



Protection Cluster  
Occupied Palestinian Territory

# Protection Cluster Monthly Update

July 2015

## Highlights from the Protection Cluster

### Protection Concerns

#### General Overview

- The Protection Cluster engaged in a process to evaluate its performance with a view to improving effectiveness and efficiency. Workshops took place in the West Bank and Gaza to reflect on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges of the current structure of the Cluster and the environment in which it performs its work. This included developing or updating terms of reference for the Cluster and all its sub-groups. Results are expected to be finalized by September 2015
- After a selection and vetting process, a funding opportunity was offered to 2 members of the Cluster, AISHA and War Child Holland, through the Humanitarian Pooled Fund, to develop further child protection activities in Gaza.

#### Gaza

- During this month, the general security situation remained relatively quiet. It was reported that five rockets were fired from Gaza at Israel with no injuries; four of them dropped short and/or exploded at the launching site, and one landed in an open area in Israel. Israeli forces launched several attacks targeting training sites and military installations belonging to Palestinian armed groups. As a result, a 65 years old Palestinian woman was injured with glass of shattered window in one airstrike on 16 July. Moreover, Israeli forces conducted four limited Israeli incursions into Gaza during the month.
- The United Nations Human Rights Council adopted a resolution based on [the findings of the United Nations Independent Commission of Inquiry on the 2014 Gaza conflict](#). The [resolution](#) emphasized “the need to ensure that all those responsible for violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law are held to account through appropriate fair and independent domestic or international criminal justice mechanisms, and to ensure the provision of effective remedy to all victims, including reparations, and stresses the need to pursue practical steps towards these goals.”
- An estimated 20,091 people had reportedly exited from the Gaza Strip through Erez crossing during the month. Despite Israel’s relaxation of its longstanding restrictions post the July-August 2014 escalation of hostilities, the criteria for travel from Gaza remain very narrow; hundreds of Gazans continue to face challenges in exiting Gaza through the crossing. Unlike the previous month, Rafah crossing was closed throughout the month.
- The “Residential Stream” of the [Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism \(GRM\) was launched at the end of July 2015 in order to support the reconstruction](#) of the estimated 12,600 housing units destroyed during summer hostilities. This is yet to produce tangible results for the about 100,000 people who remain displaced.

#### West Bank

- On 31 July, two family homes in [Duma](#) were firebombed by allegedly settlers nearby. In the first house, 18-month-old Ali Sa'ad Dawabsheh was burnt to death; his parents and 4-year-old brother were critically injured. Hate graffiti in Hebrew was left on the burnt houses during the attack.
- During July, 123 Palestinians, including 27 children and six women, were injured by Israeli forces and ten by Israeli settlers. Of these, 43 (34%) were injured during demonstrations and another 49 (39%) were injured during military operations. Another 18 (15%) Palestinians were injured in ad-hoc clashes. During the reporting period, four Israeli forces members were injured in clashes with Palestinians.
- Israeli authorities demolished 22 Palestinian homes and livelihood structures, including four residential structures, allegedly due to the lack of Israeli-issued building permits, as follows: eight were located in Area C and the demolition affected 58 people, including 33 children; six were located in Area C of East Jerusalem; and the remaining eight structures were located in East Jerusalem, resulting in 22 people displaced.

## Updates from Protection Cluster Sub-Groups

### Child Protection Working Group (CPWG)

- As part of its efforts to strengthen child protection and social welfare systems in Gaza, UNICEF through the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) has launched a case management process. This includes registration, comprehensive assessment, planning, and follow-up over a period of weeks ensuring a continuum of care for vulnerable children. The length of the follow-up process depends on the complexity of needs addressed, protection concerns as it is tailored to specific cases and individual needs. Two MOSA Child Protection Networks, and 23 Tamer and Ma'an Family Centres are now receiving referrals for case management. Since January 2015, UNICEF-supported Family Centres and Child Protection Networks have reached 167 children (62 girls and 105 boys) with this case management approach.
- The CPWG in Gaza has three active task forces: one on child protection and gender based violence referral and case management SOPs, chaired by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), which works on expanding the current referral pathways developed in Gaza; a second one on case management also chaired by NRC, which works on reviewing case management forms, developing and expanding tools, and developing the case conferencing model; a third one on emergency preparedness, which is led MOSA with support from a UNICEF consultant to implement the CPWG contingency plan activities; this aims in particular at establishing the structure for Government Collective Centres Protection Teams (which will activate in the event of an emergency); Protection Focal Points in each Governorate; and a situation monitoring framework and tools.

- In the West Bank, the CPWG finalized the 5Ws (WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN and WHOM) data entry sheet with list of activities and definitions that will be used to report on their activities related to mental health and psychosocial activities from the beginning of the year.

#### **Working Group on Grave Violations against Children**

- UNICEF, Save the Children and the Education Cluster reviewed the monitoring and reporting categories for education related violations and agreed to conduct some changes to accurately reflect the situation, in line with the global guidelines on attacks against schools.
- In addition, a discussion was held on the need to systematically use the school national ID in the reports to facilitate the analysis of trends. Follow up meetings will be held with the relevant partners to encourage and support the use of the school national ID.
- The Group continued to discuss means to strengthen its work and methodologies in light of the findings and recommendations made by the UN Secretary-General in his June 2015 report on Children in Armed Conflict, which reported on the Child Rights violations during the summer 2014 Gaza hostilities.

#### **Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Working Group (MHPSS)**

- In Gaza, since January, MHPSS members have reached 64,094 children with structured group and individual counselling services, and 440 children with specialized mental health services. A further 26,924 adults have been reached with structured psychosocial activities and counselling. Moreover, 137,769 children and 39,030 adults have received other child protection services such as case management, awareness rising on child labour, children/caregivers interaction programs and life skills education.

#### **Legal Task Force (West Bank)**

- The Task Force discussed the implications of the renewed practice of punitive demolitions, focusing on the case of the family home of one of the assailants in the Har Nof murderous attack, in Jabel Mukaber. In this case, with Court approval, Israeli police forces removed the family and its belongings from the house and sealed windows and doors with steel beams and the entire house with concrete. As a result, six innocent people – the assailant's parents and his four siblings – were left homeless.
- The group further discussed the protection implications of a recent decision by the Israeli High Court allowing building the separation wall in the Cremisan valley in Beit Jala.
- With the support of Rabbis for Human Rights – B'Tselem, in a letter sent to the Israeli Civil Administration, representatives of the village of Susiya demanded that the authorities freeze all the demolitions planned in the village. The letter was sent upon the fear of the community that the scale of destruction sought in Susiya was much greater than previously expected, and would include almost half the structures in the village. If the structures were demolished, the residents would have no means to survive in the area in extreme weather conditions. Accordingly, the demolition action, if carried out, would

effectively amount to the expulsion of the residents from their land.

- During the month under review, JALC was able to provide legal assistance for 37 cases of house demolition, of which 32 were new cases. Furthermore, 3 cases of confiscation of goods were provided with legal aid.
- JLAC conducted 3 public awareness sessions (2 in West Bank and 1 in Jerusalem) with community based organization and local governments to discuss the most pressing human rights issues concerning Palestinian communities in these areas.

#### **Access Restricted Areas (ARA) Core Group (Gaza)**

- The Group considered the protection implications of the rights violations in ARA during the month of July. In the areas adjacent to the fence, one child was reportedly killed and two other persons including a child were injured. At sea, two fishermen were reportedly injured, eight others arrested, and four boats were confiscated, reportedly in less than 6 nautical miles off Gaza ashore.

#### **Settler Violence Core Group (SVCG) (West Bank)**

- During its monthly meeting, the Group discussed its working methods and shared information about incidents. It was noted, in particular, the attack in Duma.
- During July, OCHA registered 17 settler-related incidents affecting Palestinians: 7 incidents during the Duma attack, which resulted in the killing of a baby and the injury of 11 Palestinians; 10 other incidents that resulted in the damage of 260 Palestinian-owned trees and 7 Palestinian owned-vehicles. Another 13 incidents affecting Israelis were recorded: 4 incidents resulted in the injury of 4 Israeli settlers; 9 incidents resulted in the damage of 6 Israeli-owned vehicles.

#### **Advocacy Initiatives**

- On 16 July 2015, the Advocacy Strategy and Action Plan of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) were endorsed, concluding a consultative strategy-development process led by OCHA which has taken place over the last six months. The endorsed strategy covers a two-year-period.
- Joint HCT advocacy during July focused on the implementation of the ongoing individual and coordinated HCT advocacy plan for 'Gaza one year on' activities. A [statement](#) was issued by the Humanitarian Coordinator on 7 July on this occasion, calling for an accelerated recovery effort for Gaza strip one year after 2014 hostilities.
- Gisha, [Protective Edge: One year later – too little has changed](#), 6 July 2015.
- MSF, [Testimonies from MSF patients in Gaza](#), 8 July 2015.
- ICRC, [Farmers in Gaza finally able to farm their lands](#), 9 July 2015.
- Al Mezan and the PCHR, [Update on the progress of legal interventions on behalf of victims of Israeli attacks on Gaza in July and August 2014](#), 22 July 2015.
- OCHA, [Internal Displacement in the Context of the 2014 Hostilities](#), July 2015.
- UNRWA compiled a photo essay entitled "[50 voices for 50 days of conflict: Gaza in its own words](#)" a collection of words and photos from the past 12 months.
- Handicap International, [Explosive remnants of war still threaten Gaza civilians](#), 8 July 2015.

- In response to the Israeli authorities' declared intention to demolish dozens of structures in Susiya and "relocate" residents of Abu Nuwar, with other communities in the central West Bank. The Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) visited both communities in July, discussing the situation with residents and partner organizations. Following a 23 July field visit to Susiya with diplomats from Norway, Switzerland and Italy, the HC issued a [press release](#) calling upon Israel to halt demolition plans in Area C.
- 1 July, Hamoked published an [update](#) on Punitive measures in East Jerusalem.
- 14 July, [OHCHR PRESS BRIEFING NOTE - Israel / Occupied Palestinian Territory](#).
- 16 July, Btselem published [press release](#) "ICC jurisdiction cannot be denied based on Israel's façade of investigation"
- 28 July, [UN experts urge Israel to halt legalization of force-feeding of hunger-strikers in detention](#).
- 31 July, [Statement](#) attributable to the Spokesman for the Secretary-General on the arson attack in the West Bank

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