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**The accountability to affected people practiced by the humanitarian actors while supporting the resilience of the residents of Masafer Yatta from the residents' perspective**

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Al Quds University  
Deanship of Graduate Studies  
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### **Thesis Approval**

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From the residents' perspective**

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Jerusalem – Palestine

1441-2020

## **Dedication**

In the name of Allah, most Gracious, most Merciful.

I thank Allah who made this dream come reality

To the soul of my mother who passed away shortly before seeing my new certificate.

To the soul of my father who was always encouraging me not to stop learning.

To my lovely wife who sacrificed some of her own time to allow me to continue my endless passion of learning.

To my lovely sons and daughters: Amir, Ahmad, Malak, Mayar and Khadija, whom I invite to follow my step and continue learning.

## **Declaration**

I certify that this thesis submitted for the degree of Master is the result of my own research, except where otherwise acknowledged, and that this thesis (or any Part of the same) has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other University or institution.

Signed .....

Bilal Fakhri Zaki Al-Sharif

4/6/2020

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## **Abstract**

Humanitarian disasters create humanitarian needs to massive number of victims to which different actors intervene. Governments have the lead and obligation to be the first one to assist their own citizens and offer support to victims from other countries as well. But in many situations, governments can't respond to the needs alone. Other states and many humanitarian actors intervene to minimize the human suffering and help the victims to recover and return to their normal life as soon as possible.

The humanitarian system has grown and the need to pave the way for fundamental changes became a high demand in the working environment. It recommends the humanitarian action to put disaster affected people first. Hugu Slim said "It is right, therefore, that humanitarian action should be deeply people-centred. Good humanitarian action is a social encounter between two forms of agency: the human agency of those affected and the humanitarian agency of those trying to help them. Together, they must share a diagnosis of the situation and generate appropriate solutions which respect people's reality, not only their humanity" (Slim, 2020, para 8).

The accountability to the affected people became one major approach that all humanitarian actors should integrated through their work. In 2014, the humanitarian actors published the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability that can be voluntarily adopted by organisations and individuals to guide and evaluate their work (Gibbons, 2018).

In a unique situation, the disaster of Masfer Yatta (MY) is one of the longest disasters. The cause of their disaster is the occupation that started in 1967 and doesn't seem to end in the coming future. The consequences of this disaster haven't stop since it started. As a respond, many humanitarian actors have intervened to support the residents. The

humanitarian actors have faced a coercive environment minimizing their capacity to intervene. Moreover, many of the projects the humanitarian actors executed, and assistants provided were either destroyed or confiscated.

During many years of work, the humanitarian actors published tens of reports demonstrating the status of MY, its problems and their own response. To the knowledge of the researcher, no study was made to evaluate the role of the humanitarian actors in supporting the resilience of MY residents from the residents' point of view nor to assess their respect to the commitments guiding the accountability to the affected people.

The nature of MY's problems, the area and the lifestyle of the residents, directed the researcher to adapt the analytical descriptive approach in order to reach the objective of the research. The main tool used was focus group interviews in addition to individual meetings and field visits. Other meetings were also held with managers of key humanitarian actors working in MY to get the wider humanitarian actors' vision and perspective of the humanitarian environment.

The study concluded that so far, humanitarian actors have fairly cooperated and managed to provide the residents with the essential urgent needs and created projects that enhanced the capacity of the residents to face the continuous hazards and improved their basic living conditions to cope with the changing needs of the new generation.

The study revealed that the humanitarian actors did not actively engage the people with designing, executing and evaluating the projects. Moreover, they did not present clear neutral systems addressing the complaints of the people.

The researcher recommends researchers to study other fields in MY like the role of the Palestinian government or the problems of the Bedouins' cluster.



التزام الجهات الفاعلة في العمل الانساني للمساءلة تجاه الاشخاص المتضررين أثناء دعم صمود سكان مسافر يطا من وجهة نظر السكان.

إعداد الطالب: بلال فخري زكي الشريف

إشراف أ.د. سمير ابو زويد

## الملخص

تتسبب الكوارث باحتياجات انسانية لأعداد هائلة من الضحايا. الحكومات لها الدور السابق والاجباري لتكون أول من يساعد مواطنيها ومن ثم الضحايا من الدول الاخرى أيضاً. ولكن وفي بعض الاحيان، لا تستطيع الحكومات أن تستجيب للاحتياجات بمفردها. تعرض دول اخرى والعديد من المنظمات الانسانية المساعدة من اجل تخفيف المعاناة الانسانية ومساعدة الضحايا ان يتعافوا والعودة لممارسة حياتهم الطبيعية بالسرعة الممكنة.

لقد تطور العمل الانساني ونما وأصبحت الحاجة ملحة لإجراء تغييرات اساسية في بيئة العمل بحيث يصبح الناس المتأثرين في واجهة الاهتمام، يقول هوجو سليم "لذلك من الصحيح أن العمل الإنساني يجب أن يكون محوره الإنسان بعمق، العمل الإنساني الجيد هو لقاء اجتماعي بين شكين من أشكال الوكالة: الوكالة الإنسانية للمتضررين والوكالة الإنسانية لمن يحاول مساعدتهم. يجب أن يتشاركوا معاً في تشخيص الحالة وإيجاد حلول مناسبة تحترم واقع الناس وليس إنسانيتهم فقط" (Slim, 2020, para 8).

المسألة تجاه الناس المتأثرة اصبح محوراً اساسياً يتوجب على كافة العاملين في المجال الانساني ادراجه في اعمالهم. في عام 2014 ، نشرت الجهات الفاعلة الإنسانية المعيار الإنساني الأساسي بشأن الجودة والمساءلة الذي يمكن أن تتبناه المنظمات والأفراد طواعية لتوجيه عملهم وتقييمه (Gibbons, 2018).

في وضع استثنائي فان الكارثة التي ألمت بسكان مسافر يطا هي الكارثة الاطول. سبب هذه الكارثة هو الاحتلال الاسرائيلي الذي بدأ في العام 1967 والذي لا يبدو انه سيتوقف في المستقبل المنظور. كما أن اثار هذه الكارثة لم تتوقف منذ ان بدأت. واستجابة للاحتياجات المتواصلة، تدخلت مؤسسات انسانية كثيرة لدعم هؤلاء السكان. واجهت الجهات الفاعلة في المجال الانساني بيئة قسرية هدفت الى اضعاف قدرتها على التدخل. وفي ذات الوقت، فان كثيرا من المشاريع التي نفذتها او المساعدات التي قدمتها تلك الجهات الانسانية قد تم تدميرها او مصادرتها.

خلال عملهم لعدة سنين، نشرت الجهات الفاعلة في المجال الانساني عشرات التقارير التي تظهر حالة مسافر يطا والمشاكل التي تواجهها واستجابة هذه المنظمة او تلك لهذه الاحتياجات. لم يتوصل الباحث الى أي تقرير من أي جهة يتناول تقييمها عاما حول دور الجهات الفاعلة في المجال الانساني في دعم صمود سكان مسافر يطا أو مدى احترامهم للالتزامات التي تحتم مسائلتهم امام الناس المتأثرة خلال عملهم كما يراه السكان أنفسهم.

ان طبيعة المشكلة والمنطقة ونمط حياة سكانها قد وجهت الباحث لتبني المنهج الوصفي التحليلي من اجل الوصول الى هدف البحث. اختار الباحث اداة "المجموعات المركزة" بالإضافة الى الاجتماعات الفردية والزيارات الميدانية. ومن اجل تعزيز رؤية الباحث والحصول على الاطار العام الاوسع لعمل المنظمات الانسانية، فقد قام الباحث بعمل اجتماعات مع بعض مدراء تلك المؤسسات.

إنّ ما خلصت اليه هذه الدراسة أنّه حتى الآن، نسقت الجهات في المجال الانساني في ما بينها بدرجة جيدة من أجل تزويد سكان مسافر يطا باحتياجاتهم الاساسية والطارئة بعد حدوث اية مشكلة، بالإضافة الى ذلك، فقد قامت هذه الجهات الانسانية بإنشاء مشاريع عززت قدرة السكان على مواجهة الكوارث المستمرة وحسنت شروط حياتهم الاساسية وقدرتهم على التأقلم مع الاحتياجات المتجددة للأجيال الجديدة.

وكشفت الدراسة أنّ الجهات الفاعلة في المجال الإنساني لم تشرك الناس بنشاط في تصميم وتنفيذ وتقييم المشاريع، علاوة على ذلك، لم يقدموا أنظمة محايدة واضحة لمعالجة شكاوى الناس.

يوصي الباحث بإجراء أبحاث تتناول جوانب أخرى مثل دور الحكومة الفلسطينية أو مشاكل المجتمع البدوي في تلك المنطقة.

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## Acronyms and Glossary

MY	Masafer Yatta
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
NGOs	non-governmental organizations
OPT	Occupied Palestinian Territory
IDF	Israeli Defense Forces
PA	Palestinian Authority
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
OCHA	the United Nations Office for the Coordination of the Humanitarian Affairs
ARIJ	The Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem
B'tselem	The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in Israel
ACF	Action Against Hunger
ACRI	The Association for Civil Rights in Israel
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
PRCS	Palestinian Red Crescent Society

# **1. Chapter one**

## **1.1 Statement of the problem**

In November 1999, the IL authorities expelled the residents of MY from their khirbets and confiscated and destroyed their properties. The residents were allowed to return supported by a temporary court decision.

Since their return in the year 2000, the residents of MY had been in need to all kind of support. The temporary decision of the Israeli High Court of Justice was an urgent need to follow by lawyers. Their basic needs of mattresses, blankets, kitchen kits and other basic items had to be assured. The fodder of their animals had be granted.

This unique situation has caught the attention of the humanitarian actors and official ministries to provide them with what they need. The respond of the humanitarian actors was very slowly at the beginning, and by the time, some humanitarian actors started mobilizing and advocating the case of this area that led to the arrival of many other humanitarian actors and visits carried out by high rank states' representatives. Several projects were proposed out of which many were really executed responding to the different needs like water supply, residential and animal shelters, health services, legal support and others.

The increasing number of International, Israeli and Palestinian humanitarian actors that invaded the area under the objective of assisting the residents has created a new situation that the residents did not experience before. Many community development projects were implemented, and new coping mechanisms were developed to face the risk the residents have been facing.

This research is questioning on the one hand the role played by the different humanitarian actors in supporting the residents' resilience and on the other hand whether they respected

the nine commitments of the core humanitarian standards measuring the accountability of the affected people practiced by the humanitarian actors as evaluated by the residents themselves.

## **1.2 Objectives of the study**

The objective of this study is to assess the following main objectives:

- a) To explore the MY residents' answers on whether the humanitarian actors had supported their resilience.
- b) To explore the residents' answers on whether the humanitarian actors has performed a real system to achieve the accountability to the affected people.

## **1.3 Significance of the study**

Humanitarian actors have delivered goods and services to this vulnerable population, though no or little feedback was orally shared on the overall impact of their intervention. The different humanitarian actors and media outlets have published many reports on the problems that MY has faced or the projects that were implemented by the different actors. To the researcher knowledge, no research has tackled the overall role nor the accountability of the humanitarian actors to the affected people in MY.

## **1.4 Scope of the study**

The area under study will be the Palestinian communities bordering road 317 and in the firing zone 918 area. MY includes two different types of communities; the shepherds and farmers who are originally from the area and Yatta town, and the other type is the Bedouins who refuged to the area in 1948 and were originally living in Beer Sheva'. Due to the different fabric, problems and risk, the researcher is studying the first group and leaving the space for other studies to be conducted on the Bedouins cluster.



## **1.6 The question of the study**

The study aims at finding answers at the residents on the two following questions:

Have the humanitarian actors in MY supported the resilience of the residents?

Have the humanitarian actors been accountable to the affected people in MY?

## **1.7 Methodology**

The nature of MY and its residents, the quality of needed information and the presence of different humanitarian actors directed the researcher to choose the analytical descriptive approach. To achieve the research's goals and objectives, the following tools will be used:

Individual interviews with representatives of communities, focus group discussions and field visits were organized. A review of the literature that is mainly available in the different reports published by the humanitarian actors was prepared. Moreover, interviews with few key managers of humanitarian actors were held to understand their wider vision of the situation from their perspectives.

Within making the updated version of the research, and due to the restriction of movement put in place due to COVID19, the researcher made new phone calls with key members from the focus groups to get answers on the questions related to the accountability to the affected people.

## **2. CHAPTER TWO**

### **2.0 Literature review**

#### **2.1 Masafer Yatta (MY)**

The majority of Hebron district residents might not think that today, there are people, located not far away from them, still live in caves or simple rooms covered with tarpaulin. These shepherds have been trying their best to manage their sheep in a semi-desert area, that is so hot in summer and lack close water resources. Women have been key to the household economy; they help in milking the sheep, making butter or dried-yogurt balls and take care of their family members. They have adapted to the lifestyle they inherited from their grandmothers.

According to the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories [B'tselem] (2005), MY is the area that spreads east of Yatta until reaching the Dead Sea. The area that now falls within the West Bank boundary reaches more than 30,000 dunams. It consists of semi-desert hills where you can hardly see any green spot. The heat of summer reaches many degrees above 40c. While in winter, the little heavy showers create some floods in the valleys that continues its snake-way ending up in the Dead Sea. The yearly average of rainfalls is around 270 mls. This low annual rainfall in the South Hebron Hills and ongoing desertification, have resulted in very low water consumption in these Palestinian villages, averaging as few as 28 liters per capita per day. While for the consumption of Israeli settlements in the area is 211 liters per capita per day, an amount 7.5 times that of the neighboring Palestinian communities.

The residents give the name MY to the eastern khirbets and the name Shifa to the other communities that are bordering road 317. In this study, “Shifa” area is included with the

terminology MY due to the complete similarity and continuity with MY. See (Appendix 1: map of MY).

This wild nature consists of many caves scattering around making the home of the shepherds and their sheep. Every group of caves is locally called Khirbeh. Before 1967, the area witnessed the existence of several central communities reaching far beyond the new borders that was marked after the occupation. The damaged houses and caves can still tell about that rich history of villages like "Um el Qaryatein" that its residents abandoned after the war and settled in other small Khirbets.

There is no official statistics that tells the number of people lived in the area before 1967. While the records given by the elderly people who lived that era tells that Um el Qaryatein for instance was the home of more than 30 families.

According to B'Tselem (2005), the Israeli authorities carried out an operation in October and November 1999 aiming to evacuate the residents. They damaged the residents' properties and expelled around 700 people to the town of Karmel that is locate to the west of MY.

The residents realized that if they surrender and do not return immediately to their places they would not be able to return after. Many families used the darkness of the night to cover their return. They lacked the basic need to survive but they knew it was their only choice. With the help of Israeli activists, they appointed a private Israeli lawyer (Shlomo Lecker) who filed a petition to the High Court of Justice on behalf of some of the residents.

The Association for Civil Rights in Israel [ACRI] (2016) reported that in January 2000, they "petitioned the evacuation orders before the High Court of Justice on behalf of four families (HCJ proceeding 517/00) and requested an interim injunction that would allow

them to remain in their homes and retrieve their confiscated property or be reimbursed for destroyed property.” (ARCI, 2016, para. 6).

ACRI managed to get an initial temporary decision from the Israeli High Court of Justice to stay but not to do any change on the infrastructure. This decision is on one hand, allowed them to stay in MY, while on the other hand has been used by the Israeli authority to destroy any new structure.

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics [PCBS] (2007), 1049 people were living in MY making the total of 174 families. The figures also say that %45 of them were younger than 15 years old, while %51.4 were between 15 and 64 years. Only %3.6 among them were above 64 years old. On the other hand, the PCBS (2017) census excluded some khirbets and gave proximate figures that is far away from the reality. (appendix 2: names of khirbets).

The other group of MY’s residents are the Bedouins. Bedouins are semi-nomadic people who traditionally rely on herding and farming as their main sources of livelihood – settled in southern areas of the West Bank in 1948. Similar to their neighbors, they have seen their freedom of movement progressively restricted. Drought further threatens the viability of pastoralist livelihoods. Many Bedouin are so heavily indebted that obliged them abandon their way of life and searched for work in Israel or a job within the Palestinian ministries if any.

Between 1948 and 1967, many Bedouin families that used to live around Beer el Saba' (Bir Shiva') refuge to MY and settled beside the origin owners. They bought some lands, built basic homes and shared the grazing area with the residents of MY.

### **2.1.1 Lifestyle**

The residents of the small communities in the South Hebron Hills, who are still living there today, continue a long tradition of combining dry lands agriculture with sheep herding. The farmland, which was inherited from their fathers, and the grazing land adjacent to it, is the foundation and the anchor of the existence and continuation of their unique lifestyle, which is sustained by rainwater cisterns for drinking, for both themselves and their herds. The numerous tasks involved in working the land and raising animal herds, mainly flocks of sheep, are spread over the course of the year, thus creating an entire lifestyle. The households, families and communities' activities evolve around this lifestyle. The extended family is of major importance as it is the sole social and economic fabric of the communities in this area, hence family and community relations, including marriage are linked to common interests or needs. This 'fabric of life' enables a unique physical, social and economic existence.

They inherited the lifestyle from their fathers and grandfathers. The men go with their sheep looking for grass and water, while women spend their day making stone-yogurts and butter. A homemade bag from leather is filled regularly with fresh milk. Women should have the patience and strength to shake the bag for few hours until the butter is separated and then collected. Making the stone-yogurts needs several steps until the product is finally ready to go to the market. Very sweet tea with herbs is usually the first thing they offer to workers of humanitarian actors. A loaf of Taboon bread with some eggs or butter would be a generous gesture too.

The small communities of MY used to sell their products in the market of the mother town Yatta. In return, they buy their needs and get their basic services like health and education.

But the life is changing rapidly and their ability to face the several difficulties in MY and afford the increasing expenses have obliged many of the residents to look for a job in Israel. Their family members could continue with herding and farming. Women and children have to compensate the absence of these workers.

It is common in MY to find many heads of families married to more than one wife. Haj Ismail A'drah for instance is married to four women. He believes that the more family members he has the more power he possesses to continue with this difficult life. He has now a total of 35 sons and daughters.

### **2.1.2 The problems of MY**

#### **Area C**

Area C is an administrative division of the West Bank as set out in the Oslo II Accord. According to According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of the Humanitarian Affairs [OCHA] (2017) Over 60 per cent of the West Bank is considered Area C, where Israel retains near exclusive control, including over law enforcement, planning and construction. Most of Area C has been allocated for the benefit of Israeli settlements or the Israeli military, at the expense of Palestinian communities. This impedes the development of adequate housing, infrastructure and livelihoods in Palestinian communities, and has significant consequences for the entire West Bank population. Structures built without permits are regularly served with demolition orders, creating chronic uncertainty and threat, and encouraging people to leave. Where the orders are implemented, they have resulted in displacement and disruption of livelihoods, the entrenchment of poverty and increased aid dependency. The humanitarian community has faced a range of difficulties in providing aid in Area C, including the demolition and confiscation of assistance by the Israeli authorities.

The whole MY area is in Area C and therefore has suffered the consequence of the Israeli strategy that targets Area C in total.

### **Firing Zone**

According to OCHA (2013), approximately 18% of the West Bank has been designated as “Firing Zones”. At least 5,000 Palestinians, mostly herders, live in 38 communities in these areas. Although many of the communities have lived in the areas in question for decades, Palestinian access to the areas is formally prohibited and their Palestinian residents face repeated demolitions and displacement. At least ten Israeli settlement outposts, illegal under Israeli law, are partially or completely located in “Firing Zones”. According to available information, few of these settlement outposts have been removed or their structures issued with ‘demolition’ orders.

According to B’tselem (2013), the Firing Zone 918, encompasses approximately 30,000 dunams [3,000 hectares], was declared a restricted military zone as far back as the 1970s.

### **Settlements and settlers' violence**

The Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem [ARIJ] (2017) reported that settlements are permanent civilian communities established in the OPT since 1967. As of the end of 2017, there were 130 settlements in the West Bank. In addition, there were approximately 100 “settlement outposts” located throughout the West Bank. The actual number of Israeli settlers in the illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank remains one of the secrets camouflaged by the Israeli Civil Administration. The Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics (ICBS) only reports the population of communities with 5,000 residents or more.

Settlements have a destabilizing effect being built on confiscated Palestinian lands and very close to Palestinian communities. Their related infrastructure including separate

roads, water and power lines. The perceived need for security measures such as random checkpoints and Israeli roads only, severely restrict the freedom of movement for Palestinian residents. Incidents of violence by Israeli civilians from settlements against Palestinians and their property are a daily occurrence throughout Area C and MY . The main types of incidents against Palestinians can be categorized as stone-throwing at Palestinian homes and travelling vehicles; physical assault; uprooting or damaging trees; setting fire to agricultural property; and other acts of vandalism against property. Extensive reports on settler violence can be found at many human rights organizations websites. The absence of accountability for those perpetrating acts of violence against Palestinian residents perpetuates the impunity.

In MY, settlements started to be built at the beginning of 1080s. Some settlements like Carmel started as a military camp and by the time changed into a settlement. Other small posts were created occupying some hilltops. Cow farms and chicken farms were also built adjacent to the settlements. One doesn't need to be expert to see that the settlements and the posts created a continuing line that aims to separate MY from the mother community Yatta.

Appendix 2: list of MY settlements, date of construction.

#### Access to Basic needs

##### 1. Grazing areas

The feature of MY as a semi-desert area allowed the farmers to use the valleys for planting winter crops, while the hilltops remains wild and suitable for sheep grazing. The following reasons summarize the reasons of shrinking the available grazing area:

- Settlements were built on hilltops and annexed and fenced hundreds of dunums,



- Settlers' violence against the shepherds and the sheep prevented shepherds reaching areas within the proximity of settlers,
- IDF arresting frequently shepherds on allegations given by settlers,
- IDF damaging crops adjacent to the virtual borders 1967-1948.

## 2. Education

Building schools is not allowed in MY likewise in Area C. Students were obliged to go to Yatta and stay away with relatives and had the chance only in weekends to reunion with their parents. Other lucky students had the chance to study in the only school in MY until few years ago that is located in Tuwani. The students who faced the most tough daily journey to school were from Tuba. Due to the frequent attacks by settlers, Christian Peacemakers Team [CPT] and Operation Dove started accompanying the students to and from school. Even the international volunteers were subject to a serious attack in 2004. Since then, IDF is escorting the group (CPT.org)

## 3. Health

Health services did not exist in MY. Clinics were only present in Yatta. Any patient who needed medical intervention had to reach Yatta on donkeys or a tractor due to the difficult roads' conditions. Many women gave birth during the way to Yatta. Others passed away before reaching the hospital.

## 4. Right to play

Children in MY suffer the consequence of the area and the occupation. They adapt to the tough environment and the nature of the area. Until recently when the internet connected them to the world, they did not know about playing facilities that other kids around the world or even in the near settlements enjoy. They could only play with local made toys

or creating their own games from the stones and wood they can easily collect from their surroundings.

## **5. Destruction of property**

Israeli Policy in Area C and in MY requires from the Palestinians to obtain the approval of the Civil Administration for building private homes, agricultural structures, or infrastructure in the form of a building permit. Such permit in most cases has not been given.

As a result, the risks and difficulties associated with the implementation of activities in Area C, by many humanitarian actors have been avoided. The alternative was that they have been providing simplified support through initiatives that do not require a permit. However, these projects were unsustainable (e.g. delivering water tanks to remote communities rather than rehabilitating existing cisterns). Those who build without a permit run the risk of demolition.

In 2018, the Israeli authorities issued a new military order (1797-2018) confirmed by the Israeli High Court of Justice on 30.04.2019 allowing the destruction of any new construction after 96 hours of handing over notifying the owners of the destruction. This new order makes it almost impossible for any owner to appeal in the court against the destruction. On the ground, many constructions were destroyed since May 2019 as a result of this order.

### **2.1.3 Law of occupation**

The Harvard Program on Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research [HPCR] (2004) reported that the international community almost unanimously considers the OPT to be under occupation by Israel as a consequence of its invasion and effective control in 1967. The military occupation has been recognized as such by the International Committee of

the Red Cross [ICRC] (2007) and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territory and was reaffirmed by the International Court of Justice [ICJ] in 2004.

Explaining their legal position, OCHA (2013) confirmed that under international humanitarian law, Israel is obliged to protect the Palestinian civilian population and to administer the occupied territory for their benefit. The forcible transfer of civilians from or within occupied territory is absolutely prohibited, regardless of the motive and whether the affected residents are permanent or seasonal dwellers. An occupying power may temporarily evacuate people from their homes only in the context of active hostilities, if people's safety or imperative military reasons so demand. Those affected must be provided with adequate shelter and other assistance for the duration of evacuation. The destruction of private property is strictly prohibited. Forced evictions are also prima facie contrary to international human rights law which recognizes the rights of everyone to an adequate standard of living, including to adequate housing.

## **2.2 Humanitarian Action**

### **.2.1 Definition**

Helping those who are in need is an old value that is found in almost all ancient cultures and religions. Charity and Zakat are religious examples of assisting the vulnerable suffering from wars, disasters and other forms of catastrophes. The term expanded to include people who are not from the one's country or tripe. "Humanitarianism came in this context to be associated not only with advancing human welfare, but with softening the roughness of the human condition and promoting altruism" (Calhoun, 2018, p.11).

Calhoun believes that the humanitarian action came after Henri Dunant's initiative to provide humanitarian assistance to victims of wars following Solferino battle in 1859. While the US civil war in the 1980s had generated considerable humanitarian response. But it was later in Europe when the humanity gained a clearer meaning (Calhoun, 2018).

Davey, E., Borton, J., & Foley, M. (2013) believe that the Second World War was a turning point as governments understood the need for greater international intervention following disasters. They confirm that a liberal humanitarianism has arisen from the end of the Cold War.

According to (Gugerty & Prakash, 2010), the principles that guide the humanitarian work are the humanitarian imperative, neutrality, impartiality and humanitarian activity. These principles " they are the dynamic and increasingly tested by new contextual challenges - such as the heavy use of military logistics in the humanitarian responses in Kosovo and Iraq, which undermined the principles of neutrality and debated by humanitarian NGOs" (Gugerty & Prakash, 2010).

According to (Anheier, 2009), the humanitarian actors appeared to bridge the gap that happened as a result of governments being not able to treat their own welfare, developmental and environmental problems.

### **2.2.2 Humanitarian actors**

According to the humanitarian accountability report (2018), the humanitarian sector is a highly complex interconnected system with many elements, characteristics and dimensions. For example, there are numerous interconnected actors (recipients, donors, governments, the United Nations, the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement/ICRC, NGOs, humanitarian staff, development staff, peacekeepers, community-based organisations, emerging actors, the private sector, diaspora, faith-based organisations, etc.). There are a growing variety of technical sectors (food security, livelihood, health, water and sanitation, mental health, etc.). Add to this a multiplicity of initiatives, a diversity of cultural environments, different natures of crises (natural disaster, conflict, protracted crisis, etc.) and so on. (Humanitarian Accountability Report, 2018, page 13).

### **2.2.3 Humanitarian actors in MY**

According to information got by the researcher during official meetings with directors of some humanitarian actors, the main fields of their activities in MY were classified as the following:

- a) Protection: including legal follow-up, mobilization and training
- b) Shelter
- c) Food security
- d) Education
- e) Water and Habitat
- f) Health care

This classification will be considered one main base of discussion with focus groups and in analyzing the data obtained during the focus groups meetings.

The short description in the list (no. 5) summarizes the main mission of each humanitarian actors copied from their perspective WEB sites. The link of the information appears in the table under (source) while the full link is archived under bibliography.

## **2.3 Resilience**

Humanitarian disaster occurs when the human, physical, economic or environmental damage from an event, or series of events, overwhelms a community's capacity to cope ([www.wvi.org](http://www.wvi.org)). Disasters could be geophysical like earthquakes, meteorological like storms, hydrological like floods, climatic events like droughts, or man-made hazards like conflicts. Disasters cause huge needs to victims. Governments may call for international support to cover the needs. Conflict areas caught the attention of many humanitarian actors to support the increasing number of victims. Many humanitarian actors coordinate among them while others act individually. The more the disaster lasts, the need to adapt to the changing needs appear. Assistance to those affected is usually based on an initial rapid assessment of needs and designed to contribute effectively to their recovery. Maintaining the identity, dignity, resilience and life-style of victims is main challenge.

### **2.3.1 Definition of resilience**

Coming from the Latin root *resi-lire*, meaning to spring back, resilience was first used by physical scientists to denote the characteristics of a spring and describe the stability of materials and their resistance to external shocks (Davoudi, Brooks, & Mehmood, 2013).

Resilience is more than the ability of a system (such as a household or community) to bounce back to its pre-disaster state. Rather, a more integrated and holistic definition suggests that resilience is the ability to withstand (absorb) shocks and stresses, as well as

the ability to adapt to dynamic conditions and put in place mechanisms that enable longer term, systemic responses to the underlying causes of vulnerability (Barrett, Conostas, 2013).

### **2.3.2 How to achieve resilience?**

Resilience can be translated into the following wider frame of work:

1. Building resilience of individuals: and that could be reached through developing the individuals' well-being and provide him with survival skills.
2. Building resilience of communities: That includes:
  - a) Community development: addressing needs across multiple sectors (water, health, etc.).
  - b) Community infrastructure: such as: community organizations, local leaders who knew the community well and shared communication channels helped communities to adapt after the crisis, good communication between community organizations and the people using channels such as community radio, websites, newsletters and email networks.
  - c) Community empowerment. The following activities could be done:
    - i. Community connectedness: the importance of 'opportunities to keep people coming together, talking together'. These included ceremonies, social and memorial events.
    - ii. Community participation in disaster response and recovery: through new community-based, 'do-it-yourself' initiatives.
    - iii. Community engagement in official decision-making.

## **2.4 Accountability to the affected People**

Humanitarian organisations operate in contexts where they must make difficult decisions about where, how and into whom they will invest their time and resources. Thus, humanitarian organisations are constantly responding to a variety of stakeholders and within multiple layers of accountability regulations (Daun, 2020, P 13).

Therefore, the humanitarian actors were forced to work in the different countries in a high transparency in order to obtain the trust and respect from all parties to conflicts and disasters and to avoid any misconducts. One of the main methods to achieve that is through creating, implementing and following up the accountability. The accountability was divided into the following main classifications:

- a) Upward (accountability to donors),
- b) Downward (accountability to clients (affected people and communities),
- c) Internal (accountability to mission, boards, and for individual staff members to supervisors, etc.),
- d) Lateral (accountability to peer organizations).

According to the humanitarian accountability report (2018), “while the numbers of people affected by crises and the range of actors engaged in humanitarian action has increased over the last few years, often the same institutions and actors continue to make the decisions. Despite the rhetoric and long-standing commitments to change, people affected by crises continue to be far from the centers of power, and not engaged in making the decisions which greatly affect their lives” (Humanitarian accountability report, 2018, page 23).

Over the past two decades the concept of accountability to affected populations (AAP) has become a mainstream approach among humanitarian organisations. Daun thinks that



“Hence, humanitarian organizations can declare their commitment to accountability, but the lack of clarity of the meaning of the concept can undermine accountability efforts and mean they have not substantially changed the way in which they work” (Daun, n.d.).

The Humanitarian accountability report (2018) concludes that in the last 10-15 years, progress has been made in improving affected people’s access to information about crises and humanitarian organisations, two-way communication between humanitarian organisations and affected people, and community engagement by humanitarian organisations. In some organisations and humanitarian responses, feedback mechanisms and complaints and response systems have been established to enable accountability, more relevant and effective responses, and to influence programming decisions (Humanitarian accountability report, 2018, page 28).

Yet, complaints are often received by the staff from the same organisation that the complaint is addressing, which has proven to be highly problematic, in particular in cases of abuse. The most controversial proposal to close this gap is the establishment of a humanitarian ombudsperson.

In order to measure the applicability of the accountability to the affected people by the different humanitarian actors, the researcher believes that the nine commitments of the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability are the best among others to analyze the applicability (Gibbons, 2018). The first six points are addressed to the affected people while the other three are addressed to the different actors. These nine commitments are:

- Communities and people affected by crisis receive assistance appropriate and relevant to their needs. Humanitarian assistance is appropriate and relevant.

- Communities and people affected by crisis have access to the humanitarian assistance they need at the right time. Response is effective and timely.
- Communities and people affected by crisis are more prepared, resilient and less vulnerable as a result of humanitarian action. Humanitarian action strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects.
- Communities and people affected by crisis know their rights and entitlements and participate in decisions that affect them. Humanitarian action is based on open feedback and inclusive participation.
- Communities and people affected by crisis have access to a safe and responsive complaints mechanism. Complaints are welcomed and addressed.
- Communities and people affected by crisis receive coordinated, complementary assistance. Humanitarian action is coordinated and complementary.
- The organisation learns from experience in order to improve outcomes for communities and people affected by crisis. Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve.
- Staff are treated fairly and equitably and are supported to do their job effectively. Humanitarian staff are managed and supported responsibly.
- Organisations use resources efficiently and effectively for their intended purpose. Resources are used and managed responsibly.

The first six commitments are the base that the researcher used in his discussion with the focus groups in order to answer the main question of the study. The last three commitments are relevant to the internal relation and accountability within the humanitarian actors themselves.

## **3. CHAPTER THREE**

### **3.1 Data collection**

#### **3.1.1 Executive Summary**

The main objective of this study is on one hand to explore the role played by the different humanitarian actors working in MY in supporting the resilience of the residents and on the other hand to find out if during their work, they were accountable to the affected people as evaluated by the affected people themselves. It is also an opportunity to the residents to give their definition of the term “resilience”.

This chapter describes the methodology, the research questions and hypotheses, the research design, the participants, data collection procedure, and data analysis methods.

The researcher employed his knowledge of the area, its residents, the problems and the different humanitarian actors working in MY to facilitate executing the study. However, the researcher did not influence or use his knowledge during data collecting nor in the process of data analysis.

Being well-known to the majority of MY’s residents, and to avoid any expectations or satisfying answers, the researcher and just before starting the focus group meetings, clarified to the groups that he was doing an academic research and that the meetings were not linked at all to his career with the ICRC.

A qualitative descriptive methodology was chosen as it is the best one when seeking to provide accurate and pure description of a complex situation accompanied by the low level of education of the participants.

### **3.1.2. Methodology & Participant Profile**

#### **a. Instrument Development**

The researcher had taken into consideration that the problems of MY have been accruing since the start of the occupation. Moreover, the huge number of Humanitarian actors and the different interventions they carried out besides the lifestyle of the residents themselves had guided the researcher to use focus groups interviews. The selection of the focus groups was based on including the different components of MY area. Questions were designed to match the different educational and knowledge levels of the participants. The nature of the residents being herders and shepherds and did not finish or even did not attend schools guided the researcher into choosing the focus group meetings rather than distributing questionnaires.

In-advance invitation to the meetings that included the explanation of the reason of the meetings and the times that suit them was organized. Phone calls were made again shortly before heading to their sites in order to be sure of their availability due to the nature of the area and the life-style of the residents.

No audio recording was planned in order to avoid the fear of the participants and to allow free self-expression. The researcher had accompanied with him an assistant to take answers and notes in addition to some important quotations.

The researcher determined the sample size when he reached the criterion of saturation. Saturation refers to a circumstance when information is repeated in the data so many times that the research team finds that no extra valuable interpretation could be generated. In other words, the research team could basically anticipate the results if more groups and/or interviews were to be conducted (Marshall & Rossman, 2010).

The following questions were asked to the members of the focus groups:

a. Questions related to the support of the resilience:

1. Can you tell me about MY before the forced eviction to Karmel and after your return?
2. When you returned to your communities, what was the most thing you needed?
3. How did you get these needs?
4. Who provided you with your needs? Do you recall the names of these people and to which organization do they work?
5. Did the work and assistants of the organizations continued until today? Are there new NGOs along the time?
6. Are they still giving the same type of assistant or new types appeared?
7. What is the most important assistant for you and what is less important? Why?
8. What does the word “resilience” mean to you?
9. How resilience could be achieved?
10. Did the humanitarian actors succeed in supporting your resilience? And How?
11. What would have been your situation if there were no Humanitarian actors supporting you in MY?

b. Questions related to check the complaint system:

Based on the nine commitments of the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (Gibbons, 2018), the following two questions were raised:

- Communities and people affected by crisis know their rights and entitlements and participate in decisions that affect them. Humanitarian action is based on open feedback and inclusive participation. What is your opinion?

- Communities and people affected by crisis have access to a safe and responsive complaints mechanism. Complaints are welcomed and addressed. What is your opinion?

#### b. Site Selection

The researcher went to the residential places of the groups' members as it was easier to the researcher to reach them than bringing them away from their sites. The decision took into consideration that the members are spending most of their time in their locations taking care of their herds and families. They go out of the area for urgent needs and return in hurry.

#### c. Focus Groups

Three meetings were held in March 2019 and two other meetings were held in April 2019. The length of meeting varied between 1 to 2 hours. The researcher had a copy of the prepared questions and an assistant to take notes on the answers. No voice recording was made in order to avoid any fear of the participants and to allow free discussion away from the very formal responds.

Due to including the accountability to the affected people to the study and the restrictions imposed due to the outbreak of COVID 19, phone calls were made in April 2020 in order to get the residents' feedback on these two issues.

#### d. Participant Selection

The participants were selected by the researcher depending on his previous knowledge of the people and the area in order to have variety of different backgrounds, education, gender and engagement with the humanitarian actors.

#### e. Participant Profile

The participants were selected with sufficient variation to allow for contrasting opinions. In accordance to the specificity of MY, most of the participants did not continue university education. Some of them did not even attend schools. Two of the participants have been active working as representatives of the population of MY. One participant managed to have a job with one of the humanitarian actors in charge of documenting the violations taking place in MY. List 4 describes the demography and the locations of the focus groups' members.

## 4. Chapter Four

### 4.1 Data analysis: Definition of Resilience:

In their answer to question number 8, the members of focus groups answered partially or comprehensively what resilience means for them. Each member considers what makes with the other members' contribution a definition of resilience from their perspective.

Figure 1: components of resilience according to the focus groups' members



Source: the researcher

#### New definition

The classical definition of resilience as described in chapter 2 reflects the ability to bounce back to pre-disaster state. The disaster could be social, ecological, economical or other unrest situations that affect the ability of people to live normally. The definition of resilience was based on the following factors:



1. In general, it's state who is the first responder to provide the affected population with the means to overcome this urgent disaster. In case the state doesn't have the means and ability to respond by its means, it might ask the help of humanitarian actors or the international community.
2. The disaster is a short-term event and the respond would range from short to mid-term intervention.
3. No external obstruction faces the state's effort to support the resilience of the affected.

The researcher did not find in his search any reference to MY's situation that requires modifying the definition of resilience to match the following differences:

- a) The residents live a long-lasting occupation that did not happen elsewhere.
- b) The disaster in this case is the consequence of the occupation that is not ending.
- c) The state (the Palestinian Authority) doesn't have the power nor authority to end the cause of the disaster.
- d) The state (the Palestinian Authority) provides limited assistance that doesn't reach the need of the affected population.
- e) The humanitarian actors intervene on humanitarian base and face themselves obstacles put in front of them by the occupying power.

Therefore, a new definition should include the previous elements that takes the points into consideration. The occupation is not any more a temporary situation following war situation. The Israeli occupation to the Palestinian territories has been active since decades and doesn't look to end in the coming future. Moreover, the cause of the MYs need is a result of the occupations' policy to control and evacuate the residents of MY in specific and the residents of Area C in general is not a temporary unrest situation that

needs a short term or emergency respond only. To support the resilience of the affected requires long term strategies to face the occupations' strategies in order to maintain the identity, the presence and the future of the residents.

## **4.2 Data analysis: assistance projects**

The data collected from the members of the different focus groups were classified, sorted and analysed by the researcher. The different activities of the humanitarian actors explained in point 2.2.2 were taken as a base to measure their performance. The standard indicators listed in (1.2 Objectives of the study) mentioned hereunder guided the researcher in his discussion with the focus groups. The first three indicators are:

- Communities and people affected by crisis receive assistance appropriate and relevant to their needs. Humanitarian assistance is appropriate and relevant.
- Communities and people affected by crisis have access to the humanitarian assistance they need at the right time. Response is effective and timely.
- Communities and people affected by crisis are more prepared, resilient and less vulnerable as a result of humanitarian action. Humanitarian action strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects.

The analysis of the qualitative data displays the following main themes highlighted during the focus groups' meetings.

### 4.2.1 Emergency responds:

MY residents had to face the consequence of the occupation and the dry environment. As explained in chapter one, any new structure the residents create to cope with natural needs has been subject to destruction. On the other hand, the tough place where they live, and the lack of water and shade put them and their sheep at high risk. The following points

hereunder describe the role of the different humanitarian actors in providing the pressing needs.

#### **4.2.1.1 Water and sanitation**

The lack of access to safe water and sanitation facilities is a major cause of death, disease and loss of dignity in most of the world's poorer countries. All focus group members confirmed that water is their first basic need to stay with their sheep. "If there is water, there is life, so I stay in my land" Haj Ismail said. Many humanitarian actors responded to this urgent need of clean water and sanitation units. The examples mentioned hereunder are covering some of the humanitarian actors' intervention and not aiming to list all the humanitarian actors who worked in this field and their intervention.

The year 2000 witnessed the first intervention of humanitarian actors in the sector of water and sanitation. They Dig new water cisterns and renovated some existing ones. They also built the first external small toilets in the area. "It was Rose the woman that is married to a Bedouin and her team who first arrived to MY and helped us to stay", Othman Jibril confirmed.

Between 2007 and 2010, ACF participated in digging new cisterns, renovating others, distributing water, provided filters and chlorine and held several awareness and education sessions.

Between 2004 and 2008, the ICRC donated water tanks to ease the transfer of water from a filling point located at the Bedouin community of Um al Kheir. They also supported the communities in renovating some cisterns.

#### **4.2.1.2 Housing and animal shelter**

Shelter is necessary for security and personal safety. In MY, residents depended on caves as shelter for them, their sheep and their stock. In summer, people created basic shelters

over the ground to avoid the heat and humid of the caves. humanitarian actors provided tents and other staff very quickly after every demolition. Mr. Nidal confirmed that “If the tent is destroyed or confiscated, it is not the resident who paid for it, and they knew it will be replaced shortly after any destruction”.

Examples from the humanitarian actors’ intervention:

ICRC: regularly distributes tents and household items to the families whose shelters were destroyed. Some families were donated animal shelters too in order to improve the living conditions of the sheep.

PRCS: distributes tents and household items to the families whose shelters were destroyed

ACF: provided the residents with light metal structures that are more resistance to the weathers changes and provides more comfortable and safe shelter.

#### **4.2.1.3 Food and animal fodder**

The nature of the area as dry and semi-desert, the restriction of reaching grazing areas forced by soldiers and settlers and the increasing prices of fodder obliged the residents into reducing the herd to cover the dept. Humanitarian actors frequently provided the residents with fodder and seeds for planting.

Example from the humanitarian actors’ intervention:

ICRC: The ICRC distributed fodder and seeds to all residents. The also worked for two years with the Palestinian ministry of agriculture and the vet department to vaccinate all sheep and goat.

OXFAM: in 2011, provided animal fodder to all residents.

#### **4.2.2 Legal follow-up:**

Before the year 2000, the residents did not know how to react when receiving notifications of destruction or confiscation issued by the Israeli authority. They used to approach private Israeli or Palestinian lawyers or public committees working at that time under the objective of defending the land. The residents were obliged to provide documents of ownership or maps that was extremely difficult to obtain. The financial cost was heavy on the residents. Moreover, there was no serious follow-up. Most of the cases ended up against the residents.

After 2000, the situation has changed. Legal humanitarian actors started following the cases. The main description of their work is summarized in the following points:

- a) Organized work and follow-up
- b) Free of charge.
- c) Community and individual awareness of rights and follow-up.
- d) Some achievements (decisions from the Israeli courts in favour of the residents).

For example: an appeal submitted by lawyers from Rabbis for Human Rights against the destruction in Sfay and Majaz communities was accepted. As a result, no destruction happened until writing this document.

Another appeal against the lack of access to land due to the proximity to an outpost was accepted. The court approved the ownership of the land and allowed the owner free access.

#### **4.2.3 Improving life conditions:**

The basic life that the old generation of MY residents lived is not any more accepted by the new generation specially after being personally open to the world through working in Israel, or

generally by being connected to the world through the internet and the social media. According to Othman Jabarin “enhancing the resilience means that my son should be encouraged to be next to me in MY and replaces me after my death. When my father got old, he found 3 of his sons next to him. Now, we need to improve their living conditions to encourage them to stay”.

MY residents shared this vision with the humanitarian actors and highlighted this need as a priority. Improving life conditions of victims is as well in the core work of the humanitarian agencies working in crisis. Therefore, with the difficulties the humanitarian actors have faced to implement their projects due the coercive environment the Israeli authority has created, the following field of projects were executed.

#### **4.2.3.1 Access to roads**

The conditions of the primary roads existing in the area allowed only tractors and heavy 4X4 jeeps to access the scattered communities. The transfer of patients including women who are about to give birth was done on donkeys and tractors. After 2000, a gradual improvement of roads took place initiated by some humanitarian actors including widening some roads and covering them with a layer of gravel. Israeli authorities damaged some of the roads, but the humanitarian actors worked again on them. Normal cars can now use these roads that allowed daily trips to and from Yatta to residents and their relatives. These communities are not any more isolated. But it is worth mentioning that these roads are in regular need of maintenance especially following rain showers.

ACF has been the most active humanitarian actor who took care of improving the roads conditions in MY. The dirty stony little trackways that were extremely difficult for small cars to drive through were relatively widened and covered when possible with rubble layer.

#### **4.2.3.2 Access to Health services**

Mobile clinics used to serve the medical need of the residents. A clinic is now functioning in Tuwani community that the other communities can benefit from. Weekly mobile clinic visits from

the Palestinian ministry of health are taking place that has been encouraged by the better conditions of roads.

MSF psychosocial team is regularly touring the khirbets to help victims recover from the consequences of every shock they encountered specially women and children.

PRCS organized for many years mobile clinics to provide primary health care to the patients at their places. They also provide the ambulance service for urgent health cases. Despite the roads' conditions, the ambulances were able as much as they could to reach patients who needed urgent medical intervention like, giving birth, heart attacks and snakes and scorpions' bites.

#### **4.2.3.3 Access to Housing and animal shelter:**

Mobile house units were donated to many residents as an alternative to the basic tent or shelter that used to be donated as an urgent respond to destruction. This new kind of assistance improved the living conditions of the families and provided better protection against the weather conditions. This assistant also encouraged new couples to stay and not leave to Yatta under the pressure of not having an adequate housing.

Nevertheless, some of these units were later destroyed for lack of permit. But the victims were compensated with new units in order to maintain the level of housing they got after years of struggle.

Similar is said when talking about animal shelter as it is as important as human shelter for these shepherds. Tarpaulins and plastic sheets are regularly distributed to the shepherds to replace old ones in order to assure worm and safe shelter for their animals.

Other projects aimed at improving the health care of the animals and improve or change the type of sheep and goat they have into new types that are more productive and resisting to different diseases. These projects that were implemented were monitored and followed by officers from the ministry of agriculture.

#### **4.2.3.4 Access to Education:**

Several schools were built in the last few years in MY to allow students receive their education after having relatively high numbers of illiteracy, especially amongst girls. Humanitarian actors applied different interventions. Among these steps were non-violent steps to prevent the destruction of such schools. Similar type of these schools are present now in other vulnerable towns and communities in the West Bank. These schools were called “Madares al-Tahadi” that means the Challenging Schools.

In a parallel line, Some humanitarian actors offered financial help to few students to allow them to continue their university education. These students could not afford paying the registration fees of the university due to the difficult economic situation of their families.

#### **4.2.3.5 Right to play**

As part of the new remote schools that were created in MY, playgrounds were also built to allow the students practice their favourite sports. These basic but modern playgrounds brought joy to the students during and after school hours.

#### **4.2.3.6 Access to Water network**

ACF worked to provide all the communities were water network in order to spare the efforts and expensive the residents had to pay for bringing water in the old by mobile tractors. The Israeli authorities in some occasions confiscated tractors and digging machines found working for this project. Therefore, many contractors refused to continue working in the area. To overcome this problem, residents worked as part of cash for work to allow this project to happen. Moreover, the residents gained some money from a project that brought a change to their lives. The Israeli authorities destroyed some of these networks and the plan to reconnect them is ongoing.



#### 4.2.3.7 Solar energy and wind turbines

Individual ownership of solar energy systems started after 2002. The peak only started in 2010 when the Israeli NGO (comet-me) executed wide range projects.

Electricity facilitated the life of the residents but mainly women. Getting out butter from milk used to take women around 6 hours by shaking leather bag. Now, an electric machine can get better results in few minutes allowing women to watch their favourite films on TVs or participate in other social or education activities.

Example: Comet-ME and the community of Maghayer al-Abeed appealed final demolition orders to the Supreme Court. The Israeli authority finally responded asking for the petition to be erased and instead to submit a plan for the village.

#### **4.2.4 Protection:**

##### **4.2.4.1 Physical accompaniment**

CPT and Operation Dove accompanied shepherds to grazing areas and filmed the attacks against them. They also accompanied students during their daily trip from their isolated community (Tuba) to the school in Tuwani and back home. The attack they had didn't prevent them continue this approach.

Moreover, activists of these humanitarian actors settled in Tuwani in order to be close to the residents. This step had a positive psychological support to the residents that the activists could intervene quickly when problems with settlers or soldiers occurs.

B'tselem provided Residents and activists with cameras and trained them in order to document abuses. These films were used to defend the residents when arrested by the Israeli police following the majority incidents for false allegations.

#### **4.2.4.2 Visits of diplomats, journalists and others**

Breaking the Silence organized frequent tours to influential Israelis and other nationalities to the area. Visits to Parliaments from different countries were also organized by other NGOs like CPT in order to show them the situation on the ground. For example, the military orders of evacuating Sousya community was discussed in these tours. As a result, the international community, including the EU and the US, raised the issue of the orders and the demolitions of other EU-funded projects to the Israeli authorities. So far, many of these orders are frozen.

#### **4.2.4.3 Mobilization:**

Some humanitarian actors and in cooperation with other partners abroad, invited key members from MY to present their case in front of important influential figures in the USA, Europe and Israel mainly. These live presentations allowed many stakeholders to understand the problem of the area and therefore change negative perception they had and turned to be shouldering the defendants of MY.

Nasr Nawajaa' and other residents had the opportunity to travel to the US and Europe to present their case.

#### **4.2.4.4 Intervention to the authorities**

The protection field included another important intervention that the residents needed. This intervention was of two parts; live intervention that responds to an emergency, and a preventive intervention.

The live intervention is a call to the authorities to intervene on the spot for life-saving needs or critical situation of violence. The following examples present such intervention:

- a) In case of preventing ambulances to reach patients,
- b) An attack of settlers against houses or shepherds,
- c) Lack of IDF escort to the students going to school or coming back.

Many humanitarian actors did intervene in such situation. For example, the ICRC, Taayosh and others have been usually called for the first two cases. CPT had the lead for the lack of escort cases.

For the preventing intervention, The ICRC has adapted the confidential dialogue with the authorities in order to change behaviour and avoid the repetition of violations. Other humanitarian actors have been urging the authorities to take its responsibility as an occupying power through publishing public reports. Other humanitarian actors choose to intervene to courts that was explained previously in point 4.1.2.

#### **4.2.4.5 Capacity building**

Some humanitarian actors allowed for personal journeys and individual skill of the residents to be built as a form of personal development. These skills include knowing your rights and public speaking, for example there are some local actors who are highly trained and skilled in operating on a local, national and international level.

Documenting violations by taking video shots that could be used for both defending the residents against any false allegation or proving that the perpetrators were the settlers or the IL authorities.

Non-violent engagement trainings were given to MY residents in order to send their messages to the world in a peaceful way, and to avoid on the other hand being arrested for any allegation of physical attack practiced by the residents. Such allegations could be used by the settlers or the IL police to deviate the protest of MY residents away from its' objectives.

Local committees were encouraged to establish mainly for women in order to increase their participation in decision making and to allow them to contribute more to the family income by supporting some local products such as embroidery. Youth also created media outlets in which they shared the problem and attacks they face. Trainings were provided to the managers of the pages in taking photos and writing articles.

### 4.3 Data collection: Accountability to the affected people

The base of analyzing the data collected from the focus groups regarding the accountability to the affected people practiced by the humanitarian actors as seen and judged by the affected people themselves are the following two indicators listed in chapters one and two. These indicators are:

- Communities and people affected by crisis know their rights and entitlements and participate in decisions that affect them. **Humanitarian action is based on open feedback and inclusive participation.**
- Communities and people affected by crisis have access to a safe and responsive complaints mechanism. **Complaints are welcomed and addressed.**

#### 4.3.1 Humanitarian action is based on open feedback and inclusive participation

The replies on this point shows that until few years ago, the majority of humanitarian actors were approaching the affected people with assistant kits prepared in advance by the donors themselves without checking the real need of the beneficiaries. The projects were also designed by the donors without any participation of the beneficiaries who usually accept the project without any complain knowing that their refusal to the projects would only allow the donor to give the projects to other beneficiaries. So the beneficiaries would not care if the assistance or the projects meet their needs or not, they just take whatever is given to them.

In the last few years, an increase was noticed in engaging the affected people in the process. Around half of the humanitarian actors started discussing the projects with the beneficiaries.

This new approach included as well carrying out evaluation assessments to measure the impact of their assistance and exploring feedback from the beneficiaries. But the focus group meetings showed that the evaluation assessments:

- The humanitarian actors did not present the results to the affected people,
- External evaluators of few humanitarian actors were not free to choose the people they want to meet. Such meetings were organized by the local staff of the humanitarian actors with specific beneficiaries that might affect the results of the evaluation.

Another conclusion reached through the focus groups meeting was that these projects are subject to fixed agenda forced by the donor that falls under (western standards). Most of the money allocated to the projects go for organizing workshop and awareness campaigns that are not any more attractive to the people. The many similar activities have brought the people to lose their interest and consider these activities as a waste of time and money. The real objectives of these projects have deviated from the needs of the people. They believe this money could have been invested in providing them with more important tools and needs.

#### **4.3.2 Complaints are welcomed and addressed**

The affected people are usually dealing with the local field officers of the different humanitarian actors. International delegates are frequently changing keeping the contact and authority in the hands of the local field officers.

The vast majority of the humanitarian actors did not introduce or inform the affected people on the existence of a complaint mechanism nor providing them with a contact person or number to call in case of any problem or abuse.

The very few cases in which individuals approached offices of humanitarian actor to complain, would usually end up with a cup of coffee with the director of the office and a promise of future assistance.

Contrary to some countries abroad, no allegation of sexual abuse was reported in MY. The example of problems reported by the focus groups was fraud cases in which the field officers demanded some gifts like a sheep for giving a project to someone.

## Chapter Five

### 5.1 Conclusions and recommendations

Humanitarian disasters continue to occur and cause victims who become in urgent need of support. Most of these disasters are short-lasting but cause huge physical and psychological damage and overwhelms community's capacity to cope. States and humanitarian agencies intervene to the favor of the victims to support their resilience.

The OPT in general and MY in specific has been facing a long-lasting disaster; that is the occupation. Contrary to the other types of disasters, the IL authorities has created a coercive environment minimizing and sometimes blocking the humanitarian aid to reach the victims.

Questioning the six commitments of the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability that are the base of the answering the study's question, the humanitarian actors managed to support the resilience of MYthe human's residents. Fore example, they managed through mobilizing political figures in IL and outside to continue many projects and freeze the destruction of many others. The humanitarian actors responded shortly after any new suffering of the residents to support them continue their living. On the same time, they have planned and executed a full package of activities aiming at empowering the resilience of the residents to stand against the continuous IL plans to force them leave.

MY residents appreciate the continuous role of the different humanitarian actors in supporting their resilience. Nidal Younes, the current director of MY village council confirms that "have the humanitarian actors not been present in MY, the residents would have either not being present there now or would only be there with very minor number of people and living like the first human who settled first on earth".

On the other hand, the study reveals that despite the good work of the humanitarian actors in supporting the residents' resilience, they did not actively engage the affected people in the planning and executing the projects. The humanitarian actors used to decide themselves on what they give. Moreover, they did not usually do evaluations of their projects. The very few evaluations that were done did not involve the affected people and no feedback on the results was shared with them after.

Regarding the complaint system, the results confirmed that almost none of the humanitarian actors has presented this topic. MY residents do not know if such system exists and in case of any problem, they don't know to which channel they can address their complaints. They believe a neutral body should be created that can protect them from any consequences due to their complains and on the other hand, provide them with the results of their allegations.

The researcher recommends the humanitarian actors the following:

1. To continue supporting the vulnerable MY residents.
2. Humanitarian actors should involve the residents in the future projects.
3. Increase the cooperation and coordination among the different humanitarian actors in order to unify their efforts and avoid duplications of projects and to assure reaching out to all the affected people in MY.
4. Humanitarian actors are highly recommended to create neutral complaint systems and to inform the affected people on the contact numbers and e-mails of these ombudsmen.



## **5.2 Recommendation**

The researcher recommends other researchers to study the following fields in order to have a complete landscape on MY case.

1. The Role of NGOs in supporting the resilience of the residents of MY from the humanitarian actors' perspective.
2. The Role of humanitarian actors in supporting the resilience of the Bedouins' cluster in MY from the Humanitarian actors' perspective.
3. The Role of humanitarian actors in supporting the resilience of the Bedouins' cluster in MY from the Bedouins' perspective.
4. The role of the PA in supporting the resilience of the residents of MY in both communities.

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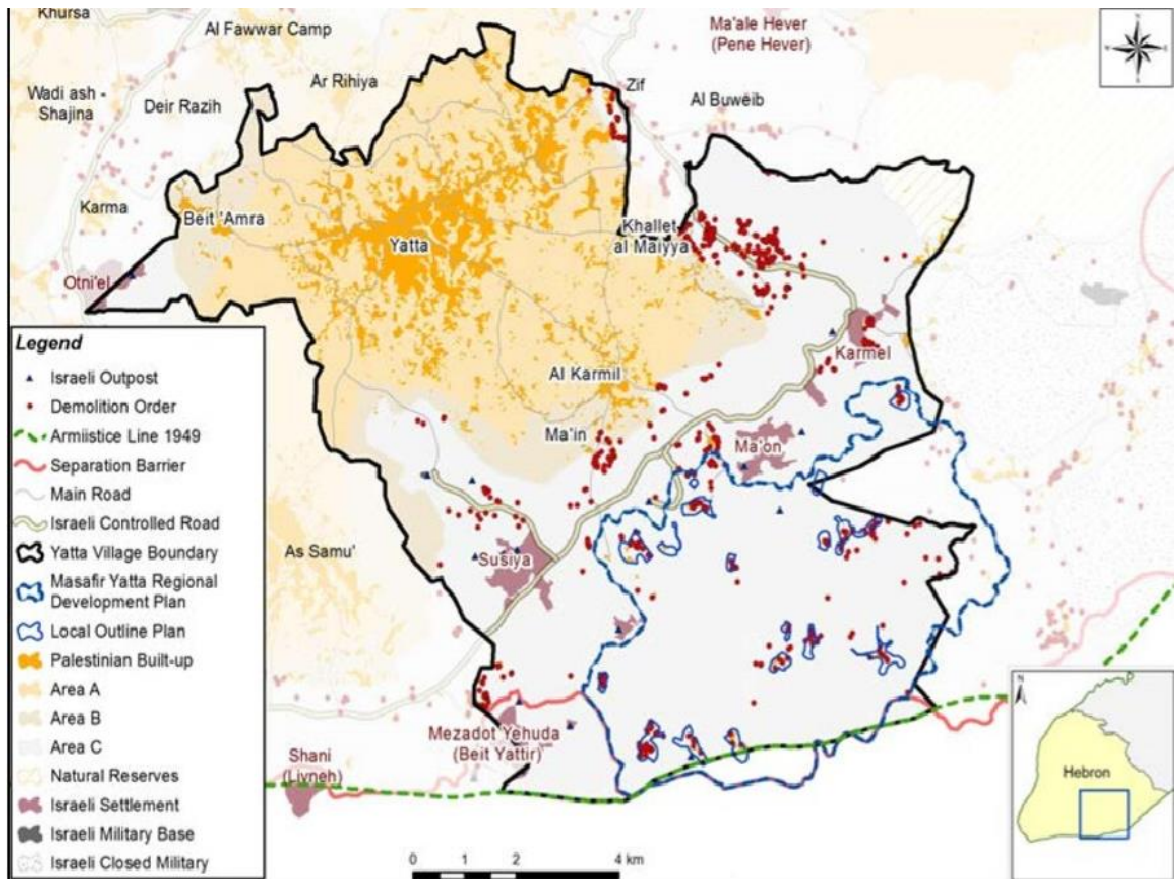
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## Appendixes

### 1. MY map



Source: <https://www.unocha.org>

### 2. List of MY Khirbets and census of PCBS 2017.

No.	Khirbet	Population
1	Jinba	Not Available
2	Markez	Not Available
3	Beer el A'id	77
4	Halaweh	Not Available
5	Tabban	Not Available
6	Maghayer Al A'bid	8
7	Sfay Foqa	44
8	Fakhit	185
9	Shaab al Botom	90
10	Majaz	Not Available
11	Sadet Al Tha'leh	26
12	Khalet Al Daba'	Not Available
13	Sousya	104
14	Tuba	Not Available
15	Mfaqara	48
16	Twani	95
17	Rakiz	7
18	Maqoura	27
19	Qweiwis	24

Source: [http://pcbs.gov.ps/pcbs\\_2012/Publications\\_AR.aspx](http://pcbs.gov.ps/pcbs_2012/Publications_AR.aspx)

### 3. List of settlements

No	Settlement	Established	Population	Status
1	Karmel	1981		settlement
2	Maa'on	1981		settlement
3	Sousya	1983		settlement
4	Beit Yatir			settlement
5	Havot Maa'on	2001		outpost
6	Avi Gayel	2001		outpost
7	Nof Nesher	1996		outpost
8	Mitzpe Yair	1998		outpost

Source: <https://www.B'tselem.org>

4. List 4: focus groups' members and their locations

Focus groups' members and locations					
Focus group (FG)	No. of participants	Location	Range of Age	gender	others
FG 1	5	Susiya	20 to 50	Females	Women association
FG 2	7	Fakhit	23 to 70	3 Females, 4 Males	Herders
FG 3	3	Tuwani	20 to 40	Males	activists
FG 4	4	Yatta	25 to 55	Males	x-representatives
FG 5	1	Yatta	50	Male	Head of representative

Source: the researcher

5. List of the main humanitarian actors working in MY

No.	NGO	Short description	Source
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International Humanitarian actors			
1	Christian Peacemaker Teams-CPT	Christian Peacemaker Teams Palestine is a faith-based organization that supports Palestinian-led, non-violent, grassroots resistance to the Israeli occupation and the unjust structures that uphold it. By collaborating with local Palestinian and Israeli peacemakers and educating people in our home communities, we strive to help create a space for justice and peace.	<a href="http://www.cptpalestine.com">www.cptpalestine.com</a> /
2	Operation Dove	Since 2004, Operazione Colomba is present in At-Tuwani,. This is an area occupied and totally controlled by Israel. Moreover, there are many Israeli settlements and outposts that are violently expanding into the Palestinian lands. Despite this, the local inhabitants have chosen to remain there and to resist in a nonviolent way.	<a href="http://www.operazionecolomba.it">www.operazionecolomba.it</a>
3	ACTION AGAINST HUNGER (ACF)	Action Against Hunger has carried out humanitarian programs in the Palestinian Territories since 2002, addressing needs in the West Bank and Gaza for revitalized livelihoods, income opportunities, improved access to water and sanitation, and nutritional support.	<a href="http://www.actionagainsthunger.org">www.actionagainsthunger.org</a>

4	OXFAM	<p>In the West Bank, we advocate for the rights of communities to stay on their land, and we promote the rights of women and marginalized groups to participate in the decision-making that affects their lives. We also help olive farmers improve the quality of their products and get it to markets, and support herders to care for their animals</p>	<a href="http://www.oxfam.org">www.oxfam.org</a>
5	GVC	<p>We carry out humanitarian aid and sustainable development cooperation projects to guarantee access to clean water, food, health services, education and work, for communities all over the world.</p>	<a href="http://www.gvc-italia.org">www.gvc-italia.org</a>
6	NRC	<p>We protect and assist Palestinians affected by, or threatened with, displacement.</p> <p>We provide legal counselling to promote human rights and improve shelter, water and sanitation facilities. We support the provision of quality education, and help communities prepare for, and respond to, emergencies. We also advocate for the rights of displaced Palestinians locally and internationally.</p>	<a href="http://www.nrc.no">www.nrc.no</a>
7	ICRC	<p>neutral organization ensuring humanitarian protection and assistance for victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence. It takes action in response to</p>	<a href="http://www.icrc.org">www.icrc.org</a>

		emergencies and at the same time promotes respect for international humanitarian law	
8	Jstreet	J Street organizes and mobilizes pro-Israel, pro-peace Americans who want Israel to be secure, democratic and the national home of the Jewish people.  Working in American politics and the Jewish community, we advocate for policies that advance shared US and Israeli interests as well as Jewish and democratic values, leading to a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.	<a href="http://www.jstreet.org">www.jstreet.org</a>
9	OHCHR	The United Nations human rights programme aims to ensure that the protection and enjoyment of human rights is a reality in the lives of all people.	<a href="http://www.ohchr.org">www.ohchr.org</a>
10	OCHA	OCHA is the part of the United Nations Secretariat responsible for bringing together humanitarian actors to ensure a coherent response to emergencies. OCHA also ensures there is a framework within which each actor can contribute to the overall response effort	<a href="http://www.unocha.org">www.unocha.org</a>

11	MSF	provide medical assistance to people affected by conflict, epidemics, disasters, or exclusion from healthcare.	<a href="http://www.msf.org">www.msf.org</a>
<b>Israeli Humanitarian actors</b>			
12	Yesh Din	Volunteers for Human Rights is an Israeli organization established in 2005 and has since worked to protect the human rights of Palestinians living under Israeli armed forces' occupation.	<a href="http://www.yesh-din.org">www.yesh-din.org</a>
13	B'tselem	strives to end Israel's occupation, recognizing that this is the only way to achieve a future that ensures	
14	Rabbis for Human Rights	is the only rabbinic voice in Israel that is explicitly dedicated to human rights. Our mission is to inform the Israeli public about human rights violations, and to pressure the State institutions to redress these injustices.	<a href="http://www.rhr.org.il">www.rhr.org.il</a>
15	The Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI)	ACRI is a policy driven, non-profit organization protecting the human rights and civil liberties of all people living in Israel and the occupied territories.	<a href="http://www.english.acri.org.il">www.english.acri.org.i</a> <u>l</u>
16	Taayush	Arabs and Jews, Israelis and Palestinians — live surrounded by walls and barbed wire.	<a href="http://www.taayush.org">www.taayush.org</a>
17	Comet-Me	Is an Israeli-Palestinian non-profit organization providing sustainable energy	<a href="http://www.comet-me.org">www.comet-me.org</a>

		and clean water services to off-grid communities	
18	Breaking the silence	An organization of veteran combatants who have served in the Israeli military since the start of the Second Intifada and have taken it upon themselves to expose the Israeli public to the reality of everyday life in the Occupied Territories. Our work aims to bring an end to the occupation.	<a href="http://www.breakingthesilence.org.il">www.breakingthesilence.org.il</a>
PAL Humanitarian actors			
19	Union of Agricultural Work (UWAK)	one of the largest agricultural development institutions in Palestine.	<a href="http://www.uawc-pal.org">www.uawc-pal.org</a>
20	The Popular Struggle Coordination Committee (PSCC).	lead community resistance to Israeli occupation in various forms, such as marches, strikes, demonstrations, direct actions and legal campaigns, as well as supporting boycott, divestment and sanctions.	<a href="http://www.ngo-monitor.org">www.ngo-monitor.org</a>
21	Agricultural Development Association (PARC)	strives to develop the agricultural sector, strengthen the resilience of farmers, reach out to the poor and marginalized groups and their CBO's, mobilize and develop the capabilities of rural people to enable them to control their resources	<a href="http://www.pal-arc.org">www.pal-arc.org</a>

22	MA'AN Development Center	MA'AN's work is informed by the necessity of creating independent, self-reliant initiatives that lead to the development of human resources for sustainable development, which incorporate values of self-sufficiency and self-empowerment	<a href="http://www.maan-ctr.org">www.maan-ctr.org</a>
23	The Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem (ARIJ)	promoting sustainable development in the occupied Palestinian territories and the self-reliance of the Palestinian people through greater control over their natural resources	<a href="http://www.arij.org">www.arij.org</a>
24	Al-Haq	protect and promote human rights and the rule of law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory	<a href="http://www.alhaq.org">www.alhaq.org</a>
25	PRCS		

Source : the researcher