

# Beit ar Rush at Tahta Village Profile



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## ***Background***

This booklet is part of a series of booklets, which contain compiled information about each city, town, and village in Hebron Governorate. These booklets come as a result of a comprehensive study of all localities in Hebron 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 Azahar Needs Assessment'; a project funded by the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID) and the Azahar Program.

The 'Village Profiles and Azahar 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 Hebron Governorate with particular focus on the Azahar program objectives and activities concerning water, environment, and agriculture.

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 Hebron 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://proxy.arij.org/vprofile/>

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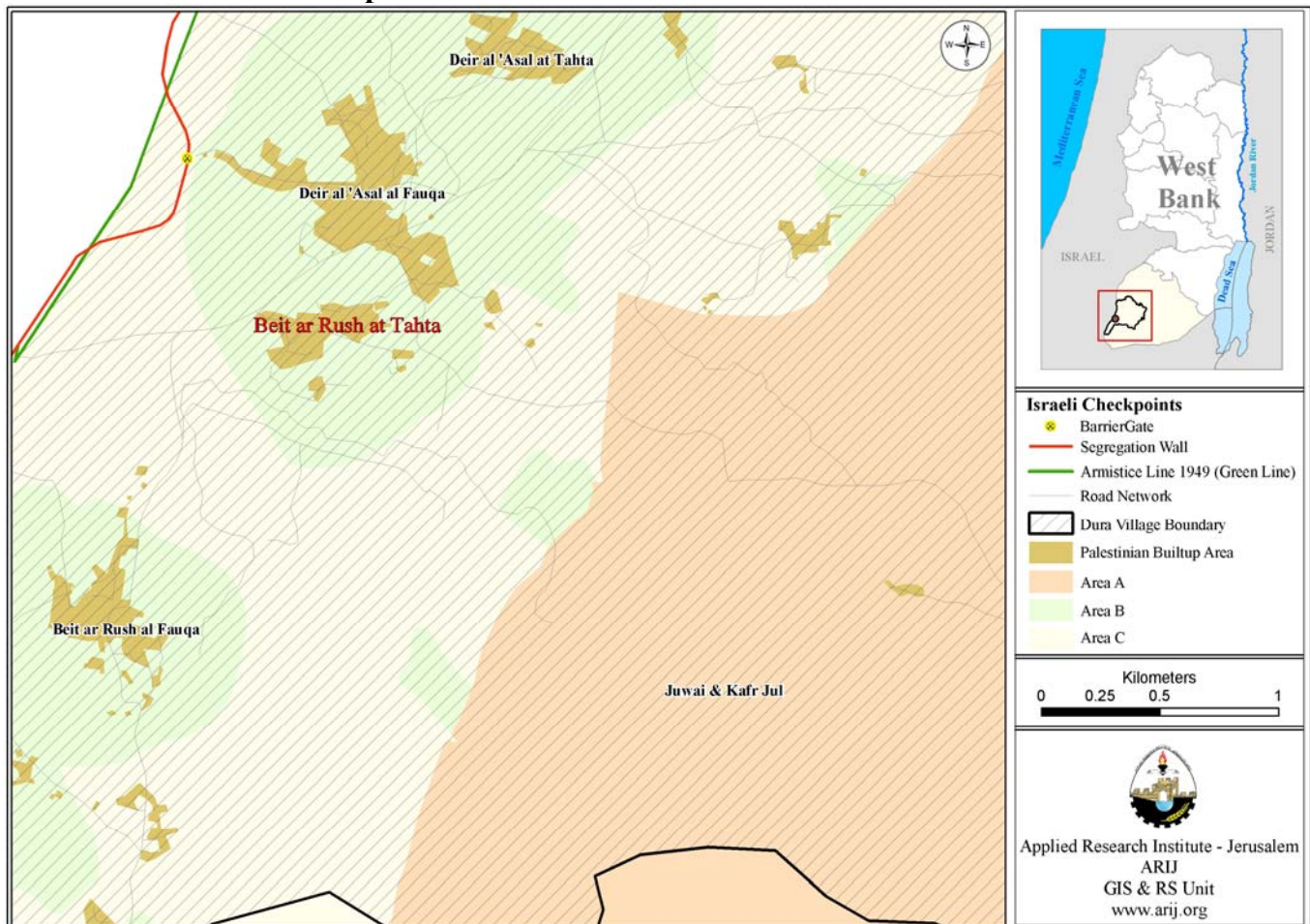
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## *Beit ar Rush at Tahta Village Profile*

### Location and Physical Characteristics

Beit ar Rush at Tahta is a village in Dura area located 28 km southwest of the city of Hebron in the south of the West Bank. It is bordered by Dura city and As Sura village to the east, Deir al 'Asla al Fauqa and Al Majd villages to the north, Al Bira and Adh Dhahiriya to the south and 1949 Armistice Line (the Green Line) to the west.

**Map 1: Beit ar Rush at Tahta location and borders**



The total area of Beit ar Rush at Tahta village is estimated to be about 2600 dunums, of which 80 dunums are built-up areas, 1540 dunums are agricultural lands, 45 dunums are forests and 520 dunums are open spaces with little or no vegetation. Currently there is about 50 dunums of the village's land that is confiscated by the Israeli Forces for the construction of settlements, military bases or bypass roads.

Beit ar Rush at Tahta village lies at an elevation of 485 m above sea level. The mean annual rainfall in Beit ar Rush at Tahta village is 436 mm; the average annual temperature is 16 °C, and the average annual humidity is 61% (ARIJ database, 2006).

The village is generally considered to be a rural area. The village is governed by a village council, established in 1996. Currently the council consists of three members and one full time employee. It provides the village with the following services.

- Infrastructural services: such as electricity and water; building and rehabilitation roads.
- Social aid and development services
- Educational services: such as establishing schools and kindergartens.

## **History**

Though Beit ar Rush is the villages original name, it was changed due to it position in low lands, to 'Beit ar Rush at Tahta', that literally means mean "under". The village was founded in 1940 by four families, it population has been expanding ever since.

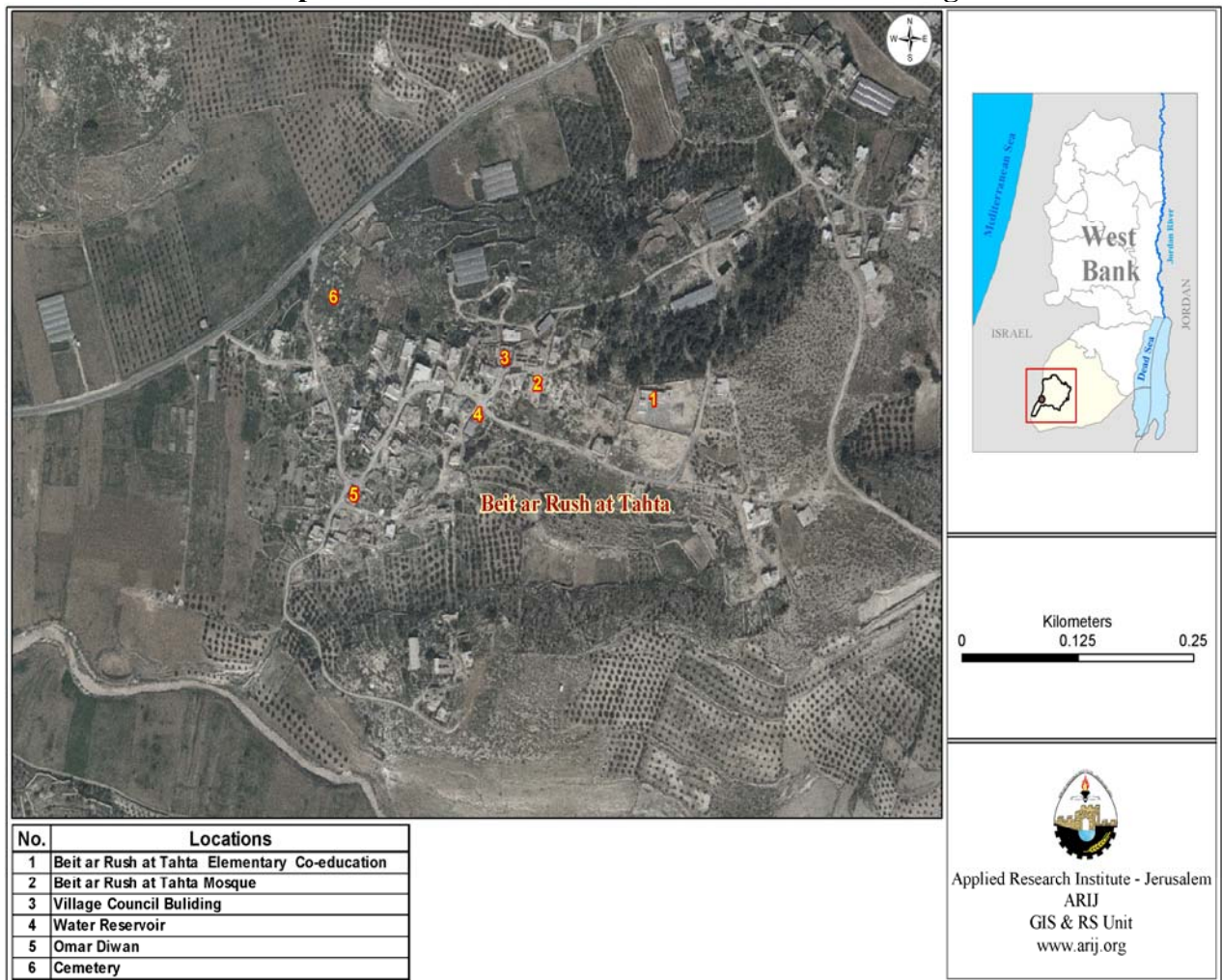
### **Photos of Beit ar Rush at Tahta**



## **Religious and Archaeological Sites**

There is one mosque in the village, which consists is separated into two areas one for men and one for women. The village lacks any known archaeological or historical sites.

Map 2: Main locations in Beit ar Rush at Tahta village



### Demography and Population

According to the 2007 Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) Census, the total population of Beit ar Rush at Tahta was 373 people, of whom 187 were males (186 females). There were 62 households in the village living in 74 housing units.

### Age Group and Gender

The Population, Housing and Establishment Census – 2007, showed the distribution of Beit ar Rush at Tahta population by age group and sex. Residents aged between 0-14 constituted 43.5% of the total population, and represents the main demographic in Beit ar Rush at Tahta society. Individuals aged between 15-64 age group constituted 51% of the total population and the 65 years and above constituted about 5.5%. The sex ratio in Beit ar Rush at Tahta village was 100.5 males per 100 females. In terms of percentage, the males in the village constitute 50.1% of the total population while the females constitute 49.9% of the total population.

## Families

All the residents of Beit ar Rush at Tahta village belongs to one family which is Amro family; this is however divided to five family branches. These are: Mahmoud, Ahmad, Abed Rabu, Muhammad and Ibrahim.

## Migration

Data collected from Beit ar Rush at Tahta village council indicated that about 15% of the residents emigrated from the village due to the political and economic situation.

## Education

According to the 2007 PCBS, Population, Housing and Establishment Census, there were 20 people illiterate in the village (aged 10 and above). This consisted of 7.5% of the population. 70% of these were females. Of the literate population, 10.5% of the population could read and write but had received no formal schooling, 24.4% completed elementary education, 35.7% completed preparatory education, 13.5% completed their secondary education and 8.3% completed their higher education. Table 1 shows the education status in Beit ar Rush at Tahta by sex and education attainment in 2007.

Sex	Illiterate	Can read & write	Elementary	Preparatory	Secondary	Associate Diploma	Bachelor	Higher Diploma	Master	PhD	Total
M	6	15	33	44	19	5	8	-	-	-	130
F	14	13	32	51	17	5	4	-	-	-	136
<b>T</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>266</b>

Source: PCBS, March 2009. Population, Housing and Establishment Census-2007, Final Results

There is one elementary co-education school in the village, which is called 'Beit ar Rush at Tahta Elementary Co-education School', this was established in 2003. The school is supervised by the governmental sector and has 80 students, 6 classes and 8 teachers in the scholastic year 2006/2007. The school provides education for students up to the sixth grade.

The village also has 'Forsan Al Ghad' Kindergarten, which caters for 80 children and is supervised by Beit ar Rush at Tahta village council. In addition, there is an educational centre used primarily for computer training.

Students in the village however, must still travel two kilometers to reach Deir al 'Asal al Fauqa (a village that has preparatory education facilities), and travel about 3.5 km or 15 km to reach Al Majd village or Dura city to complete their secondary education. Students' education is suffering as a result of these long journeys. The lack of transportation means that some students are forced to walk long distances to school. There have also been cases of students prevented from reaching school by Israeli Forces.



**Health Status**

Beit ar Rush at Tahta is suffering from a severe lack of health institutions. Similarly there is only one governmental Child and Women Health Care Centre. There are no health centers, ambulances, or pharmacies in the village. The village also lacks; doctors, health equipment and medicine.

Additional medical facilities can be found in other villages and cities, however due to a problem exacerbated by unavailability of transportation these are extremely difficult to reach. The residents are forced to travel 28 km to reach the nearest (‘Al Ahliy’) Hospital.

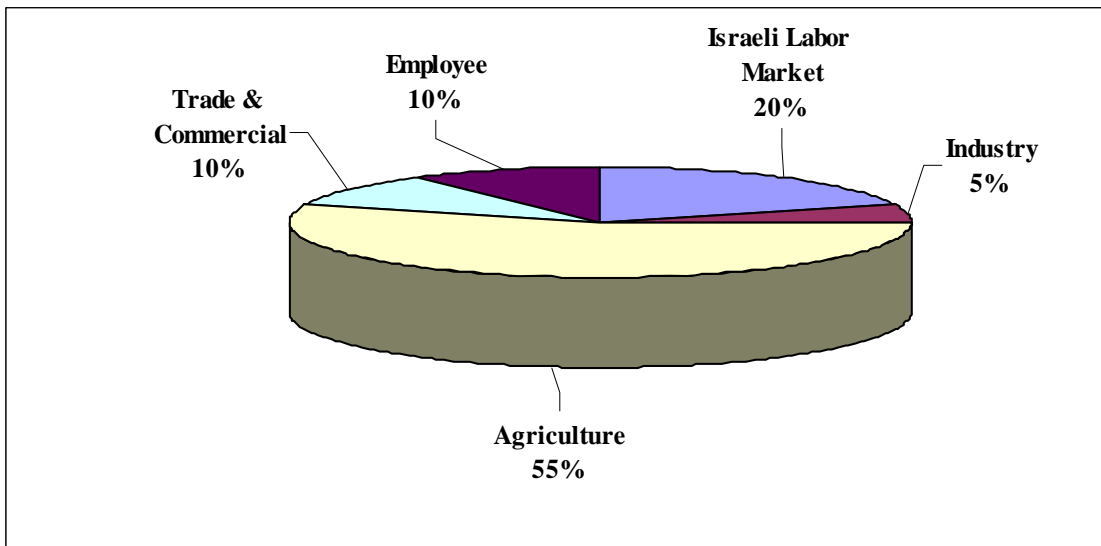
**Economic Activities**

Beit ar Rush at Tahta village is an agricultural village. Most of the residents in the village are dependent on agricultural activities, especially in rearing livestock and dairy production. In addition to the agricultural sector, the economic base of the village depends on the Israeli labor market. There is also a proportion of Beit ar Rush at Tahta residents that depend on the trade and commercial sector, as well as on the public sector. In the village there are two grocer’s serving residents of the village.

According to village officials’ estimates, the economic base of the village consists of the following sectors:

- Agricultural Sector (55%).
- The Israeli Labor Market (20%).
- Trade and Commercial Sector (10%).
- Government or Private Employees (10%).
- Industrial Sector (5%).

**Figure 1: Percentage of economic activity in Beit ar Rush at Tahta village**



A survey conducted in 2007 by ARIJ in the Hebron localities indicated that the most affected social groups in the village, as a result of Israeli restrictions and activities during the Second Intifada were: 1. Workers previously employed in the Israeli labor market. 2. Families consisting of six or more members, 3. Small-scale farmers, 4. Small-scale traders.

### Labor Force

According to the 2007 PCBS Census, the total economically active population in Beit ar Rush at Tahta village was 72 residents (aged 10 years and above). 55 of these were employed and the 17 were currently unemployed. The total number of economically inactive persons was 194, of whom 56.2% were students, 29.4% were housekeeping and 9.9% were either unable to work or currently unemployed, see table 2.

Sex	Economically Active				Not Economically Active						Total
	Employed	Currently Unemployed	Unemployed (Never worked)	Total	Students	House keeping	Unable to work	Not working & Not looking for Work	Others	Total	
M	49	17	-	66	51	-	12	-	1	64	<b>130</b>
F	6	-	-	6	58	57	15	-	-	130	<b>136</b>
<b>T</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>266</b>

Source: PCBS, March 2009. Population, Housing and Establishment Census-2007, Final Results

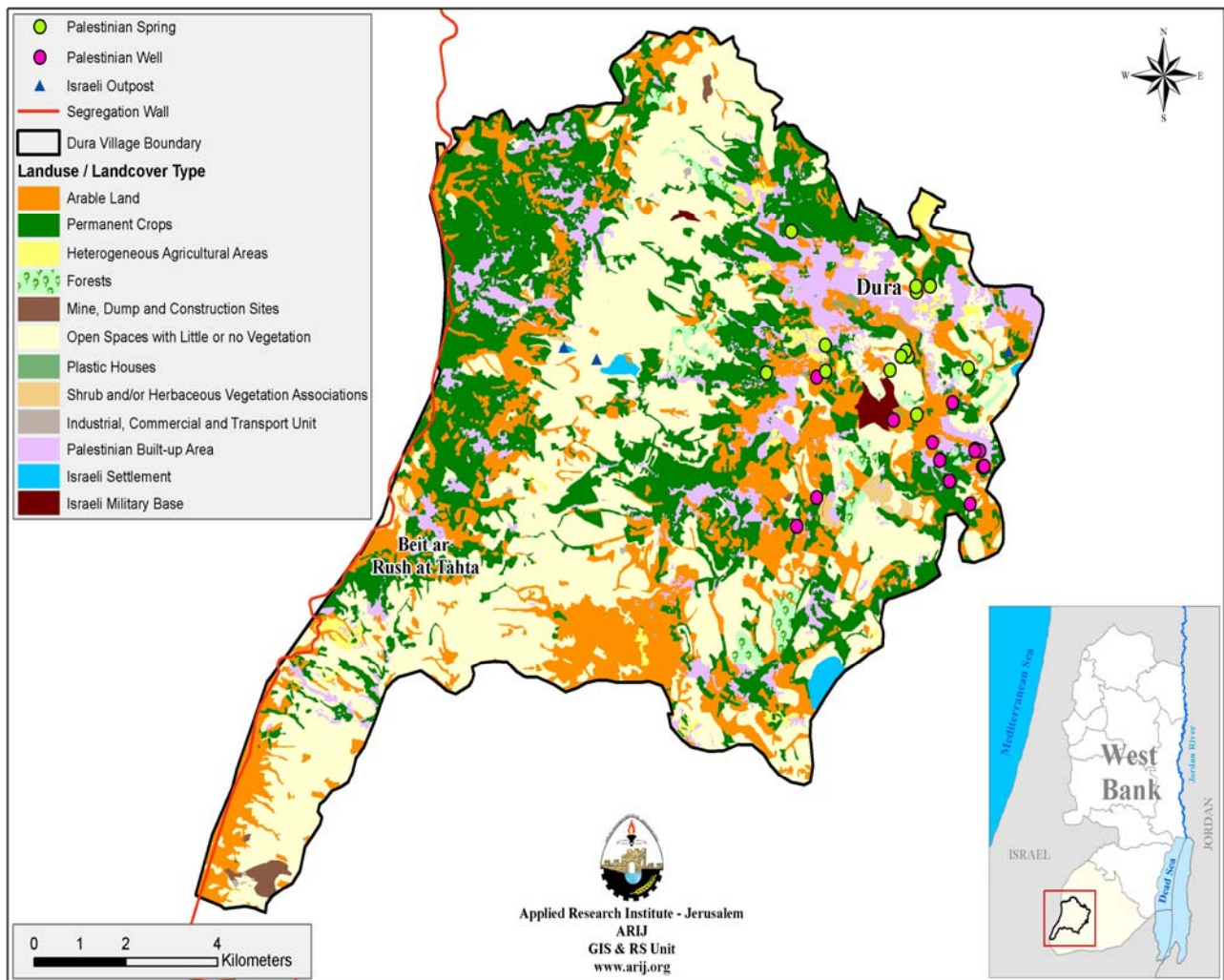
### Agricultural Sector

Beit ar Rush at Tahta lies on a total area of 2,600 dunums. 1,540 dunums are arable land, however only 1,203 dunums are currently cultivated.

Total Area	Arable Land		Built up Area	Forests Area	Open Spaces and Rangelands
	Cultivated Area	Uncultivated Area			
<b>2,600</b>	<b>1,203</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>520</b>

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agricultural (MoA), 2006

**Map 3: Land use/land cover and Segregation Wall of Beit ar Rush at Tahta village**



There are about 11.6 dunums of plastic houses in Beit ar Rush at Tahta. About 11 dunums of these are used to grow cucumbers.

Table 4 shows the different types of rain-fed and irrigated open cultivated vegetables in the village of Beit ar Rush at Tahta. The rain-fed fruity vegetables are the most cultivated vegetables consisting of an area of about 100 dunums. The most common vegetables cultivated within this area are tomatoes, snake cucumber squash.

<b>Table 4: Total area of rain fed and irrigated open cultivated vegetables in Beit ar Rush at Tahta Village (dunum)</b>											
<b>Fruity Vegetables</b>		<b>Leafy Vegetable</b>		<b>Green Legumes</b>		<b>Bulbs</b>		<b>Other Vegetables</b>		<b>Total area</b>	
Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.
100	4.5	0	3	5	0	0	1	2	0	107	8.5

*Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated*

There are two types of aromatic medical plants in Beit ar Rush at Tahta which spread over a total area of about 4 dunums, 3 dunums of them are rain-fed and one dunum is irrigated. These plants are sage and thyme.

In Beit ar Rush at Tahta, there is a total area of 456 dunums Olive Tree plantations. About 39 dunums of land is cultivated with Nuts trees and 32 dunums are cultivated with grapes. In addition, there is stone fruit such as cherry and peach grown in the village.

Olives		Stone-fruits		Nuts		Other fruit		Total area	
Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr
456	0	20	0	39	0	43	0	558	0

*Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated*

Table 6 shows the total field crops cultivated in Beit ar Rush at Tahta. Cereals, in particular wheat and barley, are the most cultivated crops with an area of about 335 dunums. In addition, the cultivation of forage crops, mostly sern and vetch, is common in Beit ar Rush at Tahta with a total area equal to 136 dunums.

Cereals		Bulbs		Dry legumes		Seeds		Forage crops		Total area	
Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr
335	0	8	0	34	0	1	0	136	0	514	0

*Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated*

The data also indicates that the residents of Beit ar Rush at Tahta are dependent upon rearing and livestock, such as chickens, sheep and goats. The village also has 32 bee hives.

Cows*	Sheep	Goats	Donkeys	Broilers	Bee Hives
3	205	61	7	9,200	32

*\*Including cows, bull calves, heifer calves and bulls*

The main source of water for irrigation in the village comes from rainwater collection wells. There are about 400 metres of agricultural road in Beit ar Rush at Tahta. These are suitable for animals only. The agricultural sector in the village suffers from severe shortage of water, lack of capital and economic infeasibility.

There is an agricultural association in the village called “Beit ar Rush at Tahta Cooperative Limited Liability Association”.

## Institutions and Services

The main institution in the village is the village council, which was founded in 1996. In addition, there is Beit ar Rush at Tahta Cooperative Society, established in 1980, which currently has 32 members. The association has 6 dunums of agricultural area, which is cultivable land and used annual for planting crops.

## Infrastructure and Natural Resources

**Telecommunication Services:** Beit ar Rush at Tahta is connected to a telecommunication network. 100% of the village housing units are connected.

**Water Services:** Since 1982, Beit ar Rush at Tahta has been connected to a water network supplied by the Israeli Water Authority (MECOROT). The village authority estimates that 100% of the housing units in the village are connected to the network. An alternative source of water in the village is the domestic cisterns. There is also a spring in the village for domestic use only. In addition, there is reservoir in the village with a capacity of 300 m<sup>3</sup>. Village officials cite obstacles to a functional water network include; the disruption of continuous water supply especially in summer, the use of drinking water for agriculture, and the insufficient number of water wells in the village.

**Electricity Services:** The village has been supplied with electricity by the Israeli National Power Electrical Company (Qutria) since 1983. According to village officials, 95% of the village housing units are connected to the power grid. Major problems with the electricity network include; weak currents, ineffective electricity generator, a lack of properly maintained equipment, an inability to maintain the electricity network, as well as insufficient power to meet the demands of a growing population.

**Sewage Disposal Facilities:** Beit ar Rush at Tahta lacks a sewage network, and disposes all of its wastewater in its cesspits.

**Solid Waste Collection Services:** Solid waste services are managed by Beit ar Rush at Tahta village council in cooperation with the Joint Services Council. The village uses the Joint Services Council's garbage truck, sending solid waste collected from the residential area in the village to a dumping site approximately 20 km from the village. Burning is the main method of solid waste disposal. About 99 tons of solid waste is generated per year in Beit ar Rush at Tahta village (ARIJ database, 2006).

**Transportation Facilities:** The residents of the village currently have two buses and two informal taxies available to them. Village officials cite the primary obstacles to transportation in the village are: existing military checkpoints, the construction of the segregation wall, lack of suitably maintained main roads and the lack of vehicles and automotive services. In terms of road quality, 1,000 meters of main road is surfaced and in good condition. A further 1,400 meters are surfaced but in need of maintenance, of which 700 m is main road, 300 m is internal road and 400 m serve as agricultural roads.

## **Impact of the Israeli Occupation**

The Israeli settlement “Efqiqis”, surrounds the north of Beit ar Rush at Tahta village. This settlement has also taken over other villages’ land. The village is subject to a permanent checkpoint on the western side of the village near the Beit Awa triangle (about 8 km from the village). People needing medical attention have experienced great difficulty in reaching health centers and hospitals in the neighboring villages. Farmers in the village continue to experience difficulties in reaching their fields and harvesting their crops in. In addition, the Israeli Forces have closed the villages dumping site preventing residents from reaching it.

Israeli Forces started constructing the segregation wall in 2004 with an eight kilometers wire fence on the western side of the village. The area confiscated for this section of the wall was 500 dunums and the isolated land behind the wall amounts to approximately 300 dunums. In addition, three plastic houses productivity was severely hindered as a result of the wall.

## **Development Plans and Projects**

Beit ar Rush at Tahta village council has established a development plan entailing a number of key development projects. Since 2004, the council has implemented many projects including; building a secondary school, paving internal roads, developing water and electricity networks, and building services included a kindergarten.

## Locality Development Priorities and Needs

According to Beit ar Rush at Tahta village council the village suffers from a shortage of many infrastructural and service needs. Table 8 below shows the development priorities of the village.

No.	Sector	Strongly Needed	Needed	Moderately Needed	Not Needed	Notes
<b>Infrastructural Needs</b>						
1	Opening and Pavement of Roads		*			2 km ^
2	Construction of New Water Networks			*		1.5 km
3	Rehabilitation of Old Water Networks			*		1 km
4	Construction of Water Reservoirs			*		500 m <sup>3</sup>
5	Extending the Water Network to cover New Built up Areas			*		80 m
6	Construction of Sewage Disposal Network			*		
<b>Health Needs</b>						
1	Building of New Clinics or Health Care Centre		*			
2	Rehabilitation of Old Clinics or Health Care Centres		*			
3	Purchasing of Medical Equipments and Tools		*			
<b>Educational Needs</b>						
1	Building of New Schools	*				Elementary & Secondary ^^
2	Rehabilitation of Old Schools				*	
3	Purchasing of New Equipments for Schools	*				
<b>Agriculture Needs</b>						
1	Rehabilitation of Agricultural lands		*			500 dunums
2	Building Cisterns			*		20 cisterns
3	Construction of Barracks for Livestock			*		5 barracks
4	Veterinary Services			*		
5	Seeds and Hay for Animals			*		
6	Rehabilitation of Greenhouses			*		15 greenhouses
7	Field Crops Seeds			*		
8	Plants and Agricultural Supplies			*		

^ Out of the 2 km, 7,00 m main roads, 300 m internal roads and 1,000 m agricultural roads.

^^ Establish classrooms for the elementary school in the village.

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