

The Bad Samaritan

Land Grabbing by Israeli Settlers
in the Occupied West Bank
Through Grazing



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"Our primary goal is to maintain open land. Our key tool for achieving this is the agricultural farms, which span an area 2.5 times larger than the combined area of all settlements."

— Ze'ev ('Zambish') Hever, Executive Director of the Israeli settlement organization Amana, in Nadlan Yeuhda veShomron newspaper, 23.6.2023.

Cover photo: Young herder from Lechatchila Farm, east of the Palestinians village of Khan al-Ahmar

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In accordance with Israeli government measures targeting critics of its policies in the occupied Palestinian territories, Peace Now clarifies that most of its funding in 2024 came from foreign political entities.

Summary

In June 2022, Kerem Navot released its report [“The Wild West: Grazing, Seizing, and Looting by Israeli Settlers in the West Bank,”](#) which revealed that Israeli settlers had seized control of 240,000 dunams (4.04 dunams are 1 acre) of land—equivalent to 7% of the West Bank’s total area—through the establishment of 77 shepherding outposts across the region. After the far-right Netanyahu-Smotrich government assumed power in December 2022, state support for these outposts expanded, particularly following the events of October 7, 2023. More than 70 additional outposts have been established since the report’s publication, alongside a surge in settler violence against Palestinians. This escalation has already led to the displacement of dozens of Palestinian shepherding communities.

This new report by Kerem Navot and Peace Now reveals that Israeli settlers have used shepherding outposts to seize at least 786,000 dunams of land—14% of the West Bank’s total area. In less than three years, 70% of all land seized by settlers to date has been taken under the guise of grazing activities.

Israeli settlers, with the backing of the Israeli government and military, employ three primary methods to seize land:

- ◆ Establishing shepherding outposts and displacing Palestinian shepherds and farmers from their lands.
- ◆ Harassing, intimidating, and violently targeting nearby Palestinian communities to force their expulsion.
- ◆ Taking control of large areas of land from displaced Palestinian communities and setting up new outposts.

Through these methods, settlers have displaced [more than 60 Palestinian shepherding communities](#) and established at least 14 Israeli shepherding outposts on or near their former lands.

An analysis of the land seized by Israeli settlers shows that the majority are not classified as "state lands," even under Israel's own definitions, making up only 40% of the areas taken. Around 41% of the seized lands have been designated as "firing zones" by the Israeli military—restricted areas where civilians without permanent residency, including settlers, are officially banned from entering. Additionally, about 4.4% of the lands taken over by settlers through shepherding outposts are located within Areas A and B, under Palestinian Authority jurisdiction.

Land seized through shepherding outposts	Dunams	Percentage of total seized land
Total	786,000	100%
Palestinian Authority areas (A, B, Agreed-Upon Reserve)	34,365	4.4%
Firing zones	324,000	41.2%
Settlement jurisdiction areas	101,400	12.9%
Private Palestinian lands*	281,500	35.8%
Lands declared as "state lands"	121,950	15.5%
State lands registered in the Israeli land registry	198,910	25.3%
Lands with no ownership information on Israeli Civil Administration maps.	134,127	17%

*Lands marked as private on Israeli Civil Administration maps, both registered and not registered.

Grazing Contracts

[The Settlement Division](#) of the World Zionist Organization (WZO), entrusted by the state with managing hundreds of thousands of dunams of land—without oversight and out of the public eye—has awarded "grazing contracts" to dozens of Israeli settlers. According to the State Attorney's Office, the Settlement Division has allocated [approximately 80,000](#) dunams of West Bank land to settlers for grazing purposes. These contracts enable settlers to take control of [hundreds of thousands of dunams](#) of land beyond the areas outlined in their agreements, while also securing financial and other state support—effectively bypassing the ban on state funding for activities officially considered illegal. Furthermore, these contracts allow settlers to enlist the help of Israeli military forces in expelling Palestinian shepherds and farmers from the lands they seek to claim.

This report reveals, for the first time, dozens of grazing contracts signed between the WZO's Settlement Division and Israeli settlers. The contracts included in the report likely represent only about half of the total agreements that have been signed. The contracts we have obtained reveal the following key details:

- ◆ Thousands of dunams of land were allocated to dozens of settlers without a tender process and without compensation.
- ◆ Although the contracts specify "grazing" as the purpose of the land allocation, settlers have established illegal outposts on nearly all the allocated lands—without permits and in direct violation of the contract terms.
- ◆ The maps accompanying the contracts were carelessly and inaccurately drawn, suggesting a deliberate effort to allow settlers to take control of areas not officially allocated to them.
- ◆ There is no consistency between the land size stated in the agreements (in dunams) and the areas marked on the attached maps.
- ◆ Some contracts allocate land already assigned to other settlers under separate agreements for residential or agricultural purposes.
- ◆ Approximately 9,000 dunams of allocated land are private Palestinian lands, outside the Settlement Division's jurisdiction, and cannot legally be allocated to settlers.
- ◆ Over 10,000 dunams of declared state lands allocated to settlers have not been reclassified by the Civil Administration's [Blue Line Team](#), contrary to Attorney General guidelines.
- ◆ More than 5,000 dunams allocated to settlers are located within military firing zones, where settlers are officially prohibited from entering.
- ◆ In one contract, the Settlement Division granted a settler approximately 1,060 dunams of land located within the Palestinian Authority's jurisdiction (Area B).

As noted, these findings are based solely on the contracts we were able to obtain.

Funding the Shepherding Outposts

The Israeli government's backing of settler shepherding outposts, along with the displacement of Palestinian communities and land seizures, extends beyond military backing and large-scale land allocations by the Settlement Division. A complex financial system funnels tens of millions of shekels annually to these illegal outposts. Below are the primary channels through which we have traced this financial support:

- ◆ **NIS 54 Million for Shepherding Outposts "Security Needs":** Under the budget category "Security Needs for Settlement Points", the Israeli government funds road paving, solar panels, electric gates, vehicles, drones, cameras, generators, and lighting poles
- ◆ **NIS 30 Million Annually for "Patrolling Units":** Through the "Establishment and Operation of Patrolling Units" budget, the government finances salaries, equipment, vehicles, drones, aerial photography, and infrastructure projects, including road construction, fencing, camera installation, and electric gates.
- ◆ **Grants for "Agricultural Volunteering":** Millions of shekels are directed each year to organizations that operate volunteer programs in shepherding outposts in the West Bank.
- ◆ **Grazing Grants:** From 2017 to 2024, the Ministry of Agriculture awarded approximately NIS 3 million in "grazing grants" to shepherding outposts, including NIS 2.6 million to Mevo Horon settlers who manage a cattle herd estimated to cover 9,000 dunams in the Canada Park area.
- ◆ **"Business Entrepreneurship" Grants by the Settlement Division:** Shepherding outpost owners have received roughly NIS 1.6 million in business development grants, alongside loans of undisclosed amounts.
- ◆ **Grazing Grants:** From 2017 to 2024, the Ministry of Agriculture awarded approximately NIS 3 million in "grazing grants" to shepherding outposts, including NIS 2.6 million to Mevo Horon settlers who manage a cattle herd estimated to cover 9,000 dunams in the Canada Park area.
- ◆ **Millions Invested by Amana:** The Israeli settlement organization [Amana](#), sanctioned by the UK and the US for its role in supporting outposts linked to violence against Palestinians, has invested millions of shekels in establishing and maintaining these outposts, including providing loans and facilitating their construction.
- ◆ **KKL-JNF Funding:** The Jewish National Fund has spent NIS 4.7 million in recent years on shepherding outposts, under the guise of funding volunteer programs supporting at-risk youth.
- ◆ **Government-Subsidized Private Donations:** Shepherding outposts receive substantial funding from private donors through non-profit organizations that are recognized as charitable entities under Article 46A of the Israeli Income Tax Ordinance, making donations eligible for tax deductions.

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Introduction

In June 2022, Kerem Navot released its report [“The Wild West: Grazing, Seizing, and Looting by Israeli Settlers in the West Bank”](#). The report included an interactive map showing the existing shepherding outposts and their controlled areas, estimated at 240,000 dunams at the time. In the two years since its release, conditions in the occupied West Bank have worsened dramatically.

On December 29, 2022, Israel's 37th government, a far-right administration and the sixth under Netanyahu's leadership, was sworn in. The government's Fundamental Guiding Principles document opened with the following statement: “The Jewish people have an exclusive and indisputable right to all parts of the Land of Israel. The Government will promote and develop settlement in all parts of the Land of Israel - the Galilee, the Negev, the Golan and Judea and Samaria.”

Days later, the government launched an assault on Israel's judicial system, its gatekeepers, professional ranks in government ministries, and the media. Just as Israel's most significant political crisis in years seemed to reach its peak, Hamas carried out an unprecedented massacre in Israeli towns across the western Negev on October 7, 2023, claiming the lives of over 1,200 Israelis, mostly civilians. The war launched by Israel immediately following the Hamas-led attacks also escalated to unprecedented levels of brutality, killing over 45,500 people in Gaza, predominantly civilians.

The latest chapter of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict—the deadliest in over a century—has unsurprisingly had a devastating impact on the occupied West Bank. There, too, circumstances have escalated drastically since the October 7 events, intensifying the already growing violence by Israeli settlers against Palestinians, especially since the summer of 2022. Among the clearest signs of this escalation is [the expulsion of dozens of Palestinian shepherding communities](#), starting with the Ras a-Tin community in July 2022. This was followed by a surge of violence throughout the latter half of 2022, marking a shift from threats and attacks on Palestinians in grazing areas to direct assaults on their homes, often with military support.

The sharp rise in settler violence is directly linked to the expansion of the Israeli shepherding outpost enterprise. As a resident of the expelled Ras a-Tin community [described](#) to Haaretz reporter Amira Hass, after being attacked by a group of settlers from nearby outposts located between the settlements of Kochav Hashachar and Shilo: “We were in our tent when suddenly four civilian cars and one military vehicle appeared. Around 15 settlers got out, accompanied by four or five Israeli soldiers. I was standing at the entrance of the tent when several settlers attacked me. Some grabbed me, one beat me with a club, and another sprayed pepper spray in my eyes. When my wife came out, one settler attacked her with a club, hitting her not once but five times. She passed out.”

This attack was part of a broader campaign that ultimately resulted in the expulsion of the Ras a-Tin community. Predictably, the "success" of removing the residents of Ras a-Tin fueled further attacks on additional communities, many facing similar fates. Between June 2022 and the October 7, 2023 massacre, six additional Palestinian shepherding communities were forcibly displaced.

Since October 7, 2023, a much larger wave of expulsions began to unfold, displacing [60 shepherding communities](#) across the West Bank, with most of them being wholly forced out. The majority of these communities were situated in the southern Hebron Hills and along the eastern edge of the mountain range, on both sides of Highway 458 ("Alon Highway"). The expulsion of these communities swiftly turned [hundreds of thousands of dunams](#) of land into areas where Palestinian shepherds and farmers were either prohibited from entering or faced immediate life-threatening danger if found there.

In recent months, it has become clear that settler aggression toward Palestinian shepherding communities expelled from Area C has continued even after these communities fled to new locations within Area B. For example, on Saturday, August 3, 2024, settlers from the area of Shiloh attacked Bedouin families who had been displaced from Khirbet 'Ein a-Rashash in October 2023 and had found shelter west of the village of Al-Mughayyir. This attack is part of a broader, ongoing pattern of assaults by settlers on Palestinian communities in Area B in recent years.

While most Israeli governments have shown tolerance toward settler violence since 1967, the current administration has openly endorsed it. Its policies have sparked unprecedented international condemnation, leading several countries, including the US and numerous EU member states, to impose economic sanctions and entry bans on settlers involved in acts of violence. Economic sanctions were also placed on several shepherding outposts owned by these settlers, as well as on settler organizations like Amana and Hashomer Yosh, which have been involved in establishing illegal settlement outposts, carrying out violent land seizures, and financing and supporting violent settlers.

Since October 7, 2023, dozens of new outposts have been established, some located near or even directly on the land from which Palestinian shepherding communities were expelled just beforehand. These outposts have become new hubs of violence, from which attacks on other Palestinian communities are launched, creating an ever-expanding cycle of violence. The current wave of settler violence is thus both a result of the existing shepherding outposts and a driving force behind the creation of new ones, which in turn fuel further violence.

On July 19, 2024, an advisory opinion by the International Court of Justice ruled that Israel's presence in the West Bank is illegal and must be ended as quickly as possible. In paragraph 154 of the opinion, the court stated that Israel's failure to prevent or punish settler violence against Palestinians and its failure to hold perpetrators accountable contributes to creating and maintaining a dangerous environment for Palestinians and their property. In doing so, Israel violates its obligations under international law as an occupying power, which requires it to ensure the wellbeing of the occupied civilian population:

“The Court considers that the violence by settlers against Palestinians, Israel’s failure to prevent or to punish it effectively and its excessive use of force against Palestinians contribute to the creation and maintenance of a coercive environment against Palestinians. In the present case, on the basis of the evidence before it, the Court is of the view that Israel’s systematic failure to prevent or to punish attacks by settlers against the life or bodily integrity of Palestinians, as well as Israel’s excessive use of force against Palestinians, is inconsistent with the obligations identified in paragraph 149 above.”

It is important to acknowledge that Israeli settler violence is not simply a result of a "lack of law enforcement" or a few "bad apples," nor did it emerge with the rise of Israel's current radical right-wing government. For decades, settler violence has been a cornerstone of the governance system Israel has established and maintained in the occupied West Bank—a system designed to dispossess Palestinians and force them out of ever-expanding areas of the region.

Countless video and written accounts show that settler violence is frequently carried out in the presence of Israeli military forces, who not only fail to intervene but often protect the settlers during their attacks and prevent Palestinians from defending themselves. Since October 7, 2023, these incidents have become more frequent as thousands of settlers were enlisted into "regional defense" units based in Israeli settlements and nearby areas. Operating under the military's authority, these units gained policing powers, further blurring the line between civilian and military roles. This growing overlap of functions strengthens the violent factions within the settler community.

By allowing millions of Palestinians to endure violence from settlers, while Israeli law enforcement bodies fail to uphold their responsibilities under both Israeli military law and international law, this violence will only escalate, claiming more victims over time.



The Samra community in the Jordan Valley, where some residents were driven out by Israeli settlers in October 2023.

Political Context

The emergence of shepherding outposts in the occupied West Bank and its implications cannot be fully understood without considering Israel's internal political context. In the decades since the signing of the Oslo Accords, which divided the West Bank into Areas A, B, and C, Israeli policies regarding these areas have undergone a dramatic shift. Under [the Taba \(or "Oslo II"\) Agreement](#), signed in September 1995 between the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel, Israel agreed to recognize the territorial integrity of the West Bank (and Gaza Strip) and gradually transfer control to the Palestinian Authority within 18 months (Article XI 2). However, this transfer never occurred, as Israel began to distance itself from the commitments made in the agreement. Since 2009, when Netanyahu formed his second government, the belief spread from the far right to the political center that Israel has the right to continue expanding its settlements in Area C and take measures to prevent Palestinians from establishing themselves there.

A 58-page [document](#) published by Israel's Intelligence Ministry in June 2021 illustrates this shift in the state's approach to Area C territories. Titled "The Struggle Over Area C: Shaping the Security Landscape—Implications and Outcomes", the report outlines what its authors describe as "takeover efforts over Area C," referring to alleged Palestinian initiatives led by the Palestinian Authority with international funding. The document provides a series of recommendations for action, framed as a "two-legged approach" comprising "defensive" and "offensive/landscape-shaping" strategies. The "defensive" approach focuses on prevention and deterrence, primarily through enforcement measures and the demolition of Palestinian structures in Area C, which Israel almost uniformly [deems illegal](#). The "offensive/landscape-shaping" approach includes recommendations for "developing the lands and strengthening the Israeli hold on it" (pp. 54–58). While the document refers to "outposts" exclusively in the context of "illegal Palestinian outposts," the underlying intent of the report is unmistakable. The phrase "strengthening Israeli hold" serves as a euphemism that conceals, among other things, the Israeli shepherding outpost enterprise—a project in which the state is deeply involved, as will be explored later.

These trends, which have gained traction over the years, suggest that Israel is positioning itself to annex the West Bank or at least significant portions of it. In recent years, the concept of annexation has moved from the fringes of far-right political discourse into the mainstream of Israeli politics. Ahead of the April 21, 2019, Knesset elections—the first in which Benjamin Netanyahu ran while under indictment—the prime minister publicly announced his intention to annex "Judea and Samaria." Although this promise was not fulfilled, it brought the idea of annexation into practical political discourse, where it has since become increasingly normalized. The re-election of Donald Trump as US President on November 5, 2024, heightens the likelihood that Israel's current far-right government will act on its plans to annex parts of the West Bank. The systematic and violent displacement of Palestinians from hundreds of thousands of dunams of land in recent years has undoubtedly laid the groundwork to facilitate such ambitions.

Report Structure

This joint report by Peace Now and Kerem Navot is organized into three sections. The first section outlines the current state on the ground in the occupied West Bank, focusing on the Israeli shepherding outposts and the land seized by settlers with the goal of forcing Palestinians out of the area. This section is primarily based on Kerem Navot's ongoing fieldwork, which involves monitoring and mapping Israeli shepherding outposts in the West Bank and the lands these outposts are used to control.

The second section of the report reviews and analyzes dozens of grazing contracts, primarily signed between [the WZO's Settlement Division](#) and a few dozen individual settlers. These contracts were obtained by Peace Now through [a Freedom of Information request](#) to Israel's Ministry of Agriculture, aimed at uncovering the ministry's support for organizations supporting the shepherding outposts. Most of these land allocation agreements were executed with little to no transparency by the Settlement Division, which oversees the management of the majority of state lands in the West Bank on behalf of the government. This lack of transparency is deliberate: in 2015, the Israeli Knesset enacted legislation restricting the Freedom of Information Act's applicability to the Settlement Division, limiting it to "matters involving fiscal management, including expenses, earnings, financial reports, budgets, and contractual agreements or tenders related to goods, services, or works to which it is a party." This carefully crafted wording, devised by the then-young MK Bezael Smotrich, was designed to exempt the Settlement Division's activities related to land rights—including grazing contracts and all land allocation agreements with settlers—from the Freedom of Information Law. This lack of disclosure persists despite the Settlement Division functioning on behalf of the state and being fully funded by the government budget. The contracts revealed in this report became accessible only after more than a decade of unsuccessful attempts to obtain information from the Settlement Division. Although the information presented is incomplete and several years old, it provides valuable insight into the methods employed by Israeli authorities.

The third section of the report studies the funding of Israeli shepherding outposts. The data compiled here for the first time reveals that the shepherding outpost enterprise is far from a spontaneous grassroots initiative. It is backed by entities with vast governmental authority and resources, including various government ministries, regional and local councils, the WZO's Settlement Division, and the Amana settler organization.

As part of this report, we also updated the [interactive map](#) that accompanied Kerem Navot's June 2022 report. The updated map includes the following information:

- ◆ Palestinian shepherding communities displaced since the summer of 2022.
- ◆ Shepherding outposts established by Israeli settlers.
- ◆ The lands currently controlled through Israeli shepherding outposts.
- ◆ Cattle and sheep enclosures that, while not situated in residential areas, play a key role
- ◆ Lands included in the land allocation contracts we obtained.



A cattle enclosure in the Jordan Valley, located on land allocated by the Settlement Division in 2021 to settler Zuriel Lilienthal.

Part One: Violent Land Seizure Through Shepherding Outposts

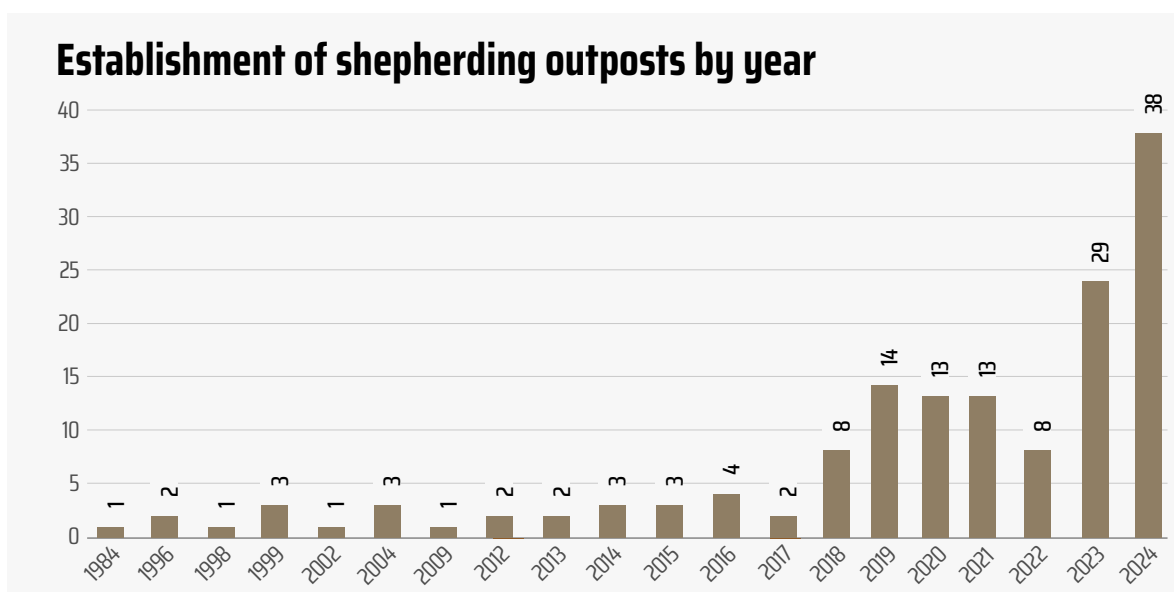
In the two years since the publication of [Kerem Navot's June 2022 report](#), the reality on the ground has changed at an unprecedented pace and scale. These changes are a direct reflection of the surge in settler violence across the occupied West Bank, which has reached new heights under Israel's current far-right government. The transformations are closely linked to the establishment of dozens of Israeli shepherding outposts, whose residents have taken control of vast swathes of land. As one settler from the Hebron Hills succinctly stated in [a fundraising video](#) for settler outposts in the area: "We are at war. We have come to reclaim this land." Based on this perspective, the notion of facing a state of war justifies the use of threats, attacks, and [livestock theft](#), all in the service of expelling Palestinians from as much land as possible.

Establishing the Shepherding Outposts

As shown in our previous report, 79 Israeli shepherding outposts were established from the 1990s to June 2022. We have divided these outposts into three categories:

- ◆ **Shepherding outposts** - Outposts where shepherding is the primary occupation of the residents.
- ◆ **Extension outposts** - Established as extensions of existing shepherding outposts.
- ◆ **Agricultural outposts** - Outposts that maintain herds of sheep or goats, though shepherding is not the main occupation of their residents.

Since June 2022, there has been a marked rise in the establishment of Israeli shepherding outposts. By December 2024, 70 new shepherding outposts had been erected across all three categories. In addition, dozens of new settler outposts that do not currently maintain herds have been established. The majority of these outposts were built after October 7, 2023, as part of efforts to capitalize on the state of emergency in the region and quickly seize control of large areas of land—the results of which are visible throughout the West Bank



Technological Advancements in Service of Israeli Settlements

One of the key ways settlers have successfully taken control of open lands in the occupied West Bank is through strategic use of new technologies. In recent years, substantial investments have been made in advanced monitoring and surveillance systems that allow settlers to closely manage access to and presence on these lands. This includes drones, visible and concealed cameras, night vision devices, and remotely operated gates. Some of this technology is purchased through funds transferred from various government ministries (which will be examined further later), while other equipment is acquired through private donations.



A gate erected on a road leading to vast grazing lands seized by settlers in the northern Jordan Valley.

Displacing Palestinian Shepherding Communities: A Strategy for Expanding Grazing Lands

In July 2022, a pivotal event occurred in the West Bank. For the first time, an entire Palestinian community was forcibly displaced not by the Israeli military, but directly by settlers. The victims were the Bedouin shepherding community of Ras A-Tin, who had lived for decades on land northeast of Ramallah, owned by the Palestinian village of Kafr Malek.

A few months before their expulsion, we visited the community and listened as residents described the systematic and escalating violence they faced from settlers. Two years earlier, these settlers had established a violent shepherding outpost known as "Micha's Farm", about a kilometer south of their homes. This outpost was part of a network of illegal settlements established over the years by residents of the isolated and violent Kochav Hashachar settlement.

The community was ultimately expelled after [a series of brutal attacks](#) by settlers, who, accompanied by soldiers from a nearby military base, invaded residents' homes. One of the displaced residents explained shortly after the expulsion that while they managed to endure the attacks in the open grazing lands, everything changed when settlers began raiding homes—[beating, humiliating, and destroying property](#) in front of their families. The danger and humiliation became unbearable, forcing the entire community to flee within days.

The "success" of the settlers in Ras A-Tin encouraged similar tactics elsewhere. In the 15 months between the expulsion of Ras A-Tin's residents and the October 7, 2023 massacre, five more Palestinian shepherding communities were forcibly displaced. For instance, in the summer of 2022, settlers from the nearby Meitarim Farm outpost, linked to Yinon Levy, expelled the Widadi community in the southern West Bank. Similarly, in the summer of 2023, settlers from outposts surrounding Kochav Hashachar forced out the community of Ein Samia.

By the time of the October 7 massacre, settlers were more prepared than ever to escalate their campaign of expelling Palestinian shepherding communities. In the following days and weeks, they forcibly removed multiple communities and groups. On October 19, 2023, B'Tselem published [a map](#) documenting 28 displaced communities—22 completely and six partially. With military backing, settlers have expelled dozens more shepherding communities over the past year. These expulsions have occurred on a scale not seen since Israel's occupation of the West Bank began in June 1967. **Since July 2022, a total of [60 shepherding communities](#) have been expelled, allowing settlers to seize control of hundreds of thousands of additional dunams of land in just two and a half years.**



Remains of structures that once housed the residents of the Al-Mu'arjat community before their expulsion in October 2023.

The Establishment of Outposts Near Areas from Which Palestinians Were Expelled

Over the past 30 months, several outposts have been established on or near areas from which Palestinian shepherding communities were forcibly removed. In some instances, the outposts were set up before the community's expulsion, directly leading to their displacement. In other cases, the outposts were built later to prevent the community from returning. A total of 14 Israeli shepherding outposts are known to have been established near locations where Palestinians were driven out:

- ◆ **Simri** – The residents were expelled before October 7, 2023, and settlers now occupy the area.
- ◆ **Al Baqa'a** – The "Yinon's Farm" outpost was erected close to the community before it was expelled in July 2023.
- ◆ **El Qabun** – "Te'ena Farm" was created in the summer of 2023, forcing the local community to relocate.
- ◆ **Bariyet Teqoa** – The "Dehra Farm" outpost was established after the expulsion of several local families in October 2023. Additionally, settlers took control of Palestinian structures within the ["Agreed-Upon Reserve"](#) after the residents were displaced.
- ◆ **Al-Qanouh** – Structures were built along the hillside near locations from which Bedouin families of the Sa'ir village were displaced in October 2023.
- ◆ **'Ein al-Rashash** – The "Gal Yosef" outpost was established following [the expulsion of the local community](#) in October 2023.
- ◆ **Khirbet a-Radhem** – The local community was expelled in October 2023, and soon after, the "Asa'el South" outpost was established nearby.
- ◆ **Khirbet a-Taybeh (Idna)** – The "Adora East" outpost was established on the site from which the local community was expelled in October 2023.
- ◆ **Um Durit** – Residents were displaced in October 2023, and shortly thereafter, the "Daroma Farm" was established close by.
- ◆ **Bariyet Hizme** – Residents were expelled in October 2023, and shortly afterward, the "Em Ha-Banim" outpost was established at the location.
- ◆ **'Ein a-Sukhun** – An outpost was established in the area in March 2024, causing the local community to leave.
- ◆ **Khallet A-Mghara (southeast of Deir Dibwan)** – "Chanania Farm" was established during and after the expulsion of Bedouin families in 2024.
- ◆ **Um al-Jamal** – In August 2024, an outpost was established east of the Tevez Israeli military training base in the northern Jordan Valley, prompting the community to leave the area.
- ◆ **Furush Beit Dajan** – Palestinian families living east of the Mechora settlement were expelled, after which the "Aviah Farm" outpost was established on the site.



"Yinon's Farm" (with the Alon settlement in the background), where the A-Baqa'a shepherding community resided until July 2023.

Methodology: How was the extent of grazing lands seized by settlers estimated?

The lands seized by settlers after the establishment of shepherding outposts were assessed and mapped by observing signs that Palestinian agricultural lands had remained uncultivated for extended periods, as well as evidence of road construction, water infrastructure installation, and the construction of fences and gates. In addition, interviews and discussions with Palestinian shepherds and farmers, whose access to large areas of land has been restricted by settlers in the outposts, provided crucial insights.

It is important to note that the lands mapped in this project do not represent all areas controlled by Israeli settlers in the occupied West Bank and to which Palestinians are prohibited from accessing. Rather, they specifically reflect the lands to which access is denied due to the establishment of Israeli shepherding outposts. Large areas of additional land have been seized through other methods for various purposes, including the construction of settlement towns and outposts, agricultural activities, or the establishment of "security perimeters" around existing settlements.

Describing lands as being under settler control does not necessarily mean that Palestinian entry is entirely prohibited in every instance. The level of restriction varies, ranging from complete denial of entry to significant limitations on Palestinian access. Most areas controlled by settlers lack fencing or other physical barriers, although the construction of fences is becoming increasingly common. In most cases, Palestinian access is restricted through violence, including threats, verbal harassment, [herd theft](#), and severe assaults, sometimes escalating to [murder](#).



A plot of land in the northern Jordan Valley, fenced off in 2024 and currently used by Israeli settlers for grazing.

Key Findings on Land Controlled by Israeli Settlers Through Shepherding Outposts

Our assessments indicate that settlers living in shepherding outposts currently control approximately 786,000 dunams of land, representing nearly 14% of the West Bank’s total area. By comparison, the fenced areas of Israeli settlements, home to around 500,000 settlers, encompass less than 180,000 dunams. This means that a few hundred settlers residing in shepherding outposts control a territory four times larger than the combined area of all Israeli settlements.

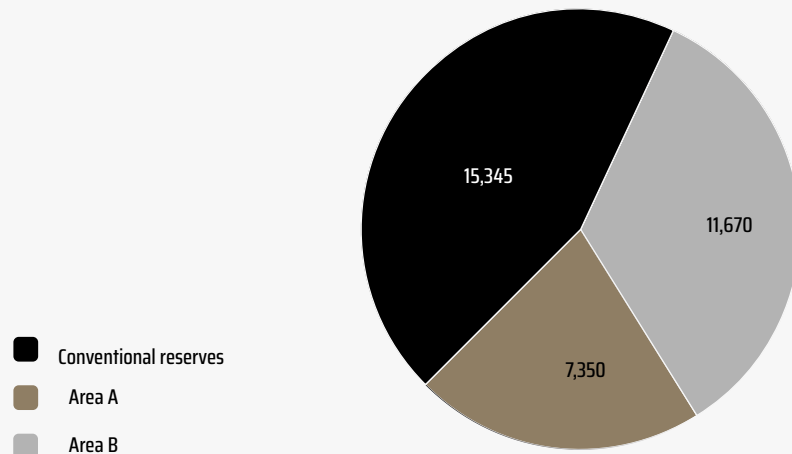
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Territories Declared “State Lands”	121,950	15.5%
State Lands Registered in the Land Registry	198,910	25.3%
Lands with Unmapped Ownership	134,127	17%

*Total lands identified as private in Israel’s Civil Administration maps, including both registered and unregistered lands (see below).

Seizure of Palestinian Authority Territories

Most of the lands seized by shepherding outpost settlers are located within Area C, which makes up 61% of the West Bank and has been under full Israeli control since the signing of the Oslo Accords. However, we estimate that they have also taken control of roughly 34,000 dunams of land that was transferred to the Palestinian Authority under the Oslo Accords. This includes Areas A and B, as well as the [“Agreed-Upon Reserve”](#), which came under Palestinian Authority control following the 1998 Wye River Agreement.

Settler takeover of grazing lands within Palestinian Authority territories (in dunam)



The “Agreed-Upon Reserve” originated from the 1998 Wye River Agreement, signed between the PLO and the Israeli government led by Netanyahu. The agreement aimed to revive the Oslo Accords, under which Israel committed to a phased withdrawal from the West Bank. During negotiations in the US, mediated by then-President Bill Clinton, Netanyahu resisted transferring territories to the Palestinian Authority as previously agreed, citing unfulfilled Palestinian obligations. As a “compromise,” it was decided that some of the land Israel had promised to transfer would instead be designated as a “nature reserve,” where Palestinian construction would be prohibited. This area, which covers about 3% of the West Bank (approximately 126,000 dunams), was originally designated as Area B, where Palestinians were intended to have freedom to develop. The nature reserve spans two regions, stretching from east of Bethlehem to the eastern part of the southern Hebron Hills, interrupted by a roughly one-kilometer-wide corridor of Area C.

Over time, as it became clear that Israel did not intend to honor its commitment to withdraw from the West Bank, Palestinians began building on these lands without intervention from the Israeli Civil Administration. In recent years, construction in the northern part of the reserve has grown substantially, particularly to the east of the Palestinian villages of Za'tara and Teqoa. At the same time, Israeli settler groups launched a vocal campaign opposing what they referred to as the construction of “a new Palestinian city in the Judean Desert.” In July 2024, shortly after assuming his role as chief of the Israeli military’s Central Command, Maj. Gen. Avi Blot issued [an administrative order](#) prohibiting Palestinian construction within the “Agreed-Upon Reserve”. Simultaneously, under the cover of the ongoing war, Israeli settlers [established several new outposts](#) near Teqoa and Nokdim—within the reserve’s boundaries. These actions displaced Palestinian shepherding families, with settlers even seizing some of their homes. Currently, [settlers control](#) thousands of dunams within the reserve, located east of these two settlements.



A truck/outpost set up east of the Nokdim settlement, located within the Agreed-Upon Reserve.

Additional Findings:

- ◆ Excluding the lands seized within Palestinian Authority territories, shepherding outpost settlers have taken over approximately 746,000 dunams of land, accounting for about 21% of the total area of Area C.
- ◆ Up to the summer of 2022, shepherding outpost settlers were able to seize control of [approximately 240,000 dunams](#) of land. Since then, land grabbing has accelerated significantly, particularly as settlers began forcibly [expelling Palestinian shepherding communities](#) from their homes. Remarkably, within just two and a half years, settlers managed to seize 70% of the total area they had taken over since the 1990s. This marks one of the most aggressive and rapid waves of expulsion since the occupation of the West Bank in June 1967.
- ◆ Of the total land controlled by shepherding outpost settlers, approximately 101,400 dunams are located within settlement jurisdiction areas, which encompass a total of 532,000 dunams. Settlement jurisdiction areas are designated by military decree as closed military zones, barring entry to Palestinian residents of the West Bank. In practice, however, this restriction is usually enforced only for entry into the settlements themselves, not for the [significantly larger](#) jurisdiction areas.
- ◆ Around 321,000 dunams (41%) of the lands seized by shepherding outpost settlers fall within declared firing zones, most of which [are not actually used for military training](#). It is important to emphasize that, under Israeli military law enforced in the occupied West Bank, firing zones are classified as closed military areas where settlers are prohibited from entering.

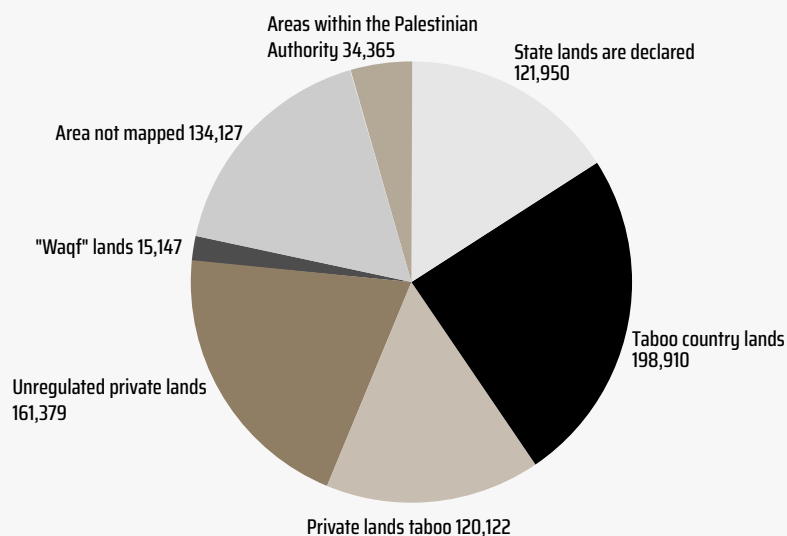
Table of Lands Seized by Settlers in Designated Firing Zones

Firing Zone	Total Firing Zone Area (in dunams)	Area Controlled by Settlers within the Firing Zone (in dunams)
203	32,591	7,511
900	73,077	4,930
901	49,229	17,848
902	10,654	10,654
903	80,309	27,690
904	60,781	59,022
904a	42,497	36,563
906	88,256	84,817
918	32,713	12,082
929	58,711	58,711
"Habika'a"	409,294	1,755

Ownership of the Lands Seized by Shepherding Outposts

Based on GIS mapping layers provided by the Civil Administration following Freedom of Information requests, it appears that most of the lands grabbed by shepherding outpost settlers are not designated as state lands. **Approximately 281,500 dunams seized by settlers are privately owned Palestinian lands** (some of which are registered in Israel's land registry, others not), while the ownership status of over 134,000 additional dunams remains undefined by the Civil Administration. Additionally, more than 34,000 dunams are located within Palestinian Authority territories. As such, as with privately owned lands (except in rare cases where [seizure orders were issued](#) "for settlement purposes"), these lands cannot legally be allocated to settlers. This means that nearly 60% of the land taken by shepherding outpost settlers—around 465,140 out of 786,000 dunams—is either privately owned by Palestinians, has undefined ownership (as much of the West Bank is not regulated in the land registry), or lies within Palestinian Authority territories. The conclusion is clear: The repeated claims that Israeli shepherding outposts are meant to protect "state lands" serve as a pretext for settlers to violently seize hundreds of thousands of dunams in the West Bank, most of which are not even classified as "state lands" by Israeli authorities themselves.

The status of the lands taken over by the shepherds' outposts (in dunams)



Conclusion

The sharp rise in settler violence across the occupied West Bank over the past decade is directly tied to the Israeli shepherding outposts enterprise. Settler violence surged starting in the summer of 2022, when settlers began forcibly expelling Palestinian shepherding communities from their homes. The frequency and scale of these expulsions have grown dramatically since October 7, 2023. To date, more than 60 Palestinian shepherding communities have been forcibly displaced, enabling settlers to seize hundreds of thousands of additional dunams of land that were previously inhabited by Palestinians.

In the two and a half years since Kerem Navot's previous report was released, 70 new Israeli shepherding outposts have been established. Most of these outposts' residents do not rely on shepherding for their livelihood, but rather use their herds as a tool for land grabbing—often referred to by settlers as a “weapon.” The violent land seizures are not confined to Area C territories; in recent years, settlers have also escalated their attacks on Palestinian shepherding communities within Palestinian Authority territories, particularly in Area B. Our estimate is that settlers now control over 30,000 dunams of land within Palestinian Authority areas. An examination of the ownership status of lands seized by shepherding outpost settlers reveals that the repeated claim that these farms exist to “protect state lands” does not align with the reality on the ground. Over half of these lands are not designated as “state lands,” even according to the Civil Administration.

Part Two: Grazing Land Allocation Contracts

One of the ways the Israeli government supports settlers in their efforts to seize land in the West Bank is through the provision of “land allocation contracts.” These contracts are signed between the WZO’s [Settlement Division](#) and individual settlers and are not made publicly accessible. Each contract specifies the intended use of the land—whether for construction, agriculture, or grazing.

As part of [a High Court petition](#) filed by Peace Now calling for a transparent and publicly accessible land allocation process in the West Bank, the state requested a deadline extension in May 2024 to submit its response. In this request, the state [informed the court](#) that it had finally received relevant information from the Settlement Division. This information revealed that **“80,000 dunams of land were transferred to settlers through grazing rights agreements, awarded in contracts that are renewed annually for 12-month periods, without granting any rights to make changes to the land.”**

Through these contracts, which are awarded to settlers without a tender process and without requiring compensation (as they do not pay for the grazing rights), **Israeli settlers have been able to seize hundreds of thousands of dunams beyond what is stipulated in the contracts.** In some cases, there has been little connection between the lands allocated to them in the contracts and the lands they have actually taken control of..

These contracts enable settlers to access state funding despite the official ban on funding activities deemed illegal. Thus, to conceal government support for illegal shepherding outposts, various ministries rely on the Settlement Division’s land allocation contracts, which are meant to be approved by the Civil Administration as the authority overseeing the allocated lands. These contracts also act as “official documentation” of settlers’ exclusive “right” to the allocated lands, helping them coordinate their actions with Israeli military forces on the ground and enlist their assistance in displacing Palestinian shepherds and farmers from areas they seek to control.



Yehoshafat Tor and Isaschar Mann, owners of settler shepherding farms in the southern Hebron Hills, on August 8, 2020. Tor is holding his land allocation contract with the Settlement Division. Photo by Guy Butavia.

The Settlement Division's Role in Land Grabbing

Established in 1971 as an independent division within the World Zionist Organization, [the Settlement Division](#) was created to assist Israeli governments in establishing settlements in the occupied West Bank. Its purpose was to function as a non-governmental entity, allegedly representing “the Jewish people,” allowing it to carry out controversial tasks without direct involvement from the Israeli government. For decades, it operated with minimal public scrutiny, receiving full state funding but lacking any public oversight or monitoring.

In recent years, it has become increasingly evident, as repeatedly highlighted by Israel's State Comptroller, that the Settlement Division is deeply involved in illegal activities. These include allocating private Palestinian lands to settlers without the owners' consent, managing land without oversight or requiring compensation, neglecting to collect debts on loans provided to settlers, and, as noted in [the 2005 Sasson Report](#), playing a key role in establishing illegal settler outposts.

A February 2015 [legal opinion](#) from Israel's Deputy Attorney General determined that the Settlement Division's activities—despite being a non-governmental entity—are essentially governmental functions that cannot be delegated to a non-governmental body. The legal opinion also ruled that the state should not fund the Division through the government budget or direct transfers, as it is not being contracted for specific projects but instead handed authority to shape policies, set national priorities, and exercise discretionary powers—responsibilities that should lie with formal government agencies.

Despite this legal opinion, instead of dissolving the Settlement Division and transferring its duties to government bodies, the Knesset passed legislation in 2015 amending [the World Zionist Organization-Jewish Agency Status Law \(1952\)](#). This amendment allowed the Israeli government to continue using the Settlement Division to carry out its policies in the West Bank. While the amendment introduced transparency requirements regarding the Division's financial activities, it deliberately avoided addressing the central issue: its role in managing land in the West Bank on behalf of the state. MK Bezalel Smotrich, who drafted the amendment, explained in a 2015 committee discussion: “The management of state lands is a sensitive issue politically and diplomatically, and I do not want the European Union to be informed of every plot of land on which construction is taking place.” Ultimately, the passage of the law reinforced the Settlement Division's unchecked authority over land management, freeing it from any obligation to report or maintain transparency about its activities.

Land Management by the Settlement Division

Over the years, the Settlement Division has received [60% of all state land](#) in the West Bank allocated by the Civil Administration to various Israeli authorities. Additionally, the Division was granted administrative authority over third-party rights to the allocated lands. As a result, anyone wishing to purchase a house or cultivate agricultural land in most settlements must sign a contract with the Division.

As noted previously, the Settlement Division allocates land to settlers without conducting a tender process [or publicly announcing](#) the land's availability, and it operates without any government oversight. The Division also refuses to provide information about previous contracts and land allocations. Over time, it became clear that even the Civil Administration's Director of Government Property, who oversees the transfer of hundreds of thousands of dunams to the Division, is unaware of how the Division manages the lands. Moreover, the Settlement Division distributes land without charging payments, allowing developers—such as [the Amana settler organization](#)—to generate substantial profits from home sales.

The clandestine dealings of a non-governmental body vested with governmental authority have enabled the Settlement Division to “allocate” lands to settlers that it was never entrusted with to begin with, including private Palestinian lands. Such was the case with the settlement of Ofra and the outposts of [Givat HaUlpana](#) and [Mitzpe Kramim](#). In some cases, settlers were granted land rights in one area but built their homes elsewhere. This was notably seen in the controversy over homes built by [Bezalel Smotrich and Yehuda Eliyahu](#), head of the Settlement Administration.

Delegating land management responsibilities to a non-governmental entity violates international law, as it disregards the state's obligations as the trustee of the occupied territories. Doing so effectively grants the Settlement Division sovereign authority over land rights in the West Bank. Furthermore, as part of the World Zionist Organization, the Division is explicitly mandated to serve Jewish interests, leading it to allocate land exclusively to Jews, despite Palestinians comprising 80% of the West Bank's population. In practice, [99.8% of all allocated land](#) in the West Bank has been granted to Jewish Israelis. Land is one of the most vital public resources, and its allocation to one group at the expense of another is a hallmark of an apartheid system..



A herd of cows owned by an Israeli settler, near the settlement of Mechora along Alon Road.

Grazing Contracts: Thousands of Dunams Granted Without Charge or a Tender Process

Most of the grazing contracts revealed for the first time in this report were obtained by Peace Now through a Freedom of Information request regarding [funding](#) provided by the Israeli Agriculture Ministry, amounting to millions of shekels, to organizations supporting illegal shepherding outposts. The information we present here is partial and does not cover all settler outposts; additional contracts likely remain undisclosed. Most of the contracts we obtained were signed between 2019 and 2021, though numerous other outposts have been established since, for which we currently lack information. Efforts to hide key details in the contracts and accompanying maps are clear, as they were provided to us in low resolution. Despite these challenges, we have supplemented the available information as much as possible based on our knowledge of the area and additional relevant data. The information we have gathered highlights the key strategies behind this mechanism:

- ◆ The Settlement Division grants individual settlers thousands of dunams of land, without holding a tender process or requiring any compensation.
- ◆ The allocation contracts specify that the land is designated for "grazing," yet in nearly all instances, settlers have constructed illegal outposts on or near the land. These constructions, built without permits, directly violate the terms of the contracts, which restrict the land's use to grazing only.
- ◆ The contracts clearly show that the lands are being managed with significant negligence, marked by several key characteristics:
 - ◆ Most of the maps accompanying the contracts were poorly drawn and fail to clearly define the precise boundaries of the allocated lands. This ambiguity clearly benefits the settlers, as it enables them to seize additional areas under the guise of claiming them as part of their allocated lands.
 - ◆ There are discrepancies between the land size specified in the contracts and the size depicted in the accompanying maps.
 - ◆ Some contracts include developed lands situated within settlements, where grazing is entirely unfeasible.
 - ◆ Some contracts encompass private lands that cannot legally fall under the Settlement Division's jurisdiction and, in any case, would not be authorized for allocation to third parties.

Key Findings on Grazing Contracts with Settlers

- ◆ In 13 of the 27 contracts in our possession, the size of the land allocated to the settler is not even specified.
- ◆ Of the 27 contracts we obtained which included a map, 24 were signed between the Settlement Division and various settlers.
- ◆ 21 contracts are classified as "grazing contracts." These are one-year agreements in which the Settlement Division allocates land without requiring compensation, exclusively "for grazing purposes."
- ◆ Three contracts are designated as "special land allocation contracts." In these agreements, the parties include the Settlement Division, the settler, and the cooperative association of the nearby settlement, as the land in question had already been allocated to the settlement. These contracts span five or seven years and permit "planting, grazing, agricultural cultivation, and non-permanent agricultural structures related to these uses." Settlers are charged a fee of one shekel for the land allocation.
- ◆ [One contract](#) involves the Directorate of the Meitarim Industrial Zone, part of the Har Hevron Regional Council, and settler Yinon Levy, who is currently subject to international sanctions. The agreement specifies the creation of an agricultural farm and grazing area, with the directorate "asking" Levy to develop the farm and construct buildings for sheep. However, this construction is illegal, as it directly contravenes the provisions of the current local construction plan.
- ◆ Another contract, labeled as a "use agreement," is between Heimanuta, a subsidiary of the KKL-JNF, and a settler for "agricultural use, including planting, cultivation, and related activities." The agreement is valid for one year and automatically renews annually unless one of the parties requests its termination. In exchange, the settler is required to pay Heimanuta a token fee of one shekel per year.
- ◆ In total, we recognized the names of 23 settlers who signed the allocation contracts. Among them, two signed multiple contracts for numerous areas.

The Accompanying Maps

As part of this report, the maps included in the obtained land allocation contracts were digitized into a GIS layer. **The total land area depicted in these maps amounts to approximately 47,000 dunams. However, this is an incomplete representation, as it does not include land allocated to settlers for grazing under contracts that we do not have access to.** In the state's response extension request to the High Court regarding the Peace Now petition, it was noted that the Settlement Division reported "transferring 80,000 dunams of land to settlers through grazing rights agreements, awarded in contracts that are renewed annually for 12-month periods, without granting any rights to make changes to the land." This suggests that numerous similar contracts likely exist but remain undisclosed.

When comparing these figures to the estimated 786,000 dunams of land seized by shepherding outpost settlers, it becomes apparent that approximately 90% of the land they currently control was not allocated by any authorized entity.

Discrepancies Between Land Sizes Stated in Contracts and Those Depicted on the Maps

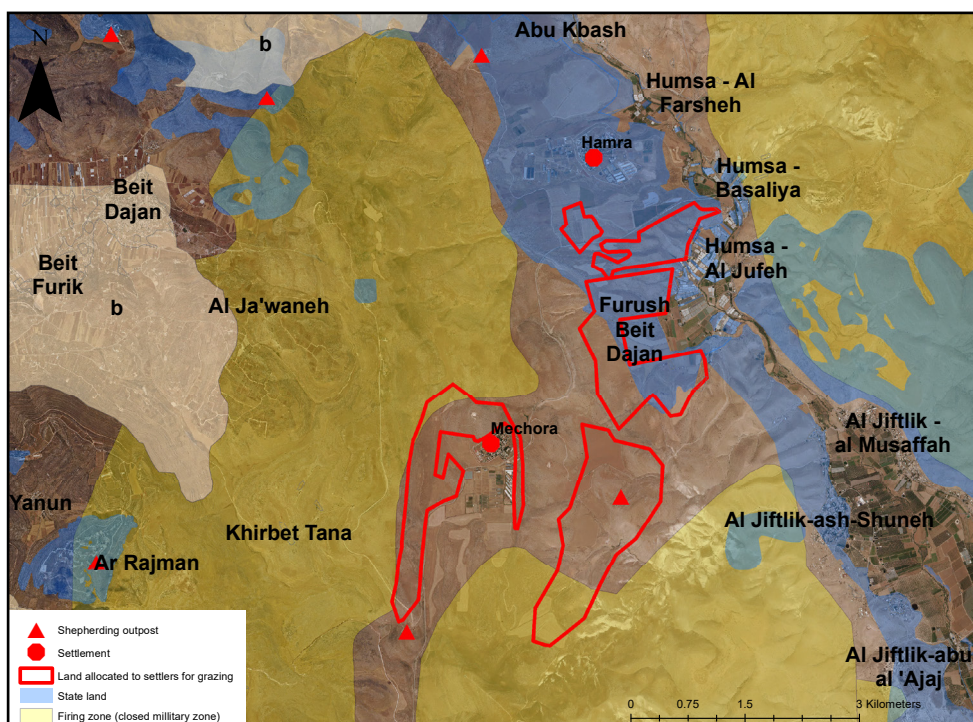
An evaluation of the lands outlined in the accompanying maps reveals that none of the contracts specifying the size of the allocated land align with the areas marked on the maps. In some instances, the discrepancies are relatively minor, while in others, the differences are significant—sometimes amounting to hundreds of dunams. These inconsistencies occur in both directions: at times, the land size specified in the contract exceeds what is shown on the map, and in other cases, the opposite is true.

For example, the contract signed with a settler named Menachem Goshen, who resides in an outpost near the settlement of Hemdat in the northern Jordan Valley, states that he was allocated 2,000 dunams. However, the accompanying map marks only 746 dunams as his allocated land. Conversely, the contract with Yehoshafat Tor, from the "Maon Farm" outpost in the southern Hebron Hills, specifies an allocation of 3,600 dunams, while the map depicts 4,780 dunams. Detailed data for other contracts are summarized in the table included in the appendix.

Ownership Status of Lands Allocated to Settlers for Grazing

- 7,021 dunams of state land registered in the Land Registry
- 30,272 dunams of declared state land
- 624 dunams registered under Heimanuta, a subsidiary of the KKL-JNF
- 9,000 dunams allocated for grazing, not classified as "state land" by the Civil Administration, attributed to two main factors:
 - Careless mapping practices and the inclusion of private Palestinian lands within areas supposedly allocated to settlers.
 - Allocation of non-state lands to settlers without clear authority and through opaque processes, suggesting deliberate action rather than mere mapping errors. These appear to be cases where the Settlement Division allocated lands outside its jurisdiction. Notable examples include two allocations near the settlement of Mechora: one to a settler named Uri Cohen, who is not active in the area (more on this later), and another to Itamar Cohen, who, as far as is known, is also not a shepherd in the area. Both were allocated thousands of dunams.

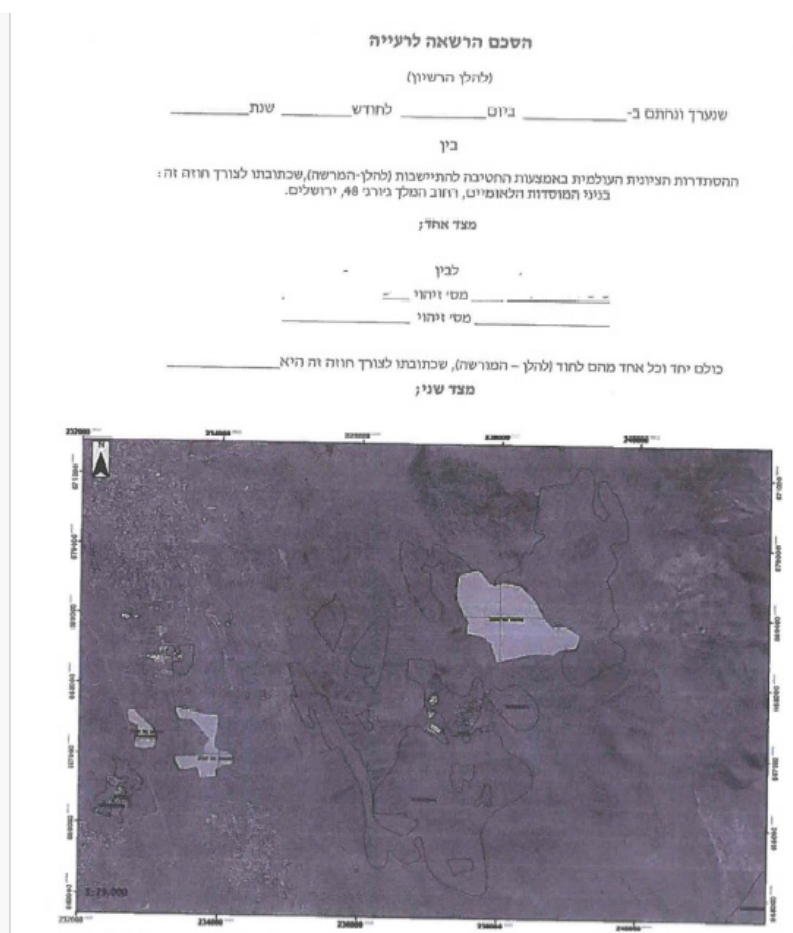
In its response to [Peace Now's court petition](#) demanding transparency in its allocation processes, dated October 31, 2024, the Settlement Division asserted that the private Palestinian lands allocated in its contracts were seized through military orders for security purposes and transferred to the Division by the Custodian of Government and Abandoned Property. And yet, the Elon Moreh High Court ruling (HCJ 390/79 Dweikat v. Government of Israel) determined that lands seized for security reasons by the military cannot be allocated for non-security purposes.



The land allocated to settlers Uri Cohen and Itamar Cohen near the settlement of Mechora.

Allocating Isolated Enclaves of Land

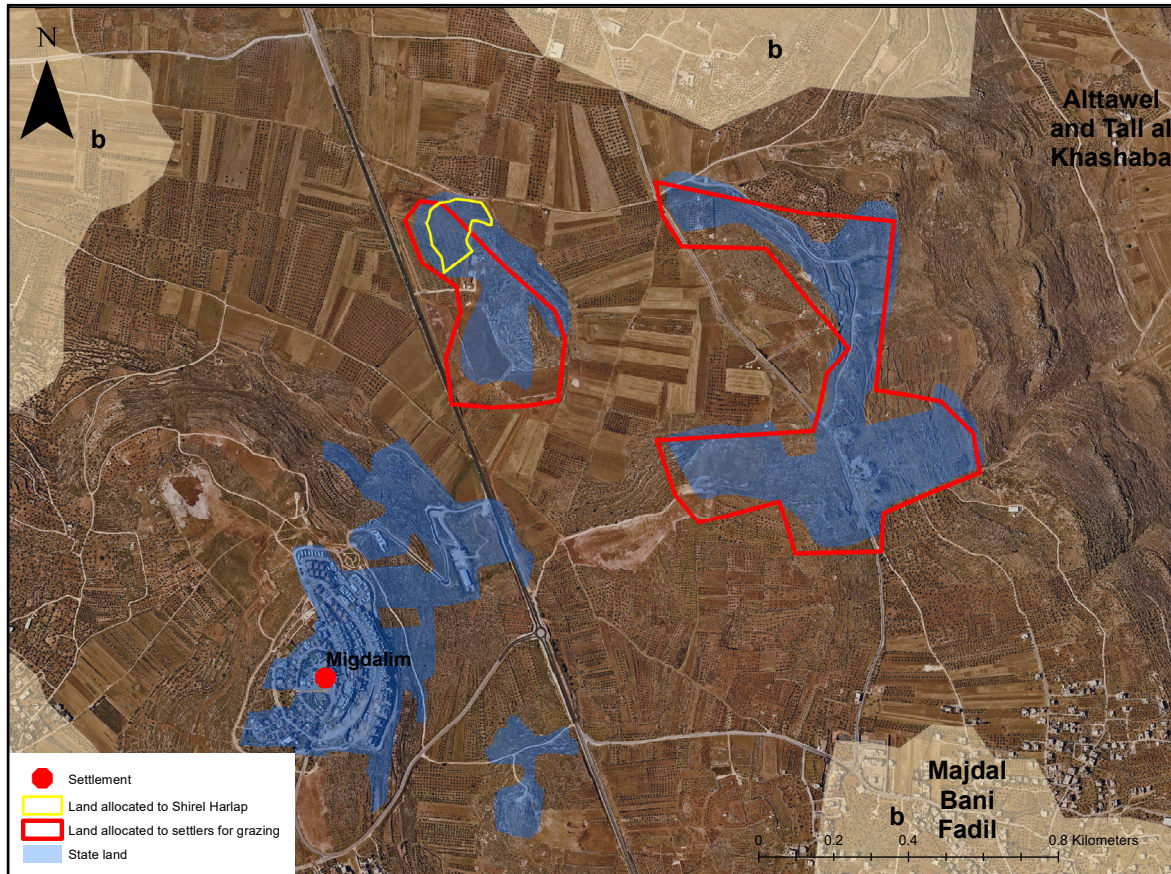
A notable feature of several maps attached to these contracts is the inclusion of enclaved lands that can only be accessed by crossing privately owned Palestinian land. One striking example is [a land allocation contract](#) signed on February 7, 2021, with a settler whose name was redacted. According to the contract, this settler purportedly owns a herd of 600 sheep. The map accompanying the contract allocates three separate enclaves totaling 1,800 dunams: two plots situated east of the settlement of Migdalim and a third over 5 kilometers away, north of the settlement of Gitit. In practice, none of these enclaves are used by settlers for grazing. Based on our assessment, this contract is fictitious, designed to allow the settler to apply for financial aid from Israeli authorities through the previously described methods.



The map included with the grazing contract dated February 7, 2021.

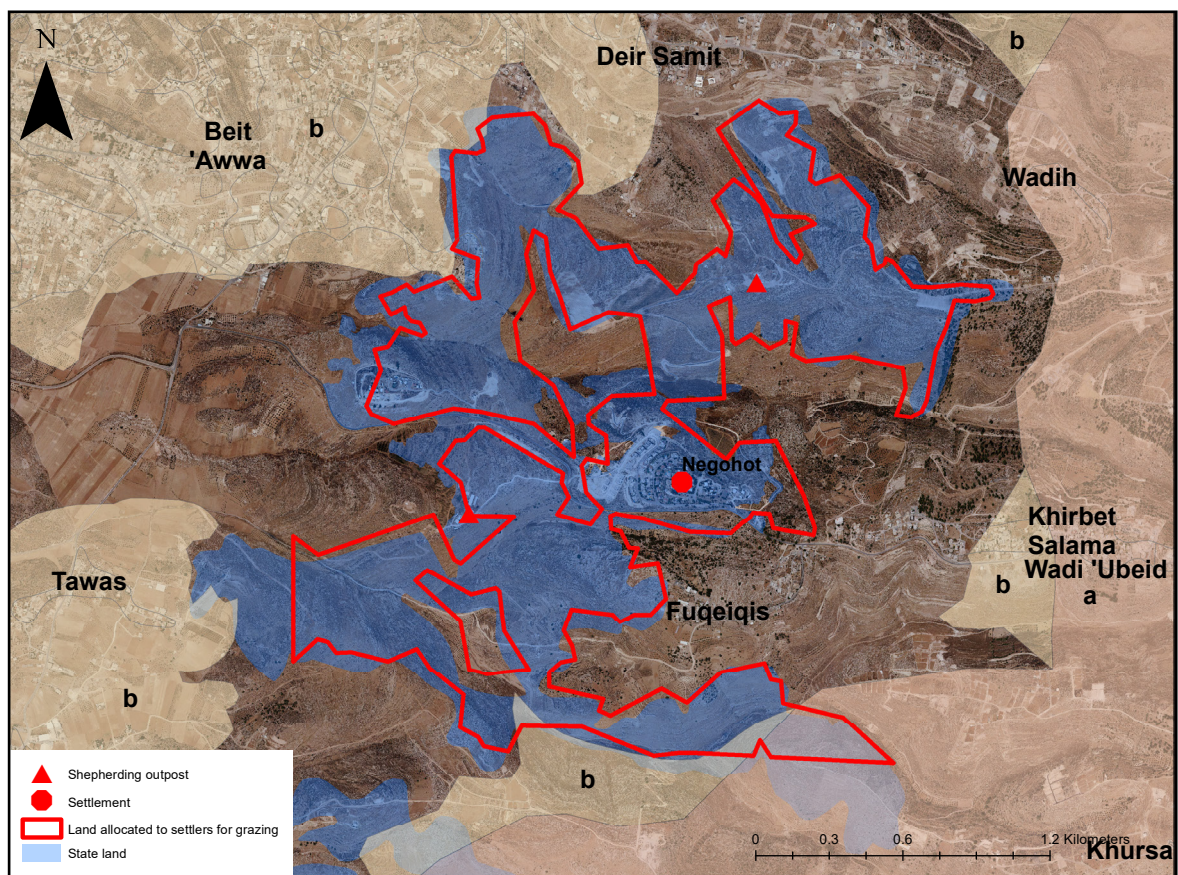
Double Allocations

Clear evidence of the fictitious nature of the aforementioned contract lies in the fact that less than a year prior to its signing, [another contract](#) was formalized between the cooperative association of the Migdalim settlement and a settler named Shirel Harlap. The earlier contract referenced a 10-dunam plot, supposedly allocated to Harlap for vineyard cultivation. However, the actual plot spans 40 dunams, and its takeover began even before the contract was officially established. Observations of the map accompanying the contract and on-the-ground evidence show that this land is split among two settlers—Harlap and Yedidia Maman. Notably, it is the westernmost plot allocated by the Settlement Division, allegedly for grazing purposes.



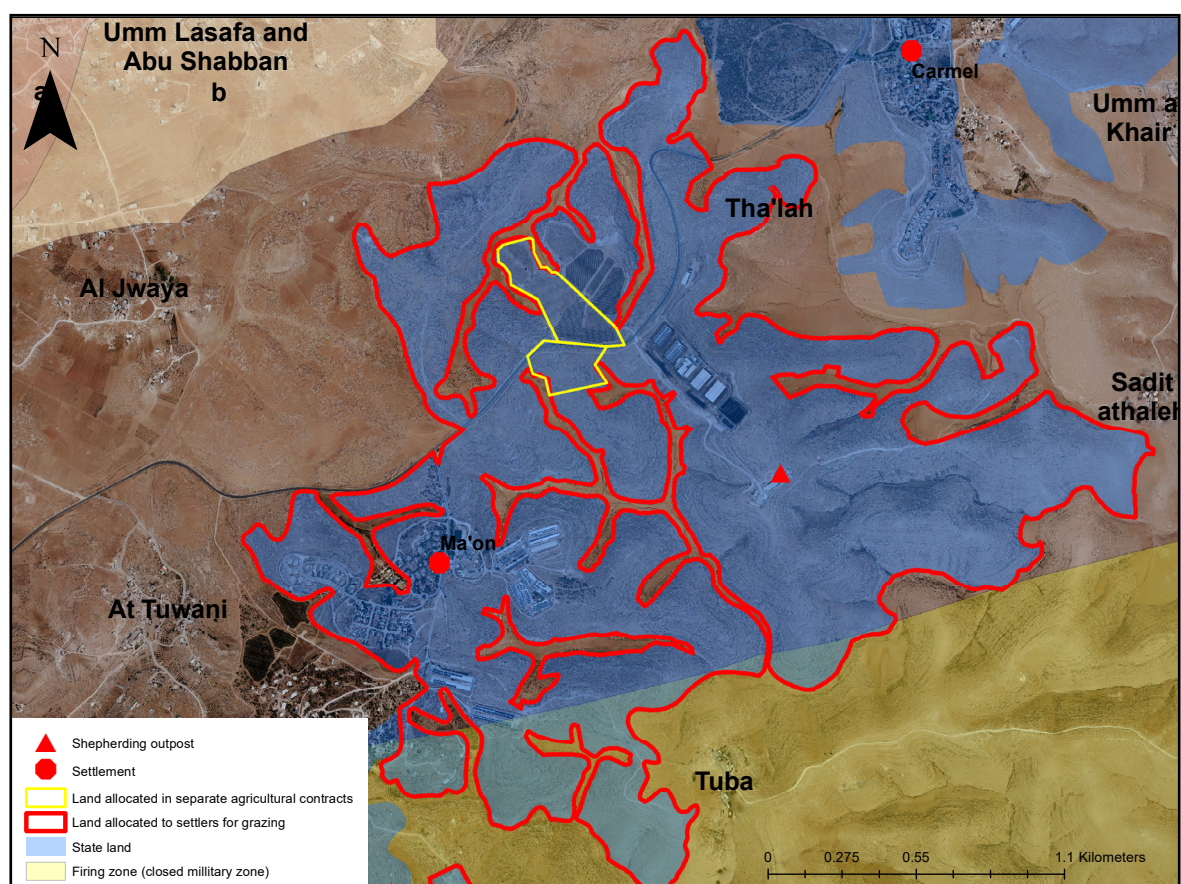
The land designated for grazing and land allocated by the Migdalim settlement to Shirel Harlap.

Another example of double allocation involves a contract with Hagai Nissim of the Negohot settlement. Labeled as a "Special Land Allocation Agreement," the contract was signed in June 2017 between the Settlement Division, the cooperative association of the Negohot settlement, and the settler. The agreement grants an extensive area of land for agricultural and grazing purposes for a seven-year period. Notably, this land includes all homes and public structures in Negohot, which were clearly already allocated to other settlers for residential use and cannot be used for grazing.



The land allocated to Hagai Nissim for agricultural purposes includes all residential homes within the Negohot settlement.

A case of double allocation can also be observed in the lands granted to Yehoshafat Tor of the "Maon Farm" outpost in the southern Hebron Hills. In January 2019, Tor received [a grazing contract](#) from the Settlement Division for 4,780 dunams, as indicated by the contract's accompanying map. However, this land overlaps with two other allocated plots: one granted in January 2018 under [a separate seven-year agricultural use contract](#), which remains uncultivated, and another [allocated in December 2020](#) for three years, where a vineyard has been planted and is actively cultivated by other settlers.



The land allocated to the settler Yehoshafat Tor and the land allocated in separate agricultural contracts.

Lands officially allocated for grazing are often used by other settlers for agricultural cultivation instead. Our investigations indicate that approximately 2,500 dunams designated for grazing are actually being cultivated, with 370 dunams planted with vineyards and olive trees and another 40 dunams utilized for greenhouses. We found no contracts suggesting this agricultural activity is based on formal allocation agreements with the settlers cultivating these lands. However, it is clear these areas are not being used for grazing.

Allocating Lands Without Updated “Blue Line” Demarcation

Many contracts involve lands declared as state lands in the 1980s but whose boundaries have not been reassessed by the Civil Administration’s [Blue Line Team](#). According to regulations set by the Civil Administration’s legal department, lands can only be allocated or developed after a reexamination by its Blue Line Team—or an additional review if they were assessed before 2003. This requirement exists because the declaration of state lands in the 1980s was conducted in a haphazard and overly broad manner, leaving the boundaries between declared state lands and undeclared private lands unclear.

However, maps accompanying the contracts show that much of the grazing land allocated by the Settlement Division includes areas whose boundaries were never reassessed by the Blue Line Team since their initial declaration as state lands. As a result, the lands allocated to settlers encroach significantly on private Palestinian lands. For example, almost none of the approximately 3,000 dunams allocated to settler Hagai Nissim, who established a shepherding outpost south of Negohot, have been reexamined by the Blue Line Team. Similar issues arise in allocations to other settlers in the southern Hebron Hills, including Israel Kaplan (1,600 dunams), Elyashiv Nachum (2,465 dunams), Yaakov Shechter (2,300 dunams), Natan Baruch (2,550 dunams), and Yinon Levy (870 dunams).

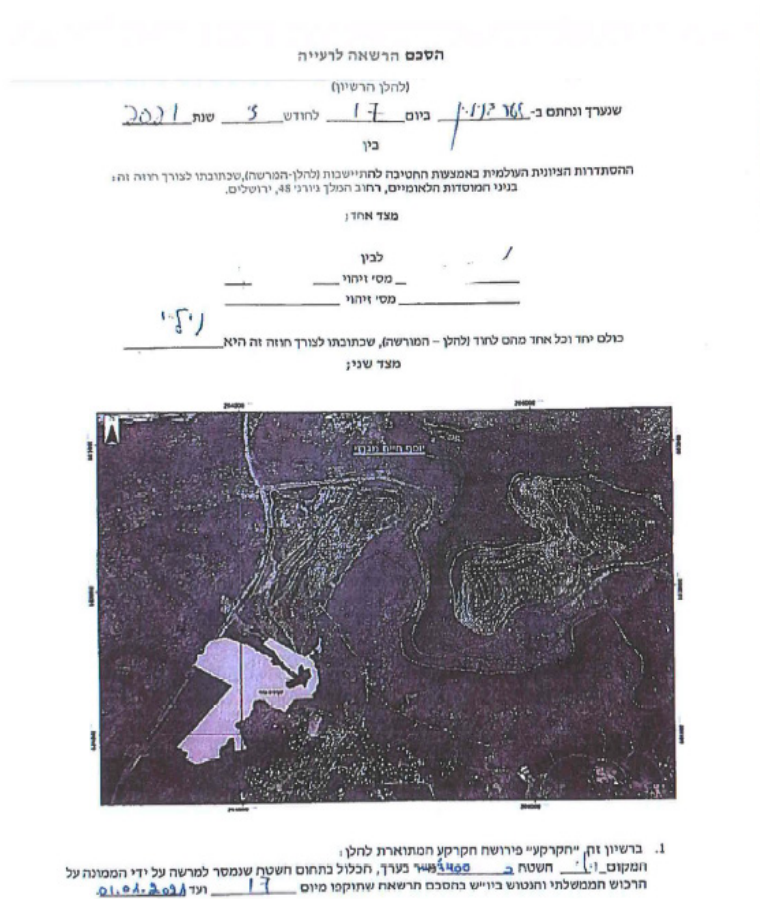
Israeli Shepherding Outposts Established Outside Allocated Lands

A recurring issue in several land allocation contracts is that the areas marked on the accompanying maps often differ entirely from the lands actually used by the settlers. These discrepancies are not minor and cannot be dismissed as mapping inaccuracies; in some cases, the settlers operate up to 15 kilometers away from their designated lands. In some cases, the reason for this misrepresentation is clear, such as when the land in use could not have been legally allocated to the settlers. In other instances, the motivation is less obvious. Because allocation contracts are not publicly available, it is uncertain whether additional contracts exist for the same settlers covering these extra areas.

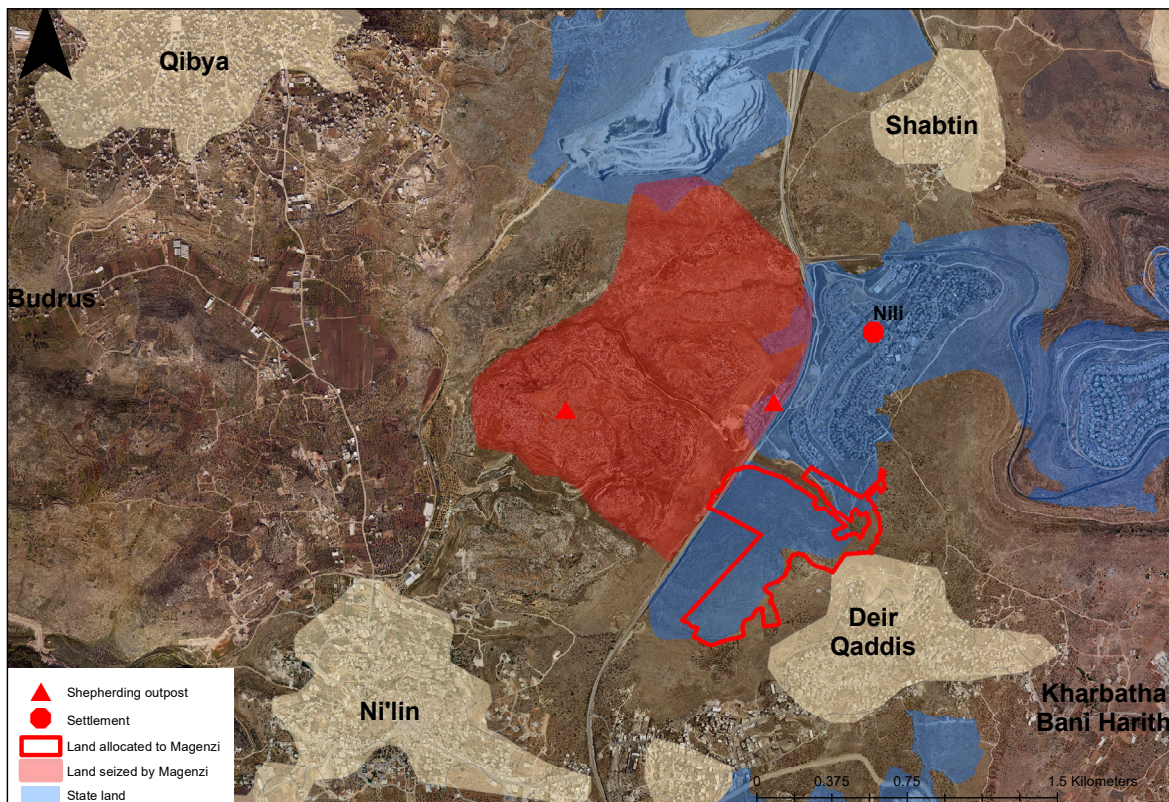
A clear case of intentional misrepresentation appears in [an allocation contract](#) between the Settlement Division and settler Yosef Chaim Magnezi, dated March 17, 2021. The contract grants Magnezi 390 dunams south of the settlement of Nili for grazing. However, the outpost he established two years earlier is actually located on the opposite side of Highway 446, outside the area designated to him according to the contract’s map. The motive for this misrepresentation is clear—Magnezi set up an illegal outpost to seize a large tract of land previously used by Palestinians. He himself acknowledged this in a statement to [Channel 7 News](#) in January 2023:

“There were herds belonging to Bedouins here, and we had conflicts with them. They needed to be shown clearly that things were going to change. It takes time, but once they see that you are committed to the land, that the land matters to you, that you’re not going anywhere—and that these mountains will belong to Jews—some understand quickly, and others take longer.”

Yet the lands from which Magnezi forcibly displaced Palestinians—approximately 1,800 dunams, according to our estimates—are not state lands and therefore could not have been allocated to him. To acquire them, he would have had to sign a fabricated allocation contract that falsely designated the lands as "state lands," despite their actual status.



The map accompanying Magnezi's allocation contract.



The land allocated to Magenzi compared to the land he seized.

Another striking example of misrepresentation aimed at resolving a specific “problem” for the Settlement Division is evident in [the allocation contract](#) signed with Itamar Cohen on March 10, 2021. According to the map accompanying his contract, the lands allocated to Cohen for grazing are situated east of the settlement of Mechora, near the Alon Highway. However, the lands Cohen actually took control of are located southwest of that area, deep within Firing Zone 904A, where he had already established an illegal outpost in 2013. As noted, firing zones in the West Bank are designated as closed military areas, officially off-limits to settlers. In practice, however, Firing Zone 904A, like most firing zones in the West Bank, is not actively used by the military. Instead, settlers, including Cohen, have taken over large portions of it, using the land primarily for cattle grazing. The map accompanying Cohen’s allocation contract appears to have been designed to misrepresent the actual area he gained control of (through [a mortgage from the Settlement Division](#)) and help him secure government funding.



Itamar Cohen's cattle grazing on the lands of the village of Yanun, near Firing Zone 904A.

הסכם הרשאה לרעייה

(להלן הרשיון)

שנערך ונחתם ב- 10 לחדש מרץ שנת 2021
 בין

ההסתדרות הציונית השלמית באמצעות החטיבה להתיישבות (להלן-המרשה), שכתובתו לצורך חוזה זה:
 בניני המוסדות הלאומיים, רחוב המלך מורג 48, ירושלים

מצד אחד;

לכין

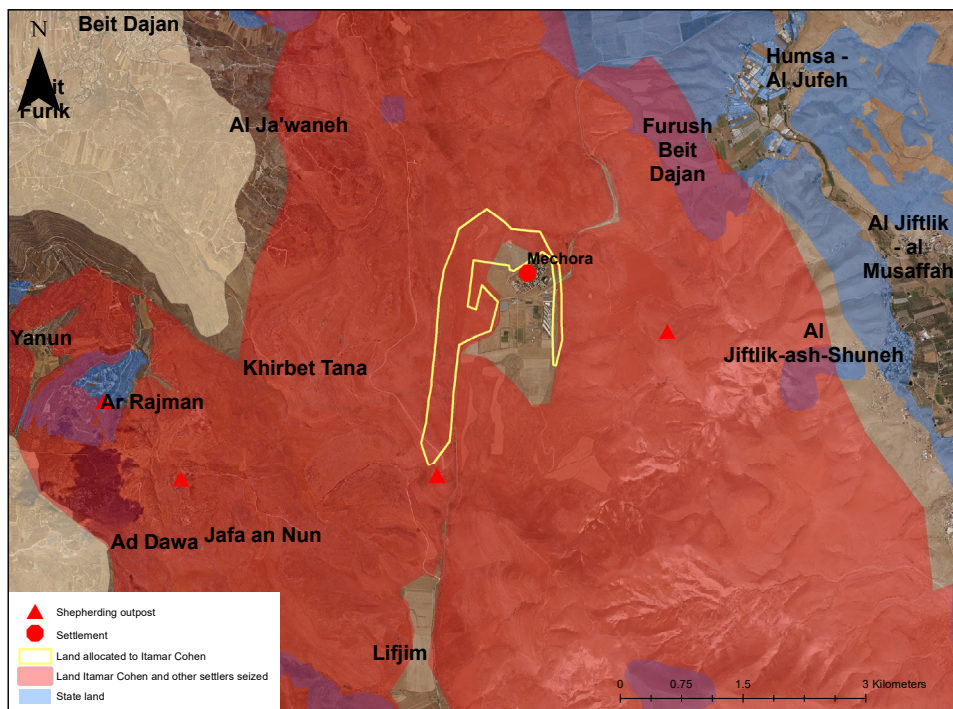
מס' זיהוי _____

מס' זיהוי _____

בולט יחז וכל אחד מהם לרוד (להלן - המורשה), שכתובתו לצורך חוזה זה היא א'ר'ר
 מצד שני;



The map accompanying Itamar Cohen's allocation contract.



The land allocated to Itamar Cohen compared to the land he seized.

Land Allocation within Firing Zones

In some cases, the Settlement Division appears to have allocated lands situated [within firing zones](#). The maps we have obtained indicate that over 5,000 dunams of land located within firing zones were allocated to settlers for grazing purposes. Notable examples include allocations to [Yaakov Shechter](#) of the “Har Sinai Farm” near the settlement of Susya and [Yehoshafat Tor](#) of the “Maon Farm” outpost, both in the southern Hebron Hills. More than 3,300 dunams were allocated to these settlers within [Firing Zone 918](#), an area from which Israel has been attempting to expel the Palestinian population for decades. The stated justification for these expulsion efforts is that the land is required for military training and unsuitable for civilian presence. However, the allocations suggest that the efforts to remove Palestinians from the area are also tied to (poorly concealed) settlement expansion objectives.



Settlers' herd grazing within Firing Zone 903 in the northeastern West Bank.

“Maskiyot” Allocation Contract

[Another contract](#) that drew our attention was one signed on June 30, 2021, with the settler’s name redacted prior to disclosure. The allocation involved 1,640 dunams of land (though the contract itself specifies 1,500 dunams), including several enclaves south of the separation fence in the northeastern West Bank. These lands are adjacent to the Israeli community of Malkishua, located just inside Israeli territory near the Green Line. Yet, the contract claims that the lands are part of the settlement of Maskiyot, which is actually about 16 kilometers southeast of the designated area.

הסכם הרשאה לרעייה
(לחלק הרשיון)
שנערך והחתם ב- 30/06/2021 ביום 30 לחודש 06 שנת 2021
בין
הרשות הרעיונית העולמית באמצעות החטיבה להתיישבות ולחיל-המרחל, שכתובתו למורך חוזה זה:
בניו המסודרות הלאומיים, רחוב המלך גוריון 46, ירושלים.
מצד אחד,
לבין
מס' ויהודי 3
מס' ויהודי 4
כולם יחד וכל אחד מהם לחוד ולחלק – המרחל, שכתובתו למורך חוזה זה היא 30/06/2021
מצד שני,



Map accompanying the Maskiyot allocation contract.

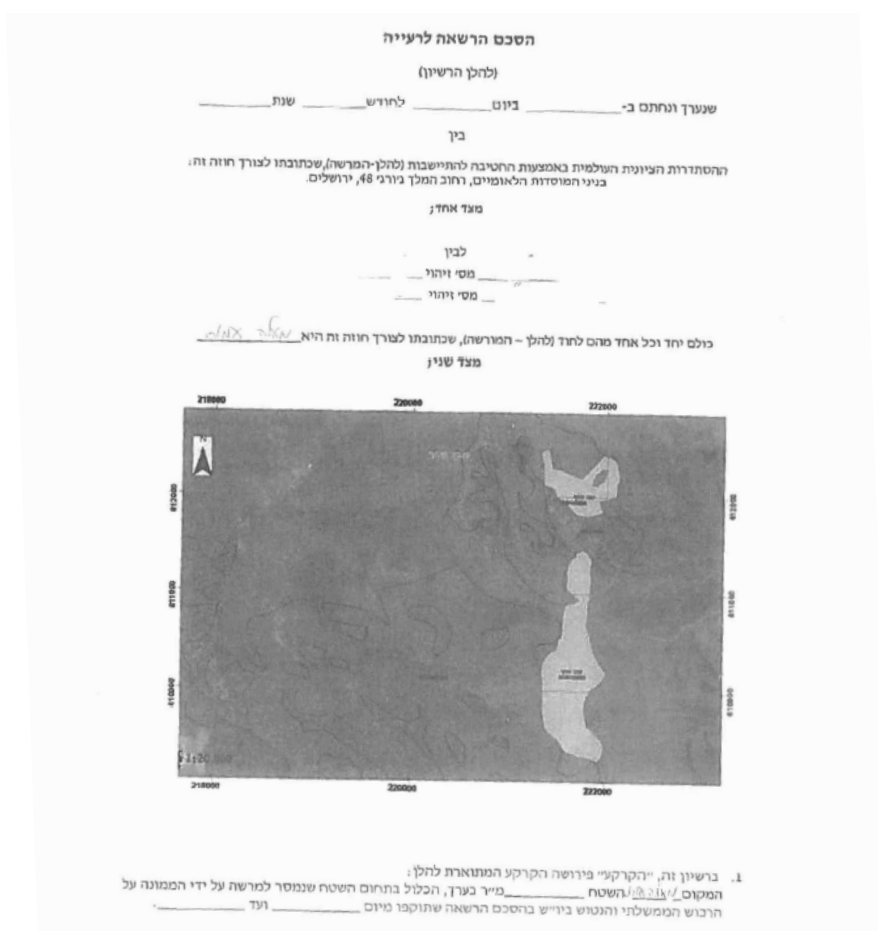
Accessing this land from within the West Bank requires passing through several Palestinian villages, and as far as we know, the area has never been used for settler grazing activities—unlike the lands [north of the separation fence](#), within the Seam Zone (the area between the separation fence and the Green Line.) However, in October 2024, a new settler outpost was established near the separation fence. This outpost is connected to the national water network through a pipe extending from Malkishua. It was built close to a gate in the fence, originally intended for Palestinian landowners to allow access to their remaining lands in the Seam Zone. Beyond the gate, there is direct access to the lands specified in the allocation contract.



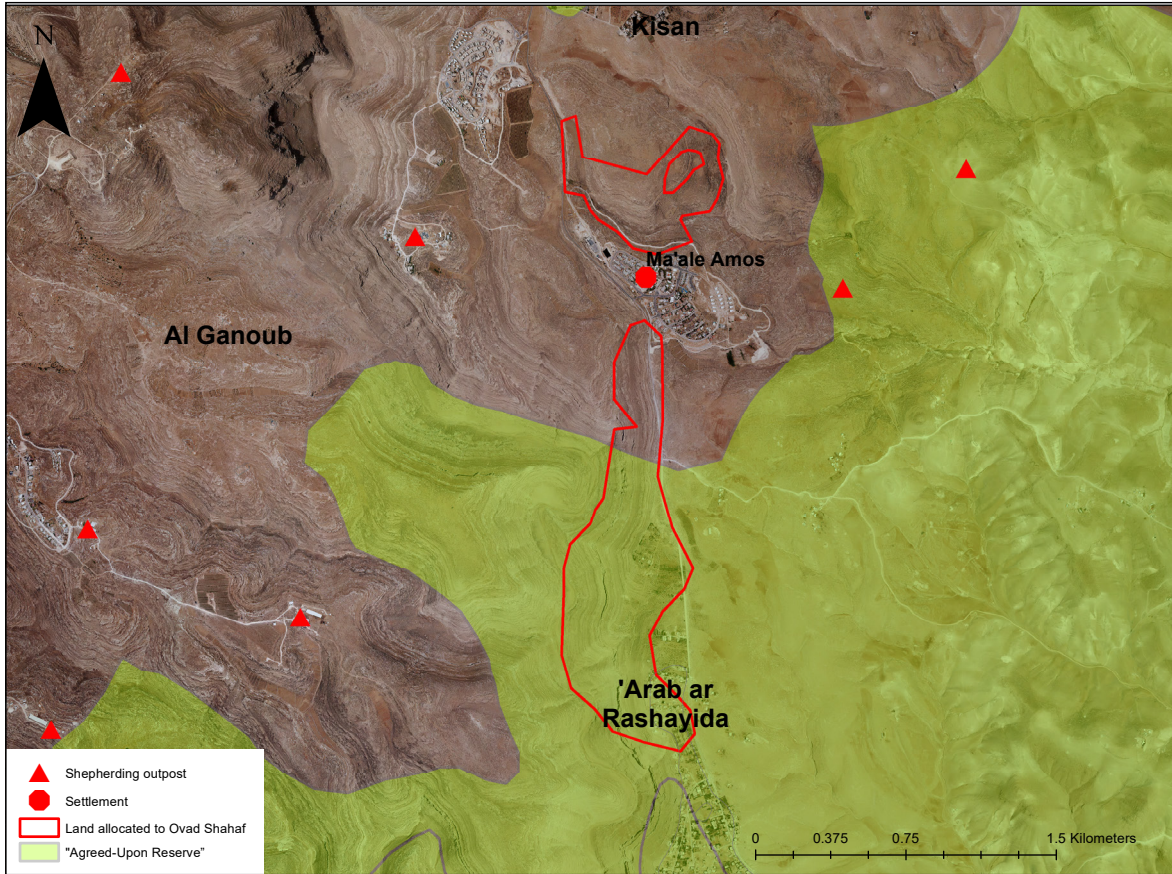
Herding outpost established during October 2024 next to the Separation Fence.

Land Allocation within Palestinian Authority Territory (“The Agreed-Upon Reserve”)

An additional [allocation contract](#) that warrants closer scrutiny is the agreement signed with a settler named Ovad Shahaf. The accompanying map reveals that the lands allocated to Shahaf total 1,060 dunams, split into two sections, one located to the north and the other to the south of the Ma'ale Amos settlement. The majority of the southern section, which is the larger of the two, lies within Area B, in the "Agreed-Upon Reserve." Despite this, the Settlement Division proceeded with the allocation of 650 dunams from this area, which had previously been transferred to the Palestinian Authority's responsibility under the 1998 Wye River Agreement signed by the Israeli government.



The map accompanying Ovad Shahaf's allocation contract.



The land allocated to Ovad Shahaf within the “Agreed-Upon Reserve”.

Three for the Price of One: Yehoshafat Tor’s Allocation Contract

The maps accompanying the allocation contracts reveal that Yehoshafat Tor, from the “Maon Farm” outpost, received [the largest single allocation](#) of land—a mammoth 4,800 dunams (though his contract officially allocates “only” 3,600 dunams.) Most of the land lies north of the Maon settlement, while Tor’s outpost is located to the south of it. Additionally, another portion of land allocated to him is situated one kilometer southeast of his outpost, within Firing Zone 918. This segment of land is beyond Tor’s ability to control on his own and is therefore currently occupied by two additional illegal shepherding outposts. Yissaschar Mann’s “Mann Farm,” established in 2020, occupies the northern part of the allocated land between the settlements of Maon and Carmel. Meanwhile, Avia Weinstock’s “Tuv Ha’Aretz Farm,” established in 2022, occupies the southern part, within Firing Zone 918.

Conclusion

The Settlement Division manages hundreds of thousands of dunams of land expropriated from Palestinians in the West Bank on behalf of the State of Israel. Portions of these lands have been allocated to settlers for various purposes, including grazing. However, the allocation process is carried out with little transparency. The Settlement Division's land management activities are not subject to the Freedom of Information Law, and it refuses to disclose the allocation contracts it issues. Despite this lack of transparency, we were able to obtain dozens of grazing contracts signed between the Settlement Division and various individual settlers, though we estimate that many more remain undisclosed. The contracts we reviewed reveal how the state, through the Settlement Division, directly supports the Israeli shepherding outpost enterprise. The contracts we reviewed cover approximately 47,000 dunams, while the shepherding outposts collectively control about 786,000 dunams in total.

The Settlement Division issues standardized contracts that allocate land to individual settlers at no cost for fixed periods, usually one year. Each contract includes a map showing the allocated land; however, in many cases, the maps are poorly drawn and do not match the land size specified in the contract. This negligence makes it difficult to clearly determine the boundaries of the allocations, as seen in the inclusion of 9,000 dunams of privately owned Palestinian land within areas supposedly allocated to settlers. This violates military law in the West Bank, which prohibits the allocation of private land to anyone—neither the Settlement Division nor settlers. These flawed mapping practices are not coincidental. The confusion and lack of clarity serve the interests of shepherding outposts, allowing them to seize as much land as possible while systematically displacing Palestinian residents.

Part Three: Funding the Shepherding Outposts

While all settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories are considered illegal under international law, shepherding outposts (along with other types of outposts) are also illegal under Israeli law. As a result, their funding is also considered unlawful. Nevertheless, dozens of shepherding outposts continue to operate and expand uninterrupted, receiving millions of shekels in public funding.

Establishing and maintaining settler outposts is an expensive endeavor. Costs include building infrastructure such as roads, electricity, and water systems, constructing facilities, purchasing equipment, acquiring and maintaining herds, and employing permanent on-site staff. These outposts are generally not profitable, particularly during their early years. The primary funding source for shepherding outposts is public funds, with tens of millions of shekels provided directly by government ministries or indirectly through the Settlement Division and local authorities. Additional funding, amounting to millions more, comes from private donations, many of which qualify for tax deductions under Article 46A of the Israeli Income Tax Ordinance.

Millions Allocated by the Settlement Division and Regional Councils

In August 2022, Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, who also held the position of Minister of Settlements, approved the Settlement Division's work plan for that year. The plan included a budget category for "planning essential infrastructure and security needs for early-stage settlements with potential for retroactive legalization." It was later revealed that under this category, the Settlement Division [allocated NIS 15 million](#) to support outposts in 2023. In 2024, the budget for outpost farms was raised to NIS 39 million.

These funds were distributed to the farms via the settlements' regional councils. At a council meeting on May 10, 2023, where the funding for the farms was approved, Israel Gantz, Head of the Binyamin Council, explained the underlying dynamics:

"This is a significant and unprecedented case of 'extraordinary budgeting' being introduced **for the first time in history**—funding for 'security needs for early-stage settlements.' It stems from the government and cabinet's decision to address the security needs of these early-stage settlements. The Central Command defined exactly what could be implemented and where, the Settlement Division transfers the funds, and the work is carried out by us. **This marks the first time that early-stage settlements have received an official government budget for their security needs.**"

The shepherding outposts used this funding to acquire utility task vehicles, drones, camera equipment, generators, electric gates, lighting poles, fences, and solar panels.

Millions from Local Authorities in the Settlements

A key source of funding and support for the illegal outposts comes from local authorities in the occupied West Bank, particularly the regional councils. (For more on the role of local authorities in establishing illegal outposts, see Peace Now's report "[Unraveling the Mechanism Behind Illegal Outposts](#)"). These local authorities receive their budgets from the government, Ministry of Interior grants, and various ministry funding, with only a small portion coming from municipal taxes. Identifying the specific funds allocated for outposts within the regional councils' budgets is challenging, as most councils do not provide detailed budget listings and often conceal such funds within broader budget categories.

Around NIS 30 million annually for "the establishment and operation of patrolling units" in settlements: Since 2021, the Israeli government has allocated approximately NIS 30 million each year to the Ministry of Settlements, which then transfers these funds to the settlements' local authorities for "the establishment and operation of patrolling units." These units are tasked with "[preventing planning and construction offenses](#) and the takeover of state lands," yet referring only to construction or land cultivation by Palestinians. Although the Civil Administration holds official responsibility for overseeing Palestinian construction, with local authorities lacking any jurisdiction in this area, the Israeli government continues to allocate tens of millions of shekels to fund local "oversight units." These units frequently monitor [and report](#) on Palestinian construction activities to the Civil Administration.

In addition to funding for "the establishment and operation of patrolling units," which covers patrol personnel salaries, equipment, vehicles, drones, and aerial photography, the Israeli government also finances "the construction of guarding infrastructure" ([see section 5.6](#)). This infrastructure includes road paving, fencing, camera installation (both overt and covert), and gate construction. **These various measures, increasingly visible on the ground in recent years—especially since October 7—are being used by settlers to seize land and displace Palestinians from hundreds of thousands of dunams in the occupied West Bank.**

Government Grants for “Agricultural Volunteer Programs”

In recent years, the government has transferred tens of millions of shekels through the Ministry of Agriculture and, in the past two years, through the Ministry of the Negev and the Galilee, to non-profit organizations running [agricultural volunteer programs](#). Based on financial reports from these organizations, it is estimated that about 30% of the grants are directed towards volunteer activities in the West Bank, almost all of which are concentrated in shepherding outposts.

Many of the volunteers are youth who have dropped out of school and now live in the shepherding outposts, where they frequently participate in daily acts of violence against Palestinians in the surrounding area. Recently, the US government imposed sanctions on the [Hashomer Yosh organization](#) for deploying volunteers in violent outposts, which have also been sanctioned by the US.

Government Grants for Nonprofits Operating Volunteer Programs in Shepherding Outposts (in NIS) by Year:

Organization	the West Bank	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Bet Moreshet - Ma'ale Adumim (registered nonprofit)	100%				115,409	237,710
Hashomer Yosh - Judea and Samaria Security Organization (registered nonprofit)	100%	673,512	1,510,399	2,000,466	2,349,445	921,391
Uri Eretz Ahavati (registered nonprofit)	100%					190,890
Beit Yatir, Pre-army Torah Academy (registered nonprofit)	About-90%	402,792	673,512	944,503	1,519,988	464,363
Shivat Zion Israeli Charity Trust (registered nonprofit)	About-85%				1,362,260	1,260,331
Kedma Youth Settlement (registered nonprofit)	About-80%	929,536	1,199,963	103,282	2,976,228	532,640
Hiburim Beit Shean and the Valley Association (registered nonprofit)	About-30%	673,126	683,414	1,177,888	3,163,448	1,971,545

Source: [Budget Key](#), as of September 1, 2024. The percentage of activities in the West Bank is estimated based on reports from the organizations.

Ministry of Agriculture Grazing Grants

Another source of funding for shepherding outposts in the West Bank comes from Ministry of Agriculture [grazing grants](#), which are intended to "preserve open lands" and offer financial support to herd owners grazing on these lands. Data on the ministry's grant distribution indicates that between 2017 and 2023, approximately NIS 1.66 million was awarded to owners of shepherding outposts in the West Bank, including those later subject to international sanctions. In 2024 alone, the Ministry of Agriculture allocated roughly NIS 1.43 million to shepherding outpost owners, including four settlers who continued to receive funding even after international sanctions were imposed on them. For a full list of outposts and the financial support they received, [click here](#).

Notably, the settlement of Mevo Horon used its large cattle herd to seize approximately 9,070 dunams of land, mostly within the territories of the villages of Yalu and Amwas (now part of Park Canada). These villages' residents were expelled shortly after the West Bank occupation in June 1967. The Mevo Horon settlement itself was established on private land belonging to the residents of Beit Nuba, another village expelled from the area, without an official government decision or legal regulation. Between 2017 and 2024, the Ministry of Agriculture awarded Mevo Horon a total of NIS 2.601 million in grazing grants.

"Business Entrepreneurship" Grants from the Settlement Division

The Settlement Division provides grants to businesses and supports economic development in rural areas, using criteria it determines independently. Shepherding outpost owners are among the beneficiaries, receiving grants of up to NIS 100,000 for purchasing herds or developing tourism initiatives. Due to the lack of publicly available data, it is particularly difficult to determine which businesses have received grants and for what activities. However, based on our inquiries, it appears that at least 13 shepherding outpost owners have received a total of NIS 1.6 million in grants. Notable recipients include Asa'el Kornitz of the "Eretz Shemesh" Farm in the northern Jordan Valley, who received NIS 84,500 to purchase a herd; Zvi Lax of the "Nachliel" Farm, located west of Ramallah, who received NIS 140,000 for agricultural tourism projects at his farm; and Hagai Nissim of the "Negohot" Farm, who received NIS 28,334 to build a sheepfold and later received an additional NIS 125,000 grant.

(Partial) List of Shepherding Outposts that Received "Business Entrepreneurship" Grants from the Settlement Division:

Farm Name	Farm Owner	Amount (in NIS)
Pnei Kedem Farm	Gabriel Ris	119,683 + 29,100
Eretz Shemesh Farm	Asa'el Kornitz	65,500 + 84,500
Mikenah Yehuda Farm	Israel Kaplan	90,763
Lechatchila Farm	Yehzekel Friedman	148,458
Yehuda Farm	Elyashiv Nachum	150,000
Tson Kedar Farm	Ariel Gringlik	145,000
Aviyah Farm	Yoav Fahima	66,471
Negohot Farm	Hagai Nissim	125,000 + 28,334
Nahal Shiloh Farm	Michael Shalom Shamla	150,000
Ruach Ha'aretz Farm	Dror Granvitz	149,000
Meshek Mann	Isaschar Mann	120,000
Nachliel Farm	Zvi Lax	140,000 + 26,000
Midbar Hever Farm	Yosef Friedlander	11,286
Total		1,649,095

Loans to Settlers Involved in Land Grabbing

In addition to grants, the Settlement Division has provided settlers with personal loans, some or all of which were later converted into grants. A 2018 [investigation by Kerem Navot](#) revealed that over the years, the Division issued loans to numerous settlers involved in illegal activities, including violent acts against Palestinians. Some of these loans were given to settlers residing in shepherding outposts to purchase herds, build pens, and acquire additional equipment needed for livestock maintenance. We do not have data on the loan amounts or whether they were repaid or later transformed into grants.

Examples of Loans Granted to Settlers by the Settlement Division:

Settler Name	Purpose	Year
Dalia Har Sinai	Purchase of a vehicle	2022
Shlomo Mor	3 mortgages for constructing a pen and buying goats and doelings	1999-2022
Ya'akov Talia	3 mortgages for purchasing lambs and a generator	1996-1999
Yitzhak Skali	2 mortgages for building a sheep pen, equipment, and 100 sheep	2001-2004
Yedidya Meshulami	Mortgage for feed containers, feeding and water equipment, and irrigation troughs	2002
Itamar Cohen	3 mortgages for buying lambs and cattle	2009-2014
Nati Shulav	Purchase of 130 sheep	2011
David Botzer	2 mortgages for buying sheep and constructing a pen	2012

Amana: Support, Loans, and Millions in Investments

Amana is among the most powerful settler organizations, both financially and politically, with profound influence in shaping the settlement and outpost landscape. With assets estimated at around NIS 600 million and an annual budget in the tens of millions, Amana is considered the driving force behind illegal settler outposts and, more recently, [the shepherding outposts](#). In 2017, we exposed Amana's role in land grabbing and illegal construction in our report, "[Unraveling the Mechanism behind Illegal Outposts](#)."

The organization hosted a conference in February 2021 to highlight its efforts in supporting the shepherding outposts. Ze'ev (Zambish) Hever, Amana's executive director, proudly discussed their role in establishing over 30 new outposts and announced, "Ten more will be erected this year—that's our plan." In a June 2023 interview with the local outlet [Nadlan Yosh](#), he emphasized, "Our primary tool is the agricultural farms," adding that the land size of these farms is 2.5 times larger than the combined area of all Israeli settlements.

Amana is not a government entity and is, therefore, not subject to public transparency requirements. It conducts its activities behind closed doors and deliberately obscures its actions. The majority of its assets and funding come from its construction company, Binyanei Bar Amana, which builds housing in settlements and sells them to settlers at market value. However, Amana also receives millions of shekels [from regional councils](#). These funds are used to support [settlements and outposts](#), with the organization employing a dedicated "outpost farms coordinator" to help shepherding outposts establish themselves and address challenges. According to information obtained by Peace Now, [Amana channeled nearly NIS 1 million](#) into equipment and aid for shepherding outposts between 2018 and 2019, using funds provided by the Gush Etzion Regional Council.

Additionally, we know of at least three shepherding outposts where Amana played a direct role in their establishment and is listed [as a co-signer](#), alongside the outpost owner, on the land allocation contract. One such example is [Yinon Levy's "Meitarim Farm"](#), which, as noted earlier, faced international sanctions.

[A recent BBC investigation](#) uncovered that Amana also provided loans to settlers to establish shepherding outposts. In February 2018, Amana signed a loan agreement with Aharon Jian of the "Meged Ha'aretz" Farm, located west of the settlement of Avnei Hefetz. Jian received a NIS 300,000 loan to establish his outpost and an additional NIS 1,000,000 to construct greenhouses. Amana also stated that it invested NIS 1.3 million of its own funds in the outpost to develop the land and build water and electricity infrastructure. Additionally, Amana loaned NIS 300,000 to Noga and Shabtai Koshlevsky of the "Avraham Farm" outpost in the southern Hebron Hills to develop the outpost and purchase a sheep herd. Koshlevsky is a co-founder of the Hashomer Yosh organization, and numerous incidents of violence against Palestinians were reported near the outpost he established.

In September 2018, responding to a Palestinian petition against the "Sde Efraim" shepherding outpost, [Amana acknowledged](#) that it had illegally constructed the road to the outpost and invested substantial funds in its development.

Moria Sharvit, wife of Moshe Sharvit of the "Emek Tirzah" Farm—also targeted by international sanctions—told [a New Yorker reporter](#) that Amana had connected their outpost to the water network.

Amana is likely involved in granting loans and making direct investments in numerous other shepherding outposts. As a result, it has been sanctioned by [the United States](#), [the United Kingdom](#), and [Canada](#).

Support from the Jewish National Fund (KKL-JNF)

Founded by the Zionist Congress in 1901, the Jewish National Fund (KKL-JNF) was created to purchase land in Israel and prepare it for Jewish settlement. In 2023, its annual budget totaled nearly NIS 4.5 billion. The KKL-JNF board is made up of representatives from Israel's Zionist political parties and the global Jewish community. Since 1967, the organization has been instrumental in establishing Israeli settlements [and acquiring lands](#) in the occupied Palestinian territories. KKL-JNF routinely funds various settler projects, including parks, roads, water reservoirs, irrigation infrastructure, and agricultural land development. It has recently [resumed purchasing lands](#) in the West Bank after a period of hiatus.

NIS 2 million for the establishment of four shepherding outposts, likely in the northern Jordan Valley: [Documents](#) we obtained suggest that KKL-JNF funded and/or carried out infrastructure work for the establishment of four shepherding outposts—Shirat Ha'asabim, Goshen Farm, Nof Gildad Farm, and Malachei Hashalom Farm. Based on the documents, the total cost for these efforts was NIS 2 million. [A similar document](#) was found for road upgrading work leading to the “Givat Eitam” farm, amounting to around NIS 1.2 million. KKL-JNF sources have denied that the work was carried out, claiming that the document was merely a price quote that was never implemented. Regardless, this indicates that some KKL-JNF officials have sought to support the establishment of outpost farms in recent years.

Youth Programs at Outpost Farms: In recent years, KKL-JNF has been funding vocational training and at-risk youth programs at shepherding outposts in the West Bank. These youths, who live at the outposts, often participate in violent actions against Palestinians. This funding serves as a critical resource that helps keep these youths in the outposts and incentivizes the arrival of more young Israelis. KKL-JNF finances these youth programs by allocating budgets to three organizations: Artzenu, the Mateh Binyamin Regional Council, and Le'Ovda U'Le'Shomra organization.

Year	Project	Organization/Body	Amount (in NIS)
2021	At-Risk Youth in Agricultural Farms	Shivat Zion Israeli Charity Trust (Artzenu)	537,570
2022	At-Risk Youth in Agricultural Farms	Mateh Binyamin Regional Council	500,000
2023	At-Risk Youth in Agricultural Farms	Mateh Binyamin Regional Council	1,000,000
2023	At-Risk Youth in Agricultural Farms	Shivat Zion Israeli Charity Trust (Artzenu)	1,750,000
2023	At-Risk Haredi Youth in Lechatchila Farm	Le'Ovda U'Le'Shomra	750,000
2024	At-Risk Haredi Youth in Lechatchila Farm	Le'Ovda U'Le'Shomra	187,500
Total			4,725,070



A teen from a shepherding outpost in the southern Hebron Hills, wearing a shirt with the KKL-JNF and Artzenu logos, while [attacking Palestinians in the village of Tuba](#) in August 2024. Photo: Ali Awad.

Government-Subsidized Private Donations

One of the key methods used by the shepherding outposts to raise funds is through crowdfunding campaigns organized by various organizations that act as funnels for transferring private donations. Most of these organizations enjoy government support by being eligible for tax deductions on donations made to them, based on Article 46A of the Israeli Income Tax Ordinance. In recent years, crowdfunding platforms have helped raise **tens of millions of NIS for the shepherding outposts.**

Examples of Organizations that Raised Funds for the Shepherding Outposts:

Organization	Shepherding Outposts for which Donations were Raised
Orot Hemda	Nachalat Tzvi
ARI Yishag	A'ira Shachar, Or Meir, Noda B'Yehuda, Ramat Migron, Sde Yonatan
*Musari (Btsalmo)	Goshen Farm, Magnezi Farm, Zvi Bar Yosef's Farm (Neve Tzuf), Maon Farm, Malachei HaShalom, Mitzpe Yair, Mann Farm, Nachalat Avot, Oz Zion
*The Association for the Development of Agricultural Farms in Samaria	Avichai Farm
The Fund for the Development of Benjamin and Settlement	Choshen Outpost
*Hashomer Yosh	Hashomer Yosh
*VeYrashtem Ota	A'ira Shachar, Givat Ohavei Yah, Givat Ronen, Ramat Migron
*Spiritual and Community Center Otzarot Ephraim	Emek Tirtza Farm
Nachalat Ovdei Hashem	Nachalat Tzvi
*Tzedakah V'Chesed Eli	Givat HaKtoret
*The Gush Etzion Fund	Eden Farm, Pnei Kedem Farm, Kashuela Farm, Neve Ori
*The Har Hebron Fund	Meitarim Farm
*Shivat Zion Israeli Charity Trust	Negohot Farm
*Torat Lechima	Har Ella Farm, Shuvi Eretz Farm, "The Shepherd Support Fund", "Supporting the Heroes of the Farms and Hills"

*Organizations eligible for tax deductions under Article 46A.

התרומות מוכרות למס ע"פ סעיף 46 ומבוקרות ע"י רואה חשבון.

**הקמפיין הקבלות והסליקה באחריות
עמותת תורת לחימה 580661460 (ע"ר)**

Screenshot of a crowdfunding campaign for a shepherding outpost in the southern Hebron Hills.

In July 2021, Peace Now alerted the Israeli police about a fundraising campaign organized by Musari (Btsalmo), calling for an investigation into potential illegal activities and requesting the recovery of the donations that had already been raised. However, the police took no action, providing only a brief response. Consequently, in June 2022, Peace Now submitted a petition to the Supreme Court. The petition remains pending, with a hearing scheduled for February 2025.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have shown that the shepherding outposts in the West Bank are not isolated or independent efforts, but rather part of a larger, coordinated operation backed by the state. This operation involves a well-oiled machine designed to establish infrastructure, build roads, acquire equipment, set up security networks, and forcibly seize control of hundreds of thousands of dunams of land. The information in this report likely reflects only a portion of the financial resources driving these outposts. Our findings indicate that a significant, if not the majority, of the funding supporting these illegal outposts comes from taxpayer money.

In 2023 and 2024, the Ministry of Finance allocated NIS 54 million, directly and explicitly, to the shepherding outposts. These funds were channeled through the Ministry of Settlements and the WZO's Settlement Division to the regional councils, which then transferred them to the outposts. Additionally, Israel's 2025 government budget has earmarked another NIS 10 million for "security measures" at these outposts.

The settlement authorities receive an extra NIS 30 million annually for the "protection of state lands." These funds are used to clear roads, purchase drones and vehicles, install fencing, and hire field workers who support land seizure efforts.

The Ministry of Agriculture directly allocates at least NIS 1.66 million in financial support to the shepherding outposts, as well as indirect funding to organizations that recruit volunteers to assist these outposts, with roughly NIS 20 million allocated between 2019 and 2023.

In addition to managing government funds allocated for "security measures" and distributing them to the outposts, the Settlement Division also supports outpost owners with "business entrepreneurship" grants totaling at least NIS 1.65 million, along with loans of undisclosed amounts.

The Amana settler organization and KKL-JNF contribute millions more to the shepherding outposts. Amana's funds are primarily allocated for infrastructure projects, while KKL-JNF mainly supports volunteer programs that help maintain the outposts. Lastly, the state aids the outposts' fundraising efforts by offering tax deductions for donations made to them.

Appendix: All Obtained Allocation Contracts

Date Signed	Farm Name/ Location (Owner Name)	Uses	Dunams According to Map	Dunams According to Contract	Allocating Body	Start Date	End Date	Number of Livestock	NIS
14/01/2019	Avraham Farm (Shabtai Koshlevsky)	Grazing Only, for One Year	3,781	3,000	Settlement Division	01/01/2019	01/01/2020		
Not Stated	Near Migdalim and Gitit	Grazing Only, for One Year	1,796	2,000	Settlement Division	01/01/2021	01/01/2022	600	0
10/03/2021	Near Mechora (Itamar Cohen)	Grazing Only, for One Year	1,569	1,000	Settlement Division	01/01/2021	01/01/2022		0
07/02/2021	Near Ma'ale Amos (Oved Shahaf)	Grazing Only, for One Year	1,057	Not Stated	Settlement Division	01/01/2021	01/01/2022	180	0
10/03/2021	East of Mechora (Itamar Cohen)	Grazing Only, for One Year	4,039	Not Stated	Settlement Division	01/01/2021	01/01/2022		0
30/06/2021	Near Malkishua	Grazing Only, for One Year	1,644	1,500	Settlement Division	01/01/2021	01/01/2022	300	0
02/06/2017	Negohot Farm (Hagai Nissim)	Planting, Grazing, Seasonal Agricultural Work, and Temporary Agricultural Facilities	2,944	Not Stated	Settlement Division	02/06/2017	02/06/2024		1
20/02/2021	Eretz HaTzvi Farm (Zvi Lax)	Grazing Only, for One Year	1,117	Not Stated	Settlement Division	01/01/2020	01/01/2022	250	0
29/01/2019	Near Susya (Yaakov Shechter)	Grazing Only, for One Year	989	1,000	Settlement Division				0
14/03/2021	Firing Zone 918 (Yaakov Shechter)	Grazing Only, for One Year	2,303	Not Stated	Settlement Division			300	0
13/04/2021	Mikneh Yehuda Farm (Israel Kaplan)	Grazing Only, for One Year	1,647	1,400	Settlement Division	01/01/2021	01/01/2022	500	0

Date Signed	Farm Name/ Location (Owner Name)	Uses	Dunams According to Map	Dunams According to Contract	Allocating Body	Start Date	End Date	Number of Livestock	NIS
20/03/2018	Midbar Hever Farm	Missing Relevant Pages	2,550	Missing	Settlement Division				
18/04/2021	Pnei Kedem Farm	Grazing Only, for One Year	2,356	2,179	Settlement Division	01/01/2021	01/01/2022		0
14/02/2021	Yehuda Farm (Elyashiv Nachum)	Grazing Only, for One Year	2,465	Not Stated	Settlement Division	01/01/2021	01/01/2022	200	0
07/03/2021	Tenah Yarok (Didi Amossi)	Grazing Only, for One Year	1,614	Not Stated	Settlement Division	01/01/2021	01/01/2022	300	
10/03/2021	El Nave Farm (Nadav Schwartz)	Grazing Only, for One Year	2,119	Not Stated	Settlement Division	01/01/2021	01/01/2022	171	0
29/01/2019	Maon Farm (Yehoshafat Tor)	Grazing Only, for One Year	4,780	3,600	Settlement Division	01/01/2019	01/01/2020		0
19/01/2021	Tson Kedar Farm (Ariel Gringlik)	Grazing Only, for One Year	693	1,000	Settlement Division	01/01/2021	01/01/2022	70	0
30/06/2021	Goshen Farm (Menahem Goshen)	Grazing Only, for One Year	746	2,000	Settlement Division	01/01/2021	01/01/2022	350	0
17/03/2021	Shuvya Farm (Yosef Chaim Magnezi)	Grazing Only, for One Year	389	400	Settlement Division	01/01/2021	01/01/2022		0
12/04/2021	Shirat Ha'Asabim (Zurriel Lilienthal)	Grazing Only, for One Year	1,073	1,067	Settlement Division	01/01/2021	01/01/2022	596	0
22/03/2021	Meitarim Farm (Yinon Levy)	Economic Agricultural Unit for Sheep Farming and Associated Structures, Planting, and Agriculture	867	Not Stated	Meitarim Industrial Zone Directorate (Har Hevron Development Company)				
21/01/2021	Near Mitzpeh Yericho	Grazing Only, for One Year	1,758	Not Stated	Settlement Division	01/01/2021	01/01/2022	400	0

Date Signed	Farm Name/ Location (Owner Name)	Uses	Dunams According to Map	Dunams According to Contract	Allocating Body	Start Date	End Date	Number of Livestock	NIS
17/10/2021	Near Hamra (Moshe Sharvit)	Grazing Only, for One Year	798	1,100	Settlement Division	01/01/2020	01/01/2022	130	0
02/01/2018	Zvi Farm (Zvi Bar Yosef)	Planting, Grazing, Seasonal Agricultural Work, and Temporary Agricultural Facilities	1,162	Not Stated	Settlement Division	02/01/2018	01/01/2023		1
June 2021	Near as-Samu	Agricultural Use Including Planting, Cultivation, etc. - Automatically Renewed Annually	624	331.4	Heimanuta				1
Total			46,879	21,577					