

WEST BANK

AREA C: KEY HUMANITARIAN CONCERNS

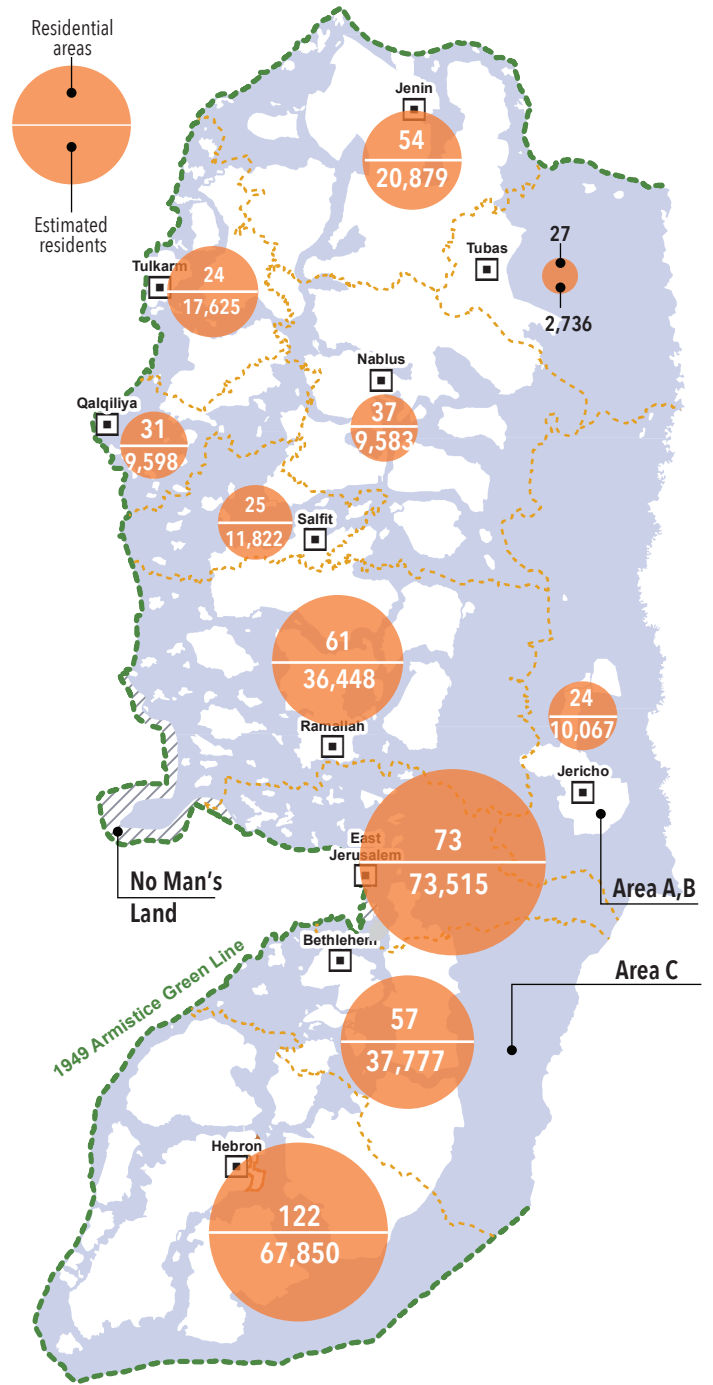
KEY FACTS

- Over 60 percent of the West Bank is considered Area C, where Israel retains near exclusive control, including over law enforcement, access and movement, and planning and construction.
- Some 300,000 Palestinians live in 532 residential areas located partially or fully in Area C, alongside 400,000 Israeli settlers residing in approximately 230 settlements, some of them (“outposts”) established without the formal approval by the Israeli authorities, but with their support.
- Less than 1% of Area C is covered by a planning scheme for Palestinian communities approved by the Israeli authorities.
- The annual average rate of approval of applications for building permits in Area C for Palestinians between 2009 and 2016 stood at less than 3%.
- Between 2009 and 2016, Israel demolished over 4,000 Palestinian-owned structures in Area C on the grounds of lack of building permits, while over 12,500 demolition orders are currently outstanding.
- Palestinian entry to, or residence in, nearly 30% of Area C is prohibited on the grounds that the area is designated as a ‘firing zone’ for military training; 6,200 Palestinians living in 38 communities in these areas face the risk of forcible transfer.
- The development or cultivation of 14% of Area C designated by Israel as ‘nature reserves’ is severely restricted.
- More than 70% of communities located entirely or mostly in Area C are not connected to the water network and rely on tankered water at vastly increased cost. Water consumption in some Area C communities drops to 20% of the minimum recommended standard (20 out of 100 litres per day per capita).
- Nearly half of the Area C communities report that their access to emergency and basic health care is hampered by the long distances to the nearest clinic, and/or the need to pass a checkpoint.
- Were Palestinians allowed to access and develop Area C without the current restrictions, Palestinian GDP would increase by an estimated 35% (The World Bank, 2013).

- 1. The restrictive planning regime applied by Israel in Area C makes it virtually impossible for Palestinians to obtain building permits, impeding the development of adequate housing, infrastructure and livelihoods.** Public (also called ‘state’) land has been automatically allocated to Israeli settlements or for military training, while most private Palestinian land is zoned as agricultural land, where construction is severely restricted. Along with other constraints, this regime contributes to the creation of a coercive environment on residents, leading to risk of forcible transfer.
- 2. Palestinian homes, animal shelters, water cisterns and service infrastructure built without permits in Area C are routinely destroyed or seized, displacing already vulnerable families and disrupting their livelihoods.** Humanitarian assistance provided in Area C, some of it in response to demolitions/seizures, has been also increasingly targeted in recent years. Demolitions and displacement have led to entrenched poverty and increased aid dependency among residents of affected communities. The psychosocial impact of demolitions and displacement on children is disproportionately high.
- 3. Due to the restrictive planning regime, most Palestinian communities in Area C are not connected to the water network, and/or face impediments on the rehabilitation of existing connections and the construction or repair of water cisterns.** This situation forces already vulnerable households to buy water from private vendors, at rates up to five times the price of piped water. The recent reactivation of the Israeli-Palestinian Joint Water Committee may facilitate an improvement in the water supply to some Area C communities but the results are yet to be seen.
- 4. Over a third of Palestinian communities in Area C lack a primary school, forcing children to travel or walk long distances to reach the nearest school.** Some of these children face additional challenges on their way to school, such as the need to cross a checkpoint, or exposure to harassment by Israeli settlers. To cope with this situation, affected families often move out of the community, leave their children during the week with relatives in the community where the school is located, or entirely withdraw them from school, a practice particularly affecting girls.
- 5. As an occupying power, Israel has the obligation under international humanitarian law to ensure that the basic needs of Palestinians living in the territory it occupies, including in Area C, are met.** Where needed, Israel must agree to, and facilitate, the delivery of humanitarian relief and protection. The destruction of private or public property is prohibited, unless absolutely required for military operations. Also prohibited is the forcible transfer of Palestinian civilians, including within the occupied territory, as well as the transfer of part of Israel’s population into the occupied territory.

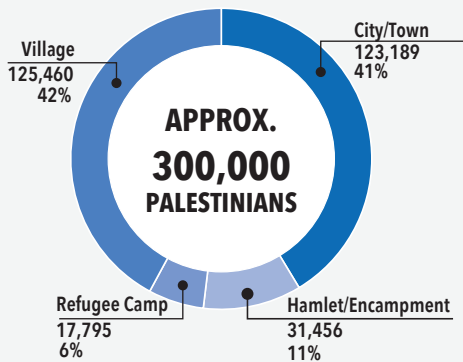


PALESTINIAN COMMUNITIES AND RESIDENTS IN AREA C BY GOVERNORATE



Source: OCHA 2013

PALESTINIAN RESIDENTS IN AREA C BY TYPE OF COMMUNITY (2013)



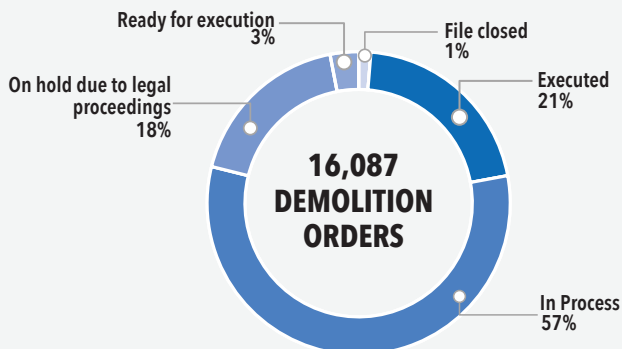
Source: OCHA 2013

COMMUNITIES PARTIALLY / TOTALLY IN AREA C

Percentage of built-up area in Area C	Communities	Estimated residents in Area C
Less than 50%	240	175,866
50 - 99%	51	55,018
100%	241	67,016
Grand Total	532	297,900

Source: OCHA 2013

DEMOLITION ORDERS AGAINST PALESTINIANS IN AREA C BY STATUS: 1988-2016



Source: Israeli Civil Administration

PALESTINIAN STRUCTURES DEMOLISHED/SEIZED IN AREA C

