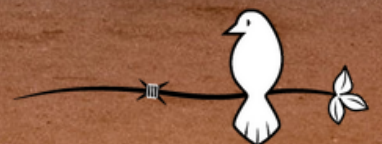




Semester School Report

August 2022 – January
2023



community peacemaker teams

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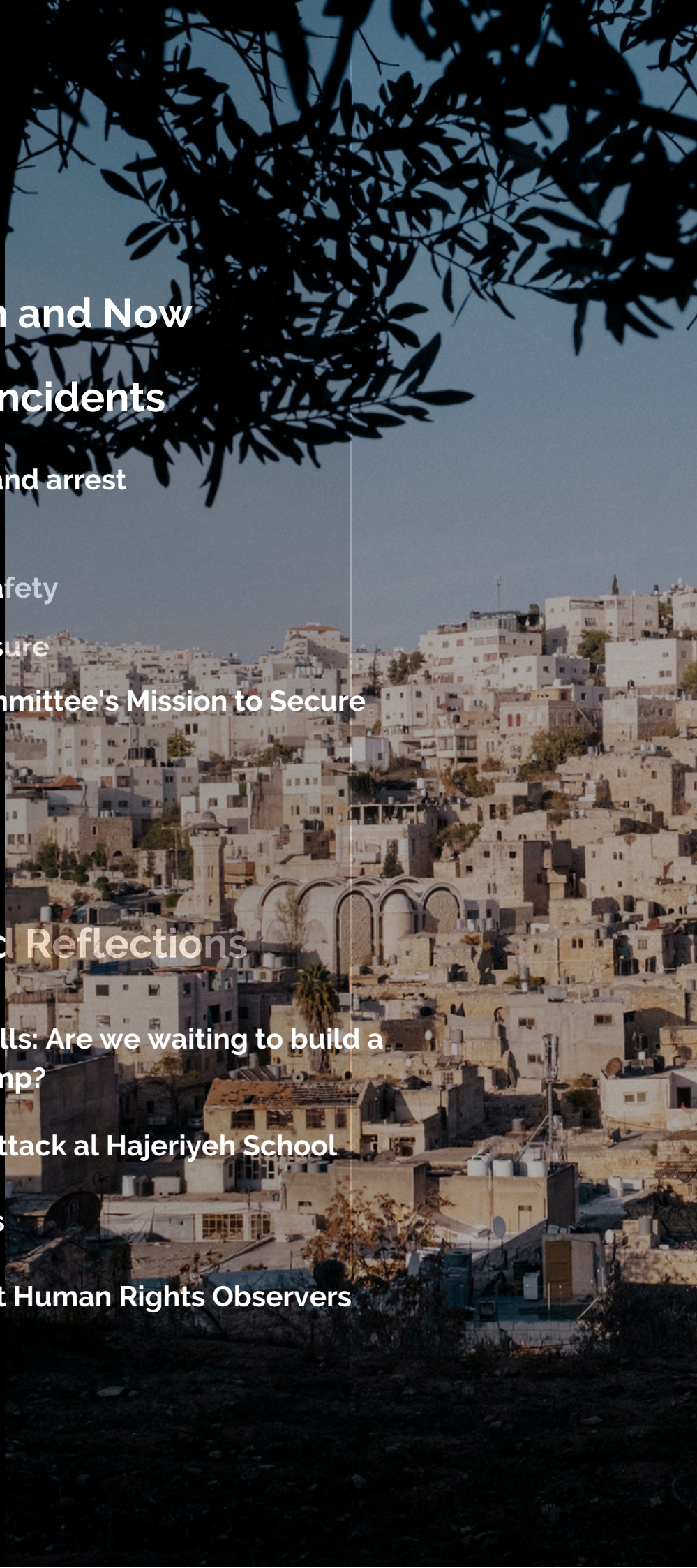
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Introduction



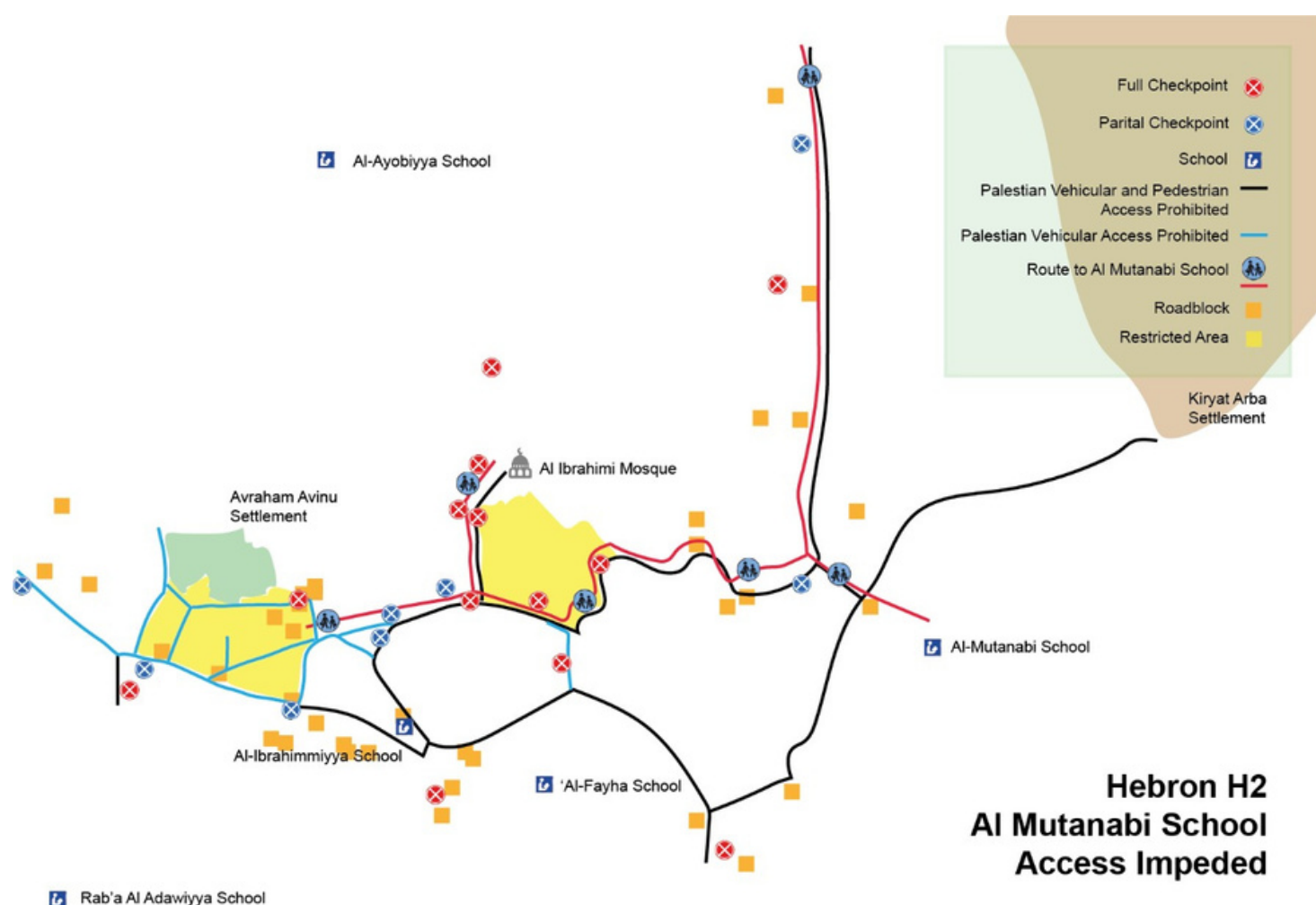
ver the last two decades, CPT has accompanied students and staff in the H2 area of al Khalil/Hebron on their way to school. The latest data records 21 fully staffed illegal Israeli checkpoints in H2. CPT and another partner organization monitor four of these checkpoints in an attempt to secure safe passage for over 600 students. The Israeli government has closed almost all the entrances to the closed area in H2, leaving the residents with no choice but to pass through the military checkpoints or to take a large detour via the surrounding hills to avoid the blockades.

Palestinian human rights are constantly being violated by the Israeli military and police, particularly while students and teachers go to and from school. In the most recent fall semester, from August 2022 to January 2023, the school compound witnessed increased violence, including using force as well as child and teacher detention. Also, as several major Jewish holidays took place this fall, this led to increased violence and checkpoints security measures against Palestinians.

In addition, 2022 was the deadliest year for West Bank Palestinians in nearly two decades, which was also reflected in the general situation near the schools. Many demonstrations took place, and the Israeli army responded with excessive force which affected the education process.

Also, CPT accompanied the families of South Hebron Hills; many villages are now under threat of demolishing due to the firing military zone law, which also effected students and the schools in the area.

Access to education is a right for every child. This report will detail the extent to which this right is violated in al Khalil/Hebron H2 and in the South Hebron Hills.





School runs:

Then and Now

A person wearing a red vest with a white logo on the back is standing in front of a large, dark wooden door. The scene is dimly lit, with a blueish tint. The person is seen from the side, looking towards the door.

By: Amy McGloughlin

School runs have changed a lot in the ten years I've been volunteering with Community Peacemaker Teams. My first school run in 2013 was made up of all volunteers from North America. The Palestinian children didn't speak English, and we only knew a few words of greeting in Arabic. The only people we could communicate with were a few of the school teachers and most of the soldiers.

We were a protective presence as we observed. We witnessed, intervened when we could, and reported on what we saw. But often, we missed details because of the language barrier. And, at times, local Palestinians would be suspicious of us because of passing conversations with soldiers.

My most recent school run in 2022 was much different. I was with a Palestinian team member, who knew the teachers and many of the students. Greetings and handshakes were exchanged, and as teachers passed through the checkpoints, they would give details about what was happening in the area.

The work of monitoring checkpoints in Hebron was important in 2013, and it is important today. But with an evolving team, made up of mostly Palestinian residents of Hebron, the work is more relational, as we build community with teachers, students and local residents. Because of those community bonds, the schools call us to report difficulties they have with soldiers. CPT can respond quickly, in Arabic, with a plan to support the schools, teachers and students.

In these last ten years, the checkpoints have grown from simple barriers, to large, foreboding structures. It's heartbreaking that so many Palestinians must pass through these checkpoints every day. But, I'm glad that CPT can continue to do the work of monitoring the school run, and being a witness and protective presence as children go to and from school.

Stories of child detention and arrest

By: Shahd Al Junaidi

The Israeli occupation forces carried out extreme violence toward many children this semester, coinciding with the presence of the Givati military brigade. The employed techniques of threatening, detaining and arresting children were observed during CPT observation and monitoring of the checkpoint.

On 12 September, within the first week of school, an Israeli soldier opened the gate at Al-Salaymeh checkpoint at 1:00 PM. An IOF jeep drove to the UN school compound while the children were leaving their school, and stopped in the front of the school.



Two soldiers exited the jeep and decided to detain two boys. When the soldiers tried to put the boys into the military jeep, the children resisted. So the soldiers grabbed them and walked with them until they reached the checkpoint. One of the CPT members asked the children their names. Only one boy responded, the other one was crying and telling the soldiers that he hadn't done anything, and that he wanted to go home.

After about 10 minutes, their father arrived at the checkpoint with two other children. "The soldiers refused to let me take my children, or even to talk with them. They are only 7 and 9 years old. I only wanted to check on them," the father told CPT. Four hours later, they were released.

"I tried to make things easier for my younger brother, by telling him that everything will be fine, they will release us and we will go back to our home. Our father is here with us, calm down," one of the boys told CPT. "But I was tired, physically more than mentally, I just want to sit down because my back was hurting me. The soldier told us that they knew we hadn't thrown stones but if we had informed them of the names of boys who threw stones from our school, then they would let us leave. We don't know any children at school yet, this is our first week in this school, we moved from another school to this school recently."

On 17 October in the afternoon, while the children were leaving their schools, there were some clashes near the high school in the H2 area. An IOF jeep came to the area where the boys we were gathering. The jeep stopped suddenly and the soldiers took Abed Al-Rahman, a young boy who was standing with the group. They transferred him directly to the Jabraa police station for investigation.

Abed Al-Rahman's father said "I'm sure that my son did not throw stones. He is in Tawjihi (the last year of high school) and I don't how he can complete his studies in jail if they arrest him. He is so calm and he focuses on studying, can we give him his books and will they allow for him to study?"

Unfortunately, Abed Al-Rahman was sentenced to four months in prison with a bail of 5,000 shekels. He will stay at jail for four months and he will lose four months of class, as well as hanging out with his friends, missing his family, and his life.

On 30 November in the afternoon, CPT members reached Al-Salaymeh checkpoint. There was a group of soldiers who grabbed a boy at the checkpoint while a group of Palestinian people, the boy's family, surrounded him. It was an unusual incident of detention, because usually the family arrives to the checkpoint after a while and only one or two members of the family come. On this occasion, it was the whole family at the checkpoint and they didn't allow the soldiers to take their child.

"I was afraid for the boy to be taken by the soldiers, but at the same time I was calm because his family was there. This made me think about how important it is for family to be with their children in these situations," reflected a CPT member. Sometimes, when the soldiers see the family watching them, they will be less aggressive with the child who is detained. The presence of the family is very important at the time of the arrest or detention in Palestinian community, as the parents have the legal right to ask the soldiers about their children. The constant contact with the occupation has also given them experience with how to deal with soldiers unfortunately, especially in the case of detention where they are only focused on releasing their child.

5 January was the last day of school, and Omar was on his way home after finishing the last exam of this semester, hoping to have good grades, and thinking about his plan for the holiday. While he passed through the checkpoint, two soldiers stopped him and detained him, accusing him of throwing stones toward the soldiers. Omar was detained for six hours, and the soldier slapped Omar for responding to the soldier when he asked for his name. "I don't know if I can walk through here next semester, I'm so afraid," said Omar.

His mother saw Omar at the checkpoint and immediately approached the soldier, telling him that she was sure her son did not throw stones. She did not leave her child alone at the checkpoint, even though she had given birth 15 days prior via c-section. She would not allow the soldier to take her son. She stayed and resisted for the full six hours even through the pain and the poor weather. It is hard to see your son without being able to touch him, or take him with you. How can she be strong and patient in this way? How did she hold her nerves for that long?

"This detention story is the one that has remained with me the strongest. I wonder how the boy will continue his life normally and go back to the school again. Imagine if it had been the soldier's son was instead of Omar, would that soldier accept if someone slapped his son?" said a CPT member.





"This detention story is the one that has remained with me the strongest. I wonder how the boy will continue his life normally and go back to the school again. Imagine if it had been the soldier's son was instead of Omar, would that soldier accept if someone slapped his son?" said a CPT member.

On 17 December, there were clashes happening near the UN school. A teacher was trying to make sure that the school children could leave safely, because of the tear gas. Suddenly, a military jeep came and stopped near the teacher. The soldiers grabbed him and pushed him inside, taking him to the Al-Salaymeh checkpoint.

While CPT members were waiting for the teacher to be released, two boys from the UN school who had been detained before stopped CPT and started asking us about the teacher's situation. They asked us, "now the soldiers will put the teacher in the same place that they put us right?"

Children have experience with this reality; a reality to which they should never be subjected. They still remember the situation and the place and what happened with them. They will never forget that. This bad memory will be with them throughout their lives.

In 1991, Israel ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which stipulates that children should only be deprived of their liberty as a measure of last resort, and that they must not be unlawfully or arbitrarily detained, or be subjected to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

But the Israeli occupation currently deals with children in stark contrast to that of the agreement. Who is responsible for keeping the Israeli occupation accountable, who will take responsibility for the care of the children who face the occupation daily? They will live with trauma for their whole lives. In a parallel world, I hope all the children live their lives without any knowledge about the occupation. May they live as free people on free land. May they have hope to end the oppression and grow up and live with love, safety and peace.



Jewish Holidays

Students routinely suffer the oppression of Israeli occupation soldiers and checkpoints, and if that wasn't enough, they also suffer at the hands of the settlers, especially during Jewish holidays.

During Jewish holidays this semester, the IOF closed the H2 area completely, only providing limited access for the people who live there. The closure of these areas of the Old City and the occupation's failure to allow Palestinian citizens to access these areas led to the unleashing of settlers who attacked Palestinian shops and homes.

When settlers celebrate their holidays, Palestinians must endure widespread closures and tightly monitored checkpoints. The Israeli occupation forces (IOF) install dozens of cameras in the neighborhoods surrounding the Ibrahimi mosque and increases the number and severity of checkpoints. Their mission is to track every movement of Palestinians, arbitrarily stopping them and checking their identities.

Students were subjected to school bag searches and detention at the checkpoints, causing delays for at least half an hour and resulting in missed class time. During the Jewish holidays, CPT visited the schools in the H2 area and remained present in the area. CPT witnessed the following incidents:

The Ibrahimiya School, because of its close proximity to the Ibrahimi Mosque, is exposed to military and settler attacks tear gas and sound bombs, and students and teachers are subjected to humiliating searches and detention for several hours, which impedes their arrival to their schools. The delays have become almost daily occurrences, and some students arrive at school after nine o'clock in the morning. During the Jewish holidays, the school hours are reduced, and many students cannot reach the school at all, especially those who live in the market area of the Old City, which is subject to complete closure on holidays. The military continues to prevent the raising of the Palestinian flag, especially at the schools located close to the settlements.

A settler woman comes to the checkpoints constantly to yell at students and film them as an intimidation tactic. She carries out these acts in front of the soldiers who allow her to continue; they protect her.

In October, the IOF stormed Ibrahimiya School and threatened to close the school because one settler claimed that some students threw stones at him. More than five soldiers entered the compound forcefully in an attempt to close the school.

Unfortunately, some families have decided to take their children to other schools because they don't feel safe when crossing the checkpoints or risking arbitrary detention. Some families feel unsafe having their children stay in schools near the checkpoints.

Struggling for Safety: The Plight of Palestinian Children in H2 Hebron

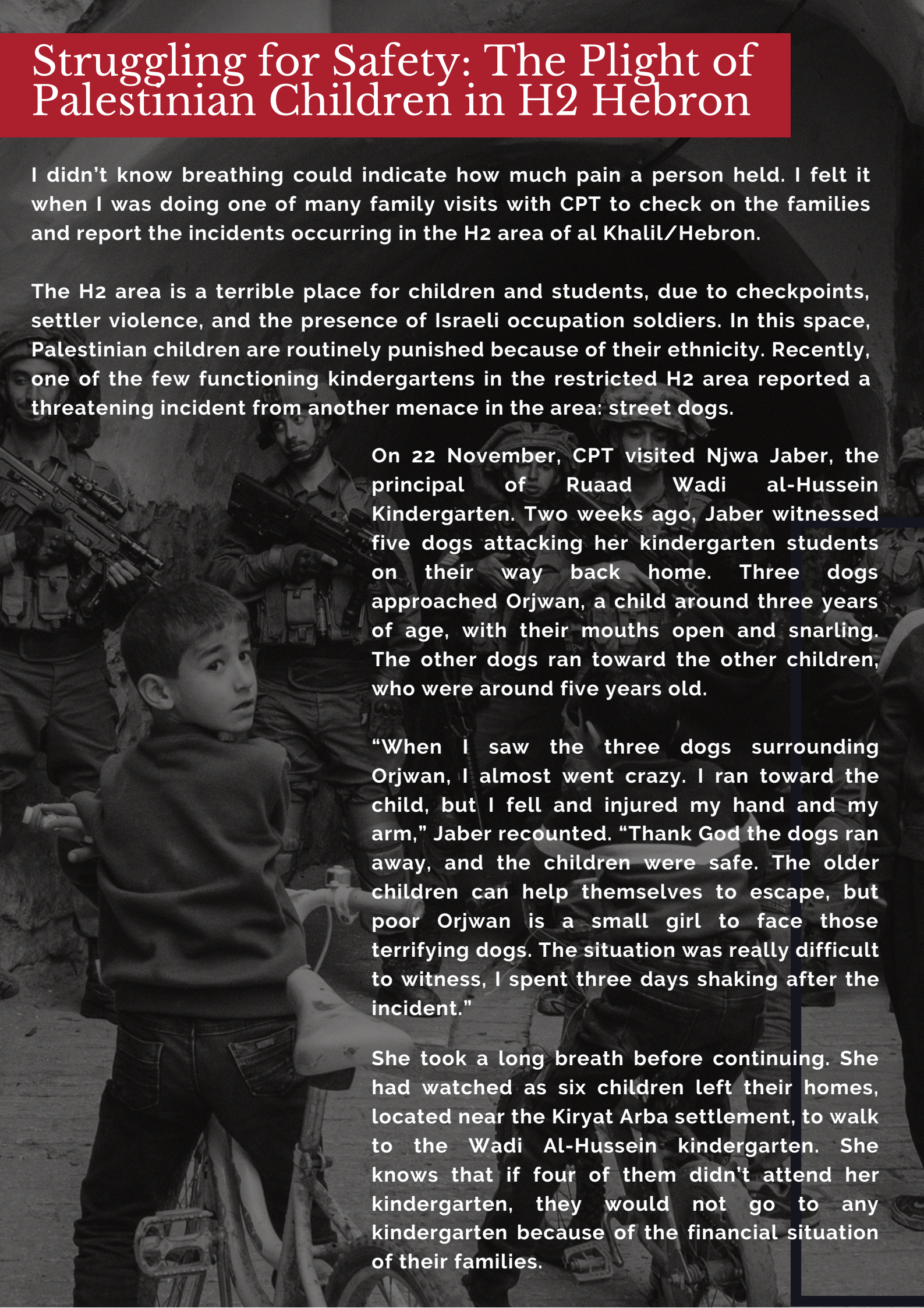
I didn't know breathing could indicate how much pain a person held. I felt it when I was doing one of many family visits with CPT to check on the families and report the incidents occurring in the H2 area of al Khalil/Hebron.

The H2 area is a terrible place for children and students, due to checkpoints, settler violence, and the presence of Israeli occupation soldiers. In this space, Palestinian children are routinely punished because of their ethnicity. Recently, one of the few functioning kindergartens in the restricted H2 area reported a threatening incident from another menace in the area: street dogs.

On 22 November, CPT visited Njwa Jaber, the principal of Ruaad Wadi al-Hussein Kindergarten. Two weeks ago, Jaber witnessed five dogs attacking her kindergarten students on their way back home. Three dogs approached Orjwan, a child around three years of age, with their mouths open and snarling. The other dogs ran toward the other children, who were around five years old.

"When I saw the three dogs surrounding Orjwan, I almost went crazy. I ran toward the child, but I fell and injured my hand and my arm," Jaber recounted. "Thank God the dogs ran away, and the children were safe. The older children can help themselves to escape, but poor Orjwan is a small girl to face those terrifying dogs. The situation was really difficult to witness, I spent three days shaking after the incident."

She took a long breath before continuing. She had watched as six children left their homes, located near the Kiryat Arba settlement, to walk to the Wadi Al-Hussein kindergarten. She knows that if four of them didn't attend her kindergarten, they would not go to any kindergarten because of the financial situation of their families.



She took many deep breaths during the conversation, but the last shaking breath was enough for me to feel how much pain she was in, especially as she carries the responsibility of keeping the children safe. She not only puts in the effort to create a healthy learning environment, but she also tries to ensure that the children are safe on their way to and from school. My eyes started to tear up and my heart became heavier when she continued, saying, "after the incident, the children are afraid of going to school, and they haven't attended on some days." On the day that CPT visited the kindergarten, the children who live close to Kiryat Arba were absent.

While she spoke with us, we walked outside to see where the incident had occurred. We found one of the dogs with her new puppies near the military outpost. It seems that the number of dogs who attack children will increase.

Jaber also introduced us to Amer, a shopkeeper who witnessed the incident. "If I was not there, the children might have been hurt," he said. "Those dogs who attacked the children belong to soldiers, they are street dogs, but they are fed and raised by soldiers. If one of the kids throws stones at the dogs, the soldiers will go out from their military outpost and chase the children or even detain them."

When CPT asked about a possible solution, Jaber exclaimed, "to who can I complain? Who is going to help me remove the dogs? The Israeli soldiers? Or the municipality? I only have God."

While recounting the story, she remembered other incidents that have happened in her kindergarten. A few years ago, the settler security coordinator entered her kindergarten with his gun in front of the children, claiming there were children throwing rocks and they had hidden inside the kindergarten. The fact that her school is only for children between three and five years old was irrelevant.

CPT also visited the families and children who were impacted by the dog attack. The children were doing okay, although Orjwan was still experiencing trauma from the incident. Unfortunately, even with extra accompaniment offered by CPT and other organizations, it is not enough for families to have their children return to school. But, we will keep following up and try to find other solutions with our partners and the families.

When there is no safety for the children, whether inside the school or on their way, how can children learn or focus if they are constantly stressed about what will happen? How they can feel safe if we cannot guarantee their basic human rights?

In occupied Palestine, childhood is a crime.

Checkpoint closure

By: Tarteel Aljunaidi



The occupied city of al Khalil/Hebron is no stranger to military checkpoints and restrictions on movement. There are over 22 checkpoints only in H2, not to mention the other flying checkpoints that regularly occur—temporary blockades that the Israeli occupation forces can set up/take down quickly whenever and wherever, without notice. These measures, allegedly put in place for security reasons, profoundly impact the daily lives of the city's residents, particularly its students.

Various Israeli military brigades serve in al Khalil/Hebron, rotating every three to four months. Each troop uses different tactics to control the Palestinian population under occupation. With CPT's long-term presence of human rights observers, we have recorded these differences while monitoring the checkpoints, which can vary between use of force and checkpoint closure.

Israeli occupation forces used a high level force during the last school semester, which this report will highlight in the upcoming chapters. However, due to the recent change in the Israeli military brigade, checkpoint closure has dramatically increased over the last two months.*

The military regularly uses this tactic of checkpoint closure to enforce collective punishment on the residents of H2 neighborhoods near the checkpoints, which the military has most recently employed during the period of time when children leave their schools.

One particularly disturbing incident of the effects of these measures occurred on 6 December 2022, when Israeli soldiers closed the checkpoint for hours, effectively blocking the only way for most students to return home safely. Regardless of the impact, the soldiers closed the checkpoint in the afternoon and prevented anyone from passing through.

In our observation, we witnessed the scene firsthand as the students were left stranded in the streets with no access to food, water, or bathrooms. The temperature was extremely cold, and the students were visibly distressed and frustrated with the situation. They are tired of the constant disruptions to their education and the severe impact that the military occupation has on their lives.

Thirty people were waiting for the checkpoint to open and most of them were small children gathered on the stairs of a small shop. A group of girls was chatting together to pass the time and forget about the cold, showing off their grades at school, and as it was raining, they started showing off their tiny umbrellas. Among them, an eight-year-old girl said, "I wish they would disappear. I want this to stop."

The checkpoint closures disrupt the child's schedule, disrupts the student's education, and causes stress and anxiety for their families.

I understand her sentiments. When I was her age, all I wanted to do was get home, turn on the heater, and have lunch together with my family. We had a time limit. We would leave school at 2:00pm, so we should be home by 2:30 pm. If we were late, my parents would call the school to check if we left on time.

I can imagine how their families feel when their child is more than an hour late, and there is no way to know exactly where your child is at the moment unless you go by yourself—if you are able—to search for your child.

Leaving children on the streets for hours is dangerous and unacceptable. The closure of the checkpoint clearly violates the rights of the students and children.

This incident is just one example of how the Israeli occupation impacts the lives of the city's residents in al Khalil/Hebron. The restrictions on movement and the constant presence of military checkpoints create an atmosphere of fear and insecurity, making it difficult for people to go about their daily lives.

The impact of these measures is particularly acute for children and young people, who are already facing significant challenges as they seek to obtain an education in a challenging and vulnerable environment. Every child deserves to be able to attend school without fear of disruption or intimidation, and we will continue to work so that their rights are protected.

You can learn more about the different military brigades in our previous school report, **ISRAEL BRIGADES: BATTALIONS AND THEIR IMPACT DURING SCHOOL TIME IN H2 AREA**. P22



Defying Occupation: The Parents Committee's Mission to Secure Education in H2



After five semesters of observing the checkpoints in the morning while students go to their schools, I had started to wonder if we still had hope to change or reduce the impact of the occupation on the educational process. Can it be changed?

The answer appeared to me this semester. A group of men of different ages and different backgrounds have come together to guarantee the educational process for the students in H2 area. They call themselves the Parents Committee.

Before this semester, I would always mentally prepare myself to handle what might happen, especially at the Al-Salaymeh checkpoint, where Israeli soldiers regularly arrest or detain students, and fire countless rounds of tear gas and sound bombs at students and into school compounds. This area has not seen calm for a long time, until the Parents Committee arrived.

Consisting of eight men, the committee is split into two groups, one standing close to Al Salaymeh checkpoint and the other group standing close to Tariq bin Ziyad school. They are non-partisan without any official affiliation; they are volunteers who are trying to ensure the students are guaranteed their right to access education.

The group stationed near the Al Salaymeh checkpoint try to prevent students from throwing rocks, this is the best way to avoid any clashes between the students and Israeli soldiers. According to one man from the Parents Committee, "this area has witnessed a lot of families choked from teargas, and many houses were burned. So, the idea of preventing students from throwing rocks at soldiers is a good idea since we are not giving the soldiers a reason to throw bombs or fire bullets."

Their presence also fills a gap in the area, since the Palestinian Authority (PA) cannot access the H2 area. Four years ago, the Ministry of Education threatened to close some schools in the H2 area because of irregular school hours as a result of checkpoint closures and clashes. Another member of the Parents Committee remembers, "the previous governor Kamal Hamid formed a group of 21 people from different families in the area to protect the educational institutions for a period. Now eight of us have kept in touch and we have come back to serve the area and save the educational process."

According to a third man from the Parents Committee, "we face challenges from both sides. Soldiers went twice to the school area in the morning, and it was very challenging for us because they were provoking the students. When we ask them to go back to the checkpoint, they threatened to destroy the schools if one child threw a stone. And on the other hand, at the beginning we struggled with the students since they did not understand our idea, but now they are aware of our role."



The Parents Committee were very comfortable sharing stories that have stuck out during their services at the Al Salaymeh checkpoint. Wael Al-Fakhoury remembers a time this semester when the Israeli soldiers detained a child around 11-years-old. "The child did not do anything," he recounted. "The soldiers claimed he threw stones but I told them I was standing from 7am here and no one has thrown stones. Check your cameras." The soldiers reviewed the cameras and were wrong, so Al-Fakhoury took the child with him. The child was so afraid that he peed on himself.

The Parents Committee also play a major role in meeting the needs of the school whether through financial or moral support. They are available at all times to assist the teachers and principals with their mission to educate the students and make them a better version of themselves.

The committee is very proud of the results. According to them, students used to go to school at 9:00am but now, by 7:30 or 8:00am all of them will be inside the school compound. As a CPT member, I also observed a huge difference on the ground when it comes to school monitoring, especially in the morning at Al-Salaymeh checkpoint. This semester has been the quietest morning school run I have observed over the last five semesters.



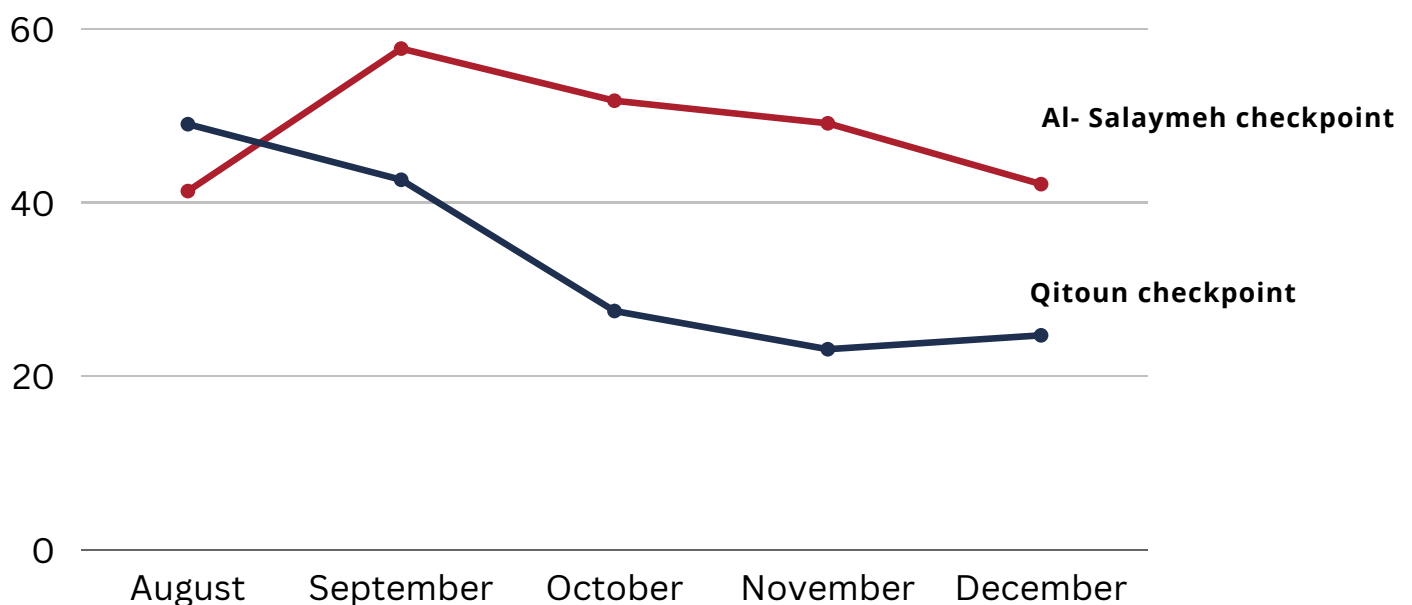
Statistics

The following statistics are derived from CPT daily monitoring of checkpoints at Qitoun (209) and Al-Salaymeh (160). CPT presence is meant to decrease Israeli soldier and police harassment of Palestinian children, teachers, and other people crossing the checkpoint. During this monitoring period, CPT records numbers in order to compare the effects of Israeli military checkpoints alongside several variables, including Jewish holidays, new brigades, and the weather.

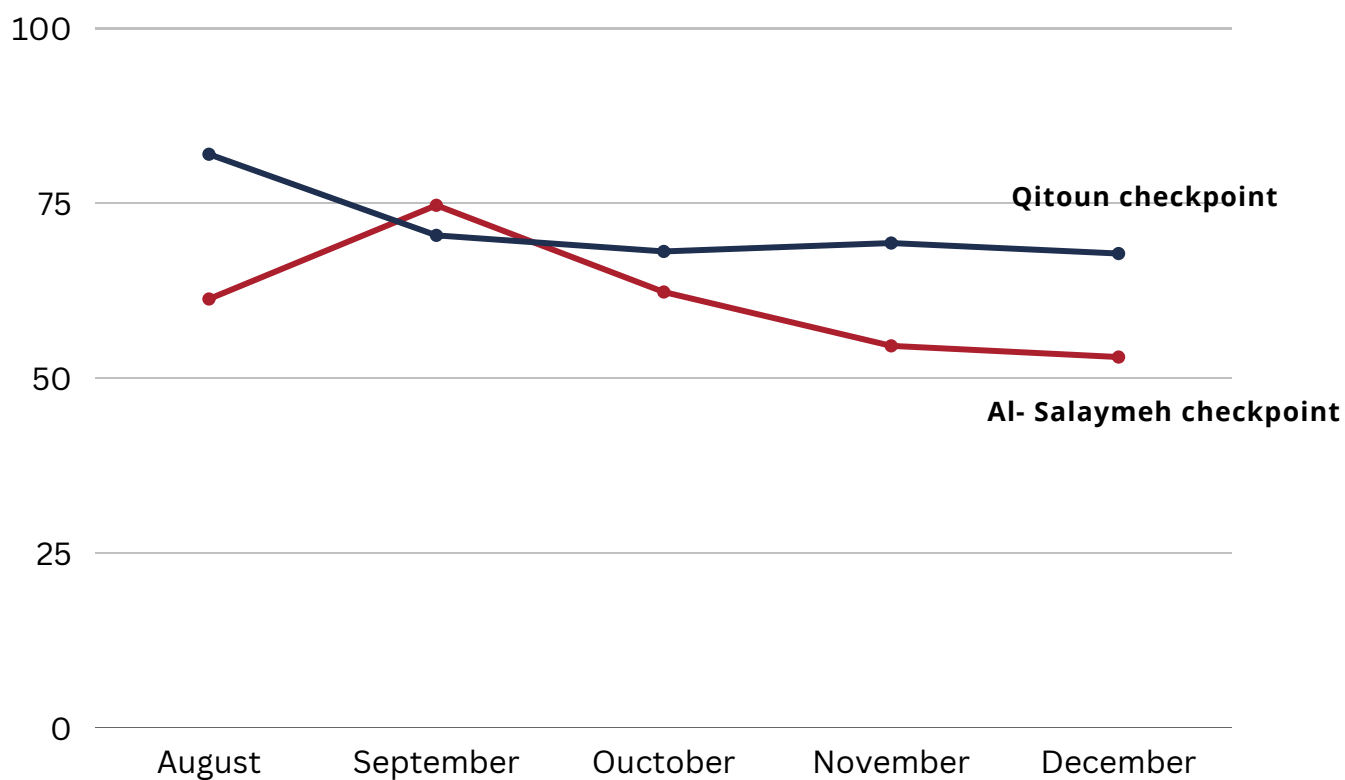
We observe children from 11 schools and 3 kindergartens. The schools are not mixed and the majority of schools in the area are boys' schools, therefore you will notice that the boys outnumber the girls.

These graphs represent the average monthly number of schoolchildren, teachers, and the general population who crossed the checkpoint in the last semester between August and December 2022 at Al-Salaymeh (160) and Qitoun (209) checkpoints from 7:00 AM to 8:00 AM when the children go to their schools, and from 12:00 AM to 1:00 PM when they return home.

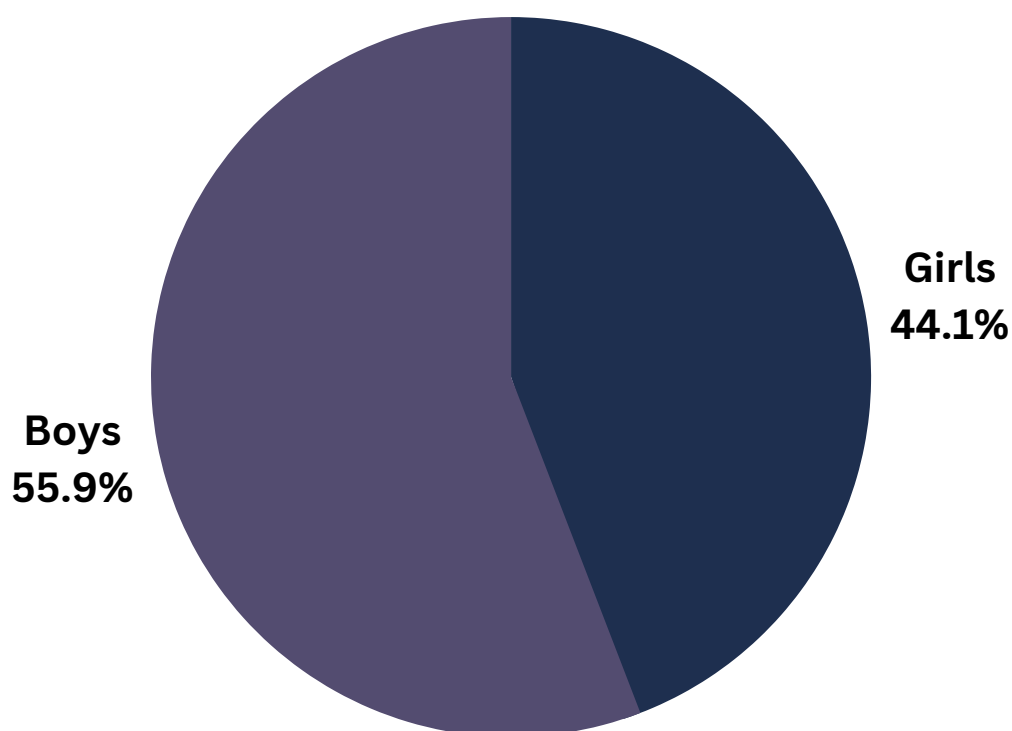
Number of girls



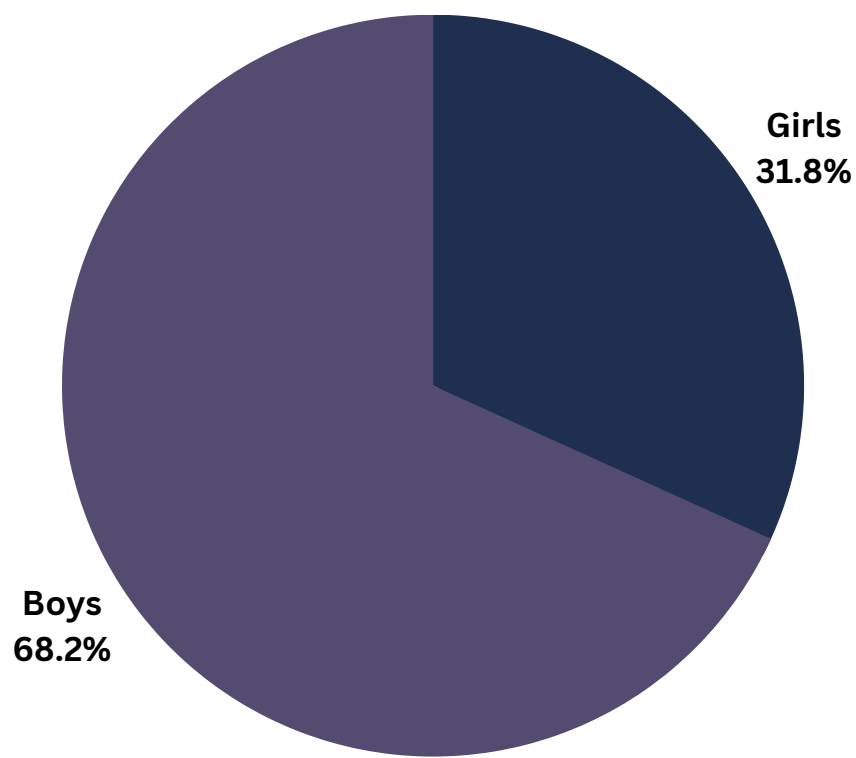
Number of boys



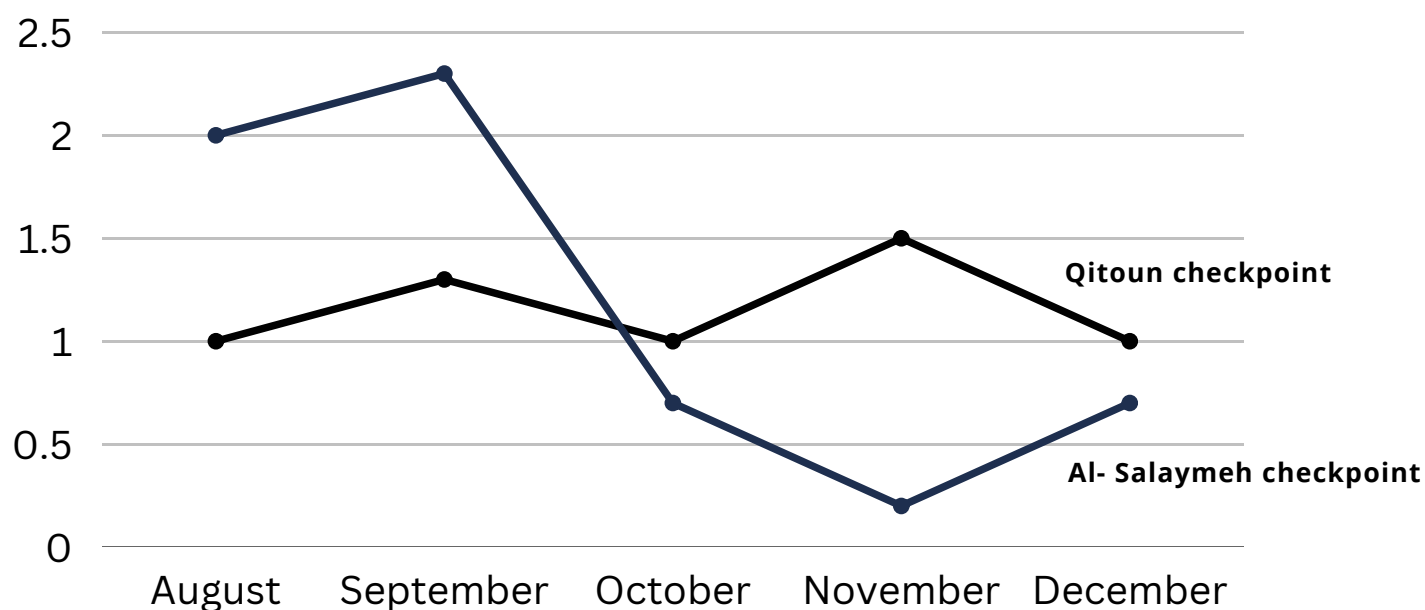
The ratio between the number of boys to the number of girls at Al-Salaymeh checkpoint



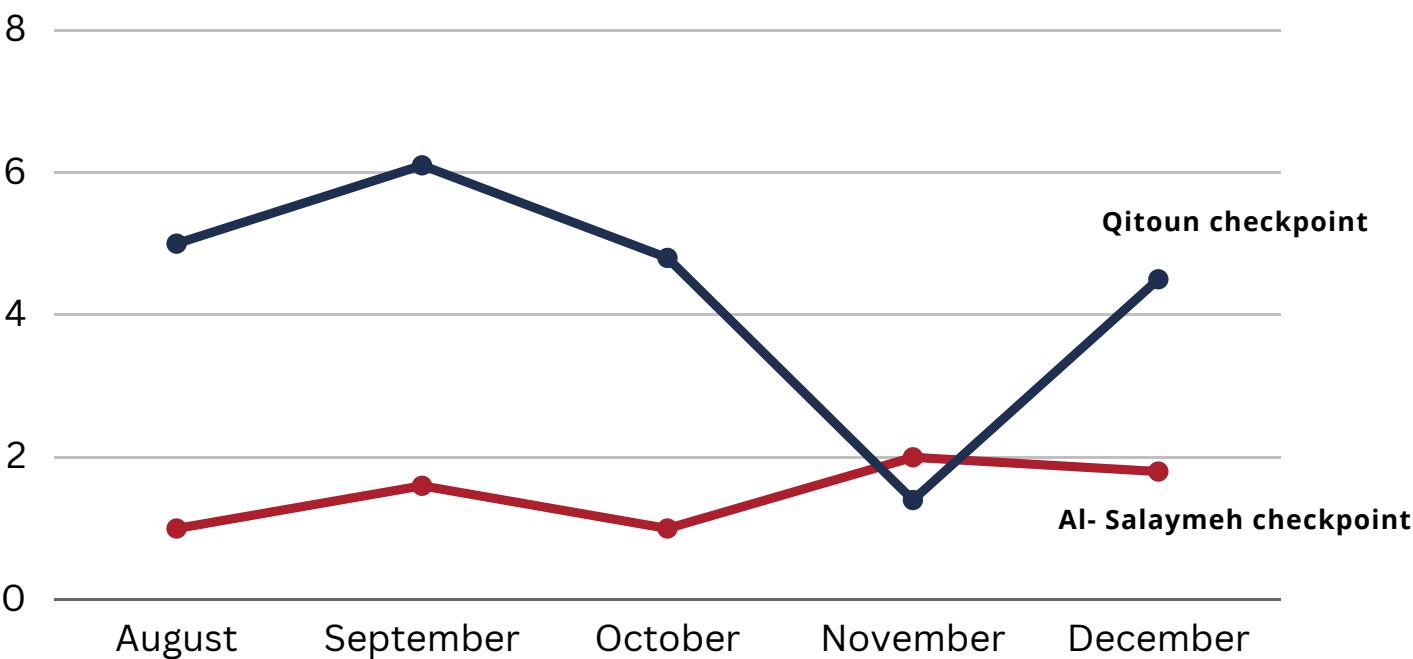
The ratio between the number of boys to the number of girls at Qitoun checkpoint



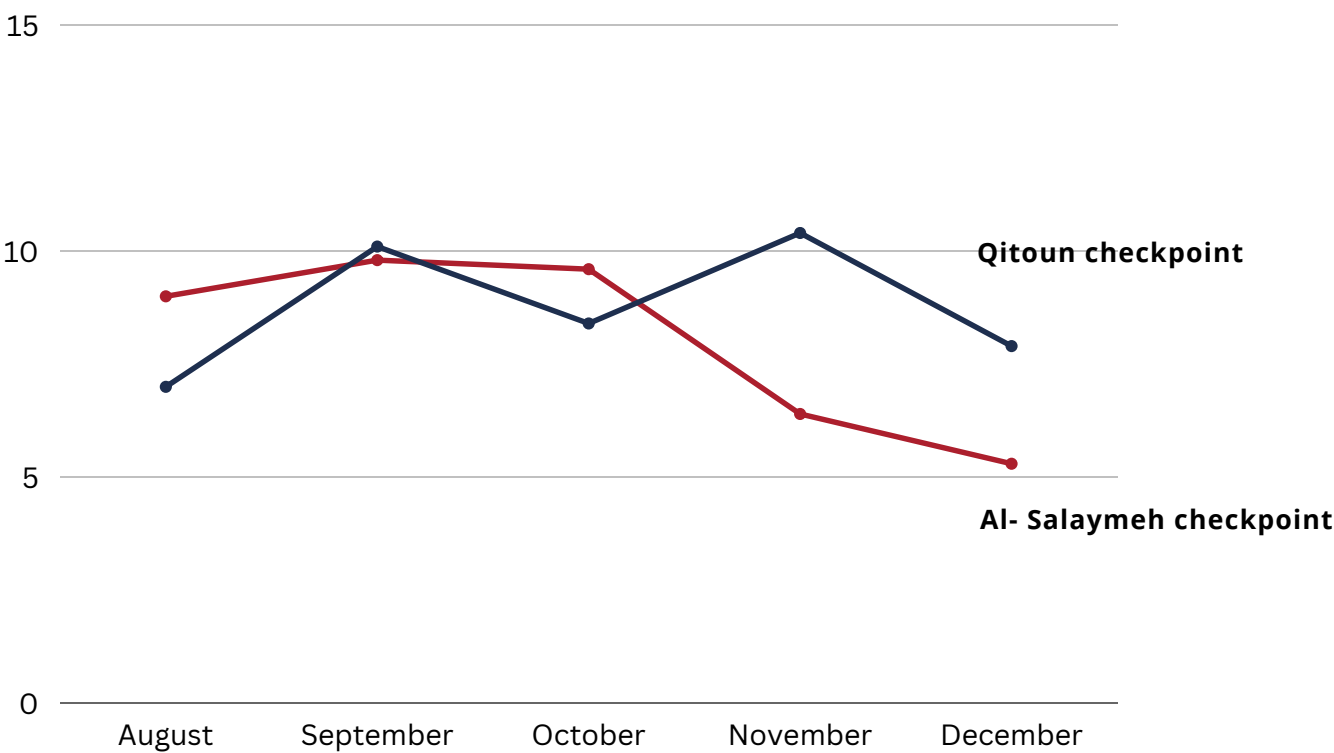
Female Teachers



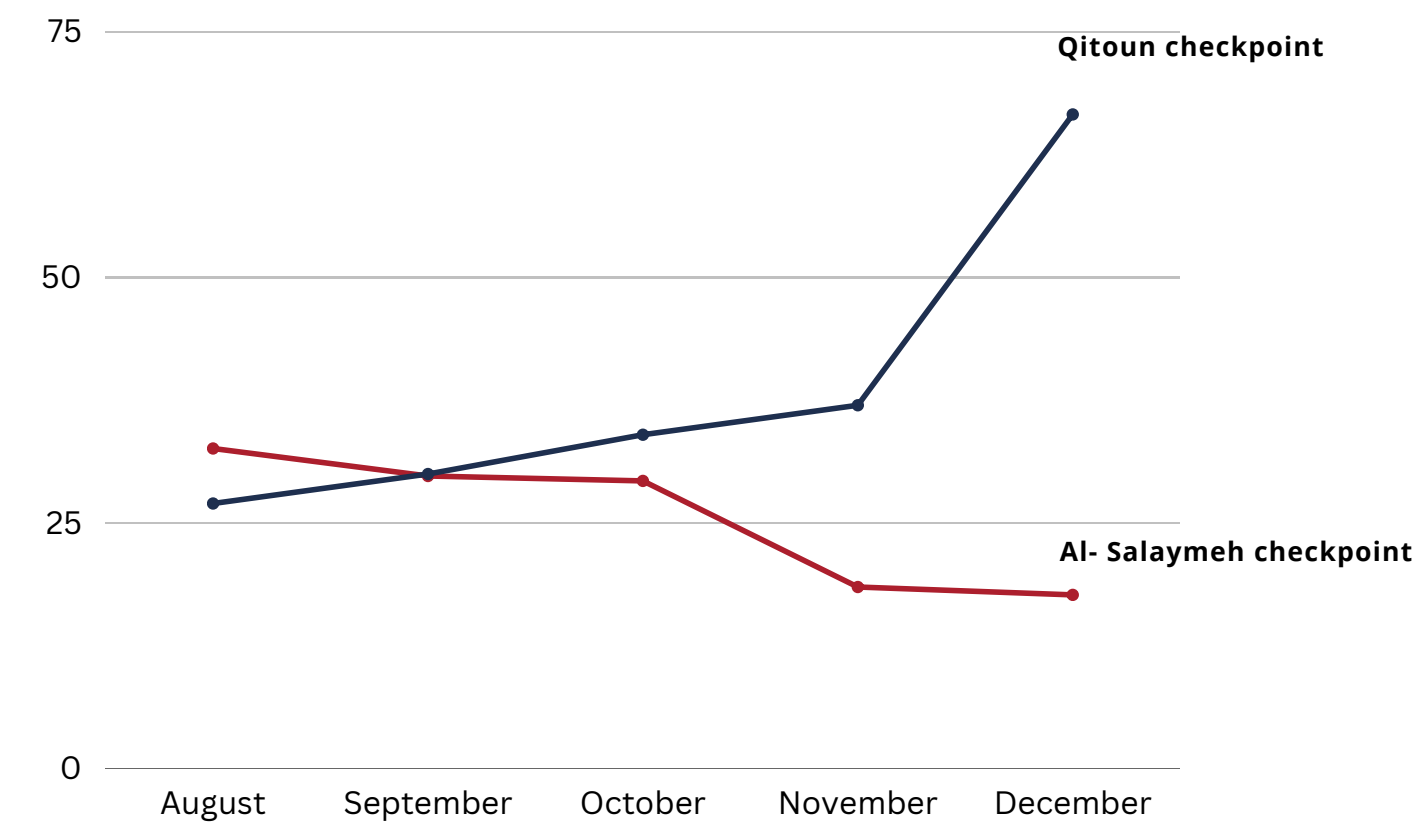
Male Teachers



Female Adults

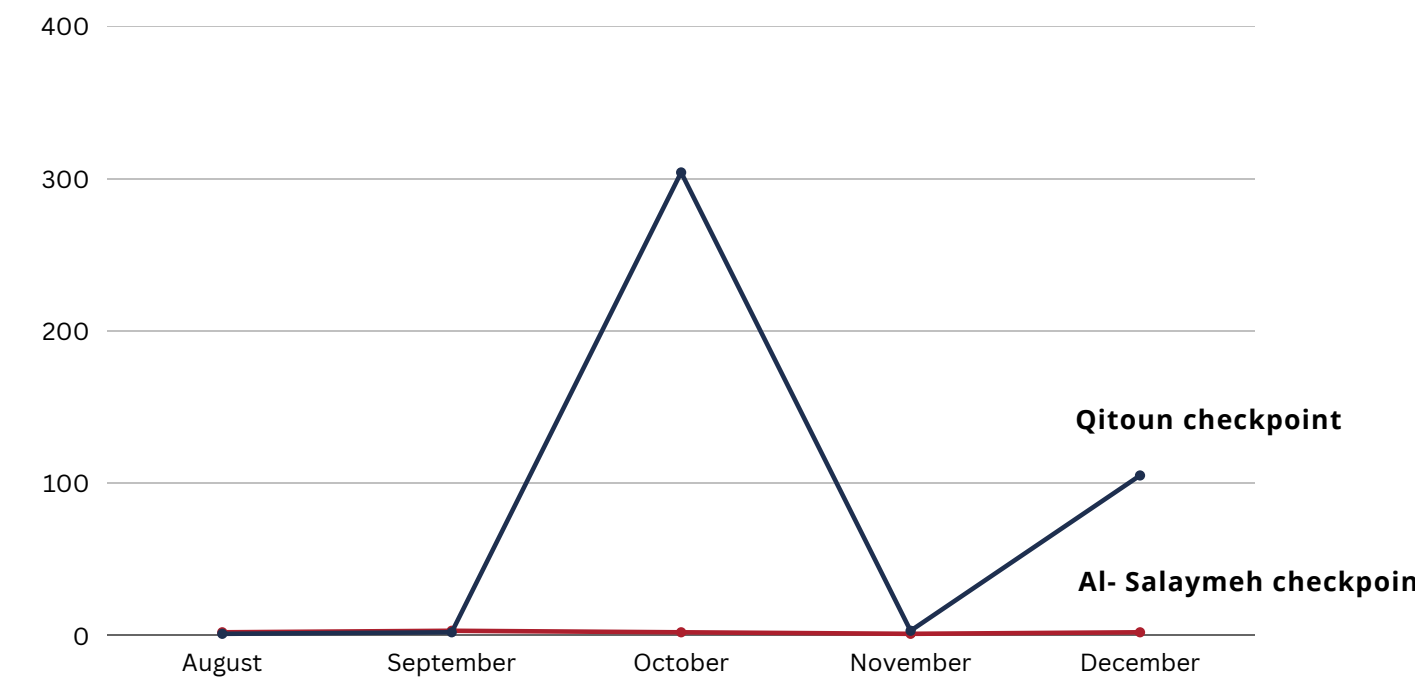


Male Adults



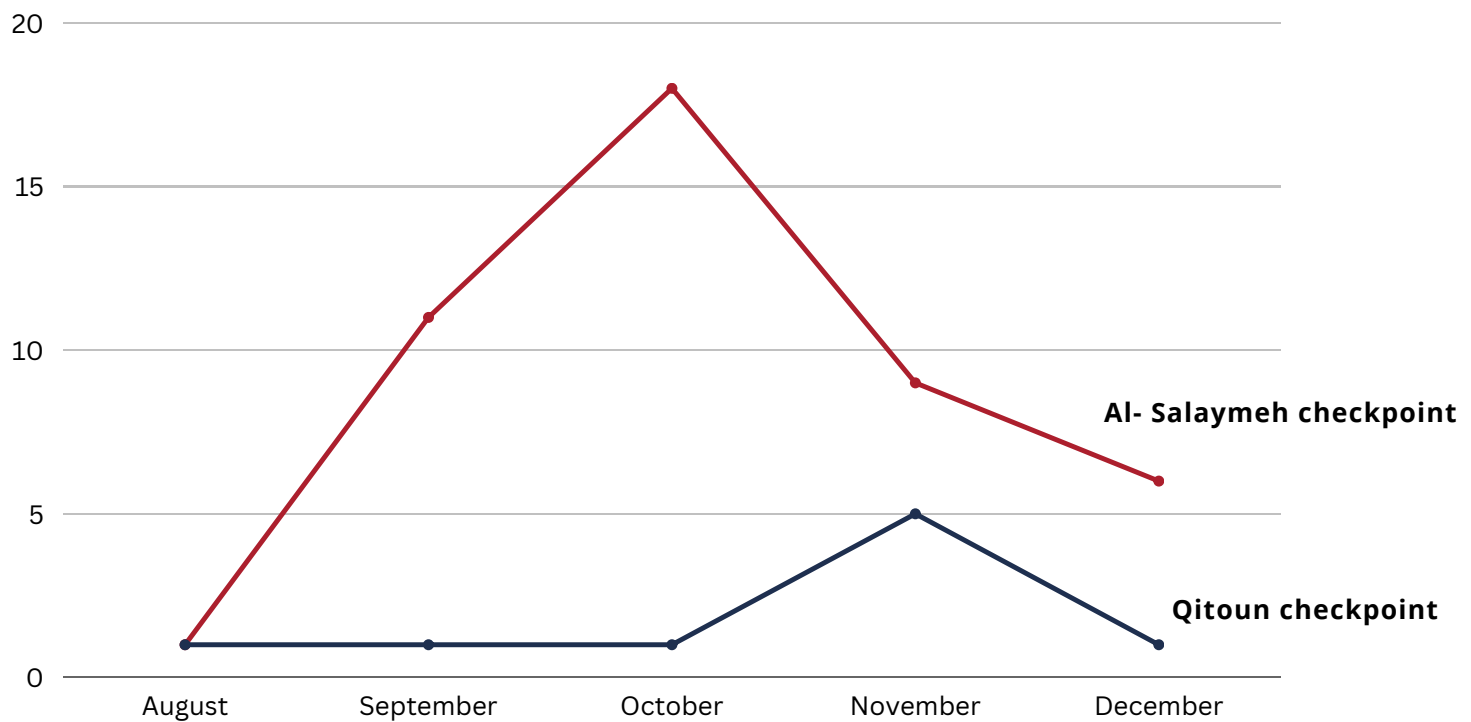
During our observation, children are subject to body and bag checks, below are the numbers of children who were checked last semester:

Number of children checked

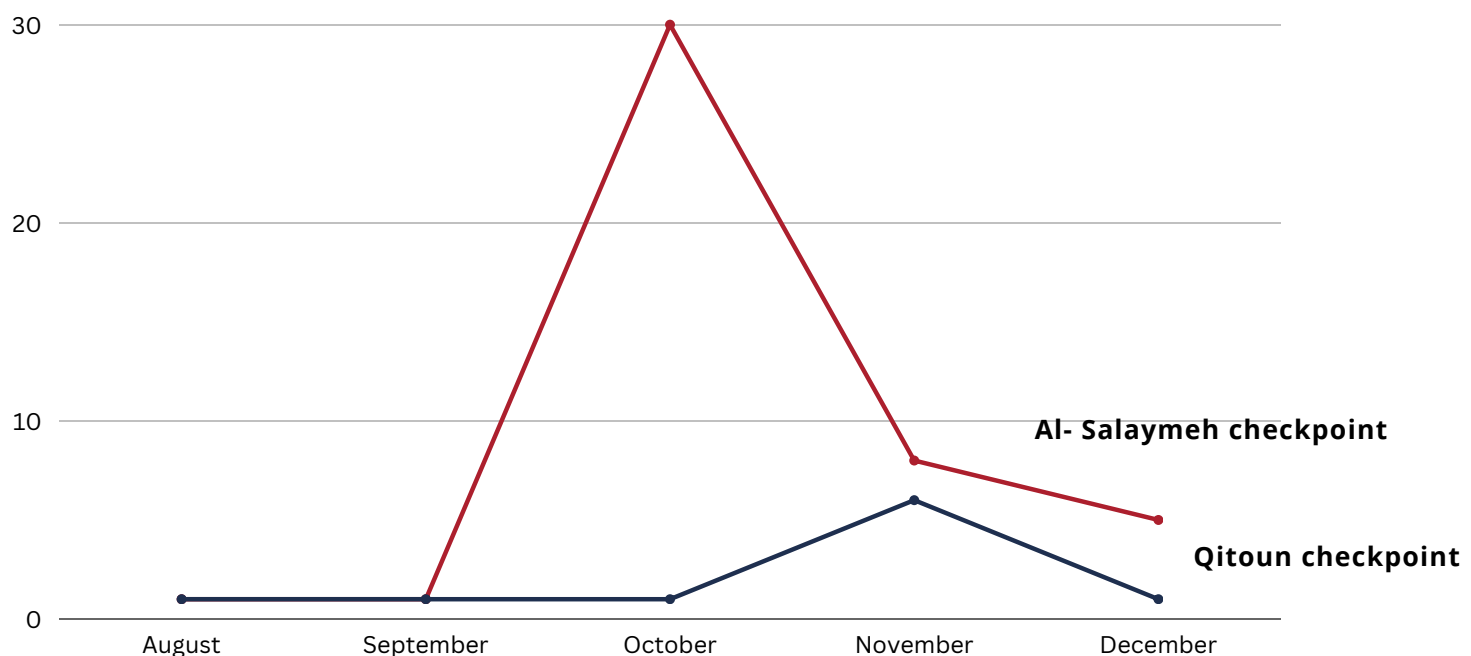


When clashes occur in the school areas, the soldiers come out of the checkpoints and throw stun grenades and tear gas at the children. Below are the numbers of the stun grenades and tear gas canisters that CPT documented were thrown at children:

Numbers of Stun Grenades

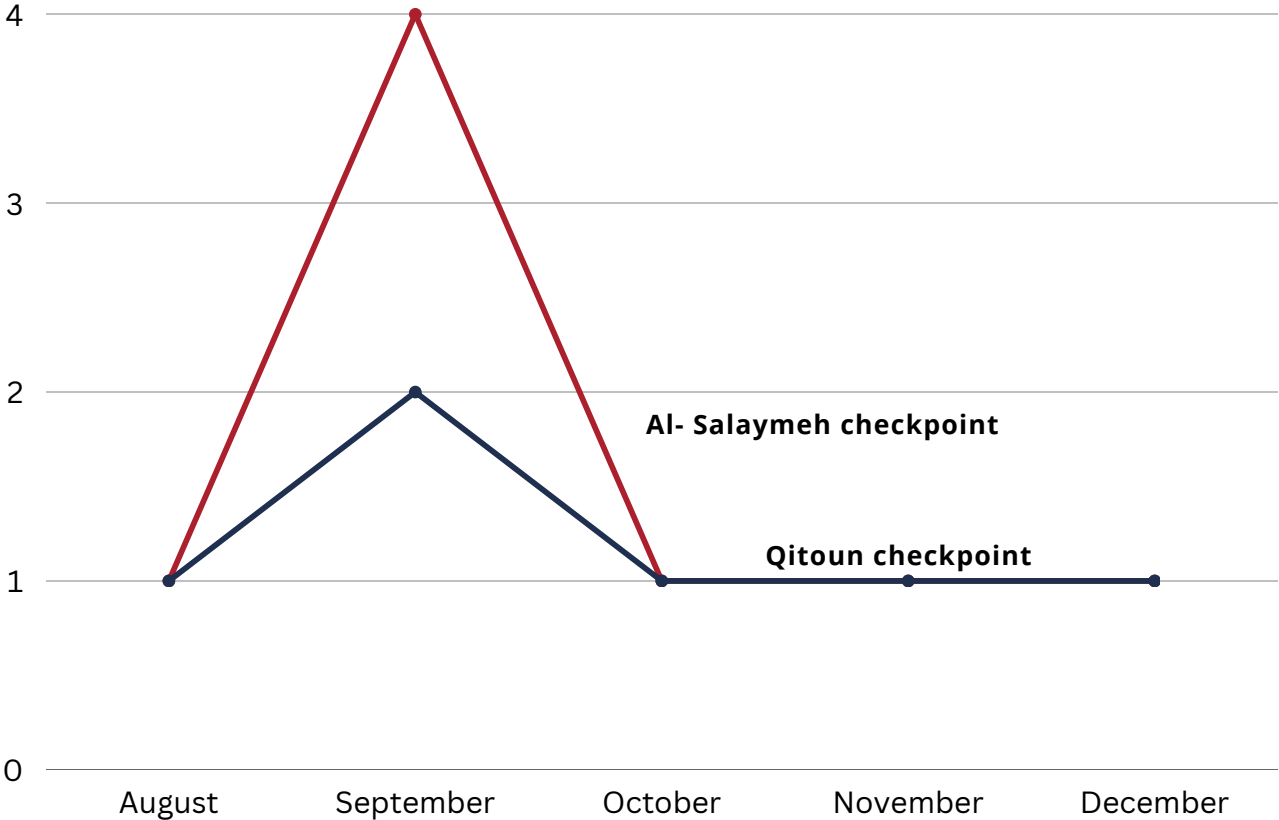


Numbers of Tear gas

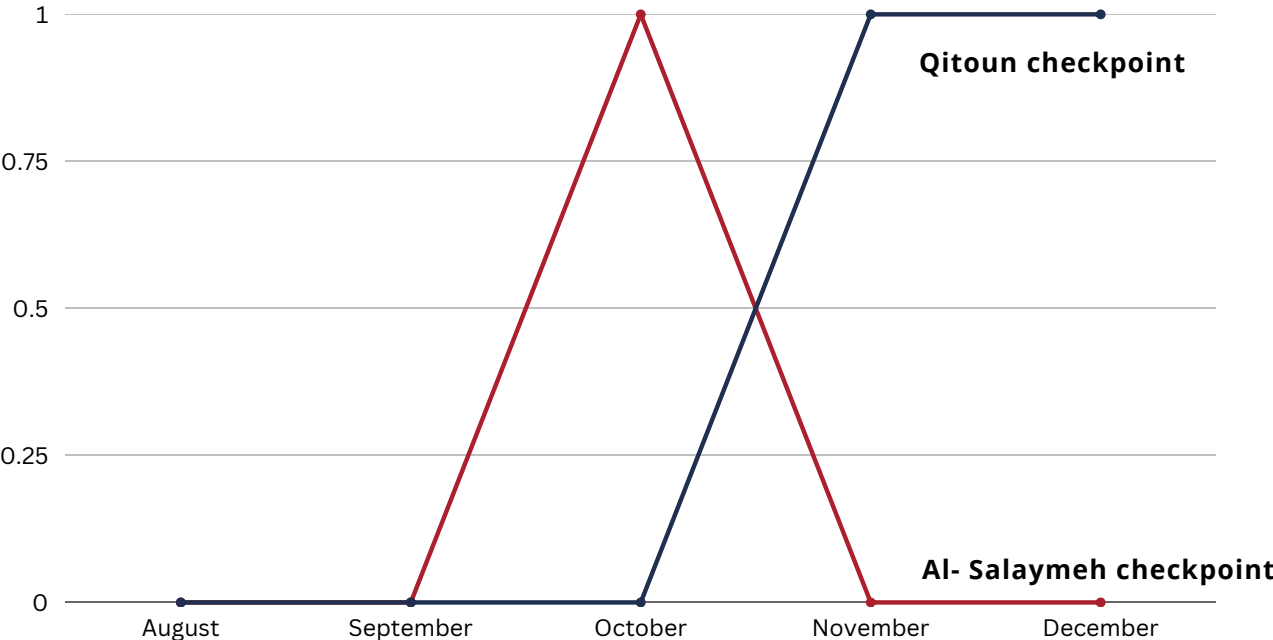


We also witnessed the assault, detention, and arrest of children. Below are the numbers:

Assaults and Detained of Children

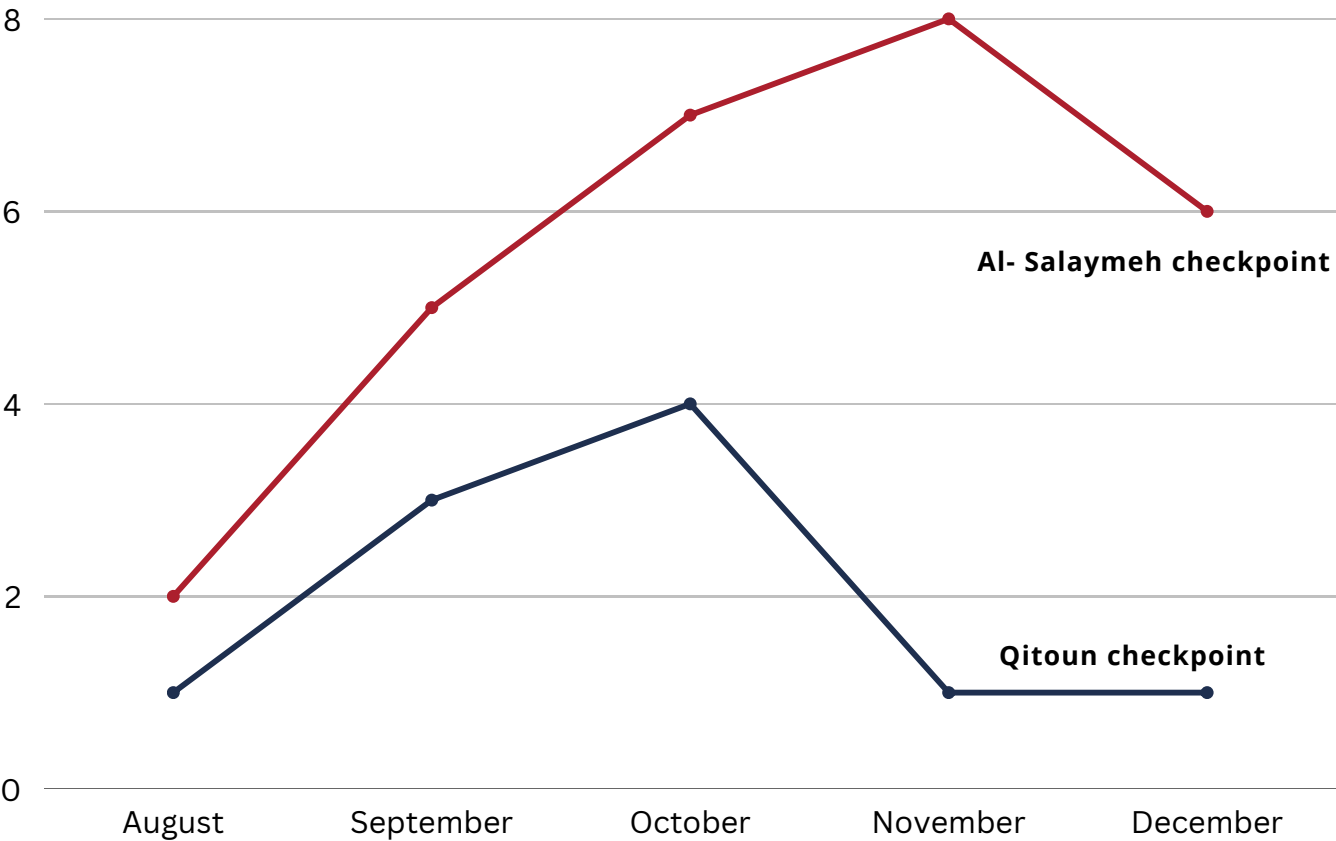


Child Arrest



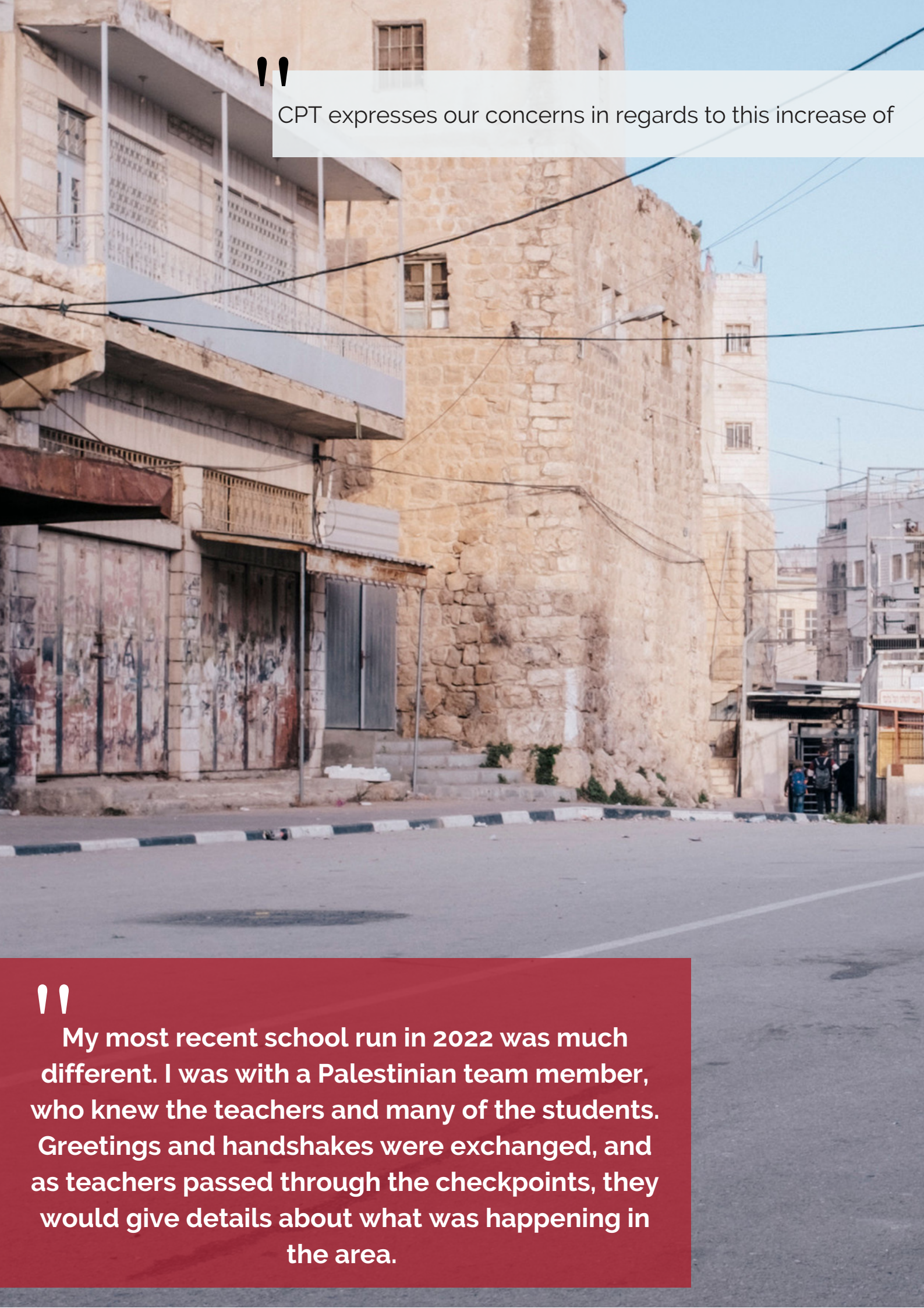
The Israeli soldiers also closed the checkpoints many times and delayed people moving through the area for hours. Below are the numbers for the times we observed:

Closing the Checkpoints

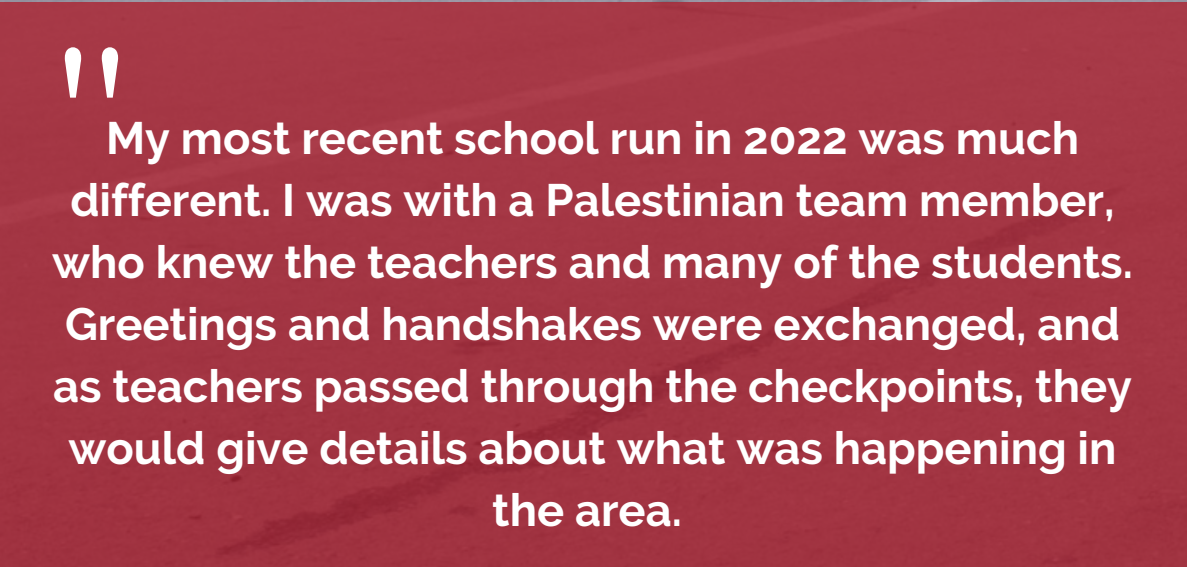


Finally, we must also record the detention of a school teacher in December, while he tried to help children get away from the soldiers.

CPT members were also detained twice at Al-Salaymeh checkpoint, the first time in September and the second in December for more than one hour on both occasions

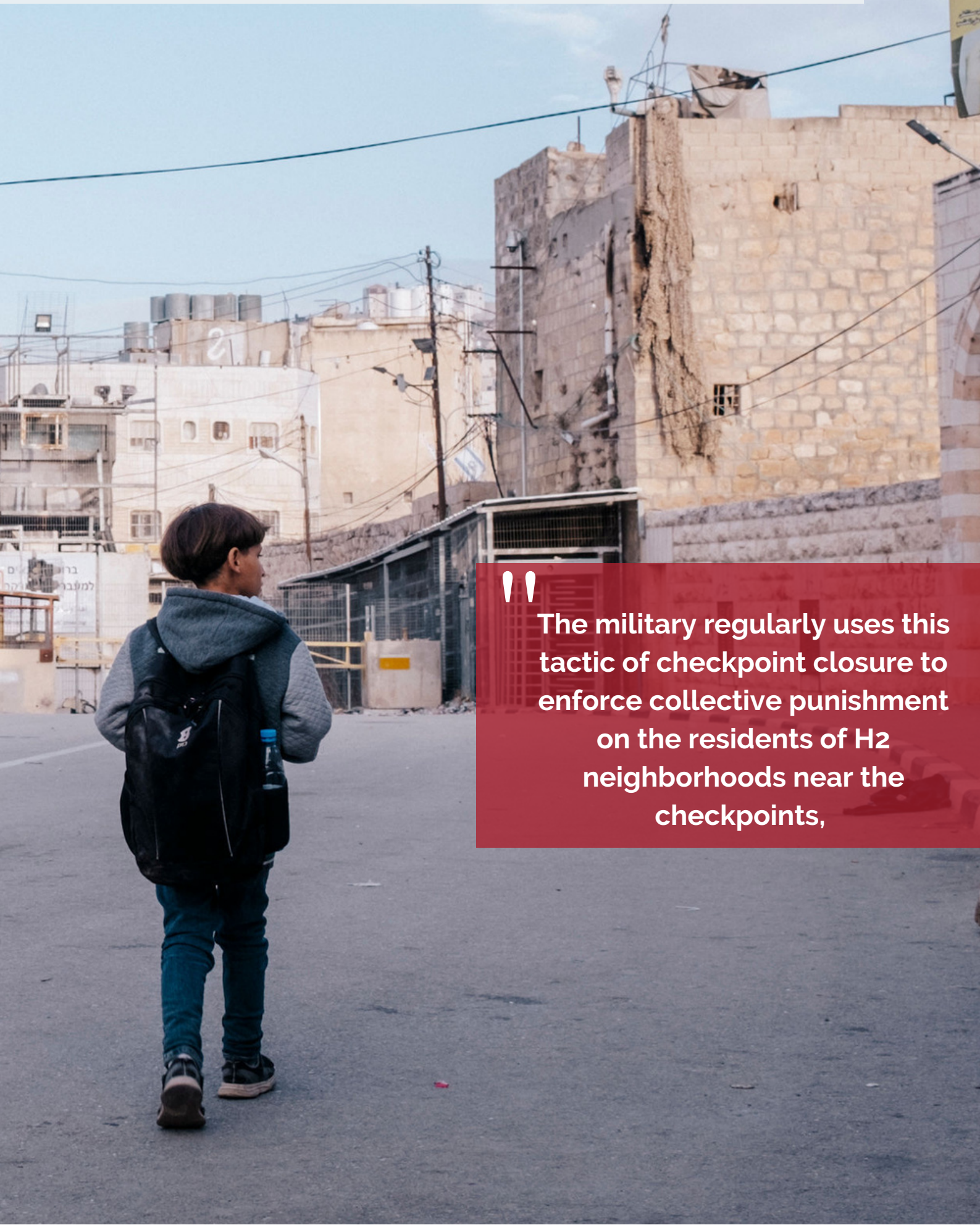
The background image shows a street scene in a conflict zone. On the left, there is a multi-story building with a concrete balcony and metal grates. To its right is a tall, weathered stone wall, likely a remnant of an old fortification. In the distance, a checkpoint with soldiers and equipment is visible. The sky is clear and blue. Two black exclamation marks are positioned above the text box.

CPT expresses our concerns in regards to this increase of

A red rectangular text box with two white exclamation marks at the top left. The text inside is white and bold.

My most recent school run in 2022 was much different. I was with a Palestinian team member, who knew the teachers and many of the students. Greetings and handshakes were exchanged, and as teachers passed through the checkpoints, they would give details about what was happening in the area.

violence and the violation of the rights of the child to education.



The military regularly uses this tactic of checkpoint closure to enforce collective punishment on the residents of H2 neighborhoods near the checkpoints,

SOUTH HEBRON HILLS: ARE WE WAITING TO BUILD A NEW REFUGEE CAMP?

BY: AHMAD ABU MONSHARI



Everyday the situation in Massafer Yatta/South Hebron Hills becomes more complex and intense; incidents of violence and humiliation by the Israeli settlers and soldiers have become part of daily life for Palestinians. "If we look back on 2022 until now, we can see that Israeli occupation forces are systematically working towards the erasure of Palestinian infrastructure in the South Hebron Hills, especially school buildings. Several schools received demolition orders this semester and one school in the village of Sfai was demolished," said Fuaad Lieumur, the coordinator of the Protection and Sumud Committee.

The Sfai school has become more than just a name after Israeli soldiers demolished the school in the village of Khirbet Sfai AL-Fouqa on 23 November. Families came together to build tents after the school was demolished, in order to continue their children's education. But, on 6 December the Israeli occupation forces (IOF) returned to the village and demolished the tent structures. The families continued to resist, rebuilding the tents again, but the IOF returned on 3 January and confiscated the tents.

Lieumur noted that the students who live in Sfai now have two options: either attend other schools which are located very far from their homes and face natural threats of the rainy season as well as threats of violence from settlers and soldiers along their route; or stop going to school. Both options are unnot acceptable for children between first and fifth grade.

Issa Makhamra, the principal of the Sfai school, said this semester has been very difficult. When the occupation forces arrived for the first demolition, students start to run and jump from windows because they were so scared of the soldiers. He also reported that the IOF beat him and two other teachers in front of students. "The situation is confusing at the moment," he said. "We might use corrugated aluminum to rebuild—which will not protect from cold or hot weather—but we're still not sure what is going to be happen." Some students wrote their final exams inside vehicles. The Sfai school has approximately 12 students.

The community of Al-Majaz noticed differences between this semester and the previous one; there has been an increase in military patrols around the school, creating more obstacles for the education process. "The most difficult part this semester were the flying checkpoints," said Jad Nawaja, the principal of Al-Majaz school. "Teachers were often delayed to school and the IOF confiscated a teacher's car when we were on the way back from expressing our solidarity with the Sfai school demolition." The school has 40 students from first grade to eighth grade, 22 females and 18 males.



The school in the village of Shaeb Al-Batum also experienced threats of violence and demolition this semester. "We received a demolition order in 2015. In 2021 we built another two new rooms but then we received another demolition order in 2022 for the two rooms," said principal Mohammed Nawaja. Lately settlers have started to pass by the school, threatening the children and the IOF closed the main road so students and teachers have to take a detour via a bumpy road. The school is not in the firing zone but it is about 200 meters away. The Shaeb Al-Batum school has 45 students from kindergarten to grade 10, 23 girls and 22 boys.

In Khilat Al-Dabae, the school remains under threat since they received a demolition order in 2018, as it is located within the Israeli military firing zone. Teachers have started walking to school because Israeli soldiers will confiscate their cars if they drive to school. "Every now and then the soldiers will enter the school and threaten us and make us feel afraid," said principal Raed Ahdeed. "Our teachers will be stopped by soldiers at least 10 times per month. The Israeli planes fly very close to the school which distracts children and teachers. Settlers have started walking closer to the area and some of the settlers walk with dogs to provoke and terrify Palestinians." The school has 12 students, three girls and nine boys.

In the community of Khirbet Jenba, the school is located within the firing zone and received a demolition order in 2014. This semester brought difficulties as well. Khaled* reported that the teachers decided to collect money together to buy a shared car, but on the first day the IOF confiscated the car, worth around 18,000 shekel. On a daily basis, teachers and students were delayed for 10 to 15 minutes because of the flying checkpoints, and teachers were also detained several times. There are 40 students, 20 females and 20 males.



Most recently, the school in Khashem Al Karem received a demolition order on 28 November 2022, and only a few years ago, the Am Qasuh school was and is still under the threat of being demolished at anytime by the IOF.

In the village of At Tuwani, the military accompanies school children. In 2004 the Israeli military was ordered by the Knesset to accompany the children from Tuba who attended school in At Tuwani. The children must pass a two kilometre stretch of road between the settlement of Maon and the outpost of Havat Maon. Two soldiers must accompany the children on foot whilst a military vehicle follows behind. This order was due to numerous violent attacks on the children (most of whom are primary school age) by settlers. International observers and other Palestinians are unable to access the road as it is deemed a closed military zone which only settlers can use. The role of activists has been to monitor the military's adherence to this order, and to accompany the children for the final part of the walk into At Tawani, beyond the closed military zone.

The Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) reported incidents this semester that involved failure of the military to accompany children past settlements as they walk to school. In some cases, military vehicles drove ahead of the children and waited for them at certain points, while in other cases, the military vehicles followed the children but stopped at the settlement gates, forcing the children to walk past the settlements unaccompanied. On one occasion, no soldiers accompanied the children at all and on another occasion, only one soldier accompanied the children. In one instance, a settler was walking on the road and two settler cars passed the children on the road.

Another observer, a Jewish activist who belongs to a grassroots movement, has been monitoring the situation for two years. He witnessed on occasion that soldiers failed to walk with the children, and during these times, settlers threw rocks at Palestinian students. Previously, activists and foreign observers used to walk with the children, "but lately there has been more harassment against human right activists, depending on the military brigade serving in the area, and it has become harder to provide presence," he noted.



Lieumur summarized the situation in Massafera Yatta, where, "our struggles have reached the international level, but we need more support from grassroots groups to push international governments to take action against what happening here. We need more people to come and visit the area. Otherwise, are we waiting to build a new refugee camp?"

Sami Huraini, a Palestinian activist and leader of Youth Of Sumud, also expressed a huge need for foreigners and activists to come and accompany the children to school, support the locals and bring more protective presence to the area.

CPT expresses our concerns in regards to this increase of violence and the violation of the rights of the child to education as a systematic toll to displace Palestinians from their land. In CPT's previous school report, we warned of another Nakba if no one holds the Israeli government accountable of for the displacement of Palestinians in Masafer Yatta/South Hebron Hills.

Israeli soldiers attack al Hajeriyeh School

By: Tarteel Al-Junaidi





Israeli occupation forces use Palestinian protest as reason for storming several schools, detaining students and injuring teachers.

On 28 September, Israeli occupation forces (IOF) stormed Jenin and killed four Palestinians. In response, Palestinians in al Khalil/Hebron carried out a small protest near Abu al Reish checkpoint, which is located in proximity to several schools. Israeli military responded violently to the protest, resulting in clashes between Palestinian youth and the IOF. During the events, the schools continued their day normally, trying not to be distracted by the shooting.

However, the clashes moved towards al Hajeriyeh School, a primary school for boys. Israeli soldiers entered the schoolyard by force and one boy ran in fear, jumping over the schoolyard walls to the other side.

On the grounds of the boy's 'escape', the IOF stormed the school and shot a stun grenade inside the office of the principal, Ammar Rajabi, burning him. Some teachers tried to intervene and stop the soldiers from getting inside the classrooms, but the IOF brutally bashed them, causing injuries where some teachers needed to be transferred to the hospital.

The IOF forced themselves inside a ninth-grade classroom. "We were having math class, and they started looking at each child's face," said the teacher, Mr. Ihab. "Clearly, they were going to choose anyone. When I saw the children's faces, all I could see was Rayan's face (a 7-year-old boy who died from 'fear' of Israeli forces). I saw extreme fear; the students were waiting for one of them to be taken away."

Mr. Ihab describes how helpless he felt when he tried to remove the IOF from his classroom. "I heard the children chanting, "go Mr. Ihab," support me in my resistance, but the IOF put me down on the ground and pushed down on my neck, then I started to bleed." What would a child feel when their teacher is humiliated in front of them? He is responsible to protect them, but he cannot defend himself.

The soldiers eventually chose two students, Abed al Rahmad Geith and Omar Abu Hamdiyeh. After an hour of fighting with the IOF trying to stop the attack, the soldiers eventually agreed they would only detain the boys for 15 minutes while they checked their cameras. If the military did not have pictures of the boys in their records, they would let the children go. One of the detainees' fathers arrived as soon as he heard of the incident, but he was attacked and beaten by the IOF too.

Mr. Ihab continued to resist the attacks, so the soldiers dragged him toward the military jeep to arrest him. An Israeli officer stopped the soldiers, though, and ordered his release because he was a teacher.

Teachers in the area suffer from violations by the Israeli occupation daily, including other teachers who must try to teach and keep the children calm during incidents like this. With everything that happened that day, the school resumed its activities, and the students finished all their classes.

On the same day, the IOF also stormed other schools in the area and shot tear gas into several of the school grounds. The girls school had to coordinate with the Education Director to arrange for the little children to get out safely. Mr. Ihab has two children who study there. As they were leaving, his children saw the soldiers dragging their father. "When they got home, all they were talking about was, where is dad? Is he arrested? We are not going to school anymore!" said Mr. Ihab.

A few hours later, the Israel Civil Administration called the schools and apologized for the "individual act." How can a violent raid with dozens of fully armed soldiers who humiliate and take students from their class be considered an individual act? Soldiers would not dare to perform this action if it were not a crucial part of the IOF's role in the occupation. The IOF attacks Palestinian schools on a regular basis. This semester, the IOF stormed eight schools in the H2 area of al Khalil/Hebron on different occasions.

"In a country that respects its law, usually the army apologizes when they do people wrong, and hold the individuals accountable. But, in the case of the Israeli military, they apologize once every 100 incidents. It's a tactic the IOF use to clear their name regarding an incident that gets high media attention so that they can say, 'we do wrong sometimes, but we apologize.' In the case of the school attack, even if a boy threw a rock towards you, that is not an excuse for fully armed soldiers and border police to invade a school," commented CPT Palestine partner H.H. The question that remains is, will these individuals ever be held accountable?

Soldier Brigades:

At the beginning of the semester, the Israeli military brigade changed from Givati to Golani: both were proud to threaten or beat the Palestinians and students in many ways. In essence, there is no difference between them, but every brigade has a strategy and plan to increase the violence against the students.

Changing the brigade from Givati to Golani means the violence will increase, especially toward the students, many of whom cross three to five checkpoints every day. More than 80% of the students in H2 area affected by the checkpoints and Israeli soldiers.

The Givati brigade targeted the students outside of their school compound.

Before school starts, the students naturally gather near the main door of the school compound.



When the soldiers noticed students gathering, they came out from the checkpoint and started to throw teargas and sound bombs toward the students and schools. Sometimes, early in the mornings, soldiers hid between the buildings in the neighborhood and if a student threw stones, they would ambush the students, creating fear. The Givati brigade also used a strategy of detaining students between 7-12 years of age. One day, soldiers stopped 9-year-old Mohammad and his 7-year-old brother for five hours, without giving them water or anything to eat.

The Givati brigade also stormed many schools in the H2 area. CPT visited four schools who were attacked during school hours. At one school, the soldiers entered and asked the principal to remove the Palestinian flag from the roof of the school because it is visible to the settlers who pass through, and the settlers become upset when they see Palestinian flags. At one school near the Ibrahim mosque and another near Al-Salaymeh checkpoint, soldiers stormed the schools to obtain security camera footage to see which students had thrown stones in order to arrest them. At the school in Al-Salaymeh, soldiers threw one tear gas canister and two sound bombs inside the school compound. The soldiers also beat a teacher for preventing them from arresting three boys. At the fourth school, the occupation forces would not allow for the students to leave at the end of the school day. They threatened the principal to hold the children in the school until they could review the security cameras.

The Golani brigade is not much different than Givati, but they use different violent strategies. They have an excessive number of soldiers working the checkpoint, coming out into the streets in large numbers and with large military vehicles which they drive into the area near the schools. At Al-Salaymeh checkpoint, they call the students one by one as they cross the checkpoint and interrogate the children about whether they plan on causing problems or throwing stones or if they know anyone who might. They threaten the students—as well as the parents committee—with arrest if anyone throws stones.

Once, a teacher stood near the front door of the school as students were leaving. Suddenly, an Israeli military jeep raced toward the teacher, stopping and forcing him into the jeep and taking him to the checkpoint. The teacher was detained for one hour, and threatened with arrest if any students threw stones.

Golani also used the technique of collective punishment, where soldiers closed the checkpoints and would not allow anyone to pass. They hold people there, especially the students, for one or two hours, and do not allow anyone to approach the checkpoint.

CPT observed a soldier give the order to close the checkpoint while some students were wanting to pass through. The soldier said, "I will count until ten and if you don't leave I will throw teargas and sound bombs toward you."

In another incident when the IOF closed the checkpoint, the students were waiting near the checkpoint when soldiers came and detained two students and ordered the rest of the people to leave. They threatened that if the group of people would not leave the area they would throw teargas and beat them.

Violence against Human Rights Observers:

By: B.S

Many Human Rights Observers were insulted, threatened, checked, or detained by soldiers and settlers during this period.

CPT experienced a large share of this violence, especially near Al-Salaymeh checkpoint, the Ibrahimi mosque checkpoint, and in the H2 area during the monitoring time.

On 4 December 2022 the Israeli occupation forces stopped two CPT members at Al-Salaymeh checkpoint. CPT was conducting afternoon monitoring, and the soldiers called to the CPT members and asked for ID and passports. They detained the CPT members for two hours without reason, even refusing to talk with CPT. Later, a soldier ordered CPT to move closer to the checkpoint, where members of the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) were passing through. The soldier called them too and took their passports and detained them for one hour as well.

A large group of soldiers surrounded the human rights observers and then the observers were finally released.

Another morning at Al-Salaymeh checkpoint, the Israeli occupation forces stopped two CPT members without any reason and took their IDs. The soldiers detained them for three hours, and did not allow anyone to talk with CPT members.

Two CPT members were conducting monitoring in the morning and the IOF asked for ID and a reason for their presence at the checkpoint. CPT members were detained for one hour. In the South Hebron Hills, Israeli soldiers threatened EAPPI members and asked them to leave the area. If they did not leave, the soldiers would arrest the EAPPI observers.

When CPT provided presence at the clashes at Al-Shalalah Street, Israeli soldiers came and ordered observers to leave and to not take photos. The soldiers later detained a man and beat him, and again threatened CPT with detainment if they did not leave the area. The soldiers pushed CPT members and ordered them to stand far away.



Summary

This report is a compilation of reporting and monitoring observations made by Community Peacemaker Teams throughout the school semester. The recorded data is derived from CPT observations during the monitoring periods (Sunday - Thursday from 7:00-8:00 am and 12:00-1:00 pm) at Al-Salaymeh and Qitoun checkpoints in the H2 area of Al Khalil/Hebron and also information collected from community members, schools, and visits to Massafar Yatta/South Hebron Hills.

Each child who attends one of the 11 schools and three kindergartens in the H2 area has their own story and challenges they face on their way to school. This report seeks to highlight some of these stories.



You'll also find these children, their teachers, and parents represented in the statistics, some of whom were detained, arrested, or assaulted by the settlers' dogs.

This report also seeks to contextualize holidays and festivals in occupied space—Jewish holidays have become synonymous with oppression and violence, taking advantage of cultural festivities to further inhibit Palestinian children's movements at checkpoints.

The soldier's persecution of children does not stop at the checkpoint, and during this semester military brigades went on to storm children's schools, intimidating and threatening students and attacking teachers.

Lastly, CPT shares stories as human rights observers where the occupation continues to restrict and inhibit our work, including two incidents where Israeli occupation forces detained CPT members as a result of CPT's presence at the checkpoints.



A photograph of two young women standing in a refugee camp. The woman on the left wears a black headscarf and a patterned shawl over a purple and white striped shirt. The woman on the right wears a brown headscarf and a blue and white striped dress over a black vest with a pink backpack. She is holding a small blue water bottle. In the background, there are white temporary housing units, a Palestinian flag, and a clear blue sky with some clouds.

CPT- PALESTINE



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