

لا للحواجز  
لا لمחסوم



נשים נגד הכיבוש ולמען זכויות אדם  
نساء ضد الاحتلال ومن اجل حقوق الانسان  
Women against the Occupation and for Human Rights

**MachsomWatch**

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

**January-December 2014**



Qalandiya Checkpoint, October 28, 2014  
Photo: Yaara Rafiah

*Prepared by Aviva Hay and Ela Greenberg, January 2015*

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## A MOST CHALLENGING YEAR

2014 has been a most challenging year for MachsomWatch human rights activists.

For many of us, it was the worst year since the outbreak of the Second Intifada. At the national and international level, 2014 marked another year without negotiations and without any hope for resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The summer of 2014 was marred by Israel's war in Gaza, and the death of over 2,000 Palestinians and 71 Israelis. The kidnapping and murder of the three Israeli yeshiva students, Gilad Shaar, aged 16; Naftali Frenkel, aged 16; Eyal Yifrach, aged 19, and the subsequent brutal murder of the 16 year old Muhammad Abu Khdeir from Jerusalem rendered the second half of 2014 increasingly dark and ominous. Following the death of Abu Khdeir, Palestinians responded by rioting for several weeks in the Palestinian neighborhoods of East Jerusalem, and at the Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount. Both Palestinians and Israelis committed acts of terror, especially in the Jerusalem area. There were also regular clashes at the Qalandiya Checkpoint during the war.

For MachsomWatch, 2014 began with the death of Adel Muhammad Yakoub, a 59 year old Palestinian worker at Efrayim/Irtach Checkpoint, and it culminated with the death of 39 year old Palestinian worker Ahmad Samih Bdeir<sup>1</sup> as he crossed through the same checkpoint on December 31, 2014. After the first death, MachsomWatch members met with the manager of this checkpoint, promises were made for changes and improvements of the harsh conditions. Promises made and not kept as at the end of the year, there was yet another senseless loss of life.

MachsomWatch members **Hanna Aviram** and **Nura Resh** witnessed this tragic event on the last day of the year and wrote the following wrenching account:

### ***Guf or Gufa: Body or Corpse?***

**In Hebrew one letter, "hey," distinguishes two states of existence: "body" and "corpse."**

*Guf or Gufa, body or corpse? We don't know which to write. We're not certain whether the man lying on an orange stretcher resting on the ground while another attempted to resuscitate him has died or was still alive. We watched him being carried by the Palestinian paramedics to the ambulance waiting on the other side of the lane the checkpoint. The partly covered body/corpse was borne on the stretcher, his/its arm dangling. That was at 5:17 am; it was still dark outside. We tried to find out from the people who filled the plaza at the exit whether they'd seen what had happened.*

A person in one of the groups said immediately: "Someone died at the checkpoint." Yes, he saw it. Another said he knows who it is, someone from Far'un, he has children, poor man. And added, "We went on strike last Sunday and for two days after that

16 booths were open. Look, now there are again only 4 or 5." A third man said they'll go on strike again. Elsewhere in the plaza we spoke with another group of people. No, he's not dead. He had a heart attack. He's ill. "But why didn't they bring him to Israel?" A good question. This happens four or five times a week, they say.

What's the point in describing the Palestinian men and women who get up in the middle of the night to build homes in Israel, pick strawberries in its fields, sweep its streets? What's the point in counting how many people move from one part of the facility to another? What's the point describing the path they take along the corridor between fences and gates where an unseen voice issues instructions and orders regulating their rate of progress? What's the point of describing how quickly this facility is being renovated if someone, if only one person, is injured there?

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<sup>1</sup> "[Palestinian man crushed to death in overcrowded checkpoint](#)," Ma'an News, December 31, 2014.



These two deaths could have been prevented, if it were not for the extreme overcrowding and trampling of Palestinian workers with valid permits at the larger checkpoints, including Efrayim/Irtach, Qalandiya, and Bethlehem 300. These checkpoints have become extremely dangerous, partly as a result of the decision of the military administration to hand these checkpoints over to private security companies.

The terror incidents in Jerusalem from June onwards led to continuing and new restrictions on the freedom of movement of Palestinians within Jerusalem itself. We

reported on new checkpoints in the Jerusalem area, and more aggressive stopping and checking IDs of Palestinians as they went about their business in Jerusalem. At the national level, the Israeli government announced plans to not allow Palestinians to ride Egged buses travelling in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), affecting hundreds of Palestinians who work in Israel, and who return home by bus.

MachsomWatch also continues to bear the brunt of hostile government policies, some still on the table, designed to effectively silence human rights organizations. We are very concerned about proposed government legislation to limit foreign government funding to Israeli organizations. If such legislation was to pass, our activities might cease. In addition, this past year, we have been forced to deal with a SLAPP libel case filed by a right wing legislator, designed to limit our freedom of expression and to sap our time, resources, and energies away from our more important work of supporting Palestinian freedom of movement and advocating for human rights.

MachsomWatch activities were expansive and varied this year. The women continued travelling to the checkpoints, to the military courts, to the villages, they led tours, spoke at lectures and engaged in public outreach in spite of the challenges we faced. Our determination is constant - to remain an active presence “Against the Occupation and for Human Rights.”

In this year’s report we have included the voices of some of our volunteers who describe their observations in the field. Their observations are imbedded in the report itself and additional important accounts are found the Appendix.

**Since 2001, MachsomWatch volunteers have been monitoring and reporting on checkpoints and other means of preventing Palestinian freedom of movement throughout the Occupied Territories. Our monitoring and reporting serves as the basis for raising public awareness about the checkpoints, and the damaging effects of the Israeli Occupation on both Israeli and Palestinian societies.**

<b>MONITORING CHECKPOINTS</b>	<b>5</b>
Jerusalem Area	5
The Southern West Bank (Hebron and South Hebron Hills)	8
The Central Region	9
The Northern West Bank	11
The Jordan Valley	13
 <b>HELPING PALESTINIANS NAVIGATE THE BUREAUCRACY OF THE OCCUPATION</b>	 <b>15</b>
Obtaining Permits and Helping with Emergencies	15
Blacklisting Appeals	16
MachsomWatch Court Appeals Project	19
 <b>MILITARY COURTWATCH</b>	 <b>19</b>
 <b>ACTIVITIES IN PALESTINIAN VILLAGES</b>	 <b>20</b>
Seam Zone Activities	20
People to People Activities	21
 <b>MACHSOMWATCH PUBLIC OUTREACH</b>	 <b>22</b>
Reality Tours	22
Lectures and Virtual Tours	23
Documentary Films	23
Media Outreach	25
Website	26
Social Media	27
 <b>THE ORGANIZATION</b>	 <b>27</b>
Secretariat, ORG, and Board	27
Membership	27
 <b>OUR DONORS IN 2014</b>	 <b>28</b>
 <b>APPENDICES</b>	 <b>29</b>
Appendix 1: MachsomWatch Media Coverage 2014	29
Appendix 2: Excerpts from Checkpoint Reports	32
Appendix 3: Announcement placed in Haaretz Newspaper on the occasion of the Haaretz Peace Conference, July 8, 2014	33 33

## **Monitoring Checkpoints**

### **Total number of shifts to checkpoints in 2014: 1,484**

Monitoring checkpoints is the backbone of our organization. We have been monitoring and documenting checkpoints since we began in 2001, and our name reflects the importance of this work. MachsomWatch volunteers travel to checkpoints in the Jerusalem area, the Northern West Bank, the Southern West Bank, the Central Region, and the Jordan Valley.

### **Jerusalem Area**

#### **666 Shifts / 1,524 Volunteer Shifts**

MachsomWatch volunteers in the Jerusalem area travel to the following checkpoints: 300 (Bethlehem), Qalandiya, Zeitim (Abu Dis), Sheikh Sa'ad, Wadi Nar, Geva, Shu'afat Refugee Camp, Macaabim and Na'alim on Road 443. They also travel to the Etzion District Coordination Office (DCO), where they observe, monitor, and report on the conduct and policies of the DCO.

#### **Overcrowding and Chaos at Qalandiya and 300 (Bethlehem) Checkpoints:**

MachsomWatch volunteers reported throughout 2014 about deteriorating conditions at **Qalandiya Checkpoint** and at the **300 (Bethlehem) Checkpoint**. Despite the sheer number of people waiting to cross daily at both checkpoints, the soldiers did not open all the carousels nor all the inspection gates. For example, one early morning in February at Qalandiya Checkpoint, MachsomWatch members reported that men were pushing their way in to get into one of the three narrow, barred passageways, known as the "cages" - or trying to climb over the cages to reach the carousels.



Waiting in the "cages" at Qalandiya Checkpoint, December 2014. Photo: Ofra Tene

In addition, progress through the "cages" was unbearably slow, as not all the inspection stations had opened. In situations like these, the MW volunteers asked the soldiers to open all of the carousels and the inspection gates, and often to our credit, the soldiers listened to our suggestions. Often, however, MachsomWatch members were told that there were not enough soldiers to open all the inspection stations.

**Clashes at Qalandiya:** During the war in Gaza, Qalandiya Checkpoint was the site of demonstrations and fierce clashes between thousands of Palestinians and Israeli soldiers. On July 24, thousands of Palestinians marched to Qalandiya in protest of the war, resulting in the death of two Palestinians, killed by Israeli soldiers and hundreds injured.



Between 16:00-17:00 during "rush hour" at Qalandiya Checkpoint. The cars were standing in a heavy traffic jam from Ramallah towards Jerusalem, as soldiers were throwing gas canisters at civilians, either pedestrians or those sitting waiting in their cars, including mothers with babies and children, elderly, December 10, 2014. Photo: Vivi Sury

**Medical Cases:** At the larger checkpoints, MachsomWatch volunteers check to see that the Humanitarian Gate is opened according to schedule and that Palestinians are able to pass through it. This gate enables relatively quick passage for women, children, and elderly, as well as the sick. At Qalandiya Checkpoint, often people who should go through this gate are not allowed to, as was the case of one man who had just had an operation, and was afraid of passing through the carousels. He did not have the proper medical permit to use the Humanitarian Gate. Another man who had hurt his leg a day earlier was also not allowed to pass through.

In another case, MachsomWatch volunteers witnessed Umar, aged seven, who had been released from hospital only a few hours earlier after an operation, and still under the influence of anesthesia, collapsed on the metal bench in the Qalandiya checkpoint one February evening. He slept on the bench, covered by his father's leather coat, while his father had to deal with the DCO office to request a permit to return to Gaza, and to reach the Erez checkpoint on time. In November, volunteers reported on a woman from Gaza who had just undergone an operation at al-Maqassed in Jerusalem, and was forced to wait on a bench at Qalandiya for more than an hour to receive a permit to return back to Gaza. Every time the woman tried to speak, her mouth filled with blood.<sup>2</sup> In May,

<sup>2</sup> Tamar Fleischman, [Report, Qalandiya](#), November 9, 2014, MachsomWatch website, accessed December, 2014.

MachsomWatch learned about a seven-month-old infant who desperately needed to reach Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem. Accompanied by a Red Cross Representative, our volunteers were told that, “His father has been blacklisted by the Shabak, his mother has been blacklisted by the Shabak, his grandfather has been blacklisted by the Shabak and his grandmother has also been blacklisted by Shabak.”<sup>3</sup>

Ambulances are common sites at Qalandiya. They arrive from all over the West Bank, and wait at the entrance to the vehicle Checkpoint, until the arrival of its counterpart from Jerusalem. At times, MachsomWatch volunteers must intervene. Ambulance drivers reported to MachsomWatch volunteers of long waits of several hours, before they were able to transfer patients from the ambulance on the Palestinian side to the Israeli side of Qalandiya.



The road for medical care from Gaza to Nablus is through Qalandiya, December 2014.  
Photo: Tamar Fleischman



A very sick 6 day-old infant being transferred between Palestinian and Israeli ambulances at Qalandiya Checkpoint, December 21, 2014.  
Photo: Tamar Fleischman

**New Checkpoints in Palestinian neighborhoods of Jerusalem:** Residents in the Palestinian neighborhoods of Sur Baher, Jabel Mukaber, Wadi Joz, and Isawiyya all suffered from new checkpoints that were set up in the late summer and fall, as collective punishment in response to a number of terror attacks committed by Palestinian residents of Jerusalem.

**Isawiyya:** While many of the neighborhoods of Jerusalem were barricaded by checkpoints in the aftermath of the killing of Muhammad Abu Khder, the neighborhood

<sup>3</sup> Roni Hammerman and Tamar Fleischman, [Report, Qalandiya](#), May 11, 2014, MachsomWatch website, accessed December 2014.

of Isawiyya has suffered all year. Currently, there are 3 checkpoints around and inside Isawiyya. Freedom of movement of residents of this Jerusalem neighborhood are restricted and severely violated by the Israeli army's use of tear gas and foul smelling "skunk water" that is used to disperse crowds of Palestinian youth who challenge the army on a regular basis. For the past few months, near the northern entrance to the neighborhood, close to the gas station and the Jewish neighborhood of French Hill, there is a checkpoint, surrounded by police vehicles and uniformed personnel. The checkpoint operates most hours of the day and night. The second checkpoint is at the eastern exit into the West Bank. The third is in the center of the neighborhood.

### **The Southern West Bank (Hebron and South Hebron Hills)**

<b>106 checkpoint shifts / 212 volunteer shifts</b>
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MachsomWatch volunteers regularly monitor checkpoints and blocking of passage in the city of **Hebron**; **Tarqumiya** and **Sansana (Meitar Crossing)**, which are the main checkpoints for entrance into Israel in the Southern West Bank; 5,000 to 7,000 workers pass through these two checkpoints each morning. This team travels also along Route 60 and Route 317, where they regularly observe soldiers creating impromptu flying checkpoints.

At **Tarqumiya Checkpoint**, MachsomWatch volunteers witnessed poor treatment of Palestinians almost every day and especially on Sundays. Similar to **Qalandiya Checkpoint** (see above) and **Efrayim/Irtach Checkpoint** (see below), thousands of Palestinian workers with permits wait at dawn each morning for the checkpoint turnstiles to open and allow them to pass into Israel so they can reach their work in the morning hours. People were seen joining the line waiting to enter the **Tarqumiya Checkpoint** from the roof of waiting area, in order to get a better stop in the line.<sup>4</sup>

We also monitor **Metzudot Yehuda Checkpoint** on Road 316. At this checkpoint children who live close to Beit Yatir whose school is on the other side of the Separation Barrier in Imneizel, are forced to pass through detectors twice a day each day and require special permits. Because these children live on the Israeli side of the Separation Barrier, they have difficulties managing their daily routine. Last winter, they were trapped without food and other supplies; with our assistance, we managed to arrange a special permit for the father to pass through the checkpoint so that he could travel to Yatta to purchase basic necessities for the family.

In Hebron, we observed all the checkpoints and closure of roads, and witnessed ongoing friction between the army and the Palestinian residents.

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<sup>4</sup> Yael Agmon, [Report. Tarqumiya](#), August 17, 2014. MachsomWatch website. Accessed December 2014.

## The Central Region

**462 Shifts / 1,198 Volunteer Shifts**



**Habla Gate, December 31, 2014.**  
Photo: Nurith Popper

MachsomWatch volunteers in the central part of the West Bank monitor and document a number of checkpoints and agricultural gates, including **Azun Atme, Beit Furik, Eyal, Falamiya, Habla, Hamra, Huwarra, Efrayim/Irtach, Jaayus, Shufa, Tayasir, and Zaatra.**

Many of the checkpoints in this region are agricultural gates, which allow Palestinians to move between their villages in the Occupied Territories to their lands and/or places of work (i.e. plant nurseries) located in the Seam Zone, the area between the Separation Barrier and the Green Line.

Some of the problems at these checkpoints revolved around access for Palestinians to their lands during the brief **olive harvest** season. For example, Palestinians in Jayyus complained that the gates were not open long enough, opening only three times a day.

In the checkpoints in the Central Region, there were several reports about settlers running Palestinians over as they waited at the checkpoint. In June, two Palestinians were killed at **Huwarra Checkpoint** as they waited along the side of the intersection (currently not in use by the IDF); and at Efrayim/Irtach Checkpoint.

**Severe Conditions at Efrayim/Irtach checkpoint:** The conditions at this checkpoint are dangerous and often life threatening. MachsomWatch monitors conditions in this checkpoint regularly with our volunteers often arriving at predawn hours when the crush is at its heaviest.

Throughout the year, as noted in the report below, Palestinians reported injuries while waiting to cross at the checkpoints. Towards the end of 2014, on Sunday, December 21, [thousands of Palestinians protested and remained at home, refusing to pass through this checkpoint due to the inhumane conditions.](#) MachsomWatch brought media attention to this strike, resulting in several media items, as well as media interviews with MachsomWatch members.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> London & Kirschenbaum, [Interview with MW member Prof Varda Zur about the Palestinian workers' strike](#), Channel 10 Israel TV, December 22, 2014.  
Allison Kaplan Sommer, [Interview with MW member Karin Lindner about the Palestinian workers' strike](#), (in English), Radio TLV1, December 23, 2014.



Waiting at Efrayim Gate/Irtach Checkpoint, August 10, 2014.  
Photo: Nurith Popper



MachsomWatch volunteer **Varda Zur** reports on the conditions at the **Efrayim Gate/Irtach checkpoint**:

***“We will not shut our eyes; we shall not turn our gaze away”***

We leave for the checkpoint at this godforsaken hour, 4 am, the time of opening the checkpoint gates, for although in general it appears we cannot really help... in a small way this is when dramas take place which, even if not earthshaking for the world at large, are very important for the people involved. And sometimes we are even able to help solve problems. But, no less importantly, if they can (what choice do they have?) be there, so can we – monitoring, documenting: the crowded conditions, the pressure, the treatment that is often no less than harassment, the ongoing suffering. We will not shut our eyes. We shall not turn our gaze away. We shall see what is going on right under our very noses, in our name, and on our behalf as it were.

The checkpoint referred to here is the one named **Efrayim Gate/Irtach**. It is a privatized checkpoint. The relative advantage we have here is being able to influence the people who man it – as they are civilians employed for the long haul and can thus be sometimes affected through the ‘managers’ of this ‘enterprise’ to show a little consideration: to speak rather than roar, to explain and not leave the public in the dark, to open the gates punctually... and other such trivia. Little. Much too little. We know. And still.

The workers of the checkpoint accept our presence with respect, some even willingly, whereas soldiers from the nearby headquarters harass us whenever they can.

### About the Efrayim / Irtach Checkpoint

The Efrayim Gate/Irtach checkpoint is one of the most important passages for workers in the central part of Israel, if not the most important one. On Sundays, over 5000 – some say even 7000 – people cross it, not all of whom live in its vicinity. However, their entry permits state that they must not choose their point of entry but have to use the Irtach crossing. On work days the checkpoint gates open at 4 a.m., and on Fridays, at 5 a.m. Naturally the only people authorized to cross are those possessing entry permits who have gone through all the possible inspection modes before being issued their permit whether for employment, trade or other needs. Timing is regimented: Until 6 a.m. only workers whose permits specify an official workplace are allowed through. From that time on, holders of a trade entry permit are allowed, and after 7 a.m. other kinds of permits such as those enabling access to medical care (including children) on the way to various hospitals inside Israel.

Many of the workers must arrive across the checkpoint prior to 5:45 a.m., which is when their free transport leaves. Anyone late, in addition to having to pay his fare, risks losing his employment, and along with it the permit to work in Israel at all. In order to be sure to arrive on time beyond the checkpoint inside Israel, they begin to gather around the gates of the inspection installation as early as 2 a.m. Ever since the old 'slalom' track was done away with in order to build the newer one, people claim to arrive even earlier. The closer opening time gets, the worse the

crowding and pressure from others, especially youngsters climbing towards the head of the line on top of the early-birds, in spite of the barbed wire fences. Lately, because of the lack of an orderly waiting line, we have witnessed people crushed to the point that they faint, people who were deprived of air, and even someone who sprained or fractured a foot. Ambulances of the Palestinian Authority had to be summoned to deliver the ailing to hospitals in the West Bank.

Until a few months ago, there was a separate waiting line for women, opened mornings for a limited amount of time only (except for Fridays). Along with the recent changes, this procedure no longer exists and women must go through the men's line. In order to avoid men "feeling them up" they get organized in groups now and when they cross together, things are a bit easier.

Why do people crowd to be first? Passing the inspection installation might take anywhere between 10 minutes at best, and over an hour if one is detained for some reason or another. In the latter case, if you are not among the first waiting, you risk being too late... People prefer to be safe. If they crossed safely, they lie down (in the summer) to catch a nap. In the winter they light a campfire to get warm and dry. After the hours-long saga of waiting, they still face a long hard day of work.

The way home back from work is relaxed.

## The Northern West Bank

### 200 Shifts / 365 Volunteer Shifts

The northern team of MachsomWatch travels regularly to the checkpoints in the Northern West Bank. These include **Jalame-Gilboa** and **Baqa** checkpoints, located along the Green line, and the checkpoints of **Barta'a-Reihan**, **Tura-Shaked** and the agricultural checkpoints of **Taibe-Romema**, and **Anin**, all located along the Separation Barrier. They also monitor **Yabad-Dotan**, an internal checkpoint located on the road leading from the Barta'ah-Reihan checkpoint and the town of Jenin, close to the Israeli settlement of Mevo Dotan.

At **Jalame-Gilboa** checkpoint, some 2,000 Palestinians in possession of work permits pass through on a daily basis on their way to and from employment in Israel. A number of families of Palestinians imprisoned in Israel also pass through at this checkpoint, as do some humanitarian cases.

At the **Tura-Shaked** checkpoint, residents, including school children, farmers, and workers of Umm al-Reihan, Dahar al-Malak, and Hirbet Radiyya, all villages located in the Seam Zone, pass through the checkpoint. MachsomWatch members estimate that about 150 people pass through this checkpoint on a daily basis.



Children on their way to school need to pass through Tura-Shaked Checkpoint, April 13, 2014.  
Photo: Ruti Tuval

At the **Barta'a-Reihan** checkpoint, some 1,500 people pass through in the morning, and another 3,000 pass through in the afternoon, all moving between the Seam Zone (The Barta'a Enclave) and the West Bank. At Anan agricultural gate, between 10 and 70 farmers pass through when the gate is open on Mondays and Thursdays. During the olive harvest, 100s of individuals are forced to pass through this gate. Also at the **Taibe-Romema** agricultural checkpoint, about 20 people pass through regularly when the gate opens on Mondays and Thursdays.



Farmers trying to reach their fields must first pass through the Anin Checkpoint, December 16, 2014.

Photo: Shula Bar

**Palestinians prevented from accessing their olive groves and harvesting olives:** During the olive harvest this year, the **Anin checkpoint in the Northern Region** did not open on Fridays and Saturdays. This prevented Palestinians who have regular jobs during the week from harvesting their olives on the weekends. There were also elderly men and women who received permits to harvest olive trees, while young relatives did not receive such permits to help with the harvesting.

## The Jordan Valley

### 50 Checkpoint Shifts / 108 volunteer shifts

MachsomWatch members travel to the checkpoints in the Jordan Valley, including **Tayasir** and **Hamra Checkpoint**. Shifts to the Jordan Valley are a whole day affair as the distances are great. We maintain contact with the many villages and the Palestinian residents in the Jordan Valley and try to help whenever possible. OCHA reports that 250 Palestinians structures were demolished in the Jordan Valley in 2014.<sup>6</sup>



Hamra Checkpoint, January 2014.  
Photo: Anthya Sadeh

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<sup>6</sup> OCHA, [Protection of Civilians](#), December 23-29, 2014. OCHA OPT website. Accessed December 2014.



**Daphne Banai visiting the village of Khirbet Makhul**  
Photo: Anthya Sadeh

**MachsomWatch volunteer Daphne Banai reports:**  
**“The Nature Reserve is a Firing Zone”**

In 2014, Israel persisted in its efforts to expel the inhabitants of the northern Palestinian Jordan Valley in order to make way for its annexation. This past year Israel has further denied Palestinians freedom of movement by imposing harsh checkpoints where they are inspected and experience long delays while traveling in both directions, to the Jordan Valley from the West Bank hills and back into Area A.

Time and again Palestinians were blocked and denied free access within the West Bank and between the Jordan Valley and the Central West Bank. Dirt dikes have been piled higher, ditches deeper, new boulders placed upon the barriers, gates locked. The gate in Gokhia that in the past used to be opened three times a week to enable Palestinians a minimal measure of movement, was closed all year.

Children of the shepherd communities in the northern Palestinian Jordan Valley were forced to stay in villages in the Central West Bank, far from their parents, in order to be able to attend school. A small structure built in Samara by volunteers of the Jordan Valley Solidarity organization to serve as a classroom for kindergarten and 1st grade pupils was served a demolition order in early November 2014.

Israel has continued to use Palestinian land for maneuvers and firing zones, to which purpose it expels shepherd families from their homes for the duration of between one and three/four days at a time.

All that time, Israel has not offered any alternative accommodations and the people, including the elderly, women and children as well as livestock have to spend scathing days and freezing nights out in the open. Suffering has been especially severe for the communities of **Ras al Ahmar** near Atuf, **Bardala** and **Humsa** near the settlement of **Beqa’ot**, **Hamam al-Malih** and the shepherd communities southeast of **Tayasir** Checkpoint.

Israel has gone as far as to use the lands of the **Um Zuka Nature Reserve** as a firing zone, a fact which often causes fires decimating the flora and fauna of the region. This year the State has turned parts of this reserve into target practice ranges. Beside the disruption of people’s everyday lives and expelling them from their homes, even if only for several days, Israel often uses live ammunition in its maneuvers there and leaves hundreds, perhaps thousands, of rounds of shells and live bullets, thus jeopardizing civilian population, especially shepherds who are young boys for the most part, with a lively curiosity about ammunition. On November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014, 44-year old Abd al-Rahim al-Sheikh from Bardala, father of four children, was killed by a shell found on the ground after an Israeli army maneuver.



## **Helping Palestinians Navigate the Bureaucracy of the Occupation**

### **Obtaining Permits and Helping with Emergencies**

<b>150 permits / 50 emergency situations handled</b>
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Over the years, some of the members of MachsomWatch have become experts on the Israeli bureaucracy of control of Palestinians in the OPT, which restricts Palestinians' freedom of movement. MachsomWatch member, Hanna Barag devotes many hours of her time contacting the military administration to lodge complaints, either by phone or letter. MachsomWatch members also know to turn to Hanna to ask for her assistance when they encounter serious issues in the field. She writes between **100-120 letters** to the authorities each year. Although seldom does she receive a written response, she sometimes gets phone replies, and changes are sometimes noticed. For example, she states that the opening of Qalandiya checkpoint at 4 am is the result of many letters of complaint by MachsomWatch.

**Hanna Barag** writes about the hidden bureaucracy of control

***"It is not possible to ignore the phone call of a father needing to accompany his ailing child to hospital"***

The State of Israel has already ruled the Occupied Territories on the West Bank and in Gaza for many years. Israel has imposed an occupation policy that is implemented through strict restrictions on the freedom of movement. This policy has far-reaching implications on the lives of three million Palestinians. It impacts all aspects of their life: economy, health, education, family and community life, and religious worship. The limitations on freedom of movement cause intense hardships and despair in the Occupied Territories and, as a result, the Palestinians' lives are severely impeded.

The policy of the occupation is executed by the army via checkpoints, obstructions and separate roads for the Palestinians. The strings of this system are manipulated by the



Civil Administration, which is the army's bureaucratic apparatus.

Every aspect of the lives of the Palestinians, from birth to death, is controlled by the State via the Civil Administration, and this includes even such elementary functions as birth registration, the issuing of death certificates, changes of address, and the like.

This bureaucracy is a most efficient tool for controlling the Palestinians, and it is administered through a regime of permits. The permits are the tools by which the bureaucracy is conducted. The system is opaque – with no articulated rules for granting or withdrawing permits, which leaves the Palestinians without recourse. The result of this system is that freedom of movement is the exception and its prohibition is the rule. Because of the opacity of the system and the tendency to deny permits, exceptions essentially become the norm.

We deal with the exceptions that affect people whom the bureaucratic system (which is not tailored to protect the individual), refuses to allow freedom of movement even in acute cases of hardship. This includes even sick people and their escorts, people injured in work accidents, those required to be present at courts of law in Israel, people who want to study in Israeli universities, and the like. All these are refused permits indiscriminately.

## **Blacklisting Appeals**

**Police Blacklisting Team: received 3,500 phone calls from Palestinians asking for assistance / 700 cases handled.**

**General Security Services Blacklisting Team: out of 1,168 requests answered in 2014 from people that approached the team, 693 (59%) were removed from blacklisting.**

Our observations at the checkpoints enable us to contend with these specific problems. Since we are a human rights organization, these problems are our focus. We believe that for all these people whose rights are denied there is no other address to whom they can turn to in an effort to breach the bureaucratic wall. We attempt to assist them in real-time.

Unlike Palestinians in need of permits we can navigate the occupation bureaucracy and know to whom to turn to in an effort to resolve as many of these cases as possible. Over the years, word of mouth has led to an increasing number of requests for assistance.

Our aim is to bring about the termination of the occupation and, as a result, the Palestinians' release from the bureaucratic system that so severely impacts their lives. Notwithstanding this, it is not possible to ignore the phone call that can enable a father to accompany his ailing child to hospital, or a promising student to receive the education she so richly deserves.

The blacklisting of Palestinians is one of the methods that the Israeli military bureaucracy uses in order to restrict Palestinian freedom of movement. For a Palestinian from the Occupied Palestinian Territories to enter into Israel, Israeli settlements or the Seam Zone between the Separation Barrier and the Green Line, a permit is required. Palestinians need permits for employment in Israel, to obtain medical care in Israel, to visit family in Israel, to work their lands located in the Seam Zone, and so forth. These permits are not easily obtained, and require dealing with Israeli military bureaucracy. Work permits, for example, are given only to Palestinians who are above a certain age, are married with children and are not blacklisted. Obtaining a permit often enables Palestinians to find better employment than they would in the Occupied Territories.

Permits are also taken away. Tens of thousands of residents of the OPT find their rights to pass through the checkpoints are rescinded because they have been “blacklisted” by the General Security Services (GSS). Done without their knowledge, they only discover that there is a problem when they try to cross a checkpoint and are refused. Only after exhausting inquiries with their District Coordination Office (DCO), do they learn that they have been blacklisted. The criteria for the blacklisting are also classified; so blacklisted Palestinians cannot know why they are being denied their freedom of

movement. The DCO also does not provide any information on how to challenge and refute the blacklisting. That is when they turn to MachsomWatch.

Tens of thousands of other Palestinians also are blacklisted by the police, which prevent them from receiving work permits for Israel, the settlements or seam zone. The vast majority of these individuals were blacklisted for illegal presence in Israel after having entered the country without a valid work permit.

Palestinians can also be administratively blacklisted for working for an employer who is not listed on their work permit, for owing money to Israelis, and for incurring traffic fines in Israel or in the OPT by the Israel Police. When Palestinians owe money to Israeli entities, the blacklisting can be removed only after it has been paid, yet fines levied on the original sums often reach thousands and tens of thousands of shekels.



Palestinians detained for 5 hours at Hamra Checkpoint, August 18, 2014. Photo: Anthya Sadeh

We must note that there are no postal services in the West Bank; as a result, Palestinians often don't receive notices of their fines. A member of the MW team helps deal with these fines. She tries to reduce them or make arrangements for payments.

In 2014, two teams of MachsomWatch volunteers continued to work with Palestinians who have been blacklisted either by the Israel Security agency or the police. Our blacklisting teams provided Palestinians with reliable information about their status and the procedure for challenging the blacklisting. The information we provide is especially important since the appeal procedure varies according to changing instructions of DCOs, their area of residence or the arbitrary whims of the authorities. Palestinians often turn to lawyers for this information, at considerable cost, only to receive incomplete and inaccurate information.

During 2014, MachsomWatch **handled 700 cases of Palestinians who had been blacklisted by the Israeli police**. We also handled about **35 difficult and ongoing** cases of Palestinians, nearly all who were caught staying in Israel illegally. Our work included passing on documentation attesting to payment of fines to the attorney so that these cases could be closed. The police blacklisting team received **3,500** phone calls asking for assistance. We advised many of the people who consulted us to submit appeals against their blacklisting by the police. Most of these appeals were written by people in the Occupied Territories who know how to write in Hebrew, but we wrote some of the appeals ourselves. Many appeals fall into a black hole in the system and many of those that didn't fall into a black hole were either not answered or rejected.

During 2014, **1,314 people who had been blacklisted by the General Security Services submitted appeals - those appeals are being handled by the DCOs. We have full statistics on 1,223 of these cases that have received answers so far. Of these 1,223 people, 693 have been removed from the blacklist (59%).**

The MachsomWatch GSS Blacklisting Team gets endless telephone calls from Palestinians who do not receive permits; they don't know why and don't have any address to turn to. We estimate that the team received approximately **5,000 calls** for information and guidance in 2014.

Most telephone calls are from blacklisted Palestinians who need permits to enter Israel for work or trade, and we are able to work with them in the preparation of their requests. We tell these people which documents are needed to submit requests to be removed from the Shabak<sup>7</sup> blacklist. Other calls are from people trying to follow up on their requests.

Some of the calls are from people not allowed to travel abroad, not able to get permits to work their lands in the seam-zone, or who are not able to get permits to enter Israel for humanitarian reasons (to hospitals, family visits, etc.), or from people blacklisted by the police. We direct these callers to turn to other human rights organizations or other MachsomWatch teams.

In order to submit requests to be removed from the Shabak blacklist, the person who is blacklisted must have an employer who is interested in hiring him; merchants have to submit documents needed to get a new merchant permit. We receive at least **10 faxes a day, seven days a week (more than 3,600 faxes annually)** from Palestinians who send us the paperwork so that we can then work with them on their blacklisting status.

Many of the documents that are submitted are insufficient or unsuitable. A member of the team has taken on the job of calling these people and explaining exactly which documents are required. We also notify Palestinians where they may go if they have the proper documentation, and where they can get forms requesting to be removed from the blacklisting filled out in good Hebrew. This allows many people to obtain the forms without us filling them. We are in touch with some of the regional offices and we exchange information about requests and other details.

#### **Requests to remove security prevention submitted during 2014 and their status<sup>8</sup>**

<b>Requests handled by the District Coordination Liaison Offices during 2014</b>	<b>1223<sup>9</sup></b>
<b>Not yet answered/ Unknown if answered</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Answered</b>	<b>1168</b>
<b>Removed from blacklist</b>	<b>693</b> <b>59%</b>
<b>Still on the blacklist</b>	<b>475</b>

Upon receiving the petition to remove the security blacklisting from us, people must submit their requests to the offices of the Civil Administration in the areas where they live. The requirements in the Jenin, Nablus, Tul Karem, Qalqiliya, Bethlehem and Jerusalem Envelope (Qalandiya and Abu Dis) areas for people wanting to work in Israel

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<sup>7</sup> The General Security Service is known as the *Shabak*.

<sup>8</sup> Requests submitted to Hebron, Bethlehem, Jericho, Abu Dis, Qalandiya, Ramallah, Qalqiliya, Tul Karem, Nablus and Jenin DCOs. The District Coordination Liaison Offices are part of Israel's Civil Administration and give bureaucratic services to the civil population in the OPT.

<sup>9</sup> 91 additional cases are currently being handled in the DCOs. The status of these cases is not available at the time of this report.

(not in the settlements) are much more complicated. Therefore, very few people are able to submit requests. In other areas, requests are more reasonable, and in those areas many people have submitted requests.

## MachsomWatch Court Appeals Project

Most of the people who get a negative answer have to wait one year before they are allowed to try again, or may appeal to the Court.<sup>10</sup> The appeals are submitted by Adv. Tamir Blank. During 2014 we received verdicts for 67 people who appealed to the Court through our project. **Only 15 (23%) did not get expunged** from the blacklist or were told they would **be removed from** the blacklist in the near future (see table below). At this time there are more than 30 appeals pending in the Courts. Many more people **would have liked to appeal**, but cannot afford the cost. People must pay NIS 2,200 to file an appeal.

### Verdicts during 2014

Total	67
Removal from blacklist**	35
Removal from blacklist after fulfillment of agreements***	8
Agreements – in the pipeline***	4
Agreements for the next few months ***	5
Refused to remove from the blacklist	15 (23%)
* Till now we have already submitted more than 500 appeals. Average rate of success is 70%. This year it is 77%, assuming that all agreements will be fulfilled. ** Some of the people still have a problem, but can get a permit to work in Israel. *** Almost all agreements say that the petitioner may submit a new request to remove the security prevention and this request will be "positively" considered.	

Information about the blacklistings as provided by MachsomWatch members appeared in ACRI's annual report on human rights in Israel and the Occupied Territories for 2014.<sup>11</sup>

## Military CourtWatch

### 76 Court Hearings / 172 Volunteer Shifts

MachsomWatch volunteers attend hearings in the military courts. We see the arrest and detention of Palestinians as another way of denying them their freedom of movement. The majority of court cases that we heard this past year were at Ofer Military Court and in the Russian Compound in Jerusalem. Our presence in the military courts is important, as we sometimes constitute the only civilian presence in these military courts. While officially two family members are allowed to attend the hearings in Ofer and Salam Courts in the West Bank, to which Palestinians from the OPT have no trouble reaching, family members are almost never present at hearings in the Russian Compound, as they

<sup>10</sup> For more about MachsomWatch Court Appeals Project, see our report: "[Invisible Prisoners - don't know why and there's nowhere to turn](#)" (Chapter 6 and Appendices 9 and 10).

<sup>11</sup> [ACRI, Situation Report, 2014](#)

are unable to receive the needed permits to enter Jerusalem. Often the detainees also are prevented from meeting with their lawyers.

The majority of the hearings in the military courts dealt with stone throwing (mainly by minors); throwing Molotov cocktails; participating in illegal demonstrations organized by the Popular Committees (such as the protests against the Wall, or against the closure of the main thoroughfare in Qaddum); entry into closed military zones; and being caught without a permit in Israel. At the Russian Compound, the cases usually deal with extending arrest.

As a result of the war in Gaza in the summer, hundreds of Hamas activists were arrested, including people who were released in the Shalit Deal. In addition, many minors were arrested in the area of Jerusalem, mainly for throwing stones. These hearings take place in Israeli civil courts, as the detained are residents of Jerusalem.

In the District Court, we attended damage lawsuits against the state and against the settlers. In addition, we were present at one High Court hearing, because the petition to the High Court discussed a prisoner who had been convicted in the Ofer Military Court, and whose case we are following.

## **Activities in Palestinian Villages**

### **Seam Zone Activities**

For the past several years, members of MachsomWatch have regularly visited Palestinian villages in and along the Seam Zone, in order to better understand the problems faced by these villages, and to help resolve individual cases of Palestinians who are not able to access and cultivate their lands in the Seam Zone. We meet regularly with village councils, who all have complaints about the path of the Separation Barrier; the location and size of the agricultural gates (which often do not meet the topological conditions); their limited opening hours and days (which do not enable farmers to grow the variety of agricultural produce that they would like to grow); and problems in receiving permits to reach and cultivate their lands. We also hear complaints about water, open sewage from the settlements, and attacks by settlers, such as uprooting and destroying olive trees.

This past year, we focused our attention on the problems facing the residents in the areas of **Jayyus** to **Kufr Jamal** and **Falamiyya** about the new difficulties resulting from changes made to the path of the Separation Barrier. Although these changes enabled some farmers to reach their lands without having to cross the Separation Barrier, they also made it difficult for others. Farmers who have been affected by these changes now are required to travel a far distance to an agricultural gate that only opens three times a day for short periods of time in order to reach their fields. In the past farmers could access their fields through a gate that was open 12 hours a day every day. According to the villagers of **Far'un**, 2014 was the worse and most difficult year in terms of obtaining permits.<sup>12</sup> The corruption and commerce surrounding permits deepened to unprecedented proportions. We have met with the DCO officers with a list of demands/requests made by a number of villages. Unfortunately, these demands were all rejected. The DCO

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<sup>12</sup> Report about a meeting with the representatives of Far'un and Maskha villages, January 6, 2015.

officers did heed to our request to stop the flow of sewage from the Etz Efrayim settlement to the Palestinian village of **Saniriya**.

## People to People Activities

In the past few years, a number of MachsomWatch members began to develop people-to-people projects with women and children in a number of Palestinian villages in the Central West Bank. These activities are important in that they provide a rare opportunity for both Israelis and Palestinians to meet. For the Palestinian women and children, the only Israelis that they know tend to be soldiers and settlers. These encounters enable Palestinian women and children to meet Israelis who are non-threatening, who do not bear arms, and who oppose the occupation and advocate for human rights. These meetings also enable the Israeli women to meet Palestinian women and their families, and to learn more about the lives of Palestinians under the Israeli Occupation. For both sides these meetings are a chance to express shared hopes for the future.

In the past few years, the people-to-people activities have expanded, as village after village turned to us requesting that we conduct our shared activities with them. During 2014, we worked in **9 villages**, holding **99 meetings**, attended by up to **133 Palestinian women** and by **25 MachsomWatch volunteers**. After the war in Gaza forced us to cease our activities temporarily, we began to resume our work in October 2014. In one village, the coordinator and village head only agreed to resume activities with MachsomWatch when the children in Gaza are able to return to school; we respected their decision, and it was agreed that we would help them only during the olive harvest in October. The activities have included learning Hebrew, physical activity, and handicrafts, to help bring the women some income.



During this year, we held English language activities with Palestinian children once a week. MachsomWatch women work together with Palestinian coordinators, activists or students to teach and to manage the lessons. These activities are currently conducted in **3 villages**. We held 46 meetings, and worked with up to **135 Palestinian children**. **10 MachsomWatch members** and **8 Palestinian women** volunteers are engaged in this activity. We also

held **2 workshops**, the latter for MachsomWatch members only.

MachsomWatch volunteers teaching Palestinian children,  
July 1, 2014. Photo: Nurit Popper

## **MachsomWatch Public Outreach**

MachsomWatch public outreach includes activities focusing on reaching out to the Israeli and international public through reality tours; lectures and virtual tours; films and media outreach.

### **Reality Tours**

<b>60 tours to the Occupied Territories / 1,288 participants</b>
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Our tours in the Central West Bank introduce Israelis and foreigners (among them diplomats, journalists, students and tourists), to the reality of life in the OPT. The tours focus on how the Separation Barrier disrupts the lives of the Palestinians, and on the hardships inflicted by the checkpoints, roadblocks, gates and other barriers that comprise a severe obstacle to their freedom of movement. The tours enable the participants to experience and see for themselves what the media

seldom portrays, namely, the thousands of Palestinian acres seized in order to construct the Separation Barrier and expand Israeli settlements; the sewage and polluted water streaming from the settlements into the Palestinian villages; the consequences of the army's actions to prevent villagers from demonstrating peacefully against blocking an important road, in order to appease the nearby settlers; and a lone Palestinian house that has been surrounded by a wall and fence to comply with neighboring settlers' needs. They also provide opportunities to meet Palestinians who, in talking about their daily lives, sharply illustrate what it means to live under military rule, under the Israeli Occupation. The consensus of feedback from the participants, Israelis and foreigners alike, is that the tours are a huge eye-opener for them; beyond their emotional impact, they provide deeper insight into the unbearable conditions imposed on the Palestinians. Some participants come on the tours a second and a third time, bringing along friends and acquaintances.

Our second tour is to Palestinian enclaves within and adjoining East Jerusalem now cut off from the city by the Separation Barrier. After a sobering visit to the Qalandiya Checkpoint, the tour shows how the Jerusalem Municipality, while continuing to collect taxes from its residents, has effectively ceased to provide services to Kafr Aqeb (a neighborhood now behind the barrier); how the once-prosperous economy of the adjoining town of Bir Naballah has been ruined by the barrier; how determined Palestinians are nonetheless able to get around the barrier, raising questions about its security value; how the barrier's route was changed because Israel's High Court of Justice suspected that an ulterior motive (to acquire more land for settlement, rather than provide security) had guided its original course; and how the egregiously unequal division of water resources between Israeli settlers and Palestinian inhabitants affects the daily lives of Palestinian households and farmers.

Of the 1,288 participants, **689 participated in tours in Hebrew and 599 in English tours**. The number of tours conducted in 2014 represented a **20% increase** from the number of tours conducted during 2013. The murders of the 3 Israeli boys, followed by the several months of hostilities led us to cancel our tours from mid-June, only resuming tours to the Central West Bank in September. Our tours to the Jerusalem Enclaves still have not been resumed.

## Lectures and Virtual Tours

**32 Lectures / 1487 Participants; 11 Virtual Tours / 302 Participants;  
10 tours and lectures to Young People / 1045 Participants**

Throughout the year, MachsomWatch members are invited to give lectures to religious groups, students, and foreign visitors in Israel. MachsomWatch members also arrange speaking engagements during their private trips abroad. This past year, we spoke to groups in Italy, Berlin, and London, as well as to visiting groups in Israel.



MachsomWatch member  
Daniella Yoel speaking in Italy

MachsomWatch has also developed a Virtual Tour based on maps and short films, expressing the difficult conditions of daily life under the Israeli military rule. It is not a lecture nor a political debate. It takes place in private homes or clubs and affords the opportunity to “meet” Palestinians and instead of hearing about them, to listen to their feelings, their thoughts and opinions, which do not find a voice in the Israeli media. This activity was also affected by the hostilities of the summer, and as a result, the majority of the virtual tours took place from January until June and were resumed towards the end of the year.

## Documentary Films

### **Nabi Samwil 1099-2099:<sup>13</sup>**

Our latest documentary was directed by Eran Torbiner.

The film features the story of the village of Nabi Samwil which is located on a hilltop 4 kilometres north of Jerusalem. The village is imprisoned by the rules of the Israeli Occupation as it is surrounded by barriers, separated from Jerusalem and from the West Bank. The



<sup>13</sup> [The film is available in its entirety on Youtube.](#)

lives of its residents are ruled by myriad restrictions and threats from the Israeli authorities. But, the history of Nabi Samwil is as fascinating as it is long. Conquerors came and conquerors went, the village of Nabi Samwil remains.

The film premiered at the Tel Aviv Cinematheque during the MachsomWatch Annual Human Rights Day Event.

**The Fading Valley:** MachsomWatch documentary, *The Fading Valley*, directed by Irit Gal, exposes the systematic water deprivation, land expropriations, home demolitions and obstacles to mobility suffered by Palestinians in the Jordan Valley. This year the film was screened at **14 international festivals and venues** and in **15 locations throughout Israel**. We expect to continue to screen the film through 2015.



#### International Film Festivals:

Barcelona, Spain, *International Human Rights Film Festival*

Berlin, Germany, *Canaan Conference – at Alex Treff*

Berlin, Germany, *Kino am Steinplatz*

Boston, USA, *Boston Palestine*

*International Film Festival*

Chicago, USA, *5<sup>th</sup> Annual Chicago South*

*Asian Film Festival*

Chicago, USA, *i2F2 The Next Generation International Film Festival*

d'Abruzzo, Italy, *D'Abruzzo International Documentary Film Festival*

Florianopolis, Brazil, *PLANETA DOC – International Social and Environmental Film Festival*

Goiás, Brazil, *FICA 2014 - International Environmental Film and Video Festival – Official Competition*

Istanbul, Turkey, *Istanbul International Documentary Film Festival*

Palermo and Treviso, Italy, *Sole Luna International Documentary Film Festival*

Paris, France, *International Human Rights Film Festival*

Seoul, South Korea, *11<sup>th</sup> Green Film Festival in Seoul (GFFIS)*

Zurich, Switzerland, *International Film Festival du Film Vert*

#### Screenings in Israel:

Haifa: Ma'an; Abyad Gallery

Jerusalem: Center for the Defense of the Individual; B'tselem; Barbour Gallery

Kfar Blum: Klohr Center

Kibbutz Ein Shemer

Kibbutz Tzuba

Kiryat Tivon: Memorial Center

Moshav Amirim

Nazarath Illit

Pardes Hanna: Yedid Theatre

Rosh Pina: Cinematheque

Tel Aviv: Association for Civil Rights; Albi Café

In addition to the screenings in Israel and abroad, *The Fading Valley* was sold to the Swiss *Radiotelevisione Svizzera di lingua Italiana – RSI* and to *Link TV – Cable TV* in the USA. Television screenings of the film can result in **thousands** of additional **viewers** being exposed to the film.

*The Fading Valley* was also sold to libraries at: **Harvard University, University of Northern Illinois, University of Pennsylvania, Duke University, Emory University and Michigan State University Library**. As a result, lecturers and student groups will have access to the film for use in teaching and awareness raising on American campuses.

## Media Outreach

<b>72 media items</b>
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Maintaining media interest in the stories of the Occupation remains a great challenge. MachsomWatch remains determined to bring focus and attention to the stories of the Occupation. During 2014, MachsomWatch had at least **72 media items** in both local and international media outlet. The news items, letters to the editor, op-ed pieces, video footage and or/ interviews on our press list were either written by MachsomWatch members, featured information provided by MachsomWatch, or referred to our organization. **Appendix 1** lists all these items with links to the stories themselves.

MachsomWatch members were responsible for bringing media attention to **the strike of Palestinian workers and their refusal to cross through Efrayim Checkpoint** on December 21, 2014. One of our volunteers received a phone call about the strike at 4 am, and she immediately drove to the checkpoint to monitor the situation. Simultaneously, our spokeswoman alerted the media. MachsomWatch members were interviewed about the conditions at Efrayim Checkpoint on the Israeli TV news show *London & Kirshenbaum* and on Tel Aviv Radio; our photographs were also used in the press stories about the strike.

MachsomWatch also featured prominently in **Ruti Ginsburg's** book [\*And You Were Our Eyes\*](#) (Hebrew), covering three human rights organization in the Occupied Territories through the lens of the camera, and published in late 2014. **Nurit Yarden**, a member of MachsomWatch, was featured in a solo photography exhibit at the *Artists' House* in Tel Aviv entitled "Qalandiya."



MachsomWatch volunteers protesting against government policy to refuse Palestinians to board Egged buses travelling in the Occupied Territories, October 2014.

Photo: Esti Tsal

Part of our media and outreach work also includes **protests and demonstrations**. During 2014, our volunteers carried out a civil protest against the policy of prolonged **administrative detention**. About 125 administrative detainees were on hunger strike with the demand to be charged with a crime or released. The lives of 70 of them were in acute danger. These men were hospitalized, cuffed to their beds 24 hours a day, and under heavy guard. Though the hunger strikers were forbidden to receive visitors, MachsomWatch women disobeyed and visited detainees in hospital. These visits were made in the spirit of solidarity, to offer encouragement, to raise awareness of the situation and to distribute information to hospital personnel and hospital visitors (many of whom were not aware of the men at the end of the hallway under heavy guard).

We initiated a protest against the witch-hunts and attacks on artists and writers who dared to speak out against the war in Gaza. We also officially signed several statements along with other human rights organizations, protesting the serious [violation of international human rights law by the IDF during the war in Gaza](#). We organized a protest at Qassem Junction in response to the statement of the Security Minister regarding the refusal to allow Palestinians to board the Egged buses travelling to the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

MachsomWatch organizes quickly and speaks out when our women observe violations of human rights.

## Website

**45,938 Sessions / 31,223 Users**

Our website serves as an important database of information about restrictions on Palestinian freedom of movement. Having been upgraded in 2013, our website is regularly updated with reports about the checkpoints and military courts in both English and Hebrew; photographs, and videos on the 30 checkpoints and the military courts that we currently observe. The database is searchable by checkpoint, military court, and keywords. Our website also serves as a point of contact for the general public, and we regularly receive queries via our website. The majority of people using our website come from Israel, followed by the US, Germany, UK, Palestine, Italy, France, the Netherlands, and Canada.

## Social Media

### 2291 Facebook Followers

MachsomWatch uses social media, mainly Facebook, in order to reach out to diverse audiences and to influence public opinion about the checkpoints and the Occupation. MachsomWatch Facebook page currently is only in Hebrew. We use Facebook as another means of publishing our regular reports and to share the most troubling and important incidents that we encounter in our work. Members of MachsomWatch also use their own Facebook pages to share information about MachsomWatch with their personal contacts. Recently, MachsomWatch opened a Twitter account, as an additional means of sharing information.

On our **YouTube channel**, [Machsomwatchvid](#), we continue to upload new videos related to our work. **1,376 people** have watched the trailer for our film *The Fading Valley* since it was uploaded to YouTube.

## The Organization

### Secretariat, ORG, and Board

During 2014, MachsomWatch Secretariat held monthly meetings focusing on MW organizational issues and held in depth meetings with close to 20 different MW teams that implement and carry out MachsomWatch activities. The ORG (our decision-making body composed of all active members of MachsomWatch) met three times and the Board of MachsomWatch registered non-profit company, *the Women's Fund for Human Rights*, met in November 2014.



### Membership

MachsomWatch members who actively participate in the organization number between **250-275 women**. In addition, some **709 women (consisting of active and inactive members)** are subscribed to our mailing list. In 2014, MachsomWatch welcomed **25 new members**. The majority of the new members joined after participating in our tours. Three veteran members of MachsomWatch are in touch with interested women by phone, and organize meetings to introduce MachsomWatch and its activities to small groups of women interested in joining. We ensure to arrange a checkpoint shift for each new member, always sending them out with veteran members who can share their experience and knowledge of the checkpoints.

## **Our Donors in 2014**

We are grateful for the support that we received this past year from private donors and from the following foundations and grant-making organizations:

*Anonymous*  
*British Shalom Salaam Trust*  
*Embassy of Switzerland*  
*Delegation of the European Union to Israel*  
*New Israel Fund*  
*Norwegian Royal Embassy*  
*Open Society Foundations*  
*Peace and Justice Fund*  
*SIVMO*

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1: MachsomWatch Media Coverage 2014**

Aviva Hay, Letter to the Editor, [The Vote to Annex](#), *Jerusalem Post*, January 1, 2014

Aviva Hay, Letter to the Editor, [Annexation of the Jordan Valley](#), *Haaretz*, January 2, 2014

Ilan Sapir, Letter to the Editor, A [Useful Visit in the Settlements](#), *Haaretz*, January 2, 2014

Raya Yaron, Letter to the Editor, [Power of the Security Network](#), *Haaretz*, January 8, 2014

Tamar Fleishman, [Her Heart has Already Burned](#), *Palestine Chronicle*, January 14, 2014

Naomi Ben Zur, [This is what a pogrom in Kusara looks like](#), *Haaretz*, January 15, 2014

Tamar Fleishman, Letter to the Editor, [Nightly Terror Raids](#), *Haaretz*, January 20, 2014

[Unhappy Checkpoint](#), *Prima Zoom Czech TV*, January, 2014

[Palestinians Crossing Jerusalem Checkpoints](#), *Radio y Televisión Española*, January, 2014

Tamar Fleishman, [The Story of the Individual is Testimony to the Story of the Public](#), *Palestine Chronicle*, January 27, 2014

Dalia Golomb, Letter to the Editor, [Security Classification](#), *Haaretz*, January 29, 2014

Marcia Greenman Lebeau, Letter to the Editor, [Different Image](#), *Jerusalem Post*, February 10, 2014

Shlomo Gazit, Op-Ed, [Letter to the Civil Administration Commander in the Occupied Territories](#), *Haaretz*, February 12, 2014

Tamar Fleishman, [This is No Oversight, This is a Policy](#), *Palestine Chronicle*, February 16, 2014

Amira Hass, [Water Torture for the Palestinians](#), *Haaretz*, February 18, 2014

Tamar Fleishman, [Listen to the Mad Man of Qalandiya](#), *Palestine Chronicle*, February 28, 2014

Nicoletta Martelloto, [Ebrei ortodossi ma sono accanto alle palestinesi](#), *Giornale de Vicenza, Italy* March 8, 2014

Daniela Yoel, [Italian TV interview @ 7 minutes](#), *Radio Oreb*, March 8, 2014

Tamar Fleishman, [When Nadia's Soul was Raped](#), *Palestine Chronicle*, March 11, 2014

Settler Hanoach Deon meets MachsomWatch volunteers in Hebron, *Israel TV, Channel 10*, March 3, 2014

State of the Nation, Einav Galili mentions MachsomWatch, *Israel TV Channel 2*, March 16, 2014

Dudu Avitan interviews MachsomWatch Spokeswoman Raya Yaron, *Yediot Jerusalem*, March 21, 2014

Special feature about the work of MachsomWatch in Qalandiya, *Spanish National TV*, March 21, 2014

Tamar Fleishman, *Palestinian Chronicle*, [The man, the lad and the boy: Each person is in himself a sea](#), March 24, 2014

Interview with MachsomWatch member Edna Kaneti, *Yediot Achronot*, March 29, 2014

Raya Yaron, Letter to the Editor, [No Limits to Creativity](#), *Haaretz*, April 19, 2014

Seder Yom, MachsomWatch is mentioned, *Israel Radio, Channel B*, May 22, 2014

Aviva Hay, Letter to the Editor, [As if for Our Protection](#), *Haaretz*, May 25, 2014,

- Raya Yaron, Op-ed, [According to the IDF, the Villages will be Destroyed](#), *Haaretz*, June 05, 2014
- London & Kirschenbaum, Dany Dayan discusses participating on a MachsomWatch Tour, *Israel TV, Channel 10*, June 9, 2014
- Guy Zohar interviews Dany Dayan. Dayan discusses participating on a MachsomWatch Tour, *Israel Radio 103 FM*, June 10, 2014
- Danya Cohen, [Who's afraid of Transparency and Accountability](#), *Jerusalem Post*, June 11, 2014
- Tamar Fleishman, [Reflections at Qalandiya](#), *Palestine Chronicle*, June 22, 2014
- Tamar Fleishman, Letter to the Editor, [Where are the Humanitarians?](#), *Haaretz*, June 23, 2014
- Oudeh Basharat, [MachsomWatch: A light in the Dark](#), *Haaretz*, June 23, 2014
- Oudeh Basharat, Opinion, [As Israel overturns the West Bank, who will protect the Palestinians](#), *Haaretz*, June 24, 2014
- Dvora Oreg, Letter to the editor, [A Hidden Line on Both Sides of the Line](#), *Haaretz*, June 25, 2014
- At the Heart of the Nation Plato Sharon interviews Oudeh Basharat and chastises him for his admiration of MachsomWatch, *Israel Radio*, June 26, 2014
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- Peace Journal, *Haaretz* Peace Conference MachsomWatch page, *Haaretz* (English), July 8, 2014
- Raya Yaron, Letter to the Editor, [Let's Fight Together](#), *Haaretz*, July 11, 2014
- Leah Shakdiel, Letter to the Editor, [The Occupation is also Terrorism](#), *Haaretz*, July 11, 2014
- Raya Yaron, Op-Ed, [Let's Not Count](#), *Haaretz*, August 5, 2014
- Sylvia Peterman, [The Saudi Initiative](#), *Radio All for Peace*, August 11, 2014
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## BOOK PUBLICATION

Ruthie Ginsburg, *And You Will Serve as Eyes for Us: Israeli Human Rights Organizations as Seen Through the Camera's Eyes*. Tel Aviv: Resling, 2014 (in Hebrew).

## Other:

Art Exhibition in Tel Aviv

Qalandiya Photographs by MachsomWatch member Nurit Yarden

"Qalandiya," The Artists House, Tel Aviv

June 2014

## **Appendix 2: Excerpts from Checkpoint Reports**

### **Qalandiya Checkpoint. December 12, 2014. AM.**

Observers: Chana S., Ronit D. (reporting). Translator: Charles K.

#### **A very difficult morning, on International Human Rights Day, and then the head of the Civil Administration arrives for a visit.**

We parked before the checkpoint and crossed on foot. Even before we went through the first revolving gate on the way to the Palestinian side we heard the noise: yelling, whistling and banging on the metal panels. It was clear a difficult morning awaited us.

The familiar, terrible sight of masses of people greeted us. Shoving, climbing over each other and on the fences in an attempt to push into the cages and advance to wait at the inspection booths. Whoever can't or won't push moves back. The benches, which on ordinary days (assuming there are any here) are almost empty, are filled with people sitting and waiting for the furor to calm down. A group of men prays in one corner.

[To read this report in its entirety, click here.](#)

### **Jordan Valley, December 29, 2014**

Observers: Naomi Levite, Rina Tsur (reporting)

**We drove to the Tayasir checkpoint.** We found the older shepherd sitting on the steps leading up to the pedestrian checkpoint. We asked the soldiers what he's doing there. They said he was grazing his sheep in a prohibited area so he was arrested. He'll remain there for three hours. That's the standard detention procedure (known to us). An officer arrived, went over to the shepherd, spoke a few words with him in Arabic, politely, and explained that he must wait and that he'll speak to his commanding officer. He told us the shepherd was where he wasn't allowed to be.

**Catching shepherds and detaining them at checkpoints in the Jordan Valley is a common practice.** Usually the settlement security coordinator (a civilian employed by the settlement who is in charge of security in the settlement) calls the army to make illegal arrests with the excuse that the shepherds came too close to the settlement's fence. In this way the checkpoint becomes an illegal punishment facility, and without leaving any trace: nothing is written down, the police aren't called because there's no basis for an arrest.

[To read this report in its entirety, click here.](#)

## Appendix 3: Announcement in Haaretz Newspaper on the occasion of the Haaretz Peace Conference, July 8, 2014

### **Machsom Watch**

**Women against the Occupation and for Human Rights**  
**Operating in the Occupied Territories**  
**Documenting and Publicizing the injustices of the Occupation**

**We aim to convince the general public that**  
**The Israeli Occupation of the Palestinian people damages both societies**  
**The Occupation turns Israeli people into a violent and an immoral society**

**How do we operate?**  
Monitoring checkpoints, roads, villages and military courts  
Documenting and Publicizing the injustices that Israel inflicts on the Palestinians  
Conducting tours and meetings with Palestinians in their villages  
Helping the Palestinians to cancel administrative detentions from working in Israel  
Meeting with Palestinian women in their villages, setting grounds for peace  
Organizing fun days at the beach for Palestinian children and their mothers



**Daphne Buzai - Tel Aviv**  
I grew up in a right wing Jewish revisionist home. At the age of 18 I came back to Israel to serve in the IDF. When the Oslo Accords collapsed I became a human rights activist in the Occupied Territories. I love my country but I object to moral corruption. I joined Machsom Watch in 2002 where I devote my activities to the remote area of the Jordan Valley



**Daniela Yofel - Jerusalem**  
I am an observant Jew. I grew up in the "Ezer" youth movement and I was a member of "Agudat Yisrael". My strong Jewish values led me to join Machsom Watch in 2001. I write reports about my observations in the West Bank. I also lecture to Israelis and visitors from abroad where I emphasize the true Jewish values, which have been pushed aside



**Leah Shaked - Yerusha**  
My parents immigrated to Israel from Poland in 1994 as religious pioneers within the "Mizrachi" movement. The values in my home led me to join "Or Ve'Shalom", a religious movement which protests the Occupation. As an educator, I focus on humanitarian Judaism. I am also active on behalf of my Belzian neighbors. My work within Machsom Watch is devoted to the Hebron area



**Nirli Harel - Tel Aviv**  
Politically my family and most of my friends are right of center. On a tour with "Combatants for Peace" I saw the reality of daily life under the Occupation. I speak out about the unbearable burden of daily life of Palestinians who live under the Occupation, and reveal their humanity. My activism in Machsom Watch involves building human connections with Palestinian women and their children.



**لا للتواجد  
في المستعمرات  
WATCH DOGS  
مراقبات**

WATCH DOGS  
מאכסום וואטץ  
מאכסום וואטץ  
מאכסום וואטץ

**Machsom Watch is an organization of 250 volunteer women**  
**We wish that men and women in Israel and everywhere**  
**will join us to bring an end to the Occupation**

Web site: [www.machsomwatch.org](http://www.machsomwatch.org)  
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