

OCHA Weekly Humanitarian Update

WEST BANK

7 - 13 June 2002

OVERVIEW:

Tension remained high in the West Bank, with the week characterised by continuing violence, a number of incursions and curfews, and severe movement restrictions on the Palestinian population. The Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) entered Ramallah/ El Bireh for the second time in less than a week, destroying buildings in the presidential compound of Yasser Arafat and placing the city and the neighbouring Amari refugee camp under a three-day curfew.

Nine Palestinians and four Israelis were killed in the West Bank this week. According to the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS), the total number of Palestinian casualties in West Bank & Gaza since Sept 29th, 2000 is 1,588 deaths and 19,423 injuries: some 524 Israeli fatalities and 4,081 injuries occurred in the same period.

<p>Curfews</p> <p>7 June Jenin town & camp, Al Yamoun, Al Hashimiyyeh, Burgin, Kufr Qud, Silat Al-Harithiyeh, Anin, Qabatia, Beit Furik, Al Harithiya, Hebron</p> <p>8 June Jenin, Beit Ummar, Halhoul</p> <p>9 June Jarushiya, Jiljiya, Tulkarm town & camp, Zeita, Attil, Deir al Ghusun, Shuweika, Halhoul</p> <p>10 June Jarushiya, Tulkarm town & camp, Zeita, Attil, Shuweika, Hableh, Ramallah, Al Bireh, Amari camp, Battir, Al Khader, Husan</p> <p>11 June Jarushiya, Tulkarm town & camp, Zeita, Shuweika, Deir Al Ghunsun, Attil, Faroun, Irtah, Ramallah, Al Bireh, Beitunya, Amari Camp</p> <p>12 June Ramallah, Al Bireh, Beitunya, Amari camp</p> <p>13 June Tubas, Beit Furik, Husan, Tayasir</p>	<p>Incursions</p> <p>7 June Jenin town & camp, Al Yamoun, Al Hashimiyyeh, Burgin, Kufr Qud, Silat Al-Harithiyeh, Anin, Tulkarm, Beit Furik, Qabatia, Jaba, Dheisheh, Hebron, Husan, Idna, Yatta, Fawar, Halhoul, Al Rashaydeh</p> <p>8 June Jenin, Hebron, Halhoul, Yatta, Dura, Ijnisinya, Beit Imrin, Beit Ummar</p> <p>9 June Tulkarm town & camps, Jijiliya, Beit Furik, Hebron</p> <p>10 June Tulkarm town & camp, Hableh, Deir al-Ghusun, Shuweika, Azzun, Ramallah, Al-Bireh, Beitunya, Amari camp, Husan, Battir</p> <p>11 June Tulkarm town & camp, Azzun, Ramallah, Al-Bireh, Beitunya, Amari camp, Dheisheh camp, Hebron, Dura, Al-Khader</p> <p>12 June Tulkarm town & camp, Tubas, Ramallah, Halhoul, Bain Naim, Tarqumiyya, Hebron</p> <p>13 June Tubas, Beit Furik</p>
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SECTORAL UPDATES:

Food

The bi-weekly Food Crisis Group meeting took place on 12 June. The latest data concerning total food aid distributed by agency and West Bank governorate, and the weekly monitoring of prices for basic foodstuffs in Gaza, Nablus, Jenin and Hebron is available on www.reliefweb.int/hic-opt/

WFP food distribution is ongoing in all West Bank and Gaza governorates, benefiting some 250,000 social hardship cases. WFP is in also in the process of purchasing over 5,000

metric tons of wheat flour locally, and will soon introduce food-for-work activities in the context of its new Emergency Operation (EMOP).

The main focus of UNRWA's ongoing food distributions has shifted from camps to refugees living in villages, benefiting a total of 3,300 families in recent weeks. A total of 2,300 families had benefited from recent ICRC aid in Nablus, Jericho, Ramallah and the ICRC will soon implement an urban food voucher programme for an estimated 20,000 families, to the value of \$US 80-90.

Health

Due to the severe closure regime, transportation of medicines and goods is still impossible without the assistance of international organizations. 17 of a planned 20 deliveries of essential medical supplies from the MoH Central Stores in Ramallah to district hospitals and primary care directorates have been completed thanks to the collaborative effort of the ICRC, WFP, UNDP, Italian Cooperation and the Health Action Response Team (HART). In a recent rapid telephone survey of health sector stakeholders carried out by HART, the majority responded that access was the biggest constraint obstructing their work.

This week's incursions severely disrupted hospital and ambulance services. In the Ramallah area, the PRCS reported that soldiers delayed ambulances responding to calls. The IDF entered and detained staff in the PRCS primary health facility in Bani Naim. A PRCS ambulance carrying a boy with a broken leg was refused entry to East Jerusalem, despite the intervention of the ICRC. UNWRA also reported that several health centres did not operate due to curfews; among them the health centres in the Jenin, Tulkarm and Amari camps.

Shelter

140 structures were destroyed as a result of IDF actions in Jenin in April, including 30 subsequently demolished because of severe structural damage. An additional 20-30 structures will also be pulled down in the next few months and another 200 houses will require extensive rehabilitation. Approximately 350 families have been made homeless: fifty-four residents died in the incursion, with five still unaccounted for.

Reconstruction will take considerable time because of the extent of the devastation, the large amount of unexploded ordinance (UXO) in the rubble, and the difficulties involved in building - according to acceptable safety and technical standards - in a densely populated area. Reconstruction efforts will be funded by the United Arab Emirates Red Crescent Society and will cost an estimated \$25-30 million: it is envisaged that the project will be completed by summer 2004.

UNRWA has had extensive consultations with the local Emergency Rescue Committee, consisting primarily of camp residents. A participatory process will ensure maximum local involvement in the planning and implementation stages. The reconstruction effort will employ local contractors, technical expertise and labour to the maximum extent possible, to benefit the local economy and to give local residents a sense of ownership and community involvement in the reconstruction process.

Mine awareness

Following a recent assessment, the ICRC has launched community-based UXO-awareness projects, in coordination with UNICEF and relevant Palestinian ministries. The first training session, in Hebron 9 -12 June, will be followed by sessions in Gaza and Jenin.

The majority of participants are Palestine Red Crescent Society volunteers, in addition to persons designated by the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

The participants will work to raise awareness of mines and UXO in their respective communities, with the help of communication tools provided by the ICRC. In Jenin camp, posters will depict the most commonly found explosive devices, and the ICRC is also building two playgrounds in Jenin town to provide children and adolescents with safe play areas

Recent Publications

A 'Preliminary Humanitarian Damage Assessment and Humanitarian Action Plan' was recently launched by a number of UN organizations, international NGOs and the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (see www.reliefweb.int/hic-opt/). The report provides a humanitarian overview of the impact of the March/April incursions and the closure regime in the West Bank and identifies a number of humanitarian activities and the extra-budgetary funding needed for immediate remedial interventions. A total budget of \$US 47.3 million is required to implement a number of emergency interventions, ranging from food and water distributions to psychosocial support to traumatized children.

The ILO has just issued a recent 'Report of the Director General: Issued by the International Labour Organization: Appendix: Report on the situation of workers in the occupied Arab territories' (see www.reliefweb.int/hic-opt/). In addition to calling for an easing of border closures, the report calls for an enlarged programme of technical cooperation to the OPT and the promotion of social dialogue.

Upcoming missions

The UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) will field an initial mission 22-28 June for the purpose of establishing contacts, methodology and timetable for a later joint FAO-WFP Food Assessment Mission.