

# INFOCUS:

# Bedouins

## in the occupied Palestinian territory



*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*

September 2013



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# INTRODUCTION

This brief outlines the living conditions of Bedouins in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) and it identifies measures of UNDP cooperation with the Bedouin community. Moreover, it suggests points for advocating a shared understanding of the needs of Bedouins.

The basic premise is to give a development outlook and complement humanitarian interventions in Area 'C'. This is done by delineating UNDP engagement with a focus on basic right claims and attainable measures of political representation and employment opportunities. The objective is to assist Bedouins maintain their livelihoods, land, and ensure services/access to commodities in light of the challenges they face as a result of the protracted occupation.

PHOTO: UNDP archive, Steve Sabella

# 1. Bedouins and the challenges to their livelihood in the occupied Palestinian territory

In order to designate targeted measures of support, a basic understanding of the living conditions of Bedouins in the oPt – and specifically in Area ‘C’ – is integral. It is important to acknowledge that the situation is precarious and the information about Bedouin communities and their living conditions is contingent.

The available aggregate information has thus to be seen as an approximation that needs to be substantiated with reference to individual examples and cases in order to trace how the current situation endangers the Bedouins, their customs, and survival as a cultural group.

Most Bedouins in the oPt are originally from the Negev Desert. In the course of 1948, they fled or were displaced from their land.

PHOTO: UNDP archive, Sharek Youth Forum

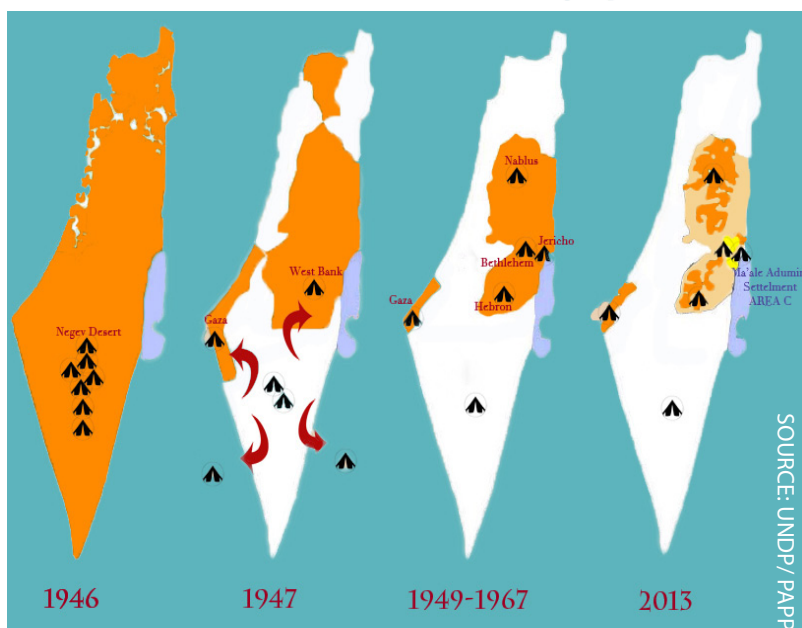
There are currently around 40,000 Bedouins in the oPt, most of which are refugees and displaced indigenous tribes that settled in areas suitable for their lifestyle around Jerusalem, Hebron, Bethlehem, and Jericho.

Bedouins are tribal-based semi-nomadic people that complement their herding activities with agricultural practices.

This means that Bedouins have a strong sense of being land owners for settlement and agriculture. As for other indigenous groups, land – especially their original lands in the Negev – is central to Bedouin history, livelihood and culture and is essential to their identity and cultural viability.

The social structure of Bedouin communities comprises three large confederations: Al Tayaha, al Azazmeh, and al Tarabeen, to which a number of 92 tribes are linked. While the majority of the tribes are in Jordan, major tribes in the West Bank are: the Jahaleen, Ka’abneh, Rashaydeh, Ramadeen, ‘Azazme, Communities of Sawarka, Arenat and Amareen.

“ Most Bedouins in the oPt are originally from the Negev Desert. In the course of 1948, they fled or were displaced from their land. ”



Bedouins' forced transfer during the last decade



## The Bedouin tribes:

### Jahaleen

In the center and south of the West Bank, around 22 Jahaleen families are living in Khan al Ahmar in east of Jerusalem.

### 'Azazme

(to which Hanajreh are linked) currently living mainly in the Masafer Beni Naim, south-east of Hebron.

### Ka'abneh

are located near the Jordan Valley, in places such as Anata, Jaba', Al Jeeb and Bir Nibala.

### Communities of Sawarka, Arenat and Amareen

(to which Ejbaraat are linked) are found in small numbers only, with larger groups in Jordan, Sinai or Gaza.

### Rashaydeh

settle mainly to the southeast of Bethlehem and in Ayn Duyouk and Ayn Al Sultan north-east of Jericho.

### Ramadeen

from the land south of Hebron and in the Qalqilya seam zone.

#### Ramallah:

- (18) Deir Nidham Al-Hossa
- (19) Kobar Bedouins
- (20) Ein Qiniya Wadi Dululm
- (21) Wadi Salman
- (22) Ras Al-Tin
- (23) Ein Samiya
- (24) Dar Faza'a
- (25) Wai Al-Seeq
- (26) Khalet Al-Maghara
- (27) Maghayer Al-Dir
- (28) Al-Baqa'a
- (29) Mu'arajat center

#### Jerusalem:

- (30) Musarat
- (31) Beit Hanina Bedouins
- (32) Beit Nabala Bedouins
- (33) Al-Jib Bedouins
- (34) Um Al-Awaj
- (35) Abu Shusha Bedouins
- (36) Ma'azi Jaba'
- (37) Atarot Bedouins
- (38) Dahyiet Al-Aqbat
- (39) East Anata Bedouins
- (40) Abu Nwar
- (41) Um Al-Asawiji

#### Bethlehem:

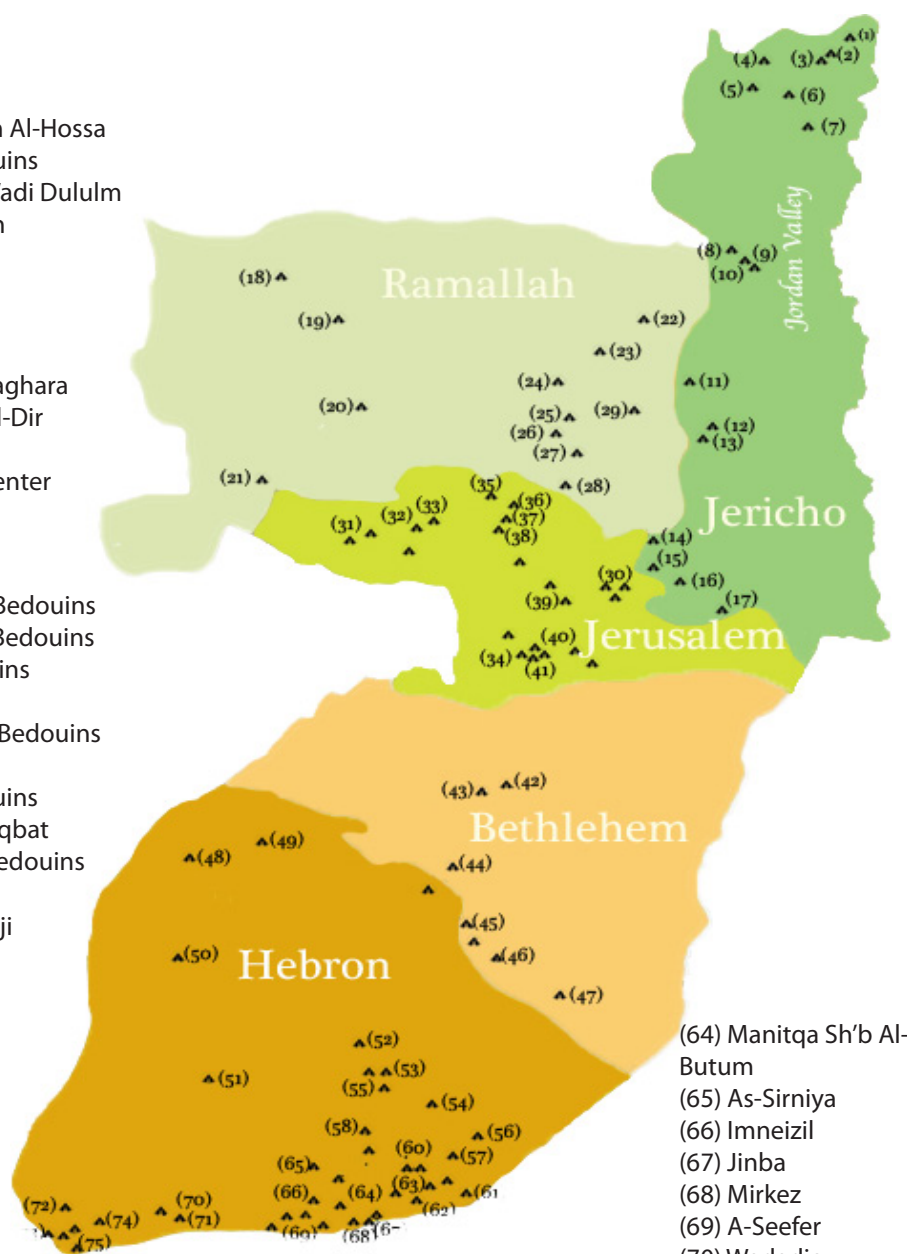
- (42) Jubbet Ad-Dhib
- (43) Zatar Al-Kurshan
- (44) Kisan
- (45) Arab Ar-Rashayida
- (46) Al-Walayda
- (47) Ar-Rawa'in

#### Jericho:





















































- (1) Marj Na'ja
- (2) Az-Zubeidat
- (3) Marj Na'ja Herders
- (4) Al-Jiftik Al-Mussaffah
- (5) Al-Jiftik Al-Shumeh
- (6) Al-Jiftik Garb Al-Mthalla
- (7) Al-Jiftik Abu Al'ajaj
- (8) Fasayil Al-Fauqa
- (9) Fasayil
- (10) Faysil Al-Wusta
- (11) Ras Ein Al-Auja
- (12) Ein Ad-Duyuk Al-Fauqa Bedo
- (13) An-Nuwe'ma Al-Fauqa Bedoui
- (14) Wadi Al-Qilt
- (15) Wadi Al-Qilt Al-Ka'abneh
- (16) Sateh Al-Bahr
- (17) An-Nabi Musa












































#### Hebron:

- (48) Hitta
- (49) Jala
- (50) Ferra'
- (51) Kirbet Bisam
- (52) Birin
- (53) Al-Buweib
- (54) Um Ad Daraj
- (55) Khamet Hajar Taha
- (56) Washem Al-Karem
- (57) An Najada
- (58) Al-Jwaya
- (59) At-Tuwani
- (60) Tuba
- (61) Dhaika
- (62) Khirbet Al-Tabban
- (63) Khirbet Al-Majaz



DESIGNED: UNDP, SOURCE: ACF international

Bedouin/ Herder Community	Governance	Home Demolition (2010-11)	High Risk of Water Scarcity	Isolate by the Barrier	Herder Community
(1) Marj Na'ja					
(2) Az Zubeidat	Jericho				
(3) Marj Naa'ja Herders	Jericho				
(4) Al Jiftik Al-Mussafah	Jericho				
(5) Al Jiftik Al-Shumeh	Jericho				
(6) Al Jiftik Garb Al Muthalla	Jericho				
(7) Al Jiftik Abu Al'ajaj	Jericho				
(8) Fasayil Al-Fauqa	Jericho				
(9) Fasayil	Jericho				
(10) Fasayil Al Wusta	Jericho				
(11) Ras Ein Al-Auja	Jericho				
(12) Ein ad Duyuk Al Fauqa Bedo	Jericho				
(13) An Nuwe'ma Al Fauqa Badoui	Jericho				
(14) Wadi Al-Qilt	Jericho				
(15) Wadi Al-Qilt Al Ka'abneh	Jericho				
(16) Sateh Al-Bahr	Jericho				
(17) An Nabi Musa	Jericho				
(18) Deir Nidham Al-Hossa	Jericho				
(19) Kobar Bedouins	Ramallah				
(20) Ein Qiniya Wadi Dululm	Ramallah				
(21) Wadi Salman	Ramallah				
(22) Ras Al-Tin	Ramallah				
(23) Ein Samiya	Ramallah				
(24) Dar Faza'a	Ramallah				
(25) Wadi Al-Seeq	Ramallah				
(26) Khalet Al-Maghara	Ramallah				
(27) Maghayer Al-Dir	Ramallah				
(28) Al-Baq'a'a	Ramallah				
(29) Mu'arrajat Center	Ramallah				
(30) Musarat	Ramallah				
(31) Beit Hanina Bedouins	Jerusalem				
(32) Beit Nabala Bedouins	Jerusalem				
(33) Al Jib Bedouins	Jerusalem				
(34) Um Al-Awaj	Jerusalem				
(35) Abu Shusha Bedouins	Jerusalem				
(36) Ma'azi Jaba'	Jerusalem				
(37) Atarat Bedouins	Jerusalem				
(38) Dahiyet Al-Aqbat	Jerusalem				
(39) East Anata Bedouins	Jerusalem				
(40) Abu Nwar	Jerusalem				

Bedouin/ Herder Community	Governance	Home Demolition (2010-11)	High Risk of Water Scarcity	Isolate by the Barrier	Herder Community
(41) Um Al-Asawi	Jerusalem				
(42) Jubbet Ad-Dhib	Jerusalem				
(43) Zatarat Al-Khrshan	Bethlehem				
(44) Kisan	Bethlehem				
(45) Arab Ar-Rashayida	Bethlehem				
(46) Al Walayda	Bethlehem			X	
(47) Ar-Rawa'in	Bethlehem				
(48) Hitta	Bethlehem				
(49) Jala	Hebron				
(50) Ferra'	Hebron				
(51) Kirbet Bisam	Hebron				
(52) Birin	Hebron				
(53) Al Buweib	Hebron				
(54) Um Ad Daraj	Hebron				
(55) Khallet Hajar Taha	Hebron				
(56) Washem Al-Karem	Hebron				
(57) An Najada	Hebron				
(58) Al Jwaya	Hebron				
(59) At Tuwani	Hebron				
(60) Tuba	Hebron			X	
(61) Dhaika	Hebron				
(62) Khirbet at Tabban	Hebron				
(63) Khirbet al Majaz	Hebron				
(64) Maniqa Sh'b Al Butum	Hebron				
(65) As Sirniya	Hebron			X	
(66) Imneizil	Hebron			X	
(67) Jinba	Hebron				
(68) Mirkez	Hebron			X	
(69) A Seefer	Hebron				
(70) Wadadie	Hebron			X	
(71) Khirbey Zanuta	Hebron			X	
(72) Ar Ramadin	Hebron			X	
(73) Um Sidra	Hebron			X	
(74) Tatrit	Hebron			X	
(75) Deir Sa'eeda	Hebron				

SOURCE: OCHA

There are around 5,000 Bedouin families in the oPt as well as 5,000 Bedouin and herder families. The distinction between Bedouin and non-Bedouin herder is fluid but the latter are traditionally linked to Palestinian villages.

Around 3,000 Bedouin families are living in refugee camps, but many do not register at the UNRWA, hinting towards a higher number of Bedouin refugees.

Around 27,500 herders, half of which are Bedouins, are living in Area 'C' of the West Bank.<sup>1</sup> They are thus under full Israeli civil and military control. 60 percent (15,000 Bedouins) of the whole Bedouin population of the oPt, live in the Jordan Valley in Area 'C', of which 3,400 reside in partially or

“ There are around 5,000 Bedouin families in the oPt. Around 27,500 herders, half of which are Bedouins are living in Area C. ”

completely closed military zones, facing danger of forced expulsion. The living conditions of Palestinians in Area 'C' and Bedouins in particular are hard hit by the occupation-regime.

The occupation severely undermines Palestinian livelihood in various ways, including restrictions of planning/development, demolitions and forced displacement, limited access to land and resources.

Moreover, the Israeli settler retain control over all building and planning in Area 'C', leaving the Palestinian Authority (PA) with marginal responsibility over health and education services. As a direct consequence, Palestinians in Area 'C' lack conditions for sustainable development.

The space for their human development opportunities is very narrow. They suffer from restrictions on freedom of movement, construction and expansion of illegal settlements, restrictive zoning and planning regimes, confiscations of land, failure to issue building permits, demolition of their properties and assets, and lack of law enforcement.



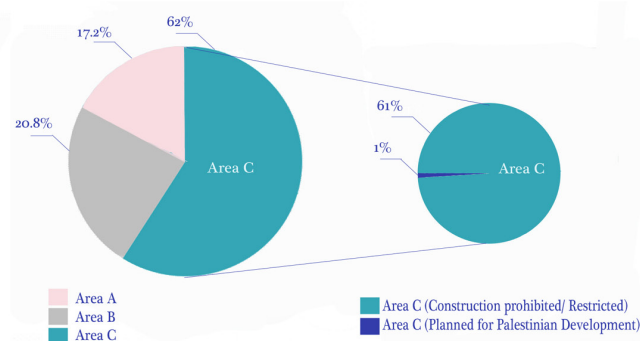
70 percent of Area 'C' land is off limits to the Palestinian population and the Bedouin/herder communities due to Israeli settlement policies, closed military zones, the imposed nature reserves, and the annexed land by the Wall. Of the remaining 30 percent, the Israeli authorities allow Palestinian construction only within the strict boundaries of Israeli-approved plans.

These plans often do not get approved and only cover one percent of Area 'C', leaving no room for development or demographic growth.

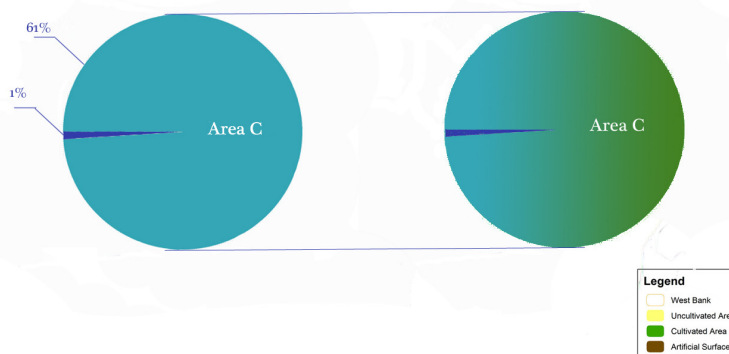
Most demolitions (90 percent) and forced displacement (92 percent) instigated through the Gol and Israeli Civil Administration in charge of Area 'C' occurs in already vulnerable farming and herding communities 2 (as indicated in the incidents of forced eviction).

Thousands of others remain at risk of displacement due to outstanding demolition orders, especially with regard to the E1-Plan that targets the expansion of Israeli settlements between East Jerusalem and Ma'ale Adumim 3. For Bedouins and herders, the restrictions imposed by the Israeli Civil Administration (CA) on the use of land, water resources, and ongoing settlement enterprise make the lodging of their livestock ever more difficult.

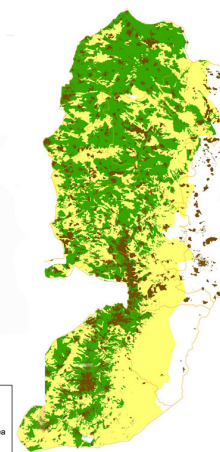
The restrictions require costly alternatives to buy fodder (up to 2000 NIS/ton) and tanked water, which lead to



75% of the Irrigated Land in the West Bank is found in Area C



Arab Studies Society  
Land Research Center  
May 2009  
GIS & Mapping Unit



SOURCE: UNDP

“Of the remaining 30%, the Israeli authorities allow Palestinians construction only within the strict boundaries of Israeli-approved plans, which only cover 1 % of Area C.”

the reduction of the stock. In turn, the erosion of traditional means of subsistence may force Bedouin communities to move to Areas A and B, further shrinking their space and affecting their way of life, culture, and identity.

Geographically marginalized, Bedouins live in areas which are often without proper access by road and are isolated by checkpoints, depriving them from essential services and markets, and hampering income generation and feeding of their livestock.

In Area 'C', only 225,000 dunums are available for the grazing of sheep and goats. Taking livestock out for pasture is forbidden in rural areas near Jericho and the Jordan Valley. In the past some Bedouin communities like Al Azazmeh in Masafir Beni Naim could travel 15 to 20 km in search for better pastures according to seasons. Now they can only move within a range of one or two km around the village.

PHOTO: UNDP archive, Steve Sabella

## Incidents of forced eviction

In recent years the CA has set forth an expulsion plan to target all Bedouin communities in Area C.

The plan entails different stages. For 2012, twenty communities of around 2,300 people next to Ma'ale Adumim were targeted for re-location to create space for the expansion of the settlement. Eviction of Palestinians and Bedouins from around this area started already in 1997 to initiate the construction of the settlement. Upon eviction, some compensation of between NIS 15,000-38,000 as well as between one and one and a half dunums of land was granted back then.

Of the remaining population that is to be evicted, the majority belongs to the Jahaleen tribe, 80 percent are refugees, and two thirds are children. The eviction plan of the CA designates the relocation of the affected Bedouins next to a waste disposal site, or to two other locations in the Jericho periphery. The second stage of the plan targets Bedouins in the Jordan Valley. There, the Bedouin village Hamsa was razed twice already in 2007, and the herding community of Hadidiyya has been displaced five times since 2006.

“The eviction plan of the Civil Administration designates the relocation of the affected Bedouins next to a waste disposal site.”

Forced eviction is a result of either direct intervention through the Gol/CA or the indirect consequence of the living conditions they control.

For example, in the summer of 2010, the Civil Administration demolished all of the 80 temporary structures in the Bedouin village al-Farsiya, to the east of which the Shademot Mehola settlement was built. In 2011 alone, 622 Palestinian owned structures directly affecting 4,200 people were demolished, displacing 1,100 people, 40 percent of which are Bedouin. The threat of eviction continues as the illegal Israeli settlements in the oPt are extended.

The Khan el Ahmar School, built in 2009 using old tyres and mud, is a case in point.

Although a demolition order was immediately issued, Israel's High Court of Justice ruled against the destruction, which leaves the school – staffed by seven teachers provided by the PA and serving 80 primary students – to remain in operation.

Its future however is precarious, not least since three nearby settlements have sued for its demolition, claiming in the Supreme Court that the Jahaleen are occupying their land (it actually belongs to Palestinian villagers of nearby Anata) and threatening their security.

Source: B'tselem 2011; Diakonia 2011; OCHA August 2011, January 2012; UNRWA/BIMBKOM 2013.



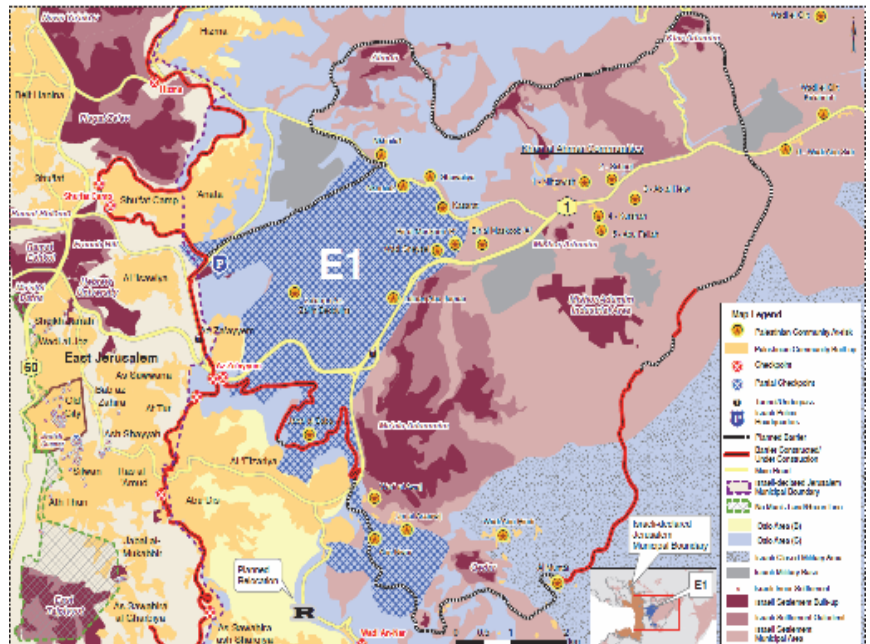
This situation is set against the stipulations of the Oslo-accords to transfer Palestinian communities from Areas 'B' and 'C' to Area 'A'. During negotiations when the delineated zones of security control (Area 'A', 'B' and 'C') were established, one of the stated goals was to over-time shift territory to the PA in preparation of a future Palestinian State alongside Israel. In total, until 1999, only seventeen percent of Area 'B' and 'C' was transferred to Palestinian civil control with the remainder of Area 'C' under full Israeli control and Area B under Israeli security-control until today.

By relegating these communities into Area 'A', Israel achieved the dual goal of reducing the number of Palestinians in Area 'C' for future land grabs or swaps, and fulfilling the Oslo tenet of limited Palestinian sovereignty.

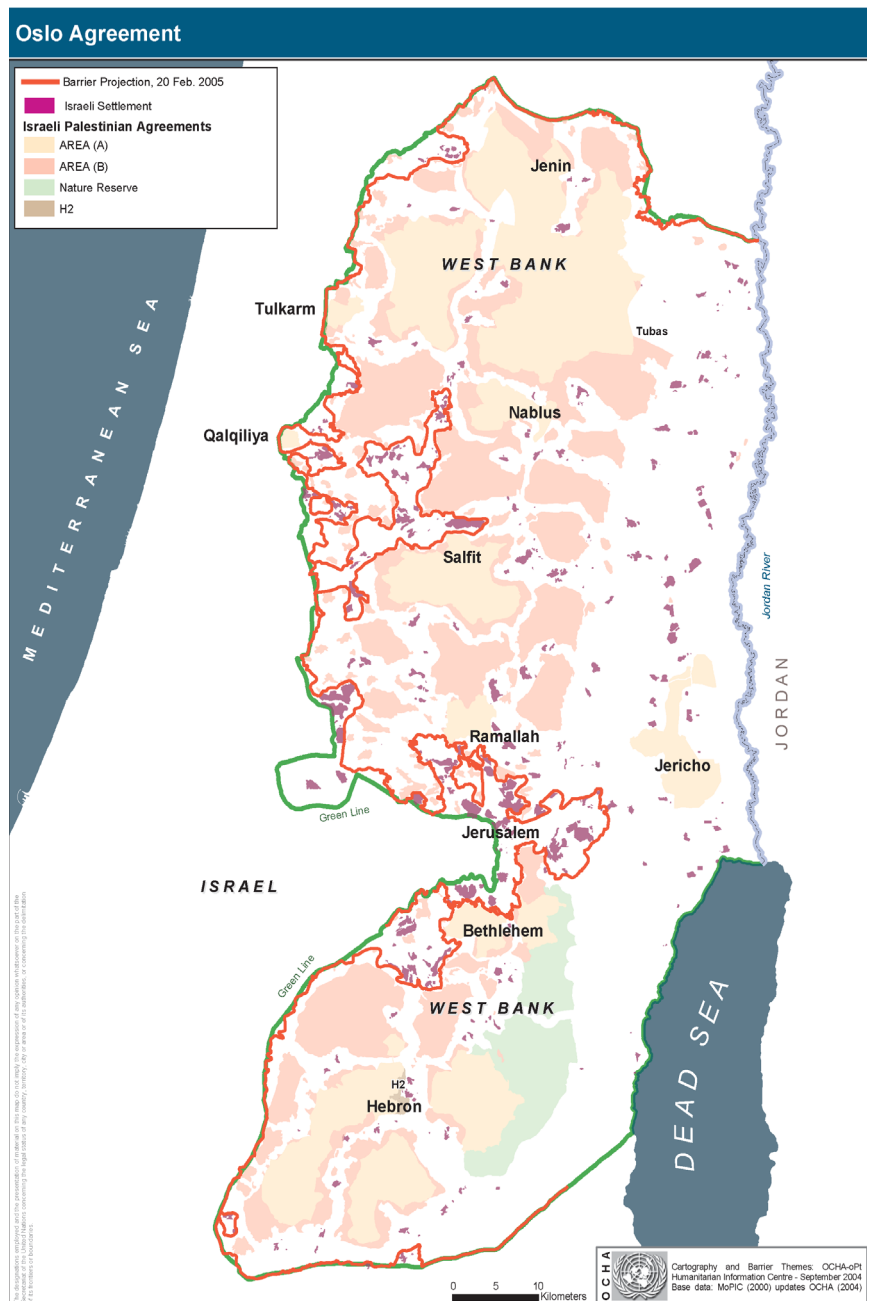
“ While in 1967 there were 350,000 Palestinians living in what is now Area 'C', today there are only 150,000 left. ”

The threat to Bedouins and possible re-locations set the stage for a future territory swap where Palestinians will lose out on residency rights to geographically key land in exchange for a wasteland in the desert. While in 1967 there were 350,000 Palestinians living in what is now Area 'C', today there are only 150,000 left, a number that Israeli politicians have mused as acceptable to integrate into the Jewish state.

These intricate constraints render the herder and Bedouin population among the most vulnerable sector in the oPt. The vulnerability is relevant in regard to the scarcity of basic commodities such as water and electricity, food, as well as health services and education.



SOURCE: OCHA Maps.



SOURCE: OCHA Maps.

# Water

consumption hardly reaches 20 litres per capita per day (l/c/d) in most communities of the area, which represents only a fifth of the consumption recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO). 20 litres are the equivalent set by the UN as the minimal quantity needed to survive in humanitarian disaster areas. In sharp contrast to this, Israeli citizens use 165 l/c/d, i.e. ten times more, whilst settlements in the Jordan Valley use 487 l/c/d, almost 25 times more than the Bedouin/herder communities who live nearby.

In the Bedouin villages al Hadidya, al Farsiya, and Ras al Akhmar in the northern Jordan Valley for example, which are cut off from water supply, residents use 20 l/c/d that they have to buy water from water-tanker operators <sup>4</sup>.

The villages of Qa'oun, Al-Himma, Al-Maleh, Al-Hulwa, Al-Shak, Hamsa, and Hadidiyya furthermore all have no access to clean drinking water at all <sup>5</sup>. Applications for access to water networks are regularly denied or permanently kept pending by the Civil Administration.

The price for the water from operators amounts to five times the price than that from water networks in the Israeli settlements <sup>6</sup>. Consequently, residents in al Maleh are required to walk for "a whole day to bring three cubic meters of water from Tammun and other areas of the Jordan Valley to Al-Malih", said Mayor Arif Da-Raghme.

# Electricity

Out of the 157 Bedouin/herder communities living in Area 'C', 118 communities amounting to 16,000 people do not have connection to the main electrical grid and are not using any kind of solar energy <sup>7</sup>.

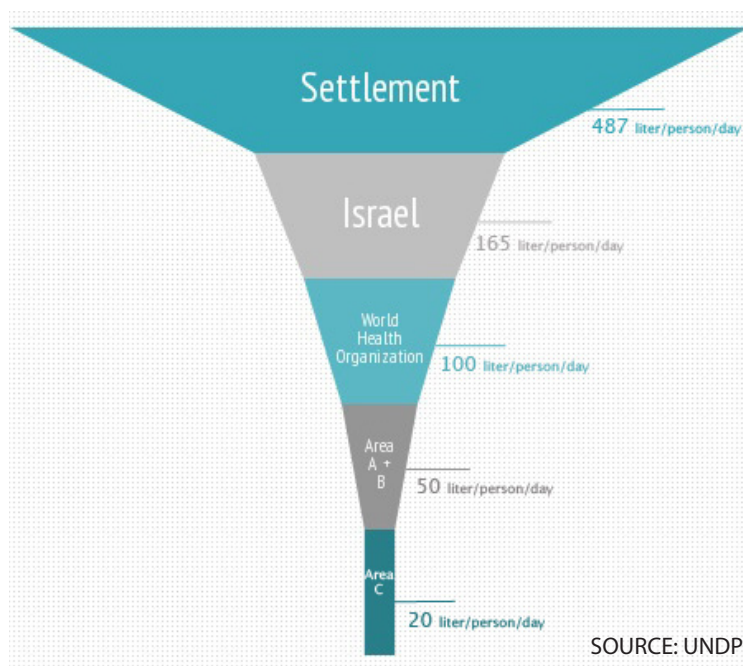
That is, 41% of Bedouin families do not have a source of electricity, compared to one percent in the rest of the West Bank. Some use generators (community, neighbourhood, or private), although this is an economic burden many cannot afford. Moreover, Bedouin communities have limited access to waste disposal and sewage networks.



PHOTO: UNDP archive, Sharek Youth Forum

“20 liters are the equivalent set by the UN as the minimal quantity needed to survive in humanitarian disaster areas.”

**Water usage in Area C in comparison with the Settlements, Israel, WHO and Area A + B.**





# Food Security

Around 55 percent of the Bedouin population in Area 'C' were food insecure. A joint UNRWA/ UNICEF/ WFP study found that in Area 'C', 79 percent of Bedouin and herder communities were food-insecure compared to 25 percent in the rest of the West Bank and 60 percent in Gaza <sup>7</sup>.

With an average monthly income of around NIS 1000, some Bedouin families have to spend up to 60 percent of total household income for food expenditures <sup>8</sup>.



PHOTO: UNDP archive, Sharek Youth Forum

## Health/ Education

Education in the Bedouin communities is often insufficient. It is plagued by poor environmental conditions and educational quality. These poor conditions have discouraged many Bedouins from completing their basic education, leading to a relatively high percentage of illiteracy in addition to a high drop-out rate, especially among females.

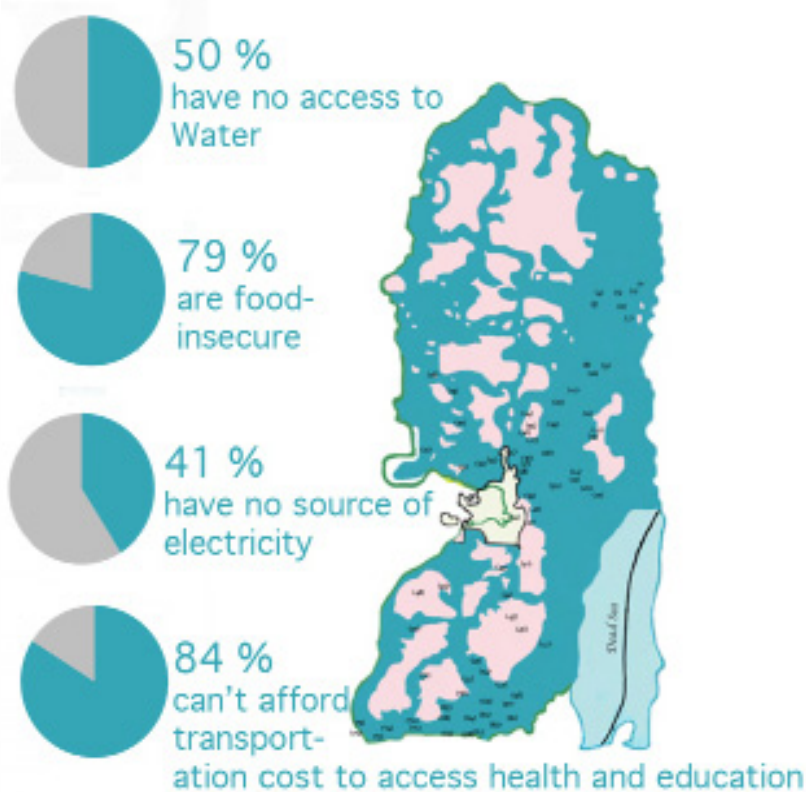
Since the Bedouin/herder population oftentimes lives in areas very isolated from the main cities or village centers with scarce internal roads and public transportation, the costs for receiving health or education services are unbearably high. Surveys show that 84 percent of families cannot afford transportation costs.<sup>9</sup>

In many cases therefore the only exit is to end studies for girls in order to save money. The reduction of the quality and scope of coverage with health and education services and the simultaneous increase of expenses creates long term implications for the household of the herding communities and their prospects of development.

For example, the Al-Rashayde Bedouin community of Bethlehem, which comprises around 2,000 people, suffers from neglect in health care services. They have no well-equipped health center/clinic, and no resident physician or nurse.

The closest hospital which can be reached is in Bethlehem city, 25 kilometers away from the community, which requires time to reach, a serious complication in cases of emergency.

“ The Bedouin/ herder population oftentimes live in areas very isolated from the main cities and village centers with scarce internal roads and public transportation. ”



SOURCE: UNDP



## 2. Measures of cooperation with the Bedouin community



PHOTO: UNDP archive, Sharek Youth Forum

The measures of cooperation of UNDP/PAPP with the Bedouin community are guided by the strategy for 2012-2014 entitled "Development for Freedom. Empowered Lives, Resilient Nation." The strategy identifies development in Area 'C' as a main focus and comprises four related objectives:

1) strengthening democratic governance and the social contract, 2) promoting productivity and dignity through livelihoods, 3) protecting natural resources and environment, and 4) public and social infrastructure.

In line with this strategy, the measures of cooperation with the Bedouin population in Area 'C' aim at strengthening their resilience in order to sustain their livelihoods and ability to remain in their lands. In the longer run, the contribution to this goal shall help retain broad areas of land in the West Bank which are integral for the viability of a Palestinian state.

As such, immediate welfare and humanitarian assistance needs to be complemented with support to attainable measures of sustainable development.

The relevant measures are developed by taking into account the main priorities requested by the Bedouin communities, the restrictions imposed by the reality of the occupation and the specific cultural characteristics of the target population.

The pursuit of those measures is done in close cooperation with the Bedouin community and focuses on three areas:

- 1) Access to basic services currently not available, including energy, transportation, community spaces and recreational activities.
- 2) Income generation opportunities for Bedouin and herder families to start or reshape family business through small grants and small micro credits in order to help them out of poverty and maintain economic activities.
- 3) Access to justice through legal support in order to help claim rights to housing, water and energy.

“ The relevant measures are developed by taking into account the main priorities requested by the Bedouin communities. ”

This is complemented with advocacy work by civil society and the communities themselves and will build upon accurate information to foster a deeper understanding amongst the Bedouin and non-Bedouin population in the

Those areas are highlighted against the demand that comes from the Bedouin population for a greater recognition of their needs and a more sustainable approach by the relevant institutions in order to support them.

This relates to the issue of political self-representation of Bedouins and cooperation with them, which is addressed in turn. Subsequently, employment conditions are addressed.

## 2.1. Political representation

In light of the enduring threat to the livelihood of Bedouins, mechanisms of representation of the needs of the Bedouin community need to be strengthened. This needs to comprise a three-pronged approach, including mechanisms of coordination within the Bedouin community, mechanisms of cooperation with Palestinian entities, as well as means of accommodation with the Gol/CA. All this should advance from available modalities and practices.

The traditional representative mechanisms embodied in Bedouin Clan Councils were dramatically challenged as a result of the expulsion from their original lands.

The clans and tribes were divided into smaller social units and many clans lost direct contact with their leaders, which provoked the dissolution of the traditional leadership and decision-making mechanisms.

“ *Not recognized as a minority or a displaced indigenous group by either the Government of Israel or Palestinian Authority, the voice of Bedouins is not being heard by decision-makers.* ”

This has left them under-represented and fragmented in front of the rest of the Palestinian society amidst discussions on state building, democracy and the creation of a Palestinian state.

In effect, not recognized as a minority or a displaced indigenous group by either the Gol or PA, the voice of Bedouins is not being heard by decision-makers.

Rather, their voice is reduced to some representatives of individual communities advocating for basic assistance, instead of focusing on the rights and the future of the Bedouins as a distinct group.



PHOTO: UNDP archive, Steve Sabella

A focus on the rights and distinctiveness of Bedouins is much needed to address their concerns. As refugees, Bedouins call for their right of return to their ancestral lands inside Israel. As people with human rights, they ask that their camps be recognized as official villages through the establishment of fair planning and zoning policies. As indigenous peoples, they demand the right to preserve their traditional lifestyle.

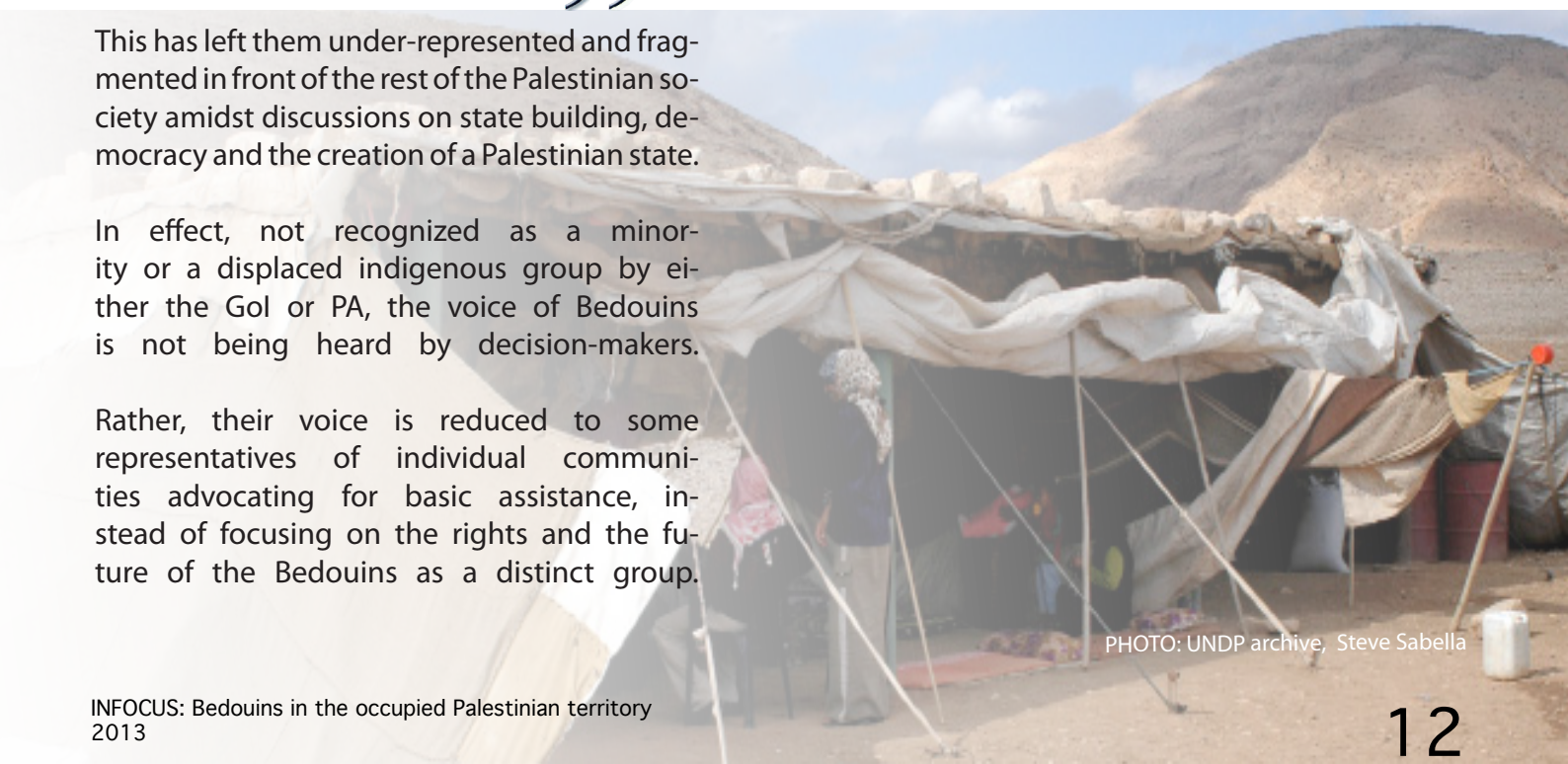


PHOTO: UNDP archive, Steve Sabella



**T**he problem is that the political representation that is integral to the realization of those basic rights is deficient in three significant ways: First, Bedouins await the legitimate recognition as a group. Second, no traditional representative body with a spokesperson has emerged to act on behalf of the Bedouin population. Mukhtars, or heads of villages, often take upon themselves this duty but the cooperation between them is weak. And third, there are no regular consultation mechanisms between Bedouins and governmental as well as non-governmental entities, such as the Palestinian Authority, the CA, international and local civil society organizations.

Yet, consultation is needed in particular with regard to Israeli relocation plans of Bedouins in Area 'C'.

In July 2011, in response to the re-emerging threat of forcible transfer of Bedouins from around the Jerusalem-Jericho tangent, the leaders of the 20 targeted communities formed the Protection Committee for Bedouin communities in the Jerusalem Periphery in order to represent themselves and call for international protection. The Committee was founded in 2011 with UNRWA support and established three priorities. In descending order, the Committee demanded: first, the right of return of Bedouins to their original lands in the Negev; second and upon disallowed return, the right to remain in current locations; and third and upon inevitable relocation, full, prior and informed consent on transfer and destination.

The work of the Committee needs to be supported. This is because of three reasons. First, the Committee constitutes a means of bringing Bedouins together over their concerns beyond individual divisions. Second, the objective of the Committee, i.e. the retention of land inhabited by indigenous communities vis-a-vis the threat of eviction to make place for Israeli settlements, directly relates to the concerns of the Palestinian community in its effort to establish a viable Palestinian state. And third, the work of the Committee warrants the kind of legal support to make a case for the protection of livelihoods against the Gol/CA. Support measures to legal protection of livelihoods in Palestine have to entail two steps.

This is because those measures can only be effective if they are pursued in a concerted effort. The first step is to reach a shared understanding of protection issues, the second concerns measures of protection on the ground.

### **Establish a shared understanding of protection issues**

To this end, the PLO is currently setting up the Jerusalem Conference Group to represent the Bedouin communities around Jerusalem. This is pursued together with national and international organizations, as well as efforts led by OCHA and development partners. To promote coordination and a shared understanding, the work of established bodies needs to be tapped into, including the Consolidated Appeal Process and the action of the joint protection group.

As part of the effort to solicit Bedouin concerns, the physical structure in regards to the accessibility of courts and legal proceedings needs to be improved. This can entail access to Palestinian public prosecution offices and service branches of the Ministry of Justice, to legal information centers and legal professionals, and finally, access to courts within the local area. Where in face of civil and security control of Israel a permanent physical presence of Palestinian legal bodies cannot be established in Bedouin communities, temporary outlets and regular services of mobile representatives need to be established and maintained, which is a cost-efficient and practical form of support.



PHOTO: UNDP archive, Steve Sabella



## Measures of protection on the ground

The second step of legal protection is action on the ground. UNDP/PAPP, through its Rule of Law and Access to Justice programme, is supporting many civil society organizations who are working on the field of legal assistance. In support to Bedouin communities and the work they carry out for legal protection of their livelihood, four areas of need to be targeted:

### 1) Proceedings:

To facilitate legal proceedings, the costs to submit cases to Israeli courts to challenge demolition orders, eviction orders and confiscation of land need to be shared. If feasible, cases could be filed in other states' courts, which are directly related to the illegality of settlements and settlement products' commercialization. To support cases, key propositions need to be pursued by the PA together with Bedouin communities against the Gol/CA.

As outlined in the recent PA Report "Moving beyond the Status Quo.

- Advocate for approval of the projects that are already in the pipeline;

- refrain from requesting additional approval from the Gol for activities related to the implementation of approved master plans;

- Commence implementation of plans once they are approved by the Ministry of local Government following six months from their submission to the Gol for approval;

- In the event that they are still pending formal approval, commence implementation of pending prioritized development projects three to six months after they have been submitted to the Gol, commence implementation of pending large-scale infrastructure projects 15 months after they have been submitted to the Gol;

- Clearly mark project investments in Area 'C' as donor investments to increase visibility beyond Area 'C' and thereby raise the threshold of obstruction/demolition through the Gol;

- Call on the Emergency Livelihoods Response, and the Ad-Hoc Planning Task Force, to provide immediate response to communities at risk of displacement further to demolition of properties;

- Arrange for diplomatic presence and facilitate media coverage at the site of a demolition in the event that a demolition cannot be stopped;

- Report demolitions of project investments to Foreign Ministries and request that they submit a protest to the Gol. For example, Poland's foreign ministry recently summoned the Israeli ambassador in order to demand reparation on behalf of Polish Humanitarian Aid for a destroyed water cistern;<sup>10</sup>

- Respond to Israeli measures affecting donor investments by demanding compensation from Israel for its destruction, and take legal and policy measures to that end by collectivizing the costs of destruction;

- Challenge demolitions vis-à-vis the Gol based on international humanitarian law, including by reference to the following stipulations: Article 49 against individual or mass forcible transfer and Article 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention against the destruction of property. Those stipulations prohibit the destruction of civilian property unless absolutely necessary by military operations. Destruction of objects essential for the survival of the civilian population is absolutely prohibited under any circumstances. Extensive destruction not justified by military necessity and done deliberately is a war crime under Article 147 of the Geneva Convention. As a state party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Gol is furthermore required to ensure adequate housing without discrimination (Art. 11.1);

- Jointly share risks: demolitions should neither prevent Bedouins and Palestinians, nor their international development partners, from providing services to communities in Area 'C'.

Hence, while cooperation is needed towards preventing demolitions, a joint and clear demonstration that demolitions will not diminish the determination to support the Palestinian communities in Area 'C' is in order.

In that spirit, a "mitigation fund" can be established, which would provide support for the reconstruction of destroyed homes and infrastructure.

## 2) Advocacy:

Bedouin communities and the already existing grassroots networks need to be empowered in order to lead their advocacy work.

This means to work with youth from different locations in order to make them spokespersons of their own plight, including training on media, awareness raising on human releases in the Palestinian, Israeli and international media, and other events to disseminate their plight.

As part of this effort, UNRWA has already done a remarkable work to make visible the situation of the Bedouin refugee communities in the oPt, through the support given to representatives of the Bedouin refugees at the UN forum on Minority Issues (Geneva 2010), the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (New York 2011) and at the European Parliament (Brussels 2012). rights and international law.

As a result of the training, they will organize visits of diplomats to their communities, press A partnership with UNRWA and other organizations could be explored in order to keep this issue on the agenda of the UNPFII (United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues) and other international forums as well as to expand it with other visits to the US and Europe.

## 3) Research:

In order to build up proper communication and advocacy campaigns, reliable data is needed. Currently, there is very little available in order to understand the reality of the Bedouins in the West Bank beyond their humanitarian situation.

Issues such as their history before and after their expulsion from the Negev; their social relationships among families and tribes and with their Palestinian neighbours; cultural heritage and traditions; the impact of the protracted occupation on their cultural identity as a group; legal implications in light of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; all these issues remain currently unexplored.

PHOTO: UNDP archive, Sharek Youth Forum



Dr. Jeff Halper, Director of ICHAD advocating for the rights of Bedouins at the OHCHR in Geneva

Moreover, research is warranted into what kind of development options are available for traditional Bedouin and pastoralist communities, whether it is under a scenario of continued Israeli occupation or Palestinian sovereignty.

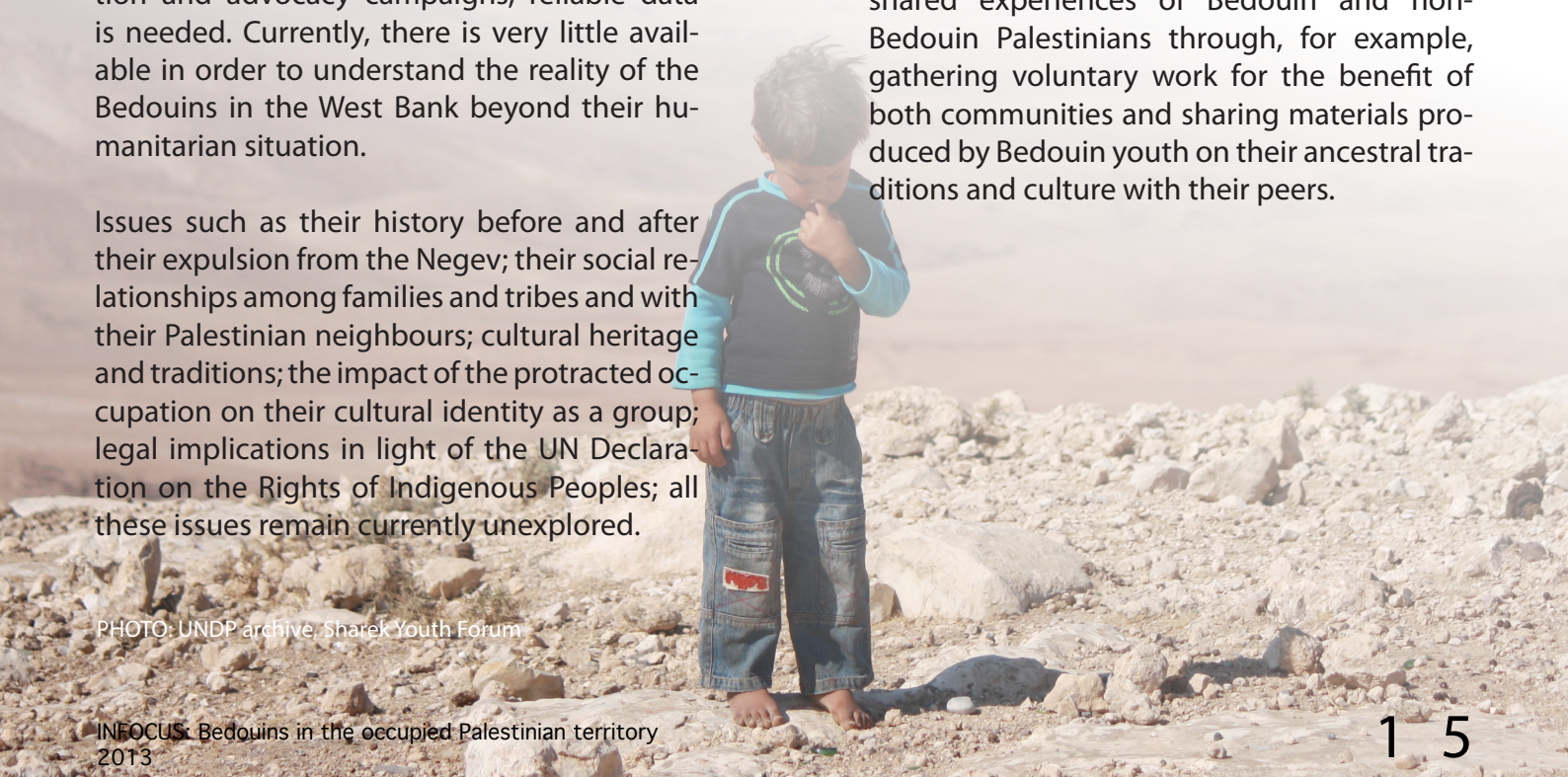
## 4) Awareness-raising towards

### Palestinian society:

Currently some stereotypes and misconceptions exist among the Palestinian population towards the lifestyle, customs and traditions of the Bedouins.

It is thus essential to work towards building links between Bedouins and non-Bedouin Palestinians, through the creation of spaces of exchange among these populations, especially with youth.

This needs to focus on and document the shared experiences of Bedouin and non-Bedouin Palestinians through, for example, gathering voluntary work for the benefit of both communities and sharing materials produced by Bedouin youth on their ancestral traditions and culture with their peers.





## 2.2. *Employment conditions*

The emphasis on employment conditions and creating employment opportunities needs to complement the measures of legal protection. The current employment conditions are the basis on which opportunities can be enhanced. The objective of this endeavor is to give poor families the required tools to improve their economic situation through more sustainable development alternatives and by overcoming the culture of humanitarian assistance predominant due to the Israeli occupation restrictions.

For UNDP/PAPP, the approach is based on the experience with the Deprived Families Economic Empowerment Programme (DEEP), which is funded by The Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and implemented by UNDP/PAPP together with the PA, Palestinian NGOs and financial institutions.

The DEEP programme combines different components targeting vulnerable families to graduate from poverty through the support for self-employment and micro-enterprise development based on small grants/loans, as means to reduce poverty levels.

Members of selected families are addressed to expand their opportunities to become entrepreneurs through access to investment capital needed to start or improve their business. Currently, employment opportunities for Bedouins are dire and decreasing, undermining their traditional means of sustenance <sup>11</sup>. Inter alia, this is because farming/herding activities are constrained as 85 percent of the existing grazing land in the West Bank is closed by the Gol/CA.

Herding and access to grazing grounds is mostly constrained to 1-2 km around Bedouin villages.<sup>12</sup> While 67 percent of Bedouin families do not own agricultural land, 32 percent do but not all land-ownership is certified which allows for eviction and expropriation. When they were expelled from the Negev and arrived to the West Bank as refugees, Bedouins had to occupy land already used by Palestinian locals.

This has been the case since, and in general they pay rent to the Palestinian owners but remain without approved entitlements. The decreasing land for farming and agriculture requires Bedouins to buy fodder at high prices. Together, these factors impact the employment conditions of Bedouins.

A 2008 UNRWA<sup>15</sup> assessment gives income sources as the sale of farming and herding products (21.1 percent), wages (23.5 percent), self-employment (17 percent), aid payments (29.1 percent) and other sources of revenue (9.3 percent).

Based on those conditions, employment opportunities should emerge from within the Bedouin community in line with their socio-cultural background. As such, small and medium-sized enterprises that are linked to the raising and exploitation of livestock are integral to render economic activity sustainable.

This pertains to the development of larger-scale chicken and cow farms, the purchase of pasteurization units and the commercialization of dairy products to lower communal costs and increase joint benefits for Bedouin communities.

Moreover, in order to promote the empowerment of Bedouin and herder women as well as to overcome cultural constraints, promotion of traditional Bedouin handicrafts and sewing-based production along the commercialization of projects are in place. As a result, there had been a 21 percent decrease in herd size overall <sup>13</sup>.



PHOTO: UNDP archive, Sharek Youth Forum





PHOTO: UNDP archive, Ahd Izhiman

## Alternative electricity, communal power solutions

Husk Power Systems provides end-to-end energy solutions to rural communities in India. This technology cost-effectively converts agricultural residue (rice husk, mustard stems, corn cobs, certain grasses etc) into electricity. A typical plant can serve two to four villages within a radius of 1.5 kilometers, depending on size and population.

The plant employs local villagers who are then trained to conduct plant operations. Consumers pre-pay a fixed monthly fee ranging from USD 2 - USD 3 to light up two fluorescent lamps and one mobile charging station. This offers consumers savings of at least 30% over competing kerosene and diesel energy sources (annual savings of up to US\$50) and a lighting package that can serve the whole household. Additional customized packages are available to meet the varying needs of each customer (with increasing volume).

A network of decentralized power plants is managed across wide geographies using a cloud-based, real-time monitoring system. Electricity is distributed through micro-grids made from bamboo or other sustainable materials instead of concrete. A custom-made pre-paid meter helps the company ensure that consumers utilize no more than the wattage they have paid for. Low-cost transformers developed by the company ensure consistent voltage flow and theft free distribution.

Looking into alternatives is integral to providing electricity to Bedouin communities in the oPt as well. To support such alternative facilities, UNDP/PAPP could initiate a partnership with an entity to provide the technology/equipment, expertise for maintenance, etc. while UNDP/PAPP together with the Bedouin community would have to perform site selection, estimate demand for electricity, examine feedstock available, gather manpower to maintain plant, obtain local regulatory approvals, and bear all costs of day to day operation (incl. procurement, cash collection).

80 percent of those Bedouins who find formal or ad-hoc employment outside the traditional herding economy experience difficulties to reach their work due to the inability to get a permit to cross checkpoints.<sup>14</sup> In contrast, working permits in settlements are easier to obtain for Bedouins instead of maintaining farming/herding activities.

The restrictive permit regime together with physical movement restrictions such as barriers, checkpoints, and earth mounds not only limit the chances of Bedouins to enter Jerusalem for work, but also to move and work within the West Bank. Yet, transportation is not easily available and where it is available, it is often very costly and the time it takes to reach the workplace is long. In order to allow for such employment opportunities, basic services must be ensured. As described above, the Israeli imposed restrictions on the use of basic commodities such as water and electricity not only undermine economic activities of Bedouin communities but also threaten the cohesion of the communities themselves.

In light of the intricate implications of the restrictions on Bedouin livelihoods, measures to support employment opportunities thus need to be comprehensive as well. That is, the support measures need to target

1) legal appeals, 2) comprise technical means of sustenance and 3) promote communal cohesion.

### 1) Legal appeals

- Transfer of the record of the land registered in Area 'C' to the PA;

- Allow for PA to carry out land registration, provide technical/financial support toward land registration; legal and counseling support must be provided to Palestinians that must apply for "prior coordination" with Israeli District Civil Liaison (DCL) offices to gain access to their land;

- Based on tangible consent between the concerned parties, Bedouin land-tenures from Palestinians need to be certified to establish entitlements.

## 2) Technical facilities

- The provision of energy is vital to daily and economic life. Given the inadequate and expensive coverage, alternative sources of energy need to be realized. The most promising source is solar energy. For individuals/families, solar panels on the houses are a prime suggestion (e.g. to maintain communication devices).

- In order to support their livelihoods, and due to the bigger power capacity which is needed to run some electric machinery, bigger solar panel installations on the community level are needed to be able to run electric appliances (e.g. for refrigerators).

- As those facilities initially require bigger investment, the solar panels should operate as a shared source of energy for productive activities in the community.

- Due to the restrictions imposed by the Israeli authorities, who prohibit the construction of infrastructure or fixed structures, these panels should be portable or easy to transport. This would also facilitate the semi-nomade lifestyle of the Bedouins.

- Those suggestions should be aligned with the Palestine Solar Initiative of the Palestinian Energy and Natural Resources Authority (PENRA) which tries to connect a remarkable number of communities to the grid using renewable energy (mainly solar power).

- In order to mitigate and alleviate the water shortage in the short-run, the use of water tanker that bring water to remote villages should be enhanced. By increasing the number of tanker and the amount of water they supply, the costs for water usage in relation to household expenditures should be decreased. In the longer-run, this however is not sustainable and more integral solution to water provision need to be found.

## 3) Communal cohesion

- Facilitate mini buses in communities where there is no transportation available and where the access to schools and health centres is more difficult. The costs for those buses should be covered by either the Ministry of Education, a member of the Bedouin community, or Bedouin families that pay a monthly amount.

- Invest in community spaces (buildup, mobile, or tents) with the component of recreational and informal education, involving the communities in the construction/preparation of the spaces in order to assure ownership

- Organize, in consultation with adults, youth and children, recreational, cultural and educational activities in partnership with Palestinian civil society organizations to preserve and exchange communal Bedouin knowledge and customs.

# ENDNOTES

1 OCHA July 2011, September 2011, February 2012.

2 Diakonia 2011, OCHA January 2012, B'tselem 2011.

3 OCHA August 2010, August 2011, January 2012.

4 B'tselem 2011.

5 Ibid.

6 Ma'an 2008, 2009, 2010.

7 UNRWA, UNICEF, WFP 2010: 16.

8 UNRWA, UNICEF, WFP 2010 and WFP, FAO, PCBS 2011.

9 UNICEF 2010: 2.

10 UNRWA, UNICEF, WFP 2010.

11 <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2012/Feb-14/163247-poland-summons-israeli-ambassador-over-west-bank-case.ashx#axzz1mRAOkNjV>.

12 Based on Ma'an 2008, 2009.

13 ODI 2009: 27.

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