PLAN

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ISOCARP
Knowledge for better Cities

Issue 1   October 2015

SPATIAL VISIONING REFLECTIONS

The Heartland of the West Bank

Understanding places
and processes

Planning for the State of
Palestine

Connecting people from
regional to local scale

Sports, art, food and
culture

Editor´s note

Urban planning is more than a technical tool. It`s a participatory, integrated decision making process, linked to a shared vision that strives for a better quality of life, according to UN Habitat International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning (2015). At the same time, urban planning is facing difficult conditions in the West Bank. On September 8, the Guardian heralded that Israel is planning to demolish 13000 Arab buildings in Area C, while UN (OCHA, 2015) reported that between 2010 and 2014, only 1,5 % of all Palestinian applications for building permits in Area C were approved. More than 60 % of the West Bank is considered as Area C and in addition to 300.000 Palestinians, 350.000 Israelis reside in settlements, which are deemed as illegal under international law. Considering the overall objectives of urban planning and the complex local conditions, urban planning turns into a very challenging issue.

Welcome to the first edition of PLAN Magazine. In a series of three editions, we are focussing on the experience and the results obtained from the ISOCARP Urban Planning Advisory Team (UPAT). The West Bank UPAT closely collaborated with local stakeholders and actors to respond to emerging urban challenges and to jointly envisage and sketch possible trajectories for the heartland of the West Bank. The overall framework for the UPAT was to look beyond the present situation raddled with separating barriers, and acknowledge the borders of 1967 as fully open for travel and trade.

Experiencing ourselves the impediments of movement and being terribly stuck in urban traffic, mobility quickly turned into a focal point. The integrative role of mobility as a carrying structure for the development of the Palestinian Metropolitan Region, was one of the core questions on the regional scale. Sebastien Goethals is introducing a multiscale approach and its importance as a driver for sustainable urban development. But anticipatory development strategies do not stop on the regional scale; they have to link the scales and answer the question on how to improve the livelihood of Palestinian communities on the local scale at present.

This magazine is more than a regular policy report: it reflects the work experience and mutual learning process between local stakeholders, practitioners, civil society, and the UPAT team and is integrated in different articles. While the UPAT spatial vision focuses on the heartland of the West Bank, IPCC contributed with a spatial vision for the future State of Palestine. Discussing with Sameer Eisheh, he emphasises the importance of a multimodal system in improving local livelihoods in a future Palestine. Urban design is linked to place making: Asmaa Ibrahim introduces the co-design projects of UN-Habitat for different communities in Area C that do not need building permits for implementation. The micro scale was also the focus for a team of students from An-Najah University and the Bard College, who joined the UPAT team for a rapid-design workshop.

The scope of articles illustrates that both professions share a relationship to decision-making – resonating the question of either to keep trajectories or to jointly imagine and create alternative futures. This first edition of PLAN has been created thanks to a marvellous team: people from Palestine and many other corners of the world, brought together by ISOCARP, UN-Habitat and UNDP, who committed themselves to jointly embark on a challenging, but worthwhile process. A big thank you to all the authors and people who contributed to this edition of PLAN. On behalf of the editorial team, I invite you to read along, hoping that the magazine contributes to an inspiring discussion for the development of the next Palestinian National Spatial Plan.

Sincerely yours,

Katharina Gugerell, editor

Contributors

Jeffrey Featherstone
Jeffrey joined Temple University (US) in September 2001 as Director of the Centre for Sustainable Communities. He was selected as coordinator of the UPAT West Bank Team due to his long experience in interdisciplinary and multi-faceted projects. Jeffrey's expertise in cross-sectoral planning and integrating many different governmental and non-governmental organizations in a project was indispensable for the UPAT.

Sebastien Goethals
Sebastien, living in China and Belgium, leads urban projects in Europe, Africa and Asia. In Palestine, as an expert in Urbanism and Mobility, he focused on multi-modal transportation and questions of mobility. Next to his work for Citilinks, he is also conducting research at Tongji University on low carbon communities and became a consultant for emerging cities in Asia and Africa.

Katharina Gugerell
Katharina is the editor of the first edition of PLAN. Together with Parul and Sebastien, she enjoyed exploring the streets of Ramallah as a basis for her work on the importance of small-scale interventions and their contribution to daily quality of life. Katharina is a landscape architect and planner, and is appointed as Ass. Professor of Planning & Spatial Design at the University Groningen in the Netherlands.

Parul Agarwala
Parul is an independent urban development consultant. For the West Bank, she worked on strategic perspectives, stressing the importance of complementary regions. She worked on several projects with the World Bank South Asian Countries. Her areas of expertise include strategic policy analysis, urbanization studies, land use and spatial planning, economic development, and zoning legislations.

Ahmad El-Atrash
Ahmad is a project manager and senior urban planner at the United Nations Human Settlements Program in the Palestinian Territory. He is an experienced planner, interested in issues related to geopolitical and strategic planning governance reform, and sustainable development within the Palestinian context.

Martin Dubbeling

Martin is a senior consultant active in the fields of spatial planning, urban planning and design, landscape architecture and the environment in the Netherlands and abroad. He is Vice President of the Urban Planning Advisory Teams (UPATs) of the International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISOCARP). He organised UPAT workshops in Singapore, Wuhan, Perm, Shantou, Nanjing and most recently in Palestine.

Ghulam Hassan Mir

Ghulam enjoyed getting into contact and exchanging experience with Palestinian planners. He met Sameer Eisheh for an interview and talked with him about his spatial vision of Palestine and the importance of mobility. Ghulam is divisional town planner at the Srinagar Development Authority in Kashmir (India). His professional interests includes urban disaster risk reduction and urban environmental management.

Asmaa Ibrahim

Being a senior urban planner and landscape architect, Asmaa is working on participatory Place-making projects in Palestine. In her work she focuses on the micro scale and shows how participatory design can lead to interesting and integrated design solutions that are also fostering local economy. Asmaa is an academically trained urban planner and architect and is currently affiliated with UN-Habitat in Ramallah.

Martina van Lierop

Martina is a Landscape Architect with experience in practice, research and education. She participated in several international workshops. Martina is part of the editorial team, and designed the layout of PLAN magazine and is responsible for all things concerning graphic design.

Stefan Netsch

Stefan coordinates PLAN Magazine; as a dedicated soccer fan he reports from the Palestinian football team and the latest games. Stefan is an urban planner who perfectly pairs academic research and planning practise, since he combines his academic research at Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) and his work as urban planner in Stuttgart.

Gizem Caner

Gizem wrote the article about the divided city of Belfast. Her doctoral studies on multiculturalism, division and planning made her an expert on consulting in difficult multi-cultural settings and her advise for planning and design questions is implacable. Previously she worked as coordinator for the Istanbul Financial Centre urban renewal project.

Planning visioning exercise for the Heartland of the West Bank

Ahmad El-Atrash

Area C represents 60 percent of the land in the West Bank, and is considered a cornerstone in the establishment of the Palestinian statehood, since it contains valuable natural and historical resources. Despite the importance of Area C to the future Palestinian statehood and the current squandered economic potentials, due to the prevailing geopolitical context, work has never been done meaningfully yet to realize a spatial planning vision for the future spatial development patterns in Area C. Therefore, UN-Habitat has commissioned ISOCARP to put together a Planning Charrette that aims at envisioning the spatial development for the heartland of the West Bank under the geopolitical context that spawns it. The spatial scope of the exercise included East Jerusalem, Ramallah, Bethlehem, and Jericho.

The French word 'charrette' in this context refers to a multidisciplinary team, consisting of consultants and staff, who produce a plan through working intensively over a short period of time. This exercise was curated by UN-Habitat office in Ramallah in coordination with the State of Palestinian Ministry of Local Government.

While, research after research with pithy versions have been concluded with the not-quite-breath-taking rediscovery that within the Palestinian context, it's all about geopolitics! So, why then, doing this fresh and probing spatial planning visioning exercise? What could be done in a practical and more mundane way? This planning exercise addressed this challenge squarely and substantially with these questions lurking in the background. More specifically, this exercise provided specific proposals for future spatial development in Area C and will feed into progress on the National Spatial Plan under prepara-

tion. In tandem, this exercise will provide inputs to the living documents of the 'National Urbanization Strategy' and the 'Palestinian Cities Report'. Many national and local stakeholders have been involved in a series of short feedback meetings, where the technical team has prepared options based on initial joint analysis and stakeholder input. A local NGO partner, IPCC has provided technical support and organized field visits for the team to establish a good rapport with the areas under investigation and unpack the socio-cultural, economic, and environmental potentials.

The spatial planning visioning exercise contained an element of knowledge exchange and capacity building activities. Therefore, a group of undergraduate students from An-Najah National University and from the Urban Studies and Spatial Practices Department at Al-Quds Bard College were invited to join part of the visioning and designing sessions to compile

initial ideas and proposals. By and large, the irreducible uncertainties of planning in the geopolitical context of the area under investigation have provided rich fodder for this exercise; nevertheless they have challenged the technical team in so many ways. Amongst the challenges that the exercise have addressed are enabling the future urban development in the West Bank, enhancing public transport and Transit Oriented Development, corridor development, protecting vulnerable landscapes, natural resources, cultural and religious heritage and to enhance industries, trade, tourism and the economy in this region. The final output addressed interrelated levels of planning and spatial interventions, namely: a) at the macro-level focused on the regional orientation and integration of the State of Palestine; b) at the meso-level with focus on planning and governance for the anticipated future State of Palestine's Metropolitan Area; and, c) the micro level with proposed urban interven-

tions to upgrade various sectors of Public infrastructure and spaces, aka place-making. While macro and meso-level proposals have a post-occupation time horizon, micro-level interventions are immediately implementable, mostly without engagement with the Israeli authorities in Area C of the West Bank.

The final proposal was presented for senior Palestinian stakeholders, including the ministries of Local Government, Planning, Transport and Agriculture, the National Spatial Planning Office, the Palestine Negotiations Support Unit and representatives from universities and planning NGOs and consultancies. This spatial planning visioning exercise has been concluded with the hope to contribute substantially in the efforts to build the statehood, with East Jerusalem at its heart under the framework of independence and co-existence.

300,000
Palestinians out of 2.8 million living in the West Bank are located in Area C

Over 10,000
Palestinians mobilized in participatory planning processes

145
multi-layered spatial plans produced

More than 55,000
Palestinians protected from forced displacement

" **Spatial and Urban planning must be used as means for delivering human rights, not denying them.** "
Executive Director of UN-Habitat
Dr. Joan Clos, 2015

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Facts & Figures

2,790,331
people live in the West Bank

Year	Population
1950	931,926
1960	1,069,399
1970	1,124,843
1980	1,509,484
1990	2,101,156
2000	3,223,781
2010	4,068,780
2020	5,333,377
2025	6,039,876
2050	9,790,688
2075	13,240,597
2100	15,516,183
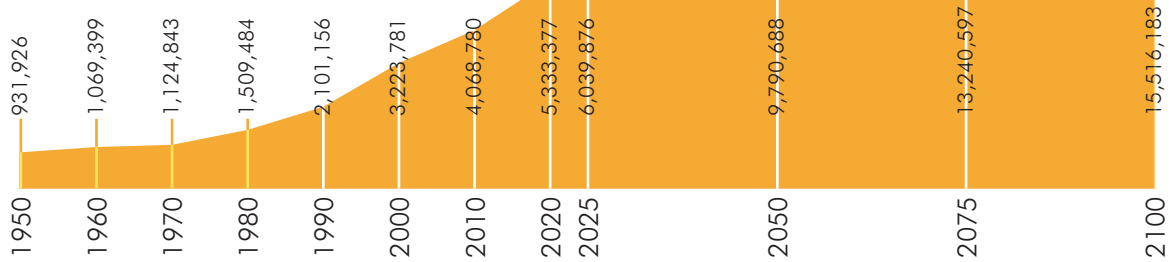
Population - age structure West Bank (2014 est.)

0-14 years — 33,7%
- 448,078 persons
- 472,480 persons

15-24 years — 21,7%
- 289,119 persons
- 303,578 persons

25-54 years — 36,4%
- 483,276 persons
- 511,443 persons

55-64 years — 4,4%
- 59,372 persons
- 59,762 persons

65 years and over — 3,8%
- 60,315 persons
- 43,629 persons
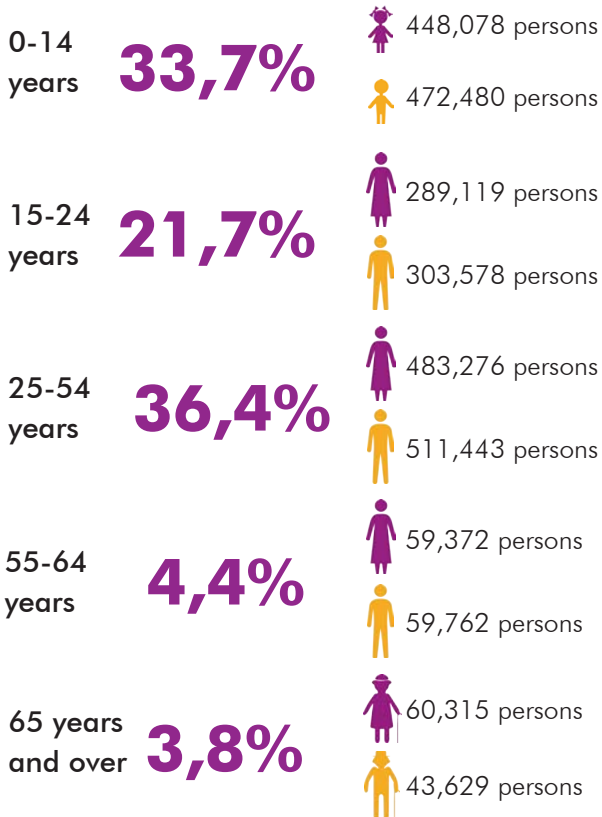
Gender differences

Time spent on household activities and domestic work per day in the West Bank for men and women (PCBS Time Use Survey, 2012/2013)
- **80** hours
- **225** hours

Labour force participation rate for men and women (PCBS, 2014)
- **71,8%**
- **19,7%**
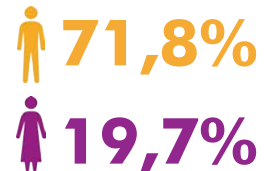
Average daily wage for men and women (PCBS, 2014)
- NIS **105,8**
- NIS **80,9**
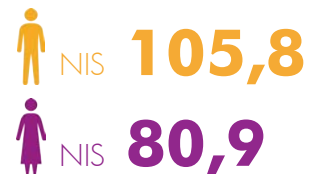
328 KWh electricity,
26 kg LPG,
28 litres Kerosene
115 litres Gasoline and
160 litres Diesel

delivered the energy for each household in the West Bank in 2015 (PCBS, 2015)

92,3%
of the population has access to sanitation (WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) for Water Supply and Sanitation 2014)

Maps

Jenin

Nablus

Qalqilya

Salfit

Ramallah

Jericho

Jerusalem

Bethlehem

Hebron

Kilometres

0 2.5   5   10
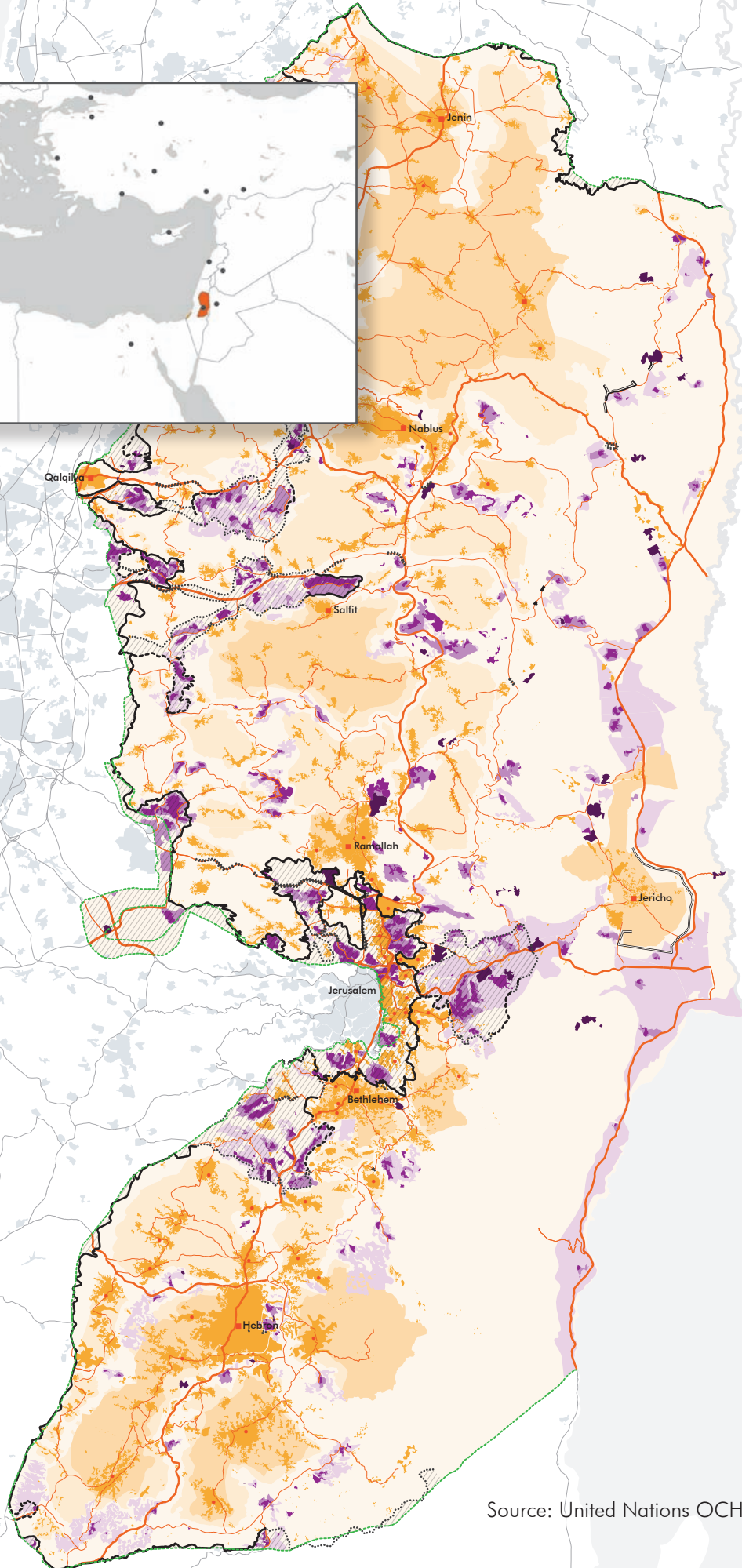
Source: United Nations OCHA oPt, 2014

Source: United Nations OCHA oPt, 2014

Legend:

- ■ Governorate capital
- ● Palestinian community >10.000 residents
- Road in Palestine
- Palestinian built-up area
- Area A
- Area B
- Area C
- Israeli settlement: built-up area
- Israeli settlement: outer limit
- Israeli settlement: municipal area
- Israeli military base
- Urban areas in Israel
- Road in Israel
- Water

- Barrier constructed
- Barrier under construction
- Barrier in planning
- 1949 Armistice Line (Green Line)
- "Existing and projected" closed areas behind Barrier
- ◆ Internal checkpoint (fully staffed)
- ✕ Barrier gate

Map labels: As-Siafa, Ramallah, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Jericho

The West Bank UPAT workshop

Martin Dubbeling, *ISOCARP Vice President UPATs*

The Urban Planning Advisory Team (UPAT) workshop programme is a service that ISOCARP, the International Society of City and Regional Planners, provides to cities and regions worldwide. Since 1965, ISOCARP brings together individual and institutional members from more than 80 countries, who collectively seek to improve cities and territories through planning practice, training, education and research. ISOCARP is based in Den Hague and is formally recognised by the United Nations and the Council of Europe and has formal consultative status with UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization).

Since 2004 ISOCARP has organised more than 22 UPAT workshops all over the world countries including China, Mexico, Russia, Spain, USA, Austria, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Singapore. Repeated requests from these countries show a strong demand for expertise and independent advice from international teams of planning and design professionals. These UPAT workshops are made up of between five and nine planning and design professionals who are brought together from around the world for an intensive week of devising creative solutions and strategic advice in response to specific urban challenges. The teams consists of a Team Leader and a Team Rapporteur, plus two to four senior planners and two young planning professionals – teams that offer a broad variety of complementary skills and experience.

The strength of ISOCARP's approach lies in the diversity of each team, with a context and perspective that is entirely exclusive to a certain location and point in time. Bringing together ISOCARP members and local professionals creates a certain momentum resulting in creative and robust strategies and proposals. Over the course of their visit to the host city, the team will have undertaken field investigations, spoken to local counterparts and community stakeholders, hosted design sessions and presented their interim findings. Following the UPAT workshop a professional publication concludes the research and suggested urban response then presents the final results at a dedicated seminar at the ISOCARP annual congress.

West Bank and Gaza area are in need of new approaches to ensure the future liveability and prosperity of their communities, citizens and enterprises. First of all, this region must ensure that basic needs are met for food, housing, safety, utilities and amenities, education and culture, healthcare and mobility. Secondly, cities should make use of the potential, creativity and talent of their inhabitants. Thirdly, urban development must preserve and restore natural and cultural assets to ensure that modern, liveable communities still have a link with their historical past.

The UPAT held between 7th and 14th June 2015 on 'Capacity Building and Test Planning Exercises for the West Bank and Gaza', is perhaps the most ambitious UPAT organised by ISOCARP to date. The team, and all those they engaged with, were asked to look beyond the present situation of physical and institutional barriers that separate the territories of Israel and a future state of Palestine, and consider the 1967 borders (or Armistice Line) as fully open for travel and trade. From this starting point, the challenges to be addressed included how to enable future urban development in the West Bank and Gaza; enhance public transport and create urban linkages with Transit Oriented Development; protect vulnerable landscapes, natural resources, cultural and religious heritage; and to enhance industries, trade, tourism and the economy in the region.

The objective of both UPAT workshops was to develop simple, practical and original solutions to improve the quality of life in the re-

gion and that can be implemented in a National Spatial Plan for the West Bank and Gaza. The UPAT teams were invited to suggest practical visions, designs, implementation tools and steps for both the West Bank and Gaza. The UPAT workshop was regarded as a potential option to develop strategies and policies that are stimulating integrative activities, supporting regions and its communities to become more liveable and sustainable. Those considerations also include capacity building, raising awareness and focus attention of a wider group of people on Palestinian planning problems.

For this UPAT workshop UN Habitat, UNDP and ISOCARP selected two teams who worked in parallel in the West Bank and in Gaza. Local planning professionals supported each of the two teams and all team members gave their time voluntarily. Both international teams met in Jerusalem and after the first common work day, one team headed towards Gaza and the other one to Ramallah. During the two concluding days both teams worked together in Ramallah.

The first issue – of a series of three editions - brings together the initial findings and experiences of the ISOCARP UPAT for the heartland of the West Bank and disseminates articles from local partners illustrating their viewpoints. While the first issue of PLAN focuses on the West Bank, the following two editions will cover Gaza Coast and strategies for future Palestine, which will be published soon. I thank the West Bank team for their efforts in the workshop and production of the magazine.

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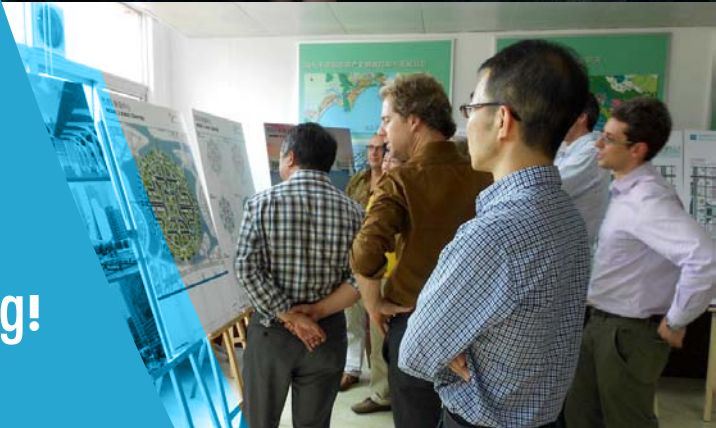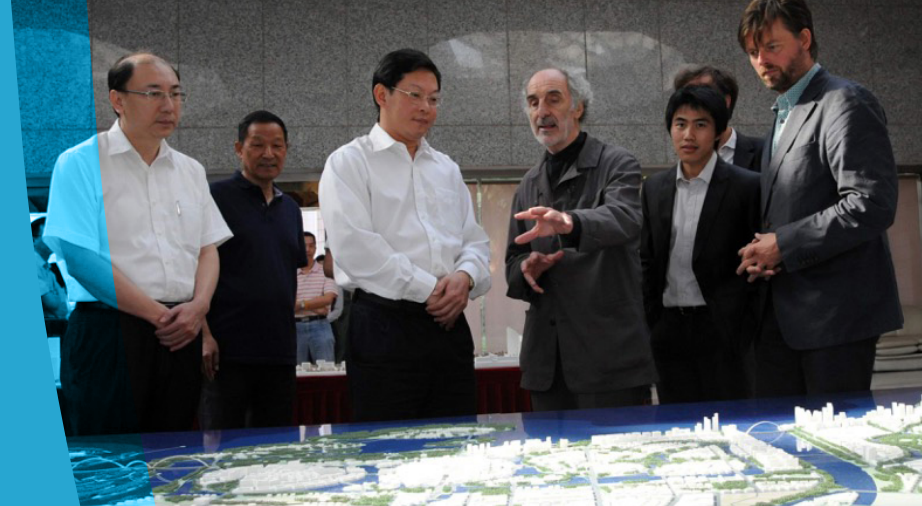
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Experiencing West Bank!

Jeffrey Featherstone

East Jerusalem, June 2015, was the moment when the West Bank team first met. Contributing different fields of expertise and professional experience from different parts of the world, the West Bank team was eager to start working on its assignment. The week the team spent in the West Bank was triggering many different impressions and illustrated the difficult situation: we saw many different places in the metropolitan region covering Ramallah, Bethlehem and Jerusalem and additionally the complementary city Jericho. During the entire week we met different stakeholders, political actors, students, people at the streets, civil society actors who shared their experiences and explained their personal and professional perspectives on the future development of Palestine. Those inputs and feedback loops with locally embedded professionals are crucial because their contribution is vital to a successful UPAT. Contrary to many other development and visioning processes, UPATs are short term assignments and were scheduled as a design charette: design charettes are intensive planning sessions where the planning and design team collaborates with other actors and have only a short time period to develop a vision or design proposal. The charette is a forum for ideas from different actors and stakeholders that directly feed in the design and planning process. The mix of international professionals from different fields offers new perspectives; the information and discussions with the local actors and planning experts guarantee that those are linked and adapted to the local conditions.

Very soon it was clear that mobility and accessibility are focal points for the quality of life and the future development of Palestine. Therefore, the team focused its work on the question of how to link mobility, transportation, spatial development and quality of life in order to stimulate a sustainable, viable development that aims to improve the daily quality of life of the Palestinian people and communities. Our focal point during the UPAT was the question on mobility and how mobility and urban planning can cross-fertilize. Mobility for Palestinians is heavily restricted in the West Bank. Palestinians must acquire military issued permits if they want to move between East Jerusalem and the West Bank. In addition, the West Bank has over 500 roadblocks, checkpoints, gates, and other barriers to restrict Palestinian movement in the West Bank. Drivers are issued special license plates to identify their cultural heritage, e.g. green for Palestinians. In addition, the Israeli military has created a separate system of roads. Many have been built for the exclusive use of Israeli settlers allowing them unrestricted movement between the West Bank and Israel. This system limits access for Palestinians, hampers urban development and also impedes the development of Area C. On a more strategic level a SWOT analysis painted a diverse and interesting picture of different future options for the Palestinian development on Metropolitan and city scale - but also the difficulties and threats, the team sees. How-

ever, they can only serve as a fresh perspective and impulse for discussion for the local decision making i.e. they could be beneficial for the development and later on the implementation of the National Spatial Plan.

After receiving an early morning briefing on 7 June from UN-Habitat and UNDP officials, the West Bank team moved to Ramallah, which served as our home base for the West Bank UPAT.

Meeting with Saeb Erekat

Saeb Erekat is Chief Negotiator for the Palestinian Liberation Organization and head of the Negotiations Support Unit. He stressed the importance of addressing the severe mobility problems for Palestinians and urged the team to consider a wide range of transportation options.

Fieldwork at Ramallah, Jericho, Rawabi, and East Jerusalem

Basel Quttaineh and Tariq Nassar from IPCC joined the UPAT team and provided important background information. Ramallah has become the de facto administrative capital of Palestine given the uncertain political status of Jerusalem. Built in a hilly terrain with homes constructed of classic Jerusalem stone façades, it is an attractive place. At first, glance, however, the city seemed to lack vibrant urban centres and interesting meeting places. Was it the Palestinian equivalent of American suburbia? Our younger UPAT team members went out at night on an urban safari and found such places! As planners we have learned to dig deeper into the souls of cities.

Rawabi (meaning "The Hills") is a newly developed Palestinian town in Area B, north of Ramallah. The master plan envisions a high-tech city with 6,000 housing units, housing a population of between 25,000 to 40,000 people. Construction began in January 2010, but was halted due to the lack of water connection with the Israeli water grid. Finally in early 2015 the developers were provided the necessary water connection from the Israeli government and full-scale construction is now under way. The slow development in Rawabi is certainly an ironic contrast to the accelerated development of Israeli settlements.

Walls everywhere

One of the most disturbing experiences for the UPAT team were the walls that are cross cutting through landscapes, cities and neighbourhoods - sometimes several ones next to each other. Behind the wall is always also in front of a wall,

who is in and who is out becomes very tangible at these moments. The beautified walls along the highways can't hide the fact that they are establishing inequality for the Palestinian people; the highway management is inhibiting mobility and necessary movements and access to services.

During the weak the UPAT team was visiting and exploring many different cities, landscapes and places of cultural importance. The skeleton remains of King Hussein's Palace provided breathtaking views of the entire region. Construction on the palace began just before the 1967 War and was abandoned after the conflict. The Mount of Olives / At-Tur, a mountain ridge east of and adjacent to Jerusalem's Old City, provided even more stunning views. Old City provides a vivid

exposure of the cultural divisions within Jerusalem with separate and distinct Christian, Jewish, and Muslin sections.

Workshop with students from An-Najah University and Bard College

Challenged by mobility problems in Ramallah, we asked the students to conceptualize a more pedestrian friendly and accessible city centre of Ramallah. Nadia Affouneh (CEP) and Alma Othman (consultant) accompanied the students and

supported them with their design assignment that the students presented later that day. The students devised and presented several concept designs.

After presenting interim reports to a small group of stakeholder focusing on either Gaza or the West Bank, the unified team presented an integrated vision for the heartland of the West Bank and Gaza to a large group of stakeholders, including many governmental representatives, consultants and academic advisers on June 14.

West Bank´s urban journey
Where does it stand today?

Parul Agarwala

Bustling city centres, mesmerizing religious and cultural sites, and cities set against a backdrop of breathtaking historic cultural landscape are some defining features of urban areas in the West Bank. Undoubtedly, West Bank has made the transition to a predominantly urban society and continues this transition as evident from the high urban population growth rate. Going by global experience, this means that the urban areas of West Bank will play a crucial role as centres of knowledge, innovation, and enterprise to propel it towards prosperity and growth. Before diving into the multi-faceted discourse on vision, policies, regulations, governance, financing mechanisms to leverage West Bank's urbanization, we must study the underlying urban dynamics. For instance - is urbanization spatially balanced? Is a network of primary and secondary cities emerging? Where and what types of urban-rural linkages are needed for balanced and inclusive growth? Are the demographic and economic strengths converging spatially?

Uneven urbanisation within West Bank

Today, more than 60 percent of West Bank's population resides in its urban areas, which is comparable to the urbanization levels of Middle Eastern countries. A closer examination reveals that urbanization within West Bank varies between its governorates. Three distinct sub-regions, namely, northern, central and southern, are emerging in the West Bank. Of these, southern sub-region has the highest urbanization level and the central sub-region comprised of Jericho, Nablus, and Ramallah governorates has relatively low urbanization. Hebron and Jerusalem governorates are not only most urbanized but also have the highest concentration of total urban population of West Bank. Interestingly, Nablus with a lower than average urbanization level, has the third highest concentration of total urban population.

Urbanisation levels
PCBS 2015
(quartiles)

- > 83%
- 67 - 83%
- 56 - 67%
- 50 - 56%
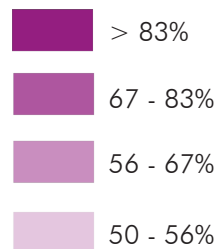
* Salfit Governorate is least urbanised at 36%
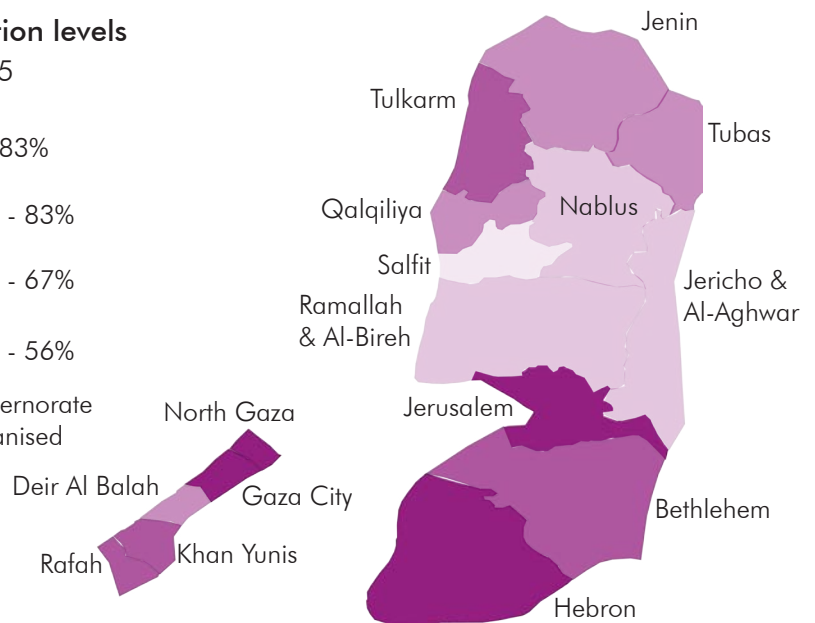
Current urbanization levels in the West Bank

Urban population share by governorate	
Governate	**% of total urban population**
Hebron	30%
Jerusalem	18%
Nablus	11%
Jenin	9%
Ramallah & El Bireh	9%
Bethelem	8%
Tulkarm	6%
Qalqiliya	3%
Tubas	2%
Jericho & Al Aghwar	1%
Salfit	1%

A remarkably regular urban hierarchy - what does it imply?

West Bank has a remarkably consistent urban hierarchy as seen from the Rank-Size distribution where Hebron holds urban primacy, followed by Jerusalem and a larger concentration of intermediate and small urban areas. This urban hierarchy is likely to be stable assuming that there are no dramatic changes in population growth rates of urban areas. Unravelling this pattern could illuminate important urban dynamics, such as – (i) social and economic interdependency between largest urban areas and others, and (ii) possible imbalance of development if peripheries are lagging far behind. As an urban practitioner, logical transition would be to ask – how do the infrastructure investment priorities in Hebron and Jerusalem differ from those in Ramallah and Bethlehem? What policy levers are necessary to promote urban development in Jericho, Tubas, and Qalqiliya for balanced urbanization?

Signs of urban sprawl - an early warning?

Built-up areas consume less than 10 percent of the total land in the West Bank. Its average net density of 8,764 persons per km² is similar to Bangkok, London, Ho Chi Min City. Even as the overall density of West Bank raises no red flags, a disaggregated analysis shows different patterns of intensive and extensive urban growth. This is clearly evident from comparing Hebron and Jerusalem, two most populated governorates in the West Bank, which are both highly urbanized but with different spatial organizations. At similar levels of urbanization, the population density of Jerusalem is 1.5 times that of Hebron. Simi-
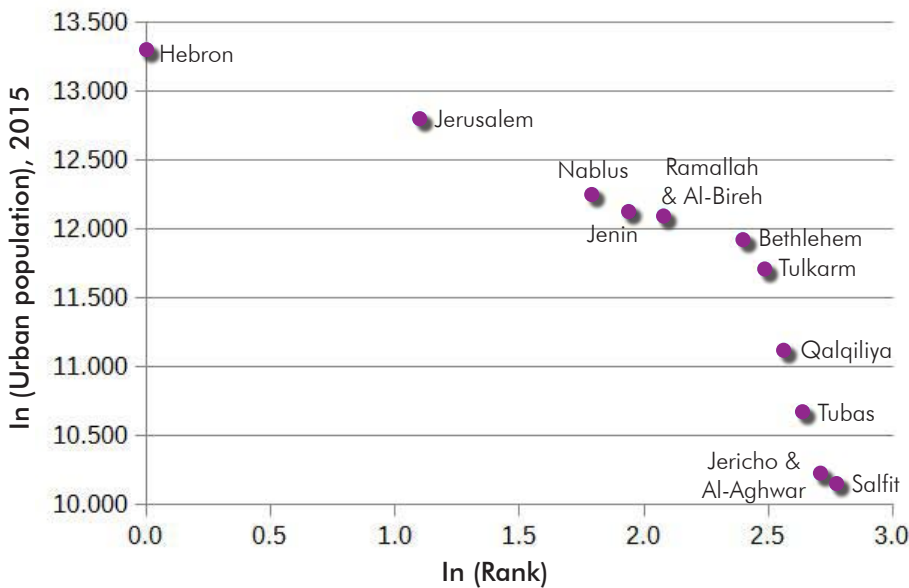
West Bank's Urban Hierarchy (Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics)
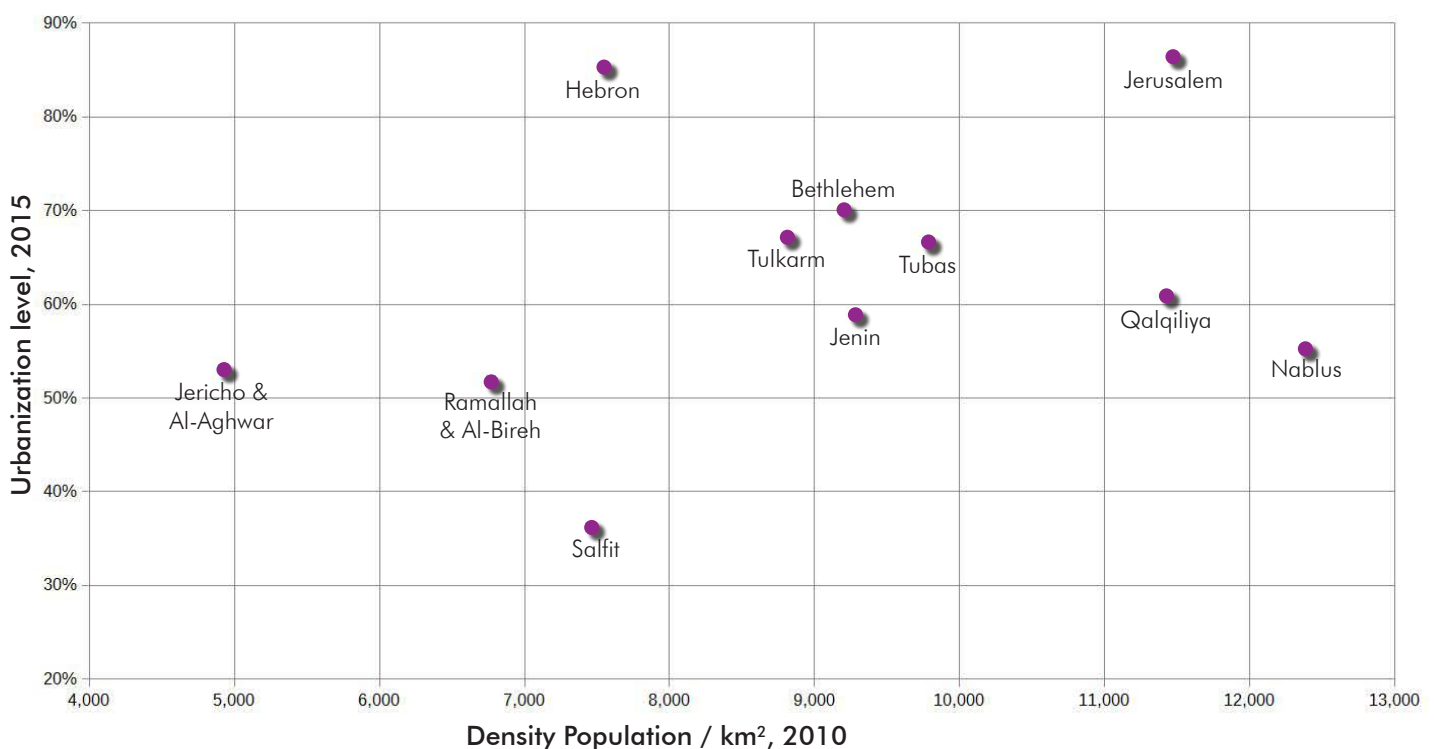
A mixed pattern of intensive and extensive urban development in West Bank (Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics)

Regional economic profiles

Existing - Key areas for agricultural activities
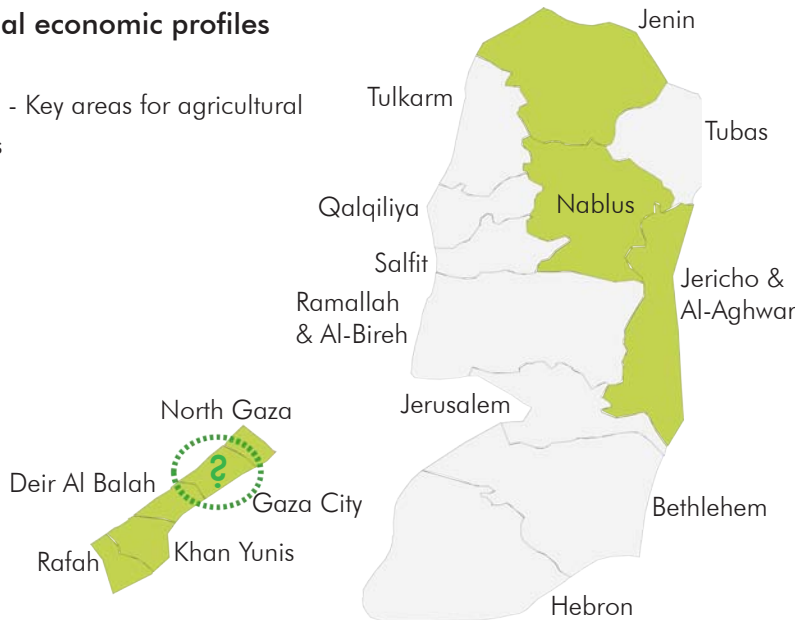
Potential - Key areas for tourism activities

Potential - Key areas for political, administrative, industrial, digital-IT sector activities
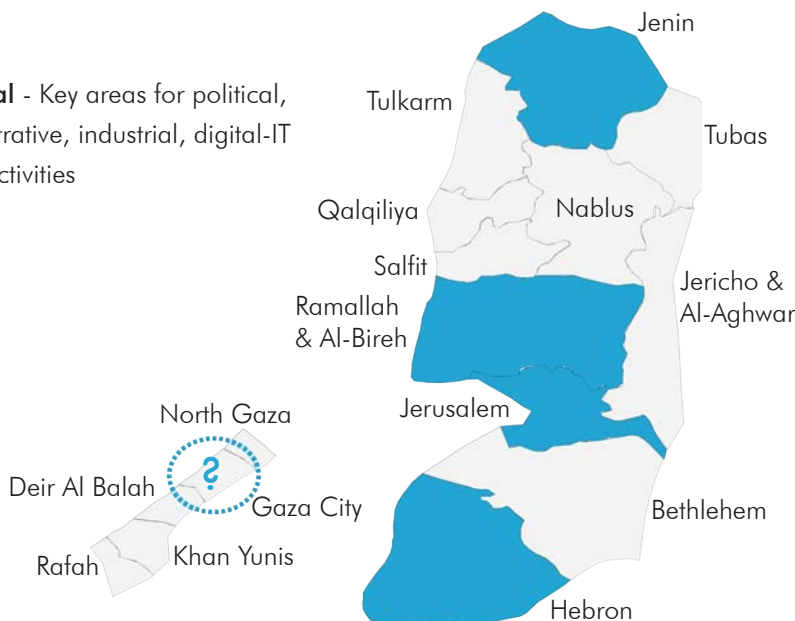
larly divergent patterns of spatial growth are visible in governorates that are less urbanized. The population density of Nablus is almost twice that of Ramallah at similar level of urbanization. These spatial trends raise important questions for urban practitioners – Is the new urban development pattern that of urban sprawl? Is it sustainable for the West Bank as a whole? Should policies to promote compact and integrated urban development be explored?

Can urban areas foster West Bank´s economic growth?

West Bank's GDP per capita of USD 2,965 puts it under the same bracket as lower-middle income countries. Tapping into the synergies between urbanization and economic development would inevitably lead to growth. The economy in the West Bank is currently driven by the service sector (73.5%), followed by manufacturing (23.6%) and agriculture (2.9%), respectively. Analysing the strengths of different governorates in reference to key economic sectors and their major urban centres will provide a template for future economic policy.

Jericho and Al Aghwar governorate, located in the Jordan Valley, is also known as the food basket of the West Bank. Jenin and Nablus are also among West Bank's prominent agricultural areas. Even though at present agricultural sector's contribution to GDP is minimal, studies show that better irrigation infrastructure to mitigate water scarcity, access to reliable energy, and removal of restrictions on access to land, among other factors have the potential for improving

agricultural productivity. Urban areas are the natural markets for agricultural produce. In this context, removing barriers to connectivity and promoting urban-rural linkages are crucial.

West Bank's history and land use has shaped a unique cultural landscape – cities with deeply rooted cultural significance on one hand and pastoral agricultural lands, also important heritage sites on the other. The combination of culture and landscape already brings as many as 2 million visitors to Palestine, an astounding figure, considering it's the same size as the population of the West Bank. The region boasts several heritage sites which are listed on UNESCO's register, concentrated in the Bethlehem, Jericho, Jerusalem and Nablus governorates in the West Bank.

A well-planned and functioning tourist circuit in the West Bank presents an incomparable opportunity to leverage the region's unique historic and cultural resources.

Jerusalem and Ramallah are the main administrative and political centres of the West Bank and the State of Palestine. These urban areas also have the potential for specialization in information technology and other hi-tech industrial sectors. The manufacturing sector is particularly concentrated in Hebron governorate, which as a result of its location to the south is isolated from the geopolitical uncertainties and mobility barriers.

What next?
West Bank's future growth trajectory is undoubtedly linked to its historical context and geopolitical

stability. The urban analytics covered here in limited detail, illustrate some trends, inter-linkages, and inter-dependencies between urban areas and economy. These tools are useful to investigate the urbanization pattern and undertake evidence-based assessment on how these trends are changing the quality-of-life and economic opportunities for the residents. A detailed assessment of West Bank's urbanization must also cover connectivity, service delivery, housing, governance and institutional coordination, among other areas relevant to the West Bank. A comprehensive urbanization study must be undertaken as a priority to make informed policy decisions which will unlock the full potential of urbanization to promote balanced growth, regional integration and cohesion.

Fact Box 1: Compact and Integrated Urban Development

Integrated and compact urban development emphasizes physical planning principles such as, (i) walkable streets and active street frontage, (ii) mixed land use neighbourhoods, (iii) built form and densities rooted in the local context, (iv) network of public spaces and green open areas, and (v) appropriate proportions of streets and block frontage. Globally competitive and attractive cities share many of these physical planning characteristics to create vibrant, inclusive and healthy city life. In applying these principles, it is important to adapt urban density regulations and design guidelines to balance the future vision with the identity and the cultural and topographical context of the city. Urban policymakers and practitioners must be active proponents of integrated and compact urban development principles in the future urban redevelopment, planned city extensions, and new cities of the West Bank.

For instance, strategic densification with mixed land use should be pursued to accommodate West Bank's increased demands for land and housing. Higher density mixed-use along mass transit corridors would increase transit patronage and mitigate auto usage. Urban design regulations must

be adopted for sustainable and inclusive growth, promoting urban safety. Urban design guidelines should pursue pedestrian-friendly environments and provide detailed requirements for open space and pedestrian amenities, landscaping, and street furniture should be properly guided. International evidence shows that integrated and compact urban development projects have contributed to not only producing pleasing urban settings for pedestrians but also revitalized urban economic activities in the cities.

Daily life in Beirut
© Dominic Chavez/World Bank

West Bank
A vision that builds on its legacy

Parul Agarwala & Jeffrey Fetherstone

A serious conversation is imperative regarding the role of West Bank's cities and urban areas in shaping their vision for the future and carving a place within the global arena. Well-planned urban areas can transform the social and economic aspirations of people into reality. The Republic of Korea and Singapore have set a strong precedent for reinventing and transforming their countries into global success stories by pursuing policies and strategies that fostered balanced and sustainable growth over the past four decades. Mexico, Brazil and Turkey are also emerging as global planning success stories.

The West Bank has a tremendous opportunity for balanced and sustainable growth by leveraging its urbanization with favourable demographics, social, cultural and economic potential. Fostering the underlying dynamism of West Bank's cities will spill over to their peripheries and rural areas, if strategic policy levers are prioritized and implemented for spatially balanced growth. The West Bank needs a well-articulated vision and a comprehensive understanding of its demographic, social and economic context to tap into its urban momentum and make this happen.

Many aspirations, one common and emerging theme

In an increasingly interconnected world, seamless movement of people, goods and ideas within and between geographical boundaries is seen as among the most important factors for countries undergoing social and economic transitions. Unsurprisingly, diplomats, government officials, private sector representatives, and international experts unambiguously assert that the West Bank's spatial vision must focus on regional integration, cohesion and mobility across urban-rural continuum. "I very much welcome this visioning initiative by UNDP and UN-Habitat, in particular with the aspiration to re-connect cities and citizens in all parts of the future sovereign State of Palestine", said Ali Shaath, CEO of Palestine Industrial Estates Authority and former deputy Minister of Transport. Saeb Erekat, PLO Chief Negotiator confirmed at another moment: "For the Palestinian citizens, it is a necessity to have access to a wide range of different transportation options and modes of mobility."

What is influencing regional cohesion and mobility in the West Bank?

Regional integration and seamless mobility within the West Bank is a cross-sector and multi-scale issue at three core levels:
- Macro level: the entire West Bank
- Meso level: between sub-regions, for example, cities forming an agglomeration
- Micro level: within an urban area/city

An assessment of Ramallah-Jerusalem-Bethlehem agglomeration and Jericho as complementary city is presented below to illustrate the different attributes and characteristics that will influence and contribute towards its spatial transformation at the meso- and micro level.

This preliminary assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis) reveals four key thematic areas that directly and indirectly foster the vision for regional integration and mobility. These are: location and proximity, transportation and mobility, historical and cultural resources, and urban land and development patterns.

Strenghts

Historical & Cultural Heritage

**Demographic Transition
young population base**

Metropolitan Region
High Urbanisation Level

Domestic & International Tourism

High Literacy Rate

Natural Resource Endowments

Opportunities

*Central Location in the
Middle East and
North Africa Region*

Urban Fabric with Potential

**Brand in Religious
and Cultural Circuit**

Green Energy

Mobility Barriers
*Poor Inter & Intra-City Mobility
Car-centric transportation,
congestion*

*Territorial Fragmentation
Uncontrolled Urban Development
& Expansion*

*Poor Integration of Urban
Planning, Mobility & Public Open
Spaces in Policy & Planning*

**Strong Focus on Interventions on Higher
Scale - Forgetting the Micro Scale &
necessary & urgent Small Scale Interventions**

**Poor Horizontal and Vertical Integration
of Policies, Strategies & Plans**

Limited Integration of Regional Economy

Weaknesses

Mobility Barriers

*Development Restrictions in
Area C imposed by Israeli government*

Land-locked Region

**Geo-Political Uncertainty
& Occupation**

Abscence of Sovereignty

**Strong Competition of other
International Cities**

Environmental Degradation

Threats

→ enabling conditions

→ constraining conditions

Location and proximity

The Ramallah-Jerusalem-Bethlehem agglomeration is centrally located within the West Bank. Ramallah and Bethlehem are each approximately ten kilometres from Jerusalem. However, due to barriers on movement geographical proximity is not translated into fast travel times. A major impediment to cohesion is the massive separation wall being extended around East Jerusalem. If completed, the wall would separate East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank. The three cities currently are functioning as a disconnected agglomeration of urban and suburban areas, where people commute daily for work and other purposes often with great difficulty. Location and proximity must be treated as siblings: it's not enough to choose and develop suitable locations for different land uses and urban functions without considering their interrelatedness. In order to develop regional spatial cohesion, planners must recognize and appropriately incorporate proximity (in time) and accessibility of different urban functions and land uses.

Historical and cultural resources

The area is rich in historical and cultural resources with deeply rooted religious significance for people of the Christian, Muslim and Jewish faiths comprising almost 45 % of the world's population. Tourists are attracted by its diversity of heritage sites. The tourism potential of these important landmark buildings, pastoral landscapes of olives and grapevines, heritage cities, among others is grossly underutilized. A serious threat to the cultural sites is the continued urban expansion into Area C and the lack of transparent development processes applied by the Israeli administration. Another threat is the environmental degradation due to unchecked urban expansion in the fringe areas – the location of important historical and cultural resources such as olive tree terraces and archaeological sites.

Transportation and mobility

Within the Ramallah-Jerusalem-Bethlehem agglomeration, the mobility of people and goods between and within cities is adversely impacted by the lack of transportation options, pattern of urban development and physical and political barriers to movement. Residents in Ramallah and Bethlehem have few options other than using their cars, buses, and often both in making their daily commutes. Traffic congestion precludes reliable and timely movement through the entire region. This is caused in large part by restrictions imposed by the Israeli government on the movement of Palestinians. The West Bank has over 500 roadblocks, checkpoints, gates, and other barriers to restrict Palestinian movement. The separation wall creates unreasonable and often unmanageable commute times. However, even assuming free and open movement, this gridlock problem will remain. Most travellers attempting to move through Jerusalem from anywhere in the region are forced to compete with trucks, commercial traffic, and other travellers on a crumbling two-lane highway choked with vehicles of all types. There is simply not enough capacity to move people and goods efficiently through the region.

But mobility is also a problem locally; the cities are cluttered with cars and are neither pedestrian friendly nor conducive to alternative modes of transportation: There are no bike lanes and few side walks. The limited public transport is mired in congestion and incapable of moving people efficiently through dedicated traffic lanes, such as successful Bus Rapid Transit networks in other major cities including Curitiba, Bogota, Bangkok and Canton. On the ground, residents are simply left to fend for themselves, usually dodging between cars. Poor or no way-finding further exacerbates this problem for people trying to navigate the cities. Way-finding is spatial problem solving. It knows where you are in a community, your desired locations, and directs you to get from here to there. Finding your way is not easy to do in the cities of the West Bank. Micro-scale interventions are critically important and ultimately can be scaled up to improve the urban fabric at the meso and macro levels.

Urban land and development pattern

The overall high urbanization levels of the West Bank and the Ramallah-Jerusalem-Bethlehem agglomeration present an immense opportunity for job creation and improving the quality-of-life. Even as each of these urban areas is forming a unique functional identity, there are opportunities to complement each other to create a more dynamic and vibrant urban environment. However, the current spatial patterns are seriously fragmented by geo-political complexity. As a result, the three cities are at risk of increased spatial isolation, exacerbated by the expanding presence of the separation wall. Furthermore, the race to develop new settlements in the hinterlands of Area C presents a serious danger to the long-term sustainability of the region's natural and cultural resources.

Strategic policy priorities

Strategic policies and priority setting in the Ramallah-Jerusalem-Bethlehem agglomeration that promotes regional integration can create a vibrant metropolitan region in the Middle East. From an urban practitioner's perspective, policy and regulatory tools to manage urban development patterns, rethinking transportation and mobility options, and leveraging the historic and cultural resources would be instrumental for cohesive development across the agglomeration. Furthermore, it is imperative that policies and investment projects are planned and implemented at the micro (neighbourhood) and macro (regional) scale to demonstrate quick-wins and build public support for the long-term transformation of the region into a global success story. The emergence of a connected metropolitan region starts at the level of the community, where innovation and liveability improvement can quickly become catalysts for development driven by a young urban population. The mid-term perspective will offer these urban communities new forms of public transport solutions that are well integrated into people-friendly public spaces. These policies and programs must be rooted in the context of each urban area. Transportation policies tailored to needs at the micro and meso-levels can be drafted to provide world-class mobility options for the residents who commute within and between these urban areas. It is clear that the future of the West Bank's development merits a comprehensive discussion. To move this discussion along, here are some specific priority suggestions.

Regional cohesion – Multi-modal transit system

Improved mobility for Palestinians is the greatest need. In our opinion the best solution is to plan for and implement an integrated multi-modal transit system using a regional rail road as its backbone. A rail-based system would deliver reliable and efficient transportation
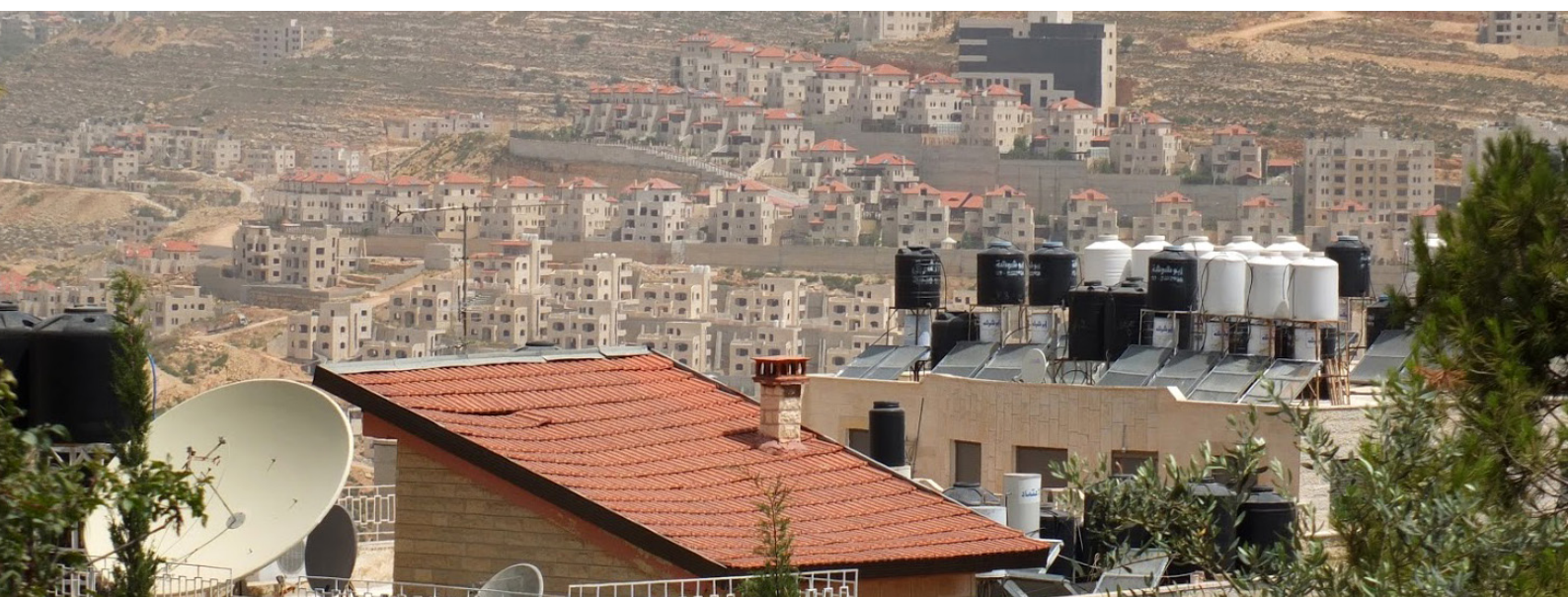
through the region and save time, energy, and money for the region's residents. Most important it would provide the impetus for creating regional cohesion at the meso and ultimately the macro levels. As presented by Stefan Goethals in this insert, such a system would connect people and communities at all three scales. Such a system can be initiated at the meso scale for the three cities and later expanded north and south to connect additional cities including Nablus and Hebron, with opportunities for further extension to Jericho and Amman to the East and beyond in all directions. As pointed out by Goethals: Connecting Palestinian cities is about connecting people, communities, and economic, cultural and social activities at every level of the Palestinian society and territory.

Micro-level – Creating vibrant public spaces and improving wayfinding

Improvements and interventions at the city, neighbourhood and block level such as green and public spaces, pocket parks, street theatre, and playgrounds can be done now and do not have to wait for planning and development at the other two levels. Our "eyes on the ground" found that the cities lacked vibrant public spaces where people can meet. Changes are needed to the existing built environment. With the help of neighbourhood groups and organizations, municipal governments can implement hundreds of eye level interventions to make their cities more liveable. Improvements and intervention on the urban and micro scale (neighbourhood, block) are possible straight away and do not have to wait for action from a higher scale. As presented by Katharina Gugerell in 'Every Journey Starts With a Walk', small-scale interventions are often overlooked because they are lacking the great gesture, but they have the potential to improve the quality of life

of urban residents very quickly and directly and in a long-term perspective make a great deal when it comes to the identity, daily quality of life of its residents and success of cities.

Furthermore, the lack of functioning green space in cities, whether for recreation or environmental purposes, is a serious problem. Green infrastructure projects would provide additional green space and provide improved storm water management. They would add much needed public spaces. The cities can also improve wayfinding on their own to enable residents and visitors to move more conveniently through them. Adopting a common signage protocol with a consistent, easy to read typeface would be a good first step.

Macro-level – Intergovernmental coordination

The lack of regional (meso level) governance is a major impediment to increasing mobility, enhancing economic development, and promoting cohesion for the cities in the metropolitan region. It also limits them from efficiently providing public services, including water, sewer, and other infrastructure that transcend their political jurisdictions. Creating formal regional governance is a vital catalyst to become competitive with other world cities and regions and to spend limited public funds in a cost-effective manner. This would require the State of Palestine to engage the major cities in the Ramallah – East Jerusalem – Bethlehem corridor to work together and create a metropolitan planning organization with sufficient powers to enable the region to become a more dynamic, integrated, and liveable metropolitan area.

Opportunities for Palestinian cities

Martin Dubbeling

Making cities liveable is a common goal for all cities around the world and concerns us all. Livable cities are the basis for local economies and crucial for their survival and competitiveness. In the eye of the storm in the turbulent Middle East, the cities of the West Bank are still relatively safe, stable and prosperous areas. Investing in attractive, liveable and competitive cities, in their city centres, public spaces and parks, has to be a core goal for the next few years in the West Bank. Cities of today and tomorrow need fresh approaches to ensure the future liveability and prosperity of their inhabitants and communities. First, liveable cities must ensure the basic needs for food, housing, safety, education, healthcare, mobility, clean air and water and waste management. Secondly, cities should encourage the human potential, creativity and talent of their inhabitants. Third, cities have a responsibility in preserving and restoring the natural assets, like urban ecosystems and natural resources. Integrating all these ambitions is a very complex challenge.

Cities have to be flexible

Successful towns and cities display flexibility. Town and city plans last for long time periods and are redeveloped over decades and centuries to accommodate new functions and to meet new requirements. Changes throughout time and changes in identity and functions are necessary to retain the vitality, connectivity, competitiveness and liveability of towns and cities. Considering their history can help to enhance liveability in the cities of tomorrow. Throughout centuries, cities traded with goods and services, charged taxes and were shaped by the availability of various resources and their links to different networks. One important lesson urban history teaches us is that successful cities are capable to repeatedly adapt to new conditions and are re-innovating themselves by stimulating new functions and identities, resulting in a rich urban tissue that is linked to their heritage. Adaptive institutional frameworks and policies combining long-term vision with incremental step-by-step implementation should support this flexibility.

Sustainable inclusive cities

Making cities liveable and sustainable needs a much broader approach than making grand designs or implementing environmental policies. The values of liveable and sustainable cities are closely related to the values of inclusive and competitive ones. An inclusive city gives people a sense of place, of belonging - an identity and the security of social networks. It provides identification and connects pride with its history, community, culture, traditions, heritage and education. Identity, paired with attractiveness, is a major driver for a competitive city. Competitive cities are deemed successful, prosperous, vital and full of opportunities for businesses, investors and institutions. Combining the values of liveable, sustainable, inclusive and competitive cities is the key success factor for the cities of the future. The cities of the West Bank can start with improving their city centres and prepare a network of railroads that connects the cities and can become the backbone of the future extensions of these cities, as the ISOCARP UPAT team suggests.

Course for the future

Making cities liveable or making liveable cities can only be achieved with the help and support of their communities and cities' inhabitants: their active involvement, already from the outset of initiatives, is crucial, wether in developing or transforming residential areas, infrastructure or designing parks and public spaces. Charting a course for the future of Palestinian cities starts with talking with their inhabitants, asking for their dreams and listening to their meaningful stories. With this magazine for the West Bank, I hope that all actors and stakeholders are better able to understand the dreams, desires, values and opportunities for the Palestinian cities.

Future State of Palestine

Rami Nasrallah, Tariq Nassar, Basel Koutena of the International Peace and Cooperation Centre (IPCC)

The International Peace and Cooperation Center (IPCC) is a Palestinian research, training, and planning organization based in Jerusalem. Founded in 1998, IPCC's activities have focused on Jerusalem issues; many IPCC projects seek to establish data and information bases that bear on the complex problems that will have a bearing on future negotiations on the final status of Jerusalem; these projects frequently result in publications that are distributed to a broad array of local, national and international decision-makers within governmental and NGO organizations.

Jerusalem has always been the heart of Palestine and it will remain so in the future. In the past, Jerusalem city was the metropolitan centre of the West Bank and the undeclared capital for the entire Palestinian community. The community still believes that Jerusalem will be the heart of the future urbanized regional Palestine as a country and its capital in terms of political, religious, and economical functions. In addition, all surrounding cities and villages were functionally linked to Jerusalem, and some of those cities had their own features and functions. After Oslo accord was signed in 1993-4, and following the closure restricting Palestinian movement to East Jerusalem, some cities lost their functions, while other cities gained additional ones. Ramallah is a case in point as it gained economical and administrative weight as the centre of Palestine in comparison to Jerusalem. The general objective of this paper is to describe the historical background, the current situation, and the future scenarios for the strategic spatial development of Palestine with its different regions. Moreover, it focuses on the idea of revitalizing Jerusalem as the urban core of the future Palestinian state (1967 border).

Target region; Inner and outer levels

Inner level: The vision is to develop and enhance East Jerusalem as a metropolitan region for the future state of Palestine under the two states solution (Israel and Palestine). This metropolitan region will focus on creating inner linkages within different aspects of development between Jerusalem as the heart of the metropolitan centre, Ramallah, Jericho (Western gateway) and Bethlehem regions. The relationship between these regions should concentrate on enhancing public transport and transit oriented development, corridor development, protecting vulnerable landscapes, natural resources, cultural and religious heritage, as well as enhancing industries, trade, tourism, and the economy in this region.

Outer level: The vision of this level is to create outer linkages between the urban core of Palestine, which is defined as a metropolitan region with Jerusalem as the centre of surrounding regions and countries. In the North, South, East and West. In the Northern region are cities including Nablus, Jenin, Tulkarem and Qalqilia, while the Southern region is centred around Hebron. In the East, Jericho and Jordan valley serves as an Eastern gateway and corridor to Jordan and Arab world, while Gaza region serves as a Western gateway and corridor to Europe and Africa. Also in the west are linkages to West Jerusalem and the urban core of Israel (greater Tel-Aviv region).

Conceptual framework

The main concept of the metropolitan region depends on studying the chronology, current situation, and future vision for each city in terms of its main functions and features. In addition, finding the main potential, restrictions and identity for each one of those cities, and how they could be linked to get the most benefits from each other. The idea is to balance the future functions within the cities of the urban core of Palestine and the surroundings. Since 1993, the Israeli closure has isolated East Jerusalem from its natural expansion. Furthermore, Israel has imposed physical restrictions such

as building Israeli settlements in the Palestinian urban contiguity as well as in Jerusalem city itself and the West Bank. All these physical and administrative restrictions from the Israeli side influence the real functions and features of each city within the Palestinian community. Dramatic changes occurred after the separation wall was built by Israeli government in 2001, as Jerusalem became physically isolated from other Palestinian cities and totally excluded from the West Bank.

However, the Palestinian society still believes that Jerusalem is the core of Palestine and that the future of the Palestinian state depends on determining the features, functions and role of Jerusalem in its future independency and centrality. In other words, Palestinian cities were changing in terms of their functions due to Israeli physical and administrative restrictions; while some cities were losing their roles and functions, other cities were gaining them. These new approaches should ensure the future liveability and prosperity for their communities, citizens, and enterprises. This urban core must ensure basic needs by making use of the human potentials, creativity and talent of its inhabitants. In addition, it must preserve and restore its natural and cultural assets to ensure liveability and modern continuity with the historical past.

Each region within the urban core, as well as other different regions of Palestine, should have both main and sub-functions in relation to other regions. For example, Jerusalem should maintain its main role of political and religious capital, while at the same time, Bethlehem should mainly be identified as a religious and touristic city. This way, each region will have its own future features and functions, both within the urban core and with the other regions of the future state of Palestine.

The urban core of Palestine
Many different city functions have been lost and gained during the Israeli occupation period. East Jerusalem was playing the role of metropolitan city for the surrounding regions, as well as assisting the development of the natural urban contiguity between East Jerusalem, Ramallah, and Bethlehem city. After the separation wall was built around East Jerusalem, Ramallah was the only city that gained more administrative and economic functions. The Palestinian authority concentration in Ramallah and Israeli physical restrictions on East Jerusalem are the main factors in developing Ramallah city

and neglecting others. This section will showcase the historical and future functions of the four key regions of the future Palestinian state.
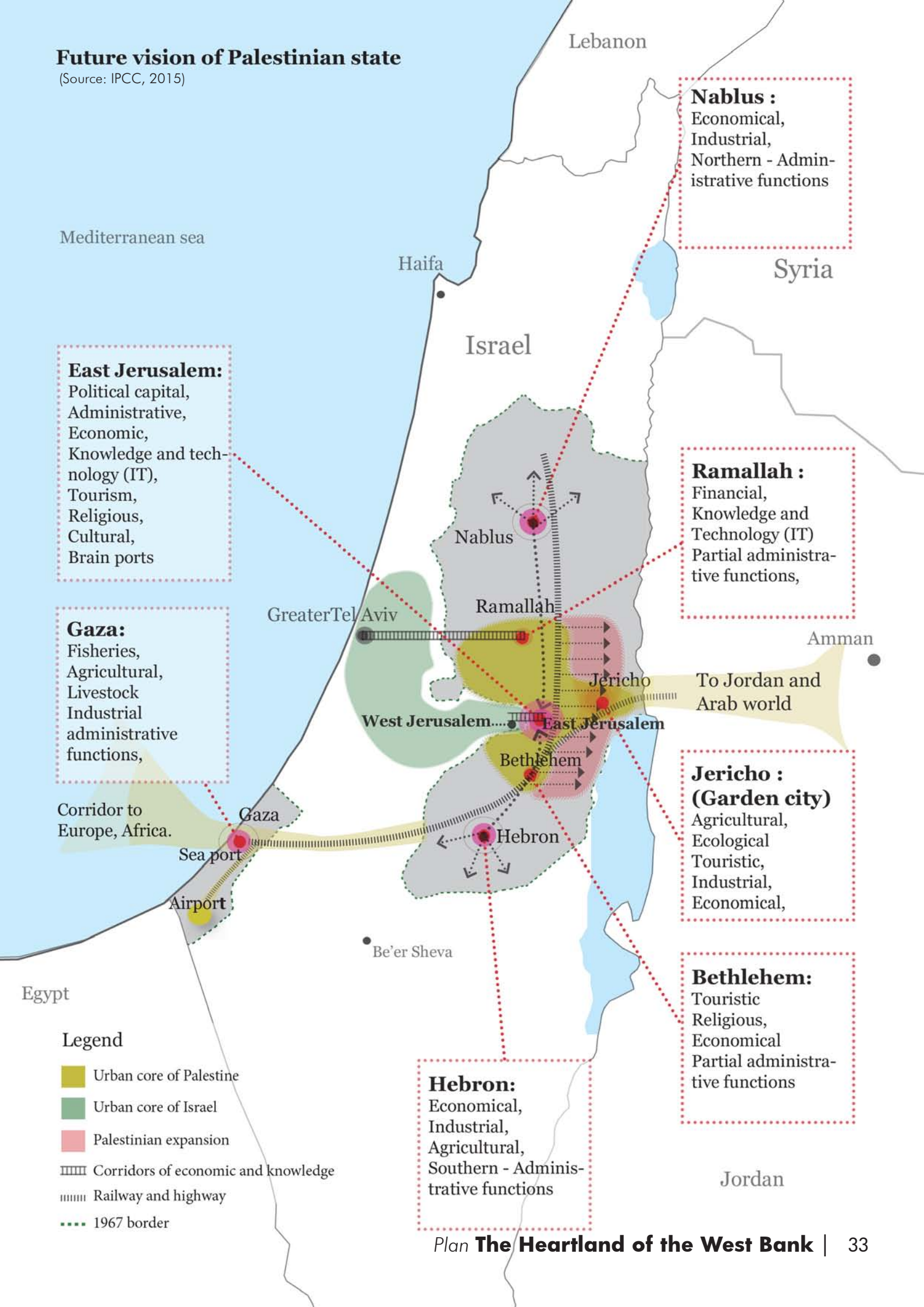
East Jerusalem region
Because of Jerusalem's location at the heart of historical Palestine, it became the second municipality (in1863) after Istanbul during the late Ottoman era. By the end of World War I and the imposition of British Mandatory rules in Palestine in 1918, Jerusalem was already developed toward northwest and southwest, mostly along the main roads. This period was accompanied by a natural urbanization process. Following the war of 1948, Jerusalem was divided into two parts, impacting the development of the Jerusalemite urban region. The main functions that Jerusalem had before Oslo Accord in1993-4 were political, administrative, cultural, religious, touristic and economic. Nowadays, the population of Jerusalem region is 411,640 residents with an average annual growth rate of 3.2 % for urban and rural areas. Many functions were lost from 1993 till present in this city. In order to revitalize Jerusalem as a centre of metropolitan region, the following functions should be developed or maintained for Jerusalem as the heart of urbanized region and the capital of the future Palestinian state: Political, Administrative sovereignty function, Economic, Knowledge and technology (IT), Tourism, Religious, and a hub of brain ports.

Ramallah and Al-Bireh region
Ramallah and Al-Bireh region is located 10 KM to the north of Jerusalem city. In the past, this region had an agricultural function. However, in the current situation Ramallah is considered the temporary capital of Palestine, and therefore has economical, administrative, financial and cultural characteristics. Moreover, Ramallah has many cultural centres and administrative associations, in addition to a huge concentration of Palestinian governmental institutions. The population of Ramallah and Al-Bireh region is 338,382 residents with an average annual growth rate of 2.83 % for urban, rural, and refugee camps areas. The main functions that should be developed or maintained for Ramallah and Al-Bireh region within the urban core of the future Palestinian state are, financial, partial administrative functions, and Knowledge and technology (IT).

Future vision of Palestinian state
(Source: IPCC, 2015)

Lebanon

Syria

Mediterranean sea

Haifa

Israel

Nablus :
Economical,
Industrial,
Northern - Admin-
istrative functions

East Jerusalem:
Political capital,
Administrative,
Economic,
Knowledge and tech-
nology (IT),
Tourism,
Religious,
Cultural,
Brain ports

Ramallah :
Financial,
Knowledge and
Technology (IT)
Partial administra-
tive functions,

Gaza:
Fisheries,
Agricultural,
Livestock
Industrial
administrative
functions,

GreaterTel Aviv

Nablus

Ramallah

Amman

Jericho

To Jordan and
Arab world

West Jerusalem

East Jerusalem

Bethlehem

**Jericho :
(Garden city)**
Agricultural,
Ecological
Touristic,
Industrial,
Economical,

Corridor to
Europe, Africa.

Gaza

Sea port

Airport

Hebron

Be'er Sheva

Bethlehem:
Touristic
Religious,
Economical
Partial administra-
tive functions

Egypt

Legend

- Urban core of Palestine
- Urban core of Israel
- Palestinian expansion
- Corridors of economic and knowledge
- Railway and highway
- 1967 border

Hebron:
Economical,
Industrial,
Agricultural,
Southern - Adminis-
trative functions

Jordan

Plan **The Heartland of the West Bank** | 33

Jericho region

Jericho is the oldest city in the world, located 36 km east of Jerusalem city. The population of Jericho region is 50,762 residents with an average annual growth rate of 2.69 % for urban, rural, and refugee camps. In the past, this region was considered as the vegetable basket of Palestine with high value of agricultural production. Additionally, the area is a main touristic attraction due to its archaeological and ecological heritage. The main functions that should be developed or maintained for Jericho region within the urbanized region of a future Palestinian state are: agriculture, tourism, industry, and economy in particular trading with the east - Jordan and the Arab world.

Bethlehem region

Bethlehem city is located 10 km to the south of Jerusalem. In the past, this city had a religious and touristic function. These functions were lost due to many Israeli restrictions. The population of Bethlehem region is 210,484 residents with an average annual growth rate of 2.63 % for urban, rural, and refugee camps. The main functions that should be developed or maintained for Bethlehem region within the urbanized region of the future Palestinian state are: tourism and religious, economic, and partial administrative functions.

Future vision of Palestinian state

In addition to previous points, IPCC has been working on different visions, levels, and concepts for developing an urban core for the future Palestinian state. The figure on page 33 shows the general ideas on inner and outer levels for the future state of Palestine. The urban core will be a hub for linkages with other regions and future gateways to the world, while the future expansion for Palestinian urban zones will be more to the eastern side of the West Bank. This shows the importance of creating a regional access, linking Gaza region with the urban core of Palestine (Jerusalem as the centre, Ramallah, Bethlehem and Jericho regions). The vision of the future Palestinian state shows the importance of linking the urban core of Palestine with the north and south of the West Bank. Additionally, revitalizing Nablus city as a centre in the north of the future Palestinian state is important. This region plays a crucial role in terms of economic, industrial, and administrative functions. In the south, Hebron city will be playing a similar role in terms of economical, industrial, agricultural, and administrative functions.

In summary, the following points show the future vision of the Palestinian state:

1. East Jerusalem is the core of the urbanized centre of Palestine.
2. The spatial interaction between East Jerusalem and its surroundings will determine the viability of the Palestinian state.
3. A two state solution will not be possible without the political and functional centrality of Jerusalem.
4. East Jerusalem urban core will function as the political capital and the main social, economic, and cultural centre.
5. Development of a coherent planning process between the urbanized core, the northern and southern regions, and Gaza, will promote social and economical inclusion and create balanced urban policy and practices.
6. Ramallah and Bethlehem will share with Jerusalem part of the administrative and service functions as one urban unit.
7. East Jerusalem will be the hub for gateways with the external world, both at the regional level (with Israel, Jordan and Egypt) and at the global level.
8. Jordan valley will be the Gateway of Palestine to the Arab World and Asia.
9. Gaza will be the Gateway to Africa and Europe.
10. Peace and a competitive relationship between the two urban cores (Israeli and Palestinian) is essential to promote East and West Jerusalem as a global hub. To facilitate this, corridors of economy and knowledge should be established to connect the Palestinian core with the Israeli core.
11. Main railway and highway will connect the 4 main centres of Palestine (Jerusalem as the core, Nablus serving as the centre to North West Bank , Hebron serving the southern centre, and Gaza region).
12. Seaport and airport will be connected by a corridor both to the core and to the southern centre of the future Palestinian state.

These points serve as a blueprint for the future development of the Palestinian state. IPCC vision of East Jerusalem as the core of the future state of Palestine must continue to be developed in a more comprehensive and sustainable approach by providing more detailed studies on the spatial, economic and social levels of the regions.

Planning for change

Creating a new spirit of optimism in the oPt

Mazen Shalbak

As an architect and an urban planner, Mazen Shalbak is profoundly involved in academic research on spatial development and its impediments evoked by Israeli separation strategies. He obtained his PhD at the Department of International Design at Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (Germany). His research unfolds interlinks and dependencies of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and planning issues. He provides a comprehensive and thorough analysis of urban development and illustrates the performative power of planning in a volatile environment, characterized by high uncertainty and unbalanced power issues.

Insight into the future: Spatial development strategy versus reflex planning actions

The monopolization of planning by the Israeli Power urged the Palestinian Authority (PA) to pursue strategically difficult and occasionally disadvantageous reflexive planning procedures within its controlled areas (zones A and B, according to Oslo II). Some national projects have been launched, like the construction of an airport and seaport in the Gaza Strip, stock exchange, hotels, governmental buildings and some residential areas to actively supply the needs of the Palestinians and to reduce the dependency on Israel. Unfortunately, all these projects are not embedded in official strategic and comprehensive spatial planning policies. The PA's desire to use financial aid from donor countries for national projects and to attract the investments funded by the Palestinian diaspora or international developers, rests on the fact that implementation becomes faster and more convenient for the proposed projects. Despite the difficult circumstances, it is hard to see why the PA missed the opportunity to follow a strategy of small and selective steps, setting priorities and offering solutions for numerous problems of Palestinian cities and people - and to adopt a planning doctrine that is necessary in this critical phase of national development.

Prior to developing a prospective plan for Palestine and as a precondition for a successful Palestinian planning framework, the extreme conditions have to be considered competently. They are rooted in the challenges presented by the geopolitical situation among Arab towns and villages, which result in a planned 'Ethnic Geography'. The Arab territorial fragments within an Israeli dominance (in Mandatory Palestine) could tempt the planner to interpret the current situation from a different point of view, namely, against the predominant perspective: not to outline scenarios for a future Palestinian state with two territories, West Bank and the Gaza Strip, but instead to critically reflect on the Israeli planning discourse in Mandatory Palestine. The liberation of planning from many ideological constraints, which led to the current situation of restrictions, barriers and fragmentation in the whole country, could be the result of such a shift in perspective. From this new point of view regarding the recent planning discourse, even troublesome issues, like the return of refugees, the status of Jerusalem or the illegal Israeli settlement structures in the oPt, would become a matter of regular domestic political consensus and administration.

The visionary idea of an incremental approach towards a bi-national state, a democratic state for both peoples in Mandatory Palestine, could serve as a cornerstone, an ambitious goal, of a Middle East Union. The current political context would deem such an idea as naive, yet it is possibly the only seriously sustainable perspective for the region. The status quo of political instability, territorial fragmentation and poor quality of life is the outcome of systematic and destructive planning actions of the Israeli occupying power in the oPT. It furthermore raises concerns on whether the implementation of the favoured two-state option is even feasible. Changing the current status quo depends essentially on overcoming the key issues of this conflict.
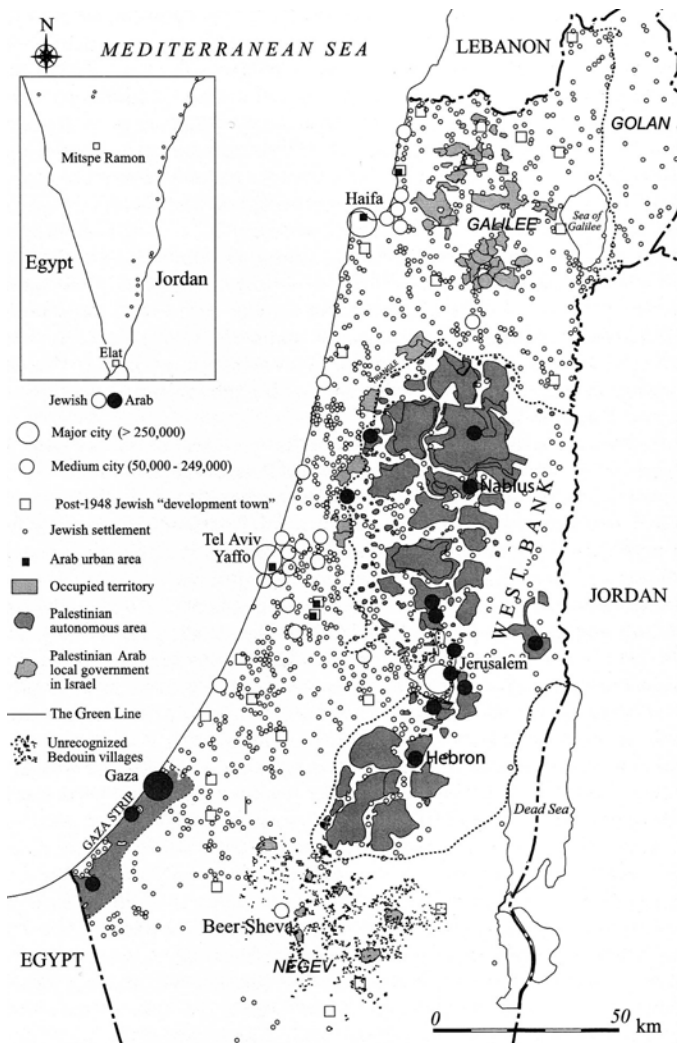
Ethnic Geography of Israel/Palestine, 2000
Source: Oren Yiftachel 2006.

Basic conditions for national and regional conception in the oPt

Usually, city planners and urban researchers' scopes do not include considerations regarding political questions on suitable territorial scenarios as target-state-solutions. Territorial questions and setting territorial boundaries are extremely important for ensuring the viability of the aspired state or the functionality of its structures. Consequently, considering the given circumstances, this issue could also be part of the pre-state planning phase. Despite all its advantages, the one-state-solution would entail some exceptional issues and challenges. The two-state solution would be, considering the current conditions, (1) in the best case, politically managed by the authorities with expectable great difficulties and (2) too complicated and expensive for territorial and technical implementation to be viable— given that the Israelis would allow the construction of a basic, economically sustainable structure.

Clearly, planning issues in Palestine are subject to political restrictions, which are illustrated in the absence of sovereign and authorized Palestinian planning bodies and structures. On the other hand, financial, demographic, and serious technical challenges leave Palestinians with little or no choice than to run a dual strategy ,facilitating an efficient and sufficient conceptual framework for Palestine. This strategy is to pair medium to long-term planning perspectives with smaller urgent interventions in the existing historical urban fabric. Actually, the most significant and complex task of planning is to facilitate the transition from a region at risk into a competitive one, offering people the opportunity to regain quality of life. Sufficient economic growth and a balanced regional development is a major issue for each government. Taking into account the level of development in the country, spatial planners and decision makers try to develop or to amend a number of spatial planning policies and guidelines as a means of public intervention, for reshaping or reorganizing the country's development and network of built environment in different dimensions; horizontal (spatial dispersion), vertical (ranking of agglomerates) and functional (economic distribution). Furthermore, they pay attention to aligning different policies with predefined national strategies.

Pre-state planning: thinking intuitively, with humility, but also with vision

A future scenario for a final territorial status of territorial Palestine should facilitate a medium to long-term regional planning strategy. This strategy should facilitate a reunification of the historic country, emphasizing socio-economic sustainability and infrastructural sufficiency. If the preferred two-state option should even get a minor chance of success, the current political and territorial context must undergo fundamental remediation. The complete termination of the Israeli occupation is the inevitable precondition for all those adjustments that have to be followed, by a sequence of interventions and measures to establish the cherished balance between environmental, economic and judicial issues. The foundation of these opportunities is rooted in good governance, ensuring that sustainable land planning will take place (cp. illustration five campaigns for a region at risk).

But what kind of National Spatial Strategy would be suitable for a country wedged in such tricky and complex conditions like they are in Palestine? Should it be a comprehensive strategy or a step-by-step strategy that

emerges as an assemblage of many small and selective interventions? Or, would a synthesis of those two strategies turn out to be more advantageous? Usually, a National Spatial Strategy is initiated when a country is either close to a tipping-point or is already transforming and therefore, renewal and future urban visions are needed. Spatial planning strategies should reinforce national, regional and urban development by means of a series of actions and urban interventions. One of the undesirable developments in the urban planning of post-colonial states in Africa and Asia are that they are still governed, planned and managed centrally, continuing a logic of revolution at the expense of a forward-looking perspective. One example of such a situation is Algeria. Algeria is a rich country, whose regime has not developed suitable planning schemes since the end of the French colonial era in the early 1960s. The disastrous trend of an ideological and mostly militarized top-down planning discourse, enforced by absolutistic Arab regimes, has created highly vulnerable and over-populated cities and regions. The most serious consequence of this planning policy was the disappearance of planning culture in these countries.

Aside from the fact that Palestine is still under Israeli control, its special geographical location, history and demographic structure provides various qualities that almost all other post-colonial states are lacking, which makes the implementation of spatial planning strategies likely easier: the country's historical continuity and its special spiritual significance places it under the spotlight of great powers' interest. For example, some interesting contemporary planning schemes and laws date back to the period of the British Mandate and to Jordanian rule. Furthermore, the demographic dispersion and decentralized hierarchical structure of the Palestinian cities and villages resulted in a balance which strengthens the urban and regional bond of the Palestinians with their land. The manageable territorial size and the high quality of the organically, historically grown urban and regional fabric, allow efficient comprehensive spatial planning policies. The cosmopolitan and highly educated Palestinian society is receptive and they form the basis for an innovative future development. It is crucial that the Palestinian society strives to answer the fundamental question on which kind of policies and territorial diversification they deem suitable and desirable for their future state. The special Palestinian status, as a de facto occupied nation, demands planning strategies that pursue the Palestinian dream for the day X, without withdrawing or prolonging solutions for the pressing issues of the Palestinian people and their built environment, today! Pro-active approaches and acting are core requirements to improve the liveability and the viability in the oPt and in the future Palestinian state. The standard reflex planning actions must be replaced by urban interventions of small steps in towns and villages, which in turn have to be fundamental features of an integrated and embedded long-term and multi-scale (and perhaps multistage) Spatial Development Strategy.
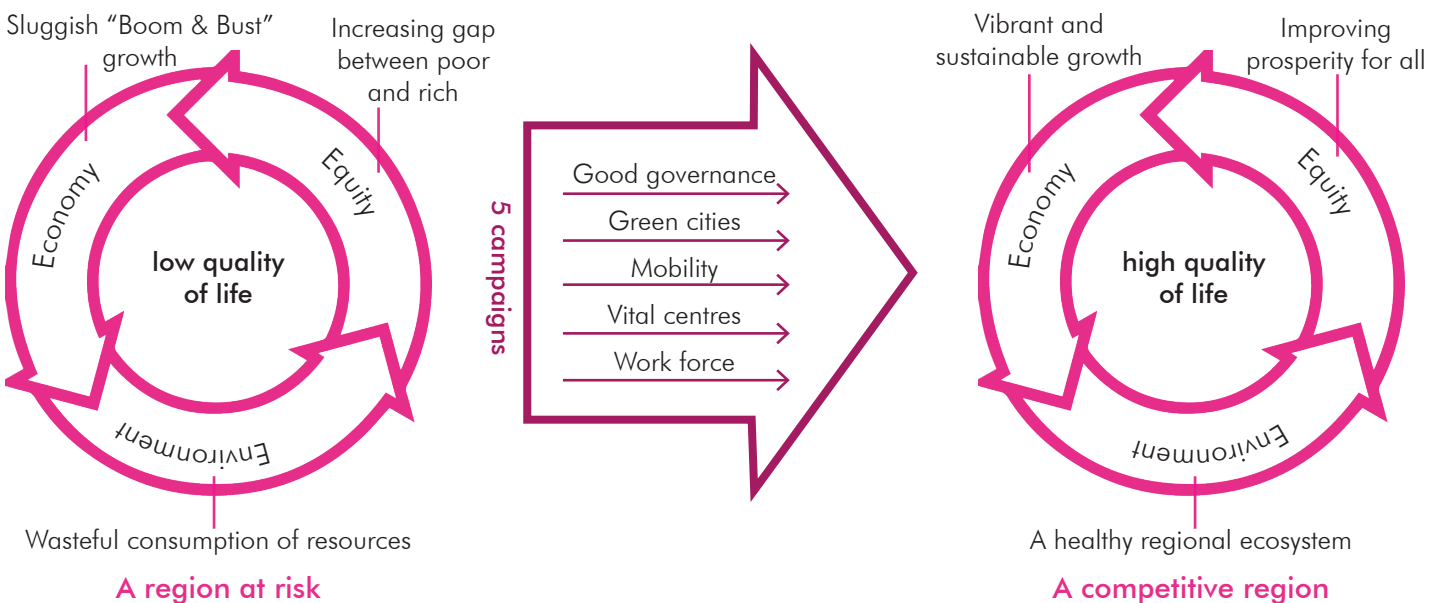
Five campaigns for a region at risk
According to Robert D. Yaro and Tony Hiss, A Region at Risk - The Third Regional Plan for the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut Metropolitan Area, 1996, edited by Shalbak, 2012.

Backbone for a resilient Palestinian development in Palestine

One of the primary concerns relates to the creation of a political, administrative and economic core in the Palestinian territories and a national agreement on the country's basic infrastructure, as a national backbone and carrying structure for a variety of urgent and future challenges, like mobility, water, economy, green areas, urban development and housing. In this regard, one of the most interesting experiments was Doug Suisman's proposal (2003-2005) to create a so-called 'formal structure for a Palestinian state (the arc)'. The arc was situated along the ridge-line, converting it into a visionary urban line that combines a variety of technical solutions trying to solve a set of urgent problems at once. The proposal, even though inspiring to professional circles, failed because of its political insensitivity and a design approach committing to design on an empty piece of paper, and not considering and competently dealing with historic, organically developed structures of a country. The second problem was the visionary approach on technical infrastructure while forgetting the urgent challenges and poor conditions the Palestinian cities and villages are faced with.
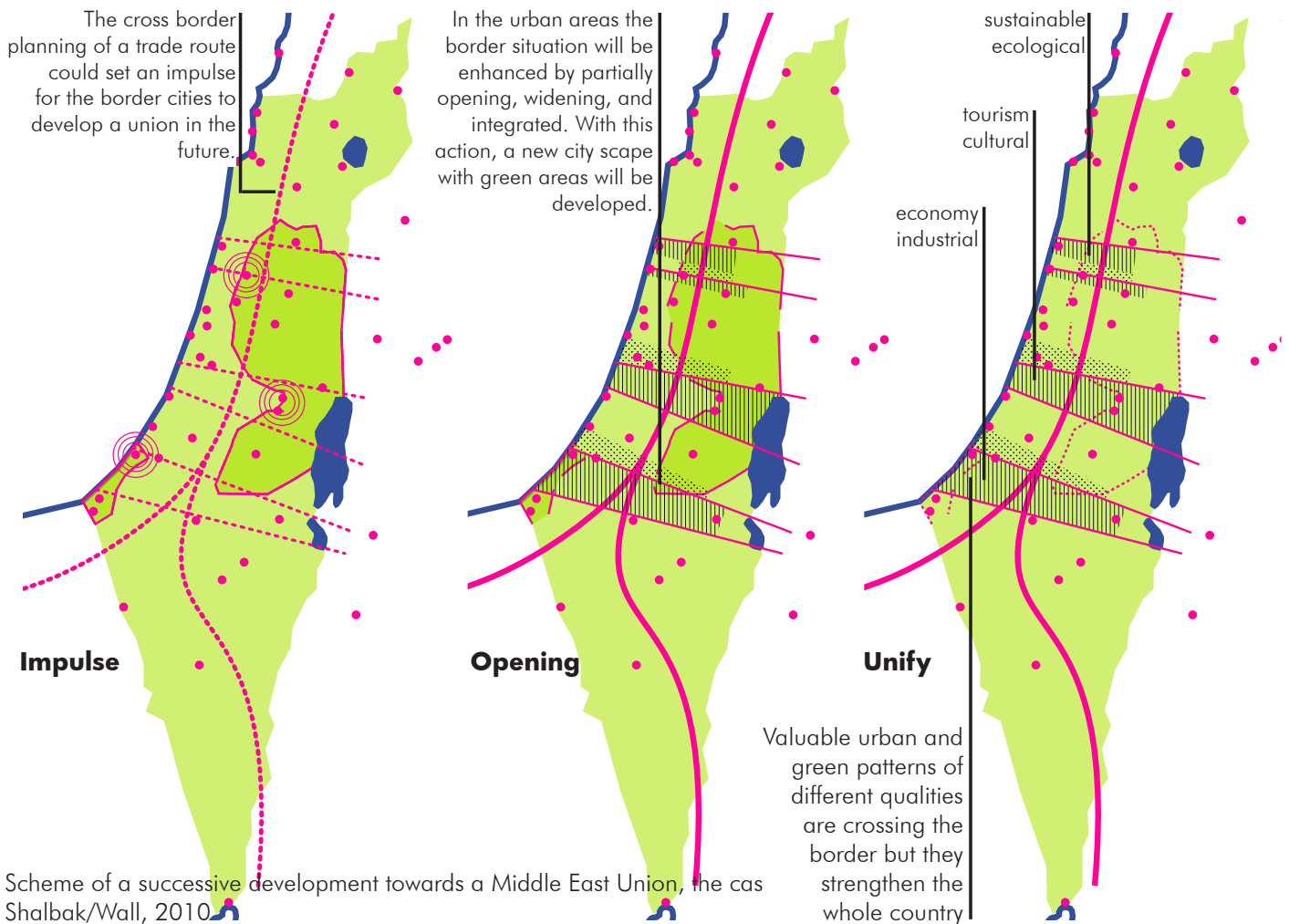
There is certainly an urgent need for a sustainable spatial planning strategy. This strategy should not only be derived from the Palestinian situation and depend on existing trends; it should also restructure the regulations for Palestinian housing and settlement construction and the priorities of public expenditure. It must consider and deal sufficiently with the scarcity of limited resources and ensure the long-awaited mobility in a country that has been fragmented and disconnected for decades. Consequently, this strategy has to offer approaches for a number of important short to long-term tasks. Additionally, it also has to provide answers to pressing urban and regional problems like the revaluation of the historic city centres, the high demand in housing, rapid population growth and high unemployment, as well as upgrading basic and critical infrastructure.

Sustainable or even resilient solutions have to be embedded in the historic and social context. A strong urban legacy points towards the importance of a new backbone, serving to build identity, unify Palestinians, resolve political disputes and reduce external dependencies - i.e. on Israel or Jordan. Instead of the visionary arc-line of the West Bank Mountains, the existing Palestinian cities should be the starting point and the focal point of the new strategy. However, the ridgeline may function as an orientation and connecting line for a multiple helix that shapes the urban DNA of urban legacy, diversity of different potentials and urban challenges. The term urban DNA refers to cities as places where positive and negative trends of urban heritage are concentrated, subsequently creating a high demand for new creative solutions. The country's decentralised urban structure and the specific urban organisation of the West-Bank and the Gaza strip support the future development of Palestine, in particular the East-West development of most West-Bank cities along the ridgeline and the linear connection of the cities in the Gaza Strip along the Mediterranean coastline. Facilitating the country's potentials, such a strategy can enable the continuation of the desired decentralization and linearity of urban and regional planning, and the appreciation of this structure by means of successive and coordinated measures.

Developing scenarios for the transformation of this part of the Middle East into an international science and innovation region has to be the core of such a strategy. Main features have to be (1) rebuilding a smart, renewable energy network; (2) efficient water use and transformation of the hydraulic system to serve as a basis for the renewal of a self-sufficient agriculture and healthy ecosystem; (3) renewal and expansion of a non-fossil fuel-dependent transport system; (4) modelling sustainable forms of urban space to rebuild climate-friendly urban and rural built up areas, able to promote a healthy community; and (5) reformulating education and communication to facilitate the region´s very rich cultural, natural and historic world-heritage as a basis of a smart, regional tourism industry.

Planning strategies have to provide sufficient answers, mechanisms and tools to develop resilient proposals to the above-mentioned five areas of innovation. They have to be embedded on three different spatial levels – on the inter-regional, regional and local levels. Transnational communities, such as Rafah and Jericho, will become of special significance, because transnational cooperation will be an important driver for the future development trajectory. Further, it would make sense to adopt sequenced development steps that sufficiently follow predetermined national priorities considering financial and political feasibility.

The cross border planning of a trade route could set an impulse for the border cities to develop a union in the future.

In the urban areas the border situation will be enhanced by partially opening, widening, and integrated. With this action, a new city scape with green areas will be developed.

sustainable
ecological

tourism
cultural

economy
industrial

Impulse

Opening

Unify

Valuable urban and green patterns of different qualities are crossing the border but they strengthen the whole country

Scheme of a successive development towards a Middle East Union, the cas Shalbak/Wall, 2010.

The local level is of great importance for the success of a long-term and comprehensive development strategy. It has to provide enough room for a small-steps-policy, i.e. for small urban interventions improving the living conditions in critical neighbourhoods, building-up urban and community resilience, the country's identity, and the residents' solidarity with their city. The current approach often considers small-scale projects as cosmetic measures. However more effort on small scale would be beneficial: smart, programmatic urban interventions and cultural projects have the potential to improve participation and facilitate the city as an urban lab, exploring how the cities and its people really tick and work. In turn, those urban regeneration projects could strengthen local neighbourhoods and put strong accents.

Small qualitative steps within an integrated overall strategy can achieve a substantive revitalization of living and work culture and consequently increasing quality of life. That includes the creation of public and accessible, recreational green spaces, pedestrian areas, cultural objects, schools and kindergartens, application of technological innovations in diverse multi-scale pro-

jects. Another important task is the development and implementation of a sustainable and operational mobility system: the existing road infrastructure should be facilitated in a way that the main roads will not pass the city centres, supporting the creation of car-free city centres and a linear urban development along a new axis. The first step towards excellent and modern mobility conditions could be the establishment of a direct connection between cities by launching and expanding a modern public transport network, paired with a medium- to long-term project of a railway line.

For the future of the country it is important to develop regional planning concepts that would be resilient enough to stimulate socio-economical, infrastructural and possibly, also a political reunification of the historical country. Promoting common future projects in border areas with the surrounding countries, e.g. related to energy cooperation, could stimulate regional win-win situations and open a window of opportunity for international urbanism – and who knows – maybe a successive movement towards a Middle East Union.

Connecting Palestinian cities and citizens

A multi-scale vision for an integrated urban network in the West Bank

Sebastien Goethals

High walls on each side flank the Highway from Jerusalem to Bethlehem: concrete walls that seem more like noise barriers than separation walls. Those highways, called Apartheid-boulevards by the Palestinians, who are not allowed to use them, cause major detours, long travel times and uncertainty.

Beyond the contextual complexity of the West Bank and its division in to A, B, C zones that limits the mobility and the local economy, several issues related to the current rapid urbanization in Palestinian cities have been pointed out:

- There is a clear lack of urban centralities, existing or emerging, that catalyse economic growth and social cohesion;
- The nature of the urban development process doesn't follow specific spatial directions;
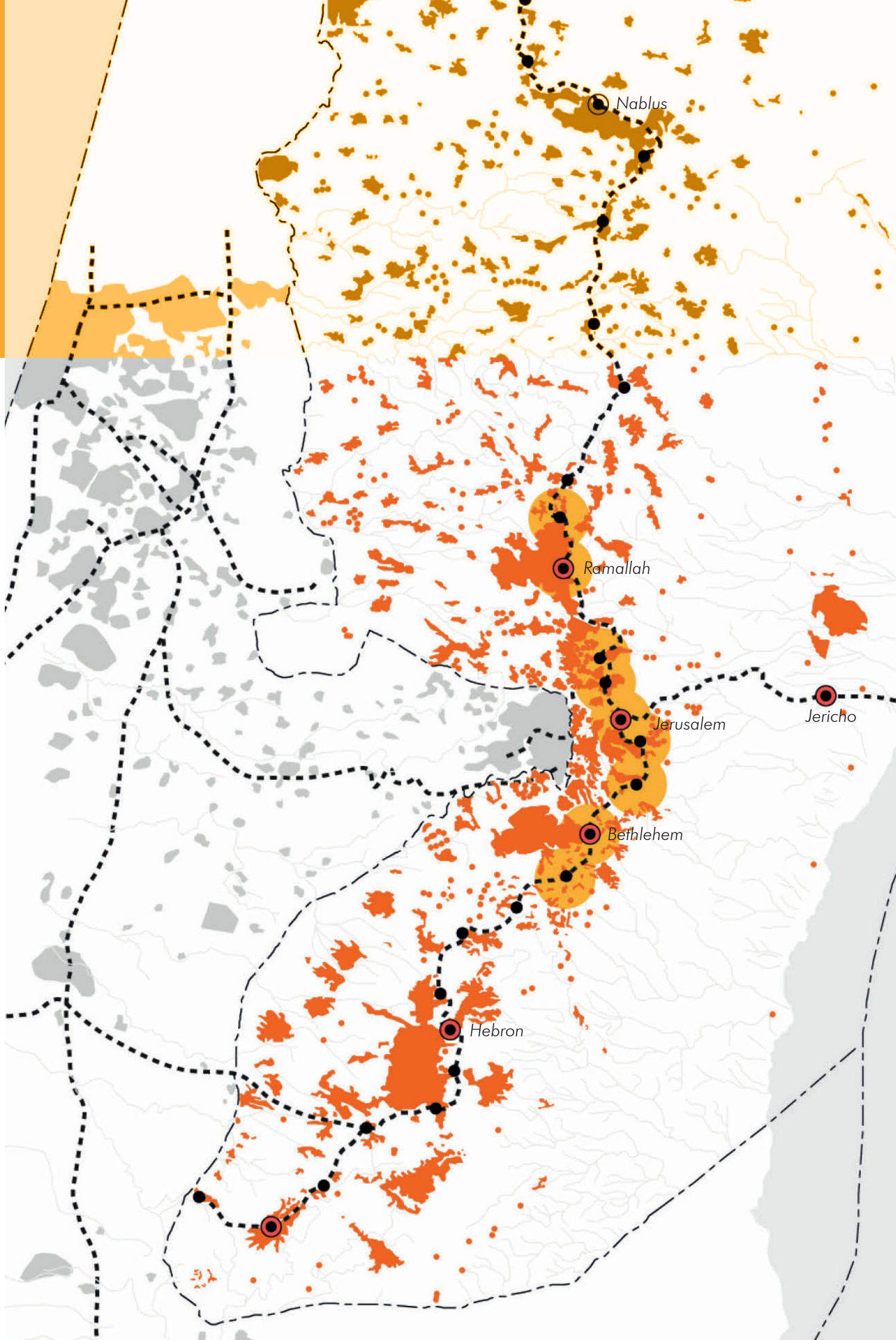- The current process of sprawled urbanization is mostly driven by residential projects in areas disconnected from economy;
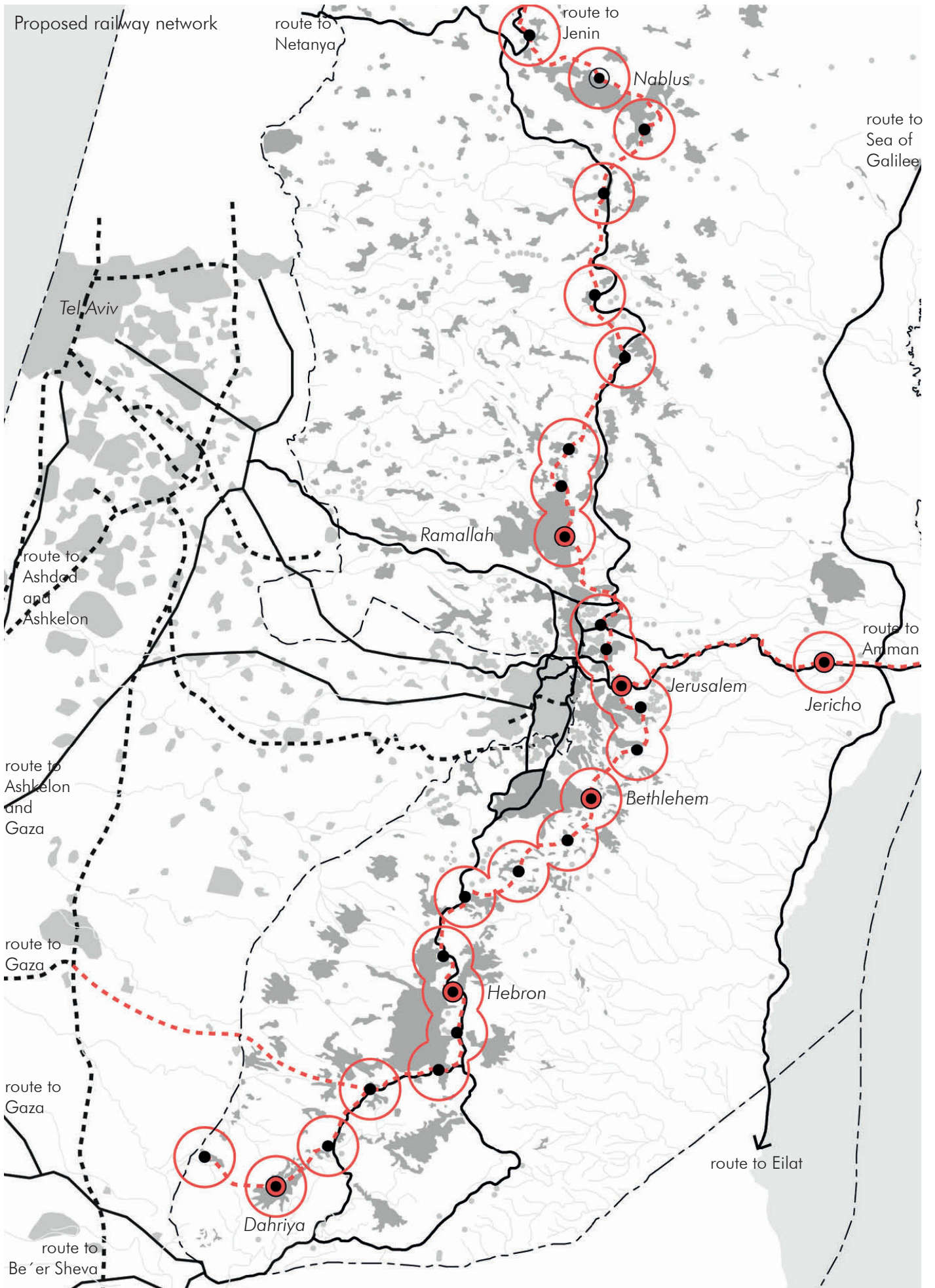- There is no clear strategy and management about urban transport and mobility.

On the regional scale a railway system that connects the cities of the Metropolitan Region seems a suitable solution, even though the geomorphology and given natural preconditions are more difficult than in other regions. During the planning process of the railway system at the regional level, it is essential to work in parallel with a spatial strategy on the city level that will integrate the interaction between the new railway station and the urban development process. Not only urban centralities must be identified and localized but also the connectivity between them and the new railway station should be planned to achieve urban liveability through high quality public spaces and the implementation of complete, green streets. In order to propose an adapted response to the lack of mobility of Palestinians in the context of the West Bank, a multi-scale approach that links urban and regional accessibility and connectivity and combines them with economic and urban development has been addressed. In the case of the West Bank, an early coordination between regional and urban development planning is essential in order to successfully integrate Palestinian cities in a metropolitan region. The regional railway system, which is the backbone of the Metropolitan Area, should be paired up with strategic city planning that integrates the railway infrastructure with a multi-modal urban transport network and suitable urban mobility plans. Together, both would create a fruitful and beneficial approach on the city level that mutually adds up different qualities. This integration is important to ensure that single interventions, like infrastructure provisions, do not remain as stand-alones but blend well into a bigger structure that is also linked to other policy and urban planning domains (housing, urban green, public spaces).

The achievement of a multimodal transport system is based on a regional railway network combined with local (urban) transport modes and smart mobility services connecting the railway stations with the urban centralities and communities

Nablus

Ramallah

Jerusalem

Jericho

Bethlehem

Hebron

Proposed railway network

route to
Netanya

route to
Jenin

Nablus

route to
Sea of
Galilee

route to
Ashdod
and
Ashkelon

Tel Aviv

Ramallah

route to
Ashkelon
and
Gaza

Jerusalem

route to
Amman

Jericho

route to
Gaza

Bethlehem

route to
Gaza

Hebron

route to
Be´er Sheva

Dahriya

route to Eilat

Flanking walls and restrictive access to the Israeli Highways are serious mobility barriers and development impediments for Palestinian communities

that support stronger spatial cohesion. Building up spatial cohesion and structure for Palestine needs a suitable phasing at different levels.

We propose to build transit oriented spatial structures for Palestinian cities, based on multimodal transport connectivity, multifunctional centralities, intensification of urban linkages and preservation of green areas from sprawled urbanization, where single features can be independently implemented, without waiting for the utilization of the railway infrastructure, and therefore incrementally building up to spatial coherence. One way to achieve spatial coherence could be the following: (1) Combining polycentric city planning with transit oriented development can create a positive environment when it is connected on lower scale to complete streets, green and public spaces. This combination offers a vibrant context for social cohesion, job accessibility, urban entrepreneurship, green

spaces for everyone, smart mobility and smart parking management. (2) This novel urban structure provides an active urban environment that will quickly connect to the new railway stations once the infrastructure is achieved. The train station as new urban nodes and the attractive urban environment will form new focal points that trigger regional cohesion at the economic and social levels. (3) Smart and innovative urban mobility appears here as a tool for better quality of life, improved conditions for economic activities and a more elaborated identity for Palestinian cities and communities.

Get connected - stay in touch with the capital

Our first exercise of implementation of the railway infrastructure at the regional level taught us that Jerusalem, Ramallah and Bethlehem potentially belong to the same metropolitan area, if a suitable transport system connects the different

urban patterns and the three major cities Jerusalem, Ramallah and Bethlehem. This North-South oriented Metropolitan Region needs to be connected by a sustainable transport system in which the railway plays an important role for the metropolitan mobility but also for an integrated spatial organization of urban growth. The 'double finger plan' embeds the transit ring axis that is circling Jerusalem into an urban green infrastructure network: the fingers of the land hand (brown) are 4 main axes of urban development, that are completed by green infrastructure, which are the fingers of the right hand (green). The integration of urban development along the mobility axis and green infrastructure is forging the cornerstones of the future sustainable development of the city.

In such a scenario, the railway plays a multiple role at the regional and the metropolitan scales, namely (1) the spatial organization

of urban growth for Jerusalem, Ramallah and Bethlehem together; (2) a metropolitan dimension to Jerusalem's development, and (3) the emergence of a national and international transport hub.

The new railway infrastructure running around Jerusalem-East is a combination of a transit ring axis and a green belt for the agglomeration. The spatial planning strategy related to the railway system in Jerusalem leads to the achievement of a "double fingerplan" that combines urban development with the provision of a suitable urban green infrastructure, acting as a framework for sustainable city development.

The finger plan links Jerusalem downtown with the three main train stations. These urban linkages are "axes of urban intensification" connecting Palestinian communities to each other and to the economic activities. Tramways and BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) run along these avenues to connect the city centre and the regional train stations. Urban transit stations along these avenues will quickly become meeting places and, beyond that, economic and social hubs of dynamism connected to the rest of the city and to other cities. Urban intensification along the axes and around the train stations, also mean mixed-used and transit oriented densification, which can become a reference for future urban development in Jerusalem. Complementary to the urban linkages, the green fingers are securing the natural heritage, recreational green, and natural areas. The three train stations serve as metropolitan gates that are bundling the green and brown linkages

and function as economic hubs in the greater Metropolitan Region. "Green Fingerplan", fitting with the natural relief, can be planned between the urban linkages, in order to combine urban intensification and land preservation for recreational green spaces and natural areas. The three metropolitan gates combine economic hubs of high density and are linked to surrounding green spaces. The opportunity of tramway lines and stations is not only to improve accessibility and urban development. A tramway can also ride on railway-tracks and its network can be extended to the peripheral areas without additional investment. This hybrid solution, called tram-train, has been successfully developed in Karlsruhe (Germany), where existing suburban villages found a new accessibility to the central city.

Jerusalem Fingerplan concept
The Fingerplan concept proposes 4 axes of urban densification and development passing by Shu'fat, Al Za'yim, Al-'Eizariya and Al-Shaykh Sa'd connecting the city centre and the 3 new train stations by tramway or BRT. The new railway is combined with a green belt and 3 sub-centres for Jerusalem

Fact Box 2: Karlsruhe Tram-Train (Germany)
The Karlsruhe "tram-train" system aims to combine tramways or light rail and regional trains on the same set of tracks in order to connect the central city and its peripheral rural areas within one integrated transport network. By switching from urban streets to regional railways and from low speed to higher speed, the tram-trains connect the city centre to both the urban agglomeration and rural areas around Karlsruhe. The principles of the tram-train have been applied and adapted to several other cities such as Strasbourg (France), San Diego (USA) and Adelaide (Australia.)

Karlsruhe main terminal: tram and train using the same infrastructure in dual-mode tram-train system

Source: Gregorius Mundus, Creative Commons

The vision map also shows that the new Eastern railway opens the opportunity to connect with the existing Western railway system as a further step, in order to achieve a completed, national and international railway network.

Connectivity, identity and diversity for Ramallah

The current process of urbanization in Ramallah doesn't provide the city with a spatial structure and urban fabric that forms a distinctive design character and urban identity. A smart and phased implementation of the new railway system that is embedded in an innovative multimodal transport system and a pedestrian friendly streetscape could bring the city development to another level. In fact, Ramallah's urban development needs to be accompanied by the pursuit of a stronger urban identity. Ramallah has the potential to become a place for innovation, knowledge and smart economy. The advantages, weaknesses and challenges of the city make it an ideal urban laboratory to think and build the Palestinian city of tomorrow. Innovative urban mobility is a tool to build a smart city, where people feel inspired and connected to each other and to the rest of the world. The new train station on the Eastern edge of Ramallah, between Kafr' Aqb and Al-Bireh, will be connected to Ramallah's city centre with different transport modes that are adapted to the existing conditions, i.e. Ramallah's hilly topography. Trains, city buses and urban cable cars are connecting the city with the multimodal transport hub, which has the potential for an economic hub and subsequently for the emergence of an urban sub-centre.

Fact Box 3: Cable Propelled Transit

Urban transit cable cars or "Cable Propelled Transit" (CPT) is a transit system that has been developed in several hilly and populated cities in South America in order to respond to growing chaotic urban traffic conditions, noise and pollution between the city centre and the hilly suburbs. The combination of the traditional transit systems in flat urban areas and transit cable cars in hilly and isolated areas has permitted cities like Medellin (Colombia) to provide lower income populations with accessibility to the economic core of the city and dramatically reduced crime rates. A smart combination with other transport modes and urban development is a key factor for the success of such systems.

Source: Wikimedia, Creative Commons

In Medellin (Colombia) a cable car is connecting different communities of the city

Accessible, barrier free cable cars can contribute to inclusive urban mobility
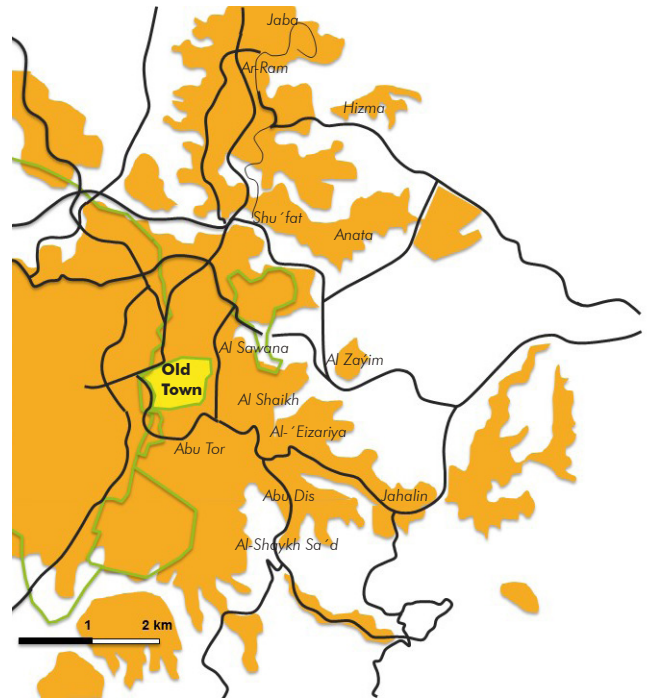
Source: Doppelmayr.com

Street life

Developing the public transport and improving the mobility of Ramallah citizens by a dense web of different opportunities for moving through the city also means giving more space to pedestrians and urban street life in city centre. The integrated supply of innovative transport services like urban cable cars and the multiple possibilities offered by smart mobility applications help to mitigate the presence of the car in the city centre and give more space to pedestrians, street merchants, pocket parks and equal access to mobility. Multimodal stations that integrate e-bike parking, cable cars, buses and pedestrian connections with real-time infor-

mation will quickly become outstanding landmarks for the city of Ramallah and future sub-centres in a logic of polycentric development. Ramallah's hilly topography demands innovative solutions that easily connect the different neighbourhoods and establish new urban connections and linkages. The cable car brings the advantage to directly connect communities and neighbourhoods which are naturally disconnected by topography. Moreover, Ramallah needs bigger green spaces and more pocket parks. We propose to give to the inhabitants a large green space that would replace the former airport strip in the South.
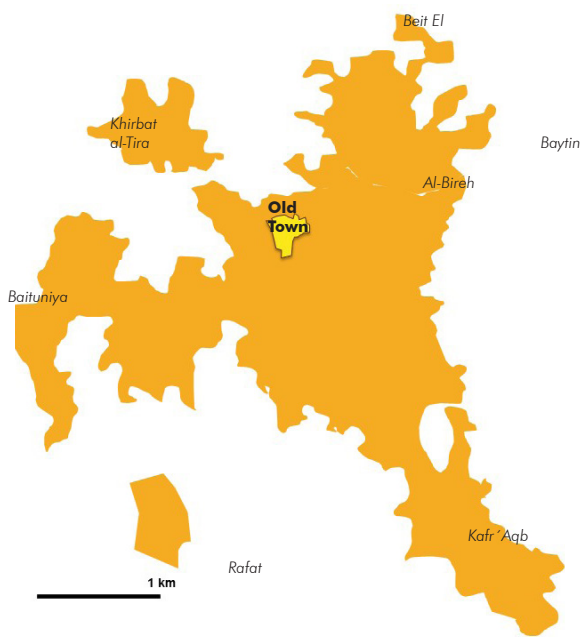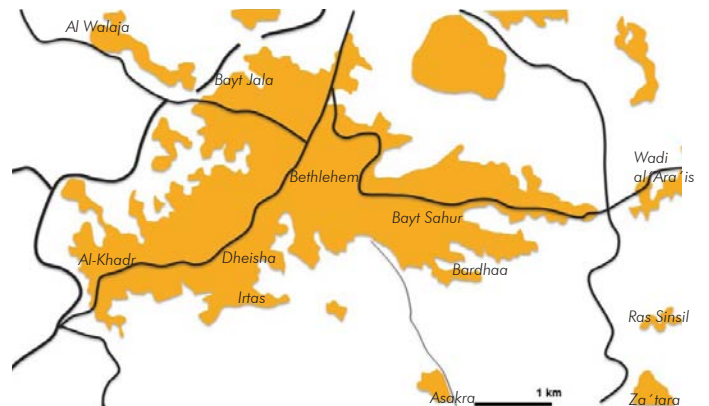
Jerusalem — built-up area

Jaba
Ar-Ram
Hizma
Shu´fat
Anata
Green Line by the 1949 Armistice Agreements
Al Sawana
Al Zaÿim
Old Town
Al Shaikh
Abu Tor
Al-´Eizariya
Abu Dis
Jahalin
Al-Shaykh Sa´d
1   2 km

built-up area

Jerusalem — road network

Jaba
Ar-Ram
Hizma
Shu´fat
Anata
Al Sawana
Al Zaÿim
Old Town
Al Shaikh
Abu Tor
Al-´Eizariya
Abu Dis
Jahalin
Al-Shaykh Sa´d
1   2 km

road network

Ramallah — built-up area

Beit El
Khirbat al-Tira
Baytin
Al-Bireh
Old Town
Baituniya
Kafr ´Aqb
Rafat
1 km

built-up area

Ramallah — road network

Beit El
Khirbat al-Tira
Baytin
Al-Bireh
Old Town
Baituniya
Kafr ´Aqb
Rafat
1 km
former airport

road network

Bethlehem — built-up area
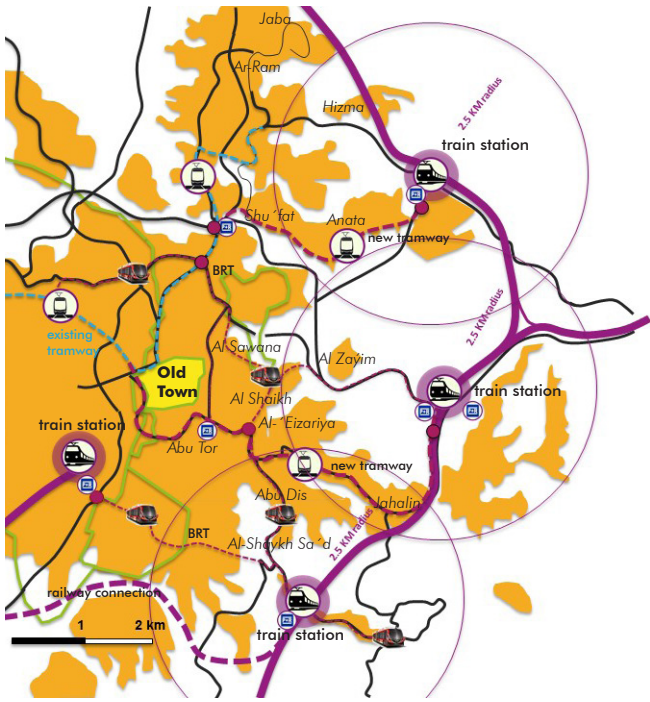
Al Walaja
Bayt Jala
Bethlehem
Bayt Sahur
Al-Khadr
Dheisha
Bardhaa
Irtas
Asakra
1 km

built-up area

Bethlehem — road network

Al Walaja
Bayt Jala
Bethlehem
Wadi al ´Ara´is
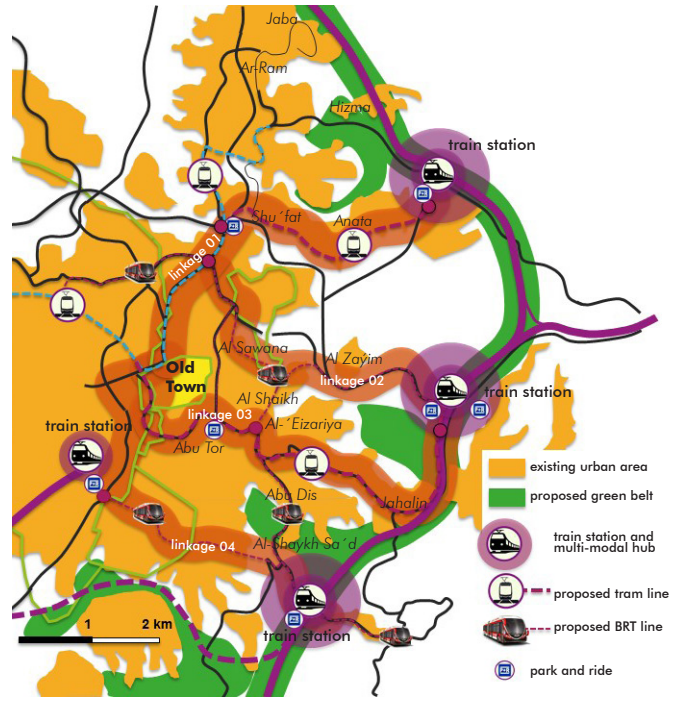Bayt Sahur
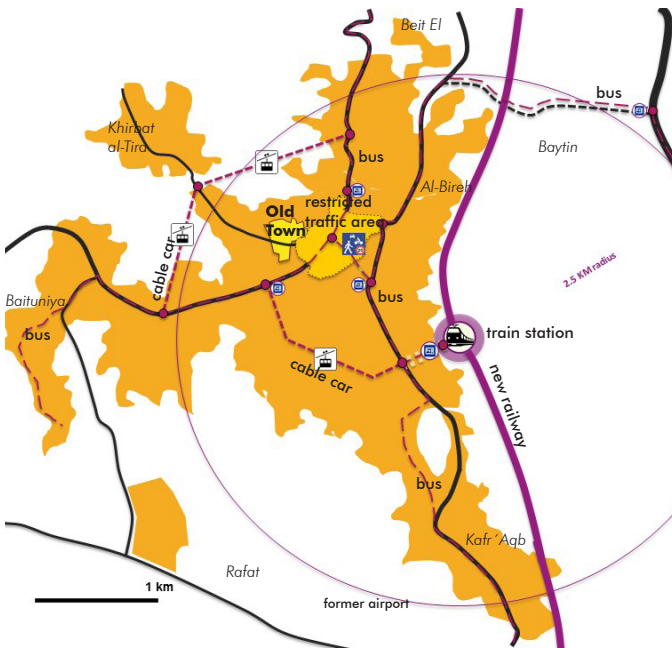Al-Khadr
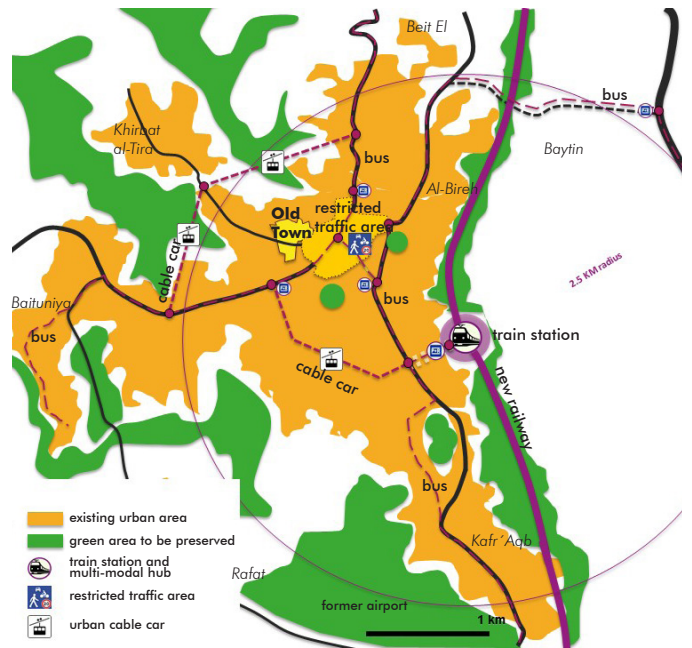Dheisha
Bardhaa
Irtas
Ras Sinsil
Asakra
Za´tara
1 km

road network

public transport

vision with urban densification axis and green infrastructure

existing urban area
proposed green belt
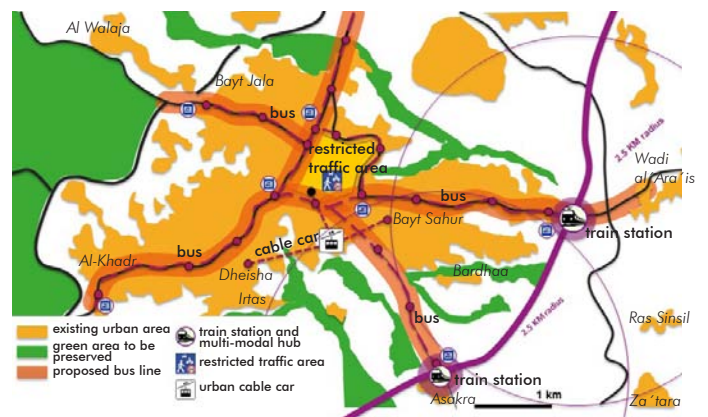train station and multi-modal hub
proposed tram line
proposed BRT line
park and ride

public transport

vision with green infrastructure

existing urban area
green area to be preserved
train station and multi-modal hub
restricted traffic area
urban cable car

public transport

vision with urban densification axis and green infrastructure

existing urban area
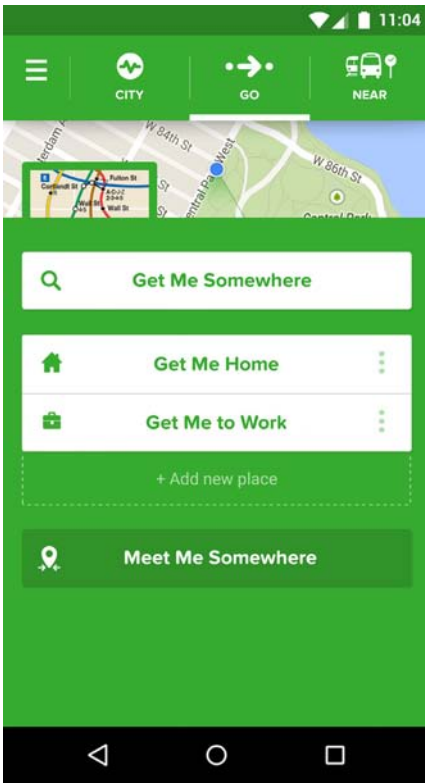green area to be preserved
proposed bus line
train station and multi-modal hub
restricted traffic area
urban cable car
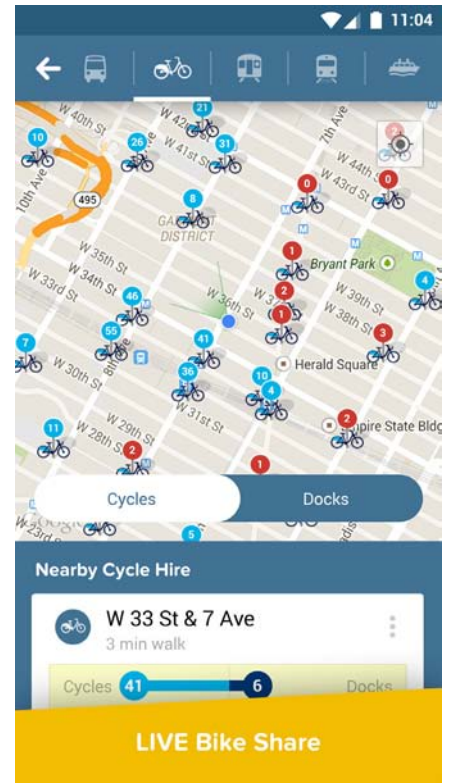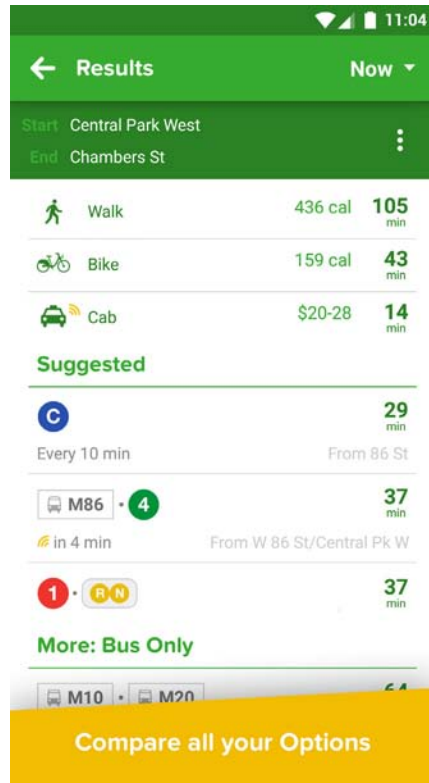
Mobility Apps like Citymapper support citizens to make smart mobility choices (Source: citymapper.com).

Moving smarter with more options and real-time information

Smart mobility applications like Citymapper support citizens to choose the right transport mode and improve individually and collectively their accessibility to services, shops, work and people. Traditional transport stations are windows of opportunity to develop sharing hubs where people share public spaces, transport modes, co-working spaces and parking.

Stay connected in Bethlehem

Bethlehem acts as the southern cornerstone of the Metropolitan Region, housing 26.000 inhabitants. Outside its historical centre, Bethlehem is characterized by a trend of sprawled urbanization following topographic issues. Road 60 surrounds the Western Part (Beït Jala and al-Khadr) of the agglomeration. The route of the railway proposal runs on the Eastern edge

of the agglomeration, around Bayt Sahur. One main train station will be located in Beit Sahour and a local one close to Asakra. Four urban axes of intensification are identified along existing roads and avenues that can support a local bus network well connected to the train stations. These axes of intensification share the same principles with the finger-plan for Jerusalem. City buses will be connected to cable car connections around the city centre in order to connect communities separated by the hilly relief. This vision of infrastructure improvement provides a spatial framework for Bethlehem's urban development. Following the same direction as Ramallah's vision, the city centre is better protected from car traffic and parking, and becomes more friendly to pedestrians with new opportunities for community oriented development.

Preserve and reconnect Jericho

Considered as one of the most ancient inhabited towns of the world, Jericho has now a population of 27.000 with an economy mostly oriented to tourism and agriculture. Its world-known heritage and its proximity to the Dead Sea make it the first tourism destination of Palestine. Developing and connecting Jericho will bring several challenges and threats on the preservation of its historical characteristics and agricultural land preservation if no integrated vision comes upstream. A regional railway connecting Jerusalem and Amman will not only better integrate Palestine with the Middle East but also connect Jericho to the metropolitan area of Jerusalem, Ramallah and Bethlehem. By running parallel to the route of Road 1, the railway line will be completed by a train station located at 5 km on the South of Jericho's centre. The location of this train station will permit the development
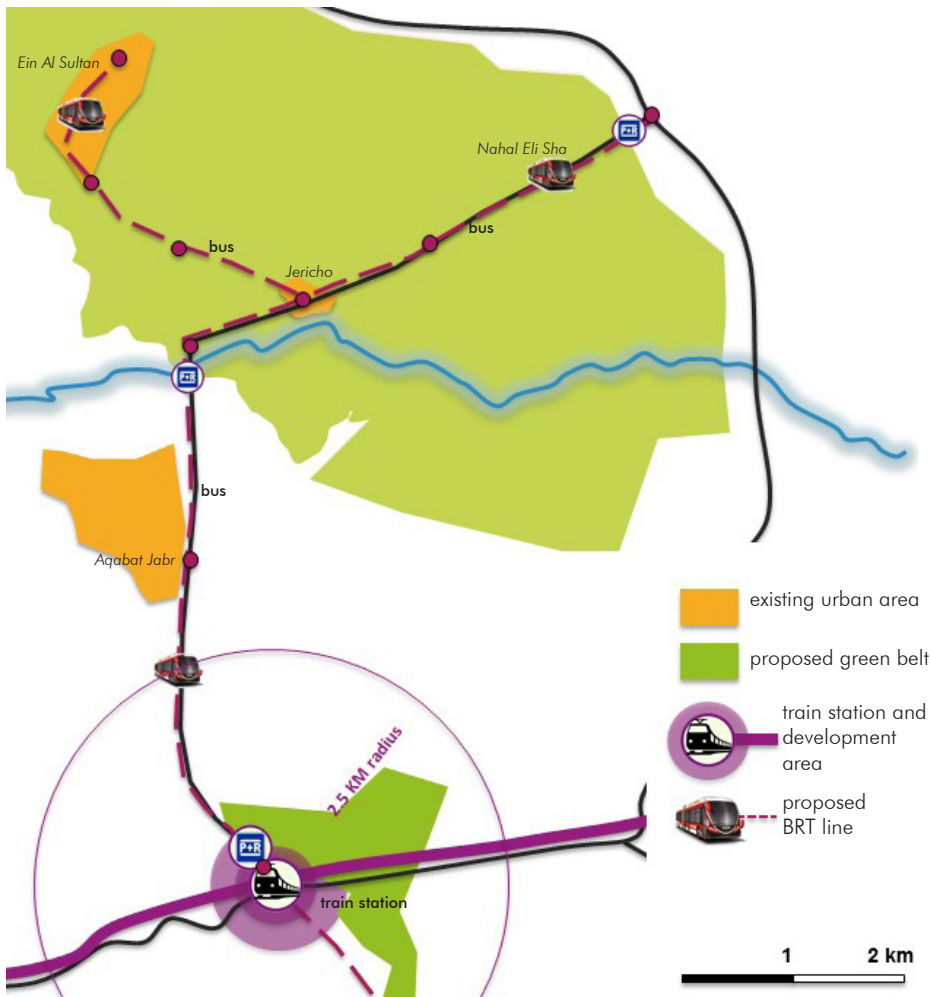
Vision for Jericho with public transport and green infrastructure.

of a new core of development, preventing the alteration of Jericho's heritage and agriculture, where the train station will play a role of local hub redistributing tourist and commuter flows to the city and to the Dead Sea.

Connecting Palestine

Following a multi-scaled approach of urban and regional development, the railway network acts as cement and a backbone full of new opportunities for development, connectivity and innovation for Palestinian cities and citizens. It provides clear directions for a sustainable urban development in Jerusalem, Ramallah, Bethlehem and Jericho, gives a metropolitan dimension to the region and offers Jerusalem the role of an international trans-

port hub, connecting countries and cities of the Middle-East. This rail oriented urban development, coordinated at the national level, gives new perspectives of development for cities like Jericho, Nablus and Hebron, with opportunities of extension to Amman and beyond. The main factor of success for such a rail network will be to integrate the train stations well in the development process of each city at the earliest possible stage of the planning and the implementation of infrastructure systems, with a suitable approach for urban mobility. Connecting Palestinian cities is about connecting people, communities, and economic, cultural and social activities at every level of the Palestinian society and territory.

Every journey starts with a walk

Katharina Gugerell

Every journey starts with a walk, no matter if you go to the airport for a business trip or just to school or to pay a visit to family – every journey starts with a walk, and every walk starts with stepping out of the door into the streets and public open spaces of our cities. In recent years, there has been a growing demand on cities to increase the quality of public open spaces and streets for the citizens' well-being and to boost the overall quality of the urban environment. Creating Healthy Cities, advocated by the WHO, focuses on sustainable urban (re) development that improves the physical environment, empowers local and neighbourhood communities to take decisions concerning their public-private well-being and provides infrastructure to meet the basic needs (water, shelter, safety, work, infrastructure) of all urban communities.

Streets for people in healthy cities

Strolling through Ramallah downtown – a bustling, lively city centre with a wide range and overlap of social activities that make Ramallah so lively and colourful. People doing grocery and window-shopping, street vendors offering their goods and services, kids running home from school. However, in Ramallah the car is the king and even with the huge amount of social and commercial activities in Ramallah downtown, the people and city life are squeezed between cars and on narrow sidewalks. Leaving the city centre and moving towards the peripheral areas, walking the streets gets more difficult: sidewalks are missing or blocked by trees that are not pruned high enough, insufficient shading, lack of safe street crossings, cars parking on sidewalks and a speedy motorist traffic makes walking through Ramallah of more an adventure race. Research shows that walkable cities are not only improving the overall quality of the city but are also a contribution to improving access to and through the city and it's various services especially for women, children and elderly people.

City streets are multi-layered/multi-functional, linear open spaces embedding pathways, urban transportation, venue for formal and informal trade, extension of the private sphere and place for social activities. Complete streets, together with a patchwork of various open spaces (parks, plazas) and recreational green spaces on different scales (block, neighbourhood, district, city) create an urban green infrastructure network. The people are bringing the city to life by using its green infrastructure network for their daily activities and active well-being in a healthy city. Complete streets are prime urban design features for healthy cities, which promote active lifestyle and support the attempt to decrease health care costs as a preventive strategy and keeping people active. Apart from public health perspective, complete/multi-layered streets drop air and noise pollution and contribute to community development and the identity of competitive cities.

Eyes on Ramallah

While there are a couple of well-designed neighbourhood parks and playgrounds like Yusef Quadura park, the access and links to the surrounding catchment neighbourhoods are insufficient and are currently not providing safe access to open spaces. A network of complete streets that link different public open spaces, social infrastructure (like schools or community centres) with Ramallah downtown and the mobility hubs (bus terminal or future train station) forges a first basic network for "slow" traffic modes, like biking and walking. And even more important is, that a network of different open spaces and complete streets are an important contribution and basis for a healthy, attractive city. A phased design proposal, with little steps and incremental implementation, can foresee phasing in different stages: the basic network with the main city's arteries of complete streets is a complementary intervention on micro scale to the suggested urban transportation and regional mobility networks and should be implemented
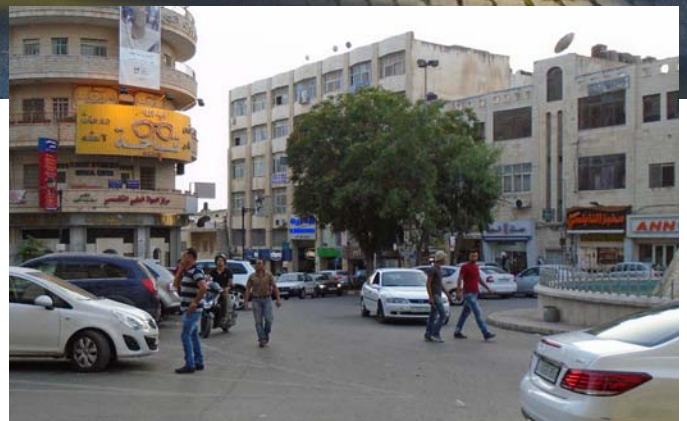
in a short term period (max. 5 years). In a mid- to long-term perspective, the network can be incrementally extended and condensed into a fine meshed fabric. The advantages of phased implementation and small-step design strategies, are that they allow to a better allocation of costs and the opportunity to test and validate the first phase, and based on the new urban movement patterns, to design subsequent phases that are adapted to changing conditions.

A city on the eye level

Apart from complete streets as linear open spaces that connect different focal points in the city, also in the city centre existing sidewalks, remaining areas and the conversion of carefully selected parking lots to spaces for people, is part of spatial politics that focuses on people and favours social activities in the public realm over storage space for cars. Re-organising and retrofitting public space and streets from car-oriented towards people-oriented, especially in the city centre, is a practise that many successful cities like New York, Vienna, Shanghai or Abu Dhabi are actively pushing in their

urban agendas. While New York gave Times Square back to the people, Abu Dhabi started to strongly focus on the design quality of streets and is not starting to implement complete street designs that also reshapes the urban mobility patterns away from cars. They expect relieved congestion and the creation of complete neighbourhoods with inviting open spaces, transit and commercial facilities. The example of Arafat Square also proves that these redesigns and small interventions work.

Yaser Arafat Square is a square in Ramallah downtown, used as a central roundabout in the inner city, but bearing potential to be a fantastic inner city square. Six

streets are flowing into the square, which is bordered by a closed building edge of mixed-use buildings. At the southern part, parking lots and flowerbeds are building transition zones between moving traffic. A diverse building edge with shopping windows builds the urban canvas for the rich multi-layered patchwork of social activities. The small-scale intervention proposes to open up the southern part of the square by combining the parking lots, flower beds, and re-attribute them to the square. Hard borders between the pedestrian part and the road are preventing car-drivers from continuing the habit to use all available space in the city as parking lots. Trees are providing shade, mitigating heat, and supplying a green roof. This kind of micro-scale re-designs are comparatively inexpensive and economic interventions that improve the public open space. Research shows that the amount of space, safety, a lively building edge in the ground floor (windows, shops, etc.) that connects the inside of the buildings with the public space, urban furniture and green features support public life and commercial activities. Reducing the cross-section of streets also reduces the pace of traffic which makes it a safer environment for pedestrians and for other car drivers.

Active land policy for Palestinian green cities of tomorrow!

Ramallah shows a swift development and the urban environment is constantly changing and adapting to internal and external conditions. Spatial growth of cities is currently rather confined, which makes inner densification a consequence. Walking through Ramallah you can see many construction skeletons and empty shells next to empty overgrown plots. Considering the vivid urban growth, it is important for the city to take an active role in securing spaces to establish a network of public open spaces (green spaces, playgrounds, sport fields, etc.) on different scales: while on the neighbourhood scale small lots and gap sites are sufficient for micro-places. On the city scale it is import to secure bigger areas to establish a coherent green infrastructure. Vivid real estate development and quick revenues, but also the most intensive focus on the regional and trans-regional scale, can be tempting to postpone active urban land policy and securing sites for public interest on urban level. Securing spaces for future public use is an important public and political task with major impact on the future quality of the city.

Fact Box 4: Complete Streets
Complete streets are designed for all age-groups and all modes of urban mobility: pedestrians, bicycles, transit users, people with disabilities are thought about already in the design process. Complete streets are safe for pedestrians and cyclists; make it easy to cross streets, walk along towards the next train or bus station or bike to school or work. Streets turn from transportation networks to community spaces that embed all modes of urban transportation and make streets a safer urban place, also for motorists. It includes walkable, short distances and pedestrian friendly sidewalks with urban furniture and greenery (trees) that provide shading, BRT systems (incl. dedicated bus lines, bus shelters, etc.) and traffic calming measures.

Tactical urbanism is an umbrella term that pools different activities and interventions on the neighbourhood scale which aim to develop local solutions for spatial problems and to establish and improve local communities by providing them with space. The local communities plan and decide together with people from planning authorities on how to use the space and what makes sense in their neighbourhood. Different case studies all over the world show, that these temporary spaces are used in a broad variety: community gardens, street vending, food trucks, meeting places – even when a city shuts down the traffic in the entire city for one day and give back the city to its people, as Paris did on September 27 "une journee sans voiture". Another good example is Bogota (Colombia) where car traffic is locked-out in the inner-city on Sundays to promote healthy cities, give more space to the residents and encourage sustainable modes of urban mobility. In an interview with Yes!Magazine, Bogota's former major Peñalosa explained his strong approach to improving the city and its public realm: "If we (…) measure our success or failure as a society in terms of income, we would have to classify ourselves as losers until the end of time. (…) With our limited resources, we have to invent other ways to

measure success. This might mean that all kids have access to sports facilities, libraries, parks, schools, nurseries. (…) We all need to see other people," he says. "We need to see green. Wealthy people can do that at clubs and private facilities. But most people can only do it in public squares, parks, libraries, sidewalks, greenways, public transit."

Many international case studies like in Sheffield (UK), Vienna (Austria) or Beirut (Lebanon), show that the temporary use of empty plots can trigger and boost community development and can offer temporary remedy to an undersupply of public open spaces and do not interfere with property rights or devaluation of property. The role of cities and municipalities in these processes is crucial: on the one hand, to make empty plots available (i.e. as intermediary organisation, financial support, etc.) and negotiate usage agreements between the landlord and the local community, and secondly, to support the local communities in developing participatory place-based solutions that fit the needs of the residents and the local conditions.

Basic toolkit to develop and design liveable inclusive cities

Green
Street trees, rain-gardens, permeable surfaces with plants and soils collect rainwater to support storm water management and urban environmental process and therefore, mitigate urban heat islands. Collected water can be re-used for maintenance of urban green infrastructure. Green design elements support the usability of the city for slow, non-motorized traffic - improves the living environment and contributes to public health.

Fair shared
Streets are fairly shared by all urban users and are not dominated by cars. Less cars need less space for parking – that means actively incorporating pedestrians, children-men-women of all ages and people with disabilities, bicyclists, transit users and motor vehicle drivers. Street space is retrofitted to the human scale and re-allocated to all users.

Smart shared
Intelligent apps (like citymapper), sharing systems, and social networks are support smart and shared mobility solutions (i.e. ride-sharing) and encouraging citizens to make smart and sustainable decisions and mobility choices. Using existing platforms like Facebook assists implementation because their usage is already part of many people's daily routines. Digital media allows real-time opportunities, like real-time-ridesharing or dynamic carpooling. Smart solutions not only apply for passenger mobility but also for smart freight or even people/freight solutions, which can make societally desirable transport options economically viable, for example in rural areas.

Healthy and active
Aside from access to clean water, sanitation and to health care, urban design actively supports healthy lifestyles and public health: green infrastructure, biking lanes, walkable distances and a network of complete streets that connect communities with social infrastructure, mobility hubs and the different communities, stimulating daily exercise as part of the everyday routine. Active cities and citizens contribute to public health.

Making places better together
Co-design and participatory planning with local communities and citizens activate people and communities as experts of their living environments. Design solutions have to be rooted in a holistic understanding of cultural, societal and usage scenarios that users encounter in their everyday lives. Co-design strategies do not only result in better design solutions but also they activate local communities, stimulating social innovation and community building.

Create space with architecture

Architecture creates the public realm as common urban space. The buildings frame streets, plazas and open spaces: soft and interactive edges especially in the ground floor zones, accessible from the street in front of the building, varied and mixed functions and small units create attractive and inviting urban environments.

Walk the city

The most important urban scale is the human scale. A city on a human scale has a vibrant walking environment equipped with enough space to comfortably walk distances that are accessible for all and in direct connection with the building edges. Sidewalks are zoned in frontage zones, pedestrian zones, green-scape/furniture zone and curb zone. Greenscapes provide a buffer between pedestrian and adjacent street traffic. When space is limited, bike-lanes and cars parked in parallel with the sidewalks can be used as buffers. In newly developed areas, designs should accommodate space for sidewalks and generous green-scapes.
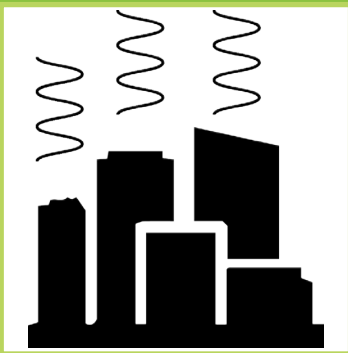
Cooling the city

Trees reduce energy use by shading buildings and increase the quality of public open spaces and streets by cooling the air by transpiration. Aside from environmental benefits, preference surveys show that retail and commerce are profiting from green and well-maintained environments. Research on urban heat islands show that greenery and especially trees substantially contribute to reducing air temperature, with street trees producing the most cooling per unit. Aside, trees also improve air quality by capturing pollutants and dust particles in the canopy.

Vegetated stormwater management

Healthy greenery, vegetation and porous soils significantly increase the amount of rain that is filtered in the groundwater system, instead of running off into storm water drainage systems or causing local flooding. Aside from increased groundwater recharge and potential project savings by green storm-water management that mimics natural systems, studies show that property values are higher in areas with water features, open spaces, good greenery as well as attractive, green street networks.

Hierarchical street network

A hierarchical network assembled by different types of streets create the urban mobility net. Street design has to go beyond functional planning of arterial, collector and local roads. It has to take into consideration the local neighbourhood, land-use and social usages as well as the competing demands of different transportation modes. Different street types are promoting different users and actors, design elements based on the specific spatial, social and economic context. A well-designed and implemented street network supports a compact city and short distances for pedestrians, non-motorized users and balances trade-offs.
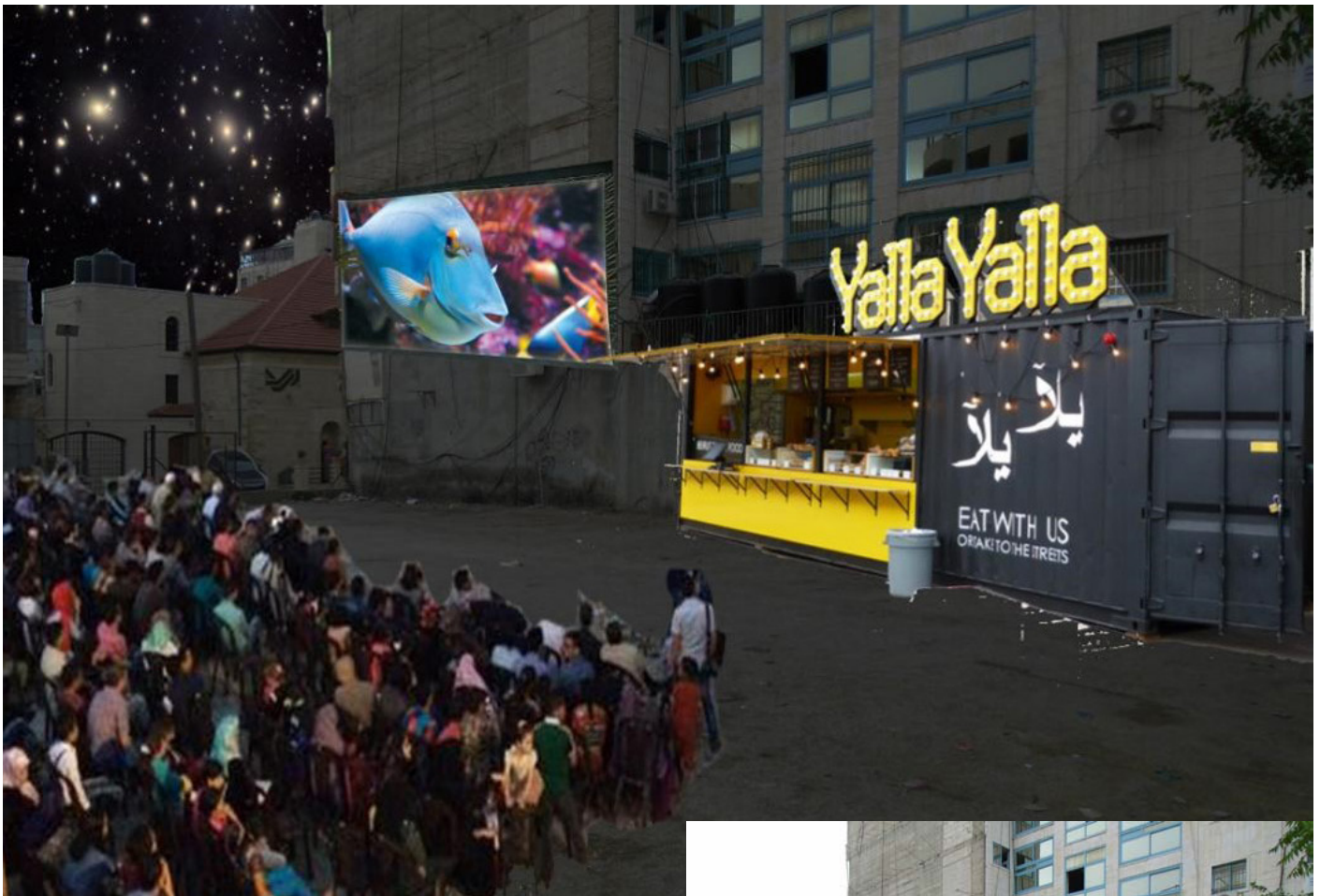
"But shouldn't we first solve all other mobility problems on the national scale?" was a question that many planning professionals and political representatives raised. Interventions on the micro-scale are of same importance than those on the regional or trans-regional scale. The other advantage is, that it is possible to start working on these interventions and improvements immediately in urban neighbourhoods that are Area A, while the temporal horizon for inter-regional and metropolitan transport solutions seem rather fuzzy. Every journey starts with a walk, no matter if it's the daily way to work or school, to the city centre or to the next park or to another part of the country. The first public open space that people normally enter by stepping out of their door are streets and they are the linear open spaces that are connecting people, different parts of the cities and services. Small-scale interventions are often overlooked because they are lacking the great gesture, but they have the potential to improve the quality of life of urban residents very quickly and directly and in a long-term perspective make a great deal when it comes to the identity, daily quality of life of its residents and success of cities.

Fact Box 5: Healthy Cities
The World Health Organisation (WHO) promotes Healthy City strategies to embed public health perspectives in urban development and design by continuously creating and improving the physical and social urban environment and community development that is supporting people in daily healthy lifestyle based on daily activities and active living in the city. Active citizens are part of preventive health strategies that are of special importance in urban environments. The links between healthy cities, complete streets, public health and citizens' well-being are well documented.

An interview with Sameer Eisheh

Ghulam Hassan Mir

Sameer is professor for Transportation Engineering and Planning at An-Najah National University in Nablus. He served in several functions in the Palestinian Government, including being the Minister of Planning. He was affiliated with different organization like World Bank and UNESCO. We visited Sameer Eisheh to discuss his perspective on planning and development in Palestine.

1 From your perspective as a planner – what is your vision for the state of Palestine?

Our vision is that Palestine is an independent prosperous state, where Palestinians live in dignity, have full control over their resources, land, air, water, have good connections with the other countries, and live in peace in this region of the world. We have many resources and assets that can facilitate the achievement of the vision: natural resources though limited - we do have the blessed land, the good environment, water, of which Israelis have stolen much; also, we have human capital, which is very worthy. Palestine's location is unique, where Palestine will be a focal point; a connecting point or a bridge between North & South, East & West - between this part of the world and rest of the world, between our culture and heritage and other cultures.

2 Where do you see the biggest problems or obstacles towards achieving this vision?

Problems mean constraints - we can think of the occupation as the main obstacle to achieving the vision. There must be an end to the occupation. At the same time when we plan, we should not think that such constraints will not make us plan well for our future. I would just say that I have supervised a master's degree student – she was looking specifically at planning under uncertainty in Palestine and doing planning under uncertainty means many challenges, assumptions, constraints, limitations, scenarios related to the political, economic, demographics aspects, but the first constraint is the Israeli occupation.

3 Planning also includes an institutional level. What is your perspective on the institutional framework?

We have the capacity and institutional building over the years since the establishment of the PNA. We made very good progress in the institutional set up, but there are institutional constraints that can't be dealt with. Another important constraint related to institutional aspects is the lack of forumulated and implemented policies in spatial questions, as much of the space is under-developed. Urbanization resulted in a reduction of fertile agricultural land, for example. Such concerns had forced the government to prepare an emergency protection plan under the National Spatial Plan. The PNA´s institutional interventions are affected always by Israeli constraints especially in working in area C that forms more than 62% of the West Bank area.

4 A glimpse of the future – how do you think will mobility and transportation look like in the state of Palestine?

For sure, the road system is the backbone of the transport system. More efforts should go towards the transit system, for example a bus rapid transit (BRT) system on the urban level, because it guarantees an efficient use of space, technology, energy, and resources. This approach should be accompanied with policies to restrict the ownership of automobiles.

5 Are you thinking about a multimodal transport system?

We should also develop proper modes of transportation. We need to invest more in public transportation. Next to that, I think there must be also rail system developed - but in a wise manner: rail is very expensive and the Palestinian topography is not very suitable. Palestine is also in need of two airports, one on the West Bank and the other in Gaza, and a seaport.

6 Palestine has an important location in the Middle-East. Thinking about Palestine without constraints in travelling - what would be your ideas for inter-regional linkages and the connection to the international transport system?

Regional links must be established, whether these are roads, railways, airports or the seaport. Proper border crossings must be planned and constructed. Palestine is a very attractive place for tourists as it could be a focal point in the region, and

therefore proper connections are essential. In addition to connections with the rest of the world, there must be a corridor connecting the Gaza Strip with the West Bank that is being suggested by the ISOCARP-team. We also need to connect people by air between West Bank and Gaza.

7 Jumping from a more long term – to a short-term vision, from your perspective - what should be done on short notice to improve the quality of life?

Well, considering the limitations on mobility caused by the Israeli occupation, which is a great impediment to transportation, development, trade and to travel, I think the number one issue is to ease the constraints on mobility, whether in internal or external travel. This is very important for every aspect of life, for social purposes, but equally important for trade and economic development - and if you do not have the proper mobility and accessibility, you will not be able to fulfil the developmental needs.

8 You attended the presentation of the ISOCARP team who showed the first results of the UNDP/UN-Habitat Workshop. What is your impression – are there lessons to be learnt from such international cooperation workshops?

First, I would like to thank ISO-CARP for the very good effort to provide excellent ideas during the short period. Although, there are some comments or some reservations on the output of the work they have done, I believe the best thing

is to come up with different scenarios and to keep the eyes open for different aspects and different options to develop the occupied Palestinian Territories (oPt). The focus on the public infrastructure, specifically transportation, is crucial and essential. I appreciate the work of Urban Planning Advisory Team, and we can together develop these ideas and bring them into a modified version. Local planners and organizations, who have been working on the NSP or its components, need to be involved in the team. Together with friends, like your group, we can express our vision into plans for the future of Palestine.

9 Planning and Politics. Where do you see the nexus between the two domains and their mutual impacts in the next 20 years? Is the link between those two spheres a fruitful one?

It's of course possible to think about planning without thinking about constraints – but when it comes to the realisation and to make plans work on the ground and bring them to life - another set of constraints arise. There are fancy plans, that are looking very good on paper - but they cannot be implemented. There is a close relation between planning and politics and again we think that there must be a solution in the coming years to the problem of Palestine - to end the Israeli occupation. However, the world should move in a quick way to end the occupation that has affected all the aspects of the everyday life of Palestinian people.

Placemaking in the West Bank in Area C

Supporting Palestinian communities in shaping more liveable places

Asmaa Ibrahim

Placemaking is an urban design approach that focuses on 'turning spaces into places'. It encompasses the diverse actions that seek to ensure valuable qualities within shared spaces based on a "bottom up approach". In other words, it focuses on changing spaces jointly with communities (women, men, and youth) in a way that offers opportunities for more and better interaction between people themselves but also between people and spaces, like safely walk, relax, play and learn.

UN-Habitat strategy in Area C

Realizing the critical situation of Area C, UN-Habitat introduced placemaking as a key activity in a program entitled "Planning Support to the Palestinian Communities in Area C" to improve the resilience of Palestinian communities in Area C. This assistance aims to provide effective planning and coordinated advocacy to Palestinian communities on one hand, and to enhance building Palestinian capacity on the other hand. Consequently, local outline plans have been prepared for over 100 localities in Area C to stop threats of displacement and demolition. Next to the outline plans, also community design schemes were developed by the placemaking approach. They aim to bridge land use plans with a better design approach of public places. UN-Habitat has applied the placemaking approach in 14 localities

throughout Area C in the West Bank. Four of those localities were chosen for pilot projects, where the placemaking approach was furthered and advanced towards implementation considering place making as a tool to quickly and effectively respond to the sensitivity of Area C. This approach supports the development, design and creation of better public places that are supporting the needs of the local communities.

Local people are the experts

The placemaking projects were carried out as a series of workshops at the different localities under the assistance of Jenny Donovan, an international expert on urban design, landscaping and placemaking and a local specialized and dedicated team of urban planners and designers hand by hand with local communities. The local workshops focused on exploring the local context in order to come up with sustainable placemaking

interventions that can serve present and future generations. The process took place from March 2014 to January 2015 and was attended by IPCC. The process was broken down into three separate workshops aiming to ensure seeing localities through the eyes of the local people. Another aim of the workshops was to trigger discussions about the community's desires, aspirations and concerns. This process moved from broad thematic issues to final designs revealing what kind of further minor changes must be adopted and how they will make a difference. Paolo Curradi, from the Office of the European Union is referring to placemaking: During the placemaking process the entire village is gathering in brainstorming activites to discuss and harvest ideas how to transform the most intensively used public spaces in the village into beautiful and welcoming public places."

The final designs were presented in reports covering next to the main placemaking-proposal also questions on major infrastructural engineering that can be funded and implemented by other donors. In terms of advocacy and raising awareness, UN-Habitat also organized a 'training of trainers' (TT). The TT-workshop aimed to encourage new generations of Palestinian planners, urban designers, and civil society to apply inclusive participatory approaches for developing and designing places. In addition, during a public fundraising presentation, donors, NGOs and Palestinian ministries received information about the results of the placemaking approach. On this basis, the European Union (EU) provided seed funds to undertake demonstration placemaking projects in four different localities: Imneizel, Ras Al-Wad, Abdallah Younis, and Izbet Tabib.

Place making in Ras Alwad: Place to site, place to walk

Ras Al -Wad is one of the smallest localities in Bethlehem: it is located partially in area C, but its centre is located in area B. A separation wall separates Ras al Wad from the Bethlehem region and the locality is therefore detached from its regional integration. Za'tara offers the basic educational and health services for these localities, which makes integration necessary to provide spatial continuity and access to services. The placemaking process took place from March-April 2014 in the village Ras Alwad. International and local urban planners and designers, jointly with Ras Al-Wad community, attended the project consisting of three Workshops including also intensive prepartation period. The

first workshop included a short introduction about the process and the activities of the three workshops. The participants (16 women, 7 men) worked in two groups: they brainstormed on the uniqueness of their environment, what they like or dislike and what they value in their environment. They were asked to record positive issues on green sticky notes and negative issues on red ones and to locate the notes on the aerial image of Ras Al-Wad to relate social issues to physical locations. Afterwards the notes were clustered in two groups:

What do you dislike in your environment?
• Transporting children to the closest kindergarten in nearby village caused additional transportation costs
• No playgrounds
• No pedestrian sidewalks
• No lighting in streets negatively affects safety matters
• No retaining walls
• No gathering spaces for social activities especially for women

What you like about your environment?
• The trees and natural environment
• The village centre near to the mosque and school.

The outcome of the first workshop was a "Community Design Agenda" which was introduced to the communities in well illustrative drawings and key messages in a second workshop. In the second workshop also the project area was defined, on which the interventions should focus. The Community Design Agenda of Ras Alwad village included interventions that could be implemented in public spaces, like landscape improvements at the entry of the mosque, construction of footpaths, and improvements of the road to the school, landscaping and further footpaths. In a third workshop, the outcomes and results of the previous ones were tested. It aimed to secure relevant outcomes and to communicate the design priorities, providing the communities with the opportunity to participate and evaluate what they would like to change.

In order to implement the project, detailed plans of all physical components of the project are produced. Sufficient details were provided by the drawings and the report to allow reasonably accurate estimates of construction costs. Besides, all final designs are in line with emerging sketches in term of using local materials and simple design concepts in order to reduce operating

Placemaking projects are already carried out in four different villages throughout West Bank, more projects envisaged (MoLG, 2012). Seed funds have been provided by the European Union "EU" to undertake demonstration placemaking projects in four different localities: Imneizel, Ras Al-Wad, AbdallahYounis, and IzbetTabib.

and managing costs. The final reports consisted of the detailed designs, estimated costs and the detailed specifications.

From design to implementation

Placemaking interventions seek to empower people, achieve capacity building and to enhance social cohesion. Therefore, it is important to consider involving local workers at the implementation of the final designs. It is also important that the developed designs are cost-sensitive – for building but also for the maintenance costs. Based on that, community contracting was proposed as a key tool to advance placemaking from the design to the implementation phase through local committees, village councils or local associations. The tendering process started in the four localities including Ras Alwad in April 2015 and attracted wide interest: out of many applicants, one contractor got selected; the implementation phase started in April 2015 and was finalized by the end of May 2015. The local council or association has been in charge of supervising the work, while the role of UN-Habitat was to monitor and support the local council during the implementation work.

During the design process, the transparent process of placemaking emphasizes on forging social bonds and reinforcing the 'sense of giving'. Therefore, the inhabitants of Ras Al-Wad were donating more willingly their land to expand the public square and the sidewalks and to plant trees on their private plots to improve the quality of the public open space. The project improved the community's commitments towards the project since it helps to transfer ideas into facts on the ground.

Small interventions and big results

The four place-making projects are small-scale projects but with a major contribution to the implementation of local village plans. They are strong showcases for other vulnerable Palestinian communities in Area C for non-statuary processes. The projects can be implemented in Area C without the need to issue construction permits.

Moreover, placemaking interventions can be an applicable model with positive effects by which people can make and implement better public spaces in their own environment. In other words, it offers realistic hope to improve shared surroundings in an inexpensive fashion towards the right direction. Placemaking projects are tools with tremendous demonstrative effect to enhance the resilience of marginalized communities in Area C, since the process produced realistic and concrete interventions that improve the quality of life. The Placemaking Approach envisages and utilizes the emotional capital of ´belonging´. On the other hand it also utilizes local, financial capital in localities where people are living with limited resources and spaces. It built a deep connection between local people and their land, because people became empowered and encouraged to use and interact with their surrounding places, which they own.

Placemaking projects in Ras-Al-Wad creating sitting area using local materials (UN Habitat, 2015)

Ramallah urban transformation exercise

Sara Thaher, Abedalqader Ismail, Ward Hamshari, Suha Tamim, Ihab Hamzi Hijazi & Ali Abdulhamed

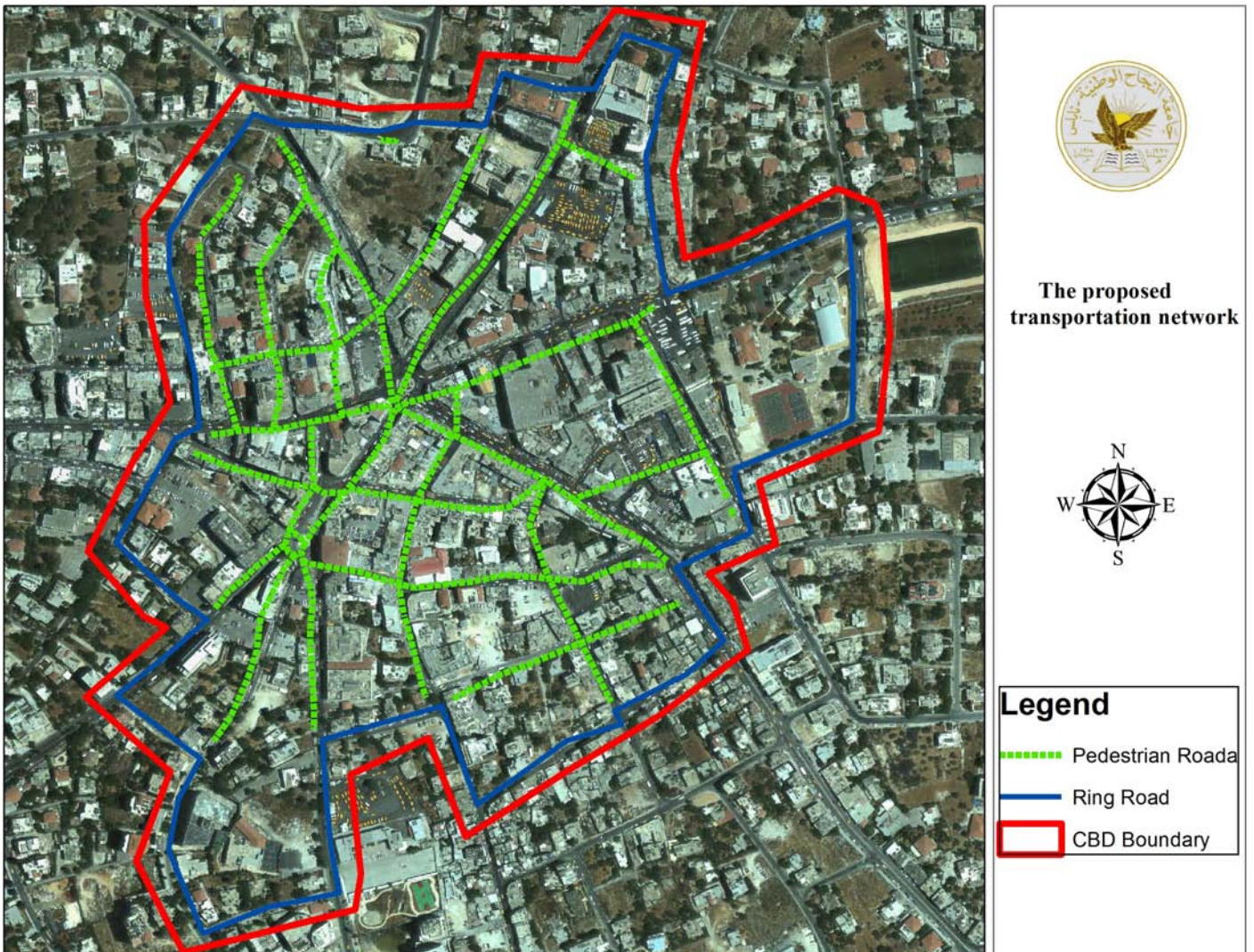## Rapid design workshop and planning exercise

On June 10, the UPAT team organized a brainstorming about Ramallah's city centre identity and livability with a group of students from An Najah University and Bard College. The severe congestion of the city centre of Ramallah inspired the ISOCARP planners to introduce several concepts of possible improvements of public spaces and streetscape-designs that could be applied in the context of Ramallah. Different cases of shared streets, green-street landscaping, integrated parking management and multimodal transport solutions have been presented to the students. The brainstorming has been followed by an exercise on designing possible options for the redevelopment of Ramallah's city centre, urban mobility and improvement of public realm. Two teams of Palestinian students from An Najah National University were working on the assignment. The students have proposed two scenarios of redevelopment of Ramallah's city centre that are presented in this article.

Introduction of Ramallah

Ramallah is a Palestinian city in the central West Bank located 10 km (6 miles) north of Jerusalem at an average elevation of 880 meters above sea level, adjacent to al-Bireh. It currently serves as the de facto administrative capital of the State of Palestine. With a population of nearly 27.092 in 2007, Ramallah was historically a Christian town, but today Muslims form the majority of the population, with Christians still representing a significant minority. Ramallah is composed of "Ram", an Aramaic word that means "high place or mountain", and "Allah", the Arabic word for God, or 'the Hill of God'. The city of Ramallah is considered as one of the Palestinian cities frequented by tourists. Despite the fact that the city is not one of the ancient cities, yet it is considered one of the Palestinian areas that are most attractive to visitors on the global and Arab level. Integrated and modern tourist facilities that are capable of meeting the needs of its residents would lead to a significant increase in the local and national

economy. What can distinguish the city of Ramallah from other cities is its harmony, variety, diversity and unity of the population. That is why, since over ten years, one notices a remarkable increase in the number of people wishing to live in Ramallah, due to this general tendency to accept the other. This has caused Ramallah to become a place that attracts many people from various regions, environments, and religions, especially those who seek security and safety. It has also created a culturally unique diversity, in which everyone found what they sought, leading to the emergence of a diverse city in terms of its culture and tendencies. Ramallah is considered the most open and liberal city in the West Bank, prompting some to call it "the soul of Palestinian culture."

The proposed
transportation network

Legend

┄┄┄┄┄ Pedestrian Roada

——— Ring Road

▭ CBD Boundary

Team 01 – Decentralization of the city centre's functions

As for many Palestinian cities, traffic jams and crowded streets are a remaining issue in Ramallah's city centre. Ramallah's central area works as a linkage between every part of the city, and there is no other way to go through the city.

From our observation, we found that the central city is

- Very crowded in most of streets.
- Full of yellow taxis.
- Lacking sidewalks.
- Lacking pocket parks and green areas.

From the workshop that we attended as students in urban planning and engineering, and from the brainstorming, we have proposed some solutions oriented to urban decentralization. Our vision of urban decentralization aims to decrease the density and intensity of traffic flows in the core of the city centre by redistributing some functions (such as taxis stations) around the city centre.

1. First we defined the limits of the city centre (CBD) of Ramallah
2. In order to reduce the crowd in the city centre, we propose to redesign several streets as pedestrian streets, without affecting the motorized traffic. A period of time can be defined for pedestrian flows during the rush hours from 7.30 AM to 4 PM by putting removable columns.
3. To support the first solution, we propose to open several roads around the city centre, and to re-develop them to increase the accessibility to the surrounding areas without entering the city centre. This network of streets would act as an urban slow ring road.
4. After removing the taxis stations to other identified places around to the centre, the concentration of traffic flows will be more manageable and better distributed.
5. Some taxis stations may not be completely re-moved but redesigned as multimodal transport stations. We also propose to convert them in mul-tifunctional areas such as restaurant and parks or public spaces where people can walk and feel the identity of Ramallah's city centre.
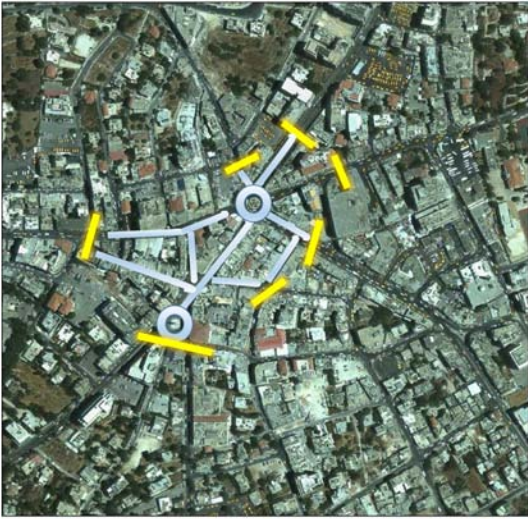
Team 02 – A pedestrian Al-Manara Square

Al-Manara Square is located in Ramallah's city centre and is one of Palestine's renowned public spaces. The square is an important Lieux de Memoire and is tightly knotted to the Palestinian collective memory. As Ramallah is a key political, cultural, commercial, and economic centre in the West Bank, an important number of people from different governorates in the West Bank go to Ramallah and live there temporarily or permanently to work in various sectors. As a result of these important migrations to the city of Ramallah, congestion problems have appeared especially in the core of the city, which is a central linkage between different parts of the city. Most of the traffic flows pass by Al-Manara Square and Al-Sa'a (Clock) Square. As planners, it is our responsi-bility to find solutions for these issues and reorganize the chaos happening as a result of the congestion.
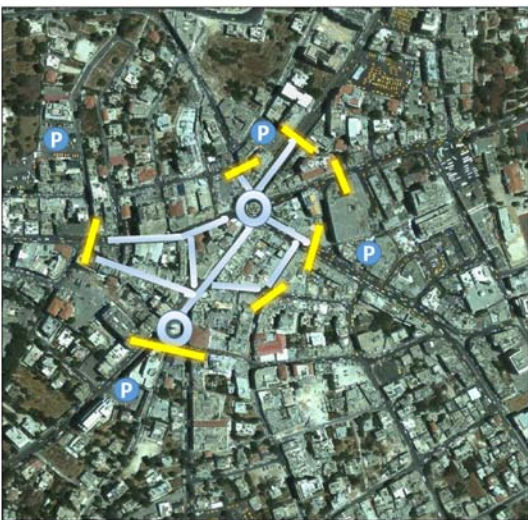
Creating a pedestrian-friendly city centre in Ramallah

As a response to the congestion problem that exists in Ramallah City, our approach is to transform this car traffic oriented area into a pedestrian-friendly CBD. In order to achieve such a result, we propose a strategy with four actions:
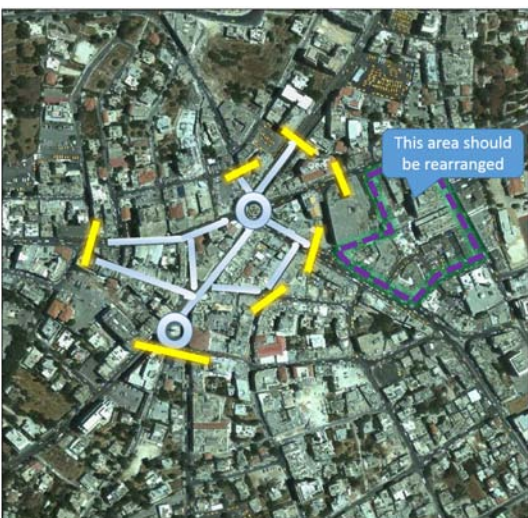
Map 1: Location of pedestrian streets

Map 2: Location of parking lots

Map 3: Potential Area for urban block intensification

1. Modify the street pavement between "Al Manara Square and Al-Sa'aSquare" and pedestrianize it. The movement of motorized vehicles will be stopped at the end of the street. From this paving idea, we divide the area into subareas such as public squares to sit in and to take a rest beside the pedestrian and bicycle flows. It's worth to mention that we take into consideration the needs of handicapped people by keeping flat sidewalks and streetscapes, and keep space for ambulance movement in emergency situations.

2. Create a "Green CBD" by prioritizing green landscapes to decrease the environmental and noise pollution and to make it more attractive for pedestrians to walk under the shadows provided by trees. Several alternatives for the car traffic can be found, such as connecting the areas surrounding the city centre to bypass the central area. For the congestion problem caused by public and private cars, we suggest one-way roads with modifying the width of the existing streets as much as possible. Although we could suggest a tunnel beneath the CBD, a more resilient and low-cost solution is more realistic, also because of the political situation in Palestine doesn't permit it (prohibition by Israel to establish tunnels and bridges in the area.)

3. Our suggestion for parking management is to prioritize the use of vacant land that is available within the CBD boundary and that is surrounding the pedestrian area. It will help the users to park their cars before entering the city centre by foot. We can take benefits from the parking lots that already exist in the CBD and suggest others to meet the needs after studying the supply and demand on parking in all time of a day, including the peak hours, and to choose the more profitable and less expensive ones. The management of these parking lots should be integrated and the diversification of use of these lands is a priority.

4. A pedestrian-friendly city centre will lead to a stronger integrated and better distribution of urban functions on the streets and in urban blocks. Street activities such as street vendors and temporary markets will be upgraded due to a better and more shared use of public space in Ramallah.

Conclusion and recommendations

As our proposals did not have all required data for performing a complete analysis, the municipality should complete the missing data on this project to solve the problems in the city centre. A review of the existing conditions in Ramallah city centre indicates that it is needed to properly study and analyse traffic flows in the road network to obtain detailed information about the streets and intersections, in order to get a clear vision on transportation and mobility problems to develop more in depth solutions in a participatory fashion.

Urban safari Bethelem

Parul Agarwala

As a first time visitor to Bethlehem, I was eager to discover the world-renowned city, hoping to experience fragments of its 2000 year old history alive in its buildings, streets and landscape. As we made our way to one of the world's most famous historical sites, the Nativity Church, from Ramallah via Jerusalem through Beit Jala, the reality of today's geopolitical context set in quickly. The separation walls along the highway and streets were a persistent reminder of the occupation. Nevertheless, I was determined to experience Bethlehem through the lens of an urban planner.

One fact was particularly striking from the visit – Bethlehem and its suburbs, Beit Sahour and Beit Jala, exist in two very different realities. Bethlehem is the historic city, which has embraced modernization with panache while preserving its cultural identity. Urbanization of its suburbs leaves a lot to be desired. This photo essay explores this urban dichotomy based on a short tour of the area.

Many facets but what is the urban identity?
A non-descript, unpaved parking lot adjacent to the Catholic Action round-point designed as a future drop-off point for the tourists marks the entrance to the Pilgrimage Route. The Star Street snakes through a newly rehabilitated area funded by US-AID in partnership with Bethlehem Municipality.

As I approached the main square, the otherwise quiet streets, took on the cacophony typical of traditional market streets. Order and chaos merged to create a lively environment. Local bakeries and shops selling traditional wares; Starbucks, Western Union and other usual suspects – a sounding board of globalization – also nudged their way into Bethlehem's historic core.

Beit Jala is known for its church steeples, Cremisan monastery, and as an important educational and health centre for the neighbouring cities and villages. However, the first impression did not enforce this identity, as the urban environment was that of any other suburb where modern development was occurring without paying any attention to the context.

Quick tour through Beit Sahour, the most famous of its cultural sites being the Shepherd's Fields, were reminiscent of an urban village vying for recognition as an upcoming urban centre.

Camp Aida, a refugee camp that came into existence in 1950s, lies in Bethlehem and is physically blocked from Jerusalem by the eight-meter high separation wall on one side and Israeli settlements on the other. More than 4,750 persons reside in less than 0.07 sq.km of territory at densities upward of 67,000 persons per square kilometre. To put in perspective, the population density of Manhattan, New York, is 28,000 persons per sq. km.

The juxtaposition revealed severely overcrowded conditions of Aida Camp's inhabitants further overburdened by limitations of movement, economic and social activity imposed by the occupation. All along the road, Banksy's graffiti on the separation wall, a poignant reality check on the irony of human rights violation right next to the holy land.

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Reinforcing urban planning and traditional design with guidelines and regulations

In Bethlehem, buildings set at the street line and entrances opening directly onto them were typical of the traditional streetscape designed for an intimate human scale. Locally sourced building materials were perfectly suited for blending the built form with the surrounding landscape.

In stark contrast to Bethlehem's historic core less than 2 kilometres from it, the urban fabric along Beit Jala's main street is interspersed with retail and residential uses with no apparent guidelines on building set-backs from the street-line, built-form or building height or store frontage regulations. In Beit Sahour, the main street is dotted with light industrial uses— mostly auto repair and building construction materials incompatible with the mid-rise residential buildings under construction and small service retail and commercial activities. A flexible, multi-modal public transport system that links motorized and non-motorized mobility could trigger further positive effects for local residents and commerce.

Shared streets and urban amenities for attractive walkable pedestrian experience

The 'shared streets' concept, which eliminates the demarcation between pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular zones in Bethlehem´s historic core was a welcome sign of incorporating new urban design concepts into traditional urban fabric. As are the newly installed way-finding markers, signboards, and street furniture, which blended well with the design context of the historic core.

In contrary, in Beit Sahour new developments also ignore the pedestrian scale and the traditional urban design context of the area. Blank walls, parking lots and lack of active uses along the sidewalks are huge deterrents to walking.

…A missed opportunity?

Bethlehem has an established global identity from its significant historic, religious and cultural heritage that attracts millions of visitors each year. However, its burgeoning urban fringes of Beit Jala and Beit Sahour need to capitalize on its existing brand identity to boost their prospects for tourism economy. As an urban planner, I was pre-occupied with– how can the historic heartland nurture its burgeoning urban fringes and suburbs? A strategic urban development approach, which focuses on strengthening the historic urban identity along the main streets leading to the historic core, could be a good starting point. Urban planning tools to incentivize commercial and recreational uses along with relocating incongruous land uses, urban design guidelines to create a vibrant walkable main street, and built-form regulations that retain visual links or vistas to the shepherd's fields, olive tree terraces, and important land marks, are some tools to extend the core tourism and recreational areas beyond the historic core.

The hyper-segregated city

Gizem Caner

Belfast resembles an open air-museum for observing how a city can organically grow and mature as a divided one.

Belfast has been the main stage for conflict on the island since the 17th century when the British colonial rule commenced. For the *Catholic* native population, *Protestant* newcomers who built new confined settlements for themselves were seen as a challenge. As the city expanded, however, Catholics penetrated inside the walls and clustered in homogeneous residential environments. Catholics resided along the Falls Road, while Protestants were clustered along Shankill and Crumlin Roads, a little further north. The spatial patterns in residential areas that emerged during this time period illustrated social segregation and the spatial structure still exists.

Disturbances rose as the population of Catholics increased in the second half of 19th century. Irish nationalism grew in reaction to the increased aspirations towards a union with Great Britain. These developments transformed the conflict into a political one and became one of the reasons that led to partition of the island in 1921. Ireland, covering 80% of the island, which was mostly Catholic/Irish, seceded from the UK, while the northern part of Ireland, which was predominantly Protestant/British was granted regional autonomy with Belfast as its capital. Even though partition resolved the political problems, it intensified ethno-national con-
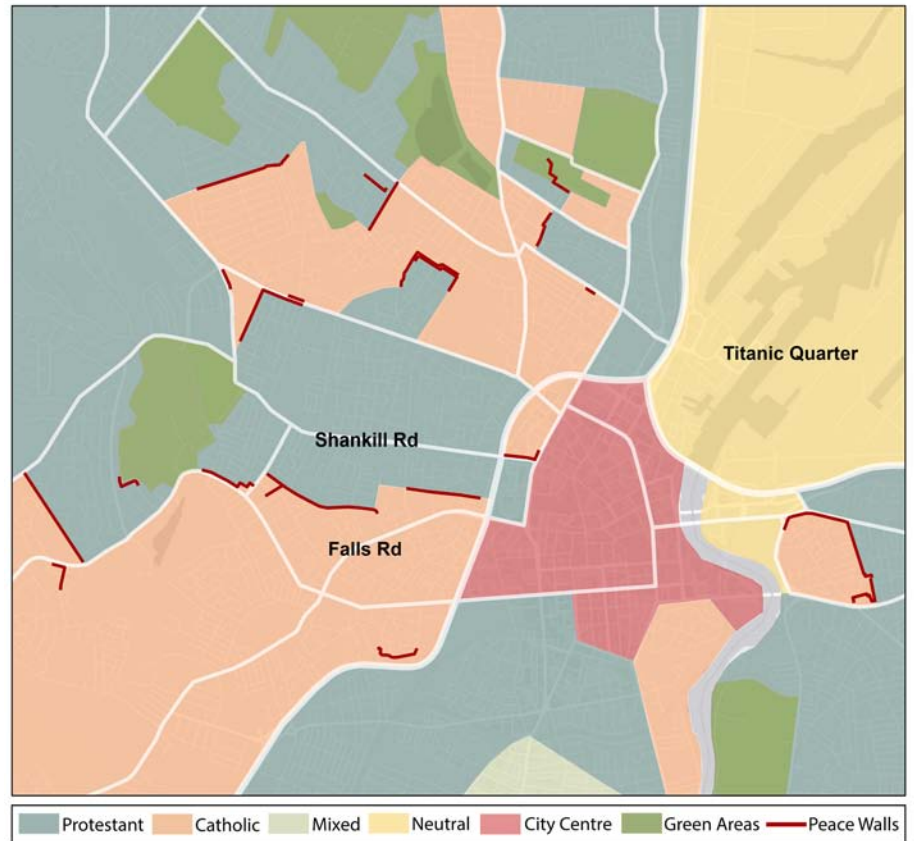
Spatial patterns of Catholic and Protestant groups, Belfast, 2015

flict and segregation further within Northern Ireland and its capital city Belfast. Catholic population gradually retreated into an isolated and institutionally self-sufficient world where community self-management functioned as a conflict-coping mechanism to preserve and sustain the group's existence.

The period between 1969 and 1998, is referred to as 'The Troubles', when more and more clashes between the Catholics and Protes-

tants became visible on the streets of Belfast and the conflict reached its peak point. In this time interval, around 60 000 people relocated into neighbourhoods with people from their own 'kind'. As concentration of each ethnic group increased, the boundaries between the two groups became well defined and symbolically more important. These boundaries turned into interface areas that were flashpoints of social tensions.

In August 1969, when riots lead to fighting along Falls Road and violence broke out at interfaces, Catholic residents who felt trapped and besieged, anxiously built physical barricades from all sorts of material they could find, mainly along the perimeters of their enclaves. When British army units were sent to secure volatile areas, they embraced the idea of building modular constructions in order to minimise or even eliminate conflict between the opposing groups. These makeshift walls are controversially named as 'Peace Walls'. The contradiction in the conceptual idea is clearly inherent in the phrase, illustrated in the opposition of the words 'peace' and 'wall'. Even though they were intended to be temporary, these walls still remain and many others have subsequently been added to the urban fabric.

The Good Friday Agreement of 1998 marks the end of the three decades long period. Since then, the Government has obligated its departments to present equity schemes and proposed community cohesion policies in a series of programs (i.e. 2001 Regional Development Strategies, 2003 A Shared Future Strategy etc.). However, according to scholars, the delivery of these programs has not been as effective as first envisaged, specifically regarding the follow-up of these commitments through to development plans and planning policies. The reasons of failure are attributed to facts like; technocratic approach of the departments; lack of recognition on issues of potential indirect discrimination; and sheer number of strategies, delivery programs and people involved.

Long standing segregation leads to the abandonement of entire streets. On the other hand residents are building caged houses for personal security

Urban artefacts of segregation. The city´s segregation is still displayed in the urban fabric. Murals and coloured curbstones are territorial markers.

houses', built by residents for their personal security at areas near interfaces.

The city's segregation is still displayed in the urban fabric by different artefacts. In predominantly segregated areas, physical environment is transformed into communal regions by the use of symbols. Murals are the most visible artefacts of territorial ownership. Also curbstones function as territorial markers through red-white-blue or green-white-orange paint in many Unionist or Nationalist areas, respectively. Flags, being cheap and easy to display, are also used for strengthening belonging.

Doubtless, the bitterest artefacts of division are the so-called peace walls. Today, 88 separation walls exist in the city. Some of them are ten meters high and several kilometres long. Some of them are equipped with gates that can be closed at specific times of the day; some are operated by the police, some by adjacent communities. Recently, graffiti artists around the world painted selected separation walls to create a sort of tourist attraction—but contrarily, beautification also legitimises their existence. Peace walls are the scars of conflict

Today, Belfast remains as a socio-spatially hyper-segregated city. Half of the city's population reside in neighbourhoods composed of 90% Catholics or Protestants. The most segregated areas of the city (north, west and east) are also the most deprived areas, which are formed of enclaves that suffer from low quality urban environment due to long years of division. Even in southern Belfast where the occupants are relatively affluent and residentially mixed, they are socially separated since the urban services are duplicated in order to sustain minimum interaction. One

example for maintaining segregation can be seen in the social and green infrastructure like, hospitals, schools, churches, leisure centres, libraries, and playgrounds, which are usually exclusively used by members of a single community in highly segregated areas.

Population decline is one of the city centre's major problems, which is an outcome of long-standing segregation. There are pockets of vacant streets and blocks resembling 'ghost' urban fragments, as a further result of urban decline. Another ghastly novelty is the 'caged

Peace Walls in Belfast: 88 separation walls are diving the city and its different communities. They are the scars of conflict displayed in the urban fabric and are shaping and affecting daily lives of Belfast´s residents.

on the urban form of the city, appearing suddenly and unpredictably, interrupting roads/parks, and shaping and affecting daily lives of its residents.

In recent years, Belfast is gaining advantage from "conflict tourism". However, using peace walls for the tourism industry yields a bigger complexity for the city and its residents, than for example, using Checkpoint Charlie as a tourist attraction, due to reasons explained above. Even though there is a government policy to bring the walls down by 2023 or there are active organisations who are producing proposals to regenerate and transform Belfast's interface areas (i.e. Belfast Interface Project), the actual situation is much more complicat-

ed for the walls to come down. According to recent surveys, majority of the population is not in favour of taking the separation barriers down because they would feel insecure without them. In a sense, this implies that these walls will not follow the path of Berlin Wall and come down in a single day, but rather happen in a prolonged manner, slowly and quietly.

Divided cities call for urban policies and design approaches that find novel ways to provide different cultures to live and work together in a diverse structure with more tolerance to one another. At the same time, these approaches have to respect the wishes of the local populations—which generally are, to live separately—to a certain degree

in order to avoid re-division. Given such a demanding duty, the only way forward is to produce genuine and case-specific solutions. Urban interventions in environments like Belfast for example, can include giving interface areas functions that can foster inter-communal activities such as green areas, workplaces, universities, football pitches etc. Under such circumstances, technical and procedural limitations of planning practice and overwhelming rigidities caused by political realities can only be surpassed by working collaboratively across divides, with people from the opposing groups who share the same future vision for their cities and communities.

Sometimes a draw can be a victory for both

Stefan Netsch

After four years the Palestinian national team played during the FIFA World Cup and Asian Cup qualifying for the World cup 2018 Russia in a home game. In the full packed Faisal Al-Husseini International Stadium in Al-Ram, north of Jerusalem, 15.000 spectators where following a 0-0 draw against the United Arab Emirates.

Besides the fact playing after four years in front of your home crowd, the match was in historical terms a milestone and also victory for the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Because politically both countries are in a conflicted war situation and it took the Arab soccer an extra effort to play the game after a tiring journey to Palestine.

Reviewing the two teams based on their abilities they are poles apart. Though the UAE team have only been qualified for a World Cup in 1990 in Italy, this year in Australia at the Asian Cup, the team reached third place after losing in the semi-final against South Korea. Recently, they hold the 61st place in the ranking of the FIFA, which is compared to Palestine's 167th rank almost close to the top. For Palestine, it was already a success to qualify for the first time for the Asian Cup. But this success is not totally surprising, because in the last four years the team developed in a positive way, highlighted by winning the Asian Football Confederation Challenge Cup in 2014. Which is a tournament meant for smaller and football developing countries. Because of this success by winning the final against the Philippines they made it to Australia.

The match itself was seen as not very exciting, but men, women, and children enjoyed themselves in the stadium. This was a good afternoon and a welcome change to the usual matches in the West Bank premier League which are played since 2010 in a regular mode with ten teams. In the last couple of years, the quality and abilities of the teams have improved step by step and football made it also possible that teams from Gaza could travel to the West Bank to participate in common Cup competition. Football is an important part for the Palestinian society. It gives them the possibility to express themselves being an independent country which is part of the world. Yet, football can teach us more: "People who work together will win, whether it be against complex football defences, or the problems of modern society" (Vince Lombardi)

Last matches

| 08.10 | East Timor - Palestine | | 1:1 |
| | Saudi Arabia - United Arab Emirates | | 2:1 |

| 13.10 | East Timor – Malaysia | | 0:1 |
| | Palestine – Saudi Arabia | | cancelled |

Current Situation

1	United Arab Emirates	4	15:3	12
2	Saudi Arabia	4	12:2	7
3	Palestine	5	9:4	5
4	East Timor	5	2:20	2
5	Malaysia	5	2:11	2

| 12.11 | Palestine – Malaysia |
| | United Arab Emirates – East Timor |

| 17.11 | East Timor – Saudi Arabia |
| | Malaysia – United Arab Emirates |

Cooking with Arwa
Fasoulia byda

Gizem Caner

Arwa Nayef is a professional translator who worked with great humour and patience to help the ISOCARP UPAT meet the people of Gaza and host a series of design charrettes and presentations. Arwa has kindly shared her version of fasoulia byda, a white bean dish with lamb meat to be savoured with white rice. So follow Arwa's steps to prepare a perfect dinner for the whole family & enjoy!

Ingredients

White beans:
- 500 gr white beans
- 1 kg diced lamb meat
- 1 large onion
- 6 big tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons of corn or sunflower oil
- 5 or 6 grains of cardamom
- 1 clove of garlic
- Laurus leaves

- Fresh basil leaves, chopped

Rice:
- 6 cups of Egyptian rice
- Ghee
- 11 cups meat broth (or half water, half broth)
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- Pinch of salt

Step 1. Prepare the white beans:
- Soak beans in water the day before for a whole night.
- Place the beans in 1,5 litres of boiling water.
- Keep it boiling until the beans are tender - like boiled potatoes.
- Remove from heat but do not pour the water. This will help the beans remain soft.
- In another saucepan, heat the corn or sunflower oil then add the meat. Cook until their colour turns and add 2 litres of boiling water.
- Few seconds later a layer of fat will appear on top of the water; remove it before adding cardamom, laurus and onion.
- While the meat is cooking, peel six big tomatoes and chop a clove of garlic and the basil.
- Put the tomato in a saucepan on the fire and add the meat with 2 cups water (used for cooking the meat) and let it cook. Put aside the leftover water - from cooking the meat - for preparing the rice.
- Remove the yellowish water from the boiled white beans and add the beans. Let it boil for 30 minutes, or until tender.
- Put the chopped garlic on the fire in a frying pan until it whitens then add to the meat and beans.
- Finally, you only need to add the chopped basil and we are done!

Step 2. Prepare the rice:

- While the meal is cooking, rinse the rice well under running water and drain.
- Stir rice with a little ghee over low heat for about two minutes.
- Add the meat broth (leftover water from cooking the meat), hot water, salt and ground nutmeg.
- Cover and move to low heat and cook for about 35 minutes.

Important tips from Arwa:

- Always better to keep the meat one night in the refrigerator before cooking.
- All green leafs or spices should be added to the food at the very last minute so that they keep their flavour and aroma.
- If you want to cook this dish with okra, follow the same steps; only fry the okra first instead of boiling it like the beans.

Qahwa 'Arabiyya

Arabic Coffee

Today, coffee is one of the most globalised products: you can have an Italian espresso, Swiss Nescafé or French café au lait almost everywhere around the world. Interestingly though, Arabic Coffee (*qahva*), being the mother of all coffees, is not as popular as a caffé latte grande.

Arabic coffee was first cultivated in Yemen in the 15th century and found its way into Europe around the 16th and 17th century. Although generally referred to as Arabic coffee, it is categorised into two: Saudi coffee and Turkish-style coffee, the latter being more common in the Levant. The coffee is brewed from Arabica coffee beans, which account for 80% of the world's coffee bean manufacture, and is considered as exceptionally tasteful.

Apart from its sublime taste, in most of the Arabic countries, coffee is a way of showing hospitality. Being part of tradition, it has developed a unique way of preparation and presentation. The following recipe will provide you with the necessary information to prepare the perfect Arabic Coffee. Enjoy!

There are mainly three kinds of Arabic Coffee which you can choose "from" according to the way they are roasted:

1. Blonde (lightly roasted)
2. Mildly Roasted (between blonde and dark)
3. Roasted (dark)

For one cup of coffee, fill the coffee cup with water, then pour it to the coffee pot (*reqwa*). Add 2 small spoons of coffee and stir slowly and continuously. While stirring, make sure that no small balls of coffee remain on the surface. Once it starts to boil, it is ready to pour in the cup. If you like your coffee dark and consistent, half fill the coffee cup and return to the stove for a second round of boiling.

Hints

If you like your coffee foamy; either remove the pot from stove before it boils, or take a small amount of foam - which forms right before boiling – from the top of the pot and place it to your cup with the help of a spoon, then carry on with boiling the coffee.

If you prefer your coffee dark, you may need to increase the amount of coffee you add.

Although it is usually sugar-free (*sada*), you may add a pinch of sugar while cooking.

Credits