



MA'AN DEVELOPMENT CENTER



SALFIT

**from Agricultural Heaven
to Industrial Ghetto**

December 2008

The background of the entire page is a photograph of olive tree branches with green olives. The branches are dark and woody, with small, elongated green olives hanging from them. The leaves are dark green and have a silvery underside. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day. The overall tone is natural and agricultural.

The changing face of Salfit

Once part of the bread basket of Palestine, where residents were able to make a healthy living off the land, a dramatic transformation is being enforced on Salfit. The policies implemented by Israel not only have severe humanitarian consequences but undermine Palestinian economic and political sustainability.

Palestinians in Salfit are subjected to a plethora of pressures which are increasingly making life in smaller communities untenable. House demolitions, lack of water, greatly restricted movement and access, pollution and the inability to sustain livelihoods form a matrix of pressures designed to force them from large portions of the governorate. While many residents are determined to resist, the continued annexation of their land, which is further dividing and fragmenting the West Bank, along with falling living conditions provides a bleak outlook.

Introduction

Covering 204 square kilometers, the Governorate of Salfit is characterized by vast tracts of fertile agricultural land and rich groundwater resources. Alongside the main urban centre, Salfit city, there are 18 other villages and towns in the governorate. Its population of 59,464 (2007)¹ accounts for 1.6 percent of the Palestinian population in the occupied Palestinian territories.²

Salfit comes from Canaanite words meaning “box of grapes” a testament to the grape vines that can still be found throughout the region.³ Eighty percent of the governorate is agricultural land resulting in a heavy reliance on agriculture and Salfit is the top producer of olive oil in Palestine, producing 1500 tons a year.⁴ Other regional produce includes delicious grapes, figs, citrus fruits, and apples. Outside of agriculture, the region is also a major producer of stones and marble used in construction. In addition, numerous archaeological and religious sites spanning the Canaanite, Roman, and Islamic eras are located in Salfit.

Today however, Salfit is suffering from the weight of the Israeli occupation. The Governorate’s rural character is being grossly undermined by Israeli colonial construction and expansion, along with the confiscation of large areas of Palestinian land that used to support the livelihoods of many residents. Fragmented into walled enclaves, communities across Salfit are under severe pressure to leave as a result of greatly compromised access to basic and essential services, clean water supplies, and livelihoods. This forced displacement is compounded by rapid urban expansion and environmental destruction, which is suffocating the region and irrevocably changing the face of Salfit.

Entrance to one of the ancient buildings in Der Istya Old City

Salfit in Crisis

- Settlement expansion and land annexation
- Fragmentation of Palestinian areas
- Forced Internal Displacement
- Environmental destruction
- Economic devastation
- Forced industrialization and urbanization

Communities	Population ⁵ (In 2007)	Total Area ⁶ (In Dunums)
City	8,796	22,576
Salfit	8796	22,576
Towns	33,997	120,105
Az-Zawiya	4,754	12,170
Biddya	8,064	13,519
Bruqin	3,236	12,210
Deir Ballut	3,195	13,647
Deir Istya	3,146	34,902
Kufr Ad-Dik	4,553	14,684
Kifl Hares	3,248	9,528
Qarawat Bani Hassan	3,801	9,445
Villages	16,777	61,869
Farkha	1,366	5,256
Hares	3,112	8,575
Iskaka	912	5,438
Khirbet Qeis	226	3,123
Marda	1,992	9,341
Mas'ha	2,003	8,123
Qira	1,143	2,080
Rafat	1,861	8,020
Sarta	2,530	5,786
Yasuf	1,621	6,118
Izbat Abu Adam	11	N/A
Total	59,570	204,550

* These figures include land seized by the Israeli military in 1967.

The Colonisation of Salfit

“ I want to be clear on this, the Ariel block will be an inseparable part of the state of Israel under any situation.

Ehud Olmert, Acting Israeli Prime Minister, 14 March 2006

”

A view of Ma'ha village through a barbed wire fence

Settlement construction and expansion in the Salfit governorate began in 1977, when the settlement of Elkana was built on land confiscated from the village of Mas'ha. By 2007 the number of settlers in the district reached 30,947 settlers, accounting for 6.4 percent of the total settler population in the West Bank.⁷

Salfit has suffered tremendously from land confiscation and annexation. Approximately 22 percent of the land area of Salfit district has been seized by the occupation. Twelve percent was taken for the construction of 13 settlements, two industrial zones, a military base and a quarry and an additional 10 percent has been declared a “free-fire zone”, used by the IOF for military training.⁸

Despite there being twice the number of Palestinians to settlers in the governorate, (59,464 versus 30,947 respectively in 2007), the occupation has allocated almost twice as much land for the colonies as it has for the

structural plans of all Palestinian communities in Salfit. In real terms this means that settlers have been given some 25,000 dunums as compared to the 13,942 allocated to the indigenous Palestinian population.⁹

Salfit land confiscation and annexation

22% of Salfit area is seized by IOF
12% for 13 settlements, 2 industrial zones, a military base & aquary
10% as “free-fire zone” for IOF

30,947 settlers allocated
25,000 dunums

59,464 indigenous Palestinians allocated
13,942 dunums

	<i>Name of settlement</i>	<i>Year of establishment</i>	<i>Area in Master Plan in Dunams</i>	<i>Built up area in Dunams 2008</i>	<i>On land belonging to</i>	<i>Number of settlers in 2006</i>
1	Elkana	1977-as military base	1025	893.546	Mas'ha	3,188
2	Ariel	1978	16,000	3025.932	Kefal Hares, Hares, Salfit, Marda, Brukin	17,652
3	Kfar Tapuh	1978	2000	369.743	Yasuf	747
4	Qarne Shomron*	1978	1265	548	Dier Istiya Jan Safut	6280 (2005)
5	Maaleh Shomron*	1980	500	510	Azun	574 (2005)
6	Barkan	1981	2000 (including Industrial Zone)	1481.234	Kefal Hares, Kerwat Beni-Hassan	1319
7	Yakir	1981	3120	349.630	Deir Istiya	1,101
8	Alei Zahav	1982	890	197.799	Kufar Dik, Deir Balut	725
9	Immanuel	1982	10,000	374.714	Deir Istiya	3,137
10	Kiryat Natifim	1982	420	147.689	Karawat Bnei Hassan	444
11	Pedu'el	1984	614	363.776	Kefal Dik	1,045
12	Etz Efrayim	1985	500	160.015	Mas'ha	672
13	Nofim	1987	1,200	277,088	Jain Safut	435
14	Revava	1991	481	194,485	Hares, Deir Istiya	868
Total				9041		38,187

Source: Arab Studies Society, Map Department Database 2008

*The Qarne Shomron and Maaleh Shomron settlements are spread out on land belonging to both Salfit and Qalqilia Districts

15,000 new settlers moved to the West Bank in 2008 ¹⁰

Settlement expansion in Salfit District during 2008 includes:

Name of settlement	Expansion during 2008 (until October)	Current expansion taking place (October 2008)
Alei Zahav settlement	4 caravans	
Ariel settlement	4 caravans	
Ariel Parks, settlement industrial zone	At least 80 Dunams of land have been leveled for the construction of 27 new factories tripling the size of the settlement industrial zone.	Work at this site is ongoing
Barkan settlement industrial Zone	170 Dunams in the vicinity of Barqan settlement have been leveled.	
Brukin settlement outpost	approximately 10 new caravans	
Karnei Shomron	Approximately 35 housing units	
Kfar Tapuah	Approximately 12 housing units	
Pedu'el settlement	At least 16 housing units (an increase of 15percent in the size of the settlement)	
Revava settlement	at least 26 housing units (an increase of a third in the size of the settlement)	Work at this site is ongoing.
Highway #5	A parallel Highway to the existing route is being cemented	A parallel Highway to the existing route is being paved.
Immanuel settlement industrial Zone	Extension of Industrial zone 5 industrial buildings	
Yakir settlement	Approximately 20 housing units	

Sources: Arij, Peace Now

The Case of the Ariel Settlement

“In light of new realities on the ground, including already existing population centers, it is unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final status negotiations will be a full and complete return to the armistice lines of 1949...”

“U.S. President George Bush, in a letter dated April 14, 2004, to then-Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon



Location map of Ariel showing the by-pass road infrastructure



Inside Ariel

“...in regard to the large settlement blocs, thanks to the disengagement plan, we have in our hands a first-ever American statement that they will be part of Israel. In years to come, perhaps decades, when negotiations will be held between Israel and the Palestinians, the master of the world will pound on the table and say: We stated already ten years ago that the large blocs are part of Israel.”

Dov Weisglass in an interview to Haartz 10/11/2005

The governorate of Salfit occupies a strategic location, linking the northern West Bank and the central Ramallah-Jerusalem area. This has left it particularly vulnerable to Israeli colonial expansion and the ensuing de facto annexation of these colonies to Israel. Israel refers to the settlements in Salfit as “the Ariel Settlement bloc” and has repeatedly stated its intention of annexing this “bloc”.

The largest settlement in the Salfit region is Ariel, which is built on land belonging to Salfit city and the villages of Iskaka, Marda, Kifl Haris and Hares.

The settlement of Ariel forms the tip of the 'Ariel finger', reaching 22km inside the West Bank. Ariel's master plan covers 16 km² and spreads from the Green Line (the name given to the 1948 Armistice line) in the West all the way to the colony of Kfar Tapuh in the East. This leaves it

second only in land mass to the massive colony of Ma'aleh Adumim (the latter spreading over 35 km²). The built up area of Ariel settlement stretches 12 km (8 miles).

In spite of the illegality of the settlements under international law and numerous peace processes for which the halting of settlement expansion is a necessary starting point, Ariel has expanded from forty settlers in 1978 to over 17,500 settlers today making it the fourth most populated settlement in the West Bank, after Ma'ale Adumim (32,372), Modi'in Illite (32,242) and Betar Illite (28,023).¹¹

Expansionist tactics of the settler movement in Salfit include reaching out to both religious and secular Israelis through marketing the settlement as “the capital of Sameria” (the old testament name for the northern West

Bank) and an “Israeli smart city close to Tel Aviv”. The municipality claims to be situated “in the heart of Israel”.¹²

Benefiting from a municipal budget, Ariel offers its settlers subsidized services and housing making it an attractive economic option compared with the cost of living across the Green Line. Ariel’s growth and expansion has been further aided by its so called ‘absorption’ programs for new Israeli immigrants and housing specifically intended for the settlers evacuated from Gaza.¹³ A clear indication of Israel’s intended permanency for the colony, it also boasts its own university, municipal court, police station, performing arts center, leisure complexes and hotel. The establishment and growth of the settlement has had a direct and deliberate impact on the population of Salfit who have lost their lands, homes and live in fear of violent attacks by settlers. In recent years the severe movement and access restrictions imposed on the Palestinian population have also greatly undermined and in many cases prevented access to the basic services upon which the population depends. The combined effect of these policies is to disrupt living conditions to such a degree that is becoming increasingly difficult for many residents to continue living in their communities.

Ariel Road Network

As with elsewhere in the West Bank, the support provided to Israeli settlers greatly contrasts with the services and provision made for Palestinians. This situation is particularly manifest in the road network where Palestinians are prevented from using a number of key roads, set aside for Jewish use.

Road no. 4775 which served as the main entrance to Salfit city has been closed to Palestinian traffic since 2001 and now only serves the settler population, as the main entrance to Ariel colony.

Highway 60 runs east of Ariel and stretches from Beersheba in the South to Nazareth in the north, passing through Hebron, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Ramallah, and Salfit. In Salfit however the flow of traffic has been greatly disrupted by the Tapuch checkpoint which results in major delays, preventing continuity for Palestinians traveling between the central and northern West Bank. Palestinians are often held up here before they can continue on with their journey to Nablus, Jenin, and for those with the necessary permits, Nazareth.

In addition, two new major highways are under



construction with the aim of solidifying the link between Ariel and other Israeli colonies in the West Bank, as well as with Israel proper. Some sections of these roads are already in use:

Highway 5, also known as 505 or the “Trans-Samaria” highway, runs along the northern limit of Ariel colony. A massive infrastructure project is currently underway to expand the highway, which will connect the colony to the Mediterranean coast and Jordan Valley settlements.

Highway 6, or the “Trans-Israel” highway runs west of Ariel and is the eastern-most major highway inside Israel. It is intended to replace Israel’s previous core transport “spine”, which runs along the coastline, by providing an alternative north to south route. However it runs very close to, and in some places right on, the Green Line and provides a fast link for the colonies in Salfit with most locations in 1948 land.

“The Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies.”

Article 49 from the 4th Geneva Convention

Israel's Annexation plans

Despite the fact that the colonies represent a clear violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention, Israel has proceeded its settlement of Salfit with vigour, as part of a determined effort to change the 'facts on the ground'. For years this received the tacit support of the American Government in the form of UN resolution vetos and a biased political negotiation processes. In 2004 however, President Bush explicitly provided his support for the annexation of the colonies to Israel. The sheer land mass involved represents a massive loss for the people of Salfit with serious long term economic consequences.

Despite President Bush's statement [see page 7] being contrary to International Humanitarian Law the US Congress ratified it almost unanimously. Israel perceived Bush's letter as a green light to keep areas that it can densely populate with settlers. Therefore, despite the Road Map requirement that Israel freeze settlement expansion, Israel has in fact accelerated the creation of so called "existing" population centers in strategically important areas, such as the Ariel and Maaleh Adumim settlement blocs.



Photo Courtesy of ARIJ
Ariel view of Ariel settlement

Settler Violence

“Protected persons are entitled in all circumstances to respect for their persons...and shall be protected especially against all acts of violence or threats thereof”

“Reprisals against protected persons and their property are prohibited”

Articles 27 and 33 of the fourth Geneva Convention

The residents of Salfit have suffered recurring violence at the hands of settlers violating their physical protection and ability to maintain their livelihoods. Cultivated lands have been deliberately set alight and farmers beaten and forced off their land through violence and threat of violence. Communities near settlements have been attacked by groups of settlers who also fire in the direction of the villages. The risks are particularly acute during the olive harvest and on Jewish holidays. In a pattern common across the occupied territory, these acts take place with little if any accountability for the perpetrators. Indeed, the IOF, police and settlers repeatedly cooperate in the harassment of the Palestinian population.



Kufr Ad-Dik resident shows a stone thrown by settlers near his child's bed

Settlers Terrorize Kufr Ad-Dik Residents

On September 27th 2008 at around 9.30pm dozens of settlers from the Ale Zahav and Pedu'el settlements marched into the Palestinian village of Kufr Ad-Dik . Many of them were armed and accompanied by aggressive dogs. They were also chaperoned by several IOF jeeps. The settlers began hurling rocks at Palestinian homes and cars, terrorizing residents and causing considerable damage to at least 16 houses and ten vehicles. Initially failing to intervene to prevent the violence, the IOF eventually announced a curfew for the village and sound grenades, tear gas canisters, rubber bullets and live ammunition were unleashed on residents attempting to defend their property. As a result, six people were injured. The violence and harassment continued as IOF jeeps drove up and down the main road of the village launching sound grenades and firing flares and tear gas at Palestinian youths until early the next morning.¹⁴



Connecting colonies,
dissecting Palestine:
**The Apartheid
Wall in Salfit**

Kids from Mas'ha village try to play with the Amer kids across the bars of the Apartheid Wall gate isolating the Amer family from the rest of Mas'ha

Residents of Salfit have been suffering the effects of the Apartheid Wall since 2003, when sections annexing the Ariel and Kedumim “fingers” were completed. The immediate effects included the loss of 70 km² of agricultural land from the villages of Deir Balut, Rafat, Az Zawiya and Mas’ha : accounting for 6.6 percent of the land mass of the entire governorate.¹⁵

Worse was soon to follow. In October 2003, the area between the Barrier and the Green Line was declared closed by military order, and a permit and gate system was introduced. Palestinians over the age of twelve, residing east of the Barrier were isolated from their farms, grazing lands and water resources and forced to obtain ‘visitor’ permits to access the newly created “closed area”. However, less than twenty percent of farmers who used to work this land prior to completion of the Apartheid Wall were granted the permits they needed to retain their livelihood.¹⁶

This has increased unemployment, increased food insecurity and left many people unable to maintain or find alternative livelihoods. Young men are especially at risk and many have been forced to leave the region. An indication of how bad the situation has become is the fact that whereas, the region used to export food, today 27 percent of households suffer from food insecurity and an additional 7 percent were deemed at risk of food insecurity in 2006.¹⁷

The situation also looks set to worsen as the Apartheid Wall in Salfit, which was approved by the Israeli government in April 2006, has yet to be completed. If plans go-ahead, the Wall will isolate 70 km² of Salfit's land annexing a staggering 33 percent of the governorate to Israel¹⁸. Furthermore, the areas that remain will have been carved up into isolated and walled enclaves.

When completed, the Apartheid Wall in Salfit will:

Connect West Bank colonies with communities inside Israel, effectively annexing and strengthening the settlements through increased territorial contiguity.	Carve up Palestinian areas into isolated enclaves to be connected by a series of tunnels running under Israeli highways (and in some cases under the Wall itself). Highways access will be denied to Palestinians with West Bank IDs.
Create a walled corridor leading to the Jordan Valley.	Greatly impede access and freedom of movement further undermining prospects for a Palestinian State by severing the link between the northern and central West Bank.

The Wall will consolidate two east-to-west corridors in the Salfit Area:

The "Ariel finger"	The Kedumim "Finger"
14 settlements and 3 settlement industrial zones	12 Israeli settlements
More than 26,638 settlers in Salfit and others from Ramallah district	More than 1,536 settlers in Salfit and others from Qalqilia district
Isolated Palestinian hamlets and homes. At least 158 Palestinians are trapped in such areas	At least 2 Palestinians from Salfit are trapped along with many others from Qalqilia governorate.

The Ariel and Kedumim "fingers" dissect the government of Salfit into isolated enclaves:

Enclaves in Salfit:

Enclave Name	Location	Communities	Population	Description
Az Zawiya Enclave	South-west Salfit	3 communities	9,810 people	Completely surrounded by the Apartheid Wall
Biddya Enclave	North-west Salfit	4 communities	16,398 people	Surrounded by the Apartheid Wall except for a 1.5 Km gap to the east
Deir Istiya Semi-Enclave	North-east Salfit	4 communities	10,659 people	Cut off by the Apartheid Wall from the west and south
Marda Enclave	Eastern tip of Salfit	3 communities	4,525 people	Cut off on one side by the Apartheid Wall and on three sides by Israeli-only roads
Salfit semi-Enclave	South Salfit	4 communities	14,941 people	Cut off by the Apartheid Wall from the east and north

“The Court considers that the construction of the wall and its associated régime create a “fait accompli” on the ground that could well become permanent, in which case, and notwithstanding the formal characterization of the wall by Israel, it would be tantamount to de facto annexation”

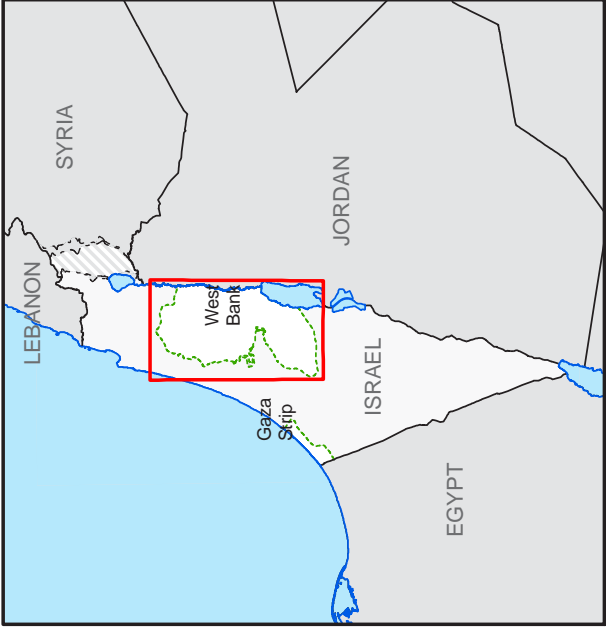
ICJ, Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Advisory Opinion of 9 July 2004, para. 121



UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

West Bank Barrier Route Projections

July 2008



Area Affected

The Barrier's total length is 723 km, more than twice the length of the 1949 Armistice Line (Green Line) between the West Bank and Israel.

The total area located between the Barrier and the Green Line is 9.8 % of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and No Man's Land.

When completed, approximately 13 % of the Barrier will be constructed on the Green Line or in Israel with 87 % inside the West Bank.

Populations Affected

If the Barrier is completed based on the current route:

Approximately 35,000 Palestinians holding West Bank ID cards in 35 communities will

be located between the Barrier and the Green Line.

The majority of the approximately 250,000 Palestinians with East Jerusalem ID cards will reside between the Barrier and the Green Line. However, Palestinian communities inside the current municipal boundary, Kafr Aqab and Shu'fat Camp, are separated from East Jerusalem by the Barrier.

Approximately 125,000 Palestinians will be surrounded by the Barrier on three sides. These comprise 28 communities; the Bidduya and Biddu areas, and the city of Qalqiya.

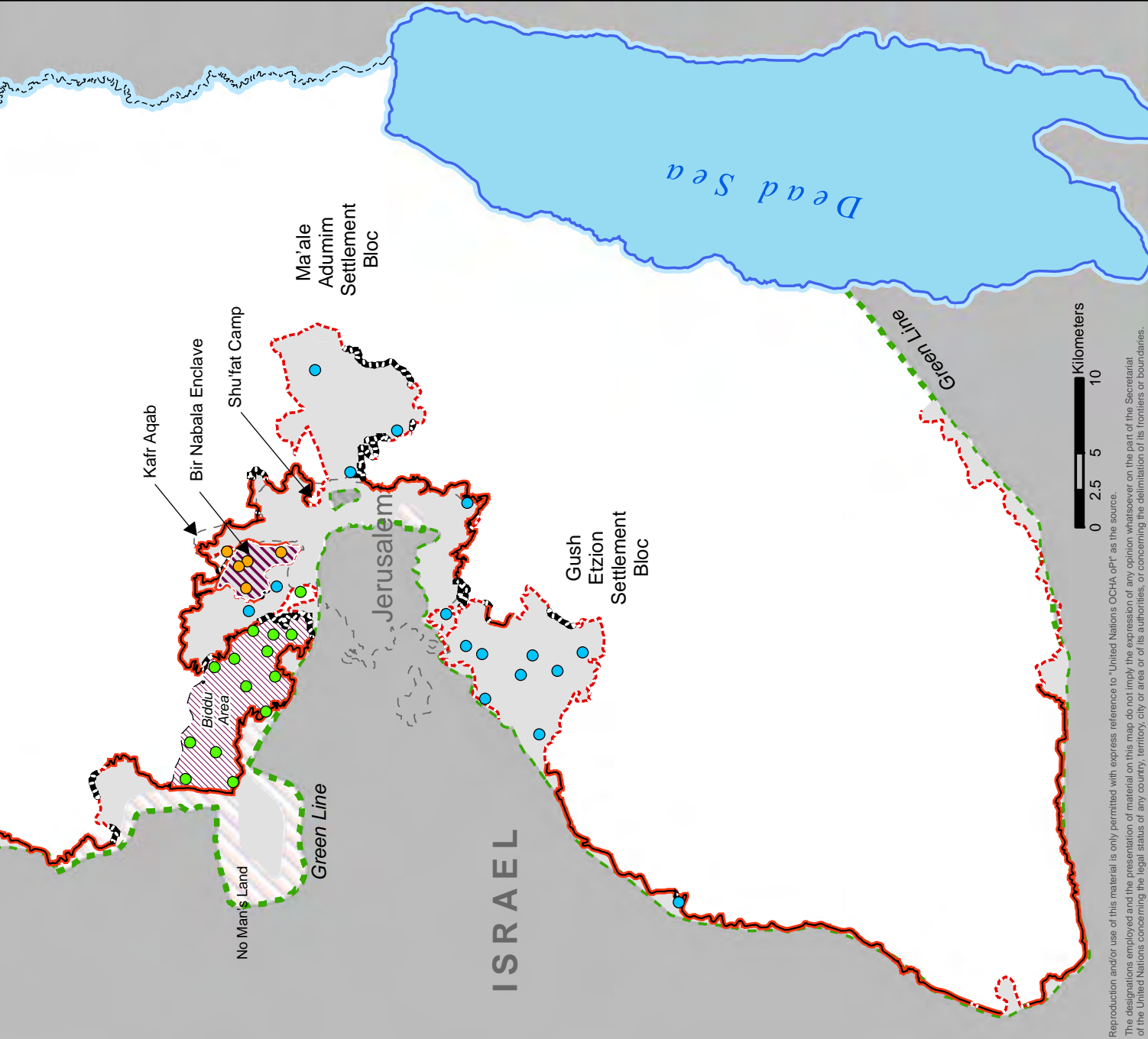
Approximately 26,000 Palestinians in 8 communities in the Az Zawiya and Bir Nabala Enclaves will be surrounded on four sides by the Barrier, with a tunnel or road connection to the rest of the West Bank.

Barrier Route

- Completed
- - - Under construction
- Planned

Cartography and Barrier Themes: OCHA-oPt IMU
Map December 2007
Base data: MoPIC (2000) updates OCHA (2006)

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Munira welcomes a friend at the Wall gate

Case Study: The Amer family

Hani and Munira Amer built their house in 1972 in the village of Mas'ha, Salfit. In the 1980's the Israeli settlement of Elkana was built on Mas'ha's land and the settlement subsequently expanded to within 20 meters of the Amer family's front door.

The threat to the family worsened with the construction of the Apartheid wall in Mas'ha in 2003: a chicken shed and a pen for sheep built next to their home were demolished to make way for the Wall. Today the family finds itself surrounded on all sides by the Wall, cut off from the village lands annexed on the other side of the wall next to their house. The family also suffers from frequent harassment by the IOF and settlers.

Case Study: Mas'ha's northern agricultural gate

The gates of Mas'ha are opened only for 10-15 days during the fall for the olive harvest and for 3 days in winter for plowing. This inability to farm the full season, has meant villagers have had to dismantle 26 of their greenhouses located to the west of the Wall.

Mas'ha northern gate, October 9, 2008, olive harvest season:

7:00 AM: Farmers gather at the gate and wait for the IOF to grant them access to their land

8:00-8:30 AM: IOF jeep arrives and soldiers open the gate. The farmers are forced to queue for inspection. Villagers are often subjected to threats of violence and verbal abuse during this process. Roughly a third of the villagers present are refused access.

2:00 PM: After claiming that two children were caught on film crawling under the gates to join their families in the fields, the IOF forces all the farmers off their land and suspends harvesting for the day.



No other choice but to wait for inspection on Mas'ha gate

House Demolitions and

Forced Displacement

Approximately 75 percent of Salfit has been designated Area C,²¹ under full Israeli control as per the Oslo interim agreements. This leaves residents at high risk of forced displacement as Israel uses its control to further colony expansion, while at the same time consistently denying building permits to Palestinians.²²

With the likelihood of being granted a permit at less than six percent many Palestinians, out of exasperation and a dire need for housing, have been forced to build or alter their homes without a permit.²³ This leaves them at heightened risk of home demolition.

Sixty five percent of families whose homes are demolished face further displacement in the aftermath as they struggle to find adequate housing and cope with the material loss. This increases their vulnerability to impoverishment.²⁴ Children are especially affected by home demolitions which take place as military operations. Children have in some cases shown signs of trauma long after the demolition occurs.

“Even though demolition is a single event, its impact [on children] is similar to multiple and continuous trauma.”

OCHA, May 2008 ²⁵

“

“Over 94 percent of applications for building permits in Area C, submitted to the Israeli authorities by Palestinians between January 2000 and September 2007, were denied. During this period 5,000 demolition orders were issued, and over 1,600 Palestinian buildings were destroyed.”

OCHA, May 2008 ¹⁹

”

“

“For every construction permit granted to a Palestinian by the Civil Administration, 18 other buildings are destroyed and 55 demolition orders are issued.”

-Peace Now report, February 2008 ²⁰

”



A young man standing on the ruins of his demolished house in Bruqin

Communities	Population	Number of Pending Demolitions (October 2008) ²⁶
Communities Completely Isolated in Area C		
	31,312	22
Mas'ha	2,003	20
Biddya	8,064	2
Sarta	2,530	0
Qarawat Bani Hassan	3,801	0
Hares	3,112	0
Deir Ballut	3,195	0
Rafat	1,861	0
Az-Zawiya	4,754	0
Marda	1,992	0
Communities Partially Isolated in Area C		
	2,533	6
Iskaka	912	0
Yasuf	1,621	6
Communities Bordering Area C		
	25,714	26
Deir Istya	3,146	1
Kifl Hares	3,248	4
Qira	1,143	0
Salfit	8,796	0
Khirbet Qeis	226	0
Farkha	1,366	0
Bruqin	3,236	10
Kufr Ad-Dik	4,553	11

With an average household size of 5.4 people, this suggests that just under 300 people in Salfit face being forcibly displaced by home demolition. This limbo exerts considerable pressure on families affecting multiples aspects of family life and family relations.

“It is especially forbidden to destroy or seize the enemy’s property, unless such destruction or seizure be imperatively demanded by the necessities of war.”

Article 23 of the Hague Convention, 1907

“Any destruction by the Occupying Power of real or personal property belonging individually or collectively to private persons, or to the State, or to other public authorities, or to social or cooperative organizations, is prohibited, except where such destruction is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations.”

Article 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, 1949

Wadi Qana Displacement

For 6 generations, spanning 150 years, the Mansour family lived in Wadi Qana. In 2000, Yousef Mansour and his family were forcibly displaced, a result of harassment and lack of access to basic services. They resettled in Deir Istya.

Yousef and Um Atef's house was demolished, their generator was burned, and many of the family's trees were uprooted. *"We stayed in the valley despite our home being demolished and the harassment and vandalism of the settlers. Finally, there was no water and we had to leave. This valley used to be heaven. Now it is like hell,"* said Yousef. Nor did they succumb to the pressures without considerable resistance. The family twice reconstructed their home, but both times the structures were demolished. Finally, they brought a container to live in. Nevertheless, the settlers continually cut water pipes and polluted the springs upon which they relied for drinking water leaving the family with no choice but to leave their village in 2000. *"We needed a home for the children,"* Yousef adds.

The Mansour family is not alone. In 1996, 130 people used to live in Wadi Qana, however; today the area no longer appears as a locality.

In the census conducted 1996 by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics 130 people were residents of Wadi Qana. In the 2007 census Wadi Qana no longer appears as a locality

Closure and Isolation



Fence and new road closure around Haris village

Of the 630 physical barriers and checkpoints that make up the Israeli implemented closure regime in the West Bank²⁷, only 14 are situated along the Green Line. Most are located alongside roads inside the West Bank that Palestinians are denied access to. This matrix of barriers, checkpoints and Israeli-only roads, together with the Apartheid Wall, dissects the West Bank into isolated enclaves.

Despite the fact the Apartheid Wall has not yet been completed around the Ariel and Kedumim fingers, the villagers of Salfit are already suffering from road apartheid. Because Palestinian access to the roads that run through the colony fingers is at best limited and worst denied, residents must either drive the entire way around the area or drive through tunnels under it.

Further prohibitions of Palestinians' freedom of movement have been implemented through military checkpoints, or physical barriers such as road-blocks (as in the case of Road 5).

Salfit suffers from 36 such physical barriers, most of them blocking Palestinian access to the main roads in the governorate, most notably Roads 5 and 446.

Physical barriers in the Salfit region

Type of physical barrier	Number
Road-blocks	7
Earth-mounds	7
Road gates	8
Road barriers	11
Checkpoints	3
Total	36

Source: OCHA

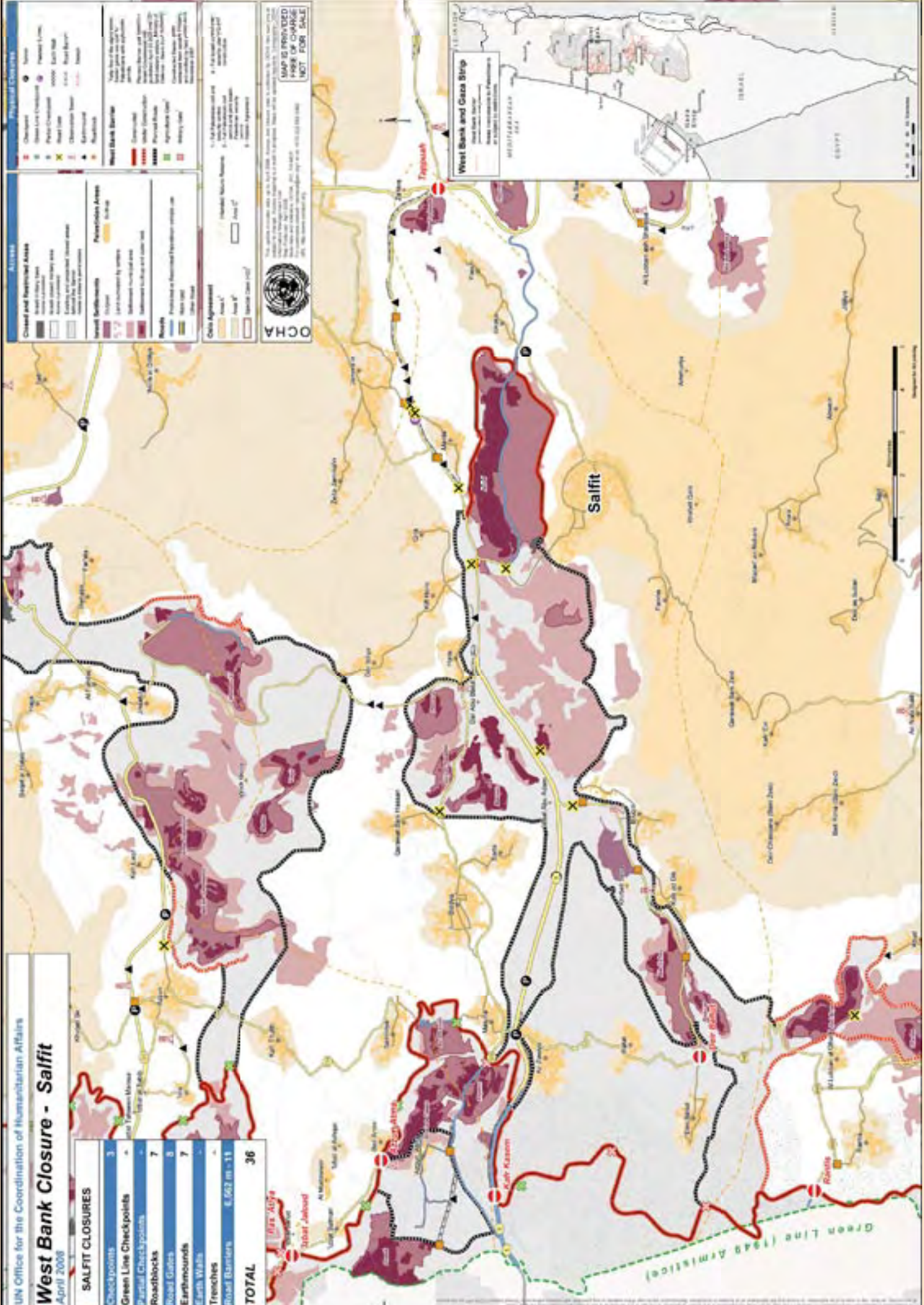
	The Az Zawiya Enclave	The Bidyaa Enclave	The Deir Istya Enclave	The Marda Enclave	The Salfit city Enclave
Checkpoints in Salfit region	<p>The Deir Ballut checkpoint blocks Palestinian access to Road 446 and to the road to Kufr Ad-Dik.</p> <p>Residents must detour through Za'atara checkpoint to access Salfit city and Nablus.</p> <p>Kufr Kasem checkpoint blocks access to 1948 Palestine.</p>	<p>A flying checkpoint is often erected at the entrance of the tunnel under Road 5.</p> <p>Residents must detour through Za'atara checkpoint to access Salfit city and Nablus.</p>	<p>Residents must detour through Za'atara checkpoint to access Salfit city and Nablus.</p>	<p>Residents must detour through Za'atara checkpoint to access Salfit city and Nablus.</p>	<p>Residents must detour through Za'atara checkpoint in order to access the rest of Salfit district.</p>
Blocked by physical barriers	All exits and entry points to Road 5	All exits and entry points to road 5	<p>Kifl Hares entrance to Road 5</p> <p>The section of Road 4775 leading to Salfit City</p>		The section of Road 4775 leading to Salfit city
Roads prohibited for Palestinians (not including all roads inside settlements)	Roads 5 and 505 west of the Apartheid Wall	The road between Mas'ha and Siniryra west of the Wall		<p>The road connecting Ariel & Rachelim colonies</p> <p>The road connecting Kfar Tapuch colony & outpost</p>	The section of road between Bruqin and Barkan settlement in the area designated to become the Ariel finger
Fences/ Gates (not including gates in the Apartheid Wall)			Road 5*	Marda's two unblocked entrances have military gates restricting access to Road 5.	
Tunnels	Under Road 5	Under Road 5		Under the road connecting Ariel and Rachelim colonies	Under the road connecting Ariel and Rachelim colonies

*Road number 5 effectively serves as a barrier between Hares and Kifl Hares and their agricultural land which will be annexed to the Ariel finger.

West Bank Closure - Salfit

April 2008

SALFIT CLOSURES	
Checkpoints	3
Green Line Checkpoints	4
Partial Checkpoints	7
Roadblocks	8
Road Gates	7
Earthmounds	7
Earth Walls	-
Trenches	-
Road Barriers	6,062 m - 11
TOTAL	36



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Za'tara Checkpoint



Za'tara checkpoint

Za'tara checkpoint serves to control Palestinian traffic between the north and the south of the northern West Bank. In order to reach the city of Salfit most of the region's residents are forced to detour through the Za'tara checkpoint where they are subject to delays and IOF inspections and harassment (sometimes including detention).

Palestinian residents of Salfit who are denied Israeli-issued ID cards can not cross Za'tara and other military checkpoints, denying them access to crucial services including hospitals and educational facilities in Salfit City, Nablus and Ramallah.

Reaching Nablus

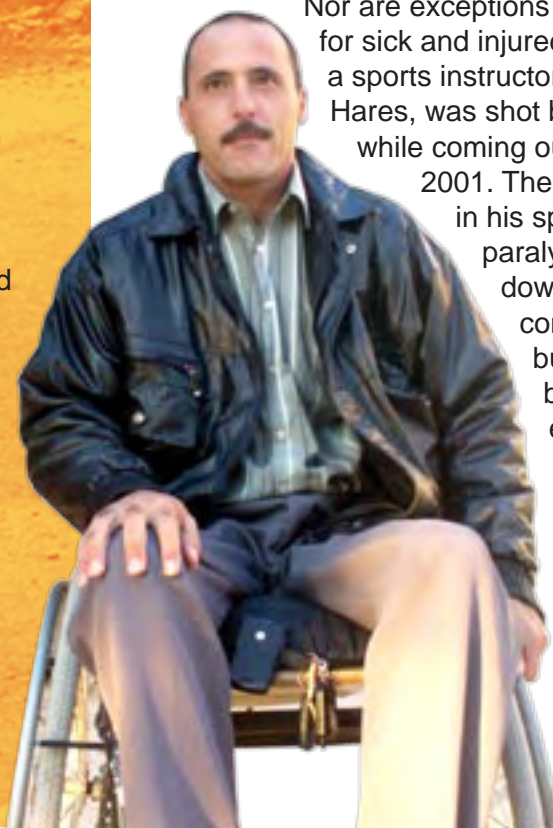
Traditionally many of Salfit's residents depended on Nablus for education, health care and employment. In response to the dire access situation resulting from road closures and checkpoints around the Nablus region, a hospital was constructed in Salfit City in 2003, although it only has the capacity to undertake basic operations and emergency treatments. More difficult and complicated cases still need to be treated in Nablus.

Since 2001 however, Nablus has only been accessible from Salfit via the notorious Huwara checkpoint. With extremely few exceptions, Palestinians are forbidden to cross the Huwara checkpoint by car. Children, the sick and the elderly all need to line up on foot, often for long periods of time, in order to enter or leave Nablus. This has serious implications for those in need of medical care. These delays in reaching Nablus can be extremely serious, particularly for those serious medical cases that cannot be treated in Salfit.

University education in Salfit is available through the Salfit city branch of Al-Quds Open University, which provides low cost university education for around 2000 students²⁸. The majority of the Governorate's university students, however, attend An-Najah University in Nablus. Movement and access restrictions mean that students and teachers travelling to and from Salfit are regularly prevented from attending classes on time.

Nor are exceptions to these policies made for sick and injured people. Issa Souf, a sports instructor from the village of Hares, was shot by an Israeli soldier while coming out of his home in May 2001. The bullet lodged itself in his spine and Issa was paralyzed from the waist down. He is now in need of continuous medical care, but like many others has been denied a permit to enter Nablus with his car.

Issa Souef, October 2008



Pollution from the Settlements

Ariel sewage running near Wadi Qana

The failure of Israeli Authorities to enforce environmental regulations and laws on Israeli settlers has resulted in the mass discharge of raw sewage from the colonies into and through neighboring Palestinian villages. This has affected land, livelihoods and health.

Raw sewage from Ariel colony flows into Al-Matwi valley, close to the city of Salfit. Al-Matwi spring supplies over 30 percent of the water needed for Salfit city and local villages and is one of the major water sources left available to Palestinians in the region. Around 1.32 million cubic meters of unprocessed sewage flowing straight into Al-Matawi valley,²⁹ while solid waste is dumped directly into the valley above Marda village. During times of rainfall, this is then carried into Marda itself.

The poor environmental regulations have also encouraged Israeli factories to relocate to industrial zones in the area where they can emit high levels of pollution unchecked. This is all the more serious given that factories in Salfit governorate (in the industrial zones of the Barkan and Ariel colonies) specialize in the production of highly polluting materials such as plastic and lead. Barkan settlement industrial zone has over 120 factories while the industrial zone of Ariel is expanding massively, adding another 27 factories to the existing 12.

In addition to the foul odor emitted from the sewage flows from the colonies, a number of studies have pointed to a significant rise in the number of impurities and small organisms in the water, which make it unfit for both agricultural use and human consumption.³⁰

A result of settlement pollution, is that Salfit municipality has been forced to carry out various expensive and time-consuming water-treatment procedures, such as adding high doses of chlorine to potable water.

Furthermore, the municipality's attempts to build their own waste-water treatment plant with a 22 million Euro grant from the German government have been constantly hindered by the IOF which has prevented the construction and seized equipment, claiming that the plan would interfere with the infrastructure of the colonies.³¹

Wadi Qana has not been spared from the settlements' pollution, despite the fact that the occupation authorities consider it a nature reserve and will freely demolish any Palestinian structure. Of the 16 fresh water springs in Wadi Qana only one remains fit for consumption because of the pollution flows from the settlements.



Wadi Qana surrounded by Israeli settlements

Salfit's Fresh Water Crisis

Only 2 of Salfit's 6 major wells are currently functioning. They are located in Hares and Mas'ha, but are only operational for the testing of water levels since they have no pumps. As a result almost 99 per cent of agricultural crops in the governorate rely on sporadic and low rainfall.

Israeli colonies in Salfit have been strategically built over the most productive water zones of the Western Aquifer Basin. This aquifer has the largest rainfall recharge rate of the three main aquifer basins in the West Bank making Salfit a pivotal water resource not only for the region but the entire Palestinian population of the West Bank. However, despite Salfit's abundant water resources, the governorate suffers from a serious water deficit, a result of inequitable water distribution, Israeli annexation and control of Palestinian water resources, and numerous strict restrictions on Palestinians' water use.

The water crisis created by the occupation's absolute prohibition on Palestinians' digging new wells in the Western Aquifer Basin, the restrictions on the rehabilitation of existing wells, and settlement contamination of local water sources has resulted in Salfit's residents being forced to purchase water from the Israeli water company Mekerot, at five times the price of local water.

The present water supply sources for Salfit City, Farkha and Khirbet Qeis are as follows:

- 1- About 50-60percent from Mekorot***
- 2- About 20-25percent from Al-Matwi spring***
- 3- About 20-25percent from Ein Aseka spring³²***



Wadi Qana spring polluted by Ariel settlement sewage



Israel uses 83 percent of the Palestinian water in the West Bank, while the Palestinians use only 17 percent.

Per capita water consumption among Israeli settlers in the oPt is roughly 5 times that of Palestinians.

Some 10 percent to 14 percent of Palestine's gross domestic product comes from agriculture of which 90 percent relies on rain-fed farming methods.

Israel's agriculture is only 3 percent of its gross domestic product, and yet it irrigates more than 50percent of its land.

Palestinian Ministry of Health



Fresh water fountain in Ariel settlement

SALFIT

from Agricultural Heaven to Industrial Ghetto



Salfit women during olive harvest season 2008



Deteriorating Economic Situation

A ccording to the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture, difficulties accessing an estimated 10,000 dunums (2,500 acres) of predominantly agricultural land isolated behind the Wall in western Salfit, has resulted in a 50 per cent decrease in the productivity of the land, or an estimated annual loss of 100 tons of olive oil at a value of approximately US \$425,530.

“The Head of the Palestinian Labor Union Association, Mr. Abdul-Jawad Al-Bur says that more than 3,000 Palestinian workers are working in the settlements surrounding the Salfit region. These workers earn NIS 80 per day despite the fact that the minimum daily wage is NIS 125. Thus, each worker loses NIS 45 every working day.”

Al-Hayat Al-Jadeedah newspaper, July 12, 2000

In 2007 the poverty rate in the occupied territories stood at 57 percent and food insecurity affected 34 percent of the population. In Salfit 27 percent of the population suffers from food insecurity and another 7 percent are at risk.³³

The lack of access to farmland, and the contamination and confiscation of local water resources has severely limited the possibility of agricultural and pastoral livelihoods. In fact, in 2007 only 641 residents of Salfit made their livelihood from agriculture, hunting, or forestry.³⁴

In the village of Deir Istya 39 families made their living from goat herds, in 1989. In 2000 that number had dropped to only 5 families³⁵ A consequence of the expansion of the colonies and their infrastructure, Palestinians have been increasingly denied access to fertile grazing lands. This has been exacerbated by the contamination of local springs and wells from raw sewage. This has also greatly increased the cost and difficulty of maintaining herds.

In May 2007, UN OCHA reported that the closures and rising poverty meant that farmers in Salfit were struggling to access and tend their land ahead of the harvest season which would have dire consequences for more than 10,000 poor and vulnerable families for whom the olive harvest represented a vital and subsidiary source of income. The agency reported that, *‘At a time when farmers should be ploughing, cultivating, weeding and controlling pests in their olive groves ahead of the harvest season, land owners are finding it increasingly hard to access their land and meet costs of production. Olive groves, covering about 80percent of Salfit’s cultivated area, are under threat from the 23 Israeli settlements, outposts and industrial areas controlling almost 12percent of the total governorate area. Since the start of second intifada, an estimated 20,000 olive trees have been destroyed.’*³⁶

Having been stripped of their traditional sources of income, many residents of Salfit are left with no other option but to work in the settlement industrial zones. Palestinians working in the settlement industrial zones in Salfit endure unsafe, unhealthy, and often degrading conditions for very low wages.

The Industrial Zones of Ariel and Barqan

Serious Consequences for Palestinian Health and Environment

The Israeli government incentives for industrial zones and parks in the West Bank also stretch to the relaxation of restrictions in regards to environmental regulations. Therefore the most polluting industries often move to the West Bank, offering the opportunity for the Israeli government to expand the industrial zones and thus annex more Palestinian land. These factories are then able to work unhindered by environmental laws, while the immediate environmental effects are not felt inside the Green Line.

As a direct result of these incentives, the industrial zones of Ariel and Barqan, built on the land of Haris, Bruqin and Sarta villages in the West of the Governorate of Salfit, have had a ruinous impact on the land around them.

The settlement of Barqan was built in 1981 and was intended as the core industrial hub of the region³⁷. Oil, plastic and lead production, all highly polluting materials, have become the mainstay of this complex, heightening the environmental damage to the surrounding land. This settlement is complemented by nearby 'Ariel Parks', an industrial zone established in 1999 and specializing in plastic production. Together these complexes, built on confiscated Palestinian land, have been responsible for a marked deterioration of the quality of the land around the settlements and a sharp rise in diseases, such as Hepatitis A and diarrhea³⁸



Barkan industrial zone

In July 2008, the Israeli government approved plans for the construction of 27 new factories within 'Ariel Parks', tripling its existing size over the next 15 months. The factories will accommodate steel, aluminum, plastic and metal companies, further adding to the environmental damage to the region, as well as marking a continuation of the policy of land annexation.

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Pictures credited to Neta Golan





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