CHILD RIGHTS FACT SHEET

October 2008

General

- There are over 3,761,000 people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) -- 2,345,000 in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and 1,417,000 in Gaza. (PCBS)
- There are 2,039,000 Palestinian children in the OPT, comprising 54.2% of the Palestinian population. (UNICEF)
- As of June 2008, there were 1.8 million registered refugees in the OPT. (UNRWA)

Lack of Unity between Palestinian Factions - Current impact on children

- In September 2008, the Gaza Coastal Municipalities Water Utility reported severe fuel shortages due to the factional rift in Palestinian leadership, thereby threatening the water supply of over 250,000 people - including approximately 140,000 children. (OCHA)
- At the time of going to press, five patients, including a nine-month-old baby, have died due to inadequate healthcare resulting from the Gaza health sector strike that started 30 August 2008. (WHO)
- As a result of the education sector strike that started 24 August 2008, 381 Palestinian Authority (PA) schools have experienced disruption and 250,000 students have been affected. (OCHA)
- The Referral Abroad department which processes new applications and permits to access medical treatment outside of Gaza, has halted its activities as part of the strike. On average, about 950 people apply for referral every month. (WHO, OCHA)
- During the strike, the PA took over coordination of pharmaceutical deliveries to Gaza. Since then pharmaceutical deliveries to Gaza ceased completely, except for two small shipments that were coordinated by the World Health Organization. (OCHA)

Protection

- More children died because of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict during the first half of 2008 than in all of 2007. From January to August 2008, 77 Palestinian children and four Israeli children have been killed and 387 Palestinian children and eight Israeli children have been injured as a result of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. (OCHA, UNICEF)
- Between January and June 2008, at least eight Palestinian children from Gaza died as a result of restricted access to healthcare inside Israel. (WHO, The Middle East Quartet: A Progress Report).
- As of August 2008, there were 293 Palestinian children in Israeli detention, the youngest of whom was 13 years old. (OCHA, DCIPS)
- Between January and June 2008, 245 Palestinian structures were demolished by Israeli authorities - 112 of these were residential. These demolitions are in part responsible for the displacement of 715 Palestinians, including an estimated 368 children. (OCHA)
- In a 2008 Gaza study, 28.2 % of children surveyed had witnessed the demolition of a friend's home and 18.5 % had witnessed the demolition of their own home. (Gaza Community Health Programme)
- During the 2007-2008 school year, 256 UNRWA school days were disrupted due to Israeli military operations and since January 2008, 21 UNRWA students and three teachers were killed during Israeli military operations. (OCHA)

"I just want to know, what have we done wrong to be treated this way by both sides? On the first day of the new school year I was so happy that the school would start. I wore my best clothes and came to school to find only three teachers in all of the school."

Mahmoud, 14, participant in a Save the Children programme to reduce violence in schools.

1 Revised from the printed version to reflect corrected displacement data.
Between July 2007 and July 2008 there were at least 23 reported attacks on schools – 15 perpetrated by the Israeli military and eight by Israeli settlers. During the same period, there were also at least seven attacks perpetrated by Palestinian factions. (OCHA)

In the three schools located closest to settlements in Hebron, attendance has dropped by more than 35% between 2004 and the 2007/2008 school year. (UNICEF)

**Education**

- In East Jerusalem, some 9,000 Palestinian children do not attend school because there are not enough public classrooms to accommodate all of them and they cannot afford private schooling. (OCHA)
- According to a June 2008 report, in East Jerusalem, the post-elementary school dropout rate is approximately 50%. (ACRI)
- During 2008, in grades four through nine of Gaza's UNRWA schools, Arabic failure rates were at 40% and English and Mathematics failure rates were between 50 and 60%. (UNICEF)

**Poverty**

- According to the latest available statistics, two out of every five children in the OPT were living in poverty. (PCBS)
- In the first quarter of 2008, the unemployment rate (relaxed definition) for all of the OPT was 29.8% – 35.5% in Gaza and 25.7% in the West Bank. (OCHA)
- According to most recent reports, 80% of Gaza’s population was relying on food aid and direct assistance and 66.7% of households in Gaza were in deep poverty -- living on less than $47.4 per month. (OCHA)
- In a report released during September 2008, in Gaza nearly 66% of earned income is spent on food; in the West Bank, about 50% of earned income is spent on food. (World Bank)

**Health**

- In Gaza, 50 thousand children are malnourished, 70% have a vitamin A deficiency and close to half of children under age two are anaemic. (UNICEF)
- As of May 2008, in the West Bank, 8% of children under the age of five suffer from chronic malnutrition and about a third of children under the age of three are anaemic. (WHO)
- As of May 2008, about 45% of pregnant women in Gaza and 31% in the West Bank are anaemic. (WHO)
- In mental health surveys, 80% of respondents reported trouble sleeping, 77% reported worsening family relations and 72% reported heightened tension in children. (WHO)

"During the summer vacation I was waiting for the day I could go to school, but when I arrived at school on the first day back, I found the school's gate closed. I felt that I had lost all hope."

**Shireen, 13, participant in a Save the Children programme to reduce violence in schools**

---

The relaxed definition for unemployment includes inactive job-seekers as well as active job-seekers to ascertain the total number of unemployed persons. (OCHA)

For more information contact + 972 (02) 583-8594, www.savethechildren.net