



MA'AN DEVELOPMENT CENTER



HEBRON DESTROYED FROM WITHIN

FRAGMENTATION, SEGREGATION AND FORCED DISPLACEMENT

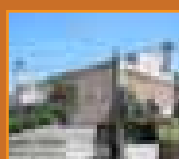
SEPTEMBER 2008

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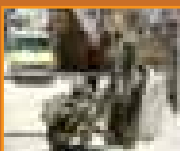
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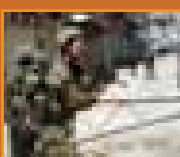
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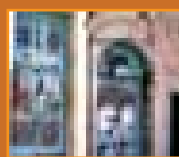
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HEBRON DESTROYED FROM WITHIN

FRAGMENTATION, SEGREGATION AND FORCED DISPLACEMENT

Overview

Introduction

Known as El Khalil in Arabic, Hebron is the largest, most populated and southern most governorate of the West Bank. Home to 551,130 Palestinians who live in 145 communities it covers a total area of 1,067.5 km square.¹ The biggest and most important of these communities is Hebron city, with over 170,000 residents.

Hebron under attack

- Since the beginning of 2005, 25 people in Hebron governorate have been killed and 508 injured in direct conflict with Israeli Occupation Forces and settlers.
- 154 hours of curfew have been imposed by IOF on the governorate since January 2005
- By April 2008 there were 316 separate movement restrictions Placed by IOF in the city of Hebron
- Hebron has the highest unemployment rate in the West Bank at 28%.
- In Hebron's Old City forced displacement reduced the population from around 10,000 in the 1950s to just 400 by the mid 90s, as a result of IOF measures

(Source: OCHA and PCBS)



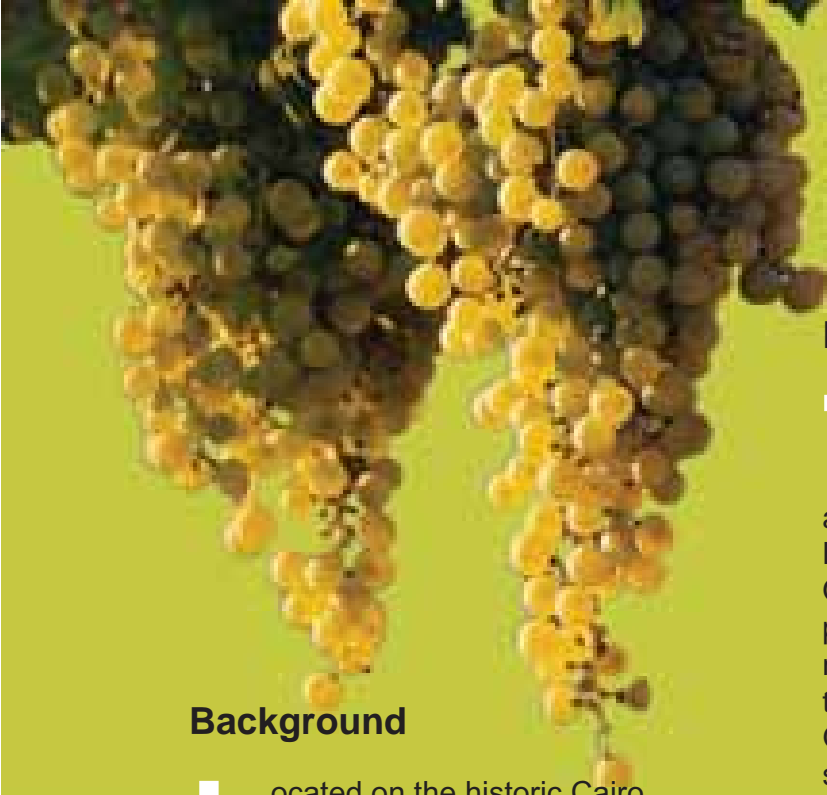
Map of Hebron city with Oslo divisions*

The Hebron Protocol

In 1997 in accordance with the Hebron Protocol agreement the city was divided into 2 administrative areas H1 (area to come under the full control of the Palestinian Authority) and H2 (under full Israeli control). H2 covers 20 per cent of the city, including the Old City, 4 central settlements and the outlying Kiryat Arba settlement block. Under Israeli control, H2 has been subject to hundreds of military orders, violent military incursions, severe movement and access restrictions and numerous attacks by settlers. The situation has effectively isolated the centre of the city from the rest of the urban area and undermines the unity and contiguity of the city which was explicitly called for in the protocol. During the second intifada the Israeli army also reoccupied H1, placing checkpoints and movement restrictions across the area, effectively subverting Palestinian Authority control of the area, further undermining the agreements.

*Source: Foundation for Middle East Peace

¹ Palestine in figures, 2007. PCBS



Background

Located on the historic Cairo to Damascus trade route and situated 1,000 metres above the Mediterranean Sea, Hebron enjoys fertile agricultural lands and has long been a hub for trade and commerce. Shoe making, production of leathers and distinctive glassware and ceramics that are sold across Palestine and abroad, are some of the city's best known products while the rolling hills allow for numerous vineyards from which Hebron's famous black honey, or Dibs, comes.

In stark contrast to its rich and colourful past, Hebron today is a suppressed and fragmented city. It is the only city in the West Bank, and only Palestinian urban centre outside of Jerusalem where Israeli settlements have been established in its core. The presence of the settlers has resulted in insecurity, segregation and severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinians, especially in the city's historic and once vibrant centre.

Past and present

The second oldest city in Palestine, Hebron has considerable religious, cultural and historical significance. Romans, Byzantines, the Muslim Empire, Ottomans and the British have all passed through Hebron and left their mark, much of which is still visible today in the streets and buildings of the Old City. The most well known of these sites is the Ibrahimi mosque, site of the Cave of Patriarchs, where Abraham, his wife Sara and their sons and wives are reputedly buried. A central figure in all three monotheistic religions, its presence means Hebron is a holy site for Jews, Muslims and Christians.

During the Nakba of 1948, residents from the Beer Al Sabe' region fled to the Hebron governorate where many still live in two refugee camps, Al Arroub (population 9,859) and Al Fawwar (population 7,630). Some of these refugees live just walking distance from their homes.² Following the 1967 occupation, settlements were established in the centre of Hebron and in 1997 administration of the city was divided under the Hebron protocol, part of the Oslo accords. Today the Old City, once the vibrant heart of Hebron filled with markets and diverse goods is deserted and severed from the rest of the city by a plethora of movement restrictions. Services have been shut down, traders forced out and poverty has risen culminating in the forced displacement of thousands of residents.

² UNRWA website: www.un.org/unrwa/refugees/westbank.html

THE IBRAHIMI MOSQUE



Israeli military checkpoint outside the mosque



Checkpoint into the mosque

The reputed burial site of Abraham, Sarah, Issac, Rebecca, Jacob, Leah and Joseph, the Cave of the Patriarchs located in the Ibrahimi mosque is one of the holiest sites in Islam and Judaism, Hebron's most famous and historic landmark, it is also on the frontline of Israel's occupation and colonisation policies.

Prayers Under Fire

On 25 February 1994, during the month of Ramadan*, an Israeli settler from Kiryat Arba settlement, dressed in military uniform entered the Friday dawn prayer and opened fire on worshippers. 29 Palestinians were killed and over 125 injured. In the immediate aftermath of the massacre, Israeli Occupation Forces placed Palestinians under curfew and prohibited them from visiting the mosque. There followed its division: 40 per cent remains a mosque while 60 per cent was set aside as a synagogue for the much smaller settler population.

Today, Palestinian's freedom of religious worship is greatly restricted. They must pass through a turnstile and no fewer than 3 checkpoints through which access is frequently denied. During Ramadan 2007 for example, the mosque was closed for 6 days. On one occasion the closure trapped worshippers inside for 2 hours while during, the holiest night in Ramadan, settlers threw garbage on Palestinian worshippers who were trying to reach the mosque and the Israeli military fired sound bombs inside the yards, interrupting prayers and creating chaos.³

No such restrictions or threats apply to settlers, who continue to celebrate the anniversary of the massacre.

³ see OCHA Humanitarian Monitor September 2007

*Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar; the holy month of fasting in which participating Muslims do not eat or drink anything from true dawn until sunset.

INTERNATIONAL PRESENCE IN HEBRON



Christian Peacemaker Team watching at a roadblock in Hebron

As a result of the current situation, several international organisations maintain a presence in Hebron. The largest of these is the Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH) a governmental organization established following the 1994 Ibrahimi mosque massacre and ensuing Security Council resolution 904. Essentially a product of the Oslo accords, TIPH does not operate within the UN system but instead has a 6 month renewable mandate agreed upon by the PLO and Israeli government. TIPH's activities are limited to observing, monitoring and reporting to its member countries, who may then intervene with the appropriate authorities through diplomatic channels. It also has a limited budget to fund and support community projects.

Invited in 1995 by the Mayor of Hebron, the Christian Peacemaker Team (CPT) has maintained a presence ever since. In 2001 it was joined by the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI). Both of these NGOs carry out observer functions and accompany Palestinians in the especially vulnerable areas of H2, especially on school runs.

*Article 3 of 904 resolution
"Calls for measures to be taken to guarantee the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilians throughout the occupied territory, including, inter alia, a temporary international or foreign presence, which was provided for in the Declaration of Principles (S/26560), within the context of the ongoing peace process".*

Despite the presence of such organizations, Settler and IOF attacks continue and members of all three organizations have themselves been targeted.⁴ For example in April 2006 an Ecumenical Accompanier was badly attacked by a settler boy and needed stitches to treat a wound on her head and in March 2007, a TIPH observer was hospitalized after a settler attack on Shuhada street. Other reported impediments to their work include; reluctance of the Israeli Occupation Forces to cooperate, soldiers on the ground contradicting military orders and the military not answering reports.

⁴ In August 2007, two Israeli settlers from Mitzpe Ya'ir outpost in southern Hebron district also attacked a UN OCHA vehicle resulting in injury to one OCHA employee.

SETTLEMENTS: A CULTURE OF IMPUNITY



A view through Israeli barbed wires to "Shavei Hebron Yeshiva" [originally Palestinian building] in Beit Romano settlement in Shuhada Street

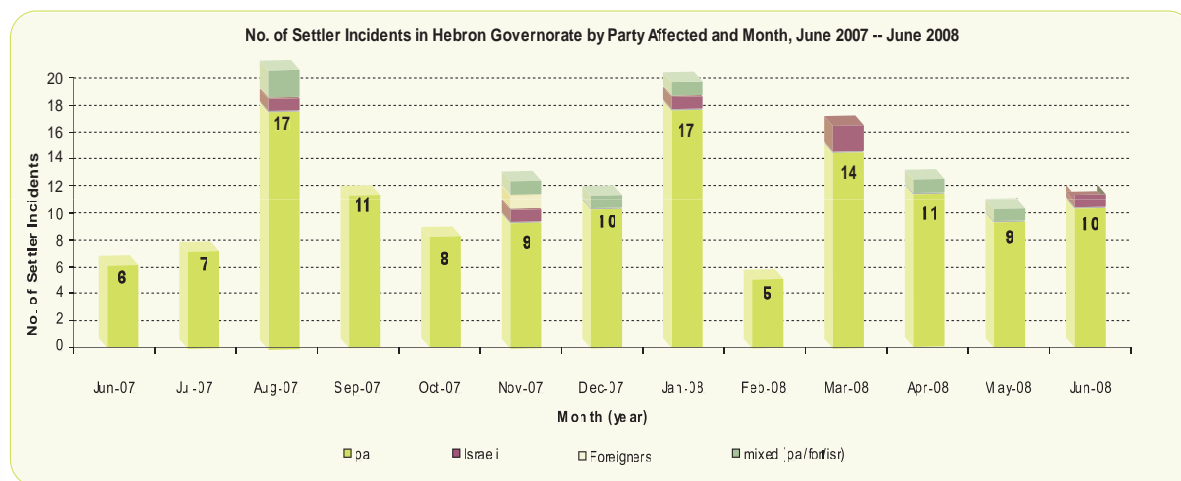


IOF accompanying settlers in H2

Hebron has been a major target of Israel's colonisation policies in the West Bank and outside of Jerusalem, is the only Palestinian city to have settlements in its centre. 25 settlements litter the governorate and outposts continue to be established with both the acquiescence and open support of the Israeli authorities. Between 1979 and 1983, Israel established Avraham Avino, Beit Romano, Beit Hadassah and Tel Rumeida which house 500 to 600 religious settlers whose behaviour

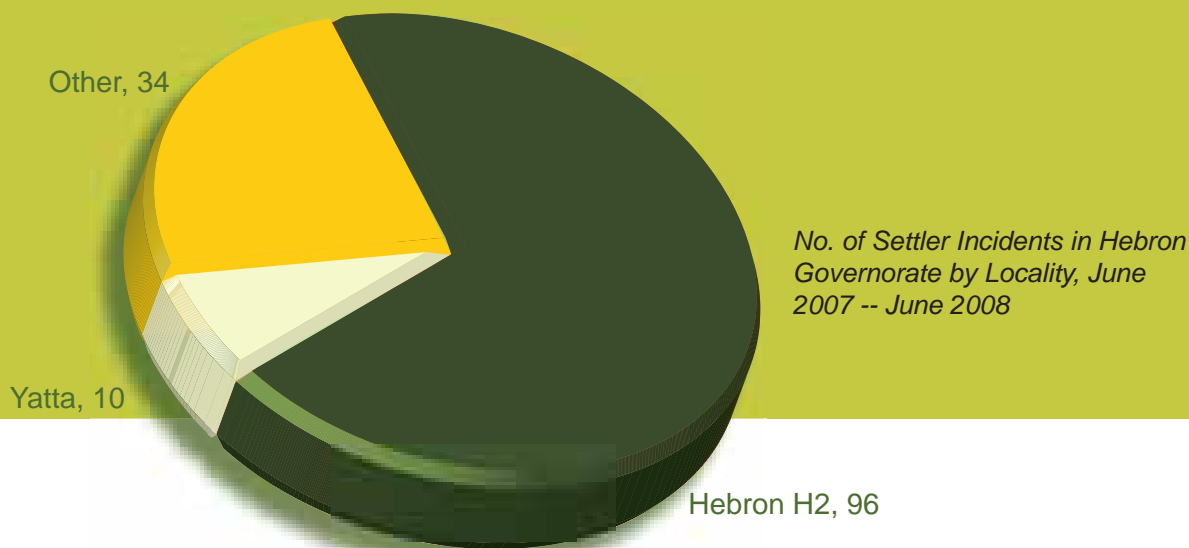
is characterized by continued acts of violence towards Palestinians.

Hebron's settlers enjoy the support and protection of the Israeli military, a relationship that has allowed them to dispossess the indigenous Palestinian population and annex much of the Old City. A direct result of the settler violence and the hundreds of military and closure orders, Palestinians have been forcibly displaced and Hebron's Old City, its cultural and religious heart, has become a virtual ghost town.



Source: UN OCHA. Almost 70 per cent of the incidents charted above took place in the H2 area of Hebron. 49 per cent of incidents resulted in casualties while 52 per cent resulted in prevention of access for Palestinians.

HEBRON



The number of assaults on civilians has grown steadily. ICRC data collected in the field indicates that the number of offenses has more than tripled in the last five years, while police investigations are rare and most of the time reach the conclusion that ‘the culprits could not be identified.

ICRC, Dignity denied, November 2007

Israeli settlements in Hebron governorate

SETTLEMENT	DATE ESTABLISHED	POPULATION (2006)
Adora	1983	220
Asfar	1984	257
Eshkelot	1982	225
Hagai	1984	477
Karme Zur	1984	696
Karmel	1981	357
Kefar Ezyon	1967	448
Kiryat Arba and Givat Kharsina	1972	Combined population 6958
Ma'on	1981	370
Mezadot Yehuda	1980	462
Migdal Oz	1977	345
Negohut	1982	172
Otne'il	1983	752
Pene Hever	1982	392
Sansana	1997	NA
Shani	1989	416
Shim'a	1985	368
Suseya	1983	737
Telem	1981	167
Tene	1983	538
OLD CITY OF HEBRON Abraham Avino Beit Hadassa Beit Romano Tel Rumeida	Started in 1968	Combined population 500- 600

Source: Foundation for Middle East Peace

Attacks on Palestinians

Settlers across the West Bank benefit from almost total impunity. Nowhere is this more obvious than in Hebron.

Zleikhah, who has been renting an apartment on Shallala street for the last 2 years has been attacked by a female settler, suffers constant verbal abuse and stone throwing, and the water pipes to her apartment have been cut. Her experience is by no means unique. From January 1st to June 30th, 26 separate incidents of settler violence directed towards Palestinians and their property in H2 area were recorded in UN OCHA's weekly briefing notes. These include shooting, throwing Molotov cocktails, throwing stones and attacking people inside their homes. Thirteen of these attacks (50 per cent) resulted in injury to 35 Palestinians. At least 8 of the victims were children. 3 of the incidents involved attacks on Palestinian schools and 5 incidents resulted in damage to Palestinian property.

Overall, a response or intervention by the Israeli military or police was recorded on only 6 occasions. On 4 of these occasions however, it was the Palestinians who were attacked by settlers who were then arrested while on another occasion it was Israeli activists protesting the settlements

who were arrested. Only once were settlers apprehended by IOF and then they were merely removed from a school they had broken into. No attacks were recorded on settlers by Palestinians during this period.⁵

⁵ Data collected from OCHA weekly briefing notes

Approximately 81% of Palestinian children injured by Israeli settlers in 2007 were in the Hebron governorate, particularly the H2 area.

OCHA, Humanitarian Monitor September 2007




Zleikhah made this mural that says Salam (peace in Arabic) from stones settlers throw at her in her house

The situation is compounded by Palestinians lack of trust in the complaints procedures. As Zleikhah explains, Palestinians must go to Givat Kharsina settlement to file complaints, a process that can take up to 6 hours. Most of the time the perpetrators are not prosecuted and victims risk mistreatment by Israeli authorities and further victimization. It is a situation that results in significant underreporting and underestimates of the problem. Zleikhah however continues to file complaints in the belief that it may one-day yield results.

'We have a major problem here. They [the settlers] understand our weak point – and they use children under the age of criminal responsibility, under the age of twelve. They do this intentionally. The children throw stones, break walls. They are the tactical wing, even the strategic wing, of the adults.'

Israeli police commander, Hebron District
Quoted in 'Ghost Town' B'Tselem and ACRI, May 2007.



Abuses are increasingly committed by settler children

Settler violence in Hebron is increasingly perpetrated by children who are encouraged by their parents and communities to commit crimes in a deliberate effort to avoid legal consequences.⁶ Israeli laws applied to settlers set the age of criminal responsibility at 12 and rather than enforcing the law on minors, the police and army are granting them absolute immunity.

⁶ This phenomenon is referenced in *Ghost Town*, (Bt'Selem and ACRI, May 2007) as well as in interviews with residents of and organisations operating in H2



Israeli military abuses

“Undoubtedly the most aggravated settler behaviour occurs in Hebron, where Palestinian schoolchildren are assaulted and humiliated on their way to schools, shopkeepers are beaten and residents live in fear of settler terror. Despite rulings of the High Court of Justice that it is the duty of the IDF to protect Palestinian farmers from settlers, there is still evidence that the IDF turns a blind eye to settler violence and, on occasion, collaborates with the settlers in harassing and humiliating Palestinians. Indeed I have witnessed such conduct on the part of the IDF myself in Hebron.”

UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories, January 2007.
(report retrieved 18 July 2008 from OHCHR website)



Settler children enter H2 with IOF escort

The 600 Israeli settlers in Hebron’s centre are protected by around 1,500 Israeli soldiers and police, exposing the 35,000 Palestinians in H2 to violence from both settlers and the military. Hebronites are routinely subject to arbitrary search, arrest and detention and there have been numerous cases of Israeli Occupation Forces abusing Palestinians and participating in acts of violence alongside settlers. One of the worst attacks was the killing of 18 year old Imran Abu Hamdiya in 2002. He was forced into a military jeep in H2, beaten and abused before being driven to the industrial area of the city whereupon he was thrown out of the vehicle while it was travelling at speed, killing him.⁷

Year	Number of searches carried out by IOF on residents of Hebron governorate	Number of arrest and detentions on Palestinian residents by IOF
2005	619	427
2006	1413	736
2007	925	930
2008 (until end June)	391	398

Source: OCHA protection of civilians database

⁷ See account of case: http://www.btselem.org/english/beatings_and_abuse/20080429_abu_hamdiyah_verdict.asp

MOVEMENT AND ACCESS RESTRICTIONS



Gun-toting IOF restricting a road in H2

By April 2008, 316 separate restrictions on movement were recorded in Hebron



Restricted road in H2

Hebron has the most closure restrictions of any governorate in the West Bank dictating daily life, and greatly compromising access to basic services and livelihoods.

By April 2008, 316 separate restrictions on movement were recorded.⁸ A staggering 40 per cent of these –some 89 separate restrictions – are found in its Old City. Residents of H2 are required to register with the Israeli occupying Power to access their homes meaning that almost any journey outside ones house is punctuated by time consuming questions and humiliating searches.

Restricted roads

Palestinians are restricted from using all roads running between, adjacent or towards settlements. This includes 21 roads that are banned to Palestinian traffic (under a military order renewed

in July 2006). The most flagrant example of this road apartheid is the prohibition of Palestinian access to the main street in the city, Shuhadah Street, as well as Old and New Shalala Streets which form the backbone of the Old City. The enforced pedestrianisation of this area has also greatly affected business as traders must find alternative ways to transport goods to their shops.

In H2, 89 movement and access restrictions;

- 14 checkpoints
- 13 iron walls
- 44 roadblocks
- 13 road gates
- 5 observation towers

Source: UN OCHA, closure maps, April 2008

⁸ The next closest being Nablus governorate which counted 104 separate restrictions on movement. Source: OCHA, closure maps April 2008

Curfews

Since the beginning of the second Intifada, Israel has imposed hundreds of hours of curfew on the Palestinian population in Hebron. The curfews may last for weeks or months at a time, with residents only allowed to leave their homes to purchase basic provisions. They have not only added to the near economic collapse in the heart of the city but place immense economic and psychological pressures on families who may be stuck indoors for months on end, prevented from accessing educational and health services, or from pursuing their livelihoods. Although the number of curfews has fallen in recent years as Israeli control on Palestinian movement

It is estimated that during the second intifada the IOF imposed 584 days of curfew on the Old City of Hebron.

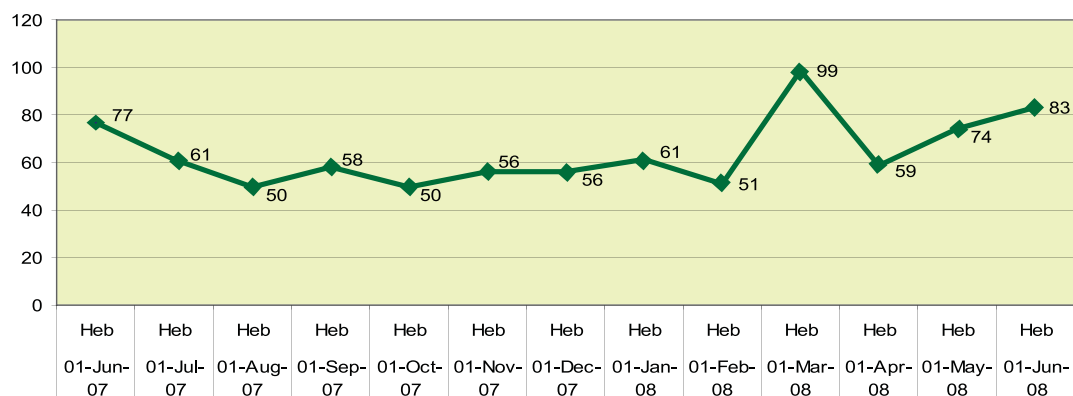
UN OCHA

is near complete, 43 hours of curfew were recorded in the governorate from September 2007 to June 2008, over a third of which was imposed on H1 (OCHA). The settler population has never been placed under curfew.

Flying checkpoints

From June 2007 to June 2008 the number of flying checkpoints in the governorate fluctuated from no fewer than 50, to a high of 99 per month.

Number of Reported Flying Checkpoints in Hebron Governorate, June 2007 -- June 2008



Restricted access into the city

Farmers from surrounding villages are unable to access markets. Of the 11 access points controlling entry and exit from local villages into the city all 11 were closed until May 2008 (one access point has since been opened at Al Fahas). As with elsewhere in the

West Bank, the matrix of checkpoints and bypass roads also means that communities outside of the main municipal area have been cut off from the social and public services they rely upon. The situation will be aggravated as the separation wall is completed in the South, annexing more land to Israel and increasing displacement pressures on dispossessed Palestinian villagers.

The restrictions have severe humanitarian and economic impacts

As a result of the restrictions, children are forced to make arduous journeys to nearby schools passing near settlements from which they have been attacked and access for humanitarian organizations and ambulances and fire trucks into the Old City has been reduced to just one entry point (compared to four previously). Between September 2000 and January 2006 the Hebron Fire department recorded an average of 15 minutes waiting time to obtain authorization to access the Old City. On 46 occasions (out of a total of 182 calls) the delay was for more than one hour. The fire department has consequently been forced to open a branch in the industrial zone of H2.

In addition, the Palestinian Red Crescent society estimates that the time to reach patients in the Old City has increased from 7 to 14 minutes. When ambulances are required to pass through a checkpoint the average time to reach patients is 43 minutes.⁹

The closures have also forced a number of Palestinian Authority and civil society organizations to relocate to areas less affected, consolidating the marginalization of those residents who remain.¹⁰

⁹ UN OCHA 'The closure of Hebron's Old City'

¹⁰ These institutions include the Hebron Women's Society, the Ministry of Information and the Union of Agricultural Workers Committee. UN OCHA 'The closure of Hebron's Old City'.

In June, the IOF announced that 20 closures or physical obstacles to movement were removed (ten in the Hebron governorate, six in Ramallah and four in Nablus). OCHA conducted a field survey regarding these removals. Nine closures could not be found within 400 meters of the location provided by the IOF. Of the 11 located, six were found to be of minimal significance, four were of no significance and one was not removed.

(UN OCHA June 2008)



Palestinians passing in front of Israeli settlement [originally Palestinian building] in H2

From September 2000 – January 2006, 25% of the calls received by the Hebron Fire Department were subject to a delay of more than one hour before Israeli authorization was given.

Movement and access restrictions
Hebron governorate April 2008;

- 2 check points on Green Line into Israel
- 12 check points
- 6 partial checkpoints
- 29 road gates
- 29 road blocks
- 127 earth mounds

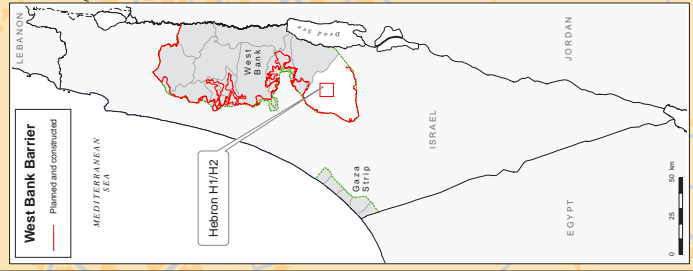
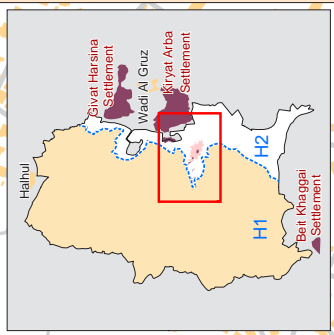
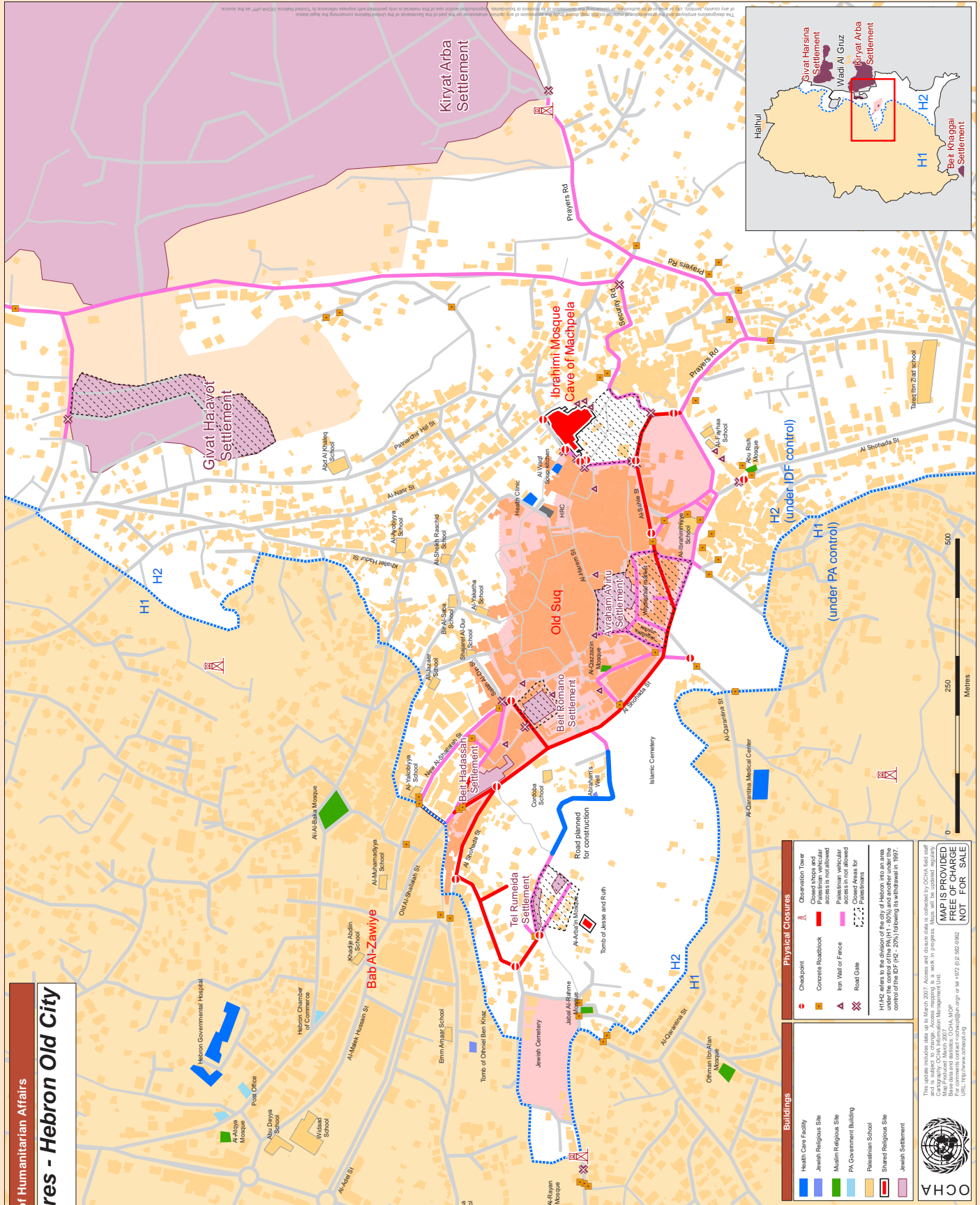
Source: UN OCHA

West Bank Closures - Hebron Old City

March 2007

HEBRON OLD CITY CLOSURES

Checkpoints	14
Iron Walls and Fences	13
Roadblocks	44
Road Gates	13
Observation Towers	5
TOTAL	89



Buildings	Physical Closures
Health Care Facility	Checkpoint
Jewish Religious Site	Closed shops and services
Muslim Religious Site	Closed Roadblock
PA Government Building	Iron Wall or Fence
PA Government Building	Palestinian vehicular access is not allowed
Shared Religious Site	Closed Areas for Palestinians
Jewish Settlement	Closed Areas for Palestinians

Physical Closures

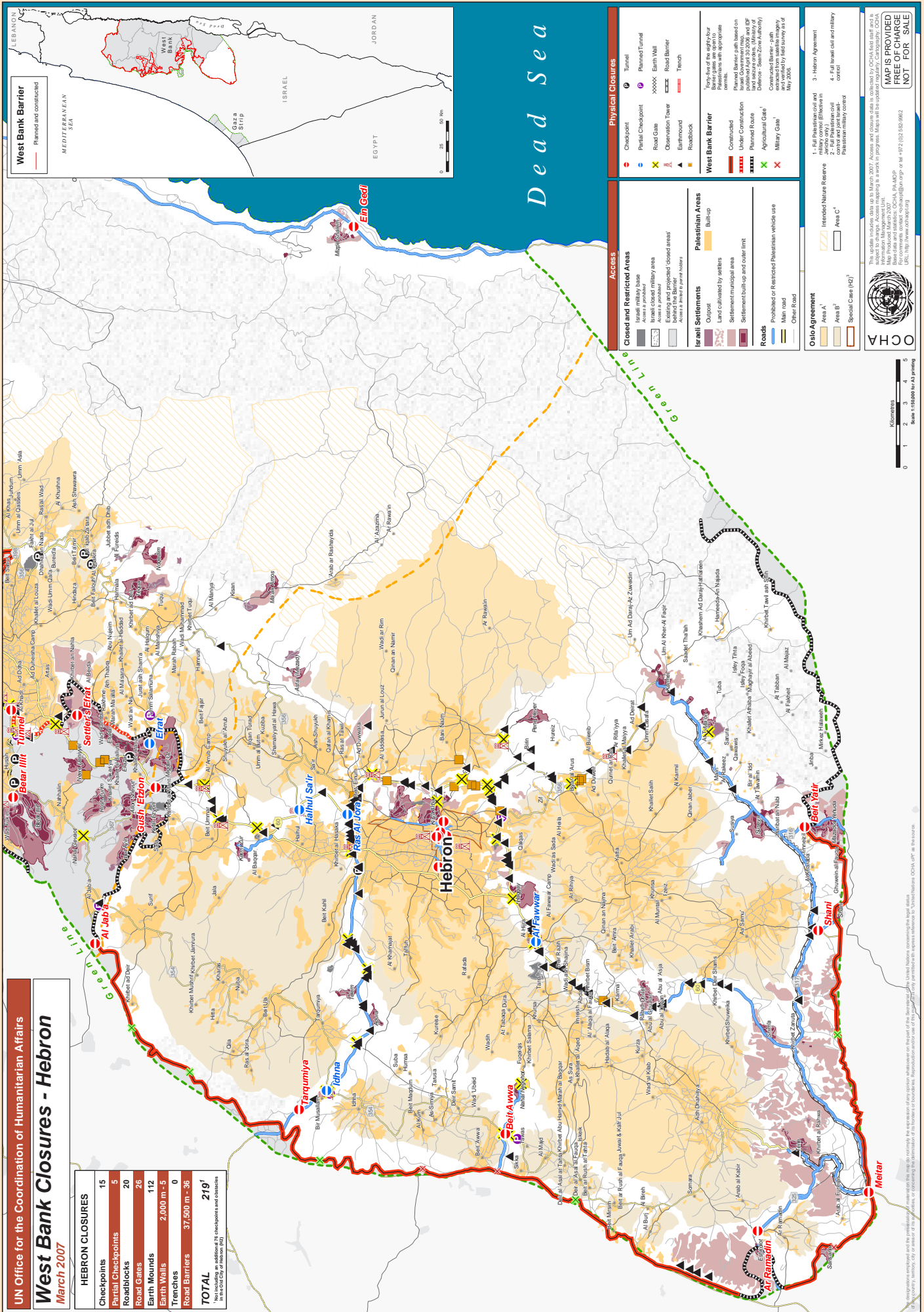
Observation Tower
Closed shops and services
Closed Roadblock
Iron Wall or Fence
Palestinian vehicular access is not allowed
Closed Areas for Palestinians
Closed Areas for Palestinians

Buildings

Health Care Facility
Jewish Religious Site
Muslim Religious Site
PA Government Building
PA Government Building
Shared Religious Site
Jewish Settlement

This update includes data up to March 2007. Access and domain data is collected by OCHA field staff and is subject to change. Access mapping is a work in progress. Maps will be updated regularly. Map Produced March 2007. OCHA, UN OCHA, UN OCHA. For comments contact: ocha@un.org or tel: +972 011 236 9162 URL: <http://www.ocha.org>

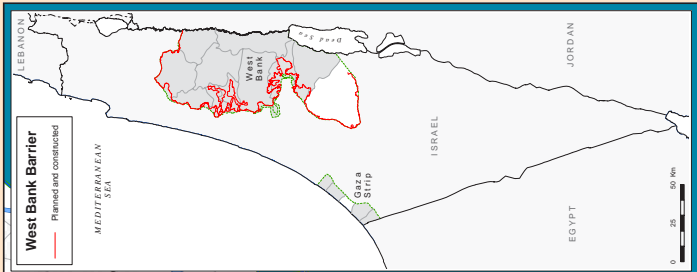
MAP IS PROVIDED FREE OF CHARGE (NOT FOR SALE)



UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
West Bank Closures - Hebron
March 2007

HEBRON CLOSURES	
Checkpoints	15
Partial Checkpoints	5
Roadblocks	20
Road Gates	26
Earth Mounds	112
Earth Walls	2,000 m - 5
Trenches	0
Road Barriers	37,500 m - 36
TOTAL	219*

* Not includes an addition of checkpoints and obstacles in the Old City of Hebron (NY)



Access

- Closed and Restricted Areas
 - Israeli military base
 - Israeli closed military area
 - Access prohibited
 - Existing and proposed closed areas
 - Access is limited by general orders
- Israeli Settlements
 - Outpost
 - Land cultivated by settlers
 - Settlement municipal area
 - Settlement building and outer limit
- Roads
 - Prohibited or Restricted Palestinian vehicle use
 - Main road
 - Other Road

Physical Closures

- Checkpoint
- Partial Checkpoint
- Road Gate
- Earth Wall
- Observation Tower
- Earthmound
- Roadblock
- Trench
- Tunnel
- Planned Tunnel
- Earth Wall
- Road Barrier
- Trench

West Bank Barrier

- Constructed
- Under Construction
- Planned Route
- Agricultural Gate
- Military Gate

Oslo Agreement

- Area A
- Area B
- Special Case (P2)
- Intended Nature Reserve
- Area C

Other

- 1- Full Palestinian and Israeli military control and joint Israeli-Palestinian military control
- 2- Full Israeli military control
- 3- Hebron Agreement
- 4- Full Israeli old military control and joint Israeli-Palestinian military control

Scale: 1:100,000 or 1:50,000

Scale: 1:100,000 or 1:50,000

Scale: 1:100,000 or 1:50,000

Map does not include 76 checkpoints and obstacles in the Old City of Hebron

From trading hub to aid dependence:

Hebron's economic decline

It's 10am in the middle of the week and the heart of Hebron's ancient market area should be buzzing with activity, yet barely any shops are open. Most are shuttered up – padlocked or welded shut. Indeed, Hebron's historical importance as a major commercial hub is a far cry from the current reality. The decline has had severe humanitarian consequences including increased poverty and aid dependence and increased forced displacement pressures.

Hebron's economic decline started in the 1980s

The commercial decline of Hebron started with the proliferation of the settlements. In 1983, settlers took over Usama ibn al-Munqidh School, which resulted in the IOF shutting down the main bus station and the gas station.

Of the 10% of the original population who still live in the Old City, eight out of ten adults are unemployed and an estimated 75% live below the poverty line. A recent survey conducted by the Ministry of National Economy found that the average income per household in the area is about \$160 per month while the average for the West Bank is \$405.

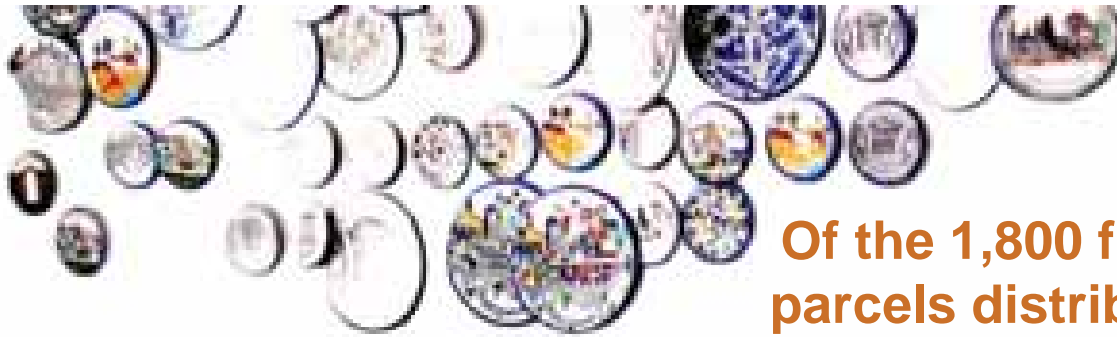
UN OCHA, The Humanitarian Impact of Israeli infrastructure in the West Bank, 2007.

It is hard to underestimate the impact of these closures: the bus station was at the time the busiest in the Middle East after those of Jerusalem and Amman. Its closure effectively cut the Old City off from customers and suppliers who relied on the public transport to access the markets. The Hebron Chamber of Commerce recorded that even before the first Intifada, more than 60 per cent of the shops along Shuhada street had closed due to the resultant lack of trade.¹¹



Deserted market in Hebron old city

¹¹ Report, 'the closure of Hebron's Old City,' OCHA Hebron office.



Of the 1,800 food parcels distributed by the ICRC in H2, recipients include all residents of the Old Souk area

Worsening situation with the second intifada

Of the 1,610 shops that existed in the Old City before September 2000, 354 have been closed by verbal or written military order and 700 had been driven out of business because of a lack of trade. Yusri, a lawyer who also owns an internet and photocopying store in H2, noticeable as the only business open within a 100m radius, explains that customers have been scared away. *'People are afraid of settlers or of being stopped by the IOF. Today no one with an Israeli security file would dream of coming to the area and other people have simply been prevented from accessing this area'*. Of the 650 shops that remain in the Old City, just 10 per cent are estimated to be functioning.

Poverty and unemployment

75 per cent of the residents of the Old Souk live below the poverty line and 80 per cent of those of working age are unemployed. The value of property has fallen dramatically and many shop owners have lost the considerable down payments they had to make to lease their shops. Of 1,800 food parcels distributed by the ICRC in H2, recipients include all residents of the Old Souk area.¹² In May 2006, food insecurity in the Hebron governorate (i.e. the incidence of those unable to afford a balanced meal), was 51 per cent, an increase of 24 per cent on the previous year.¹³

¹² Data from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Ministry of the National Economy, quoted in UN OCHA, 'The closure of Hebron's Old City'.

¹³ Food insecurity in the occupied Palestinian territory, CAP, revised emergency appeal, May 2006



Decorative pottery painting

The Hebron Chamber of Commerce estimates that the value of a 36m² shop has declined from 125,000JD in 1982 to less than 5,000JD by 2005.

Hebron's poverty has also become self-perpetuating. The first to be displaced from the Old City were those with the economic means to relocate to safer areas. Poorer residents found themselves 'internally stuck' unable to leave despite ongoing violations of their rights. Over time they have been joined by other poor families attracted by the free rent and tax breaks currently offered by Hebron Rehabilitation Committee in the Old City.

Far reaching consequences

According to the Ministry of National Economy, 60 per cent of all imports enter the West Bank via Hebron and 40 per cent of Palestinian industries are located in the Hebron district:¹⁴ numerous small villages and rural communities also rely upon the city to sell produce and access services and amenities. The disappearance of Hebron's main markets and inability to access the city has cost many villagers a primary source of income meaning alternative markets and services have been established, breaking down centuries old centralised community structures. Last summer, farmers in communities on the outskirts of Hebron city including Beit Ummar, Al-Baq'ah, Al Bweira and Wadi Al Ghrous were forced to leave grapes on the vine: closure policies and the inability of reaching different markets has driven prices so low that it did not make economic sense to hire people to pick the grapes, rent the boxes to collect the grapes and pay for transportation to market.¹⁵

Palestinian women shop in the old city under protective netting to avoid settler attacks

¹⁴ Cited in UN OCHA Humanitarian Monitor, July 2007

¹⁵ Cited in UN OCHA Humanitarian Monitor, August 2007

Drought

Hebron's economy has been further weakened by drought. From mid November 2007 (the beginning of the rainy season) until the end of that year only 90 millimetres of rain fell in Hebron City, as compared to the normal 250 millimetres. Along with the increase price of animal fodder this has greatly weakened the governorate's agricultural base and poses an existential threat to local herders.¹⁶

Arial view of a deserted Palestinian fruit market



CASE STUDY:

ABU HISHAM*

For almost 55 years, Abu Hisham has been working in his gift shop outside the Ibrahimi mosque. Located in what used to be a bustling city centre, sustaining hundreds of Palestinian families, business today is almost non-existent and only 5 Palestinian shops remain. There are many days when Abu Hisham does not sell a thing.

Remembering fondly the days before the occupation when tourists from Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and further afield would flock to Hebron, he explains that the situation has been on a downward spiral ever since. Although things worsened considerably during the first Intifada when the IOF forced him to close his shop for several years, for Abu Hisham the worst period coincided with the implementation of the Oslo Accords and the harsh restrictions imposed on Palestinians in the aftermath of the Ibrahimi mosque massacre. These restrictions have only increased during the second Intifada.

For Abu Hisham, turning up to work these days is more a question of giving himself something to do rather than earning a living: with business the way

it is he is barely able to cover his running costs. Living in nearby Jabal Jawhar, Abu Hisham must take transportation to the checkpoint, which he must pass through on foot, before walking the rest of the way to work, which includes passing through 2 more checkpoints. It is a time-consuming process that is often compounded by the rude and abusive behaviour of the soldiers. At least 2-3 times a month he is prevented from reaching his shop, though no reason is ever given. Nor is he permitted to open on Jewish holidays.

Once at work, Abu Hisham faces a new series of challenges. On the infrequent occasions when customers do enter the shop they may be harassed and attacked by settlers. *'Sometimes settlers walk into the shop and drag customers out'* he recounts. *'They shout at the clients and tell them they should not buy from us ... One time settler women entered the shop next door and started breaking everything inside. The soldiers and police came but claimed they could do nothing.'*

Though defiant and determined to keep his shop open, Abu Hisham acknowledges that this was not possible for many former shop owners. *'My children are all grown up', but if you have a family to support, you cannot continue like this, you are forced to leave.'*

Abu Hisham outside his shop



¹⁶ See UN OCHA, Humanitarian Monitor, December 2007

*Interview conducted 15 July, 2008



Education under threat

The current situation has gravely affected children’s right to education. In communities close to settlements, reduced attendance has been recorded while performance in the end of school matriculation exam – or Tawjihi – falls well below the average for Hebron as a whole. In 2006 for example, Tariq Ibn Ziad and Abdel Khaleq Yaghmour schools in the Old City ranked 38 and 39 out of 40 in terms of pass rates of schools managed by the Directorate of Education in Hebron.

Performance in the end of school matriculation exam – Tawjihi – falls well below the average for Hebron as a whole.

Attendance in the three schools closest to settlements

School	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	Percentage reduction in attendance
Qurtuba girls school	194	196	148	139	85	88	101	47%
Al Fayhaa	327	335	269	253	207	217	215	33%
Ibrahimi boys school	532	539	428	401	309	352	365	31%

Source: Directorate of Education in Hebron

Higher education in Hebron has also been targeted by the Israeli Occupation Forces. In January 2003, the Israeli Army issued closure orders and sealed the gates of the Hebron University and the Palestine Polytechnic University. The military orders were finally lifted in August

2003 however during the 8 months university administrations had been forced to schedule classes in local secondary schools, after school hours, in environments classes far from conducive to learning and educational attainment.

CASE STUDY: QURTUBA SCHOOL

During the 1990s Qurtuba school for girls catered for approximately 250 students. However forced displacement and repeated attacks on the children reduced attendance to just 78 at one point. As current school principle Reem Al Shereef explains, *'parents care about their children's education and we were not able to protect them... the situation was just not conducive to their learning.'*

Attacks by settlers on the school over the last 12 months include, setting fire to the school (August 2007); destroying the newly refurbished garden funded by the ICRC (November 2007) and trying to enter the school and breaking windows and the door (March 2008). The main problem however is the frequent attack on students on their way to or from school by settler children who hurl stones or shout verbal abuse. As Reem explains, *'Girls reach the school either by passing through the checkpoint and through areas inhabited by settlers or by cutting through the cemetery: it's the worst possible start to their day.'*

Two years ago the school administration commissioned a survey and found that one third of the students were suffering psychological problems including insomnia, inability to concentrate and problems verbally communicating. *'The worst period was during the second intifada when many school days were lost to curfew and the school was forced to teach students in shifts during the afternoon in schools in H1... even until recently though the children were being attacked at least once a week, and always on Saturdays.'* In response, the school administration cut two hours off of Saturday classes to avoid confrontations with settlers. Over the last 2 years they have also undertaken a number of initiatives to create a safer environment which has also boosted attendance. These include;

Initiatives for a safer educational environment:

- Getting Israeli border police to station vehicles outside the school as children arrive and leave, to mitigate for settler harassment and attacks;
- Keeping detailed records of all attacks on children which are routinely sent to those international agencies present in Hebron as well as the Israeli authorities. This both increases the visibility of Israeli actions and helps the girls who know they have someone to talk to;
- Strengthening the teacher parent councils which keep parents well informed of issues pertaining to their children's safety;
- Coordinating with international groups offering protective presence to ensure their presence at the school during Jewish holidays when attacks are more likely, (for example during Purim 2008, international volunteers slept in the school and were able to prevent settlers from breaking in and causing further damage);
- Starting the school day half an hour earlier to avoid confronting settlers;
- Rehabilitating and expanding facilities to provide the children with a safe space for extra curricular activities (the school is currently looking to renovate a nearby building).

Attendance increased to 118 last academic year and projected intake for 2008-2009 is around 150. However, as Reem explains there is only so much the administration can do in the current climate, *'Right now we have small classes and excellent teachers but the pressure these girls live under don't allow them to learn... when they are with me at school I can make every effort to protect them, but when they leave, I cannot guarantee their safety.'*

Interview with school principle Reem Al Shereef, 22 July 2008.

Forced displacement

Violence and insecurity, denied access to basic services and the destruction of livelihoods have combined to force thousands of Palestinians in H2 from their homes. According to the Christian Peacemaker Team, families are especially vulnerable to displacement when they have older children. Teenage boys are a frequent target of the Occupation Forces, constantly stopped at checkpoints and at risk of arbitrary arrest and detention and for many families the risks become too high.

In addition to these triggers, Israeli Occupation have also confiscated Palestinian land and demolished a number of houses. In July 2005 Palestinian agricultural lands were taken by Israeli military order in order to build a 6km road around Kiryat Arba and Givat Harsina settlements and in August 2004, 3 historic houses in the Old City were demolished to build a so-called 'security-road' linking Kiryat Arba to the settlements in H2.

Shrinking City: population decline due to forced displacement from Hebron's Old City.

- 1950s – approximately 10,000
- 1967 – 7,500
- 1970 – 6,000
- 1985 – 1,620
- 1990 – 1,501
- mid 90s – approximately 400
- today – approximately 5,000

Data from interview with Hebron Rehabilitation Committee and report, *The Old City of Hebron, Can it be saved?*

Displacement in numbers

Estimates from the 1950s place the population of Hebron's Old City at a bustling 10,000.¹⁷ By the mid 90s however settler intimidation and military closures meant that only 400 people remained. Data published in 2007 shows that at least 1,014 Palestinian housing units in H2 had been vacated – 42 Per cent of the total housing units there.¹⁸



A Palestinian boy sitting outside his home in Hebron Old City, settler's graffiti is seen on the door

¹⁷ Interview with Hebron Rehabilitation Committee, 15 July 2008

¹⁸ Ghost Town, Bt'Selem and ACRI, May 2007.

These figures are though likely to underestimate the extent of forced displacement in Hebron as many abandoned properties had been filled by more vulnerable IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons) from outlying areas at the time of the survey. Today the population is slowly bouncing back. Around 5,000 people now live in approximately 52% of the Old City. These people are both returnees, and IDPs from villages in the south.¹⁹

The vast majority of Hebron's displacement has been from H2 and most of the IDPs have resettled in the H1 area of the city. However as more IDPs from the south of the governorate are forced to move to escape settler violence, house demolitions and forced evictions, the city faces dual displacement and resettlement pressures.

Temporary displacement

Movement and access restrictions have meant that access to health services and for ambulances has been greatly impeded. As a result pregnant women are experiencing temporary forced displacement, moving in with friends and relatives in H1 during the latter stages of their pregnancy.

Resettlement

Although some of those who have returned are the original occupants, the high poverty levels in the Old City and influx of marginalized IDPs and migrants from surrounding communities has shifted the socio-economic dynamic of the area. Some residents complain of increased crime which continues unchecked as the Palestinian police are unable to enter the area.

¹⁹ Interview with Hebron Rehabilitation Committee, 15 July 2008

Displacement also threatens rural communities

The resettlement of IDP families from the south into the Old City highlights the broader issue of forced displacement across the Hebron governorate. Many small communities located in Area C under Israeli civil and military control are at high risk of forced displacement by home demolitions, forced evictions and settler violence. Some communities have already been entirely displaced. For example, in Masaffer Yatta, Southern Hebron, 837 people in 11 hamlets were forced to leave between 1998 and 2002²⁰. In Baqa'a a community of only 60 families, a number of whom were forcibly displaced from the Old City of

Hebron, 32 demolition orders have been issued by Israel since the Annapolis conference and 30 homes demolished over the last 12 years.²¹ In Susiya, a community that suffers from continued settler attacks, all 13 families received eviction orders in June 2007. If carried out it will be the 5th time they have been forcibly displaced.²² As construction of the Apartheid Wall continues in the south, the threat of displacement increases: 207 residents of Arab Ar Ramadin Bedouins in the South have been threatened with eviction by Israeli military in June 2008, to make way for the Wall.²³

²⁰ The humanitarian impact of Israeli infrastructure in the West Bank. OCHA

²¹ Alternative Information Centre, *Expanding Settlements Means Removing Palestinian People from their Land: The Story of Baqa'a*, April 2008

²² OCHA Humanitarian Monitor, June 2007

²³ International Middle East Media Centre, *Entire Palestinian village threatened with expulsion*. June 2008

Responding to displacement

The rejuvenation of Hebron's Old City has been achieved in large part by the focused efforts of several organizations. Their efforts provide important lessons to prevent displacement and protect Palestinian IDPs.

Established in 1996 the Hebron Rehabilitation Committee (HRC) works to safeguard the city's cultural and

architectural heritage. In pursuit of this goal it has also facilitated return and resettlement for hundreds of IDPs. Working in partnership with Ministries, local NGOs, donor governments, the Chamber of Commerce and the municipality, the HRC;

1. Strategically constructs new Palestinian infrastructure across H2, by building to contain and encircle settlements to prevent their expansion and interconnectivity;
2. Reclaims and rehabilitates existing infrastructure, to strengthen the community and help reconnect H2 with the rest of the city;
3. Provides an aid package for those living in the Old City including free housing, \$200 for each shop keeper per month, tax breaks, free water, building restoration, food parcels, social activities and insurance. They also have a team of social workers on hand to help families deal with the stresses from living in such a pressurized environment.

This holistic approach has played an important role in repopulating Hebron's historic core and ensuring durable solutions (namely return and resettlement) for IDPs. Nevertheless, a major displacement trigger remains that the organisation can do little to mitigate for— that of residents' ongoing insecurity. While HRC provides wire netting for families and window reinforcements, Palestinians continue to be attacked in the streets and in their homes by settlers and IOF and their only source of protection are international observers. It is a reality that prevents many IDPs from returning.



A collaborative response to internal displacement

Unlike for refugees, no single agency is responsible for internally displaced persons. Instead government and local authorities, UN agencies, the Red Cross / Red Crescent, international and local NGOs and donors and bilateral organisations should work together to respond to the situation in accordance with their particular mandate. The effort is then coordinated by the UN Humanitarian Coordinator.

As of yet, no collaborative response has been implemented in the Palestinian territories and assistance and protection is ad hoc, limited to cash hand outs, tents and house demolition kits (provided by UNRWA and ICRC). Some UN agencies and NGOs are also reporting on the issue through existing UN mechanisms. Recently however, an internal displacement working group has been formed. As their efforts expand towards implementing a collaborative response to protect IDPs, address the root causes of internal displacement and search for durable solutions, the example of displacement in Hebron and the community's response to these pressures should inform and guide their programming.



CASE STUDY:
**LIVING UNDER
THREAT OF
DISPLACEMENT...**

Said and two of his sisters

Said is 18 and lives in the H2 area of Hebron. His house is located next to Avraham Avino settlement and his family have suffered repeated attacks by settlers and the military who have stationed themselves on the roof of his building. Only one or two of the families Said knew as a young boy remain in the area.

Said's family lives in a situation of constant insecurity and fear. A few years ago they were approached to sell their house to Israelis but refused. Since then the harassment and violence has been constant with tragic consequences. *'When we refused to sell they told us we would suffer,'* he says. The worst of the attacks occurred when a settler threw a Molotov cocktail into the entrance of his house which killed Said's younger brother who was playing there. Another time, an ambulance was delayed from entering the Old City to reach Said's pregnant mother: she lost the baby. Said's younger brother was also hit in the leg with a large stone thrown by settler children, badly injuring him, and his sister was attacked by settler's dogs on the way to school.

“ When we refused to sell [the house] they told us we would suffer ”

The family's insecurity and fear is heightened by the constant presence of the military on the roof. From their vantage point the Israeli Occupation forces watch over the family's every move. *'We have no privacy'* he explains. The military has destroyed the locks and repeatedly breaks into their home where the soldiers sleep and help themselves to food. Sometimes after these random break-ins, items and cash also go missing. When Said and his father are out of the house his mother and sisters face increased verbal abuse and heckling.

For Said, nowhere feels safe; his house is broken into; the settlers attack people as they walk in the streets; and his old school, the Ibrahimi boys school, has been repeatedly targeted by settlers and the military. The worst period was at the beginning of the second Intifada when curfews were constantly imposed on the Palestinians living in the area. Sometimes it meant that Said would only be able to attend school once a week. This was when most of the community left. Now that he is older, life is harder in different ways. He has become more of a target for the military and is constantly stopped at the checkpoints: the military has confiscated his ID and sometimes his movement so restricted that he lives under virtual house arrest. The family home is already crowded with 13 people living there and the inability to play outside safely means the siblings fight a lot. Said gets easily frustrated with the situation and during particularly bad times he is given to breaking objects and throwing things around the house.

Though his family never considered leaving, for Said, the situation is unbearable. In addition to the harassment and violence he cannot make a living. *'I work all hours in construction for which I earn 40 shekels a day. This compares to the 400 shekels a day we could earn when we worked in Israel.'* Nor does the presence of international protection workers from agencies like CPT and EAPPI make enough of a difference, *'once they placed a dirt mound outside the entrance to our house and no one could help us, no one could do anything about it... Mostly I just want to leave, I feel desperate'.*

“ a settler threw a Molotov cocktail which killed Said's younger brother ”

Annex

DATE INCIDENT (data collected from UN OCHA weekly briefing notes)

- 02.01 At least 12 Palestinians (including three children) were injured during an attack by a large group of settlers.
- 04.01 A Palestinian man was injured when five Israeli settlers hit him with a stone near the Islamic cemetery in H2. Settlers occupied land in Wadi al Hussein for nine days. They prevented Palestinian access to schools and the Ibrahimī mosque, among other destinations. There were frequent attacks on Palestinian houses in the vicinity.
- 09.01 Three Palestinian men and two Palestinian women from H2 were physically assaulted and injured by settlers inside their homes. The Israeli Police arrested the Palestinian men for questioning.
- 12.01 Settlers threw a Molotov cocktail at the kitchen of a Palestinian family living next to the settlement. The kitchen caught fire.
- 15.01 Six Palestinians (four women and two children) from Wadi Al Hussein in H2 were injured when settlers attacked and physically assaulted them while they were inside their homes.
- 19.01 A Palestinian man from H1 was physically assaulted and injured by IDF soldiers while covering settler attacks in Wadi Al Hussein for B'Tselem. He was later detained for two days and released on bail pending his trial.
- 19.01 IDF soldiers imposed movement restrictions on Palestinians in the market of the Old City of Hebron in the H2, due to the presence of Israeli settlers visiting the Souq.
- 21.01 Two Palestinian boys from Wadi Al Hussein in the H2 were injured when a group of Israeli settler youth physically assaulted them on the Kiryat Arba Road. The two Palestinian boys were later arrested by the Israeli police.
- 30.01 A Palestinian man from H2 was injured when a group of settlers threw stones and bricks at his house.
- 07.02 Settlers forcibly entered Qurtuba Basic School for girls in H2 and damaged window panels and doors. The IDF later evacuated the settlers from the school.
- 12.03 A Palestinian man was injured with a rock to the head when settlers threw stones at Palestinians walking on Al Shalaleh Street in H2.
- 19.03 A Palestinian man from H2 was injured in the head when settlers threw stones at nearby Palestinian houses during the Jewish holiday of Purim.
- 21.03 A Palestinian woman from H2 was injured when a group of settlers threw stones at her house during the Jewish holiday of Purim.
- 23.03 A large group of Israeli settlers threw stones at Qurtuba Girls School as they were celebrating the Jewish holiday of Purim. Window panels were damaged.
- 21.03 A Palestinian man was physically assaulted near his house by Israeli settlers in H2.
- 18.04 A Palestinian woman from H2 was physically assaulted by a group of settlers while walking towards her house.
- 28.04 Settlers clashed with 120 Palestinian, Israeli and international activists protesting the settler movement in the City. After the clashes, the IDF detained 60 Israeli activists.
- 25.04 Settlers damaged 11 cars in H2 area. The attack took place after settlers sent out an e-mail declaring the imminent destruction by the IDF of a nearby outpost. The removal of the outpost was not carried out.
- 29.04 A man from Wadi Al Hussein in H2 area was injured when settlers occupied land in Wadi Al Hussein and physically attacked him while he was en route to his house. He was later arrested by the IDF.
- 06.05 A Palestinian man was injured with live ammunition when an Israeli settler opened fire at him from a car near the Al Fahs junction, south of H2, which was recently opened by the IDF for Palestinian movement.
- 19.05 A Palestinian teacher and a 12-year-old Palestinian boy were injured in Al Ibrahimiya School by stones thrown by Israeli settlers.
- 22.05 A demonstration was held by settlers protesting the opening of Al Fahs closure, in H2. The demonstration disrupted Palestinian traffic.
- 03.06 Settlers cut down 4 trees in the Ibrahimī Mosque Garden in preparation for a wedding that was carried out on June 10th, 2008.
- 08.06 Settlers took control of a piece of land in Wadi Al Hussein in H2 and placed tents and chairs thereon.
- 10.06



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