



This guide was prepared within the project ***“Towards Social Inclusion in Community Development by Providing Platforms for Planning and Advocacy”*** which is implemented in partnership between the Applied Research Institute - Jerusalem (ARIJ), The Union of the Charitable Societies - Jerusalem (UCS), Hasso-Plattner-Institut für Digital Engineering GGmbH (Hasso-Plattner-Institute for Digital Engineering), Digital Engineering Faculty of the University Potsdam and CESVI Fondazione Onlus, funded by the European Union.

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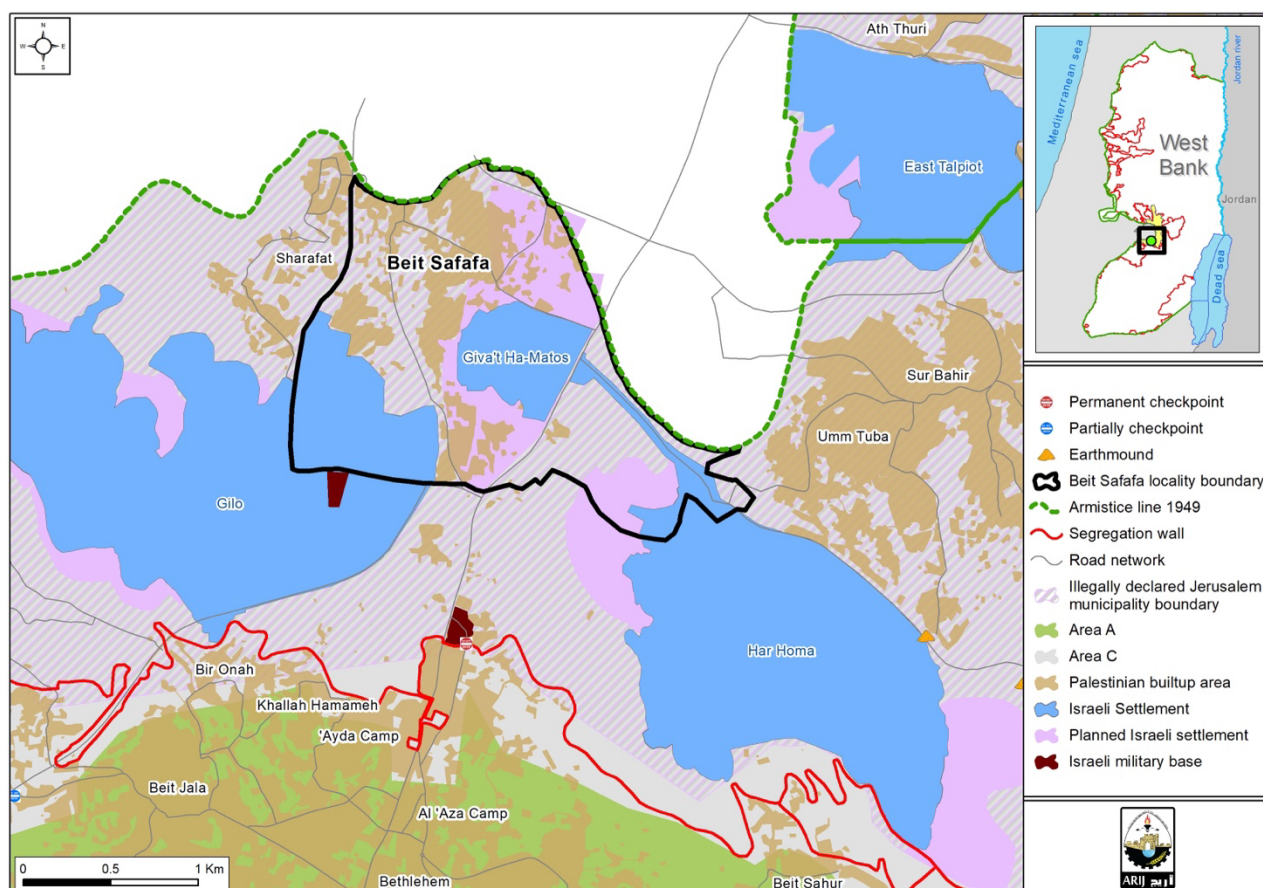
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## Beit Safafa Town Profile

### Geographical location and physical characteristics

The town of Beit Safafa is one of the towns in Jerusalem Governorate, located southwest of Jerusalem as it lies about 4.55 km from the city of Jerusalem (the horizontal distance between the centre of the town and the centre of Jerusalem). In general terms, Beit Safafa is bounded from the east by Umm Tuba and Sur Baher, from the north by West Jerusalem, from the west by Sharafat, and from the south by Bethlehem and Beit Jala lands (Geographic Information System Unit - ARIJ, 2019) (see map 1).

**Map 1: Beit Safafa location and borders**



**Source:** ARIJ Geographic Information Systems Unit, 2020

The town of Beit Safafa is located at an altitude of 732 meters above sea level with an average annual precipitation of 488.3 mm. The average temperature is 16.4 degrees Celsius, while the average humidity is approximately 60.4% (GIS Unit - ARIJ, 2019). As for services provided for the cluster, they are all provided by the Israeli Jerusalem municipality.

### Brief history

The reason for naming Beit Safafa town this name goes back to when the Jews heard about the coming of Alexander of Macedon (Alexander the Great) and his army from Gaza, they immediately

rushed to meet him outside the city of Jerusalem, wearing white clothes and demanding peace; he accepted and pardoned them from paying tribute. In 333 BC, clarity and purity 'safa' existed between them, and the town was therefore named Beit Al Safa or 'house of purity', and over time, it became called Beit Safafa. There is also another story transmitted from the ancestors, which states that a Roman emperor had a lonely daughter called Saffa' who gave her his most sincere love, and when she became in the prime of her youth, she became ill with an incurable disease. Doctors were unable to cure her and his relative advised him to take her to a place with fresh and pure air, so he chose Beit Safafa, where he built a palace for her in the centre of the town. There is also another story which claims that the word "Beit Safafa" is a distortion of the word "Saffa" which in Syriac means 'house of the thirsty'; this story is probably true since the town has no springs or water (Othman, 2006). The town was established in 450 AD, and its residents are descended from Jabaliya (Gaza Strip) and East Jordan (Othman, 2006) (see photo 1).

**Photo 1: View from the town of Beit Safafa**



## **Religious and archaeological Sites**

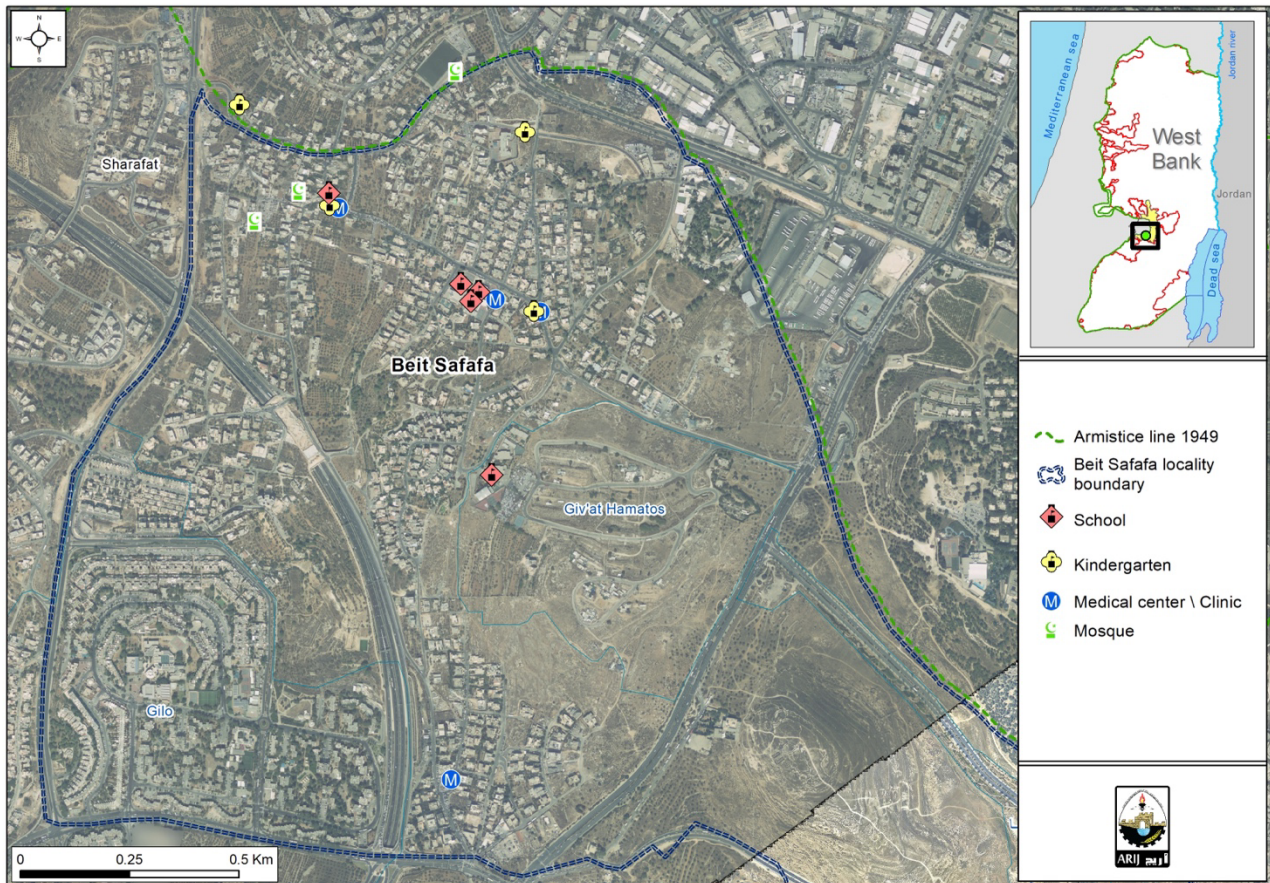
There are 5 mosques in the town of Beit Safafa and are Al Batma, Al Sharqi, Sheikh Mahmoud, Tantur and Al Jadid mosques. There are also few sites with archaeological significance, including (Othman, 2006) (see map 2):

- The tower which dates back to the Roman era, and is a labyrinthine building of two storeys with a tomb carved into the rock, containing various tunnels and chambers.
- Al Dirdas is a rocky basin containing a large stone used to press olive manually.
- The Hall is a fertile plain planted with ancient olive trees, as well as a cave carved into the rock and old cemeteries.



- The winery, where wine was produced.
- The Christian Garden.
- Al Dahra which contains ancient caves.

**Map 2: Main locations in Beit Safafa town**



**Source:** ARIJ Geographic Information Systems Unit, 2020

## Population

Unfortunately, the population and housing census were not conducted by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics in 2017 for Beit Safafa community. However, it was found that the population of Beit Safafa reached 13,760 (including Beit Safafa and Sharafat) in 2018, according to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics (The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 2020).

## Families

The residents of Beit Safafa town consist of several families (Othman, 2006), including:

- Dar Elian, which consists of four families: Hamid, Awad, Al Hajj and Ahmad Ali.
- Dar Salman, which consists of four families: Abd Rabbo, Jum'a, Ismail and Al Hajj.
- Dar Hussein, which consists of five families: Al Athamneh, Subhi, Abu Dillu, Muslih and Lafi.

## Standard of living

The household survey was used as a tool to collect necessary data to evaluate the socio-economic conditions at a neighborhood level, and to gather the necessary data to conduct a comprehensive assessment of East Jerusalem residents' needs, their preferences and perceptions concerning the availability and quality of education, health, transportation, infrastructure, housing and environmental services.

The Geographic Sample Distribution of Household was designed using a stratified sampling approach. Unfortunately, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) does not publish estimates of the number of residents in Palestinian neighborhoods within East Jerusalem. On the other hand, the Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research publishes population numbers, demographic and socio-economic indicators in its annual statistical book. However, the boundaries of the statistical enumeration areas differ from the borders used by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) and this project. In order to solve the problem, samples were taken where partners compared the number of buildings from the GIS database with the population numbers mentioned in the Statistical Work Manual. As it became clear that the number of buildings, according to statistics from the Central Bureau of Statistics is approximately 80% of the population. The distribution of the number of buildings and the number of samples for each cluster in the following table:

Cluster	Number of buildings	Sample number
Al Sawahira al Gharbiya	1,699	231
Al Thuri	2,099	325
Beir Owana	126	86
Beit Safafa	2,025	238
Beit Hanina	3,534	248
Isawiya and Sheikh Jarrah	2,605	242
Jabel Mukaber	3,259	247
Bayt al-Maqdis	10,623	371
Kafr 'Aqab	2,710	243
Old City	4,101	250
Sharafat	410	162
Shu'afat	1,895	234
Silwan	2,288	239
Sur Baher	2,771	243
Umm Tuba	874	204

As for the survey, it was completed by designing a questionnaire called “The Socio-Economic Survey for Families in East Jerusalem Districts 2019”. The Union of the Charitable Societies - Jerusalem (UCS), in cooperation with the Applied Research Institute - Jerusalem (ARIJ), conducted this survey, and the survey was divided into the following sections:

- Data on family members.
- Domicile and living conditions (water, sanitation/sewerage, waste, communications, internet and mail).
- Movement and mobility.
- Education.
- The standard of living.
- Violence and personal security.

## The standard of living in Beit Safafa

The number of Beit Safafa families that were sampled was 238, and when asked about their families living conditions, 96% reported they are living in middle to upper levels. As for the monthly income, 96% of the families that were surveyed earned 5,000 shekels and above monthly, while 4% of the families earned less than 5,000 shekels a month. As for the primary source of income, 96% were salaries earned while 6% were from self-employment.

## Education sector

Regarding primary and secondary educational institutions in Beit Safafa in the academic year 2015/2016, there are 3 endowment schools in town which are managed by the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education, but there are no kindergartens supervised by the Ministry of Education (ARIJ database, 2016) (see table 1).

**Table 1: Distribution of schools in Beit Safafa by type of school and supervising authority for academic year 2015/2016**

School Name	Supervising Authority	School Type
Elementary Mixed School	Awqaf	Mixed
Boys' Secondary School	Awqaf	Male
Secondary Mixed School	Awqaf	Mixed

Source: ARIJ database 2016.

The number of classrooms in the town of Beit Safafa that are supervised by the Directorate of Education is only 16 classes, while the number of students is 193 students both male and female. The number of teachers is 39 teachers including both genders (ARIJ database, 2016). It should be noted here that the average number of students per teacher in Beit Safafa schools is 6 students, and the classroom density is 12 students per class (ARIJ database, 2016).

It is worth mentioning that there is also Al Salam School, which is a private school for people with special needs supervised by Jerusalem municipality.

There are some problems and obstacles facing the education sector, the most important is:

- The lack of classrooms in schools.
- The limited number of schools in town.
- The lack of gender separation in town schools.

## Health Sector

Beit Safafa has some health care facilities and include 4 health care centers which are affiliated with the National Insurance (patients' fund), a radiology center and a medical laboratory also run by the National Insurance, 3 private pharmacies and 5 private clinics. If the required health services are not available in the town, patients go to Hadassah, Ein Karem, and Augusta Victoria (Al Mutla') (The Union of the Charitable Societies - Jerusalem (UCS) and ARIJ database, 2019).

## Agriculture sector

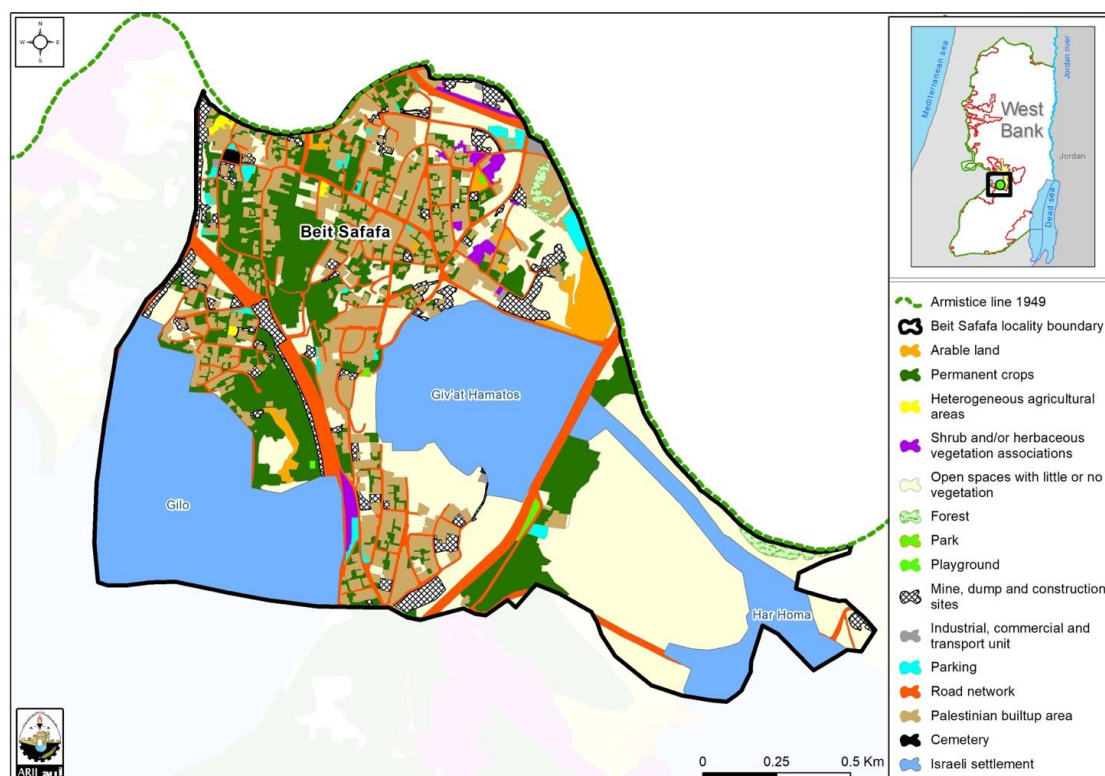
The area of Beit Safafa is approximately 3,096 dunums, of which 491 dunums are arable lands and 425 dunums are residential lands (see table 2 and map 3).

**Table 2: Land use in the town of Beit Safafa for the year 2019 (area in dunums)**

Total area	Residential land area	Agricultural area (491)				Inland water	Forests	Open Spaces	Industrial and commercial area	Area of settlements, military bases and wall zone
		Permanent crops	Green - houses	Range -land	Arable lands					
3,096	425	411	0	30	50	0	19	741	431	989

Source: Geographical Information Systems Unit - ARIJ, 2019

**Map 3: Land use and the route of the Apartheid Wall in Beit Safafa**



## Institutions and Services Sector

There are no public institutions in Beit Safafa; however, there are several local institutions and associations that provide services to the various groups of the society and in several cultural, sports and other fields. These institutions include:

- **The Arab Club:** Founded in 1969, and concerned with sports activities such as football.
- **Beit Safafa Women Association:** Founded in 1967.
- **Al Nama' Association:** Founded in 2008.
- **The Arab Club:** Founded in 1969.

## Infrastructure and Natural Resources

### 1. Water and Waste water

The Gihon Company Ltd is the company that deals with the distribution of drinking water and the sewerage system in all Jerusalem- defined municipal boundaries. The Israeli company manages network maintenance and extension, water pipes setting up.

Despite all communities within the Jerusalem-defined municipal boundaries are entitled to access full and equal services provided by the Municipality, in East Jerusalem the difficulty in obtaining housing permits had at times resulted in the illegal construction of buildings for which services such as access to public networks of drinking water and sewerage has not always been possible. The problems with the water and wastewater infrastructure create an unhealthy environment and expose the residents to infections and illness.

Gihon Company has made significant efforts over recent years to develop water and sewage network in several East Jerusalem communities.

Due to the lack of accessible information, it was not possible to fully collect data on water and waste water system in Beit Safafa and Sharafat. However, the status of water and waste water service will be described on the basis of the most accurate and up-to-date information available.

### 1.1 Water

In Israel water sources are managed by the Israeli Mekorot Company. Mekorot has recently completed the largest water tunnel in Israel – almost 14 kilometres – from Sorek to Jerusalem that brings desalinated drinking water to the municipality of Jerusalem<sup>1</sup>. As it has been already mentioned above, Gihon Company is in charge of the drinking water distribution in Jerusalem and accordingly it is also responsible for providing these services to the communities of Beit Safafa and Sharafat.

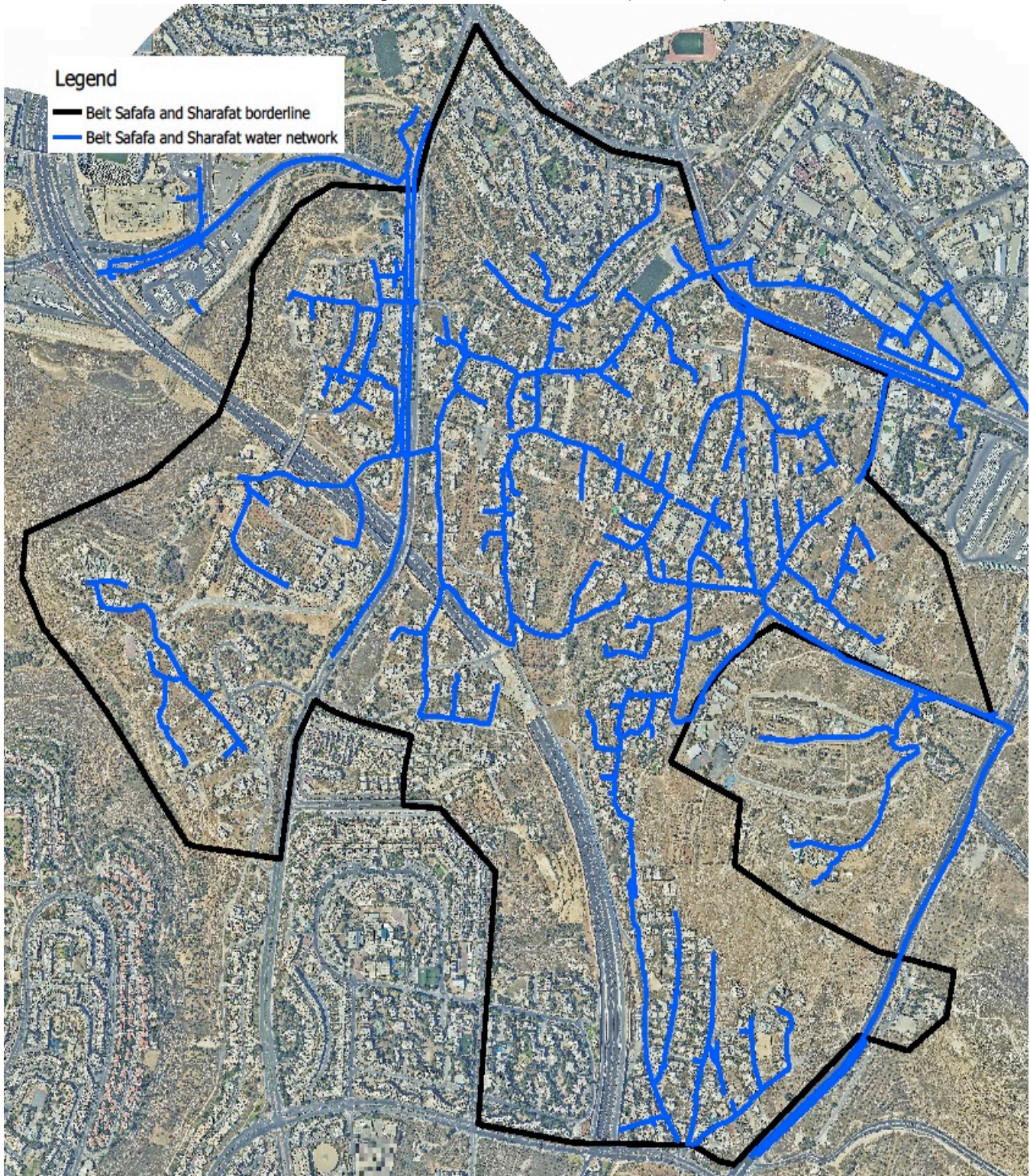
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<sup>1</sup> The Jerusalem Post, , <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/using-israeli-technology-to-live-in-a-water-stressed-world-627227> , May 2020



The water distribution network in 2013 covered approximately 90% of the target area (**Map 1**). Currently, 100% of the dwellings are officially connected to the water network (Beit Safafa and Sharafat Community Centre).

**Map 1. Water network in 2013 (Cesvi 2019)**





Despite officially the average water consumption per capita per day in Jerusalem seems to be 0.21 m<sup>3</sup>, not less than the “minimum water required sustaining a healthy life per capita per day” established by the World Health Organization, corresponding to 0.1 m<sup>3</sup>, in East Jerusalem the water supply per capita appeared to be 55% of the WHO minimum standard. Unfortunately, exhaustive data concerning water availability and consumption in Beit Safafa and Sharafat community are not available in this regard.

As regards municipal water service fees, Gihon Corporation considers as a standard value the consumption of 3.5 m<sup>3</sup> of water per person per month, considering a minimum of 2 people per housing unit. In applying this principle, it sets the lowest rate for drinking water and sewerage network connection service at 7.385 NIS/m<sup>3</sup>. For any amount exceeding 3.5 m<sup>3</sup>/per person per month, the rate is up to 13.461 NIS/m<sup>3</sup>. With regard to different consumption (trade, industry, craft, business, institutions, hospitals and other services), Gihon set a rate range which may differ according to water quantity consumed (water and sewer), from 10.998 to 13.461 NIS/m<sup>3</sup>. If drinking water and sewerage connection services are provided separately by Gihon, the basic rate for each of them varies between 1.170 and 9.368 NIS/m<sup>3</sup> for the first and between 2.832 and 3.184 NIS/m<sup>3</sup> for the second, according to the cadastral category of the property and the water consumption. The cost of connecting to the network is particularly expensive and partly depends on the dwelling meters squares. The average size of the dwellings in the target communities ranges from 90 to 120 m<sup>2</sup> and the connection unit cost per m<sup>3</sup> corresponds to 165 NIS. To this cost must also be added the cost of supplying and installing the water meter which corresponds to 3700 NIS per dwelling (Sur Bahir Community Centre, 2020).

## 1.2 Waste water

In most of the Palestinian neighbourhoods, people used septic tanks, which are currently impermissible under the regulations of the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Health. Installation of main sewage lines, to which dwellings can connect, is a service that the authorities must generally provide to residents. This is not the case of East Jerusalem, where residents, in the last years, were responsible for the installation of water and sewage lines. The high costs and the bureaucratic hardships have proven an obstacle for people to take advantage of the potential of building on their property<sup>3</sup>.

The data concerning the sewerage in 2013<sup>4</sup> shows that Beit Safafa and Sharafat had the network in almost all of the areas, but it had no drainage lines (**Map 2.**). Recently, the 2018 Gihon plan predicted to develop the sewer system through a line extension of about 11 km, with a diameter greater than 200 mm up to 300 mm. In 2019, the same company set out to extend about 15 km of lines with a diameter of more than 200 mm up to 300 mm<sup>5</sup>. Currently, 75% of the HHs is officially connected to the sewer network and it is expected to reach 100% shortly. It is assumed that the remaining 25% of the population still uses cesspits or it is forced to find alternative solutions. No

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<sup>2</sup> Jerusalem Institute for Policy research, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Bimkom, 2010

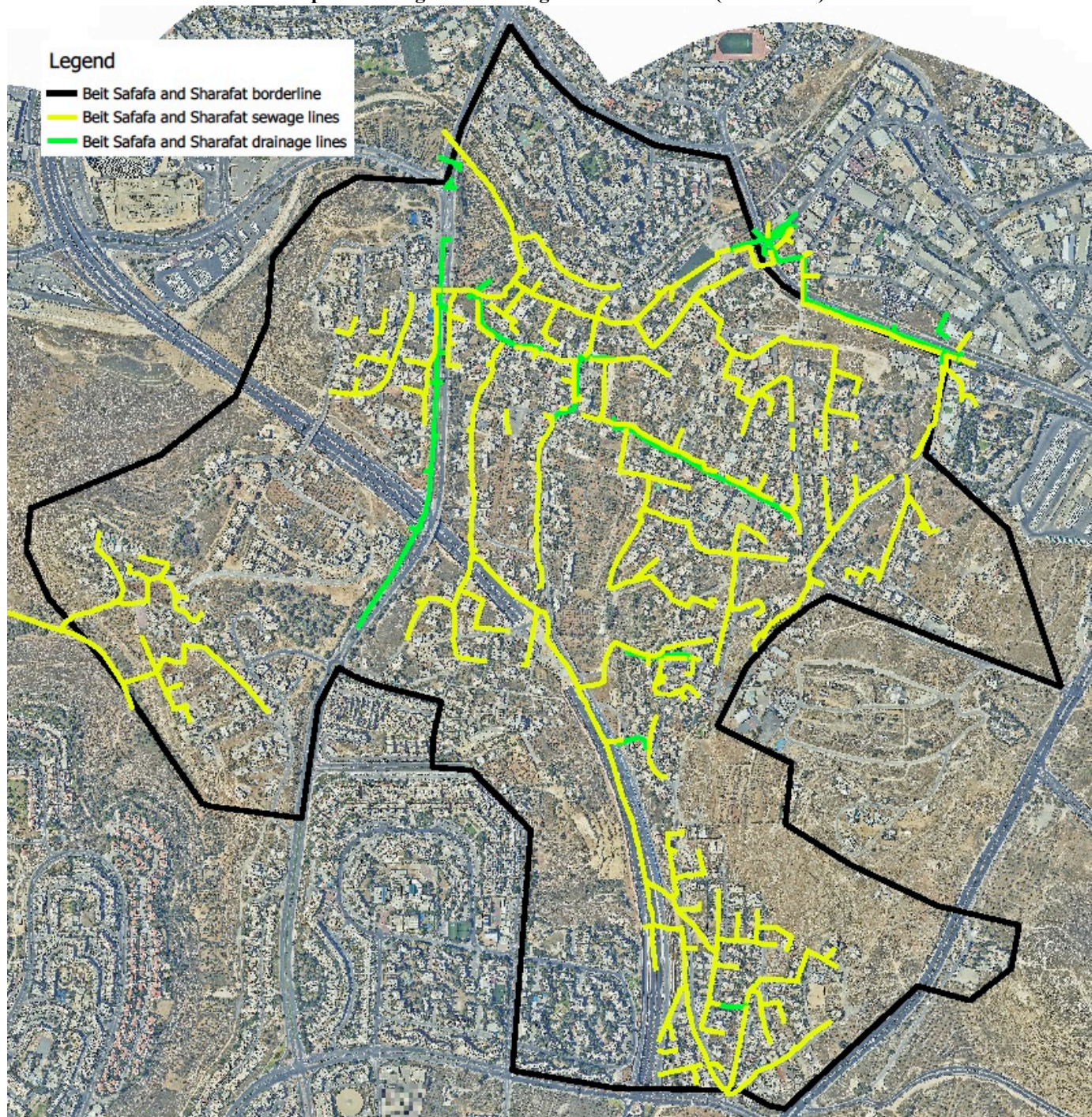
<sup>4</sup> ACRI, 2019

<sup>5</sup> Gihon Company, 2020.



information regards cesspit emptying frequency and costs have been traced (Beit Safafa and Sharafat Community Centre, 2020).

**Map 2. Sewerage and drainage network in 2013 (Cesvi 2019)**



Regarding Gihon service fees, where the sewerage connection service is included in the drinking water supply service, the unit costs applied shall be those shown above. If drinking water and sewerage connection services are provided separately, the basic rate for the sewerage service varies between 2.832 and 3.184 NIS/cu.m, calculated based on the cadastral category of the property and the water consumption. The cost of connecting to the network is particularly expensive and it depends on the dwelling meters squares. According to average size of the dwellings in the target communities,



the cost per dwelling is between 40,000 and 60,000 NIS. This cost is calculated on the basis of the m<sup>2</sup> of the dwelling the size of housing units in East Jerusalem varies between 90 and 120 m<sup>2</sup>, for which the unit cost is therefore estimated between 400 and 500 NIS per m<sup>2</sup> (Beit Safafa and Sharafat Community Centre, 2020).

As far as waste water generation is concerned, no data has been found. However, it is well known that the waste water confers in the Waste Water Treatment Plan (WWTP) of Sorek, West of the city of Jerusalem, it is considered the largest waste water treatment plant in Jerusalem, and it is capable of treating approximately 80,000 cubic meters of wastewater per day (50% of the wastewater produced in Jerusalem).

## 2. Solid Waste

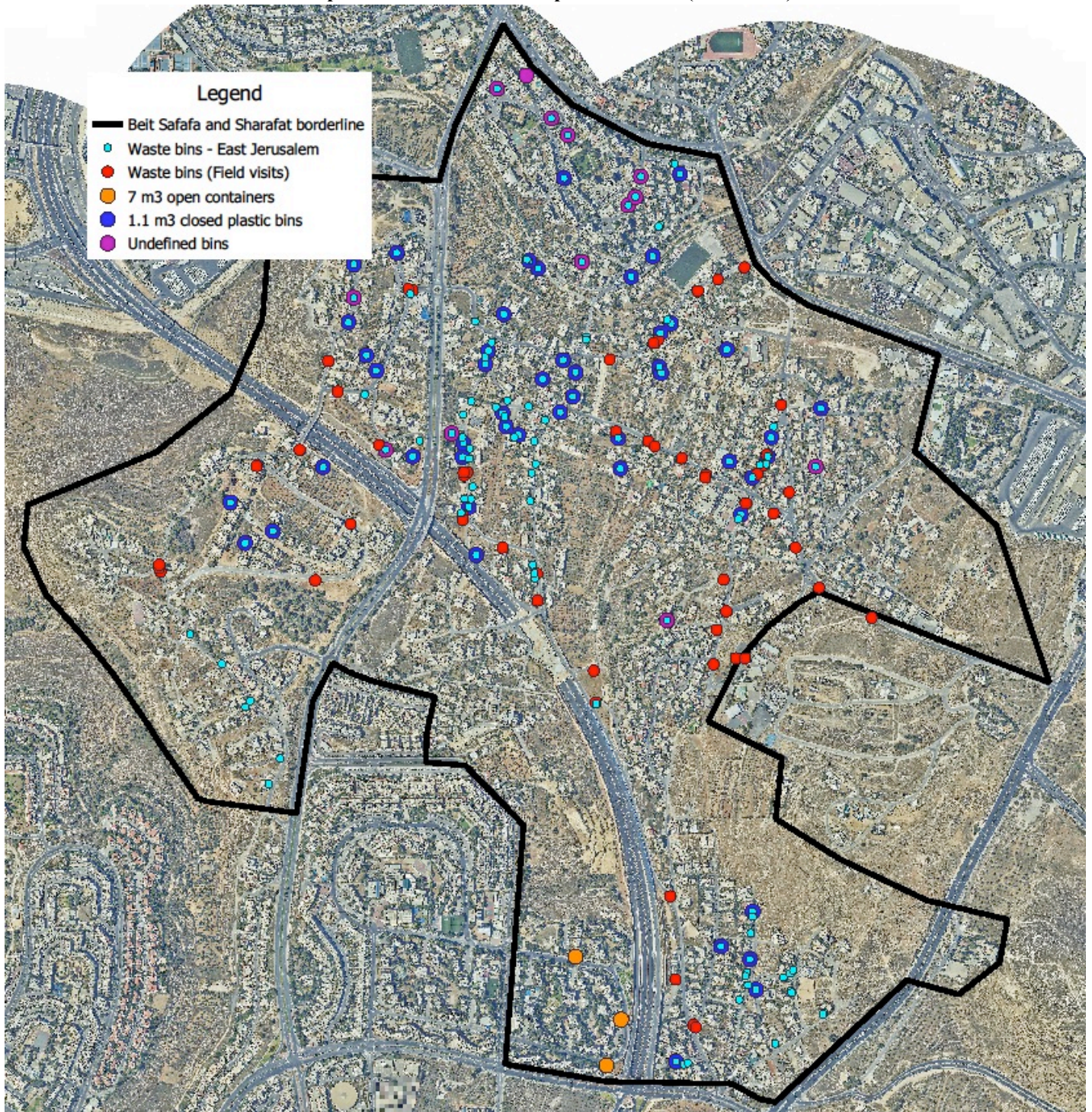
The Solid waste<sup>6</sup> value chain in Beit Safafa and Sharafat is managed by the Jerusalem Municipality. Concerning the solid waste collection service coverage, solid waste bins and containers are distributed in various areas in a not equitable manner (**Map 3.**). The distance between one and the other appear different depending on the zone and the service appears rather poor for the lack of containers and bins for long stretches along the boundaries and part of the main street crossing the area from north to south. Through the information published by Jerusalem Municipality and filed visits, it was possible to trace the location of the solid waste collection points and the types of bins and containers. 118 collection points and 134 bins and containers have been identified. For 20 out of 134 bins and containers the capacity is not identified. (**Table 3.**).

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<sup>6</sup> Waste that is not lost through illegal burning, burying or dumping in unofficial areas but delivered to an official treatment/disposal facility or to a recycling factory.



Map 3. Solid waste collection points location (Cesvi 2019)





**Table 3. Solid waste bins and containers**

N. Collection points	Bin/container type	N. bins/containers	N.bins/containers for which NO collection frequency is detected	N.bins/containers for which collection frequency is detected	Waste density per bin/container kg (250 kg /1 m3)	Waste density per total bins/containers (ton)
118	All types	134	77	55		72,650
71	1,1 m3 closed bins	86	45	41	275	23,650
28	7 m3 open containers	28	25	3	1,750	49,000
19	undefined bins	20	7	13	N/A	N/A

**Picture 1. Collection point (1.1 m3 closed bins)**



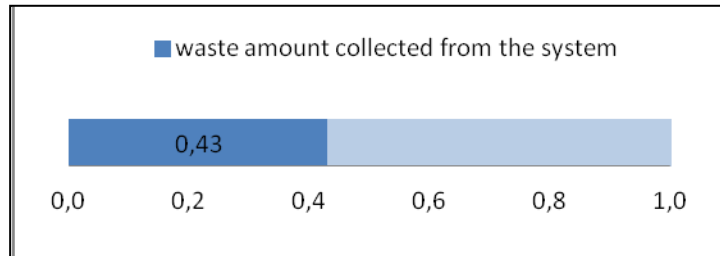
**Picture 2. 7 m3 open containers**



Comparing the total number of bins and containers collection capacity (72.650 tons) with the amount of waste generated per day (31.464 tons)<sup>7</sup>, we can consider the system discretely efficient. On a scale of 0 to 1, which measures the total collection capacity based on the total number of bins and containers located in the community, we can measure the saturation level of the system based on the amount of waste daily generated by the community population. The system in the target communities presents a low saturation level corresponding to 0,43 (**Figure 1**). It can therefore be deduced that the system is quite capable of collecting the quantity of waste generated daily by the community. Consequently, a collection frequency of three times a week would be adequate.

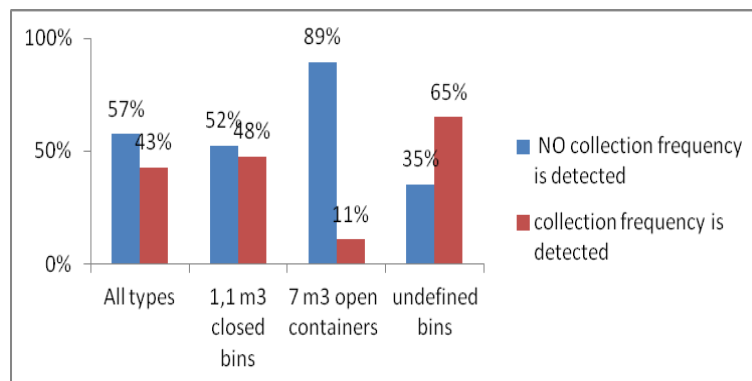
<sup>7</sup> The average waste generation per day per capita in East Jerusalem is considered as 1.9 kg for 2018, according to the Israeli Ministry of Environmental Protection.

**Figure 1. Saturation level of the solid waste system**



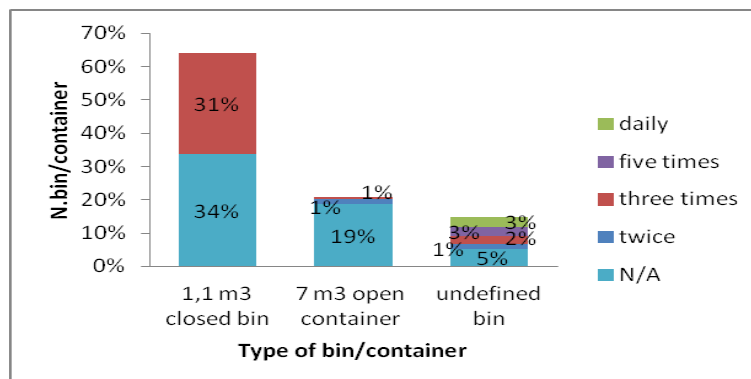
For most of the bins and containers (57%), it was not possible to gather the data on the weekly emptying frequency (**Figure 2.**). Four compactors are used for the solid waste collection, shared with the communities of Al Sawahreh Al Gharbia and Jabal Al Mukabbir. For every collection day, each compactor collects the solid waste minimum twice and for each trip it is capable to collect between 10-12 tons (Sur Bahir and Umm Tuba Centre, 2020).

**Figure 2. Detection of the weekly emptying frequency of bins and containers**



According to the data collected, it emerges that both bins and containers, for which the emptying frequency is detected, are mainly emptied three times a week (3%). Despite, for most of them (58%) the emptying frequency is not detected. (**Figure 3.**).

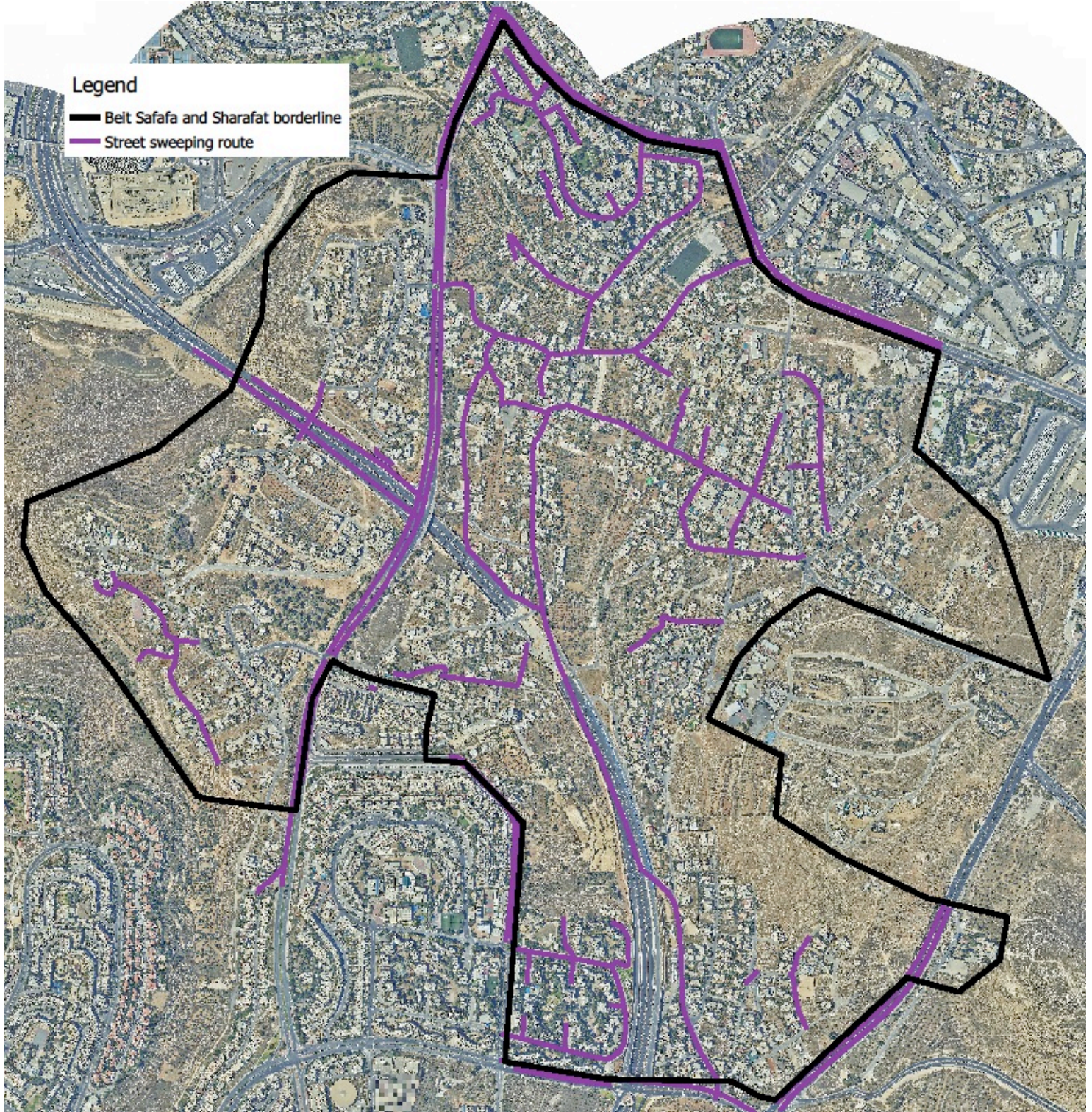
**Figure 3. Weekly emptying frequency of bins and containers**





The street sweeping service in the target area seemed to be inefficient, according to the data of 2013, despite the population commitment to paying their taxes to the Municipality (**Map 4**). No more recent data on this regard was available.

**Map 4. Street sweeping service (Cesvi 2019)**



Through some field visits carried out in 2019, critical solid waste collection points were detected (**Picture 3**). From the condition of some collection points, it can be assumed that the street sweeping



service is not guaranteed in some areas of the communities despite the emptying service seems to be efficient.

**Picture 3. Cleanliness level around few solid waste collection points**



Furthermore, in Beit Safafa community, a critical waste point was identified in the northwest area (Picture 4.).

**Picture 4. Critical point of waste concentration in Beit Safafa**



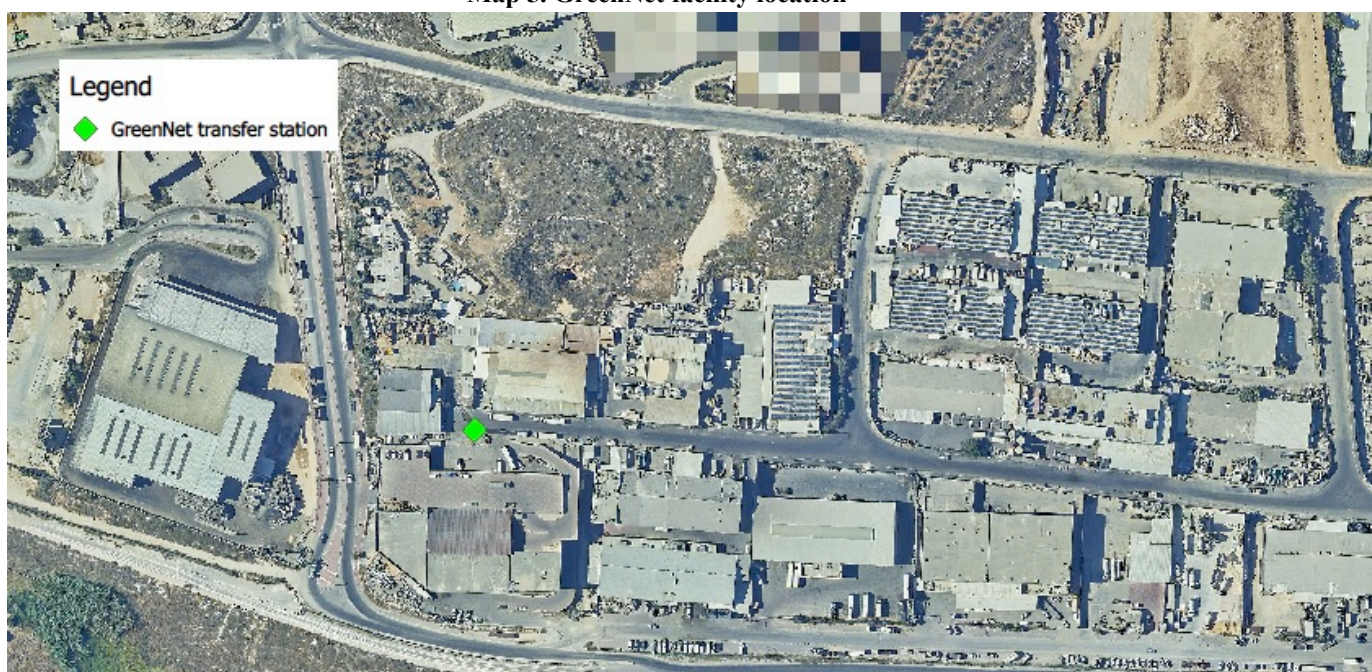


In the target area, no waste separation points were detected. In addition, the clearance service of scrap and old furniture is not available as in other Jerusalem neighbourhoods, according to the information published by the Jerusalem Municipality website.

The fee for the solid waste service is included in the Arnona, the annual expense that include all municipal services and it can be paid in instalments to Jerusalem Municipality. The Arnona is calculated upon the area where the housing unit is located and it depends on square meters of the accommodation and the category of the living area.

As for the waste disposal methods, no detailed information was found to describe this phase of the waste value chain, but the most used methods seem to be through the solid waste service that is provided by the municipality. Currently, Jerusalem solid waste is conveyed to GreenNet sorting facility in Atarot industrial area, north of the city of Jerusalem (**Map 5 and Map 5.1**) (Beit Safafa and Sharafat Community Centre, 2020)<sup>8</sup>.

**Map 5. GreenNet facility location**



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<sup>8</sup> The plant was inaugurated in 2013 and serves as a sorting point for municipal solid waste generated by the population of the metropolitan area of Jerusalem. Selected materials are then transferred to recycling industries for re-use, while reducing waste sent to landfills.



**Map 5.1 GreenNet transfer station location comparing to Qalandia airport**





### 3. Household Survey

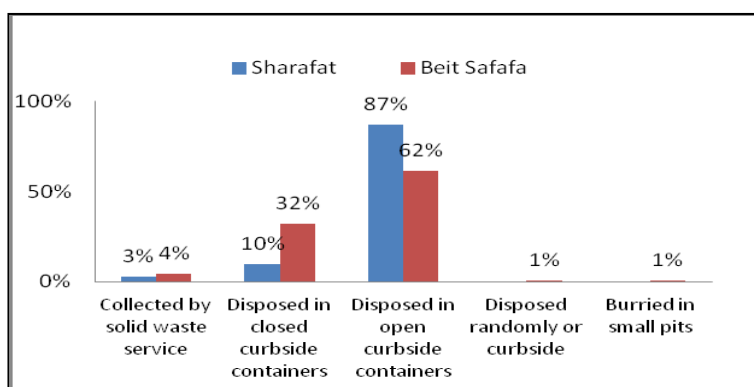
In 2019, the Union of Charitable Societies – Jerusalem, conducted a socio-economic survey that covered 19 residential communities in East Jerusalem, and the survey included 3,767 housing units. The results of the survey in Beit Safafa and Sharafat, which included 144 housing units out of the total units surveyed in the survey, showed the following:

#### 1. SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

##### Solid waste disposal method

*(Q: How do you usually dispose of solid waste?)*

More than 90 % of the respondents in both communities stated to dispose the solid waste in open or closed curb side containers and just a restricted number declared to use different methods. The HHs interviewed uses the current solid waste system for the disposal of the domestic waste.

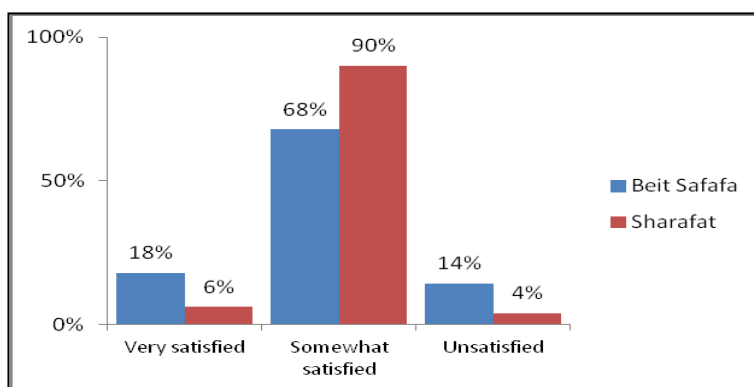


#### 2. STREET SWEEPING

##### Satisfaction with curb side and streets sweeping

*(Q: Are you satisfied with the Municipality efforts to keep the curbside and the neighborhood street clean?)*

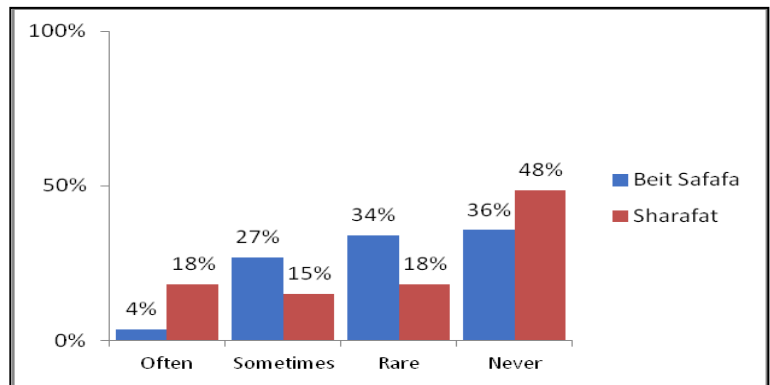
Most of the respondents for both of the people interviewed for both communities declared to be somewhat satisfied with the curb side and street sweeping service: the clearest figure is 90% for the community of Sharafat. The rest of the community interviewed is split between very satisfied and unsatisfied. It can be also stated that Sharafat seems to be more reached by this type of service compared to Beit Safafa.



### Street uncleanness

*(Q: Do you suffer from unclean street?)*

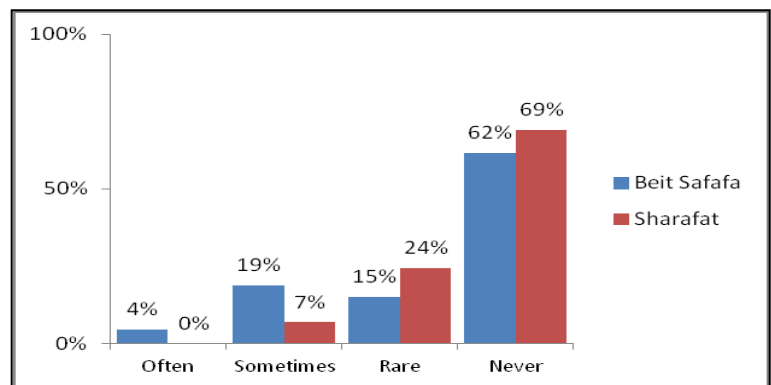
The data confirms the above assumption that street sweeping service seems to be quite efficient in both communities. Almost most of the respondents of Sharafat community stated that they never suffer from unclean streets.



### Outbreak of rodent population

*(Q: Did you notice an outbreak of rodent population?)*

The chart shows that both communities are rarely or never affected by outbreak of rodent population, even if the community of Beit Safafa is more affected by this phenomenon compare to Sharafat.

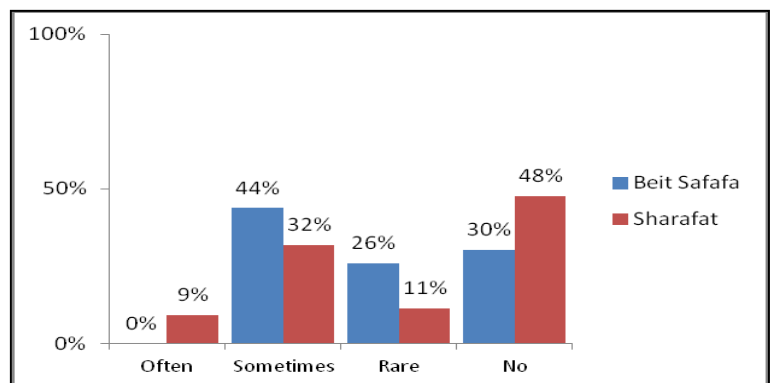


## 3. AIR POLLUTION

### Bad odours emitted from solid waste near the house

*(Q: Do you suffer from bad odors emitted from solid waste near your house?)*

Regarding the emission of bad odours from solid waste, this phenomenon seems to be different for the two communities. However, this phenomenon seems to affect the community life: most of the respondents of Beit Safafa opted for sometimes (44%) and rare (26%). Comparing this data with the answers of Sharafat respondents, it can be assumed that Sharafat inhabitants suffer less than Beit Safafa from this phenomenon: 48% of the respondents stated that they do not suffer from it.

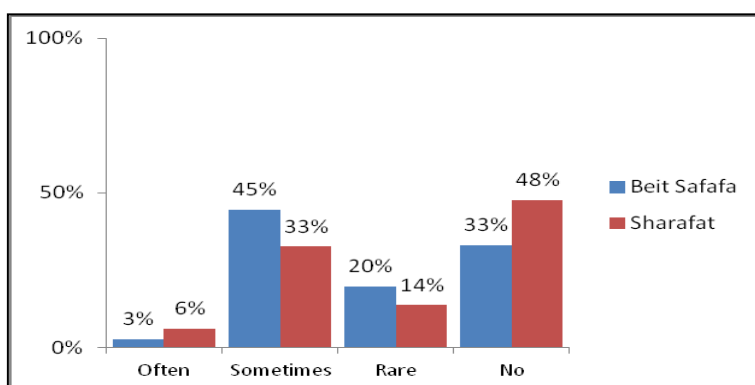


## Solid waste burning emissions/gases

*(Q: Do you suffer from solid waste burning emissions/gases?)*

Also, this figure can be considered as indicative of not fully efficient solid waste system, but it could be indicative of a bad behaviour of the inhabitants of the communities, who used to burn as a solid waste disposal method. As for the latter, it can be considered as an important factor if the solid waste management system shows a good level of efficiency. This phenomenon

seems to affect the community life: most of the respondents of Beit Safafa stated that sometimes they suffer from solid waste burning emissions/gases (45%) and others said rarely (20%). Comparing this data with the answers of Sharafat respondents, it can be assumed that Sharafat inhabitants suffer less than Beit Safafa from this phenomenon: 48% of the respondents stated that they do not suffer from it. In summary, most of the respondents from both communities suffer from this phenomenon although to a different extent

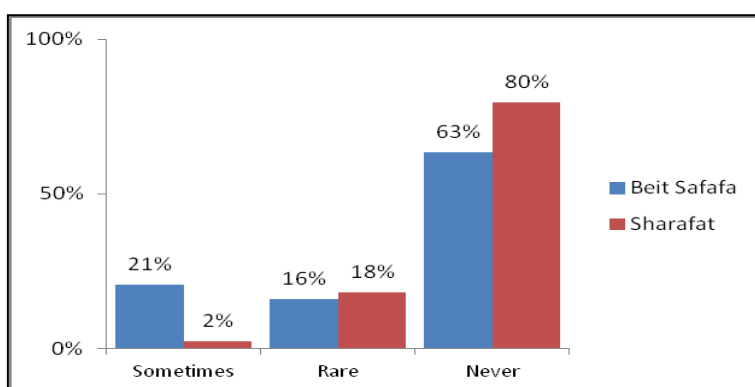


## 4. WASTE WATER

### Wastewater overflowing

*(Q: Do you suffer from overflowing wastewater?)*

The data gathered in this case highlights that the phenomenon of the wastewater overflowing never occurs for most of the respondents in both communities. The most relevant figure is shown for the community of Sharafat for which it reaches 80% of the total respondents. The community of Beit Safafa appears more affected by wastewater overflowing, although rarely or sometimes occurs (37%).



## **Electricity and Telecommunications**

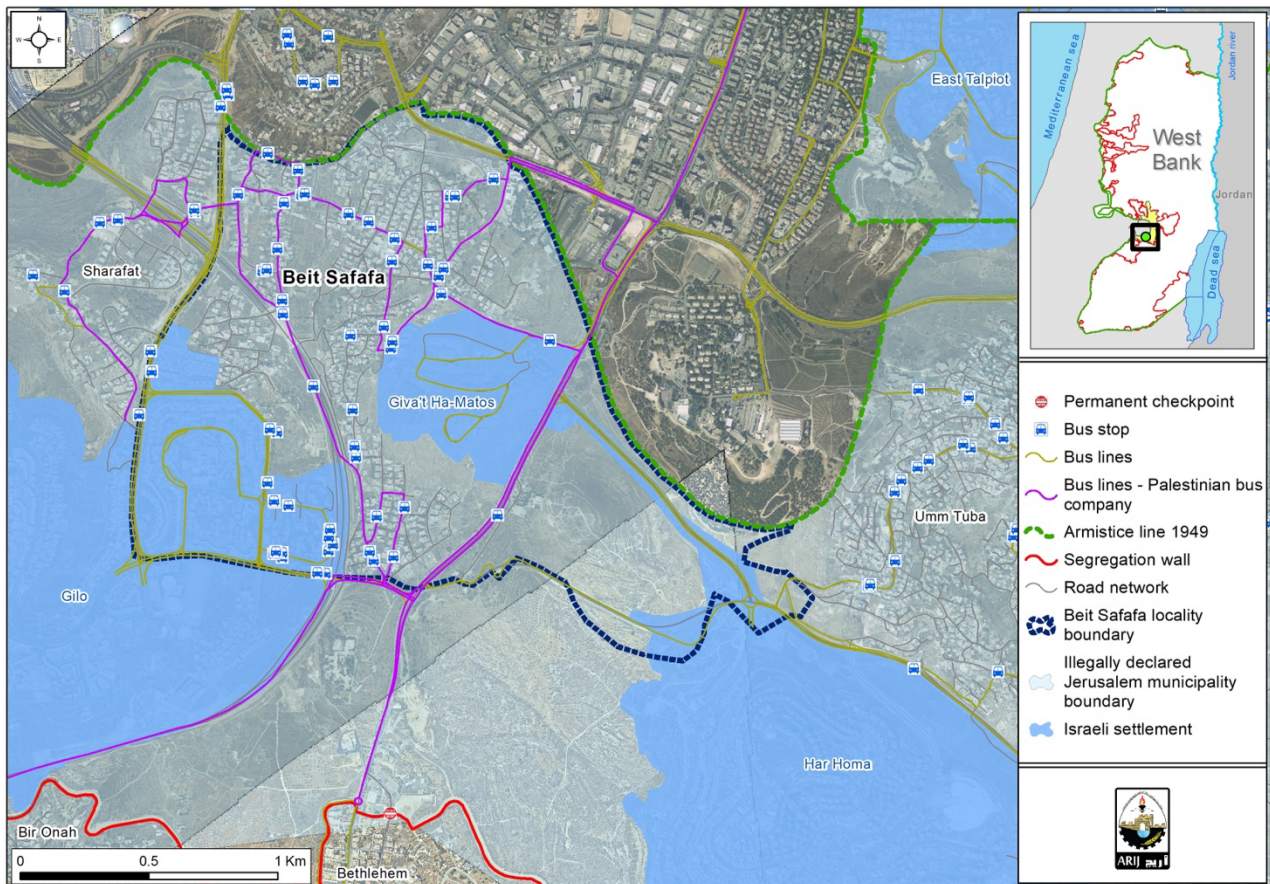
The town of Beit Safafa has a public electricity network since 1967, and the Jerusalem District Electricity Company is considered to be the main source of electricity in the town. The percentage of housing units connected to the electricity network reaches 100%. The community also suffers from the problem of power cuts, especially in the winter season, and weak electricity. The town also has a

telephone network, which operates through an automated switchboard in Jerusalem municipality, and nearly 100% of the housing units are connected to this telephone network.

## Transportation

In the town of Beit Safafa, there are 56 stops designated for public transport, served by the bus transportation company in east Jerusalem, on Beit Safafa - Jerusalem line (ARIJ database, 2019). As for the road network in the town, there are 31.7 km of paved roads. (ARIJ database, 2019).

**Map 9: The road and transportation network in the town of Beit Safafa**



**Source:** Geographical Information Systems Unit - ARIJ, 2020

## Geopolitical Status

The entirety of Beit Safafa town, covering an area of 3,096 dunums is located under the control of Jerusalem Israeli Municipality, which was, illegally and unilaterally, declared and expanded in 1967 after the Israeli Occupation of the West Bank including East Jerusalem, in addition to Gaza Strip and other Arab lands. Jerusalem Governorate was divided into two main regions. J1 area is located inside the borders and under the control of Jerusalem Municipality, and includes many Palestinian communities from the old town and Jerusalem City (Beit Al Maqdis), in addition to Beit Safafa town, which is located in (J1) area from its southern side. The other region is J2, which is located outside the borders and control of Jerusalem Municipality. The eastern and western parts are under



the control of Palestinian Authority's where the central part of the Governorate remains under Israeli Occupation control.

The Israeli Occupation Authorities have also used the segregation plan, which is represented by the construction of the Segregation Wall to redraw the boundaries of Jerusalem Municipality illegally and unilaterally, aiming to create a *de facto* situation in favor of the Jewish presence in the city. The Segregation Wall has separated the whole area of J1 from Jerusalem Governorate, except for Kafr 'Aqab and Shu'fat Camp towns.

According to the Oslo II Interim Agreement signed between the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel on 28<sup>th</sup> September 1995, the West Bank was classified into areas "A," "B" and "C." The town of Beit Safafa was not subjected to this classification, but remained as it was before this agreement, under the control of Jerusalem Israeli Municipality.

### Israeli Occupation Practices in Beit Safafa Town

Beit Safafa town has been subjected to a number of Israeli confiscations for the benefit of the various Israeli targets, represented in; the construction of Israeli settlements on the town territories and its surroundings, the construction of Israeli bypass roads, in addition to the Israeli segregation plan. That which follows is a breakdown of Israeli confiscations in Beit Safafa town territories:

During Israeli Occupation of Palestinian territory, the Israeli government confiscated 988 Dunums in Beit Safafa town (32% of the total town's area) to establish three Israeli settlements; "Gilo" settlement located south of Beit Safafa and separates the town from Bethlehem city, in addition to Abu Ghneim "Har Homa" and "Giv'at Hamatos" settlements located south and south-east of Beit Safafa (Table 4).

**Table 4: Israeli Settlements constructed on Beit Safafa & Sharafat lands**

<b>Settlement Name</b>	<b>Year of construction</b>	<b>Area confiscated from Beit Safafa &amp; Sharafat (dunums)</b>	<b>Population of Settlement (2018)</b>
Gilo	1971	503	30,830
Jabal Abu Ghneim "Har Homa"	1997	152	23,930
Giv'at Hamatos	1991	333	170 (ARIJ)
<b>Total</b>		<b>988</b>	<b>54,930</b>

Source: ARIJ, 2020

Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research - Jerusalem Statistical Yearbook 2020 (Statistics of 2018)

### Israeli bypass Roads on lands of Beit Safafa Town

Along with launching a vigorous settlement program following the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967, the consecutive Israeli governments adopted a separation concept based on the creation of an Israeli controlled road grid system, which will work to facilitate the construction of Israeli settlements and the Israeli settlers movement between occupied territory

settlements and Israel and eventually incorporate the Israeli created and controlled road grid system in the occupied territory with the road grid system in Israel.

The Israelis built these roads under the pretext of 'security needs'; a term that presented the Israeli Army with legitimate excuse to expropriate Palestinian lands; a procedure that proved its efficiency before when the Israeli Army would expropriate Palestinian lands under the 'security needs' pretext to establish an Army base, which later on is turned to Israeli settlers control who would turn it on their part into a civilian inhabitant area.

For Israel, that was the only available option or the only loop to bypass the international law, which considers, expropriating land for any purpose other than military use a 'grave breach'. Israel also argued the military role of the settlements and the bypass roads to its security, which allowed the Army to expropriate private Palestinian lands to build settlements and its roads; Israel also argued that the roads it is building will also benefit the local Palestinian population who would be allowed to travel on these roads. Furthermore, the Israeli built roads on confiscated Palestinian lands contributed immensely to stimulate the habitation of the Israeli settlements, which encouraged the Israeli settlers to take initiative and construct roads on their own, but would later on be endorsed and adopted by the Israeli Army to cast a shadow of legitimacy on these roads. In addition to its role in connecting settlements, the Israeli built roads worked to restrain the development of the Palestinian communities in the West Bank by creating de-facto obstructions to areas designated for development.

#### **Israeli Bypass Road No. 4 (50)**

In this regard, the Israeli occupation Army (IOA) have confiscated more lands from Beit Safafa town to construct the Israeli bypass road number 4 (50) in order to link Israeli settlements in the area with Jerusalem city and Israeli settlements in the southern West Bank and with those inside the 1949 Armistice Line (Green Line). It is worth mentioning that the real threat of bypass roads lies in the buffer zone formed by the IOF along these roads, extending to approximately 75 m on the roads' sides.

In 2013, the Israeli Moriah Jerusalem Development Company along with the Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem and the Israeli Ministry of Transportation commenced the work to extend the Menachem Begin Road (Also known as Road 50) to penetrate deep inside the 1967 borders, on lands of Beit Safafa and Sharafat towns south of Jerusalem city. The Israeli Bypass road No. 50, extends from Golomb<sup>9</sup> Intersection inside the 1948 lands and heads south towards Sport Beitar Agodat, passing by Teddy Stadium<sup>10</sup> and the Railway station in Al Malha town inside the 1948 lands. The road continues to extend southwards to Al Malha Shopping Mall to connect with Road No. 39 (Yetzhaq Modia<sup>11</sup> Road), which is the last connection point inside the 1948 lands. From this point (Road 39), the road extends towards the south, penetrating deep inside the lands of Beit Safafa and Sharafat south of Jerusalem city, inside the 1967 borders, and heads towards the Israeli settlement of Gilo, to finally connect with the Israeli Bypass Road No. 60 which is the main connection point between

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<sup>9</sup> It was named after Eliyahu Golomb, the chief architect of the Haganah, between 1920 and 1948.

<sup>10</sup> Teddy Kolek served as the mayor of Jerusalem from 1965 to 1993

<sup>11</sup> etzhaq Modia was an Israeli politician, who served five terms in the Knesset for Likud.

Israeli settlements in southern Jerusalem (Bethlehem and Hebron Governorates) and those in the north and inside the 1948 lands.

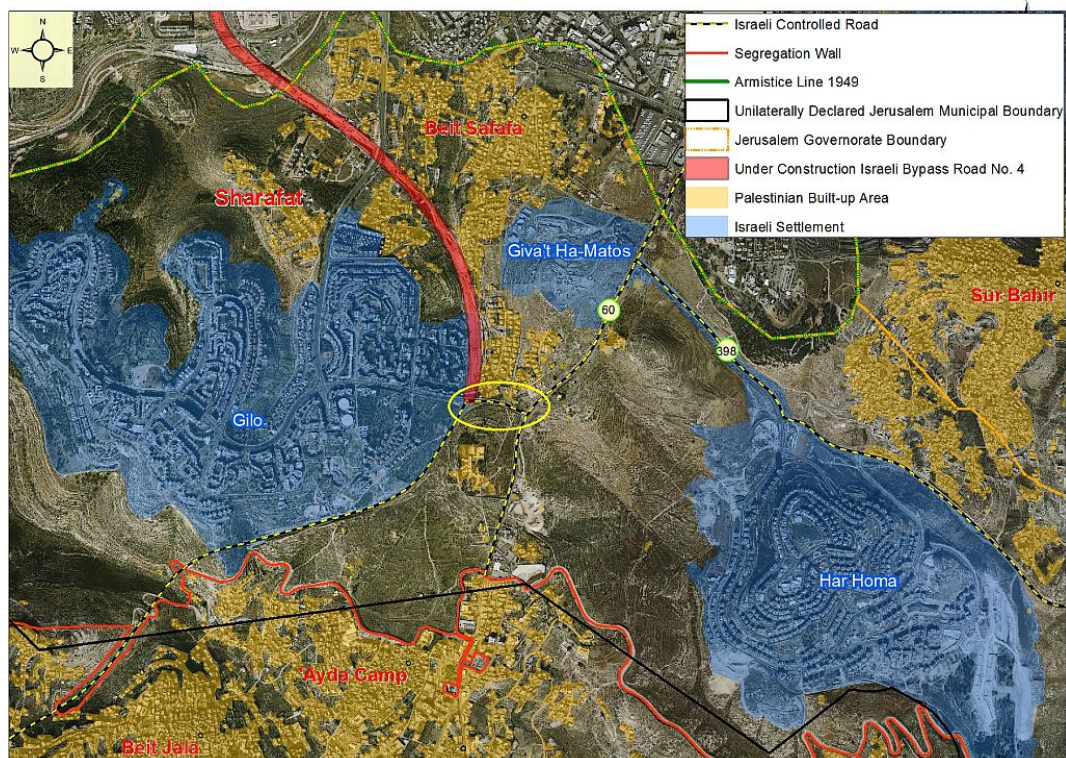
The Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem claimed that the main goal behind constructing the Bypass Road No. 50 is to ease and improve the flow of traffic in the southern outskirts of Jerusalem while the construction of the road was mainly to benefit Israeli settlers living in settlements in southern Jerusalem (mainly Gilo, Giv'at Hamatos and Har Homa) and those of the Gush Etzion settlement Bloc, so that settlers will be able to drive to Jerusalem and to areas inside the 1948 lands without having to stop at any single traffic light.

The construction of the road was implemented on three stages; whereas the overall budget of constructing the road No. 50 is USD 1.1 Billion. The construction of the Israeli bypass Road No. 50 created a bitter and irreversible reality on the Palestinian population of Beit Safafa and Sharafat as the road separated between the town towns which were on a permanent geographical connection over the past years and both depend on each other in all the services.

### **The Rosemary Junction - An Entrance gate to Southern Jerusalem settlement**

In February 2016, the Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem, and in cooperation with the Israeli transportation ministry, commenced the construction of a new bypass road section and a road interchange that will link the Israeli so-called “Begin Road” or the Israeli bypass Road number 4 (50) with the Israeli bypass road No. 60 (the section locally known to the Palestinians as the Historic Bethlehem-Jerusalem road). The road interchange is made via a new tunnel road that goes under the ground, from the southern endpoint of the “Begin road – Bypass Road number 4 (50)” near Gilo Settlement to link with the Israeli bypass Road No 60, the main Jerusalem artery. The road was implemented under plan (TPS 258270) which acted as an entrance gate to southern Jerusalem settlements and was implemented in two levels: **(i)** an underground tunnel road of 70 meters long with two lanes on each side; **(ii)** and an upper road interchange that will serve the traffic on the road leading to Gilo settlement and its surroundings (and vice versa). The road interchange also serves the Jerusalem light rail which is going to pass via this point, on lands of Beit Safafa. The overall cost of the road is NIS 120 million, and was completed in 2018. **See Map 2**

**Map 2: The Rosemary underground tunnel and road interchange**



### **The Jerusalem light rail**

The Israeli settlement project in the occupied West Bank territory is a corner stone in the comprehensive Israeli project; and while it is valid to consider the needs of the people to facilitate accesses for them to major cities and workplaces, it will also be naïve to think that anything happens here is not politically related and to dismiss the concept that whatever Israel plans in relation to the occupied West Bank territory; particularly in occupied East Jerusalem is not related to its plans to graze as much possible land from the West Bank and Jerusalem to ultimately maneuver the peace process to its own course of plan.

To this end, the need for practical, purposeful, serviceable and well-designed public transportation network was more important than ever between Jerusalem as the center core of the settlement project in the West Bank and the major cities where industrial and businesses centers exist. Jerusalem has always been a vortex for the rest of the Israeli settlements in the West Bank and the point where the leave the occupied territory into Israel. More than that the success, in fact the durability of the settlement project in the West Bank became somehow associated with providing a swift and functional transportation system for the settlers between the settlements within Jerusalem and the outskirts of the occupied city to major cities to the settlers' work areas. The whole transportation system is an integrated one that aims to complement settlements, Jerusalem and Israel in the following phased scenario:

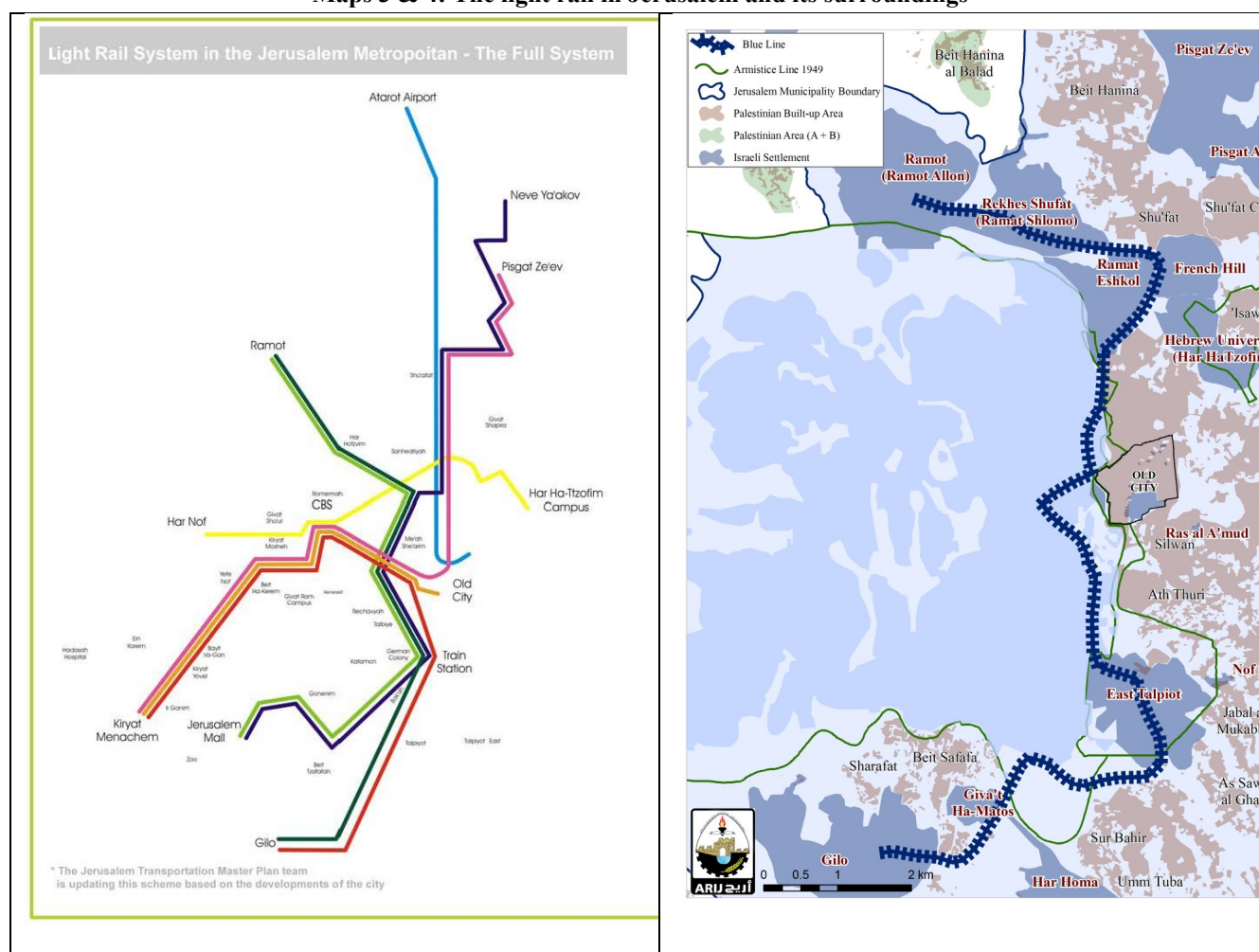
In 1999 the Israeli government approved a project to build a light rail that links settlements in East Jerusalem with each other and with west side of the occupied city. In 2005 the Israeli government



contracted two French companies (Alstom, and Veolia) to implement the project with a budget set at 1.7 billion NIS (515 USD) of which 1.2 billion NIS (364 USD) financed by the Israeli private sector.

The work on the light rail started in April 2006 and according to the plans set, the first phase of the project was set to complete by 2009 across 13.8 km with 23 stops and serving more than 150,000 Israeli settlers in settlements Neveh Yaccov, Pisgat Ze'ev, French Hill, and Ma'alot Dafna. Furthermore, the light rail plan has several other serving tracks to link Ramot settlement located northwest of Jerusalem with West Jerusalem and others linking south Jerusalem settlements such as Gilo settlement through East Talpiot settlement.

**Maps 3 & 4: The light rail in Jerusalem and its surroundings**



## Israeli settlement Plans in Beit Safafa Town:

### 1. “Giv’at Hamatos” Israeli Settlement:

On October 11 2011, the “Israel Land Authority” posted for public review a new plan (No. 14295) for “Giv’at Hamatos” Israeli settlement located on expropriated Palestinian lands from Bethlehem and Jerusalem Governorates. The plan issued by the Israeli Land Authority, under the direct supervision of the Israeli Government, includes the construction of 2,610 housing units on 370



dunums of land, in the area located west of Gilo and south of Beit Safafa town. Israeli authorities claim that the plan will include the construction of many housing units for the benefit of Palestinian residents in Beit Safafa. However, this claim is misleading and the real aspirations of the Israeli Government are to expand the construction of Israeli settlements on occupied territory. When the Israeli occupation authorities started establishing “Har Homa” settlement on Jabal Abu Ghneim area, they claimed that part of the construction will be for Palestinians in the area, but the reality did not reflect this. Instead, authorities established the settlement through confiscating the surrounding lands and building a Separation Wall around the settlement to prevent Palestinians from reaching their confiscated lands. below is break down of the plans awaiting implementation in the area. Table 5

<b>Table 5: List of plans for the expansion of Givat Hamatos settlement on lands of Beit Safafa and the surrounding areas</b>				
<b>No.</b>	<b>TPS No.</b>	<b>Area of plan (dunums)</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Date of receiving plan</b>
<b>1</b>	5834/ א	191	the building of Two Tourist Hotels	May 2002
<b>2</b>	5834/ ב	153	the building of 1214 units	October 2003
<b>3</b>	5834/ ג	412	building of 2355 units	January 2005
<b>4</b>	5834/ ד	416	the building of 647 units	May 2006
<b>Total</b>		1172		4216 Units

**Source: Israeli Ministry of Interior  
Retrieved in September 2020**

Giv’at Hamatos settlement is located in the area that mediates Jabal abu Ghneim “Har Homa” and “Gilo” settlements. It is being planned for this area in order to create a geographical contiguity between the settlements and those in East Jerusalem and “Gush Etzion” bloc in the south. At the same time, this plan will further complete the separation of Bethlehem Governorate from Jerusalem city and will destruct any possibility of creating geographical contiguity among Palestinian communities surrounding the planned location (POICA, 2011).

## **2. Har Homa west settlement plan on lands of Beit Safafa**

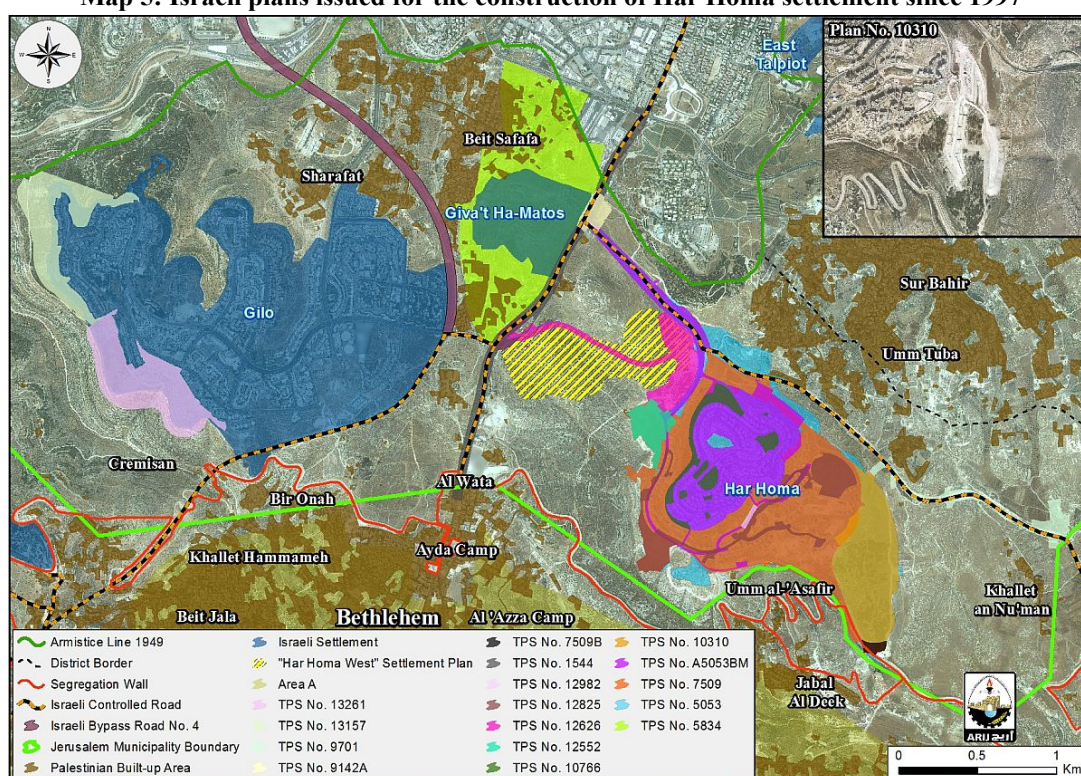
In March 2016, the Jerusalem Municipality website indicated that Israel is planning for a new settlement to the west of Har Homa settlement, identified as “Har Homa West” - **TPS No. 285411**. The new settlement is planned to include 1600 new settlement units over total land area of 445 dunums, to the south of Saint Elias Monastery.

During the past few years, Israel started constructing a new bypass road, which extends from the northwest end of Har Homa settlement towards Bethlehem-Jerusalem Road, to connect with the Tantour Junction. The construction of this new bypass road serves the Israeli plans in the area, which is to establish the aforementioned new settlement. The construction of the road comes as part of TPS number 12626 which states the confiscation of 141.7 dunums of land for the construction of the

aforementioned bypass road. The plan was first deposited on 26 September 2011 and construction work commenced right after it gained the approval of the designated Israeli Authorities.

Note that TPS No. 5053 was the first town planning scheme (TPS) issued for Har Homa settlement on 2 March 1997. The plan included the development of an urban residential with all issues related to it on lands of Beit Sahour, Bethlehem in Bethlehem and Sur Baher, Um Tuba and Beit Safafa in Jerusalem Governorate, on the part located within the illegally and unilaterally declared Jerusalem Municipality boundary of 1967. The plan stated the construction of a new settlement by the name “Har Homa” over 1992.3 dunums of land to encompass up to 6,500 settlement units that time. Several plans were issued afterwards commencing the building in the settlement. Today, the settlement stands on 2316 dunums of land and is home to nearly 24,000 Israeli settlers.

**Map 5: Israeli plans issued for the construction of Har Homa settlement since 1997**



### 3. The Refayem Park on the western edges of Beit Safafa and Sharafat towns

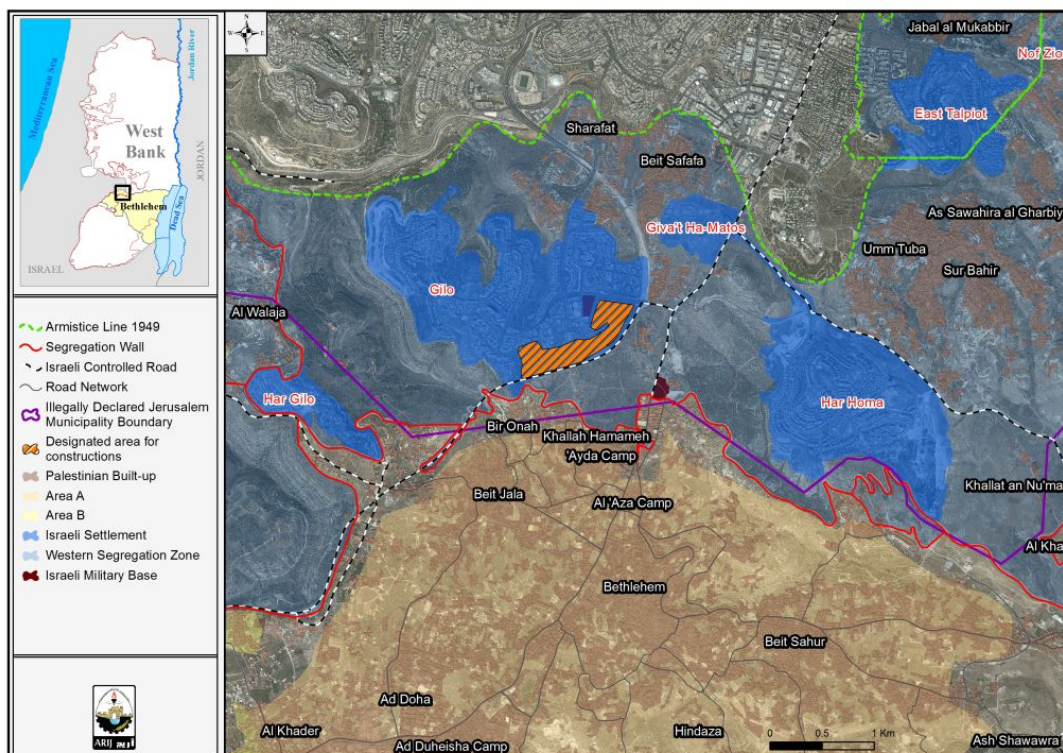
The Refayem Park – Israeli TPS No. 12222: In July 2013, the Israeli District Planning and Building Committee related to the Israeli Ministry of Interior approved the town plan scheme No. 12222 to build “Refayem Metropolitan Park” in the southern parts of the city of Jerusalem – on the western edges of Sharafat and Beit Safaf town . According to the plan that was developed by the Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem and the “Israeli Development Authority”, the Refayem Park will fill in the “public” spaces between the expanding settlements on Jerusalem's southern side, further erasing the Green Line and contributing to the “buffer” between Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Additionally, the plan that, Refayem Valley Park will occupy an area of 5,649 dunums, of which, 1195 dunums beyond the Green Line (Armistice Line of 1949), on lands belonging to Bethlehem Governorate, Beit Jala, Battir, Beit Jala and Al Walajeh.



#### 4. The “Ahuzat Nof Gilo” Settlement Project

On 8 August 2016, the Israeli developer Nehemiah Davidi and architect David Guggenheim advanced a new plan to build a large neighborhood to south-eastern side of Gilo settlement, located between Jerusalem and Bethlehem Governorates. The plan holds number “125195” and states the construction of 3,045 new settlement units, public buildings and commercial facilities, on 271 dunums of land, located southeast of Gilo settlement and along the Israeli Bypass road No. 60.

See Map 6: The “Gate of Bethlehem” Settlement Project



#### The Segregation Wall plan in Beit Safafa Town

The construction of the Israeli Segregation Wall has had a negative impact on Beit Safafa town. According to the last amendment of the plan that was published on the webpage of the so-called “Israeli Defense Ministry” (30<sup>th</sup> April 2007), the Segregation Wall isolates all lands of Beit Safafa from the remaining Palestinian Territory in the West Bank. This is significantly difficult for the people of Bethlehem Governorate, which have historical relations with this town. The isolated lands include the whole Palestinian residential area of the town, agricultural lands, open spaces, Israeli settlements built on the town’s territory and others (Table 6).

**Table 6: Land classification of lands isolated west of the Segregation Wall in Beit Safafa Town - Jerusalem Governorate**

No.	Land classification	Area (dunums)
1	Agricultural Areas	466
2	Forests and Open Spaces	785
3	Artificial Sites (Parks, cemeteries, roads, other constructions)	432
4	Palestinian Built-up Area	425
5	Israeli Settlement	988
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3,096</b>

Source: ARIJ, 2020

### **The Segregation Walls Negative effects on Beit Safafa & Sharafat Town Residents**

Since the outbreak of the Second Intifada in September 2000, the citizens of Beit Safafa south of Jerusalem City have lost their association with Bethlehem city and other Palestinian cities in the West Bank. The city of Jerusalem along with surrounding towns such as Beit Safafa & Sharafat were separated from lands of the West Bank, as the Segregation Wall was constructed to isolate Jerusalemite towns from the Palestinian body. The citizens of Jerusalem who hold the Jerusalemite identity (the Blue Identity) can enter the West Bank areas through the Israeli terminals, which often witness huge congestion, while being subjected to inspection from Israeli soldiers, thus restricting Palestinian's freedom of movement.

On the other hand, Palestinian citizens of the West Bank who hold a Palestinian Identity (Green Identity) are prohibited from entering Jerusalem city and its surrounding towns due to the Segregation Wall. This resultantly isolates them from health, education, social and economic services, such as hospitals, schools and medical centers, in addition to their places of work in Jerusalem. None of those holding the Green ID are able to reach the city except if holding special Israeli permits which are rarely issued to Palestinian citizens. These citizens must also pass through military checkpoints where they are inspected on a daily-basis, causing humiliation and the suffering of Palestinians in terms of movement and the breaking of family and social bonds between West Bank and Jerusalem residents. This distressing scenario occurs for many Palestinian families, especially in the case where one in a couple holds a Palestinian identity (Green) and the other holds the Jerusalemite identity (Blue). Moreover, the Segregation Wall has prevented Palestinians from reaching places of worship in the Holy City and has also deprived them from practicing their religious rituals in Jerusalem.

The Segregation Wall plan, which was published, on the webpage of the so-called "Israeli Defense Ministry" in 2007 showed that lands of Beit Safafa town are isolated from neighboring Palestinian towns and villages since the Segregation Wall along with the Israeli settlements' belt around Jerusalem City, isolated East Jerusalem area from the rest of West Bank. The existing Segregation Wall is located south of the town and is currently isolating the town inside Jerusalem city boundaries, which became off access to Palestinians living in the West Bank territory.



Parallel to the establishment of the Segregation Wall, Israeli Occupation Authorities constructed a settlement belt around Jerusalem city, which aims at founding an isolation area in addition to preventing of Palestinian urban expansion in the towns of Jerusalem. Israeli Occupation Authorities constructed these settlements close to the urbanized areas in Jerusalemite towns, which have led to the increase of total area confiscated in these towns, and have minimized the area available for future Palestinian urban expansion. This move will create a new reality on town residents that will be difficult to reverse.

Israeli policies and plans particularly in Jerusalem, and the remaining Palestinian Territory, have led to the creation of high population densities as a result of the lack of lands needed for urban expansion, thus forcing people to adopt internal and vertical expansion. This has caused Jerusalem and its surrounding towns to have one of the highest considered population densities in the world. The population density in Palestinian neighborhoods in East Jerusalem is approximately 13,500 person/ km<sup>2</sup> compared to 9,000 person/ km<sup>2</sup> in the settlements of Eastern Jerusalem and 8,300 person/ km<sup>2</sup> in Western Jerusalem.

### **The Dilemma of Lands and Building's Licenses in Beit Safafa & Sharafat Town**

The problems of lands and building's license are considered one of the most difficult problems in Beit Safafa town and in the other Jerusalemite towns in East Jerusalem. The reason for this is two-fold; the high prices of lands and the very high cost of licenses for construction Beit Safafa town. According to citizens of Beit Safafa, land price (one dunum) in the town ranges between JOD 150 and 250 thousand, (equivalent to 750,000 Israeli shekels), in order for a Palestinian to own a piece of land in this town, especially within the area of the Municipality of Jerusalem; This applies to all Jerusalem towns and even doubles in price in other places near the city of Jerusalem and the surrounding neighborhoods.

The Israeli Occupation Authorities have used the money as an effective tool to buy Palestinian lands in Jerusalem in an attempt to Judaize the area and settle Jewish settlers instead. Individual Jews or Jewish organization offer Palestinians open cheques (price of land or property to be set by the property owner himself (the Palestinian) (Leninology, 2009). For anyone in Jerusalem who has a land and wants to build a house, has to take the authorization and permission of the Municipality of Jerusalem which puts obstacles in the way of Palestinian Jerusalemites who want to get a license for the building in an attempt to expel Palestinians out of Jerusalem city and change the demographic balance for the benefit of the Jews, thus making Palestinians in Jerusalem a minority. One of the main obstacles that comes in the way of obtaining a building license is that one has to prove the ownership of the land. The Israeli Occupation Authorities require that Palestinians seeking to build a house/structure must prove their ownership of the land, which is considered a political problem related to the occupation since 1967.

According to a report prepared by Bimkom Organization (Planners for Planning Rights), approximately 50% of the East Jerusalem lands are unregistered in the archive of ownership such as the town of Kafr 'Aqab and the area extending from Al 'Isawiya town in the north to Sur Bahir in the

south. Additionally, 25% of the lands in East Jerusalem are in the process of survey and registration (such as Beit Hanina and Shu'fat towns); and only 25% of the lands in East Jerusalem are officially registered and include parts of Al Bireh, Qalandiya, Beit Hanina, Hizma and 'Anata, Ash Sheikh Jarrah and Beit Safafa (Bimkom, 2004).

According to the testimonies of Palestinians in the town of Beit Safafa and Sharafat town, any Palestinian applying to the Israeli Authorities to get a building license, the licensing procedure is lengthy (sometimes lasting years) and carries a very high cost depending on the land area and type of building, and ranges between NIS 250,000-500,000. Moreover, due to the high cost imposed on Palestinians acquiring building permits and the Israeli lengthy licensing procedures, Palestinians tend to build without waiting for the Israeli Authorities license approval, to meet their housing needs. Because of the political problem of land registration and ownership, the unreasonable prices of licenses, in addition to the lengthy time it takes to secure licenses many citizens because of humanitarian needs and the natural family growth resort to building without licenses. In this case, the Israeli occupation Authorities usually demolish the property and force the Palestinian owner to pay for his own demolition and submit for a new building application with new fees and time procedure. On top of this, the majority of Palestinian people in Jerusalem are living in difficult conditions because of high poverty rates, which is a consequence of the Israeli Occupation closures, which restrict the movement of the Palestinians, thus preventing them from reaching their work places. These Israeli restrictions and harassments against the Palestinians in east Jerusalem, along with the housing problems, lack of lands for building and increase of unemployment rate, force many Jerusalemites to migrate outside the borders of the Municipality towards the West Bank or even travel abroad to find better living standards.

According to the 'Civic Coalition for Defending Palestinian Rights' in Jerusalem, (CCDPRJ, 2009), the Israeli Authorities adopted many policies that aim at enacting pressure on Jerusalemites; for example, in the case of the demographic status and urban growth in Jerusalem, the area that is allocated for the development of Palestinian neighborhoods in East Jerusalem and lies under the jurisdiction of the Jerusalem Municipality is estimated at approximately 9,200 dunums, which represents only 13% of the total area of east Jerusalem; whereas the remaining area (of East Jerusalem and under the jurisdiction of the Jerusalem Municipality) is classified as Israeli settlements, green areas -which are off use to the Palestinian urban growth-, public buildings, roads and others.

Furthermore, the Israeli Authorities often don't prepare the needed Master Plans for the Palestinian neighborhoods in East Jerusalem which are necessary for the urban planning process, and in case of preparing such plans for Palestinian neighborhoods, the Israeli Authorities usually put restrictions and give limited of areas for Palestinian urban expansion, below the needed areas for natural urban growth which varies between 25%-75%. If one compares these percentages with the percentage of lands used for Israeli settlements, it is found that urban growth varies between 75%-120%. In Beit Safafa for example, Israeli Authorities determined the urban growth percentage to be 50%, whereas for the neighboring settlement of "Gilo" which was illegally constructed on Beit Safafa land, this percentage was set at 75% (CCJ, 2009) .



It is further noted that Jerusalem Municipality has classified some areas within its boundaries, including areas from Beit Safafa, as “Green Areas”, which the Occupation Authorities have used as a way of controlling and confiscating more lands in Jerusalem. Moreover, the Occupation Authorities have demolished houses in Jerusalem under the claims that these houses were built on “Green Areas”, as seen in the ethnic cleansing process in “Al Bustan Neighborhood,” Silwan, which is very close to Al Aqsa Mosque’s southern side. The process of land confiscations in Al Bustan came after the Municipality announced on 20 February 2009, a plan to relocate more than 1,500 Palestinian citizens living in the 88 houses of Al Bustan neighborhood in Silwan town to alternative locations. Here they are planning to demolish all 88 houses to establish what they called “King David Garden” as part of the “Biblical Gardens” around the Holy City. Furthermore, the Israeli Authorities under the name of “Green Areas” have built many settlements in Jerusalem such as Rekhes Shu’fat (Ramat Shlomo), and Jabal abu Ghneim (Har Homa settlement) which were built on areas that were classified as “Green Areas”. One should note here that there are some areas within Beit Safafa classified as “Green Areas,” which will remain for use in future plans of the Israeli Authorities in Jerusalem.

The right of adequate housing is laid out in international treaties and international humanitarian law, which has called for respect of human dignity through everyone’s right to adequate housing. However, Israel through –its aggression against Palestinian housing rights, as demonstrated above considers itself to be above international laws and treaties.

### **A Dangerous Escalation in Jerusalem Housing Demolitions.**

During the past years, Israeli occupation Authorities have escalated their attacks against houses of Palestinians living in Jerusalem by targeting them through housing and other building demolitions under the pretext of “unlicensed construction”. According to ARIJ violations database, more than 1,900 Palestinian homes were demolished in occupied east Jerusalem since 1993, in addition to thousands of other constructions (ARIJ, 2020). Thousands of homes and other structures are also threatened by demolition under the pretext of “unlicensed construction”, despite the fact that residents fulfill the needed procedures for the license. The Municipality of Jerusalem however typically procrastinates in granting the license and finally they refuse the request under non-justified pretexts.

### **The Municipal Tax (Arnona) negatively affects the living status and economic situation of Palestinians in Jerusalem**

The Municipal tax which named in Hebrew as “Arnona” is imposed by the Jerusalem Municipality on the holders of buildings and lands in Jerusalem. This tax is considered one of the greatest that burdens Palestinian residents of the city, including the residents of Beit Safafa town. The Israeli Authorities use this tax as an instrument to put pressure on Palestinians to force them to leave the city.

The “Arnona” tax, which is imposed on Jerusalemites by the Municipality, is calculated based on criteria that take in consideration the classification of area and land-use classification of the master plan (residential areas, commercial, industrial, agricultural, public buildings, parking... etc). They

also consider the zone type, the type of use and the area of building or land (Jerusalem Municipality,). Regarding the residential areas for instance, they classify them into four categories (A, B, C and D)<sup>12</sup>, and based on this zoning, along with the area of building, they determine and calculate the amount of tax that must be paid for the municipality. For example, the tax tariff in the residential areas varies in the four zones between 40-113 NIS/m<sup>2</sup> which is equivalent to approximately 12-34 US\$/m<sup>2</sup>, meaning that a small house with an area of 120 m<sup>2</sup> will cost its owner around 12,000 NIS yearly for the “Arnona.” At the time of writing this was equivalent to approximately 3,400 US\$.

In terms of economic impact, the segregation plan, which has focused on the isolation of Jerusalem city from the Palestinian Territory, had a huge negative impact on the economic situation of the Palestinians living in Jerusalem in general and on the commercial sector particularly, which has suffered from global recession. Much of the trade in Jerusalem is largely dependent on the Palestinian visitors of the Holy City from the West Bank, Gaza Strip and the Palestinians from the occupied land in 1948, but Israeli closure of the city has negatively affected the economic situation of the city and its residents. Despite these difficult situations, the Occupation Authorities impose taxes without taking into consideration the situation of the Jerusalemites, who represent the poorer class in the Holy City. Moreover, the Municipality by the beginning of last year (2020) decided to increase the “Arnona” by approximately 3%, which increases the burden on the Palestinians of Jerusalem.

It is further noted that, Palestinians are forced to pay these taxes in order to preserve their presence in the city without receiving a decent level of Municipal services. The planning process in the Municipality of Jerusalem focuses on the political-demographic dimension that aims to Judaize the city more than planning for the purposes of prosperity and well-being of its citizens. Furthermore, the Palestinian neighborhoods and communities in Jerusalem are deliberately neglected in different services provision. For instance, the Municipality rarely makes the needed maintenance for the infrastructure of the Arab neighborhoods, including; roads, water and wastewater networks, solid wastes and others. The most obvious problem that the people of Jerusalem suffer is the lack of cleaning service and the accumulation of solid wastes despite their commitment in paying the taxes for the Municipality. This can be easily understood if we compare the situation of the Palestinians in Jerusalem with the situation of the illegal settlers living in the occupied city who get all the facilities and services in order to stay in the Holy City.

### **Israeli Terminal (Gilo 300) near Beit Safafa and Sharafat separates the town from Bethlehem City**

On 15 November 2005, Israeli occupation Authorities inaugurated Gilo 300 terminal/crossing (Rachel’s Terminal) on the southern entrance of Jerusalem city near Beit Safafa, replacing the old Israeli checkpoint which was erected following eruption of the second intifada in September 2000 between Bethlehem and Jerusalem to restrict Palestinians entry to the Jerusalem and Israel. This

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<sup>12</sup> Tariffs for Residential Assets

<https://www.jerusalem.muni.il/en/residents/arnona/arnonarates/>



terminal/crossing was established on the path of segregation wall that separates Jerusalem from Bethlehem, which contributes to the Israeli isolation plan in the area.

Palestinians in Beit Safafa, who have been isolated by the effect of the wall and the terminal, have historical social relations and economic interests with Bethlehem city; however, after the segregation plan took place in the area, the interaction between this town and the city of Bethlehem became difficult, especially for citizens living in the West Bank side of the barrier and holding the Palestinian identity (Green Identity Card) who cannot reach the isolated areas inside Jerusalem.

This checkpoint allows crossing to Jerusalem for Palestinians holding special permits issued by the Israeli Civil Administration, in addition to touristic, religious and diplomatic delegations. All persons crossing through this terminal are subjected to security and personal inspection by Israeli soldiers who are permanently present on the checkpoint.

## Town Development Priorities and Needs

Beit Safafa suffers from a significant shortage of infrastructure and services. Table 7 shows the development priorities and needs in the town according to the Development Committee's feedback

**Table 7: Development priorities and needs in Beit Safafa**

No.	Sector	Strongly Needed	Needed	Not a Priority	Notes
<b>Infrastructural Needs</b>					
1	Opening and Pavement of Roads				
2	Rehabilitation of Old Water Networks				
3	Extending the Water Network to Cover New Built up Areas				
4	Construction of New Water Networks				
5	Rehabilitation/ Construction of New Wells or Springs				
6	Construction of Water Reservoirs				
7	Construction of a Sewage Disposal Network				
8	Construction of a New Electricity Network				
9	Providing Containers for Solid Waste Collection				
10	Providing Vehicles for Collecting Solid Waste				
11	Providing a Sanitary Landfill				
<b>Health Needs</b>					
1	Building of New Clinics or Health Care Centres				
2	Rehabilitation of Old Clinics or Health Care Centres				
3	Purchasing of Medical Equipment and Tools				
<b>Educational Needs</b>					
1	Building of New Schools				
2	Rehabilitation of Old Schools				
3	Purchasing of New Equipment for Schools		1		
<b>Agriculture Needs</b>					
1	Rehabilitation of Agricultural Lands				
2	Building Rainwater Harvesting Cisterns				
3	Construction of Barracks for Livestock				
4	Veterinary Services				
5	Seeds and Hay for Animals				
6	Construction of New Greenhouses		1		
7	Rehabilitation of Greenhouses				
8	Field Crops Seeds				
9	Plants and Agricultural Supplies				



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