ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF PALESTINIAN HOUSEHOLDS IN AREA C OF THE WEST BANK

A Summary of the Findings of the First Comprehensive Household Survey
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Cover: Children playing in the Bedouin community of Ma’azi Jaba, in the Central West Bank. The electricity line that runs above their heads and the water networks that are piped underneath only benefit the nearby illegal Israeli settlements. Photo credit: Simon Trépanier/Oxfam 2016
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January 2019

A joint project of the Institute of Women’s Studies & the Development Studies Center at Birzeit University on behalf of Oxfam
ABBREVIATIONS

HH  Household
ICA  Israeli Civil Administration
NGO  Non-Governmental Organization
OCHA  Office of the Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs
oPt  Occupied Palestinian Territory
PCBS  Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
STL  Standard of Living Scale
UNRWA  United Nations Relief & Works Agency

A farmer irrigates his fields in Saqout Village in Area C. Photo credit: Oxfam
MAP OF AREA C COMMUNITIES

Types of Communities
- City/Towns
- Hamlet/Encampment...
- Refugee Camp
- Village
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This report on households in Area C – the territory comprising more than 60% of the occupied West Bank and which is heavily restricted by Israeli military control – describes in quantitative and qualitative detail the lives of the approximately 300,000 Palestinians who live there.¹

It is based on the first and only comprehensive and representative statistical survey of Palestinian households located in Area C,² offering a detailed overview of their demographic, socio-economic, and human security situation while providing a statistical baseline for future surveys. The 2014 baseline survey of 1,600 households had a very low margin of error, less than 2%. It is augmented by a second smaller survey of 400 households conducted in 2017 in order to assess stability and change in trends identified three years prior, as well as by findings from focus groups and individual interviews carried out in four different Area C communities that represent regional and other main characteristics of the survey sample design.³

Area C households, especially those most deprived, have been locked out of the socio-economic and related demographic transitions underway in the West Bank for over 20 years.

¹ There are large disparities in the estimated Palestinian population of Area C due to definitional variations, as well as difficulties in counting individuals in the field. The most recent estimate by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) based on their 2017 population census of the West Bank and Gaza Strip is 393,163. UNOCHA estimated the Area C population at approximately 300,000 in 2013; Bimkom estimated it at 180,000 in 2011; and PCBS estimated it at 117,000 in 2012. The sample for the 2014 survey on which this report is based used the PCBS 2012 estimates – at the time the most reliable because, unlike the other two sources, they were based on population projections from the 2007 Palestinian National Census (i.e. based on an actual household survey in the field). As well, the PCBS definition of Area C communities most closely reflected that used by this survey.

² Only two previous statistical studies exist on households in Area C communities: one by the PCBS, and the other by UNICEF (in partnership with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency and the World Food Programme). The PCBS study was not a dedicated Area C-focused survey, instead it was a special statistical report (published in 2012) that amalgamated preexisting data on Area C households from previous surveys of the wider West Bank and Gaza undertaken by the bureau. That data is useful in providing a broad overview in comparison to the population in the wider West Bank but, not being a dedicated survey, it sheds no light on issues of specific relevance to Area C. In addition, its 932-household sample size allows only the most general level of analysis. The 2010 survey undertaken jointly by UNICEF, UNRWA and the WFP only surveyed households in herder communities in Area C. By excluding village and urban communities, that survey is not representative of all of Area C households.

³ These were: Imreiha (herding community in the north); Walajeh (village in the south); al Za‘im (urban community in the center) and al–Fasayil in the Jordan Valley.
Aims of this Report

The study aims to round out the substantial human rights evidence base on community level circumstances in Area C, with household level data from the first base-line social survey of the Palestinian population there. The base-line survey (which forms the core of this report) provides in-depth data showing how various aspects of the protracted protection crisis and destructive mechanisms related to Israeli policies have translated into different circumstances and dynamics at the household level in Area C. It provides a range of indicators suggesting how macro-level policies (over more than two decades) have shaped the livelihoods, wellbeing and future life chances of men, women, and children in Area C households. It also points to variations in circumstances, highlighting significant patterns of greater household distress and deprivation in specific regions of Area C and among specific community types, as well as gendered differences in their impacts and experiences of them.

Ultimately, by providing a more comprehensive and in-depth picture of how women and men in households across Area C experience their circumstances, respond to them, as well as perceive their needs and options, the report hopes to contribute to the development of more effective and better targeted strategies for intervention and advocacy on their behalf.

Profile of Surveyed Communities

The base-line survey used a sample of 40 households from each one of 40 selected communities distributed across four main regions of Area C: north, south, middle and the Jordan Valley. The distribution by type of community (as an outcome of the sample design) was that 61% of surveyed households were located in Area C village communities; 31% were in Area C hamlet or encampments (20.5% encampments/10.5 hamlets) and 8% were in urban Area C communities.

According to data from the United Nations Office for the Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) one-third of the selected communities were entirely in Area C, almost four-tenths had greater than or equal to half their land area in Area C, and slightly over one-fourth had less than half of their land in Area C. Also according to OCHA, 3.5% lie in an Israeli designated nature reserve, 16% are affected by an Israeli military zone, and 6.3% are located within a closed Israeli military zone. One quarter of the communities are located 0–500 meters away from an Israeli settlement, slightly over one quarter are about 500 meters away, almost another quarter are at 500–1,000 meters away, and less than one fifth are 1,000–1,500 meters away.

4 Although all households surveyed were themselves completely located in Area C.
Demography in Area C

Overall family size, marriage ages and patterns, as well as family structures in Area C households, particularly those in the Jordan Valley, south West Bank and in hamlet/encampments, tend to mirror those that were the norm across the West Bank two decades ago. Larger families, early marriage, and polygamous marriage are more prevalent in those regions and community types of Area C. For example, families in Area C were larger on average than those in the overall West Bank, with the largest families found in the most deprived communities and regions: hamlet/encampments had an average of 5.9 household members, and the Jordan Valley and south West Bank both averaged 5.8 persons per household (compared to an overall of 4.9 in the entire West Bank). This suggests that households in Area C, especially the most deprived communities, have been locked out of many of the socio-economic and related demographic transitions that have taken place in the wider West Bank over the past two decades.

Only 8% of all Area C households surveyed were female-headed, significantly fewer than the 12% of female-headed households in the entire West Bank in the same year. Fewer female-headed households, higher incidence of female early marriage and increased incidence of polygamy in certain community types and regions of Area C may be linked to greater levels of violence and insecurity. The finding that these demographic patterns are more prevalent in Area C contexts with higher levels of human insecurity and vulnerability to Israeli state violence suggests linkages to heightened concerns around female bodily integrity rather than simply being due to longstanding social norms. Similarly, higher levels of polygamous marriage were found in household contexts highly dependent on herding or agriculture and where women’s domestic/productive labor burdens were their most acute. As attested to by focus group findings, in such contexts a co-wife mitigates other women’s heavy labor responsibilities. Approximately 5% of married women in Area C households were in polygamous marriages—significantly higher than the 1% found in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Polygamy was highest in hamlet/encampments (at more than 9% of married women), followed by households in the Jordan Valley (8%) and the south West Bank (5%).

Also more common were women married to first-degree relatives (at 33% of married women compared to 26% in the overall West Bank, both in 2014). This phenomenon was significantly higher (at 38%) in hamlet/encampments.

Education

Educational attainment levels in Area C households are significantly lower than those across the West Bank and are at their lowest in households located where Israeli obstacles to education are at their most acute. Moreover, the data shows that these disadvantages have a relatively higher impact on female access to education in Area C.

See “Understanding Masculinities: Results from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES)—Middle East and North Africa (MENA)
Overall, educational attainment was low, with nearly 60% of Area C households reporting male and/or female members who had left school before completing compulsory education (10th grade), compared to a significantly lower 45% among West Bank households in the same year. One-third (32%) of individuals in Area C have only the lowest levels of a primary education (four years) or less, in comparison to one-fifth (22%) among individuals across the West Bank. The lowest levels of educational attainment among respondents of both sexes were found in contexts in which Israeli obstacles to educational access are most acute: in hamlets/encampments 50% of individuals have less than 5 years of education; in the Jordan Valley the rate is 52% and among individuals in communities completely located in Area C, 47% have attained less than 5 years of education.

In contrast to the wider West Bank, where female educational attainment now surpasses that of males, in Area C females continue to face relatively greater educational disadvantage compared to male counterparts. More than a third (36%) of females in Area C have less than five years of education compared to 28% of males there, and this climbs to 53% among women in hamlets/encampments compared to 48% among males in these community types. Similarly, only 13% of females and 16% of males in Area C have attained higher education (compared to 22% of females and 20% of males in the wider West Bank); in hamlet/encampments, higher educational achievement drops dramatically to only 5% of females and 6% of males.

Lack of access to education is often linked to female early marriage, found in the study to be higher in Area C. One-third (31%) of surveyed women had been married before age 18, compared with one-fifth (20%) across the West Bank, with no notable decline in rates of early marriage among younger women in Area C. Highest rates of female early marriage were found in contexts where overall educational access was most constrained: in hamlets/encampments (40%) and in the Jordan Valley (38%).

Housing, Living Conditions and Standards of Living

More than one-fourth of households in Area C live in inadequate housing lacking basic infrastructure such as piped water and sanitation facilities. Households with the worst housing conditions were located in contexts where the Israeli planning regime is most restrictive: in hamlets/encampments, in communities completely located in Area C, and in the Jordan Valley. Most strikingly, one-fourth of households entirely in Area C were dependent on firewood for cooking fuel, and one-third had no access to piped water. These were also the locations where crowding in homes was most common, and where more households had the lowest standards of living.

Area C families are much more likely to live in independent houses (at 68%) in comparison to those living in the wider West Bank (56%), but their homes tend to be smaller (more than two-thirds of homes have three rooms or less) and more crowded (with 16% suffering from crowded living conditions versus 10% across the West Bank). Notably, 16% of households in Area C live in tents,

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6 West Bank data is for 2015.
sheds, or caves, while almost half of households in hamlets/encampments live in these types of dwellings.

Basic household infrastructure is absent for many households in Area C. Almost half of households in the Jordan Valley and in hamlets/encampments are not linked to water networks, resulting in high numbers of households relying on more expensive tanked water (at 41% in the former and 31% in the latter) while a full one-fourth of homes in hamlets/encampments and one-fifth of Area C households in the Jordan Valley have no access to electricity.

Almost a quarter (23%) of Area C households have a poor standard of living, rising to 53% of households in hamlets/encampments, 41% in the Jordan Valley, and 36% among households in communities completely located in Area C.

Area C households are more likely to own only the land on which their home is built. Around two-thirds (65%) of the surveyed households only own the land on which their dwellings are situated (41% stated they own other land), dropping to less than one-third among Jordan Valley households (32%) — a significant finding given these communities’ high dependence on agriculture. **Households in hamlets/encampments reported the greatest ownership of land in insecure locations, in other words, of land that falls outside municipal boundaries.**

**Women in Area C communities own minimal personal assets, usually gold jewelry (43%), mirroring low asset ownership among females across the OPT.** Other assets reported (8% having a bank account, 3% owning land, 2.5% owning a home or portion, etc.) were even lower in incidence than elsewhere in the OPT. Otherwise, like elsewhere in the OPT, immovable and productive assets such as livestock or a home are most likely to be held by widowed rather than married or single women. Despite the high numbers of women engaged in productive work in Area C, this does not translate into greater asset ownership; indeed, no correlation was found between women’s asset ownership and labor force activity.

**Livelihood & Employment Activities**

The main sources of income for the majority of households in Area C are **unstable and insecure.** For their primary source of income, almost one-fourth of households rely on herding or agriculture and another approximately 40% rely on irregular daily wages. Less than one-fourth of households in Area C can rely on the stability of a regular salary for their primary income. Households in hamlets/encampments and the Jordan Valley present the least stability in their primary sources of income. Half of the households surveyed said they also relied on secondary sources of income, primarily social assistance, at 28% of households.

**More than half (51%) of the surveyed households depend on irregular wages for some part of their household income** (with 38% depending on them as the primary source, and 16% as the secondary source). Most irregular wages (53%) came from Palestinian private sector employers while 38% said they came from working in Israel or Israeli settlements. The main source of regular salaries (for
A Palestinian woman tends a zucchini patch made possible with donor support. Photo credit: Oxfam
the 28% of households who reported receiving them) was from the Palestinian Authority (at 54%), followed by the Palestinian private sector and local NGOs.

More than three-fourths of Area C households depend on agriculture and animal husbandry for some part of their household income, with the greatest dependence on farm activities found among households in hamlet/encampments and the Jordan Valley. The majority (78%) of households who depend to any degree on agriculture or herding are self-employed and work on family farms. Another 27% report being agricultural workers on Israeli settlements or in Israel, and 18% do agricultural labor for a Palestinian employer.7

Area C households in the Jordan Valley are those most dependent on agriculture and/or herding for their livelihoods by region, but under the worst set of conditions. Jordan Valley agricultural households tend to be agricultural wage laborers versus the norm across other regions of Area C where households are predominantly self-employed family farmers. More than half of the households that depend primarily on agriculture wage labor in settlements, as well as half of those who depend primarily on agricultural wage labor in Israel are from the Jordan Valley. In addition, poorer forms of land tenure dominate in the Jordan Valley, with 30% of agriculture-dependent households there renting or share-cropping land (compared to 8% in the middle West Bank and 4% in the south).

More than one-fourth of households in Area C rely on social assistance, but it is overwhelmingly a secondary source of income. Reliance on income from social assistance is highest in hamlet/encampments and the Jordan Valley. The two main providers of social assistance cited by respondents are UNRWA at 45% and the Palestinian Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) at 40%.

In Area C, while more men, women and individuals in the same household are engaged in work than is found across the West Bank, they are also less likely to be fully employed. As such, in Area C, the greater levels of multiple individuals in the same household engaged in work activities represents a livelihood strategy to compensate for poor and unstable work and inadequate income. This is borne out by the fact that these patterns are most apparent in hamlet/encampments and in the Jordan Valley, i.e. in the most vulnerable and deprived community contexts. Both male and female labor force participants in Area C are much less likely to have stable full employment than their counterparts across the West Bank. Sixty-nine percent of males 15 years and above in Area C, compared to 62% of males across the West Bank, were in some form of employment. But they were four times as likely to be only partially employed (28%), in comparison to males across the West Bank (at 7%).

These findings on the poor employment profiles of men in Area C dovetail with those on main and secondary sources of household income, marked by high dependence on irregular salaries added to the dependence on agriculture and herding (that are often seasonal, as well as vulnerable to the vagaries of Israeli mil-

7 The total exceeds 100% given some households engage in agriculture under multiple circumstances of employment.
itary restrictions and environmental impacts such as drought). **Unemployment among males (and as shown below, among females) is primarily an issue for university-educated youth in Area C.** While this is a phenomenon across the OPT, it is exacerbated in Area C because of the lack of semi-professional work opportunities within these communities, as well as their distance and isolation from urban centers where jobs for the highly educated are more available.

Women and girls age 15 and above in Area C are more likely to be in the labor force than are their female counterparts across the West Bank (at 26% versus 19%). Similarly, their unemployment levels are much lower at 11% than the 27% unemployment among women across the West Bank in the same year.

The very low levels of educational attainment of working women in Area C is markedly different than among employed women across the West Bank, where the vast majority have higher education. The survey found that 22% of females in Area C households were working full-time or part-time, a significantly greater proportion than the 14% female employment across the West Bank in the same year (2014). Employment was higher among married women (29%) than among single (23%), separated, widowed, or divorced women (20%). **However, employment opportunities for women in Area C are characterized by unwaged/low waged work (most likely in herding/agricultural activities, including in Israeli settlements), while employment opportunities for the highly educated are far more limited than is the case for women in areas A and B.**

Women in the surveyed communities have heavy productive work burdens along with domestic ones, yet few of them earn any direct income. **While 22% of women had some level of employment, only 7% said they worked for pay.** This is congruent with wider findings on women in agricultural households across the OPT, in which the majority work under the category of “unpaid family labor.” A total of 57% of surveyed women in Area C households engage in one or more productive activities such as handicrafts and food processing, animal husbandry or agricultural production, reaching a high of 72% among women in hamlet/encampments. Women in hamlets/encampments showed the greatest gap between high productive workloads and the percent of them who receive pay. **In total, 69% of women in the Jordan Valley and 60% in the south West Bank were engaged in one or more productive activity, mostly craft/food processing.** Women’s level of engagement in agricultural and herding activities was significantly higher (91%) in households that depend on these for income, attesting to the fact that women’s engagement in these activities are critical to agricultural and herding livelihoods.

**Along with undertaking multiple – and usually unpaid productive activities – women in Area C also have high domestic workloads.** In the course of an ordinary day, 96% of women reported doing cleaning, 96% reported cooking, and **22% spent time collecting wood or water.** A majority also undertook childcare, and caring for elderly, ill or disabled family members on a daily basis. **More than half of women in hamlets/encampments (57%) spent time in a normal day gathering water or wood for fuel, as did 44% of women whose communities were completely in Area C (in contrast to only 7% of women**
in villages and less than 1% in urban areas). The only task that a significant number of women (24%) undertake outside their immediate home environment is shopping, while another 11% said they undertake tasks of dealing with official institutions on behalf of the family. The 6% of women who undertake paid work also usually do so outside their immediate home environment.

More than half (52%) of women surveyed said that they felt stressed from having too many daily duties. Higher levels of stress were expressed by women in encampments (58%) as well as among women whose households rely on herding (65%), agriculture (57%), and poultry farming (59%) for any portion of their income.

Women in Area C households report having little decision-making power, particularly in relation to economic decisions. Approximately half of surveyed women said they were free to decide whether to visit friends or relatives (49%) or to seek medical treatment for themselves (52%), but only 40% said they had the power to decide on daily household spending. Women in hamlets/encampments and in the Jordan Valley express the most limited household decision-making power in comparison to other women across Area C. Of all three community types, women in village Area C households had the relatively highest household decision-making power.

Married women were also asked about whether they had the final say on a number of important life decisions, and if not, who did. Only on the issue of selecting whom they married did a substantial number (51%) of women say they, not their fathers, made the final decision. Final decision-making on women’s work outside the home, a daughter’s education, or buying an expensive household item was overwhelmingly in the hands of husbands. Married women in hamlets/encampments also had the least decision-making power on these significant life issues.

Area C women’s involvement in the labor force does not seem to impact their decision-making power. Women in the Jordan Valley, who were the most economically active women by region in Area C, had the least decision-making power in terms of choosing to work outside the home (with only 9% having the final say on this decision versus 22% for all women). Similar to the findings on women’s freedom of movement, greater decision-making power on daily issues increased with women’s age – especially among women over 50.

Human Insecurity & Distress

There are strong correlations between living in households located in the most vulnerable, precarious contexts of Area C and exhibiting high levels of human insecurity. Almost half of respondents in Area C households exhibit high levels of human insecurity, and these levels are even higher among

8 The concept of “human security” was developed to address the fact that impacts of violent conflict and insecurity are not limited to material loss and bodily harm. The survey used a Human Security scale developed by the Institute of Community and Public Health (ICPH) at Birzeit University to assess the impacts of long-term conflict and insecurity on respondents’ emotional security and sense of wellbeing in the present and towards the future. The ICPH scale contains ten questions about individuals’ level of fear about threats to personal safety; the safety of their
respondents living in households in the Jordan Valley (66% highly insecure) or in hamlet/encampments (70% highly insecure). In all, 47% of the respondents exhibited high levels of insecurity, 42% showed moderate insecurity, and 11% had low levels of insecurity. When broken down by individual indicators, respondents' most common fears and worries were for the family's future including its economic well-being, followed by fears of direct forms of Israeli state violence.

Higher levels of insecurity were also found among households in communities entirely located in Area C, at 63%, compared to 35% in those communities that are halfway in Area C. In addition, 70% of households located in a nature reserve exhibited high insecurity levels, compared to 45% among those not located in reserves. Finally, 83% of households located in military zones expressed high levels of insecurity compared to 67% living in communities affected by military zones, and only 30% among those not affected by military zones. Households with low living standards also expressed higher levels of human insecurity.

More than two-thirds of respondents whose homes are in communities most exposed or vulnerable to Israeli military violence express high levels of uncertainty about their households' ability to continue living in its present location. This included 68% of respondents whose homes had been exposed to at least one incidence of Israeli military violence over the past three years, 80% of those whose households are located in Israeli firing/military zones, 70% whose households are located in Israeli nature reserves, 70% of respondents living in hamlet/encampments, and 66% in the Jordan Valley.

Levels of individual distress were measured using a scale comprised of 12 questions that assessed individuals' fears, frustration, and anxieties about incapacitation and displacement, as well as fears of not being in control over their lives (see appendix). Among the women surveyed, 32% exhibited low levels of individual distress, 45% moderate levels, and 24% high levels. Greater incidence of high distress was found in the Jordan Valley (33%), hamlets/encampments (at 38%, more than double other types of communities), among women in inadequate housing (41%), and those in low standard of living (45%, nearly double the rate among those with medium and low standards of living).

**Exposure to Israeli State & Settler Violence**

The survey assessed exposure by Area C households and their members to various types and levels of Israeli military and settler violence. Almost a third (29%) of Area C households had experienced exposure of the home to Israeli military (such as full or partial demolition, expulsion, or an expulsion order) and settler violence over the preceding five years. Women's individual experiences of moderate forms of military violence over the preceding three years

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9. The scale has also been used and validated in multiple studies of the West Bank and Gaza Strip by Institute of Community and Public Health/Birzeit University.
10. The findings of the 2017 resurvey show a significant decline in overall levels of distress, but it is unclear if this is related to conditions or to limitations posed by the small sample size.
was similar, while one-fifth of households reported that family members had experienced more severe forms of state violence over a five-year period. **Among the respondents who experienced violence against the home, almost two-thirds (61%) had experienced multiple incidents.**

- The highest levels of home exposure to political violence were found in military zones, with 63% of women in these communities reporting that their homes were exposed to at least one of six types of such violence in the past five years.

- Among households located in hamlets/encampments, a high of 46% reported at least one incident over the past five years (compared to 18% among village and only 2% in urban Area C locations). Incident levels were also high in the Jordan Valley at 41%.

- Households in communities completely located in Area C also reported greater levels of violence against their homes, with 41% reporting one or more incidents over the preceding five years.

There are also clear links between homes' greater vulnerability to military violence, and households' economic and structural deprivation. More than two-thirds (64%) of households living in inadequate housing experienced at least one of six types of incidents of state violence against their home, compared to only 16% of those with adequate housing. Likewise, 57% of respondents with a low standard of living (using an STL index) reported incidents of violence against their home. **Human insecurity and a home's exposure to state or settler violence were highly correlated, with more than two-thirds (68%) of those who were exposed to at least one incidence of this type of violence against the home expressing high degrees of human insecurity.**

Twenty percent of respondents reported that individual household members had been exposed to at least one incidence of direct political violence from the military or settlers over the preceding five years. Specifically, 15% of women reported that a family member had been arrested (with 3% reporting more than one person arrested); another 8% reported a family member's injury by the Israeli military; 7% reported that a family member was injured by Israeli settlers; and 7% reported that a family member was killed.11

Nine variables assessed women's individual and direct exposure to moderate political violence by the Israeli army or settlers over the preceding three years. **More than a quarter of women in Area C (29%) reported experiencing at least one type of moderate political violence.** Of these, 22% reported being held for a long time at an Israeli army checkpoint; 13% had undergone a body search by military personnel; 18% had been exposed to tear gas/sound bombs; 7% were interrogated by the military; and 3% were under a travel ban. In terms of settler violence, 6% had been detained by settlers; 4% searched by settlers; and 3% physically attacked by settlers.

Almost half (44%) of households dependent on agriculture or herding for their livelihoods in Area C experienced one or more attacks on or impediments to their livelihood activities over the previous three years due to...
Israeli policies or direct Israeli violence; nearly half said this was a continual problem. A third of households dependent on agriculture or herding for their livelihoods (30%) had experienced destruction of crops; 24% had experienced confiscation of agricultural lands; 21% had faced forced eviction from productive lands; 22% experienced destruction of crops; 24% experienced confiscation/theft of livestock or agricultural infrastructure; and 15% had experienced poisoning of livestock. Lack of access to water for agriculture/livestock emerged as a dominant obstacle, faced by 38% of these households over the previous three years. An overwhelming majority (92%) of households who had faced any of these obstacles over the previous three years said that a decline in productivity had resulted, with more than half (56%) saying the decline was substantial.

The majority of women who said they faced restrictions on their freedom of movement in/to most locations tended to cite social reasons (family constraints/norms) as the cause. However, fear of military/settler violence was the primary reason women cited for their lack of freedom to move in or to family fields/herding areas, with two-thirds (67%) of women citing this as the reason they were restricted in accessing productive lands. In the Jordan Valley, as many as three-quarters of women cited fear of military/settler violence as the reason they could not go freely to family herding/farming lands. A notable 59% of women in hamlets/encampments and 45% of women in the south West Bank also stated this as the reason they could not go to farming/herding lands.

Experiences of Humanitarian Aid

The uneven patterning of “soft” versus “hard” humanitarian aid across community types in Area C, suggests that aid is distributed in ways that conform with Israeli restrictions rather than by prioritizing the specific needs of communities.

Food aid was cited as the dominant form of humanitarian aid received by Area C communities, with one-third of respondents saying their community had received it the previous year in both 2014 and 2017. Food aid was even more often cited by respondents in hamlets/encampments, with 46% saying their community had received aid in this form in 2014. Other forms of aid received by communities included water and road projects (each cited by 26% of respondents), followed by health and agriculture projects (each cited by 19% of respondents). Legal aid and income generation projects (cited by 4% and 0% of respondents consecutively) were the least likely forms of aid to be received by communities.

Findings suggest that hamlet/encampments had received the least variegated array of aid with responses on types of aid received overwhelmingly grouped around four types of aid (food aid cited by almost half of respondents; health, agricultural and water projects cited by less than 20% of them) and all other
types of aid (roads, electricity, education, legal, etc.) cited by less than 10% of respondents. In contrast, responses in Area C villages reflect a pattern of greater aid diversity: five types of aid cited by more than 20% of respondents and three types of aid cited by another 10% to 20%. It is notable that infrastructure projects (such as roads and electricity, as well as housing) were almost completely absent in the aid respondents said their community received in hamlet/encampments. In contrast, 42% of urban Area C households and 32% of village households said their community had received aid in the form of road infrastructure the previous year.

Women in Area C communities had high levels of knowledge about forms of aid distributed in their communities, but very few of them had been consulted about their aid priorities.
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