



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.

February 2014



Demolitions in Khirbet Yarza

On the morning of February 17th, Israeli military and Civil Administration forces descended upon the Palestinian herding community of Khirbet Yarza. They proceeded to demolish 15 structures, including five homes. Additionally, they confiscated four tent covers that were supplied by MA'AN, and funded by OCHA.

Israel Begins Construction of a Water Plant in the Central Jordan Valley

Towards the middle of February, Israeli bulldozers and drills began construction of a new water plant in the Jordan Valley. The location is north of the settlement of Yafit, in the buffer zone, between Route 90 and the Jordan River. The land on which the water plant is being built is approximately 40 dunums and will be controlled by the settlement of Yafit upon completion of the project.

Uprooting Date Trees in Zbeidat

In the early hours of February 6th, Israeli Civil Administration and military forces arrived at the village of Zbeidat in order to uproot 120 date trees planted and owned by Hasan al-Jermi Zbeidat, the head of the village council for the village of Zbeidat. He received uprooting orders for the trees back in May 2013. Although the trees are located a mere 10 meters from his house, Israeli authorities declared the trees to be located on settlement land (even though the nearby settlement of Argaman is almost one kilometer away). In the process of uprooting the trees, the soldiers also destroyed an okra farm located between the rows of trees.

Evacuation Order Given to 219 Palestinians in the Greater al-Maleh Region

Around noon on the 4th of February, Israeli soldiers went to three different Palestinian communities

in the northern Jordan Valley to deliver evacuation orders to 219 Palestinians in the area. The justification given for this was an upcoming military exercise to be conducted in the area. These exercises have long been used as pretext for the displacement of Palestinians in the Jordan Valley. Additionally, when military exercises are conducted, the army frequently leaves behind used and undetonated explosives that have caused injury to scores of Palestinians. Of the 219 evacuation orders, 85 were for children under the age of 17.



Israeli Army Confiscates Four Caravans Provided by MA'AN

On the morning of 17 February, Israeli military forces entered the village of Bardala in the northern Jordan Valley. Upon entering, they confiscated four caravans from the village. These caravans were provided by MA'AN as part of a project in conjunction with UN Women. The project is intended to assist women in the Jordan Valley to open businesses. These women decided to open up shops on the main highway of Route 90 in order to sell food and other goods. This has now made it very difficult for the women to continue with their plans in the absence of the caravans.

MA'AN's Work in the Jordan Valley

Rehabilitation of the Marj Na'aje Play Area

In the beginning of 2012, MA'AN constructed a football field and large play area for the village of Marj Na'aje in the central Jordan Valley. Over time and due to great usage, the play area required a makeover and regular maintenance. Due to a generous grant from the Norwegian Representative Office, MA'AN was able to

rehabilitate the play area. This included cleaning the lands of the play area, fixing the swings, and installing two new slides.

Renovation of the Main Kindergarten in Zbeidat

As part of our ongoing work with kindergartens in the Jordan Valley, MA'AN renovated the main kindergarten in the Palestinian village of Zbeidat. This involved installing a proper shading unit and the installation of a rubber floor for children to play on.

Release of MA'AN's New Video

On the February 20th MA'AN released its first video of 2014, entitled "Youth of the Jordan Valley: Huge Ambitions, Looking for Opportunities." The video, in Arabic, interviews many youth in the Jordan Valley, who discuss topics that they find to be important in their lives.

Two Additional Houses Constructed in Furush Beit Dajan

As part of our Voices to be Heard project, funded by the Norwegian Representative Office, MA'AN was expected to renovate a total of 60 homes over three years for vulnerable and marginalized Palestinians in the Jordan Valley. This year, MA'AN was required to complete the final 17 house renovations. Thankfully, due to extra money sourced from other parts of the project, the two extra houses were renovated in addition to the required 60. The last two houses were renovated in February – actions graciously welcomed by the family members.

Tour of the Jordan Valley for Students from Bir Zeit University

Organized with an enthusiastic group from Bir Zeit University, located just north of Ramallah, a tour was conducted for a group of 30 students. They went to the Jordan Valley with MA'AN's field coordinator who gave them a well-rounded and informative tour, which included visitations to the Palestinian communities of Ras al-Auja, Fasayil al-Foqa, Zbeidat, and the Greater al-Maleh region.