

OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY (OPT): WEST BANK Protection Analysis Update

Update on protection risks and trends

MARCH 2025

Families displaced from their homes in Jenin, Occupied West Bank (Photo: Wuhai Rami Mufleh)

PALESTINIANS KILLED BY ISRAELI FORCES OR SETTLERS	CHILDREN KILLED BY ISRAELI FORCES OR SETTLERS	PALESTINIANS ARRESTED BY ISRAELI FORCES ¹	PERSONS DISPLACED BY DEMOLITIONS AND FORCED EVICTION
804	173	10,154	5,375
Per cent change compared to preceding period			
+ 179%	+ 184%	+ 100%	- 32%

The following information is an extract from the Protection Analysis Update (PAU) – occupied Palestinian territory (West Bank), published March 2025. The PAU is an expert view of the protection situation in West Bank. It is a reminder and summary of the devastating impact of the past 16 months of violence and discrimination and how these patterns drive the protection risks people across West Bank face and the consequences of the absence of long-term solution for the Palestinian people.

SUMMARY OF THE WEST BANK PROTECTION ANALYSIS UPDATE – MARCH 2025

Since hostilities flared in Gaza in 2023, the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem have witnessed simultaneously a steady deterioration in the protection environment. Operations by the Israeli military in the northern West Bank violate international law and expose Palestinians to unprecedented mass displacement, dispossession and violence. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled in its July 2024 Advisory Opinion that Israeli practices, including the confiscation or requisition of land, the forcible transfer of the Palestinian population, the transfer by Israel of settlers to and maintenance of their presence in the

West Bank, including East Jerusalem, constitute violations of international law. Nevertheless, Israel has expanded these practices, moving towards consolidation of its annexation of the West Bank while reducing viability of a two-State solution and violating the Palestinian peoples’ right to self-determination.

PROTECTION DRIVERS AND RISKS

State and settler violence against Palestinians has surged in the West Bank, exposing Palestinian communities to record levels of violence and abuse. Between 7 October 2023 and 31 December 2024, the following figures¹ were recorded:^{2 3}

The expanding movement and access restrictions severely limit Palestinians’ access to critical services including education, health and water, as well as farmland and roads, is increasingly rendering livelihoods unsustainable and deepening economic deprivation, while also serving as a flashpoint for gender-based violence. These drivers are converging to entrench the long-standing coercive environment, triggering displacement, and increasing the severity of protection risks. The protection risks requiring immediate attention in the period covered by this analysis are:

1. Use of force violations and attacks against protected persons
2. Forcible transfer
3. Enforced disappearance, arbitrary or unlawful arrest and detention
4. Psychological/emotional abuse and inflicted distress
5. Gender-based violence

URGENT ACTIONS NEEDED

1. Increased donor funding for critical protection response services in the West Bank, including support to local and women-led organizations and community-led initiatives to boost community self-protection capacity.
2. The diplomatic community should ensure a protective presence in the West Bank, including through diplomatic missions and supporting the continued presence and improved access of operational actors in high-risk communities.
3. Humanitarian actors should ensure that coordination and programmatic approaches fully adhere to principles of do no harm and reduce exposure of Palestinian partners and staff facing heightened risks operating in the West Bank.

RESPONSE

PROGRESS MADE ON PROTECTION

As of February 2025, 80 protection partners are actively addressing the protection needs of over 1.2 million people in the West Bank. In 2024, approximately 800,000 individuals (40% women, 25% men, 20% girls, 15% boys, 15% persons with disabilities, and 3% elderly) received protection services. Catchment reflects the heightened protection risks and resulting needs in five at-risk groups across the West Bank – namely residents of refugee camps, herding communities, agricultural villages, Seam Zone and East Jerusalem/H2 area of Hebron. Among those reached, 15 per cent are residents of refugee camps impacted by militarized operations, while at least 35 per cent live in Area C, where coercive measures are significantly heightening protection risks. 60 per cent of protection interventions focused on GBV prevention and risk mitigation, child protection, legal aid, MHPSS, and awareness-raising on protection and preventative measures.

In response to escalating protection risks and resulting needs across each of the five at-risk groups, protection partners strengthened community-led protection efforts, including proactive approaches to protection, reinforcing localized referral pathways, early warning mechanisms, and direct engagement with community-based organizations. Legal aid interventions have expanded to address movement restrictions and ensure protection for communities at risk of settler violence and land confiscation. A Legal Aid Emergency Relief Package was introduced to provide urgent support for communities facing forced eviction. In September 2024, the first EORE technical working group was launched to raise awareness on EO in high-risk areas.

ACCESS-RELATED CHALLENGES AND ACTIONS

Movement and access restrictions in the West Bank are a key challenge as many partners face growing constraints reaching high-risk areas, undermining access to critical protection services due to both physical and administrative measures. Access is particularly affected in Area C, H2 area of Hebron, and the Seam Zone area between the Wall and the Green Line. For protection workers to travel from Bethlehem to Ramallah, a journey which should take less than one hour instead takes six. Movement restriction measures prevent partners from responding with emergency assistance, and limit in-person service delivery.

Additional Israeli bureaucratic and administrative impediments have been implemented by authorities, including a December 2024 announcement by the GOI further restricting visas and registrations for INGOs.⁴ The new measure is expected to have significant ramifications on INGO operability in OPT, leading to critical staffing gaps, reduced footprint, programmatic disruption, quality and monitoring challenges, and cost increases.

With restricted access to many high-risk areas, partners have scaled up remote protection services, including MHPSS, support through helplines, remote case management, and awareness messaging on protection risk mitigation. The Protection Cluster has enhanced coordination on cash-for-protection responses, ensuring that emergency cash assistance is integrated into case management for those affected by displacement, eviction, and protection-related shocks. Concerns remain about reaching survivors of violence, including vulnerable children exposed to grave violations. Access to children in their homes and to children detained in IPS prisons remains a key challenge. Safety and security for frontline field staff remains a growing concern amid escalating violence.

CRITICAL GAPS AND POPULATION REACHED

Severe funding shortfalls have critically impacted protection service delivery in the West Bank. Women-led organizations that provide frontline GBV services in particular are underfunded and lack financial resources to respond to the needs of GBV survivors, leading to a shortage of skilled staff and less GBV service coverage across the West Bank. Further funding is needed to provide specialised MHPSS for children and to expand support to children who have experienced arbitrary detention and violence. EO risk mitigation remains critically underfunded, limiting outreach and preparedness activities.

Access restrictions, legal barriers, and recurrent violence continue to undermine response efforts, with limited safe spaces, case management, and psychosocial support for GBV survivors. Children face increasing risks due to displacement, settler violence, and military operations, while education disruptions push families toward negative coping mechanisms such as child labour and early marriage. Legal aid services are constrained, with new administrative restrictions limiting support for communities facing forced displacement and arbitrary detention. MHPSS services remain overstretched, as continuous violence and prolonged trauma affect both vulnerable populations and frontline responders, many of whom face burnout and secondary trauma. Specialized services for persons with disabilities and the elderly remain severely limited, further compounding intersectional protection risks. The deteriorating economic situation and movement restrictions continue to hinder access to essential services, healthcare, and education, particularly in refugee camps. Without sustained financial support and strengthened community-led protection mechanisms, vulnerable populations will face growing risks with little access to essential services and legal safeguards. Strengthening community-led initiatives, securing sustained financial support, and improving humanitarian access remain key priorities for the protection response in the West Bank.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Protection Cluster and partners consider the here listed actions necessary to avoid further harmful consequences for Palestinians across the West Bank.

- Increased donor funding for critical protection response services in the West Bank, including support **to local and women-led organizations and community-led initiatives to boost community self-protection capacity.**
- **The diplomatic community should ensure a protective presence in the West Bank,** including through diplomatic missions and supporting the continued presence and improved access of operational actors in high-risk communities.
- **Scale-up** and prioritize funding support for humanitarian partners that implement multi-sectoral and integrated protection interventions to support communities at risk of and victims of forcible transfer.
- Sustain and increase humanitarian aid funding to address critical gaps in service provision and to meet the intersectional needs of West Bank communities, thereby reducing protection risks.
- Ensure sustained diplomatic advocacy to end practices that amount to arbitrary arrest, administrative detention, and enforced disappearance, and support legal interventions for victims of ill-treatment.
- Invest in strengthening the state system to respond to emergency needs, including for the provision of specialised case management services for children affected by violence and their families. Invest in expanding specialized care to complement the existing state system.
- Expand funding support for appropriate and integrated GBV services for GBV survivors and those at risk of GBV, including the provision of dignity kits, GBV case management, legal support, MHPSS, and cash assistance.
- Enable GBV prevention and response localization through scaling support to national NGOs and Women-Led Organizations to overcome challenges related to access restrictions, bureaucratic impediments, and funding.



For further information please contact the Protection Cluster: ohchr-protectioncluster-opt@un.org
Child Protection AoR: Jessica Dixon | jdixon@unicef.org
GBV AoR: Anna Stone | stone@unfpa.org
Legal Task Force: Nader Muaddi | nader.muaddi@nrc.no

ENDNOTES

¹ Given the rapidly evolving situation, up to date figures on casualties, demolitions, displacement, and settler violence can be found at <https://www.ochaopt.org/data>, and by contacting the Protection Cluster Coordinator relevant Areas of Responsibility (see end for contact information). Recent analysis of the human rights situation in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is also available here.

² OCHA, data on demolition and displacement in the West Bank. [Data on demolition and displacement in the West Bank | United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - occupied Palestinian territory](#)

³ OHCHR fatality tracking

⁴ The Ministry for Diaspora Affairs and Combatting Anti-Semitism, International Non-Governmental Organizations Primarily Engaged in Activities with Palestinian Residents for the Purpose of Humanitarian Aid: Guidelines for the Registration of Organizations and Issuance of Recommendations for Their Foreign Employees. [International Non-Governmental Organizations Primarily Engaged in Activities with Palestinian Residents for the Purpose of Humanitarian Aid The Ministry for Diaspora Affairs and Combatting Antisemitism](#)