



Barrier stops Palestinians accessing land

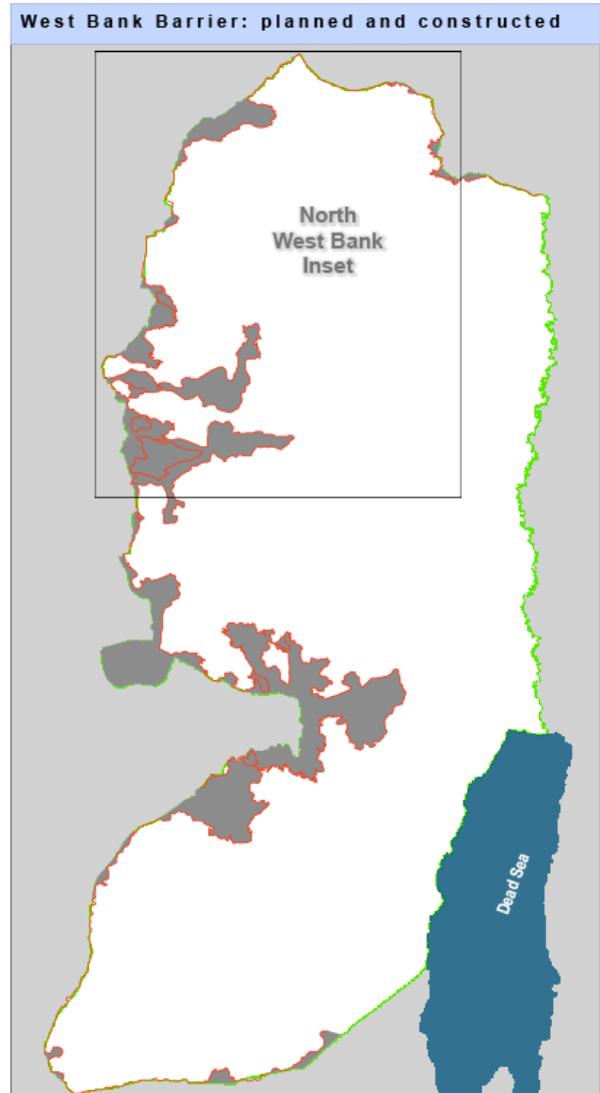
A survey of 57 communities located close to the West Bank Barrier revealed that six out of ten did not have access to their land because of the Barrier.¹

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The targeting of West Bank Islamic Charities by the IDF

The IDF has closed down four Islamic charities in recent months and raided many more in a string of targeted raids across the West Bank which have left more than 4,450 orphans, 157 widows and 3,000 destitute families without a local humanitarian safety net⁴.

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Loss of access to Palestinian land due to the Barrier

A report by OCHA and UNRWA¹, which analysed permits issued to Palestinians between December 2004 and July 2005, drew attention to the tightening permit regime enforced by the Government of Israel (GOI) on Palestinians crossing the Barrier. It predicted that within 12 months approximately 62% of land owning families would have no access to their land because they had been refused a permit. Twelve months later, this prediction was

borne out in a new survey which found that 60% of farming families² with land to the west of the Barrier could no longer get to it.



The West Bank Barrier

The Gol began the construction of the Barrier in June 2002. It stated that the purpose of the Barrier was to reduce the number of militant attacks on its population, although Gol officials have also stated that the Barrier could have political implications. The Barrier has been declared illegal under international law where it is located inside the West Bank.

The small rural communities near the Barrier are highly dependant on agriculture for their livelihoods. Agriculture has also become increasingly important during the last five years, and especially since the construction of the Barrier, because access to jobs in Israel has been stopped and there is high unemployment in the West Bank.



Azzun Atmeh, Qalqilia - Woman crossing with 'Green Permit'
OCHA / Steve Sabella, June 2005

The Survey's Main Findings

- An estimated 40% of farming families have been issued with permits to pass through gates, leaving 60% of farming families entirely cut off from their land.
- There are approximately 26 gates open, out of a total of at least 61 gates, for Palestinian use all year round in the 57 communities surveyed.
- More than half (30 of the 57 communities surveyed) do not have direct, regular access to their land.
- The gates are only open for 64% of the officially stated time.
- 72% of surveyed communities complained of regular verbal abuse and humiliation by IDF soldiers at the gates; 24% reported damage or refusal of entry of agricultural produce.
- 90% (52 of the 57) of communities surveyed have had traditional routes cut by the Barrier.
- 85% (202 of 239) of routes have been severed by the Barrier.
- None of the ten communities lying in the closed areas, between the Green Line and the Barrier, have 24-hour access to emergency health services and at least three communities have experienced a life-threatening delay at the Barrier gate.

The Permit Regime

Farmers needing to access their land are only allowed to pass through a Barrier gate if they have a permit issued by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). It has become steadily more difficult and time-consuming to obtain a permit because the documentation required is often unavailable. By July 2006, the survey found that approximately 40% of farming families had been issued with permits to pass through gates, leaving 60% of farming families entirely cut off from their land.



Gates Management

In the northern stretch of the Barrier, where the 57 communities surveyed are located, there are at least 61 gates³ and each permit assigns a specific gate through which a farmer can access his land. At least 15 of the gates are used by the IDF for military purposes only. Of the remaining gates open to use by Palestinians, approximately 11 are seasonal gates, open for as little as three days a year during the olive picking season.

unexpectedly closed for a total of 206 days in addition to the officially stated days of closure. The most common reasons for gate closure given by the IDF at the gates are security and Jewish holidays.

The maltreatment of Palestinian farmers by soldiers at the gates is reported to be widespread. The findings reveal that 72% of



Palestinian olive pickers at the Khirbet ad Dir (Hebron) seasonal barrier gate waiting for it to open on 2 November
OCHA / Tareq Talahma, November 2006

The survey found that there are just 26 gates open for Palestinian use all year round, including those which double up as road terminals into Israel, leaving 30 of the 57 communities with no direct or regular access to their land.

There is a discrepancy between the officially stated and actual opening times of the gates, making it difficult for farmers to plan and execute their work efficiently. According to the survey's findings, the gates are only open for 64% of the officially stated time. Since the completion of the Barrier in the northern section in May 2004, 14 gates used by Palestinians have been

surveyed communities had reported regular verbal abuse and humiliation by IDF soldiers at the gates and 24% reported damage or refusal of entry of agricultural produce, such as taking seeds into the closed areas or taking harvested crops from the closed areas back to the community west of the Barrier.

The irregular and limited operation of the gates has a negative impact on agriculture. Eleven seasonal gates are open only at olive harvesting time, meaning that any tending of the olive groves, such as ploughing, spraying and pruning is not possible at any other time of the year, resulting in reduced yields.



Cutting of roads

Before the Barrier was built, farmers travelled from their homes to their land by short, direct roads. Some were paved but many were agricultural tracks suitable only for tractors and sturdy vehicles. Many farmers were close enough to walk to their land or ride on donkeys. The survey found that 90% (52 of the 57) communities surveyed have had traditional routes cut by the Barrier.

At least 85% (202 routes of the 239) have been severed by the Barrier and at least 30 communities have to take a detour through other villages to access their land. It was further found that 22% (4,954 of 22,557 hectares) of land is now accessible only on foot and all goods and produce brought in and out must be carried on foot.⁴

Trapped between the Green Line⁵ and the Barrier

Ten of the 57 communities surveyed lie between the Barrier and the Green Line. Residents are not allowed into Israel to work or use services and, consequently, are totally dependent on access to the West Bank. The restrictions on crossing the Barrier into the remaining West Bank differ from community to community.

All of the ten communities require permits to pass through their designated gate. The survey found that 94 permanent residents (20 women, 54 children and 20 men) in the ten communities do not have permits, which means that they can not leave their communities to enter the remaining West Bank to seek services for fear of not being allowed back to their homes.

The survey found that none of these ten communities have 24-hour access to emergency health services and at least three communities have experienced a life-threatening delay at the Barrier gate.



United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

North West Bank: Access to the 'Closed Areas'

November 2006

Barrier Gates

- Restricted access to Palestinians
- Restricted Access to Palestinians (Seasonal)
- ▲ Currently no access to Palestinians

Barrier as of November 2006

- Completed
- - - Under construction
- · · · · Planned

Barrier - path extracted from satellite imagery and verified with field surveys.
 Planned Barrier - path based on Israeli Government (Ministry of Defence - Seam Zone Authority) maps, published 20 February 2005.

Barrier within Village Boundary (1948)

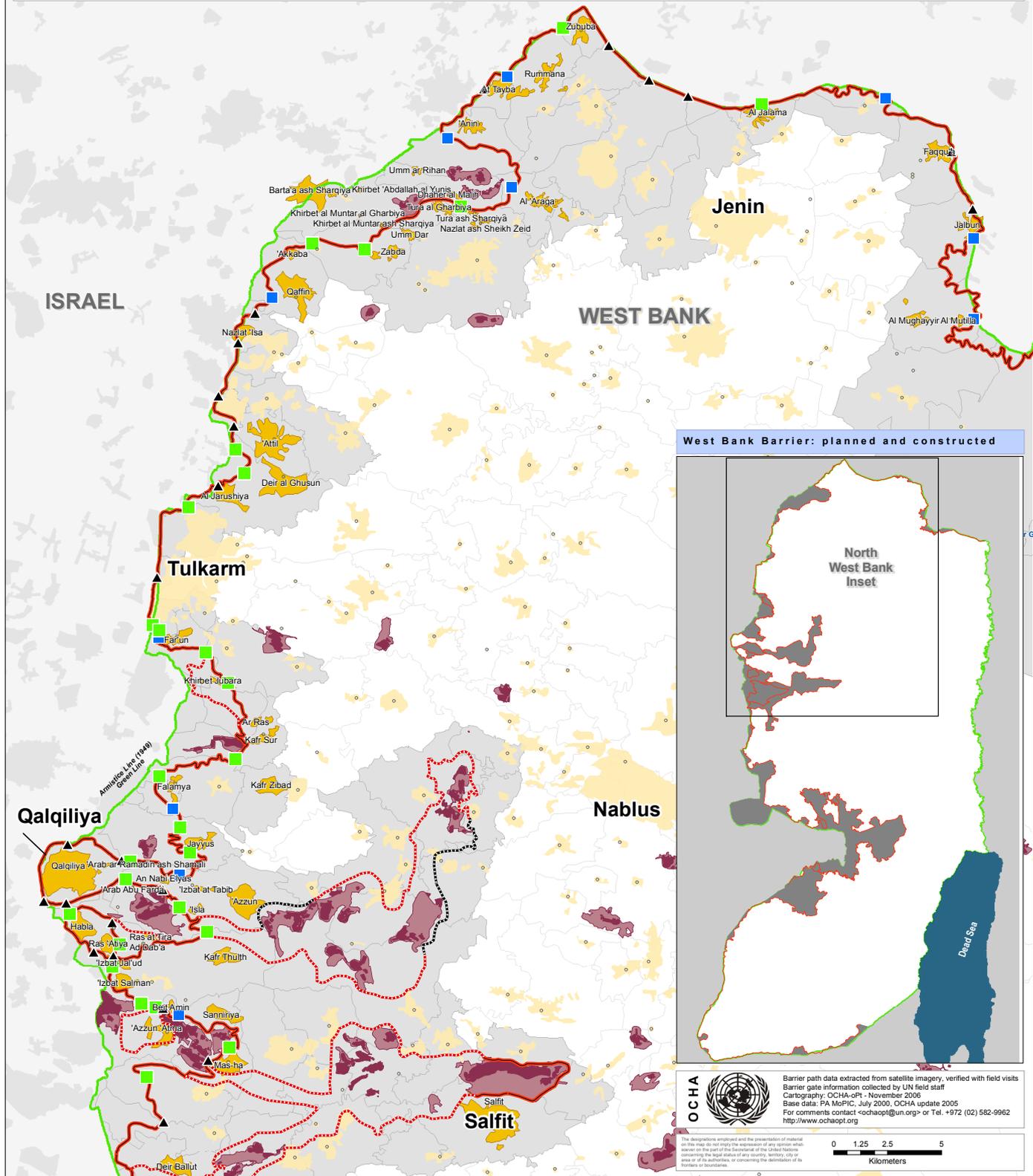
Surveyed communities that face access problems because of the barrier

Palestinian Built-Up Area

Israeli Settlement

61 Barrier gates have been observed by the UN in Jenin, Tulkarm, Qalqiliya and north Salfit. Of these, 26 are currently open to Palestinians for use all year round with appropriate permits.

The Barrier gates identified on this map reflect the situation at writing. Gate monitoring is a work in progress and is subject to change.





The targeting of West Bank Islamic Charities by the IDF

The IDF has closed down four Islamic charities in recent months and targeted many more in a string of raids across the West Bank. As a result more than 4,450 orphans, 157 widows and 3,000 destitute families are no longer receiving help.⁶

The seizing of computers and administrative records by the IDF from other organisations has led to severe delays in the provision of vital services. They now have to draw up new lists of beneficiaries, adding pressure on their time and resources and leading to a shortfall in the help they can deliver.

Between May and August 2006, 37 charitable institutions in the West Bank were targeted in IDF attacks, searches and raids (see table below). The IDF stated that these organisations were closed down or raided to prevent militant attacks on Israeli citizens. Israel claims Muslim charities are being used as a front for militant activities.

According to the International Crisis Group (ICG), some charities do have political affiliations, although many are politically independent: "Because Islamic social welfare organisations are formally independent entities, their political affiliations are not immediately apparent. Some are politically as well as legally independent. Others are affiliated with political entity, such as Hamas, Fatah, or the PA itself. Affiliation, in turn, is often a matter of degree."⁷

What they do and who they help

In the West Bank, charities play an important role among Palestinian communities in a variety of ways, such as assisting impoverished students to pay tuition fees, helping poor families with daily necessities and providing cheap or free medical services to those who couldn't otherwise afford them. They provide care for physically and mentally disabled children and adults, the elderly and orphans, and organise women's income-generating enterprises and youth and sports activities.

What is an Islamic charitable institution?

The aim of Islamic charitable institutions is to assist the most needy Palestinian individuals and families. Run as non-profit making organisations, they are independent from governmental authority⁸ and are reliant on donations or voluntary assistance to carry out their work.

Islamic charitable institutions singled out by the IDF include the committee offices of Az Zakat. The Zakat⁹ and other charities operate under the supervision of the Palestinian Authority (PA) Ministry of Waqf (Islamic endowment) and Islamic Affairs. Each active charity has to be registered with the PA Ministry of Interior and is issued with an annual renewable license on the recommendation of the sector ministries that supervise them.

Following registration, each charity is overseen by the Ministry dealing with the type of work it carries out, ie, Zakat is overseen by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, others by the Ministry of Agriculture or Ministry of Social Affairs.

Each organisation must also submit a financial report to both the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the overseeing ministry, which are scrutinised before a license is renewed. Charitable institutions are required to hold elections for the Board of Members every two years.

In the West Bank, most present themselves as religious associations, for example the Az Zakat Committee, Religious Charitable Association, Islamic Club, Al Bir Wa'el Ihsan, The Islamic Society for Orphan Sponsorship, Yatta.

In Muslim societies, the application of the term "Islamic" generally denotes positive characteristics, such as honesty, social justice, righteousness and promotes a sense of legitimacy.¹⁰

As with Caritas in Christianity and GAMAHA (Gmilot Hassadim) in Judaism, calling a charity "Islamic" implies that it is rooted in the indigenous societies of the Muslim world and offers a model of socio-economic development within a traditional religious framework. Another principal of these institutions is that participation in, and benefit from them, is open to all, regardless of socio-economic, religious or political background.



As well as being centres for the distribution of charity, these institutions often provide an opportunity for social interaction, offering a forum for friends and neighbours to revive social ties while delivering a service to the community.

Since the Hamas victory in the PLC elections in January 2006, the role of these organisations as a social safety net for the most vulnerable in Palestinian society is more important than ever. With the rise in the levels of poverty, the non-payment

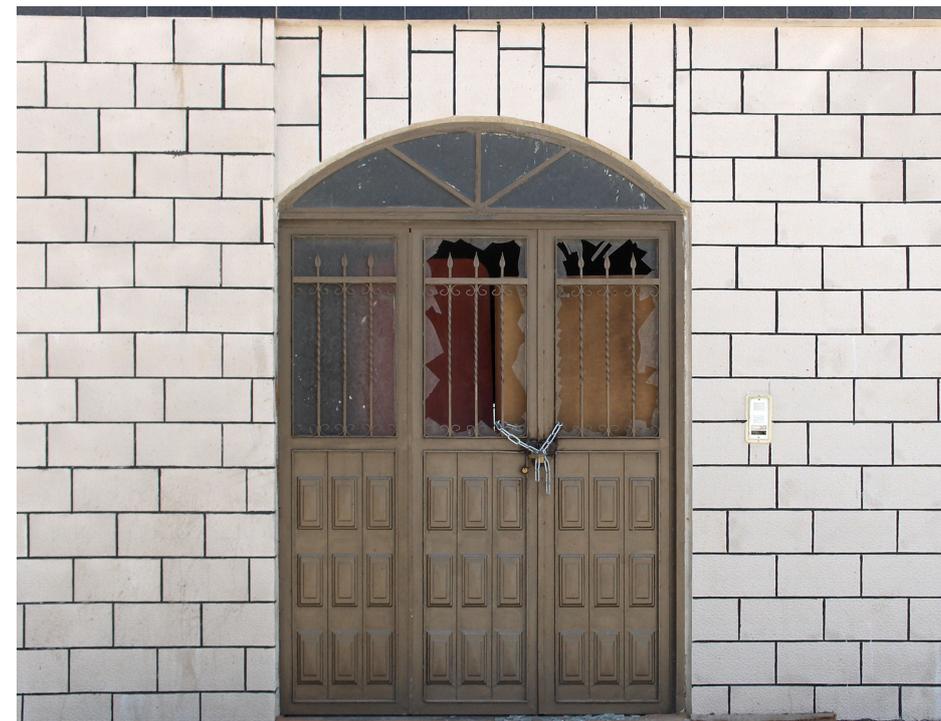
The charities make up anywhere between 10% - 40% of all NGOs in the oPt¹³, and directly reach tens of thousands of people, and hundreds of thousands more indirectly.¹⁴

Their work is mostly carried out in isolated and rural communities, refugee camps, and in communities now cut off from services by the Barrier. Their constituencies are mostly the poor and marginalised. According to the latest Institut Universitaire d'Etudes du Development (IUED) survey, the refugees (58%) and hardship cases (55%)¹⁵ are the main beneficiaries.

How these institutions evolved

Since 1967, Israel, as the occupying power, has been obliged to take responsibility for the welfare of Palestinians and provide services to the populations of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. As the needs of these communities have continued to go unmet by Israel, Islamic charities have become increasingly active, providing help with the basic daily needs of Palestinian people.

In response to their establishment, Israeli authorities placed new legal restrictions on them¹⁶ and the IDF District Commander was given the power to shut down any organisation suspected of carrying out political activity, if it contravened security or Israeli Military Orders, or if it didn't meet certain administrative requirements.¹⁶



Al Aqsr Charitable Clinic (Nablus). Was closed 2. July 2006
OCHA / Roz Willey, July 2006.

of PA salaries and the decline in the provision of basic health care, more and more Palestinians are turning to Muslim charities for help.

A survey conducted by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) revealed that between March and May 2006, approximately 5% of mainly food and cash assistance, was provided by charitable institutions.¹¹ According to a poll conducted by Birzeit University in September 2006, 20% of assistance delivered was provided by NGOs and charitable institutions.¹²



Table of IDF Incidents Involving charities

Date	Institution	Town / governorate	Scope of work	Action taken by IDF	Impact
26. May 2006	Social Club	Tulkarm / Tulkarm	A cultural, social and sports club. Licensed from the Ministry of Youth and Sport.	Closed for two years	Confiscated a computer
21. June 2006	Al Ihasan Charitable Society	Hebron City / Hebron	A charitable society providing services for 120 mentally and physically handicapped as well as offering other medical services for the society at large.	Searched	Confiscated computers and financial documents
21. June 2006	The Islamic Charitable society	Hebron City / Hebron	A charitable society providing educational services for orphans and emergency services to the needy.	Searched	Destruction of property
29. June 2006	Iqra' Center and Kindergarten	Bethlehem / Bethlehem	An organisation associated with Al Islah Charitable society. The kindergarten has 60 children	Searched	Three computers and financial documents were confiscated.
29. June 2006	Ar Rahma Charitable Association	Fahma/Jenin	Working to assist poor orphans, students, helping to pay wedding costs and distribute food parcels in occasions	Searched	Confiscated five computers and files
29. June 2006	Center for Religious Studies	Tulkarm/ Tulkarm	Provides religious education to children	Searched	Destruction of property
1. July 2006	Adh Dhairiyya Charitable Society	Adh Dhairiyya / Hebron	A charitable society providing assistance to the needy families.	Searched	Two computers were confiscated as well as financial documents. Damage to property.
2. July 2006	Az Zakat committee.	Jenin/ Jenin	Regular assistance to 1800 orphans, distribution of food parcels and subsidises medical treatment for vulnerable families.	Searched	Confiscated computers and files
2. July 2006	Islamic Club	Jenin/ Jenin	A cultural, social and sports club. Licensed by the Ministry of Youth and Sport.	Searched	Confiscated computers and files
2. July 2006	Al Bir Wa'el Ihsan Charitable Association	Jenin/ Jenin	Building was closed two years ago but the association continues to give help to 140 orphans, distributing food parcels and school bags.	Searched	Confiscated files.
6. July 2006	Islamic Charitable Association for workers	Tubas City	Assists poor workers, health insurance and distribute food parcels	Searched	Confiscated twelve computers and files
6. July 2006	Qarawat Bani Hassan (The Islamic Charitable Association for relief of needy Orphans)	Salfit/ Salfit	Established by Arab Israelis in Kafr Qasem it has branches throughout the West bank. This branch covers Salfit district. Assists 350 orphans, distributes food parcels during Ramadan and school bags.	Searched	Confiscated files.
2. July 2006	Al Quran and Suna association	Jinsafut / Qalqiliya	The building was closed two and a half years ago. Despite that the institution provides monthly payment of 20 JD to 120 orphans, distributes school bags and pays for the medical treatment of orphans	Searched	Confiscated files
3. July 2006	Al Hanan Orphanage	Tulkarm/ Tulkarm	Runs a school from grade 1 to grade 9. Provides cash help to 1400 orphans and the payment of orphan's educational fees.	Searched	Confiscated three computers and some files
3. July 2006	Religious Charitable Association	New Asker Camp/ Nablus	Monthly payments of 50 JD to 850 orphans and monthly payment of 45 JD to 157 widows	Closed	All assistance stopped. Damage to premises and office equipment. Computers and confidential files confiscated.



Date	Institution	Town / governorate	Scope of work	Action taken by IDF	Impact
3. July 2006	Az Zakat Committee and Al Sufa Dairy (both located in the same building)	Nablus/ Nablus	The Zakat Committee pay monthly cash assistance to 3000 poor families and to 2800 orphans. They provide cash assistance to poor students through the Ministry of Education and covering the cost of medical fees and insurance, including provision of prosthetics. The Zakat was also involved in providing emergency assistance after house demolitions. Al Sufa Dairy employed 70 staff.	Closed	Assistance to beneficiaries stopped. 70 factory employees were made redundant. Damage to premises. Confiscated two computers and some files.
3. July 2006	Az Zakat Committee in Taqu	Taqu/ Bethlehem	They serve 30 orphans and 70 needy families.	Searched	The IDF confiscated all checkbooks, receipts and payment vouchers. All files of the Committee were also confiscated. The one computer that the Committee had was taken away by the IDF.
3. July 2006	The Orphan Society	Bethlehem / Bethlehem	Providing assistance to 55 orphans and a number of needy families	Searched	Damage to property.
3. July 2006	Center for Qur'anic Healing	Bethlehem / Bethlehem	Religious studies Center	Searched	Two computers were confiscated.
3. July 2006	Islamic Society of Beit Sahur	Beit Sahur / Bethlehem	Providing assistance to orphans and needy families.	Searched	Damage to property. Financial documents confiscated.
3. July 2006	Beit Fajjar Zakat Committee	Beit Fajjar / Bethlehem	Providing assistance to 50 orphans and a number of needy families.	Searched	One computer confiscated.
4. July 2006	Al Khadr Zakat Committee and its associated An Noor Kindergarten	Al Khadr / Bethlehem	60 kindergarten students and providing financial assistance to orphans and needy families.	Closed until further notice	Damage to property.
5. July 2006	Ibn Al Baz Islamic Center -	As Samu/ Hebron	35,000 food parcels distributed to 315,000 people	Searched	Confiscated 11 computers, CDs containing all projects of the Society in addition to all files of projects, orphan files, more than 100 books, school files and all financial files.
5. July 2006	Az Zakat Committee in Al Dhahiriya	Al Dhahiriya/ Hebron	Financial support to 82 students (grade 1-4), 250 families, 130 orphans and 100 widows	Searched	Confiscated five computers.
5. July 2006	Islamic Charitable Society	Hebron city/ Hebron	Benefits 3500 orphans. (The Islamic Charitable Society is a chain of Societies that carry the same name and are set up throughout the Hebron Governorate. Branches are also located in Bani Na'im, Dura, Beit Ula, Tarqumiya and Ash Shuyukh)	Searched	Destruction of property was reported. A number of computers were confiscated.
5. July 2006	Islamic Charitable Society	Tafooh/ Hebron		Searched	
5. July 2006	Islamic Charitable Society	Tarqumiya/ Hebron		Searched	
6. July 2006	Az Zakat Committee	Jericho/ Jericho	Assists 1,600 orphans, widows and members of poor families.	Searched	Confiscated all the computers and documents including confidential information about beneficiaries
6. July 2006	Juthur Cultural center	Tubas/ Tubas	Provides summer camps for children, helps meet cost of healthcare, run extra curricular school courses and workshops for handicrafts, embroidery and ceramics.	Searched	Confiscated files
6. July 2006	Charitable Association for Orphans	Jericho/ Jericho	Assists 800 orphans	Searched	confiscated 10 computers and documents including confidential information of beneficiary
12. July 2006	Az Zakat Committee	Al Ezariyeh/ Jerusalem	2,300 beneficiaries including orphans, widows and poor families.	Searched	Confiscated two computers and documents including confidential information of customers and program's beneficiaries



Date	Institution	Town / governorate	Scope of work	Action taken by IDF	Impact
7.July 2006	The Yatta Islamic Charitable Society.	Hebron/ Hebron	Financial support for 250 families, 350 orphans and 50 widows	searched	Files and computers were confiscated.
17.July 2006	The Islamic Society for Orphan Sponsorship – Yatta.	Hebron/ Hebron		Closed. Carrying out its function from a different location.	Aid to all beneficiaries has stopped. Files, phones, a TV set, a fax machine in addition to the hard drives of two computers were confiscated. Wide spread destruction of furniture and property was done by the IDF.
19.August 2006	Halhul Zakat Committee	Halhul / Hebron	Financial support for 200 needy families	Searched	Confiscated three computers and financial documents.
20.August 2006	Islamic Charitable Society	Ash Shuyukh / Hebron	Supports 500 beneficiaries including orphans, widows and poor families.	Searched	Damage to property. Confiscation of one computer and financial files.
20.August 2006	Islamic Charitable Society	Beit Ula / Hebron	Supports 420 beneficiaries including orphans, widows and poor families.	Searched	Damage to property
28.August 2006	Zakat Committee of Sa'ad Ibn Abi Waqqas Mosque	Idhna / Hebron	Supports 300 orphan families and some needy families	Searched	Confiscated a computer and some financial documents

Endnotes:

- The study covered the Barrier communities in the Governorates of Salfit, Qalaliya, Tulkarm and Jenin. A survey was undertaken in each of the 57 communities. Information was gathered from the municipalities and gate users. When available, supporting information was gathered from official Palestinian and Israeli sources. The total population of these communities is approximately 173,000. 47 of the communities are located east of the Barrier and 10 are encircled by the Barrier.
- These are defined as nuclear families farming land on the west side of the Barrier.
- According to OCHA monitoring.
- This is a conservative estimation of the proportion of land only accessible on foot because it includes the land impacted by the Ari'el and Emanuel fingers (8,800 hectares) where Barrier construction is ongoing.
- Armistice lines of 1949.
- Social Club (Tulkarm), Religious Charitable Association, (New Asker camp- Nablus), Az Zakat committee and Al Sufa Dairy (Nablus).
- ICG (2003), Islamic Social Welfare Activism in the Occupied Palestinian Territories: a legitimate target?, Middle East Report n. 13
- According to the law of Charitable Associations and Community of PA Legislative Council (PLC), this type of association is allowed to provide social, financial and economic services to society without any profit or political gains. In 2000 the Legislative Council (PLC) of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) adopted the existing version of the Palestinian NGO law - the Law of Charitable Associations and Community. http://www.pngo.net/NGOLaw_en.htm
- Az Zakat is the third of the Five Pillars of Islam. Zakat refers to spending a fixed portion of one's wealth for the 'poor; needy, zakat collectors, people whose hearts need to be reconciled, slaves, those in debt, in the way of Allah, and the travelers in the society'. The payment of zakat is obligatory for all Muslims. In current usage it is interpreted as a 2.5% levy on most valuables and savings held for a full lunar year. <http://www.islamicity.com/mosque/zakat/>
- WIKTOTWICZ Q., "The Role of Charites and NGOs in the Financing of Terrorist Activities", August 2002, http://banking.senate.gov/02_08hr/080102/wiktorow.htm
- PCBS, March- May 2006 (including Zakat committee, charity institutions, Local Reform Committee.)
- Results of Opinion Poll # 28, Fieldwork conducted between 14-16 September 2006 in oPt, by Development Studies Programme of Birzeit University
- According to Sara ROY's findings. "The Transformation of Islamic NGOs in Palestine", Middle East Report, Spring 2000
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- Regarding the period of November 2004 -July 2005. Graduate Institute of Development Studies (IUED), Palestinian Public Perceptions, Report IX, April 2006, Geneva, p.135
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