

# FACT SHEET—ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS

“Israeli Settlements” are towns built by Israel on Palestinian land in the West Bank, often on land the Israeli government has declared “state land.” Palestinian families often hold deeds to the land or the land is locally recognized as belonging to particular families. Settlements are illegal under the Fourth Geneva Convention, article 49, which prohibits a country from moving its citizens onto land it occupies.

By moving its own citizens to settlements in the West Bank—land which would become a Palestinian state—Israel undermines peace efforts.

- Settlers move to the West Bank for two reasons: 1) because they believe God has given them the land, 2) because private & government subsidies make this an inexpensive and attractive place to live.
- After the settlements are built—with housing, schools, recreation facilities, and parks—more land is confiscated to serve as buffer zones for security, for future expansion and for Israeli-only roads, constructed to facilitate travel between Israel and the settlements.
- Since 1967, Israel has established about 150 settlements in the West Bank, in addition to about 100 “outposts” erected without official Israeli authorization.
- In total 43% of the West Bank is allocated to settlement councils.
- Virtually all of the land declared “state land” by Israel (27% of the West Bank) has been allocated to settlements, rather than for the benefit of the local Palestinian population.
- About one-third of the land within the outer limits of settlements is privately owned by Palestinians, according to Israeli land records.
- Approximately 540 internal checkpoints, roadblocks and other physical obstacles impede Palestinian movement within the West Bank; these obstacles exist primarily to facilitate settler movement.
- Israeli settlers in the West Bank consume approximately six times the water used per person by Palestinians.
- Settlements limit the growth of Palestinian towns; Palestinians cannot get permits to build, even to remodel.
- Because daily life is a struggle, with settlements limiting growth of Palestinian towns and closing roads, Palestinian Christians fear that the Holy Land may soon be emptied of Christians.
- Settlements built on their land are an obstacle to ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Jordan and the Holy Land—schools and other institutions they have created to minister in their communities.

([www.elcjh.org](http://www.elcjh.org))

Details: ♦ <http://btselem.org> ♦ <http://peacenow.org/il/eng>

♦ [http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha\\_opt\\_settlements\\_factsheet\\_december\\_2012\\_english.pdf](http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_settlements_factsheet_december_2012_english.pdf)

