

# Beit Kahil Village Profile



**Prepared by**



**The Applied Research Institute - Jerusalem**

**Funded by**



**Spanish Cooperation**



**Azahar program**

**2009**

## Acknowledgments

*ARIJ hereby expresses its deep gratitude to the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID) for their funding of this project through the Azahar Program.*

*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 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/>

## *Table of Contents*

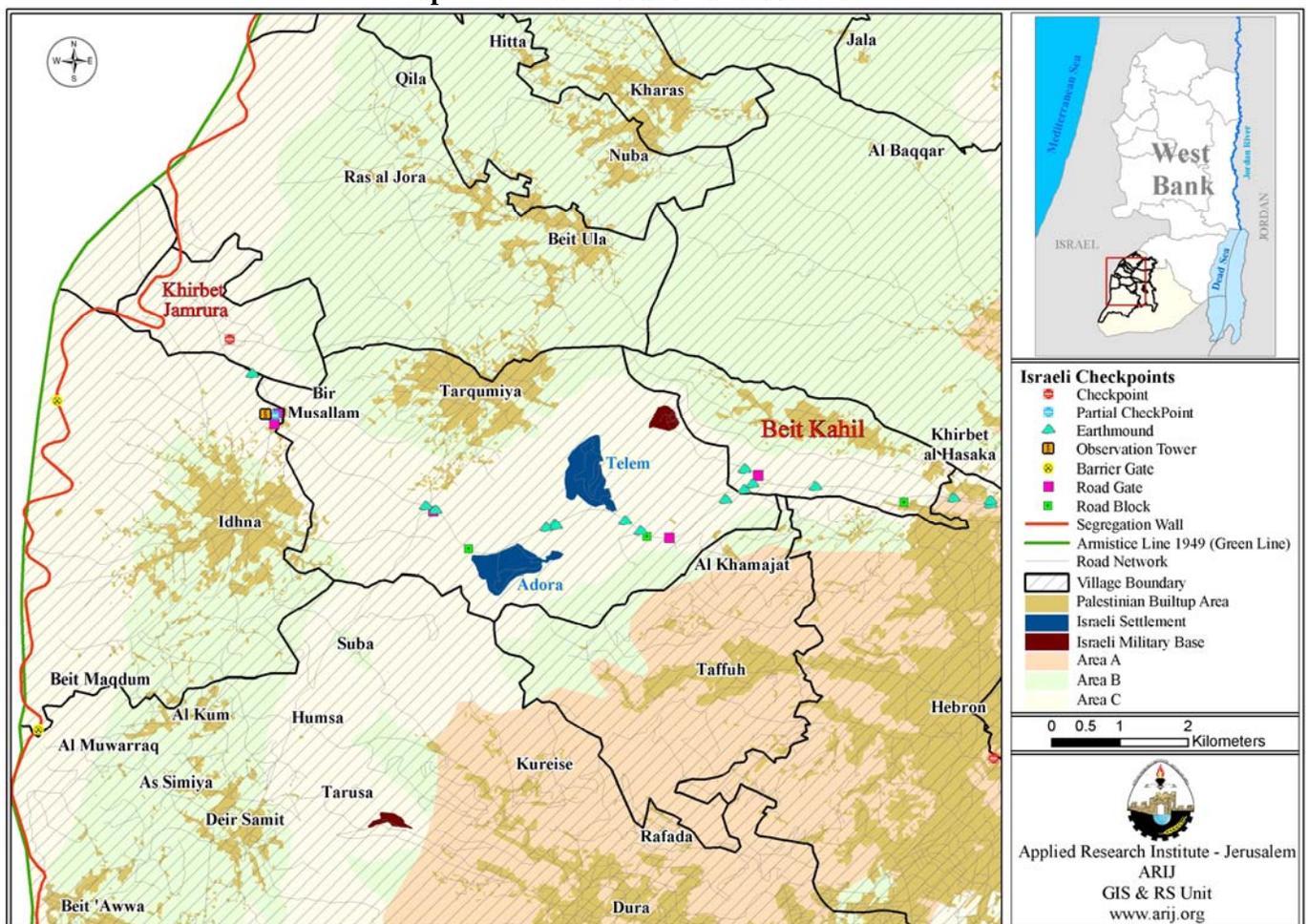
<i>Location and Physical Characteristics</i>	<u>4</u>
<i>History</i>	<u>5</u>
<i>Religious and Archaeological Sites</i>	<u>5</u>
<i>Population</i>	<u>6</u>
<i>Education</i>	<u>7</u>
<i>Health Status</i>	<u>8</u>
<i>Economic Activities</i>	<u>9</u>
<i>Agricultural Sector</i>	<u>10</u>
<i>Institutions and Services</i>	<u>12</u>
<i>Infrastructure and Natural Resources</i>	<u>13</u>
<i>Impact of the Israeli Occupation</i>	<u>14</u>
<i>Implemented Development Plans and Projects</i>	<u>14</u>
<i>Locality Development Priorities and Needs</i>	<u>15</u>
<i>References</i>	<u>16</u>

## Beit Kahil Village Profile

### Location and Physical Characteristics

Beit Kahil is a village located in the Hebron Governorate in the southern part of the West Bank, about 5.4 kilometers northwest of Hebron city. It is bordered to the east by Hebron city, to the south by Taffuh, to the west by Tarqumiya, and to the north by Halhul (See map 1).

Map1: Beit Kahil location and borders



Beit Kahil village lies atop a mountain in the west of Hebron Mountains at an elevation of 827 m above sea level. Characterized by a cool climate, the average annual temperature is about 16 °C, and the average annual humidity is 61 %. Mean annual rainfall is 532 mm (ARIJ GIS, 2006).

Beit Kahil is considered a rural area as it complies with the demographic and institutional criteria relevant to rural areas. From 1983 to 2005, a Village Council appointed by the Ministry of Local

Authorities governed Beit Kahil village. In 2005 another elected Council of 11 members, of whom nine were employees, replaced the Village Council. Though the Council has no building, it provides infrastructure services including electricity, water and solid waste disposal, and educational services including construction and rehabilitation of schools and kindergartens.

According to village officials, throughout the period of Ottoman Empire rule, the nearby agricultural land of Khirbet Jamrura was included with the land of Beit Kahil, as Beit Kahil lacked agricultural lands for growing crops. Khirbet Jamrura is located 10 km from the village, near the Tarqumiya crossing point, and though unpopulated; farmers may be found camping in Jamrura during planting and harvest seasons.

## **History**

The history of the village dates back to the times of the Ottoman Empire. According to village lore, Beit Kahil derives its name from Beit "Kuhail", meaning "the house of 'Kuhail'", the surname of a Canaanite monk who administered the eye liner (Kohl) in the treatment of eye diseases.

Current village inhabitants are the descendents of Palestinian refugees displaced during the 1948 war from their homes in Beit Jibreel (currently a coastal city in Israel), Khirbet Al Ansari, and Beersheba in the Negev.

### **Photos of Beit Kahil Village**



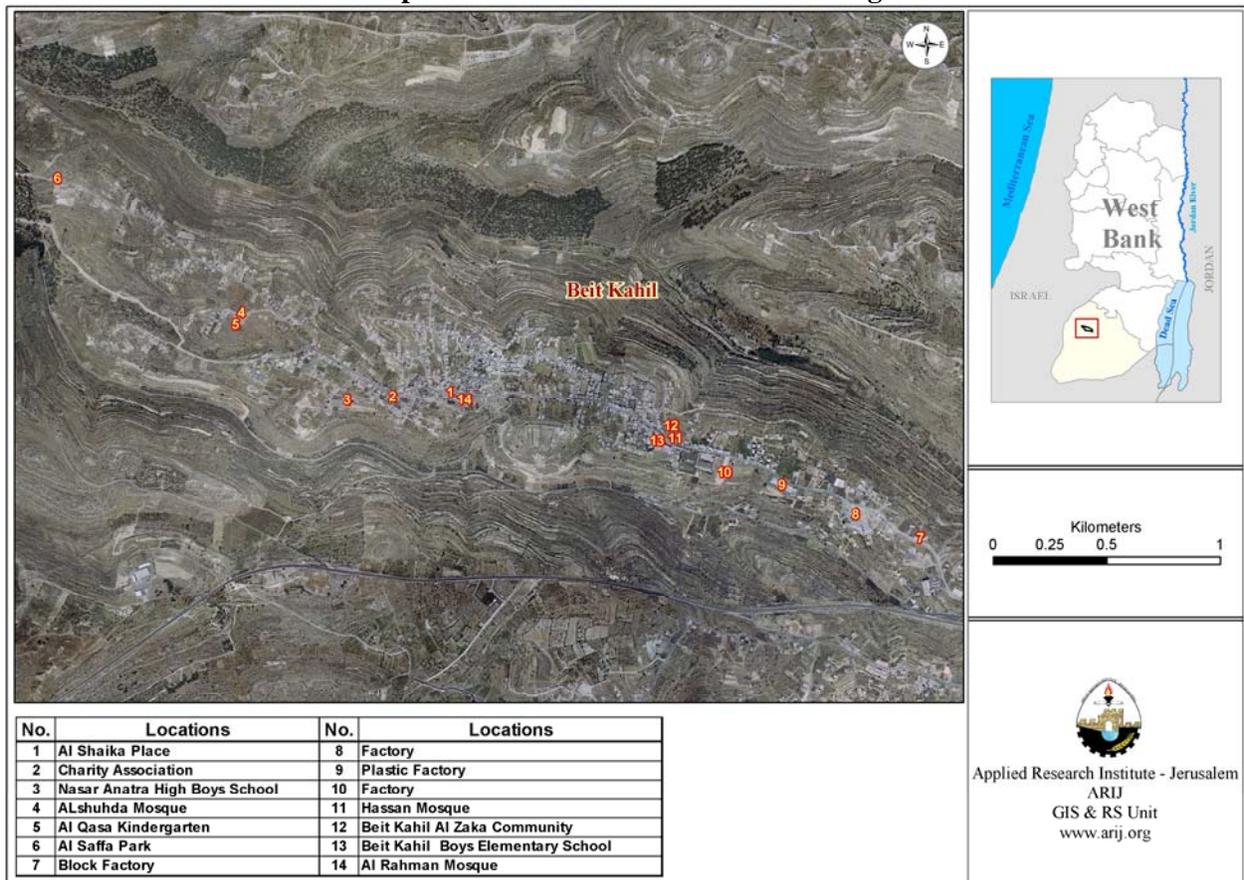
## **Religious and Archaeological Sites**

In terms of religious establishments, there are three mosques serving the village: al-Rahman Mosque, Hasan al-Bana Mosque and Al Shuhada' Mosque. The shrine of Skeikh Maghazi is an additional holy site in the village.

In terms of historical sites, there are several places of historical and archeological interest in the village, including:

- Khirbet Al Ba'arna
- Khirbet Jamrura
- The ruins of Mount Safa

**Map 2: Main locations in Beit Kahil village**



## Population

According to the 2007 Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) Census, the total population of Beit Kahil in 2007 was approximately 6,526 people, of whom 3,364 were males and 3,162 were females. There were 948 households living in 1,084 housing units, and the average household size was 6.9 people.

## Age Groups and Gender

The 2007 Census data showed the distribution of the Beit Kahil population by age group and sex. The largest age group, constituting 49.2% of the total population, is between (0-14) years; 48.7% of the total population is in the 15-64 age group, and around 1.9% of the population is 65 years old and above. As per the 2007 Census, males constituted 51.5% of the population, and the

proportion of males to females (sex ratio) in the given population was 106.4 males for every 100 females.

### Families

The social unit of Beit Kahil consists of three families: Al 'Atawana Family, Al 'Asafra Family, Al Zuhour Family.

### Migration

Beit Kahil Council data indicates that around 50 emigrants moved from the village due to the bad political and economic situation.

### Education

According to the PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census 2007 results, approximately 5.7% of the population was illiterate, with women comprising 80.7% of the total illiterate population in the village. Around 12.6% of the population could read and write but had received no schooling, 24.4 % had completed elementary education, 26.1% had received preparatory education, and 31.3% of the residents had completed their secondary education and continued with higher education.

**Table 1: Population (10 years and above) by education and sex in Beit Kahil, 2007**

Sex	Educational Attainment										Total
	Illiterate	Can Read and write	Elementary	Preparatory	Secondary	Associate Diploma	Bachelor	Higher Diploma	Master	PhD	
M	46	269	516	532	392	153	223	4	13	1	<b>2,149</b>
F	192	258	502	556	315	90	104	2	1	-	<b>2,020</b>
<b>T</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>1,018</b>	<b>1,088</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4,169</b>

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

The field survey data indicates that there are five governmental schools in the village, two boys' schools and three girls' schools, which provide elementary and secondary education (Table 2). In addition to the normal daytime classes, one of the schools, Beit Kahil Girls Elementary School, provides evening classes for students.

**Table 2: The schools in Beit Kahil by name, stage, sex and supervising authority**

No.	School Name	Stage	Sex	Supervising Authority
1.	Daoud Atawna Boys Secondary School	Secondary	Male	Governmental
2.	Beit Kahil Boys Elementary School	Elementary	Male	Governmental
3.	Nassar Al 'Asafra Girls Secondary School	Secondary	Female	Governmental
4.	Beit Kahil Girls Elementary School "A"	Elementary	Female	Governmental
5.	Beit Kahil Girls Elementary School "B"	Elementary	Female	Governmental

The data of the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) reveals that at the end of the scholastic year 2006/2007, there were 2083 students, 62 classes, and 82 teachers in Beit Kahil village (See table 3).

		<b>Government</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Male</b>	No. of Schools	2	<b>2</b>
	No. of class	32	<b>32</b>
	No. of Teachers	42	<b>42</b>
	No. of Students	1100	<b>1100</b>
<b>Female</b>	No. of Schools	3	<b>3</b>
	No. of class	30	<b>30</b>
	No. of Teachers	40	<b>40</b>
	No. of Students	983	<b>983</b>

Source: Ministry of Higher Education –Hebron Directorate -2006/2007

There are also two kindergartens in the village. These kindergartens provide pre-education services to 290 children. Table 4 below is a listing of kindergartens in the village by name, number of children, and supervising authority.

<b>No.</b>	<b>Kindergarten Name</b>	<b>Number of Classes</b>	<b>Number of Children</b>	<b>Number of Teachers</b>	<b>Supervising Authority</b>
<b>1.</b>	Beit Kahil Charitable Society Kid	4	150	4	Charitable Society
<b>2.</b>	Al Aqsa Mosque Kindergarten	4	140	4	Private

Source: ARIJ Data Base – 2006

The education system in the village suffers from many problems including

1. A lack of classrooms;
2. That there are no public school services such as playgrounds, laboratories, etc;
3. Lack of funding to establish new schools.

There is a school in the village that was destroyed by the Israeli Defence Forces.

## **Health Status**

The village of Beit Kahil is served by a health center administered by the Palestinian Ministry of Health, with an additional two health clinics and one dental clinic administered by the private sector. There are other health facilities in the village such as a medical laboratory, a maternity and pediatric center, and a pharmacy. However, the village lacks ambulances to transport sick or injured people, and in case of emergencies, patients are sent to Hebron city medical facilities, located five km from the village.

The health sector in the village suffers from many problems including:

- The lack of well equipped medical laboratories.
- There is no X-ray center.
- No ambulances.
- There is a deficiency in the amount of medicine needed for patients' treatment.

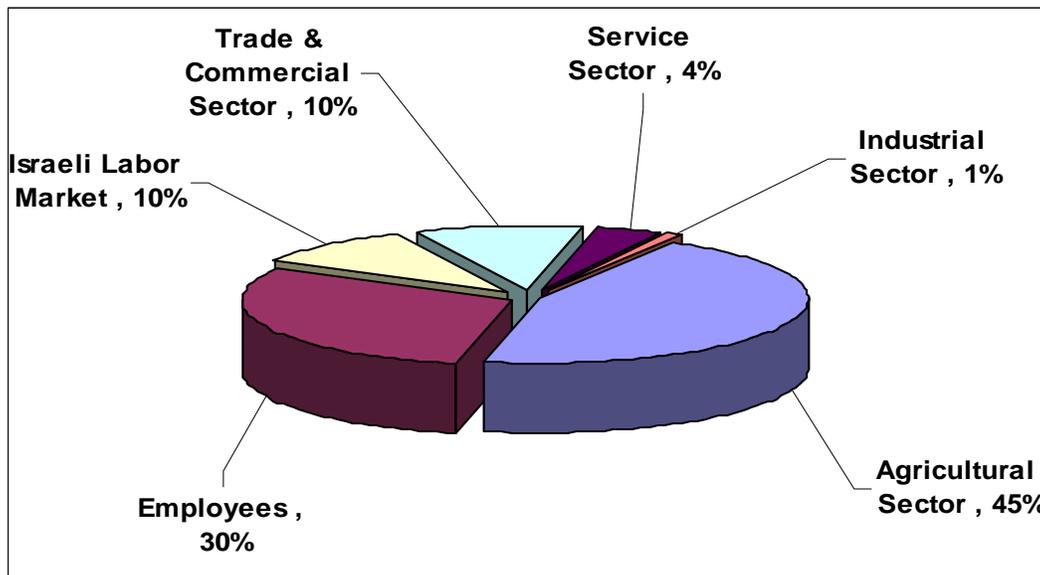
**Economic Activities**

According to field survey data (2007), the unemployment rate in Beit Kahil village reached 55%. The agricultural sector is considered the most important element of the economic base in Beit Kahil, comprising 45% of the total labor market.

The economic base of Beit Kahil is distributed as follows:

- The Agricultural Sector (45%)
- Employees (government or private institutions) (30%)
- The Israeli Labor Market (10%)
- The Trade and Commercial Sector (10%)
- The Service Sector (4%)
- The Industrial Sector (1%)

**Figure 1: Percentage of economic activity in Beit Kahil village**



The main industrial establishments in Beit Kahil include a vacuum cooling factory, al Jerashi Concrete Factory, the International Cement Company, a brick workshop and several plastic factories. Other establishments within the village market area include retail stores of fifteen groceries, two clothing shops, one butcher, two blacksmith workshops, five carpentry workshops and two service shops.

Village officials indicate that the social groups most affected by Israeli activities since the beginning of the Second Intifada are:

- 1) Workers previously employed in the Israeli market,
- 2) Small-holder farmers, and
- 3) Small-holder traders.

### Labor Force

According to the PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census 2007, there were 1,154 economically active persons in Beit Kahil, of whom 92% were employed. Of the 3,008 non-economically active persons, 62.1 % were students, 28.1% were housekeepers, and 9.8 % were unable to work. Females were over-represented in the non-economically active sector as housekeeping (see table 5).

Sex	Economically Active				Non 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	925	43	29	997	1,000	1	107	18	21	1,147	<b>2,149</b>
F	137	5	15	157	868	844	112	3	34	1,861	<b>2,020</b>
<b>T</b>	<b>1,062</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>1,154</b>	<b>1,868</b>	<b>845</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>3,008</b>	<b>4,169</b>

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

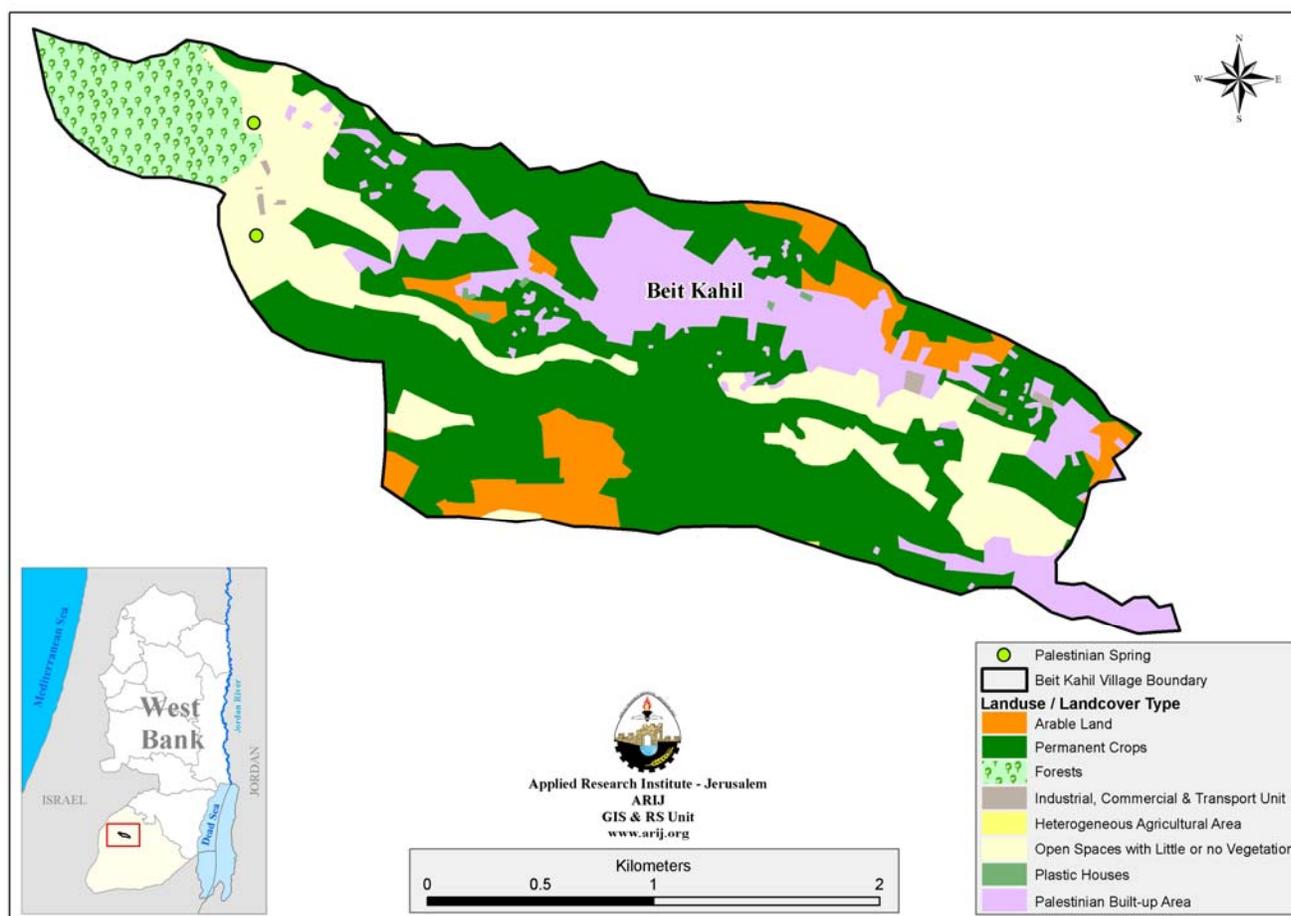
### Agricultural Sector

Beit Kahil village is predominantly an agricultural village; 60% of the village land is agricultural land of which 5,500 dunums are considered arable and 5,325 dunums are cultivated. (See table 6 and map 3)

Total Area	Arable land		Built up Area	Forests Area	Open Spaces and Rangelands
	Cultivated	Uncultivated			
8,850	5,325	175	1,300	2,000	50

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agricultural (MoA), 2006

Map 3: Land use/land cover and Segregation Wall in Beit Kahil village



Rain-fed fruity vegetables are the most cultivated vegetables in the village, covering an area of about 333 dunums (Table 7). The most common fruity vegetables cultivated within this area are tomatoes, squash and snake cucumber. An additional 65 dunums of land are cultivated with cauliflower, and other vegetables cultivated in the village include cabbage, spinach and cowpea.

**Table 7: Total area of rain-fed and irrigated open cultivated vegetables in Beit Kahil 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.
333	3	1	29	15	8	0	13	40	25	389	78

*Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated*

According to MoA data, 1,383 dunums of Beit Kahil land is cultivated with olive trees; various fruits, such as stone fruits, pome fruits, nuts and other fruit trees are planted in the village over a total area of 2,311 dunums (Table 8). The main trees cultivated in the village are olive, grape vines, and plum trees.

Approximately 100 olive trees in Beit Kahil were uprooted and destroyed by the Israeli settlements surrounding the village and the Israeli military forces.

Olives		Stone-fruits		Pome fruits		Nuts		Other fruit		Total area	
Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr
1,383	0	389	0	16	0	93	0	430	0	2,311	0

Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated

Table 9 shows the total field crops cultivated in the village of Beit Kahil. Cereals, in particular wheat and barley, are the most cultivated crops, covering an area of about 2,166 dunums. In addition, the cultivation of dry legume crops, mostly lentils and chick-peas, as well as forage crops, such as vetch, is common in the village of Beit Kahil. Data collected from the Village Council indicates that natural rainfall is the main source of water provision to grow crops.

Cereals		Bulbs		Dry legumes		Forage crops		Stimulating crops		Total area	
Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr
2,166	0	41	0	347	0	170	0	10	0	2,734	0

Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated

Village Council data also shows that most people in Beit Kahil are dependent on livestock rearing and dairy production. Table 10 shows the number of livestock and poultry raised in the village.

Cows*	Sheep	Goats	Donkeys	Mules	Broilers	Layers	Bee Hives
19	550	900	75	10	45,000	1,000	71

\*Including cows, bull calves, heifer calves and bulls

Though there are 10 km of agricultural roads in the village, these roads are largely insufficient and are mainly used for animals. Surfacing and paving the roads is necessary to serve the farming sector.

In Khirbet Jamrura, to the west of Beit Kahil village, roughly 3,000 dunums of arable lands are unused due to water shortage and lack of available investment capital for agricultural development. The total area of reclaimed land in Beit Kahil, including Khirbet Jamrura, is about 3,000 dunums.

## Institutions and Services

The preeminent institution in Beit Kahil is the Village Council, founded in 1983. Additionally, Beit Kahil has the following institutions:

- The Labor Union of the Southern West Bank: Established in 2004, it provides services to employed and unemployed people in the village.

- The Beit Kahil Charitable Society: Established in 1980, it focuses on various aspects of charity within the village, such establishing and reconstructing kindergartens, nurseries, etc.

## Infrastructure and Natural Resources

- **Telecommunication Services:** According to village officials, the village is connected to a telecommunications network. Nevertheless, only 30% of the housing units in Beit Kahil are connected to the network.
- **Water Services:** In 1993, Beit Kahil connected with a water network provided by Mekorote, the Israeli Water Supply Company, in cooperation with the Palestinian Water Authority. Approximately 60% of the housing units are connected to the network. Alternative water sources exist in the village and village officials note that there are 250 cisterns throughout the village, primarily for domestic use. In addition, there are numerous cisterns, as well as a spring used for agriculture. It should be noted that there is a water reservoir in the village with a capacity of 200 cubic meters. However, the water reservoir supply is not sufficient to meet household demand. In terms of water quality, village officials rate it as moderate, citing the inoperative network and low connectivity.
- **Electricity Services:** Since 1983, the Israeli Electric Company "Al-Qutriya" has been the major provider for energy in Beit Kahil; around 90% of the housing units are connected to the electric network. The village suffers from a weak current and powerless generators and electrical towers.
- **Sewage Disposal Facilities:** The sewage disposal system in Beit Kahil village is chronically under-funded. There is no sewage disposable network, and the bulk of sewage and domestic wastewater is discharged and disposed through septic tanks or in cesspits. Discharge of a variety of pollutants and sewage effluent from surrounding Israeli settlements causes Beit Kahil to suffer from water springs pollution.
- **Solid Waste Collection Services:** The solid waste generated in Beit Kahil is collected by Village Council owned trucks. The waste collected is transported and buried in the Nuba regional dumping site, which is owned by Hebron Municipality and located about 30 km away.
- **Transportation Facilities:** The village has a public transportation network consisting of 15 taxis dispatched from a central office, in addition to an informal transportation network conveying passengers from the village to other destinations. Transportation is made difficult, however, due to the lack of suitable roads, presence of military roadblocks and earth mounds, and an insufficient public transportation system. While Beit Kahil boasts four km of well-maintained, paved roads, there are five km paved roads in various states of poor repair, and an additional fifteen km of completely unpaved roads, of which five km are main roads and ten km are agricultural roads.

## **Impact of the Israeli Occupation**

Two settlements, Adora and Telem, lie very close to Beit Kahil to the southwest, as well as an Israeli military base, which lies to the west of the village; all three greatly affect the residents of Beit Kahil.

There are no permanent checkpoints around Beit Kahil village; however, the village is subjected to unpredictable flying checkpoints and three earth mound roadblocks. The Israeli bypass road passes above the main entrance to the village on a bridge, beneath which Israeli forces have piled earth mounds, complicating and diverting access to the village. Farmers in the village continuously experience difficulties reaching their fields and harvesting their crops. According to village officials, three homes have also been destroyed. While the separation wall does not dissect the village itself, planned expansion of the separation wall will isolate the agricultural lands of Khirbet Jamrura.

## **Implemented Development Plans and Projects**

There is an overall development concept in Beit Kahil village and since 2004, two development projects have been actively implemented:

- Expansion and reclamation of additional branches of the water network (funded by the Palestinian Hydrology Group and the Village Council)
- Construction of six new classrooms (funded by the UNDP)

## Locality Development Priorities and Needs

According to Beit Kahil Village Council, the village still suffers from lack of infrastructure development and shortage of many required services. Table 11 shows the development priorities and needs in the village.

No.	Sector	Strongly Needed	Needed	Moderately Needed	Not Needed	Notes
<b>Infrastructural Needs</b>						
1	Opening and Pavement of Roads	*				5 km main roads, 2,5 km internal roads 2 km agricultural roads
2	Construction of New Water Networks				*	
3	Rehabilitation of Old Water Networks	*				4 km
4	Construction of Water Reservoirs	*				1,000 m <sup>3</sup>
5	Extending the Water Network to cover New Built up Areas	*				5 km
6	Construction of Sewage Disposal Network	*				
<b>Health Needs</b>						
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			*		
<b>Educational Needs</b>						
1	Building of New Schools		*			Elementary & Secondary
2	Rehabilitation of Old Schools		*			Elementary
3	Purchasing of New Equipments for Schools		*			
<b>Agriculture Needs</b>						
1	Rehabilitation of Agricultural lands		*			1,000 dunums
2	Building Cisterns		*			50 cisterns
3	Construction of Barracks for Livestock		*			
4	Veterinary Services		*			
5	Seeds and Hay for Animals		*			
6	Rehabilitation of Greenhouses		*			20 Greenhouses
7	Field Crops Seeds		*			
8	Plants and Agricultural Supplies		*			

**References:**

- Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem (ARIJ). *GIS Database*. 2006-2009.
- Ministry of Agriculture. *Agricultural Status Database in Hebron Governorate*. 2006.
- Ministry of Higher Education. *Educational Status Database*. 2006-2007.
- Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. *Population, Housing and Establishment Census- Final Results*. Ramallah, Palestine. 1997 -2007.