

A Palestinian walking by a closed iron gate installed by Israeli forces to block a road leading to Al Fawwar camp, in the southern West Bank. Photo by OCHA

Humanitarian Situation Update #289 | West Bank

14 May 2025

The Humanitarian Situation Updates on the Gaza Strip and on the West Bank are both issued every Wednesday. The Gaza Humanitarian Response Update is issued every other Tuesday. The next Humanitarian Situation Updates will be published on 21 May.

Key Highlights

- Some 200 families are estimated to have gradually returned to the outskirts of Jenin refugee camp, which remains depopulated, while demolitions and displacement continue in Tulkarm city and Nur Shams refugee camp. Some 40,000 Palestinians remain displaced in the northern West Bank.

- More than 550 students were evacuated from their classrooms as Israeli forces raided and shut down three UNRWA schools in East Jerusalem.

- Across the West Bank, Israeli settlers have damaged water infrastructure on 62 occasions since January, with herding communities facing the most severe impacts.

- A decision by the authorities to resume land registration risks further land expropriation in violation of Palestinian property rights, warns the UN Human Rights Office.

Humanitarian Developments

- Between 6 and 12 May, Israeli forces killed four Palestinians across the West Bank, including two who were killed during an exchange of fire and one who attacked soldiers. During the same period, Israeli forces injured 104 Palestinians: 59 were treated for tear gas inhalation, 25 were physically assaulted, 19 were shot with live ammunition, and one was hit by a sound grenade. Sixteen of those injured were children. The following are details of the fatality incidents:
    - On 7 May, Israeli forces shot, killed and withheld the body of a Palestinian man who tried to carry out a ramming and stabbing attack near the southern entrance of Hebron city, reportedly injuring one Israeli soldier. Subsequently, Israeli forces closed the southern entrance to the city, keeping it shut through the time of reporting. Israeli forces then raided the house of the assailant in Dura town, also in Hebron governorate, causing property damage, and arrested four of his family members. Israeli forces also assaulted and injured 15 family members and neighbours, including one child, who were offering condolences to the family.

    - On 8 May, undercover Israeli forces shot, killed and withheld the body of a Palestinian man and injured 43 others during a raid in the Old City of Nablus. The forces also shot live ammunition and tear gas canisters at Palestinians who threw stones at them; eight Palestinians were injured by live ammunition, and 35 needed medical treatment for tear gas inhalation.

    - On 9 May, Israeli forces killed two Palestinian men in an exchange of fire with people in a house they surrounded in eastern Nablus city. The forces fired a shoulder-fired explosive projectile and launched an explosive drone at the house.

- Between 6 to 12 May, OCHA documented the demolition of 17 Palestinian-owned structures for lacking Israeli-issued building permits, which are nearly impossible to obtain. These included seven structures in East Jerusalem and ten in Area C. The

demolitions resulted in the displacement of seven households comprising 38 Palestinians, including 18 children, and affected the livelihoods of 40 other people. Eighteen people, including eight children, were displaced in three demolition incidents in East Jerusalem, where three homes were demolished in Beit Hanina, Silwan and Ras al 'Amud. Twenty others, including ten children, were displaced in Area C, where three homes were demolished in: Al Funduq village, in Qalqiliya governorate; Suba village, in Hebron governorate; and Nablus city. Demolitions due to the lack of Israeli-issued permits in Area C have been soaring since the beginning of 2025. Between 1 January and 12 May, OCHA documented the demolition of 592 structures by Israeli authorities in Area C – more than double the number of structures demolished (272) during the corresponding period in 2024.

- On 11 May, the Israeli Security Cabinet approved the implementation of a new land settlement process, which will effectively resume land registration in Area C of the occupied West Bank. The UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR) expressed their alarm at this development and stated: "The process of land registration or settlement of land title, under which Israel purportedly seeks to definitively establish land ownership registration in favour of Israeli settlers, represents an exercise of sovereignty prohibited in occupied territory." Moreover, according to OHCHR, this process raises concern that the process would be used "to acquire Palestinian land and consolidate the unlawful annexation of the West Bank." Under the Oslo Accords, over 60 per cent of the West Bank was designated as Area C, under Israeli control, where land registration remained suspended. Less than 1 per cent of Area C is covered by a planning scheme for Palestinian communities approved by the Israeli authorities.

- Between 6 to 12 May 2025, OCHA documented 14 settler attacks against Palestinians that resulted in property damage but did not document attacks that resulted in casualties. They included the burning of a structure used for livelihood, damage to water and electricity networks, and vandalism of over 240 olive, fig and apricots trees. Six of the incidents took place in Ramallah governorate, including an incident on 9 May, when Israeli settlers raided Wadi Qatoniya area on the outskirts of Al Mughayyir village, where Palestinian herding families live. The settlers broke into the residential tent of one family, damaging kitchen equipment and furniture. In another incident on 7 May, a group of Israeli settlers set fire to an uninhabited structure, including several hay bales, belonging to a Palestinian herder in a farm on the outskirts of Khirbet Abu Falah village.

- On 6 May, in a setter-related incident that did not result in damage to property, Israeli settlers blocked for approximately two hours the access of at least four children, who were walking back home from school, through a closed road gate in Shuqba village, in Ramallah governorate. The gate was installed in early February 2025 by Israeli forces on a road that leads to five houses on the eastern outskirts of the village, affecting about 60 people, including 40 children. The families have since been denied vehicular access through the gate and are forced to walk or take a lengthy detour to reach the village and essential services by car, turning a one-kilometre trip into a five-kilometre journey. This is the latest in a series of nearly daily incidents where Israeli settlers, believed to be from an outpost established in September 2024, have been preventing the movement of families in one area of the village to and from their homes and harassing residents. Similarly affected are Palestinian farmers, who, according to residents, have been prevented by Israeli settlers from accessing their agricultural land in areas near the outpost. Since the outpost was established, OCHA has documented nine attacks perpetrated by Israeli settlers against Palestinians that resulted in casualties or property damage, and seven other incidents involving trespass, harassment, or access restrictions. This is compared with two such incidents documented between 2020 and 2024.

- Since the beginning of 2025, at least 13 per cent of settler-related incidents that led to property damage and were documented by OCHA across the West Bank (62 out of 464 incidents) have targeted water-related structures used for domestic and agricultural purposes. Most of these incidents (46) occurred in Palestinian villages and towns, while 16 were in herding and Bedouin communities. The nature and scope of the damage in both settings reflect a broader pattern of settler vandalism targeting essential service infrastructure.
    - In villages and towns, Israeli settlers have vandalized water infrastructure, including main pipelines, irrigation networks, shared tanks, and agricultural wells – disrupting water access for multiple households. Examples include an incident in Kisan village, in Bethlehem governorate, where settlers damaged 450 metres of a water network installed by an international NGO, cutting off water to 20 families (about 50 people). In Kafr Qaddum village, in Qalqiliya governorate, settlers seized a water pump, and 75 metres of piping used to irrigate plots cultivated by several households. In Rujib village, in Nablus governorate, settlers rendered an agricultural well unusable, disrupting irrigation for over 300 olive trees. In Deir Nidham village, in Ramallah governorate, the main water pipeline serving the village was damaged by Israeli settlers, leaving about 1,000 people without access to water for two days. Similarly, in An Nazla ash Sharqiya village, in Tulkarm governorate, settlers destroyed 1,700 metres of irrigation piping, affecting more than five dunums (1.2 acres) of farmland used by 12 households.

    - In Bedouin and herding communities, examples of vandalism by Israeli settlers damaging water and sanitation structures include an incident on 9 May in Hammamat al Maleh herding community in the northern Jordan valley, where settlers cut a water network pipe used to transfer water from a nearby spring. In Ras 'Ein al 'Auja herding community, in Jericho governorate, at least three incidents involved settlers damaging water pipes serving the community, disrupting access to water for up to eight households. Residents report that such attacks on the water network occur on a near-daily basis, severely undermining their already limited access to water for both domestic and livestock needs. While the number of attacks in villages and towns is higher, the impact on herding and Bedouin communities tends to be more severe due to their heightened vulnerability and limited coping mechanisms. These communities typically rely on minimal and unregulated water infrastructure, such as water tanks, trailers and natural springs, and often lack access to pipe networks or public services. Under the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene WASH Cluster's 2024 water vulnerability mapping, most herding communities, specifically those in the northern Jordan Valley, fall under the highest vulnerability index, relying primarily on water trucking at high costs – paying 20-25 ILS (US$5-7) per cubic metre – with insufficient storage capacity to meet household and livestock needs. These conditions are compounded by recurrent settler attacks targeting their limited water infrastructure.

- On 8 May, Israeli forces raided three UNRWA schools in Shu'fat refugee camp, in East Jerusalem, and demanded their closure. UNRWA evacuated more than 550 girls and boys from their classrooms, and Israeli forces temporarily detained one UNRWA staff member. This follows closure orders that were presented to six UNRWA-run schools in East Jerusalem on 8 April, affecting 800 students. Following the forced closures on 8 May, UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini stated: "UNRWA was forced to evacuate all children across the six schools it runs in East Jerusalem. These schools are inviolable premises of the United Nations. By enforcing closure orders issued last month, the Israeli authorities are denying Palestinian children their basic right to learn." The Director of UNRWA Affairs in the West Bank additionally stressed: "Israel's actions today are a grave violation of its obligations as a UN member state under international law." These developments follow the passage of two laws by Israel's parliament, the Knesset, on 28 October 2024, which aim to prohibit UNRWA's operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) and bar any contact between UNRWA and Israeli officials. According to the Education Cluster, the "fear that similar closures could expand to other UNRWA schools in the West Bank and beyond raises serious concerns about the erosion of access to education for an entire generation of children. Such disruptions would not only affect learning, but also undermine children's wellbeing, development, and long-term prospects." There are over 47,000 Palestinian refugee children enrolled in 96 UNRWA schools across the West Bank, which "serve as critical spaces for protection and stability amid protracted crises," the Education Cluster emphasized.

- For key figures and additional breakdowns of casualties, displacement and settler violence between January 2005 and March 2025, please refer to the OCHA West Bank March 2025 Snapshot.

Developments in the northern West Bank

- Demolitions and displacement continue in Tulkarm city and Nur Shams camp. On 11 May, three residential structures in Nur Shams refugee camp were reportedly demolished using explosive devices. On the same day, according to the Palestinian General Authority of Civil Affairs, 10 households residing in three residential structures in the eastern neighbourhood of Tulkarm city were verbally ordered to leave by Israeli forces. The families were given a window of time ranging from 30 minutes to two days to evacuate their homes. Between 12 and 13 May, residents of Tulkarm city reported ongoing sounds of explosions coming from within Nur Shams camp. The explosions on 13 May were mostly heard in Al Jame' neighbourhood, located in the centre of the camp. According to the Jenin Governor's Office, several homes were demolished before their residents were allowed to retrieve their belongings. On 1 May, Israeli forces had issued two military orders to demolish 106 Palestinian-owned structures in Tulkarm (58) and Nur Shams (48) refugee camps. A legal petition to stop the demolition of homes by an NGO was rejected by the Israeli military, citing that these demolitions were done out of military necessity. Humanitarian actors have been unable to systematically assess the demolitions due to the lack of access.

- On 13 May, two Palestinian men were killed during operations by Palestinian forces in El Fara'a refugee camp, in Tubas governorate, and in Jenin city. In the first incident, in El Fara'a, Palestinian forces shot and killed a Palestinian man. In the second incident, in Jenin, a 67-year-old man was shot and killed, and a woman was shot and injured, with the identity of the perpetrators remaining undetermined. The presence of Palestinian forces and other armed Palestinians was reported in the area at the time of the incident.

- On 9 May, Israeli forces informed the Palestinian District Coordination Liaison office in Jenin that residents of areas adjacent to the Jenin refugee camp would be allowed to return to their homes, which they had been forced to leave nearly a week earlier. The notification included a map highlighting a designated "green zone" that residents would be allowed to return to, primarily covering the Az Zahra neighbourhood, located north of the camp. The return was authorized to begin on 10 May. Local sources estimate that nearly 20 families, comprising about 100 people, were directly affected by this order and that residents of other neighbourhoods have been returning from their own volition. Local sources also estimate that about 200 families have gradually returned over the past month.

- Over 90 per cent of the 124 Palestinians killed by Israeli forces across the West Bank between 1 January and 12 May 2025 were in the six northern West Bank governorates of Jenin, Tubas, Tulkarm, Nablus, Qalqilya and Salfit. Seven Israelis, including five members of Israeli forces, were killed by Palestinians in the West Bank during the same period, all of them in the northern West Bank.

Funding

- As of 14 May 2025, Member States have disbursed approximately $637.6 million out of the $4.073 billion (15.7 per cent) requested to meet the most critical humanitarian needs of three million out of 3.3 million people identified as requiring assistance in Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in 2025, under the 2025 Flash Appeal for the OPT. Nearly 88 per cent of the requested funds are for humanitarian response in Gaza, with just over 12 per cent for the West Bank. Moreover, during April 2025, the oPt Humanitarian Fund managed 128 ongoing projects, totalling $74.3 million, to address urgent needs in the Gaza Strip (88 per cent) and the West Bank (12 per cent). Of these projects, 64 are being implemented by INGOs, 49 by national NGOs and 15 by UN agencies. Notably, 47 out of the 79 projects implemented by INGOs or the UN are being implemented in collaboration with national NGOs. For more information, please see OCHA's Financial Tracking Service webpage and the oPt HF webpage.

* Asterisks indicate that a figure, sentence, or section has been rectified, added, or retracted after the initial publication of this update.