practice in place make it nearly impossible for spouses from the West Bank or Gaza Strip to be granted residency rights through family unification processes, and children (in particular those of “mixed” couples) are at risk of remaining unregistered. From 1967 to 2010, approximately 14,000 East Jerusalem Palestinians had their residency revoked by Israeli authorities.³² From 2000 to 2013, Israeli authorities rejected 43% of family unification applications and 24% of child registration applications: it is estimated that there are as many as 10,000 unregistered children in East Jerusalem.³³ Over the years, Israeli authorities have increased difficulties for East Jerusalem Palestinians to maintain their residency rights: of particular concern is the introduction of new Israeli procedures related to residency and identity documents with expiration dates.
- Closed military zones: Approximately 18% of the West Bank has been declared as a closed military zone for training or a “firing zone”.³⁴ An estimated 86 Palestinian (mostly Bedouin or herding) communities, of which 38 communities (some 5,000 people) lie fully within closed military zones, are affected by closed military zones in the West Bank, including military zones established on privately-owned land. These communities are at direct risk of forced eviction and forcible transfer, repeated temporary evacuation due to military training exercises, and demolitions. This compounds pre-existing vulnerabilities and humanitarian needs in the affected communities. At particular risk are an estimated 1,300 people in Masafer Yatta (“Firing Zone 918”) and communities residing fully or partially in closed military zones in the northern Jordan Valley.
- Restricted access to basic services: In certain communities, particularly in Area C, restricted access to basic services increases their vulnerability and can be a trigger of displacement. The

²⁸ OCHA, *Factsheet on the Humanitarian Impact of Israeli Settlement Policies* (December 2012). Since 1967, Israeli authorities have demolished thousands of Palestinian-owned structures in the oPt, including an estimated 2,000 houses in East Jerusalem.

²⁹ These include the Wall, checkpoints, roadblocks, earth mounds, and restricted areas requiring coordinated access, including close to settlements.

³⁰ OCHA, *The Humanitarian Impact of the Barrier* (July 2012).

³¹ For an analysis on the experience of women living in the Seam Zone, see WCLAC, *Life behind the Wall: the experience of women living in the Seam Zones* (2010).

³² OCHA, *Factsheet on East Jerusalem: Update of Key Humanitarian Concerns* (December 2012).

³³ Information from Society of St. Yves. See also OCHA, *East Jerusalem, key humanitarian concerns* (March 2011), pp. 11-26.

³⁴ OCHA, *The Humanitarian impact of Israeli-declared “Firing Zones” in the West Bank* (August 2012).

denial of basic services, for example access to water, may have a devastating impact on community livelihoods and their ability to sustain themselves, particularly for farming or herding communities. Lack of access to social services are also a protection concern in Area C, due to absence of effective presence of Palestinian Authority institutions and Israel's failure to fulfil its obligations towards Palestinians under international law.

While the risk of forced displacement affects communities across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, particularly vulnerable geographic locations and communities are Palestinians living in the Seam Zone (Wall-affected and dislocated communities); Bedouin and herding communities on the Jerusalem periphery (2,300 people, mainly refugees), South Hebron Hills (1,300 people in Masafer Yatta), and northern Jordan Valley (communities residing fully or partially in closed military zones); some 1,000 East Jerusalem Palestinians at risk of mass demolition and eviction in the Al-Bustan area of Silwan, and the H2 area in Hebron.

Forced evictions, forcible transfer and displacement run counter to international law: they may amount to forcible transfer in violation of international humanitarian law, and may constitute forced eviction in contravention of international human rights law.³⁵ The impacts of displacement on communities and individuals include loss of assets, livelihoods and access to services, psychosocial distress, negative coping mechanisms including child labour, early marriage of girls³⁶ and loss of community resilience.³⁷ Special consideration should be given to the impact of demolitions and displacement on women and girls, as their lives traditionally revolve around the private sphere of the home. Women experience anxiety, depression and distress in fear and anticipation of demolitions and forced evictions, in addition to the psychological impact of actual demolitions and forced evictions.³⁸ As a result of displacement, families are often obliged to live with extended families in overcrowded and unsuitable conditions, resulting in loss of privacy and autonomy for women, and the risk of violence and sexual assault for women and children, which has reportedly resulted in early marriages for girls.³⁹ The experiences of men are exacerbated by a perceived failure to provide a safe haven for their families in accordance with traditional gender roles and by social pressure not to publicly show emotions or weakness.

Girls, boys, women and men are in need of psychosocial support to overcome the difficult and traumatic experience of the anticipated and actual demolitions of homes, forced evictions and resulting displacement. Legal assistance is key in order to prevent forced displacement: an important gap that needs to be addressed is legal assistance in relation to residency rights in East Jerusalem. In addition to direct responses to demolitions and incidents of displacement (including the provision of shelter-related assistance, livelihoods support, legal assistance, psychosocial support and protective presence), there is a need to address the prevention and mitigation of the risk of displacement through programming. This includes interventions to provide safe access to education and services, training and adequate tools for communities and community-based organisations to assess protection risks, and document and report incidents, and strategic advocacy. Interventions should contain a prevention component which focuses on the mitigation of risks associated with key triggers that lead to displacement.

³⁵ Article 49 Fourth Geneva Convention, Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and Article 17 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. See also Principle 6 of the Guiding Principles on Internally Displaced Persons (2011), and General Comments 4 and 7 of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

³⁶ Kvinna till Kvinna, *Inequalities facing Women living in Area C of the occupied Palestinian territories* (October 2012).

³⁷ See, for example, UNRWA, *Al Jabal: a study on the transfer of Bedouin Palestine Refugees* (May 2013).

³⁸ WCLAC, *Forced Evictions: Assessing the Impact on Palestinian Women in East Jerusalem* (November 2010); WCLAC, *Submission to CEDAW* (2011); and Al-Haq and WCLAC, *Alternative Report on Israel to the Pre-Sessional Working Group of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (November 2010).

³⁹ WCLAC, *Submission to CEDAW* (2011); Report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women its Causes and Consequences, Yakin Erturk, Mission to Occupied Palestinian Territory (2005), E/CN.4/2005/72/Add.4, para. 29.

Settler violence and related actions

Violence by Israeli settlers against Palestinians and their property in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is directly linked to the presence of Israeli settlements and lack of law enforcement and accountability by Israeli authorities, and has the effect of restricting Palestinian access to land and resources. From January to August 2013, 278 incidents of settler-related violence were recorded, including 70 incidents resulting in casualties (with 110 casualties, including 30 children, caused by settlers), 208 incidents resulting in property damage, and 7,714 trees destroyed or damaged. Since 2009, the number of trees destroyed or damaged has increased almost four-fold, the number of incidents resulting in casualties has more than doubled, and the number of casualties caused by settlers has increased by 30%.⁴⁰ From January to August 2013, 143 Palestinians (including 25 children) were injured by Israeli security forces during settler-related violence incidents; this is a more than four-fold increase compared to the same period in 2012, when 34 Palestinians (including 13 children) were injured in such incidents.

Priority concerns related to settler violence are:

- **The lack of law enforcement and accountability:** From 2005 to July 2013, only 8.5% of Israeli police investigations into offences committed by Israeli settlers against Palestinians led to indictment, and 84% of files were closed due to police investigation failures.⁴¹ The lack of effective action by Israeli security forces to prevent and protect Palestinians from settler violence, coupled with the lack of effective investigations by Israeli police, serve to encourage further violence. This is evident in trends such as the increase in settler attacks closer to and in Palestinian communities (including in Area B and A), and the increase in casualties caused by Israeli security forces in settler-related violence.
- **Access to land and livelihoods:** The continuing destruction of and damage to productive trees, in particular olive trees, have a cumulative and detrimental impact on the livelihoods of families and communities. In addition, access to land in areas close to settlements is restricted for Palestinians, and farmers require prior coordination to access their land.⁴² At the same time, settlement expansion and related activities, including settler agricultural activity, are increasing using Palestinian land and water resources.⁴³ Reduced access to land and decreased sustainability of livelihoods are further factors that increase the risk of displacement.
- **Access to services:** Violence and harassment by settlers targeting schools and children impedes access to education: in the first six months of 2013, 7 incidents of attacks on schools and 11 incidents of denial of access to education were recorded, affecting 6,316 children. Fear of settler-related violence has been reported as one of the reasons why girls are prevented from accessing school, particularly in Area C.⁴⁴ Access to water resources is also restricted due to the takeover of

⁴⁰ For the number of trees damaged during the same period in previous years, the figure was 6,094 in 2012, 5,593 in 2011, 1,790 in 2010, and 1,950 in 2009. For the number of incidents resulting in casualties during the same period in previous years, the figure was 63 in 2012, 87 in 2011, 49 in 2010, and 33 in 2009. For the number of casualties caused by settlers during the same period in previous years, the figure was 102 (including 30 children) in 2012, 122 (including 18 children) in 2011 (in addition to 1 adult and 2 children killed), 70 (including 22 children) in 2010 (in addition to 1 child killed), and 84 (including 23 children) in 2009 (source: OCHA).

⁴¹ See Yesh Din, *Law Enforcement on Israeli Civilians in the West Bank* (July 2013). These figures are almost identical to those collected and published by Yesh Din since 2005, illustrating the lack of meaningful action taken to address identified flaws in the investigation process.

⁴² In July 2013, on land within the perimeter fence of Itamar settlement, where ‘prior coordination’ with Israeli authorities is required for access, more than 1,150 olive trees belonging to farmers in the village of ‘Awarta were cut down.

⁴³ From 1997 to 2013, the total area used for Israeli agriculture in the West Bank grew by 35% (with 40% of this growth in areas around “religious” settlements); in 2013, 93,000 dunums are used for Israeli settler agriculture - see Kerem Navot, *Israeli Settlers’ Agriculture as a Means of Land Takeover in the West Bank* (September 2013). In comparison, the area cultivated by Palestinians in the West Bank declined from 1.7 million dunums in 1984 to 1.1 million dunums in 2010.

⁴⁴ Kvinna till Kvinna, *Inequalities facing Women living in Area C of the occupied Palestinian territories* (October 2012).

springs by settlers, or damage to water infrastructure. This has a direct impact on women, who often bear the responsibility of collecting water from wells and other sources.⁴⁵

- **Illegal expropriation of land:** In the absence of effective law enforcement, settlers continue to illegally use and expropriate Palestinian land, property and resources, including water springs. Of particular concern are trends such as the recent decision to give settlers access to the West Bank land registry,⁴⁶ and 'lawfare' by settler groups to expropriate land and compel demolitions. For example, the settler organization *Regavim*, jointly with settlement local councils, has initiated numerous legal actions in the Israeli High Court, calling for Israeli authorities to demolish "illegal" Palestinian private and public property, in order to expedite the process of land expropriation and displacement of Palestinian communities living close to settlements.⁴⁷

Communities that are particularly vulnerable to settler violence include six communities affected by Yitzhar settlement (Nablus governorate),⁴⁸ and communities near Bracha settlement (Nablus governorate), Tel Rumeida, Kiryat Arba and Ma'on settlements (Hebron governorate) and Beit El settlement (Ramallah governorate).

Israeli authorities are under the obligation to protect Palestinians and their property from acts of violence by settlers, and to ensure accountability for crimes committed.⁴⁹ Failure to fulfil these obligations creates a culture of impunity that fosters further violence. The impacts of settler violence include physical insecurity; loss of land, resources, assets and livelihoods; physical injuries; psychosocial distress; impeded access to services; risk of displacement; and increased risk of arrest and detention of boys. The lives of women and girls are directly and indirectly affected by settler violence in various ways: continued exposure to settler violence has a psychological impact on women, who report suffering from anxiety and constant fear for themselves and their children; the increased pressure adds further stress and tensions to family life, and can increase the risk of violence within families; and women may be restricted from working or studying outside the home because of the threat of settler violence.⁵⁰

Required responses include livelihoods support, legal assistance, psychosocial support for children, women and men, protective presence, initiatives to ensure safe access to education and services, and advocacy. In addition, there is a need to ensure farmers' access to their land throughout the year, and not only during the olive harvest.

Violations by Israeli security forces

The killing and injury of Palestinian civilians by Israeli security forces and the ill-treatment of Palestinian children in Israeli military detention are key issues of protection concern. From January to August 2013, 14 Palestinian civilians were killed by Israeli security forces in the West Bank, including 2 children; another 2,878, including 1,184 children, were injured. This represents a dramatic increase compared to the fatalities (4) and injuries (1,945 including 242 children) recorded during the same period in 2012. As at the end of July 2013, 195 boys, aged 12 to 17 years, were being held in Israeli

⁴⁵ WCLAC, *Submission to CEDAW* (2011).

⁴⁶ In July 2013, the Jerusalem District Court ordered the Israeli Civil Administration to give settlers access to the names of Palestinian landowners in areas near settlements. The West Bank Land Registry was marked classified after 1967 to prevent fraudulent land purchases.

⁴⁷ To date, the Court has ruled in favour of such petitions in a number of cases (e.g. in Burin, Um Fagarah and Susiya), and an unsuccessful petition contributed to a decision by the Military Commander to issue demolition orders in Khan Al Ahmar.

⁴⁸ Burin, Madama, Asira al Qibliya, Urif, Einabus and Huwwara.

⁴⁹ As the Occupying Power, Israel has the obligation to maintain public order, and to ensure that protected persons are safeguarded against all acts of violence or threats thereof (Article 43, Hague Regulations; Articles 4 and 27, Fourth Geneva Convention). Israel also has the obligation to protect the right to life and physical integrity of Palestinians (Article 6, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights).

⁵⁰ WCLAC, *Women's Voices in the Shadow of the Settlements* (2010).

military detention for alleged security infractions,⁵¹ and at least 49 children reported being subjected to ill-treatment by Israeli security forces.

Priority concerns related to ISF violence are:

- **Increase in civilian casualties:** In 2013, there has been a marked increase in civilian fatalities and injuries caused by Israeli security forces. This raises serious concerns about the excessive use of force by Israeli security forces in law enforcement, in particular regarding the recourse to live ammunition. There has been an increase in demonstrations and tensions in the West Bank, often linked to settlements and related infrastructure (including the Wall), with heightened violence by both Israeli security forces and protesters. There has also been an increase in incursions by Israeli security forces and resulting clashes, particularly in refugee camps. From January to September 2013, there was an 80% increase in the number of operations by Israeli security forces in refugee camps compared to same period in 2012, and a 118% increase in the number of injuries affecting camp residents.⁵² Women who have experienced night raids in Palestinian villages and towns express their fear and the unsettling effect on their families, in particular on children.⁵³ In Area C, women report that the fear of being subjected to violence by Israeli security forces negatively affects their ability to leave their villages.⁵⁴
- **Arrest, ill-treatment and torture of children in detention:** The arrest and detention of children for alleged security infractions (largely stone-throwing), ill-treatment and torture in military custody, and prosecution in juvenile military courts are serious protection concerns.⁵⁵ Types of ill-treatment reported by affected children, predominantly boys, include blindfolding and painful restraint during arrest, transfer and interrogation; verbal abuse; physical violence; and threats of violence. Particularly vulnerable locations include H2 (Hebron), East Jerusalem and specific refugee camps (e.g. Al Arrub and Aida camps). Upon their release, children who have been arrested or detained suffer from depression, isolation, and difficulty reintegrating into their school environment, and their relationships with parents and siblings change significantly: they become less obedient to their parents, and more violent towards younger siblings.⁵⁶ Mothers also suffer from anxiety and other forms of distress during the detention of children, and even in anticipation or fear that their children will be arrested.⁵⁷ Families also bear the costs of high fines for the release of detained children.
- **Lack of accountability:** From 2003 to 2013, the Israeli Military Police Criminal Investigations Department opened over 179 investigations into the suspected killing of Palestinian civilians by Israeli soldiers, but only 16 of these files led to indictments.⁵⁸ Since April 2011, military police investigations have been automatically opened in every case of the killing of an “uninvolved” civilian by Israeli security forces in the West Bank. Such investigations should also be opened in cases of serious injuries of civilians caused by Israeli security forces, and all investigations must abide by international standards of independence, impartiality, timeliness, thoroughness and effectiveness. Israel must prevent the torture and ill-treatment of children living in the oPt, ensure effective investigations into alleged cases of ill-treatment and torture of children, and

⁵¹ Over the past two and a half years, the number of Palestinian children in Israeli military detention at the end of each month has fluctuated around 200.

⁵² Source: UNRWA.

⁵³ WCLAC, *Glimpses of Life under Occupation* (October 2012), p. 11.

⁵⁴ Kvinna till Kvinna, *Inequalities facing Women living in Area C of the occupied Palestinian territories* (October 2012), p. 5.

⁵⁵ UNICEF, *Palestinian children in Israeli Military Detention, Observations and Recommendations*, February 2013; UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations on the second to fourth periodic reports of Israel* (June 2013), paras. 35 and 36; Madaa Creative Center, *The impact of child arrest and detention* (2012); B'Tselem, *The Illegal Behaviour of the Police toward Minors in Silwan Suspected of Stone Throwing* (December 2010); ACRI, *Violations of the Youth Law by the Police in East Jerusalem* (March 2011).

⁵⁶ Save the Children Sweden, *The Impact of Child Detention: occupied Palestinian territory*. (2012).

⁵⁷ WCLAC, *Glimpses of Life under Occupation* (October 2012).

⁵⁸ See Yesh Din, *MPCID investigations into the circumstances surrounding the and death of Palestinians* (August 2013).

bring those responsible before justice. Ensuring accountability is an important deterrent to prevent the reoccurrence of violations in the future.

Locations that are particularly vulnerable to violations by Israeli security forces include refugee camps, communities where weekly demonstrations take place, and communities affected by regular settler violence. In 2013, the governorates with the highest prevalence of injuries caused by Israeli security forces were Hebron, Ramallah, Jerusalem and Bethlehem: in Hebron governorate, there has been a more than four-fold increase in injuries compared to the same period in 2012.⁵⁹ In relation to the arrest, ill-treatment and torture of children, boys are at highest risk.

The use of force and firearms in law enforcement operations must adhere to international human rights standards.⁶⁰ The rights of children during arrest, interrogation and detention must be respected.⁶¹ All credible allegations of violations must be investigated and those found responsible must be prosecuted.

Required protection responses include monitoring and documentation of violations, including grave violations against children, legal assistance and advocacy in order to support efforts to seek accountability and an effective remedy. Further, psychosocial support is required for victims and also for family members who are indirectly affected by such violations. Cash assistance to respond to damage caused by incursions in refugee camps is also required.

C. Protection of children and adolescents (child protection)

The protection crisis weighs heavily on children, who comprise half of the population in the oPt. Child protection concerns have been impacting upon generations of children and adolescents growing up in a society permeated by the occupation and related violence, and with a deep sense of insecurity for their future. These concerns are exacerbated by the fragility of and pressures on traditional community-based child protection mechanisms.

Priority child protection concerns include:

- Impact of conflict and violence: Conflict-related violence and settler violence have serious physical and psychological impacts on children and adolescents. In Gaza, children are the overwhelming majority of victims of ERWs. In the West Bank, the arrest and ill-treatment of children (predominantly boys) in Israeli military detention affects their psychosocial development and life prospects. Ensuring accountability is a priority, and an important deterrent to prevent future violations.
- Impact on psychosocial and mental well-being: The protracted occupation and related violence impacts upon the coping mechanisms and resilience of children, adolescents and their caregivers, leading to feelings of fear and frustration among the community at large, as well as increased levels of violence in the home, at school, and in the community, hindering the enjoyment of children's rights and preventing their normal and positive development. Psychosocial interventions remain the key and essential child protection response to incidents resulting from the conflict and the occupation, enabling children and adolescents to cope with violations directly affecting them and the insecurity for the future. The psychosocial response mechanism in the Gaza Strip and West Bank requires ongoing support to ensure it can respond to current humanitarian needs, and maintain the ability to scale up as the situation changes.

⁵⁹ During the same period in 2012, governorates with the highest prevalence of injuries were Qalqilya, Ramallah, Jerusalem and Hebron.

⁶⁰ The United Nations Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials, and Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials, govern the use of force by law enforcement officials and provide that the use of firearms is only permitted when strictly unavoidable in order to protect human life.

⁶¹ Article 37, Convention on the Rights of the Child; Article 32, Fourth Geneva Convention; United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty, Resolution 45/113, 14 December 1990.

- **Forced displacement:** Children account for half of those displaced in the oPt. The impact of displacement on children includes psychosocial distress and negative coping mechanisms such as child labour and early marriage of girls.
- **Access to services:** Children are faced with a number of protection risks that affect their access to education, including attacks by settlers on their way to school and damage/destruction of school infrastructure. Further, discriminatory planning restrictions in Area C and East Jerusalem impact upon public infrastructure and service delivery, including services for children.
- **Child labour:** As a result of rising unemployment and poverty, children have been drawn into the Palestinian labour market or to seek work in Israeli settlements, where they are left without protection. Other factors contributing to the spread of child labour are the absence of law enforcement regarding compulsory and free education, and the lack of systematic control on workplaces employing children.

Required child protection responses include psychosocial support, monitoring and documentation of violations, including grave violations against children, legal assistance, advocacy, and interventions addressing prevention and building resilience. In October 2012, the Global Child Protection Working Group issued the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action: it is a priority that the Minimum Standards are rolled out in the oPt and that all partners are able to implement them in order to meet the needs of children.

D. Gender-based violence⁶²

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a key protection concern in the oPt. The protracted protection crisis, and its impact on Palestinian society and gender and family dynamics, has exacerbated GBV in all its forms, including sexual violence, domestic violence, early marriage, and political violence.⁶³ It is acknowledged that GBV in humanitarian settings affects men and women, boys and girls, and those with disabilities differently. Of particular concern is the increase of GBV cases reported and the limited multi-sectoral protection and response services available in Area C and East Jerusalem, and in the Gaza Strip.⁶⁴ In the view of GBV survivors, deteriorating economic conditions in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and related high unemployment due to the blockade and policies of the Occupying Power, are among the main drivers of violence against women.⁶⁵

Priority concerns related to GBV are:

- **Sexual assault:** Risks of sexual assault and harassment due to living in overcrowded spaces and with extended family have been reported.⁶⁶ Research also shows that checkpoints represent spaces of humiliation, and present both physical and psychological danger to women and girls.⁶⁷ When detained by Israeli security forces, women report nuanced sexual acts, which to them entail abuse, but are not necessarily perceived as such by Israel or the international community.

⁶² Gender-based violence is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will, and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between males and females. Acts of GBV violate a number of universal human rights protected by international instruments and conventions. See *IASC Guidelines on Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings* (2005).

⁶³ According to focus groups organised by MoWA for preparing the 2011-2019 National Strategy to Combat VAW, women interviewed indicated that oppressive policies of occupation, which impose check points and expose men to daily insults, in turn increases the severity of violence perpetrated against women by their husbands and brothers.

⁶⁴ Practitioners, service providers and organisations working in the area of GBV acknowledge that the phenomenon of GBV in the oPt is under-reported. In Gaza, UNFPA women's centres have observed an increased number of GBV cases. In a number of refugee camps, UNRWA is recording reported incidents of GBV and referring patients to medical services.

⁶⁵ Women's Studies Center, *Palestinian Women in the Cycle of Violence*, pp. 31 and 35.

⁶⁶ Women's Studies Center, *Sexual Violence Against Female Teenagers in the West Bank* (2007).

⁶⁷ World Bank, *Checkpoints and Barriers: Searching for Livelihoods in the West Bank and Gaza Gender Dimensions of Economic Collapse* (2010), p. 49; Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), *Palestinian Women and Security: Why Palestinian Women and Girls Do Not Feel Secure* (2010), p.20; Women's Studies Center, *Women, Armed Conflict and Loss: Mental Health of Palestinian Women in the Occupied Territories* (2004), p.27; PWRDS, *Violence Against Palestinian Women and Girls Fact Sheet* (2010).

Due to the taboo surrounding sexuality, there is a concern that few women have the space or security to discuss issues related to sexual assault, and thus a response is not available.

- Increased child marriage for ‘protection’: As a preventive measure against sexual assault, it has been reported that families marry girls off, increasing the prevalence of early marriage, in particular in the Gaza Strip and Area C.⁶⁸
- Intimate partner violence: Intimate partner violence is prevalent throughout Palestinian society, but domestic violence is increasingly affecting women and children due to conflict-related distress, widespread violence, and movement restrictions.⁶⁹
- Lack of, or limited access to, services in response to GBV: Despite the needs, GBV prevention and response is very limited. Access to and utilisation of services for female and male survivors of GBV is limited due to distance, mobility restrictions, fragmentation of areas and services, and reluctance to report GBV due to fear of stigma, social exclusion, honour killings or reprisals.⁷⁰ The capacity of service providers also remains limited,⁷¹ there is no GBV inter-agency referral system, and survivors and communities have very limited information on existing services and how to access them.

Areas of special concern include those where the Palestinian Authority has limited access or coverage (Gaza Strip, Area C and East Jerusalem).

E. Actions by Palestinian duty-bearers

A number of actions or omissions by Palestinian duty-bearers that raise potential protection concerns, and exacerbate the humanitarian situation of Palestinians, also merit monitoring and relevant responses by Protection Cluster members. These include:

- Permits and other requirements imposed by the De Facto Authorities in the Gaza Strip that further restrict freedom of movement.
- The risk of displacement due to forced evictions carried out by the De Facto Authorities in the Gaza Strip, and the impact on families displaced in recent evictions (e.g. families who were relocated from Gaza City to other locations where access to services and infrastructure is not available).
- The ongoing apparent failure by the De Facto Authorities in the Gaza Strip to open criminal investigations into violations of international law, including indiscriminate projectile attacks that have killed and injured civilians in Israel, or have fallen short and killed and injured Palestinians in Gaza; attacks against Israel that originated from built-up and populated areas within Gaza which placed nearby communities at increased risk of harm; and the extra-judicial and summary executions of alleged collaborators during the escalation of hostilities in November 2012.⁷² The failure to hold perpetrators accountable makes the possibility of repeated violations in the future more likely.

⁶⁸ NRC, *Overview of the housing situation in the Gaza Strip* (March 2013), pp. 21-24; Kvinna till Kvinna, *Inequalities facing women living in Area C of the occupied Palestinian territories* (October 2012).

⁶⁹ See Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, *Violence Survey in the Palestinian Society* (2012): approximately 37% of married women had experienced physical or sexual violence by their husbands in the last 12 months, and more than 600,000 children are growing up in homes where violence against women is prevalent. According to a CFTA study of women in Gaza in 2012, widows of “martyrs” are forced to marry their husband’s brother.

⁷⁰ According to data from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (see above note 69), only 0.7% of married women exposed to violence by their husbands during the last 12 months went to a women’s organization for counselling, with the majority preferring to remain silent or take refuge in her family’s household.

⁷¹ Doctors normally treat survivors’ physical injuries but rarely discuss sexual violence or refer survivors to other services, either due to tacit acceptance of violence, blaming the victim instead, or reluctance to become involved in a case that may put their own safety at risk. Consequently, survivors are discouraged from seeking assistance through the health sector. Past efforts to train clinicians to recognize and respond to GBV have been limited to individual workshops, which have little impact and fail to institutionalise learning within healthcare structures.

⁷² The DFA has stated that an investigation was undertaken, but little information is available to validate such statements or assess any steps taken.

- The potential recruitment of children and adolescents by armed groups, that directly impacts on the rights of children to be protected from armed conflict.
- Effectiveness of actions taken by Palestinian authorities to investigate, prosecute and address gender-based violence.

III. GENDER ANALYSIS AND IMPACT ON VULNERABLE GROUPS

There is a need to collect geographically specific and consistent sex, age and disability disaggregated data to support increased and robust gender analysis and for an analysis of the impacts of these protection concerns on different members of communities and families.

A. Gender impacts

Women's organisations have documented in numerous studies the gender impacts of the occupation and conflict on women and girls. Women who experienced repeated unpredictable violence, either by Israeli security forces or settlers, exhibited chronic depression, dissociative symptoms, psychic numbing, and other personality impairments affecting their identity and psycho-social well being.⁷³ These organisations have also documented the trauma suffered by women as a result of death, injury or detention of family member, or demolition, and the need for specialised assistance and rehabilitation. It has also been reported that women, and mainly mothers, experience high levels of anticipatory terror and severe psychological impact (e.g. fear, anxiety, sleep disorders) faced with the threat of home demolition; night raids; arrest of children; settler violence; risks for children at friction points near settlements; and the denial of residency rights.⁷⁴ This also affects the ability of men and women to parent and protect children, and anger and frustration at the inability to protect one's family creates tension, and can lead to increased domestic violence. Further, fear of violence can result in conservative behaviour limiting women's and girls' freedom of movement, and their access to basic services like health clinics, education, water and sanitation.⁷⁵ There is a need for targeted psychosocial interventions to address psychological impacts on men and women, further to the support provided to them in their capacity as caregivers, in support of children's needs.

B. Impact on persons with disabilities

Persons with disabilities represent 6.9% of the Palestinian population.⁷⁶ Palestinians with disabilities, particularly those facing displacement and refugees, are particularly vulnerable. Lack of opportunities and access to health, education, employment and social services compounds disability as both a cause and consequence of associated poverty. The inclusion of Palestinians with disabilities and their specific needs in humanitarian service delivery must be ensured.

C. Impact on older people

In relation to older people, the main gaps identified are access to and accessibility of services, and the lack of inclusion of older people and their needs in humanitarian service delivery. As a result, many older people are dependent on support provided by their family and community, which is not always appropriate or adequate to meet their needs.⁷⁷

⁷³ WCLAC, *Glimpses of Life under Occupation* (October 2012).

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Issa Ar-Rabadih and Zuheir Tmeiza, *Effects of Demolitions on Women and Children* (July 2011).

⁷⁶ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, *National Disability Survey* (2011).

⁷⁷ HelpAge, *Needs assessment report with a special focus on older people in the Gaza Strip affected by the conflict* (June 2012).