



Special Focus: Avian flu: A virus without borders

The Gaza Strip is currently in the grips of a full-scale outbreak of avian flu. Two and half million poultry stock in Gaza are threatened. The humanitarian response is addressing two main issues, in order to minimize the impact on the Palestinian population. The first is targeting short-term action to halt further outbreaks in the region. Second, at a time when Palestinians are living with record-high poverty levels, the virus threatens the single most important source of protein in Palestinian diets – poultry. Restocking the poultry industry and finding alternative and affordable protein sources are essential steps to ward off a further deterioration in the humanitarian situation.

With outbreaks in Israel and the Gaza Strip, and following earlier incidents in Egypt, (see map), it is critical that a coordinated approach occurs between the Israeli and Palestinian authorities and international donors. Because of the proximity of the oPt and Israel to each other, such coordination is the most effective way to prevent the virus from spreading across borders.

Until now, both the Israeli and Palestinian Authority (PA) ministries of Agriculture (MoA) and Health (MoH) have been coordinating in an unprecedented manner compared to other government sectors which have not had contacts since the victory of Hamas movement in the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) elections in January this year. Both sides recognise that systems and structured interventions on veterinary and human health services, nutrition and public health policy are vital for the containment of the outbreak.

Yet the PA lacks the level of resources to mount an effective response on its own. Protective equipment for cullers, anti-viral treatments for humans, compensation to farmers, poison, sprayers and disinfectants to carry out the culling, as well as the surveillance capacity for testing farms and backyards are either absent or in short supply.

In part, the shortages emanate both from the non-transfer of the VAT tax and customs revenues that the Israeli Government collects on Palestinian goods on the PA's behalf, and the freezing of assistance to the PA from mainly Western donor countries since the Hamas-led administration took office.

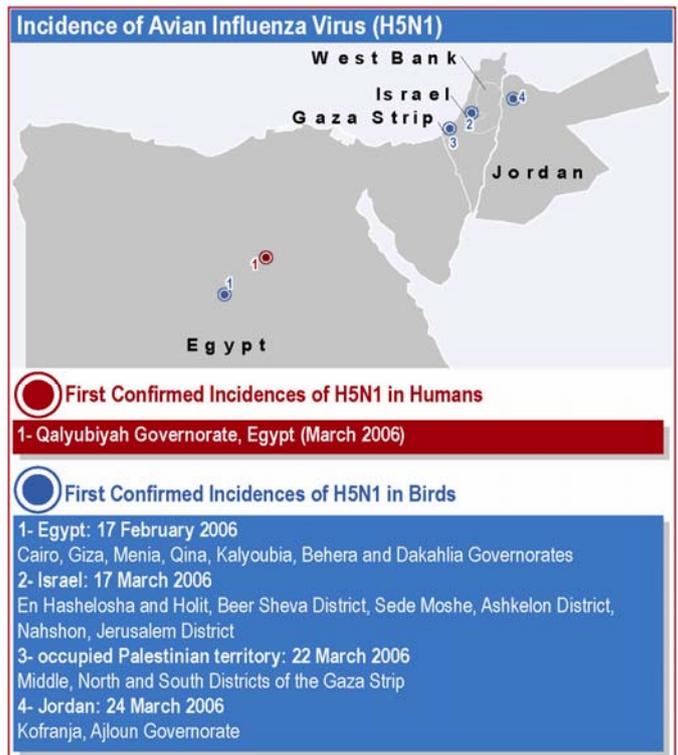
The PA, with its extensive network of health clinics and personnel and agricultural - extension workers, is the best-placed institution to respond. To augment this capacity, a UN Inter-agency Plan will be launched on 2 May to mitigate the current avian flu outbreak and to reduce the eventual consequences of human flu pandemic. As part of the Plan, there will be an appeal for funds to address some of the emergency shortfalls and growing needs resulting from culling of chickens.

Avian Flu in the Region

The occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), Israel, Jordan and Egypt are particularly at risk to avian flu because of the migratory patterns of large numbers of wild birds. On 17 March, the H5N1 strain was confirmed in 11,000 turkeys in southern Israel by the Israeli Ministry of Agriculture (MoA).¹ Five days later, a case was confirmed in a poultry farm of 35,000 chickens near Gaza City in the Gaza Strip by the Palestinian MoA, after tests were conducted in Israel. The Jordanian authorities confirmed the first case of H5N1 in poultry two days later in the Jordan Valley.² There has also been one confirmed case of H5N1 in the Israeli settlement Beq'aot, in the West Bank (near Tubas). Incidences of H5N1 have been confirmed since mid-February 2006 in Egypt.

No human cases of avian flu have been confirmed in the oPt despite a number of suspected cases in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. Egyptian local authorities have confirmed 11 human cases in Egypt, resulting in three deaths.

Following the first confirmed incident of H5N1 virus in the Gaza Strip on 22 March, a further six incidents in domestic poultry and ducks were confirmed by 25 April 2006. There are no animal testing facilities in the Gaza Strip and all tests have been carried out by Israeli authorities.



Dependence on Poultry in the oPt

26.4.2006



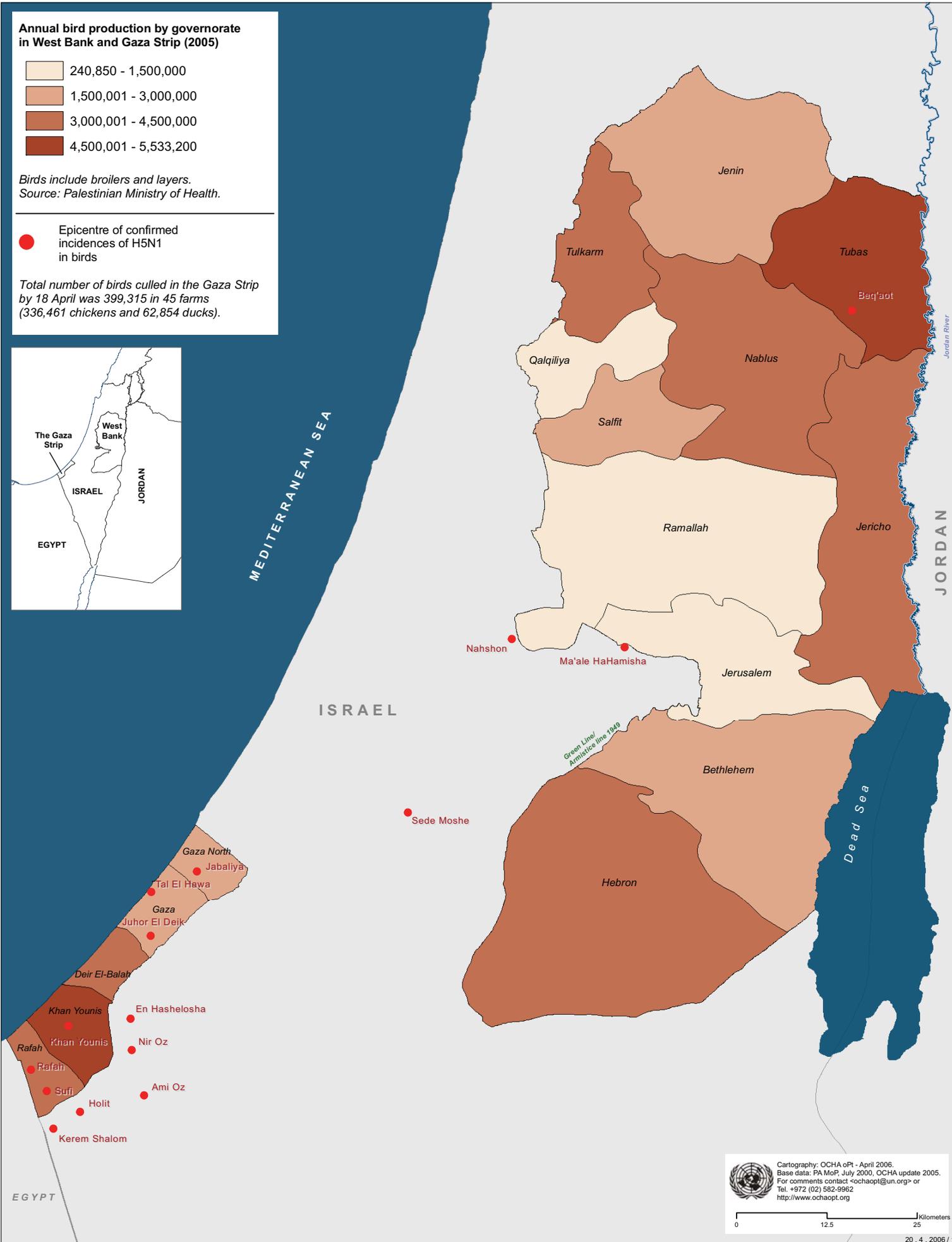
Annual bird production by governorate in West Bank and Gaza Strip (2005)



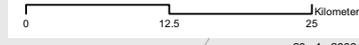
Birds include broilers and layers.
Source: Palestinian Ministry of Health.

Epicentre of confirmed incidences of H5N1 in birds

Total number of birds culled in the Gaza Strip by 18 April was 399,315 in 45 farms (336,461 chickens and 62,854 ducks).



Cartography: OCHA oPt - April 2006.
Base data: PA MoP, July 2000, OCHA update 2005.
For comments contact ochaopt@un.org or
Tel. +972 (02) 582-9962
<http://www.ochaopt.org>



In the West Bank to date, there has been one report of H5N1 in domestic poultry - in the Israeli settlement of Beq'aot in the Jordan Valley. Its location close to Palestinian communities raises fears about the virus spreading to Palestinian domestic poultry, particularly in Tubas where there is a high concentration of poultry production (see Map).

Humanitarian Impact

According to international guidelines, all birds should be culled within a 3-km radius around the location of an outbreak and an area quarantined within a radius of 10 km of the outbreak.³ According to the Ministry of Health (MoH), the Higher Committee established to combat avian flu in the oPt has taken the decision to cull all poultry in the Gaza Strip because of the difficulties of surveillance and containment in a densely populated area.

Extensive culling of Palestinian poultry will impact Palestinians on many levels :

Food security and nutrition: Chicken meat and eggs provide the main source of protein in the Palestinian diet - 73% of animal protein consumed in Gaza Strip is from local poultry sector. Chicken and eggs have grown in importance for their nutritional content since the start of the second *intifada* when meat and fish prices rose dramatically. In 2003, a nutritional assessment conducted by Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) found that Palestinians were consuming minimal amounts of protein and more expensive nutrition-rich foods such as meat and fish due to plummeting incomes.

Household economy: A high number of poor families have come to rely on backyard poultry for cash income and protein-rich foods. In the West Bank, an estimated 16% of households work in farming or breeding livestock (compared with 6% of the Gaza Strip) as a coping mechanism.⁴ It is this type of animal husbandry which is of most concern from a public health perspective as humans are in close contact with poultry and the H5N1 virus could spread more easily between bird and human. Accordingly, the household and family farm has become the first line of prevention and control.

Employment in agriculture: Agriculture has served as an employment buffer, following the large number of jobs Palestinians lost as a result of Israeli closures. The portion of Palestinians working in the agriculture sector has increased from 12.5% in 1999 to 15.9% in 2004, with women representing 36% of those employed in the sector.⁵ It is estimated by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) that in the Gaza Strip alone, there are approximately 6,000 persons working in the poultry sector supporting approximately 40,000 dependants.

Poverty: The impact of avian flu will be felt heavily by Palestinian poultry farmers. Farmers, having lost access to land and markets, are among the most vulnerable in the oPt. Wages in the agricultural sector are lower than any other sector in the economy. The agricultural wage accounts for 71% of wages for all other employees in the Gaza Strip and 54% of all other wages in the West Bank, Real agricultural wages have fallen by 19% and 14% respectively, as well. The impact on farmers of the virus outbreak will be protracted – after infected stocks are destroyed, farming will not be able to resume immediately due to the need to disinfect the farms and ensure the virus has been eliminated.

Vulnerability of the rural population: The Palestinian rural population engages in 56% of all agriculture employment. Poorer than the Palestinian urban population, they will be most affected economically by the virus outbreak.

Role of poultry production in the economy: While the value of poultry meat production has declined in the West Bank since the start of the current *intifada*, due largely to the loss of access to markets for the sale of poultry, production in the Gaza Strip has remained constant. In 2005, the average annual number of poultry reached 46 million in the oPt, with 26 million in the West Bank and 18 million in the Gaza Strip. Broiler meat makes up 61% of total meat production for the oPt (53% in the West Bank and 88% in the Gaza Strip).⁶ Income from egg and chicken meat production makes up 49% of total livestock production, excluding dairy.

Response

PA and Israeli government response: Since October 2005, the Palestinian MoA and MoH have led the PA's efforts to respond to the avian flu and developed a response plan for the oPt. Since 19 March 2006, Israeli and Palestinian authorities have cooperated for exchange of information and coordination. They continue to meet regularly in Jerusalem and at Erez crossing. Israeli authorities test suspected cases for the PA and have provided 300 doses of the tami flu antiviral treatment.

Donor response: The donor response has thus far been limited and pledges received cover only some of the budget items. In 2006, the PA reports that most of the problems related to the containment of the current outbreak are due to the lack of donor funds.⁷ Since the victory of the Hamas movement in the PLC elections, Western donors have signalled their intention to withdraw their funding to the PA, including funding PA activities to combat avian flu. Some major donors recognising the international nature of the crisis, have confirmed their support to combat the outbreak albeit through non-governmental organisations or the global World Bank Trust Fund.

UN response: UN agencies, largely via the WHO and FAO, have provided technical assistance and resources to the PA in preparedness activities. These include detection training, testing facilities for human cases, some basic equipment in the event of an outbreak and awareness raising activities. Following the outbreak, these agencies along with the World Bank, have sent expert missions to assess the situation and to mobilise further resources.

The scale of the avian flu threat worldwide

Avian flu refers to group of different viruses that primarily affect birds. The H5N1 strain, which was recently detected in poultry in the Gaza Strip and Israel, is a highly infectious subtype of the virus, posing immediate and severe threats to animal and human health. According to World Health Organization (WHO), this strain has caused the largest outbreaks in poultry on record with outbreaks originally detected in countries in Southeast Asia and subsequently spreading rapidly to poultry in Central Asia, the Middle East, Europe and Central Africa by 2006.⁸ The H5N1 strain has infected a relatively small number of humans who came into contact with sick birds with a high fatality rate – 109 deaths worldwide from 194 confirmed cases since the second wave of outbreaks in mid-2003.⁹ However, there are fears of the pandemic potential of H5N1 if it adapts into a strain that is contagious through human-human transmission.

Web sources:

http://www.hewsworld.org/avian_flu/
<http://gamapserver.who.int/mapLibrary/app/searchResults.aspx>
<http://www.healthinform.net/index.php>

A Virus without Borders: Virus Spread across region

26.4.2006

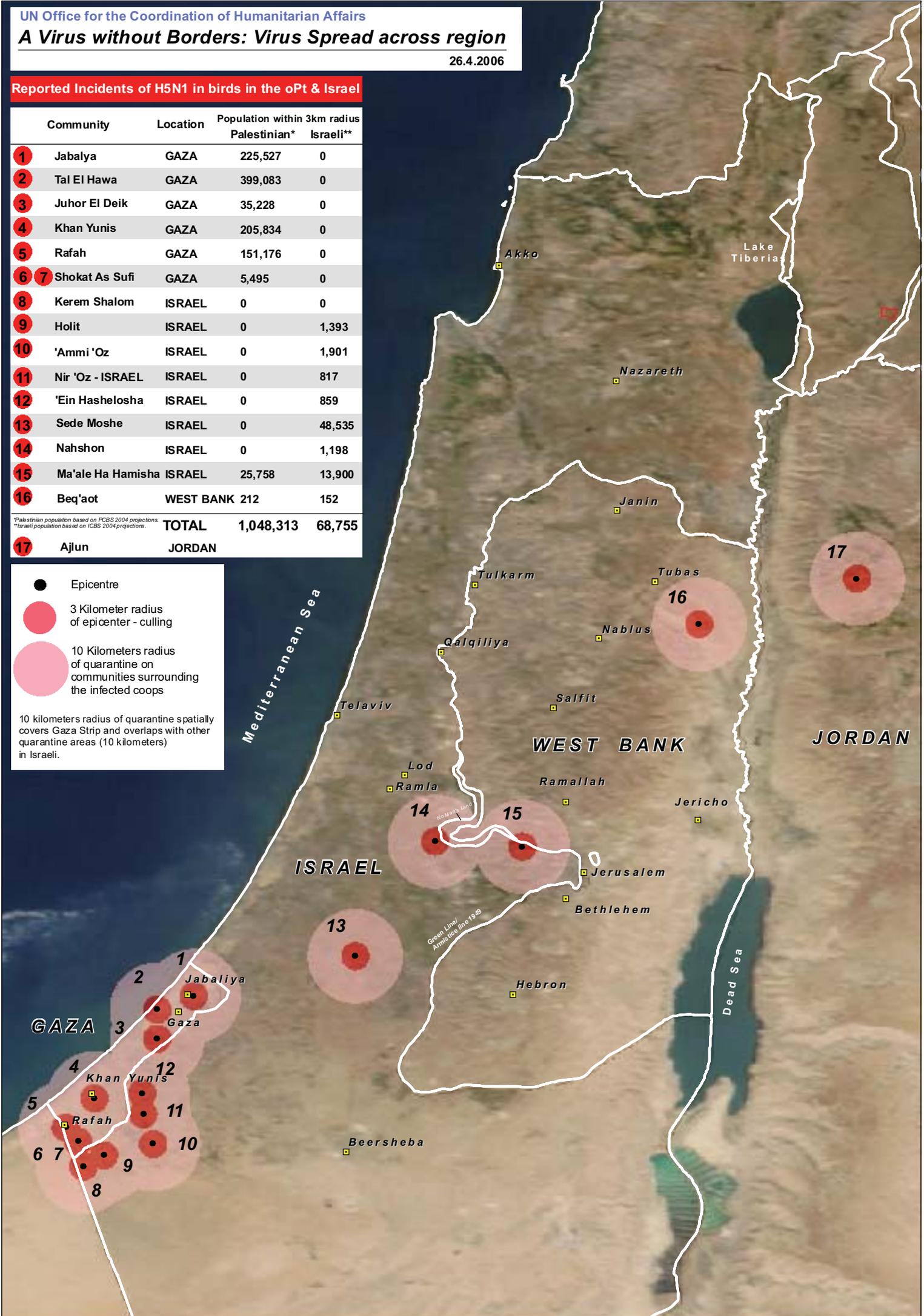
Reported Incidents of H5N1 in birds in the oPt & Israel

Community	Location	Population within 3km radius		
		Palestinian*	Israeli**	
1	Jabalya	GAZA	225,527	0
2	Tal El Hawa	GAZA	399,083	0
3	Juhor El Deik	GAZA	35,228	0
4	Khan Yunis	GAZA	205,834	0
5	Rafah	GAZA	151,176	0
6 7	Shokat As Sufi	GAZA	5,495	0
8	Kerem Shalom	ISRAEL	0	0
9	Holit	ISRAEL	0	1,393
10	'Ammi 'Oz	ISRAEL	0	1,901
11	Nir 'Oz - ISRAEL	ISRAEL	0	817
12	'Ein Hasheloshah	ISRAEL	0	859
13	Sede Moshe	ISRAEL	0	48,535
14	Nahshon	ISRAEL	0	1,198
15	Ma'ale Ha Hamisha	ISRAEL	25,758	13,900
16	Beq'aot	WEST BANK	212	152
17	Ajlun	JORDAN		
TOTAL			1,048,313	68,755

*Palestinian population based on PCBS 2004 projections.
 **Israeli population based on ICBS 2004 projections.

- Epicentre
- 3 Kilometer radius of epicentre - culling
- 10 Kilometers radius of quarantine on communities surrounding the infected coops

10 kilometers radius of quarantine spatially covers Gaza Strip and overlaps with other quarantine areas (10 kilometers) in Israeli.



II. Of note this month

Deteriorating situation in the Gaza Strip

The humanitarian and economic situation in the Gaza Strip deteriorated during March 2006. The closure of Karni crossing for prolonged periods led to shortages of essential food items including bread, dairy products and fruit. The closure paralysed the Gaza export market and hampered humanitarian agencies' activities. Erez crossing has been closed for Palestinian workers since 12 March. In addition, violence continued. IDF shelling and missile strikes (including targeted killings) killed 11 Palestinians (including six children) and injured sixteen others. Four Palestinians were killed and 40 others injured during one day as part of an internal armed dispute. See OCHA's *Gaza Strip Situation Reports 19 and 29 March 2006* and *Gaza Access Report March 2006* (www.ochaopt.org).

Tightening of closures in the northern West Bank and Jordan Valley

Increased numbers of physical obstacles blocking Palestinian movement and access were observed in the northern West Bank. The Al Badhan road - recently reopened for Palestinian vehicular movement to Nablus city - was closed by the IDF with three earth mounds. The numbers of IDF flying (random) checkpoints has increased with many checkpoints operating in the same location on a daily basis. Age and residence restrictions were imposed at checkpoints surrounding Nablus and at Za'atara checkpoint for travel south. As of 31 March, no Palestinian from the northern West Bank can travel south,

For one week, all checkpoints out of the Jordan Valley and Jericho were closed for Palestinians between the ages of 16 and 30. Only Jericho ID cardholders could enter Jericho - but not leave. Ambulances, health care workers, teachers and school children continue to be allowed to cross but faced delays and difficulties

particularly at Hamra and Tayasir checkpoint. Although age restrictions were lifted for entrance into Jericho, they remained in place in the north of the Jordan Valley.

Drought in southern Hebron

This year, rainfall is 50% of the yearly average in areas of Yatta, As Samu' and east of Bani Nai'im in southern Hebron. It remains well below average in the areas of Ar Ramadin and villages along the Green Line. This has led to a critical shortage of water and fodder for animals in Palestinian communities in these areas. In Masafer Yatta and Masafer Bani Nai'im, cisterns are at a maximum of 15% of their capacity. Some families have left the area in search of water and grazing land.

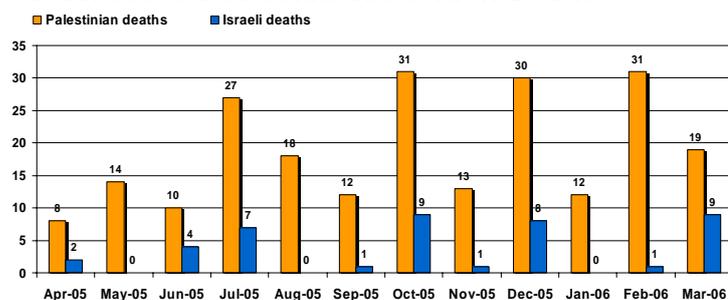
Construction of the West Bank Barrier around Jerusalem

Construction of an Israeli Border Police Station commenced in the planned E1 development. Barrier construction continued around Ma'ale Adumim settlement along a 3km stretch south of Ma'ale Adumim and Kedar settlements following large requisition orders in August 2005.

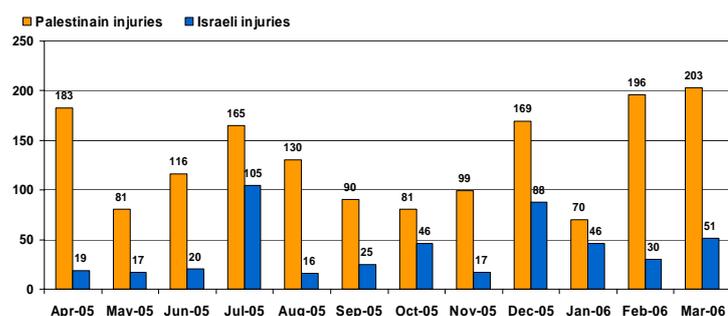
The vehicle lanes in the newly-renovated Qalandiya checkpoint were opened on 10 April 2006. A fence was installed between Ar Ram/Dahiyat al Bareed checkpoint and the Barrier to the north effectively blocking all Palestinian traffic into Jerusalem from these areas. It also prevents vehicles from accessing Atarot or Bet Hanina from the Ar Ram/Dahiyet al Bareed area. Palestinians from the Bir Nabala enclave can no longer directly access Jerusalem as all exit points from the enclave are blocked by Israeli checkpoints. Instead, enclave residents must take a 13-km detour north to the Qalandiya checkpoint and then return south towards Jerusalem, making the total journey length 24 km instead of 11.

III. Monitoring Issues¹⁰

Casualties: Palestinian and Israeli Deaths



Source: OCHA Weekly Briefing Notes



Source: OCHA Weekly Briefing Notes

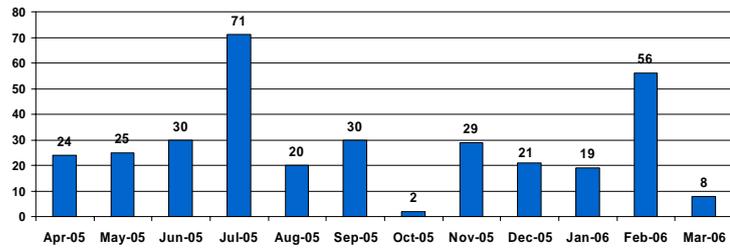
Casualties

Overall, the casualty figures for March 2006 are higher than in the previous month. Nineteen Palestinians were killed and 203 injured. Half of the Palestinian fatalities were children - six of the children were killed in the Gaza Strip during IAF air strikes (targeted killings), by an unexploded ordnance (UXO) in the northern Gaza Strip and near the border fence with Israel. The other two children, including a 12-year-old girl, were killed in the West Bank during IDF incursions.

Nine Israelis were killed and 51 others injured in the same period. Four of the Israeli deaths, including a child, occurred during a suicide bombing in an Israeli settlement in the West Bank.

Seven internationals were injured during Barrier demonstrations by IDF soldiers and Israeli Border Police and in the H2 area of Hebron city by Israeli settlers.

Structures Demolished

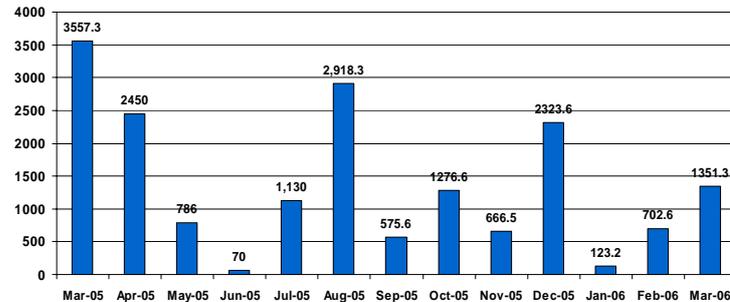


Source: OCHA Weekly Briefing Notes

Structures demolished

In March, eight Palestinian structures in the West Bank were demolished. Six were Palestinian homes and buildings demolished by Israeli authorities for reportedly being built without permits (in Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Qalqiliya governorates). The other two homes were demolished by the IDF during military operations in Jenin. At least 18 people were left homeless by the demolitions.

Land Requisition Orders (in dunums)



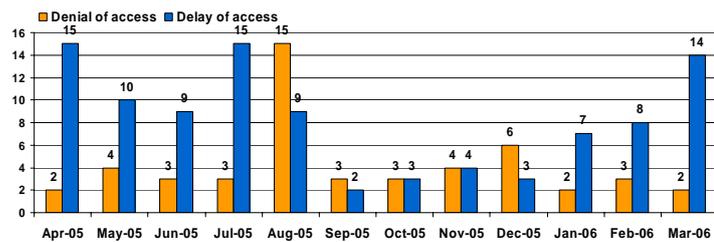
Source: OCHA Weekly Briefing Notes

Land requisitions/levelling

The IDF requisitioned 1,351.3 dunums (135 hectares) of Palestinian West Bank land in March. Large requisition orders were recorded in Jerusalem (Al Jib), Bethlehem (Al Walaja, Battir, Husan, Al Qabu and Wadi Fukin) and Hebron (Surif) for the construction of the Barrier. An amendment to a previous military order altered the route of the Barrier in Ramallah (around Ofarim and Beit Ayre settlements) resulting in 239 dunums (23.9 hectares) of Palestinian land originally west of the Barrier now remaining on the eastern side.

Land levelling continued for Barrier construction, the expansion of existing and the establishment of new IDF infrastructure (checkpoints and road barriers) and around Israeli settlements (fences and buffer zones), particularly in the southern West Bank.

Ambulance Incidents

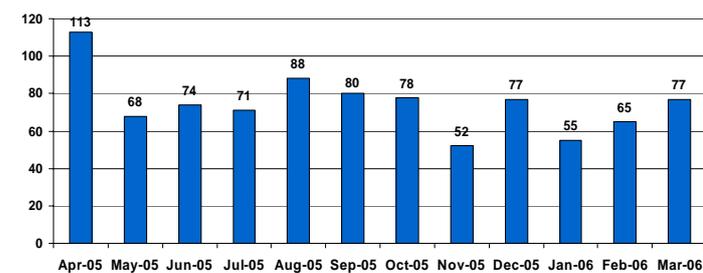


Source: PRCS

Ambulance incidents¹¹

Two denials and 14 delays of access (in excess of 30 minutes) were reported by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS) in the West Bank. The majority of the delays of access occurred at the Allenby Bridge border where crews reported delays of more than two hours. In one incident in Nablus city, PRCS ambulances came under IDF gunfire. This is the highest number of access incidents reported by PRCS since September 2005.

Humanitarian Access



Source: Access and Closure Information System (ACIS) and UNRWA monthly reports

Humanitarian access¹²

In March 2006, 78 access incidents were reported throughout the West Bank by international organisations. UNRWA filed 76 of the reports in which the delivery of aid and/or the movement of personnel were obstructed by the IDF or Israeli Border Police. Eighteen of the incidents filed by UNRWA occurred at the Jericho DCL checkpoint.

Since 23 February, UN national staff members have not been able to cross Erez.

Access for water transporters / tankers¹³

IDF closure measures and the Barrier in the West Bank continue to have a severe effect on water transport; closures can result in the inability of water tankers to reach their destination. According to a WaSH MP survey in 2005, 200 Palestinian communities are not connected to water networks and in 11 other communities over half of the households are not connected to a network.

Access for Palestinian workers and traders from the Gaza Strip¹⁴

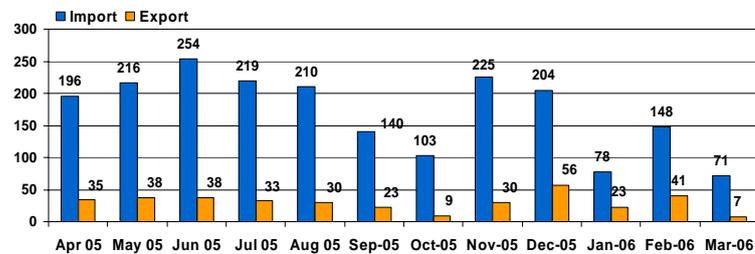
Erez crossing is the only access point for Gazan workers and traders with valid permits to enter Israel. According to the Palestinian Ministry of Labour, as of 12 March, 5,129 work permits were issued for Palestinians from the Gaza Strip to enter Israel daily and 510 permits for traders (as of 14 February).

Erez crossing has been closed since 12 March for all worker and traders. The crossing's closure coincided with the Jewish Purim holiday but remained in place throughout the rest of March. The closure of Erez crossing was part of a comprehensive closure of the oPt including in the West Bank. Approximately one third of the workers went through the crossing compared the previous month.¹⁵

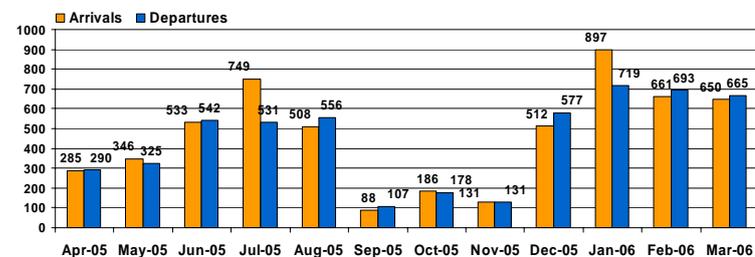
Erez Crossing: average daily labour movement

	Apr 05	May 05	Jun 05	Jul 05	Aug 05	Sep 05	Oct 05	Nov 05	Dec 05	Jan 06	Feb 06	Mar 06
Workers to Israel	3,200	2,067	3,588	1,767	281	137	0	1,200	1,502	891	3,698	1,161
Traders to Israel	224	103	362	175	168	120	0	104	73	42	155	56

Source: Palestinian National Security Forces

Karni Crossing: average daily truckloads (imports and exports)

Source: Palestinian Ministry of National Economy

Rafah Passenger Crossing: average daily arrivals and departures

Source: Palestinian Passport and Border Police

Access for Gazan trade movement through Karni crossing¹⁶

Karni crossing - the principle point for transporting goods to / from the Gaza Strip - was closed between from 22 February – 8 March. Since 9 March Karni crossing has opened sporadically and for imported goods only. The recurrent closure of the crossing is reflected in low average daily number of truckloads of imported and exported goods.¹⁷ For more information on the closure of Karni and its associated economic and humanitarian impacts see OCHA's *Gaza Strip Situation Reports 19 and 29 March 2006* and *Gaza Access Report March 2006* (www.ochaopt.org).

Palestinians' access internationally from the Gaza Strip

Rafah passenger crossing on the Egyptian border is the access point for Gazans travelling overseas. Since 18 December, Rafah has operated daily from 8am to 4pm. The opening times have been further extended in March from 8am to 7pm. The average daily number of people crossing in March is comparable to the previous month and is higher than prior to the November 2005 Access and Movement Agreement. 2005.

Access for Gaza fisher folk¹⁸

Since January 2005, the Israeli authorities have restricted Palestinian fishing up to ten nautical miles from the Gaza Strip coastline compared to six nautical miles previously (under the Oslo Accords, Gaza Strip fisherman are entitled to fish 20 nautical miles from the coast). Palestinian fishing is prohibited one nautical mile north of the border with Egypt and one and half nautical miles south of the border with Israel.

IV. New humanitarian reports

OCHA Barrier Update No. 6: Crossing the Barrier – Palestinian Access to Agricultural Land. OCHA's sixth report in the Barrier Update series co-authored with UNRWA focuses on Palestinian access to agricultural land in areas west of the Barrier. The study finds that Palestinians living east of the Barrier are facing increased difficulties accessing their farm land in the closed areas because of the permit regime to access the closed areas imposed by the IDF and the erratic and unreliable operation of the Barrier gates. This reality challenges statements made by the Gol that Palestinians would be able to access and use land in the closed areas with "minimal interference". The UN fears that Palestinian farmers maybe at risk of dispossession from their land in the closed areas because of these difficulties in accessing their land. See [<http://www.ochaopt.org>].

WFP Gaza Strip Market Monitoring report (No. 5). The World Food Program released its fifth market monitoring report which looked at the impact of avian influenza on the price of meat and the related critical situation of the fishing industry in the Gaza Strip. Beef and lamb are not an affordable alternative source of animal protein to many Gazans. IDF restrictions on access to the sea, over-fishing in shallow areas and pollution have depleted fishing stocks and

increased prices, particularly of sardines, the only fish affordable to Gaza's poor.

UNEP Environmental Assessment of Areas Disengaged by Israel in the Gaza Strip. The United Nations Environmental Programme released the results of their study assessing the environmental impact of Israeli disengagement from the Gaza Strip. The environmental impact of the former Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip was limited and should not constrain Palestinian land-use plans, according to the assessment. See [<http://www.unep.org>].

PCBS reports and press releases. During March 2005, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) released a number of statistical reports relating to the humanitarian and socio-economic situation in the oPt:

- **Impact of Israeli measures on the economic conditions of Palestinian households (October – December 2005):** Median monthly income in the oPt has decreased from NIS 2,600 prior to the second *intifada* to 1,600 during 4th Quarter 2005 and 60% of households indicated that their income has decreased since 2000. The main coping mechanisms include delays in paying bills or reducing expenditure on basic needs. A stated 27% of households receive humanitarian assistance during 4th Quarter 2005 while 67% report that they need assistance - 72% in the

Gaza Strip and 65% in the West Bank. Food continues to be the priority need of Palestinian households.

- **Impact of the Barrier on the socioeconomic conditions of Palestinian households (August 2005):** PCBS surveyed Palestinian communities impacted by the Barrier in the West Bank. The findings revealed that 42% of households in areas affected directly by the Barrier have had their lands confiscated. The Barrier is also impacting Palestinians access to health and education services, relatives and agricultural livelihoods.
- **Survey on the perception of Palestinian population towards socioeconomic conditions (January 2006):** The survey found that 33% of Palestinians interviewed reported that the overall wellbeing of their households is worse than one month ago with

Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip reporting similar perceptions. 45% of respondents believe that their overall wellbeing will be better in six months with Palestinians in the Gaza Strip demonstrating greater optimism than in the West Bank.

- **Palestinian Consumer Price Index (February 2006):** The consumer price index (CPI) decreased by 0.9% compared to January 2005 when there had been a 1.5% increase. For more information on all reports and press releases see [<http://www.pcbs.gov.ps>].

¹ A total of 314,000 birds were found to be infected in southern areas of Israel. Culling has taken place in 14 communities and 1.2 million birds were destroyed. The outbreak was thought to be contained but two new cases have been recently confirmed in Israel including near Jerusalem.

² Egyptian authorities had earlier confirmed H5N1 outbreak in poultry.

³ WHO Press Release, 25 March 2006.

⁴ PCBS, Impact of the Israeli Measures on the Economic conditions of Palestinian households-various surveys, Q4 2005.

⁵ PCBS Labour Force Surveys unpublished data.

⁶ PCBS, Agricultural Statistics, 2003/2004.

⁷ Palestinian Cabinet Committee to combat the Avian Influenza threat.

⁸ The H5N1 strain has also been detected in wild birds in these regions.

⁹ The first outbreak of H5N1 in poultry was detected in Hong Kong in 1997. Eighteen human cases are reported in Hong Kong, six of them fatal. A second wave of H5N1 began in mid 2003.

¹⁰ OCHA monitors a number of indicators related to the protection of civilians in our Weekly Briefing Notes. OCHA is also tasked with monitoring the specific commitments given by the Government of Israel (GoI) to Ms Caroline Bertini in August 2002 in her capacity as Personal Humanitarian Envoy of the UN Secretary-General. Ms Bertini's mission was in response to the deteriorating humanitarian situation and was to assess the nature and scale of the humanitarian needs and to clarify the respective responsibilities of those actors involved. The GoI made and/or confirmed a number of humanitarian commitments to Ms Bertini during her mission. Since this time OCHA has produced monthly reports monitoring the GoI's actions in relation these commitments. The monitoring of the Bertini Commitments is now included in the Monitoring Section of the Humanitarian Update.

¹¹ GoI Bertini Commitment (2002): (1) Palestinian ambulances will wait no more than 30 minutes at any checkpoints; and (2) Effective mechanisms will be put in place to ensure that Palestinians seeking critical medical services (child delivery, dialysis, chemotherapy etc) can quickly pass all checkpoints.

¹² GoI Bertini Commitment (2002) - Facilitation of International Organisations: (1) Israel will fully facilitate the assistance activities of international organisations with particular reference to UNRWA; (2) Israel agrees to review and strengthen the liaison arrangements between international agencies and the IDF to facilitate assistance activities; and (3) Israel will improve the situation at checkpoints, including the deployment of more experienced IDF personnel.

¹³ GoI Bertini Commitment (2002): Problems related to water deliveries to Palestinian towns and villages will be addressed to ensure that daily water deliveries in proper quantities can be supplied by Palestinian water tankers.

¹⁴ GoI Bertini Commitment (2002) (confirmed during the Bertini mission): Increase in the number of work permits for Palestinian workers in Israel from the Gaza Strip.

¹⁵ The average daily Palestinian labour movement through Erez crossing is calculated for weekdays i.e. excluding Fridays and Saturdays.

¹⁶ GoI (2002) (confirmed during the Bertini mission): Increase in the shipments at Karni crossing in the Gaza Strip.

¹⁷ The average daily number of truckloads of import/exported goods through Karni crossing is calculated excluding Saturdays.

¹⁸ GoI Bertini Commitment (2002) (confirmed during the Bertini mission): The fishing zone for Palestinian fishing boats of the Gaza Strip will be extended to 12 nautical miles.