



Home demolished in Al Jiftlik. The mother is crying in the back, because she is alone after her husband was arrested and she has to take care of four children. (Photo Credit: EAPPI)

Jordan Valley Demolitions

13 June 2023

Facts and Figures about the Jordan Valleyⁱ

- The Jordan Valley amounts to 720,000 dunums; 25% of the size of the West Bank.
- It includes 280,000 dunums that amount to 50% of suitable agricultural land in the West Bank.
- 56,908 Palestinians live there in 27 villages.
- It has 169 water wells.
- There are 36 settlements in the Jordan Valley.
- No less than 50,000 Palestinians have been forcefully evicted since 1967.

Why the Jordan Valley Demolitions?

Demolition of Palestinian homes and structures occurs frequently in the the Jordan Valley and around Jericho. According to Israeli human rights group B'Tselem, Israel has mooted plans to Annex parts of Area C. Demolitions are carried out on structures built without permits, although Israel's military government in the West Bank only approves between 1 and 3 percent of Palestinian building permit requests.ⁱⁱ

Palestinian presence in the Jordan Valley is important because the area is indispensable for a viable Palestinian state in the future. Sparsely populated, it has many open, undeveloped areas.

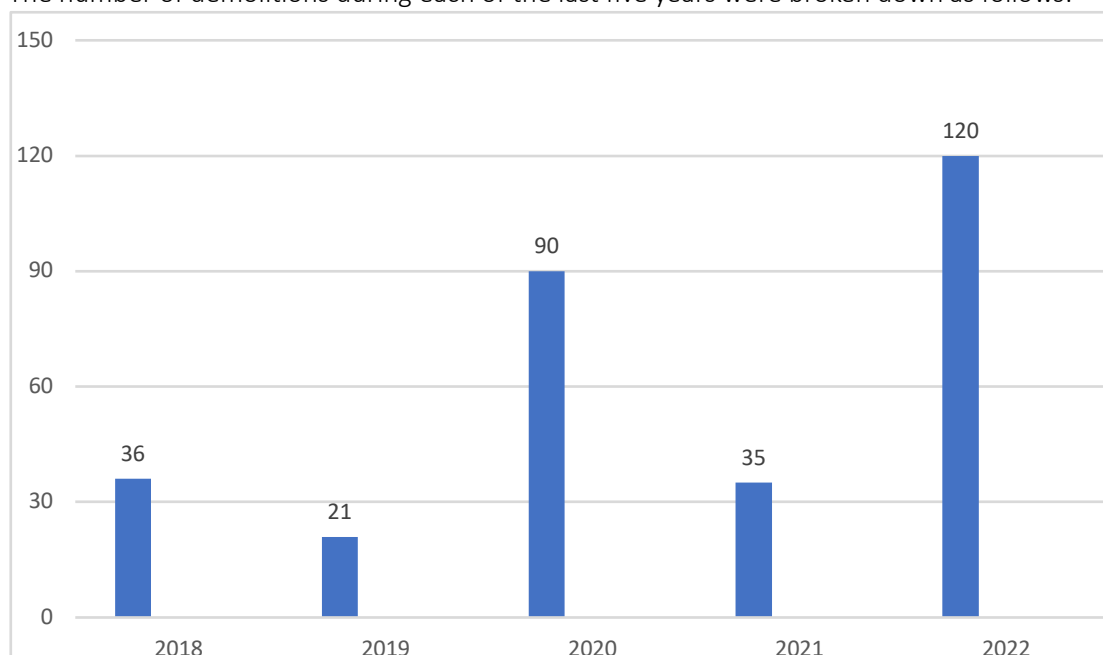
It is a fertile breadbasket of land that runs along the West Bank, east of the central highlands. As such, the Jordan Valley is the land and water reserve for future development of the entire West Bank. The Jordan Valley could serve to create urban centres; develop advanced agriculture for export, energy projects, and industry. The Palestinians view the area, which borders Jordan to the east; as the key to economic stability in any future state, geographic contiguity with the Arab World, and new population centers.ⁱⁱⁱ

Demolition Overview^{iv}

Between the period of 13 September 1993 (when the Oslo Agreement was signed) and the 31 December 2022: Israel demolished 884 structures in the Jordan Valley including 201 donor-funded structures, and it displaced 1,253 persons, including 679 children. For the purposes of demolition data; the Jordan Valley is defined as the area that includes Jericho's cities and villages in Areas A, B, and C. The demolitions included homes; Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) facilities; solar panels, and agricultural structures.

302 structures including 65 donor-funded structures were demolished during the last 5 years (2018 – 2022), and 129 children were displaced. The last 5 years amount to 34% of the demolished structures, 32% of the demolished donor-funded structures, and 19% of the displaced children since the Oslo Agreement was signed.

The number of demolitions during each of the last five years were broken down as follows:



2022 Jordan Valley Demolitions Compared to the Rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territories

959 structures were demolished and 1,021 persons including 500 children were displaced in the occupied Palestinian territories during 2022, out of which 120 structures were in the Jordan Valley whereby 76 persons were displaced, including 36 children.

Overall, during 2022, the Jordan Valley amounted to 13% of the demolitions and 7% of the displacement. Moreover, Jordan Valley children amounted to 7% of the displaced children in the occupied Palestinian territories.

140 donor-funded structures were demolished in the occupied Palestinian territories; of those, 17 were in the Jordan Valley and amounted to 12% of the demolitions.

First Quarter of 2023 Compared to Previous Period

Fortunately, the demolition rate in the first quarter of 2023 is less than that in 2022. During the first quarter of 2023 (1 January–31 March 2023), 29 structures were demolished and 41 persons displaced in the Jordan Valley including 23 children. During the first quarter of 2022, 7 structures were demolished and 10 persons displaced, including 4 children. The first quarter of 2023 in the Jordan Valley, compared to the first quarter of 2022, saw a drop of 24% in demolitions, 24% in the number of displaced persons, and 17% in the number of displaced children.

EAPPI Testimony of Jordan Valley Demolitions

- A Palestinian home was demolished in Ein ad Duyuk al Fauqa on 30 March 2023. The Palestinian family had built the home but did not move in yet. It was a simple structure of one floor; 120 square meters in size. The family consists of parents and 10 children. It took them five years to build at the cost of NIS 150,000 (\$44,000), and they paid another NIS 40,000 (\$11,500) to the lawyer who sought to stop the demolition. The demolition was carried out by a bulldozer affiliated with the Israeli Civil Administration, protected by three military vehicles.
- A Palestinian man moved near Khirbet 'Atuf area after his home was demolished in An Nabi Musa. The family consists of 16 persons, including 12 children, the parents, and their married sons. The family told their story on 11 March 2023. Israeli security forces of the Civil Administration gave the family two hours to vacate the premises. The family left and hid in the mountains, but the Israeli authorities located them using a drone. After the deadline, the demolition took place under the protection of security forces in two Civil Administration cars and one military jeep who took away the solar panels, washing machine, and yogurt-making tools. The family was not given any papers relevant to a demolition order or to the demolition itself.
- A self-demolition in Humsa was documented on the 4 March 2023. The new residential structure was not ready and no one was living in it at the time of the demolition. The ground floor was built 35 years ago and the owner was adding more rooms. The owner succumbed to the decision to demolish on his own, as per an order from the Israeli Civil Administration. A lawsuit would have cost him 20,000 NIS (\$5,800), on top of the demolition cost imposed by the Civil Administration. The man ended up implementing the demolition order.

ⁱ Numbers released by Grip.Consulting on 3 January 2023

ⁱⁱ Israel carries out largest West Bank demolition operation in a decade, Israeli human rights NGO B'Tselem. 4 November 2020

<https://www.972mag.com/demolition-west-bank-jordan-valley/>

iii Israel demolishes Palestinian houses in vital Jordan Valley. The Washington Post. 8 March 2014.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/israel-demolishes-palestinian-houses-in-vital-jordan-valley/2014/03/08/2d80f960-9da2-11e3-878c-65222df220eb_story.html

iv UN OCHA Demolition Database

<https://www.ochaopt.org/data/demolition>