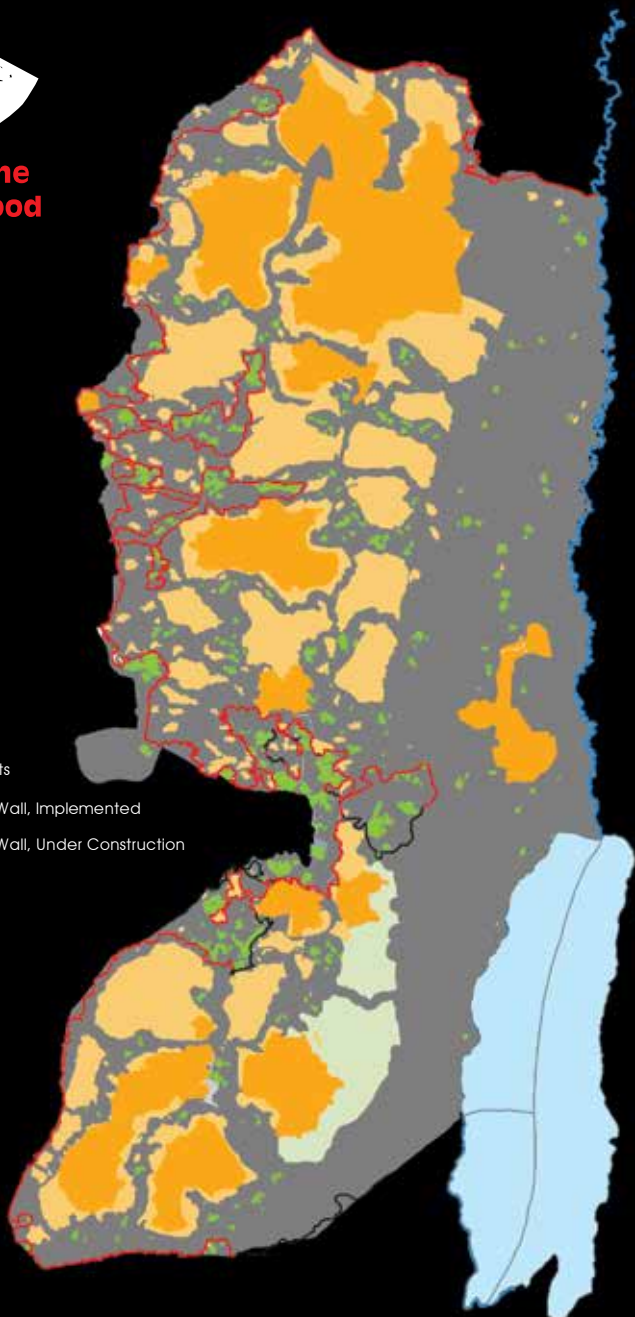




Cornerstone for Statehood

- Area A
- Area B
- Area C
- Israeli Settlements
- The Separation Wall, Implemented
- The Separation Wall, Under Construction
- Dead Sea
- Jordan River
- Natuar Reserv



al-
palestine

Special Issue, November 2015
www.thisweekinpalestine.com



Sustainable Urban Development in the State of Palestine: An Opportunity Interrupted



Op-ed by UN-Habitat Executive Director, Dr. Joan Clos



My visit to the State of Palestine comes at a crucial moment for global development. In the coming weeks, world leaders will adopt the Post-2015 Universal Agenda that consists of seventeen Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets that aim at ending poverty and improving the lives of the world's population by 2030. One of these goals focuses on sustainable cities and human settlements. Almost all of the other goals are linked in one way or another to urbanization.

The new development agenda is a strong global commitment to achieving sustainable development. But what does this new development agenda mean for the State of Palestine? Globally, the majority of the world's population is now urban. Looking at the State of Palestine, in the West Bank approximately seventy percent of the population live in urban areas, mostly in Bethlehem Hebron, Jerusalem, Nablus, and Ramallah; in Gaza, eighty percent of the population does.

But urbanization is not simply a demographic phenomenon. It is a broader force. When managed well, urbanization is a driver for sustainable development, which can potentially help the world to effectively tackle some of

its major challenges, such as ending poverty and addressing the issue of climate change. At UN-Habitat, which is the UN agency mandated to promote sustainable urbanization, we promote a new and more positive approach to urban issues. We strongly believe that effective urbanization is a choice, a human choice that is not achieved by chance but by design and political will. The positive outcomes of urbanization depend largely on the quality of that design.

In the case of the State of Palestine, it is clear that there are many challenges to harnessing urbanization as a positive force for development. It is hard to see how urbanization can foster development in Palestine, where over sixty percent of the West Bank, known as Area C, is under a restrictive planning process that is discriminatory and not in conformity with international humanitarian and human rights law. Or in Gaza, where recurrent conflict has killed thousands of people, devastated the urban space, destroyed and damaged thousands of homes, and where reconstruction is proceeding too slowly. Or Jerusalem, where I see one city divided by multiple growing inequalities.

Urbanization, as a positive force for development in Palestine, is a



Landscape view of the village of Imneizil, south of Hebron. Photo Courtesy of UN-Habitat.

phenomenon significantly interrupted by the occupation. Yet, there is no development without urbanization, a fact we have to acknowledge against the long process of final political settlement leading to two states living side by side in peace and security. To be clear, the UN seeks a just resolution to issues including the demarcation of borders, Israeli settlements, the status of Jerusalem, water and natural resources, the Gaza blockade, and Palestinian refugees, together with affirmative actions to cease the destruction of Palestinian property.

UN-Habitat – as articulated through its recent analysis on East Jerusalem, Area C, and Gaza and as echoed in the One UN Position Paper on Spatial Planning in Area C – believes there are practical measures that can be taken to foster sustainable urbanization for the State of Palestine, which in turn can improve the conditions for peace. Central to UN-Habitat's perspective on urbanization is that spatial and urban planning must be used as a means for delivering human rights, not denying them. Hence, UN-Habitat considers the approval of the Master Plans that have been submitted by Palestinian communities for Area C to be an imperative step for the implementation of an inclusive planning and zoning regime that will

enable Palestinians' residential- and community-development needs to be met across the entirety of the State of Palestine. For Gaza specifically, Israel must end the blockade to allow the cities to build back better through innovation and participatory urban planning approaches.

Looking ahead, the UN system has begun preparations for Habitat III, the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development that will take place in Quito, Ecuador in October 2016. The new urban model that we are promoting as a basis for the conference addresses all three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social, and environmental. Our primary objective is to plan "for a better urban future," where cities and human settlements become inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. Palestinians should not be excluded from this high endeavor. Our unwavering commitment to the State of Palestine is to support it in realizing the potential of sustainable urbanization – today, tomorrow, and in the years to come.

Dr. Joan Clos is the Executive Director of UN-Habitat, which is mandated to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all.



MDGs to SDGs



Op-ed by Roberto Valent
Special Representative of the Administrator
UNDP's Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People

Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.



Across the globe, world leaders have adopted the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that are essentially an agreed-upon vision to put people and the planet on a sustainable path by 2030. This will form the bedrock of a new development agenda that can set the world on a course of action to end poverty, transform lives, and protect the planet.

The Goals spell out how we can and must work together to promote dignity, equality, justice, shared prosperity, and well-being for all – while protecting the environment. I have learned from my work with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) that setting goals and targets is effective: and we are the first generation that can end poverty and the last one that can avoid the worst effects of climate change.

Millions of people's lives have improved due to concerted efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals that serve as the foundation for the next global development agenda. Some MDG targets have already been met, i.e. reducing poverty, increasing access to improved drinking water sources, improving the lives of slum dwellers, and achieving gender parity in primary schools.

Over the past twenty years, the likelihood of a child dying before the age of five has been cut nearly in half; globally, the maternal mortality rate dropped by nearly half; more people than ever before are receiving antiretroviral therapy for HIV-infection; more than six million deaths from malaria were averted due to a substantial expansion of malaria interventions. Enormous progress has been made, which shows the value of a unifying agenda underpinned by goals and targets.



View of the landscape near the village of Tuqu', Bethlehem district.
Photo courtesy of Ventura Formicone - @UNDP/PAPP

Yet despite this progress, the indignity of poverty has not been ended for all, which is why the seventeen new Goals will continue the journey towards progress for everyone, a journey which aims to go even farther: to focus the world on ending poverty, hunger, and major health problems and to break new ground by setting goals and targets regarding inequalities, economic growth, decent jobs, energy, climate change, peace and justice, and more.

The government of the State of Palestine has made important achievements in the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). However, in light of the occupation and the challenges facing Palestinian development, the localization of the SDGs warrants particular attention to the Palestinian context, especially in Area C of the West Bank and in East Jerusalem. According to the 2014 Human Development Report, the State of Palestine scored higher than the calculated average for the Arab-country region group in health and education, but it fell significantly below other Arab countries in the "decent standards of living" measure of GNI (average of US\$ 15,817 per capita). While notable progress has been made in education, two areas still require special attention: preschool education and accessibility of education in general and in all regions. If these areas are improved, if infrastructure for education is further developed, and additional progress is achieved in enrollment rates, education targets will be met in the State of Palestine.

I believe, we will achieve substantial results by taking on together the many interconnected challenges we face. Taking action to achieve the Global Goals and building greater shared prosperity is in everybody's best interest and provides enormous investment opportunities that will





A mural on one of the walls of the village of Bil'in.
Photo courtesy of Ventura Formicone - @UNDP/PAPP

14 LIFE BELOW WATER



15 LIFE ON LAND



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



benefit all people and the entire planet. Success in this new ambitious agenda for global action will be driven by leaders, governments, and people, especially at the local level. The Goals should matter to all of us: we all have a shared responsibility for our future.

By working united, shared problems can be overcome. With new, interconnected Sustainable Development Goals that apply to all, we can go much further in order to end all forms of poverty, ensure that no one is left behind, tackle unsustainable practices, and chart a dignified future for all people in all countries.

Therefore, the establishment of an environment conducive towards supporting Palestinian resilience and the right to freedom, dignity, and self-determination will propel the achievement of the SDGs in the State of Palestine. UNDP stands ready to support the State of Palestine as it develops its plans for making the SDGs a reality – the Sustainable Development Goals matter to Palestinians, too!

Roberto Valent is the Special Representative of the Administrator for UNDP's Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (UNDP/PAPP). Prior to his current position, Mr Valent was the UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in El Salvador and Belize. From 2007-2010, Mr Valent was Deputy Special Representative at UNDP/PAPP. From 2005-2007 he was Deputy Country Director in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and assigned as Deputy Resident Representative in Sudan from 2002-2005. Mr. Valent began his career with UNDP in 1995 in Albania. An Italian national, Mr Valent holds a BA and a Master's Degree in Political Sciences from Bologna University, Italy, followed by another Master's Degree in International Relations from Sussex University, United Kingdom.



United Nations Development Programme Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People

UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in more than 170 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations.

UNDP's Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (UNDP/PAPP) owes its origin to a resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 December 1978, calling upon UNDP "to improve the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people".

Empowered lives. Resilient nations.

In partnership with Palestinian institutions, civil society, communities and donors, UNDP's goal is to empower the Palestinian People to establish a viable State that is able to realize the right to development for its people and support their socio-economic resilience. Since its establishment, UNDP/PAPP has delivered over USD 1.5 billion in development assistance to the Palestinian People, and generated over 3.5 million workdays.

UNDP/PAPP places empowerment, resilience and sustainability at the centre of its operation and focuses on three priority areas: the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem and Area C, where the needs are the greatest. UNDP/PAPP focuses on democratic governance and the rule of law, economic empowerment and private sector development, environment and management of natural resources, as well as public and social infrastructure.

UNDP/PAPP's support in the governance sector is aligned to Palestinian national priorities and focuses on the rule of law and access to justice, national unity and social cohesion, inclusion and participation, local governance, and public administration reform to build strong and accountable institutions.

To reduce poverty, UNDP prioritizes support to the most vulnerable communities and families through sustainable economic empowerment approaches that help people enhance their self-reliance and become gradually less reliant on aid. Efforts are made in the areas of promoting private sector productivity, employment schemes, and micro-entrepreneurship, social safety nets for the most vulnerable families, agricultural management, and basic infrastructure for improved service delivery.

UNDP/PAPP's environment and natural resources portfolio focuses on strengthening environmental and water governance, mobilizing environmental financing, improving access to environmental services such as water supply and sanitation, solid waste management, and energy; mainstreaming environment and climate change, and developing the capacities of Palestinian State institutions in climate change adaptation and mitigation.

UNDP/PAPP also focuses on social, public and economic infrastructure as well as early recovery and reconstruction to support the resilience of Palestinian marginalized communities, especially in Area C, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. Interventions cover five key sectors; access to energy, transportation, housing, education and health.



Area C of the West Bank: Strategic Importance and Development Prospects



Mohammad Mustafa

The peace process that began in the early 1990s purportedly aimed at reaching a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace settlement through a permanent status agreement that would (among other things) end the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory (that began in 1967) and result in the establishment of an independent Palestinian state throughout the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip.

As part of this peace process, a series of interim agreements were concluded between the PLO and Israel: the Declaration of Principles of 1993 called for a gradual transfer of power in the Occupied Palestinian Territory from Israel to the Palestinian side over a five-year period, with negotiations on permanent status issues to begin two years after an initial Israeli withdrawal from Jericho and Gaza.¹ The Gaza-Jericho Agreement of 1994 called on Israel to withdraw from Gaza and Jericho within a certain period of time.² The 1995 Interim Agreement contemplated four additional phases of Israeli “redeployments” in the West Bank:³ The first phase was to be an Israeli redeployment from “populated areas” of the West Bank, to be completed

before the elections for the Palestinian Council.⁴ The remaining three phases would involve the gradual redeployment to “specified military locations” over the period of eighteen months from the inauguration of the Palestinian Council, to take place at six-month intervals.⁵ These interim arrangements were an integral part of the whole peace process, to be concluded with a Permanent Status Agreement, and to lead to the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.⁶

To facilitate the transfer of authority to the Palestinian side, the 1995 Interim Agreement divided the West Bank into three Areas – A, B, and

The strategic importance and economic significance of Area C cannot be overstated. It is a natural location for large infrastructure projects such as wastewater treatment plants, landfills, water pipelines, energy projects, and main roads as well as for industrial, tourism and agricultural projects.

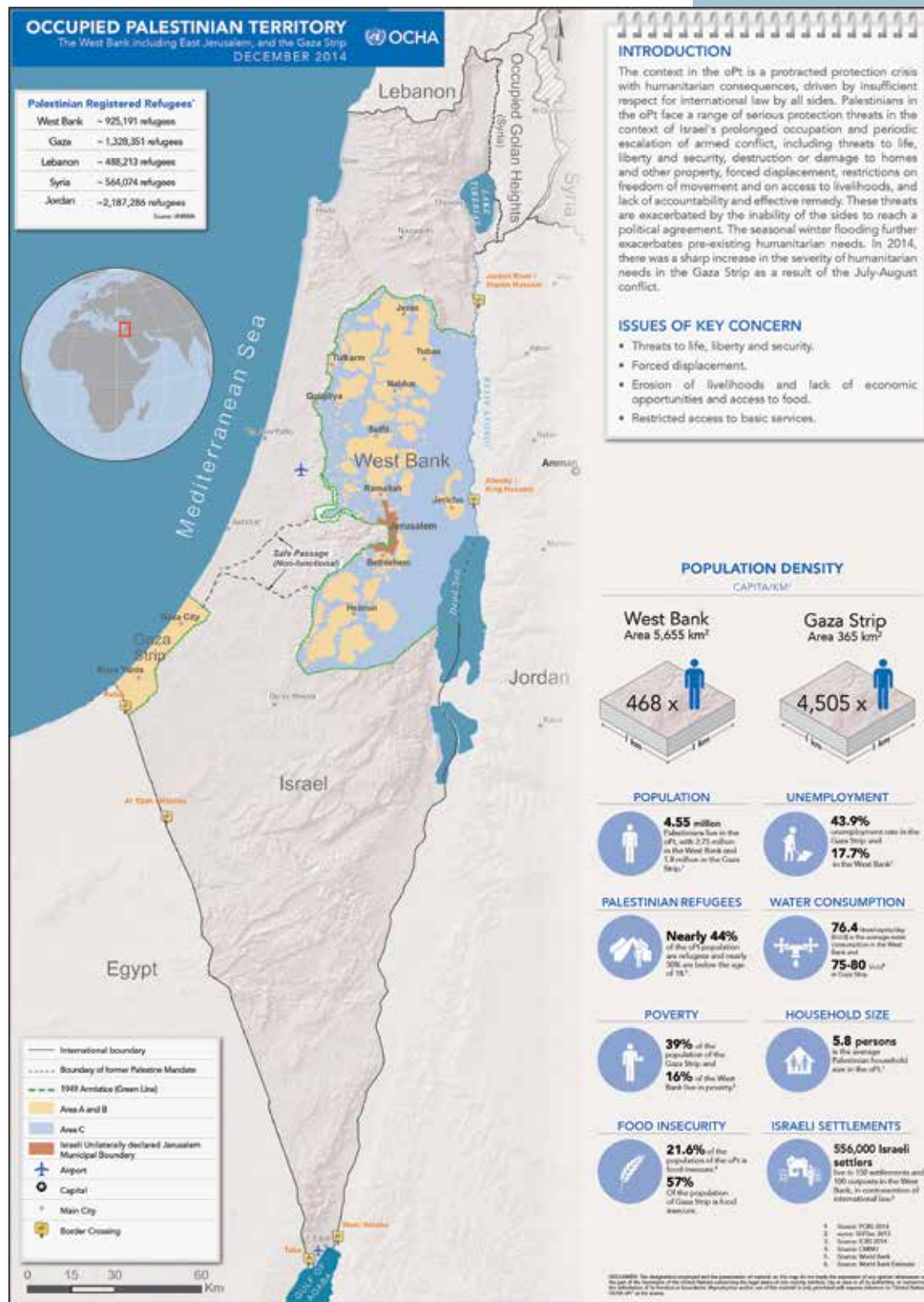
Photo from Palestine Image Bank.



C – and provided that the parties would have varying degrees of authority in each. It provided that Area C, “except for the issues that will be negotiated in the permanent status negotiations (Jerusalem, settlements, specified military locations), will be gradually transferred to Palestinian jurisdiction”⁷ as part of the three-stage “further redeployments.”⁸ Notwithstanding the temporary administrative divisions, the interim agreements declared that the West Bank and Gaza Strip comprised a single territorial unit, whose integrity and status were to be preserved during the interim period,⁹ also providing for a safe passage to link the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.¹⁰ But the implementation of the first two phases of redeployment was delayed by Israel, and it failed to carry out the third and final phase of redeployment. Had Israel fulfilled its obligations under the interim agreements in carrying out all redeployments, approximately 92% of the West Bank area would have been under Palestinian control since 1997. Instead, Area A today comprises about 18% of the West Bank territory, which includes all Palestinian cities and most of the Palestinian population; Area B comprises approximately 21% of territory and encompasses small towns and villages in rural areas; while Area C covers 61% of the West Bank territory and is the only area that is contiguous, engulfing the fragmented islands of Areas A and B.

Regarding functional jurisdiction under the terms of the interim agreements: In Area A, the Palestinian government has authority over civil affairs, internal security, and public order, while Israel retains responsibility over external security. In Area B, the Palestinian government exercises civil authority and maintains public order for Palestinians, while Israel retains overriding responsibility for security. In Area C, Israel retains jurisdiction with regards to security, public order, and on all issues related to territory, including planning and zoning, while the Palestinian side has personal jurisdiction over Palestinians and “functional jurisdiction” in matters “not related to territory,” excluding issues that will be negotiated in the permanent status negotiations (Jerusalem, settlements, and military locations).

Notwithstanding the 1995 Interim Agreement’s division of the West Bank into areas A, B and C,



VULNERABILITY PROFILE PROJECT (VPP) 2013

The VPP includes detailed information on 532 residential areas* located in Area C of the West Bank. Some of these residential areas are located entirely (i.e. 100 per cent) in Area C, but, in many cases, the area is part of a bigger community, part of which lies in Areas A or B. The tables below provide the breakdown of available data in terms of geographic location, type of community and amount of built-up area located in Area C.

3.1 Area C Residential Areas and Residents by Governorate

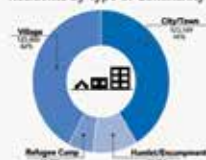
Governorate	Residential Areas	Estimated Residents
Bethlehem	57	37,777
Hebron	122	67,850
Jenin	54	20,879
Jericho	24	10,067
Jerusalem	70	73,515
Nablus	37	9,583
Qalqilya	31	9,599
Ramallah	61	36,448
Salfit	25	11,822
Tubas	27	2,736
Tulkarm	24	17,625
TOTAL	532	297,900

3.2 Area C Residential Areas and Residents by % Area C

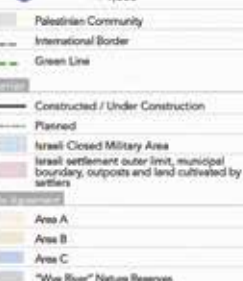
% Area C	Residential Areas	Estimated Residents
Less than 50%	240	175,866
99% - 50	51	55,018
100%	241	67,016
GRAND TOTAL	532	297,900



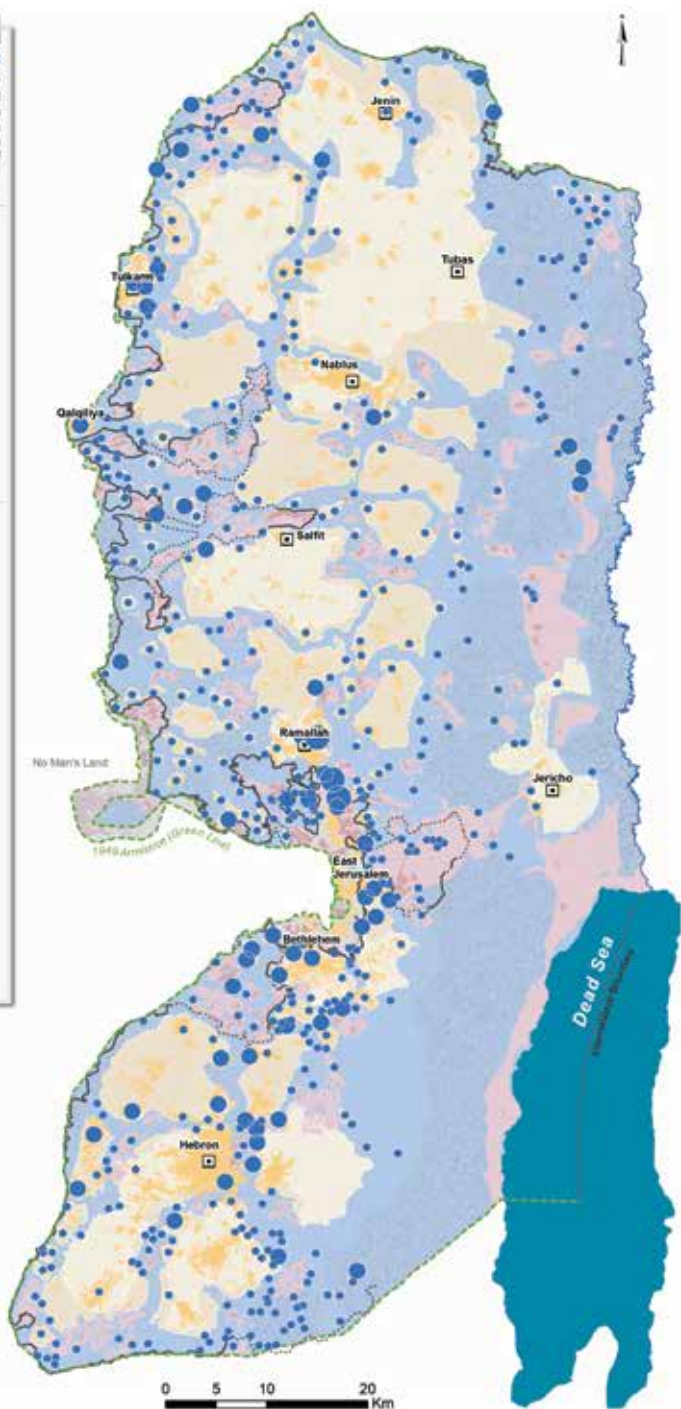
Estimated Number of Residents by Type of Community



Residents of Area C*



*Source: Vulnerability Profile Project 2013. Residential areas in the VPP are geographically referenced or PCCode-linked to the PCBS locality list to ensure compatibility between data sets.



Courtesy of OCHA.

Considering Area C's development potential and the fact that it comprises the portion of the West Bank territory that is the largest in size, most fertile, and richest in resources, while taking into account that it is the only territorially contiguous area, it is clear that without Palestinian control over Area C and its development, there can be no viable Palestinian state - nor any prospect for a political settlement based on a two-state solution.

the status of all the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and Area C, as well as of the Gaza Strip remains that of an occupied territory under international law and as stipulated by the International Court of Justice in its Wall Advisory Opinion.¹¹ The interim agreements do not and were never intended to constitute an acknowledgement of Israel's claims to sovereignty within any part of the West Bank, whether Area C or otherwise. On the contrary, the interim agreements were intended to formalize a transition from total Israeli control to partial Palestinian control within a period of five years, to be followed by a Permanent Status Agreement that would end Israeli occupation and result in the establishment of a fully independent Palestine state.

As an occupying power, Israel's powers are only temporary, administrative, and limited in scope, without conferring any sovereign title.¹² Sovereignty remains vested in the Palestinian people and the Palestinian state. Furthermore, Israel is obliged to act only for the benefit of the Palestinian population and is prohibited from acting to advance in the occupied territory its own territorial or economic interests, which includes the establishment of settlements and the transferring of its civilian population into the occupied territory.¹³ Israeli policies and practices in Area C - as well documented by UN agencies, international organizations, and civil society - aim to limit Palestinian access and prohibit development while facilitating illegal settlements and Israel's exploitation of this area. These practices are in clear violation of international law and of the interim agreements under which Area C should have long been transferred to Palestinian control.

Today, Area C is home to approximately 520 Palestinian communities, 230 of which are entirely located in Area C. The majority of these communities (70%) are not connected to basic infrastructure such as water networks. Palestinian construction is allowed only within the boundaries of Israeli-approved plans that cover less than 1% of Area C. Conversely, land set aside for illegal Israeli settlements and military locations covers 70% of Area C (44% of the West Bank). In addition, 23% of the West



Photo from Palestine Image Bank.

Bank is designated as 'fire zones' or 'nature reserves' by the Israeli military. Similar to lands within the expansive boundaries of settlements and military locations, these lands are considered off-limits for Palestinian access and development. Today, there are 224 illegal Israeli settlements, including over 100 so-called "outposts", scattered across the West Bank, the majority of which are in Area C.

A case in point for the impact of Israeli restrictions on Area C is the Jordan Valley. In 1967, approximately 250,000 Palestinians lived in the Jordan Valley. In recent years, this number has dropped to 70,000, of which 70% are concentrated in the Jericho area, while approximately 91.5% of the Jordan Valley is considered off-limits for Palestinians. Despite its vast agricultural potential, the Jordan Valley is the governorate least cultivated by Palestinians due to Israeli restrictions. Only 4.7% of the land in the Jordan Valley is cultivated, compared to an average of 25% in other governorates.

A World Bank report published in 2013 on Area C assessed the economic potential of the area to the Palestinian economy.¹⁴ The report evaluated the effect of Israeli restrictions on Palestinian planning, zoning, and development of Area C in key economic sectors: Dead Sea minerals exploitation, cosmetics, stone mining and quarrying, construction, tourism, and telecommunications. The conclusions were unequivocal: The direct impact of removing restrictions on the above sectors could generate an additional output of \$ 2.2 billion per annum – an amount equivalent to 23% of the Palestinian GDP in 2011. Most of this output could be derived

from removing restrictions on two sectors, agriculture and Dead Sea mineral exploitation, with irrigation of unexploited land yielding a potential \$ 704 million per year, and exploitation of Dead Sea minerals yielding \$918 million per year. The study has also concluded that the multiplier effect across the economy could add a total benefit of \$3.4 billion per year and would lead to significant improvements in the government's fiscal situation by adding \$800 million in tax revenues per annum.

The Palestinian government has adopted a Strategic National Framework for development interventions in Area C.¹⁵ This framework outlines the national priorities and interventions in Area C across multiple sectors, spanning governance, social sectors, infrastructure, the economy, and the importance of consolidating the efforts of all stakeholders in developing Area C as part and parcel of the territory of the State of Palestine. Building on this government strategy on Area C, the Palestine Investment Fund (PIF), the investment arm of the State of Palestine, has developed a portfolio of projects intended for Area C. These include the development of agricultural production, and of food processing and packaging plants in the areas of Tubas and Sanur; the development of solar farm projects in ten locations in Area C found suitable for that purpose; the development of the shores of the Dead Sea, including mineral production and tourism facilities; residential housing projects in the areas of Qalqilia and Tulkarm, both in Area C, creating contiguity between Areas A and B; a waste recycling site in Beit Furik; a waste burial and recycling site west of Deir Sharaf; a

new town in the northern Jordan Valley area to include residential units, an area for commerce and business, and health care and recreational facilities; a new town between Ramallah and Jericho comprised of four thousand housing units; a new neighbourhood in Hebron in the area of Jabel Johar; and the Moon City north of Jericho comprised of residential housing units and recreational facilities.

Against the backdrop of a sharp decline in donor aid, a protracted fiscal crisis, rising unemployment and poverty rates, as well as intensified Israeli settlement activity in Area C, the implementation of these and similar projects in Area C will advance the physical and economic foundations of an independent Palestinian state.

It will undoubtedly revitalize the Palestinian economy, create sustained economic growth led by the private sector, and generate thousands of new employment opportunities, all within a developmental approach that goes beyond the humanitarian imperative and accounts for the strategic importance of Area C to a viable Palestinian economy and statehood.

Dr. Mohammad Mustafa is Chairman of the Palestine Investment Fund and is leading PIF in delivering its strategic investment mandate in key sectors of the Palestinian economy. Previously, he has served the PA as Deputy Prime Minister of Palestine and as Minister of National Economy and held a senior position in the World Bank on private sector and infrastructure development.

¹ Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements, (September 13, 1993), [DoP], Art. V(1) and (2).

² Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area, (4 May 1994).

³ Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, (September 28, 1995), [1995 Interim Agreement].

⁴ 1995 Interim Agreement, Art. X(1); Art. XI(2)(a); Art. XVII(8); and Annex I, Art. 1(1).

⁵ 1995 Interim Agreement, Art. X(2); Art. XI(2)(d); Art. XVII(8); Annex I, Art. I(9); and Annex I, Appendix I, para. B.

⁶ DoP, Art. I.

⁷ 1995 Interim Agreement, Art. XI(3)(c).

⁸ 1995 Interim Agreement, Art. XIII(2)(b)(8).

⁹ DoP, Article IV; Gaza-Jericho Agreement, Article XXIII, Clauses 6-7; 1995 Interim Agreement, Article XI, Clause 1, and Article XXXI, Clause 8.

¹⁰ 1995 Interim Agreement, Annex I, Article X.

¹¹ "The territories situated between the Green Line and the former eastern boundary of Palestine under the Mandate were occupied by Israel in 1967 during the armed conflict between Israel and Jordan. Under customary international law, these were therefore occupied territories in which Israel had the status of occupying Power. Subsequent events in these territories, [including the conclusion of the Interim Agreements], have done nothing to alter this situation. All these territories (including East Jerusalem) remain occupied territories and Israel has continued to have the status of occupying power." ICJ Advisory Opinion, par. 77.

¹² 1907 Hague Convention, Article IV: Respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land, (October 18, 1907).

¹³ 1949 Geneva Convention, Article IV: Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

¹⁴ World Bank Report: Area C and the Future of the Palestinian Economy, (October 2, 2013).

¹⁵ State of Palestine: Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development, National Development Plan: State Building to Sovereignty, 2014-2016, available at http://www.mopad.pna.ps/?option=com_content&view=article&id=458&Itemid=142&hideNav=true.



International Experts Call for Fundamental Changes in Israel's Approach to Planning and Development in Area C



Cliff Hague

The Israeli Civil Administration's (ICA) practice of planning in Area C of the occupied West Bank has been strongly criticised by leading professional planners from abroad. A report by a five-strong International Advisory Board (IAB) of experienced planners from the UK, Germany, South Africa, and Canada calls for an end to demolitions and for plans for Palestinian communities in Area C to be approved.¹

The Board was invited by UN-Habitat to look at the current impasse in planning in Area C. Under the Oslo Accords, the ICA is (temporarily) the agency with ultimate responsibility for regional and local planning in Area C. However, only three plans have been approved for Palestinian communities, and many others have been stalled for years. Without ICA-approved local-scale plans for Palestinian villages, development is unauthorised and enforcement action is taken: properties are demolished and planned developments funded by donor agencies are put on hold. Bedouin and herder communities are particularly at risk because of their semi-nomadic way of life.

The ICA says that the poor technical quality of the Palestinian plans is the reason for the delays and rejections of plans. However, after looking at a sample of ten such plans and visiting a number of the affected villages, IAB has come to the view that the plans are adequate and should be approved. This would enable villagers to undertake lawful development of their land and properties and remove the fear of demolition.

The report comments on the very high rate of demolitions in Area C, typically around 500 a year. The international experts make comparisons with the much more limited use of demolition in their own countries, where such action is seen as a "last resort". Where unauthorised development takes place, it is usually resolved through negotiation - or may be seen as not so serious as to require demolition. The IAB report says "It is simply not credible that each year in Area C, in what are largely poor and marginalised village communities, there are over 500 unauthorised Palestinian developments that have such a deleterious impact that the only remedy has to be demolition, often entailing the eviction of families from their homes and/or severely damaging livelihoods."

The Board also comments on the marked discrepancy between the lack of approval of these Palestinian plans and the expeditious process by which the ICA approves plans for new Israeli settlements in Area C. These Israeli settlements are illegal under international law. However, some 340,000 Israeli settlers now live in approximately 135 Israeli settlements, and there are another one hundred settlement "outposts" in Area C (not including East Jerusalem). The IAB notes that "The Israeli settlements get preferential access to water resources, and their residents are offered financial incentives to locate there by the Israeli government (e.g. housing subsidies). While outposts are typically 'unauthorised development' in terms of statutory plans, they rarely face demolition of their illegal structures."

Denial of Administrative Justice

The IAB report is very critical of how the ICA delivers planning in Area C, stating that it amounts to a denial of administrative justice. The concept requires that administrative systems operated by states safeguard the rights and interests of individuals affected by those systems, have fair processes, and deliver just outcomes. Good administrative justice requires states to:

- make users and their needs central, treating them with fairness and respect at all times;

The way in which the Israeli Civil Administration delivers planning in Area C amounts to a denial of administrative justice to the Palestinian people.

- enable people to challenge decisions and seek redress using procedures that are independent, open, and appropriate for the matter involved;
- keep people fully informed and empower them to resolve their problems as quickly and comprehensively as possible;
- lead to well-reasoned, lawful, and timely outcomes;
- be coherent and consistent;
- work proportionately and efficiently;
- adopt the highest standards of behaviour, seek to learn from experience, and improve continuously.²

The report points to a number of ways in which planning in Area C currently falls short on these criteria. For example, there is a lack of transparency in the use of criteria by which plans are evaluated by the ICA. The criteria are not published on the web in Arabic, but rather are explained verbally at

Landscape in Imneizel Village near Masafer Yatta, Hebron.





International Advisory Board Listening to the Village Leaders in Ras Tira and Daba, North of Qalqilya, February 2015.

the first meeting between the ICA and the planning consultants preparing plans. Similarly, the customary lack of written comment and advice from the ICA following meetings about the preparation of plans is bad practice, as is the fact that the process for vetting and objection to plans is cumbersome and involves different committees. All this contributes to excessive delays in the determination of plans. The IAB further comments that “In the context of occupation, the right of settlers to object to plans for Palestinian villages is inappropriate, as is the lack of a Palestinian voice in decisions about plans in Area C.”

Why Planning Matters

Currently, about a third of Area C residents rely on farming and herding for their livelihoods. These are activities for which access to land and to water is essential. A quarter of residents

work in Israel or in Israeli settlements – for these people transport matters to access employment opportunities. Rather than a restrictive land-use planning approach, Area C needs a form of planning that aims to drive rural development to lift people out of poverty and aid dependency.

The form and operation of the planning system is fundamentally entwined with the conflicts over land in the West Bank. At the local level, it affects the rights of every Palestinian household in Area C. However, at a more strategic level, planning is currently an obstacle to the economic development of the West Bank. Area C is fundamental to the infrastructure and connectivity of the West Bank, particularly for telecommunications, water, and transport. By preventing development of such networks to serve Palestinian homes and businesses, the planning

system operated by the ICA acts as a barrier to economic opportunity and locks people into poverty.

The IAB was surprised that regional-scale plans drawn up a lifetime ago under the British Mandate are still used and carry statutory power. Thinking about regional development has changed greatly since the 1940s, when the focus was almost exclusively on urban containment and restriction of development outside villages.

Planning in Area C is preventing the proper development of the towns in Areas A and B. Denied adjacent land on which to expand, these towns are forced to cram new development inside their boundaries at ever higher densities. The functional city-region is now recognised as an important scale at which development needs to be integrated to secure benefits for both urban centres and their hinterlands. The IAB report suggests that the West Bank needs city-region plans. Similarly, the report backs the idea of a National Spatial Strategy, which the Palestinian Authority is working on, to set a strategic development framework to guide investment by the private sector, donor agencies, and local government.

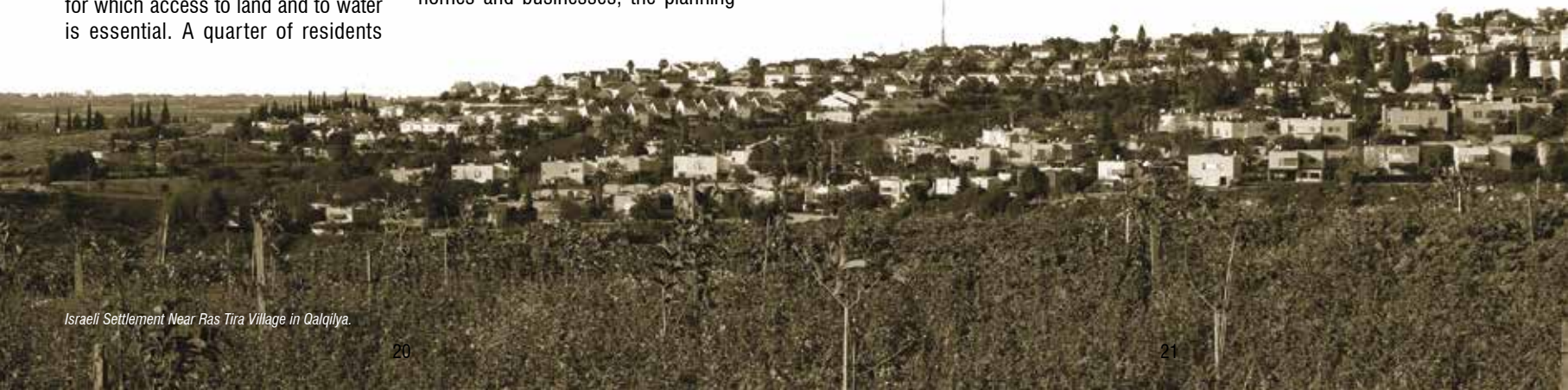
The planners on the IAB put forward a vision for how planning should be done that is very different from the negative and restrictive practice of the ICA. The IAB says urban and regional planning “can be the means to coordinate investments spatially, to

Planning in Area C should identify an adequate land supply to meet development needs over a five to ten year period and take a proactive approach towards infrastructure and connectivity. Plans need to identify and promote development opportunities.

create synergies between investments in different sectors, to connect urban and rural areas into functional economic units, to build consensus amongst stakeholders, and to fashion a development path that is respectful of local needs and cultures.” Such an approach “has a key role to play in realising the ambitions of the Palestinian people, the Palestinian Authority, the World Bank, and donor agencies.”

18 Past Presidents of Royal Town Planning Institute Express Concern

Following the publication of the IAB report, eighteen Past Presidents of the UK-based Royal Town Planning Institute signed a letter in their personal capacities, expressing concern at the way planning is being done in Area C.³ This letter, sent to the RTPi’s magazine *The Planner*, read:



Israeli Settlement Near Ras Tira Village in Qalqilya.

“We write to draw attention to the recent report to UN-Habitat on planning in the West Bank (<http://unhabitat.org/planning-needs-to-change-in-the-occupied-west-bank-un-habitat/>). The report gives the findings of an International Advisory Board of experienced planners, led by RTPI Past President Cliff Hague. It explains how planning is being used to block development and impede much-needed infrastructure investment in Palestinian villages, while facilitating the construction of Israeli settlements which are illegal under international law. As experienced planners, we are concerned at planning being used in this discriminatory way. We assert the need for planning practices to be fair, inclusive and enabling, and to be used as a means of building trust within and between communities.”

Use Planning to Deliver Human Rights

The fact that Israel has the responsibility for planning in Area C does not mean that it has to operate the planning system in the way in which it is currently conducting it. Community involvement is a central feature of most planning systems across the world. Decisions are taken locally, except where developments have impacts on a wider scale. The effective exclusion of Palestinians living in Area C from decisions about small-scale developments that have only local effects is unnecessary and inequitable. A system of Local Planning Councils, based on clusters of villages, should

be reconstituted and given powers to decide on local outline plans and to issue building permits.

In Area C, planning needs to become – as it is elsewhere nowadays – an enabling process rather than a purely restrictive mechanism. This means ensuring an adequate land supply to meet development needs over a five to ten-year period, and a proactive approach towards infrastructure and connectivity. Plans need to identify and promote development opportunities.

The international community should continue to support the process of making local plans with the aim of getting comprehensive coverage in Area C. As suggested above, approval of plans should rest with the re-established Local Planning Councils. The plans should be reviewed every five years. However, to expedite the plan preparation and adoption process and to integrate development spatially, plans should be prepared for areas based on clusters of villages and the space between them.

Such reforms could create the basis for a planning system based on human rights. They could dramatically improve development opportunities not just in Area C, but in the West Bank as a whole.

Cliff Hague is Emeritus Professor of Planning and Spatial Development at Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, Scotland, and a Past President of the Royal Town Planning Institute and of the Commonwealth Association of Planners. He chaired the International Advisory Group that reported on planning in Area C.



UN-Habitat is the United Nations programme working towards a better urban future. Its mission is to promote socially and environmentally sustainable villages, towns, and cities and the achievement of adequate shelter for all. Cities are facing unprecedented demographic, environmental, economic, social, and spatial challenges. There has been a phenomenal shift towards urbanization, with six out of every ten people in the world expected to reside in urban areas by 2030. In the State of Palestine, approximately seventy percent of the West Bank population live in urban areas – mostly in Bethlehem, Hebron, Jerusalem, Nablus, and Ramallah – while in Gaza, eighty percent of the population does. In the absence of effective urban planning, the consequences of this rapid urbanization will be dramatic. In many places around the world the effects can already be felt: lack of proper housing and growth of slums, inadequate and out-dated infrastructure – be it roads, public space, public transport, water, sanitation, or electricity – escalating poverty and unemployment, safety and crime problems, pollution and health issues, as well as poorly managed natural or man-made disasters and other catastrophes due to the effects of climate change.

Mindsets, policies, and approaches towards urbanization need to change in order for the growth of cities and urban areas to be turned into opportunities that will leave nobody behind. UN-Habitat is at the helm of that change, supporting governments in over seventy countries to harness the power of urbanization for the benefit of citizens. Mandated by the UN General Assembly in 1978 to address the issues of urban growth, it is a knowledgeable institution on urban development processes and understands the aspirations of cities and their residents. For close to forty years, UN-Habitat has been working throughout the world, focusing on building a brighter future for villages, towns, and cities of all sizes. Because of these four decades of extensive experience, from the highest levels of policy to a range of specific technical issues, UN-Habitat has gained a unique and universally acknowledged expertise in all things urban. This has placed UN-Habitat in the best position to provide answers and achievable solutions to the current challenges faced by our cities. UN-Habitat is capitalizing on its experience and position to work with partners in order to formulate the urban vision of tomorrow. It works to ensure that cities become inclusive and affordable drivers of economic growth and social development. Since 2003, UN-Habitat has supported Palestinians in their ambitions for a better urban future.

¹ UN-Habitat, (2015), *Spatial Planning in Area C of the Israeli Occupied West Bank of the Palestinian Territory: Report of an International Advisory Board*, available at <http://unhabitat.org/spatial-planning-in-area-c-of-the-israeli-occupied-west-bank-of-the-palestinian-territory/>.

² Administrative Justice and Tribunals Council, (2010), *Principles for Administrative Justice*, available at http://ajtc.justice.gov.uk/docs/principles_web.pdf.

³ Cliff Hague, (2015), 18 RTPI Past Presidents sign letter on planning in Palestine, Cliff Hague: Urbanization and Planning, available at <http://www.cliffhague.com/index.php/component/k2/item/200-18-rtpi-past-presidents-sign-letter-on-planning-in-palestine>



National Strategies for Area C



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

Courtesy of the United Nations Development Programme
Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (UNDP/PAPP)

The Vision for Area C

Because Area C is critical to Palestinian national development, sovereignty, and sustainability, the framework on which the Palestinian agenda and the National Development Plan (NDP) 2014-2016 are constructed includes several key measures for Area C: Firstly, all interventions must be premised with the understanding that Area C is territory of the West Bank, to be governed in civil and military aspects by the Palestinians. This means that Palestinian sovereignty over the territory and its resources is core towards a sustainable and viable Palestinian State. Secondly, within the current context of occupation, it is important to protect Area C from land annexation and the systematic forced displacement of the local population. Thirdly, it is necessary to create measures that strengthen Palestinian resilience, facilitate access to key resources, guarantee freedom of movement, and secure their basic human rights as a population under occupation. Fourthly, it is imperative to work towards connecting the geographical Palestinian territories overall, in particular strengthening the economic, social, and civil harmony between Areas A, B, and C. All aforementioned factors are

important for a viable, sovereign, and economically stable Palestinian state.

Current Barriers and Restraints Towards the Development of Area C

The Israeli-imposed occupation and the heightened military protocol for Area C are creating systematic gaps in both governance and development of Area C. Since 1967, Israel has occupied the West Bank and enforced special military orders, particularly in the Jordan Valley area. These military orders have proven instrumental in mitigating Palestinian development by creating barriers for local communities displaced in 1967 to return to their lands. By forcefully expelling the majority of the population of the Jordan Valley, Israel was able to

acquire and retain large areas of arable lands and important water networks. These gains were further cemented through the peace process, whereby the Oslo Agreements helped increase the fragmentation of Palestinian territories via the development of Areas A, B, and C. While at the time of the agreements it was mutually agreed that Israel would slowly transfer powers back to the Palestinians, to date Israel maintains control of the Area C territories and their key resources. These conditions create systematic constraints, including;

(i) Denying Palestinians Access to Land Military Order No. (59) prevents Palestinians from registering their properties with the responsible authorities. This creates strategic



A view of Modi'in and the Barrier from the terraces of the under construction cafeteria.
Photo courtesy of Ventura Formicone - @UNDP/PAPP

difficulties in claiming ownership to the land in Area C and therefore access to it. According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, the total area of land cultivated by Palestinians in 2010 was 1,207,061 *dunums* (120,706 hectares), compared to 1,700,042 *dunums* (170,004 hectares) cultivated in 1982. This decline can be attributed directly to Israeli policies towards Palestinian agriculture in the area, including restrictions posed on access to water.

(ii) Restrictions of Construction, Infrastructure, and Development

The urban-planning regime imposed by Israel creates conditions for local communities that are deemed unlivable. In particular, restrictions on infrastructure cause risky environments for an already vulnerable population, given that any renovation or new construction requires Israeli approval through a long, complex, and discriminatory process. Therefore, the needs of the growing population are not being met and the new generation of Palestinians is prevented from building their communities in a sustainable manner. Current data reveal that the majority of communities in Area C are not connected to water networks, power grids, and other basic necessities. This leaves the existing population reliant on costly resources and many of the more marginalized families vulnerable to displacement.

(iii) Sustaining Territorial Dominance Through Law and Occupation

A core means by which the Israeli occupation contributes to local Palestinian de-development includes its continuous dominance over land and territory via military law and military supremacy. The two elements work closely together to create deep disparities among the local population. Following the 1967 war, Israel issued a series of military orders in the Jordan Valley area that have contributed significantly towards the development of



Shufaat Refugee Camp. Photo courtesy of Ahed Izhiman.

illegal settlements and their businesses. In addition to settlements, the Israeli military practices have helped create a network of military zones (and firing zones) that add to both the insecurity in the area and also towards the further fragmenting of local territory. Other means of dominating the local area include the practice of declaring arable lands and water-rich zones as natural reserves that are accessible only to settlers in the area.

Actors in Humanitarian Development Interventions in Area C

In a response to the growing needs of the communities in Area C, multiple stakeholders have emerged in order to respond to the development of the area and to respond to humanitarian gaps that continue to deteriorate livelihoods. At the grass-roots level, interventions

were designed and implemented by local communities, local councils and committees, NGOs, and cooperatives who act in a mediatory role with other agencies of the Palestinian government, donors, UN agencies, and the international community.

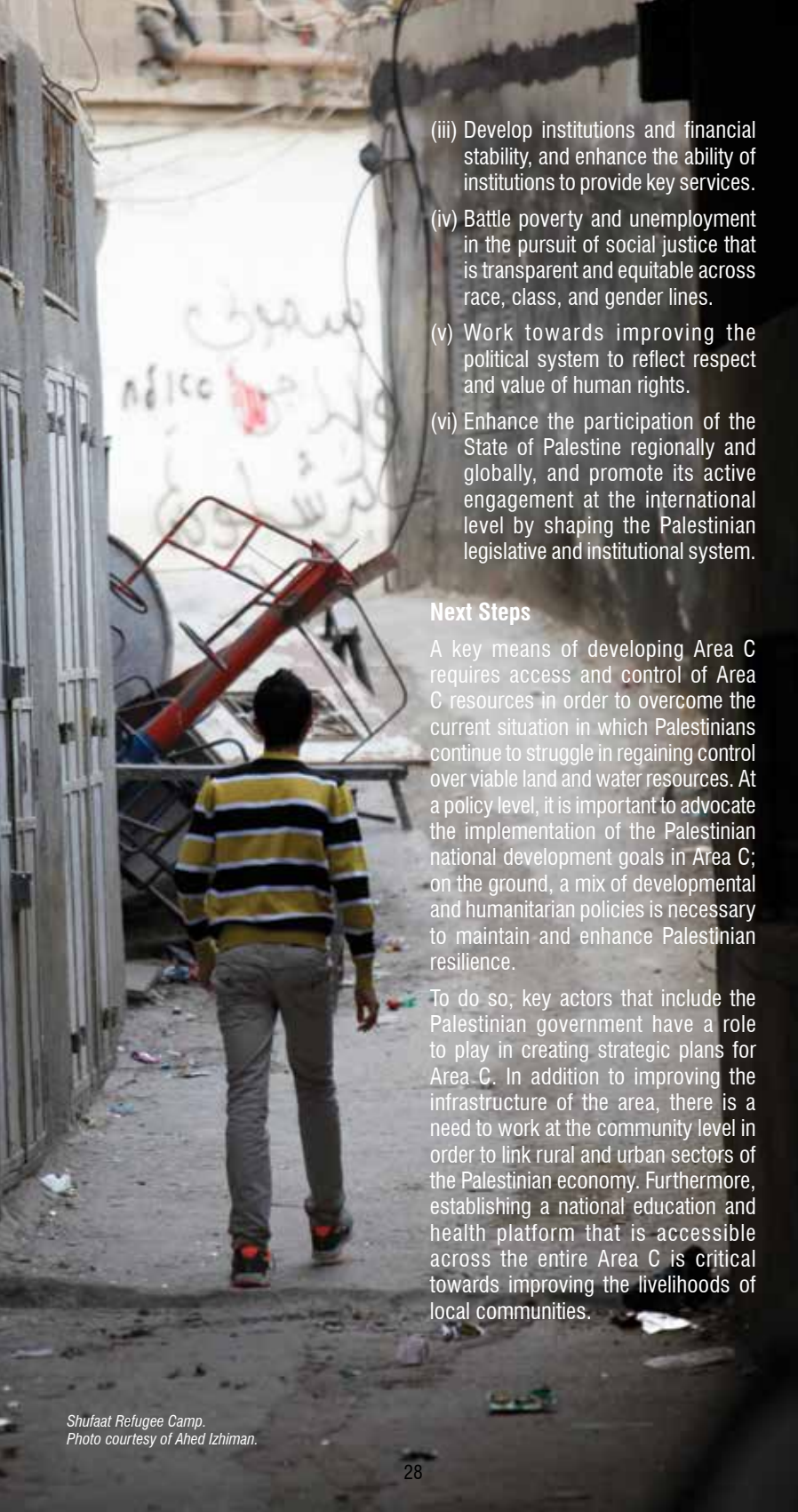
At the political and national level, the local government continues to provide support wherever possible. The Palestinian private sector plays a role in Area C in its pursuit to further national development plans and ambitions in Area C. Intervention and aid is delivered through agents that work by funding, witnessing, documenting, and advocating for Area C, most of whom have slowly merged into clusters that address three key areas: human rights violations, gaps in infrastructure and development, and humanitarian response.

All the aforementioned groups work at some level of coordination within the Palestinian national development framework on Area C. However, given the Israeli military paradigm, it is difficult to offer protection, governance, and socio-civil administrative support to the local communities.

The Agenda of the Palestinian National Development Plan in Area C

The agenda of the Palestinian National Development Plan includes six key policy directives:

- (i) Unify the Palestinian territory and its economy via ensuring the best utilization of the local resources.
- (ii) Revive the national economy and advance the Palestinian private sector to enhance its competitive capacities.

- 
- (iii) Develop institutions and financial stability, and enhance the ability of institutions to provide key services.
 - (iv) Battle poverty and unemployment in the pursuit of social justice that is transparent and equitable across race, class, and gender lines.
 - (v) Work towards improving the political system to reflect respect and value of human rights.
 - (vi) Enhance the participation of the State of Palestine regionally and globally, and promote its active engagement at the international level by shaping the Palestinian legislative and institutional system.

Next Steps

A key means of developing Area C requires access and control of Area C resources in order to overcome the current situation in which Palestinians continue to struggle in regaining control over viable land and water resources. At a policy level, it is important to advocate the implementation of the Palestinian national development goals in Area C; on the ground, a mix of developmental and humanitarian policies is necessary to maintain and enhance Palestinian resilience.

To do so, key actors that include the Palestinian government have a role to play in creating strategic plans for Area C. In addition to improving the infrastructure of the area, there is a need to work at the community level in order to link rural and urban sectors of the Palestinian economy. Furthermore, establishing a national education and health platform that is accessible across the entire Area C is critical towards improving the livelihoods of local communities.




HAPPY THANKSGIVING

FROM

**Ambassador
hotel**
JERUSALEM

Tel: 02 541 2222, Fax: 02 582 8202
reservation@jerusalemambassador.com

www.jerusalemambassador.com

 [amb.jerusalem](https://www.facebook.com/amb.jerusalem)





Israel's War of Construction



By Ariel Sophia Bardi

The documentary-propaganda film *Homecoming* was released just one year after the events of the *Nakba*, during which anywhere from 400 to 600 Palestinian villages were destroyed by Israeli forces. “On the home front, it’s a war of construction. A quiet war,” intones the 1949 film, made by the United Israel Appeal to drum up foreign financial contributions to the fledgling state. In one scene, a young couple clutching bundles of luggage saunters down an unpaved street. A row of identical white homes gleams beyond them, all freshly assembled. Inside one house, a middle-aged man beams with pleasure as he draws open a line of window slats. “A victory has been realized,” continues the narrator, “a glorious conquest, with the luxury of Venetian blinds... the wonder of a full linen closet.” These three residents, newcomers to the Jewish state, were among hundreds of thousands of new citizens drafted to the front line of Israel’s construction boom.

After the violent demolitions of 1947–1948, a quieter war took place across the country, with a rush of new developments literally cementing the transformation of Palestine into the new Jewish state. Israel’s so-called

“war of construction” came with better amenities – “Venetian blinds,” “a full linen closet” – than most other war zones, but its targets were nonetheless the same. The new state looked to overpower one people in place of another, only this time through the medium of space. The sociologist Sari Hanafi coined the term “spaciocide” to describe the “entire Israeli project since 1948,” which has produced far fewer casualties than other major conflicts while still causing devastating losses. As Hanafi has explained, “In every conflict, belligerents define their enemy and shape their mode of action accordingly. In the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the Israeli target is the place.”¹

In the events of 1947–1948, property destruction was a key feature. Bombs rocked urban centers, decimating familiar spaces; whole communities were reduced to rubble. Schools, cafés, farms, and cultural sites were cleared or converted, tacked on to the expanding Jewish state. In the countryside, Israeli paramilitary forces advanced a set of

Over 400 Jewish towns shot up in the early years of statehood: one for almost every destroyed Palestinian locality. The “war of construction” formed the second phase of development in the transformation of Palestine into Israel. In this way, destruction and construction went on to form twinned strategies of erasure and usurpation, working in tandem to convert Palestinian spaces into Israeli state lands.

Area A pictured in the foreground, while Area C settlements surround Bethlehem.



military campaigns. Plan Dalet, now perhaps the most notorious, set out specific instructions for the destruction of villages. They included “setting fire to, blowing up, and planting mines.”ⁱⁱ Attacks on Palestinian space spurred an exodus of residents to neighboring countries, somber processions toward safer grounds. Terrified residents were removed by troops, as in Zarnuga, or the Christian village of Al-Rama, or else, like the villagers of Khirbat ‘Azzun, they were goaded into leaving by surrounding attacks. After statehood, expulsions accelerated. Groups set out for Egypt, Syria, and beyond the West Bank border, embarked on slow climbs to Lebanon, or were bused to neighboring Jordan. Refugees were never to return. Meanwhile, Israeli territory ballooned from only 1,800 square kilometers before the war to a whopping 20,000.

In just two years, at least half of Palestine’s Palestinian population –

which totalled some 1.3 million people at the time – was forced to flee, directly or indirectly. Demolition and depopulation went hand in hand. Property attacks not only erased Palestinian infrastructure but also eradicated layers upon layers of cultural history, propelling whole communities away from the properties and practices to which they had long been tied. But targeted demolitions were only the initial phase of development. Destruction cleaned the slate of property and of people in anticipation of future construction, but Israel’s “quiet war” was now focused mostly on new structures. Over 400 Jewish towns shot up in the early years of statehood: one for almost every destroyed Palestinian locality. The “war of construction” formed the second phase of development in the transformation of Palestine into Israel. In this way, destruction and construction went on to form twinned strategies of erasure and usurpation, working in tandem to convert Palestinian spaces into Israeli state lands.

In many cases, the substitution was exact. Majdal Yaba, depopulated during the summer of 1948, became the Jewish transit camp of Rosh Ha’ayin, and by 1950 had evolved into a permanent colony. Beit She’an, near the Jordan River Valley, contained the Arab village of Baysan before it was demolished in 1948. Sderot began as a collection of tents on the former Palestinian village of Najd. Not far from today’s city, parts of the old village can still be glimpsed in ruins. New townships were literally built over former villages, blocking the possibility of Palestinian return. In 1949, a reporter from *The New York Times* mused while watching bulldozers begin “clearing away a wrecked Arab village for the first of nine settlements,” that “this means, obviously, that very few of the 750,000 refugees...will ever return to their former abodes in Israeli territory.”ⁱⁱⁱ Little evidence now remained of their “former abodes,” and of Palestine’s Palestinian past.

In its place, Israel’s post-war settlements often resembled American suburbs, with new houses scattered, crop-like, in seemingly infinite order. They colonized hills and plains in tidy satellite rows, pantomiming modern middle-class normalcy. Yet they also represented a new vernacular, a national likeness that was by definition non-Palestinian. Throughout its history, the Israeli state has used numerous means not only to conquer the landscape, but to inflect it with the signs and symbols of a new population. Lands have been rebranded through diverse means, from JNF afforestation to the breakneck construction of Jewish housing projects. Now, Palestine’s ethnic cleansing was supported not only through the physical destruction of Palestinian homes and infrastructure but also by supplanting Palestinian structures with new building vocabularies. To be sure, Israel’s growth came as an act of territorial usurpation. But underneath the guns



A small boy rides his bike in Nabi Saleh under the shadow of the Jewish settlement of Halamish.



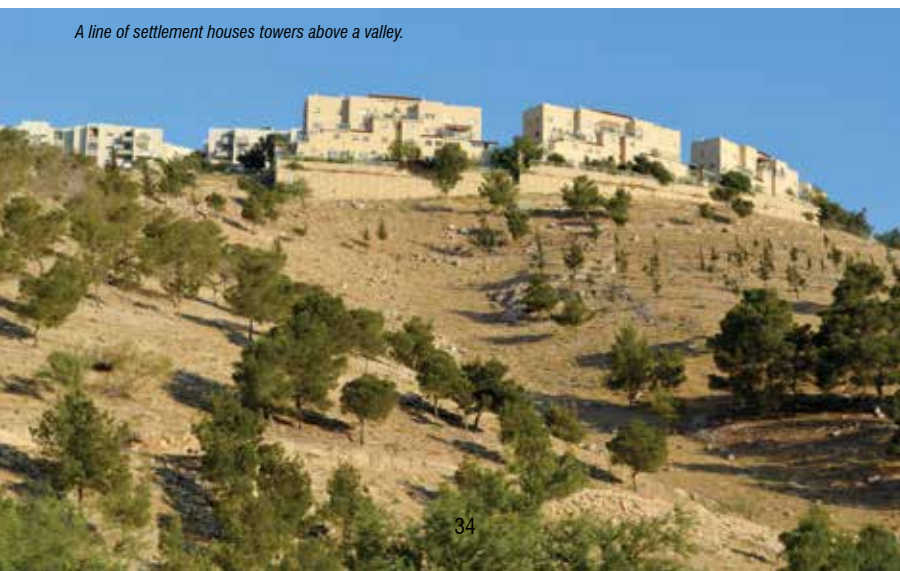
The remains of a mosque in an industrial zone near the northern Israeli town of Shelomi, built in 1950 on the ruins of al-Bassa. The Palestinian village was mostly destroyed by Israeli troops in May of 1948.

and battle cries, the state's "quiet war" also formed a war of representation.

Housing blocs have enacted a longer, subtler, and, in some ways, more pernicious form of violence. Since its earliest history, building has been linked to the growth of the Israeli state. Though it reached its fever pitch after 1948, Israel's "war of construction" was in fact part of a process that had begun sixty years prior, with Palestine's earliest Jewish colonies. Known, with a whiff of the American Old West, as "pioneers," Jewish

settlers checkered the countryside with population blocs, building their own archipelago nation. Their compounds were self-contained, connected to one another by a constellation of Jewish roads. Buildings waged a shadow war, a quiet war, appropriating territory in anticipation of the state. Cropping up, fortress-like, in strategic locations, Jewish settlements slowly changed the face of the landscape. Designed as both housing and surveillance units, they were the first instruments of Palestine's war of construction.

A line of settlement houses towers above a valley.



Much like Israel's earliest compounds, today's settlements in the West Bank continue to lay siege on Palestinian lands, maintaining a state of persistent conflict. Built atop the peaks of the hilly terrain, these surveillance fortresses visually dominate the valleys. They mime the practices of early Zionist expansion, making today's settlers heirs to the state's early builders. Palestinians now live within a grid of semi-autonomous towns and cities, segmented by a network of Israeli roads and settlements. Patrolled by armed guards, with living rooms designed

the territories into a mirror image of the Jewish state.^{iv}

Ariel Sophia Bardi holds a PhD from Yale University, where her research looked at the role of architecture in defining new forms of power in India, Pakistan, and Israel/Palestine. She is the recipient of numerous awards and fellowships, and has carried out separate projects in the West Bank, Turkey, and Nepal. Her writings, documentary photographs, and artworks have appeared in publications throughout the world.



A post-war housing unit in northern Israel. Developments were constructed in rings so that residents could patrol frontierlands, much like today's settlements in Area C of the West Bank.

as observation towers, the red-roofed suburban homes of the settlements of Area C are ubiquitous, always looming above. In smaller compounds, tan and white sheds snake around low, rock-strewn hills. Even in the dead of night, rings of bright lights stake their ground. By day, settlements remain omnipresent. To use the historian Gyanendra Pandey's expression, these building forms have become a way of "nationalizing the nation," transforming

ⁱ Sari Hanafi, "Spaciocide as a Colonial Policy in the Palestinian Territories," *Grotius International*, September 30, 2009, Web source.

ⁱⁱ Quoted by Walid Khalidi, "Text of Plan Gimmel (Plan C), May 1946: Section on Countermeasures," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 1, 1988, p. 20.

ⁱⁱⁱ Quoted in Joseph Schechtman, *Population Transfers in Asia*, New York: Hallsby Press, 1949.

^{iv} Gyanendra Pandey, *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism, and History in India*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, p. 17.



Ministry of Local Government Engagement in Area C



We met Dr. Tawfiq Bdeiri, Deputy Assistant for Planning and Engineering Affairs at the Ministry of Local Government, in his office in Ramallah, shortly prior to taking this issue of *This Week in Palestine* to print. As per the title, we wanted a first-hand account on the Ministry of Local Government's engagement in Area C. With a doctorate in Regional and Urban Planning from Cairo University and hands-on experience after years at the Ministry, Bdeiri was the right person to talk to.

The Ministry of Local Government is quite conscious of Area C's potential impact on the economy of a future Palestinian State, Bdeiri says. He refers to the World Bank's July 2014 report that estimates a hike of as much as thirty-five percent to the Palestinian GDP, an extra US\$ 2.4 billion, if businesses and farms were permitted to develop in Area C. With that drive, the ministry is doing its best to implement its mandate to help local communities in planning infrastructure issues and helping prepare local outline plans (master plans) with the clear goal of local economic development. Following a national strategy of giving priority to Area C, adopted in 2011, the Ministry of Local Government followed suit to ensure steadfastness on the ground.

Engagement with the local communities is best witnessed in the preparing of the outline plans. The participatory approach adopted was met with extraordinary local enthusiasm. Successful workshops were set up where, in some cases, illiterate people participated in the drawing of the map of their village or local community. The Ministry of Local Government's engagement with the people, along with its advocacy that empowers local residents, has created a relationship that is based on trust and good faith. Another success, Bdeiri adds, is the local understanding and the willingness to implement the concept of public good.



The challenges are great, Dr. Tawfiq Bdeiri concludes. With the abolishment of local and district planning committees in 1971, as stipulated by the (supposedly) implemented Jordanian Planning Law of the year 1966, and with a Higher Planning Council currently represented solely by Israeli army personnel, very few local outline plans and infrastructure projects intended for Palestinian communities in Area C had been approved since the 1970's. In 2011, the ministry started encouraging the Palestinian communities in Area C to prepare alternative local outline plans to meet their needs and aspirations. Only three out of the seventy-seven local outline plans submitted to the Israeli Civil Administration received approval. However, in a new practice adopted by the ministry, if eighteen months have passed and no reply from the Israeli Civil Administration has been received, the Ministry of Local Government starts implementation without explicit Israeli approval. In some cases, Bdeiri says, Israel did not object. Finally, Dr. Bdeiri's expressed his wish for the donor community to be bolder in extending aid to develop local communities in Area C even without the Israeli authorities' approval.

Article photos from Palestine Image Bank.





UN-Habitat's Spatial Planning Interventions in Area C of the West Bank

Courtesy of UN-Habitat Palestine Programme



Area C of the West Bank, as it stands today (sixty percent of the West Bank that fall under full Israeli control), creates a state of gradual decline for the meaningful development of Palestinians. It is characterized by formidable challenges

regarding control and territorial reduction that weaken the structure and viability of Palestinian statehood. Area C is a cornerstone to the sustainable development of a Palestinian state, since it contains not only valuable natural resources and a rich cultural heritage, but also represents the bulk of available land for future spatial development. Furthermore, Area C holds a considerable, yet so far untapped potential, as it is inhabited by only six percent of Palestinians in the West Bank and as such drives the phenomenon of artificial land scarcity in Palestine. The geo-political designation of the West Bank into three areas (A, B, and C) with different levels of authority was meant to be a temporary stage to enable the discussions for a phased allocation of lands to the Palestinian side, but this transition has never been done due to the political impasse in

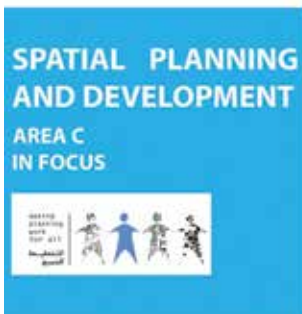
UN-Habitat, together with other local and national stakeholders has been engaged in different spatial planning interventions for the past four years, providing support to vulnerable Palestinian communities in the Israeli occupied Area C of the West Bank to defend their building and planning rights that have been undermined by the measures enforced by the Israeli authorities, chiefly the Israeli Civil Administration (ICA), which is part of the Israeli army apparatus.

the peace process. Nevertheless, the status of the West Bank overall as land occupied by Israel was not altered, and Palestinians are defined under international human rights law as a “protected population” and Israel as an “occupying power” that is not sovereign in the territory and therefore prohibited from making permanent changes; rather it must protect the status quo.

UN-Habitat, as the UN agency for human settlements, is mandated by the UN General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all. UN-Habitat's programs are designed to help policy makers and local communities come to grips with the issues of human settlements and urban planning and to find workable and lasting solutions. In 2003, conscious of the special housing and human-settlements needs of the Palestinian people, and recognizing that they fall within the technical mandate of UN-Habitat, the Governing Council of UN-Habitat endorsed the establishment of the Special Human Settlements Programme for the Palestinian People (SHSPP).



Wall plastering through Community Mobilization at Izbet Tabib in Qalqiliya.



A Periodical Newsletter on Area C.

One of the visible interventions of the UN-Habitat programs in Palestine has been the Planning Support Programme for Palestinian Communities in Area C of the West Bank (2012-2015). The main objectives of this program could be boiled down into: satisfying an acceptable level of legalization to stop the increasing number of housing demolition orders issued by the Israeli authorities; and spearheading spatial development plans that guarantee the provision of infrastructural lines,

EDITORIAL: The Right to Planning and Development

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the first issue on Area C of the West Bank newsletter prepared by the UN-Habitat uPT programme. We would like to thank everyone who has supported this issue by providing funds and useful information on our activities in the Palestinian communities in Area C. This issue offers a summary of planning and design activities to date. Subsequently, this issue outlines facts, information and activities recently undertaken and introduces our plans for the coming period. Also in this newsletter we present new approaches to the planning framework that looks at more comprehensive and strategic planning approach that is not restricted to buildings. An important element presented in this newsletter is "Place-making": A relevant section, which we would also like to highlight is the interesting life story of Hajj Abdullah from the village of Abdallah Souris. The story of his life tells a lot about the history of the Palestinian society. The nature of our activities and the need to keep the momentum moving forward with ambition and enthusiasm is a significant challenge to all parties involved in these activities particularly to the community representatives. Finally, we provide some other information under the title "outside the box" about some interesting activities that are happening outside Area C.

Happy reading!

economic functions, and housing. More specifically, a panoply of planning interventions has been introduced to harness the associated economic potentials of the areas that are currently affected by discriminatory planning restrictions, including: (1) the preparation of four planning policy papers as inputs for the main national partner, the State of Palestine Ministry of Local Government (MoLG); (2) the preparation of 145 multi-layered spatial plans drafted with

input from the local communities to foster development and resist the occupation's discriminatory planning processes; (3) the mobilization of over 10,000 Palestinians in participatory planning processes, which in turn has contributed to the development of their resilience and community cohesion; (4) the protection of more than 55,000 Palestinians in Area C and East Jerusalem from eviction and forced displacement; and (5) the continued efforts to ensure a high level of coordinated advocacy activities. A result of the last point is the report of the Independent International Advisory Board on Spatial Planning in Area C that examined the planning situation in Area C, benchmarked against international quality standards local outline plans that were prepared by and with Palestinian communities, and concluded that these local outline plans are technically sound and should be endorsed by the Israeli authorities, namely the Israeli Civil Administration (ICA), without any further delays.

In September, 2015 the UN family in Palestine adopted a "One UN" Approach to Spatial Planning in Area C of the occupied West Bank in which it assured that it will continue to advocate for the

transfer of planning powers in Area C to the Palestinians - to the largest extent possible and as an essential component in the state-building process. The intention is that this approach will make development interventions more concrete by meeting the current needs of Palestinians, without undermining their future aspirations and rights to planning and development.

Spatial planning interventions in the geo-political context of Area C are not rudimentary from the outset. The bulk of Palestinian communities in Area C are threatened by demolitions and displacement. According to official Israeli data, more than 11,000 Demolition Orders against ca. 17,000 Palestinian-owned structures in Area C have been issued. Furthermore, land delineations in Area C show sober realities in terms of planning inequalities: in 2014, plans for Palestinians targeted 0.4 percent of Area C land compared to 20.1 percent designated for illegal Israeli settlements. Area C is considered a cornerstone for the sustainability of Palestinian statehood. A World Bank report in 2014 showed that alleviating Israeli restrictions in Area C would generate a sum equivalent to thirty-five percent of the Palestinian GDP



Coloring the curb stones of sidewalks through a youth initiative in Dab'a village.



At one of the Local Planning workshops in South Hebron.

in 2011, including direct and indirect benefits, which translates into \$800 million a year of additional tax revenues for the Government of Palestine. These numbers reflect the prevailing planning crisis in Area C and the squandered development opportunities that could be unlocked for the benefit of Palestinian communities.

The Case of Imneizil Village, South of Hebron

Imneizil is a small Palestinian village south of As Samu', about nine kilometers away from the southern parts of the mother town of Yatta and seventeen kilometers south-west of Hebron city, bordering the Green Line (Armistice Line for the year 1949). Imneizil is inhabited by nearly 450 Palestinians, or sixty families of an average size of 7.5 family members. The village is a hot spot in the Israeli occupied Area C of the West Bank. Because of its proximity to the Israeli matrix of control - located between

the separation barrier, nearby Israeli settlements, and by-pass roads - the village has come under the serious threat of forcible displacement, and as it lacks statutory local outline plans, most of the new houses and constructions in the village that were built after 1990 are under the threat of demolition. Under the supervision of the MoLG and the International Peace and Cooperation Centre (IPCC) and with financial support from the UK, Imneizil village prepared a local outline plan that was submitted to the ICA in July 2011. In March 2014, after multiple rounds of negotiations with the ICA, further detailing to the local outline plan – and with EU funds and technical support from UN-Habitat – the ICA finally endorsed the plan, thus making it one among the first three Palestinian-led plans ever to be approved by the Israeli authorities. To further engage the local inhabitants in the plan-making and to establish a connection between the inhabitants and the built environment, especially the public space, UN-Habitat,

in collaboration with the MoLG, the IPCC, and other local partners, initiated a non-statutory planning approach, called Placemaking, to turn the public space in Imneizil into livable places. More specifically, designs for village roads, school surroundings, and a public playground were made with the local inhabitants in a participatory way and drafted in three iterative rounds of consultations with women, youth, elderly, and others from the local community of Imneizil. Some of these designs were funded by the EU via community contracting in order to implement some of the prioritized projects under the local community action plan that had been endorsed by the Village Council of Imneizil. At this time, other donors are investing in the village by building new roads and public facilities according to the approved plans, a practice that represents a model to other Palestinian villages in Area C: local communities have been empowered to plan for their villages, which has rendered the inhabitants more resilient and assured their confidence to plan and develop “for a better urban future”.

UN-Habitat will continue to work closely with its national partner, the MoLG, and with other local and international stakeholders to support the delivery of spatial planning interventions needed to enable sustainable development in

Area C and in the West Bank at large. Gender and human rights mainstreaming will continue to be the guiding principles for its implementation strategy, working in ways that are geo-politically responsive and socio-economically and environmentally sensitive in order to ensure sustainability of the introduced spatial planning interventions and to support the flag-ship project of building Palestinian statehood.

Ahmad El-Atrash has a PhD in Spatial Planning from TU-Dortmund University, Germany. He is a project manager and senior urban planner at the UN-Habitat office in Palestine. He has solid experience and interest in issues related to geo-political and strategic planning, governance reform, resilience, and sustainable development within the Palestinian context. He can be reached via email at ahmad.el-atrash@unhabitat.org



International planners discussing the future of the heartland of the West Bank. - PC for UN-Habitat.



The Political Economy of Area C



Courtesy of the United Nations Development Programme Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (UNDP/PAPP)

Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

Area C – as commonly referred to in the post-Oslo era, comprises an approximate sixty-one percent of the West Bank.¹ Through the 1995 Interim Agreement between Israel and the PLO, the West Bank was divided into three categories: Area A (eighteen percent of the West

Bank) is home to the major Palestinian cities and houses the majority of the Palestinian population, governed under the Palestinian Authority (PA). Area B (twenty-two percent of the West Bank) is a largely rural area where Israel maintains security control and has transferred civil control to the PA. In Area C, the Palestinian government is responsible for health and education, but the infrastructure for both health and education facilities is entirely under Israeli control and discretion, as is security, civil administration, planning, infrastructure, and construction. Area C represents a critical mass of productive capital, natural resources, and fertile land that links over two hundred small urban hubs across the territory. As per the 1993 Oslo Peace Accords, it was stipulated that it would gradually be transferred to the Palestinian Authority, to be under Palestinian control by the year 1998. This transfer has yet to materialize, and a heightened occupation of Area C continues to displace the local population, create barriers towards Palestinian economic empowerment, and pose restrictions to the movement of people.

44

The dramatic contrast regarding the rights of individuals living in Area C is stark: Israeli citizens residing in Area C enjoy state protection through the application of Israeli civil law, just as would any Israeli living in Tel Aviv or Tiberias. They receive health care, are guaranteed labor rights, and enjoy ease of access over broad highways that slice through Area C of the West Bank and make the crossing of the Green Line practically imperceptible – for settlers riding in cars with Israeli (yellow) license plates that easily glide through check points. “Bedroom communities” of settlements sprinkle the West Bank, as do immense urban sprawls, all offering appealing economic incentives for residents: low-rate mortgages, cheap housing prices, full access to services, and spectacular landscapes. For the three hundred thousand Palestinians living in Area C,² life is quite

different. Largely deprived of the ability to link to common sanitation, water networks, and electrical grids, their attempts at improving their standard of living face myriad challenges. In recent years, most Palestinians were not able to obtain an Israeli permit to renovate, let alone build, their homes or essential infrastructure, a practice that prevents any natural community growth or expansion. Structures, including homes, built without permits are routinely demolished, and families forcibly evicted.

By strategically controlling Area C, the Israeli occupation and settler-economy have largely benefitted from both the resources and the geography of the area. A recent World Bank report, incorporating information received from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), highlights the key potential of growth and development

*A worker at the cafeteria in the park of Abu Lomon.
Photo courtesy of Ventura Formicone - @UNDP/PAPP.*



45

Area C could hold for the Palestinian economy if Palestinians had access and control: current loss to the Palestinian economy caused by Israeli-imposed restrictions is valued at US\$ 3.4 billion.³ It is estimated that the additional tax revenues associated with a US\$ 3.4 billion increase in GDP would amount to some US\$ 800 million - assuming that there would be no improvements in the efficiency of tax collection, which is currently at a rate of 20% tax/GDP. Were such restrictions removed, the resulting increase in productivity could dramatically improve the Palestinian government's fiscal position. It could reduce the current fiscal deficit by half, which in turn would enhance effectiveness of international aid, reduce dependence on donors for recurrent budget support, improve fiscal sustainability, and enhance investor confidence in the Palestinian economy.

The steady loss of land and protracted inability to foster indigenous development leaves Palestinians

with few legal options. On matters of contesting land confiscation, demolition orders, or the non-granting of building permits, legal remedy for Palestinians residing in Area C can only be sought through the Israeli High Court, an onerous, costly, and normally dead-ended process. Thus, the demographic reality of increasing proximity between Israeli and Palestinian communities has led to dramatic security issues for Palestinians in particular. Every moment lost in anticipation of a political solution will see more intractable issues created over this expanse of land.

Economic Potential of Area C

The key potential sectors that can be unleashed by an eventual Palestinian control of Area C include agriculture, tourism, Dead Sea minerals, construction, telecommunication, stone mining, quarrying, and more. In addition, an overall investment in the infrastructure and administration of Area C could attract further investment

and development across the entire State of Palestine in the long term.

Agriculture in Area C is one of the main sectors that could help kick-start the Palestinian economy with an estimated 326,400 *dunums*⁴ of arable land potentially available to Palestinians in Area C. With the right of access to water and other agricultural inputs, an estimated US\$ 704 million could be added directly to the Palestinian GDP per year.⁵ This would further enhance the capacities of farming communities that have been obliged to work in urban centers, create opportunities for women, and impact food security across the State of Palestine. Currently, a viable settler-based agriculture economy flourishes across Area C. It has been estimated that Israeli settlements and their agricultural ventures are roughly valued at US\$ 251 million.

Similarly, the Dead Sea minerals industry is a lucrative business that could foster further investment and

development for Palestinians. It has been reported that both Israel and Jordan derive an estimated US\$ 4.2 billion in annual sales from products sold in the international markets. Moreover, steady growth is anticipated in the demand for both potash and bromine; and therefore, Palestinian access and investment in this area would indeed prove profitable. It is estimated that from production and sales of potash, bromine and magnesium, Palestinians could increase their GDP by 9% (or US\$ 918 million).⁶

Another key resource that could contribute substantially to the Palestinian economy includes the over 20,000 *dunums* (2,000 hectares) of land suitable for quarrying in Area C. This particular sector is significant to the local economy as it holds the promise of creating an additional 15,000 jobs. However, under the current circumstances, the stone industry faces several challenges: it faces prohibitions on the importing of key machinery, costly export-related



Dead Sea. Photo courtesy of Ahed Izhiman.



An oil press in the village of Haja. Photo courtesy of Ventura Formicone - @UNDP/PAPP.

logistics, lack of investment due to investment restrictions, and an intense permit system that has prevented Palestinians from opening new quarries in Area C since 1994. These conditions have led to intensified and localized quarrying in and around fertile lands in Areas A and B. Currently, the stone industry in the West Bank is a key contributor to Palestinian exports with US\$ 60 million in annual sales (17% of the total value), and with increased access, this contribution could generate - by a conservative estimate - US\$ 241 million per year, an equivalent of 2% of the GDP. But as a number of quarries are coming to the end of their life-cycle, there is a fear of collapse across this industry. Thus, there is an urgent need for an overall critical assessment of stone quarrying and its effect on local climate, land use, and the environment.

Global tourism to the region and more specifically to the State of Palestine could open great opportunities for development and growth in the Palestinian economy. However, the

current socio-political and legal climate plays a critical role in curbing the potential of the tourism industry, which holds the potential of competing with Israel's hotel and tourism industry - given the overall security concerns of travellers in the region. Israel currently controls all land crossings and border areas, making access to the occupied Palestinian territory challenging for tourists who wish to visit the territory directly. All visitors and tourists are subjected to Israeli security protocols that pose restrictions on tourists who wish to visit, work, research, and invest in the State of Palestine. These challenges greatly curb the potential of the Palestinian tourism industry.

Another emerging industry is the Palestinian telecommunications sector which has proven to be competitive and lucrative. However, the barriers towards the telecommunications infrastructure in Area C drastically impact the growth of the sector. For instance, the current Israeli-imposed permit system prevents the construction of communication

towers necessary for mobile service and impedes the laying of landlines and ADSL cables. Only 2G frequencies are provided to two Palestinian mobile operators, while the 3G spectrum is monopolized by Israeli companies. Furthermore, costs are excessively high for Palestinian consumers, as necessary equipment has to be imported at higher than normal market prices. The quality and service of Palestinian companies is lower than their Israeli competitors who have developed the necessary infrastructure in Area C. Some rough estimates suggest that the sector has the potential of increasing the Palestinian GDP by 0.5%, which would be equivalent to US\$ 48 million in value.⁷

Therefore, if the current restrictions were to be relaxed, the Palestinian economy would benefit greatly from access to key trade routes, resources, and land that could be converted into profitable industries.

Barriers to Palestinian Economic Growth

By controlling Area C, the Israeli occupation has strengthened its grip over the local Palestinian economy of the West Bank. First, the security-political-development nexus plays a key role in how the Palestinian economy is curbed. Since the

Oslo agreements, the Palestinian Authority was required to operate under a specific set of guidelines laid out by Israel. Within a structure that is shaped to sustain Israeli security above all, the Palestinian Government has limited room to manage its borders and resources and, therefore, its own development. Second, while recent years have witnessed a slow and steady growth of Palestinian businesses, the restrictions on trade continue to create barriers towards prosperity. Private investment and businesses continue to struggle under a system that controls critical aspects of what should be an open and free economic market space. For instance, the manufacturing sector, which is critical for export-oriented growth, has been stagnant since 1994 due to Israeli restrictions on the development of infrastructure and on the importing of necessary machinery, as well as by complete control over key internal crossings, which has a severe impact on the mobility of labour and goods. The viability and growth of an independent and sovereign Palestinian state is deeply tied to the control over territory, particularly Area C and its resources. Any sustainable plan towards serious economic growth and development must include Palestinian access to Area C and control of its local natural resources without restrictions to the movement of goods and labour.

¹ B'tselem, (2013), *Area C: What is Area C?*, available at http://www.btselem.org/area_c/what_is_area_c.

² Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, (August 2014), *Area C of the West Bank: Key Humanitarian Concerns*, available at https://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_area_c_factsheet_august_2014_english.pdf.

³ World Bank, (October 2, 2013), *Report: Area C and the Future of the Palestinian Economy*.

⁴ A *dunum* is a unit of land area enclosing 1,000 square meters: 326,400 *dunums* is equivalent to 32,640 hectares.

⁵ World Bank Report, October 2013.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*



Outline Planning in Area C: An Alternative Approach



Wafa Butmeh and Jihad Rabayaa



Community participation in the planning of Masafra Yatta, south of Hebron. Photo courtesy of UN-Habitat.

The planning and building crisis in Area C dates back to the early 1970s, when shortly after the 1967 war, the Israeli authorities abolished all Local Planning Committees, essentially the Palestinian village councils, along with all District Planning Committees. As a consequence, Palestinian representation was eliminated from the hierarchy of the planning regime and all planning decisions were concentrated in the hands of the Israeli Higher Planning Council (HCP). After the signing of the Oslo Accords, the Palestinian authority received the right to plan in only forty percent of the West Bank (Areas A and B), while planning in the remaining sixty percent, known as Area C, was under the mandate of the Israeli Civil Administration (ICA). The latter, concerned with the geographical containment of Palestinian localities in Area C, adopted outdated plans from the British Mandate era and special plans prepared by the Israeli military during the 1980s that delineated the village boundaries as the basis for their decision making. These so-called blue lines were drawn tightly around the existing built-up areas in a process that never consulted the local communities. The ICA and felt justified to consider new buildings outside the blue lines as illegal structures and since 1993, very limited numbers of permits were issued for new buildings outside these borders, while demolition orders were generously delivered and executed in Palestinian communities in Area C.

In 2011, in a step aimed at opposing and stopping the Israeli policy of unjustifiable demolition and forced displacement of the Palestinian population in Area C, the Palestinian Ministry of Local Government (MoLG), supported by the Palestinian cabinet, adopted an alternative planning approach. Based on the prevailing Jordanian Law number (79) - which states that each local council has the right to initiate planning in its village and which is binding for both Palestinians and Israelis in the occupied West Bank - the MoLG was able to argue that plans initiated by the local councils and prepared with the local communities should be reviewed by the ICA to grant them approval and authorization as statutory documents, thus considering new expansion areas as legal zones for building and development.

Since 2011, the MoLG has commissioned private Palestinian planning firms to draft 108 spatial outline plans targeting around 100,000 persons and covering

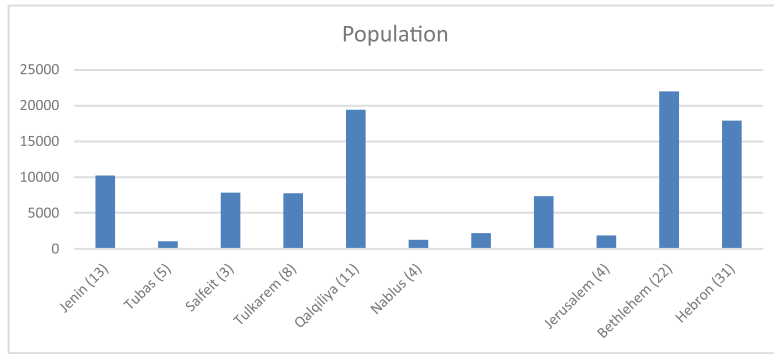
the 116 most affected localities in the West Bank, irrespective of whether they are close to the Green Line, settlements, the Apartheid Separation Wall, or even inside restricted military zones. The plans are funded by six different channels: by the Palestinian government, Belgium, France, and the UK, while the EU funded the detailing of a number of the already prepared plans. Seventy-seven of the local outline plans were submitted to the ICA. However, as the discussion phase requires an unreasonable amount of time due to the requirement of obtaining the approval of all subcommittees in the ICA, approximately half of the submitted plans are stuck in the technical discussion phase. Only three plans have succeeded in receiving a positive final authorization when - after three years of discussion sessions moving back and forth - plans for the villages Imneizil in the Hebron district, Tas Tirah and Al-Dabah near Qalqilya, and Wadi Al-Neis near Bethlehem received approval. Another five plans have been announced for public objection for more than a year now - six times longer than the conventional time span; seven plans have been rejected, as it is claimed that

For almost two decades, basically since its creation, Area C has been excluded from any statutory planning initiative of the Government of Palestine (GoP) in the West Bank whose planning was concentrated in Areas A and B. In 2011, in order to circumvent the occupation authority's policies of forced eviction and demolition that were based on the pretext that the land in Area C was uninhabited, the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG), supported by the Palestinian Cabinet, started to follow an alternative planning approach by drafting local outline plans and implementing them under certain conditions without necessarily securing direct and overt official Israeli approval. This process was undertaken together with the local communities to make sure that their needs and aspirations are properly addressed.

these communities are illegal and do not exist as individual villages.

Impact of planning initiatives across the West Bank (2015):

Table 1: The Population per Governorate that Benefitted from Development Plans With the number of plans in each governorate indicated between brackets. (Source: Ministry of Local Government, 2015)



Despite the fact that only three plans were approved, the MoLG considers this initiative a breakthrough: it has built the capacity of over one hundred Local Government Units (LGUs) across the West Bank and has increased their awareness of their rights to the land and to adequate service provision. It also illustrates a remarkable success in terms of emphasizing the importance of participatory planning, as all plans were prepared directly with the local communities. Whether authorized or not, the plans are fully adopted by the local communities as the tangible result of their efforts in conceptualizing their development needs and aspirations and in then reflecting them in form of local outline plans. Currently, 108 local outline plans have been endorsed by the local councils and the MoLG; they are used not only as a basis for fund raising, but also for the implementation of development and infrastructure projects for plans which have been submitted to the ICA for a period of more than eighteen months (which currently is the case with sixty-one plans). The latter practice has been implemented since late 2014, following an agreement between the MoLG and

the European Union, when several projects were nominated to receive funds before their local outline plans had been formally approved.

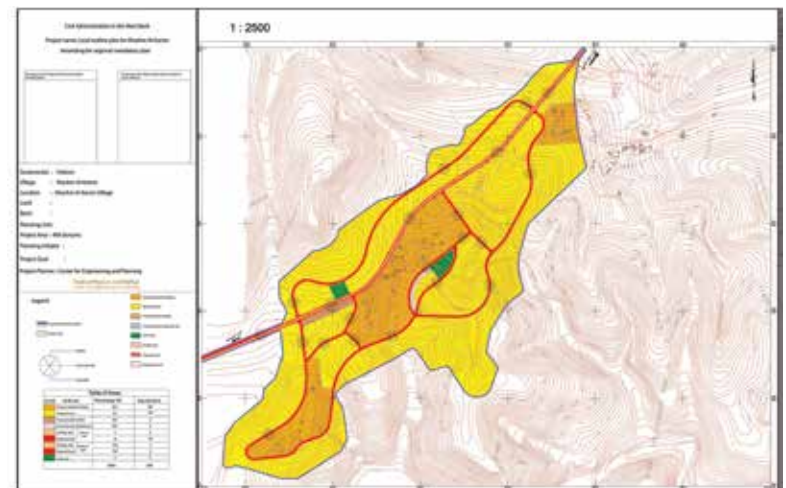
Thus, several villages have been successful in creating facts on the ground according to the plans, either by constructing an individual building, such as a school or kindergarten, or by establishing water networks. “The outline plan of Um Arrihan was a tool to implement several infrastructure projects, most importantly electricity,” said the Mayor of Um Arrihan. “The initial plan prepared by the ICA was only for 56 *dunums* (5.6 hectares), but after two years of training and capacity building with MoLG, I was equipped with the knowledge to make a legal argument against the Israeli planning proposal. After three sets of negotiations with the ICA, where we presented our alternative plan drafted by the International Peace and Cooperation Center (IPCC), we achieved a plan covering 122 *dunums* (12.2 hectares) that reflects the needs of the community for the next fifteen years; and we no longer receive demolition orders inside the planned area.”



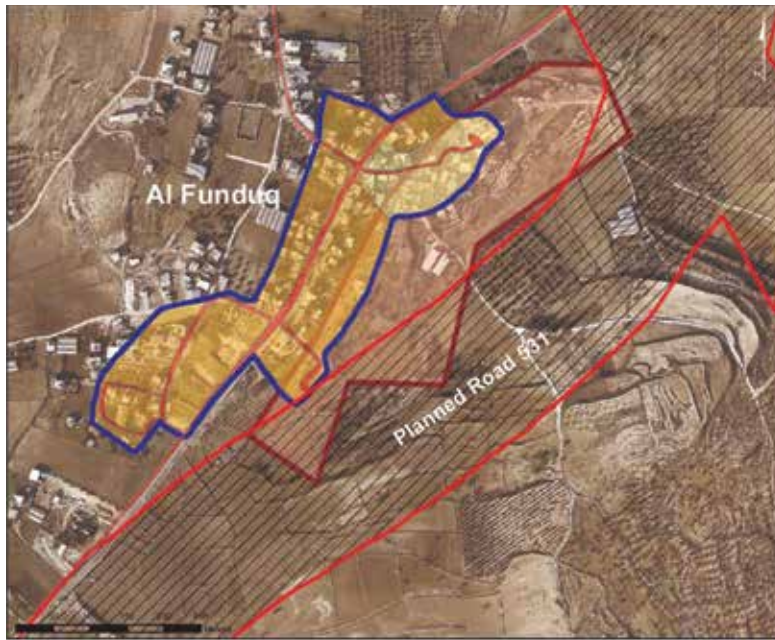
Draft local outline plan of Azzebeidat by drafted by Center for Engineering and Planning (CEP).

In summary, this planning initiative was a step towards achieving development goals, reclaiming the right to the land, and asserting Palestinian sovereignty. As any pilot initiative, it had its successes and failures. On the one hand, it has empowered the local communities, incited them to be proactive, and illustrated that people should be the

core of any planning intervention. On the other hand, the authorization process requires an unreasonable effort in time and procedures and the localities whose plans were rejected are still suffering from the threat of demolition and other risks that include stop work orders, the confiscation of equipment, or forcible displacement by



Outline Plan of Khash Al-Karem, South of Hebron. Photo Courtesy of IPCC.



- Legend**
- Area B
 - Roads
 - Residential Zone A
 - Residential Zone C
 - Boundary of plan 1271/91
 - Right of way Road 531

The special outline plan for the village of Al-Funduq and the route of Road 531, which has not been constructed

the ICA for those living inside restricted military zones. It is also critically important to deal with these plans as temporary solutions, as temporary documents that need to be updated regularly in order to accommodate the emerging needs of the communities. Finally, in each governorate, these plans should be linked to the national vision and to regional development trends in order to achieve cohesive planning in all Palestinian land, regardless of the geopolitical divisions.

Wafa Butmeh is an Urban Planner in UN-Habitat based in the Ministry of Local Government. She graduated from Birzeit University in 2013 as an architect with emphasis on urban planning.

Jihad Rabayaa, Head of Geographic Information System (GIS) at the Municipality of Ramallah and of the Surveying Department (Ministry of Local Government), has been working with the MoLG since 1995.



TAYBEH GOLDEN HOTEL
PALESTINE

Join us for Thanksgiving Dinner on
Thursday, November 26th

Make Your Reservations Today!
Happy Thanksgiving!



Taybeh-Ramallah, Palestine

Tel: +972 2 289 9440

info@taybehgoldenhotel.com

www.taybehgoldenhotel.com



Archeological Heritage in Area C



By Hamdan Taha

Introduction

Being a meeting place for civilizations and a cultural bridge between the East and the West, Palestine has played an important role in human history. Earliest archeological evidence of civilization in the area dates back to the Prehistoric Period and marks the emergence of the first settled societies in the Neolithic Period and of urban life in the Bronze Age. Furthermore, as Palestine has unique geological features and an extraordinary cultural landscape, the wealth and diversity of this cultural heritage is an important asset for the sustaining of the cultural identity of the Palestinian people and for the economic development of Palestine.

According to the Palestinian national database of archeological and historical sites, the Occupied Palestinian Territory within the borders of 1967 contained circa 7,000 sites that reflect the cultural wealth and diversity of the Palestinian areas. They are classified as follows:

- 350 historic centers
- 2,000 major archeological sites
- 5,000 archeological features
- 60,000 historical buildings

The history of these sites ranges from the Paleolithic Period to modern times, and more than half of them (53%) are located in Area C. They consist of main human settlements (Tells and Khirbah), as well as thousands of archeological features such as ancient roads, milestones, water springs, cisterns, pools, caves, cemeteries, water channels, and hundreds of holy shrines (*maqams*), in addition to cultural and natural landscape and geological features. These archeological sites in Area C represent an integral part of Palestinian cultural heritage, as they are historically associated with Palestinian population centers, and belong to the Palestinian community. They include major prehistoric sites along Wadi Khareitun in Al-Bariyah, located east of Jerusalem and

Bethlehem; furthermore the Natufian site in Wadi An-Natuf near Shuqba; major urban centers at Tell An-Nasbeh, Tell Taannek, and Tell Dothan; a large number of historical Roman, Byzantine and Islamic sites; and finally holy places that are distributed throughout the country (eg. the site of Baptism, Qubbat Rahel and the Bilal mosque), in addition to thousands of archeological features. The division into Areas A, B, and C is artificial and part of a transitional arrangement in which Area C temporarily remains under the control of the occupying power.

Oslo Agreement

Following the 1993 Palestinian-Israeli agreement, Jericho and Gaza were handed over to Palestinian control, and by December 1995 the Palestinian National Authority was given control throughout the West Bank and Gaza in several spheres of responsibility, including archeology in Areas A and B. According to the Declaration of

According to the Palestinian national database of archeological and historical sites, the Palestinian Occupied Territory within the borders of 1967 contained circa 7,000 sites classified as the following: 350 historic centers; 2,000 major archeological sites; 5,000 archeological features; and 60,000 historical buildings.

Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangement for Palestinians, final negotiations were to be completed by May 1999, but the mutually agreed-upon timetable that called for power transfer has been delayed and never implemented by Israel. In some parts of Area C, powers and responsibilities in the sphere of archeology will be

Damaged landscape at Wadi Natuf.



transferred gradually to the Palestinian jurisdiction; eventually, this will include the entirety of Palestinian Territory in the West Bank, Jerusalem, and Gaza.

The Palestinian Department of Antiquities was established in 1994, during a time of complex difficulties, and renamed the Department of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage (DACH) in 2002. It manages the archeological resources in Areas A and B and can be viewed as the revival of the Palestinian Department of Antiquities that had been established in 1920, under the British Mandate, and ceased to exist with the political

But the new situation gives the Palestinian archeologists, who won autonomy at the end of the last century, an independent role to explore the history of Palestine from its primary sources, a task reserved until recently for foreign and Israeli archeologists - who often made political and ideological use of these data and their interpretation without objective scientific controls. The establishment of a national body for the management of antiquities and cultural heritage marks the beginning of a Palestinian field school in archeology and signals the return of Palestinians



Tell el-Fureidis (Herodion).

events of 1948. Because Israel had occupied its premises in 1967, at the outset, in 1994, the new department possessed neither archeological record files nor documentation of the finds of archeology previously undertaken on its soil. It lacked sufficient space and logistical support, and, due to inadequate opportunities for field training under occupation, the Palestinian Department inherited a shortage in qualified personnel.

again to history. This is evident through the wide range of activities in excavations and restorations, the rehabilitation of historic centers, and international cooperation undertaken in the last two decades.

Israeli Management Structure in Area C

After the Israeli military occupation in 1967, the archeological resources in the OPT were managed by the Israeli military government through a series of Israeli military orders. Order (119) gave the responsibilities of the Director of Antiquities, as per Jordanian law of 1966, to the Israeli military governor; and order (1166) changed the structure of the Advisory Council to include representatives of the Israeli Antiquities Authority and Israeli academic institutions. In subsequent years, these responsibilities were shifted among Israeli Civil Administration officers, but it is noteworthy that Palestinians were never involved in this council.

The tasks of the Archeology Staff Officer and of the Israeli Archeology Department of the Civil Administration in Area C include drawing and implementing the archeological policy of the Civil Administration; conducting archeological excavations and surveys in Area C; granting permits for excavations, surveys, and building licenses; and granting permits for the transfer of archeological objects from the Area C to Israel, including for participation in archeological exhibitions outside the Palestinian areas. Since 2012, the Archeology Department of the Civil Administration was also involved in establishing museums associated with Israeli settlements. The Israeli Group Emeq Shavi observed that these activities are part of a policy of using archeological excavations to emphasize the Israeli historical narrative as a means to strengthen Israeli presence and control of Area C through the integration of archeological sites into Israeli settlements. This policy, as it is highlighted here, contradicts with Israel's responsibility as an occupying power, as specified in international law. However, in absence of a final peace agreement, Israel remains a military occupier in the Occupied Palestinian

Territory, and therefore remains bound by international humanitarian law as outlined in the Hague Convention and Regulations of 1907, the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, the Hague Convention and Protocol of 1954, the UNESCO recommendation on International Principles Applicable to Archeological Excavations - which was adopted by the UNESCO General Conference at its ninth session in New Delhi on 5 December 1956, and many other resolutions and recommendations concerning cultural property in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The State of Palestine was acknowledged as a full member in the UNESCO in 2011 and given non-member observer status by the UN General Assembly in 2012. Palestine has acceded to a significant number of international conventions relating to cultural heritage, including the Hague Convention of 1954 and the World Heritage Convention of 1972.

The archaeological sites in Area C represent an integral part of Palestinian cultural heritage, as they are associated with the Palestinian community.

Archeological Excavations

The Israeli Archeology Staff Officer and the Archeology Department of the Israeli Civil Administration have conducted a large number of research- and salvage-excavations in the Palestinian Occupied Territory. According to Israeli statistics, more than 1,000 excavations were conducted in the Palestinian areas between 1967 and 2007, including more than 300



Maqam Hasan Ar-Rai.

excavations in East Jerusalem. Major excavations were carried out in East Jerusalem, inside the town, and in the surrounding areas, including Silwan and the surrounding hills. Long-term archeological excavations were carried out at a number of sites in the West Bank and the Gaza strip, including Telul Abu Alayeq near Jericho; Tell Al-Fureidis, east of Bethlehem; Mount Gerizim and Tell Seilun, near Turmus Aya, in the Nablus district; Tell Ar-Rumeida in Hebron and Susiya near Hebron; and Deir Al-Balah in Gaza; as well as a large number of salvage excavations throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Needless to say, these excavations yielded thousands of archeological artifacts.

Most of these excavations were selected for ideological reasons and clearly associated with Israeli settlement

plans. Israeli settlements were given control over archeological sites in Deir Al-Murasras in the Maali Adumim settlement, Mount Ebal in Nablus, Tell Ar-Rumeida in Hebron, and Tell Seilun in the Shilo settlement.

Archeological Parks in Area C

Israel declared a number of sites in the West Bank and Area C as archeological parks, including the City Wall in Jerusalem, Khirbet Qumran, Tell Al-Fureidis, Sabastiya, Mount Gerizim, and Tell Seilun. The ADCA conducts archeological activities in the areas declared by the Israeli military commander as natural parks and nature reserves, which fall under the responsibility of the Office of Nature Reserves and the staff park officers in the Israeli Civil Administration. Such

enclosed by the Israeli Separation Wall. Some of these sites (Khirbet Qumran, Umm Ar-Rihan, Tell Al-Fureidis, Sabastiya, Mount Gerizim, monasteries in Al-Bariyah, and the Shuqba cave) are listed in the Palestinian inventory of cultural and natural cultural heritage sites of outstanding universal value.

Destruction of Cultural Heritage Sites

Many previously excavated sites have been left unprotected. Since 1967, great damage has been inflicted on archeological and historical sites in the Palestinian areas. They have suffered from military bombing and shelling

In the absence of a final peace agreement, Israel remains a military occupier in the Occupied Palestinian Territory - and therefore remains bound by international humanitarian law.

areas include Wadi Khareitun, Al-Bariyah, Wadi Al-Qelt, and the nature reserves of Umm Ar-Rihan, now



Mount Gerizim.



Mar Saba.

that caused partial or total destruction and from Israeli incursions - such as in 2002, when a series of archeological and historical sites were demolished, including the church of St. Barbara in Abud and the historic cores of Nablus and Hebron. A wide range of historical sites in Gaza has suffered repeatedly from Israeli military activity. Furthermore, hundreds of archeological sites in Area C have been looted and plundered, and there has been an active illegal trade of cultural properties.

The Separation Wall

A major threat is caused by the Separation Wall constructed by Israel in the OPT and in and around Jerusalem. Composed of concrete walls, razor wire, trenches, and fences, it cuts into the West Bank and separates people

from their land and history. Besides its direct human, economic, and social negative impact on Palestinian life, the Separation Wall has devastating consequences for the rich archeological remains and many cultural heritage sites and, most importantly, the cultural landscape of Palestine. The implemented and the projected Wall will encircle the Palestinian population centers, turning them into a series of disconnected blocks. At the same time, the 462 Israeli settlements inside the Palestinian areas already control more than 900 archeological sites and features. After completing the Wall, Israel will control more than 3,500 archeological sites and features, including circa 500 major archeological sites that constitute a significant part of the Palestinian cultural resources.



the full integration of these resources will not be possible without putting an end to the prolonged Israeli occupation of the Palestinian land.

Dr. Hamdan Taha is an independent researcher and former deputy minister of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (until 2014). He served as the Director General of the Department of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage from 1995 to 2013. He is the author of a series of books and of many field reports and scholarly articles.

Article photos courtesy of Dr. Hamdan Taha.

Removed Roman mosaic pavement from Nablus.

Museums in Area C

As part of the Israeli policy to reinforce its control over Palestinian cultural heritage, in 2012 Israel applied the Israeli Museum Law to the West Bank settlements, which included the establishing of a Museum Council in the OPT. The council is composed of representatives of Israeli institutions and settlements. About fifteen settlement museums are listed, including three major museums, among them the Samaritan Inn Museum that hosts primarily mosaic heritage from the West Bank and the Pottery Museum in the Qadumim settlement.

Hundreds of thousands of archeological artifacts have been transferred from the Palestinian territory to Israeli museums and institutions: mosaic pavements from near the Gaza shore, anthropoid coffins from the cemetery of Deir Al-Balah, mosaic pavements from Nablus and from Deir Samaan and Deir Qal'a in the Salfit area, and paintings from the site of Telul Abu Alayeq in Jericho. Archeological artifacts from Palestinian areas have been exhibited in Israeli museums, such as the King Herod exhibition in Jerusalem, and have been presented in international exhibitions, such as the Dead Sea Scrolls exhibition organized by the Royal Ontario Museum in Canada.

In sum, the archeological resources in Area C are an integral part of the Palestinian cultural heritage, and



Stories From the Field



Courtesy of the United Nations Development Programme Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (UNDP/PAPP)

Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

A New Opportunity Has Emerged!

Abu Azzam is a Palestinian farmer from Jayyous village in the Qalqilya governorate, a village near the western border of the West Bank. Residents in the area rely on farming and agriculture as their main source of income; and Abu Azzam managed to raise and educate his seven children by working in agriculture. For many years, he succeeded in looking after his land despite all kinds of hardship, especially as his land was at risk of being annexed due to its proximity to the Israeli settlement of Tsur Yigal. But, according to Abu Azzam, everything changed in October 2002: When the Barrier was built, annexing around thirty *dunums* (three hectares) of his land to become an enclave between the Barrier and the Green Line in what is now referred to as the 'Seam Zone', Abu Azzam and many other farmers lost their ability to access their land. This restriction was partially lifted when Abu Azzam got a special 'farmer permit in the Seam Zone' that enabled him to access and look after the land that his family had owned for generations.



Abu Azzam on his land. Photo by Palestine News & Information Agency, Wafa.

Furthermore, upon the erection of the Barrier, the Israeli authorities did not permit farmers to enter the large amounts of diesel needed to operate the underground wells in the area west of the Barrier. At the same time, and to add to the challenges farmers were facing, the price of diesel increased significantly, which affected the farmers' purchasing power and even further disrupted their ability to operate the wells and irrigate their diminishing land. Initially, the Swedish NGO We Effect implemented a short-term humanitarian intervention that during the summer season reduced the cost of irrigation water by fifty-two percent when it subsidized the cost of diesel fuel needed to operate some of the wells in the Seam Zone; then, support was provided by the UNDP's Community Resilience and Development Programme (CRDP).

"The Community Resilience and Development Programme (CRDP) helps farmers in saving on water prices, which means that many farmers are now able to come back to their land despite the difficulties of accessibility. I personally now save half on water prices, which means that I can plant and irrigate more of my land," says Abu Azzam.

Milk and Butter

Khirbet Ar-Rahawa, a Bedouin community south of Hebron, did not have any electricity, nor does it have schools. So children had to go to a nearby village to get an education - due to the lack of electricity, they often could not finish their assignments at home. Nayfeh used to live on her own in Khirbet Ar-Rahawa. She took care of her brother's one hundred and fifty sheep, while he lived with his wife and children in a nearby village.

Nayfeh used to milk sheep and make butter in a process that can take

Improving access to irrigation water in Hableh, Qalqilya and Khirbet Jubara are flagship CRDP interventions targeting agricultural lands of the Seam Zone. The project was initially categorized as humanitarian - subsidy of diesel - and has proven successful in its transition to development aid. Regardless of the difficulties of access they face, the project aims to support the resilience of farmers, so they can continue to attend to their land, by enhancing their access to irrigation water, lowering its cost, and increasing the accessible quantities. This goal was achieved when CRDP partner We Effect implemented the project by replacing the deteriorating diesel-run pumping systems of three underground water wells (two of them in the Seam Zone) with new, more efficient ones, operated by electricity. After completing most of the rehabilitation processes, the discharge rates of the three targeted wells increased about twofold. This had a great impact on the farming activities in the area because it decreased the irrigation costs for farmers, which in turn increased the irrigated area by about two hundred *dunums* (twenty hectares), and enhanced the competitiveness of their produce. The guava planted in the area is the best!

up to five hours a day. But since the Community Resilience and Development Programme, as part of UNDP's support to marginalized communities in Area C, has provided Nayfeh with solar panels and a milk churn, not only has the process of making butter decreased to half an hour instead of four, her brother and his family have moved back to the Bedouin community in Khirbet Ar-Rahawa.

"Thanks to the project, I see my family more," Nayfeh says. "The kids can study at home after school now that we have solar electricity. I used to have



chronic pain in my arms because of the shaking to make butter, but now, no more pain or shaking”.



Solar panels provided to a family in Al Rashaydah through CRDP. @UNDP/PAPP

A Cave With A Well

Tana is a herder community located in the eastern part of the Nablus Governorate. The community is located in Area C and considered by the Israeli army to be a closed military area. Abu Afif is a father of nine and a shepherd with two hundred sheep. He resides in the Tana hamlet so he can graze

sheep, whereas his wife and nine kids reside in the nearby town in order for them to be able to attend school. The family joins him in December during the milking season. Because Abu Afif’s tent has been demolished many times, he is now living inside a cave. He used to travel a long distance to fetch water for his sheep, but since the UNDP renovated the water-harvesting cisterns



in the Tana area, Abu Afif has access to water right next to his cave.

Throughout the area, Abu Afif has helped in locating tens of ancient and abandoned water cisterns that were renovated during the lifetime of the project.

The Community Resilience and Development Programme (CRDP) is an umbrella of multi-sector projects that aim at injecting the developmental capital needed for Palestinians’ sustainable development through working with partners and

communities on four main outputs: public infrastructure, protection of natural resources, income generation, and human rights. The program is implemented by the UNDP’s Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, funded by the Swedish, Austrian, and Norwegian governments, and led by the Palestinian government. Until this date, fifty-two projects in various locations in Area C and East Jerusalem have been implemented that contributed to providing new opportunities and supported the resilience of hundreds of families.

Herd of a CRDP beneficiary in the village of Al Korshan. Abu Khardish’s home was provided with solar panels and a refrigerator. Photo courtesy of Ventura Formicone - @UNDP/PAPP





The Political Agency of Fallahin Architecture:

Unravelling the Conflict of Susiya



By Hania Halabi

In the dusty hilly terrain to the south of Hebron, on dry bedrock ground where shrubs can barely find a way to grow, stands a small house built from concrete blocks. The concrete is surrounded by a metal structure that supports a suspended layer of fabric. It is hard to call it a concrete house, yet it is not a tent. It is something in-between: a draped house that I will call the “Concrete Tent”. The fabric covers the concrete from all sides but reveals it at the front. Obviously, at the moment the photograph was taken, the house was partially undraped and the blue painted door left slightly open. Perhaps someone has just entered inside or left. Their recent presence in the scene is a reminder of an on-going

Concrete tent.



daily life. In front of the house, there are pieces of rock, a pile of concrete blocks, and sparse patches of dry green growth. To the right, a child's slide is angled, its end directed towards the hard bedrock. Behind the Concrete Tent there is a swing, and further to the back, in the near horizon, there is an Israeli patrol on the watch.

On 4 May 2015, High Court Judge Noam Solberg rejected a petition for an interim order that would freeze the implementation of demolition orders issued against homes in the village of Khirbet Susiya, a tiny encampment of tents and shacks. Here, a few hundred people are still hanging on to what is left of their ancestral lands; in face of the Israeli Civil Administration which could uproot the entire village of eighty structures at any moment. However, after negotiations with the representatives of the village, the final hearing at the Supreme Court as to whether the Israeli Defence Forces could carry out the deed - initially scheduled for August 3 - was postponed given the outrage and escalating tension that followed the burning of an eighteen-month-old boy

In 1997, Israel declared the status of unregistered lands as state lands on the basis of a distorted interpretation of the Ottoman Agrarian Law. In Area C, around 34% of the lands gained that declaration, 30% were declared as “military firing zones”, 20% classified as “survey fields”, and others designated as “nature reserves” and “national parks,” which left Palestinians with less than 1% for construction - with most of it already built up. Construction in the remaining part is only possible with a permit and within the borders of an approved master plan. However, the Civil Administration has rejected most master plan proposals and declined almost all building permits, leaving 340 peasants and goat-herders in Susiya on the brink of eviction today.

in Duma, near Nablus in the West Bank. This continued deferral of a decision preserves the ambiguous legal context that has allowed the continuation of a trend which caused the inhabitants of this village to be evicted three times in as many decades. The enforced uncertainty brought about by this situation threatens to push Susiya's case into an open conflict. Today, the whole village lives on the brink of eviction, awaiting a fateful decision from the pending court hearing.

The Israeli-Palestinian story of build-and-destroy is not new to the conflict. In Susiya, as is the case in other villages within Area C, this story has been well rehearsed on the claim that Palestinian structures have been built without permits and are thus rendered illegal. In fact, Palestinians living in the area do apply for permits, but almost

none are ever issued. Thus, the urban informality and illegality of structures is the consequence of a condition brought about by Israel's discriminatory policies that leave Palestinians who need shelter with no other alternative but to build without permits.

The political geography of urban informality has been conceptualised by Israeli theorist Orel Yiftachel as gray spaces positioned between the "lightness" of legality, safety, and full membership (white spaces), and the "darkness" of eviction, destruction, and death (black spaces). In the Palestinian-Israeli context, Yiftachel associates "Gray Spacing" with the ethnocentric practices of Israel against the indigenous Palestinian Bedouins in the Negev desert. However, an application of the concept inside the Green Line, as I suggest, can also illuminate the urban colonial practices of Israel against the Palestinian peasants, *fallahin*, in Area C. In this article, I extend my analysis over a spectrum of scales across which the conflict of Susiya unfolds in an attempt to reveal what delineates the borders of the entire village as a "gray space:" how are these borders maintained, and what whitening and blackening practices shift them? Moreover, what is the role of *fallahin* as both the planners and architects of the village within these processes?

To answer these questions, I base my research on the image of the Concrete Tent that begins this article. At first glance, the most striking element in the Concrete Tent is the tension between the fabric and the concrete that together form its envelope, one of the most primitive elements in architecture. The envelope separates the inside from the outside. Thinking of it as the border, the frontier, the edge, and the liminal brings about the shift that contemporary studies have made in understanding these synonym concepts as complicated, contested territories rather than mere lines. The envelope, as I argue, is no longer a surface but rather a device

fully loaded with political content. The hardness of the concrete and softness of the fabric reveal their expressions and political agency. While concrete expresses permanence, formality, and illegality; fabric expresses temporality, informality, and 'imagined' legality. Although building without permits in Area C is prohibited regardless of the construction materials, fabric tends to be more tolerated by the Israeli authorities. Thus, the logic behind veiling the concrete with fabric suggests that it is used to exit a regime of visibility. It positions *fallahin* outside the gaze of the state authorities by blurring the figure of a concrete house as a demolition target against the background of the village in conflict.

The interesting constellation shown in the photograph of the Concrete Tent, where the concrete reveals itself from underneath the fabric while an Israeli patrol is standing in the horizon and watching, also suggests that this practice of the *fallahin* is not completely secretive. It is rather a tactic that allows Israel to mobilise tolerance - understood here as a mode of incorporating the village's presence within a system that refuses to recognise it - within this volatile zone of conflict. The architecture of *fallahin* becomes a time-management tool for postponing demolition orders.

The logic of the Concrete Tent's envelope should also be analyzed in relation to the broader urban context of Susiya. Both the concrete and the fabric, as I suggest, unfold upon the surface of the earth and play roles in border-making processes. While the concrete delineates the borders of the black space, where practices of eviction and destruction take place, the fabric as a more temporary material delineates the borders of the white space, as it allows the state to perform a gesture of tolerance. However, it does not eliminate the present threat of destruction and removal. Thus, the fabric's act of veiling-unveiling, or

draping-undraping the concrete marks a flickering at the border between black and white spaces. However, this is not to say that if the concrete is completely concealed, the village lies within the white space and is safe; neither is it to say that exposing it puts the village at the instant threat of destruction. In fact, the complex relation at stake is regulated by the space in-between the two materials, which I argue produces a gray zone. The grayness here marks the shifting and unresolved tension between state 'tolerance' and *fallahin* strategies for preservation.

According to the new adopted laws, any piece of land must be cultivated for ten continuous years in order to come under private ownership. Moreover, if a land is not cultivated for three continuous years, it directly comes under the possession of the sovereign.

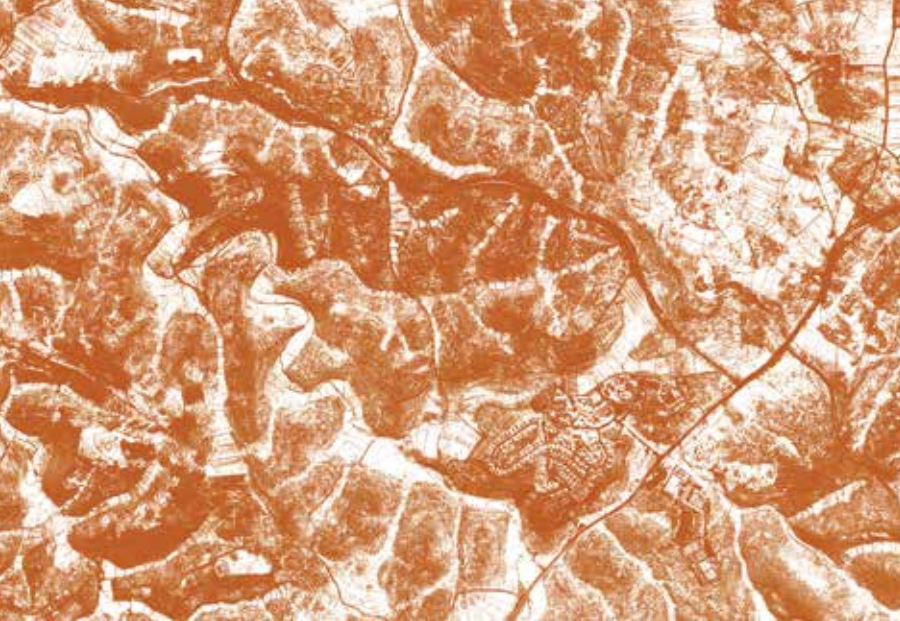
In the late 1970s, Israel based a large scale topographical-mapping and land-registration project on these laws. It was run by the director of the civil department of the state prosecutor's office, Plia Abek, who started her work by touring the mountains of the



Susiya aerial photograph.

When the space of in-between unfolds upon the surface of the earth, it meets the complex legal pattern of Area C inscribed on the ground. An understanding of this pattern requires drawing back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when Israel-Palestine witnessed a shift from the application of international Belligerent Occupation Laws (that were based on different conceptions of security) to the Ottoman Agrarian Land Laws.

West Bank in a helicopter. The project was undertaken from the air, using aerial photometry that would by-pass the problems of doing surveys in hostile terrains. It aimed to define uncultivated lands (which either haven't been cultivated for three years, or have been cultivated for less than ten years) to which Israel could lay claim. As a result, uncultivated state land existed in a wide range of scales: from large tracts of desert, to smaller



Susya's Legal Ground Pattern - done by Author.

islands of rock puncturing the private fields of the peasants. The borders between cultivated Palestinian lands and uncultivated Israeli lands followed a clear topographical logic, but stayed blurry on the ground. The suitable soil erodes down from the summits of the mountains to the valleys, leaving the rocky summits to be declared as Israeli lands - and the cultivatable valleys for Palestinians. Thus, the gray space of Susiya is complexified by the multiplication of internal borders between rocky and cultivated lands that are, in fact, borders between Israeli and Palestinian jurisdictions. However, on the ground, the military orders that are applied to Israeli state lands remained in effect for the Palestinian valleys below and between them. Thus, the materiality of the Concrete Tent here can be understood in relation to the legal pattern of the ground. The harder the ground, the less cultivable it is; the structure must be softer and less permanent in order to be tolerated.

The architecture of the Concrete Tent, as I have proposed in this article, is not a subject of research, but a research tool itself. By analyzing its materiality,

I unpacked the agency of *fallahin* architecture in delineating the borders of the spaces they inhabit. The veiling of concrete by fabric, as an oppositional strategy to the Israeli regulations in Area C, allowed Israel to utilise tolerance as a vehicle for sustaining life in Susiya. Moreover, it revealed how Susiya's current conflict is rooted in Israel's adoption of the Ottoman Agrarian Land Laws that in turn have allowed cultivation to become a colonial tool. Today, the whole population of Susiya inhabits the threshold of eviction, living an open-ended story of build-and-destroy.

Resources

- Eyal Weizman, (2007), *Hollow Land*, London: Verso.
- Oren Yiftachel, (2009), "Critical Theory and 'gray space': Mobilization of the colonized", *CITY*, Vol. 13 (Issue 2-3), 246-263.

Hania Halabi is an architect and a researcher from East Jerusalem who has completed her Masters in Research Architecture at Goldsmiths University of London.

Casper & Gambini's[®]

all in good taste



Casper & Gambini's is an internationally franchised restaurant-café, Offering a healthy rich menu with a variety of savory dishes, blends & brews.

Casper & Gambini's specializes in serving gourmet meals and specialty espresso-based drinks, with an emphasis on health and fresh ingredients. The all-day menu comprises hot cuisine, sandwiches, salads, weekly features, homemade desserts, coffee and juices, served in an elegant and contemporary atmosphere.

Ramallah, Al Maysoun, nearby Al Rafedein square,
Adel Masri building, Tel: 02 2988268

Delivery Service: **1700 90 90 90**



Placemaking in the West Bank in Area C



By Asma Ibrahim and Pren Domgjoni
UN HABITAT



At a site visit in the Abdallah Younis village near Jenin. Photo Courtesy of UN-Habitat.

P lacemaking

Placemaking is an approach to urban design that intends to ensure the creation of valuable qualities within shared spaces based on a “bottom-to-top approach.” Most of the time, Placemaking is understood merely as an urban design. While it is true that urban design is part of Placemaking, there is more to it: Placemaking is about bringing a community together to decide about the design and use of a public space that can be a street, or a small or large space in the village, town, or the city. Placemaking is not only about large-scale projects and large budgets; in other words, it welcomes increased efforts and collaboration of citizens, professionals, and authorities to design any public place in a way that has meaning.

Placemaking in Area C

During the few past decades, Palestinian communities in Area C have fallen victim to the political situation, since all decision-making in planning was in the hands of the Israeli Civil Administration (ICA). Most Area C villages were considered as an agricultural zone in the Mandatory-era regional plans that the ICA utilized, plans that are inadequate to meet the needs of current populations. Furthermore, the Israeli occupation has enforced a centralized planning system by eliminating community participation. As a result, Palestinians have been left with no other choice than to build without permits - which directly has led to a deterioration of the built environment and has lowered the quality of services, infrastructure, and of shared places. Moreover, Palestinian communities of Area C have come to suffer from a lack of trust in their desire and ability to be a service provider rather than consumer.

Realizing the critical situation of Area C, UN-Habitat salutes Placemaking as a key activity in a program entitled “Planning Support to the Palestinian Communities in Area C” to improve the resilience of the local Palestinian communities. This assistance aims to provide effective planning and coordinated advocacy to Palestinian communities on the one hand, and to enhance Palestinian building capacity on the other hand. Community-design schemes are developed by the Placemaking approach that aims to bridge land-use plans with a better approach to the designing of public places. Thus, UN-Habitat has applied Placemaking to designs in fourteen localities throughout Area C of the West Bank and has implemented them

in four out of the fourteen localities, considering Placemaking a tool to quickly and effectively respond to the sensitivity of Area C.

Building Communities Around Places

The process is designed so each party brings with it its particular strength: the community brings the unique insights and inspirations that come from living in that particular community and caring for it, while the professionals bring technical insights and knowledge of best practice. Through a series of carefully organized workshops, the participants develop a shared understanding of the issues, move to an agreed set of priorities (a design agenda), and eventually arrive at a set of design proposals that are not only realistic and achievable, but also demonstrably respond to the issues that the community agrees are important.

Although Placemaking proposals are as diverse and unique as the communities within which they occur, typically they share a number of features. They

- reconcile local priorities with best practice to ensure that interventions continue to be relevant and appropriate, even

Placemaking projects are tools with the tremendous demonstrative effect to enhance the resilience of marginalized communities in Area C because the process produces realistic and concrete interventions that improve the quality of life. The Placemaking approach utilizes emotional capital, the “belonging to the land,” and local financial capital in places where marginalized people are living on limited resources and spaces. It builds a deep connection between people and their land, since people are encouraged to use and interact with their surroundings, to make them places they truly own.

- when circumstances change or new changes emerge that were not apparent to the community, but are known by the professional experts;
- are designed to meet multiple needs, offering something for everyone;

- require low capital cost and are relatively easy to do and maintain sustainably by the local community, using local skills and materials;
- combine practicality with attractiveness by offering opportunities that people choose to experience, rather than merely solutions that they have no choice than be contented with; and
- leave a positive legacy of empowerment and greater confidence in the performance and legitimacy of the community within which the interventions occur.

Placemaking: Pilot Projects in Four Localities

The Placemaking projects were carried out as a series of workshops at different localities. They were led by Jenny Donovan, an international expert on urban design, landscaping, and Placemaking, as well as by a specialized and dedicated local team of urban planners and designers, all working hand in hand with local communities. The workshops focused on exploring the local context in order to come up with sustainable Placemaking interventions that can serve present and

future generations in the long run. The process took place from March 2014 to January 2015 and was attended by the International Peace and Cooperation Center (IPCC).

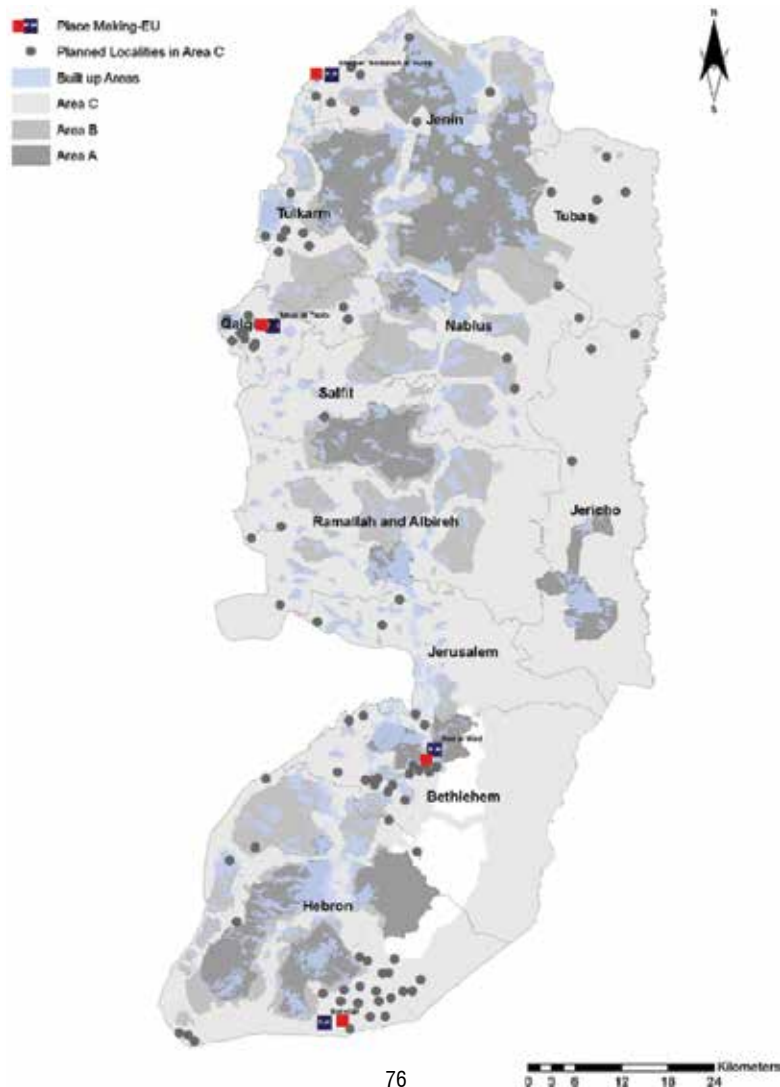
In 2014, the final designs were presented in reports that also covered, besides the main Placemaking projects, questions on major infrastructural engineering proposals that can be funded and implemented by other donors. For advocacy and in order to raise awareness, UN-Habitat also organized Training of Trainers (TOT). The TOT-workshop aimed to encourage the new generation of Palestinian planners, urban designers, and civil society activists to apply an inclusive, participatory approach in developing and designing places. In addition, during a public fundraising presentation, donors, NGOs, and Palestinian ministries received information about the results of the Placemaking approach. On this basis, the European Union provided seed funds to implement a demonstration of Placemaking projects in four different localities: Imneizil, Ras Al-Wad, Abdallah Younis, and Izbet Tabib, as shown in Figure (1).

For the implementation of the Placemaking interventions, illustrative

A Placemaking project can be seen as a journey on which the people of a community embark together with external professionals to arrive at a shared plan for key spaces in the community.

drawings of the project were produced in March 2015 that together with the reports provided sufficient details to allow for reasonably accurate estimates of construction costs. Besides, all final designs use local materials and feature simple design concepts in order to reduce operating and managing costs. The final report consisted of the detailed designs, their estimated costs, and the detailed specifications.

In April 2015, the tendering process started in the four localities and attracted wide interest: out of many applicants, one contractor was selected and the implementation phase was finalized by the end of May 2015. The local council association has been in charge of supervising the work, while UN-Habitat's role has been to monitor and support it during the implementation phase.



Placemaking Workshop. Photo Courtesy of UN-Habitat.



Figure 2 – Ras Al-Wad – Drawn by Jenny Donovan.

Placemaking in Ras Al-Wad: A Place for Walking, a Place for Sitting

Ras Al-Wad is a small village near Bethlehem with approximately 500 inhabitants. While it is located partially in Area C, its centre is located in Area B. The Separation Wall separates Ras Al-Wad from the Bethlehem region, and the locality is therefore detached from regional integration. Za'tara offers basic educational and health services for these localities, which makes integration necessary to provide spatial continuity and access to services. Through a planning process, this locality was selected to conduct a Placemaking exercise, and professional designers, planners, local citizens, and authorities designed in three workshops a Placemaking project. Paolo Curradi,

the Office of the European Union representative for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is referring to Placemaking: “Ras Al-Wad is one of the thirty-six villages in Area C in which the European Union is funding an urban planning process, and one of the four villages where we support Placemaking interventions. During the Placemaking process, the entire village is gathering in brainstorming activities to discuss and harvest ideas and images on how to transform the most used public spaces in the village into beautiful and welcoming public places.”

Placemaking focused on the entire village and selected key sites based on the community's input. The interventions were designed and managed to allow the community to build these sites themselves, wherever

possible. This approach supports empowerment and self-determination and cultivates an increased sense of ownership over a community's surroundings. The interventions:

- improve the environmental and visual quality (landscaping and tree planting);
- calm traffic, which includes accessible and safe pedestrian connections;
- improve access to economic opportunities; and
- create a meaningful place for citizens.

The outcome of the workshops were documented as a Community Design Agenda and then reported to the communities, illustrated with drawings and key messages as shown in Figure 2.

Implementing Projects Through Community Contracting

Since Placemaking projects are implemented through community contracting – in order to empower the community - and based on some regional examples that were implemented by UN-Habitat, in Ras Al-Wad, the initial idea was to establish a community-based organization. However, after assessing the conditions and the time frame needed to establish such an organization, it was decided to implement this project through the Municipality of Za'tara in cooperation with the Village Project Group. The contracts were prepared in cooperation with the Village representatives and translated into Arabic. The English version was signed by the regional office representative and the Municipality of Za'tara representatives.

Placemaking Interventions and Positive Contributions

Placemaking projects are strong showcases for other vulnerable Palestinian communities in Area C for non-statutory processes, i.e. they can be implemented without the need to obtain explicit construction

permits. Placemaking projects provide opportunities for people to create solutions - in a regional context and with local means - by designing surroundings that meet their needs and facilitate for them to thrive and fulfill their potential.

Moreover, Placemakers seek to minimize reliance on financial capital to realize plans, but instead give greater weight to a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential to get things done. In different words, Placemaking processes emphasize the efficient use of local resources and seek to ensure that all interventions are designed to meet multiple local needs. The combination of outside experts and a local agenda allows for best practice to be considered at a local level.

Asma Ibrahim is an architect with a master's degree in urban planning from Birzeit University. Her master dissertation was about urban housing qualities at neighborhoods of Palestinian cities. She has five years of experience in academic teaching, architectural design, and urban planning. Asma joined UN-Habitat oPt in December 2013, as an Urban Planner and designer for the supporting of planning in Area C.

Pren Domgjoni studied Spatial Planning and GIS Application; EU Integration and Law; and Albanian Language and Literature. From 2007-2014 he worked as a Spatial Urban Planner in UN-Habitat, Kosovo, supporting Kosovo municipalities throughout the process of spatial and urban planning. From January 2014-October 2015 he worked as Urban Planner Project Manager in UN-Habitat, Palestine. He was responsible for two projects titled “Spatial Planning Support Programme for Palestinian Communities in Area C of West Bank”. He has experience in spatial and urban planning, sustainable development, and disaster risk assessment and management. He conducted a research on integration of disaster risk management into spatial and urban planning in Japan in 2013. Currently he works for the Japanese Embassy in Kosovo as Grass Roots Project Coordinator for Kosovo.



On the Edge



By Elias and Yousef Anastas

The edge is where potentialities are revealed: living on the edge, one has to put into motion everything possible in order to persevere.

On the Edge is a story about making architecture in Palestine told through the specific case of The Stonesourcing Space project: A stone pavilion which adapts traditional techniques to the imperatives of resistance within the framework of the Palestinian public space, The Stonesourcing Space is a project that was designed, fabricated, and implemented in 2013 by Scales, the research department of AAU Anastas. The exhibition on Manger Square in Bethlehem was motivated by the urgency of standing up to a misuse of stone and an urbanism that is increasingly taken out of its context in Palestinian cities, while it aims to set in motion a thinking process that links stone construction techniques to the urban morphology of Palestinian cities. The Stonesourcing Space intends to foster a strategic awareness for new visions of urban morphologies.



The Stonesourcing Space at Wadi Makhrour, snow storm, 2014..

As such, The Stonesourcing Space is a permanent, ongoing project that presents an on-the-edge process of making architecture in Palestine. It visualizes an essential relation to the contested geographical and political edge of Palestinian reality and reacts to architectural concerns – on a research level as well as on a territorial scale. The Stonesourcing Space is strengthened by every on-the-edge situation by offering immediate tangible solutions.

Chora

Chora in ancient Greek refers to a definite location that is either occupied or can be occupied by something, denoting a void or a potential.

Historically, Palestinian cities have been built with a relationship to nature – to vast expanses of countryside landscape. The nucleus of a city, managed by its inhabitants, was considered only a small part of the city which was defined mainly by its surrounding landscape. The only constructions found outside the dense nuclei were the *manateers*, countryside shelters used to mark territory and to signal property. The Ottoman Empire and the British Mandate introduced

Originally produced on Manger Square in 2013, The Stonesourcing Space's special features allow the structure to legally persevere in Area C. It can be viewed on the edge of Makhrou Valley, near Hosh Jasmin, Bethlehem. In August 2015 the project was featured at The Voices of Sirens, an exhibition at the Little Constellation Network for Contemporary Art in Gibraltar.

urban regulations that transformed the use of space from appropriation to attribution. The territorial restrictions of the Israeli occupation increased the tendency of containing the use of space; and consequently, today the layout of cities is muddled. A physical limit is imposed by the Separation Wall. These complex territorial devices transform Palestinian cities into territories whose urban spread has a visual horizon drawn by the Wall's path. Additionally, in order to protect one's land, one must prove that it is inhabited. Thus,

The Stonesourcing Space invests the Nativity Square in Bethlehem as an installation whose aim is to reinvigorate public space.





All design simulation procedures were unveiled on the public space as open-source material.

the temptation of the urban filling of an enclave is a natural reaction and Palestinian cities have adopted a new scale: less defined, less dense, less concentrated, and their construction spreads without a real master plan. Through change in the use of space, a shift has taken place, moving from a dense urbanism emptying its landscape surroundings to the temptation of filling up the space on the cities' edges.

Since all geographical spaces on the edges of Palestinian cities are threatened by expropriation, The Stonesourcing Space is implemented in Wadi Makhrou, at the western limit of Bethlehem, in the same way in which the ancient *manateers* had the function of alerting wayfarers to the fact that a piece of land was privately owned. Wadi Makhrou is situated in Area C, defined by the Oslo Accords as Palestinian property, yet under Israeli control – and as such it is constantly threatened by colonization and expropriation. All constructions on the geographical edge of Bethlehem are categorically forbidden.

Without spoiling the landscape or condemning the city's development on a long term basis, The Stonesourcing Space's goal is to provide an answer

to the need of land consumption in times of war and to mark property as an act of resistance to the Wall's path. Since the city's limit has been erased over time through numerous, often unfathomable political separation policies, The Stonesourcing Space goes beyond the power-driven practice of dominating space and puts back nature as part of the urbanism process. The city extends to the limit beyond which any going further would be topographically destroying nature: the edge of the valley.

From a viewpoint that considers political context, The Stonesourcing Space is implemented on a territory that features an exhaustive sample of the space-related complexities that exist in Palestine: it overlooks road 60 – used by settlers to commute from settlements to Jerusalem; it is located on a hill under which road 60 becomes a tunnel; it is only a twenty-minute walking distance away from the city center of Beit Jala; it shares the valley with the Palestinian city of Battir, inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list; and it is overlooked by Har Gilo, a settlement located on the highest hill in the area. The Stonesourcing Space is built from stones that weigh

five tons, but it has no roof. Thus, it is indestructible – at least according to the political meaning of space use and due to the law of the roof.

Let us explain: In 1993 the Oslo accords divided the West Bank into three areas, each with a different status that denotes the amount of self-government Palestinians are allowed to exert through the Palestinian Authority. This situation was intended to be temporary, until a Final Status Agreement would be established in 1999. Area A includes eight Palestinian cities and their surrounding areas

as unmeasured, occurring at the intersection of natural events and human wisdom, and defined by the opportunity that this moment carries.

Construction started on a hot summer day in August after the wedding of Abu Awwad's daughter. Although all documents had been ready in mid-July, most stone factories in the region of Bethlehem had refused to cut the 859 stones, mainly because it broke the production rhythm of the standardized stone products, usually the size of 2,3 or 5cm. However Abu Awwad's stone business, whose backyard has been



The Stonesourcing Space overlooks road 60.



The Stonesourcing Space adapts the historical function of a muntar to the current imperatives of resistance.

(Nablus, Jenin, Tulkarem, Qalqilya, Ramallah, Bethlehem, Jericho and eighty percent of Hebron), exempting Israeli settlements. Entry into this area is forbidden to all Israeli citizens. Area B is under Palestinian civil control and joint Israeli-Palestinian security control. Area C is under full Israeli civil and security control. Seventy percent of this area is defined as within settler municipal boundaries where permits for development are denied to Palestinians. Constructions are only accepted if they have neither roof nor foundations. The Stonesourcing Space does not have a roof – and yet it weighs more than 5 tons of stone!

Kairos

Kairos in ancient Greek refers to an instant of time, experienced

cut in two parts by the Separation Wall, did accept the challenge. His family has been in the stone craftsmanship for several generations, and he was supportive of standing up to the recent misuse and standardization of stone.

On a Saturday afternoon, drinking Arabic coffee in his workshop, Abu Awwad promised to deliver the stones – all of them – next Tuesday, adding that he could not deliver them earlier because his daughter's wedding was on Monday. We had found a partner who was at least as convinced as we were of the necessity of rebelling against the current use of stone! However, for Abu Awwad it was also a way of paying a tribute to his ancestors and their love of stone.

The misuse of stone is not typical or methodological: stone cladding is used



Abu Awad cut the 859 stones in two days.

Friday - 3 am - when Area C sleeps.

in the whole world. But in Palestine stone use is particularly misused due to a neglect of our heritage of construction methods, a heritage built over time. Unfortunately, in the last century, stone-construction know-how didn't evolve. Our generation may be the one who will completely forget those techniques – or it may not.

Not only does The Stonesourcing Space stand up to the disappearance of historical know-how, it aims at enriching it by introducing new construction techniques based on novel design simulation and fabrication processes. Although on the edge of vanishing, some aspects of stone construction heritage remain profoundly settled in Palestinian culture. Palestinian quarries refuse to use bad quality stone, almost by arrogance, even though mediocre quality stone blocks – i.e. poor mechanical properties – satisfy the requirements for stone cladding construction as used today in all buildings. Instead, they only accept the blocks with the best characteristics, leaving the mediocre quality to the Israeli market. In Palestinian imagination, time has inscribed a trace of what stone must be, a trace that even occupation cannot destroy.

The Stonesourcing Space intends to be part of the existing landscape. The durability of the material and its resistance to climate influences increase its ability to adapt to the

landscape and, on a long term basis, even to merge with it. Just as *manateers* became an essential part of Palestinian landscape, The Stonesourcing Space mixes material use and morphology with the goal of bringing back nature as a criterion for urbanism.

Kinesis

Kinesis in ancient Greek refers to motion.

After its construction and exhibition on Manger Square, The Stonesourcing Space had to move. On moving day the square was crowded and bets were on: will the pavilion be successfully dismantled or not. Abu Wadi', the best-known trailer driver was on the square; his entire reputation was at stake. But taking the pavilion from the square was the easy task. Moving it to Makhrou Valley was difficult, and implementing it in Area C seemed impossible.

On a Friday evening the pavilion was dismantled. A special convoy was organized to move from Manger Square to Makhrou Valley: the trailer was preceded and followed by municipal police cars and didn't exceed 15 km/h in speed. There were difficulties of topography to overcome in reaching the western limit of Bethlehem, passing through 800 m of declivity, and additional difficulties in settling down the pavilion in Area C, where all construction is forbidden by the Israeli

authorities. On a Friday night, we knew we would avoid the latter difficulty – at least until the next day.

Techne

Techne in ancient Greek, refers to craftsmanship. Urbanism is a way of crafting the citizens of a community.

Before and during the Ottoman Empire, urban development was influenced by three factors: *harat* ('big families' to which every inhabitant was linked), *hosh* (a common shared space in the heart of a series of houses), and the typical city surroundings of olive orchards and terraced landscapes. At that time, urban strategies were regulated between the *moukhtar* (chiefs) of each *hara*. This self-managed urbanism, whose successful operation would fulfil many of today's western criteria of a successful city, has progressively been disappearing. The dense nucleus is no longer as much a center of interest as the surroundings where cities boom. Palestinian cities today have very complex boundaries. The British mandate put in place urban planning. Power rather than nature took precedence and in response, Palestinian cities have broken with their domestic scale. Their boundaries are being dictated by the Separation Wall, and the unstable political situation is leading to a lack of trust in public space.

The Stonesourcing Space addresses the question of public space in the city of Bethlehem. The stone structure takes a rebellious stand against current construction techniques and poor intellectual research investment in the only locally-available independent and abundant Palestinian construction material. As a place where expression, debate, and innovation are possible, public space is both the locus of counter powers and the necessary binder of the state. It is the meeting place of architects, engineers, mayors, citizens, bricklayers, historians, and many more. And while in the past public space was inherent to Palestinian urbanism, under modern circumstances there has been a clear break-off with public space. The Stonesourcing Space stands for a reconciliation of Palestinians with their public spaces.

The Stonesourcing Space on Manger Square aimed to embody urban social power and artisanal skills and to help build an inclusive city.

Yousef Anastas is an architect and engineer, principal at AAU ANASTAS.

He is currently leading AAU Anastas' research department, SCALES, a research laboratory that aims to consistently link together scales that are otherwise opposed.

He is a co-founder of Local Industries and can be reached at yousef@aauanastas.com.

www.aauanastas.com, www.localindustries.org.

Elias Anastas is an architect, principal at AAU ANASTAS.

He is a co-founder of Local Industries, a project born from the desire to put direct collaboration with local artisans at the heart of the process and to look for ways to minimize energy consumption for the creation and production of industrial design. Elias can be reached at elias@aauanastas.com. www.aauanastas.com, www.localindustries.org.



Jerusalem Suburbs: Lost and Forgotten?



By Rasha Alyatim

Oh, I am sure you know about Areas A, B, and C. I do not doubt you know of the daily applications of this labeling.

Who doesn't know about Qalandia checkpoint? I am quite positive you know the shortcut, better known as Kassarat. Undoubtedly, you have passed the famous Kufer Aqab traffic light. Did you use an expletive? Or have you stopped yourself just in time? I have no hard data, but I don't know any Palestinian who sings a happy tune on his way into Ramallah - using Qalandia checkpoint and Semiramis Street. I do know a number of people who try to avoid Qalandia checkpoint at any cost.

So while you try to avoid that street as much as possible, I am asking you to allow me to give you a new perspective on things. Let me take you on a journey along the Ramallah-Al-Quds road - a journey that will not take you to Ramallah at all, but to several stops along the road: to villages and cities that are called the Jerusalem Suburbs. I don't read minds, but I have a feeling you never pause to think of what it is like to live there. In this piece, I want to tell you what it is like. I want to tell you stories of people living there and of their daily struggles to achieve what others (non-citizens of the Jerusalem Suburbs) take for granted.

Let's take Kufer Aqab as our first case in this piece. Kufer Aqab is an eccentric place to live in. Part of it is under the Palestinian Government and the other part is under the Israeli Jerusalem Municipality. At this point, some legitimate questions might be asked:

Who provides services to citizens? - I don't know.

Who licenses the tall residential buildings you see on your way to Ramallah? - No one I know of.

Who makes sure these buildings are safe and have proper infrastructure? - I am still looking for the responsible agency for that.

I will not educate about, political/environmental/educational/health/gender/youth statuses of Jerusalem Suburbs. I want to tell a human story. I want to highlight the daily struggle of being a citizen/resident of the Jerusalem Suburbs. I want to highlight the daily struggles of people, not just people passing through Qalandia and AlKassarat, but people actually living there.

The Separation Wall cutting through Al-Ram main street.





A usual sight when a waste water network is blocked.

Where do children go to play safely, to a park or a playground? - To the streets.
 What do citizens do as recreational activities? - Stay away from trouble.

How many people live in Kufer Aqab anyways?

Ah, here is the question to which I know the answer: Kufer Aqab's population is not officially registered. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics estimates its population to be around 18,000-20,000 people. Its village council estimates it to be around 80,000 people. Why this discrepancy? Because first, Palestinians with a Jerusalem ID did not declare themselves to the PCBS during the 2007 census; second, in the last five years, Palestinians holding Jerusalem IDs moved en masse into the tall residential buildings in Kufer Aqab because it is cheaper than living in Jerusalem - but they get to keep their Jerusalem ID. So they weren't counted in the 2007 census.

What are the implications of this population discrepancy? The implications are bountiful, to be honest. For one, under the Palestinian local governance structure, Kufer Aqab has a village council. For reasons I will not go into right now - or judge, the Palestinian Government set up a special local governing structure in the Jerusalem Governorate. In this governorate, there

is only one municipality in the capital city: the Jerusalem Municipality. Other localities are governed by a village council or a local council. Because a Palestinian village council is not allocated the same amount of resources (human, capital, and financial) as a municipal council, Kufer Aqab's council has a total of ten employees. The village mayorship is a non-paying job; so generally, the mayor of Kufer Aqab has to have an income-generating job or business because being a mayor "doesn't feed bread." The current mayor has a private business and only comes to the council on his day off work. I don't blame him, of course, but I ask: is it possible to run a city of 80,000 citizens with ten employees and a mayor who comes in only once a week?

With a village council, Kufer Aqab also has no executive powers to take any legal actions against wrongdoers, like the owners of the tall residential buildings who build without licensing. Once, Abu Jabber from the Kufer Aqab village council looked at me and said: "I feel like my hands are tied all the time. Citizens ask us to accomplish tasks that are reasonable and sensible. But as a village council, it is beyond us."

Another implication has to do with infrastructure and development projects; an international funding agency is far more interested in doing

projects in densely populated cities, for wider impact. Funding agencies rely on PCBS numbers. Kufer Aqab with an official population of 20,000 will not win against a city with an official population of 80,000.

A fourth implication is something as basic as numbers: of schools, pharmacies, or health care clinics. Once, a pharmacist told me this story: the Pharmacists Association licenses one pharmacy for every 4,000

is surrounded by the Wall. The main entrance to Jaba' is through Al-Ram, because its own main entrance was closed down by the Israelis several years ago. Once, on the Facebook group for Jaba', the question was posted, "What do you think is the most important project for Jaba'?" The majority asked for streetlights. The mayor of Jaba' has been working very hard to get streetlights; he says it will be his proudest moment.



Kufer Aqab and the settlement behind it.



Adding insult to injury; uncollected garbage and the Separation Wall.

residents. Therefore, and according to official numbers, Kufer Aqab has reached its capacity of pharmacies and no licenses are being given to open new pharmacies. In reality, there is a real need for pharmacies in Kufer Aqab. Unlicensed pharmacies started to open in the city - and some of them sell not just medication, but also drugs and all sorts of things - with no one to hold them accountable.

The sadder part of the story is that the case of Kufer Aqab does not stand alone but is mirrored in other localities in the Jerusalem Suburbs as well. A similar population discrepancy is exemplified in Al-Ram and in 'Anata. Al-Ram's official number of residents is 18,000 and its real number is 60,000, while 'Anata's numbers are 7,000 and 20,000.

On your way in or out of Ramallah, you will surly pass Kufer Aqab, Al-Ram, and 'Anata. You will also pass smaller localities like Hizma and Jaba'. Hizma

Kufer Aqab and Jaba' may vary widely in terms of population numbers, but as all twenty-eight localities in the Jerusalem Suburbs, they face very common issues. The most important of them is security. The Jerusalem Suburbs, unlike neighboring Al-Bireh or Ramallah, lack a Palestinian police force to serve and protect citizens. Consequently, outlaws find the Suburbs to be their favorite spot to hide. Take a moment to chat with any local citizen, and she will tell you how her locality has become a popular spot for drug dealers and wrongdoers. You will start thinking "That cannot happen here in Palestine."

Now, can you imagine yourself living in the Jerusalem Suburbs?

Rasha Alyatim is not a resident of the Jerusalem Suburbs, but she has been working there since 2009 in civic engagement projects.

Article photos courtesy of the ARIJ.



THE C-WORD



By Karim Kattan

Although everyone in Palestine fancies himself a political analyst, I would not dare to try to define Area C. Such a definition is a job for someone specializing in the arcana of the Oslo Accords. All I know is that Area C is a name given to certain expanses of land in the country where I live. These expanses of land are under heavy restrictions for Palestinians; and sometimes it seems that all of Palestine is an Area C.

As spaces go, Area C is weird. It is a mystery, a non-zone caught in a state of uncertainty. At stake in these areas are the control of natural resources, the free use of Palestinian land, the building of settlements, and the slow destruction of whatever is left of the integrity of Palestine.

French philosopher Michel Foucault created the concept of heterotopia, which he uses to describe spaces that are 'parallel' because these spaces contain undesirable bodies. Area C is a place where Israel can 'dump' unwanted Palestinian bodies. Unwanted Israeli bodies are dumped there as well: settlers are the crux of colonization, but Israel does not really like them. They are used as willing cannon fodder in Area C, but I doubt the upper-class society in West Jerusalem would welcome a settler in its midst.

Defined by a transience of form, Area C is indeed a weird space: you never know if it is standing still or being annexed. Lands in Area C are always on the verge of disappearing. In a way, Area C does not even exist; it is the purgatory of Palestine, where lands are in waiting until they are annexed.

Area C is not a real space: it is merely the road map of colonization.

2.

When thinking about a title for this article, I toyed with different iterations of the same – 'Area Crap,' 'Area Canine' - all ways of suggesting that Area C is really, truly, undoubtedly, the crappy end of a really crappy deal. But I'm pretty sure everyone knows that today. Area C has come to represent the many ways in which Oslo has failed us.

After Oslo, the limits between different areas - A, B, C - in the West Bank were demarcated by yellow and gray concrete blocks. These blocks have fallen into disuse now, merely serving as reminders of the strange few years between Oslo and the Second Intifada. In Bethlehem, where I come from, you don't need those blocks to let you know you've stumbled from Area A to Area C at night. You just need to listen carefully to the howling of dogs. Area Canine indeed, Area C is run over by stray dogs every night.

There is a mystery in Palestine I have yet to solve. Everyone who's ever driven from the north to the south has

"Area C is the purgatory of Palestine, a place where the road map of colonization is being laid out for all to see. A wonderland of injustice, it is at times horrific and - at times - magical. It has become the space where Israel dumps the unwanted bodies that do not fit within its lopsided utopia."



Natural Landscape in Izbet Tabib Village, Qalqilya.

probably faced the same enigma. The 'Container' (yet another convenient C-word) is a checkpoint located east of Abu Dis, at the tail end of Wadi Nar. That specific check-point is empty, most of the time, save for a few bored soldiers and stray dogs. The soldiers and the

dogs are on excellent terms, barely moving out of the way when Palestinian cars cross over. Every time I cross the Container I feel the same unease, as if I had walked into an alternate reality, a parallel Palestine, where dogs rule the land.

This has come to represent Area C to me: dogs and soldiers in what is de facto a no-man's-land. But despite its being the road map of our disappearance, despite the uncontrollable sprawling of settlements and the multiplication of land annexations, despite the way dogs and soldiers seem to spawn out of the darkness of Area C, Palestinians have found alternative uses to this elusive land.

If you've ever driven with a Palestinian, you must have noticed some strange mannerisms. For instance, he puts on his seatbelt as soon as he enters Area C; and the second he's crossed over to Area A, like clockwork, he'll remove the seatbelt as if it were a scorching reminder of the humiliations of the occupation. Because in some parts of Area C the military is on the loose, we have come to associate it with a certain form of law, or rather with a space in which there is no possible negotiation with the law, where the law is unfair and blind and illegitimate. Area C is where we are most vulnerable, where what passes for justice is a masquerade, a nightmarish carnival. Removing one's seatbelt is an insignificant act. Seatbelts are not agents of the occupation. But the act itself is a way of navigating one's lack of freedom. People in general will remove their seatbelts once they have reached a place that is considered safe: Palestinians remove them when they have safely left the unpredictable, shifting sands of Area C.

But Area C is also the space of another type of carnival, a more positive one perhaps. In Bethlehem and in Ramallah - I'm not sure about other cities - Area C is not just the reminder of the crappy end of the crappy deal. It is the kingdom of darkness. The roads are rarely lit. People seldom go there after dark. Area C, therefore, is where you go to get some peace and quiet. It is where you go to hide

from the eyes of society. There, in the darkness, boys are boys, and girls are most certainly girls. I live in Area C. At night, car after car of what I assume are young couples drive up and down our street, living out bits and pieces of their lives far from the public eye. Heterotopias, as defined by Foucault, are also places where coming of age rituals take place: some of the naughtier rituals often take place in Area C.

3.

It is hard to define what exactly Area C is. The singular is misleading: Area C covers a diverse range of realities, all of which have in common that Israel has set its eyes on them and, by dint of bogus negotiations, is managing to annex them. Over the years, these areas have morphed into a strange monster with multiple limbs and a few too many genetic malformations.

In Macbeth - as in most of Shakespeare's tragedies - the land changes, morphs, and bemoans the loss of its legitimate leader. As Macbeth takes over, the very face of the land changes; nature itself is unhinged and bares its teeth when faced with an unlawful prince. The land rebels when an impostor holds sway over it - because the ruler and the land are one.

Let us transpose this to another context: here, in Palestine, the people and the land are one. Area C is the physical manifestation of all that is wrong in our country; and as long as things stay as they are, Area C will remain a weird wonderland of injustice and insanity, a testimony to the twisted process through which we are made to disappear.

"Karim Kattan is a French-Palestinian PhD student in comparative literature. In the summer of 2014, he founded el-Atlat, an international artists' and writers' residency in Jericho. Karim lives between France and Palestine."

Filistin Ashabab

November issue #107



We make the change

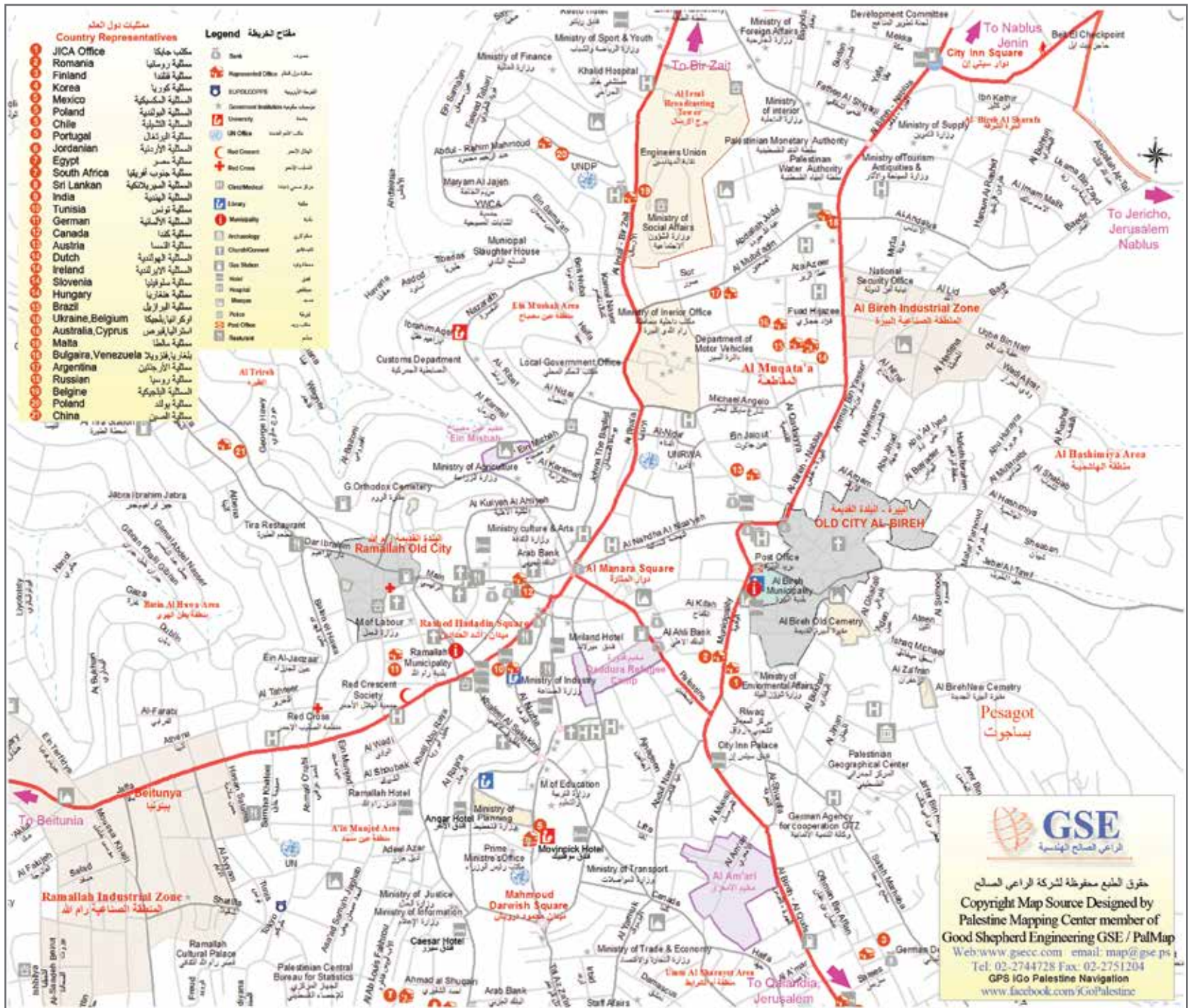
info@filistinashabab.com

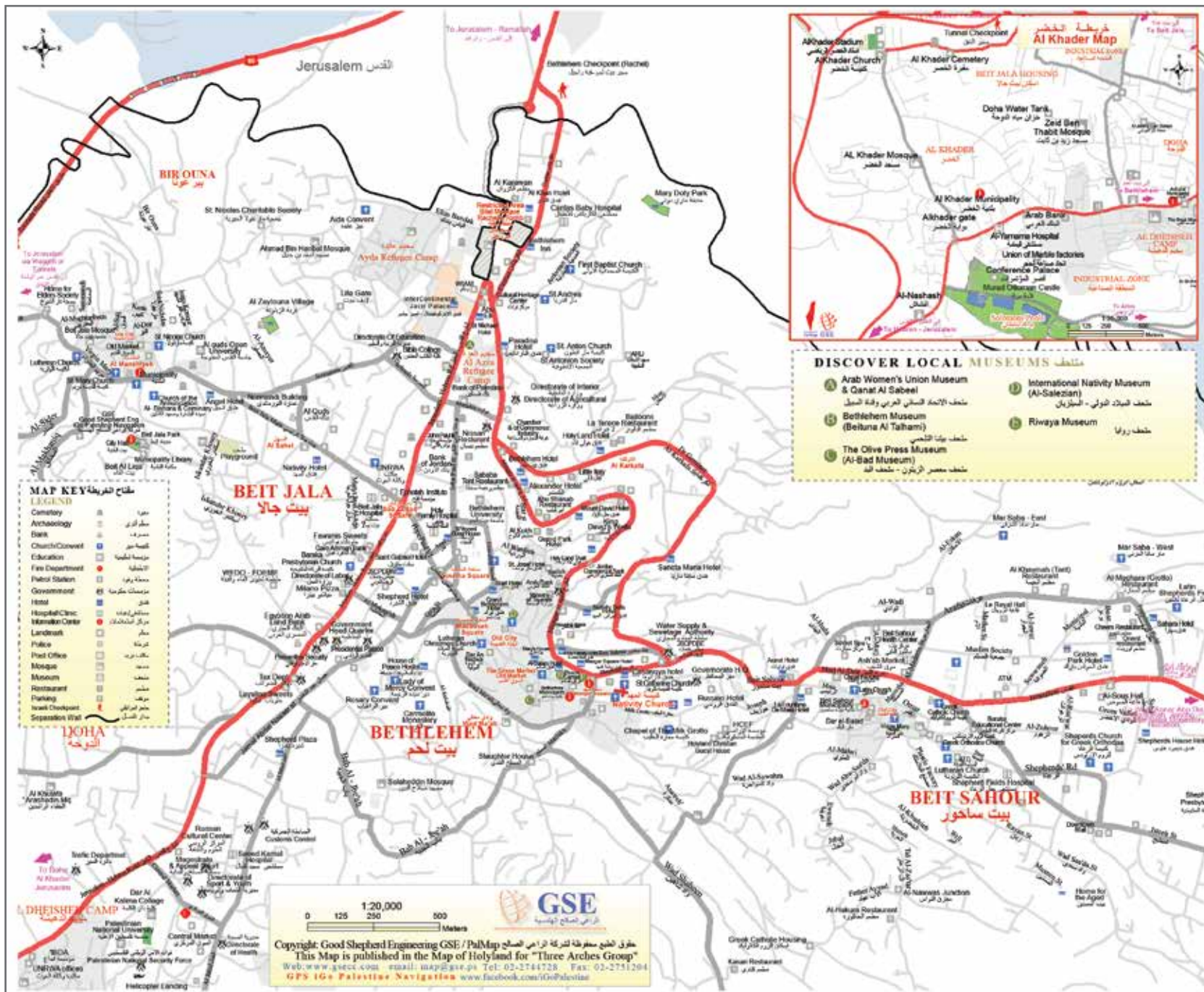
www.filistinashabab.com

https://www.facebook.com/Filistinashabab



AMALLAH and AL-BIREH





This special issue on Area C would not have been possible without the generous contribution of UN-Habitat Palestine Programme, and UNDP's Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People.

As part of interim agreements concluded between the PLO and Israel in 1993, the 1995 Interim Agreement divided the West Bank into areas A, B, and C, essentially to facilitate the transfer of authority to the Palestinian side. The interim agreements were meant to last for five years!

Both co-sponsors have also contributed invaluable articles that not only shed light on the geography, the people, and the projects taking place in Area C, but also demonstrate the utmost importance of Area C to the economy and viability of any future Palestinian state.

This Week in Palestine is grateful to UN-Habitat and to the UNDP for making this issue a reality.



The Dead Sea. Photo from Palestine Image Bank.