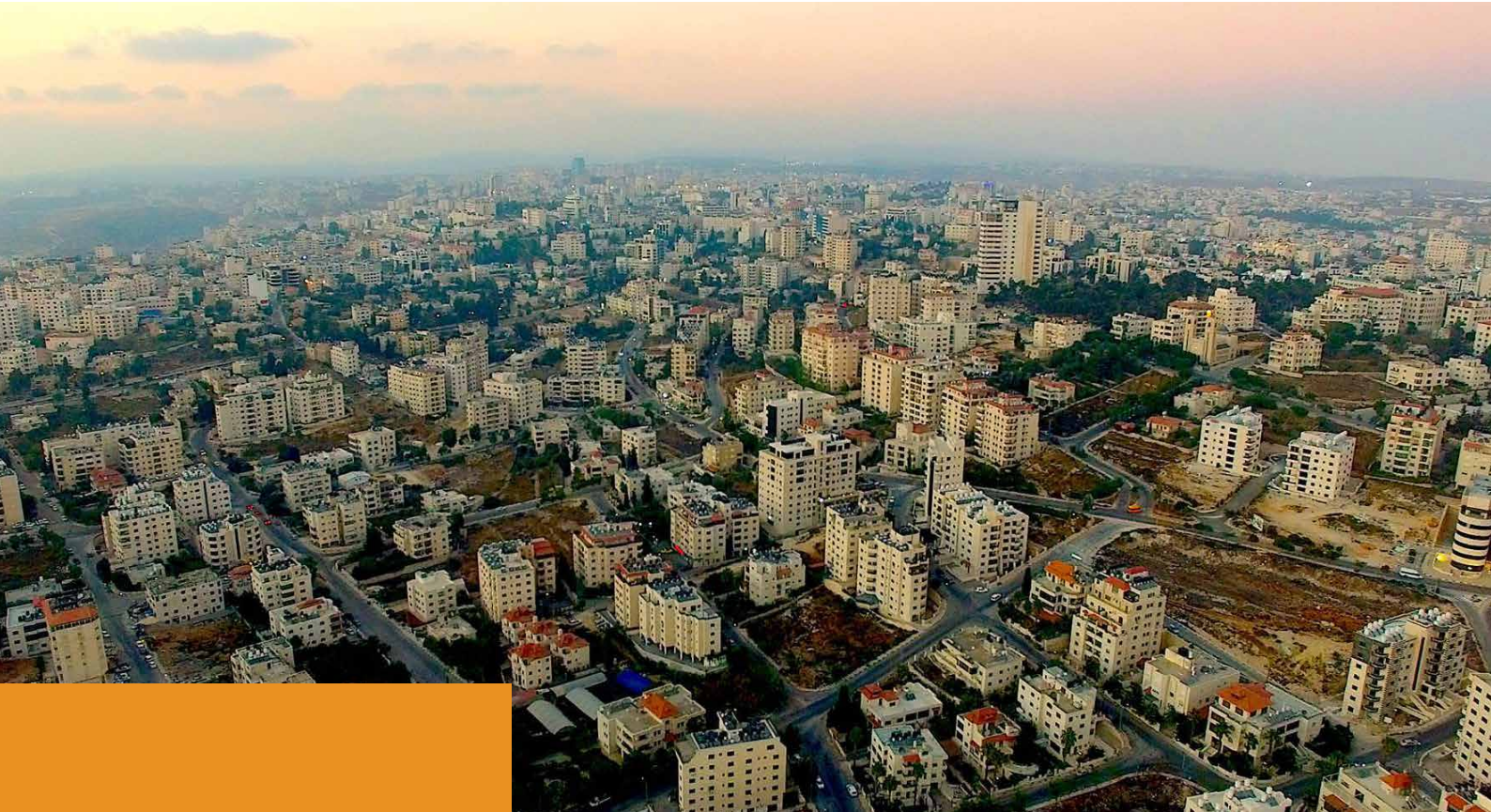




State of Palestine
Ministry of Local Government



STATE OF PALESTINE CITIES **REPORT** 2016



صندوق تطوير وإقراض البلديات
Municipal Development & Lending Fund

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE



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STATE OF PALESTINE: **CITIES REPORT 2016**

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Ministry of Local Government (MoLG)

Ramallah, Palestine

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► **FOREWORD**



Cities throughout the world are witnessing rapid growth, thus increasing the demand for high-quality services and necessitating that governments and municipalities develop improved solutions that fulfill the requirements for sustainable urban development and assure the social, economic, and environmental interactions distinctive of cities in the modern era. The observable acceleration in urbanization is taking place within a framework that entails expanding globalization, intensifying competition, continuous technological development, and the transformation to smart cities. Palestinian cities and urban areas are no exception in this regard; nearly 75 percent of the Palestinian population lives in urban areas that must expand their visions, objectives, and strategies towards the development and conservation of resources that will enable them to continuously and reliably respond to the needs of their residents and visitors.

Furthermore, Palestinian cities and urban areas must operate within a unique context, as numerous challenges and far-reaching impediments are imposed by the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories. Such entail the ongoing confiscation of land, demolition of houses, imposition of closures and roadblocks, sieges of urban areas, and control of the resources required for sustainable development.

The first State of Palestine: Cities Report was drafted and presented as part of preparations for the Habitat III (HIII) conference and the launching of the New Urban Agenda. The report reflects the current urban reality with all its spatial, social, economic, and environmental components and outputs. It highlights the obstacles to sustainable development in cities, and includes the most important recommendations.

I would like to thank all those who contributed their efforts and prepared and brought to fruition this report, ranging from staff at the Ministry of Local Government to partners at other national institutions and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme in Palestine. It is hoped that this report may provide a source of insight for planners and policymakers engaged in the planning of Palestinian cities.

Dr. Husein AlAraj
Minister of Local Government



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» SCOPE OF PUBLICATION – WHY A STATE OF PALESTINE: CITIES REPORT?

Recent years have witnessed a substantial global movement to advance sustainable development agendas, among them the Paris Agreement (as part of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change), the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR). All of these global frameworks have established – some for the first time – the importance of “thinking urban” and of capitalizing on the potentials and resources offered by cities and urban regions when making efforts to overcome key global challenges. Moreover, during the recent Habitat III conference the world has adopted the New Urban Agenda, and with SDG 11 there exists for the first time a stand-alone sustainable development goal that targets cities and communities and will guide the urban development of the world's cities over the next twenty years.

In twenty years, more than two thirds of the world's population will be living in cities. More than half of the world's population is already living in urban areas, and most of the ongoing urbanization is happening in developing countries. In Palestine, we have made progress in advancing our state-building and development agendas. However, thinking urban, in terms of potentials, limitations, and ways in which global and regional urban agendas and urbanization trends are impacting national and local urban development plans, is still a new concept and at best a work in progress.

This report will present concise and up-to-date data, information, and analyses of the urban contexts in Palestine; indicate urbanization trends and forces; and highlight recent debates and initiatives regarding the urban dynamics in Palestine. It aims at encouraging further work on how to localize the global urban development agendas, including the New Urban Agenda and SDG11, in ongoing efforts towards developing more inclusive, sustainable, and resilient Palestinian cities.



DEFINITIONS

East Jerusalem

According to the 1947 UN Partition Plan, Jerusalem was intended to be placed under an international regime as a Corpus Seperatum, a political entity under the UN's trusteeship and separate from both the proposed Arab and Jewish states. However, as a consequence of the 1948 war, West Jerusalem came under the control of Jewish forces and East Jerusalem ended up as part of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Having occupied the city earlier that month, Israel on June 28, 1967 unilaterally and illegally expanded the borders of East Jerusalem, increasing its area from 6.5 sq. km (the boundaries as designated by Jordan) to 70.5 sq. km to include lands from many West Bank villages.¹

Green Line

The 1949 Armistice Line, as agreed upon between Egypt and Jordan on the one hand and Israel on the other, following the war of 1948. After signing the Oslo Accords in 1995, the Green Line became the internationally recognized border between Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory, which comprises the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.²

Informal Areas

Areas where groups of housing units have been constructed on land over which occupants have no legal claim, and/or unplanned areas where housing is not in compliance with current planning and building regulations.³

Informal Economy

The economic activities that are unregulated by a society's institutions and not taxed or overseen by the government.⁴

Israeli Settlement

A special expanse of land allocated for Israeli civil or semi-military colonization, founded by the Israeli occupation, and built on Palestinian territory occupied since 1967. According to international law, the

West Bank and the Gaza Strip are "occupied territory." Thus, Israeli activities in the West Bank and Gaza are considered illegal. Israeli settlements are also described as "colonies," and the people living in them "colonists."⁵

Jerusalem (J1)

Includes the part of Jerusalem that was annexed forcefully by Israel following its occupation of the West Bank in 1967 and encompasses the following localities: Beit Hanina, Shu'fat Refugee Camp, Shu'fat, Al-'Isawiya, Sheikh Jarrah, Wadi Al-Joz, Bab As-Sahira, As-Suwwana, At-Tur, Jerusalem ("Al-Quds"), Ash-Shayyah, Ras Al-Amud, Silwan, Ath-Thuri, Jabal Al-Mukabbir, As-Sawahira Al-Gharbiya, Beit Safafa, Sharafat, Sur Bahir, and Um Tuba.⁶

Jerusalem (J2)

Includes the remaining parts of the governorate, namely: Rafat, Kufr A'qab, Mikhmas, Qalandya Refugee Camp, the Bedouin Community Jaba', Qalandya, Beit Duqqu, Jaba', Al-Judeira, Beit Anan, Al-Jib, Bir Nabala, Biet Ijza, Al-Qubeiba, Khirbat Umm Al-Lahem, Biddu, An-Nabi Samu'eil, Hezma, Beit Hanina At-Tahta, Qatanna, Beit Surik, Beit Ikka, A'nata, the Bedouin community Al-Khan Al-Ahmar, Az-Za'eem, Al-Eizariya, Abu Dis, As-Sawahreh Ash-Sharqiyeh, Ash-Sheik Sa'd.⁷

Poverty

Households (two adults and three children) whose monthly income is estimated at less than US\$ 609.8

Refugee Camp

Any locality referred to as a refugee camp and administered by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency in the Near East (UNRWA).⁹

Rural Area

Any locality whose population is less than 4,000 persons, or whose population varies from 4,000 to 9,999 persons but lacks the four elements mentioned below as defining an urban area.¹⁰

Separation or Annexation Wall

A barrier that consists of concrete walls, fences, ditches, razor wire, groomed sand paths, an electronic monitoring system, patrol roads, and a buffer zone, with a length of 712 km, constructed by Israel in the West Bank with the stated aim of preventing Palestinians from carrying out violent attacks inside Israel. However, the vast majority of the Separation Wall's route (almost 85%) is located within the West Bank,

1. The Applied Research Institute ARIJ (2016), "Monitoring Israeli Colonization Activities: Glossary," POICA, available at <http://poica.org/glossary/#a1>.

2. Ibid.

3. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2016), Glossary of Statistical Terms, available at <https://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=1351>.

4. Fridell (2008), Microcredit and the Informal Sector in the West Bank, Uppsala University, Sweden, available at <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:131750/FULLTEXT01.pdf>

5. The Applied Research Institute ARIJ (2016), "Monitoring Israeli Colonization Activities."

6. PCBS (2016), "Environment: Israeli Settlements in Palestine," Palestine in Figures 2015, Ramallah, Palestine.

7. Ibid.

8. PCBS (2011), On the Eve of the International Population Day, available at http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_En_IntPopD2014E.pdf.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

separating Palestinian communities and farming land from the rest of the West Bank and contributing to the fragmentation of Palestine.¹¹ On July 9, 2004, the International Court of Justice stated that “the construction of the wall being built by Israel, the occupying power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and its associated régime, are contrary to international law.”¹²

Urban Area

Any locality whose population amounts to 10,000 persons or more. This applies to all governorates or district centers regardless of their size. Besides, it refers to all localities whose population varies from 4,000 to 9,999 persons, provided they have at least four of the following elements: a public electricity network, a public water network, a post office, a health center with a full-time physician, and/or a school offering a general certificate of secondary education.¹³

KEY FACTS AND FIGURES


4,816,503

Total population in Palestine
Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2016


26.1%

Urban poverty headcount ratio
(% of urban population)
World Bank, 2011


6,020 SQ. km

Area
PCBS, 2015


19.4%

Rural poverty headcount ratio
(% of rural population)
World Bank, 2011


2.9%

Population growth rate
United Nations Population Division, 2015


18.7%

Ratio of the Palestinian urban population living in the largest city (Gaza City)
World Urbanization Prospects, 2015


75.3%

Urban population
World Bank, 2015


735 PERSONS PER SQ. KM

Population density, (Ranked number 13 worldwide)
World Bank and FAO data, 2015


2,496 SQ.KM

Urban land area
Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN), 2013


1,333 PERSONS PER SQ. KM

Land urban density
World bank and FAO data, 2015


3.2%

Urban population growth rate
(Among top 25% of urbanizing countries)
World Urbanization Prospects, 2015


6.3%

Urban poverty gap at national poverty lines
World Bank, 2011


US\$ 12.677 BILLION

GDP in current prices
World Bank, 2011


3.8%

Rural poverty gap at national poverty lines
World Bank, 2011


US\$ 7.463 BILLION

GDP in constant prices
World Bank, 2011

11. OCHA (2013), The Humanitarian Impact of the Barrier, available at https://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_barrier_factsheet_july_2013_english.pdf.

12. International Court of Justice (2004), Summary: Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, available at <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/files/131/1677.pdf>.

13. PCBS (2012), Census Final Results in the Palestinian Territory, Ramallah- Palestine, available at http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/pcbs_2012/Publications.aspx?catid=4

CHAPTER | 1 |

>> URBANIZATION AND POPULATION

1.1. Geography

The occupied State of Palestine, "Palestine," is located in the Eastern Mediterranean region. It shares borders with Jordan from the east, the Mediterranean and Israel from the west, Lebanon from the north, and Egypt from the south. The territory of Palestine covers an area of 6,020 sq. km¹⁴ and is composed of two physically separated land masses: the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The West Bank has an area of 5,655 sq. km, and the Gaza Strip has an area of 365 sq. km.¹⁵ The geography of Palestine is characterized by a diverse topography, and its terrain includes coastal and inner plains, mountains, and hills. The elevation span in Palestine reaches from a low 429 m below sea level to 1,030 m above sea level.



control over their hinterlands and the natural resources they contain – which are needed to sustain spatial development and ensure inclusiveness and equity. Area A constitutes 18% of the West Bank area and falls under full Palestinian control, which includes internal functions related to security and public order as well as planning. The main Palestinian cities and major urban areas fall under this zone. Area B constitutes 21% of the West Bank territory, and here Palestinians have full control over civil administration issues, including planning-related functions, but Israel has the overriding responsibilities regarding security. Area C constitutes more than 61% of the West Bank area; it includes most of the rural and peri-urban areas as well as agricultural lands and is under full Israeli control. Palestinians have no control over water and oil or gas resources, no matter in what area they are located. Israeli geopolitical artefacts on the ground include, but are not restricted to, Israeli settlements, outposts, military bases, nature reserves, archeological sites, by-pass roads, seam zones, the Separation and Annexation Wall, and more.¹⁶

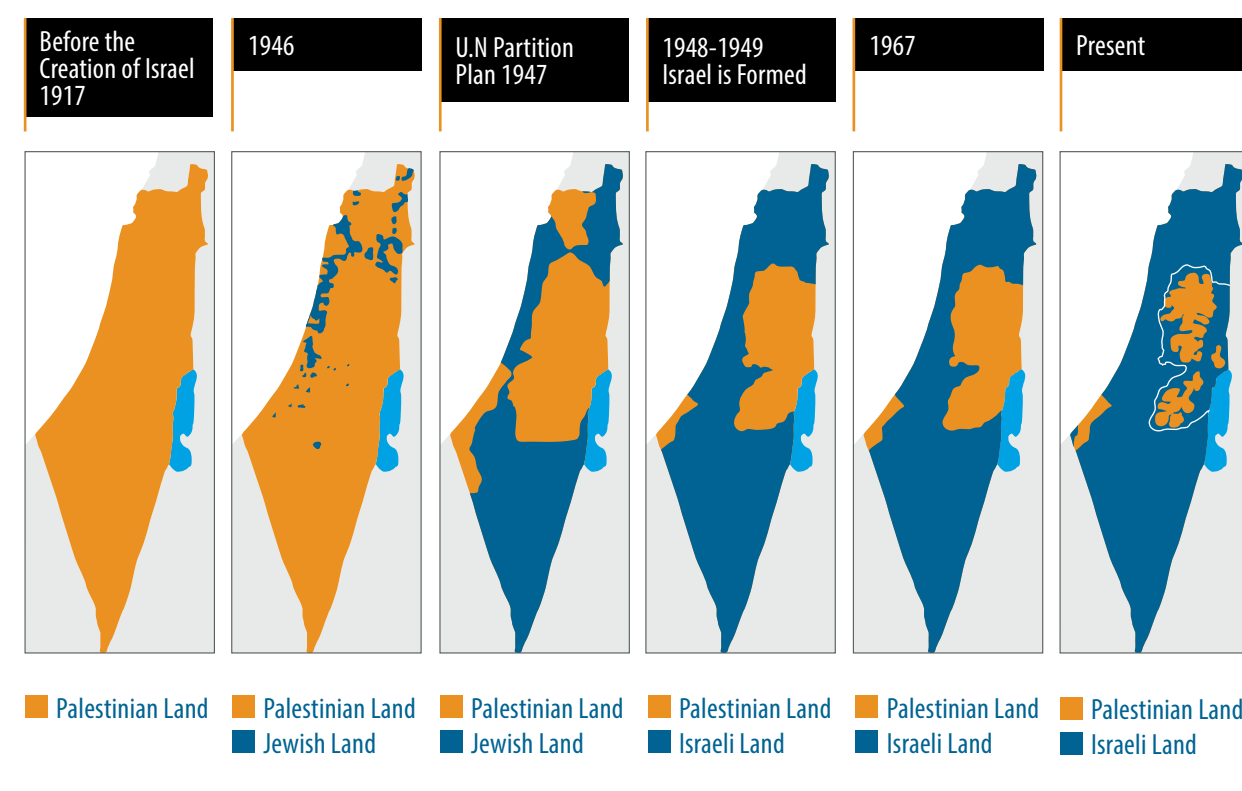


Fig. 1.2. An overview of the history of the occupation of Palestinian land

1.3. Population

The Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza reaches 4.81 million people, of which 2.93 million are living in the West Bank (including more than 251,000 in East Jerusalem) and 1.88 million in the Gaza Strip.¹⁷ Palestine has a very high annual population-growth rate that stands at 2.9%. Currently, more than

16. The international community considers the Israeli settlement activities in the Israeli occupied territories, including the West Bank and East Jerusalem as illegal under Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention that is at the heart of international humanitarian law. Israel is a signatory to this convention that dictates that "The Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies."

17. PCBS (2016), Estimated Population in the Palestinian Territory Mid-Year by Governorate, 1997-2016, available at http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_Rainbow/Documents/gover_e.htm.

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