

Humanitarian Updates from MSF's Hebron Project in the West Bank

I. NEW FINDINGS

In February and March 2024, 210 MSF patients were interviewed across 21 villages in Hebron Governorate.

Access to health care

- Nearly all patients (90.5%) expressed that their access to health care has worsened since 7 October 2023.
- 79% of patients said **checkpoints** were one of the main factors hindering access to health care.
- Barriers to access to health care, according to MSF patients, were primarily caused by: combination of Israeli soldiers and settlers (63%), soldiers (24.5%), settlers (7%), Palestinian Authority (0.5%), combination of Israeli soldiers, settlers, and Palestinian Authority (5%).
- Between end of April and mid-July 2024, at 17% of MSF's consultations in Hebron Governorate, patients reported that they had health insurance prior to 7 October 2023, but could not renew the health insurance due to increased levels of financial hardship.

Physical health

- 81% of patients said **stress** was one of the main factors impacting their physical health; demonstrating the massive psychological pressure the population is under.
- 20% of MSF patients said there was a delay in vaccinations for their children/babies.

Mental Health

- 97% of patients said **war on Gaza** was impacting their mental health.
- 75% of patients said **fear of violence** was impacting their mental health.
- 72% of patients said **financial hardship** was impacting their mental health.
- 60% of patients said **fear for the future** was impacting their mental health.
- 55% of patients said **threats and intimidation** was impacting their mental health.
- 53% of patients said **loss of hope** was impacting their mental health.

Forced displacement

- In 13 of the 21 villages, where MSF conducted interviews, patients said that since 7 October 2023 people were displaced from their village.
- The main contributing factors leading to forced displacement mentioned was movement restrictions, followed by fear of violence, threats & intimidation, and lack of access to livelihoods/land.
- The main instigator of factors causing forced displacement, according to MSF patients: combination of Israeli soldiers and settlers (78.5%), soldiers (12%), settlers (5%), combination of Israeli soldiers, settlers, and Palestinian Authority (4%).

II. FORCED DISPLACEMENT

Since 7 October 2023 and as of 1 August 2024, MSF provided material support including mattresses, blankets, cooking utensils, and food parcels to over 1,500 Palestinians in Hebron Governorate who were either forcibly displaced from their village or whose house or essential personal items were destroyed.

III. HOME DEMOLITIONS

Since mid-June 2024, several times per week, we have been receiving calls from our patients in South Hebron Hills informing us that they, within the blink of an eye, suddenly became homeless and lost all their belongings due to home demolitions. Since mid-June and as of 1 August 2024, MSF provided material and mental health support to residents in 14 villages in Hebron Governorate whose homes were demolished, leaving 208 people homeless. We want to outline three reasons why the current home demolitions are not 'business as usual':

1. Increased frequency and scale (up to 9 homes or 11 structures per small village)
2. Home demolitions are sudden, often without advance warning, and all belongings are destroyed as people are not allowed to retrieve their belongings from their home before it gets demolished.
3. Home demolitions are more aggressive and the threats that people report to MSF make it clear the goal is to push people out of their land. Affected community members have told MSF that the settlers, who come to the village during or after the demolitions use rhetoric such as 'Go to Europe and build a house there', 'go away, don't stay here, this is our land, you don't have any land'.

IV. UMM AL KHEIR

Since the end of June 2024, Umm al Kheir—a village of 33 families where MSF provides mental health support—has been facing increased pressure to leave their homes, including relentless attacks and harassment by Israeli settlers. Within one day, Israeli forces demolished 11 structures, including 6 homes, bathrooms, solar panels, and water tanks. Leaving over 50 Palestinians homeless while bulldozing one third of the village. Since then, also the settler attacks—often in the presence of Israeli soldiers—are increasing. Settler attacks have resulted in injuries and hospitalization and on several occasions, they have fully cut off the water for the whole village. Seeing the mental health impact of the attacks, MSF provided hygiene kits and food parcels, while increasing mental health support for the children in particular. The village is at high risk of forcible transfer.