

PUBLIC SPACE ASSESSMENT

# NABLUS, WEST BANK | PALESTINE

ELIMINATING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN THE WEST BANK AND GAZA STRIP



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# PALESTINE · WEST BANK · NABLUS

## PUBLIC SPACE INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT

Towards safety for women & girls in public spaces



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**Antisocial behaviour**

Anti-social behaviours are acts that create community concern. These range from misuses of public space, such as fighting or drug use and dealing, to disregard for community safety, such as dangerous driving or drunk and disorderly behaviour. Other examples include acts that cause environmental damage, such as graffiti or litter. Anti-social behaviour can range from what is socially unacceptable through to acts that break the law.

**Experiences of crime/harassment**

To encounter/undergone a form of crime or harassment,

**Gender equity**

The process of being fair to both women and men. To ensure fairness, measures must be available to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from operating on a level playing field. Gender equity strategies are used to eventually attain gender equality. Equity is the means and equality is the result.

**Harassment**

Harassment is any improper and unwelcome conduct that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another person. Harassment may take the form of words, gestures or actions which tend to annoy, alarm, abuse, demean, intimidate, belittle, humiliate or embarrass another or which create an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

**Infrastructural problems**

Issues related to the physical state of public spaces.

**Mono-functional spaces**

Spaces that are limited to only one activity.

**Multi-functional spaces**

Spaces that are used for different types of activities at different times of the day.

**Perception of safety**

A generalized judgment about the chance of crime. Different times of day, and physical location may affect perception of safety.

**Pluri-funtional spaces**

Spaces with different kinds of activities at the same time.

**Public space**

All places publicly owned or of public use, accessible and enjoyable by all for free and without a profit motive. UN-Habitat categorises public spaces into streets, open public spaces, and public facilities.

**Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favour, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behaviour of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another.

**Social problems**

A social problem is any condition or behavior that has negative consequences for large numbers of people and that is generally recognized as a condition or behavior that needs to be addressed.

**Urban Safety**

Safety does not only mean lack of criminal behavior, fear or aggression. Safety points to the certainty of being respected as an individual at the physical, social and psychological levels. 'Safety' goes beyond the multiple ways of crime and violence. In fact, safety is firstly a foundation for the deployment of human abilities, freedom, solidarity, multiculturalism and creativity. Safety does not only cover the individual's life, but embraces also society and the city. Safety is also a social value, since it is the foundation for the common good of societies that allows a fair and equitable development for all its members. Safety is one of the pillars of good governance and is the basis of freedom and equality for people's full and equal

**Walkability**

Defines much more than just providing citizen with "the ability to walk". Several characteristics result in optimal walkability such as physical access, places and proximity. Defining a walkable neighbourhood extends beyond pedestrian concerns, as the ability to walk in a neighborhood indicates not only a type of mobility and means of travel, but also a type of sociability between neighbors, which, together, likely affect the physical, mental, and health of people in the community.



Commercial street in Nablus © Cornersoftheworld

# 1

CHAPTER

## BACKGROUND

- Global Framework
- UN-Habitat's Public Space Programme
- UN-Habitat in Palestine
- HAYA Joint Programme

# GLOBAL FRAMEWORK ON SAFETY, GENDER AND PUBLIC SPACE

While cities are powerful engines of development and innovation, they are also home to slums and many millions of vulnerable women and girls. Sexual harassment and other forms of violence against women and girls in public spaces are present in cities as well rural areas, and even in online spaces. As a result, it is an impediment to the rights of women and girls to the city, and to enjoy the opportunities of urbanization. The outcome is often gender exclusion and the lack of participation of women and girls in development.

With the 2030 Agenda, governments will need to choose strategies and interventions that have the greatest impacts across a number of goals and targets. The 'safe cities' idea for women includes their equal right to the city and public places within it, which includes their right to be mobile in the city at any time of the day, as well as their right to idle in public spaces without any threats of harassment or sexual violence. The global community agreed that public space plays a key role in achieving inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements. This means that interventions in public space can support achievement in several other targets within the 2030 Agenda. The 2030 Agenda together with the New Urban Agenda also recognizes gender equality and strategically supports women's empowerment across all social development goals.

Local level data is important to address challenges and achieve inclusive public spaces for women and girl's in cities. Some of the statistics of the state of women and girl's safety, conducted by UN-Habitat, Women and Cities International and Plan International, are represented in the graphic.



Gender equality in the Agenda 2030 adopted from UN-Women © UN-Habitat

**60%**  
60% of all urban residents in developing countries have been victims of crime



Globally, one in five people have been a victim of violence and crime



96% of adolescent girls don't feel safe in Delhi

**45%**

45% of girls reported sexual harassment when using public transport in Kampala

**2.2%**

Just 2.2% of girls say they feel safe in public spaces in Lima

**90%**

In Port Moresby, over 90% of women and girls have experienced some form of sexual violence when accessing public transportation.



In London, 43% of young women have experienced some form of harassment in the past year.



*“We will support the provision of well-designed networks of safe, accessible, green and quality streets and other public spaces that are accessible to all and free from crime and violence, including sexual harassment and gender-based violence, considering the human scale, and measures that allow for the best possible commercial use of street-level floors, fostering both formal and informal local markets and commerce, as well as not-for-profit community initiatives, bringing people into public spaces and promoting walkability and cycling with the goal of improving health and wellbeing.”*

New Urban Agenda: Para 100.

## WOMEN IN PALESTINE

In Palestine, women use public spaces more frequently and for a greater variety of purposes than men. This reflects the multiple roles and responsibilities they assume both inside and outside of the home. The availability of safe public spaces and public transport allows women to access essential services, take advantage of employment opportunities and participate in cultural and recreational activities. It not only improves the quality of life available to them but is an essential component in strengthening women's civic engagement through access to institutional and political spaces.

According to the PCBS 2020 statistics, 11% of Palestinian households are women headed households. Despite the empowerment of women in certain areas as demonstrated through the PCBS report 2020, women's right in other sectors are still violated, including them being subjects to violence inside or outside the household and inside public spaces. Statistics show a noticeable decrease in early marriage rate and illiteracy among Palestinian women, nevertheless, a gap in women's

active participation in the workforce, and in decision making can still be detected, as only 21% of women who are in the employment age participated in the workforce in Palestine in the year 2018 according to PCBS. The situation is even worse for women with disabilities as only 3% of women with disabilities participated in the workforce in 2019.

As in other countries, sexual harassment and other forms of violence against women and girls in Palestine extends beyond the domestic sphere to also impact women's access to public spaces, such as parks, streets, public transport, workplaces and schools. In terms of violence in public spaces, the preliminary results of the national survey of violence in the Palestinian society in 2019, recorded that 5% of young females and 3% of married women have experienced violence in shopping places (inside markets or shopping stores). Moreover, 4% of women aged (18-64 years old) and 12% of young females (12-17 years old) have experienced violence in the streets.

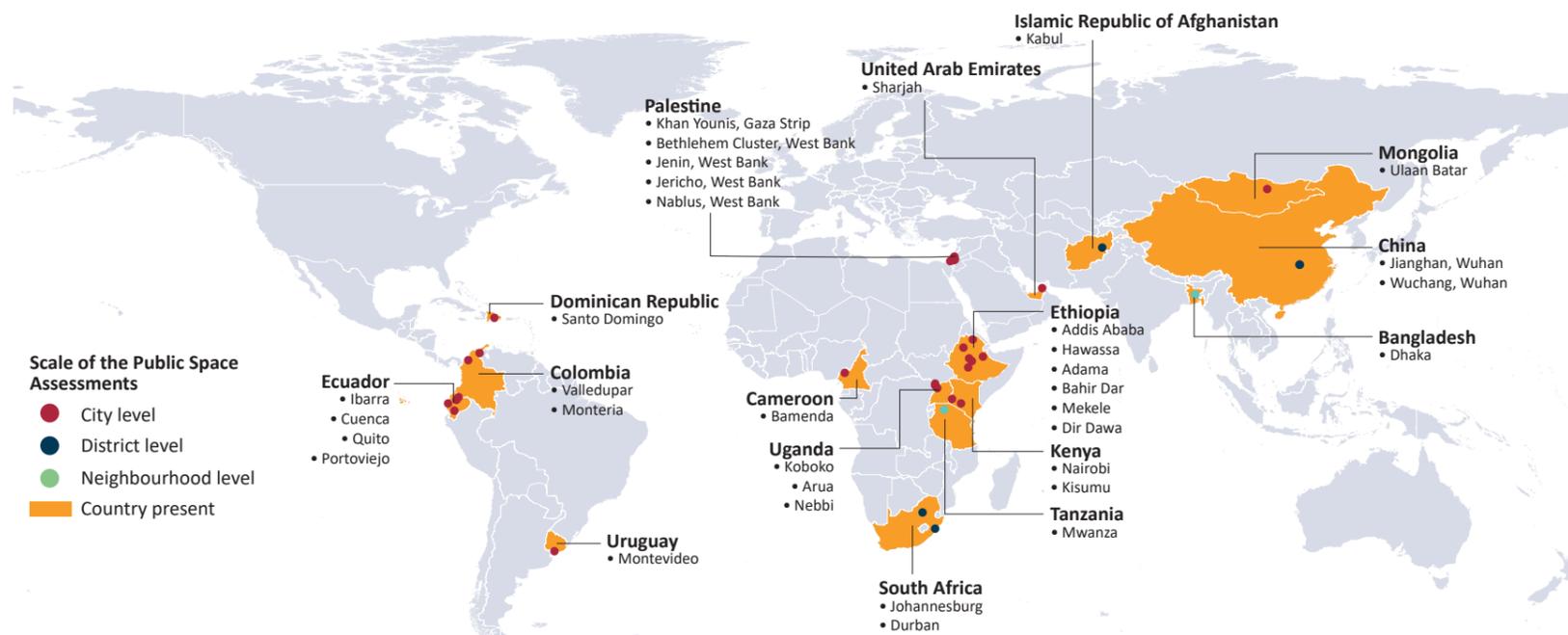


Old City Nablus © Flickr District 47

# UN-HABITAT'S GLOBAL PUBLIC SPACE PROGRAMME

Launched in 2011 and currently active in around 40 countries, UN-Habitat's Global Public Space Programme aims to improve the quality of public spaces worldwide. Despite a recent tendency to overlook and undervalue them, public spaces are again being recognised by cities as a key element of inclusion and sustainability. UN-Habitat adopts a definition of public spaces as sites that are accessible and enjoyable by all without a profit motive and take on various spatial forms, including parks, streets, sidewalks, markets and playgrounds. Good public

spaces enhance community cohesion and promote health, happiness and well-being for all citizens. The Programme helps cities become more sustainable by providing policy advice, capacity building, knowledge sharing and support for public space regeneration and improvement. More concretely, it maps public spaces and works with cities to develop city-wide public space strategies and urban development frameworks. Good policies and practices are shared through its global network of around 100 partner organizations.



## THE PUBLIC SPACE ASSESSMENT

UN-Habitat provides guidance to local governments in developing city-wide strategies that provide the foundation for taking a strategic action-oriented approach to public space development and management and can help local governments map the current state of public spaces and set goals to improve them. This work can be translated into annual public space action plans which provide more detailed information on proposed projects as well as monitoring framework. The strategy also supports local governments in allocating of resources in the management and maintenance of the spaces that exist and invest in creating new public space, especially for more marginalized communities.



## CIVIL SOCIETY PARTNERS

UN-Habitat brings together a broad global network of partners working on the issue of public space, and has agreements and ongoing activities with various organizations. These partners are brought together annually at either the World Urban Forum and/or the Future of Places Conference.



## PUBLIC SPACE UPGRADING

UN-Habitat selects each year, a number of public spaces upgrading projects through an annual call for expression of interest. The spaces are geographically distributed all over the world, but with a main focus on countries in the global south. The upgrading of the public spaces is done in a participatory manner engaging the community and the users in the process.



## TECHNOLOGY

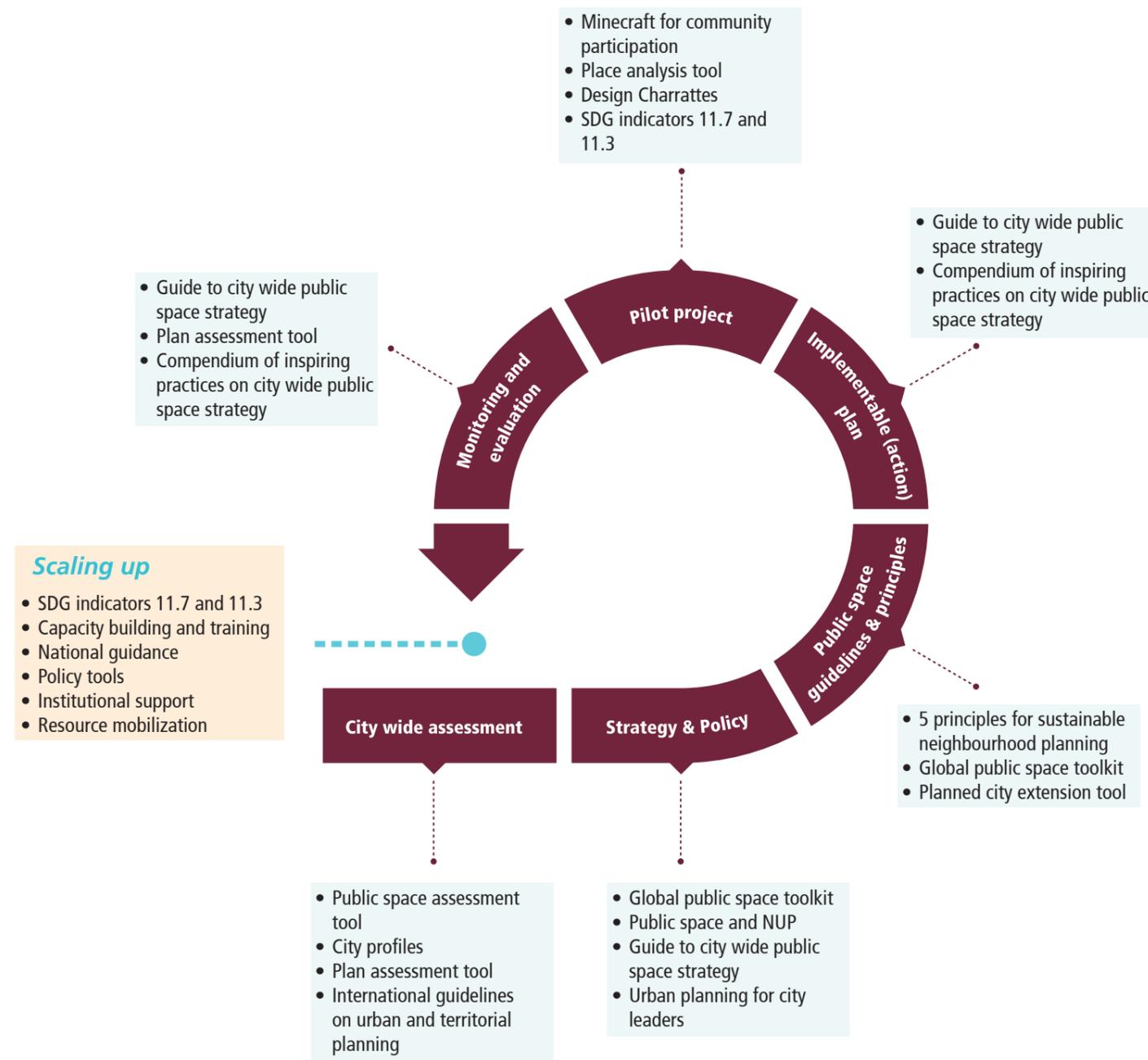
In recent years, the role of digital technologies has become increasingly important. UN-Habitat recognizes the role of ICT and the opportunities that it can offer for citizens, particularly children and youth, to take part in decision making and governance process. The Programme uses technologies such as Kobo Toolbox for mapping spaces and the Minecraft video game as a participatory tool for upgrading public spaces.



## POLICIES

UN-Habitat supports national governments in mainstreaming public space in NUP as well as local governments in developing their own public space frameworks, policies and implementation strategies. The intention is to influence cities to recognize the importance of localized city-wide public space policies, to deepen the understanding of local governments' role and responsibilities in public space development, and to increase the percentage of public space in a city as well as safety. This is considered as a guiding strategy for local governments in which public space is a central axis.

## UN-HABITAT'S PUBLIC SPACE PROGRAMME PROCESS AND TOOLS



## HOW WE WORK

UN-Habitat has developed an integrated approach to public space that covers cities, neighbourhoods and individual sites and applies a targeted approach to each scale. The iterative approach includes normative and operational tools, methodologies and practices to support governments and other organizations to make public spaces more safe, inclusive, accessible and green. The tools include city-wide and site-specific assessments, design principles, strategies and policies, digital participation and action planning and monitoring.

## CITY-WIDE PUBLIC SPACE ASSESSMENT

The city-wide public space assessment is a digital tool that uses a structured questionnaire that can be modified to fit any context as well as assess the priorities for any city. It utilises the free open source app called Kobo Collect. It is a fast and effective tool for data collection as it minimises enumeration errors and is a holistic tool for data collection process from data collection, to analysis and design. This assessment helps in identifying needs or substantive areas to address in the city, but also how the process can align with other, already ongoing or planned processes. The objective of this alignment is to identify areas of possible synergies and the identification of institutions, organizations, agencies and other municipal departments as potential stakeholders or collaborating partners. In addition to identifying key strategies, steering documents, potential partners, etc., the key issues of the existing strategic plan (if any) should be mapped and analysed. This tool helps to answer the question “where are we?” in the realm of public space.

The baseline research will produce recommendations on public space interventions in the city. This is not limited to types of intervention, but also includes areas that should be prioritized in developing new public spaces.

## UN-HABITAT IN PALESTINE

Palestinian cities lack safe and inclusive public spaces. The complex geopolitical context and the fragmentation of the territory, in addition to the lack of proper planning and investment in public spaces, have impacted negatively the quality of the built environment. The severe shortage of public spaces, parks, playgrounds, as well as other public infrastructure and services led to the deterioration of the quality of daily life for the Palestinian communities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, particularly for children and women. Many children resort to play in the streets, making the lack of playgrounds actually life threatening. Against this backdrop, The Special Human Settlements Programme for the Palestinian People has, since 2014, started supporting the local communities in East Jerusalem, Area C and in the Gaza Strip to develop safe and inclusive public spaces to improve the urban environment and the living conditions of the Palestinian people, provide higher levels of safety and well-being inside the Palestinian neighborhoods, and to strengthen social cohesion, cultural interaction and citizenship.

UN-Habitat has utilized different tools and methodologies to design and implement public spaces in Palestine, including participatory planning and community engagement, support community led initiatives, and using innovative technologies to promote youth leadership.

Meeting, relaxing and taking a break in clean green spaces that are open to all, is a basic need for all. Yet, in some parts of the world this fundamental need cannot be taken for granted. This is true in Gaza, which has been affected to its very core by years of war. Ten years of blockades and several cycles of violence have had a serious effect on the Gaza Strip, which still bears the material and human scars of the hostilities of summer 2014 and the regular attacks that followed. Thousands of houses, schools, universities and mosques were damaged in these bombings. But even though post-conflict reconstruction is now underway, women and young people are scarcely involved in urban planning, particularly in integrating the issue of safety in public places.

By involving marginalized communities in a marginalized region, these public space projects were able to promote women and youth positions in the society while creating community spaces and aiming to reduce gender-based violence. The collaboration during the design process and the employment of female architects helped advance this mission even further, resulting in more safe opportunities for all in the Gaza Strip. The participants believed that their experience in the design and implementation processes was unique and special. It represented their ideas and visions and enhanced their sense of ownership. They felt as this community garden belongs to all of them so that they have to look after it, maintain it, and keep it clean and well organized.



Al-Shaimaa Community Garden, Gaza Strip © UN-Habitat

## PUBLIC SPACES PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED BY THE SPECIAL HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME FOR THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

Intervention	Description	Location	Implementing Partners	Donor	Year	No of Beneficiaries
Sur Baher Community Garden	This project supported a community led initiative to design a children playground in Sur Baher. The local community including the youth in cooperation with Sur Baher community Center played a major role in the design and implementation of the playground. This initiative was implemented as part of the "Scaling up and Deepening of Planning Support to Palestinian Communities in East Jerusalem" project, which aimed to facilitate an immediate improvement of living conditions for Palestinian communities in East Jerusalem.	East Jerusalem	Bimkom- Planners for Planning Rights, Local Community Center of Sur Baher	Government of Kingdom of Belgium	2015	21,500
Wadi Al Joz Community Garden	This project aimed at creating a safe and inclusive community garden in Wadi Al Joz neighborhoods in East Jerusalem and has utilized the computer game MineCraft as a tool to engage the youth in the design process. This project was implemented as part of the "UN Habitat Global Public Space Programme".	East Jerusalem	Bimkom - Planners for Planning Rights, Al Enaya Community Center, Green Mosques Youth Group	Block by Block Foundation Global Public Space Programme	2017	17,000
Ras Al-Amoud Playground	Under UN-HABITAT "Supporting the Palestinians Right to Development in East Jerusalem" Project, the project aimed to support and implement tangible interventions that enhance the quality of the living environment for the residents, especially for women and girls. The project contributed to support a Palestinian women group initiative in Ras IlAmud neighborhood. The playground was designed, based on a participatory approach where women were engaged in focus design group sessions. In these sessions, the women explained how public spaces should respond to their and their children's essential needs. The project succeeded in co-designing with the women group a new playground in Ras Il Amud that states and emphasis that women should be engaged more and consulted in the decision making of their built environment.	East Jerusalem	Bimkom - Planners for Planning Rights, Local women group	Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation	2019	14,500
Al-Shoka Community Garden	Al Shoka, Al-Zawayda and Al Shaima community gardens were developed as part of the "Utilizing Digital Tools to Promote Human Rights and Create Inclusive Public Spaces in Gaza Strip" project. The main aim of the project was to promote youth leadership and participation, and to develop the skills and knowledge of the youth to make informed decisions about their lives and their built environment. The participants utilized the computer game MineCraft to design their community gardens. The three projects have successfully created safe and inclusive public spaces in Al-shoka, Al-Zawayda and Beit Lahia cities in Gaza Strip, and helped improving the urban environment and the living conditions of residents, in particular children and youth.	Al-shoka city/Gaza Strip	UN Women, Palestinian Housing Council, Aisha Association for Woman and Child Protections and Gateway	Government of Kingdom of Belgium	2017	16,000
Al-Shaimaa Community Garden		Beit Lahia city/ Gaza Strip	UN Women, Palestinian Housing Council, Aisha Association for Woman and Child Protections and Gateway	Government of Kingdom of Belgium	2017	100,000
Al-Zawayda Community Gardens		Al-Zawayda city/ Gaza Strip	UN Women, Palestinian Housing Council, Aisha Association for Woman and Child Protections and Gateway	Government of Kingdom of Belgium	2018	23,000
Ti'innik Placemaking Project	This project worked on creating a public space located between the two schools in Ti'innik's. The main aim of the project was to create a space that is accessible, particularly for the school's students, and for the wider community in general serving as a playground and a comfort and relaxing area. The project was implemented under the "Fostering Tenure Security and Resilience of Palestinian Communities through Spatial-Economic Planning Interventions in Area C".	Area C	Ministry of Local Government, Ti'innik Village Council, Al-I-Hamdeye Company for General Contracts	European Union	2018	1,300
Wadi Al Nis	The interventions are located at the center of the village, connecting the four main nodes; the village council building, the medical clinic, the main mosque and the main school. The project has formed and improved the the network and connections focusing on safe pedestrian movement throughout the site. Speed pumps and roundabouts were constructed to facilitate the movement of cars and calms down the traffic. The sidewalks contain benches, as relaxing points shaded by trees. The project was implemented under the "Fostering Tenure Security and Resilience of Palestinian Communities through Spatial-Economic Planning Interventions in Area C".	Area C	Ministry of Local Government, Wadi Al Nis Village council, UN-Habitat	European Union	2018	1,000

Intervention	Description	Location	Implementing Partners	Donor	Year	No of Beneficiaries
Al Walaja	Developing the main entrance of Al Walajah Village by making it safe and comfortable for pedestrian movement. The main bus stop area was rehabilitated, tiled and shaded with trees. The intervention and detailed designs were designed to be inexpensive, focusing on using local skills and materials and well related to the local context. The project was implemented under the "Fostering Tenure Security and Resilience of Palestinian Communities through Spatial-Economic Planning Interventions in Area C".	Area C	Ministry of Local Government, Al Walaja Village council, UN-Habitat	European Union	2018	2,670
At Tuwani	The intervention, the design and its details were developed in collaboration process with the community and based on their needs, and financially inexpensive. The designs also focus on local resources and skills to get the best results with the lowest costs and ensure its maintenance in the present and the future. The public space in this intervention is a recreational area and playing yard for the children and people of At Tuwani village. The project was implemented under the "Fostering Tenure Security and Resilience of Palestinian Communities through Spatial-Economic Planning Interventions in Area C".	Area C	Ministry of Local Government, At Tuwani Village council, UN-Habitat	United Nations	2019	330
Al Aqaba	The intervention, the design and its details were developed in collaboration process with the community and based on their needs, and financially inexpensive. The designs also focus on local resources and skills to get the best results with the lowest costs and ensure its maintenance in the present and the future. The public space in this intervention is a playing yard for the Kindergarten of Al Aqaba village. The project was implemented under the "Fostering Tenure Security and Resilience of Palestinian Communities through Spatial-Economic Planning Interventions in Area C".	Area C	Ministry of Local Government, Al Aqaba Village council, UN-Habitat	European Union	2019	350
Bruqin	The intervention is the yard located between the two schools, the village council and the soccer field. The space will be used as a sitting area, with a playing and recreational yard, for students and families. In addition to being used by the local community for different occasions and activities. The project was implemented under the "Creating friendly public spaces for children in Hares and Bruqin"	Area C	Ministry of Local Government, Bruqin Village council, UN-Habitat	Secours Islamique France	2018	4,050
Haris	The intervention is in the space connecting the school, the village council, and the mosque, to improve the village center and create a suitable and safe space for students and families. The local community mainly focused on the elements that support their needs (sitting chairs, pergolas, ...). The project was implemented under the "Creating friendly public spaces for children in Hares and Bruqin"	Area C	Ministry of Local Government, Haris Village council, UN-Habitat	Secours Islamique France	2018	4,140
Ras Al Wad	The project aimed to physically improve the condition by enhancing the quality of life through creating a public space, improve pedestrian's safety around the school and mosque in the main village spine, while also promoting participation by residents to encourage and raise awareness of the importance of maintaining their own communities. The project was implemented under "Spatial Planning Support Programme for Palestinian Communities in Area C, West Bank".	Area C	Ministry of Local Government, Ras Al Wad Village council, UN-Habitat	European Union	2015	900
Abdullah Al Yunis	The project aimed to physically improve the condition by creating pedestrian paths and creating a public place for people to sit and enjoy, while also promoting participation by residents to encourage and raise awareness of the importance of maintaining their own communities. The project was implemented under "Spatial Planning Support Programme for Palestinian Communities in Area C, West Bank"	Area C	Ministry of Local Government, Abdullah Al Yunis Village council, UN-Habitat	European Union	2015	170
Imneizel	The project aimed to physically improve the condition by creating the small playground for children in the park, enhancing the playground of the school and surroundings, improvement of access, while also promoting participation by residents to encourage and raise awareness of the importance of maintaining their own communities. Furthermore, the project aimed to bring together the community through encouraging citizens to participate in community development issues and gain knowledge on the sense of participation and ownership over their local area. The project was implemented under "Spatial Planning Support Programme for Palestinian Communities in Area C, West Bank"	Area C	Ministry of Local Government, Imneizel Village council, UN-Habitat	European Union	2015	280
Izbet Tabib	The project aimed to physically improve the condition by creating the improvement of access to school and improvement of streetscape in main village spine. Also promoting participation by residents to encourage and raise awareness of the importance of maintaining their own communities. The project was implemented under "Spatial Planning Support Programme for Palestinian Communities in Area C, West Bank"	Area C	Ministry of Local Government, Izbet Tabib Village council, UN-Habitat	European Union	2015	260

# HAYA JOINT PROGRAMME

Eliminating Violence Against Women in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

The HAYA Joint Programme: Eliminating Violence Against Women in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is funded by the Government of Canada and jointly implemented by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), and the

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), in partnership with the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Ministry of Social Development as well as other ministries and civil society organizations. The overall objective of building just and secure communities for women and girls in the West Bank and Gaza Strip will be achieved through progress against three main outcomes focusing on: (1) Decreased

harmful practices and attitudes that perpetuate and validate violence against women and girls within targeted households and communities; (2) Increased access by women and girls of gender-responsive EVAW services (economic, medical, psychosocial, security, shelter) free of discrimination; (3) Strengthened institutional capacity to develop and implement legal and policy frameworks that promote and

protect women's and girls' rights with regards to VAW. Under outcome (1), there is a special focus on building an enabling policy environment to combat violence against women and increase the knowledge and capacity to undertake comprehensive local interventions for prevention and response on EVAW by local authorities and municipalities.

Through the HAYA Joint Programme,

UN-Habitat is working on increasing the knowledge and capacity of local authorities and municipalities to undertake comprehensive local interventions for prevention and response on EVAW, through achieving set of results: A) Safety Audits that assess women's safety in five cities (four cities in West Bank and one city in Gaza Strip); B) Awareness and advocacy campaign to promote

women's safety in public spaces; C) Capacity building for municipalities on how to design safe and inclusive public spaces; D) Development and regeneration of five safe and inclusive public spaces; E) Development of gender responsive public space policy and safe and inclusive public space design methodology; F) Curriculum development jointly with the local universities on how to design safe and inclusive public spaces.

## DEVELOPING SAFE AND INCLUSIVE PUBLIC SPACES FOR ALL THROUGH

Safety audits assessing women's safety in Khan Younis, Jericho, Nablus, Jenin, and the Bethlehem cluster including Beit Jala, Beit Sa hour, and Al Doha and Bethlehem



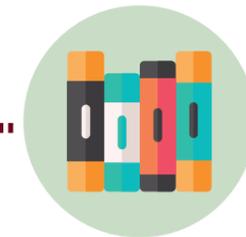
Awareness and advocacy campaigns to promote women's safety in public spaces

Capacity building for municipalities on how to design safe and inclusive public spaces



Development and regeneration of five safe and inclusive public spaces in targeted Palestinian communities

Development of gender responsive public space policy and design methodology for safe and inclusive public spaces



Joint curriculum development with local universities on designing safe and inclusive public spaces



Woman in busy market in Jenin © Cornersoftheworld

# 2

CHAPTER

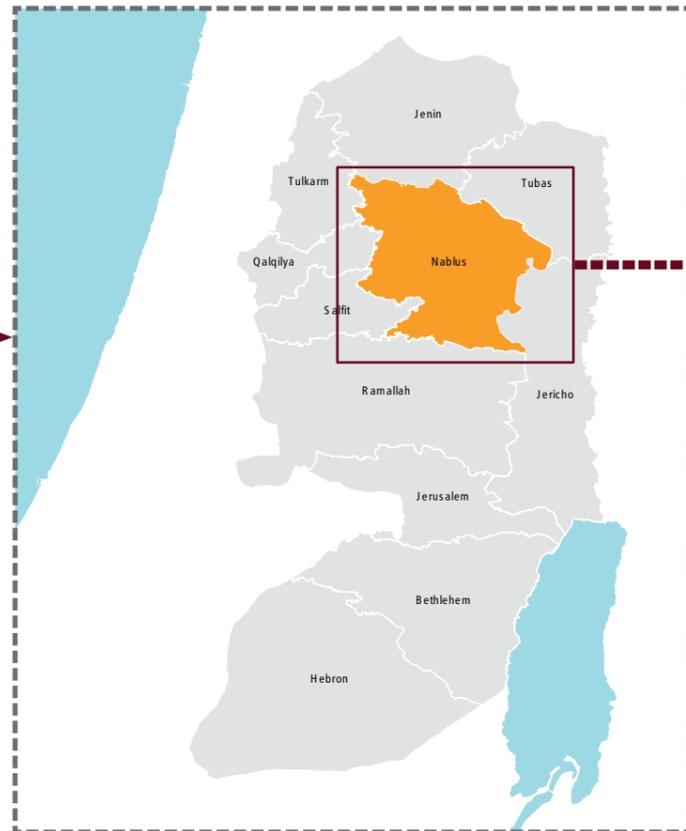
## INTRODUCTION

- About Nablus Governorate
- State of public spaces
- Scope and focus
- Objectives and methodology

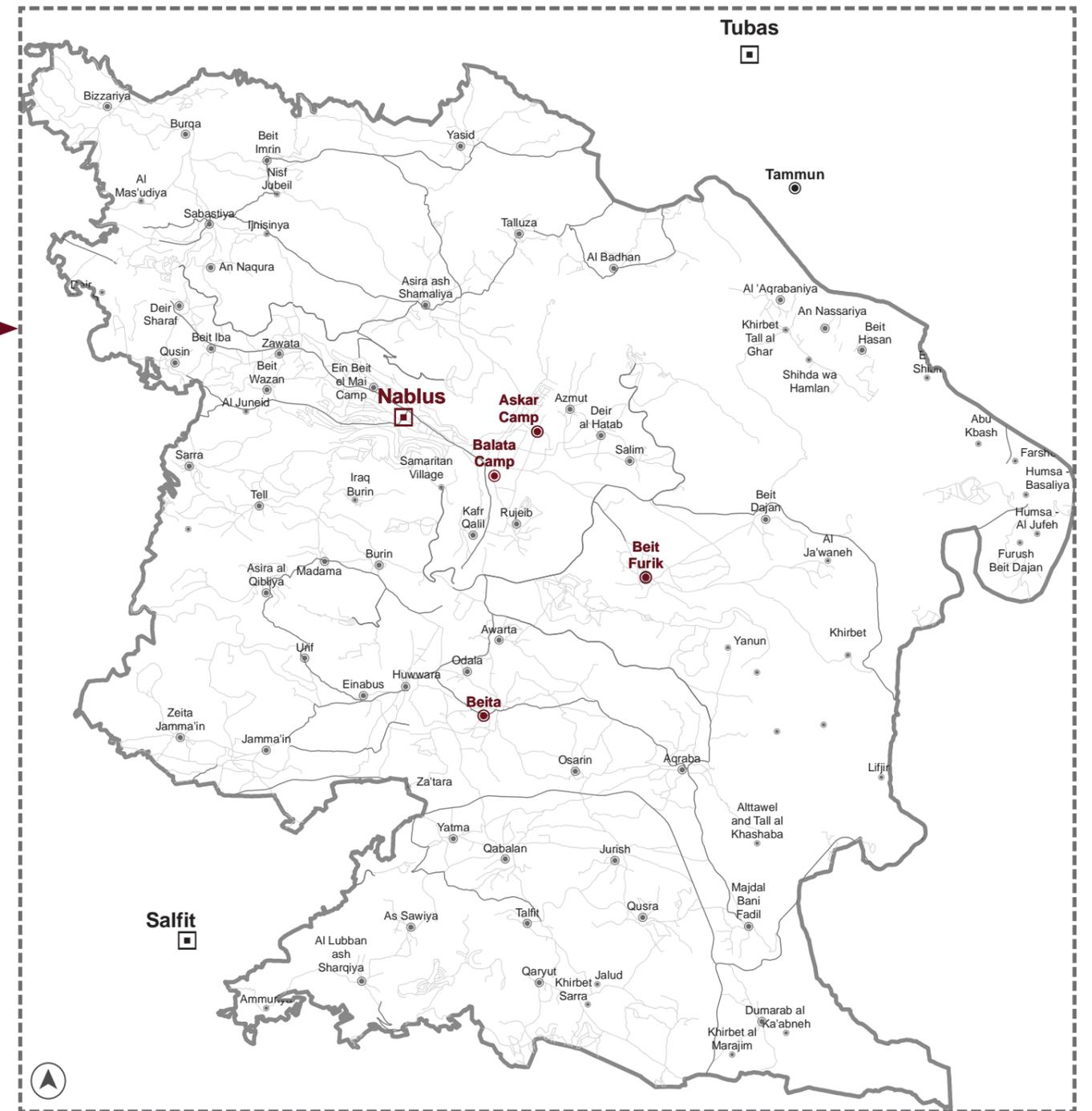
# LOCATION OF NABLUS GOVERNORATE



Palestine showing West Bank © UN-Habitat



Nablus governorate © UN-Habitat



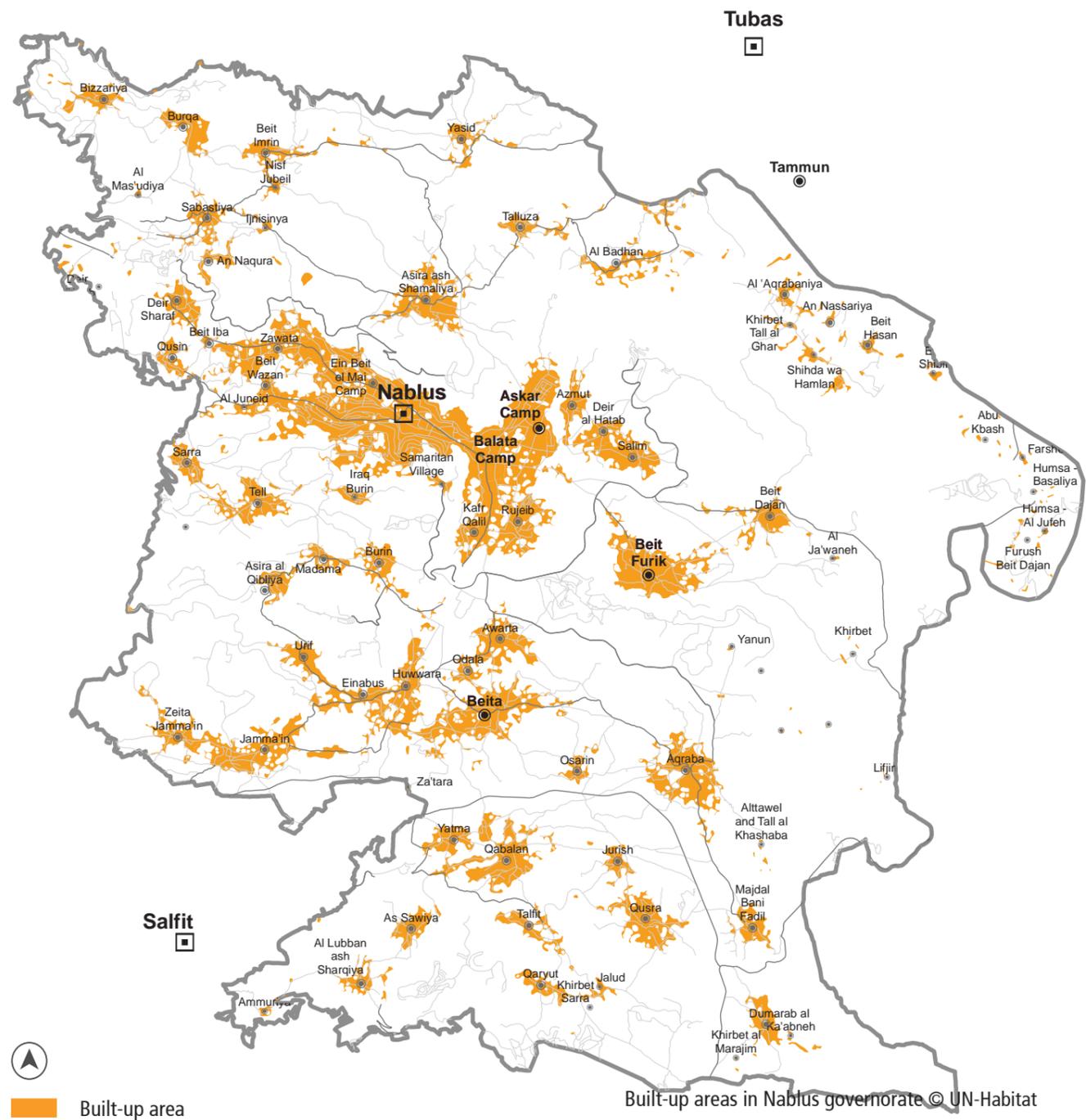
Nablus governorate major settlements © UN-Habitat

## URBANIZATION IN THE WEST BANK

Urbanization in Palestine is characterized by a rapidly growing pace, as the total urban population is estimated by 75% and the urban population growth rate stands at 3.2%, almost double the one of the global growth rate (1.7%). Since the establishment of the Palestinian Authority (PA), and the emergence of jurisdictional land classifications according to the Oslo Accords (1993-1995), urbanization has been heavily constrained by geopolitics, which limits the urban expansion of Palestinian population within the West Bank within Areas A and B according to Oslo Accords which comprises only 39% of the total area of West Bank. This has led to imbalanced distribution of the urban population, creating highly dense urban centers and decreasing population densities as we move away from main Palestinian cities in the West Bank. The imbalanced urban growth is coupled with poor planning solutions and unsatisfactory infrastructural networks, imposing pressure on the land and the environment, as well as comprising the overall livability of urban life, including the quality of open public spaces in Palestinian cities.

Post 2007, and the economic development plan and the institution building programme presented by the Palestinian government at that time, and the escalating attention by international aid agencies, Palestinian cities in the West Bank witnessed significant growth in economic and construction sectors. Nevertheless, this exerted more pressure on Palestinian cities, as the construction boom was not matched by proper planning and infrastructure to accommodate the rapidly growing cities.

Post 2007, and the economic development plan and the institution building programme presented by the Palestinian government at that time, and the escalating attention by international aid agencies, Palestinian cities in the West Bank witnessed significant growth in economic and construction sectors. Nevertheless, this exerted more pressure on Palestinian cities, as the construction boom was not matched by proper planning and infrastructure to accommodate the rapidly growing cities.



## URBAN GOVERNANCE IN THE WEST BANK

Urban planning and development in Palestine are governed by a multi-layered system of administrative and organizational structures. In terms of organizational setup, the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG) is considered the main body mandated to monitor policy making and coordinating urban planning interventions implemented in Palestinian cities, supported by line ministries and with the Municipal Lending and Development Fund (MDLF), which is considered the executive body responsible for the implementation of urban improvement projects and infrastructure interventions within Palestinian Local Government Units (LGUs). Finally, there is the Association of Palestinian Local Authorities that represents the LGUs and supports their interest. However, the association has not been active for the past few years due to political reasons.

Administratively, the Palestinian Government, represented by the different line ministries, is in charge of issuing main policies and setting the annual budgets at the national

level. Whereas at the regional levels, there are eleven governorates across the West Bank that represent the national government, without being a distinct level by itself. At the local level, municipal and village councils are mandated to govern planning and development issues on the scale of individual communities, and managing the implementation of planning and building regulations, including the management of open public spaces.

In terms of the legal framework, the main laws that govern the work of the LGUs are:

- The Law for Local Authorities no. (1) for the year 1997 describing the rules of the law in forty articles focusing on the main responsibilities of the MoLG, the tasks of local authorities and the duties they have to undertake.
- The Planning and Building Law no. (79) for the year 1966 (Jordanian Planning Law) that continue to be applicable in the West Bank, especially Area C.
- The Law of Expropriation no. (2) for the year 1953.

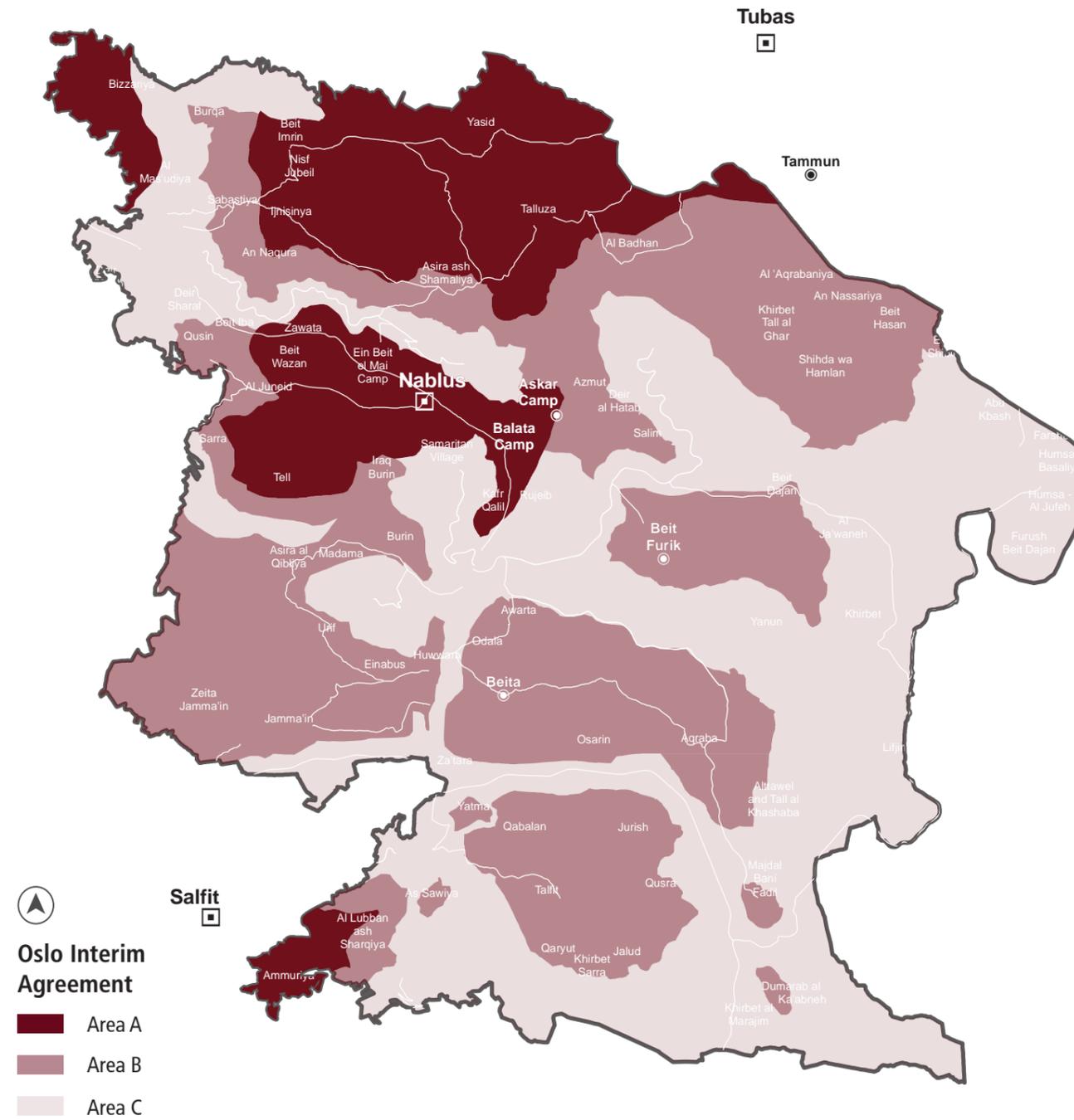


Aerial view of Nablus city © Flickr Audun Bakke Andersen

### LAND AND HOUSING IN THE WEST BANK

In the West Bank, opportunities to adequate housing are limited, particularly in Area C and occupied East Jerusalem. The high demand on housing, especially in urban centers, coupled with the lack of proper planning and regulation solutions, in addition to high geopolitical constrains, and an outdated land management tools have all contributed to the emergence of random unregulated developments that are characterized by highly dense residential areas within the urban centers within Areas A and B, and particularly in occupied East Jerusalem.. Palestinians are forced to develop within a very limited, confined space due to the limited availability of land, where this scarcity of land creates expensive housing options that do not respond properly to the demand and capabilities of Palestinian families. Studies have indicated that 61 percent of Palestinian families will need new housing units in the next decade to replace old deteriorated units, in addition to the housing units needed for natural growth.

The housing typology in Palestine is characterized by either single, free-standing houses (ranging in height from one to three stories, usually occupied by one family) or multi-story apartment buildings occupied by several families. Housing typologies vary between Palestinian cities and depend on their densities, topography, growth rates, and socio-economic situation. Typologies are generally governed by the local master plans and land use regulations



Nablus © UN-Habitat

### LAND OWNERSHIP IN THE WEST BANK

Land management in Palestine still a lagging behind sector, with various laws and by-laws inherited from different eras that ruled over the planning sector in Palestine, (namely, the Ottoman Period, British Mandate Period, Jordanian Administration Period, Israeli Military Occupation and the Palestinian National Authority). Among which, Ottoman Land Laws have extensively affected land regulations in Palestine. However, important to note that land laws in Palestine were manipulated by the Israeli military orders and used as tools to restrict Palestinian development and confiscate their lands, burdening the land management tools with more challenges. Land titling in urbanized areas of the West Bank is a slow process initiated by the Water and Land Settlement Agency, which operates under the Land Authority.

## STATE OF PUBLIC SPACE

### IMPACT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS ON THE PUBLIC SPACE

The urbanization and growth patterns in the west Bank have negatively affected the development of good quality public spaces. Planning regulations and bylaws in Palestine were incapable of facilitating the provision of open public spaces, and mainly focused on the development of the built up areas. Hence open public spaces were treated negatively and were not integrated in master plans and their by-laws. Furthermore, no policies are currently mainstreamed within the Palestinian spatial planning system that guide the planning, designing, constructing, and managing the open public spaces in cities and towns.



Aerial view of Nablus © Flickr Audun Bakke Andersen

# SCOPE AND FOCUS: NABLUS CITY

## GEOGRAPHIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES

The city of Nablus is located in the northern part of the West Bank, it expands linearly along a narrow valley between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. Historically, the geographic location of Nablus facilitated the development of the city as a major cultural and commercial hub in the West Bank. Demographically, the city's total population is 190,447 in 2019 and is projected to reach 259,141 capita in 2030.



**NABLUS POPULATION:**

**190,447** (2019)     **259,141** (2030)



**NABLUS POPULATION DENSITY:**

**6,568** Persons/Km<sup>2</sup>

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC ASPECTS

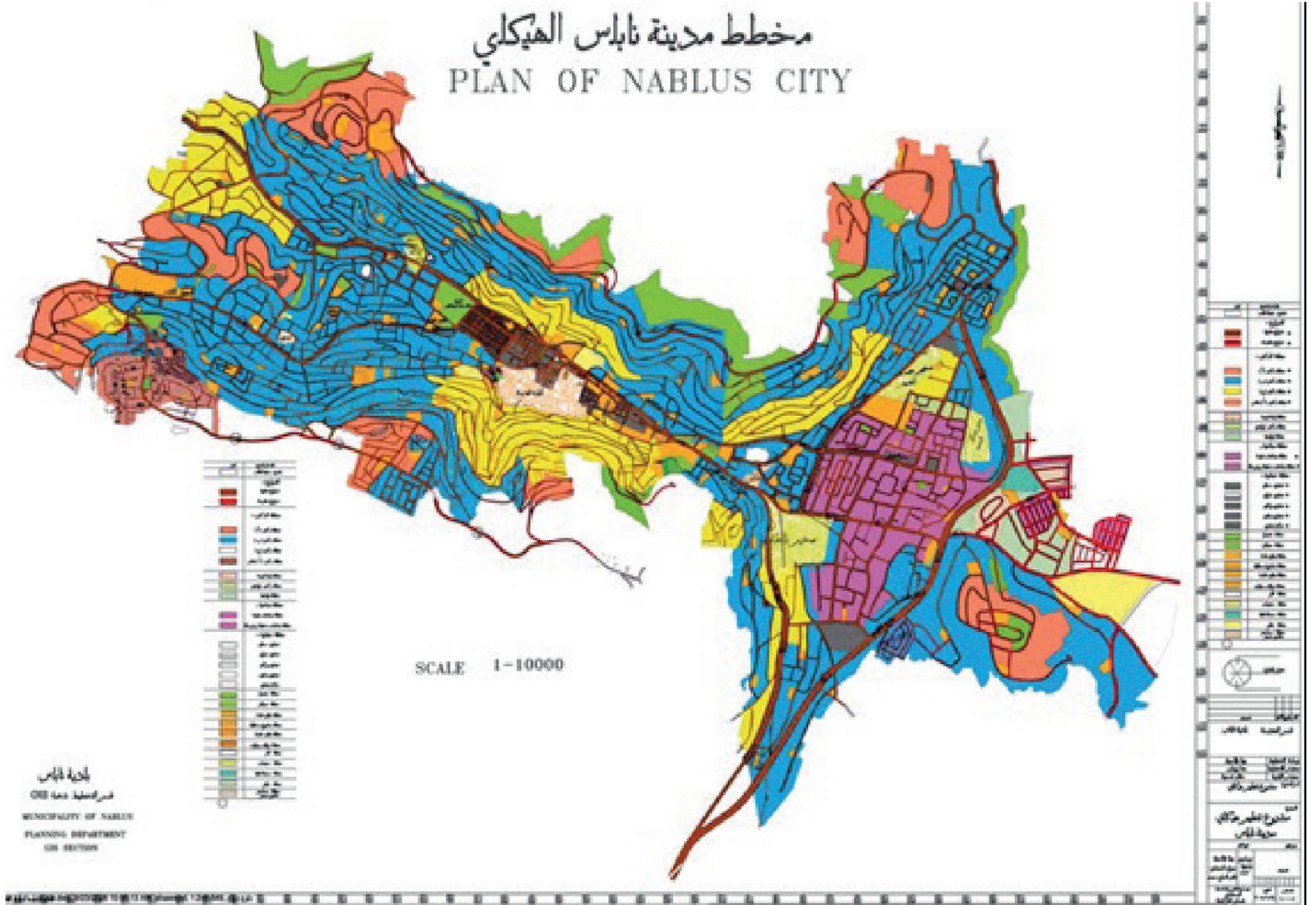
Nablus has a high concentration of shopping centers and restaurants, and an active old city with traditional markets. In addition, traditional industries have continued to function in Nablus, including the production of soap, olive oil, and small handicrafts. Moreover, the city hosts key academic, cultural, medical and economic institutions in Palestine, including An Najah National University.



Mosque in Nablus © Flickr



Shrine in Nablus © Flickr



Masterplan of Nablus City

# OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY OF THE PROJECT

## OBJECTIVES OF THE OPEN PUBLIC SPACE ASSESSMENT

The inventory and assessment of Open Public Spaces in Nablus City was carried out with an aim that:

The results of the assessment will inform strategic and policy recommendations, particularly to improve safety and security, accessibility and inclusion for women and girls.

-  Investigate the Accessibility of the public spaces in the Municipality.
-  Understand the Distribution of the public spaces in the Municipality.
-  Understand the Network of the public spaces in the Municipality.
-  Assess the Quality of the public spaces in the Municipality (Accessibility, Use, Comfort, Facilities, Safety, and Green Coverage).
-  Establish the share of urban land that is used as open public spaces in Municipality.

## PRE-FIELDWORK PREPARATION

### 1

#### Creation of a reference group and Developing the Assessment Tool

UN-Habitat team in collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG) developed a structured questionnaire to guide the classification and analysis of the existing open public spaces. The questionnaire constituted from two main sections as follows:

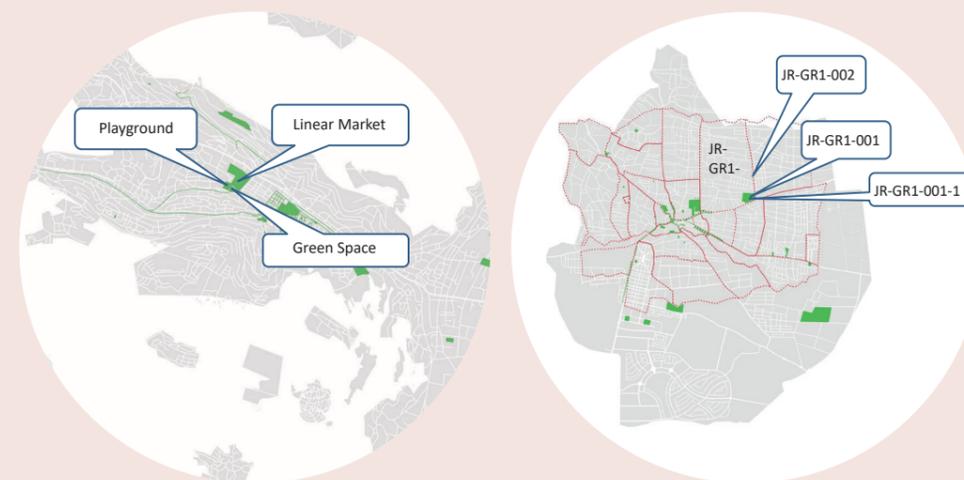
##### Section A: Public space assessment

- Part 1: Identification of the open public space
- Part 2: Types of the public space assessment
- Part 3: Physical facility assessment
- Part 4: Accessibility assessment
- Part 5: Use assessment
- Part 6: Comfort assessment
- Part 7: Green coverage assessment

##### Section B: Safety assessment

- Part 8: Safety Assessment
- Part 9: Perception of Safety

The questionnaire was then uploaded into Kobo toolbox application that is an open source and digital and allow for validation on the ground, remote administration, and working under different conditions.



### 2

#### Preparation of GIS Base Map

In collaboration with Municipalities the first version of GIS base map was prepared, including several GIS layers such as: administrative boarders, existing open public spaces, main streets, public facilities, land use, and neighborhood boundaries.

Updating the base map was critical prior to commencing the data collection step, the main objective of this task was to validate the existing public space in terms of location, area, ownership, and use, and to identify any other available public spaces that were not reflected on the base map.

For further verification, the updated base map was presented to the municipality staff to validate and confirm the updated public spaces base map.

## 3

**Mobilizing the Assessment Team**

Through a vigorous exercise, Al-Ihteraf Company was hired to supported in conducting city-wide public space assessments, with a specific focus on providing safe, inclusive and accessible public space for women and girls, especially in the most disadvantaged communities. The Company was responsible to lead and facilitate the safety audit survey in Nablus City and to discuss and present the findings from the assessment to the key stakeholders.



## 4

**Training Sessions**

Two sets of training events were held in January 2019 in Ramallah and Jericho and in September 2019 in Ramalla, Bethlehem and Nablus to provide better understanding of the task ahead, the trainings was divided into two main parts.

A) Theoretical Part: during this session the project's main objectives, scope, and intended results were highlighted. In addition, the trainees were introduced on how public spaces are identified globally and what criteria and measures that should be in place to ensure they are safe, inclusive, and gender responsive. The final section was introducing Kobo toolbox, how it works, and the content of each section in the developed questionnaire and how to respond to each question;

B) Practical part: this session focused on how to configure and set up Kobo toolbox on their mobile phones and how to fill, edit, validate, and send finalized forms. These steps were followed by practical testing of the application in the adjacent open public spaces, and open discussions on concerns and possible challenges that may arise throughout the fieldwork.



## DATA COLLECTION QUALITY CHECK AND DATA CLEANING

5

## Data Collection

The team conducted data collection in Nablus City.

The questionnaire used included different methods to harness data required for reliable assessment of public spaces:

- A) Observations: data related to the physical components of public spaces, and number of users were injected based on the surveyor's observations in the field;
- B) Photos: minimum of three photos were mandatory to finalize the form, the photos were very helpful for assessing the nature of the public space and to verify its respective data as well;
- C) Sound Measurement: the surveyors were able to reflect the noise levels through voice recording tab that is an indication of comfort level of the public space;
- D) Semi-Structured Interviews: to assess the safety from the users' perspectives, the surveyors conducted a number of interviews for each entry, people living adjacent to the targeted public spaces were interviewed when the public spaces were vacant during the field visits. Children were also interviewed regarding their perception of safety

To facilitate the fieldwork and make sure that the generated data from the field are appropriately linked with spatial data (GIS base map), each team member received assigned public spaces ID and name. In addition, each team was given aerial map of the neighborhoods that include the targeted public spaces.

Most of the sites were visited over the weekdays, and during the peak hours.



6

## Data Cleaning Updating

The data was cleaned and verified to ensure precise data analysis and hence reliable findings. This included omitting duplicate entries for the same field visit, entries for privately-owned public spaces, entries that were uploaded during the training sessions.

After careful and precise verification, the total number of cleared and verified open public spaces in Nablus City was 61.

The unique open public space ID provided to the surveyors was then used to link the data from the field to the individual open public space.

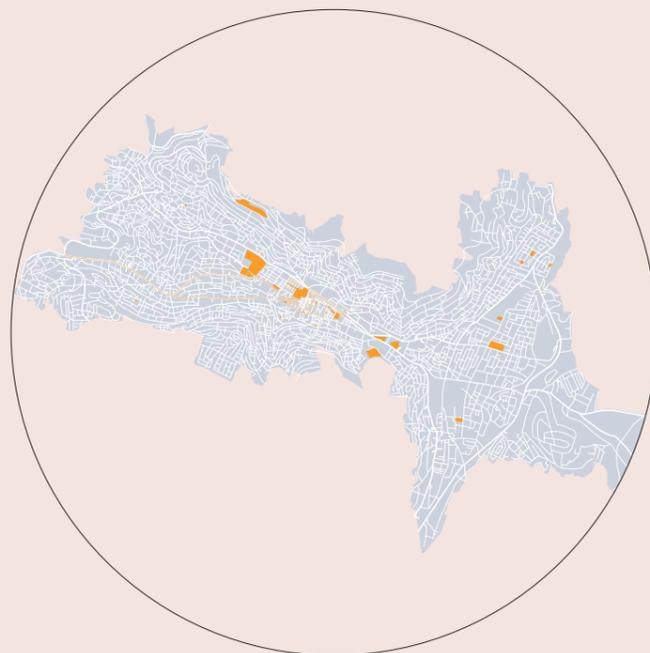
61

Number of open public space collected in Nablus City

7

GIS map

GIS database was updated prior to data analysis, this included reshaping of number of public spaces and omitting the other open public spaces that were outside our scope of focus. The GIS database includes the open public space ID that is considered key cell that link the spatial data with the data generated from Kobo Toolbox.



8

Data analysis and reporting

The qualitative and quantitative data gathered during the field survey was analysed and categorized in themes. Data was then analysed using Kobo Toolbox and GIS and Excel and any other statics software. The statistical treatments were means, percentages and factor analysis. Charts were used to present the results. Information gained by documents and maps analysis and observations were compared with the real situation and interviews. The following chapter provides an overview of the results.

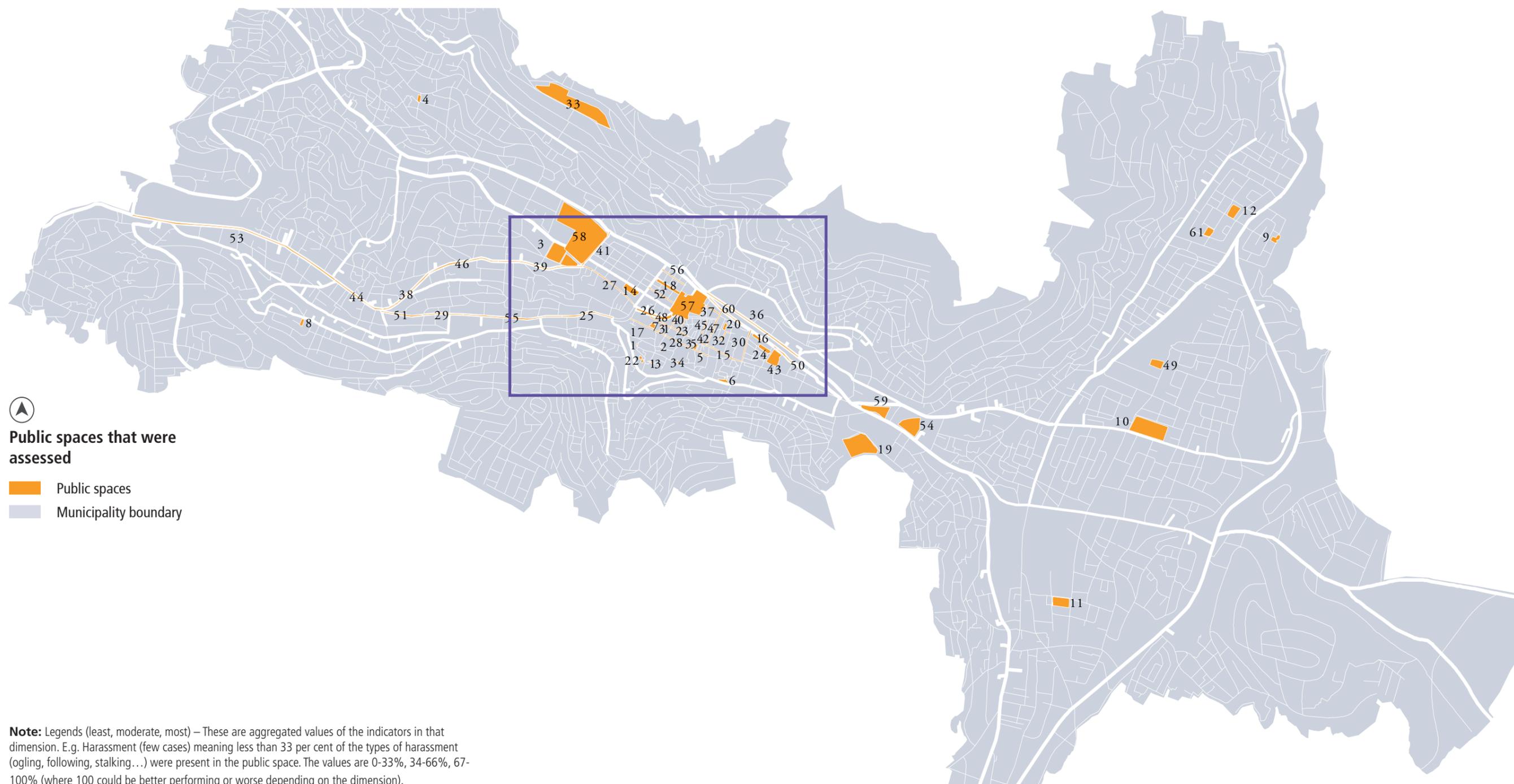
## ASSESSED PUBLIC SPACES

No	Name of Public Space	Ownership	Management	Scale of public space	Safety Index	Comfort Index	Accessibility Index	User Index	Use Index	Physical facilities index	Green cover Index	Priority for Improvement
1	Yasmina Square	Government	Government	Pocket Park	10.6	66.7	16.1	0	37.5	25	0	22.3
2	Yasmina Square	Government	Government	Pocket Park	7.8	75	12.9	0	50	20	0	23.7
3	Municipal playground	Government	Government	City level	14.4	66.7	6.5	33.3	37.5	30	0	26.9
4	Al Bayarah Park	Government	Government	Pocket Park	7.6	75	9.7	0	50	20	27.3	27.1
5	Hosh aljetan yard	Government	Government	Pocket Park	4.8	100	16.1	0	50	20	0	27.3
6	Roman amphitheater	Government	Government	Neighborhood	20.8	100	12.9	0	37.5	10	18.2	28.5
7	Al Sabaneh square	Government	Government	City level	10.8	75	22.6	22.2	50	20	0	28.7
8	Ali Dawabsheh Garden (Health Garden)	Government	Government	Neighborhood	11.5	75	12.9	22.2	37.5	20	27.3	29.5
9	Masaken Al Shaabeyah - Al Mattalah	Government	Government	Neighborhood	16.2	55.6	12.9	66.7	37.5	20	0	29.8
10	Hasba Nablus Street	Government	Government	City level	20.9	68.2	12.9	22.2	37.5	50	0	30.2
11	Phoenix Garden	Non-Government	Non-Government	Neighborhood	7.6	100	9.7	0	50	20	27.3	30.6
12	Masaken Al Shaabeyah - the square adjacent to the Omar bin Khattab Mosque	Government	Government	Neighborhood	35.7	75	12.9	44.4	37.5	10	0	30.8
13	Hammam Al Samrah Staircase	Government	Government	Pocket Park	6.6	75	12.9	77.8	37.5	10	0	31.4
14	Hesba Market	Government	Government	Neighborhood	5.6	77.8	16.1	44.4	37.5	35	18.2	33.5
15	Khaled Bin Al-Waleed street	Government	Government	Neighborhood	19.6	50	12.9	88.9	50	15	0	33.8
16	Eastern Hesba Market	Government	Government	Pocket Park	24.9	57.1	35.5	66.7	37.5	30	0	36
17	West Entrance Street	Government	No information	Neighborhood	6.7	69.2	12.9	88.9	50	30	0	36.8
18	Mohamed tofaha Street	Government	Government	Neighborhood	18.2	66.7	29	66.7	62.5	20	0	37.6
19	Al Harash Park	Government	Government	Neighborhood	20.1	100	16.1	22.2	50	30	27.3	38
20	Habla Square	Government	Jointly managed	Pocket Park	4.8	100	29	44.4	50	20	18.2	38.1
21	Basal market	Government	Government	Pocket Park	17.1	57.1	25.8	100	37.5	30	0	38.2
22	Martyrs alley	Government	Government	Neighborhood	12.9	77.8	16.1	55.6	50	40	18.2	38.7
23	Al Khan Market	Government	Government	Neighborhood	35.2	100	25.8	44.4	37.5	30	0	39
24	Eastern Market	Government	Government	Pocket Park	43.9	44.4	29	55.6	50	35	18.2	39.4
25	Western Cemetery Street	Government	Government	Neighborhood	16.2	75	16.1	77.8	37.5	30	27.3	40
26	Granada Street	Government	Government	Neighborhood	11	66.7	32.3	88.9	62.5	20	0	40.2
27	Hamouz Street	Government	Government	Neighborhood	15.5	76.9	25.8	55.6	50	45	18.2	41
28	alnaser Street	Government	Government	Neighborhood	13.3	100	19.4	66.7	50	40	0	41.3
29	Old University Street	Government	Government	Neighborhood	20.7	100	32.3	22.2	37.5	50	27.3	41.4
30	The Eastern Market - the entrance to the old town - Al-Anbiya Mosque	Government	Government	Pocket Park	33.9	75	29	66.7	50	20	18.2	41.8
31	Nazmi Street - Old City	Government	Government	Neighborhood	9.4	88.9	16.1	100	50	30	0	42.1

Values are in percentages. Higher percentage means better performance

No	Name of Public Space	Ownership	Management	Scale of public space	Safety Index	Comfort Index	Accessibility Index	User Index	Use Index	Physical facilities index	Green cover Index	Priority for Improvement
32	al faqus alley	Government	Government	Neighborhood	27.6	75	29	77.8	37.5	30	18.2	42.2
33	Sama Nablus Park	Government	Government	City level	7.5	100	16.1	44.4	50	50	27.3	42.2
34	Al Toteh Square	Government	Government	City level	4.8	100	29	77.8	50	20	18.2	42.8
35	Bab al saha	Government	Government	Neighborhood	12.3	100	12.9	77.8	50	30	18.2	43
36	Faisal Street - next to the National Hospital	Government	Government	Neighborhood	17.6	88.9	22.6	66.7	37.5	50	18.2	43.1
37	Omar Mukhtar Street	Government	Government	Pocket Park	14.8	100	32.3	44.4	50	45	18.2	43.5
38	Rafidia - AlcZakat Building	Government	Government	Neighborhood	21.3	66.7	12.9	100	50	30	27.3	44
39	Rafidia - old Najah Street junction	Government	Government	Neighborhood	16.8	77.8	25.8	100	62.5	10	18.2	44.4
40	Old City - Jarwan entrance	Government	Government	Pocket Park	16.4	77.8	25.8	88.9	62.5	40	0	44.5
41	Al-Montazah Street - Al-Salam Mosque	Government	Government	Neighborhood	21.8	77.8	16.1	88.9	50	30	27.3	44.6
42	Al Khan	Government	Government	Neighborhood	20.8	100	25.8	88.9	50	30	0	45.1
43	The eastern complex	Government	Government	Neighborhood	18.6	100	29	44.4	37.5	60	27.3	45.3
44	Rafidia - Junction Tunisia and Tala'a Abdul Rahim Mahmoud	Government	Government	Neighborhood	26.3	77.8	16.1	100	50	20	27.3	45.4
45	Gold market	Government	Government	City level	12.1	100	29	88.9	62.5	30	0	46.1
46	Rafidia - Rafidia Hospital entrance	Government	Government	City level	23.1	77.8	25.8	88.9	50	30	27.3	46.1
47	Hittin Street	Government	Government	City level	20.7	75	35.5	100	62.5	30	0	46.2
48	khan Al Wakala	Government	Government	Neighborhood	14.4	100	16.1	100	62.5	30	0	46.2
49	Martyr Yasser Arafat's garden	Non-Government	Non-Government	City level	3.9	100	16.1	0	62.5	70	72.7	46.5
50	Faisal Street, next to Al Rahma Polyclinic	Government	Government	Neighborhood	19.1	66.7	29	100	62.5	30	18.2	46.5
51	Rafidia - Badawi street	Government	Government	Neighborhood	31.8	100	29	55.6	50	35	27.3	46.9
52	Palestine street	Government	Government	Neighborhood	9.9	66.7	22.6	88.9	87.5	35	18.2	47
53	Rafidia - Academy Street - Junaid Prison	Government	Government	Neighborhood	29.7	77.8	16.1	88.9	50	50	27.3	48.5
54	Childhood Happiness Center	Government	Government	Neighborhood	4.8	100	22.6	77.8	37.5	70	27.3	48.6
55	Old University Street - Nablus Specialized Hospital	Government	Government	Neighborhood	29.1	66.7	32.3	55.6	50	70	36.4	48.6
56	Sufyan Street	Government	Government	Neighborhood	23	69.2	38.7	100	62.5	30	18.2	48.8
57	City center	Government	Government	Neighborhood	14	88.9	32.3	100	50	50	27.3	51.8
58	al aeyilat garden	Government	Jointly managed	City level	17.5	100	22.6	88.9	50	50	45.5	53.5
59	Martyrs' Tomb - Governorate Street	Government	Government	City level	6.6	100	25.8	55.6	62.5	70	54.5	53.6
60	Municipal Street	Government	Government	City level	23.9	66.7	38.7	88.9	62.5	50	45.5	53.7
61	Public housing - Al-Oruba Park	Government	Government	Neighborhood	7.5	100	25.8	66.7	62.5	60	54.5	53.9

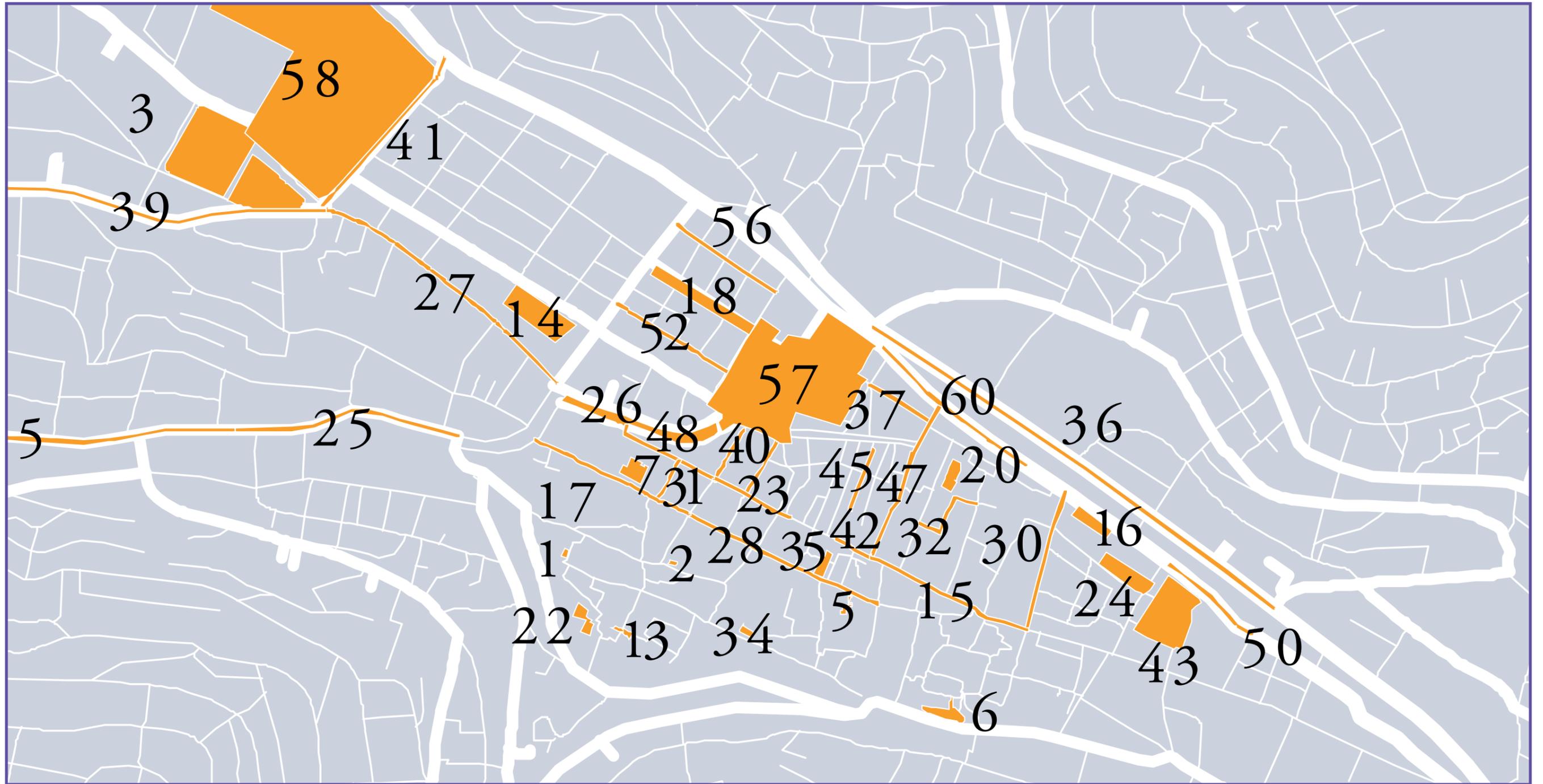
Values are in percentages. Higher percentage means better performance



**Public spaces that were assessed**

- Public spaces
- Municipality boundary

**Note:** Legends (least, moderate, most) – These are aggregated values of the indicators in that dimension. E.g. Harassment (few cases) meaning less than 33 per cent of the types of harassment (ogling, following, stalking...) were present in the public space. The values are 0-33%, 34-66%, 67-100% (where 100 could be better performing or worse depending on the dimension).





Residents walking in streets of Balata Refugee Camp, Nablus © Flickr PalFest

# 3

CHAPTER

## SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

- General state of public spaces
- What are the amenities present in public spaces?
- How are people using the public spaces?
- Who are the users of public spaces?
- What are the opportunities for 'stay' in public spaces?
- How accessible are the public spaces?
- What are the safety concerns in the public space?
- Which dimension are strong in the public spaces?

# GENERAL STATE OF OPEN PUBLIC SPACES

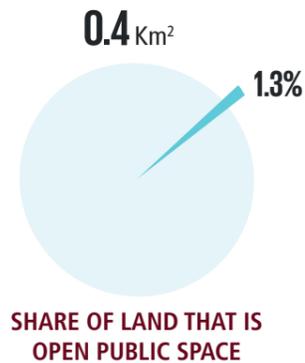
## LOW SHARE OF LAND THAT IS OPEN SPACE

High quality, safe, inclusive and accessible green and public spaces are a key anchor for inclusive cities. When properly planned and designed, especially with a gender lens, and built around major public destinations, public spaces build local economies, civic pride, social connection and human contentment. They serve as

'safety valves' for a city, where people interact as civic equals, gather to celebrate, grieve, honour, remember, exult and protest.

Aggregately, the area of open public space measures 0.4 square kilometres, representing only 1.3% of urban land. This is against the internationally recommended optimum of 15 -

20% which is also supported by UN- Habitat. Computed against the population, the per capita open public space in the city is 2.1 square meters. This is projected to reduce to 1.5 square meters by 2030 if the city does not incorporate strategies to create new public spaces. This is a wakeup call for the city to embark on providing more public spaces.



AREA: 29.4 Km<sup>2</sup>  
POPULATION: 190,447 - 2019  
259,141 - 2030

2.1m<sup>2</sup>/Person - 2019 assessment  
1.5m<sup>2</sup>/Person - 2030 assessment



2.8m<sup>2</sup>/Person - 2019 master plan  
1.9m<sup>2</sup>/Person - 2030 master plan



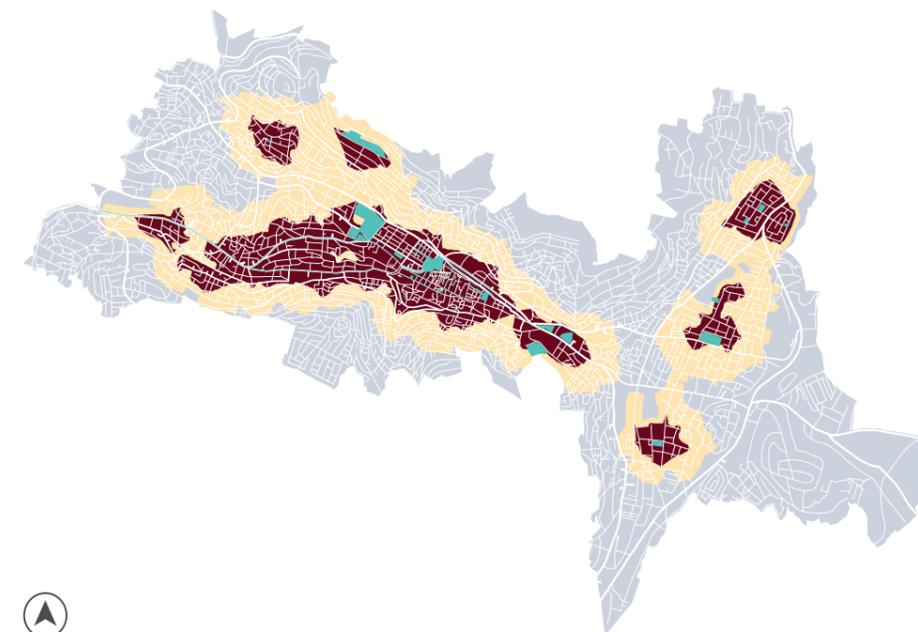
## LACK OF A NETWORK OF PUBLIC SPACES

Public space serve as a critical urban infrastructure for promoting continuity and ordering territories. As such, it is a principle structuring element in cities, towns and villages. The benefit of public spaces is that they have an inherent ability and or reinforce a strong local identity, environmental quality, economic competitiveness and a sense of collectiveness. Through their structure they can be used to reconnect a fragmented city, ensuring that no

place and no one is left behind. The network of public spaces is composed by both the squares, playgrounds, parks and gardens as well as the links in between them. Primary links can for example be river systems, public transport routes, and continuous, safe and dedicated walking and cycling infrastructure and networks.

In Nablus less than every fifth person has public space within five minutes walking of where they live, and more

than every second has to walk more than ten minutes to reach a public space. Studies show that the average distance most people will typically be willing to walk before opting to drive is considered to be 400 meters, coverable in five minutes. Others use 1,000 meters, coverable in ten minutes. It is also worth noting that many people, especially women and girls, will walk only if it is easier, safer and more interesting than driving.



Share of land within 5 minutes walk



Share of land within 10 minutes walk

Walking distance to public spaces

- Public spaces
- 5 minutes walk from public spaces
- 10 minutes walk from public spaces

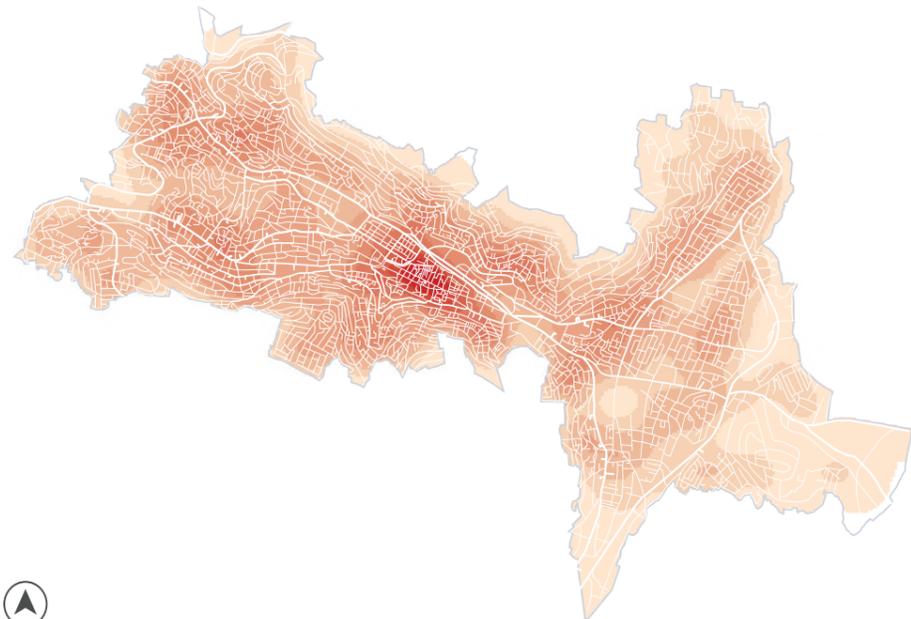
### WEAK STREET CONNECTIVITY OUTSIDE THE CITY CENTRE

Accessibility, mobility, efficiency and ultimately prosperity are all characteristics associated with an efficient street connectivity. Street connectivity is one of the essential urban infrastructures which has both direct and indirect correlations to active transport. Active transport relating to walking and cycling subsequently improves eyes on the street. UN-Habitat recommends an optimum length of eighteen kilometres

of street length per square kilometre, with smaller blocks. In Nablus it is observed that the city has an average of 17 kilometre of street length per square kilometre. The city centre of Nablus is more connected than other parts of the city.

Besides street connectivity, intersection density is another measure of how walkable a city is. Street intersection density is a measure of the number of intersections (nodes) per square

kilometre of land. Adequate amounts of intersections within an urban area increase points where vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians can join streets moving in different directions across blocks, therefore reducing connection distance. The reports conclude that the number of street intersections per square kilometre in Nablus is 215. The city is well connected when looking at the street length and street intersections per square kilometre.



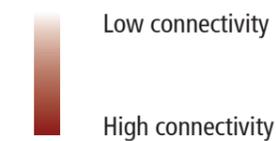
Street length per Sq. Km



Street intersections per Sq. Km



#### Street connectivity

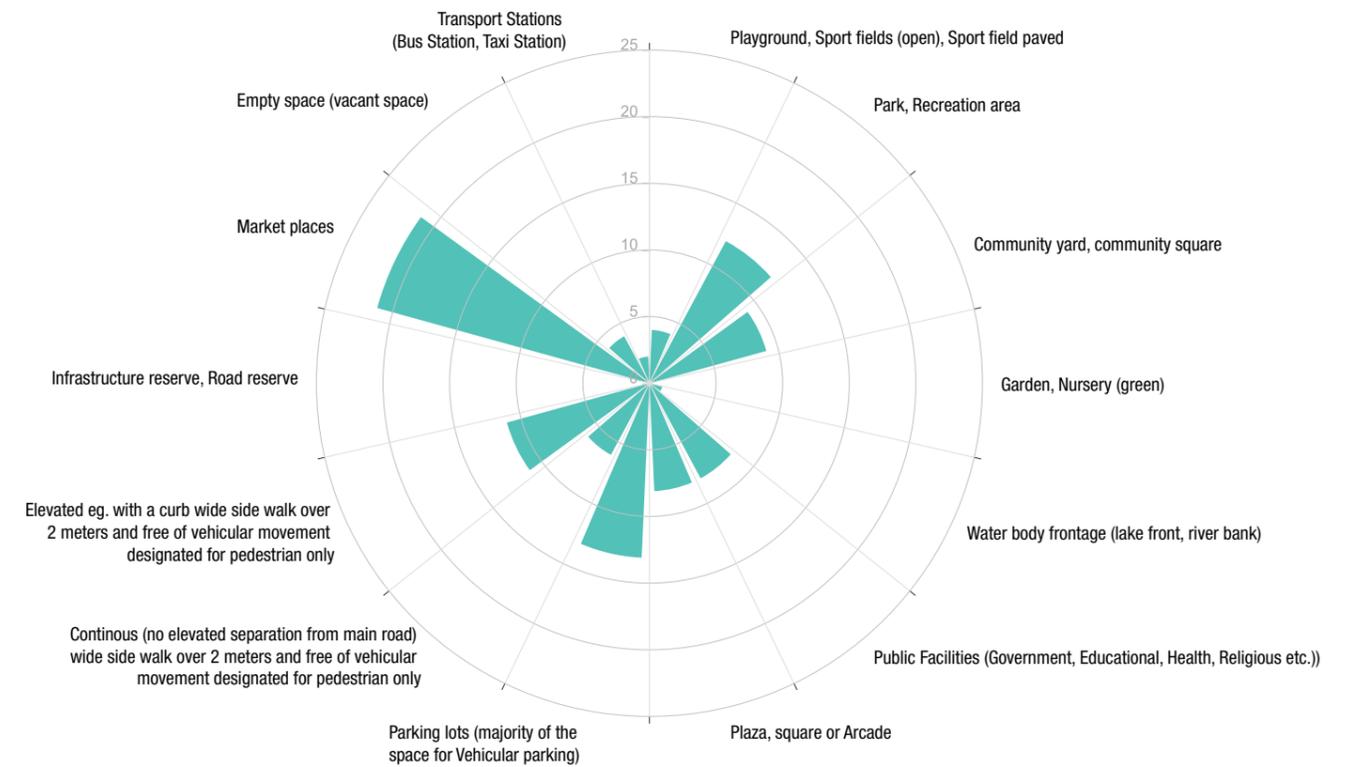


### MARKETS ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT SPACES

Public space comes in many different shapes and sizes. They include parks, gardens, playgrounds and community squares/courtyards among others. In the Nablus, there are seven different typologies of public spaces including gardens, plazas, markets, commercial

axes, public transport space, water frontage and playgrounds. Of the public spaces 34% are considered market spaces, 21% parking spaces and roughly 19% parks and recreational areas. 18% of the public spaces are seen as elevated curbs. Almost 15%

are community gardens and roughly 13% are plazas, squares and public facilities. Less than 10% are continuous wide sidewalks and less than 5% of the public spaces are transport stations, empty spaces, water bodies and playgrounds and sports fields.



# GENERAL STATE OF OPEN PUBLIC SPACES

## WHO OWNS AND MANAGES PUBLIC SPACES?

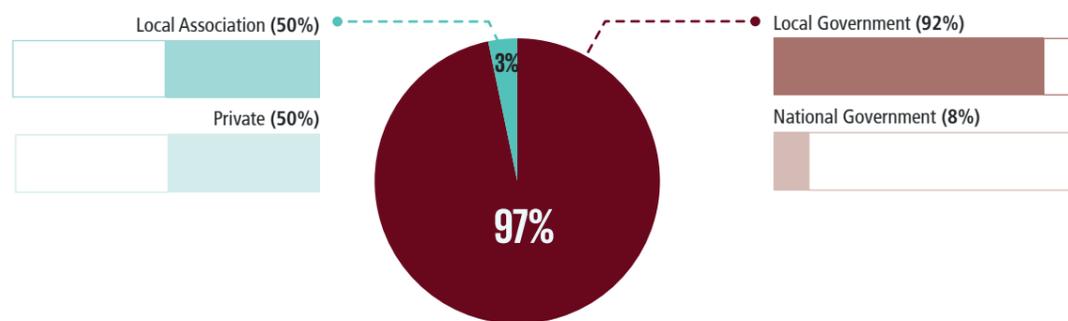
The appearance of a public space can add to effective vigilance and thereby reduce the fear of crime and risks of mischief and delinquency. Appearance also attracts people and results in them staying longer in public spaces that offer interest and stimulation. Further, they are more likely to linger if there is

somewhere comfortable to sit, there is protection from adverse weather, there is fresh air to breathe and the overall environmental quality is satisfactory. At the centre of this is a clear ownership and pragmatic management.

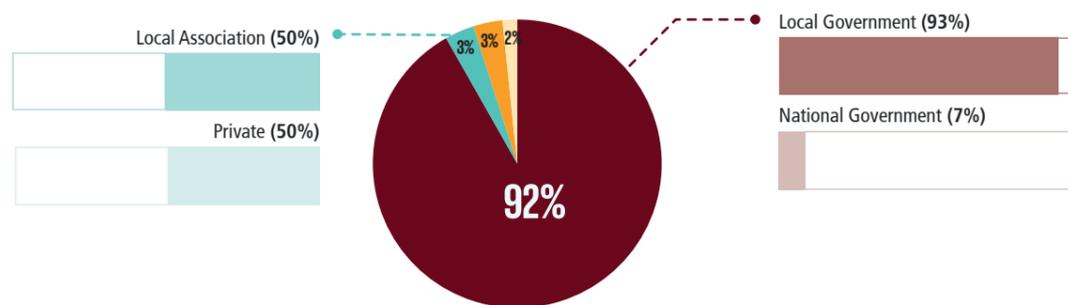
Ownership of public space in Nablus is mainly in the hands of the government,

with the absolute majority owned by the local government. 3 % is owned by local associations or is privately owned. Similarly, the management of the public space is mainly done by the local government. Roughly 3 % is jointly managed and another 3 % is managed by local associations or by private owners.

Ownership of public spaces



Management of public spaces



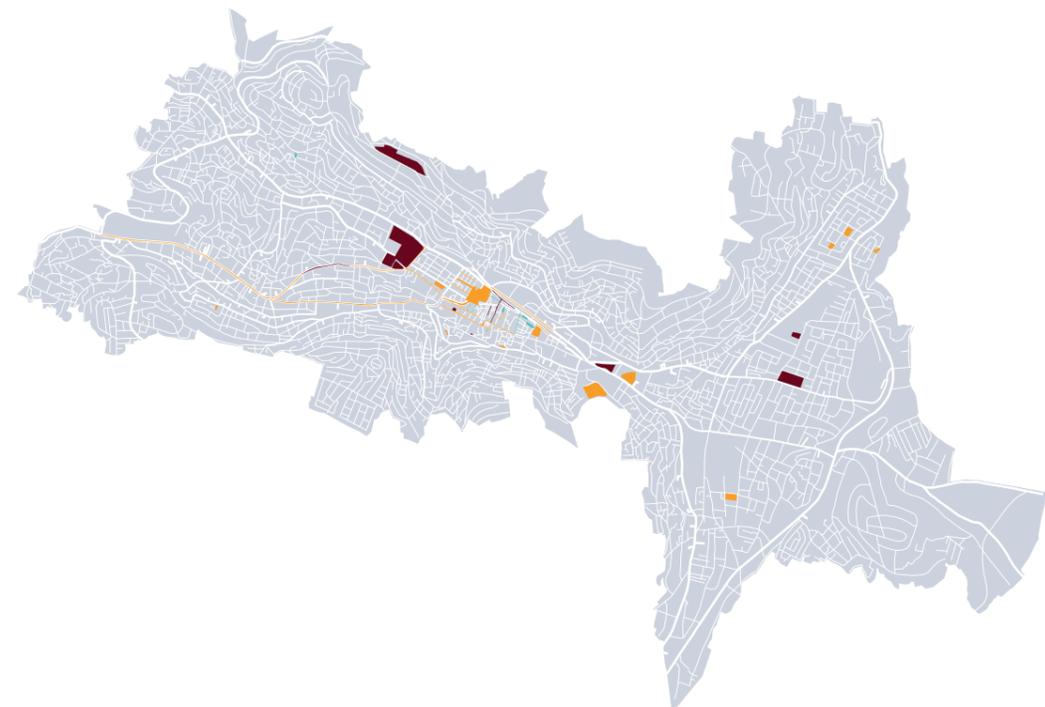
Government (dark red), Non-Government (teal), Jointly managed (orange), No information (light orange)

## SCALE AND DESIGNATION OF PUBLIC SPACES

The public spaces in Nablus were classified into three broad categories: city level spaces, neighbourhood level spaces and pocket parks. While city level and neighbourhood level public spaces are categorised based on their location and catchment area, pocket parks are predominantly defined by their sizes. Neighbourhood level public spaces are public spaces

which are predominantly used and experienced by people living within the neighbourhood in which the spaces are located while city level public spaces are public spaces which have a wider catchment area (used by people from different parts of the city). Pocket parks on the other hand are small public spaces measuring less than 400 square metres.

The survey found that of the 61 public spaces in Nablus, 25 were City Level, 37 were Neighbourhood Level and 43 were pocket parks. Providing a variety of public spaces of different scales offers a greater choice to residents and provides a range of ways for people to gather and interact with the community.



Scale of public spaces

- City level (12)
- Neighborhood level (37)
- Pocket spaces (12)

## MAJOR ADJOINING LAND-USE TO PUBLIC SPACES

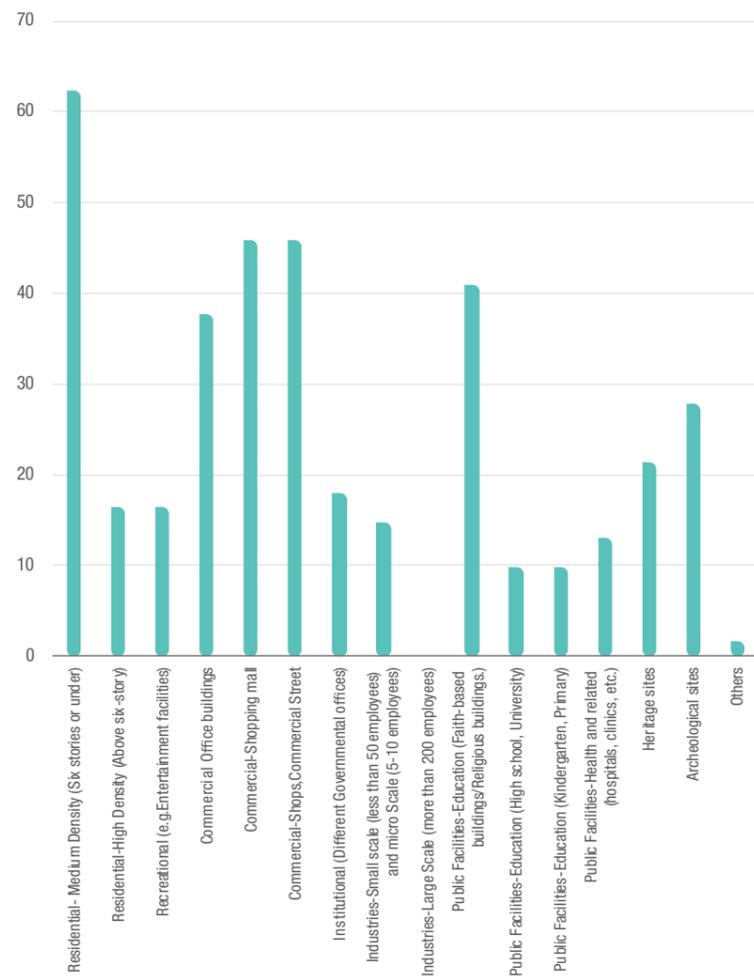
Women's and girl's perception of safety is significantly impacted by the adjoining type of land of the public space. Land which generates a greater amount of people to use the public space, resulting in eyes on the street, have a positive impact. These types of land uses can for example be commercial (retail) and residential activities. They have a positive impact on the perception of safety in public

spaces.

More than 60% of the public spaces in Nablus are located in medium density residential areas. These public spaces have the potential of having a high impact on the safety for women and girls since they are located in proximity to their homes. This also means that children can be under a guarding eye from parents while playing. A high

amount of the public spaces is located close to commercial areas such as shopping malls, office buildings and commercial streets.

However, few public spaces are in close proximity to educational facilities. Having public spaces close to schools is especially important for younger kids. Promoting an active lifestyle from an early age is important among school going children.

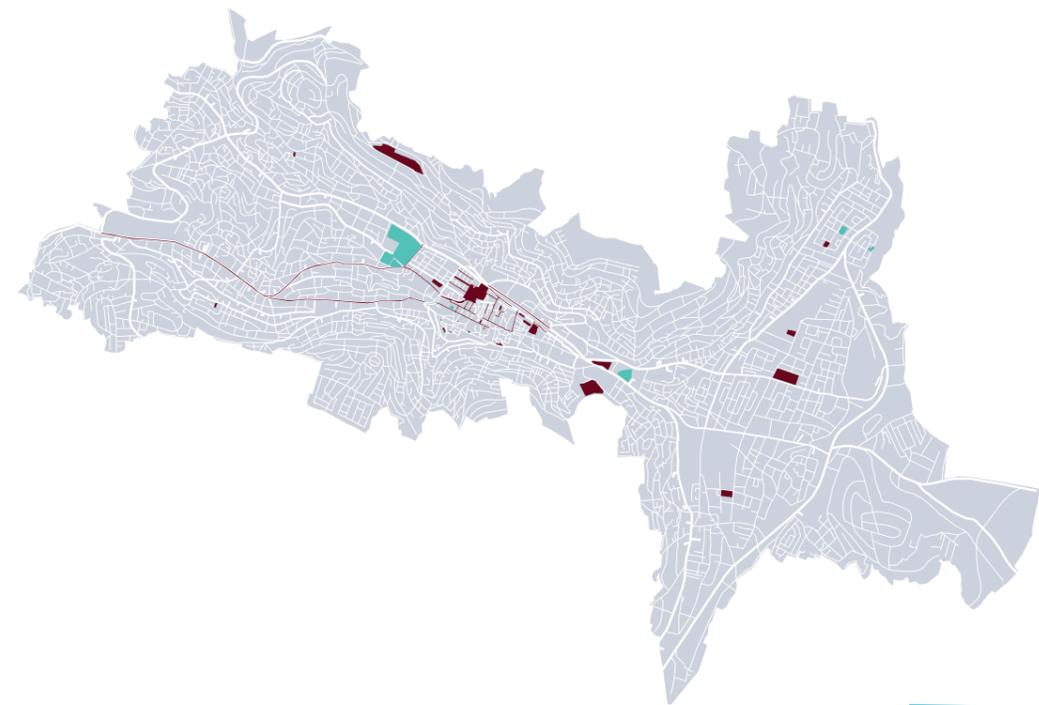


## WHAT IS THE TEXTURE AND EXISTING LANDMARKS IN PUBLIC SPACES?

Public spaces of soft texture are an essential part of any city, town or village. Examples of soft texture public spaces can for example be parks. When it comes to cooling and in management of surface water they play a critical role. Similarly, the green infrastructure of a city provide opportunities for urban water management and ground

water recharge. Moreover, they build resilience against extreme weathers and natural hazards such as flooding and facilitate sustainable land management and restoration. In Nablus only 5 public spaces are of soft texture and 56 are of hard texture. This might pose a risk for urban water management.

Landmarks are one of the five elements of the city image. They define the city and aid way-finding. Similarly, they are one of the defining elements of a public space. At a macro level, public spaces themselves can also serve as landmarks. They occur in various shapes, forms and sizes including significant trees and small padlocks.



### Surface texture of public spaces

- Soft texture (6)
- Hard texture (55)



Public spaces with play furniture

# HOW SAFE ARE PUBLIC SPACES?

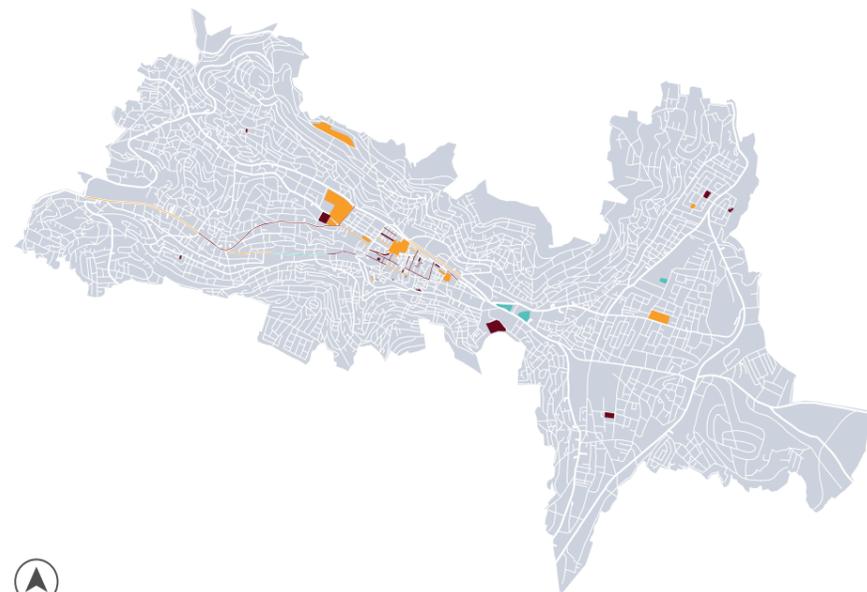
## WHAT ARE THE AMENITIES PRESENT IN THE PUBLIC SPACE?

People are commonly drawn to public spaces which are appropriately designed with well integrated furnitures and amenities. This adds to the experience of using public space and making people feel safe, relaxed, welcome and involved. Contrary, poorly designed, poorly placed and poorly maintained furniture and amenities in public spaces make women and girls in public spaces vulnerable to crime, harassment and violence. Examples of issues related to disintegrated and absence of design include inadequate signage, lack of proper public lighting and lack of

public toilets.

Street lightning can be found in close to 90 % of the public spaces of Nablus. The following two amenities with most presence is kiosks which can be found in almost 60 % of all public spaces and garbage bins which can be found in more than every second. Street lightning help improve the feeling of security, whilst benches makes public spaces more accessible for people with disabilities, elderly and parents. Kiosks have the possibility of attracting crowds and making the public space multi-functional.

However, amenities such as seating (30 %), water taps (20 %), drainage (30 %), artificial shade (30 %) can be found in less than half of the public spaces. Fire emergency (5 %), health facilities (15 %) and baby care facilities (5 %) can only be found in a few instances. Depending on the user different amenities are of varying importance. For women and girl's accessibility, light and baby care facilities might be of greater importance to create a sense of security.

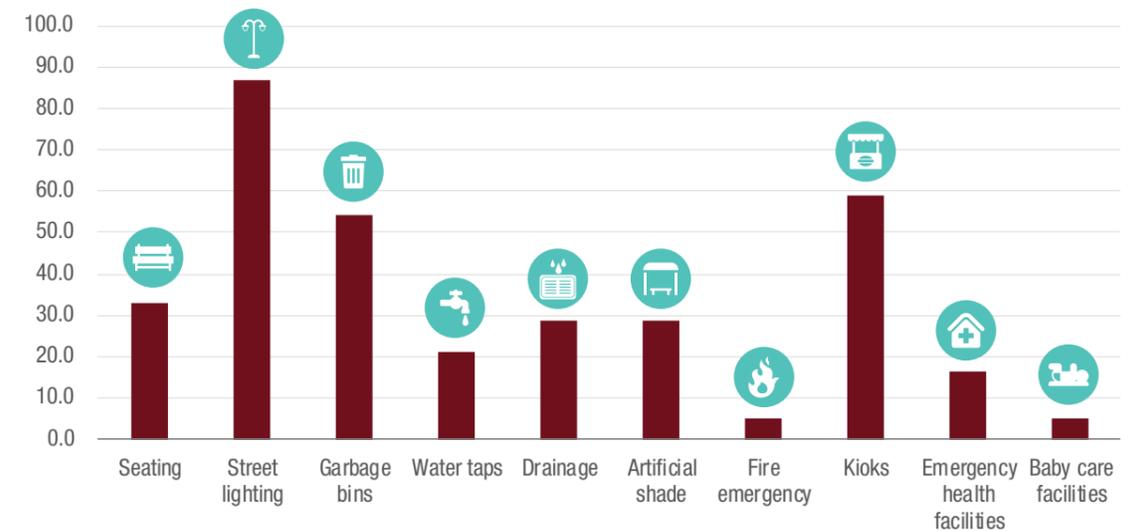


### Presence of facilities in public spaces

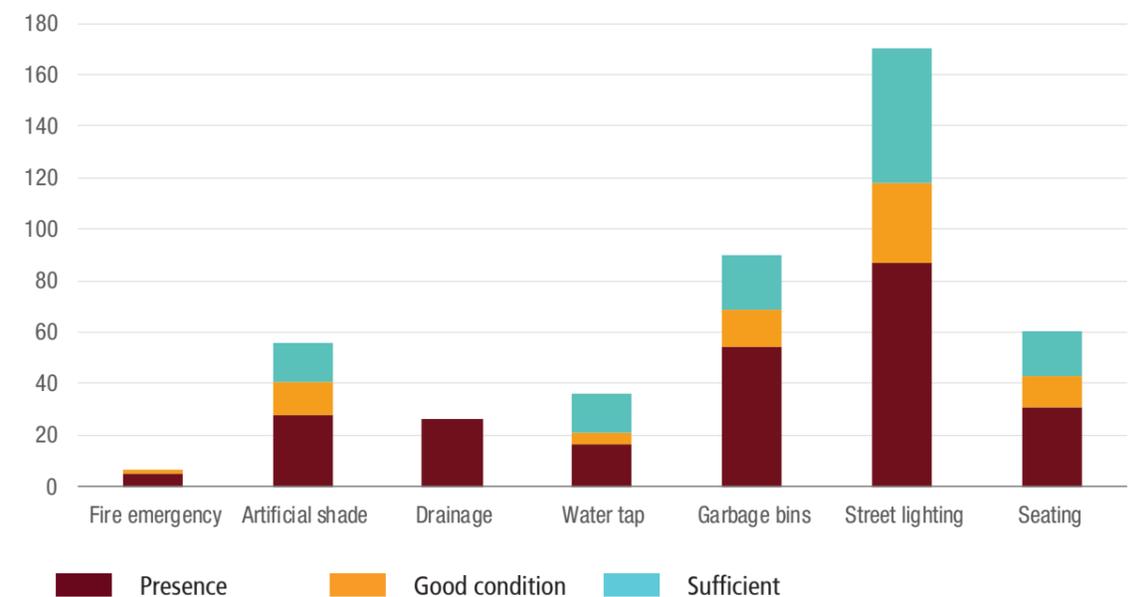
- Most facilities are present
- Some facilities are present
- Few facilities are present

No.	Name of Public Space	Physical facilities index
1	Roman amphitheater	10
2	Masaken Al Shaabeyah - the square adjacent to the Omar bin Khattab Mosque	10
3	Hammam Al Samrah Staircase	10
4	Rafidia - old Najah Street junction	10
5	Khaled Bin Al-Waleed street	15
6	Yasmina Square	20
7	Al Bayarah Park	20
8	Hosh aljetan yard	20
9	Al Sabaneh square	20
10	Ali Dawabsheh Garden (Health Garden)	20
11	Masaken Al Shaabeyah - Al Mattalah	20
12	Phoenix Garden	20
13	Mohamed tofaha Street	20
14	Habla Square	20
15	Granada Street	20
16	The Eastern Market - the entrance to the old town - Al-Anbiya Mosque	20
17	Al Toteh Square	20
18	Rafidia - Junction Tunisia and Tala'a Abdul Rahim Mahmoud	20

### PERCENTAGE OF PUBLIC SPACES WITH VARIOUS FACILITIES



### PERCENTAGE OF PUBLIC SPACES SHOWING PRESENCE AND CONDITION OF VARIOUS FACILITIES



## HOW ARE PEOPLE USING PUBLIC SPACES?

In order to attract people to public space there is a need to make the environment safer and friendlier to linger and spend time in. A mix of activities within the same public space can include eateries, playgrounds, open theaters and gym attract people. The multiplicity of activities, uses and attractions generate activities that contribute to a positive perception of urban safety and security.

In Nablus a majority of the public

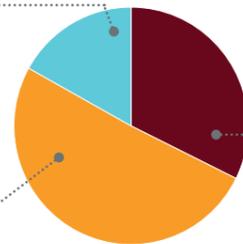
spaces are multi-functional whilst close to every fifth are pluri-functional. More than 30 % of all public spaces are still mono-functional. This indicates that more than every third of the public spaces only have one use. This suggests that the spaces are deserted at given times of the day, potentially compromising the perception of safety by women and girls. If spaces are used at different times of the day, they have a higher chance of being safe for women and girls.

**17%**

Pluri-functional public spaces

**51%**

Multi-functional public spaces

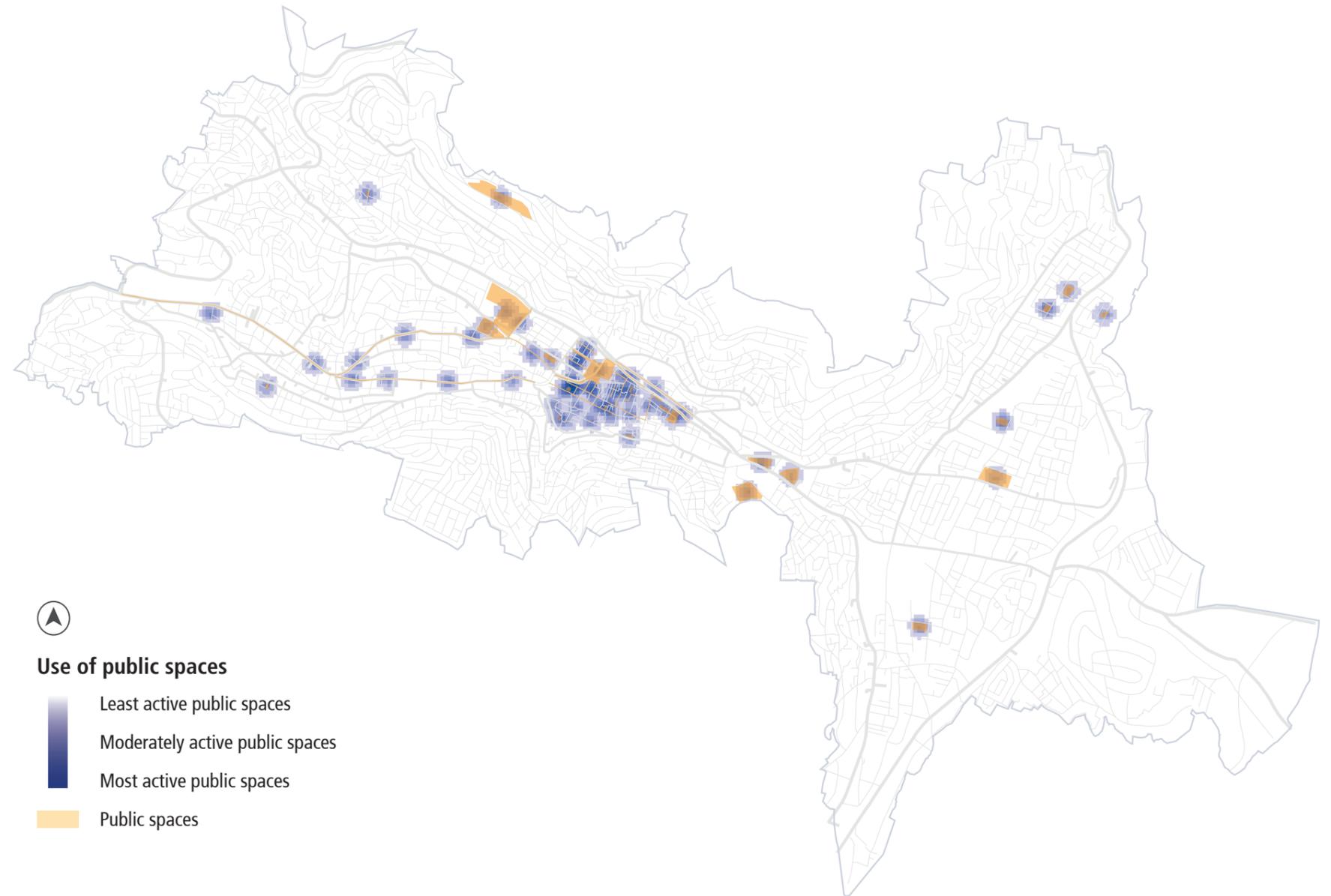


**32%**

Mono-functional public spaces



Children playing in Nablus © UN-Habitat



### Use of public spaces

- Least active public spaces
- Moderately active public spaces
- Most active public spaces
- Public spaces

## WHO ARE THE USERS OF PUBLIC SPACES?

Public spaces serve as symbols of collective wellbeing and provide possibility for political debate, demonstrations and agonistic struggle. Furthermore they are important places where people go to see and to be seen, and where people from all walks of life interact as civic equals.

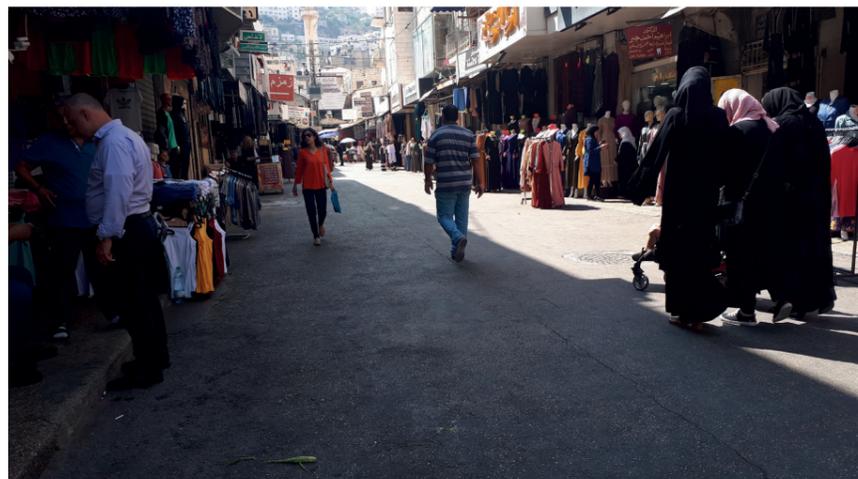
As observed during the survey most inhabitants of Nablus tend to visit the public spaces which are centrally

located in the city. Young women tend to visit the public spaces in different groups rather than alone or in one group.

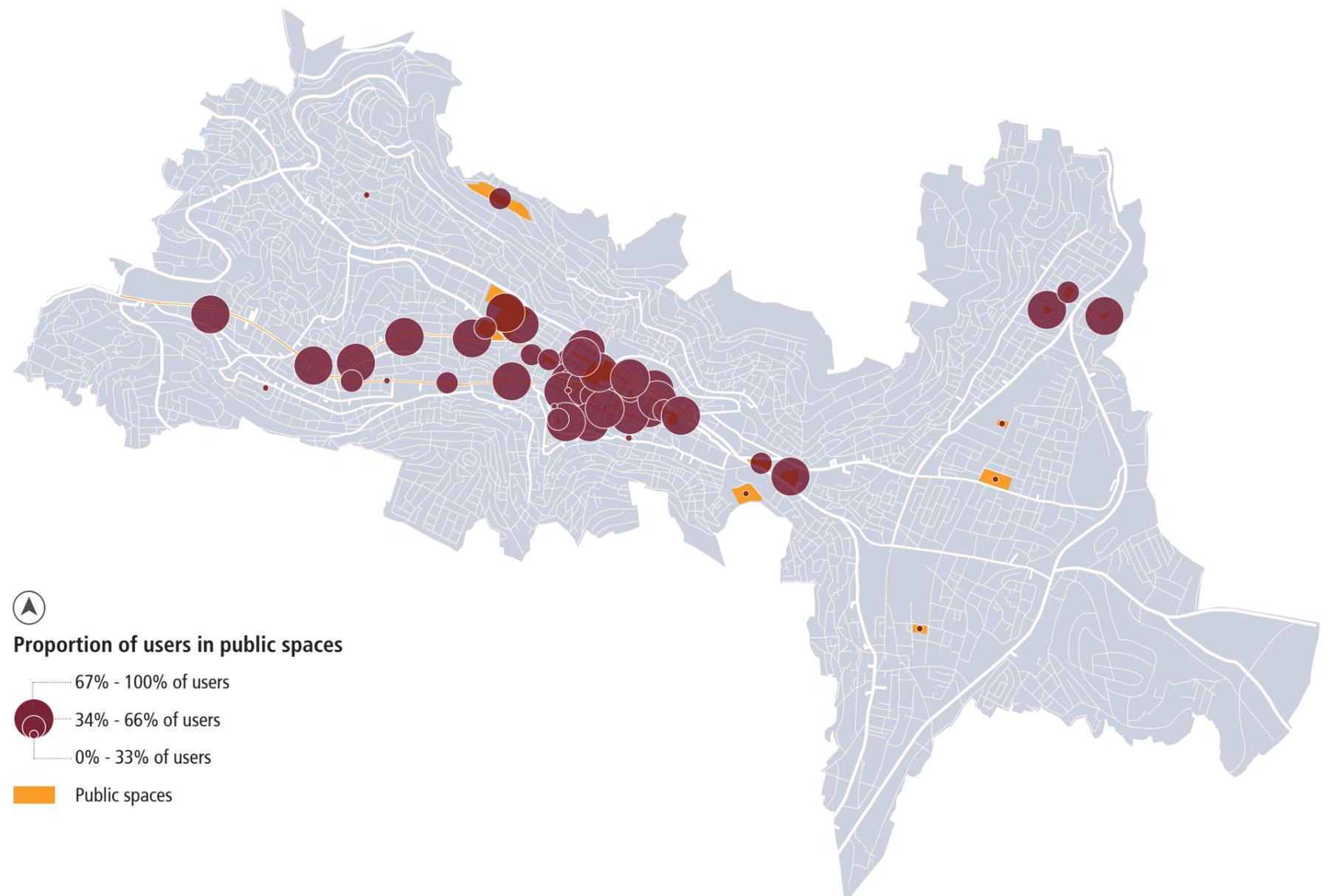
Although both men and women have a high presence in public spaces in Nablus, men are still overrepresented. This pattern is clear indifferent of age group. People with disabilities are underrepresented in the public spaces.



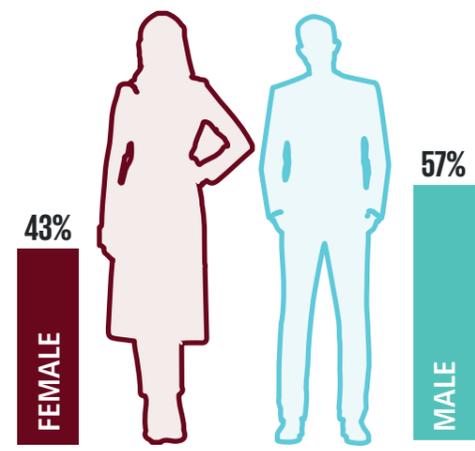
Shopping in market, Nablus © UN-Habitat



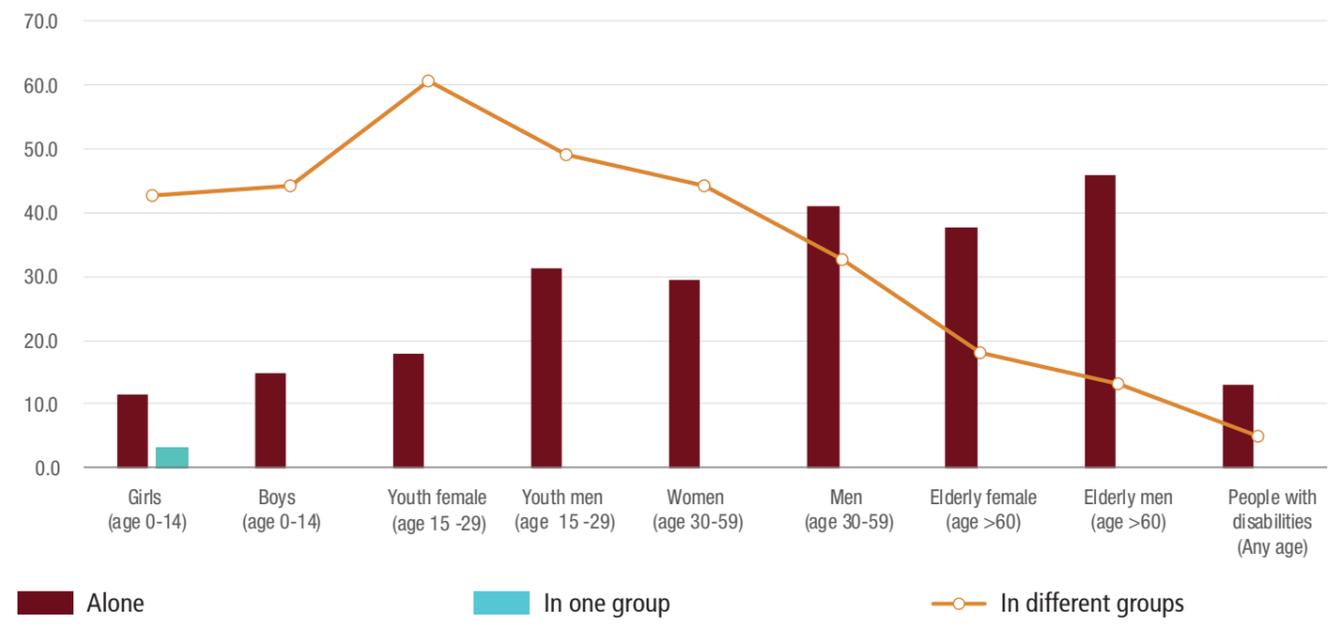
Commercial street in Nablus © UN-Habitat



### USERS OF PUBLIC SPACE BY GENDER



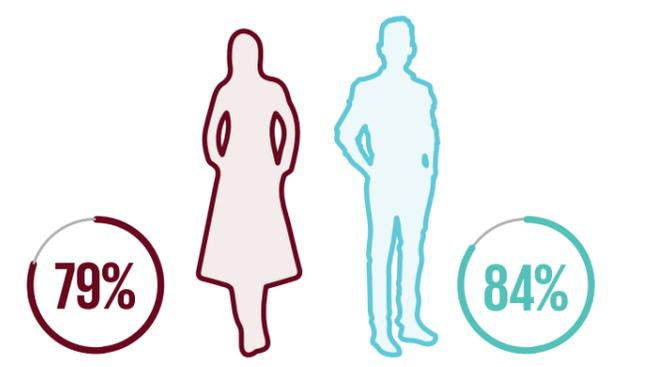
### NUMBER OF PUBLIC SPACES SHOWING HOW USERS GROUP THEMSELVES



**61%**

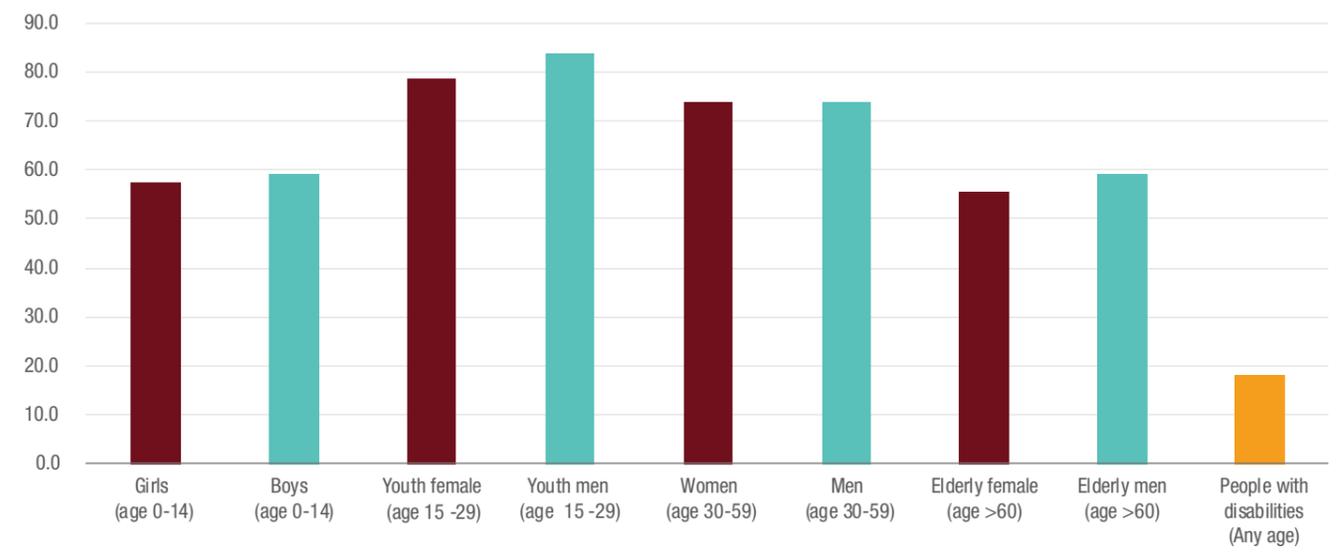
Of public spaces show that girls between the age of 15-29 years were mostly found in different groups

### PERCENTAGE OF PUBLIC SPACES WITH DIFFERENT USERS BY AGE



Women (30 - 59 years) are the most present in public spaces compared to other females of different ages

Young men (15 - 29 years) are the most present in public spaces compared to other males of different ages



**83%**

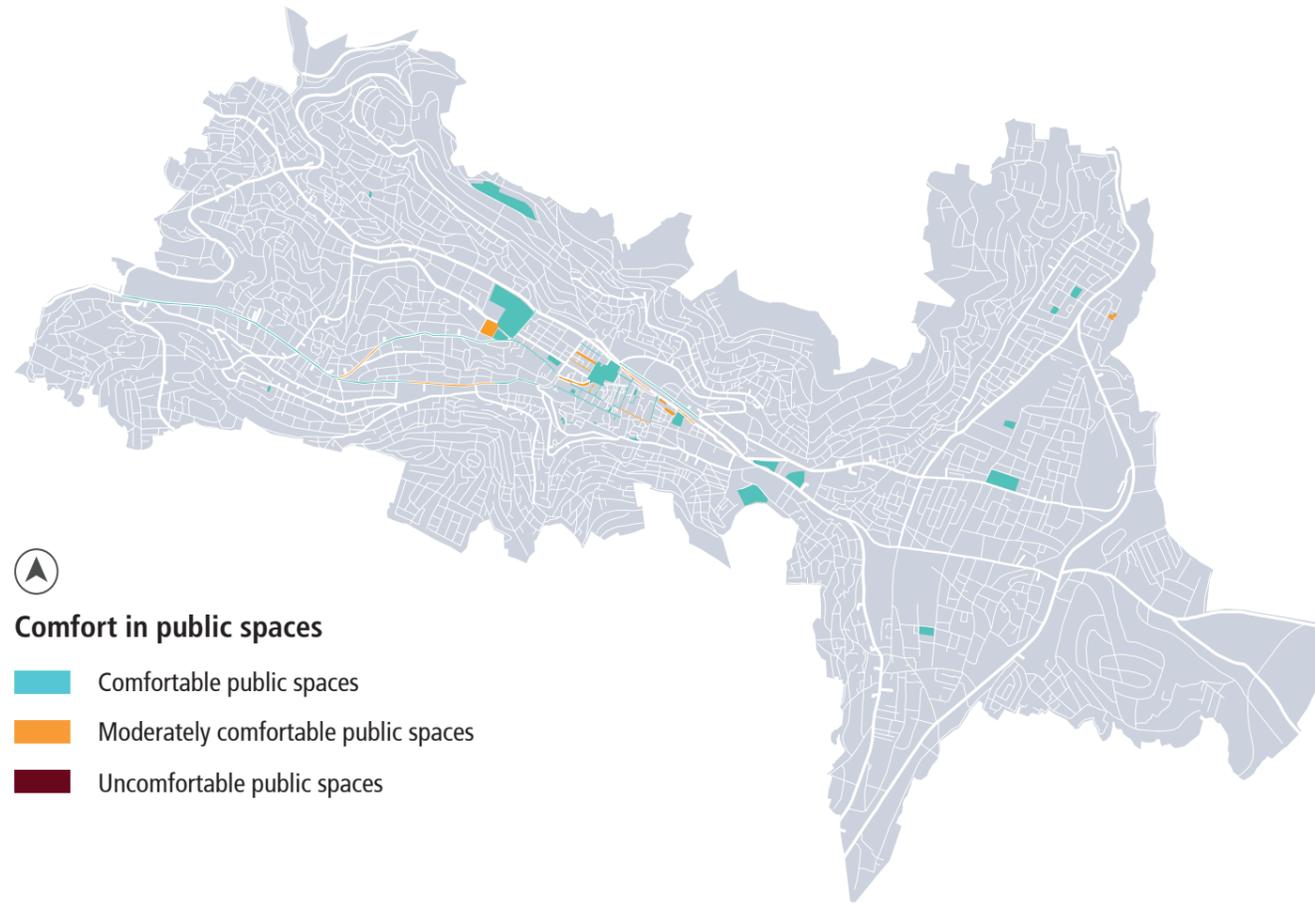
Of public spaces show that young male users between the age of 15-29 years were mostly found in different groups

## WHAT ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR 'STAY' IN THE PUBLIC SPACES?

In order for a public space to be truly pleasant and welcoming it needs to be appreciated and accessible for everyone regardless of gender, age or ability. Factors which influence the level of comfort include perceptions of safety, cleanliness, quality of smell, diversity of uses and users in the space, microclimate, soundscapes, and availability of amenities. Moreover, design, social programming and management of public spaces are directly linked to enjoyment and quality of stay in public spaces. If design and programming are done wrong, public spaces become underused, misused or abandoned, becoming unsafe places. If they are done right, public spaces become the 'pulse' of the city and hotbeds of activities.

The factors which affect if people chose to stay and the quality of the stay are factors of smell, sight of garbage and noise. In more than two of three public spaces uncollected garbage is a present. Similarly, noise is present in more than 40 % of public space whilst smell is in every fifth public space.

Among the public spaces more than 60 % have the presence of trees. Trees and green spaces improve the quality of public space and can help minimizing indicators such as noise and bad smell. Less than 10 % of the spaces in Nablus have urban agriculture. These areas help both green the city and create community among its citizens which improves the feeling of safety for women and girls.



### Comfort in public spaces

- Comfortable public spaces
- Moderately comfortable public spaces
- Uncomfortable public spaces

17% of public spaces have grass coverage



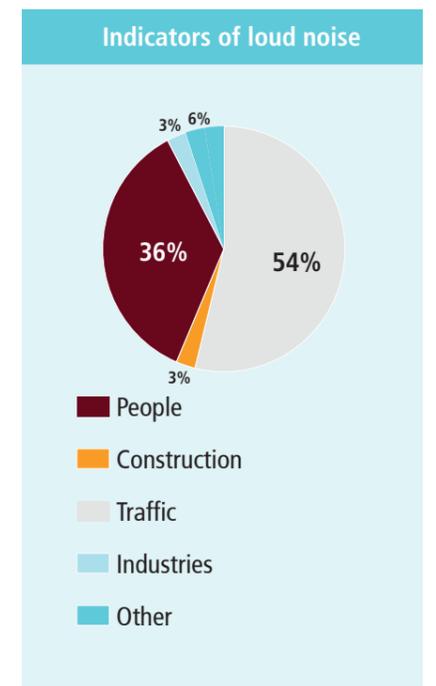
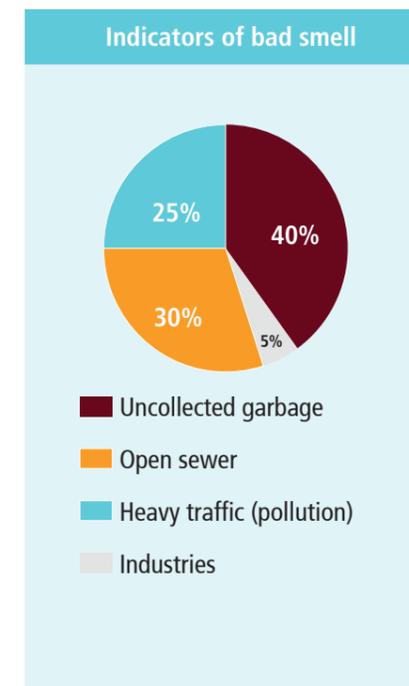
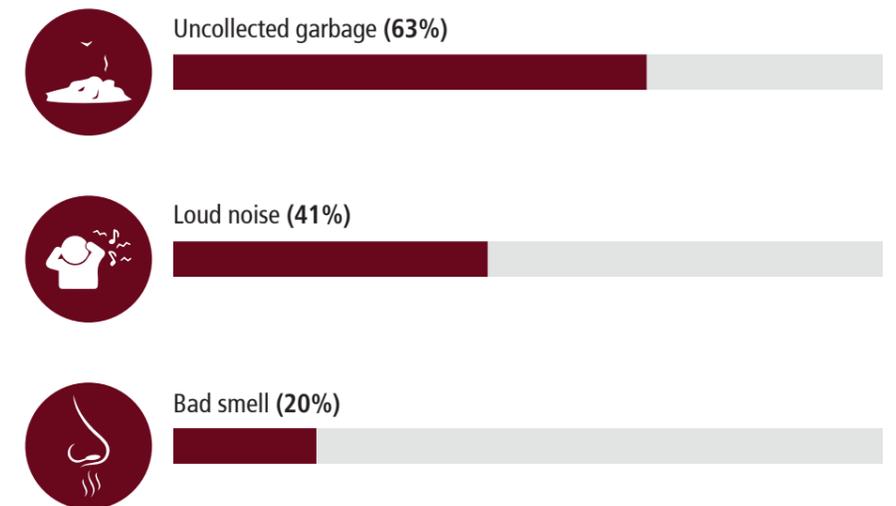
62% of public spaces have trees



7% of public spaces have urban agriculture



## INDICATORS AFFECTING COMFORT IN PUBLIC SPACES



## HOW ACCESSIBLE ARE THE PUBLIC SPACES?

If a public space has entrances which are well defined and easy to see they are perceived as more welcoming, inclusive and accessible. In Nablus it is observed that more than 40 % of public spaces have no clearly defined entrances. While 40 % of the public spaces do not require entrances, less than every fifth have clearly defined entrances. Similarly, infrastructure differential can either be an enabler or barrier to accessibility and inclusivity in public

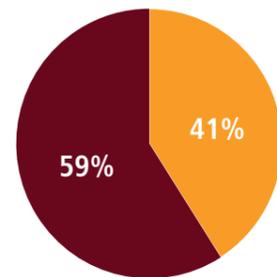
spaces. Universal design, for instance, design of walkways, entrances and amenities such as toilets can promote access for the blind, the elderly, children and people in wheelchairs. In the city however, a lot still needs to be done to promote universal accessibility.

Making the city accessible for pedestrians in general creates a safer environment for women and girls in particular. The survey found that more than every third public space

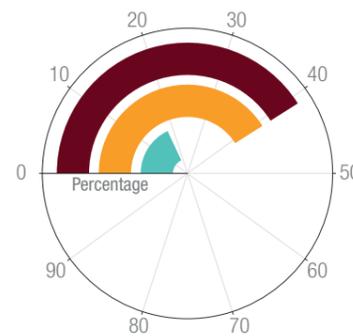
have restricted vehicular movement. However, none of the public spaces have bicycle parking. Of the public spaces in Nablus 41 % is accessible by wheelchair. However, none of its spaces are recognized as accessible or have texture changes in order to facilitate movement for the blind. Furthermore, 15 % of public spaces have limited access to the public. These factors play a part in order for women and girls to access and feel safe in public spaces.



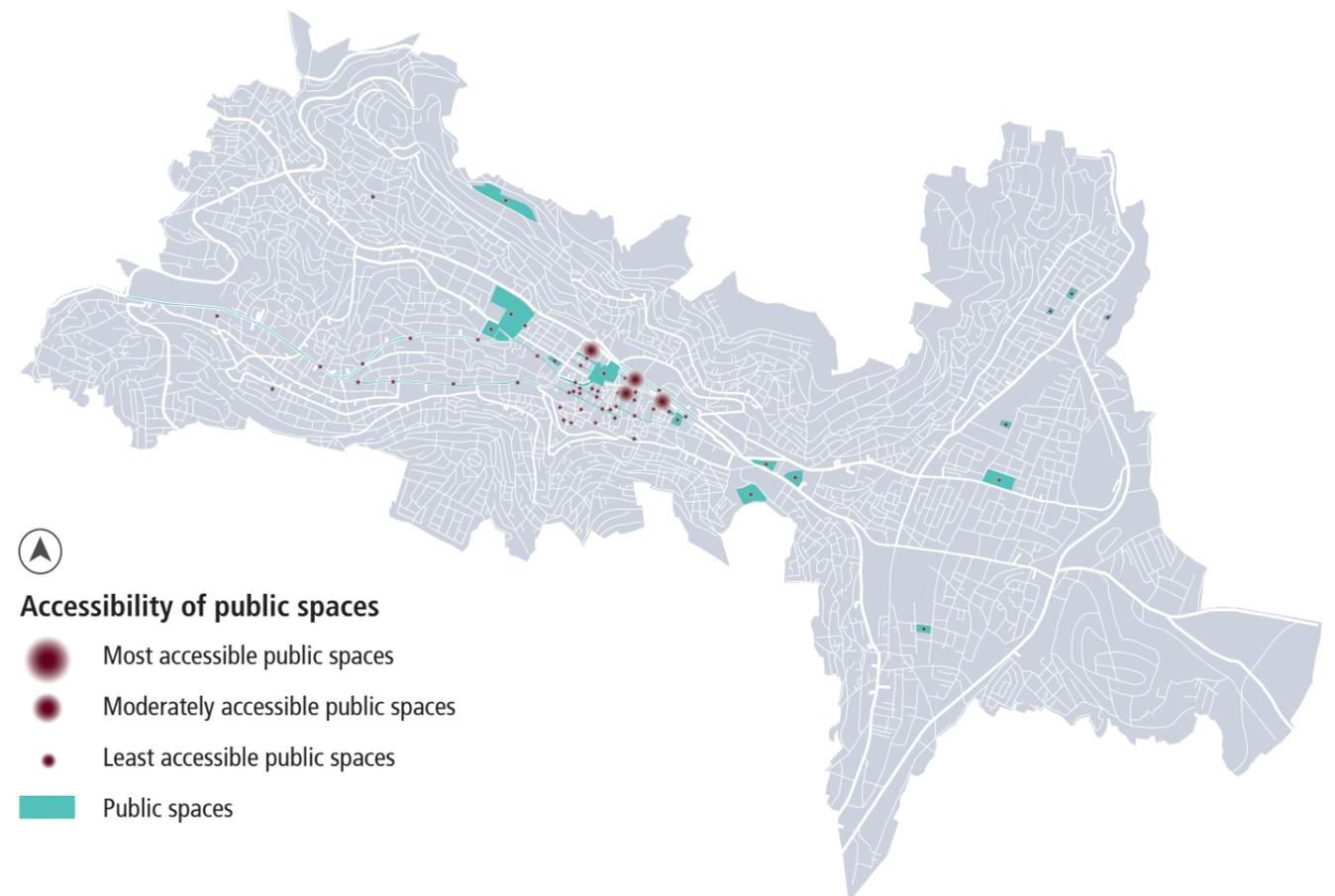
85% (52) of public spaces have unrestricted access. 10% (6) public spaces have limited access while 2 public space has controlled access and 1 has restricted access.



- Other
- Wheelchair access
- Wide street for the blind
- Texture change for the blind



- Not clearly defined
- Not required
- Easy to find



- Most accessible public spaces
- Moderately accessible public spaces
- Least accessible public spaces
- Public spaces



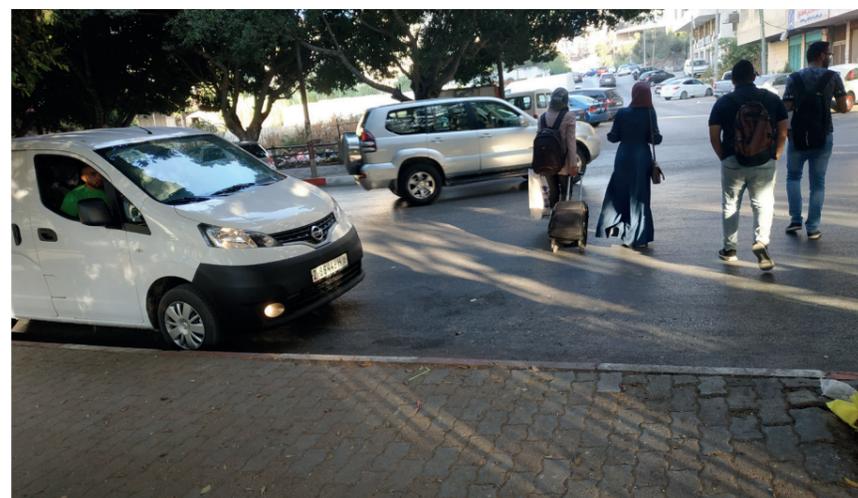
Public spaces with facilities to restrict vehicular movement



Public spaces with vehicular parking



Public spaces with bicycle parking



Pedestrians crossing road in Nablus © UN-Habitat



Adults and children in large public space in Nablus © UN-Habitat

## WHAT ARE THE SAFETY CONCERNS IN PUBLIC SPACES?

To live free from crime and harassment and have the right to work, live and leisure is a right everyone should enjoy. However, women and girls are especially fearful of becoming victims of harassment and crime. The violence and threats of violence against women and girls is not only undermining their basic human rights. It also threatens the achievement of gender equality, and the gains associated with empowering women.

Key factors contributing to harassment

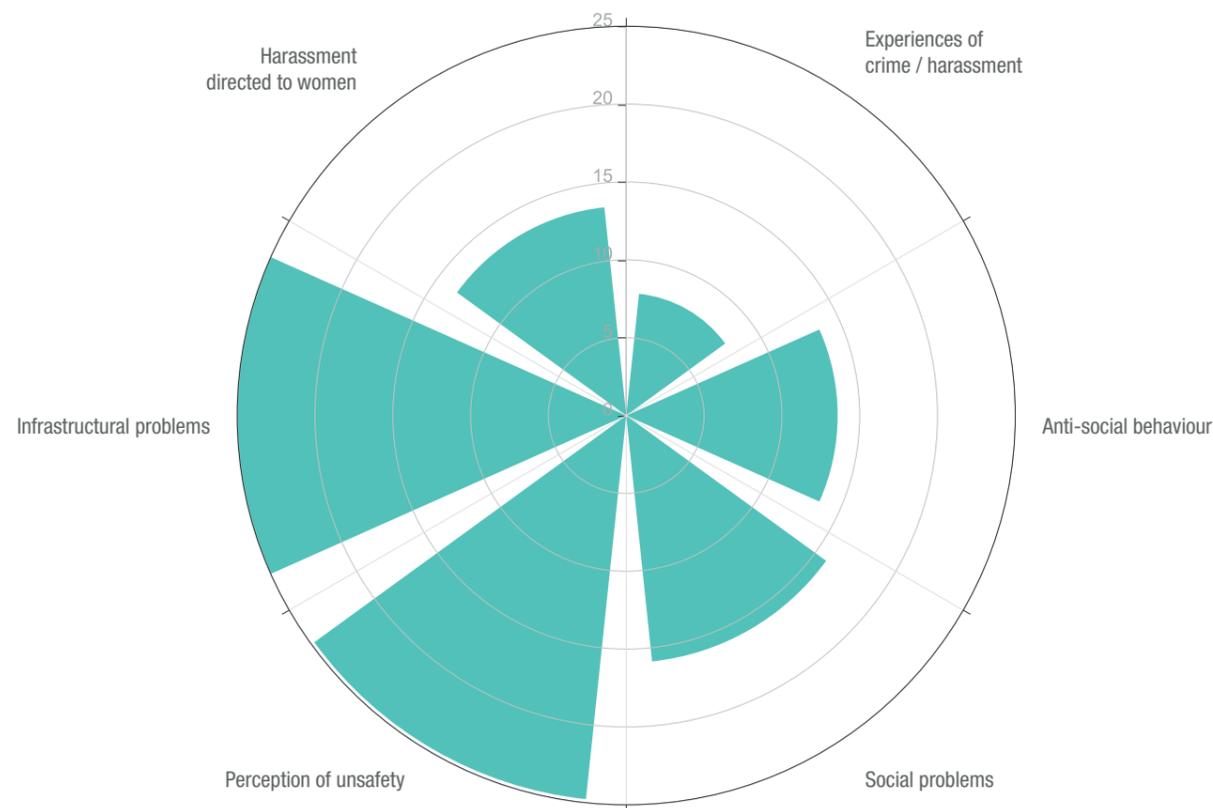
against women and girls include social factors, culture, and norms and traditions which often limit the power of women to make their own choices and decisions.

In Nablus it is observed that every fourth public space is regarded as unsafe or having infrastructural problems. Close to 15 % of the public spaces are characterised as having safety concerns due to social problems, anti-social behaviour or due to harassment directed towards women. In more than

5 % of the public spaces people regard them as unsafe due to experiences of crime and/or harassment.

In order to inspire a culture change towards building a society where women and girls can feel safe and interact with their male counterparts as civic equals, there is a need for concerted effort to promote public spaces as inclusive places, especially for women and girls.

### SAFETY CONCERNS IN OPEN PUBLIC SPACES

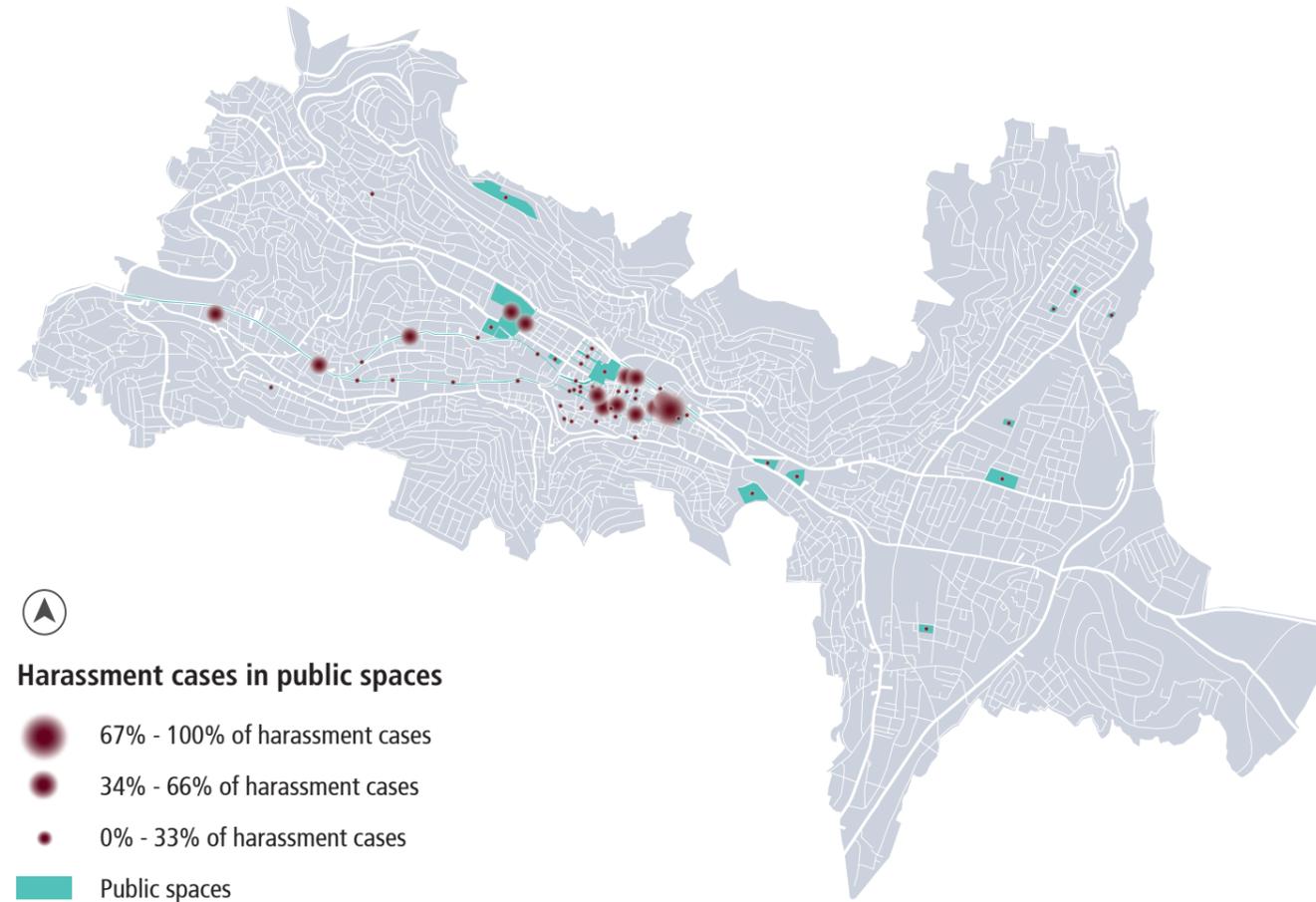


Percentages of public spaces



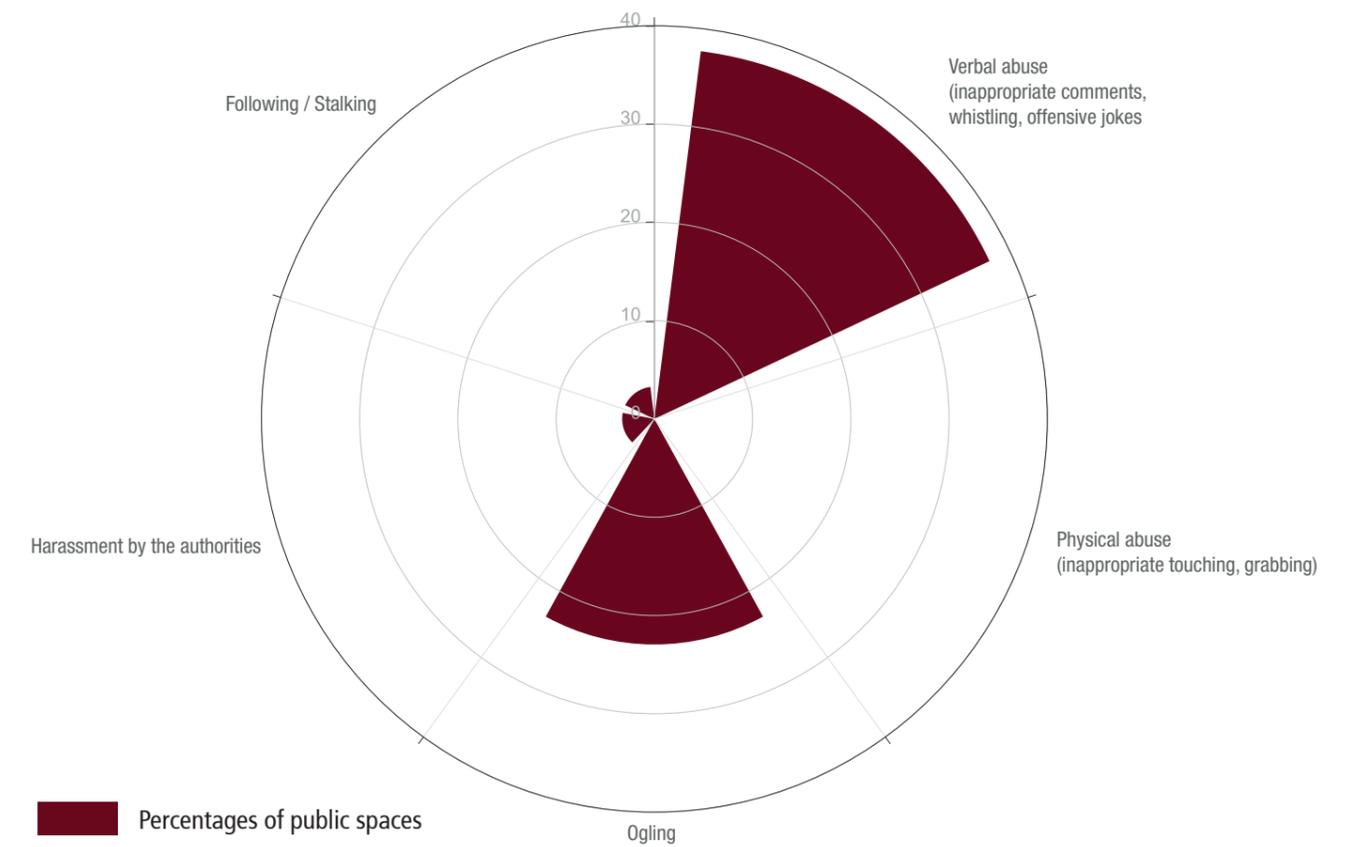
Children playing and adults sitting in public space, Nablus © UN-Habitat

## HARASSMENT



Markets street in Nablus © UN-Habitat

## PERCENTAGE OF PUBLIC SPACES WITH PRESENCE OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF HARASSMENT

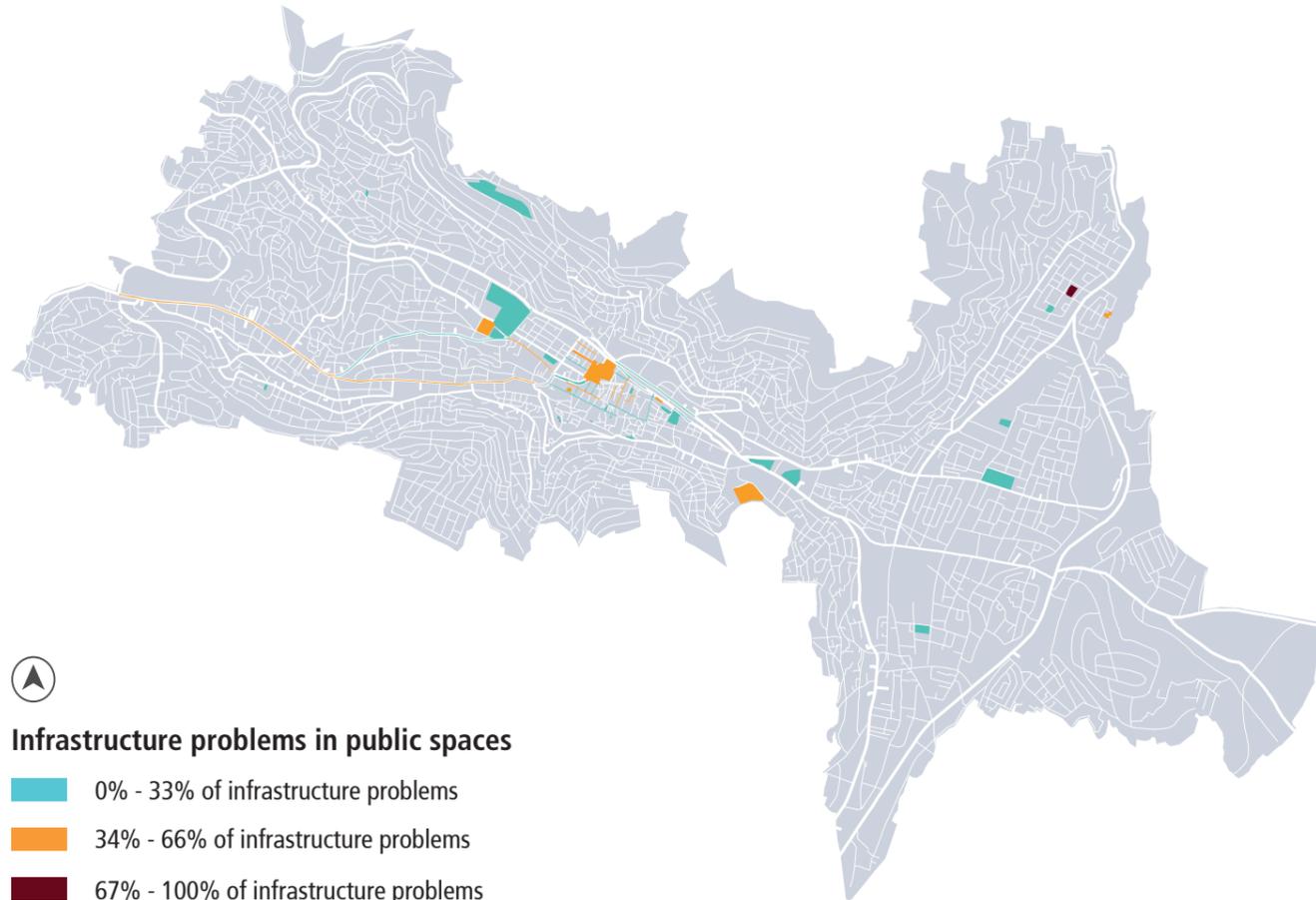


Unwelcome remarks, inappropriate conduct and many other types of sexual harassment are everyday risks women and girls have to deal with when using public spaces in cities, towns and villages. Harassment of women and girls in public spaces can for example be ogling, inappropriate touch, stalking, harassment by authorities and verbal abuse by men. This raises a question about the place of women in the city.

Women constantly deal with the fear and possibility of harassment in public spaces. In Nablus verbal abuse like inappropriate comments, whistling and offensive jokes is experienced by women in close to 40 % of the public spaces. Ogling, inappropriate staring, was observed in more than every fifth public space. Stalking or following and harassment by the authorities was observed in roughly 5 % of the public spaces. A majority of the harassment cases are found in the central areas of

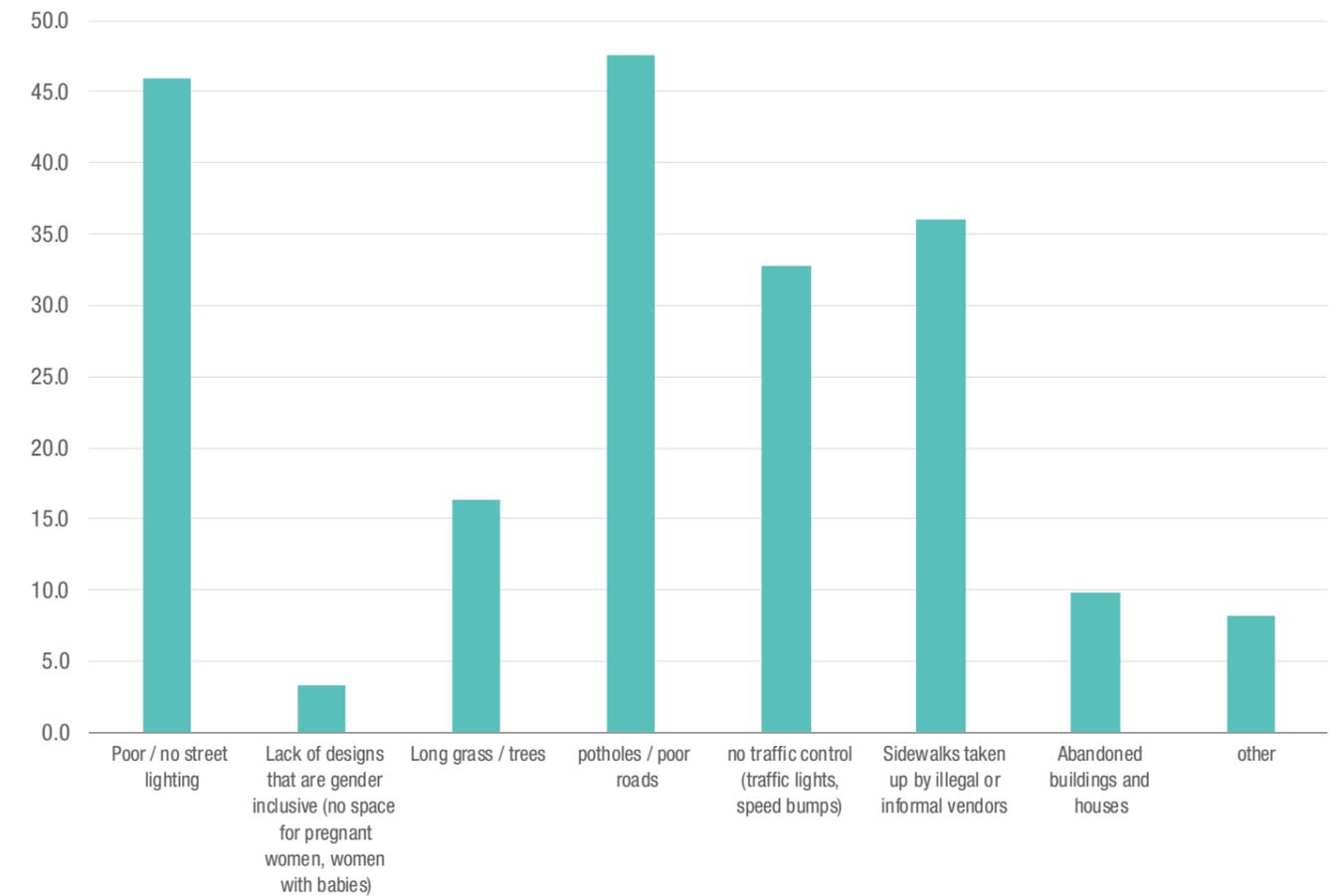
Nablus, close to commercial areas. These harassments highly inflict the feeling of unsafety for women and girls. They also showcase that women and girls are seen as strangers in the public space of Nablus. The authorities need to take deliberate steps to promote the inclusion of women in public spaces, and a culture that respects women and their right to use and enjoy public space and the city at large.

## INFRASTRUCTURE PROBLEMS



Pedestrians crossing road in Nablus © UN-Habitat

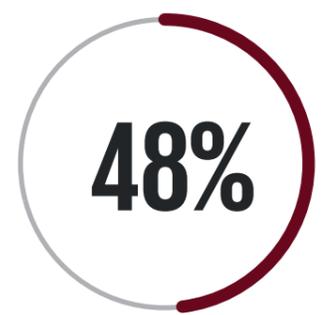
## POOR ROADS IS THE MAIN INFRASTRUCTURAL PROBLEM IN PUBLIC SPACES



Poor urban design, inadequate organisation and distribution of urban basic services, and urban functions create burdens which women have to bear. These are commonly manifested in dark and poorly lit streets, derelict public spaces, public facilities and empty lots, poorly maintained public spaces and urban furniture, inadequate signage and lack of or poorly maintained public toilets.

The survey of infrastructural problems

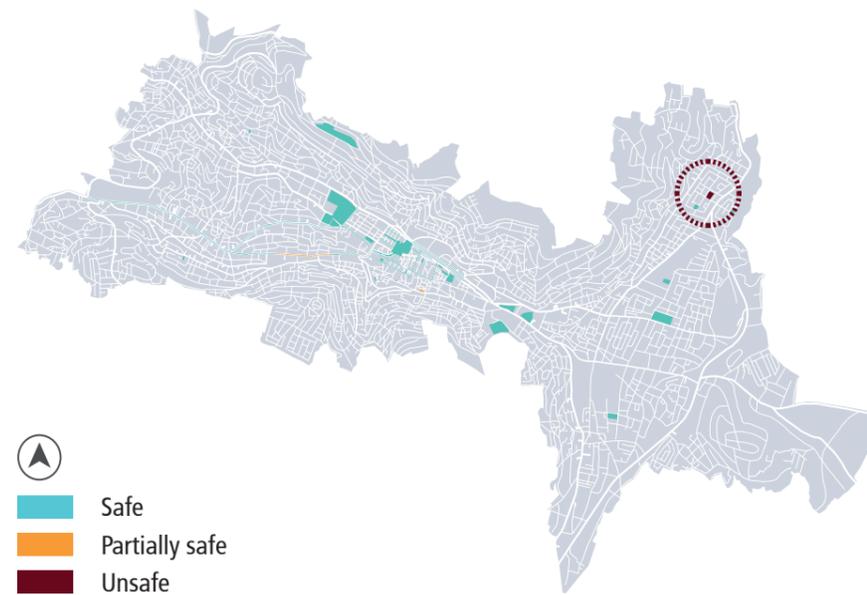
in Nablus showcase that poor road condition and poor or no street lighting are the main problems. These problems can be found in close to every second public space. These are closely followed by lack of traffic control (speed bumps, traffic lights) and sidewalks being taken up by vendors which can be found in more than a third of the public spaces. This creates an unsafe environment for both women with children and young girls.



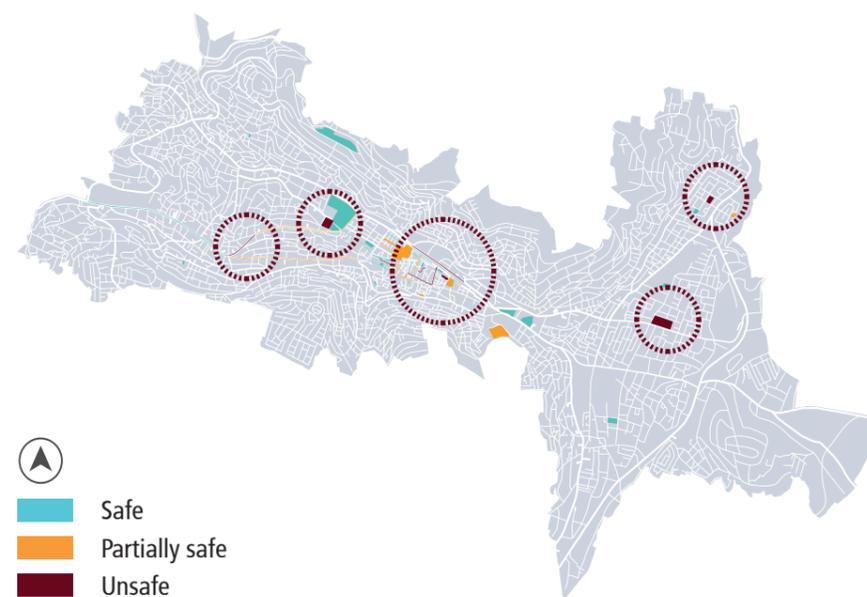
Public spaces with potholes / poor roads

## FEELING OF SAFETY

### Perception of unsafety for male users



### Perception of unsafety for female users

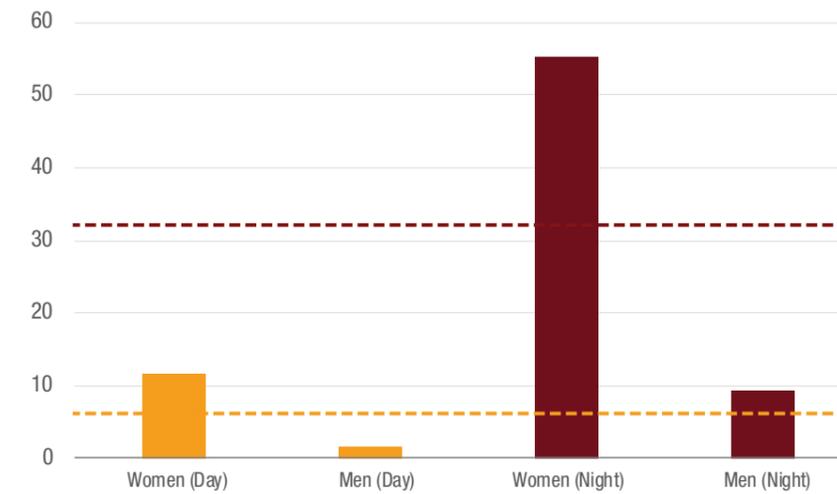


Fear of crime and perceiving a place as unsafe are both functions which create feelings of insecurity. The feeling of insecurity has a significant impact on how women and girls move in the city and go about their daily life. By this, women and girls are often pushed into taking some precautionary measures such as avoiding going to certain places alone or at night or even taking measures such as carrying weapons. This reality reduces women's and girls' freedom of movement. It reduces their ability to participate in school, work and public life. It limits their access to essential services and their enjoyment of cultural and recreational opportunities. It also negatively impacts their health and well-being.

Areas that affect the feeling of safety are for example street lighting, presence of security personnel, video surveillance and clear sight-lines. More than a third of the public spaces of Nablus lack clear sight-lines. Similar statistics can be found for lack of security personnel. A fifth of the public spaces do not have CCTV.

The feeling of unsafety by gender and time showcase that more than every tenth women feel unsafe during daytime and more than every second feel unsafe during night. This can be compared to men in which less than every tenth feels unsafe during night and close to zero during daytime. Linking this to the map it is clear that men feel unsafe in a very specific area of the city. Whilst women feel unsafe all over Nablus indifferent if it is centrally located or more secluded.

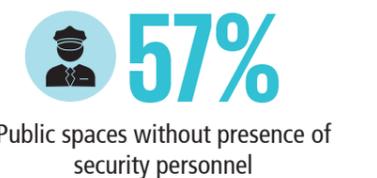
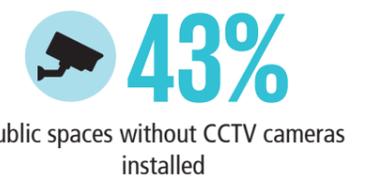
## FEELING OF UNSAFETY BY GENDER AND TIME



Women feel unsafe in public spaces compared to men



Town plaza in Nablus © Nablus Municipality

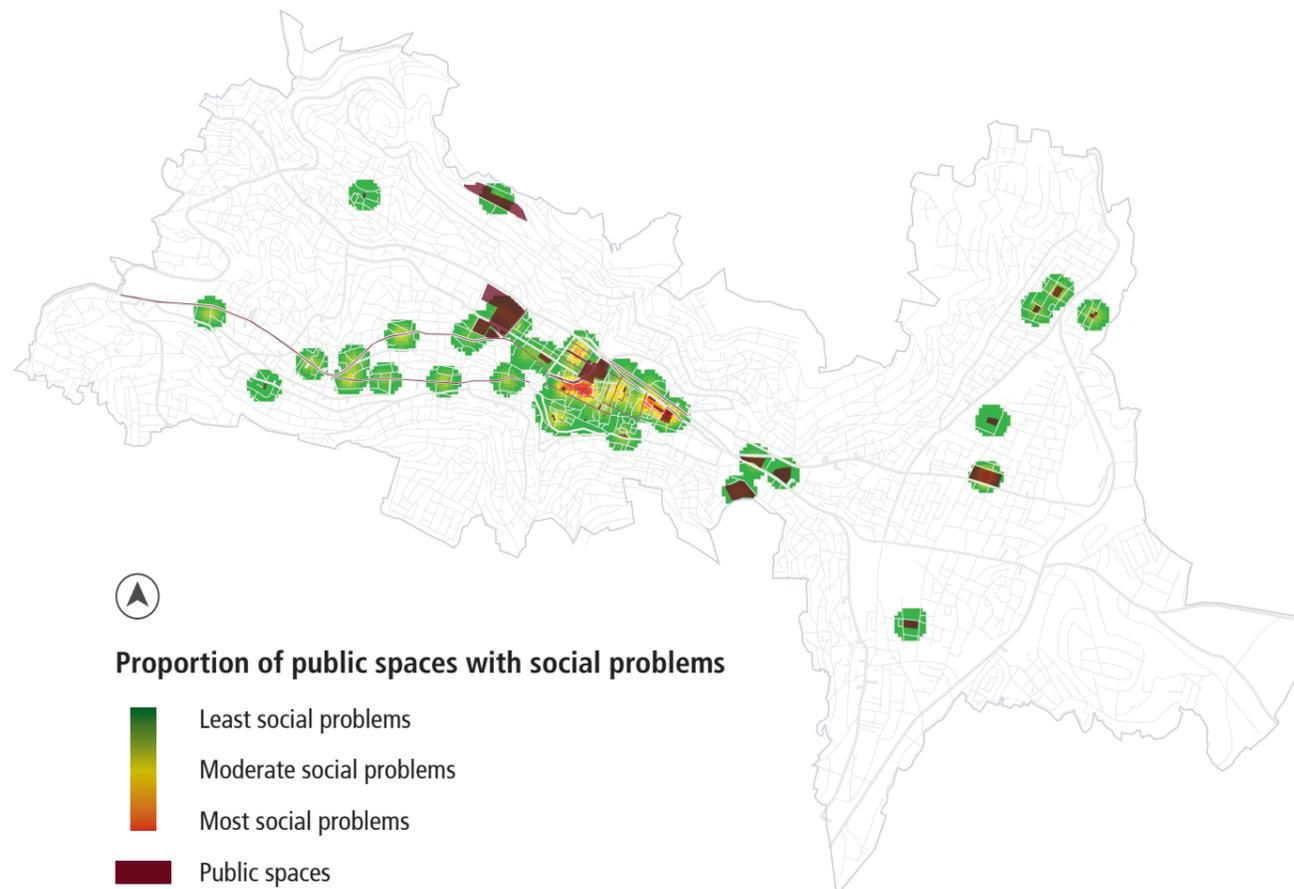


## SOCIAL PROBLEMS AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN PUBLIC SPACES

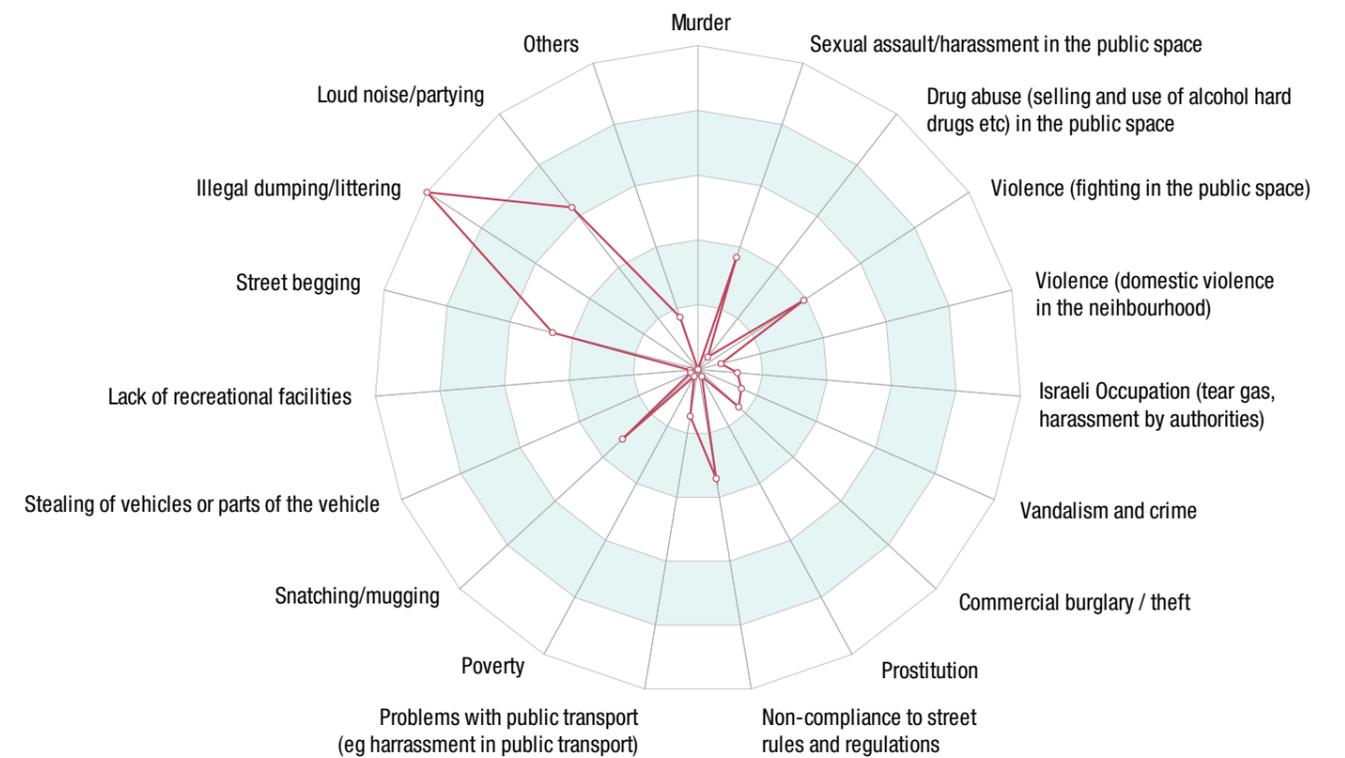
Crimes (including such opportunistic crimes as snatching), prostitution, noise and violence are all social determinants of poor safety in cities and neighbourhoods. Such social problems also offer a platform for crime to thrive. Poverty can push people to the brink where they have to commit criminal acts including snatching and stealing of vehicle parts when they are parked.

These incidences lead to gradual decline, leading to increased perception of lack of safety in public spaces. The social problems recognized in Nablus concern illegal dumping and littering, loud noise and partying, street begging and sexual assault in public spaces, non-compliance with street rules, violence and snatching/mugging.

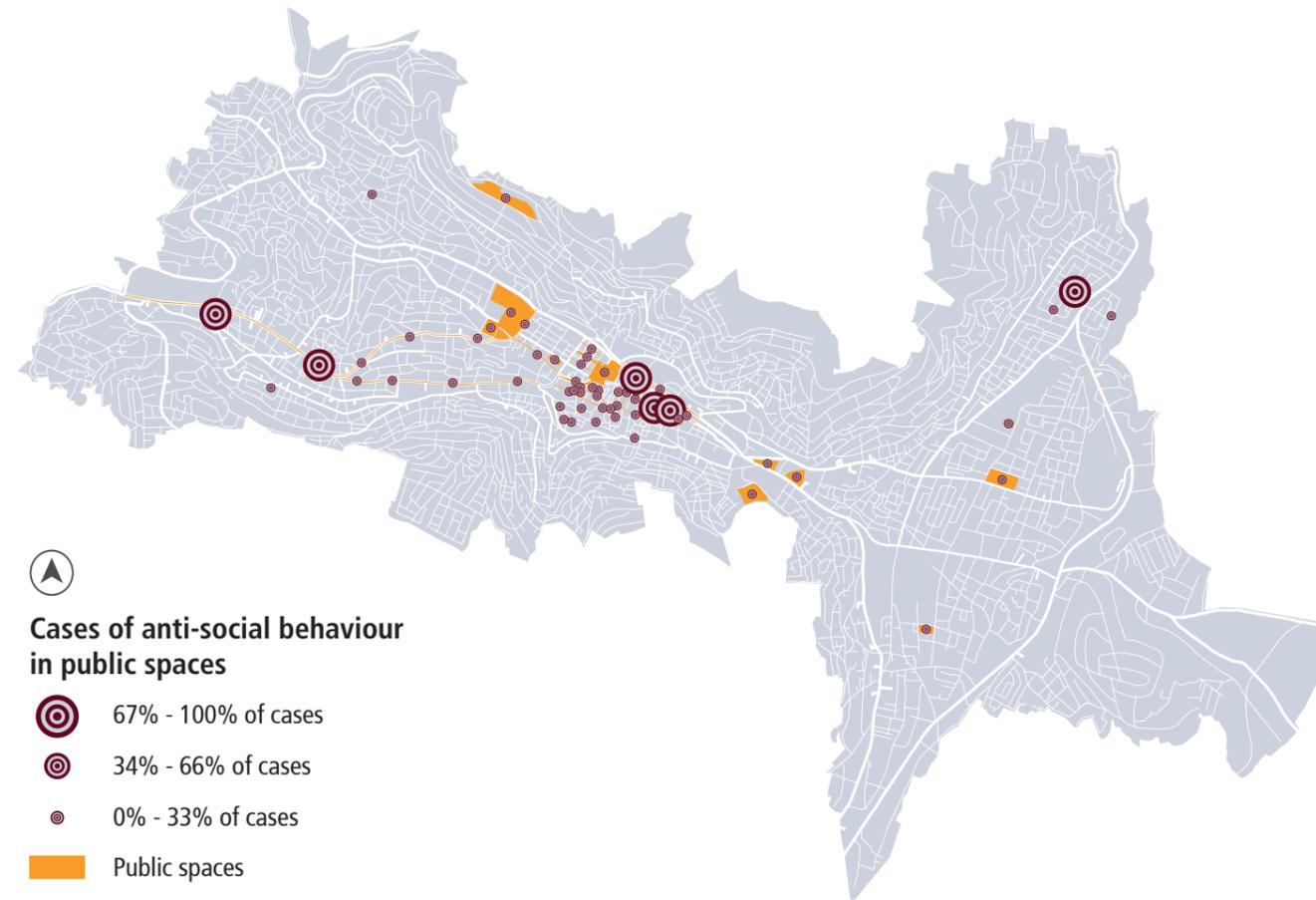
One of the most successful approaches for tackling the root causes of crime and lack of safety is social prevention. Social prevention focuses on the social and economic conditions that contribute to violent and criminal behaviour. It places emphasis on groups at risk. This include women and youth.



## ILLEGAL DUMPING IS THE HIGHEST RECORDED PROBLEM

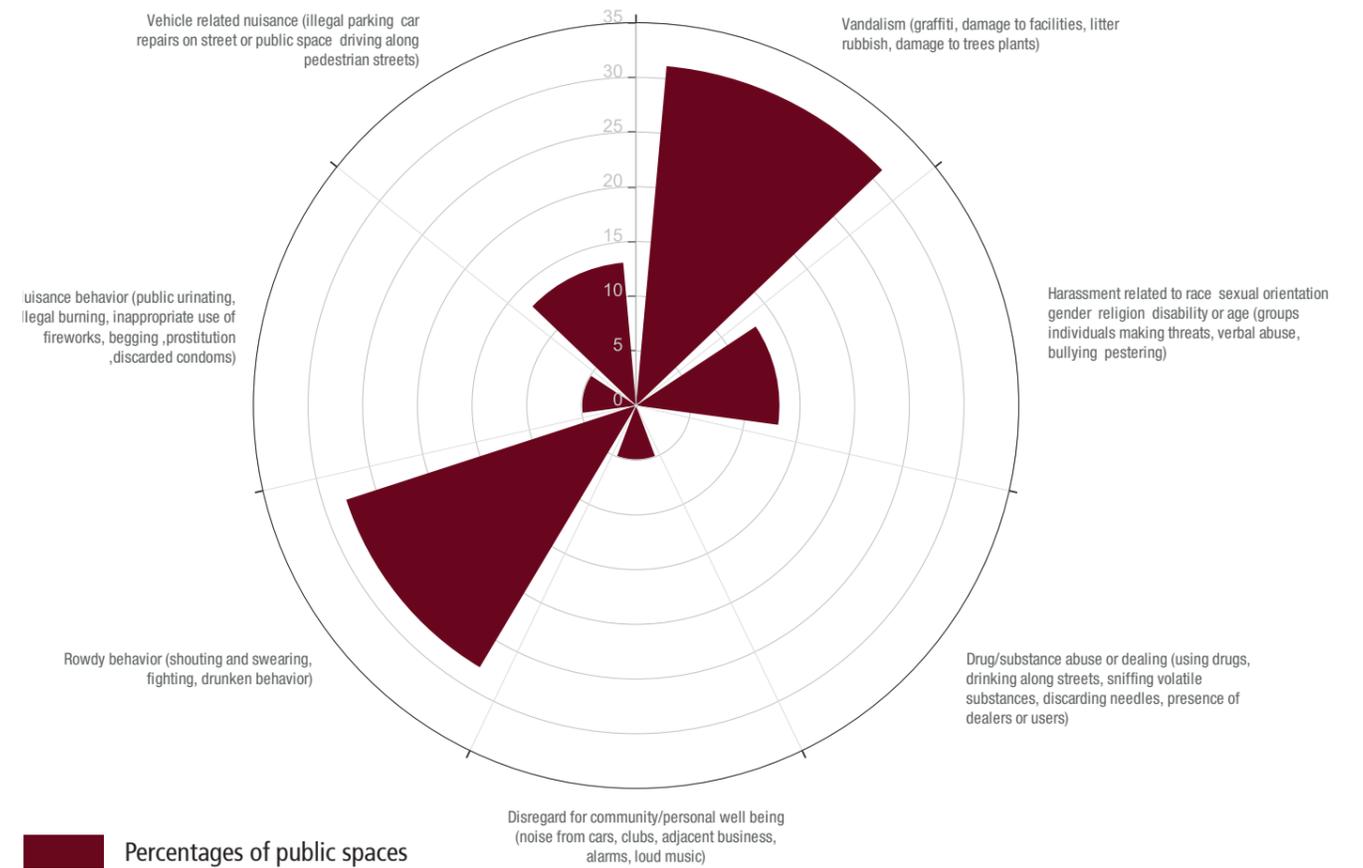


Woman and child walking in Nablus © UN-Habitat /Joy Mutai



Women pedestrians in Nablus © UN-Habitat

**PERCENTAGE OF PUBLIC SPACES WITH DIFFERENT TYPES OF PROBLEMS IN PUBLIC SPACES**



Examples of soft crimes are depreciative behaviour and related disorder. This is because they are seen as less serious in their nature. However, if left unhandled these 'run-away' crimes can grow into a spiral of 'more serious' crime and disorder, causing discomfort and fear, especially among women and girls. This explains how public spaces gradually fall into a state of disrepair if there is no system of custodianship and management in place.

Poor maintenance of public spaces

often sends cues that no one cares or is in charge of the space and can encourage potential offenders to commit offenses. These cues include but are not limited to irresponsible graffiti, vandalism, drug peddling and abuse, public nuisance such as urinating in non-designated places, illegal parking in non-designated places, and unwelcome behaviour by groups of youth and teenagers.

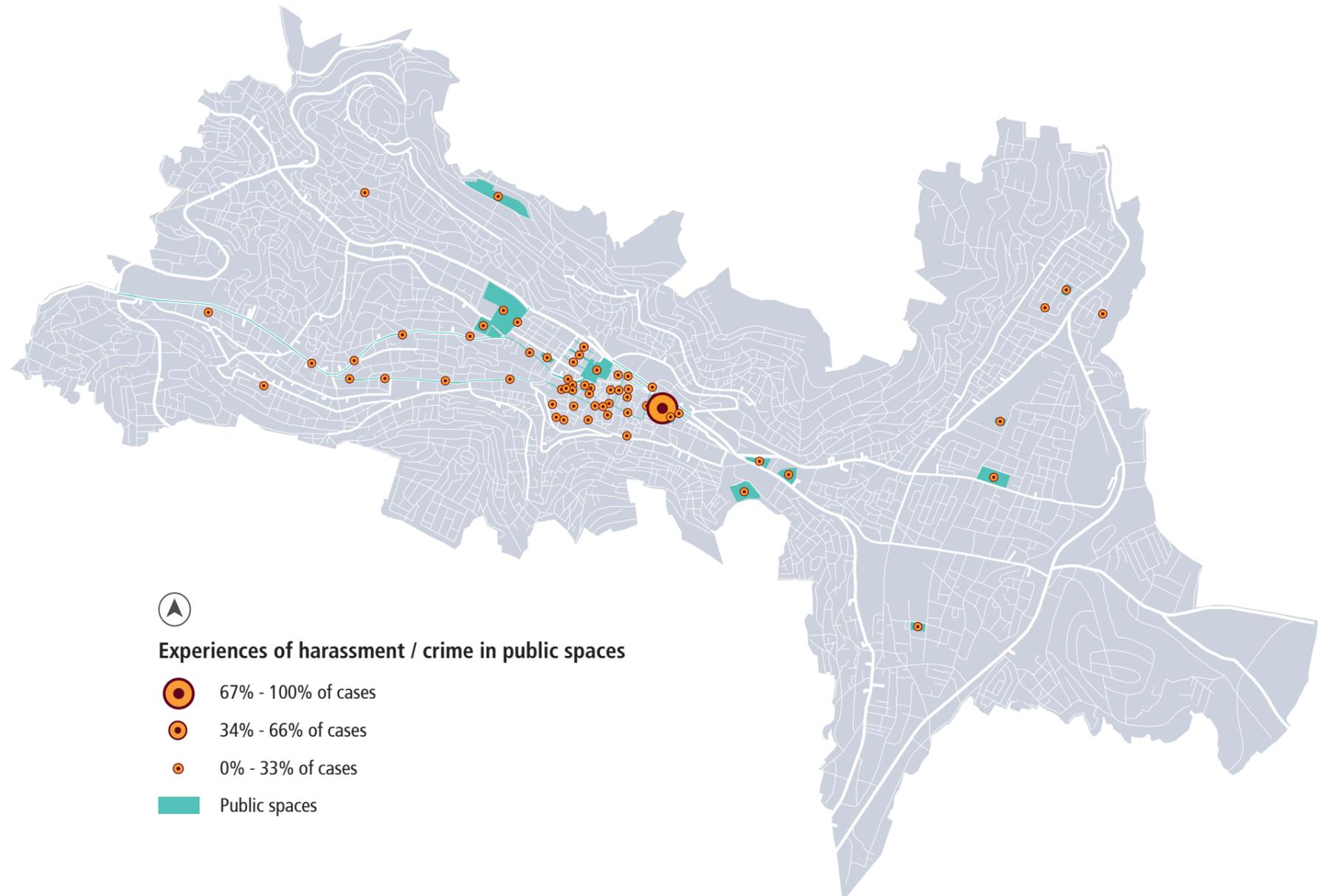
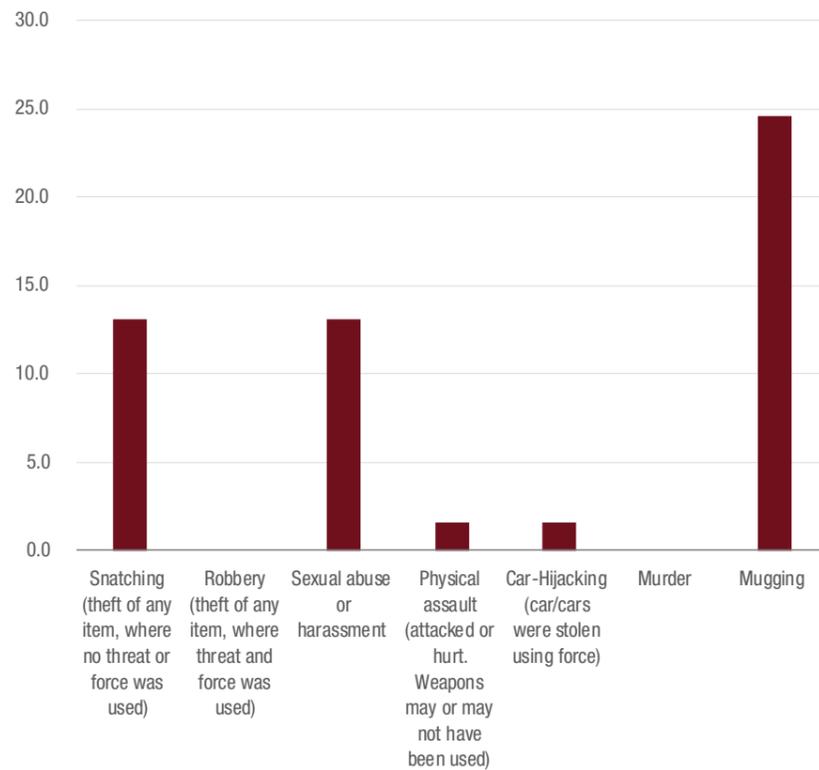
The primary anti-social behaviours found in Nablus are vandalism such as graffiti, damage to facilities etc. and

rowdy behaviour. These anti-social behaviours are observed in almost every third public space. Harassment of individuals due to race, sexual orientation, gender, religion or age is present in more than 10 % of public spaces. Lastly, vehicle related nuisance is present in more than 10 % of public spaces. Consistent inaction by the custodians of the spaces may lead to increased incidences or even more serious crimes including robbery with violence and even rape.

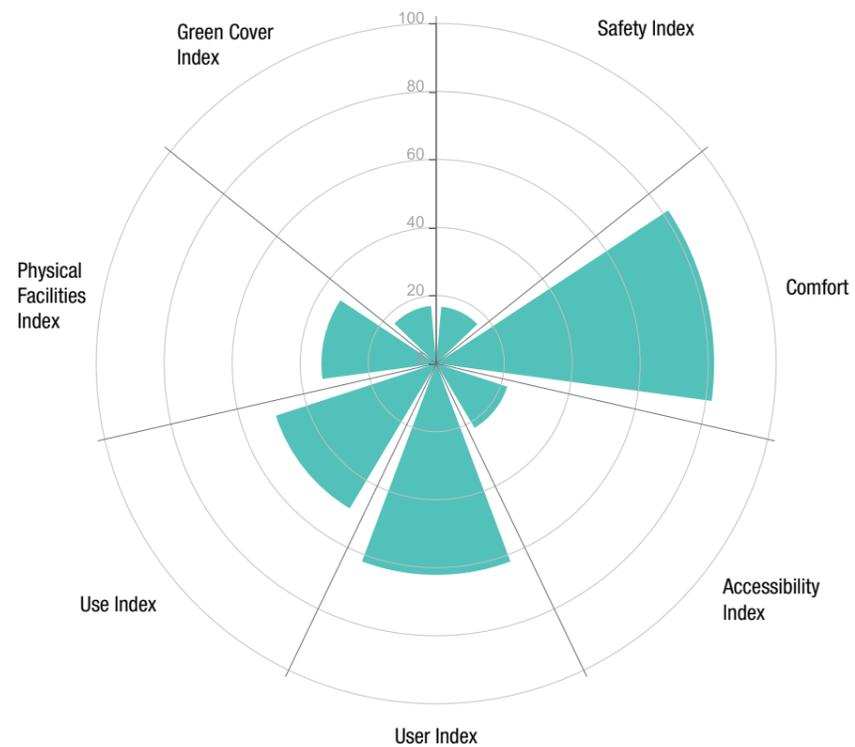
## EXPERIENCES OF CRIME / HARASSMENT

Crime and harassment and the fear of crime and harassment can have serious implications on the freedom of women and girls, their autonomy and perception of safety. For girls, this often starts at a young age and is often experienced more frequently by adolescent girls and young women compared to their older counterparts. Crime typically takes place in instances where there is an offender(s), victim(s) and a space. Oftentimes, the space is either a public space, public transport

or a private space. In Nablus mugging is the most experienced crime which is present in a fourth of the public spaces. this is followed by snatching and sexual abuse and harassment which is observed in 15 % of the public spaces. Physical assault and car-hijacking is observed in less than 5 % of the public spaces. What should be noted is that a majority of the cases are observed in the city centre with one apparent hot-spot.



## WHICH DIMENSIONS ARE STRONG IN PUBLIC SPACES?



Percentages of public spaces

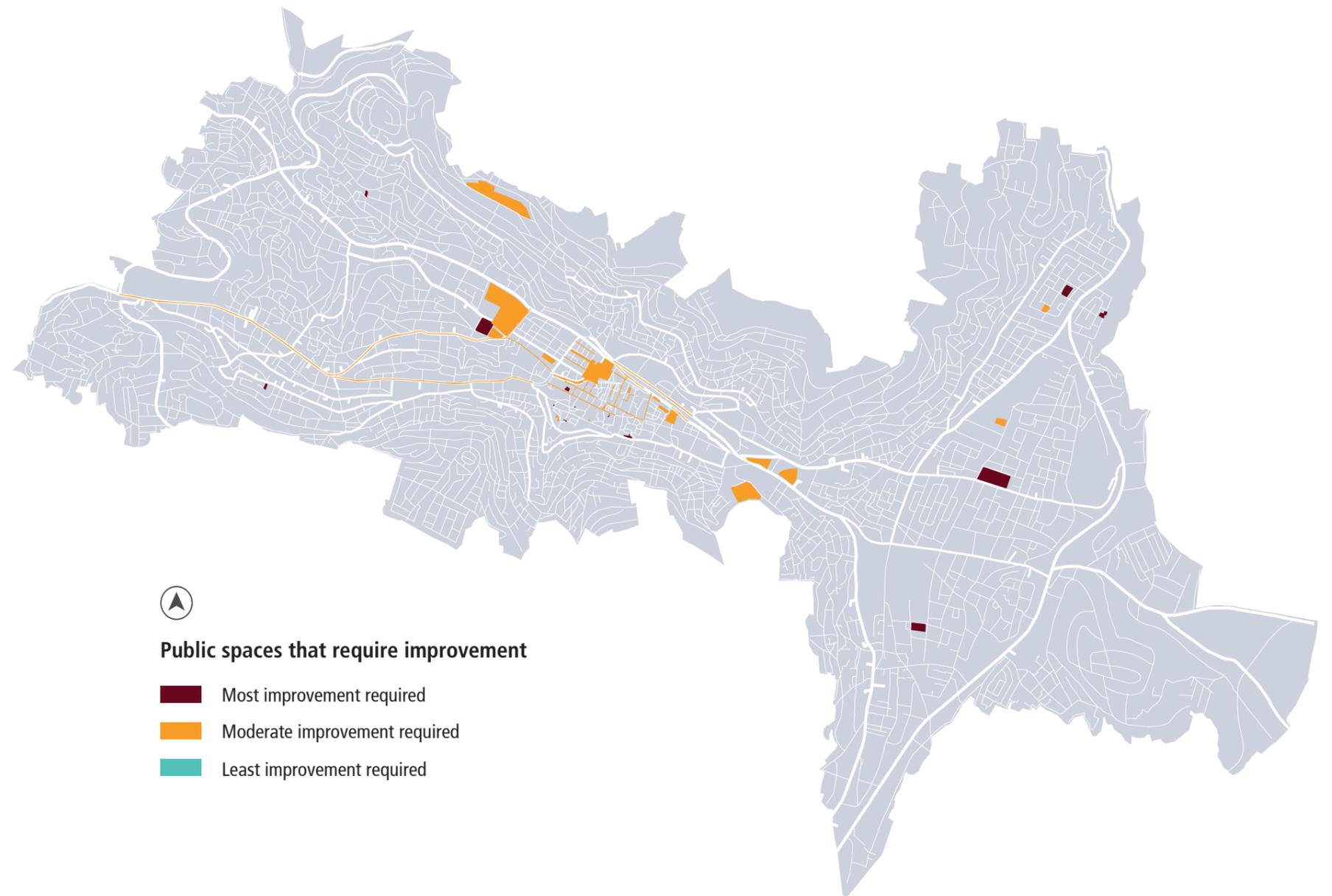
Indices were developed in order to measure the quality of public spaces in Nablus. Based on the following broad and mutually reinforcing criteria the weighted aggregate were selected: use, users, green, comfort, accessibility, physical facilities and safety.

The strong dimensions of Nablus are observed as comfort at 80%, user index at 60% and use index at 50%. The weaker dimensions are the

physical facilities index, accessibility index, green cover index and safety index. This should indicate to the local authorities that the safety, accessibility and green cover index are priorities when it comes to interventions.

From a geographical perspective it is general the central public spaces that need to be rehabilitated and with most urgent improvement needed for some specific off-centre public spaces.

## PRIORITIZATION FOR IMPROVEMENT OF PUBLIC SPACES





Mosque in Nablus © Nablus Municipality

# 4

## CHAPTER

ENVISIONING  
NABLUS CITY

- Validation workshop
- Vision and Goals for Nablus City
- Strategic recommendations and way forward

# VALIDATION WORKSHOP

To present the results of the city-wide public space assessment, an e-validation workshop was held with the participation of active members of the local community including women associations, journalists, local NGOs, International NGOs, handicapped related associations, Ministry of Education, and youth activists; in addition to UN-Habitat, Nablus municipality, and representatives of local universities

## RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE VALIDATION WORKSHOP

- Improve street infrastructure including pavements, street lighting and furniture.
- Improve the efficiency of public spaces to host more than one activity and a wide range of users in a day.
- Improve street connectivity outside of the city center
- Increase the soft landscape within public spaces in the city and improving its green index.
- Improving the management mechanisms to maintain the cleanliness of public spaces.
- Improve the safety index ( ex. through the presence of security guards in public spaces to avoid robbery and vandalism in public spaces).
- Improve the availability and quality of physical infrastructure in public spaces.
- Adopt a planning methodology and guidelines as a reference on how to design, implement and maintain safe and inclusive public spaces.
- Provide public car parking areas.
- Launch an awareness campaign on the importance and mechanisms of having safe and inclusive public spaces in the city of Nablus.



Sunset over Nablus © Nablus Municipality

Table 4: Top 13 priority public spaces for improvement

No	Name of Public Space	Safety Index	Com-fort Index	Acces-sibility Index	User Index	Use Index	Physi-cal facilities index	Green cover Index	Prior-ity for Im-prove-ment
1	Yasmina Square	10.6	66.7	16.1	0	37.5	25	0	22.3
2	Yasmina Square	7.8	75	12.9	0	50	20	0	23.7
3	Municipal playground	14.4	66.7	6.5	33.3	37.5	30	0	26.9
4	Al Bayarah Park	7.6	75	9.7	0	50	20	27.3	27.1
5	Hosh aljetan yard	4.8	100	16.1	0	50	20	0	27.3
6	Roman amphitheater	20.8	100	12.9	0	37.5	10	18.2	28.5
7	Al Sabaneh square	10.8	75	22.6	22.2	50	20	0	28.7
8	Ali Dawabsheh Garden (Health Garden)	11.5	75	12.9	22.2	37.5	20	27.3	29.5
9	Masaken Al Shaabeyah - Al Mattalah	16.2	55.6	12.9	66.7	37.5	20	0	29.8
10	Hasba Nablus Street	20.9	68.2	12.9	22.2	37.5	50	0	30.2
11	Phoenix Garden	7.6	100	9.7	0	50	20	27.3	30.6
12	Masaken Al Shaabeyah - the square adjacent to the Omar bin Khattab Mosque	35.7	75	12.9	44.4	37.5	10	0	30.8
13	Hammam Al Samrah Staircase	6.6	75	12.9	77.8	37.5	10	0	31.4

Values are in percentages. Higher percentage means better performance

### PRIORITIZATION FOR IMPROVEMENT OF PUBLIC SPACES



#### Public spaces that require improvement

- Most improvement required
- Moderate improvement required
- Least improvement required

The map illustrates the public spaces in Nablus that require the most improvement, moderate improvement and least improvement. This has been determined by the score each public space has received in the categories of safety, accessibility, comfort, users, use, physical facilities and green coverage (refer to Table 4) . The lower the score, the more improvement is required.

## VISION FOR NABLUS CITY

**NABLUS IS A  
PEOPLE'S CITY, AN  
ECONOMIC AND  
CULTURAL HUB THAT  
IS RESILIENT AND  
AUTHENTIC**

*The recommendations provided in this section cannot be considered as a comprehensive plan. They are to be further developed and designed by Nablus Municipality and its local community.*

## GOALS AND STRATEGIES



GOAL 1

### IMPROVE THE SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC SPACES

- Increase the quantity and ensure equitable distribution of public spaces
- Improve the availability and quality of physical infrastructure in public spaces
- Improve street connectivity outside of the city center
- Improve the efficiency of public spaces to host more than one activity and a wide range of users in a day.



GOAL 2

### IMPROVE THE PLANNING GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC SPACE PROMOTING INCLUSIVITY, DIVERSITY AND USE

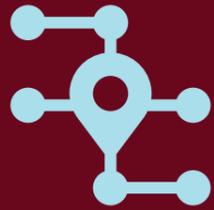
- Adopt a planning methodology and guidelines as a reference on how to design, implement and maintain safe and inclusive public spaces.
- Improving the management mechanisms to maintain the cleanliness of public spaces.
- Launch an awareness campaign on the importance and mechanisms of having safe and inclusive public spaces in the city of Nablus.



GOAL 3

### IMPROVE PUBLIC SPACE GREENERY AND SAFETY

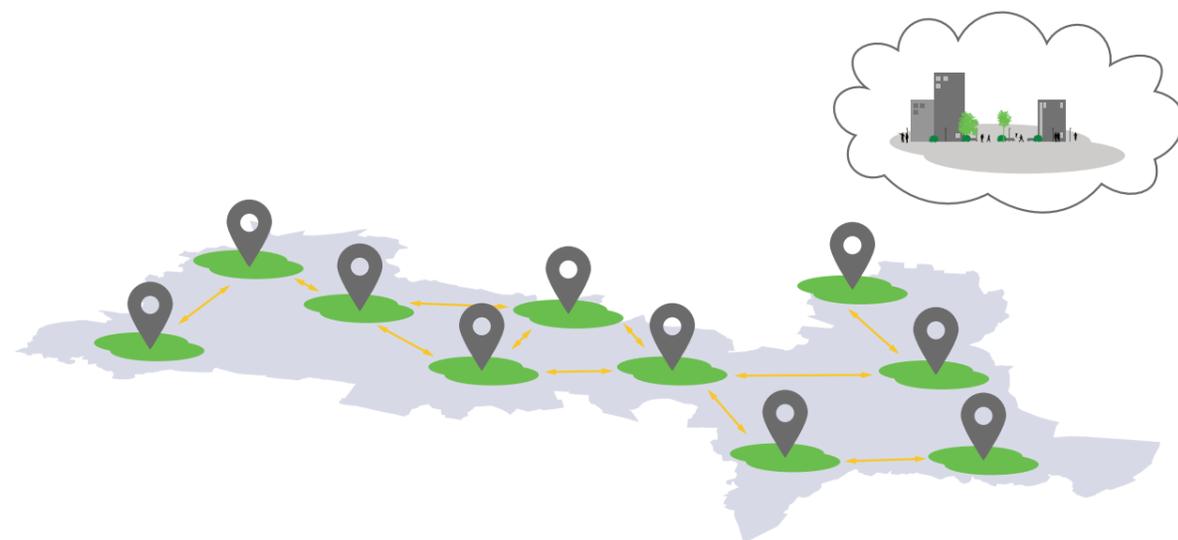
- Increase the soft landscape within public spaces in the city and improving its green index.
- Improve the safety index (for example, through the presence of security guards in public spaces to avoid robbery and vandalism).



## IMPROVE THE SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC SPACES

### INCREASE THE QUANTITY AND ENSURE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC SPACES

Only 1.3 per cent of urban land in Nablus is dedicated to open public space compared to the recommended amount of 12-15 per cent of land allocated to open public space and public facilities. This can be done through various planning tools such as master planning, urban regeneration and redevelopment, sub-divisions and land readjustment. Increasing the quantity of public space will increase the per capita ratio of residents to public space which at the moment is 2.1m<sup>2</sup> per person and is expected to reduce to 1,5m<sup>2</sup> per person by 2030 if the city does not adopt strategies to create new public spaces. The share of land that a city allocates to streets and open public spaces contributes significantly to the social dimensions and health and safety of its population. Ensuring a well distributed system of public spaces, promotes accessibility and encourages their use, contributing to a better quality of life for everyone across the city. Ideally, all areas of the city should be within 5 minutes walking distance (400 metres) of safe and comfortable public space. The Municipal Council, should give priority to neighbourhoods requiring public space and establish a framework to work together with communities to co-create public space where it is not enough.



### IMPROVE AVAILABILITY AND QUALITY OF PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN PUBLIC SPACE

Ensure public spaces are welcoming and that people of all walks of life, mix of ages, genders, religions, socio-economic classes and ethnicities have the opportunity to linger. Improving the quality and quantity of amenities available in a public space can draw people to the space and make them stay longer. Existing amenities should be restored and maintained, and new amenities should be determined according to the needs of local residents. Amenities can include seating, lighting, garbage bins, shading, café's, kiosks, public toilets, play areas, exercise equipment and baby care facilities. To improve the availability and quality of physical infrastructure in public spaces a design manual for creating safer, more inclusive and accessible public spaces, proposing low cost solutions and establishing frameworks for engaging communities in the design and co-creation of these spaces is key for local government and communities.



### IMPROVE STREET CONNECTIVITY AND STREET INFRASTRUCTURE

Improving street infrastructure street connectivity is key in promoting walking and cycling. Smaller block sizes should also be encouraged and sidewalks and bike lanes should be planned and built in a network throughout the city to increase connectivity. Nablus can design and build a continuous network of streets and sidewalks that are wide enough and with even surfaces. Places with tree-lined sidewalks that are wide enough for pushing strollers and for children to walk hand-in-hand with adults, having surface texture that is appropriate, where there are curb ramps, with regular complete streets, street crossings and there is protection from motorized traffic can promote walking by women and girls. Importantly, Nablus should pay particular attention to safety, convenience, culture and comfort for people on foot, improving street lighting and providing seating opportunities for women to socialize or elderly people to rest while out. Providing public parking in strategic areas that can be transformed into children's skating rink or a temporary weekly market when not being used.



### IMPROVE MULTI-FUNCTIONAL USE OF PUBLIC SPACE

In Nablus, the survey found that a third of all the public spaces are mono-functional spaces, suggesting that the spaces may be deserted at given times of the day, potentially compromising the safety by women and girls during these times. Public spaces that are used for a wide range of activities make the spaces safer, more vibrant and full of life and this calls for programming a diverse range of activities throughout different times of the day and night to make these spaces safer and more attractive to spend time in. Promoting social programming refers to the scheduling of activities in a public space to ensure its use. Maintaining a schedule of events, such as cultural, religious or recreational events, will encourage the public space to be activated throughout the year. A way to do this is through creative placemaking and tactical urbanism, which can engage women and girls and other members of the community in activating and transforming spaces that building ownership and identity, boost economic development and women and girl's safety.





## IMPROVE THE PLANNING GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC SPACE PROMOTING INCLUSIVITY, DIVERSITY AND USE

### DEVELOP STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR CREATING SAFE AND INCLUSIVE PUBLIC SPACES

Planning and design of public space through the lens of women and girls is important. Not all public places are spaces where women and girls feel comfortable and Nablus needs to develop standards and guidelines for creating women-friendly safe and inclusive public spaces. The standards and guidelines should take into consideration: proximity to be able to access independently within walking distance; safety and accessibility and able to access through a safe journey and without obstacles; cleanliness, to reduce exposure to air pollution, soil pollution and waste; usability and liveliness for social gatherings, physical activity and intergenerational interactions. A wide range of universal guidelines and standards for public space already exist, including UN-Habitat's Global Public Space Toolkit (2015) and NACTO's Street Design Guide, which can be reviewed to develop principles and guidelines specifically for Nablus, taking into consideration the building codes, the development control policies and integrated development plans of the city



### IMPROVE MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SPACES

In Nablus, the survey found that close to half of all the public spaces are mono-functional spaces, suggesting that the spaces may be deserted at given times of the day, potentially compromising the safety by women and girls during these times. Communities can be engaged in activation, management and maintenance of certain neighbourhood spaces and pocket parks, building ownership and identity and boosting women and girl's safety. The municipality can sign an agreement or establish a framework for engaging women and girls in the management and maintenance of these spaces, setting up the rules and regulations for the use of the space and enforcing those rules. Other innovative approaches is engaging private sector in adopting a space which they are then responsible for maintaining and keeping clean.



### CREATE AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

In Nablus, the survey revealed that verbal abuse was observed in close to 40 per cent of public spaces and ogling in about 25 per cent. Due to the high levels of harassment and women's fear of harassment in public spaces, it is recommended that rules for the standards of acceptable behaviour in public spaces should be developed and enforced by the Municipal Council. In additions, the launching an awareness campaign that calls upon all: civil society, women's and men's organizations, young people, the private sector, government and the media to join forces in addressing harassment against women and girls in public space would be key. Raising awareness, engaging, convincing and inspiring change through various media events, through storytelling, art and cultural events and local theatre in public space and schools all advocating for change.

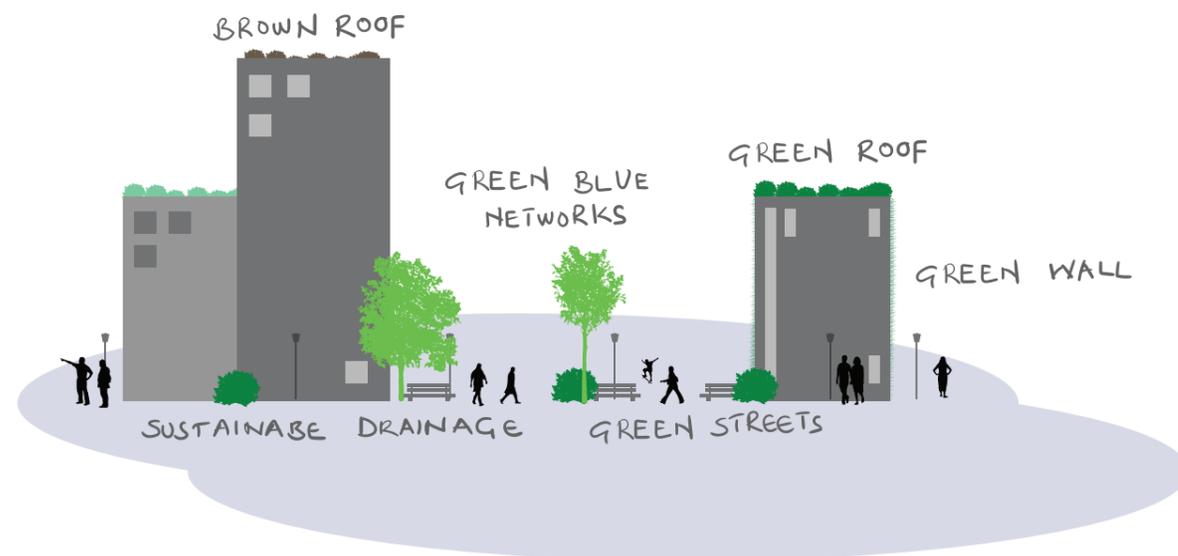




## IMPROVE PUBLIC SPACE GREENERY AND SAFETY

### LEVERAGE OF GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE TO CREATE GREEN CORRIDORS AND PROMOTE BIODIVERSITY

Public spaces should also, ideally, be connected, forming a green network throughout the city. Bethlehem Municipal Council should establish a continuous network of green public spaces by connecting medians, transit streets, pedestrian-only and pedestrian-priority streets, bike and walking trails and other linear green spaces. These networks must be designed as part of the city's green infrastructure and as an alternative mobility network for active travel, connecting diverse destinations including public spaces, industrial districts and residential neighbourhoods. Improving the green index in the cluster by providing layers of green infrastructure to the streets while taking into consideration visual permeability and making sure not to block the vision or comprise the safety street is key. Moreover, the municipality should develop a greening/planting strategy choosing plants that need the least maintenance and irrigation. The green networks of public space play a critical role in reducing temperatures as well as reducing carbon emissions and contributing to urban resilience.



### ENHANCE SAFETY

A variety of mechanisms can be implemented to promote safety in public spaces. In particular there needs to be a heightened awareness of gender-specific safety issues in Bethlehem Cluster and this can be informed by conducting neighbourhood safety audits or exploratory walk with women in the community. The safety walk maps areas of concern such lighting, obstructions, cleanliness, signage, surveillance and use of the space. Clear sightlines along streets and in open public spaces can improve the perception of safety especially among women and girls as it encourages the notion of “see and be seen”. Rather than allocating security guards and installing CCTV, promoting activities such as street vending along streets increases natural surveillance by increasing the number of “eyes on the street” and at the same time enhancing feelings of safety. High fences and walls should be avoided to maintain lines of sight and special attention to the bottom floor plinth to create an interesting street at eye-level.





The clock tower in Nablus

# 5

## CHAPTER

## ANNEXES AND REFERENCES

- Annexes
- References

## ANNEX

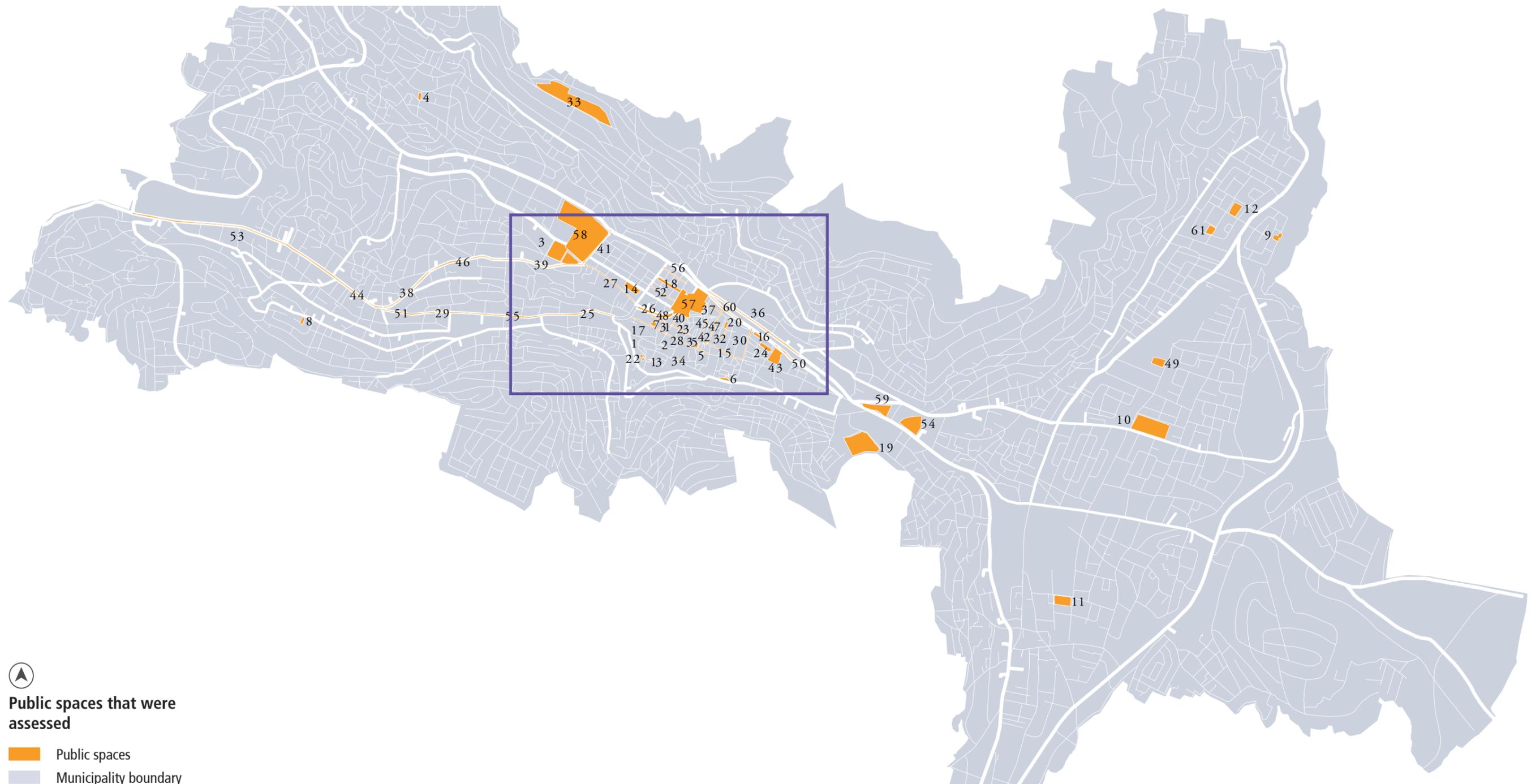
## PERFORMANCE OF EACH PUBLIC SPACE

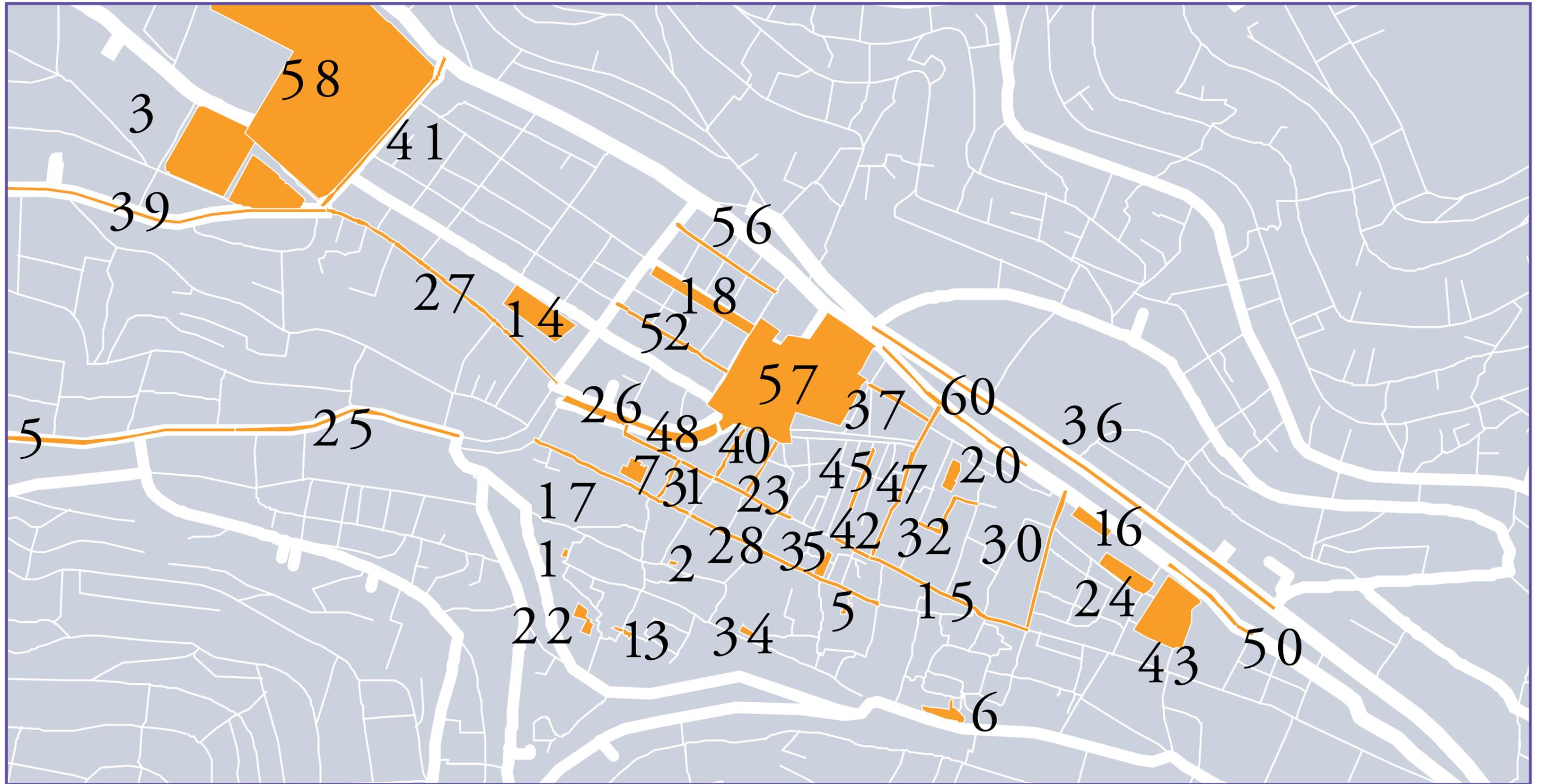
No	Name of Public Space	Ownership	Management	Scale of public space	Safety Index	Comfort Index	Accessibility Index	User Index	Use Index	Physical facilities index	Green cover Index	Priority for Improvement
1	Yasmina Square	Government	Government	Pocket Park	10.6	66.7	16.1	0	37.5	25	0	22.3
2	Yasmina Square	Government	Government	Pocket Park	7.8	75	12.9	0	50	20	0	23.7
3	Municipal playground	Government	Government	City level	14.4	66.7	6.5	33.3	37.5	30	0	26.9
4	Al Bayarah Park	Government	Government	Pocket Park	7.6	75	9.7	0	50	20	27.3	27.1
5	Hosh aljetan yard	Government	Government	Pocket Park	4.8	100	16.1	0	50	20	0	27.3
6	Roman amphitheater	Government	Government	Neighborhood	20.8	100	12.9	0	37.5	10	18.2	28.5
7	Al Sabaneh square	Government	Government	City level	10.8	75	22.6	22.2	50	20	0	28.7
8	Ali Dawabsheh Garden (Health Garden)	Government	Government	Neighborhood	11.5	75	12.9	22.2	37.5	20	27.3	29.5
9	Masaken Al Shaabeyah - Al Mattalah	Government	Government	Neighborhood	16.2	55.6	12.9	66.7	37.5	20	0	29.8
10	Hasba Nablus Street	Government	Government	City level	20.9	68.2	12.9	22.2	37.5	50	0	30.2
11	Phoenix Garden	Non-Government	Non-Government	Neighborhood	7.6	100	9.7	0	50	20	27.3	30.6
12	Masaken Al Shaabeyah - the square adjacent to the Omar bin Khattab Mosque	Government	Government	Neighborhood	35.7	75	12.9	44.4	37.5	10	0	30.8
13	Hammam Al Samrah Staircase	Government	Government	Pocket Park	6.6	75	12.9	77.8	37.5	10	0	31.4
14	Hesba Market	Government	Government	Neighborhood	5.6	77.8	16.1	44.4	37.5	35	18.2	33.5
15	Khaled Bin Al-Waleed street	Government	Government	Neighborhood	19.6	50	12.9	88.9	50	15	0	33.8
16	Eastern Hesba Market	Government	Government	Pocket Park	24.9	57.1	35.5	66.7	37.5	30	0	36
17	West Entrance Street	Government	No information	Neighborhood	6.7	69.2	12.9	88.9	50	30	0	36.8
18	Mohamed tofaha Street	Government	Government	Neighborhood	18.2	66.7	29	66.7	62.5	20	0	37.6
19	Al Harash Park	Government	Government	Neighborhood	20.1	100	16.1	22.2	50	30	27.3	38
20	Habla Square	Government	Jointly managed	Pocket Park	4.8	100	29	44.4	50	20	18.2	38.1
21	Basal market	Government	Government	Pocket Park	17.1	57.1	25.8	100	37.5	30	0	38.2
22	Martyrs alley	Government	Government	Neighborhood	12.9	77.8	16.1	55.6	50	40	18.2	38.7
23	Al Khan Market	Government	Government	Neighborhood	35.2	100	25.8	44.4	37.5	30	0	39
24	Eastern Market	Government	Government	Pocket Park	43.9	44.4	29	55.6	50	35	18.2	39.4
25	Western Cemetery Street	Government	Government	Neighborhood	16.2	75	16.1	77.8	37.5	30	27.3	40
26	Granada Street	Government	Government	Neighborhood	11	66.7	32.3	88.9	62.5	20	0	40.2
27	Hamouz Street	Government	Government	Neighborhood	15.5	76.9	25.8	55.6	50	45	18.2	41
28	alnasr Street	Government	Government	Neighborhood	13.3	100	19.4	66.7	50	40	0	41.3
29	Old University Street	Government	Government	Neighborhood	20.7	100	32.3	22.2	37.5	50	27.3	41.4
30	The Eastern Market - the entrance to the old town - Al-Anbiya Mosque	Government	Government	Pocket Park	33.9	75	29	66.7	50	20	18.2	41.8
31	Nazmi Street - Old City	Government	Government	Neighborhood	9.4	88.9	16.1	100	50	30	0	42.1

Values are in percentages. Higher percentage means better performance

No	Name of Public Space	Ownership	Management	Scale of public space	Safety Index	Comfort Index	Accessibility Index	User Index	Use Index	Physical facilities index	Green cover Index	Priority for Improvement
32	al faqus alley	Government	Government	Neighborhood	27.6	75	29	77.8	37.5	30	18.2	42.2
33	Sama Nablus Park	Government	Government	City level	7.5	100	16.1	44.4	50	50	27.3	42.2
34	Al Toteh Square	Government	Government	City level	4.8	100	29	77.8	50	20	18.2	42.8
35	Bab al saha	Government	Government	Neighborhood	12.3	100	12.9	77.8	50	30	18.2	43
36	Faisal Street - next to the National Hospital	Government	Government	Neighborhood	17.6	88.9	22.6	66.7	37.5	50	18.2	43.1
37	Omar Mukhtar Street	Government	Government	Pocket Park	14.8	100	32.3	44.4	50	45	18.2	43.5
38	Rafidia - AlcZakat Building	Government	Government	Neighborhood	21.3	66.7	12.9	100	50	30	27.3	44
39	Rafidia - old Najah Street junction	Government	Government	Neighborhood	16.8	77.8	25.8	100	62.5	10	18.2	44.4
40	Old City - Jarwan entrance	Government	Government	Pocket Park	16.4	77.8	25.8	88.9	62.5	40	0	44.5
41	Al-Montazah Street - Al-Salam Mosque	Government	Government	Neighborhood	21.8	77.8	16.1	88.9	50	30	27.3	44.6
42	Al Khan	Government	Government	Neighborhood	20.8	100	25.8	88.9	50	30	0	45.1
43	The eastern complex	Government	Government	Neighborhood	18.6	100	29	44.4	37.5	60	27.3	45.3
44	Rafidia - Junction Tunisia and Tala'a Abdul Rahim Mahmoud	Government	Government	Neighborhood	26.3	77.8	16.1	100	50	20	27.3	45.4
45	Gold market	Government	Government	City level	12.1	100	29	88.9	62.5	30	0	46.1
46	Rafidia - Rafidia Hospital entrance	Government	Government	City level	23.1	77.8	25.8	88.9	50	30	27.3	46.1
47	Hittin Street	Government	Government	City level	20.7	75	35.5	100	62.5	30	0	46.2
48	khan Al Wakala	Government	Government	Neighborhood	14.4	100	16.1	100	62.5	30	0	46.2
49	Martyr Yasser Arafat's garden	Non-Government	Non-Government	City level	3.9	100	16.1	0	62.5	70	72.7	46.5
50	Faisal Street, next to Al Rahma Polyclinic	Government	Government	Neighborhood	19.1	66.7	29	100	62.5	30	18.2	46.5
51	Rafidia - Badawi street	Government	Government	Neighborhood	31.8	100	29	55.6	50	35	27.3	46.9
52	Palestine street	Government	Government	Neighborhood	9.9	66.7	22.6	88.9	87.5	35	18.2	47
53	Rafidia - Academy Street - Junaid Prison	Government	Government	Neighborhood	29.7	77.8	16.1	88.9	50	50	27.3	48.5
54	Childhood Happiness Center	Government	Government	Neighborhood	4.8	100	22.6	77.8	37.5	70	27.3	48.6
55	Old University Street - Nablus Specialized Hospital	Government	Government	Neighborhood	29.1	66.7	32.3	55.6	50	70	36.4	48.6
56	Sufyan Street	Government	Government	Neighborhood	23	69.2	38.7	100	62.5	30	18.2	48.8
57	City center	Government	Government	Neighborhood	14	88.9	32.3	100	50	50	27.3	51.8
58	al aeyilat garden	Government	Jointly managed	City level	17.5	100	22.6	88.9	50	50	45.5	53.5
59	Martyrs' Tomb - Governorate Street	Government	Government	City level	6.6	100	25.8	55.6	62.5	70	54.5	53.6
60	Municipal Street	Government	Government	City level	23.9	66.7	38.7	88.9	62.5	50	45.5	53.7
61	Public housing - Al-Oruba Park	Government	Government	Neighborhood	7.5	100	25.8	66.7	62.5	60	54.5	53.9

Values are in percentages. Higher percentage means better performance





## REFERENCES

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