



Protection Cluster
Occupied Palestinian Territory

Protection Cluster Monthly Update

June 2015

Highlights from the Protection Cluster

Protection Concerns

General Overview

- Protection Cluster contributed to the OCHA-led Vulnerability Profile Project, to be implemented together with the Palestinian Authority, by completing the protection section of the questionnaire for this exercise, on the basis of which data collection will be done.
- Protection Cluster started to engage on the mid-term review process on the implementation of the 2015 Strategic Response Plan (SRP) and also on the planning process for the 2016 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP).
- Two unfunded SRP projects relating to Child Protection in Gaza (from War Child Holland and AISHA) were selected in the framework of the Humanitarian Pooled Fund (HPF) to receive funding for the last 6 months of the year.

Gaza

- During June, the illegal blockade in Gaza continued to jeopardize a proper protection environment in Gaza. A total of 8 rockets were reportedly fired from Gaza at Israel; 4 of them dropped short. Israeli forces launched several attacks targeting vacant training sites and military installations belonging to Palestinian armed groups, and conducted 3 limited Israeli incursions into Gaza. No casualties were reported. Israeli forces continued to shoot at Palestinians in the Access Restricted Areas (ARA) both on land and at sea (see the ARA section).
- On 22 June, the UN Independent Commission of Inquiry (COI) on the 2014 Gaza Conflict released its report on alleged violations of international human rights and humanitarian law (A/HRC/29/52 and A/HRC/29/CRP.4). The COI found that the Israeli airstrikes on homes and families in Gaza, in which large numbers of civilians had been killed, including 551 children, were reflective of a broader policy, approved at least tacitly by decision-makers at the highest levels of government. It also found that the vast majority of projectiles fired by Palestinian armed groups towards Israel were rockets without guidance systems aimed at major population centres in Israel. The COI expressed concerns about the prevailing impunity and stressed that comprehensive and effective accountability mechanisms for violations committed by Israel or Palestinian actors would be a key deciding factor in preventing further violations. On 29 June, the Human Rights Council held an interactive dialogue with the COI, followed by a general debate on the human rights situation in Palestine and other Occupied Arab Territories.
- Reconstruction efforts after the 2014 summer hostilities continue to be limited and insufficient for the full enjoyment of rights. Efforts continue to focus mainly on physical infrastructure. Some 95,000 people were authorized under the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism (GRM) to purchase construction materials to repair their buildings damaged during the 2014 escalation of

hostilities. During June, the Palestinian Authority's housing minister announced that the reconstruction of thousands of destroyed homes would begin shortly. However, until now, not a single fully-destroyed home has been rebuilt. While Israeli authorities allowed 1.2 million tons of construction materials into Gaza Strip through the GRM, more than half of the imported materials were destined for road infrastructure projects funded by the Qatari government. As of now, the truckloads of construction materials allowed into Gaza only 5% of the need. A number of limitations continue to impact adequate responses to IDPs. These include lack of funds, the slow pace of the GRM, and the limited operational capacity of Kerem Shalom crossing. Some 100,000 internally displaced persons continue to live in overcrowded accommodation with host families or in uncertain situations in rental properties, temporary shelters, or caravans.

- In a positive development, Rafah crossing was opened for ten days (13-19 June, 23-25 June), after several months of restricted operation since 24 October 2014 after an attack in Sinai. A total of 5,029 people managed to exit Gaza, while some 1,417 others returned. For the first time in several months, Egypt allowed the entry of 487 trucks of construction materials, mainly cement, aggregates, and bitumen, into Gaza during the month. Israeli authorities introduced several measures over the last few months that has doubled the number of Palestinians exiting via Erez crossing between January (9,350 exits) and June (19,605 exits). Traders (54%) and patients (16%) account for 70 percent of total exits in June. Despite this increase, hundreds of Palestinians continued to face challenges exiting Gaza through the crossing. The current activity at Erez crossing currently stands at only 3% when compared to the levels of September 2000.

West Bank

- Protection Cluster participated in a meeting of the Area C Steering Committee discussing the situation of Bedouin and herder communities at risk of forcible transfer (a great breach of IHL), with emphasis on the Susiya communities, in the Hebron district area. In the context of an imminent risk of forced eviction, Protection Cluster, consistently with the *Rights Up Front* initiative of the Secretary-General, emphasized the need for preventive actions. In the case of Susiya, efforts were made to plan in a coordinated and systematic fashion high level visits to the community, as well as to ensuring preparedness plans and continuous protective presence.
- In June, three Palestinians males were killed by Israeli forces. On 10 June, a 23 years-old Palestinian man was killed in Jenin RC with live ammunition by the Israeli forces during search and arrest operation. Another 22 years-old Palestinian man was killed with live ammunition on the 14th of June by the Israeli forces in Kafr Malik village. On 26 June, a 23 years-old Palestinian man was killed at Al-Hamra CP after being shot by Israeli soldiers.

- During June, 63 Palestinians, including 14 children and a woman, were injured by Israeli forces and Israeli settlers. Of these, 15 (23%) were injured during demonstrations and another 21 (33%) during military operations. While another 15 (23%) Palestinians were injured in ad-hoc clashes.
- During June, Israeli authorities demolished 47 Palestinian homes and livelihood structures, including 11 residential structures, allegedly due to the lack of Israeli-issued building permits (41 structures in Area C with 29 people were displaced including 17 children, 6 structures in East Jerusalem with two people displaced).

Updates from Protection Cluster Sub-Groups

Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) (Gaza)

- Partners from the CPWG reached 133,893 children and 22,560 adults with risk education on Explosive Remnants of War (ERW). 132,154 children and 37,256 adults received child protection services including case management support, awareness rising on child labour, children/caregivers interaction programs and life skills education.
- UNICEF supported MOSA and partners to introduce a case management process including registration, a comprehensive assessment, planning, and follow up. MOSA Child Protection Networks, Tamer and Ma'an Family Centres have adopted the case management approach and receive referrals for multiple services. UNICEF supported 23 Family Centres and two Child Protection Networks to reach 155 children (59 girls and 96 boys) through this case management approach.
- A UNICEF funded consultant was appointed for a 10 week period to support the implementation of the CPWG contingency plan activities, in particular to establish the structure for shelter protection committees (which will activate in the event of an emergency); Protection Focal Points in each Governorate; and a situation monitoring framework and tools. This is to complement the preparedness and crisis response plans in Gaza.

Working Group on Grave Violations against Children

- On 2 June, the UN Secretary-General issued his annual report on Children in Armed Conflict covering 2014 (A/69/926-S/2015/409). This included the situation in Israel and the State of Palestine (paras. 79-111), with special emphasis on the devastating summer hostilities in Gaza. Report indicates "the number of Palestinian children killed (557) is the third highest in 2014, after the number of children killed in (a) Afghanistan (710) and (b) Iraq (679), and before the number of children killed in (c) Syrian Arab Republic (368) and (d) Darfur (197). The number of schools damaged or destroyed in the State of Palestine (at least 543) was the highest recorded number of all situations in 2014" (para. 110).
- The WG has completed the verification and analysis of trends for the second quarter of 2015. This will be reflected in the relevant Global Horizontal Note. The total number of incidents of grave violations documented in the reporting period (April to June 2015) is 415, affecting at least 4,902 children. During this period, 137 Palestinian children, 129 boys and eight girls, were injured and one boy was killed. Two Israeli boys were injured. This reflects

a 24% increase in the number of Palestinian children injured with respect to the first quarter of the year.

- During the second quarter of 2015, 32 education-related incidents were documented in the West Bank, marking a decrease compared to the 55 incidents documented in the first quarter, in part due to the fact that the school year ended on 30 May. The number of incidents affecting children in Gaza remained low as a result of the ceasefire of 26 August 2014; however, an increase was noted in the number of children injured near the Access Restricted Areas and as a result of ERW detonations (10 children were injured in the second quarter of 2015 compared to three children in the first quarter).

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Working Group

- Since 1 January, in Gaza, WG reached 58,707 children with structured group and individual counselling services, and 440 children with specialized mental health services. A further 24,042 adults were reached with structured psychosocial activities and counselling. Members of CPWG and MHPSS-WG provide a variety of additional recreational and basic psychosocial activities, including open days, sporting activities; expressive arts and drama, for a number of beneficiaries are not included in the above figures.
- In the West Bank, the WG finalized the 5'W's (Who, What, Where, When and whom) database entry sheets. According to preliminary inputs provided by partners, since 1 January 2015, 1,082 children were reached with structured group and individual counselling services and 166 children with specialised mental health services. In addition, 1,988 adults have been reached with structured psychosocial activities and counselling.

Legal Task Force (West Bank)

- On 7 June, the Israeli National Board for Planning and Building issued its decision partially upholding the appeal submitted by the residents of Wadi Helweh and other organizations, against the approval of the "Kedem Compound" plan by the Jerusalem District Planning Committee. One of the appeals was submitted with the support of NRC in order to protect the rights of the affected Palestinian communities in East Jerusalem.
- JLAC referred to the Israeli High Court's rejection of the appeal to transfer planning authority back to Palestinians.

Access Restricted Areas (ARA) Core Group (Gaza)

- Israeli forces shot and injured 5 people in areas adjacent to the fence on land during the month, of which 3 including 2 children were shot and injured while visiting the areas within 300 meters from the fence in east of Khan Younis on 19 and 22 June. On 3 June, one farmer was reportedly shot and injured in east of Khuzaa while he was collecting wheat and grass. On 13 June, an 18 year old mentally and physically disabled Palestinian was shot and injured -in his lower limbs- and arrested by Israeli soldiers in al-Shokah village when he approached the fence.
- Israeli Naval Forces continued restricting access of fishermen to fishing areas beyond the imposed 6NM limit by using live fire. Three fishermen were reportedly injured, and 15 others were arrested in three other

incidents. 3 boats were confiscated, and 2 others were damaged.

Settler Violence Core Group (SVCG) (West Bank)

- On 19 June, a 25-year-old Israeli settler was killed near Deir Ibzi' village when a Palestinian man opened fire towards his vehicle.
- On 29 June, one Israeli settler died of his wound a day after being shot when fire opened from a Palestinian-plated vehicle near Shavut Rachel outpost. Following the incident, settlers' price tag attacks were reported in Al Mughayyir, Burin and Qusra villages, resulted in the injury of two Palestinian males and the destruction of a Palestinian owned agricultural structure by settlers.
- During June, OCHA registered 16 settler-related incidents affecting Palestinians: 4 incidents resulted in the injury of 5 Palestinians, including one child; 12 incidents resulted in the damage of 43 Palestinian-owned trees and 13 Palestinian owned-vehicles. Another 12 incidents affecting Israelis were recorded: 7 incidents resulted in the injury of 10 Israeli settlers, including two women; 5 incidents resulted in the damage of 2 Israeli-owned vehicles.
- Remarkable increase of tensions took place mainly in Qaryut and Qusra villages. At the beginning of the month, a group of armed Israeli settlers started bulldozing and opening a road between Shilo and Eli settlement in the lands of Qaryut village, near Khirbet Saloun. 4 days later, clashes occurred between IF and Palestinian protesters against recent settlers' activities in the area, around 200 dunums of Palestinian lands were burnt in Qaryut.

Gender Based Violence Working Group (GBV)

- On 14 June, OHCHR and UNFPA organized one training day on monitoring and documentation of women's rights violations targeting the GBV WG members in Gaza.
- ApS is working jointly with NRC on harmonizing GBV referral pathways and providing technical support to the case management and SOPs' technical committees on women and adolescent girls' specific needs in GBV cases.
- ActionAid together with Wefaq society are working to establishing the first family support centre in Rafah; to enhance community mediation and psychosocial wellbeing of divorced women, providing legal counseling for war/vulnerable women, and legal awareness sessions for women, community leader and service providers.
- The Centre for women legal research and consulting established a forum on "Protection of Palestinian women in emergencies" to ensure coordination among local NGOs in emergencies.

Advocacy Initiatives

Reports, outputs and events by PCWG members

- Joint and coordinated advocacy efforts during June focused on preparations for advocacy around the 'one year on' since the escalation in hostilities in Gaza, and have included the drafting of joint key messages highlighting the need to lift the 8-year-long blockade, the development of an action plan for activities around the 'one year' targeting media, as well as a joint # to be used for social media activities, #opengaza. Preparations for a joint Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) media-event around the ceasefire anniversary are ongoing.

- Published in May, Diakonia presented a report entitled "The Unsettling Business of Settlement Business", reviewing the application of IHL to corporate activity in and for settlements in the West Bank.
- Also published in May, Yesh Dejn presented a report entitled "Mock Enforcement: The failure to enforce the law on Israeli Civilians in the West Bank" on levels of impunity regarding settler violence.
- NRC published a report entitled "Settler Violence: international investigative and policing standards".
- B'Tselem published a report entitled "Presumed Guilty: Remand in Custody by Military Courts in the West Bank", analyzing the work of Israeli military courts and use of "motions for remand".
- Physicians for HR-Israel published a report entitled "#Denied: Harassment of Palestinian Patients Applying for exit permits" about the right to health in Gaza.
- On 2 June, UN OCHA published a factsheet on the humanitarian impact of Gaza blockade.
- On 14 June, MA'AN also published a factsheet on Gaza blockade.
- On 17 June, Jahalin issued a statement from the Israel-Palestine NGO Working Group, calling on the diplomatic community to uphold their Third State responsibility to prevent the forcible displacement of Bedouin in the West Bank.

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