

'Azzun 'Atma Village Profile



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Background

This report is part of a series of booklets, which contain compiled information about each city, town, and village in the Qalqiliya Governorate. These booklets came as a result of a comprehensive study of all localities in Qalqiliya 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 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 Qalqiliya 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 Qalqiliya 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://vprofile.arij.org>.

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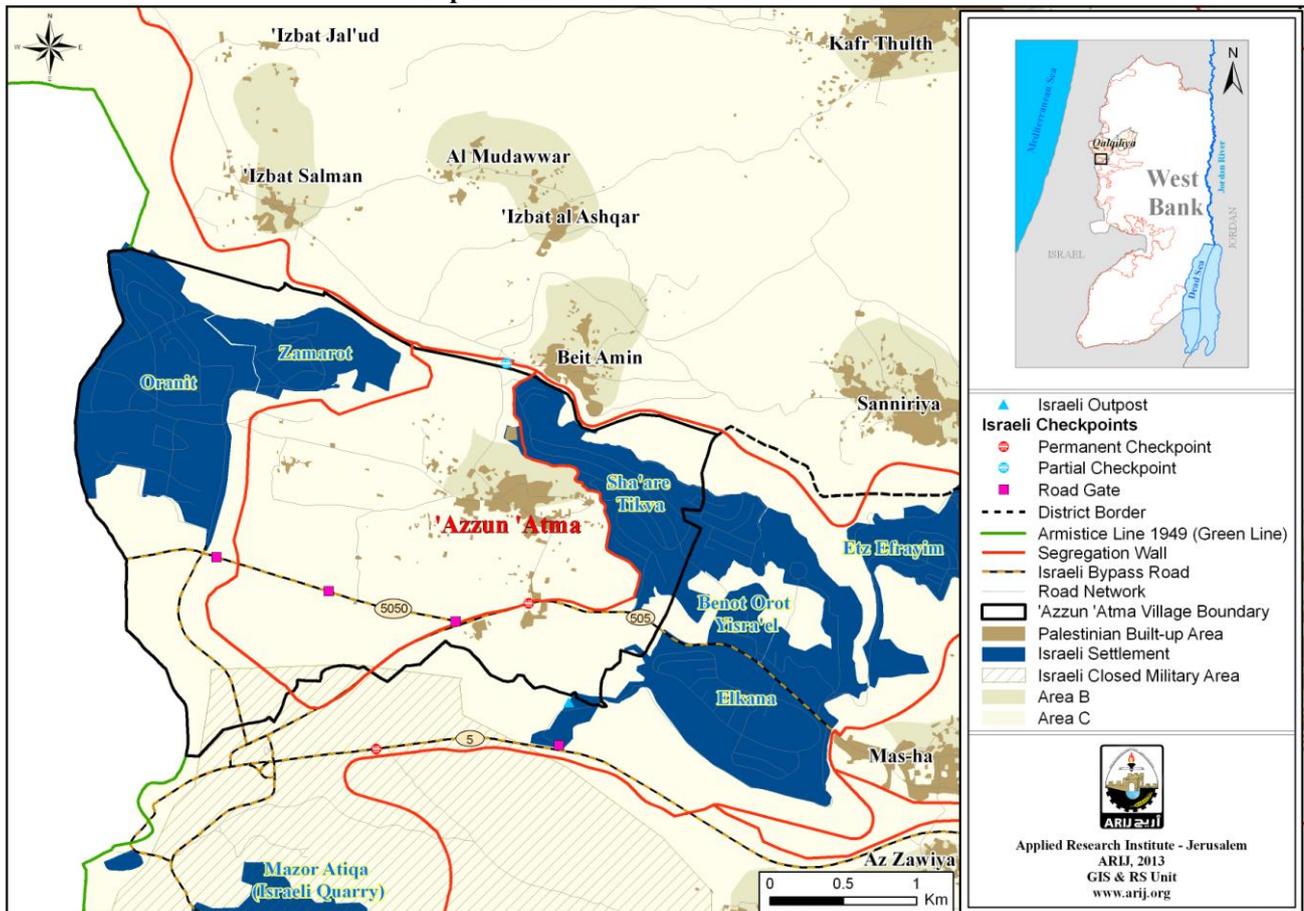
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'Azzun 'Atma Village Profile

Location and physical characteristics

'Azzun 'Atma is a Palestinian village in Qalqiliya Governorate, located 8.82km south of Qalqiliya City. It is bordered by Mas-ha (in Salfit Governorate) to the east, Az Zawiya (Salfit Governorate) to the south, lands of the 1948 to the west, and Beit 'Amin and 'Izbat Salman to the north (ARIJ-GIS, 2013) (see map 1).

Map 1: 'Azzun 'Atma location and borders



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2013

'Azzun 'Atma is located at an altitude of 148m above sea level with a mean annual rainfall of 588.2mm. The average annual temperature is 19°C whilst the average annual humidity is approximately 62% (ARIJ-GIS, 2013).

The classification of the residential areas borders has been adopted in this profile based on the administrative division of Palestinian communities, according to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). This administrative division system has been developed by the Palestinian Ministry of Planning, the Ministry of Local Government, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), and the Central Election Commission (CEC).

Since 1996, ‘Azzun ‘Atma has been governed by a Village Council which is currently administrated by 6 members appointed by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). There are also 3 employees working in the council, which owns a permanent headquarters that is included within the Western Joint Services Council/Sanniriya. The Council possesses a tractor and a wastewater pumping tank, but it does not own a vehicle for the collection of solid waste (‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012).

It is the responsibility of the Village Council to provide a number of services to the residents of ‘Azzun ‘Atma, including:

- 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 village.
- Protection of historical and archeological sites.
- Protection of governmental properties.
- Provision of educational kindergartens.

(‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012)

History

‘Azzun ‘Atma village was named after ‘Al ‘Attum’ tribe which inhabited the village hundreds of years ago, however this tribe now resides in the north of Jordan; in Soof town in the Irbid Governorate.

The village was established around 1,400 years ago with its current residents descending from Sanniriya (‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012).

Photo of ‘Azzun ‘Atma



Religious and archaeological sites

There are two mosques in the village (Ali Ben Abi Talib and Ash Sheikh ‘Ihfeeth Mosques). The village has several sites of archaeological interest including As Sheikh ‘Ihfeeth Mosque and Shrine, ‘Azzun ‘Atma Roman Pool, Khirbet Ben ‘Atma and Khirbet Najjarah (ruins). All of these sites are in need of rehabilitation in order to be suitable for tourism, as determined by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012) (see map 2).

Map 2: Main locations in ‘Azzun ‘Atma village



source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2013

Population

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), the total population of ‘Azzun ‘Atma in 2007 was 1,720, of whom 906 were male and 814 female. There were 310 households registered as living in 309 housing units.

Age groups and gender

The General Census of Population and Housing carried out by the PCBS in 2007 showed the distribution of age groups in ‘Azzun ‘Atma was as follows: 43.4% were less than 15 years of age, 52.7% were between 15 and 64 years of age, and 3.0% were 65 years of age or older. Data also showed that the gender ratio of males to females in the village was 111.3:100, meaning that males and females constituted 52.7% and 47.3% of the population, respectively.

Families

‘Azzun ‘Atma residents are from several families, including Ahmad, Ash Sheikh, Omar, Yunis and Abu Hajla (‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012).

Education

According to the results of the PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census - 2007, the illiteracy rate among ‘Azzun ‘Atma’s population is approximately 8.3%, of whom 81% are females. Of the total population, 16% could only read and write with no formal education, 29.5% had elementary education, 29% had preparatory education, 12.4% had secondary education, and 4.7% had completed higher education. Table 1 shows the educational level in the village of ‘Azzun ‘Atma by gender and educational attainment in 2007.

Table 1: ‘Azzun ‘Atma population (10 years and above) by sex and educational attainment

| Sex | Illiterate | Can read & write | Elementary | Preparatory | Secondary | Associate Diploma | Bachelor | Higher Diploma | Masters | PhD | Unknown | Total |
|----------|------------|------------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------------|-----------|----------------|----------|----------|----------|--------------|
| M | 19 | 98 | 189 | 218 | 75 | 10 | 24 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 637 |
| F | 81 | 94 | 165 | 130 | 74 | 7 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 564 |
| T | 100 | 192 | 354 | 348 | 149 | 17 | 37 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1,201 |

Source: PCBS, 2009

There are two public schools in the village, all of which are run by the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education (Directorate of Education in Qalqiliya, 2012) (see table 2).

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

| School name | Supervising authority | Sex |
|--|-----------------------|-------|
| Banat ‘Azzun ‘Atma Secondary School | Government | Mixed |
| ‘Azzun-Beit Amin Co-educational Secondary School | Government | Mixed |

Source: Directorate of Education in Qalqiliya, 2012

There are 577 students, 44 teachers, and 27 classes in the village. 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 Qalqiliya, 2012).

There is also one kindergarten in ‘Azzun ‘Atma village (Al Amal Kindergarten) which is run by a private organization. The kindergarten consists of 3 classes supervised by 3 teachers (Directorate of Education in Qalqiliya, 2012).

The educational sector in ‘Azzun ‘Atma village faces a number of obstacles, including, but not limited to:

- The existence of a permanent Israeli checkpoint and iron gates at the village’s northern entrance which hinders the students’ access to their schools.
- The Israeli harassments towards the students and staff, represented by the existence of partial and permanent Israeli checkpoints as well as the Segregation Wall.

- The Israeli occupation prevents any construction and/or rehabilitation of ‘Azzun ‘Atma-Beit Amin Co-educational Secondary School.

The flow of wastewater from the Sha'are Tikva settlement towards ‘Azzun ‘Atma-Beit Amin School located near the settlement.(‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012)

Health status

‘Azzun ‘Atma has one governmental health clinic (‘Azzun ‘Atma Governmental Clinic), a private pediatrician clinic and a private pharmacy. In the absence of required health services or in emergencies, patients are transferred to Darweesh Nazzal Hospital in Qalqiliya city (15km away) or to Rafidiya Hospital in Nablus city (35km away) (‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012).

The health sector in the village faces a number of obstacles and problems, principally (‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012):

- The lack of specialized physicians in the village.
- The lack of a resident physician working on daily basis in the health clinic.
- The health and medical staff’s inability to access the village sometimes.
- The closure of the village entrances by the Israelis.

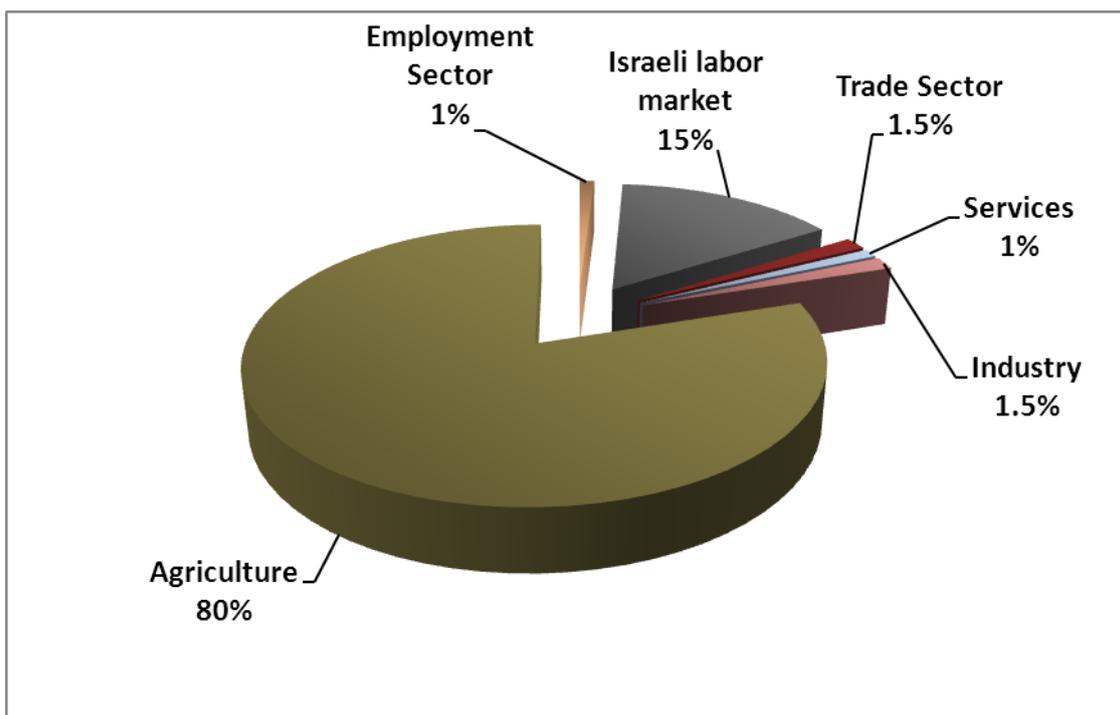
Economic activities

The economy in ‘Azzun ‘Atma is dependent mainly on the agricultural sector, which absorbs 80% of the village’s workforce (‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012) (see figure 1).

The results of a field survey conducted by the ARIJ team in 2012 for the distribution of labor by economic activity in ‘Azzun ‘Atma are as follows:

- Agriculture sector (80%)
- Israeli labor market (15%)
- Trade sector (1.5%)
- Industry (1.5%)
- Government or other employees sector (1%)
- Services sector (1%)

Figure 1: The distribution of labor force among main economic activities in ‘Azzun ‘Atma



Source: 'Azzun 'Atma Village Council, 2012

'Azzun 'Atma has 6 groceries, 7 service stores, 5 different professional workshops, 3 stonemasons and 1 store for agricultural tools ('Azzun 'Atma Village Council, 2012).

In 2012, the unemployment rate in 'Azzun 'Atma reached 5%. The groups most affected economically by the Israeli restrictions have been:

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

('Azzun 'Atma Village Council, 2012)

Labor force

According to the PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census - 2007, 39.2% of 'Azzun 'Atma's labor force was economically active, of whom 89% were employed, 60.8% were not economically active, 52.5% were students, and 37.9% were housekeepers (see table 4).

Table 4: 'Azzun 'Atma 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 | Housekeeping | Unable to work | Not working & not looking for work | Others | Total | | |
| M | 358 | 21 | 24 | 403 | 192 | 2 | 29 | 2 | 9 | 234 | 0 | 637 |
| F | 62 | 0 | 6 | 68 | 191 | 275 | 30 | 0 | 0 | 496 | 0 | 564 |
| T | 420 | 21 | 30 | 471 | 383 | 277 | 59 | 2 | 9 | 730 | 0 | 1,201 |

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

Source: PCBS, 2009

Agricultural sector

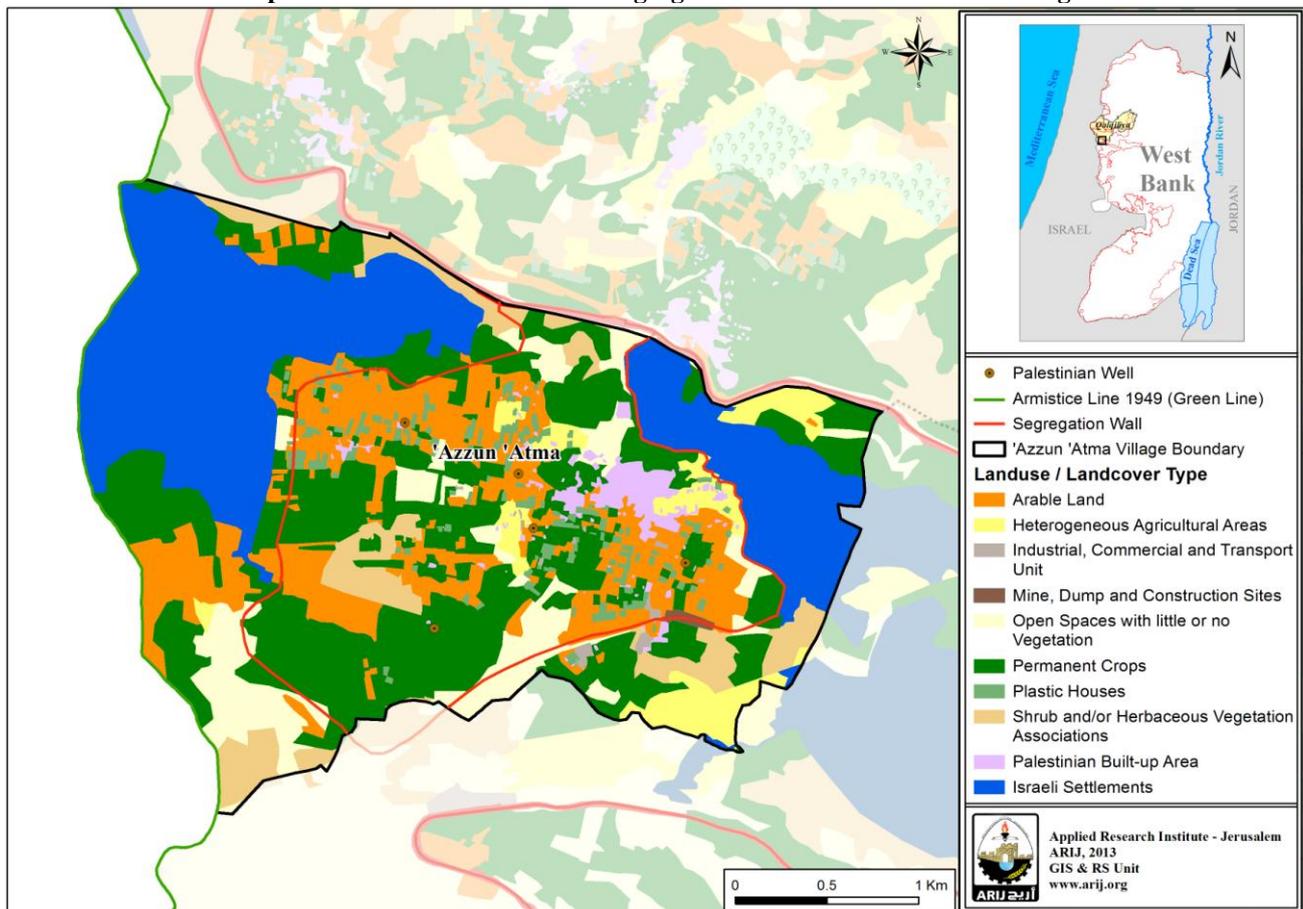
‘Azzun ‘Atma has a total area of approximately 9,434 dunums, of which 5,705 are arable land and 197 dunums are registered as residential (see table 5 and map 3).

Table 5: Land use and land cover in ‘Azzun ‘Atma village (area in dunums)

| Total area | Built up area | Agricultural area (5,705) | | | | 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 | | | | | |
| 9,434 | 197 | 3,251 | 249 | 620 | 1,585 | 0 | 0 | 787 | 46 | 2,699 |

Source: ARIJ – GIS Unit, 2013

Map 3: Land use/land cover and Segregation Wall in ‘Azzun ‘Atma village



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2013

Table 6 shows the different types of rain-fed and irrigated open-cultivated vegetables in ‘Azzun ‘Atma. The most commonly cultivated crops in this area are squash, white cabbage and green beans, there are a total area of 545 dunums of greenhouses in the village and the most commonly cultivated crops within this cucumber

Table 6: Total area of rain-fed and irrigated open cultivated vegetables in ‘Azzun ‘Atma (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. |
| 5 | 40 | 0 | 52 | 25 | 12 | 10 | 7 | 0 | 15 | 40 | 126 |

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

Source: Ministry of Agriculture - Qalqiliya, 2010

Table 7 shows the different types of fruit trees planted in the area. ‘Azzun ‘Atma is famous for olive cultivation and there are approximately 440 dunums of land planted with olive trees in the village.

Table 7: Total area of horticulture and olive trees in ‘Azzun ‘Atma (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. |
| 440 | 0 | 0 | 144 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 11 | 455 | 160 |

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

Source: Ministry of Agriculture - Qalqiliya, 2010

In terms of field crops and forage in ‘Azzun ‘Atma, cereals (particularly wheat) are the most cultivated, covering an area of approximately 90 dunums (see table 8).

Table 8: Total area of forage and field crops in ‘Azzun ‘Atma (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. |
| 90 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 107 | 0 |

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

Source: Ministry of Agriculture - Qalqiliya, 2010

The difference between the two sets of results obtained from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and ARIJ’s GIS Unit in size of agricultural areas is explained by the difference in each organization’s definition of land coverage and ownership. The MoA and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2011) conducted a survey which used a definition of agricultural areas based on land ownership. Therefore, the areas included in the survey were those of actual holdings of agricultural areas and they did not consider fragmented and small seasonal cultivated areas in residential and agricultural areas. ARIJ’s survey, however, indicated the existence of a high proportion of small and fragmented holdings (home gardens) throughout the occupied Palestinian territories. This therefore accounts for the larger area of agricultural holdings calculated by ARIJ.

The field survey conducted by the ARIJ team shows that 50% of the residents in ‘Azzun ‘Atma rear and keep domestic animals such as sheep and goats (see table 9).

Table 9: Livestock in ‘Azzun ‘Atma

| Cows* | Sheep | Goats | Camels | Horses | Donkeys | Mules | Broilers | Layers | Bee hives |
|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|---------|-------|----------|--------|-----------|
| 2 | 1,085 | 218 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11,000 | 95 |

*Including cows, bull calves, heifer calves and bulls

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture - Qalqiliya, 2010

There are approximately 12km of agricultural roads in the village, divided as follows:

Table 10: Agricultural roads in ‘Azzun ‘Atma Village and their lengths

| Suitability of agricultural roads | Length (km) |
|--|-------------|
| For vehicles | 5 |
| For tractors and agricultural machinery only | 6 |
| For animals only | 1 |
| Unsuitable | - |

Source: ‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012

The agricultural sector in the village faces some problems, including:

- The confiscation of land by Israelis.
- The lack of pastures.
- The lack of economic feasibility for agricultural production.
- The lack of access to agricultural lands.
- The lack of capital for agricultural projects.
- The high price of water.
- The high prices of raw materials.

(‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012)

Institutions and services

‘Azzun ‘Atma village has a number of local institutions and associations that provide services to various sectors of society. These include:

- **‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council:** Founded in 1996 by the Ministry of Local Government, with the aim of addressing different issues concerning the village and providing various services and infrastructure to its residents.
- **The Cultural Society:** Founded in 2006 by the Ministry of the Interior. The Society provides cultural and educational services.
- **The Community Education Council:** Founded in 2011 by the Ministry of Education, with the aim of providing educational and developmental services.

The Farmers Committee: Founded in 2007 with the aim of providing agricultural and guidance services. (‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012)

Infrastructure and natural resources

Electricity and telecommunication services:

‘Azzun ‘Atma has been connected to a public electricity network since 1996. It is served by the Israeli Qatariya Electricity Company, which is the main source of electricity in the village, and 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 accumulated debts recorded at the Palestinian Ministry of Finance (2.5 million NIS) (‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012).

‘Azzun ‘Atma is also connected to a telecommunication network and approximately 95% of the housing units within the village boundaries are connected to phone lines (‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012).

Transportation services:

There are 3 large taxis (7 passengers) and 1 small taxi (4 passengers) in ‘Azzun ‘Atma, as well as 50 private cars used by the residents as paid taxis. However, the residents suffer from the existence of earth mounds and military checkpoints on roads during their travels, as well as the Segregation Wall (‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012). There are 3km of main roads and 7km of secondary roads in ‘Azzun ‘Atma (‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012) (see table 11).

Table 11: Roads in ‘Azzun ‘Atma village

| Status of internal roads | Road length (km) | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|-----|
| | Main | Sub |
| 1. Paved and in good condition | 3 | - |
| 2. Paved and in poor condition | - | 5 |
| 3. Unpaved | - | 2 |

Source: ‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012

Water resources:

‘Azzun ‘Atma is provided with water through the public water network established in 1992, which itself is provided with water from the Rummanah Well. Approximately 95% of the housing units are connected to the network (‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012).

The quantity of water supplied to ‘Azzun ‘Atma village in 2012 was recorded as approximately 100,000 cubic meters/year (‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012). Therefore the estimated rate of water supply per capita is approximately 137 liters/day. However, no ‘Azzun ‘Atma citizen consumes this amount of water due to water losses, which are estimated at 30% (‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012). These losses happen at the main source, along major transport lines, in the distribution network, and at the household level. Therefore the rate of water consumption per capita in ‘Azzun ‘Atma is 96 liters per day (‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012). The average water consumption of ‘Azzun ‘Atma residents is 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 3 NIS (‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012).

The village also has 30 individual household rainwater harvesting cisterns, as well as 2 water reservoirs with 300 and 120 cubic meters capacities. There are also 5 private artesian wells located in the village, with a daily average pumping rate of 2,250 cubic meters, used for agriculture (‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012).

Sanitation:

‘Azzun ‘Atma lacks a public sewerage network and most of the population use cesspits and septic tanks, as the main means of wastewater disposal (‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012).

Based on the estimated daily per capita water consumption, the approximate quantity of wastewater generated per day, is 153 cubic meters, or 56,000 cubic meters annually. At the individual level, it is estimated that the per capita wastewater generation is approximately 77 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. 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 and to public health (ARIJ - WERU, 2013).

Solid waste management:

The Joint Services Council for Solid Waste 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 25 NIS 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 ('Azzun 'Atma Village Council, 2012).

Most of the population in 'Azzun 'Atma benefits from the solid waste services, whereby waste is collected from households, institutions, shops and public squares in plastic bags, and placed in 80 containers (of 1m³ capacity), located at various points in the village. The Joint Council collects the solid waste three times a week and transports it using a waste vehicle to Zahret al Finjan dumping site in Jenin Governorate, 80km from the village, where it is subsequently buried in an environmentally friendly way ('Azzun 'Atma Village Council, 2012).

The daily per capita rate of solid waste production in 'Azzun 'Atma is 0.7kg. Thus the estimated amount of solid waste produced per day from the 'Azzun 'Atma residents is nearly 1.4 tons, or 509 tons per year (ARIJ-WERU, 2013).

Environmental conditions

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

Water crisis

Water is cut off for long periods of time during the summer because the quantity of water available does not meet the citizens' water needs. There is also a high rate of water losses from the network which is aged and worn out and is in need of renovation.

Wastewater management

The absence of a public sewage network in the village means that 'Azzun 'Atma 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

'Azzun 'Atma 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 resulting from the village and disposing it in Zahret al Finjan landfill in Jenin Governorate. This landfill is the main environmentally friendly landfill serving the village as well as most of the other localities in the Qalqiliya Governorate.

Impact of the Israeli Occupation

Geopolitical status in 'Azzun 'Atma

According to the Oslo II Interim Agreement signed by the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel on 28th September 1995, 'Azzun 'Atmawas was divided into areas "B" and "C". Approximately 357 dunums (3.8. % of the village's total area) were assigned as area B, where the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) has complete control over civil matters but Israel continues to have overriding responsibility for security. Area B constitutes most of the inhabited Palestinian areas including municipalities, villages and some refugee camps. Most of the population of 'Azzun 'Atma resides in area B. The rest of the village's area, constituting 9077dunums (96.2% of the total), is 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 without the prior consent or authorization of the Israeli Civil Administration. Most of the lands lying within area C are agricultural areas and open spaces. In addition to this is the confiscated lands used for the purposes of building Israeli settlements (see table 12).

Table 12: The geopolitical divisions of 'Azzun 'Atma according to the Oslo II Interim Agreement in 1995

| Area | Area in dunums | Percentage of total village area |
|----------------|----------------|----------------------------------|
| Area A | 0 | 0 |
| Area B | 357 | 3.8 |
| Area C | 9077 | 96.2 |
| Nature reserve | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 9434 | 100 |

Source: ARIJ-GIS, 2013

Israeli occupation practices in 'Azzun 'Atma village

Land lying within the confines of 'Azzun 'Atma has often been subjected to numerous Israeli confiscations for the benefit of various Israeli objectives such as the construction of Israeli settlements, bypass roads and the Segregation Wall on the village territories. In effect, this has isolated thousands of dunumns of lands in order for the land to be included in the western isolation zone, which Israel is seeking to include within its borders by constructing the Separation Wall on

West Bank lands. During the period of Israeli occupation, Israel confiscated 2689 dunums of land (28.5% of the village lands) in 'Azzun 'Atma village, so as to establish the Israeli settlements of Oranit, Sha'are Tikva, and Zamarot.

The Israeli Segregation Wall plan in 'Azzun 'Atma village

The Implementation of the Israeli Segregation Wall plan on the ground has been ongoing since June 2002. This began after the decision of the Israeli Authorities to implement the separation policy between Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories by establishing an isolation zone in the western part of the West Bank. This isolation zone stretches from the north to the south of the West Bank, thereby confiscating the most agriculturally fertilized lands and isolating Palestinian societies (into Ghettos) and separating communities from one another. By controlling natural resources and connecting most of the Israeli settlements to one another, in an attempt to legitimize the route of the Separation Wall inside the West Bank, the isolation area also undermines the regional interaction between Palestinian towns and villages and controls the natural resources. The construction of the wall has therefore ignored the ruling of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) made on July 9th 2004, in which it was recommended that the route of the Wall should be changed and Palestinians affected by the Wall in this area should be offered compensation. However, on 30th April 2007, new amendments were made, which concentrated on the new route of the Separation Wall. The areas faced geographical obstacles in the West Bank. The amendments were based on solving the problems which were considered a challenge in light of the continuously building process of the Separation Wall. 'Azzun 'Atma village was one of the villages that was affected by the amendments to the original route of the Separation Wall (published in July 2002). This map showed that the Wall would completely isolate 'Azzun 'Atma village and its neighboring villages.

On October 2003, the Israeli military published a new map showing further changes to the route of the Separation Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. 'Azzun 'Atma village was one of the villages that was affected by the amendments. The map showed that the wall will surround the Palestinian built up-area from all four sides, in order to control the entry and exit of Palestinian villagers to and from the village. This process is conducted through the establishment of a gate at the entrance of the village from the northern side. Only the residents who are able to prove their place of residence and/or ownership of the land are permitted entry into the village. The documents that formally state ownership of the properties in the area are usually in the names of the elderly. Israeli official departments (such as the Israeli Civil Administration; ICA) will only issue permits to these residents who own the Title Deeds to the land. It is worth mentioning that the Israeli Civil Administration is only issuing these permits from one season to another, making it difficult for land owners to cultivate their agricultural lands by themselves, especially since these permits do not include access for labourers or the equipment that is necessary for the cultivation of the land.

The Israeli military published further amendments to the route of the Separation Wall on their webpage but these changes have not affected 'Azzun 'Atma village and the surrounding villages from the last change in 2006. According to the latest map, it appears 8 km of the Separation Wall has been built on the village's lands from the northern, eastern, and western side. In addition, the Wall has isolated approximately 9204 dunums of the village's lands, approximately (97.5 % of the total

village area) which included Israeli settlements close to the village. In addition to this, agricultural lands and open spaces have also been isolated by the Wall (see table 13).

Table 13: Land classification of the isolated area behind the Segregation Wall in 'Azzun 'Atma village

| No. | Land classification | Area (dunums) |
|-----|---|----------------------|
| 1 | Open spaces | To be viewd from GIS |
| 2 | Agricultural lands | 5066 |
| 3 | Shrub and/or herbaceous vegetation associations | To be viewd from GIS |
| 4 | Segregation Wall | 10 |
| 5 | Mine,dump and constructions sites | 46 |
| | Total | 9204 |

Source: ARIJ-GIS, 2013

It should be noted that in addition to the isolation of the village from four sides, the Israeli authorities have identified the Palestinian traffic movement on the Israeli bypass road No.505 which cuts the village lands from the south. The Israeli authorities have set up a security fence on the other road which is linked to the aforementioned bypass road (No. 505), from the eastern and western sides so as to provide security and protection to the settlers who use this bypass road in order to pass into the occupied territories within the 1948 Green Line.

It should be noted also that the Israeli occupation authorities have established a security fence (as claimed by the Israeli authorities) on the borders of the settlement Sha'areTikva and adjacent to the boundaries of the urban area in the village of 'Azzun 'Atma. The fence stretches from the east side so as to secure and protect the settlers who are living in the settlement. They also set up a gate along the security fence in order to control the movement of the Palestinians from this gate toward the Israeli bypass road No.505 south of the village of 'Azzun 'Atma .

The Israeli Segregation Wall and Nirit Israeli Settlement

The majority of Nirit settlement land is located to the west of the Green line (Armistice Line of 1949). According to The Central Bureau of Statistics (Israel), CBS2012, 1236 settlers reside in this settlement. This settlement Bloc was established in 1981 and expanded through the years 1986, 2000, 2004, 2006 and 2009. Over the years the settlement has infringed upon Palestinian land, which resulted in an increase in the population. (see table 14).

Table 14: Number of buildings that have been added to the new neighborhood ' Nov Hisharon ' inside the Palestinian territories and of Nirit Israel Bloc within the Green Line

| Buildings | Year |
|-----------|------|
| 27 | 2006 |
| 30 | 2008 |
| 42 | 2009 |

Source: ARIJ- 2009

The Israeli occupation claims that the reason behind the construction of the Separation Wall in the occupied Palestinian territories is for security reasons. This is done under the pretext of protecting Israeli citizens, but on the ground level it is infringing upon the Palestinian territories. The area which will become isolated between the Separation Wall and the Armistice Line of 1949 (Green Line) consists of 733 square kilometers, representing 13% of the total area of the West Bank. In addition to this was the annexation of 107 Israeli settlements incorporating more than 85% of the number of Israeli settlers residing in the Israeli settlements in the occupied territories of the West Bank. It seems that Israel has begun the second phase of what it aims to achieve through the construction of the Segregation Wall after the isolation of the Palestinian territories from the main communities in the West Bank. Israel is taking advantage of the uninhabited spaces and linking them to Israel through the same pattern that was used in the development of the settlements. However, in this phase, Israel is seeking to link the Israeli settlements in the West Bank to the cities and Israeli communities adjacent to the Green Line in an effort to undermine the development of the Green Line. Ultimately, the aim to redraw the Green Line is evident, so as to impose on the ground, tactics such as the Segregation Wall. Through the Segregation Wall, Israel seeks to redraw their eastern border as part of what they are doing; imposing their vision and their plans for the peace process on the ground. Over the past few years, the Israeli plan aimed at expanding the Nirit settlement bloc, which stretches through the occupied West Bank territories. This is achieved by linking it to Alfei Menashe, which in essence, is nothing more than a ploy to impose a reality on the ground through the control of the western isolation zone (Palestinian territories isolated between the Separation wall and between the Green Line [the armistice line of 1949]).

The Israeli Checkpoints on 'Azzun 'Atma village

Following the outbreak of the second Palestinian Intifada in September 2000, the Israeli authorities tightened the closure procedures surrounding Palestinian towns and villages. The Israeli occupation closed off the entrance roads to the Palestinian villages which connects them to the main streets (especially the roads that are used by Israeli settlers as well). This forced the Palestinian villagers (in the rest of the West Bank) to walk long distances in an attempt to find an alternative exit or entry point into their villages. The Israeli occupation authorities attempt to find alternatives to Palestinian villages in order to communicate with each other by digging tunnels beneath the Israeli bypass roads. This process was part of the Israeli policy to ensure the exclusive use of these roads by Israelis, which was announced in October 2004. Israel proposed a network of bypass roads that will transform the paths of the Palestinians It will result in Palestinians having to redirect their routes to other road

networks that are entirely separated from the Israeli bypass roads in order to ensure the exclusive use of these roads by Israelis. In the village of Azzun Atma , the Israeli occupation authorities have set up four checkpoints , in order to control the movement of the villagers. The first checkpoint, were established on the southern entrance of the village , in order to communicate with neighboring Palestinian villages to the south side of the village where the Israeli occupation authorities have set up this barrier so as to control the movement of the residents of the village on the Israeli bypass road No.505 . The Israeli occupation authorities established a control tower along the street number 5050 , which is connected to the Israeli bypass road No.505 from the eastern and western sides, This Tower were established in order, to monitor the Palestinian movement on the above mentioned bypass road and at the same time to provide protection for the Israeli settlers who use this street to connect with the Israeli settlements inside the occupied Palestinian borders of 1948. Moreover, the Israeli occupation authorities have set up another barrier to the western side of the street number 5050 , which connects with the road that is leading to the occupied Palestinian territories within the borders of 1948. It is also considered as a transit point to the territory that have been isolated in the village of 'Azzun 'Atma, since the owners were not able to access them after the construction completion of the Segregation Wall

The village of 'Azzun 'Atma still suffer from the checkpoint that is established by the Israeli occupation authorities on the northern entrance of the village, as with the end of construction of the wall on the territory of the village of 'Azzun 'Atma, the Israeli occupation authorities made procedures for the entry and exit of the residents by making them enter and exit during certain times (from sixth O'clock in the morning until six o'clock pm , for example) which means during the time that Israeli authorities would open the gate every day. It should be noted that the educational sector were mostly affected in the village as the gates blocked the access of the students and teachers from the neighboring village to their schools which are located in the village of 'Azzun 'Atma . As the Israeli occupation bulldozers razed the school garden on the third week of June,2013 and they demolished the walls that surround the village in addition to the uprooting of olive trees that were planted in the school garden. These practices were done in order to complete the building of the Separation in the village. In addition to, establishing a security street between the school and the settlement (Sha'are Tikva) that is built on village lands.

Israeli military orders which targeted 'Azzun 'Atma village

Israel tries to avoid its responsibilities as an occupying power of the Palestinian territories. Repeated attempts to justify its existence as an administrative body in the occupied Palestinian territories is evident. Israel produces military orders in order to legitimize violations and cite "security concerns" as their primary motivation. This in effect, violates international and humanitarian laws as well as the decisions taken by the UN Security Council. Throughout the years of Israeli occupation, the village of 'Azzun 'Atma has been targeted with many military orders which have affected land and property. The following is an Israeli military order:

- Israeli military order no.35/02/T: Issued on December 25th 2002 to confiscate an area of 280dunums of lands from the villages of 'Azzun 'Atma, Sanniriya, and Kafr Thulth for the purpose of

building the Segregation Wall. This military order targets the west and south part of 'Azzun 'Atma village.

- Israeli military order no.78/06/T: Issued on September 13th 2006 to confiscate an area of 16.5dunums of lands from the villages of 'Azzun 'Atma, and Sanniriya for the purpose of building the security fence and gate within the Segregation Wall. It should be noted that the security fence that was mentioned in the Israeli military order will be set up on part of Israeli bypass road No.505. The fence originates from the southern entrance of the Israeli settlement “Sha'are Tikva” and then extends towards the southern entrance of the village of Azzun Atma, which is used by Palestinians to communicate with their neighboring Palestinian villages from the southern side. It extends to street number 5050, which connects the eastern side of the street to Israeli bypass road No. 505 and the south side, along the street leading to Israeli settlements inside the Green Line, the armistice line of 1949. Thus, the southern part of the village will indirectly become isolated from its Palestinian owners.
- Israeli military order no.07/14/T: Issued on 17th September 2007 to confiscate an area of 389.5dunums of lands from the villages of 'Azzun 'Atma, Sanniriya, and Az Zawiya, for the purpose of building the Segregation Wall on the lands of the aforementioned villages.

Development plans and projects

Implemented projects

'Azzun 'Atma Village Council has implemented several development projects in 'Azzun 'Atma during the past five years (see table 15).

Table 15: Implemented development plans and projects in 'Azzun 'Atma during the last five years

| Name of the project | Type | Year | Donor |
|--|-----------------|------|---|
| Constructing a kindergarten | Educational | 2009 | GTZ, Ministry of Finance & 'Azzun 'Atma Village Council |
| Establishing a women's cultural center | Public Services | 2009 | GTZ, Ministry of Finance & 'Azzun 'Atma Village Council |
| Connecting the artesian wells with electricity | Infrastructure | 2010 | Ministry of Finance & 'Azzun 'Atma Village Council |
| Constructing a water reservoir with 300 cubic meters capacity | Water | 2011 | KFW & 'Azzun 'Atma Village Council |
| Establishing a rainwater drainage canal in 'Azzun 'Atma Secondary School | Infrastructure | 2011 | The National Bank |

Source: 'Azzun 'Atma Village Council, 2012

Proposed projects

‘Azzun ‘Atma 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 sewerage network (13km long).
2. Rehabilitating the public water network (13km long) through renovation and maintenance; noting that the engineering study and the necessary licenses for this purpose are available.
3. Rehabilitating the main street linking the village’s northern and southern entrances (2km) and constructing sidewalks Also paving secondary roads (approximately 2km long).
4. Rehabilitating agricultural roads (7km long) and constructing new agricultural roads (4km).
5. Constructing a multi-purpose hall with the possibility to set it up rooftop of the existing cultural center.
6. Providing additional educational courses to help students and support new graduates.
7. Reclaiming a total area of approximately 200 dunums of agricultural lands, and rehabilitating another 200 dunums area of agricultural lands.
8. Establishing a public garden and a park.

Locality development priorities and needs

‘Azzun ‘Atma suffers from a significant shortage of infrastructure and services. Table 16 shows the development priorities and needs in the village, according to the Village Council’s perspective:

Table 16: Development priorities and needs in ‘Azzun ‘Atma

| No. | Sector | Strongly needed | Needed | Not a priority | Notes |
|------------------------------|--|-----------------|--------|----------------|---|
| Infrastructural needs | | | | | |
| 1 | Construction and paving of roads | * | | | 7km [^] |
| 2 | Rehabilitation of old water networks | | | * | |
| 3 | Extending the water network to cover new built up areas | | | * | |
| 4 | Construction of new water networks | * | | | 15km |
| 5 | Rehabilitation/ onstruction of new wells or springs | | | * | |
| 6 | Construction of water reservoirs | | | * | |
| 7 | Construction of a sewage disposal network | | | * | |
| 8 | Construction of a new electricity network | | | * | |
| 9 | Providing containers for solid waste collection | | | * | |
| 10 | Providing vehicles for collecting solid waste | | | * | |
| 11 | Providing a sanitary landfill | | | * | |
| Health needs | | | | | |
| 1 | Building new clinics or health care centres | * | | | 1 health clinic |
| 2 | Rehabilitation of old clinics or health care centres | | | * | |
| 3 | Purchasing medical equipment and tools | | | * | |
| Educational needs | | | | | |
| 1 | Building new schools | | | * | ‘Azzun ‘Atma-Beit Amin Co-educated Secondary School |
| 2 | Rehabilitation of old schools | | * | | |
| 3 | Purchasing new school equipment | | * | | |
| Agriculture needs | | | | | |
| 1 | Rehabilitation of agricultural lands | * | | | 150 dunums |
| 2 | Building rainwater harvesting cisterns | | | * | |
| 3 | Construction of livestock barracks | | | * | |
| 4 | Provision of veterinary services | | * | | |
| 5 | Provision of seeds and hay for animals | | | * | |
| 6 | Construction of new greenhouses | | | * | |
| 7 | Rehabilitation of greenhouses | | * | | 50 greenhouses |
| 8 | Provision of field crops seeds | * | | | |
| 9 | Provision of plants and agricultural supplies | * | | | |
| Other needs | | | | | |
| 1 | Establishing a multi-purpose public hall inside ‘Azzun ‘Atma-Beit Amin Co-educational Secondary School | * | | | |

[^] 3km secondary roads and 7km agricultural roads

Source: ‘Azzun ‘Atma Village Council, 2012

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