

The Impact of the Barrier



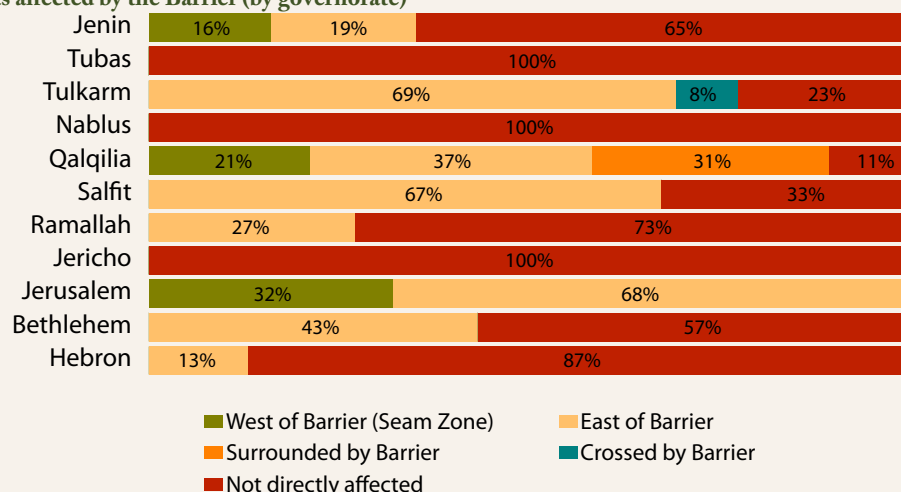
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This report includes a special focus on the Separation Barrier. The Barrier's planned length is 670 kilometres, 54% of which (362 km) was complete and operational at the time of the survey. This briefing note will focus on the impact of the Separation Barrier on the lives and livelihoods of Palestinian households in the West Bank.

1.1 The distribution of Barrier affected households in the sample

Over a quarter of the Palestinian households in the West Bank reside in communities directly affected by the Separation Barrier, meaning households from communities that are in close proximity to the Separation Barrier and where systematic destruction, separation from or requisition of the community assets is recorded. Of those affected households, 75% are east of the Barrier, 19% are in the Seam Zone.¹ Four and a half percent live in communities surrounded by the Barrier and less than 2% live in communities that are crossed by it. In terms of geographic distribution, 39% of the affected households are in the northern West Bank, 46% are in the middle area and 15% are in the southern West Bank. The chart below provides the distribution of affected households by governorate according to the sample interviewed in the current survey.

Figure 1: Areas affected by the Barrier (by governorate)



While none of the households in Nablus and Jericho governorates are directly affected,² households from the rest of the 11 governorates of the West Bank were affected directly by either being located in the Seam Zone directly east of the Barrier, or living in a community that is surrounded or crossed by the Barrier. Aside from Nablus and Jericho, the governorate that is the least proportionally affected is Hebron, with 87% of its households not directly affected. In our sample, Tulkarm is the only governorate that includes communities that are crossed by the Barrier.

Jenin, Qalqilia and Jerusalem³ governorates include households that are located within the Seam Zone. With the average ratio of Palestinian West Bank households located in this zone at 19%, the ratio in Jenin governorate falls 3% below the average, whereas in Qalqilia governorate the ratio is 3% above and, finally, Jerusalem governorate, which recorded 32%, is above the average.

¹ The term *Seam Zone* is used in this report to define the area of land located between the Separation Barrier and the 1949 armistice line – popularly known as the Green Line.

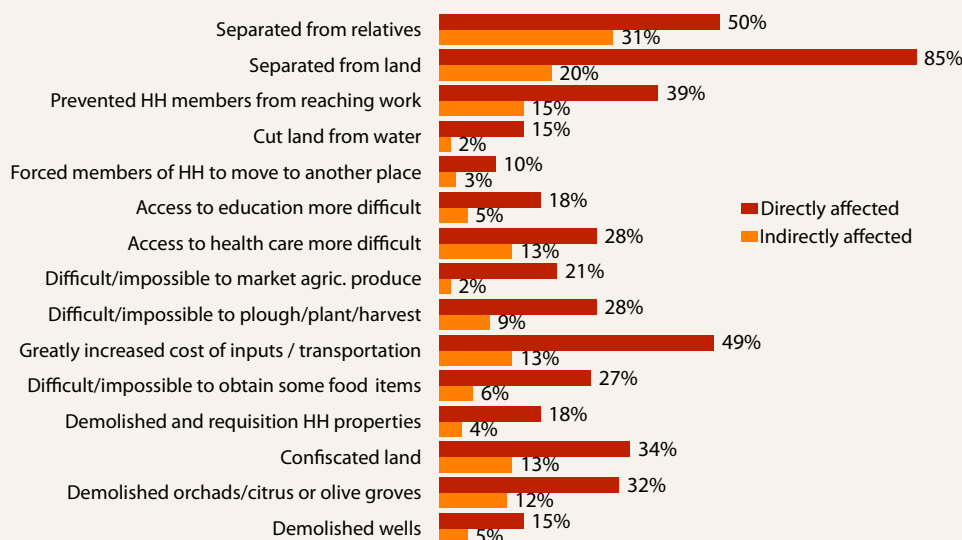
² References to communities that are not affected refer to those communities that are not in close proximity to the Separation Barrier and where no systematic destruction, separation from or requisition of the community assets is recorded.

³ It must be noted that the classification of communities as located in the Seam Zone includes communities located in East Jerusalem.

1.2 The effects of the Separation Barrier

A battery of questions was asked in the survey aimed at gauging the effects of the Separation Barrier on different facets of the lives and livelihoods of Palestinian households in the West Bank. As mentioned above, over a quarter of the Palestinian households in the West Bank reside in communities directly affected by the Separation Barrier; however, this survey reveals that 54% of Palestinian households in the West Bank report being indirectly affected by Barrier. The figure below provides insight on how the Barrier affects these households.

Figure 2: Effects of the Separation Barrier on households (directly vs. indirectly affected)



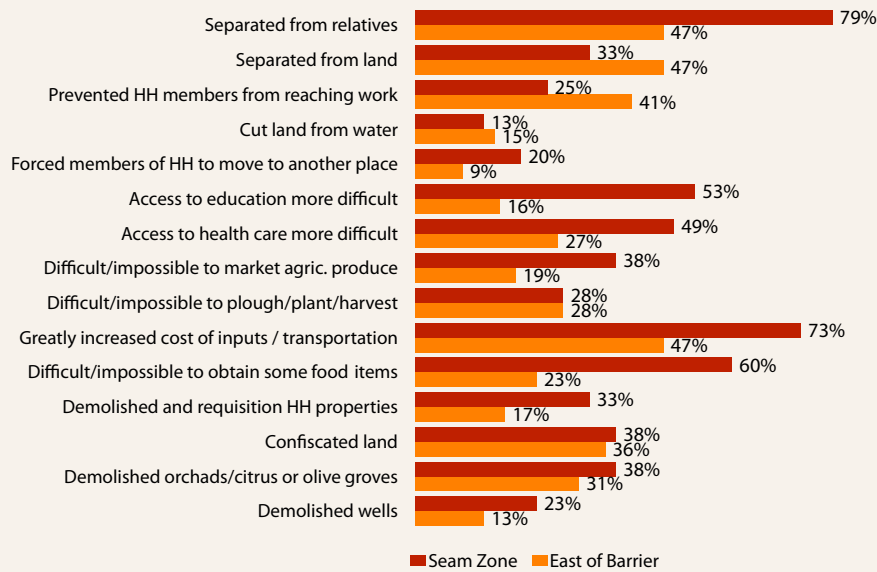
The Separation Barrier has both general effects on the population of the West Bank and more specific effects on communities that are directly affected. It is obvious that greater proportions of households from communities directly affected by the Barrier report negative impacts from the Barrier when compared to households from communities not directly affected by it.

The three most frequently mentioned negative impacts of the Barrier by households located in communities directly affected are: separation from their land (85%), separation from their relatives (50%) and the increase in the cost of inputs and transportation (49%). In contrast, the three most frequently mentioned negative impacts of the Barrier by households from the remainder of the West Bank communities are: separation from relatives (31%), separation from land (20%) and the prevention of household members from accessing work (15%).

These figures and the other proportions listed in the figure above point to a qualitative difference in the way in which the Barrier impacts Palestinian households – a difference that depended on whether the Barrier directly affects the communities where they are located or not. For those located in communities directly affected by the Barrier, the negative impacts pervade all aspects of their lives, ranging from being cut off from their relatives as well as educational and medical services to being prevented from reaching their workplace or, for some family members, to having to relocate through to being practically hampered all facets of agricultural activity. Indeed, it is the impact of the Separation Barrier on agricultural activity that sets apart those that are directly affected from the Barrier from those that are indirectly affected – of whom very few have mentioned their land being cut from its water sources, demolition of wells or difficulty in marketing their agricultural produce.

It is possible to delineate the difference in impact of the Barrier on households located within the Seam Zone from households in communities directly east of the Barrier. Figure 3 below highlights these differences.

Figure 3: Effects of the Separation Barrier on directly affected households (Seam Zone vs. East of Barrier)



On the one hand, when compared to households located within the Seam Zone, higher percentages of households in communities directly east of the Barrier report being separated from their land, prevented from reaching work and their land being cut from its water source. On the other hand, for households located in the Seam Zone the Barrier has a more negative effect on all aspects of their lives. The greatest differences are seen in the ability to obtain certain food items and access to educational services (a 37% difference), followed by separation from relatives (a 32% difference), increases in the costs of necessary inputs and transportation (a 26% difference) and access to health services (a 22% difference). Finally, attention must be directed to the fact that 20% of the respondents from the Seam Zone report household members being forced to move to other places. This finding is in line with the findings of an earlier report (September 2006) on forced migration as a result of the Separation Barrier which asserts that “the Wall and its regime generate forced displacement in East Jerusalem”.⁴

⁴ *Displaced by the Wall: Forced Displacement as a Result of the West Bank Wall and its Associated Regime*, Badil Resource Center and the Norwegian Refugee Council, September 2006.

1.3 Poverty and the Separation Barrier

In the chapter on socio-economic conditions of the PPP report (chapter 2), it is reported that, when examining the overall picture, the Separation Barrier has little influence on poverty levels. However, a comparison between poverty levels of households within the Seam Zone and poverty levels of households located directly east of the Barrier (as opposed to affected vs. not affected categories in chapter 2) reveals a different picture.

The proportion of households living above the poverty line is significantly higher in the Seam Zone (81%) than in the area directly east of the Barrier (34%).

Due to the classification of areas within East Jerusalem as being within the Seam Zone, this ratio might be exaggerated due to the relatively better access for residents of East Jerusalem to the Israeli labour market and Israeli social services. However, even when excluding East Jerusalem households, the differences in poverty levels remain large and significant: the proportion of the remaining Seam Zone households living above the poverty line is 49%, which is 15% higher than that for households located directly east of the Barrier and the West Bank average (34% above the poverty line) and also 19% above the national average (30%). These trends partially confirm the conclusions of a previous UNSCO report (2005) which claimed that “the Barrier has had a negative economic impact on all communities near it, particularly those to the east of it”.⁵ The main difference is that, even excluding East Jerusalem figures, the percentage of poor households in Seam Zone communities is even lower than the total West Bank average.

⁵ *Economic Fragmentation and Adaptation in the Rural West Bank*, UNSCO, October 2005.

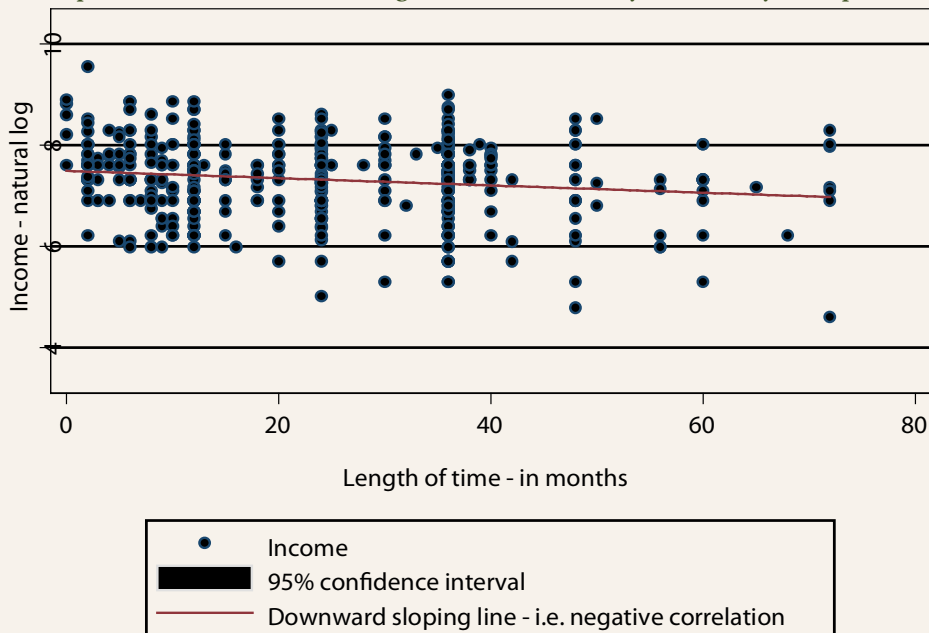
1.4 Income levels and the Separation Barrier

Differences in median household income levels are to be seen across communities affected by the Separation Barrier. For households located within the Seam Zone (including East Jerusalem), the median per capita income is NIS 1332 (about USD 280) per month, nearly three times the median per capita income for those located east of the Barrier (NIS 449 (approx. USD 94) per month. The median monthly per capita income in an average West Bank household is NIS 453 (approx. USD 95) per month. As is the case in the poverty analysis above, the classification of East Jerusalem communities as being located in the Seam Zone accounts for most of the vast difference in the median income levels. Excluding East Jerusalem localities from the comparison leads to a more realistic comparison, whereby the median monthly per capita income for all other localities within the Seam Zone is NIS 484 (approx. USD 102), i.e., NIS 31 (approx. USD 7) per capita per month above income levels for communities directly east of the Barrier.

The poverty rates mentioned above (51% poor in the Seam Zone vs. 76% poor in east of Barrier communities) and the relatively small difference in income levels (NIS 31 per capita per month off the median) invites the conclusion that while households located directly east of the Barrier have less income and greater proportions of them are living in poverty, many households located within the Seam Zone (excluding East Jerusalem) are living literally “on the edge” of poverty and are thus highly vulnerable.

As the Separation Barrier encroaches on more communities located along its path, it is expected that its impact will be felt directly in all aspects of life. As respondents from Barrier-affected areas report, the standard of living declines as households become cut off from their relatives, work and land, and as accessible educational and health services⁶ become sparser. However, the hardship created by the Barrier extends beyond the initial shock and it continues to have a negative impact on standards of living over time.

Figure 4: Relationship between income levels and length of time a community is affected by the Separation Barrier



Indeed, there is a statistically significant negative correlation between income levels and the length of time communities have been affected by the Separation Barrier. The longer a community has been affected by the Separation Barrier, the lower the income levels.

⁶ The most commonly mentioned reason for not receiving needed health services is military barriers, including the Barrier. For further reading on the effect of the Separation Barrier on access to health services, please refer to chapter 5 of the PPP 10 report.

1.5 Employment and the Separation Barrier

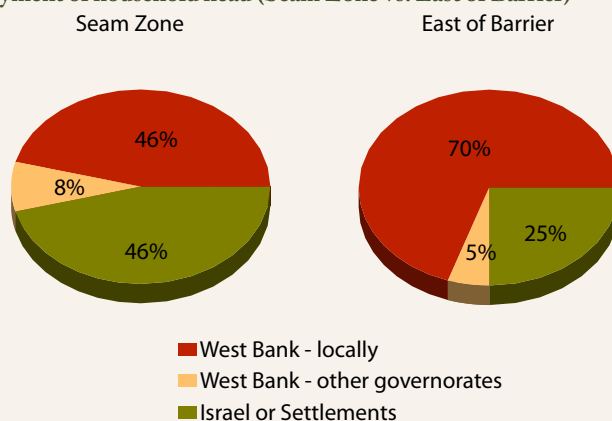
The comparison between the number of respondents in the Seam Zone who are unemployed and those from communities directly east of the Barrier reveals a statistically significant difference, whereby respondents from the Seam Zone (including East Jerusalem) have lower unemployment rates than those from communities east of the Barrier (88% vs. 67%, respectively). Conducting the same comparison for all Seam Zone communities except East Jerusalem reveals a smaller difference in employment levels: the ratio of unemployed respondents located east of the Barrier remains at 67% compared to 71% of the respondents located in the Seam Zone (excluding East Jerusalem⁷). It must be noted, however, that the remaining difference is only marginal and is statistically insignificant.

A consideration of the employment status of the household head and how it differs between Seam Zone and east of Barrier communities adds very little to the above comparisons. It must be noted, though, that in East Jerusalem, 100% of the household heads are reported to be either fully or partially employed. Moreover, the ratio of unemployed household heads from Seam Zone communities is also marginally higher (less than 3%) and is not statistically significant.

The marginal differences in employment levels and the statistical insignificance of the cross-tabulations serve to highlight that employment levels cannot account for the differences in poverty and income levels observed between communities located in the Seam Zone and those located east of the Barrier.

In the section on Poverty and the Separation Barrier, it is suggested that easier access to the Israeli labour market for Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem may possibly explain the lower ratios of households living in poverty. The location of employment is significantly different for communities within the Seam Zone than for those located east of the Barrier. While the ratio of employed respondents from the Seam Zone who work in Israel proper is 28% (excluding East Jerusalem it is 29%), the ratio of employed respondents from communities east of the Barrier who work in Israel proper is 22%. This indicates that for those living within the Seam Zone, employment in Israel proper is more accessible than for respondents located east of the Barrier. Moreover, 74% of the employed respondents from East Jerusalem work within the same city and 70% of the employed respondents from communities directly east of the Barrier work within the remaining West Bank.

Figure 5: Location of employment of household head (Seam Zone vs. East of Barrier)



Note: The Seam Zone figures exclude responses from East Jerusalem residents

⁷ Caution must be advised with this particular statistic, since the number of cases which fit the criteria of living in the Seam Zone aside from East Jerusalem and are in the labour force add up to no more than 17 cases. This is below what is considered as a minimum number of cases for a robust cross-tabulation and is reported here only as a gross and imperfect indicator.

The previous figure details the location of employment of the household head for households both within the Seam Zone and for those from locations east of the Barrier. The difference in employment locally within the West Bank (i.e., within the same community or governorate) is significantly lower for Seam Zone heads of households (46%) than for those from locations east of the Barrier (70%). Conversely, the proportion of household heads from the Seam Zone who work in Israel proper or a settlement is significantly higher (46%) than for household heads from communities east of the Barrier (25%). These figures help explain the fact that greater proportions of households located east of the Barrier are living in poverty when compared to households located in the Seam Zone. Although rates of unemployment are comparable between the communities from the two areas, it is the greater ability of those living within the Seam zone to access employment in Israel - where wages are higher - that explains their better (albeit slightly) socio-economic status.