

# PLAN



**ISOCARP**  
Knowledge for better Cities

**Issue 3** August 2016

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## Palestine

Territorial contiguity and regionalization

Economic empowerment and social cohesion

Alternative planning and participatory approaches

The cultural zests of Palestine

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# Editor's note

Welcome to the third edition of ISOCARP's PLAN Magazine, the last of a series of three which aims to convey the experiences and ideas of two Urban Planning Advisory Teams (UPAT) who visited Gaza and the West Bank in June 2015. In close collaboration with local actors and stakeholders, the two teams simultaneously tried to envision possible urban futures – that look beyond the present situation and acknowledge the borders of 1967 as fully open for travel and trade, and – that might exist in a future State of Palestine.

With the beginning of the New Year, in a candid and sentient speech, Ban Ki-Moon, the Secretary-General of the UN, stressed that 2016 has not brought any novelty to the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt) and Israel, in terms of violence and public discourse. He was referring to the outbreak of violence in October 2015, which proves that everyday reality of occupation provokes anger and despair. This “everyday reality of occupation” is also the main challenge for urban planning in Gaza and the West Bank. However naïve it sounds under such conditions, urban planning strives to provide better everyday realities – a better quality of life – to urban dwellers, and war zones are no exceptions. The first three issues of PLAN provides different perspectives on how to achieve this in the oPt.

The articles of this magazine are a combination of different viewpoints of local stakeholders, practitioners, civil society and UPAT members on a great variety of issues, from political economy to urban design and food culture. To start it off, Martin Dubbeling gives an account on the reactions received at the 51<sup>st</sup> ISOCARP Congress and afterwards regarding the results of the UPAT workshops. We then take UN-Habitat's views on how global ambitions, set forth in Goal 11 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), meet local realities of Palestine. While Cliff Hague portrays the current status of the National Spatial Plan and provides insightful suggestions, Jeremy Dawkins enables us to imagine a future State of Palestine, reflecting on the findings of the UPATs. Ahmad El-Atrash and Parul Agarwala deliver perspectives on economic aspects of spatial development on the regional and national scales. Rolf Jensen contributes by informing us on the Norwegian advisory effort between 1995 and 2007 on Physical Planning and Institution Building in Palestine. We interviewed Tawfiq Bdeiri to get his views on current planning and devel-

opment issues in the State of Palestine. One major concern of the West Bank UPAT was mobility and accessibility. Sebastien Goethals built on to his previous article – on connecting Palestinian cities – by introducing a progressive path to accessibility and integrated development in Jerusalem and beyond.

Recently, the war in Syria has yielded research on how climate change and environmental conditions can affect armed conflict. Long history of conflicts over water has entered a new phase of acceleration with regards to the role water plays in development disputes and economic activities. In this framework, Jeffrey Featherstone and his colleagues address the history and current status of Water Management in the Jordan River Watershed.

On the local scale, Peter Slits reflects on the past and present of local governance in Palestine, and then the UNDP provides an account on the strategic value of Local Economic Development. UN-Habitat's overview on its ongoing local projects provides insights on participatory urban planning in Gaza and alternative planning for housing and spatial development in East Jerusalem. Muneer Elbaz then shows how Gaza's future is planned via the graduate projects of Development Planning students from the University College of Applied Sciences.

The final part is the fun part, where we observe conservation efforts in Gaza, talk about ‘dark tourism’ in Palestine and delve into Palestinian street art, sports and food.

The variety of the articles show that the magazine has been created together with a wonderful team, composed of urbanists from Palestine and from all over the world, brought together by ISOCARP for the UNDP and UN-Habitat. A special thanks to the editorial team and all the contributors. On behalf of the editorial team, I invite you to enjoy the magazine and hope that it contributes to Palestinian national planning policies and reconstruction efforts.

Gizem Caner, editor

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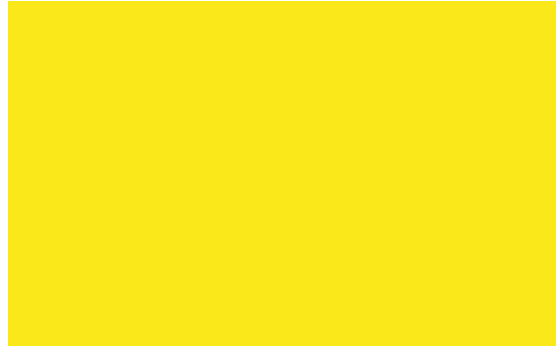
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# Contributors



**Gizem Caner**

Gizem is the editor of the third edition of PLAN. Her doctoral studies on multiculturalism, division and planning made her an expert on consulting in difficult multi-cultural settings and her advice for planning and design questions is implacable. Gizem was previously a coordinator for the Istanbul Financial Centre Project. She is currently working as a researcher and a lecturer based in Cyprus.



**Nader Atta**

Nader is a programme management officer at the UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People. Within the UNDP, he is responsible for developing response programmes on health, education, agricultural employment and infrastructure.



**Ahmad El-Atrash**

Ahmad is a project manager and senior urban planner at the United Nations Human Settlements Program in the Palestinian Territory. He is an experienced planner, interested in issues related to geopolitical and strategic planning governance reform, and sustainable development within the Palestinian context.

**Martina van Lierop**

Martina is a Landscape Architect with experience in practice, research and education. She participated in several international workshops. Martina is part of the editorial team, and designed the layout of PLAN magazine and is responsible for all things concerning graphic design.





**Jeffrey Featherstone**

Jeffrey joined Temple University (US) in September 2001 as Director of the Centre for Sustainable Communities. He was selected as coordinator of the UPAT West Bank Team due to his long experience in interdisciplinary and multi-faceted projects. Jeffrey's expertise in cross-sectoral planning and integrating many different governmental and non-governmental organizations in a project was indispensable for the UPAT.

On Saturday 7th of May 2016 Dr. Jeffrey Featherstone, passed away at the age of 68. He was a both diligent and goal oriented team leader and above all, a team player who was respectful of diverse and competing views and interests. He contributed to the three Magazines that illustrate the findings of the UPAT workshops. In this magazine Jeffrey contributed with one of the leading articles on water management in the Jordan River watershed. Always available to participate, support, and contribute to the ISOCARP activities he was for many years of great importance to ISOCARP as well as to the US ISOCARP delegation. Jeffrey will be greatly missed by his wife Nancy and his two daughters. His friends and colleagues in ISOCARP will remember him as a regular and active participant in our annual congress and as a friendly and open-minded debater. ISOCARP will miss his professionalism and his easy and joyous manner.

**Martin Dubbeling**

Martin is a senior consultant active in the fields of spatial planning, urban planning and design, landscape architecture and the environment in the Netherlands and abroad. He is Vice President of the UPATs of ISOCARP. He organised UPAT workshops in Singapore, Wuhan, Perm, Shantou, Nanjing and most recently in Palestine.



**Elizabeth Reynolds**

Elizabeth is an Urban Planner with design and development management experience focused predominantly on large-scale infrastructure and urban regeneration schemes in the UK and UAE. Elizabeth is Director of Urben, a small London based planning and design consultancy that is working to make cities better places.

**Jeremy Dawkins**

Jeremy was the coordinator of Gaza UPAT because he is a leading Australian urban planner, designer and researcher with a record of leadership and innovation in spatial planning practice and government policy. In 2009 he completed a five year term as executive Chairman of the Western Australian Planning Commission and now writes, researches and practices planning based in Sydney.



**Katharina Gugerell**

Katharina is a landscape architect and planner, and is appointed as Ass. Professor of Planning & Spatial Design at the University Groningen in the Netherlands. She is an experienced landscape and urban planning expert, interested in spatial & institutional design, conflict-post conflict planning, living labs & co-design/co-production, and games.



### **Sebastien Goethals**

Sebastien, living in China and Belgium, leads urban projects in Europe, Africa and Asia. In Palestine, as an expert in urbanism and mobility, he focused on urban development, social integration and transport accessibility. Next to his work for Citilinks, he is also conducting research at Tongji University on low carbon communities and became a consultant for emerging cities in Asia and Africa.



### **Parul Agarwala**

Parul is an urban specialist working independently in international organizations, city governments, and private consulting on strategic policy analysis, land use and urban planning, economic development, environmental assessment, and zoning legislations. Currently, she is based in Kabul, working as an urban development advisor for the UN-Habitat.



### **Ghulam Hassan Mir**

Ghulam enjoyed getting into contact and exchanging experience with Palestinian planners. He is divisional town planner at the Srinagar Development Authority in Kashmir (India). His professional interests include urban disaster risk reduction and urban environmental management.



### **Stefan Netsch**

Stefan coordinates PLAN Magazine and is an urban planner who perfectly pairs academic research and planning practice, since he combines his academic research at Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) and his work as urban planner in Stuttgart.



### **Julien Gicquel**

Julien is a Technical Advisor to the UNDP. Julien's experience in local planning and regeneration projects spans from Egypt to Mauritania and from Mongolia and Morocco, but he is currently at home in Paris working on the Métropole du Grand Paris project to reconnect and regenerate greater Paris.



### **Muneer El Baz**

Muneer has previously worked with the Aga Khan Trust for Culture and currently lectures at the University College of Applied Sciences (UCAS) in Gaza, alongside his role as a Senior Planner at planning projects and studies with consultant offices and NGOs.





# Introductory remarks

## UN-Habitat and UNDP

Since the signing of the Oslo accords in September 1993, the Palestinian government has worked diligently to establish and strengthen its institutional ability to plan and strategise its future course. Over the past two years, UNDP and UN-Habitat have worked closely with the Palestinian National Spatial Plan (NSP) Office to formulate a National Spatial Plan for the State of Palestine. As part of this exercise, a 2025 and 2050 vision for an integrated independent State of Palestine was drafted which captures in essence how Palestinian leaders, technocrats, the academic and CSO community, private sector, women and youth aspire their state to encapsulate.

To this effect, UNDP and UN-Habitat with the NSP team, housed at the Ministry of Local Government, and the ISOCARP worked closely with Palestinian national and local counterparts to present spatial visioning reflections for the Gaza Strip and the heartland of the West Bank as one coherent planning unit that responds to the current needs of Palestinians in the State of Palestine and the Diaspora.

As a result, two magazines were published, one for Gaza and the other for the heartland of the West Bank that provided for inspirational reading on the enormous possibilities that both important regions can contribute to a free and independent State of Palestine.



This magazine is a culmination of a process to bring light to how an integrated State of Palestine has all the ingredients to make it a strong, viable, and important contributor to the discourses at the international community level on how to harness the unprecedented urbanization potentials. The United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, Habitat III that will take place in Ecuador in October 2016 is a case in point. The magazine, which comes on the heels of the two previous magazines on the West Bank and Gaza will touch on how the State of Palestine will work towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular SDG 11, Sustainable Cities and Communities, and SDG 16, Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.

In this magazine, the local economic potential of the State of Palestine is touted as a catalyst for a strong local government system by advancing the

concept of Metropolitan Governance in Gaza city-region and the heartland of the West Bank (Jerusalem city-region) that supports sustainable economic growth, especially in the most vulnerable Palestinian communities, such as Area C of the West Bank. Finally, the magazine touches on how planning in East Jerusalem can and will contribute to Palestinian resilience in the face of increased Israeli confiscations and unlawful demolitions of private homes and structures.

UNDP and UN-Habitat are proud to contribute to the Palestinian endeavour of formulating a long-term spatial vision for the State of Palestine. Such a spatial vision, not only guides the strategies of Palestinian institutions in an integrated manner, but also gives hope to Palestinians, in particular the young, that it is moving towards a sustainable self sufficient State that is a positive contributor to the neighbourhood it lives in and the international community at large.



**ISOCARP**  
Knowledge for better Cities

# International Society of City and Regional Planners

800 members in 80  
countries worldwide

Founded in 1965 and  
focused on the Next  
Generation of Planners

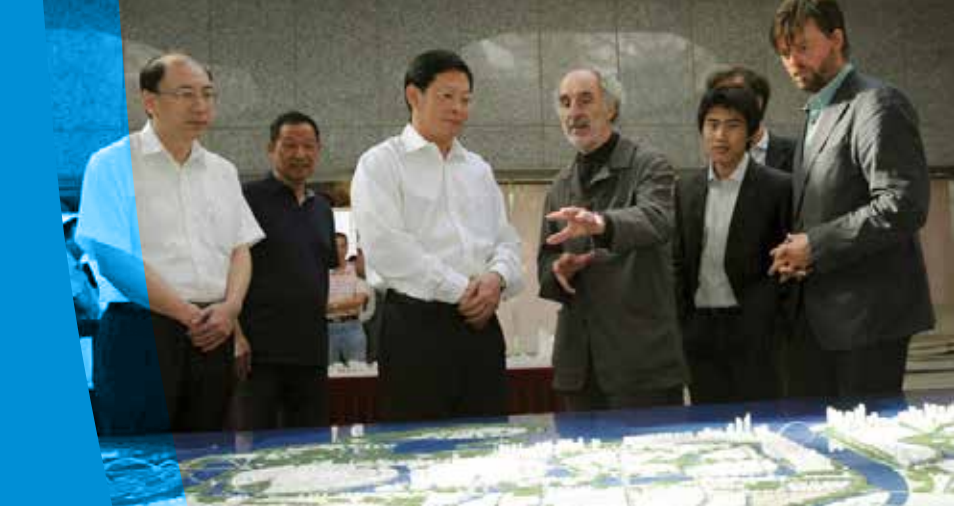
Network opportunities  
for international  
planning professionals,  
academics and  
practitioners

Workshops, seminars,  
congresses and training  
programs

Collaborations with UNESCO,  
UN-Habitat and UNDP

Our motto is  
'Knowledge for Better Cities'

Meet and join us at [www.isocarp.org](http://www.isocarp.org)!



# UPATs for Gaza and West Bank

Martin Dubbeling



The two UPAT workshops that took place between 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> June 2015 on Capacity Building and Test Planning Exercises for the West Bank and Gaza, is perhaps the most ambitious workshops organised by ISOCARP to date. The team and all those they engaged with were asked to look past the present situation of physical and administrative barriers that separate the territories of Israel and a future state of Palestine, and consider the 1967 borders (or Armistice Line) as fully open for travel and trade. From this starting point, the challenges needing to be addressed included how to enable future urban development in the West Bank and Gaza; enhance public transport and create Transit Oriented Development; plan for corridor development; protect vulnerable landscapes, natural resources, cultural and religious heritage; and to enhance industries, trade, tourism and the economy in the region.

For this UPAT workshops the UNDP, UN-Habitat and ISOCARP selected two teams, one for the West Bank and one for Gaza. Local planning professionals supported each of the two teams and all the team members gave their time voluntarily. Both international teams met and worked together during the first day of the UPAT workshop in Jerusalem, one team then visited and worked in the West Bank while the other team was based in Gaza. During the two concluding

days of the workshop both teams met and worked together in Ramallah. The findings and experiences of the ISOCARP Urban Planning Advisory Teams are brought together in three magazines. The first magazine focuses on the West Bank, the second on Gaza and this third issue addresses the future state of Palestine.

The results of the two workshops were presented and widely discussed at the annual ISOCARP congress, 19-23 October in Rotterdam. This discussion as well as the online publications evoked many reactions. Some participants to the discussion, like Tawfiq Bdeiri and Rolf Jensen contributed to this issue of the magazine (see pages 37-39 and 40-42). Khalid El Adli, a practicing professional and professor of urban design and architecture at the Cairo University, reacted by saying that the initiatives to organize this workshop and to disseminate the results in the magazines are much needed for Gaza. "The nation of Palestine and its people have experienced and continue to date to experience very difficult and inhumane living conditions. I hope that initiatives like this eventually bring peace and change to the area. The UPAT teams have done a great job to explore the status of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, offer reasonable exposure, and provide the basis for future sustainable development in Gaza and the West Bank. It is essential that this initiative be followed through as the

stepping stone towards responding to current and emerging urban challenges in the area while managing urban growth and flows, and safeguarding the cultural heritage and local population. Pertinent however, is promoting equal and easy access to people, resources and services while connecting the people and cities within the parameters of 1967 borders via a multi-modal transportation network."



The objective of both UPAT workshops was to develop simple, practical and original solutions that improve the quality of life in the region and that can be implemented in the near future. The UPAT teams were invited to suggest practical visions, designs, implementation tools and steps for both the West Bank and Gaza. The two UPAT workshops were seen as having the potential to make a valid and crucial contribution to increase capacity, to enhance awareness, to develop strategies, to propose policies and to stimulate a set of integrated activities that would help the region and its communities to become more liveable, sustainable and prosperous and, at the same time, generate more tenable economic activity for the future prosperity of the region.

Amos Brandeis actively participated in the discussion in the Rotterdam Congress. Amos is an architect and urban planner, former Chairman of the Israel Planners Association (2006-2012) who was born in Israel and lived his whole life in the Middle East. "The two UPAT workshops are positive and important," Amos stated. "They present the complexity of the situation and mainly focus on the tools of our profession to foster hope for a better future and to make a real difference. Most people in our region just want to live together in peace on a very small piece of land. Unfortunately, due to lack of real leadership, and a minority of extremists on both sides, led us to the recent tragic situation, with less and less optimism towards the future, which as a result, leads to more extremism. Ignoring, as much as possible, any kind of politics, and concentrating on suggesting planning ideas towards

a better future for the people who live in the West Bank and Gaza, is the right approach. Some of the ideas suggested during the UPATs are relatively small-scale ideas for projects, which can be implemented in the short term, without any political implications, but with real impact on the quality of life of the people. This is the way to do it."

"Living half a century in the Middle East means I have many good memories of better times in our troubled part of the world," Amos Brandeis continues. "As a child, I spent many weekends in Eastern Jerusalem and in most cities and towns in the West Bank, and even in Gaza. As an owner of a planning firm, I believe it is a mission to foster collaboration and sustainable co-existence between Jews, Muslims and Christians in our region. This is because I face reality, and not because of my political views, which no one will hear from me, because even I don't know what they are in this complex situation. I was, and I am, involved in many projects, which are aimed to demonstrate that neighbours can, and have to, live normal life together, or side by side such as the Alexander and Zaymar River Restoration Project (Israeli-Palestinian cross-border river), neighbourhoods for Muslim Bedouins in Rahat, Tel Sheva, Nazareth development plans, and other Arab cities in Israel. These projects represent successful collaboration between 'normal people', based on mutual trust, addressing real day-to-day needs. Concentrating on this approach, bypassing regional and national political aspects and ideologies, can lead slowly to a more sustainable and prosperous future of the Palestinian cities. In the end, most people just want to have a normal, secure and tranquil life."

Abdellatif Qamhaieh, program director and assistant professor in urban planning at the Alhosn University in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, grew up in the West Bank. "I have always found Palestinian cities and villages extremely beautiful as they are nestled within the hilly landscapes and combine traditional architecture with more modern elements. Within the last few years, I have witnessed some negative changes in these cities due to the political instability, and the lack of



resources - especially the unavailability of land for expansion. I would like to see these cities and villages prosper and grow again, and would like to see major improvements in infrastructure, especially sustainable transport modes beyond the automobile. One of the areas where Palestinians currently suffer the most is mobility (or the lack of it), and I hope through proper planning and with any political settlement in the future that this issue is addressed at the local and regional levels. I am happy to see that the UPAT teams echoed this sentiment. It is refreshing to see attempts to look beyond the conflict, and envision a Palestinian state with a vibrant, contiguous, and sustainable urban environment. The work demonstrated best practice in urban planning, and the list of experts was excellent – both local and international. Considering the short duration of the visits, I think the results are impressive. I am particularly impressed by the spatial plan for Gaza.”



Rafael Tuts, coordinator of the urban planning and design branch of UN-Habitat, made a more cautionary note on the findings of the UPAT teams. “The UPAT program is quite similar to our Urban Planning and Design Lab. Where ISOCARP focuses on visioning, planning issues and on disseminating the results of their team efforts in magazines in a very effective way, UN-Habitat also addresses legal and financial aspects of urban planning. Only then you can deliver concrete and integrated solutions and make implementable plans. The approaches of ISOCARP and UN-Habitat have much in common, though. They promote to integrate design throughout the whole planning process and replace sequential planning processes with an iterative planning process in which plans are developed, tested and improved. But this can only be effective if the teams in the international assignment are deployed for a long-term support.”

The photos on page 11-13 were taken at the ISOCARP Congress in Rotterdam 19-23 October 2016 during the presentation and discussion of the results of the West Bank and Gaza UPAT workshops amongst the ISOCARP congress delegates, representatives from UN-Habitat and the Palestinian Authority and the West Bank and Gaza UPAT members.

## About UPAT workshops

Since 2004 ISOCARP has organised over 22 UPAT workshops in countries including China, Mexico, Russia, Spain, USA, Austria, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Singapore. Repeated requests from these countries shows there is a strong demand for expertise and independent advice from international teams of planning and design professionals. These UPAT workshops are made up of between five and nine planning and design professionals who are brought together from around the world for an intensive week of devising creative solutions and strategic advice in response to specific urban challenges. The teams comprise a Team Leader and a Team Rapporteur, plus two to four senior planners and two young planning professionals – all with a broad range of skills and experiences.

The strength of ISOCARP’s approach lies in the diversity of each team, with a context and perspective that is entirely exclusive to a certain location and point in time. Bringing together ISOCARP members and local professionals creates an alchemy that leads to creative and robust urban strategies. Over the course of their visit to the host city, the team will have undertaken field investigations, spoken to local counterparts and community stakeholders, hosted design sessions and presented their interim findings. Following the UPAT workshop a professional publication concludes the research and suggested urban response then presents the final results at a dedicated seminar at the ISOCARP annual congress.

The UPAT workshop programme is a service that ISOCARP, the International Society of City and Regional Planners, provides to cities and regions worldwide. Since 1965, ISOCARP brings together individual and institutional members from more than 80 countries worldwide, who collectively seek to improve cities and territories through planning practice, training, education and research. ISOCARP is based in Den Hague and is formally recognised by the United Nations and the Council of Europe. It has a formal consultative status with UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

# Facts & Figures



**12.37** mln. Palestinians  
in the world  
4.75 mln. in the State of Palestine  
1.47 mln. in Israel  
5.46 mln. in Arab countries  
685.000 in foreign countries  
(Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2015)



**\$4,900**  
GDP per capita in  
2012 (CIA The World  
Factbook, 2012 est.)



**42.8%** of the Palestinian  
population are refugees  
27.1% of them in the West Bank  
67.3% in the Gaza Strip  
Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics,  
2015)



**13 years**  
is the **average school life**  
**expectancy** (primary to tertiary)  
(CIA The World Factbook, 2013 est.)

**41%** youth (15-24)  
unemployment of which  
**37%** are male  
**64.7%** are female  
(CIA The World Factbook, 2013 est.)



**96.5%** of the  
Palestinian population is  
**literate\***  
\*age 15+ who can read and  
write (CIA The World Factbook, 2015  
est.)



**36.9%** of households\*  
participated in a domestic trip  
during 2014  
\*at least one household member  
(Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics,  
2014)

**1.4 mln** internet users  
**34.4%** of the  
population  
(CIA The World Factbook, 2009 est.)



**110** hotels comprising  
**6,826** available rooms  
and **15,211** beds in  
the West Bank (Palestinian Central  
Bureau of Statistics, 2015)



**8,715** employees in  
Research & Development  
**4,533** researchers  
in 2013  
(Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics,  
2014)



**43.3%** agricultural land  
**7.4%** arable land  
**1.5%** forest  
**55.2%** other  
(CIA The World Factbook, 2015)

# The 'Urban SDG' – Sustainable Development Goal 11

## *Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable*

UN-Habitat, oPt

In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit adopted a new framework to guide development efforts between 2015 and 2030, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development”. The 2030 Agenda contains 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. The SDGs address, in an integrated manner, the social, economic and environmental dimensions of development, their interrelations, aspects related to peaceful societies and effective institutions, as well as means of implementation (finance, technology, capacity development etc.). By endorsing a stand-alone goal on cities (Goal 11), known as the ‘urban SDG’, – make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable – the international community recognized urbanization and city growth as a transformative force for development. This first-ever international agreement on urban-specific development acknowledges sustainable urban development as a fundamental precondition for sustainable development. Heads of State and Governments also committed to engage in the systematic follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The follow-up and review will be based on regular, voluntary and inclusive country-led progress reviews at the national level feeding into reviews at the regional and global level.

But let us look at the urban SDG from the perspective of the State of Palestine and examine how the global ambitions meet local realities. Rapid urbanization, high population growth rates, scarcity of land and territorial fragmentation resulting from the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories are considered the main challenges facing the Palestinian urban areas. According to the World Urbanization Prospects, the urbanization rate in the Palestinian territories is estimated to be 3.3% compared to the 1.98% of the world average. The growth rate in the occupied Palestinian territories is estimated to be 3%, which is among the highest in the world. Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) estimates the 2013 population of the occupied Palestinian territories as 4.4 million

people, 2.7 million in the West Bank and the rest 1.7 million in the Gaza Strip. The gross population density has reached 468 capita per square kilometre in the West Bank and 4,505 capita per square kilometre in the highly crowded Gaza Strip. This high population growth rate is accompanied by rapid urbanization - currently, around 74% of the population are located in urban areas- creating growing pressure on land, infrastructure and resources. As a result, random and uncontrolled developments have expanded in the cities and around the fringes of towns, encroaching on surrounding agricultural land and poor infrastructure.

In terms of housing, the Palestinian communities suffer from a housing crisis in Area C of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip. The Palestinian construction in the Israeli occupied Area C of the West Bank is heavily restricted; only approximately 1 percent of Area C has been planned for Palestinian development. According to the Israeli Civil Administration (ICA) data, between 2010 and 2014, only 33 of the 2,020 submitted applications by Palestinians for building permits in Area C were approved by the ICA. Likewise, since 1967, about 27,000 Palestinian homes and other structures have been demolished in the occupied Palestinian territories. In 2013, 565 Palestinian-owned structures in Area C, including 208 residential structures, were demolished due to lack of Israeli-issued permits, displacing 805 people, almost half of them children. In occupied East Jerusalem, according to the land use designations, only 9 km<sup>2</sup> of East Jerusalem (about 12%) is zoned for construction. Scarcity continues to put enormous pressure on the affordability of housing in East Jerusalem. Between 2007 and 2012, the average house price increased by more than 192%, compared with average wages in East Jerusalem increasing by only 12% during the same period. By the same token, Gaza Strip suffers a lot from the housing shortages, especially after the recent wars that left thousands of families without proper shelter, since more than 17,000 Gaza housing units were destroyed or severely damaged during 2014 war and 5,000 units still need work

after damage sustained in the previous military campaigns. Estimations are that if the business-as-usual reconstruction process continues, more than two decades are needed to address the housing deficit in Gaza Strip alone, which is estimated to reach 75,000 units.

Lastly, in terms of harnessing the potential of urbanization, the Palestinian Authority has planning jurisdiction only over 42% of the West Bank territory, the remainder of which is occupied by Israel and in which development is highly restricted, land confiscation occurs, and illegal Israeli settlements and outposts continue to expand, as well as the ever present fragmentation caused by the Segregation Barrier, to name a few. In addition, the continued political impasse between the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and the de-facto authority Hamas in Gaza further complicates matters related to sovereignty and development and inevitably hampers the ability of Palestinians to see the positive results that well planned urbanization can bring.

#### **A complex urban context indeed.**

For the State of Palestine to achieve the urban SDG – and the other goals as well – cities must emerge as the locus for change and the venue where policies are realized. Cities in Palestine can forge new linkages and pacts among actors, offering innovative solutions that have the potential to influence development agendas at national, regional and global levels. Cities globally have been catalysts of productivity, technology and infrastructure development, including institutional arrangements that contribute to the enhancement of equity, social inclusion and quality of life, and must become so for Palestine. There are methodologies and approaches available now that can assist the State of Palestine in this endeavour.

The first of these is the City Prosperity Initiative that was introduced in 2012 by UN-Habitat, as a monitoring tool that enables city authorities, as well as local and national stakeholders, to identify opportunities and potential areas of intervention for their cities to become more prosperous. It is a composite index made of six dimensions that serves to define targets and goals that can support the formulation of evidence-based policies, including the definition of city-visions and long-term plans that are both ambitious and measurable. The City Prosperity Initiative is both a metric and a policy dialogue, which offers cities from developed and developing countries the possibility to create indicators and baseline information, often for the first time. It is also a global monitoring mechanism, adaptable to national and local lev-

els that can provide a general framework that allows cities, countries, and the international community to measure progress and identify possible constraints. Prosperity, as defined by UN-Habitat, is a social construct that materializes in the realm of human actions. It deliberately and conscientiously builds on the conditions prevailing in a city at any time, despite its size or location. This is a broader, wide-ranging notion that has to do with clear policies, and well-balanced, harmonious development in a fair and just environment. UN-Habitat conceptualized the notion of urban prosperity as being composed of the following: productivity; infrastructure; quality of life; equity and inclusion; environmental sustainability; and governance and legislation. The City Prosperity Initiative is based on the fundamental principles of human rights. It considers that urbanization, as a process, should adhere to human rights principles, while the city, as an outcome, should meet specific human rights standards that need to be measured.

Another approach that can assist decision makers is the nationalization of a monitoring framework for the SDGs and the urban SDG in specific. What is measured is known, and what is known and quantified can be instrumental in influencing decisions and political will. UN-Habitat has developed an SDG 11 Monitoring Framework and guide to assist national and local governments to monitor and report on SDG 11 indicators (<http://unhabitat.org/sdg-goal-11-monitoring-framework/>). The guide aims to support national and local government efforts to collect, analyse, validate data and information in view of the preparation of country-based report and includes necessary definitions, method of computation and metadata of indicators, including spatial indicators. The use of this guide and the overall broader monitoring of the SDGs will require new data collection mechanisms and innovation on the part of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, whose high technical capacities make it an obvious critical partner for such an effort, as well as the Ministry of Local Government and others.

To this end, a lot is at stake for the localization and realization of SDG 11 in Palestine. Despite the many challenges that loom large towards conceiving a harmonious urbanization in Palestine, the urbanization process itself remains the transformative force that will enable the environment for sustainable development and the fulfilment of the New Urban Agenda that will be discussed in October, 2016 during the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (HABITAT III).



# The National Spatial Plan for the State of Palestine

Cliff Hague



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The first issue of Plan made a strong case for moving beyond a reactive planning regime, crippled by the Israeli military occupation. The article "Future State of Palestine" by the team from the International Peace and Cooperation Centre provided a diagrammatic map of a "Future Vision for Palestine". Meanwhile, the Palestinian Authority has taken some important steps towards developing strategic spatial planning. By giving the Ministry of Local Government lead responsibility for completing the National Spatial Plan, and by embarking on city-region scale planning exercises, the Palestinian Authority is putting into practice the kind of ideas that contributors to Plan are advocating.

However, making a National Spatial Plan can be a fraught exercise. Indeed, work began on a National Spatial Plan for Palestine some years ago, under the direction of the then Ministry of Planning, but no plan was produced.

## **Obstacles to National Spatial Plan-making**

Typically, a National Spatial Plan seeks to integrate the spatial dimension of a range of government policies. However, sector ministries such as education or health, rarely have an explicit spatial component in their policies. Their goals often focus on targets such as increasing participation in secondary education, or reducing infant mortality, which are not disaggregated spatially. Even Ministries whose work have

a clear spatial element, most notably Transport, usually have their own criteria by which they prioritise investment, and will defend these against priorities of other ministries. In short, the need for integration, which a National Spatial Plan aspires to meet, is also a reason why National Spatial Plan preparation can be contentious and protracted. If the National Spatial Plan is seen to be owned exclusively by planners, others within government are unlikely to give it much regard.

Defining priorities spatially can also create rivalries between places and trigger political challenges. A map showing places to benefit from development projects is also a map showing places that will not reap such rewards.

Faced with pressure from places planned to “miss out”, the political response is typically to spread the benefits wider: the “Law of Growth Centre Multiplication”.

The centralist legacy of colonial physical planning cultures does not help. A National Spatial Plan conceived as a kind of National Masterplan or blueprint is a triply flawed project. It tries to do too much, in too much detail and will not be deliverable. What are truly national issues in spatial development, and what aspects are best left to regional and to local levels for decision and action? Transparency, but also humility, is needed in expressing through the plan what national level government wants to, will do, but also what it cannot do by itself.

## A National Spatial Framework would sketch a direction of travel rather than an end point.

Strategic planning has changed as governments have become weakened, by financial crises, fiscal limitations or loss of powers to supra-national levels or to global companies. Practice has moved from a linear, top-down “predict and provide” model, to something more recursive and negotiated, as part of the shift from “government” to “governance”.

### A National Spatial Plan or a National Spatial Framework?

These obstacles and shifting patterns of power imply that a National Spatial Plan may not be the most appropriate

way to address the future development of Palestine. Scenarios and visions have their place, and can be tools for advocacy and education. However, they also carry the risk of being seen as idealistic, impractical. In the very fraught context of the occupied Palestinian territory, a national strategy needs to provide a narrative of an attainable better future, but also create a consensus on short-term and practical action to move towards that future.

It might be best to think of a National Spatial Framework rather than an National Spatial Plan. An National Spatial Framework would be a less precise document, more open-ended and exploratory. It would sketch a direction of travel rather than an end point. It would accommodate the aspirations of sector ministries, rather than seek to resolve potential tensions between them. Revealing possible tensions, even contradictions, would be a starting point; reviewing the National Spatial Framework in 4 years’ time would create a space in which to work for better integration.

Planners know better than other professions that everything affects everything else. But this insight can create paralysis. We would always want more information on which to build a plan, and as a consequence many plans have been preceded by ambitious, protracted surveys, with the result that the plan is out of date by the time it is produced: the world moved on while planners were drawing their maps.

### A National Spatial Framework for Palestine?

Decisions about how to approach spatial planning in Palestine are matters for the Palestinian people and their representatives. As an outsider I seek

to do no more than offer ideas based on my experience elsewhere, blended with the knowledge I have picked up in a few short visits to the country. In this spirit I offer these suggestions.

I would go for an National Spatial Framework rather than an National Spatial Plan, with an explicit commitment to reviewing it in 4 years’ time: in other words, the review process would begin as soon as the National Spatial Framework is published, and would be informed by issues that the first National Spatial Framework had not been able to resolve.

Rather than base the National Spatial Framework on some kind of Report of Survey, I would propose an “Issues Report” that would be a basis for consultation with as wide an array of stakeholders as possible, with the caveat that the consultation is time-limited and focused on the issues, as otherwise time and scarce resources will be eaten away.

Issue 1 of Plan provides much of the basis for an Issues Report. Urbanisation and economic transformation, connectivity and accessibility, culture and landscape, and water provide the starting points for discussion and consultation. Parul Agarwara called for “a comprehensive urbanization study”: yes, but make that a commitment in the National Spatial Framework, rather than delay the National Spatial Framework until that study has been done. Similarly, identify the specialisms and opportunities for the regions, and commit to working with them to deliver, but don’t prescribe now what they must deliver. A National Spatial Framework should be the basis for engagement, mobilisation and advocacy for Palestine’s future.

# Imagining a dynamic nation with two complementary metropolitan regions

Jeremy Dawkins

*Gaza is an ancient centre of habitation that has survived for 4,000 years, at various times in the face of marginalisation and destruction. Today it represents an essentially urban economy, isolated and kept alive through external funding, the illegal tunnel economy, and the ingenuity and persistence of its people. An urban area cannot survive without being connected. A return to economic progress and prosperity can only materialise through **trade, communication** and **contact** with the world beyond Gaza.*

These words by Maxwell Gaylard, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in the occupied Palestinian territory, in his 2012 UN report *Gaza in 2020*, apply not only to Palestine's Gaza Coast but to the whole of the State of Palestine. At present, the barriers to communication and trade are more extreme in the State of Palestine than in almost any other place on earth, and contradict human life and progress. Despite the barriers, the Palestinian authorities are doing everything possible to maintain human dignity, living standards, communication and contact.

To contribute to this effort, the two UPAT workshops looked beyond the barriers, to a time of sovereignty when the 1967 borders are fully open for travel and trade. We asked all those joining with us in the workshops to look to that hard-to-imagine future, and we were delighted and honoured by the generous manner in which our partners joined in this process. We also thought about immediate and interim initiatives, and improvements to governance, so that *ad hoc* decisions now do not limit options in the future. So – when peace returns and the State of Palestine is a full member of the international community of nations – what picture emerged?



We saw two cities – Jerusalem and Gaza City – as the social, economic and cultural engines that will drive the great historic potential of the State of Palestine. Both cities already support emerging metropolitan regions that can be defined by function and geography – the analysis is contained in *PLAN No 1* (particularly page 40) and *PLAN No 2* (particularly page 36) respectively. And we think that in future they will be governed as metropolitan regions, each with its metropolitan government. This is consistent with strong trends world-wide. As David Wilmoth said at the 2016 Conference on Political Reordering of Space and Optimal Governance of Tehran City:

Effective urban governance is now widely seen (not least by national and provincial governments) as a *pre-requisite for national productivity and economic performance* and this recognition includes the necessity for well-functioning and attractive *metropolitan regions*.

To give the State of Palestine's two metropolitan regions names, here they are referred to as the Capital Metropolitan Region and the Gaza Coast Metropolitan Region.

## Transport systems can help define two complementary metropolitan regions

The State of Palestine has an opportunity to leapfrog today's dominant transport systems and take advantage of the best available technology. Present planning must factor in many possible technologies, including heavy rail, metro, tram-trains, light rail, cable cars (as at Jericho), a variety of bus modes, a variety of taxi modes, driverless cars (here now, and fully anticipated by planner Brian Dudson in his 1995 book, *To the Cities of the Second Car Age*), shared cars, shared electric bikes, and more. These will be safe, pollution free, entirely powered by renewable energy, and managed by the smartest technologies – and they will be in demand, since even where routine transactions are increasingly online, the number and variety of **trips** increases. This increasing mobility requires the kinds of high-volume transport spines that shape metropolitan regions.

In the West Bank, a north-south urban railway, as described in *PLAN No 1*, can be a critical factor in shaping the Capital Metropolitan Region and driving multi-centred sustainable urban development. This north-south urban railway will potentially connect the whole of the State of Palestine and beyond, and at the same time provide the impetus, at smaller scales, for city structure, stronger centres, axes of development and economic opportunity, urban density, conservation, great public spaces and community development. A credible *commitment* to the north-south urban railway can begin to have those impacts long before it is actually built.



On Palestine's Gaza Coast, the future structure of the metropolitan region – urban areas, ports, industry, agriculture, natural areas, a high tech campus, heritage assets, tourist assets – will be united by the movement systems presented in *PLAN No 2*. Elements of the transport system include Al Rasheed Coastal Road as a low-speed route for local and tourist traffic and public transport; the old Istanbul to Cairo rail alignment as a pedestrian, bike and green spine; Salah al-Din Road (the grand trunk road) as an urban road and primary bus route with many intersections; and a new fast international rail and highway freight route along the eastern border, linking the port in the north and the airport in the south, and international networks beyond that.

## The complementary roles of the two metropolitan regions

Palestine's Capital Metropolitan Region is, of course, truly unique, with an intense sense of place and a striking natural setting. Great city regions are not simple: they have differentiated centres, accidental juxtapositions and separations, consistencies and diversities, and distinct areas of specialised character and function. Despite its recent history, and often because of that history, the Capital Metropolitan Region has all of those qualities. In addition, it will have options for planned, orderly and efficient expansion. It is understood that, despite the terrain, most growth is likely to take place to the east, and that Ramallah, Jerusalem and Bethlehem, through growth and change, will be progressively connected and integrated, while retaining their strong separate identities and distinct forms and patterns of activity. A great national project such as the north-south railway described above is the most powerful way in which to promote metropolitan objectives that help unify the state.

On Palestine's Gaza Coast, the State of Palestine has unique assets that will complement those of the West Bank. The Gaza Coast Metropolitan Region, despite its physical size, is not the West Bank's "little brother". It provides the nation with specific social and economic advantages, and makes many specific contributions to national life. In the first place, Palestine's Gaza Coast is a Palestinian metropolitan region with a critical mass of population and its own unique character, building on the historic significance of Gaza City – giving it the capacity to attract entrepreneurs and knowledge economy workers from the Gaza and Palestinian diaspora, and large flows of foreign direct investment once sovereignty is achieved. Secondly, accelerating economic activity along the Gaza Coast will be generated by its location, as it always has been: ports, marinas, fishing and aquaculture, offshore gas,



coastal resorts, tourist attractions and activities, and attractive locations for education, research, and clusters of creative and knowledge economy participants. In short, it will recover the dynamism of a city and region with a strong tradition and image, a highly favoured location and an orientation towards commerce, trade and entrepreneurialism.

### **Wider implications for governance**

The State of Palestine has over 130 municipalities. These correspond to traditional places and affiliations, and are close to the people, but they cannot plan and control the patterns of development that respond to a larger-scale dynamic, such as metropolitan infrastructure, housing, economic development and urban services meeting the needs of regional populations. This leads to many proposals for the amalgamation of municipalities and a rationalisation of their number, and proposals to give the larger municipalities greater powers.

Extensive world-wide experience shows that this would generate long-term disruption and would in the end be counter-productive. Concrete experience shows that it is much better to take a different course: (i) to preserve the strong associations and traditions embodied in the existing municipalities, while at the same time (ii) transferring their current functions to regional and national governments and agencies, and (iii) giving them the crucial, contemporary responsibility of ensuring that *local* priorities and concerns are heard at the higher levels.

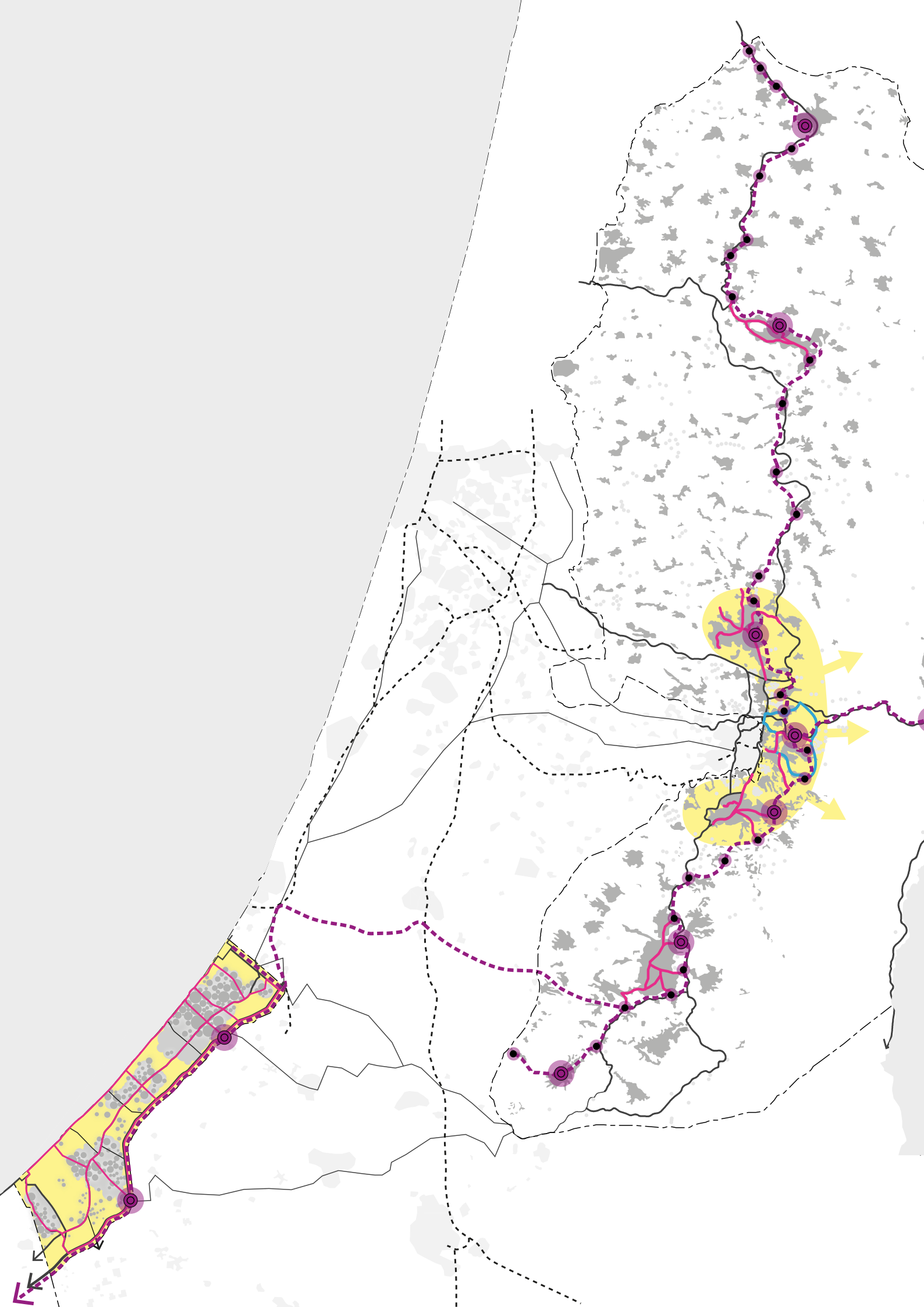
The roles of the Governorates are likely to change also. Despite being numerous (especially on Palestine's Gaza Coast) and possibly having outlived their functions, they can play important new roles: (i) to provide local planning services and local property services, and (ii) to be the agents which locally deliver the services provided by metropolitan and national governments and agencies. Amalgamating and empowering Governorates will only make it much more difficult to establish metropolitan governments. Provided the present Governorate boundaries are broadly appropriate for their new roles, it may be best to leave them as they are, for the same reasons as those for not disrupting the boundaries of the municipalities.

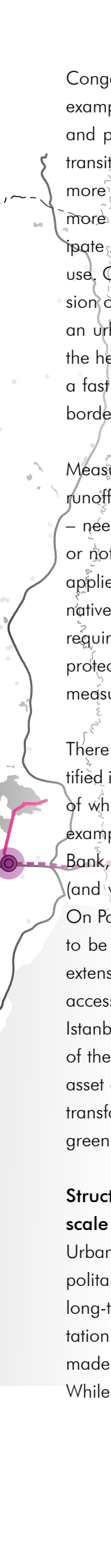
In the short term, it may be expedient to establish authorities for waste management, for instance, or transport services, or parks, covering smaller territories than the regional and metropolitan-wide authorities that will be needed in the future. This could have the same effect as strengthening and/or amalgamating Governorates and municipalities: it could make the ultimate establishment of national, regional and metropolitan authorities for urban development and services more protracted, expensive and controversial.

### **Wider implications for planning and reconstruction**

The Palestinian authorities face urgent and pressing demands, including the demands of aid donors and partners for expediency and short term measures in relation to urban projects. The best short term measures will be those that take account of long term futures and keep options open.







Congestion and parking demand in West Bank cities is one example. To create expectations that demands for car access and parking should and will be met would be to make the transition to smarter and more sustainable forms of transport more difficult. Similarly, there will be demands for more and more roads, whereas leading Palestinian professionals anticipate the introduction of restraints on car ownership and/or use. On Palestine's Gaza Coast, Qatar is funding the expansion of Salah al-Din Road to a scale that far exceeds that of an urban arterial. The choice is between a traffic barrier in the heart of the region, or holding to the future possibility of a fast international highway (and railway) along the eastern border.

Measures for water conservation – including collecting roof runoff, recycling waste water and treating urban storm water – need to be factored into all urban projects now, whether or not these measures can be implemented now. The same applies to conserving agricultural land, natural areas, alternative energy sources, etc. Sustaining agriculture will not only require measures to strictly restrain urban expansion and to protect or create water sources, but also legal and financial measures to support the economic viability of farming.

There are many sites and alignments which need to be identified in strategic plans and protected for the long term, some of which are discussed in *PLAN No 1* and *PLAN No 2*. An example is the route for the north-south railway in the West Bank, including stations and extensive land for development (and value capture) near the stations and other key nodes. On Palestine's Gaza Coast, the site for the major port needs to be defined in a strategic plan and protected, along with extensive terminal and related space behind the port, and access alignments for road and rail. The old alignment of the Istanbul to Cairo railway, a waqf passing through the middle of the Gaza Coast's urban areas, can become a significant asset and linkage if each adjoining project contributes to its transformation into a pedestrian and bike path with small green spaces along its length.

### **Structures of government and the new metropolitan scale**

Urban and regional planning for the nation and the metropolitan regions – the preparation and administration of expert long-term strategic spatial plans, based on evidence, consultation and the engagement of all interests – might best be made the responsibility of independent expert commissions. While the commissions answer to national and metropolitan

governments, their broad independence ensures stability in planning, guards against corruption and influence, takes the heat off politicians, gets the best out of the professionals, and engenders the trust and support of industry, civil society and the public.

Similarly, the State of Palestine is likely to see the need for a strong, expert and broadly independent national transport agency, operating within the priorities and strategies of the national spatial plan and other plans and policies. Its role would be to balance the demands for all modes of travel, to analyse the forms of investment with the best rates of return to the nation, to ensure that all forms of transport/mobility are integrated, and to oversee the provision of public transport services by licensed entities.

There is likely to be a mix of national, regional and metropolitan agencies responsible for such functions as energy, industry and environment (most likely national) and water management, waste services and regional parks (most likely regional and metropolitan).

The two Metropolitan Governments would have sufficient scale and legitimacy to provide strong government, relatively stable political leadership, technical expertise and high quality administration for the two Metropolitan Regions, within frameworks and priorities set by the National Government. Only a metropolitan government can bring together all the dimensions of complex urban growth, meeting high-order objectives and at the same time delivering locally-specific outcomes on the ground. A Gaza Coast Metropolitan Government provides a single voice for Palestine's Gaza Coast, and provides integrated urban planning and management across what is, functionally, economically and environmentally, a single urban region.

Recent evidence gathered by the OECD demonstrates that regions with *metropolitan governments* are correlated with faster economic growth and reductions in urban sprawl, and regions with a *metropolitan transport authority* are associated with much higher levels of citizen satisfaction with public transport (*OECD Regional Development Working Papers*, 2014/04). It is likely, and highly desirable, that the State of Palestine will arrive at the same conclusions in relation to the two metropolitan regions that will help to power the State of Palestine and define it globally.

# Political economy affecting spatial transformation in the State of Palestine

Ahmad El-Atrash and Parul Agarwala

The overall weak Palestinian economy is dependent on the Israeli economy, since economic development could not grow beyond a specific structural level as it could not access critical inputs of natural resources and free transport of people and goods. Furthermore, many scholars and critics argued that the Palestinian national liberation movement was superseded by a Palestinian state-building programme that is supposed to be achieved through neoliberal institution-building. The Palestinian economy was therefore “designed from the very beginning by the policies and prescriptions of globalizing institutions” (Adel Samara, ‘Globalisation, the Palestinian Economy, and the “Peace Process”’, 2000).

At the very beginning of the Israeli occupation, and before the start of the peace negotiations in 1993, ‘development’ to the Palestinians denoted resistance. The many Israeli military actions in that era, thwarted Palestinian ‘development’ efforts, and the primordial task became among Palestinians to spur resistance and steadfastness. In spatial development terms, this has been translated as the spread of urban sprawl that was politically accepted and encouraged. At that period, the environmental repercussions to this spread were unknown to Palestinians and minimal against the value of keeping the land by building constructions that were mostly used for residential and agricultural purposes. The idea was, the more you build the more land you would preserve against the de facto Israeli appropriation and confiscation policy. Nevertheless, this strategy proved inefficient and the consequences on the urban environment could be described as negative, at best and disastrous, at worst. By means of micro-examining the human settlement patterns in the territory, one can easily notice how fragmented and dispersed the urban fabric of Palestinian communities is with a galaxy of sprawled neighbourhoods becoming increasingly prominent resulting in a kind of peripheral conditions with little regard for spatial coher-

ence. For instance, according to 2004 ARIJ data, total urban development grew at a slow rate between the years 1989 and 1995 with approximately 6,391 dunums/year and then accelerated after 1995 with 8,888 dunums/year till 2000. This trend observed between the years 1995 and 2000 for the West Bank was expected, due to the fact that the Government of Palestine has allowed spatial development in the territories under its jurisdiction, and the economic situation was conducive to urban growth. The observed trend indicates that urban development is directly affected by the political situation which influences economic growth and land development process. It is worth mentioning that the political situation has played a great role in limiting the Palestinian built-up area expansion only in Areas A and B, where Palestinians have control over the land resulting in consuming most of the available land and open spaces.

The Israeli occupation of the Palestinian State and concomitant restrictions have also dramatically changed the functional identity of cities and shifted the inter-relationships between cities and neighbouring regions. Nablus and Jerusalem are the most affected by the restrictions imposed by Israel, as the dependency of surrounding regions on these cities has diminished. For example, in Nablus Governorate, commuting to Aqraba, Beita, Huwwara, and Qabalan as commercial centres increased.

The carrying capacity of the State of Palestine in terms of land availability for future spatial development under the current Israeli planning regime has been increasingly yet unsustainably consumed. Furthermore, the functional linkages between the urban centres and their rural hinterlands has been weakened and stretched to the limit. Palestinians need to adopt and realize on the ground a coherent spatial vision that is geo-politically sensitive, socio-economically and environmentally responsive to the facts on the ground.



# Reconfiguring regional economic development policies

For equitable spatial growth in the State of Palestine

Parul Agarwala and Ahmad El-Atrash

## Palestine – Economic Overview

The State of Palestine is reeling under immense social and economic pressure evident in high poverty rates, rising unemployment, and poor spatial growth outlook amid unprecedented urbanization. According to World Bank estimates, almost a quarter of Palestinians live in poverty, and unemployment rates remain remarkably high at over 20 percent, with youth unemployment particularly in Gaza at over 60 percent. Despite the relatively overall weak socio-economic conditions in the State of Palestine, the Human Development Index (HDI) for the year 2011 was estimated at 0.641, which is comparable to the average value for the Arab countries. Palestine, is thus, part of countries in the middle cluster of the HDI reflecting strong advances in health, education, and incomes.



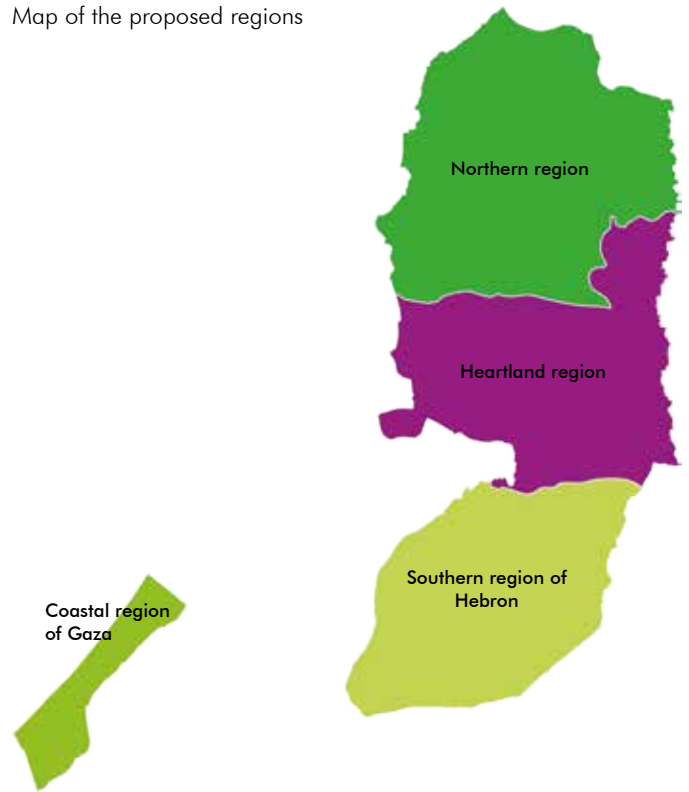
Today, the State of Palestine must set an agenda for strategic visioning, policy, and programs to steer the territory on path of inclusive prosperity and regionally balanced growth. Palestinian economy has undergone transformation since its creation in 1996, when agricultural sector dominated the economy. Today, its economic structure has been greatly altered, as agriculture comprises less than 10 percent of the total GDP, and the economy is dominated by the public sector comprising of government services, trade and construction, education, and health, and so on, which have skewed the economy towards non-tradable sectors. On the other hand, World Bank reports that the industrial sector has remained at only 12 to 13 percent of the GDP, reflecting stagnation in productive sectors. Important to notice that the structure of economic activities differed between the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 2012. According to 2013 data of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), although the service sector represented the largest share of GDP in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip, it contributed 26.9 percent of Gaza Strip GDP compared to 17.7 percent of West Bank GDP.

The most recent bout of strong economic growth between 2007 and 2011, when the average annual GDP growth was 7.7 percent (PCBS), was largely driven by expansionary fiscal policies driven by donor funding, and has since receded due to limited aid support. Weak growth can be attributed to the following main factors: (i) reduced donor aid, (ii) economic contraction during the Second Intifada and 2014 war on Gaza, (iii) almost total dependence on trade with Israel elaborated in the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations between Israel and the PLO, and (iv) Israel's restrictions on movement, access and trade, along with Israel's full control over 60 percent of land area, known as Area C of the West

Map of the current governorates



Map of the proposed regions



Bank. The World Bank has calculated that if restrictions on Area C are lifted, the combined direct and indirect economic benefit could total up to 35 per cent of 2011 GDP, which is indeed a huge contribution at a time when the aid budgets of donors are shrinking globally.

### Understanding underlying regional dynamics

A cross ministerial committee established in 2016, advanced a regionalization plan for the State of Palestine. The idea behind the plan is to merge the present 16 Governorates by 4-6 regions: 1 or 2 in the Gaza Strip, and 3 or 4 in the West Bank. The regionalization plan will have major implications on the governance structure in terms of devolution of power, roles and responsibilities, operationalization, and economic feasibility. The regionalization plan has a merit within the overall reform agenda, known as the National Policy Agenda (2017-2022), but this remains heavily contested with the geopolitical designations, especially in the West Bank territory, where the three proposed regions (south, heartland, and north) correlate with the Israeli definition of the territory.

### Coastal region of Gaza

Gaza city stands as the centre of this region for providing the main major services in terms of health and educational facilities of high rank, along with social protection services including emergency and risk protection measures. The southern part of this region is predominantly high value agriculture

with more than half of it designated as agricultural areas. The 'already developed area' in this region forms 23 percent of the total area, while the 'already developed area' in the West Bank forms only 7 percent of the total area. Overall, this region has limited carrying capacity to accommodate future economic activities, especially in light of the relatively high number of economic establishments compared to the West Bank territory.

### Southern region of Hebron

Hebron city-region has approximately 23 percent of the West Bank population. Economic activity is high with 17,661 active businesses, comprising more than 21 percent of the West Bank's total. In contrast, Hebron also has the highest poverty rate in the West Bank territory with 34 percent of its population classified as poor compared to an average of 18 percent (PCBS, 2011) and 32 percent of the population are food insecure compared to the West Bank average of 21.5 percent. This region is considered as the economic and industrial hub of the West Bank territory.

### Heartland region

This is considered the capital region of the State of Palestine with Jerusalem at the centre as the touristic hub of Palestine. This region has valuable agricultural lands, especially in Jericho. Furthermore, this region has valuable natural resources, including water resources, along with archaeological and

touristic sites. This region is heterogeneous in terms of natural and economic characteristics with many blocked potentials that are not tapped in yet, mainly due to the complex geopolitical situation.

**Northern region**

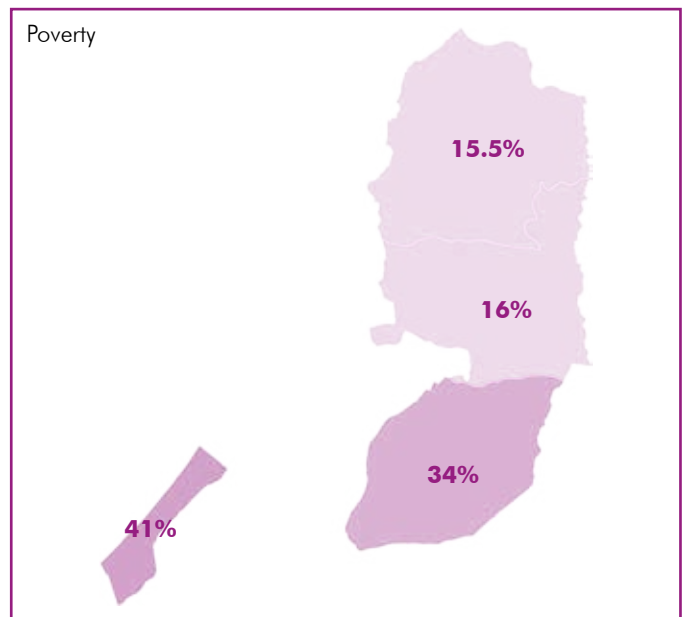
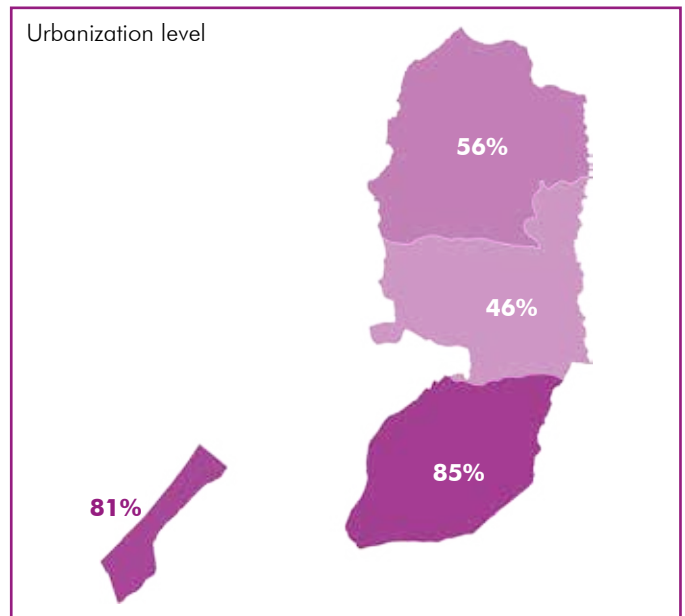
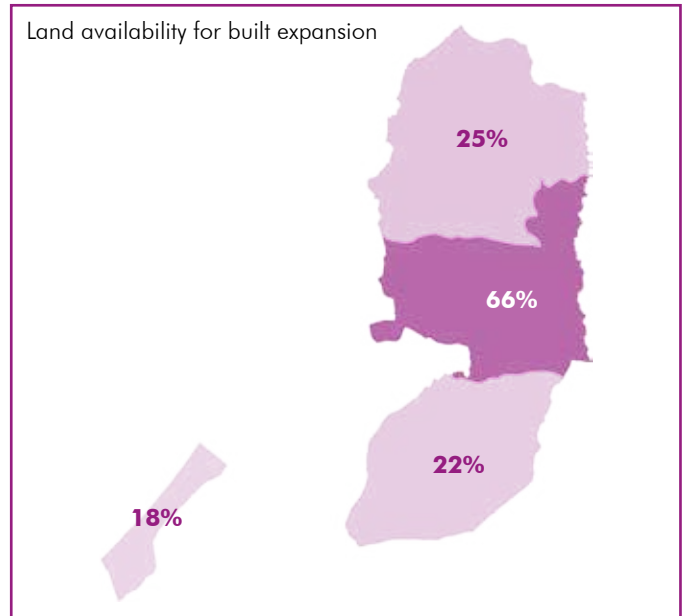
This region has more than one-quarter of the West Bank’s available area for future spatial development, accommodating more than 56 percent of its population in urban areas. The rest of the region has high valuable agricultural areas, biodiversity, landscape, and nature reserves. In relative terms, this region is the least underserved after Hebron region, in terms of basic infrastructure, including electricity connection and solid waste collection, except waste water connection. With Nablus as the centre of this region, it has the second highest share of stone quarries after Hebron city.

In summary, the 4 regions have diversified economic potentials, but to sustain the economic growth of these regions more in-depth analysis is needed to identify areas of overlap and potential collaboration. Before that, a coherent economic vision is in crucial need to be adopted by the Government of Palestine to the entire State of Palestine, and to the 4 regions accordingly where the relation with other sectors including local government would be defined.

**Economic diversification based on regional endowments**

Economic sustainability of the State of Palestine will be driven by a dynamic and vibrant private sector. The policymakers and practitioners must look beyond the constraints imposed by Israel, on mobility, investment, labour market distortions, and focus on 21st century industries, which can potentially overcome these external barriers.

According to World Bank’s study, West Bank and Gaza must reorient existing economic policies to promote export of higher value-added products, much like the Asian countries, such as South Korea and Japan, which were also devastated following war. However, by embracing export oriented trade policies not restricted to the neighbouring countries, adopting innovative technologies, and integrating their economy with the global value chains, these countries were able to transform within a short time span. Strong leadership from top-tier of government, clear institutional mandates and financial plan contributed to the economic success story of these countries.



Regionally stratified policies based on economic trends and growth potential of new innovative sectors in the West Bank and Gaza strip must be examined and explored in more detail. The territories within the State of Palestine generally lack natural resources for the manufacturing sector. However, the high proportion of well-educated and entrepreneurial population is an undeniable asset for transitioning to high-value added services, which could be tradable in the global market, for instance, in the hi-tech and information technology clusters. Furthermore, educational institutes must impart training relevant for creating a globally competitive labour force with high levels of cognitive and behavioural skills.

Palestine must leverage the urbanization potential and spatial trends of population concentration to its advantage. Agglomeration of enterprises in urban areas leads to spill over benefits, fosters innovation and learning, and ultimately, leads to vibrant city economies. Spatial planning and economic development policies must be integrated and interlinked to foster these synergistic relationships of agglomeration in Palestine's large and medium-sized cities. Urbanization must also be managed to prevent sprawl into high value-added agricultural belts in Jenin, Tubas, Nablus, Jericho, Rafah and Khan Yunis.

Strategic economic infrastructure, namely, transport and connectivity, logistics, telecommunications, electricity, and municipal services, is a necessary pre-requisite for competitiveness of urban areas and economic development. Regionally balanced and inclusive growth must drive investment priorities in infrastructure. As presented in the previous section, a comparison of socio-economic characteristics reveals inequity between different regions of the Palestinian State. Regional strengths based on natural resource endowments must inform investments into economic infrastructure. For instance, infrastructure needs of administrative and political hubs such as Ramallah and Al-Bireh, are different from industrial hubs in Hebron, and agricultural centres in Jericho and Nablus.

## Main messages

Palestine must lay strong foundation for reinvigorating its economy for a sustainable upward economic development trajectory in the future.

A forward looking economic growth vision for the future State of Palestine to integrate it into global marketplace must be framed, and supported by policy and regulatory frameworks.

National and local policymakers must identify key constraints that would be instrumental in transforming the region.

The Palestinian competent authorities must aim for reducing regional inequities by targeted policies, foster economic sectors based on comparative and competitive advantages, and attract private sector participation to create jobs.

Regionally stratified economic development policies, founded in resource endowments, must drive investment in economic infrastructure.

Urban areas must adopt policy and planning tools to foster agglomeration, remove barriers to enterprise formation, and improve access to land, skilled labor and finance.



# Impressions of **Palestine**





# A progressive path to accessibility

Integrated development for the metropolitan area of Jerusalem and beyond

Sébastien Goethals

*Creating a railway network for Palestine at the national level with both international connectivity and local public transport implementation requires a strategic and singular, phased approach. Following the multi-scale vision previously introduced in the first issue of Plan Magazine with the “Connecting Palestinian Cities and Citizens” article, here a progressive approach of phasing a transport system for the Jerusalem Metropolitan Area and its surroundings is presented. Urban development, social integration and transport accessibility come together in this approach. Yet, this article goes beyond the traditional planning of transport infrastructure and includes the emergence of potential digital infrastructure which connects citizens through innovative tools and has a deep impact on urban lifestyles.*

## **One Metropolitan Railway for Jerusalem**

The regional railway vision presented us Jerusalem’s, Ramallah’s and Bethlehem’s capacity to form one unique Metropolitan agglomeration with connected centralities and urban commu-

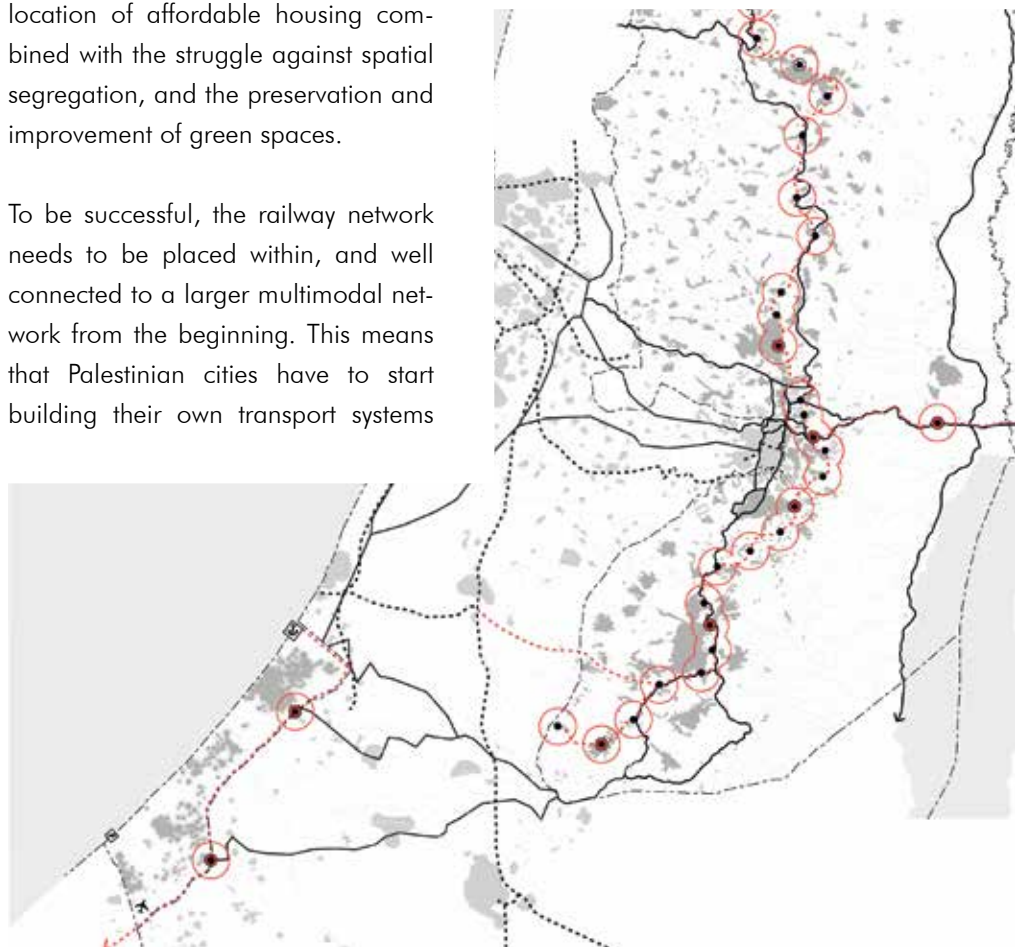
nities. It is within these urban areas, where many people live and work, that the initial steps to achieve a Palestinian Railway will start.

The development of such a railway network needs a long-term perspective and should be placed within a more holistic project of urban liveability and connectivity improvement in which this infrastructure is a final step. This project requires a phased strategy of integrated urban development which includes; the renovation and upgrade of Palestinian communities, the suitable location of affordable housing combined with the struggle against spatial segregation, and the preservation and improvement of green spaces.

To be successful, the railway network needs to be placed within, and well connected to a larger multimodal network from the beginning. This means that Palestinian cities have to start building their own transport systems

so that it benefits from a railway infrastructure which is at the edge of the agglomeration.

If a railway is to start somewhere in Palestine, it will be in Jerusalem. Locating the railway network route at the eastern edge of the agglomeration offers the opportunity to implement the Finger Plan of Jerusalem with its East-oriented urban development axes and four linkages to the future railway stations (see Issue 1, “Connecting Palestinian cities and citizens”).

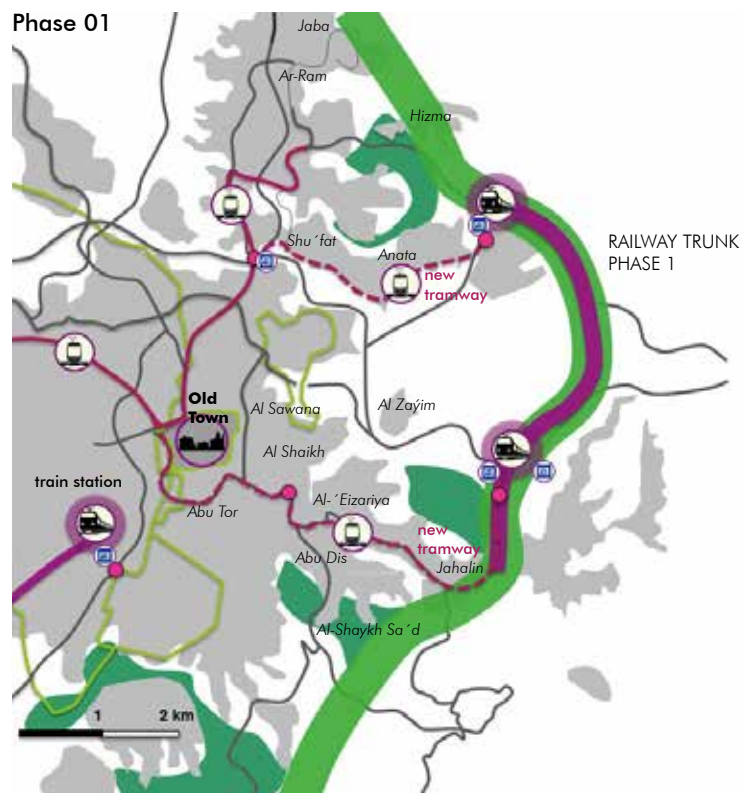
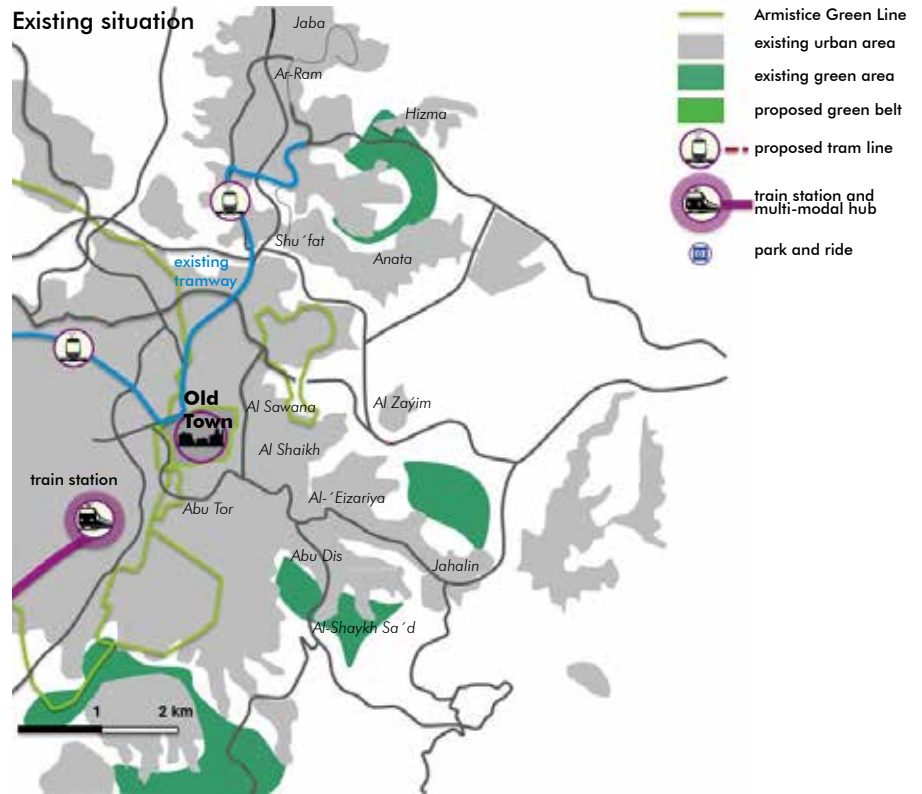


## Phase 01: A Finger Plan for Jerusalem

To secure the progressive phasing of the Palestinian railway, a parallel green belt is developed. This green belt secures the emplacement of the railway route while preventing sprawled and uncontrolled urbanisation which could threaten the feasibility of the railway. The construction of the multi-scale Palestinian transport system starts with building a railway trunk between the Eastern edge of Anata and Jahalin. This first 4 km long trunk will connect two new railway stations: Anata East and Al Za'Yim East. These stations will be designed as multimodal hubs and future urban centralities. The two future stations steer the two metropolitan axes of urban renovation and development, bringing modernisation and accessibility to the Palestinian communities of Anata, Abu Dis, Eizariya, and Jahalin. The main catalyst of this urban renovation process is the construction of two tramway lines running through Anata and Abus Dis and Eizariya. Strategically connected with the existing tramway network and the two future two railway stations, the two tramway lines will form a loop of connectivity and development.

### Anata, an emerging centrality in the context of the Finger Plan

The implementation of a tramway line running through Anata will lead to the renovation (and transformation) of its main avenue (Derech Anatot) with the opportunity to renovate and build affordable housing. Where Derech Anatot intersects with Derech Shua'fat, the new tramway line will be connected with the existing tramway network. Next to the crossing between Road 60 and Road 1, a new multimodal station and P+R infrastructure will emerge, encouraging green mobility through the use of a modern public

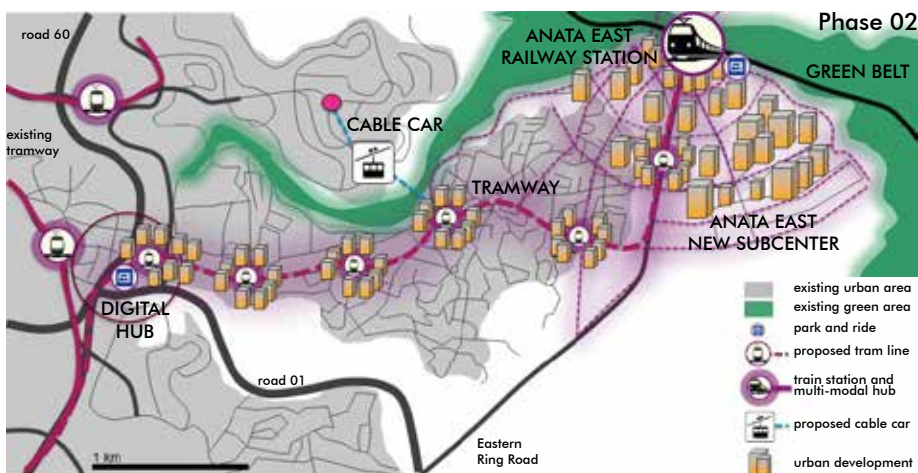
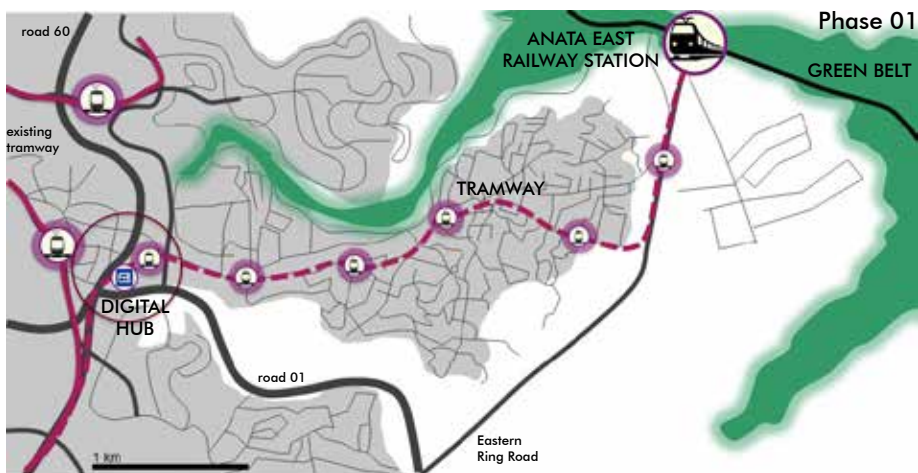
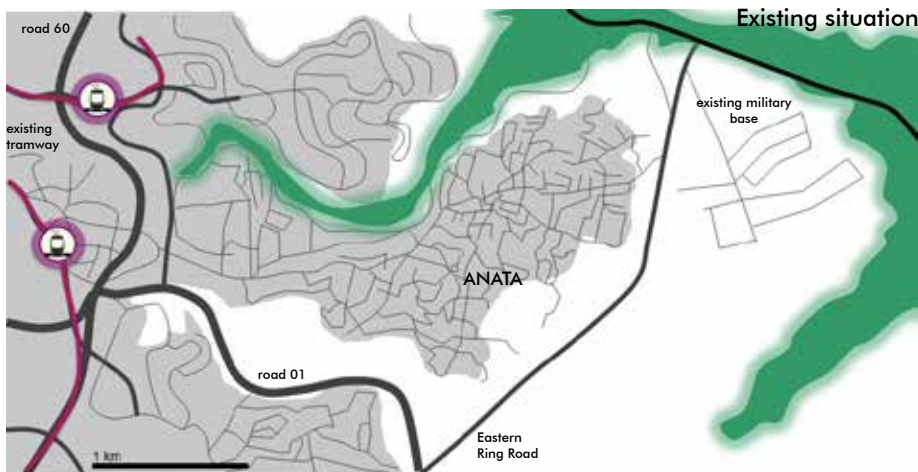


transport system, combined with a hub for shared mobility, offering space for car-sharing, public bicycles, and attractive pedestrian linkages.

The multimodality of the location creates an opportunity to build a public

digital infrastructure that provides information to citizens and improves urban liveability and social cohesion. A digital public space is the ideal interface between the Internet of things and the daily challenges of urban communities. By connecting a multi-





modal transport system with mobile phone applications, citizens can start to develop new solutions by themselves for better mobility through the city via cars, bicycles, parking spaces, office spaces, and their time.

Linking the invisible (digital) infrastructure with the traditional urban infrastructure in one public space will add new perspectives to urban economy and local entrepreneurship. Playing a role of centrality, the new multimodal hub will be the upgraded window of Anata's community.

A new railway station at the Eastern side of Anata will lead to integrated urban development, providing space for Anata's sustainable urban growth, strategically contained by the green belt of Jerusalem.

This vision integrates a "post-conflict phase" where planners can finally offer alternatives to the existing spatial segregation. Mass transit systems connected with urban cable cars can drastically alleviate spatial segmentation of urban development, which is mainly a product of Palestinian hills that encourage a natural separation of communities. In this post-conflict phase, the military base close to Anata will be transformed and reintegrated into the new sub-centre of Anata East.



## Phase 02: Extending to the South and completing the Finger Plan

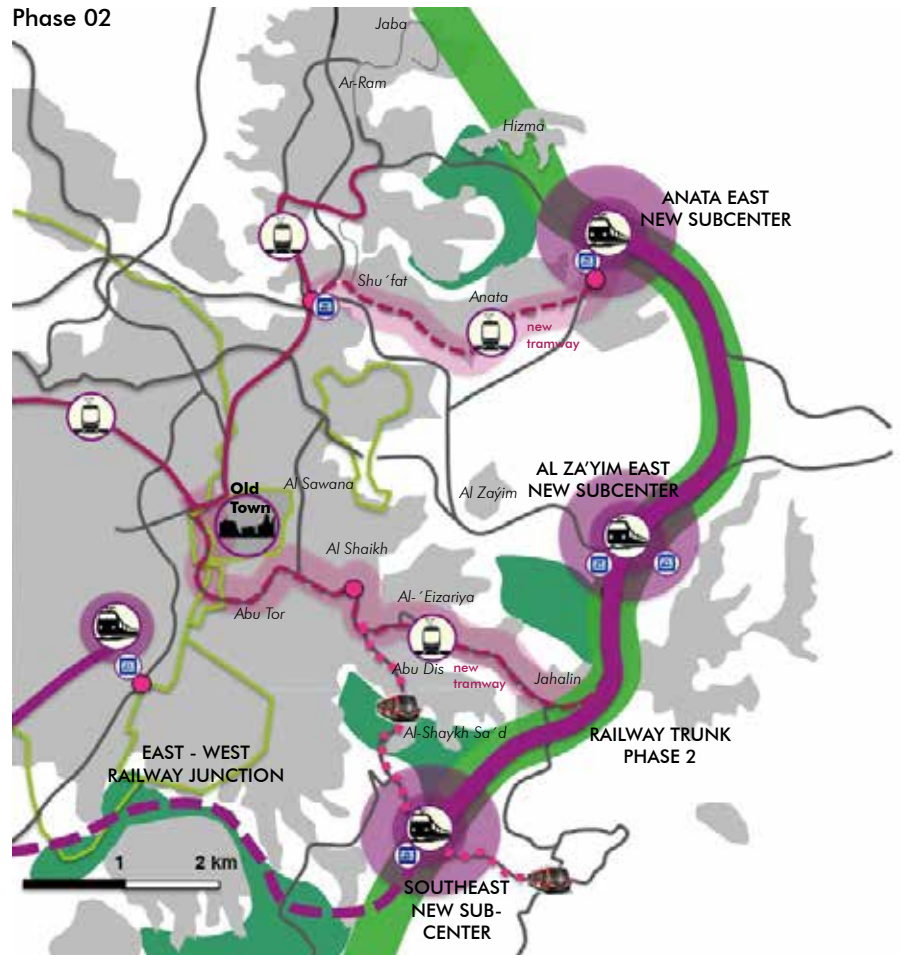
When a green belt is landscaped and it secures the route for the railway trunk extension, the phasing of such a project becomes more flexible and manageable. The second phase will complete the major investments of the first phase by adding a third railway station in the Southeast of Jerusalem, close to Al-Shaykh Sa'd. Eastern railway extension is also a big opportunity for regional integration through the Western Jerusalem railway system connection.

## Phase 03: From an urban to a metropolitan railway and beyond.

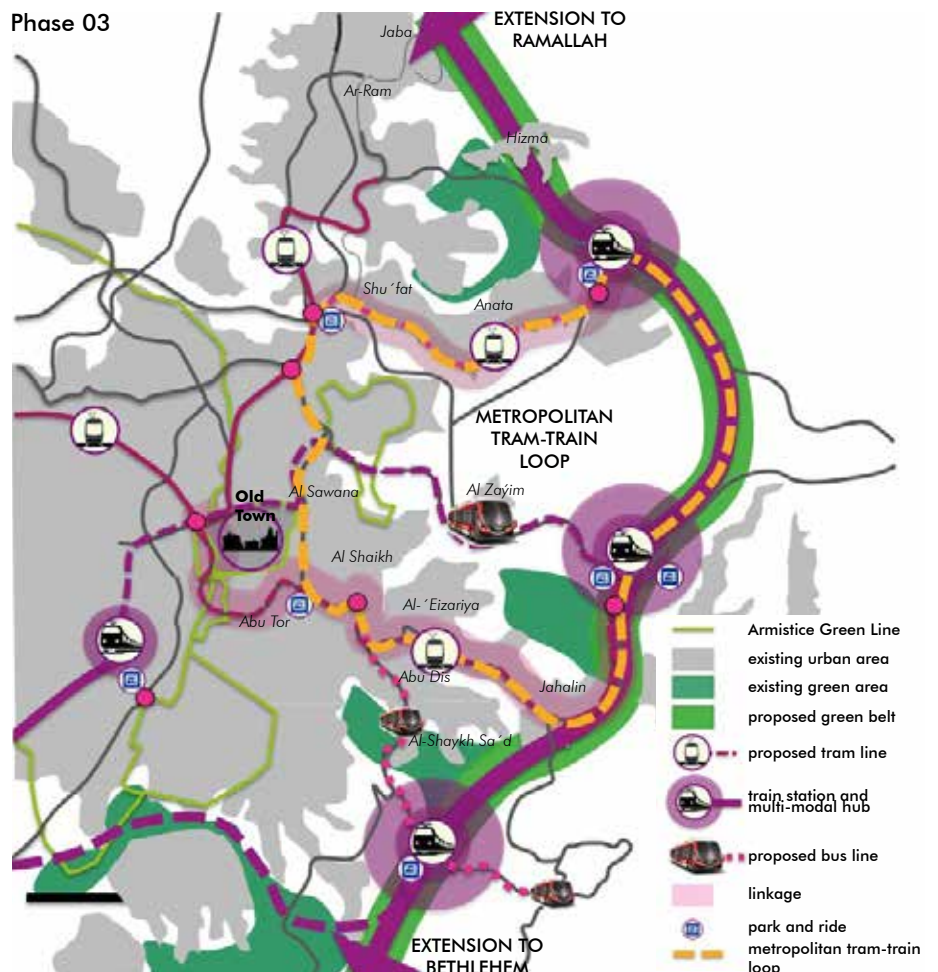
Integration of the metropolitan area of Jerusalem will be close to completion by extending the railway network to Ramallah and Bethlehem. In phase 03, the railway already plays an important role in urban structure and daily life. Three new urban centralities will emerge and more options for accessibility will appear.

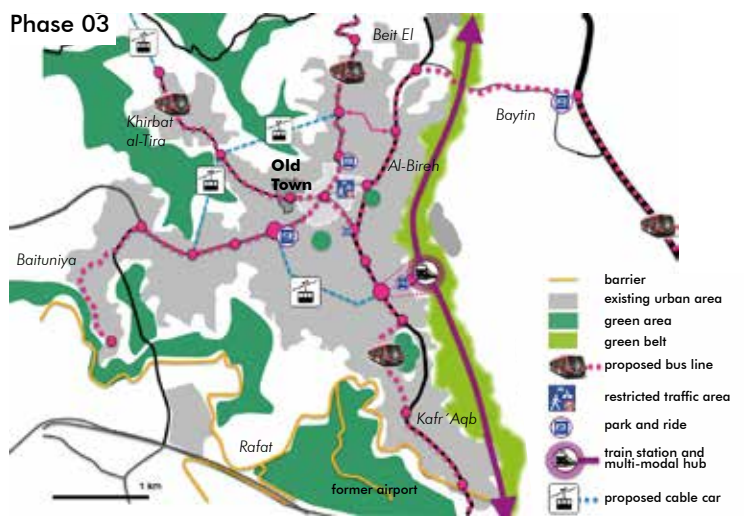
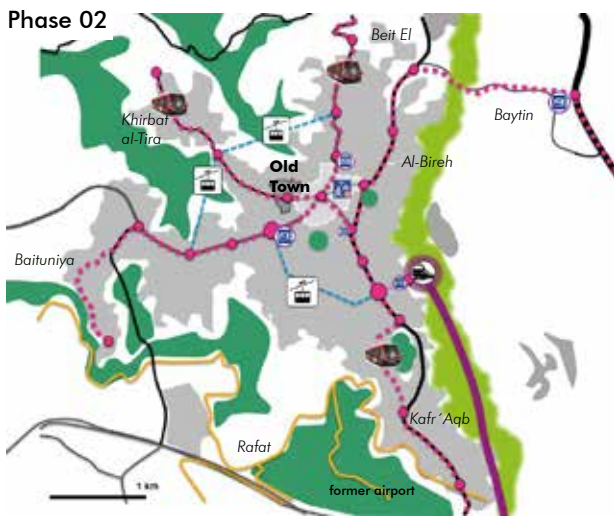
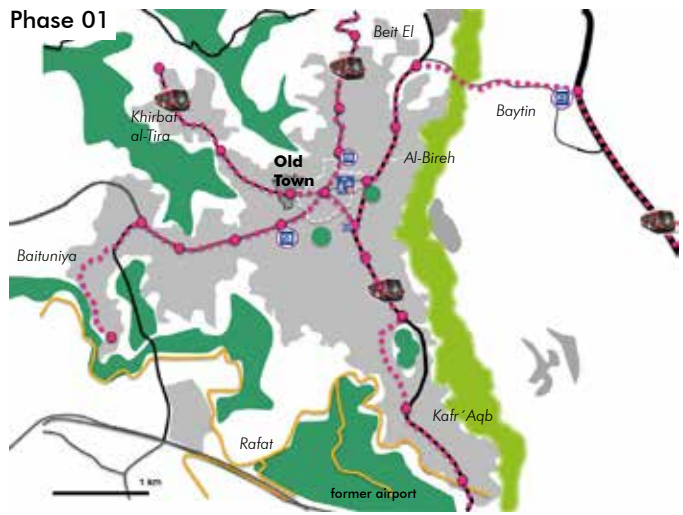
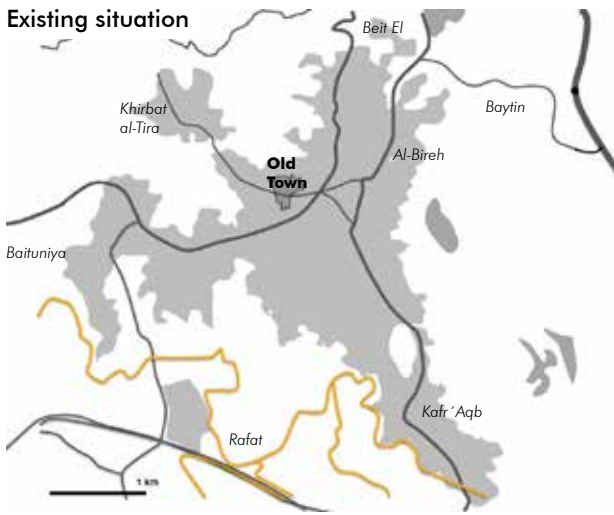
One advantage of combined tramway and railway lines is that they can be part of the same network, and actually, be used by same vehicles. The tram-train option presented in Issue 1 demonstrates new opportunities of public transport development on the Eastern part of Jerusalem. In phase 03, by connecting the existing rails, a tram-train loop can be implemented along the two tramway lines and the Eastern railway, with an additional tramway link passing along the Eastern part of the Old City. Tramway stations with an inter-distance of 500 meters to 1 kilometre in the urban areas, and of 3 to 4 kilometres along the railway, will supply a fast connection between North-eastern and South-eastern Jerusalem. Road 01 provides the opportunity to build a BRT line with a limited

Phase 02



Phase 03





- barrier
- existing urban area
- green area
- green belt
- proposed bus line
- restricted traffic area
- park and ride
- train station and multi-modal hub
- proposed cable car

number of stops for a quicker connection between the city centre and Al Za'Yim East Railway Station.

**Ramallah: a local transport supply as a tool against spatial and social segregation**

Ramallah is a city characterised by rapid urbanisation and faces a natural relief made up of hills and valleys which complicates urban mobility related issues. Current urban development in Ramallah encourages spatial and social segregation: Palestinian communities develop on top of distant hills, leading to an archipelago of car-oriented and isolated neighbourhoods. The passage of a regional railway through the Eastern edge of the urban agglomeration will not solve the existing spatial segregation.

Ramallah is in urgent need of an alternative model of urban development to reverse the effects of the current trend. Transport cannot solve everything, but it can help to provide accessibility to isolated communities and to improve public spaces and avenues in the city centre.

The plan for a railway station in Ramallah and a future direct connection to Jerusalem should be prepared by a suitable urban mobility plan which will later be completed by the railway network.

Phase 01 should be directed at preserving the future route of the railway by creating a green belt at the city's East. The bus network (described in Issue 1) supplemented by cable car will

then be defined as a priority for the renovation of the train station. Phase 02 of Ramallah will correspond to the extension of the railway network to the North and the South, connecting the towns and villages of Palestine, until it reaches to the national level.

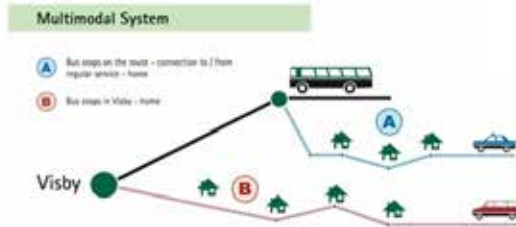
**Beyond big plans: A community oriented approach for multi-scale accessibility improvement**

Beyond the metropolitan railway of Jerusalem—which includes Ramallah and Bethlehem—a nation-wide railway network will eventually emerge, connecting Nablus, Hebron, Jericho, and Gaza, later reaching neighbouring countries and cities like Amman. But the current demographic growth and urbanisations rates of Palestine call for alternative and complementary



Community shuttles can be multifunctional and combine services for schools, companies, private groups of people or communities.

They can be reached thanks to a real-time information available for communities and be scheduled according to specific demand.



© Trivector Traffic AB

### How express lanes will work

Express lanes, or carpool lanes that solo drivers can use for a fee, will be coming to southbound I-680 next month.

Not to scale

- 1 Toll signs**  
Electronic signs display current toll, based on level of congestion.
- 2 Entry/exit**  
Lane striping alerts drivers to fixed entry and exit points to carpool lanes.
- 3 Toll is charged**  
FasTrak transponder sends a signal to a sensor; toll is deducted. Carpoolers should cover transponder to avoid being charged.
- 4 Enforcement**  
Highway Patrol detects cheaters with aid of electronic signals pinpointing vehicles with no transponders.

The concept of separated lanes for car pooling can be extended to collective mobility (taxibuses, company and schools shuttles, on demand transport, etc.)

Source: Caltrans, Doug Griswold/Mercury news



options to accompany the progress of the railway network. When the metropolitan network is finalised and before it reaches the national scale, the new train stations will need appropriate transport supply to connect with the rest of the country, including cities and rural areas.

Road 60 offers a range of opportunities to develop collective transport solutions supplementing the railway transport supply. By reserving one express lane for community shuttles, on-demand transport, regional buses and BRT, the national road can become a vector of accessibility for both urban and rural communities. This kind of express lanes—dedicated to public and shared transport—have already been successfully implemented in various cities around the world, such as the “Fast Track” carpool lanes of California, where only vehicles with multiple passengers can drive. Electronic signals keep solo drivers away from the express lane without charge.

Improved accessibility to rural communities and villages can be achieved by developing on-demand shuttles and taxi-buses with vehicles that modify their routes according to the schedule and user types (students, employees, elder people, farmers, etc.). Each user can reserve a seat according to his/her destination and purpose of travel, eventually travelling to the city in a faster and better way. The extension of the railway to the national scale will later reintegrate these local shuttle services, connecting the rural and the urban Palestine. The national railway project and its progress will most importantly be a lever of local dynamism and an initiative for the improvement of accessibility and liveability of the Palestinian communities.

# Interview with Tawfiq Bdeiri

Katharina Gugerell



*Tawfiq Bdeiri has a PhD in Urban and Regional Planning from Cairo University and more than two decades of experience in the local government sector in Palestine. We have interviewed Dr Tawfiq as the Deputy Assistant for Engineering and Planning Issues at the State of Palestine Ministry of Local Government at Groningen, Holland*

**You are in the Netherlands for a week already, first in Rotterdam and now in Groningen, the European capital of cycling, where more than 60 percent of the daily tours are made by bike. Did you take a bike tour in Rotterdam or Groningen?**

Not yet, I have to admit, and it's been a while since I biked for the last time – 15 years maybe. It is interesting to see that biking plays such an important role for daily urban mobility in the Netherlands. I think biking will also play a more important role in the future of Palestinian cities. We tried to introduce biking in Jericho for example, or in Qalqilya. But, launching cycling is more than just implementing the infrastructure, it is also important to change the culture. Now our economic situation is bad, so to a certain degree, we are still dependent on this kind of car-oriented mobility, even though we know it is unsustainable.

**Does that mean that slow mobility and multimodality is part of the political planning agenda?**

Definitely. After our excursion today and what I experienced in Rotterdam, I discussed with the mayor of Ramallah, and he said "I believe in this" and now he will try to shift the boundaries for biking. What we also learned is that in Groningen, the politicians took a courageous decision to implement a circulation plan and privilege cycling over cars, in one night! Also the idea of the cable car for Ramallah – we had never

thought about that. These are good ideas to improve the livelihoods of Palestinian communities, and to improve the city centre of Ramallah.

**From the governmental perspective - how would you evaluate implementation and integration of different policies?**

Implementation and integration are important questions. Since Oslo, we have rebuilt our existing institutions and built new ones, and a lot of the donor money went into rebuilding the same institutions over and over. So, if the citizens look at the political circumstances, they can see that it's not easy for the government to make decisions and implement them because of the overall conditions. I think the theory in this case is, how to think of a nation that lives under occupation and a government that does not have the means to implement policies. This is a very dissatisfying situation for us.

**Participation and civic approaches to city-making are very central in urban planning. In your opinion, how can participation work in such volatile and uncertain conditions?**

There are different roles for the government, the citizens and the municipality. For those who work as public servants, like me for example, citizens can be a scary thing, because the government does not have the power for decision-making, implementing and realizing the wishes of its population. Overall, it's a country under occupation – we don't have the enforcement power to say, "I will do this and that". I think the first and most important thing is trust. To build trust between citizens and the government in order to convince people to accept what you ask for. The difficulty is, we are still in a crisis situation. Working and planning in crisis conditions, require more centralized systems. Hence, we can't be decentralized because we are under occupation.

**The condition of occupation is a serious impediment for institutional and spatial design, but also for picking up public interest and concerns to implement them.**

**How are you balancing?**

When we plan, to stay with the planning issues, the Palestinian side is rather weak. Israel and Palestine both have plans for the same territory: we are weak, they are strong, they have the army and they have everything you can imagine. We can hardly plan. If you take a look at political science, about the way nations are liberated and how they found their way to independence, you see that they, at this time of their development, focus on military issues – to be in power. We focus more on civilian issues; other nations postpone civil issues for later stages instead. And this is a rather unique case.

**What do you exactly mean with civil issues?**

Urban planning for example. I will give you an example: let's say you have a ministry for urban planning, you make your laws and you issue permit licenses – but you don't control 60% of the land. You know what is really bothering me – when you are at a conference and you sit down with planners – they mostly consider our case as “post-conflict”. We are not in a “post-conflict” situation – we are under occupation.



It's a different way of thinking in planning; planning under occupation is different. For example, compare the case of Belfast. I went there to see the clashes between Protestants and Catholics. That's also very problematic, but it's different, because it's not an occupied country. We are under occupation and we want to plan for the future, then all our plans are based on assumptions. I am assuming there is no Israeli settlement, I assume I can control the water; I have to assume many things...

**When the UPAT team was working in the West Bank, we were confronted with many different consultancy reports, advice policies, framework programs and so on. Sometimes it seems like there are too many different policies and strategies, especially from international organizations, that are not coming into life? What do you think are the reasons for that?**

Actually, the national vision for our state started in 1998, together with NORAD [Norwegian Agency for Development Co-Operation]. Back then we prepared 2 regional plans, one for West Bank and one for Gaza: two regions, two regional plans. The vision was about three axes – one in the middle through the mountains, one in the east and another in the West, near the Green Line. The second one was for the Gaza Strip: Gaza in the centre and Khan Yunis. Connection to the West Bank was called ‘safe passage’. This does not only mean safe roads, but safe everything. That was the concept with NORAD – unfortunately, these plans were not approved. There was resistance from our side, and participation was not sufficient, well there was zero participation, and it was too focused on the Ministry of Planning. Later, RAND came with the ARC - we were not asked to participate – they approached us only when they were finished, “We made this”, and we said “Well - we do not want it”.

And now ISOCARP - another two dust catchers on the shelf? True, now it's ISOCARP – I think it was a good approach, to meet and talk with the stakeholders and civil society, politically and technically. It was important that you made the workshop and presented what you think, the vision for the heartland of the West Bank and the Gaza Coast, so everybody had the opportunity to respond. If we look at the proposals provided by ISOCARP: Gaza, for example, I look at the proposed railway direction – it is a logical location, but it feels wrong – because it's near to the border with Israel. But I also know, in the end, it's 6 km – it's going to be either in the east or in the middle, as it was in the past. Or Jerusalem, I do not totally agree with the proposed path of the railway, I prefer a ring road for now, but I think it can be implemented



in about ten years. Maybe I do not believe in all the proposed concepts, it's mainly a different perspective. But the ISOCARP West Bank vision, it shows, and this is important, Jerusalem as heart of Palestine, as a capital for Palestinians. However, it can't work without Ramallah, Bethlehem and Jericho - what ISOCARP has presented as a metropolitan region. And the scenario that is proposed comes from ISOCARP, they studied the area and they say this is a coherent metropolitan region. That is important for us.

**You are in the Netherlands with a Palestinian delegation. You visited several municipalities and projects, met different planners and professionals – What do you think the Dutch can learn from Palestine?**

(laughs) What can be learned from Palestine is to think about the real challenges you are facing at the moment and in the future - how to work on assumptions, how to be patient, and how to accept change. If I compare the Netherlands and Palestine – here in the Netherlands, it seems like there is a lack of ideas, but implementation is very easy. In our case, we have many ideas, but we can't implement them. Here, there are municipalities that put a lot of money into these 'smart ideas', this is good – but there is a lack of ideas in general, because they repeat the same ideas and then there is no big added value.

**Well let's stick to urban matter and ideas then - where do you see the gaps in the Palestinian system?**

Sometimes I think about trust, it's very important. Urban planning is not only a technical matter. If you look at the local level, there are many tools for trust building. Theoretically,

it sounds easy – I enable people to participate in planning, implementation and monitoring. I organise public hearings etc., there are many tools and we use these mechanisms – not most of the time, maybe once or twice, and I am not sure if trust-building occurs. These trust issues are generally related to the role of the municipalities and cities. The state needs the municipalities, but the citizens don't see this: if the state wants to build a school, the municipality provides the land. In the end, what can the municipality give to the citizens – they have a lack of resources – this is a big challenge for the Palestinian cities and for urban planning.

**Resources and their sustainable management are an important issue for future development....**

Achieving sustainability is an important goal. There are two major conditions: first, you need to be in control and secondly, you need enforcement power – they are two sides of a coin. Control means that you can manage your resources. In our case – now we are working on the National Spatial Plan in 2 phases. The first phase is protection – we need to protect for our future. We finished this phase and approved it in the cabinet and we respect it. The second phase, which will start in March 2016, is the land-use plan with different sectorial policies. Again – we are under occupation, we must protect our resources for the future – but we don't control them. Water is controlled by the Israelis, gas as well – we don't control anything. How do you become sustainable when you are under occupation and you can't manage your own resources – that's a difficult question.

**What are the possible scenarios from your perspective?**

There are 3: first, there should be an independent state for the Palestinians. Then it's easier to think of other scenarios. One of the scenarios is 'free borders': free borders with Jordan, with Israel, with Egypt. The second scenario is a closed one – just with Jordan, not with Israel. Jordan from the East and Egypt of course. For me, I think the first scenario is better: to live in an open country with free borders to Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Cyprus – with all the world. It's a free country, it's an open country. It could be part of Europe.

**Well, you would then also play in the Euro League and European Championship.**

Yes! And we would win the Cup!

**A free, independent country and the European Championship. Sounds like a perfect scenario?**

Yes. Wouldn't that be great?

# Physical planning and institution building in Palestine

A Norwegian advisory effort 1995 - 2007

Rolf H. Jensen

## Background

*The Oslo Accord of 1993 created optimism and a political climate between the Palestinians and the Israelis that opened up new possibilities. The Norwegian Government and the Palestinian Authorities wished to use the opportunity to set up a project dealing with “Physical planning and Institution Building” (PPIB) in Palestine. The project originally had two main objectives; to carry out institution building that could establish a professional physical planning in Palestine; and to produce plans that would be of relevance and value for the development of Palestine. This endeavour was to take place through the advisory efforts of experienced Norwegian planners and experts from other fields, according to need. The time frame was set to three years.*

## The actual situation in Palestine at that time

### Lack of planners

Physical planning was previously regarded as a military activity; hence the field was prohibited for the Palestinians. We could find architects, engineers, social scientists and other professionals, but none of them had any education and experience in physical planning. This immediately led to an educational program where lectures were combined with on-the-job training. Through the years, this led to further studies and several Master degrees at Norwegian universities and elsewhere. Some even obtained Ph.Ds.

### Lack of maps and data

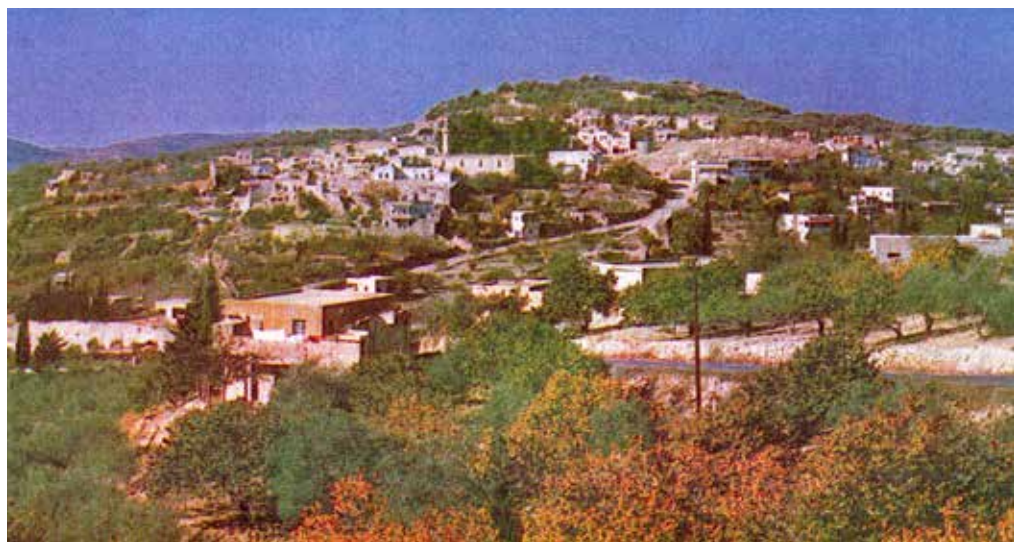
Physical planning requires maps, but no maps were available for us. Having tried several options, we ended up

using Russian aerial photos as a base for mapping together with Israeli auto maps. In addition, very little data was available for Palestine at this time, and in the beginning, we had to use different kinds of sources. Our own young Palestinians made quite an effort for registration and data collection on the field. Palestinian universities and the census bureau, together with some NGOs, also assisted. First priority was to get an aerial overview of the whole

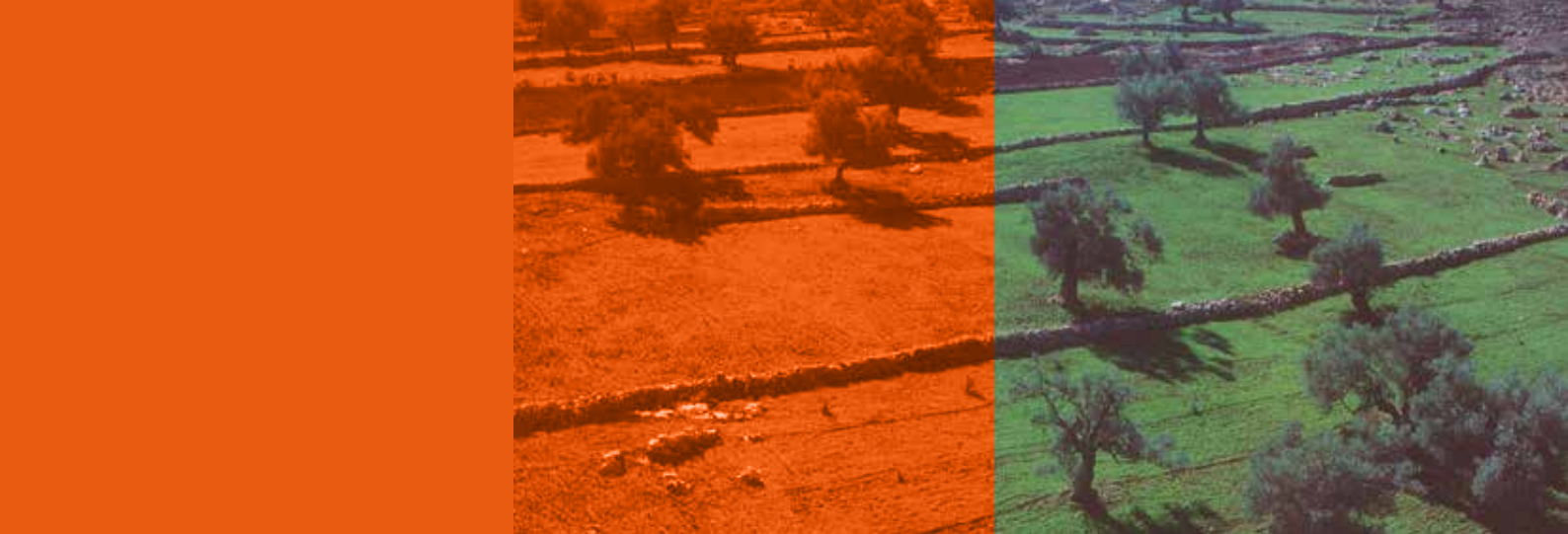
of West Bank and Gaza, as well as aerials of different classes A - C to be used as an input to the negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, and to plot in land uses and transportation networks.

### Lack of institutions

The PPIB was to be the core of the new Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation. Our institution building efforts soon came to realize that the lack of resources, both professional and economic, would become a constant threat, in addition to the lack of internal clarification regarding the division of authority and power between ministries. Competition between ministries can easily be understood: due to scarce resources, leadership tends to please most parties. For physical planning, a clear legal system is also a requirement, hence, we immediately started preparing for a Palestinian “Planning and Building Act”. However, laws and institutions are heavily inter-







woven with the political system, and in practice these challenges proved to be very complicated and time-consuming.

### **Constraints rising from the occupation**

For those who have not experienced occupation with checkpoints, controls, admissions and delays – in other words, serious friction in ordinary daily life, it is hard to imagine the frustrations and obstacles in trying to conduct civil life as well as business. Movements within the West Bank and Gaza, not to mention between these two areas, unfortunately often became obstacles for the project.

### **What did the PPIB manage to do in the end?**

#### **Timeframe of the PPIB**

The project was expected to last for 3 years, starting from January 1995. However, it soon became obvious that more time would be necessary. Although intense work took place during the first few years (up to 2000), the Norwegians supported Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation until March 2008. Throughout this period, activities varied, and advice was offered in accordance with Palestinian wishes. Many physical, social, economic, and cultural issues were addressed; like waste disposal locations, integration of refugee camps, new industrial zones, protection of cultur-

al heritage and the landscape. Policy planning and organizational questions were also addressed over time.

### **Education and training**

Education was an integral part of our efforts. It is safe to say that during our time in Palestine, a substantial number of Palestinians obtained an understanding of, and skills for, modern physical planning. By modern we mean cross-sector perspectives and the ability to use geographical information systems (GIS), different sorts of analysis tools and models, as well as advanced presentation techniques. This has developed internal respect and a professionalism that will spread and remain in Palestine. With aid obtained from other sources as well, many young Palestinians (among them quite a few women) have managed to acquire advanced education. Regardless of the institutional situation, this quality will be available for future generations.

### **Plans for the West Bank and Gaza**

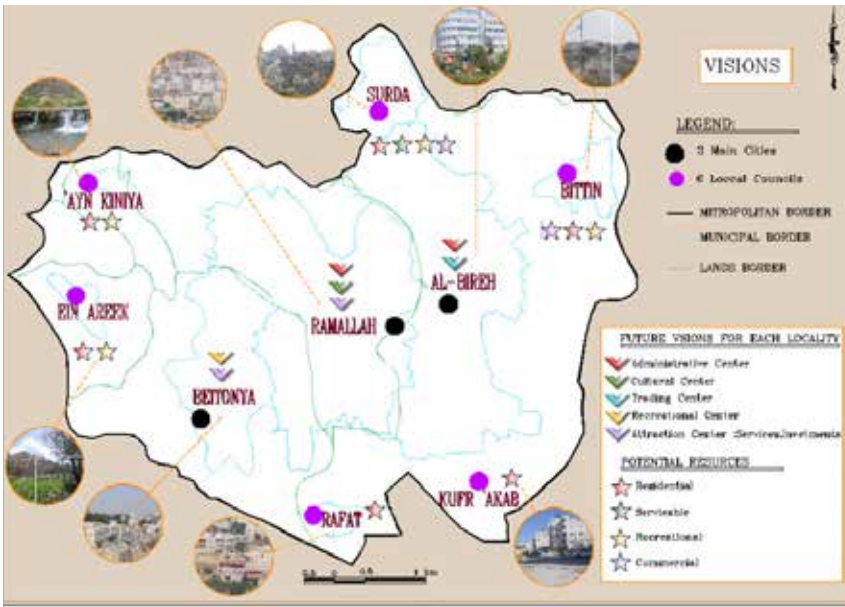
At the end of the period, complete regional plans existed for both the West Bank and Gaza, based on sound information and skill. Transportation plans were also ready within few years. This meant that foreign investment could be used according to defined needs, instead of arbitrary decisions. Plans for cultural heritage, as well as for the

landscape existed. Alternative studies were carried out for linking the West Bank and Gaza. All the time, the prospect for a united Palestine and a two state solution was kept open.

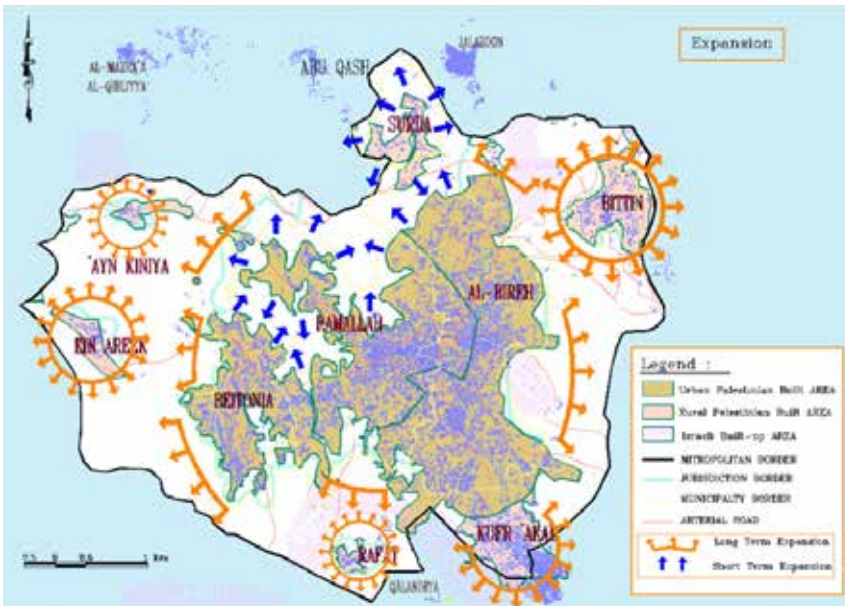
At the local level, several master plans were developed for Palestinian cities both in Gaza and the West Bank. Some of these plans were formally enacted, in spite of institutional difficulties; others could be used as guidance, without formal decisions. In all, some 64 plans and publications were finished before the year 2000. In the aftermath, several new documents (24 in numbers) have been prepared as part of advising.

It is important to stress that the Norwegians have *not worked as consultants* coming up with ready analyses and plans. While we were there, many foreign consultants visited and made plans. Most of them constituted “blue prints” and were just put away into drawers. Some had an image with a futuristic glare, like one from an American Think Tank that placed a super corridor for all transport on the eastern side of the West Bank, disregarding topography as well as vulnerability. The Norwegian PPIB team have been *advisers and they guided work*. It is the Palestinians themselves who have conducted the planning efforts.

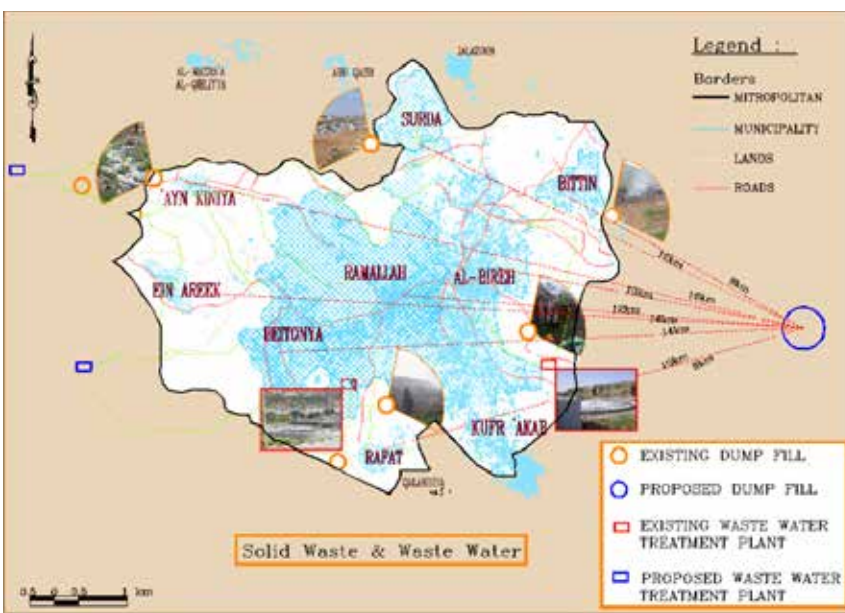
The expected vision for metropolitan localities (1996-97)



The expected expansion in metropolitan areas (1996-97)



Solid waste and waste water in metropolitan (1996-97)



**Is it sustainable?**

The situation for the Palestinians has unfortunately become increasingly difficult. The optimistic spirit of the Oslo Accord seems to have faded away. Organizing institutions are dependent on the political atmosphere. Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation has recently closed down, and planning authority is placed under the Ministry of Local Government. There is still no Planning and Building Act, although a draft exists. I have been informed that many of the then young planners trained by us are now in important positions in Palestine.

Physical planning needs to be kept alive through time, giving hope for the future and still, dealing with present-day realities. International professionals should try to create spin-offs for Palestinians in dealing with their everyday struggles. By this, I mean that planning and implementation should yield them employment and economic benefits, and increase their security.

The Palestinians do have professional planners able to perform the task. To me, this was proven on my last mission to Palestine in 2007, when we were there to give advice on the Regional plan for Gaza. As for the quality of the work carried out by the Palestinian planning professionals, I rest my case with the words of the previous Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice. When asked at a White House press conference on what will happen to the colonies in Gaza when the Israeli withdrew, she answered, "The Palestinians have a plan. I have seen it. And it is a valid plan."

# Water management in the Jordan river watershed

Jeffrey Featherstone, Tanner Adamson, and Julien Gicquel

*Current water management of the Jordan River Watershed seriously limits the ability of the State of Palestine to promote growth and development in the West Bank. This essay describes the watershed, notes some water facts, evaluates water governance both locally and regionally, and identifies water conflicts and describes their implications for growth and development of the West Bank.*

## The Jordan Watershed

The Jordan River begins from the lower slope of Mount Hermon (Jabel Al-Sheikh) and flows southward until it empties into the Dead Sea. The Basin includes five countries: Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, and Syria and it is traditionally divided into two sections, the Upper Jordan River, which is north of the Sea of Galilee (also known as Lake Tiberias or Buhera Tibria), and the Lower Jordan River which flows from the Sea of Galilee down to the Dead Sea. The river is 223 km in length, and its basin covers an area of 18,285 km<sup>2</sup>. The share of the basin area for each country is as follows: Israel 10%, Jordan 40%, Lebanon 4%, Palestine 9%, and Syria 37%. Of the 7.18 million people living in the basin, most of them live in Jordan (71%), 18% lives in Syria, and the remaining 11% in the other three countries. According to the Inventory of Shared Water Resources in Western Asia (2013) there are 45 main dams along the Jordan River and its tributaries and the river basin irrigates an estimated 100,000-150,000 ha.

The climate within the basin is highly variable for such a small area which is typical for the whole region. The topography is varied and changes quickly creating various microclimates throughout the river basin. The rainfall is greatest in the north western portion of the basin and declines towards the south eastern portion; from 1,000 mm annually in the northern region to 100-200 mm annually in the south near the Dead Sea.

*“If we solve all the problems of the Near East but not the division of the water, our region will explode. The peace will not be possible.”*

Prime Minister of Israel, Yitzhak Rabin (1992)



Jordan River Basin (UN-ESCWA, 2013)

The flow of the Jordan River has been severely altered in its lower portions due to development and human intervention. According to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (2011), the flow rates within the Upper Jordan River have remained mostly constant to what they are under natural condition, as seen in Figure 1. The current average annual inflow to the Sea of Galilee is around 616 million cubic meters (MCM) (or 160 billion gallons), compared to 605 MCM per year under natural conditions. Around 400 MCM/year is diverted from the Sea of Galilee by Israel for agricultural, domestic, and industrial uses. Water is also diverted into dams for water-supply storage and diverted from the Yarmouk River, which is in Syria. This has caused the Jordan River's flow to drop to 83-99 MCM/year south of the Yarmouk River, compared to 450-500 MCM/year under natural conditions. Moreover, groundwater is also taken out in the upper part of the river basin by Israel, Jordan, and Syria, which reduces the flow of the river even further. Due to these measures, the flow in the Lower Jordan River nowadays mostly consists of drainage water or return flows, which are waters that leave agricultural fields following irrigation. The net result of all these diversions is that the inflow into the Dead Sea is currently between 20-200 MCM/year, compared to the flow under natural conditions of 1,300 MCM/year. According to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (UN-ESCWA, 2013), this has resulted in the water level in the Dead Sea dropping over one meter a year. UN-ESCWA reports that salinity levels in the Upper Jordan River are still at low levels, but at the Sea of Galilee they begin to rise and are very high along the Lower Jordan River as a result of the decrease of water influx, as shown in Figure 2. Salinity is the measure of salt content in water and can change the chemistry of water as well as the biological processes that occur within it. The transfer of high salinity waters near the Sea of Galilee to the Lower Jordan River, and in addition agricultural runoff and sewage discharge, "caused the Lower Jordan River to become highly polluted and to have increased salinity levels along with a 50 percent decrease in biodiversity. These changes continually reduce the future availability of water for both off stream and instream uses in the Jordan Valley.

### Trends in Water Use

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (2010), total water withdrawals per capita in m<sup>3</sup>/year for all uses varies considerably in the region: Palestine (104 m<sup>3</sup>); Jordan (158 m<sup>3</sup>); Israel (282 m<sup>3</sup>); Lebanon (315 m<sup>3</sup>); and Syria (817 m<sup>3</sup>). These average estimations mask serious local problems. For example, many Palestini-

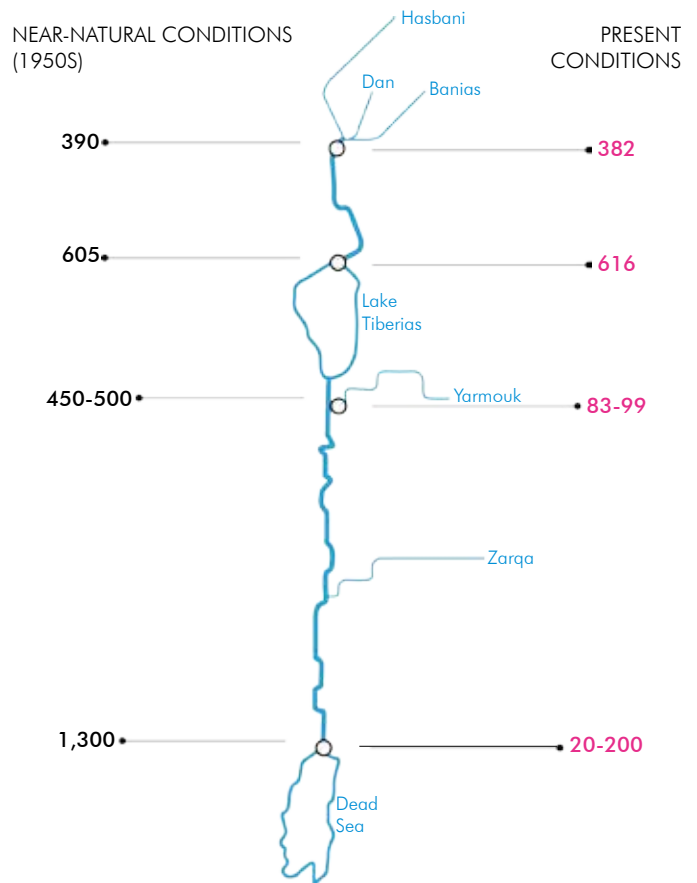
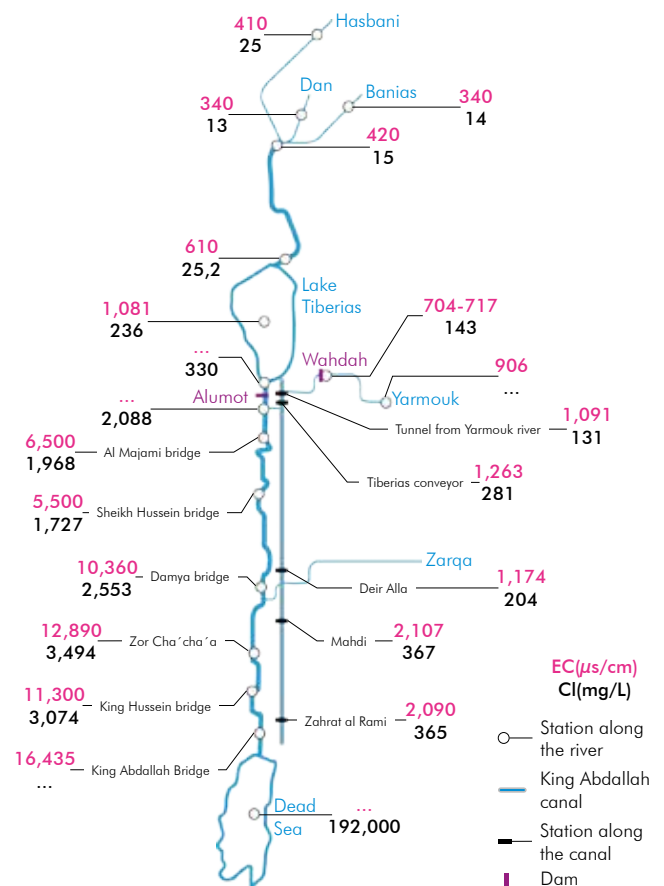


Figure 1. Annual Water Flow (MCM) of the Jordan River (UN-ESCWA, 2013). Source: Compiled by ESCWA-BGR based on Courier et al., 2005; GRDC, 2011; HSI, 1944-2008.



Salinity Levels along the Jordan River (UN-ESCWA, 2013). Source: Compiled by ESCWA-BGR.

an communities in the West Bank have much less than the recommended minimum daily consumption of 100 litres of water by the World Health Organization (WHO). Particularly hard hit are the communities near Jericho. Due to the low availability of water, families have to purchase their water from water-tanker operators. This results in the expenditures on water for a family to be at least three times higher than families elsewhere in the West Bank.

In 2010, a study conducted by Friends of the Earth Middle East investigating water use in the Lower Jordan River concluded that more than 98 percent of the natural flow was diverted by Israel, Jordan, and Syria, primarily for agricultural purposes. Even so, the region is one of the most efficient in the world in utilizing their existing water resources for off stream uses, however instream flows and biodiversity are greatly diminished.

Israel constructed the National Water Carrier in 1964 to move water from the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee to the southern parts of Israel. The system is Israel's largest water management project and is the country's main water distribution system, with other distribution networks linked to it. The National Water Carrier caused some serious negative environmental impacts, especially to the biodiversity of the watershed and has contributed to the declining level of the Jordan River. While the National Water Carrier is currently the leading supplier of water for Israel, the increasing desalination efforts may replace it as the leading supplier of water in Israel.

Israel, Jordan, and Palestine are the three countries within the river basin that have the greatest water supply issues. Syria and Lebanon receive the majority of their water supplies from sources other than the Jordan River, such as the Euphrates in Syria, and Lebanon has ample supplies with 17 perennial rivers that are tapped for water supplies. Israel currently uses the total amount of its allocated water resources from bilateral agreements, while Jordan has a yearly deficit of around 200 MCM/year. Palestine, which receives most of its water from Israel, has the most serious water supply issues and is routinely subject to water cutbacks and restrictions imposed by the Israeli government. This greatly impairs Palestine's ability to develop and revitalize the West Bank. According to a B'Tselem report dated 2011, Palestine has additionally seen the number of their active wells in the Jordan River Basin decrease from 209 in 1967 to 89 currently.

Israel has invested heavily in desalination technology, wastewater recycling and reclamation, and the harvesting of rainwater. Israel has four operating desalination plants with a fifth one opening soon. Kreshner reports in the New York Times in 2015 that the plants produce more than 490 MCM/year (130 bg/y) of water. Israel seeks to produce 750 MCM/year by 2020. While the price of desalination is decreasing, it is still expensive, with a single plant in Israel costing around \$500 million to construct. 86 percent of its wastewater is recycled and reused for agricultural purposes, which accounts for around 55 percent of all the agricultural water used.

### **Historical Context**

*The Water: a Vital Stake, Early Conflicts* – In 1919, Chaim Weizmann, the leader of the world Zionist Organization, declared: "All the economic future of Palestine depends on its water supply." Weizmann concluded that a major source of water, the Litani River in Lebanon, was essential to the future of the Jewish "national home" as the Jordan River lacked sufficient flow to meet future water needs. This contention was fiercely opposed by the Arab states, and continues to be opposed by them.

The idea of a water sharing policy for the region was first discussed in 1913 with the Franjeh Plan, which focused on irrigation in the Jordan Valley. The 1939 Lonides Plan proposed diverting the Yarmouk River into two canals meant to irrigate the Jordan Valley. While never implemented, the plan stressed cooperation between Jordan and Israel and established water planning concepts for the region. The American government tried to mediate in the Jordan valley in 1953-1955 by proposing the Johnston Plan, which established a unified watershed allocation strategy, by giving about 56% of the water to Jordan, 31% to Israel, 10% to Syria, and 3% to Lebanon. While the plan was approved by the technical water committees of the four countries, it was rejected by the Arab league. Although rejected, both Israel and Jordan continued to use the plan's allocations in order to obtain outside funding for water projects.

In the early 1950s, the Israelis drained a large marshland known as Lake Houleh just north of the Sea of Galilee, and widened and deepened the Jordan River downstream of the lake. While providing additional water for diversions, the drainage proved to be an ecological disaster resulting in a massive loss of biodiversity. In the 1990s, the Israelis redeveloped the area back into a natural state by flooding and retaining a permanent pool in the area which provides a stopover site for migratory birds.

Also in 1950s, Israel began to plan and construct the National Water Carrier to divert water from the Sea of Galilee to Israel. This aqueduct project, Israel's largest, was constructed by Mekorot and completed in 1964, and forms the primary source of drinking water for Israeli cities. The project has proven to be a major source of contention between Israel and the Arab states. In 1964, Syria attempted to construct a diversion plan that would have precluded Israel from taking full use of the National Water Carrier, and the first attack of Fatah - spearheaded by Yasser Arafat - in 1965 targeted National Water Carrier. In response, Israel attacked Syria's diversion attempt, and another attempt by Jordan. These disputes over water and diversions from the Jordan Valley greatly contributed to the regional tensions that led to the 1967 War. Was the Six-Day War (June 5-10th, 1967) a war over water? In the period leading up to the War, Israel attacked and destroyed every water project initiated by the Arab states.

The Six-Day War, a Change in Water Politics – The 1967 War profoundly influenced water politics in the region. The Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories has given the Israelis the upper hand in securing diversions from the Jordan River and its tributaries that are highly favourable to the country. Its administrative control of the West Bank allows the country to control the region's important groundwater resources. Since the 1967 War, the Israelis have expeditiously tapped new water resources and maximized its usage of existing sources. Today over half of the country's drinking water originates in

the West Bank. Military orders issued by Israeli authorities have restricted Palestinian water development. For example, the 1967 Military Orders required all water structures to have permits and gave Israel control over all the water related activities in Area C.

### Governance

No multilateral agreements have been made in the region with respect to water resources, with only bilateral agreements existing. (Table 1) Most of the bilateral agreements fit into two main categories: agreements between Jordan and Syria and agreements between Israel and Jordan after they signed a peace treaty.

The Johnston Plan is the closest the Jordan River Basin region has come to adopting a multilateral agreement. The proposed agreement was negotiated in 1953-1955 by then US Ambassador Eric Johnston. The plan was not ratified, but it has been used as a basis for water allocation discussions.

Israel and Jordan signed a treaty in October 1994 which established the Israel-Jordan Joint Water Committee. This committee contains three members from each country and allows for data sharing on water resources, cooperation in plan development related to water supply and use, and outlines specific volumes of water that each country can use, store, and transfer to each other.

Table 1. Water agreements in the Jordan River Basin (UN-ESCWA, 2013)

YEAR	NAME	SIGNIFICANCE	SIGNATORIES
1920	Franco-British Convention	Article 8 states that the signatories will undertake joint examination of the Upper Jordan and Yarmouk for the production of hydroelectric power.	Great Britain (Israel, Jordan, Palestine), France (Lebanon, Syria)
1923	Exchange of notes constituting an agreement between the British and French Governments	The agreement focuses on water rights.	Great Britain (Israel, Jordan, Palestine), France (Lebanon, Syria)
1926	Agreement I of Good Neighbourly Relations Concluded Between the British and French Governments	Article III focuses on water rights.	Great Britain (Israel, Jordan, Palestine), France (Lebanon, Syria)
1953	Agreement between the Republic of Syria and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Concerning the Utilization of the Yarmouk Waters	Cooperative use and management of the Yarmouk, including construction of the Wahdah Dam.	Jordan, Syria
1987	Agreement Concerning the Utilization of the Yarmouk Waters	Cooperative use and management of the Yarmouk, including construction of the Wahdah Dam.	Jordan, Syria
1994	Treaty of peace between the State of Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan	Annex II outlines the principles of cooperative use and management on the Yarmouk River and the Jordan River.	Israel, Jordan
1995	Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip	Annex III, Article 40 comprises the interim arrangement for water management in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.	Israel, Palestine (PLO)

An Israeli-Palestinian Joint Water Committee was formed in 1995 from the Oslo II Accord which manages water and sewage infrastructure in the West Bank. Approval of projects by the Joint Water Committee does not guarantee their completion however. Additional permits must also be obtained from the Israeli army before any work can be commenced in Area C of the West Bank, yet many applications are rejected and others are subject to long delays.

The new Palestinian city Rawabi (meaning “The Hills”) in Area B, north of Ramallah, is the only new Palestinian city being built in this area. The master plan envisions a high-tech city with 6,000 housing units for 25,000 to 40,000 people. Construction began in January 2010, but was halted due to the lack of a water connection with the Israeli water grid. Finally, in early 2015 the developers were provided with the necessary water connection and full-scale construction resumed. (Picture 1) The slow development in Rawabi is an ironic contrast to the accelerated development of Israeli settlements.

A regional NGO Master Plan for Sustainable Development in the Jordan Valley was published in June 2015 by the Stockholm International Water Institute, together with consortium partners EcoPeace Middle East and Global Nature Fund. This plan could provide a path for better water management in the Jordan River Basin if the countries choose to adopt it. The plan aims to eliminate all sources of environmental pollution in the Jordan Valley by 2025 by improving water use, irrigation efficiencies and economic outputs per unit of water used, and by strengthening cooperation among the responsible authorities, municipalities and other related ministries in the Jordan Valley. The plan attempts to accomplish this through a mix of pollution control interventions, sustainable water management, agricultural efficiency improvements, establishing a transnational basin commission, improving ecology, and boosting tourism.

### **Conflicts and implications for development in the West Bank**

The demand for water by Palestinians in the West Bank steadily increased over the last decades. Yet, the infrastructure development needed to meet that demand has not taken place due to Israel’s tight restrictions since 1967. Israel has drastically limited the construction of new wells by Palestinian authorities from the Mountain Aquifer (also called the Western Aquifer), one of Palestine’s two main water sources, and has generally prohibited new agricultural wells elsewhere in the West Bank. With respect to the second source, the Upper Jordan River, Palestinians do not receive any water from it, while Israel uses it to meet approximately one-third of its wa-



ter needs. In order to meet increasing demands, Palestinians have become increasingly reliant on the Israeli government and in particular on its national water company, Mekorot. The West Bank currently receives 45% of its municipal and industrial water supplies from Mekorot.

Water conflicts between Israel and Palestine stem in large part from Article 40 of the Oslo II agreement. While this article specified that water had to be managed jointly, Israel has a much greater influence over the water resources in the region due to its specific provisions. While the article estimated the future water needs of the West Bank, and allocated quantities of the aquifers between Israel and Palestine, the article also required all proposed projects in the West Bank to receive approval from Israel. The article also allowed for additional water allocations for the Palestinians from the Eastern Aquifer, but they have been unable to develop them. In addition, Israel also heavily pumps water from the Western Aquifer which precludes the ability of the Palestinians to withdraw their share. This water is often sold by Mekorot back to the Palestinians living in the West Bank.

The Palestinian Water Authority, which is responsible for managing the water resources in Palestine, encourages economic growth and water and food security through securing the water rights of Palestinians. Unfortunately, the agency lacks sufficient resources, and cannot perform its key functions including negotiating with the Joint Water Committee and Mekorot. While potentially a key player in the region on behalf of Palestine, its influence is overwhelmed by the control of water by the Israeli government and Mekorot.

The Joint Water Committee has only been partially effective in providing a framework for water management and in approving projects in the region. According to the World Bank's 2009 report, between 1996 and 2008, the Joint Water Committee approved 236 projects, but only 151 (64%) were ever implemented, many of them only after significant delays.

Growth and development of the State of Palestine has been severely impacted by water policies and regulations imposed since the 1967 conflict. Providing the Palestinians with greater autonomy and control of their fair share of the Jordan River Watershed will be essential for their growth and development of the West Bank. Otherwise development will stall and growth will become even more haphazard in the West bank, further frustrating tensions in the region.

**“Nothing is left of Palestinian water rights. The Palestinians have become customers for the Israeli Mekorot Water Company... We now depend on the Israeli Mekorot Company.”**

**Abdul Rahman al-Tamimi, President of the Water Committee of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (2015)**

#### **Future Considerations**

The major hurdle to the development of revitalization in the Jordan Valley and West Bank is the lack of sufficient water infrastructure to support it. While improvements can be made in water use efficiencies and wastewater reuse, Palestine must be recognized as a full riparian state in Jordan Valley, entitled to full access of its fair share of water resources and sovereignty over its lands in the valley. Bilateral and multi-lateral agreements among the riparian states must recognize this critical need.

The NGO Master Plan for Sustainable Development in the Jordan Valley (2015) provides several recommendations that should be implemented by the riparian states. These include:

- Eliminate all sources of environmental pollution in the Jordan Valley by 2025. This would require full and adequate treatment and reuse of all wastewater flows in the valley and to embark on fully integrated solid waste management.
- Improve water use and irrigation efficiencies and economic outputs per unit of water used.
- Strengthen land co-operation among the responsible authorities, including Jordan Water Authority, Israeli Water Authority, Palestinian Water Authority, drainage authorities, municipalities and other related ministries and authorities in their roles over regulation of the Jordan Valley. This will also require improved coordination and cooperation among various stakeholders involved in water management, to enable a more efficient and beneficial water economy.

A key resource objective is maintaining high quality and sufficient instream flows in the Lower Jordan River. This is critical for the tourism industry in the West Bank. But given the increasing demands for off stream uses, meeting this objective will be a challenge. Increasing use of desalination plants may be the only alternative to meeting both instream and off stream uses.

Environmental cooperation building has been successful in other regions where riparian cooperation was able to settle water disputes between neighbouring countries with a history of conflict. In the Indus River Basin, India and Pakistan agreed to a riparian cooperation agreement called the Indus Waters Treaty in 1960, which has deescalated tensions between the two opposing countries. The opportunity exists in the Jordan River Basin to use a multi-lateral agreement as a way to build peace and reduce tensions between Israel, Palestine, and other neighbouring countries. This multi-national agreement with ongoing discussions and fact sharing provisions could mediate water issues while also serving to deescalate tensions in the region. Countries and political leaders have recently recognized that environmental resources and issues are fundamental for a nation's prosperity and that the solutions to these issues which do not recognize political boundaries require multi-lateral agreements. Cooperation over water, a fundamental resource for life, can avoid conflict between adversarial countries and build confidence between countries by serving as a pathway for communication.



# Local government in Palestine

Peter Slits

*Peter is an urban/regional planner by education and has been a freelance consultant in local governance capacity development for more than ten years; he has been active in international cooperation in different capacities with special emphasis on local government as a key actor in local development. He has extensive field experience in the African region and more recently in the Middle East (Jordan but especially Palestine)*

## **The period before 1994**

Local government (LG) in Palestine has been in existence for a long time. It has evolved over time with a significant part of its institutional and legal framework having its origin in different political and legal systems that have governed the Palestinian Territories. This explains the complexities of the institutional setting of the Palestinian local administration system as it is today. It mostly served as a vehicle for providing services to citizens within the limits of their operational capacities. The immediate consequence of the 1967 war was that the occupied Palestinian territories came under Israeli regime, suspending the administrative authorities of West Bank and Gaza Strip Governorates, and passing them to Israeli military governors. All existing administrative divisions were re-divided according to the needs of the military rule. Because of the new organisational set-up, many cities and villages related to new centres as required under the military regime, thus changing the pattern of urban-rural linkages considerably.

## **The period after 1994**

In 1994, the Palestinian National Authority was established as part of the Oslo Agreement signed in 1993. Since then, the Palestinian National Authority has exercised a variety of functions, mostly in the area of civil administration and to some extent in the field of security. According to the Oslo Agreement, the Palestinian National Authority has full administrative and security authority in Area-A, has only civil authority in Area-B and has no authority whatsoever in Area-C. Obviously, this has major implications for the local government sector in a variety of areas such as (spatial) planning, financial planning & management, utilities, socio-econom-

ic development, urban-rural linkages to mention a few. The Ministry of Local Government was established in May 1994. It inherited a local government system comprising only 30 municipalities and 109 village councils that existed in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. After its establishment, the Palestinian National Authority increased the number of these local government units to 119 municipalities and 251 village councils by 1997. It is this local government system and more particularly its territorial organisation that has become the subject of a serious debate on measures to be taken to make it more viable, effective and efficient.

## **The local government sector today**

The organisational set-up is basically comprising three levels. At the national level, the following institutions are key. Ministry of Local Government is the main policy making and legislative institution for the sector working in partnership with other line ministries and related governmental institutions. Municipal Development & Lending Fund is the main executive arm of Ministry of Local Government and mandated to develop and implement local government support programmes in close partnership with international donor agencies. Association of Palestinian Local Authorities is the national association of local government, whose key functions include representation, influencing policy development, advocacy & lobbying, development of by-laws and training. While its performance record has been poor for a number of years, there is currently a renewed interest to reinvigorate it as a national umbrella for local government in the country. Efforts are underway to re-build the association and its operating capacities accordingly.

Given the complexities of the country in general and those of the LG sector in particular, there is a need for a coherent policy and strategy document that integrates the operations of various sub-sectors. It is characteristic for the sector though to embark on certain (sub-sector) approaches and strategies (such as decentralisation, joint service councils, amalgamation, strategic development & investment plans, local economic development etc.), without having spelled out the linkages between those sub-areas. The result being that pro-

gramme interventions and operations are implemented in a disjointed and incoherent manner, thus reducing its final impact on the communities concerned.

### **Regionalisation**

On this point, the formulation of a national policy agenda 2017-2022 is currently being developed and is expected to be finalised by the end of 2016. Apart from setting the framework for national development in general, it will also serve as a lead document for the various sub-sectors. The policy priority areas for the LG sector have been identified and can be summarised as follows:

- Regionalisation,
- Fiscal reform,
- Local economic development, and
- Amalgamation=restructuring of small village councils (territorial integrity).

The last three are in a sense issues of on-going concern as they have been addressed in varying degrees in previous development plans. This is not the case for regionalisation, which has been the subject of debate, resulting in a decision by the cabinet in early 2016. The idea behind it is to restructure the regional organisation of government structures by replacing the present 16 Governorates (WB 11, Gaza 5) by 5 Regions (WB 3, Gaza 2), though the latter numbers are yet to be decided. Obviously, this will have major implications for various levels of government, their vertical relations as well as horizontal linkages with relevant institutions at a particular level. It is fair to say that the notion of regionalisation is provoking a wide range of reactions, making it a highly controversial issue. It remains to be seen if and how regionalisation will be incorporated in the forthcoming national policy agenda .

### **Development of Area C**

There is one other development that should be highlighted, regarding Area C. In these areas, civil authority and security lie entirely with the Israeli authorities. Due to a strict set of regulations (both in terms of planning and security) any form of development is made impossible by the occupier. The reason the Government of Palestine has unilaterally decided to go ahead with plans to develop these areas is because they are seen as a crucial asset for the future development of the Palestinian state. These plans essentially exist of preparing master plans and so-called Outline plans for (the communities in) Area C. Once finalised, the plans are submitted for approval to the relevant Israeli authority. If technical negotiations with the relevant Israeli authority exceeds eighteen

months, the government of Palestine considers the plan as approved and commences implementation. Out of more than 108 local outline plans prepared or under preparation, only 3 have actually been approved by the relevant Israeli authorities. The others have either been rejected or have not been submitted yet. Although this is not an encouraging record, the government of Palestine is determined to go ahead. One other positive aspect that should be highlighted here is that spatial planning has been the entry point for local development plans. It is hoped that this example will be made a central point of departure for local municipal development across the country.

### **International support**

In this and many other areas of responsibility, the LG sector is receiving tremendous support from a large number of donor agencies. This shows the interest of the international community to assist the government of Palestine in building national institutions on one hand, but also – and increasingly – the sub-national partners in local government. It is encouraging to see how most of these programmes and interventions are being channelled through the Municipal Development & Lending Fund in an effort to develop a unified framework for assisting the local government. A major multi-donor support programme (Municipal Development Programme/MDP) is in its third phase, running from 2017-2020. It is likely to comprise five windows of operation of which the final design process is in full swing. The programme has attracted an accumulated level of international funding of over € 50 million for the first two phases. It is expected that the budget for MDP-3 will exceed hundred million € as well. Whilst these donor programmes are essentially serving the bigger local councils, i.e. Municipalities, there is also a range of support programmes specifically targeting smaller Village Councils and Local Government Units.

All in all, the LG sector in Palestine is truly a multi-layered, multi-faceted, and multi-stakeholder sector. It can be characterised as being very dynamic, facing tremendous challenges and constraints, but at the same time developing from strength to strength. In spite of the difficult conditions because of the occupation, it is encouraging to see how the national institutions responsible for local government (Ministry of Local Government, Municipal Development & Lending Fund and hopefully soon Association of Palestinian Local Authorities as well) are making headway in building a strong local government sector serving communities in area A, B and C, as much as they possibly can.

# Local Economic Development Promotion & its strategic value in the State of Palestine

UNDP

State of Palestine's economy is severely undermined by a range of highly restrictive policies and regulatory instruments imposed during decades of Israeli occupation. The occupation has extracted large swathes of territory within Area C and their economic potential out of the overall equation of territorial as well as national economic development. It has simultaneously forced the concentration of economic activities in isolated urban centers and higher density village clusters in various regions of the West bank that fall within Areas A and B. It also ensured the separation of these urban enclaves from each other and most critically, from their hinterland in Area C.

The absence or weakness of a national economic development framework, which could deploy strategies to counteract the adverse impact of Israeli policies on the Palestinian economy, has allowed these policies to achieve much of their intended objectives. The absence or weakness of territorial economic development frameworks and of well-synchronized Local Economic Development (LED) promotion processes at the municipal and village cluster level has enabled the occupation to systematically sever vital inter-territori-

al economic linkages and the gradual isolation of urban economies. This gap has also enabled the gradual shrinkage of the productive sectors in urban economies and their gradual replacement by trade sectors, which are increasingly functioning as the marketing conduits for Israeli goods as well other commodities imported through Israel. This transformation represents a structural deformation of the Palestinian economy, which might become irreversible if not confronted strategically and systematically sooner than later.

Applying the LED approach and utilizing its integrated national framework would be instrumental in helping to counteract the adverse impact of these prevailing conditions and gradually, leveraging the significant potential of the diverse territorial economies of the State of Palestine. Specifically, the LED approach would contribute significantly to enhance the outcome of territorial local economic development efforts. It will also aid national efforts to unleash the obstructed potential of the broader Palestinian economy towards a systematic and legally grounded pushback on an illegal policy and regulatory framework.

## **LED Application in the State of Palestine: a potential scenario**

To ensure the effectiveness of an economic development process in the State of Palestine, an integrated, multi-tier national framework for LED promotion would have to be gradually applied. This framework will enable the launch of an interconnected economic development process at various territorial levels where each would be assigned a specific set of functions while ensuring complementarity and a coherent cumulative output.

### **At the National Level:**

The national level would launch and manage an Integrated National Framework for LED Promotion. This national effort would focus on ensuring the responsiveness of macroeconomic policies to the developmental requirements of territorial/local economies. It would ensure that national economic development strategies (both general and sector specific) are aligned with the objectives of territorial and local economic development. It would also maximize the level of coordination between national economic infrastructure strategies and those of the localities to maximize their contribution to local economic development efforts.

### **At the Local/Territorial Level:**

The LED approach will enable the launch of an integrated economic development process at two subnational tiers where the first would ideally encompass a cluster of Governorates (a Region), which would cumulatively cover an economically coherent geographic entity. The second would encompass the municipal and Village Clusters tier. Each of these two tiers would be assigned specific but complementary LED promotion functions.

### **The Governorate Cluster (Regional) Tier:**

The LED promotion process at the governorate cluster/regional tier would enable approaching the economy of the territory in a comprehensive manner combining urban and rural zones. In spite of existing exclusionary physical infrastructure and access restrictions that yield fragmented territorial zones in all parts of the West bank, a comprehensive view of such territorial clusters would facilitate the development of Integrated Territorial Economic Development Strategies that can take such fragmenting elements and factors into consideration while devising ways to counteract them and to gradually and systematically mitigate their adverse impact. Most critically, such a higher-level territorial view would enable the development of LED strategies that can be built upon the comparative advantages of these broader territories and that aim to promote their economic development in an integrated and strategic manner. Such strategies can also be synchronized with the national vision and strategies for economic development and can be instrumental at contributing to that.

### **The Municipal and Village Cluster Tier:**

Currently, the economies of cities, towns and village clusters in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are evolving in an informal and opportunistic manner, driven by decisions that are largely taken by private sector actors and the sectors, subsectors and clusters they represent as they try to individually navigate an increasingly obstructive environment. The absence of a broader territorial economic development vision and strategies reinforces the economic isolation of these urban centres and contributes to the further erosion of economic linkages that could evolve among them and between them and their surrounding hinterland. This isolation will eventually lead to their transformation into trading economies and the gradual erosion of their productive and value-addition sectors.

The introduction of well-structured LED promotion processes at the Municipal and Village Cluster tier that runs in a synchronized manner with that at the territorial level would enable an in-depth exploration of the particular economic growth potentials of the cities, towns or village clusters within the broader territory they exist in. This is a vital process, which will help counteract efforts to force such entities and their economies to turn inward and to disconnect from their surrounding territorial or national economy. Gradually, the LED process will enable these cities/towns or village clusters to more accurately and strategically define their economic role/function within the broader economy of their territory and to work on differentiating themselves from each other and thus avoiding damaging competition and focusing instead on complementarity.

### **LED: Definition**

A Local Economic Development process leverages the comparative and competitive advantages of a territory, its human and economic resources, its natural endowments and the contributions of its private sector, local government, economically oriented nongovernmental and civil society organizations to cumulatively contribute to the promotion of economic growth. Central government as well as national and international private sector actors and development partners also contribute to LED promotion in a given locality. However, their contributions must be aligned with the locality's LED objectives and effectively contribute to their fulfillment. The distinctive differentiating characteristic of the LED approach is that it aims to support the promotion of equitable, sustainable and ethical economic growth and not only a quantitative increase in its volume.

LED is foundational for grounding and contributing to national economic development strategies. It enables the nuanced translation of a national economic development vision into implementable and practical economic development actions at the territorial level. It provides the critical framework for integrating and consolidating the full range of economic interventions taking place within a territory to cumulatively contribute to the strategic development of the local economy. Additionally, it provides the framework for the synchronization of national economic policies and strategies with local/territorial economic development strategies thus contributing to the overall coherence of a country's economic development efforts.

# Participatory urban planning in Gaza

UN-Habitat, oPt

## Background

Gaza Strip is a narrow strip of land with a width ranging from 6-11 km and a limited area of 360 square kilometres. In 1948, the Gaza Strip had to receive around 300,000 refugees that were hosted in 8 refugee camps. As a political constrain to urban planning, the refugee camps were never allowed to be part of planning. Between the years 1967-1994, there were only 5 municipalities and 9 village councils with limited boundaries. Urban planning at the time of Israeli occupation was administered by municipalities and village councils, while master plans were prepared by Israeli consulting firms under the control of the occupation.

Following the formation of the PA, the municipalities suddenly found themselves responsible for urban planning although they lacked such knowledge. Between 1994 and 1998, a lot of funded projects were implemented among municipalities and ministries in order to build capacity in the field of urban planning. The Palestinian Authority in addition formulated other municipalities and village councils in order to cover the needs of the urbanized areas. Nowadays, the number of municipalities is 25 covering most of the urbanized areas in the Gaza Strip while the regional areas are controlled by the Ministry of Local Government.

The relatively newly formulated municipalities are suffering from lack of personnel and capacity in all terms and they are assisted by the Ministry of Local Government. The well-established municipalities benefited from accumulated experience in urban planning and had the opportunity to develop their capacity. Nevertheless, urban planning is still in the hands of public authorities, either within municipalities or assisted by Ministry of Local Government. The concept of participatory planning is common, but not applied. The role of the local community comes at the end of the planning process when plans are announced as part of the legal process, and it is restricted to opposition by those effected from plans.

The last round of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict of July/August 2014 in the Gaza Strip further devastated an already overwhelmed situation in Gaza, leaving more than 2,200 dead and more than 18,000 homes destroyed or uninhabitable. Moreover, the Shelter Cluster reports that after more than one year of the end of the hostilities, some 100,000 people in Gaza remain internally displaced. Thus, the majority of the population of Gaza is hindered access to one of their most basic rights; the right to adequate housing and associated basic services.



Gaza Strip Governates

## Supporting state building through neighbourhood planning in Khuza'a

Khuza'a Municipality was one of the most heavily affected by the 2014 conflict with 179 housing units totally destroyed (35% of the total units) and many more damaged. In addition, Khuza'a experienced significant damage to its infrastructure including water and road networks. With the financial support of the UK Department for International Development, UN Habitat/Palestine in partnership with the Palestinian Housing Council and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) began a process of supporting Khuza'a to review and develop new detailed outline plans for the two heavily damaged



Abu Reida & Al Najar neighbourhoods

neighbourhoods. The overall ambition of the project is to support Khuza'a to 'build back better' in support of reconstruction and include innovative planning concepts in the design of their neighbourhoods as they look to recover from the conflict

To ensure the project best reflects the future infrastructure needs and associated services of both the community of the 3,600 residents Al-Najar and Abu Reida neighbourhoods and the locality in Khuza'a; the project aims to build an intra-governmental and government-citizen collaboration through the establishment of a Neighbourhood Technical Support Centre (NTSC) for planning process facilitation. The Centre will help to ensure that community social cohesion is developed through the establishment of Representative Platforms, to develop a spatial plan which is approved by the community and municipality, and finally to provide improved technical skills on participatory planning approaches for the municipality and NTSC staff.

Both neighbourhoods suffer from a lack of public facilities and green spaces. This situation is due to unplanned

land-use, limited engagement of the community in building projects over the years, and lack of resources. Quality of life in Khuza'a is further affected by the absence of a sewage system. A particular problem is that water quality is deteriorating largely as a result of the intrusion of sea water into the aquifer. Residents living in the town also do not have a reliable access to electricity. The town is connected to Palestinian National Authority Electricity Distribution Company, which cuts off the electricity randomly several times a day due to overloading.

Through the spatial planning process for Al-Najar and Abu Reida neighbourhoods, a new forum was provided for dialogue and coordination between the national government, local government and citizens. The overall objective of the project is to contribute to state-building in Palestine through a neighbourhood spatial planning process. In addition, the spatial plan itself added value to future reconstruction investments by prioritizing issues such as the creation of public space, establishing connectivity with basic services and encouraging autonomous mobility. Further, the process contributed to improve social cohesion through a community led planning process in advance of reconstruction efforts.

### Participatory approach to planning

In its simplest terms, a participatory approach is one in which everyone who has a stake in the intervention has a voice, either in person or by representation. It ensures that the intervention will have more credibility in all segments of the community because it was planned by a group representing all segments of the community. Social participation has an important role in the success of different projects especially the municipal and governmental





- Host public meetings for appraising the options, led by community representatives, municipality, senior staff of the project.
- Conduct workshops to present the draft of the proposed detailed plans to different stakeholders at different stages.
- Host public meetings for finalizing the plans.
- Exhibit the final plans to the public.

projects for the development of the urban areas. This concept was developed when the institutions working in development realized that community is the basic element in development; it had become more responsive and reactive to the growing needs and demands of its members. In addition, political, economic and social development cannot be achieved unless all community sectors are given the opportunity to participate in expressing their needs and setting up the appropriate plans and programs.

The first step of the project was to map existing conditions with the participation of the community. The project team conducted a detailed survey covering both socio-economic and physical aspects to map the existing data regarding buildings (including building use, size, and material, number of stories, conditions and ownership, etc.), land use and the current state of infrastructure.

Two committees of community representatives (one for each neighbourhood, 15 to 20 persons) have been formulated to ensure proper support to the project team, and to oversee the planning process. The committees were established after determining the stakeholders that cover all the categories of the local community; they were selected from different segments of the

society including, women, youth, disabled persons, farmers, labours, traders, land owners and private businesses. The committees are project team partners during assessment, planning and accomplishment of the plans.



### Assessment of community needs and priorities

Community participation is essential for the planning process to ensure that any development is relevant to

The main approach of the project is to involve a participatory planning process to develop specific plans for the two districts, reflecting the priorities of community members and always focusing on the most vulnerable groups. Participatory planning was facilitated through a number of steps:

- Develop and implement a comprehensive information campaign.
- Announce the planning initiation and promote broad engagement in the planning process.

the priorities of the local community. Participation also fosters a sense of community ownership, and thereby promotes sustainability.

Residents identified the priorities of their community, based on what will have the most sustained impact on quality of life, particularly for vulnerable groups. Technical experts ensured that planning processes are technically sound, realistic and that they identify feasible developments.



A community needs and priorities assessment was developed and carried out by citizens. Four focus groups from the local community analysed the four development sectors using a SWOT Analysis:

1. Social Sector (housing, education, health, heritage, empowerment)
2. Economic Sector (agriculture, industry, commerce, tourism, employment)
3. Built Environment & Infrastructure (roads network, water, electricity, sewage)
4. Governance & Administration (disaster management, institutional development, planning, IT)

The work of each group included an assessment of quantitative and qualitative indicators to identify the main priorities for the sector. In addition, planning workshops with local communities have been organized to prepare conceptual plans for the two areas. After a short orientation session about neighbourhood planning principles, community representatives were divided into two groups and after they finished their work, it was noted that the planning concepts of both teams have been almost the same. This was a sign of success showing that local communities can be reliable partners during planning processes.

### Provision of legal support to affected families

As one of the core competencies of the NRC in Palestine, the Information, Counselling and Legal Assistance (ICLA) program serves refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and those at risk of displacement. The program aim is to enhance Palestinian access to justice through the provision of legal assistance, capacity building of legal professionals and advocacy of their rights. The long-term objective of the program is to contribute to improved protection and living conditions for refugees and internally displaced persons in Palestine. In the Gaza Strip, ICLA offers legal services to beneficiaries in the area of Housing, Land and Property (HLP) rights with particular focus on women's HLP rights, in addition to document assistance for reconstruction efforts.

### Exchange of experience with international planning experts

UN Habitat, through a partnership with Dutch Creative Industries Fund deployed a team of four planning and architectural experts from Belgium, Netherlands, and Germany for technical exchange with Gazan planners, engineers and community representatives in the context of developing detailed local outline plans for Abu-Reida and Al-Najar neighbourhoods in the Municipality of Khuza'a in south eastern Gaza.

Participatory spatial planning is critical in Gaza. With a constrained land area, fragile ecosystem, a growing population, and the significant damage caused by recurrent conflict, every square meter is a precious resource in Gaza and must be optimized in terms of use. The approach in Khuza'a shows the value of equipping the community with the tools they need to

design a better future and built environment. Through a series of participatory sessions over the course of four days, the international experts shared their experiences and spatial planning approaches related to water infrastructure, public space, street connectivity, and other issues. Their international experiences provided inputs and inspiration to the community members as they further refined the detailed plans for their neighbourhoods. While rebuilding destroyed houses and catering for natural growth are the primary concerns, a sufficient street network and a network of public spaces should be reserved to sustain accessibility and to provide spaces for economic and cultural activities, for children to play in, and for the growing community to interact. The participatory process started in Khuza'a is an exemplary model and with the support of the Dutch Creative Industries Fund we are keen to develop innovative concepts and see tangible results on the ground for the people of Khuza'a.





# Alternative planning for housing and spatial development in East Jerusalem

UN-Habitat, oPt

East Jerusalem as an occupied city has been affected by Israeli policy on the ground. Informal urbanization in East Jerusalem has been, by and large, a politically-driven process since the beginning of the Israeli occupation in 1967. Israel has insisted on maintaining itself as the only governing body in East Jerusalem, preventing Palestinians from having any role in governance or planning inside the Jerusalem municipal area. Simultaneously, the Israeli Jerusalem Municipality has severely limited services provided to Palestinian areas, including the building and maintenance of infrastructure, schools and health centres. In addition, obtaining building permits for Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem is made very expensive and difficult, with lengthy and complex procedures. Hence, the process rarely results in obtaining a permit, forcing thousands of residents to build unpermitted structures and become under the risk of demolition. This situation prompted the Palestinian community of East Jerusalem to develop 'bottom-up' alternative plans

in collaboration with bilateral partners against the 'top-down' Israeli plans that do not meet the basic building and planning rights.

Below is an overview of the UN-Habitat's interventions that have been delivered in collaboration with the Palestinian communities and local partners in East Jerusalem:

## **Urban Planning Support Programme for Palestinian Communities in East Jerusalem**

This programme has been funded by the EU and scaled up by the Belgian Government for a period of four years (2011-2015) with an overall goal to facilitate the immediate improvement of living conditions and to ease displacement pressures, while securing growth opportunities for Palestinian communities in East Jerusalem. More specifically, the programme was designed to assist Palestinian communities in East Jerusalem in terms of securing tangible development and building opportunities as well as ob-

taining planning rights. In addition, the programme intended to generate planning solutions in order to address the various urban challenges faced by Palestinians and moreover, to increase their awareness in terms of their planning and building rights with the hope of finding a collective planning solution which addresses their immediate needs and aspirations. This programme was implemented in partnership with the International Peace and Cooperation Centre, Bimkom, – Planners for Planning Rights, and Centre for the Advancement of Peace Initiatives. Throughout this programme, master plans were completed for the targeted neighbourhoods in East Jerusalem, covering an area of more than 3,300 dunums and benefiting more than 40,000 residents. Furthermore, specialized training sessions were held for more than 80 Palestinian planners and professionals. Likewise, advocacy efforts were visible by producing several newsletters and briefing materials, in addition to the report "Right to Develop: Planning the Palestinian Com-



A children playground in Sur Baher, East Jerusalem that was developed under the framework of “Scaling up and Deepening Urban Planning Support Programme to Palestinian Communities in East Jerusalem” funded by the Belgian Government, and implemented by UN-Habitat and its partners benefiting more than 40,000 residents.

munities in East Jerusalem”, which documents the experiences of the Palestinian communities in East Jerusalem in developing alternative plans.

### **Urgent Housing Rehabilitation for the poor and marginalized families in East Jerusalem**

The Urgent Housing Rehabilitation programme has been implemented in close collaboration with the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian Housing Council and funded by the French Government. The overall aim of the programme is to improve the living conditions of low-income families and disabled people in East Jerusalem who live in deteriorated housing conditions in need of immediate maintenance. The programme has successfully contributed to 45 poor families through the rehabilitation of their houses and the improvement of their livelihood conditions. A self-help approach has been adopted to train unskilled workers on basic housing rehabilitation skills.

### **Rehabilitation of Dar Al Consul Project**

The rehabilitation of Dar Al Consul is a partnership between UN-Habitat, the Custody of the Holy Land, and Al-Quds University through major and primary funding by the European Union. The project focuses on the comprehensive rehabilitation of a historical complex via a neighbourhood development approach that simultaneously provides an integrated and inclusive living environment within an open space. The project considered a comprehensive and multi-layered approach that aims to integrate residential rehabilitation of 45 units and the network of their 5 courtyards towards adequate and

safe housing for Palestinian residents. In parallel with rehabilitation, a vacant underground space is functionalised through a customized economic empowerment and business development approach.

UN-Habitat will continue to work closely with its national and local partners, including international stakeholders and bilaterals to support the delivery of spatial planning interventions needed to enable sustainable spatial development in the occupied part of Jerusalem city and the Palestinian territory at large. Gender and human rights mainstreaming will continue to be the guiding principles for UN-habitat’s implementation strategy, working in ways that are geo-politically responsive and socio-economically and environmentally sensitive in order to ensure sustainability of the introduced interventions and to support the flag-ship project of building the Palestinian statehood, with East Jerusalem as its capital.



Dar Al Consul

# Planning for Gaza's future

## A planning college in Gaza

Muneer Elbaz, Amani Herz, Amal Herz, Mohammed Eljawwi, Abd Al-Rahman Hammad

Gaza, like many Palestinian cities, faces tremendous environmental, cultural and social challenges resulting from rapid urbanisation and on-going societal transformations taking place in other cities of the Middle East and North Africa. In conflict-driven countries like Palestine, there are additional factors accelerating deterioration, such as politics and security conditions. These issues create an atmosphere of fear and despair, which have negative impacts on the process of planning and development.

Development planning can play a crucial role in post-conflict situations. Post-conflict societies are characterized by; a weak institutional capacity and absence of a strong rule of law, which result in chaotic and inefficient development; dysfunctional land management and land administration systems; informal land invasions by, for example, internally displaced persons; large-scale destruction of buildings and infrastructure that might have to be reconstructed outside formal channels; and large-scale ambiguity and gaps in the regulatory framework. Therefore, introducing development planning in post-conflict situations is a crucial step for sound urban development and can contribute to creating a more stable, peaceful and prosperous society. It also allows for effective coordination of donor assistance, as well as more efficient use of the limited local resources.

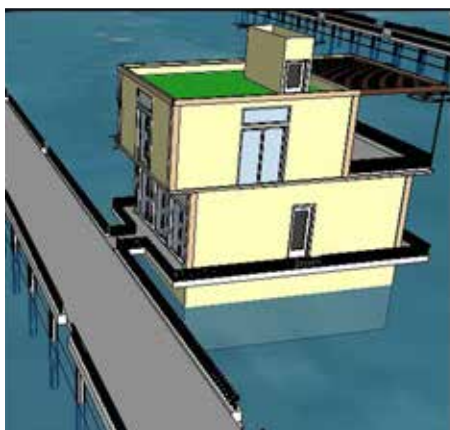
The University College of Applied Sciences-Gaza (UCAS) has introduced a four-year bachelor (B.Sc.) degree in Development Planning as a major. It is a degree program that graduates highly skilled persons, able to develop solutions for many of the society's most pressing problems, providing a variety of services to cities, states, and regions, to change their physical, economic, or social structures.

As the future representatives of planning in Gaza, the graduate projects of UCAS Development Planning students contributed to producing plans with a new vision to make Gaza Strip a better place. For this aim, three project groups worked on three different conceptual ideas, including the creation of a floating residential area, the redevelopment of the Gaza Port, and sustainable urban planning strategies for city centres.

### Project 1: A floating residential area for Gaza Strip

In Gaza, population growth is a significant problem resulting in a growing need for housing units, thus obliging people to settle on agricultural land. Besides this environmental pressure, current climate models estimate that the Mediterranean Sea level will rise by 35cm by 2100, posing a serious threat to the Gaza Strip. In addition, the Israeli Ministry of Environmental Protection anticipates a 10mm/year rise in sea level in the Mediterranean.

In this framework, by benefiting from contemporary technological methods, the project group aims to plan and design a floating residential area on the seashore, near Gaza City, in an attempt to fill the gap between population growth and the increasing needs of the population for more residential units.



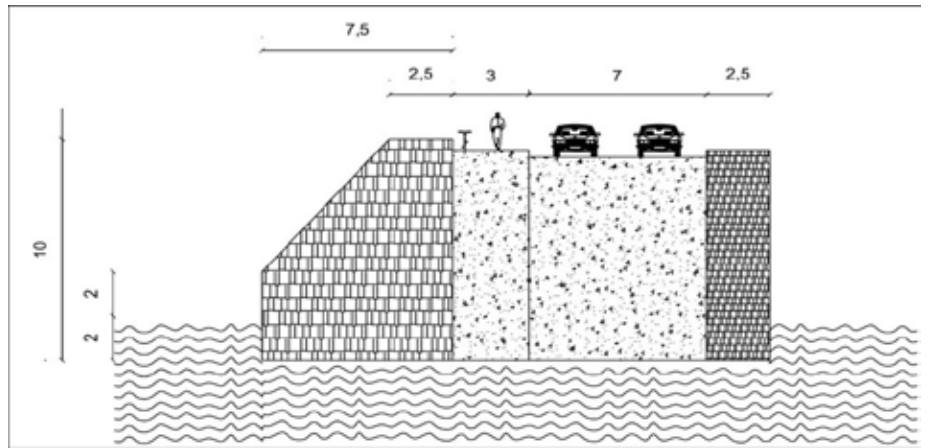
Building types with precast materials and the floating foundation

The objectives of the project group is to plan and design; 100 housing units, in other words, "Floating Buildings", on two establishment phases; sea sidewalks; wave breakers; and a Community Centre. Group members investigated new methods on 'living on water' and the vast techniques for constructing such buildings. These houses have the following features: a special foundation system which makes the house float and settles down conveniently according to the water level; living conditions suitable for different living styles, customs and habits; connection to other houses/modules to form a living system; and, precast materials that can be mass produced at an acceptable price for local people.

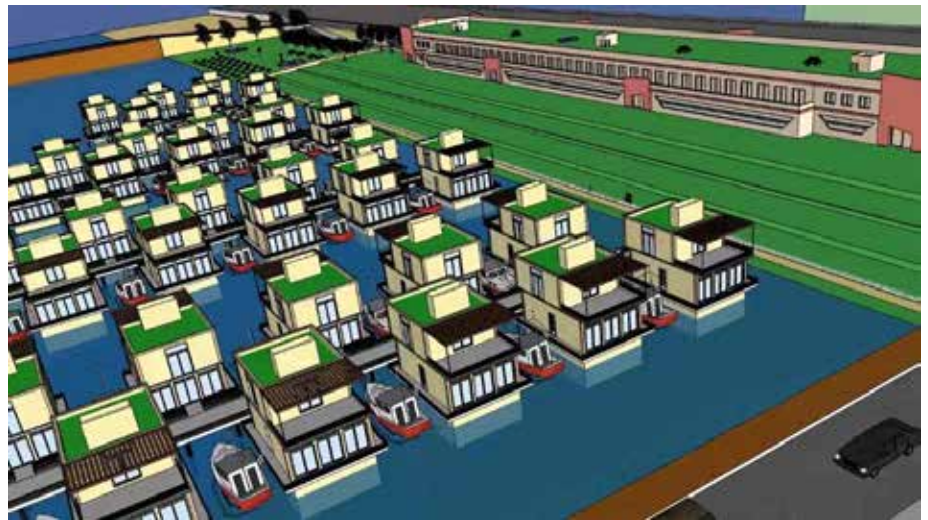
**Project 2: Redevelopment of the Gaza Port**

The fishermen port in the Gaza City area, is one of the most important touristic places for Gazans who live with limited opportunities for tourism. This project group analysed and evaluated the port area in order to plan and develop strategies according to sustainable development concepts which allow a high level of comfort associated with sustainable tourism.

The project was based on monitoring the role of the fishing port in planning and developing sustainable tourism in the Gaza Strip. The group presented regional and global experiences related to sustainable tourism development, and reflected on basic concepts of development, tourism, sustainability, and implementation. These analyses were used to develop sustainable strategies on several levels that take the dimensions of sustainable tourism into account and were applied to the fishing port area.



A section of wave breakers



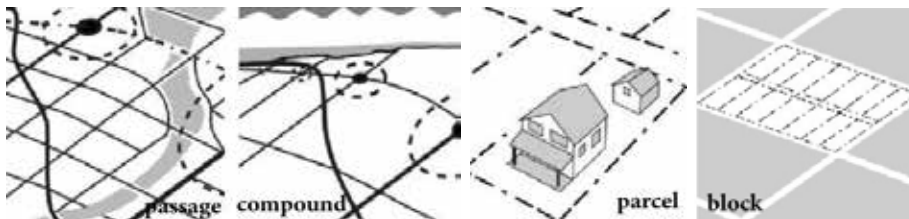
East of the project area with the Community Centre and the beach garden.



The study was concluded with a set of recommendations, including the need to activate sustainable tourism development of the fishing port, and the necessity to develop obsolete facilities and spaces in the area, which is one of the most attractive regions for tourists that is under a popular demand by the residents of the Gaza Strip.



The categories for studying sustainability in all levels of urban design are; movement, community structure, green spaces and cost.



The levels of urban design; the compound, passage, block and parcel.



Urban rehabilitation (revitalization) project for Khan Younis old City

### Project 3: Sustainable urban planning for city centres

This project group aimed to acknowledge a comprehensive methodology for the sustainable urban planning of cities centres. The city centre of Khan Younis was chosen as a case study to show that its development would balance economic, social and environmental interests.

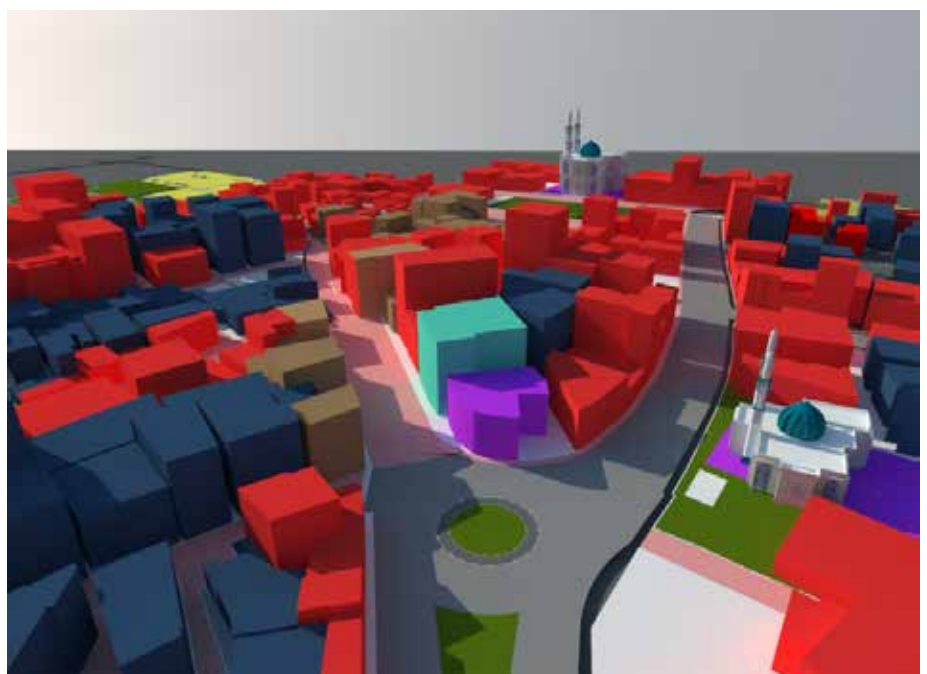
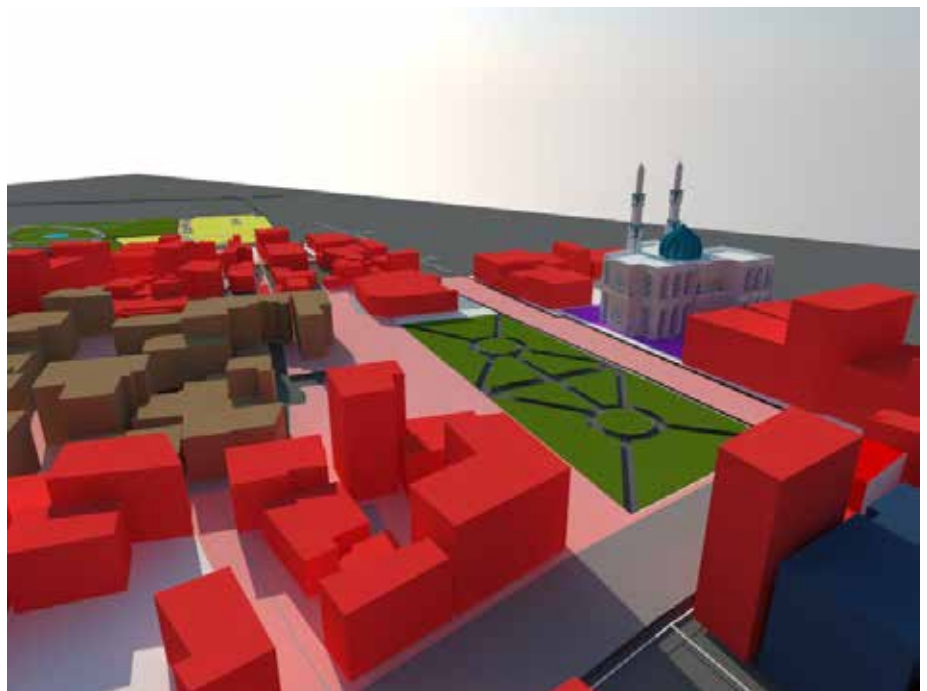
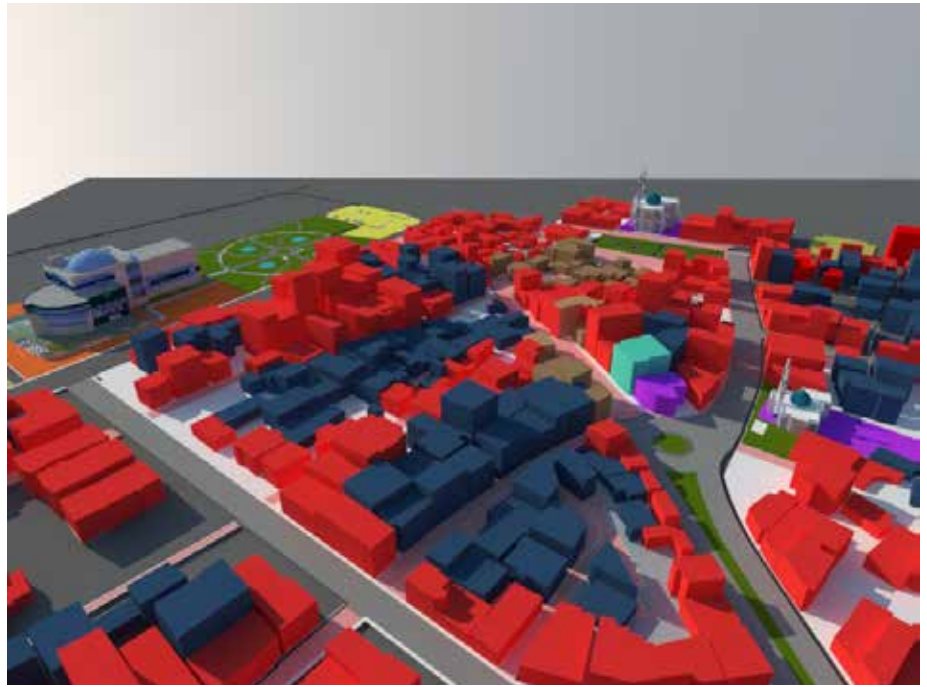
Application of sustainability principles to urban planning depends on activating these principles on all levels of urban design; namely the compound, passage, block and parcel. This approach guarantees that all these concepts are completely applied to all parts of a living environment, starting from the highest level to the lowest, according to the procedures certified in planning. In other words, sustainability elements applied on these levels are the elements that interactively compose the human living environment (green spaces, community structure, cost, and movement).

In conclusion, a set of recommendations were proposed: Establishing municipal agreements between Gaza Strip and Europe to enhance Khan Younis' capabilities; Encouraging the

culture of participation by using commercial aspects in social activities; Encouraging mutual investment to the city centre, by businessmen, real estate owners and municipalities; Providing partnership programs for the government, the municipality and non-governmental organizations to participate in voluntary works in the city centre; Providing loans for citizens to do rehabilitation works instead of waiting for external subsidies.

### Planning for Gaza's future

The profession of development planning still gets insufficient interest in Gaza because while architects try to fill the gap of urban designers, economists try to fill the gap of development specialists. However, planning for the future of Gaza should rest in the hands of development planners. Hence, their education means Gaza's future. These projects were aimed at raising the level of life quality for Gazans, which should be the main aim of every plan produced. With the efforts of young planners, developing on the sea, attracting new investments to the existing seaport and rehabilitating old city centres can be a solid starting point for changing the picture of Gaza and creating an exciting future.



# Protecting architectural heritage in Gaza Strip

## The role of regional planning

Nihad M. K. Almughany

*An expert in the conservation of architectural heritage, Dr Nihad Almughany is the Director General for Engineering and Planning in the Municipality of Gaza and an Associate Professor at the Department of Architecture, University of Palestine. Here, he provides an appraisal for the built heritage in Gaza, demonstrates the deficits of the conservation process, and gives valuable insights on how to protect the built heritage of the city of Gaza through sound policies in parallel with the regional planning process.*

Throughout four thousand years of its history, Palestine has experienced political conflicts due to successive occupation campaigns. In 1994, after a long period of struggle, the Palestinian National Authority was established in the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Palestinian resources are very limited and depend mostly on some natural resources

– like limestone and sand – and on tourism. Architectural and urban heritage is of vital importance to Palestine in general, and to Gaza in particular for two major reasons: as cultural assets and as socioeconomic sources of prosperity.

### Conservation aspects

In Gaza, as well as in other Palestinian territories, people are faced with strong cultural challenges and debates. Previous urban plans ignored cultural values and neglected an actual protection for the built heritage.

From a technical point of view, conservation differs from one place to another due to; various causes of decay, different historic building materials used, and diverse preservation techniques. Due to the variety of these aspects; some countries have set out technical guides for preservation works. Other countries follow the international standards set by UNESCO. Reasons of decay of historic buildings and structures in Gaza are also varied. The most important factors are dampness and moisture, man-made causes, and the lack of technical experience and craftsmen.

One of the major aims of a conservation strategy for Gaza should be to improve the socio-economic prosperity of the city. Since resources are very limited, it could be argued that architectural and urban conservation could be a beneficial resource to answer the socio-economic concerns of Gaza. Because there are two potentials of historic buildings and areas: their commercial and touristic value. And these values, in return, indirectly fulfil social values.

And lastly, legislation is one of the most important aspects of conservation strategies. Many countries around the world have established conservation legislation to protect their built historic heritage. On the other hand, the only legislation concerning the protection of historic buildings and archaeological sites in Palestine is an old one; *Kanun Al Athar Al kadema* - Antiquities Act of 1929 and its amendments. Most of the Act's articles are concerned with archaeological sites. Another relevant act in the Gaza Strip is the *Kanun Tanzeem Almudun*—City Organization and Planning Act of 1936. Article 14 of this act states that the master plans done for the city should conserve the "archaeological and beautiful sites".

## Architectural heritage of Gaza

The history of the city of Gaza is long and turbulent, as throughout centuries, the city has been attacked and destroyed, restored and reconstructed many times. Consequently, Gaza has been under the rule of different historic civilizations found in the area: Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Hellenes, Romans, Byzantines, Moslems, Crusaders, and the British, until the Israeli Occupation in 1967. In 1994, Gaza had been under Palestinian National Authority.

From the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Gaza played a strategic role, especially under the Mamluk Moslem rule, to which some of the surviving buildings are related. In 1516, the city fell to the Ottoman Empire and was made the capital of the province of Palestine, once again becoming prosperous. Most of the historic buildings that exist in Gaza today, refer to this period. Architectural heritage of the Gaza Strip could be classified as follows:



### Archaeological and historic sites

Archeological sites are remnants of buildings or structures, such as the: Anthidon (Greek harbor) on Gaza beach, Byzantine Church in Jabalia, Tal Al Ojool and Helarion Monastery (Tal Om Amer) in the Middle Area. Excavations took place, but no serious steps for conservation have been done.

Historic sites are areas with historic value or places where important historic events were witnessed, such as Tal Almontar in Gaza, Unknown Soldier Square in Gaza, and Alshohadaa Square in south Gaza.

### Archaeological and historic buildings

According to the Palestinian Archaeology Law, archaeological buildings are the ones built before 1700, while historic buildings are the ones built after which have a historic or architectural value. They could be classified as; Religious Public Buildings (mosques, churches, shrines, and zawaya); Public Buildings (commercial, administrative, and social); and, Residential Buildings, spread out in the old town of Gaza and in other towns – some inhabited, others abandoned, while some are structurally in good shape and others are not.

### Historic areas (conservation areas)

Areas that still keep their historic character. For example, some small areas in the old town of Gaza City and Khan Younis city.

### Urban planning and conservation activities in Gaza Strip

Planning in Gaza Strip started in 1995 through a Norwegian capacity building project (PPIB), by laying out a master plan for the city of Gaza, as a pilot project. Today, planning is practiced on three levels. On the National Level, sectorial development plans are







Historic areas, Al Daraj Quarter , Gaza

drawn. None has been done for the protection of built heritage up till today. On the Regional Level, a regional plan was laid out in 1998 which was not legally approved, however another one, the Regional Plan for Gaza 2005-2015, was approved. Both plans basically concentrated on the orientation of urban development, land use and on the protection of natural resources. No actual development or conservation measures were laid out for the protection of built heritage. On the Local Level, physical master plans and detailed plans for cities and towns have been prepared by all 25 local governments of Gaza Strip. The plans concentrate on physical development, land use and building regulations, with little and very general reference to the protection of architectural heritage, historic areas or handicrafts.

Heritage conservation, which started in 1995 as well, was paralleled with a delayed public knowledge and interest. Today, conservation activities are generally limited to the building-scale, whether residential, or public. No steps

have been taken on the urban level. Conservation of cultural heritage in Gaza is individual and scattered, without a definite and organized plan, done by different bodies and institutions, without a general framework. In addition, some are not done according to conservation charters and remains very inefficient when compared to the existing cultural heritage stock.

### **New regional planning proposals**

Presently, there are three separate initiatives working on a regional plan for the Gaza Strip. These initiatives are not carried out by regular government institutions, but rather by international bodies in consultation with local experts. They are as follows:

#### **ISOCARP initiative**

Adopted by UNDP and carried out by ISOCARP, the initiative is working on drawing a regional plan for Gaza Strip, concentrating on future land uses and stressing the importance of agriculture, coastal area, industries, higher education, and urban residential areas. The plan also shows possible accessibility options within the Gaza Strip, building onto density and open recreational activities. Regional assets like the har-

bour and the airport, are presented on macroscale (outside Gaza Strip). They also propose a new name for the Gaza Strip – The Gaza Coast.

#### **Palestinian private sector initiative**

Adopted by Portland Trust and in development by the AEMAC Planning firm, this project is intended to examine the future of Gaza as free, open, and connected to the West Bank as part of an independent Palestinian state. The vision will be based on a holistic assessment of key opportunities and constraints for Gaza's urban development – including environmental capacity, current built environment and infrastructure, demographic growth, and economic potential, in a vision to inform the development of a broader, long-term Plan for a Global Palestine.

#### **Palestinian Cities Report initiative**

Adopted by UN-Habitat and Municipalities Development Fund (MDLF), this project is aimed at drawing a comprehensive planning system for Palestinian towns and cities in a participatory planning process composed of different Palestinian institutions. The report concentrated mainly on urban growth in the Gaza Strip, land uses, roads and transportation, appropri-



Porphierous Orthodox Church (5<sup>th</sup> Cent. AC) and Katib Walaya Mosque (13<sup>th</sup> Cent. AC), Gaza



Anglican Church (19<sup>th</sup> Cent. AC), Gaza



Historic buildings outside the old town (Tarazy House) from the 1930s, Gaza



Hammam Al Samra (Traditional bath) (15<sup>th</sup> Cent. AC), Gaza



Sayyed Hashim Mosque (19<sup>th</sup> Cent. AC), Gaza



The Restoration of some residential buildings, Gaza (Done by IWAN, 2007)

The Restoration of Barquq Citadel remnants, Khan Younis (Done by The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, 2010)





Municipality Building from 1933, Gaza

ate locations for the harbor and the airport, the structure of planning administrative system, and other regional concerns.

### Protection of architectural heritage through regional planning

Due to the current status of the architectural built heritage, it seems like it is difficult for this sector to develop without an envelope to fulfil not only the protection of heritage from decay and deterioration, but also the activation of it to play a role in improving Gaza's socioeconomic prosperity. The most appropriate envelope for this seems to be the regional plan of the Gaza Strip.

### The role of planning

The greatest responsibility for the designation and control of conservation areas and architectural heritage components falls on planning authorities. Planning authorities should consider the possibility of designation or extension of conservation areas when they prepare regional and local plans in order to ensure the inclusion of these

areas within the overall scheme of the city. More specifically, to give an example from Britain, according to legislation, authorities are at times obliged to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of their designated conservation areas.

### Why on the regional level?

The urban areas in the Gaza Strip are divided into 25 cities. Except for the five big ones (Gaza, Khanyounis, Derralbahlah, Rafah, Jabalia), other towns are relatively small and the urban administrative structure is not sufficiently qualified to draw development plans for the protection and enhancement of architectural heritage. In addition, most of the architectural heritage is located in the periphery and they have no planning authority in these areas. The prevailing planning, heritage protection and technical expertise in local authorities is weak and cannot rise to govern and draw up protection strategies. Hence, architectural heritage protection in Gaza Strip should be considered in terms of both natural and national resources, and must be



Dar Al Saada (Qaser Al Basha, Administrative and Residential Building (17<sup>th</sup> Cent. AC), Gaza

governed beyond the local interests of towns and cities. The regional plan could deal with architectural heritage as an important asset and could include its development as a priority within overall development schemes and projects.

### Legal measures

As mentioned earlier, the current Conservation Act deals only with the protection of archaeological sites and buildings that were built before 1700 and has no protection measures for historic areas, while Urban Planning Act refers to historic areas and buildings in only one article. The regional plan can use this article to protect historic sites and buildings through urban master plans. In addition, upgrading the historic built heritage sector could become one of the projects of the regional plan.

**What next?**

The following steps are required for a better protection of the built heritage in the Gaza Strip: Placing conservation of built heritage on top of the development agenda; Preparing an appropriate legislation to guide and govern conservation initiatives and urban planning; Establishing a high council for planning and conservation of built heritage in Palestine; Uniting the current different regional planning initiatives for Gaza Strip; and, finally, Drawing up an appropriate regional plan for Gaza Strip which concentrates on built heritage protection to guide future development. Besides the protection of the built heritage, the regional plan has to take the required measures to form cities and towns within the context of their local culture and identity. The proposed regional plan has to fulfil a prosperous future for Gaza as a free, open, and connected part of an independent Palestinian State.



The Anthedon, Greek Harbor archaeological site (since 8<sup>th</sup> Cent. BC) (Source: Jean-Baptiste Humbert, 2000, p. 106)



The Byzantine Church archaeological site, (5<sup>th</sup> Cent. AC), Jabalia



The Unknown Soldier Square historic site, (1957), Gaza.



Al Omary Great Mosque (13<sup>th</sup> Cent. AC), Gaza



Latin Church (19<sup>th</sup> Cent. AC), Gaza

# Emotional dynamics of conflict (and) tourism in Palestine

Dorina Maria Buda

*Dr. Dorina Maria Buda is Assistant Professor in Tourism Studies and Rosalind Franklin Fellow at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands. She established Tourism Research Network Northern Netherlands (TOREN) [[rug.nl/research/toren](http://rug.nl/research/toren) & [facebook.com/researchctoren](https://facebook.com/researchctoren)], with the goal to create a shared intellectual environment and impetus to increase tourism research in the Netherlands. Dorina's work has been driven by a passion for tourism research, which revolves around interconnections between tourism, socio-political conflict, emotions and identity. Dorina has conducted ethnographical work in Jordan, Israel and Palestine since 2009, and is the author of *Affective Tourism: Dark Routes in Conflict*, Routledge 2015 [[facebook.com/affectivetourism](https://facebook.com/affectivetourism)]. For this issue, she offers a brief account of the interconnections between tourism, emotions and the regional conflict in Palestine.*

There is no doubt regarding the economic, socio-cultural, spatial and political importance of tourism for the Palestinian National Authority (the West Bank, also known as Judea and Samaria, and the Gaza Strip). Tourism is one of the most important sectors in Palestine as a catalyst for economic growth since it accounts for US\$ 271 million; this represents more than 3% of the Palestinian economy GDP, and generates about 15,000 direct jobs. Same-day visitors in Palestine are approximately 1.3 million per year, but overnight tourists only add up to 0.5 million. In neighbouring Jordan, yearly tourist arrivals are around 4 million, and in Israel around 2.5 million. According to the Office of the Quartet Representative (2013), tourists spending at least one night in Palestine are

amongst the lowest in the Middle East. The economy of tourism in Palestine is also dealt with in documents such as "Initiative for the Palestinian Economy" published by the Office of the Quartet Representative in 2013 and "Tourism in the occupied Palestinian territories: How Fair...How Educational?" prepared by the Joint Advocacy Initiative Magazine in 2010.

Beyond the economic aspect, tourism is a significant socio-cultural, spatial and political phenomenon. Critically understanding tourism in such a sensitive and troubled area like Palestine might seem irrelevant at first as tourism does not bring any relief to Palestinian refugees. The Separation Wall just becomes longer and higher, the number of Israeli settlements increases by the month, and the issue of East Jerusalem is still not resolved. Tourism is, however, an important stage where Israelis and Palestinians assert their identities, their claims and tell their stories. Alternatively, tourists engage emotionally with stories and places in this region of ongoing socio-political turmoil.

## **Conflict and Dark Tourism**

This form of tourism that develops in tumultuous times and locations of ongoing political conflict has been termed in different ways: conflict tourism, danger-zone tourism, politically-oriented tourism, and war tourism. It is noteworthy that these tumultuous locations are not necessarily the sites of declared, full-blown wars but are, however, places of political instability and on-going turmoil, where there is at least an imagined potential of violent manifestations. This type of tourism is also considered a form of dark tourism, which more generally refers to travel to places connected to death, disaster and atrocities. Dark tourism encompasses visitation of a wide range of sites from Holocaust museums to battlefields, cemeteries of famous people, places of natural catastrophes, and even places of ongoing conflict.

In more mainstream thought, tourism and conflict are considered to be mutually exclusive. The separation of tourism and conflict is held in place by an overarching discourse, which



Group of tourists along the wall



Group of tourists in Aida refugee camp



Taxi stand outside Bethlehem checkpoint

claims that tourism can only thrive in tranquil and peaceful conditions. The assumption is that wherever there is conflict and troubles, people will not travel. Tourists, in practice, travel to places of ongoing troubles and socio-political conflict, such as Palestine, Israel, Iran, Northern Ireland, and even North Korea.

### Dark Tourism Sites in Palestine

In Palestine, the ongoing regional conflict has spatially, socio-culturally and politically transformed the phenomenon of tourism in this region. 'Icons' of the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict such as the separation wall still being built, refugee camps, and checkpoints have become tourist sites.

These are so pervasive and present in the Palestinian landscape that they entice and intrigue most tourists in Palestine irrespective of their primary motivations, be it religion, culture, nature or history. Visits to the Separation Wall/Security Fence as well as crossing of checkpoints have become the pièce de résistance of tourism as they are incorporated into most tours in and around Palestine.

Through checkpoints, which control access for locals and tourists alike, entry in Palestine is delayed and sometimes denied, but this is a tourism experience in itself, as one Palestinian tour guide explains:

*We sometimes take our tourists on foot to cross the wall, you understand – this is part of the programme, ... we tell the groups, you walk how Palestinians walk. We want them to experience this, to feel how it's happening, to have the experience. (Interview, October 13, 2010)*

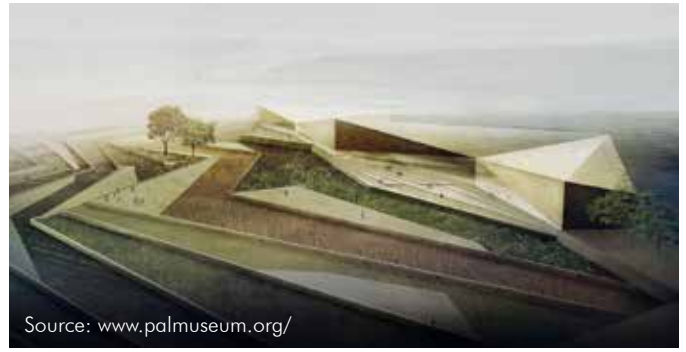
To move in and around Palestinian Territories, from Bethlehem to Ramallah, from Jericho to Hebron, for example, one has to pass through countless checkpoints and filters. For some tourists from countries with stable political and economical regimes the wall and accompanying checkpoints are a curiosity, an anomaly, which intrigue and fascinate them at first. Some tourists in Palestine seek an alternative experience, alternative to the traditional pilgrimages to the Church of Nativity in Bethlehem, or the Tomb of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs in Hebron. They want to witness the Palestinian plight, they want to cross checkpoints, see the wall, knowing they can withdraw in the security of the familiar once they are back in their stable home countries.

## Emotional Dynamics in Palestinian Tourism

The Separation Wall and its checkpoints are macabre constructions, which bring about intense emotions, and often reveal repressed memories. While visiting around Palestine, an English tourist in his forties relived memories of past visits in Belfast and Berlin:

*I regret to say that it evoked memories of past visits to West Belfast in darker days, as well as my first trip to East and West Berlin in 1986. However, it is significant that the separation barrier in the West Bank is twice as high as the Berlin Wall ever was. ... By the end of my stay, I had the feeling that I had been in the West Bank for considerably longer than the four days I had actually spent there, such was the intensity of what I experienced every day. (Tourist, personal communication, October 18, 2010)*

Not surprisingly, tourism in Palestine is fraught with politics and emotions. Palestinian tourism spaces are highly contested not only politically, but also emotionally. Emotions connect local tour guides to tourists, to places and spaces in Palestine. In this concluding paragraph, I return to the idea that tourism is a significant arena where identities are asserted, claims are made, stories are told, and emotions felt, performed and negotiated. Understanding emotional dynamics of conflict tourism in Palestine can help planning and development of tourism in more socially, culturally and politically sustainable ways. Whether in times of peace and stability, or during intensifications of conflicts, locals ought to participate in decision-making processes, and be empowered to mould social, economic and political initiatives in tourism despite the ongoing conflict in the region. Understanding the workings of tourism in a sensitive and contested place, where conflict is part and parcel of daily life, more specifically understanding emotional dynamics as a definable aspect of tourism encounters in Palestine can empower local tourism industry representatives and tourists alike.



# Palestinian Museum

**Elizabeth Reynolds**

In Birzeit, 23 kilometres north of Jerusalem an angular, other worldly building emerges from the terraced hills. Nearing completion, this ambitious project by Heneghan Penge architects will soon be home to the Palestinian Museum, providing a tangible international home for Palestinian art and culture. Once complete, the museum will contain 3,500 square metres of exhibition and educational spaces set within 40,000 square metres of gardens designed by Jordanian landscape architect Lara Zureikat, a means by which to also communicate the rich horticultural history of Palestine.

Almost twenty years after the idea was conceived by Taawon (a leading Palestinian non-governmental organisation previously known as the Welfare Association), the A.M. Qattan Foundation (AMQF) is now months away from turning an ambitious dream into a physical reality. Ahead of the museum opening Omar Al-Qattan, Chair of the Palestinian Museum Taskforce, said that 'Our ambition is to create an institution with an international status, capable of presenting Palestinian history and culture in a manner worthy of the heroism, creativity, sacrifices and steadfastness of the Palestinian people. We aim to be innovative in our approach and to create a hub of new thinking and research about Palestinian history and culture, as well as a space for debate and creativity. The Museum also aims to act as an ambassador for Palestinian culture, allowing Palestinians to better communicate with the world and with each other'.



Source: [www.opendemocracy.net](http://www.opendemocracy.net), photo: Khaled Fanni. ©The Palestinian Museum

The Museum opened on 18 May 2016, a few days after the 68th anniversary of the Nakba, (or catastrophe) when over 750,000 Palestinians were driven from their homeland at the creation of the State of Israel, and never allowed to return. Given the significance of the Nakba in Palestinian culture and that many families still keep keys from the homes they were forced to flee, the Museum's inaugural exhibition is entitled *Never Part*. The exhibition will open on 7 October 2016 and is based on over three years of research, the exhibition's starting point is a series of personal interviews with Palestinians, at home and in the Diaspora, about objects with which they would never part. It thus offers various readings of contemporary, collective history through individual perspectives.



The Palestinian Museum has contributed to the digitization of the vast United Nations Works and Refugees Agency's audiovisual archive, which documents the lives of Palestinian refugees since 1950. Much of the archive will be made available through the Museum's digital platforms, launching in June 2016 with an interactive historical timeline developed in collaboration with the Institute of Palestine Studies. It is hoped that by providing a digital platform for exhibitions and partnering with museums and galleries internationally that



Source: [www.palmuseum.org/](http://www.palmuseum.org/)

The Museum can transcend political and geographical borders, resisting the social divisions and restrictions to mobility imposed by the current occupation of the Palestinian territory.



# Street art

Elizabeth Reynolds

## The wall as a stage

Measuring up to 8m high, the separation wall winding along and through parts of the occupied Palestinian territory is intimidating, yet has become an important visual medium with which to stage political protest. In 2005 the British street artist Banksy painted nine images on the wall, describing it as “the ultimate activity holiday destination for graffiti writers”. The separation wall has become a canvas for Palestinian and international graffiti artists and protesters, with illustrations and text ranging from scrawled words of frustration against the presence of the wall to elaborate large scale murals, sometimes imagining exotic scenes of what could lie, unseen on the other side.

In 2014, following operation Protective Edge, Banksy returned to the occupied Palestinian territory to paint ruined buildings in the Gaza Strip – creating images ranging from a kitten playing with a mangled ball of metal rebar, to a take on Rodin’s the Thinker with a man cradling his head in his hands, despairing of the bomb damage around him. Although Banksy is able to command international attention through his work, there are many other Palestinian graffiti and street artists whose work is rarely seen outside of the occupied Palestinian territory. Local Palestinian artists such as Hamza Abu Ayyash and Majd Abdel Hamid achieve little of the recognition (or auction prices) given to Banksy, JR or How and Nosh. Majd trained at the Malmo Art Academy and has worked with other mediums, such as sculpture



and embroidery, to communicate his feelings on politics and conflict, not just in the occupied Palestinian territory, but also Lebanon and Syria.

### Politics and paint

The Chinese artist Ai Wei Wei claims that all art is politics, something that rings particularly true in the occupied Palestinian territory where slogans of protest are often displayed alongside large scale portraits of 'martyrs', a trend particularly prevalent in the second Intifada where many paintings were left as a tribute to people who had lost their lives fighting or caught up in conflict. In Gaza particularly, similar portraits are displayed with added layers of political conflict between Hamas and Fatah playing out in public spaces, with rivals painting over each other's work.

### Palestinian style

Whether based in the West Bank or Gaza, there are similarities in the style of Palestinian street artists, with common colours including those of the Palestinian flag (black, white, green and red); the use of free hand illustrations rather than stencils; the depiction of prominent landmarks such as the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem; detailed portraiture of political and military leaders; and the use of Arabic calligraphy. There are six Arabic scripts often seen in Palestinian graffiti – Farsi; Thuluth; Ruq'a; Kufic; Naskh; and Diwani. Although in English language graffiti there are typical styles used such as blockbuster (over scaled, bold, often geometric lettering), or wildstyle (elaborate swirls, contorted letters, bold colours and even three dimensional in appearance), Palestinian graffiti seems unique in its display of penmanship.



One image seen in both Gaza and the West Bank is that of a cartoon like character known as Handala. Depicted as a boy in tattered shorts with his hands tied behind his back, the line work is simple and often drawn in black. Handhala was first created by the Palestinian Journalist Naji Al-Ali and is intended to show a barefoot refugee boy, with his back turned to the world in protest against the existing situation.

In her book 'Gaza Graffiti – Messages of Love and Politics' (2009), Mia Grondhal explains that in Gaza, graffiti are not only used as a visual form of political agitation, but also as a marker to recognise significant life





events such as marriage. Graffiti artists are sometimes commissioned or offer the gift of painting messages of love and congratulations on the walls outside family homes, with hearts, candles, and flowers depicted amongst the names of the newlyweds.

### Graffiti cities

Looking at street art in an international context, there are some interesting examples of cities attempting to embrace creativity, without creating spaces that are perceived to be unsafe or neglected. In Berlin, the wall that formerly separated east and west Germany is largely dismantled – sold as fragmented souvenirs and dispatched to

various corners of the globe, however small sections of the wall have been retained as part of community spaces. Previously known as the ‘death strip’, the Mauerpark is a hilly grassland between two districts in Berlin and is now a popular public park. A section of the Berlin Wall that remains within the park has become a popular destination for local and international artists to practice, creating layers of bright, constantly evolving large scale art and graffiti.

Melbourne in Australia is described as one of the world’s best cities in which to see street art, however like most cities, it also has a proliferation of generic tag based graffiti that is unwanted on public and private property. In parallel to a graffiti management plan, the City of Melbourne therefore acknowledges that public spaces provide a stage for artistic expression and approve permits for street art with building owner’s permission. A number of laneways in central Melbourne are designated street art zones where tourists are encouraged to visit and view the ever changing walls. Political satire is a recurring theme of the various artworks, though



© Russell Charters

they vary significantly in their style, scale, materials and messages. One of the most well-known art works in central Melbourne is by local artist Adnate who was awarded \$AUD20,000 by Hosier Inc, a collective of residents, artists and members of the street art community in Melbourne. Adnate was able to access the upper floors of a commercial building to paint a 23m high mural, his subject is an Aboriginal child who overlooks the dense city buildings to Birrarung Marr. The stunning mural is often photographed by tourists and thanks to its inaccessible location, will hopefully be a part of the urban streetscape for many years to come.



© Roman, Kulfmucke.de, 17 April 2015.

# The runnable city

Frank D'hondt

My first purchase upon arrival in Jerusalem back in February 2013 was a foldable bike. I had signed up for an initial contract with UN-Habitat to work in the oPt for one year and that seemed long enough for me to invest in a new bike. However, my first physical activity was a city-run.

The first couple of weeks I stayed in a small apartment nearby the Central Bus Station in West-Jerusalem. It was a Friday afternoon and I heard the horn announcing Shabbat - the Jewish rest-day. Soon the streets were nearly empty and the tram seized operation for the next 24 hours or so. Perfect condition to discover my new 'duty-station' the way I prefer - by running; by getting lost and then trying to orientate back to the starting point. However, for my first run, I decided to play safe and follow the empty light-rail track further west, running over the majestic Calatrava foot/tram bridge - which would become one of the best city landmarks on my future runs - and all the way up to the terminal station at Mount Herzl, slightly further than the Holocaust Museum at the entrance of

the Jerusalem Forest. Once back, I had logged around 10 km. Next morning the streets looked even more deserted and I ran on the other side of the tramway, through entire Jaffa Street, continuing downhill along the walls of the Old City, passing Damascus Gate and further onto Shuafat road in East Jerusalem. However, I did not continue until the terminal station which would lead me into Pisgat Zeev, one of the many illegal Israeli settlements encroaching East-Jerusalem.

Immediately I experienced running in East Jerusalem as very different from running in the West. Palestinian drivers ruled on the streets, void of Jewish drivers and police - testing their engines and sound-systems to the max so it seemed. Kids looked rather sceptical to a fluo-dressed runner with looks that appeared more Israeli than Palestinian. However, the real discomfort would come later, when I decided to deviate from the railway and try to run a shortcut through some residential neighbourhoods in the West that turned out to be inhabited by Ultra-Orthodox Haredim Jews - men wearing big hats dressed in black and women with many children wearing clothes from a long gone era. It felt like running in a movie set - until I felt many eyes disapproving my naked arms and legs while running through these ultra-conservative streets. In less than 24 hours upon arrival, I already had discovered 21km of Jerusalem's streets and its divided and exclusive neighbourhoods in West and East.

I ran, walked and biked many more kilometres in the nearly 3 years I stayed in this tormented and mutilated city as well in other cities and places in Israel and Palestine. I discovered some other great running routes and tracks in the West and equally struggled to find similar running opportunities in the Eastern parts of Jerusalem, torn apart by the apartheid wall, many check-points, interrupted roads, and the aggressive rule of the car and its mainly male drivers. Not that Israeli drivers are more civilised, on the contrary - but in the West, there are ways to avoid direct contact with cars: large sidewalks, the tramway, Jaffa street, the Sacher Park, the old railway track, the trails in the Jerusalem Forest and last but





not least, the newly established metropolitan bike-trail from French Hill to Emek Refaim - good for a full marathon distance if done as retour.

When looking for other running opportunities I tried some options in the West-Bank - I also wanted to try Gaza but that was entirely off-limits for internationals - but it was poor running compared to the run-ability of a city like Tel Aviv - with its world-class River-park and Waterfront-trails - as well as most of the coast line between Ashkelon in the South (nearby Gaza!) and Netanya in the North, where I ran up to 60 km in a day. I rarely ran in Palestine cities such as Ramallah or Bethlehem, simply because of traffic terror and restrictions on free movement under the Israeli occupation. I admired my friend and colleague Pren, who lived in Ramallah and trained for his marathon races in both Ramallah and Bethlehem, but also noticed the relief on his face whenever he ran in West Jerusalem or Tel Aviv. Maybe the most memorable running track of all, was the Old Railway path from the Ottoman railway station in West Jerusalem, all the way down to the new railway station at Malha, and even further down along the Jerusalem Zoo and across the beautiful Palestinian village of Battir (and further continued as a mountain bike trail all the way down to Tel Aviv). This track also happens to run through the Palestinian East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Beit Safafa, and it is one of the rare venues where Jews walk, run and bike alongside Arabs on the same track! It proved to me that investing in walking and running is investing in a more inclusive city.

I also participated in multiple marathon races, including Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Tiberias and Eilat, and twice in the one and only Palestine marathon in Bethlehem - a rare chance to run in this unique city. While racing in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Eilat is entirely car-free, in Bethlehem you do not only face aggressive drivers but also run through refugee-camps and from check-point to check-point - making this race more of a solidarity run with the occupied Palestinian people and their poor urban governance to create liveable places and streets for its citizens.

As a result, I have ran most of my training and racing miles - and there were many hundreds of them - in West Jerusalem and 'proper' Israel, while I wished I could run more and more often in Palestinian cities and their hinterlands. In general I see that Israeli cities and urban governance is paying increasing attention to cities for people to walk, run and bike. On the contrary, in the occupied Palestinian territory the (just) fight for the right of movement seems to favour the male dominated car drivers, with little or no attention to public transport, pedestrianised city centres, safe roads with sidewalks and bike-lanes, as well as (linear) parks and car-free green fingers for recreational and commuting purposes. Since the end of the Israeli occupation would not automatically end the occupation of the car, there is a big need for raising awareness and empowering progressive people to make Palestinian cities more attractive and friendly for walking, biking and running. A free people should be a healthy people!



Cooking with Arwa

# Palestinian Musakhan: sumac chicken with sautéed onions

**Gizem Caner**

Arwa Nayef is a professional translator who worked with great humour and patience to help the ISOCARP UPAT meet the people of Gaza and host a series of design charrettes and presentations. Arwa has kindly shared her version of Musakhan, one of the most popular and traditional Palestinian recipes, where sumac and bread are the main players. So follow Arwa's steps to prepare a delicious meal for the whole family & enjoy!

## Ingredients

- 2 chickens, each cut into four large pieces
- 8 loaves of Arabic bread (or any kind of flat bread)
- 6 large onions, chopped coarsely
- 1 cup of olive oil (or more, all onions should be generously topped with olive oil)
- 5 tablespoons of sumac
- 2 teaspoons of black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon of cardamom
- salt
- 1 bay leaf
- almonds (or any other nuts) for decoration

## Instructions:

- Place the chicken in a pot and cover it with boiling water, add the cardamom, a pinch of salt and the bay leaf. Cook over medium heat until tender.
- Place the coarsely chopped onions in a saucepan. Stir in with the olive oil and cook over medium flame for 20-30 minutes. They should not be mushy but hold their texture. Then, add 3 tbsp sumac, 1 tbsp black pepper, and salt. Set aside.
- Take the remaining ingredients (sumac, pepper, salt) and season the chicken on all sides. Place the chicken in the oven and roast.
- To assemble the dish; place each loaf into a plate, top it with onions and chicken. Decorate with almonds.
- If you want to make Musakhan wraps; roll the breads over, brush with olive oil and heat it in the oven.



# Credits

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Ministry of Agriculture, Palestine

Ministry of Local Government, Palestine

Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development - PNSP

Ministry of Transportation, Palestine

PLO - Palestinian Negotiation Support Unit (NSU)

International Peace and Cooperation Center / IPCC

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