



# THE HUMANITARIAN MONITOR

APRIL 2010

## April Overview

The month of April brought to light a range of concerns throughout the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), including the potential for the displacement of tens of thousands of Palestinians because of new military orders, an escalation in Israeli settler violence, and increasing indicators to poverty in Gaza. In attempting to meet the most pressing needs of the population, humanitarian organizations are encountering a number of access and operational challenges that limit their response and impede the effective delivery of aid.



Partially finished units in the Khan Yunis housing project, frozen since June 2007 due to restrictions on the import of necessary materials. Photo by UNRWA

Displacement and risk of displacement in the West Bank derive from multiple factors, including house demolitions, evictions and deportations. During the month, demolitions in Area C due to the lack of Israeli-issued building permits resulted in the displacement of seven people. In East Jerusalem, four Palestinian families (including 21 children) living in the Beit Safafa neighborhood

were evicted from their homes in the context of a dispute over ownership with Israeli settlers, and two new Palestinian families in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood were served with civil eviction proceedings by a settler organization. This month, new Israeli military legislation, defining persons staying in the West Bank without an Israeli-issued permit as “infiltrators”, entered into force. Under

### ISSUES COVERED THIS MONTH

**West Bank:** Casualties decrease along an escalation in settler attacks on Palestinian property • Demolitions and eviction proceedings in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem • Area C in Focus: Meeting basic humanitarian needs • Improved monitoring of Emergency Medical Services access conditions orders

**Gaza Strip:** The Gaza-Israel border remains tense, affecting lives and livelihoods of civilians • Two prisoners executed in the Gaza Strip • Gaza Crossings activity • Palestinian access into and out of Gaza remains restricted • UNRWA Survey Shows Dramatic Increase in Abject Poverty in Gaza

**Issues across occupied Palestinian territory** - Increasing incidents leading to the disruption of schooling • Military orders potentially placing thousands at risk of deportation • Consolidated Appeals Process

this legislation, tens of thousands of Palestinians are potentially at risk of arrest, prosecution, and deportation from the West Bank on the grounds of unclear criteria and without adequate judicial review.

Also this month, conflict-related incidents continued along the Gaza-Israel border, as did Israeli air strikes inside Gaza, resulting in the killing of four Palestinians, including one civilian, and the injury of 12 others, of whom ten were civilians. In the West Bank, one Palestinian militant was killed and 107 others injured during the period; the majority of West Bank injuries occurred during demonstrations or in the context of Israeli settler-related incidents. The number of attacks perpetrated by Israeli settlers against Palestinian property during April (26) was the highest recorded by OCHA in the last year and included, for the third time since December 2009, damages to a mosque. Some of these incidents occurred in the context of the so-called "price tag" strategy, in which settlers attack Palestinians and their property in retaliation for measures adopted by the Israeli authorities.

The deterioration of living conditions in the Gaza Strip, mainly as a result of the Israeli blockade continued to be of concern. A new poverty survey conducted by UNRWA showed that the number of Palestine refugees completely unable to secure access to food and lacking the means to purchase even the most basic items, such as soap, school stationary and safe drinking water ('abject poverty') has tripled since the imposition of the blockade in June 2007. Imports of industrial fuel designated for the Gaza Power Plant continued to decline for the fifth consecutive month, due to a lack of funds needed to purchase the industrial fuel required to operate the plant. As a result, the majority of Gaza's population experienced rolling blackouts of up to 12 hours per day, every day.

By contrast, this month Gaza saw also a major positive development, when, for the first time since June 2007 and October 2008, respectively, aluminum and wood were allowed entry for commercial purposes. Previously, limited quantities of aluminum and wood had entered through tunnels at high prices and low quality. As has been the case with the entry of glass, allowed since December 2009, the influx of wood and aluminum through the crossings will likely result in a sharp decline in prices, making such items more affordable for the population-at-large and allowing the latter to weatherproof their homes and undertake some repairs. Yet, this development is far from allowing any significant reconstruction of homes and public buildings destroyed during the "Cast Lead" offensive, or needed due to population growth.

The UN's ability to meet the current level of need in Gaza continues to be significantly impeded by the blockade, which has either prevented the implementation of planned humanitarian projects or resulted in significant delays. After months of negotiations between the UN and the Government of Israel, the UN Secretary-General was informed during his March 2010 visit to Israel and the oPt that three of the frozen UN projects in the areas of housing, sanitation and education, would be allowed to resume. While some progress was achieved regarding two of these projects (sanitation and education), the largest one, which addresses the housing needs of 151 families, has remained frozen due to delays in the clearance of the necessary imports; construction material for the project only began entering Gaza on 17 May. While the blockade has limited the ability of the UN and its partners to operate, materials smuggled in through the tunnels are entering Gaza in larger quantities, including building materials. On 11 May the Hamas authorities announced the launching of an ambitious reconstruction project, involving 1,100 houses damaged during Israel's "Cast Lead" offensive.

The UN faces similar access and operational challenges in Area C of the West Bank. In January 2010, the humanitarian community submitted a response plan designed to address the most critical needs of extremely vulnerable communities in the areas of water, education and shelter. Three months following submission of the plan, the UN and its partners have not yet received any support or response from the Israeli authorities.

The humanitarian situation in the oPt underscores the need for a lifting of the blockade on Gaza, the need for the removal of building restrictions in Area C, and the need to freeze any evictions in East Jerusalem, among others. It also requires unconditional and increased support for humanitarian and development agencies to carry out their work smoothly and efficiently. In the absence of such measures, the prospects for any improvement in the humanitarian situation diminishes and Palestinian dependency on international aid will only likely grow.

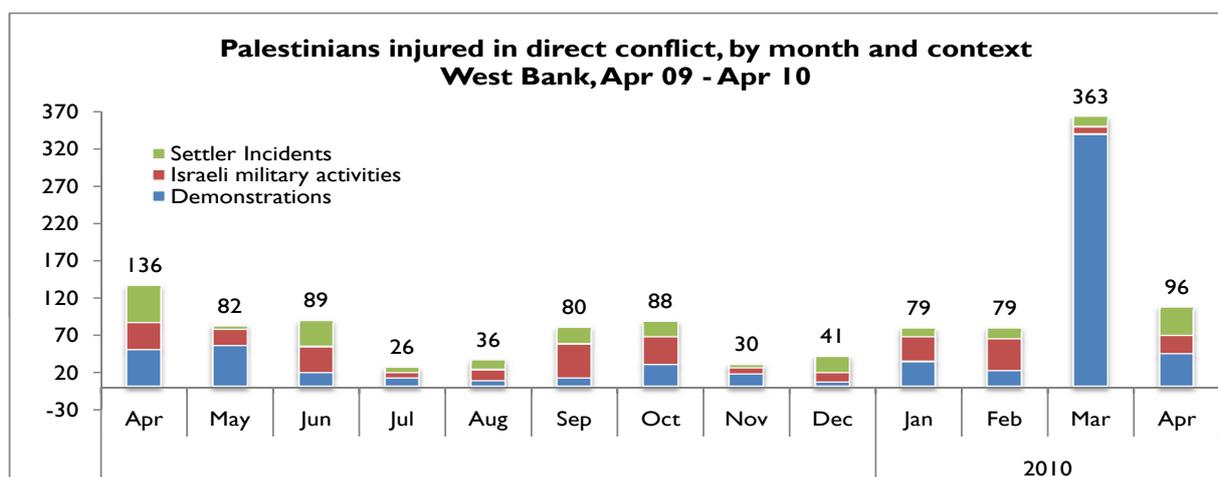
## West Bank

### Casualties decrease along an escalation in settler attacks on Palestinian property

Following the sharp increase in March,<sup>1</sup> casualties during April decreased significantly but remained higher than any month since April 2009. One Palestinian was killed due to Palestinian-Israeli violence and 107 others, including 40 children, and 10 Israelis were injured during the period.<sup>2</sup> April also saw a significant increase in Israeli settler incidents targeting Palestinian property. Since the beginning of the year, six Palestinians and one Israeli soldier have been killed and 628 Palestinians and 93 Israelis<sup>3</sup> injured in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

On 26 April, following an exchange of fire in the village of Beit Awwa (Hebron), an armed Palestinian man was killed when Israeli forces bulldozed his house while he was still inside. The man was allegedly affiliated with the armed wing of Hamas and suspected of killing an Israeli police officer four years ago. The incident triggered clashes between village residents and the Border police, which resulted in the injury of six Palestinians, including two boys and a woman. A similar operation targeting alleged militants by an Israeli special unit was carried out in Nablus in December 2009 and ended with the killing of three Palestinians.

Demonstrations in Deir Nidham, Ni'lin, Bil'in, (Ramallah) and Beit Jala (Bethlehem), against the Barrier and settlement expansion, accounted for



roughly 40 percent of Palestinian injuries in the West Bank (44 injuries). More than half of the injuries from demonstrations (23) were in the village of Deir Nidham, where weekly protests have taken place since December 2009 against the persistent restrictions by Israeli settlers from Hallamish settlement on Palestinian access to farming land. During the last ten years, Israeli settlers have taken over roughly 3,000 dunums of privately-owned Palestinian land from these villages by planting various crops and trees and obstructing access of Palestinian farmers.

Aside from Palestinian demonstrations protesting Israeli settlement expansion, 38 percent of Palestinian injuries (38) this month were in the context of incidents related to other Israeli settler activities, compared to a monthly average of 21 percent in 2009. The majority of Palestinian injuries in this context were inflicted by Israeli armed forces (30), most of them in clashes that occurred on 25 April in the Silwan neighbourhood of East Jerusalem. These clashes were sparked after a group of Israeli settlers and other right-wing activists, escorted by the Israeli Police, conducted a march to protest what they consider to be the “illegal” construction of Palestinian homes in Silwan. At least 29 Palestinians, including 19 children, and two Israeli policemen were injured during the confrontations (see section on access to education). Tension remained high in Silwan through the rest of the month; Israeli settlement activity in the area is ongoing and some 90 Palestinian houses in the Bustan area of Silwan continue to face the threat of demolition.

There were 26 Israeli settler incidents leading to damage of Palestinian property, nearly double the monthly average of such incidents of the previous year, 26 compared to 14 incidents.<sup>4</sup> In one of the gravest incidents during the month Israeli settlers vandalized a mosque and two houses, and set fire to four vehicles in the Palestinian village and Huwwara in the northern West Bank. This was the third documented settler incident targeting a mosque since 11 December 2009.

In the southern West Bank, on 21 and 28 April, respectively, two incidents were reported where sewage from Israeli hilltop settlements seeped into Palestinian communities and village land. In Bethlehem, sewage from the settlement of Kfar Etzion (Bethlehem) flooded into agricultural land belonging to Palestinian farmers from Beit Ummar village (Hebron), damaging 70 dunums of land; sewage from the nearby settlement of Bitar Illit also flooded two dunums of land owned by Palestinians from the village of Husan.

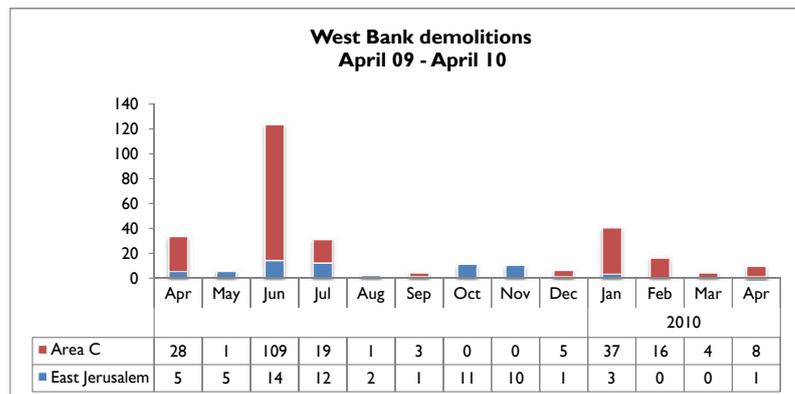
### **Demolitions in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem**

This month, the Jerusalem municipality carried out its first demolition in 2010 and the Israeli Civil Administration demolished eight Palestinian-owned structures in Area C, due to lack of Israeli-issued permits. Since the beginning of 2010, the Israeli authorities have demolished a total of 65 Palestinian-owned structures in Area C, displacing 125 Palestinians, and one non-residential structure in East Jerusalem; two structures were also self-demolished in East Jerusalem, following receipt of demolition orders from the Jerusalem municipality, displacing seven Palestinians, including five children and otherwise affecting eight Palestinians, including five children.

On 25 April, the Israeli authorities demolished a guard’s room belonging to Al Quds University campus in the Beit Hanina neighbourhood of East Jerusalem. The demolition was carried out as part of the municipality’s construction of a segment of a planned road around Jerusalem, the eastern “ring road.” When complete, this road will enable Israeli settlers traveling from northern West Bank settlements to connect directly to West Jerusalem whilst minimizing travel through East Jerusalem.

Additionally this month, the Israeli Civil Administration demolished eight Palestinian-owned structures in Area C, due to the lack of building permits, in the localities of Haris (Salfit),

Al Khader and Beit Sahur (Bethlehem). Two of the structures were residential, leading to the displacement of seven people, while the remaining included commercial structures and the foundation of a house. Also in April, OCHA recorded the delivery of stop work orders, the step prior to the issuance of a demolition order, against 27 Palestinian-owned structures, due to lack of permit.<sup>4</sup>



## Evictions in East Jerusalem

On 25 April, four Palestinian families, comprising 33 people including 21 children living in the Beit Safafa neighbourhood of East Jerusalem, were evicted from their homes. The High Court of Justice ruling was issued in the context of a dispute over ownership of the houses and the land between the families and Israeli settlers living in the Kiryat Arba settlement. The families had been living in the houses since before 1967.

Tens of Palestinians in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood of East Jerusalem remain at risk of displacement as a result of efforts of settler organizations to have them evicted from their homes to make way for a new settlement in the area. In April, two new families were served with civil eviction proceedings instigated by the Nahalat Shimon Company, the same organization involved in the eviction of two Palestinian families in August 2009 and in similar proceedings against six other families in Sheikh Jarrah. Since November 2008, a total of 56 people, including 20 children, have been evicted from their homes in Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood. In addition, a part of the home of another family was taken over by settlers in December 2009. Overall, an estimated 475 Palestinians are at risk of forced eviction, dispossession and displacement due to plans for settlement construction in Sheikh Jarrah.<sup>5</sup>

## Area C in Focus: Meeting basic humanitarian needs

*This is the first in a series of pieces to be included in the Humanitarian Monitor drawing attention to the humanitarian issues facing Area C residents and provide updates on responses to these needs by the humanitarian community and the Israeli authorities.*

Area C has been identified as a priority area for humanitarian assistance, due to a high level of need stemming from years of neglect and isolation.<sup>7</sup> However, the humanitarian organizations have faced considerable challenges meeting the needs of vulnerable Area C communities, due to continued Israeli control of the area, primarily as concerns restrictive permit requirements. As a result, in January 2010, the Humanitarian Country Team endorsed a response plan designed to address the urgent needs of vulnerable communities in the areas of water, education and shelter.

The Area C Humanitarian Response Plan is composed of a package of priority projects, all of which require urgent implementation. The water and sanitation component includes 15 projects that need to be urgently resolved in order to meet the pressing humanitarian needs of some 52,000 people in 17 different Area C communities. These are communities that receive less than 60 litres of water per capita per day, well below the WHO

standard of 100 litres of water per capita per day or pay more than 20 NIS per cubic metre of tankered water, compared to 4.8 NIS the average cost of water provided by the water network. The package also includes projects targeting some 25 educational facilities that provide education to over 6,000 students. These schools are facing difficulties due to lengthy delays in the granting of building permits, the issuance of stop-work or demolition orders. Other problems affecting education in Area C include protection issues, such as settler violence, Israeli military operations and difficulties accessing schools for remote communities (see section on attacks on schools below). Finally, the plan calls for a moratorium on the demolition of Area C houses lacking a building permit from the Israeli authorities and calls for recognition of the right to weatherproof shelters without a permit.

Three months following submission of the plan, the UN and its partners are still expecting an official response from the Israeli authorities.

**Qaher Abu Shhab**, an ambulance driver for the Health Work Committees in Qalqiliya in the Northern West Bank, tells of his work, conditions at checkpoints and the dangers posed by Israeli settlers. - *Excerpt taken from a case study and interview conducted by WHO*

“The communities that are closed off by the Israeli barrier are of our greatest concern; it is difficult to provide emergency aid and basic medical care there. An example in my area of operation is Ras at Tira in the Alfe Menashe enclave. Of late, the Israeli soldiers have become somewhat more lenient towards us, but in the end our access depends on the commander at the checkpoint. Passage can get particularly difficult if the patient in the ambulance is a young man.<sup>8</sup>

At the main checkpoints within the West Bank we are now normally allowed to pass after showing our papers and quickly opening the back. What bothers me is the roughened tarmac before the checkpoint that is designed to slow down the cars. I try to drive over it as carefully as I can, to avoid the ambulance vibrating violently. Nevertheless, for patients with fractures for example, this is very painful.”

So far, the mapping of the over 250 Area C communities and their populations has been completed. To date, there has been no comprehensive data on the number of communities residing in Area C or their population.

## Improved monitoring of Emergency Medical Services access conditions

Access to hospitals and medical facilities during emergency medical transfer (or evacuation) remain a concern, in particular to communities cut off by the Barrier, Area C, military areas and at East Jerusalem checkpoints. To monitor these restrictions, the Health and Nutrition Cluster, led by WHO, have trained 42 ambulance drivers and mobile teams on safe access and protection, monitoring and incident reporting. The training was organized in cooperation with the Palestinian Ministry of Health in Ramallah. The health cluster partners will use an adapted version of the OCHA Access Closure Information System starting May 2010.



Qaher Abu Shhab, an ambulance driver for the Health Work Committees in Qalqiliya in the Northern West Bank, Photo by Patrick Zoll, WHO

## Gaza Strip

---

### The Gaza-Israel border remains tense, affecting lives and livelihoods of civilians

Incidents along the Gaza-Israel border as well as Israeli airstrikes inside Gaza continued during the month, resulting in the killing of four Palestinians, including one civilian, and the injury of 12 others, of whom ten were civilians. Since the beginning of 2010, 18 Palestinians,<sup>8</sup> three Israeli soldiers and one foreign national have been killed and 71 other Palestinians and four members of Israeli armed forces have been injured.

In April, Israeli forces killed three Palestinians members of an armed faction and wounded two others in two separate incidents next to the border, after they reportedly spotted a group of armed people attempting to plant an improvised explosive device and in the course of an armed clash that took place during an Israeli incursion.<sup>9</sup>

The remaining fatality occurred in a demonstration near the border fence, protesting continued Israeli access restrictions to the “buffer zone” along the Gaza-Israel border. This is the first Palestinian killed in such demonstrations, which have been organized in Beit Hanoun since January 2010, and on an almost daily basis in April throughout the Gaza strip by groups representing farmers and other Gazans living near border-adjacent areas. In two similar protests, Israeli forces opened fire with live ammunition towards protesters, injuring six of them. The incidents occurred after the demonstrators marched towards the border fence, and reportedly, in a few occasions also threw stones in the direction of Israeli forces. According to Israeli media, the IDF declared the areas adjacent to the border inside the Gaza Strip a “combat zone”. While the implications

of this declaration remain uncertain, there is a concern that this development will increase the level of risk to the lives of Palestinians living or working in these areas. The declaration came after the Israeli military reportedly located and detonated three explosive devices near the border.

Israeli forces’ enforcement of access restrictions on fishing areas officially beyond three nautical miles from the shore, and often less, also resulted in Palestinian casualties in April. During the month, Israeli naval vessels opened “warning” fire towards Palestinian fishing boats in four separate incidents. In one incident, a 15-year-old Palestinian fisherman was critically injured when his boat sank while attempting to evade Israeli fire.

Israeli air strikes continued in early April following the death of two Israeli soldiers during an armed clash between Israeli forces and armed Palestinians on 26 March, which also resulted in the death of two armed Palestinians and the injury of two Israeli soldiers. The April air strikes targeted a police station, a blacksmith’s workshop and a dairy factory in Gaza City, the latter attack resulting in the injury of two children (ages two and 18), as well as the destruction of the factory and damage to a number of surrounding houses.

Palestinian armed factions fired a number of rudimentary rockets towards southern Israel, including military bases located on the border. While no Israeli injuries or damage to property were received, three Palestinians sustained shrapnel wounds when one of the rockets landed in Beit Hanoun, north of Gaza City.

## Two prisoners executed in the Gaza Strip

On 15 April, the Hamas authorities in Gaza executed two prisoners convicted of collaborating with Israel. These were the first officially-sanctioned executions since the Hamas takeover in June 2007 and the first to take place in the Gaza Strip since 2005.

Shortly before the executions, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) received information that the Hamas authorities had contacted the families of 15 individuals sentenced to death, to make a last visit to their sons. It is believed that the two people executed at midnight were part of this group of prisoners.

On 24 March, the authorities in Gaza announced the decision to carry out the execution of several alleged criminals. Four days later, they announced that a process to ratify such death sentences had been initiated, notwithstanding applicable Palestinian law requiring all such sentences to be ratified by the president of the Palestinian Authority.

Human rights and civil society organizations in Gaza have voiced concerns that further executions may be imminent. On 19 April, the Hamas Interior Minister, Fathi Hamad, told a press conference that his government "...will continue to implement the death penalty for all those who are so sentenced."

Under international human rights law, the right to life is protected and the use of the death penalty is restricted to the most serious crimes under extremely limited circumstances. One absolute restriction is that the death penalty can only be imposed after observing fair trial guarantees in duly constituted courts, which, according to OHCHR, is practically impossible under current circumstances in the Gaza Strip. A draft law, currently under consideration by the Palestinian Authority, seeks to abolish capital punishment and has been welcomed by human rights groups.

### WOMAN KILLED UNDER THE PRETEXT OF "HONOUR"

On 12 April, a woman from the town of Beit Lahia in the northern the Gaza Strip, was killed allegedly to "maintain family honor." According to UNIFEM, this death brings the total number of documented cases of girls and women killed in so-called "honour" killings since the beginning of 2010 to eight; seven in the West Bank and one in the Gaza Strip.

Crimes committed in under the pretext of "honor" continue to represent a serious threat to women's inalienable right to life, and have not been adequately addressed by the Palestinian authorities. For example, the penal codes currently applied in the West Bank and Gaza Strip consider murders committed against women in the name of "honor" as a mitigating circumstance and allow for a reduction of the sentence against the perpetrator.<sup>11</sup> This is in conflict with the protection of the fundamental right to life and with the provisions contained in the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), to which the Palestinian Authority decided to adhere through a Presidential decree in March 2009.

## Gaza Crossings activity

*Wood and aluminum enter Gaza through the crossings for the first time in over a year; decline in industrial fuel continues*

For the first time since June 2007 and October 2008, respectively, 15 truckloads of aluminum and 25 truckloads of wood were allowed into Gaza for commercial purposes, while glass continued to enter since December 2009. Previously, all quantities of aluminum, glass and wood had entered only through tunnels, were high in price and generally of low quality. However, as glass began entering prices of glass sharply declined. Since then, a total of 181 truckloads carrying approximately 117,600 sheets of glass have entered Gaza, causing a drop in prices from 150 NIS/m<sup>2</sup> to 25-50 NIS/m<sup>2</sup>. The import of wood, as well as aluminum for window frames, will allow many Gazan families to weatherproof their homes.

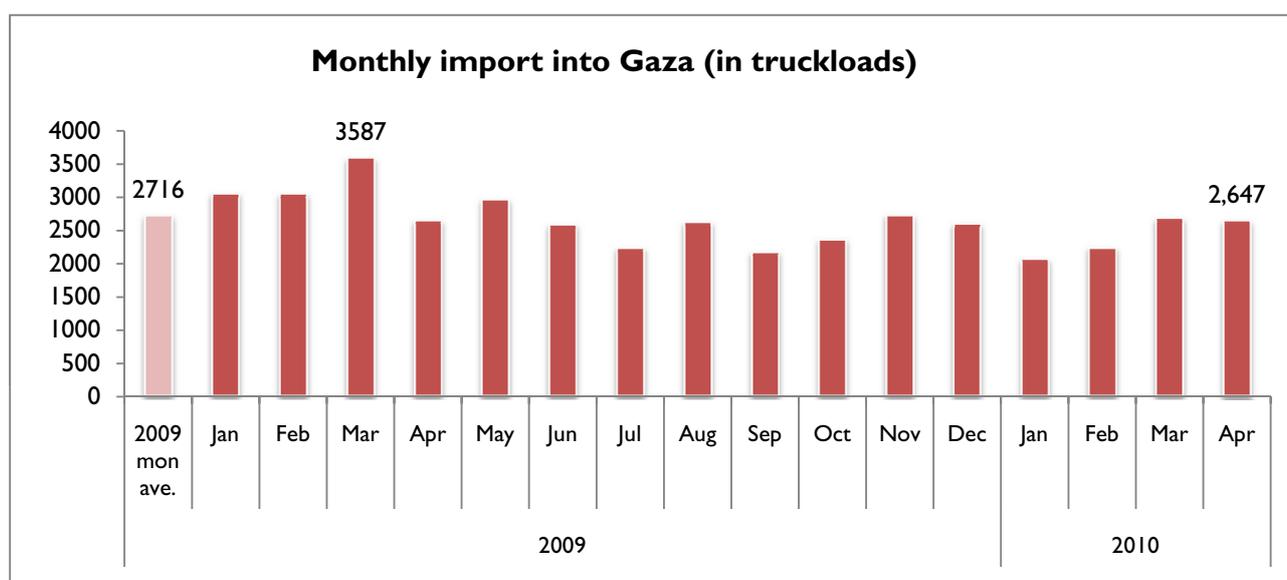
In total, 2,647 truckloads of goods entered Gaza in April, about 78 percent below the monthly average of truckloads that entered Gaza in the first five months of 2007 (12,350). Seventy-six (76) percent

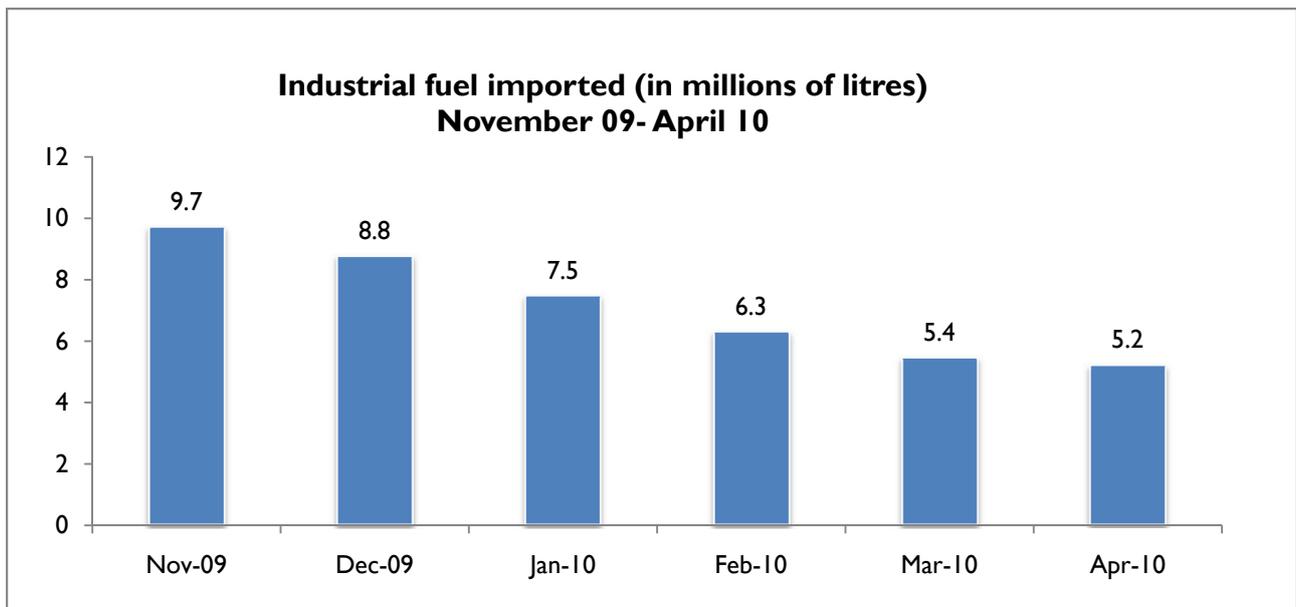
of all imports were made up of food supplies and hygiene and cleaning materials. Nine percent of this month's imports were designated for humanitarian aid agencies.

Previously in March, the UN Secretary - General was informed by the Israeli authorities that the materials needed for the finalization of an UNRWA housing project in Khan Younis comprising 150 housing units will be soon approved for entry. Thus far, the materials are still awaiting approval for entry. The current ban on the import of construction material had first imposed by Israel since June 2007; its affects were compounded by the widespread destruction of homes during the "Cast Lead" offensive.

### Electricity and Industrial Fuel

In April, industrial fuel imports designated for the Gaza Power Plant continued to decline for the fifth consecutive month, to approximately 5.2 million liters, the lowest recorded since January 2009.<sup>11</sup> As a result of the ongoing shortage of industrial fuel, one





of the plant's two turbines, which had been shut down in March 2010, remained non-operational. As a result, the majority of Gaza's population continued to experience rolling blackouts of up to 12 hours per day, every day.

Of note, five truckloads of electricity spare parts designated to the Gaza Electricity Distribution Company (GEDCO) were allowed into Gaza, bringing the total number of truckloads of electricity supplies allowed entry since the beginning of the year to 24.

### **Cooking gas imports**

During the month, a total of 3,210 tonnes of cooking gas entered through the Kerem Shalom fuel pipeline. This represents a 16 percent decrease compared to the previous month, which had reached the highest levels entered since July 2009, when Israeli authorities began gradually transferring fuel imports from the Nahal Oz to the Kerem Shalom Crossing.

### **Exports**

This month, five truckloads of cut flowers were allowed to exit Gaza. So far in 2010, 112 truckloads limited to cut-flowers (79) and strawberries (33) have been exported. According to the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committee (PARC), there were

300 dunums planted with carnation seedlings, which under optimal conditions could produce a maximum of 30 million stems. However, partially due to fact that the carnation seedlings needed for production were allowed into Gaza one month late in 2009, only 20 million stems were produced. Of these, about 13 million stems (79 truckloads) were exported, and the remaining seven million stems were used mainly as livestock fodder. These could not be exported for several reasons, including the Israeli blockade, poor quality, and the falling prices and demand in Europe.

Strawberry exports also fell short of potential. PARC estimates that 300 tonnes of strawberries could have been exported. However, because the first shipments of strawberries were allowed to exit very late in the season, at the beginning of February,<sup>12</sup> only about 52 tonnes exited Gaza this year. The 2010 export season for both strawberries and carnation has now ended.

### **Palestinian access into and out of Gaza remains restricted**

Movement of Palestinians via Rafah and Erez Crossings controlled by the Egyptian and the Israeli authorities, respectively, remains largely restricted and limited to medical and other humanitarian cases.

The number of people who were able to enter or exit the Gaza Strip via the Rafah Crossing declined dramatically this month, largely due to the absence of scheduled openings. Those who entered via Rafah in April (1,578) represented around 60 percent of the respective figure in March (2,530), while those who left were only 2.5 percent (112) of the March figure (4,528). On June 2006, following the capture of the Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit, Rafah Crossing began operating on an irregular basis and in June 2007 it officially closed; since then the crossing has had scheduled, but irregular, openings on 2-3 days each month to allow the entry or exit of certain people.<sup>13</sup> During the first five months of 2006, an average of 650 people crossed per day each way. The uncertainty and unpredictability of the opening times, along with vague criteria for approving passage and overcrowding at the crossing, create difficulties for Palestinian travelers passing through Rafah Crossing.

During April, there was a slight decline in the number of Palestinians who left Gaza through Erez crossing, 2,074, compared to March (2,463). As in previous months, the majority of the Palestinians who crossed Erez (over 60 percent) were patients and their accompaniers, while most of the remaining was people conducting family visits.

### **UNRWA Survey Shows Dramatic Increase in Abject Poverty in Gaza**

A recent poverty survey, conducted by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), showed that the number of refugees living in abject poverty in the Gaza Strip has tripled since the onset of the blockade in 2007, according to UNRWA figures.

The survey, which so far has assessed more than 74,000 families,<sup>14</sup> demonstrates the depth of Gaza's poverty crisis and highlights the need for additional and targeted efforts to address the situation. According to UNRWA's findings, approximately 300,000 Palestine refugees live in conditions of abject poverty, up from 100,000 in early 2007. Families in this category are completely unable to secure access to food and lack the means to purchase even the most basic items, such as soap, school stationary and safe drinking water.<sup>15</sup> In order to methodically capture changes and trends, the survey will be updated on an annual basis.

UNRWA's overall caseload of 700,000 poor refugees, including the 300,000 abject poor, testifies to the immense challenges facing humanitarian and human development assistance providers - especially UNRWA - in the Gaza Strip. A decade of socio-economic decline, caused by the policies of closure and blockade, have shattered livelihoods, eroded the productive base and impoverished ordinary people. Jobless and with little hope for employment, the population of Gaza is in large part struggling to survive. The ongoing blockade hampers prospects for long-term improvements and self-reliance.

Without a change in policy, aid dependency is only likely to grow. Meanwhile, the poverty survey serves as a tool to better identify and target the poorest of the poor. However, the resources required to adequately address current circumstances are considerable. In UNRWA's case, the Agency will respond to the dramatic rise in abject poverty through targeted food, non-food and cash assistance. The implementation of such interventions will be limited by the Agency's financial difficulties; to properly address the needs of the newly identified abject poor, the Agency's Gaza operations would need an estimated additional \$80-100 million in 2010 alone.

## Issues across occupied Palestinian territory

Child Protection	March 2010	April 2010
Palestinian children killed	2	2
Israeli children killed	0	0
Palestinian children injured	58	42
Israeli children injured	0	0
Palestinian children displaced from home demolitions	0	0
Palestinian children in Israeli prisons	342	NA

### Increasing incidents leading to the disruption of schooling

In 2010, the UNICEF-led working group, established pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 1612, has documented an increasing number of incidents in which students are hindered from accessing their schools, learning is disrupted, or where the safety of students is compromised.<sup>16</sup> Throughout the oPt, there has thus far been 26 such incidents, including five in the month of April, compared to a total of 13 reported incidents during 2009 in the period following the end of the Cast Lead offensive on 18 January.<sup>17</sup>

Access incidents affecting school attendance generally include: closures of roads and checkpoints that prevent students from reaching their schools; searches at checkpoints resulting in missed school hours; harassment by Israeli soldiers or settlers; and more severe cases of settler violence that result in injury to students on their way to school. In April, two school days were lost for Palestinian students from the Silwan neighbourhood of East Jerusalem,



Student from A Seefer village (Beit Yattir enclave) has to cross a Barrier checkpoint every day to attend school in Imneizil, outside the enclave. Photo by Save the Children UK

one following Israeli-imposed closures during the Jewish Passover holidays on 1 April, and another on 25 April, when a settler march took place in the neighbourhood (*See also West Bank casualties section*). In another access incident, 19 children from a Barrier enclave in South Hebron (Beit Yattir enclave) were delayed for 90 minutes on their way to and from school at the nearby checkpoint, when Israeli private security personnel that demanded the children show their birth certificates, which most did not have.

So far this year, there have been six reported incidents of Israeli military activities, and two incidents of Israeli settler violence, which resulted

#### EXCERPTS FROM INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED BY SAVE THE CHILDREN UK

*"I like school a lot, but I do not like going to school because it takes two hours for me to get home because of the checkpoint and then the long walking distance. I usually arrive at home feeling very tired."* – 15-year-old student from A Seefer village (Beit Yattir enclave), who attends the Imneizil school outside the enclave.

*"I walk to school with a large group of children from our village with the (Israeli) military escort that sometimes protects us from the settlers. I feel afraid every day. I like school, but I do not like the walk to school."* – 10-year-old student from Tuba village (South Hebron), who attends at-Tuwani school.<sup>18</sup>

in damages to schools or otherwise placed the safety of the children present at risk. On 12 April, Israeli soldiers raided the Basic School for Boys in 'Azzun village to search for children alleged to have thrown stones at military jeeps in the village. While no arrests were reported, this is the second time the Israeli military has raided a school in this community in just over a month.

The impact of the incidents reported above on acquired learning outcomes is of growing concern as the end-of-year examination period approaches. These incidents further exacerbate the constraints on access to education affecting Palestinian children in the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem and Area C of the West Bank, as a result of the shortage of adequate school space. In the Gaza Strip this is a direct outcome of the blockade, which prevents the import of the necessary material to repair and construct schools. In East Jerusalem and Area C, the shortage stems from the restrictive access and building permit systems implemented by the Israeli authorities. As the occupying power, Israel has the primary responsibility for the protection and fulfillment of Palestinian children's right to education.

### **Military orders potentially placing thousands at risk of deportation**

Israeli authorities forcibly transferred a Palestinian man residing in the West Bank to the Gaza Strip in April amid widespread criticism following the entry into force of two new military orders, which expand the ability of the IDF to forcibly transfer or deport Palestinians from their homes in the West Bank. Both Palestinian and Israeli human rights organizations have expressed concerns that the military orders potentially place thousands of Palestinians at risk of arrest, prosecution, and deportation on the grounds of unclear criteria and without adequate judicial review.<sup>19</sup>

Order regarding Prevention of Infiltration (1650), expands the definition of an "infiltrator", which originally applied to nationals of "enemy states" who entered the West Bank illegally, to any person present in the West Bank without "a permit". Such a person can be subject to detention, imprisonment, fines, and deportation within 72 hours of detention. The order does not define the term "permit" apart from stating that it should be Israeli-issued. As such, it is open to interpretation and could potentially affect thousands of Palestinians, who until now have not been required to hold Israeli permits to reside in the West Bank, as well as foreign nationals. There are concerns that the order allows for the creation of a new military permit regime on the basis of broad and ambiguous criteria.

Order regarding Security Provisions (1649) establishes a new military committee tasked with reviewing appeals pending a deportation. The order stipulates that anyone held in custody shall be brought before the committee no later than eight days (four days if the person is a minor) from the date of issuance of a deportation order. The committee is also authorized to extend custody for up to 60 days (30 days in the case of minors). The order does not expressly allow for the right to appeal to a court or to access legal counsel, nor does it guarantee that a person will not be deported within 72 hours in line with the provisions of Order 1650.

According to Israeli authorities, the military orders are intended to improve judicial oversight following criticism from the Israeli Supreme Court of the current policy in a ruling last year, which led to the revocation of at least two deportation orders. However, several organizations have expressed concerns that the orders serve to restrict such oversight by replacing a judicial procedure with a military procedure, while at the same time expanding the power and discretion of the military to arrest, prosecute and deport individuals living in the West Bank.

Given the broad terms of the orders it remains unclear against whom and how they will be applied. Certain groups may be at greater risk than others. This might include Palestinians who have not been registered in the Palestinian population registry maintained by Israel, or who according to the Israeli authorities are registered with an address in Gaza, even if they were born and are living in the West Bank. Individuals at risk also include foreign spouses of Palestinians and foreign nationals whose visas have not been renewed, including the workers of human rights and humanitarian organizations. While the potential impact of orders remains unclear, they seem to contradict a number of provisions of international law, most notably the prohibition against individual or mass transfers within or from occupied territory under international humanitarian law.<sup>20</sup>

## Consolidated Appeals Process

The 2010 CAP in the oPt appeals for US\$ 664.4 million. Funding levels have risen very slightly this month. We continue to urge agencies and organizations to update the FTS website.

As of 4 May funding levels stand at US\$137 million, or 21 percent, of total requirements. Sectors which have attracted contributions so far are Agriculture three percent (of sector's total requirements), Cash for Work and Cash Assistance (nine percent), Food Security (27 percent), Health and Nutrition (7 percent), Protection (11 percent) and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (three percent).

## Endnotes

---

1. March 2010 had the highest number of Palestinian injuries recorded in the West Bank in a single month since OCHA began recording casualties in January 2005.
2. One additional Israeli was injured by Israeli forces during anti-Barrier protests.
3. Casualties by Palestinians.
4. Ten in Shi'b al Butum community, south of Yatta area (Hebron), four in Al Jib village (Jerusalem), four in Halhul (Hebron), one in Nabi Elyas (Qalqiliya), two in Um al Kheir (Hebron), two in Khirbet Tana (Nablus), three in Al Jiftlik (Jericho) and one in Qabatiya (Jenin). An additional verbal order against a new tent erected was given in Shi'b al Butum. Among the orders distributed in Shi'b al Butum are those that affect three tents provided to families in need of adequate shelter by an international NGO.
5. For additional details, see OCHA oPt fact sheet on Sheikh Jarrah, August 2009.
6. For additional information on Area C issues and humanitarian need, see the December 2009, January 2010 and March 2010 issues of the Humanitarian Monitor. Also see, OCHA oPt, "Restricting Space: the Planning Regime Applied by Israel in Area C of the West Bank," December 2009.
7. Late development: On 12 May, the Israeli army removed the Ras 'Atyia barrier checkpoint after completing the rerouting of the Barrier; the villages of Ad Dab'a, Wadi Ar Rasha and Ras at Tira are now outside of the Alfe Menashe enclave. However, the two villages of 'Arab ar Ramadin al Janubi and 'Arab Abu Farda remain on the other side of the Barrier.
8. This figure includes one Palestinian who died in February from wounds sustained three years ago.
9. Israeli forces launched incursions a few hundred metres inside Gaza on 16 separate occasions

in April, withdrawing after conducting land leveling.

10. According to UNIFEM, article 340 of the Jordanian Law No.16 (1960), applicable in the West Bank, provides a reduced sentence for a male who kills a female relative engaged in adultery. Likewise, article 237 of the Egyptian Law No. 58 (1937), applicable in the Gaza Strip, provides extenuating circumstances for the murder of a wife (but not a husband) for committing adultery.
11. The decline in the fuel supply to the power plant since December 2009 follows the expiration of the European Commission's direct subsidy to the fuel purchase for the Gaza Power Plant.
12. The export season is from November through February
13. In addition to these 2-3 days, additional people are able to leave each month through special coordination.
14. The nutrition and asset-based methodology employed by the survey estimates family expenditures by taking into account a variety of household demographic characteristics and context-specific factors. All refugees who filed an application for assessment were visited by UNRWA social workers.
15. The UNRWA poverty survey employs a Proxy Means Testing Formula. The nutrition and asset-based methodology estimates family expenditures by taking into account a variety of household demographic characteristics and context-specific factors to determine poverty level.
16. The working group (also known as the "Israel-oPt working group on grave violations against children") monitors grave violations against children in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), including killing and injuries, arrest, detention and torture, child recruitment and use by armed forces and groups, attacks on schools and hospitals, displacement and denial of humanitarian access including access to health and education.
17. There were an additional 18 schools destroyed and more than 260 damaged in Gaza during the "Cast Lead" offensive.
18. Quotes taken by Save the Children UK in interviews conducted in February 2010
19. See A New Military order Defines all Residents of the West Bank as "Infiltrators" who may be Jailed and Deported, by Hamoked et al, 11 April 2010, available at [http://www.hamoked.org.il/news\\_main\\_en.asp?id=904](http://www.hamoked.org.il/news_main_en.asp?id=904) and Palestinian and Israeli Human Rights Groups call for End to Israeli Military West Bank Deportation Policy, by Adalah et al, 13 April 2010, available at [http://www.hamoked.org.il/news\\_main\\_en.asp?id=918](http://www.hamoked.org.il/news_main_en.asp?id=918).
20. See Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, available at [www.icrc.org/ihl](http://www.icrc.org/ihl).

## CONTRIBUTING AGENCIES

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), United Nations Office for the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Relief and Works Agency for

Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO), World Food Programme (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO), Al Haq, Badil, Save the Children (UK), Defence for Children International – Palestine Section (DCI-PS), Oxfam GB, Palestine Hydrology Group (PHG), Campaign for the Right to Enter, ACF-E, AAA, ACP, ACAD, and members of the Temporary International Mechanism (TIM).

**MORE INFORMATION: Omar Abulhaj, [abulhaj@un.org](mailto:abulhaj@un.org), +972 (0)2 5829962**