

BROKEN HOMES

Addressing the Impact of House Demolitions
on Palestinian Children & Families



Palestinian boys search the rubble of dozens of houses demolished by the Israeli army on the border between Rafah and Egypt on June 2, 2004. PHOTO/ Apollo images.

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House Demolitions on Palestinian Children & Families

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April 2009

Issued by

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Cover image: A Palestinian child stands in a camp for Palestinians displaced in Gaza in Israel's Dec. '08 - Jan. '09 offensive. Two hundred and fifty families live in this camp, where Save the Children established a child-friendly space as part of its program. Credit: O. Damo

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Palestinian Counselling Centre

The Palestinian Counselling Centre (PCC) was established by a group of psychologists, sociologists and educators in 1983 to work towards improving and developing mental health and services in Palestine. The Centre began operating voluntarily by working in schools to increase awareness of the importance of counselling and intervention for children exposed to political abuse and violence. Public services in the field of mental health were at that time confined to Bethlehem's mental hospital, which treats the seriously mentally ill, as well as private clinics of a few psychiatrists. Biochemical treatment (medicine and electric shock) and behavioural therapy were the only two therapeutic methods in use. The PCC has sought to educate about a broader range of mental health options, coping skills and treatments.

Save the Children-UK in the OPT

Save the Children UK began providing health services to Palestinian refugees living in Lebanese camps in 1949, following the exodus of Palestinians from the newly-created state of Israel. Following the signing of the Oslo Accords and

formation of the Palestinian Authority in 1994, we increased our support for partner organisations in the OPT, focusing on technical assistance in health and education. We established a full-time presence in the OPT in 2002. Currently, our programme consists of providing emergency support in Gaza, protecting children in their schools and communities, and promoting and protecting children's rights.

Welfare Association

Welfare Association (WA) is a private, non-profit foundation established in Geneva in 1983 to support Palestinian society in sustainable development. It has become better known in Palestine and the Arab region by its Arabic name, Ta'awoun, meaning 'cooperation'. WA beneficiaries are the more than four million Palestinians who are served by Palestinian non-governmental organizations, community institutions and charitable organizations in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Galilee, Jaffa, Akka, Nazareth and Naqab, as well as in refugee camps in Lebanon. WA works by strengthening local organizations, and assisting them in improving their services to the community and in promoting Palestinian culture, heritage and identity.

Acknowledgments

To all those who contributed to the success of this research, the children and families, and the project coordinating committee

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Mother of activist Rayad Abu Daher inspects damage at her home in the West Bank city of Ramallah, May 14, 2004. Israeli forces destroyed their home to punish Abu Daher, who is accused of planning attacks on Israelis. PHOTO/OSAMA SILWADI

I - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since Israel's 1967 occupation of the West Bank, including Jerusalem and Gaza, it is estimated that Israeli civil and military authorities have destroyed 24,000 Palestinian homes in the occupied Palestinian territory (OPT). The rate of house demolitions has risen significantly since the second Intifada began in September 2000 and, as this study shows, house demolitions have become a major cause of forced displacement in the OPT.

When a home is demolished, a family loses both the house as

a financial asset and often the property inside it. For the families surveyed in this study these losses respectively totalled an average of approximately \$105,090 and \$51,261 per family.¹

But the impact goes beyond loss of physical property and economic opportunity. This report is unique in the connection it makes between the impact of house demolitions on children and their families, and the responsibility of duty bearers to protect and assist.

Using structured mental health questionnaires, semi-structured questionnaires of the family's demolition experience and socio-economic conditions, and open interviews with families, this study depicts a portrait of Palestinian families who have experienced house demolitions. This depiction enables the humanitarian community to better advocate for an end to demolitions and, in the interim, put in place a comprehensive and coordinated response for families who are facing displacement due to demolition or other factors.

“ They told us that we could return at five o'clock, but where were we supposed to go after they demolished our home? It's gone. , ,

The main findings of the study were:

- House demolitions cause displacement. Fifty-seven percent of 56 families surveyed never returned to their original residences. Those who did return, on average, spent over a year displaced before returning.
- House demolitions are followed by long periods of instability for the family, with over half of the families who responded taking at least two years to find a permanent residence.
- At the time of interviewing, the average monthly income of families surveyed was NIS 1,561 (USD 355) – well below both the absolute (deep) and relative poverty lines.²
- Compared to children of similar demographics living in the same geographical locations, children who have had their home demolished fare significantly worse on a range of mental health indicators, including: withdrawal, somatic complaints, depression/anxiety, social difficulties, higher rates of delusional, obsessive, compulsive and psychotic thoughts, attention difficulties, delinquency, violent behaviour - even six months after the demolition.
- Families also report deterioration in children's educational achievement and ability to study.
- A fundamental factor affecting the child's mental health following demolition is the psychological state of the parents, yet one-third of the parents were in danger of developing mental health disorders and some reported that the demolition precipitated a decline in their physical health also.
- The social support that parents receive and their ability to employ coping strategies for themselves and their children (usually determined by proximity to the original home and the family's cultivated network of resources) may mitigate some of the detrimental effects.
- Maintaining the mother's mental health is particularly crucial for children under 12.

Based on its findings, the study recommends that all stakeholders-Israel, the Palestinian Authority, the international community and donor governments-act immediately to respond to house demolitions within the OPT by fulfilling their obligations to protect children and their families according to international humanitarian and international human rights law, in particular the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.

In particular, the report's authors call on Israel, the occupying power in the OPT, to halt the policy of house demolitions, which violates its responsibility to protect the civilian population in accordance with the laws of armed conflict and human rights law.

Alongside advocacy on prevention, the international community (including donor governments) should support a United Nations-led inter-agency response to alleviate the wide range of health, social and economic problems resulting from house demolitions and the broader problem of forced displacement in the OPT.

2 - INTRODUCTION

HOUSE DEMOLITIONS AND INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

“Far from being confined to a discrete war in 1948, the conflict which triggered Palestinian flight has persisted over six decades... In the occupied Palestinian territory, refugees are repeatedly displaced in the wake of armed incursions, home demolitions and air strikes-and even checkpoints and the separation barrier.”

—United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) Commissioner General, Jan. 2008

The demolition of a home not only destroys a physical structure, but has numerous other consequences: it tears down the family structure, increases poverty and vulnerability, and ultimately displaces a family from the environment that gives it cohesion and support. This has long term physical and mental health consequences.

While forced displacement is an acknowledged part of Palestinian history, it is often discussed as a limited historical phenomenon that occurred during the Arab-Israeli

wars that produced hundreds of thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs).

But Palestinians, both refugee and non-refugee, are still being displaced today. One of the primary vehicles for their displacement is the Israeli policy of house demolitions.

In recent years, ongoing internal displacement in the occupied Palestinian territory (OPT) has received increasing attention from international human rights, humanitarian and development agencies. Nevertheless, monitoring and documentation of internal displacement in the OPT has been largely ad hoc, and the numbers of internally displaced and the impact of displacement on their lives have not been systematically recorded.

In an effort to contribute to this expanding discussion, our study presents a portrait of families whose houses have been demolished, emphasizing the mid- and long-term impact of house demolitions on children and families.

We have asked these families questions related to their economic status, mental and social health, and the fulfilment of basic needs: food, education, and housing. “There are numerous interacting social, psychological and biological factors that influence whether people develop psychological problems or exhibit resilience in the face of adversity,”¹³ and this study seeks to illustrate these various influences.

In addition, the study makes a preliminary assessment of these families’ ability to return to their places and communities of origin or resettle to a new community, and the impediments that may subsequently arise.

We are concerned that families who experience house demolition fall into a protection abyss, without a coordinated safety net to support them and their additional needs.

This paper concludes therefore by outlining the basic principles

for an appropriate response to house demolitions, making recommendations for the Israeli government, the Palestinian Authority, the international community and civil society groups, while keeping in mind the broader framework of forced displacement.

HOUSE DEMOLITIONS: A BACKGROUNDER

Since Israel's 1967 occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, it is estimated that Israeli civilian and military authorities have destroyed 24,130 Palestinian homes in the OPT.⁴

The rate of house demolitions and evictions has risen significantly since the beginning of the second Intifada in September 2000. According to the Israeli Committee against House Demolitions (ICAHD), between 1994 and 2000 when Palestinians and Israelis were engaged in negotiations, 740 Palestinian homes were demolished in Israeli military operations.⁵

By comparison, between October 2000 and 2004, 5,000 homes were demolished during military operations.⁶

Children are deeply impacted by house demolitions.

In Gaza, 35,224 children were impacted when 7,342 houses were entirely or partially destroyed by Israeli forces between 2000 and 2007.

28% of children surveyed in Gaza had witnessed the demolition of a friend's home and nearly 19% had witnessed the demolition of their own home.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) systematically began tracking homes demolished in the OPT in 2006. From that year to July 2008, 989 structures were demolished (639 in the West Bank and 350 in the Gaza Strip), of which 52% were residential. While this appears to mark a decline in the number of homes demolished, ICAHD notes that Israeli authorities have demolished increasingly larger structures, which house more people.

The demolition of homes causes the forced displacement of their residents. In the West Bank alone, the destruction of some 3,302 homes between 2000 and 2004 meant the displacement of approximately 16,510 people.⁷ The Israeli incursion into Jenin Camp in 2002 displaced approximately 4,000 people. Nearly all of the 232 people displaced in Nablus over the past two and a half years lost their homes in military operations.⁸ Tens of thousands of additional homes have been damaged to the point of being uninhabitable during military incursions. In Gaza, from 2000 to 2007, the partial or total destruction of 7,342 houses, largely as a result of Israeli military activity, impacted 69,350 residents, among them 34,224 children.⁹

During 2008, 1,151 Palestinians—including a confirmed 419 children and an additional estimated 194 children¹⁰—were displaced or affected¹¹ by the demolition of 156 residential structures in the OPT.¹² Of these, 87 houses were demolished and 404 Palestinians (including 227 children) were displaced in East Jerusalem alone.¹³ In addition, over 4,000 homes were demolished between 27 December 2008 and 18 January 2009 during Israel's

military operation in Gaza¹⁴ and at the peak of hostilities, 200,000 people were estimated to be displaced-among them 112,000 children.¹⁵

In a 2008 Gaza study, 28 percent of children surveyed had witnessed the demolition of a friend's home and nearly 19 percent had witnessed the demolition of their own home.¹⁶

WHY ARE HOUSES DEMOLISHED?

Various explanations are given by Israeli authorities for the demolition of Palestinian homes. The Israeli human rights group B'Tselem documented the official reasons given for the demolition of over 4,100 Palestinian houses in the OPT between 2000 and 2004. Sixty percent were demolished in 'clearing operations' (i.e. mass demolitions); 25 percent were destroyed for the lack of building permits; and 15 percent were destroyed as punishment against accused militants.¹⁷ In this latter case, 32 percent of the individuals were in Israeli detention, 21 percent were 'wanted', and 47 percent were already dead.¹⁸ When the homes of suspected militants are

60% of 4,100 Palestinian houses demolished between the years 2000 and 2004 were demolished in military 'clearing' operations.

25% were destroyed for lack of building permits.

15% were destroyed to punish accused militants.

demolished, they are usually demolished without prior warning.¹⁹ In some cases, residents were not able or were not given the opportunity to evacuate and died in the building's collapse.²⁰

SECURITY RATIONALE

When demolishing houses of Palestinians suspected of committing security offences, Israeli authorities refer to article 119 (1) of the 1945 Defence (Emergency) Regulations approved by the British government at the time of the British Mandate in Palestine:

A Military Commander may by order direct the forfeiture by the Government of Palestine of any house, structure, or land from which he has reason to suspect that any firearm

has been illegally discharged, or any bomb, grenade or explosive or incendiary article illegally thrown, or of any house, structure or land situated in any area, town, village, quarter or street the inhabitants or some of the inhabitants of which he is satisfied have committed, or attempted to commit, or abetted the commission of, or been accessories after the fact to the commission of, any offence against these Regulations involving violence or intimidation or any Military Court offence; and when any house, structure or land is forfeited as aforesaid, the Military Commander may destroy the house or the structure or anything growing on the land.²¹

The Israeli Supreme Court regards the Defence (Emergency) Regulations as a section of Israeli local law, despite the fact that they were rescinded at the end of the British Mandate.²² Israeli authorities began applying those regulations to the OPT in 1967.²³

ADMINISTRATIVE RATIONALE

Due to restrictive zoning and urban planning, bureaucratic and financial obstacles, Palestinians seek to resolve urgent housing needs by building without an official permit, despite the risk of subsequent

demolition. Three-hundred and twenty-five homes, over half (184) of them in Jerusalem, were demolished in the West Bank due to the lack of building permits between the years 2004 and mid-2007, according to B'Tselem.²⁴

Throughout the West Bank, but in Jerusalem in particular; observers note clear discrimination in the application of building regulations and punishment meted out. Between 1996 and 2000, for example, the number of recorded building violations was four and a half times higher in Israeli neighbourhoods of Jerusalem (17,382 violations) than in Palestinian neighbourhoods of East Jerusalem (3,846 violations). But the number of demolition orders over this period issued in West Jerusalem was four times less (86 orders) than the number in East Jerusalem (348 orders).²⁵

"In other words, while over 80 percent of building violations were recorded in West Jerusalem, 80 percent of actual demolition orders were issued for buildings in Palestinian East Jerusalem," according to the World Bank.²⁶ Between 1999 and 2003, 157 Palestinian-owned buildings were demolished in Jerusalem

by Israeli authorities, compared to only 30 Israeli-owned buildings.

Many families continue to live with the threat of displacement through house demolition. In 2005, there were more than 10,000 outstanding demolition orders for Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem alone.²⁷

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A HOUSE IS DEMOLISHED?

Once a home is demolished, the family loses both the house as a financial asset and often the property inside it; in addition it is liable for the costs of the house demolition which can run up to tens of thousands of dollars. To avoid these costs, Palestinians subject to administrative house demolitions may "opt" to undertake the demolition of their own home and pay a smaller fine in a deal with authorities. It is not known how many Palestinians choose this route; however, ICAHD fears that their numbers rival those whose homes are demolished by the authorities.²⁸

The demolition of inhabited structures may affect many families at a time. Often in the OPT, the entire extended family lives in close proximity to one another, and even in

the same building. The demolition of one structure therefore, or collective demolitions within a defined area, can destroy not just the family domicile but also each nuclear family's most immediate source of support and social capital.

When a house is demolished, individuals must cope with the trauma in an environment of family trauma, which makes it much more difficult to receive the needed care. For children, who would normally be protected and cared for by their parents, the initial trauma is magnified.

Depression, for instance, is one prevalent symptom after the experience of trauma, especially one of loss. One study published on the psychological impact of house demolition showed a tendency among mothers in these families to develop symptoms of depression.²⁹ Other studies have discussed the impact on children of parental depression. They show that children tend to experience behavioural and emotional disturbances³⁰ when parents are not able to meet the children's needs due to distraction with their own.

HOW DO HOUSE DEMOLITIONS IMPACT COMMUNITIES?

PROTECTED PERSONS

House demolitions frequently impact Palestinian refugees and internally displaced persons, as well as other protected groups. Palestinian refugees comprise the largest and longest-standing unresolved refugee case in the world today. In 2007, there were an estimated seven million Palestinian refugees worldwide and 450,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Israel and the OPT.³¹

The rights of Palestinian refugees and IDPs are guaranteed under international human rights and humanitarian law, which includes the Fourth Geneva Convention, the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, UN General Assembly Resolution 194, and UN Security Council Resolution 237.

COMMUNITIES AT RISK

In 2008, UN agencies confirmed that 198 communities in the OPT currently face forced displacement because of their proximity to settlements or their locations within so-called closed military zones. This includes 81 communities of 260,000

Palestinians and semi-nomadic Bedouin living between the Wall (a series of cement walls, barbed wire and “smart” fencing being constructed in the West Bank by Israel) and the 1948 “Green Line” that demarcates the boundary between Israel and the OPT. Ma'an Development Centre has also identified an additional 98 enclaves or areas in the West Bank where communities are surrounded by the Wall and settlements, or other Israeli infrastructure, in a manner that restricts Palestinian movement. The 312,810 Palestinians living in these enclaves are particularly vulnerable to internal displacement, in part because they are more likely to have their homes demolished.

The 1993 Oslo agreements signed between Israel and Palestinians designated 60 percent of the West Bank as Area C, which falls under Israeli civil and security control. Over 94% of applications for building permits in Palestinian communities located in these areas were denied by Israeli authorities between January 2000 and September 2007. (Prior to the late-1970s when Israel began its settlement enterprise in the OPT, permits to build were readily granted to Palestinians.)³² Building continues

regardless, as Palestinians try to meet their housing needs; between January 2000 and September 2007, 5,000 demolition orders were issued and over 1,600 Palestinian buildings were demolished.³³

In the Gaza Strip, the creation of a 500-metre to one-kilometre wide military ‘buffer zone’ along the Egyptian border has transformed former residential areas into military no-go zones.³⁴ Sixteen thousand people in the southern Gaza Strip town of Rafah—more than 10 percent of its population—had lost their homes by 2004.³⁵ In June 2006, as many as 5,100 Palestinians were displaced in a series of Israeli military incursions in the Gaza Strip.³⁶

THE BEDOUIN

“In September 2007 the Special Rapporteur visited Al Hadidiya in the Jordan Valley where the structures of a Bedouin community of some 200 families, comprising 6,000 people, living near to the Jewish settlement of Roi, were demolished by the IDF. This brought back memories of the practice in apartheid South Africa of

destroying black villages (termed “black spots”) that were too close to white residents. Article 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention prohibits the destruction of personal property ‘except where such destruction is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations’.”

The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, 21 January 2008.

The Israeli policy of house demolition has had particular consequences for the Bedouin population inside Israel and the OPT. Tens of thousands of Bedouin, indigenous Palestinian residents of the Negev (Naqab) before the state of Israel was created, live in communities unrecognized by Israel. Nearly 40 percent of the residents of the unrecognized villages in the Negev are under the age of nine. Construction in these villages is prohibited. As a result, 45,000 structures have been built ‘illegally’ in southern Israel, according to the Israeli Ministry of Interior, and could be ordered demolished. The escalating practice of demolishing

unlicensed homes was criticized as “discriminatory” in a 2007 Human Rights Watch report which called for a moratorium on the policy.³⁷

While our report focuses on the OPT, studies of house demolitions in the Negev reflect similar impacts on children. “House demolition is a traumatic and difficult event for all the members of the family,” said Alean al-Krenawi in an opinion written for Physicians for Human Rights. “The existence of the home fills a vital and basic need for children, and its absence impairs the development of safe and adaptive relationships.”³⁸

Bedouin who were displaced to the West Bank face a similar dilemma.³⁹ It is estimated that there are 6,000 Bedouin families in the West Bank. As Israel expands strategic settlements in the Jerusalem area, Bedouin living in open areas are increasingly vulnerable to demolition orders and eviction.⁴⁰

Moreover, when displaced, the Bedouin have limited coping resources. They are reliant upon herding with few opportunities for other income-raising activities. They have little social standing in an area where urban class structures

dominate. The Bedouin also are largely ignored by the Palestinian Authority,⁴¹ increasing their vulnerability. As a group on the margins now facing house demolition and evictions, the Bedouin represent the worst case scenario of house demolition and displacement.



RELATED INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN AND HUMAN RIGHTS LAW

Fourth Geneva Convention

Article 53

Any destruction by the Occupying Power of real or personal property belonging individually or collectively to private persons, or to the State, or to other public authorities, or to social or cooperative organizations, is prohibited, except where such destruction is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations.

Article 33

No protected person may be punished for an offence he or she has not personally committed. Collective penalties and likewise all measures of intimidation or of terrorism are prohibited; Pillage is prohibited; Reprisals against protected persons and their property are prohibited.

Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement

I. Every human being shall have the right to be protected against being arbitrarily displaced from his or her home or place of habitual residence.

2. The prohibition of arbitrary displacement includes displacement:

- (a) When it is based on policies of apartheid, "ethnic cleansing" or similar practices aimed at/or resulting in altering the ethnic, religious or racial composition of the affected population;
- (b) In situations of armed conflict, unless the security of the civilians involved or imperative military reasons so demand;
- (c) In cases of large-scale development projects, which are not justified by compelling and overriding public interests;
- (d) In cases of disasters, unless the safety and health of those affected requires their evacuation; and
- (e) When it is used as a collective punishment.

3. Displacement shall last no longer than required by the circumstances.

Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 9

I. States Parties shall ensure that a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will...

Article 24

I. States Parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health...
States Parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health care services.

Article 27

I. States Parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development...

3. States Parties, in accordance with national conditions and within their means, shall take appropriate measures to assist parents and others responsible for the child to implement this right and shall in case of need provide material assistance and support programmes, particularly with regard to nutrition, clothing and housing.

Article 28

I. States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity...

Article 31

I. States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

Article 38

I. States Parties undertake to respect and to ensure respect for rules of international humanitarian law applicable to them in armed conflicts which are relevant to the child...

4. In accordance with their obligations under international humanitarian law to protect the civilian population in armed conflicts, States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure protection and care of children who are affected by an armed conflict.

3 - STUDYING THE IMPACT OF HOUSE DEMOLITIONS ON CHILDREN & FAMILIES

ABOUT THIS STUDY

Many studies have been conducted on the policy of house demolition in the OPT. Most have been primarily legal studies, combining theory, description and analysis and sidelining practical assessment of individual responses and needs.⁴² A significant number of papers have been written on the psychological impact of house demolition and its effect on children or adults.⁴³ Yet, none have taken a 'whole person' approach, tackling the policy's impact on the individual, his or her family and the wider socio-economic environment.

This study draws a portrait of Palestinian families who have experienced house demolitions, describing their needs and coping mechanisms in order to make recommendations for an appropriate coordinated humanitarian response. To do so, it uses structured mental health questionnaires, semi-structured questionnaires of the family's socio-economic conditions and the events of the demo-

lition, and open interviews with families. (For a detailed description of the survey methodology, see the Annex.)

Full profiles were collected from 56 families whose houses were demolished by Israeli military forces between the years 2000 and 2006, except for two families whose houses were demolished in 1992 and 1994. (Fifty-nine families were approached in this study and 58 families provided detailed socio-economic profiles, while 56 families gave detailed information on the demolition of their home.)

In addition, open interviews were carried out with seven of the families surveyed. The interviews were carried out with a family from Rafah; the parents and two children of a family from Ramallah; a mother and her daughter from Bethlehem; a father from Bethlehem; and two children from two different families and a mother from a third family from Jenin refugee camp.

HOUSE DEMOLITIONS: THE DAY OF AND THE DAY AFTER

The data collected illustrates the transformation in the families between the time of the demolition and the study interview, looking at socio-economic factors, health needs, assistance provided, as well as mental health developments:

ON THE DAY OF THE DEMOLITION

A Portrait of Families Surveyed

"We had at our home swings, roses, fig trees-everything was gone. There were a lot of memories [there]... Right after the holiday feast, our house was demolished."

—Duha, 15, Ramallah

- On the day their home was demolished, the number of people present in the homes of families interviewed were 237 children under 18 years of age (123 male and 114 female) and 198 adults (98 male and 100 female). Three of the children were under three months old, three children

were between three and six months old, and eight children were between six months and one year old.

- The average number of family members living in the houses on the day of the demolition (the above numbers include visitors and extended family) was 8.4. An average of 66% (5.5) of family members were under 18.
- On the day of the demolition, there were ten pregnant women present (three were more than six months pregnant, five were in-between the third and fifth month of pregnancy and two women were in the early stages of pregnancy).
- At the time of demolition, there were four adults suffering from poor health and critical disabilities present; two suffering from failing eyesight, one was mentally disabled and another had cancer.
- Three people suffering from disabilities or chronic diseases were injured during the course of the Israeli military demolition of their home.

- 39% of the families (23) were from refugee camps, 37% were from towns (22), and 24% (14) were from villages.

"Previously our life was better than it is today. They took my father and demolished our house. Our house now is like the one before it, but without my toys and storybooks that I used to read. All our things were charred and burnt, and our house and our neighbor's house were spilling open in front of each other after the demolition. I used to sit by myself and imagine it as it was in my memory, but it was hard sometimes to imagine it like before. When I went back after the demolition, I could hardly look at it and so I left and sat on the street below."

—Saji, 13, Bethlehem

THE DEMOLITION PROCESS

Destruction of Property, Arrests & Physical Injury

Ahmad, in his 50s, experienced the demolition of his Bethlehem-area home twice. His family's house was first demolished in June 2004 in a military operation. Two years later, in November 2006, the house was issued a demolition order and again

demolished. Most of the family was living in a rented apartment and Ahmad was there when he heard that the Israeli military had surrounded his old home and ordered all the residents outside. The soldiers kept calling on Ahmad's [adult] son to come out or they would destroy the house, but the father felt sure that his son was not inside.

Only after the house was demolished was his son's body found in the rubble. Subsequently, the elderly man refused to leave the house, stopped participating in social events, didn't go to work and ended his hobby as a referee in the local football league. He told interviewers: "I didn't care that the house was demolished, or even for the neighbors, only that this time my beloved son was lost. My mental state was terrible. My wife became ill psychologically. We are not a family now, but destroyed. They oppressed us when they immorally and illegally killed my son, as he sat in his own home."

House demolitions are often accompanied by injuries, arrests and even the death of family members. Severe health problems can follow the trauma of house demolition.

- 41% of the 56 homes studied were said to be demolished for military reasons, 27% demolished as a punitive measure, and 13% demolished for alleged lack of building permits. The 11 remaining houses were demolished for unknown reasons.
 - Arrests occurred during seven demolitions.
 - Over half (52%) of the homes of the 56 families in our survey were demolished in a collective demolition, where a series of homes or a neighbourhood was razed.
 - Palestinians were injured in 22 of the house demolition events. Three of the injuries were incurred by family members to whom the homes belonged.
 - One family member was killed during the demolition, and one woman died from injuries incurred during the demolition.
 - Families reported debilitating changes in family members' physical health-including stroke, diabetes, and high blood pressure-following the demolition of their homes.
- The family of Duha, 15, unwittingly rented out an apartment in their building to a wanted man. One night, the Israeli military arrived and soldiers told her family and the other residents to leave. The families waited in suspense for hours. Duha was in an apartment across the street.*
- "I was so afraid and terrified," she told interviewers. "It was the first time I was afraid this way. I couldn't stand it. My nephew was with me, too. I tried to talk to him to pass the time and ignore what was happening outside with the soldiers. I decided to stop crying. I kept myself calm by playing with my nephew." By morning, soldiers had shot and killed the wanted man. But they were not finished-they planned to demolish the apartment building to punish the family. "[When] we asked the soldiers to allow us to get some things before they demolished our house, they refused," Duha remembered.*
- "After a while, they allowed my brother and two of my youngest sisters to go inside to get our things. They refused to let my other sister get her identity card. We lost 300 shekels that belonged to my sister; my sister-in-law lost her money and her gold.*
- "Even the things that we got out of the house were shredded and damaged because the soldiers shot at them. My mother kept some of her shredded clothes as keepsakes. After that, we ran away. They told us that we could return at five o'clock, but where were we supposed to go after they demolished our home? It's gone."*
- Only 13% of the 56 families said they were able to remove belongings from the home before it was demolished.⁴⁴
 - All of the families surveyed lost property. The average losses incurred in the demolition of these buildings were estimated at JD73,490 (approx. \$105,090). The average losses incurred in destroyed possessions and building contents were estimated at JD35,847 (approx. \$51,261) per family.

“ My wife became ill psychologically. We are not a family now, but destroyed. ”

FOLLOWING THE DEMOLITION

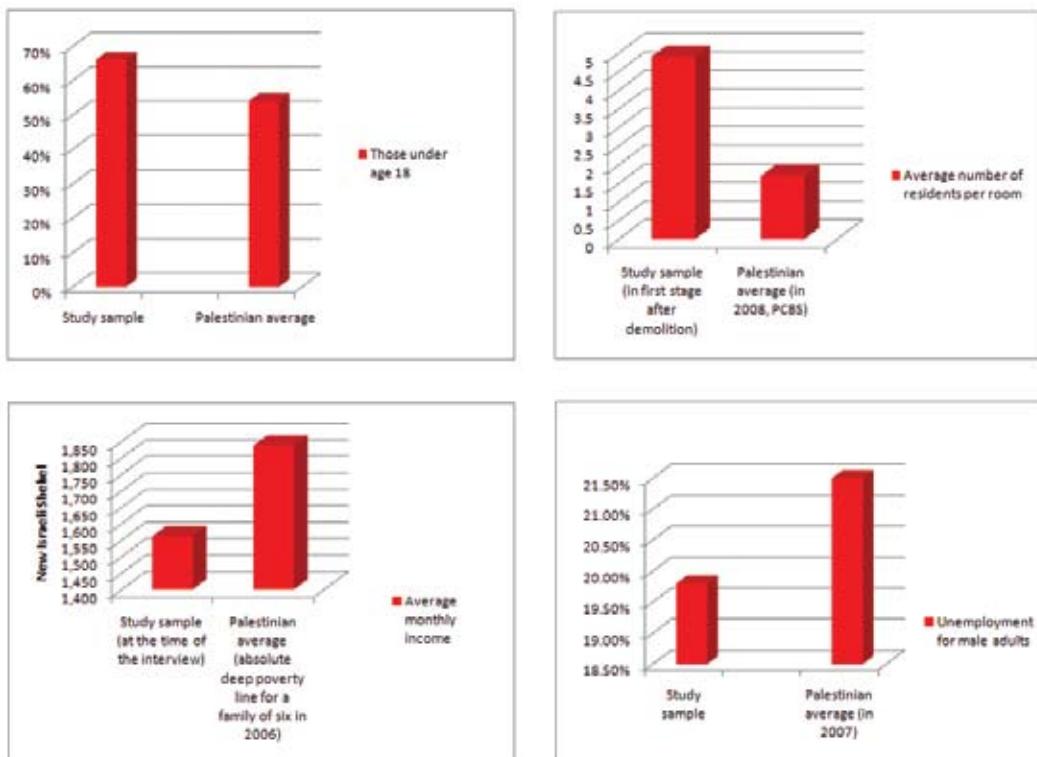
Displacement & Insecurity

Amal lives in Bethlehem and is the wife of detainee Isam Baker. Her house was demolished to punish her husband who was, at that time, wanted by Israeli authorities and in hiding.

"When we first left [the demolished house], my daughter asked me, 'Where are we going to go?'" Amal recalled. "Houses aren't important, but the children were hard-hit psychologically. I have a son entering first grade who was sleeping next to his sisters when the soldiers came. They grabbed him right away, and he saw the soldiers and was afraid. Now at night, he wakes up crying. When he wants something, it is like he is not

my son—he shouts and cries. He is now ten years old, and it affects his studies. When he opens a book, he keeps it open on the same page. Before the fear and what happened to my husband, they did better academically and got good grades. When I asked about my son Bilal in 2nd grade, the teachers used to say that he answers right away. He was getting 95s, but now only with difficulty will he not repeat the year."

Study Families Compared to the Average Palestinian Family



- Immediately after the house demolition, only two families of 56 were able to remain in their homes (these homes were only partially demolished).⁴⁵

- 20 of the other families went to live with relatives.

- 19 families rented apartments, three stayed in tents, one was housed in a hospital and another in a school, one reported being in the 'street'.

- This led to crowded living conditions, with one family cramming 30 people in one room. The average number of people in a room in this initial period was 4.9. (In 2008, the Palestinian Bureau of Statistics put average housing density in the OPT at 1.7 per room.)

Duha's mother described the family's new living conditions after Israeli soldiers demolished their Ramallah home to punish them for renting an apartment to a wanted Palestinian.

"No one wants to lease us an apartment because we are 15 people - 10 girls and three boys and me and my husband," she said. The night the building was demolished we went to

Immediately after the demolition, most families are forced to find housing wherever they can, either crowding together or breaking up the family unit.

57% of the 56 families interviewed whose homes were demolished never returned to their original residences.

Half of those who did not return said that Israeli forces prevented them from returning. Others said the original home was not safe.

Urban residents may find it easier to return to their homes than do refugee camp residents or villagers.

my brother's house. The next day in the morning (it has been one year and two months now) we moved to a [temporary housing] container - we got three containers. It was difficult to stay at my brother's house because they are a big family and we are a big family. Living in the container is hell. Animals lived in the containers before us. I wish it was better. It was difficult during summer and winter. A snake came by my legs as I hung the clothes up to dry. There is no electricity and there is no bathroom.

My husband made a makeshift toilet next to the container. We were able

to get electricity, and we fixed up the place and brought in mattresses. Of course, the container is not large enough for one mattress per person. We had more than one container - one for sleeping, one for food and as a kitchen, and one for visitors. We used to relieve ourselves outside. We cannot take a shower. We used to sit on cardboard."

- 57% of the 56 families surveyed never returned to their original residence.

- Of those who did not return, half (15 families) said that the

Israeli military authorities prevented them from returning (seven in Gaza, six in the West Bank and two in Jerusalem).⁴⁶

- Of the remaining families who did not return, 10 said that the area was not secure, two found better employment in a different area, one found assistance elsewhere, and one remained living with their extended family.

- Half of those who eventually returned to their reconstructed homes were from towns, 36% were from refugee camps, and 14% were from villages.

- Most of the families surveyed were from refugee camps, and were unable to return to a reconstructed home. The study indicates that urban residents may find it easier than others to return to their reconstructed homes after the demolition of their houses. Palestinian urban areas are usually administered by Palestinian authorities and experience less interference from the Israeli military than border regions in Gaza or Area C in the West Bank, as described earlier in this report.⁴⁷

Ahmad's Bethlehem home was destroyed twice. "There was no opportunity to remove our furniture," recalled Ahmad, "and we had 15 minutes to get our important papers. It was so difficult-we had no recourse, no court [of appeal], no choice but to see our home demolished. That night we slept in the street, since the soldiers turned the place into a closed military area. [Afterwards], we stayed with family and the neighbours - by god, we spread ourselves between aunts and uncles. The family was dispersed, and this deeply affected us."

- 71% of the 56 families moved at least twice before settling in a place of residence after the demolition of their home.
 - 20 families moved twice, 12 moved three times, five moved four times, two families moved five times and one family moved seven times.
 - Two families did not move at all, and 14 families moved just once after the demolition of their home.
- 61% of the families surveyed experienced at least two years of moving before finding a

House demolitions are followed by long periods of instability for the family.

71% of the 56 families moved at least twice before settling in a place of residence after the demolition of their home.

Most families took at least two years to find a permanent place of residence.

17% of families (all of them in the Gaza Strip) changed their children's school after their house was demolished.

permanent residence after the day of demolition.⁴⁸

- Nine families experienced more than four years of transition (with the majority still not stable in their residence at the time of the interview).

- Eight families experienced three to four years of housing instability; four families experienced two to three years; ten families experienced from

one to two years; six families from half a year to one year; ten families from one month to half a year of instability; and four families experienced less than one month of instability.

- Even families who eventually returned to the site of their demolished homes experienced an average of 13 months displacement before returning.
- 26% of families experienced the separation of one or more family members from the family unit after the demolition of their home, affecting 50 of the children surveyed.⁴⁹
- 45% (25) families (at the time of the study) were living in houses that they owned, 38% (21) families were living in rented houses, 11% (six) were living in houses belonging to the extended family and 7% (four) were living in houses belonging to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency that provides services to Palestinian refugees.

Educational Changes & Decline

Saji, age 13, was 11 when her Bethlehem house was demolished. "We were down by the mosque and heard the sound of the explosion," she recalled. "We sat for an hour outside and it was really cold and I was afraid—very afraid. When I heard the sound of the demolition, I became fearful and angry. I started to cry. Then we went out and saw the apartment destroyed. I was sad afterward. We went to the old house in the refugee camp, but I wasn't happy in that house. Things were normal; my uncles helped us, supporting my father until we had rebuilt the house and moved back. But I regressed in my studies. I stopped studying and concentrating, although slowly got better. The demolition also affected my friends at school and my relationships. I didn't like to talk to anyone because I didn't want any of them to ask me what happened."

- 17% of families put their 46 children in different schools following the demolition of their homes. All of these families were from the Gaza Strip.

Data collection for the study took place in the summer of 2007, which did not allow us to collect information from schools, but the testimonies of children and their families indicate that most children who have experienced a house demolition have seen a subsequent decline in school achievement. As noted above, a significant number of children are forced to change schools after the demolition of their home.

"All our things are gone. There is no money. We were absent from school for one week because we lost our school uniforms, our books and our clothes. Our teachers brought me a school uniform and a bag - at first, I was going to school wearing slippers." —**Duha, 15, Ramallah**

“ At first, I was going to school wearing slippers. , ,

ON THE DAY OF THE STUDY INTERVIEW

Information gathered on the day of the study interview was used to assess the socio-economic and mental health status of the families studied post-house demolition.

Poverty & Economic Hardship

"There is no income and no money. We wish we could leave, and make a change. Even my father is starting to think about selling the [containers] and leaving the country. Our economic condition and our housing are not good. We are getting nervous... I feel extremely claustrophobic. The situation is getting worse; we can't stay this way, living in a container... In the winter, the situation was worse. We used to heat with firewood. We could not have a shower or do anything. Everything smelled smoky, including our clothes."—**Duha, 15, Ramallah**

- 57% of the 56 families surveyed described their economic status as poor or very poor.
- Only 2% of the families described their economic status as excellent, 10% said their

economic status was good, and 41% said theirs was average.

- Average monthly family income at the time of the interview was NIS 1,561 (USD 355).⁵⁰

In 2006, the absolute (deep) poverty line and the relative poverty line for the average household of six people in the OPT stood at a monthly income of less than 1,837 NIS (USD 414) and 2,300 NIS (USD 518) respectively. The first refers to a budget for food, clothing and housing, while the second adds other necessities such as health care, education, transportation, personal care and housekeeping supplies.⁵¹

- The percentage of unemployment among the male adults was 19.8%. Among female adults, the unemployment rate was 4.1%, since 73.1% of the women identified themselves as homemakers and are not part of the regular labour force. Average unemployment in the OPT in 2007 was 21.5%.
- Seven children under the age of 18 had jobs.

"I get angry when they ask me what I have cooked. I tell them 'lentils', and some days 'rice with lentils'. They tell us that their stomachs now have roots from the lentils. What can I do? This is what is available. Your father cannot work; he is disabled and I do not work and you are studying. Who then can support you?" This is what I tell them... We are forced to take them out of school so that they can work. The work is hard—it is too difficult for them. But children need support—they need food and they need school bags... I feel that I am tired and suffocating. I feel stinging pains in my chest and I am not at ease. What can I do except cry? What can I do? Go beg?"—**Duha's mother, Ramallah**

Lack of Assistance

"No organization offered to help. At the beginning, UNRWA offered—they brought us some food, flour and lentils and beans, blankets and kitchen supplies. The Palestinian Counselling Center helped us with the children. The Red Cross brought us some mattresses and blankets; they were not wool."—**Duha's mother, Ramallah**

- 14 families reported receiving assistance from organizations (governmental organizations included) and eight families reported receiving assistance from their extended families.
- 22 families reported that the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) arrived on the scene after demolition; 14 reported that the UNRWA was there; eight reported the arrival of Palestinian Authority ministry representatives; six reported the arrival of various non-governmental organizations or political parties; three reported more than one organization at once (unspecified); one family reported a response from nobody and two did not answer the question.⁵²

“After the demolition, I waited for the morning and took my children and returned to the refugee camp. My leg was hurting me and I couldn’t stand. The

*Red Cross came, but I wasn’t there. They recorded the usual: what did we need them to give us? A tent and house wares. But I had the house in the camp, and the governorate helped us to rent an apartment and the neighbours helped us pay the rent.”—**Saji’s mother, Bethlehem***

Declining Mental Health

How Children Respond When Their Home is Demolished

*“The house is goodness, and goodness ended with its demolition. Our health is lost, our children changed for the worse.”—**father, Ramallah***

When children whose home has been demolished were compared with a control group using mental health questionnaires, all indicators showed comparably worse mental health among the first group, even six months after the time of the demolition (see table below).

The child’s experience of the demolition of his or her home may, therefore, result in long-term trauma.

Almost 80 percent of the 103 children for whom data was available witnessed the demolition of their homes (82 vs. 21). There was no difference between the mental health of these children and those who did not see their home demolished.

Nor did girls and boys exhibit notable differences in mental health indicators, in either the control group or among children whose houses were demolished.⁵³

Older children did not appear to be better protected against the psychological trauma of house demolitions than their younger peers.

Table on Mental Health Findings - Children

Withdrawal

"I do not like to hear loud noises or the voices of children; I love to stay by myself and to sleep."
—girl, Bethlehem

Children whose houses were demolished are more withdrawn than other children, preferring to remain alone or stay quiet in the presence of others.

Somatic Complaints

"I feel I'm suffocating."—boy, Ramallah

Children whose houses were demolished complain more than other children of somatic complaints such as dizziness, pain in various parts of the body, and problems in breathing without any known cause.

Anxiety/Depression

"My heart has become black in colour."
—girl, Ramallah

Children whose houses were demolished suffer from anxiety and depression more than other children. They cry more, are afraid to go to school, feel they are not loved or that others are bad to them, feel guilty, nervous and are very tense.

Social Problems

Children whose houses were demolished suffer more than other children from social problems such as difficulty relating to other children, greater attachment to adults, age inappropriate behaviour, or preferring to remain with younger children.

Delusions, Obsessions, & Other Problems

"I took photos of the house on my mobile while [it was] being demolished and I keep replaying it to see it falling. I like to see it because it reminds me of that house. I remember the old days, those sweet days."
—boy, Ramallah

Children whose houses were demolished exhibit delusional, obsessive, compulsive, and psychotic thoughts more often than other children.

Attention Difficulties

“My daughter says, ‘I study and study, but in the exam when the teacher asks me I forget.’”

—mother, Bethlehem

“I cannot concentrate in my studies. Today, I mean, I cannot concentrate and I do not like to study.”

—boy, Ramallah.

“They see photos of demolition and cannot focus. She is in 12th grade, but failed. There is no way to study. There is no place to study.”—mother, Ramallah

Delinquency

Violent Behaviour

“They are driving me crazy. They do not listen to me at all; I do everything by shouting and yelling at them.”

—mother, Bethlehem

“I scream at them, and hit them [my brothers and sisters]. I was not like this in the past. I become agitated very quickly.”—her daughter, Bethlehem.

“Their morals have changed. They hit each other; they do not tolerate each other anymore. They are over-sensitive and violent with each other.”—mother, Ramallah

Other Symptoms

Children whose houses were demolished have a harder time concentrating than do other children. They are overactive, under-motivated, easily confused and quick to lose focus and daydream.

Many of these symptoms are indicative of mental illness including depression.

Children whose houses were demolished tend more towards delinquency than other children, for example, hanging out with troublemakers, lying and stealing, not showing remorse and running away.

Children whose houses were demolished exhibit violent behaviour more than other children, for example, not responding to others' requests at home and school, destroying their property and that of others, acting brusquely with others, fighting frequently and demanding attention.

Parents report bedwetting, thumb-sucking, inappropriate sexual behaviour and other behaviours more frequently among families whose homes were demolished.



A Palestinian girl east of Jabalia refugee camp walks near a home flattened by Israeli bombardment in the Dec. 2008 - Jan., 2009 war in Gaza.PHOTO/O:DAMO

Impact on Adolescents

Adolescents in the study were asked directly how they felt, in

addition to the recording of their parents' observations about them. The results echo the findings about all children who have experienced

the demolition of their home (see table below).

Table on Mental Health Findings - Adolescents

Trauma-Related symptoms

"I dream a lot that the army has come into the house and wants to hit me... I cannot sleep sometimes because I remember our house."

—boy, Ramallah

"We were afraid after the demolition. We could not sleep. I was afraid sometimes, that while we were sleeping, I would find the house demolished over my head. I was always tense... and I used to cry." —girl, Rafah

Sense of Family

Adolescents whose homes have been demolished suffer from more trauma-related symptoms than their peers. The evidence of this effect is present even six months after the event.

Adolescents whose houses were demolished expressed feeling less family coherence than their peers: they felt that family events and their way of life were less comprehensible, more difficult to manage, and less meaningful than did adolescents in the control group.⁵⁴ In other words, the family after a home demolition is less able to help the adolescent understand events, manage daily issues, provide meaning, and fulfil children's needs.

The Parent-Child Relationship for Children Under 12

Children under age 12 are more attached to their parents, unlike

adolescents who select their psychological resources from a wider environment, including friends, school and the neighbourhood. The interplay of mental health con-

ditions and socio-economic factors following the demolition of home results, our study shows, in rising tension between the parents and their children (see table below).

Table on Mental Health Findings - Parent-Child Relationship

Distractibility and Hyperactivity

Increased distractibility and hyperactivity in children whose homes have been demolished increases tension in the child's relationship with his or her parents.

Demanding Behaviour

"I never [used to] refuse their demands, but I cannot help it. It is a horrible feeling when they ask for something and I cannot afford. I become angry or start to scream at them. What can I do? It is really beyond my capabilities."—father, Ramallah

Families of children whose homes have been demolished feel that their children are more demanding than do families in the control group. This increases tension in the family, as parents struggle to meet their own mental health needs and resolve new, difficult economic realities.

"The way we deal with our children has changed; when my daughter asks for a shekel, and I do not have a penny [to give her] it breaks my heart. How should I feel when I cannot give her even one shekel to buy what she wants?"—mother, Ramallah

Depression

"I felt my chest hurt, and I don't feel good. I cannot do anything but cry. I feel comforted when I cry, what else can I do?"—mother, Ramallah

Parents whose homes have been demolished suffer from melancholy and depression more than adults in the control group. This detrimentally impacts their ability to parent, adding to their frustration and distress and exacerbating depression.

Health

“Our health conditions are poor. My mother-in-law had a stroke after the event, and I suffered from diabetes. My husband suffered from diabetes and [high blood] pressure, then he had a stroke due to these conditions. I never thought that I would suffer from diabetes.”

—mother, Ramallah

“My father suffered from a stroke and stayed in bed. He became very tense and could not stand any of us. The relationship between my siblings and I changed, and we started to say words we had never used before.”

—daughter, Ramallah

The study found that the greatest sources of tension in the home were—for children—their feelings of being neglected by their parents and—for parents—an increase in depression. It is clear that parents in families who have experienced the demolition of their home require psychosocial support to help them meet their own needs and those of their children.

How Parents Respond when their Home is Demolished

“One of the most difficult things [to experience] is to be in a house, then to be on the pavement. How can this be true? There is no clothing, no money... There is no money to buy anything.”

—mother, Ramallah

Families of children who have had their homes demolished suffer more from health problems than the control group. This places greater demands on the family unit, diminishes the parents' sense of self, self-worth and competence, engenders a sense of failure and aggravates the problems in the relationships between parents and their children.

“Their mother then began to suffer from nightmares. When she is sleeping at night, she starts screaming.”

—father, Rafah

“More than anything, I have become very agitated and my nerves are extremely on edge.”

—mother, Jenin

Parents feel great loss after the demolition of their home. Nevertheless, they remain responsible for child care, as well as handling the basic demands of daily life.

The study found that 97% (92 out of 95) of mothers and fathers whose homes were demolished suffer from trauma-related symptoms.

The Relationship Between the Parents

“It was a large building. But at the time of the demolition, what happened happened only to me. Only I collapsed, and after two days I felt a sharp pain in my leg. I have been bothered by it for four years, and should have had an operation but I was pregnant. I used to take 14 aspirin a day, but I didn't get better. I stayed day and night going and coming and wide awake from the pain. The reason for this was that I never shouted and never cried, so it [the pain] came out that way.”

—mother, Bethlehem

The study found that if one parent whose house has been demolished

exhibits severe symptoms of mental illness, the other parent is also likely to experience severe symptoms. This apparent correlation may be attributable to common features of the trauma that both parents experienced, or to other unknown factors.

Having a family member with a severe physical or mental illness imposes additional stresses that can exacerbate predispositions to mental illness.

Prevention: Parents' Mental Health

A significant factor in the mental health of children is the psychological wellbeing of the parents. Our study found that the psychological wellbeing of the mother has far more impact on children than the father's psychological wellbeing. Similar results were observed in the severity of trauma-related symptoms of the adolescents sur-

veyed and their correlation to the mother's psychological state. Other research has shown that a mother's ability to appropriately nurture and care for children has serious implications for their short medium and long-term neuro biological wellbeing. This has measurable effects on the development of children's and adolescents' brains that can adversely affect them for life unless remedial treatment is provided.⁵⁵

In Palestinian society, the mother is often the primary guardian of the children and thus has great influence over them and their emotions. Maintaining the mother's mental health is a major factor in maintaining the child's mental health, especially in times of tragedy and insecurity.

Despite the lack of a direct correlation between the psychological health of the father and child, there are indicators of an indirect

relationship. Adolescents report that they feel congruity and a sense of family (i.e. personal and family coherence) at the same time that their father says he receives support from his environment. In other words, the support that the father receives from within and beyond the family impacts the family, providing an atmosphere where adolescents feel their world makes sense despite the trauma of the house demolition.

In turn, social support, according to the study, is a protective factor for teenagers in hard times, ameliorating the severity of post-traumatic stress symptoms.

Further, social support plays a crucial role in protecting parents against the psychological consequences of house demolitions, in particular avoidance, depression, and psychosis.

4 - WHAT IS BEING DONE?

Current responses to displacement, both as a result of house demolition or other causes, can be described as both ad hoc and inconsistent, as significant gaps exist related to the protection of IDPs and assistance for IDPs within the OPT.

Currently, first line responses to displacement are provided by UNRWA and the ICRC in the form of emergency shelter, food and other basic supplies intended to help IDPs cope with immediate material losses of home and property. This emergency assistance does not sufficiently meet the needs, as demonstrated in this survey, and also fails to address the needs of the host family or community. It is not complemented by adequate intermediate and long-term assistance responses and focused interventions to prevent displacement. Specifically, the current response does not involve searching for durable solutions as outlined in the Guiding Principles (namely voluntary return or resettlement and local integration for IDPs).

In an effort to address these weaknesses, as part of the UN-led Protection Cluster, a Displacement Working Group was formed in late 2007 through which UN agencies and non-governmental organizations (international, Palestinian and Israeli) are working to develop and implement an inter-agency response to internal displacement. Building on existing studies on displacement in the OPT and preliminary data that has been gathered, the group's longer-term initiatives include documenting and monitoring the situation with a view to improving advocacy efforts to mitigate and stop forced displacement and implementing a protection response that seeks to prevent forced displacement, address vulnerabilities during a displacement event, and searches for a durable solution.

In the 2008 and 2009 UN Consolidated Appeals,⁵⁶ the Protection Cluster prioritized forced displacement and the need for a more coordinated response.

Examples exist of communities that are successfully resisting displace-

ment pressures. In Al Aqaba village in the Jordan Valley, donor investment in education, health, water, agriculture, infrastructure, and livelihoods has been identified by residents as supporting those people who still remain. Parallel advocacy campaigns, coordinated visits of the international community and the media, and legal assistance services have also provided a level of protection for villagers.

In the Um al Nasser village in Gaza, 1,450 people were displaced in March 2007 following a breach of a nearby sewage lagoon. Here, displacement was expected as the construction of a sewage treatment station has been stalled and the lagoons were (and remain) full to overflowing. Prevention efforts were not employed effectively. However, the emergency response following the displacement—including prompt assessment and provision of short-term emergency shelter, water, food, hygiene and kitchen kits; prompt clean-up and rebuilding efforts; 24-hour medical assistance; comprehensive psychosocial assessments; and effective coordination and communica-

tion—can be viewed as an example of effective response to be emulated and improved.

Some donors have recently incorporated protection responses to forced displacement pressures as part of their emergency protection responses. Save the Children UK, Welfare Association, and the

Palestinian Counselling Centre are developing programmatic responses to help prevent displacement.

These examples provide a basis for developing best practice around preventing displacement and working for durable solutions. More work also needs to be done, however; to map communities at

risk of displacement, survey IDPs to find out what they need in order to return, and examine the impact of this phenomenon on IDP and host families and communities. See Recommendations section at the end of the report for fuller details of the steps required to implement a UN-led coordinated inter-agency response.



An Israeli military bulldozer demolishes a home in Kharbatha, near Ramallah, on April 1, 2004. PHOTO/ O. SILWADI

5 - CONCLUSION

"I still remember the day the Israelis destroyed our house. It was the last day of Ramadan... Suddenly we heard some noise outside, and when my father looked out from the window, he saw the Israeli tanks in front of our building. I started crying and shouting. I knew they came to kill us... All this

happened just before [the Muslim holiday] Eid. Everything was burnt, including my new Eid clothes... Everyone was happy about Eid except me. I was crying that day. I couldn't go to school later because all my school things were burnt."—**Salma, Beit Lahia in the Gaza Strip**

This study seeks to highlight the direct victims, particularly children, of house demolitions and make policy recommendations on the basis of its findings.

FROM IMPACT TO A RESPONSE

The following table lays out the impact of the demolition of a home on families, according to this study's findings.

	<i>Immediate stage 1-30 days</i>	<i>Short-term stage 1-6 months</i>	<i>Long-term stage More than six months</i>
General state of the family	In shock	Survival: Trying to survive as one unit	Chronic disruption in family life
Residence	Interim shelter: usually a tent, mobile home, school or public building. Many turn to relatives and a few can afford a rented house.	Interim residence: rented houses, houses owned by relatives or the extended family. A few renovate their demolished house and return to it.	Alternate residence: Half of the families returned to their homes after renovation. The rest stay in rented houses or houses owned by the extended family.
Food and clothing	Dependent upon aid institutions: concentration on basic needs, mainly food and water. Shortage of clothing, which has been damaged during demolition.	Needs only: demand for permanent aid, if available, and other aid including basic needs, mainly food. Shortage in clothing.	Poverty: most families live in deteriorated economic conditions, whereby food and clothing are available in small quantities. Some children suffer from malnutrition.

	<i>Immediate stage 1-30 days</i>	<i>Short-term stage 1-6 months</i>	<i>Long-term stage More than six months</i>
Hygiene and health	Ruins: life in a ruined environment filled with waste. Waste water sewage systems are often damaged. Neglect of health needs such as medicine for chronic diseases because they are not available and not a top priority.	Overcrowding: families live in overcrowded permanent residences causing deteriorated health conditions. Health conditions of the chronically-diseased deteriorate.	'New' residence: living conditions improve after the family adapts to new situation, yet it remains less comfortable compared to the demolished house. Development of psychophysical symptoms. Deterioration in general health conditions.
Health services	Dependent upon aid institutions, which provide basic health services at the demolition scene, especially in cases of collective demolition.	Recipient of health services available in the OPT (ministry of health, UNRWA, etc.)	Services are available but are not used due to poor finances. No financial resources available to purchase medicine and go for tests.
Labour and financial status	Temporary halt: the family head stops working to manage family issues and provide support during the critical time.	Return to work: Previously employed family members return to their careers, especially salaried employees.	Some time after the demolition, some family heads lose their jobs due to deteriorated psychological health or movement to another area. Those self-employed are most deeply impacted due to serious financial losses incurred.
Education and schools	Temporary interruption: children are absent from school for days to remain close to their parents. In many cases of collective demolitions, schools were temporarily shut down.	Return to school: most children return to school after a short time, either to their previous schools or a new one if they have moved to a new area.	Schools return to normal; nevertheless, children get low marks and suffer from serious behavioural problems. In some cases, children drop out of school.

Through analysis of the data collected through the field work, it is clear that children and families who experience house demolition have special needs brought about by this experience of trauma. Indeed, the clear mental health and socio-economic consequences of house demolition indicate that children and the family are not being protected as required by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other human rights conventions, the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and international humanitarian law.

The rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child include the child's right to equality, the right not to be arbitrarily displaced, the right to adequate housing, the right to live in dignity, the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to health and education, the right to live with parents in a sound environment, and the right to play and be free from violence and fear (see p. 17).

The demolition of a house is only the beginning of trauma for these children and their families. The majority of the families studied whose houses were demolished were subsequently repeatedly displaced

for long periods of time—the majority for two years or more—affecting dozens of children.

"Now I am alone and there is no one to play with. A long time ago I used to play with other kids my age. I liked them and also liked playing with them. Now I play with my cousins—but not a lot."—**Sultan, 12, Ramallah**

This study shows that these children must cope with continuous and ongoing trauma, as feelings of loss haunt them in their family and their wider environment. Children report a subsequent loss of nurturing and tenderness from their parents, who are supposed to act as their protectors. Analysis of the study's results shows trauma-related deterioration in the parent's mental health, while one-third of the parents were in danger of consequentially developing mental health disorders. Thus, the deteriorated mental health of their parents further places children at risk, as they lose emotional security as a consequence of physical insecurity.

As indicated, children whose houses were demolished were in poor mental health compared with their peers. This affected the children's overall health and resulted in social

withdrawal, difficulty relating to their peers, violent and sometimes delinquent behaviour, stress and depression, difficulty in concentrating, attention problems, and higher rates of obsessive, compulsive and psychotic behaviours. These broad psychological symptoms emphasize the fact that the mental health consequences of house demolition resemble a continuous trauma rather than a single incident of trauma. Although beyond the scope of this study, there are also physical consequences of psychological trauma. These include irritable bowel syndrome, fibromyalgia, and other somatic complaints.⁵⁷

The majority of house demolitions studied resulted in the displacement of the inhabitants. The subsequent period of migration is determined by the family's financial resources, the assistance they receive and the possibility of returning to the same land after the house demolition. Generally, migration leads to significant change, mainly distance from the extended family. It also leads to tension in the relationship between the nuclear family and extended family members due to fundamental changes in the lifestyles of both. Maintaining proximity to the original home

and the family's cultivated network of resources around that home is important for a family's health and ability to cope.

Our study shows that certain family mechanisms break down after the trauma of house demolition. Tension accumulates in the relationship between the parent and the child, limiting the ability of this relationship to ease the impact of trauma.

Usually the mother plays a major role in alleviating or aggravating her children's post-traumatic stress symptoms. Children may be unable to overcome the trauma of the house demolition without her help, and she may be preoccupied with her own symptoms. The father plays an indirect role, albeit one not less important. A psychologically-healthy father provides a healthier family atmosphere, which helps the mother and the children overcome their crisis. Therefore, the child's psychological health is closely associated with the parents' health.

These families are not only traumatized at the time of the demolition or afterwards, but also preceding the destruction of their home. Direct threat of demolition, on one

hand, and daily cases of demolition in targeted areas, on the other, led participants in the study to panic in anticipation. One family in Rafah even reported feeling a sense of stability and reassurance following the demolition, explaining that daily anticipation of the demolition of their house was far worse than their feelings following the demolition. If a family seeks to reconstruct their demolished house, there is often the risk that the home will be demolished once again.

WIDER CONSEQUENCES OF NO RESPONSE

In addition to risks to children and families, the internal displacement of Palestinians threatens to significantly change the social fabric and demographic composition of Palestinian society and the OPT. No response will also increase instability and worsen poverty.

The long-term effects of forced displacement in the OPT may be analogous to urbanization. IDPs in cities will remain there or move further into the crowded inner city. This study has shown that refugees whose homes are demolished become residents of urban areas, further straining municipal resources.

Overcrowding in host communities has consequences for health and education, risking the spread of disease and lowering enrolment rates. It also risks increased conflict over resources such as land and water.

Displacement from agriculturally strategic areas, including the northern West Bank and the Jordan Valley, could have severe consequences for food security in the OPT. In 2000, Jenin, Tulkarem and Qalqiliya—all areas with considerable access issues related to the Wall and other Israeli military infrastructure—accounted for 45% of agricultural production in the West Bank. Displacement from these areas will presumably increase aid dependency.

Forced displacement in Gaza follows different patterns. Effectively stuck and with nowhere else to go, Gazans are forced to return to unsafe and already overcrowded areas. Without a coordinated response by the aid community to the problem of house demolitions, Palestinians face increasing internal displacement, compounded socio-economic problems, and a shift in the demographic landscape.

6 - RECOMMENDATIONS

“[T]he demolitions ordered either for lack of permit or another pretext have a military dimension and a gratuitously cruel nature.” —Miloon Kothari, UN Special Rapporteur on housing, June 12, 2002

“Israeli policies on house demolitions … may, in certain instances, amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.” —UN Committee against Torture, 2001

The findings of this study show that Palestinian children and their families who experience the demolition of their homes are not being properly protected.

Not only are house demolitions carried out for punitive reasons, as collective punishment, or in military operations considered a violation of international humanitarian law (as stipulated, for example, in Article 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention) but Israel's policy of house demolitions is also a violation of its obligations as stipulated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the UN Guiding Principles on Forced Displacement and other international human rights law.⁵⁸

The state of Israel has, in addition, failed to take up its protective role in responding to the special needs of families following the demolition of their homes. The Palestinian Authority has been unable to take up its responsibilities in this regard due to a lack of resources and because it exercises no administrative, legal, or political control over the most vulnerable areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Instead, local, international, and UN agencies have committed themselves to responding to these obligations.

To respond effectively to the special vulnerabilities of children and their families following an event of such trauma, the following should take place:

- Development and roll-out of standardized forms and questionnaires to assess vulnerability and damage and to ensure appropriate responses.
- Monitoring of displacement and registration of displaced families to more effectively support rehabilitation and re-integration of families.

- Establishment of mechanisms that provide sustained service provision for relief and rehabilitation, including a clear referral system for providers of psychological, health, and education services.
- Creation of a mapping mechanism for monitoring communities at risk of displacement, along with identification and implementation of localised prevention strategies.

In addition, we recommend the following steps be taken to protect children and their families.

STATE OF ISRAEL

- Halt the demolition of Palestinian homes.
- Respect and apply to the OPT the principles of international humanitarian law, international human rights law, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and relevant Security Council resolutions.
- Establish/mandate an independent commission to investigate

the legality of house demolitions that will address questions of restitution and compensation for those who have been harmed in contravention of international humanitarian law.

- Hold a hearing in the Knesset on the impact of house demolitions on the well-being of children in the OPT, and their relationship to Israeli responsibilities under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Ensure aid community access to populations at risk and to people that have been displaced.

PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY

- Monitor and document the practice of house demolition in the OPT, in particular East Jerusalem, the resulting displacement, and the damage caused.
- Advocate for prevention of house demolitions in the OPT, through political pressure and by providing support for legal

intervention to families threatened with house demolition.

- Ensure necessary assistance for victims of house demolitions, especially children, particularly providing psychological support and necessary referrals.
- Ensure that displacement and house demolitions remain on the agenda during political negotiations.

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

- Advocate for prevention of house demolitions in the OPT, through political pressure and by providing support for legal intervention to families threatened with house demolition.
- Develop and implement an inter-agency response to internal displacement in the OPT.
- Mobilize funds to implement the response, through the Consolidated Appeal Process and other mechanisms.

- Take up the issue with the Special Rapporteurs, the Special Representative to the Secretary General, and the Emergency Response Coordinator.

DONOR GOVERNMENTS

- Apprise themselves of conditions related to internal displacement.
- Ensure that information related to internal displacement is included in the delegations' regular reporting to headquarters, as well as the country-specific needs assessments.
- Integrate support for the UN-led inter-agency response into funding strategies.
- Call upon Israel to adhere to its obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law vis-à-vis its house demolitions policy.



A camp of internally displaced in Jabalia, northern Gaza. PHOTO/M. FATHI

7 - ANNEX - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH SAMPLE

Information was collected from 59 families whose houses were demolished by Israeli military forces between the years 2000 and 2006, except for two families whose houses were demolished prior. Within these families, 106 children (61 male and 45 female) between the ages of five and 18 were targeted by the study. Psychosocial questionnaires were filled out by 95 of the families (42 fathers and 53 mothers), in addition to questionnaires filled out for or by (depending on age) 96 control children (54 male and 42 female). The average age of children in families whose houses have been demolished was 12.05 years, compared with 11.63 years for the children in the control group. There is no statistical difference in age and gender between the control children and the children in the study.

In addition, a number of open interviews were carried out profiling seven different families. The interviews encompassed a family from Rafah, the parents and two children of a family from Ramallah, a mother and her daughter from Bethlehem, a father from Bethlehem, and two children from two different families and a mother from a third family from Jenin refugee camp.

TOOLS

Structured Questionnaires

The following questionnaires were translated from English into Arabic to be used in the study.

Children Behaviour Checklist (CBCL):⁵⁹ This questionnaire consists of 112 indicators rated from zero to two in accordance with their manifestation. The indicators are related to child mental health: withdrawal, somatic complaints, anxiety/depression, social problems, thought problems, attention difficulties, delinquency and violent behaviour, as well as introversion. This questionnaire is designed to study children between the ages of four and 18. In our study, we have used the version designed to be taken by the parents rather than the children themselves.

Brief Symptoms Inventory (BSI):⁶⁰ This list consists of 53 symptoms rated on a scale of zero to four in accordance with their manifestation. It is designed to be taken by adults and measures the following indicators: somatisation symptoms, obsession compulsion, depression, phobia, hostility, and psychosis, among others. In addition, general indicators may also be extrapolated, such as the General Severity Index (GSI), which reflects the severity of the symptoms suffered.

Parenting Stress Index (PSI):⁶¹ This questionnaire seeks to measure stress in the relationship between child and parent. It consists of 101 items (items 102-120 associated with life pressures were eliminated). The questionnaire measures two perspectives of stress: that of the child, which includes distractibility and hyperactivity, adaptability, reinforcing of parent, demandingness, mood and acceptability, and that of the parent, which includes competence, social isolation, attachment to the child, health, role restriction, depression and spouse.

Posttraumatic Diagnostic Scale (PDS).⁶² This scale consists of 17 items representing posttraumatic psychological symptoms in accordance with DSM IV, which are rated on a scale according to their manifestation. Three types of symptoms can be extrapolated: intrusion, avoidance and hyperarousal. In addition, diagnosis can be made according to DSM IV standards.

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Index (PSDI).⁶³ This questionnaire includes 22 symptoms to be rated on a scale from one to five, according to their appearance. The scale is designed for children and teenagers and assists the diagnosis of posttraumatic stress disorder, in accordance with DSM IV.

Coping Strategies Questionnaire (CSQ).⁶⁴ This questionnaire consists of 30 methods arranged on a scale from one to two in accordance with the extent to which each is used in problem resolution. Three stress coping strategies can be extrapolated: those focused on the problem, those focused on emotions and avoidance.

Social Support Index (SSI): This index consists of 12 statements used to measure the satisfaction of the individual with the support he/she receives from the people around him/her. Each item is rated from one to seven, depending on the respondent's feelings regarding the applicability of each sentence.

Sense of Coherence Scale (SOC-13).⁶⁵ This is an abridged version of Antonovsky's sense of coherence scale. It consists of 13 sentences that are to be rated from one to seven by the respondent. The scale is considered a good measure of resilience against symptoms of disease as a result of trauma. Elements

of the individual's sense of coherence can be extrapolated: understanding, management and concept.

Family Sense of Coherence (FSOC).⁶⁶ This questionnaire consists of 12 items for measuring the sense of coherence within the family. It is a development of the previous questionnaire's theory on to the family. It consists of 12 sentences that are to be rated from one to seven accordingly.

Self-Esteem Scale: This questionnaire consists of ten statements to be rated from one to four depending on the individual's agreement with the statement. This is a simple measure of self-esteem applied to teenagers.

Semi-Structured Questionnaires

This questionnaire was designed to learn about the family building, its demolition, and the living conditions of the family prior to and following the demolition. The questionnaire includes queries on the following:

- A.** Information regarding the parents and children (age, vocational and academic level, health status and any other observations);
- B.** Their economic conditions: steady and periodic income, assets, land or property, children receiving education in universities or private schools;
- C.** The reasons and procedures surrounding the house demolition. Reasons are divided into three categories: security, lack of a building permit, or punitive. Legal procedures applied by the Israeli authorities were recorded in detail;

- D.** The house demolition, how it was carried out, who was present, injuries and damage incurred;
- E.** A description of the demolished building and its value, as well as furnishings lost; and
- F.** The stages experienced by the family following the house demolition. In this section, the head of the family describes the various stages of the family's movements and residences since the day of the demolition to the present. A table of questions about living conditions during each period is filled out. This table relates directly to the Child's Rights Convention and the experiences of children under the new living conditions.

Interviews

All interviews were conducted with families who did not participate in the quantitative research.

Interviews opened with introductions, then the interviewee was asked to narrate the story of the demolition. Interviewers were expected to ask few questions at the beginning of the interview, and only illustrative ones. In some interviews, the interviewees needed to be drawn out and interviewers were told to ask questions regarding the changes that had occurred since the house demolition. The interviews with children were much more challenging, as they often had difficulty in expressing themselves. Nevertheless, they were more genuine, not seeking to embellish their narrative of events. Many individuals approached to be interviewed refused; therefore, they were replaced with individuals from other families.

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

Information and data on houses demolished between the years 2000 and 2006 were collected with the assistance of various organizations (B'Tselem, Al-Haq, Al-Mezan, The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, the Housing Ministry, governorates and village councils). By examining the data collected, a research sample was adopted of one house for every 60 houses demolished. Houses were divided into four districts: North West Bank (Jenin, Nablus, Tulkarem, Qalqilya and Salfit), Central West Bank (Ramallah, Jericho and Jerusalem), South West Bank (Hebron and Bethlehem) and the Gaza Strip. In each district, cases were divided further between houses in cities, villages and refugee camps.

The field teams used the data to establish the following parameters limiting the sample to:

- 1.** Families with houses that were demolished between 2000 and 2006;
- 2.** The presence of children between the ages of five and 18, one child at least and preferably two; and
- 3.** Demolition of the house while the family was living there.

The heads of the families selected were contacted. The above-mentioned organizations, with the assistance of local councils and mutual acquaintances, helped arrange home visits to the families. The research team of two individuals was present at all the home visits, dur-

ing which the relevant questionnaires were filled out. Occasionally, there was a need to return, either because time ran out or due to the absence of targeted members of the family.

The research team tried to approach the study's control children at the same time of the visit by searching for children of a similar age in the neighbourhood. Unfortunately, this wasn't always successful and the team had to seek out children similar in residence, age and gender at a later time.

RESEARCH SYSTEM

The demolition questionnaires (semi-structured questionnaires) were filled out by one of the parents in each family. Both parents were asked to fill out the following: the Posttraumatic Diagnostic Scale (PDS), Brief Symptoms Inventory (BSI), Coping Strategies Questionnaire (CSQ) and the Social Support Index (SSI). In addition, one of the parents (preferably the mother) was asked to fill the Children Behaviour Check List (CBCL) for all participant children.

Children were divided between those who were under age 12 and teenagers (12-18 years). Given that children under 12 are incapable of filling the questionnaires by themselves, one of their parents filled out the Parenting Stress Index (PSI) instead. However, a number of questionnaires were directly filled out

by the teenagers: the Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Index (PTSDI), Sense of Coherence Scale (SOC-13), Family Sense of Coherence (FSOC), Coping Strategies Questionnaire (CSQ), Social Support Index (SSI) and Self-Esteem Scale.

The control children were divided in a similar manner, whereby one of the parents (preferably the mother) filled out questionnaires for children under 12 years of age, and teenagers filled out their own questionnaires. In addition, the CBCL was completed by the parents for the control children.

DATA ANALYSIS

All structured questionnaires and sections of the semi-structured questionnaires were entered into the SPSS program for statistical analysis. Statistical analysis was carried out by comparing averages of indicators from the control group and the study group, including gender differences, through the t-test. In addition, correlations were calculated between the different variables. Some of the correlations concerned the same person, whereby the correlation between psychological health indicators and protective/risk factors were calculated. The other set of variables, however, measured the relationship between psychological indicators for different members of the same family. The questionnaires and interviews conducted for this study were considered evidence of the demolitions and their aftermath.

8 - ENDNOTES

¹ While the US dollar has fluctuated in the last year and exchange rates are difficult to set, but for the sake of comparison, the same exchange rate was used for the poverty rates given below.

² 1,837 NIS (USD 414) and 2,300 NIS (USD 518) respectively. The first refers to a budget for food, clothing and housing, while the second adds other necessities such as health care, education, transportation, personal care and housekeeping supplies.

³ Inter-Agency Standing Committee Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings, p. 3.

⁴ For more information about early demolitions, see for example Ilan Pappe's 2004 book, *A History of Modern Palestine: One Land, Two Peoples*, Cambridge University Press. According to data available from the Committee against House Demolitions in Israel, 24,130 houses have been demolished since 1967, 6,000 of them directly after the war in Latrun (the villages of Emmaus, Beit Nuba, Yalo), as well as most of the Dung Gate neighbourhood in Jerusalem's Old City ("Statistics on House Demolitions", ICAHD, February 2009)

⁵ ICAHD.

⁶ As described below, demolitions by the Israeli army are only one segment of the demolitions that Israel carries out. ICAHD documented that between October 2000 and 2004, 628 homes were demolished as collective punishment against the families of persons suspected of involvement in attacks on Israelis. An additional 1,900 homes were demolished between September 2000 and May 2007 by Israeli civilian authorities due to building permit violations.

⁷ Save the Children UK Fact Sheet, June 2007

⁸ OCHA Weekly Briefing Notes

⁹ Al-Mezan Human Rights Organization

¹⁰ Total displacement numbers for January and March are at least 215 (predominantly in the West Bank) and 135 respectively, and at least 95 children are known to have been displaced during March. An additional 147 people were displaced during March in Gaza (UN OCHA). The estimate for child displacement in January was achieved by applying the overall West Bank child population percentage to the known total displacement number for that month. The final estimate for March was achieved by applying the overall Gaza child population percentage to the additional 147 displaced people in Gaza, and then adding this estimate to the 95 already documented displaced children.

¹¹ "Affected" refers to people impacted by the demolition of a seasonal residence; such as the winter or summer residence of a Bedouin family.

¹² This data is compiled from reports produced by the Israel/OPT Working Group on Security Council Resolution 1612 on Children and Armed Conflict.

¹³ According to the Israeli Committee against House Demolitions.

¹⁴ "Direct Losses in Infrastructure", Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, January 2009.

¹⁵ "IOF Escalates Its Attacks on Gaza", Al Mezan Center for Human Rights Press Release, January 2009.

¹⁶ Gaza Community Health Program

¹⁷ "Through No Fault of Their Own: Israel's Punitive House Demolitions in the al-Aqsa Intifada", BTselem Information Sheet, November 2004.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ According to the BTselem study, only 3% were given prior warning. This was born out by our study's sample, where most house demolitions took place without prior warning. Only one family out of 59 actually received a warning. In addition, 34 houses were demolished during the night without prior warning.

²⁰ For example, during 2002 incursions into Nablus city, Israeli bulldozers demolished the al-Shabi house while they were still inside. Eight family members were killed, including six children.

²¹ Defence (emergency) Regulations (1945). Palestine Gazette No. 1442, 2, 1055.

²² See al-Haq for more on the subject of the Emergency Regulations.

²³ The Israeli High Court has ruled on hundreds of appeals by Palestinians seeking review of pending home demolitions but has usually ruled in favour of the military authorities.

²⁴ For more information see Khameyeh, R. (1989 Arabic & English). Israeli Planning and House Demolishing Policy in the West Bank, PASSIA and Amirav, M (2007). Sandrom Yerushalayem: Cacha qarsa hamadiniot loach Yerushalayem [Hebrew].

²⁵ "Movement and Access Restrictions in the West Bank: Uncertainty and Inefficiency in the Palestinian Economy," World Bank, May 9, 2007

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ "Meanwhile Israel grabs the rest of Jerusalem," Herald Tribune, Hind Khouri, August 2005.

²⁸ Home demolitions in East Jerusalem, Meir Margalit, Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, 24 July, 2007

²⁹ Qouta, S., Punamaki, R-L., El-Sarraj, E. (1998). "House demolition and mental health: Victims and witnesses," Journal of Social Distress and Homeless, 6(3), 203 – 211.

³⁰ Low, S., & Stocker, C. (2005). "Family functioning and children's adjustment: Associations among parents' depressed mood, marital hostility, parent-child hostility, and children's adjustment," Journal of Family Psychology, 19(3), 394-403.

³¹ These numbers are estimates, but they include: 4.5 million Palestinian refugees displaced in 1948 and registered for assistance with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency; an estimated 1.5 million Palestinian refugees displaced in 1948 but not registered; 950,000 refugees displaced in 1967; an estimated 338,000 internally displaced Palestinians in Israel; and an estimated 115,000 internally displaced Palestinians in the OPT. "Q & A", Badil Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights, 2008.

³² "Israel strangles Area C development," Jerusalem Post, Oct. 27, 2008, Dan Izenberg.

³³ "Lack of Permit' demolitions and resultant displacement in Area C," UN OCHA, May 2008.

³⁴ "Occupied Palestinian Territory: Forced displacement continues", Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, September 2008, p. 7.

³⁵ Razing Rafah: Mass Home Demolitions in the Gaza Strip, Human Rights Watch, October 2004.

³⁶ At the peak of displacement, UNRWA was accommodating almost 51,000 people, among them approximately 28,560 children, in 44 shelters across Gaza. (OCHA) It has been estimated that 300-500,000 people were displaced, among them 112,000 children. (Al Mezan)

³⁷ Off the Map: Land and Housing Rights Violations in Israel's Unrecognized Bedouin Villages, Human Rights Watch, March 30, 2008.

³⁸ 'The Ramifications of House Demolitions in Israel on the Mental Health of Children,' Orly Almi, Unrecognized Negev Villages Project, Physicians for Human Rights – Israel

³⁹ See "Jahalin Bedouin Refugees - Nowhere Left to Go," ICAHD, October 28, 2007.

⁴⁰ "West Bank herders afflicted by drought," IRIN, December 13, 2008.

⁴¹ See "Bedouin Nomads Under Threat in the Holy Land," Carolyne Wheeler, Daily Telegraph, 25 August, 2008 or "Forced Displacement of Bedouin," POICA Case Studies, 10 January 2008, www.poica.org

⁴² These studies include Amnesty International, "Under the rubble: House demolition and destruction of land and property," 18 May 2004 and "Demolition of Palestinian houses by Israeli occupying forces as a means of punishment and determent: A report on the Demolition of houses of families of Palestinians who carried out, planned or facilitated armed attacks against Israeli targets," 10 January – 30 June 2003; Darcy S., 2003, "Israel's punitive house demolition policy: Collective punishment in violation of international law," Al-Haq; and B'Tselem, "Through no fault of their own: Israel's punitive house demolitions in the al-Aqsa Intifada" information sheet, November 2004 and "Policy of destruction: House demolition and destruction of agricultural land in the Gaza Strip" information sheet, February 2002.

⁴³ See citations throughout this report.

⁴⁴ It should be noted that the response to this query (13%) are highly subjective: in the interviews, respondents sometimes said they were allowed to remove "nothing" from the house, but went on to describe being allowed a few minutes to grab documents.

⁴⁵ Numerous families surveyed did not answer this question, hence the use of numbers here instead of percentages.

⁴⁶ The answers to this question were open-ended and therefore families did not indicate how the Israeli military prevented them from returning.

⁴⁷ Not all refugees in the OPT live in refugee camps. Of our sample, 54% of the mothers and fathers in the families reported being refugees.

⁴⁸ 31 of 51 families who responded to this question.

⁴⁹ 13 of the 50 who responded to this question.

⁵⁰ While the US dollar has fluctuated in the last year and exchange rates are difficult to set, for the sake of comparison, we have used the same exchange rate as the poverty rates given below.

⁵¹ UN OCHA OPT Socioeconomic Fact Sheet, April 22, 2008.

⁵² Fifty-six families answered this question.

⁵³ The lack of difference contradicts studies of other populations that examined samples and found contrasts, but it seems that the conditions experienced by Palestinian children, particularly children whose houses were demolished, erode these differences between boys and girls. To further support this, the control sample for our study

scored lower and exhibited more symptoms of poor mental health than the sample used by the CBCL's creators to codify the list of children's behaviour. Achenbach, T. M., (1991). Integrative Guide for the 1991 CBCL/4-18, YSR & TRF Profiles. Burlington, VT: University of Vermont Department of Psychology. Further research is needed.

⁵⁴ Sometimes extended family members fear greater dependence on the part of, or connection to, a traumatized family; sometimes compassion and pity, which can be difficult to cope with, are an obstacle to strong relationships.

⁵⁵ Bagot, R., Parent, C., Bredy,T.W, Zhang.T, Gratton, A. & Meaney, M.J.(2007). Developmental Origins of Neurobiological Vulnerability for PTSD. In Kirmayer, L.J., Lemelson, R., & Barad, M., Understanding Trauma: Integrating Biologica, Clinical and Cultural Perspectives. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁵⁶ The UN Consolidated Appeal is a tool for structuring a coordinated humanitarian response to complex and/or major emergencies within the consolidated appeals process (CAP).

⁵⁷ Mayer, E.A. (2007), Somatic Manifestations of Traumatic Stress. InKirmayer, L.J., Lemelson, R., & Barad, M., Understanding Trauma: Integrating Biologica, Clinical and Cultural Perspectives. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁵⁸ "International humanitarian law permits an occupier to take the drastic step of destroying property only when 'rendered absolutely necessary by military operations.' According to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), military operations are 'movements, manoeuvres and actions of any sort, carried out by the armed forces with a view to combat.' A belligerent occupation cannot be considered a "military operation" in itself, nor can every activity conducted by the Occupying Power be considered a military operation; rather, a military operation must have some concrete link to actual or anticipated fighting... Outside of combat, the Occupying Power may take measures to enhance its security. Among other things, it can temporarily take control of property to prevent its hostile use, build fortifications, and prohibit access to certain areas, but these measures must be compatible with a fuller range of human rights protections, including the right to compensation for properties seized. Although it has denied the applicability of international human rights instruments to Palestinians in the OPT, Israel is widely considered to be bound by these laws." Razing Rafah.

⁵⁹ Achenbach, T.M, (1991). Integrative Guide for the 1991 CBCL/4-18, YSR & TRF Profiles. Burlington, VT: University of Vermont Department of Psychology

⁶⁰ Derogatis,L (1975). Brief Symptoms Inventory. Edin Prairie, MN: National Computer System

⁶¹ Abidin, R. (1995). Parenting Stress Index: Professional Manual. Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resource, Inc.

⁶² Foa, E., Cashman, L., Jaycox, L., & Perry, K. (1997). The validation of self report measure of posttraumatic stress disorder: The posttraumatic diagnostic scale. Psychological Assessment, 9(4), 445-451.

⁶³ Pynoos, R., Rodriguez, N., & Steinberg, A. (2000). PTSD Index for DSM IV. Los Angeles: University of California Los Angeles.

⁶⁴ Carver, M., Scheier, J. & Weinraub, J. (1989). Assessing coping strategies: a theoretically based approach. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 56(2), 267-283.

⁶⁵ Eriksson, M., & Lindsrom, B. (2005). Validity of Antonovsky's sense of coherence scale: a systematic review. Journal of Epidemiological Community Health, 59, p 460-466.

⁶⁶ This questionnaire was developed by Segal based on Antonovosky's Salutogenic model.