

Beit Ta'mir Village Profile



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Background

This booklet is part of a series of booklets, which contain compiled information about each city, town, and village in Bethlehem Governorate. These booklets came as a result of a comprehensive study of all localities in Bethlehem 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 Azahar Needs Assessment," the project funded by the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID) and the Azahar Program.

The "Village Profiles and Azahar 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 Bethlehem Governorate with particular focus on the Azahar program objectives and activities concerning water, environment, and agriculture.

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 Bethlehem 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 locality profiles in Arabic and English are available online at <http://proxy.arij.org/vprofile>.

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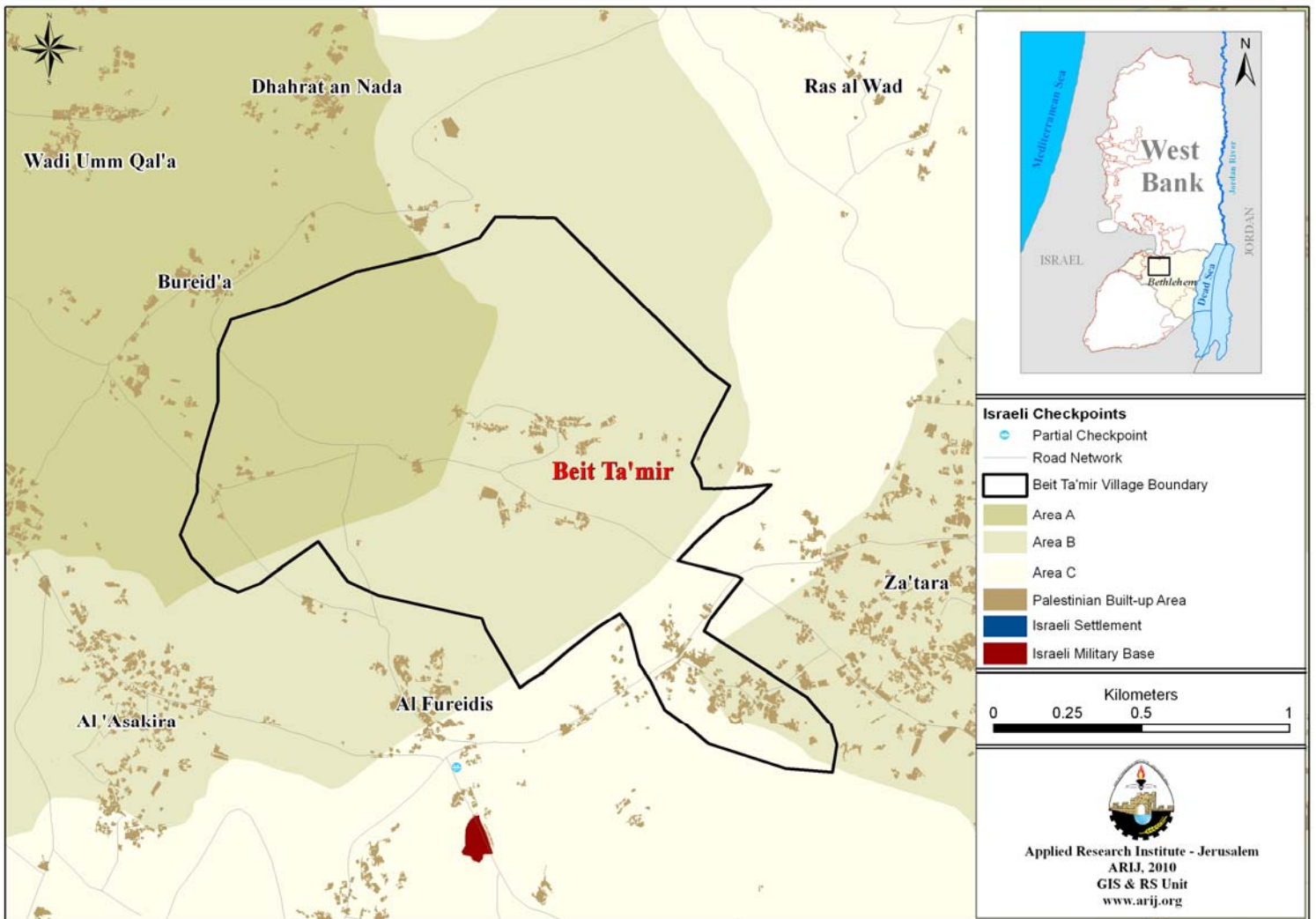
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Beit Ta'mir Village Profile

Location and Physical Characteristics

Beit Ta'mir is a Palestinian village in Bethlehem Governorate located 5km (horizontal distance) south-east of Bethlehem City. Beit Ta'mir is bordered by Za'tara town to the east, Hindaza village to the west and north, and Jannatah and Tuqu' towns to the south (See map 1)

Map 1: Beit Ta'mir location and borders



Beit Ta'mir is located at an altitude of 645m above sea level with a mean annual rainfall of 362mm. The average annual temperature is 17.4° C, and the average annual humidity is about 60 percent (ARIJ GIS, 2009).

Since 1996, Beit Ta'mir has been governed by a village council which is currently administrated by nine members appointed by the Palestinian Authority, but there is no employees working in the council. The village council owns a permanent headquarters.

It is the responsibility of the village council to provide a number of services to the residents of Beit Ta'mir, including:

1. Infrastructure services such as water and electricity.
2. Solid waste collection, road construction and restoration, street cleaning, and social development services.
3. Implementing projects and case studies for the Village.

History

Beit Ta'mir village was named in relation to the Caliph Omar Ben Al Khattab. The story is that, while Omar was heading from the Arabian Peninsula to Jerusalem, in order to liberate it, he passed through this area and prayed in it. As a result of this, Omar Ben Al Khattab mosque was built in the location where he prayed.

Beit Ta'mir village dates back to 640 AD, the year the mosque was constructed, and its residents originate from the Arabian Peninsula.

Photo of Beit Ta'mir

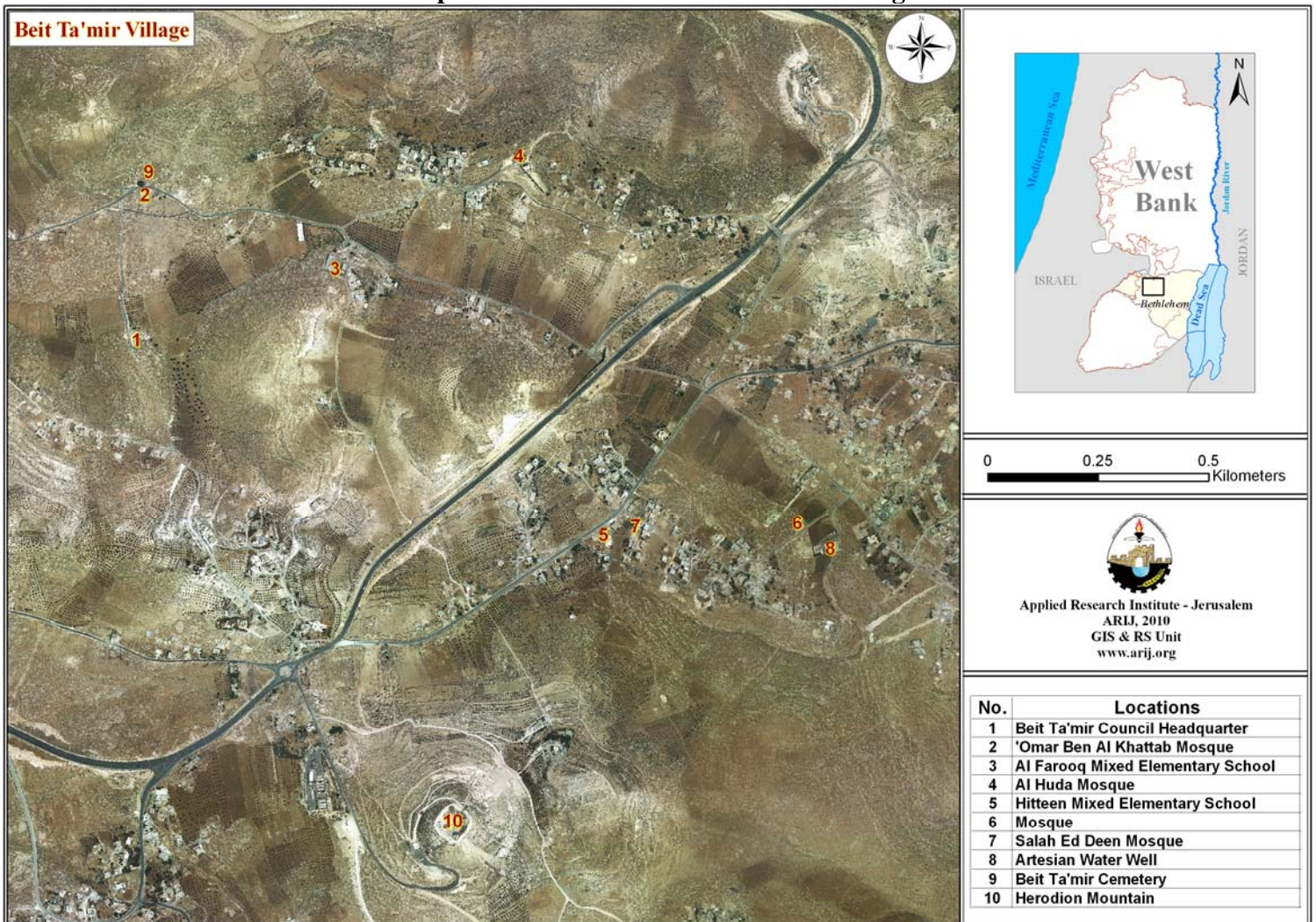


Religious and Archaeological Sites

In terms of religious establishments, there are four mosques in Beit Ta'mir: Omar Ben Al Khattab Mosque, Al Huda Mosque, Al Ansar Mosque, and Omar Ben Al 'Ass Mosque.

As for the archaeological sites in the village there is Omar Ben Al Khattab Mosque, which dates back to 640 AD which is qualified in term of tourism. There is also Al 'Akkad old houses (See map 2).

Map 2: Main locations in Beit Ta'mir village



Population

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), the total population of Beit Ta'mir in 2007 was 1,229; of whom 654 are males and 575 are females. There are 200 households living in 242 housing units.

Age Groups and Gender

The General Census of Population and Housing carried out by PCBS in 2007 showed the distribution of age groups in Beit Ta'mir is as follows: 45.1 percent are less than 15 years, 49.2 percent are between 15 - 64 years, and 2.9 percent are 65 years and older. Data also showed that the sex ratio of males to females in the village is 113.7:100, meaning that males constitute 53.2 percent of the population, and females constitute 46.8 percent of the population.

Families

The inhabitants of Beit Ta'mir village are composed of several families, mainly: Al Wahsh, Az Zawahra, Al Hamri, Abu Mahmeed, Suman, Farraj, and Dannoon.

Education

According to the results of the PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census-2007, the illiteracy rate among Beit Ta'mir population is about 7.1 percent, of whom 66.1 percent are females. Of the literate population, 15.6 percent can read and write, 27.8 percent had elementary education, 26 percent had preparatory education, 21.7 percent had secondary education, and 9 percent completed higher education. Table 1, shows the educational level in the village of Beit Ta'mir, by sex, and educational attainment in 2007.

Sex	Illiterate	Can read & write	Elementary	Preparatory	Secondary	Associate Diploma	Bachelor	Higher Diploma	Master	PhD	Total
M	19	60	103	106	87	9	26	1	4	1	416
F	37	55	102	85	73	8	16	-	1	-	377
T	56	115	205	191	160	17	42	1	5	1	793

Source: PCBS, 2009. Population, Housing and Establishment Census-2007, Final Results

In regards to the basic and secondary education institutions and schools in Beit Ta'mir in the academic year 2008/2009, there are two public schools in the village run by the

Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education. There are no private schools in Beit Ta'mir. See Table 2.

In the village, there are 455 students; 23 teachers, and 18 classes (Directorate of Education in Bethlehem, 2009). It should be noted here that the average number of students per teacher in the school is nearly 20, while the average number of students per class is approximately 25.

School Name	Supervising Authority	Sex
Thukoor Al Farooq Omar Ben Al Khattab Elementary School	Governmental	Mixed
Bnat Hitteen Elementary School		
Source: Directorate of Education in Bethlehem, 2009		

Health Status

There are no health facilities of any kind available in Beit Ta'mir village. In emergency cases, residents of Beit Ta'mir use Bethlehem hospitals and health centers, such as: Beit Jala Governmental Hospital (Al Hussein), which is about 5km from the village, Rehabilitation Arab Society in Beit Jala, which is about 9km from the village, Za'tara clinic, which is about 4km from the village, and the Greek Monastery clinic in Beit Sahour, which is about 4km from the village.

The health sector in Beit Ta'mir village faces several obstacles, mainly:

1. The absence of a health center or clinic in the village.
2. The long distance between the village and Bethlehem city, especially in cases where checkpoints exist.

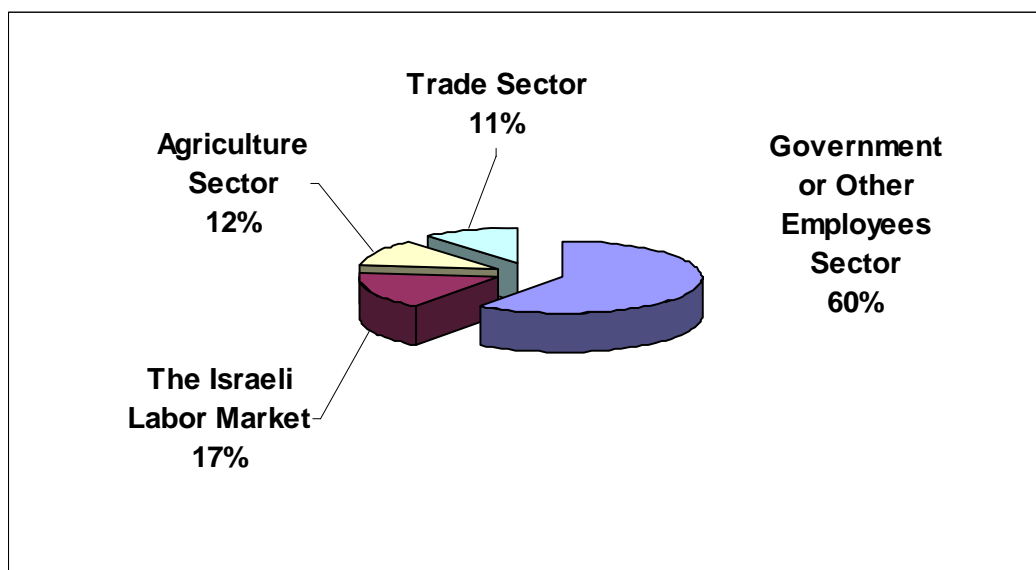
Economic Activities

The economy in Beit Ta'mir is dependent on several economic sectors, mainly: the government and private employee sector, which absorbs 60 percent of the village workforce (See Figure1).

The results of a field survey for the distribution of labor by economic activity in Beit Ta'mir are the following:

- Government or Other Employees Sector (60%)
- Israeli Labor Market (17%)
- Agriculture Sector (12%)
- Trade Sector (11%)

Figure 1: Economic Activity in Beit Ta'mir Village



There are no economic or industrial activities in Beit Ta'mir besides some broiler chicken farms, 2 different service stores, and 15 grocery stores.

As a result of the Israeli occupation and restrictions, the economic status of the population has severely declined, as many citizens have lost their jobs and have become unemployed, thus forcing them to work in the service sector and agricultural activities, as a last resort for obtaining a minimum income.

The unemployment rate in Beit Ta'mir has reached about 50 percent, and the economical groups most affected by the Israeli restrictions are:

1. Former workers in Israel.
2. Workers in agricultural activities.
3. Workers in the trade sector.

Labor Force

According to the PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census-2007, 25.3 percent of the Beit Ta'mir population was economically active, of whom 86.1 percent were employed, 74.7 percent were not economically active, 56.6 percent were students, and 31.4 percent were housekeepers (See table 3).

SEX	Economically Active				Not Economically Active						Total
	Employed	Currently Unemployed	Unemployed (Never worked)	Total	Students	House-keeping	Unable to work	Not working & Not looking for work	Other	Total	
M	161	24	3	188	175	-	42	1	10	228	416
F	12	1	-	13	160	186	16	-	2	364	377
T	173	25	3	201	335	186	58	1	12	592	793

Source: PCBS, March 2009. Population, Housing and Establishment Census-2007, Final Results

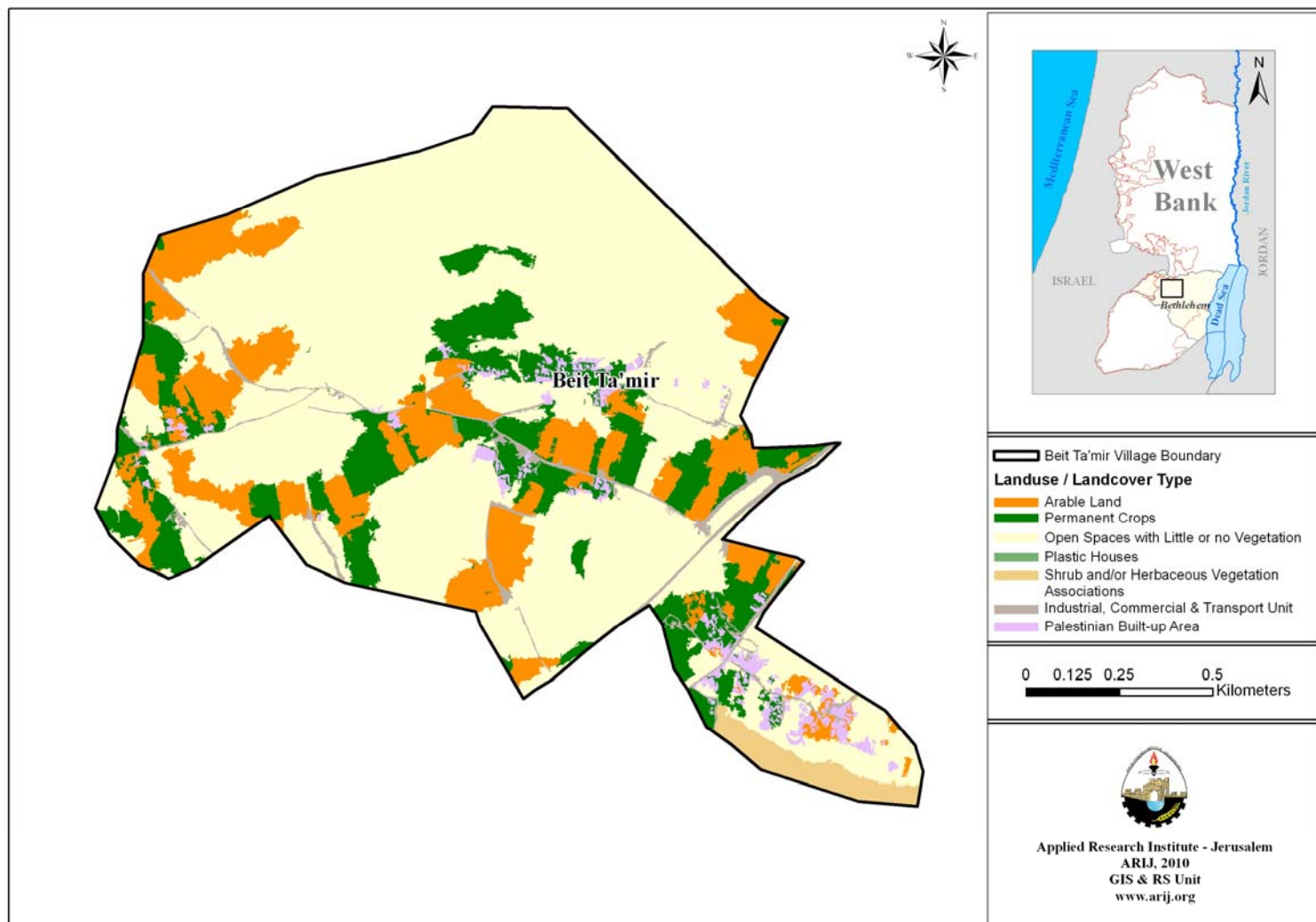
Agricultural Sector

Beit Ta'mir lies on a total area of about 2,138 dunums of which 2,028 dunums are considered arable land, and 53 dunums are residential land (See table 4 and map 3).

Total Area	Built up Area	Arable Land (2,028)					Area of Industrial, Commercial & Transport Unit	Area of Settlements and Military Bases
		Seasonal Crops	Permanent Crops	Greenhouses	Forests	Open Spaces and Rangelands		
2,138	53	330	290	1	0	1,407	57	0

Source: GIS unit – ARIJ, 2008

Map 3: Land use/land cover and Segregation Wall in Beit Ta'mir Village



Agricultural production in Beit Ta'mir depends mostly on rainwater. As for irrigated fields, they depend on the public water network.

Table 5 shows the different types of rain-fed and irrigated open-cultivated vegetables in Beit Ta'mir. The most common crop cultivated within this area is tomato.

Table 5: Total area of rain-fed and irrigated open cultivated vegetables in Beit Ta'mir village (dunum)

Fruity vegetables		Leafy vegetable		Green legumes		Bulbs		Other vegetables		Total area	
RF	Irr.	RF	Irr.	RF	Irr.	RF	Irr.	RF	Irr.	RF	Irr.
13	15	0	3.5	0	2	0	0	0	7	13	27.5

Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture, 2007

There is also one dunum lands on which there are greenhouses planted with cucumber.

Table 6 shows the different types of fruit trees planted in the area.

Table 6: Total area of fruit and olive trees in Beit Ta'mir Village (dunum)													
Olives		Citrus		Stone-fruits		Pome fruits		Nuts		Other fruits		Total area	
Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.
460	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	80	0	0	0	553	0

Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture, 2007

As for the field crops and forage in Beit Ta'mir, cereals, in particular wheat and barley are the most cultivated covering an area of about 530 dunums, while forage crops, such as bitter vetch and common vetch are the next most cultivated crops (See table 7).

Table 7: Total area of field crops in Beit Ta'mir village (dunum)															
Cereals		Bulbs		Dry legumes		Oil crops		Forage crops		Stimulating crops		Other crops		Total area	
Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr
530	0	0	0	17	0	0	0	23	0	1	0	0	0	571	0

Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture, 2007

The field survey shows that 20 percent of Beit Ta'mir residents are rearing and keeping domestic animals such as sheep, goats, broiler chicken, and bees (See Table 8).

Table 8: Livestock in Beit Ta'mir village										
Cows*	Sheep	Goats	Camels	Horses	Donkeys	Mules	Broilers	Layers	Bee Hives	
0	3,500	1,508	0	8	25	13	19,300	0	50	

*Including cows, bull calves, heifer calves and bulls

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture, 2007

There are about 20 kilometers of agricultural roads in the village; 8km of which are suitable for tractors and agricultural machinery, while the rest of the road is suitable for animals only.

Institutions and Services

Beit Ta'mir has a village council, founded in 1996 by the Palestinian National Authority, which has no associations, committees, centers, sport or cultural clubs in the village.

Infrastructure and Natural Resources

Electricity and Telecommunication Services:

Beit Ta'mir has been connected to a public electricity network since 1984; served by Jerusalem Electricity Company, which is the main source of electricity in the village. Approximately 96.4 percent of the housing units in the village are connected to the network, and 1 percent of the remaining units have no source for electricity, while the source of electricity is unknown for the remaining units (2.6%) (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2007)

Furthermore, Beit Ta'mir is connected to a telecommunication network and approximately 15 percent of the housing units within the village boundaries are connected to phone lines (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2007).

Transportation Services:

Taxis are considered the main means of transportation in Beit Ta'mir, as there are 15 taxis in the village. As for the road network in the village; there are a total of 5km of paved main roads and, a total of 3km secondary roads, all of which are in bad condition and in need of rehabilitation, in addition to 6km of unpaved secondary roads (Beit Ta'mir village council, 2009).

Water Resources:

Beit Ta'mir is provided with water by the West Bank Water Department and the Palestinian Water Authority through the public water network established in 1980, and about 95.9 percent of the housing units are connected to the water network, while 0.5 percent of the housing units are dependent on rainwater harvesting cisterns. The quantity of water supplied to Beit Ta'mir in 2009 was about 84,000 cubic meters/year, therefore the estimated rate of water supply per capita is about 29 liters/day (Beit Ta'mir village council, 2009).

Here it should be noted that no Beit Ta'mir citizen in fact consumes this amount of water due to water losses, which are about 25 percent, and usually happen at the main source, major transport lines, distribution network, and at the household level (Beit Ta'mir village council, 2009). Thus, the rate of water consumption per capita in Beit Ta'mir is 22 liters per day. This is a low rate compared with the minimum quantity proposed by the World Health Organization, which is 100 liters per capita per day.

Sanitation:

Beit Ta'mir lacks a public sewage network; most of the population uses cesspits as means for wastewater disposal. According to the results of Community Survey conducted by the PCBS in 2007 and the data provided from PWA, the majority of Beit Ta'mir housing

units (97.4%) use the cesspits as a major means for wastewater disposal, while the mean for waste water disposal is unknown for the remaining units (2.6%)

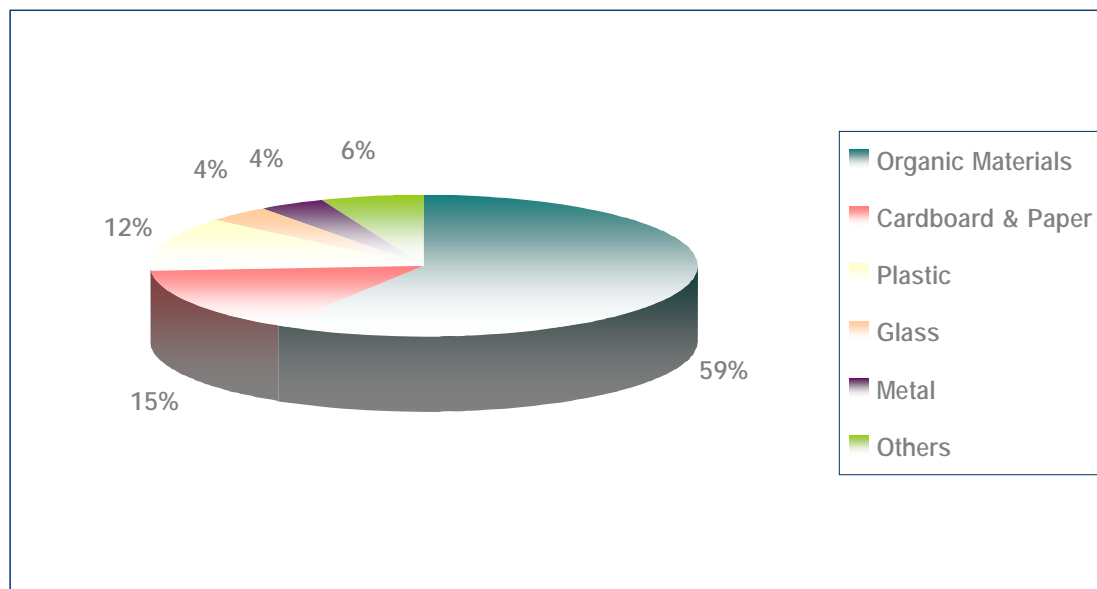
Based on the estimated daily per capita water consumption, the estimated amount of wastewater generated per day, is approximately 21.6 cubic meters, or 7.9 thousand cubic meters annually. At the individual level in the village it is estimated that the per capita wastewater generation is approximately 17.6 liters per day. The wastewater collected by cesspits is discharged by wastewater tankers directly to open areas or nearby valleys, without any regard for the environment. Here it should be noted that there is no wastewater treatment either at the source or at the disposal sites and this poses a serious threat to the environment and the public health.

Solid Waste Management:

Hindaza Village Council is considered the official body responsible for managing solid waste, i.e. solid waste collection and disposal, generated from the citizens and establishments in Beit Ta'mir, which is currently represented by solid waste collection and disposal. Due to the fact that the process of solid waste management is costly, a monthly fee has been charged on the population serviced by domestic solid waste collection and transportation services which is about 15 NIS/month. However, the collected fees are not considered sufficient for a good management of solid waste; it contributes to less than 20 percent of the solid waste costs, thus, the village council spends 30 percent of its budget on the solid waste management service.

Most of the population in Beit Ta'mir benefit from the solid waste services, where waste is collected from households, institutions, shops, and public squares in plastic bags and then transferred to 10 containers, spread throughout the neighborhoods. Hindaza village council collects the solid waste from the containers two days a week and transports it to Al 'Ezariya dumping site, 30km from Beit Ta'mir. The common method for solid waste treatment in the dumping site is to bury it. It should be mentioned here that household waste, industrial, and medical solid waste are collected together and dumped into the same landfill, with the absence of any special system for separation and/or collection. The largest volume of solid waste is household waste which makes up around 45-50 percent of total capacity of solid waste

The daily per capita rate of solid waste production in Beit Ta'mir is 0.7kg. Thus the estimated amount of solid waste produced per day from Beit Ta'mir residents is nearly 0.86 tons, or 314 tons per year. The main component of household solid waste is composed of organic materials, followed by paper and cardboard, and then by plastic, as shown in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: The components of the household solid waste produced

Environmental Conditions:

Like other villages in the governorate, Beit Ta'mir experiences several environmental problems which must be addressed and solved. These problems can be identified as follows:

Water Crisis:

Water is cut off for long periods of time in summer in several neighborhoods of the village for several reasons:

- (1) Israeli domination over Palestinian water resources; which makes the residents dependent largely on water purchase.
- (2) High rate of water losses, because the water network is worn out and in need of rehabilitation and renovation, in addition to the practices of citizens, such as, creating illegal connections, water theft, and damaging water meters.

Wastewater Management:

The absence of a public sewage network, thus the use of cesspits for the disposal of wastewater, and the discharge of wastewater in the streets, especially in winter, because the citizens can not afford the high cost of sewage tankers, causes environmental and

health problems, and the spread of epidemics and diseases in the village. The use of cesspits pollutes the groundwater and water collected in domestic cisterns (rainwater harvesting cisterns) as wastewater mixes with water, making it contaminated for human consumption. This is due to the fact that most cesspits are built without lining, which allows wastewater to enter into the ground and avoids the need to use sewage tankers from time to time. Moreover, the untreated wastewater collected from cesspits by sewage tankers is disposed of in open areas without taking into account the damage it causes to the environment and the resident's health.

Also, the lack of wastewater treatment that is collected by sewage tankers, where it is disposed in Wadi an Nar area without taking into consideration the damage it causes to the environment and the resident's health.

Solid Waste Management:

The lack of a central sanitary landfill to serve Beit Ta'mir and the other communities in the governorate is due mainly to the obstacles created by the Israeli authorities for local and national institutions, such as the difficulty to obtain licenses to establish such a landfill, because the appropriate land is within Area C, under the Israeli control. In addition, the implementation of such projects depends on funding from donor countries. Thus, the lack of a sanitary landfill is a hazard risk for the health, and a source of pollution to the groundwater and soil through the leachate produced from the solid waste, and it also produces bad odors and distorts the landscape. It should be noted here that a sanitary landfill is currently under construction in Al Maniya area, south of Bethlehem governorate, to serve Bethlehem and Hebron governorates.

There is an absence of a system in the village and the governorate in general that separates hazardous waste from non-hazardous waste, consequently hazardous solid waste is collected with non-hazardous waste and transported to Al 'Ezariya landfill for disposal by burning.

Impact of the Israeli Occupation

According to Oslo Interim Agreement, 738 dunums of Beit Ta'mir lands (34.5% of the total area of the village) were classified as area A, 1201 dunums of Beit Ta'mir lands (56.2% of the total area of the village) were classified as area B, while the remaining area of Beit Ta'mir lands, 199 dunums (9.3% of the total area of the village) were classified as area C (Table 9).

Land Classification	Area (dunums)	% of the Total Area
Area A	738	34.5
Area B	1201	56.2
Area C	199	9.3
Nature Reserves	0	0
Total Area	2138	100

Source: GIS unit –ARIJ 2009

Beit Ta'mir has also lost part of its land for the construction of the Israeli bypass road no. 356, which cuts through the village land by 0.5km. Moreover, the Israeli occupation forces have uprooted about 1000 olive trees from Beit Ta'mir territories.

Israeli military orders issued in Beit Ta'mir village

Israel has continuously tried to evade its responsibilities as an occupier of the Palestinian lands through its repeated attempts to justify its presence as an administrative body in the Occupied Territories, and by not planning or providing resources for the Palestinian occupied residents. Thus, Israel has used military orders in order to take Palestinian lands and to legitimize its violations under the pretext of "security concerns" while it has violated international and humanitarian laws and resolutions issued by the UN Security Council. During the years of its occupation of the Palestinian Territories, Israel has issued thousands of military orders, which aimed at tightening its grip on the Palestinian territories, building and expanding Israeli settlements, the construction of bypass roads, the confiscation of land, and lastly, the construction of the racist Segregation Wall.

Beit Ta'mir village, among many other Palestinian villages, was targeted by Israel with a number of military orders, namely:

1. On August 13, 2006, the Israeli military order no. 65/06/T was issued to confiscate 3.9 dunums of Beit Ta'mir village land for the purpose of fencing Za'tara bypass road.
2. On August 13, 2006, the Israeli military order no. 64/06/T was issued to confiscate 1.4 dunums of Beit Ta'mir village land for the purpose of fencing Za'tara bypass road.
3. On August 13, 2006, the Israeli military order no. 63/06/T was issued to confiscate 3.9 dunums of Beit Ta'mir village land for the purpose of fencing Za'tara bypass road.
4. On May 11, 2004, the Israeli military order no. 02/04/H was issued to proclaim 380 dunums of the lands of Beit Ta'mir village, Bethlehem, and Beit Sahour, as land for public interest.
5. On December 8, 2005, the Israeli military order no. 95/01/T was issued to confiscate 10 dunums of Al 'Akban agricultural land, in Beit Ta'mir, for the establishment of a camp for the Israeli occupation forces in the region.

Development Plans and Projects

Implemented Projects:

Beit Ta'mir Village Council has implemented several projects during the years 2005 to 2009 as shown in table 10:

Table 10: Implemented Projects in Beit Ta'mir (2005-2009)		
Name of the Project	Year	Donor
Sheep barracks	2006	ARIJ
Raising the standards of living of poor families (greenhouses, home gardens, rainwater harvesting cisterns)	2007	ARIJ
Source: Beit Ta'mir Village Council, 2009		

Proposed Projects

Beit Ta'mir village council, in cooperation with the civil society organizations in the village and the village residents, looks forward to the implementation of several projects in the coming years. The project ideas were developed during the PRA workshop that was conducted by ARIJ staff in the village. The projects are as follows, in order of priority, from the viewpoint of the participants in the workshop:

1. Establishment of a sewage network.
2. Providing job opportunities.
3. Establishment of an emergency clinic.
4. Establishment of an economic project.
5. Construction of schools in the village.
6. Establishment of associations to support farmers
7. Establishment of agricultural roads.
8. Establishment of headquarters for the village associations.
9. Providing assistance for the poor families.
10. Establishment of recreational places, youth centers, and a public library.

Locality Development Priorities and Needs

Beit Ta'mir suffers from a significant shortage of infrastructure and services. Table 11 shows the development priorities and needs in the village, according to the village council's point of view (Beit Ta'mir village council, 2009):

Table 11: Development Priorities and Needs in Beit Ta'mir					
No.	Sector	Strongly Needed	Needed	Not a Priority	Notes
Infrastructural Needs					
1	Opening and Pavement of Roads	*			16km *
2	Rehabilitation of Old Water Networks			*	
3	Extending the Water Network to Cover New Built up Areas	*			5km
4	Construction of New Water Networks	*			2.5km
5	Rehabilitation/ Construction of New Wells or Springs			*	
6	Construction of Water Reservoirs		*		
7	Construction of a Sewage Disposal Network	*			
8	Construction of a New Electricity Network			*	
9	Providing Containers for Solid Waste Collection		*		40 containers
10	Providing Vehicles for Collecting Solid Waste			*	
11	Providing a Sanitary Landfill			*	
Health Needs					
1	Building of New Clinics or Health Care Centres	*			one clinic
2	Rehabilitation of Old Clinics or Health Care Centres			*	
3	Purchasing of Medical Equipment and Tools			*	
Educational Needs					
1	Building of New Schools	*			elementary & secondary
2	Rehabilitation of Old Schools	*			elementary & secondary
3	Purchasing of New Equipment for Schools	*			elementary & secondary schools
Agriculture Needs					
1	Rehabilitation of Agricultural Lands	*			20 dunum
2	Building Rainwater Harvesting Cisterns	*			10 cisterns
3	Construction of Barracks for Livestock	*			15 barracks
4	Veterinary Services	*			
5	Seeds and Hay for Animals	*			
6	Construction of New Greenhouses	*			20 greenhouses
7	Rehabilitation of Greenhouses	*			8 greenhouses
8	Field Crops Seeds	*			
9	Plants and Agricultural Supplies	*			

*2km is a main road, 6km internal road and 8km agricultural road

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