

## Kifl Hares village profile, IWPS 2004

*Date of Survey: 27 May, 2004*

**Location.** 25 km south of Nablus, north of Salfit and Ramallah. “If I could fly from Kifl Hares, I would reach England before I reached Nablus, 25 km away,” says Fathi Hussein Bouzia, head of the local municipality. The journey to Nablus should take around 20-30 minutes, but nowadays it is very difficult and can take 1-5 hours, depending on the situation at Huwara checkpoint. It used to take 5 minutes to drive from Kifl Haris to Salfit, which is 5 km away taking the old Salfit road, which is now forbidden to villagers as it passes by the settlement of Ari’el. Since the year 2000 villagers are forced to take the road via Yasouf, a distance of 30 km and the journey takes around one hour.

**Population.** In 1940 the village had only 373 people living in it but this has now increased to over 4,000.

**Origins of the name.** Kifl Haris was a Canaanite village thousands of years ago and used to be called Tamnit Haris and before that Tamnit Sara – which means ‘a piece of the sun’. The name changed from Tamnit to Kifl after the death of the prophet Kalib bin Yaffna, who was buried in the village. Kalib bin Yaffna is mentioned in the holy texts of all three monotheistic religions of the region and is known as Kifl in the Koran. As the people of the village say, the prophets were sent by God for all peoples. Another prophet, called Yosha (known as Joshua in the Bible) also died and was buried in the village. Their tombs are still regularly visited and honoured by people of the three faiths (although this has been curtailed due to the continual Israeli closures of Palestinian villages and towns). During the time of King Barqoq, a Mameluke, a mosque was built and is dated to 1187. All the family names of the village have an ancient heritage and descend from the prophets Abraham and Ishmael who belong to all the three religions. These names include: Jacob, Kaneen, Bouzeiah, Brahim, Saliyeh and Obeid.

**Main forms of employment.** Before the second Intifada, most of the villagers were employed in Israel or in the settlements. Now there is around 70% unemployment. 90% of the families own land around the village, from which they can earn around US\$1,000 to \$4,000, depending on how much they own. Agriculture is seasonal work and they need additional work. Some families are dependent on humanitarian aid from the Red Cross or other humanitarian organizations.

**Any traditional industries apart from farming?** No.

**Agriculture.** 80% of the land is used to grow olives. 10% is planted with wheat, lentils, barley that the villagers use themselves. They currently have a problem marketing the olive oil they produce. There are very few animals, some people have a few sheep.

**Form of government, e.g. village council, municipality.** Municipality. At the moment families send representatives to the municipality, the number depending on the size of the family. There are currently 13 representatives in the municipality. Their first elections are to be held on August 29th, 2004.

**Political, religious and civic organizations e.g. mosques, women’s organizations.** There are 3 mosques, a youth club, children’s club, and they are in the process of organizing a women’s club with a women’s centre and kindergarten.

Names of the families living in the village in order of size. Bouzia, Saleh, Abu Yacoub, Obeid, Al Qaq, Abu Hamad, Sha'qur, Shaqnoor, Quishawi.

**Services: Any schools or clinics? How many shops?** There are 4 schools, 2 girls' schools and 2 boys' schools. Each has classes from Grades 1 to 6, and from 7 to matriculation. There are 3 clinics. One is a government clinic and one Red Crescent, and the other a private clinic. The government and Red Crescent clinics open from 8 am to 2 pm, with a doctor attending two days per week plus a one-day doctor presence for women. The private clinic is open from 8 am to 10 pm. A doctor is present all day and they bring different specialists. Patients need to pay for these services. Nearest hospital is in Salfit, which is an emergency hospital. For more serious cases, they have to go to Ramallah and Nablus. Currently there are 90 shops in village.

**Utilities.** Does the village have electricity, running water? When did they receive these? Other water sources. Any restrictions on their use? Electricity since 1982 and water since 1972. Previously, houses used well water. Some houses still have well water.

**Transportation.** Prior to the second Intifada, there were buses that cost 5 shekels (\$1.40) to Ramallah and 3 shekels to Nablus. Currently, there are private cars and shared taxis. There is a roadblock to the main road, which is settler highway number 5. There is a Tulkarem bus that passes on highway 5, people go to the roadblock and catch the bus from there. It costs 8 to 10 shekels to get to Ramallah. The existence of this bus route makes it easy to get to Ramallah. A shared taxi costs between 25 and 30 shekels to get to Nablus. At the beginning of the intifada, this journey would cost around 60 shekels.

**Housing: Village plan, problems with building permits, and history of house demolitions.** The village is in Area B and there is some Area C beyond the village. They cannot build in Area C and therefore cannot expand the village. There have been problems with permits for Area B, although it is expensive to obtain the building permit. Two houses were demolished in the first Intifada.

**Land: total original area, previous confiscations with areas and dates and purpose, current confiscations and how they heard about confiscations?** The village used to have around 10,000 dunams of land. They lost around 500 dunams to settler highway 5 built in 1967. 3,000 dunams of land were lost to the illegal colony of Ari'el to the south. The land was confiscated by military order stating that it was for military purposes. Gradually the military camp became the settlement of Ari'el. The villagers found out about the military orders by a notice in the newspaper. There were court cases challenging the orders. Human rights organizations were involved, but ultimately nothing changed the outcome. A strip of land, around 500 dunams, was taken for the Trans-Samaria highway, with no notice given, to widen the road. Bulldozing started but then work was stopped in 1988 around the time of peace negotiations. Last year, bulldozers arrived and ripped up olive trees along a strip of land next to highway 5. Again, no notice was given. They were told that it was for road expansion.

**Settlements: when built, population? Settler roads? Any problems with settlers?** Ari'el was built in 1978. The villagers still use land next to Ari'el and north of the road, however they have problems with

settlers who have burned their olive trees, burned wheat, killed animals and in 1989 killed a 14-year-old girl. The army and settlers harass the farmers during the olive harvest.

**Human rights violations: killings, serious injuries, house demolitions, admin detention by army and/or settlers.** There have been army curfews. Soldiers stop the villagers at the roadblock and inspect their IDs. They enter the village every day, sometimes two to three times per day.

**History of resistance.** First Intifada: Around 100 villagers were arrested. There are around 10 villagers still in prison. Three people were killed, the girl killed by settlers, and two other villagers. Second intifada: One killed. Apartheid Wall: The head of the village does not expect justice if there is a legal case against the wall. There is an Arab saying: “When the judge is your enemy, to whom can you take your grievance?”

**Apartheid Wall. Will any land be confiscated?** The villagers expect another 4,000 dunams to be lost to the wall, leaving the village with around 20% of their original land. They have not as yet received any notification. **What will be the loss of income from the wall in shekels?** Some families will lose all their land, and consequently all their income. Around \$100,000 per year, divided among several families depending on the extent of their land.