

Biddya Town Profile



Prepared by



The Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem

Funded by



Spanish Cooperation

2013

Acknowledgments

ARIJ hereby expresses its deep gratitude to the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID) for their funding of this project.

ARIJ is grateful to the Palestinian officials in the ministries, municipalities, joint services councils, village committees and councils, and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) for their assistance and cooperation with the project team members during the data collection process.

ARIJ also thanks all the staff who worked throughout the past couple of years towards the accomplishment of this work.

Background

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

Table of Contents

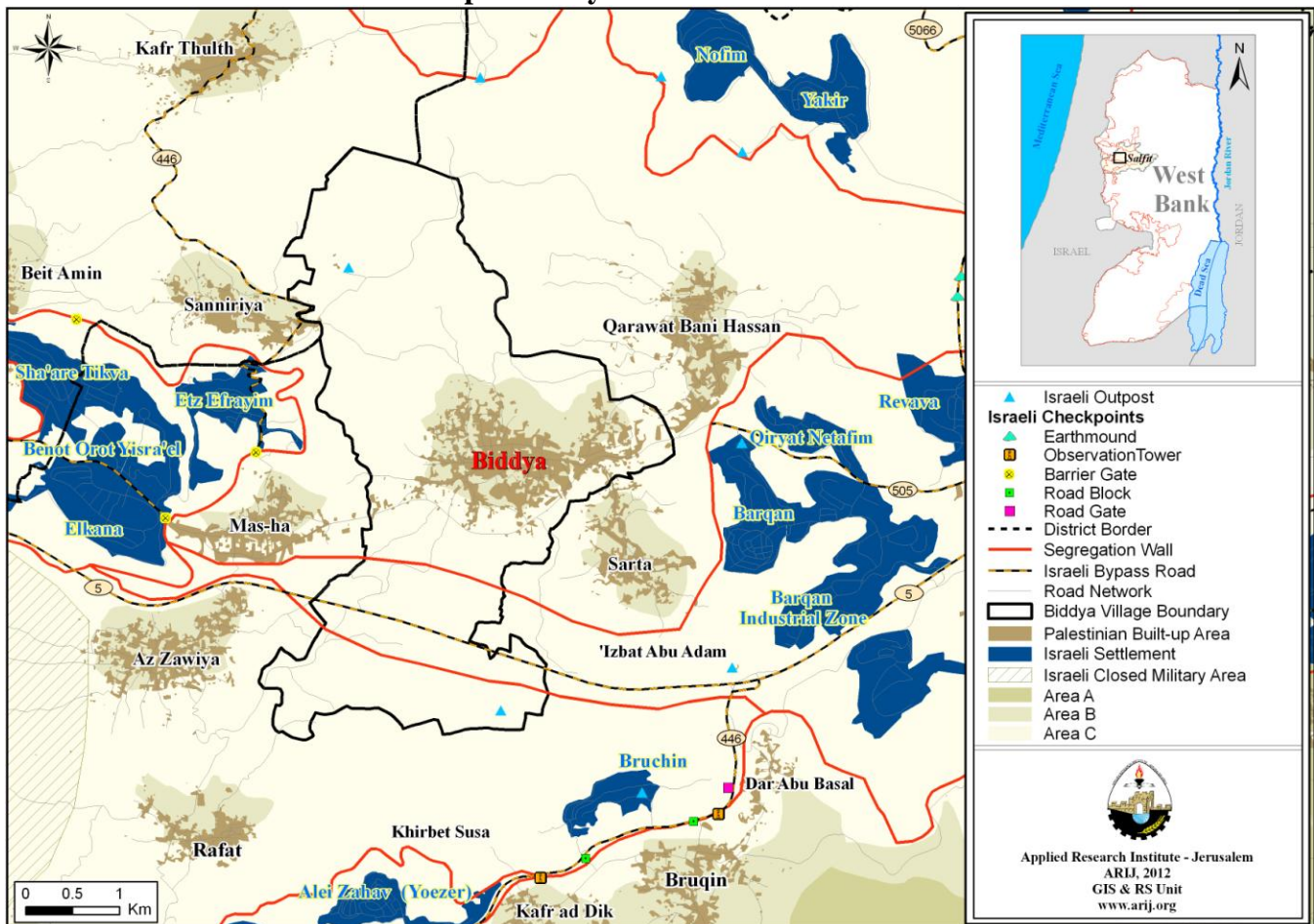
<i>Location and Physical Characteristics</i> _____	4
<i>History</i> _____	5
<i>Religious and Archaeological Sites</i> _____	6
<i>Population</i> _____	6
<i>Education</i> _____	7
<i>Health Status</i> _____	8
<i>Economic Activities</i> _____	9
<i>Agricultural Sector</i> _____	10
<i>Institutions and Services</i> _____	13
<i>Infrastructure and Natural Resources</i> _____	14
<i>Environmental Conditions</i> _____	15
<i>Impact of the Israeli Occupation</i> _____	17
<i>Development Plans and Projects</i> _____	19
<i>Implemented Projects</i> _____	19
<i>Proposed Projects</i> _____	20
<i>Locality Development Priorities and Needs</i> _____	21
<i>References:</i> _____	22

Biddya Town Profile

Location and Physical Characteristics

Biddya is a Palestinian town in Salfit Governorate located 10.27 km north-west of Salfit City. Biddya is bordered by Qarawat Bani Hassan and Sarta villages to the east, Kafr ad Dik to the south, Sanniriya village in Qalqiliya Governorate, Rafat, Az Zawiya and Mas-ha villages to the west, and Kafr Thulth village in Qalqiliya Governorate to the north (ARIJ-GIS, 2013) (See Map 1).

Map 1: Biddya location and borders



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2013.

Biddya is located at an altitude of 359 m above sea level with a mean annual rainfall of 609.4 mm. The average annual temperature is 19 C° and the average annual humidity is approximately 61.9% (ARIJ-GIS, 2013).

Since 1997, Bidhya has been governed by a Municipal Council which is currently administrated by 9 members appointed by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). There are 42 employees working in the council, which owns a permanent headquarters that is included within the Joint Services Council of West Salfit. The Council also owns 2 pickup cars and a hammer, but not a vehicle for the collection of solid waste (Bidhya Municipality, 2012).

It is the responsibility of the Municipal Council to provide a number of services to the residents of Bidhya, including (Bidhya Municipality, 2012):

- The establishment and maintenance of the drinking water and electricity networks.
- Road construction and restoration, street cleaning and social development services.
- Organization of construction and licensing processes.
- Implementation of projects and studies for the town.
- Provision of offices for governmental services.
- Protection of historical and archeological sites in the town.
- Provision of transportation.

History

Bidhya town's name derives from the large number of olive trees on its lands and as one of the most productive localities of olive oil in the region. The word Bidhya was converted from the old Aramaic word "Bidd", which means the heavy branch used to press the oil. "Al Bidda's" direct meaning is 'the olive oil-press.'

The town was established in the Roman era with its residents descending from Al Hijaz country as they resided in "Majdal 'Asqalan" where they were known as "Tannirah" and "Al Hallaq" families; before they left it and came to their current location in Bidhya town and resided, to become known as "Salamah" family. However, some of the residents are descendants from Deir Tareef town in Ar Ramla and Deir Istria town in Salfit (Bidhya Municipality, 2012).

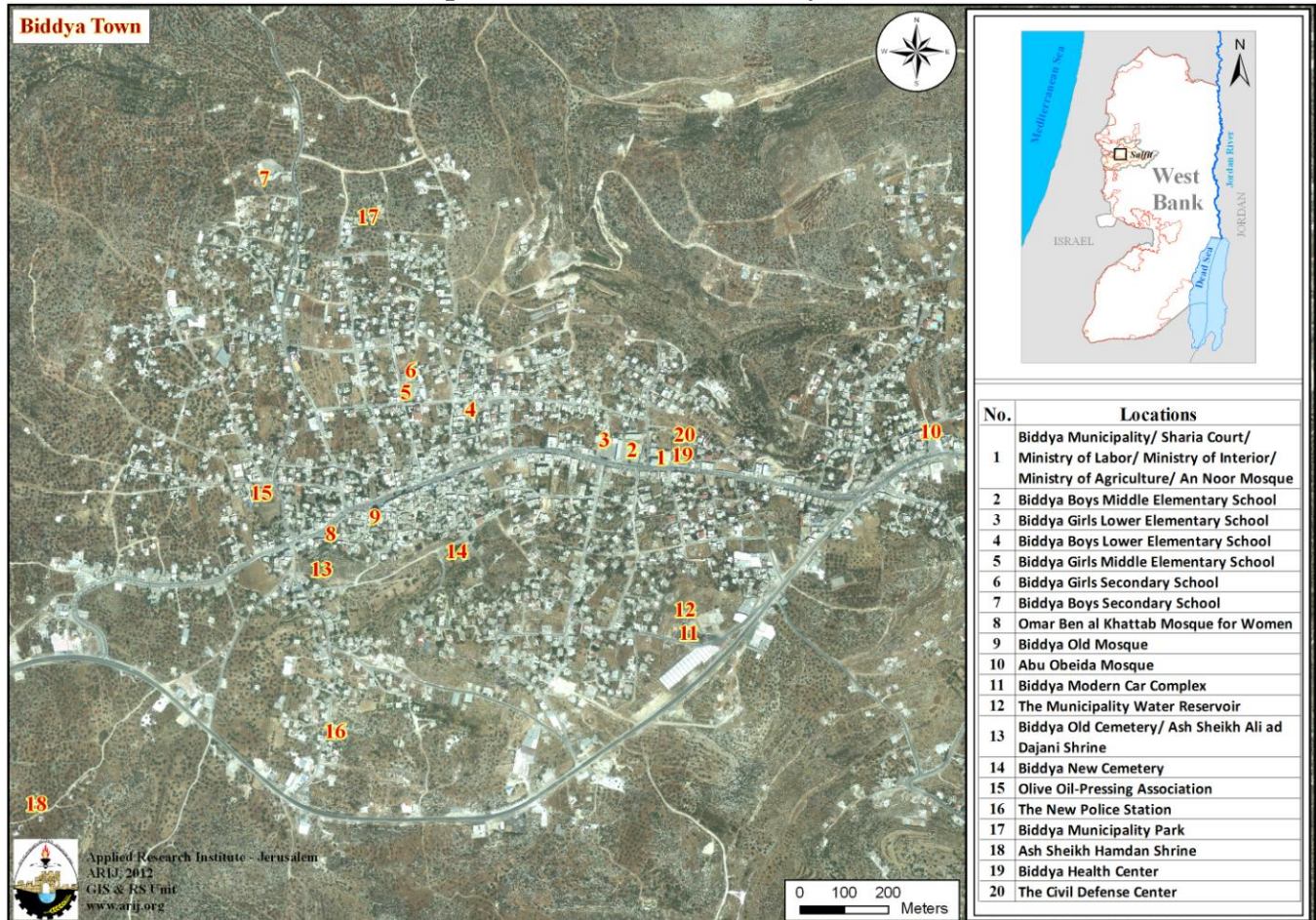
Photo of Bidhya



Religious and Archaeological Sites

There are five mosques in the town (An Noor, Omar ben al Khattab, Abu Obeida Ben al Jarrah, the New and the Grand Mosque). The town has several sites of archaeological interest including: Ash Sheikh Ali ad Dajani Shrine, Ash Sheikh Hamdan Shrine, Khirbet as Samra, Khirbet Salita and Khirbet Hazima. One should note here that none of these sites are qualified for tourism (Biddya Municipality, 2012) (See Map 2).

Map 2: Main locations in Biddya Town



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2013.

Population

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), the total population of Biddya in 2007 was 7,960, of whom 4,081 were male and 3,879 female. There were additionally 1,471 households recorded as living in 1,668 housing units.

Age Groups and Gender

The 'General Census of Population and Housing' carried out by PCBS in 2007 showed the distribution of age groups in Bidya is as follows: 44.9% were less than 15 years of age, 51.9% were between 15 and 64 years of age, and 3.2% were 65 years of age or older. Data also showed that the sex ratio of males to females in the town is 105.2:100, meaning that males and females constitute 51.3% and 48.7% of the population, respectively.

Families

Bidya residents are from several families, including Ibrahim, 'Aqel, Salih, Ahmad, Taha, Abu Bakr, Kan'an, Abu Othman, Hamad, Mousa, Hussein, Al 'Ahrash, Taha Abdul 'Al, Juha and Al Wafideen (Bidya Municipality, 2012).

Immigration

The field survey conducted by ARIJ staff showed that around 100 families have left the town since Al Aqsa Intifada in 2000 (Bidya Municipality, 2012).

Education

According to the results of the PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census-2007, the illiteracy rate among Bidya population is approximately 5.4%, of whom 78.5% are females. Of the literate population, 13.9% could only read and write, with no formal education, 26.4% had elementary education, 26.6% had preparatory education, 17.4% had secondary education, and 10.2% completed higher education. Table 1 shows the educational level in the town of Bidya by sex and educational attainment in 2007.

Table 1: Bidya population (10 years and above) by sex and educational attainment

Sex	Illite- rate	Can read & write	Element- ary	Preparat- ory	Second- ary	Associate Diploma	Bachelor	Higher Diploma	Master	PhD	Un- known	Total
M	65	428	779	796	508	71	185	2	38	4	0	2,876
F	238	347	687	683	462	73	192	0	3	1	1	2,687
T	303	775	1466	1479	970	144	377	2	41	5	1	5,563

Source: PCBS, 2009.

There are six public schools in the town and two private schools, all of which are run by the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education (Directorate of Education in Salfit, 2012) (see Table 2).

Table 2: Schools in Bidya by name, stage, sex, and supervising authority (2011/2012)

School Name	Supervising Authority	Sex
Bidya Boys Secondary School	Government	Male
Bidya Boys Elementary School	Government	Male
Bidya Boys Elementary Higher School	Government	Male

Biddya Girls Secondary School	Government	Female
Biddya Girls Elementary School	Government	Female
Biddya Girls Elementary Higher School	Government	Female
The Future Private Elementary School	Private	Mixed
Al 'Awa'el Private Co-educated School	Private	Mixed

Source: Directorate of Education in Salfit, 2012

In the town there are 2,870 students, 158 teachers, and 97 classes. The average number of students per teacher in the school is nearly 18, whilst the average number of students per class is approximately 30 (Directorate of Education in Salfit, 2012).

There are five kindergartens in Biddya town, all run by a private organization (Directorate of Education in Salfit, 2012) (See table 3 below).

Table 3: Kindergartens in Biddya town by name and supervising authority

Name of Kindergarten	No. of Classes	No. of Teachers	Supervising Authority
As Sadeel Kindergarten	1	1	Private
Al 'Awa'el Kindergarten	2	3	Private
As Samah Model Kindergarten	3	4	Private
The Educational Growth Kindergarten	3	3	Private
An Nawras Kindergarten	2	3	Private

Source: Directorate of Education in Salfit, 2012

Due to the lack of an industrial school in the town, students head to Salfit Industrial School which is 20 km from Biddya (Biddya Municipality, 2012).

The educational sector in Biddya town faces a number of obstacles, including (Biddya Municipality, 2012):

- The school's poor infrastructure.
- The small playground and yard areas which are available in some schools and the lack of any playing areas in others.
- Some of the school's conditions are poor, their buildings are worn out and they are in need of rehabilitation.
- The crowded classrooms in some schools.

Health Status

Biddya has two governmental health centers (the 'Primary Health Care Center' and the 'Medical Scientific Society'), a private center of specialized clinics, four general physicians clinics (one governmental, two private and one run by a charitable society), three specialized physicians clinics (one is a governmental gynecology center, and two are private pediatrician and internist clinics), three medical laboratories (two are private and one is run by a charitable society), a mother and child care center run by the Red Crescent Society, a private physiotherapy center, a radiology center run by a charitable society, five private pharmacies and one pharmacy run by a charitable society. The town also has two ambulances; one is owned by the Red Crescent Society and the other is privately owned. In the

absence of required health services or in emergencies, patients are transferred to Yasir Arafat Governmental Hospital in Salfit city (20 km away) or to Nablus city hospitals (30 km away) (Bidhya Municipality, 2012).

The health sector in the town faces some obstacles and problems, principally (Bidhya Municipality, 2012):

- The lack of functioning twenty four hour emergency services.
- The lack of a cost-free governmental ambulance.

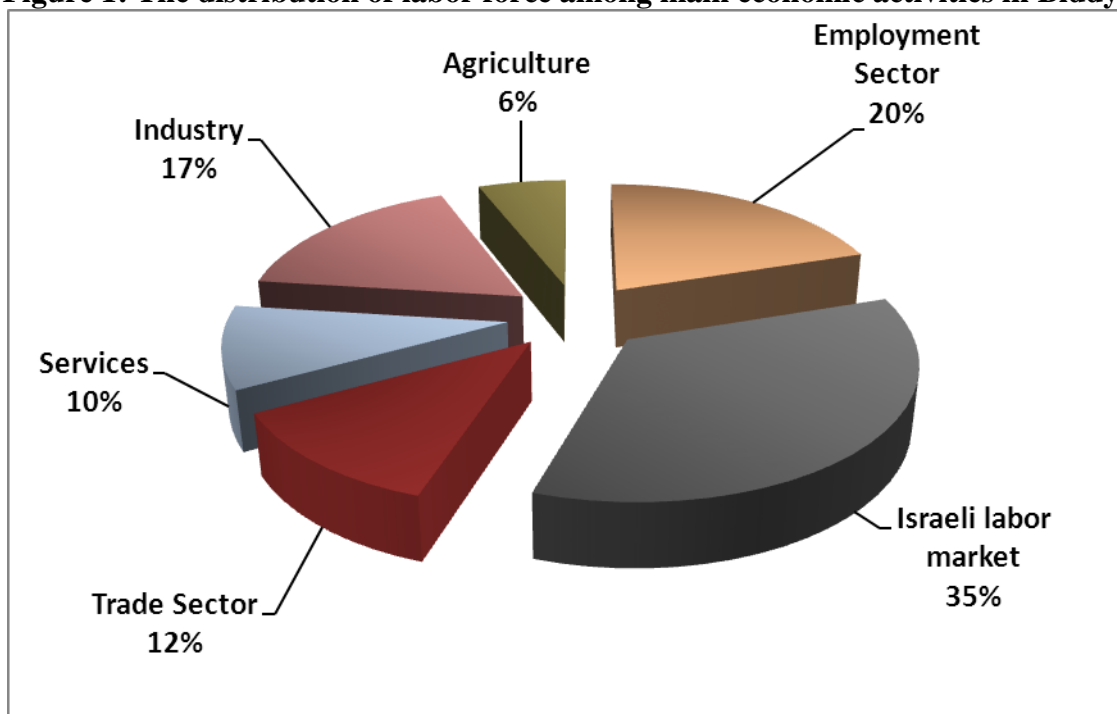
Economic Activities

The economy in Bidhya is mainly dependent on the Israeli labor market which absorbs approximately 35% of the town’s workforce (Bidhya Municipality, 2012) (See Figure 1).

The results of a field survey conducted by the ARIJ team in 2012 for the distribution of labor by economic activity in Bidhya are as follows:

- Israeli Labor Market (35%)
- Government or Other Employees Sector (20%)
- Industry (17%)
- Trade Sector (12%)
- Services Sector (10%)
- Agriculture Sector (6%)

Figure 1: The distribution of labor force among main economic activities in Bidhya



Source: Bidhya Municipality, 2012

Biddya has 50 groceries, 8 fruits and vegetables stores, 6 bakeries, 5 butcheries, 87 service stores, 40 different professional workshops, 19 stone cutters, 8 chicken shops, 2 quarries and crushers, 5 olive oil-presses, 2 stores for agricultural tools, 2 agricultural nurseries, 3 sewing workshops, 2 concrete factories, 40 stores for clothes and shoes, 4 engineering offices, 5 law firms and 5 accountants firms (Biddya Municipality, 2012).

The unemployment rate in Biddya reached 30% in 2012 and the groups most affected economically by the Israeli restrictions have been (Biddya Municipality, 2012):

- Industrial workers.
- Workers in the trade sector.
- Workers in the services sector.
- Agricultural workers.

Labor Force

According to the PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census-2007, 32.2% of Biddya labor force was economically active, of whom 87.2% were employed, 67.8% were not economically active, 59.1% were students, and 30.9% were housekeepers (See Table 4).

Table 4: Biddya population (10 years of age 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	1,377	82	93	1,552	1,123	2	142	37	19	1323	1	2,876
F	185	9	45	239	1,104	1,165	159	12	8	2,448	0	2,687
T	1562	91	138	1791	2227	1167	301	49	27	3,771	1	5,563

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

Source: PCBS, 2009.

Agricultural Sector

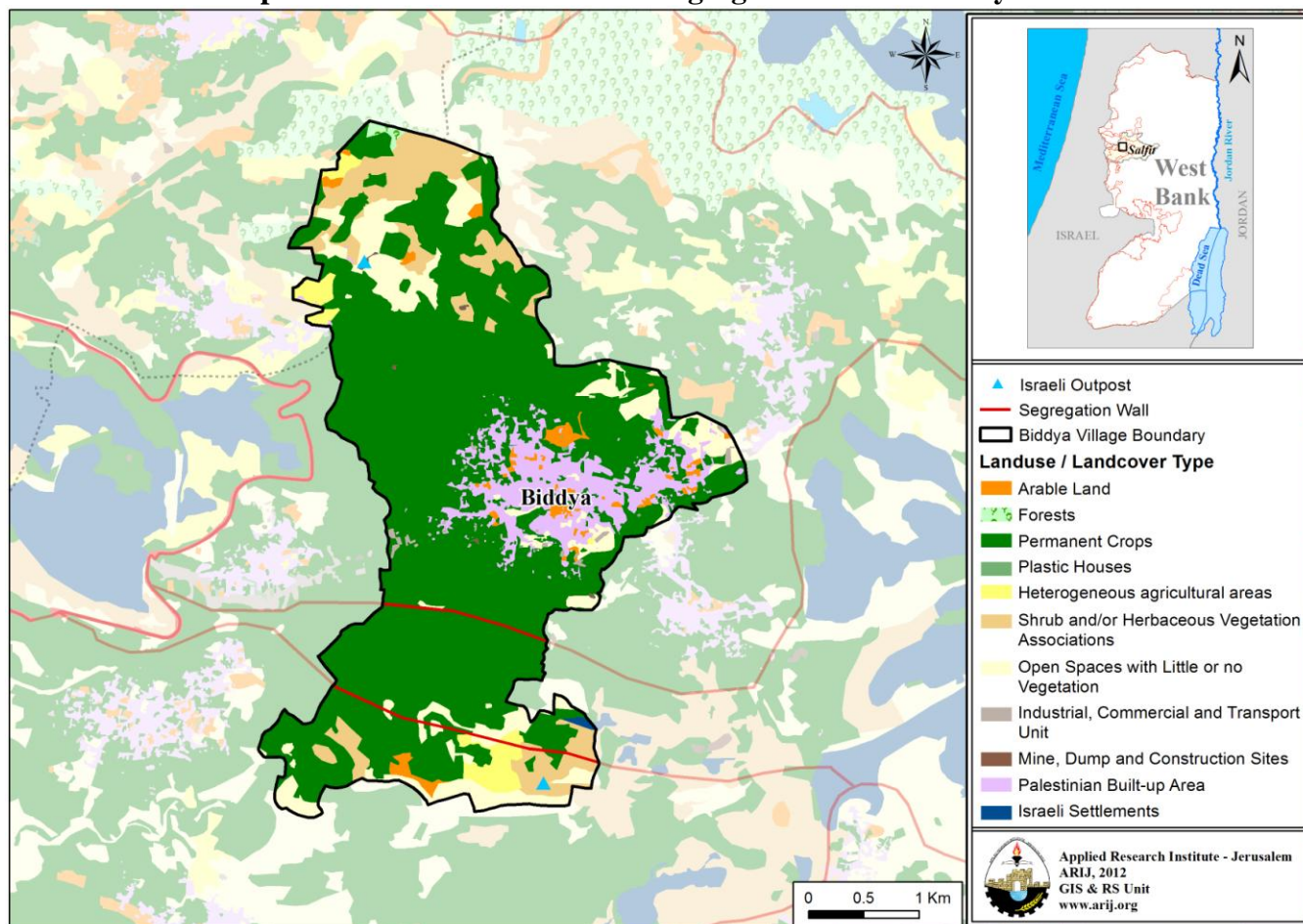
Biddya has a total area of approximately 13,828 dunums of which 11,079 are 'arable' land and 1,174 dunums are registered as 'residential' (See Table 5 and Map 3).

Table 5: Land use and land cover in Biddya town (area in dunum)

Total Area	Built up Area	Agricultural area (11,079)				Inland water	Forests	Open Spaces	Area of Industrial, Commercial & Transport Unit	Area of Settlements, Military Bases & Wall Zone
		Permanent Crops	Green-houses	Range-lands	Arable lands					
13,828	1,174	9,662	9	1,155	253	0	37	1,455	67	16

Source: ARIJ – GIS Unit, 2012.

Map 3: Land use/land cover and Segregation Wall in Biddya Town



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2013.

Table 6 shows the different types of rain-fed and irrigated open-cultivated vegetables in Biddya. The most commonly cultivated crops within this area are tomatoes, cabbages and cauliflowers.

Table 6: Total area of rain-fed and irrigated open cultivated vegetables in Biddya (area in dunums)

Fruity vegetables		Leafy vegetables		Green legumes		Bulbs		Other vegetables		Total Area	
Rf.	Irr.	Rf.	Irr.	Rf.	Irr.	Rf.	Irr.	Rf.	Irr.	Rf.	Irr.
19	61	0	30	0	15	0	4	0	0	19	110

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

Source: Ministry of agriculture-Salfit, 2010

Table 7 shows the different types of fruit trees planted in the area. Biddya is famous for olive cultivation and there are approximately 12,590 dunums of town lands planted with olive trees.

Table 7: Total area of horticulture and olive trees in Biddya (area in dunums)

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.
12,590	0	0	0	72	0	9	0	0	0	114	0	12,785	0

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

Source: Ministry of agriculture-Salfit, 2010

In terms of field crops and forage in Bidhya, cereals (particularly wheat) are the most cultivated, covering an area of approximately 210 dunums (See Table 8).

Table 8: Total area of horticulture and olive trees in Bidhya (area in dunums)

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.
210	0	33	0	53	0	4	0	22	0	0	0	20	0	342	0

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

Source: Ministry of agriculture-Salfit, 2010

The field survey conducted by ARIJ shows that just 1% of the residents in Bidhya rear and keep domestic animals such as sheep and goats (See Table 9).

Table 9: Livestock in Bidhya

Cows*	Sheep	Camels	Poultry	Bee Hives
11	582	0	4,000	428

*Including cows, bull calves, heifer calves and bulls

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture - Salfit, 2010

There around 20 kilometers of agricultural roads in the town, divided as follows (Bidhya Municipality, 2012):

Table 10: Agricultural Roads in Bidhya Town and their Lengths

Suitability of Agricultural Roads	Length (km)
For vehicles	5
For tractors and agricultural machinery only	10
For animals only	5
Unsuitable	0

Source: Bidhya Municipality, 2012

The agricultural sector in the town faces a number of problems, including (Bidhya Municipality, 2012):

- The lack of awareness of the importance of agriculture and the use of agricultural lands in addition to the neglect of the agricultural sector in favor of governmental jobs and/or working inside the Green Line.
- The lack of knowledge of modern agricultural methods for both plant and animal.
- The lack of adequate governmental support for farmers in terms of financial support, training and/or capacity development.
- The difficulty of marketing agricultural products, thus causing the agricultural sector to be economically unfeasible for its workers.
- The lack of water sources for agricultural production.
- The lack of agricultural roads.

Institutions and Services

Biddya town has several governmental institutions: a post office, a post division, a fire station, a police station, office for the Ministry of Interior, office for the Ministry of Agriculture, office for the Ministry of Labor and an office for the Ministry of Social Affairs. It also has a number of local institutions and associations that provide services to various sectors of society. These include (Biddya Municipality, 2012):

- **Biddya Municipal Council:** Founded in 1997 by the Ministry of Local Government, with the aim of taking care of the town's issues and providing various services to its population, such as infrastructure services.
- **Biddya Youth Sports Club:** Founded in 1994 by the Ministry of Youth and Sports. The Club is interested in sports, cultural, artistic and social activities for youth, as it includes different sports and art teams. The club also repeatedly provides first aid courses for different age groups.
- **Women for Life Association:** Founded in 2004 by the Ministry of Interior, it is interested in women's affairs and providing them with psychological and social support. It organizes medical days, holds several courses in the fields of health education, motherhood and childhood, and organizes summer camps for the development of children's musical, artistic and cultural talents.
- **Scientific Medical Society:** Established in 2003 by the Ministry of Interior, aiming to provide medical services to citizens through an emergency clinic, orthopediatricians, gynecology and dental service, in addition to a medical laboratory and radiology center. Also it holds seminars on health education and awareness.
- **Safe Motherhood Committees:** Founded in 2005 by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, in order to support needy families and those with special needs, provide health education for schools and kindergartens, and organize medical days.
- **Palestinian Red Crescent Society:** Founded in 1996 by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, in order to provide daily primary health care, especially for those suffering chronic diseases such as diabetes.
- **The Palestinian Red Crescent Volunteers Committee:** Founded in 2006 by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, with a view of implementing various social and cultural voluntary activities.
- **The Genius Cultural Center:** Founded in 2011 by the Palestinian Ministry of Education, to provide assisting educational courses and tuition for students, in addition to summer camps.
- **Early Childhood Association:** Founded in 2004 by the Ministry of Interior, and is interested in cultural, health and social affairs of mothers and children. It holds a number of seminars on health education, assistance courses for children, regulates summer camps and artistic teams, as well as trainings on the industry of local soap.
- **Livestock Association:** Founded in 2006 by the Ministry of Interior, and is interested in farmers, as it provides them with material support and extension services such as feed and agricultural inputs.
- **Cooperative Association for Olive Pressing:** Founded in 1964 and is now officially registered with the Ministry of Labor. It is concerned with pressing olives and marketing organic products in addition to providing guidance and technical services to farmers.

Infrastructure and Natural Resources

Electricity and Telecommunication Services:

Biddya has been connected to a public electricity network since 1980. It is served by the Israeli 'Qatariya Electricity Company,' which represents the main source of electricity in the town. Approximately 98.1% of the housing units in the town are connected to the network. The town residents face a number of problems concerning electricity, primarily the electrical network's need for expansion and the need to increase its power. These issues are particularly problematic in winter (Biddya Municipality, 2012).

Biddya is also connected to a telecommunication network. Approximately 99.5% of the housing units within the town boundaries are connected to phone lines (Biddya Municipality, 2012).

Transportation Services:

There are 82 taxis and 9 public buses in Biddya. However, residents suffer from the existence of earth mounds and/or military checkpoints on roads (Biddya Municipality, 2012). There are 7 km of main roads and 31 km of secondary roads in Biddya (Biddya Municipality, 2012) (See Table 11).

Table 11: Roads in Biddya town

Status of Internal Roads	Road Length (km)	
	Main	Sub
1. Paved & in good condition	7	10
2. Paved but in poor condition	-	11
3. Unpaved	-	10

Source: Biddya Municipality, 2012

Water Resources:

Biddya is provided with water by the West Bank Water Department through the public water network established in 1978. Approximately all of the housing units are connected to the water network (Biddya Municipality, 2012)

The quantity of water supplied to Biddya town in 2010 was approximately 209,036 cubic meters/year which makes the estimated rate of water supply per capita about 65 liters/day (Biddya Municipality, 2012). However, no Biddya citizen consumes this amount of water due to water losses, which are estimated at 22% (PWA, 2010). These losses happen at the main source, major transport lines, in the distribution network, and at the household level. Therefore, taking into account water losses, the rate of water consumption per capita in Biddya is 51 liters per day (Biddya Municipality, 2012). The average water consumption of Biddya residents is low compared with the minimum quantity of 100 liters per capita per day proposed by the World Health Organization. Each cubic meter of water from the public network costs 3.5 NIS (Biddya Municipality, 2012).

The town has a public water reservoir with a capacity of 500 cubic meters in addition to 500 rainwater harvesting cisterns (Biddya Municipality, 2012).

Sanitation:

Biddya has been connected to a public sewerage network since 2007. However, only 3.7% of Biddya housing units use the sewage network as a means for wastewater disposal (ARIJ-WERU, 2012).

Based on the estimated daily per capita water consumption, the amount of wastewater generated per day is approximately 357 cubic meters, or 130,438 cubic meters annually. At the individual level it is estimated that the per capita wastewater generation is 41 liters per day, depending on the consumption rate. The wastewater collected from housing units that are not connected with the sewage network (97.2%) by cesspits and septic tanks is discharged by wastewater tankers directly to open areas or nearby valleys with no regard for the environment. There is no wastewater treatment either at the source or at the disposal sites and this poses a serious threat to both environmental and public health (ARIJ-WERU, 2012).

Solid Waste Management:

The Joint Services Council of West Salfit is responsible for the collection and disposal of solid waste generated by citizens and establishments in the town. As the process of solid waste management is costly, a monthly fee amounting to 15 NIS/ month is charged to the population served by domestic solid waste collection and transportation services. All of the fees are collected from the citizens (Biddya Municipality, 2012)

Most of the population in Biddya benefits from the solid waste services, whereby waste is collected from households, institutions, shops, and public squares in plastic bags, and placed in 500 containers (of 1 m³ capacity) located around the municipality. The Joint Council collects the solid waste once daily and transports it using a waste vehicle to the town's dumping site, 2 km from the town, where it is subsequently burnt (Biddya Municipality, 2012)

The daily per capita rate of solid waste production in Biddya is 1.05kg. Thus the estimated quantity of solid waste produced per day from the Biddya residents is nearly 9.2 tons, or 3,352 tons per year (ARIJ-WERU, 2012).

Environmental Conditions

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

Water Crisis

- Water is cut off by the West Bank Water Department for long periods of time during summer in numerous neighborhoods of the town for several reasons:
 1. Israeli control over Palestinian water resources causes problems in the organization of water pumping and its distribution among populations. The West Bank Water Department distributes water to various areas on an interval basis because the amount of water available

is not sufficient to simultaneously supply everyone's needs. In addition, the West Bank Water Department purchase water from Israeli Companies in order to meet the citizens needs of water.

2. High rate of water losses, because the water network is aged and in need of rehabilitation and renovation.

Wastewater Management

- The absence of a public sewage network in many neighborhoods (97.2%) means that Bidya residents are forced to use unhygienic cesspits for the disposal of wastewater, and/or to 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 town. This wastewater also contaminates the groundwater because most cesspits are built without lining, to avoid the need to use sewage tankers and allow wastewater to enter into the ground. 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 to residents' health.

Solid Waste Management:

- Zahrat al Finjan landfill in Jenin Governorate (approximately 32 km in distance from the center of Salfit Governorate), is considered the central sanitary landfill which is supposed to serve Salfit Governorate. However, the Municipalities and Village Councils in Salfit Governorate do not transfer the solid waste to Zahrat al Finjan landfill, but rather get rid of waste in random dumps scattered throughout the Governorate. This is due to the high costs of transporting and disposing waste in the landfill. As a result, wastes are being disposed randomly in these landfills causing an abomination to health, and leading to the proliferation of harmful flies, insects, and mice, as well as the bad odors, toxic gases and black smoke which emits when burned. All of these have harmful effects on human as well as environmental health.
- The lack of a central sanitary landfill to serve Bidya 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, which produces bad odors and a distortion of the landscape.

Impact of the Israeli Occupation

Geopolitical status in Bidhya

According to the Oslo II Interim Agreement signed between the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel on 28th September 1995, Bidhya was divided into areas “B” and “C”. Approximately 2,105 dunums (15.2% of the town’s total area) were assigned as area B, where the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) has a complete control over civil matters but Israel continues to have overriding responsibility for security. Area B constitutes most of the inhabited Palestinian areas, including municipalities, villages and some refugee camps. It is worth mentioning that most of the town’s population resides in area B. The rest of the town’s area, constituting 11,722 dunums (84.8% of the total area), is classified as area C, where Israel retains full control over security and administration related to the territory (table 12). In area C Palestinian building and land management is prohibited unless through consent or authorization by the Israeli Civil Administration. Most of the lands lying within area C are agricultural areas.

Table 12: The Geopolitical Divisions of Bidhya – Salfit Governorate

Area	Area in dunums	Percent of Total town area
Area A	0	0
Area B	2,105	15.2
Area C	11,722	84.8
Nature Reserve	0	0
Total	13,827	100

Source: ARIJ-GIS, 2013

The Israeli Occupation Practices in Bidhya Town

Despite the fact that there are no Israeli settlements in Bidhya, the town is surrounded by two settlement blocs established on lands of neighboring villages: “Ariel” settlement bloc to the south and east and “Sha'are Tikva-Elkana” settlement bloc to the west. These settlement blocs controls thousands of dunums of agricultural lands surrounding the town and suffocates Bidhya.

Israeli settlers living in settlements established on Bidhya lands have had a significant impact on Palestinians and their properties in Bidhya town. These attacks have contributed to the loss of Palestinian lands adjacent to settlements as landowners are prevented from accessing their plots, which have been fenced in with barbed wire and planted with trees. Israeli settlers have also carried out a series of attacks against Palestinian landowners in an attempt to intimidate them and deter them from returning to their lands adjacent to the aforementioned settlements.

Following the outbreak of the Second Palestinian Intifada in September 2000, the Israeli occupation authorities established an Israeli military checkpoint on the northern entrance of Salfit city, which is represented as an iron gate established near the western entrance of Ariel Israeli settlement. Closing the

northern entrance of Salfit city has had a negative impact on Palestinians lives during the last decade, as it is restricting their freedom of movement and connection with villages north of Salfit and the rest of the West Bank. This has caused numerous material losses for Palestinians and increased economic burden, as they are forced to use longer distances in order to reach villages in the north. The closure of this checkpoint, was done so under the pretext of protecting settlers in Ariel settlement as well as other nearby settlements. This checkpoint represents a part of the Segregation Plan adopted by the occupation forces through the establishment of settlements, annexing them through the Segregation Wall and changing Palestinians' movement, through the establishment of military checkpoints on roads. The checkpoint north of Salfit was closed to Palestinians for more than 10 years and was recently partially opened (during 2011) for public vehicles only (taxis and buses), while private cars are still forbidden to cross it. Due to the closure of this main entrance to Salfit city and its neighboring villages, citizens started using the eastern entrance of the city which passes through Yasuf and Iskaka villages, then to Salfit city. however, the citizens are forced to cross through another military checkpoint that is considered a main feature of the Palestinian daily suffering. The checkpoint is called "Za'tara" (Kfar Taffuh) military checkpoint which separates the center from north of the West Bank.

Moreover, the Israeli Government has confiscated thousands of dunums of agricultural and non-agricultural lands to open several bypass roads stretching thousands of kilometers from the north to south in the West Bank. This has been done in order to link Israeli settlements, dismember Palestinian lands and enhance security control over it. Israel has also confiscated more land from Bidhya to its south, for the construction of the Israeli bypass road no. 5 known as "Samria Crossing." This road extends for 2.5km on the town's land separating large areas of agricultural lands south of the town. The real threat of these bypass roads however lies in the buffer zone formed by the IOF, extending approximately 75 m on each side. These buffer zones dramatically increase the total area of land affected by the construction of the bypass roads.

The Israeli Segregation Wall Plan in Bidhya Town

The Israeli Segregation Wall plan has had a negative and destructive impact on Bidhya residents. The latest route of the Israeli Segregation Wall Plan, published on the Israeli Ministry of Defense's website (April 30 2007), shows that upon the implementation of the wall under construction on Bidhya town's land to the south, will confiscate and isolate 1,943 dunums, equivalent to 14% of the town's total area, for Israeli settlement activities. The majority of lands planned to be isolated by the Wall includes mainly agricultural areas in addition to open spaces, shrubs and herbaceous vegetation (See Table 13).

Table 13: Land Classification of the Isolated lands in Bidhya Town – Salfit Governorate

No.	Land Classification	Area (in dunums)
1	Agricultural Areas	1714
2	Open Spaces	138
3	Shrubs and Herbaceous Vegetation	91
Total		1943
Source: The Geo-informatics Department – ARIJ 2013		

Upon the completion of the Segregation Wall plan, published by the Israeli Ministry of Defense in 2007, the planned Segregation Wall will isolate thousands of dunums of Bidhya town's land, mainly fertile agricultural lands filled with trees. This will threaten the future agricultural and economic situation of

the Palestinian population in the region, and will include many Israeli settlements within the Wall area known as the "Ariel Finger" scheme. This will lead to the isolation of Bidya town from Salfit city and villages south and west of Salfit, as this plan aims to dismember Palestinian land, restricting the movement of the Palestinian population and confiscating and isolating more agricultural and non-agricultural lands for Israeli settlement purposes. Moreover, the Wall will divide the territorial contiguity between Bidya town and its agricultural lands extended to the south and adjacent to the village of Kafr ad Dik.

One should also note that Salfit Governorate villages are known for their fertile soil, their beautiful nature and the abundance of water and large trees, especially olive trees. This makes the region an important target for Israeli settlement activities, in addition to being the second Governorate after Jerusalem on the list of land confiscation, wall and settlement construction.

Development Plans and Projects

Implemented Projects

Bidya Municipal Council has implemented several development projects in Bidya during the past five years (See Table 14).

Table 14: Implemented Development Plans and Projects in Bidya during the Last Five Years

Name of the Project	Type	Year	Donor
Establishing a transportation vehicles complex	Public Services	2012	Bidya Municipality
Constructing additional classrooms in Bidya Girls' School	Educational	2012	CHF
Expanding the water network	Infrastructure	2011	Palestinian National Authority
Constructing Bidya Youth Sports Club headquarters	Public Services	2011	CHF
Constructing additional classrooms in Bidya Girls' Secondary School	Educational	2010	Local Community & Bidya Municipality
Constructing additional classrooms in Bidya Boys Secondary School	Educational	2009	Palestinian National Authority
Establishing a roof for Bidya Municipality headquarters	Public Services	2009	Palestinian National Authority
Establishing the civil defense headquarters	Public Services	2010	PECDAR
Strengthening the public electricity network	Infrastructure	2009	PECDAR

Source: Bidya Municipality, 2012

Proposed Projects

Biddya Municipal Council, in cooperation with the town's civil society organizations and town residents, hopes to implement several projects in the coming years. The project ideas were developed during the PRA workshop conducted by ARIJ staff in the town. The projects are as follows, in order of priority from the viewpoints of the workshop participants:

1. Establishing emergency and maternity services to operate 24 hours a day.
2. Establishing a sewage network and a preliminary treatment unit, and developing the sewage system in the town.
3. Rehabilitating the town's main Street (approx. 2 km long).
4. Constructing and paving internal roads (approx. 8 km long).
5. Rehabilitating internal roads (approx. 8 km long).
6. Providing settlement schemes on the town's territory, in addition to constructing agricultural roads (20 km long).
7. Constructing a comprehensive cultural center.
8. Establishing an Industrial Zone.
9. Establishing a Football Stadium.

Locality Development Priorities and Needs

Biddya suffers from a significant shortage of infrastructure and services. Table 15 shows the development priorities and needs in the town, according to the Municipal Council's view point.

Table 15: Development Priorities and Needs in Biddya

No.	Sector	Strongly Needed	Needed	Not a Priority	Notes
Infrastructural Needs					
1	Opening and paving roads	*			23 km [^]
2	Rehabilitation of old water networks			*	
3	Extending the water network to cover new built up areas	*			5 km
4	Constructing new water networks			*	
5	Rehabilitation/ construction of new wells and/ or springs			*	
6	Construction of water reservoirs	*			500 m ³
7	Construction of a sewage disposal network	*			25 km
8	Construction of a new electricity network			*	
9	Providing containers for solid waste collection	*			500 containers
10	Providing vehicles for collecting solid waste	*			1
11	Providing a sanitary landfill	*			
Health Needs					
1	Building new clinics or health care centres	*			1 health clinic
2	Rehabilitation of old clinics or health care centres			*	
3	Purchasing medical equipment and tools	*			
Educational Needs					
1	Building new schools	*			2 elementary schools; one for boys and one for girls
2	Rehabilitating old schools			*	
3	Purchasing new equipment for schools	*			All schools
Agriculture Needs					
1	Rehabilitating agricultural lands	*			500 dunums
2	Building rainwater harvesting cisterns	*			60 cisterns
3	Constructing livestock barracks		*		10 barracks
4	Provision of veterinary services	*			
5	Provision of seeds and hay for animals	*			200 tons per year
6	Construction of new greenhouses		*		30 greenhouses
7	Rehabilitation of greenhouses			*	
8	Provision of field crops seeds	*			
9	Provision of plants and agricultural supplies	*			

[^] 5 km main roads, 10 km secondary roads and 8 km are agricultural roads

Source: Biddya Municipality, 2012

References:

- *Applied Research Institute - Jerusalem (ARIJ)*, 2013. Geographic Information Systems and Remote Sensing Unit Database. Bethlehem - Palestine.
- *Applied Research Institute - Jerusalem (ARIJ)*, 2013. *Geographic Information Systems and Remote Sensing Unit; Land Use Analysis (2012) – Half Meter High Accuracy*. Bethlehem - Palestine.
- *Applied Research Institute - Jerusalem (ARIJ)*. 2012. Water & Environment Research Unit Database (WERU). Bethlehem - Palestine.
- *Biddya Municipality*, 2012.
- *Ministry of Education & Higher Education (MOHE) - Salfit*, 2012. Directorate of Education; A database of schools (2011/2012). Salfit – Palestine.
- *Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics*. 2009. Ramallah, Palestine: General Census of Population and Housing Censuses, 2007.
- *Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture (MOA)*, 2010. Directorate of Agriculture data (2009/2010). Salfit - Palestine.
- *Palestinian Water Authority*. 2012. Ramallah, Palestine: Water Supply Report, 2010.