

# Kharas Town 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/>

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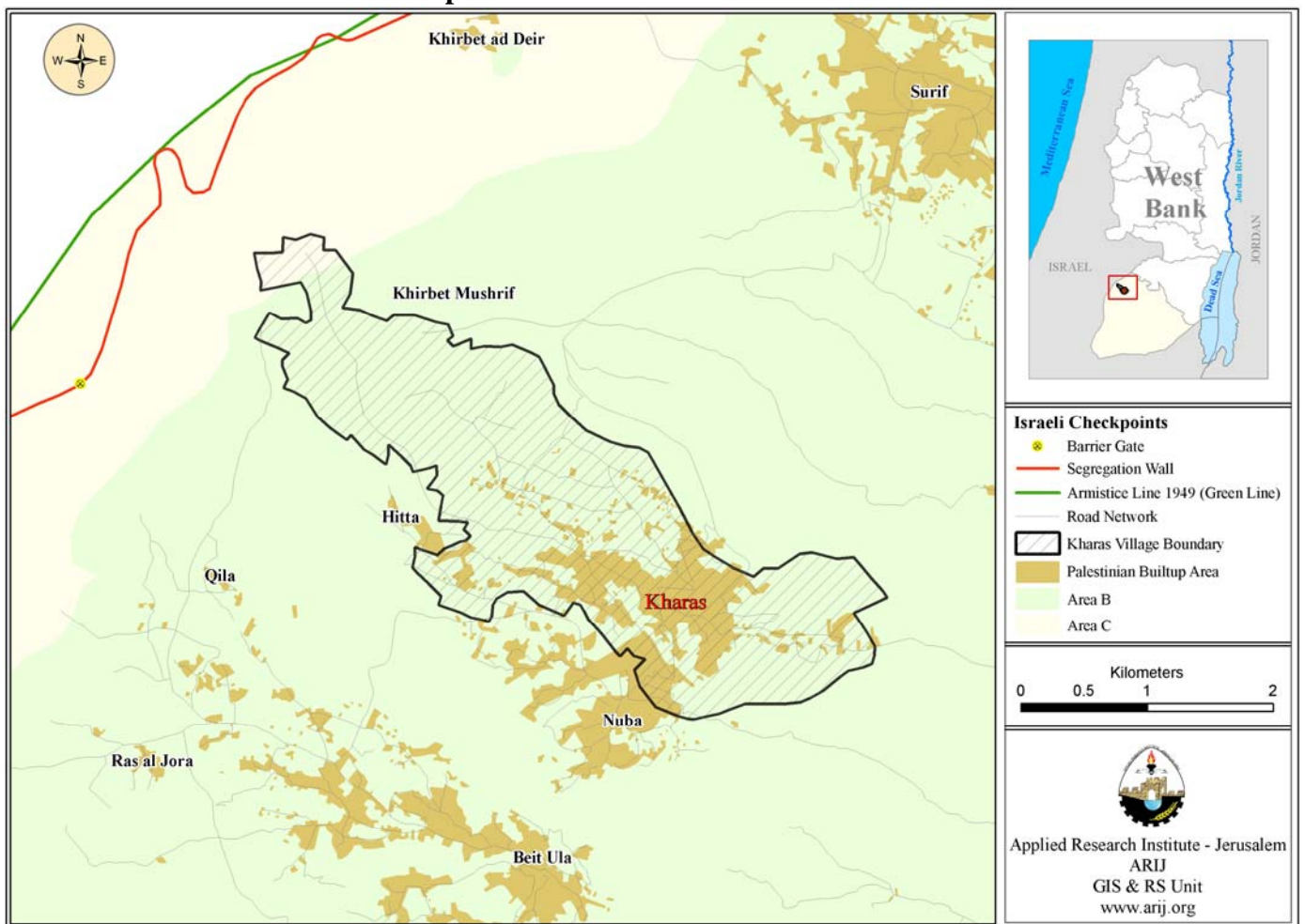
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## *Kharas Town Profile*

### Location and Physical Characteristics

Kharas is a town located within Hebron Governorate, 11 km north-west of Hebron city in the southern part of the West Bank. It is bordered by Halhul town to the east, Surif to the north, Nuba to the south and the Green Line to the west (See map 1).

**Map 1: Kharas location and borders**



Kharas town is located in the west of Halhul mountain region, at an elevation of 523 m above sea level. The mean annual rainfall in Kharas town is 481 mm; the average annual temperature is 17° C, and the average annual humidity is 60 % (ARIJ GIS).

Kharas town was governed by a village council, established in 1972, until 2000 when a municipal council, appointed by the Palestinian Authority, took over the responsibilities of the village council. In 2005, a new council was elected, consisting of 11 members and 15 employees. The municipal council operations and responsibilities include:

1. Administration, planning and development, organizing and issuing building licenses;
2. Infrastructural maintenance of water, electricity, solid waste collection, open and paved roads and the distribution of social services.

## **History**

A town rich in water wells and olive trees, Kharas town dates back more than 250 years. According to town residents, Kharas was originally named "Deir Hrash" after an existing convent, though changed its name over time to its present name (Kharas).

Kharas town was also mentioned in the Torah as 'Heret' in Samuel I (5: 22). (Arraf,1996)

### **Photos of Kharas**

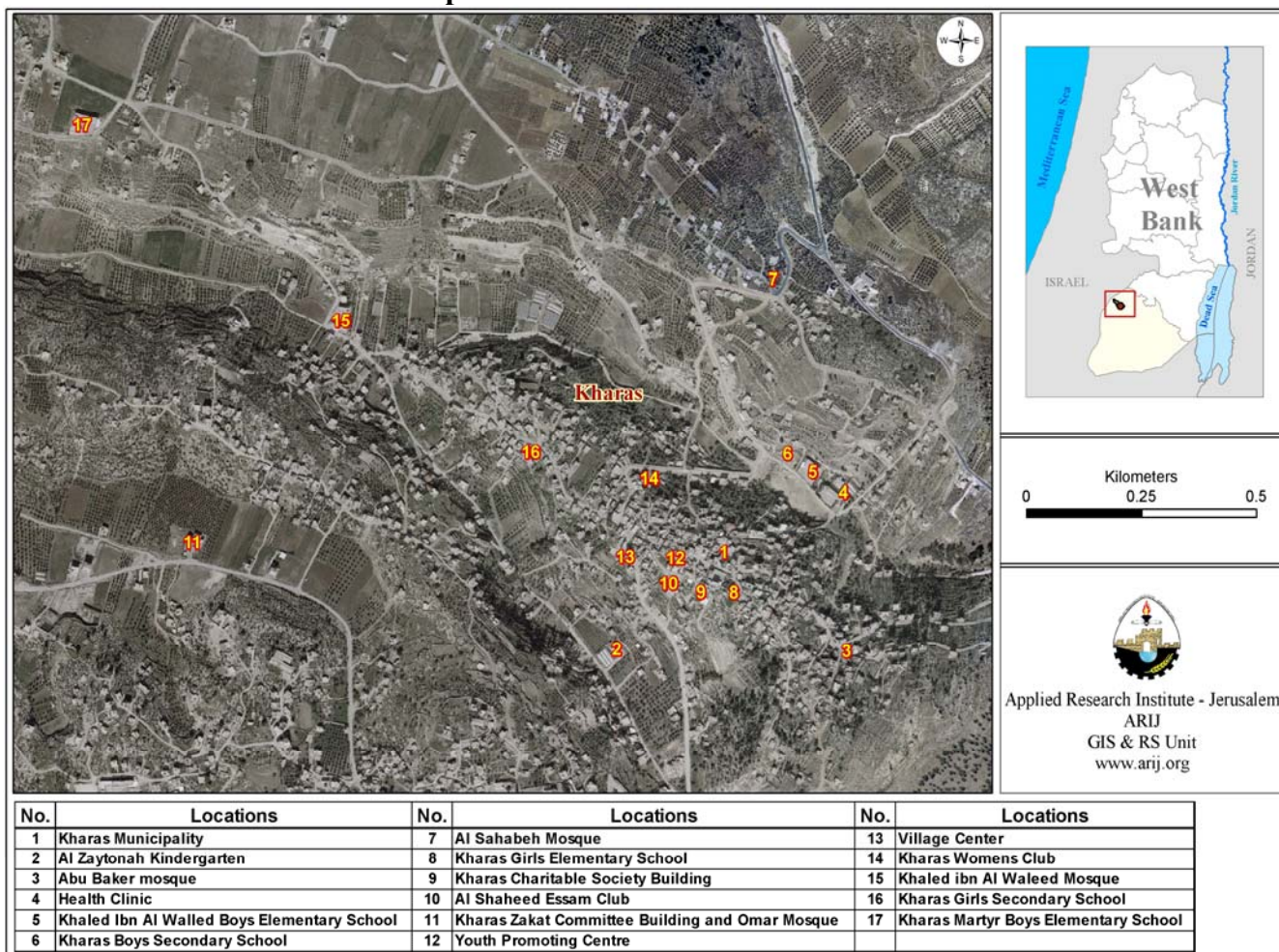


### Religious and Archeological Sites

There are four mosques in the town: Khaled Ibn Al Waleed Mosque, Omar Bin Al Khatab Mosque, Abu Baker Mosque and Al Sahabeh Mosque.

A few historical and archeological sites in the town exist, including Khirbet Al Mosheraf, Khirbet Leqya and Wad Al Shekh well. In north Kharas, there is another archeological site called Khirbet Luqa (Luke), where there are many ancient ruins remaining. (Ad Dabbagh, 1991)

**Map 2: Main locations in Kharas town**



### Population

According to the 2007 Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) Census, the total population of Kharas in 2007 was approximately 6,655 people, with 3,472 males and 3,183 females. Furthermore, 1,042 households resided in 1,182 housing units.

The population of Kharas town constitutes about 1.2% of the total population of the Hebron Governorate and is classified as a rural area.

## Age groups and gender

The data of the 2007 census shows that 44% of the town population was less than 15 years of age, 52 % are in the 15-64 age range and 2.7 % are 65 years and above. The sex ratio in the town was 109 males for every 100 females, thus males constitute 52.2 % of the population and females constitute 47.8 %

## Families

The population of Kharas is comprised of six main families, several smaller families, and a few refugees, such as the Al Hrub family, Kdemat family, Attwan family, Halahliah family, Aqabneh family, Abu Aljarish family.

## Education

According to the 2007 Population Census, 6.3% of the residents were illiterate, with women representing 64.6% of this population. Of the literate population, 13.2% of residents could read and write having received no formal education, 24.5% had completed elementary education, 31.1% had completed preparatory education and 25% had completed secondary and higher education. Table 1 shows the 2007 education status in Kharas by sex and educational attainment.

Sex	Illiterate	Can read & write	Elementary	Preparatory	Secondary	Associate Diploma	Bachelor	Higher Diploma	Master	PhD	Total
M	101	322	593	715	410	56	158	2	17	3	2,377
F	184	277	514	703	336	37	96	2	-	-	2,149
<b>T</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>1,107</b>	<b>1,418</b>	<b>746</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4,526</b>

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

Field survey data indicates three levels of education in Kharas town: pre-school (kindergarten), elementary and secondary education. The data specifically identifies five schools in the town, of which three were for males and two for females. The number of schools by stage, sex and supervising authority is shown in table 2.

No.	School name	Stage	Sex	Supervising Authority
1.	Khaled Ibn Al Walled Boys Elementary School	Elementary	Male	Governmental
2.	Kharas Martyr Boys Elementary School	Elementary	Male	Governmental
3.	Kharas Girls Elementary School	Elementary	Female	Governmental
4.	Kharas Boys Secondary School	Secondary	Male	Governmental
5.	Kharas Girls Secondary School	Secondary	Female	Governmental

The data of Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) shows that during the 2006/2007 scholastic year there were 62 classes, 83 teachers and 2,081 students in Kharas town (See table 3).



		<b>Government</b>	<b>Private</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Male</b>	No. of Schools	3	-	<b>3</b>
	No. of class	32	-	<b>32</b>
	No. of Teachers	43	-	<b>43</b>
	No. of Students	1,062	-	<b>1,062</b>
<b>Female</b>	No. of Schools	2	-	<b>2</b>
	No. of class	30	-	<b>30</b>
	No. of Teachers	40	-	<b>40</b>
	No. of Students	1,019	-	<b>1,019</b>

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

As of 2006, there were two kindergartens in Kharas, both supervised by charitable societies, providing pre-school education services to 240 children. Table 4 shows the kindergartens 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>
1.	Kharas Kindergarten	5	150	5	Kharas Charitable Society
2.	Al Zaytonah Kindergarten	3	90	3	Developing Rural Woman

Residents cite the lack of transportation to and from schools, which are located far from the residential area, as the main impediment to educational services in Kharas.

## Health Status

In Kharas, one governmental clinic provides health services for women and children. In addition, there are four private general physician clinics, three dental clinics and several other health institutions. Table 5 below shows the number of health institutions in Kharas town.

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Governmental</b>	<b>Privet</b>	<b>Charitable</b>	<b>NGO</b>
Physician Clinic	-	4	-	-
Dental Clinic	-	3	-	-
Health Clinic	-	-	-	-
X Ray Center	-	-	-	-
Medical Lab	-	1	-	-
Maternity & Pediatric Center	1	-	-	-
Pharmacy	-	3	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

When health services are unavailable in the town or in the case of emergencies, residents of Kharas travel to neighboring towns including Halhul, or Hebron City.

Obstacles and problems facing the health sector in Kharas include:

1. Shortage of modern health centre facilities; and
2. Lack of an ambulance.

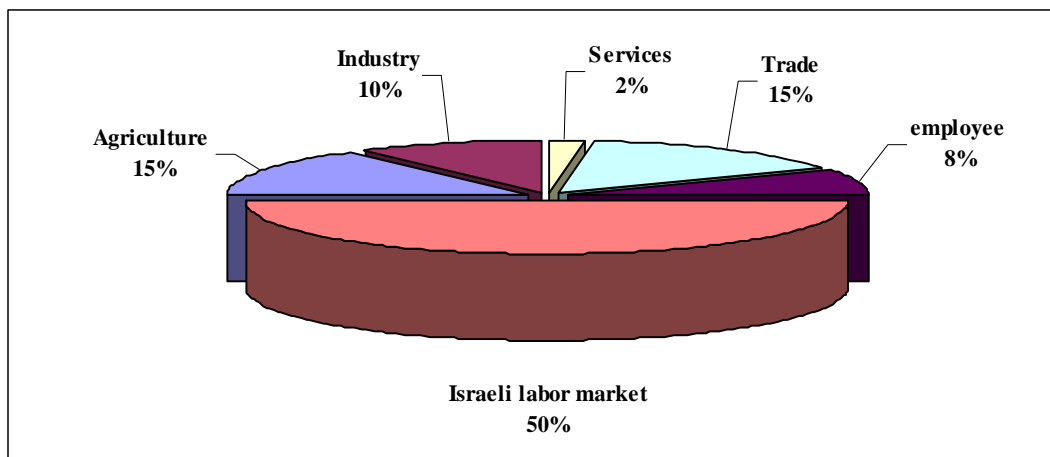
**Economic Activities**

Nearly 50% of the town labor force is engaged in the Israeli labor market, while thirty percent of the labor force depends on agriculture and trade activities

Field survey data indicated that the share of the population working in the various sectors of the economy is:

- The agriculture sector -15 %
- The employee sector - 8%
- The service sector -2 %
- Israeli labor market -50 %
- The industrial sector -10 %
- The trade sector -15 %

**Figure 1: Percentage of economic activity in Kharas town**



The main economic institutions in the town include two olive pressing plants, two stone cutting factories and one automatic backer. Traders include two clothing shops, four butchers, three blacksmiths, three carpenters, and a number of grocers and other shops. A significant proportion of Kharas residents also depend on the public and private sectors.

Based on ARIJ survey in 2007, the social groups most affected by Israeli restrictions during the second Intifada are: 1) workers previously employed on the Israeli labor market, 2) families with

six individuals and more, 3) small-holder traders 4) small-holder farmers 5) housekeepers and children.

### Labor Force

The 2007 census data showed that labor force participation constituted 70% of the town's total population, with 47.5% being women participants (2,149 women in total). The labor force in Kharas town is 4,526 people in total, of which 28.7% are economically active, and 85.8% of the economically active people are employed. The remaining 71.3% of the labor force population represent non-economically active people. The largest groups of non-economically active people are the students and housekeepers, who constitute 60.4% and 29.7% respectively. Table 6 shows the labor force statistics of Kharas town.

**Table 6: Kharas population (10 years and above) by sex and employment status**

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	1,037	72	70	1,179	996	5	137	16	44	1,198	2,377
F	77	4	38	119	955	955	107	2	11	2,030	2,149
<b>T</b>	<b>1,114</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>1,298</b>	<b>1,951</b>	<b>960</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>3,228</b>	<b>4,526</b>

Source: PCBS, May 2009. Population, Housing and Establishment Census-2007, results

### Agricultural Sector

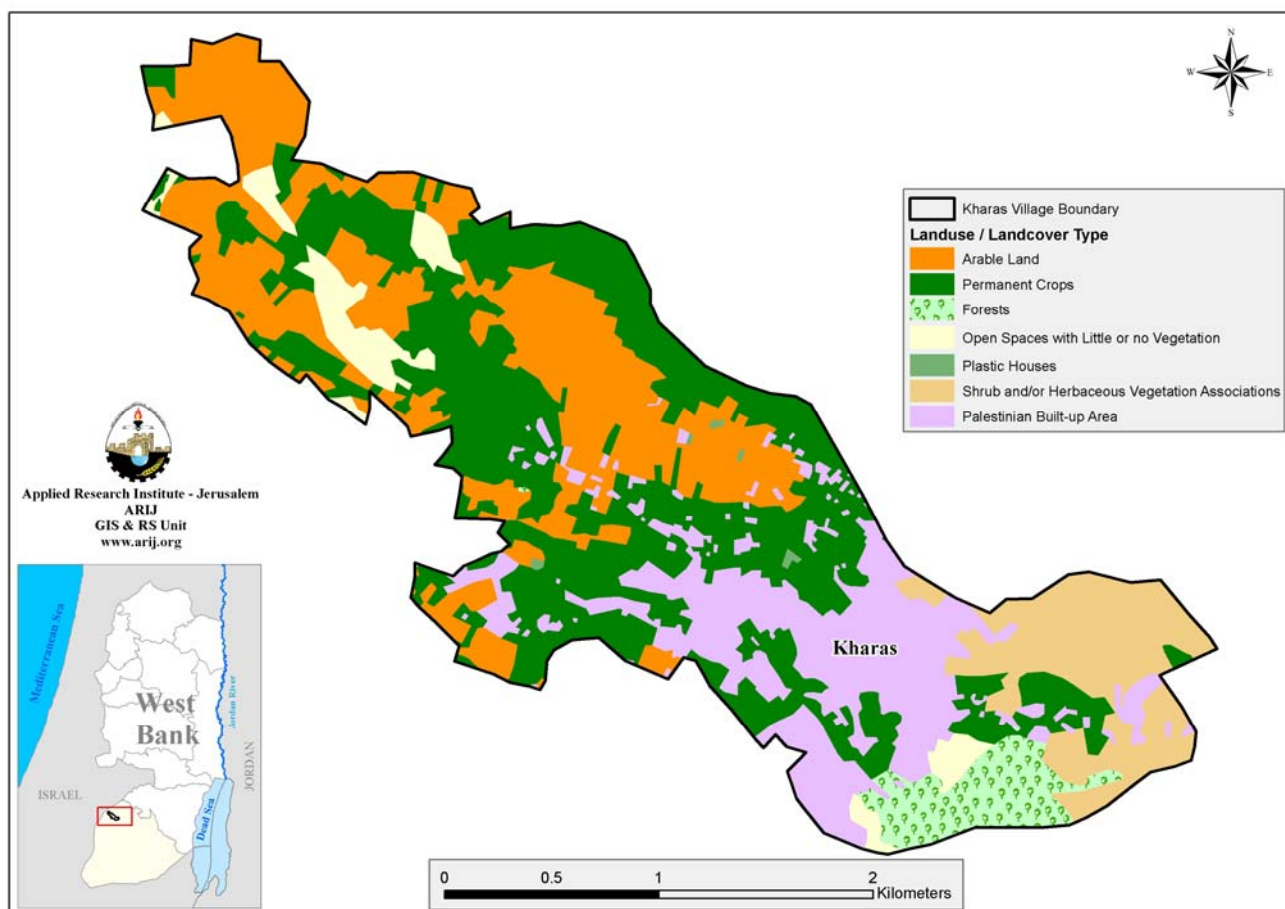
According to the Palestinian Ministry of Agricultural, Kharas town lies on a total area of 6,800 dunums. 5,500 dunums are considered arable land; however, only 4,242 dunums are cultivated. (See table 7 and map 3)

**Table 7: Land Use in Kharas town (dunum)**

Total Area	Arable Land		Built up Area	Forests Area	Open Spaces and Rangelands
	Uncultivated Area	Cultivated Area			
6,800	1,258	4,242	800	200	300

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agricultural (MoA), 2006

Map 3: Land use/ land cover in Kharas town



There are about 15 greenhouses with a total area equal 10 dunums, but no tunnels in Kharas town. Five dunums of this area are used for growing tomatoes and five for planting summer cucumber.

Table 8 shows the different types of rain-fed and irrigated open cultivated vegetables in the town of Kharas. The rain-fed fruity vegetables are the most cultivated covering an area of about 119 dunums. The most common vegetables cultivated within this area are okra, squash, snake cucumber and cauliflower.

**Table 8: Total area of rain fed and irrigated open cultivated vegetables in Kharas town (dunum)**

Fruity vegetables		Leafy vegetable		Green legumes		Bulbs		Other vegetables		Total area	
Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr
119	17	3	15	15	1	0	6	0	20	137	59

*Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated*

There are two types of aromatic medical plants in the town of Kharas, thyme and sage, which spread over a total area of about four dunums.

In the town of Kharas, there is a total area of 3,533 dunums planted with olive trees. Other trees planted in the area include almond trees, plum trees, fig trees nut trees and grape vines.

Olives		Stone-fruits		Pome fruits		Nuts		Other fruit		Total area	
Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr
3,353	0	40	0	1	0	86	0	108	0	3,588	0

*Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated*

Table 10 shows the total field crops cultivated in the town of Kharas. Cereals, in particular wheat and barley, are the most cultivated crops covering an area of about 505 dunums. In addition, the cultivation of dry legumes such as chickpeas, lentils and broad bean is common in the town of Kharas. 17 dunums of land was cultivated with forage crops such as vetch and sern.

Cereals		Bulbs		Dry legumes		Forage crops		Stimulating crops		Total area	
Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr
505	0	11	0	50	0	17	0	5	0	588	0

*Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated*

The survey data conducted by ARIJ indicated that about 40% of Kharas residents are also dependent upon rearing and keeping livestock, such as cows, sheep, goats and chicken, in addition to 123 bee hives.

Cows*	Sheep	Goats	Horses	Donkeys	Mules	Broilers	Layers	Bee Hives
104	800	600	5	20	5	70,000	1,000	123

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

There are approximately 10 km of agricultural roads in the town providing farmers access to their lands and crops. Some of these roads are suitable for driving vehicles and others only for driving agricultural machines

Farmers of Kharas town participate in local agricultural societies and unions that provide agricultural assistance, which include the Charitable Society, the Agricultural Union and the Women's Club.

The other problem facing the agricultural sector, other than the Israeli procedures, is the extension of built up areas infringing on arable lands. In addition, a general shortage of grazing area for livestock is a threat not only to a sustainable livestock economy but also to overgrazing of existing pasturelands.

## Institutions and Services

Kharas town has no national institutions; residents receive most services from Hebron City or the neighboring towns. Kharas has five societies, as well as other institutions including:

1. Kharas Municipality, established 2000. With a new council elected in 2005 consisting of eleven members, the municipality provides public services to the residents such as water, electricity, license issuance, solid waste management, etc.
2. The Kharas Charitable Society, established in 1974, has a board with six members. Based out of a building located in the centre of Kharas, the society has a kindergarten providing educational and cultural training, as well as health activities.
3. Kharas Society for co-operation and consumption, established in 2004, consists of 50 members. Its objective is to provide consumption needs to members as well as residents and to support other activities in the town.
4. Kharas Women's Club (KWC), established in 1990, has more than 450 members, most who work within the developmental sector. KWC is increasingly participating in rural women's development activities by providing vocational training courses and implementing small income generating initiatives, as well as hosting social activities. The club has a board of six female members.
5. The Youth Promoting Centre, established in 2002, has 18 members. The centre has implemented many activities in the town for youths including first aid instruction, computer and academic courses.
6. Kharas 'Zakat' and Charity Committee, established in 1995, provides assistance to needy households, orphans and needy students.
7. The Agricultural Union was established in 2001 with 10 members. Today the union has more than 200 farmers as members, with a range of activities implemented by the union including opening agricultural roads, cisterns construction and extension. The union provides some services to its members including government insurance, private insurance and health cards.
8. Kharas Young Women's Centre, established in 2005, is an NGO funded by UNIFIM. It provides services to women, including education, raising awareness of women's rights, encouraging the role of women socially and economically, and encouraging woman for leadership roles.
9. Kharas Sport Club.

Table 12 shows the number of institutions in Kharas by type:

<b>Table 12: No of institutions in Kharas by type</b>						
<b>Type of institution</b>						
<b>Governmental</b>	<b>Charitable</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>NGO</b>	<b>Agriculture</b>	<b>Sports</b>	<b>Religious</b>
2	2	2	0	1	1	4

## Infrastructure and Natural Resources

- **Telecommunication Services:** Approximately 50% of Kharas town households are connected to the telecommunications network.
- **Water Services:** Kharas connected to the water network in 1973 and nearly 98% of housing units are currently connected. The Palestinian Water Authority is the primary provider of water in the town. Water tanks and cisterns provide an alternative resource to the water network. In addition, a water reservoir exists in Kharas with a capacity of 1000 m<sup>3</sup> used mainly during the summer season. Potential domestic water supply per capita is 47 (L/day). However, during summer, potential water supply falls considerably.
- **Electricity Services:** Kharas has been connected to the electricity network since 1998. Approximately 95% of housing units in the town are connected to the network. Kharas municipality manages the supply of electricity, which is provided by the Israeli Electric Cooperation.
- **Solid Waste Collection:** Solid waste management in Kharas is managed by the Kharas municipality in cooperation with Joint Services Council for Planning and Development-North West Hebron. Solid waste produced in the town is collected and sent to a dumping site 3-4 km away, which is operated by the Joint Services Council. Burning and dumping are the main methods used to dispose of solid waste.
- **Sewage Disposal Facilities:** Kharas town had been partially connected to the sewage network since 2003, covering an estimated 50% of the town. The remainder of the town disposes of wastewater in cesspits. This is considered one of the main sources of pollution to local groundwater.
- **Transportation Services:** There are approximately 33,207 m of roads in Kharas, 21,200 m of which are surfaced and in good condition, 5,500 m are surfaced yet not in good condition and 6,507 m are completely unsurfaced. Transportation in Kharas is compromised of four buses and ten informal taxies. Town transportation suffers from a general shortage of vehicles and services.

## Impact of the Israeli Occupation

Kharas town had already lost part of its land as a result of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. Since the beginning of the second Intifada, approximately 2,000 dunums of the town's land has been confiscated; 1,000 dunums of these confiscated lands have been allotted for the construction of the segregation wall, which will pass through the western part of the town. The Israeli authorities began construction of the wire and concrete wall near Kharas in 2005, with 2 km currently completed.

Upon completion, an additional 600 dunums of land will be isolated behind the wall, thus making it arduous for farmers to access these lands. Local construction of the wall is responsible for uprooting more than 2,000 trees including 1,000 olive trees, 300 grape vines, 500 fruit trees and 200 other forest trees.

The Israeli forces also destroyed one housing unit and more than three cisterns for construction of the segregation wall.

## Implemented Development Plans and Projects

In light of Kharas's largely agricultural character, the municipality implemented a project to rehabilitate its agricultural land funded by the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committee and the Ministry of Agriculture.

The municipality of Kharas has implemented many projects in the town with an objective to develop the town infrastructure and increase services available to residents. Since 2004, more than twelve projects have been implemented in the town. These include:

No.	Project name	Type	Funded by
1	Rehabilitation of open and surfaced Roads	Infrastructure	USAID, Arabic Fund, PASIA and Kharas Municipality
2	Build water reservoir and construction of water networks.	Infrastructure (Water)	Palestinian Water Authority
3	Construction of internal electricity network	Infrastructure (Electricity)	Local Community and Kharas Municipality
4	Construction of sewage network (1 km)	Infrastructure	PHG
5	Preparation and outfit Kharas Health Centre	Health	Italy and Turkish Governments
6	Preparation of Kharas Stadium	Infrastructure (Sport)	Municipality and Ministry of Finance
7	Automatic Backer	Investment	YMCA
8	Outfit Kharas Municipality General Library		



## Locality Development Priorities and Needs

Kharas Municipality has prepared a study for the developmental priorities and needs in the town, shown below in Table 14. The strategic plan for Kharas municipality is to implement numerous town infrastructure and service development projects involving, among others, projects for water, schools and roads. The shortage of funds and irregular budgetary resources are the main obstacles for implementing this plan.

<b>Table 14: Development priorities and needs in Kharas</b>						
No.	Sector	Strongly Needed	Needed	Moderately Needed	Not Needed	Notes
<b>Infrastructural Needs</b>						
1	Opening and Pavement of Roads	*				7 km internal
2	Construction of New Water Networks				*	
3	Rehabilitation of Old Water Networks				*	
4	Construction of Water Reservoirs				*	
5	Extending the Water Network to cover New Built up Areas				*	
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
2	Rehabilitation of Old Schools			*		
3	Purchasing of New Equipments for Schools			*		
<b>Agriculture Needs</b>						
1	Rehabilitation of Agricultural lands			*		200 dunum
2	Building Cisterns			*		50 cistern
3	Construction of Barracks for Livestock			*		20 unit
4	Veterinary Services			*		
5	Seeds and Hay for Animals			*		
6	Rehabilitation of Greenhouses			*		15 unit
7	Field Crops Seeds			*		
8	Plants and Agricultural Supplies			*		

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