

Al-Jiftlik Village Profile



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Introduction

This booklet is part of a series aimed at documenting and analyzing the social and economic conditions in the Palestinian Jordan Valley, specifically in the governorates of Tubas and Jericho, through a comprehensive study of the population clusters, monitoring developmental needs, and setting future plans to improve the living standards of the residents and enhance their resilience in the face of challenges.

In this context, the Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem (ARIJ) is implementing the project:

"Identifying and Diagnosing the Livelihoods of Palestinian Rural Women and Their Economic Empowerment in Area C."

The project addresses the economic and social impacts of Israeli military orders and occupation practices, which directly affect Palestinian rural women, particularly in Area C of the West Bank. The project aims to empower rural women by raising awareness of their rights and developing their capabilities to face various challenges, such as settler attacks and the risks of displacement, in addition to supporting their participation in developmental planning to ensure a more stable future for them and their families.

The project relies on an integrated methodology that includes field data collection, documenting life stories of affected women, engaging with media and social media platforms, and fostering cooperation with local and international stakeholders. It also focuses on developing effective advocacy strategies to raise awareness of the challenges faced by rural women and push for the adoption of policies that support their access to necessary resources for their economic projects, particularly in the agricultural sector, which is a primary livelihood source for many of them.

This booklet aims to provide a comprehensive picture of the reality of the population clusters in the Tubas and Jericho governorates, highlight the challenges faced by women in these areas, and review the opportunities available to enhance sustainable rural development. It also seeks to serve as a reference that contributes to supporting efforts aimed at improving the economic and social conditions of the residents of the Jordan Valley and strengthening their resilience in the face of increasing political and economic challenges.

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Geographical Location and Natural Characteristics

Al-Jiftlik village is one of the villages in the Jericho Governorate. It is located to the north of Jericho City, at an aerial distance of 33 km (the horizontal distance between the center of the village and the center of Jericho City). It is bordered to the east by Jordan, to the north by the lands of Tammun, to the west by villages from the eastern part of Nablus Governorate such as Duma, Majdal Bani Fadil, and Aqraba, and to the south by the village of Fasayil, which belongs to the Jericho Governorate. (Geographic Information Systems Unit – ARIJ, 2024)

The total area of Al-Jiftlik community is 188,851 dunums, while its administrative area is 22,000 dunums, of which 18,000 dunums are agricultural lands and 4,000 dunums are residential areas. This is in the absence of an officially approved master plan for the community. The boundaries of the residential areas were defined according to the administrative division adopted by the Palestinian National Authority. The Palestinian Ministry of Planning, the Ministry of Local Government, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, and the Central Elections Commission developed the area and administrative division system.

Al-Jiftlik village lies at an elevation of 189 meters below sea level. The average annual rainfall is approximately 232 mm, the average temperature is around 22°C, and the average relative humidity is about 49.2% (Geographic Information Systems Unit – ARIJ, 2024).

Land Use and Land Cover Analysis: Al-Jiftlik Village, 2024

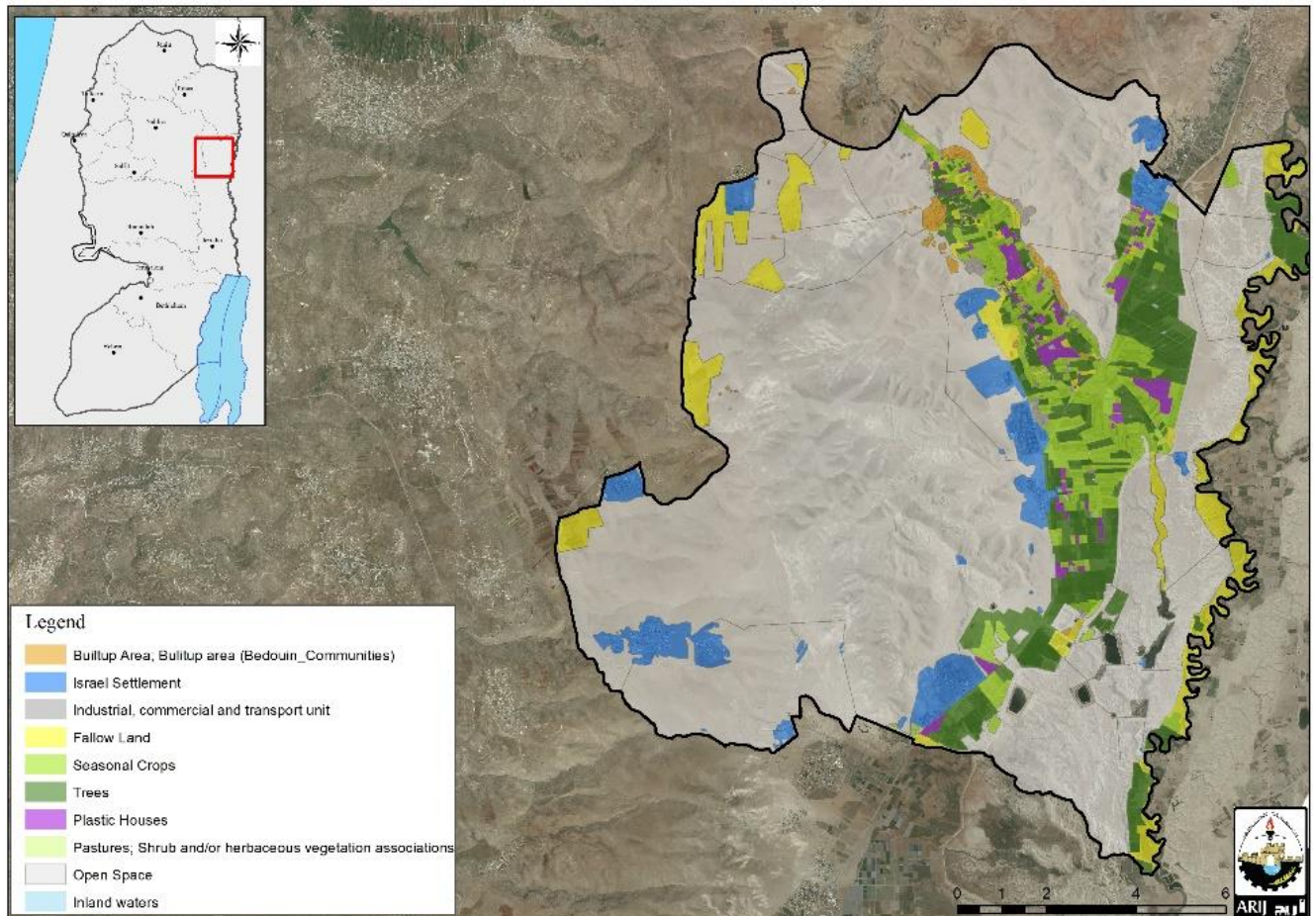
The analysis of land use and land cover in Al-Jiftlik for the using Aerial photographs ofr year 2021 reveals a wide range of land use types and covers across the area. Barren lands, represen ting uncultivated areas, cover 9,483 dunums, while built-up areas, including urban zones, occupy 1,178 dunums. Seasonal crops, which make up a significant portion of the town's agricultural activity, cover 8,711 dunums. Industrial, commercial, and transportation units occupy 1,019 dunums, highlighting the town's infrastructure for economic development. Inland water bodies, such as ponds or small lakes, cover 1,673 dunums, contributing to the town's natural environment.

Israeli settlements extend over 8,915 dunums, while agricultural areas within these settlements span 17,879 dunums. Open spaces with little or no vegetation dominate the landscape, covering 134,610 dunums. Pastures and shrubs, indicating grazing areas and natural vegetation, cover 109 dunums, while trees, mainly used for forestry or fruit production, span 4,653 dunums. Additionally, greenhouses, commonly used for agriculture, cover 621 dunums.

In total, Al-Jiftlik town covers an area of 188,851 dunums (see Table (1) and Map (1), reflecting a complex land use pattern with a strong focus on agricultural activity, extensive residential areas, and a variety of natural and developed land covers.

Type	Area (Dunums)
Barren land	9,483
Built-up area	1,178
Seasonal crops	8,711
Industrial, commercial, and transport units	1,019
Inland water	1,673
Israeli settlements	8,915
Agricultural areas of Israeli settlements	17,879
Open areas with little or no vegetation	134,610
Pastures and shrubs	109
Trees	4,653
Greenhouses	621
Total Area	188,851

Data Source: Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem (ARIJ), GIS and Remote Sensing Unit, 2024



Map: Land Use and Land Cover in Kardala Village, 2021

Al-Jiftlik Village Council and Community Overview

The Village Council of Al-Jiftlik was established in 1995 and currently consists of 9 members appointed by the Palestinian National Authority. The council owns a permanent headquarters and employs several paid staff. Several surrounding localities have been incorporated under the jurisdiction of the council, including Al-Masfah, Al-Shouna, Khillet Al-Ghoula, Arab Al-Muthalath, and Abu Al-Ajaaj.

Among the equipment owned by the council is an agricultural tractor acquired in 2021 through the Ministry of Agriculture (Al-Jiftlik Village Council, 2024).

The responsibilities and services of the council include:

1. Providing infrastructure services (water and electricity networks, road construction and maintenance)
2. Providing government facilities and services
3. Developing projects and studies for village improvement
4. Developing the transportation sector and providing public transport
5. Providing kindergartens
6. Providing emergency services such as ambulance and fire response
7. Providing facilities for government services

Historical Background

The name *Al-Jiftlik* comes from a Turkish word meaning "farm" and also refers to an old Ottoman estate (Jiftlik) or land of the Sultan. The village has ancient origins dating back to the early history of Palestine. In addition to original inhabitants, many residents are from the Al-Mas'eed tribe from Tammun in Tubas Governorate and refugees from Be'er Al-Sabe', Sheikh Ali, and other areas. (*Al-Jiftlik Village Council, 2024*)

Religious and Archaeological Sites

There are seven mosques in Al-Jiftlik: Abu Ubaida Mosque, Abu Bakr Mosque, Al-Sahaba Mosque, Al-Shouna Mosque, Amir Al-Jarrah Mosque, Abu Al-Ajaaj Mosque, and Khillet Al-Ghoula Mosque. Notable archaeological sites include Tell Al-Samadi and the Ottoman center, which has been seized by a settler two years ago. (*Al-Jiftlik Village Council, 2024*)

Population

According to the 2017 General Population and Housing Census conducted by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), the population of Al-Jiftlik was 3,100, with 1,595 males and 1,505 females, distributed across 516 households and 617 housing units.

By 2024, according to the council, the population has grown to 4,000. Of these, 2,400 are refugees displaced during the 1948 Nakba from three areas: Be'er Al-Sabe', Wadi Al-Hawarith, and Sheikh Muwannis.

Age Groups and Gender

The 2017 census showed the following age distribution:

- 40.5% under the age of 14
- 55.2% between 15–64 years
- 2.6% aged 65 and above
- 1.7% unspecified

The gender ratio was 51.5% male and 48.5% female.

Families

The village is home to several families, including: Arab Al-Masa'eed, Arab Al-Ayed, Arab Al-Jahaleen, Al-Ajajreh, Abu Sris, Abu Dallakh, Al-Ruteimat (Abu Daheela), Al-Nafi'at, Al-Anouz (Ma'ouz), Daraghmeh, Ka'abneh, D'ais, Kanouri, and Al-Ramadin. (*Al-Jiftlik Village Council, 2024*)

Migration

Field surveys indicate that around 20 families have been displaced since the start of the Second Intifada in 2000 due to harsh living conditions imposed by the occupation. Since 2000, nearly 300 structures—including homes, animal shelters, and greenhouses—have been demolished by the occupation. (*Al-Jiftlik Village Council, 2024*)

Education Sector

Literacy and Education Levels (2017)

The illiteracy rate among the residents of Al-Jiftlik village in 2017 was approximately 8% (with females accounting for 76% of that figure). Among the educated population, 18.9% could read and write, 30% had completed primary education, 35.5% had completed intermediate (preparatory) education, 9.2% had completed secondary education, and 6.4% had completed higher education. (See Table 2), which shows the educational level in Al-Jiftlik village by gender and educational attainment for the year 2017.

Gender	Illite rate	Reads & Writes	Primary	Preparatory	Secondary	Diploma	Bachelor	Higher Diploma	Master	PhD	Not Specified	Total
Male	40	198	314	404	86	17	43	3	-	-	0	1105
Female	126	185	295	317	100	18	47	2	-	-	0	1090
Total	166	383	609	721	186	35	90	5	-	-	0	2195

(Source: PCBS, 2018 – 2017 General Population and Housing Census)

With regard to educational institutions for primary and secondary levels in Al-Jiftlik village for the academic year 2024/2025, there are two co-educational schools in the village. The first is a public school managed by the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education, catering to grades from first to ninth. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency manage the second school for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), which accommodates students from first grade to twelfth grade (see Table 3).

This distribution highlights the limited educational infrastructure in Al-Jiftlik, with only two schools serving all primary and secondary education needs. The reliance on UNRWA for secondary-level education underscores the challenges faced by the village in expanding its public educational facilities.

There are 30 classrooms in Al-Jiftlik village, with a total of 829 male and female students and 47 male and female teachers. It is worth noting that the average number of students per teacher is approximately 18, and the average classroom density is about 28 students per class. Both schools serve all educational stages. Additionally, there is one kindergarten in the village, established in 2016 by UNDP, with 109 students enrolled. (Al-Jiftlik Village Council, 2024).

Table 3: Distribution of schools in Al-Jiftlik village by school type and supervising authority for the academic year 2024/2025		
School Name	Supervising Authority	School Type
Al-Jiftlik Secondary Co-educational School	Government	Co-educational
Ghor Al-Fara'a Basic Co-educational School	UNRWA	Co-educational

Source: Directorate of Education, 2024.

The education sector in Al-Jiftlik faces several obstacles and challenges, including, (Al-Jiftlik Village Council, 2024)

1. Lack of a government school for the basic education level
2. Lack of transportation means for students
3. Student dropouts to work in Israeli settlements
4. A low percentage of teachers from the village itself, not exceeding 8%, despite having a sufficient number of qualified graduates to meet educational needs
5. Ongoing harassment and assaults by the occupation targeting schools, students, and the infrastructure of the educational process
6. Military checkpoints significantly disrupt school operations

Health Sector

Al-Jiftlik village has some healthcare facilities, including a government clinic (Al-Jiftlik Health Clinic) that provides general practitioner services, a medical laboratory, a maternal and child health center, and a pharmacy unit. Additionally, there is a fully equipped emergency center, established three years ago by Medical Relief, which includes an emergency unit, a dental clinic, a fracture treatment room, five beds (including an intensive care bed with monitoring equipment), and an

ambulance. However, this center is currently non-operational due to difficulties in securing medical staff.

When the required medical services are unavailable in the village, patients must travel to Jericho Governmental Hospital in Jericho (approximately 50 km away) or Rafidia National Hospital in Nablus (approximately 40 km away).

Challenges Facing the Health Sector in Al-Jiftlik:

1. Limited services provided by the health center (irregular availability of doctors and lack of essential medications).
2. Absence of public or private radiology centers.
3. Lack of medical staff due to restricted access caused by military checkpoints and insufficient financial coverage for employees.
4. No ambulance crew available to operate the ambulance.
5. Frequent harassment and attacks by the occupation forces on the health sector.
6. Military checkpoints imposed by the occupation hinder the movement of doctors, patients, and ambulances.
7. The village's distance from urban centers.
8. Lack of antivenoms for snake and scorpion bites, which are urgently needed.
9. Absence of private clinics for general or specialized medicine.

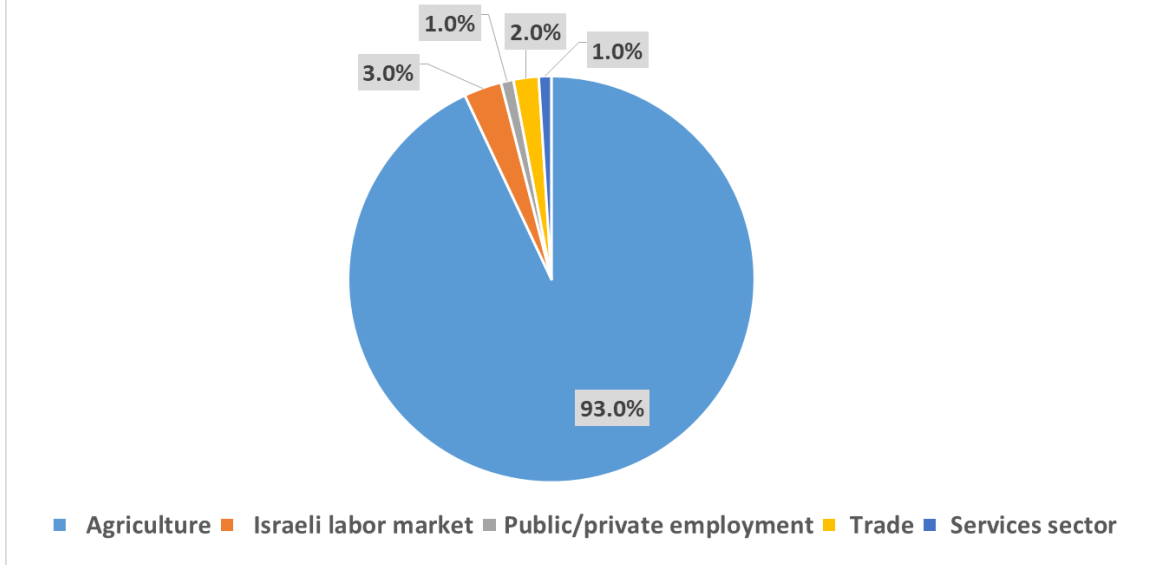
Economic Activities

The economy of Al-Jiftlik village heavily relies on agriculture, which employs 93% of the workforce (see Figure 1). According to a field survey conducted by ARIJ in 2024, the distribution of labor across economic sectors is as follows:

1. Agriculture: 93% of the workforce.
2. Trade: 2% of the workforce.
3. Employment in the Israeli labor market: 3% of the workforce.
4. Public sector employees: 1% of the workforce.
5. Services sector: 1% of the workforce.

(Source: Al-Jiftlik Village Council, 2024)

Figure 1: Distribution of the labor force by economic activity in the village of Kardala



Economic and Commercial Facilities

The village has 3 date packaging facilities, 5 grocery stores, 3 building material shops, 9 service-oriented shops (salons, car washes, event supply rentals, etc.), 2 wholesale produce points for vegetables and fruits, 3 professional workshops (blacksmithing, carpentry, etc.), and 1 agricultural tools shop.

The unemployment rate in Al-Jiftlik village has reached **15%**. The social groups most adversely affected by Israeli restrictions are:

- **Agriculture sector**
- **Israeli labor market**
- **Trade sector**

Labor Force

According to the 2017 Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) Population and Housing Census, **45%** of the population aged 10+ were economically active (94% employed, 6% unemployed), while **55%** were economically inactive. Among the inactive population, (see table 4):

- **18.1%** were full-time students
- **63.3%** were engaged in household duties
- **14.7%** were unable to work due to illness/disability
- **3.9%** had alternative income sources or were retirees

Table 4: Population of Al-Jiftlik (Aged 10+) by Gender and Labor Force Status (2017)							
Gender	Economically Active			Economically Inactive			Total
	Employed	Unemployed	Total	Full-time Students	Household Duties	Unable to Work	
Males	679	44	723	60	0	74	35
Females	79	5	84	118	623	71	3
Total	758	49	807	178	623	145	38

(Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2017; Al-Jiftlik Village Council, 2024)

Agricultural Sector

Al-Jiftlik village is characterized as a fertile agricultural area located in the Jordan Valley, with suitable climate conditions for farming. The village contains approximately 18,000 dunums of agricultural land. Around 93% of the population relies on the agricultural sector for their income. The main sources of water are artesian wells and springs supplied through the Israeli Mekorot company. Water is not paid for, as it is provided free of charge at the source. Al-Jiftlik is considered economically vital, acting as a corridor between Jericho Governorate and the governorates of Nablus and Tubas.

The residents of Al-Jiftlik mainly depend on irrigated agriculture, especially vegetable cultivation—most notably tomatoes—and also on date palm cultivation.

As for livestock, it constitutes only a small part of the agricultural sector, with figures indicating that only 2% of the population works in livestock farming, such as sheep and goats. Additionally, very few people work in beekeeping and poultry farming. (Al-Jiftlik Village Council, 2024), (See Table 5).

Table 5: Livestock in Al-Jiftlik Village					
Beehives	Poultry	Goats	Sheep	Work Animals**	Cattle*
260	1063	3969	19998	70	153

* Includes cows, calves, heifers, and bulls

** Includes horses, mules, and donkeys

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Livestock Census 2021

Regarding agricultural roads in the village, there are about 25 km of agricultural roads, distributed as follows:

1. 7 km suitable for vehicle traffic
2. 18 km suitable only for tractors and agricultural machinery
(Al-Jiftlik Village Council, 2024)

The agricultural sector faces several challenges, including:

1. Harassment and practices by Israeli occupation forces, such as land confiscation, crop destruction, assaults on farmers, and bans on grazing in wide areas of the community
2. Military checkpoints established by the occupation at village entrances, most notably Hamra checkpoint
3. Israeli restrictions on the construction of buildings, sales kiosks, or residences that could improve the agricultural economic situation
4. The presence of the region's largest landfill for settlement waste, which spreads diseases, attracts rodents, and threatens the agricultural environment
5. Lack of a stable water source
6. Salinity of artesian well water
7. Limited water quota allocated to the community by the occupation
8. High prices of fodder and agricultural production inputs
9. Marketing issues, including limited export capacity and problems at border crossings
(*Al-Jiftlik Village Council, 2024*)

Institutional and Services Sector

In Al-Jiftlik village, there are various local institutions distributed as follows:
(*Al-Jiftlik Village Council, 2024*)

Village Council Institutions:

Al-Jiftlik Village Council: Established in 1995 by the Ministry of Local Government.

Government Institutions:

- **Ministry of Agriculture Office:** Established in 2011 by the Ministry of Agriculture, providing agricultural services.
- **Al-Jiftlik Sports Club:** Founded in 2010 by the Ministry of Youth, providing sports services.
- **Firefighting Center**
- **Public Health Center**

Religious Institutions:

- There are seven mosques in the village: Abu Ubaida Mosque, Abu Bakr Mosque, Al-Sahaba Mosque, Al-Shuna Mosque, Amer Al-Jarrah Mosque, Abu Al-Ajaj Mosque, and Khillet Al-Ghoulah Mosque.

Associations and Cooperatives:

- **Agricultural Relief Society Office:** Established in 2021 to serve the village and surrounding communities.
- **Women's Association:** Founded in 2013 by the Ministry of Labor, focused on cultural and social activities for women.
- **Farmers' Union:** Founded in 1994 by the Jericho Farmers Union to support farmers and provide agricultural guidance.
- **Al-Jiftlik Cooperative Association:** Founded in 2014 by the Ministry of Labor.

Inactive or Dissolved Associations:

- **Land Agricultural Association:** Founded in 2007 by the Ministry of Labor.
- **Poultry Association:** Founded in 2008.
- **Al-Jiftlik Food Processing Association:** Founded in 2008.
- **Al-Jiftlik Cultural Youth Association:** Founded in 2010.

Infrastructure and Natural Resources

Electricity and Communications:

The village has had a public electricity network since 2008, primarily supplied by the Israeli Qatari Company. All housing units (100%) are connected to the grid. Electricity is free of charge from the source.

Main electricity-related issues:

- Outdated electrical network.
 - Weak electricity supply and lack of transformers.
 - Overload on the grid.
 - Inefficient infrastructure causing power loss.
- (*Al-Jiftlik Village Council, 2024*)

Transportation:

Public buses and two licensed taxis are the main transportation means, in addition to private vehicles. The road network in the village totals around 16 km—10 km main roads and 6 km secondary roads. Roads are in poor condition and need development. See table 6.

Road Condition	Main Roads	Secondary Roads	Agricultural Roads
Paved & Good	5 km	0	-
Paved & Poor	5 km	-	-
Unpaved	0	6 km	25 km

Transportation challenges:

- Permanent and temporary military checkpoints at village entrances.
- Ongoing attacks by Israeli forces and settlers targeting roads and public infrastructure.
- Poor condition of main roads.
- Limited transportation services available to the community.

Water:

Water has been supplied via the Israeli Mekorot Company since 1983, with full coverage of all housing units (100%). The public water network was renovated in 2018.

- **2024 water supply:** ~7,920 m³/month from Mekorot and 9,000 m³/month from artesian wells, covering about 80–85% of the total water demand. Farmers rely on water tankers to meet the shortfall.
- **Other water sources:** 22 groundwater wells and 1 spring, used mainly for agricultural projects like date palms and vegetables.
- **An unused public water reservoir needs maintenance.**
- **There are no household rainwater harvesting wells.**
- **Water is free of charge from the source.**
(*Al-Jiftlik Village Council, 2024*)

Water sector challenges:

1. Need to expand the water network due to dispersed housing.
2. Israeli military attacks and deliberate sabotage of infrastructure.
3. Salinity in artesian wells.
4. Israeli control over the quantity of water pumped—resulting in low supply to the village.
5. Limited potable water.

Sanitation:

The village lacks a sewage network. Residents rely on cesspits for wastewater, often emptied by vacuum trucks and discharged in open areas without environmental safeguards. (*Al-Jiftlik Village Council, 2024*)

Untreated wastewater poses significant threats to both public health and the environment. (*Water and Sanitation Group, 2024*)

Solid Waste:

There is no solid waste management service in the village. Waste is disposed of randomly—either buried or burned near homes.

- **Waste generation rate:** 0.7 kg per person/day.
- **Total waste generated:** ~2.8 tons/day (~1008 tons/year).

Environmental Conditions

Al-Jiftlik faces several pressing environmental issues requiring urgent solutions:

Water Crisis:

- Over-extraction of groundwater by the Israeli Mekorot Company, which controls all drilling, maintenance, and water distribution. Palestinians are forbidden from drilling new wells or restoring old ones.
- The Israeli company extracts vast quantities of groundwater and diverts most of it to illegal settlements, particularly in the Jordan Valley, where settlers consume disproportionate amounts.
- **One of the main wells in the village is the Jericho Well No. 1, owned and being operated by Mekorot.**

Wastewater Management:

The absence of a public sewage network has led residents to rely on cesspits to dispose of wastewater. Some residents even discharge wastewater into public streets, especially during the winter season, due to their inability to afford the high costs of septic tank emptying. This practice creates unsanitary conditions and contributes to the spread of epidemics and diseases within the village. Additionally, the use of cesspits threatens to contaminate groundwater and the water collected in household rainwater harvesting wells, as the wastewater mixes with this water, rendering it unfit for drinking. These pits are often constructed without proper lining, allowing wastewater to seep into the soil layers, thereby avoiding the need for frequent vacuum truck services. Furthermore, untreated wastewater collected from cesspits by vacuum trucks is often dumped in open areas without consideration for the resulting environmental and public health hazards.

Solid Waste Management:

- The absence of a solid collection and management waste service causes environmental and health hazards.
- Waste accumulates throughout the village, contaminating soil and water sources through leachate.
- Open burning of waste—including hazardous materials like plastics—pollutes the air, increasing respiratory illnesses like asthma and allergies.

Impact of Israeli Occupation Measures

According to the *Interim Oslo II Agreement* signed on September 28, 1995, between the Palestinian National Authority and Israel, all the lands of Al-Jiftlik village, totaling **188,831 dunums**, were classified as **Area C**—areas under full Israeli control, both security-wise and administratively. In these areas, Palestinian construction or land use is prohibited unless a permit is issued by the Israeli Civil Administration. *See Table 7.*

Land Classification	Area (dunum)	% of Total Village Area
Area A	0	0
Area B	0	0
Area C	188,831	100
Nature Reserve	0	0
Total Area	188,831	100

Source: ARIJ GIS Database – 2024

Al-Jiftlik Village and Israeli Occupation Practices

Al-Jiftlik village has been subjected to various Israeli land confiscations, leading to the loss of thousands of dunums for various Israeli objectives. These include the construction of Israeli

settlements and outposts, as well as bypass roads to connect settlements with each other and with military bases. During its occupation of Palestinian territories, Israel has confiscated **9,470 dunums** (5% of the village's total area) to establish **seven Israeli settlements**. Today, these settlements are home to more than **4,000 Israeli settlers**. See Table 8.

Settlement Name	Confiscated Land (dunum)	Total Settlement Area	Population (2025)	Governorate	Year Established
Yafit	1,577,857	1.58	273	Jericho	1980
Gitit	523,811	1.20	617	Nablus	1973
Argaman	1,092,797	1.14	174	Jericho	1970
Petza'el	186,055	1.45	453	Jericho	1972
Mekhora	464,935	1.04	230	Nablus	1973
Ma'ale Efraim	1,406,428	1.41	1,848	Jericho	1970
Massu'a	1,657,857	1.66	440	Jericho	1970
	6,909,739	9,470	4,035		

Source: ARIJ GIS Database – 2025

Israeli Military Bases

Land confiscation in Al-Jiftlik did not stop at settlements. The village has also lost **5,184 dunums** to the establishment of an Israeli military base intended to protect the settlements built on and around its lands.

Israeli Bypass Roads

Israel has confiscated further lands in Al-Jiftlik to build bypass roads such as **Road No. 90** and **Road No. 57**, designed to connect Israeli settlements internally and externally. Notably, the real threat of these roads lies in the **buffer zones** enforced by the Israeli military, typically extending **75 meters** on either side of the road.

Agricultural Lands Belonging to Settlements

Over years of occupation, successive Israeli governments have encouraged settlers to live in the Jordan Valley through financial incentives and tax exemptions. Additionally, settlers were encouraged to farm nearby lands to assert control and eventually annex them. Today, settlers control **64,000 dunums** of agricultural land in the eastern isolation zone (3.9% of the area's total). In Al-Jiftlik, settlers control **20,915 dunums** for agriculture (11% of the village's area), linked to the settlements of Argaman, Gitit, Mekhora, Massu'a, and Yafit.

Israeli "State Lands"

Israeli authorities classify about **152,300 dunums** (approx. 80% of Al-Jiftlik's total area) as "State Lands." This includes lands declared before 1967, those registered post-1967, and lands surveyed as such. These classifications are used to prevent Palestinians from utilizing their lands while expanding Israeli settlement ambitions.

Upon occupying the West Bank in 1967, only a third of the land was officially registered under individuals via Ottoman, British, or Jordanian legal systems. Israel exploited the **Ottoman Land Law of 1858** under **Military Order 59 (1967)** and its amendment, **Order 1091**, enabling the "Custodian of Government Property" to confiscate lands managed by the Jordanian government or declared as "Public/State Lands"—including those allegedly held by enemies of Israel.

Israel thus claimed **634,920 dunums** of Jordanian "State Lands" (11.2% of West Bank). Post 1967, another **843,922 dunums** (14.9%) were added as "Declared State Lands." Currently, **666,327 dunums** (11.7%) are being surveyed as "State Lands."

In total, Israel now classifies **2,145,169 dunums—38% of the West Bank**—as "State Lands," including **248,904 dunums** (4.4% of the West Bank), located within Areas A and B per the Oslo II Agreement, particularly in Hebron.

Nature Reserves

Since 1967, Israel declared **53 sites** in the West Bank as **nature reserves**, totaling **350.7 km²** (6.2% of the area). Plans are underway to designate **140 additional sites**, amounting to **704.9 km²**. Most reserves are in the eastern slopes and the Jordan Valley. Many declared reserves were later converted into **settlements** or **military bases**, indicating the real motive behind the declarations.

In Al-Jiftlik, over **84,000 dunums** are classified or planned as "nature reserves" by Israeli authorities. *See Table 9.*

#	Nature Reserve Name	Plan No.	Publication Date	Area Under Reserve Classification
1	Adam Bridge	51_52	7/17/1991	762,651
2	Sartaba	51_20	9/17/1990	34,660,596
3	Wadi Al-Ahmar	51_51	1/8/1992	7,994,055
4	Jordan River – South	51_77	3/15/1995	15,457,897
5	Nahal Tirzah	51_61	10/20/1993	5,747,027
6	Wadi Al-Ahmar (Extension)	51_51_1	11/22/2000	6,188,589
7	Ma'ale Efraim Cave	51_53	11/18/1992	4,653
8	Nahal Petza'el	51_10	5/3/1983	1,468,366
9	Al-Kharouba	51_24	5/3/1983	12,086,185
	Total area			84,370,019

Source: ARIJ GIS Unit – 2025

For more details on Israeli military orders targeting Al-Jiftlik:
<http://orders.arij.org/searchLocality.php>

Settlement Outposts

Al-Jiftlik has also seen the forceful seizure of lands for **five Israeli outposts**, including: *Initial Ma'ale Efraim Outpost, North Ma'ale Efraim Outpost, South Massu'a Outpost, East Gitit Outpost, and South Mekhora Outpost.*

Over the past two decades, Israel has constructed **243 settlement outposts** in the West Bank. These usually start with **mobile caravans** and later expand. The outposts are typically satellite extensions of existing settlements, a phenomenon ignited by Ariel Sharon's call for settlers to occupy hilltops to prevent their return in any future peace deal.

Though officially illegal under Israeli law, the government has provided these outposts with **military and logistical support**, particularly after 2001, facilitating infrastructure and security.

Israeli Demolition and Displacement Policies in Al-Jiftlik Village

The situation in Al-Jiftlik village is no different from other Palestinian villages located in **Area C**, which are under full Israeli control. Palestinian residents in these areas suffer from the absence of structural plans that meet their urban development needs, and the **Israeli Civil Administration routinely denies them building permits** to accommodate population growth. As a result, residents remain under constant threat of **home demolitions under the pretext of unlicensed construction**, as claimed by Israeli authorities.

On the other hand, **Israeli bulldozers are quick to respond to Palestinians who dare to defy Israeli laws** by building in Area C. Any Palestinian wishing to construct a house or even add a room to an existing home must undergo **a lengthy, complex, and costly process**, which almost always ends in rejection by the Israeli Civil Administration, on the grounds that Palestinians do not meet the so-called requirements for building in those areas.

It is worth noting that **before the announcement of the Oslo Accords in 1993**, the Israeli government unilaterally issued **structural plans for all Palestinian cities, towns, and villages in the West Bank**, through which it determined the urban boundaries of each community **based on Israeli needs and future plans**. These plans effectively **restricted Palestinian development**, even in Areas A and B, while **servicing Israeli expansionist agendas**, particularly for expanding existing settlements in Area C and constructing new ones.

Following the **Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967**, Israel targeted the **eastern region of the West Bank** by declaring vast areas as "**closed military zones**" with the aim of halting Palestinian urban and economic development and displacing residents to facilitate its colonial plans and strengthen its presence in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Since Al-Jiftlik lies within this eastern region, **Israeli policies have severely hindered its growth** and that of other Palestinian communities in the area, most of which fall within zones where

construction is prohibited without a permit issued by the Israeli Civil Administration. Additionally, Israel has **exploited the region’s natural resources**, such as agricultural lands and **natural water sources** (wells and springs), **diverting them to nearby Israeli settlements** by digging deep wells. This has been a strategic move to force Palestinians to abandon their lands.

These Israeli land-grab policies in the Jordan Valley align with a public statement made by former Israeli Prime Minister **Benjamin Netanyahu** on **June 3, 2005**, where he made it clear that **Israel does not intend to relinquish control of the Jordan Valley**, stating:

*"The Jordan Valley will not be included in any Israeli withdrawal plans. The Jordan Valley will remain under Israeli control forever. It is Israel’s eastern defensive shield... and we will not return to the 1967 borders."*¹

Implemented and Proposed Development Plans and Projects in Al-Jiftlik Village

Implemented Projects

The Al-Jiftlik Village Council has implemented several projects over the past five years (see Table 10).

Project Name	Type	Year	Funding Agency
Paving internal roads	Infrastructure	2024	French Development Agency (AFD)
House renovation	Infrastructure	2024	AFD
House renovation	Infrastructure	2024	Action Against Hunger (ACF)
School renovation	Infrastructure	2024	AFD
Emergency health center	Health	2021	Palestinian Medical Relief Society
Fully equipped with ambulance but not operational	-	-	-
Kindergarten project	Education	2016	UNDP

Proposed Projects

In cooperation with civil society organizations and village residents, Al-Jiftlik Village aims to implement several projects in the coming years. These project ideas were developed during a **Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA)** workshop held in the village and conducted by the **Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem (ARIJ)**. The projects are prioritized as follows by workshop participants:

¹ 'Netanyahu Warns Against PA Terror State, Leaving Jordan Valley.' Israel National News, 03 June 2005. [1 <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/83197>](http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/83197).

1. Construction of a school
2. Paving and rehabilitation of roads
3. Operation of the non-governmental health center
4. Expansion of the electricity network
5. Provision of a service vehicle for the council
6. Increase in the share of drinking water reaching the community
7. Provision of alternative sources for irrigation water on a permanent basis
8. Expansion of irrigation and drinking water networks
9. Provision of internal transport means for school students
10. Establishment of agricultural export projects
11. Provision of a mobile veterinary clinic

Development Priorities and Needs of the Village

The village suffers from a major shortage in infrastructure and services. Table 11 shows the village's priorities and development needs as viewed by the Al-Jiftlik Village Council.

Table 11: Development Priorities and Needs in Al-Jiftlik Village				
Priorities	Urgent Need	Needed	Not a Priority	Notes
Infrastructure Needs				
Is the community in need of opening or paving roads?				
What are the lengths of these roads by type:				Length (meters)
1. Main roads		✓		0
2. Secondary roads	✓			5000
3. Agricultural roads	✓			18000 (rehabilitation)
Is the community in need of repairing/rehabilitating the existing water network?	✓			Network length: 1000 meters
Is the community in need of expanding the old water network to cover new areas?	✓			Network length (km): 4 km (drinking water), 15 km (agricultural irrigation)
Is the community in need of installing a new water network?			✓	Network length (km):
Is the community in need of rehabilitating/restoring springs or groundwater wells?	✓			Number: 22, Type: Groundwater wells
Is the community in need of constructing a public water tank?		✓		
Is the community in need of a sewage network?	✓			Network length (km): 14 km

Is the community in need of installing a new electricity network?	✓			Network length (km): 2 km
Is the community in need of solid waste collection containers?	✓			Number: 20, capacity 1 cubic meter
Is the community in need of vehicles for solid waste collection?		✓		Number: 1
Is the community in need of a sanitary landfill for solid waste?	✓			
Health Needs				
Is the community in need of building new health centers/clinics?			✓	Number: —
Is the community in need of rehabilitating/restoring existing health centers/clinics?	✓			Number: 1 (re-operation of a public health center)
Is the community in need of purchasing medical equipment for existing centers/clinics?	✓			Yes
Educational Needs				
Is the community in need of building new schools? If yes, specify the level: primary, secondary, or both.	✓			Primary school
Is the community in need of rehabilitating existing schools? If yes, specify the level: primary, secondary, or both.		✓		
Is the community in need of educational equipment?	✓			
Agricultural Needs				
Is the community in need of land reclamation?		✓		Area (dunums): 0
Is the community in need of constructing water harvesting wells?		✓		
Is the community in need of building livestock barns/sheds?	✓			Number (based on study): 15
Is the community in need of veterinary services?	✓			Clinic, veterinarian, and medicines
Is the community in need of livestock feed and hay?	✓			Annual amount: 100 tons
Is the community in need of constructing greenhouses?	✓			Area (based on study): 20 dunums
Is the community in need of rehabilitating greenhouses?	✓			Area (based on study): 30 dunums
Is the community in need of field crop seeds?	✓			12 tons per year

Is the community in need of seedlings and agricultural materials?	✓			500,000 vegetable seedlings (some palm), 10 tons of fertilizers
Other Needs				
School construction	✓			
Paving and rehabilitation of roads	✓			
Rehabilitation and expansion of the electricity network	✓			
Operation of the non-governmental health center	✓			
Provision of a service vehicle for the council	✓			

References

- Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2020), General Population, Housing, and Establishments Census, 2017. Ramallah - Palestine.
- Al-Jiftlik Village Council (2024)
- Applied Research Institute - Jerusalem (ARIJ) (2024), GIS and Remote Sensing Unit Database. Bethlehem - Palestine.
- Ministry of Education and Higher Education (2024/2025), Directorate of Education Data – Tubas Governorate, Schools Database. Tubas - Palestine.