

# Occupied Palestinian Territory (oPt): West Bank



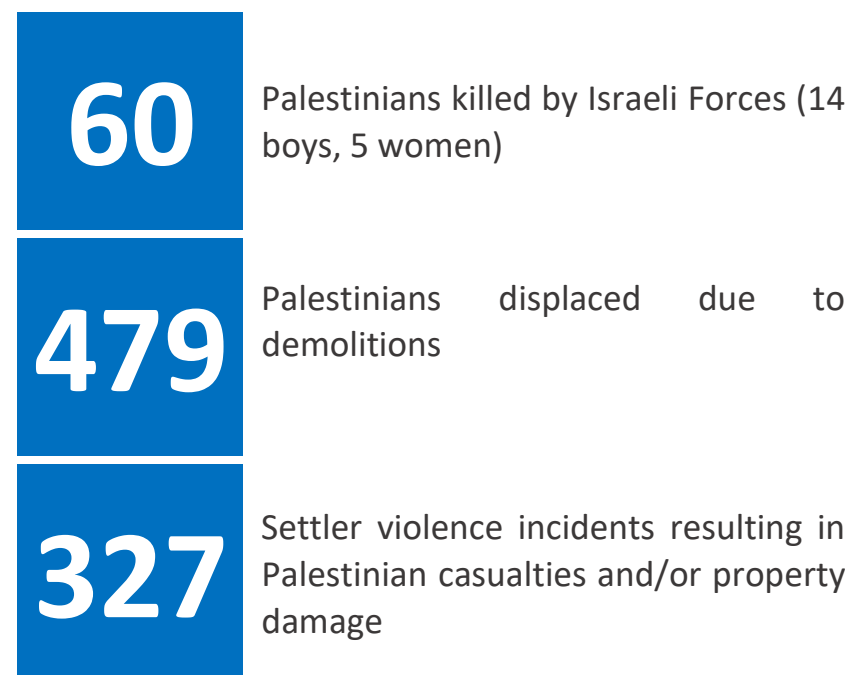
# 1. REPORT SUMMARY

This protection analysis update (PAU) is focused on risks and threats across the West Bank including East Jerusalem. Priority protection risks and underlying threats have been identified as follows:

- **General Protection and Human Rights risks, in particular deterioration in physical well-being due to violence and conflict**
  - Killings & injuries resulting from IF use of force
  - Settler Violence
  - Violence in Refugee Camps (IF operations & Intra-Palestinian violence)
  - Restrictions to freedom of association, peaceful assembly and freedom of opinion and expression
  
- **Displacement and risk of forcible transfer**
  - Coercive environment (Evictions, Demolitions, Settler violence, Residency rights, Restrictions on movement and access to land, resources and basic services)
  
- **Psychosocial distress and deterioration in mental well-being**
  - Political situation, insecurity and violence, including threats of home demolitions, arrests, night raids and settler violence
  - Escalations of violence / Prolonged periods of high tensions
  
- **Child protection threats/ Grave violations against children**
  - Use of force and violence against children by IF and settlers resulting in killing and maiming
  - Arbitrary arrest and detention of children, incl. ill-treatment
  - Violence against children in the home (incl. abuse and neglect) and impact on mental well-being
  - Negative coping mechanisms
  
- **Specific protection risks facing women and girls**
  - Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in all its form
  - Child, early, and forced marriages (CEFM)

People in Need (PiN) West Bank: 1,021,561					
Children		Adults		Over 65	
Boys	Girls	Men	Women	Men 65+	Women 65+
234,448	220,249	270,918	260,294	15,630	20,023
454,697		531,212		35,652	
People with Disabilities <sup>1</sup> : 153,234					
<b>Total PiN: 1,021,561</b>					

## KEY FIGURES – 2022 (as of 30 June)



<sup>1</sup> Based on 15%, the WHO global figure on the world's population living with some form of disability

## 2. CONTEXT OVERVIEW

### Protection crisis

Protection risk severities and needs in the West Bank<sup>2</sup>, including East Jerusalem continue to be driven by a protracted protection crisis that leaves many Palestinians impacted and struggling to live their life with dignity. This crisis is characterized by more than 55 years of Israeli military occupation, 20 years of the Wall separating the West Bank from East Jerusalem, lack of respect for international humanitarian and human rights law, recurrent spikes in violence and IF use of force, settler violence and intra-Palestinian violence.

Palestinians are directly impacted by frequent use of excessive force by Israeli Forces (IF), demolitions and seizures of Palestinian structures and resulting forced evictions and displacement, movement restrictions, settlement-related activities, including settler violence, widespread arbitrary arrests and unlawful detentions. At the same time, for Palestinians living under the effective control of the Palestinian Authority, the situation is also marked by and increasing repression of civic space, arbitrary arrests, intra-Palestinian tensions and violence, and excessive use of force by Palestinian Security Forces (PSF).<sup>3</sup>

The protracted protection crisis means that around 0.75 million Palestinians across the West Bank, corresponding to 21 per cent of West Bank residents, experience or are at risk of conflict, violence and forcible displacement/transfer and are in need of humanitarian assistance<sup>4</sup>.

According to the latest calculation of People in Need (PiN) and severity ranking based on both the 2021 oPt Multisectoral Needs Assessment (MSNA) and other available data from protection contextual indicators and indicators specific to each AoR, an estimated one million people (1,022,000) across the West Bank including East Jerusalem are in need of protection assistance.

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<sup>2</sup> The West Bank is divided into three areas with different jurisdictional arrangements: Area A (around 18 percent), is administered autonomously by the Palestinian Authority (PA), Area B (22 percent) is under PA civil control and Israeli security control while Area C (60 percent) is under full Israeli control.

The long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and its toll on the mental health situation of Palestinians remains, and already stretched MHPSS services have been overburdened by the COVID-related increase in needs.

#### **Methodology**

*This analysis is guided by the Global Protection Cluster's Protection Analytical Framework, which seeks to identify threats, their impact on the population and capacities available to mitigate these.*

*Use of secondary data and analysis from the AoRs and its partners, as well as situational reports from OCHA and OHCHR.*

*This PAU will be updated around twice each year, with additional in-depth protection analysis carried out by the Protection Cluster and its Areas of Responsibility (AoRs): GBV Sub-Cluster (GBV SC), Child Protection and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Working Group (CP/MHPSS AoR), and the Legal Task Force (LTF).*

#### **Limitations:**

*Due to spikes in violence, clashes, movement restrictions and increase in coercive environment in certain parts of West Bank during 2022, some partners have faced difficulties with access and gathering in-depth and reliable data. Ongoing needs assessments, updated analysis of threats, impact and capacity, and design of responses to address these for specific geographic locations/hot spots **will be used to update the PAU on a regular basis.***

*Plans to roll-out the 5Ws System in the oPt will harmonize and standardize systems for the collection, management, analysis, and use of data.*

<sup>3</sup> See [A/HRC/49/83](#).

<sup>4</sup> OCHA, Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022, occupied Palestinian territory

## Israel

In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, Israel's prolonged military occupation, illegal settlement expansion and settler violence continue, as well as the demolition of residential, livelihood and service infrastructure, and planned and implemented forced evictions, resulting in displacement of entire families, severely increasing their vulnerability, with women, children and elderly disproportionately affected. Consistently high levels of IF presence, including day and night search and arrest operations, including arrest, detention and ill-treatment of children continues at a high rate. A range of longstanding Israeli policies and practices, including severe restrictions on the freedom of movement and discriminatory planning regime applied in Area C (comprising over 60 percent of the West Bank) and in East Jerusalem prevents and impedes Palestinians from accessing basic protective services, resources, housing, livelihood opportunities, obtaining personal documentation and accessing justice as well as essential services such as education and healthcare. A steep rise in conflict-related violence, including settler attacks, has further eroded public safety and increased fear and stress among the population. Individually or as a result of their compounded effect, these factors create a highly **coercive environment**, placing Palestinian individuals and communities in Area C, East Jerusalem and the Israeli-controlled part of Hebron city (H2) at risk of forcible transfer.

In the first half of 2022, there has been a marked deterioration in the situation in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, with growing tensions and violence leading to high levels of Palestinian casualties by IF, a rise in settler violence and demolition related displacement and the ongoing risk of forced evictions/ forcible transfer in East Jerusalem. These challenges posed by the occupation and violations of IHL and IHRL all exacerbate the protection crisis.

### Shrinking humanitarian and civic space

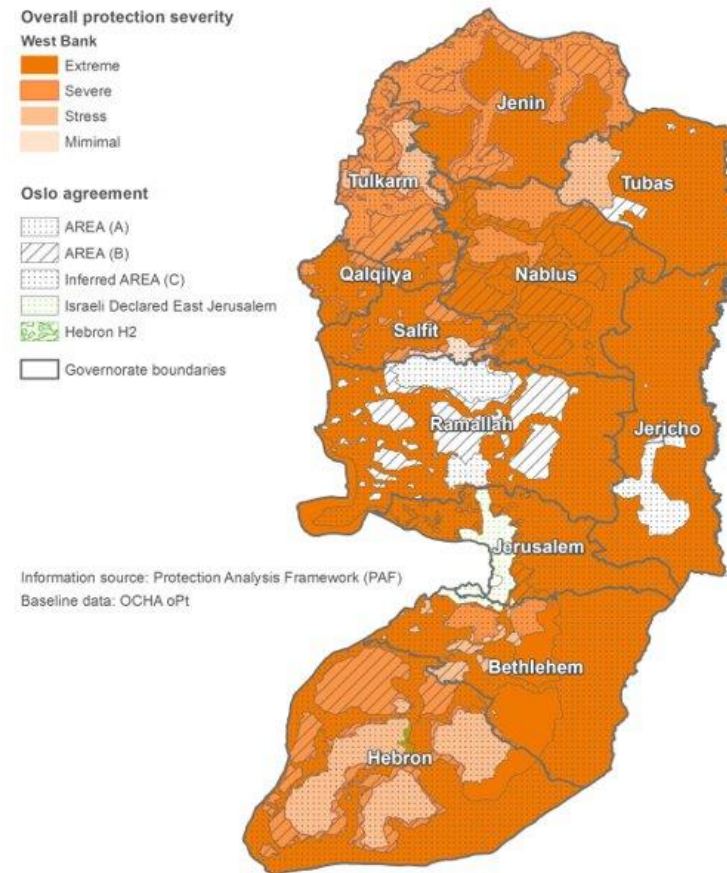
Shrinking civic space and attacks on civil society, including human rights defenders (HRDs), continues at a time when there is heightened concern over a range of measures targeting HRDs and civil society groups, introduced by both Israel and the Palestinian Authority.<sup>5</sup> Arbitrary constraints to freedom of association, peaceful assembly and freedom of opinion and

<sup>5</sup> Diakonia IHL Centre in Jerusalem, [Q&A report](#) on the Designation of six Palestinian civil society organisations as "terrorist/unlawful organisations" in Israel and oPt, 18 November 2021

expression includes threats of harassment, arbitrary arrest and use of force against demonstrators driven both by IF and PSF.

Israel: In late 2021, the Israeli authorities designated six Palestinian human rights and humanitarian NGOs as 'terrorist organizations' and declared them

Protection Cluster - Overall WB Protection severity map



and others as 'unlawful'.<sup>6</sup> Particularly worrying is the ongoing harassment

<sup>6</sup> Evidence substantiating the allegations has not been provided to the United Nations.

and punitive arrest and other measures by IF against those most active in protests, or as collective punishment against family members of those involved in attacks, including police arriving at night to their houses, and in some cases using violence, arresting family members or imposing movement restrictions (in particular in Jenin in 2022). IF have arrested and detained Palestinian HRDs, imposed restrictions on their freedom of movement, and raided the offices of civil society groups. These trends unjustifiably limit civic space, and have drawn swift criticism from CSOs, States and the UN.

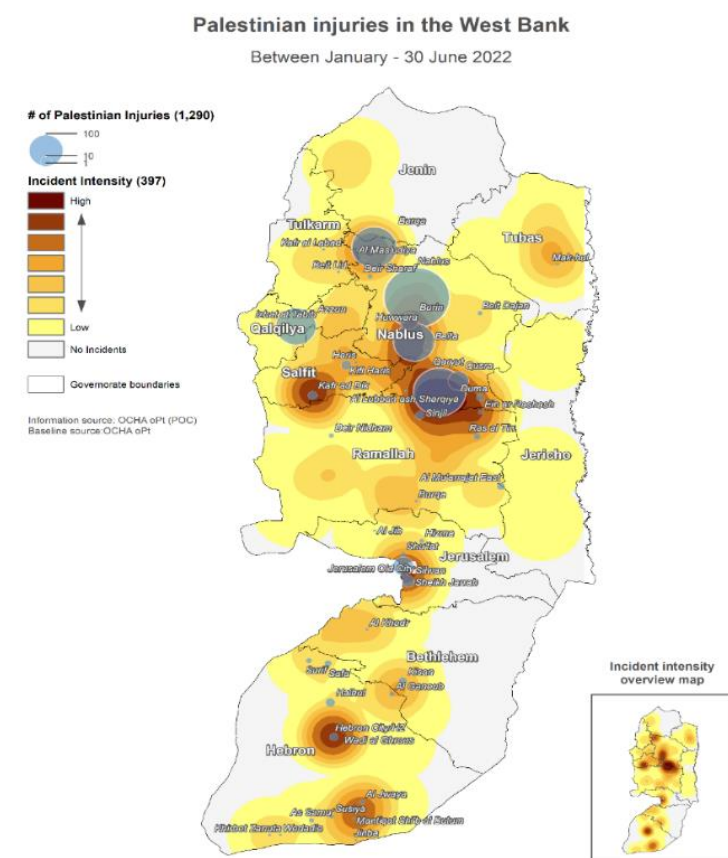
Palestinian Authority (PA): The PA has also taken actions that significantly curtail civic space and demands for accountability. The President of the State of Palestine has issued a series of decree laws relating to the freedom of association, peaceful assembly and expression.<sup>7</sup> PSF routinely repress peaceful dissent through physical assault and arbitrary arrests and crack down on demonstrators, journalists, and human rights defenders. Most recently, gender-based targeting of women and Women Human Rights Defenders took place by Palestinian Security Forces during demonstrations in the West Bank between June and August 2021. OHCHR documented numerous cases of physical attacks against women activists, journalists and by-standers, as well as being subjected to threats with sexual connotations, and other sexual violence and harassment.<sup>8</sup>

### 3. PRIORITY PROTECTION RISKS

The below identified risks and inherent threats are not exhaustive and attempt to capture the issues that the Protection Cluster, AoRs and their partners have identified for immediate prioritization. They are mutually reinforcing with specific groups such as women, children and persons with disabilities (PwDs) suffering from multiple vulnerabilities across the risks.

**These risks must be urgently addressed.**

### Protection Risk 1: General Protection and Human Rights risks, in particular deterioration in physical well-being due to violence and conflict



<sup>7</sup> See [A/HRC/49/83](#).

<sup>8</sup> A/HRC/49/83, paras 39-40

Persistently high tensions over the past year in the West Bank including occupied East Jerusalem (since early 2021), as evidenced across key protection indicators including injuries, killings and settler violence saw a further surge in early 2022.

### Killings & injuries resulting from IF use of force (Lack of accountability as driver)

In 2022, the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, continued to witness an increase in the excessive use of force by IF in the context of demonstrations against the military occupation, settlement expansion and Palestinian forced evictions, and in response to attacks or alleged attacks by Palestinians against Israelis.<sup>9</sup> A direct consequence has been the alarming increase in Palestinian fatalities.

#### 2022 West Bank Fatalities and Injuries by IF (as of 30 June)



From the start of 2022 and as of 30 June, the use of force by IF in the context of law enforcement in the West Bank resulted in 60 civilian Palestinians killed<sup>10</sup>, including 14 boys and five women, and more than 5,000 injured. By comparison, the full year 2020, in itself a year with record high levels of killings and injuries, saw 68 Palestinians killed and 1,043 injured with live ammunition<sup>11</sup>. In the absence of active hostilities in the West Bank, all these incidents should be analysed through the human rights law framework regulating conduct of law enforcement operations<sup>12</sup>. In many of the cases

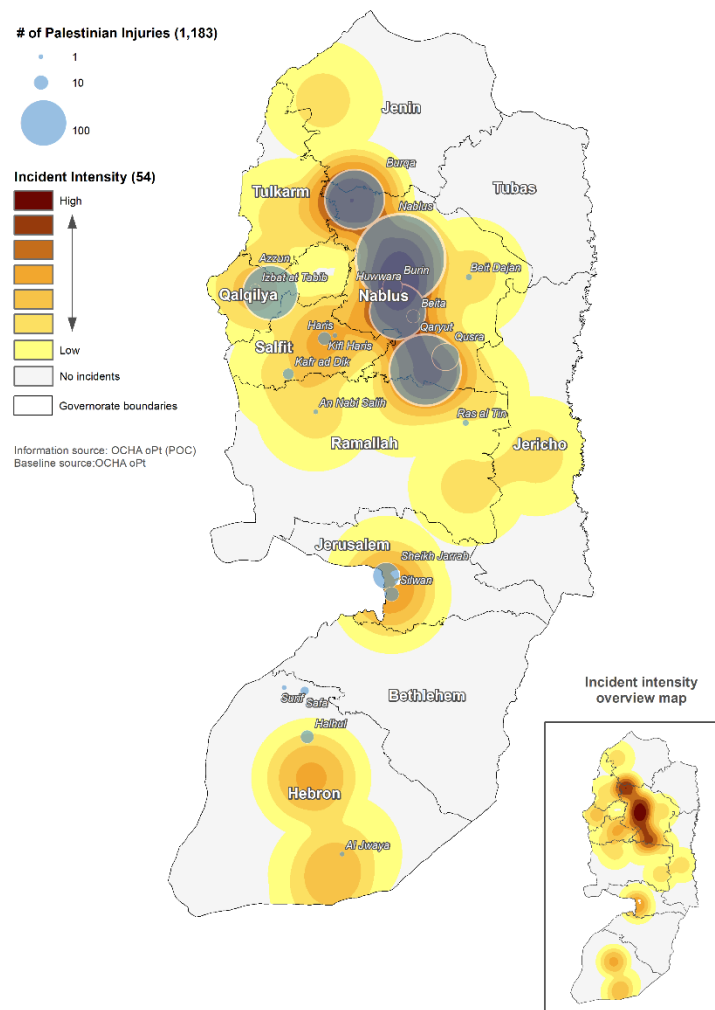
<sup>9</sup> A/76/333, paras. 12–13.

<sup>10</sup> OHCHR Fatality Tracking

<sup>11</sup> In the same period in 2021 (first 6 months), which in itself saw high tensions, IF killed 41 Palestinians, including 9 children.

### Palestinian injuries caused by Israeli military in the West Bank

Between January - 30 June 2022



<sup>12</sup> International human rights law is clear: the use of firearms in the context of law enforcement operations is allowed in extremely limited circumstances, namely in self-defence or defence of others from an imminent threat of death or serious injury, and as a last resort. Even when necessary, force must be used in a manner, which minimizes harm and preserves life.

monitored by OHCHR, IF appeared to use excessive force<sup>13</sup>. Israeli use of lethal force has become a common practice in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, even in the absence of an imminent threat to life or of serious injury and often as a first rather than as a last resort, contrary to international standards. This has directly led to now chronic levels of killings and injuries. Refugee camps are particularly affected, with UNRWA 2021 statistics<sup>14</sup> showing that the overall percentage of injuries inside refugee camps attributed to live ammunition by IF is 58 per cent, compared to 11 per cent of injuries outside of camps. This means that when injuries do occur, and therefore when escalation or confrontation occurs in the refugee camps, the IF are much more likely to use live ammunition in this environment than they would outside.

From the beginning of Ramadan in April 2022, IF stepped up raids and arrest operations in the West Bank following an increase in tensions, including a number of attacks in Israel by Palestinians or Palestinian citizens of Israel, resulting in 19 Israelis killed. The situation in the West Bank deteriorated with high tensions, increased IF operations and unrest rising, including use of firearms by Palestinians, resulting in 23 Palestinians killed in April 2022 alone<sup>15</sup>. The situation was particularly tense in East Jerusalem and in Jenin and Nablus Governorates, exacerbating the already existing and severe protection threats as a result of the occupation<sup>16</sup>. The threat of a number of imminent forcible evictions and displacement intensified protests across the West Bank. IF's increased use of live ammunition against Palestinians raises significant concerns with regard to excessive use of force and poses risks to men and boys in particular, often resulting in death or serious injury. The use of firearms by Palestinians also increases the risk to residents in these

<sup>13</sup> In a number of incidents, it appears that lethal force was used by IF as a first rather than as a last resort to confront the alleged threat: [https://m.facebook.com/UNHumanRightsOPT?\\_rdcr](https://m.facebook.com/UNHumanRightsOPT?_rdcr)

<sup>14</sup> UNRWA Protection and Neutrality database

<sup>15</sup> Intensive IF operations took place across the West Bank, following attacks in Israel on 7 April, with Jenin Governorate particularly targeted by IF presence, arrest operations and clashes, including with local Palestinian armed militants. IF intensified military operations and the use of firearms by Palestinian militants places Palestinian residents at high risk. IF conduct during arrest operations moreover raises concern of excessive use of force and ill-treatment, including against children.

<sup>16</sup> Protection Cluster [Situation Report](#) on the Escalation of violence in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in April 2022, 28 April 2022

<sup>17</sup> [A/HRC/43/21](#), paras. 20 and 30; and [A/HRC/46/22](#), para. 11.

<sup>18</sup> 1 January 2017 represents the beginning of the first reporting period during which the High Commissioner was requested by the Human Rights Council to report on accountability and justice for violations of international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

areas and those not involved in any violence. The humanitarian implications of live ammunition use, and improper use of less-lethal weapons are potentially life-threatening. They may cause life-long disabilities and often result in social, economic, and mental health disruption to families and communities.

The UN Secretary-General and the oPt UN Human Rights Office have expressed serious concern that lack of accountability measures for these violations remains pervasive, including holding those responsible for incidents involving the unnecessary or possible excessive use of force by IF, resulting in the killing or injury of Palestinians, to account.<sup>17</sup> Such impunity also encourages further violations to occur.

Between 1 January 2017<sup>18</sup> and 31 October 2021, 428 Palestinians<sup>19</sup> (including 91 children) were killed by IF in law enforcement operations in the oPt. OHCHR is aware of 82 criminal investigations opened in relation to these deaths<sup>20</sup>, of which at least 13 were closed without further action being taken and 5 resulted in indictments, 3 of which led to convictions.<sup>21</sup> The lack of transparency regarding the opening of investigations and the absence of progress and outcome of investigations by Israeli authorities is a matter of utmost concern, as the duty to investigate potential unlawful deaths is an important element of the protection afforded to the right to life.<sup>22</sup>

According to Yesh Din<sup>23</sup>, 72 per cent of complaints filed between 2019-2020, relating to IF harming Palestinians and their property in the context of law enforcement were closed with no criminal investigation, and only

<sup>19</sup> This number does not include those killed in the context of hostilities and those killed in situations in which it was not possible to determine the circumstances. The total number of Palestinians killed by Israeli security forces during the same period amounts to 850.

<sup>20</sup> A/HRC/49/25, See also

[https://www.btselem.org/sites/default/files/publications/202112\\_unwilling\\_and\\_unable\\_eng.pdf](https://www.btselem.org/sites/default/files/publications/202112_unwilling_and_unable_eng.pdf).

<sup>21</sup> These figures appear starkly inconsistent with Israeli investigation policy, applicable since 2011, according to which IF are obligated to open an immediate investigation into operations in the West Bank that result in the death of a person, except when involving "actual combat".

<sup>22</sup> Human Rights Committee, general comment No. 36 (2018), para. 27; and Minnesota Protocol on the Investigation of Potentially Unlawful Death.

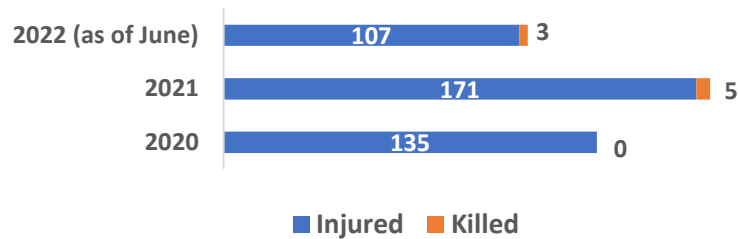
<sup>23</sup> Yesh Din Data Sheet, Dec 2021, <https://s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/files.yesh-din.org/Data+Sheet+2021+Law+Enforceme/Law+Data+21+ENG.pdf>

approximately 7 per cent led to indictment.<sup>24</sup> Over a quarter of the complaints related to incidents of shootings.<sup>25</sup> In many cases however, Palestinians do not wish to file complaints due to inherent distrust in the system or fear of reprisal. There is an ongoing consistent decline in number of criminal investigations being opened on suspected offenses of soldiers against Palestinians.

### Settler Violence (Lack of accountability as driver)

Illegal Israeli settlement expansion continues at a rapid pace in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem with high levels of settler violence persisting, as well as a significant lack of accountability for such acts. Numerous settler attacks occur in the presence of IF or even with their active support, raising concerns of failure by law enforcement to ensure public order and, in particular, the safety and security of the protected population as required by IHL.<sup>26</sup>

### Palestinian casualties due to settler violence between 2020 - June 2022

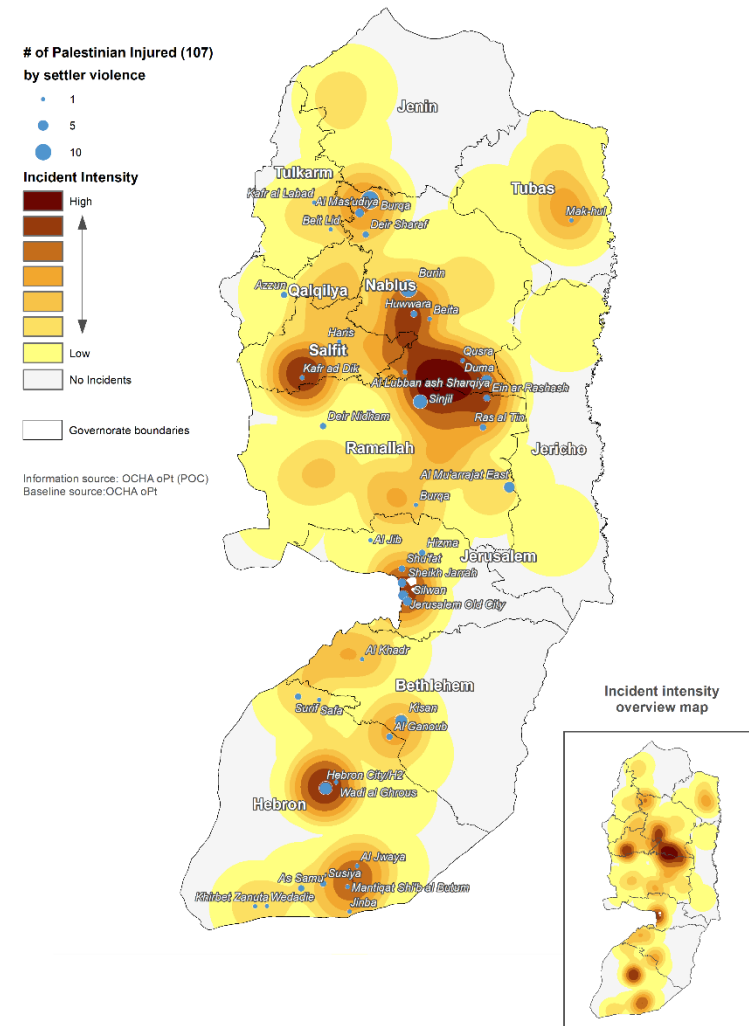


Since the beginning of 2022 (as of 30 June) the threat of settler violence has resulted in 327 incidents resulting in killing or injury or property damage, which is above average figures.<sup>27</sup> Official complaints are rarely filed by Palestinians affected by settler violence due to a lack of trust in the system and of accountability given that when investigations do take place, action

<sup>24</sup> 273 [complaints](#) were received in total (250 from the West Bank, 23 from Gaza – incidents relating to the Great March or those relating to hostilities were excluded.) 73 were still under review. 144 out of the remaining 200 were closed without investigation,

### Palestinian injuries caused by settler violence in the West Bank

Between January - 30 June 2022



<sup>25</sup> Yesh Din, at 16-18.

<sup>26</sup> The Hague Regulations, art. 43; and Fourth Geneva Convention, art. 27.

<sup>27</sup> OCHA Protection of Civilian database



against settlers is rare. The number of complaints being filed is moreover reportedly decreasing.<sup>28</sup> A 2022 Human Rights Committee report on Israel noted with concern “the underreporting by victims for lack of trust in the authorities and fear of reprisals, and the lack of access by victims to justice and effective remedies”.<sup>29</sup>

According to official Israeli statistics, there were 19 indictments of Israeli suspects in “ideologically-based offences” in the West Bank in 2021, following 87 investigations undertaken by Israeli Police<sup>30</sup> - a small fraction of the 575 documented instances of settlers causing injury or damage to Palestinians.

In 2022, Yesh Din released research<sup>31</sup> showing that 92per cent of all investigative files studied (2005-2021) relating to settler/civilian violence against Palestinians were closed without an indictment filed, while only approximately 3per cent of investigations led to convictions.<sup>32</sup> According to Yesh Din, an Israeli who harms a non-Palestinian in the West Bank is six-times more likely to be indicted (19per cent) than if they harmed a Palestinian (3per cent). Such impunity moreover encourages further attacks.

Disadvantaged rural Palestinians are increasingly exposed to violent acts by settlers<sup>33</sup>, particularly impacting the safety and wellbeing of women, children and youth. As in previous years, settler violence is expected to increase during the olive harvest season.

The UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR) has previously reported on the gendered impact of settler violence, with worrying incidents of targeting persons in vulnerable situations, including children, persons with disabilities and older persons. Settler violence targeting children is not a new phenomenon and OHCHR has previously reported on its impact on the right to education.<sup>34</sup>

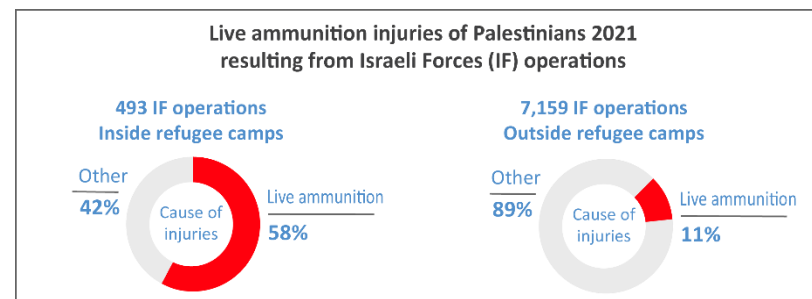
<sup>28</sup> <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2022-02-07/ty-article-magazine/.premium/charges-are-pressed-in-just-4-of-settler-violence-cases/0000017f-e826-df2c-a1ff-fe77f5090000>

<sup>29</sup> CCPR/C/ISR/CO/5, para 24.

<sup>30</sup> Offences investigated included assault, arson, malicious damage to property etc. [https://www.gov.il/BlobFolder/dynamiccollectorresultitem/hr-0007/he/human-rights-replay\\_investigation-and-prosecutionof-offences-against-palestinians.pdf](https://www.gov.il/BlobFolder/dynamiccollectorresultitem/hr-0007/he/human-rights-replay_investigation-and-prosecutionof-offences-against-palestinians.pdf)

<sup>31</sup> Yesh Din Data Sheet, Dec 2021, <https://s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/files.yesh-din.org/Data+Sheet+2021+Law+Enforceme/Law+Data+21+ENG.pdf>

## Violence in refugee camps



**IF operations:** The protection situation facing Palestine refugees living in the 19 refugee camps across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is dire as nearly all conflict-related indicators point to an alarming increase in violence. At this rate, in terms of the number of IF operations, 2022 is on course to surpass 2021, which recorded the highest number of such incursions since UNRWA records began in 2013. In 2022, IF carried out at least 13 operations per week in or around one of the 19 Palestine refugee camps in the West Bank, compared with nine operations per week in 2021.

The rate of “confrontations” between IF and Palestinians in 2022 is at a similar level to 2021, with 1,622 confrontations so far this year, 163 of them in refugee camps<sup>35</sup>.

High numbers of Palestinian injuries and fatalities continue in 2022 from the already record-high levels of 2021. In 2022 so far, the number of Palestinian injuries in refugee camps (300), is already higher than for all of last year (119) as well as any full year since 2016<sup>36</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> The data sheet analyzes 1,395 investigations.

<sup>33</sup> Concluding observations on the initial report of the State of Palestine, CEDAW/C/PSE/CO/1, para. 42

<sup>34</sup> A/HRC/40/42, paras. 44–47.

<sup>35</sup> UNRWA Protection and Neutrality database

<sup>36</sup> Ibid

In 2021, around 58per cent of Palestinian injuries sustained inside camps were caused by live ammunition compared with around 11per cent of Palestinian injuries outside camps<sup>37</sup>. This trend has continued in 2022 even as injuries in refugee camps have increased significantly. So far in 2022, 37per cent of Palestinian injuries sustained in camps were from live ammunition, compared with 8per cent outside camps. Indeed, in 2022, IF used tear gas in 24per cent of operations outside of refugee camps, compared with 43per cent of operations in refugee camps<sup>38</sup>.

IF use of teargas has also been raised as a protection and health concern by UNRWA. According to a 2017 study commissioned by UNRWA, Residents of several refugee camps in the oPt reported exposure to tear gas 2–3 times a week for more than a year, but in some months, almost every day.<sup>39</sup> Further compounded by the destruction of public goods and private property resulting from these operations, these factors add to the physical and psychological trauma for local camp populations, with vulnerable groups such as children and PwDs being particularly affected.

Jenin Camp in particular has been subject to significant levels of violence in 2022. Palestine refugees in Jenin camp and Jenin city are under immense security and economic pressure, which is driving protection risks and threats. IF routinely conduct raids in the camp - incursions by the IF are occurring at any time of the day (rather than being restricted to very early mornings) compromising the safety of vulnerable groups. The camp has also been continuously exposed to IF surveillance and disruptions of late, including through the use of drones and helicopter surveillance.

Intra-Palestinian violence: In the 19 UNRWA refugee camps in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, the absence of effective policing and law enforcement has led to the formation of informal local networks and groups, often criminal in nature. Frequently, these networks involve powerful local families which, in some camps, have long-standing disputes that are not resolved through any justice system. Refugees in the camps have limitations on their access to justice in general, including for GBV survivors, child protection cases and other forms of abuse. Refugee camps

in the West Bank, including those in Area A – where the Palestinian Authority has been designated security and civil authority – do not benefit from effective civilian policing by Palestinian Security Forces.

## Risk 1.1: Operational context

Escalation of violence and excessive use of force in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem results in greater protection risks and needs for Palestinians. However, the capacity of the families and communities to address the above threats is limited and the high number of persons affected adds considerable caseloads and burdens on legal aid, child protection, MHPSS, and GBV service providers.

In the West Bank, access remains a key challenge as many partners face constraints reaching high risk areas due to closures of village entrances by IF, checkpoints, ongoing IF operations, settler demonstrations and clashes. Some partners have been forced to cease operations due to safety and security risks and in other cases, movement restriction measures prevent partners from responding with emergency care. Safety and security for frontline field staff and trauma experienced is moreover of concern during escalations of violence, with high levels of fear due to direct physical contact with soldiers.

## Risk 1.2: Partner responses and capacities

The Protection Cluster and its partners work on an ongoing basis to put in place minimum preparedness measures both for monitoring and operational protection purposes with a focus on hotspot areas. Emergency responses focus on mitigating the effects of spikes of violence particularly for children and vulnerable groups.

Partners closely monitor and document suspected violations and provide legal aid and child protection and MHPSS services. Monitoring, documentation and advocacy by legal partners in the West Bank focus on IHL and IHRL violations and conflict-related violence, in addition to protection issues affecting human rights defenders. Advocacy oriented

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid

<sup>38</sup> Ibid

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.unrwa.org/resources/reports/no-safe-space>

towards accountability, prevention of violations, and respect for IHRL and IHL remains central to the Protection Cluster response.

Partners are responding to the increasing demand for legal aid as the frequency of suspected violations related to arrests and detentions, excessive use of force and access restrictions increases. Legal support and consultation is provided to Palestinian children, youth, families/caregivers and human rights defenders detained, targeting those affected by, or at risk of, violations of their right to life, liberty and physical integrity; arrest and ill-treatment. Priority groups and issues include children, people affected by access restrictions in general, and survivors of GBV.

Partners seek to address stress and psychological impact on children and caregivers due to violence and conflict through provision of emergency MHPSS responses for those injured, families of those killed, and children/families affected by conflict-related violence, in addition to Psychological First Aid, consultations for children in contact with IF, PSS kits, national helplines, MHPSS case management and referrals for specialized support, and sport and recreational activities for children within safeguarded spaces.

Preventing and responding to incidents of GBV that have occurred amidst escalations of violence is critical due to expected increases in GBV in the home as a result of consequent increased uncertainty and feelings of reduced safety when leaving the home. The tense situation and fear prevents women from accessing life-saving GBV services, and shelter services during these periods.

Protective Presence and accompaniment of individuals (including children) particularly in communities exposed to settler violence and friction with IF remains crucial and more important than ever given concerning developments in different parts of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Protective presence work in Hebron H2 has at times been impossible due to restrictions put on almost all internationals to access certain areas. This has intensified due to the campaign of settler organizations to remove the sole international protective presence partner operating in the West Bank,

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<sup>40</sup> campaign peaked in March 2022

<sup>41</sup> Forcible transfer may be accomplished by the creation of a coercive environment, even without the use of physical force. Fear of violence, duress, detention, psychological oppression,

EAPPI, from Hebron<sup>40</sup>. In South Hebron Hills, teams are stretched to meet the protective needs of the communities due to recent spikes in settler and army violence.

### Risk 1.3: Humanitarian needs and gaps

- Growing need for **protective presence** as community members report harassment at checkpoints and other spots, by IF and armed settlers, which has often resulted in violent attacks causing casualties and damage to property.
- Serious concerns over the IF **use of force against people exercising their rights and settler violence** (including in apparent coordination with Israeli Forces), among other serious human rights concerns.

### Protection Risk 2: Displacement and risk of forcible transfer

#### Coercive Environment

The existence of a coercive environment in the West Bank - with increasing concerns that it is forcing Palestinians to leave their homes and land - has been reported by the Secretary-General with respect to Area C, including the Jordan Valley, Hebron's H2 and East Jerusalem. Displacement or involuntary movement of protected persons as a result of a coercive environment and elements of a coercive environment may amount to forcible transfer<sup>41</sup> – which is a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and thus a war crime. Where a coercive environment is assessed to exist, a decision to leave cannot be presumed to be genuinely free.

A number of factors have created and exacerbated a coercive environment for Palestinians in parts of West Bank<sup>42</sup>, including significant policies, practices and administrative measures being implemented by Israel. Key factors include:

and other such circumstances may create an environment where there is no choice but to leave, thus amounting to the forcible transfer of people

<sup>42</sup> Coercive Environment Note, oPt Protection Cluster 2021

- Israeli efforts to forcibly evict and ‘relocate’ entire communities, and seizures/confiscations of Palestinian homes and structures
- Demolitions, including punitive demolitions and application of policies that lead to so-called ‘self-demolitions’
- Land confiscation related to the implementation of the illegal, restrictive and discriminatory planning regime, and impossibility of building without the risk of demolition<sup>43</sup>
- Settlement establishment and expansion (shrinking space for Palestinians to live)
- Frequent intimidation, harassment, destruction of property and violence from settlers and settlement security guards (including physical violence), in an environment of impunity
- General sense of insecurity due to heavy military presence and security operations including discrimination and excessive use of force by IF in law enforcement operations, raids, clashes, harassment and arbitrary arrest
- Significant freedom of movement and access restrictions, including for essential services, natural resources, and impediments to humanitarian assistance
- Collective punishment
- Exposure to military training and activity for communities inside Israeli-defined firing zones
- Risk of unexploded munitions
- Specifically in East Jerusalem: unilateral imposition of arbitrary status and conditions to maintain residence status and restrictions on family unification

A number of developments and trends affecting the coercive environment should be highlighted for 2022, as relate particularly to demolitions, evictions and intensified settler violence across the West Bank, and residency rights and evictions in East Jerusalem specifically.<sup>44</sup>

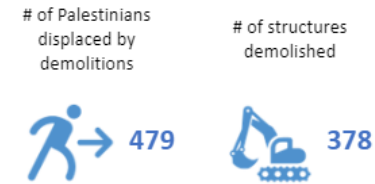
<sup>43</sup> Particularly for communities inside closed military zones, natural reserves, and/or located near Israeli settlements

<sup>44</sup> For a detailed overview of related developments see periodic reports of the UN Secretary-General (‘Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan’)

<sup>45</sup> A/68/513, para. 30-34; see also A/HRC/25/38, paras. 11-20; See also A/HRC/31/43 paras. 44 and 46, A/68/513, para. 30-34; see also A/HRC/25/38, paras. 11-20; See also A/HRC/31/43 paras. 44.

## Demolitions and Evictions

2022 West Bank Demolition Figures (as of 30 June)



The threat of destruction of homes and sources of livelihood, driven by a discriminatory planning regime<sup>45</sup> is a key contributor to the generation of a coercive environment pressuring people to leave their areas of residence in Area C, Hebron H2 and East Jerusalem. Demolitions and resulting forced evictions entail numerous human rights violations.<sup>46</sup> They also affect Palestinian women and girls disproportionately.<sup>47</sup> The UN Human Rights Committee has concluded: “such systematic practice of demolitions and forced evictions based on the discriminatory policies has led to the separation of Jewish and Palestinian communities in the OPT, which amounts to racial segregation.<sup>48</sup> They also breach Israel’s obligations as the occupying Power,<sup>49</sup> and further exacerbate the coercive environment increasing the risk of forcible transfer. Along with forcible transfer, extensive and wanton destruction of property without military necessity are also grave breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention and thus war crimes.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>46</sup> A/72/564, paras 25, 49-50.

<sup>47</sup> CEDAW/C/ISR/CO/6, paras. 32–33.

<sup>48</sup> CCPR/C/ISR/CO/5, para 42.

<sup>49</sup> Fourth Geneva Convention, arts. 53.

<sup>50</sup> Fourth Geneva Convention, arts. 49, 53, 147; Hague Regulations, arts. 46, 56.

2022 has already seen alarming levels of demolitions and seizures of Palestinian structures on the grounds of a lack of Israeli-required building permit,<sup>51</sup> including also demolitions of international funded humanitarian projects. According to OCHA, between 1 January 2022 and 14 June 2022, Israel seized or demolished 312 structures (including 57-donor-funded structures) in the West Bank, resulting in the forced eviction of 84 households that consist of 449 people (including 210 children) and otherwise affecting 2,538 households that consist of 15,130 people (including 6,717 children). Of these seizures / demolitions, 79per cent (246 targeted structures) took place in Area C, while the remaining 21per cent (66 targeted structures) were executed in East Jerusalem.

### Communities at Imminent Risk of Forcible Transfer

- ❖ Masafer Yatta
- ❖ Silwan and Sheikh Jarrah
- ❖ Wadi Qaddum

During the same reporting period, 22per cent of all structures in Area C that were targeted by the ICA, were seized rather than demolished (55 of 246 structures). Seizures are primarily implemented utilizing various military orders and around half of all structures targeted in Area C are seized with little to no prior notice, effectively preventing the affected people from legal recourse and limiting access to domestic legal remedies. 42per cent of all demolished structures in East Jerusalem were forced self-demolitions (28 of 66 structures). The main basis of this phenomenon is Amendment 116 to Israel's Planning and Building Law and its Complimentary Administrative Fines Regulations, which impose draconian punitive measures on those who engage in "illegal" construction.

<sup>51</sup> Less than one per cent of Area C and 13 per cent of East Jerusalem have Israeli-approved plans, which allow Palestinians to apply for building permits and construct in these areas.

<sup>52</sup> Save the Children Report, Hope under the Rubble: The impact of Israel's home demolition policy on Palestinian children and their families, 2021, [https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/hope\\_under\\_the\\_rubble\\_final.pdf/](https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/hope_under_the_rubble_final.pdf/)

<sup>53</sup> Similarly, between 1 January and 25 May 2022, Yesh Din documented 46 incidents of settler violence, including: 29 incidents of violence, 14 incidents of damage to property, and 3 incidents of land takeover

Demolitions forcibly evict people with all that entails in terms of subsequent humanitarian need. They not only heighten protection risks and affect the coping capacity of communities, with disproportionate impacts on women and children, but moreover have profound psycho-social impacts. The findings of 2021 research by Save the Children show that beyond the initial trauma of losing their homes, the resulting dispossession and displacement cripple children's sense of safety, lead to severe emotional distress, and leave them cut off from their friends and communities. From consultations with 217 families across the West Bank impacted by home demolitions, most children (70per cent) reported feeling socially isolated and no connection with their communities and land after losing their home. And a majority of children (60per cent) felt that their education had been jeopardised or interrupted following the demolition.<sup>52</sup>

### Settlement-related violence, including denial of access to land and resources

Further concerning components of the coercive environment placing Palestinians at risk of displacement and forcible transfer, are continuing attacks and intimidation by Israeli settlers, carried out with impunity. In the first six months of 2022, OCHA recorded 327 incidents involving Israeli settlers and other Israeli civilians resulting in Palestinian casualties and/or property damage<sup>53</sup>. Three Palestinian had been killed by settlers/settlement guards and 239 injured, including 11 children<sup>54</sup>. The increased presence, harassment and intimidation by armed Israeli settlers across the West Bank, compounds security concerns. The dramatic increase in the establishment of settler farm outposts over recent years, has resulted in a parallel spike in attacks on villages and the use of firearms during incidents of settler violence in these areas of the West Bank.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>54</sup> OCHA Protection of Civilians database

<sup>55</sup> Yesh Din report (2021), Plundered Pastures: Israeli settler shepherding outposts in the West Bank and their infringement on Palestinians' human rights, <https://s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/files.yesh-din.org/shepherding+outposts+2021/shepherding+outposts+ENG.pdf> & B'Tselem and Kerem Navot report (2021), This Is Ours - And This, Too - Israel's Settlement Policy in the West Bank, [https://www.keremnavot.org/files/ugd/a76eb4\\_1bb3fac3cb4f4363a88a34ea6ffaf7cd.pdf](https://www.keremnavot.org/files/ugd/a76eb4_1bb3fac3cb4f4363a88a34ea6ffaf7cd.pdf)

Members of the Protection Cluster have also documented an increase in severe attacks (resulting in injury and/or property damage) and an increase in attacks in which settlers use firearms. Palestinian access to land in settlement/outpost peripheries is also challenged, with Yesh Din reporting that many landowners and farmers<sup>56</sup> are impeded access to their lands near settlements and illegal outposts and require permits to plough their lands.

### Coercive factors specific to East Jerusalem

Within East Jerusalem, 970 Palestinians, including 424 children, are facing the threat of demolition and forced eviction, mostly in the neighbourhoods of Sheikh Jarrah and Silwan. On 10 and 11 May, demolitions in Silwan forcibly evicted 33 people (19 male and 14 female), including 18 children. Tensions in both neighborhoods have remain high as a result.

In addition, developments relating to Israel’s unilateral imposition of arbitrary status and conditions for Palestinians to maintain residence status in East Jerusalem, and restrictions on family unification between residents of East Jerusalem and of other parts of the West Bank, are contributing to a deterioration of the coercive environment in East Jerusalem. The Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law (Temporary Order) which was renewed in the Knesset in March 2022, severely curbs family unification rights to Palestinians from West Bank or Gaza who are married to Israeli Palestinian citizens or permanent residents, including Palestinians living in East Jerusalem.

### Risk 2.1: Operational context

Key public interest cases that that have been lodged to mitigate mass evictions and demolitions in Area C and East Jerusalem alike, are increasingly nearing exhaustion of domestic legal remedies.

Continued settlement expansion plans and settlement infrastructure projects that will further fragment the West Bank, segregate the transportation system and impose further restrictions on freedom of movement for Palestinians. Additional administrative measures, including

<sup>56</sup> from Burqa, Beita, Qabalan, Yatma, Turmusayya, Qusra, Al-Mughayir, and Qaryut

Israeli plans for the settlement of land title in Area C, the Seam Zone and East Jerusalem, place more communities at risk of dispossession, displacement, loss of shelter, loss of livelihood, poverty and food insecurity.

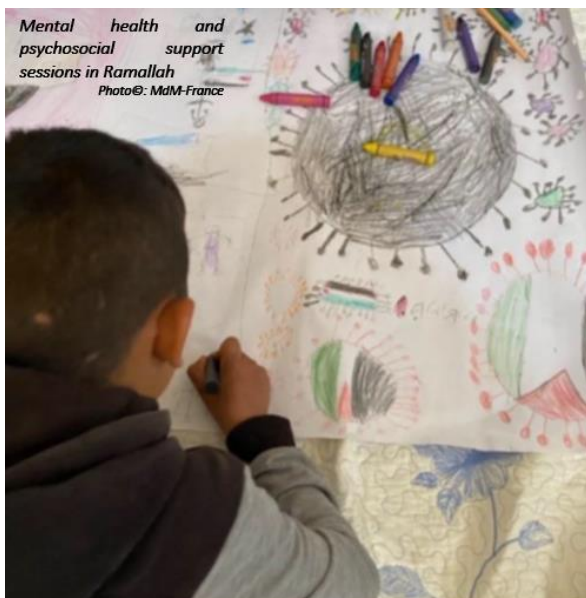


### Risk 2.2: Partner responses and capacities

Monitoring and documentation by partners focuses on the risk of forcible transfer, particularly in East Jerusalem, H2 and Area C. Partners undertake monitoring and analysis of settlement related activities, ranging from settler violence through retroactive legalization of settlement outposts, land takeover and expropriations, with a view to understanding and mitigating their effect on Palestinians.

Legal support and consultation is provided targeting those affected by, or at risk of, forcible transfer, demolitions, forced evictions and displacement, and revocation of residency rights. A multitude of legal aid services is implemented to respond to the significant number of legal and administrative developments in the West Bank, measures which are expected to further intensify the coercive environment. These services include information sessions to raise community legal awareness;

counselling sessions on seeking domestic legal remedies; individual legal representation to protect individual households from displacement; public interest cases by filing principled petitions; technical assistance to substantiate legal arguments (surveys, spatial plans, aerial photographs, GIS maps, expert opinions etc.); and increased advocacy coordination. Legal work on HLP issues is coordinated closely with other sectors providing responses such as shelter and WASH.



Child protection and MHPSS partners moreover provide emergency MHPSS responses for families who have been exposed settler violence and demolitions, with a particular focus on children affected.

### Risk 2.3: Humanitarian needs and gaps

- Intensified thematic legal awareness sessions, tailored legal counselling sessions and paralegal services, individual legal representation and strategic litigation, including principle petitions, will be required to

<sup>57</sup> ESCWA socio-economic situation Report 2019, p. 23.

### secure both temporary reprieve and durable solutions amidst an increasingly coercive environment

- Without planning procedures in place legal aid cannot secure durable solutions for people at risk of displacement in these areas. It is imperative that the donor community **support local, community-led planning initiatives**, in tandem with continued support for legal aid, research and advocacy.

### Protection Risk 3: Psychosocial distress and deterioration in mental well-being

The oPt has one of the highest burdens of mental health issues and psychological disorders in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, with 54 per cent of Palestinian boys and 47 per cent of Palestinian girls (aged 6 to 12 years) presenting emotional and/or behavioural disorders.<sup>57</sup> In general, the need for MHPSS services for persons suffering from mild to moderate and severe mental health problems is on the rise in the West Bank and has become exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Violence resulting from the occupation, displacement of people and families, dispossession of homes, and the risk thereof are the main causes of mental health issues amongst adults and children in the West Bank.

In addition, the geographic and administrative fragmentation distinct to the West Bank, characterized by a multitude of movement restrictions in the form of checkpoints, road barriers, and walls which severely impacts the ability of Palestinians to travel, work, marry, study, worship, or be with family<sup>58</sup>. All these measures, which cut off families and communities from each other and from needed services, directly affect the psychosocial wellbeing of Palestinians by destroying a sense of home, safety, community cohesion and cultural identity.

Protection partners have further identified violence within Palestinian families and communities, including domestic violence, harsh corporal punishment in homes and schools, sexual abuse, early marriage, and child labor as additional key drivers of the rising need for MHPSS.

<sup>58</sup> Assessment of MHPSS interventions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, UNFPA, August 2021

Finally, the long-term devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and its toll on the mental health situation of individuals remains, brought on by social isolation, health-related fears, stigma, discrimination and the loss of family members. It moreover highlighted pre-existing challenges in mental health provision and hindered access to essential health services. People with pre-existing mental health conditions were at risk of experiencing an increase of stress and anxiety and difficulties in accessing services, information or medicine. Similar to other countries, pressures and struggles due to the pandemic created tension in families which resulted in a continued increase in domestic violence against women and children.<sup>59</sup>

### Political situation, insecurity, and violence including threats of home demolitions, arrests, night raids and settler violence

Populations exposed to violence and conflict are well known to be at risk of increased incidence of poor mental health outcomes<sup>60</sup>. What is sometimes mistaken for resilience is the necessary adaptation to a stressful environment, in which encountering violence is part of the “daily routine” and where acute stress is the norm<sup>61</sup>.

Palestinians in the West Bank including East Jerusalem are highly impacted by the ongoing crisis around them and regular surges in conflict-related violence. Exposure to violence, both in the short and long term, negatively affects mental, emotional, behavioral, social and physical well-being, which leads to requiring structured MHPSS services and specialized individual case management<sup>62</sup>. As a result of the escalation of violence in April 2022, one of the main national helplines run by a cluster partner providing MHPSS services registered an increase in calls from East Jerusalem. During April

2022, the national helpline provided a total of 1,594 counseling sessions of which 628 were girls.<sup>63</sup>

Recent studies have indicated that the political situation and insecurity, including threats of home demolitions, arrests and night raids and the aftermath of escalations of violence, have had a significant impact upon mental health and psychological well-being of Palestinians. A recent report and survey by MdM-France and AIDA<sup>64</sup> showed that prolonged feelings of insecurity, fear and instability resulting from a coercive environment can translate into both physical pain (headaches and stomach pain), emotional impact (fear, anxiety, sadness, despair and lack of safety<sup>65</sup>) and behavioral impact (isolation and difficulty sleeping). The report moreover highlighted challenges of quantifying the tangible impact of a coercive environment on mental health. Mental health impact of exposure in this context can often be a hidden driver of displacement that is overlooked.

According to Save the Children research in 2021, home demolitions take an enormous emotional toll on parents and caregivers, with 76per cent out of 217 families consulted reporting that they feel unable to protect their children after losing their homes, accompanied by high rates of shame (75per cent), irritation and anger (72per cent), and feeling emotionally distant from their children (35per cent).<sup>66</sup>

The population in and around the cities of Bethlehem, Qalqilia, Tulkarem, Nablus, Hebron, and East Jerusalem live in a permanent state of extreme stress owing part to the proximity of the Israeli settlements as well as poverty and lack of services. Due to military presence, Palestinians are regularly subjected to searches at checkpoints and harassment, beating, stoning, shooting, damage to housing, and destruction of crops by the Israeli settlers.<sup>67</sup>

with a high number of incidents of settler violence, demolitions and Israeli excessive use of force.

<sup>65</sup> In assessing Palestinians’ sense of safety and agency over their lives, close to 60per cent of respondents in the MdM-F and AIDA 2022 report, indicated there was nothing they could do to protect their families when experiencing attacks by settlers and demolitions.

<sup>66</sup> Save the Children | Report - Hope under the Rubble: The impact of Israel’s home demolition policy on Palestinian children and their families, 2021 [https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/hope\\_under\\_the\\_rubble\\_final.pdf/](https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/hope_under_the_rubble_final.pdf/)

<sup>67</sup> CP AoR Report (2019): A Review of the humanitarian Mental health and Psychosocial needs and Gaps in the State of Palestine Gaza & West Bank September 2019

<sup>59</sup> Assessment of MHPSS interventions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, UNFPA, August 2021

<sup>60</sup> MdM-France and AIDA (June 2022), No Peace of Mind- Palestinian Mental Health Under Occupation.

<sup>61</sup> Giacaman & all. “Mental health, social distress and political oppression: the case of occupied Palestinian territory.” Global Public Health. 2010.

<sup>62</sup> Assessment of MHPSS interventions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, UNFPA, August 2021

<sup>63</sup> SAWA Organization -121 Emergency Helpline Update. Factsheet # 34: April 2022.

<sup>64</sup> MdM-France and AIDA (June 2022), [No Peace of Mind- Palestinian Mental Health Under Occupation](#). The report examined, on an initial small scale, the impact of the coercive environment on the mental health of 10 Palestinian communities in Area C of the West Bank,



## Vulnerable groups

Particularly vulnerable groups such as children, women PwDs, GBV survivors those displaced or at risk thereof, and residents of Refugee Camps are exposed to increased threats of psychological distress.

Both the external and internal factors of the Israeli occupation and geographical fragmentation influence the mental well-being of young people and adolescents in the West Bank. Exposure to violence and discrimination, particularly during the transformative period from childhood to adulthood can have very damaging effects and adolescent boys are particularly vulnerable to ill-treatment in military detention as well as violence and child labour.

The 2022 HNO estimated that some 678,000 children (345,800 boys, 332,200 girls) across the oPt are in need of child protection and MHPSS services, including 122,000 in need of focused nonspecialized support or specialized services. 12 percent of all children in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem are in need. CP AoR estimates that in 2022 over 14,500 children in H2 and 15,000 children in Area C are in need of structured psychosocial support and children exposed to conflict-related violence such as school-related violations (e.g. settler attacks on students and school property<sup>68</sup> and Israeli demolition of schools<sup>69</sup>) are identified as a particularly vulnerable group to be prioritized in responses. Documented helpline calls during the escalation of violence in April 2022, showed that 36 per cent of children expressed fear and anxiety due to Israeli violence, mourning the loss of loved ones and sexual violence. Suicide ideation amongst children was also increasingly reported. The majority of children interviewed in a recent MdD-France and AIDA survey (2022), expressed experiencing an acute sense of fear, which impacted their daily life such as not being able to go play outside or commute to school without experiencing anxiety, flashbacks or feeling unsafe at all times.

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<sup>68</sup> For example Israeli settlers attacking schools and school buses and damaging and vandalizing school property.

<sup>69</sup> The demolition or destruction or confiscation of schools and educational infrastructure is unlawful and constitutes a grave violation against children in accordance with UN Security Council resolution 1612 and related resolutions

With the level of coercion, pressure and daily violence experienced by children and youth in the West Bank worsening year on year, there is a fear that the next generation of Palestinians will suffer from significant mental health issues such as depression, trauma and anxiety, while they hold no hope in the international community's ability to protect them and their rights<sup>70</sup>.

The overall situation in the West Bank has had a disproportionate impact on the mental health of PwDs, one of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in Palestinian society who not only face institutional and attitudinal barriers to accessing MHPSS services, but are at a greater risk of violence, stigma and discrimination. This has led to an increase in the risk of poor mental health, stress, anxiety and depression. For children with a disability families report more security concerns than for children without a disability, with concerns varying significantly from area to area. Youth with disabilities are specifically marginalized and the vulnerability of girls with disabilities is further increased with the risk of violence, exploitation and abuse<sup>71</sup>.

The situation for Palestinian girls and women is characterized by overlapping vulnerabilities linked to threats of violence, poverty, discriminations due to legal and sociocultural norms, and low access services which result in harmful practices, including child marriage. Despite there being a higher prevalence of mental health disorders for girls and women than for boys and men, there is a higher percentage of male mental health service users<sup>72</sup> - owing to the higher stigma for women around mental health<sup>73</sup>, who additionally often require the permission of family members to access mental health service<sup>74</sup>.

For Palestine refugees living in the 19 refugee camps across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, an increase in MHPSS concerns has similarly been reported by UNRWA and protection partners, particularly amongst children, due to prolonged exposure to extreme levels of violence in camps and

<sup>70</sup> MdM-France and AIDA (June 2022), No Peace of Mind- Palestinian Mental Health Under Occupation.

<sup>71</sup> Assessment of MHPSS interventions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, UNFPA, August 2021

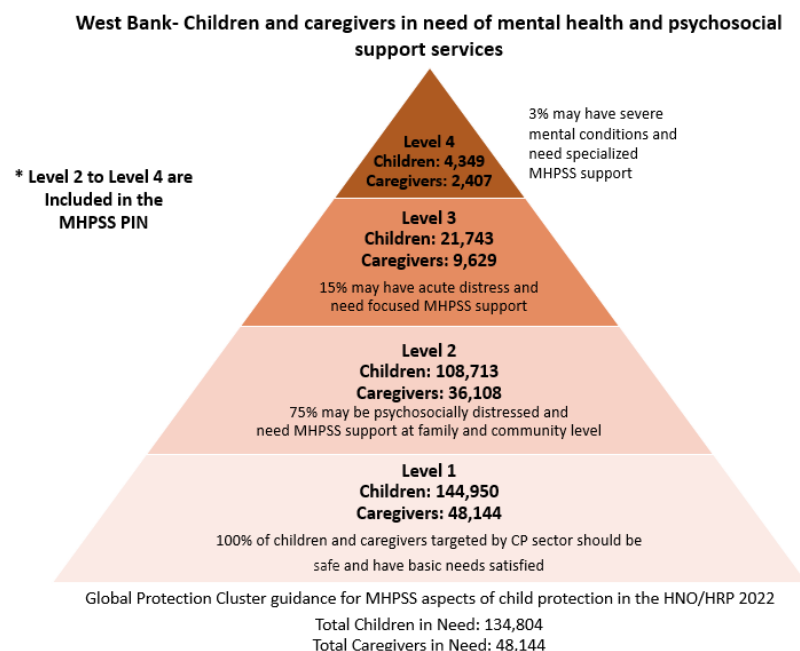
<sup>72</sup> Mental Health Unit- MoH 2020

<sup>73</sup> Assessment of MHPSS interventions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, UNFPA, August 2021

<sup>74</sup> Which is not easily granted due to stigmatization and fear for the reputation of women

surrounding areas combined with their lack of protection and limited access to essential services.

### Risk 3.1: Operational context



The Palestinian Ministry of Health (MoH) is the main provider of primary health care in the West Bank, accounting for over 71 per cent of the 583 clinics<sup>75</sup>. The health system is suffering from major shortages in specialised personnel, specialised facilities and the availability of drugs, exacerbated by a longstanding challenge of integrating mental healthcare into essential health services. Mental health is underfunded in the health care system (physical lifesaving activities are instead prioritized during crises) and MoH

<sup>75</sup> Assessment of MHPSS interventions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, UNFPA, August 2021

<sup>76</sup> Ibid

<sup>77</sup> YMCA East Jerusalem (2014). A Survey of the Mental Health and the Psychosocial Support organizations in the West Bank. Available at: <http://mhps.ps/reports/mapping-report-english.pdf>

not able to deal with the growing issue, including specialised services for people with severe mental health disorders.<sup>76</sup>

While Level 1 and 2 of MHPSS services of the IASC Intervention Pyramid are available across all governorates in the West Bank, Level 3 and 4 services are more infrequent and scattered.

A 2014 YMCA survey<sup>77</sup> showed that in addition to governmental clinics, there is a significant presence of NGOs working within the domain of mental health offering psychosocial- and counselling services.<sup>78</sup> This diversified field of mental health providers is both an asset as well as a complication in providing a cohesive mental health response.

Against the backdrop of multisectoral and household vulnerabilities, there are considerable needs for MHPSS interventions, including specialised case management and approaches, targeting children, adolescents and caregivers, particularly males. Exposure to violence negatively impacts on mental health, emotional, behavioral, social, and physical well-being of children and could get worse without proper counseling. Without additional investment in child protection and MHPSS services, children in need will be at significant risk of developing serious mental health issues. Lack of capacities of teachers and schools in detecting risks affecting children, PSS service provision and referrals to specialized service providers, has resulted in extra burdens on teachers, and increases the risk of long-term mental health disorders among affected children who do not receive appropriate support<sup>79</sup>. In order to answer the concerns and needs of adolescents and youth, PSS and the availability of youth-friendly health centers are essential.

### Risk 3.2: Partner responses and capacities

The mental health impact faced by children and families directly and indirectly affected by violence in the West Bank is adding additional burdens on MHPSS service providers.

<sup>78</sup> The main findings indicate that there are 148 organizations providing mental health services, of which the highest number, 109, were non-governmental organizations, 27 private sector organizations, seven international organizations as well as the Palestinian Red Crescent Society and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (YMCA, 2014).

<sup>79</sup> 24.3 per cent of the households with school-aged children interviewed in West Bank as part of the MSNA reported that psychosocial support for children was not available at the school.

MHPSS services is coordinated with the Health and Education Clusters. Intersectoral MHPSS activities for children and caregivers (particularly males) includes psychological first aid, structured psychosocial support through age and gender-appropriate individual or group interventions, suicide and parasuicide prevention, supportive parenting programming, clinical mental health and psychosocial services targeting beneficiaries with severe symptoms

through the support of mental health professionals. In addition, awareness on combating stigma surrounding seeking MHPSS. Key actors train and support service providers on MHPSS guidelines and MHPSS skills such as psychological first aid, problem solving, active listening, detection and referrals including referrals to mental health specialized service providers. In the ongoing context of COVID-19, partners continue to provide both in-person and remote services to enhance availability, accessibility, and continuity of specialized services for mental health support. Partners



promote mental health and psychosocial well-being among staff, frontline workers and volunteers through training and awareness sessions in self-care, conducted both in person and remotely.

<sup>80</sup> 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview: Occupied Palestinian Territory, UN-OCHA, December 2021.

### Risk 3.3: Humanitarian needs and gaps

- Access and availability of more specialised MHPSS staff and services and strengthened case management and referrals
- Integration of MHPSS into all health centers and humanitarian strategies
- Enhancing capacities of CBOs to provide PFA during surges in violence, more outreach services to reach marginalize areas
- Coordination funding for MHPSS
- More data and analysis on the prolonged mental health impact of the occupation on Palestinian communities
- CP/MHPSS AoR referral pathways and Standard Operating Procedures to align with the National Case Management and referral system to be used by MHPSS partners operating in the West Bank.

### Protection Risk 4: Child protection threats/ Grave violations against children

Conflict-related violence including grave violations affecting children in the oPt occurs in the context of Israel's ongoing military occupation, exacerbating child protection needs. The 2022 oPt Humanitarian Needs Overview<sup>80</sup> highlights children exposed to conflict-related violence as a particularly vulnerable group in need of protection and MHPSS support.

Child protection needs in the West Bank including East Jerusalem have been exacerbated by the increase in conflict-related violence, particularly since April 2021, and the continuing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Key forms of conflict-related violence endangering children's rights and contributing to needs in the West Bank include:

- Killing and injuring of children in the context of demonstrations against occupation and settlement activity, IF law enforcement operations, and resulting confrontations; and as a result of settler violence.

- Arrest and detention of children for alleged security-related offences, with high rates of children reporting ill-treatment and due process violations.
- Attacks on education facilities and related personnel including students, and other interferences with the normal functioning of schools and children’s access to education.
- Displacement of children and denial of children’s access to basic services or livelihoods as a result of demolitions of Palestinian-owned structures, particularly in Area C and East Jerusalem.

### Use of force and violence against children by IF and settlers resulting in killing and maiming



Children directly exposed to conflict-related violence remain a particularly vulnerable group. In 2022 (as of 30 June), 14 children (all boys) had been killed by IF and over 500 injured across the West Bank<sup>81</sup>. Partners

<sup>81</sup> <https://www.ochaopt.org/data/casualties>

<sup>82</sup> Figures cited are reported in: Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary General, A/76/871-S/2022/493, 23 June 2022

continuously raise serious concerns on the use of force by IF against children in view of the vulnerable position of children and the requirements for special protection and treatment.

During 2021, the annual report of the Secretary General on Children and Armed Conflict<sup>82</sup> included 2,934 grave violations verified in Israel and the State of Palestine including 1,216 children killed or maimed; 134 attacks on schools, hospitals and related protected personnel; and 1,583 incidents of denial of humanitarian access affecting children.

According to a 2020 NRC report<sup>83</sup> analysing attacks and barriers harming Palestinian children’s ability to access their education across the West Bank, between January 2018 and June 2020, research showed that Palestinian children in the West Bank Bank faced an average of 10 attacks on education per month. Across the 30-month reporting period, analysis of a multi-source dataset showed 296 attacks against education by IF or settlers and settlement private security guards. Nablus and Hebron were especially hard hit and three out of four attacks were perpetrated by IF. Of these, 37 per cent involved harassment, intimidation and threats or the actual use of force against students and educational staff, including 10 attacks during which IF physically assaulted students.

In the context of exposure to violence, children are particularly vulnerable to experiencing high rates of mental distress, including significant risks of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, behavioural problems, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, as well as functional impairment. In conflict environments, good parenting, relationships with teachers, social networks, and healthcare systems are also affected by trauma and toxic stress.

<sup>83</sup> NRC, Raided and Razed: Attacks on West Bank Education, 2020, <https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/reports/raided-and-raized/raided-and-raized.pdf>

## Arbitrary arrest and detention of children, including ill-treatment

During 2021, the annual report of the Secretary General on Children and Armed Conflict<sup>84</sup> included 637 children arrested and detained for alleged security-related offences; and 156 other interferences with education and health were verified in the same period<sup>85</sup>.

IF continues to carry out the arbitrary arrest and unlawful detention, including at least 428 Palestinian children arrested in the West Bank and East Jerusalem between January-May 2022, of which 338 were in East Jerusalem<sup>86</sup>. As a result, there was an increase in the number of tracing requests to locate Palestinian children detained by IF. According to one NGO, Israel is the only country in the world that systematically prosecutes children in military courts<sup>87</sup>. As of 31 May, the total number of Palestinians children currently held in Israeli prisons was 170 and one child in administrative detention.

According to a 2022 report by Save the Children looking into the impact of family separation on Palestinian children in military detention, approximately 500-700 Palestinian children come into contact with the Israeli military court system every year<sup>88</sup>. Nearly 60 per cent of Palestinian child detainees are transferred out of the West Bank to prisons inside Israel, in violation of Article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Out of 381 children surveyed who had been detained, 85 per cent were detained without being summoned in advance, with most being taken from their home in the middle of the night and 90 per cent of children did not have a parent or caregiver present during interrogation. Many children display signs of emotional distress and trauma as a result of the experiences during arrests, with their sense of security profoundly shaken. A UNICEF study

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<sup>84</sup> Figures cited are reported in: Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary General, A/76/871-S/2022/493, 23 June 2022

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> <https://www.addameer.org/ar/publications/monthly-reports>

<sup>87</sup> <https://defenceforchildren.org/israels-detention-of-palestinian-children-is-an-outrage-to-humanity/>

<sup>88</sup> Save the Children [report \(2022\)](#), Isolated: The impact of family separation on Palestinian children in military detention

<sup>89</sup> United Nations Children's Fund. (2013). Children in Israeli Military Detention. Observations and Recommendations. Available at:

concluded that the abuse of Palestinian children who come into contact with the Israeli military detention system appears to be widespread, systematic and institutionalized<sup>89</sup>. Partners report serious concern concerning children being prosecuted in a military court, or any court that lacks comprehensive fair trial rights and juvenile justice standards.

The structural violence has very strong linkages with the presence of settlements which exposes Palestinian children to military arrest operations.<sup>90</sup> According to analysis by Military Court Watch in 2017, the vast majority of children arrested in the West Bank by the military on average live within 1.02 km from a settlement<sup>91</sup>.

## Violence against children in the home (including abuse and neglect) and impact on mental well-being

Across the oPt, children face high levels of violence at home, with 90 per cent of children facing some form of violent discipline at home (boys 92.3 per cent, girls 87.9 per cent).<sup>92</sup> This includes 20.1 per cent of children subject to severe physical violence from their caregivers (boys 23.3 per cent, girls 16.9 per cent), with the rate in the West Bank at 13.7 per cent.

Some 26 per cent of boys under the age of 11 experience severe physical violence from their caregiver,<sup>93</sup> with children with disabilities three to four times more likely to experience all forms of violence, and three times more likely to experience sexual violence.

## Negative coping mechanisms: School drop-out and child labour

[https://www.unicef.org/oPt/UNICEF\\_oPt\\_Children\\_in\\_Israeli\\_Military\\_Detention\\_Observations\\_and\\_Recommendations\\_-\\_6\\_March\\_2013.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/oPt/UNICEF_oPt_Children_in_Israeli_Military_Detention_Observations_and_Recommendations_-_6_March_2013.pdf)

<sup>90</sup> Premiere Urgence Internationale (2020): Mental Health and Psychosocial Wellbeing Assessment Outcome Report.

<sup>91</sup> 125 children out of the 127 cases documented by MCW in 2016, [http://www.militarycourtwatch.org/files/server/MCWpercent20ANNUALpercent20REPORTpercent20-per cent202016percent20\(FINAL\)\(1\).pdf](http://www.militarycourtwatch.org/files/server/MCWpercent20ANNUALpercent20REPORTpercent20-per cent202016percent20(FINAL)(1).pdf)

<sup>92</sup> Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey 2019-2020 (MICS), Palestine Central Bureau of Statistics, 2021, Chapter 9.2. The figure includes any form of physical discipline as well as psychological aggression.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid*

Direct threats of violence, arbitrary arrest and unlawful detention of children all have a negative impact on the mental wellbeing in particular amongst children, which can lead to increased school dropout and child labor, reinforcing other child protection threats and leading to further deterioration of mental well-being.

Across the oPt, it is estimated that three per cent of children aged 10 to 17 are engaged in child labour.<sup>94</sup> In households living in poverty, the pandemic has increased pressure on boys to work and generate income, and exposed girls to additional burdens associated with domestic work and caregiver duties. At the same time, it is estimated that 10.3 per cent of children (age 5-17) are engaged in child labour including hazardous labour with boys twice as likely as girls to be engaged in child labour and six times as likely to be working. 14 percent of the households in the West Bank interviewed as part of the 2021 MSNA reported having difficulties meeting essential education needs (such as tuition fees, books) due to financial reasons, in the 30 days prior to the data collection. In 2022, these challenges have been compounded by the escalation in violence and effects of COVID-19.

### Risk 4.1: Operational context

The protracted crisis in the oPt and continued deterioration of the humanitarian situation has seen humanitarian space shrinking and partners reporting constraints imposed by IF from reaching vulnerable children who are exposed to unacceptable levels of violence, exploitation, and grave violations.

Violence against children by IF and settlers during confrontations and clashes and high levels of arrests of children in West Bank and East Jerusalem result in protection needs relating to legal aid, MHPSS and child protection responses. Access to children in their homes remains a key challenge as well as access those detained in Israeli prisons. To address this, partners are working on awareness and capacity building for children on child rights and empowering children to advocate for themselves and for peers. In addition to strengthening capacity of CBOs to address violence against children and for school counselors, student councils and social

workers on how to minimize impact of violence on well-being and promotion of children's rights.

### Risk 4.2: Partner responses and capacities

In response to violent attacks by IF and settlers against children travelling to and from school, partners are advocating for expansion of international protective presence to monitor school buildings and accompany children travelling to and from school in areas with high rates of incidents in which IF or settlers harassed, intimidated, arrested, or delayed school children.

Throughout the West Bank, Child Protection partners focus responses on children at risk of resorting to negative coping mechanisms or being the victims of harmful practices, notably children dropping out of schools, children involved in labour, children vulnerable to child marriage, and those exposed to both severe physical and psychological violence at home.

Child protection services include specialized individual case management and age and gender sensitive actions. These include awareness sessions for children and caregivers, family support and child/parent interaction programmes, life-skills programmes, youth-led protection initiatives and other programmes aimed at supporting vulnerable children and adolescents and reducing negative coping mechanisms, especially for those children affected by conflict and household violence, and grave violations. Partners prioritize multi-sectoral and integrated approaches, including approaches targeting families, to strengthen children's access to protection and MHPSS services and address inter-related factors contributing to their vulnerabilities, which may be compounded by COVID-19 pandemic conditions. Most vulnerable groups of children to be prioritized for protection services including individual case management, includes those who are displaced/living in insecure shelter situations, are impacted by demolitions, have suffered life-changing injuries and lost one or both parents, who have been detained, or who are affected by domestic violence. Child protection partners also provide legal assistance to children who have been detained or affected by grave violations, and ensure documentation

<sup>94</sup> MICS. 9.6per cent of boys across the OPT are estimated to be involved in child labour as defined in the MICS, compared to 4.8per cent of girls. Meanwhile, 8.7per cent of boys are estimated to be working under hazardous conditions, compared to 1.4per cent of girls.

and monitoring of grave violations against children (as defined by UN Security Council Resolution 1612). Partners in the West Bank continue to strengthen their ability to undertake rapid assessments and service referrals in communities affected by critical conflict-related incidents such as demolitions, settler violence or killings and injuries of children by IF.

### Risk 4.3: Humanitarian needs and gaps

- Children are significantly affected by escalating violence in the West Bank. Particular concern raised of **excessive use of force against children**, which has resulted in cases of life-altering serious injuries.
- Noticeable increase in **legal services** requested for children detained by IF
- High number of arrested children is adding **additional burdens on Child Protection service providers**
- Coordinate development of guidelines and tools on child protection case management with Ministry of Social Development to align with the National Case Management and Referral System.

### Protection Risk 5: Specific protection risks facing women and girls

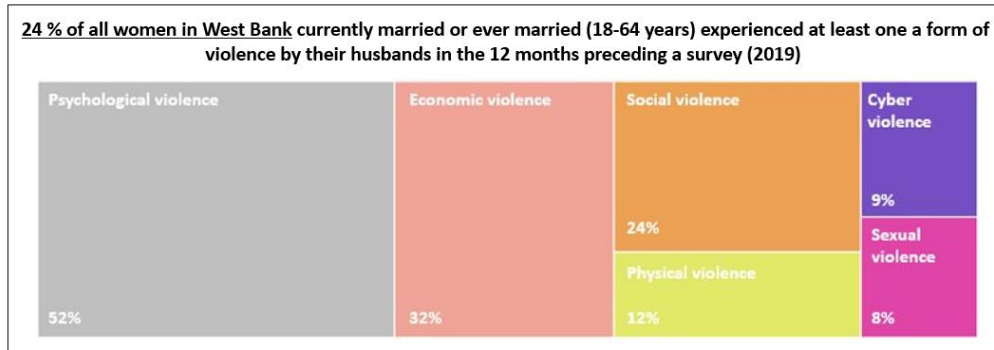
The Protection Cluster and GBV Sub-Cluster produced a [thematic Protection Analysis Update on protection issues affecting women and girls](#) in March 2022, which provides additional details and data to the below, including on most vulnerable and at-risk groups and impacts of COVID-19 with regards to shelters, access to justice, women and girls with disabilities (WGWs), and stigma.<sup>95</sup>

Decades of Israeli occupation exacerbate the already existing risks of violence and discrimination that women face in Palestine,<sup>96</sup> including

<sup>95</sup> oPt Protection Cluster | [Protection Analysis Update](#) – Protection issues affecting women and girls, March 2022

<sup>96</sup> According to the 2021 MSNA, some ten per cent of households report that women and girls avoid areas near settlements, checkpoints, community areas and markets, and using public transportation because they feel unsafe. Households in the West Bank are concerned about safety and security of girls (31 percent) and women (24 per cent).

<sup>97</sup> <https://palestine.unfpa.org/en/gender-based-violence>



domestic violence, sexual abuse and forced marriage. This is underpinned by high levels of gender inequality, supported by the strong patriarchal culture in Palestinian society.<sup>97</sup> The two protection threats highlighted below and driving forces behind these have been exacerbated due to recent spikes of violence across the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

### Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

GBV remains a prevalent protection risk in the oPt, with the impacts of 2021 highly visible in the current situation and in demand for services. Women and girls in oPt face widespread and varied risks of GBV throughout their lives, exacerbated by conflict, displacement, and movement restrictions.<sup>98</sup> Life-saving GBV services are extremely limited and access further restricted due to limitations on movement – with the result that those who experience GBV are not able to access quality care and support to recover.

No comprehensive law dealing with discrimination against women exists in the oPt.<sup>99</sup> Moreover, the political and legal fragmentation between West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem in itself poses a major obstacle to the protection of women and girls. At present, no laws specifically criminalize

<sup>98</sup> The SAWA Hotline reported a 70 per cent increase in calls after the beginning of COVID-lockdowns. This helpline operates in all of the oPt and provides support and assistance, primary social and psychological counseling for women, children, and men who have been exposed to various forms of violence and abuse.

<sup>99</sup> CEDAW, Concluding observations on the initial report of the State of Palestine, CEDAW/C/PSE/CO/1, para. 10.

GBV such as femicide, domestic violence, and sexual harassment, abuse, and assault.<sup>100</sup>

In 2019, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) conducted the latest survey on violence,<sup>101</sup> according to which, 24.3 per cent of (married or previously married) women in the West Bank between the ages of 18-64 experienced violence in the 12 months preceding the survey.<sup>102</sup> The main coping mechanism remains keeping silent. Better disaggregated data is needed on WGwDs who are often more vulnerable and at a higher risk of being exposed to all forms of GBV.

When it comes to femicide, there are no official statistics on the prevalence and the issue is vastly underreported. However, femicide is increasing.<sup>103</sup> Recent annual reports by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation in the oPt, reports that leniency and biased judicial practice contributes to social acceptance of crimes of femicides.<sup>104</sup>

Recent resurging violence in the West Bank including East Jerusalem, has had a negative impact on caregivers' ability to meet basic needs of the family, which may lead to GBV, including intimate partner violence and violence against children.<sup>105</sup> Forced internal displacement of people further increases the threat of GBV as women and girls outside of their homes are more vulnerable.

A study undertaken by UNFPA in 2019 showed that WGwDs are the most vulnerable to all kinds of violence and higher levels of marginalization.<sup>106</sup> Their vulnerability is heightened by limited awareness, low educational

attainment and educational exclusion, lack of resources and dependence on others, who may lack adequate support or resources themselves.

Furthermore, women who lack or are denied access to legal and social protection services (such as shelters) include those who are already vulnerable such as women with disabilities, women accused of murder or other offences, or those who have involvement with drugs, selling sex or collaboration with Israeli authorities.<sup>107</sup> For women LGBTQI+, access is not always denied but certainly restricted, either directly or not being able to identify themselves as such due to security concerns.

### Child, early, and forced marriages (CEFM)

One of the forms of GBV that poses particularly high risks for adolescent girls is early and forced marriage.<sup>108</sup> According to the strategy for addressing CEFM,<sup>109</sup> the prevalence of child marriages in Palestine is at 24 per cent of all marriages.<sup>110</sup> Although in general CEFM seems to be declining,<sup>111</sup> an increase has been identified in certain areas, particularly isolated parts of Area C and East Jerusalem. Recommendations have been made to PCBS to provide an update on CEFM prevalence based on the raw data, which was obtained as part of the 2019 violence survey. In West Bank and Area C, the highest prevalence of CEFM is recorded in the Jordan Valley (38per cent) and the southern part of the West Bank (35per cent). A higher prevalence rate was identified in villages and encampments (40per cent) compared to other localities.<sup>112</sup> In East Jerusalem, in communities where traditional

<sup>100</sup> Femicide is the intentional killing of women or girls because of their gender.

<sup>101</sup> PCBS (2019), [Preliminary results of the violence survey in the Palestinian Society](#).

<sup>102</sup> However, methodological flaws in the PCBS survey have been identified which do not allow for a reliable comparison. Moreover, the survey does not include child, early and forced marriage as a form of GBV.

<sup>103</sup> [WCLAC, "Parallel Follow-up Report Prepared by the Women's Center for Legal Aid and Counselling \(WCLAC\) and the Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations Forum to Combat Violence Against Women \(Al Muntada\)", 2020, p. 6](#)

<sup>104</sup> A/HRC/46/63, para. 32

<sup>105</sup> Terre des hommes Foundation 2021: Rapid Needs Assessment in the Gaza Strip and West Bank including East Jerusalem

<sup>106</sup> UNFPA (2019), [Women and girls with disabilities: Needs of survivors of gender-based violence and services offered to them](#), pp. 5-6.

<sup>107</sup> Gender Justice Report, p. 14.

<sup>108</sup> Since the amendment of the Personal Status Law on 21 October 2019, the minimum age of marriage is 18 for all (in West Bank). However, Article 5 allows sharia courts and other religious

authorities to grant exceptions to the minimum age of marriage. In Gaza, the minimum legal age for marriage remains 17 for girls and 18 for boys. However a girl can marry at the age of 14 if a judge approves it as being in the child's interest.

<sup>109</sup> Wadi, A. (2020), Strategy for addressing CEFM in the West Bank and Gaza.

<sup>110</sup> In the Arab region, on average, one in five women are married before the age of 18. See UNFPA (2019), State of the World Population. Furthermore, in nearly 10per cent of marriages both spouses are under the age of 18 years old. See Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, on her mission to the Occupied Palestinian Territory/State of Palestine, [A/HRC/35/30/Add.2](#), 8 June 2017, para. 39.

<sup>111</sup> 15per cent among women aged 20-24 in 2014 and approximately 11per cent in 2017. See PCBS (2014), Palestinian Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey and PCBS (2017), The Population, Housing and Establishment Census.

<sup>112</sup> Oxfam (2019), Addressing the Needs of Palestinian Households in Area C of the West Bank: Findings of the First Household Comprehensive Survey.



marriage is predominant, more than one in three girls marry before the age of 18.<sup>113</sup> Girls and women married early are often at a heightened risk of GBV.

The oPt GBV SC and the Child Protection/MHPSS Working Group (CP/MHPSS WG) have adopted an initial two-year strategy (2020-2022) that provides a framework for joint advocacy on CEFM.<sup>114</sup> The strategy shows gaps in legislation and enforcement, i.e. while the minimum age of marriage was raised to 18 (in West Bank), the law allows exceptions for Sharia courts and other religious authorities and it lacks enforcement mechanisms to prevent CEFM.

## Risk 5.1: Operational context

Specialized GBV services are limited in the oPt.<sup>115</sup> There is a national referral pathway in place in the West Bank (awaiting endorsement in Q1/Q2 2022). Recent reviews, such as the PSEA review of assistance to survivors<sup>116</sup> and a recent review of the clinical management of rape in oPt<sup>117</sup> also convey a need to advocate to fill gaps in services, build the capacity of partners to provide specialized and high quality services, with a strong focus on survivor's centered practices.

There are three shelters in the West Bank, offering emergency and sheltering services to women GBV survivors including Beit Al Tawarea in Jericho, Mehwar Centre in Bethlehem and Al Beit Al Aman in Nablus.<sup>118</sup> In 2018, UN Women conducted an assessment of the shelters and their effectiveness showing that common challenges include stigma, the extensive sheltering period in emergency shelters (due to no other available options), limited data and knowledge management, incomplete service provision, and the exclusion of certain vulnerable groups of women e.g. women with disabilities due to lack of accessibility and LGBTQI women.<sup>119</sup> In addition to the shelters, a number of women and girl safe spaces are operational in the oPt, six in the West Bank. In 2017, a UN backed one stop

center opened in Ramallah, providing health, legal, referral and police protection services for women and girl survivors of GBV.<sup>120</sup>

## Risk 5.2: Partner responses and capacities

To address the specific needs of women and girls within the humanitarian context in the oPt, the GBV SC is enhancing and supporting provision of multi-sectoral face-to-face and remote services, including case management, psychosocial support, cash and voucher assistance, dignity kits, legal aid, emergency medical care (through coordination and referral), and outreach around these services.

In 2022, GBV actors focuses on expanding service delivery and offering high quality multi-sectoral services for the most vulnerable groups, especially women and girls with disabilities, groups excluded or restricted from access to shelters, and female-headed households. GBV-SC work closely with other Clusters, in particular CP/MHPSS WG and Health Cluster, and continue to use health and psychosocial support services as the best entry point for GBV survivors to access care and support.

Efforts will continue to strengthen data collection and analysis of GBV trends and gaps, update referral pathways, and facilitate coordination between government and non-government service providers. This includes plans to roll-out the GBV Information Management System (GBV IMS+) in oPt.

## Risk 5.3: Humanitarian needs and gaps

- High need for high quality provision of **multi-sectoral face-to-face and remote specialized services**, including case management and referral, sheltering services, legal aid and representation, psychosocial support (including to frontline workers), cash and voucher assistance, dignity kits, legal aid, emergency medical care (through coordination and

<sup>113</sup> Juzoor for Health and Social Development (2017), Empowering Women in Marginalized East Jerusalem Communities.

<sup>114</sup> Wadi, A. (2020), Strategy for addressing CEFM in the West Bank and Gaza.

<sup>115</sup> ESCWA socio-economic situation Report 2019, p. 25.

<sup>116</sup> United Nations oPt, 2020 "Development of Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) protocol for Victims' Assistance in the State of Palestine"

<sup>117</sup> UNFPA and PMRS, 2018. "Assessment of Clinical Management of Rape in oPt."

<sup>118</sup> The Mehwar Centre in Bethlehem, run by the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD); the Family Defence Society shelter in Nablus; and the WCLAC emergency shelter in Jericho (ESCWA socio-economic situation Report 2019, p. 25)

<sup>119</sup> UN Women (2018), [Assessment of the services of anti-violence centres and shelters in Palestine](#), pp. 45-50.

<sup>120</sup> ESCWA socio-economic situation Report 2019, p. 25; Gender Justice Report 2018, p. 14.

referral), and outreach to empower GBV survivors to access specialized care and support.

- Increased focus on **internally displaced women and girls and WGwDs**, through the provision of dignity kits, protection information, and cash and voucher assistance for GBV survivors as part of GBV case management.
- Development of a **contingency plan to respond to GBV during emergencies**. The National Referral System sets out procedures during normal times, yet it is crucial to have a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for emergencies, aligned with the National Referral System.
- Need for **updated Referral Pathways and Standard Operating Procedures**, aligned with the expected updated National Referral System, inclusive of both Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Exploitation protocols and WGwDs.
- Need for GBV mainstreaming in the humanitarian response by increasing coordination on GBV among the Humanitarian Clusters, and strengthening national and community-based systems that prevent and mitigate GBV.

## 4. RESPONSE & CHALLENGES

The Protection Cluster seeks to address the most urgent protection concerns in the West Bank, in line with needs identified through the MSNA analysis, and extensive research and documentation carried out by protection partners. The most urgent needs range from the ongoing human rights and IHL concerns arising from military occupation, and ongoing escalations of violence and tension, to those driven by longstanding Israeli policies and practices, or caused by compounded risks associated with deteriorating living standards and COVID-19. The Protection Cluster Objectives in the oPt HRP 2022 are as follows:

- ❖ **Objective 1:** Increased respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and International Human Rights Law (IHRL) and accountability for violations
- ❖ **Objective 2:** Ensuring protection response mechanisms are in place to prevent and mitigate the compounded risks arising from the occupation and conflict related violence, and the impacts of COVID19

The Protection Cluster and the GBV, CP/MHPSS and LTF AoRs work closely with partners and authorities, enhancing their capacity to ensure inclusion of those in need of protection. Across the various responses, the cluster has prioritized the inclusion of PwDs. Protection Mainstreaming interventions particularly aim at bolstering meaningful access for PwDs, and with a focus on introducing effective safeguards to protect people against stigma and discrimination across the humanitarian response. For the 2022 HRP, the Protection Cluster and its partners made efforts to address accessibility barriers, including developing a disability inclusion checklist. Some remote work modalities, adapted to the constraints generated by the COVID-19 pandemic, continues in line with global minimum standards.

The Protection Cluster prioritizes interventions that address protection risks arising from the threats described above which have intensified over the past year. As underscored by persistently high rates of settler violence and use of force resulting in record-high numbers of injuries and killings, with broad-ranging impacts on the most exposed communities in the West Bank, primarily hotspots for settler violence, and areas seeing frequent clashes, raids, incursions, and arrest operations.

Palestinian movement in certain areas of the West Bank, including into East Jerusalem, continues to be restricted by physical and administrative measures, undermining access to basic services, as well as hindering the ability of protection organizations to provide support. Access is particularly affected in Area C, Hebron H2 and the 'Seam Zone' area between the Barrier and the 'Green Line.' Particularly impacted are women, children and persons living with disabilities, forcing vulnerable households to adopt negative coping strategies and increasing burdens on female headed households in particular



Despite increasing protection needs, access restrictions remains a key challenge to reach affected populations and provide legal aid, child protection, MHPSS and GBV services. Many partners face constraints reaching targeted areas due to closures of village entrances by IF, checkpoints, settler demonstrations and clashes.

**Disability Inclusion:** There is a high need for technical support for humanitarian partners on disability inclusion, specialised responses for PwDs and inclusive messaging and awareness raising materials.

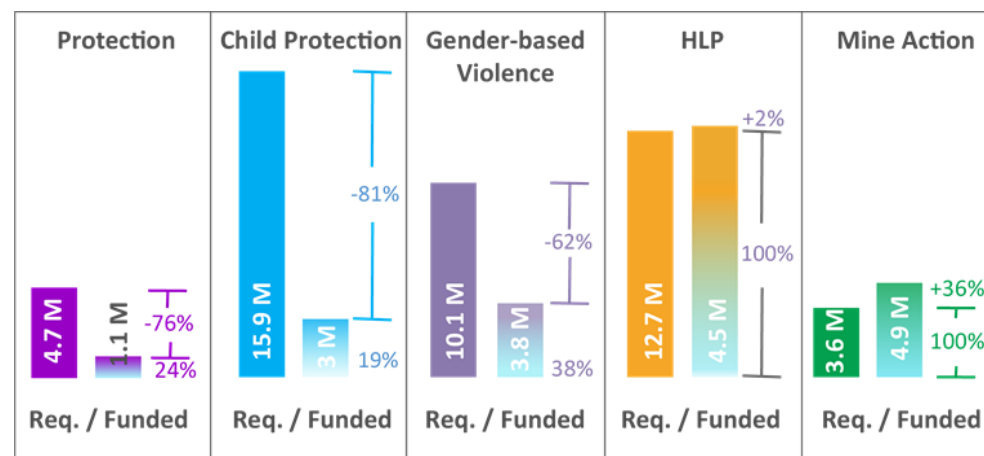
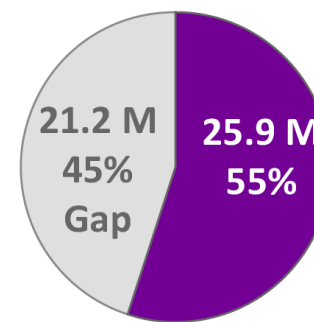
## 5. FUNDING DATA

Funding gaps within the Protection sector persists, particularly for:

- MHPSS, notably advanced MHPSS services for remote communities and vulnerable groups;
- GBV services including adequate sheltering services for women and girl survivors of GBV;
- Child Protection Interventions.

## | HRP 2022 | Protection Cluster Funding Requirements vs Funds Received oPT-Wide (as of June 2022)

**Protection Cluster  
Requirement 47 Million**



## 6. ADVOCACY MESSAGES

### Protection Risk 1: General Protection and Human Rights risks, in particular deterioration in physical well-being due to violence and conflict

- In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, there are serious concerns over the **excessive use of force (EUoF)** against Palestinians exercising their rights, and Israeli settler violence, among other serious human rights concerns.
- Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security and all authorities must fulfill obligations under international law to respect and protect these fundamental rights.
- When use of force is necessary, it must be used in a manner which minimizes harm and preserves life. All use of force should comply fully with IHRL: use of firearms is allowed in extremely limited circumstances, namely self-defence or defence of others from imminent threat of death or serious injury, and as a last resort.
- No force should be used against those peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly.
- Israel as the occupying power is **responsible for the safety and security of the Palestinian population** and must do its utmost to prevent violence and take all steps necessary to ensure the protection of all civilians, including Palestinian refugees. This includes **preventions of attacks by settlers** and **ensuring accountability** in cases of settler violence against Palestinians and their property.
- Israel should undertake **thorough, independent, impartial and prompt and transparent investigations** into all instances of possible EUoF, in accordance with international law. Those responsible for violations must be held to account.

### Protection Risk 2: Displacement and risk of forcible transfer

- Everyone should be able to live in safety and dignity. Israeli authorities' plans to demolish and forcibly evict Palestinians from their homes in different parts of West Bank and East Jerusalem raise a range of human rights concerns and also heighten their risk of **forcible transfer** – a grave breach of the fourth Geneva Convention and a war crime
- Publicly voice opposition to Supreme Court decisions and Israeli policies that demonstrate intent to reinforce **policies of discrimination and dispossession** in the oPt. Demolition orders issued contrary to international law – including based on the discriminatory planning regime in Area C and East Jerusalem – should be revoked/postponed
- **Punitive demolitions** constitute a flagrant form of **collective punishment**, prohibited under the Fourth Geneva Convention and the 1899 and 1097 Hague Regulations, as nobody should be punished for the deeds of another
- Palestinians from the WB, whether married to spouses from Gaza, EJ, Israel, or abroad are entitled to live together as a **cohesive familial unit**, without constant threat of separation.

### Protection Risk 3: Psychosocial distress and deterioration in mental well-being

- Increase availability of specialized MHPSS services and funding to ensure better coordination in the community, including response to settler violence and demolitions in each governorate.
- Prioritise funding to improve mental health services

### Protection Risk 4: Child protection threats/ Grave violations against children

- IF must refrain from using force against children and particular care should be taken to **protect children from any form of violence**.
- Government of Israel to respect international law and to **end the detention of children** under military law and their prosecution in military courts. According to CRC, any deprivation of liberty of a child (arrest, detention or imprisonment) should be as a last resort and for the minimum appropriate time.
- Ensure case managers/social workers in MoSD refer urgent cases for support by humanitarian child protection case management

### Protection Risk 5: Specific protection risks facing women and girls

- Establish a **national network** for the protection of women and girls in times of conflict, to provide specialized, equipped shelters responsive to the needs of women, girls, PwDs, and LGBTQI+ persons in accordance with SCR1325 and international laws on protection of women and girls in conflict areas.
- **Review of government plans** and interventions during an emergency, specifically the Rapid Response Plan for the social sector
- **Endorsement and effective enforcement of the Family Protection Bill**, to prevent and combat GBV in all its forms; to protect and ensure that women and girls can fully enjoy their human rights. Immediately repeal discriminatory legislation, in consultation with GBV actors and civil society.
- Ensure **equal and non-discriminatory access** to specialized services for GBV survivors, incl. WGWDs and LGBTQI+ persons, such as sheltering, legal and judicial services guided by GBV Minimum Standards
- Increase availability and accessibility of life-saving specialized GBV services, incl. community awareness about accessing services.