

Sikka/Tawas 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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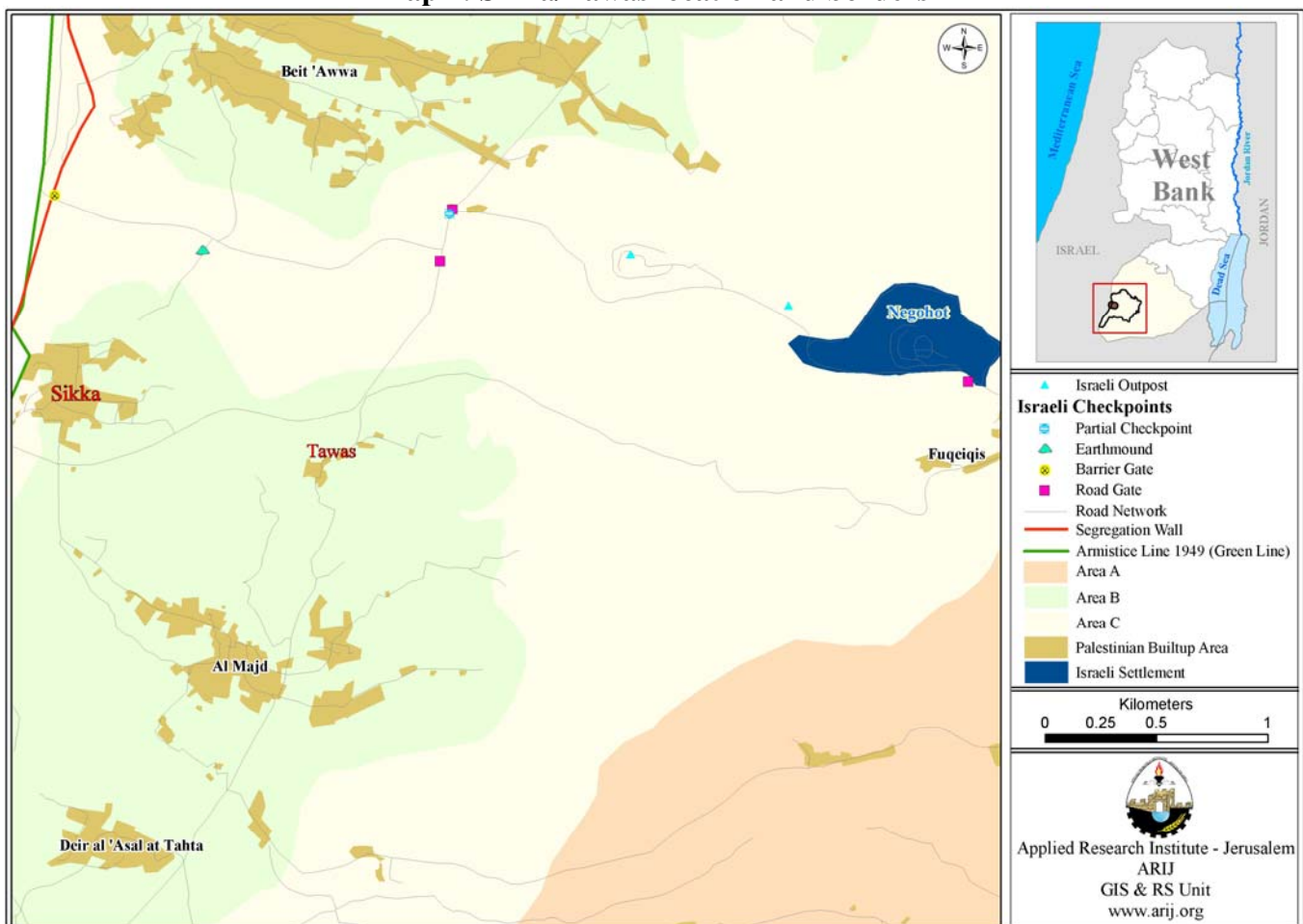
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Sikka/Tawas Village Profile

Location and Physical Characteristics

Sikka and Tawas are two incorporated Palestinian villages in Dura area located 14 km southwest of Hebron city in southern part of the West Bank. Sikka Village is bordered by Tawas village to the east, Beit 'Awwa to the north, Al Majd village to the south, and 1949 Armistice Line (the “Green Line”) to the west (See map 1).

Map 1: Sikka/Tawas location and borders



The total area of Sikka village is around 3,000 dunums, of which 140 is classified as built-up area, 2,040 are agricultural lands, 18 dunums are forests and 350 dunums are uncultivated or open lands. Sikka Village Council has a master plan for 100 dunums of the village land.

Sikka Village is located on low altitude hills at 457 meters above sea level, whereas Tawas is located at an elevation of 498 meters above sea level. The mean annual rainfall in Sikka/Tawas is

436 mm; the average annual temperature is 16 °C, and the average annual humidity is about 61% (ARIJ GIS).

Sikka village is governed by a Village Council since 1996; the council consists of five members. The council has its own building and provides a number of services to the residents of Sikka/Tawas, including:

- Water services
- Social development services
- Reconstruction of public buildings, particularly schools.

History

Sikka village is considered one of the ancient localities in the area, and most its lands has been confiscated by Israeli forces since the 1948 war. The name of the Sikka village derives from "sikka" which means "Road" in Arabic, and it was due to the main road that links the West Bank to Gaza Strip. The origin of present inhabitants of the village traces their roots from Arab tribes. Tawas, a nearby village, was incorporated into Sikka in 1996 and they both have today the same village council.

Photo of Sikka/Tawas

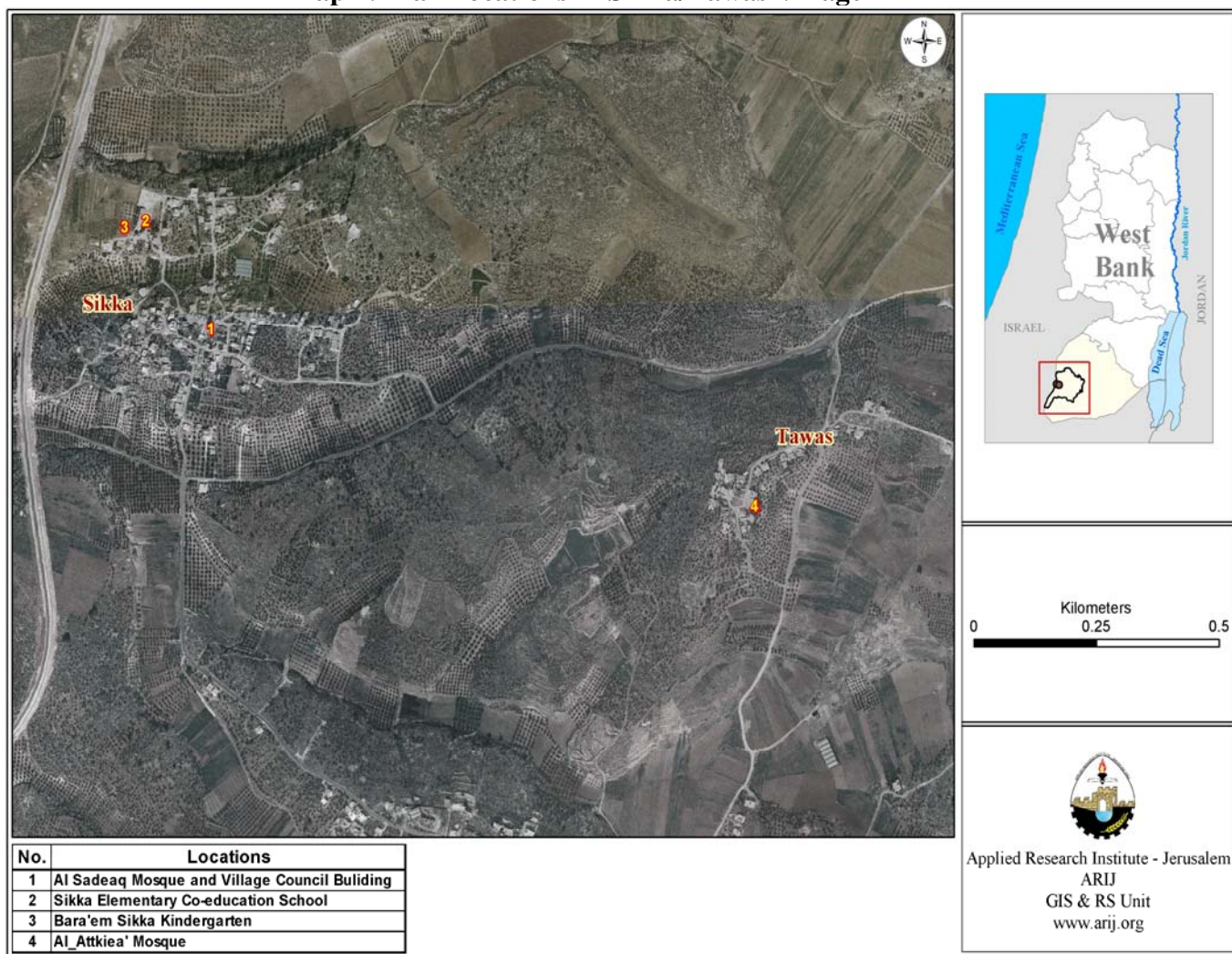


Part of the Israeli Segregation plan in Sikka village

Religious and Archaeological Sites

There are only two main mosques serving the village called 'Al_Attkiea' mosque and Al Sadeaq mosque. There are no other historical sites in Rabud.

Map 2: Main locations in Sikka/Tawas Village



Demography and Population

According to the 2007 Census conducted by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), the total population of Sikka was 855 people, of whom 724 people were living in Sikka and 131 people were living in Tawas. Out of the 855 inhabitants 402 were males and 453 were females. There were 149 households resident in 162 Housing units in Sikka Village and the average household size was 5.7 people.

Village	Male	Female	Total
Sikka	334	390	724
Tawas	68	63	131
Total	402	453	855

Source: PCBS, May 2008. Population, Housing and Establishment Census-2007, Final Results

Age Groups and Gender

The 2007 Census results showed that the distribution of the population in the Sikka village, in terms of age group and sex. The data showed that 41.2% were less than 15 years, 55.9% were aged between 15-64 and 2.9% were aged 65 years and above. The table above reveals that the sex ratio in the village in 2007 was 88.9 males for every 100 females. In terms of percentages, the males in Sikka constituted 47.1% of the population and female constitute 52.9%.

Families

There are four main groups consisting of 10 families within the two villages. These are Al Jawa'da (Ihsheish, Jada', Ibsees, Habes, Jawa'da), Hureibat (Abu Samra, Iqteit, Hureibat), Abu Eideh and Nashwiyah which is the smallest group, representing of the total population.

Migration

The data collected from Sikka/Tawas village council indicates that there were around 60 emigrants from the village since the beginning of the Second Intifada as a result of the political and economic situation.

Education

According (PCBS), Population, Housing and Establishment Census 2007 results, about 5.9% of Sikka/ Tawas residents were illiterates, of whom women (77.8%) comprised a greater percentage of illiterate than men (22.2%). Of the literate population, 12.5% of residents could read and write although having received no formal education, 21.5% had completed elementary education, 34.2% had completed preparatory education and 25.9% had completed both secondary and higher education. Table 2 shows the education status in Sikka by sex and education attainment in 2007.

Sex	Illiterate	Can read & write	Elementary	Preparatory	Secondary	Associate Diploma	Bachelor	Higher Diploma	Master	PhD	Total
M	8	33	52	106	54	8	20	-	3	-	284
F	28	44	80	104	57	4	13	-	-	-	330
T	36	77	132	210	111	12	33	-	3	-	614

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

According to the field survey there is just one coeducation governmental school in Sikka/Tawas village, which is the Sikka Elementary Co-education School. The school provides elementary education to the students.

According to Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) data, by the end of the scholastic year 2006/2007 there were 211 students (106 males and 105 females), 14 teachers (8 males and 6 females), and 10 co-educational classes.

Field survey data indicated that there are two private coeducational kindergartens in Sikka/Tawas village, Al-Seddik (Sikka) Kindergarten and Bara'em Sikka Kindergarten; they both provide pre-school education services to 52 children of the two villages.

As there is no secondary school for students in Sikka/Tawas village, most students went to complete their school education to Al-Majd village, which is about 2 km away. These include Al-Majd Girls Secondary School and Al-Majd Boys Secondary School.

The educational sector in the village is suffering from the following problems:

- Lack of classrooms.
- Lack of public school services.

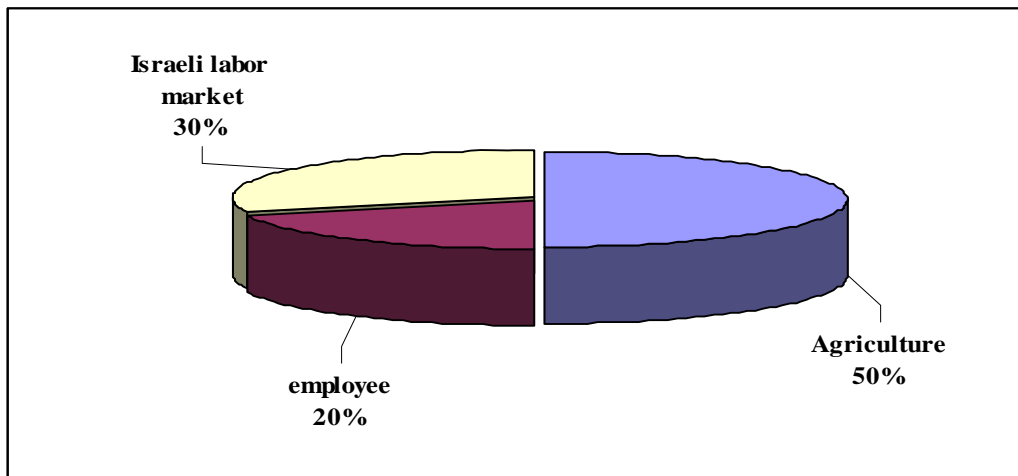
Health Status

Sikka/Tawas Village lacks health institutions, except for a mother and childcare center, but in general there are no health services and public or private health clinics in the village. In emergency cases, residents of Sikka or Tawas get health services, mainly from neighboring localities including Al-Majd which is around 2 km away and Dura which is 14 km away.

Economic Activities

Sikka/Tawas residents depend mainly on the agricultural sector, where around 50% of the total population work in agriculture. In addition, residents of Sikka/Tawas also depend on the Israeli labor market, due to the village location adjacent to the Green Line. The Data collected from the village council showed that 30% of the total population worked in Israel, and 20% of the total population worked as employees in different sectors. Sikka/Tawas village lacks economic main institutions, as there are just five small groceries.

Figure 1: Percentage of economic activity in Sikka/Tawas Village



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

1. Workers that had previously worked in the Israeli labor market.
2. Families with six individuals and more.
3. Small-holder farmers.
4. Housekeeping and children.

Labor Force

According to PCPS, Population, Housing and Establishment Census-2007 -73.7% of the population of Sikka/ Tawas were of working age (10 years and above). Of 614 people above the minimum working age, 170 people (27.7%) were economically active people – in the labor force- of which 93.5% were employed, 4.7% were unemployed, and 1.8% were unemployed and have never worked. The total number of economically non-active persons (i.e. those out of the labor force) stood at 444, 54.5% of whom were students, 37.8% were housekeeping, and 7.7% are unable or unwilling to work (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	139	8	3	150	108	4	15	1	6	134	284
F	20	-	-	20	134	164	11	1	-	310	330
T	159	8	3	170	242	168	26	2	6	444	614

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

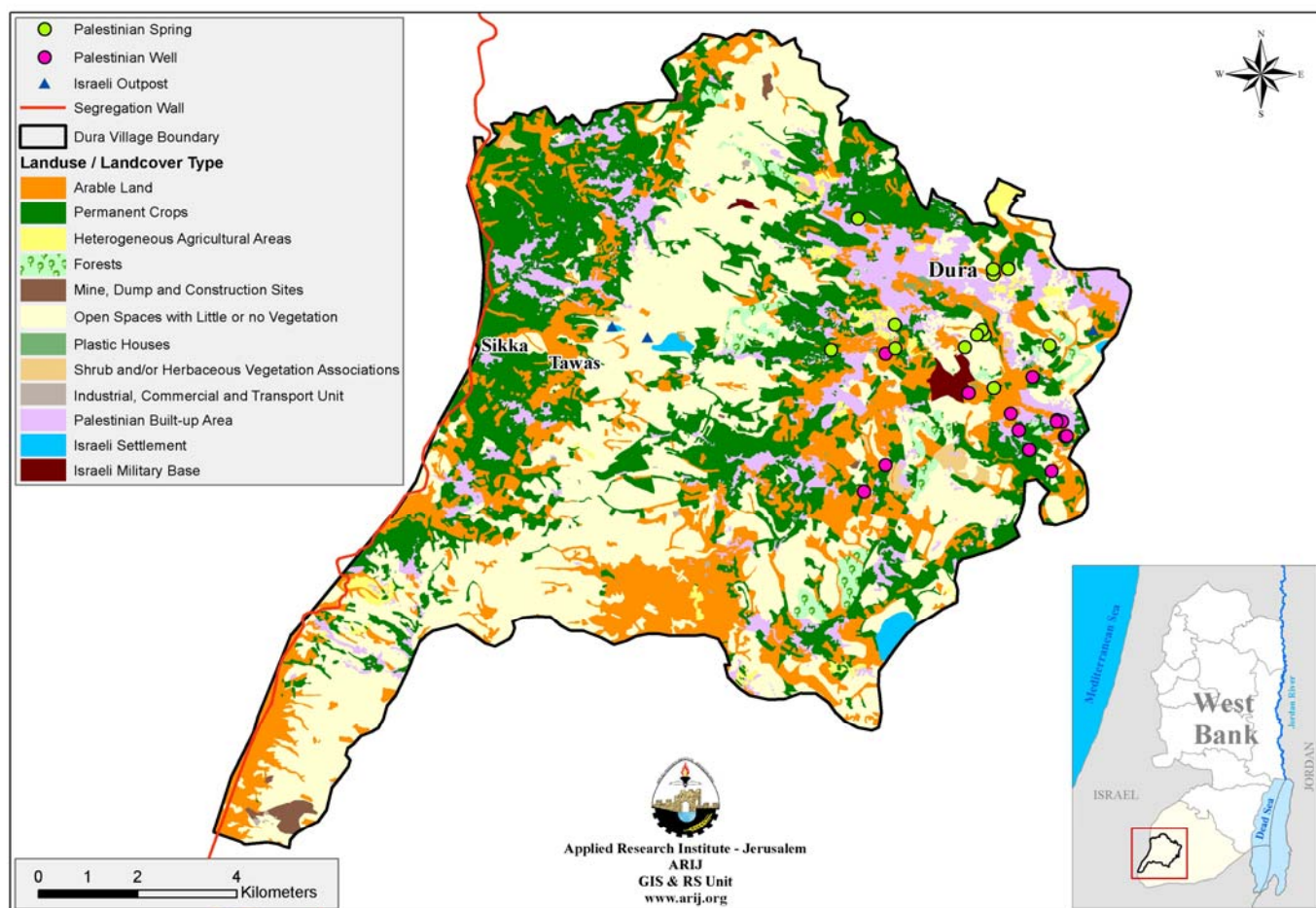
Agricultural Sector

Sikka village lies on a total area of 3,000 dunums. 2,040 dunums are considered to be arable land; however, only 1,606 dunums are used for growing crops. Many elements, such as land confiscation, uprooting and destruction of crops by Israelis, and lack of available investment capital for agricultural development, have interfered with the unsuitability of arable farming in the village. Another important element includes the lack of water resources in the Village, as the only main resource for irrigated open cultivation is harvesting wells.

Total Area	Arable Land		Built up Area	Forests Area	Open Spaces and Rangelands
	Cultivated Area	Uncultivated Area			
3,000	1,606	434	140	18	350

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agricultural (MoA), 2006

Map 3: Land use/land cover in Sikka Village



In Sikka, there is about 1 dunum of greenhouses, and it is used for growing cucumber. Table 5 shows the different types of rain-fed and irrigated open cultivated vegetables in Sikka. The fruity vegetables are the most cultivated with an area of about 26 dunums, where the most common vegetables cultivated within this area are squash and snake cucumber.

Table 5: Total area of rain-fed and irrigated open cultivated vegetables in Sikka Village (dunum)

Fruity vegetables		Green legumes		Other vegetables		Total area	
Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.
26	0	2	0	4	0	32	0

Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated

Two species of aromatic medical plants are grown in the village of Sikka over a total area of about 2 dunums. These plants are thyme and sage.

There is also a total area of 780 dunums of Olive tree plantations. Other trees planted in the area include almond trees, fig trees and grape vines (See table 6)

Olives		Citrus		Nuts		Other fruit		Total area	
Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.
780	0	0	1	170	0	53	0	1003	1

Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated

Cereals, in particular wheat and barley, are considered the most commonly cultivated crops; they cover an area of about 356 dunums. The cultivation of forage crops is considered to be very common in the village, and it includes the common vetch and bitter vetch, with an area of about 170 dunums. Lentils are also considered one of the important cultivated field crops in the village and they cover an area of 30 dunums

Cereals		Bulbs		Dry legumes		Seeds		Forage crops		Other crops		Total area	
Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.
356	0	5	0	33	0	1	0	170	0	2	0	567	0

Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated

Data collected from Sikka Village Council indicates that Sikka residents depend heavily on livestock rearing and dairy production. The data indicates that around 20% of the households are rearing animals. In total there are about 5 cows, 39 goats and 514 sheep in addition to 8 poultry farms with approximately 56,600 birds. There are also around 56 beehives that belong to the Sikka residents.

Cows*	Sheep	Goats	Donkeys	Mules	Broilers	Layers	Bee Hives
5	514	39	16	1	56600	0	56

*Including cows, bull calves, heifer calves and bulls

There is about 7000 meters of agricultural road in Sikka, that is suitable for tractors and agricultural hardware but this is largely insufficient and the village needs to construct new roads in order to cover the vast agricultural area of the village

The agricultural sector in Sikka village suffers from many problems. Lack of water and capital are the main obstacles standing in the way of agricultural development. Israeli activities are also accountable; around 400 olive trees, 200 almond trees and a further 300 forest trees have been destructed and uprooted since the beginning of the Second Intifada.

Institutions and Services

Sikka/Tawas is a small rural village; the residents receive most of their services from Dura and Hebron cities and nearby villages. However, There is a village council that was established in 1996, and consists of five members; one mosque (Al-Majd mosque); there is also a cultural center in the village which was established in 2001

Infrastructure and Natural Resources

- **Telecommunication Services:** Sikka village is connected to a telecommunication network, about 80% of the housing units in Sikka village are connected to a telephone network.
- **Water Services:** The village has been connected to a water network since 1989, and around 60% of the households are connected. The main source of water to the village is supplied by the Israeli Water Company (MECOROT). Rain water collection cisterns and water tanks provide alternative water resources. The village also possesses a reservoir with a 150 cubic meter capacity. However, the village faces several problems regarding water sufficiency. These include shortage of water supplied by the authority, lack and insufficiency of rain, and the use up of the village groundwater by the Israeli occupation.
- **Electricity Networks:** Sikka village has not yet been connected to an electrical network. Some families use an electrical generator to generate electricity for some period of time upon their needs. However, many families still suffer from a lack of electricity as many families are unable of buying electrical generators, in addition to the high prices of fuel.
- **Sewage Disposal Facilities:** There is no sewage network in the village. All housing units in Sikka rely on cesspits.
- **Solid Waste Collection Services:** There is no solid waste management system in the village, and residents dispose the generated solid waste (estimated to be around 600 kg/day) on random burning sites. The village also suffers environment problems due to the over widely scattered household wastes and the smoke generated from burning them.
- **Transportation Facilities:** There are about 21 km of internal roads in Sikka village: 14 km are main roads of which are surfaced but in a bad condition, there is also 7 km of agricultural roads. There is only one bus services transportation in Sikka/Tawas. Residents occasionally use taxies that belong to Dura office taxi to movement. Transportation is made difficult in the village by military checkpoints and road blocks, in addition to the lack of suitable roads, as well as the lack of transportation facilities in general.

Impact of the Israeli Occupation

Sikka/Tawas Village lies adjacent to the Green Line. It has suffered considerably from Israeli occupation, particularly as a result of land confiscation and construction of the segregation wall. According to Data collected from the Village council, around 120 dunums of village lands were confiscated during the Second Intifada. Furthermore, the Israeli settlement of (Nighot) lies to the east, the segregation wall borders Sikka to the west, a permanent military checkpoint to the North, and a bypass road runs through the northern site of the village.

Approximately one kilometer of segregation wall has been constructed in Sikka Village since 2005, and an additional one kilometer is yet to be incorporated into the wall. The Wall is currently made from wire and borders the village on one side. Around 60 dunums of lands have been isolated by the wall.

Development Plans and Projects

Village officials' note that Sikka/Tawas village has development plans, the plans includes infrastructure services such as water, electricity roads and health.

Locality Development Priorities and Needs

According to Sikka Village council, the village has suffered from shortages in many infrastructure and service requirements. Table 9 below summarizes development priorities in the village.

No.	Sector	Strongly Needed	Needed	Moderately Needed	Not Needed	Notes
Infrastructural Needs						
1	Opening and Pavement of Roads	*				3700 m
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				*	
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		*			
3	Purchasing of New Equipments for Schools		*			
Agriculture Needs						
1	Rehabilitation of Agricultural lands		*			100 dun
2	Building Cisterns		*			32
3	Construction of Barracks for Livestock		*			12
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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