

# west bank field office



## children in distress: raising the alarm for 2016 and beyond

*briefing note*  
*april 2016*

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## About UNRWA

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

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# introduction

The year 2015 was the most deadly since 2006 for Palestinians, including Palestine refugees, in the West Bank including East Jerusalem. Children and young people in particular have suffered.<sup>1</sup> Last year, 28 Palestinian children were killed by Israeli security forces (ISF) and 3 by Israeli settlers. Among them were 12 Palestine refugee children. In the six months between 1 October 2015 and 31 March 2016, 44 Palestinian children were killed, twice the number of child fatalities in 2013 and 2014 combined. Between January and March 2016, 56 Palestinians were killed, including 13 Palestine refugees. During the same period, 19 Palestinian children were killed, including 1 Palestine refugee child.

*The United Nations (UN) Secretary General has been very clear that attacks against civilians are unacceptable, stating in recent remarks to the Security Council that “Stabbings, vehicle attacks, and shootings by Palestinians targeting Israeli civilians – all of which I condemn – and clashes between Palestinians and Israeli security forces, have continued to claim lives.”<sup>2</sup> Addressing his remarks to the underlying causes that fuel violence, however, the Secretary-General also stated: “Palestinian frustration is growing under the weight of a half-century of occupation and the paralysis of the peace process. Some have taken me to task for pointing out this indisputable truth. Yet, as oppressed peoples have demonstrated throughout*

the ages, it is human nature to react to occupation, which often serves as a potent incubator of hate and extremism.”<sup>3</sup>

This briefing note focuses on Palestine refugee children<sup>4</sup> and how deeply they have been affected by the recent upsurge in violence. It provides a summary of relevant events and trends, concentrating on, but not limited to, fatalities, injuries and displacement between October and December 2015. A disturbing manifestation of the violence and its impact is being seen in the behavior, and evident despair, of children in UNRWA schools, as reported by staff and documented in this note. This note also describes what UNRWA teachers have anecdotally observed in terms of children’s reactions to the situation. *In analyzing and seeking to give context to the experience of Palestine refugee children in the current environment, UNRWA reiterates its condemnation of all violence against civilians, including attacks carried out by Palestinians.*

An explanation of the Agency’s two-track programmatic and advocacy response to the current crisis will then be outlined. It will conclude by listing key recommendations for the way forward. This note draws upon data and information collected by UNRWA protection staff and feedback from UNRWA personnel.

# 2015: increased violence affecting children in the west bank

Children in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, face the daily risk of violence living under long-standing occupation that will have endured for 50 years by 2017. While 2014 saw an unprecedented number of Palestinian children killed during hostilities in Gaza, 2015 has seen increased death, injuries, detention and use of force against children in the West Bank, in particular since October 2015.

As the graph below shows, since 2012, UNRWA has observed an increase in Palestinian fatalities and injuries related to ISF operations in the West Bank. This trend continued in 2014, following the kidnapping and killing of three Israeli teenagers, which led to the large-scale ISF operation, 'Brother's Keeper', and was followed by the killing of the Palestinian child, Mohammad Abu Khdeir.

Between January and March 2016, 56 Palestinians were killed, including 13 Palestine refugees. During the same period, 19 Palestinian children were killed, including one Palestine refugee child.

In the first three months of 2016, the violence continued but the pattern changed. Most of the conflict-related indicators (injuries, fatalities, live ammunition incidents, confrontations) have decreased, with weekly averages

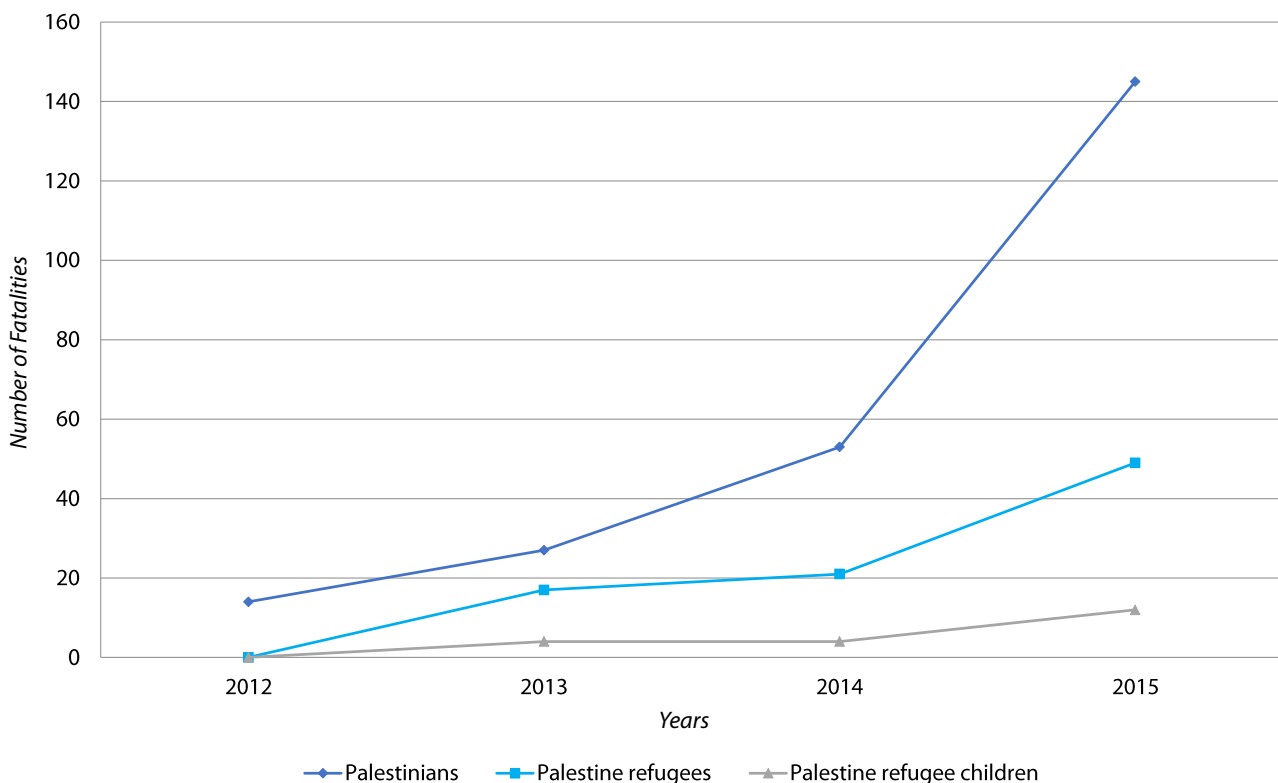
lower than during the last three months of 2015. The attacks by Palestinians against the ISF or Israeli civilians, however, are now increasingly involving gunfire or explosive devices.

## Fatalities

The number of Palestinian children killed in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, has more than doubled in the last two years, rising from 13 in 2014 (all Palestine refugee children) to 31 in 2015 (including 12 Palestine refugee children – 3 girls and 9 boys). Ten of the twelve Palestine refugee children were killed in the last quarter of the year. In 11<sup>o</sup> of the 12 cases, the cause of death was due to the use of live ammunition by Israeli security forces.

UNRWA is particularly concerned about the use of force in and around densely populated areas such as Palestine refugee camps, resulting in deaths and injuries, and the increasing use of live ammunition by ISF, which is further leading to increased fatalities, including the death of children. While in the past, UNRWA observed an increased risk for Palestinians living in refugee camps, this was no longer the case in 2015. At the same time,

## Palestinian Fatalities as a Result of ISF Operations between 2012 and 2015<sup>5</sup>



between 2013 and 2015, there was a steep increase in incidents involving the use of live ammunition in and around refugee camps (from 51 to 225). Fifty per cent of all injuries in 2015 related to the use of live ammunition took place in Kalandia and Shu'fat refugee camps.

**Case study:** On 5 October 2015, following a day at school, a 13-year-old boy was fatally shot in the chest by a single bullet in front of the Agency's office in Aida refugee camp. UNRWA conducted an investigation and assessed that at the time of the shooting, the boy did not pose a threat to the lives of the Israeli soldier or any other civilian. UNRWA has been informed that the IDF brigade in question conducted an operational debriefing that showed that the victim was not the intended target. UNRWA has confirmed that a military police investigation has been opened.<sup>11</sup>

Concerningly, 65 per cent of the 145 Palestinian fatalities were allegedly involved in stabbing or ramming attacks<sup>7</sup> and 7 of the 12 Palestine refugee children killed were alleged to have attacked or attempted to attack either ISF or Israeli civilians.

While it is recognized that the use of force by law enforcement officials is permissible in self-defense or defense of another person against imminent threat of death or injury, strict criteria is stipulated by international policing standards.<sup>8</sup> The Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Christof Heyns, has expressed concerns that, despite assurances from the Israeli Attorney-General Yehuda Weinstein that security personnel are prohibited from firing at a suspect unless an immediate danger to human life cannot otherwise be prevented, live ammunition is used against alleged attackers, including children, in circumstances where there is no apparent immediate risk to life and non-lethal force can be used to apprehend suspected attackers.<sup>9</sup> The UN Secretary-General, the UN High-Commissioner for Human Rights and UNRWA have all raised publicly their serious concerns about the excessive use of force by the ISF during operations, including in response to demonstrations and alleged stabbings.<sup>10</sup>

**Case study:** On 22 November 2015, a 16-year-old Palestine refugee boy approached the roundabout at Huwara checkpoint in Nablus. He reportedly approached a settler with a knife, at which point he was shot several times by the IDF, according to eyewitness testimony, while turning away from the settler and lying on the ground. He died as a result of multiple gunshot wounds. The live fire used by the IDF during this incident also resulted in the death of an innocent 18-year-old Palestinian bystander.

## Injuries

In 2015, **5,897** Palestinians received treatment in a medical facility due to injuries suffered as a result of ISF operations and/or settler violence, according to UNRWA reports.<sup>12</sup> OCHA recorded 15,000 injuries including those that did not require treatment in a medical facility. UNRWA recorded 64 Palestine refugee children who were seriously injured<sup>13</sup> during clashes with ISF inside refugee camps. Of these cases, 19 were documented by UNRWA (18 boys and 1 girl).<sup>14</sup> These figures are underreported due to the reticence of those injured to pass on information to UNRWA for fear of arrest.

**Case study:** In three separate incidents documented by UNRWA staff in March, May and December 2015, all of which occurred in Shu'fat refugee camp in East Jerusalem, three boys aged 8, 13 and 15 were shot in the face by either plastic-coated metal or black sponge-tipped bullets. Each child lost one of their eyes as a result, and each child required a prosthetic eye. One of these children has suffered brain damage as a result of the impact of the bullet and has not been able to go back to school as of mid-February 2016. The two other children have returned to school. In all three cases, there is no evidence that any of the children were involved in the clashes taking place at the time or posing a direct threat to the ISF.

ISF delayed the medical evacuation of two of the three critically injured children, preventing timely access to hospital care. The 8-year-old was delayed for roughly half an hour at the checkpoint to enter Jerusalem because the soldiers demanded to see the boy's identification card. Medical assistance was also delayed for the 15-year-old as he was injured during a security operation in the camp. Due to movement restrictions imposed by Israel during the ISF operation, the child was unable to enter Jerusalem to access the nearest hospital with specialist services. He was taken to a hospital in Ramallah, thereby delaying his treatment. Seven hours later, he was transferred to Jerusalem for treatment by a specialist. As prostheses are considered to be cosmetic by the medical insurance companies concerned, medical costs were covered by the families themselves. At least two of the families have filed an official complaint to the Israeli authorities.

## Demolitions

The practice of punitive home demolitions was resumed by the Israeli authorities in 2014 after being suspended in 2005.<sup>15</sup> In 2015, six Palestine refugee residences were demolished or sealed for punitive reasons in the West Bank, while one family was evicted for punitive reasons. Thirty-two Palestine refugees, 15 of them children, have been displaced and rendered homeless.<sup>16</sup> On 16 November 2015, the UN Regional Humanitarian Coordinator, Robert Piper, called for an end to punitive

demolitions in the West Bank, noting that they “are a form of collective penalty as they effectively punish not only the alleged perpetrators but also people (relatives, neighbours) for acts they have not individually committed. Collective penalties are prohibited under international law.”<sup>17</sup>

In 2015, the Israeli authorities demolished 546 Palestinian-owned structures, of which 176 were owned by Palestine refugees.<sup>18</sup> The zoning and planning regime as applied by the Israeli authorities in Area C does not meet the needs of the protected population. It restricts Palestinian construction (Palestinians are generally not able to secure construction permits in Area C), while facilitating Israeli settlement construction and expansion.<sup>19</sup> In 2015, Israeli-executed administrative demolitions displaced at least 784 Palestinians. At least 287 of the displaced were Palestine refugees (compared to 411 in 2014) and 57 per cent of refugees displaced were children.<sup>20</sup> At least 666 Palestinians have been displaced in the first quarter of 2016, which is equal to 85 per cent of the overall number of Palestinians displaced last year.

## Detention

The number of Palestinian children detained by Israeli authorities following arrest reached new levels in 2015 when 946 children were detained (of whom 118 were Palestine refugees), compared to 695 in 2014 (of whom 111 were Palestine refugees). The majority of these arrests<sup>21</sup> were related to charges of stone throwing.<sup>22</sup> In 2015, UNICEF and its partners documented 111 cases of ill-treatment related to the arrest and detention of Palestinian children through affidavits. All of the 111 children – 108 boys and 3 girls – reported having been subjected to ill-treatment by the ISF.<sup>23</sup>

## Use of Tear Gas by ISF

During clashes between ISF and Palestinians, including young people, the ISF frequently used tear gas as a crowd control method. Tear gas may be used in law enforcement contexts but should be used with caution in densely populated camps, with care to minimize the risk to children in the area.<sup>24</sup> UNRWA is concerned that when used, particularly in areas close to playgrounds, the pungent dust from the gas lingers for hours, sometimes more than a day, affecting thousands of children and potentially also affecting the elderly and pregnant women and persons with respiratory concerns. In 2015, more than 205 tear gas canisters fell or were fired into UNRWA installations such as schools, which as UN premises are to be inviolable.<sup>25</sup> UNRWA staff and beneficiaries have had to evacuate their posts 22 times in 13 separate security incidents related to tear gas. Eight of these 13 incidents caused the evacuation and disruption of classes in 15 UNRWA schools.

## Search Operations

ISF search operations in Palestine refugee camps in the West Bank have increased 289 per cent since 2011, from 231 to 667.<sup>26</sup> The three densely populated Palestine refugee camps in and around Bethlehem – Aida, Dheisheh and Beit Jibrin, which have over 18,700 refugees living in them – have been particularly affected. In the last two years of heightened tension and conflict, ISF have entered one of these camps nearly every other day, mostly in the middle of the night to carry out search-and-arrest operations among the civilian population. In some cases, operations have taken place during morning hours when children are walking to school and are therefore at greater risk of being injured or killed.

# assessing the impact on children

As a result of the deteriorating security situation elaborated upon above, as well as previous results from UNRWA needs assessments<sup>27</sup>, in November 2015, 120 UNRWA psychosocial counsellors were asked to conduct a brief and informal needs assessment in the Agency's 96 schools in the West Bank.

The needs assessment identified unprecedented levels of intra-student violence and alarming levels of despair, trauma and anxiety among children. Increasingly, students have displayed disturbing behavior, manifesting itself in many ways. Notably, health staff have reported more than 200 cases of children injuring each other with sharp objects since 1 October 2015. Violence and aggressive behaviour in general among pupils is at an all-time high. In one day alone, in Shu'fat Boys' School in East Jerusalem, 10 students were reported to have been injured as a result of lightly stabbing one another with sharp objects.<sup>28</sup> Developmental regression, evidenced by bed-wetting, has been observed in some schools. Post-traumatic stress disorder has been diagnosed at a rate that UNRWA medical staff have not witnessed since 2000, during the second intifada. Cases of generalized anxiety and depression are also more present than in previous years. Teachers noted a lack of concentration and poorer performance in the classroom. Due to military activity in the surrounding area, UNRWA students in the West Bank lost 83 days of school between 1 October 2015 and 9 March 2016.

Staff are also concerned about students who have expressed increasing levels of frustration and a desire to take action against the Israeli occupation. An immediate set of referrals and support mechanisms are put in place by UNRWA when staff are alerted to such behavior. Girls, in particular, have become more vocal about this wish, as well as the desire to 'resist' in general. Due to the dangerous environment, their movements have been more restricted to the school and the home, leaving them with less safe space to channel their anger and frustration.<sup>29</sup>

UNRWA staff noted the following categories of sentiments that children have expressed:

- Frustration with the Israeli occupation and related policies such as settlement expansion, home demolitions and restrictions on freedom of movement;
- Frustration with incidents that entailed a perceived breach of the sanctity of Al-Aqsa;
- Anger about specific incidents where Palestinians were killed;
- Desire for "revenge" related to the killing of relatives or friends;
- Glorification, as a form of resistance to occupation, of stabbing and ramming attacks; and
- Depression and a desire to commit suicide.

The UN Secretary-General acknowledged the effect of the current situation on young Palestinians and the sentiments they express in his statement to the Security Council on 26 January 2016, referenced in the introduction. This statement by the Secretary-General echoes those of other high level United Nations officials, including the High Commissioner for Human Rights, who stated in October 2015: "The escalating tensions indicate a general sense of growing frustration and despair resulting from the situation of prolonged occupation, exacerbated by recent restrictions imposed by the Israeli authorities on Palestinian worshippers wishing to access the Al-Aqsa compound, the ongoing settlement expansion and settler violence...". The general lack of accountability, including on a number of cases of excessive use of force by the Israeli security forces, is concerning. For example, on 23 November 2015, in Jerusalem, a police officer shot two Palestine refugee females who attempted to stab Israeli civilians with scissors after they fell to the ground. The Officer was cleared of all charges after investigation.<sup>30</sup>



# the agency's programmatic and advocacy response

In response to the upsurge in violence since October 2015 affecting Palestine refugees, UNRWA has increased its programmatic interventions to mitigate the effects of the current situation on children and undertaken advocacy efforts calling for action to prevent a further escalation of violence.

## Programmatic Response

With preventative and restorative goals, WBFO undertook a multiphase and multifaceted set of programmatic initiatives throughout the West Bank in the last quarter of 2015. This initiative expanded upon the holistic and comprehensive programme and service delivery the Agency already undertakes in the West Bank, which encompass protection, health, education, and relief and social services. Where UNRWA staff become aware of students that appear to be particularly affected (indicating violent tendencies), UNRWA engages families, the community and other stakeholders to ensure that specific concerns detected by UNRWA staff, albeit beyond their control, are adequately addressed.

Additional programmatic activities seek to mitigate the despair and sense of hopelessness pervading the lives of Palestine refugee children, by relieving stress and identifying children at risk of violent behavior or showing serious signs of severe distress, who can then be provided with the support needed through referrals, either internally or externally. The table below details the timeline, objectives and outputs of the activities by UNRWA in recent months.

The reaction of students, parents, teachers and counsellors to the activities conducted by UNRWA has been very positive. Children have responded very strongly to the activities and speak of the positive interaction and increased trust with their teachers and peers. Many described feeling a sense of relief and lightheartedness for the first time in many months. All those consulted spoke about an increase in positive dialogue and emotional expression with children. Mothers noted that siblings fought less and that their children spent more time studying and were generally calmer. Counsellors and teachers observed that these initiatives were absolutely

	Phase One (October, November)	Phase Two (December)	Phase Three – Not yet funded
<b>Objective</b>	Targeting of children and teachers in the most affected schools for emergency stress release – case referral where needed	Holistic approach: Individual counselling and full day of stress relieving activities for all UNRWA school children; group discussion sessions with parents to provide tools to assist their children in coping with the surrounding environment	Expressive therapy activities for students; stress-relieving activities for UNRWA front-line staff (teachers, principals and counsellors); emphasis on community-based self-protection mechanisms and the refinement of the UNRWA referral system
<b>Target audience</b>	Students and teachers	Students, teachers, principals, parents	Student, teachers, principals, parents, community at large
<b>Scope</b>	28 most affected schools	All 96 UNRWA schools	All 96 UNRWA schools, as well as stakeholders in the community, including parents and community groups
<b>Activities</b>	Emergency group therapy activities for students and debriefing for teachers led by counsellors	One full day of sport activities in each of the 96 schools, 40 consultations with parents' groups to ensure they understand referral mechanisms for troubled children and youth.	Continuation of previous activities, with the addition of further consultations and partnerships with community stakeholders
<b>Number of refugees reached</b>	12,576 children and 354 education staff	50,566 students and 445 parents	Activity not yet undertaken
<b>Funds</b>	Health, education and relief departments utilized existing funds.	Health, education and relief departments utilized existing funds.	Not yet funded

necessary for the children's well-being in the current climate. All wished that a more sustainable programme of activities would be adopted and noted that one day of activities was insufficient. Pending funding and as detailed later in this section, UNRWA will continue this and other group activities for children.

At present, UNRWA is seeking to further refine its referral system in order to ensure that the needs of children, youth and adults affected by conflict-related violence are addressed in a timely and effective manner. A task force to address gaps in the referral process between departments was created last year to ensure that an integrated approach by programmes (health, education, relief and social services) is implemented.

Screening for children in need of individual counselling is ongoing and follows referral pathways created through the Community Mental Health Programme (CMHP), which has been implemented to protect and improve the mental health status and well-being of Palestine refugees through integrated, community-based psychosocial and mental health services. The Programme works along four main strategic objectives: (1) early recognition of persons who may be experiencing mental health difficulties; (2) timely intervention to enhance coping and prevent further deterioration; and (3) promotion of psychosocial resiliency through education and training.

This has been complemented by the development of the Family and Child Protection Programme in 2009, which aims to protect the rights of vulnerable groups in refugee camps – children, youth, women, the elderly and people with special needs – from all forms of violence, injury, abuse, neglect and discrimination. The Programme's strategic objectives include: (1) integrating family and child protection into UNRWA services through systems-building and staff capacity-building; (2) building social safety networks through family and child protection committees within UNRWA programmes and departments; (3) empowering the community in prevention and advocacy; and (4) ensuring quality counselling, case management and services for victims of violence, abuse and neglect. The Programme has also been responsible for the development and implementation of the GBV case management and referral systems – one for adults and one for children – which have integrated into the Agency's health, education, and relief and social services programmes.

The UNRWA Crisis Intervention Unit continues to provide emergency cash assistance and psychosocial support, within 72 hours, to those affected by home demolitions or damages to their home as a result of military operations.

In 2015, emergency cash assistance was provided to 72 displaced Palestine refugee families comprising 384 individuals, including 198 children. Cash assistance was also provided to 820 Palestine refugee families (including

2,087 children) whose homes were damaged by military operations. Forty-four per cent of all 148 referrals to specialized services, which were primarily psychosocial in nature, were for children.

UNRWA continues to support students in 'schools on the front-line'<sup>31</sup> that are most vulnerable to conflict-related violence. Key responses include community involvement in school governance and maintenance, psychosocial activities for children and teachers, and advocacy with duty bearers. Project funds are continually sought to support responses. With the support of the UN Office on Sport for Development and Peace, a football pitch has recently been built in Aida refugee camp, the only safe place in the camp to engage in outdoor sports.

There is, however, a funding gap for the provision of specialized comprehensive psychosocial programmatic interventions that needs to be filled. UNRWA is currently seeking funds to conduct psychosocial activities for 49,546 students and their parents in 96 UNRWA schools. Activities would include expressive therapy, debriefing sessions and group therapy, led in some cases by the Agency's partners (for example, Al-Madaa for music therapy). These activities enable staff to identify and refer the most critical cases.

Pending additional funding, UNRWA will also focus on building the capacity of school staff in the most vulnerable communities to assist both students and themselves to cope with the current situation. This requires training for staff by specialists, as well as subsequent training of trainers.

## Advocacy Response

Programmatic interventions, however, can only address symptoms of the root causes of the problem, which include the Israeli occupation itself and require political action. UNRWA therefore monitors, documents and reports on incidents affecting Palestine refugee children that raise concerns about compliance with international legal obligations, including under international humanitarian and human rights law. UNRWA raises documented and transmissible concerns with the relevant authorities. While some documented protection cases raised by the Agency led to investigations by the appropriate Israeli authority, in many cases, the Agency's Israeli interlocutors did not respond, a trend that UNRWA continues to monitor with concern. UNRWA has continued throughout the last months of 2015 to brief the diplomatic community on the worsening of the situation in the West Bank, in particular on the impact it has on the security environment in the camps and the effect on Palestine refugees. WBFO also contributes to the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) on Grave Violations against Children in Armed Conflict for Israel and the State of Palestine to the Security Council, led and coordinated by UNICEF.

# the way forward: a call for political action and accountability

The question of why violence has escalated so rapidly in the last quarter of 2015 and why children have become more involved is complex. Underlying the multiple factors is growing Palestinian frustration under the weight of a half-century of occupation and the paralysis of the peace process. These overarching issues must be addressed. The Agency's programmatic and advocacy responses form two parallel tracks that seek to promote the human development and enhance protection of the rights of young Palestine refugees in this context. Alone, however, they are not sufficient to address the current political stalemate, ensure accountability for violations of international law or ensure that children are protected from daily violence and aggression.

UNRWA makes the following recommendations:

- The international community should continue to increase its support for programmes that seek to prevent and address the impact of violence on children, including the UNRWA programmatic model.
- Robust political action is urgently needed to ensure restraint and prevent further escalation. Addressing the root causes of the deterioration, including Israel's prolonged occupation, and ensuring compliance with international legal standards in law enforcement and military operations is vital to moving forward. All parties need to commit themselves to efforts towards an invigorated, viable political process.
- UNRWA is particularly concerned about the excessive use of force directed at children in and around camps where Palestine refugee children live and play – including in the vicinity of UNRWA schools.
- Israel must take precautionary measures to ensure innocent civilians, including children, are not harmed during operations in camps, including by planning and conducting operations in a manner that safeguards human life and the safety of the protected population, and that during operations in camps, military and security forces act with restraint and proportionally, as required by international law.
- All suspected human rights violations by law enforcement officers must be thoroughly, effectively, independently and impartially investigated. Those found responsible for excessive use of force and arbitrary or unlawful killings, including during operations in camps, must be prosecuted and sanctioned in a manner commensurate with the gravity of the acts committed and victims provided with effective remedies, including equal and effective access to justice and reparations.<sup>32</sup>
- The inviolability of UNRWA premises (schools, clinics, etc.) must be respected at all times in accordance with international law.
- Punitive demolitions of the homes of persons suspected of committing an attack violate international law by punishing family members for acts they did not commit.<sup>33</sup> This policy and practice must be rescinded.

# endnotes

1. Eighty-nine per cent of the refugee fatalities were young Palestinians, aged 24 and below. As the Agency's mandate is to provide schooling only until the ninth grade, this document focuses largely on children.
2. UNSG Ban Ki-moon, Remarks to the Security Council on the Situation in the Middle East, New York, 26 January 2016.
3. UNSG Ban Ki-moon, Remarks to the Security Council on the Situation in the Middle East, New York, 26 January 2016
4. The current violence is also having a severe impact on Israelis; however, it is not within the Agency's mandate to document such incidents.
5. OCHA and UNRWA Operations figures, 2015.
6. In the context of a demonstration, one Palestine refugee child fell to the ground for unclear reasons and hit his head. He subsequently died.
7. Twenty-one Israelis, including 3 IDF soldiers and 16 settlers, have been killed by Palestinians in 2015. None of them were children.
8. The Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials (1990) and the Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials (1979).
9. Joint Statement of the UN Special Rapporteurs on the situation of human rights in the oPt, Makarim Wibisono and on summary executions, Christof Heyns, 16 November 2015; Statement by UNRWA spokesperson Christopher Gunness, 'UNRWA calls for political action and accountability to stem the current spiral of violence and fear', 12 October 2015.
10. Secretary-General's remarks to the Security Council on the Situation in the Middle East, 26 January 2016 (New York); Statement of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein, 'Zeid urges calm and restraint in West Bank amid deadly escalation', 8 October 2015; Joint Statement of the UN Special Rapporteurs on the situation of human rights in the oPt, Makarim Wibisono and on summary executions, Christof Heyns; Statement by UNRWA spokesperson Christopher Gunness, 'UNRWA calls for political action and accountability to stem the current spiral of violence and fear', 12 October 2015 (<http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/unrwa-calls-political-action-and-accountability-stem-current-spiral>)
11. "UNRWA calls for political action and accountability to stem the current spiral of violence and fear," 12 October 2015.
12. The number of injuries reported by OCHA for the same period is 15,000 injuries. The discrepancy with UNRWA figures is linked to the fact that UNRWA does not record injuries caused by tear gas injuries, unless they are referred to a medical facility.
13. Injuries that required treatment in a medical facility.
14. UNRWA does not have the capacity to monitor and document all cases of Palestine refugee children who were injured, especially outside camps, and the numbers cited above represent only a fraction of the total number of injuries. For fear of arrest or other forms of reprisal by the ISF, there is also reluctance from the community to provide testimonies. If they do, they often prefer to remain unidentified.
15. A/HRC/27/76, Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the implementation of Human Rights Council resolution S-21/1 on ensuring respect for international law in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, p.6.
16. UNRWA Operations figures, 2015.
17. "Humanitarian Coordinator calls for end to punitive demolitions in the occupied West Bank," [https://www.ochaopt.org/documents/hc\\_statement\\_on\\_punitive\\_demolitions\\_16nov2015.pdf](https://www.ochaopt.org/documents/hc_statement_on_punitive_demolitions_16nov2015.pdf), 16 November, 2015.
18. UNRWA Operations figures, 2015.
19. The Secretary-General (A/66/36 and A/HRC/25/38) and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD/C/ISR/CO/14-16, para. 25) have noted the discriminatory nature of Israeli planning policy.
20. UNRWA Operations figures, 2015.
21. Defense for Children International. Military violence. [http://www.dci-palestine.org/issues\\_military\\_detention](http://www.dci-palestine.org/issues_military_detention).
22. On 20 July 2015, the Knesset amended Article 322a of the Israeli Penal Code. The amendment increases the maximum sentence for throwing stones or other objects at moving vehicles to 20 years when the intent to harm the occupants of the vehicle can be established (irrespective of the harm caused). In addition, the amendment allows for a maximum sentencing of 10 years when the intent cannot be proven. A five-year sentence can be imposed on children for throwing stones at a police vehicle, regardless of whether damage or injury was caused.
23. *Children and armed conflict: Report of the Secretary-General Draft 2015 – oPt*
24. See OHCHR, UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials, general provision 3, available here: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/UseOfForceAndFirearms.aspx>.
25. Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of United Nations (1946), section 3.
26. UNRWA Operations figures, 2015.
27. In 2014, an UNRWA study conducted in refugee camps found that 30 per cent of the children are at heightened risk of developing a severe psychosocial disorder.
28. Health staff report that all 10 students were involved in the attacks.
29. Girls, in particular, have become more vocal about this wish, as well as the desire to 'resist' in general. Due to the dangerous environment, their movements have been more restricted to the school and home, leaving them with less safe space to channel their anger and frustration.
30. "Investigation Clears Police Officer Who Killed 'Scissors Terrorist'", The Jewish Press, 12 December 2015 and "Policeman questioned over shooting of teenage stabber," The Times of Israel, 12 December 2015.
31. Schools located in the vicinity of military infrastructures, the West Bank Barrier or Israeli settlements.
32. HRC, Concluding Observations – Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 40 of the Covenant, Israel, UN Doc. CCPR/C/ISR/CO/3, at para. 12 and HRC, Concluding Observations – Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 40 of the Covenant, Israel, UN Doc. CCPR/C/ISR/CO/4, at para. 13.
33. The Israeli security cabinet, on 14 October 2015, officially reinstated the policy of punitive demolitions after the policy was removed in 2005, when an internal Israeli commission recommended to end punitive demolitions, reportedly assessing that punitive demolitions were not an effective deterrent and caused damage to Israel by generating hatred and hostility. Responding to the increased use of punitive demolitions in 2015, the United Nations Secretary-General lamented that punitive measures, "supposedly intended as a deterrent, but entailing multiple violations of international law, only serve to alienate the population, particularly owing to their collective nature and the impact on people innocent of any alleged crime." Report of the Secretary-General to the Human Rights Council, 'Human rights situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, (5 March 2015) A/HRC/28/45, para. 51.



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