

## Jordan Valley - Fire Zone

### Photographs by Kobi Wolf

Some 2,700 people live in approximately twenty shepherding communities in the Jordan Valley, either in areas declared firing zones by the military or on the periphery of those areas. Some of these communities existed there even before the land was declared a closed zone in the 1970s. In 2009 – decades after the firing zones were originally declared – the military placed cement slabs near each of these communities and posted notices stating that the area was a firing zone and entry was prohibited.

As of the summer of 2012, the military occasionally orders the temporary evacuation of communities located in Jordan Valley areas designated firing zones, alleging that this is necessary for the purpose of military exercises. The orders given to the residents required them to leave their homes for periods of time ranging from a few hours to two days at a time, and stated that if the residents did not leave voluntarily, they would be forcibly removed, their livestock confiscated, and they would be billed for the cost of the evacuation.

In IDF's training areas, which are partly used by Palestinian farmers as plantations, the army leaves accidentally behind thousands of unexploded shells and ammunition. Children and adults often get killed while working their land. a year ago an IDF general Yoav Mordecai admitted that the military trainings purpose is to remove the Palestinian population from their land. needless to say that Fire zones apply only in areas where Palestinians live. The jewish settlements are not included on their land.



IDF Canon cross over a farmland during a training



Some of 3,000 additional dunams of agricultural land are being cultivated by settlers without them having been given official permission to do so. Most of these sites are registered as privately owned Palestinian lands, but the authorities aren't enforcing the law against the settlers. Indeed, according to the report, they are even supporting the settlers' cultivation of these lands. The IDF general Mordechai Civil Administration is mapping all the Bedouin tribes very precisely and "therefore there is no problem if there is a certain overlap of city folk who become Bedouin."

From **Kerem Navot** report ( A new report by Israeli nonprofit Kerem Navot, which monitors Israeli land policies in the West Bank, shows in detail how the system works, through the issuing of closure orders for large tracts of land that become closed military zones.)

"The State of Israel is making sweeping use of closure orders in the West Bank for varied purposes, first of all closing off areas for military training maneuvers. Research shows that the continued closure of the vast majority of the training zones does not answer to any military need, since in 80 percent of the areas no military maneuvers are held at all.

The size of these areas, their locations, the correlation between them and other statutory elements that limit the Palestinians ability to use them – like the jurisdictions of the settlements and designated nature reserves – lead to the conclusion that the continued closure of these areas is a major factor in the land regime the State of Israel is pursuing in the West Bank. It appears that its main aim is to drastically reduce the Palestinian population's ability to use the resource of land and to transfer as many parts of it as possible into hands of the settlers."



picture : Palestinian shepherd walks with his shepherd dogs and his donkey in Jordan





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Children watching TV in their tent located in a fire zone





Palestinian girl holding the Palestine flag with her family near their farmland



A girl carrying a water from the water tank in her village



Palestinian smoke cigarette in his farm



The family of Ayoub Daragme, a 13 year old, shepherd was seriously injured by an unexploded shells





A Palestinian pray in his house.





Israeli Soldiers walking on Palestinian farmland during a military exercise.





Military target in Jordan Valley.





IDF's tanks on a Palestinians farmland after a military exercises.





Military equipment left by Israeli soldiers on a Palestinian's farmland





A Palestinian Farmland damaged by IDF Tanks and canons during a training in the area





As of the summer of 2012, the military occasionally orders the temporary evacuation of communities located in Jordan Valley areas designated firing zones, alleging that this is necessary for the purpose of military exercises.





Palestinians waiting on the main road until IDF finishes the military exercises. If the residents do not leave voluntarily, they would be forcibly removed, their livestock confiscated, and they would be billed for the cost of the evacuation.





IDF Canon cross over a Palestinian's farmland during a training





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IDF Canon cross over a Palestinian's farmland during a training



When IDF completed the training, People are allowed to return home after 4 hours waiting in a safe area





When IDF completed the training, People are allowed to return home after 4 hours waiting in a safe area





Israeli soldiers return from Military training in the Jordan Valley.





Unexploded shells on a farmland. In IDF's training areas, which are partly used by Palestinian farmers as plantations, the army leaves behind thousands of unexploded shells and ammunition. Children and adults often get killed while working their land.





Hader Dragme , Lost his right leg from unexploded shell that was left behind by Israeli army.





The burned hand of Fatma Dragme, she has been injured by unexploded shell in Joran Valley and lost part of her hand,



Fatma Dragme, she has been injured by unexploded shell in Joran Valley and lost part of her hand,



Camahl Muhamed Sabis, from the Palestinian city Tayasir, 35 years old, Lost his arm when he was 25 while he was with his sheep and found an unexploded shells left by IDF.



Basat Daragme holding a picture of his Brother Muhanez who was killed by an unexploded bomb when he was 18.





Ayoub Daragme, a 13 year old, shepherd was seriously injured by an unexploded shells while he was with his sheep. He suffered second degree burns.



For more information & wider edit  
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