



MA'AN's Jordan Valley Monthly Update

MA'AN's monthly updates are not intended to be a news source, but instead offer information that is relevant or underreported in the region.

September 2013



Children at the al-Ka'abneh school in the central Jordan Valley use computers for the first time after receiving a solar panel from a MA'AN project

Demolitions in Mak-hul

On 16 September, 2013 at 4:30am, Israeli army jeeps and bulldozers descended onto the Palestinian herding community of Khibet Mak-hul in the Jordan Valley. They subsequently demolished over three dozen structures and in the process made dispossessed 43 persons including 17 children. The Makhoul community is home to a total of 118 residents which includes an overall 65 children.¹ During the school year, the children of the village live with extended families in the village of Tammoun in order to attend school because the Israeli Civil Administration has refused to allow the construction of a school in the area for the communities of Mak-hul, Ras al-Ahmar, and al-Hadidiya.²

Demolitions in Fasayil al-Foqa

On the second of September, the Israeli Civil Administration and army demolished one house and two animal shelters belonging to Daif-Allah al-Rashaideh and his family. In the process, they made a whole family of nine homeless and unable to take care of their animals which are the sole source of income for the family.³

Settler Cultivation

In early September of this year, the settlement of Na'ama began to expand northward towards the Palestinian village of al-Auja. Approximately 100 dunums of newly cultivated land have been added to the settlement. The last years have seen a population increase of around 40% which may be a major factor to this recent cultivation.

The settlement of Na'ama is completely located on lands owned by families in the village of al-Auja.⁴

Settler Cultivation of Closed Military Zones

It was recently released by the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* that the Israeli Civil Administration, in cooperation with the World Zionist Organization and the Israeli army, have been actively selling large swaths of fertile closed military zones to settlements in the Jordan Valley. *Haaretz* was able to document that at least 6,000 dunums have been sold to settlements this way as a new method for their expansion.⁵ MA'AN was the first organization to document this phenomenon and has been actively tracking these plots of land.⁶

MA'AN's Work in the Jordan Valley

Enhancing Youth's Ability to Advocate for their Rights

MA'AN, in coordination with World Vision, began its project entitled *Jordan Valley Through My Eyes*. This project selected 30 youth from the Jordan Valley to participate in a media training geared towards equipping them with skills needed to document their lives. From the initial 30, 12 were selected to receive digital cameras to allow them to photographically document their lives and Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights in the Jordan Valley. They will go out with a professional photographer a number of times to locations in the Jordan Valley to learn how to properly photograph various aspects of life in the region and learn how to caption them properly. The project will carry on until the middle of October, thereafter they will keep the cameras for future usage.

Expansion of the Primary School and Kindergarten in Fasayil al-Foqa

At the beginning of the month of September, construction was completed on the expansion of the primary school in the Palestinian village of Fasayil al-Foqa. A new classroom for the 8th grade was finished, in addition to a computer lab and library, for the students to use. For the kindergarten, a proper toilet, a sink, and a water fountain were built for the children. This was all done with as part of the *Voices to be Heard* project funded by the Norwegian Representative Office.



Installation of Solar Panels at the al-Ka'abneh Primary School

For the start of the new school year, MA'AN installed a solar panel at the al-Ka'abneh primary school in the Jordan Valley. This allowed the school to finally have stable supply of electricity after numerous years of being without it. With the installation of the solar panel, the school was able to create a computer lab for the children, all of whom had never used a computer before. In addition, the school is in the process of installing fans to help the students cope with the extremely high temperatures prevalent in the Jordan Valley. This project was only possible with the gracious funding of the Norwegian Representative Office as part of our *Voice to be Heard* project.

(Endnotes)

- 1 Wafa News Agency *Israel Displaces 120 People in Jordan Valley* 17 September 2013
- 2 MA'AN Development Center Field Research and Interviews January 2013
- 3 MA'AN Development Center Field Research 2 September 2013
- 4 For more information see MA'AN Development Center *Cultivating Dispossession* 2013 pg. 25
- 5 Levinson, Chaim (Haaretz) *Document Confirms World Zionist Organization Allocates Land to Settlers in the Jordan Valley* 9 September 2013
- 6 For more information please see MA'AN Development Center *Settler Cultivation of Closed Military Zones*