



barrier impacts on grazing and livestock

general barrier facts

- 1949 Armistice Line (Green Line): 320 km (excluding "No-Man's Land")
- Total planned Barrier length: 708 km
- Constructed: 438 km (61.8 per cent)
- Under construction: 58 km (8.2 per cent)

If completed according to the planned route, approximately 85 per cent of the Barrier will run inside the West Bank and effectively render about 9.4 per cent of its territory, including East Jerusalem and No-Man's Land, off-limits to West Bank Palestinians.

In conjunction with the gate and permit regime, the Barrier has already impeded access to East Jerusalem for the overwhelming majority of West Bank Palestinians.

Source: OCHA-oPt, December 2011

unrwa/bmu - arij joint environmental impact monitoring

Between June 2011 and June 2012 UNRWA's Barrier Monitoring Unit (BMU) and the Applied Research Institute Jerusalem (ARIJ) jointly researched the environmental impacts of the West Bank Barrier, the effects on Palestinian livelihoods, and the already-vulnerable Palestine refugee population. The survey targeted over 170 directly-affected communities¹ through focus group discussions with village council and municipality representatives, and farmers owning land behind the Barrier.

The West Bank enjoys 2.02 million dunums of rangeland. However, closures imposed by the Israeli authorities, including those due to the construction of the Barrier, have led to only 30.7 per cent of rangeland being accessible to Palestinians (Source: ARIJ 2012). This leads to overgrazing, a reduction in vegetation cover and grazing capacity, accelerated land degradation, and enhanced desertification processes.

The construction of the Barrier has therefore had a detrimental socio-economic impact on the rural communities that depend on agriculture and herding as a source of income, particularly those with lands now isolated behind the Barrier in a closed military area commonly referred to as the "Seam Zone".

As shepherds can no longer graze their animals in areas behind or close to the Barrier, 90 per cent of the surveyed communities² reported a decrease of up to 60 per cent in livestock numbers. They also reported a deterioration of the remaining rangeland due to overgrazing.

impacts on rural livelihoods

As West Bank grazing land is either inaccessible to Palestinians or overgrazed, rural households are increasingly unable to bear the high cost of buying commercial fodder as a replacement. Rural families are thus compelled to sell the majority of their livestock and endure a drop in their sales of dairy and meat, a vital source of income.

Herding has been an important form of traditional Palestinian livelihoods for centuries. The construction of the Barrier has seriously infringed on the ability of Palestinians to maintain and carry on their daily lives in accordance with this tradition.

Ar Ramadin is a settled Bedouin community located in the south of the Hebron governorate, with a population of 3,281 — 85 per cent of whom are Palestine refugees. In 2007, over half of the population depended on livestock trade for their income (Source: ARIJ 2009). Community shepherds would graze their animals on their lands near the Eshkolot settlement, but since 2009 the construction of the Barrier around the settlement has isolated 2,000 dunums of their land out of their reach. As a result, the community's livestock has decreased from 22,000 to 7,000-8,000 animals. Similarly, the village of Deir Samit in Hebron Governorate (population 6,237; 16 per cent refugees) lost land to the Barrier in 2004 and has endured losses in income due the impact of the Barrier on their herding practices.

¹ According to criteria applied by UNRWA's Barrier Monitoring Unit, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and various other organisations. The directly-impacted communities list includes communities whose lands have been isolated by the Barrier and communities located between the Barrier and the Green Line, excluding most within the Israeli-defined Jerusalem municipal area (May 2012).

² Results are based on data from 144 Barrier-affected communities. Seam Zone communities and Bedouin communities in the Jerusalem area were excluded as they are treated as separate categories.

case study - deir samit

Ibrahim Mohammed Ahmed Al Harub is a Palestine refugee displaced from his original home in 1948 and settled in the village of Deir Samit in Hebron governorate.

"Before 1948 we lived in Asbur across the Green Line from Deir Samit. Back then we had goats, cows and sheep, and we had houses there. In 1948 we were all driven from our homes and lost most of our lands. All the people left the area and settled in Deir Samit."

In 2004, construction of the Barrier in the Hebron area cut Palestinian farmers off from their agricultural land and pastures.

"Before the Barrier we had around 100 sheep and goats. They gave birth and we sold their young. They produced milk, yoghurt and butter and we sold half of it for income. We let them live and



we lived. When they built the Barrier we lost access to pastures so we could not let the sheep graze and we had to sell them. Now I have nothing left. It is a bad situation. All I have are four goats that I need to sell. But what can we do? We can't do anything."

In central and northern West Bank, agriculture is a major source of income supplemented with the herding of livestock for dairy and meat production. Livestock is either grazed on pastures or on cultivated land after the harvest. As farmers are not permitted to bring livestock through agricultural gates that provide occasional access to land isolated in the "Seam Zone", many Barrier-affected communities have reported a substantial decrease in livestock numbers.

Zabda is a village in the Jenin governorate with a population of 944, ten per cent of whom are Palestine refugees. Since 2004, the construction of the Barrier in the Jenin area has isolated the community's land in the "Seam Zone" within the Barta'a enclave. Due to the loss of rangeland, the community reported a dramatic

reduction in their livestock from 1,200 to 100 heads. Households that used to sell their excess dairy and meat products in the town of Jenin are now forced to buy these products instead. Not only have they lost a source of income, they have also increased their expenditures, and their livelihoods have become less sustainable.

The community of Beit Ur al Faqua in the Ramallah governorate, with a population of 864 (31 per cent of whom are Palestine refugees), has reported an 80 per cent drop in its livestock numbers due to the isolation of community land behind the Barrier. This has left insufficient remaining land to sustain their herds. Farmers must now graze their animals on land originally foreseen to be agricultural land, which has in turn affected the community's agricultural productivity and negatively impacted farmers' income.



bedouin communities impacted by the barrier

Bedouin communities in the West Bank, a large majority of whom are UNRWA-registered refugees, rely heavily on their livestock for meat and dairy products as a source of income. Many of these Bedouin communities have been particularly impacted by the construction of the Barrier. Having no formal land ownership rights, it has been almost impossible for the majority of Bedouin communities to gain access to their land that is isolated by the Barrier.

Bedouin communities stranded on the "Jerusalem" side of the Barrier face acute hardship as they have no access to alternative grazing land in the rest of the West Bank. These communities have witnessed a devastating decline in their livestock due to limited access to rangeland and the high cost of commercial fodder as a replacement. This seriously threatens their traditional ways of life and livelihood.



UNRWA established the Barrier Monitoring Unit (BMU) in 2010, due to the particular vulnerability of the Palestine refugee population affected by the Barrier and its associated gate and permit regime. The primary objective of the BMU is to research and better document the effects of the Barrier on Palestinian communities. www.unrwa.org/bmu



The Applied Research Institute Jerusalem (ARIJ) represents 20 years of combined organisational experience in the Palestinian Territory in the fields of economic, social, management of natural resources, water management, sustainable agriculture and political dynamics of development in the area. www.arij.org



united nations relief and works agency
for palestine refugees in the near east

www.unrwa.org

UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and is mandated to provide assistance and protection to a population of some 5 million registered Palestine refugees. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and the Gaza Strip to achieve their full potential in human development, pending a just solution to their plight. UNRWA's services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, microfinance and emergency assistance. UNRWA is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions.