

Al Am'ari Camp 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 localities 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 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 special emphasize on agriculture, environment and water.

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

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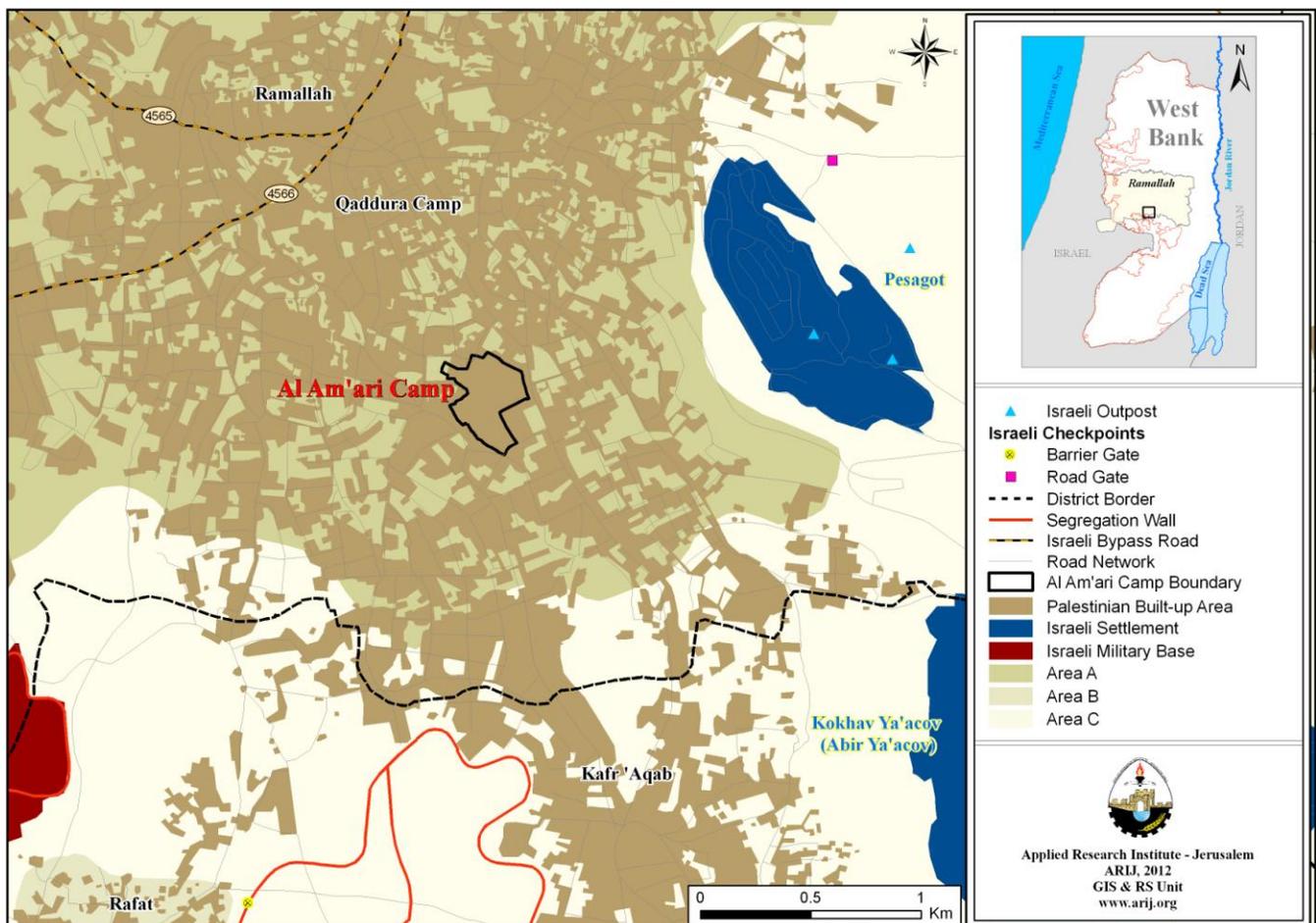
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Al Am'ari Camp Profile

Location and Physical Characteristics

Al Am'ari is a Palestinian camp in Ramallah Governorate located 1.44km east of Ramallah City. Al Am'ari camp is bordered by Al Bireh city on all sides (ARIJ- GIS Unit, 2012) (See Map 1).

Map 1: Al Am'ari camp location and borders



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2012.

Al Am'ari camp is located at an altitude of 827m below sea level with a mean annual rainfall of 574mm. The average annual temperature is 16 °C and the average annual humidity is approximately 61% (ARIJ – GIS Unit, 2012).

Since 1997, Al Am'ari camp has been governed by a Camp Services Committee which is currently administrated by 13 members appointed by the Palestinian National Authority and 2 employees. The Camp Committee, which is included within the Joint Services Council for Al Bireh Municipality, has a permanent rented headquarters, but does not possess a vehicle for the collection of solid waste (Al Am'ari Camp Committee, 2012).

It is the responsibility of the Camp Committee to provide a number of services to the residents of Al Am'ari camp (Al Am'ari Camp Committee, 2012), including implementing projects and case studies for the camp, cleaning streets, constructing and paving roads and providing social services.

History

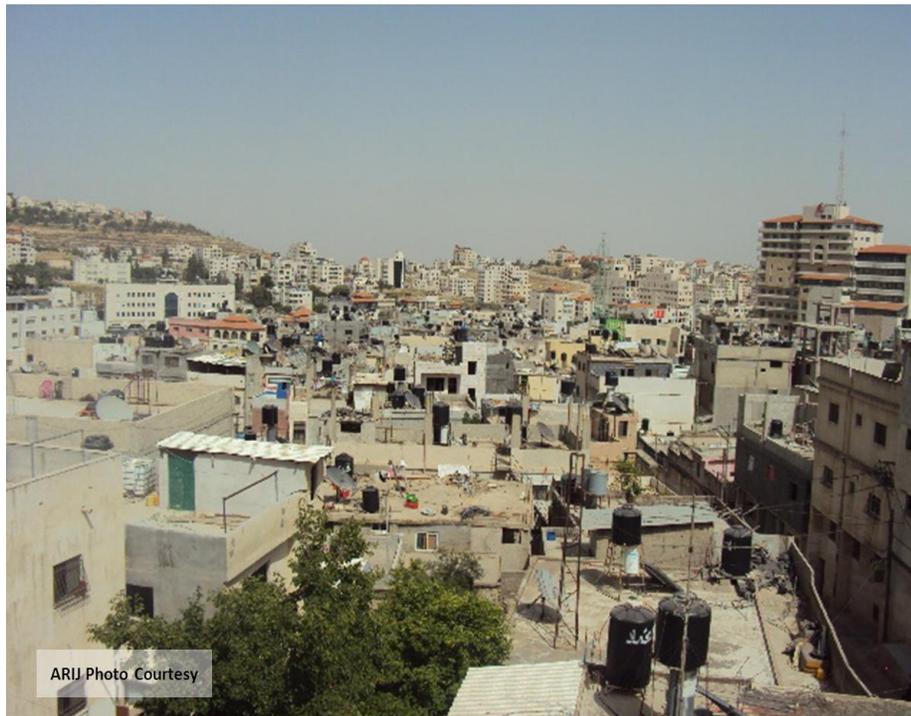
Al Am'ari's name has been attributed to two different causes (Al Am'ari Camp Committee, 2012):

1. The camp was named after the Al Am'ari carpentry, which was located on the camp's land on Ramallah-Jerusalem Street and belonged to a man of Syrian origin from the Al Am'ari family.
2. The camp was named after a fabric factory located on the camp's land before immigration and known as the Al Am'ari Factory.

Before immigration, the camp was known as Wadi an Nika', due to the large amounts of water that gathered there. The camp land was planted with olive trees, fig and grape trees, and vines.

The camp was established in 1949; its residents are originally from various places including Ar Ramla, Lid, Jaffa, and Haifa (Al Am'ari Camp Committee, 2012) (See photo below for Al Am'ari camp).

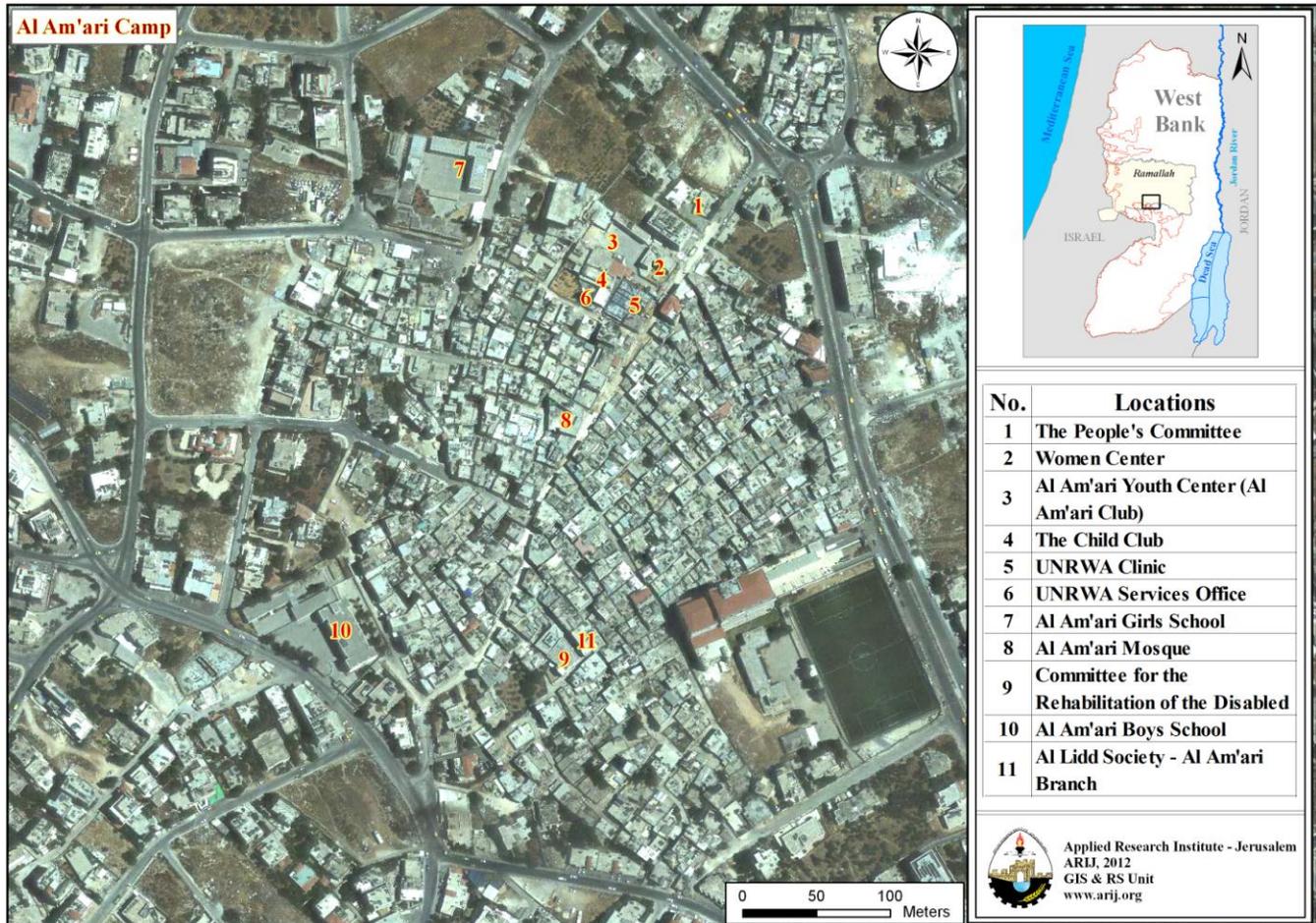
Photo 1: A general view of Al Am'ari Camp



Religious and Archaeological Sites

There is one mosque in the camp, Al ‘Umawi Mosque. No sites of archaeological interest have so far been discovered in the camp (See Map 2) (Al Am’ari Camp Committee, 2012).

Map 2: Main locations in Al Am’ari Camp



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2012.

Population

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), the total population of Al Am’ari camp in 2007 was 4,713, of whom 2,428 were male and 2,285 female. There were 906 households living in 1,029 housing units.

Age Groups and Gender

The General Census of Population and Housing carried out by PCBS in 2007 showed the distribution of age groups in Al Am’ari camp were as follows: 39.1% were less than 15 years old, 52.3% between 15 -

64 years of age, and 3.1% aged 65 years or older. Data additionally showed that the sex ratio of males to females in the camp is 106.3:100, meaning that males and females constituted 51.5% and 48.5% of the population respectively.

Families

Al Am'ari camp residents are from several families, including the Tamliyyah, Hammad, Abu el Reesh, Fleifil, Al Mawalha, Al Qutri, Rahana and Al Mimi families, in addition to many others (Al Am'ari Camp Committee, 2012).

Education

According to the results of the PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census (2007), the illiteracy rate amongst the population of Al Am'ari camp was approximately 5.3%, of whom 71.4% were females. Of the literate population, 12.8% could only read and write with no formal education, 26.8% had elementary education, 34.9% had preparatory education, 12.2% had secondary education, and 7.6% had completed higher education. Table 1 shows the educational level in the camp of Al Am'ari camp by sex and educational attainment in 2007.

Table 1: Al Am'ari camp population (10 years of age and above) by sex and educational attainment

S E x	Illite- rate	Can read & write	Elem- entary	Prepa- ratory	Second- ary	Associate Diploma	Bach- elor	Higher Diploma	Master	PhD	Un- known	Total
M	48	208	488	560	191	71	47	1	3	1	4	1,622
F	120	201	366	552	198	81	35	2	2	-	5	1,562
T	168	409	854	1,112	389	152	82	3	5	1	9	3,184

Source: PCBS, 2009.

There are two registered schools in the camp, both run by UNRWA. These are Al Am'ari Boys Elementary School and Al Am'ari Girls Elementary School, but there are no kindergartens (Ministry of Education - Ramallah, 2011).

The MoEHE stated that for the scholastic year 2010/2011, there were 49 classes, 1,636 male and female students, and 71 teaching staff (Ministry of Education - Ramallah, 2011). Classroom density was recorded at 33 students per class, and the average number of students per teacher was 23 (Ministry of Education - Ramallah, 2011).

Health Status

There are a number of health centers available in Al Am'ari camp. There is a health center run by UNRWA which includes a physician's clinic, a radiology center, a motherhood and childhood care center, a medical laboratory, and a private dental clinic. In the absence of required health services and in emergencies, residents go to Ramallah Governmental Hospital in Ramallah city, about 2km from the camp (Al Am'ari Camp Committee, 2012).

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

1. The lack of an ambulance in the camp.
2. The lack of medical service during evenings.
3. The lack of medicines in the UNRWA clinic.

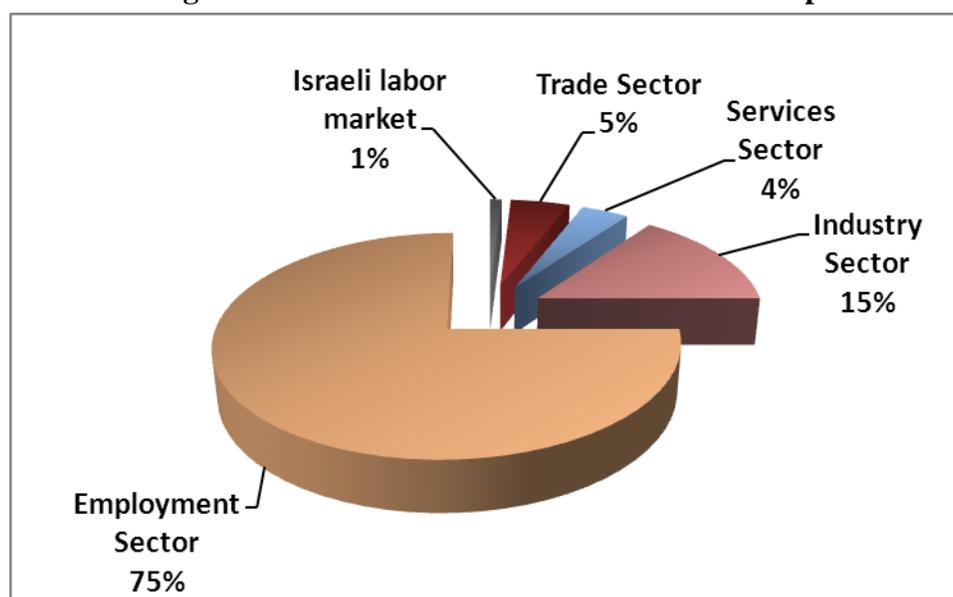
Economic Activities

The economy in Al Am'ari camp is dependent on several economic sectors, mainly the employees sector, which absorbs 75% of the camp's workforce (See Figure 1).

A field survey conducted by ARIJ in 2012 showed that the distribution of labor by economic activity in Al Am'ari camp is as follows:

- Government or Private Employees Sector (75%)
- Industry (15%)
- Trade Sector (5%)
- Services Sector (4%)
- Israeli Labor Market (1%)

Figure 1: Economic activities in Al Am’ari Camp



Source: Al Am’ari Camp Committee, 2012

In terms of commercial and industrial productions in Al Am’ari camp, there are 15 grocery stores, 1 bakery, 2 butcheries, 4 vegetable and fruit stores, 5 different professional workshops (carpentry, blacksmith etc.), and 10 different service stores (Al Am’ari Camp Committee, 2012).

The unemployment rate in Al Am’ari camp reached approximately 45% in 2012, and it was found that the social groups most affected by the Israeli actions and procedures are former workers in the Israeli labor market and workers in the services sector (Al Am’ari Camp Committee, 2012).

Labor Force

According to the PCBS Population, Housing and Establishment Census (2007), 34.1% of the Al Am’ari camp labor force was economically active, of whom 84.2% were employed, and 64.3% were not economically active, of whom 49.9% were students and 37.1% were housekeepers (See Table 2).

Table 2: Al Am’ari camp population (10 years of age and above) by sex and employment status, 2007

SEX	Economically Active				Not Economically Active						Un-known	Total
	Employed	Currently Un-employed	Un-employed (Never worked)	Total	Students	House-keeping	Unable to work	Not working & Not looking for work	Other	Total		
M	787	104	37	928	492	4	103	5	49	653	41	1,622
F	127	11	19	157	529	755	99	1	9	1,393	12	1,562
T	914	115	56	1,085	1,021	759	202	6	58	2,046	53	3,184

Source: PCBS, 2009.

Agricultural Sector

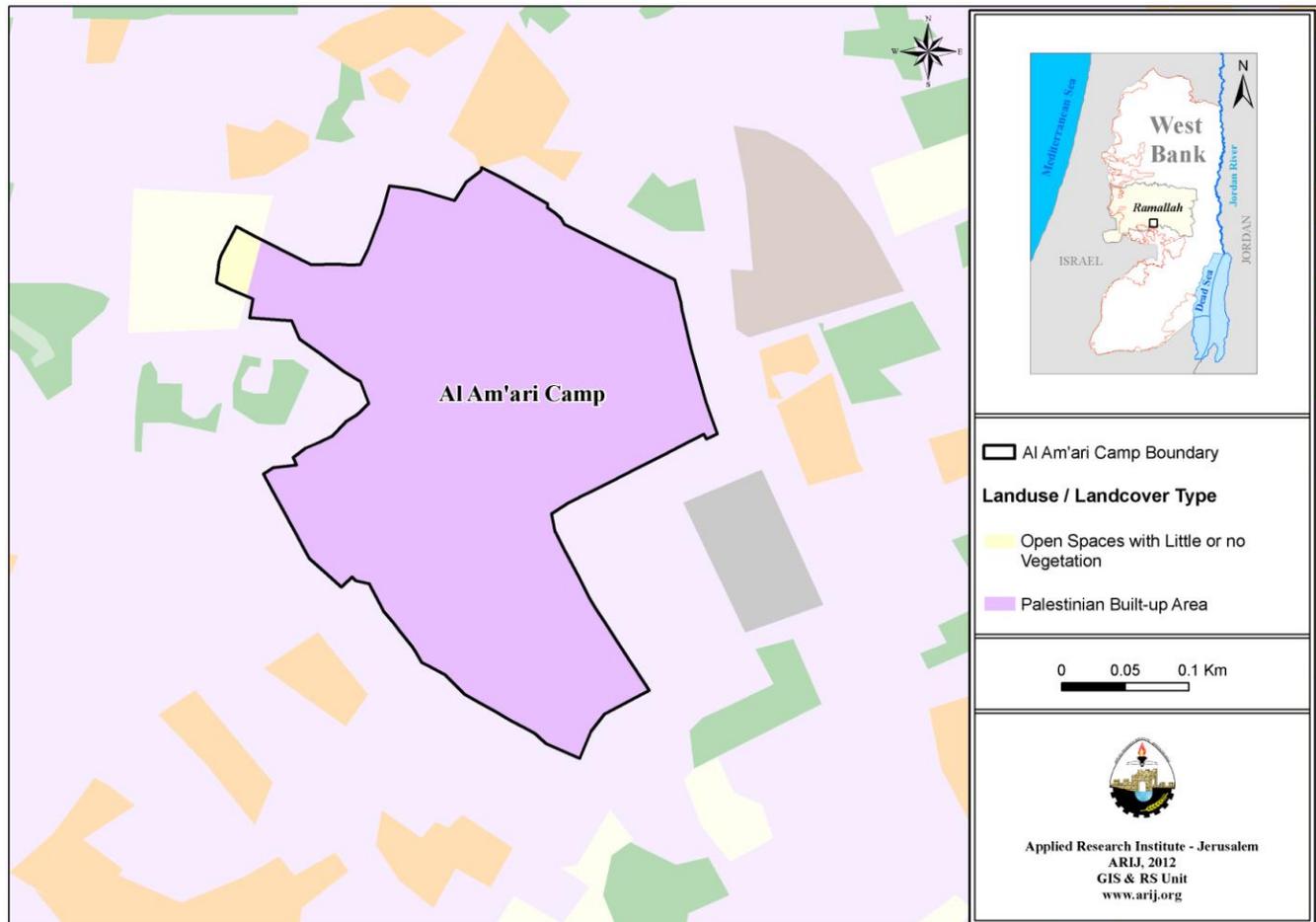
Al Am’ari camp has a total area of about 97 dunums of which 96 dunums are considered ‘residential’ (See Table 3 and Map 3).

Table 3: Land use and land cover in Al Am’ari camp in 2010 (areas in dunum)

Total Area	Built-up area	Agricultural area (0)				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					
97	96	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0

Source: ARIJ – GIS Unit, 2012.

Map 3: Land use/land cover in Al Am’ari Camp



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2012.

There are no lands cultivated with rain-fed or irrigated open vegetables, fruit trees, or forage crops in the camp (Ramallah Directorate of Agriculture – Ramallah, 2009).

Table 4 below shows the types of livestock reared and kept by the residents in Al Am'ari camp including domestic animals such as sheep and goats (Ramallah Directorate of Agriculture – Ramallah, 2009).

Table 4: Livestock in Al Am'ari Camp

Cows*	Sheep	Goats	Camels	Horses	Donkeys	Mules	Broilers	Layers	Bee Hives
0	8	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

*Including cows, bull calves, heifer calves and bulls

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture - Ramallah, 2009

There are no agricultural roads in the camp (Al Am'ari Camp Committee, 2012).

Institutions and Services

Al Am'ari camp has no governmental institutions, but has a number of local institutions and associations providing services to various sectors of society. These include (Al Am'ari Camp Committee, 2012):

- **Al Am'ari Camp Services Committee:** Founded in 1997 by the Refugees Department with the goal of providing social services and implementing different projects for the benefit of camp residents.
- **Al Am'ari Youth Center:** Founded in 1953 by the camp's young people and currently registered in the Ministry of Sports and Youth. The Center provides different sports, social, and educational services and activities.
- **The Child (At Tifel) Center:** Founded in 2002 by the Ministry of Interior, the Center provides educational, artistic and social services to children.
- **The Women Society:** Founded in 1993 by UNRWA and is concerned with providing training, awareness and educational courses.
- **People with Special Needs Committee:** Founded in 2007 by UNRWA. The Committee provides treatment and assistance to the disabled.

Infrastructure and Natural Resources

Electricity and Telecommunication Services

Al Am'ari camp has been connected to a public electricity network since 1967. It is served by Ramallah Electricity Company, which is the main source of electricity in the camp. Approximately 100% of the housing units in the camp are connected to this network. However, the camp residents face some problems concerning electricity (Al Am'ari Camp Committee, 2012), mainly:

1. The poor condition of the network and its need for rehabilitation.
2. The debts accumulated by the camp residents.

Al Am'ari camp is connected to a telecommunication network and approximately 50% of the housing units within the camp boundaries are connected to phone lines (Al Am'ari Camp Committee, 2012).

Transportation Services

There are 10 public taxis as the main means of transportation in Al Am'ari camp (Al Am'ari Camp Committee, 2012). There are 1km of 'main' roads and 1km of 'secondary' roads; both the main and secondary roads are paved but in poor condition (Al Am'ari Camp Committee, 2012).

Water Resources

Al Am'ari camp is provided with water by Jerusalem Water Authority through the public water network established in 1975, and almost all housing units in the camp are connected to the network (Al Am'ari Camp Committee, 2012). The quantity of water supplied to Al Am'ari camp in 2010 was approximately 155,291 cubic meters (Jerusalem Water Authority, 2011). Therefore, the average rate of water supply per capita in Al Am'ari camp is 90 liters per day. However, no Al Am'ari citizen consumes this amount of water due to water losses, which are recorded at around 26.5%. 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 Al Am'ari camp is 66 liters per day (Jerusalem Water Authority, 2011). The rate experienced by Al Am'ari camp residents is low compared with the minimum quantity of 100 liters per person per day proposed by the World Health Organization.

The water authority has adopted an upward rate to determine water costs whereby the price of water increases in tandem with the increase in water consumption. Table 5 shows the price of water by category of consumption.

Table 5: Water tariffs of Jerusalem Water Authority adopted in 01.01.2012 (one month bill cycle)

Consumption Category (m ³)	Domestic (NIS/m ³)	Industrial (NIS/m ³)	Tourist (NIS/m ³)	Commercial (NIS/m ³)	Public Institutions (NIS/m ³)
0 – 5	4.5	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.4
5.1 – 10	4.5	5.6	5.6	5.6	4.5
10.1 – 20	5.6	6.8	6.8	6.8	5.6
20.1 – 30	6.8	8.1	8.1	8.1	6.8
30.1+	9	9.9	10.8	9	9

Source: Jerusalem Water Authority, 2012

Sanitation

Al Am'ari camp has a public sewerage network, established in 1993. Almost all housing units in the camp (100%) are connected to the network (Al Am'ari Camp Committee, 2012).

Based on the estimated daily per capita water consumption, the estimated amount of wastewater generated per day is approximately 250 cubic meters or 91,000 cubic meters annually. At the individual level in the camp it is estimated that the per capita wastewater generation is 64 liters per day, depending on the consumption rate. The wastewater collected through the sewerage network and from cesspits is discharged by wastewater tankers directly into open areas or nearby valleys with no concern 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

UNRWA is the official body responsible for managing the collection and disposal of solid waste generated by the citizens and establishments in the camp (Al Am'ari Camp Committee, 2012).

Most of the population of Al Am'ari camp benefits from the solid waste services, whereby waste is collected from households, institutions, shops, and public squares in plastic bags and then transferred to 7 large containers distributed throughout the camp. UNRWA collects the solid waste from containers on a daily basis and then transports it using a waste vehicle to Ramallah Municipality dumping site, located 7 km from the camp, where it is usually burnt (Al Am'ari Camp Committee, 2012).

The daily per capita rate of solid waste production in Al Am'ari camp is 0.7kg. Thus the estimated amount of solid waste produced per day by Al Am'ari camp residents is nearly 3.3 tons, or 1,204 tons per year (ARIJ-WERU, 2012).

Environmental Conditions

Like other camps and villages in the governorate, Al Am'ari camp experiences several environmental problems which must be addressed and solved. These problems can be identified as follows:

Water Crisis

- The water is cut off by Jerusalem Water Authority for long periods of time in summer in several neighborhoods of the camp, for several reasons:
 1. Israeli control over Palestinian water resources means that Jerusalem Water Authority must purchase water from Mekerot, an Israeli company, since the available amount of water is not sufficient to meet resident' needs.
 2. High rate of water losses, because the water network is old and in need of rehabilitation and renovation.

Wastewater Management

- The use of unhygienic cesspits for the disposal of wastewater in houses, and the discharge of 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 camp. 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 Al Am'ari camp and 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

Geo-political Status of Al Am'ari Refugee Camp

Al Am'ari refugee camp is a Palestinian refugee camp located in Ramallah and Al Bireh Governorate, in the center of Ramallah city. The camp was established in 1949 after the Palestinian Nakba. According to UNRWA statistics, the camp hosts approximately 10,500 registered Palestinian refugees from several towns and villages in Palestinian areas such as Lid, Ramla, and Jaffa. The total area of the camp is approximately 97 dunums (0.097 km²). The land was leased by UNRWA from the Jordanian Government and is currently situated within the municipal boundaries of Al Bireh. Like other refugee camps, Al Am'ari has a very high population density as all available land has been used for construction and there are no empty spaces or agricultural areas in the camp; the population density reaches about 108 people/ km². According to the Oslo II Interim Agreement signed on 28th September 1995 between the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel, Al Am'ari camp is located in Area A, where the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) holds all responsibilities for internal security and public order; however, like all other Palestinian refugee camps, Al Am'ari is under the administrative control of UNRWA.

In addition to the displacement of Palestinian families from their lands and the difficult humanitarian situation represented by the high rate of poverty, unemployment, overpopulation and deterioration of the environmental situation, the Palestinian residents of the camp have been subject to further problems as a result of the Israeli occupation. As part of Ramallah Governorate, Al Am'ari has faced difficulties due to closures and military checkpoints, settlements, military camps and bypass roads that surround the Governorate from all sides. The Israeli settlement of Pesagot is located 1km east of the camp, while the Segregation Wall is approximately 1.3km south of the camp; Qalandia military airport base and Ofra military base are 2.2km from the southern part of the camp.

Despite the fact that Ramallah city is nominally under Palestinian security control, Al Am'ari refugee camp population is frequently exposed to Israeli military attacks and the arrests of Palestinian militants within the camp.

Development Plans and Projects

Implemented Projects

Al Am'ari Camp Committee has implemented several development projects in Al Am'ari camp during the past five years (See Table 6).

Table 6: Implemented development plans and projects in Al Am'ari camp during the last five years

Name of the Project	Type	Year	Donor
Restoring the Child Club	Public Services	2008	Ministry of Finance
Constructing a pool and a multi services hall	Public Services	2010	PECDAR
Constructing a music institution hall	Public Services	2011	Ministry of Finance
Rehabilitating the water network	Infrastructure	2010	UNRWA

Source: Al Am'ari Camp Committee, 2012

Proposed Projects

Al Am'ari Camp Committee, in cooperation with the civil society organizations in the camp and the camp 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 camp. The projects are as follows, in order of priority from the perspectives of the participants in the workshop:

1. Paving streets and improving and beautifying the landscape of the camp (0.5 km).
2. Improving infrastructure and restoring houses in need of rehabilitation (120 houses).
3. Establishing a sewage network.
4. Rehabilitating the electricity network.
5. Constructing public places, and improving and rehabilitating institutions.
6. Providing basic furniture for institutions.

Locality Development Priorities and Needs

Al Am'ari camp suffers from a significant shortage of infrastructure and services. Table 7 shows the development priorities and needs in the camp according to the Camp Committee's feedback.

Table 7: Development priorities and needs in Al Am'ari Camp

No.	Sector	Strongly Needed	Needed	Not a Priority	Notes
Infrastructural Needs					
1	Opening and Pavement of Roads	*			2km*
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			*	
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			*	
2	Rehabilitation of Old Schools			*	
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			*	

*1km are main roads and 1km are sub roads.

Source: Al Am'ari Camp Committee, 2012

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