



School Report: August –
December 2019
Christian Peacemaker Teams

“ Education must be free of discrimination and exclusion’ is the cornerstone of the right to education. The [Education 2030 Agenda](#) reiterates the importance of ensuring access to and completion of quality education for all children and youth and promoting lifelong opportunities for all. To fulfil the right to education, countries must ensure universal and equal access to equitable quality education and learning, which should be [free and compulsory](#)” UNSCO (The Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process)

This statement by UNSCO echoes the Declaration of Human Rights and Children rights considering safety and equality access to education essential for social development.

Moreover, according to the Geneva convention any military occupying power must ensure the protection of the safe civilian access to education:

“The Occupying Power shall, with the cooperation of the national and local authorities, facilitate the proper working of all institutions devoted to the care and education of children.” and:

“The Occupying Power shall take all necessary steps to facilitate the identification of children and the registration of their parentage. It may not, in any case, change their personal status, nor enlist them in formations or organizations”

However, despite these articles stressing the right to education, today the military occupation still prevents Palestinian students from having safe access to education.

Because of the value that Palestinians place on education, along with the human right of access to education, [CPT Palestine](#) has an ongoing commitment to accompany students and teachers and document the human rights violations they face. Constant Israeli military patrols, checkpoints, and settlers in the Old City result in daily human rights violations. Members of CPT live in the community of al-Khalil (Hebron) to document these violations, standing in solidarity with Palestinian efforts to resist the occupation and claim their rights, dignity, and freedom.

Incidents during school time

Child Arrest



In this reporting period August-December 2019 CPT documented two arrests at Qitoun Checkpoint which is an entry point for different schools mainly Al Ibrahimiyeh School and Al Fayhaa.

30 September 2019

The morning of September 30th, 2019 a 16 year old Palestinian boy was arrested on his way to school, accused that he had a knife and was taken to the police station

8 December 2019

A 17 years old girl was accused of having a kitchen knife in her bag, Soldiers asked her to get down on the ground, after 25 minutes, they took her to the police station.

Detention

8 September 2019

14- 15 year old school girl was detained for ten minutes at Salaymeh Checkpoint for she did the victory sign and was verbally harrassed.

Controlling and use of force



One of the school principals said to the soldiers: *““You shouldn’t stand here, it’s provocative for the kids.” the soldier responded: “I’m here to shoot tear gas canisters’” Their commander asked one of them to shoot the canister, (which he did), so he then raised his gun as if a victory”*

Being a teacher and student in the Old City of Hebron it means that the road to education is not safe and is controlled by Israeli Border police.

During this semester CPT monitored Israeli border police using teargas, stun grenade, and closing the checkpoint.

Teargas and stun grenades

Despite the fact that the Israeli military manual 2006 noted that even the tear gas used by the police to disperse demonstrations is a chemical weapon and thus prohibited under the Israeli military protocol. This results in the absurd situation in which demonstrators are “endangered” by tear gas whereas military personnel going into combat are protected from it”

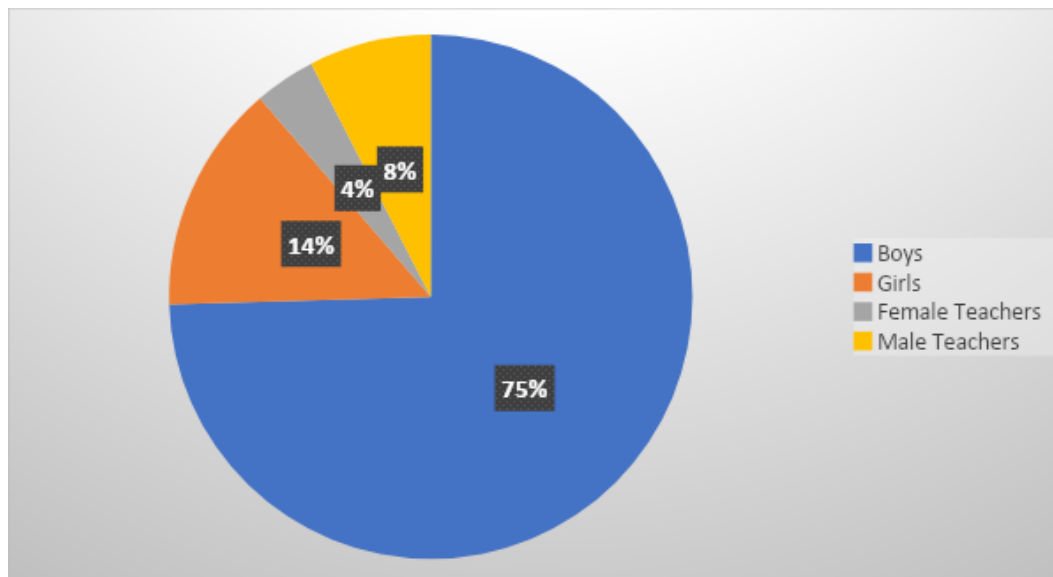
The month of November at Qitoun Checkpoint recorded the highest use of teargas canisters, 24 teargas canisters were used at the checkpoint where in average 94 students (boys and girls) pass through it. ([Watch Video](#))

In the same month at Salaymeh Checkpoint 17 girls and 28 boys were stopped by Israeli Border police while going to school.

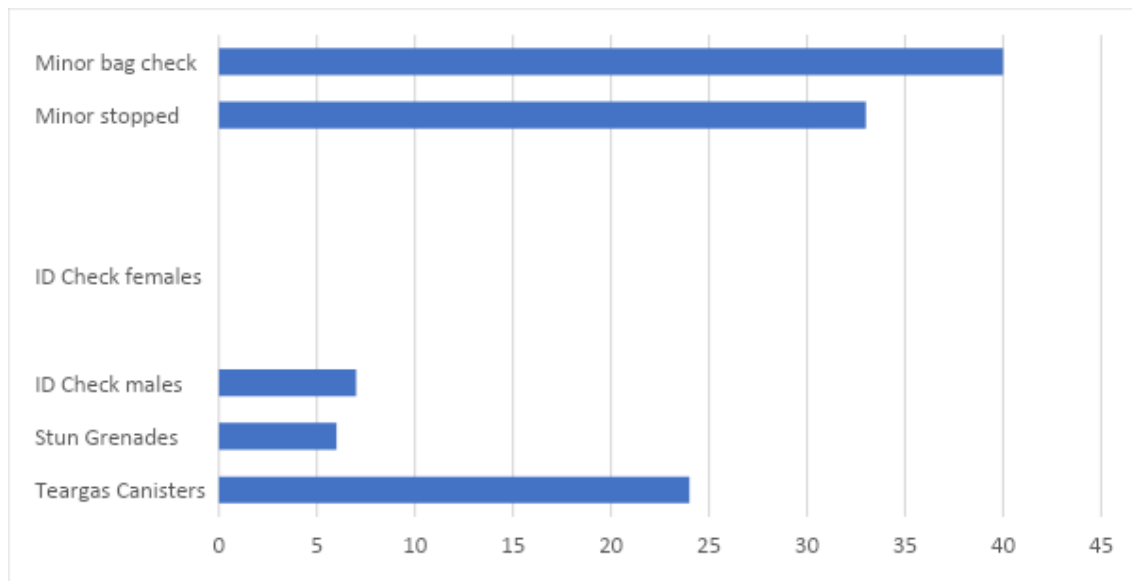
As for Salaymeh Checkpoint the highest number of using tear gas was September 24 teargas canisters were used.

In both checkpoints Qitoun and Salaymeh around 24 times the checkpoints were closed, or the access of teachers and students were delayed for no reason.

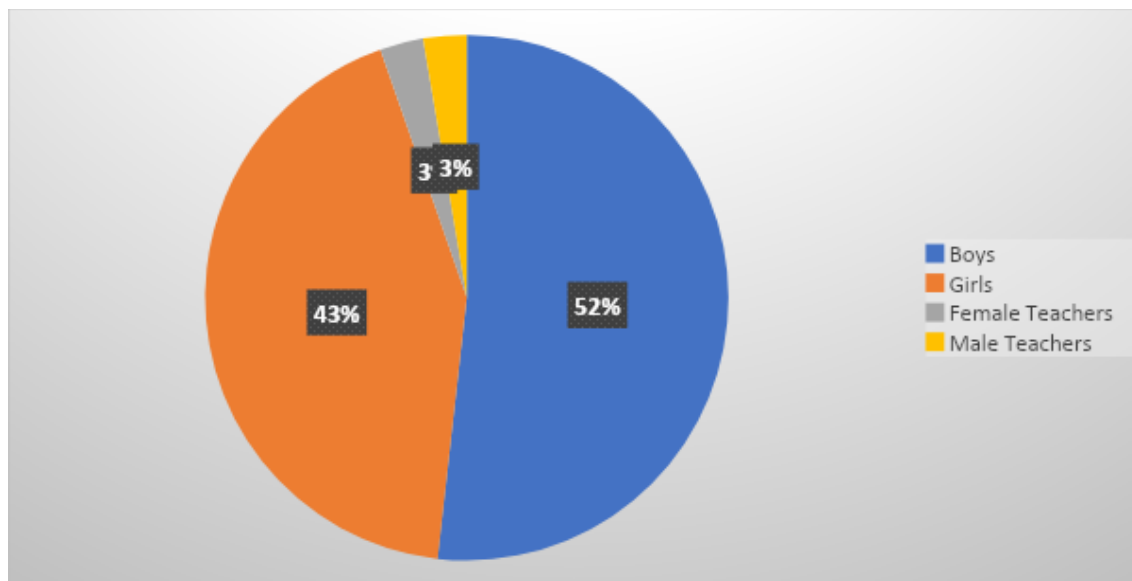
Qitoun in Numbers:



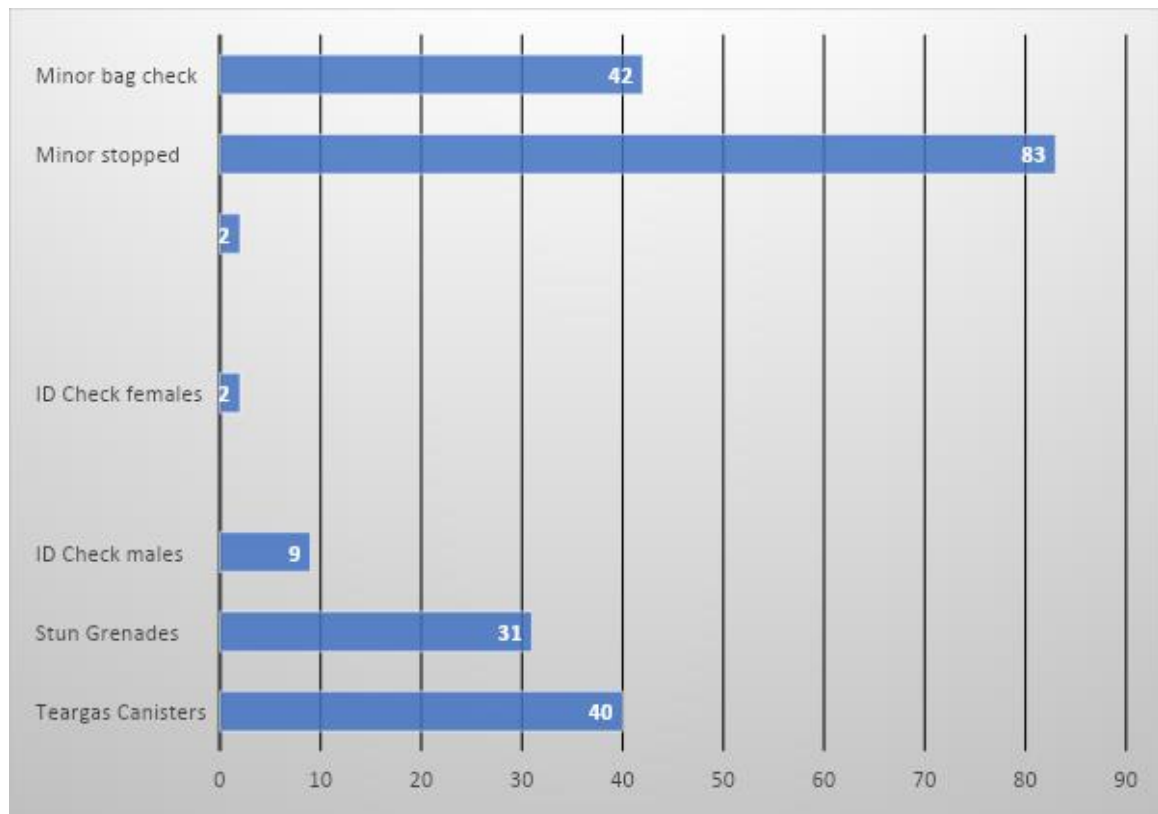
Controlling and use of Force at Qitoun Checkpoint :



Salaymeh in numbers:



Controlling and use of Force at Salaymeh Checkpoint :



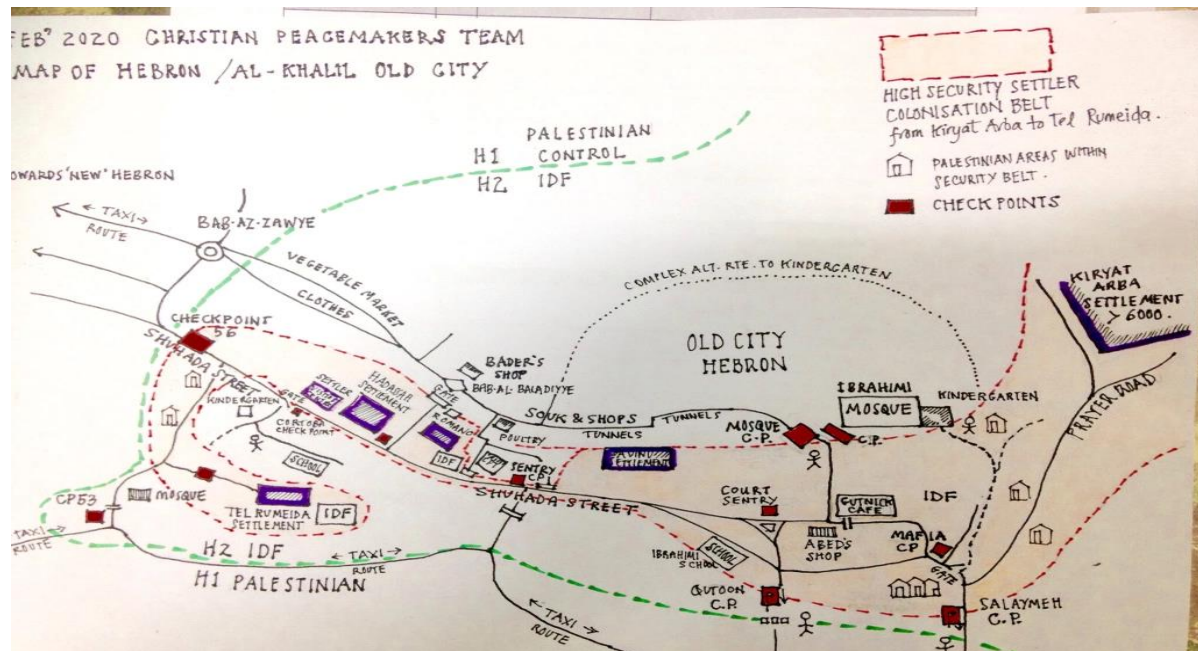
One of the boys that was stopped tell CPT

“Soldiers were emptying our bags and searched them and questioned us where we were going”

And this is one of many other mornings that children are questioned where are they going by Israeli military, and this is one of the reasons why either children go to different schools and new environment that may cause stress, or the drop out of school as they try to find a safer place.

The schools during settlers events

During the Jewish Holidays, and some other events, the Israeli military closes the mosque and the checkpoints which are the main routes that connect the Old City of Hebron H2 to H1 area (see map).¹



To give you a better grasp of what's happening here: children who live inside the Souk area, outside of the settler's High Security Zone (H2HSZ) (*shaded in orange in the map above*), have to go through at least one checkpoint in order to get to their schools that are inside of, or the opposite side of, the restricted area, H2HSZ. If the checkpoints are closed the *only* way to school is via a long circuitous ride, around the outside of the HSZ. in a taxi. One pupil, 15 years old Osama told us:

“When they close the mosque checkpoint, I must get a taxi that will take much more time and money to get to the school. Sometimes we don't know that Israel is going to close the checkpoint so I have to skip school these days”

On **October 6, 2019**, there was more than 20% absence among the children at Al Ibrahimiye school (a school in H2HSZ, accessed from the mosque checkpoint) due to the mosque checkpoint closure. Some classes did not happen that day because some teachers were not able to make it to the school.

¹ Following the 1994 massacre of over 30 Muslims by an Israeli settler in Al Ibrahimi mosque a Hebron Protocol was agreed which divided Hebron into areas H2, under Israeli military control and law, and H1 under, in theory, Palestinian jurisdiction. Sadly, since then this protocol has been abused by Israel as it has closed off Shuhada Street and built many fortified checkpoints to enclose a High Security Zone, within H2, seriously damaging the economic sustainability, and quality of life, for Palestinians living in the Old City.

At times, for no apparent reason, the soldiers insist on searching *everyone* going through the checkpoint. For example, on **19 November**, 2019, during the preparation for Sarah's Day (a Jewish religious holiday in which over 40,000 Jews invade Hebron), there were long delays at Qitoun checkpoint. There were delays of well over a minute between each opening of the gate of the turnstile, and often longer, each student was checked individually. One pupil, 10 years old Yazan said:

“Soldiers were emptying our bags and searched them and questioned us where we were going”

The school principal told us: *“More than 10 students had to skip the first class due to over 20 minutes delays at the checkpoint”*

These barriers, or checkpoints can also be closed, barring access to schools, on other occasions as well. For example, very recently, because of electioneering by Netanyahu, the right wing Israeli PM, on the 4th September, at the local illegal settlement-colony of Kiryat Arba, the Israeli military closed the checkpoints and only allowed access to the schools inside the H2 between 8 and 10 am. Which meant that the children could only attend two out of the usual 7 lessons that day.



Settlers Cars closing the entry of Al Ibrahimiya School during Sukkot

The Israeli State, and its occupying forces, claim these collective punishments, and infringements of freedom of movement, are for ‘security reasons’. In fact, a) because of illegal settlement-colonization, it is Israel that has caused its own security issues ; and b) in any case, these ‘security’ processes are part of a

wider system to discourage children accessing their education. This is part of a long term strategy to drive Palestinians away so that Israel's settler colonial expansion can continue.

Checkpoint closure and delays:



Israeli soldiers are deliberately closing checkpoints and intentionally preventing children from passing through to get to school. On October 10 2019, there was a bike accident involving settlers only on the other (H2 High-Security Zone) side of the Salaymeh checkpoint. There was **no** Palestinian involved, however, despite this, the checkpoint was still closed for 10 minutes making twelve Palestinian students late for the start of school. One of the Palestinian school teachers commented on the impact this has on the childrens motivation to go to school:

“It’s such a distraction for starting the day. That’s the reason why so many kids feel discouraged to go to the school”

In addition, on September 17, 2019, the same checkpoint was closed by the Israeli military for no obvious reasons. Even though there was no stone throwing, a group of heavily armed soldiers went outside Salaymeh checkpoint, from the H2 High Security zone into the Palestinian neighbourhood and, with

no provocation, fired teargas canisters down the street towards the school. One of the children, a 12 yr old boy told us:

“We are standing here for 20 minutes now, the soldiers didn’t allow any of us to go through, and they didn’t tell us why!”

The Israeli military uses the collective punishment on Palestinian students.

State practice establishes this rule, the prohibition of collective punishment of civilians, as a norm of international law applicable in both international and non-international armed conflicts. This prohibition is on the grounds (rule 102) that *no-one* may be convicted of an offence except on the basis of *individual* criminal responsibility. Note, however, that the prohibition of collective punishments is even wider in scope because it does not apply only to criminal sanctions, but also to “sanctions and harassment *of any sort*, administrative, by police action or otherwise”.

Two more examples of illegal collective punishment:

First, October 31, 2019: the Israeli military closed Qitoun checkpoint for an hour, the Israeli border police claimed it was because there was a shooting near the mosque area. More than 50 people weren’t allowed to go through the checkpoint, among them students and teachers.

And, second, on December 17, 2019, after 12 years old had thrown stones at the checkpoint (which, note, is very heavily protected with wooden and metal caging and fencing, and *completely* impregnable to stones, [Read more](#)) the IOF closed Salaymeh checkpoint to students, teachers and others for 30 minutes.

Harassment of Human Rights Observers

“Go back, to where we can't see you!” An Israeli soldier said to a human right observer



While monitoring children going in and out their schools, and accompanying the community members to document human rights violations, human right observers experience an increased amount of harassment from Israeli military and settlers.

CPT members were stopped, asked to show their ID's, check their bags and sometimes body search them (ask to empty their pocket, lift their shirts and pants and remove their jackets) going in and out of the checkpoints. In addition to this harassment by the settlers includes verbal, and physical assaults.

Local Palestinian members of CPT are often questioned, under go checks, and are stopped. Here is a typical interaction when one of CPT's local members was stopped recently:

ID check, bag check:

“Border police officer: Where are you from?”

CPTer: Palestine.

Border police: Where?

CPTer: Palestine.

Border police: Where is that?

CPTer: I am Palestinian.

[Border police talks to a soldier in same booth.]

Border police: Are you carrying a knife?

[-- searches CPTer's bag thoroughly, hands it back.]

Border police: Welcome to Israel.”

Particularly after announcing Trump’s “Peace deal” the deal of the century, members of CPT were especially targeted by the Israeli military. This ranged from Israeli forces performing extra ID checks to soldiers firing teargas directly at them. One CPT member was threatened that they could be arrested and denied entry due to filming the Israeli border Police arresting a 17 years old student. Watch [video](#).

After the USA announced the deal, Israeli settlers have acted more violently towards both Palestinian community members and human rights observers.