

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 March & April 2012.



Photos: The Barrier was completed in Abu Dis in 2009, cutting the Comboni convent pre-school in East Jerusalem from many of its teachers and students in Abu Dis. Following a request by Christian authorities, there was a gate cut in the Barrier directly next to the kindergarten that opened to allow the passage of children and teachers in the morning and, again, at the end of the school day. Israeli authorities closed this entrance gate permanently in 2010. Now the children face a long detour and lengthy queues at the checkpoint into Jerusalem for school every morning. The journey usually takes about an hour but it can take more and involves crossing the checkpoint on foot and taking small children one by one through steel turnstiles and electronic detectors. The sisters running the kindergarten have painted cartoon characters on the Barrier in order to alleviate children's stress, however Israeli Security Forces heightened the Barrier in early 2012.

Credit: UNICEF/Ennaimi

KILLINGS AND INJURIES

In March and April 2012, **6 Palestinian boys were reported killed and 84 Palestinian children were reported injured** (82 boys and 2 girls). **No Israeli children were reported killed and one Israeli girl was reported injured during the same reporting period.**

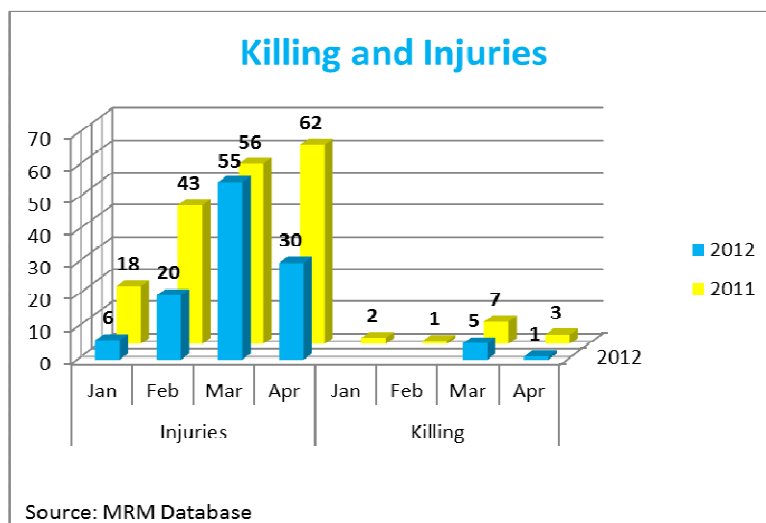
This represents a significant increase in the number of children killed and injured compared to the first two months of the year, when no Palestinian children were reported killed but 26 were reported injured, and no Israeli children were reported killed or injured.

Armed hostilities in Gaza and southern Israel in March resulted in the killing of one Palestinian boy and the injury of 16 Palestinian boys. On 30 March 2012, demonstrations held to mark the 36th anniversary of Palestinian Land Day resulted in 21 Palestinian children injured.

Children killed

Among the six Palestinian boys killed, **three died as a result of UXO explosions**. Two 12-year-old boys died when unexploded ordnance belonging to Israeli security Forces (ISF) detonated in Sa'ir (Hebron) while they were playing near their homes, as confirmed by ISF. In a separate incident, a 14-year-old died in Gaza when mishandling an explosive device. The other three cases include a 12-year-old boy **killed by**

an ISF missile that was reportedly targeting a rocket launching site in Gaza, a 17-year-old Palestinian boy killed when mishandling a weapon in Gaza and a 17-year-old was shot and killed in Yatta (Hebron) by ISF during an arrest operation.



Children injured

Fifty-one per cent of the injuries to children during March and April occurred in Gaza and forty-nine per cent in the West Bank.

One Israeli girl was injured on 8 April when Palestinians threw stones at the vehicle she was travelling in, near Beit Sira (Ramallah).

Sixty-one children were injured by Israeli Security Forces (ISF).

In the **West Bank**, weekly demonstrations against the wall or settlement expansion, clashes between Palestinians and ISF, or ISF search and arrest operations resulted in 10 children (9 boys and 1 girl) injured by tear gas inhalation, 9 boys injured by rubber-coated metal bullets, 6 boys by tear gas canisters launched at them and one boy injured by a live bullet.

In **Gaza**, 16 boys were injured by ISF missiles targeting militants or rocket launching sites, and 18 boys were injured by live ammunition shot by ISF who opened fire to disperse people marching toward the fence on Land Day. In another instance, a 6-year-old boy was shot and injured in his legs while at home when Israeli soldiers positioned at the Kerem Shalom crossing opened fire on Palestinian houses.

Eleven Palestinian boys, age 10 to 16, were **injured in settler related incidents**, including eight boys suffering suffocation from tear gas fired by ISF who intervened when masked settlers threw stones at the Urif Secondary Boys School (Nablus). Other incidents involved a 10-year-old boy beaten by Israeli settlers in East Jerusalem, a 10-year-old boy injured by stones thrown by Israeli settlers in Hebron Old City and a 13-year-old boy injured by Israeli settlers firing live ammunition in Wadi An Nabe' (Ramallah).

Eleven Palestinian children (10 boys and 1 girl) were **injured as a result of UXO explosions** in Gaza and the West Bank. In the West Bank, three boys age 8 to 16 were injured in three separate incidents that involved mishandling of UXOs. In another incident a UXO exploded in a field where children were playing in Sa'ir (Hebron). In Gaza, in three separate cases, eight children age 4 to 16 years, mishandled explosives found on the street or outside their houses and were injured when the devices detonated.

RECRUITMENT AND USE OF CHILDREN BY ARMED FORCES AND GROUPS

One reported incident of using of a child as a human shield was documented when a 15-year-old Palestinian boy was arrested from his home at 2.30 am. Soldiers forced him to walk in front of their jeep when neighbours started throwing stones at them. Two cases of attempted child recruitment by Israeli Security Forces (ISF) were reported, involving two 17-year-old boys arrested by ISF who attempted to recruit them as informants during interrogation.

ARREST AND DETENTION

At the end of April 2012, 220 Palestinian boys between the ages of 12 to 17 were in Israeli detention for alleged security violations, marking a 7 per cent increase in April compared to the previous month and a 63 per cent increase since December 2011. This included 33 children between the ages of 12 and 15 years.

No children are currently held in administrative detention.

Nineteen children from the West Bank were reported as transferred to prisons inside Israel in contravention of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2010	318	343	342	335	305	291	284	286	269	256	228	213
2011	222	221	226	220	211	209	202	180	164	150	161	135
2012	170	187	206	220								

Source: DCI Palestine, Detention Bulletin, April 2012.

ILL-TREATMENT AND TORTURE

In relation to the cases of detention mentioned above, a sample of forty cases was documented through affidavits, including 17 that occurred in January and February. **All of the 40 Palestinian boys aged 13-17 who provided sworn affidavits reported being subjected to ill-treatment and/or acts tantamount to torture by the Israeli army and police.**

Sixty per cent of the children were arrested from their homes at night between 1am and 5am. Sixty-seven per cent of the children suffered at least ten different types of ill-treatment including but not limited to being hand-tied, blindfolded, strip searched, leg-tied, verbally abused, subjected to physical violence, denied access to water and food and denied access to toilets, not informed of their rights, and not allowed the presence of a parent or lawyer. Most abuses occurred during the first 48 hours after arrest, when 90 per cent of the children were subjected to the above mentioned violations.

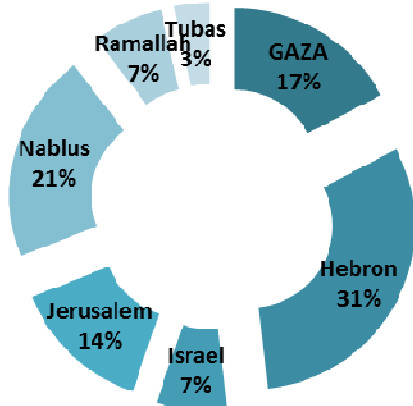
EDUCATION-RELATED VIOLATIONS

Attacks on schools

In March and April 2012, **seven incidents of attacks on schools were reported**, three in the West Bank and five in Gaza, affecting 8,049 children. **One incident was reported in Israel** with no children affected.

In Gaza, a 12-year-old boy was killed by an Israeli drone while walking to school across a field previously used for rocket launching in Jabalia. In addition, five Government Schools and four UNRWA Schools were damaged by ISF air strikes. One UNRWA clinic was damaged by ISF air strikes.

Education Related Violations by Governorate Jan-Apr 2012



Source: MRM Database

On 11 March, a **rocket hit an Israeli school in Be'er Sheva**; no damage was reported and no children were injured.

In the West Bank, Israeli Security Forces (ISF) destroyed two gates and fired tear gas at the Silwad Basic Boys School (Ramallah). In two other separate incidents, Israeli settlers broke the main gate locks of the Haj Ma'zoz Al Masri Secondary School for Girls (Nablus) and **Israeli Settlers threw stones at the Urif Secondary School (Nablus)**, which resulted in a **ISF tear gas intervention that injured eight children**.

Denial of access to education

Twelve incidents of denial of access to education were documented, including 10 in the West Bank, one in Gaza and one in Israel.

In the West Bank, **three incidents were reported at Cordoba School in Hebron's Old City**. In one incident Israeli Security Forces (ISF) entered the Cordoba school to warn students against stone throwing. In another incident, ISF established a flying check point (16 armed soldiers) at the entrance of the Cordoba school to search students entering the school and required them to empty their school bags. The third incident involved **Israeli settlers who physically assaulted two Palestinian girls** on their way home from school.

In Nablus, three incidents were reported including the detention of two students on 6 March, and the detention of another 30 students on 11 March while they were on their way to the As Sawiya Secondary School, and an ISF search operation in the Burin Basic School, disrupting the school classes. In Jerusalem, two incidents were reported involving the arrest of 12 children leaving the Wadi Rababeh School, who were detained for one hour in a jeep, and **the arrest of the Vice-Principal of the Silwan Boys School in front of his classroom by the Border Police**. This is the first time the Border Police arrested a teacher inside a school which is under the authority of the Jerusalem Municipality. Two other incidents in the West Bank include the demolition of two stretches of road rehabilitated by the Palestinian Authority linking villages in the Jordan Valley affecting 60 students that attend school in Al 'Aqaba, and the arrest of a 16 year old boy while he was being driven to school by his father in Nabi Saleh (Ramallah).

On 12 March, Gaza authorities announced the suspension of the evening shift at schools in northern Gaza, affecting 2,500 students.

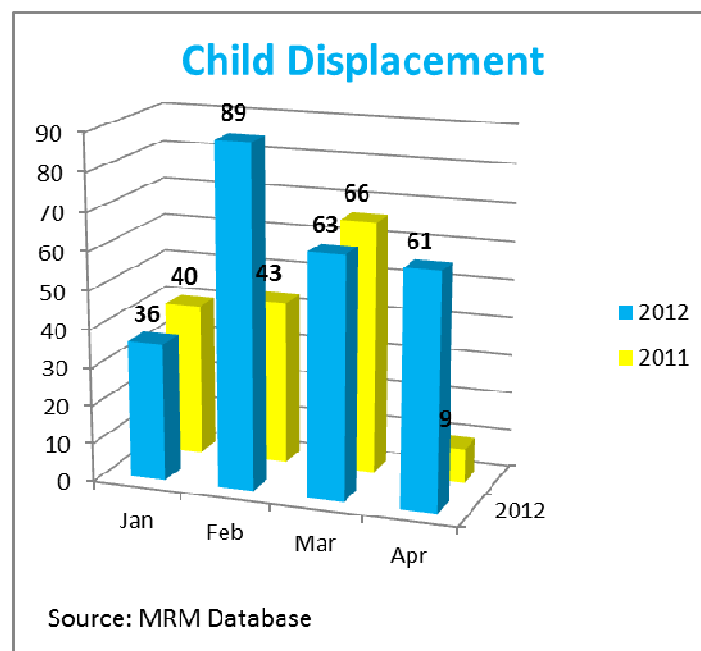
On 11 March, Israeli students were ordered not to go to schools in the area near the fence with Gaza as a result of the rockets fired from the Gaza strip. The schools were closed for three days affecting 200,000 students.

Denial of humanitarian access for children

Children in need of specialized medical care outside of Gaza continue to face delays when accessing health services. In March 2012, the Israeli District Liaison Office approved 268 out of 276 applications for children to cross Erez for medical treatment outside of Gaza. Eight applications were delayed.

Displacement

In March and April 2012, Israeli authorities demolished 143 Palestinian structures across the West Bank, including 49 homes. As a result, 245 people lost their homes, including 124 children. Another 587 people, including 213 children, were affected by the demolitions, which caused community displacement and threats to livelihood, **confirming the trend of an increasing number of demolitions.**



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