



DIVERSITY IN EAST JERUSALEM

Newsletter of the EU Project "Advancing the Rights of Vulnerable
Palestinian Women and Children in East Jerusalem"



ADVANCING
THE RIGHTS OF
CHILDREN AND WOMEN
JERUSALEM

**HEINRICH
BÖLL
STIFTUNG**
فلسطين والأردن



Dr. Bettina Marx hbs Director

Dear Friends,

We are happy to present to you the second edition of our bi-annual electronic newsletter on Jerusalem. I take this opportunity to greet you and to present myself to you. I am the new director of Heinrich-Boell-Foundation Palestine & Jordan and I have taken over from my predecessor Dr. René Wildangel, who has passed the baton to me last October.

With this publication, we aim at keeping you informed about the situation in Jerusalem, which has witnessed an almost unprecedented upsurge of violence in recent months. The ongoing occupation, the spreading settlements, and the further marginalization of the Palestinian population of the city have given rise to chilling acts of despair by mostly young Palestinians. Their knife wielding attacks on Israeli soldiers, policemen, or civilians have in the majority of cases resulted in the death of the attackers. Fear and panic are spreading and while Israel insists on the unification of Jerusalem, the city is very much divided. Concrete barriers, checkpoints, budgetary discrimination, and striking neglect of the Palestinian neighborhoods are testimony to the uneven distribution of wealth, rights, and opportunities.

Our EU-supported project “Advancing the Rights of Vulnerable Palestinian Women and Children in East Jerusalem” tackles precisely this situation and strives to improve the life of marginalized Palestinians in their hometown. The project, that has entered its second year, covers a wide variety of activities

aimed at improving social, psychosocial, economic, and cultural opportunities of vulnerable children, youth, and women in the occupied East Jerusalem. The activities are implemented through our partner organizations: Right to Play, War Child Holland, ArtLab, ACAD, and SAWA. You will find information on all these organizations in this Newsletter with a special focus on SAWA's helpline for women victims of violence. Two opinion pieces – one written by a Palestinian and one by an Israeli - will reflect on the political background of the current situation. Furthermore, as life in East Jerusalem is especially difficult for young Palestinians, we put emphasis on children and youth with an article contributed by Defense for Children International - Palestine (DCIP).

Information about Jerusalem and links to additional articles and publications complete the Newsletter.

I hope that you will find this publication useful and informative. With this newsletter we want to keep you up-to-date on our EU-funded project and, more generally, about the grim situation in East Jerusalem, which is home to around 372,000 Palestinians.



ACAD

ACAD is a non-governmental development organization that contributes to the development of the agricultural sector in rural communities. ACAD, as a project partner, focuses on women's economic empowerment through the development of sustainable cooperative microenterprises.

Between September 2015 and January 2016, ACAD successfully completed the training How to Start Your Own Business at Burj al-Luqluq, The Domari Society for Gypsies, and Women for Life and Equality. This training aimed at increasing the viability of Small-scale Enterprises and at strengthening entrepreneurial spirit initiatives and behaviors. The beneficiaries could learn, for example, how to develop business ideas, how to explore the market and the competitors with the help of interactive methods such as case-studies, games, and positive change questions.

ACAD has also continuously ensured strong group-building spirits among women via weekly workshops designed and implemented by the social worker. The themes of the workshops were about increasing self-esteem while also exposing women to business skills (such as negotiation). The workshops were extremely important to support women during the period of political violence in Jerusalem as beneficiaries were suffering from fear, anxiety, and stress. During those workshops, women could share in groups their witnessing of political violence (such as imprisonment of relatives, soldiers searching private houses, harassment at checkpoints) and learn how to release negative energy via breathing and meditation methods, as well as how to make children cope at violent times.

www.acad.ps



ADVANCING LIVES IN THE BEDOUIN COMMUNITIES THROUGH PLAY

**RIGHT
TOPLAY**

www.righttoplay.com

Living in a Bedouin community, where play and games are limited and opportunities for recreation and amusement are not accessible to children, especially girls, children have little or even no chances of living their childhood like other children. They live in a remote area far from the city center, where safe play spaces are unavailable. The area is also threatened due to the occupation and the political situation. Additionally, children are deprived from playing safely, they do not have opportunities to try out activities, nor do they have their own space to express themselves freely.

Right To Play intervention at Badiet Al-Quds Primary School has provided children with the opportunity to engage, participate and

play together safely and enthusiastically, through implementing different activities, games, and rehabilitating a safe playground, where children can play safely. 46 children (100% of the school children) at school benefited from the playground and were playing together on a regular basis.

Ms. Yamama Al-Salameen, a civic education teacher, says: "Before rehabilitating the playground by Right To Play, the playground wasn't safe for children, it was full of stones where I couldn't implement activities. But today, when the recess bell rings, children immediately run towards the school playground to play. I can see the amusement and enjoyment in their eyes".

SAWA believes that both women and men have an essential role to play in ending gender-based violence, and that all members of the society can take active steps - even if small - towards building a less-violent, more equitable, and more resilient Palestinian community. To that end, SAWA has included activities with groups of men interested in social change among the components of the project with hbs and the other partners. Three groups took part in workshops addressing the different forms of violence affecting communities, the pressures of life in the tense East Jerusalem, and constructive ways to channel energy and work for the safety and well-being of all members of society.

Twenty nine men took part in a series of six workshops. Two were groups of drivers employed by the Jerusalem Bus Company, men who have regular contact with many segments of the society, and the third group was teachers from the Shuafat Boys School, who are in a prime position to influence the younger generation. One bus driver commented that he was glad SAWA had chosen to work with them, because they feel they are often ignored because their work is looked down upon. The sessions made them feel more positive and less stressed, and they began to treat one another with consideration, understanding that everyone faces problems and challenges. This greater empathy is an important start to lessen violence within communities and strengthen supportive, healthy relationships, at home and at work.



www.sawa.ps



Through external consultancy with War Child (WC), a study was conducted to assess the protection and the psychosocial needs of children and adolescents, especially girls and children with disabilities, in target neighborhoods in East Jerusalem. The needs assessment is part of “Advancing the Rights of Vulnerable Palestinian Women and Children in East Jerusalem” project and targets the following neighborhoods: The Old City, Wadi Hilweh, Wad Qaddum al-Bustan, Jabal al-Mukabber, at-Tur, ath-Thori, Ras al-Amud, and al-Issawiya.

Interviews conducted with children, adolescents, and CBOs showed that there are many psychosocial problems caused by the political and social dilemmas around them. Harassments by Israeli police and settlers and their guards, as well as the repeated attacks, arrests, and the loss of safety cause psychological pressure on these children. As a result, many psychosocial needs were found, as a result of this study, including the need for

protection and safe places, free self-expression, and the need to provide activities that release psychological stress. Other needs focused on raising awareness for children and their parents on the rights of children during detention and after detention, as well as the need for supportive education programs to ensure that children receive proper education after they have been released from arrest or detention, or during house arrests.

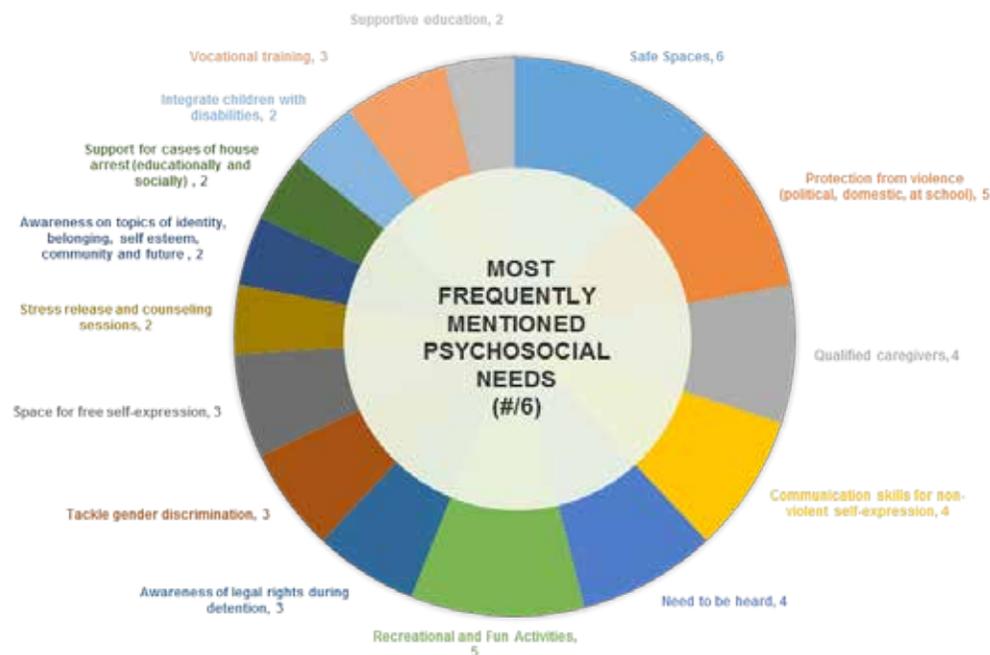
Results of the study also showed that there is a number of CBOs that provide services and programs for children. CBOs are based on the principle of voluntarism, and have the ability to communicate with the communities to which they provide services. CBOs enjoy a strong rapport with the community and are able to attract children and adolescents. However, they suffer from some challenges that affect the programs they offer in terms of quantity and quality. CBOs are not able to meet the growing needs of children, especially with the deteriorating

political, social and economic situation in East Jerusalem. It was noted through visits to these CBOs that they suffer weak infrastructures, a lack of outdoor spaces, proper health facilities, and many of them need rehabilitation and maintenance.

Additionally, CBOs need to develop institutional capacities, without neglecting the voluntary nature and the ability to stay close to their communities. They need to build their capacity in strategic planning, and in financial management in terms of budgeting, management, the development of clear and smooth financial measures, as well as the development and empowerment of human resources. It is also required to develop mechanisms enabling them to raise funds and to train staff on monitoring and evaluation. As grassroots organizations, CBOs need to build institutional capacities to develop and improve the quality of services and interventions they provide. Despite

the fact that some CBOs provide training for their employees to maintain a high quality level of specialized activities, there are many CBOs that lack the presence of such possibilities for development due to the lack of funding and external support.

Finally, the results of this study also showed that networking and coordination between institutions is not strong enough. Partnership remains within its narrow sense, often managed by stronger NGOs or CBOs that have a clear vision. CBOs have shown competitiveness and thus programs in many occasions are redundant instead of being complementary. Accordingly, there is a need to work on organizational development of CBOs on the one hand, and the development of the principles of networking on the other. CBOs also need to coordinate the exchange of knowledge and to share data in order to develop plans for networking based on the integration of their program.



<http://www.warchild.nl/>

<https://www.facebook.com/artlabjerusalem/?fref=ts>

ARTLAB

ArtLab Jerusalem

As part of the EU project and on a yearly basis ARTLAB recruits a new group of youth from Jerusalem and provides them with professional trainings in multimedia. ARTLAB provides new students with trainings in documentary photography, studio photography, video-making, creative writing and content development. After finishing the trainings the students work on one topic/theme with the goal of producing a final exhibition (in August) each year of the project with the facilitation and assistance of their trainers.

Simultaneously, second year students who have actively engaged in year one of the project (2014-2015), assist the professional trainers in providing trainings for the new students.

They also participate in advanced workshops in animation and graphic design. Moreover, second year students produce- with the support of ARTLAB - different personal productions. These productions are part of sub-grants that are provided to the students to give them the space to translate the knowledge they gained with the talent and skills they have to tangible products in multimedia.

ARTLAB aims at remaining a creative hub which fosters innovation and entrepreneurship through the use of multimedia to allow the youth to be actively engaged in defying all stereotypes.



Situation in East Jerusalem

Occupied East Jerusalem has always been at the center of the decades long Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but in recent months the city has seen an upsurge of violence which left residents, on both sides, on the edge.

Tensions over the status of al-Haram a-Sharif / Temple Mount, in the Old City, are said to have sparked this recent round of violence. But some observers also see the general hopelessness of Palestinian youth and the lack of perspective of any political solution as a trigger for the current wave of violence.

East Jerusalem and the Old City were captured in 1967 by Israel. After the war, Israel extended the city's municipal boundaries and annexed some 70 square kilometers to the municipal boundaries. These annexed territories included not only the part of Jerusalem that had been under Jordanian rule, but also an additional 64 square kilometers, most of which had belonged to 28 villages in the West Bank, and part of which belonged to the municipalities of Bethlehem and Beit Jala. Today about 37% of the inhabitants of the city are Palestinians. Legally, most of them are considered permanent residents rather than citizens.

If residents spent a certain number of years abroad, they can lose their residency in the city. According to Israeli human rights organizations, about 75% of the Palestinians in the Eastern part of the city live under poverty line. More than 100,000 Palestinian residents live in Jerusalem neighborhoods physically separated from the city center by Israel's security barrier, which makes access to municipal services difficult. Access to the city for Palestinians from the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip is tightly controlled by Israeli authorities. There is also widespread international concern over continued settlement building by Israel in sensitive areas of the city.

Sources: Israeli Central Bureau of statistics (CBS), Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI), UN-OCHA, BTselem.



RAFIQ HUSSEINI

Born in Jerusalem. Holds a B.Sc. from American University of Beirut, Masters in Health Management from UK, and PhD in Medicinal Chemistry. Founding Director of Medical Aid for Palestinians in the UK (1984-1994), Director General of the Palestinian Council for Health (1994-1995), Director of Operations at Welfare Association (1999-2005), Chief of Staff of President's Office (2005-2010), Deputy Secretary General of Union for the Mediterranean (2010-2013). Currently CEO of Makassed Hospital in Jerusalem (2013-date).

Government issued the Palestinian residents of Jerusalem with permanent residency cards (equivalent to those given to immigrants) as if they have arrived from outer space rather than being treated as the original indigenous citizens who have lived there for hundreds, if not thousands, of years! This "temporary" residency status was augmented by several laws and policies aimed at spiriting the population outside of the city by making their life untenable and difficult through denying them full property rights, heavily taxing them while giving little services in return, not granting building permits while allowing settlers to freely build and expand, and devising the "Center of Life" law, by which a Palestinian from East Jerusalem has his/her residency ID revoked if s/he resides or works outside the city for more than three years!

This unsettling - even threatening - situation produces enormous and continuous pressure on the Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem and, for them, the question becomes "to be or not to be".

Opinion: Is the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) doing enough to ensure full resilience of its Palestinian population in East Jerusalem?

Ever since Israel illegally annexed East Jerusalem just after the 1967 War, Palestinian residents of the Holy City have been placed under immense pressure to leave their city. The Israeli

To survive the Israeli unrelenting onslaught, the Palestinians in East Jerusalem need to be supported in 6 vital sectors. Naturally, such support would (should) come from the PNA. On a scale 1 to 5 in, how does the PNA fare in supporting the resilience of Palestinians in the six vital sectors?

1. **Health:** the PNA needs to ensure that East Jerusalem remains the medical capital of Palestine and the flow for patients from all over the West Bank and Gaza by supporting and developing its main referral hospitals. East Jerusalem hospitals have 550 beds, employ nearly 1600 professionals, and are visited by over 120,000 patients every year. They represent the backbone of the Palestinian tertiary health system. In this respect, the PNA deserves a rating of 4, which is a very good rating indeed, although there is still room for improvement.
2. **Education:** although most of main schools have already been taken over by the Israeli municipality, 40% of the schools are still run by Palestinians, although struggling to make ends meet. Nevertheless, the Israeli municipality is making an offer of substantial support to those independent schools if they adopt the Israeli curriculum. Unfortunately, the PNA is not responding with cash or policy in support of those schools, thus already forcing some schools to accept the Israeli offer and becoming "Israelized" with time. The rating therefore is no more than 2 out of 5.
3. **Housing:** Israelis are making it impossible for Palestinians living in East Jerusalem to obtain planning permission and build or expand. Here, funds would be extremely helpful to cover costs of area planning/zoning, or to fund construction through loans or grants, or help those who build illegally pay the fines. There is very little intervention there. Rating therefore does not exceed 2.
4. **Job creation:** the PNA must help Jerusalemite entrepreneurs by offering incentives to open businesses and create jobs in the Holy City. However, there is minimal intervention in this sector and therefore the rating does not exceed 2.
5. **Promoting national culture:** this is an important aspect since Palestinian youth in Jerusalem are being sucked out of their original culture and deprived from their history, values, and traditions. This would leave the Palestinian society in the same existential mode as most of Native Americans: roaming in their "reservations", dehumanized, cultureless and resorting to drugs and alcohol in order to deal with reality! In this sector, little has been done by the PNA since launching Jerusalem as the Capital of Arab Culture in 2009. So the rating is around 2.
6. **Legal support/defense:** legal and financial help is needed by East Jerusalemites who seek legal support in order to defend themselves against the Israeli settler onslaught on their properties, IDs, civil rights etc... While the PNA has helped in the past with funds and lawyers, this effort has neither been consistent nor adequate. Therefore the PNA deserves a rating of 3 out of 5.

In conclusion, if all the scores were averaged, one may conclude that the performance (in terms of support) of the PNA's for the Palestinians living in East Jerusalem averages 2.5 out of a possible score of 5.

This means that the PNA is doing barely enough in the main sectors that are needed to increase the resilience of the Palestinians in East Jerusalem. More can - and should - be done!



To Be a Child in East Jerusalem!

By Defense for Children International – Palestine*

Ramallah, February 23, 2016-Palestinian children living in the West Bank might sometimes envy their East Jerusalem peers for their relatively higher levels of freedom of movement and enshrined legal rights. The latter of these is particularly salient when Palestinian children come into conflict with the law since West Bank children are automatically prosecuted by an Israeli military court while children living in Jerusalem are generally entitled to trials in Israeli civilian courts.

But how good do East Jerusalem children really have it? A close look at recent detentions, injuries, and fatalities demonstrates that these youths are becoming increasingly vulnerable.

THE LEGAL CONTEXT

The legal distinctions between East Jerusalem and the West Bank trace back to 1967, when Israel occupied the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, following the Six Day War. Contrary to principles of international humanitarian

law and international law, Israel annexed East Jerusalem on June 28, 1967.

Since then, Palestinian children who happen to live in Jerusalem fall under Israeli civilian law while Palestinian children in the West Bank live under Israeli military law.

Notably, the children of Israeli settlers who reside within the bounds of the West Bank are included in the Israeli civilian legal framework. Settlements are Jewish-only communities built in the occupied Palestinian territory in violation of international law.

The legal gap between Palestinian children in the West Bank and Jerusalem expanded further - at least in theory - when Israel amended the 1971 Youth Law (Adjudication, Punishment and Methods of Treatment) in 2008. The amendments promised new protections for children, including East Jerusalemites, in conflict with the law during the entire process - arrest, transfer,

interrogation, and trial. These safeguards included the use of arrest as a last resort, advance notice before questioning takes place, minimal use of restraints, and the presence of a legal guardian or adult family member during questioning.

Israel's military legal system, meanwhile, continued to systematically arrest, detain, and prosecute West Bank children in virtually the same manner as Palestinian adults. For example, military law contains no provision for children to have a family member, legal guardian, or lawyer present during interrogation.

Given the prescribed differences in these two legal systems, one would logically expect fairly different rights outcomes for Palestinian children in conflict with the law based on whether they live in Jerusalem or the West Bank. At least on paper, Palestinian Jerusalemite children are entitled to more protections than West Bank youth.

However, data compiled by Defense for Children International - Palestine found that, in practice, Palestinian children in Jerusalem are not enjoying their enshrined rights. Out of 65 cases documented by DCIP in 2015, more than a third of Jerusalem youth were arrested at night (38.5 percent), the vast majority (87.7 percent) was restrained during arrest and only a slim minority of children (10.8 percent) had a parent or lawyer present during interrogation.

In fact, in the last year, East Jerusalem children suspected of committing criminal offenses saw rights violations in several categories at comparable rates to West Bank children. For example, cases documented by DCIP showed 69.2 percent of detained Jerusalem children suffered some form of physical violence at the hands of Israeli forces compared to 74.5 percent of West Bank children. For night arrest cases, there was nearly no difference between the two groups.

Although they had better outcomes than their West Bank peers along a few axes, such as rights notifications and access to a toilet between arrest and interrogation, they also suffered much higher rates of position abuse during interrogation.

As a whole, it is apparent that Israeli civilian laws, when applied to Palestinian children from Jerusalem do not approach "guarantee" rates. DCIP analysis found that this is because Israel over-applies the exception clause of its Youth Law to Palestinian children—meaning that for East Jerusalem children, the exception is the rule.

ADMINISTRATIVE DETENTION

Another alarming indicator of East Jerusalem children's receding rights is Israel's renewed use of administrative detention. Israeli authorities recently approved a six-month administrative detention order for a 17-year-old youth from Jerusalem, Mohammad Hashlamoun. Up until October 2015, DCIP had never documented cases of administrative detention for Palestinian children from East Jerusalem. That month, the measure was used against three East Jerusalem youth.

Mohammad was arrested from his home in the Ras al-Amoud neighborhood of Jerusalem around 2 a.m. on December 3, 2015. He was denied access to an attorney, and subjected to repeated prolonged interrogation sessions while being held in solitary confinement for 22 days. He denied accusations that he was planning to carry out unspecified future attacks, even when the interrogator threatened to have his family home demolished.

"The last time I appeared in the magistrates' court in Jerusalem, the court decided to release me on bail," Mohammad told DCIP. "But before my family could post the bail, an intelligence officer came to the detention center and asked me to sign a document stating that I had received an order of administrative detention."

The current administrative detention order will expire on June 20, 2016. However, the Emergency Powers Law of 1979 permits the administrative detention of any person in Israel for a period of up to six months, subject to indefinite renewals.

INJURIES AND FATALITIES

Eight East Jerusalem Palestinian children have been killed since October 2015, all except one at the hands of Israeli forces. Of

this number, one youth was fatally shot during clashes while the other seven allegedly carried out stabbing attacks.

Israeli forces appear to be implementing a 'shoot-to-kill' policy, which in some incidents may amount to extrajudicial killings. International law requires that intentional lethal force be used only when absolutely unavoidable. Where individuals allegedly carry out a criminal act, they should be apprehended in accordance with international law and afforded due process of law.

In the same time frame, more than 2,177 Palestinian children from the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, have sustained injuries, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Among them, DCIP has documented three serious head injuries in East Jerusalem, where the boys narrowly escaped death, but wound up with long-term disabilities.

Khalil Mahmoud, 17, sustained his head injury from Israeli forces' live ammunition during clashes in al-Issawiya on October 9. Khalil's father, Ahmad Khalil Mahmoud, told DCIP that his son underwent 10 brain surgeries at al-Maqased hospital in the months following the injury. Although his medical treatment has concluded, Khalil remains hospitalized and in need of rehabilitation with an uncertain future, according to his father.

"I hope that his health will improve and he will be able to move and speak again. He is unable to move or speak, but he hears and sees. I hope he would recover and be as he was before the injury. He was a cook and he loved it very much."

The two others, both 15-year-olds, suffered head wounds from sponge-tipped plastic bullets between December and January. Ahmad Abu Hummus was injured by Israeli forces during a raid on his hometown of as-Issawiyya. He is currently unable to move his left limbs and eats through a tube. Khalil was transferred to the ALYN Woldenberg Family hospital for rehabilitative therapies after doctors confirmed that part of his brain had been damaged by the injury.

Khalil Mohammad Ismail Kiswani's face was wounded near the entrance to Shufat refugee camp after Israeli forces had completed a home demolition on December 2, according to his father. As a result of the injury, Khalil lost his left eye and required reconstructive surgery involving a platinum transplant to replace the shattered bones in his face.

Accountability for shootings by Israeli forces is extremely rare. Israeli authorities have rejected opening investigations into the recent incidents and refused autopsy requests by the families of those killed.

***Defense for Children International – Palestine is an independent, local Palestinian child rights organization dedicated to defending and promoting the rights of children living in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. For 25 years, we have investigated, documented, and exposed grave human rights violations against children; held Israeli and Palestinian authorities accountable to universal human rights principles; and advocated at the international and national levels to advance access to justice and protection for children. We also provide direct legal aid to children in distress.**

| Violations Summary 2015 | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|-------------|-----------|--------------|----------------|---------------|
| | Jerusalem | Percentage* | West Bank | Percentage** | Combined Total | Combined Rate |
| Night arrest | 25 | 38.5% | 42 | 38.2% | 67 | 38.3% |
| Hand or ankle restraints | 57 | 87.7% | 106 | 96.4% | 163 | 93.1% |
| Blindfolds | 5 | 7.7% | 95 | 86.4% | 100 | 57.1% |
| Physical violence | 45 | 69.2% | 82 | 74.5% | 127 | 72.6% |
| Verbal Abuse, Humiliation & Intimidation | 47 | 72.3% | 91 | 82.7% | 138 | 78.9% |
| Strip search | 47 | 72.3% | 66 | 60.0% | 113 | 64.6% |
| Denial of adequate food/water | 26 | 40.0% | 69 | 62.7% | 95 | 54.3% |
| Threats/ inducements | 36 | 55.4% | 49 | 44.5% | 85 | 48.6% |
| Denial of access to toilet | 7 | 10.8% | 41 | 37.3% | 48 | 27.4% |
| Position abuse | 30 | 46.2% | 23 | 20.9% | 53 | 30.3% |
| Transfer on vehicle floor | 1 | 1.5% | 55 | 50.0% | 56 | 32.0% |
| Shown or signed paper in Hebrew | 61 | 93.8% | 71 | 64.5% | 132 | 75.4% |
| Solitary confinement (> two days) | 0 | 0.0% | 14 | 12.7% | 14 | 8.4% |
| Detained with adults | 2 | 3.1% | 7 | 6.4% | 9 | 5.1% |
| Threat of sexual assault | 0 | 0.0% | 2 | 1.8% | 2 | 1.1% |
| Electric shock | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 0.9% | 1 | 0.2% |
| Not informed of rights | 22 | 33.8% | 78 | 70.9% | 100 | 57.1% |
| Attempted recruitment | 2 | 3.1% | 2 | 1.8% | 4 | 2.3% |
| Not informed of reason for arrest | 60 | 92.3% | 95 | 86.4% | 155 | 88.6% |
| No lawyer/family member present for interrogation | 58 | 89.2% | 108 | 98.2% | 166 | 94.9% |

*Based on 65 East Jerusalem cases,

**Based on 110 West Bank cases,

For more information, please visit: www.dci-palestine.org.



DANIEL SEIDEMANN

Jerusalem, February 2016

Daniel (“Danny”) Seidemann is an American-born Israeli lawyer, and founder of the Jerusalem-based NGO “Terrestrial Jerusalem”. He is a leading expert on contemporary Jerusalem and advocates for an equitable political agreement that will guarantee the rights and address the concerns of both Palestinians and Israelis.

Opinion: Israeli Policy toward East Jerusalem

What possesses hundreds and thousands of Palestinian youth to go out almost on a nightly basis and clash with the Israeli police – and for well over a year? Contrary to the popular image, the current round of disturbances did not erupt in the fall of 2015, but more than a year earlier, in July 2014. During 2015, the Israeli authorities arrested more than 950 Palestinian boys – in excess of 1% of all the Palestinian youth under the age of 18. This staggering figure clearly indicates that East Jerusalem is in the grips of a popular uprising unseen since 1967.

The question is “why”? – and it is one that is not being asked, at least not publicly, by official Israel. Committed to an article of faith – Jerusalem as the undivided capital of Israel in which the Palestinian “have is as good” as they will ever get – the Israeli authorities are impervious to the stark empirical realities of the city. This devotion to a Jerusalem that simply does exist outside of ideological imaginations leads to the specious conclusion that these kids are being incited, and have no legitimate grievances.

The answer to this question is by no means trivial. And as an

Israeli, it is a question I will attempt to answer with caution and humility. My analysis is based on twenty-five years of observing Palestinian society in the city, but they remain the observations of an outsider, and a son of the occupying society at that.

In attempting to answer that question, it is important to distinguish between the “detonators”, those acute events that trigger the violence, and the underlying causes that sustain them.

This author has come to the conclusion that the horrendous and savage murder of Mohammed Abu Khdeir is far more significant than the isolated event it appears to be. The burning alive of Palestinian teen exposed the existential underpinnings of Palestinian youth in East Jerusalem in such a manner that it has become a pivotal, epoch-defining event that continues, and will continue to resonate.

What are the “take-aways” deriving from and illuminated by this event?

- When Israel demolishes the homes of the innocent

families of deceased Palestinian terrorists, while doing no such thing with the Jewish terrorists who murdered Mohammed Abu Khdeir, Palestinian youth hear the following message: in the eyes of official Israel, Israeli blood is blood, and it's red, Palestinian blood is water.

- While the murder was a unique, extreme event, it touches on a pervasive sense of vulnerability among Palestinian youth. It is a sense, not unjustified, that they are governed by authorities that see them a hostile minority and ever-potential threat, not a part of a society worthy of being served.
- Palestinian youth of East Jerusalem feel themselves adrift. Cut off from the Palestinian hinterland in the West Bank, not part of Israel, it is a population apart, for whom no one speaks.
- Living in a society which is denied the right to any significant political expression, and one which is increasingly subject to arbitrary enforcement and collective punishment, these youth witness an adult Palestinian society incapable of fulfilling the basic obligation towards their children: giving them a future that can be lived in dignity. The ensuing loss of respect for adult authority has a devastating impact, and is clearly one of the major manifestations of this uprising.
- Even without being very familiar with current political

machinations, the young Palestinians are fully aware that there is currently no political horizon, nor any prospect, now or in the foreseeable future, for things to get better.

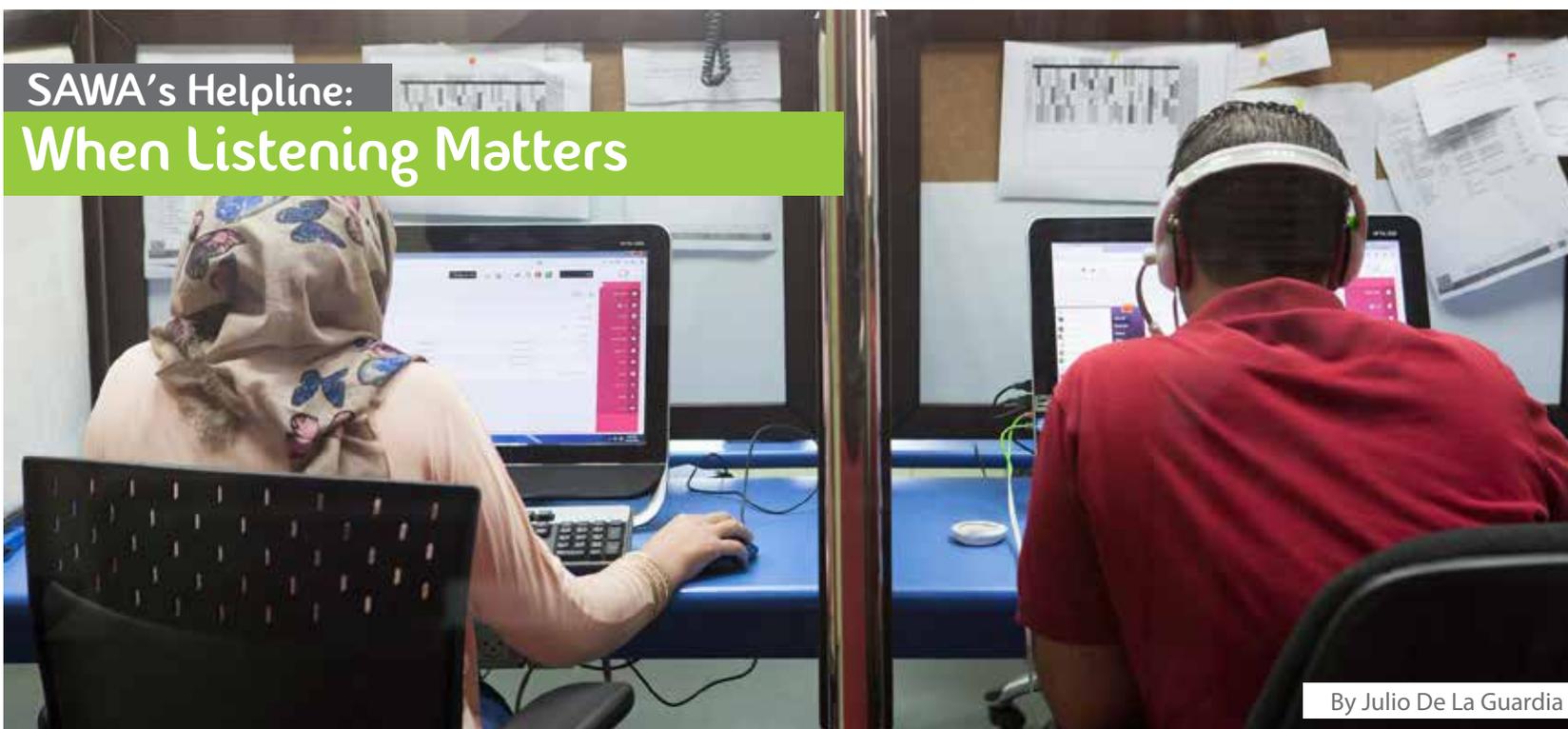
- In the absence of clear path to the kind of life young people aspire to live, for growing numbers among the youth; the deadly mystique of heroic martyrdom dangerously fills this void.

If our analysis is correct, the current round of violence is caused by a dangerous amalgam of a sense among these young men and women live in a world where "Palestinian lives don't matter", where they "have no future to speak of", that no one much cares about changing that, and there is no prospect for change for the better. The fuel of this uprising is rage, generated by despair.

If our analysis is correct, the Palestinian youth of East Jerusalem are in open revolt because their lives are being shaped by an ever-more aggressive occupation, with no end in sight. And if that is the case, their wills will not likely be broken by harsher punishments and demolitions, nor will they be placated by the building of schools and sewer lines.

The current atmosphere of anger and despair in East Jerusalem may ebb for a while, but that won't be for long. Significant change will come only when serious steps will be taken towards ending an increasingly unsustainable occupation.





SAWA's Helpline:

When Listening Matters

By Julio De La Guardia

The four-hour weekly training for SAWA's Helpline operators takes place every Wednesday afternoon. It is rather intense and the trainees need to be very concentrated. "To become a good Helpline operator you don't necessarily need to be a social worker or psychologist, but the most important thing is that you are a good listener and develop empathy with the person who is calling", says SAWA General Director, Ohaila Shomar. SAWA has also programs in the field of sexual education for children, women and men, as well as tailor-made for specific professions such as bus drivers (as part of Advancing the Rights of Vulnerable Palestinian Women and Children in East Jerusalem project funded by EU).

The trainees, all volunteers, need to be able to deal with sometimes severe emotional distress of people who need help to cope with sexual or domestic aggression. For that SAWA (**All the Women**

Together Today and Tomorrow) has a 24-hour Helpline with a toll free number: 1800-500-121 if calling from East Jerusalem and 121 if calling from the West Bank. These lines are provided by the telecom companies Bezeq at low cost and Paltel at no cost at all. Callers are counseled by a qualified team equipped with the skills to provide primary social and psychological counseling not only over the phone, but also through chat and e-mail, using modern information and communication technologies.

The future operators get only a short break in the middle of the training, so they can breathe some fresh air and prepare for the next session. "SAWA's training method is actually special, as they not only teach us the theory but there are also call simulations", says Furat, who studies Chemistry and Biology. "Sometimes they even put us in real-life situations where we are able to listen how experienced operators deal with real phone calls". Once they finalize

this six months instruction, they will all commit to volunteering 200 hours at the Call Center, which provides preliminary support and guidance for women, youngsters and children who have experienced any form of violence, abuse or neglect.

The Helpline is an important tool to empower both women and children to express their grievances, complaints and feelings. It is an opportunity to access counseling in a context where domestic violence or abuse, and resulting psycho-social problems, are often considered a stigma in a quite conservative society. Moreover, sufficient options are lacking for obtaining psychotherapy. Indeed, access to psychological clinics is not equally available to all Palestinians and, most importantly, it is not affordable by many. So, the Helpline gives callers a feeling of safety and security, enabling them to express themselves comfortably by providing privacy. It also saves them money since the calls are free of charge.

In 2015, the Call Center documented over 15000 calls related to gender and domestic violence. Nearly 3000 (2942) came from girls under the age of 18, over 4000 (4167) from boys under the age of 18, and 3490 from adult women. From a thematic point of view, 4836 were related to mental and psycho-social health issues, 1517 to abuse and violence, 1802 with family relationships and 1871 with peer relationship issues. These numbers show that their work as counselors is really needed. *“The training of our volunteers consists of 110 hours, both theoretical and practical”* says the Director Ohaila Shomar, who started her career at the Haifa-based NGO **Women Against Violence** back in 1988 and joined SAWA in 2003. *“As the closures of the second Intifada restricted our movement so much we operate a second center in Ramallah, so that we can cover the West Bank and Gaza Strip from there and East Jerusalem and its surroundings from here”* she continues.

In addition to operating the Helpline, this program provides accompaniment services to hospitals and clinics, or –if there is any evidence of criminal conduct by the perpetrators– also to the Police regarding any victims of physical, sexual and psychological violence. They also manage referrals to specialized organizations when necessary.

A dozen new trainees are attending the lessons provided by two experts. Almost all of the trainees are young University students, either from Al-Quds University in East Jerusalem, Birzeit University in Ramallah area, or the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. But there are also a couple of exceptions. For example, Asma, who is 45 years old and a mother of eight. *“To some extent I could also be the mother of all my colleagues here”* says Asma sarcastically, as she doubles the age of the other trainees. Unlike most of them she doesn't have any academic background, but doesn't think this is the most relevant qualification. *“I have done many other courses to prepare myself and I can tell you that this one is unique, more comprehensive than all I have previously attended”* she emphasizes.

Regardless to the distance and the difficulties the trainees face to reach the training, none of them misses the Wednesday sessions which will shortly qualify them to operate the Call Center. Then, they will be able to help other women, young people, and children to cope with any psychological harassment or physical aggression they might face in their daily lives, by giving them time and listening to them patiently and carefully.



USEFUL RESOURCES ON JERUSALEM

- **Report on Detention of Minors, Particularly Felt in East Jerusalem**

The new report "Arrested Childhood" by the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI) focuses on the consequences of recent legislative changes to detention policies which increasingly result in the detention of minors, particularly in East Jerusalem. <http://goo.gl/YjZbY0>

- **Jerusalem Quarterly Website with Special Focus**

The Jerusalem Quarterly website offers a selected collection of freely accessible articles on the topic "Arab Jerusalem" with a special focus series in February 2016 (more of a historical background!) <http://goo.gl/iyDyDB>

- **Palestine-Israel Journal**

The Palestine-Israel Journal publishes quarterly in-depth analyses and articles on the Palestinian-Israel conflict. With its office in East Jerusalem and an editorial board comprised of equal number of Israelis and Palestinians, the Journal puts a focus on understanding the viewpoints of both sides and works on a balanced exchange and communication between the two people. The last issue from November 2015 has a focus on "Young Voices of Jerusalem". <http://goo.gl/eigg7P>

- **The Stones of Jerusalem, by Sahar Vardi**

The Israeli activist Sahar Vardi gives an insight into her work in primarily East Jerusalem where child arrests increased severely during the last months. Accused of 'stone throwing', these minors are often deprived their basic legal rights and kept in detention. The article thus looks at the activist's work as an advocate for the minor's basic rights and tries to understand who those stone throwers actually are. <http://goo.gl/UKOmWB>

- **Israelization of East Jerusalem, Land through Identity and the Question of Citizenship - The Palestine-Israel Journal, Vol. 21, No. 2, 2015**

Tariq Nassar the various urban policies in East Jerusalem which aim at an Israelization of the latter. By increasingly narrowing down the options for East Jerusalemites to earn a living, the application for Israeli citizenship has become a powerful tool to separate East Jerusalem from the rest of Palestine. <http://goo.gl/NnlQsJ>

- **United Nations Human rights Situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, Report of the Secretary General, March 2015** <http://goo.gl/5t2zeW>

- **AI Haq Report on East Jerusalem - Exploiting Instability to Deepen the Occupation, December 2015**

Although the situation for Palestinians in East Jerusalem has long been of great concern, the outbreak of violence in September 2015 led to an aggravation of restrictive and discriminatory policies for Palestinian Jerusalemites. This article explains what the expansion of police forces, collective punishment measures and harsh detention policies for stone throwers imply for the everyday life of Palestinians in East Jerusalem. <http://goo.gl/Y8X6VX>

- **AI Haq Report on violence against children** <http://goo.gl/LsOLWA>

- **Israel's Refusal to Return Bodies of Deceased Palestinians Violates International Law, December 2015**

Civic Coalition for Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem and Adalah Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel. <http://goo.gl/ObdaCm>

During the recent outbreak of violence between foremost young Palestinian adolescents and

Israeli border police officers in what some commentators call the Third Intifada, the Israeli Security cabinet changed its policies and now increasingly refuses to return the bodies of the deceased Palestinian perpetrators. The report sheds a light on the consequences for the grieving families as well as the various violations of International Law this policy inevitably implies.

- **OCHA Special Focus of September 2015: Under Threat - Demolition orders in Area C of the West Bank**

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the occupied Palestinian territory (OCHA) has analyzed recently published government data on demolition orders in Area C in the West Bank. It impressively visualizes the existential threat Palestinian families are faced with and analyzes severe double standards of the Israeli zoning regime. <http://goo.gl/DKS3d6>

- **Security Council Briefing on Situation in Middle East, East Jerusalem statement by Coordinator for Middle East Peace Process Coordinator Nickolay Mladenov**

The UN Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process delivered a speech at the Security Council that vividly briefs the current situation in the region, particularly on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem and the Palestinian territory. He thus formulates key points of concern which should be addressed in order to not lose a comprehensive political approach out of sight. <http://goo.gl/1FcpUA>

- **Palestinian Families under Threat - 10 Years of Family Reunification Freeze in Jerusalem**

Relatively old (December 2013) and co-funded by the Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung <http://goo.gl/vCp3KA>

- **Palestinian Women from Occupied Eastern Jerusalem Call for Protection: Jerusalem Women's Coalition**

The "Jerusalemite Women's Coalition", a collective comprised of women NGOs, calls for the protection of particularly women and children in the on-going violent conflicts in East Jerusalem which they see as a severe threat to their livelihoods. <http://goo.gl/5nQxRS>

- **B'tselem on: Strict Movement Restrictions in East Jerusalem**

B'tselem offers an interactive map visualizing the numerous movement restrictions in East Jerusalem, for example in the form of physical barriers or random vehicle checks, and explains how such collective punishment violates international law. <http://goo.gl/K3jC15>

- **3,000 Nights - a film by Mai Masri**

The first feature film by Palestinian film maker Mai Masri poses a spotlight on those most vulnerable in society: women and children. The film tells the story of a pregnant Palestinian woman called Layal who is imprisoned in an Israeli women's prison. An interview with the film maker Mai Masri has been published on the blog of the Institute for Palestine Studies. <http://goo.gl/5fyiSW>

- **37% - Stories from East Jerusalem**

A powerful photo documentary of Jerusalem's 37%: the Palestinian residents. It sheds a light on the life and stories of those who seemingly do not take part in the public debate. A collective of Ir Amim, an organization that devoted itself to the complex realities of Jerusalem and strives for equality within the city borders, has therefore interviewed numerous Palestinian Jerusalemites. <http://goo.gl/y5FzCu>



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ADVANCING
THE RIGHTS OF
CHILDREN AND WOMEN
JERUSALEM

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