

Odala Village 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 village 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 "Village Profiles and Needs Assessment;" the project funded by the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID).

The "Village 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>.

Table of Contents

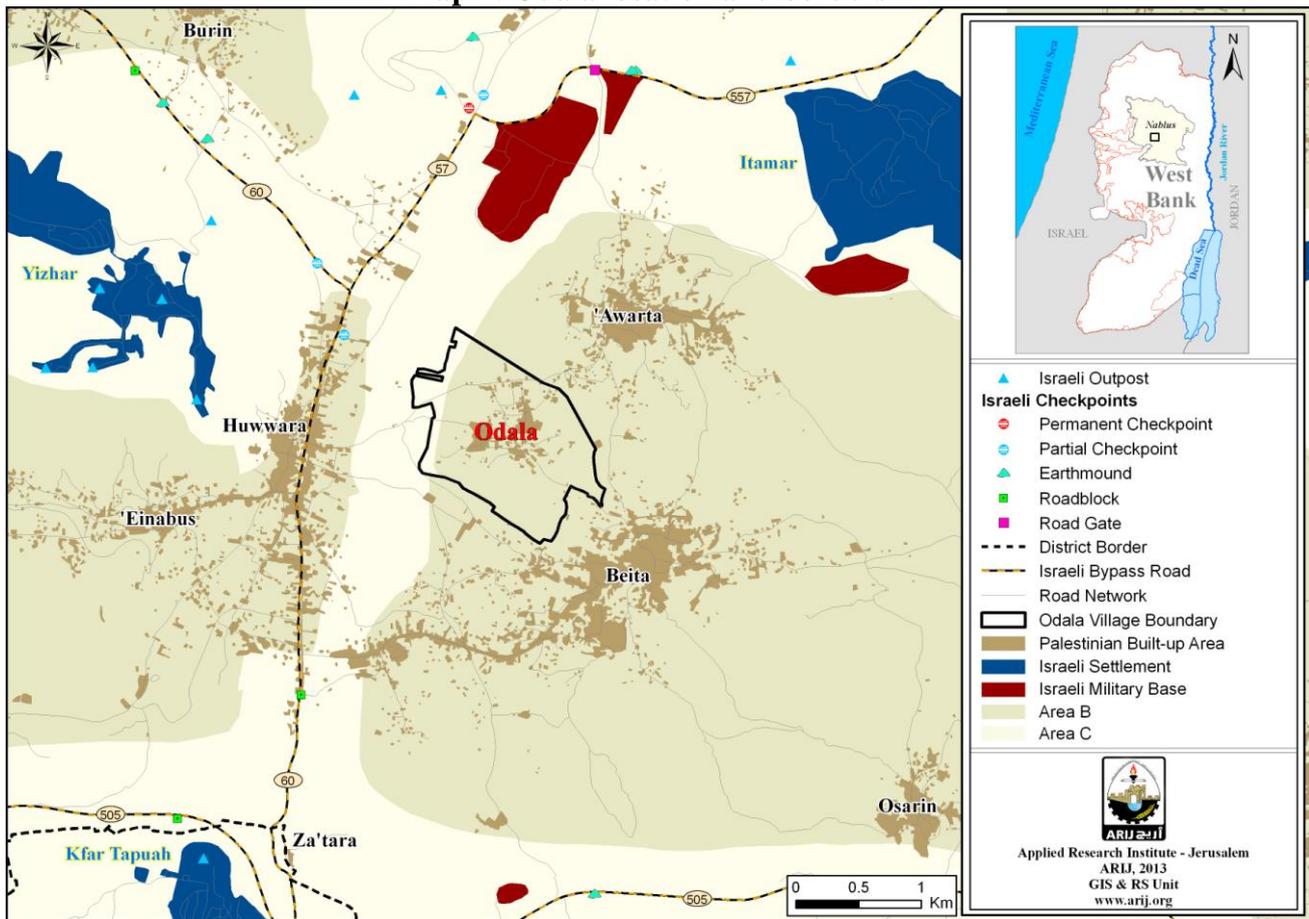
<i>Location and Physical Characteristics</i>	4
<i>History</i>	5
<i>Religious and Archaeological Sites</i>	6
<i>Population</i>	7
<i>Education</i>	8
<i>Health Status</i>	8
<i>Economic Activities</i>	9
<i>Agricultural Sector</i>	10
<i>Institutions and Services</i>	12
<i>Infrastructure and Natural Resources</i>	13
<i>Environmental Conditions</i>	14
<i>Development Plans and Projects</i>	15
<i>Implemented Projects</i>	16
<i>Proposed Projects</i>	16
<i>Locality Development Priorities and Needs</i>	17
<i>References:</i>	18

Odala Village Profile

Location and Physical Characteristics

Odala is a Palestinian village in Nablus Governorate, located 7.6km south of Nablus City. It is bordered by Beita and 'Awarta to the east, 'Awarta to the north, Huwwara to the west, and Beita to the south (ARIJ-GIS, 2014) (See Map 1).

Map 1: Odala location and borders



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2014.

Odala is located at an altitude of 543m above sea level with a mean annual rainfall of 535.5mm. The average annual temperature is 18°C whilst the average annual humidity is approximately 60% (ARIJ-GIS, 2014).

The total area of Odala village consists of approximately 1,466 dunums. This is according to the new borders of the local bodies which were 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 1995, Odala has been governed by a Village Council which is currently administrated by 9 members appointed by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). There are also 2 employees working in the council, however the council does not own a permanent headquarters but is included within the Beit Services Council (Odala Village Council, 2013).

It is the responsibility of the Village Council to provide a number of services to the residents of Odala, including (Odala Village 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.
- Organization of the construction and issuance of licenses.
- Implementation of projects and studies for the village.
- Protection of governmental properties.
- Provision of offices for governmental institutions.
- Provision of means of transportation.

History

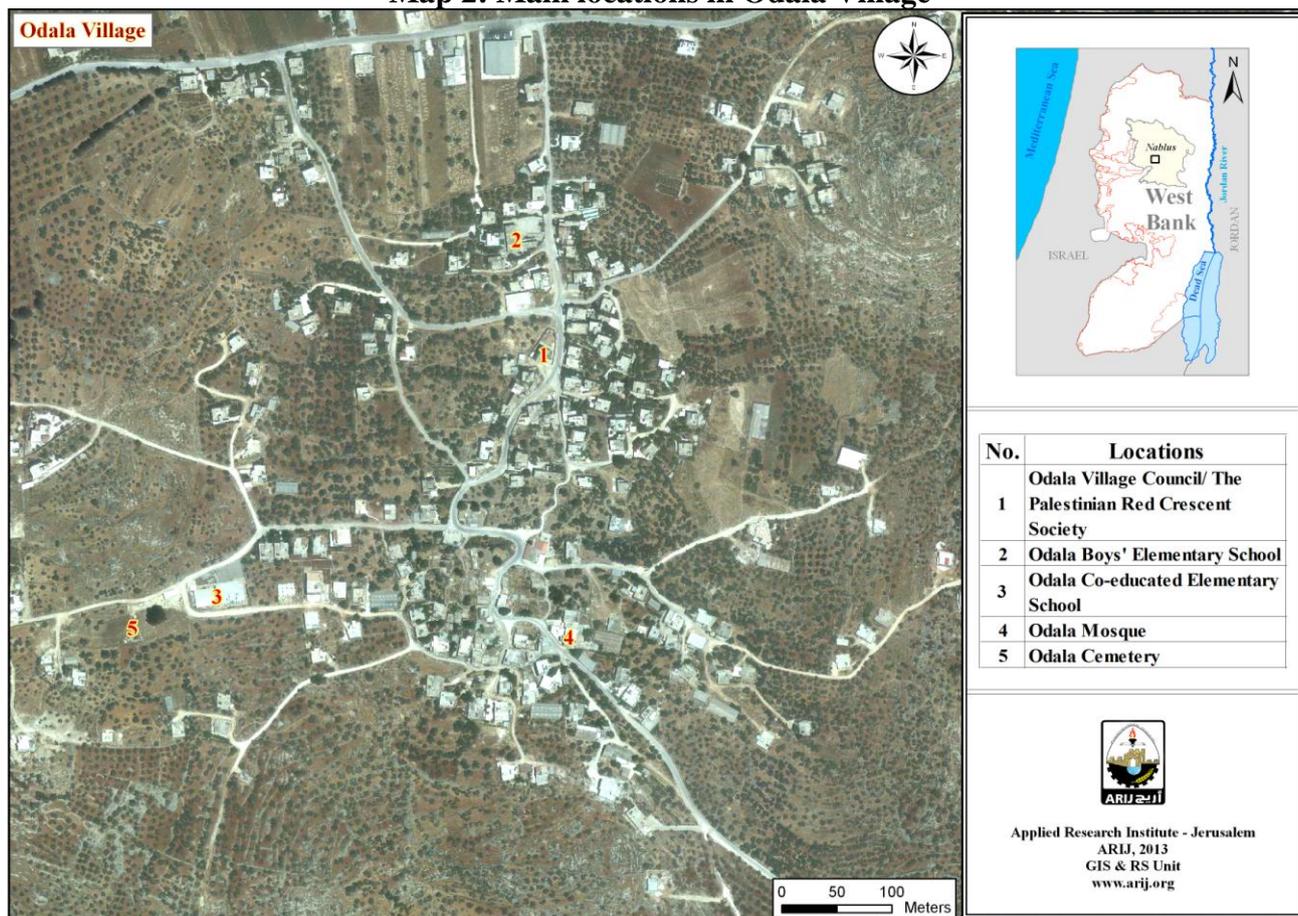
The village's origin name is Khirbet Mattar, but because this was difficult to spell, the name was changed to Odala, which is a Pharaonic name.

The village was established in 1914, with its residents descending from Yemen and Syria (Odala Village Council, 2013).

Photo of Odala**Religious and Archaeological Sites**

There is only one mosque in the village (Odala Old Mosque). The village has several sites of archaeological interest including an ancient mosque which contains an ancient water well, in addition to some archeological sites at Khirbet al Gharbiya (ruins) which primarily constitute some grottos. All of these sites are in need of restoration in order to qualify as a tourist location, as determined by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (Odala Village Council, 2013) (See Map 2).

Map 2: Main locations in Odala Village



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2014.

Population

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), the total population of Odala in 2007 was 1,117, of whom 558 were male and 559 female. There were additionally 173 households registered as living in 194 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 Odala is as follows: 44.2% were less than 15 years of age, 53.7% were between 15 and 64 years of age, and 2.1% were 65 years of age or older. Data also showed that the sex ratio of males to females in the village is 99.8:100, meaning that males and females constitute 50% and 50% of the population, respectively.

Families

Odala residents are from several families, including Ahmad Yousif, Abdul Rahim, Rashid, Abu Ali and Abdul Jabbar (Odala Village Council, 2013).

Education

According to the results of the PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census-2007, the illiteracy rate among Odala population is approximately 5.9%, of whom 85% are females. Of the literate population, 12.8% could only read and write, with no formal education, 33% had elementary education, 28.7% had preparatory education, 14.9% had secondary education, and 4.7% completed higher education. Table 1 shows the educational level in the village of Odala by sex and educational attainment in 2007.

Table 1: Odala 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	7	43	131	140	62	8	14	0	1	0	0	406
F	40	58	130	87	56	4	10	0	0	0	1	386
T	47	101	261	227	118	12	24	0	1	0	1	792

Source: PCBS, 2009.

There are two public schools in the village run by the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education, but there are no kindergartens (Directorate of Education in Nablus, 2012) (see Table 2).

Table 2: Schools in Odala by name, stage, sex, and supervising authority (2011/2012)

School Name	Supervising Authority	Sex
Odala Boys' Elementary School	Government	Males
Odala Co-educated Elementary School	Government	Mixed

Source: Directorate of Education in Nablus, 2012

In the village there are 340 students, 27 teachers, and 16 classes. The average number of students per teacher in the school is nearly 13, whilst the average number of students per class is approximately 21 (Directorate of Education in Nablus, 2012).

Due to the lack of variety when it comes to education, such as the secondary level; students attend Beita secondary schools (4km away) or to 'Eqab Mufdi Girls' Secondary School (3km away) (Odala Village Council, 2013).

The educational sector in Odala village faces a number of obstacles including (Odala Village Council, 2013):

- The lack of eligible teaching staff.
- The difficult curriculums.
- The lack of secondary schools in the village.

Health Status

Odala only has a first aid center run by NGOs. In the absence of required health services or in emergencies, patients are transferred to Rafidiya or the national hospitals in Nablus city (14km away), to Ar Rahma Health Clinic also in Nablus city (13km away), or to the Health Committees Center in 'Awarta (3km away) (Odala Village Council, 2013).

The health sector in the village faces a number of obstacles and problems, principally (Odala Village Council, 2013):

- The lack of an ambulance service.
- The lack of a clinic center to serve visitors who are Palestinian during summer.
- The lack of a pharmacy.

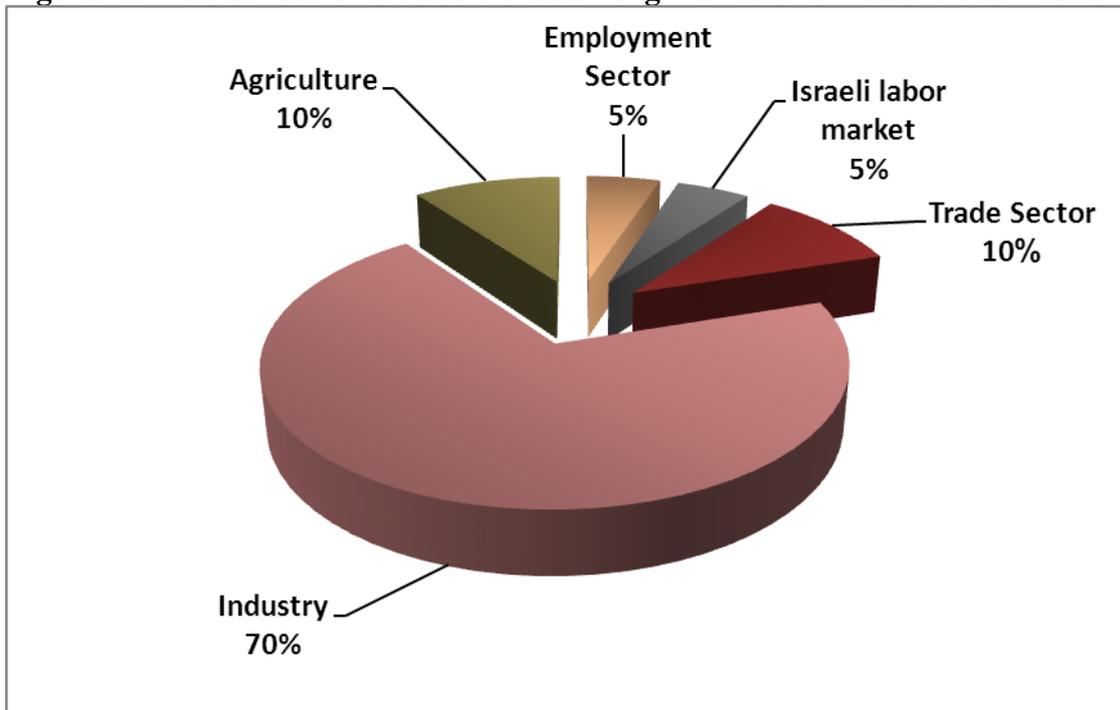
Economic Activities

The economy in Odala is primarily dependent on the industrial sector, which absorbs 70% of the village’s workforce (Odala Village 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 Odala are as follows:

- Industry (70%)
- Agriculture sector (10%)
- Trade sector (10%)
- Government or other employees sector (5%)
- Israeli labor market (5%)

Figure 1: The distribution of labor force among main economic activities in Odala



Source: Odala Village Council, 2013

Odala has 6 groceries, 6 fruits and vegetable stores and 5 service stores (Odala Village Council, 2013).

In 2013, the unemployment rate in Odala reached 10% and the groups most affected economically by Israeli restrictions have been (Odala Village Council, 2013):

- Former workers in Israel.
- Workers in the agriculture sector.
- Workers in the trade sector.
- Industrial sector.

Labor Force

According to the PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census 2007, 27.9% of Odala's labor force was economically active, of whom 88% were employed, 72.1% were not economically active, 52.9% were students, and 29.6% were housekeepers (See Table 3).

Table 3: Odala population (10 years of age and above) by sex and employment status

Sex	Economically active				Non-economically active						Not stated	Total
	Employed	Currently Unemployed	Unemployed (never worked)	Total	Student	House-keeping	Unable to work	Not working & not looking for work	Others	Total		
M	177	14	16	207	156	0	29	0	14	199	0	406
F	13		1	14	146	169	13	0	44	372	0	386
T	190	14	17	221	302	169	42	0	58	571	0	792

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

Source: PCBS, 2009.

Agricultural Sector

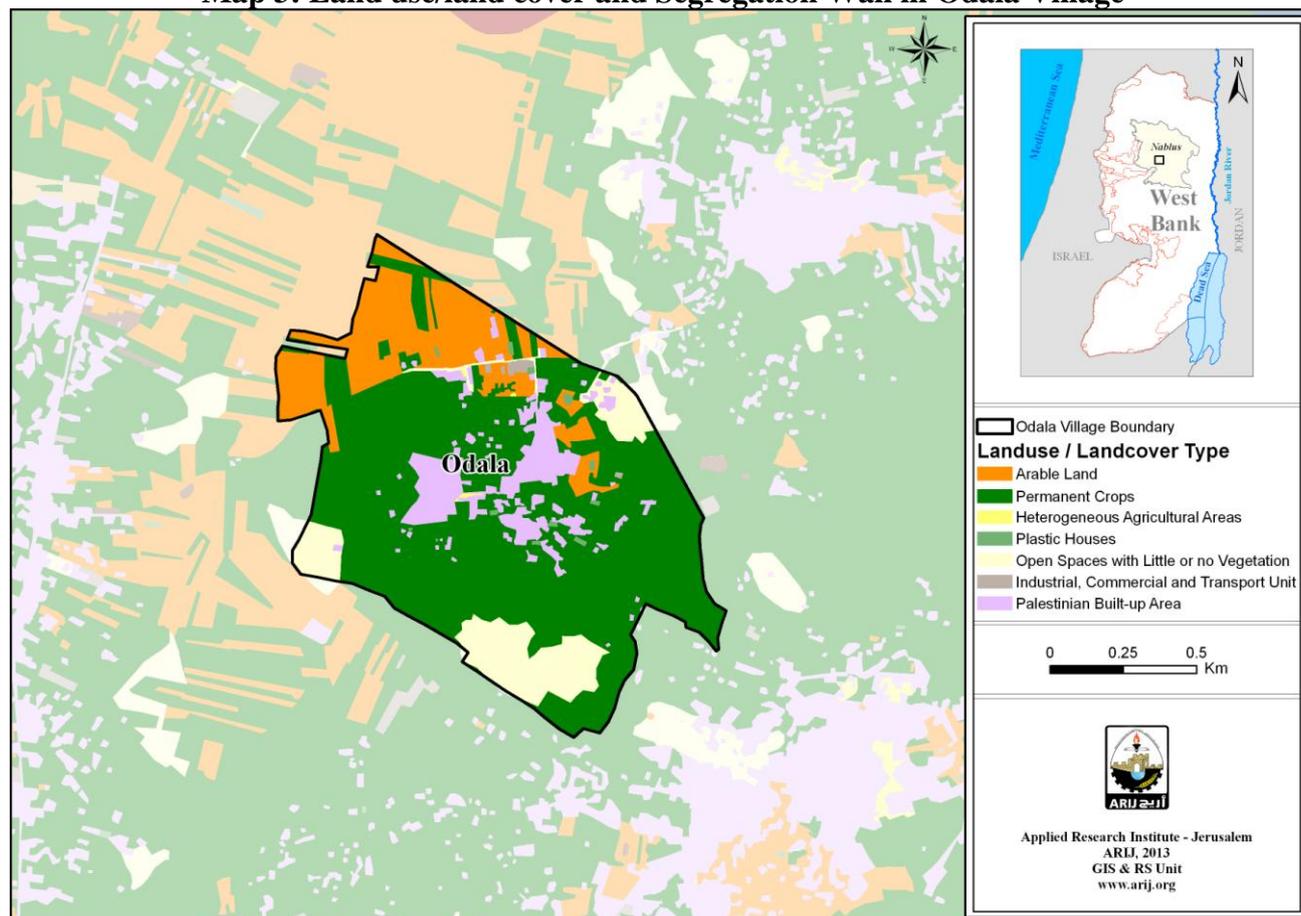
Odala has a total area of approximately 1,466 dunums of which 1,169 are 'arable' land and 138 dunums are registered as 'residential' (See Table 4 and Map 3).

Table 4: Land use and land cover in Odala village (area in dunum)

Total Area	Built up Area	Agricultural area (1,169)				Inland water	Forests	Open Spaces	Area of Industrial, Commercial & Transport Unit	Area of Settlements, Military Bases & Wall Zone
		Permanent Crops	Green-houses	Range-lands	Arable lands					
1,466	138	924	6	0	239	0	0	154	5	0

Source: ARIJ – GIS Unit, 2014.

Map 3: Land use/land cover and Segregation Wall in Odala Village



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2014.

Table 5 shows the different types of rain-fed and irrigated open-cultivated vegetables in Odala. The most commonly cultivated crops within this area are okra and green beans. In addition, there are 9 dunums of greenhouses located in Odala (Ministry of Agriculture-Nablus, 2010).

Table 5: Total area of rain-fed and irrigated open cultivated vegetables in Odala (area in dunums)

Fruity vegetables		Leafy vegetables		Green legumes		Bulbs		Other vegetables		Total Area	
Rf.	Irr.	Rf.	Irr.	Rf.	Irr.	Rf.	Irr.	Rf.	Irr.	Rf.	Irr.
2	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	5	0

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

Source: Ministry of Agriculture-Nablus, 2010

Table 6 shows the different types of fruit trees planted in the area. Odala is famous for olive cultivation and there are approximately 1,139 dunums of land planted with olive trees in the village.

Table 6: Total area of horticulture and olive trees in Odala (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.
1,139	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	38	0	15	0	1,192	0

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

Source: Ministry of Agriculture-Nablus, 2010

In terms of field crops and forage in Odala, cereals (particularly wheat) are the most cultivated, covering an area of approximately 290 dunums (See Table 7).

Table 7: Total area of forage and field crops in Odala (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.
290	0	3	0	25	0	2	0	60	0	0	0	53	0	433	0

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

Source: Ministry of Agriculture-Nablus, 2010

The field survey conducted by the ARIJ team shows that 30% of the residents in Odala rear and keep domestic animals such as cows and sheep (See Table 8).

Table 8: Livestock in Odala

Cows*	Sheep	Goats	Camels	Horses	Donkeys	Mules	Broilers	Layers	Bee Hives
5	288	110	0	0	0	0	60,000	0	0

*Including cows, bull calves, heifer calves and bulls

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture - Nablus, 2010

There are approximately 27 kilometers of agricultural roads in the village, divided as follows (Odala Village Council, 2013):

Table 9: Agricultural Roads in Odala Village and their Lengths

Suitability of Agricultural Roads	Length (km)
For vehicles	8
For tractors and agricultural machinery only	0
For animals only	14
Unsuitable	5

Source: Odala Village Council, 2013

The agricultural sector in the village faces a number of problems including (Odala Village Council, 2013):

- The lack of laborers.
- The lack of capital for agricultural investment.
- The lack of support by relevant institutions.
- The lack of support and funding for the agricultural sector.
- The pollution caused by wastewater flowing from Nablus city.
- The lack of agricultural experience by the villagers.
- The lack of feeds and veterinary services for sheep.

Institutions and Services

Odala village has few local institutions and associations that provide services to various sectors of society. These include (Odala Village Council, 2013):

- **Odala Village Council:** Founded in 1995 and later registered by the Ministry of Local Government, with the aim of taking care of different issues concerning the village and providing various services to its population, in addition to infrastructure services.
- **First Aid Center:** Founded in 2000 by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society. The Center aims to provide the village residents with first aid services in addition to organizing summer camps.

Infrastructure and Natural Resources

Electricity and Telecommunication Services:

Odala has been connected to a public electricity network since 1982. It is served by the Israeli Qatariya Electricity Company, which is the main source of electricity in the village, through the North Electricity Company. Approximately 100% of the housing units in the village are connected to the network. The village residents face a number of problems concerning electricity, primarily the need for a bigger electric transformer (400 kilo watt) (Odala Village Council, 2013).

Odala is also connected to a telecommunication network and approximately 10% of the housing units within the village boundaries are connected to phone lines (Odala Village Council, 2013).

Transportation Services:

There are 3 taxis and 2 public buses in Odala. Residents use 'Awarta transportation vehicles in case of the lack of public transportation vehicles, and even sometimes walk towards Huwwara (Odala Village Council, 2013). The lack of vehicles to serve the residents is considered a main obstacle faced by the village residents. There are 10.5km of main roads and 14.5km of secondary roads in Odala (Odala Village Council, 2013) (See Table 10).

Table 10: Roads in Odala Village

Status of Internal Roads	Road Length (km)	
	Main	Secondary
1. Paved & in good condition	10.5	8.5
2. Paved & in poor condition	-	2.5
3. Unpaved	-	3.5

Source: Odala Village Council, 2013

Water Resources:

Odala is provided with water by Mekorot through the public water network established in 1985. All housing units are connected to the network (Odala Village Council, 2013)

The quantity of water supplied to Odala village in 2012 was recorded at approximately 27,000 cubic meters/year (Odala Village Council, 2013). Therefore, the estimated rate of water supply per capita is approximately 59 liters/day. However, no Odala citizen consumes this amount of water due to water losses, which are estimated at 54% (Odala Village 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 Odala is 27 liters per day (Odala Village Council, 2013). The average water consumption of Odala residents is critically low compared with the minimum quantity of 100 liters per capita per day proposed by the World Health Organization. In addition the village has five domestic wells to collect rain water. Each cubic meter of water from the public network costs 4.5 NIS (Odala Village Council, 2013).

Sanitation:

Odala lacks a public sewerage network and most of the population use cesspits and septic tanks, as a main means for wastewater disposal (Odala Village Council, 2013).

Based on the estimated daily per capita water consumption, the approximated quantity of wastewater generated per day, is 27 cubic meters, or 10,000 cubic meters annually. At the individual level, it is estimated that the per capita wastewater generation is approximately 22 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 Joint Services Council for Solid Waste in Nablus is responsible for the collection and disposal of solid waste generated by citizens and establishments in the village. As the process of solid waste management is costly, a monthly fee amounting to 5 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 (Odala Village Council, 2013).

Most of the population in Odala benefits from the solid waste services, whereby waste is collected from households, institutions, shops, and public squares in plastic bags, and placed in 10 containers (of 1m³ capacity), located at various points in the village. The Joint Council collects the solid waste twice weekly and transports it using a waste vehicle to Relay Station Sirefi, 12 km from the village, where the waste is separated (Odala Village Council, 2013).

The daily per capita rate of solid waste production in Odala is 0.7kg. Thus the estimated amount of solid waste produced per day from the Odala residents is nearly 0.9 tons, or 322 tons per year (ARIJ-WERU, 2013).

Environmental Conditions

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

Water Crisis

- Interruption of water for long periods in the summer.
- The public water network is old and need maintenance. The rate of loss within the network is approximately 54%.

Wastewater Management

The absence of a public sewage network in the village means that Odala 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 village. 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

Odala village does not suffer any problems concerning the management of solid waste, as the Joint Council for the Management of Solid Waste is responsible for the process of collecting waste from the village and disposing of it in Zahret al Finjan landfill in Jenin Governorate. This landfill is the main environmentally-friendly landfill serving the village in addition to most of the localities in the Nablus Governorate.

Impact of the Israeli Occupation

Geopolitical status in Odala village

According to the Oslo II Interim Agreement signed on 28th September 1995 by the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel, Odala was divided into areas “B” and “C”. Approximately 1,309 dunums (89% of the village’s total area) were classified as area “B”, where the PNA has complete control over civil matters but Israel continues to retain overriding responsibility for security. The rest of the village’s area, constituting 157 dunums (11% of the total area), was classified as area “C”, where Israel retains full control over security and administration related to the territory. In area “C” Palestinian building and land management is prohibited unless through consent or authorization by the Israeli Civil Administration. The majority of Odala’s population resides in area B while most of the land lying within area C is agricultural area (table 11).

Table 11: The Geopolitical Divisions of Odala village according to the Oslo Agreement 1995

Area	Area in dunums	Percentage of Total village area %
Area A	0	0
Area B	1,309	89
Area C	157	11
Nature Reserve	0	0
Total	1,466	100

Source: Source: ARIJ-GIS, 2014

The Israeli Occupation practices in Odala village

There are no Israeli settlements and camps on Odala land although some settlement blocs are very close to the village and are located on neighboring villages' land. Therefore, the residents of the village were subjected to several arrest procedures and suffered under Israeli practices that were carried out by the Israeli military base “Huwwara”, which is located to the north of the village, on the land of the two neighboring villages 'Awarta and Burin. This Military base is a source of violations and attacks on the Palestinian people. Moreover, Israeli forces have set up flying checkpoints and infantry military soldiers on patrol, on road number 60, which is considered as the main road that Israel retains full control over and is located to the west of the village.

Moreover, Odala village in particular and Nablus City and its villages in general, were affected by “Huwwara” and Za'tara as main checkpoints, that is consider the important checkpoints in the west Bank, which separate the Northern governorates from the middle and southern governorates. The main barrier “Huwwara” has been removed in 2009. Although Israeli forces reduced their presence

in this area and reduced their control over the movement of Palestinian civilians under calm conditions on the ground in the last period, the main barrier Za'atara still cuts through the West to this day, maintaining inspection procedures but to a lesser extent than in previous years.

These military checkpoints had a negative impact on the lives of Palestinians in the last decade. The checkpoints have worked to disable the freedom of movement and to cut the connection between Nablus city and the surrounding villages, in addition to the separation of the agricultural land of the village. This resulted in economic losses and an economic crisis for the residents as they are forced to travel further distances which takes more time, in order to reach their agricultural land, due to the closure of these checkpoints.

Development Plans and Projects

Implemented Projects

Odala Village Council has implemented several development projects in Odala during the past five years (See Table 12).

Table 12: Implemented Development Plans and Projects in Odala during the Last Five Years

Name of the Project	Type	Year	Donor
Development of the electricity network	Infrastructure	2010	A Saudi Company
Build a new school in the village	Educational	2010	Belgium
Paving roads	Infrastructure	2012	USAID
Extension of internal lines	Infrastructure	2012	Odala Village Council

Source: Odala Village Council, 2013

Proposed Projects

Odala Village Council, in cooperation with the village's civil society organizations and the village 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 village. The projects are as follows, in order of priority from the viewpoints of the participants' in the workshop:

1. Establishing a water reservoir of a capacity of 200 cups.
2. Constructing a secondary school to accommodate students of the village who study in neighboring localities.
3. Expanding the public water network (5km) and expanding the public electricity network (5km).
4. Paving secondary roads (10km long).
5. Constructing a health clinic to serve the village.
6. Constructing agricultural roads (10km long), and reclaiming agricultural lands (a total area of land of approximately 200 dunums).
7. Supporting the livestock sector with fodder, medicines and veterinary services, and the plant sector with seedlings, fertilizers and seeds.

8. Creating a project to support needy families and assist the rehabilitation of people with special needs.

Locality Development Priorities and Needs

Odala suffers from a significant shortage of infrastructure and services. Table 13 shows the development priorities and needs in the village, according to the Village Council's perspective:

Table 13: Development Priorities and Needs in Odala

No.	Sector	Strongly Needed	Needed	Not a Priority	Notes
Infrastructural Needs					
1	Opening and pavement of roads	*			11.5 km [^]
2	Rehabilitation of old water networks	*			4 km
3	Extending the water network to cover new built up areas	*			6 km
4	Construction of new water networks	*			8 km
5	Rehabilitation/ construction of new wells or springs			*	
6	Construction of water reservoirs	*			4,000 cubic meters
7	Construction of a sewage disposal network		*		9 km
8	Construction of a new electricity network			*	
9	Providing containers for solid waste collection	*			25 containers
10	Providing vehicles for collecting solid waste	*			1 vehicle
11	Providing a sanitary landfill			*	
Health Needs					
1	Building new clinics or health care centres	*			1 health center
2	Rehabilitation of old clinics or health care centres			*	
3	Purchasing medical equipment and tools			*	
Educational Needs					
1	Building new schools	*			secondary school
2	Rehabilitation of old schools		*		the boys' school
3	Purchasing new school equipment		*		all schools
Agriculture Needs					
1	Rehabilitation of agricultural lands			*	
2	Building rainwater harvesting cisterns			*	
3	Construction of livestock barracks			*	
4	Provision of Veterinary Services		*		
5	Provision of seeds and hay for animals		*		250 tons per year
6	Construction of new greenhouses			*	
7	Rehabilitation of greenhouses		*		8 greenhouses
8	Provision of field crops seeds		*		
9	Provision of plants and agricultural supplies		*		
Other Needs					
1	Constructing a conference hall at the Village Council	*			

[^] 2.5 km main roads and 9 km secondary roads.

Source: Odala Village Council, 2013

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