



Demolitions of WASH infrastructures, a threat to the right to life of Palestinian communities in Area C

Since the beginning of 2021, 28 demolition incidents against 46 Palestinian WASH structures have occurred, displacing 266 people including 146 children and affecting 794 people¹. During a one month period, three mass demolitions took place in the communities of Humsa Al Bqai'a, Ras At Tin, and most recently Ibziq. This destruction of WASH infrastructure represents an increase of 40 per cent, compared to the same period in 2020, and an increase of 300 per cent in terms of people affected.

Palestinian communities in 'Area C' face daily challenges accessing safe and affordable water due to the lack of permits to construct and connect to water networks². By demolishing WASH infrastructures and preventing communities from accessing water, the lives and livelihoods of hundreds of women, men, and children are under threat, which is compounded by COVID-19 and an intense heatwave. The demolition of water pipelines, storage tanks, and cisterns deepen the water vulnerability of the affected communities. Families are becoming unable to secure the minimum quantities of water for their drinking, domestic and livelihood needs, considering that water is critical to livestock breeding. Moreover, the confiscation of mobile water tanks and access restrictions prevent affected people and their surrounding communities from purchasing trucked water to satisfy their basic water needs. As a result, many households have run out of solutions and coping mechanisms and are often forced to leave their land searching for safe water sources for their families and livestock as a matter of survival.

"In the last incident, all our water storage units were demolished. Currently, even if we arrange to purchase expensive trucked water, we don't have sufficient storage capacity to store the water. Therefore we moved part of our families and livestock to the surrounding communities as we can't meet our water needs here," A resident from Ras At Tin community.

In addition, restrictions and constant monitoring are put in place to prevent the support of these communities with humanitarian assistance. Following the demolition of Humsa Al B'qaia, the international community witnessed restrictions placed on the delivery of humanitarian assistance despite the imminent risk to life faced by the community members, particularly the 24 children directly affected.³

The WASH Cluster therefore calls upon:

- **The international community** to advocate with the Israeli authorities to consider the basic water structures in Area C as necessary humanitarian capital that must not be subject to demolition;
- **Israeli authorities** to allow access to humanitarian aid to the affected communities and guarantee the protection of WASH assistance as a lifesaving response;
- **UN Member States** to increase their funding to water projects that address the needs of the most vulnerable communities in Area C with capacity building and material assistance interventions that enhance the resilience and quick recovery of these communities.

¹ [OCHA dashboard: West Bank Demolition And Displacement.](#)

² [OCHA: The Israeli authorities approve five of over 100 outline plans submitted by Palestinians in Area C.](#)

³ Statement by Lynn Hastings, the Humanitarian Coordinator for the occupied Palestinian territory, on the demolitions at Humsa – Al Bqai'a