

# Deir Abu Mash'al Village Profile



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## *Acknowledgments*

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## Background

This report is part of a series of booklets, which contain compiled information about each city, town, and village in the Ramallah Governorate. These booklets came as a result of a comprehensive study of all localities in Ramallah 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 Ramallah 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 Ramallah Governorate. In addition, the project aims at preparing strategic developmental programs and activities to mitigate the impact of the current political, social, and economic instability with the focus on the agricultural sector.

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

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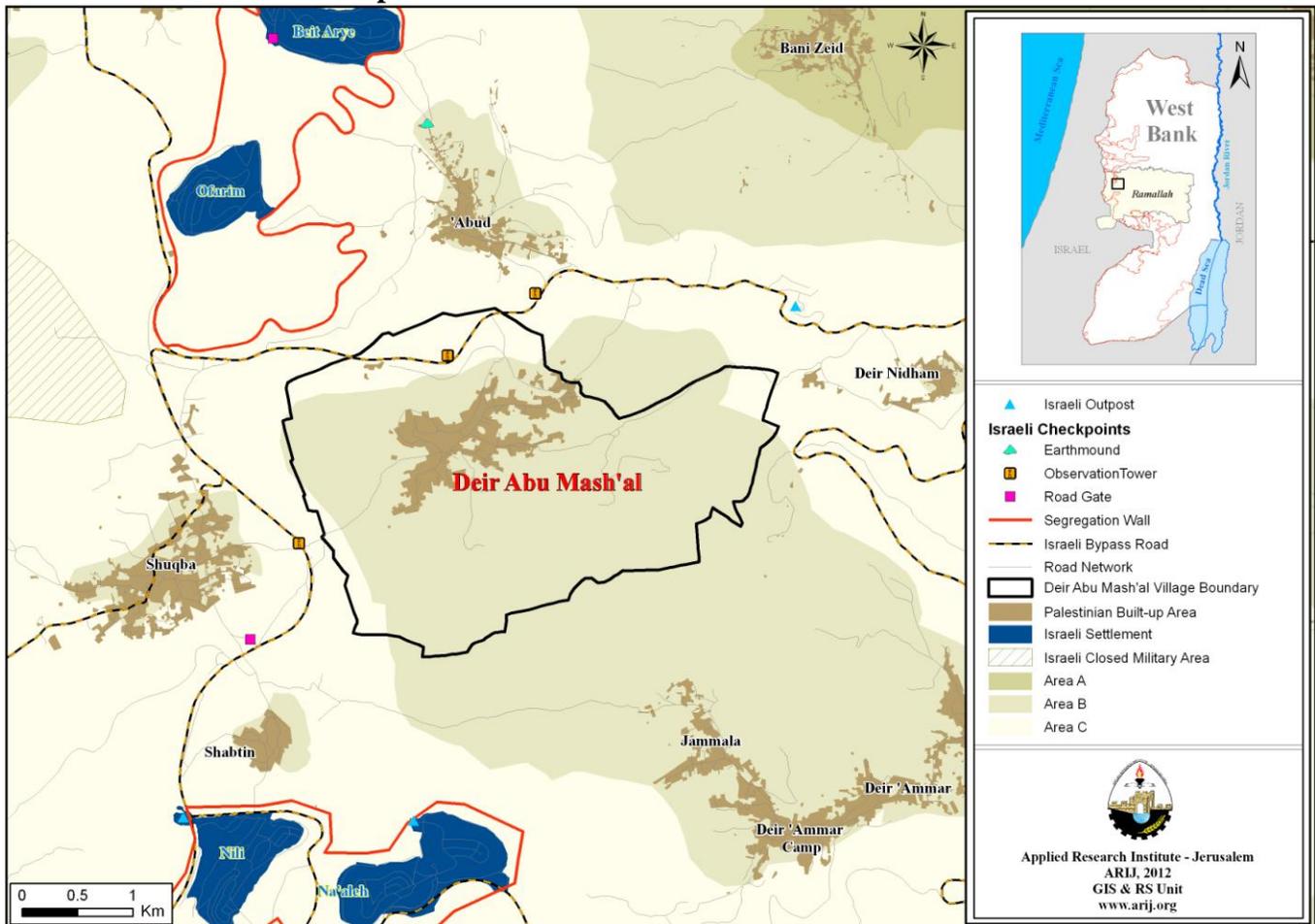
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# Deir Abu Mash'al Village Profile

## Location and Physical Characteristics

Deir Abu Mash'al is a Palestinian village in the Ramallah Governorate located 16.4 km northwest of Ramallah City. Deir Abu Mash'al is bordered by Al Itihad and 'Abud localities to the east, 'Abud village to the north, Shuqba village to the west and Al Itihad town to the south (ARIJ GIS, 2012) (See Map 1).

**Map 1: Deir Abu Mash'al location and borders**



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2012.

Deir Abu Mash'al is located at an altitude of 468m above sea level with a mean annual rainfall of 567mm. The average annual temperature is 18 °C and the average annual humidity is approximately 62% (ARIJ GIS, 2012).

Since 1996, Deir Abu Mash'al has been governed by a village council included within the Joint Services Council for Ni'lin. The Village Council is currently administrated by 9 members appointed by the

Palestinian National Authority. The Council owns a permanent headquarters (in which two employees work) but does not possess a vehicle for the collection of solid waste (Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011).

It is the responsibility of the village council to provide a number of services to the residents of Deir Abu Mash'al, including:

1. Installing and maintaining the drinking water network.
2. Providing electricity network or generators.
3. Implementing projects and case studies for the village.
4. Organizing the construction and licensing processes.
5. Providing an ambulance.
6. Providing transportation services.
7. Providing and managing kindergartens.

## History

Deir Abu Mash'al village name is derived from the word 'shu'la', meaning torch; village residents used to light a torch in the old city which could be seen by residents of Jaffa to guide ships and travelers in their journeys (Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011).

The village was established more than 450 years ago (Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011) (See photo below for Deir Abu Mash'al village).

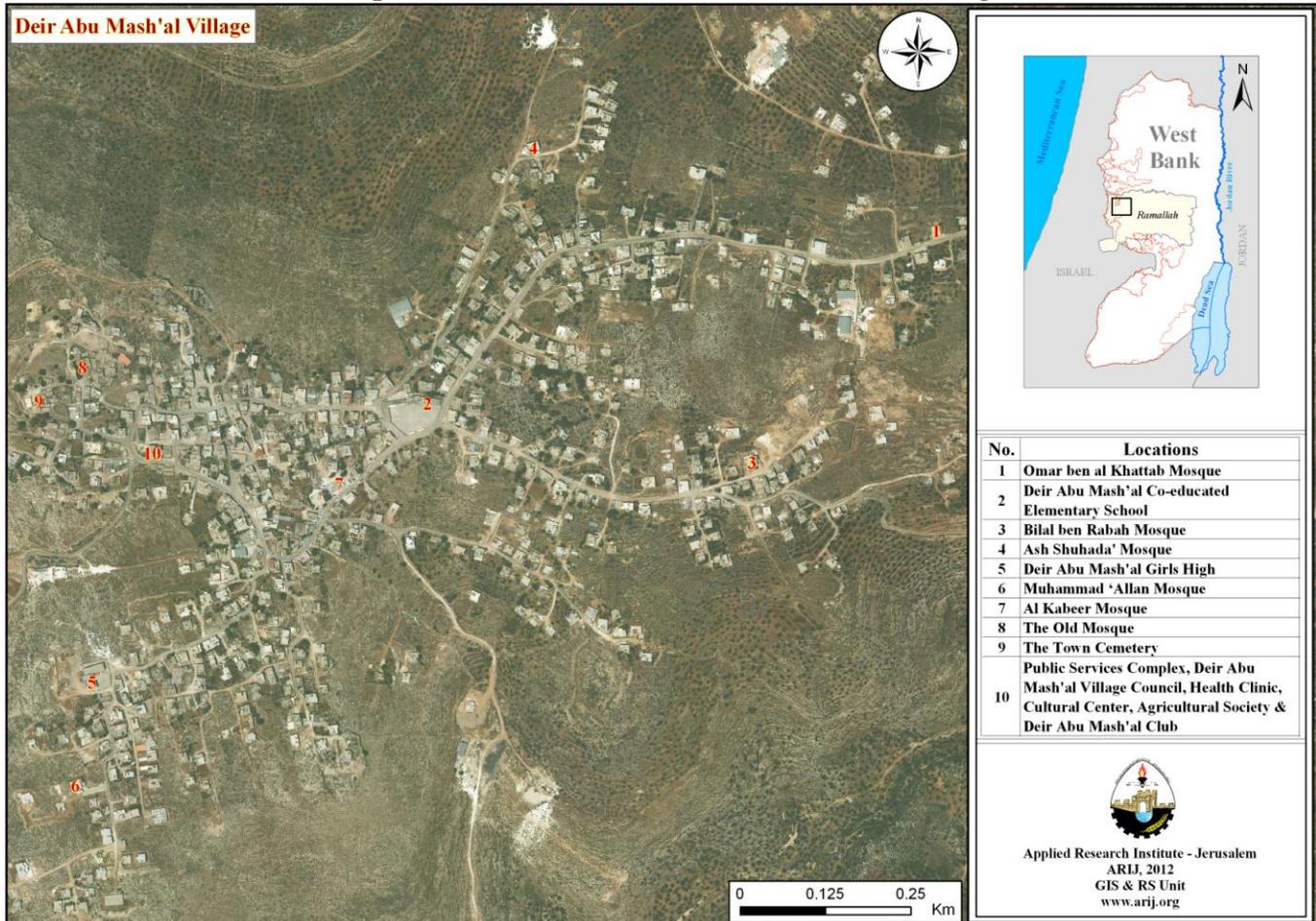
**Photo of Deir Abu Mash'al**



## Religious and Archaeological Sites

There are six mosques in the village: the Old Mosque, Omar Ben al Khattab, Ash Shuhada', Bilal ben Rabah, Muhammad 'Allan, and Al Kabir Mosques. There are a few sites of archaeological interest, including Deir Abu Mash'al archaeological pool (Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011), in addition to some Khirabs (ruins), including Khirbet ar Rashniya which contains the remains of two towers built with carved rocks, and Khirbet 'Ertiba which contains an oil-press (Al Dabbagh, 1991) (See Map 2).

**Map 2: Main locations in Deir Abu Mash'al Village**



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2012.

## Population

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), the total population of Deir Abu Mash'al in 2007 was 3,310, of whom 1,686 were male and 1,624 female. There 672 households living in 703 housing units.

## Age Groups and Gender

The General Census of Population and Housing carried out by the PCBS in 2007 showed the distribution of age groups in Deir Abu Mash'al was as follows: 40.5% were less than 15 years of age, 55.8% were between 15 and 64 years of age, and 3.6% were 65 years of age or older. Data additionally showed that the sex ratio of males to females in the village is 103.8:100, meaning that males and females constituted 50.9% and 49.1% of the population respectively.

## Families

Deir Abu Mash'al residents are from several families, mainly the 'Atta, Zahran and Barghuthi families (Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011).

## Education

According to the results of the PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census-2007, the illiteracy rate among Deir Abu Mash'al population was approximately 5.9%, of whom 75.2% were females. Of the literate population, 14.7% could only read and write with no formal education, 28.3% had elementary education, 31% had preparatory education, 13% had secondary education, and 7% completed higher education. Table 1 shows the educational level in the village of Deir Abu Mash'al by sex and educational attainment in 2007.

**Table 1: Deir Abu Mash'al population (10 years of age and above) by sex and educational attainment**

Sex	Illiterate	Can read & write	Elementary	Preparatory	Secondary	Associate Diploma	Bachelor	Higher Diploma	Master	PhD	Unknown	Total
M	35	163	335	430	163	40	50	1	5	1	1	1,224
F	106	187	340	309	148	22	47	-	-	-	3	1,162
<b>T</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>675</b>	<b>739</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2,386</b>

Source: PCBS, 2009.

There are three public schools in the village, which are run by the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoHE) (Directorate of Education in Ramallah, 2011).

**Table 2: The Schools in: Deir Abu Mash'al by name, stage, sex, and supervising authority**

School Name	Supervising Authority	Sex
Sa'dat 'Allan (Deir Abu Mash'al) Boys Secondary School	Government	Male
Deir Abu Mash'al Girls Secondary School		Female
Deir Abu Mash'al Co-educated Elementary School		Mixed
<b>Source:</b> Directorate of Education in Ramallah, 2011		

In the village there are 914 students, 49 teachers, and 29 classes (Directorate of Education in Ramallah, 2011). The average number of students per teacher in the school is nearly 19, while the average number of students per class is approximately 32.

Furthermore, there is one kindergarten in the village, Al 'Ahab kindergarten, which is run by a private body and is responsible for 17 children (Directorate of Education in Ramallah, 2011).

In the absence of any levels of education in the village schools, students of Deir Abu Mash'al attend 'Abud secondary school (6km from the locality) in order to complete their education (Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011).

## Health Status

Deir Abu Mash'al village has a Red Crescent Center and an ambulance. In the absence of any required health services and in emergencies, residents of Deir Abu Mash'al head to 'Abud Medical Center in 'Abud village or to Ramallah Governmental Hospital in Ramallah city, 6km and 35km from the locality respectively (Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011).

The health sector in the village faces many obstacles and problems, including:

1. The lack of modern machines and equipment in the Red Crescent Center laboratory.
2. The lack of a resident employee in the laboratory.
3. The lack of available medicines.

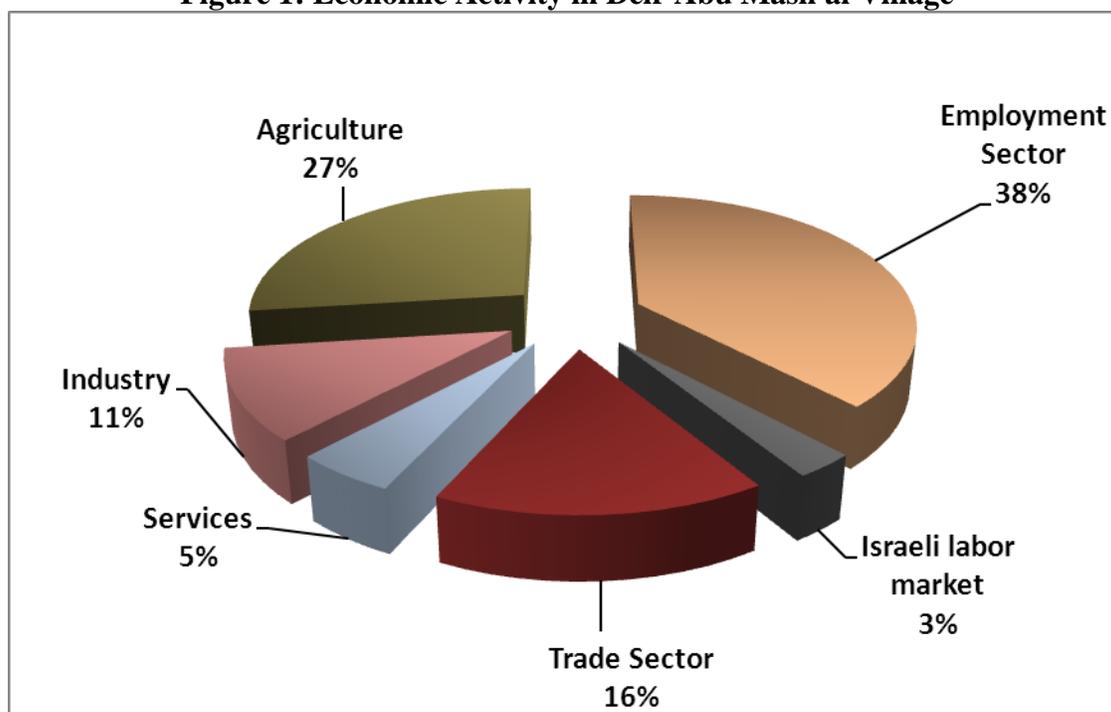
## Economic Activities

The economy in Deir Abu Mash'al is dependent on several economic sectors, mainly the employees sector, which absorbs 38% of the village workforce (See Figure 1).

The results of a field survey conducted by ARIJ staff in 2011 for the distribution of labor by economic activity in Deir Abu Mash'al are as follows:

- Government or Private Employees Sector (38%)
- Agriculture Sector (27%)
- Trade Sector (16%)
- Industry (11%)
- Services (5%)
- Israeli labor market (3%)

**Figure 1: Economic Activity in Deir Abu Mash'al Village**



(Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011)

Deir Abu Mash'al village has 16 grocery stores, 3 fruit and vegetable shops, 2 butcheries, 5 offices providing services, 3 professional workshops (e.g. carpentry, blacksmith, and aluminum), 3 stone quarries, 3 olive oil-presses, and one store for agricultural tools and equipment (Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011).

The unemployment rate in Deir Abu Mash'al reached around 30% in 2011 (Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011).

### Labor Force

According to the PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census-2007, 32.1% of Deir Abu Mash'al labor force was economically active, of whom 85.9% were employed, and 67.6% were not economically active, of whom 48.8% were students, and 37.5% were housekeepers (See Table 3).

**Table 3: Deir Abu Mash'al population (10 years of age and above) by sex and employment status-2007**

SEX	Economically Active				Not Economically Active						Un-known	Total
	Employed	Currently Unemployed	Unemployed (Never worked)	Total	Students	House-keeping	Unable to work	Not working & Not looking for work	Other	Total		
M	603	59	47	<b>709</b>	375	1	83	14	37	<b>510</b>	5	<b>1,224</b>
F	54	1	1	<b>56</b>	412	604	82	1	5	<b>1,104</b>	2	<b>1,162</b>
T	657	60	48	<b>765</b>	787	605	165	15	42	<b>1,614</b>	7	<b>2,386</b>

Source: PCBS, 2009.

## Agricultural Sector

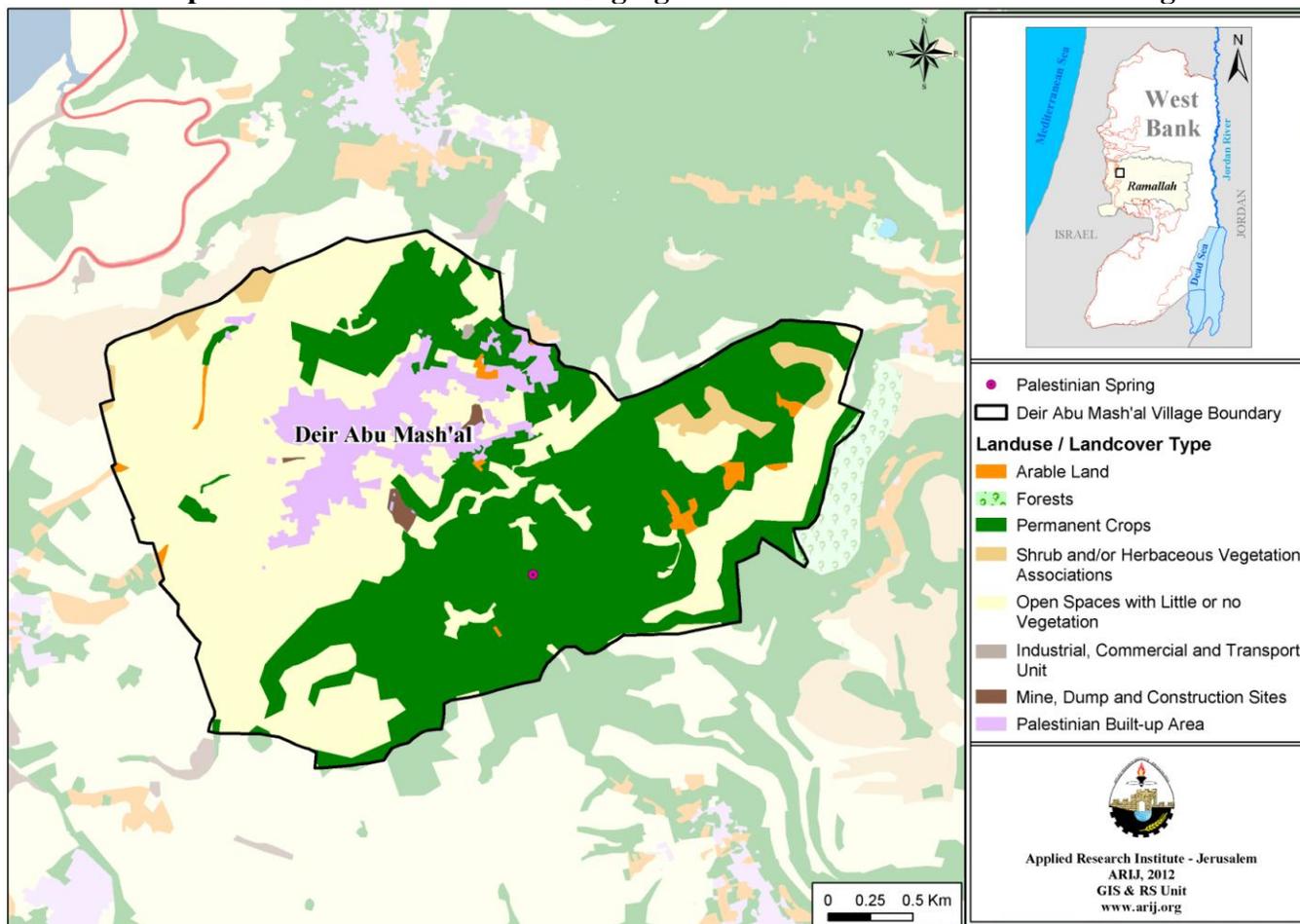
Deir Abu Mash'al has a total area of around 8,763 dunums of which 3,982 are arable land and 720 dunums are registered as 'residential' (See Table 4 and Map 3).

**Table 4: Land use and land cover in Deir Abu Mash'al village in 2010 (area in dunum)**

Total Area	Built up Area	Agricultural area (3,982)				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					
8,763	720	3,691	0	205	86	0	17	4,004	38	0

Source: ARIJ – GIS Unit, 2012.

**Map 3: Land use/land cover and Segregation Wall in Deir Abu Mash'al Village**



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2012.

Table 5 shows the different types of rain-fed and irrigated open-cultivated vegetables in Deir Abu Mash'al. The most commonly cultivated crop within this area is snake-cucumber.

**Table 5: Total area of rain-fed and irrigated open cultivated vegetables in Deir Abu Mash'al village (dunum)**

Fruity vegetables		Leafy vegetable		Green legumes		Bulbs		Other vegetables		Total Area	
RF	Irr.	RF	Irr.	RF	Irr.	RF	Irr.	RF	Irr.	RF	Irr.
25	0	0	0	20	0	7	0	5	0	<b>57</b>	<b>0</b>

Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture, 2009

Table 6 shows the different types of fruit trees planted in the area. Deir Abu Mash'al is famous for olive cultivation; there are 2,652 dunums of land planted with olive crops.

**Table 6: Total area of fruit and olive trees in Deir Abu Mash'al village (dunum)**

Olives		Citrus		Stone-fruits		Pome fruits		Nuts		Other fruits		Total Area	
Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.	Rf	Irr.
2,652	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	60	0	70	0	<b>2,782</b>	<b>0</b>

Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture, 2009

In terms of field crops and forage in Deir Abu Mash'al, cereals (particularly wheat) are the most cultivated, covering an area of about 100 dunums, in addition to the cultivation of dry legumes such as beans (See Table 7).

**Table 7: Total area of field crops in Deir Abu Mash'al village (dunum)**

Cereals		Bulbs		Dry legumes		Oil crops		Forage crops		Stimulating crops		Other crops		Total Area	
Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr	Rf	Irr
100	0	18	0	24	0	5	0	30	0	0	0	0	0	<b>177</b>	<b>0</b>

Rf: Rain-fed, Irr: Irrigated

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture, 2009

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.

The field survey conducted by ARIJ staff shows that 10% of the residents in Deir Abu Mash'al rear and keep domestic animals such as sheep, goats, and chickens (See Table 8).

**Table 8: Livestock in Deir Abu Mash'al village**

Cows*	Sheep	Goats	Camels	Horses	Donkeys	Mules	Broilers	Layers	Bee Hives
13	235	431	0	0	0	0	173,200	700	62

\*Including cows, bull calves, heifer calves and bulls

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture, 2009

There are approximately 7 kilometers of agricultural roads in the village suitable only for the use of vehicles (Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011):

The agriculture sector in the village faces many obstacles and problems, mainly the lack of lands suitable for cultivation as the whole region is mountainous (Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011).

## Institutions and Services

Deir Abu Mash'al village has no governmental institutions but has a number of local institutions and associations that provide services to various sectors of society. These include (Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011):

- **Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council:** Founded in 1996 by Deir Abu Mash'al's youth, with the goal of taking care of issues in the village, providing various services to its population, working on the development of the village, and implementing different projects for the village.
- **Deir Abu Mash'al Sports Club:** Founded in 1974, aiming to provide young people in the village with sports and cultural and social activities.
- **Deir Abu Mash'al Agricultural Society:** Founded in 1985, the Society provides seeds and agricultural tools to farmers.
- **Deir Abu Mash'al Cultural Center:** The Cultural Center offers educational and computer courses in addition to other scientific courses.

## Infrastructure and Natural Resources

### Electricity and Telecommunication Services:

Deir Abu Mash'al has been connected to a public electricity network since 1980. It is served by Jerusalem Electricity Company, which is the main source of electricity in the village, and approximately 80% of the housing units in the village are connected to the network. However, the village residents face some problems concerning electricity, mainly (Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011):

1. The high costs of electricity poles and cables.
2. Many residential houses are not connected to the network due to population growth and the accompanying expansion of the town.
3. The lack of cooperation between the electricity company and the citizens.
4. The high cost of connecting to the electricity network.

Deir Abu Mash'al is connected to a telecommunication network and approximately 30% of the housing units within the village boundaries are connected to phone lines (Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011).

**Transportation Services:**

One public taxi, 8 public buses and 15 illegal/unlicensed cars are the main means of transportation in Deir Abu Mash'al village. In addition to the lack of vehicles in the village, residents seeking to travel struggle because of earth mounds and military checkpoints on roads (Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011). There are 3km of main roads, which are paved but in poor condition, and 5km of unpaved secondary roads (Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011).

**Water Resources:**

Deir Abu Mash'al is provided with water by the West Bank Water Department through its own sources and through sources purchased from Mekerot, an Israeli company, via the public water network established in 1974. Approximately 70% of housing units in the village are connected to the water network (Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011).

The quantity of water supplied to Deir Abu Mash'al in 2008 was about 72,820 cubic meters/ month. The estimated rate of water supply per capita is about 60 liters/day (PWA, 2009). However, no Deir Abu Mash'al citizen consumes this amount of water due to water losses, which are approximately 50%. These losses happen at the main source, major transport lines, in the distribution network, and at the household level; therefore, the rate of water consumption per capita in Deir Abu Mash'al is 30 liters per day (Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011). This is an extremely low rate compared with the minimum quantity of 100 liters/capita/day proposed by the World Health Organization (WHO).

The village has 30 household harvesting cisterns as an alternative source of water to the public network; these are used during periods of water shortages, primarily in summer. There is also a public water reservoir in the village (Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011).

**Sanitation:**

Deir Abu Mash'al lacks a public sewerage network with most of the village residents using cesspits as their main means of wastewater disposal (Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011).

Based on the estimated daily per capita water consumption, the estimated amount of wastewater generated per day is approximately 80 cubic meters or 29,128 cubic meters annually. At the individual level in the village it is estimated that per capita wastewater generation is 21 liters per day, depending on the consumption rate. The wastewater collected by cesspits is discharged by wastewater tankers directly to open areas or nearby valleys with no regard for the environment. There is no wastewater treatment either at the source or at the disposal sites and this poses a serious threat to both environmental and public health (ARIJ-WERU, 2012).

**Solid Waste Management:**

Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council employs a private contractor to manage the collection and disposal of solid waste generated by citizens and establishments in the village. Solid waste in Deir Abu Mash'al is collected from houses, institutes, shops, and public squares in plastic bags by the private body once a

week. The collected waste is transported using a tractor to a random landfill near the village, where it is burnt (Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011).

The daily per capita rate of solid waste production in Deir Abu Mash'al is 0.7kg. Thus the estimated amount of solid waste produced per day from Deir Abu Mash'al residents is nearly 2.3 tons, or 847 tons per year (ARIJ WERU, 2012).

## **Environmental Conditions**

Like other villages and towns in the governorate, Deir Abu Mash'al experiences several environmental problems which must be addressed and solved. These problems can be identified as follows:

### **Water Crisis**

- Water is cut off by the West Bank Water Department for long periods of time during summer in several neighborhoods of the village for several reasons:
  - (1) Israeli control over Palestinian water resources. Consequently, the West Bank Water Department purchases water from Israeli companies in order to satisfy residents' needs.
  - (2) High rate of water losses, because the water network is old and in need of rehabilitation and renovation.

### **Wastewater Management**

- The absence of a public sewage network means that in Deir Abu Mash'al residents are forced to use unhygienic cesspits for the disposal of wastewater, and/or to discharge wastewater in the streets. This is particularly common in winter, as citizens cannot afford the high cost of sewage tankers during this period. These methods facilitate environmental damage, health problems, and the spread of epidemics and diseases in the village. This wastewater also contaminates the groundwater because most cesspits are built without lining, allowing wastewater to enter into the ground and avoiding the need to use sewage tankers. Moreover, the untreated wastewater collected from cesspits by sewage tankers is disposed of in open areas without concern for the damage it causes to the environment and to residents' health.

### **Solid Waste Management:**

- The lack of a central sanitary landfill to serve in Deir Abu Mash'al and the other neighboring communities in the governorate is due mainly to the obstacles created by the Israeli authorities for local and national institutions in granting licenses to establish such a landfill, because the appropriate land is within Area C and under Israeli control. Additionally, the implementation of such projects depends on funding from donor countries. The lack of a sanitary landfill is a source of pollution to the groundwater and soil through the leachate produced from the solid waste, and produces bad odors and distortion of the landscape.

## Impact of the Israeli Occupation

### Geopolitical status in Deir Abu Mash'al

According to the Oslo II Interim Agreement signed in 28<sup>th</sup> September 1995 between the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel, Deir Abu Mash'al was divided into areas "B" and "C". Approximately 7,437 dunums (85% of the village's total area) were assigned as area B, where the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) has a complete control over civil matters but Israel continues to have overriding responsibility for security. Area "B" constitutes most of the inhabited Palestinian areas, including municipalities, villages and some camps. It is worth mentioning that all of the village's population resides in area "B" which constitutes the larger area in comparison to the total area of the village. The rest of the village's area, constituting 1,326 dunums (15% of the total area), is classified as area "C", where Israel retains full control over security and administration related to the territory. In area "C" Palestinian building and land management is prohibited unless through a consent or authorization by the Israeli Civil Administration. Most of the lands lying within the area "C" are agricultural areas and open spaces (table 9).

**Table 9: The Geopolitical Divisions of Deir Abu Mash'al – Ramallah Governorate**

Area	Area in dunums	Percent of Total village area
Area A	0	0
Area B	7,437	85
Area C	1,326	15
Nature Reserve	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,763</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Source: ARIJ-GIS, 2011*

Israeli government confiscated hundreds of dunums of lands in Deir Abu Mash'al to open Israeli bypass road no. 465. This road is constructed and open to connect the Israeli settlements surrounding the village with each other. The real threat of bypass roads lies in the buffer zone formed by the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) along these roads, extending to approximately 75 m on the roads' sides.

## Development Plans and Projects

### Implemented Projects

Deir Abu Mash'al village council has implemented one development project in Deir Abu Mash'al during the past eight years (See Table 10).

**Table 10: Implemented Development Plans and Projects in Deir Abu Mash'al during the Last Eight Years**

Name of the Project	Type	Year	Donor
Construction of Deir Abu Mash'al multi-service center	Public Services	2004	PECDAR
<b>Source: Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011</b>			

### Proposed Projects

Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, in cooperation with the civil society organizations in the village and the village 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 village. The projects are as follows, in order of priority from the perspectives of the participants in the workshop:

1. Providing programs to raise general awareness for families.
2. Improving and developing the village infrastructure in order to meet the village's needs.
3. Improving and developing the educational level reached by village students and the educational sector in general.
4. Improving and developing the health sector in the village.
5. Providing necessary support for the development and revitalization of the agricultural sector.
6. Empowering women within society.
7. Developing, enabling and activating the role of youth in community development.

## Locality Development Priorities and Needs

Deir Abu Mash'al suffers from a significant shortage of infrastructure and services. Table 11 shows the development priorities and needs in the village, according to the village council's feedback (Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011).

**Table 11: Development Priorities and Needs in Deir Abu Mash'al**

No.	Sector	Strongly Needed	Needed	Not a Priority	Notes
<b>Infrastructural Needs</b>					
1	Opening and Pavement of Roads	*			18km *
2	Rehabilitation of Old Water Networks	*			8km
3	Extending the Water Network to Cover New Built up Areas	*			2km
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	*			7km
9	Providing Containers for Solid Waste Collection	*			35 containers
10	Providing Vehicles for Collecting Solid Waste	*			1 vehicle
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	*			
<b>Agriculture Needs</b>					
1	Rehabilitation of Agricultural Lands	*			300 dunums
2	Building Rainwater Harvesting Cisterns	*			50 cisterns
3	Construction of Barracks for Livestock	*			20 barracks
4	Veterinary Services	*			
5	Seeds and Hay for Animals	*			1000 tons/ year
6	Construction of New Greenhouses	*			15 greenhouses
7	Rehabilitation of Greenhouses			*	
8	Field Crops Seeds	*			
9	Plants and Agricultural Supplies	*			

\*3km are main roads, 5km are sub roads and 10km are agricultural roads

Source: Deir Abu Mash'al Village Council, 2011.

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