

SEMESTER SCHOOL 20 REPORT 26

BETWEEN CHECKPOINTS AND CLASSROOMS

A Special Edition on Palestinian Education During the 2026 Academic Year

Community Peacemaker Teams - Palestine | Semester Report | February - June

CPT – PALESTINE

Community Peacemaker Teams – Palestine

Is an international organization that works alongside Palestinian communities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, with a particular focus on Hebron (Al-Khalil).

Through protective presence, documentation, and advocacy, CPT supports civilian safety and access to basic rights, including the right to education specifically under conditions of military occupation.

The CPT team in Palestine's Occupied Territories

They accompany students and families, monitor school routes, and document violations that impact daily life, ensuring that lived realities are witnessed and shared with international audiences.



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CHAPTER 01

Introduction

Introduction

According to the Convention against Discrimination in Education and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, education is a fundamental human right. Yet for many Palestinian children, learning is overshadowed by uncertainty and dread. Military checkpoints, movement restrictions, and settler violence disrupt students' access to education.

Community Peacemaker Teams (CPT) Palestine has documented human rights violations and has accompanied children in facing threats to their right to education in Al-Khalil (Hebron) and Masafer Yatta, a group of Palestinian communities in the South Hebron Hills, since 2002. In addition to our school accompaniment program, CPT works

in solidarity with Palestinian communities through a protective presence, monitoring and documenting human rights violations, and advocacy. School accompaniment involves CPT members accompanying children on their journeys to and from school, including through areas where military restrictions and settler violence can threaten their safe access to education.

The second semester of the 2025–2026 academic year unfolded amid escalating restrictions imposed by Israeli authorities, supported by continued US political and military backing. Increased checkpoint closures, intensified military activity, and ongoing settler violence further limited

Osama Bin Al
Munqith School





Child stands facing IOF

children's ability to access education safely and consistently. These same conditions also affected CPT's ability to monitor and accompany students. While our commitment remains unwavering, heightened restrictions and security risks often prevent us from reaching schools and documenting every incident.

Another major factor affecting education in the second semester of 2025-2026 was the US/Israel war with Iran, which began on 28 February, exactly one month after the start of the semester. This resulted in school classes going online for a month and a half. Schools resumed with in-person classes in April.

Represented in this report are the obstacles that Palestinian students, teachers, and families continuously face in achieving their right to education. Despite these challenges, the Palestinian community as a whole continues to show perseverance and to resist the oppressions in their lives. The determination of students and teachers to learn and teach under such circumstances is a powerful reminder of how the right to education must be upheld, protected, and respected.

This report is based on the results of a qualitative data analysis approach. Data was collected through interviews and conversations with students, teachers, parents, school staff, and community members. These interviews provided valuable insights into the challenges affecting access to education and the broader impact of movement restrictions on students, schools, and local communities.

You will find, first, a section describing methodology: how the team went about collecting and analysing interview material about the experience of school life. The heart of the report is the section entitled Data Interpretation, where we comment on the recurring themes arising from the interviews. We then consider first the possibilities (Our Impact), and next the challenges for our own work. In Looking Ahead, we list several specific commitments, and we conclude with an overview.

By combining the perspectives and experiences of students, teachers, and parents, this report aims to provide an understanding of how movement restrictions and the dehumanizing conditions of occupation continue to hinder students' access to education.

CHAPTER 02

Methodology

Methodology

The data interpretation at the heart of this report is based on a qualitative data analysis approach to address the research question: what have been the ongoing and unique educational challenges faced by students, teachers, and families in the second semester of the 2025-2026 academic year?

Because of excessive disruptions during this semester due to the US/Israeli war on Iran, we lacked the quantitative data on access, attendance, checkpoint impacts, reported incidents, and infrastructure issues that we have gathered in the past. Therefore, we chose a qualitative methodology based on twenty-seven interviews (nine with students, eight with teachers, and ten with parents). This allowed us to emphasize personal, on-the-ground experiences.

Data was collected through structured interviews (17-20 questions in each questionnaire) with students, teachers, and parents. We also had additional, less-structured conversations with a few school staff and community members.

With three data sets (students, teachers, and parents), we analyzed our data under the categories listed below, identifying the recurring themes:

- Accessibility, Arrivals, and Attendance
- Settler and Military Violence
- Educational, Psychological, and Motivational Challenges
- Online Learning Challenges
- Academic Performance
- Challenges Affected by Gender
- Financial Hardships (only in interviews with parents)





When reviewing and notating (“coding”) the data within a given category, we looked for and wrote down recurring themes and identified illustrative quotations under each recurring theme. When all or most respondents spoke to a recurring theme, we noted that. We also noted when some recurring themes were stronger within one data set (e.g. students) than in another (e.g. parents). We also noted the significance of area of residence – Al Khalil/Hebron H2 or Masafer Yatta – for interview responses. Data interpretation followed from the data analysis, with the first two categories – “Accessibility” and “Settler and Military Violence” – being combined to become “Education Amidst Military and Settler Violence”.

In all our data collection, we aimed to have fair representation from Hebron H2 and Masafer Yatta. In H2, particular attention was given to the impact of checkpoints, including the Salaymeh, 160, 56, Abed, and Ibrahimi Mosque checkpoints. In Masafer Yatta, we noted additional challenges related to settler presence and attacks.

Interview Questions:

The full set of interview questions used for the interviews is attached below:

[Set of Interview Questions.](#)



CHAPTER 03

Data Interpretation

Data Interpretation

Education Amidst Military and Settler Violence

Access to school for students and teachers in H2 and Masafer Yatta is severely restricted by Israeli military practices and settler violence. Interviewees consistently described fear, uncertainty, and repeated disruptions that affect students' ability to safely reach school and participate in education. While both communities face significant obstacles, the nature of these challenges differs between H2 and Masafer Yatta.

All students interviewed in H2 face at least one checkpoint on their way to school. At these checkpoints, they are regularly searched and humiliated by soldiers, resulting in students arriving late, missing classes, and in some cases missing examinations. Students, parents and teachers detailed how soldiers arbitrarily close checkpoints without prior warning, forcing students to take alternative routes through different checkpoints or return home. During Israeli-declared states of emergency and Jewish holidays, movement restrictions are intensified for Palestinians throughout H2 to facilitate settlers' movement in the area. Schools are often unable to operate under these conditions, forcing classes online or preventing students from attending altogether.

Teachers in H2 face the same checkpoints as their students. They report sometimes being denied entry, delaying classes when they are stuck at a checkpoint or when checkpoints are closed, and having to move classes online. One teacher in H2 explained:

"At the Bab Al-Zawiya checkpoint, iris scans and ID numbers are taken, and we pass through an electronic gate where our bags are searched. At the beginning of the semester, many of us [teachers] were denied entry during that initial period"

For students and teachers in Masafer Yatta,

in addition to military checkpoints, settler violence is a very large concern. Students and parents detailed how students are intimidated, chased, spat on and beaten by settlers. Parents interviewed by CPT explained that children who previously walked to school are now driven because the route has become too dangerous. One parent explained:

"My daughter has been chased many times. She comes home breathless, terrified, screaming, and crying that she doesn't want to go to school."



Settler Incursion
Hebron - H2

Teachers in Masafer Yatta often do not live in the villages themselves and travel in groups from nearby cities, Yatta and Hebron. Due to the gates, “flying checkpoints” and settler attacks, some of them have to start their journeys to school as early as 5am. Because teachers travel together, delays caused by checkpoints or settler violence disrupt multiple classrooms simultaneously.

Almost all students CPT interviewed (7/8) have had their school materials damaged or stolen by soldiers at checkpoints. Students and parents explained that soldiers specifically target religious studies and social science books that may have Islamic or Palestinian symbolism, leading students to try to hide these books. Students described soldiers stepping on schoolbooks, drawing Stars of David on books, forcing children to step on images of the Palestinian flag, compelling them to swear, and forcing them to state that the map of Palestine is the map of Israel.

Beyond the journey to school, students described their homes as places of insecurity rather than safety. Every student and parent interviewed reported military raids in which homes were searched, belongings were damaged or displaced, residents were threatened at gunpoint, and family members were physically assaulted. Families in Masafer Yatta also reported repeated settler attacks on their homes, including arson, property destruction, and physical assaults. During both military raids and settler attacks in Masafer Yatta, devices used for schoolwork were frequently damaged. Two students shared:

“Sometimes I wish I had stayed at home so my mother and siblings wouldn't be scared, but I get scared too. I love school, but I am afraid to go. I keep thinking, ‘Why can't I go to school like everyone else in the world, without checkpoints?’”

The data highlights the significant psychological and educational impact of movement restrictions, checkpoints, and

Educational, Psychological, and Motivational Challenges

settler violence on students' access to schools in H2 Hebron and Masafer Yatta. Across all locations, respondents consistently reported that fear and insecurity have become central parts of students' daily school experiences, affecting their motivation, concentration, and overall well-being.

In H2 Hebron, students identified checkpoints as one of the main sources of anxiety and disruption. Daily uncertainty, delays, and the possibility of being stopped or questioned create stress that continues into the classroom. One student shared:

“I have difficulty concentrating, especially during the first lesson when I am on my way to school ... I keep thinking and praying that I will not be stopped at the checkpoint.”

Another student shared how these experiences directly affected academic performance:

“A soldier tore up my notebook ... I was so frightened that I was unable to concentrate during the exam, and I failed it.”

In Masafer Yatta, students are primarily affected by settler violence and intimidation, which creates fear around their movement and access to education.

Parents also expressed serious concerns about their children's safety and emotional well-being. Many reported hesitation in sending their children to school due to the risks they face on the way. Parents described symptoms of psychological distress, including anxiety, nightmares, and fear. As one parent explained:

“Sometimes, not sending them to school at all feels like the better option.”

These experiences demonstrate the difficult choices families face between protecting their children from harm and ensuring their right to education.

Teachers confirmed that these challenges directly affect students' motivation, attendance and academic performance. They described the increased stress among students, reduced learning time due to delays and harassment, and cases where students were prevented from reaching school. One teacher stated:

"During the last month of the school year, approximately 7 to 10 students were barred from entering the school ... This is part of a strategy to intimidate students and disrupt the educational system."

Overall, the findings show that barriers to education extend beyond physical access to schools. The ongoing exposure to military checkpoints and settler violence has created an environment where students struggle not only to reach their classrooms but also to feel safe, focused, and motivated to learn. The constant exposure to harassment and insecurity affects students' mental health, concentration, and ability to engage fully in their education.

Online Learning Challenges

The findings indicate that online learning during the one-and-a-half-month period at the beginning of the US/Israel war with Iran was not an effective alternative to in-person education for students in H2 and Masafer Yatta. While remote learning reduced students' exposure to checkpoints and settler violence, it introduced significant barriers that limited participation and learning outcomes.

Both students and parents consistently reported a lack of devices, unreliable internet access, and electricity outages as major obstacles to attending online classes. In H2, weak network coverage and electricity cuts disrupted access to online lessons, while in Masafer Yatta, limited internet infrastructure, shortages of digital devices, and attacks on homes further reduced students' ability to participate. As one student explained:

"We only had my mother's phone [to use for school] ... I missed many classes."

Another added:

"School is the place for learning ... I cannot concentrate when I study at home."

Parents described the challenges of supporting multiple children with limited resources, often having to decide which child could attend online lessons.

One parent stated:

"There was only one device for the three of them."

Teachers confirmed that cameras-off online learning resulted in very low attendance, limited student engagement, and widening learning gaps.

One teacher reported that:

"Attendance reached a maximum of 47%."

Another noted:

"There is no interaction whatsoever between the student and the teacher."

Overall, the findings demonstrate that online learning served as an emergency coping mechanism rather than a sustainable replacement for classroom education, reinforcing the importance of safe, in-person learning opportunities for all students.

Academic Performance

All students and teachers, and almost all parents, reported a decline in academic performance and/or grades during the period of the US/Israel war with Iran. This period resulted in disruptions in schooling. Several students mentioned difficulty concentrating due to fear, uncertainty, and constant exposure to news about the war. As one student stated:

"I become distracted and find it difficult to concentrate on my studies."

Regarding academic outcomes, one parent lamented:

"We aren't even thinking about their grades anymore; we just worry about keeping them alive."

Majorities of students and parents reported Math and English as the subjects for which there were the greatest challenges during this period. Parents and teachers agreed that students need additional educational resources, tutoring, learning activities, and technology to support learning and to recover learning loss. Several parents reported trying to teach their students at home.

Teachers reported school interruptions and student absences as big impediments to learning during this period. One teacher summarized:

"Attendance was minimal ... and a substantial learning gap emerged. That's why grades were impacted, showing a continuous downward trend."

Both parents and teachers also emphasized the importance of addressing children's psychological health for successful academic performance. In Hebron's H2 area, teachers reported schools closest to checkpoints experienced the greatest decline in attendance and academic performance. In Masafer Yatta, parents described continuous educational disruption since COVID-19, teacher strikes, and the war, resulting in prolonged learning loss, hampering student academic performance.



Shuhada Street
Hebron - H2

Challenges Affected by Gender

Interviews showed that both boys and girls faced harassment on their way to and from school. A near unanimity of students stated they were verbally abused in ways affected by their gender, and a large majority specifically mentioned soldiers or settlers cursing at them. A girl and then a boy stated:

"Because I was wearing a hijab, the soldier spat at me and forced me to wait at the checkpoint. They often insult and swear at me. They also force me to insult myself by making me say things like, 'I am a dog.'"

All teachers (8/8) believed that boys and girls are mistreated roughly in equal measure. In contrast, two-thirds of the students (6/9, all three of the girls and three of the boys) felt that boys were treated worse. One boy, by contrast, thought that girls were treated worse, and two boys perceived similar treatment by gender. One teacher from Masafer Yatta stated:

"Settlers ... treat everyone equally as Arabs, without making any distinction between young or old, male or female. These settlers operate as trained gangs dedicated to targeting and violating Palestinians."

All teachers in Masafer Yatta (4/4) specifically mentioned girls having fear of harassment. One summarized:

"The dropout rate among girls is higher than among boys due to fear."

Financial Hardship

Parents consistently described worsening economic conditions that have made it increasingly difficult to meet the costs associated with their children's education. Beyond basic school expenses, many families reported being unable to afford educational resources such as electronic devices, private tutoring, or transportation to learning centers, limiting students' opportunities for additional academic support.

One parent highlighted the challenge of adapting to digital learning, stating:

"I can't even afford to buy my daughter an electronic device ... I have five children, and I simply cannot afford to provide each of them with a modern device."

Multiple parents expressed how access to desired supplemental instruction is limited by both cost and safety concerns.

"Transportation and [private] courses are expensive, and it is also difficult to enter and leave the area. [My daughter] watches the lessons she doesn't understand [at school] on YouTube."

Another parent concurred that although their daughter wished to improve her English, attending private lessons is not feasible for reasons of finances and movement restriction concerns.





CHAPTER 04

Summary of Findings

Summary of Findings

Throughout the second semester of the 2025-2026 academic year, students, families, and schools continued to face significant challenges affecting children's access to – and experience of – safe, quality education.

- **Access to Education:** Military checkpoints, road closures, and delays continued to disrupt students' access to school, resulting in missed learning time, increased stress, and uncertainty for students and their families.
- **Settler and Military Violence:** Students continued to face harassment and intimidation from settlers and the military while travelling to and from school. These experiences affected students' sense of safety, motivation, and ability to focus on their studies.
- **Psychological Impact:** Continued exposure to insecurity, military presence, and violence has had a significant impact on students' emotional well-being, contributing to increased fear, anxiety, and reduced engagement in learning.
- **Online Learning Challenges:** During the period of remote learning in the middle of the second semester, many students faced challenges due to limited access to electronic devices, unreliable internet connections, and electricity interruptions. These barriers reduced students' ability to participate consistently and contributed to widening learning gaps.
- **Academic performance:** Students' academic performance is under great pressure due to school disruptions during the US/Israel war on Iran, and the continued settler and military violence they face on their way to school, leading to lower grades, lower attendance and a greater need for educational and psychosocial support.
- **Gender-affected challenges:** Students overwhelmingly reported experiencing gendered harassment and verbal abuse by soldiers and settlers while travelling to and from school.
- **Financial Hardship:** Financial difficulties continue to affect families' ability to cover education-related costs, including school supplies, transportation, electronic devices, and additional learning support, limiting students' educational opportunities.





CHAPTER 05

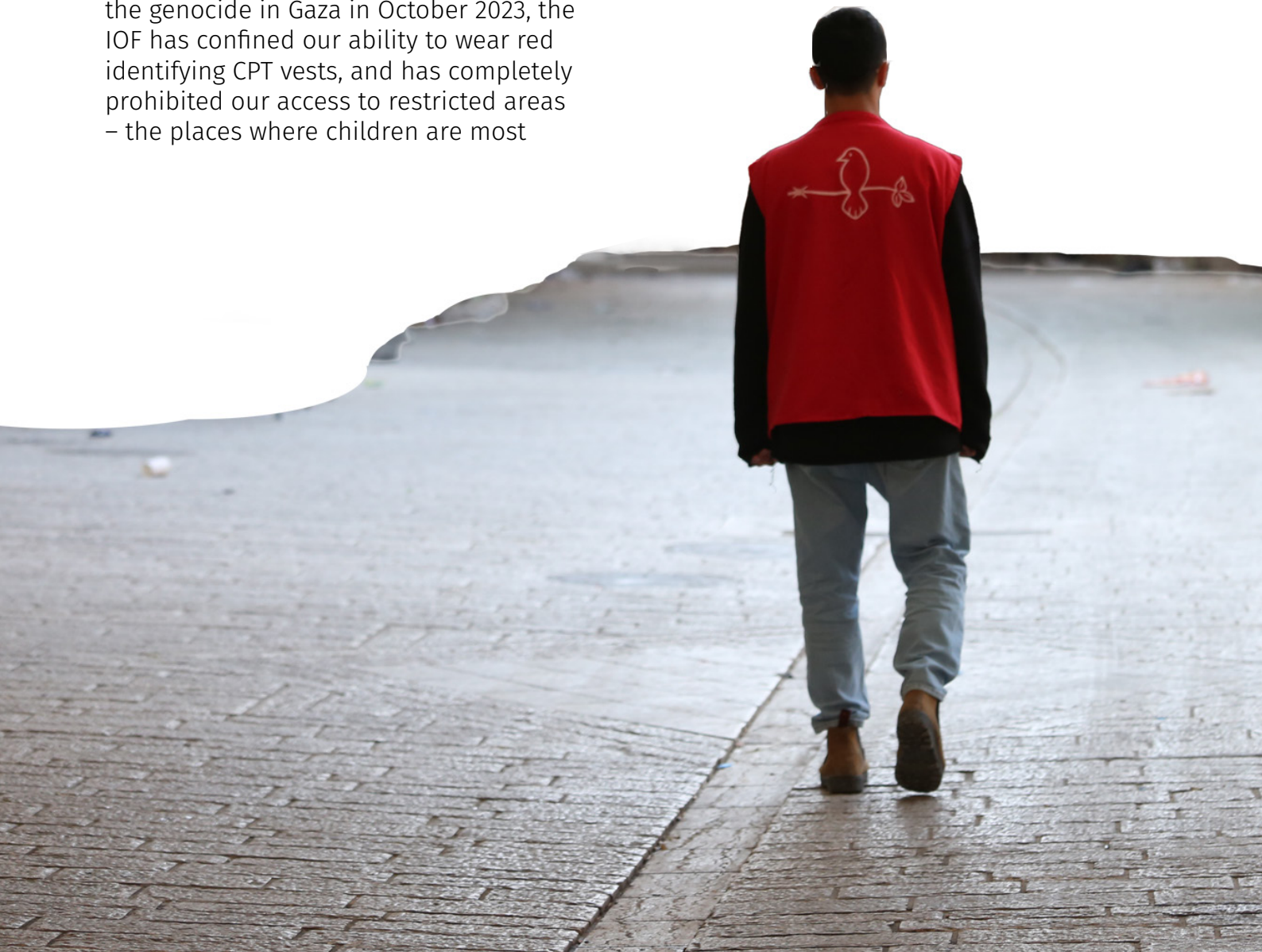
Our Impact and Challenges

Our Impact & Challenges

CPT Palestine works to help children access education more safely by providing protective accompaniment, documenting human rights violations, and amplifying the voices of Palestinians living under occupation. While we cannot remove the checkpoints and restrictions that children face, our presence helps create a greater sense of safety for students and reassures families that they are not facing these challenges alone.

Despite our longstanding dedication to the accompaniment of children and their access to education, CPT Palestine continues to face increased restrictions on our ability to conduct our work. Ever since the start of the genocide in Gaza in October 2023, the IOF has confined our ability to wear red identifying CPT vests, and has completely prohibited our access to restricted areas – the places where children are most

vulnerable and in need of accompaniment. Team members have faced harassment, intimidation, and detention while carrying out human rights monitoring. In addition, our office has been targeted, forcing temporary evacuations that disrupt our work. A shortage of international funding has reduced our overall capacity to recruit and maintain staff, limiting our ability to maintain a protective presence and conduct all our activities in communities that are experiencing a growing need for them.



Community members repeatedly described the impact of CPT's presence not only in terms of physical accompaniment, but also the confidence and reassurance it provides.

One participant explained how simply knowing that CPT volunteers are present at a checkpoint changes how children experience their journey to school:

"When there is an organization standing at the checkpoint, it gives [my] children a sense of reassurance."

For many families, that reassurance has grown into something much deeper. Reflecting on years of accompaniment and solidarity, one participant shared:

"We don't consider CPT an organization – we consider them family."

Community members also emphasized that CPT's work extends beyond its physical presence. Through documentation, reporting, and advocacy, community members are able to share their experiences with audiences they could never otherwise reach:

"Through your platforms, I was able to express what I couldn't say myself and get my message across."

One participant recalled how CPT's long-standing accompaniment of schoolchildren helped bring international attention to attacks on students, noting:

"Without CPT's international presence at the time, the incident would never have reached the US Congress."

These testimonies reflect the lasting impact of CPT's work: helping children feel safer on their journey to school, letting families know they are not alone, and bringing the realities faced by Palestinian communities to international attention.

CHAPTER 06

Looking Ahead

Looking Ahead

Based on CPT's experiences and observations during the second semester of the 2025–2026 academic year, consolidated in the findings presented in this report, CPT commits to:

- Continue monitoring from a distance, dictated by restrictive military presence and practices, at the checkpoints that students must pass through to attend schools in the H2 area and increase this presence during exam periods and times when the military is especially aggressive and intimidating.
- As with the semiannual CPT School Reports, continue documenting the barriers that students, teachers, and families face in trying to access their basic right to education.
- Share widely through web articles, social media posts, and reports the testimonies of students, teachers, and parents in order to increase awareness of the effects of occupation on education and to encourage advocacy for humane policies and the end of the occupation.
- As we share our School Report data with multiple partner organizations, encourage those organizations with appropriate capacity to provide psychosocial services, tutoring, self-care sessions, and material support for students and families. This would include the basic technological needs of Masafer schools and students.
- Continue nurturing relationships with school administrators, teachers, parent groups, community leaders, and Palestinian authorities to work with them, as we are able to address the obstacles that students face in receiving the education they deserve, as detailed in this report.
- Continue the CPT practice of visiting families, including those with children who have experienced painful physical and psychological challenges attending and staying in school.
- Beyond our information sharing on social media, communicate and share our School Report with international organizations and international educators about the challenges that schools and teachers face trying to provide education under occupation and to request strong advocacy to address these challenges.
- Continue coordinating with Al-Khalil-located organizations such as United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, International Committee of the Red Cross, and Hebron Rehabilitation Center, not only to address the identified challenges in the education sphere, but to regularly assess the measures being taken to improve the situation for students, teachers, and parents.



Settler Incursion
Hebron - H2



ברוכים הבאים
למעבר 160

اهلا وسهلا الى معبر السلايمة

Welcome to 160 crossing

checkpoint



Conclusion

The second semester of 2026 once again demonstrates that Palestinian children in H2 Hebron and Masafer Yatta continue to face significant and ongoing barriers to their fundamental right to education. Movement restrictions, military checkpoints, settler violence, and insecurity continue to transform what should be a simple journey to school into an experience marked by fear, uncertainty, and disruption. Behind every statistic are children navigating checkpoints, families making impossible decisions about their children's safety, and schools striving to provide education despite increasingly difficult conditions.

Yet, in the face of these challenges, students, teachers, parents, and school communities continue to show extraordinary resilience. Their determination to continue learning and teaching reflects not only a commitment to education but also a steadfast commitment to dignity, hope, and the future. Every school day represents an act of perseverance in the face of circumstances that continue to undermine children's right to learn in safety.

The CPT Palestine team has been researching and writing School Reports for more than ten years. Why does this regular documentation matter? In the resistance to occupation, the experience of school children and their teachers and families is one that needs to be kept front and center. Documentation enables us to avoid normalizing the dehumanizing daily realities faced by Palestinian schoolchildren in H2, Masafer Yatta, and all those who go to school under occupation across Palestine. Their stories, their lived experiences, remind us: this is not acceptable, this is never acceptable!

Careful documentation allows us to share organized facts to multiple audiences, both those that are local and those that are farther away. May this report, like all those before, help us to reach that day when every child enjoys the right to reach school safely, to learn in a supportive environment, and to pursue their education and their dreams free from fear, intimidation, and discrimination.





community peacemaker teams
PALESTINE

2026 SEMESTER SCHOOL REPORT PAL ESTINE