

Al Faqir (Umm al Kheir) 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 Hebron Governorate. These booklets come as a result of a comprehensive study of all localities in Hebron 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'; a 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 Hebron 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 Hebron 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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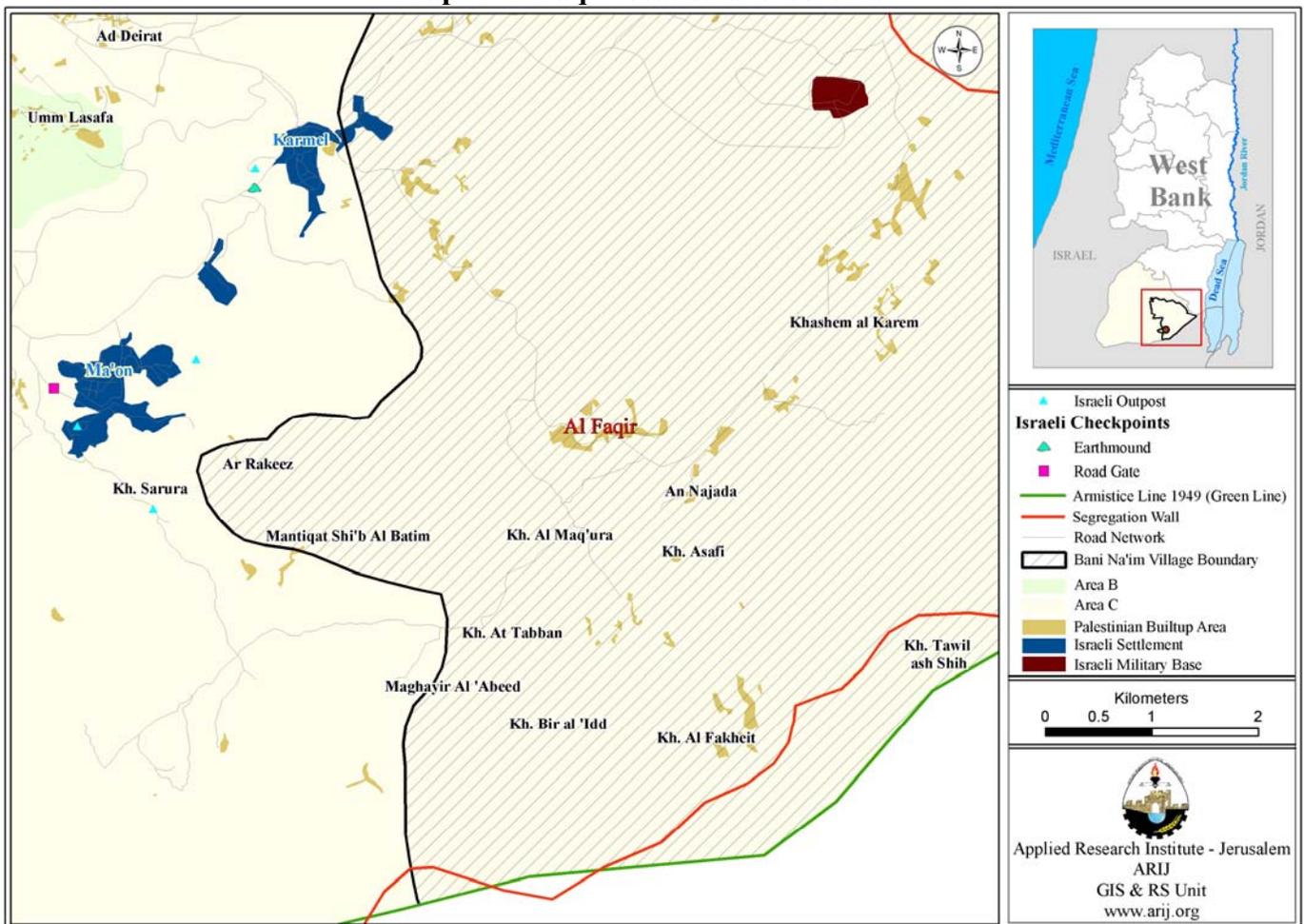
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Location and Physical Characteristics

Al Faqir is a village in the Yatta area; it is located almost 20 kilometers to the southeast Hebron City in the southern part of the West Bank. It is bordered by Khashem Ad Daraj village in the East, Az Zuweidein in the North, Ar Rakeez village to the West, and An Najada (Arab al Ka'abnah) to the South (See map 1).

Map 1: Al Faqir location and borders



The total area of Al Faqir village is estimated at around 7,000 dunums, of which 1,450 dunums are Palestinian built-up area, 3,500 dunums are agricultural land, and around 2,000 dunums are forests or open spaces.

Al Faqir village is located at an elevation of 583 m above Sea level. The mean annual rainfall in the village is 369 mm, the average annual temperature is 16 °C, and the average annual humidity is 61% (ARIJ GIS).

The village is administered by a Village Council that was established in 1997 with 5 members. Its main duties are to provide infrastructure services, such as water and electricity, to the village residents.

History

Al Faqir is a Bedouin locality, the original site (place) of the village called "Rujem Umm Al Kheire", which is now occupied by Israeli settlement called "Karmel", which is about 500m away from Al Faqir village. Al Faqir is also called Umm al Kheir which is derived from the site's name.

The origin of the village residents is Palestinian refugees who were driven out from their homelands, 'Arad and Beersheva, in 1948. These residents comprise 60-70% of the total village population. Others inhabitants of the village trace their lineages from Arab tribes from the area.

Photos of Al Faqir



Religious and Archaeological Sites

Arab Al Saray'ah Mosque is the only religious place in AL Faqir village.

Demography and Population

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) Census 2007, the total population of Al Faqir village was 516 inhabitants, of whom 256 were males and 260 were females. There were 69 households resident in 102 housing units (2007 Census).

Age Group and Gender

The 2007 Census data about Al Faqir village showed that the distribution of the population in terms of age group and sex. The data showed that 51.1% of the total population was less than 15 years, 44.1% was in the 15-64 age group and 2.6% was 65 years and above .

The sex ratio in Al Faqir was 98.8 males per 100 females. In terms of percentage, the males in the village constituted 49.7% of the total population while females constituted 50.3% of the total population.

Families

There are four main families in the village; Al Faqir , Al Hathaleen , Al Tabnah each constituting, and Al Azazmah which constitutes only.

Education

According to the final results of the Population, Housing and Establishment Census-2007, around 19.2% of AL Faqir population (10 years and above) were found to be illiterate, of whom females had the higher percentage which constituted 80% of the total illiterate in the village. Of the literate population, 26.3% of the population could read and write, 50% had received formal education at schools, and 4.5% had been conferred academic degrees. (See table 1).

Sex	Illiterate	Can read & write	Elementary	Preparatory	Secondary	Associate Diploma	Bachelor	Higher education	Total
M	12	44	57	19	17	2	6	-	157
F	48	38	30	22	11	-	6	-	155
T	60	82	87	41	28	2	12	-	312

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

Al Saray'ah Secondary Co-educational School is the only school in Al Faqir village. The school is supervised by the government and it provides formal elementary and secondary education to female and male students.

According to the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) data, by the end of the scholastic year 2006/2007 there were 230 students, 127 male students and 103 female students, and they were distributed into 12 classes. Around 16 teachers are currently teaching in the village.

As there is not enough for both male and female students within the village boundaries, many students are sent to acquire their formal education to Yatta Elementary School in Yatta which is about 15 km away from Al Faqir village. There is a massive need to establish educational classes and specialist classrooms including laboratories for computer science education in Al Saray'ah School. Furthermore, there is a need to build a fence around the school.

Health Status

Al Faqir village lacks any kind of health services; no clinics, no physicians and no pharmacies, and the closest health facilities are to be found in Yatta or Hebron City, 15 kilometers and 20 kilometers away from the village, respectively. However, there is only a governmental Mother and Child Care Center that is run by the Palestinian Ministry of Health.

The village officials state that Al Faqir suffers from the lack of medication and that there is a need for a full-time doctor to provide medical diagnosis and treatment for the village's patients.

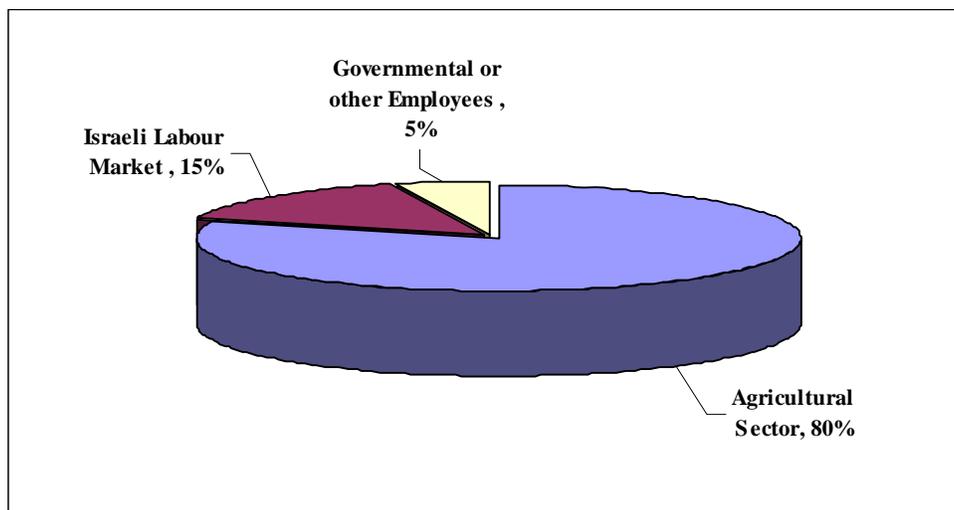
Economic Activities

The residents of Al Faqir village are mainly dependent on the agricultural sector especially livestock rearing, where there is a heard of about 4,500 animals in the village. The village lacks grazing areas; therefore, to feed the animals they buy forage and seeds from outside the village. Farmers market their animals and their produce in Yatta and Hebron city markets.

According to village officials' estimates, the economic base of the village consists of the following sectors:

- Agricultural Sector (80%)
- The Israeli Labor Market (15%)
- Governmental or other Employees (5%)

Figure 1: Percentage of economic activities in Al Faqir village



Recently this sector faces and suffers from many problems like lack of rain and increasing prices of forage and seeds. Moreover, a small number of workers engaged in the Israeli labor market also suffer from unemployment due to the closures and a limited number of permits issued by the Israeli authorities to the workers in the village.

There are also two small groceries serving the village residents for retailing foodstuffs and various household supplies.

Based on a survey conducted in 2007 by ARIJ in Hebron localities, the results indicated that the social groups most affected in the village due to Israeli measures were:

1. Workers which had previously worked in Israel.
2. Families with six individuals and more.
3. Small-holder farmers.
4. Housewives and children.

Labor Force

According to the PCBS, Population, Housing and Establishment Census in 2007, there were 312 persons within the working age (10 years and above) in Al Faqir village. Out of the 312 people, 64 were economically active, of whom 92.2% were employed. There were 248 non-economically active persons in the village, of which 48% were students, 35.1% were housekeeping and 16.9% were unable to work, not working and not looking for work, see table 2.

Sex	Economically Active				Not Economically Active						Total
	Employed	Currently Unemployed	Unemployed (Never worked)	Total	Student	House keeping	Unable to work	Not working & Not looking for Work	Others	Total	
M	56	2	3	61	65	2	10	-	19	96	157
F	3	-	-	3	54	85	7	-	6	152	155
T	59	2	3	64	119	87	17	-	25	248	312

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

Agricultural Sector

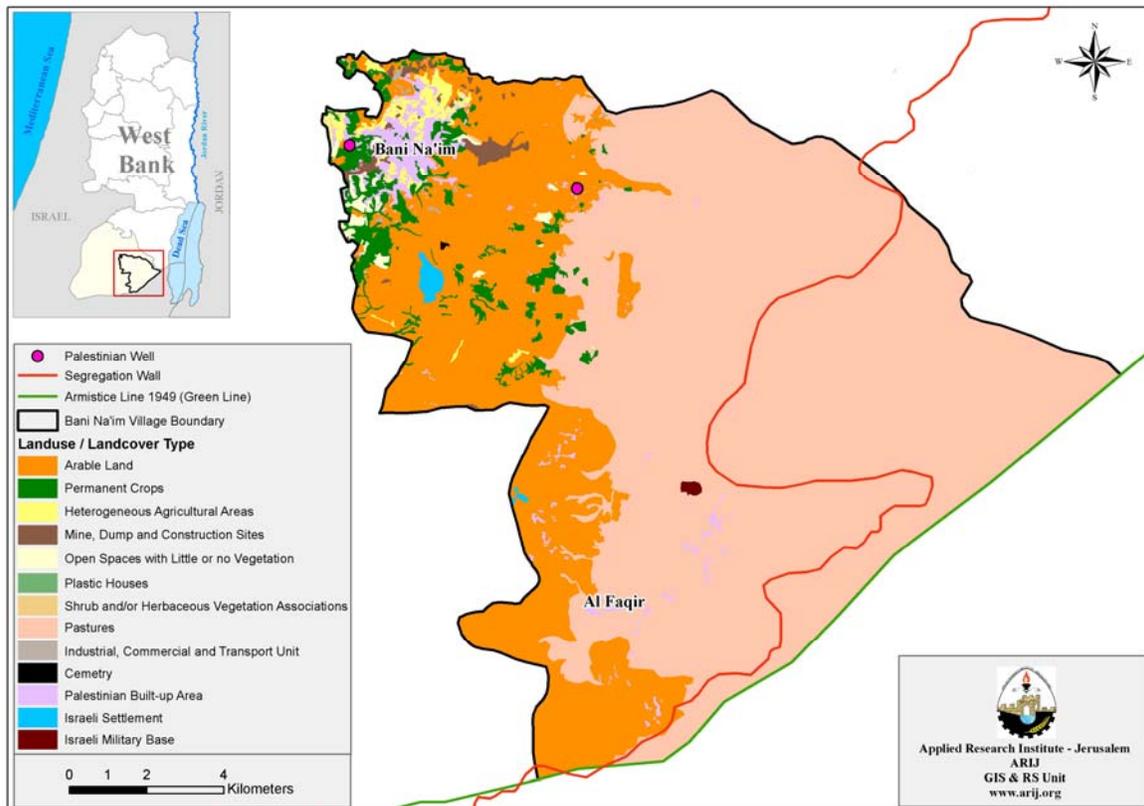
As mentioned earlier, Al Faqir village lies on a total area of 7,000 dunums, of which 3,500 dunums are considered agricultural land. In addition to another 1,500 dunums of land that is suitable for reclamation. Lack of available investment capital for agricultural development, and the lack of water resources .

There are about 3 km of agricultural roads in the village. They are suitable only for animals and the village needs to reconstruct these roads in order to serve the agricultural activities in the village well. The main cultivated crops in the village include wheat and barley.

Al Faqir village residents depend on livestock rearing and dairy production. Around 80% of the households are rearing and keeping domestic animals. In total there are about 2,000 sheep and 2,500 goats.

The main obstacles that face the agricultural sector development in the village are the lack of capital, the high prices of animal feed and the absence of an effective marketing system.

Map 2: Land use/land cover in Al Faqir village



Institutions and Services

The main institute in the village is Al Faqir Village Council which was established in 1997 to serve the village.

Infrastructure and Natural Resources

Telecommunication Services: Al Faqir village is not connected to the telecommunication network.

Water Services: Al Faqir village has been connected to a water network since 1970, around 60% of the housing units in the village have been connected to the Israeli water network (MEKROT). Cisterns are an alternative source of water for domestic and agricultural uses. The water network system is in very bad condition, and the total quantity and the quality of water available to the residents is not sufficient for the residents' daily activities.

Electricity Networks: Al Faqir is not connected to the electricity network, around 20% of the housing units in the village have been connected since 1996 to an electrical generator which is

considered the only provider of electricity in the village. It provides an electrical power of 80 kilowatt for around four hours nightly.

Sewage Disposal Facilities: There is no sewage network in Al Faqir village, and the bulk of domestic wastewater is discharged and disposed in cesspits.

Solid Waste Collection Services: There is no solid waste management system in al Faqir village, and each family disposes its own wastes by either throwing it out randomly or burning it.

Transportation Facilities: The public transportation in Al Faqir village is considered an informal transport system. There are unregistered taxis operating to transport people between Al Faqir and nearby villages. In whatever manner, the transportation system in the village is poorly developed and lacks regulated transport services, in addition to the unsuitability of roads. In the case of the unavailability of common carriers, the passengers get to the closest community on foot in order to use its transport system, or they use their private cars if there are any. In keeping with the transportation facilities in the village, there are about 7 km of roads in AL Faqir village: 3 km surfaced main road of good condition, 1 km unpaved link road and another 3 km unpaved agricultural roads.

Impact of the Israeli Occupation

There are two flying checkpoints at the village entrances, and since the beginning of the Second Intifada, five houses in the village were demolished by the Israeli occupation.

Locality Development Priorities and Needs

Al Faqir village is still suffering from shortages in much of the infrastructure and service requirements. Table 3 below summarizes development priorities and needs in the village.

No.	Sector	Strongly Needed	Needed	Moderately Needed	Not Needed	Notes
Infrastructural Needs						
1	Opening and Pavement of Roads	*				4 km
2	Construction of New Water Networks		*			
3	Rehabilitation of Old Water Networks	*				3.5 km
4	Construction of Water Reservoirs	*				Of 500 m ³ water capacity
5	Extending the Water Network to cover New Built up Areas	*				
6	Construction of Sewage Disposal Network	*				
Health Needs						
1	Building of New Clinics or Health Care Centre	*				
2	Rehabilitation of Old Clinics or Health Care Centres				*	
3	Purchasing of Medical Equipments and Tools				*	
Educational Needs						
1	Building of New Schools	*				elementary
2	Rehabilitation of Old Schools		*			secondary
3	Purchasing of New Equipments for Schools	*				
Agriculture Needs						
1	Rehabilitation of Agricultural lands	*				1500 dunums
2	Building Cisterns	*				15 cisterns
3	Construction of Barracks for Livestock	*				20 barracks
4	Veterinary Services	*				
5	Seeds and Hay for Animals	*				
6	Rehabilitation of Greenhouses				*	
7	Field Crops Seeds		*			
8	Plants and Agricultural Supplies		*			

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