

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 the months of September and October 2011.

12 teachers and 19 children forced to cross through metal detectors on their way to school in the old city of Hebron

In Hebron, 12 teachers and 19 of the students attending the Cordoba school, in the old city (H2), have been refused access through the humanitarian corridor (a gate) that is normally open for them. They were told by Israeli Security Forces that from now on they would have to access only through metal detectors at checkpoint no. 56, including pregnant women, who fear it might harm their unborn babies. Nine of the teachers, some of them pregnant, now walk 45 minutes every day to avoid passing through the metal detectors; the three others cross through it.



Photo :UNDP/Ahed Izhiman 2011

During a protest in October, some soldiers assaulted and injured five school children (four girls and one boy, aged 11 - 15 years) on their way to school for refusing to go through the gates. In a separate incident, settlers threw stones and attempted to break into the school.

KILLINGS AND INJURIES

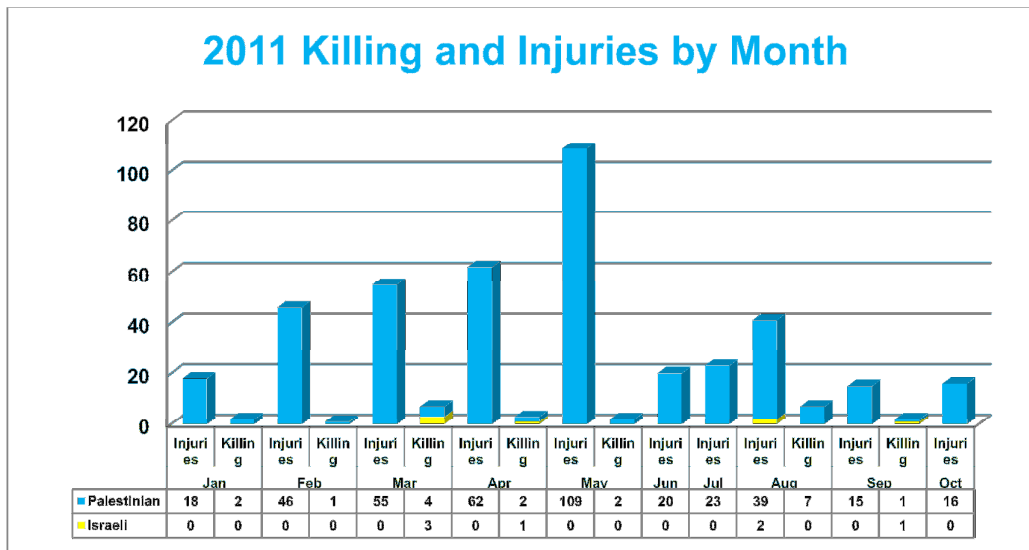
Four Palestinian boys were reported killed in Gaza in September and October, including three cases from August. A six-year-old died when the **home-made Palestinian explosive device he was playing with detonated**; two boys, a 13 and a 14-year-old, died of wounds they sustained **following Israeli Security Forces (ISF) airstrikes**; and a 17-year-old boy was killed when the **explosives he was carrying exploded while performing surveillance tasks for Hamas' military wing** in south Gaza.

A one-year-old Israeli boy was killed in the West Bank when his father lost control of the car they were riding in **due to stones thrown by Palestinians**.

54 Palestinian children (46 boys and 8 girls) were **reported injured**, including 23 new cases from July and August. **No Israeli children were reported injured**.

Fifty-seven per cent of the injuries reported took place in the West Bank, 37 per cent in Gaza and six per cent in East Jerusalem. Forty-three children were injured directly by ISF forces, and 11 children were injured in the context of settler violence by Israeli settlers and ISF. Among the 43 children injured by ISF, 18 boys were injured in Gaza as a result of **Israeli air strikes, one boy was shot by ISF while collecting scrap metal in the Gaza Access Restricted Area¹**, and **one boy was shot while in a fishing boat** by the Israeli Navy.

¹ The 'Access Restricted Areas' denote the fence separating Israel and Gaza. The Israeli military has officially indicated the boundary of the no-go area to be 300 meters from the border but in practice, it extends up to one kilometre in most areas and two kilometres at its widest point in North Gaza.

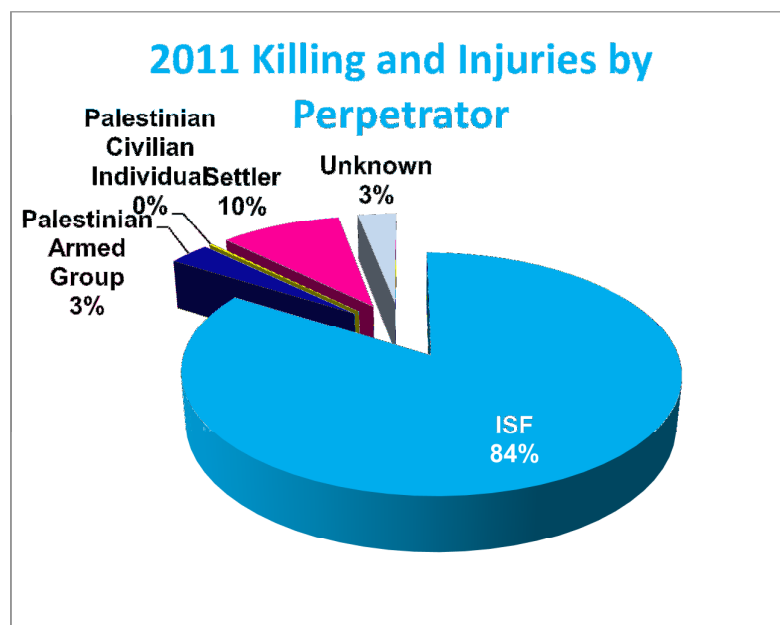


Fourteen children – nine boys and five girls – were injured by ISF during search operations, clashes, or at checkpoints in the West Bank. An additional nine children – eight boys and one girl – were injured by ISF during demonstrations in the West Bank, due to rubber-coated metal bullets, tear gas inhalation, tear gas canisters fired at close range or as a result of beating.

Eleven children were injured due to settler related incidents, including six boys and two girls who were **directly injured by Israeli settlers**. In one case, on 21 October, a 14-year-old boy was injured and hospitalized after being **beaten with sticks by settlers while picking olives on his village land**. The olive picking had been coordinated in advance with Israeli authorities to allow farmers to access to their land (*see story on page 3*). In other cases, three boys were **injured by ISF rubber-coated bullets or tear gas canisters fired at them when ISF forces intervened during clashes with settlers**.

Since the beginning of the year 19 Palestinian children have been killed and 403 injured. This represents an increase in the number of children killed and injured compared to the same period last year (9 Palestinian children killed and 308 Palestinian children injured).

Since the beginning of 2011, 5 Israeli children were killed and 2 injured, this also marks an increase compared to the same period last year when one child was reported injured. No Israeli children were reported killed last year.



14-year-old boy injured by settlers during the olive harvest

On Friday 21 October, during the olive harvest, a 14-year-old boy went to pick olives with a group of Israeli, international and Palestinian volunteers who came to help villagers to pick olives and protect them from settler attacks, a common occurrence during the olive season. The olive trees were located on Palestinian-owned land in the vicinity of two Israeli outposts. The timing of the olive picking had been coordinated in advance by the Israeli authorities to allow farmers to access their land.



Villagers report that at approximately 10 am, five settlers arrived from the outposts. They were escorted by an armed man who villagers assumed to be a security guard. The settlers were armed with “wooden sticks and knives”, while the guard was “wearing a black uniform and had an M16 rifle.”

According to a villager, “three of the five settlers attacked the 14-year-old boy as he picked olives, hitting him with their wooden sticks on his face and back.” When some volunteers rushed to help the child, the settlers’ guard opened fire in the air. In total, two Palestinians and three Israeli volunteers were injured by the settlers during the incident. The child, who had received a blow to the head and passed out, was taken to hospital by ambulance.

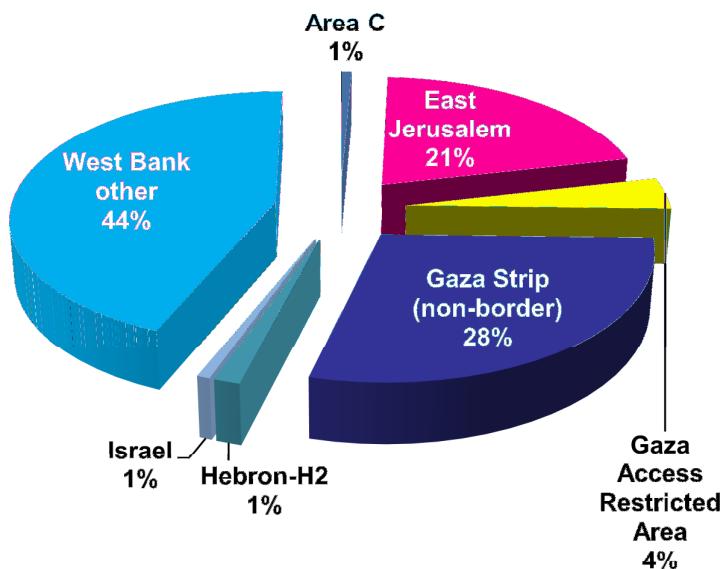
Sources: DCI & OCHA. Picture: UNICEF/Halawani

RECRUITMENT AND USE OF CHILDREN BY ARMED FORCES AND GROUPS

One case of child recruitment was documented on 11 August, when a 17-year-old boy was killed because the explosives he was carrying for the Hamas military wing, Izz al-Din Al Qassam Brigades, detonated. He was reportedly performing surveillance tasks in Rafah, south Gaza.

In another case, on 11 September, the ISF reportedly attempted to recruit a 17-year-old boy from Gaza City when he was arrested. He was reportedly offered money to become an informer. He was subsequently released.

2011 Killing and Injuries by Region



ARREST AND DETENTION

At the end of September 2011, 164 Palestinian boys between the ages of 12 to 17 years (including 35 between the ages of 12 and 15 years) were in Israeli detention for alleged security violations, a decrease by 38 in the number of children detained since the last reporting period. No children are currently held in administrative detention. Eight children from the West Bank were reported as transferred to prisons inside Israel in contravention of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

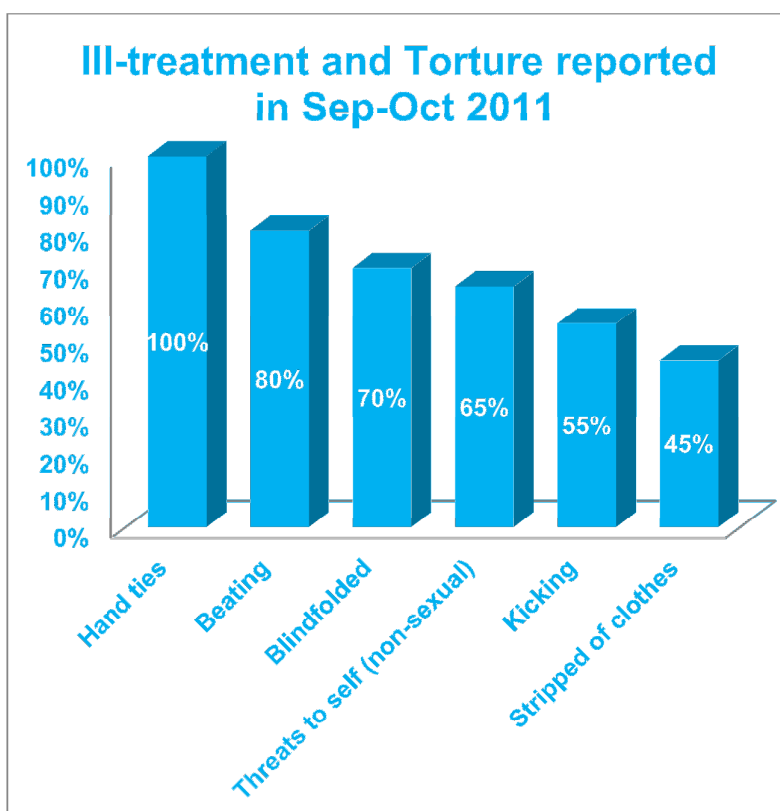
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2010	318	343	342	335	305	291	284	286	269	256	228	213
2011	222	221	226	220	211	209	202	180	164	150		

Source: DCI Palestine, Detention Bulletin, September 2011.

ILL-TREATMENT AND TORTURE

In relation to the cases of detention mentioned above, **twenty cases of ill-treatment and acts tantamount to torture** of Palestinian boys aged 14 to 17 years were documented out of a sample of twenty sworn affidavits.

The cases involved the use of hand-ties (20 instances), beatings (16), blindfolding (14), threats of violence (13), kicking (11), and stripping of clothes (9). In all instances where affidavits were taken children reported ill-treatment or acts tantamount to torture by the Israeli army and police.



EDUCATION-RELATED VIOLATIONS

During the reporting period **five incidents of attacks on schools** were reported in the West Bank and **one in Israel**. In one instance, **settlers threw stones** and empty bottles at the Qurdoba Elementary School in the Hebron Old City and attempted to break in. The **settlers assaulted teachers** who had intervened to prevent the attack. **Israeli soldiers who observed the attack did not intervene** to stop the assault or apprehend suspects. In four cases, **Israeli authorities issued stop-work or demolition orders** and an order for the forced closure of educational institutions in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, affecting more than 220 students.

In Israel, on 29 October, a **rocket launched by Islamic Jihad fighters hit a school in Ashdod**, landing in an empty classroom. No injuries were reported.

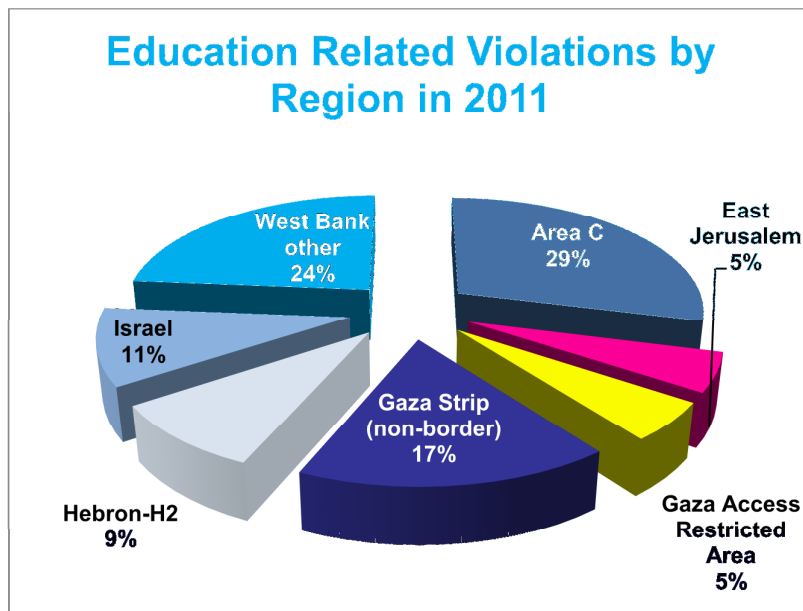
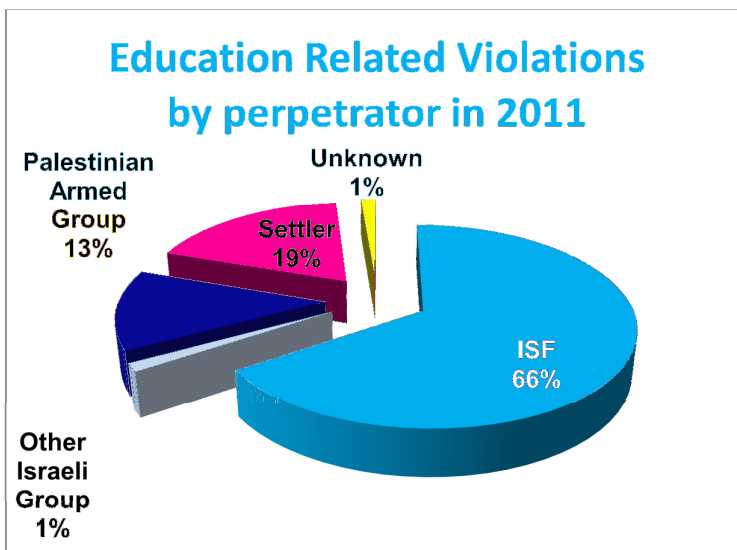
Since the beginning of 2011, 39 attacks against schools were reported affecting 6,587 students - **21 in the West Bank, 13 in Gaza and five in Israel**. Three attacks were perpetrated by **Israeli Settlers**, 29 by **Israeli Security Forces** and 7 by **Palestinian Armed Groups**. This marks an 85 per cent increase compared to the same period of 2010, when 21 incidents were reported. Five attacks were reported in Israel since the beginning of the year compared to one in 2010.

Eleven incidents of **denial of access to education** were documented; **nine were reported in the West Bank and two in Israel**. In the West Bank, **six incidents occurred in Hebron**, including four in the old city and two in At-Tuwani village (South Hebron hills).

In one instance, **in the old city of Hebron, soldiers assaulted and injured five school children** (four girls and one boy, between 11-15 years old) on their way to the Qurdoba school because they refused to go through the metal detectors at the permanent military checkpoint known as checkpoint no. 56 and asked to use the humanitarian corridor (a side gate) that is normally open for teachers and school children. In another instance, **teachers were prevented from reaching the school**

as they refused to go through the metal detectors (see story on page 1). At Twani, school children were harassed by settlers in cars. The military escort accompanying the children was not walking close enough to protect them from the settlers.

On 23 September, clashes took place between Palestinians and ISF in the Shu'fat Refugee Camp in East Jerusalem. **The ISF used 'skunk water' to disperse the protesters; some of the water was sprayed into the playground of the UNRWA Shu'fat Girls' School**. This caused the closure of the school for two days because of the unbearable odor of the 'skunk water'. UNRWA waited for the military to confirm previous statements that the 'skunk water' does not pose any health risk. Skunk water is a substance fired by ISF from water cannon. It leaves a n unbearable odor on whatever it touches, does not wash off easily and is said to linger on clothes for up to five years. Its composition has not been independently verified.



More than 170,000 Israeli children were kept out of schools for four days in a number of locations in the southern district (Ashdod, Ashkelon, Kiryat Gat and Be'er Sheva) to ensure their safety due to rockets launched from Gaza.

Since the beginning of 2011, 37 cases of denial of access to education were reported, 4 in Gaza, 30 in the West Bank and three in Israel. Among these cases, 22 were perpetrated by Israeli authorities, 11 were perpetrated by the Israeli Settlers and four by Palestinian Armed Groups. 41 cases were reported in 2010.

DENIAL OF HUMANITARIAN ACCESS TO HEALTH

Children in need of specialized medical care outside of Gaza continue to face delays and denials of access to health services. In September and October 2011, the Israeli District Liaison Office approved 654 out of 655 applications for children to cross Erez for medical treatment outside of Gaza. **26 applications were delayed and one denied.**

FORCED DISPLACEMENT

In September and October, **Israeli authorities demolished 85 Palestinian structures across the West Bank, including 31 homes.** As a result 132 people lost their homes, including 78 children. Another 1,344 people, including 630 children, were otherwise affected by the demolitions, which caused community displacement and threats to livelihood.

The total number of people displaced due to demolitions and settler violence in 2011 has surpassed the 1,000 mark. In one instance, on 31 October, Israeli forces carried out demolitions in two communities in the eastern Jerusalem periphery. As a result, 32 people, including 22 children, lost their homes and 31 people, including 19 children, were affected. This was the **first demolition in the Jerusalem periphery in 2011.**

There are reports of an Israeli Civil administration plan to **relocate the Bedouin population currently living in the West Bank Jerusalem periphery to a land located near a municipal waste landfill** in Abu Dis, reportedly in order to vacate the area for an expansion of the Ma'ale Adumin Israeli settlement, starting as early as January 2012.

The proposed relocation of the Palestinian Bedouins without the free and informed consent of the communities amounts to forced transfer of protected persons, in violation of international humanitarian law. International laws prohibits the forced transfer of civilians living under occupation, unless temporarily required for their own security or military necessity. According to the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in oPt, "the Israeli authorities' expulsion of the Bedouins would meet none of these conditions".

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