

# 'Asira ash Shamaliya Town Profile



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*ARIJ also thanks all the staff who worked throughout the past couple of years towards the accomplishment of this work.*

## Background

This report is part of a series of booklets, which contain compiled information about each city, town, and town in the Nablus Governorate. These booklets came as a result of a comprehensive study of all localities in Nablus Governorate, which aims to depict the overall living conditions in the governorate and presenting developmental plans to assist in improving the livelihood of the population in the area. It was accomplished through the "Town Profiles and Needs Assessment;" the project funded by the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID).

The "Town Profiles and 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 Nablus Governorate.

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 Nablus Governorate. In addition, the project aims to prepare 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://vprofile.arij.org>.

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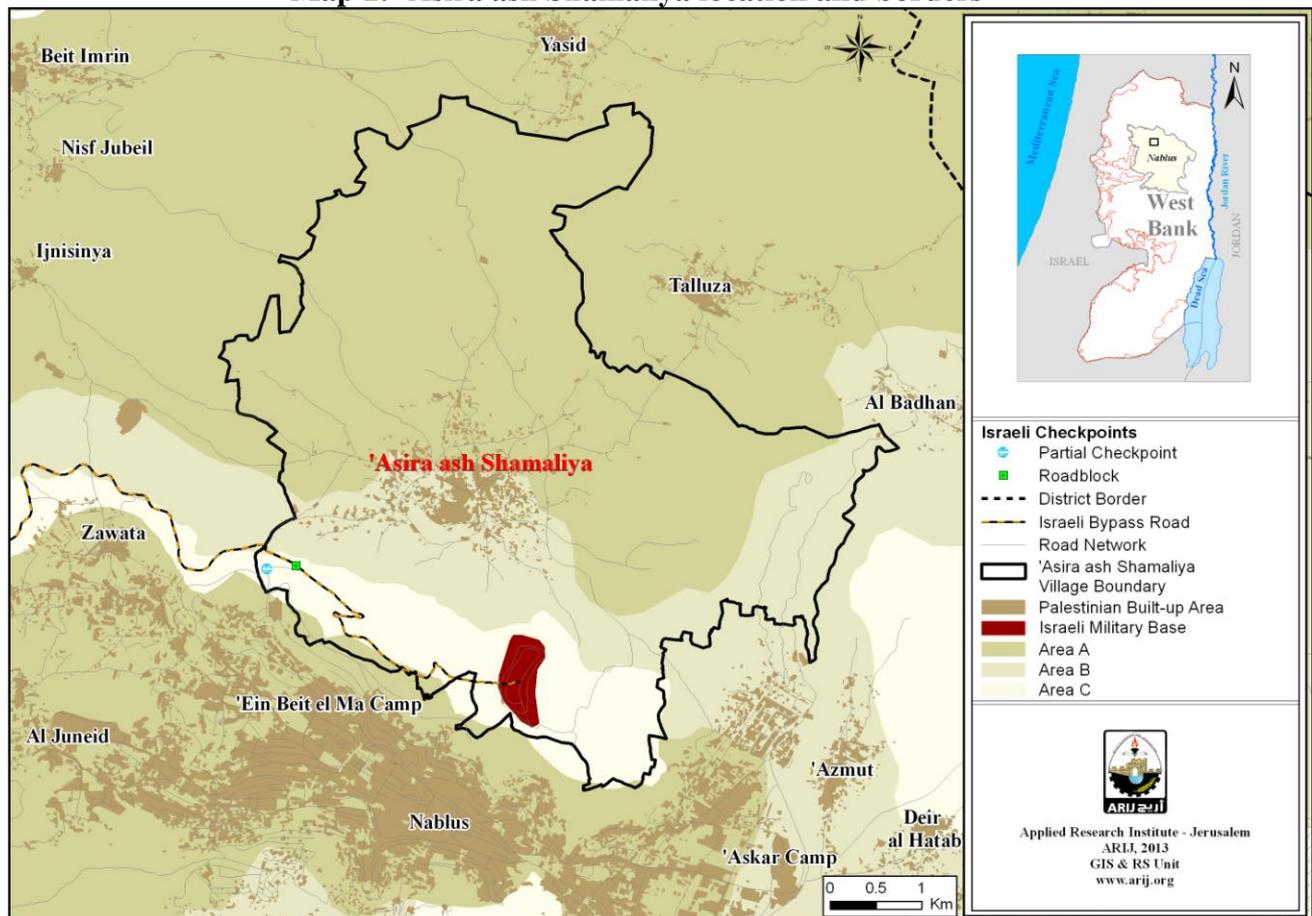
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# 'Asira ash Shamaliya Town Profile

## Location and Physical Characteristics

'Asira ash Shamaliya is a Palestinian town in Nablus Governorate, located 3.5km north of Nablus City. It is bordered by Talluza, Al Badhan, and 'Azmut to the east, Nablus city to the south, Zawata, Ijnisinya, & Nisf Jubeil to the west, and Beit Imrin & Yasid to the north (ARIJ-GIS, 2014) (See Map 1).

Map 1: 'Asira ash Shamaliya location and borders



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2014.

'Asira ash Shamaliya is located at an altitude of 636m above sea level with a mean annual rainfall of 589.2mm. The average annual temperature is 16°C whilst the average annual humidity is approximately 60.4% (ARIJ-GIS, 2014).

The total area of 'Asira ash Shamaliya town consists of approximately 29,033 dunums. This is according to the new borders of the local bodies which was stipulated by the Palestinian Ministry of local government, prepared by the Palestinian National Authority and represented by the Ministry of Local Government, the Central Elections Commission, the Ministry of Planning and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics 2011. These governmental institutions redeveloped and altered the borders of the local bodies for the purpose of the elections. ARIJ adopted these new borders in this

project for the purposes of research and study. The adopted borders, to a certain extent, suited the demographic variables and the environmental and agricultural facts on the ground. These borders do not represent the space and the borders of private property in the district and are not included in the files of private land properties.

Since 1996, 'Asira ash Shamaliya has been governed by a Municipal Council which is currently administrated by 13 members appointed by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). There are also 27 employees working in the council within a permanent headquarters. The Council has a vehicle to collect solid waste, 2 pick-up cars, a tractor, and a bagger ('Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013).

It is the responsibility of the Municipal Council to provide a number of services to the residents of 'Asira ash Shamaliya, including ('Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013):

- The establishment and maintenance of the drinking water and electricity networks.
- Waste collection, street cleaning and public services.
- Road rehabilitation, construction and paving.
- Implementation of projects and studies for the town.
- Organization of the construction and issuance of licenses processes.
- Provide first aid services and the provision of an ambulance.
- Organize transportation.
- Provision of a center for governmental services (mail, security).
- Protection of historical and archeological sites.
- Protection of governmental properties.
- Provide fire services.
- Providing kindergarten.

## History

'Asira ash Shamaliya town's name has a number of potential origins. It could be after the grape juice which was famous in the town during the Roman era, which was used for the preparation of fine wines. In other folklore, the name is related to olive pressing which was and still is the main product of the town.

'Asira' is also a perversion of the word 'Asira' which means difficult, and this could relate to the roads that are rugged between the town and Nablus City.

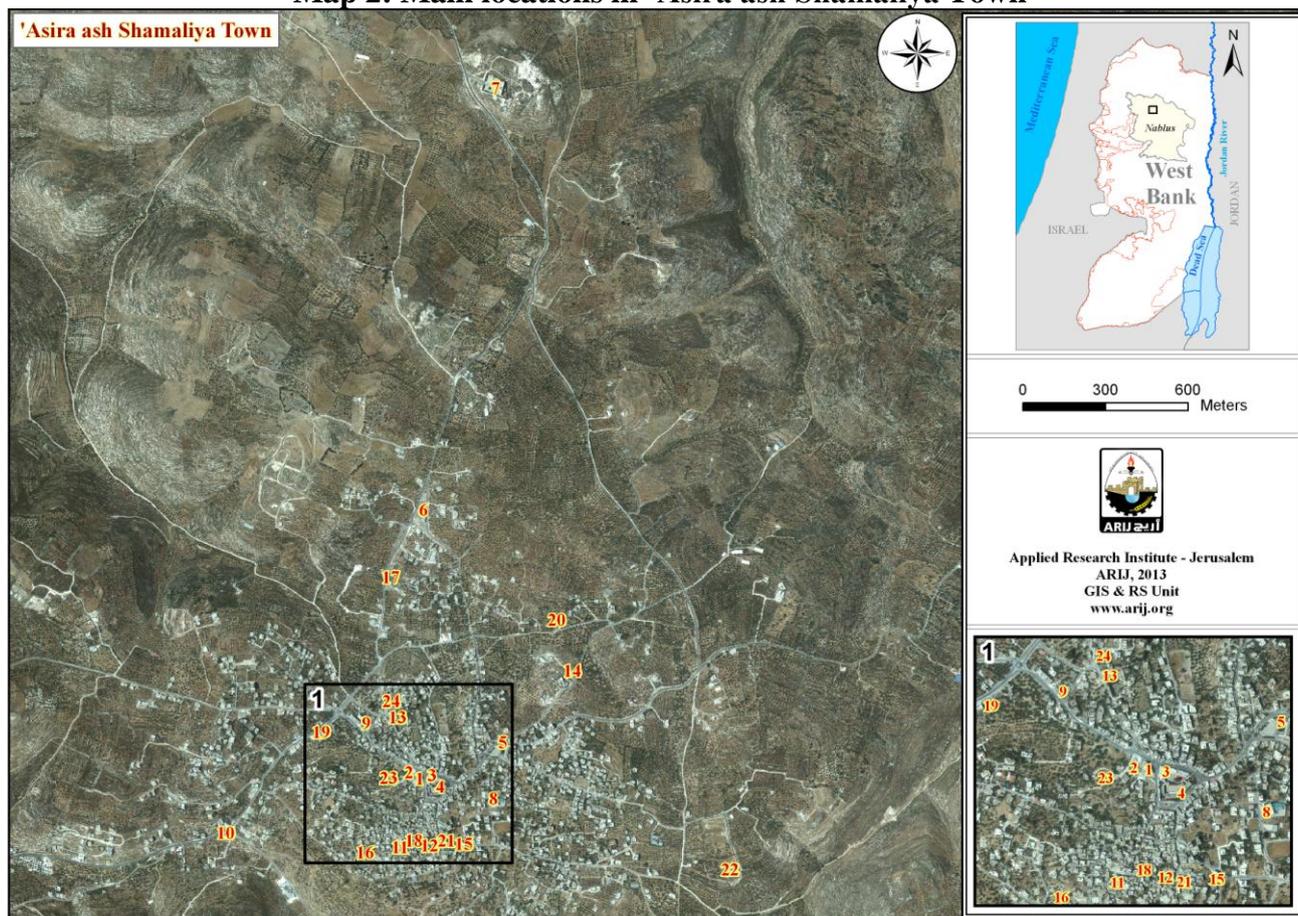
The town was established more than 400 years ago, with its residents descending from the ancient Canaanites ('Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013).

**Photo of ‘Asira ash Shamaliya**

## **Religious and Archaeological Sites**

There are five mosques in the town (Western Mosque, Eastern Mosque, Abu Khalil, `Umar ibn Al-Khattāb Mosque, and Ubada ibn as-Samit Mosque). The town has several sites of archaeological interest including the Old City, the Old Mosque, and Ala'ward area which is under Israeli control. All of these sites are in need of restoration in order to qualify as tourist locations, as determined by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities ('Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013) (See Map 2).

Map 2: Main locations in 'Asira ash Shamaliya Town



No.	Locations	No.	Locations	No.	Locations
1	'Asira ash Shamaliya Municipality/ Post Office/ The North Electricity Center/ The Ministry of Agriculture Office	9	Omar Ben al Khattab Mosque	17	Public Garden & Park
2	Public Services Complex/ Public Transportation Vehicles' Parking	10	Abada Ben Samit Mosque	18	'Asira ash Shamaliya Water Reservoir
3	'Asira ash Shamaliya Girls' Elementary School (A)	11	The Western Mosque	19	'Asira ash Shamaliya Olive Oil-Press
4	'Asira ash Shamaliya Girls' Secondary School	12	The Eastern Mosque	20	Al Aqsa Olive Oil-Press
5	'Asira ash Shamaliya Boys' Elementary School	13	'Asira ash Shamaliya Women Club/ That an Nitaqain Society	21	The Eastern Olive Oil-Press
6	Masqat Boys' Elementary School	14	'Asira ash Shamaliya Sports Club	22	The Civil Defense Headquarters
7	'Asira ash Shamaliya Boys' Secondary School	15	The Palestinian Red Crescent Society	23	'Asira ash Shamaliya Health Clinic
8	Abu Khalil Mosque/ 'Asira ash Shamaliya Girls' Elementary School (B)	16	The Western Cemetery	24	'Asira ash Shamaliya Police Station

Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2014.

## Population

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), the total population of 'Asira ash Shamaliya in 2007 was 7,441, of whom 3,769 were male and 3,672 female. There were additionally 1,490 households registered as living in 1,845 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 'Asira ash Shamaliya is as follows: 37.5% were less than 15 years of age, 57.1% were between 15 and 64 years of age, and 5.4% were 65 years of age or older. Data also showed that the sex ratio of males to females in the town is 102.6:100, meaning that males and females constitute 50.7% and 49.3% of the population, respectively.

## Families

'Asira ash Shamaliya residents are from several families, including Yassin, Sawalha, Hamadna, As Sheraga, Sholi, and Grara' families ('Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013).

## Education

According to the results of the PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census 2007, the illiteracy rate among 'Asira ash Shamaliya population is approximately 5.8%, of whom 87.8% are females. Of the literate population, 9.4% could only read and write, with no formal education, 19.3% had elementary education, 26.6% had preparatory education, 18.3% had secondary education, and 20.8% completed higher education. Table 1 shows the educational level in the town of 'Asira ash Shamaliya by sex and educational attainment in 2007.

**Table 1: 'Asira ash Shamaliya population (10 years and above) by sex and educational attainment**

Sex	Illiterate	Can read & write	Elementary	Preparatory	Secondary	Associate Diploma	Bachelor	Higher Diploma	Master	PhD	Unknown	Total
M	39	268	568	804	532	219	322	9	40	10	0	<b>2811</b>
F	281	252	502	672	483	212	327	2	12	2	1	<b>2746</b>
<b>T</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>520</b>	<b>1070</b>	<b>1476</b>	<b>1015</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5557</b>

Source: PCBS, 2009.

There are five public schools in the town run by the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education (Directorate of Education in Nablus, 2012) (See Table 2).

**Table 2: Schools in 'Asira ash Shamaliya by name, stage, sex, and supervising authority (2011/2012)**

School Name	Supervising Authority	Sex
'Asira ash Shamaliya Girls' Secondary School	Government	Female
'Asira ash Shamaliya Girls' Elementary School "A"	Government	Female
'Asira ash Shamaliya Girls' Elementary School "B"	Government	Female
'Asira ash Shamaliya Boys' Secondary School	Government	Male
Muscat Boys' Elementary School	Government	Male

Source: Directorate of Education in Nablus, 2012

In the town there are 1,782 students, 90 teachers, and 54 classes. The average number of students per teacher in the school is nearly 20, whilst the average number of students per class is approximately 33 (Directorate of Education in Nablus, 2012).

There are six kindergartens in 'Asira ash Shamaliya town, all of which are run by private organizations (Directorate of Education in Nablus, 2012) (See Table 3).

**Table 3: Kindergartens in ‘Asira ash Shamaliya town by name and supervising authority**

Name of Kindergarten	No. of Classes	No. of Teachers	Supervising Authority
Hope Kindergarten	2	3	Private
Love Kindergarten	4	5	Private
Peace Kindergarten	2	3	Private
Rainbow Kindergarten	2	2	Private
Noor Al- Huda Kindergarten	4	4	Private
Happy Child Kindergarten	2	3	Private
<b>Source:</b> Directorate of Education in Nablus, 2012			

The educational sector in ‘Asira ash Shamaliya town faces a number of obstacles, primarily (‘Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013):

- Inefficient schools and classrooms.

## Health Status

‘Asira ash Shamaliya has several health facilities available. There is the government-run ‘Asira ash Shamaliya Health Clinic, one private medical lab, a private mother and child care center, one private general physician clinic, 5 private general physician clinics, 6 private dental clinics, a private pediatrician clinic, and 5 private pharmacies.

In the absence of required health services or in emergencies, patients are transferred to Rafidiya or the national hospitals, or to another clinic in Nablus city (6km away) (‘Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013).

The health sector in the town faces a number of obstacles and problems, especially (‘Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013):

- The inadequacy of the current health center because it serves more people from the neighboring villages
- The lack of medicines at the government health clinic.
- The lack of medical equipment.

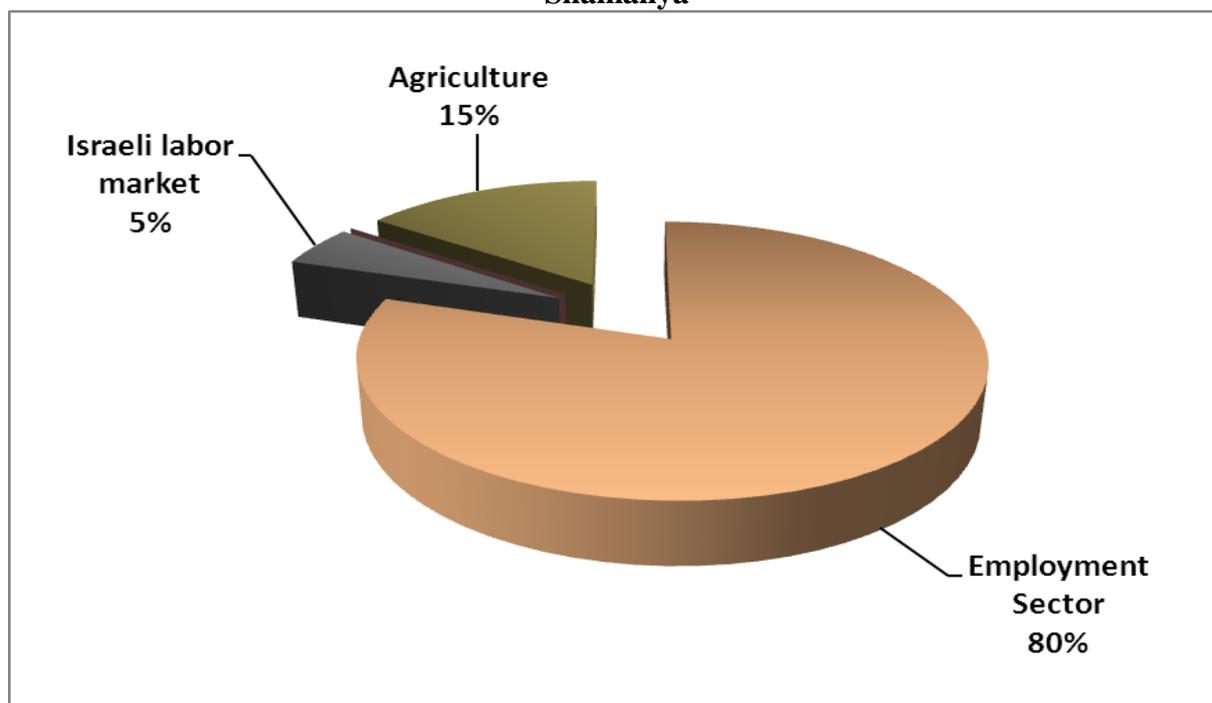
## Economic Activities

The economy in ‘Asira ash Shamaliya is dependent mainly on the Government or other employees sector, which absorbs 80% of the town’s workforce (‘Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013) (See Figure 1).

The results of a field survey conducted by the ARIJ team in 2013 for the distribution of labor by economic activity in ‘Asira ash Shamaliya are as follows:

- Government or other employees sector (80%)
- Agriculture sector (15%)
- Israeli labor market (5%)

**Figure 1: The distribution of labor force among main economic activities in ‘Asira ash Shamaliya**



Source: ‘Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013

‘Asira ash Shamaliya has 125 groceries, 30 fruit and vegetable stores, 3 bakeries, 5 butchers, 15 professional industry stores, 8 different professional workshops, 5 quarries, 3 olive oil-presses, 3 stone cutters, 5 stores for agricultural tools and 1 agricultural nursery (‘Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013).

In 2013, the unemployment rate in ‘Asira ash Shamaliya reached 15% and the groups most affected economically by the Israeli restrictions have been (‘Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013):

- Workers in the agriculture sector

**Labor Force**

According to the PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census 2007, 36.4% of ‘Asira ash Shamaliya’s labor force was economically active, of whom 89.4% were employed, 63.5% were not economically active, 58.4% were students, and 27.4% were housekeepers (See Table 4).

**Table 4: ‘Asira ash Shamaliya population (10 years of age and above) by sex and employment status**

Sex	Economically active				Non-economically active						Not stated	Total
	Employed	Currently Unemployed	Un-employed (never worked)	Total	Student	House-keeping	Unable to work	Not working & not looking for work	Others	Total		
M	1372	64	62	1498	1051	0	160	53	48	1312	1	2811
F	437	36	52	525	1011	966	213	21	6	2217	4	2746
T	1809	100	114	2023	2062	966	373	74	54	3529	5	5557

M: Male; F: Female; T: Total.

Source: PCBS, 2009.

## Agricultural Sector

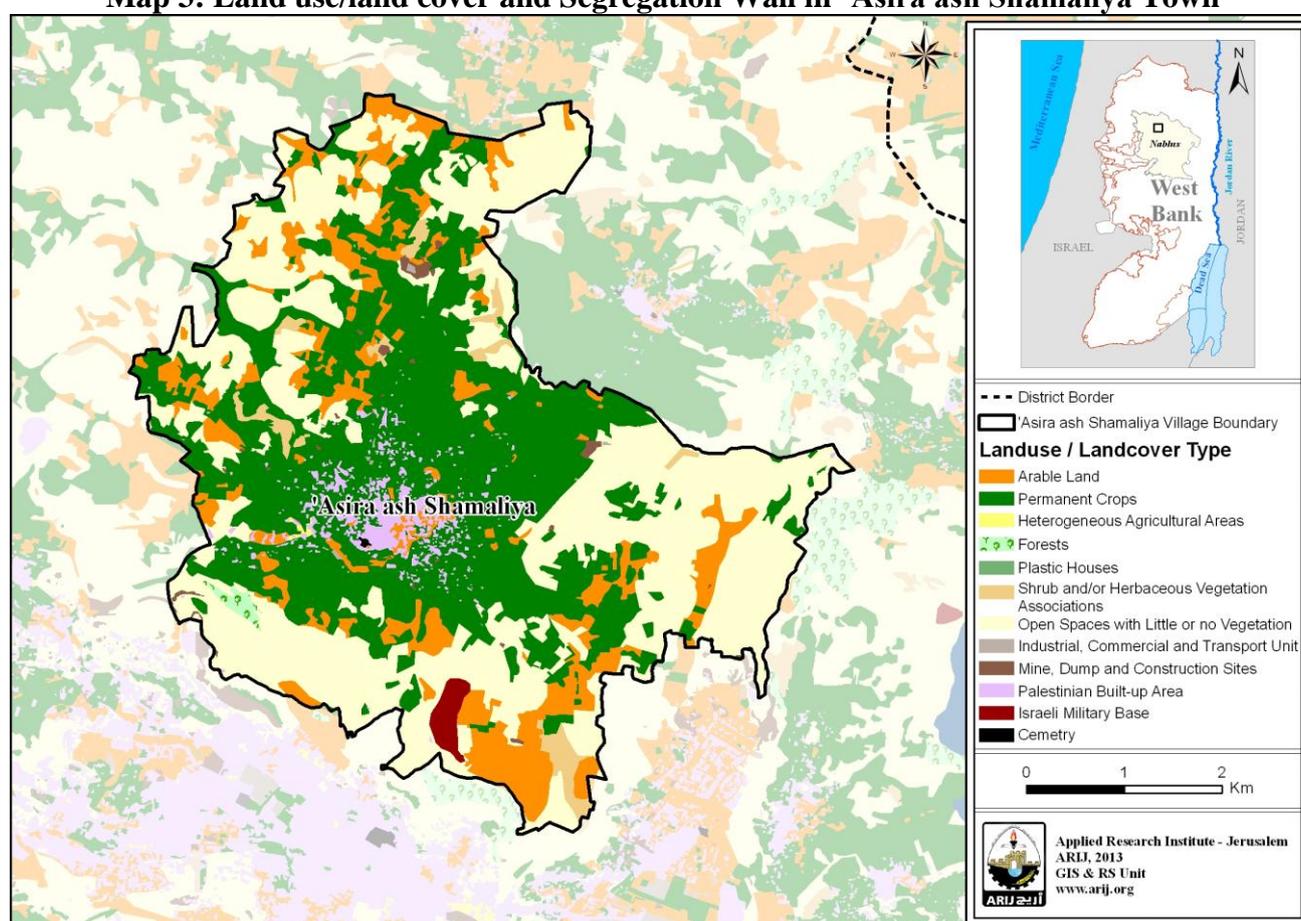
‘Asira ash Shamaliya has a total area of approximately 29,033 dunums, of which 15,975 are ‘arable’ land and 747 dunums are registered as ‘residential’ (See Table 5 and Map 3).

**Table 5: Land use and land cover in ‘Asira ash Shamaliya town (area in dunums)**

Total Area	Built up Area	Agricultural area (15,975)				Inland water	Forests	Open Spaces	Area of Industrial, Commercial & Transport Unit	Area of Settlements, Military Bases & Wall Zone	comm entary
		Permanent Crops	Green-houses	Range-lands	Arable lands						
29,033	747	11,498	0	560	3,917	0	101	11,829	175	198	8

Source: ARIJ – GIS Unit, 2014.

**Map 3: Land use/land cover and Segregation Wall in ‘Asira ash Shamaliya Town**



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2014.

There are different types of vegetables irrigated and rain-fed exposed in the ‘Asira ash Shamaliya town. Approximately 2 dunums of green beans are planted in the town. (Ministry of Agriculture-Nablus, 2010)

Table 6 shows the different types of fruit trees planted in the area. ‘Asira ash Shamaliya is famous for olive trees cultivation and there are approximately 18,318 dunums of land planted with olive trees in the town.

**Table 6: Total area of horticulture and olive trees in ‘Asira ash Shamaliya (area in dunums)**

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.
18,318	0	0	0	99	0	30	0	210	0	229	0	18,886	0

Rf.: Rain-fed; Irr.: Irrigated.

Source: Ministry of Agriculture-Nablus, 2010

In terms of field crops and forage in ‘Asira ash Shamaliya, cereals (particularly wheat) are the most cultivated, covering an area of approximately 210 dunums (See Table 7).

**Table 7: Total area of forage and field crops in ‘Asira ash Shamaliya (area in dunums)**

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.
210	0	8	0	45	0	5	0	95	0	0	0	6	0	369	0

Rf.: Rain-fed; Irr.: Irrigated.

Source: Ministry of Agriculture-Nablus, 2010

The field survey conducted by the ARIJ team shows that 5% of the residents in ‘Asira ash Shamaliya rear and keep domestic animals such as cows and sheep (See Table 8).

**Table 8: Livestock in ‘Asira ash Shamaliya**

Cows*	Sheep	Goats	Camels	Horses	Donkeys	Mules	Broilers	Layers	Bee Hives
39	805	540	0	0	0	0	200,000	12,000	580

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

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture - Nablus, 2010

There are approximately 246 kilometers of agricultural roads in the town, divided as follows (‘Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council):

**Table 9: Agricultural Roads in ‘Asira ash Shamaliya Town and their Lengths**

Suitability of Agricultural Roads	Length (km)
For vehicles	9
For tractors and agricultural machinery only	25
For animals only	12
Unsuitable	200

Source: ‘Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013

The agricultural sector in the town faces a number of problems, including (‘Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013):

- Lack of available water to irrigate plants and animals.
- High costs of land reclamation.
- Migration of people to neighboring cities.
- The existence Israeli military camp on Ebal Mountain, that impedes farmers’ access to their land.
- Lack of sufficient agricultural roads for farmers to reach their land.
- Lack of agricultural water wells.

## Institutions and Services

‘Asira ash Shamaliya town has a several governmental institutions, including a post office, Ministry of Agriculture office, fire brigade center and a police station, in addition to a number of local institutions and associations that provide services to various sectors of society. These include (‘Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013):

- **‘Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council:** Founded in 1997, and later registered by the Ministry of Local Government, with the aim of taking care of different issues concerning the town and providing various services to its population, in addition to infrastructure services.
- **‘Asira ash Shamaliya Sports Club:** Founded in 1982 and registered later by the Ministry of Youth & Sports. The Club organizes sports team and artistic activities among others.
- **That An Nitakean Association:** Founded in 2004, by the Ministry of the Interior, with the aim of conducting interviews and developmental courses, especially in the technical field.
- **Women Club Association:** Founded in 1998 and registered later by the Ministry of the Interior, with the aim of implementing cultural and social courses, in addition to conducting visits to the elderly.
- **Children Friends Association:** Founded in 2003, by the Ministry of the Interior, in order to take care of children and establish nurseries in the town, in addition to running activities and recreational trips for them.
- **Community Rehabilitation Association:** Founded in 2008, by the Ministry of the Interior, with the aim of working with people who have special needs. The organization also holds training courses for disabled people in the town.
- **Palestinian Red Crescent Society:** Founded in 1999, and registered later by the Ministry of Health, the PRC Society aims to implement the health, environmental and cultural activities, in addition to organizing volunteer services.
- **Agricultural Cooperative Foundation:** Founded in 2011, by the Ministry of Agriculture, it aims to support farmers, lands reclamation and development of the olive sector.

## Infrastructure and Natural Resources

### Electricity and Telecommunication Services:

‘Asira ash Shamaliya has been connected to a public electricity network since 1990. It is served by the North Electricity Company, through the North Electricity Company, which is the main source of electricity in the town. Approximately 100% of the housing units in the town are connected to the network. (‘Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013).

‘Asira ash Shamaliya is connected to a telecommunication network. Approximately 90% of the housing units within the town boundaries are connected to phone lines (‘Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013).

### Transportation Services:

There are 28 taxis and 4 buses in ‘Asira ash Shamaliya. When there are no vehicles available, residents use their private cars and a taxi office in the town (‘Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013). Residents face obstacles in the form of earth mounds and military checkpoints which impedes their movement (‘Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013). There are 28km of main

roads and 40km of secondary roads in 'Asira ash Shamaliya ('Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013) (See Table 10).

**Table 10: Roads in 'Asira ash Shamaliya Town**

Status of Internal Roads	Road Length (km)	
	Main	Secondary
1. Paved & in good condition	10	12
2. Paved & in poor condition	6	4
3. Unpaved	12	24

Source: 'Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013

### Water Resources:

'Asira ash Shamaliya is provided with water by Nablus Municipality through the public water network established in 1982. 80% of housing units are connected to the network ('Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013)

The quantity of water supplied to 'Asira ash Shamaliya town in 2012 was recorded at approximately 240,000 cubic meters/year ('Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013). Therefore, the estimated rate of water supply per capita is approximately 78 liters/day. However, no 'Asira ash Shamaliya citizen consumes this amount of water due to water losses, which are estimated at 30% ('Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013). These losses happen at the main source, major transport lines, in the distribution network, and at the household level. Therefore, the rate of water consumption per capita in 'Asira ash Shamaliya is 55 liters per day ('Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013). The average water consumption of 'Asira ash Shamaliya residents is very low compared with the minimum quantity of 100 liters per capita per day proposed by the World Health Organization. Each cubic meter of water from the public network costs 6.4NIS ('Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013).

The town also has five springs and 1,000 individual household rainwater harvesting cisterns, as well as a public water reservoir with a capacity of 300 cubic meters ('Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013).

### Sanitation:

'Asira ash Shamaliya lacks a public sewerage network and most of the population use cesspits and septic tanks as a main means for wastewater disposal ('Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013).

Based on the estimated daily per capita water consumption, the approximated quantity of wastewater generated per day is 368 cubic meters, or 134,000 cubic meters annually. At the individual level, it is estimated that the per capita wastewater generation is approximately 44 liters per day. The wastewater collected by cesspits and septic tanks is discharged by wastewater tankers directly to open areas or nearby valleys with little regard for the environment. Here it is 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 in addition to public health (ARIJ - WERU, 2013).

### **Solid Waste Management:**

The 'Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council for Solid Waste is responsible for the collection and disposal of solid waste generated by citizens and establishments in the town. As the process of solid waste management is costly, a monthly fee amounting to 17 NIS/ month per household is charged to the population and facilities served by domestic solid waste collection and transportation services. All of these fees are collected from the citizens ('Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013)

Most of the population in 'Asira ash Shamaliya benefits from solid waste services, whereby waste is collected from households, institutions, shops, and public squares in plastic bags and placed in 150 containers (of 1m<sup>3</sup> capacity), located at various points in the town. 'Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council collects the solid waste daily and transports it using a waste vehicle to Zahret al Finjan dumping site in Jenin Governorate, 35km from the village, where it is subsequently buried in an environmentally-friendly way ('Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013).

The daily per capita rate of solid waste production in 'Asira ash Shamaliya is 1.05kg. Thus the estimated amount of solid waste produced per day from the 'Asira ash Shamaliya residents is nearly 8.8 tons, or 3,214 tons per year (ARIJ-WERU, 2013).

## **Environmental Conditions**

Like other towns in the Governorate, 'Asira ash Shamaliya experiences several environmental problems which must be addressed and solved. These problems can be identified as follows:

### **Water Crisis**

- An increase in the proportion of waste water network, which reaches about 30%.
- Rehabilitation and expansion of the public water network.

### **Wastewater Management**

The absence of a public sewage network in the town means that 'Asira ash Shamaliya residents are forced to use unhygienic cesspits for the disposal of wastewater, and/or to discharge wastewater into the streets, as citizens cannot afford the high cost of sewage tankers. This is particularly common in winter. These methods facilitate environmental damage, health problems, and the spread of epidemics and diseases in the town. This wastewater also contaminates the groundwater because most cesspits are built without lining, to avoid the need to use sewage tankers and allow wastewater to enter into the ground. Moreover, the untreated wastewater collected from cesspits by sewage tankers is disposed of in open areas without concern for the damage it causes to the environment and to residents' health.

### **Solid Waste Management**

'Asira ash Shamaliya town does not suffer from any problems concerning the management of solid waste, as its solid waste is disposed of daily in Zahret al Finjan landfill in Jenin Governorate. This landfill is the main environmentally-friendly landfill serving the town in addition to most of the localities in the Nablus Governorate.

## Impact of the Israeli Occupation

### Geopolitical status in 'Asira Ash Shamaliya Town

According to the Oslo II Interim Agreement signed on 28<sup>th</sup> September 1995 by the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel, 'Asira Ash Shamaliya was divided into Areas A, B and C. Approximately 17,956 dunums (62% of the towns total area) were assigned as Area A where the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) holds all responsibility for internal security and public order, while 7,061 dunums (24% of the town total area) were classified as Area B, where the PNA has a complete control over civil matters but Israel continues to have overriding responsibility for security. The rest of the village's area, constituting of 4,016 dunums (14% of the total area), were classified as Area C, where Israel retains full control over the security and administration of the territory. In Area C, Palestinian building and land management is prohibited unless through the consent or authorization of the Israeli Civil Administration. The majority of 'Asira Ash Shamaliya's population resides in Areas A and B, while most of the land lying within Area C is open space, agricultural land or has been taken for Israeli military bases. (See Table 11).

**Table 11: The Geopolitical Divisions of 'Asira Ash Shamaliya town according to Oslo Agreement 1995**

Area	Area in dunums	Percentage of Total town area %
Area A	17,956	62
Area B	7,061	24
Area C	4,016	14
Nature Reserve	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>29,033</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Source: ARIJ-GIS, 2014

### Israeli occupation practices in 'Asira Ash Shamaliya town

Hundreds of dunums of land belonging to 'Asira Ash Shamaliya town have been confiscated by Israel, primarily for the purpose of establishing settlements, military bases and the construction of Israeli settlement roads. The following is a breakdown of the Israeli confiscations of land of the town of 'Asira Ash Shamaliya:

#### Israeli outposts in the town of 'Asira Ash Shamaliya

Israel has confiscated 198 dunums for the establishment of a military base, located on the southern side of the town on top of a mountain which separates the town and Nablus city. This camp is the closest military site to the city center.

### **Israeli checkpoints in 'Asira Ash Shamaliya town**

During the Second Intifada, the Israeli occupation authorities established checkpoints upon the road that links between 'Asira Ash Shamaliya town and Nablus city. These checkpoints are made of cement blocks, earth mounds fence, and iron gates. Over the last decade, military checkpoints in the area have continued to have a negative impact on the daily lives of residents. Checkpoints continue to hinder freedom of movement and sever the links between Nablus city and the surrounding villages, as well as the connection between the towns and their agricultural lands. This has resulted in heavy economic losses for residents of 'Asira Ash Shamaliya as they are forced to travel further distances which takes more time, in order to reach their agricultural land located to the north of the town, especially when checkpoints are closed. These checkpoints have been partially removed since 2009, after many years of suffering in this area.

### **Israeli bypass roads in 'Asira Ash Shamaliya town**

Israeli authorities have established multiple bypass roads across the West Bank, confiscating thousands of dunums of agricultural and non-agricultural lands in order to link Israeli settlements to each other and to separate the Palestinian community. These roads also serve to enhance Israeli security control on these roads. Israel has confiscated land from 'Asira Ash Shamaliya town territory in order to construct an Israeli bypass road, which connects to the settlement . The length of this road extends approximately 4 km onto the territory of 'Asira Ash Shamaliya. The Israeli occupation forced set up iron gates at the entrance of these roads to prevent Palestinians from using them.

On December 12<sup>th</sup> 2011, For the purpose of connecting this Israeli military base which is built on the territory of the town of 'Asira Ash Shamaliya. The Israeli occupation authorities issued military order No. 95/11 / T (extension of the validity of the amendment limits) which confiscated 92.334 dunums of land in from An Naqura, Zawata, Sabastiya (Ijnisinya) and Beit Iba villages, for the construction of a military road. These villages are situated to the west of 'Asira Ash Shamaliya. The length of this road extends approximately 9km onto the territory of the neighboring villages of 'Asira Ash Shamaliya.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.poica.org/editor/case\\_studies/view.php?recordID=5355](http://www.poica.org/editor/case_studies/view.php?recordID=5355)

## Development Plans and Projects

### Implemented Projects

‘Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council has implemented several development projects in ‘Asira ash Shamaliya during the past six years (See Table 12).

**Table 12: Implemented Development Plans and Projects in ‘Asira ash Shamaliya during the Last Six Years**

Name of the Project	Type	Year	Donor
Build Muscat Boys’ Elementary School	Educational	2007	Sultanate of Oman
Rehabilitating parts of a public water network	Infrastructure	2007, 2008,2011	Kuwait Fund in cooperation with the Ministry of Finance
Rehabilitating and Paving the secondary road	Infrastructure	2011	Kuwait Fund in cooperation with ‘Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council
Renovating and equipping the public library	Services	2012	‘Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council

Source: ‘Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013

### Proposed Projects

‘Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, in cooperation with the town’s civil society organizations and residents, hopes to implement several projects in the coming years. The project ideas were developed during the Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA) workshop conducted by ARIJ staff in the town. The projects are as follows, in order of priority from the viewpoints of the participants’ in the workshop:

- 1 - Establish a sewage network.
- 2 - Build additional rooms for the health center in order to improve the delivery of health services to the town.
- 3 - The need to provide markets for agricultural products (olive oil) .
- 4 - The need to improve the entrance to the main town and improve internal roads.
- 5 - Provide centers and clubs for people with disabilities.
- 6 - Providing workers with health and safety training in restaurants, canteens and shops.
- 7 - Promote networking among institutions and increase cooperation to serve the town, as well as activating the role of associations and clubs.
- 8 – Establish an employment office.
- 9 - Establish a closed playground for young people to serve them in summer and winter.
- 10 - Eliminate harmful wild animals in an appropriate way.
- 11 - Renovate old houses in the town and promote heritage and tourism.
- 12 - Road rehabilitation and construction agricultural roads (12 km), and fencing of lands for irrigated cultivation (50 dunums).
- 13 - Expand the water spring in the town.
- 14 - Establish water wells for agricultural use.

## Locality Development Priorities and Needs

‘Asira ash Shamaliya suffers from a significant shortage of infrastructure and services. Table 13 shows the development priorities and needs in the town, according to the Town Council’s perspective:

**Table 13: Development Priorities and Needs in ‘Asira ash Shamaliya**

No.	Sector	Strongly Needed	Needed	Not a Priority	Notes
<b>Infrastructural Needs</b>					
1	Opening and pavement of roads	*			86 km <sup>^</sup>
2	Rehabilitation of old water networks	*			111 km
3	Extending the water network to cover new built up areas	*			22 km
4	Construction of new water networks			*	
5	Rehabilitation/ construction of new wells or springs			*	
6	Construction of water reservoirs	*			1000 m <sup>3</sup>
7	Construction of a sewage disposal network	*			40 km
8	Construction of a new electricity network			*	
9	Providing containers for solid waste collection	*			100 containers
10	Providing vehicles for collecting solid waste			*	
11	Providing a sanitary landfill			*	
<b>Health Needs</b>					
1	Building new clinics or health care centres			*	
2	Rehabilitation of old clinics or health care centres	*			Expanding the health centre
3	Purchasing medical equipment and tools	*			
<b>Educational Needs</b>					
1	Building new schools	*			Build a girls secondary school
2	Rehabilitation of old schools	*			girls elementary school, boys elementary school and boys secondary school
3	Purchasing new school equipment	*			
<b>Agriculture Needs</b>					
1	Rehabilitation of agricultural lands	*			500 dunums
2	Building rainwater harvesting cisterns	*			100 cisterns
3	Construction of livestock barracks	*			20 barracks
4	Provision of Veterinary Services	*			
5	Provision of seeds and hay for animals	*			1500 tons per year
6	Construction of new greenhouses			*	
7	Rehabilitation of greenhouses			*	
8	Provision of field crops seeds	*			
9	Provision of plants and agricultural supplies	*			

<sup>^</sup> 20 km main roads, 26 km secondary roads and 40 km agricultural roads.

Source: ‘Asira ash Shamaliya Municipal Council, 2013

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