



## UNITED NATIONS

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs  
occupied Palestinian territory

# SUSIYA: AT IMMINENT RISK OF FORCED DISPLACEMENT MARCH 2012

## KEY FACTS

- The Palestinian community of Susiya, located in the occupied West Bank, has a population of some 350 people, including 120 children.
- In 1986, the main residential area of the community was declared an archaeological site by the Israeli authorities and approximately 60 families were forcibly displaced, without any compensation according to residents; an Israeli settlement outpost, Suseya Synagogue, was subsequently established in the same area.
- The Israeli settlement of Suseya, est. 1983, and the outpost, est. 2002, control land that is ten times larger than the built-up area of both settlements, much of which is privately-owned Palestinian land. (Rabbis for Human Rights)
- Susiya residents now have access to less than one-third of the approximately 6,000 dunums of land that were previously available to them for residential, agricultural and herding purposes.
- In 2001, all structures in the community were demolished and the residents forcibly displaced again.
- In 2011, the Israeli authorities carried out four waves of demolitions, targeting 41 structures, including 31 residential tents or shacks and two water cisterns, repeatedly displacing 37 people (including 20 children) and affecting another 70.
- At least 70 percent of the existing structures in the community, including the school, have pending demolition orders.
- Residents pay 25 NIS per cubic meter of tankered water, five times more than the nearby settlement, which is served by the network, and spend up to 1/3 of their income on water.
- Water consumption is 28 litres/capita/day (l/c/d), significantly less than the 70 l/c/d consumed by an average Palestinian and well below the WHO standard of 100 l/c/d. (WASH cluster)

### 1. Susiya faces a high risk of forced displacement

due to the lack of adequate planning and its close proximity to an Israeli settlement. These characteristics make the community a “high priority” for demolitions, according to the Israeli Civil Administration’s (ICA) criteria applied in Area C. In response to a petition filed by a settler group to the Israeli High Court, the State indicated in March 2012 that it would act soon against outstanding demolition orders in Susiya.

### 2. Susiya families, who have lived in the community since before 1948, face some of the worst living conditions in Area C.

Residents, who own the land in the community, used to live in houses, but these were destroyed by the Israeli authorities. They now live in tents and tin shelters. Residents, who rely on agriculture and herding for their livelihood, depend on rainwater cisterns, as the community is not connected to the water network and there are no nearby filling points.

### 3. Access to land for residents has been progressively reduced due to settlement construction and settler violence, with a negative impact on livelihoods and security as residents have less space for herding and cultivation.

### 4. The ICA has carried out multiple waves of demolitions targeting residential and livelihood structures, including water cisterns.

Like most Area C communities, the Israeli authorities have never approved a “master plan” for Susiya, without which

residents have almost no possibility of obtaining a permit for construction on their land.

### 5. There is a clear pattern of discrimination between Susiya and the nearby settlements, particularly regarding planning and zoning.

Suseya settlement has an approved plan that allows construction. While the structures in the nearby outpost lack a building permit, the ICA has carried out no demolitions and the outpost is connected to the water and electricity networks.

### 6. Susiya residents are exposed to systematic intimidation and abuse from settlers, in cases triggering forced displacement.

Incidents recorded include physical assaults, verbal harassment and prevention of access to land. This phenomenon has had a damaging psycho-social impact on residents, particularly on children.

### 7. If Palestinian communities in Area C continue to lack access to a fair planning and zoning regime and there is no freeze on demolitions, the situation in these communities will continue to deteriorate, increasing their risk of forced displacement and undermining Palestinian presence in Area C.

Central to this risk is ongoing settlement expansion, which runs counter to international humanitarian law, and persistent settler violence, which the Israeli authorities consistently fail to investigate thoroughly or hold those responsible accountable.





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