

Ethnic Planning

A Comparison between Israel's ethnic spatial planning policies in Israeli Jewish settlements and Syrian villages in the Occupied Syrian Golan

Al Marsad

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Introduction

Conducting research on ethnic-based planning policies and practices in the Occupied Syrian Golan, given the area's internationally-recognized status as a militarily occupied area, might not normally be seen as necessary.

However, in 1981 and during the four decades since the Israeli occupying authorities have imposed Israeli civilian law on the indigenous population, with profound consequences. This has rendered such research necessary in order to expose the discriminatory impact of the occupying authorities planning policies, their erosion of democracy, and their contradiction of false claims of equality between all Israeli "citizens".

This research paper aims to reveal the discriminatory policies of the occupying Israeli authorities, on the basis of "*min famuka odinuka*"(from your mouth I condemn you)¹, whilst adopting a comparative approach, contrasting the planning policies and practices in Jewish settlements and Syrian villages in the occupied Golan.

1967 witnessed the second phase of the Zionist occupation of Arab lands. In June of that year, Israel launched an expansionist war against neighboring Arab countries, resulting in its occupation of the entire area of historic Palestine, including the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, in addition to the Egyptian Sinai and the majority of the Syrian Golan. [1]

During the war and in subsequent weeks, the Israeli authorities carried out a fierce ethnic cleansing operation throughout the now occupied area of the Golan. Within a few months, the occupying authorities uprooted more than 95% of the population (approximately 140,000 people), using violence, killings, as well as forcible expulsion from residential areas to elsewhere inside Syria. The vast majority of residential communities, namely 340 villages, and the city of Quneitra, were completely destroyed. [2]

Hebrew sources confirm that in 1967, during the war, the occupying power uprooted more than 250,000 people from their homes in the West Bank and the Golan, and expelled them to Jordan and elsewhere in Syria respectively. [3]

After the occupying authorities largely accomplished their project of ethnic cleansing in the Golan, it began to consolidate its grip on the land, through the establishment of settlements and the recruitment of Jewish settlers. As part of these actions, in violation of international law, the occupation authorities have imposed far-reaching urban planning policies in the occupied Golan.

1. The Golan: Between International Law and Israeli Law

Between 1967, the beginning of the occupation of the Golan, and 1981, the residents of the Golan were subject to the jurisdiction of the military authorities. After this period, the occupation escalated to the stage of bypassing international law and officially annexed the Golan to the "Jewish state," revealing its colonial intentions. The Golan de facto became an integrated part of the Israeli state through a law issued on 14 December 1981 by the Israeli Parliament (the Knesset). From this point, the occupying power began to apply Israeli civilian law to the indigenous population.

Contrary to US recognition of Israel's sovereignty over the area during the presidency of Donald Trump, the United Nations and all relevant international bodies have repeatedly affirmed that the Golan remains an occupied Syrian territory. Repeated UN Security Council (UNSC) and General Assembly (UNGA) resolutions have called on Israel to withdraw from all occupied areas. The UNSC has issued a series of resolutions calling on the occupying Israeli authorities to cancel its illegal annexation of the Golan, with similar such resolutions issued by the UNGA and international human rights bodies.[4] Notable resolutions include the following:

¹ "*min famuka odinuka*" lit. 'from your mouth I condemn you', an Arabic language idiom referring to using the words and actions of the accused party in order to highlight their own wrongdoing.

UN Security Council.

The UNSC resolution 497, 17 December 1981, consider Israel's decision to impose its laws, sovereignty and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan null and void, with no international legal effect, and demanded that Israel immediately rescind this decision. The resolution affirmed that all provisions of the Geneva Convention issued on August 12, 1949, relating to the protection of civilians in time of war, are valid on the Syrian territories occupied by Israel since June 1967.

United Nations General Assembly.

UNGA Resolution 35-122 of 11 December 1980 condemned Israel for imposing legislation that would 'change the character' of the Golan. Resolution 35-207, 16 December 1980, renewed the categorical rejection of Israel's decision to annex the Golan and Jerusalem. On the same day, resolution 36-147 was condemned Israel for its attempts to forcibly impose Israeli citizenship on Syrian citizens in the Golan.

UN Commission on Human Rights and the UN Human Rights Council.

The UN Commission on Human Rights 1997/2, 13 December 1976 condemned Israel for its continued violation of human rights in the occupied Arab territories, its alteration of landmarks in Jerusalem, and its destruction of the city of Quneitra in the Golan. The resolution considered that Israel had violated international humanitarian law in respect of protection of civilians. During its 43rd session, on 11 February 1981, the Commission considered the decision taken by Israel in 1981 to impose its law, authority and administration on the Golan as null and void, calling on Israel to cancel it immediately. The UN Human Rights Council's (UNHRC) 28 March 2014 report entitled "The Situation of Human Rights in the Occupied Syrian Golan," again condemned the Israeli actions in the occupied Golan, and called for the Israeli authorities to comply with UNSC, UNGA and UNHR resolutions.

United Nations Subcommittee on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.

Resolution 11, 01 September 1987, condemned Israel for human rights violations in Israeli occupied territories, and for the Israeli authorities decision to impose its laws and administration on the Golan.

Various other UN bodies have also addressed Israeli practices within the occupied Golan with similar interpretations. The subjugation of the Golan to Israeli law has had profound repercussions on the lived reality of the indigenous population. This research paper, addresses those repercussions deriving from racist ethnic-based planning policies and practices.

2. Defining Urban Planning

Urban planning, or spatial planning, is concerned with the organization and development of space in which humans live, in order to assist their welfare and development, balancing human need and environmental factors. It is a social, economic, and environmental process that seeks to monitor and distribute resources among groups across spatial division in various locations. In practice this monitoring and distribution is directly affected by relationships of power and prevailing governance structures. Urban planning is not a neutral translation of purported social justice aims that serve all equally, and is employed extensively for political-ideological goals.

2.1 Zionist Thought and Colonial Planning

Zionism falls within the framework of Settler Colonialism. Whereas other colonialisms, are based on military occupation, marginalization of the indigenous population, and exploitation of resources, settler colonialism seeks to reformulate spaces in order to produce a new society with altered social and cultural features, through a profound demographic, social and economic changes which get rid of the indigenous population and/or the remaining populations indigeneity. One tactic to this end is the killing or expulsion of the indigenous population from outside the limits of the occupying authorities control, and then filling the area with settlers to who the area's resources are transferred. Such a process was undertaken in Palestine in 1948 and 1967, and in the Golan in 1967.

The common feature of all colonial regimes is their grounding in the concept that the indigenous peoples of the country do not deserve full inclusion or representation, and do not have the right to determine their own future.

Israeli planning policies advance this in their dealings with the remaining indigenous peoples of Palestine and the Golan who survived the initial ethnic cleansing project. These policies should be examined in their historical context, cognizant of the Zionist philosophy which animates the Israeli authorities actions in the Golan, and which adopts settler colonialism in order to create a space in which the Jewish is in control.

In Israel, the process of planning and organizing cannot be separated from the ideological-political, national, and economic context, since planning plays a structural role in extraction of resources from the lands of the indigenous people (non-Jewish Arabs), and handing them to Jewish settlers. "Jewish settlement" is a basic principle and an official goal stipulated in the national plans that regulate the construction and urbanization process.

The historical culture of urban planning policy in Israel, which began upon the establishment of the Israeli state, is infused with racist ideology, based on fundamental preference for the dominant group (Jewish people) at the expense of the the marginalization of others. The Israeli authorities adopt a special method in urban planning consisting of two models.

The Traditional Model

The focus of this model is its application on the organization and distribution of space, with the difference being that it is managed in a highly centralized and hierarchical manner, based on the concept of apartheid. This is the model applied to the non-Jewish Arab population.

The Development Planning Model

The focus of this model is on integrating spatial planning on the one hand, and socio-economic planning on the other. This model links the urban planning process to the of distribution of the state budget, to suit the development needs of the government, population sectors, and administrative departments. In addition, this model includes cooperative assistance programs aimed at lifting the living standards of impoverished and marginalized people, and is applied only when it comes to the Jewish population.

Decentralized management in the field of planning and development is a basic best practice requirement, and a necessary condition for success. Activating the popular democratic participation of target population groups, the "planning from below" method, constitutes an essential and important element in an effective just development process. This stands in contrast to centralized administration of such on process, the "**planning from above**" method. One core principle of the "**planning from below**" method is the strengthening of self-efficacy, self-esteem, and freedom. Freedom is defined here as including the full realisation of people's capacity to freely choose.

Spatial planning in Israel, through the Traditional Model, is authoritarian and centralized. It's relationship with the Arab population is dictatorial, rather than consultative or deliberative. As such the reality of the space on the ground is formed and reformulated without the individual Arab 'citizen' having any formalised means through this process of influencing the determination and design of this reality.

An analysis of the planning practices of the Israeli authorities since the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948, indicates that the policy of planning and development is based on two components:

A demographic component, which aims to create a Jewish majority in the areas where the indigenous population (Arabs) are still present, and to maintain a demographic balance in favor of the Jewish group.

A territorial component, which aims to control the space through replacement of the indigenous population (ethnic cleansing) through the creation of Jewish settlement zones, and establishing geographic contiguity between these areas, together with the inverse; to impose constricting zones for Arabs, and prevent geographical contiguity between these areas, including through the establishment of Jewish settlements between Arab villages. [5]

3. The Reality of Ethnic-Based Spatial Planning in Israel

Spatial or Urban planning has great potential to improve living standards and quality of life, individually and collectively, and equally can be an impediment to such development.

Israel officially and legally defines itself as the "**Jewish State**", or "the State of the Jewish People". This ethnic definition embeds discrimination, persecution, exclusion and marginalization from the outset. It acts as a compass for its planning policies, which come to revolve around the principle of preference for Jews in all areas of life over non-Jews (particular the vast majority of the indigenous Arab population), who live within its sphere of control (inside Israel and in territories occupied by Israel). This racial discrimination is clearly manifested legally and practically.

3.1 The Legal Level

Direct and indirect discrimination against Arab citizens of the Jewish state is ingrained in the legal system and in all government policies. In order for the institutions of the Jewish state to achieve its goals by Judaizing the space and the control of Jewish communities over all aspects of life, successive Israeli governments, since the establishment of the Jewish state, have institutionalized discrimination, exclusion and marginalization towards the Arab population living within its sphere of control, through the enactment of new law. and amendment of previous law.

Within Israel there are more than 55 laws that discriminate against Arab citizens in all spheres of life, including restrictions on their freedom of expression, their rights to political participation, education, discrimination against them in the distribution of financial and natural resources (such as water and land), and other rights to non-discrimination and equality. This is in addition to other laws that violate the rights of the Arab population in other occupied territories. [6]

3.2 The Operational Level

The real test of the justice or injustice of legal and policy frameworks is seen in their actual practice on the ground. The existence of a law may appear to theoretically guarantee rights, but once enacted may have far reaching effects. Key practical effects of the Israeli authorities' law in this are addressed as follows.

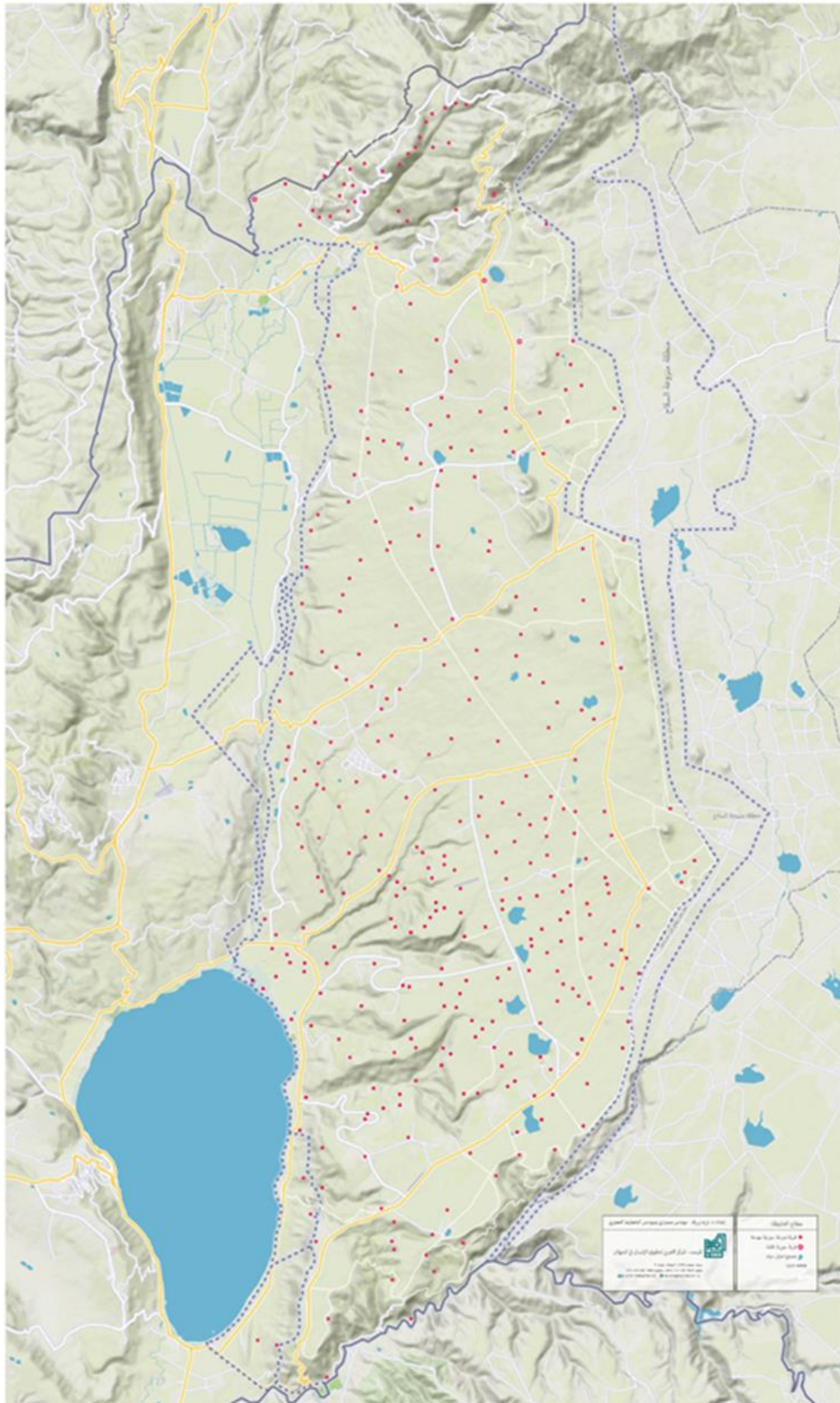
3.2.1 The Land

Israel occupied the Golan as part of its war launched in 1967 against neighboring Arab countries. The goal of this war was to control more land and natural resources, to expand its settlement-colonial project in the Arab region.

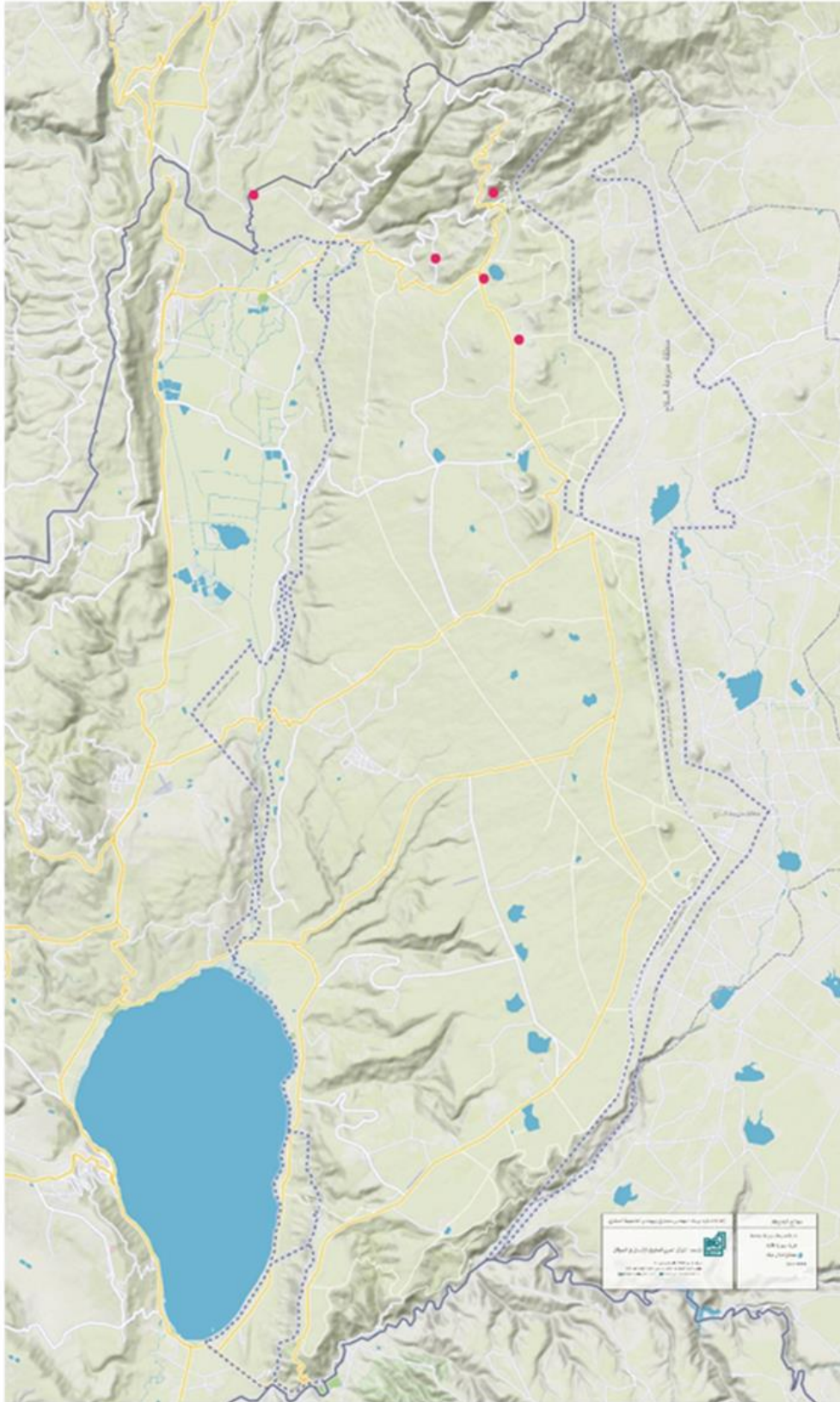
Beginning on the first day of the war, Israel embarked on a widespread ethnic cleansing operation in the area, uprooting and expelling 95% of the population of the area it occupied in the Golan, approximately 140,000 people, and completely destroying their villages, which numbered 340 villages in addition to the city of Quneitra. This left an indigenous population of only 6,000 people, distributed over five villages in the northern Golan, namely Majdal-Shams, Masaada, Buqaatha, Ain Qinya, and the village of Ghajar, situated directly on the Lebanese border. The 'before' and 'after' infographics below illustrate this.^[7]

Syrian villages in the Golan before the occupation

● القرى السورية في الجولان قبل الاحتلال



Syrian villages in the Golan after the occupation ● القرى السورية في الجولان بعد الاحتلال



In a matter of months after clearing the Golan Heights of its original inhabitants, and largely destroying the previous demographic and urban landscape that had existed, the Israeli authorities began to reformulate the space to produce a new demographic and new urban landscape. They built settlements and re-settled Jewish settlers in to the area to help ensure effective control on the ground through civilian human forces, as well as military forces.

Since 1967 up until today, the occupying authorities have established 34 agricultural settlements, and an urban settlement, the city of Kazrin, which constitutes the administrative center of these settlements, which they term the "capital of the Golan."

Control of land constitutes an essential element in the development of communities, and moreover to the retention of their indigeneity, and their existence and survival. Additionally, it provides a socio-economic foundation. Whoever owns the land controls the natural resources located under and above ground, and therefore controls the means of production.

Prior to the occupation, the Syrian population in the five villages that were not expelled via ethnic cleansing owned more than 100,000 dunams² of land. Over the four decades since, the occupation authorities have confiscated 56% of these lands for military and settlement activities, rendering the size of the land owned by the Syrian population, which now numbers 27,000 people, at only 47,000 dunams. [8]

Prior to the occupation, the land, agriculture and livestock farming, constituted the main source of livelihood for the residents of the Golan, and the backbone of the economy of Golani society. As a result of confiscation of grazing lands, livestock farming has all but disappeared. Agriculture has declined significantly due to the occupation authority's discriminatory policy in the distribution of water resources away from Syrian villages, and the inability of the Syrian farmers to compete with the agricultural production of the Jewish settlements, which is organized, developed and generously subsidised by the occupying authorities. At the same time as losing their key source of income, the loss of land has reinforced the indigenous populations economic dependence on the occupying authorities who now control the land and the means of production. Economic dependency is a goal of the occupying authorities, because this enables them to control the political, cultural and social scene in Golani society.

3.2.2 Construction and Housing

Despite the relatively small number of residents in the Golan (both the indigenous population and Israeli settlers), three planning and building committees have been established. The "Golan Planning and Building Committee" manages planning affairs in the Jewish agricultural settlements. The "Kazrin Local Building and Planning Committee", manages planning affairs in the settlement of Kazrin city. The headquarters of the two committees are in the settlement of Kazrin. The third is the "Planning and Building Committee - Ma'aleh Hermon", which is responsible for planning affairs in the five remaining Syrian villages, and headquartered in the village of Masaada.

The presence of three planning and building committees in the Golan is not at all commensurate with the small population. This did not come about by chance. Rather, it is a reflection of the ethnic-based policies practiced by the Israeli authorities in separating Jews and non-Jews, which the separation of institutions on an ethnic basis enables. The occupying authorities control the course of spatial development in Arab society, and the distribution of material and financial resources for the benefit of the Jewish community. As for the separation of urban planning into two committees for planning and building for Jewish

² 1 dunam = 1,000m².

settlements, this is due to administrative reasons, and so that the committees can respond more effectively to the needs of the different settler populations in Kazrin and the agricultural settlements.

The occupied Syrian Golan villages now suffer from severe overcrowding. The land policy pursued by the governments of the occupying power has greatly contributed to limiting urban expansion and limiting its presence to under-developed urban centers. The disappearance of the livestock sector, the decline in the agricultural sector and the diversification of fields of work, along with the increase in the population, has meant that Golani villages have lost their traditional features as villages. Rather than transforming them into modern sustainable building complexes, multiple overcrowded and suffocating residential buildings have been built, with random non-traditional features, and concrete facades.

Traditionally, urban expansion in the Syrian villages of the Golan took place from the inside out. Such expansion towards the outer circles allowed for the maintenance of green spaces, and establishing open spaces between buildings. Now, as a consequence of the restricted space and shortage of land the villages of the Golan are witnessing the reverse urban expansion process - from the outside inward. This has resulted in a loss of open space, and increased the density of vertical construction. In addition, this has led to housing distress, and an escalating crisis of a shortage of housing. This is all due to the restructuring of the Golan in a way which ignores the cultural and socio-economic needs of the Arab Syrian community, whilst giving priority to the needs of the Jewish community.

The following tables and attendant graphs illustrate the inequitable distribution of building permits. In 2012, the number of residents of Syrian villages was approximately 1.15 times more than the number of settlers, but the number of building permits obtained by settlers was 3.47 times more than those obtained by residents of Syrian villages. This discrimination continues at pace to this day, albeit in different proportions as the Jewish population has grown.

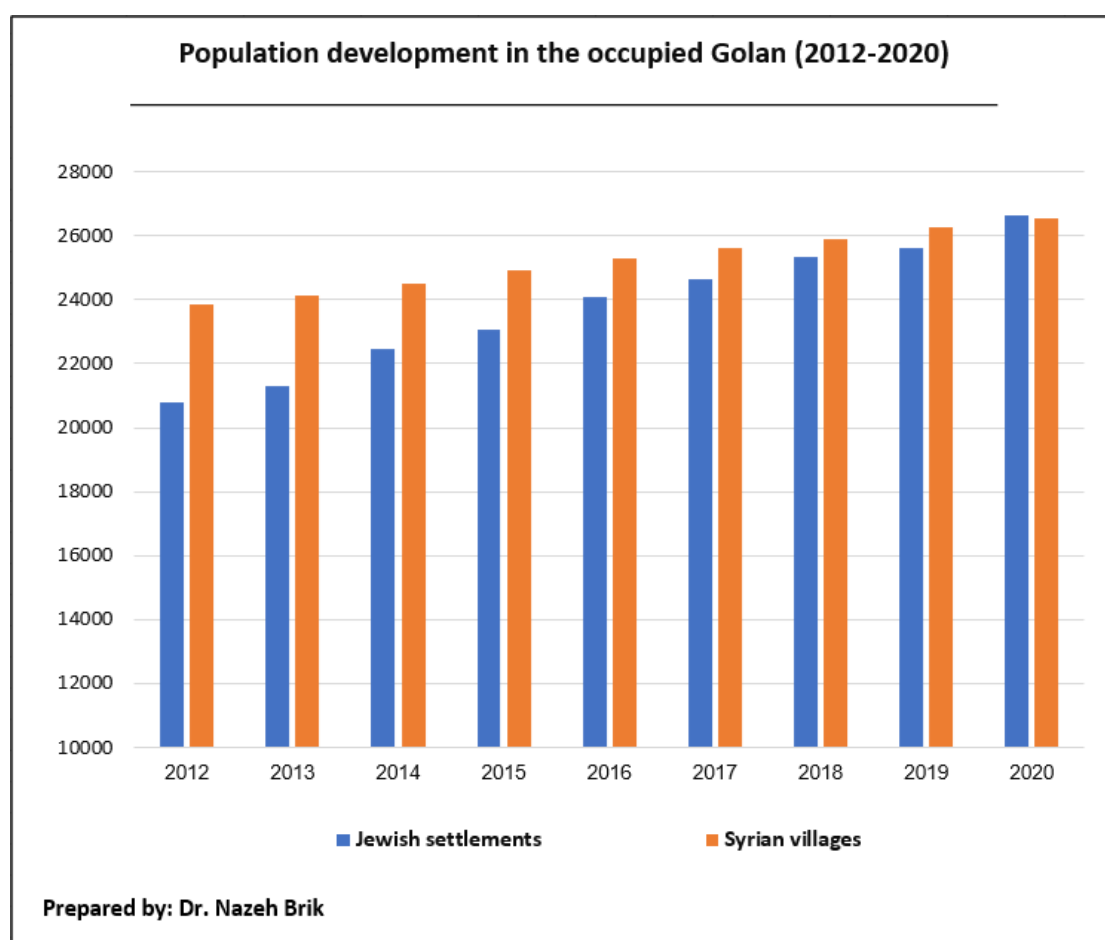
Number of Housing Units Permitted by Year of Issuance of the Building Permit, 2012-2021										
Jewish Settlements	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Kazrin	64	20	10	25	98	125	75	13	47	27
(1) Regional Council-Golan	179	181	206	176	128	153	128	113	107	177
Total	243	201	216	202	226	278	233	126	154	204
Syrian Villages										
Majdal-Shams	27	33	60	42	71	62	37	35	71	44
Buqaatha	18	13	39	34	47	25	21	26	19	41
Masaada	18	7	10	10	53	34	23	26	13	10
Ain-Qinya	7	8	12	17	18	21	4	11	10	11
Al-Ghajar	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Total	70	61	121	103	190	143	85	98	113	106
<p>(1) Including housing units in the settlement of Snir, which doesn't belong to the Regional Council-Golan. This doesn't include the Housing Units of the settlement Nimrod. The settlement of Ramat Trump was established by the Israeli authorities in 2020</p> <p>Sources:</p> <p>https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/Pages/search/TableMaps.aspx?CbsSubject=%D7%94%D7%99%D7%AA%D7%A8%D7%99%20%D7%91%D7%A0%D7%99%D7%99%D7%94</p> <p>https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/publications/LochutTlushim/2020/heter_yr_yv_01_2021.pdf</p> <p>https://www.btl.gov.il/medinyut/situation/statistics/btlstatistics.aspx</p>										

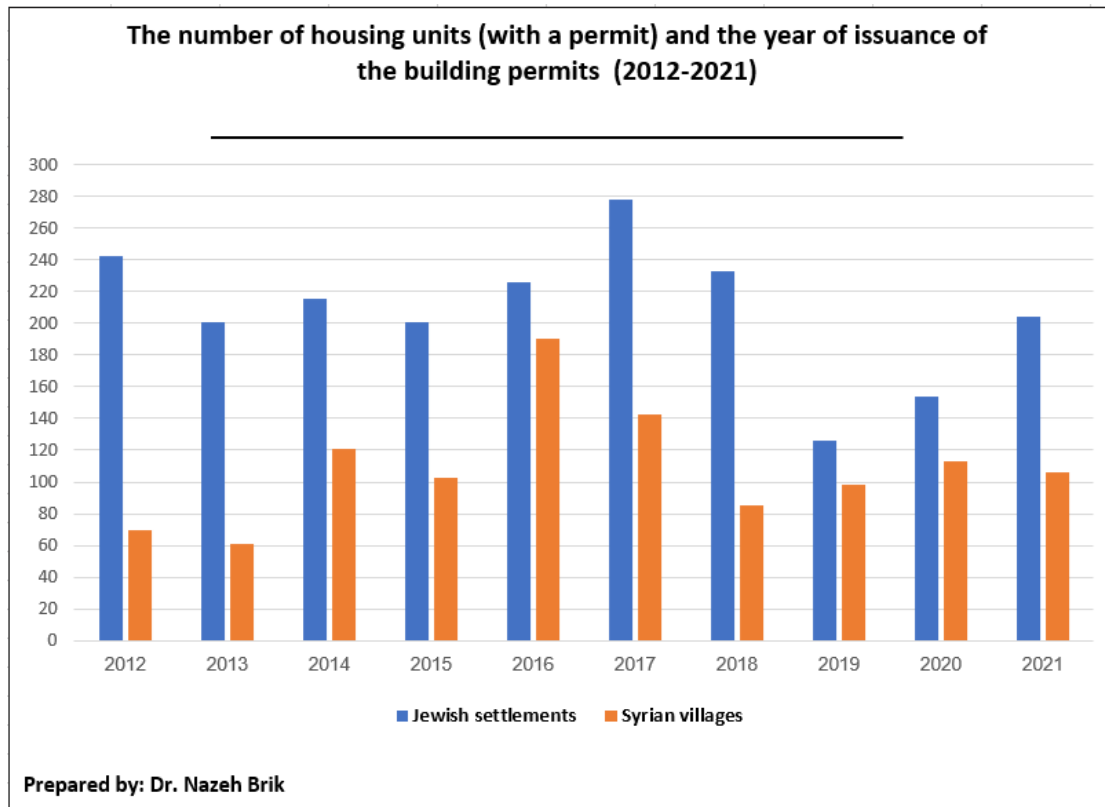
Population Development in the Occupied Golan (2012-2020).									
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Jewish Settlements	20,778	21,301	22,473	23,054	24,074	24,627	25,321	25,618	26,623
Syrian Villages	23,831	24,138	24,500	24,921	25,297	25,599	25,892	26,261	26,525

Prepared by: Dr. Nazeh Brik

Sources:

- 1- https://gis.cbs.gov.il/Yeshuvim_allyears/
- 2- <https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/settlements/Pages/default.aspx?mode=Yeshuv>
- 3- https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/publications/LochutTlushim/2020/heter_yr_yv_01_2021.pdf





One of the impacts of this aspect of urban planning policy is the dramatic increase in younger people who remain single, whilst the number of young people aged 25-29 has increased from 41% in 1997 to 62% in 2001. During the same period the the number of girls aged 20-24 has increased from 49 % to 65%. At the same time population growth has declined sharply. At the beginning of the occupation, the population growth rate was 3.7%, declining to 1.7% in 2009, and then to 1.4% in 2018. This is now lower than the rate among the Jewish community (1.7%).

In the plan drawn up by the occupation government to develop the so-called "Druze villages"³ in the Golan, officials from the Israeli authorities admit that one of the main reasons for the growing shortage of suitable housing is the result of their policy to not allocate sufficient urban spaces to meet the needs of the local population.^[9]

The severe shortage of urban spaces has significantly inflated land prices. When construction is permitted, the current price of one dunum⁴ in Syrian villages ranges from 200,000 to 220,000 US dollars, consequently placing an inordinate burden on the vast majority of Syrians. In 2019, the average monthly income of an employee in the Syrian villages of the Golan was 6,000 Shekel, while the average monthly income in the Jewish agricultural settlements in the Golan is 9,159 Shekel, and elsewhere in Israel rises to 10,474 Shekel.

³ The use of the term Druze by the authorities is a reference to the majority religion of the Syrian indigenous population since the 1967 ethnic cleansing operation' s removal of Syrians from most other religious and ethnic minorities in the Golan. It is used as a label by the occupying authorities to focus on religious rather than national identity, contrary to popular appeals to Syrian reintegration, and as a means of associating them non-Syrian Israeli Druze who reside elsewhere in Israel. Syrians in the occupied Golan are not only Druze, but include Alawite and Christian communities.

⁴ 1,000 m²

Land and housing distress has also had wider linked consequences on the fabric of society, with an increase in physical violence and verbal abuse between people in the Golan. This is due to disputes over land borders, neighbour disputes, and disputes over land use such as parking.^[10]

3.2.3 The Local Master Plan

The role of a 'local master plan', also known as a local structural or zoning map, according to building and planning law, is to direct planning policy and determine how land is to be used in general terms. The effectiveness of such a plan should be measured, as a matter of professional standards, by the extent to which it responds to the residential, social, cultural, economic and environmental needs of the residents concerned. The local master plans prepared by the occupying authorities do not in any way meet this standard. Rather than meeting the needs of the indigenous population they clearly aim to weaken and impede the ability of Syrian communities to develop by limiting the zones designated for their construction to a minimum, and restricting the granting of building permits, in addition to surrounding the areas with nature reserves.⁵

The local master plans prepared by the occupation authorities, reflect the authorities' goal of concentrating the population of Syrian villages within a specific and reduced area by imposing vertical construction (multi-storey) and reducing horizontal construction. This is despite the fact that vertical construction contradicts the culture of residents, who depend to a large extent on agriculture, which necessitates different social and housing requirements. In addition, they do not respond to the natural increase of the population.

The shortage of land, the absence of suitable sites for construction in what is a mountainous area, and the lack of detailed local master plans, make it difficult to obtain building permits. This has led to the exacerbation of unauthorised construction, as people strive themselves to meet their urgent needs for security and stability, as per their fundamental right to housing. However instead of recognising this and responding to the residents' needs by expanding zones suitable for construction, in order to eliminate unauthorised construction, the occupying authorities fine them large sums of money through the courts, and issue demolition orders against unauthorised homes. Fines for such building violations are accrued directly by the Planning and Building Committee - Ma'aleh Hermon, and represent one of their sources of income.

⁵ For more information see: "Nature Reserves in the Occupied Golan", November 2021,

<https://golan-marsad.org/nature-reserves-in-the-occupied-golan-the-environment-in-the-service-of-land-control-policy/>

The following table shows the number of building violations cases, and the number of financial fines imposed by the Israeli judicial authority on violators. **[11]**

Judgements issued against Building cases in the Syrian villages in the Golan, 2012-2021								
Judgment year	Majdal-Shams		Buqaatha		Masaada		Ain-Qinya	
	Adverse Judgment (cases)	Fines (Shekel)	Adverse Judgment (cases)	Fines (Shekel)	Adverse Judgment (cases)	Fines (Shekel)	Adverse Judgment (cases)	Fines (Shekel)
2012	32	349,500	21	138,000	19	175,000	5	19,500
2013	20	99,600	8	131,000	21	323,500	3	33,000
2014	27	675,000	16	301,500	12	456,000	3	34,000
2015	44	1,638,000	21	835,000	28	886,500	8	180,800
2016	7	90,500	12	397,000	17	373,500	8	96,000
2017	12	380,000	5	26,000	8	296,000	2	27,000
2018	6	115,000	1	20,000	4	238,000	0	0
2019	2	86,000	2	76,000	0	0	0	0
2020	3	135,000	0	0	0	0	2	48,000
2021	1	160,000	0	0	4	126,000	1	28,000
Total	154	3,728,600	86	1,924,500	113	2,227,500	32	446,300

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Source:
Planning and Construction Committee "Ma'ale Hermon-Masada". The information was obtained from the Planning and Construction Committee, at the request of the Al-Marsad - the Arab Center for Human Rights in the Golan, via the Freedom of Information law. The Committee did not provide information about Ghajar, which may be due to its geopolitical situation, given part of the Ghajar lies within the Lebanese border, and Israel is unable to exercise any authority over this part.

According to the data provided in the table, between 2012-2021 fines were issued for 385 unauthorised construction cases in Syrian Golan villages, amounting to 8,326,900 Shekel (excluding Ghajar), approximately 3.4 million US dollars. The table also shows that the number of building violations in 2018 and since has increased significantly compared to the previous years as enumerated above. This may be an indication of the increasing constriction of legal construction, due to land distress and the sharp decrease in authorised construction sites relative to the indigenous population's needs, in addition to increases in the imposition of these exorbitant fines.

Administrative Boundaries, Master Plans, Population density				
Jewish Settlements	Population (2020)	Size of administrative boundaries (Dunams)	Area Size of Master Plan (Dunams)	population density Person/ km ²
Regional Council-Golan	19,123	1,088,897	31,670	603.8
Kazrin	7,500	12,214	10,522	712.7
Snir	609	-	562.8	1.082
Total	26,623	1,101,111	42,754.8	623.5
Syrian Villages				
Majdal-Shams	11,266	17,548	2,193	5,137
Masaada	3,753	12,506	1,378	2,723
Buqaatha	6,665	19,540	1,524	4,373
Ain-Qinya	2,139	5,650	1,062	2,014
Al-Ghajar	2,702	2,800	505	5,350
Total	26,525	58,044 ⁽¹⁾	6,662	3,981
Prepared by: Dr. Nazez Brik				
<p>(1) The area of administrative boundaries of the Syrian villages is actually 47,000 dunums, as the occupying authorities have annexed approx. 11,000 dunams for nature reserves adjacent to the borders of the villages, without the approval of the local community.</p> <p>Sources:</p> <p>הועדה המקומית לתכנון ובניה מעלה חרמון, מסמך מדיניות אכיפה טיוטה לאישור. Planning and Building Committee - Ma'ale Hermon, Draft Enforcement Policy Document. https://maalehermon.complot.co.il/generalinfo/Documents/%D7%9E%D7%93%D7%99%D7%A0%D7%99%D7%95%D7%AA%20%D7%90%D7%9B%D7%99%D7%A4%D7%94.pdf; https://mavat.moin.gov.il/mavatps/forms/sv3.aspx?tid=3; https://mavat.iplan.gov.il/SV3?searchEntity=1&searchType=3&searchMethod=2; https://golan.bartech-net.co.il/SearchCityPlan.aspx</p>				

The data in the above table clearly shows how the policies pursued by the occupying authorities are discriminatory. In 2020, the number of Jewish settlers was almost equal to the number of indigenous Syrians. At the same time, the total area of zones designated for construction in all Israeli settlements, according to official local master plans, amounted to 42,755 dunums, equivalent to 1.6 dunams per person. The total area of zones designated for construction in all Syrian villages was 6,662 dunams, equivalent to 0.25 dunums per person. Israeli settlements received 6.4 times more land allocated for construction than Syrian villages.

This has compounded population density. In 2020 in the Syrian villages this reached 3,981 people per km², while in the settlements it reached approximately 624 people per km². In other words, the population density in the Syrian villages has also reached six times 6.4 times the population density of Israeli settlements, directly congruent with the inequitable distribution of land.

The occupying authorities seek, through a policy of restricting new spaces for construction and housing, to push the community to build onto their agricultural lands. This has already happened with the construction of the industrial zone in Majdal Shams, which was built at the expense of agricultural lands. This is congruent with the occupying authorities project to de-indigenize the Syrian population, through eliminating agriculture as a source of livelihood, and thus accelerating incorporation of the indigenous population into the Israeli economy as cheap labor.

This unequal and unjust zoning of land has led to the increased urbanisation of Syrian villages, but without the availability of the necessary facilities, amenities, local services, infrastructure or sustainable economic structures.

3.2.4 Local Council Boundaries

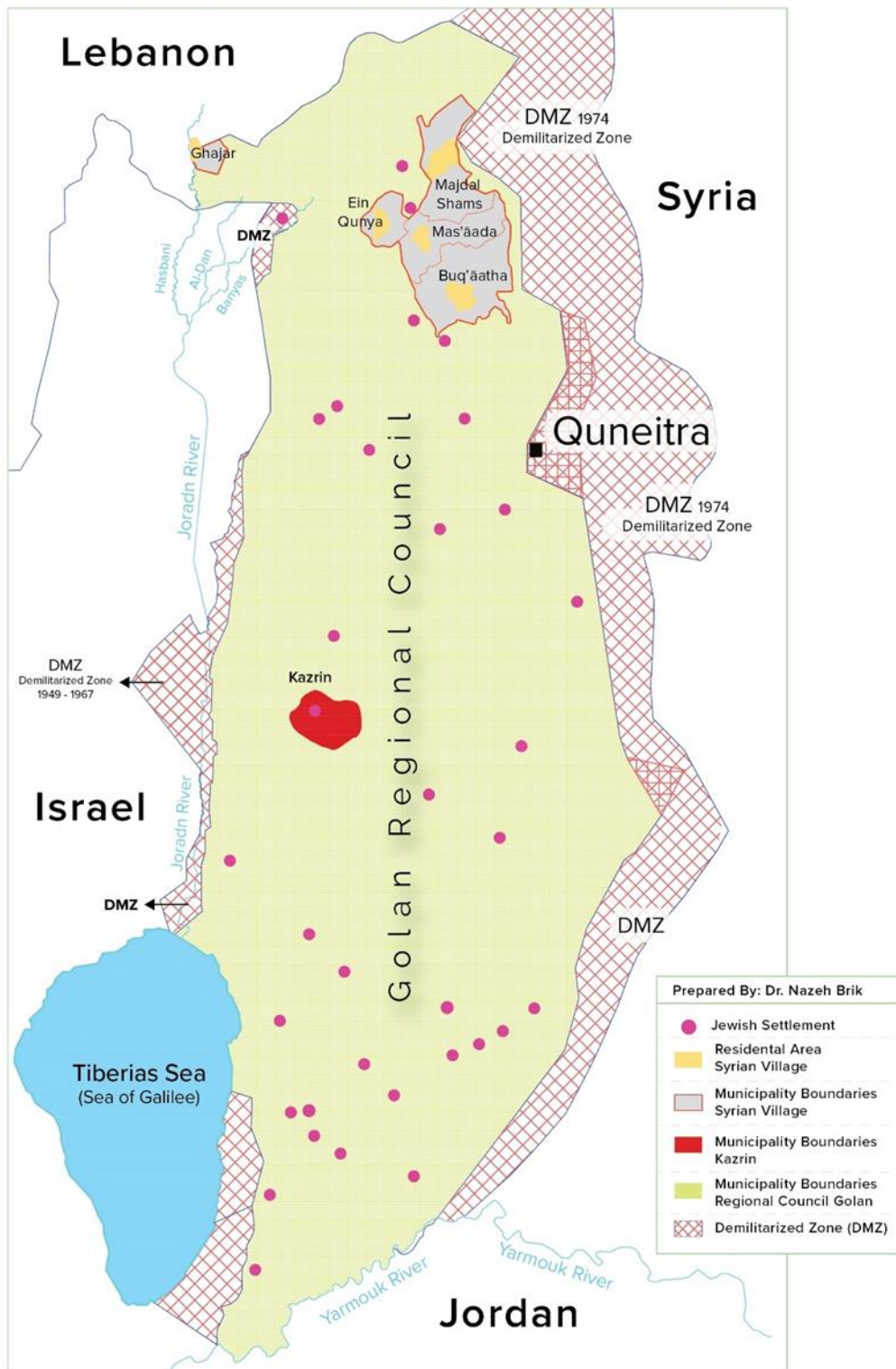
The urban planning policies practiced by the occupying authorities against the indigenous population, have resulted in insufficient land and a shrunken administrative area which is unable to meet the basic development requirements of the population. This has affected the share of tax revenues that the Local Council, with municipal responsibilities for this administrative area, would otherwise accrue from economic, commercial and tourism activities within its administrative borders. The Local Council therefore have reduced financial capacity to develop infrastructure and improve living standards

Based on the data presented in the previous table in 3.2.3 above, according to the relative administrative areas allocated to the Israeli settlements and the Syrian refugees, the allocation per Jewish settler is 41 dunums, while the allocation per Syrian villager is 2.18 dunums. This means proportionately that Jewish settlers share of the land according to administrative borders is 19 times greater.

Since the 1967 occupation, the administrative borders of the Syrian villages have never been expanded, despite the urgent need. To the contrary, egregiously, the Israeli authorities have annexed areas 11,000 dunams of land within their administrative borders to adjacent nature reserves, which they have established since the occupation. With this the possibility of these natural spaces being used for the benefit of the development of the indigenous people has been robbed.⁶ The current administrative boundaries can be seen in the below map.

⁶ See Al-Marsad – The Arab Human Rights Center in Golan, “Nature Reserves in the Occupied Golan”, November 2021, <https://golan-marsad.org/nature-reserves-in-the-occupied-golan-the-environment-in-the-service-of-land-control-policy/>

Municipality boundaries of the Jewish settlements and Syrian villages in occupied Golan



3.2.5 Employment

Since the early years of the occupation, the occupying authorities have sought to eliminate sources of income for indigenous Syrians that might guarantee them a level of economic independence and independence in the management of their own affairs. Causing dependence for their livelihood on the Israeli labor market forces integration and enables the Israeli authorities to more easily control the indigenous population and rule over their affairs.

As referred to earlier in this report, over the years, there has been a radical change in the structure of work in Golan villages. The role of the agricultural sector has been forced to decline sharply, leaving only a small number of families, dependent on agriculture only for their livelihood. According to the data from the Central Bureau of Statistics, in 2008 only 10.1% of residents from the five Syrian villages worked in agriculture. In addition to the decline of the agricultural sector, the livestock sector has completely disappeared from the local economy. Before the occupation, more than 85% of the labor force of the indigenous population worked within the residential areas in which they live. The planning policies enumerated above which have brought about the collapse of the agricultural sector, in tandem with the population increase and a lack of local job opportunities has led to a decrease in the number of workers inside the villages, and an increase in those moving or commuting ever greater distances elsewhere for work, and entering the Israeli Labor market.

According to the data of the Central Bureau of Statistics for the year 2008, presented in the below table, the percentage of workers from the villages of the Golan outside their place of residence was 62.5%, while in the settlements the percentage was 44.3%. [12]

Percentage of workers outside their areas of residence (2008) (Age of 15 years and over)	
Jewish Settlements	
Regional Council (1)	47.9%
Kazrin	40.8%
Syrian Villages	
Majdal-Shams	45.0%
Buqaatha	73%
Masaada	68.7%
Ain-Qinya	68.0%
Al-Ghajar	-
Prepared by: Dr. Nazeh Brik (1) Does not include the settlements Snir and Ramat Trump.	
Sources: מפקד האוכלוסין 2008 - הלשכה המרכזית לסטטיסטיקה (Central Bureau of Statistics, Census 2008) - https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/subjects/Pages/%D7%9E%D7%A4%D7%A7%D7%93-%D7%94%D7%90%D7%95%D7%9B%D7%9C%D7%95%D7%A1%D7%99%D7%9F-2008.aspx	

As a result of the geopolitical position of the Syrian indigenous community, located far from the Israeli urban centres and from Palestinian communities inside Israel, they have been able to establish a semi-autonomous construction sector, as contractors and as professional workers, and in some industries as employers of workshops that address the needs of the local market. One third of the labor force from the

Golan villages (31.6%) work in the construction sector. Most of them work in Israeli settlements and Jewish-majority towns, while only 5.3% of the labor force of Jewish settlers works in this sector. [13]

The Israeli labor market is characterized by large disparities in income equality and equity in job opportunities between Jews and non-Jews. This is reflected in the below tables. The average monthly income of a wage earner in Israel is 10,474 NIS, as compared to 8,260 NIS for those from Israeli settlements in the Golan, and falling to only 6,002 NIS for those from Syrian villages in the Golan. This means that the income of an employee who is from the Syrian indigenous community amounts to a mere 57.3% of the average income in Israel, and 72.6% of the average income of an employee who is a Jewish settler in the Golan.

The labor market in Israel is riven by clear ethnic divisions. While the majority of the Syrians work in, and benefit, Israeli settlements and Jewish-majority zones, there is not a single Jewish worker working in Syrian designated zones. This is with the exception of some government institutions located in the villages of the Golan, whose senior director is often a Jewish. Ironically, this is also the case with the Planning and Building Committee - Ma'ale Hermon.

Monthly income of the Salaried Worker (2018) (1)							
	Jewish Settlements		Syrian occupied Villages				
	Kazrin	Regional Council-Golan (2)	Majdal-Shams	Buqaatha	Masaada	Ain-Qinya	Al-Ghajar
Population	7,100	17,400	11,045	6,528	3,650	2,063	2,607
Salaried Worker	3,317	8,061	4,450	2,636	1,507	959	1,121
Monthly income (Shekel)	7,362	9,159	5,524	5,680	5,476	6,096	7,234
Percentage of Worker who earn Minimum Wage	42.4%	38.3%	63.8%	63.6%	65.0%	57.4%	48.7%
Number of families who receive Income Support	72	24	123	91	60	23	20

Prepared by: Dr. Nazeh Brik

(1) The average monthly income of the Salaried Worker in Israel in 2018 was 10,474 Shekel.
https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/mediarelease/DocLib/2019/077/26_19_077b.pdf

(2) The Regional Council includes 33 settlements, and does not include the settlement of Snir.

Sources:

פרסום מס. K1835 פרופיל מועצות מקומיות \ מועצות אזוריות - הרשויות המקומיות בישראל 2019

Profile of local councils / regional councils - the local authorities in Israel, K 2019 publication no. 1835.

<https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/settlements/Pages/default.aspx?subject=%D7%90%D7%95%D7%9B%D7%9C%D7%95%D7%A1%D7%99%D7%99%D7%94>

קובץ הרשויות המקומיות בישראל.

- File-local-authorities-in-Israel

<https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/mediarelease/pages/2021/%D7%A7%D7%95%D7%91%D7%A5-%D7%94%D7%A8%D7%A9%D7%95%D7%99%D7%95%D7%AA-%D7%94%D7%9E%D7%A7%D7%95%D7%9E%D7%99%D7%95%D7%AA-%D7%91%D7%99%D7%A9%D7%A8%D7%90%D7%9C-2019.aspx>

[2019.aspx](https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/mediarelease/pages/2021/%D7%A7%D7%95%D7%91%D7%A5-%D7%94%D7%A8%D7%A9%D7%95%D7%99%D7%95%D7%AA-%D7%94%D7%9E%D7%A7%D7%95%D7%9E%D7%99%D7%95%D7%AA-%D7%91%D7%99%D7%A9%D7%A8%D7%90%D7%9C-2019.aspx)

Representation of the workforce in the following sectors (2008)					
(Age 15 and over)					
Jewish Settlements	Agriculture	Industry	Construction	Health	Education
Settlements of the Regional council-Golan	12.4%	13.4%	9.6%	6.4%	15.2%
Kazrin	3.9%	18.3%	1.1%	7.6%	9.4%
Syrian Villages					
Majdal-Shams	3.2%	9.6%	26.9%	8.4%	13.1%
Buqaatha	13.1%	13.6%	33.3%	4.8%	12.4%
Masaada	14.0%	11.7%	34.9%	9.3%	8.9%
Ain-Qinya	-	22.9%	-	9.7%	16.3%
Al-Ghajar (1)	-	-	-	-	-
Prepared by: Dr. Nazeh Brik					
(1) Since the demarcation of the Blue Line in 2000 between Israel and Lebanon, which passes through the center of the village of Ghajar, no complete statistics are available for the village of Ghajar, as the occupation authorities are not allowed to enter the part that lies within the Lebanese borders.					
Sources: Central Statistics Department: https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/pages/search/SearchResultsMain.aspx?k=					

3.2.6 Industrial Zones

Industrial zones are essential for attracting investment, and provide opportunities for economic and community development. In addition to providing workplaces close to housing, the industrial zones are an important source of finances for the Local Council's tax revenue, which can be put in the service of projects with communal benefit.

In relation to Israeli settlements, businesses include 700 agricultural companies, employing about 1,100 workers; 24 manufacturing companies, employing about 860 workers; 207 tourism companies, employing about 720 employees, and; 180 commercial and service companies, employing about 600 employees. There are another 1820 employees working in the public service and education system. In total 1,100 companies operate within Israeli settlement areas, employing about 5,000 employees. Most of these economic activities are located in industrial zones. **[14]**

All major industrial and commercial zones in the Golan are concentrated in Israeli settlement areas, the largest of which is the industrial zone in Katzrin settlement, central Golan, with an area of 1,400 dunams. The second largest of which is the Bnei Yehuda industrial zone in the southern Golan, with an area of approximately 443 dunams. **[15]**

These two industrial zones are run by the Golan Settlements Economic Company, owned by the Israeli government. In conjunction with this, the F.L.G Company (חברת פ.ל.ג), owned by the Katzrin settlement municipality and the Golan Settlements Regional Council, are tasked with developing the economy, establish new economic sectors, and attracting investment to Israeli settlements. In addition, there are 16 other small industrial zones totalling 552 dunams, distributed among 16 other Israeli settlements in the Golan. **[16]**

In the Local Master Plans of the Golan villages, areas have been designated as industrial zones, but with clear significant differences. The Jewish industrial zones enjoy government support and a developed infrastructure including administrative support, transportation and resources, in addition to a diversity of

active economic sectors . The industrial zones in Katzrin and Bnei Yehuda include factories and production companies exporting to the Israeli and international market, including in the high tech industry, and production of military equipment, food, water, cosmetics, plastics and others. By contrast the limited industrial zones in Syrian villages suffer from weak infrastructure, no government support, and are limited to production for the local market within the villages of the Golan.

This is also impacted by the significant disparity in land prices, referred to earlier in this report. The price of a dunam of land in the Katzrin industrial zone is 200,000 Shekel (approximately 60,000 USD), while the price of a dunam in the Majdal Shams industrial zone is one million NIS (approximately 300,000 USD). In the industrial zones in Katzrin and Bnei Yehuda, investors are exempted from paying fees for connecting projects to the water network, which amount to 130 Shekel per square meter of building, while investors in industrial zones in the Syrian villages do not benefit from this exemption. This is despite the fact that both the city of Katzrin and the Syrian villages have the same water supplier, then Mih-Tannour Water Company [17].

The below table provides further detail.

Industrial zones in the Golan				
Jewish Settlements	Industrial area (dunams)	Number of local Master Plan	Number of employees (2019)	Number of Business (2019)
Katzrin	1,400	G/19968	1,400	127
Bnee Yehuda	442.7	0975524-219	240	30
Other (16) Settlements	552 (1)	-	-	-
Total	2,394.7			
Syrian Villages				
Majdal-Shams	723.5	G/19849	170	78
Buqaatha	145	G/6121	17	45
Masaada	128	G/5867	-	-
Ain-Qinya	-	-	-	-
Al-Ghajar	51	G/5444	-	-
Total	1,081.5			

Prepared by: Dr. Nazeh Brik

(1) The number is calculated based on the official Local Master Plans of each settlement.

Sources:

- <http://www.moital.gov.il/>; <http://www.moital.gov.il/NR/exeres/DD66A5CC-4AA1-4235-97B1-B339002284EC.htm>;

https://mavat.moin.gov.il/MavatPS/Forms/SV4.aspx?tid=4&mp_id=6oPTq5clnWPq6PURj1qZKcjInxctLMRn%2FRbYgovpmNUi2jP6CxpaeEdNZ5hCOGK8zzvS8MmWArV%2Btf3TqwY6OrnaiaNEIjKLff16rTwNc%3D&et=1;

[https://www.golanjobs.co.il/he/pages/%D7%A4%D7%90%D7%A8%D7%A7-%D7%AA%D7%A2%D7%A9%D7%99%D7%94-%D7%92%D7%95%D7%9C%D7%9F-%D7%91%D7%A0%D7%99-%D7%99%D7%94%D7%95%D7%93%D7%94](https://www.golanjobs.co.il/he/pages/%D7%A4%D7%90%D7%A8%D7%A7-%D7%AA%D7%A2%D7%A9%D7%99%D7%94-%D7%92%D7%95%D7%9C%D7%9F-%D7%91%D7%A0%D7%99-%D7%99%D7%94%D7%95%D7%93%D7%94;);

<https://www.synadlan.co.il/live-in-the-golan-> ;

<https://www.shishibagolan.co.il/%D7%90%D7%96%D7%95%D7%A8-%D7%AA%D7%A2%D7%A9%D7%99%D7%94-%D7%A7%D7%A6%D7%A8%D7%99%D7%9F-%D7%A4%D7%99%D7%AA%D7%95%D7%97-%D7%94%D7%99%D7%A9%D7%92%D7%99%D7%9D-%D7%91%D7%A0%D7%99%D7%99%D7%94-%D7%95>

3.2.7 Agriculture and Water

Before the occupation, the residents of the five villages owned more than 100,000 dunams, of which approximately 27,000 dunams were agricultural land, and the remainder for grazing animals. As mentioned earlier in this report, agriculture and raising livestock were the backbone of the livelihood of the indigenous people with more than 90% of people working in these sectors. After the occupation, the livestock sector collapsed due factors including to the occupying authorities' confiscation of grazing lands, and restrictions imposed by the army authorities on livestock breeding. In addition, agriculture and farming have been impacted by the presence of land mines on agricultural land. The indigenous population now use only 21,000 dunams of land for agriculture, while settlers use about 110,000 dunams.

From the outset of the occupation, the occupying authorities established water infrastructure in the Golan to supply the settler agriculture sector with irrigation water. In 1978, the Mith Golan (Golan Water) company was established, owned and operated by 27 Israeli settlements in the Golan. Over the years and until today, the occupation authorities, represented by this company, have established 16 further water supply networks, with a capacity of 45 million cubic meters, in addition to 6 sewerage networks in the perimeter of the settlements, with a capacity of approximately 3 million cubic meters [18].

In addition, the occupying authorities, represented by one of these companies, the Mekorot Company, seized the natural waters of Lake Ram. This is located in the middle of lands owned by the Syrian indigenous population of the Golan villages, with a capacity of 6.5 million cubic metres. The company pumps this water to the settlements.

The government Mekorot Company is also active in groundwater extraction in the Golan. Thusfar, they have drilled more than 40 artesian wells in 17 sites across the Golan, five of which are located in the middle of Syrian indigenous farmers' land.

The Mekorot Company does not disclose the actual amount of water that it extracts from the Golan, but it is estimated to be tens of millions of cubic meters per year. From one site, the Aloneh Habshan wells, the company extracts between 11 and 12 million cubic meters per year. From the Mitzar site they extract approximately 4.5 million cubic meters per year, depending on rainfall, and from the Mansoura site, they extract about 3 million cubic meters per year [19].

Until 1990s, the occupying authorities refused to provide Syrian farmers with water, so the farmers built small-scale rain water harvesting systems, filling small dug pools or iron tanks with water in the winter season, to use for irrigation in the summer. These structures have become a prominent landmark of the Golan landscape on the indigenous populations agricultural lands.

For their part, the occupying authorities consider building such small reservoirs and water storage a building violation. Instead of responding to the farmers' demands to provide them with water, they have demolished reservoirs, prosecuted farmers, and subjected them to large fees. This flagrant disregard for the rights of Syrian farmers, whilst also extracting the waters of Lake Ram solely for Israeli settlement use, has angered the indigenous community. It was only when the occupation authorities realized that their policy could result in confrontation between the community and occupying forces, and after underground water sources was found in their land, did they agree to provide farmers with some limited quantities of water. The Israeli Water Authority has stipulated that the Syrian farmers establish water associations, to be the link between them and the Mekorot Company. Today, there are 21 water associations (only 18 of which are currently active) that manage water affairs between the farmers and the occupying authorities.

Nevertheless, and predictably, the occupying authorities have not abandoned their policy of engrained discrimination in water distribution. A Jewish farmer in the settlements is allotted **750-800** cups of water per one dunum of agricultural land, while the Syrian farmer is allotted **only 250** cups of water per dunum.

This is equal to one third of the amount received by the Jewish settler farmer. Moreover, Syrian farmer water associations are forced to buy each cup of water for 1.6 NIS from the Mekorot Company, and then pay for its delivery to their land, meaning the cost inflates to 3.5 NIS. In other words, the Syrian farmer has to bear the costs of water infrastructure, while the Jewish farmer in the settlements pays only 1.1 NIS per cup of water, and does not pay the infrastructure fees. [20]

The result is that Syrian farmers receive only 4.7 to 5 million cubic meters of water annually to irrigate approximately 20,000 dunams of land. This small quantity has had a negative impact on agricultural production. Compounding this, Syrian farmers face increased barriers to marketing and selling their agricultural products (traditionally apples and cherries), forcing them to sell produce at a cheaper price. In contrast the institutions of the occupying authorities guarantee the Jewish settler farmer the marketing of his produce without obstacle. [21]

The agricultural sector of the indigenous population of the Golan faces great challenges and significant decline, as a result of the discriminatory policies practiced by the occupying authorities. This has destroyed a major component in the economy of the Golanis, and the main source of livelihood for the Golan community. According to the Central Bureau of Statistics for the year 2008, only 10.1 of the Syrian labor force now work in the agricultural sector, and this includes those working in agriculture for Jewish settler farmers. [22]

3.2.8 The Educational System and Schools

The most important aspect of urban planning policy is the education sector. The educational system is the cornerstone of any socio-economic development, and a fundamental part of any civilizational, cultural and developmental project for any society. In its pursuit of the the land, as their most coveted resource, the Israeli authorities seek to control and manipulate the Arab in their area of control by tampering with the components of their identity, their heritage, their memory, and their cultural and social affiliations.

Since the occupation, Israel has prohibited all schools in the Syrian villages of the Golan from continuing to teach the Syrian education curriculum, and instead imposed on them the Israeli curriculum. specifically, the curriculum used in the "Druze schools" inside Israel. They did so with the aim of separating subsequent generations from their indigenous history and culture, and the wider Arab community, in the service of their long-term project of changing the character of the Golan.

The Israeli authorities adopt three educational curricula, one for the Jewish community, the second for the Arab community (both Muslims and Christians), and the third for what they term as the "Druze community". This assists them in dividing Arab society by ethno-religious groups, to undermine their internal and external sources of support and ensure they are easier to control. This national-ethnic division provides them with more ideal conditions for imposing discriminatory policies in the distribution of resources. The education system in the Golan is characterized by the following:

Separating the Golan schools from the "Arab section" of the education system, incorporating them into a "Druze section," and establishing educational programs for the Druze, based on the values of Druze religious culture and loyalty to the State of Israel. The stated purpose of this is "strengthening relations" between Jewish and Druze people, expanding knowledge of Jewish culture, and crystallizing a "Druze-Israeli" entity, based only on religion without any link to their Arab identity and culture. The Ministry of Education has given educational subjects a sectarian character, for example through 'druzification' of educational topics and material, such as "Mathematics for the Druze Schools" and "Arabic for the Druze Schools" and others. [23]

The focus on 'druzification and "Druze heritage"' is a means to crystallize a new 'Druze-Israeli' identity among younger generation, that isolates the Druze community, turns them into a minority, and denies its ties to the Arab world, while fostering blind loyalty to the Israeli state as their 'protector'. In this context, Israel has sought to exploit the 2011 war in Syria to advance this same narrative and its control over the Syrian indigenous population in the Golan.

Central control of the Ministry of Education over the form and content of the educational curriculum in schools, without giving the Syrian indigenous population the right to participate in developing the educational curriculum, and in order to pass the above Israeli-Zionist narrative to younger generations unopposed. Logically centralise authoritarian control over the educational system allows the occupying authorities another means of controlling Arab communities and preventing dissent. This is reflected in the staffing of the education system in Golan which is managed and supervised at senior levels solely by Israeli Jewish officials, and in the middle and lower ranks by Arabs, in line with the Zionist ideology of Jewish supremacy.

The Security Service (*Shin Bet*), in accordance with the above, deeply interfering in the appointment of teachers, directors, and inspectors. [24]

A politicised curriculum, carrying a political agenda, focussing on passing on the Zionist narrative, through history, geography, and social studies to younger generations, in addition to eliminating any Syrian or Arab national identity, and replacing it with an ethno-religious identity (a Druze identity) linked to the Hebrew state.

A severe lack of infrastructure and resources allocated to the education system in the Syrian villages of the Golan, compared to the education system in Jewish settler communities.

The right to participate in deciding the form and contents of education should be granted to every citizen without discrimination, based on the fundamental right to freedom and dignity. This stems from the fact that education is a condition for preserving the cultural heritage and the personal and collective identity of peoples. The Israeli authorities instead see the function of education for Arabs as a way to reconstitute this in order to serve its aims.

The most dangerous aspect of the Israeli occupation is the occupation of thought and self, and the obliteration of the collective identity of the Syrian and wider Arab population within its sphere of control.

With regard to the severe lack of infrastructure and resources, the data in the below table highlights the inequitable funding regime practiced by the occupying authorities, which discriminates against children and young people from the Syrian indigenous population. In 2020, there were 5,784 students in the schools of Syrian villages in the Golan, and 5,998 students in the schools of Israeli settlements, a marginal difference of 214 students. However, settlement school budgets for 2020 received nearly 100 million Shekel (30.2 million US dollars) more, equating to an average of 15,732 Shekel (4,753 US dollars) more for every Jewish student. This has impacted the number of schools, the number of classes, and the number of students per class, in addition to other aspects of teaching and educational infrastructure, all of which have negative impacts on student learning and attainment.

Schools in the Occupied Golan (2020)						
-Syrian Villages and Jewish Settlements-						
	Number of schools	Number of Students	Number of classroom	Students / classroom	Student cost share Ministry of Education (NIS)	school budget (Million NIS)
Jewish Settlements						
Regional Council-Golan	16	4,601	206	22.9	28,291	212.036
Kazrin	4	1,397	62	23.3	27,099	56.218
Total	20	5,998	268			268.254
Syrian Villages						
Majdal-Shams	4	2,283	88	26.1	23,395	65.010
Buqaatha	3	1,404	58	25.1	24,478	43.597
Masaada	3	1,069	46	24.8	25,800	33.277
Ain-Qinya	1	354	15	25.1	21,484	11.045
Al-Ghajar	2	647	26	24.7	22,862	14.760
Total	13	5,784	233			167.689
Prepared by: Dr. Nazez Brik						
Source:						
The government website of the Ministry of Education.						
- https://shkifut.education.gov.il/national						

It is evident from the below table and attendant graph, that the schools in the Syrian villages of the Golan are ranked at the bottom of the official school classification rankings relative to those in Israeli settlements. This is mirrored by the rankings of the socio-economic status of the wider community. These rankings illustrate a dialectical relationship between the human rights violations practised by the occupying authorities, for example in regards to the education system and children and young people, and the wider socio-economic status of the Syrian indigenous population.

Together these outcomes are a clear indication of the discriminatory policies pursued by the occupation authority. The significant disparity in educational quality and socio-economic status between the Syrian indigenous population and Jewish settlers is a result first and foremost of the ethnic-based planning policies and discrimination practised by the occupying authorities.

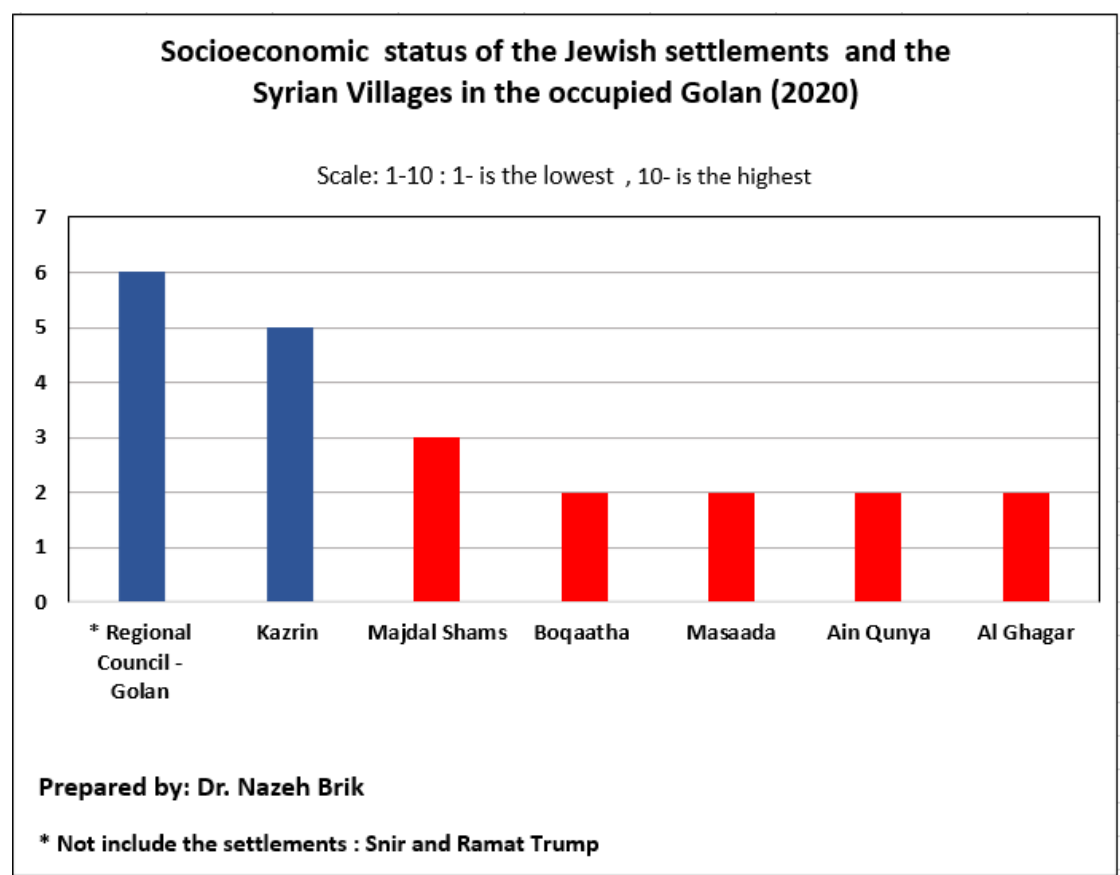
Socio-economic arrangement of Jewish settlements and Syrian villages in the Occupied Golan (2019-2020)		
(Scale 1 – 10: 1 the lowest, 10 the highest)		
	Ranking of Jewish settlements and Syrian villages (2019)	School Ranking Score (2020) (2)
Jewish settlements		
Regional Council-Golan (1)	6	6
Kazrin	4	5
Syrian Villages		
Majdal-Shams	3	3
Buqaatha	2	2
Masaada	2	2
Ain-Qinya	2	2
Al-Ghajar	3	2

Prepared by: Dr. Nazeh Brik

(1) Including 33 settlements, not including Ramat Trump settlement which was established in 2020. Snir settlement belongs to the Regional Council "Galil-Alion" (Upper Galilee).

(2) Classification of schools is not related to the level of education in the school, but rather to the social and economic status of the student and his family.

Source:
Government websites <https://shkifut.education.gov.il/national> and <https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/Pages/%D7%90%D7%AA%D7%A8-%D7%97%D7%93%D7%A9.aspx>



3.2.9 Budgets

The calculation of the size of budgets provided to local municipalities by Israeli Ministries and governmental institutions is based a number of factors. This includes the Ministry of Interior classification of the locale as a village, town, which each being allocated relatively more funding. In the Golan, only the settlement of Katzrin enjoys the status of a town, while the main Syrian village of Majdal Shams, whose population is 1.5 times larger than the population of Katzrin, does not receive this status. Whilst population number alone is not sufficient to give a locality the status of a city, it is apparent that ethnic composition (Jews or non-Jewish Arabs), plays an important role in the classification process on the part of the Ministry of Interior, and a hidden tool in deciding upon how to distribute budgets.[25].

There are a significant number of Arab towns within Israel who also do not have town status, even though their population is much larger than that of Jewish towns that do have such status.

The budgets that municipal councils obtain from state institutions play a major role in developing community infrastructure, such as schools, roads and transportation, electricity, water, parks and green areas, tourism, and other services and amenities.

The data in the below table reveals that discrimination in the occupying authorities starts from the top, with governmental institutions, and is rooted in the policies of the ruling class. While the Syrian indigenous worker in the Golan pays taxes at the exact same rate as the Jewish worker, there is a huge discrepancy in their share of the budgets allocated by the Israeli authorities, showing a redistribution away from the indigenous population and towards Jewish settlers.

According to the data of the Central Bureau of Statistics, as shown in the table below, in 2019 the per capita share of the settler community from the central budget allocated to settlement municipalities amounted to 13,176 NIS, while the per capita share allocated to the Syrian villages amounted to 9,081 NIS. This was approximately 69% of what a Jewish settler received in the Golan.

The budgets allocated to the municipalities of Jewish settlements and Syrian villages in the occupied Golan (2019)			
	Population	Budget (Million Shekel)	Individual share (Shekel)
Jewish settlements			
Regional Council Golan	18,000	234.246	13,013
Kazrin	7,300	99.120	13,578
Total	25,300	333.366	Average individual share 13,176
Syrian Villages			
Majdal-Shams	11,200	90.087	8,034
Buqaatha	6,600	62.694	9,499
Masaada	3,700	39.154	10,582
Ain-Qinya	2,100	23.257	11,258
Al-Ghajar	2,700	23.643	8,756
Total	26,300	238.853	Average individual share 9,081
Prepared by: Dr. Nazeh Brik			
Source:			
"The Local authorities in Israel 2019, publication no. 1835". 1835 פרסום מס. 1835, הרשויות המקומיות בישראל 2019, פרסום מס. 1835". https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/publications/pages/2021/%D7%94%D7%A8%D7%A9%D7%95%D7%99%D7%95%D7%AA-%D7%94%D7%9E%D7%A7%D7%95%D7%9E%D7%99%D7%95%D7%AA-%D7%91%D7%99%D7%A9%D7%A8%D7%90%D7%9C-2019.aspx			

4. Summary

The above findings emphasize that violating equal rights in one area will quickly lead to violations of equal rights in other areas of individual and communal life. Just like dominoes, when the first one falls, so do the rest.

Urban planners play an active role in shaping the physical, social and psychological characteristics of any social system, by enabling equal economic opportunities, and achieving social and economic integration.

Planning policies and practices, as a matter of professional standards as well as ethics, must be grounded first and foremost on the principles of solidarity, social and environmental justice, and social and economic sustainability, not on ethno-nationalist considerations. They must be responsive to collective social and cultural needs. There is a dialectical relationship between planning and socio-economic status. Land and planning policies fundamentally affect living standards quality of life. They can be used to improve the situation of the individual and society, or instrumentalized to cause great damage.

Discrimination by the Israeli authorities in Israel and the territories it occupies is grounded in the fact that Israel first defines itself as a Jewish state. This opens the door to discrimination against all non-Jews. However, Israel continues demand the international community to recognize it as a “Jewish state”, as though it is asking the international community to legitimize its discriminatory racist policies.

This foments an Israeli planning system which perpetuates patterns of injustice and inequality, with profound negative consequences for Arab indigenous communities. Israeli planners are violating professional ethics, which requires that planning and planning experts do not seek to place the interests of one racial or ethnic group over the interest of any another group. Contrary to these ethics, since 1967 through 2022, they have prepared and implemented plans to transfer part of the Jewish population, in the form of Israeli settlements, to the occupied Syrian Golan. This is in flagrant violation of international human rights law and international humanitarian law. The occupying authorities are prioritising the interests of the Jewish settlers to land, the economy and civil rights, with permanent damage to the Arab indigenous population (inside Israel and in the occupied territories, including the occupied Syrian Golan). The planning system has been transformed into a means to stifle development, to restrict economic activity, and to limit and distort the growth of Arab villages. It has also been transformed into a means to destroy or remove the environmental features (whether villages and residential communities, land and natural resources, culture or heritage) which embody the Syrian Arab indigenous character of the Golan.

The Israeli authorities practices serious ethnic-based discrimination in its allocating of budgets on a national basis. Arabs (whether in the occupied Syrian Golan or inside Israel) suffer discrimination in admission to work places, budgets, social welfare services, and infrastructure in local authorities. In some cases, there is institutionalized discrimination, which is codified by legislation and policy, that gives preference to Jewish Israeli citizens. In addition to this apparent institutional discrimination, there is hidden discrimination in wider society, based on linking some jobs and budgets to military service, while the indigenous people of the Golan -the Syrian Arabs- do not serve in the army.

Several years ago, the Israeli government sought to join the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). To do so the Israeli state had to meet a number of conditions to be accepted into this organization, including reducing disparities between different groups in “Israeli” society. The government set up committees and authorities such as: “The Authority to Develop the Arab Sector Economically” and formed the “Hundred Days Committee,” which was entrusted with the task of developing a detailed plan to solve the housing crisis and unlicensed construction and development issues in Arab communities. After Israel was accepted into the OECD, these plans remained on paper only, and little was done to develop Arab communities.

End Notes:

[1]

Documents: Israel has planned since the beginning of the sixties a war and occupation of 1967, Arab 48 website, publication date: 06/05/2021. (Arabic).

وثائق: إسرائيل خططت منذ بداية الستينيات لحرب واحتلال 1967، موقع عرب 48، تاريخ النشر: 2021/06/05

<https://www.arab48.com/%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA%D8%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%88%D8%AA%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%B1/2021/06/05/-%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84-%D9%84%D9%85-%D8%AA%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%B7-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%AA%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%85-1967-%D8%A8%D9%84-%D8%AE%D8%B7%D8%B7%D8%AA-%D9%84%D9%87-%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AA->

[2]

For more information about the Syrian communities destroyed by Israel after the occupation of the Golan, see the Al-Marsad website, <https://golan-marsad.org/ar/46502-2/>

[3]

Ofer Aderat, "55 Years Later: A Censored Kibbutz Decision About Arab Land Is Revealed", Haaretz 14.06.2022.

<https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2022-06-14/ty-article-magazine/.premium/55-years-later-a-censored-kibbutz-decision-about-arab-lands-is-revealed/00000181-6218-d76c-a7b9-679ce2990000>

Adam Raz, "The Dark Truth Behind the Israeli Army's Reenactment of the Six-Day War", Haaretz, 20.06.2020

<https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2020-06-20/ty-article-magazine/.premium/the-dark-truth-behind-the-israeli-armys-reenactment-of-the-67-war/0000017f-f2c4-df98-a5ff-f3edc6990000>

The unspoken transfer: the displacement of the residents of the Golan after the setback, Arab 48 website, publication date: June 19, 2020. (Arabic).

- الترانسفير المسكوت عنه: تهجير سكان الجولان بعد النكسة، موقع عرب 48، تاريخ النشر: 19.06.2020

<https://www.arab48.com/%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA/%D9%88%D8%AB%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%82>

[4]

On Security Council and General Assembly resolutions see:

- https://www.un.org/ar/ga/63/plenary/A_middle_east.shtml

- <https://www.un.org/ar/ga/all-ga-resolutions.shtml>

- <https://news.un.org/ar/tags/ljwln>

- https://stringfixer.com/ar/List_of_United_Nations_Security_Council_Resolutions_401_to_500

- <https://sa24.co/show2237211.html>

[5]

The settlement Neve Ativ is located on the road linking Majdal Shams and Ain Qinya, and Nimrud settlement overlooks the road linking Majdal Shams and Masada, and at the western entrance to Majdal-Shams

[6]

In this research paper, these laws will not be discussed in detail. To learn more about the components of these laws, they can be found on the website of Adalah - The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel: <https://www.adalah.org> . or you can refer to the Report "Housing Right" issued by Al-Marsad in 2017.

[7]

After the occupation of the Golan, there were 6 villages that were not affected by displacement and destruction, namely Majdal Shams, Masaada, Buqaatha, Sihita, Ain Qinya and Ghajar. However, in 1971, the occupation authorities displaced the residents of Sihita village (300 people), to Masada and Buqaatha, and the village was completely destroyed. For more about the villages demolished by the occupation authorities in the Golan, see the file "Residential communities demolished by Israel after occupying the Golan in 1967" on Al-Marsad website: <https://golan-marsad.org/ar/46502-2/>

[8]

See the report: Al Marsad, "Nature reserves in the Golan", 2021.

<https://golan-marsad.org/ar/%d8%a7%d9%84%d9%85%d8%ad%d9%85%d9%8a%d8%a7%d8%aa-%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%b7%d8%a8%d9%8a%d8%b9%d9%8a%d8%a9-%d9%81%d9%8a-%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%ac%d9%88%d9%84%d8%a7%d9%86-%d8%a7%d9%84%d9%85%d8%ad%d8%aa%d9%84-2>

[9]

"A plan for empowerment and socio-economic development in the Druze settlements in the Golan Heights for the years 2021-2023".

(תוכנית להעצמה ולפיתוח כלכלי-חברתי ביישובים הדרוזיים ברמת הגולן לשנים , 2023 - 2021).

https://www.gov.il/he/departments/policies/dec_717_2021

It should be noted that the occupation authorities included in this plan only the four Druze-majority villages and excluded the village of Ghajar, which is predominantly Alawite. This exception falls within the policy adopted by the Jewish state since its establishment, which is based on the fragmentation of the Arab community under its control into small ethn0-religious groups, to obscure its identity and national solidarity.

[10]

Tal Schneider, "Planning and Building Problems in Arab Towns and Villages in Israel Fueling the Deadly Wave of Violence", Times of Israel, 2021. (Arabic).

(תל שניידר: مشاكل التخطيط والبناء في مدن وقرى العرب في إسرائيل تُغذي موجة العنف الدامية، تايم أوف إزرانل، 2021).

<https://ar.timesofisrael.com/%d9%85%d8%b4%d8%a7%d9%83%d9%84-%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%aa%d8%ae%d8%b7%d9%8a%d8%b7-%d9%88%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%a8%d9%86%d8%a7%d8%a1-%d9%81%d9%8a-%d9%85%d8%af%d9%86-%d9%88%d9%82%d8%b1%d9%89-%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%b9%d8%b1/>

[11]

Building violations here refer to a new building without a permit, or an addition to an existing building without a permit. For more information on Building issues in the Syrian villages of the Golan, see Al Marsad, "The Right to Housing Report", 2017, <https://golan-marsad.org/ar/%d8%aa%d9%82%d8%b1%d9%8a%d8%b1-%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%ad%d9%82-%d8%a8%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%b3%d9%83%d9%86/>

[12]

Central Statistics Department. (Hebrew).

<https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/subjects/Pages/%D7%90%D7%95%D7%9B%D7%9C%D7%95%D7%A1%D7%99%D7%99%D7%94.aspx>

[13]

Central Statistics Department. (Hebrew).

<https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/subjects/Pages/%D7%90%D7%95%D7%9B%D7%9C%D7%95%D7%A1%D7%99%D7%99%D7%94.aspx>

[14]

- **Golan Industrial Park - Bnei Yehuda.** (Hebrew).

(פארק תעשייה גולן - בני יהודה)

<https://www.golanjobs.co.il/he/pages/%D7%A4%D7%90%D7%A8%D7%A7-%D7%AA%D7%A2%D7%A9%D7%99%D7%94-%D7%92%D7%95%D7%9C%D7%9F-%D7%91%D7%A0%D7%99-%D7%99%D7%94%D7%95%D7%93%D7%94>

[15]

Planning Administration.(Hebrew).

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https://mavat.moin.gov.il/MavatPS/Forms/SV4.aspx?tid=4&mp_id=6oPTq5clnWPq6PURj1qZKcjInxctLMRn%2FRbYgovp mNUi2jP6CxpaaeEdNZ5hC0GK8zzvS8MmWArV%2Btf3TqwY6OrnaiaNElJkLff16rTwNc%3D&et=1

[16]

The industrial zones in 16 settlements were calculated from the local master plans of each settlement. See the government website, Planning Administration.(Hebrew).

<https://mavat.moin.gov.il/MavatPS/Forms/SV3.aspx?tid=3>

[17]

An interview with an architect, who runs an office in the Katzrin settlement.

[18]

- **Mih Golan** - the website of the Water Association. (Hebrew).

מי גולן - אתר אגודת המים
<http://www.mgw.org.il>

[19]

- **Water Authority - Kinneret Basin.** (Hebrew).

(רשות המים – אגן הכנרת)

<https://www.gov.il/he/departments/general/kinneret-basin>

- **Mekorot - National Water Company.** (Hebrew).

(מקורות – חברת המים הלאומית)

<https://www.magazine-pro.com/13/112/A/890/Mekorot>

- **Sea Kinneret Basin** (Hebrew).

(אגן הכנרת)

<https://www.gov.il/BlobFolder/reports/water-resources-2014/he/agan-kinneret-2014.pdf>

<https://www.gov.il/BlobFolder/reports/water-resources-2012/he/mei-tehom-kineret-2012.pdf>

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(רשות המים - דו"ח ועדת קידוחים מיום 16.11.22)

https://www.gov.il/BlobFolder/reports/comittee-summaries/he/comittee-summaries_drill-2016_kiduhim-22.11.16.pdf

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(מקורות, חברת המים הלאומית. דוח איכות מי השתיה בשנת 2016)

<https://www.mekorot.co.il/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/%D7%93%D7%95%D7%97-%D7%90%D7%99%D7%9B%D7%95%D7%AA-%D7%9E%D7%99%D7%9D-%D7%A9%D7%A0%D7%AA%D7%99-2016.pdf>

[20]

Interview with the director of one of the water associations in Magdal Shams. It should be noted that the Golan farmers are supplied with water from the Israeli company Makurot (National Water Company), while the Jewish settlers get their irrigation water from the Golan Water Company, a company owned by 27 agricultural settlements in the Golan. The company was founded in 1978, and obtained on a license from the state to extract water from the Golan, and build water reservoirs, to supply the settlers with their water needs. <https://www.mgw.org.il/>

On the other hand, the occupation authorities do not allow Golan farmers to dig wells and extract water to cover their needs from irrigation water, even if the source of the water is inside their land.

Previously, the water associations for Golan farmers obtained irrigation water from the Makurot company, at a more expensive price than the normal price, as the water associations used to pay 2.5 shekels for each glass of water for irrigation, and it reaches the farmers at a cost of 5.0 shekels per glass, but in 2020, the company was forced to Makurot unification of prices in the whole country. About the prices of the Makurot irrigation water company from 2020, see:

<https://www.agronet.co.il/%D7%AA%D7%A2%D7%A8%D7%99%D7%A3-%D7%9E%D7%99%D7%9D-%D7%9C%D7%97%D7%A7%D7%9C%D7%90%D7%95%D7%AA-1-2020>

[21]

- Interview with the director of one of the water associations in Majdal Shams

[22]

. Central Bureau of Statistics, census 2008. (Hebrew).

הלשכה המרכזית לסטטיסטיקה, מפקד האוכלוסין - 2008

<https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/pages/search/SearchResultsMain.aspx?k=>

The percentage of agricultural workers from the villages of the Golan was calculated from the data of the Central Department of Statistics for Majdal Shams, Bugaatha and Masaada, the percentage in Majdal Shams was 3.2%, in

Bagatha 13.1%, and in Masada 14.0%, as for the village of Ain Kuniya and the village of Al-Ghajar, it was not available Information on the proportion of workers in agriculture.

[23]

In 1976, the Israeli establishment separated the local councils in villages with a majority of Druze members from the rest of the Arab villages, and called them "Druze villages". And in the same year, the institution separated the educational curricula, and also assigned to the schools in the "Druze" villages a special teaching curriculum that included selected materials, to contribute to the manipulation of history and the blurring of the facts, where they wrote on the covers of the books:

"Arabic Language for Druze Schools", "Hebrew for Druze Schools", "Mathematics for Druze Schools", the Ministry of Education has introduced a new subject to be taught in these "Druze" schools called Heritage Lessons, and it was intended for Druze students only. Religion among Muslim and Christian students, but it did not include any content related to the Druze religion, but rather included information about the holy places and shrines of the Druze in the Middle East, and information about religious and non-religious Druze personalities, in addition to that, there are some stories mentioned in the heritage article, which include inflammatory content hidden in the Arab environment.

The heritage share contributed to the shell and thought of the Druze students, as if they had a different history and culture different from their Arab environment. The Israeli authorities took this step within the framework of its policy, which is based on the fragmentation of the Palestinian Arab community into religious-ethnic groups, to strengthen the policy of control and control. The occupation authority practiced the same policy in the Golan society, where it abolished the Syrian educational curriculum from the schools of the villages of the Golan, and applied the same curriculum to the four villages (Majdal Shams, Buqaatha, Masada, and Ain Qinya) to the "Druze schools" inside Israel. Al-Ghajar, whose children belong to the Alawite sect, have been enrolled in the existing education curriculum in other Arab schools.

C:\Users\Win_10\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Word\https://www.adalah.org

[24]

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(محمود ميعاري: مناهج التعليم العربي في إسرائيل - دراسات نقدية في مناهج اللغة العربية والتاريخ والجغرافيا والمدنيات. تحرير برفسور محمود معاري، إصدار المجلس التربوي العربي، 2014.)

[25]

For more information on the resource allocation policy in Israel, see:

- **Ministry of the Interior** - Administration for Local Government, the economy of local government in Israel, analysis of the gaps between local authorities in Israel, 2016. (Hebrew).

(مשרד הפנים - המינהל לשלטון מקומי, כלכלת השלטון המקומי בישראל, ניתוח הפערים בין רשויות מקומיות בישראל, 2016.)

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https://sikkuy-aufiq.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/revenue_resurces_arabic.pdf

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[https://www.mossawa.org/Public/file/0Report-%20Arabic%20final2004%20budget\[1\].pdf](https://www.mossawa.org/Public/file/0Report-%20Arabic%20final2004%20budget[1].pdf)

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