



## west bank id holders stranded on the “jerusalem” side of the barrier

After the 1967 Israeli occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and Israel's unilateral expansion of Jerusalem's municipal boundary, the State of Israel conducted a census of all residents living in the city. All Palestinians living within Jerusalem's municipal borders were granted “residency status” and given identity cards popularly referred to as “blue IDs” due to the colour of the cards' plastic case. Palestinians living in the rest of the West Bank at the time of the census were issued identity cards in green plastic cases known as “green IDs”. Jerusalemites who found themselves outside of the city but within the West Bank or the Gaza Strip at the time of the census were denied Jerusalem residency status and also issued “green IDs”, while those who were outside of the Occupied Palestinian Territory were denied any form of residency altogether. Although East Jerusalem is part of the West Bank, only “green IDs” are referred to by the Israeli Authorities as “West Bank” identity cards.

Identity cards were distributed based on boundaries drawn by the 1949 Armistice Line, the internationally-recognized demarcation of the West Bank commonly referred to as the “Green Line”. However, the route of the Barrier (whose construction started nearly four decades after the 1967 war) deviates far from this line, especially in the area around Jerusalem. As a result, it traps an estimated 1,600 West Bank ID holders on the “Jerusalem” side of the Barrier, both within the Jerusalem municipal area and in Area C.

### restrictions on access and movement

Most West Bank ID holders living on the “Jerusalem” side of the Barrier must go through a number of mechanisms in order to access the rest of the West Bank. For some communities, a coordination system has been set up that requires individuals to register their ID cards and addresses at a designated checkpoint. Others must obtain special permits in order to live in their homes and to be granted access to cross the Barrier.

However, certain households have not been granted this access. Because they were issued IDs which no longer directly correspond to the location of their homes after the Barrier's construction, the Israeli Authorities consider them to be “illegal”, and they are at constant risk of being detained and/or expelled to the West Bank side of the Barrier. Facing effective deportation, Palestinians within this category are extremely isolated. For example, should they find a way to cross to the “West Bank” side of the Barrier in the case of an emergency, they find themselves unable to legally return to their homes.

### economic impact

Due to their residency status and the impact of the Barrier, only 45 per cent of households of West Bank ID holders in Jerusalem have a family member in full-time employment. The situation is even worse for West Bank ID-holders in Jerusalem who are also refugees: of these households only 30.4 per cent have a member employed full-time. Most West Bank ID holders on the Jerusalem side of the Barrier must therefore rely on occasional unskilled work opportunities. Moreover, as a result of the Barrier, the main bread-winner has changed jobs in over 50 per cent of non-refugee and 56.5 per cent of refugee households. Three-quarters of all West Bank ID households and a significantly higher 95.7 per cent of refugee

households experienced a decline in earning capacity due to their lack of a Jerusalem residency status and geographical isolation resulting from the Barrier.

### health

West Bank ID holders on the Jerusalem side of the Barrier also struggle to access healthcare. Although West Bank ID holders can still physically access hospitals in the city, it is illegal for them to do so. However, when accessing hospitals on the West Bank side of the Barrier, they need to pass through a checkpoint, increasing the time, distance and cost required to access these facilities.

West Bank ID holders also struggle to receive ambulance services. Palestinian-run ambulances require prior coordination with the Israeli Civil Administration before being able to reach communities on the Jerusalem side of the Barrier. This coordination typically takes time and delays the transport of patients, even in urgent cases. In some instances, a back-to-back procedure (in which a patient needs to be transferred from one ambulance to another at the checkpoint) is needed because Palestinian ambulances are not permitted to cross; putting patients at additional risk and under increased stress when seeking medical attention.

### education

Since the construction of the Barrier, 37.1 per cent of all West Bank ID-holder households had at least one child change their primary school. In the case of refugees, this is exacerbated: 44.4 per cent of West Bank ID-holding refugees on the Jerusalem side of the Barrier had to change their source of education. Over 35 per cent of all West Bank ID-holder households changed their children's secondary education.

Almost half of all West Bank ID holder households reported a moderate to severe deterioration in the educational performance of their children, and 65.8 per cent said their children lost the motivation to attend school after the construction of the Barrier. Typically, the numbers of refugee households affected are higher than the norm, with 66.7 per cent stating a fall in performance and 77.8 per cent of refugee children expressing a decline in their motivation.

### psychosocial impact

The psychosocial situation of West Bank ID holders isolated on the Jerusalem side of the Barrier has deteriorated substantially due to the pressures of daily life resulting from their precarious residency situation and inability to access services. 95 per cent of West Bank ID holder households reported a decline in the emotional well-being of adults since the completion of the Barrier. Of these households, 92 per cent reported a similar deterioration in the wellbeing of their children.



The figure is more striking among refugees where 100 per cent of households reported experiencing a deterioration of emotional well-being in both adults and children.

### protection and displacement

West Bank ID-holders living on the Jerusalem side of the Barrier face acute hardship and the pressure on their households can be intolerable. Most West Bank ID holders cite the Barrier and its associated gate and permit regime as a main source of stress in their lives. The Barrier and its associated measures such as permits and checkpoints cause stress by dramatically reducing the economic opportunities and access to services such as health and education in East Jerusalem. West Bank ID holders are also more vulnerable to harassment at checkpoints due to their precarious residency situation.

Around 16 per cent of all West Bank ID-holders on the Jerusalem side of the Barrier reported that these pressures lead them to consider leaving in their homes and communities. Of the West Bank ID holder households surveyed, 14.5 per cent reported that at least one member of the household had already left as a result of the Barrier and its associated regime.

<sup>1</sup> Statistical data from UNRWA's Barrier Monitoring Unit's 2011 survey of West Bank ID holders on the "Jerusalem" side of the Barrier comprising of 94 households containing 665 individuals.



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