

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba Town Profile



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Background

This report is part of a series of booklets, which contain compiled information about each city, village, and town in the Jerusalem Governorate. These booklets came as a result of a comprehensive study of all villages in Jerusalem Governorate, which aims at depicting the overall living conditions in the governorate and presenting developmental plans to assist in developing the livelihood of the population in the area. It was accomplished through the "Village Profiles and Needs Assessment;" the project funded by the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID).

The "Village Profiles and Needs Assessment" was designed to study, investigate, analyze and document the socio-economic conditions and the needed programs and activities to mitigate the impact of the current unsecure political, economic and social conditions in the Jerusalem Governorate.

The project's objectives are to survey, analyze, and document the available natural, human, socioeconomic and environmental resources, and the existing limitations and needs assessment for the development of the rural and marginalized areas in the Jerusalem Governorate. In addition, the project aims at preparing strategic developmental programs and activities to mitigate the impact of the current political, social, and economic instability with the focus on the agricultural sector.

All village profiles in Arabic and English are available online at <http://vprofile.arij.org>.

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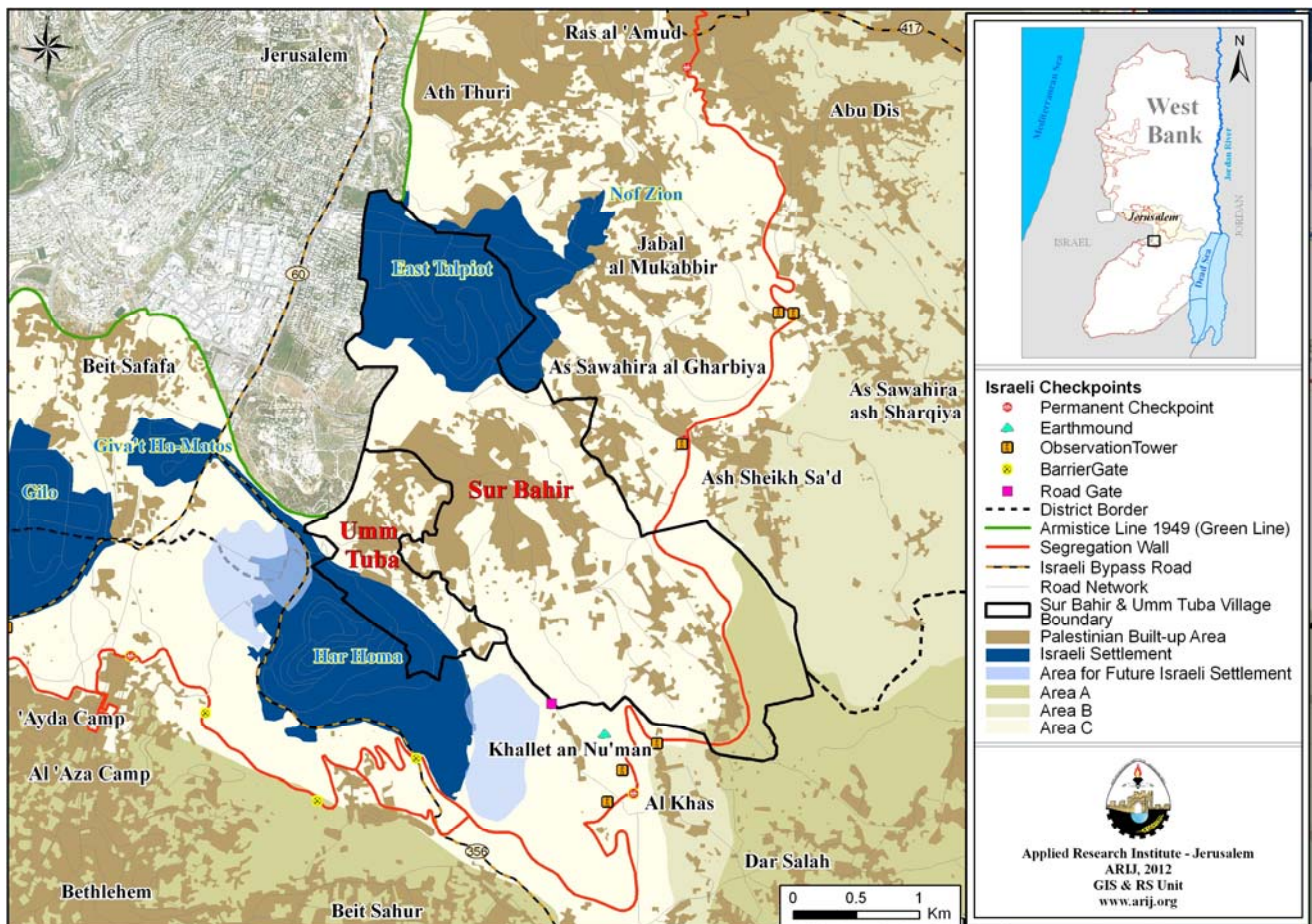
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Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba Town Profile

Location and Physical Characteristics

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba is a Palestinian town in Jerusalem Governorate located, (horizontally) 4.62km from Sur Bahir and 5.3km from Umm Tuba, south of Jerusalem City. It is bordered by As Sawahira al Gharbiya and Ash Sheikh Sa'd to the east, Ath Thuri territories and Jabal al Mukabbir to the north, Western Jerusalem and Beit Safafa to the west, and the territories of Al Khas, An Nu'man and Beit Sahour (in Bethlehem Governorate) to the south (ARIJ-GIS Unit, 2012) (See map 1).

Map 1: Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba location and borders



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2012

Sur Bahir is located at an altitude of 742m above sea level with a mean annual rainfall of 407.7mm. The average annual temperature is 17 °C and the average annual humidity is approximately 60% (ARIJ-GIS Unit, 2012).

Umm Tuba is located at an altitude of 707m above sea level with a mean annual rainfall of 431.8mm. The average annual temperature is 17 °C and the average annual humidity is approximately 60% (ARIJ-GIS Unit, 2012).

All services are provided by the Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

History

An ancient story claims that Omar Ben al Khattab held a secret meeting in the area with his army leaders before he entered Jerusalem, and the town was therefore originally named 'As Sir al Bahir' ('the impressive secret'), which later became Sur Bahir (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

The town was established over 1000 years ago, and its original residents were from the Arabian Peninsula and Yemen (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Religious and Archaeological Sites

There are 3 mosques in the town, Al Muhajireen, Al Murabiteen and Al 'Omari Mosques. There are no sites of archaeological interest in the town (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Population

Unfortunately, no census has been conducted by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) to ascertain population numbers and housing statistics in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba town. However, the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics indicates that the population of Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba was approximately 15,325 in 2010 (The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 2010).

700 dunums of land have been confiscated from the town for the construction of the Segregation Wall. 90% of Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba town's population holds Jerusalem identity papers, and 10% carry Israeli passports (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Families

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba residents are from several families, mainly the Dabesh, Duwayyat, Nimer, 'Elayyan, 'Omeira, Hamadah, Abu Kafer, Bkeirat, Jboor, Abu Jamed, Jad Allah and Al 'Atrash families (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Education

There are 7 schools in the town: 6 governmental schools run by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE), and one school run by UNRWA, but there are no local kindergartens run by the Ministry of Education (Directorate of Education in Jerusalem, 2011). There are 4 schools in the town run by Jerusalem Municipality (see Table 1). The illiteracy rate amongst the Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba population in 2012 is approximately 18% (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Table 1: Schools in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba by name, stage, sex and supervising authority

School Name	Supervising Authority	Sex
Banat Omar ben Abd al Aziz School	Government	Mixed
Ali ben Abi Taleb Boys School	Government	Male
Abu Bakr as Siddiq Girls School	Government	Female
Othman ben 'Affan Girls School	Government	Female
Omar ben al Khattab Boys School	Government	Male
Umm Tuba Boys High School	Government	Male
Sur Bahir Girls Elementary School	UNRWA	Female
Umm Tuba Co-educated Preparatory School	Jerusalem Municipality	Mixed
Sur Bahir Girls Preparatory School	Jerusalem Municipality	Female
Sur Bahir Boys Primary School	Jerusalem Municipality	Male
Sur Bahir Girls High School	Jerusalem Municipality	Female

Source: Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012 & Directorate of Education – Jerusalem, 2011

In the town there are 5,163 students and 184 classes (Directorate of Education in Jerusalem, 2011). The average number of students per class is approximately 28 (Directorate of Education in Jerusalem, 2011).

Due to the lack of some levels of education in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba, students attend schools in neighboring villages, including Ar Rashidiya Boys School in Eastern Jerusalem (Bab as Sahira neighborhood), the Orphans Islamic Boys High School in the old city, Al Fatat al Laji'a Girls High School in Eastern Jerusalem (Bab as Sahira neighborhood), and Al Ma'muniya Girls School in Eastern Jerusalem (Wad al Jozz neighborhood). Each of these schools is 4-6km from the town. To complete their vocational and technical studies, some students go to Sakhneen 'Atarot School or the Lutheran School in Beit Hanina (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

The educational sector in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba town faces some obstacles, primarily (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012):

1. The lack of means of transportation.
2. The distortion of curriculums by the Israeli government.
3. The weak educational level of students.

Health Status

There are some health centers available in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba town. There are 5 health centers run by Israeli insurance companies (such as Maccabi, Clalit and Meuhedet). These include general physicians and specialized physicians in most fields, a motherhood and childcare center, a medical laboratory, a radiology center and a physiotherapy center. There are 5 private dental clinics in the town, 2 plastic surgery centers and 3 pharmacies. In the absence of required health services or in emergencies, residents of Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba go to hospitals in east and west Jerusalem, including Hadasa (Al 'Isawiya and 'Ein Karem), Al Muttala', Ad Dajani, the Red Crescent, Al Maqasid and Al Faransawi hospitals. These hospitals are between 8 and 22 km from the town (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

The health sector in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba town faces some obstacles, primarily (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012):

1. The lack of an ambulance.
2. The lack of a nearby hospital.
3. The existence of flying/ partial checkpoints.

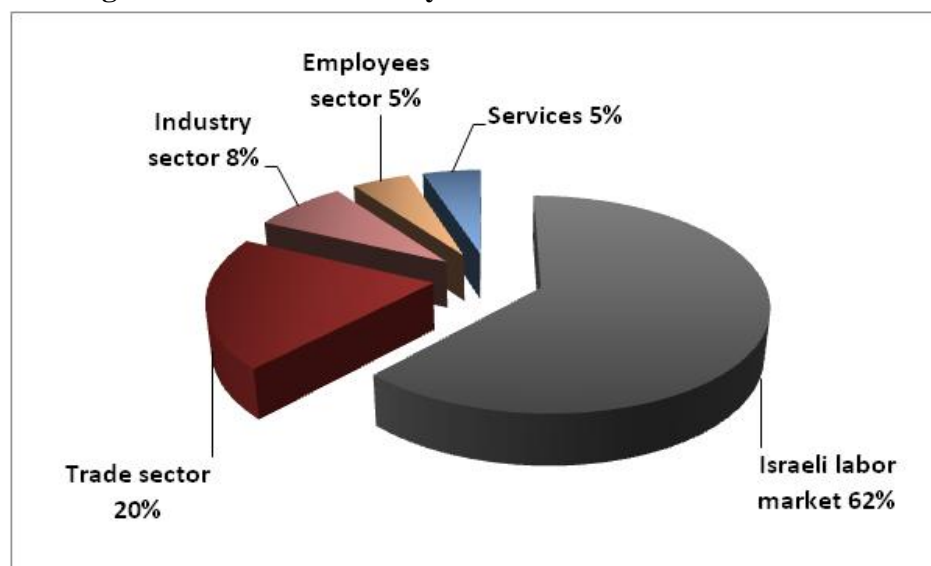
Economic Activities

The economy in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba is dependent on several economic sectors, mainly the Israeli labor market, which absorbs 62% of the workforce (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012) (See Figure 1).

A field survey conducted by ARIJ in 2012 showed that the distribution of labor by economic activity in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba is as follows:

- Israeli labor market (62%)
- Trade sector (20%)
- Industry (8%)
- Government or private employees sector (5%)
- Services sector (5%)

In terms of commercial and industrial productions in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba town, there are 50 grocery stores, 7 bakeries, 3 butcheries, 15 vegetable and fruit stores, 10 different service stores and 21 different professional workshops (blacksmith, carpentry, etc.), in addition to an olive-oil press (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Figure 1: Economic activity in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba town

Source: Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012

The unemployment rate in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba has reached (in 2012) around 25%, and it was found that the social groups most affected in the town as a result of Israeli restrictions and procedures are (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012):

1. Workers in the agriculture sector.
2. Workers in industry.
3. Workers in the trade sector.
4. Workers in the services sector.
5. Workers in the tourism sector.

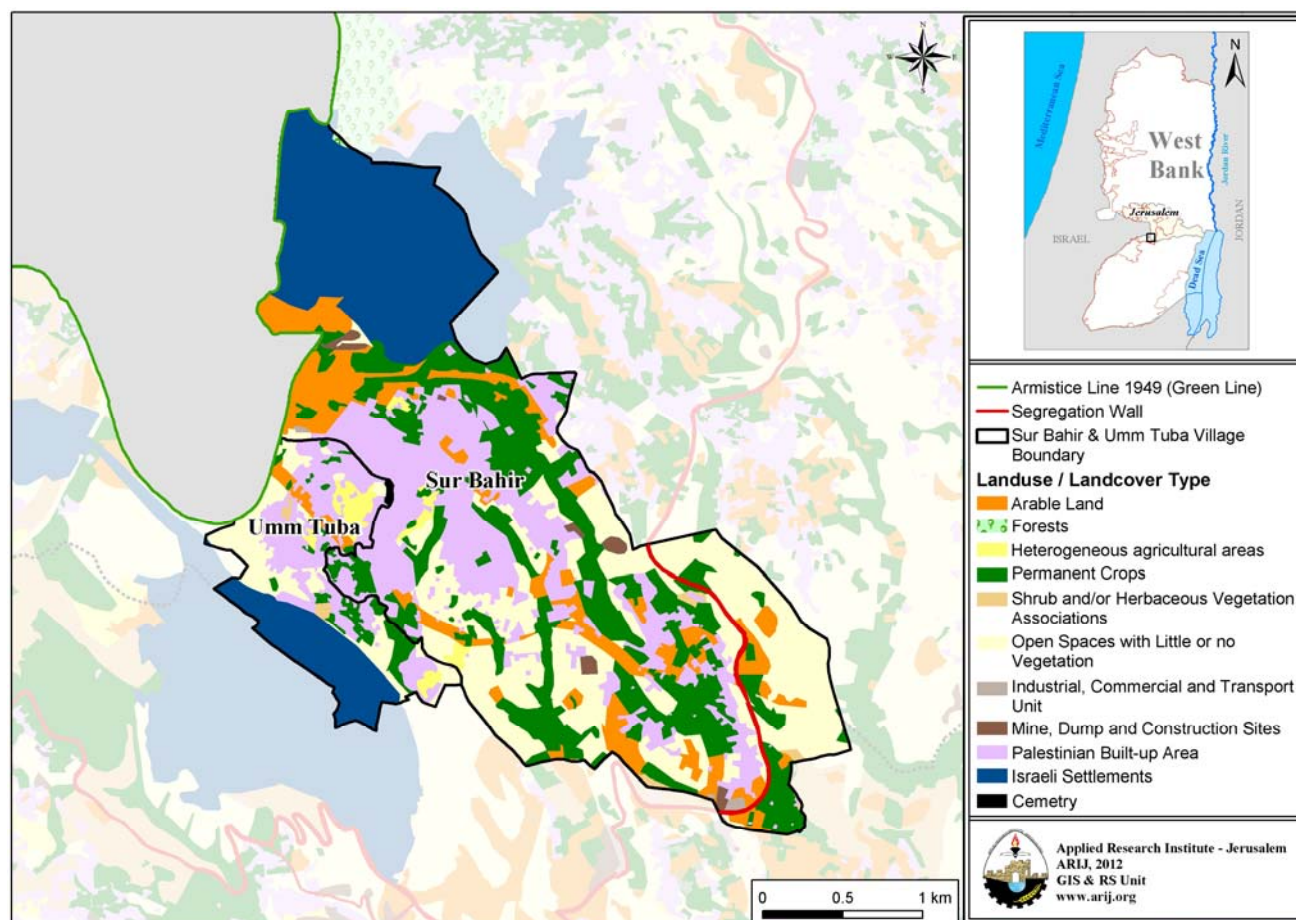
Agricultural Sector

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba has a total area of around 8,245 dunums of which 2,652 are considered 'arable' land and 1,853 dunums are registered as 'residential' (See Table 2 and Map 2).

Table 2: Land use and land cover in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba town in 2010 (area in dunum)

Total Area	Built up Area	Agricultural area (2,652)				Inland water	Forests	Open Spaces	Area of Industrial, Commercial & Transport Unit	Area of Settlements, Military Bases & Wall Zone
		Permanent Crops	Green-houses	Range-lands	Arable lands					
8,245	1,853	1,763	0	41	848	0	5	1,902	74	1,758

Source: ARIJ – GIS Unit, 2012.

Map 2: Land use/land cover in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba town

Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2012.

Table 3 shows the different types of fruit trees planted in the area. The town is known for the cultivation of olives; there are 121 dunums of land cultivated with olive trees in the town.

Table 3: Total area of fruit and olive trees in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba Town (dunum)

Fruit trees	Rainfed (dunum)	Irrigated (dunum)
Olives	121	0
Citrus	0	0
Stone-fruits	151	0
Pome fruits	45	0
Nuts	7	0
Other fruits	5	0
Total Area	329	0

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture - Jerusalem, 2010

The difference between the two sets of results obtained from the Ministry of Agriculture and by ARIJ's GIS Unit in sizes of agricultural areas is explained by the fact that the Ministry of Agriculture and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2010) conducted a survey which used a definition of

agricultural areas based on land ownership. Therefore, the areas included in the survey were those of actual holdings of agricultural areas instead of seasonal ones. The survey did not consider fragmented and small seasonal cultivated areas in residential and agricultural areas. ARIJ's survey, however, indicated the existence of a high proportion of small and fragmented holdings (home gardens) throughout the occupied Palestinian territories, thus accounting for the larger area of agricultural holdings calculated by ARIJ.

ARIJ's field survey also shows that 15% of the residents in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba rear and keep domestic animals, such as sheep, goats, and bees (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012) (See Table 4).

Table 4: Livestock in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba Town

Cows*	Sheep	Goats	Camels	Horses	Donkeys	Mules	Broilers	Layers	Bee Hives
0	300	300	0	0	0	0	0	0	35

*Including cows, bull calves, heifer calves and bulls

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture - Jerusalem, 2010

There are no agricultural roads in the town (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012). The agricultural sector is one of the sectors most affected by the Israeli occupation, as all agricultural lands have been confiscated; currently there is a very small commercial growing sector. Israeli occupation forces immediately demolish any barracks constructed in the area. It is worth mentioning that Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba were previously amongst the most productive wheat and barley growing areas, but the occupation practices have led to the almost complete decay of this sector (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Institutions and Services

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba town has very few governmental institutions. There is a post office and a few local institutions and associations that provide services to various sectors of society. These include (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012):

- **Sur Bahir Youth Club:** A sports center founded through support and contributions from town residents. The club provides cultural, sports, and artistic activities.
- **The Islamic Club:** A sports center founded through support and contributions from town residents. The club provides cultural, sports, and artistic activities.
- **Endowments Zakat Fund Committee:** It provides religious services and consultancies and cultural services.

Infrastructure and Natural Resources

Electricity and Telecommunication Services

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba has been connected to a public electricity network since 1950. It is served by Jerusalem Electricity Company, which is the main source of electricity in the town. Approximately 100% of the housing units in the town are connected to this network (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba is connected to a telecommunication network through Jerusalem Municipality and approximately 90% of the housing units within the town boundaries are connected to phone lines (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Transportation Services

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba has 35 public buses (Al Muwahhad Company), which are the main means of transportation in the town (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012)

Water Resources

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba is provided with water by Jihon (an Israeli company) through the public water network established in 1972, and approximately 100% of the housing units are connected to this network (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Sanitation

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba has a public sewerage network; about 50% of the town's housing units use the sewage network as a major means for wastewater disposal, while the rest (50%) use cesspits and endocrines (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Solid Waste Management

Jerusalem Municipality is the official body responsible for managing the collection and disposal of solid waste generated by citizens and establishments in the town. No specific fees are charged to the population served by domestic solid waste collection and transportation services; citizens pay the Arnona taxes to Jerusalem Municipality which range between 3,000 and 10,000 NIS/ year depending on household size. This tax covers all services provided by Jerusalem Municipality to the town residents, including solid waste services (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Most of the population in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba benefits from the solid waste services, whereby waste is collected from households, institutions, shops, and public squares in plastic bags and then transferred to containers distributed throughout the town. Jerusalem Municipality collects the solid waste and then

transports it using a waste vehicle to El 'Eizariya dumping site, where it is usually buried and sometimes burnt (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

The daily per capita rate of solid waste production in J Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba is 1.05kg. Therefore, the estimated amount of solid waste produced per day from Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba residents is nearly 16 tons, or 5,873 tons per year (ARIJ-WERU, 2012).

The town residents suffer from the poor collection and disposal services of solid waste; typically, waste accumulates in the streets for several days before it is collected (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Development Plans and Projects

Implemented Projects

Wadi Hilweh Information Center has implemented several development projects in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba during the past five years (See Table 5).

Table 5: Implemented development projects in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba during the last five years

Name of the Project	Type	Year	Donor
Establishing Ibn Rasheed Elementary School	Educational	2008	Jerusalem Municipality
Establishing two schools in Umm Layasoon area	Educational	2008	Jerusalem Municipality
Establishing Sur Bahir soccer field	Public Services	2010	NGOs inside the Green Line

Source: Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012

Proposed Projects

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba Development Committee, in cooperation with the civil society organizations in the town and the town residents, hopes to implement several projects in the coming years. The project ideas were developed during the PRA workshop conducted by ARIJ staff in the town. The projects are as follows, in order of priority from the perspectives of the participants in the workshop:

1. Rehabilitating Umm Tuba spring.
2. Rehabilitating five Roman cisterns.
3. Establishing two kindergartens.
4. Constructing a school.

Town Development Priorities and Needs

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba suffers from a significant shortage of infrastructure and services. Table 6 shows the development priorities and needs in the town according to the Development Committee's feedback (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Table 6: Development priorities and needs in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba

No.	Sector	Strongly Needed	Needed	Not a Priority	Notes
Infrastructural Needs					
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	*			rehabilitating Umm Tuba spring
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			*	
Health Needs					
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			*	
Educational Needs					
1	Building of New Schools		*		constructing a school
2	Rehabilitation of Old Schools		*		rehabilitating a school
3	Purchasing of New Equipment for Schools			*	
Agriculture Needs					
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			*	
7	Rehabilitation of Greenhouses			*	
8	Field Crops Seeds			*	
9	Plants and Agricultural Supplies			*	

Source: Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012

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