Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment

Protection

Background

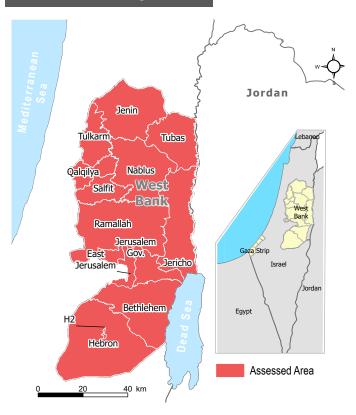
The year 2022 has seen the highest monthly average of Palestinian fatalities in the West Bank since the UN began systematically tracking such data in 2005¹. Driven by the effects of the long-standing Israeli occupation, access restrictions, and limitations on movement, the West Bank is in a state of a chronic crisis, driven primarily by economic and protection concerns. The marginalization of certain locations, including those in Oslo Area C, the parts of Hebron city classified as H2, and specific population groups within East Jerusalem is also one of the key drivers of need and vulnerability in the West Bank. With limited access to socioeconomic opportunities, 630,000 Palestinians in the West Bank were estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance in 2022².

The situation of vulnerability in the West Bank is enhanced by Israeli settlement activity and frequent exposure to episodes of violence from Israeli settlers, home demolitions, and the forced displacement of families and communities. These safety concerns along with restricted freedom of movement and a coercive discriminatory planning regime in Area C (see the limitation of each area in maps on page 3), East Jerusalem, and parts of Hebron city (H2), prevent Palestinian households' livelihood development and obstacle their access to essential services³.

The first Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment (MSNA), conducted by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and facilitated by REACH in May of 2021, represented an important step in filling information gaps in the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt). To further facilitate evidence-based response planning, the 2022 MSNA timing aligns with key milestones in the 2023 Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC). This brief focuses on the protection needs and concerns of households living in West Bank.

Sample Assessed households	
West Bank total	4,179
- Areas A and B	1,855
- Area C	1,910
- East Jerusalem	244
- H2 (Hebron)	170

Cover Map



Key findings

230 (4%) households in the West Bank reported that a member of their household had experienced threats or violent and destructive acts from Israeli forces or settlers in the six months prior to data collection. Households in Area C (7%) and H2 (12%) were the most affected.

12% of households in West Bank reported areas in their location that women and girls avoid because they feel unsafe. Among these households, settlements and checkpoints were the most frequently avoided locations (38%).

20% of households with school-aged children reported children feeling unsafe or very unsafe when traveling to and from schools or while at school.

In the year prior to data collection, 12% of households reported that at least one member of their household had shown signs of psychosocial distress or trauma (self-diagnosed). Among those households, 29% reported that at least one child was affffected and 88% reported that at least one adult was experiencing distress.

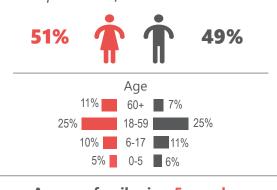
Methodology

Data for the MSNA was collected by the data collection partner, the Palestinian Central Bureau for Statistics (PCBS), between May 29th to July 6th of 2022 by means of an in-person household level survey. The MSNA relied on a quantitative methodology, and the survey tool was designed in close collaboration with OCHA and representatives of the humanitarian clusters active in the oPt (Food Security, Health, Shelter, WASH, Education, and Protection), as well as other key stakeholders and thematic focal points.

The MSNA followed a two-stage cluster sampling approach across all strata in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, with the final sample frame developed in consultation with OCHA and the PCBS. Enumeration areas, geographic areas of inhabited areas across the occupied Palestinian territory containing approximately 150 households each, served as the primary sampling unit for cluster sampling. A total of 8,331 householdlevel surveys were conducted across 57 strata and representative at a 95% level of confidence and 9% margin of error, with a 15% buffer built in across all strata. Each of the 11 West Bank governorates was stratified according to Oslo Area, with the territories designated as Area A and Area B sampled together, and the territory designated as Area C treated separately (creating 22 strata). Two additional strata were created for the part of Hebron city designated as H2, and East Jerusalem. Data across all West Bank strata is representative at a 95% level of confidence and a 9% margin of error, with a 15% buffer built into the sample

■■■ Key demographics

Composition of assessed households



Average family size: 5 members

27% of households are refugees

10% of households have at least one member with a disability

MSNA limitations

- The MSNA is a household level survey, thus may not provide a complete understanding of access to services and infrastructure, which would be better assessed through area-level research. To gain a more comprehensive understanding, the MSNA findings should be triangulated with other sources of data that investigate at a higher level of analysis.
- Data collected at the household level may not accurately reflect the experiences of each individual member within the household as it was reported by a single representative rather than the individuals themselves, and could potentially underrepresent vulnerable members.
- Findings related to particular sub-sets of the population (such as households including a person with a disability or female-headed households, for example) may have a wider margin of error, potentially yielding results with lower precision.
- In East Jerusalem, the data collection was conducted using paper surveys. The paper survey tool was adapted specifically by PCBS for this format of data collection. However, this may have introduced a bias for enumerators filling the paper form compared to those using the Open Data Kit (ODK) form, especially for questions with an individual household member loop or questions which in the tool were coded with skip logic following a specific dependency path. In addition, the ODK form was coded to include automatic logical checks and acknowledgement notes for enumerators when certain logically incompatible answer choices were chosen encouraging enumerators to review the answer they had inputted and facilitating the data cleaning process. The need to manually transfer data from paper surveys into the server later also created the potential for human error when inputting data.

Note - Disaggregations

Findings disaggregated by household characteristics other than household refugee status (including sex of the head of household, age of the head of household, presence of disability in the household, and aid-recipient status of the household) are indicative only in nature.

Exposure to threats or violence

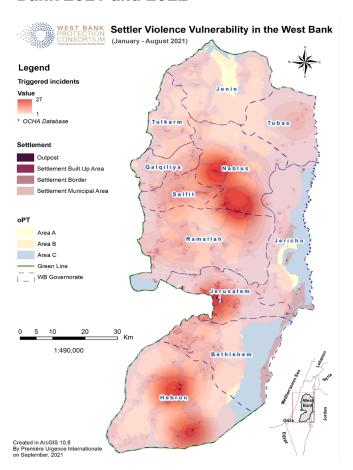
Violence and tensions directed at Palestinian civilians by Israeli settlers and military forces have been on the rise in the West Bank, with particularly high occurrences in areas such as Area C, East Jerusalem, and Hebron (H2)⁴. The violence reported includes physical attacks, shootings with live ammunition, arson of fields and livestock, theft and destruction of property, stone-throwing, and persistent intimidation of herders and their families. According to the HNO 2023, over 465,000 Israeli settlers reside in Area C, in addition to the 230,000 settlers living in East Jerusalem⁵.

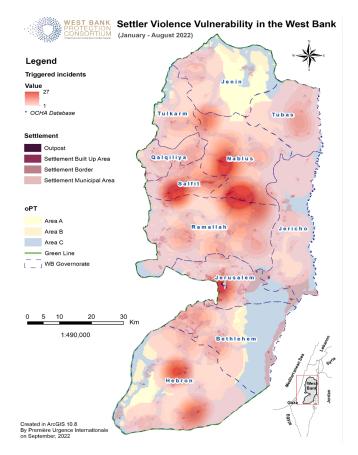
The MSNA indicators allow for the assessment of some of the threats faced by Palestinian households. Data collected by the MSNA shows that 230 (4%) of households in the West Bank reported that a member of their household had experienced threats or violent and destructive acts from Israeli forces or settlers in the six months prior to data collection. Notably, households in Area C (7%) and H2 (12%) were found to have a higher rate of experience of such threats or acts of violence by settlers.

Most frequently reported measures adopted in the 6 months prior to data collection to avoid threats or violent acts by settlers, among households who reported having experienced such acts, by area:

Reported coping measures	Area A & B	Area C	H2
None	48%	37%	30%
Withheld children from school	6%	7%	35%
Withheld children from travel	15%	19%	60%
Withheld adult family members from travel	20%	12%	55%
Changed livelihood behaviors	22%	7%	5%
Added security/protection measures	1%	6%	5%
Sent children to live elsewhere on at least one occasion	9%	1%	0%
Entire HH has moved from a certain area on at least one occasion	0%	14%	0%
Contacted local municipal actors to complain or request help	7%	15%	0%
Contacted security forces complain/ request help	6%	7%	0%

Settler violence vulnerability in the West Bank 2021 and 2022⁶





12% of households reported areas in their location that women and girls avoid because they feel unsafe. Among these households, settlements and checkpoints were the most frequently avoided locations across the West Bank (38%), particularly in Area C with 74% of households reporting these areas were avoided by women and girls. Additionally, 20% of households with school-aged children reported children feeling unsafe or very unsafe when traveling to and from schools or while studying in schools. Among these households, traffic or crossing roads (64%), tear gas (16%) and violence or harassment by settlers (13%) were the most cited safety concerns.

% of households who reported violence or harassment by settlers as a safety concern for children at school or on their way to school, among HHs that perceived the school or the route to it as unsafe or very unsafe, by area:

Area A and B Area C East Jerusalem H2









Most reported type of disruption among households in West Bank who reported that their economic activities were curtailed or disrupted by Occupation authorities⁷ in the 6 months prior to data collection (6%, n=357):

- 153 households were denied entry to land
- households were detained or arrested while carrying out economic activities
- households were denied entry to market (goods/people)⁸
- households reported economic resources were destroyed
- households reported cancellation of entry permit to Israel

Many households in Nablus Area C, Bethlehem Area C, and Tubas Area C reported that their economic activities have been impacted by the actions of occupation authorities, with respectively 27%, 22%, and 12% reporting disruptions. Analysis of the MSNA data also showed that **51% of these households experienced a decrease in income as a result of these disruptions.**

Spotlight: Hebron Area C

Area C of the West Bank, which is under complete Israeli control, has a restrictive planning regime that makes it extremely difficult for Palestinians to obtain building permits. This hinders their ability to develop adequate housing, infrastructure, and livelihoods⁹.

The MSNA conducted 165 interviews with households in Hebron Area C, which represents 2% of the total sample. 39% of these households were non-refugees living in rural areas, and 61% were non-refugees living in urban areas.

The following indicators highlight key protection risks faced by Palestinian households residing <u>in</u> **Hebron Area C**:

<u>11%</u> of households reported that **economic** activities were curtailed or disrupted by Occupation authorities in the 6 months prior to data collection.



% of households who reported having experienced threats or violent/destructive acts by settlers in the 6 months prior to data collection.

33% of HHs reported children feeling unsafe or very unsafe due to settlers' violence or harassment when traveling to and from school and while studying in school (among HHs that reported the school or the route to it as unsafe or very unsafe for children).

% of households by most frequently reported measure employed to avoid such acts in the 6 months prior to data collection:

Withheld children from travel

35%

Withheld children from school

24%

Withheld adult family members from travel

Structure demolition

Demolitions are a significant factor in the coercive environment experienced by Palestinian households in the West Bank, particularly in Area C, H2 and East Jerusalem. These demolitions are often carried out by Israeli authorities, citing the lack of building permits, which are difficult to obtain under the restrictive planning policies imposed by Israel, or for alleged security reasons¹⁰. This has resulted in the forced displacement of thousands of Palestinian households since 1967. According to UN OCHA. in 2022, a total of 953 structures were demolished or seized, 1,031 people were displaced and 28,446 people were affected¹¹. Of the 140 households surveyed through the MSNA who reported that their shelter was at risk of demolition, the vast majority (98%) were located in Area C, and nearly half (69 households) cited lack of Israeli-issued permits as the reason.





Four strata with highest % of HHs who reported their shelter being at imminent risk of demolition at the time of data collection:

Nablus Area C

Jericho Area C

Tubas Area C

Bethlehem Area C

12%

Exposure to pychosocial distress

According to a study published in 2017, the oPt has the highest burden of mental health disorders in Eastern Mediterranean region¹². In the context of the West Bank, Palestinians are exposed to different forms of violence related to the Israeli occupation and settlers, or home demolitions which have been associated with negative psychological outcomes, in particular for children¹³. Twelve percent of households surveyed through the MSNA reported that at least one member of their household had shown signs of psychosocial distress or trauma (self-diagnosed) in the year prior to data collection. Among those households, 29% reported that at least one child was affected and 88% reported that at least one adult was experiencing distress.

Among HHs reporting signs of psychosocial distress:	Area A and B	Area C	East Jerusalem
% of HHs with at least one child reported to be showing signs of psychosocial distress	31%	36%	13%
% of HHs with at least one adult reported to be showing signs of psychosocial distress	91%	67%	87%

The location with the highest rate of self-reported psychosocial distress was Nablus governorate, where 52% of households reported at least one member showing signs of psychosocial distress. Among those households in Nablus, signs of distress were primarily observed among adult household members, with 10% of households reporting a child member showing such signs and 98% reporting the same for an adult household member. Throughout 2022, the escalating tensions and violence have significantly impacted protection and safety, causing a noticeable decline in living conditions. There have been frequent instances of armed Palestinians and Israeli forces exchanging fire in certain parts of the West Bank, particularly in Nablus and Jenin in the northern region.

The situation in Nablus has been particularly tense, with a rise in Israeli raids, Palestinian fatalities, and the use of live ammunition, as well as intra-Palestinian clashes, which might explain the high rates of psychosocial distress in this location. Children residing in Nablus, East Jerusalem and H2 might be particularly vulnerable as they are more likely to experience arrest, detention, or house arrest compared to other regions in the West Bank.¹⁴

Among West Bank households reporting that a member of their household was exposed to at least one protection incident in the six months prior to data collection¹⁵ (3%, n=178), the most reported incidents were:

Being shot (live fire, rubber/sponge bullets)	45%
Physical violence	43%
Detention or imprisonment	34%

In the year prior to data collection, 12% of households reported that at least one member of their household had shown signs of psychosocial distress or trauma (self-diagnosed). Among those households, 29% reported that at least one child was experiencing distress. This rate reached even 36% in Area C. Furthermore, 17% of households with at least one member showing signs of psychosocial distress had experienced at least one protection incident in the last 6 months prior to data collection. These figures, combined with the safety concerns for children mentioned above, reflect the mental burden that children living in West Bank have to endure. highlighting the importance of mental health and psychosocial support services (MHPSS) or protection support to this particularly vulnerable group of population.

West Bank wide, 74% of households reported availability of any type of mental health and psychosocial support services (MHPSS), 71% of MHPSS in schools, and 24% specifically reported women and girls being able to access MHPSS in their location.

	% of HHs reporting MHPSS services in school	% of HHs reporting access for women/ girls to MHPSS services
Area A and B	72%	24%
Area C	71%	19%
East Jerusalem	55%	22%
H2	78%	41%

Households reporting that a child member of their household had showed signs of psychosocial distress or trauma in the year prior to data collection were more likely to report any type of psychosocial support services (PSS) being available in school.

A cross-tabulation of West Bank households reporting at least one child showing signs of psychosocial distress or trauma in the year prior to data collection and households reporting psychosocial support services (PSS) available in school:

	HH reporting at least one child showing signs of distress or trauma		
PSS available in school	No	Yes	
No	30%	70%	

84%

Barriers to access basic services

Access to basic services such as healthcare and education is a fundamental human right and is closely linked to the overall protection of individuals and communities. In situations of conflict, such as in the West Bank, access to these services can become severely limited, and protection risks may increase. The lack of access to basic services can exacerbate pre-existing vulnerabilities and create new ones, leaving individuals and communities at a higher risk of harm.

Access to Health

Yes

The MSNA data highlights the diverse healthcare needs of Palestinian households, particularly for specialized services. At the time of data collection, 43% of households in West Bank reported having a member with a chronic illness, 13% included a pregnant or lactating woman, and 10% of assessed households had at least one member with a disability. Furthermore, among West Bank households who needed to access care in the three months prior to data collection (63% of the entire sample), 97% reported experiencing barriers to access healthcare. Notably, households with at least one member with a disability were more likely to report needing to access healthcare in this same period (see box below).

Access to services for person with disabilities

Households including a member living with disabilities may face additional challenges to access fundamental services such as healthcare, education, and livelihoods. According to MSNA findings, 81% of households including a person with disability reported that a member of their household needed to access healthcare in the 3 months prior to data collection, compared to 61% for households without any member having a disability. They were also more likely to report the type of care to be 'other specialized services' (23% against 18% for households without a member with disability), which may be an indicator of care related to disability.

Households including a person with disability have reported lower expenditure on disability-specific hygiene items (6%) and reduced healthcare expenses (21%, compared to 13% of households without any member having disabilities) as measured by the LCSI. 24% of households including a person with disability reported that a member of their household was unable to access one or more services due to a cognitive or physical difficulty, with the main reported reasons being "distance to specialised service" (25%) and "cost of accessing service" (21%).

The MSNA data indicates that barriers to accessing health services, particularly related to distance, cost, and accessibility, are a major concern for Palestinian households, especially those with members who have disabilities. Regarding access to specialized reproductive health services, 88% of households reported that women of reproductive age (15-49 years) did not have access to such services. Among households with a healthcare need in the three months preceding data collection, households with a person living with disabilities faced particularly high financial barriers to healthcare. Indeed, 96% of those households reported a barrier to accessing care, and the most commonly reported barrier was the cost of services being too high (71% of HHs who reported having encountered a barrier). These households were also more likely to reduce spending on disability-specific hygiene items and to have reduced healthcare expenses.

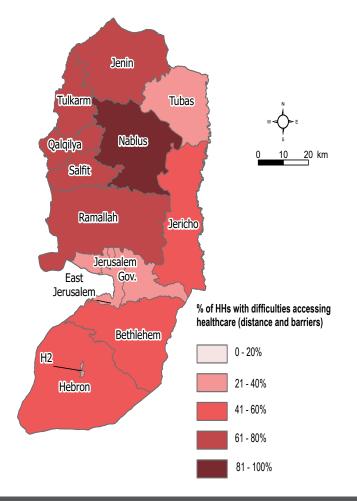
% of HHs in West Bank reporting presence of services that women and girls in their community can access, by type of service:

Medical services	68%
Legal services	28%
Mental health and psychosocial services	24%
Not aware of any	10%

Most reported types of barrier or difficulty encountered while attempting to access healthcare (out of the 14% of households who needed to access healthcare in the three months prior to data collection and reported a barrier), by location:

	Area A and B	Area C	East Jerusalem	H2
Lack of qualified medical staff at the health facility	6%	17%	0%	33%
No medicine available at the health facility	15%	13%	0%	0%
No treatment available at the facility	5%	13%	33%	0%
Quality of services could not meet the needs	3%	3%	0%	33%
Distance too far, transportation constrains	11%	21%	67%	0%
Movement restrictions (permit/checkpoint)	3%	21%	0%	0%
Cost of services and/or medicine was too high	77%	59%	0%	0%
% of households who reported a healthcare need and a barrier	16%	15%	2%	5%

% of HHs reporting having encountered difficulties in accessing health services while they needed it at the time of data collection¹⁶:



Access to Education



% of school-aged children (5-17 years) reportedly attending school regularly (4 days per week), in the 2021-2022 school year.

% of school-aged children (5-17) reportedly attending school regularly (4 days per week), by gender and age:



An estimated 579,173 Palestinians (56% females) in the oPt and more than 26% in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, will need humanitarian assistance to access education in 2022¹⁷. School closures in West Bank appeared to represent a major obstacle to accessing education, with 70% of West Bank households reporting a perceived need for catch-up learning due to school closures (both for COVID-19 related reasons and other reasons). Throughout the first months of 2022, schools across the West Bank were also affected by a teacher's strike, with on average 44% of teachers committed to the strike across all West Bank governorates¹⁸. In addition to these challenges, a lack of interest of children in education, children busy working or supporting the household, and disability-related barriers were the main reported reasons in the MSNA for children not attending school regularly.

% of households reporting a need for catch-up learning due to school closures related to COVID-19 or other reasons, by location:

West Bank (all household)	70%
Areas A and B	72%
Area C	73%
H2 (Hebron)	84%
East Jerusalem	50%

19% of those children attending school, dropped out of school during the current school year (2021-2022), with 20% of all school-aged boys and 14% of school-aged girls reportedly dropping out.

The main reasons why children reportedly dropped out (among the 19% of households who reported a child dropping out of school) were:

	Area A and B	Area C	East Jerusalem	H2
Lack of interest of children in education	26%	23%	25%	9%
Protection risks while commuting to school - political ¹⁹	35%	40%	0%	89%
The school was demolished or under threat of demolition	0.1%	0.3%	25%	0%
Disability-specific educational needs not met	3%	2%	25%	2%
Medical issue (e.g. illness, need for care)	7%	4%	0%	4%
% of HHs reporting a child dropping out of school	21%	20%	3%	38%

Child Protection Threats

Safety and security concerns for all children were widespread among households in West Bank, with 20% of households with school-aged children reporting children feeling unsafe or very unsafe when traveling to/from schools or while studying in schools. Among the households who reported school or the route to and from school as being unsafe or extremely unsafe for children, the most commonly reported concerns in West Bank were: traffic hazards/crossing roads (64%), firing tear gas on schools or students (16%), violence or harassment by settlers (13%), military presence around schools (11%), and violence or harassment travelling to school (10%).

In 2022, 35 Palestinian children were killed by Israeli forces in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), with an additional 1,203 children who were recorded as injured in the oPt²⁰. According to UNICEF, there are two main sources of violence against children, violence resulting from the occupation and ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict; and violence within Palestinian families and communities. These two sources of violence are interconnected and are linked to family stress and dysfunction²¹. While households survey in the MSNA were asked about their main safety and security concerns for girls and boys in the area, more than a third of households reported at least one concern for girls and boys.

Among those households, verbal harassment and kidnapping were the most frequently reported concerns. The percentage of households reporting safety concerns for children with disabilities were similar to percentages for boys and girls.

% of households in West Bank by the most frequently reported safety and security concerns for children:

Girls:		Boys:	
None	57 %	None	55%
Verbal harassment	14%	Being kidnapped	14%
Being kidnapped	13%	Verbal harassment	8%
Sexual harassment/ violence	6%	Threatened with violence	8%
Physical violence	6%	Wildlife	7 %

% of households by most frequently reported main safety and security concerns for children with disabilities (including both girls and boys):

None	56%
Bullying	17%
Being kidnapped	9%
Verbal harassment	5%
Threatened with violence	4%
Sexual harassment/violence	3%

According to the MSNA, 75% of households perceived that children with mental or physical disability faced additional challenges in accessing education services.

Among those households, the most reported challenges to accessing education were:

Bullying	33%
nfrastructure not adapted	24%
Teachers not able/available to teach child	22%
Classrooms not adapted to need	16%
Child not effectively integrated with peers	14%
Transportation or travel constraints	12%

Note: Respondent could select multiple answers to this question. 25% selected "do not know"

While investigating differences in coping strategies, households having a member living with disabilities in West Bank were more likely to have used at least one coping strategy in the 30 days and 7 days prior to data collection, as measured through the LCSI (49% compared to 38% for HHs with no member having disabilities) and rCSI (58% compared to 38%). Overall, the need of using coping strategies to cover basic needs illustrates the financial barriers faced by West Bank households. One of the ways that households may try to cope with these financial barriers is by engaging in child labor.

MSNA recorded percentages of child labour among households with children aged 15 to 17 years in the following areas:

Areas A and B	4%
Area C	6%
H2 (Hebron)	6%
East Jerusalem	0%

Endnotes

- ¹ UN OCHA. <u>Protection of Civilians Database</u>, 2022.
- ² UN OCHA. Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022.
- ³ UN OCHA. Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022.
- ⁴ UN OCHA, <u>UN experts alarmed by rise in settler violence in occupied Palestinian territory.</u>
- ⁵ UN OCHA, Humanitarian Needs Overview 2023
- ⁶ West Bank Protection Consortium. Settler violence vulnerability in the West Bank Heat map, January to August 2021, 2022.
- ⁷ The term Occupation authorities refers to Israeli government authorities such as the Israeli Defense Force (IDF), Israeli police, Jerusalem municipality (Israeli), or the Unit for the Coordination of Government Affairs in the Territories (COGAT), and private security forces. Civilian actors, including individual settlers, are not captured within the scope of this term.
- ⁸ Households were denied entry to market (goods/people): refers to the delay and confiscation of products destined for the markets as well as the refusal of movement permits for businessmen

- ⁹ UN OCHA, AREA C: Key humanitarian concerns.
- ¹⁰ Al- Haq organization, Ongoing Demolitions of Palestinian Property in the West Bank.
- ¹¹ UN OCHA, <u>Data on demolition and displacement in the West Bank</u>. According to OCHA, "Affected people" refers to those whose livelihood has been affected by the demolition without being displaced. "Displaced people" and "affected people" are mutually exclusive.
- ¹² Charara R, Forouzanfar M, Naghavi M, Moradi-Lakeh M, Afshin A, Vos T, et al. (2017), The Burden of Mental Disorders in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, 1990-2013.
- ¹³ Based on UN OCHA, <u>Humanitarian Needs Overview</u> 2022 and REACH, Multi-Sector Needs Assessment 2021.
- ¹⁴ UN OCHA, <u>Humanitarian Needs Overview 2023</u>.
- ¹⁵ This question refers to cases where one of the family members suffered from physical or psychological harm. The question relates to acts of a political nature, and primarily those committed by the occupation against the Palestinians.
- ¹⁶ Each household was assigned a severity score based on the combining factors of distance to the nearest primary healthcare facility (using their regular mode of transport) and barriers that prevented a member of their household from accessing health services. The population of reference for households experiencing a barrier to healthcare consisted of households that reported a healthcare need (89.6%), as the follow-up question on barriers was only asked to those households.
- ¹⁷ UN OCHA. Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022.
- ¹⁸ Middle East Monitor. West Bank Unified Teacher's Movement: 'GUPT, Education Ministry agreement does not represent us, we will continue our strike'. April 2022
- ¹⁹ Defined for the purpose of the MSNA as "protection risks while commuting to school political (e.g. soldiers and settler harassment/violence)".
- ²⁰ UN OCHA, <u>Humanitarian Response Plan 2023</u>.
- ²¹ UNICEF, Child protection (Protecting children from all forms of violence, exploitation and grave violations).

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