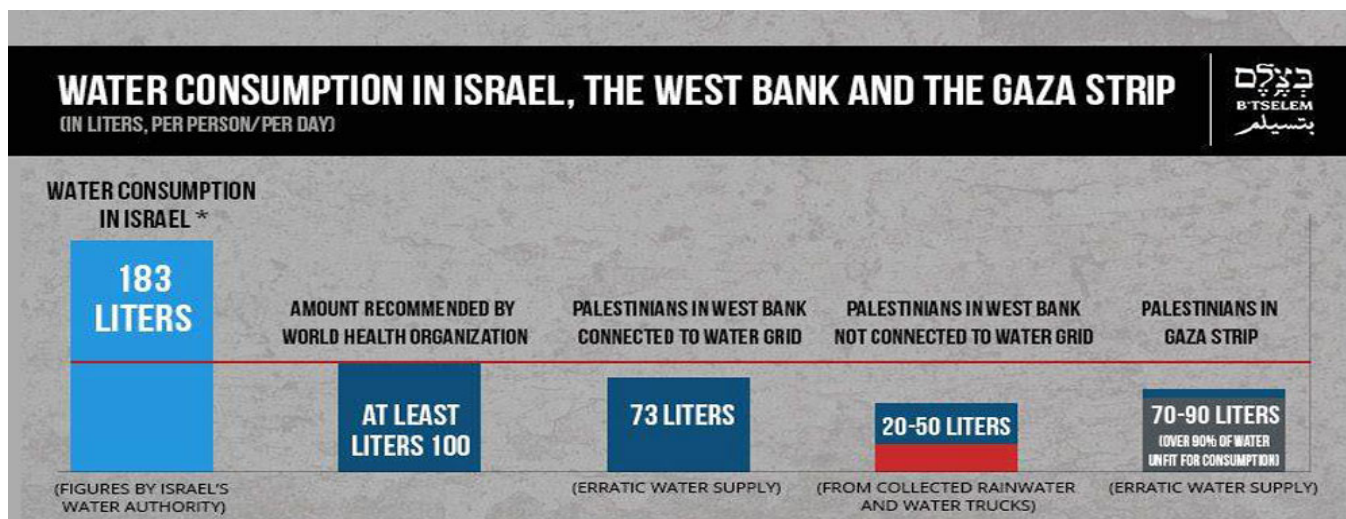


Israeli water policies leave Palestinians thirsting for justice

Around the globe, Israel is promoting its “innovative” water technologies as the 21st century solution to water shortages. Mekorot, the Israeli state-owned water company that controls water management and supply in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), boasts of being “a world leader in desalination, water reclamation, water project engineering, water safety and water quality” and brags about making the desert bloom.

But while Israel promotes its water industry around the world, 1.6 million Palestinians -- whose access to water is limited by Israel -- are without clean drinking water. Water has become a weapon in Israel’s ongoing plan to control and displace Palestinian people.



Mekorot steals Palestinian water for Israeli benefit in violation of International Law: It diverts close to 90% of the water from West Bank aquifer, leaving Palestinians with access to less than 10% of their own water. The Secretary-General of the UN and an international fact-finding mission of the UN have denounced this diversion of West Bank water to Israel and Israeli settlements.

Palestinians have less water than needed for basic survival: 50,000 Palestinians in 151 communities live on less than the minimum amount of water deemed necessary by the World Health Organization (WHO) for “short-term survival.” Mekorot routinely cuts Palestinian supply – sometimes by as much as 50 per cent – during summer months to meet consumption needs in Israel and the settlements. As of September 2011, some 313,000 Palestinians across 113 West Bank communities were not connected to a water network. **Israel’s 2014 war on Gaza left over 100,000 people with no connection to water networks; the electricity shortage results in 40 percent of the Gaza population only getting water supply for 5-8 hours once every three days.**



Drawing water from a cistern in the village of Khirbet Jenbah, Photo by Sharon Azran, B’Tselem

Mekorot profits from its water monopoly: Palestinians are forced to buy water at inflated prices. It also charges Palestinians for urban sewage treatment but supplies the treated water only to Israelis.

ISRAEL enforces water policy through violence: The Israeli army confiscates irrigation pipes from Palestinian farmers and destroys the water supply sources of Palestinian communities. In 2012 alone, it demolished 60 water and sanitation structures.

Israeli water policy contributes to food scarcity, poverty, and public health crises in the Occupied Palestinian Territories: The diversion of water has ruined agriculture, pushing thousands of Palestinian families into poverty. The lack of clean drinking water contributes to chronic health problems and high rates of child mortality.

Israeli water policy violates international law: The right to water and sanitation, and the right for a people to make use of their natural wealth are human rights under international law. The Fourth Geneva Convention, signed by Israel, prohibits an occupying state from discriminating between residents of occupied territory, **BUT** Israeli colonists in the West Bank are allocated much more water than Palestinians.



Israel's policy of deliberately denying water in some areas has contributed to ethnic cleansing: In the Nagab/Negev Israel refuses to acknowledge the 45 villages where 160,000 Palestinian Bedouins live and prohibits the construction of water networks to provide drinking water in those villages. Mekorot is a partner of the Jewish National Fund's "Negev Blueprint" plan to uproot 40,000 Palestinian Bedouin citizens of Israel from their homes into reservations and allocate their land for Jewish-only use.

Omer, a Jewish community, bordering a Bedouin village, has recreation centers, mansions, swimming pools, landscaping, and much more. Israel does not permit nearby Bedouin villages even to hook up to the water or electricity grids.

Israel's purported 'expertise' on water is 'bluwashing:' Internationally, Israeli water technology companies promote themselves by claiming that they can "make the desert bloom" to expand their international market. Mekorot already has contracts with the US, Cyprus, India, Uganda, Brazil, Portugal and Italy. Israel has just signed a contract with California, promising to help that state cope with its ongoing drought.

Human Rights activists say NO to partnerships for water apartheid.

Human rights activists around the world are working to block Israel's global aspirations for its water industry. There are campaigns to kick Mekorot out in Argentina, Italy, Greece and Portugal. Holland terminated its contract with Mekorot due to its involvement in violations of international law. Argentina cancelled a proposed \$170m water treatment facility in response to trade unions and human rights groups connecting Mekorot to the theft of Palestinian water resources. The Brazilian state of Bahia decided on April 2, 2016 to end its cooperation agreement with Israeli water company Mekorot. The decision came after pressure from campaigners from the Boycott Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, which works to end Brazilian complicity with Israel's violations of international law.



The Alliance for Water Justice in Palestine promotes awareness about Israel's use of water as a weapon against the people of Palestine. We oppose partnerships with Israeli water companies while their technologies are used to oppress Palestinian people. We do not want our governments to be complicit in Israel's theft of Palestinian water or its discriminatory water policies.

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