



The Impact of the Barrier on West Bank Communities

An update to the Humanitarian and Emergency Policy Group (HEPG)
and the Local Aid Coordination Committee (LACC)

Construction of the Barrier, Access and its Humanitarian Impact

April 2004¹

This report is compiled by the United Nations² and intended to complement a series of more detailed analysis of the Barrier's socio-economic impact.

¹ Covers the period between 7 March - 23 April 2004.

² This update has been compiled by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the United Nations Refugee and Works Agency (UNRWA).

West Bank Barrier 23 April 2004

An Update to the Humanitarian Emergency Policy Group (HEPG) and the Local Aid Coordination Committee (LACC)

Introduction

Motivated by concerns that Palestinian livelihoods and access to essential services would be harmed by the construction of the West Bank Barrier, the international donor community, through the Humanitarian Emergency Policy Group (HEPG), requested regular updates on the humanitarian impact of the Barrier.

This humanitarian monitoring update focuses on three key elements:³

- An outline of the key developments in the construction and path of the Barrier;
- An overview of access through the Barrier via the gates and 'green' permit system; and
- A case study of humanitarian access of the village of At Tira located in an enclave created by the Barrier that includes the urban centres of Beit Surik and Biddu.

In June 2002, the Israeli Government commenced construction of the West Bank Barrier as a security measure to protect its citizens from Palestinian suicide attacks. The Ministry of Defense noted that "[t]he Seam Zone is being built with the sole purpose of saving the lives of Israeli citizens who continue to be targeted by the terrorist campaign that began in 2000. The fact that over 800 men, women and children have been killed in horrific suicide bombs and other terror attacks clearly justifies the attempt to place a physical barrier in the path of terrorists."⁴

While part of the Barrier follows on the 1949 Armistice or the Green Line, approximately 88% of the planned route of the Barrier intrudes into the West Bank.

The constructed Barrier is currently **185 km** long and consists of a system of fences, ditches, razor wire, groomed trace sands, electronic monitoring system, patrol roads, and a no-go buffer zone. Around 12 km of the constructed Barrier consists of 8-9 metre high concrete-slab segments which are connected to form a wall (mostly in urban areas such as Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Qalqiliya, and Tulkarm). On the basis of maps published by the Government of Israel, the total length of the Barrier, when completed is estimated to be 630 km⁵.

³ The maps and information used in this report are based on satellite imagery and field work by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the United Nations Refugee and Works Agency (UNRWA). The planned Barrier route is based on a map published by the Government of Israel (Gol), Ministry of Defense, Seam Zone Authority (23 October 2003) and land requisition orders issued by the Gol that have been collected from local authorities and IDF liaison offices.

⁴ Israeli Ministry of Defense at www.seamzone.mod.gov.il/pages/ENG/questions.html.

⁵ Estimate based on GIS analysis of the Gol Barrier projections made public 23 Oct 2003. Gol projections are available at: <http://www.seamzone.mod.gov.il/Pages/ENG/route.htm>.

Overview

- Construction of the Barrier in the northern West Bank is nearly complete, while Barrier construction is rapidly progressing in the Ramallah, Jerusalem and Bethlehem governorates. A large tract of land was requisitioned in Salfit to further extend the northern section and will place three Palestinian villages into an enclave.
 - Along the completed section of the Barrier in the northern West Bank, from Jalbun to Masha, the Israeli authorities have declared land between the Green Line and the Barrier a “closed area”. ‘Green’ permits⁶ are required by the IDF for Palestinian residents and visitors to enter and leave these areas. The system of permits has varied in the six months since it was introduced.
 - Petitions to the Israeli High Court of Justice continue to be submitted to prevent or minimize the negative impact of the path of the Barrier on adjacent communities. These petitions and court actions have resulted in delays in the Barrier construction in and around Jerusalem.
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NORTH WEST BANK BARRIER - April 2004 **TUBAS | JENIN | TULKARM | QALQILIYA | SALFIT**

Each reference letter listed below corresponds to a letter on the attached reference map titled – North West Bank Barrier - April 2004.

Tubas

- A. Land requisition orders⁷ have been issued and construction of the Barrier has begun on or near the Green Line/northern border of the Tubas Governorate. Barrier construction is fence-like in this area, and stretches from the Jordan River west to the area north of Bardala. Construction of the eastern portion of the Barrier in this area is more advanced than the western areas.
- B. Northwest of Bardala, the path of the Barrier deviates from the Green Line into the West Bank. The Barrier extends to Al Mutilla, climbing from the base of the Jordan Valley (an approximate altitude of (-150) metres) and skirting a 200 metre high peak. Requisition orders have been issued along this section, and construction of the Barrier is underway.

Jenin

- C. From Al Mutilla south to Tayasir/Al ‘Aqaba, requisition orders have been issued for the northern portion of this extension. The land has been surveyed and marked from Al Mutilla to Raba; however no construction has begun. The planned Barrier path runs south along the ridge of the Jordan Valley. The IDF

⁶ Green permits (named for the colour of the permit) are required to pass through gates in the completed Barrier. See section on Access for details about the green permit system including a brief chronology of the system.

⁷ Land obtained for the building of the Barrier is requisitioned from Palestinian landowners by the Israeli Ministry of Defense through military orders. The orders generally become effective on the date they are signed and are valid even if they are not personally served on the property owners. Most orders are valid until 31 December 2005 and can be renewed.

issued house demolition orders to several Al' Aqaba residents during October 2003, however no new demolitions have been reported.

- D. From Al Mutilla north to Jalbun Barrier construction is nearly complete.
- E. The Barrier is complete from Jalbun to Barta'a gate, north of Qaffin. Barrier gates have been installed to allow restricted access to Israel and to Palestinian lands west of the Barrier.

The path of the Barrier runs near the Green Line from Jalbun to 'Anin. South of 'Anin, the Barrier juts eastward, running along the hilly terrain. This area of the Barrier creates an enclave or 'closed area', including 3 Israeli settlements and 6 Palestinian communities, with a combined Palestinian population of 4,317⁸. All Palestinian residents in this 'closed area' have received green permits. However, approximately 50 traders lost their businesses when they were denied permits to enter, as they were non-residents.

Despite increasing access restrictions, the population in this area has remained constant according to the Village Council. This may be because an estimated 40% of residents hold Israeli identification cards, due to the close proximity to the Green Line and Israel proper which means that they are able to move more freely than West Bank ID holders.

Tulkarm

- F. The Barrier from Qaffin to Zeita has been dismantled, and a new Barrier consisting of concrete segments has been constructed closer to the Green Line. This section of the Barrier runs through Nazlat Isa village and is constructed on leveled market land, separating several Nazlat Isa homes from the main part of the town, located east of the Barrier. In the last Barrier Update it was estimated that eight Nazlat Isa homes were isolated west of the Barrier. Since this report, UNICEF has conducted a house survey and reports that actually six homes, inhabited by 65 people are isolated west of the Barrier. This figure includes 13 children who attend school in Nazlat Isa. An additional 32 people were displaced as a result of two houses demolished due to the construction of the Barrier.
- G. The Barrier is complete from Zeita south to Falamyia. The Barrier in this area is mostly fence-like construction with the exception of a 5 km section of concrete Barrier running along the west side of Tulkarm town. Several gates have been installed, allowing restricted access to Palestinians with green permits.

Tulkarm: Kufr Zibad

Kufr Zibad Village Council reports that 40 families in the village own 175 acres of irrigated land isolated beyond the Barrier.⁹ Approximately 10 of the families are registered UNRWA refugees. Since their permits to cross the Barrier expired in January 2004, no landowners have been able to acquire a permit. The residents attribute this to the cumbersome permitting process. (See Access section for discussion on the issues surrounding the green permit process.)

⁸ All Palestinian locality population figures are taken from the Palestine Central Bureau of Statistics 2004 projected populations, or 1997 census population for villages with less than 100 residents. Estimates for 2004 figures are based on the PCBS 1997 census. The Barta'a Village Council reports 5,000 residents in this area, a slightly larger number than the official PCBS estimate.

⁹ This report uses "acre" as the reference measurement for land, however "dunum" is the measurement used locally (1 acre = 4 dunums = 0.4 hectare).

Qalqiliya

- H. The path of the Barrier runs south from Falameya, encircling Qalqiliya Town to Masha in Salfit Governorate. This section is complete, and includes portions of both concrete and fence-like construction. The concrete Barrier runs more than 3 km along the Green Line, on the west side of Qalqiliya. Several gates have been installed, allowing restricted access to Palestinians with green permits.
- I. Tunnel construction to connect Qalqiliya town to Habla and the surrounding villages to the south is ongoing. Currently movement restrictions placed on the Israeli-controlled Road 55 (between Jaljouliya checkpoint and Israel proper) prohibit general use by Palestinians. The tunnel will create an alternative and separate route for Palestinians to access towns in this area. The Israeli DCL reports that the project has encountered some delays, and it is now expected to be completed in October 2004.

Southeast of Qalqiliya, the Barrier has been built around the Israeli settlement Alfe Menashe, with a population of 5,500¹⁰. This has created a second enclave in Qalqiliya of five villages¹¹ with a combined population of 900. Six gates have been built in this enclave but only one gate is currently accessible to Palestinians to exit this area and access nearby roads.

The IDF has, however, made efforts to facilitate movement for school children in this area. School buses have been hired to carry students to and from schools.¹² (See the Barrier Gate Summary table for further details).

- J. The village of Funduq, located on Road 55 near Imanu'el settlement received 3 demolition orders during March for buildings on the eastern side of the village. These buildings lie on the projected route of the Barrier.

Salfit

- K. The Barrier has been completed north of Masha and extends south towards Road 5. This section of the Barrier includes a 50 metre section of 8-9 metre concrete slabs placed in front of a single home, isolated west of the Barrier.
- L. On 10 March the IDF issued a land requisition order extending the Masha Barrier. This order is for land extending from Masha, southwest and includes three parts. According to Qalqiliya DCL, the IDF will start land leveling and begin construction during May 2004.

¹⁰ All Israeli settlement population figures taken from the Research Department of the Knesset - 2003.

¹¹ Villages are Ras Tira, Ad Daba, Wadi Ar Rasha, Ramadin and Arab Abu Farda.

¹² The IDF reports that it is providing school buses also in the Tulkarm district.

Each reference number listed below corresponds to a number on the attached reference map titled – Central West Bank Barrier.

CENTRAL WEST BANK BARRIER RAMALLAH | JERUSALEM | BETHLEHEM

1. If the Rantis to Deir Qaddis planned enclave in northwest Ramallah proceeds in accordance with the 23 October 2003 Ministry of Defense map, it will isolate 9 villages with an estimated population of 23,500.

Land requisition orders have been issued to most of the villages south of Rantis, along the Green Line to Al Midya and east to Deir Qaddis. Extensive foundation work in preparation for the Barrier has been completed between Rantis and Budrus. Agricultural lands and olive groves belonging to Rantis, Budrus, and Qibya villages have been affected. New olive tree uprooting was carried out on the western edge of Budrus along the Green Line.

Land leveling started on 4 March 2004 south of Deir Qaddis, between the village and the Modi'in settlement bloc. Al Midya, Ni'lin, Shuqba and Kharbatha Bani Harith have also been issued with land requisition orders.

Land leveling was halted in Ni'lin, Deir Qaddis, Al Midya and Kharbatha Bani Harith for a short time, by an Israeli High Court decision. Work has resumed in many of these areas.

No orders have been issued for the eastern section of the planned enclave.

2. The Saffa to Beit Surik planned enclave covers both southwest Ramallah and the northwest Jerusalem Governorate. According to the plans issued by the Government of Israel, the Barrier construction in this area will isolate 16 villages with a combined population of 53,100.

Land requisition orders have been issued for the southern portion of this planned Barrier, south of Road 443 which bisects the enclave. 13 of the 16 villages in this planned enclave are located in this southern area with a combined population of 43,900.

In addition to the land affected by the construction of the Barrier, an estimated 12,500 acres belonging to 8 villages will be separated from the residents.¹³ Of this area, an estimated 7,500 acres is cultivated/agricultural land.

Barrier construction in this area started in late February. It has been halted and restarted according to High Court orders, followed by petitions from residents. Currently, construction is ongoing in At Tira, Bet Ijza, Biddu, Al Qubeiba, Qatanna Beit Nuba and Beit Liqya. Construction at Bet Surik remains halted.

Land has been leveled southward from Highway 443 to At Tira toward Beit Duqqu. Construction was halted for one week in this area by a High Court injunction,

¹³ Villages are Biddu, Beit Surik, Kattana, Beit Dukku, Beit Ijza, Beit Likiya, Beit 'Anan, Qubeiba.

following a petition from the residents. Work resumed on 8 March, after the Court narrowed the original injunction.

Beit Ijza running southward to Biddu has been leveled and Barrier construction has begun. Several olive trees were uprooted in the land preparation. Construction in these villages was halted for a month by a High Court order, following a petition from the residents. Construction resumed 27 March. On 21 April, another petition was submitted to the High Court. The new petition addressed two matters arising out of the Barrier path. The first issue concerned dividing a 4.5 acre plot of fig and olive trees and the second concerned scenarios for rerouting the Barrier around two Palestinian houses located next to Beit Khoron settlement (a 15 acre plot).

After 2 days of land leveling in two areas in Beit Surik, construction was halted on 29 February 2004. A High Court order was issued and alternative Barrier routes are being considered while the petition is pending. The petition addresses the requisition of 500 acres of olive and almond trees and vineyards. The court is expected to rule on the new route at the end of June 2004.

The next section of Barrier construction in this enclave runs north of Har Adar settlement and south along Qubeiba and Qatanna towns, also affecting Kharayib Umm al Lahim village lands. Construction was halted following a petition from the residents, however construction has resumed.

Land leveling continues around the planned enclave, running south of Beit Liqya and Beit Nuba villages northward toward Beit Sira.

No requisition orders have been received for construction of the Barrier at the northern section of the enclave (north of Highway 443). However, Highway 443 effectively closes this area into an enclave – see At Tira case study.

3. From Beit Ur al Fauqa to Beituniya, residents have been issued with land requisition orders. Land leveling began in February 2004 and has continued to the south and west of Beituniya on an old settler bypass road (no.455) and west along the Jabal Zaitoun hillside. Construction of the Barrier in this area will isolate 5,000 acres of Beituniya land, leaving only an estimated 1,250 acres inside the Beituniya municipal boundaries.

Beit Ur al Fauqa filed a petition to the High Court to raise claims regarding the path of the planned Barrier which would require the uprooting of olive trees and would block access to a minor religious site on Jabal al Zaitoun. An injunction was granted.

4. The Barrier construction from Beituniya extending to Qalandiya checkpoint was completed in spring 2003. The constructed Barrier in this area has restricted and rerouted movement between Ramallah and Jerusalem. Rafat and Beituniya agricultural lands have been particularly affected.
5. The Bir Nabala enclave has not been issued with requisition orders. 15,100 residents, in 5 villages, live in this planned enclave.
6. Residents living in the area between Qalandiya checkpoint and east towards the Jaba' road, have been issued requisition orders. Concrete foundations were installed in the east side of Qalandiya checkpoint in 2003, however active Barrier construction was not evident. A large quarry is located along this stretch making observations

difficult. Movement in this area is restricted by existing physical barriers and IDF patrols.

7. A small area in Ar Ram/Dahiyat al Bareed has been issued with requisition orders. In preparation for construction of the Barrier, 800 metres of concrete blocks and slabs were placed along the planned Barrier path to reroute traffic. This area is a high density Jerusalem suburb, inhabited mainly by Jerusalem ID cardholders with an estimated population of 25,215 Palestinians.¹⁴
8. The Hizma area received land requisition orders on 8 April. No construction has begun in this area.
9. 'Anata Village and Shu'fat refugee camp (located within the Jerusalem municipality), have both been issued with orders for the requisition of land encircling this area on three sides. According to the planned path, the Barrier will only be open on the West Bank side, separating these communities from Jerusalem. The residents filed an appeal to the Magistrate Court Appeal Committee to relocate the Barrier east of the current route and closer to the Jerusalem Municipality border. Due to a temporary court injunction, no construction has begun in this area during the reporting period.

This area has a total population of more than 20,000 Jerusalem ID card holders. Shu'fat refugee camp is located within the Jerusalem municipal boundary and has 9,567¹⁵ UNRWA registered refugees with Jerusalem ID cards. There are approximately an additional 5,000 unregistered residents of Shu'fat camp with Jerusalem IDs. In the Al Salam neighborhood in 'Anata, approximately 5,000 residents hold Jerusalem ID cards.

10. The Barrier in Al Eizariya area is under active construction. A strip is complete on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, running along the Beit Fage Convent with a gap of 500 metres of leveled land then extends eastward towards the Az Za'ayem checkpoint. East of the convent, land requisition orders have been issued extending to the Ma'ale Adumin settlement junction. Standing on Az Za'ayem checkpoint the concrete Barrier can be seen running southeast. The planned route will continue down the valley surrounding the village of Al 'Eizariya and ending at the entrance to Ma'ale Adumim settlement. A 100 metre stretch of land has been leveled west of this entrance.

A tunnel is expected to be built to connect Al Eizariya to Az Za'ayem Palestinian villages, crossing under Israeli-controlled Road 1. This area is under heavy construction and consequently it is difficult to make observations.

11. Land has been leveled and is now under construction northeast of Ras Kubsa junction, along the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives. This area is a patchwork of concrete sections interrupted with small open sections. From the convent approximately 120 concrete slabs run south (180 metres), then a 150 metre gap, another 150 concrete slabs are in place (220 metres) followed by a gap to Ras Kubsa junction. The area is currently open to Jerusalem ID cardholders and Palestinians from the West Bank with appropriate permits.

¹⁴ Population figure based on 1997 PCBS census projections. The Ar Ram village council, however, reports more than 62,000 people in this area.

¹⁵ UNRWA refugee profile, 30 June 2001, www.unrwa.org/

12. South of Ras Kubsa junction, between Ras al 'Amud and Abu Dis, a concrete Barrier has been built running south on the main road to the Cliff Hotel. A 300 metre opening still exists at the hotel. Land has been leveled around the hotel.
13. South of the Cliff Hotel, a concrete Barrier is constructed on an adjacent hill. It zigzags along the top of the hill, in some cases within 5 metres of Palestinian homes. This section spans approximately 300 metres, followed by a 300 metre gap and a second set of 25 concrete slabs. There are 600-800 metres of road and concrete Barrier construction running down the valley towards Al Quds University. After the University, land has been leveled for 200 metres, extending from the University playground, followed by a section of concrete Barrier. The Barrier continues around the bottom of the next hill, followed by 2 kilometres of land that has been leveled running south towards Ash Sheikh Sa'ad.
14. In the Ash Sheikh Sa'ad area, a fence-like Barrier is being constructed. The Barrier path currently runs along the western border of Ash Sheikh Sa'ad, placing it on the West Bank side of the Barrier. Ash Sheikh Sa'ad has 2,370 residents some with Jerusalem and some with West Bank ID cards. This village is heavily dependant on services in Jerusalem. The Barrier path combined with the closures (roadblocks) will effectively isolate this village from Jerusalem. There is no road access to West Bank services. An appeal filed by residents to the Magistrate Court Appeal Committee is still pending.¹⁶
15. The Barrier extends southward towards Sur Bahir agricultural land. A 600 metre stretch is completed and land is being leveled in preparation for further construction. Approximately 250 families (1,000 people living in more than 45 houses) with Jerusalem IDs live in Wadi Hummus, a neighborhood of Sur Bahir. Land requisition orders for the Barrier separate Wadi Hummus from Sur Bahir by placing this neighborhood on the West Bank side of the Barrier. The requisition orders are for 400 acres of land, including 34 acres of olive tree groves.

In An Nu'man, work on both the Barrier and the intersecting Za'tara bypass road has progressed. Olive trees have been uprooted along the path of the Barrier. Land has been cleared right up to the village cemetery. There are strong concerns by the residents of An Nu'man that grave sites will be damaged or lost in the process of building the Barrier. An Nu'man is planned to remain on the Jerusalem side of the Barrier, which presents a problem to the residents who all hold West Bank ID cards.

16. Jabal Al Diek, a suburb of Beit Sahour located below the Israeli hillside settlement Har Homa, is planned to be an enclave surrounded by barriers on all sides. 74 people reside in this community where the constructed Barrier zigzags along the northern side of the village. Land requisition orders have been issued and land leveling has taken place along the southern portion. The combination of the existing Barrier with newly requisitioned land orders for a security road will create an enclave of 75 acres, restricting movement in and out. This community will be separated from all services previously used in Beit Sahour. Residents will face restricted access to their families, friends, schools, hospitals and work places. No additional construction work has been undertaken in this neighborhood.
17. Barrier construction began at the entrance of the Emmanuel Monastery in Bethlehem extending towards the area requisitioned south of the Gilo checkpoint (CP300). At

¹⁶ The IDF reported that it intends to build a road to enable Ash Sheikh Sa'ad Jerusalem ID card holders to access Jerusalem through Sur Bahir. A manned IDF checkpoint will be placed on the road to check ID's.

the time of writing, 200 metres of 8-9 metre high concrete slabs have been erected. Barrier construction is extending towards the road to Bethlehem/Rachel's Tomb. Rachel's Tomb is planned to be included on the Jerusalem side of the Barrier.

18. South of Gilo checkpoint, land requisition orders have been issued. Construction of the Barrier has progressed around the Aida camp, north of Bethlehem, where a concrete Barrier now takes the place of the original fence and security road. This section runs for approximately 250 metres.
19. Construction of the Barrier is complete from behind Aida refugee camp to the bridge over bypass Road 60 (known locally as the "Tunnel Road") northwest of Beit Jala. New land confiscation orders have been received by the Beit Jala municipality for 44 acres. The land requisitioned runs from the west side of bypass Road 60, at the level of overpass and, although not continuously, connects with the orders issued for the village of Walaja, issued in August 2003. According to the map attached with the military order, the Jewish settlement of Har Gilo and the Cremisan monastery will be located on the Jerusalem side of the Barrier.
20. Residents of Al Walaja have received requisition orders for land surrounding the village in August 2003, which now connects to the new orders issued near Beit Jala. No construction has begun.

ACCESS: West Bank Barrier Gates

As the constructed Barrier route runs through populated and agricultural areas into the West Bank, it cuts off local roads and access to fields farmed by the Palestinian population. The Barrier path in the north also isolates more than 5,000 Palestinians who live in 'closed areas' – the areas between the Green Line and the Barrier – and restricts others who need to access these areas. The Israeli authorities have installed a network of gates in the Barrier and a system of special permits (green in colour) to control movement through the Barrier.

This section of the Update provides an overview of the gates located in the constructed Barrier. Varying restrictions and conditions apply for each recorded gate. The location, type and status of each gate have been documented through consultations with local Palestinian and Israeli officials and field observations. The table also classifies the Barrier gates as either open for Palestinian use or currently not open for Palestinian use¹⁷. The status of gates is subject to change.

The following definitions should be used with the attached map and table, entitled – North West Bank Barrier Gates map and West Bank Barrier Gate Summary table.

Barrier Gate Definitions:

Agricultural Gate – A gate installed in the completed Barrier to allow access to agricultural fields, green houses, and orchards located on the other side of the Barrier. Principally used by Palestinian farmers who reside inside of the Barrier and whose land

¹⁷ Barrier Gates are considered 'closed' if they have not been open for Palestinian use during the current reporting period or six weeks.

is on the other side. Farmers must apply for and obtain a green permit to cross the gate to their fields.

Checkpoint Gate – A crossing point from the West Bank into West Bank areas (de facto placed under Israeli jurisdiction) and Israel. Checkpoint gates are typically manned by Israeli Border Police or IDF, and are also used by Israeli settlers. Palestinians from the West Bank must have a permit to enter Israel. Since the Barrier lies inside the West Bank in most areas, many of these gates are not located on the Green Line.

Military Gate – These gates are not permitted for Palestinian civilian use.

Road Gate – In some cases a gate is installed at the junction where the Barrier blocks a road. Permits are required to cross Road gates to continue traveling on the road.

School Gate – In some places the Barrier blocks a route used to reach a school, a gate is installed to allow Palestinian school children and teachers to cross. Opening times coincide with school hours twice daily, often the IDF supplies a school bus to transport the students through the Barrier gate. These gates are usually closed to green permit holders.

Settlement Gate – Primarily used by settlers, these gates are officially open to farmers with green permits. However, due to the proximity of the gate to settlements and the fear of harassment by settlers, farmers generally choose not to use these gates.

Barrier Gate Update Summary:

While the IDF states that there are 73 gates in the constructed part of the Barrier,¹⁸ UN staff have observed only 53 gates.¹⁹

15 of the 53 gates observed by the UN were currently open to Palestinian permit holders – a net reduction of 4 from the last Update. The remaining 38 gates were currently closed for a variety of reasons listed in the remarks column of the West Bank Barrier Gates Summary table. Of the closed gates, six gates fall into a special case.²⁰

Five gates previously open for green permit holders are now closed, 3 of these gates are school gates where the IDF now supplies school buses to facilitate movement through the Barrier to and from schools. The remaining two are a checkpoint gate and an agricultural gate which is open for one family isolated on the west side of the Barrier.

Regarding the seven newly observed gates since March 2004, four are in the Bethlehem area, and the remaining three are located in Qalqiliya, Tulkarm and Salfit respectively. The Salfit gate is open to Palestinian permit holders, however, the six others are closed for Palestinian crossing.

¹⁸ The IDF records 73 gates, 45 of which are for the use of the Palestinian population. Out of the 45, 15 are open 24 hours for Palestinians with permits, 16 are opened daily according to set hours, 12 are opened seasonally for agricultural use and 2 are opened for bus passage for school children.

¹⁹ The March Update reported on 46 gates. 19 were reported generally opened to permit holders.

²⁰ Special cases refer to gates that have official opening hours posted by the IDF, but in practice are not used, or rarely used by residents. Reported reasons for not using a particular gate include: lack of green permit, no access to land, fear of Israeli settler harassment, and lack of confidence that the gate will be open at scheduled times.

Map – Bethlehem Barrier Gates



Table - Gate Overview by Governorate

	Barrier gates currently open	Barrier gates currently closed	Total gates recorded
Tulkarm	2	10	12
Qalqiliya	9	14	23
Jenin	3	9	12
Salfit	1	1	2
Bethlehem	0	4	4
TOTAL	15	38	53

Overview of the Green Permit system:

- Green permits are required for Palestinians to enter West Bank land located between the Barrier and the Green Line which the IDF declared as 'closed' in October 2003. The 'closed areas' include 12 Palestinian villages/towns and 13 individual households²¹ affecting approximately 5,000 Palestinian residents.
- The green permits are valid to pass through one gate only.
- Green permits are required for:
 1. All Palestinians residing in the 'closed areas' (more than 5,000 people);
 2. 12 categories of visitors: business owners, merchants, employees, farmers, teachers, students, Palestinian Authority employees, local staff of international organizations, local council/infrastructure company employees, medical staff, visitors, and a general category of 'special cases'.
- Currently, green permits are not required for: children under 12 (accompanied by a adult holding a green permit); Palestinians possessing permits to enter Israel or work in settlements; Israeli citizens and foreign citizens of Jewish descent; and tourists with valid visas.
- Currently, the IDF does not enforce the green permit requirement for medical staff and teachers, for students from villages inside the 'closed areas', for students who live in nearby villages and attend schools located in the 'closed areas' and for residents of Azun Atma.

Green Permits - Access through Barrier

– A Brief Chronology-

2 Oct 2003

The IDF declares the area between the Barrier and the Green Line along the completed Barrier in the northern West Bank a 'closed area'. The order is called, "Declaration of Closing an Area No. S/20/03 (Seam Zone)". A permit system to allow movement through the Barrier is introduced; people living in the area are now classified as 'long-term residents'.

Throughout October, the IDF distributes a first round of permits to several thousand villagers in the 'closed areas'. These are issued without any formal application procedure on the part of the recipients. Palestinians complain about the randomness of the distribution: A number of those eligible do not receive permits while in other cases children, ex-residents and even deceased persons do. Certain communities resist accepting the permits on the grounds that it legitimizes a system they do not support.

²¹ Single households are: Tulkarem: 11 homes in Nazlat Isa, al Ras and Schweika; Qalqilya: 1 home in Jayyous; Salfit: 1 home in Masha.

Nov 2003 – Jan 2004

The initial permits expire. To renew, applicants are required to apply through the Civil Administration, presenting their ID cards and land ownership documents. Those not issued permits in the first round can also apply, with appropriate documents.

Eligibility is limited to those who own land behind the Barrier. Landless agricultural labourers who were initially issued permits are now refused. The new policy has severe implications for the many farmers who depend on this workforce. Some applicants are also denied permits based on 'security reasons'.

22 Jan 2004

The Israeli authorities issue more stringent requirements for application/renewal of permits. Requirements include: an application form; ID card with photograph; updated land ownership documents; certification from the local village council or municipality that the documents are valid; and a magnetic card signifying that the applicant is not deemed a security risk by the IDF. The DCL in Qedumim also requires applicants to present a document showing the payment of taxes for irrigated land since 1995.

12 Feb 2004

The Tulkarm DCL is closed to implement a new high-tech electronic system to service green permits and register identity cards. This pilot project, once established, will be extended to other West Bank governorates. Meanwhile, Tulkarm residents are instructed to apply to Qedumim DCL for permits.

In February, the magnetic card and back taxes requirements are relaxed.

13 Apr 2004

The Tulkarm DCL reopens but is not yet accepting permit applications. Due to its limited capacity to process green permits from the Qalqilya, Tulkarm and Salfit governorates, the Israeli Tulkarm DCL instructs the Palestinian DCL to coordinate permit applications. No individual applications are now accepted.

21 Apr 2004

There is confusion over permit requirements when the Qedumim DCL issues a new type of permit with a 'State of Israel' watermark rather than the previous IDF logo. The permits are valid for one year and indicate that the holder may enter Israel, which previous permits had strictly prohibited. Holders are no longer termed permanent or long-term residents but rather persons with a 'permanent purpose in the seam zone'. Many Palestinians refuse to accept these permits fearing a loss in their permanent resident status. The DCL declare the alterations a mistake and that there is no change in status.

Case Study: At Tira – Access to Ramallah

Location and background

At Tira is a small village 20km southwest of Ramallah in the West Bank. It is located beside Highway 443, a four-lane highway which the IDF prohibits Palestinians from using. In exceptional cases, Palestinians may get a permit to access the highway. The population of At Tira village is 1,605. Over 90 percent of the residents are refugees.

As with other villages in the area, Ramallah has traditionally been At Tira's main economic and service centre. About 12km distant, Ramallah was accessible from the village by local roads and Highway 443. Since the imposition of the closure regime, involving IDF roadblocks and checkpoints, in late 2000, At Tira residents find it difficult to reach Ramallah because they are no longer allowed to use Highway 443.

New Barrier construction

The southern and eastern sections of the Barrier are being rapidly completed, in line with official Israeli plans. When it is finished, At Tira will be located within an enclave – surrounded on three sides by the Barrier and across the top to the north by Highway 443.

Approximately **43,900 people in 12 other villages are also located in this enclave.** They will be similarly affected.

Residents of At Tira and the villages in this enclave have two alternative routes to reach Ramallah (see map):

Alternative Route 1:

At Tira residents can go by Kharbatha al Misbah on a difficult, dirt road. This 30km route is nearly impassable in the winter, even in an all-terrain vehicle, and leads through a Bedouin encampment. The journey takes about 90 minutes if there are no delays at flying checkpoints.

Alternative Route 2:

A dirt path from At Tira to Beit Duqqu which leads down a steep ravine between two hills. This 45 km route uses the Beit Anan road and adds a further 30 minutes to the 90-minute detour in alternative route 1. During the winter rains, this route may be impassable.

At the moment there is a short underpass at Kharbatha al Misbah for vehicles to go under Highway 443 to Ramallah. According to a map obtained by the head of At Tira village council, the IDF plans to build a tunnel under Route 443 to allow Palestinian traffic pass under the Barrier. It is not clear when construction might begin or how this would affect access for the villages in the enclave to the rest of the West Bank.

Access to health care

Before closure was put in place in late 2000, At Tira's registered refugee residents were able to access primary health care facilities at the UNRWA health point in Beit 'Ur at Tahta, on the other side of Highway 443. Otherwise, residents used health facilities in Ramallah. For secondary health care, hospitalisation or medical emergencies, patients could easily reach Ramallah or call an ambulance to the village. Closure has made these services across Highway 443 and in Ramallah difficult to access.

The next largest population centre with a Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS) clinic and a number of private clinics is Biddu, which is only accessible at the moment by the dirt and steep road to Beit Duqqu.

In response to the problems of access to health care, the Palestinian Authority (PA) opened a clinic in At Tira in early 2003. The clinic is open six days a week but the doctor visits only twice a week in the morning. From his home in Saffa the doctor has to drive to Beit 'Ur al Fauqa, where he crosses Highway 443 on foot under a culvert to At Tira. While the villagers benefit from the PA clinic, they find it difficult to pay for consultations and medicine.

In addition, road blocks at the entrance to At Tira have meant that medical emergencies have to be transferred to Ramallah using the 'back-to-back' system: carrying the patient from one ambulance to another across the road block. It is unclear whether this system will be possible once the Barrier is completed. If not, ambulances would have to use an alternative route like the dirt road through Beit Diquu as discussed above. "From a medical point of view, this road is unacceptable [for emergencies]," according to Mohammed Sabri, administrator of Biddu's PRCS Health Centre.

Access to education

Another issue of concern is access to primary schools, secondary schools and university. Boys from At Tira go to the Beit 'Ur al Fauqa Boys' School (primary), located across Highway 443 near the Bet Khoron settlement. Of approximately 350 pupils in the school, 170 are registered refugees from At Tira.

Since the start of the second *intifadah* in September 2000, the IDF has prevented the boys from crossing a pedestrian bridge over Highway 443, diverting them through the culvert under the highway. The culvert often floods in the winter and has no lighting. According to teachers and pupils, IDF soldiers frequently stand at the exit of the culvert or near the military camp and search the children on their way to school.

In summer 2003, and again in March 2004, the IDF approached the Village Council and offered to build a new boys' primary school in At Tira in place of the existing one in Beit 'Ur al Fauqa. The villagers declined, refusing to abandon their access to their land and school on the other side of Highway 443. The headmaster, Abdel Hamid Asi, insists: "We will not leave this school. It won't be easy to get us out. If they want peace, this is not a sign of peace."

It is not clear whether pupils from At Tira will have access to this school once the Barrier is completed because, in addition to getting to the other side of Highway 443, they will also need to get past the Barrier.

Youths who continue to secondary school do so in Saffa, Beit 'Ur at Tahta, Beituniya, Ramallah or Ar Ram. University students go to colleges in the major urban centres. Public transport to Birzeit University, north of Ramallah, costs around NIS 50 for a round-trip. Many families, especially those with several children in school, cannot afford this cost.