

Deir Istiya Town Profile



Prepared by



The Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem

Funded by



Spanish Cooperation
2013

Acknowledgments

ARIJ hereby expresses its deep gratitude to the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID) for their funding of this project.

ARIJ is grateful to the Palestinian officials in the ministries, municipalities, joint services councils, village committees and councils, and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) for their assistance and cooperation with the project team members during the data collection process.

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 Salfit Governorate. These booklets came as a result of a comprehensive study of all localities in Salfit 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 Salfit 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 Salfit 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>.

Table of Contents

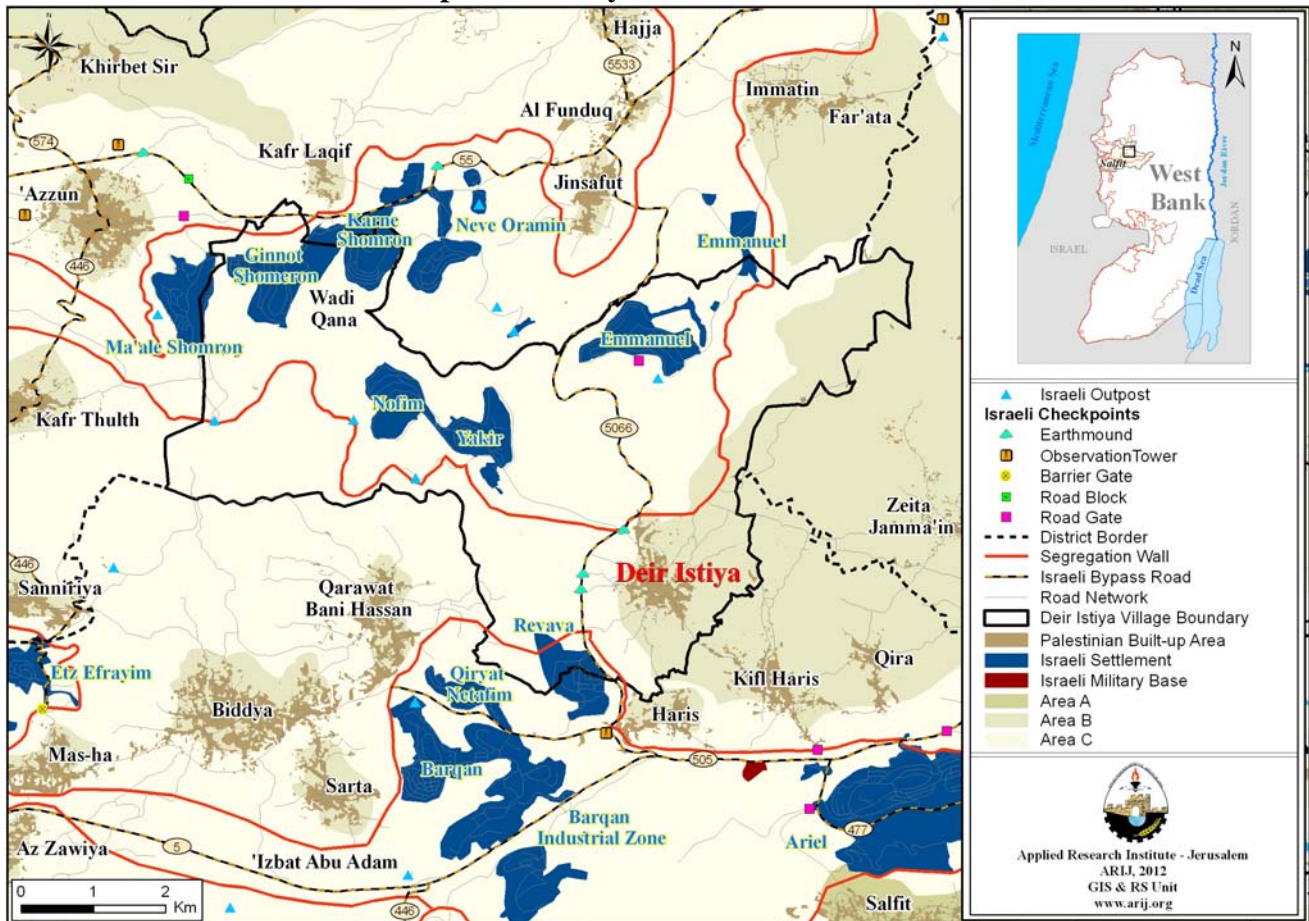
<i>Location and Physical Characteristics</i> _____	4
<i>History</i> _____	5
<i>Religious and Archaeological Sites</i> _____	6
<i>Population</i> _____	6
<i>Education</i> _____	7
<i>Health Status</i> _____	8
<i>Economic Activities</i> _____	9
<i>Agricultural Sector</i> _____	10
<i>Institutions and Services</i> _____	13
<i>Infrastructure and Natural Resources</i> _____	14
<i>Environmental Conditions</i> _____	15
<i>Impact of the Israeli Occupation</i> _____	17
<i>Development Plans and Projects</i> _____	23
<i>Implemented Projects</i> _____	23
<i>Proposed Projects</i> _____	23
<i>Locality Development Priorities and Needs</i> _____	24
<i>References</i> _____	25

Deir Istiya Town Profile

Location and Physical Characteristics

Deir Istiya is a Palestinian town in Salfit Governorate located 6.62 km north of Salfit City. Deir Istiya is bordered by Zeita Jamma'in in Nablus Governorate and Kifl Haris village to its east, Haris and Qarawat Bani Hassan to the south, Kafr Thulth and 'Azzun villages in Qalqiliya Governorate to the west, and Kafr Laqif, Jinsafut and Immatin villages in Qalqiliya Governorate to the north (ARIJ-GIS, 2013) (See Map 1).

Map 1: Deir Istiya location and borders



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2013.

Deir Istiya is located at an altitude of 379 m above sea level with a mean annual rainfall of 615.3 mm. The average annual temperature is 19 C° whilst the average annual humidity is approximately 61% (ARIJ-GIS, 2013).

Since 1997, Deir Istiya has been governed by a Municipal Council which is currently administrated by 11 members appointed by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). There are 8 employees working in the council, which owns a temporary headquarters located in the water reservoir's building. The Municipal Council is included within the 'Joint Services Council of East Salfit.' The Council does not own a vehicle for the collection of solid waste (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012).

It is the responsibility of the Municipal Council to provide a number of services to the residents of Deir Istiya, including (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012):

- The establishment and maintenance of the drinking water and electricity networks.
- Solid waste collection, road construction, restoration, street cleaning and social development services.
- Organization of construction and licensing processes.
- Implementation of projects and studies for the town.
- Provision of offices for governmental services.
- Protection of historical and archeological sites in the town.
- Protection of governmental properties.
- Provision of kindergartens.

History

Deir Istiya town's name consists of two words; the first 'Deir' means in Syriac, Aramaic and Arabic languages a house or a place to live, while the second part of the name 'Istiya' is most likely converted from the Syriac word "Ista" which means the wall.

The town was established in the 18th and 19th centuries AH with its residents descending from the Arabian Peninsula, Levant region and Iraq, in addition to neighboring Palestinian localities (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012).

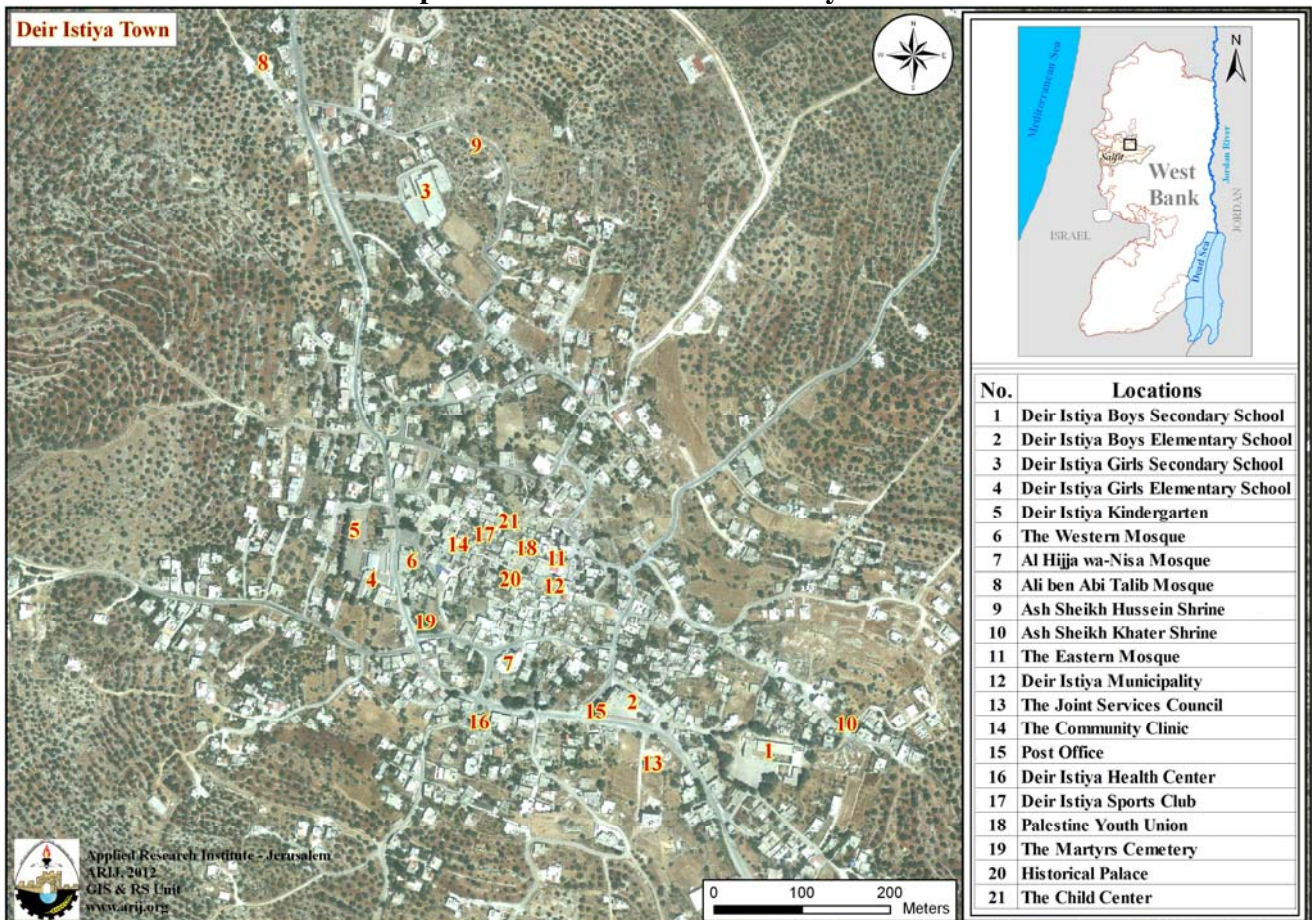
Photo of Deir Istiya



Religious and Archaeological Sites

There are four mosques in the town (Al Farooq Omar, Othman Ben ‘Affan, Abu Bakr as Siddiq and Ali Ben Abi Talib Mosque). The town has several sites of archaeological interest including: the old city buildings which are qualified for tourism, in addition to Ash Sheikh Hussein Shrine, Ash Sheikh Khater Shrine, Khirbet Tafa, Khirbet Qana and Khirbet Shihada. One should note here that none of these later sites are qualified for tourism (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012) (See Map 2).

Map 2: Main locations in Deir Istiya Town



Population Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2013.

Population

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), the total population of Deir Istiya in 2007 was 3,106, of whom 1,562 were male and 1,544 female. There were additionally 592 households recorded as living in 707 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 Deir Istiya is as follows: 38.9% were less than 15 years of age, 55.4% were between 15 and 64 years of age, and 5.6% were 65 years of age or older. Data also showed that the sex ratio of males to females in the town is 101.2:100, meaning that males and females constitute 50.3% and 49.7% of the population, respectively.

Families

Deir Istiya residents are from several families, including Abu Hajla, Salman, Zeidan, Dhiyab, Mansoor, Sa’ed, Al Qadi, Al Khatib, ‘Aqel, Abu Faris, Abu Naser, Sahban, Saleem (Hakeem), Awad, Makhalfa, Ash Sheikh Abd Allah, Zaghlool and Kujok (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012).

Immigration

The field survey conducted by ARIJ showed that approximately 100 families have left the town since Al Aqsa Intifada in 2000 (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012).

Education

According to the results of the PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census-2007, the illiteracy rate among Deir Istiya population is approximately 9%, of whom 72% are females. Of the literate population, 11.7% could only read and write, with no formal education, 21.3% had elementary education, 25.1% had preparatory education, 16.4% had secondary education, and 16.5% completed higher education. Table 1 shows the educational level in the town of Deir Istiya by sex and educational attainment in 2007.

Table 1: Deir Istiya population (10 years and above) by sex and educational attainment

Sex	Illite- rate	Can read & write	Element- ary	Preparat- ory	Second- ary	Associate Diploma	Bachelor	Higher Diploma	Master	PhD	Un- known	Total
M	59	152	263	307	190	59	120	4	14	3	0	1,171
F	153	122	238	284	195	63	120	2	2	0	1	1,180
T	212	274	501	591	385	122	240	6	16	3	1	2,351

Source: PCBS, 2009.

There are four public schools in the town, all are run by the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education (Directorate of Education in Salfit, 2012) (see Table 2).

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

School Name	Supervising Authority	Sex
Deir Istiya Co-educated Secondary School	Government	Mixed
Deir Istiya Girls' Secondary School	Government	Female
Deir Istiya Girls' Elementary Higher School	Government	Female
Deir Istiya Boys' Elementary School	Government	Male

Source: Directorate of Education in Salfit, 2012

In the town there are 920 students, 69 teachers, and 41 classes. The average number of students per teacher in the school is nearly 13, whilst the average number of students per class is approximately 22 (Directorate of Education in Salfit, 2012).

There is one kindergarten in Deir Istiya town, run by a private organization (Directorate of Education in Salfit, 2012) (See table 3 below).

Table 3: Kindergartens in Deir Istiya town by name and supervising authority

Name of Kindergarten	No. of Classes	No. of Teachers	Supervising Authority
Deir Istiya Kindergarten	3	4	Private

Source: Directorate of Education in Salfit, 2012

The educational sector in Deir Istiya town faces a number of obstacles, including (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012):

- The lack of classrooms in some schools.
- The lack of educational facilities such as computer labs in some schools.
- The lack of public safety for students such as the presence of traffic lights and warning signs.
- The lack of teaching competencies represented unqualified teaching staff available in the town schools.

Health Status

Deir Istiya has a governmental health center (Deir Istiya Care Clinic), a health center run by a charitable society (the Palestinian Red Crescent Society Clinic), two private general physician clinics, two private dental clinics and a private pharmacy. In the absence of required health services or in emergencies, patients are transferred to Yasir Arafat Governmental Hospital in Salfit city (9 km away), the National Governmental Hospital and Rafidiya Governmental Hospital in Nablus city (27 km away) or to the Mother and Child Care Center in Kifl Haris town (3 km away) (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012).

The health sector in the town faces some obstacles and problems, principally (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012):

- The lack of functioning twenty four hour health services (the physician in the town's clinic works only three days a week).
- The lack of an emergency center.

- The lack of specialized physicians.
- The lack of some medicines, particularly for those suffering high pressure and diabetes.
- The lack of an ambulance.

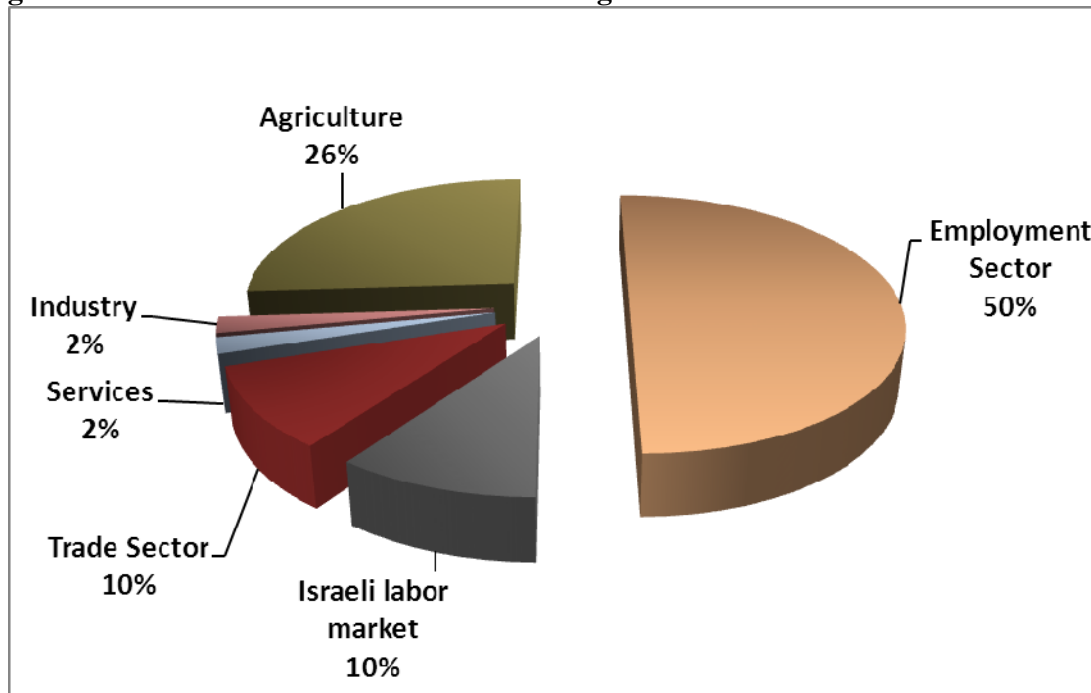
Economic Activities

The economy in Deir Istiya is mainly dependent on the employees sector (private and government) which absorbs approximately 50% of the town’s workforce (Deir Istiya Municipality, 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 Deir Istiya are as follows:

- Government or Other Employees Sector (50%)
- Agriculture Sector (26%)
- Israeli Labor Market (10%)
- Trade Sector (10%)
- Industry (2%)
- Services Sector (2%)

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



Source: Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012

Deir Istiya has 17 groceries, 4 fruits and vegetable stores, 3 service stores, 7 different professional workshops, 3 olive oil-presses, 1 store for agricultural tools, 3 restaurants, 6 coffee shops, 7 poultry shops, 9 clothes stores, 4 shops for cooking gas, 2 sewing workshops, 4 hardware stores, 1 store for used

furniture, 2 libraries, a shop for construction materials, a dry cleaning store, 2 telecommunication services offices, a store for electronic devices, a plumbing store, a taxi office and a marble and stone cutter (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012).

The unemployment rate in Deir Istiya reached 22% in 2012 and the groups most affected economically by the Israeli restrictions have been (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012):

- Agricultural workers.
- Former workers in Israel.
- Workers in the trade sector.
- Industrial workers.
- Workers in the services sector.
- Workers in the employees sector.

Labor Force

According to the PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census-2007, 34.1% of Deir Istiya labor force was economically active, of whom 83.8% were employed, 65.9% were not economically active, 59.5% were students, and 26.3% were housekeepers (See Table 4).

Table 4: Deir Istiya 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	502	55	29	586	475	1	86	15	8	585	0	1,171
F	170	12	33	215	448	406	90	7	14	965	0	1,180
T	672	67	62	801	923	407	176	22	22	1,550	0	2,351

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

Source: PCBS, 2009.

Agricultural Sector

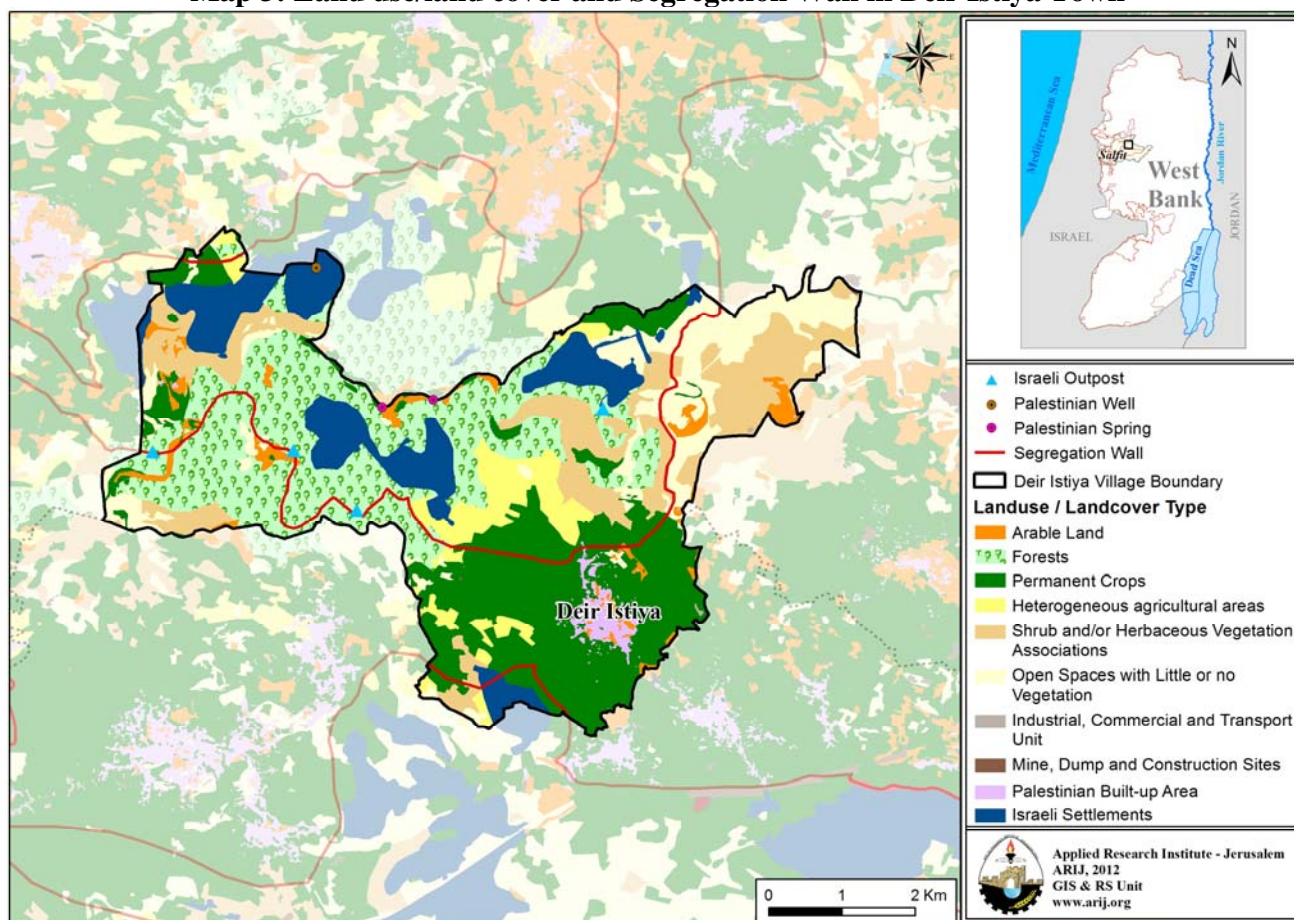
Deir Istiya has a total area of approximately 34,129 dunums of which 16,807 are 'arable' land and 492 dunums are registered as 'residential' (See Table 5 and Map 3).

Table 5: Land use and land cover in Deir Istiya town (area in dunum)

Total Area	Built up Area	Agricultural area (16,807)				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					
34,129	492	10,573	0	5,165	1,069	0	8,852	3,780	25	4,070

Source: ARIJ – GIS Unit, 2012.

Map 3: Land use/land cover and Segregation Wall in Deir Istiya Town



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2013.

Table 6 shows the different types of rain-fed and irrigated open-cultivated vegetables in Deir Istiya. The most commonly cultivated crops within this area are cabbages and cauliflowers.

Table 6: Total area of rain-fed and irrigated open cultivated vegetables in Deir Istiya (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.
52	63	0	45	0	15	0	8	0	0	52	131

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

Source: Ministry of agriculture-Salfit, 2010

Table 7 shows the different types of fruit trees planted in the area. Deir Istiya is famous for olive cultivation and there are approximately 10,290 dunums of town lands planted with olive trees.

Table 7: Total area of horticulture and olive trees in Deir Istiya (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.
10,290	0	13	39	228	0	5	0	1	0	214	0	10,751	39

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

Source: Ministry of agriculture-Salfit, 2010

In terms of field crops and forage in Deir Istiya, cereals (particularly wheat) are the most cultivated, covering an area of approximately 210 dunums (See Table 8).

Table 8: Total area of horticulture and olive trees in Deir Istiya (area in dunums)

Cereals		Bulbs		Dry legumes		Oil crops		Forage crops		Stimulating crops		Other crops		Total Area	
Rf.	Irr.	Rf.	Irr.	Rf.	Irr.	Rf.	Irr.	Rf.	Irr.	Rf.	Irr.	Rf.	Irr.	Rf.	Irr.
210	0	45	0	75	0	4	0	51	0	0	0	22	0	407	0

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

Source: Ministry of agriculture-Salfit, 2010

The difference between the two sets of results obtained from the Ministry of Agriculture and ARIJ's GIS Unit in sizes of agricultural areas is explained by the difference in each organization's definition of land coverage and ownership. The Ministry of Agriculture and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2011) conducted a survey using 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. This therefore accounts for the larger area of agricultural holdings calculated by ARIJ.

The field survey conducted by ARIJ shows that just 1% of the Deir Istiya residents' rear and keep domestic animals such as sheep and goats (See Table 9).

Table 9: Livestock in Deir Istiya

Cows*	Sheep	Camels	Poultry	Bee Hives
14	1,277	0	28,000	109

*Including cows, bull calves, heifer calves and bulls

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture - Salfit, 2010

There around 40 kilometers of agricultural roads in the town, divided as follows (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012):

Table 10: Agricultural Roads in Deir Istiya Town and their Lengths

Suitability of Agricultural Roads	Length (km)
For vehicles	11
For tractors and agricultural machinery only	20
For animals only	6
Unsuitable	3

Source: Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012

The agricultural sector in the town faces a number of problems, including (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012):

- Land confiscations by the Israeli occupation forces and continuous harassments from settlers against farmers.

- The contamination of underground water sources and streams in valleys with waste water flowing from settlements.
- The lack of financial and moral support for farmers to reclaim their lands threatened with confiscation and located in area C, and to expand and rehabilitate the agricultural roads leading to these lands.
- The lack of economic feasibility of the all aspects of the agricultural sector; animal and plant production.
- The difficulty of access to agricultural roads close to settlements.
- The deliberate sweeping of the farmers' lands and the frequent uprooting of trees by settlers.
- The continuous threats to the lives of farmers from Israeli occupation forces and settlers whilst working on their lands.

Institutions and Services

Deir Istiya town has a post office in addition to a number of local institutions and associations that provide services to various sectors of society. These include (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012):

- **Deir Istiya Municipal Council:** Founded in 1997 by the Ministry of Local Government, with the aim of taking care of the town's issues and providing various services to its population, such as infrastructure services.
- **Palestinian Youth Union:** Founded in 1992 by the Youth Union in Ramallah and is interested in young people through implementing different social, sports and cultural activities.
- **Draw a Smile for Children Society:** Founded in 2007 by the local community, with donations from American institution. The Society is interested in children issues as it implements various engaging activities and programs.
- **Deir Istiya Women Society:** Founded in 2004 by a number of the town's women. The Society is interested in women as it organizes different educational, awareness and health activities
- **Deir Istiya Youth Sports Club:** Founded in 1997 and later registered by the Ministry of Youth and Sports. The Club is interested in various sports, cultural, scout and social activities for young persons.
- **Palestinian Red Crescent Society:** Founded in 2002 by the local community and the Palestinian Red Crescent Society in Ramallah in order to provide daily primary health care, emergency services and an ambulance, in addition to training programs for disasters.
- **The Red Crescent Volunteers Committee:** Founded in 2004 by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, with a view of implementing various social, environmental, health and cultural voluntary activities.
- **Deir Istiya Cooperative Society:** Established in 1975 by the local community, and is concerned with pressing and marketing olives.
- **Wadi Qana Farmers Committee:** Founded in 2000 by the local community, in order to support farmers and provide them with various capacity building services.

Infrastructure and Natural Resources

Electricity and Telecommunication Services:

Deir Istiya has been connected to a public electricity network since 1993. It is served by the Israeli 'Qatariya Electricity Company,' which represents the main source of electricity in the town. Approximately 98% of the housing units in the town are connected to the network. However, town residents' face a number of problems concerning electricity, including (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012):

- The existing network of which part is worn out and is in need of renovation, and is currently imposing risks on residents.
- The problem of horizontal urbanization and the large increase in the number of subscribers.
- The weak material and technical resources to expand the network and covering the current expansion in construction.

Deir Istiya is also connected to a telecommunication network. Approximately 70% of the housing units within the town boundaries are connected to phone lines (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012).

Transportation Services:

There are 5 taxis and 7 public buses in addition to 3 illegal/unlicensed cars in Deir Istiya. However, residents suffer from the lack of vehicles to serve all residents, in addition to the poor infrastructure of the main roads (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012). There are 2 km of main roads and 14 km of secondary roads in Deir Istiya (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012) (See Table 11).

Table 11: Roads in Deir Istiya town

Status of Internal Roads	Road Length (km)	
	Main	Sub
1. Paved & in good condition	-	5
2. Paved but in poor condition	2	3
3. Unpaved	-	6

Source: Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012

Water Resources:

Deir Istiya is provided with water by the West Bank Water Department through the public water network established in 1996. Approximately 98% of the housing units are connected to the water network (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012)

The quantity of water supplied to Deir Istiya town in 2010 was approximately 72,000 cubic meters/ year which makes the estimated rate of water supply per capita around 58 liters/day (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012). However, no Deir Istiya citizen consumes this amount of water due to water losses, which are estimated at 22% (PWA, 2010). These losses happen at the main source, major transport lines, in the distribution network, and at the household level. Therefore, taking into account water losses, the rate of water consumption per capita in Deir Istiya is 45 liters per day (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012). The average water consumption of Deir Istiya 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 4 NIS (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012).

The town has 9 springs all located in 'area C' (Oslo Accords II) which provides water for the town's agricultural needs (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012). Also, located in the town is a public water reservoir with a capacity of 200 cubic meters in addition to 200 rainwater harvesting cisterns (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012).

Sanitation:

Deir Istiya lacks a public sewerage network and as a main means for wastewater disposal, most of the population use cesspits and septic tanks, (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012).

Based on the estimated daily per capita water consumption, the approximated quantity of wastewater generated per day, is 123 cubic meters, or 44,928 cubic meters annually. At the individual level, it is estimated that the per capita wastewater generation is approximately 36 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, 2012).

Solid Waste Management:

The 'Joint Services Council of East Salfit' is responsible for the collection and disposal of solid waste generated by citizens and establishments in the town. As the process of solid waste management is costly, a monthly fee amounting to 15 NIS/ month is charged to the population served by domestic solid waste collection and transportation services. 90% of the fees are collected from the citizens (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012)

Most of the population in Deir Istiya benefits from the solid waste services, whereby waste is collected from households, institutions, shops, and public squares in plastic bags, and placed in 90 containers (of 2 m³ capacity) located around the municipality. The council collects the solid waste three times a week and transports it using a waste vehicle to the town's dumping site, 5 km from the town, where it is subsequently burnt. This method of disposal represents a serious health and environmental threat (Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012)

The daily per capita rate of solid waste production in Deir Istiya is 1.05kg. Thus the estimated quantity of solid waste produced per day from the Deir Istiya residents is nearly 3.6 tons, or 1,308 tons per year (ARIJ-WERU, 2012).

Environmental Conditions

Like other towns and villages in the Governorate, Deir Istiya 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 numerous town neighborhoods for several reasons:
 1. Israeli control over Palestinian water resources causes problems in the organization of water pumping and its distribution among populations. The West Bank Water Department distributes water to various areas on an interval basis because the amount of water available is not sufficient to simultaneously supply everyone's needs. In addition, the West Bank Water Department purchases water from Israeli Companies in order to meet the citizens needs of water.
 2. High rate of water losses, due to the water network's aged condition in need of rehabilitation and renovation.

Wastewater Management

- The absence of a public sewage network in the town means that Deir Istiya residents are forced to use unhygienic cesspits for the disposal of wastewater, and/or to 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 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:

- Zahrat al Finjan landfill in Jenin Governorate (approximately 32 km in distance from the center of Salfit Governorate) is considered the central sanitary landfill to serve Salfit Governorate. However, the Municipalities and Village Councils in Salfit Governorate do not transfer the solid waste to Zahrat al Finjan landfill, but rather get rid of waste in random dumps scattered throughout the Governorate. This is due to the high costs of transporting and disposing waste in the landfill. As a result, wastes are being disposed randomly in these landfills causing an abomination to health, and leading to the proliferation of harmful flies, insects, and mice, as well as the bad odors, toxic gases and black smoke which emits when burned. All of these have harmful effects on human as well as environmental health.
- The lack of a central sanitary landfill to serve Deir Istiya and the other neighboring communities in the Governorate is due mainly to obstacles created by the Israeli authorities for local and national institutions in granting licenses to establish such a landfill. The reason cited for this is that the appropriate land is within Area C and therefore 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, which produces bad odors and a distortion of the landscape.

Impact of the Israeli Occupation

Geopolitical status in Deir Istiya

According to the Oslo II Interim Agreement signed between the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel on 28th September 1995, Deir Istiya was divided into areas “B” and “C”. Approximately 5,848 dunums (17% of the town’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. It is worth mentioning that most of the town’s population resides in area B. The rest of the town’s area, constituting 28,281 dunums (83% of the total area), is classified as area C, where Israel retains full control over security and administration related to the territory (table 12). In area C Palestinian building and land management is prohibited unless through consent or authorization by the Israeli Civil Administration. Most of the lands lying within area C are agricultural areas and forests, in addition to lands on which Israeli settlements are established.

Table 12: The Geopolitical Divisions of Deir Istiya – Salfit Governorate

Area	Area in dunums	Percent of Total town area
Area A	0	0
Area B	5,848	17
Area C	28,281	83
Nature Reserve	0	0
Total	34,129	100

Source: ARIJ-GIS, 2013

The Israeli Occupation Practices in Deir Istiya Town

Deir Istiya town has been subjected to numerous Israeli confiscations for the benefit of various Israeli objectives, represented in the construction of Israeli settlements, checkpoints, outposts and bypass roads on the town territories, in addition to the segregation plan represented by the Segregation Wall. That which follows is a breakdown of the Israeli confiscations to have negatively affected Deir Istiya town territories.

Throughout years of occupation, Israel has confiscated 4,071 dunums of Deir Istiya town lands (12% of the total town area) for the establishment of six Israeli settlements; Emmanuel, Karne Shomron, Ginnot Shomeronm, Yakir, Nofim, Revava. And ma’ale shomron All of these settlements are located north and north-west of the town, except for Revava settlement which is located to the town’s southwest. A planned wall will separate Deir Istiya town from these settlements, which are inhabited by more than 13,000 Israeli settlers (See Table 13).

Table 13: Israeli settlements established on lands of Deir Istiya town

Settlement Name	Establishment Date	Lands confiscated from Deir Istiya town	Population
Emmanuel	1981	951	2,901
Ginnot Shomeronm	1985	920	-
Yakir	1981	659	1,207
Nofim	1986	625	409
Karne Shomron	1978	512	6,733
Revava	1991	335	1,113
Ma'ale Shomron	1980	69	789
Total		4,071	13,151
Source: The Geo-informatics Department – ARII, 2013			

Israeli settlers living in settlements established on Deir Istiya lands have had a significant impact on Palestinian residents and their properties. These attacks have contributed to the loss of Palestinian lands adjacent to settlements as landowners are prevented from accessing their plots, which have been fenced in 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.

Following the outbreak of the Second Palestinian Intifada in September 2000, Israeli occupation authorities established a number of earth mounds on the entrances of agricultural roads which are connected with the bypass road west of the town. Moreover, the town suffered from the closure of Haris and Kifl Haris villages' entrances, as Deir Istiya town shares with these two villages the same entrance from its southern side, in addition to another entrance it has in the northern side. Deir Istiya town in addition to Salfit Governorate suffers from the establishment of an Israeli military checkpoint on the northern entrance of Salfit city, which is represented as an iron gate established near the western entrance of Ariel Israeli settlement. Closing the northern entrance of Salfit city has had a negative impact on Palestinians lives during the last decade, as it is restricting their freedom of movement and connection with villages north of Salfit the West Bank. This has caused numerous material losses for Palestinians and increased economic burden, as they are forced to use longer distances in order to reach villages in the north. The closure of this checkpoint was carried out under the pretext of protecting settlers in Ariel in addition to other nearby settlements. This checkpoint represents part of the Segregation Plan adopted by the occupation forces through the establishment of settlements, annexing them with the Segregation Wall and changing Palestinians' movement through the establishment of military road checkpoints.

The checkpoint north of Salfit was closed to Palestinians for more than 10 years and was recently partially opened (during 2011) for public vehicles only (taxis and buses), while private cars are still forbidden to cross it. Due to the closure of this main entrance to Salfit city and its neighboring villages, citizens started using the eastern entrance of the city which passes through Yasuf and Iskaka villages, then to Salfit city. However, the citizens are forced to cross through another military checkpoint called "Za'tara" (Kfar Taffuh) which separates the center from north of the West Bank and represents a point of daily suffering and indignity for Palestinians.

In addition, lands of Deir Istiya town have been forcefully seized by Israeli settlers to establish four Israeli settlements; West Nofim, South Nofim - Yair Farm, Elmatan (Ma'ale Shomron South) and South Immanuel Israeli outpost, in an attempt to expand the settlements and control further Palestinian lands. Moreover, during the past two decades Israel constructed 232 outposts within the West Bank and are considered the nucleus for the development of new settlements. Outposts are composed of mobile caravans on the lands stolen by settlers and represent a contiguity of a mother settlement that is nearby. It is worth mentioning that the epidemic of Israeli outposts started with a "Sharonian" call for Jewish settlers to take control over Palestinian hilltops to prevent transferring them to Palestinians in negotiations. Although successive Israeli governments haven't legalized this phenomenon, they managed to find a security and logistic cover to justify the act and its continuity. After 2001 the then Prime Minister Ariel Sharon unleashed the expansion of outposts which has led to a significant increase in the number of outposts within Palestinian areas. In addition, Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) helped Israeli settlers to move and settle in those outposts, in addition to protecting and providing them with the necessary infrastructure to guarantee their continued existence.¹

Moreover, the Israeli Government has confiscated thousands of dunums of agricultural and non-agricultural lands to open several bypass roads stretching thousands of kilometers from the north to south of the West Bank. This has been carried out in order to link Israeli settlements, dismember Palestinian lands and enhance security control over them Israel has also confiscated more land from Deir Istiya and lands to its west, for the construction of Israeli bypass road no. 5066 which extends for 7.5km on the town's land separating large areas of agricultural lands west of the town. The real threat of these bypass roads however lies in the buffer zone formed by the IOF, 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 Deir Istiya Town

The Israeli Segregation Wall plan has had a negative and destructive impact on Deir Istiya residents. The latest route of the plan, published on the Israeli Ministry of Defense's website (April 30 2007), shows that the planned wall on Deir Istiya town's land to the south and north, will confiscate and isolate 18,827 dunums, equivalent to 55% of the town's total area, for Israeli settlement activities. The majority of lands planned to be isolated by the Wall includes agricultural areas and forests in addition to Israeli settlements and others (See Table 14).

¹ **Outposts: the Unripe Settlements, 2004**
http://www.poica.org/editor/case_studies/view.php?recordID=337

Table 14: Land Classification of the Isolated lands in Deir Istiya Town – Salfit Governorate

No.	Land Classification	Area (in dunums)
1	Forests	5,945
2	Agricultural Areas	4,684
3	Israeli Settlements	4,014
4	Open Spaces	1,202
5	Shrubs and Herbaceous Vegetation	2,875
6	Israeli Outposts	94
7	Palestinian Built-up Area	13
Total		18,827

Source: The Geo-informatics Department – ARIJ 2013

Upon the completion of the plan, the Segregation Wall will isolate thousands of dunums of Deir Istiya town's land, mainly fertile agricultural lands containing trees, as well as forests which represents an important source of Palestinian natural resources. This will threaten the future agricultural and economic situation of the Palestinian population in the region, and will include many Israeli settlements within the Wall area. This will lead to the isolation of Deir Istiya town from Salfit city and villages south and west of Salfit as well as isolating it from surrounding villages within Qalqiliya Governorate to the north. Moreover, the Wall will divide the territorial contiguity between Deir Istiya town as its agricultural lands extended to the north and west, and adjacent to 'Azzun village in Qalqiliya Governorate. All of the above mentioned confiscations is considered representative of the nationwide Zionist Plan of removing and eradicating Palestinian presence in 'Israel.'

One should also note that Salfit Governorate villages are known for their fertile soil, beautiful nature and the presence of an abundance of water and large trees, especially olive trees. This makes the region an important target for Israeli settlement activities and it is the second Governorate after Jerusalem on the list of Israeli land confiscations, wall and settlement construction.

Targeting Wadi Qana (Qana Valley) Area of Picturesque Nature:

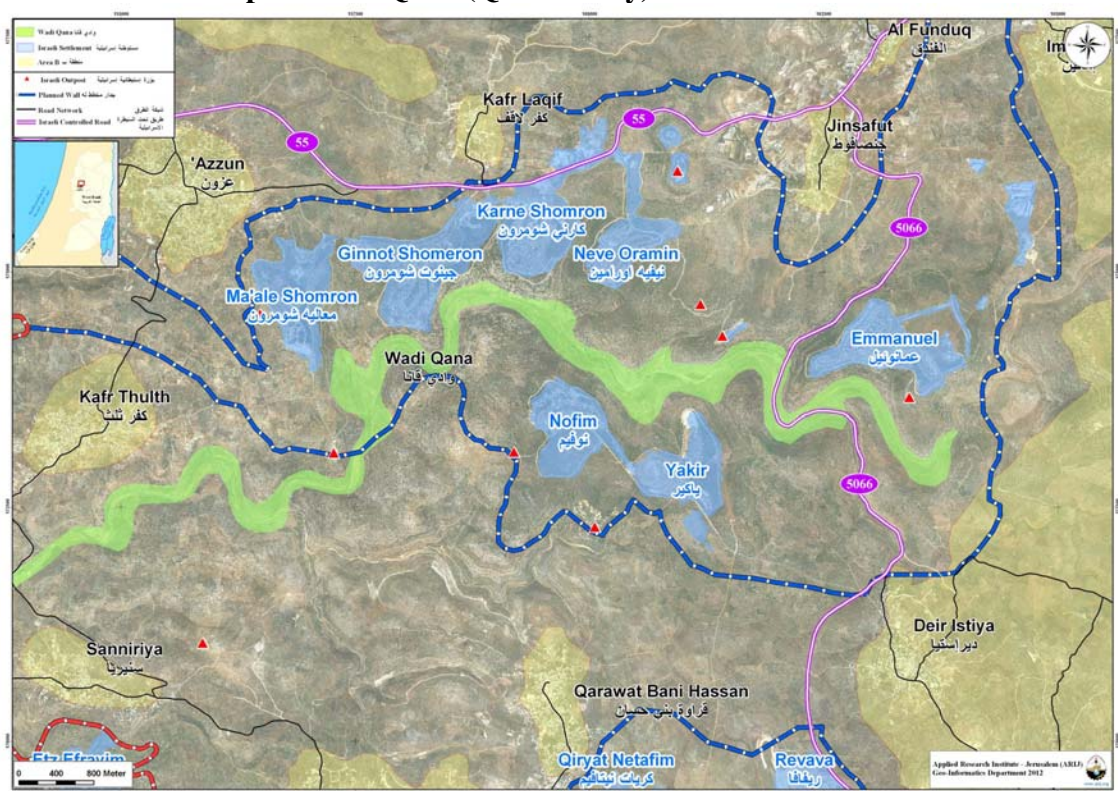
Wadi Qana which separates Salfit and Qalqiliya Governorates is considered one of the most prominent natural attractions in Palestine. This valley is surrounded with Palestinian villages such as Deir Istiya, Qarawat Bani Hassan, Bidya, Sanniriya, Kafr Thulth, 'Azzun, Kafr Laqif and Jinsafut, etc. The valley is famous for its natural beauty, the abundance of water, the many springs located in it and its green lands. The area is also known for the prevalence of trees, crops and livestock. This has made it an obvious target of Israeli occupation forces and settlers, given its beauty and availability to natural resources to utilize. The occupation forces, through the Israeli Civil Administration's (ICA) Protection of Nature Committee announced its control over this region under the pretext of being an Israeli nature reserve area, as it is located within Area "C" (Oslo II Agreement).

Israeli occupation forces have, on top of the Qana Valley, established seven settlements and eight outposts, and today have almost full control over the water sources in this valley which is rich with groundwater. The Israeli deep water drillings in Wadi Qana (Qana Valley) have caused the drying up of

Palestinian wells and springs in the area and are today consumed by Israel and its illegal settlements surrounding Wadi Qana. Only few water resources (estimated at 3) are left for Palestinian farmers in Wadi Qana to use and are barely sufficient for the daily use.

Additionally, these surrounding settlements have caused the contamination of this valley and sunk it in waste water flowing from these settlements²³. Furthermore, the occupation forces have prevented farmers from cultivating their lands which comes in addition to the settlers' harassments represented in the burning of hundreds of trees, attacking Palestinian farmers and expelling them from their lands.

Map 4: Wadi Qana (Qana Valley) Area North of Salfit



The Land Research Center (LRC) mentions some examples of these attacks carried out by the occupation forces and settlers living in the surrounding settlements over the past years, including:

- On 21 December 2009, settlers from Nofim colony uprooted 40 olive seedlings (two years of age) from land of citizen Salah Abdul Latif Abdul Qader Abu Hajleh.
- On 13 January 2011, the Israeli occupation forces, represented by the Protection of Nature Committee of the Israeli Civil Administration, notified farmer Rami Qassem Mansour from Deir Istiya town to vacate his land. This citizen had recently begun cultivating his land again after

² Sewage Flowing from the Colony of Yakeir Targets the Palestinian Environment

http://www.poica.org/editor/case_studies/view.php?recordID=2621

³ The Colony of Rafafa: The Source of Pollution in Wadi Qana

http://www.poica.org/editor/case_studies/view.php?recordID=4652

being assaulted by settlers from Yakir settlement, which resulted in the destruction of 26 olive and citrus trees seedlings. Moreover, because of this farmer's insistence and frequent visits to the area to cultivate his land, he was exposed to physical assaults more than once by the settlers. It should be noted that this bitter reality embodies the case of hundreds of Palestinian farmers in the Wadi Qana area, as the number of farmers in the valley before 1967 was about 200 farmers shrunk before 2000 to about 14 farmers, whereas the valley become at the time almost free of its residents.⁴

- During March 2012, settlers from Revava settlement pumped large quantities of sewage water toward the valleys of Wadi Qana. An estimated area of 70 dunums planted with olive trees was damaged which led to health problems in the region as rainwater became mixed with contaminated sewage water.
- In early July 2012, a group of extremist settlers from Emmanuel settlement set fire to agricultural lands in "Wadi al Qatt", "Khillet Sabra" and "Al Mintar: regions, in the eastern side of Jinsafat village, leading to the burning of 300 olive trees belonging to citizens from Bashir and 'Eid families.
- On 30 May 2012, in a new form of attacks, a group of settlers from Yakir settlement, located in the heart of Wadi Qana, stole large amounts of agricultural dirt in the area and transported it to the heart of the Yakir settlement. The dirt was then reused in farming within the boundaries of the settlement, after bulldozing large tracts of land (12 agricultural dunums) in Wadi Qana.

Israeli Military Orders Issued in Deir Istiya town

The Israeli authorities issued a series of military orders to confiscate land or notices to stop construction or evacuation in Deir Istiya town. The following are some of these orders:

- Israeli Military Order No. 05/05/T: Issued on January 8 2005, to confiscate 128.4 dunums of land in Deir Istiya and Immatin villages for military purposes.
- Israeli Military Order No. 28/06/T (validity extension and adjustment of borders): Issued on the 21st of December 2011, to confiscate 21 dunums of territory in Deir Istiya town for military purposes.
- Israeli Military Order No. 76/06/T: Issued on 6th August 2006, to confiscate 1.2 dunums of territory in Deir Istiya town for military purposes.
- Israeli Military Order No. 76/06/T (validity extension and adjustment of borders): Issued on 1st December 2011, and confiscates an area of 4.27 dunums of Deir Istiya town land for military purposes.
- Israeli Military Order No. 96/09/T (validity extension and adjustment of borders): Issued on 26th March 2012 and confiscates 29.6 dunums of Deir Istiya town territory for military purposes.
- A series of Israeli military orders (13 military order of which are given as an example below), holding the following numbers: 2006), 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2071, 2072, 578 and 580. All of these were issued during 2011 and 2012 and require the evacuation of sites owned by Palestinians citizens from Deir Istiya town under the pretext of being located within areas classified by the occupation authorities as "nature reserves, which mostly exist in the area of Wadi Qana.

⁴ Farmer from Deir Istiya village was notified by the occupation authorities to vacate his land in Wadi Qana north of Salfit http://www.poica.org/editor/case_studies/view.php?recordID=2919

Development Plans and Projects

Implemented Projects

Deir Istiya Municipal Council has implemented several development projects in Deir Istiya during the past five years (See Table 15).

Table 15: Implemented Development Plans and Projects in Deir Istiya during the Last Five Years

Name of the Project	Type	Year	Donor
Rehabilitating secondary roads	Infrastructure	2007	Municipalities Fund
Rehabilitating the electricity network	Infrastructure	2008	Japanese Grant
Renovating the old city	Renovation	2008	USAID
Constructing classrooms in the Girls' Elementary School	Educational	2009	Ministry of Finance
Rehabilitating Wadi Qana area	Agricultural	2010	Ministry of Finance
Constructing additional floor in in the Girls' Elementary School	Educational	2011	Brazilian Grant
Constructing agricultural roads	Agricultural	2011	Agricultural Relief
Expanding and rehabilitating the town's main entrances	Infrastructure	2011	CHF & USAID

Source: Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012

Proposed Projects

Deir Istiya Municipal Council, in cooperation with the town's civil society organizations and town residents, hopes to implement several projects in the coming years. The project ideas were developed during the PRA workshop conducted by ARIJ staff in the town. The projects are as follows, in order of priority from the viewpoints of the workshop participants:

1. Constructing Deir Istiya Municipality headquarters.
2. Providing a health services complex.
3. Expanding and rehabilitating internal roads (3 km).
4. Rehabilitating sidewalks (2 km).
5. Constructing an additional floor in Deir Istiya Girls' Secondary School.
6. Constructing an additional floor in Deir Istiya Girls' Elementary School.
7. Constructing a public hall and a cultural center.
8. Establishing base course layers and paving internal roads within the existing structural plan (3 km).
9. Expanding and rehabilitating the water and electricity networks.
10. Rehabilitating Deir Istiya kindergarten's building and providing a bus to transport children.
11. Establishing a sewerage network (15 km).
12. Establishing a public garden and an amusement park.
13. Supporting and developing the youth and women centers in the town.

Locality Development Priorities and Needs

Deir Istiya 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 view point.

Table 16: Development Priorities and Needs in Deir Istiya

N o.	Sector	Strongly Needed	Needed	Not a Priority	Notes
Infrastructural Needs					
1	Opening and paving roads	*			18 km [^]
2	Rehabilitation of old water networks	*			5 km
3	Extending the water network to cover new built up areas	*			6 km
4	Constructing new water networks			*	
5	Rehabilitation/ construction of new wells and/ or springs			*	
6	Construction of water reservoirs		*		200 m ³
7	Construction of a sewage disposal network	*			17 km
8	Construction of a new electricity network			*	
9	Providing containers for solid waste collection	*			70 containers
10	Providing vehicles for collecting solid waste			*	
11	Providing a sanitary landfill		*		
Health Needs					
1	Building new clinics or health care centres	*			a comprehensive health center
2	Rehabilitation of old clinics or health care centres			*	
3	Purchasing medical equipment and tools	*			
Educational Needs					
1	Building new schools	*			constructing an additional floor in each of the co-educated secondary and girls elementary schools
2	Rehabilitating old schools	*			co-educated secondary and boys elementary schools
3	Purchasing new equipment for schools	*			computer labs
Agriculture Needs					
1	Rehabilitating agricultural lands	*			500 dunums
2	Building rainwater harvesting cisterns	*			20 cisterns
3	Constructing livestock Barracks		*		3 barracks
4	Provision of veterinary services			*	
5	Provision of seeds and hay for animals	*			300 tons per year
6	Construction of new greenhouses			*	
7	Rehabilitation of greenhouses			*	
8	Provision of field crops seeds	*			10 tons
9	Provision of plants and agricultural supplies	*			Olive, citrus and stone-fruits

[^] 3 km main roads, 9 km secondary roads and 6 km are agricultural roads

Source: Deir Istiya Municipality, 2012

References:

- *Applied Research Institute - Jerusalem (ARIJ)*, 2013. Geographic Information Systems and Remote Sensing Unit Database. Bethlehem - Palestine.
- *Applied Research Institute - Jerusalem (ARIJ)*, 2013. *Geographic Information Systems and Remote Sensing Unit; Land Use Analysis (2012) – Half Meter High Accuracy*. Bethlehem - Palestine.
- *Applied Research Institute - Jerusalem (ARIJ)*. 2012. Water & Environment Research Unit Database (WERU). Bethlehem - Palestine.
- *Deir Istiya Municipality*, 2012.
- *Ministry of Education & Higher Education (MOHE) - Salfit*, 2012. Directorate of Education; A database of schools (2011/2012). Salfit – Palestine.
- *Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics*. 2009. Ramallah, Palestine: General Census of Population and Housing Censuses, 2007.
- *Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture (MOA)*, 2010. Directorate of Agriculture data (2009/2010). Salfit - Palestine.
- *Palestinian Water Authority*. 2012. Ramallah, Palestine: Water Supply Report, 2010.