



Annual Status Report:
The Failing East Jerusalem Education System
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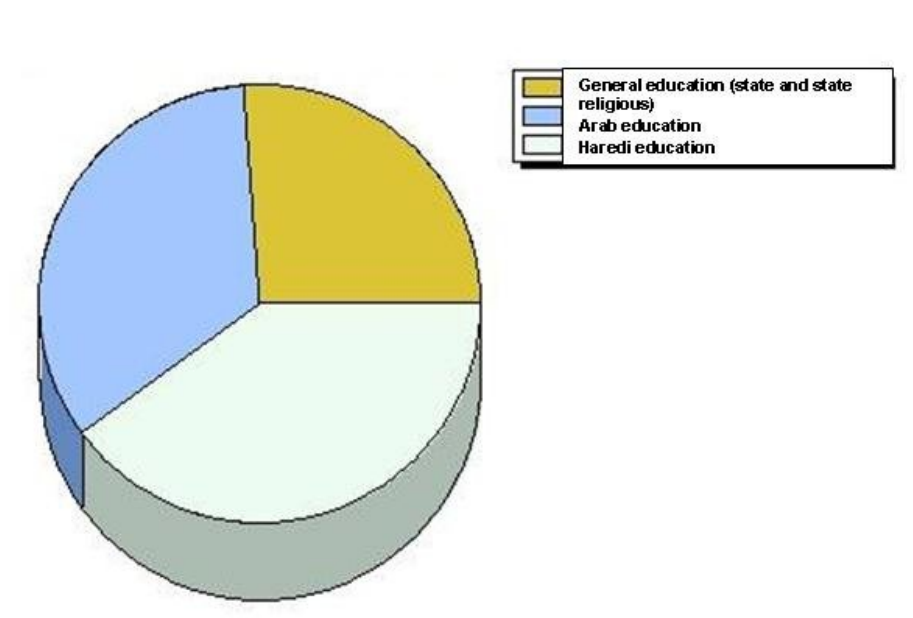
1. Introduction

According to the Jerusalem Education Administration (MANHI), during the 2012-2013 school year, there were 78,676 students (grades K-12) in the Arab school system in Jerusalem, of which 41,665 were in the official education system, 36,515 in the recognized but unofficial system and the remainder in kindergartens for special needs students.¹

Breakdown of students by educational classification

	Number of students	Percentage of students
Jewish secular and national-religious education	61,006	26.2%
Arab education	78,676	33.8%
Ultra-Orthodox ('Haredi') education	92,819	39.9%
Total	232,501	

The number of Arab students in both official schools and in recognized but unofficial schools constitutes 33.8% of the total number of students in both these educational categories across Jerusalem.



From Jerusalem Education Administration (MANHI) Almanac (2012-2013)²

¹ Recognized but unofficial schools are not state owned. Though run by private bodies (both for-profit and not-for-profit), they operate under the recognition and licensing of the Ministry of Education and enjoy substantial funding from both the Ministry and in recent years from the municipality or local council (in this case, from the Jerusalem Municipality). The authorities provide partial supervision and allow the schools to administer placement exams (without discrimination) and charge tuition fees from parents.

² This includes only official schools and recognized but unofficial schools:
http://jerhinshnatonout.jerusalem.muni.il/pages/index_MANHI.aspx?year=2013 [Hebrew] .

These figures do not take into account another 20,000 Arab students who attend private schools run by the Waqf³, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and others.

A recent analysis of the Ministry of Education's 2012 budget by the daily economic newspaper "The Marker" found that "an especially low sum—beneath the national average—of about NIS 12,000 per student" is budgeted for Arab high school students in Jerusalem. This figure is less than the average budgeted for students of Jewish national-religious state schools in Jerusalem (NIS 25,500 per student) and students of Jewish secular state schools in Jerusalem (NIS 24,500 per student).⁴

The first chapters of this report focus on the severe shortage of classrooms in East Jerusalem. For more than a decade, hundreds of parents from East Jerusalem and a number of organizations, including Ir Amim and ACRI, have been conducting legal proceedings concerning the shortage of classrooms in East Jerusalem.⁵ In February 2011, the Supreme Court accepted a petition by the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI) demanding that the Jerusalem Municipality and the Ministry of Education enable every child in East Jerusalem to enroll in an official municipal school in their area of residence or, alternatively, to refund them the tuition for whatever recognized but unofficial school they are forced to attend.⁶ The Court instructed the state to create the physical infrastructure to admit all East Jerusalem students whose families opt to send them to official municipal schools within five years, by 2016.

Last year Ir Amim and ACRI reported a shortage of 1,100 classrooms in East Jerusalem. To be accurate, one must add to that figure the number of classrooms needed for children who are currently enrolled in recognized but unofficial schools in East Jerusalem and who are entitled to learn in the official school system, as established by the Court. This addition doubles the number of missing classrooms, which—even after the construction expected this year—will stand at 2,200. The number of missing classrooms is projected to grow over the years as the population simultaneously grows at an anticipated rate of 3-4% a year. It is perfectly clear that the existing shortfall will not be met by the 2016 deadline set by the Court and that the Municipality will be required to underwrite tuitions for alternative placements to comply with the Court order.

This report will also include a detailed discussion of the skyrocketing dropout rate in East Jerusalem. Last September, the total dropout rate in East Jerusalem was 13% of students of all ages. The dropout rate in East Jerusalem is significantly higher than the rate in the Israeli education system—both Jewish and Arab—and is particularly high compared to dropout rates in West Jerusalem. The result is that 36% of the children in East Jerusalem do not complete a full 12 years of education. The Municipality is not adequately prepared to

³ "A Muslim religious or charitable foundation created by an endowed trust fund", <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/waqf>

⁴ Lior Detel, "How Much Money Does Your Child Receive from the Ministry of Education?", *The Marker*, July 18, 2013, <http://www.themarker.com/career/1.2075019>

The figures are based on the budget transferred by the Ministry of Education to pay for teaching hours in high schools.

⁵ See ACRI and Ir Amim report, "Failed Grade: The Failing Education System in East Jerusalem," (August 2012), <http://ir-amim.org.il/en/report/failed-grade-%E2%80%93-east-jerusalem-failing-educational-system-2012>.

⁶ HCJ 5373/08 Abu Libdeh et al v Minister of Education et al, February 6, 2011, <http://elyon1.court.gov.il/files/08/730/053/r07/08053730.r07.htm>.

confront systemic problems contributing to high dropout rates, and relevant government ministries are almost completely absent from East Jerusalem.

This report will also discuss the failure to realize the right to free education for children ages 3-4 in East Jerusalem due to a shortage of kindergarten classrooms, the deep discrimination in allocation of professional staff positions such as inspectors and school counselors, and the unique difficulties of the East Jerusalem Parents' Committee, which operates without a budget and within the complicated political environment of East Jerusalem.

These hardships take place within an overall dire situation of life in East Jerusalem, where 79% of the residents and a full 85% of the children live below the poverty line and where the social welfare system is too overwhelmed to provide a sufficient response.⁷ The absence of alternative educational frameworks, adequate educational programs and skilled and supportive professional staff is detrimental not only to the quality of education but to children's overall emotional and psychological wellbeing.

2. A Shortage of Approximately 2,200 Classrooms in the Official School System

Over the last 12 years, hundreds of parents from East Jerusalem and a number of organizations, including Ir Amim and ACRI, submitted petitions to the Supreme Court concerning the shortage of classrooms in East Jerusalem, demanding that the authorities respect the Compulsory Free Education Law in East Jerusalem. As early as 2001, the Supreme Court recognized that the law in East Jerusalem had been violated through years of neglect and gave the effect of a court ruling to a four-year plan to build 245 new classrooms. The petitioners filed a motion under the Contempt of Court Ordinance after the Municipality and Ministry of Education failed to honor their commitment. Ir Amim has continued to advance these legal proceedings since its initial petition in 2001.

It was against this background that the Supreme Court accepted ACRI's petition in February 2011 demanding that the Jerusalem Municipality and Ministry of Education allow every child from East Jerusalem to enroll in an official municipal school in his/her area of residence or, alternatively, refund the tuition for the recognized but unofficial school where s/he was forced to enroll.

Two and a half years have now elapsed since the Supreme Court ruling. As Justice Procaccia wrote in her verdict:

"The violation of the right to equality in education in East Jerusalem is not the plight of a few. It is the plight of a significant portion of an entire sector of the population that is not able to exercise a basic right it is afforded by Israeli law and under its constitutional values. [...] The pace of activity and the resources devoted to this

⁷ National Insurance Institute, "The Dimensions of Poverty and Social Gaps 2011, Annual Report," Table 11a, p. 31, http://www.btl.gov.il/Publications/oni_report/Documents/oni2011.pdf.

purpose indicate prospects of only a partial solution to this serious and complicated problem in the coming years."⁸

The Court ordered that within five years, by 2016, the state must create the physical infrastructure to enable a spot for any East Jerusalem student who opted to enroll in the official municipal school system.

Last year we reported a shortage of 1,100 classrooms in East Jerusalem, including the 720 new classrooms needed to replace existing classrooms located in substandard buildings and 400 new classrooms required in order to admit the children enrolled in schools outside of the system.

We must add to the number of missing classrooms in the official school system those needed for students currently enrolled in the recognized but unofficial system. The authorities are obligated to provide spaces in the official education system to comply with the Court order. Based on this calculation, last school year the official school system was lacking more than 2,300 classrooms.

Why is there a classroom shortage? The Municipality blames the shortage of classrooms on a scarcity of land in East Jerusalem—an explanation not supported by the facts. As described in detail in last year's report⁹, the Municipality regularly supports Israeli initiatives for Jewish Israeli construction in East Jerusalem, on land that could be allocated for the immediate construction of new schools. The planning policy in East Jerusalem, including the potential for expropriation of additional land for public use, is harnessed to discriminatory demographic goals—the primary explanation for the existing shortage of classrooms in East Jerusalem.

The shortage of classrooms will improve only negligibly with the opening of the new school year. According to our monitoring, 67 new classrooms are expected to open at the beginning of the new school year.¹⁰ Additional classrooms in rented space in residential buildings are also slated to open. In the last school year, the number of rented classrooms was 773; another 12 rented classrooms and 16 rented kindergarten classrooms—a total of 28 rented classrooms—will be added in the coming school year.¹¹ Rented classrooms should be viewed as a temporary solution only; the Municipality must continue to seek adequate solutions in designated educational buildings. According to a Knesset Research and Information Center report:

“Because of the perpetual classroom shortage, the Municipality has for many years pursued a policy of ‘putting out fires,’ in which it erects mobile structures or more often rents residential houses and turns them into schools. Many of the rented

⁸ The aforesaid Abu Libdeh petition, paragraphs 44-45 of Justice Procaccia's ruling.

⁹ Refer to footnote #5.

¹⁰ See Appendix 1 – Classroom Construction Monitoring Table, July 2013.

¹¹ See Appendix 2 – Figures on Rented Classrooms (2012-2014).

buildings do not meet the accepted standards as far as classroom and yard size and basic sanitary conditions, as well as ventilation, heating and air-conditioning.”¹²

In addition to the classrooms that will open in the next school year, 75 classrooms are under construction and 110 are in the planning stages (of which 14 may open during the school year). Another 147 classrooms are in initial planning stages. The total number of classrooms in all stages of planning and construction is 332.

Therefore, we can estimate that at the opening of the school year—and even after the addition of classrooms—there will still be a shortage of 2,200 classrooms in East Jerusalem in the official education system. This grave shortage of classrooms will persist even if the additional 332 classrooms are built in future years.

The number of missing classrooms is expected to grow over the years along with an estimated population growth of 3-4% a year. It is patently obvious that by the 2016 deadline set by the Court, the shortage will not be filled.

Behind the Barrier: the Story of the Students of Ras Khamis

Following the construction of the separation barrier in north Jerusalem in the years 2005-2006, a number of communities were physically separated from the city, including the neighborhoods of Kufr Aqab, Samiramis (located on the other side of the Qalandia checkpoint), the Shuafat Refugee Camp, Ras Khamis, Ras Shehadeh and Dahiyat al-Salam (located on the other side of the Shuafat Refugee Camp’s checkpoint). These neighborhoods are within the municipal boundaries of Jerusalem as declared by Israel in 1967 and their residents are residents of Jerusalem (with the status of permanent residents of Israel), who depend on services from Jerusalem as the urban center to which they belong. By conservative estimate, about 100,000 Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem live beyond the barrier.

Since the construction of the barrier, and due to the Municipality’s near complete abdication of responsibility for serving these areas, the residents of these neighborhoods are forced to pass through checkpoints every day in order to access municipal and administrative services. Thousands of students, including primary school students, pass through checkpoints daily on their way to schools throughout the city due to the incapacity of the few schools located in their neighborhoods to absorb all of the students who live there.¹³

The only educational institution the Jerusalem Municipality built in the neighborhoods beyond the barrier is a boys’ school in the area of the Shuafat Refugee Camp that was built adjacent to a toxic metal factory despite warnings by the Ministry of Environmental Protection. Only following a petition to the Supreme Court by students’ parents, ACRI

¹² Yuval Wargen, “The East Jerusalem Education system: Classrooms and Curricula,” Knesset Research and Information Center (May 2010), [Hebrew], p. 2.

¹³ Ms. Lara Mubariki, Deputy Director of MANHI for the Arab Sector, wrote in a letter to ACRI from June 13, 2012 that 3,500 students living in those areas are bused to school by the Jerusalem Municipality every day. An additional unknown number of students is bused to school by non-Municipality private parties or uses public transportation.

and the Israel Union for Environmental Defense did the City move to close down the factory.¹⁴ The Municipality has not built new schools in the neighborhoods beyond the separation barrier despite its awareness of the grave shortage of schools in these areas and insupportable classroom overcrowding.¹⁵

In addition to demanding more educational institutions and classrooms in the neighborhoods beyond the separation barrier, in the past year the Ras Khamis Residents' Committee and ACRI have acted to improve the transportation system for the 300 students who live more than a 30-minute walk from the Shuafat Refugee Camp checkpoint. According to a directive from the Director General of the Ministry of Education, transportation must be provided to students of compulsory education age if they live more than 2 km from the nearest school (up to the fourth grade) or more than 3 km away from the nearest school (students in the fifth grade and up). Despite this entitlement, these students do not have access to transportation from their homes to the schools they attend outside of the neighborhood. Instead, they must navigate to the checkpoint independently, on a steep road, where they are exposed to the elements in the winter and summer and forced to pass through the checkpoint. The poor road conditions that impede public transportation access and the heavy traffic congestion at the checkpoint are both direct outcomes of the policies of the Municipality and the Defense Ministry.

The situation was exacerbated by security authorities' decision to shut down the Ras Khamis checkpoint in September 2012. Before the closing, children could walk through the checkpoint, located close to their homes, and board buses waiting on the other side of the checkpoint. Despite this deterioration in circumstances and in spite of the director general's directive, the students have not yet been provided with transportation from their homes. The transportation problem is but one example of the violation of the right to education in the neighborhoods beyond the separation barrier.

3. A Shortage of 400 Preschool Classes: A Violation of the Right to Free Education for Children ages 3-4

The government decision to apply the Free Education Law across the country to children ages 3-4, beginning in the 2012-2013 school year, exposed the deep shortage of kindergartens in East Jerusalem and the tremendous difficulty of implementing the law in that part of the city.¹⁶

¹⁴ Administrative petition 8779/08, "Hussein vs. the Municipality of Jerusalem"; AAP 5634/09, "Hussein vs. the Municipality of Jerusalem". For details on the sequence of events, see ACRI site: <http://www.acri.org.il/he/?p=1968> [Hebrew].

¹⁵ Colin Hames, Director of the Community Center for Jerusalem's Palestinian communities living alongside the barrier, Protocol No. 387 of Knesset Interior and Environmental Protection Committee meeting about conduct of the Government of Israel and the Jerusalem Municipality in the Jerusalem neighborhoods beyond the barrier, May 30, 2011.

¹⁶ The government decision provided that children ages 3-4 could be admitted for free to official kindergartens, yet compulsory education begins from ages 5 and up.

According to current population registry figures, 18,231 Palestinian children ages 3-4 live in Jerusalem.¹⁷ According to MANHI figures, in 2012-2013, the number of children ages 3-4 enrolled in both official and recognized but unofficial educational systems was, at most, 5,792, or 31% of children within this age group. Only 6% of the total number of children in this age category—1,105 children—attended official kindergartens.

According to monitoring data (Appendices 1 and 2), and as noted in the section addressing the classroom shortage, 10 kindergarten classes are expected to open in the coming school year (all in Beit Hanina) as well as another 16 rented kindergarten classrooms, of which nine are also in Beit Hanina. The classrooms are expected to absorb roughly 500 children ages 3-5. Even if most of these children are aged 3-4, there will still be roughly 12,000 children in this age group who are not absorbed into the system. To bridge the gap and enable families of children 3-4 years of age the benefit of free education, as stipulated by law, some 400 new kindergarten classrooms would be required.

The professional literature clearly indicates the strong correlation between preschool education and child development and school preparedness. Preschool education is even more important in high poverty areas such as East Jerusalem, where the population suffers from a lack of infrastructure development, playgrounds and systems for the provision of extracurricular educational activities. Furthermore, free preschool education offers mobility to mothers seeking to acquire education or enter the workforce in order to economically contribute to their families' welfare.

Parents whose children do not find places in official or unofficial but recognized kindergartens face two undesired alternatives: Leaving their children at home, or paying out of their own pocket for one of the private and unsupervised kindergartens operating throughout East Jerusalem.¹⁸

4. Severe Dropout Rate

According to MANHI figures, last September the total dropout rate in East Jerusalem reached 13% of all students.¹⁹ The dropout rate in East Jerusalem is significantly higher than in the Israeli education system, both Jewish and Arab, and especially high compared to dropout rates in West Jerusalem: in 2011, the dropout rate in Hebrew secondary schools nationwide was 2.6%; in Arab secondary schools nationwide, 4.6%; and in West Jerusalem, only 1%.²⁰ Most of the attrition occurs in high school (grades 10-12), with the trend starting as early as middle school (grades 7-9). According to MANHI data for the school year 2012-2013, 10% of Palestinian children of 8th or 9th grade school age were not enrolled in any educational institution. For 10th grade, this figure doubled to 20% and by 11th grade, 30% of

¹⁷ Interior Ministry population registry figures for Jerusalem are divided into "Jews" and "non-Jews." It is assumed that the vast majority of Jerusalemites registered as non-Jews are Palestinians. According to the December 2012 figures, 8,878 non-Jewish children age 3 and 9,353 non-Jewish children age 4 live in Jerusalem.

¹⁸ Since private kindergartens and day care centers are not part of the education system, there is no monitoring of the number of children who attend them.

¹⁹ Tzahi Golan, Director of the Department for Care of the Individual unit in MANHI, "Reinforcing Persistence and Retention of Students in the Municipal Education System in East Jerusalem", September 24, 2012, p. 1.

²⁰ Central Bureau of Statistics, Statistical Abstract of Israel 2012, Table 8.33, http://www.cbs.gov.il/reader/shnaton/templ_shnaton.html?num_tab=st08_33x&CYear=2012.

the students did not attend school. The cumulative dropout rate results in 36% of children in East Jerusalem failing to complete a full 12 years of school.²¹

The Israeli educational system manages several types of dropout prevention and support programs for at-risk children and teenagers. Some are run by the City and some by government ministries. Most of the Jerusalem Municipality's dropout prevention activities are operated as part of the municipal education system's basket of educational programs. A document written by MANHI's Department for the Care of the Individual at the beginning of the previous school year describes the severe shortage of dropout prevention programs in schools in East Jerusalem: in 30% of secondary schools in East Jerusalem MANHI does not operate any dropout prevention program and in 44% it runs only one program per school.²²

The implementation in Jerusalem of the MALEH program, a national program with the singular goal of reducing dropout and "hidden dropout" rates,²³ was funded during the 2011-2012 school year at NIS 723,000 for the state secular and national-religious schools (funds were allocated by the Municipality, the government and external sources) and at only NIS 360,000 in the Arab educational system of Jerusalem. Compared to the 225 students in Hebrew education who benefited from the program in Jerusalem, there were only 100 beneficiaries in East Jerusalem.²⁴ Meanwhile, the percentage of Palestinian students out of the total student body that MANHI is in charge of constitutes 56%.²⁵ The need for dropout prevention programs within the population is much greater than its relative size, both because of high dropout rates and because of socioeconomic conditions in East Jerusalem. Further, the Municipality's analysis indicates that about half of the programs the City does run in East Jerusalem do not address the emotional and psychological contributors to students dropping out of the system, even though programs that address these causes are proven to be the most effective in reducing dropout rates.²⁶

Government ministries also bear direct responsibility for maintaining programs for youth who drop out of school. Under the Apprenticeship Law (1953), the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor (ITL) runs vocational training schools from within a program called "Youth Training." In 2010, 15.8% of dropout from Hebrew education and 27.5% of dropouts from Arab education throughout Israel were absorbed in ITL programs.²⁷ While Jerusalem maintains four youth training institutions under the authority of the ITL, all of them are located in West Jerusalem and designated for the Israeli population. East Jerusalem once had a vocational school operated by Na'amat—a non-profit women's organization providing services for mothers and children—but it has since closed. Though supporters in MANHI are trying to promote the opening of such a school in East Jerusalem, at the time of

²¹ The presentation "The Education System in East Jerusalem – Challenges and Tasks" was presented as part of a MANHI roundtable, June 27, 2013, p. 6.

²² Tzahi Golan, Director of the Department for Care of the Individual, MANHI, "Reinforcing Persistence and Retention of Students in the Municipal Education System in East Jerusalem," September 24, 2012, p. 5.

²³ <http://maleh.org.il/about.html>.

²⁴ According to information from Deputy Mayor and Head of the Education Portfolio in East Jerusalem, Pepe Alalo.

²⁵ MANHI is the Jerusalem Municipal administration body in charge of running the Jewish secular and national-religious schools and the official Arab schools. The ultra-Orthodox ('Haredi') education system has a separate administration within the Municipality, and runs its own budget.

²⁶ Tzahi Golan, Director of Department for Care of the Individual, MANHI, "Reinforcing Persistence and Retention of Students in the Municipal Education System in East Jerusalem," September 24, 2012, p. 9.

²⁷ Central Bureau Statistics, Statistical Abstract of Israel 2012, Table 8.34, http://www.cbs.gov.il/reader/shnaton/templ_shnaton.html?num_tab=st08_34x&CYear=2012.

this writing, no such school yet exists. According to representatives of the East Jerusalem Parents' Committee (see below), ongoing attempts to get MANHI to run a vocational school in East Jerusalem for students who are not interested in completing an academic matriculation program have met with consistent failure.

The shortage is also evident in alternative programming operated by the Ministry of Education. The Education Ministry's Department of Welfare and Educational Services ("SHAHAR") runs both alternative schools and supplemental classes within the traditional school system for youth at risk, which are intended to absorb a large number of dropouts. Additional funding is allocated for these students. According to SHAHAR figures, in 2011-2012 there were 76 alternative educational frameworks throughout Israel, with 10,565 students.²⁸ While in West Jerusalem there are 11 alternative educational frameworks (supervised either by the ITL or the Ministry of Education) accommodating 1,100 students, in East Jerusalem there are only two schools for youth at risk²⁹. Moreover, the SHAHAR department runs several programs inside the formal educational system in the form of special high school classes for at-risk students (ETGAR, MABAR, TELEM, OMETZ). As of 2011-2012, there were 1,078 ETGAR classes in 408 classrooms throughout Israel.³⁰ A response from the SHAHAR department to a recent inquiry by Ir Amim indicated that in the coming school year there will be 65 MABAR classes in Jerusalem, only three of which will be located in a high school in Beit Safafa, and 31 ETGAR classes, only two of which will be located in a high school in Beit Safafa.³¹ The department's responses indicates that the significant shortage of such classrooms across East Jerusalem is the result of East Jerusalem schools not meeting the criteria set by the Ministry of Education for operating SHAHAR classes. One criterion is that the school prepares students for the Bagrut (Israeli matriculation exams)³². This criterion explains why the aforementioned classes are provided only in the high school in Beit Safafa, which offers a curriculum geared toward the Israeli matriculation exams (Bagrut). The department also states that the general shortage of classrooms is one of the reasons for the dearth of special programs in East Jerusalem, and that in general East Jerusalem schools "do not meet the criteria for MABAR and ETGAR". The importance of alternative educational frameworks, which are almost completely absent in East Jerusalem, is demonstrated by the fact that they absorb 35% of Jewish students and 27% of Arab students who drop out in grades 7-12 nationwide.³³

MANHI's Department for Care of the Individual made recent recommendations for rectifying the system, starting with a pilot program to provide a solution for 6 of the 23 high schools in the official education system in East Jerusalem. The department estimated the cost of the pilot program at NIS 2.5 million a year. This year, the Municipality added NIS 600,000 to the dropout prevention budget for East Jerusalem (bringing it to NIS 1 million) and appealed to the Ministries of Finance and Education to contribute funding to the

²⁸ Ministry of Education data:

http://cms.education.gov.il/EducationCMS/Units/Shachar/Machlakot/MerkazeiChinuch/netunim_sm.htm.

²⁹ Conversation with Mr. Golan, June 16, 2013.

³⁰ Ministry of Education data:

http://cms.education.gov.il/EducationCMS/Units/Shachar/Machlakot/MerkazeiChinuch/netunim_sm.htm.

³¹ Response from SHAHAR Department to Ir Amim's Freedom of Information request, from July 28, 2013

³² *ibid*

³³ Central Bureau Statistics, Statistical Abstract of Israel 2012, Table 8.34,

http://www.cbs.gov.il/reader/shnaton/templ_shnaton.html?num_tab=st08_34x&CYear=2012.

project. Recently, each ministry approved the additional allocation of NIS 1 million.³⁴ There is no assurance that these budgets will be allocated in future years;³⁵ by the Municipality's own analysis, that funding would only be directed to the partial budget under the pilot program, not the overall budget, which would require an estimated NIS 15 million to comprehensively address the problem.

Over the last year, MANHI has made an effort to more adequately respond to the high dropout rate among Palestinian students; yet even after the increase, the budget is extremely limited and programs proposed to address the issue tend to transfer responsibility for an acute systemic problem to school principals while ignoring the broader causal roots of the high dropout rate (economic stressors, teenage marriage of girls and, of course, the shortage of classrooms and their uneven distribution across the different neighborhoods). Furthermore, there appear to have been no actions taken to address the disparity in alternative programs under the jurisdiction of the Education and IITL ministries for children who drop out of the formal education system.

Data summary

- Last September, the total dropout rate in East Jerusalem was 13% of students of all ages.
- 36% of East Jerusalem children do not finish a full 12 years of education.
- MANHI's dropout prevention budget grew this year from NIS 400,000 to NIS 3 million, with the help of funding from the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Education, but implementation of the program throughout East Jerusalem would require a total budget of NIS 15 million.
- In 30% of East Jerusalem high schools MANHI runs no dropout prevention program and in 44% it operates only one program.
- The Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor runs four youth training institutions in Jerusalem but they are all in West Jerusalem and designed for the Israeli population.
- In West Jerusalem, there are 11 alternative educational frameworks (supervised either by the IITL or the Education Ministry) accommodating 1,100 students, compared to East Jerusalem, which has only two schools for youth at risk.
- In the 2013-2014 school year, there will be 65 MABAR classes in Jerusalem, of which only three are in East Jerusalem, and 31 ETGAR classes, of which only two are in East Jerusalem.

³⁴ The funding has not yet been actually transferred.

³⁵ Conversation with Ms. Lara Mubariki and Mr. Tzachi Golan, April 24, 2013.

5. Discrimination in Professional Personnel Positions

There are tremendous disparities in the distribution of professional personnel between the educational systems in West and East Jerusalem. Only five inspectors are employed in the East Jerusalem educational system to monitor 129 official and recognized but unofficial schools; in West Jerusalem, there are 18 inspectors. Furthermore, while there are 9 subject inspectors (for art, music, science and so on) in West Jerusalem, East Jerusalem has 10 “subject instructors” as opposed to subject inspectors.

There is also an acute shortage of school counselors. The role of a school counselor, as defined by a directive of the Ministry of Education’s Director General, is to serve as a personal support to the student—the party who mediates between the student and the educational system or even between the student and his/her parents, and helps students navigate society in general. School counselors serve a critical role in dropout prevention by responding to problems at an early stage, offering counseling to students who have difficulties adjusting to the system and providing them with guidance to continue their education and successfully manage their lives after leaving school. The significance of this role is even more pronounced in East Jerusalem given its dire socioeconomic conditions and soaring dropout rates.

Across the entire educational system in East Jerusalem, there are only 29 school counselors, working full-time or part-time positions: eight are in special education, five in middle school, nine in high school and seven in recognized but unofficial institutions. Even though most of East Jerusalem’s schools are primary schools (of which there are 77), according to official figures only one of them employs a school counselor.³⁶ Meanwhile, the West Jerusalem educational system employs more than 25 counselors—more than eight times the number in East Jerusalem.

6. The East Jerusalem Parents’ Committee: Without a Budget and Under Investigation

The East Jerusalem Parents’ Committee was established in 2006 as an association under the name “The Union of Parent Committees of Arab Schools in Jerusalem.” Following a strike called by parents in several Palestinian neighborhoods to protest the severe shortage of classrooms, the residents of East Jerusalem initiated a process for establishing parent committees in the schools and organizing them under an umbrella organization. The first elections for the committee were held in 2007. Thirteen representatives were elected and Abed Al-Kareem Lafi, a resident of Beit Safafa and an architect by profession, was elected chairman. Elections for the committee are held every other year, the last being held in May 2013. Today the committee is composed of 17 members representing each neighborhood in East Jerusalem.³⁷ Mr. Lafi continues to serve as the elected chairman.

³⁶ Ministry of Education response to our Freedom of Information request from December 18, 2012.

³⁷ Except for Silwan

The association's bylaws define the Committee's goals as "improving the quality of schooling in the East Jerusalem educational system and monitoring the fulfillment of students' rights in the schools." The Committee seeks to end discrimination in resource allocation by the Israeli authorities and increase parental involvement in the schools. It is well recognized by parents, who turn to it for assistance with problems ranging from registration issues to complaints about teachers and excessive tuition fees.

A primary difficulty faced by the Parents' Committee is the lack of funding to support its activities. The source of funding for parents' committees is a fee levied on each child within the municipal education system. Even though the parents' committee was elected by the parents of East Jerusalem students to serve as its representative body, payments collected for that purpose from East Jerusalem students are transferred to the parent's committee representing students in West Jerusalem, as that committee is recognized by the authorities as the sole formal parents' committee in the city. Members of the East Jerusalem Parents' Committee volunteer their services, which is the norm for parents' committees; but without a budget from the Municipality, they have no funds with which to rent office space or pay for administrative services. All activities are funded out of representatives' private pockets.

Though the parents in East Jerusalem chose to operate independent of the West Jerusalem Parents' Committee, the two committees maintain cooperative relations. The committee in West Jerusalem recently organized a tour of East Jerusalem schools for educators from West Jerusalem, guided by the chairman of the East Jerusalem Parents' Committee. At the same time, the West Jerusalem committee is working to bring the East Jerusalem schools under its authority and sometimes advances measures that blatantly contradict the will of the city's Palestinian residents and its parents' committee, for example the institutionalization of the Israeli curriculum in Palestinian schools.

Over many years, the Israeli authorities have not welcomed the emergence of an authentic local Palestinian leadership in Jerusalem, and it appears that the East Jerusalem Parents' Committee is no exception to the rule. Shortly after the Committee was founded in 2006, its chairman was summoned for an investigation at police headquarters in the Russian Compound. Since that time, he has been repeatedly interrogated for his activity in the Committee. The last time Mr. Lafi was interrogated was in February 2013 when, as part of a campaign organized by the residents of Beit Safafa to protest the extension of the Begin Highway in the center of their neighborhood, a one-day school strike was called. Mr. Lafi himself is a resident of Beit Safafa and has been active in the campaign against the highway. The police raided Mr. Lafi's house in the middle of the night, and he was questioned for 18 hours on charges of disturbing the peace. In contrast to the authorities' blatant attempt to intimidate a public representative and suppress legitimate civilian protest, the chairman of the West Jerusalem Parents' Committee, Paz Cohen, responded to Mr. Lafi's arrest by publicly supporting him in the local press and calling on the authorities to refrain from undermining the activity of the East Jerusalem Parents' Committee.

7. Conclusion

Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat frequently asserts that under his leadership, the Municipality has allocated more resources than previous administrations had allocated for improving the

East Jerusalem educational system, and that it has been reducing the gaps in education, first and foremost through the construction of missing classrooms.³⁸ Yet since the city council and mayor were sworn into office in 2009, only 150 new classrooms were built in East Jerusalem. In comparison, during Uri Lupolianski's term (2003-2008) 191 classrooms were built in East Jerusalem, and during Ehud Olmert's second term as mayor (1998-2002), 131 classrooms were built.

The shortage of classrooms is only intensifying. Barkat's complete term in office ended with the construction of 150 classrooms despite a shortage measuring 2,200. Combined with the dearth of classrooms, inadequate responses to enduringly high dropout rates and discrimination in the distribution of professional personnel positions, the gaps are only growing. It is the City and relevant government ministries—in particular, the Education and ITL ministries—that must be held accountable for this egregious gap.

As we have already argued in the conclusion of last year's report, deep disparities in the educational system are not accidental but rather the product of policy making that finds expression in lack of funding, resources and efforts to ameliorate the current situation. We cannot accept the Municipality's claim that the primary explanation for the classroom shortage is a scarcity of land when it simultaneously supports plans for Israeli construction on land suited for construction of the missing classrooms. There is no justification for the deficient budget; the lack of professional positions, kindergartens and schools; the neglect of students living in neighborhoods beyond the barrier; and the inadequate response to severe dropout rates. The solutions to all of these problems are well known and it is the responsibility of the relevant authorities to implement them.

³⁸ For example, in a booklet submitted for discussion with members of the City Council, "Main Working Plans, 2013," p. 15.

Appendix 1 - Classroom Construction Monitoring Table, July 2013

Projects Completed Since August 2012 and Expected to be Populated by September 2013							
Project No.	Project Name	Institution code + TPS No.	Status	No. of Classrooms	Neighborhood	Type of Building	Current Status
595	Kindergarten classrooms in Beit Hanina, plot 9	7469	Completed	6	Beit Hanina	Kindergarten	Completed and populated August 27, 2012
590	Kindergarten on plot 8+11 in Beit Hanina	978114 7464+7465	Completed	4	Beit Hanina	Kindergarten	Completed and populated April 2013
559	Comprehensive School B, Ras al-Amud 2 for boys	183228 2/2668	Under construction	24	Ras al-Amud	School	-- Construction completed -- Slated to open for coming school year -- To be populated before September 2013
	Ras al-Amud primary school – renovation of Amal school building	3085 MANHI responsibility	Under construction	9	Ras al-Amud	School renovation	-- Building in residential area that required exceptional use permit and asbestos removal --In last stages of renovation -- To open by coming school year -- To be populated

Project No.	Project Name	Institution code + TPS No.	Status	No. of Classrooms	Neighborhood	Type of Building	Current Status
							before September 2013
591	Beit Hanina Primary School, plot 6	347187 7466	Under construction	24	Beit Hanina	School	-- Last stages of construction -- To open by coming school year -- To be populated before September 2013
Total			<i>67</i>				
Projects under Construction							
Project No.	Project Name	Institution code + TPS No.	Status	No. of Classrooms	Neighborhood	Type of Building	Current Status
592	Comprehensive Girls School, Beit Hanina, plot 10	347179 7469a	Under construction	24	Beit Hanina	School	-- Last stages of construction -- Development problems to be settled -- Doubtful will be populated by coming school year
593	Primary school in Shuafat, plot 12	353458 3456a	Under construction	18	Shuafat	School	-- Under construction status since April 2013 -- Actual work has not begun due to objection by owners

Project No.	Project Name	Institution code + TPS No.	Status	No. of Classrooms	Neighborhood	Type of Building	Current Status
							of expropriated land
594	Kindergarten in Shuafat, plot 29 (adjacent to plot 12)	978239 3456a	Under construction	2	Shuafat	Kindergarten	-- Under construction status since April 2013 -- Actual work has not begun due to objection of owners of expropriated land
596	Primary school 12a – plot row 3	353607 308	Under construction	12	A-Tur	School	-- Pre-tender -- Requires removal of illegal building on playground
597	Kindergarten in a-Tur, plot 5	978247 3085	Under construction	4	A-Tur	Kindergarten	-- Construction expected to end at end of 2013 -- Requires removal of shacks from the site -- Planned to open during coming school year -- Projected population by January 2014
598	Special education school in Beit Hanina. Plots 11a+ 11b	347161 7643+7643a	Under construction	15	Beit Hanina	School	-- Construction started -- Projected population

Project No.	Project Name	Institution code + TPS No.	Status	No. of Classrooms	Neighborhood	Type of Building	Current Status
							September 2014
Total				75			
Projects under Planning and Execution							
585	Boys high school in Shuafat – addition of classrooms	148155 3456a/h	In planning	14	Shuafat	School	Tender for contractor to be issued in August 2013
600	Kindergarten (2 classrooms) Wadi Joz	6320 3533	In planning	2	Wadi al-Joz	Kindergarten	-- Approved plans -- Surrounding infrastructures to be settled and issue of archaeological stratum at the site -- Tender expected in coming months
601	Primary school, 18 classes in Wadi Joz	6320 3533	In planning	18	Wadi Joz	School	-- Approved plans -- Surrounding infrastructures to be settled and issue of archaeological stratum at the site -- Tender expected in coming months
602	Issawiyya middle school for girls – addition of 12 classes	193003	In planning	12	Issawiyya	School	In advanced planning stages -- Tender expected in coming months
604	Mixed primary	3855	In planning	24	Beit Safafa	School	-- Planning finished

Project No.	Project Name	Institution code + TPS No.	Status	No. of Classrooms	Neighborhood	Type of Building	Current Status
	school in Beit Safafa						-- Tender in July 2013
607	Mixed high school in Beit Safafa – expansion of existing school		In planning	18	Beit Safafa	School	-- Waiting for Ministry of Education approval for planning -- Meanwhile, moving forward with building of special education school in Sharafat in order to clear the ground
608	Kindergarten in Beit Hanina, plot 11	7462a	In planning	2	Beit Hanina	Kindergarten	-- Advanced in planning-execution model -- In process for building permit -- Work expected to begin in August 2013 -- Planned to open during coming school year or at the beginning of next year
609	Kindergarten in Beit Hanina, plot	7469	In planning	3	Beit Hanina	Kindergarten	-- Advanced in planning-execution

Project No.	Project Name	Institution code + TPS No.	Status	No. of Classrooms	Neighborhood	Type of Building	Current Status
	8						model --In procedure for building permit -- Work expected to begin in August 2013 -- Planned to open during coming school year or at the beginning of next year
610	Special education kindergarten in Beit Hanina, plot 10	7463	In planning	3	Beit Hanina	Kindergarten	-- Advanced in planning-execution model --In process for building permit Work expected to begin in August 2013 --Planned to open during coming school year or at the beginning of next year
611	Kindergarten Shuafat, plot 4	6431	In planning	2	Shuafat	Kindergarten	-- Advanced in planning-execution model -- In process for

Project No.	Project Name	Institution code + TPS No.	Status	No. of Classrooms	Neighborhood	Type of Building	Current Status
							building permit -- Work expected to begin in August 2013 -- Planned to open during coming school year or at the beginning of next year
613	Kindergarten in Beit Hanina, plot 10		In planning	2	Beit Hanina	Kindergarten	-- Advanced in planning-execution model -- In process for building permit -- Work expected to begin in August 2013 -- Planned to open during coming school year or at the beginning of next year
614	Kindergartens in Beit Hanina, plot 3		In planning	2	Beit Hanina	Kindergarten	-- Advanced in planning-execution model -- In process for building permit -- Work expected to

Project No.	Project Name	Institution code + TPS No.	Status	No. of Classrooms	Neighborhood	Type of Building	Current Status
							begin in August 2013 -- Planned to open during coming school year or at the beginning of next year
619	Kindergartens, al-Sal'a	2683a/b	In planning	2	Jabel Mukaber	Kindergarten	-- Last stages of planning before receiving building permit -- Meanwhile, expropriation procedure underway for plot b
621	A-Turi for girls	1864a	In planning	6	Abu Tor	School	-- Last stages of planning --Last stages of expropriation procedure (Section 19)
Total				110			
Projects in MANHI (before public buildings department) and in stages of expropriation							
	Al-Sal'a – Jabel Mukaber kindergarten (plot b)	2683a	MANHI	2	Jabel Mukaber	Kindergarten	Expropriation procedure in court – for planning procedure see above
	A-Tur school	4904a	Property	24	A-Tur	School	Expropriation

Project No.	Project Name	Institution code + TPS No.	Status	No. of Classrooms	Neighborhood	Type of Building	Current Status
	compound B		Department of Municipality				procedure in court
	Mixed primary school in Wadi Kadoum – Silwan plot 7	2668	Property Department of Municipality	24	Silwan	School	Expropriation procedure in court
	Addition of department in A-Tur	4640	Property Department of Municipality	12	A-Tur	School	Possession was taken and draft program submitted to Ministry of Education; meanwhile, expropriation procedure continues under Section 19
	Primary school for boys, Sheikh Jarrah	8620	Property Department of Municipality	24	Sheikh Jarrah	School	-- Land belongs to state; therefore no need for an expropriation budget -- In process of land form to allocate land from Israel Land Administration to Ministry of Education

Project No.	Project Name	Institution code + TPS No.	Status	No. of Classrooms	Neighborhood	Type of Building	Current Status
							-- Solution not yet found for lack of parking lot
635	Shuafat kindergarten	7611	MANHI	2	Shuafat	Kindergarten	-- Planning order issued -- Possibility of high rise construction being explored before beginning of planning process
636	Shuafat kindergarten	7619	MANHI	4	Shuafat	Kindergarten	-- Planning order issued -- Possibility of high rise construction being explored before beginning of planning process
637	Shuafat kindergarten	7620	MANHI	3	Shuafat	Kindergarten	-- Planning order issued -- Possibility of high rise construction being explored before beginning of planning process
	A-Sal'a – plot A – additional department	2683a	MANHI	6	Sawahreh	Department for school instead of mobile homes	Awaiting program

Project No.	Project Name	Institution code + TPS No.	Status	No. of Classrooms	Neighborhood	Type of Building	Current Status
	A-Sal'a – plot A – primary school	2683a	Property Department of Municipality	18	Sawahreh	School	Waiting to take possession
	Abu Tor – plot 100g – primary school	5222a	Property Department of Municipality	18	Abu Tor	School	-- Expropriation procedures under Sections 5, 7 -- Requires removal of illegal construction from the plot
	Sharafat – plot 2 – A-Salam special education school	4552	Property Department of Municipality	10	Sharafat	School	-- Expropriation procedures under Sections 5, 7 -- Instead of special education school in Beit Safafa
Total				147			
Total classrooms in all stages				399			

Appendix 2 – Figures on Rented Classrooms (2012- 2014)

Neighborhood	Number of rented classrooms 2012-2013	Addition of rented classrooms 2013-2014	Number of rented kindergarten classrooms 2012-2013	Addition of rented kindergarten classrooms 2013-2014
Kufr Aqab	56		5	
Beit Hanina	58		3	9
Shuafat	86		7	
Issawiya	21			
A-Tur	99		4	
Sheikh Jarrah	34			
Wadi Joz	27		2	
City Center	44			
Old City	73		7	
Silwan/Ras al-Amud/Abu Tor	50		3	3
A-Sheikh/Abu Tor	65		4	
Sawahreh/Jabel Mukaber/a-Sal'a	72	12	6	4
Sur Baher/Um Tuba	27		5	
Beit Safafa	15			
Total	727	12	46	16