

Since 2007, a UNICEF-led working group has consolidated efforts to report on the impacts of armed conflict on children in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt). The bulletin is published on a bi-monthly basis highlighting trends and patterns in grave violations against children.

Members of the working group include: Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights, Save the Children, DCI-Palestine, B'Tselem, Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, War Child Holland, OCHA, OHCHR, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNRWA and WHO.

This edition covers November & December 2012.



Between 14 - 21 November, **35 Palestinian children were killed in Israeli airstrikes or shelling on Gaza, and by rockets** launched by Palestinian armed groups which fell short. A total of **14 Israeli children were injured** by rockets launched from Gaza.

Photo: Girls picking up their belongings from the remains of their house, which was damaged by an Israeli airstrike in Gaza on 18 November 2013. UNICEF/El Baba

In 2012, 50 Palestinian children were killed and another 665 were injured; no Israeli children were killed and 17 were injured.

KILLINGS AND INJURIES

In November and December 2012, a total of 39 Palestinian children were killed (30 boys and nine girls) and **another 279 were injured** (273 boys and six girls); **no Israeli children were killed and another 14 were injured**. Most of the casualties were linked to the eight-day escalation of violence in Gaza and Southern Israel, and to West Bank demonstrations against the Israeli military intervention. An increase in the use of lethal force by Israeli security forces was also observed, including with regard to children.

Gaza

Between the 14 and 21 of November, 35 Palestinian children were killed in ISF airstrikes or shelling, and by Palestinian rockets falling short. It is believed that most of these children were killed in ISF airstrikes. Evidence indicates that three children were killed by Palestinian rockets falling short, however, the perpetrator could not be clearly identified.

In addition, **three boys were killed in Gaza in the week before the 14 November**: a 13-year-old was killed due to ISF shooting in Al Qarara, during an incursion in Gaza on 8 November; and on 10 November, two boys aged 16 and 17 were killed by ISF tank shells fired following the injury of four Israeli soldiers as a result of anti-tanks missiles launched by Palestinian armed groups in Al Mentar hill.

The steep increase in the number of children killed in Gaza in November and December is due to the eight-day escalation of violence in Gaza and southern Israel in November. On 14 November at approximately 15:45 the Israeli Air Force (IAF) launched an airstrike that targeted and killed the acting

chief of Hamas' armed wing, marking the start of a military offensive that ended on 21 November as a result of an Egyptian-brokered ceasefire between Israel and Hamas. This operation followed several weeks of intermittent escalations in violence, during which Palestinian armed groups indiscriminately fired rockets into southern Israel, and the ISF attacked various targets inside Gaza, killing and injuring civilians and militants.

Up to 255 Palestinian children were reportedly injured during the November escalation in Gaza, but Working Group partners are still verifying the causes of the injuries. In addition, excluding the 14-21 November period, 26 Palestinian boys were injured in Gaza. Eleven (11) boys were injured on 10 November by ISF tank shells fired following the injury of four Israeli soldiers as a result of anti-tanks missiles launched by Palestinian armed groups in Al Mentar hill. A 17-year-old boy was injured on 11 November by an ISF attack on a metal workshop. After the Gaza escalation, 15 boys were shot and injured by the ISF with live ammunition while in the Access Restricted Area (A.R.A.), near the border with Israel. A 14-year-old was injured working on his family's land (30 November), a 16-year-old was injured while grazing sheep (3 December), 12 boys were injured while protesting against the Israeli-imposed 300 meters A.R.A. (23, 25, 28, 30 November and 21 December), and a 17-year-old was injured as he collected rubble and firewood (31 December).

South Israel

During the escalation of violence, Palestinian armed groups indiscriminately launched rockets on Southern Israel. As a result, on 15 November, 14 Israeli children were injured in Southern Israel.

West Bank

On 12 December, a 17-year-old boy was shot and killed in the Old City of Hebron. The causes of the shooting vary according to the sources. According to Israeli reports, the boy threatened a soldier at the checkpoint at the entrance of al-Masharqa neighborhood with a gun which turned out to be a plastic toy. According to Palestinian reports, the boy was returning home after buying his birthday cake, and an Israeli female soldier fired at him from a close range as he reached the checkpoint. He was hit by three bullets which killed him instantly.

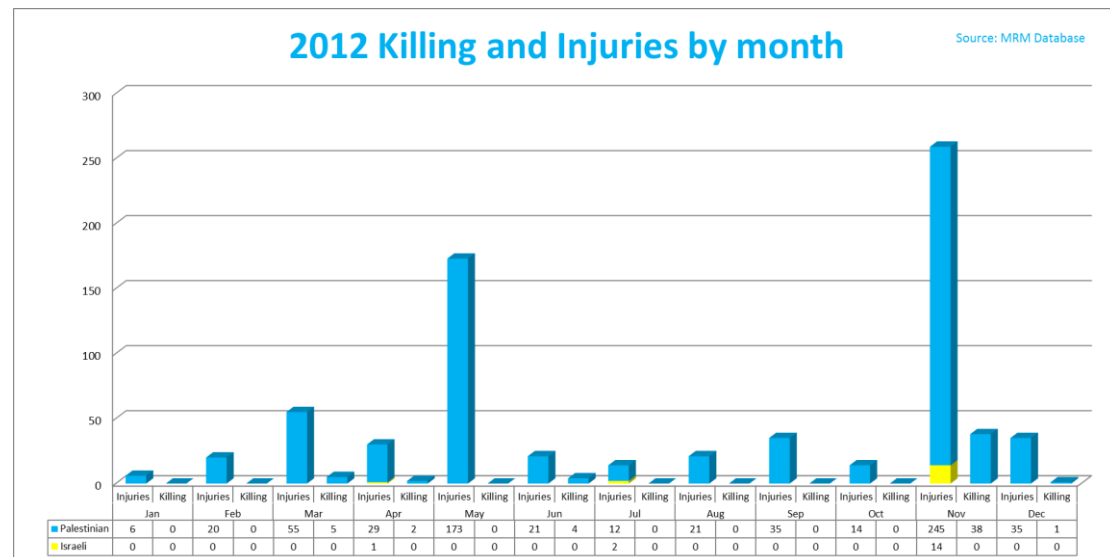
A total of 253 children were injured in the West Bank. Between 14 and 21 November, **203 children (all boys) were injured during demonstrations against the military operation in Gaza**. They were injured with live ammunition (8 boys), rubber-coated metal bullets (53), hit by tear gas canister (3), suffered severe tear gas inhalation (136), physically assaulted (2) or shot with a tazer (1). The **other nine children were injured during the weekly demonstrations against the Barrier** or the expansion of Israeli settlements in Qaryut (Nablus), Bi'lin (Ramallah), Nabi Saleh (Ramallah), and in the Al 'Isawiya neighbourhood of East Jerusalem.

Thirty two (32) children were injured during military operations (31 boys and one girl). Seventeen (17) children (16 boys and 1 girl) were injured in Hebron during clashes that erupted right after the death of a 17-year-old who was shot by Israeli Security Forces, and during his funeral the day after. Fifteen (15) boys were injured during clashes that followed search and arrest operations, raids of villages or refugee camps during funerals or in response to stone throwing at checkpoints. These boys, aged between 12 and 17, were physically assaulted, directly hit with tear gas canisters, hit by rubber-coated metal bullets, or suffered severe tear gas inhalations

Seven (7) children were injured in settler related violence (six boys and one girl). Four (4) children were physically assaulted by Israeli settlers: a nine-year-old boy and a 14-year-old girl in the Old City of Hebron on 13 December; a 15-year-old boy and a 17-year-old boy in Jerusalem on 24 and 27 December respectively. Another three boys were injured as a result of ISF intervention in response to children clashing with settlers. A three-year-old and a four-year-old were treated for exposure to tear gas in Urif

(Nablus) and a 14-year-old was hospitalised after being shot in the forehead with a rubber coated metal bullet.

Two children were injured by explosive remnants of war on 14 and 20 December in Bizzariya (Nablus) and in Hammamat al Maleh (Tubas) - a 15-year-old boy and a 12-year-old girl.



RECRUITMENT AND USE OF CHILDREN BY ARMED FORCES AND GROUPS

No cases were reported in November and December 2012.

ARREST AND DETENTION

At the end of December 2012, 192 boys and 1 girl aged 12 to 17 years were in Israeli military detention for alleged security violations, including 23 between the ages of 12 and 15 years. This marks a nine per cent increase compared to the previous month, and a 46 per cent increase compared to December 2011. Out of the 195 children, **119 were in pre-trial detention** and 76 were serving a sentence. According to the Israeli Prison Services, **88 per cent of Palestinian child detainees were transferred to prisons inside Israel during the reporting period, which contravenes the Fourth Geneva Convention.**

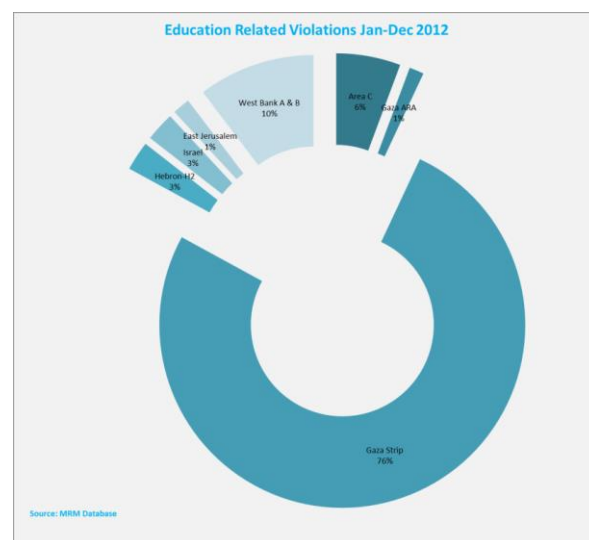
Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2010	314	338	337	328	300	287	281	280	264	251	226	210
2011	221	216	224	217	211	207	201	176	162	150	159	132
2012	166	183	203	218	231	220	210	194	189	164	177	193

Source: www.btselem.org/statistics/minors_in_custody

ILL-TREATMENT AND TORTURE

In a sample of 12 cases of children arrested and detained (see above), all of the 12 Palestinian boys, aged 14 to 17, who provided sworn affidavits, **reported being subjected to ill-treatment and/or acts that could be tantamount to torture by the Israeli army and police**. Nine out of twelve children suffered at least ten different types of ill-treatment, including but not limited to being painfully hand-tied, blindfolded, strip searched, leg-tied, verbally abused, subjected to physical violence (beating, slapping, kicking, including with sticks), not informed of their rights, and not allowed the presence of a parent or lawyer during interrogation.

EDUCATION-RELATED VIOLATIONS



Gaza and South Israel

In Gaza and Southern Israel, a high number of incidents were documented as a result of the escalation of violence and the Israeli military operation between 14 and 21 November 2012. In Gaza, **285 school buildings were damaged as a result of Israeli airstrikes**, including 62 UNRWA school buildings. The school buildings were damaged as a result of ISF targeting nearby locations; none of the schools was a direct target. The verification of the level of damage to government, NGO or private schools is on-going. According to preliminary assessments, ten (10) schools suffered major structural damage and three (3) UNRWA school

buildings¹ also suffered major damage, affecting five distinct schools.

In southern Israel, six school buildings were damaged as a result of rockets launched by Palestinian armed groups.

West Bank

In the West Bank, 14 incidents were documented in November and December 2012, marking an increase compared with the previous reporting period. Eleven (11) incidents were the result of military activity - in seven instances, **the ISF entered schools premises** during village patrols, disrupting classes and causing a disturbance without an apparent or given reason (three cases in Nablus, two cases in Qalqiliya and one case in Jenin governorates), **or occupied the school** to provide security to an area (Nablus, 14 November). In four instances, the ISF **fired tear gas, threw canisters of tear gas or fired live ammunition at the schools** (Urif, 19 November; East Jerusalem 27 November; Ramallah, 13 December; Hebron's Old City, 26 December). In another case, **the Israeli Civil Administration entered** the Musafer Primary Mixed School in Yatta (Hebron) to deliver a verbal demolition order and take pictures of the school. **Two (2) incidents related to Israeli settlers** were

¹ In Gaza, each school building may host more than one school, one in the morning shift and one in the afternoon shift due to shortage of schools.

reported in the village of Urif (Nablus): on 21 November **settlers from Yitzhar outpost attacked the school**, which resulted in clashes with the Palestinians students and in the intervention of ISF who fired tear gas. On 29 November, **settlers from Yitzhar raided the village and threw stones at the school**.

ATTACKS ON HOSPITALS

Gaza

Six (6) UNRWA health centres, one UNRWA distribution centre and five UNRWA emergency and social service offices suffered minor collateral damage during the November escalation.

DENIAL OF HUMANITARIAN ACCESS FOR CHILDREN

Gaza

Children in need of specialized medical care outside of Gaza continue to face delays when accessing health services. In November and December 2012, the Israeli District Liaison Office approved 558 out of 600 applications for children to cross Erez for medical treatment outside of Gaza. Forty two (42) applications were delayed. No applications were denied.

Gaza and South Israel

Between 14 and 21 November, **schools in Gaza and in Southern Israel were closed** as a result of hostilities. In Gaza, **462,000 basic and secondary school Palestinian students could not go to school** as a result of the Israeli military intervention. In Israel, schools in the range of 40 km from Gaza were closed, affecting **317,000 Israeli students who could not go to school as a result of rockets** launched by Palestinian Armed groups.

West Bank

In November and December 2012, 20 incidents of denial of access to education were documented in the West Bank. In eight instances, the ISF disrupted normal classes by attempting to enter the schools, or clashed with the students. In some instances students were injured as a result of the use of tear gas inhalation or rubber coated meal bullets in Nablus and Bethlehem. In four instances, students were delayed for school as a result of ISF closure of roads or checkpoints in Azzun (Qualqilia), in Urif (Nablus) and twice in the Old City of Hebron, including one instance which resulted in clashes and the arrest of five students.

In three instances, raw sewage from nearby Israeli settlements flooded school premises and affected the normal delivery of the classes in the Yaqubia Basic School for Girls (Hebron) on 19 November, the Azzun Bait Amin Secondary School (Qualqilia) on 1 November and again on 23 December. In three instances, children were arrested while on their way to school. On 10 December, three students were arrested while on their way to the 'Sawyeh Al Lebban' School (Nablus). On 12 December in Bethlehem, a 16-year-old boy was arrested, brought to Rachel Tomb's checkpoint and physically assaulted; he was hospitalised as a result of this incident. Throughout the month of December 2012, 12 students were detained while on their way to Azzun Bait Amin Secondary School (Qualqilia), and additional students reported arriving late to class because of delays at south Azzun checkpoint. In three other instances, the military escort intended to protect school children from settler violence in at-Tuwani was late or did not arrive at the agreed meeting point.

DISPLACEMENT

Israeli authorities demolished 60 Palestinian structures (homes, water wells, animal shelters, etc.) across the West Bank in November and December, including 18 homes. As a result, 62 people lost their homes, including 24 children. Another 377 people, including 170 children, were affected by the demolitions, which caused community displacement and threats to livelihood.

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