

Yasuf 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 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>.

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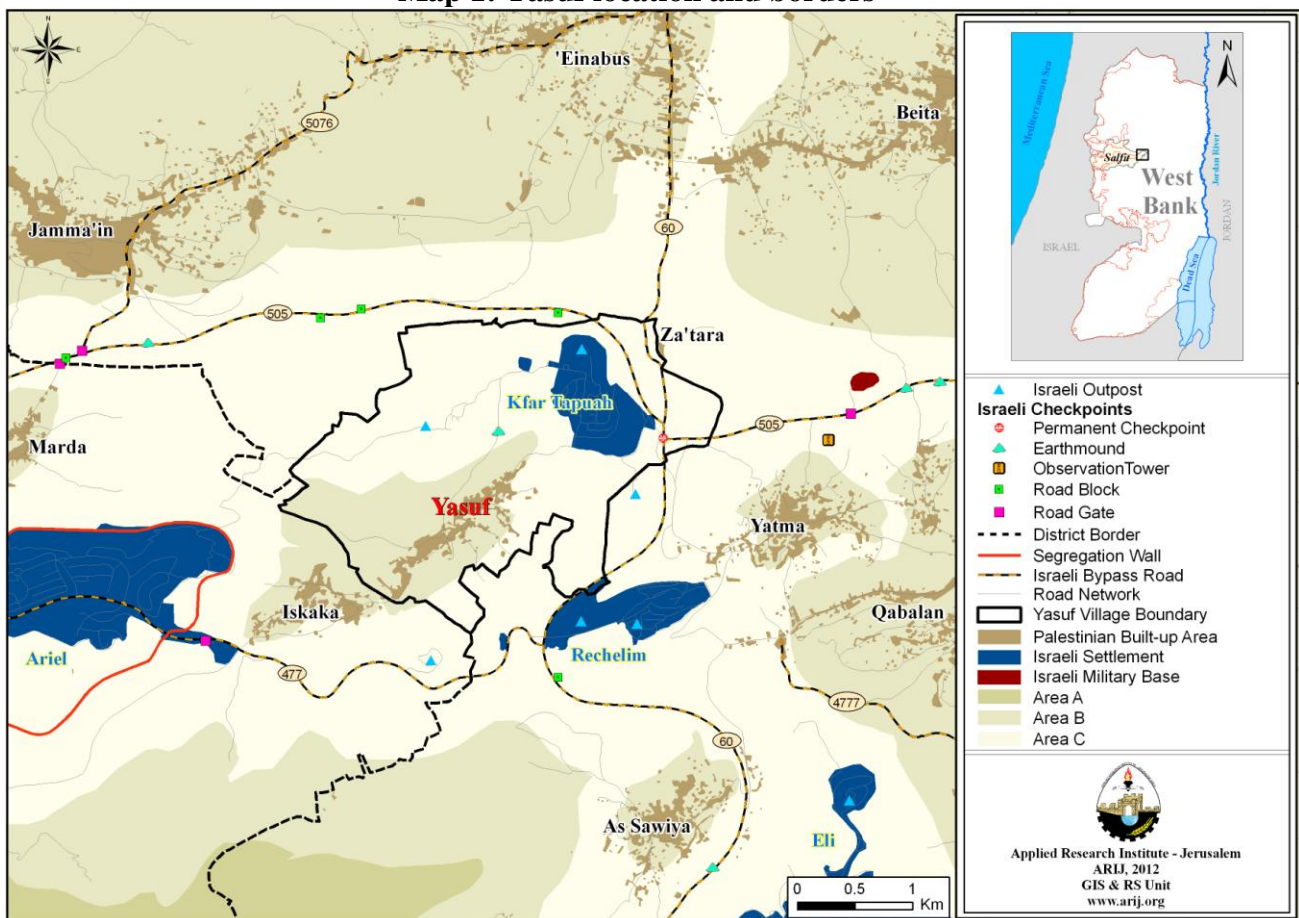
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Yasuf Village Profile

Location and Physical Characteristics

Yasuf is a Palestinian village in the Salfit Governorate located 6 km north-east of Salfit City. Yasuf is bordered by Yatma, As Sawiya and Za'tara villages in Nablus Governorate to the east, As Sawiya village in Nablus Governorate and Iskaka village to the south, Jamma'in village in Nablus Governorate and Iskaka village to the west, and Jamma'in and Huwwara villages in Nablus Governorate to the north (ARIJ-GIS, 2013) (See Map 1).

Map 1: Yasuf location and borders



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2013.

Yasuf is located at an altitude of 575 m above sea level with a mean annual rainfall of 599.9 mm. The average annual temperature is 18 C° and the average annual humidity is approximately 60.3% (ARIJ-GIS, 2013).

Since 1996, Yasuf has been governed by a Village Council which is currently administrated by 9 members appointed by the Palestinian National Authority. Furthermore there are 3 staff members working in the permanent headquarter (Yasuf Village Council, 2012).

It is the responsibility of the Village Council to provide a number of services to the residents of Yasuf, including (Yasuf Village Council, 2012):

- The establishment and maintenance of the drinking water and electricity networks.
- Waste collection, road construction and restoration, streets cleaning and social development services.
- Implementation of projects and studies for the village.
- Provision of kindergartens.
- Provision of a transportation bus for students.

History

Yasuf village's name derived from the word "Yashub". The latter refers to an ancient Greek village on which Yasuf was built on. "Yashub" was named after Prophet Yusuf who is said to have visited the city, however, the name "Yashub" was later converted into Yasuf. Also, the Islamic [biographer](#) and [geographer](#) 'Yaquut al Hamawi' described the village in his book for its abundance of pomegranate.

The village was established more than 2000 years ago. Its residents are descendent from the Arabian Peninsula, from Hijazi origins who came to Palestine and stayed. (Yasuf Village Council, 2012).

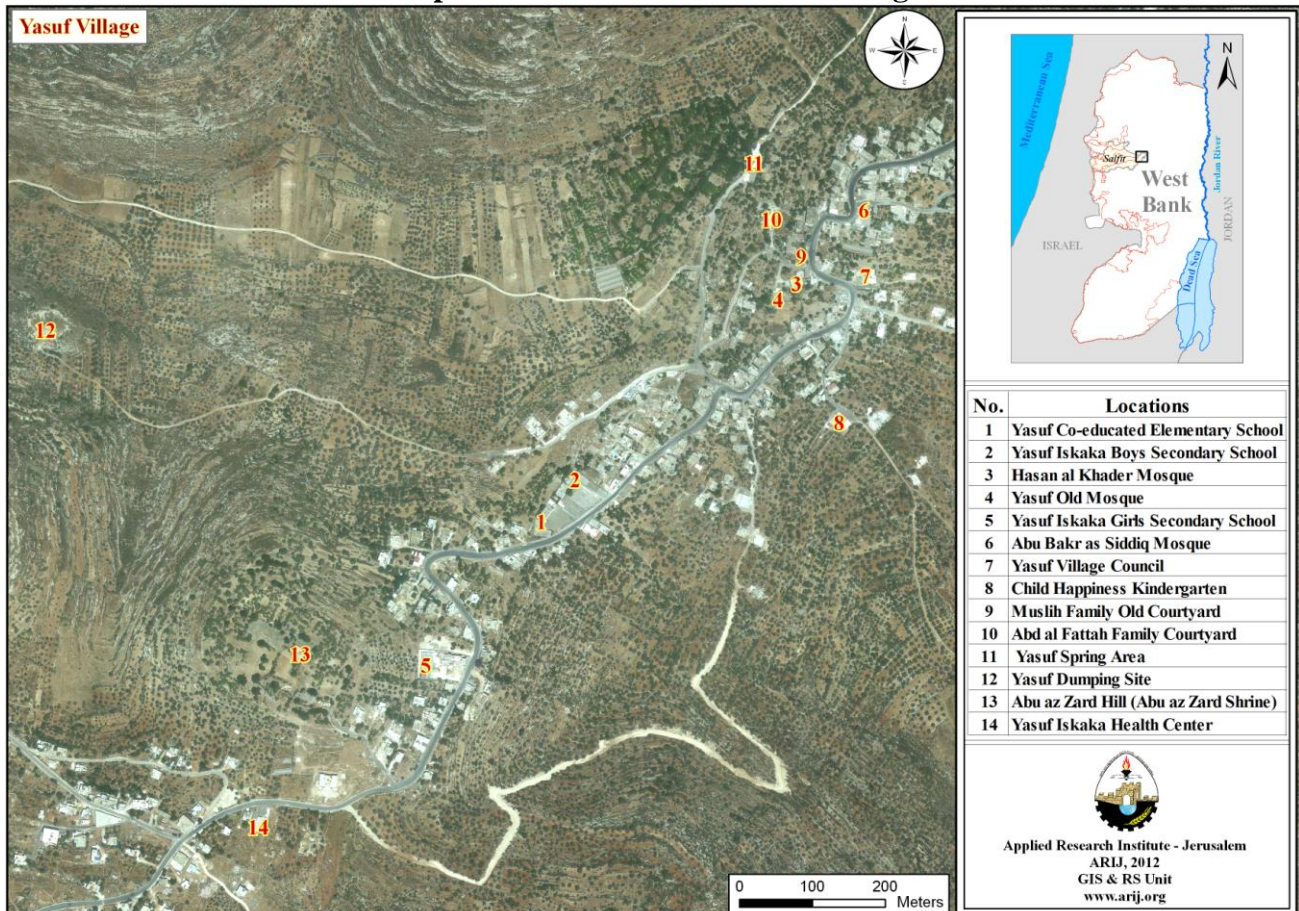
Photo of Yasuf



Religious and Archaeological Sites

There are four mosques in the village (Hasan Khader, Ali Ben Abi Talib, Abu Bakr as Siddiq and Yasuf Old (Omari) Mosque). Furthermore it has several sites of archaeological interest including: ancient caves and wells, in addition to shrines, such as Abu az Zurd and Ash Sheikh Ali. Also there are At Tuta Well Area, the Omari Mosque and the Old City. Except for one shrine and part of the Old City, none of these sites are qualified for tourism (Yasuf Village Council, 2012) (See Map 2).

Map 2: Main locations in Yasuf Village



Population Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2013.

Population

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), the total population of Yasuf in 2007 was 1,600, of whom 818 were male and 782 female. There are 312 households distributed to 374 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 Yasuf is as follows: 37.1% were less than 15 years of age, 59.3% were between 15 and 64 years of age, and 3.7% were 65 years of age or older. Data also showed that the sex ratio of

males and females in the village is 104.6:100, meaning that the gender distribution in the village is 51.1% to 48.9%.

Families

Yasuf residents are from several families, including ‘Ayyub, Hammurah, ‘Atyani, Hussein, Muslih, Abdul Raziq, Abdul Fattah, Yasin and ‘Azzam families (Yasuf Village Council, 2012).

Immigration

The field survey conducted by ARIJ staff showed that around 14 persons have left the village since Al Aqsa Intifada in 2000 (Yasuf Village Council, 2012).

Education

According to the results of the PCBS in 2007, the illiteracy rate among Yasuf population is approximately 7.2%, of whom 80.2% are females. Of the literate population, 10.6% with no formal education can read and write, 17.6% had elementary education, 32.6% had preparatory education, 22.4% had secondary education, and 9.5% completed higher education. Table 1 shows the educational level in the village of Yasuf by sex and educational attainment in 2007.

Table 1: Yasuf 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	17	71	94	209	156	11	51	1	8	0	0	618
F	69	56	117	181	112	7	34	0	2	0	0	578
T	86	127	211	390	268	18	85	1	10	0	0	1,196

Source: PCBS, 2009.

There are three public schools in Yasuf (all run by the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education) (Directorate of Education in Salfit, 2012) (see Table 2).

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

School Name	Supervising Authority	Sex
Yasuf Iskaka Boys' Secondary School	Government	Male
Yasuf Iskaka Girls' Secondary School	Government	Female
Yasuf Co-educated Elementary School	Government	Mixed

Source: Directorate of Education in Salfit, 2012

In the village there are 555 students, 39 teachers, and 23 classes. The average number of students per teacher in the school is around 14, whilst the average number of students per class is approximately 24 (Directorate of Education in Salfit, 2012).

Also, there is one kindergarten in Yasuf village; Bara'em and "Noor Kindergarten" which is run by a private organization. The kindergarten consists of two classrooms which are supervised by 2 teachers (Directorate of Education in Salfit, 2012).

Due to the lack of scientific, commercial and industrial levels of education in the village, students are forced to go to Salfit Boys' Secondary School and Salfit Girls' Secondary School in Salfit city (for scientific and commercial education), each of which is 7 km away. A third option is Salfit Industrial School in Salfit city (for industrial education) which is also 7 km from Yasuf (Yasuf Village Council, 2012).

The educational sector in Yasuf village faces a number of obstacles, mainly (Yasuf Village Council, 2012):

1. The lack of land for the construction of new schools leading to the vertical expansion of constructing over the schools' buildings.
2. The lack of sufficient financial support to complete the construction work in Yasuf Iskaka Girls' Secondary School which is currently put on hold.

Health Status

Yasuf has one governmental health center (Yasuf Iskaka Health Center) and a private dental clinic. In the absence of required health services or in cases of emergency, patients are transferred to Yasir Arafat Governmental Hospital or to the medical laboratories, radiology centers and specialized clinics, all located in Salfit city approx. 7 km away (Yasuf Village Council, 2012).

An overview of the main obstacles and problems in the village's health sector, gives the following list (Yasuf Village Council, 2012):

- The lack of specialties at Yasuf Iskaka Health Center.
- The lack of a medical laboratory and a radiology center at the Health Center.
- The lack of medical staff available at the health center (only one physician works in it).
- The physician at the health center is not available all time.
- The lack of an ambulance.

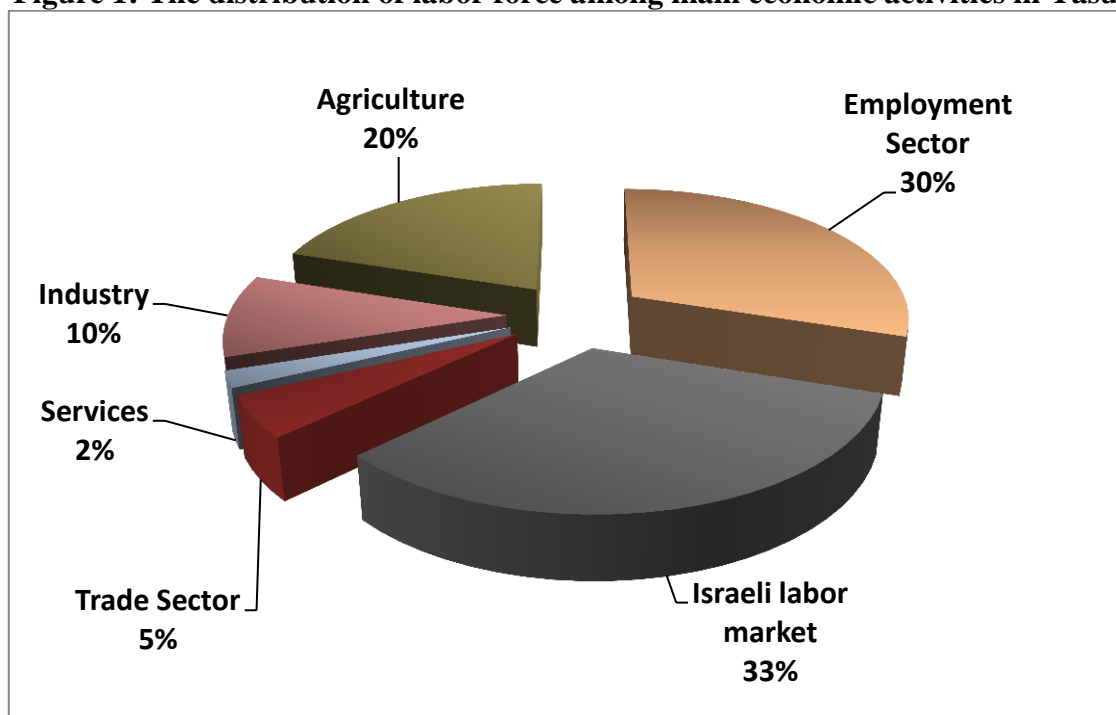
Economic Activities

The economy in Yasuf depends mainly on the Israeli labor market which absorbs 33% of the village's workforce (Yasuf Village Council, 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 Yasuf are as follows:

- Israeli Labor Market (33%)
- Government or Other Employees Sector (30%)
- Agriculture Sector (20%)
- Industry (10%)
- Trade Sector (5%)
- Services Sector (2%)

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



Source: Yasuf Village Council, 2012

Yasuf has 11 groceries, 1 butchery, 1 service store, 6 different professional workshops, 1 olive oil-press, a quarry and a stone crusher (Yasuf Village Council, 2012).

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

- Workers in the agriculture sector.
- Former workers in Israeli.

Labor Force

According to the PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census-2007, 31.4% of Yasuf labor force was economically active, of whom 89% were employed, 68.3% were not economically active, of whom 57.3% were students, and 28.5% were housekeepers (See Table 3).

Table 3: Yasuf 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	294	17	7	318	249	1	33	5	8	296	4	618
F	40	3	14	57	219	232	60	2	8	521	0	578
T	334	20	21	375	468	233	93	7	16	817	4	1,196

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

Source: PCBS, 2009.

Agricultural Sector

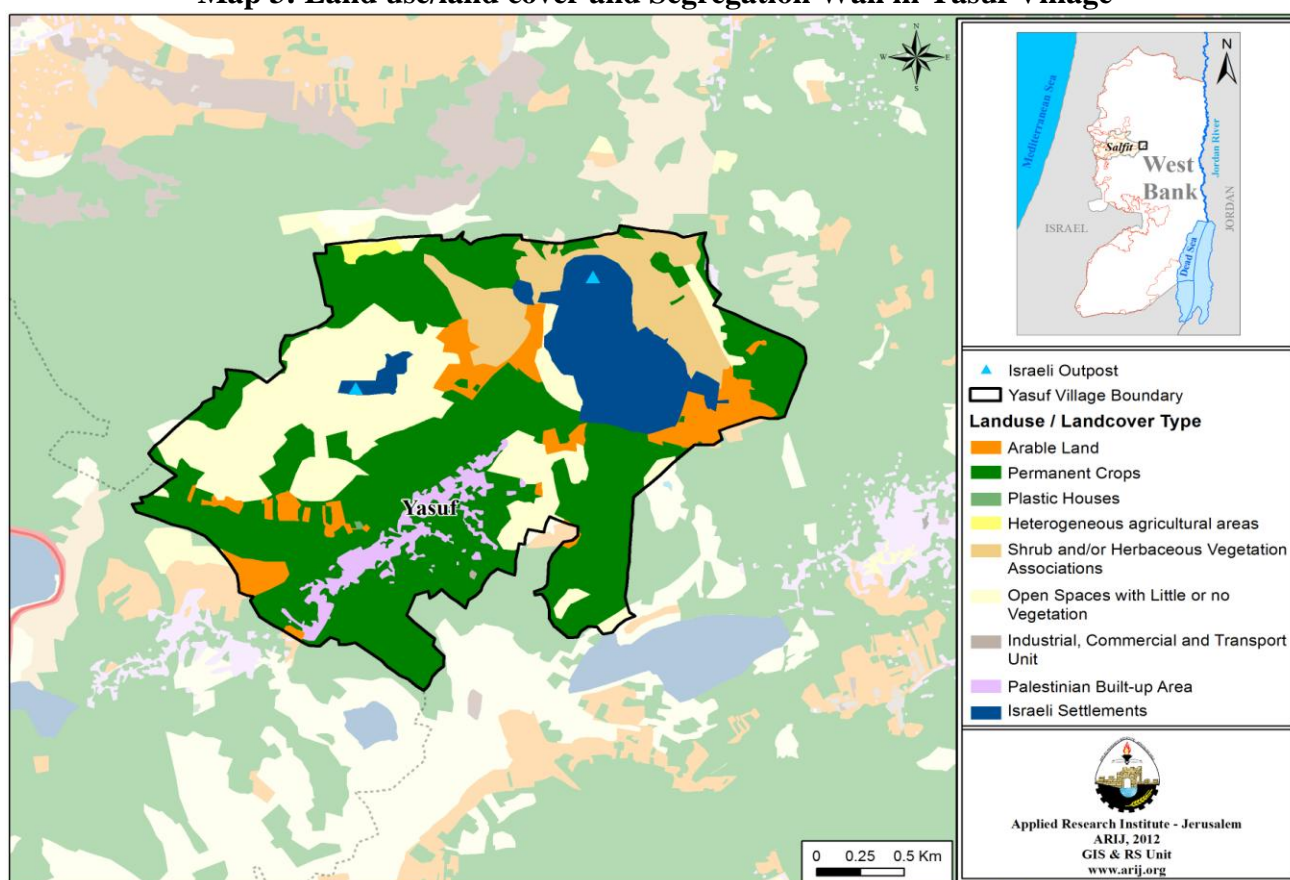
Yasuf has a total area of around 6,037 dunums of which 3,893 dunums are ‘arable’ land and 220 dunums are registered as ‘residential’ (See Table 4 and Map 3).

Table 4: Land use and land cover in Yasuf village (area in dunum)

Total Area	Built up Area	Agricultural area (3,893)				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					
6,037	220	2,916	2	543	432	0	0	1,272	2	650

Source: ARIJ – GIS Unit, 2012.

Map 3: Land use/land cover and Segregation Wall in Yasuf Village



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2013.

Table 5 shows the different types of rain-fed and irrigated open-cultivated vegetables in Yasuf. The most commonly cultivated crops within this area are tomatoes, jew’s melon, green beans and cauliflowers.

Table 5: Total area of rain-fed and irrigated open cultivated vegetables in Yasuf (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.
17	66	0	35	0	17	0	9	0	0	17	127

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

Source: Ministry of agriculture-Salfit, 2010

Table 6 shows different types of fruit trees planted in the area. Yasuf is famous for olive cultivation; there are approximately 3,230 dunums of land in the village planted with olive trees.

Table 6: Total area of horticulture and olive trees in Yasuf (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.
3,230	0	0	12	154	0	0	0	1	0	100	0	3,485	12

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

Source: Ministry of agriculture-Salfit, 2010

In terms of field crops and forage in Yasuf, cereals (particularly wheat) are the most cultivated, covering an area of about 95 dunums (See Table 7).

Table 7: Total area of horticulture and olive trees in Yasuf (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.
95	0	20	0	28	0	4	0	25	0	0	0	17	0	189	0

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

Source: Ministry of agriculture-Salfit, 2010

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 through the difference in each organization's definition of land coverage and ownership. The Ministry of Agriculture and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2011) 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. This therefore accounts for the larger area of agricultural holdings calculated by ARIJ.

The field survey conducted by ARIJ team shows that just 3.2% of the residents in Yasuf rear and keep domestic animals such as sheep and goats (See Table 8).

Table 8: Livestock in Yasuf

Cows*	Sheep	Camels	Poultry	Bee Hives
-	1,322	-	-	148

*Including cows, bull calves, heifer calves and bulls

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture - Salfit, 2010

There are approximately 16 kilometers of agricultural roads in the village, divided as follows (Yasuf Village Council, 2012):

Table 9: Agricultural Roads in Yasuf Village and their Lengths

Suitability of Agricultural Roads	Length (km)
For vehicles	6
For tractors and agricultural machinery only	-
For animals only	10
Unsuitable	-

Source: Yasuf Village Council, 2012

The agricultural sector in the village faces some problems, including (Yasuf Village Council, 2012):

- Settlers' attacks on farmers.
- The confiscation of lands by the Israeli occupation forces.
- The overgrazing of pastures by settlers.
- The spread of wild pigs released by settlers in the agricultural lands causing the harm and destruction of crops.
- The difficulty of marketing produced olive oil due to the lack of attention by competent authorities in the Palestinian National Authority, leading to the lack of demand and interest in land.
- The high costs of feed in light of the lack of material support, the poor economic situations and the bad living conditions of farmers.
- The lack of a capital for agricultural projects.

Institutions and Services

Yasuf village has a post office division in addition to a number of local institutions and associations that provide services to various sectors of society. These include (Yasuf Village Council, 2012):

- **Yasuf Village Council:** Founded in 1996 by the Ministry of Local Government, with the aim to take care of the village issues and providing various services to its population, in addition to infrastructure services.
- **Children Happiness Center:** Founded in 1996 by the Ministry of Local Government, with the aim to raise the scientific level of children of Yasuf village and activate non-curriculum activities. The Center also includes a wedding hall and a kindergarten which the center supervises and administrates.
- **Yasuf Children Club:** Founded in 1999 it was registered later by the Ministry of Youth & Sports, with the goal of organizing different programs for children to provide the basics of physical and mental development.
- **Yasuf Youth Sports Club:** Founded in 2010 by the Ministry of Youth & Sports, with the goal of taking care of young people, developing their capacities and their various talents.
- **Yasuf Women Club:** Founded in 2009 by the Ministry of Interior in order to organize women activities and events in the village, promoting their cultural, social and scientific levels and creating job opportunities for them.
- **The Women Saving & Credit Society:** Founded in 2003 it was registered by the Ministry of Interior, and is in charge of food processing as a type of productive agricultural activities, and in providing small loans for women.
- **Yasuf Cooperative Society for Saving & Credit:** Founded in 2005 by the Ministry of Labor. the Society is interested in its members as it provides them with loans and credits from the Society's own budget, as well as providing them with needed guarantees in order to get loans from outside sources.
- **Yasuf Society for Olive Oil-Pressing:** Founded in 1981 by a group of the village residents, it in pressing and producing olive oil. The society also encourages farmers to use modern techniques of cultivation and also provides their needs to increase productivity.
- **Yasuf Agricultural Cooperative Society:** Founded in 2008 by the Ministry of Labor, the Society in marketing olive oil at fair prices that fits with the work done by the farmers. It also encourages farmers to use modern techniques for picking and producing.

- **Farmers Union:** Founded in 2005 by the Farmers Union in Salfit, the Union aims to support livestock and the marketing of olive oil.

Infrastructure and Natural Resources

Electricity and Telecommunication Services:

Yasuf has been connected to a public electricity network since 2000. It is provided by the Israeli Qatariya Electricity Company, which is the main source of electricity in the village, and approximately 95% of the housing units in the village are connected to the network. The village residents face some problems concerning the electricity, in particular electricity cables', which lack of renewal and expansion. Furthermore the current system of prepaid meters is very ineffective. to include new areas, and the ineffective current system of prepaid meters and the need to replace it with a new better system (Yasuf Village Council, 2012).

Yasuf is also connected to a telecommunication network. Approximately 95% of the housing units within the village boundaries are connected to the phone lines (Yasuf Village Council, 2012).

Transportation Services:

There are only 2 taxis in Yasuf. Moreover, residents suffer from the existence of earth mounds and/or military checkpoints on roads sometimes in addition to the lack of a main transportation line from the village to Nablus city (Yasuf Village Council, 2012). There are 2.3 km of main roads and 6.68 km of secondary roads in Yasuf (Yasuf Village Council, 2012) (See Table 10).

Table 10: Roads in Yasuf village

Status of Internal Roads	Road Length (km)	
	Main	Sub
1. Paved & in good condition	2.3	2.58
2. Paved & in poor condition	-	-
3. Unpaved	-	4.1

Source: Yasuf Village Council, 2012

Water Resources:

Yasuf is provided with water by the West Bank Water Department through the public water network established in 1996. Approximately 95% of the housing units are connected to the water network (Yasuf Village Council, 2012)

The quantity of water, supplied to Yasuf village in 2010, was recorded at approximately 60,000 cubic meters/year (Yasuf Village Council, 2012). Therefore, the estimated rate of water supply per capita is approximately 94 liters/day. However, no Yasuf 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, the rate of water consumption per capita in Yasuf is only 73 liters per day (Yasuf Village Council, 2012). The average water consumption of Yasuf residents is low compared with the minimum quantity of 100 liters per capita per day proposed by the World Health Organization. Moreover, each cubic meter of water from the public network costs a citizen 4 NIS (Yasuf Village Council, 2012).

The village has 2 springs with an annual pumping rate of 160 cubic meters/ day, used for agricultural and recreation purposes (Yasuf Village Council, 2012). Moreover, located in the village are 70 rainwater harvesting cisterns (Yasuf Village Council, 2012).

Sanitation:

Yasuf lacks a public sewerage network and most of the population uses cesspits and septic tanks, as a main mean for wastewater disposal (Yasuf Village Council, 2012).

Based on the estimated daily per capita water consumption, the approximated quantity of wastewater generated per day, is 102 cubic meters, or 37,400 cubic meters annually. At the individual level, it is estimated that the per capita wastewater generation is approximately 58 liters per day. The wastewater collected by cesspits and septic tanks is discharged by wastewater tankers directly to open areas or nearby valleys with little regard for the environment. It should be noted that there is no wastewater treatment either at the source, or at the disposal sites which poses a serious threat to the environment and the public health (ARIJ - WERU, 2012).

Solid Waste Management:

The Joint Services Council of South Salfit is responsible for the collection and disposal of solid waste generated by citizens and establishments in the village. As the process of solid waste management (collection and transportation of solid waste) is costly, a monthly fee amounting to 13 NIS is charged to the village people and the facilities (Yasuf Village Council, 2012)

Most of the population in Yasuf benefits from the solid waste services, whereby waste is collected from households, institutions, shops, and public squares in plastic bags, and placed in 40 containers (of 1 cup capacity), located at various points in the village. The Joint Council collects the solid waste three times a week and transports it using a waste vehicle (one vehicle of 5 tons capacity) to the village's dumping site, 2 km from the village, where it is subsequently burnt (Yasuf Village Council, 2012)

The daily per capita rate of solid waste production in Yasuf is 0.7kg. Thus the estimated amount of solid waste produced per day from the Yasuf residents is 1.2 tons, or 449 tons per year (ARIJ-WERU, 2012).

Environmental Conditions

Like other towns and villages in the Governorate, Yasuf 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 several village neighborhoods, for numerous reasons:
 1. Israeli control over Palestinian water resources causes problems in the organization of water pumping and its distribution among Yasuf populations. The West Bank Water Department distributes water to various areas on an interval basis because the quantity of water available is not sufficient to simultaneously supply everyone's needs. In addition, the West Bank Water Department purchases water from Israeli Companies in order to meet the citizens' water needs.

2. High rate of water losses, due to the water networks- aged condition in need of rehabilitation and renovation.

Wastewater Management

- The absence of a public sewage network in the village means that Yasuf residents are forced to use unhygienic cesspits for the disposal of wastewater, and/or to discharge wastewater into 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 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 emitted when burned. All of this has harmful effects on human health and the environment.
- The lack of a central sanitary landfill to serve Yasuf and 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. The main impediment cited is that 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, and produces bad odors and distortion of the landscape.

Impact of the Israeli Occupation

Geopolitical status in Yasuf

According to the Oslo II Interim Agreement signed between the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel on 28th September 1995, Yasuf was divided into areas “B” and “C”. Approximately 1,540 dunums (25.5% of the village’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 noting that most of the village’s population resides in area B. The rest of the village’s area, constituting 4,497 dunums

(74.5% of the total area), is classified as area C, where Israel retains full control over security and administration related to the territory (table 11). 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, open spaces and Israeli settlements built on the village territory.

Table 11: The Geopolitical Divisions of Yasuf – Salfit Governorate

Area	Area in dunums	Percent of Total village area
Area A	0	0
Area B	1,540	25.5
Area C	4,497	74.5
Nature Reserve	0	0
Total	6,037	100

Source: ARIJ-GIS, 2013

The Israeli Occupation Practices in Yasuf Village

Yasuf village has been subjected to numerous Israeli confiscations for the benefit of the various Israeli objectives, demonstrated by the construction of Israeli settlements, checkpoints, outposts and bypass roads on the village territories. This is in addition to the Segregation Plan realized through the Segregation Wall. That which follows is a breakdown of the Israeli confiscations to have negatively affected Yasuf village territories:

Throughout the years of occupation, Israel has confiscated 602 dunums of land in Yasuf to establish “Kfar Tapuah” settlement north-east of the village. The settlement was established in 1978 and is currently inhabited by 919 Israeli settlers. Also, the Israeli occupation authorities established a military base inside “Kfar Tapuah” settlement on a total area of 25 dunums. These military bases established by Israeli authorities on Palestinian territories aim to intensify the military existence and enhancing security control over Palestinians.

Following the outbreak of the Second Palestinian Intifada in September 2000, the Israeli occupation authorities established Za'tara (Kfar Tapuah) a military checkpoint on Yasuf village lands which is considered to be one of the most important Israeli military checkpoints in the West Bank, separating its center from its north, and symbolizes a main feature of the Palestinian daily suffering. This checkpoint was established at a road intersection linking several Palestinian cities, as it is connected with Nablus, Ramallah, Salfit and Qalqilya cities, while also representing a main site of the many violations against Palestinian citizens of harassments, conflicts, injuries and inspection, arrest, long hours of closures and severe traffic jams. The Israeli occupation forces' aim of these checkpoints is to obstruct the freedom of movement of Palestinians between cities, to tighten the security control over them and disrupt their daily life.

Moreover, the Israeli occupation authorities established an Israeli military checkpoint on the northern entrance of Salfit city, which is realized through an iron gate, established near the western entrance of Ariel Israeli settlement. This checkpoint has had a negative impact on Palestinian lives during the last decade, as it is restricting their freedom of movement and their connection with villages north of Salfit and north 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 implemented 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 into the Western Segregation Area and changing Palestinians' movement, through the establishment of military checkpoints. The checkpoint north of Salfit was closed to Palestinians for more than 10 years and only recently partially opened (during 2011) for public vehicles (taxis and buses), while private cars are still denied access. 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. Hence, the internal road of these two villages has become the main road for crossing into Salfit Governorate.

In addition, lands of Yasuf village have been forcefully seized by Israeli settlers to establish "Tapauah West" outpost north of the village on a total area of 48 dunums, in an attempt to expand "Kfar Tapuah" Israeli settlement to the west and control more Palestinian land. Moreover, during the past two decades Israel constructed 232 outposts within the West Bank which are considered the nucleus for the development of new settlements. Outposts are composed of mobile caravans on the lands stolen by the settlers and are a contiguity of a mother settlement that is near. It is noted 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 after negotiations. Although the successive Israeli governments haven't legalized this phenomenon, they managed to find a security and logistic cover to justify the act and its continuity. After 2001, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon unleashed the expansion of outposts which has led to a significant increase in the number of outposts within Palestinian areas. In addition, the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) helped Israeli settlers to move and settle in those outposts, in addition to protect and provide them with the necessary infrastructure to guarantee their continued existence.

Moreover, the Israeli Government confiscated thousands of agricultural and non-agricultural dunums to open several bypass roads that stretch thousands of kilometers from the north to south of the West Bank in order to link Israeli settlements, dismember Palestinian lands and enhance security control over it. Israel has additionally confiscated lands from Yasuf, to the north and east, for the construction of the Israeli bypass roads no. 505, no. 60 and no. 4775, which all extend for 4 km on the village's land. The real threat of the bypass roads however lies in the buffer zone formed by the IOF along these roads 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.

It should also be noted that villages of Salfit Governorate 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 in terms of land confiscation, wall and settlement construction (ARIJ-UMD, 2012).

Military Orders Issued in Yasuf Village

The Israeli Occupation Army has issued many military orders and notifications to confiscate lands or halt construction in Yasuf village:

A series of Israeli military orders (9 of the military orders are given as an example below) holding the following numbers: No. (141612), (141721), (141722), (141723), (141724), (141725), (141726), (141727) and (141728): all of which were issued in June 2007, requiring to stop the construction

work of buildings, most of which are houses for citizens in Yasuf village, under the pretext of not obtaining a building permit from the Israeli authorities and also due to its presence in areas C.

The Israeli Occupation Attacks on Lands & Properties in Yasuf Village

Israeli settlers, living in settlements, established on Yasuf lands, have had a significant impact on Palestinians and their properties in Yasuf village. 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.

On the early morning hours of December 11 2009, settlers from “Taffuh” settlement near the village, sneaked into Hasan Khader Mosque in the center of Yasuf village and broke down the mosque’s main door, poured gasoline inside it and set it on fire causing huge losses in the second floor of the mosque, as most of the carpets were burned, in addition to the mosque’s library which was completely damaged. Additionally, settlers wrote slogans in Hebrew on the entrance floor of the mosque saying: 'revenge for Evie fire', and 'we will burn you all.'

Also, on October 12 2011, settlers living in “Kfar Tapuah” settlement razed lands located between the villages of Iskaka and Yasuf east of Salfit city in the northern West Bank to add four new trailers in the region. The targeted lands are located between “Kfar Tapuah” and “Shvut Rahel” (Rechelim) settlements, which belong to each of the citizens: Hamadallah Yousef Abu Hikma, Abdul Qader Ahmad Abu Hikma, Daoud Abdul Qader Abu Thahir, Ahmad Harees Lami and Ahmad Awad Harb. It should be noted that the razed area on which trailers were added was occupied by a group of Israeli settlers in 2002 who established “Nofei Nehama” outposts on it. Today, the outpost is comprised of 25 trailers, inhabited by 52 Israeli settlers. It is worth noting that this outpost is not included in any of the future structural schemes of any previous mentioned settlements (Kfar Tapuah or Shvut Rahel), which indicates that settlers living in the outpost are in the process of converting this outpost into a new settlement in the near future due to its strategic location; between Kfar Tapuah and Shvut Rahel settlements, alongside the Israeli bypass road number 60.

Furthermore, on the early morning hours of December 14th, 2011, a group of settlers sneaked into Yasuf village and raided the house of citizen Mohammad Ibrahim Musleh and burned down his car. In addition, they tried to burn his house by trying to set fire in a gas cylinder from the houses yard, where the aforementioned citizen lives with his family. Luckily the cylinder was empty, which prevented a deathly disaster.. Further to their withdrawal, under the protection of the occupation army, the settlers wrote racist slogans which state: Price Tags.'

Also, on January 13 2012, a group of settlers from “Tapuah” settlement, built on land of Yasuf village, raided 'Al Mafqa'a' area located west of the village in the southern side of Jamma'in town, where settlers, using sharp tools, proceeded to cut, sabotage and destroy approx. 78 olive trees partially. It is important to note that 'Al Mafqa'a' area is the most vulnerable agricultural area in the villages of Yasuf and Jamma'in to attacks by extremist settlers, which, during the last olive season, witnessed many harassments caused by the settlers against farmers while being in their fields.

Development Plans and Projects

Implemented Projects

Yasuf Village Council has implemented several development projects in Yasuf during the past five years (See Table 12).

Table 12: Implemented Development Plans and Projects in Yasuf during the Last Five Years

Name of the Project	Type	Year	Donor
Constructing retaining walls and roads	Infrastructure	2012	COOPI
Constructing a secondary school	Educational	2012	UNDP
Constructing an agricultural road	Infrastructure	2012	UNDP
Rehabilitating water springs	Water	2012	World Vision
Rehabilitating and fencing "Al Janayen" area	Infrastructure	2012	World Vision
Renovating the Old City	Infrastructure	2012	Riwaq
Preparing the village structural scheme	Infrastructure	2012	USAID
Rehabilitating the wedding hall	Public Services	2011	Yasuf Village Council
Providing a transportation bus for students	Public Services	2010	Ministry of Finance
Renovating Al Hajj Hasan Mosque	Public Services	2009	Ministry of Finance

Source: Yasuf Village Council, 2012

Proposed Projects

Yasuf Village Council, in cooperation with the civil society organizations in the village and the village residents, hopes to implement several projects in the upcoming years. The project ideas were developed during the participatory rapid appraisal (PRA) workshop conducted by ARIJ staff in the village. The projects are as follows, in order of priority from the viewpoints of the participants' in the workshop:

1. Expanding the village map and restructuring it in accordance to the population needs.
2. Providing the village schools with computer labs.
3. Constructing and rehabilitating agricultural roads (6 km).
4. Establishing a sports stadium for young people in the village.
5. Establishing a sewerage network (6 km).
6. Creating small development projects for groups to absorb as much as possible of the unemployed young people.

Locality Development Priorities and Needs

Yasuf suffers from a significant shortage of infrastructure and services. Table 13 shows the development priorities and needs in the village, according to the Village Council's point of view.

Table 13: Development Priorities and Needs in Yasuf

No.	Sector	Strongly Needed	Needed	Not a Priority	Notes
Infrastructural Needs					
1	Opening and pavement of roads	*			14.1 km [^]
2	Rehabilitation of old water networks			*	
3	Extending the water network to cover new built up areas	*			1 km
4	Construction of new water networks			*	
5	Rehabilitation/ construction of new wells or springs			*	
6	Construction of water reservoirs	*			500 m ³
7	Construction of a sewage disposal network	*			10 km
8	Construction of a new electricity network	*			1 km
9	Providing containers for solid waste collection			*	
10	Providing vehicles for collecting solid waste			*	
11	Providing a sanitary landfill	*			
Health Needs					
1	Building new clinics or health care centres			*	
2	Rehabilitation of old clinics or health care centres			*	
3	Purchasing medical equipment and tools	*			computer labs
Educational Needs					
1	Building new schools	*			additional floors in the boys' and girls' secondary schools
2	Rehabilitation of old schools			*	
3	Purchasing new school equipment		*		all schools
Agriculture Needs					
1	Rehabilitation of agricultural lands		*		100 dunums
2	Building rainwater harvesting cisterns		*		30 cisterns
3	Construction of livestock barracks		*		30 barracks
4	Provision of Veterinary Services	*			
5	Provision of seeds and hay for animals	*			60 tons per year
6	Construction of new greenhouses	*			5 greenhouses
7	Rehabilitation of greenhouses			*	
8	Provision of field crops seeds	*			
9	Provision of plants and agricultural supplies		*		

[^] 4.1 km secondary roads and 10 km are agricultural roads

Source: Yasuf Village Council, 2012

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