

Al-Itihad Town Profile

(Beitillu, Jammala & Deir 'Ammar)



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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 Ramallah Governorate. These booklets came as a result of a comprehensive study of all localities in Ramallah 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 Ramallah 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 Ramallah 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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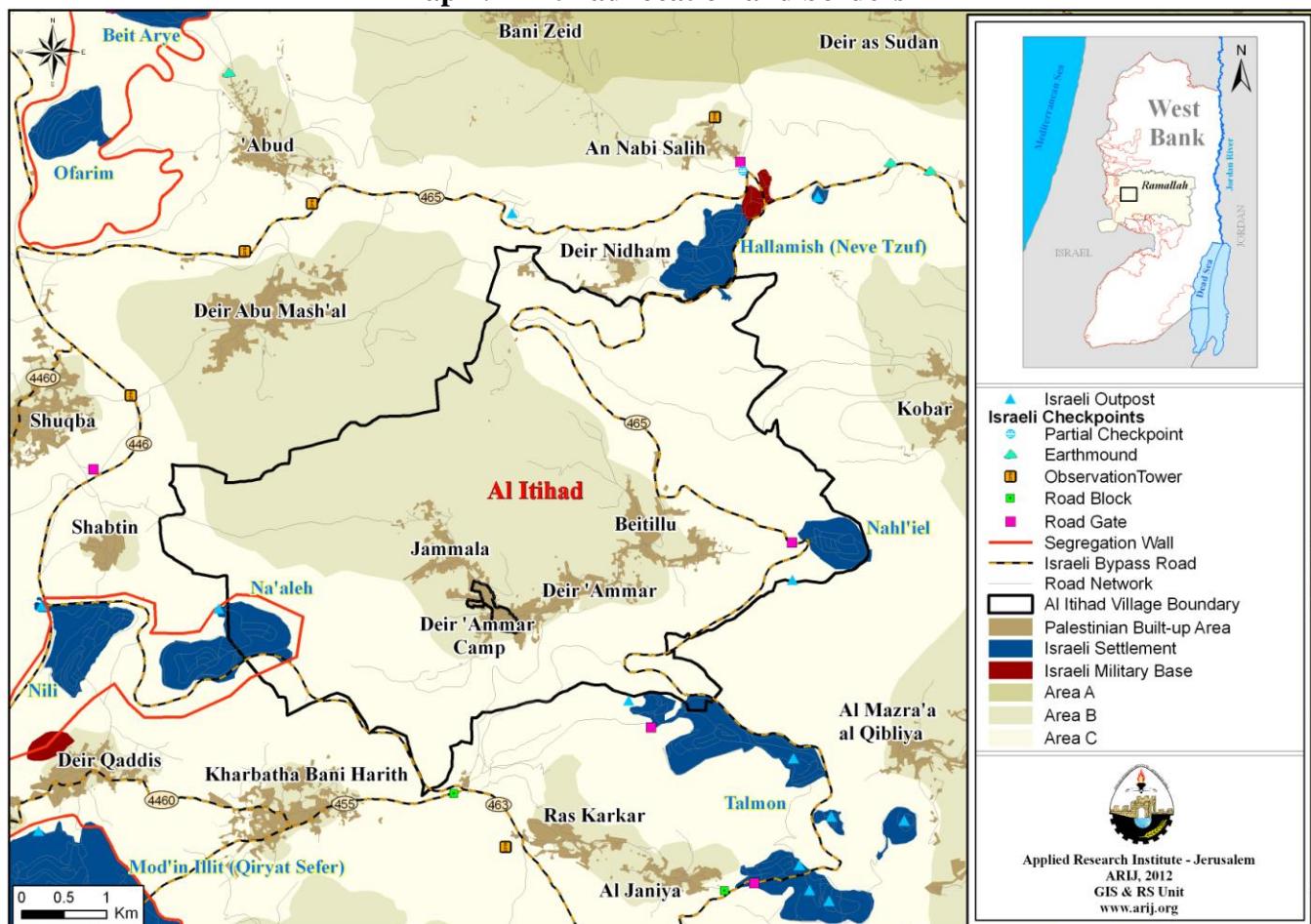
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Al-Itihad Town Profile

Location and Physical Characteristics

Al-Itihad is a Palestinian town in the Ramallah Governorate located (horizontally) 12.5km northwest of Ramallah City. Al-Itihad is bordered by Kobar and Al-Zaytounah lands to the east, Deir Abu Mash'al and Deir Nidham villages to the north, Shabtin and Deir Qaddis villages to the west, and Ras Karkar, Kharbatha Bani Harith, Al-Zaytounah and Al Janiya villages to the south (ARIJ GIS, 2012) (See map 1).

Map 1: Al-Itihad location and borders



Al-Itihad is located at an altitude of 531m above sea level with a mean annual rainfall of 576mm. The average annual temperature is 17 °C, and the average annual humidity is about 61% (ARIJ GIS, 2012).

Since 2005, Al-Itihad has been governed by a Municipal Council, which is currently administrated by 5 members appointed by the Palestinian National Authority. The Municipal Council, which is included within the Joint Services Council for Ni'lin, owns a permanent headquarters in which 12 employees work. Moreover, the Council owns a vehicle for the collection of solid waste, a private car and water maintenance devices (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011).

Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the Municipal Council to provide a number of services to the residents of Al-Itihad, including (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011):

- Infrastructure services such as water and electricity management.
- Solid waste collection and road construction, restoration and pavement
- Organization of the construction and licensing processes.
- Implementation of projects and studies for the town.
- Management and maintenance of the drinking water supply network.

History

Al-Itihad town (literally meaning "the Union") took its name from the merger of the three Councils of "Beitillu", "Deir 'Ammar" and "Jammala" villages in one joint Municipal Council, and hence its residents come from these three localities (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011) (See photo below for Al-Itihad town).

Photos of Al-Itihad

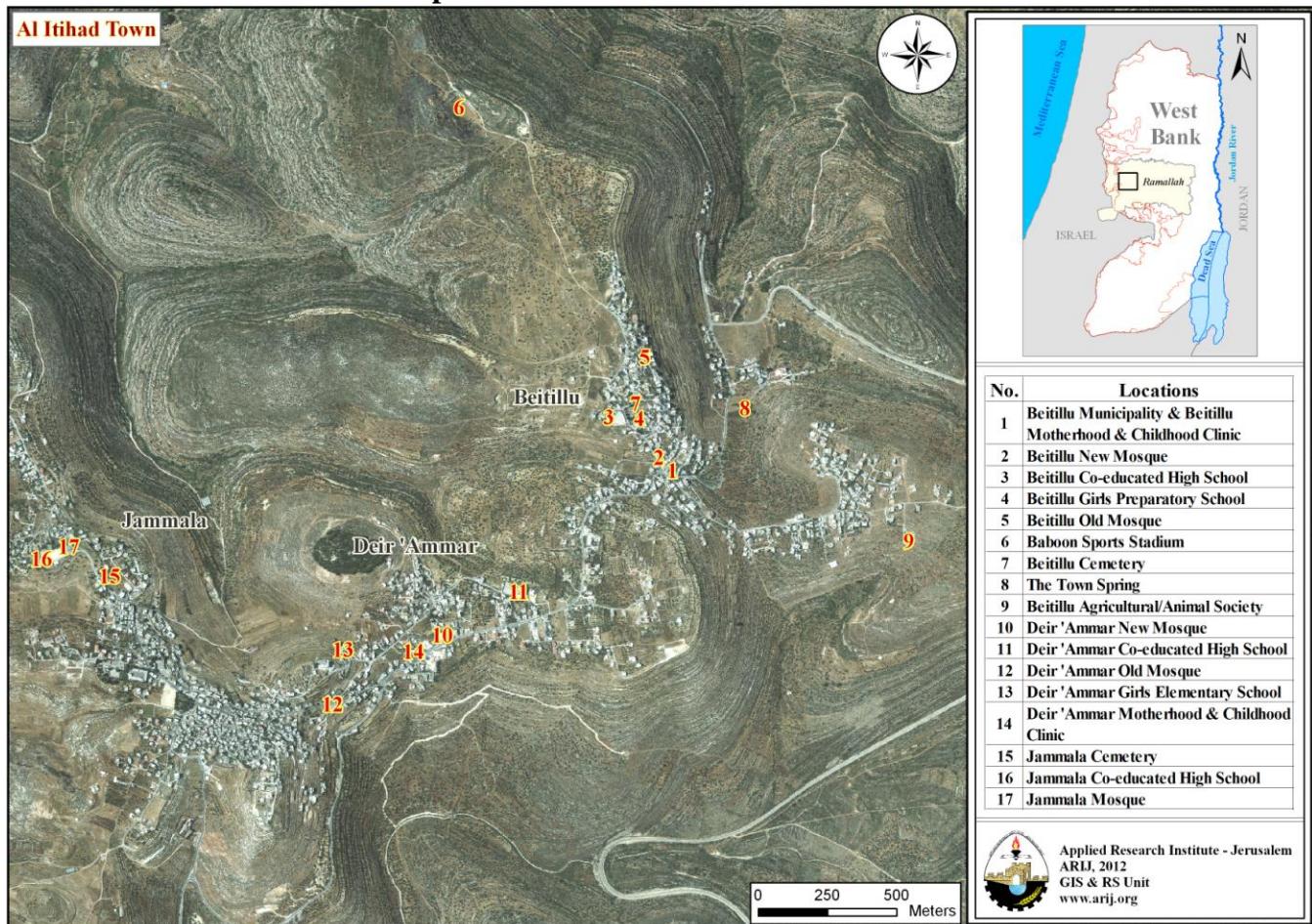


ARIJ Photo Courtesy

Religious and Archaeological Sites

In terms of religious establishments, there are five mosques in Al-Itihad; two of which are in Beitillu village; Beitillu new Mosque and Beitillu old Mosque, two in Deir 'Ammar village; Deir 'Ammar new Mosque and Deir 'Ammar old Mosque, and one in Jammala village; Jammala Mosque. As for the archaeological sites, there are a few, mainly: Az Zarqa Valley area, Ash Sheikh Gheith Mountain and Al Yasirah area, in addition to some shrines distributed within the town (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011) (See Map 2).

Map 2: Main locations in Al-Itihad Town



Population

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), the total population of Al-Itihad in 2007 was 6,395; of whom 3,310 are males and 3,085 are females. There are 1,055 households living in 1,101 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 Al-Itihad is as follows: 42.7% are less than 15 years, 54.2% are between 15 - 64 years, 3.1% are 65 years and older. Data also showed that the sex ratio of males to females in the town is 107.3:100, meaning that males and females constitute 51.8% and 48.2% of the population respectively.

Families

Al-Itihad residents are composed of several families, mainly: Abu Ziyada, Bazar, 'Odah, Daramnah and other families (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011).

Education

According to the results of the PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census-2007, the illiteracy rate among Al-Itihad population is about 6.4%, of whom 79.2% are females. Of the literate population, 15.4% can only read and write, with no formal education, 27% had elementary education, 30.7% had preparatory education, 14.2% had secondary education, and 6.1% completed higher education. Table 1, shows the educational level in the town of Al-Itihad, by sex, and educational attainment in 2007.

Table 1: Al-Itihad population (10 years and above) by sex and educational attainment

S E x	Illiterate	Can read & write	Elementary	Preparatory	Secondary	Associate Diploma	Bachelor	Higher Diploma	Maste r	PhD	Unknown	Total
M	61	345	668	770	371	40	106	2	10	-	3	2,376
F	232	364	570	642	281	45	74	-	1	-	7	2,216
T	293	709	1,238	1,412	652	85	180	2	11	-	10	4,592

Source: PCBS, 2009.

With regards to the basic and secondary education institutions and schools in Al-Itihad in the academic year 2010/2011, there are five public schools in the town; all run by the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education, and one co-educated school run by UNRWA, but there are no kindergartens in the town (Directorate of Education in Ramallah, 2011) (see Table 2).

Table 2: The Schools in Al-Itihad by name, stage, sex, and supervising authority (2010/2011)

School Name	Supervising Authority	Sex
Beitillu Girls Secondary School	Government	Female
Beitillu Co-educated Secondary School		Co- educated
Jammala Co-educated Secondary School		Co- educated
Deir 'Ammar Co-educated Secondary School		Co- educated
Deir 'Ammar Girls Secondary School		Female
Deir 'Ammar Girls Elementary School	UNRWA	Female

Source: Directorate of Education in Ramallah, 2011

In the town there are 2,232 students, 146 teachers, and 91 classes (Directorate of Education in Ramallah, 2011). It should be noted here that the average number of students per teacher in the school is nearly 15, while the average number of students per class is approximately 25.

Additionally, the educational sector in Al-Itihad town suffers some obstacles, mainly (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011):

- The overcrowding of students per class.
- The shortage of classrooms in some schools.
- The need for a model school in the town.
- The absence of a known donor to financially support the educational sector.

Health Status

There are a number of health centers and services available in Al-Itihad: two governmental physician clinics and another five private physician clinics, three private dental clinics, two motherhood and childhood centers, one governmental medical analysis laboratory, a governmental physiotherapy center and two governmental pharmacies. However, in case of the absence of required health service and in emergency cases, residents of Al-Itihad head to Ramallah governmental hospital in Ramallah city; 30km in distance from the locality (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011).

Nevertheless, the health sector in the town suffers some obstacles and problems, including (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011):

- The lack of physicians with different specialties.
- The lack of an integrated hospital along with an emergency center.
- The lack of an ambulance.

Economic Activities

The economy in Al-Itihad is dependent on several economic sectors, mainly: the Israeli labor market sector which absorbs 86% of the town workforce (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011) (See Figure1).

The results of a field survey conducted by ARIJ in 2011 for the distribution of labor by economic activity in Israeli Labor Market are as follows (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011):

- Israeli Labor Market (86%)
- Government or Private Employees Sector (10%)
- Agriculture Sector (2%)
- Services Sector (1%)
- Trade Sector (1%)

Figure 1: Economic Activity in Al-Itihad Town

Source: Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011

In term of industrial productions and facilities in Al-Itihad town, there are 15 groceries, 2 vegetables and fruits stores, one butcher, two stone cutters and two olive oil-presses. Moreover, the unemployment rate in Al-Itihad has reached around 20% in 2011 (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011).

Labor Force

According to the PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census-2007, 31.2% of Al-Itihad labor force was economically active, of whom 85.1% were employed, 68.5% were not economically active, 56.4% were students, and 30.9% were housekeepers (See table 3).

Table 3: Al-Itihad population (10 years and above) by sex and employment status-2007

S E X	Economically Active				Not Economically Active					Un-known	Total
	Employed	Currently Unemployed	Unemployed (Never worked)	Total	Students	House-keeping	Unable to work	Not working & Not looking for work	Other		
M	1,063	145	75	1,283	912	8	134	7	26	1,087	9
F	104	6	39	149	864	965	179	2	50	2,060	7
T	1,167	151	114	1,432	1,776	973	313	9	76	3,147	13
	Source: PCBS, 2009.										

Agricultural Sector

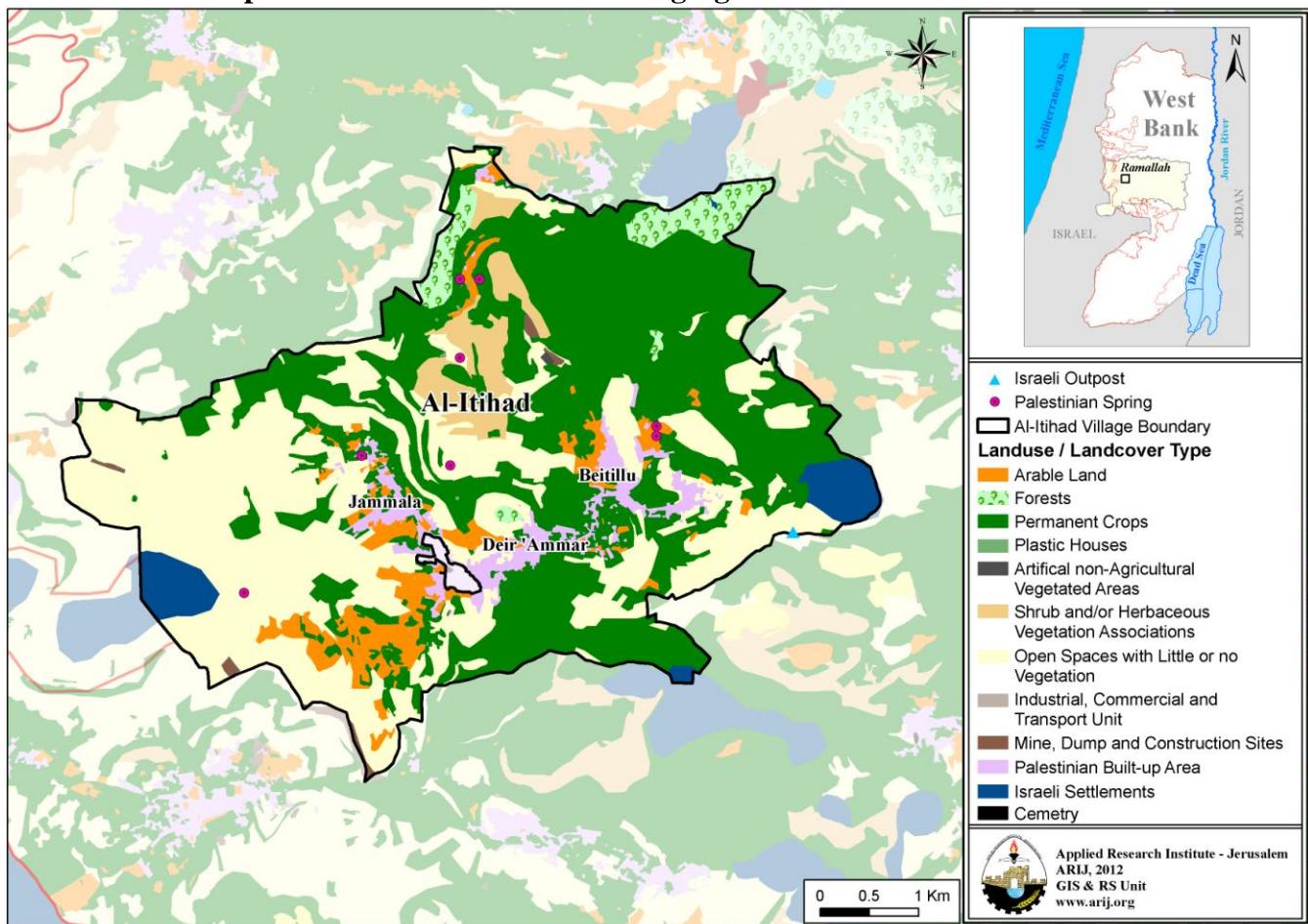
Al-Itihad lies on an area of 27,584 dunams, of which 14,283 dunams are considered arable lands, and 1,069 dunams are dedicated to residential services (see table 4 and map 3).

Table 4: Land use and land cover in Al-Itihad town in 2010 (area in dunam)

Total Area	Built up Area	Agricultural area (14,283)				Inland water	Forests	Open Spaces	Area of Industrial, Commercial & Transport Unit	Area of Settlement, Military Bases & Wall Zone
		Permanent Crops	Green-houses	Range -lands	Arable lands					
27,584	1,069	11,692	10	1,015	1,566	0	867	10,391	111	862

Source: ARIJ – GIS Unit, 2012.

Map 3: Land use/land cover and Segregation Wall in Al-Itihad Town



Source: ARIJ GIS, 2012

Table 5 shows the different types of rain-fed and irrigated open-cultivated vegetables in Al-Itihad. The most commonly cultivated crop within this area is squash.

Table 5: Total area of rain-fed and irrigated open cultivated vegetables in Al-Itihad town (dunam)

Fruity vegetables		Leafy vegetable		Green legumes		Bulbs		Other vegetables		Total area	
RF	Irr.	RF	Irr.	RF	Irr.	RF	Irr.	RF	Irr.	RF	Irr.
285	60	0	8	72	30	35	0	0	2	392	100

Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture - Ramallah, 2009

Table 6 shows the different types of fruit trees planted in the area. Al-Itihad is famous for olive trees; there being a total of 10,030 dunams planted with olive trees.

Table 6: Total area of fruit and olive trees in Al-Itihad town (dunam)

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.
10,030.5	0	0	10	61	0	39.5	0	125	0	473	0	10,729	10

Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture - Ramallah, 2009

As for the field crops and forage in Al-Itihad, cereals (in particular wheat) are the most cultivated covering an area of about 725 dunams (See table 7).

Table 7: Total area of field crops in Al-Itihad town (dunam)

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.
725	0	55	0	155	0	18	0	160	0	0	0	2	0	1,115	0

Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture - Ramallah, 2009

The difference between the two sets of results obtained from the Ministry of Agriculture and by ARIJ's GIS Unit in sizes of agricultural areas is explained by the fact that the Ministry of Agriculture and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2010) 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 instead of seasonal ones. The survey 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, thus accounting for the larger area of agricultural holdings calculated by ARIJ.

The field survey conducted by ARIJ team also shows that 5% of the residents in Al-Itihad rear and keep domestic animals such as sheep, goats and others (See Table 8).

Table 8: Livestock in Al-Itihad town

Cows*	Sheep	Goats	Camels	Horses	Donkeys	Mules	Broilers	Layers	Bee Hives
6	475	668	0	0	0	0	128,800	10,000	113

*Including cows, bull calves, heifer calves and bulls

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture - Ramallah, 2009

There are also around 65 kilometers of agricultural roads in the town (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011), divided as follows:

Table 9: Agricultural Roads in Al-Itihad town and their Lengths

Suitability of Agricultural Roads	Length (km)
For vehicles	-
For tractors and agricultural machinery only	20
For animals only	30
Unsuitable	15

Source: Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011

The agricultural sector however suffers some problems and obstacles, including (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011):

- The lack of access to agricultural lands.
- The lack of capital.
- The economic infeasibility.

Institutions and Services

Al-Itihad town has no governmental institutions; however, it has a couple of local institutions and associations that provide services to various segments of society in the areas of culture, sports and others, including (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011):

- **Al-Itihad Municipal Council:** Founded in 2005 by the Ministry of Local Government with the goal of taking care of all the issues in the town and providing various services to its population, including water management and supplying and waste collection.
- **Cooperative Agricultural Society.**

Infrastructure and Natural Resources

Electricity and Telecommunication Services:

Al-Itihad has been connected to a public electricity network since 1982; served by Jerusalem Electricity Company, which is the main source of electricity in the town. Approximately 99% of the housing units in the town are connected to the network. However, the town residents suffer some problems concerning electricity, mainly (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011):

- The weak electricity current and generators.
- The abrupt outages of power.
- The lack of streets lighting.

- The network extensions are old, close to houses and in need of maintenance.
- The expansion areas are not reached by the electricity network.

Furthermore, Al-Itihad is connected to a telecommunication network and approximately 85% of the housing units within the town boundaries are connected to phone lines (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011).

Transportation Services:

There are only 6 taxis, 15 public buses and 100 illegal/unlicensed cars in Al-Itihad. These are considered to be the main means of transportation in the town. However, in addition to the lack of vehicles in the locality, travelers suffer from the unqualified main roads and the existence of earth mounds and military checkpoints on roads (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011). As for the road network in the town; there are a total of 7km of main roads and a total of 12km of secondary roads (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011) (See table 10).

Table 10: Roads in Al-Itihad town

Status of Internal Roads	Road Length (km)	
	Main	Sub
1. Paved & in good condition	2	6
2. Paved but in poor condition	3	3
3. Unpaved	2	3

Source: Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011

Water Resources:

Al-Itihad is provided with water by the West Bank Water Department, through sources purchased from Mekorot Israeli Company, via the public water network established in 1982. Approximately, 99% of the housing units are connected to the water network (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011).

The quantity of water supplied to Al-Itihad town in 2008 was about 100,158 cubic meters/ month (PWA, 2009), thus, the estimated rate of water supply per capita is about 43 liters/day. Here it should be noted that no Al-Itihad citizen in fact consumes this amount of water due to water losses, which are about 50%. The losses happen at the main source, major transport lines, distribution network, and at the household level (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011), thus the rate of water consumption per capita in Al-Itihad is 21.4 liter per day. This is a very low rate compared with the minimum quantity proposed by the World Health Organization, which is 100 liters per capita per day.

However, located in Al-Itihad are 3 water springs used for the irrigation of agricultural lands in the town that are planted with vegetables (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011) (See table 11). Also, there is a public water reservoir in the town which is not in use due to its need for rehabilitation (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011). Each cubic meter of water from the public network costs 4.80 NIS (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011).

Table 11: Water Springs in Al-Itihad Town

#	Name of Spring	Ownership	Area of Cultivated Land (dunam)	Type of Crops	Irrigation System
1	Al Balad	Al-Itihad Municipality	5	Vegetables	Dripping
2	Al Komas	Al-Itihad Municipality	10	Vegetables	Dripping
3	Az Zarqa'	Private	100	Vegetables	Dripping

Source: Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011

Sanitation:

Al-Itihad lacks a public sewerage network; most of the town residents use cesspits for the disposal of waste water (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011).

Based on the estimated daily per capita water consumption, the estimated amount of wastewater generated per day, is approximately 109.8 cubic meters, or 40 thousand cubic meters annually. At the individual level in the town, it is estimated that the per capita wastewater generation is approximately 15 liters per day. The wastewater collected by cesspits is discharged by wastewater tankers directly to open areas or nearby valleys without regard for the environment. Here it should be noted that there is no wastewater treatment either at the source or disposal sites and this poses a serious threat to the environment and the public health (ARIJ - WERU, 2012).

Solid Waste Management:

The Joint services Council - Al-Itihad Municipality is considered the official body responsible for managing solid waste, i.e. solid waste collection and disposal, generated from the citizens and establishments in the town, which is currently represented by solid waste collection and disposal. Due to the fact that the process of solid waste management is costly, a monthly fee has been charged on the population serviced by domestic solid waste collection and transportation services. This fee is about 15 NIS. However, the collected fees are not considered sufficient for good management of solid waste; only 70% of these fees are collected from the citizens (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011).

Most of the population in Al-Itihad benefits from the solid waste services; waste is collected from households, institutions, shops, and public squares in plastic bags and then transferred to 70 containers spread throughout the locality. The Joint Council collects the solid waste daily and transports it by the Joint Council's waste vehicle to 3 random dumping sites owned by the three localities in Al-Itihad. The common method for solid waste treatment in these dumping sites is setting the waste on fire (Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011).

The daily per capita rate of solid waste production in Al-Itihad is 1.05kg. Thus the estimated amount of solid waste produced per day from the Al-Itihad residents is nearly 6.7 tons, or 2451 tons per year (ARIJ - WERU, 2012).

Environmental Conditions

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

Water Crisis

- Water is cut off by the West Bank Water Department for long periods of time during summer in several neighborhoods of the town for several reasons:
 - (1) Israeli control over Palestinian water resources. Consequently, the West Bank Water Department purchases water from the Israeli company Mekorot in order to satisfy residents' needs.
 - (2) High rate of water losses, because the water network is old and in need of rehabilitation and renovation.

Wastewater Management

- The absence of a public sewage network means that in Al-Itihad residents are forced to use unhygienic cesspits for the disposal of wastewater, and/or discharge wastewater in the streets. This is particularly common in winter, as citizens cannot afford the high cost of sewage tankers during this period. These methods facilitate environmental damage, health problems, and the spread of epidemics and diseases in the town. This wastewater also contaminates the groundwater and water collected in household cisterns (rainwater harvesting cisterns), as it mixes with the wastewater and thus becomes unsuitable for drinking. This happens because most cesspits are built without lining, allowing wastewater to enter into the ground and avoiding the need to use sewage tankers. 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

- The lack of a central sanitary landfill to serve in Al-Itihad and the other neighboring communities in the governorate is due mainly to the obstacles created by the Israeli authorities for local and national institutions in granting licenses to establish such a landfill, because the appropriate land is within Area C and under Israeli control. Additionally, the implementation of such projects depends on funding from donor countries. The lack of a sanitary landfill is a source of pollution to the groundwater and soil through the leachate produced from the solid waste, and produces bad odors and distortion of the landscape.

Impact of the Israeli Occupation

Geopolitical status in Al-Itihad Town (Beitillu - Deir ‘Ammar - Jammala)

According to the Oslo II Interim Agreement signed between the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel on 28th September 1995, Al-Itihad town, which covers three localities (Beitillu, Deir ‘Ammar and Jammala) united under one municipality, was divided into politically classified areas ‘B’ and ‘C’. Approximately 11,358 dunums (41.2% of the town’s total area) were assigned as Area B, where the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) has complete control over civil matters and Israel continues to have overriding responsibility for security. Area B constitutes most of the inhabited Palestinian areas, including municipalities, towns, and some refugee camps. Most of the town’s population resides in Area B. Approximately 16,226 dunums (58.8% of the total town area) is classified as Area C, where Israel retains full control over security and administration (Table 12). In Area C, Palestinian building and land management is prohibited unless through a permit given by the Israeli Civil Administration. Most of the lands lying within the Area C are classified as open spaces and agricultural lands, in addition to Israeli settlements.

Table 12: The geopolitical divisions of Al-Itihad town according to the Oslo II interim agreement in 1995

Area	Area in dunums	Percent of total town area
Area A	0	0
Area B	11358	41.2
Area C	16226	58.8
Nature Reserve	0	0
Total	27584	100

Source: ARIJ-GIS Unit, 2011

Israeli Occupation Practices in Al-Itihad

Thousands of dunums of land have been confiscated from Al-Itihad for different Israeli purposes, including the building of Israeli settlements and outposts on the town’s lands, and the construction of Israeli bypass roads in order to connect settlements with their neighboring ones. In addition, lands have been taken through military force in order to facilitate the implementation of the Segregation Wall plan aimed at isolating Palestinian lands from one another. Below are details of the various Israeli land confiscations in Al-Itihad.

During the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territory, the Israeli government has confiscated 858 dunums of land from Al-Itihad town to establish 4 Israeli settlements; Nahl’iel, Hallamish, Talmon and Na’aleh. It is noted that Nahl’iel settlement is located fully on Al-Itihad town lands, while only part of each of the rest of the settlements are located on the town lands, in addition to the lands of neighboring villages. In total, these settlements are currently inhabited by more than 4,961 Israeli settlers (Table 13).

Table 13: Israeli Settlements constructed over Al-Itihad lands

Settlement Name	Establishment Date	Lands confiscated from Al-Itihad town	Population
Nahl'iel	1984	396	392
Na'aleh	1982	408	935
Talmon	1989	44	2580
Hallamish	1977	10	1054
Total		858	4961

Source: The Geo-informatics Department – ARIJ 2011

Israelis living in settlements established on Al-Itihad lands have had a significant impact on Palestinians and their properties in Al-Itihad town. These attacks have contributed to the loss of Palestinian lands adjacent to settlements as landowners are prevented from accessing their lands, which have been fenced with barbed wire and planted with trees. Israeli settlers have also carried out a series of attacks against Palestinian landowners in an attempt to intimidate them and deter them from returning to their lands adjacent to the aforementioned settlements.

The Israeli Government confiscated additional land in Al-Itihad town to open Israeli bypass roads 463 and 450, in order to connect Israeli settlements with each others. These roads stretch for approximately 14 km on land of Al-Itihad and confiscate thousands of agricultural dunums from the town. The real threat of the bypass roads lies in the buffer zone formed by the IOF along these roads extending approximately 75 m on each side. These buffer zones dramatically increase the total area of land affected by the construction of the bypass roads.

The Israeli Segregation Wall Plan in Al-Itihad Town

The Israeli Segregation Wall plan has had a negative and destructive impact on Al-Itihad residents. The latest route of the Israeli Segregation Wall Plan, published on the Israeli Ministry of Defense's website on April 30 2007, shows that the planned Wall south of the town extends for 1.9 km on town lands. This will result in the confiscation and isolation of 593 dunums of the town's total area. It is planned that the Wall will annex Nili and Na'aleh settlements established west of the town to Mod'in Illit settlement bloc established west of Ramallah, and to Al Bireh Governorate on the Green Line borders, which includes 8 Israeli settlements. The lands isolated by the Wall include Israeli settlements and open spaces (See Table 14).

Table 14: Land Classification of the Isolated lands in Al-Itihad Town – Ramallah Governorate

No.	Land Classification	Area (in dunums)
1	Israeli Settlements	406 (Na'aleh settlements located within Mod'in Illit settlement bloc)
2	Open Spaces	187
Total		593

Source: The Geo-informatics Department – ARIJ 2011

Through the construction of the Segregation Wall on Palestinian territories, Israel seeks to annex major areas of Israeli blocs established illegally on Palestinian lands, to Israel. These settlement blocs are: Ariel, Mod'in Illit, Ma'ale Adummim, Giv'at Ze'ev, Gush Etzion and Qiryat Arba'. Upon the completion

of the Segregation Wall plan in the West Bank, Israel would be annexing the largest number of Israeli settlements (around 60 Israeli settlements out of 107 that will be all annexed to Israel through the Wall) to its new borders, which are inhabited by more than 50% of all Israeli settlers.

Settler Attacks on Citizens and Property in Al-Itihad Town

On the 11th December 2011, a group of settlers attacked and severely beat a group of Palestinian citizens in Deir ‘Ammar village, at a time when Palestinian land owners were surveying their lands located between Talmon and Nahl’iel settlements within the “Al Matookh” area of the village. In addition, Israeli settlers attacked a Palestinian citizen named Sufian Odeh and his family whilst they worked on their land near the settlement. The attack involved settler’s stealing the family’s mule, meaning that they would no longer be able to till and work on their land.

On the morning of May the 23rd 2011, a group of settlers living in Nahl’iel settlement, using sharp tools, damaged and destroyed approximately 32 olive trees on the land of Palestinian citizen Fawzi al Bazzar. The attacks targeted the olive trees in the area known as Kafr Sum within Basin no. 4 of Beitillu village’s territory, adjacent to the settlement.

In the last week of August 2012, a group of Israeli settlers living in Hallamish settlement, armed with machine guns, destroyed and uprooted irrigated crops in the valley area between Jammala and Deir ‘Ammar villages, Ramallah district. The total area attacked by settlers is estimated at 1.5 dunums.

On the 7th of March 2012, a group of settlers under the cover of darkness, sneaked into Beitillu village territory from the west and towards Khallet Kafr Sum area which is only 2 km from the village houses, and vandalized 75 perennial olive trees using electric chain saws in order to inflict maximum possible damage to those trees.

Furthermore, on 17th April 2012, a settler group from Nahl’iel settlement built on land of Beitillu village, attacked olive groves in Kafr Sum and Ath Thuhoor areas within basin no. 4, located in the eastern side of the village. This area of the village contains fields located just 200 m from the aforementioned settlement. Settlers have entered these fields and used sharp tools to cut trees braches, leading to the partial destruction of 250 olive trees, aged over 20 years.

On the 1st May 2012, Palestinian farmer Salih Abdul Raziq Darwish headed to his land in the Al Ghazawi area in Beitillu village adjacent to Nahl’iel settlement. Here he discovered that the branches of his 70 year old tress trees were cut and partially destroyed by Israeli settlers living in Nahl’iel settlement. This work resulted in the partial destruction of 100 of his olive trees. It is noteworthy that on the same day, settlers partially cut 35 olive trees aged around 75 years under the ownership of the farmer Sameeh Ahmad Bazzar. They caused extensive damage to the olive groves which are located in the area adjacent to the previously targeted trees, known as “Al ‘Abbad” area on the eastern side of Beitillu village, surrounded by Nahl’iel settlement.

On the 15th July of 2012, settlers living in Nahl’iel settlement infiltrated agricultural land in Kafr Sum area in the eastern part of Beitillu village, cut and vandalized 21 perennial olive trees using electric sawing machines. It is important to note that the targeted trees belong to the farmer Muhammad Naji

Badr whose trees were also targeted on 10th March 2011 by the same group of settlers, which at that time caused the partial damage of 71 olive trees.

Israeli Settlements in the Israeli Corridors Area

It should be noted that each of Nahl'iel, Talmon and Hallamish settlements is located in the “Israeli Corridors” area¹ through which Israel seeks to create territorial contiguity between the Israeli settlements located in the East (Jordan Valley) and those in the West (which will be annexed to Israel upon the completion of construction of the Wall). Israeli plans do not stop at extracting 13% of the West Bank area along its western parts, through building the segregation wall, and isolating 29% (1664 square kilometers) from the eastern side of the West Bank (the Jordan Valley area). In addition, plans have been made to take further lands in the remaining area of the West Bank to create a territorial contiguity between the two regions, as the Israeli settlements located in the Israeli corridors area will provide the opportunity to maintain a geographical area which will create a link between the eastern and the western regions. In addition, Israeli settlers living in the Israeli settlements located in the corridors area will have a safe and direct access to Israel from both the West and the East. Most importantly the presence of settlements and Israeli outposts in these corridors will keep the Israeli colonialist project alive through undermining the Palestinian aspiration for a geographically contiguous Palestinian State. Moreover, the ‘Israeli Peace Now’ movement report, issued on the 12th September 2012, indicates that most of the Israeli settlements located in the Israeli corridor areas will be engaged in the Israeli settlement expansion plans, which confirms Israel’s intention to keep these areas under its control.

Military Orders Issued in Al-Itihad Town

Israeli Occupation Forces have issued a series of military orders in Al-Itihad town in order to confiscate large areas of land. These military orders include:

- Israeli Military Order 16/95/T: Issued on the 1st November 2006 to confiscate 145.3 dunums of land from Deir ‘Ammar, Beitillu and Ras Karkar, villages for military purposes for the construction of the bypass road linking between Nahl'iel and Talmon settlements. This order is an amendment to a previous order holding no. (15/95/T) that was issued on the 10th January 1995.

¹Israeli Corridors: Israel seeks to link the Western with the Eastern Segregation Area through strengthening its control on the Israeli Corridors areas to implement its plans.

Development Plans and Projects

Implemented Projects

Al-Itihad Municipal Council has implemented several development projects in Al-Itihad, during the last five years (See Table 15).

Table 15: Implemented Development Plans and Projects in Al-Itihad during the Last Five Years

Name of the Project	Type	Year	Donor
Constructing and finishing three floors in Beitillu Boys School	Educational	2009	CHF/ Al-Itihad Municipality
Paving internal roads and retaining walls	Infrastructure	2009	Ministry of Finance
Constructing and finishing Beitillu clinic and Deir 'Ammar kindergarten	Public Services	2010	Ministry of Finance/ Al-Itihad Municipality
Expanding Jammala entrance	Infrastructure	2010	CHF
Paving internal roads	Infrastructure	2011	Municipal Development & Lending Fund

Source: Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011

Proposed Projects

Al-Itihad Municipal council, in cooperation with the civil society organizations in the town and the town residents, looks forward to the implementation of several projects in the coming years. The project ideas were developed during the PRA workshop that was conducted by ARIJ staff in the town. The projects are as follows, in order of priority, from the viewpoint of the participants in the workshop:

1. Establishing a sewerage network.
2. Establishing an integrated health center.
3. Protecting farmers and supporting them through the reclamation of agricultural lands and roads, and establishing fences and groundwater wells.
4. Rehabilitating the water and electricity networks and the internal roads.
5. Expanding the structural plan of the town.
6. Constructing an industrial school in the town.
7. Providing streets lighting.
8. Encouraging expatriates to invest in the town and not outside.
9. Establishing a vocational and industrial zone.
10. Establishing a public park.

Locality Development Priorities and Needs

Al-Itihad suffers from a significant shortage of infrastructure and services. Table 16 shows the development priorities and needs in the town, according to the municipal council's point of view.

Table 16: Development Priorities and Needs in Al-Itihad

No.	Sector	Strongly Needed	Needed	Not a Priority	Notes
Infrastructural Needs					
1	Opening and Pavement of Roads	*			29km*
2	Rehabilitation of Old Water Networks	*			20km
3	Extending the Water Network to Cover New Built up Areas			*	
4	Construction of New Water Networks	*			25km
5	Rehabilitation/ Construction of New Wells or Springs	*			40 springs
6	Construction of Water Reservoirs	*			500 cubic meters
7	Construction of a Sewage Disposal Network	*			5km
8	Construction of a New Electricity Network			*	
9	Providing Containers for Solid Waste Collection	*			200 containers
10	Providing Vehicles for Collecting Solid Waste			*	
11	Providing a Sanitary Landfill	*			
Health Needs					
1	Building of New Clinics or Health Care Centres		*		1 health center
2	Rehabilitation of Old Clinics or Health Care Centres			*	
3	Purchasing of Medical Equipment and Tools		*		
Educational Needs					
1	Building of New Schools	*			2 secondary schools
2	Rehabilitation of Old Schools		*		
3	Purchasing of New Equipment for Schools		*		
Agriculture Needs					
1	Rehabilitation of Agricultural Lands	*			300 dunams
2	Building Rainwater Harvesting Cisterns	*			
3	Construction of Barracks for Livestock		*		
4	Veterinary Services		*		
5	Seeds and Hay for Animals		*		
6	Construction of New Greenhouses		*		
7	Rehabilitation of Greenhouses		*		
8	Field Crops Seeds		*		
9	Plants and Agricultural Supplies		*		

*7km are main roads, 12km are sub roads and 10km are agricultural roads

Source: Al-Itihad Municipal Council, 2011

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