

Abu al 'Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan 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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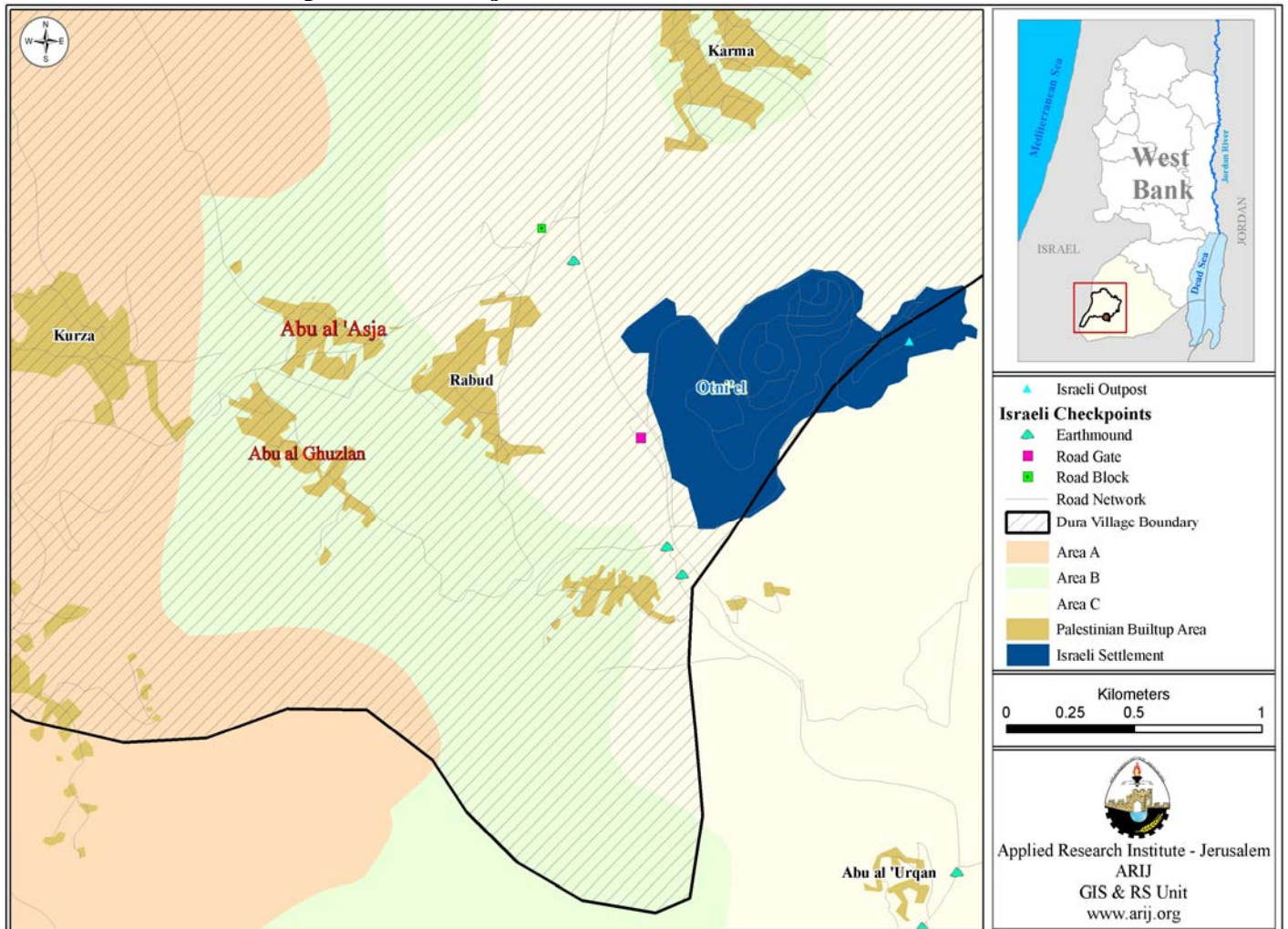
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Abu al 'Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan Village Profile

Location and Physical Characteristics

Abu al 'Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan are two adjoining Palestinian villages in Dura area. They are located 19 km south of Hebron City in the southern part of the West Bank. It is bordered by Rabud village to the east, 'Abda and Imreish villages to the north, Kurza village to the west, and Adh Dhahiriya to the south (See map 1).

Map 1: Abu al 'Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan location and borders



The total area of the two villages is estimated to be 2,300 dunums, of which 130 dunums are Palestinian built-up areas, 900 dunums are agricultural area, 210 dunums are forests, and 285 dunums are open spaces with little or no vegetation.

Abu al 'Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan extends over a mountainous area south of the Hebron Mountains, with an elevation of 660m above sea level. The mean annual rainfall in Abu al 'Asja and Abu al

Ghuzlan is 436mm, the average annual temperature is 18°C, and the average annual humidity is 61% (ARIJ GIS).

Abu al 'Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan is considered to be a rural area. Since 1995, the village has been governed by a village council. This is comprised of nine members and one full time employee. The village council provides services to the village residents such as:

- Administration, planning and development services.
- Infrastructure services; such as water, electricity and paved roads,
- Social services.

History

The two villages were born out of the 1948 war (Nakba). Many Palestinians become homeless due to the conflict and moved to this area. The Abu al 'Asja village dates back to the 1950s, while the Abu al Ghuzlan village dates back to the 1970s. In 1995, the two villages were incorporated into one, but both names are still used. According to one source the name of Abu al 'Asja village is derived from an abundance of matrimony vine (called Auwsaj in Arabic العوسج), whereas the name Abu al Ghuzlan is derived from the 'gazelles' that used to live in the area. Most of the inhabitants of the villages are descendents of families that were expelled from Israel in 1948, mainly from the Umm Al Shaqn and Allouabda villages.

Photos of Abu al 'Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan

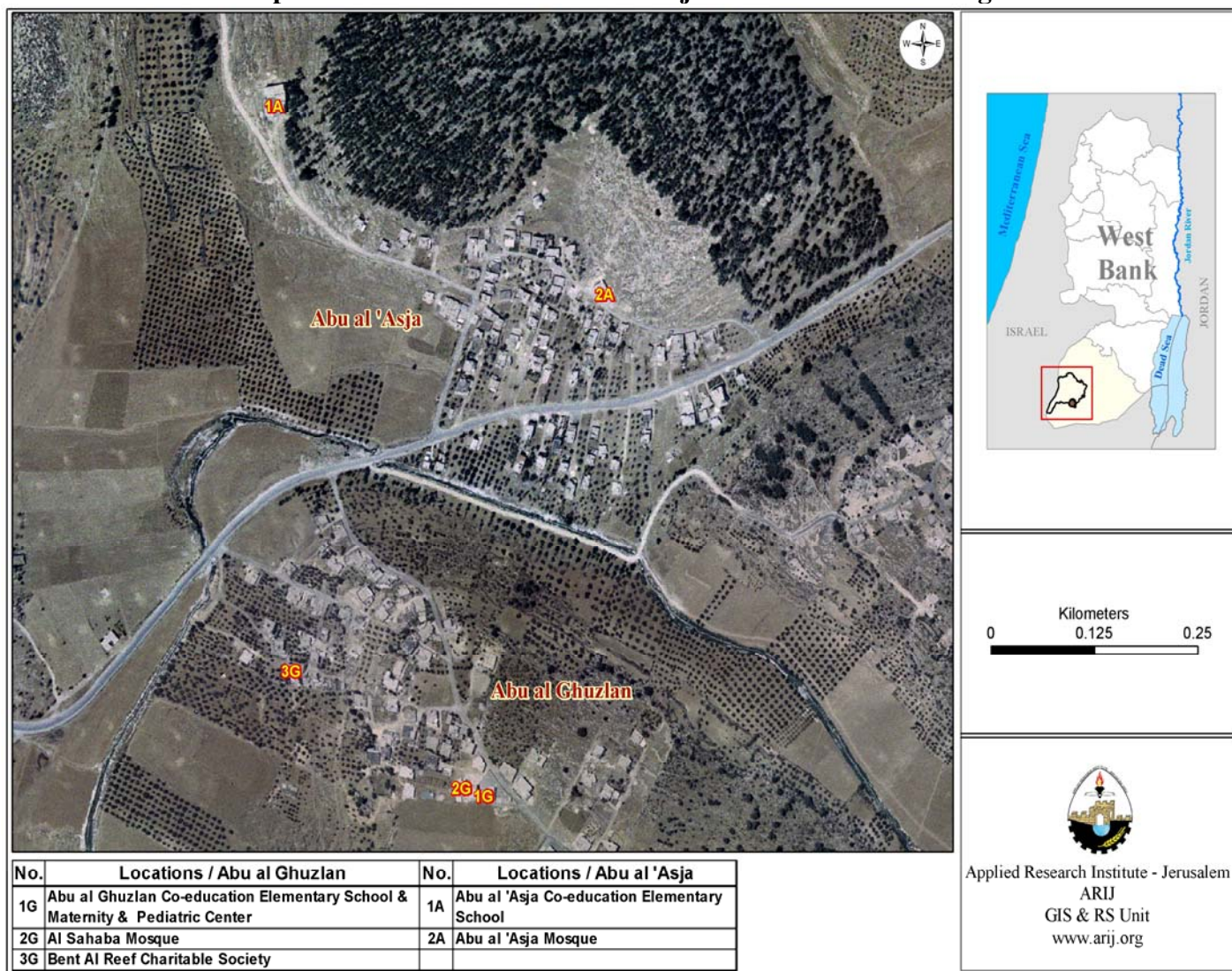


Religious and Archaeological Sites

There are two mosques serving the community; the Abu al 'Asja Mosque, and the Al Sahaba – Abu al Ghuzlan Mosque.

There are three archeological sites in the village: Wad Al 'Alqa (famous for its wells), Abu 'Ashra mountain and the ruins of the old village of Rabud.

Map 2: Main Locations in Abu al 'Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan village



Population

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of statistics (PCBS) census of 2007, the total population of Abu al 'Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan villages was 1,176 people, of which 613 were in Abu al 'Asja and 563 in Abu al Ghuzlan. 586 of the population were males and 590 were females (See table 1).

Village	Male	Female	Total
Abu al 'Asja	318	295	613
Abu al Ghuzlan	268	295	563
Total	586	590	1176

Families

Most of the residents of Abu al 'Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan are from the following major families: Abu Sundos, An Namoura, Khallaf, and Al 'Aqyli. The remaining 10% is made up from other small families, such as the Al Fasfos, Al Jawajra, Al Shawamra, Ziydan, and Ad Darawesh.

Migration

According to the village officials, there were 10 cases of emigration from the village since 2000. This was as a result of Israeli activities in the region during the Second Intifada.

Education

Abu al 'Asja & Abu AL Ghuzlan village was not counted as a single locality during the 2007 PCBS Census. Based upon the PCBS divisions, Abu al 'Asja & Abu AL Ghuzlan village was counted as part of Rabud village. Therefore, the labor force data for Abu al 'Asja & Abu AL Ghuzlan village is not available. Table 2 shows the education e status in Rabud, Abu al 'Asja & Abu AL Ghuzlan and Abu al 'Urqan.

Sex	Illiterate	Can read & Write	Elementary	Preparatory	Secondary	Associate Diploma	Bachelor	Higher Diploma	Master	PHD	Total
M	36	86	163	209	130	28	83	1	7	-	743
F	97	103	183	231	100	22	38	-	-	-	774
T	133	189	346	440	230	50	121	1	7	-	1,517

Source: PCBS, May 1999. Population, Housing and Establishment Census-1997, Final Results

This data includes population figures from the villages of Rabud, Abu al 'Asja & Abu AL Ghuzlan, and, Abu al 'Urqan

The survey indicated that there are two elementary schools in the village; one located in Abu al 'Asja and the other is located in Abu al Ghuzlan. Education in the village is supervised by the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE). Table 3 shows the number of schools by name, stage, sex and supervising authority.

No.	School name	Stage	Sex	Supervising Authority
1.	Abu al 'Asja Elementary Co-Education School	Elementary	Co-education	Government
2.	Abu al Ghuzlan Elementary Co-education School	Elementary	Co-education	Government

Source: ARIJ database, November 2006

According to MOHE, by the end of the scholastic year 2006/2007 there were 116 students (57 males and 59 females), 9 teachers (7 males and 2 females), and 7 co-educational classes in Abu al 'Asja Elementary Co-Education School. There is no data available for the Abu al Ghuzlan Elementary Co-education School.

There is one kindergarten in the village, Shouhada' Al Aqsa Kindergarten. It provided services for 50 children. The kindergarten is supervised by the private sector.

The village lacks any form of secondary education; students are forced to travel about one kilometer to reach their nearest village that provides it (Kurza village), though some children have to travel up to seven kilometers to reach Dura or Adh Dhahiriya to complete their secondary education. The village officials cite that the village also suffers from a lack of playgrounds and lack of money to pay the registration fees for school.

Health Status

There is one Mother and Child Care center that provides health services in Abu al 'Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan village and it is supervised by the government. Otherwise, there are no health clinics, ambulances or pharmacies. For their medical residents are forced to travel a distance of seven or eight kilometers to reach Adh Dhahiriya or Dura, which is difficult and very inconvenient.

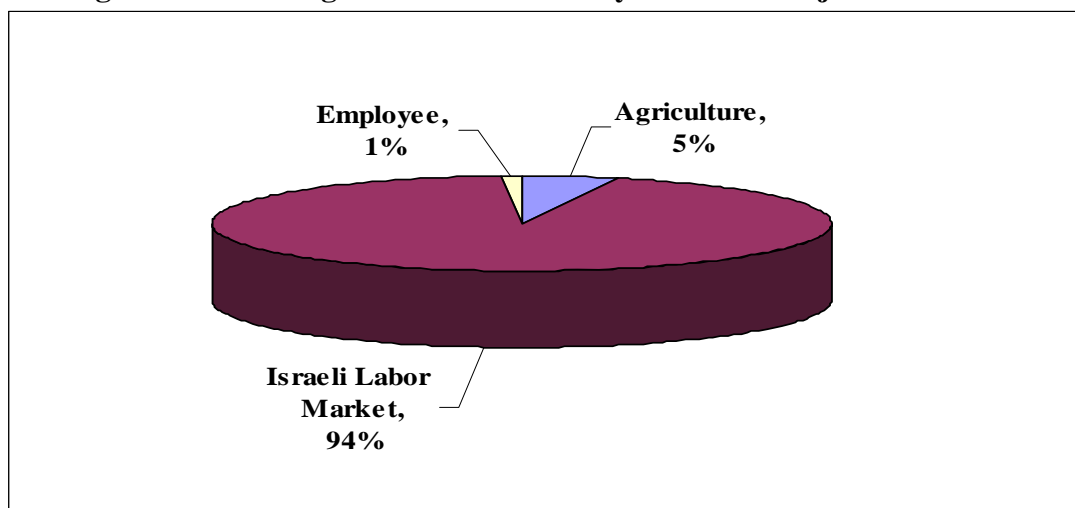
The health sector in the village suffers from the following problems:

- Lack of health center or clinic, and neighboring health centers being too far from the village.
- Wastewater, from Hebron City and the nearby Israeli settlements runs through the village and causes many health problems that may lead to the population having to leave the village in the future.

Economic Activities

According to Abu al 'Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan Village Council, most of the residents depend on the Israeli labor market as their main sources of income. Surveys conducted by ARIJ in Hebron Governorate have shown that about 94% of the working age population works in Israel.

According to village officials, 94% of the working population in the village work in Israel, 5% work in agriculture, and only 1% are employed in either governmental or private sectors. The village officials cite that the village lacks any industrial or service establishments.

Figure 1: Percentage of economic activity in Abu al 'Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan village

The survey also showed that the social groups most affected by Israeli activities during the Second Intifada were: 1) previous workers in Israeli labor market, 2) families maintaining six individuals and more, 3) small-scale farmers, 4) housekeeping and children, and 5) small-scale traders.

The economic institutions that serve the residents of Abu al 'Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan village consist merely of three groceries.

Labor Force

Abu al 'Asja & Abu AL Ghuzlan village was not counted as a single locality during the 2007 PCBS Census. Based upon the PCBS divisions, Abu al 'Asja & Abu AL Ghuzlan village was counted as part of Rabud village. Therefore, the labors force data for Abu al 'Asja & Abu AL Ghuzlan village is not available. Table 4 shows the labor force status in Rabud, Abu al 'Asja & Abu AL Ghuzlan and Abu al 'Urqan.

Table 4: Rabud population (10 years and above) by sex and employment status											
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	Other	Total	
M	306	27	41	374	292	-	66	2	9	369	743
F	31	-	13	44	317	358	48	2	5	730	774
T	337	27	54	418	609	358	114	4	14	1,099	1,517

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

This data includes population figures from the villages of Rabud, Abu al 'Asja & Abu AL Ghuzlan, and, Abu al 'Urqan

Agricultural Sector

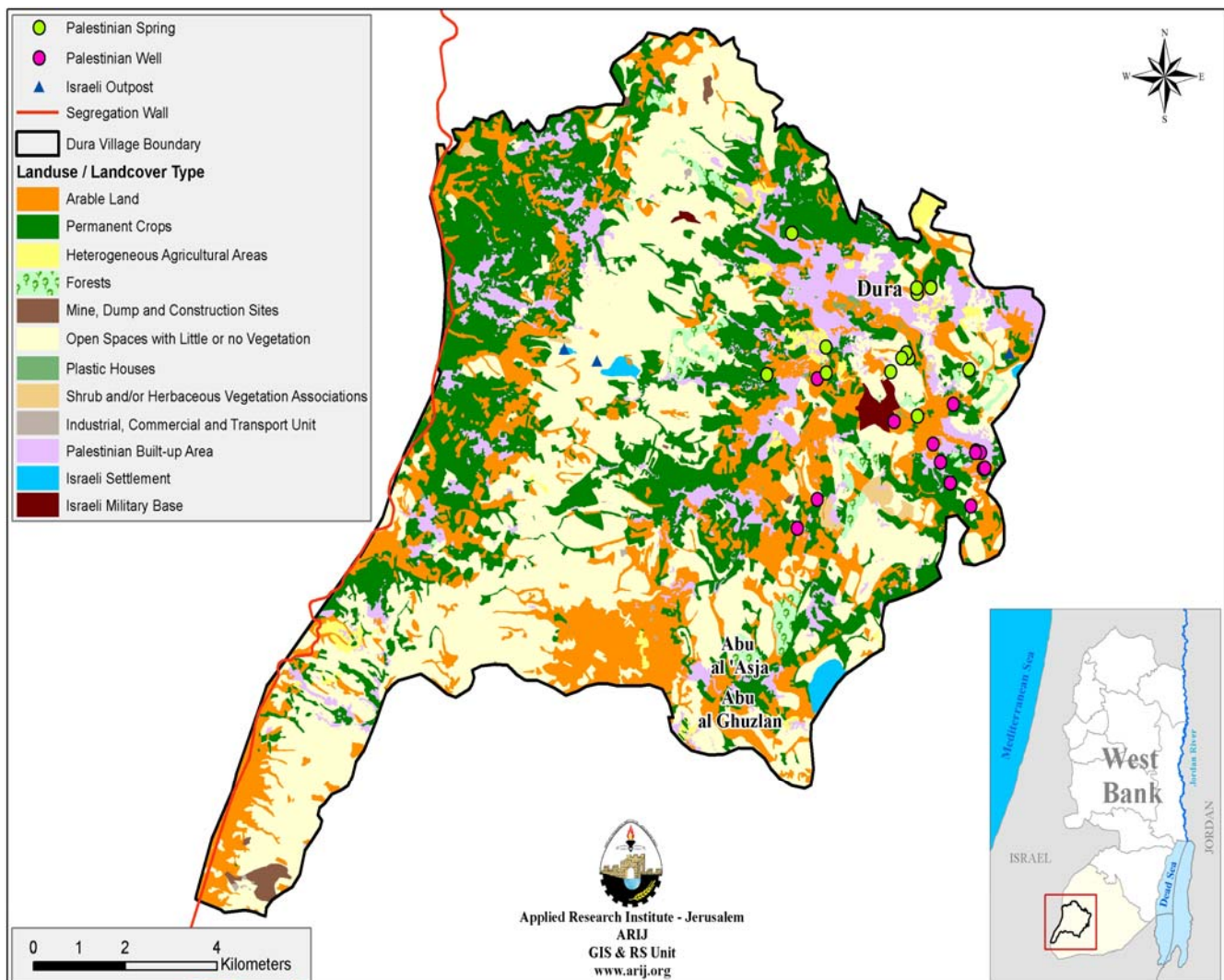
There are about 900 dunums of agricultural lands in Abu al ‘Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan; of which 545 dunums are cultivatable lands. Only 4% of the residents are engaged with the agricultural activities.

Table 5: Land Use in Abu al ‘Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan (dunum)

Total Area	Arable Land		Built up Area	Forests Area	Open Spaces and Rangelands
	Uncultivated Area	Cultivated Area			
2,300	900	545	130	210	258

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agricultural (MOA), 2006

Map 3: Land use / land cover and Segregation Wall of Abu al ‘Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan village



In Abu al ‘Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan, there are about 3.5 dunums of greenhouses, they are used primarily for growing cucumbers and tomatoes.

Table 6 shows the different types of rain-fed and irrigated open cultivated vegetables in the village. The rain-fed fruity vegetables are the most cultivated accounting for an area of about 19 dunums. The most common vegetables cultivated within this area are gourd, squash and snake cucumber.

Fruity vegetables		Green legumes		Other vegetables		Total area	
Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.
19	0.5	1	0	1	0	21	0.5

Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated

In Abu al ‘Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan, olive tree plantations account for a total area of approximately 276 dunums. Other trees planted in the area are mostly almond trees, fig trees and grape vines (See table 7).

Olives		Citrus		Nuts		Other fruit		Total area	
Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.
276	0	12	0	41	0	34	0	363	0

Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated

Table 8 shows the total field crops cultivated in the village of Abu al ‘Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan. Cereals, in particular, wheat, white corn and barley, are the most commonly cultivated crops accounting for an area of about 91 dunums. In addition, the cultivation of dry legumes crops such as lentils, and forage crops such as sern and vetch is also common in the village of Abu al ‘Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan.

Cereals		bulbs		Dry legumes		seeds		forage crops		other crops		Total area	
Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.
356	0	5	0	33	0	1	0	170	0	2	0	567	0

Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated

Data collected from Abu al ‘Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan village council indicates that the residents depend heavily on rearing livestock and dairy production. The data indicates that around 3% of the households do rear animals. There are about 510 sheep, 160 goats and 16 donkeys in the village.

The agricultural sector in the village suffers little support from the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture.

Institutions and Services

The most well-known institution in the village is the Abu al 'Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan Village Council, which was founded in 1995. In addition, there is a women's society, established in 2003 but currently inactive, and an Agricultural Association, established in 1985.

Infrastructure and Natural Resources

Telecommunication Services: Abu al 'Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan village is connected to a telecommunication network. About 65% of the housing units are connected to the network.

Water Services: Abu al Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan village is not connected to any water network. The main sources of water in the village are water tanks and cisterns. There is a reservoir in the village with a capacity of 300 m³. Village officials cite several problems concerning the water status; mainly, the non-existence of water networks, shortage of cisterns, the contamination of drinking water with wastewater, the extremely high prices of water purchased in tanks, and the difficulty of its transportation.

Electricity Services: The village has been supplied with electricity by the Israeli National Power Electrical Company (Qutria) since 1988. According to village officials, 100% of the housing units are connected. The major problems with the electrical network are; weak currents, damaged networks, lack of maintenance, and residents being incapable of paying their bills, which increases the village council's debt.

Sewage Disposal Facilities: Abu al 'Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan is not connected to any sewage network. Wastewater in the village is disposed of in cesspits. As mentioned previously, the village also suffers from the Israeli wastewater that flows through the village.

Solid Waste Collection Services: There is no solid waste management system in the village. Households dispose of their solid wastes in the agricultural lands and then they burn it. Moreover, the nearby Israeli settlements throw their solid wastes near the village, which has an obvious negative effect on the environment. According to an ARIJ field survey 500 cubic meters of solid wastes is produced daily in the village. It is collected individually, but is only thrown about 1.5 km away from the village.

Transportation Facilities: Abu al 'Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan village is served by Adh Dhahiriya taxi office, as well as an informal transportation sector. Village officials cite several primary obstacles concerning transportation and mobility in the village; these include the presence of military road blocks and earth mounds, lack of regularly maintained roads, and the scarcity of vehicles and transportation services. In terms of road qualities, one km of main roads is paved and in good condition, 300 meters of main roads are paved but in poor condition, and 5 km of agricultural roads are unpaved.

Impact of the Israeli Occupation

To the east of Abu al ‘Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan village, there is an Israeli settlement named “Otni’el”, the total area of this settlement is about 1,000 dunums, there is also a bypass road to the east site of the village which occupies about five dunums. The village is subject to a permanent checkpoint, earth mounds (Al Samo’ junction) and metal gates.

The settlement and the checkpoints have negative effect on the village. The Israeli army continuously closes the checkpoints, therefore obstructing the normal flow of traffic. As mentioned previously; the settlers leave their solid waste near the village, and the Israeli wastewater flows through the center of the community.

Development Plans and Projects

Since 2004, the village council has implemented 3 educational projects funded by outside resources, these projects are:

- Building a third floor for Abu al ‘Asja Elementary School, which was funded by the French Government and the 'Save the Children' organization.
- Establishing the Abu al Ghuzlan Elementary School, funded by Dura's Joint Services Council and the local community.
- Opening new agricultural roads: Funded by the Abu al ‘Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan village council.

Locality Development Priorities and Needs

Table 9 shows the development priorities in the village.

Table 9: Development priorities and needs in Abu al 'Asja / Abu al Ghuzlan						
No.	Sector	Strongly Needed	Needed	Moderately Needed	Not Needed	Notes
Infrastructural Needs						
1	Opening and Pavement of Roads	*				8.5 km ^
2	Construction of New Water Networks	*				1.5 km
3	Rehabilitation of Old Water Networks				*	
4	Construction of Water Reservoirs	*				2,000 m ³
5	Extending the Water Network to cover New Built up Areas	*				1,000 m ³
6	Construction of Sewage Disposal Network	*				
Health Needs						
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		*			
Educational Needs						
1	Building of New Schools				*	
2	Rehabilitation of Old Schools			*		Elementary
3	Purchasing of New Equipments for Schools			*		
Agriculture Needs						
1	Rehabilitation of Agricultural lands			*		500 dunums
2	Building Cisterns			*		50 cisterns
3	Construction of Barracks for Livestock			*		10 barracks
4	Veterinary Services			*		
5	Seeds and Hay for Animals			*		
6	Rehabilitation of Greenhouses			*		5 greenhouses
7	Field Crops Seeds			*		
8	Plants and Agricultural Supplies			*		

^ 3 km main roads, 0.5 km internal roads, and 5 km agriculture roads

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