Humanitarian Bulletin
occupied Palestinian territory

DECEMBER 2017

OCHA


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Clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinians in the context of a demonstration in protest of the US announcement regarding Jerusalem, Bethlehem city, December 2017.

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HIGHLIGHTS

- The number of Palestinians allowed to move in and out of Gaza declined by almost 50 per cent in 2017 compared with 2016.
- High level of demolition of Palestinian structures in East Jerusalem in 2017 in contrast to significant decline in Area C.
- 2.5 million Palestinians across the oPt in need of humanitarian assistance and protection in 2018.

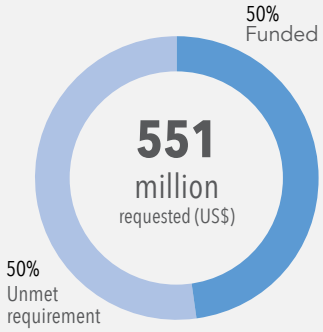
DECEMBER FIGURES

Palestinian killed (direct conflict)	4
Palestinian injured (direct conflict)	4,580
Israelis killed (direct conflict)	0
Israelis injured (direct conflict)	10
Structures demolished in the West Bank	9
People displaced in the West Bank	10

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PLAN 2017

551 million
requested (US$)

50% funded



OVERVIEW

Since the announcement, on 6 December 2017, of the United States' recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, widespread demonstrations by Palestinians have resulted in clashes with Israeli forces across the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt). In the West Bank, as of 31 December, three Palestinians have been killed and 3,590 injured. The majority of injuries (almost 70 per cent) were due to tear gas inhalation requiring medical treatment, followed by rubber bullets and live ammunition.

In the Gaza Strip, there have been regular demonstrations next to the perimeter fence, involving stone-throwing at Israeli forces deployed on the Israeli side, who have fired live ammunition, rubber bullets and tear gas canisters at protesters. Eleven Palestinians, of whom nine were civilians, have been killed by Israeli forces and 959 other civilians have been injured during these incidents. In response to the level of casualties in Gaza, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights raised "serious concerns as to whether the force used by Israeli forces was properly calibrated to the threat."[1] Palestinian armed factions have also regularly fired rockets and mortars towards southern Israel, with a minority landing in Israel, resulting in limited property damage but no casualities. Following this, Israel has launched a series of airstrikes targeting military sites in Gaza, which have killed three Palestinians, including one civilian, and injured 21 others.

The escalation in Gaza is of particular concern given the deteriorating humanitarian situation there. An item in this month's Humanitarian Bulletin describes how the exit of Palestinians in Gaza through the Israeli-controlled Erez crossing declined by almost 50 per cent in 2017 compared to 2016. The number of businesspeople who hold valid trader permits has declined by 85 per cent compared to late 2015. Those businesses affected employed a significant number of workers in the depressed Gaza economy; their inability to leave Gaza to meet professionally with their Israeli counterparts may force many to shut down entirely.

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Palestinian access via Rafah, the Egyptian-controlled crossing also declined during the year, from an already extremely low level. On 1 November, as part of the Palestinian reconciliation agreement reached on 12 October, the Hamas authorities handed over control of the Gaza side of the Erez, Kerem Shalom and Rafah crossings to the Palestinian Authority (PA). However, this development has had no apparent impact on the volume of Palestinians crossing from Gaza through the Israeli- and Egyptian-controlled checkpoints.

The deterioration in access from Gaza must be seen in the context of the decade-long blockade, compounded by three devastating escalations of hostilities and the internal Palestinian divide, which in 2017 resulted in long power cuts, with significant impact on daily life and service provision for 2 million people. Since the 12 October signing of the intra-Palestinian reconciliation agreement, there has yet to be any significant improvement in the humanitarian situation. The Palestinian Authority's decision in early January to resume payment for 50 megawatts of electricity purchased from Israel, reduced since June 2017, improved the humanitarian situation. However, this needs to be followed by additional steps to improve the humanitarian situation and prevent further de-stabilization.

The deterioration in access from Gaza must be seen in the context of the decade-long blockade, compounded by three devastating escalations of hostilities and the internal Palestinian divide

Another item in this month's Bulletin concerns the 2018 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), which was completed in December 2017. About 2.5 million Palestinians across the oPt, or roughly half of the population, are in need of humanitarian assistance and protection, according to the HNO. Of those, 1.9 million, identified as the most vulnerable, will be targeted in 2018 by a range of interventions outlined in the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), for a total cost of US$ 539.7 million. The bulk of the financial requirements (75 per cent) will cover the provision of humanitarian assistance in Gaza.

The final item in this month's Humanitarian Bulletin concerns the high levels of Palestinian demolitions in East Jerusalem, despite a reduction in the rest of the West Bank, which is one of a range of Israeli policies that creates a coercive environment for Palestinian residents of the city. In 2017, the Israeli authorities demolished 142 structures in East Jerusalem due to the lack of building permits, the second largest number of demolitions since 2000. In addition to demolitions implemented, the threats of demolition to homes and other structures continue. Recently, two instances of multiple demolition orders have been reported in two East Jerusalem localities affected by the Barrier, Kafr 'Aqab and Sur Bahir.

About 70 per cent of all Palestinian injuries in the oPt during 2017 occurred during protests and clashes, following developments related to Jerusalem

The ongoing unrest throughout the oPt is a reminder of the sensitivity of the issue of Jerusalem: about 70 per cent of all Palestinian injuries in the oPt during 2017 occurred during protests and clashes, following developments related to Jerusalem – the installation of metal detectors at the entrance of the Haram ash Sharif/Temple Mount in July, and the recent announcement by the United States. *I*n his most recent briefing to the Security Council, Special Coordinator Mladenov declared that "the United Nations maintains the view that Jerusalem is a final status issue that must be resolved through direct negotiations between the two parties on the basis of the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions taking into account the legitimate concerns of both the Palestinian and the Israeli sides."

PALESTINIAN ACCESS FROM GAZA STRIP DECLINED SHARPLY IN 2017

The number of Palestinians allowed to move in and out of Gaza declined significantly in 2017 compared with 2016. At the Erez crossing, movement via Israel has been in decline since mid-2016. Palestinian access via Rafah, the Egyptian-controlled crossing, also declined during the year from an already extremely low level. As the internal Palestinian divide escalated, access for medical purposes was also restricted during most of 2017 by the PA Ministry of Health, which delayed or suspended payments for patients referred for medical treatment outside Gaza.

These developments have exacerbated the isolation of Gaza from the remainder of the oPt and the outside world, further limiting access to medical treatment unavailable in Gaza, to higher education, to family and social life, and to employment and economic opportunities as well as impeding the realization of a range of human rights. The movement of national staff employed by the UN and international NGOs was also restricted in 2017 and impeded the running of humanitarian operations.

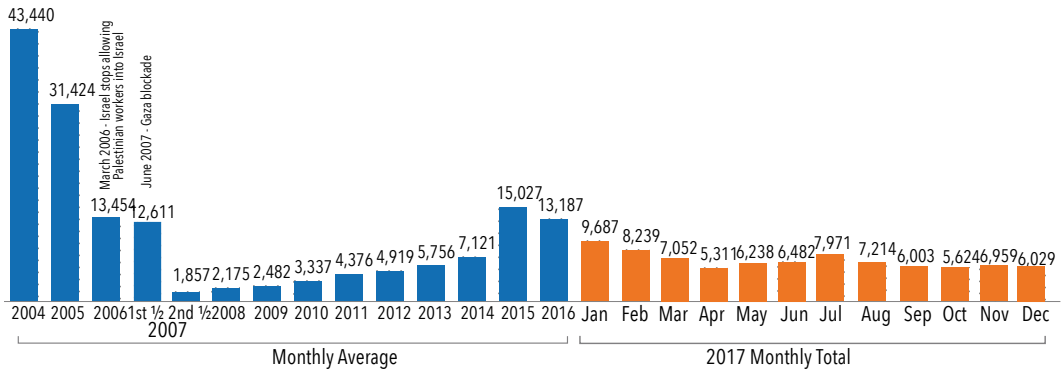
The exit of Palestinians from Gaza through the Israeli-controlled Erez crossing declined by almost 50 per cent in 2017 compared with 2016

Following the Palestinian reconciliation agreement signed on 12 October, the Hamas authorities handed over control of the Gaza side of the Erez, Kerem Shalom and Rafah crossings to the Palestinian Authority (PA) on November 1, and dismantled the Hamas-run *Arba' Arba'* checkpoint that controlled access to the Erez crossing. To date, this development has had no apparent impact on the passage of Palestinians from Gaza through the Israeli- and Egyptian-controlled crossings.

Significant decline in movement through Erez checkpoint

The exit of Palestinians from Gaza through the Israeli-controlled Erez crossing declined by almost 50 per cent in 2017 compared with 2016: on average, there were about 7,000 exits per month (as of 30 November), down from 13,200 exits per month in 2016. Prior to the start of the second Intifada in 2000, there were over half a million exits per month from Gaza, primarily for work in Israel. Work permits for Palestinians from Gaza have since been dramatically reduced and were totally suspended from 2006.

EREZ: CROSSINGS INTO ISRAEL



This report was prepared by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in collaboration with humanitarian partners.

Other restrictions introduced by the Israel authorities in 2017 included additional prohibitions on items carried by Palestinians leaving Gaza via Erez, primarily electronic devices (other than mobile phones), toiletries and food items. In May 2017, the processing time for 'non-urgent' permit applications to leave Gaza was extended from 23 to 50-70 working days, not including Fridays, Saturdays or other holidays.

The Erez crossing is vitally important for Palestinian access as it controls the movement of people between Gaza and the West Bank. Under a policy implemented since the beginning of the second Intifada in September 2000, and tightened after June 2007 following the takeover of Gaza by Hamas, only people belonging to specific Israeli-defined categories are eligible for an exit permit, subject to a security check. In recent years, these categories have included patients referred for medical treatment outside Gaza and their companions; traders; staff of international organizations; and exceptional humanitarian cases.

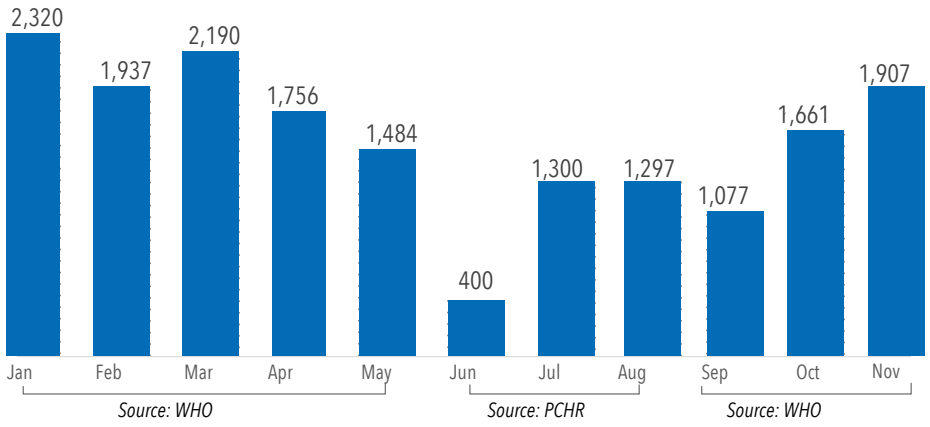
By the end of November 2017, the approval rate for permit applications by Palestinian patients to travel via Erez was 54 per cent, down from 62 per cent in 2016

Referral of patients remains highly restricted

By the end of November 2017, the approval rate for permit applications by Palestinian patients to travel via Erez was 54 per cent, down from 62 per cent in 2016. This is the lowest approval rate since 2006 when the World Health Organization (WHO) began monitoring patient access from Gaza. The decline is occurring alongside a gradual increase in the absolute number of referrals and related permit applications to West Bank hospitals in the wake of stricter constraints via the Rafah crossing.

Most unsuccessful applications in 2017 were delayed, meaning that they were not processed in time rather than rejected on security grounds, i.e. no response was received by the date of the hospital appointment, requiring patients to re-schedule the missed appointment and submit another permit application. In situations such as cancer treatment, delays can have life-threatening implications for patient health. According to

FINANCIAL APPROVALS OF MEDICAL REFERRALS (# OF PATIENTS)*



** Financial approvals are granted by the West Bank-based Ministry of Health*

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PERMIT TO ISRAEL REVOKED AFTER 45 YEARS

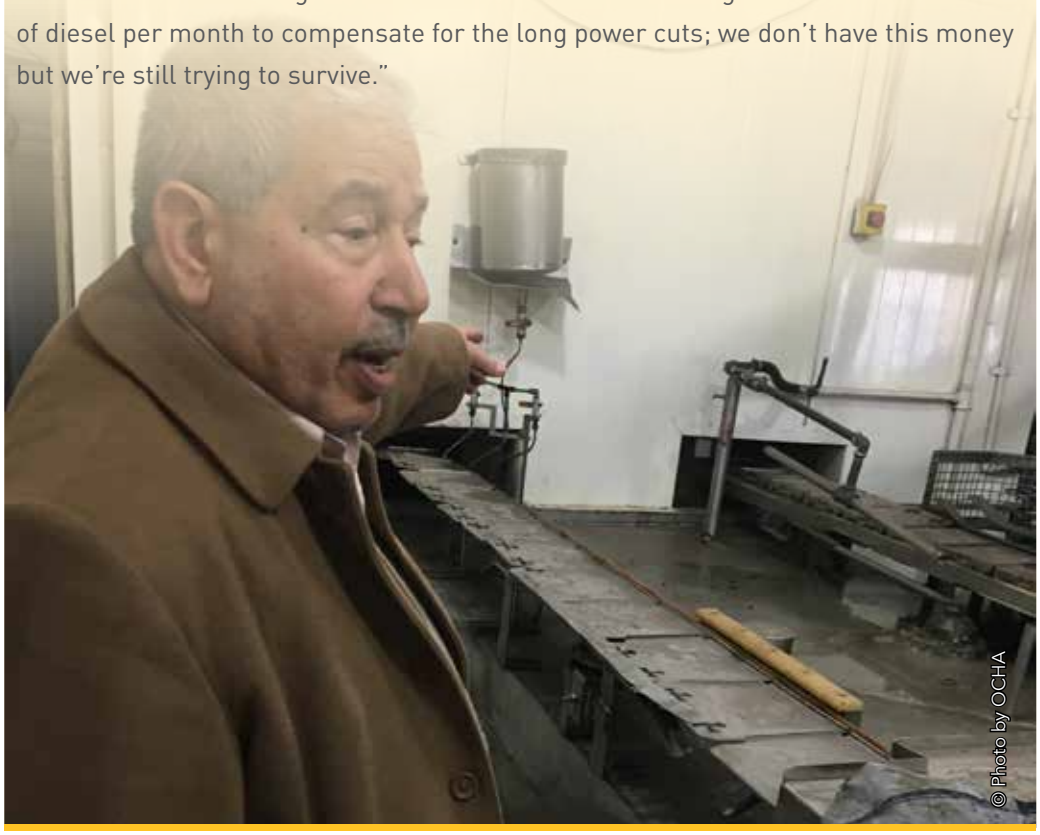
"My business was one of the best in Gaza but now we barely have enough work to stay open", explained Ghazi Musht'ha, a pharmacist and the owner of an ice-cream factory. Musht'ha has been working in this industry for more than 45 years. He used to own two ice-cream factories in Gaza City and the former Erez Industrial Zone, which was dismantled by Israel in the 2005 'disengagement'.

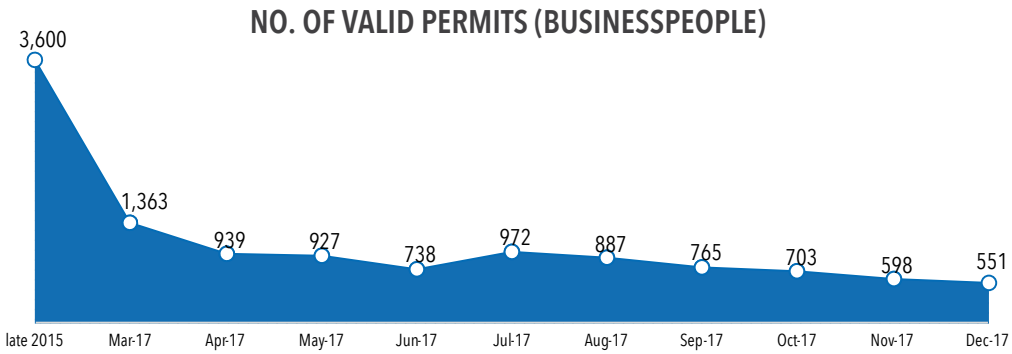
"For more than 45 years I had almost undisrupted access to Israel and West Bank, and my Israeli exit permit was never denied. I developed very good business relations with my Israeli counterparts and was the Gaza agent for an Israeli medical company for 28 years. Our ice-cream products were very competitive and were even kosher to penetrate the Israeli market, where I used to sell up to 95 per cent of our production.

"In 2016, my permit was denied for security reasons and since then I haven't been able to travel outside Gaza, although I only used to travel for business and not for personal purposes. In the past, I used to employ up to 120 staff but now I only have 50 to 60 people. They don't work on a daily basis as our production capacity has been reduced from 20 tons in 2005 to only one. I've lost a lot since 2005 and still have debts I am unable to collect from the Israeli agents.

"Electricity is also a huge challenge: this summer we couldn't produce ice-cream at all. Also, we don't have adequate access to spare parts, which we used to import from the US. Now we cannot afford spare parts. I tried to import an electricity generator but was not allowed to bring it into Gaza. We consume about eight to 10 thousand litres of diesel per month to compensate for the long power cuts; we don't have this money but we're still trying to survive."

In 2016, my permit was denied for security reasons and since then I haven't been able to travel outside Gaza





new Israeli guidelines effective from May 2017, patients are required to submit non-urgent applications at least 20 working days prior to the date of their hospital appointment, doubling the time required previously.

As of December 2017, there were only 551 valid trader permits, a decline of 85 per cent compared with an average of 3,600 permits in late 2015

Slow processing of requests for financial approval by the Palestinian Ministry of Health in Ramallah also impeded patient referral from Gaza, in the context of a worsening of the internal Palestinian divide. In recent months the number of financial coverage documents issued to patients has increased but has still not reached pre-April 2017 levels.[2]

Sharp decrease in permits for businesspeople

This year's downward trend was particularly pronounced for businesspeople, for whom permit rejections have increased dramatically since mid-2016. According to the Palestinian Civil Affairs Committee, as of December 2017, there were only 551 valid trader permits, a decline of 85 per cent compared with an average of 3,600 permits in late 2015 (*see chart*).

Many of those now refused entry to Israel are prominent businesspeople in the furniture, garment, food processing, agriculture, tile manufacturing and other industries. These sectors once employed a significant number of workers in the depressed Gaza economy and enjoyed long-standing ties with their counterparts in Israel, the West Bank and internationally. The decade-long blockade, compounded by three devastating escalations of hostilities and the internal Palestinian divide, has eroded coping capacities and this latest setback may force many businesses to shut down entirely.

Deterioration in access by humanitarian staff

Like all Palestinians, national staff employed by the UN or international NGOs must obtain a permit to exit Gaza via Erez. The movement of humanitarian personnel to and from Gaza has been subjected to increased constraints that hamper the ability of staff to properly supervise and coordinate operations and training. In September 2017, the Israeli authorities informed agencies that the processing time for long-term permits will be 55 working days, and 70 for travel abroad. This is a change from the 14 days required at the beginning of 2017, subsequently extended to 26 days before this latest announcement. According to the Israeli authorities, this is part of a stricter vetting process by Israel's security services. On the other hand, the maximum validity of the security clearance has been extended from six to nine months.

STILL WAITING AT THE RAFAH CROSSING

M.N., a 40-year-old mother-of-four, was participating in a sit-in organized at the gate of the Rafah crossing by students, patients, separated spouses and other humanitarian cases to protest against the denial of their right to travel.

In the 2014 hostilities M.N. lost 24 members of her extended family, including her three-year-old child. Her daughter Yasmeen, now 13, was injured and has since developed diabetes with serious complications, including heart dysfunction. "As Yasmeen is regularly admitted to the intensive care unit (ICU) and cannot get proper treatment in Gaza, we decided to find her treatment outside the Strip", M.N. explained.

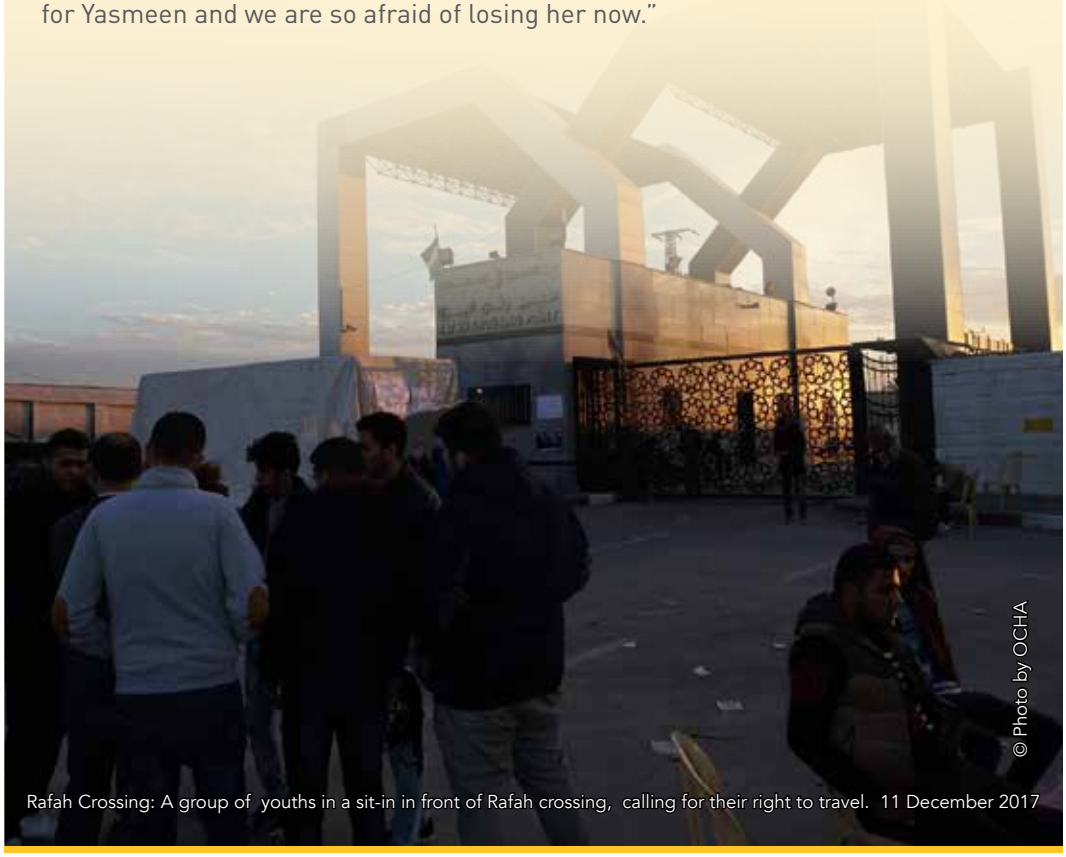
"Two years ago, we tried to have Yasmeen treated in a West Bank hospital but our permit applications were denied for reasons never explained to us. We then decided to treat Yasmeen aboard and luckily found someone who agreed to help us cover some of the expenses, but the Rafah crossing was always closed.

"We registered at the travellers' registration office and our names were approved. Unfortunately Yasmeen was admitted to the ICU during this period and we couldn't leave Gaza. In February 2016 we registered again but our names weren't approved on the travellers' list until the last opening of the crossing in November 2017. We were informed that our bus was scheduled to be the first to pass on a specific day, but the evening before, a new list of travellers was approved, although their names weren't registered at the registration office.

"These people had paid a large amount of money to certain bodies and busloads of them crossed, but our bus didn't. My husband tried to facilitate our travel through Rafah but he was asked to pay around $3000 for each of us. That's a large amount of money that we can't afford. Anyway, I'm not willing to spend the travel expenses we saved on bribes.

It's such a difficult situation we are facing. It took us up to two years to find a sponsor for Yasmeen and we are so afraid of losing her now."

We tried to have Yasmeen treated in a West Bank hospital but our permit applications were denied for reasons never explained to us.



Rafah Crossing: A group of youths in a sit-in in front of Rafah crossing, calling for their right to travel. 11 December 2017

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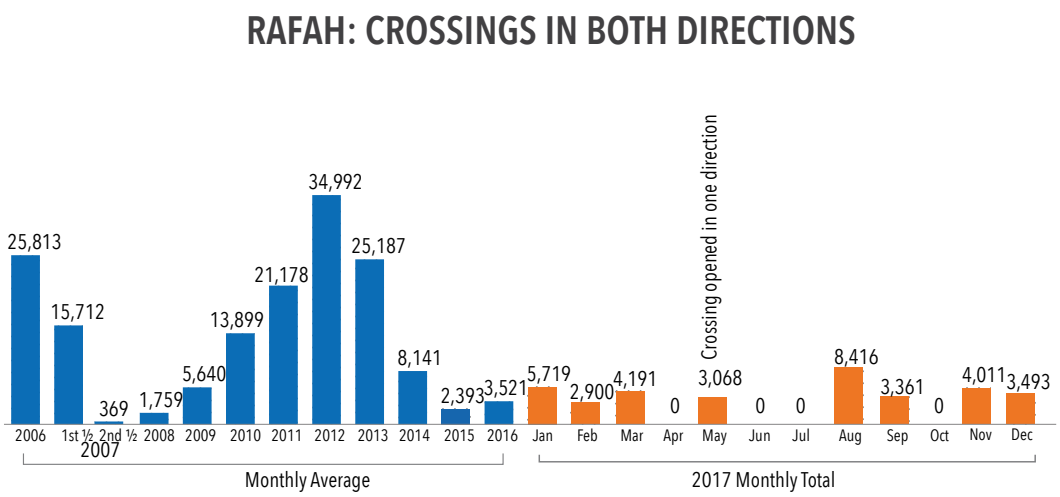
Further decrease in the opening of the Rafah crossing

Until 2013, the Rafah crossing with Egypt was the main crossing point used by Palestinians in Gaza, given the broad restrictions on the Israeli-controlled crossings. Rafah has been largely closed, including for humanitarian assistance, since October 2014, following attacks against Egyptian forces in the Sinai. As with Erez, only specific categories, including patients, students and foreign visa holders, can register on a waiting list held by the authorities in Gaza pending reopening of the crossing. At present, over 20,000 people are registered.

In 2017, the Egyptian-controlled Rafah crossing opened only on exceptional occasions for a total of 36 days compared with 44 days in 2016: 17,000 exits were recorded compared with 26,000 in 2016 and 151,000 in 2013.

In 2017, only 1,222 patients exited via Rafah for medical treatment. Prior to the closure of the crossing in 2014, a monthly average of 4,000 people crossed Rafah for health-related reasons.

In 2017, the Egyptian-controlled Rafah crossing opened only on exceptional occasions for a total of 36 days compared with 44 days in 2016



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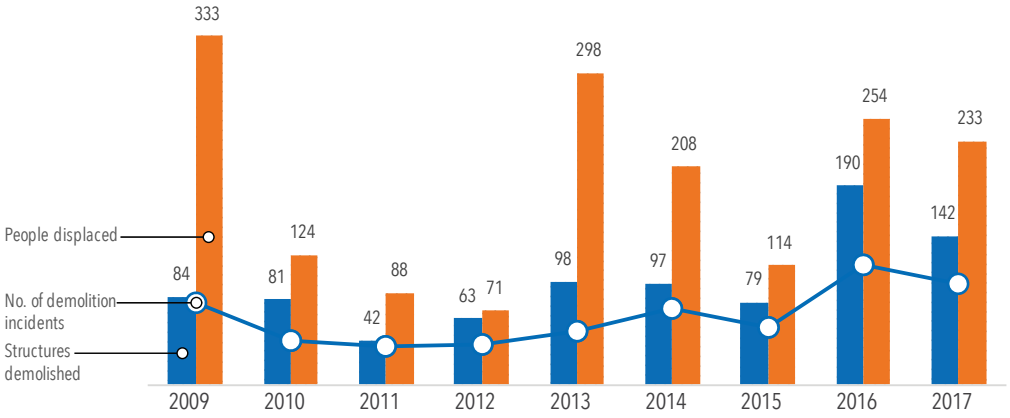
HIGH NUMBERS OF DEMOLITIONS: THE ONGOING THREATS OF DEMOLITION FOR PALESTINIAN RESIDENTS OF EAST JERUSALEM

Many Palestinians in East Jerusalem are subject to a coercive environment with the risk of forcible transfer due to Israeli policies such as home demolitions, forced evictions and revocation of residency status. As is the case in Area C, a restrictive and discriminatory planning regime makes it virtually impossible for Palestinians to obtain the requisite Israeli building permits: only 13 per cent of East Jerusalem is zoned for Palestinian construction and much of this is already built-up. Palestinians who build without permits face the risk of home demolition and other penalties, including costly fines, the payment of which does not exempt the owner from the requirement to obtain a building permit.[3] At least a third of all Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem lack an Israeli-issued building permit, potentially placing over 100,000 residents at risk of displacement.

In 2017, the Israeli authorities demolished 142 structures in East Jerusalem for lack of a building permit. This is the second largest number of demolitions since 2000, although lower than 2016 when 190 demolitions were recorded. This year's demolitions resulted in the displacement of 233 people, including 133 children, and otherwise affected another 631 people. The communities most heavily affected were Jabal Mukabbir, Beit Hanina, al Isawiya and Silwan which, combined, accounted for 72 per cent of demolition incidents and almost two-thirds of all structures demolished this year. Overall, East Jerusalem accounted for a third of all demolitions (142 out of 423) and more than a third of all people displaced (233 out of 664) in the West Bank in 2017. Around 23 per cent of the structures demolished in East Jerusalem were inhabited homes, while agricultural or livelihood-related structures accounted for some 35 per cent of all demolitions.

In 2017, the Israeli authorities demolished 142 structures in East Jerusalem for lack of a building permit

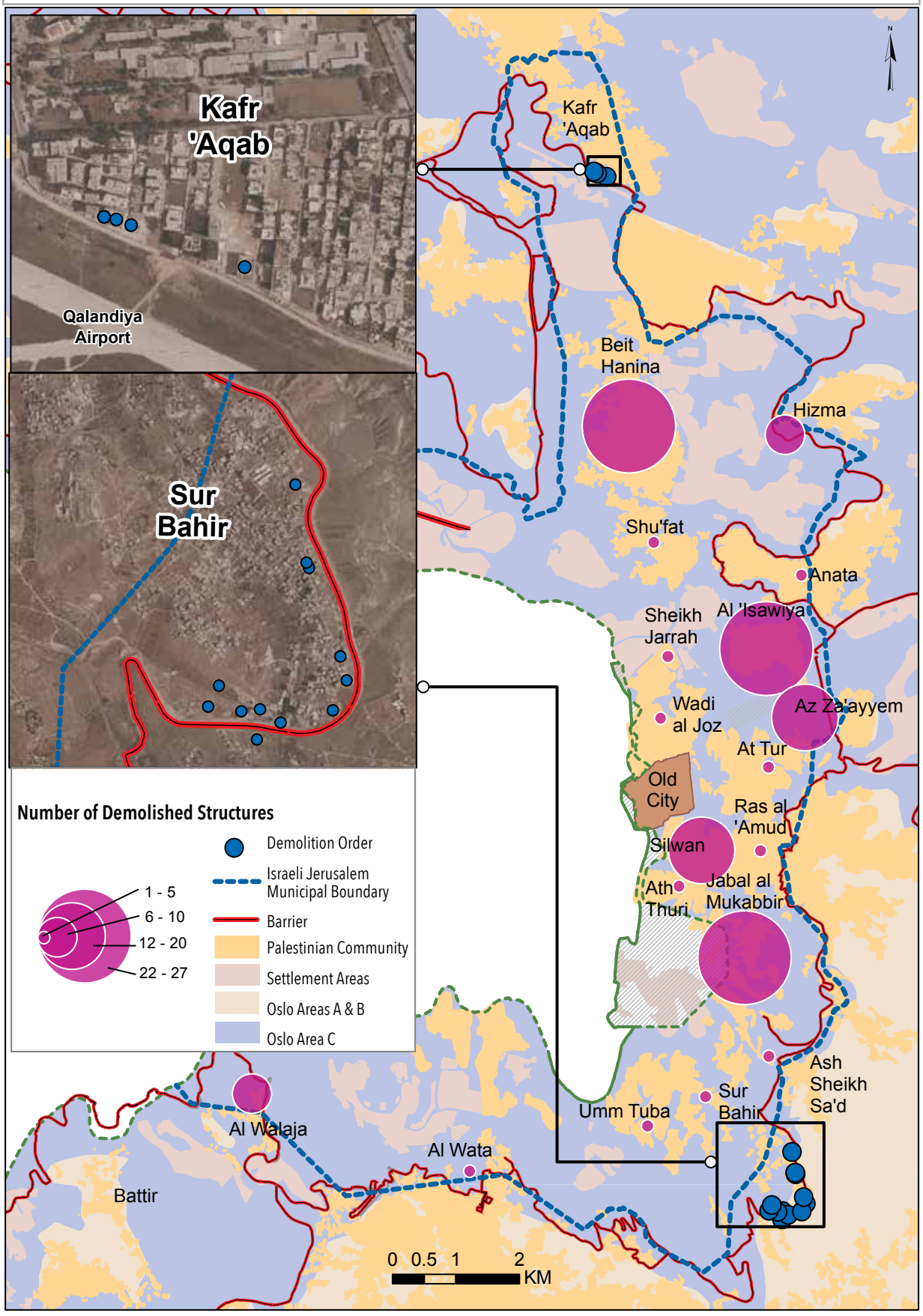
STRUCTURES TARGETED AND PEOPLE DISPLACED IN EAST JERUSALEM BY YEAR



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DEMOLISHED STRUCTURES IN EAST JERUSALEM IN 2017 INCLUDING KAFR 'AQAB AND SUR BAHIR

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In contrast, in Area C of the West Bank, the number of Palestinian-owned structures demolished and people displaced was the lowest since 2010. The 270 structures targeted represented almost half the number documented annually over the last seven years, while the 398 people displaced represented a decline of 40 per cent versus the yearly average in the seven-year period.

The threat remains of further demolitions of homes and other structures in East Jerusalem. Two instances of multiple demolition orders were reported recently in two East Jerusalem localities affected by the Barrier.

The Barrier's deviation from the Israeli-defined municipal boundary has physically separated some Palestinian localities in East Jerusalem from the urban centre.[4] Although residents retain their 'permanent resident' status and pay municipal taxes, these areas have been effectively abandoned by the municipality; basic facilities and services are either degraded or lacking entirely. There are multiple high-rise buildings, with structures springing up within metres of each other and no municipal oversight to ensure basic engineering and safety standards, including for earthquakes and other hazards. Such construction is primarily driven by the lack of municipal enforcement of regulations and penalties, alongside high demolition rates enforced on Palestinians in areas of Jerusalem 'within' the Barrier.

The Barrier's deviation from the Israeli-defined municipal boundary has physically separated some Palestinian localities in East Jerusalem from the urban centre



Demolition orders threaten high-rise buildings in Kafr 'Aqab

In Kafr 'Aqab, one of the East Jerusalem localities isolated from the city by the Barrier, no building permit has been issued since 2001.[5] According to the Israeli organization Ir Amim, it appears that no employees of the Building Inspection Division have entered the locality since 2005 and that, "as of 2012, the number of building starts in Kafr 'Aqab accounted for 83 per cent of the total number of building starts in the entire city of Jerusalem."[6]

The Jerusalem municipality is now planning to demolish four high-rise buildings in Kafr 'Aqab following the rejection by a Jerusalem District Court in mid-October 2017 of the residents' appeal against the demolition orders. The buildings targeted are located adjacent to the Barrier. The municipality plans to demolish them to build an eight-metre-wide public road proposed to alter traffic flows to and from Qalandiya checkpoint. Three of the buildings targeted contain over 60 apartments, which are still uninhabited. The fourth contains over twenty apartments, of which six are occupied. The demolitions would result in the displacement of 25 people, including 13 children. Dozens of families who have purchased apartments in these buildings would be affected, all of whom are Jerusalem ID holders. Most have reportedly invested their life savings to acquire the apartments and are still paying the owner in monthly instalments.

Sur Bahir land falls within the Israeli-defined municipal boundary but Sur Bahir also has land in Area A, Area B and Area C

On 5 September, municipality staff, accompanied by Israeli forces, entered the neighbourhood and served residents with judicial demolition orders. Since the Jerusalem District Court ruling on 15 October 2017, the Israeli army and other forces have entered the buildings on multiple occasions, including in the early hours, to photograph the contents and residents, including sleeping children. Neighbours are concerned that demolition of the buildings with explosives will cause collateral damage to adjacent buildings and filed an appeal. In late November, the Jerusalem District Court issued an order halting the demolition and ordering the municipality to respond by the end of January. A discussion on the matter is scheduled for 28 February.

Demolition orders in the 'buffer zone' in Sur Bahir

Sur Bahir (population 25,000) is a Palestinian neighbourhood in the southern part of East Jerusalem. The majority of its land falls within the Israeli-defined municipal boundary but Sur Bahir also has land in Area A (187 dunums), Area B (21 dunums) and Area C (691 dunums). Unlike Kafr 'Aqab, the entirety of the neighbourhood, including areas falling outside the Jerusalem municipal boundary, has been left on the 'Jerusalem side' of the Barrier.

Although all the residents hold Jerusalem IDs, the services and infrastructure available vary according to which jurisdiction they reside in. Historically, construction was concentrated in areas located within the Israeli-defined municipal boundary, but population growth and the inability to obtain building permits forced residents to expand into Areas A, B and C, where it is reportedly three times cheaper to buy an apartment than inside the municipal area.

This report was prepared by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in collaboration with humanitarian partners.

Residents who build in Area A must obtain construction permits from the PA, as stipulated in the Oslo Accords, through Dar Salah village council, located in Bethlehem governorate on the West Bank side of the Barrier. However, according to local community sources, about 70 per cent of structures in Area A have been constructed without PA building permits.

Palestinian families were recently served demolition orders related to 12 buildings or house foundations in the Wadi al Humos area of Sur Bahir. Eleven people, including seven children, reside in two apartments in one building. According to the Israeli authorities, all the buildings are located in an area which has been designated as a Barrier 'buffer zone' since 2010 (see map). The area of the buffer zone covers some 160 dunums in areas A and B, and around 200 dunums in Area C, according to local community sources, and includes 200 to 250 buildings.

AROUND US$540 MILLION REQUESTED TO RESPOND TO HUMANITARIAN NEEDS FOR 1.9 MILLION PALESTINIANS NEXT YEAR

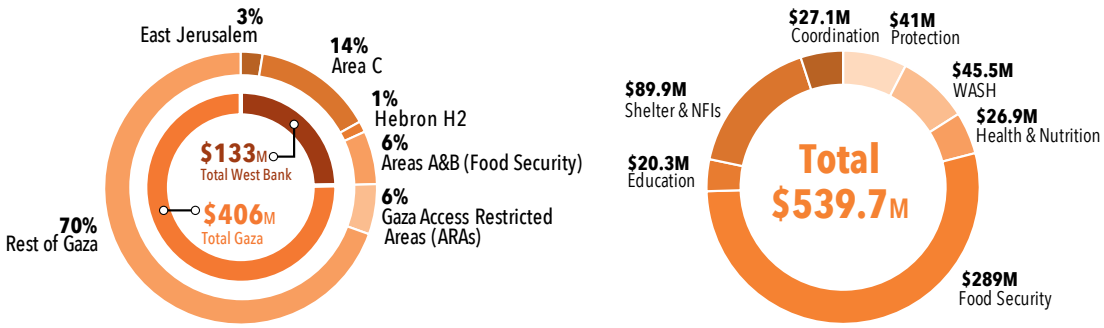
The major drivers of humanitarian vulnerability in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) remain unchanged

About 2.5 million Palestinians across the oPt, or roughly half of the population, were identified as in need of humanitarian assistance and protection according to the 2018 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) released in December 2017. Of those, 1.9 million, identified as the most vulnerable, will be targeted in 2018 by a range of interventions outlined in the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), at a total cost of $539.7 million, ten per cent lower than the 2017 request.

The vulnerability drivers

The major drivers of humanitarian vulnerability in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) remain unchanged. The protracted occupation of the oPt, which marked its fiftieth year in June 2017, is accompanied by the systematic denial of Palestinian rights and ongoing conflict.

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS (US$) BY GEOGRAPHICAL AREA AND BY CLUSTER



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In the Gaza Strip, ten years of blockade imposed by Israel after the violent takeover of Gaza by Hamas, plus recurrent outbreaks of hostilities, have eroded basic infrastructure, service delivery, livelihoods and coping mechanisms. An intra-Palestinian political divide between authorities in Ramallah and Gaza has exacerbated the dire humanitarian conditions in Gaza, with the ten-year crisis deepening in 2017 following the imposition of measures affecting civil service allowances, electricity supplies and medical payments by the PA. While intra-Palestinian reconciliation discussions accelerated in late 2017 and show promise, talks have yet to translate into any improvement in the humanitarian situation.

In the West Bank, the prolonged occupation, continuing settlement expansion, and the destruction of homes and livelihoods, remain major sources of frustration and conflict, and pose a heightened risk of forcible transfer for many Palestinians. A pervasive crisis of accountability exists as there are no effective remedies for the vast majority of alleged violations of international law. In this protracted oPt crisis, the drivers of vulnerability are linked to a stunted economy, fragmentation, and limited opportunities for growth and development across the oPt, plus de-development in Gaza. The root causes of drivers of vulnerability are political and require engagement beyond a purely humanitarian response to be resolved.

The HRP for 2018 comprises 240 projects, of which 31 per cent will be implemented by national NGOs and a further 47 per cent will be implemented in partnership with national NGOs

Strategic objectives and interventions

In early 2017, the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) embarked on a multi-year plan for the period 2018-2020. The unique context in the oPt offers both an opportunity and an interest in developing a longer-term strategy to address the protracted and chronic humanitarian impact of the Israeli occupation and the intra-Palestinian political divide.[7] The three strategic objectives for all interventions in the coming three years are: protecting the rights of Palestinians living under occupation in accordance with international law, with duty-bearers held increasingly to account; providing access to basic services for those who are vulnerable; and supporting the ability of Palestinians to cope with, and overcome, a protracted crisis while more sustainable solutions are sought.

The HRP for 2018 comprises 240 projects, of which 31 per cent will be implemented by national NGOs and a further 47 per cent will be implemented in partnership with national NGOs. As in previous years, humanitarian operations in 2018 focus on Area C, the Israeli-controlled area of Hebron city (H2) and East Jerusalem in the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip.

The bulk of the financial requirements (75 per cent) will cover the provision of humanitarian assistance to Palestinians in Gaza, where conditions deteriorated significantly in 2017 due to a deepening of the internal Palestinian political divide and the chronic energy crisis in an already fragile humanitarian context following ten years of Israeli blockade, internal divisions and recurrent hostilities.

Approximately 54 per cent of the funding requested ($289 million) is to provide food assistance to 1.6 million Palestinians who are moderately to severely food insecure. Another 17 per cent ($89.9 million) targets ongoing shelter needs, while the remaining 29 per cent will address a range of projects in protection, water, sanitation and hygiene, health and education.

ENDNOTES

1. http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=22550&LangID=E
2. WHO monthly reports on referral of patients from the Gaza Strip, October 2017. http://www.emro.who.int/pse/publications-who/monthly-referral-reports.html
3. Between 2000 and 2009, the Jerusalem Municipality collected an average of NIS 20.8 million per year (US$5.8 million) in these fines. Source: For 2004 - 2008, see ICAHD data sheet on East Jerusalem demolitions: http://icahd.org.dolphin.nethost.co.il/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/East-Jerusalem-english.pdf. Data for 2000 - 2003 and 2009 provided by Meir Margalit. For more details on fines and other penalties, see Margalit, No Place Like Home, pp. 10-12.
4. The localities primarily affected are Kafr 'Aqab; the Shufat ridge comprising Shufat camp, and part of Anata; Ras Khamis; Ras Shihadeh; Dahiyat as Salaam; Qalandiya village; part of Hizma; Ash Shayah of As Sawahira Ash Sharqiya; Bir Ona; and part of al Walaja in the Bethlehem area. Estimates of the population in these areas range from 55,000 to 120,000 -160,000 residents, although the ratio of East Jerusalem residents to West Bank ID holders is not known. See East Jerusalem Palestinian localities behind the Barrier, OCHA Humanitarian Bulletin, July 2016.
5. Munir Zagheir, chairman of the Kafr 'Aqab Residents Committee quoted in Nir Hasson, 'In Rare Move, Israel to Demolish Five Palestinian Residential Buildings Behind Separation Barrier' Ha'aretz, 28 October 2017.
6. Ir Amim, "Displaced in their own city", pp. 46, 44. As of the beginning of 2013, some 1,282 new apartments were nearing completion, all in high-rise buildings.
7. The decision to adopt a multi-year approach was taken following several months of consultations and consideration by stakeholders of different options for multi-year planning and their applicability to the oPt context. In September 2017, the humanitarian community came together in HRP workshops held in Ramallah and Gaza to define the strategic objectives that will guide the multi-year humanitarian interventions. The 2018 projects were submitted by cluster partners and vetted by the clusters in October and November 2017.