

Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Town Profile



Prepared by



The Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem

Funded by



Spanish Cooperation

2012

Acknowledgments

ARIJ hereby expresses its deep gratitude to the Spanish agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID) for their funding of this project.

ARIJ is grateful to the Palestinian officials in the ministries, municipalities, joint services councils, village committees and councils, and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) for their assistance and cooperation with the project team members during the data collection process.

ARIJ also thanks all the staff who worked throughout the past couple of years towards the accomplishment of this work.

Background

This report is part of a series of booklets, which contain compiled information about each city, village, and town in the Jerusalem Governorate. These booklets came as a result of a comprehensive study of all villages in Jerusalem Governorate, which aims at depicting the overall living conditions in the governorate and presenting developmental plans to assist in developing the livelihood of the population in the area. It was accomplished through the "Village Profiles and Needs Assessment;" the project funded by the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID).

The "Village Profiles and Needs Assessment" was designed to study, investigate, analyze and document the socio-economic conditions and the needed programs and activities to mitigate the impact of the current unsecure political, economic and social conditions in the Jerusalem Governorate.

The project's objectives are to survey, analyze, and document the available natural, human, socioeconomic and environmental resources, and the existing limitations and needs assessment for the development of the rural and marginalized areas in the Jerusalem Governorate. In addition, the project aims at preparing strategic developmental programs and activities to mitigate the impact of the current political, social, and economic instability with the focus on the agricultural sector.

All village profiles in Arabic and English are available online at <http://vprofile.arij.org>.

Table of Contents

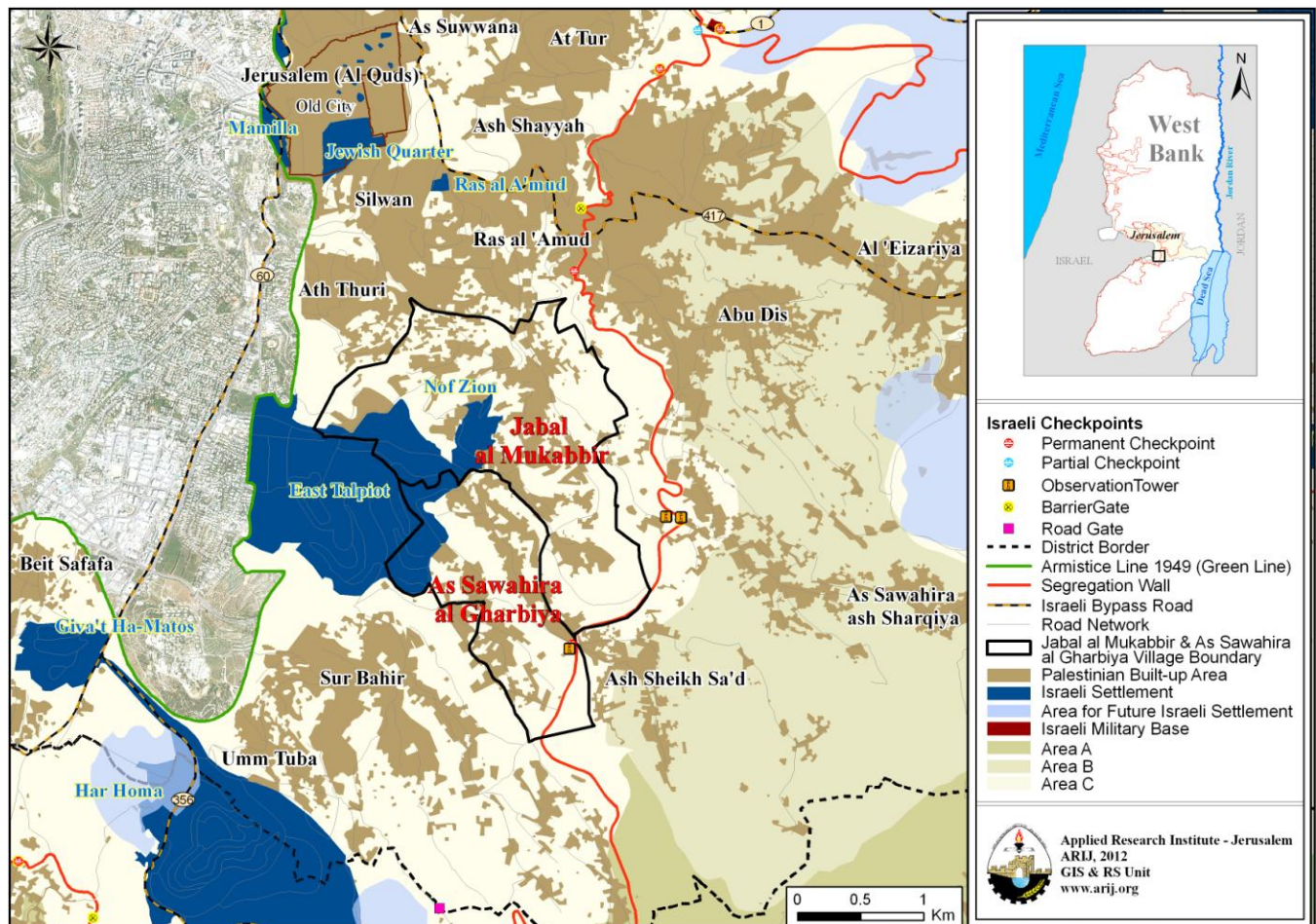
Location and Physical Characteristics	4
History	5
Religious and Archaeological Sites	6
Population	6
Education	7
Health Status	8
Economic Activities	8
Agricultural Sector	9
Institutions and Services	12
Infrastructure and Natural Resources	12
Geopolitical Status of Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Town	14
Development Plans and Projects	21
Town Development Priorities and Needs	23
References	24

Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Town Profile

Location and physical characteristics

Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya are Palestinian towns in Jerusalem Governorate located, where Jabal al Mukabbir is located 3.34km from Jerusalem City and As Sawahira al Gharbiya 4.32km from Jerusalem City, to the south of Jerusalem City. They are bordered by Abu Dis and As Sawahira ash Sharqiya to the east, Silwan and Jerusalem city to the north, Ath Thuri and Sur Bahir to the west, and Ash Sheikh Sa'd and Sur Bahir to the south (ARIJ-GIS Unit, 2012) (see map 1).

Map 1: Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya location and borders



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2012

Jabal al Mukabbir is located at an altitude of 598m above sea level with a mean annual rainfall of 360.4mm. The average annual temperature is 17°C and the average annual humidity is approximately 60% (ARIJ-GIS Unit, 2012).

As Sawahira al Gharbiya is located at an altitude of 617m above sea level with a mean annual rainfall of 363.7mm. The average annual temperature is 17°C and the average annual humidity is approximately 60% (ARIJ-GIS Unit, 2012).

All services are provided by the Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012).

History

Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns were allegedly named in relation to Omar Ben al Khattab's statement of 'Allah Akbar' (God is great) when standing upon a high hill and receiving the keys of Jerusalem (Beit al Maqdis) from governor Sophronius (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012).

The towns were established in the year 363AD, and the original residents are thought to have come from the Arabian Peninsula, Iraq, and as part of Salah ad Deen's army during the Islamic conquests (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012) (see photo below of Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya town).

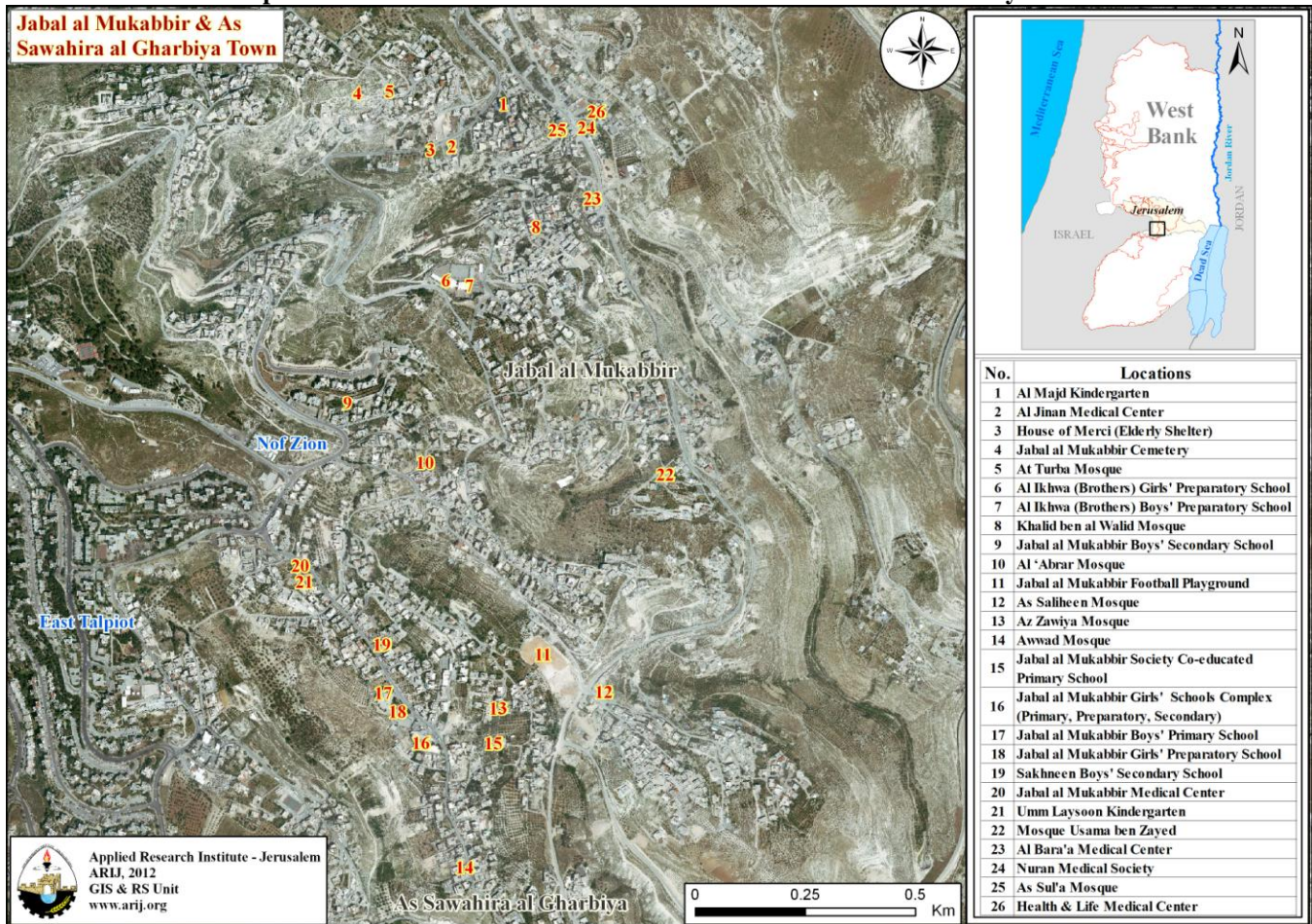
Photo 1: Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns



Religious and archaeological sites

There are 8 mosques in the towns, Az Zawiya, Al ‘Abrar, Ahmad as Sahoury, Mus’ab ben ‘Omeir, Khalid ben al Walid, Awwad, As Sul’a and Abu ‘Obeida mosques. Ahmad as Sahoury mosque, considered the oldest mosque in Jerusalem city, is the only site of archaeological interest in the towns (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors’ Committee, 2012) (see Mmap 2).

Map 2: Main locations in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya town



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2012

Population

Unfortunately, no census has been conducted by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) in 2007 to ascertain the population and housing statistics for Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns. However, according to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, the towns’ population stood at 21,127 in 2011 (The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 2012).

80% of Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns' populations hold Jerusalem identity papers, and 2% carry Israeli passports (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012).

Families

Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya residents are from several families, mainly the Ja'afra, Sarawkha, Bashir, 'Eweisat, Shqqeir, Mashahra, Obeidat, Zahaiqa, Za'atra, Haslah and Ja'abees families (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012).

Education

There is one governmental and one private school in the town run by the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education (Directorate of Education – Jerusalem, 2011), in addition to 18 schools run by Jerusalem Municipality (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012) (see table 1).

Table 1: Schools in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya by name, stage, sex and supervising authority, 2010/2011

School name	Supervising authority	Sex
Jabal al Mukabbir School	Private	Mixed
Umm Laysoon Elementary School	Government	Mixed
Al Ikhwa (Brothers) Girls' Preparatory School	Jerusalem Municipality	Female
Al Ikhwa (Brothers) Boys' Preparatory School	Jerusalem Municipality	Male
As Sawahira Girls' Primary School	Jerusalem Municipality	Female
As Sawahira Girls' Preparatory School	Jerusalem Municipality	Female
As Sawahira Boys' Preparatory School	Jerusalem Municipality	Male
As Sawahira Girls' Elementary School	Jerusalem Municipality	Female
Al Mukabbir Girls' High School	Jerusalem Municipality	Female
Al Mukabbir Boys' High School	Jerusalem Municipality	Male
As Sawahira Boys' Primary School	Jerusalem Municipality	Male
As Sawahira Boys' Preparatory School	Jerusalem Municipality	Male
Umm Laysoon Boys' Preparatory School	Jerusalem Municipality	Male
Jabal al Mukabbir Society Primary School	Jerusalem Municipality	Mixed
As Sal'a Girls' Preparatory School	Jerusalem Municipality	Female
As Sal'a Boys' Primary School	Jerusalem Municipality	Male
Jabal al Mukabbir Girls' Preparatory School	Jerusalem Municipality	Female
Jabal al Mukabbir Boys' Preparatory School	Jerusalem Municipality	Male
Jabal al Mukabbir Girls' Primary School	Jerusalem Municipality	Female
Jabal al Mukabbir Boys' Primary School	Jerusalem Municipality	Male

Source: Directorate of Education – Jerusalem, 2011 & Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012

The total number of students is 2,434 in 88 classes, and the average number of students per class is approximately 28 (Directorate of Education in Jerusalem, 2011).

There are no local kindergartens in the town run by the Palestinian Ministry of Education & Higher Education. However, there are 5 kindergartens run by private bodies: Al Majd, Al Farooq, Al Ikhwa, Al Hayah and Al Mustaqbal kindergartens (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012).

The educational sector in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns faces some obstacles, primarily:

1. The lack of classrooms in schools.
2. The existence of Israeli checkpoints which prevent the students from Ash Sheikh Sa'd from accessing the schools.
3. The low educational level of students.
4. The distortion of curriculums by the Israeli government.

(Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012)

Health Status

There are some health centers and medical facilities available in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns. There are 5 health centers run by the Israeli National Insurance (patients' fund): Al 'Obeidi, Al Bara', Ash Shifa', Al Jinan and Al Mukabbir Centers. These centers provide 5 radiology facilities, 5 medical laboratories and 5 pharmacies. There is one private health center, the Nuran Center, which has an ambulance and a center that provides first aid courses. Additionally, there are 6 private dental clinics. In the absence of required health services or in emergencies, residents of Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya go to larger hospitals, including Hadasa-Ein Karem hospital (around 15km from the town), or to Al Maqasid, Al Muttala' and Al Faransawi hospitals, each of which is 7km from the town (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012).

The health sector in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns faces some obstacles, primarily):

- The unavailability of certain medicines without approval from the Israeli authorities.
- The lack of certain medical tests due to high costs.

(Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012)

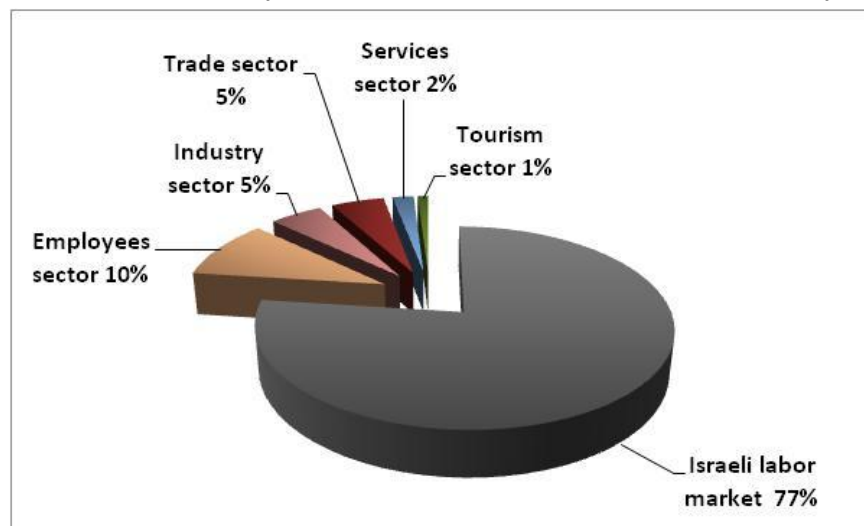
Economic activities

The economy in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya is dependent on several economic sectors, primarily the Israeli labor market, which absorbs 77% of the workforce (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012) (see figure 1).

A field survey conducted by ARIJ in 2012 showed that the distribution of labor by economic activity in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya was as follows:

- Israeli labor market (77%)
- Government or private employees sector (10%)
- Industry (5%)
- Trade sector (5%)
- Services sector (2%)
- Tourism sector (1%)

Figure 1: Economic activity in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns



Source: Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012

In terms of commercial and industrial productions in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns, there are 50 grocery stores, 3 bakeries, 10 butchers, 10 fruit and vegetable stores, 20 different services stores and 20 professional workshops (blacksmith, carpentry etc.), in addition to a stone quarry and 3 agricultural nurseries (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012).

The unemployment rate in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya reached around 15% in 2012, and it was found that the social groups most affected in the town as a result of Israeli restrictions and procedures were the following:

1. Workers in the agriculture sector.
2. Workers in the industry sector.
3. Workers in the services sector.
4. Workers in the trade sector.
5. Workers in the employees sector.

(Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012)

Agricultural sector

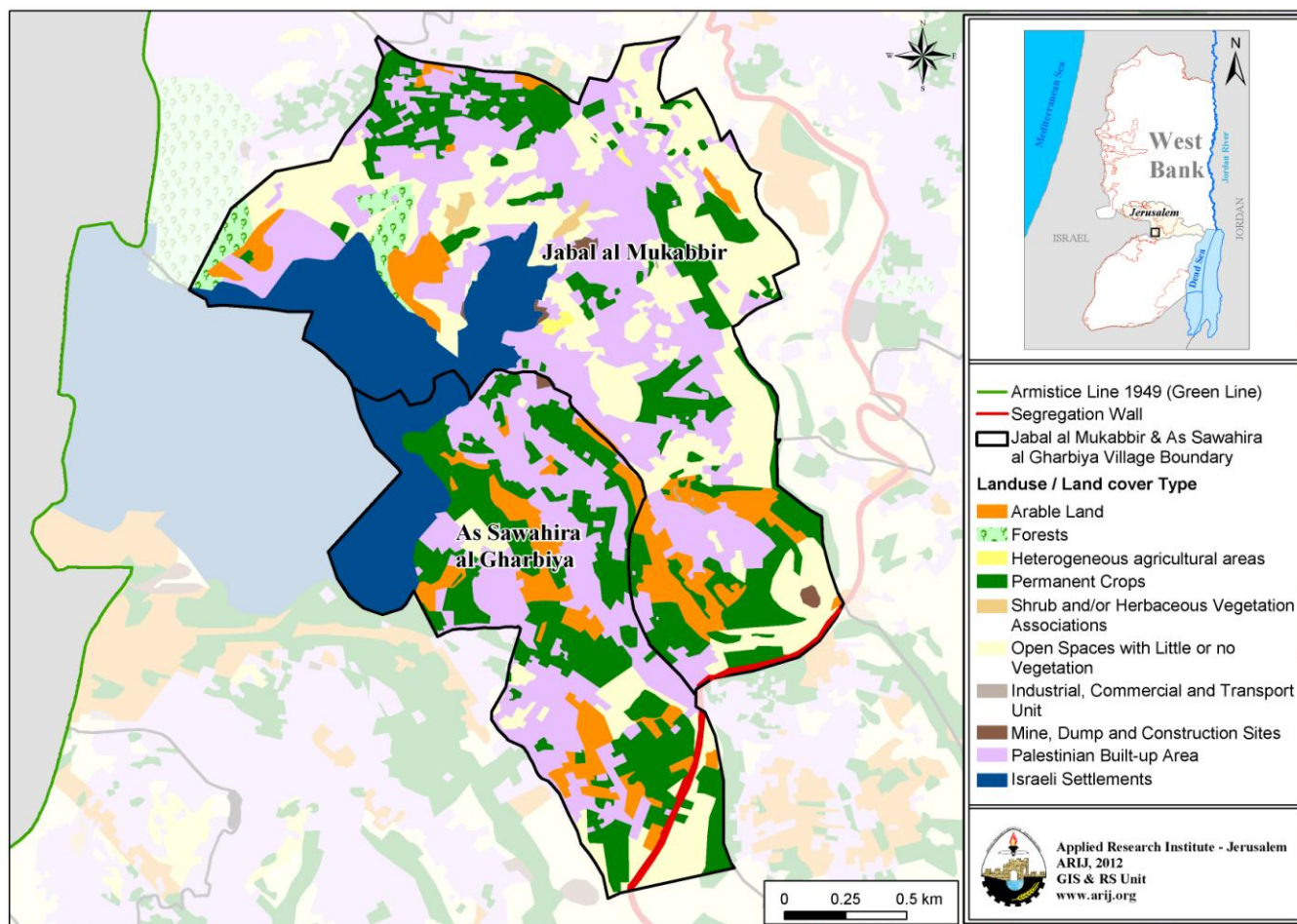
Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya have a total area of around 5,023 dunums of which 1,549 are considered ‘arable’ land and 1,563 dunums are registered as ‘residential’ (see table 2 and map 3).

Table 2: Land use and land cover in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns in 2010 (area in dunums)

Total area	Built up area	Agricultural area (1,549)				Inland water	Forests	Open spaces	Area of industrial, commercial & transport unit	Area of settlements, military bases & Wall zone
		Permanent crops	Greenhouses	Rangelands	Arable lands					
5,023	1,563	1,114	0	19	416	0	81	1,190	49	591

Source: ARIJ – GIS Unit, 2012

Map 3: Land use/land cover in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2012

Table 3 shows the different types of fruit trees planted in the area. The towns are known for the cultivation of olives; there are 270 dunums in the towns cultivated with olive trees.

Table 3: Total area of fruit and olive trees in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns (dunums)

Fruit trees	Rain fed (dunums)	Irrigated (dunums)
Olives	270	0
Citrus	0	0
Stone fruits	3	0
Pome fruits	0	0
Nuts	9	0
Other fruits	5	0
Total area	287	0

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture - Jerusalem, 2010

The difference between the two sets of results obtained from the Ministry of Agriculture and by ARIJ's GIS Unit in terms of size of agricultural area is explained by the fact that the Ministry of Agriculture and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2010) conducted a survey which used a definition of agricultural areas based on land ownership. Therefore, the areas included in the survey were those of actual holdings of agricultural areas instead of seasonal ones. The survey did not consider fragmented and small seasonal cultivated areas in residential and agricultural areas. ARIJ's survey, however, indicated the existence of a high proportion of small and fragmented holdings (home gardens) throughout the occupied Palestinian territories, thus accounting for the larger area of agricultural holdings calculated by ARIJ.

ARIJ's field survey also shows that 20 families in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya rear and keep domestic animals such as sheep, goats and bees (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012) (see table 4).

Table 4: Livestock in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns

Cows*	Sheep	Goats	Camels	Horses	Donkeys	Mules	Broilers	Layers	Bee hives
0	2,300	700	0	0	0	0	0	0	8

*Including cows, bull calves, heifer calves and bulls

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture - Jerusalem, 2010

There are around 4 kilometers of agricultural roads in the town (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012), divided as follows:

Table 5: Agricultural roads in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns and their lengths

Suitability of agricultural roads	Length (km)
For vehicles	-
For tractors and agricultural machinery only	-
For animals only	-
Unsuitable	4

Source: Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012

The agricultural sector in the towns faces some obstacles, including:

- The confiscation of lands.
- The lack of access to agricultural lands.
- The lack of a sufficient labor force.
- The lack of economic feasibility.
- The lack of capital.

The lack of water sources.(Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012)

Institutions and services

Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns have a few governmental institutions, including a post office and an office for Israeli Social Affairs. There are also a few local institutions and associations that provide services to various sectors of society, including:

- **Jabal al Mukabbir Club:** Founded in 1975 with an interest in sports, social and cultural activities for young people.
- **Jabal al Mukabbir Society:** Founded in 1979, but currently unable to provide services or carry out work as the society has been refused a license.

(Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012)

Infrastructure and natural resources

Electricity and telecommunication services

Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya have been connected to a public electricity network since 1970. is the network is served by Jerusalem Electricity Company, which is the main source of electricity in the towns. Approximately 100% of the housing units in the towns are connected to this network, but the electricity is very expensive (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012).

Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya are connected to a telecommunication network through Jerusalem Municipality and approximately 100% of the housing units within the towns' boundaries are connected to phone lines (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012).

Transportation services

30 public taxis and 18 buses (Al Muwahhad Company) covering the Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya-Jerusalem line are the main means of transportation in the town (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012). Residents of the town use private cars to access areas the transport system does not cover (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012). There are 20km of designated 'main' roads and 17km of 'secondary' roads in the town (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012) (see table 6).

Table 6: Roads in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns

Status of internal roads	Road length (km)	
	Main	Sub
Paved and in good condition	20	7
Paved but in poor condition	-	10
Unpaved	-	-

Source: Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012

Water resources

Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya are provided with water by Jihon, an Israeli company, supplied through the public water network established in 1985. Approximately 100% of the housing units are connected to this network (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012).

The quantity of water supplied to Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya is approximately 40,000m³ per month (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012); therefore, the average rate of water supply per capita in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya is 73 liters per day. Water consumption by Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya residents is low compared with the minimum quantity of 100 liters a day proposed by the World Health Organization. The town residents also suffer from water shortages on average one day a week, usually on Fridays (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012).

30 domestic rainwater harvesting cisterns are located in the town and are used during water shortages (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012). Each cubic meter of water from the network costs between 7 and 15 NIS (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012).

Sanitation

Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya have a public sewerage network, established in 1990; about 40% of the town's housing units use the sewage network as the main means of wastewater disposal, while the rest (60%) use cesspits (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012).

Solid waste management

Jerusalem Municipality is considered to be the official body responsible for managing the collection and disposal of solid waste generated by citizens and establishments in the towns. No specific fees are charged to the population served by domestic solid waste collection and transportation services; citizens pay the Arnona taxes to Jerusalem Municipality which range between 3,000 and 10,000 NIS per year depending on household size. This tax covers all services provided by Jerusalem Municipality to the

towns' residents, including solid waste services (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012).

Most of the population in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya benefit from the solid waste services, whereby waste is collected from households, institutions, shops and public squares in plastic bags and then transferred to 20 containers distributed throughout the town, each with a capacity of 5m³. Jerusalem Municipality collects the solid waste on a tri-weekly basis and then transports it using a waste vehicle to El 'Eizariya dumping site, 12km outside of the town, where it is usually buried and sometimes burnt (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012).

The daily per capita rate of solid waste production in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya is 1.05kg. Therefore, the estimated amount of solid waste produced per day from Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya residents is nearly 19 tons, or 7,012 tons per year (ARIJ-WERU, 2012).

The town residents suffers from the poor collection and disposal services of solid waste; typically, waste accumulates in the streets for several days before it is collected (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012).

Geopolitical status of Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns

Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns cover an area of 5,021 dunums and are located under the control of Jerusalem Israeli Municipality, which was declared illegally and unilaterally in 1967 after the Israeli Occupation of the West Bank including East Jerusalem, in addition to the Gaza Strip and other Arab lands. Jerusalem Governorate was divided into two main regions, J1 and J2. The J1 area is located inside the borders and under the control of Jerusalem Municipality, and includes many Palestinian communities from the Old Town and Jerusalem City (Beit Al Maqdis), in addition to Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns which are located in J1's southern area. The other region is J2, which is located outside the borders and control of Jerusalem Municipality. The eastern and western parts are under the control of the Palestinian Authority, whilst the central part of the Governorate remains under Israeli Occupation control.

It is noted that the Israeli Occupation Authorities have used their separation plan, represented by the construction of the Segregation Wall, to redraw the boundaries of Jerusalem Municipality illegally and unilaterally, with the aim of creating a *de facto* situation in favor of the Jewish presence in the city. The Segregation Wall has separated the whole area of J1 from Jerusalem Governorate except for Kafr 'Aqab and Shu'fat Camp.

According to the Oslo II Interim Agreement signed between the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel on 28th September 1995, the West Bank was classified into areas "A," "B" and "C." The towns of Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya were not subjected to this classification, and remained as they were before this agreement under the control of Jerusalem Israeli Municipality. This is except for a small area estimated at 95 dunums and located in the valley that separates As Sawahira al Gharbiya and Ash Sheikh Sa'd towns. This area is located outside the segregated zone and Jerusalem Municipality control, and is classified as area C under the Oslo Agreement.

Israeli Occupation practices in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns

Jabal Al Mukabbir & As Sawahira Al Gharbiya towns have been subjected to a number of Israeli confiscations for the benefit of various Israeli aims, represented by the construction of Israeli settlements on the towns' territories and surroundings, in addition to the Israeli Segregation plan which has confiscated most of its lands. That which follows presents a breakdown of Israeli confiscations of Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya town territories:

During the Israeli Occupation of the Palestinian territory, the Israeli government has confiscated 684 dunums in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns (13.6% of the total area) to establish two Israeli settlements: 'East Talpiot' settlement west of Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya, and 'Nof Zion' settlement in the heart of the town (see table 7).

Table 7: Israeli settlements constructed over Jabal Al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya lands

Settlement name	Year of construction	Area confiscated from Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya (dunums)	Population of settlers (2009)
East Talpiot	1973	544	14,800
Nof Zion	2004	140	300
Total		684	15,100

Source: ARIJ-GIS Unit, 2012

The Israeli Segregation Wall plan in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns

The construction of the Israeli Segregation Wall has had a negative and destructive impact on Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns. According to the last amendment of the plan that was published on the webpage of the Israeli Defense Ministry on 30th April 2007, the Segregation Wall isolates approximately 98% of lands of Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya from the remaining Palestinian Territory. The fact that the Wall segregates the towns from the West Bank in addition to East Jerusalem localities such as Abu Dis, As Sawahira ash Sharqiya and Ash Sheikh Sa'd, is particularly devastating, as they have historical relations with these towns. A small area estimated at 119 dunums and located outside the path of the Segregation Wall is excluded from the isolated area. The isolated lands include all of the Palestinian residential areas in the towns, in addition to agricultural lands, open spaces and Israeli settlements established on the towns' land (see table 8).

Table 8: Land classification of areas isolated west of the Segregation Wall in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns - Jerusalem Governorate

No.	Land classification	Area (dunums)
1	Palestinian built up areas	1544
2	Agricultural areas	1486
3	Open spaces	1040
4	Israeli settlements	684
5	Forests	80
6	Shrub and/or herbaceous vegetation associations	19
7	Construction sites	19
8	Wall zone	30
Total		4,902

Source: ARIJ-GIS Unit, 2012

The impact of the Segregation Wall on the residents of Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya

Since the outbreak of the Second Intifada in September 2000, the citizens of Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya have lost their association with the city of Jerusalem and surrounding towns such as Beit Safafa and Sharafat, which have been separated from lands of the West Bank. Citizens of Jerusalem holding the Jerusalemite identity (the blue identity card) can enter the West Bank areas through Israeli terminals, but these often witness huge congestion and the Palestinians are subjected to inspection from Israeli soldiers, thus restricting their freedom of movement.

On the other hand, Palestinian citizens of the West Bank who hold the Palestinian identity (green identity card) are prohibited from entering Jerusalem city and its surrounding towns due to the Segregation Wall. As a result, they are isolated from health, education, social and economic services, such as hospitals, schools and medical centers, in addition to their places of work in Jerusalem. Green ID holders are only able to enter the city if they are holding special Israeli permits, but these are rarely issued. These citizens must also pass through military checkpoints where they are inspected on a daily basis, causing humiliation, restricting their movement and breaking down family and social bonds between West Bank and Jerusalem residents. This scenario is common for many Palestinian families, especially in the case where one half of the couple holds Palestinian identity (green) and the other holds the Jerusalemite identity (blue). Moreover, the Segregation Wall has prevented Palestinians from reaching places of worship in the Holy City, thus depriving them from practicing their religious rituals in Jerusalem.

According to the Segregation Wall plan which was published on the website of the Israeli Defense Ministry in 2007 and implemented on the ground years after, the lands of Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns are already isolated from neighboring Palestinian towns and villages, such as Abu Dis, El 'Eizariya, As Sawahira Ash Sharqiya and Ash Sheikh Sa'd. In fact, the path of the Segregation Wall in the East Jerusalem together with the Israeli settlement belt are set to isolate the East Jerusalem area from the rest of the West Bank.

The Israeli Occupation Authorities have constructed a settlement belt around Jerusalem city to prevent Palestinian urban expansion in the towns of Jerusalem, confiscating yet more land from the Palestinian communities for Israeli interests. This move has created a new reality for the towns' residents that is difficult to reverse. Israeli policies and plans, particularly in Jerusalem, have led to the creation of high population densities as a result of the lack of lands necessary for urban expansion, thus forcing people to adopt internal and vertical expansion. This has caused Jerusalem and its surrounding towns to have some of the highest population densities in the world. The population density in Palestinian neighborhoods in East Jerusalem is approximately 13,500 people per km² compared to 9,000 people per km² in the settlements of East Jerusalem and 8,300 people per km² in West Jerusalem.

The Dilemma of land and building licenses in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns

The issue of land and building licenses is considered to be one of the most difficult problems in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns and in the other Jerusalemite towns in East Jerusalem. This is due to the very high prices of both lands and licenses.

According to citizens of Jerusalem, land prices within the East Jerusalem area, (in particular the land located within the borders of the Jerusalem municipality, which is rarely available), is significantly higher than land located outside the borders of the municipality, and even doubled in places closer to the city center and the surrounding neighborhoods.

The Israeli Occupation Authorities have used their economic advantage as an effective instrument to buy the Palestinian lands in Jerusalem for very high prices in order to Judaize these lands and house Jewish settlers in the city. Anyone in Jerusalem who has land and wants to build a house on it or wants to buy land has to be granted authorization and permission from the illegal Municipality of Jerusalem, which puts many obstacles in the way of Palestinians who want to get a license for construction.

One of the main obstacles to obtaining a building license is having to prove ownership of the land. The Israeli Occupation Authorities require that Palestinians seeking to build a house or structure must prove their ownership of the land, which is considered a political problem related to the occupation since 1967.

According to a report prepared by Bimkom Organization (Planners for Planning Rights), approximately 50% of the East Jerusalem lands are unregistered in the archive of ownership, such as those in the town of Kafr 'Aqab and the area extending from Al 'Isawiya town in the north to Sur Bahir in the south. Additionally, 25% of the lands in East Jerusalem are in the process of survey and registration (such as Beit Hanina and Shu'fat towns); and only 25% of the lands in East Jerusalem are officially registered, including parts of Al Bireh, Qalandiya, Beit Hanina, Hizma and 'Anata, Ash Sheikh Jarrah and Beit Safafa (Bimkom, 2004).

According to the testimonies of Palestinians in the towns of Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya, the process for applying to the Israeli Authorities to get a building license is lengthy (sometimes lasting years) and carries a very high cost depending on the land area and type of building, ranging between NIS 150,000-300,000. Thus, due to the high cost imposed on Palestinians attempting to acquire building permits and the lengthy licensing procedures, Palestinians often build without waiting for license approval in order to meet their housing needs. In these instances,, the Israeli Occupation

Authorities usually demolish the property and force the Palestinian owner to pay for their own demolition and submit a new building application, incurring yet more fees and time. On top of this, the majority of Palestinian people in Jerusalem are living in difficult conditions because of high poverty rates, which is a consequence of the Israeli Occupation closures which restrict the movement of the Palestinians, thus preventing them from reaching their places of work. These Israeli restrictions and harassments, along with the housing problems, lack of lands for building and high unemployment rate, force many Jerusalemites to migrate outside the borders of the Municipality towards the West Bank or even travel abroad in search of better living standards.

According to the ‘Civic Coalition for Defending Palestinian Rights’ in Jerusalem (CCDPRJ), the Israeli Authorities have adopted many policies aimed to enact pressure on Jerusalemites. An example of this is the case of the demographic status and urban growth in Jerusalem, as the area that is allocated for the development of Palestinian neighborhoods in East Jerusalem and lies under the jurisdiction of the Jerusalem Municipality is estimated at approximately 9,200 dunums, which represents only 13% of the total area of East Jerusalem. The remaining area of East Jerusalem is classified as Israeli settlements, green areas (which cannot be used for Palestinian urban growth), public buildings, roads and other land for other uses. Furthermore, the Israeli Authorities often do not prepare the necessary master plans for Palestinian neighborhoods in East Jerusalem which are required for the urban planning process. In cases when the Israeli Authorities do prepare these master plans, they usually put on restrictions and limit the percentage of area designated for Palestinian urban expansion to below the necessary percentages for natural urban growth, which is between 25% and 75%.

If one compares these percentages with Israeli settlements, it is found that the urban growth varies between 75%-120%. In Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya for example, the Israeli Authorities determined the urban growth percentage to be 25% according to plan no.2691, whereas this percentage in the neighboring settlement of Nof Zion, which was illegally constructed on Jabal al Mukabbir lands, was set at 142.5% (according to plan no.4558) (CCJ, 2009).

It is also worth mentioning that Jerusalem Municipality has classified some areas within its boundaries, including areas within Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya, as ‘green areas.’ The Occupation Authorities have used these areas as a way of controlling and confiscating more lands in Jerusalem for the purpose of colonization activities. They have also demolished houses in Jerusalem under claims that these houses were built on ‘green areas’, such as the ethnic cleansing process witnessed in Al Bustan neighborhood in Silwan. The case of Al Bustan came after the Municipality announced a plan on February 20th 2009 to relocate more than 1,500 Palestinian citizens living in the 88 houses in Al Bustan neighborhood in Silwan town to alternative locations, as they planned to demolish the 88 houses to establish the ‘King David Garden’ as a part of the ‘Biblical Gardens’ around the Holy City. The Israeli Authorities have also built many settlements in Jerusalem under the name of ‘green areas’, such as Rekhes Shu’fat (Ramat Shlomo), and Jabal Abu Ghneim (Har Homa) which were built on areas that were classified as ‘green areas.’ One should note that there are some areas within Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya which are classified as ‘green areas’, and they will remain for the future plans of the Israeli Authorities in Jerusalem.

The right of adequate housing is considered one of the most prominent issues which has been assured in international charters and treaties and in international humanitarian law, all of which have demanded a respect of human dignity and the universal right of adequate housing. However, by ignoring the human

rights of Palestinians, the Israeli state appears to classify itself as being above these international laws and treaties.

The dangerous escalation of house demolitions in Jerusalem

During recent years, the Israeli Occupation Authorities have escalated their attacks against the houses of Palestinians living in Jerusalem by targeting them with demolitions under the pretext of ‘unlicensed construction’. A study carried out by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs showed that since 1967, the Israeli Occupation have demolished approximately 2,000 houses in Jerusalem in addition to thousands of other constructions (OCHA, 2009). According to ‘Al Maqdese Organization for Society Development’, an estimated 1,059 houses and constructions were demolished in East Jerusalem between 2000 and 2011, resulting in the displacement of 4,900 Palestinians from Jerusalem of whom 1,290 were women, and 2,537 were children (Al Maqdese, 2012). Regarding the demolition of houses in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya during 2011, Al Maqdese Organization claimed that five constructions were destroyed; four of which were residential, resulting in the displacement of 22 Palestinians (including 12 children). Out of the five constructions, three were self-demolished and two were demolished by the Israeli Occupation Forces (Al Maqdese 2012).

These Israeli assaults against the Palestinians of Jerusalem aim to punish them and force them to leave the city and its surrounding towns. The following are demolition orders in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya:

- In November 2009, the Israeli Occupation Authorities issued 21 military orders to demolish 53 residential apartments owned by Al Ja’abis family from Jabal al Mukabbir, under the pretext of ‘construction without permission.’ This family lives in constant fear of this demolitions being implemented, as it would result in the displacement of 207 people (including 117 children) (Al Maqdese, 2012).
- In December 2009 the Israeli Occupation Authorities issued a military order to demolish seven houses owned by the Jum’a family from Jabal al Mukabbir, under the pretext of ‘proximity to the Segregation Wall.’ The seven houses are home to 51 people, including 33 children (Al Maqdese, 2012).
- In February 2012, the Israeli High Court of Justice issued an order to demolish the house of Mahmoud al Mughrabi (aged 52 years) from Jabal al Mukabbir. The house consists of three floors and is home to 28 people (Jerusalem Newspaper, 2012).

It is noted that there are dozens more houses that are threatened by demolition in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya under the pretext of ‘unlicensed construction’, despite the fact that residents fulfill the necessary procedures for licenses. However, the Municipality of Jerusalem typically procrastinates in granting the license and eventually refuses the request under non-justified pretexts.

The Municipal ax (Arnona) has a negative impact on the living status and economic situation of Palestinians in Jerusalem

The Municipal tax, (‘Arnona’ in Hebrew), is imposed by the Israeli Jerusalem Municipality on the owners of buildings and lands in Jerusalem. This tax is considered to be one of the greatest burdens faced by Palestinian residents of the city, including the residents of Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al

Gharbiya towns. The Israeli Authorities use this tax as an instrument to exert pressure on Palestinians and force them to leave the city.

The 'Arnona' tax is calculated based on certain criteria that take in to consideration the classification of area and land use classification of the master plan (residential areas, commercial, industrial, agricultural, public buildings, parking etc.). They also consider the zone type, the type of use and the area of building or land (Jerusalem Municipality, 2012). Regarding the residential areas, they classify these into four categories (A, B, C and D), and based on this zoning, along with the area of building, they determine and calculate the amount of tax that must be paid to the Municipality. For example, the tax tariff in the residential areas varies in the four zones between 35-98NIS per m², which is equivalent to approximately 10-25 US\$ per m². This means that a small house with an area of 100-150m² will cost its owner 3,000-10,000 NIS a year in tax. At the time of writing, this was equivalent to approximately 800-3,000 US\$.

As for commercial shops, the tax imposed by the Municipality of Jerusalem is doubled, which affects the economic activity, as this tax forces merchants to increase their prices. The tax rate for commercial shops varies between 309-319 NIS per m² (or 80 US\$ per m²), depending on the area of the shop¹. In addition to the taxation of residential and commercial areas, the Municipality also imposes taxes on places of worship, agricultural areas, schools, kindergartens, elderly homes and other facilities.

The segregation plan has had a huge negative impact on the economic situation of Palestinians living in Jerusalem and on the commercial sector in particular. Trade in Jerusalem was largely dependent on Palestinians visiting the Holy City from the West Bank area, the Gaza Strip and Palestinians living inside the 1948 borders. However, the Israeli military closures imposed on the city have negatively affected the economic situation of the city and its residents. Despite these difficulties, the Occupation Authorities continue to impose taxes on Palestinians in East Jerusalem without taking into consideration the difficult situations of the Palestinians who represent the poorest social group in the Holy City. In fact, just last year (2012), the Jerusalem Municipality decided to increase the 'Arnona' tax by approximately 3%, which in turn increased still further the economic burden on the Palestinians of Jerusalem.

It is also worth mentioning that in the case of Jerusalem, Palestinians are forced to pay this tax just to maintain their presence in the city, without even receiving the decent level of Municipal services in return. The planning process in the Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem focuses more on the political-demographic dimension that aims to Judaize the city rather than planning for the purposes of prosperity and well-being of the citizens. Furthermore, Palestinian neighborhoods and communities in Jerusalem are deliberately neglected in the provision of services provided. For instance, the Municipality rarely carries out the necessary maintenance for the infrastructure of Arab neighborhoods, including roads, water and waste water networks, solid waste and other services. This is seen in the many roads that have not been rehabilitated, whilst those in West Jerusalem are in good condition. The major problem suffered by people of Jerusalem is the lack of a cleaning service and the accumulation of solid waste due to the failure to provide services as required, despite the Palestinians' commitment in paying their taxes to the Municipality. This injustice can be clearly seen if we compare the living situation of Palestinians in East Jerusalem with that of the illegal settlers living in the city who have all of their facilities and services provided for them in order to encourage them to stay in the Holy City.

¹ The bigger the shop area, the higher the tax rate.

Ash Sheikh Sa'd – As Sawahira al Gharbiya checkpoint

Ash Sheikh Sa'd town is historically considered as one of the neighborhoods of Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns. However, the Israeli Occupation Forces have separated this neighborhood from Jabal al Mukabbir through the construction of the Segregation Wall and the military checkpoint which was established in 2006 to replace the old earth-mound and road blocks which were installed following the outbreak of the Second Intifada in 2000. This military checkpoint is used as a gate by Ash Sheikh Sa'd residents to travel between their town and Jerusalem City through Jabal al Mukabbir town. These measures has forced thousands of citizens from Ash Sheikh Sa'd to move to areas located inside the wall, such as Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns, in order to protect their rights, residency, and Jerusalem identity status.

Together with the Segregation Wall, this checkpoint has isolated Ash Sheikh Sa'd town geographically, socially, economically and historically from the city of Jerusalem. This has caused suffering to the blue ID holders, as they are forced to walk through this checkpoint on a daily basis.

Israeli military orders issued in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns

The Israeli Occupation Authorities have issued a set of military orders to confiscate lands in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns for different military purposes. The following are some of the main orders issued:

1. Israeli military order no.22/03/T: Issued on 12th August 2003 to confiscate 173.4 dunums of Sur Bahir, Umm Tuba, Ash Shayyah and As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns for the construction of the Segregation Wall.
2. Israeli military order no.19/07/T: Issued on 24th September 2007 to confiscate 1,129 dunums from Abu Dis, As Sawahira ash Sharqiya and As Sawahira al Gharbiya towns for the establishment of the 'Fabric of Life\ road.
3. Israeli military order no.47/03/T: Issued on 22nd July 2003 to confiscate 1.5 dunums of As Sawahira al Gharbiya town for military purposes.

Development plans and projects

Implemented projects

Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee has not implemented any development projects in the towns (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012).

Proposed projects

Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Development Committee, in cooperation with the civil society organizations in the towns and the towns' residents, hopes to implement several projects in the coming years. The project ideas were developed during the PRA workshop conducted by ARIJ staff in the town. The projects are as follows, in order of priority from the perspectives of the participants in the workshop:

1. Implementing an agricultural project.
2. Reclaiming agricultural lands (500 dunums).
3. Establishing 50 rainwater harvesting cisterns.
4. Establishing a sewage network (10km in length).
5. Establishing waste water treatment units.
6. Rehabilitating health centers.
7. Constructing 50 classrooms to solve the overcrowding problem, along with providing appropriate playgrounds, computer devices and medical laboratories.
8. Providing training to teachers to improve students' low level of education.

Town development priorities and needs

Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya suffer from a significant shortage of infrastructure and services. Table 9 shows the development priorities and needs in the towns according to the Development Committee's feedback (Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012).

Table 9: Development priorities and needs in Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya

No.	Sector	Strongly needed	Needed	Not a priority	Notes
Infrastructural needs					
1	Constructing and paving roads	*			38km*
2	Rehabilitating old water networks			*	
3	Extending the water network to cover new built up areas			*	
4	Constructing new water networks			*	
5	Rehabilitating/constructing new wells or springs			*	
6	Constructing water reservoirs			*	
7	Constructing a sewage disposal network	*			10km
8	Constructing a new electricity network			*	
9	Providing containers for solid waste collection			*	
10	Providing vehicles for collecting solid waste			*	
11	Providing a sanitary landfill			*	
Health needs					
1	Building new clinics or health care centres			*	
2	Rehabilitating old clinics or health care centres	*			3 health centers
3	Purchasing medical equipment and tools			*	
Educational needs					
1	Building new schools	*			50 classrooms
2	Rehabilitating old schools			*	
3	Purchasing new equipment for schools	*			Playgrounds, computer devices, libraries and medical laboratories
Agriculture needs					
1	Rehabilitating agricultural lands	*			500 dunums
2	Building rainwater harvesting cisterns	*			100 cisterns
3	Constructing barracks for livestock	*			
4	Veterinary services	*			
5	Seeds and hay for animals	*			100 tons per year
6	Constructing new greenhouses			*	
7	Rehabilitating greenhouses			*	
8	Field crop seeds	*			
9	Plants and agricultural supplies	*			

*16km are main roads, 16km are sub roads and 6km are agricultural roads.

Source: Jabal al Mukabbir & As Sawahira al Gharbiya Mayors' Committee, 2012

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