

LAND ISSUES IN THE WEST BANK



Photo courtesy of Palestine Image Bank

NEWSLETTER March 2020, Issue #2

Main highlights of the project: Achieving Planning and Land Rights in Area C, West Bank – Palestine (2019-2023). This project is implemented by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) in partnership with the Land and Water Settlement Commission (LWSC) at the bequest of the European Union (EU).

3-11 December 2019 UN-Habitat and LWSC teams visited the targeted communities in Hebron and Bethlehem Governorates: Um Al Daraj, Al Najada, At Tawani, Al- Samu` (Simia), Ar Ramadin, Imnizel, Khamlet Al Mayia, and Al Karmil including Khamlet Saleh and Ma'in in Hebron, and Al Walajah, Wadi Fukin, Kisan, and Minyia in Bethlehem; to introduce the project and main expected deliverables to the Local Government Units (LGUs), and to get a better understanding of the physical and socio-cultural landscapes.



Figure 1: Field visit to Khamlet Al Mayia Community, Hebron. 3 December 2019.



Figure 2: Meeting with representatives from Kisan village, Bethlehem. 3 December 2019.

8 January 2020 Letter of Intent signed between UN-Habitat and LWSC to improve the socio-economic conditions of Palestinian communities through supporting the land settlement process across areas A, B and C through:

- Building capacities of LWSC staff
- Supplying LWSC with equipment and devices
- Building of a land spatial system
- Raising awareness and advocacy on land rights, including women's land rights
- Establishing a designated land sector working group, a platform to connect with international partners and donors.



Figure 3: Signing-off on the Letter of Intent between UN-Habitat and LWSC. 8 January 2020.



Photo courtesy of UN-Habitat, 2020.

23 January 2020 **The President, Mr. Mahmoud Abbas, issued a decree appointing Mr. Mohammad Sharakah as the acting head of the LWSC.** UN-Habitat and LWSC agreed to continue their support for the project and the signed Letter of Intent.

February 2020 **Establishment of the Land Management and Administration Sector Working Group (LMA SWG) within the Local Aid Coordination Secretariat (LACS).** Members would include the World Bank, UN-Habitat and FAO, among others. With the purpose of effective and coordinated implementation of land reform programmes, and adherence to the national land reform agenda.

6 February 2020 **Two consultation workshops with the target communities in both Hebron and Bethlehem governorates organized by UN-Habitat and LWSC.** Establishing rapport with the communities in general and the women in specific; presenting the project, the land settlement processes, focusing on the importance of the community participation approach in bringing success to this project. 24 participants ages 16-60 attended (16 women), including representatives of the LGUs (three women).



Figure 4: Consultation workshop, Hebron, 6 February 2020.

Land settlement progress

According to the statistics of the LWSC, more than 2,600 natural basins, including about 588,000 plots across the West Bank have been surveyed, checked, and published for public objections, as specified by the Law of Settlements of Lands and Waters, No. 40 of the year 1952. More than **31 per cent of the registered plots as of today have been registered to women.**

Over the past four years, 25 per cent of the targeted 3,740,078 dunums have been surveyed. In the last four months alone another 5 per cent of the targeted land for survey was completed, totaling 93,000 dunums, the highest percentage of accomplishment was in the Governorate of Tulkarem with about 11 per cent increase, and the least in Nablus, Jenin and Jerusalem governorates with less than 1 per cent of the targeted areas surveyed.

Since November 2019:

- Increase of 4 per cent in the number of agreements signed between LWSC and the LGUs
- Increase of 3 per cent in settlement orders issued
- Increase of 4 per cent in the settlement announcements published

Noting that there are 107 offices opened for LWSC through out the West Bank.

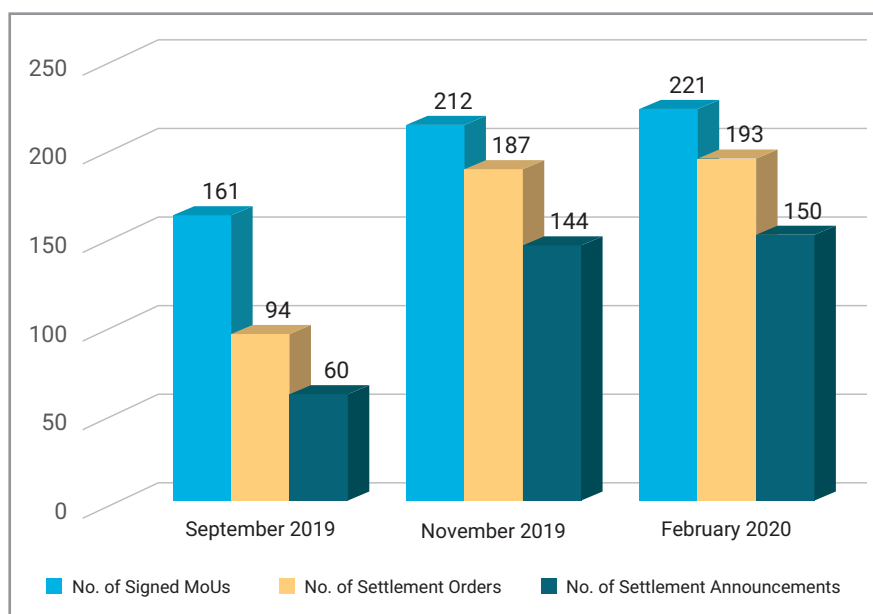


Figure 5: Factual Information on LWSC's work between September 2019 and February 2020.

Photo by Firas Jarrar.



Land valuation estimations

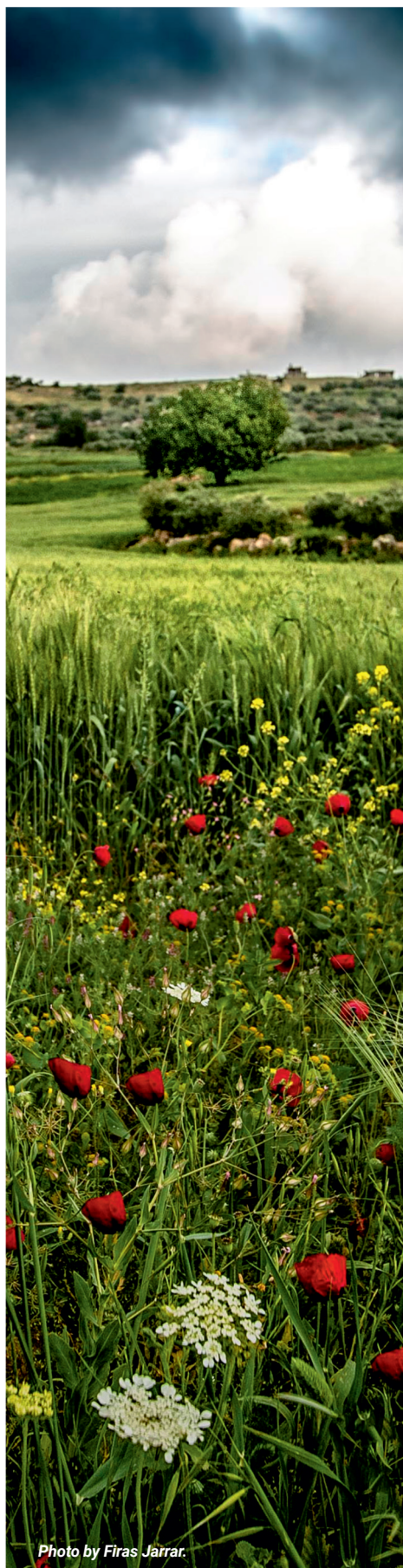


Photo by Firas Jarrar.

According to Law No. 40 of the year 1952, all land settlement work should include land valuation for the registered land plots. A sample of 330,806 dunums of land settled in the West Bank by LWSC, demonstrates that the average land valuation was USD 23,683. In Area A the average for the 71,046 dunums registered was USD 44,150 per dunum, and in Area B the average for the 108,943 dunums registered was USD 25,563 per dunum. However, in Area C the average for the 150,817 dunums registered was USD 12,684 per dunum which is less than 50 per cent and 30 per cent of the valuations in Area B and Area A, respectively (see table below).

Geo-political Classification	Sample area in dunums	Average price per dunum (USD)
Area A	71,046	44,150
Area B	108,943	25,563
Area C	150,817	12,684
Total	330,806	23,683

What you can do:

As a member of the community your role is:

- to be equipped with correct information by attending the information sessions held for your community, where you can also ask your questions and voice your concerns;
- to encourage dialogue and support other people in your community in understanding the importance of the land registration processes including your community leaders and representatives; and
- to especially understand and advocate for the importance of supporting women in their right to inherit and own lands, support and encourage the women in your community to defend their land rights.

For more information on the project, you can contact UN-Habitat on: unhabitat-palestine@un.org or LWSC on: info@lwsc.ps

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