



JAI

Joint Advocacy Initiative

The East Jerusalem YMCA

YWCA of Palestine

www.jai-pal.org

A photograph of a road checkpoint in a rural, hilly area. In the foreground, a white truck with '420 POWER' on its side is partially visible on the left. In the middle ground, a white Volvo truck is stopped at a checkpoint. Two soldiers in military uniforms and helmets are standing near the Volvo truck. One soldier is in the foreground, holding a rifle, and another is further back. A yellow and red barrier is positioned in front of the Volvo truck. The background shows a dirt road winding through a hilly landscape with sparse vegetation and some trees. The overall scene suggests a military or security checkpoint.

**Invest in
Freedom**

Investment *in* change

For an economy to develop itself in a sustainable way, investment must be secure, with adequate resources committed.

Security and political conditions must be stable, with minimum risk to investment. Rule of law must be established. The phrase 'adequate resources' implies resources' availability and accessibility, with internal and external freedom of movement for goods and people.

In order for this to be accomplished, just peace, based on international law and rights, with freedom must be in effect. Freedom and human rights are not generously given, and must instead be claimed by the oppressed.

For Palestinians living under occupation, this is certainly the case. Serious and practical plans for change must be put into place.

As the Joint Advocacy Initiative of the East Jerusalem YMCA and YWCA of Palestine we aim for the creation of a global movement, from and through the World YWCAs/YMCAs, Churches, Christian and civil society organizations, that would put pressure on Israel to implement international law and respond to the UN resolutions

The Joint Advocacy Initiative Team

Invest in change ...

Make a difference!

Keep Hope Alive!

concerning the occupation of Palestine by exposing injustice and guiding actions.

Step by step, starting from raising people and groups' awareness through media and meetings, moving towards getting them involved through campaigns and joining activities, we lead people, individually and collectively, into taking and leading actions for change on at the grassroots and at higher levels.

The priority for investment in Palestine and Israel today is investment in advocacy, which is the basis for the success of future investments of capital. The blind belief that money alone, under the current political conditions, could change people's lives, is nonsense, indicates ignorance, and is destined to fail; even if it could temporarily appear successful.

Investment in advocacy provides simple tools and mechanisms for individuals everywhere in the world to contribute and get involved. In such investment one makes real sustainable change for better life for both the Palestinian and Israeli sides.

Joint Advocacy Initiative Magazine

Volume 3 , Issue no. 1

Joint Advocacy Initiative

Office: The East Jerusalem YMCA
Beit Sahour Branch
Tel/Fax: +972 (0)2 2774540
E-mail: advocacy@jai-pal.org
Website: <http://www.jai-pal.org>

Mailing address:

Joint Advocacy Initiative
The East Jerusalem YMCA
P.O. Box 19023
East Jerusalem

Editor:

Ibrahim Hannouneh

Sections of articles may be used freely, but please contact the editor before reproducing a whole article. Articles express the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinion or policies of the Joint Advocacy Initiative.

Design & Printing:

NOUR Design & Print Co.
Beit Jala - Palestine
Telfax: +972 2 2742823
E-mail: info@nourdp.ps
www.nourdp.ps

JAI is the Joint Advocacy Initiative of the

The East Jerusalem YMCA
29 Nablus Road
P.O. Box 19023
East Jerusalem
Tel: + 972 (0)2 6286888
Fax: + 972 (0)2 6276301



President: Rev. Riah Abu Al-Asal
General Secretary: Andre Batarseh

YWCA of Palestine

Ibn Jubeir Street
P.O. Box 20044
East Jerusalem
Tel: + 972 (0)2 6282592
Fax: + 972 (0)2 6284654



President: Hanadi Soudah Younan
General Secretary: Mira Rizek

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By: Mr. Nadi Farraj
Agricultural expert and consultant
Women Training Program
The East Jerusalem YMCA

Can Real Economic Development Occur Under Israeli Occupation?

How can an economic development take place under occupation?

How can Palestine develop with the increasing division of the West Bank into cantons, the separation of East Jerusalem from the rest of the Palestinian areas, the expansion of settlements, Israel's confiscation of land and water resources, and the construction of the Apartheid Wall?

This is while the Gaza Strip, in spite of the fragile ceasefire, is at the edge of a humanitarian, social and environmental catastrophe, where daily Israel violates all its past and present international obligations.

It is the closures, checkpoints, and control over Palestinian natural resources and raw materials, which the Israeli system is using to prevent any economic development. World Bank statistics indicate that doubling international assistance to the Palestinian people would cause a 7% increase in income per capita, while removing checkpoints would cause a 25% increase in the income per capita.

Forced economic dependency

The Palestinian economy is suffering from reliance, placement and complementary to the Israeli one, which in turn created a sharp and deep

defect in the Palestinian economic structure. This is well reflected in the no more than 13% of exports over imports of local products, while 90% of the imports come from Israel.

The merger of the Palestinian & Israeli economies

Since the Israeli occupation to the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967, Israel took a number of actions to make the Palestinian economy dependent to its own. This caused Palestinian villages to be transformed from productive ones into bedroom communities for workers employed in Israel. Farmers left their farms and moved into Israeli



One of the YMCA Women Training Program beneficiaries - rising animals



One of the YMCA Women Training Program beneficiaries - sewing

workshops and factories.

This resulted in a decline in the productivity of the economy in Palestine, with sharp declines in Palestinian factories' output. Even the number of cows decreased from 37,000 to 11,000, sheep from one million to half a million. Because they were making fewer of their own goods, Palestinians became severely dependent on Israeli products.

Nowadays, Palestinians annually consume more than 46 million liters of milk, 3.2 million kilograms of meat, 38 million eggs, 2.4 million tons of grains and feeds. Most of the electricity consumed in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is supplied by Israel. This is in spite of the fact that the West Bank used to be completely productively self-dependent before 1967.

Some Palestinian products, including flowers, berries, helium and others, are sold to Israel, because their production is more costly than it is in the Palestinian territories. This is also the case for the production of textiles and stone.

The cheapest occupation in history – the Palestinian Authority

With the establishment of the Palestinian Authority (PA), Israel

was released of its administrative responsibility over the occupied Palestinian territories, including the areas of education, medical services, and infrastructure. Hence, the Israeli occupation became the perhaps the cheapest in history. Dependent on the international community for financial support the PA runs an annual deficit of 900 million dollars out of a total budget of 2.4 billion. As a result, external financial support to the PA flows indirectly into the Israeli economy. The PA has accumulated more than three billion US dollars. Effectively means that each Palestinian child is born with a debt of more than 1,000 US dollars.

Who pays the price for Israel's policies?

With the onset of the Israeli occupation in 1967, Israel devastated Palestine's capacity to engage actively in international trade, transforming Palestinians into passive consumers.

After the beginning of the second Palestinian Intifada (uprising) in the year 2000, the Israeli military destroyed Palestinian infrastructure, private and public property, costing the Palestinian economy more than 3.5 billion US dollars.

Palestinian unemployment increased during 2007 to 29% according to the

Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, while the cost of living has increased by 37% in the last seven years. Palestinian families savings, being in US dollar and Jordanian dinars, have declined sharply over the last seven years. Many families are selling their assets, including gold and real estate.

The average Palestinian individual spends 75% of his or her income on food, compared to less than 22% for the average Israeli. The average Palestinian consumes 20% of the amount of water consumed by an average Israeli.

The proposed economic development model:

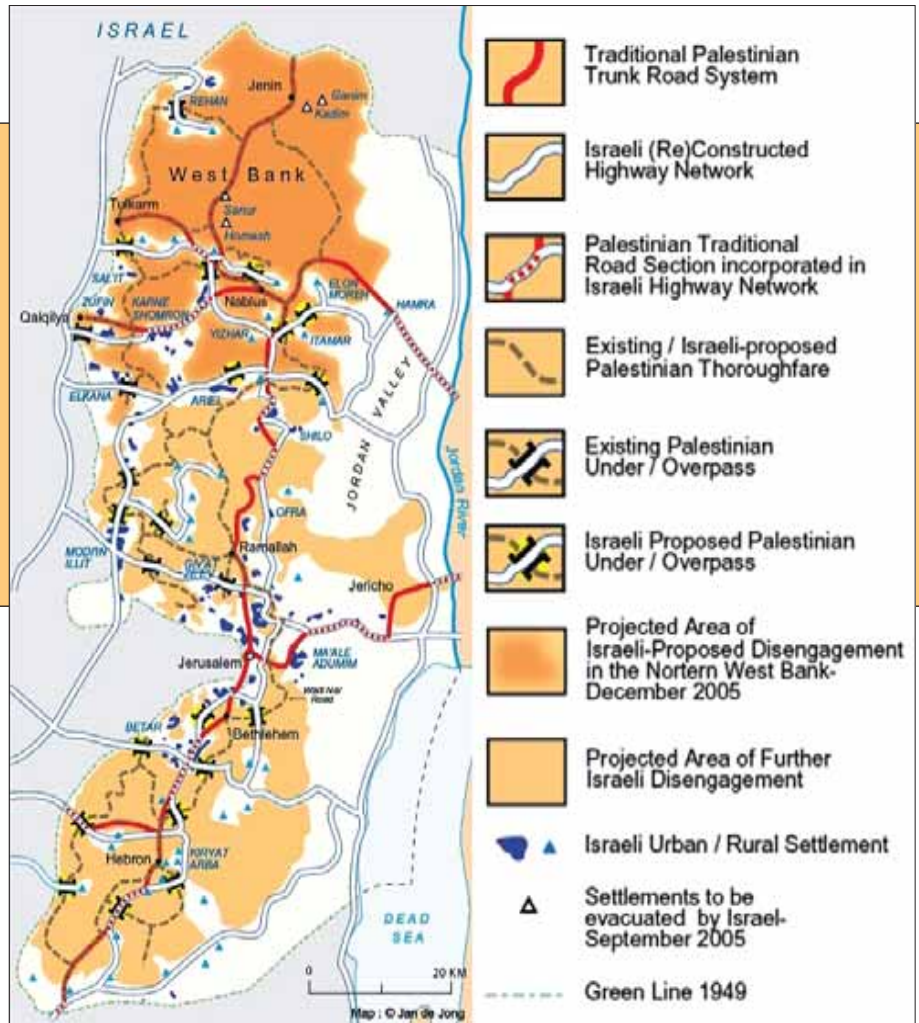
Any investment under occupation is ultimately in the interest of the Israelis. It is useless and misleading to discuss international investment. The first step, before a conversation about economic development can take place, is to pressure Israel to end its closures, land destruction and to comply with international law, stop and remove the Wall and allow all farmers reaching their fields.

It is hard to discuss any Palestinian economic development vision under occupation! A suitable development model for now is one that supports ending the occupation.

The Palestinian Economy Under Occupation



A research carried out by:
Nathan Troutman Blumenshine
United States / Ex-JAI volunteer



The Palestinian economy has struggled since beginning of the second Intifada (uprising) in 2000. In 1999 per capita income in the West Bank and Gaza was \$1,612 and in 2006 it was \$1,100. This income is not enough to provide families with basic goods, which are sold in the occupied territories at expensive Israeli prices. Fifty-six percent of the West Bank and 88% of the Gaza Strip population lives below the poverty line. In addition, unemployment is over 50% in Gaza and close to 24.3% in the West Bank.

A slight economic rebound between 2003 and 2005 was quickly negated by economic sanctions and decreased foreign aid following the election of Hamas in 2006. The GDP of \$5 billion reported for 2006, is likely to decrease significantly with the continued Israeli siege on the Gaza Strip. Thus the occupied Palestinian territories in general have become dependent on foreign assistance. The Palestinian Authority received \$450 million in the first half of 2007 and \$7.4 billion has already been pledged for 2008 to 2010. This increase in foreign aid coupled with

the decrease of mobility has led to an economy based on consumption rather than production. Foreign investment has fallen to very low levels, creating a major decrease in private sector jobs. Meanwhile the public sector has grown by 60% between 1999 and 2006 to include 157,800 employees. These numbers are a serious concern for any country since they signal an economic collapse. However, as shown in the following table, the case of Palestine is even more frustrating because of the economic disparity between it and its neighbor and occupier Israel.

	Population	GDP billion \$	GDP per capita \$	GDP Growth Rate	Unemployment Rate
Israel	6,426,679	184.9	28,000	5.1%	7.6%
Occupied Palestinian Territories	4,018,333	5.034	1,100	- 8%	34.8%

The table shows the incredible disparity of economic conditions between Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). Israel's population is less than twice that of the OPT but the GDP is 34 times larger. While the GDP of the OPT is quickly shrinking, Israel's is growing rapidly. But the Israeli economy could be doing even better without the occupation.

Israel is also dependent on foreign aid. It is supported by well over \$3 billion from the United States each year. This allows it to cover the large expenditures resulting from the occupation, like the colonies which have cost over \$10 billion and the West Bank Wall which, at \$3.7 million a kilometer, will take more than \$2.6 billion to complete. Without the economic assistance from the US it

is unlikely that Israel would be able to afford the occupation and colonization of the West Bank.

On the other hand, it is estimated that with a friendly relationship with Palestine, the Israeli economy would grow by \$12 billion in the first year alone due to increases in exports to Arab countries, increases

in Holy Land tourism and 400,000 new jobs. With 500,000 new jobs the Palestinian economy would also benefit substantially, but instead of a beneficial relationship, the economies of both have suffered as a result of the occupation.

The Israeli economy has struggled from the high cost of military security, lack of trade with its Arab neighbors and construction of widespread colonies, totaling over \$11 billion. However, these losses have been offset by special free trade agreements with the EU and US, as well as the direct unconditional financial aid. This special treatment has allowed the Israeli economy to continue to grow and the government to maintain its independence from foreign influences despite numerous internationally respected reports of human rights violations.

The Palestinian economy has suffered much more, and international aid is only given with strings attached. Dependency is created by aid and then when it is withdrawn in times of violence or following the election of Hamas in 2006, a crisis is created.

Colonial Infrastructure

In general, the infrastructure of the West Bank is geared more towards developing the Israeli economy rather than the Palestinian one. A key indicator of this is that investment in infrastructure does not match the population distribution. For example, the massive expansion of Highway 1 east from Jerusalem to the

Jordan valley connects West Jerusalem to the agricultural colonies in the valley, while bypassing East Jerusalem with a tunnel under the Mount of Olives and staying to the south of Jericho. Another major highway running north/south connects the valley to outside of the West Bank. As is shown in the following map, this infrastructure is designed to completely separate Palestinian and colonist roads with overpasses.

Despite being geographically incompatible with the Palestinian population distribution, these bypass roads could still improve the connection and cohesiveness of the Palestinian economy if it were not for the restrictions placed on them. Since all these roads are under full Israeli control in Area C, Palestinian drivers are always nervous of being stopped and ticketed by Israeli soldiers for not possessing the correct permit or violating a road law not enforced in other places. In the case of even more stressed political situations, such as during the intifada, the roads are completely closed off to Palestinian use and almost every area in the West Bank becomes isolated. Even during "normal" times, earth mounds, road blocks, ditches and checkpoints limit normal vehicle access to the road from Palestinian communities, in many cases offering only one way in and one way out of communities.

Integration

One of the great tragedies of Jewish colonization in Palestine since the early 20th century has been the significant

lack of integration. New communities of European Jews did not integrate themselves into the local population but instead developed their own separate communities and economies with a strong sense of self-preservation and significant international support following the Holocaust. This pattern of development has created the unequal economic situation we see today. However, even with though Israel's per capita GDP is 25 times higher than that of Palestine, the economy of Israel and Palestine are not separate. 65% of Palestinian GDP is used on imports from Israel. Palestinian labor contributes significantly to Israel's economy, for every dollar of Palestinian labor, between two and three dollars of Israeli income is created.

Before the second Intifada in 2000, over 150,000 Palestinians, or 23% of the workforce, legally worked in Israel. The number of undocumented workers was likely to be much higher. Unfortunately, since then Israel has issued fewer permits, limited the mobility of Palestinians from the West Bank in Israel and completely shut down the Gaza Strip's border. In 2006, 50,000 West Bank Palestinians worked in Israel, representing 10% of the workforce, and about 20,000 worked illegally, crossing with fake permits or going around the checkpoints.

Even with separation being attempted and desired by many people involved in the conflict, it has not been achieved. The area is too small for the population groups to be completely separated.



Hebron markets empty
Photo by: JAI volunteer



The Colour of Water

Thirst in the Palestinian Territories



By: Alice Gray
United Kingdom
International activist
and Ex-JAI volunteer

“Who says water has no colour, flavour or smell? Water does have a colour that reveals itself in the unfolding of thirst ... And water has the flavour of water, and a fragrance that is the scent of the afternoon breeze blown from a field with full ears of wheat waving in a luminous expanse strewn like the flickering spots of light left by the wings of a small sparrow fluttering low.”

Mahmud Darwish, Memory for Forgetfulness, August, Beirut, 1982.

“Water is fundamental for life and health. The human right to water is indispensable for leading a healthy life in human dignity. It is a pre-requisite to the realization of all other human rights.”

United Nations Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

The water crisis has started early this year in the Palestinian Territories. In scores of towns and villages throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip, people listen eagerly for the gurgle of water in pipelines, and turn on their taps with trepidation, watching anxiously for the first drops to appear, waiting to see if they turn into a stream, or splutter and gurgle to nothing after a few seconds. Others watch and wait for the arrival of water tankers, transporting the life-giving liquid to them from distant sources across an obstacle course of road blocks, checkpoints and military closures put in place by the Israeli Authorities, an inherent feature of their ongoing military occupation and colonization of the Palestinian Territories.

Even in normal years, the majority of Palestinians suffer from problems with their water supply. According to the Palestinian Water Authority, over 220,000 West Bank Palestinians are not connected to a piped water network, instead relying on water tankers, harvested rainwater and untreated natural springs for their water supply. All of these sources are susceptible to contamination, and according to the Palestinian Medical Relief Committee, health problems associated with poor water quality are common in Palestinian villages that rely on them. Even in villages that are connected to the network, water supply is neither continuous nor reliable. According to the Water, Sanitation and Health Monitoring Project (WaSH MP) only 46% of West Bank communities

receive full coverage from the water network. The rest suffer interruptions in supply that can last from a few hours to several weeks or even months.

In the Gaza Strip, while the vast majority of the population are connected to the water network, there is an enormous problem with water quality. A shocking 90% of water supplied to Gazans does not meet World Health Organization drinking water standards. This is due to the degradation of the Gaza Aquifer, the sole source of drinking water for Gaza's population, which quite simply does not contain sufficient water to satisfy the demands of Gaza's swollen population, over 70% of whom are registered refugees. The level of the aquifer is dropping, year by year,

and salt water from the adjacent Mediterranean Sea is seeping in, threatening to render the entire aquifer unusable if no measures are taken to reverse the situation. Interruptions in water supply for Gaza's residents come as a result of Israeli military operations that damage water infrastructure, or that interfere with the supply of electricity to power wells and pumping stations.

In normal years, as the furnace-hot Middle Eastern summer wears on, interruptions in water supply become more and more frequent, as natural water reserves run low and pressure in the water network drops. Israeli authorities, who control a large proportion of key water pipelines in the West Bank, close valves to Palestinian villages in order to ensure that the supply to Israeli settlements, supplied via the same network, remains constant. Military operations in Gaza smash water pipelines and close down power stations, halting water supply to tens of thousands of people. Rainwater, captured during the winter and stored in cisterns against just such emergencies begins to dwindle, and Palestinians wait, gasping, for the first rain since spring to fall on the parched land, restoring the level of underground aquifers, lakes, rivers and cisterns, turning the austere barren hillsides green once more.

Palestinians wait, but on the other side of the Wall, in Israel and in Israeli settlements in the West Bank, it is another story. Sprinklers play over green lawns, flowers bloom in well-kept gardens, children play in swimming pools, young executives are able to take two showers a day, and for the vast majority, the water crisis does not exist, or exists only at one remove, as a hazy awareness that Israel is located in one of the most arid regions on earth.

The reality of water scarcity that haunts the Palestinians scarcely touches most Israelis, and in addition, Israel is able to maintain a multi-billion dollar agricultural sector, that exports water intensive crops (such as avocados, citrus fruits and herbs) to Europe, an activity that essentially amounts to exporting water.

It seems strange that such different realities should exist within such a small geographic area. Stranger yet when one realizes that Israeli and Palestinian populations draw their water from the same three major resources, the Mountain Aquifer, the Coastal Aquifer and the Jordan River, which straddle the borders of Israel and the Palestinian Territories. Surely if there is a water crisis, everyone should feel it? Yet every year, Palestinians suffer water shortage, and the majority of Israelis (with the notable exception of the Bedouin) do not.

The total yield of the three main water resources for Palestinians and Israelis is approximately 1720 million cubic metres of water per year on an average year, of which Israel uses some 1444 million cubic metres, leaving a mere 275 million cubic metres for the Palestinians. Despite the aridity of the region, it is a fact that there is enough water available in Israel and the Palestinian Territories for everyone to have the minimum supply recommended by the World Health Organization to maintain a decent standard of living: 100 litres per person per day. Many Palestinians receive far below this amount. In some areas the average supply is as little as 10 litres per person per day during the hot months of the summer, even in years of relative water abundance.

This year is not an average year. This year is the worst drought the area has seen this decade. This year crops and trees are wilting and dying in the fields, and shepherds are struggling to find water for their livestock. According to a UN report issued in January, the rainfall over the Palestinian Territories this past winter was a mere 26% of the inter-annual average, dipping as low as 13% in the Hebron region. This year even the Israelis are worried. The Israeli Water Authority may protect ordinary Israelis from feeling the effect of the water shortage by making up the shortfall in domestic water supply from other resources, quite possibly at the expense of already struggling Palestinians.

At present, Palestinian water rights have been acknowledged by Israel, but

not quantified, leaving Palestinians vulnerable to water deprivation. In 1995, a temporary agreement was made (the Oslo Interim Agreement) stipulating that each side would maintain current utilization of the shared Mountain Aquifer until the Permanent Status Negotiations could take place – this meant that Israelis got to use 80% of the water, whilst Palestinians were guaranteed the use of just 20% of this resource. Palestinians should also have been allowed to develop an additional supply of up to 80 million cubic metres of water from sources inside the West Bank, to help alleviate their immediate water shortage.

[Photo: Water2.jpeg]

Even with the additional allowance, the amount of water allotted to Palestinians was barely enough to meet their basic needs, made no allowance for development of the agricultural sector, and took no account of population growth in the medium to long term. The Final Status Negotiations should have been concluded within 5 years of the Interim Agreement. However, to this day they have not taken place, and improvements in the water situation for many needy Palestinian communities have remained elusive.

Less than half the promised 80 million cubic metres of additional water supply has been developed, despite high levels of international funding for Palestinian water development. One major reason for this is that the Oslo Agreement allows Israelis a veto over Palestinian development projects; and in addition creates a lengthy, convoluted and bureaucratic permitting system that many NGOs working in the field have found it impossible to negotiate. 60% of the land mass of the West Bank remains under full Israeli control, and projects in these areas require additional permits from Israeli Authorities. Nearly all of the Palestinian communities who are not connected to the water network (comprising over 220,000 people) are in these areas.

Efforts to help these people have consistently been hampered and derailed over the course of the 13

years since the signing of the Oslo Agreement. For example, this year in April, the British charity Oxfam who had been involved in two major water projects in the water scarce Hebron governorate, closed their office in the area due to the impossibility of obtaining permits for their work. Due to the ongoing frustration of being unable to implement projects due to lack of permits and the wastage of time and money that this was causing, the charity has been forced to give up on their much needed efforts to bring water to the parched communities of south Hebron, who are among the neediest in the West Bank.

As Palestinians have been unable to gain access to sufficient resources of their own, over the years, they have increasingly come to depend on purchasing water from the Israeli water company, Mekorot. Last year, Palestinians purchased 43.9 million cubic metres of water from Mekorot, constituting over 50% of the domestic

water supply for the West Bank. This water is under no guarantee (with the exception of 5 million cubic metres that are transferred to Gaza) – if Mekorot decides not to sell it to Palestinians, there is no binding agreement that can force their hand. If this water is wanted inside Israel, for domestic use, for agriculture or for industry, it may be transferred to those uses, leaving Palestinians thirsty.

Due to the drought this year, there is great concern that this is what will happen. So far, water cut-offs that would normally start happening in July have occurred in May, and the situation looks set to deteriorate as the heat intensifies. Mekorot currently controls the water supply to 250 Palestinian communities in the West Bank. In June, the Water, Sanitation and Health Monitoring project issued a report on severe reductions in water supply to several villages in the Nablus governorate that are normally supplied by Mekorot. Currently their water

supply is just 15% of the normal rate, forcing them to buy additional supplies from water tankers at a cost of 20 shekels per cubic metre (5 times the price of piped water). Many families are already suffering from economic crisis, and a lot of people can ill afford this additional expense and will instead reduce their consumption of water to unsafe levels.

Violations of the right to water are not limited to the West Bank. This year the Gaza Strip is under an ongoing embargo that restricts supplies of fuel to power water pumping stations and sewage works, and the supply of spare parts to maintain the water and wastewater networks. On 21 January 2008, the Palestinian Water Authority acknowledged that 40 percent of the houses in the Gaza Strip had no running water and the following day reports emerged that sewage was flooding the streets.





Investment in Education

By: Issa Salameh

YMCA Youth for Peace and Development group

As a Palestinian youth living under occupation, I feel that it is unfair that I am unable to live like any person in this world. While youth all around the world are free to do whatever they like, Palestinians are deprived this freedom. This situation has caused frustration in our hearts for the past sixty years. Since 1948 we have tried to defend our country and our rights through many different and various ways, but unfortunately each time the story ends with bad unintended consequences. Some people in Palestine are about to lose hope in life. They might say:

“What else should we do? We already lost our country, our homes and our families as well. We have tried to do the impossible but with no results.” As for me, I think that there are better methods of opposing occupation than throwing stones. I believe the best way to deal with our conflict is to create an educated Palestinian society, then to invest this education here. As statistics show that the rate of return of investment in education

can be very useful to the country's economic situation in the long term. This would probably raise awareness of our own situation, and allow us to think wisely and produce people who have the ability to change things. If we succeeded in this method our country would become stronger and it would have the power to stand correctly against its enemies and demand its right to exist.

Education is a very simple and normal right that every student should have, but this is not the case for Palestinians. Abusing Palestinian students and preventing them from studying is part of the strategy that Israel has been implementing for the past several decades. Checkpoints are major problems that students face daily on their way to school and university.

Sometimes Palestinian students are forced to wait at checkpoints for many hours. The segregation wall as well made it almost impossible for some students to reach their schools. But

despite of all these obstacles we will always find the way to achieve what we determined to. If we made up our minds to be well educated, I'm sure we will accomplish this aim someday. Our commitment to Palestine requires taking advantage of every single opportunity that may benefit the whole country.

As for me I am studying Business Administration, and I still need three more years to get my BA degree, after which I am planning to pursue a master's degree abroad, and return to Palestine to invest my skills here. Educated Palestinians are our future leaders; they will have the wisdom to lead our case to a suitable solution that will be fair enough for the both sides. Finally I would say that we will always Keep Hope Alive. We believe in what we are doing, we believe that our stolen rights will be achieved one day, even though this day may seem far away, but our faith in freedom and justice will give us the strength to survive.



Siege on Gaza effects

By: American Friends Service Committee and United Nations

Since the January 2006 Palestinian Parliamentary elections, Israel and the United States have led a campaign of international sanctions against Hamas and the elected Palestinian government. This campaign was increased since June, 2007 when Hamas assumed control of Gaza. Since then, Gaza has been almost completely cut off from the outside world. Israel controls all travel and commerce in and out of Gaza. Most recently, Israel has stopped or significantly reduced the flow of fuel, general goods and aid and is now considering cutting off electricity and water to the residents.

The humanitarian effects of these policies have been devastating:

Poverty

- 80% of families in Gaza currently rely on food aid compared to 63% in 2006. This amounts to approximately 1.1 million people (OCHA, 2007).

- In 2007, households were spending approximately 62% of their total income on food compared with 37% in 2004 (WFP, 2007).
- During the period of May-June 2007 alone, commodity prices for wheat flour, baby milk, and rice rose 34%, 30% and 20.5% respectively (WFP, 2007).
- During the period June-September 2007, the number of households in Gaza earning less than \$1.2 per person per day soared from 55% to 70% (WFP, 2007).

Economic collapse

- In September 2000, some 24,000 Palestinians crossed out of Gaza everyday to work in Israel (World Bank, 2006). Today that figure is zero.
- Unemployment in Gaza is close to 40 percent in Gaza and is set to rise to

50 percent (OCHA, 2007).

- In the months before the blockade began around 250 trucks a day entered Gaza through Sufa with supplies, now it is only able to accommodate a maximum of 45 trucks a day. In most cases, this number is barely reached.
- 95% of Gaza's industrial operations are suspended due to the ban on imported raw materials and the block on exports (World Bank, 2007).

Basic services

- 40-50 million liters of sewage continues to pour into the sea daily (Oxfam, 2008).
- As a result of fuel and electricity restrictions, hospitals are currently experiencing power cuts lasting for 8-12 hours a day. There is currently a 60-70 percent shortage reported in the diesel required for hospital power generators.

Fuel

- While over 1.8 million liters of diesel entered the Gaza Strip through Nahal Oz pipelines between 2 and 4 July, the pipelines have remained closed since then. The concern remains that the increased reliance on generators and the need for additional fuel will result in fuel shortages if the pipelines do not reopen. There is also concern of the high maintenance costs of large fleets of generators and the restrictions to import spare parts.
- UNRWA brought in 30,000 litres of diesel Thursday via Karni crossing.

Water & sanitation

- The limited generation of power via the national grid remains unsynchronized with the water distribution network, leading to water shortages in Palestinian households.

- When wells are utilizing power from the national grid, fluctuations in power have led to malfunctions in the water pumping systems in parts of both Beit Hanoun (Abu Ghzalah well) and in the middle areas (Nuseirat wells). The increased demand on generators has resulted in temporary breakdowns of the 800 KVA at the main pumping station in Jabalia, northern Gaza.
- In response to concerns over increased IDF incursions into various parts of the Gaza Strip, the Coast Municipal Water Utility (CMWU) has pre-positioned the limited spare parts that it has at five separate locations in the governorates. Underground water pipes have been damaged by the weight of heavy tanks and APCs in prior incursions. In addition the CMWU has assigned contractors with local workshops in each location to provide assistance in the event of emergency repairs.

- A four-inch underground water pipe was temporarily damaged by the IDF movement in Beit Hanoun and led to brief water cuts for approximately 1,000 residents.

Health

- 18.5% of patients seeking emergency treatment in hospitals outside Gaza in 2007 were refused permits to leave (WHO, 2007).
- The proportion of patients given permits to exit Gaza for medical care decreased from 89.3% in January 2007 to 64.3% in December 2007, an unprecedented low (WHO, 2007).
- During the period October-December 2007, WHO has confirmed the deaths of 20 patients, including 5 children (among people awaiting visas) (WHO, 2007).



making a personal profit from the occupation. Churches and universities that are concerned about the morality of their investments have already taken initial steps to disinvest from companies (both Israeli and international) that profit from the occupation.

Such companies include construction companies that build the settlements and thus assist in land confiscation, industrial companies operating in the settlements industrial zones (profiting from stolen land and resources and from exploiting Palestinian workers), companies that provide the occupation forces with equipment that is used to control and attack the Palestinian population (such as surveillance equipment, checkpoint equipment and house-demolition machinery) and many others.

The limited liability that corporations confer upon their shareholders means that simply buying a stock in a certain company doesn't make one liable for lawsuit if that company violates international law. But that doesn't mean that there are no risks that accompany ownership in such a company.

The main risk that concerns shareholders is the risk of losing money. In the context of the occupation, this

risk could be realized in several ways:

- Consumer boycott: companies that become the target of popular campaigns are under risk that their products will be rejected by morally-conscious consumers even if those particular products are not related to the illegal activities of the company against the Palestinians. An example of this is the boycott of Lev Leviev's diamonds, launched as protest to his real-estate companies constructing illegal settlements in the West Bank.
- Lawsuit: companies that are involved in the occupation could be violating the laws of their parent countries, or could be tried in The International Court of Justice. Legal proceedings and investigations have already begun against several international companies that are suspected of violating international law. Any company that will be convicted will be faced with a formidable compensations bill.
- Bad debt: companies that provide services to the Israeli government rely on its ability to pay for these services. However, as the pressure mounts to make Israel accountable for its violations of international

law, the Israeli economy and the government's financial strength is jeopardized. Israel currently denies that it owes compensations to Palestinians whose homes it destroyed, whose land it confiscated and whose bodies it injured. The UN has already recognized the right of Palestinians to receive compensation for the damages caused by the Wall of Separation, and tens of thousands of Palestinians have cause to sue Israel for unlawful imprisonment for extended periods of time without trial. When Israel will finally be forced to acknowledge its debts, its credit rating will drop and many of its creditors (bond holders and companies that receive payments from the Israeli government) will likely lose a great deal.

Companies that operate in the settlements and provide Israel with illegal services operate under an underlying assumption that the occupation is a permanent condition, and that the Palestinians will never be strong enough to demand compensations from them. As the arguments above demonstrate, this assumption is unrealistic and very risky for the companies and their shareholders.

Not even with a



Normalization



By: **Adnan Ateyah**
JAI ex-coordinator

Concept *and* Judgment

Media and political actions have succeeded in distorting facts, which created a war that targeted the concepts, terminologies and the meanings of words, as a means for confusion and the removal of the right to defend culture against history and violations of human rights.

Unfortunately, talking about anti-normalization at many international civil society forums concerning Palestine and Israel has become equivalent to anti-peace, anti-dialogue and against bringing people together. With this phenomenon, matters have been turned upside down. Hence, this article aims to put things back in order.

Normalization means changing a phenomenon such that its content, form and pattern of movement is considered by the majority to be normal and in harmony with natural and social norms.

In the Palestinian context, normalization means social and psychological adaptation. Normalization means acceptance of Zionism, including the military occupation, dealing with them as normal, ordinary facts. It is to remove all opposing ideas as they will be considered weird, obstructing the normal process, or not agreeing with it.

This term has been spread out and used for the first time in the Zionist

dictionary to refer to Jews in exile to indicate their reformulation into a nation like all other nations. With the creation of Israel, this term almost disappeared until it re-emerged in the late seventies, with the beginning of diplomatic relations between Egypt and Israel. At that time to the relationships between the two countries became a normal one.

In the context of consequent Israeli negotiations with a number of Arab states, normalization came to represent a change in the Palestinian, Arab, Islamic and international worlds towards the acceptance of a Jewish State in the Middle East. This would lead to a change in the religious and political beliefs and a shift in the relationships among the states of the region, including Israel.

In this context normalization will have more impact in the region than any military action, since the later will remain unable to achieve significant portion of the Zionist movement's vital objectives. It would be unable, for instance, to achieve the demographic integration of "Israel" in the region.

The acceptance of the above implicitly implies the legitimization to the Palestinian Catastrophe (Al-Nakbah) and the 1948 forced displacement of millions of people. It is the endorsement of the Zionist vision, which considers itself as a national liberation movement of the Jewish people, and accept its story of the "promised land" and "Land without a people to people without a land", in order to make eyes blind from the settlements and forced transfer policies, with the religious and ethnic discrimination.

The Israeli insistence that the political, economic, cultural and other forms of normalization with Arab states is the first step towards peace in the Middle East comes from its larger project, which is to accept all the previously mentioned. Israel views any opposition to normalization a form of extremism: anti-peace, anti-democracy, anti-Israel, anti-Judaism and hence anti-Semitic, helping in the creation of terrorism.

It is a crime against history and reality and a denial of the human values and international law to attempt to convince the public that Israel in its present form is a normal country like any other.

Sixty years after its establishment, Israel is still engaging constant wars with surrounding countries. This shows its inability to become part of the region. Israel's self-definition as an exclusive Jewish state seriously conflicts with its supposed democracy, and shows how it remains a part of the colonial project. Its settlement project has proved its failure, and its representation of the Zionist dream itself has become doubted.

The question of normalization is an existential issue. The problems that Israel has created present us with a dilemma in how to deal with this phenomenon without fundamental changes.

Zionism may succeed temporarily by force and power, as it now does on the ground, rather than through people's choice. All political attempts to divide states, groups and individuals into moderates and non-moderates based on their acceptance or non-acceptance of the Zionist project is part of the

conceptual debate to peruse truth as the key for peace with justice.

The calls for normalization claim that we must be objective and rational, which means not to deny facts on the ground and adapt reality, not to accept it rather to change it. Such a standpoint is either entrapment in the illusion of knowledge, not knowledge itself, or regional political choices that respond to normalization in its previously outlined frame.

The refusal of normalization is not a refusal of dialogue, but dialogue should be between two equal parties rather than one side controlling and denying the other.

The essentials of any successful dialogue are based on respect and

recognition of others. This should not be only in the context of statements but rather as results on changes on the ground that begins with the acknowledgement of history and of human rights.

A serious dialogue is based on these basics, which is the beginning of the desired change and the mechanism for achieving a peaceful solution to the conflict as well as opening doors to dialogues, discussions and mechanisms for cooperation and joint actions to hold the model of co-existence based on equality, democracy and the rule of law.

Since the Oslo agreement several workshops and joint projects were and still being carried out between various age-based and profession-based Israeli

and Palestinian groups. What have come out of such meetings? What are the participants' motivations apart from some benefits such as permission to get into Israel or outside the country, which Israel itself is in control of, or some education or work opportunities in the context of occupation-made poverty?

Such meetings are used by Israel to redecorate its image. The best way of dealing with this issue is refusing and resisting normalization, while encouraging the culture of boycott – divestment and sanctions as a non-violent means of resisting occupation, discrimination and violations of human rights. This will lead to a normal state where human dignity is respected and rights are achieved with equality and justice.



The Olive Tree Campaign

Reserves Land And Helps Keeping Hope Alive



Ever since the Olive Tree Campaign was launched by the Joint Advocacy Initiative it aimed to plant and replant olive trees throughout the occupied West Bank and Gaza.

The major lands and field in which the olive tree campaign is present are lands located by Israeli Jewish only settlements, by the Separation wall or lands that have Israeli military orders for confiscation; meanwhile all the lands are privately owned by Palestinian families and located within the occupied West Bank and Gaza.

The Olive Tree Campaign – Keep Hope Alive has been helping farmers to overcome the several obstacles imposed on them by the military occupation. It is known that the Israeli occupation have been grabbing land of the Palestinians by different means, military orders are the most common. Israel gives itself the right to confiscate Palestinian's land for military use, security reasons, natural reserve, declaring land as a state land or abandoned land and so on, where all these lands end as part of the infrastructure of the military occupation, including its bypass roads, settlements, military camps,

checkpoints, the Separation wall and terminals, while leaving Palestinian families and land owners with no property or a resource of income.

Ever since the Olive Tree Campaign started it managed to plant more than 43.000 sponsored olive trees over the west bank and Gaza, some of these trees bare fruit now, and for the years to come these trees will be a more reliable resource of income or food. By planting olive trees in the areas that are threatened to be confiscated Palestinian farmers can demonstrate that even with all the Israeli preventions from using, developing or even accessing their lands, the land is still used and not abandoned, and therefore, the discriminatory and racist laws imposed by the military occupation will not apply on it.

Finally, for the past few years, this campaign has proven that investing in justice and in ending the occupation is possible, with focus on helping out the Palestinian community in their struggle for survival through a merciless type of military occupation.



By: **Gary Hall**
United States / Ex-JAI volunteer

Back home in the United States the notion of freedom has always been a defining characteristic of what the country stands, fights, and lives for. Though our current brand of foreign policy may seem to act otherwise, especially in the Middle East, the spreading of freedom is quite often used to justify and legitimize the country's international operations and behavior. Before my arrival in the West Bank I knew such abuse of the word to be decadent, but its immorality lacked a personal context in which I could bind the reality to. The Palestinian struggle for freedom from occupation reflects negatively on my country's policies abroad, but even worse on the American public's acceptance, and ignorance, of on oppressed Palestinian people.

After spending the last month living in Beit Sahour, experiencing life within the confines of the Wall, the concept of freedom has been stripped of abstraction and political potential, leaving it bare and fragile. The freedoms I enjoy in the United States have travelled with me to Palestine, creating a great feeling of guilt as I move freely between Israel and the West Bank, knowing that I have the privilege of returning home to my family and friends. The same cannot

Perspective Essay

be said of the wonderful people who have taken me into their homes, their culture, and their lives. The Palestinians - indeed, no one - deserves to be dominated by the will of any other individual, society, or nation.

My brief experience working with the JAI has been both melancholic and inspirational. The organization's commitment to non-violent resistance has proved successful thus far, demonstrating that raising awareness and building a network of support is capable of accomplishing change, even if the long-term goal of ending the occupation has not been reached. Social change is a process, one with many obstacles and challenges, but to deny one's self of involvement solely based on such hurdles is to sit in passivity, contributing negatively to the cause. The barriers placed in front of the Palestinian liberation movement are no doubt tremendous, comparable to the biblical story of David and Goliath, but in the end justice and freedom will prevail.

There are many ways one can invest in freedom. Naturally, the term "invest" brings forth principles of economics, development, and infrastructure. Due to the occupation the Palestinian economy has suffered a great deal, prohibiting local entrepreneurs to trade, sell, and buy without the burden of Israeli taxation and embargos. The political instability of the region is preventing international companies from investing in the West Bank and Gaza, and foreign aid is not



abundant enough to build the amount of needed services and resources to provide a sustainable civil society for the Palestinian people. Although the aforementioned principles are undisputedly required to build a better life here in Palestine, they are not the only principles worth investment.

Much can be done internally, without the aid and support of external sources. The work of countless Non-Governmental Organizations, Church-Related Organizations, and other non-profit organizations to strengthen the relationships between members of the Palestinian community are in effect building solidarity and creating space for an improved quality of life within the Palestinian civil society. A united civil society can invest in their freedom as one voice, one people, dramatically reversing the consequences of a systematic effort to "divide and conquer". Taking the initiative to improve one's community in times of hardship speaks loudly to the will of the people as self-determinant, independent, committed, and in negligible. Freedom, in my opinion, is never given but rather is always taken. The struggle to take what is rightly yours [the Palestinians'] should occur at all levels - internationally, diplomatically, governmentally, and locally. Everyone has a part to play, and what is desired cannot be achieved without the participation of everyone involved.



THE EAST JERUSALEM YMCA

NEWS



Strategic Planning and Assembly

In order to improve its work and strategic development, the East Jerusalem YMCA has conducted a strategic planning project, in which staff and volunteers were involved.

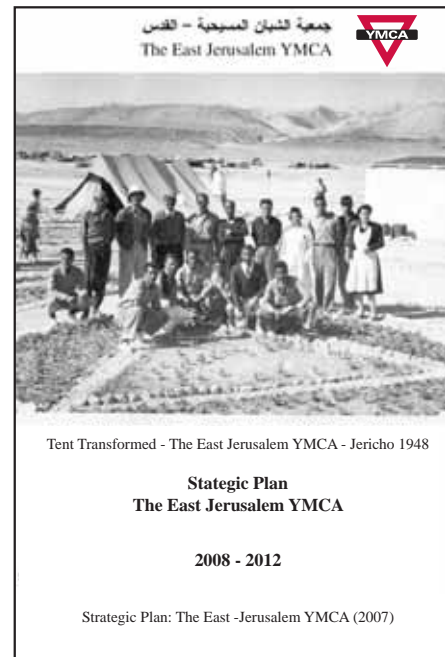
The planning, that was carried out by the Centre of Continuing Education at Birzeit University, ended in early 2008 with the reformulation and clarification of the EJ YMCA vision, mission, values and strategic focus. The strategic planning report was printed as a booklet and distributed to the association's partners.

The association's goal and direction

for the coming five years were determined. They included the revision and reformulation of the bylaws, the construction of advisory councils for each program and branch, and the development of the association's income generating projects so as to increase its sustainability.

Following the bylaws' reformulation, the door was open for the creation of the association's assembly whose membership was intended to be as high as 40-50 members.

Around forty five members were finally registered, based on certain criteria and



a selection process involving interviews. These members are to elect a new East Jerusalem YMCA board by the end of this year 2008 or early next year 2009.

It was agreed by the members of the assembly that the board would be composed of nine members.

Open Day

Jerusalem YMCA President Rev. Riah Abu Al-Asal, as well as the General Secretary Mr. Andre Batarseh, and programs management team. The day gathered staff and volunteers from the association various programs and teams.

It included welcoming and introduction to each other, followed by the association's updates, in the form of open discussion with various inputs, suggestions and proposed ideas, which all were recorded to be taken into consideration.

It also included some entertainment and Dabka performances, as well as games and competitions at the YMCA garden. After lunch, the attendees played soccer, basketball, volleyball and handball, in teams and groups.

Many attendees have met for the first time, especially the news staff and volunteers, while they have showed high interaction and integration among each other.



The YMCA Open Day is an idea initiated by the East Jerusalem YMCA where its staff, members and volunteers gather to enhance their harmony, discuss their experiences, and present or share ideas and proposals to each other.

It is also meant to develop their understanding of the vision, message, mandate and values of the EJ YMCA,

while living them through their various work and programs in the various locations, with and transferred to their various beneficiaries and target groups in Palestine and abroad.

This year, the YMCA Open Day took place at the East Jerusalem YMCA - Beit Sahour, on the 16th of April, as an informal day, attended by the East



NEWS

Joining Hands and Peace Making Conference



Rana Qumsiyeh, the National Program Coordinator at the YWCA of Palestine represented the "Joining Hands for Justice in Palestine" network at the Joining Hands and Peacemaking conference organized by the Presbyterian Church USA at Chapman

University in Orange, California, from July 12th to 18th. Together with Zoughbi Zoughbi, the Director of Wi'am and other partners from the sister network in Greater Atlanta, they organized a workshop about the Palestinian/Israeli conflict, where they discussed the daily life of Palestinian and the work of the JAI and Wi'am.

From July 19th to 27th, Rana was on a speaking tour in Atlanta, Georgia, organized by the Greater Atlanta Presbytery. She visited churches and gave talks about her daily life

as a Palestinian and the work of the YWCA and JAI. On July 26, a whole day conference was organized for the two Palestinian representatives to have panel discussion and give workshops on the situation and the advocacy work they do. They were also hosted on a radio show in Atlanta called "Just Peace" for one hour. Rana also visited the YWCA of Greater Atlanta, gave a presentation on the work of the YWCA of Palestine and the JAI and spent a whole day there.

During this trip, Rana highlighted the Olive Tree Campaign, and gathered enough sponsorship to plant a whole new field.



Career Day

The Vocational Training Centre (VTC) in the Jerusalem YWCA has been graduating secretaries, health workers and aid physiotherapists for more than a half century now. The aim of the VTC is women empowerment through giving such courses to students who have lost their chances to join our local universities due to financial, social and political reasons. Thus, as a means of support we offer them the courses which meet the demands of the market of employment.

In 2008 we decided to perform a career day in order to strengthen the link with the local institutions that usually train and employ our students. In addition, our aim was to increase the students' job opportunities and to realize their importance of their future contribution in the work market. Our students were prepared to

perform a number of tasks due to their fields of studies. The students and labs were divided into corners where they exhibited their talents in first aid, medical and health guidance in dealing with hypertension, breast feeding and the use of physiotherapy equipment. The other students performed their power point presentations on their academic achievements and some topic that were related to the things they studied. Moreover, they had the chance to present their CVs.

As a result, some of the guests were interested to interview the students whom they wanted to train or employ. They were very impressed by our students' performances and considered that our career day was a success. They also recommended that we should organize a career day in the coming year.



JOINT ADVOCACY INITIATIVE



Join our upcoming Olive Planting Program February 2009

The JAI together with the Alternative Tourism Group (ATG) are glad to invite you for the 2nd Olive Planting Program taking place between the 7th and 16th of February 2009. A detailed schedule of the program and other information are available on our website at:

<http://www.jai-pal.org/content.php?page=752>

Register online at:

http://www.jai-pal.org/olive_planting_2009_registration.php

Olive Picking Program 2008

People from all over the world have joined the Olive Picking Program which took place between the 25th of October and 3rd of November. Besides picking olives, the program featured introductory presentations about the current situation in Palestine and the effect of the Apartheid Wall, tours in the Old City of Jerusalem, in Bethlehem and Hebron, in addition to cultural events and social gatherings.



Winchester group program

Based on a partnership between the YMCA of Winchester and YMCA Beit Sahour branch called YMCA bridges, and following several youth exchange programs, the Joint Advocacy Initiative has planned and organized a program in Palestine and Israel for a group of five members and volunteers of the YMCA of Winchester.

The programs lasted between the 26th of August and 6th of September, and included visits, meetings and activities with Palestinian youth, groups, students, and leaders. Their program included visits into various areas, including Ramallah, Bethlehem, Hebron, East Jerusalem, West Jerusalem, and Jericho. More about the program with pictures can be viewed on our website at:



Journey for Justice 2008

25 International young leaders' have joined this year Journey for Justice program coming from seven different countries namely the United Kingdom (Winchester), South Africa, The Netherlands, Switzerland (World YWCA), Norway, Denmark and Argentina (Argentina YMCA and the Latin American and the Caribbean Confederation of YMCAs), through their YMCA and YWCA movements or regional alliances.

Palestinian participants are local young

YMCA and YWCA leaders, volunteers at the Joint Advocacy Initiative.

They went through a challenging program, between the 23rd and the 31st of July, that aims to witness, accompany and share Palestinian youth in their daily life, with their stories, experiences, and dreams.

More details on the programs with pictures are available on our website at: <http://www.jai-pal.org/content.php?page=673>

Art of Life program - To Get There

From the 15th to the 20th of July a group of Dutch university students had a 6-days program organized by JAI as part of their 15-days trip facilitated by "To Get There".



The theme of the trip centered around "the Art of Life", in which the students' aims focused on meetings people, specially youth, gaining a better understanding of the Palestinians, their culture, their struggles, and the quality of life west of the Wall.

Meetings were organized with Palestinian Non-Governmental, international and faith based Organizations, as well as Palestinian farmer while it was arranged for the students to spend two overnights with Palestinian families.



Who's who in Palestine?

Palestinian Hydrologist Group (PHG)

The mission statement:

Palestinian Hydrologist Group (PHG) is a Palestine Non-Government Non-Profit Organization striving to promote the role women and civil societies in managing local water and its related environment resources to ensure transparency good water governance and just equal provision of water and sanitation services to the rural and the marginal communities in the West Bank and Gaza. PHG is also striving to promote water research capacity and infrastructure in Palestine. PHG is seeking local and international networking partnership to participate actively in promoting the sustainability and the right based approaches for just allocation of water resources at local regional and global levels.

Strategic Objectives:

1. To promote the adaptation of good local water governance in the water in the water sector in Palestine.
2. To promote the right based approach and insure equal and just allocation of water as we as the provision of sanitation services to Palestinian communities.
3. To promote gender mainstreaming within the water sector to insure the sustainable management of water and the environmental resources in Palestine

Target Group:

The target areas are the rural and marginal communities. Beneficiaries may include grass-root organization, women and individuals. There is more than one criteria for selection of beneficiaries it depends on the type of activity.

PHG Reputation and Context in the Society

PHG is not only known as a developmental organization in the West Bank and Gaza, it is also known as a water resources and environmental professional group which has the largest professional capacity. Moreover, PHG is the major water information center which provides services for the water professionals, graduate students, journalists, politicians, local government councils, local and international firms and decision makers.

Networking:

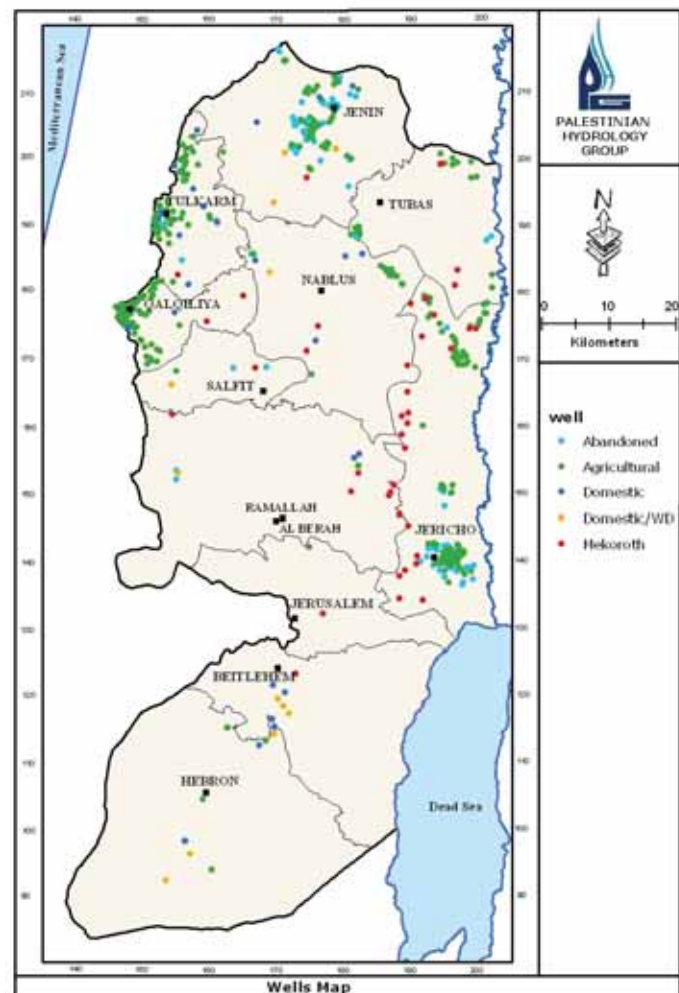
PHG has been active at national and regional levels in the field of water and environment. PHG also played important role in networking at national and regional levels.

It is a founding member of an environmental network for environmental organizations at the Mediterranean level

calles (MEDFORUM). In addition, PHG is a founding member of Palestinian NGO Network as well as Palestinian Environmental NGO Network at national level. Currently, PHG has been elected as a member of the executive board of Mediterranean Information Office (MIO)

Membership:

1. Mediterranean Environmental Forum (MED Forum)
2. Mediterranean Information Office (MIO)
3. Middle East Water Information Network (MEWIN)
4. Arab Non-Governmental Organization Network for Environment
5. FRIEND AMHY group
6. Palestinian Water Council
7. Palestinian Non Governmental Organizations Network PNGO
8. Palestinian Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations Network PEGON
9. IHAS national representative



Divest from Occupation
Divest from Occupation
Divest from Occupation



Your Tax Dollars,
Hard at Work.