

# **Israeli state – sanctioned settler terrorism**

## **A gendered lens**

Documented Human Rights Violations Against Palestinian Women  
& Girls in the occupied West Bank



Photo by: Thomas Coex/AFP

**The Global Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and  
Democracy - MIFTAH**  
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# Background

The illegal Israeli settlement project, including settler-only bypass roads, military checkpoints, and the annexation wall, continues to expand and steal more Palestinian land and resources. As of today, the number of illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, including Jerusalem, is close to 300, with around 750,000 Jewish settlers residing in them.

Israeli state-sanctioned settler terrorism against Palestinian civilians and property is prevalent and has been on the rise in recent years. Violence takes the form of psychological, physical, and verbal violence, including beating, throwing stones or sharp tools, intimidation, shooting, verbal assaults, and assaults on agricultural lands, cars, and homes. Such attacks are committed in the presence of Israeli occupation forces who often join them.

The high frequency of these forms of violence and their persistence give rise to psychological, physical, and material harm. Palestinian survivors of settler terrorism seldom press charges and file complaints against Israeli settlers given the complicity of the Israeli law enforcement system.

The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy (MIFTAH) collected questionnaires from 229 Palestinian women covering settler violence in the occupied West Bank governorates of Al-Khalil/Hebron, Bethlehem, and Jerusalem.

The full report is accessible **here**.

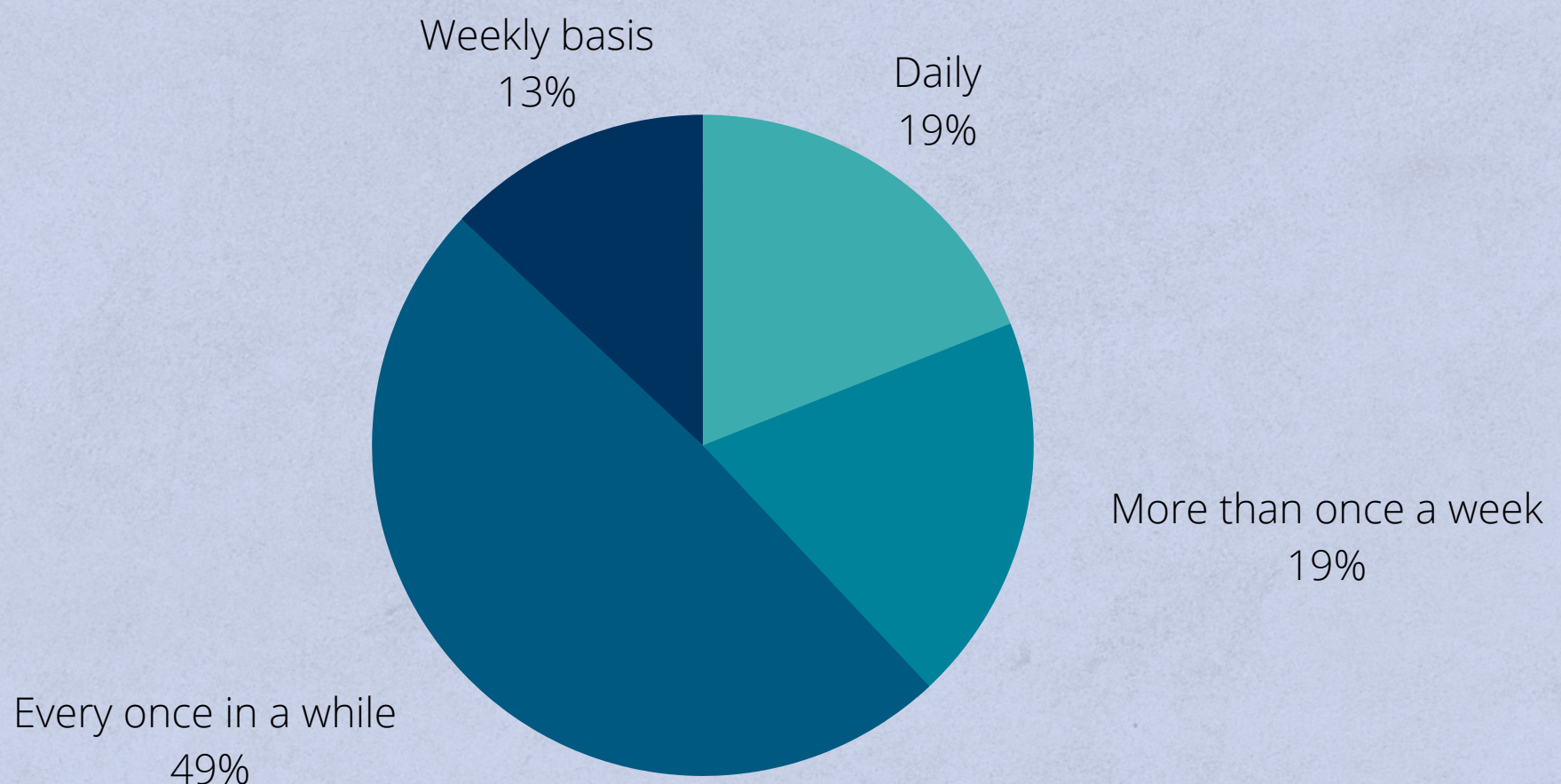


# Main Findings

Of the 229 women who filled out the questionnaire:

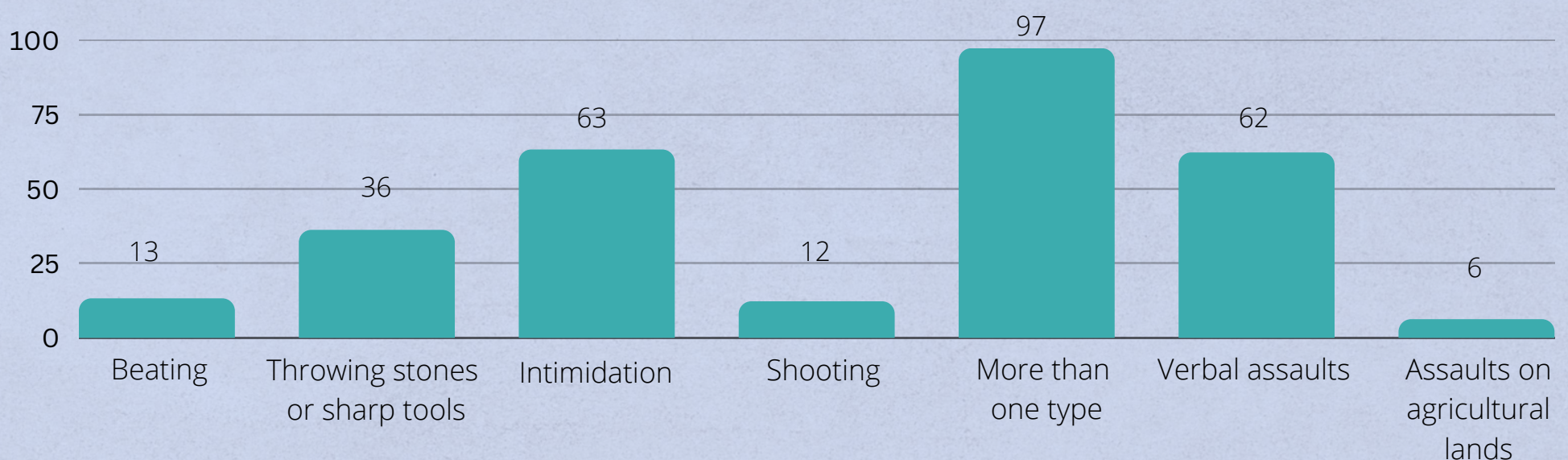
- 190 pass an illegal settlement on their way to work or school
- 182 are subjected to settler assaults when they leave their home
- 100 need an accompaniment for protection purposes

## *Frequency of assaults by Israeli settlers*



→ 82% of these assaults on women are carried out by male settlers

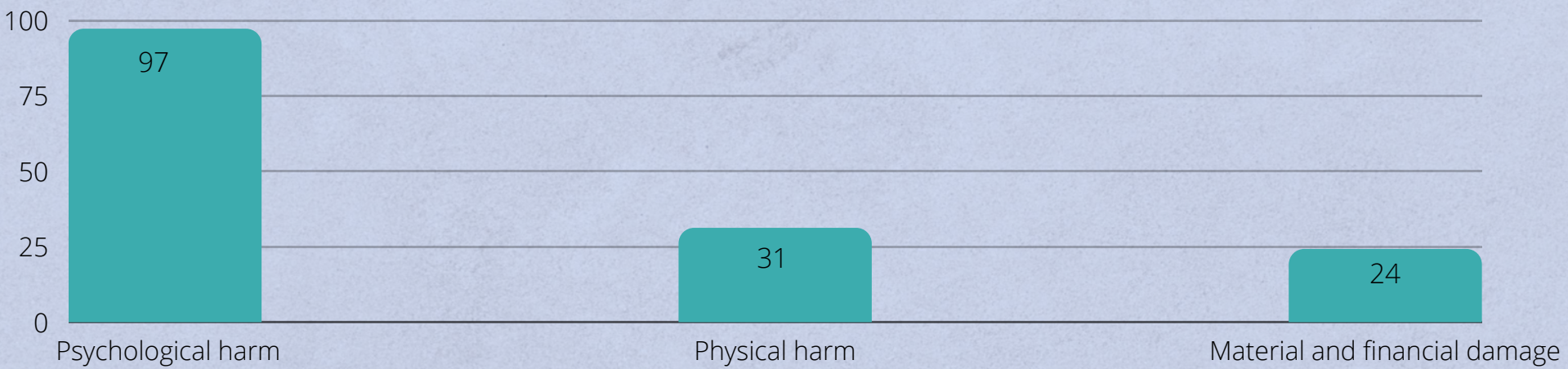
## *Method of assault*





# Consequences of the assaults:

Respondents reported that the assaults caused them physical, and psychological pain, and had material and financial consequences.



- 86% of women respondents decided not to submit complaints against settler violence, most likely due to their belief of the ineffectiveness of submitting a complaint to a complicit Israeli legal system.





# Legal Dimension

Israeli settler attacks against civilians and illegal settlement expansion are a violation of Israel's obligations as an occupying power under international humanitarian law and human rights law. They also amount to war crimes under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and a violation of the protection and accountability pillars under the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.

International Humanitarian Law	International Human Rights Law	Rome Statute	Women, Peace and Security Agenda
Article 43 of the Hague Regulations of 1907 to maintain public order in territory it occupies. Israel's failure to protect Palestinian civilians and enforce public order through putting an end to Israeli settlers' assaults and attacks against Palestinians, blatantly violates its obligations as an occupying power.	Israel's lack of action to provide protection to Palestinians, end settler attacks, and hold settlers accountable for human rights and humanitarian law violations contravenes its obligations under several articles in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.	The gravity of settlement expansion as a violation of international humanitarian law is reflected in its inclusion in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which considers settlement construction and expansion a war crime.	Settler attacks on Palestinian women contravene state obligations under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and wider resolutions contained in the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.



# Conclusion and Recommendations

Israeli state-sanctioned settler terrorism continues relentlessly across occupied Palestine. Such violence is systematic and affects all aspects of Palestinian life, with a particular impact on women and children. The Israeli state and settlers feel emboldened to commit such crimes and human rights violations given the impunity they enjoy due to the lack of accountability and the international community's inaction.

## **MIFTAH calls on the international community to:**

Put an end to Israel's impunity and hold it accountable for its persistent crimes, including the crime against humanity of apartheid, through the adoption of effective and concrete measures;

Stop all relations and trade with illegal Israeli settlements including international companies that profit from them;

Criminalize and blacklist Israeli settler groups that engage in terrorist activities and hold those with dual citizenship accountable in their respective states;

Ensure the urgent implementation of UNSCR 1325 to provide immediate protection for Palestinian women and to put an end to Israel's impunity;

Support the UN Special Rapporteur in the oPt, the International Court of Justice's advisory opinion, the ICC investigation and the UN Commission of Inquiry.