



Israel targets children to weaken demographic vitality and deny the Palestinian people's right to self-determination

United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel

June 2026

MAIN FINDINGS

► Widespread and systematic killing and harming of children in Gaza:

more than
 **20,000** [children killed]

and
 **44,000** [children injured]

between 7 October 2023 and 7 October 2025 (source: MOH Gaza)

- Children **constitute 30% of the killed**
- **Continued killing and injuring of children** since the October 2025 ceasefire
- Children killed mainly in two ways:
 - **Airstrikes** using explosives with wide-area effects
 - **Quadcopters, drones and sniper rifles** target and kill children to their head and upper body

► Newly disabled children, with chronic pain and scars, **facing lifelong impairment**

► Sexual violence against boys and girls used to punish, instill fear and oppress Palestinians

► Severe orphan crisis with an estimated **58,554 children who lost one or both parents** between 7 October 2023 and 7 October 2025 in Gaza (source: PCBS)

► Systematic disruption by Israel of children's ability to learn, thereby sabotaging the intellectual and social foundations of Palestinian society:

as of November 2025, over
 **97%** [of schools damaged or destroyed]

(source: Education cluster)

and
 **95%** [of universities affected in Gaza]
with 22 out of 38 completely destroyed
(source: UNESCO)

► Use of starvation and imposition of conditions of life **obstructing children's survival**

by 1 October 2025
 **151** [child deaths from malnutrition]
(source: MOH)

► Destruction of healthcare, undermining disease prevention, including immunization, resulting in the **re-occurrence of poliovirus in Gaza after 25 years** (source: WHO)

► In the West Bank:

at least
 **213** [children killed by Israeli security forces]

between 7 October 2023 and 20 October 2025 (source: OCHA)

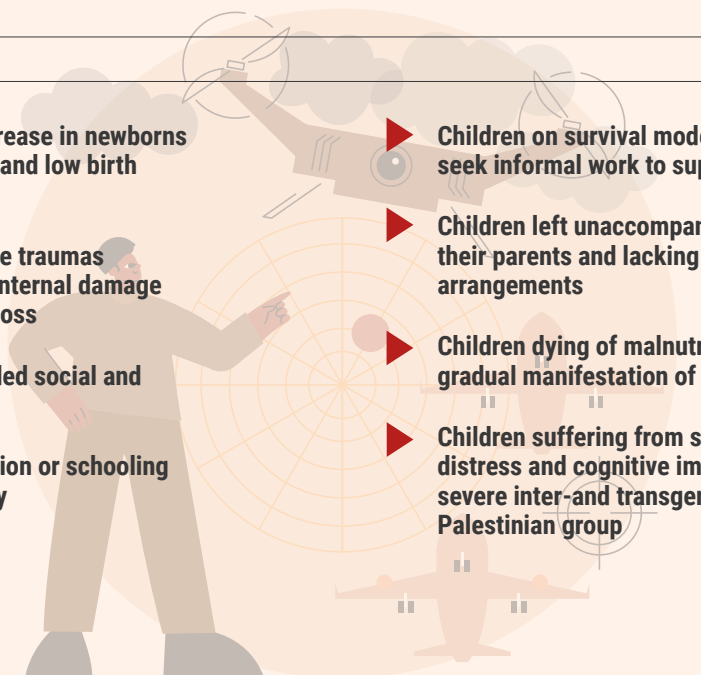
At least **two boys killed by settlers** (source: OHCHR)

► Children, especially adolescent boys, arrested, tortured, and severely mistreated in Israeli prisons and detention facilities:

over
 **1,665** [children detained in the West Bank]
since 7 October 2023 (source: PCBS)

► No data disclosed by Israel on children arrested in Gaza

IMPACT

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- **Decrease in birth rates and increase in newborns with birth defects, prematurity and low birth weight**
 - **Children suffering from multiple traumas impacting several body parts, internal damage and severe vision and hearing loss**
 - **Children unable to access needed social and medical care**
 - **Children without formal education or schooling and falling behind academically**
 - **Children on survival mode and increasingly forced to seek informal work to support their family**
 - **Children left unaccompanied and separated from their parents and lacking alternative care arrangements**
 - **Children dying of malnutrition and suffering from gradual manifestation of malnutrition**
 - **Children suffering from severe psychological distress and cognitive impairments resulting in severe inter-and transgenerational trauma of the Palestinian group**