

# Abu al 'Urqan 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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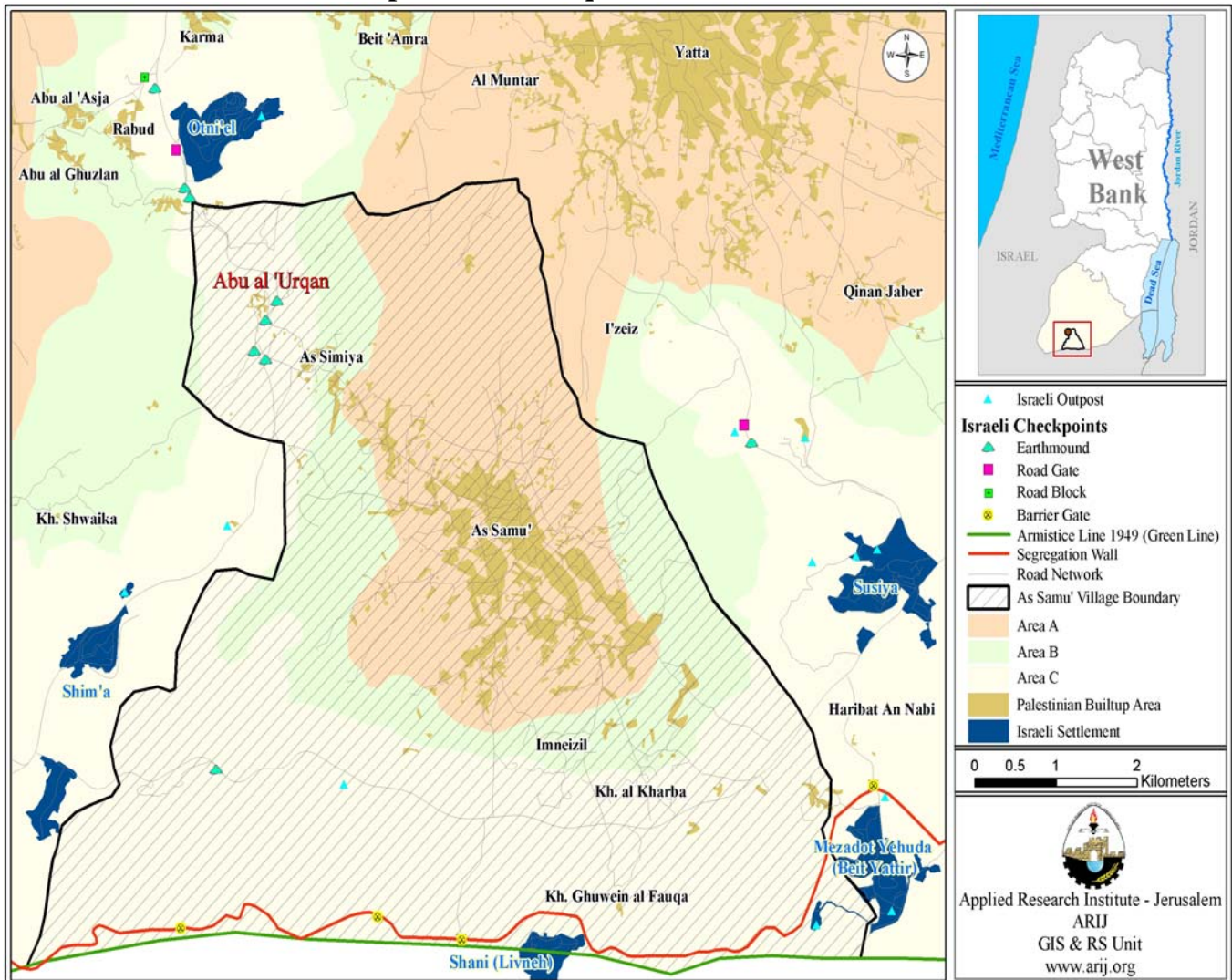
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# Abu al 'Urqan Village Profile

## Location and Physical Characteristics

Abu al 'Urqan is a Palestinian village in Dura area, which is located 13 km southwest of the city of Hebron in the southern part of West Bank. It is bordered by As Samu' to the east, Karma to the north, Rabud and Dura to the west and by Adh Dhahiriya to the south (See Map 1).

Map 1: Abu al 'Urqan location and borders



Abu al 'Urqan village is located on a hill at an elevation of 664 meters above sea level. The mean annual rainfall in Abu al 'Urqan village is 306 mm, the average annual temperature is 18°C, and the average annual humidity is 61% (ARIJ GIS).



Abu al ‘Urqan village is considered to be a rural area. The village is governed by a project committee of three members. The committee was established in 1996. The project committee provides services to the village, and initiates many of the village’s projects.

## **History**

Abu al ‘Urqan village history goes as far back as to the Canaanite and Roman periods. The original name of the village was Urqan abu Hasan; which some believe to have derived from the nest of the falcon, due to the abundance of falcons that can be found in the area. The original inhabitants of the village were the Al Shamer family, who came from Saudi Arabia.

### **Photos of Abu al ‘Urqan village**



## **Religious and Archaeological Sites**

There is one mosque in the village, which is Al Muhajereen Mosque. There are also many archeological grottos in the village; the most famous of which is Ush Al Sakra.

Map 2: Main locations in Abu al 'Urqa village



## Population

The total population of Abu al 'Urqa, in 2007, is estimated to be 481. This is an estimate number based on the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) Census of 1997, of which 216 were males and 265 were females.

## Families

All residents of Abu al 'Urqa are members of the Al Shawamreh family.

## Education

Abu al 'Urqa village was not counted as a single locality during the 2007 PCBS Census. Based upon the PCBS divisions, Abu al 'Urqa village was counted as part of Rabud village. Therefore,

the labor force data for Abu al 'Urqa village is not available. Table 1 shows the education status in Rabud, Abu al 'Asja & Abu AL Ghuzlan and Abu al 'Urqa.

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
<b>T</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,517</b>

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 'Urqa*

The field survey indicated that there is one governmental school in Abu al 'Urqa village; Abu al 'Urqa Elementary Co-education School. This school provides elementary and preparatory education for the students. The survey also found that there are no kindergartens in the village.

According to Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), by the end of the 2006/2007 scholastic year, there were 77 students; 36 males and 41 females. They were distributed into 7 classes. 9 teachers are currently teaching in the village, 4 males and 5 females.

The educational sector in Abu al 'Urqa suffers from many problems. For example, there is no permanent transportation for the students to reach their schools. There is also a severe need for; new class rooms, a computer lab, and stationary. Furthermore, students of Abu al 'Urqa are forced to go to Kursa and Rabud villages to complete their secondary education.

## Health Status

There is only one health centre (a maternity and pediatric clinic) in Abu al 'Urqa village, there are no other health services in the village; there are no clinics, no ambulances, and no pharmacies. The nearest health facility is located in Dura, 15 km away from the village, or in Adh Dhahiriya, 8 km away.

The village officials state that Abu al 'Urqa is in severe need of a clinic with a full-time doctor to provide emergency medical diagnosis and treatments for the villagers.

## Economic Activities

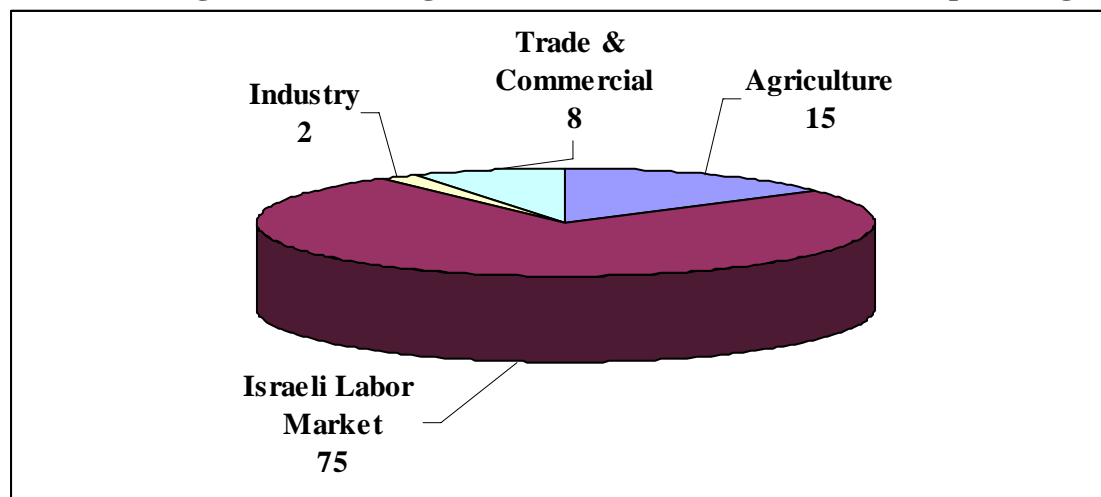
According to an ARIJ field survey, most of Abu al 'Urqa residents depend on the Israeli Labor market. Nearly 75% of its working population depends on the Israeli labor market as the main source of living. The agricultural sector represents 15% of the labor force. Only 2% of the population works in industrial sector, and 8% work in trade. Additionally there are 2 groceries and one blacksmiths.

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



- Agricultural Sector (15%)
- Industrial sector (2%)
- The Israeli Labor Market (75%)
- Trade and Commerce Sector (8%)

**Figure 1: Percentage of economic activities in Abu al 'Urqa village**



Based on an ARIJ survey in Hebron localities, the social groups most affected in the village due to the Israeli measures were:

1. Workers previously working in the Israeli,
2. Families maintaining six individuals and more,
3. Small-holder farmers,
4. Small-holder traders.

### Labor Force

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

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	<b>743</b>
F	31	-	13	44	317	358	48	2	5	730	<b>774</b>
<b>T</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1,099</b>	<b>1,517</b>

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

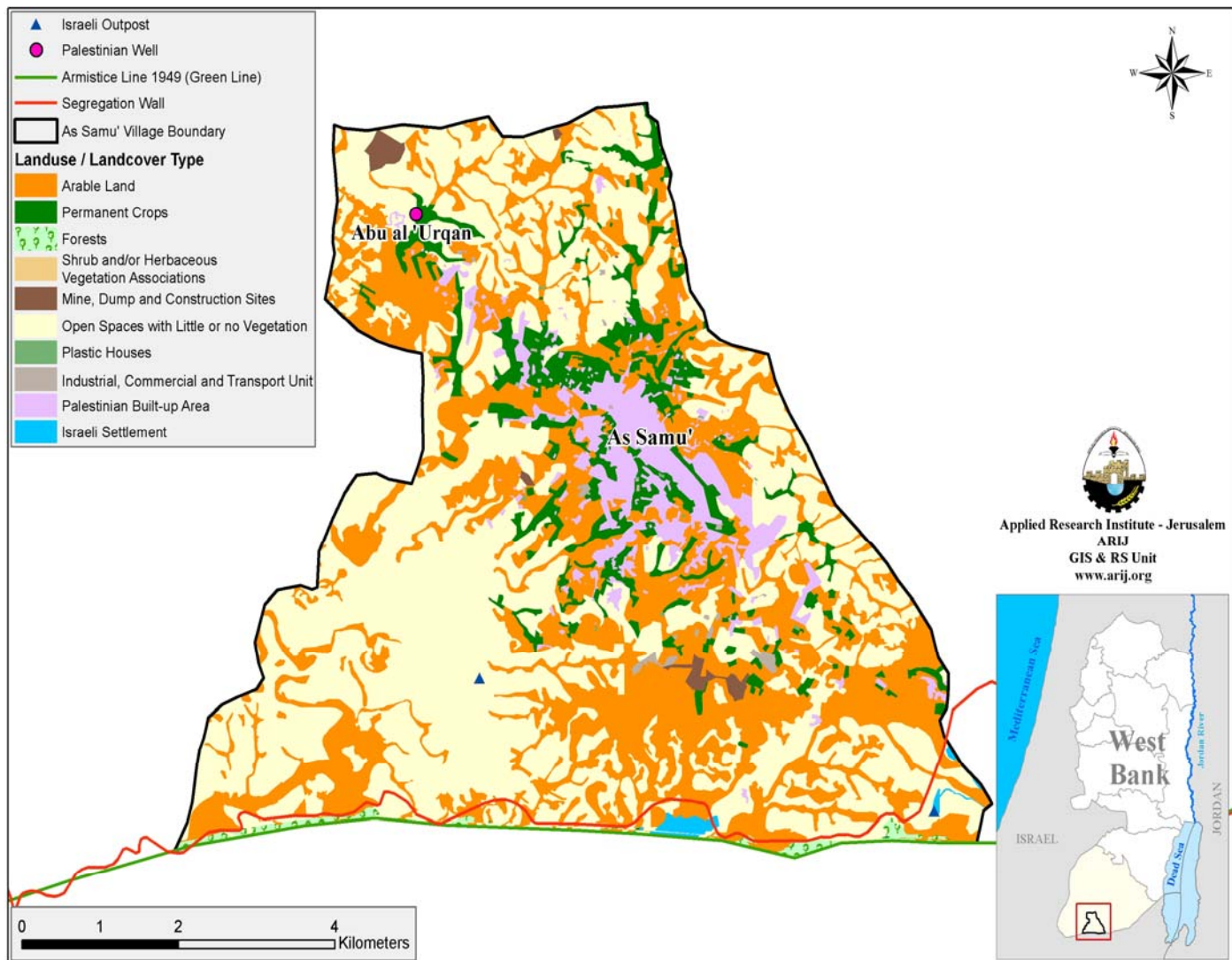
*This data includes population figures from the villages of Rabud, Abu al 'Asja & Abu AL Ghuzlan, and, Abu al 'Urqa*

### Agricultural Sector

The total area of the village is estimated to be 1,110 dunums, of which 100 dunums are Palestinian built-up areas, 100 dunums are agricultural lands, 900 dunums are forest or open spaces (with little or no vegetation), and 110 dunums is area that has been confiscated by the Israeli Forces to construct bypass road.

Abu al 'Urqan lacks agricultural lands; for it is located on a mountain area. As mentioned earlier, there are only about 100 dunums of agricultural lands in the village; in addition to about 400 dunums, which is agricultural land but is in severe need of rehabilitation. Most of the crops cultivated in the village are wheat and barley, as well as olive trees. A small portion of the villagers (10%) rear and breed livestock.

**Map 3: Land use/ Land cover and Segregation wall route in Abu al 'Urqan village**



## Institutions and Services

The main institution in the village is Abu al 'Urqan Project Committee', which was established in 1996. The committee consists of three members. It was founded to provide services to the village such as electricity, and to initiate developmental projects in the village.

## Infrastructure and Natural Resources

**Telecommunication Services:** Abu al 'Urqan village is connected to a telecommunication network, but only 7% of the housing units are actually connected to the network.

**Water Services:** Abu al 'Urqan village is connected to a water network, which is provided by As Semiya well in As Samu'. Other water resources come primarily from rainfall water as there is reservoir in the village with a capacity of 60 m<sup>3</sup>. However, there is an insufficient amount of natural water in the village, and the cost of purchasing water is very high.

**Electricity Networks:** The village has been connected to an electricity network since 1997. This is supplied by the Israeli electricity company. 100% of the housing units are connected to the network. However, the village suffers from the high cost of electricity.

**Sewage Disposal Facilities:** The village does not have a sewage disposable network; waste water is disposed of in cesspits or in open channels.

**Solid Waste Collection Services:** There is no solid waste disposal system in the village; families must dispose of their own garbage individually. Solid wastes are usually burnt.

**Transportation Facilities:** The village has no transportation services. The roads in the village are ill maintained. In terms of road qualities, there is 2,000 meters (of the main road in the village) that are paved and in good condition, all other roads in the village are in bad condition and unpaved.

## Impact of the Israeli Occupation

To the northeast of Abu al 'Urqan village, there is an Israeli settlement named "Oten'il", the total area of the settlement is about 100 dunums. There is also bypass road to the west of the village. The settlement's waste water flows directly into the village, which causes many health problems.

The village is subjected to frequent flying checkpoints and earth mounds. The people find extreme difficulty in accessing neighboring villages for health and educational services. In addition, the

Israeli forces have previously destroyed many olive trees and a wheat field that were owned by residents of the village.

## Development Plans and Projects

There have been two infrastructure projects implemented in Abu al ‘Urqan village since 2004; these include the construction of water networks (funded by village residents), and the surfacing of one of the villages streets (funded by Dura Joint Services Council).

## Locality Development Priorities and Needs

Table 3 below summarizes development priorities and needs in the village.

No.	Sector	Strongly Needed	Needed	Moderately Needed	Not Needed	Notes
<b>Infrastructural Needs</b>						
1.	Opening and Pavement of Roads	*				1,300 M ^
2.	Construction of New Water Networks				*	
3.	Rehabilitation of Old Water Networks				*	
4.	Construction of Water Reservoirs				*	
5.	Extending the Water Network to cover New Built up Areas				*	
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		*			
2.	Rehabilitation of Old Schools				*	
3.	Purchasing of New Equipments for Schools		*			
<b>Agriculture Needs</b>						
1.	Rehabilitation of Agricultural lands	*				
2.	Building Cisterns				*	
3.	Construction of Barracks for Livestock				*	
4.	Veterinary Services		*			
5.	Seeds and Hay for Animals		*			
6.	Rehabilitation of Greenhouses	*				
7.	Field Crops Seeds		*			
8.	Plants and Agricultural Supplies		*			

^ Main road 800 m and Internal roads 500 m



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