

'Ajjul Village Profile



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Background

This report is part of a series of booklets, which contain compiled information about each city, town, and village in the Ramallah Governorate. These booklets came as a result of a comprehensive study of all localities in Ramallah 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 Ramallah 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 Ramallah 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>.

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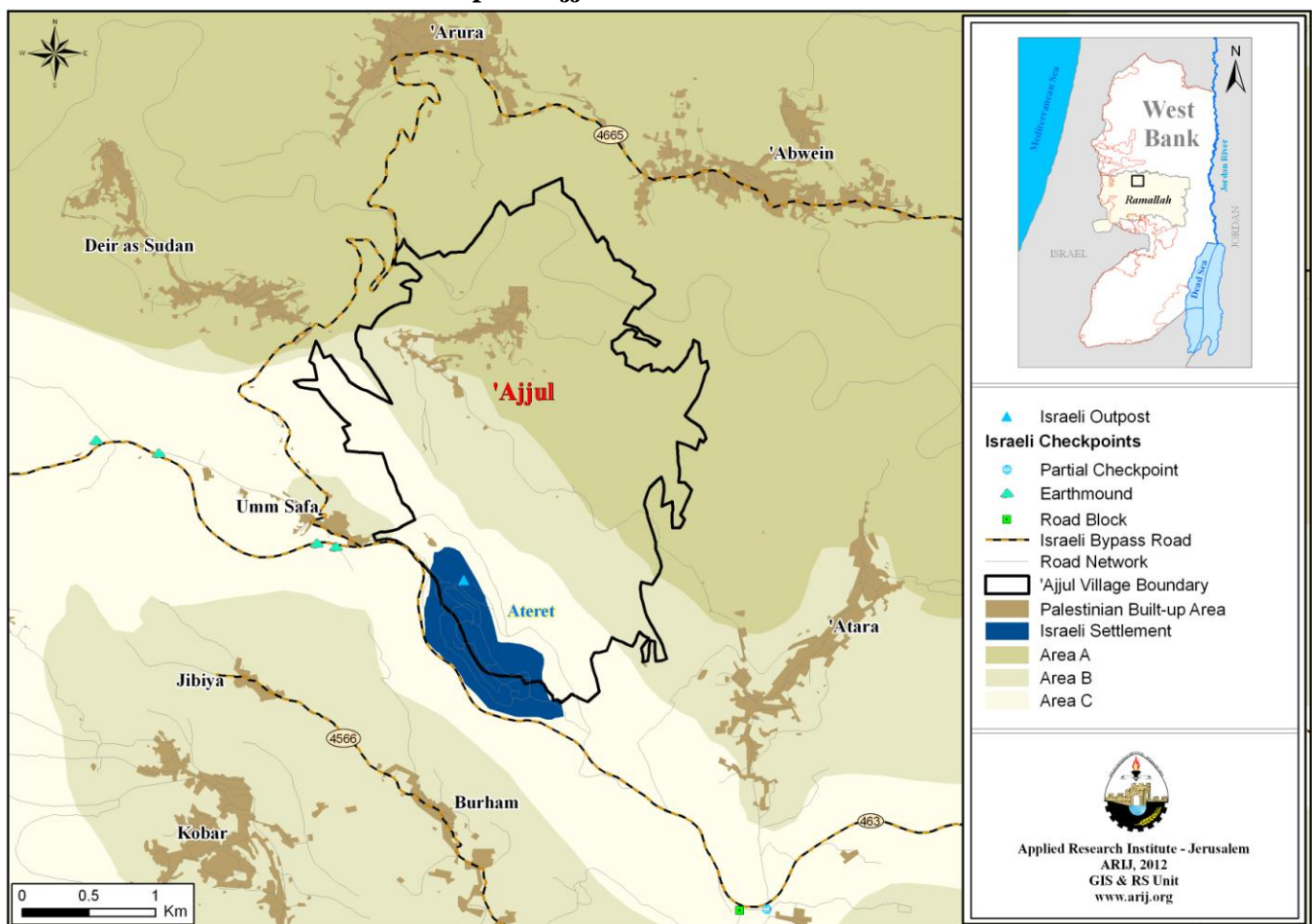
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'Ajjul Village Profile

Location and physical characteristics

'Ajjul is a Palestinian village in the Ramallah Governorate located (horizontally) 13.4km north of Ramallah City. The village is bordered by 'Abwein and 'Atara to the east, Bani Zeid ash Sharqiya village to the north, Deir as Sudan and Umm Safa villages to the west, and 'Atara village lands to the south (ARIJ GIS, 2012) (See map 1).

Map 1: 'Ajjul location and borders



Source: ARIJ GIS, 2012

'Ajjul is located at an altitude of 484 m above sea level with a mean annual rainfall of 711 mm. The average annual temperature is 16 °C, and the average annual humidity is approximately 61% (ARIJ GIS, 2012).

In 1990 a Village Council was established which is currently administrated by 5 members appointed by the Palestinian National Authority. The village Council owns a permanent headquarters with just 1 employee working there but it does not own a vehicle to collect solid waste. The Council provides the residents of 'Ajjul with a number of services, including ('Ajjul Village Council, 2011):

- Providing infrastructure services (e.g. water).
- Social services, solid waste collection, road construction and restoration, and street cleaning.

History

The word 'Ajjul is derived from the Canaanite word “Joul,” meaning a fortress ('Ajjul Village Council, 2011)

Photo 1: 'Ajjul Village

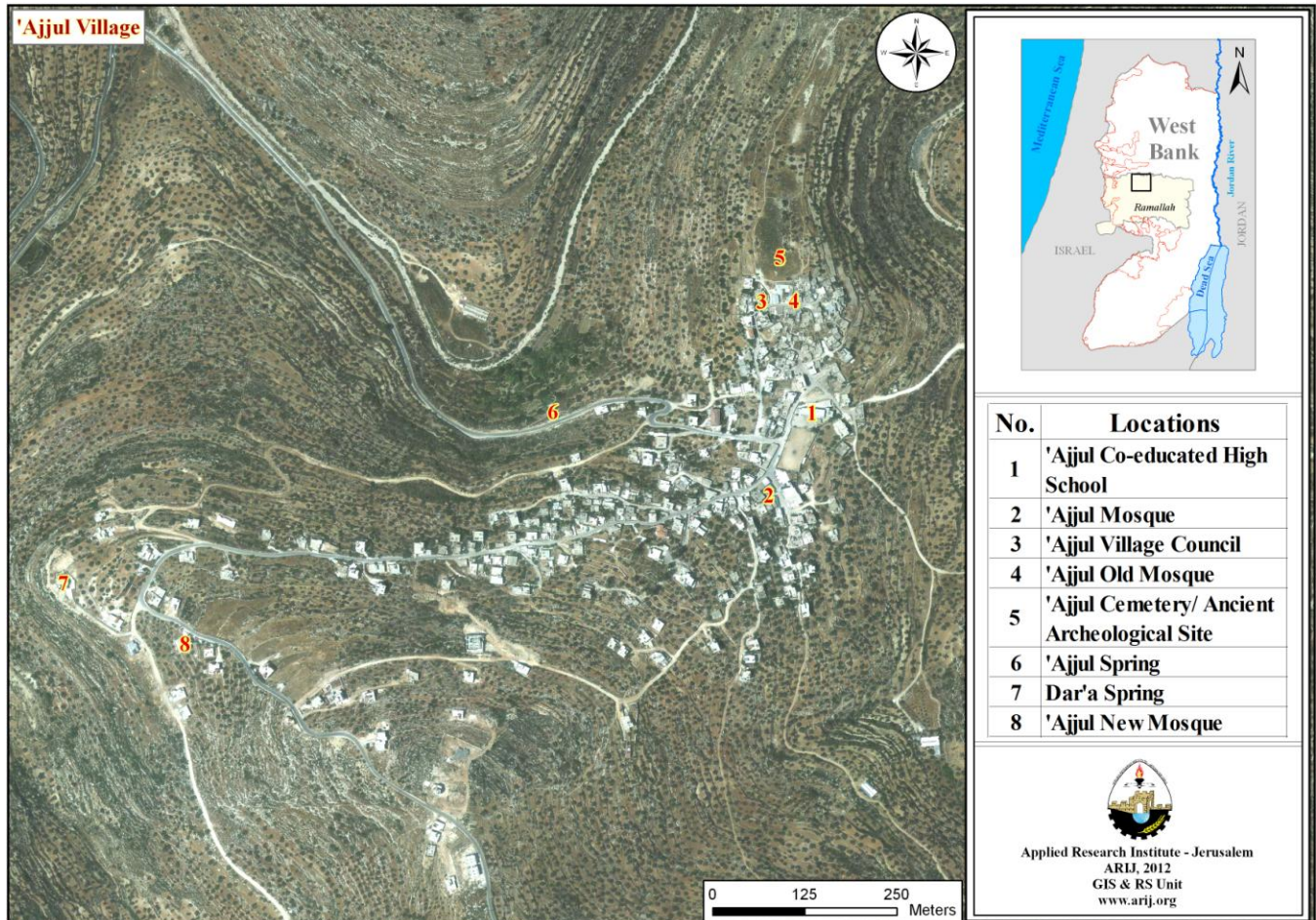


Religious and Archaeological Sites

In terms of religious establishments, there are three mosques in the village; 'Ajjul Mosque, 'Ajjul Old Mosque and 'Ajjul New Mosque

As for the archaeological sites, the village is very ancient and hosts a mosque which dates back to the end of the late Umayyad and early Abbasid eras. There are also the Umayyad old Mosque and Sheikh Khalil Shrine, in addition to some village ruins and water springs ('Ajjul Village Council, 2011) (See Map 2).

Map 2: Main locations in 'Ajjul village



Source: ARIJ GIS, 2012

Demography and Population

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), the total population of 'Ajjul Village in 2007 was 1,163; of whom 598 were males and 565 were females. The Census also showed that there were 220 households living in 227 housing units.

Age Group and Gender

The General Census of Population and Housing carried out by PCBS in 2007 showed the distribution of age groups in the Village was as follows: 37.7% were less than 15 years, 56.9% were between 15 - 64 years, whereas 5% were 65 years and older. Data also showed that the sex ratio of males to females in the village was 105.8:100, meaning that males and females constituted 51.4% and 48.6% of the population, respectively.

Families

There are many families forming the community of 'Ajjul Village, including: Dar Salah, Dar Issa, Dar al Housheh, etc ('Ajjul Village Council, 2011).

Education

According to the results of the PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census-2007, the illiteracy rate among 'Ajjul population was about 8.5%, of whom 85.3% were females. Of the literate population, 11% could only read and write, with no formal education, 25.2% had elementary education, 31.1% had preparatory education, 17% had secondary education, and 7.2% completed higher education. Table 1, shows the educational level in the village of 'Ajjul, by sex, and educational attainment in 2007.

Table 1: 'Ajjul population (10 years and above) by sex and educational statement

S e x	Illite- rate	Can read and write	Elem- entary	Prep- aratory	Secon- dary	Associate Diploma	Bach e-lor	Higher Diploma	Master	Docto- rate	Not stated	Total
M	11	38	104	174	89	7	30	-	1	-	-	454
F	64	59	117	99	60	10	15	-	-	-	-	424
T	75	97	221	273	149	17	45	-	1	-	-	878

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

Source: PCBS, 2009.

As for educational institutions and schools for the scholastic year 2010/2011, it was registered that there is only one public school; 'Ajjul Co-educated Secondary School, which is run by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE), but there are no kindergartens in the village (Directorate of Education-Ramallah, 2011).

The MoEHE revealed that for the scholastic year 2010/2011 there were 12 classes occupied by 323 male and female students, and 20 teaching staff. Classroom density was 27 students per class, and the average number of students per teacher was 16 students (Directorate of Education-Ramallah, 2011).

There are substantial difficulties facing the education sector in the village which need to be addressed in order to ensure adequate education is provided for local students. For example, the only school in the village does not fully cover the educational needs for the students, and there is a need for a single-sex girl’s school. Another problem that the educational sector suffers in the village is the access to university given that there is no good transportation for university students ('Ajjul Village Council, 2011).

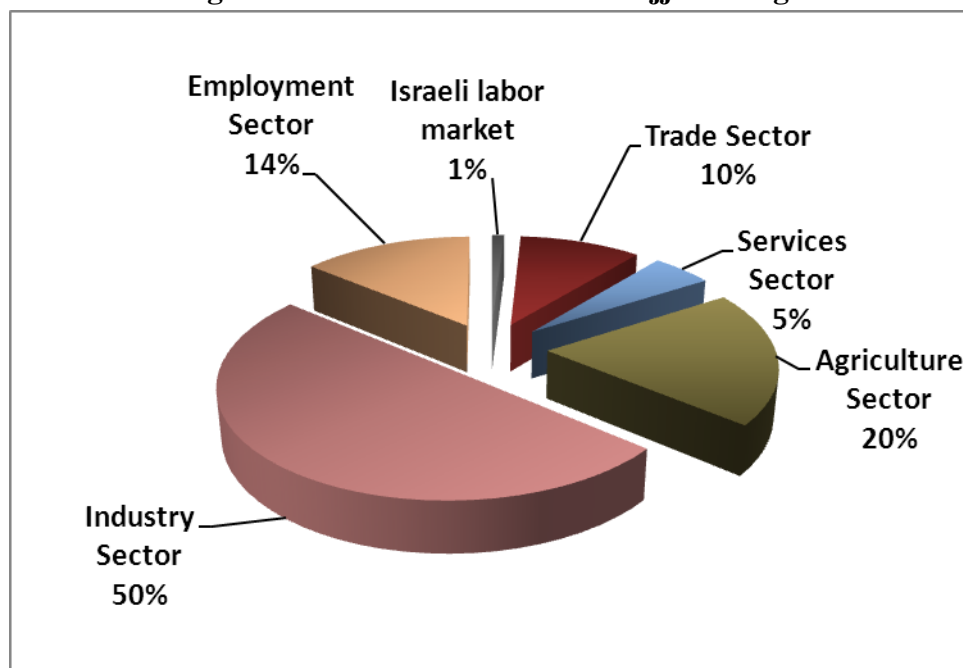
Health Sector

There are no health facilities in the Village, which is obviously a considerable problem in the health sector. In case of emergencies, patients travel for treatment to the Ramallah Governmental Hospital, which is 20km away, or they visit doctors in nearby villages such as Arroura and Jilijliya; each of which is almost 10km away ('Ajjul Village Council, 2011).

Economic Activities

The economy of the village depends on many sectors, however the industry sector is considered to be the most important, constituting 50% of labor force. Results of the ARIJ conducted field survey in 2011 indicated that the agricultural sector is considered the second important economic activity, forming 20% of labor face (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Economic activities in 'Ajjul Village



Source: 'Ajjul Village Council, 2011

There are no industrial buildings or areas in the village, however there are around 15 grocery shops, 5 stores and offices offering public different services, and 6 shops for occupational industries such as carpentry, blacksmith, etc ('Ajjul Village Council, 2011).

Unemployment in 'Ajjul has reached around 18% in 2011, mainly due to Israeli Occupation measures. Most affected groups are laborers that used to work in Israel, in addition to those working in the agricultural and commerce sectors in addition to former workers in the Israeli labor market ('Ajjul Village Council, 2011).

Labor Force

According to the PCBS, Population, Housing and Establishment Census in 2007, 35.2% of the population was considered economically active of which 91.6% were employed, and 64.8% of the populations were non-economically active of which 49.9% were students and 34.6%, housekeepers (Table 2).

Table 2: 'Ajjul population (10 years 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	265	7	4	276	140	1	31	4	2	178	-	454
F	18	1	14	33	144	196	46	-	5	391	-	424
T	283	8	18	309	284	197	77	4	7	569	-	878

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

Source: PCBS, 2009.

Agricultural Sector

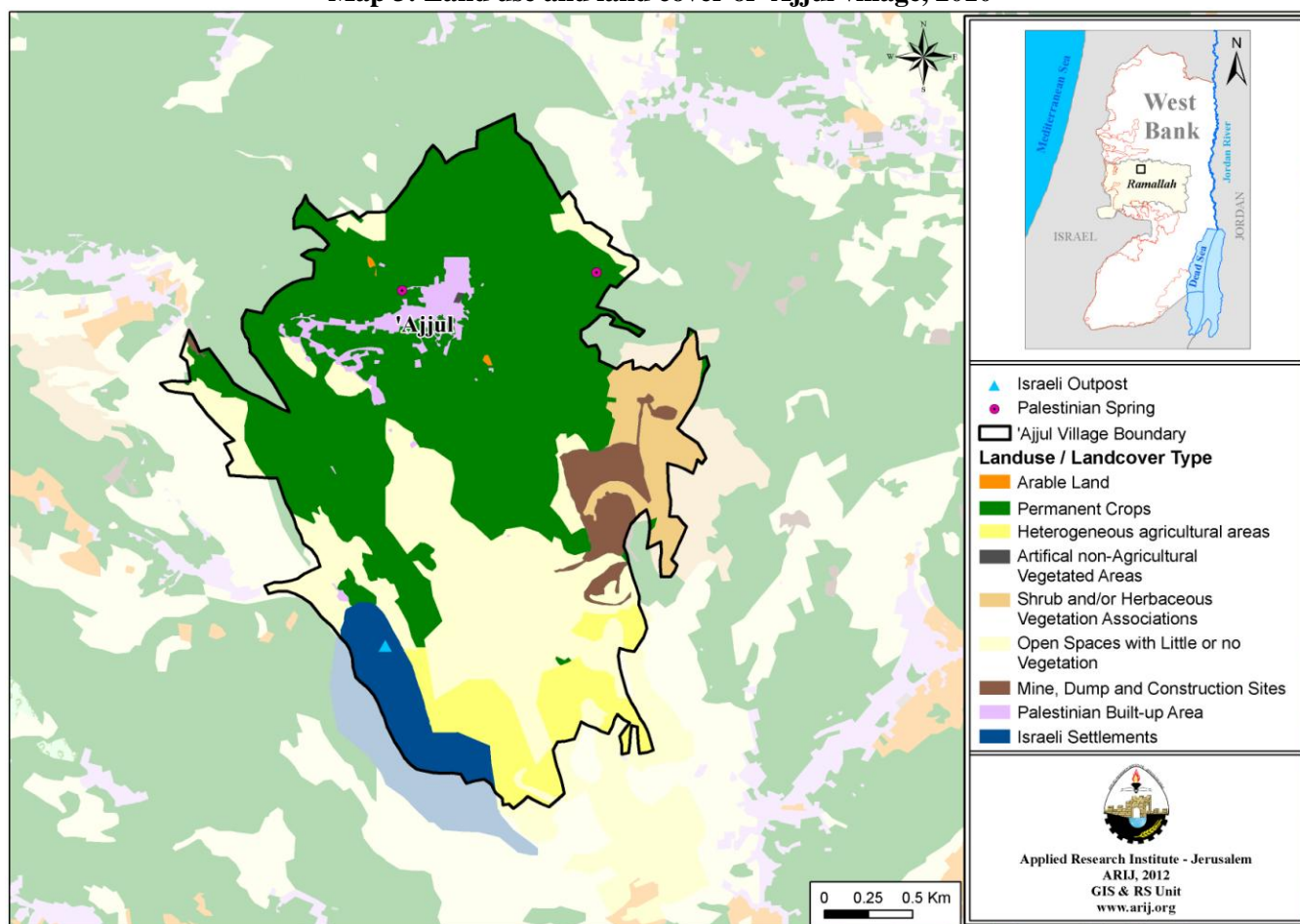
'Ajjul Village lies on an area of 6,547 dunams, of which 4,199 dunams are agricultural land, and 180 dunams are dedicated to residential services. See table 3 and map 3 for land use and land cover areas for 2010.

Table 3: Land use and land cover in 'Ajjul village in 2010 (area in dunam)

Total Area	Built up Area	Agricultural area (4,199)				Inland water	Forests	Open Spaces	Area of Industrial, Commercial & Transport Unit	Area of Settlement, Military Bases & Wall Zone
		Permanent Crops	Green-houses	Range-lands	Arable lands					
6,547	180	3,838	0	357	4	0	0	1,598	248	321

Source: ARIJ – GIS Unit, 2012.

Map 3: Land use and land cover of 'Ajjul village, 2010



Source: ARIJ GIS, 2012

Table 4 shows the different types of rain-fed and irrigated open cultivated vegetables in the Village; tomato is considered the main cultivated vegetable.

Table 4: Total area of rain-fed and irrigated open cultivated vegetables in 'Ajjul (area in dunams)

Fruity vegetables		Leafy vegetables		Green legumes		Bulbs		Other vegetables		Total area	
Rf.	Irr.	Rf.	Irr.	Rf.	Irr.	Rf.	Irr.	Rf.	Irr.	Rf.	Irr.
28	13	0	2	20	2	10	0	0	0	58	17

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

Source: Ministry of agriculture-Ramallah, 2009

As for cultivating fruits, 'Ajjul is famous for olive trees, and around 2,740 dunams are planted with olive crops (table 5).

Table 5: Total area of horticulture and olive trees in 'Ajjul (area in dunams)

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.
2,740	0	1	0	5	0	1	0	35	0	64	0	2,846	0

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

Source: Ministry of agriculture-Ramallah, 2009

Table 6 shows the total area of field crops cultivated in 'Ajjul, being the area cultivated with cereals the largest, covering 80 dunams. The most importantly cultivated cereals include wheat and barley.

Table 6: Total area of horticulture and olive trees in 'Ajjul (area in dunams)

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.
80	0	28	0	30	0	6	0	26	0	0	0	0	0	170	0

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

Source: Ministry of agriculture-Ramallah, 2009

The difference between the two sets of results obtained from the Ministry of Agriculture and by ARIJ's GIS Unit in sizes of agricultural areas is explained by the fact that the Ministry of Agriculture and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2010) conducted a survey which used 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, thus accounting for the larger area of agricultural holdings calculated by ARIJ.

The field survey conducted by ARIJ team in 2011 shows that 7% of the residents in 'Ajjul rear and keep domestic animals, such as sheep, goats and others ('Ajjul Village Council, 2011) (See Table 7).

Table 7: Livestock in 'Ajjul

Cows*	Sheep	Goats	Camels	Horses	Donkeys	Mules	Broilers	Layers	Bee Hives
0	24	58	0	0	0	0	24,000	3,200	16

*Including cows, bull calves, heifer calves and bulls

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture - Ramallah, 2009

There are only around 10km agricultural roads in the Village which are used for vehicles only ('Ajjul Village Council, 2011).

Institutions and Services

There are no governmental institutions or offices in the village, and there is only one local organization that provides services to the village residents; the 'Ajjul Village Council, which was founded in 1990 by the Palestinian National Authority to carry out and offer services to the village ('Ajjul Village Council, 2011).

Infrastructure and Natural Resources

Electricity and Telephone Networks

'Ajjul has been provided with electricity network since 1982; served by Jerusalem Electricity Company, which is the main source of electricity in the village, and it is connected to approximately 90% of the housing units. However, 'Ajjul suffers some problems concerning the electricity sector; mainly, the weak electricity current, in addition there is a need of a new electricity transformer ('Ajjul Village Council, 2011).

As for the telecommunication services, around 80% of housing units in the 'Ajjul are connected to a telephone network ('Ajjul Village Council, 2011).

Transportation Services:

There are 5 taxis in 'Ajjul that transport people to and from the village ('Ajjul Village Council, 2011). As for the road system, there are approximately 4km of main paved in bad condition roads and 3km of secondary paved and in good condition roads ('Ajjul Village Council, 2011).

Water Resources:

The water company in Jerusalem provides the village with water through a water network that has been constructed since 1995. This network supplies water to almost 80% of housing units in the village ('Ajjul

Village Council, 2011). The quantity of water supplied to the village reaches in 2010 approximately 26,030 m³/ year (Jerusalem Water Authority, 2011), and thus the amount of water consumed per person is estimated to be 61 liter/capita/day. Nevertheless, residents of 'Ajjul do not really consume this amount of water due to the water loss from transfer of water and distribution through the network from the main company provider to housing units, and it reaches to 26.5 %, and thus the average of water consumption per capita is 45 liter/capita/day (Jerusalem Water Authority, 2011). This average is much less than the recommended amount proposed by the World Health Organization (WHO) which is 100 liter/capita/day. It is worth mentioning that there are 150 rainwater harvesting cisterns in the village ('Ajjul Village Council, 2011).

To control water costs, the water authority has adopted an upward rate where the price of water increases with increasing consumption. Table 8 shows the price of water by category of consumption.

Table 8: Water tariffs of Jerusalem Water Authority adopted since 01.01.2012

Consumption Category (m ³)	Domestic (NIS/m ³)	Industrial (NIS/m ³)	Tourist (NIS/m ³)	Commercial (NIS/m ³)	Public Institutions (NIS/m ³)
0 – 5	4.5	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.4
5.1 – 10	4.5	5.6	5.6	5.6	4.5
10.1 – 20	5.6	6.8	6.8	6.8	5.6
20.1 – 30	6.8	8.1	8.1	8.1	6.8
30.1+	9	9.9	10.8	9	9

Source: Jerusalem Water Authority, 2012

Sanitation:

'Ajjul lacks a public sewerage network; with most of the population using cesspits as their main means for wastewater disposal ('Ajjul Village Council, 2011).

Based on the estimated daily per capita water consumption, the estimated amount of wastewater generated per day, is approximately 42 cubic meters, or 15 thousand cubic meters annually. At the individual level in the village, it is estimated that the per capita wastewater generation is approximately 32 liters per day. The wastewater collected by cesspits is discharged by wastewater tankers directly to open areas or nearby valleys without regard for the environment. Here it should be 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 and the public health (ARIJ - WERU, 2012).

Solid Waste Management:

'Ajjul Village Council is considered the official body responsible for managing solid waste, i.e. solid waste collection and disposal, generated from the citizens and establishments in the village. Due to the fact that the process of solid waste management is costly, a monthly fee of about 3 NIS has been imposed on the population, serviced by domestic solid waste collection services. However, the amount of money collected is not sufficient for good management of solid waste, as only 90% of the village residents pay these fees ('Ajjul Village Council, 2011).

Solid waste in 'Ajjul is collected by the Council twice a week from houses, institutes, shops and public squares in plastic bags. The Council is responsible for the disposal of the waste. The collected waste is subsequently transported by a tractor that is rented by the Council, carried to a nearby Locality's dumping site which is approximately 3km from the village and burned ('Ajjul Village Council, 2011).

The daily per capita rate of solid waste production in 'Ajjul is 0.7kg. Thus the estimated amount of solid waste produced per day from the 'Ajjul residents is nearly 0.8 ton, or 297 tons per year (ARIJ - WERU, 2012).

Environmental Conditions

Like other villages and towns in the governorate, 'Ajjul experiences several environmental problems which must be addressed and solved. These problems can be identified as follows:

Water Crisis

- In several neighborhoods of the village, water is cut off by the Jerusalem Water Authority for long periods of time during summer for several reasons:
 1. Israeli control over Palestinian water resources causes problems in the organization of water pumping and its distribution among populations. The Jerusalem Water Authority distributes water to various areas on an interval basis because the amount of water available is not sufficient to supply everyone's needs simultaneously.
 2. High rate of water losses, because the water network is old and in need of rehabilitation and renovation.
- Lack of a public water reservoir in the village to be used by residents during water shortages.

Wastewater Management

The absence of a public sewerage network means that in 'Ajjul residents are forced to use unhygienic cesspits for the disposal of wastewater, and/or 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 village. This wastewater also contaminates the groundwater and water collected in household

cisterns (rainwater harvesting cisterns), as it mixes with the waste water and thus becomes unsuitable for drinking. This happens because most cesspits are built without lining, allowing wastewater to enter into the ground and avoiding the need to use sewage tankers. 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 residents' health.

Solid Waste Management

The lack of a central sanitary landfill to serve in 'Ajjul and the other neighboring communities in the governorate is due mainly to the obstacles created by the Israeli authorities for local and national institutions in granting licenses to establish such a landfill, because the appropriate land is within Area C and 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. It also produces bad odors and a distortion of the landscape.

Impact of the Israeli Occupation

Geopolitical status in 'Ajjul

According to the Oslo II Interim Agreement signed on 28th September 1995 between the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel, 'Ajjul village was divided into areas "A", "B" and "C". Approximately 3,161 dunams (48.3% of the village's total area) were assigned as area A where the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) holds all responsibilities for internal security and Public order, while 1,780 dunams (27.2% of the village's total area) were classified as area B, where the PNA has a complete control over civil matters but Israel continues to have overriding responsibility for security. The rest of the village's area, constituting 1,606 dunams (24.5% of the total area), is classified as area C, where Israel retains full control over security and administration related to the territory. In area C Palestinian building and land management is prohibited unless through consent or authorization by the Israeli Civil Administration (table 9).

Table 9: The Geopolitical Divisions of 'Ajjul – Ramallah Governorate

Area	Area in dunams	Percent of Total village area
Area A	3,161	48.3
Area B	1,780	27.2
Area C	1,606	24.5
Nature Reserve	0	0
Total	6,547	100

Source: Source: ARIJ-GIS, 2011

‘Ajjul Village and the Israeli Occupation Practices

During its occupation of Palestine, Israel confiscated an area of 363 dunams (5.5% of the village’s total area) from ‘Ajjul for the construction of Ateret Israeli settlement. Ateret is currently inhabited by 763 Israeli settlers (table 10).

Table 10: Israeli Settlements constructed over ‘Ajjul village’s lands

Settlement Name	Year of construction	Area confiscated	Population of settlers
Ateret	1981	363	763
Total		363	763

Source: ARIJ-GIS, 2011

Moreover, during the last two decades Israel constructed 232 outposts within the West Bank. These outposts are considered the nucleus for the development of new settlements. Outposts are composed of mobile caravans on the stolen lands by the settlers. Outposts are a branch of a mother settlement that is near. 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 the successive Israeli governments haven’t legalized this phenomenon, they managed to find security and logistical cover to justify the act and its continuity. After 2001 the Prime Minister Ariel Sharon unleashed the expansion of outposts which has led to a significant increase in the number of outposts within Palestinian areas. Also, the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) helped the 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. ‘Ajjul is one of the Palestinian villages that had their lands seized forcefully for the establishment of Ateret North outpost between 2001 and 2002 which is taken up by one Israeli family.

The Israeli Government confiscated more lands from ‘Ajjul to open bypass roads 465 and 4665 to connect the Israeli settlements established on its lands with those near and surrounding it. The real threat of bypass roads lies in the buffer zone formed by the IOF along these roads, extending approximately 75 m on each side of the road. These buffer zones dramatically increase the total area of land affected by the construction of the bypass roads.

Development Plans and Projects

Implemented projects

The Village Council of 'Ajjul has implemented several development projects in the last 5 years. For more details please see table 11.

Table 11: Implemented development projects and plans in 'Ajjul, 2011

Name of the Project	Type	Year	Donor
Build up the network of street light	Infrastructure	2010	Village Council
Building a new store in school	Educational	2011	Village Council & residents of the village
Excavation and opening of sub roads	Infrastructure	2011	Village Council & residents of the village

Source: 'Ajjul Village Council, 2011

Proposed Projects

'Ajjul Village Council, in cooperation with the civil society organizations in the village and the village residents, looks forward to the implementation of several projects in the coming years. The project ideas were developed during the PRA workshop that was conducted by ARIJ staff in the village. The projects are as follows, in order of priority, from the perspectives' of the participants in the workshop ('Ajjul Village Council, 2011):

1. Providing a truck to transfer drinking water.
2. Establishing a sewerage network.
3. Constructing main and sub roads, as well as paving and expanding existing ones.
4. Finishing the service complex completely in order to take advantage of it.
5. Constructing a school for girls.
6. Constructing an olive press.
7. Constructing a reservoir to be used for drinking.
8. Financing projects to help citizens in the village; of sheep, bees and chickens.
9. Providing a deed (Tabu) for the village.

Locality Development Priorities and Needs

The village suffers from a significant shortage in infrastructure and services. The following table shows the development priorities and needs in the village, according to the 'Ajjul Village Council's point of view and feedback gained by the ARIJ village surveying.

Table 12: Development Priorities and Needs in 'Ajjul

No.	Sector	Strongly needed	Needed	Not a priority	Notes
Infrastructural Needs					
1	Opening and pavement of roads	*			5km*
2	Rehabilitation of old water networks			*	
3	Extending the water network to cover new built up areas	*			3km
4	Construction of new water networks			*	
5	Rehabilitation/ Construction of new wells or springs			*	
6	Construction of water reservoirs	*			500m ³
7	Construction of a sewage disposal network	*			11km
8	Construction of a new electricity network		*		
9	Providing containers for solid waste collection	*			30 containers
10	Providing vehicles for collecting solid waste	*			1
11	Providing a sanitary landfill	*			
Health Needs					
1	Building of new clinics or health care centres	*			
2	Rehabilitation of old clinics or health care centres	*			
3	Purchasing of medical equipment and tools	*			
Educational Needs					
1	Building of new schools	*			all school stages
2	Rehabilitation of old schools	*			finishing a floor
3	Purchasing of new equipment for schools	*			
Agriculture Needs					
1	Rehabilitation of agricultural lands	*			500 dunams
2	Building rainwater harvesting cisterns			*	
3	Construction of barracks for livestock		*		10 barracks
4	Veterinary services			*	
5	Forage and hay for animals		*		250 tons/ year
6	Construction of new greenhouses		*		5 greenhouses
7	Rehabilitation of greenhouses		*		5 greenhouses
8	Field crops seeds		*		
9	Plants and agricultural supplies		*		

^ 2km main roads and 3km secondary roads

Source: 'Ajjul Village Council, 2011

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