

**ANNUAL REPORT  
OF BAYT MAL AL-QUDS ASHARIF AGENCY  
2020**

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**Al-Quds Facing the Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic**

*Towards innovative initiatives for sustainable social development in the Holy City*

**Prepared by: Baty mal Alquds asharif Agency**

contact@bmaq.org

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**Report of the Economic, Social, Educational, Cultural, and Health Situation in Al-Quds amidst the Covid-19 Pandemic**

Prepared by: Al Quds Center for Social and Economic Rights (JCSER) – Al quds

Al quds – Arrashid Av. - P.B. 67807

Phone: +972 6271776 / +972 6275446

Fax: +972 6273516

Email: [info@jcser.org](mailto:info@jcser.org)

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**Baty mal Alquds asharif Agency**

13, Ilot 2, attine Av. Riad - Rabat

Phone : +212537565903/04

Fax: +212537565905

Email: [contact@bmaq.org](mailto:contact@bmaq.org)

Website : [www.bmaq.org](http://www.bmaq.org)



“The road to peace is arduous and long, and requires tremendous sacrifices from all sides. It also requires a spirit of compatibility and pragmatism, and the necessary courage to take difficult and decisive decisions in which the logic of reason, wisdom, hope, and life triumphs over the tendencies of hatred, extremism, despair, and aggression, in order to serve the interest of the peoples of the region.”

*Excerpt from the address of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, Chairman of the Al-Quds Committee, at the conclusion of the 20th Session of the Al-Quds Committee, held in Marrakech on 17-18 January 2014.*

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## BACKGROUND

The outbreak of the coronavirus has greatly impacted on the work of the institutions in Al-Quds during 2020. Bayt Mal Al-Quds Asharif Agency, affiliated to the Al-Quds Committee, has estimated that the pandemic requires exceptional action to support hospitals and educational institutions that are at the forefront of the sectors most affected by the pandemic.

Therefore, the Agency, with the blessing of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, Chairman of Al-Quds Committee, moved swiftly to set up an emergency plan of 250.000 US dollars, to organise its interventions in coordination with the Eastern Al-Quds Hospitals Network, the Directorate of Education, and Al-Quds University, and in cooperation with a host of associations that contributed to the social assistance process in favour of more than 500 families in need, in full compliance with the health safety conditions for workers and beneficiaries.

Regardless of the size of the financial contribution mobilised by the Agency to face the repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic, the symbolism of the field presence of the Institution's teams amidst the circumstances of the pandemic – and in conformity with physical distancing measures – is appreciated by everyone, exemplifying the kind of operational model that must be built upon, even in the most severe conditions.

In parallel to that, the Agency continued to implement the instructions of His Majesty King Mohammed VI to give its work in Al-Quds a social dimension. It continued its social assistance programmes without interruption and fulfilled, without delay, all its obligations towards its partners in Al-Quds, thus enhancing its credibility among operating institutions.

Despite the limited funding, hope remains that Arab and Islamic countries will fulfil their obligations towards Al-Quds and its residents in terms of securing the necessary funding for the Agency's projects and plans, which was reaffirmed by the decisions of the forty-seventh session of the OIC's Council of Foreign Ministers held in Niamey, capital of Niger, on November 27 and 28, 2020.

With this hope, the Ummah needs, as indicated by His Majesty King Mohammed VI, Chairman of Al-Quds Committee, at the opening of the twentieth session of Al-Quds Committee held in January 2014 in Marrakesh, Kingdom of Morocco, to **“consolidate Arab and Islamic joint action, unite ranks, and adopt innovative methods to contribute constructively to concretising the will for peace, as well as practical and effective strategic approaches, in which Al-Quds Committee plays a decisive role as a permanent mechanism for the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).”**

There is no doubt that everyone appreciates the importance of the political and legal path in defending Al-Quds and protecting its religious and cultural heritage, which is the role that many institutions play with dedication, especially the Al-Quds Committee. However, dealing with local development indicators in the Holy City requires doubling the support, fortifying its paths, and securing its delivery to those who deserve it, so that we succeed in strengthening the immunity of the people and making them able to resist occupation.

In order to elaborate a common vision that stimulates innovation and initiative, the Agency organised a consultative meeting via teleconferencing with more than 20 institutions and civil coalitions. The meeting was attended by experts and university professors from Al-Quds, and **culminated** in defining the features of the development model that we all want for the protection

of Al-Quds, the safeguarding of its religious and cultural heritage, and preservation of its Legal status.

It has been emphasised that overcoming the challenges facing Al-Quds must be the result of many innovative initiatives that can be taken by various parties, namely Bayt Mal Al-Quds Asharif Agency, which remains the ideal institutional tool for joint Arab and Islamic coordination in this regard, in cooperation with donor institutions, including the Islamic Development Bank, which supervises the Al-Quds and Al-Aqsa Funds.

Bayt Mal Al-Quds Asharif Agency prides itself on the implementation of the Royal instructions of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, Chairman of the Al-Quds Committee, and praises the continuous coordination with the institutions of the Palestinian National Authority in the city, and looks forward to further cooperation with the Department of Islamic Endowments, the representative of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, which is the custodian of Al-Quds and its holy sites.

The Agency presents its Annual Report for the year 2020, which will remain marked in the history of humanity with its economic, social, and psychological effects on societies, which require more wisdom, realism, and self-denial.

This report is divided into three topics:

- The Economic, Social, Educational, Cultural, and Health Situation in Al-Quds amidst the Covid-19 Pandemic
- **The Outcome of the Agency's Action in Al-Quds for 2020**
- Programming and Prospects for the Agency's Work in Al-Quds for the year 2021.

***Bayt Mal Al-Quds Asharif Agency***

# **I. The Economic, Social, Educational, Cultural, and Health Situation in Al-Quds amidst the Covid-19 Pandemic**

## **Overview**

The coronavirus pandemic has affected all countries regardless of their politics, ethnicities, religions, or classes, and everyone without exception has been under the threat of this virus, driving the developed world to invest all its financial and scientific capabilities to find a vaccine or a treatment that eradicates it.

A glimmer of hope has begun to shine with the appearance of the first vaccines in the United States, Russia, China, among others.

In the first stage of the outbreak, most countries resorted to taking preventive and awareness-raising measures and closing all walks of life in order to control it and limit its spread. Experience has shown that countries that have not taken strict measures to limit the spread have suffered the collapse of the health system, whether they are rich or poor; The United States of America, for instance, which gave priority to the economy at the expense of human life, has paid - and is still paying - a heavy price for this choice. The same applies to Italy, which has suffered from the very painful repercussions of the pandemic.

What happened and is still happening in the world applies to Al-Quds, with some differences in the course of events due to the conditions experienced by the residents of the city, which are undoubtedly different from others.

Al-Quds is an integral part of the Palestinian reality, yet the impact of the coronavirus pandemic has a special effect on this occupied city, according to all international conventions, which makes the occupation authorities responsible for providing health, social, and economic care.

This paradox left the people of Al-Quds in front of specific options in this aspect, and with limited capabilities, as Israel has not fulfilled its duty. We have experienced deliberate negligence in the areas of awareness-raising, testing, etc., as a result of a set of factors, the most important of which are: the lack of confidence in the Israeli authorities and the language barrier.

The Israeli administration disseminated bulletins in the Hebrew language at the beginning of the pandemic, and further entrenched stereotypes regarding the occupation's treatment of the health system in the eastern part of the city, which suffers from many crises due to subjective and objective conditions, which the occupation exacerbated with its policies aiming to fully integrate the health sector into Israeli institutions.

The Palestinian National Authority, on the other hand, had its hands tied by the Oslo Accords and the resulting measures that prevented it from fulfilling its required role, as the occupation responded severely to its modest attempts to get involved in the health situation. Every educational, health, or relief activity suspected to be linked to the Palestinian National Authority was forbidden and people behind it arrested by the occupation authorities.

## Report Methodology

The report relied on a quantitative approach in collecting information and determining vulnerability indicators by designing an electronic questionnaire aimed at a random sample of 200 families, distributed randomly in different residential areas in the city, with various questions relating to the report's axes.

The qualitative approach was also used in the form of a set of in-depth individual interviews with influential and active persons or specialists in various axes. A number of reports and statistics were obtained from different institutions, the most important of which were the Israeli National Insurance Institute, the Israeli Social Affairs Foundation, and the Palestinian Faisal Husseini Foundation, in addition to some press reports issued by several electronic or printed newspapers such as Al-Quds newspaper.

The data accumulated was used as part of a unified analytical framework to approach the impact on the areas of the report.

### 1. Economic Sector

The city of Al-Quds is the cradle of monotheistic religions, and it is a tourist city for its history and antiquities that go back to the roots of human history. Therefore, the city, specifically the Old City and its surroundings, has relied on tourism and trade in the past and present, and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future.

To understand the economic reality of this city amidst the coronavirus pandemic, our focus will be mainly on this area.

In 1948, Israel occupied the western part of the city of Al-Quds, and Jordan administered the eastern part until 1967. The separation between the two parts of the city continued for 19 years, during which most of the Palestinian residents were displaced from the western part to the eastern part or other places at home and abroad.

The commercial and tourist life, which constitutes the core of the Al-Quds economy, has gone through several phases, which can be divided into seven key phases, as follows:

- **Phase 1:** It started with the beginning of the occupation and until the end of the 1970s and was characterised by a partial revival of commercial and tourist life in Al-Quds through the weekly tours of Israeli tourists in the city, specifically the Old City, where they would buy many of their foodstuff and antiques from the shops in Al-Quds, In an attempt to integrate the city's economy into the Israeli economy.
- **Phase 2:** It extended from the beginning of the 1980s until the outbreak of the first Palestinian Intifada (the Intifada of Stones) at the end of 1987. This phase was marked by a clear increase in the number of tourists who came to Al-Quds for religious reasons or just as tourists. They spent most of their time within its walls, mainly in the Old City.
- **Phase 3:** It extended from the end of 1987 to 1993, as the Palestinian people's Intifada swept across all Palestinian cities, including Al-Quds. Both foreign and domestic tourism

declined, as a result of the abusive occupation measures of lockdown and repression, which negatively affected the entire economic reality in the city.

- **Phase 4:** It extended from 1994 to 2002, with the start of the second Palestinian Intifada (Al-Aqsa Intifada). During this period, an internal tourism programme was developed by the Islamic movement inside the Palestinian territories, as visitors from the Palestinian areas occupied in 1948 flocked to Al-Quds on a weekly basis, mainly on Fridays and Saturdays, in order to pray at the Al-Aqsa Mosque and visit Al-Quds.

During this period, the commercial and economic life in the city was clearly revived, not to mention the influx of Muslim and Christian foreign tourists, with a tourism programme seeing the light which included Egypt, Jordan, and Palestine, with the aim to economically connect Palestine with the Arab countries. Soon after, this programme faced a setback on September 2000 with the start of the second Palestinian Intifada and the ensuing oppression of the occupation forces, thus greatly affecting the economic and tourism reality in Al-Quds.

- **Phase 5:** It extended from 2002 until October 2015. This phase was marked by the extreme violence of the occupation authorities in an effort to stop the Al-Aqsa Intifada. They based their policies on building the apartheid wall that contributed to separating Al-Quds from its natural extension in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

During this phase, the occupation authorities worked on restructuring the external tourism sector by linking it to a programme that had been set up by them. Consequently, tourism in the Arab part of Al-Quds became dependent on the surplus of inbound tourism, “tourism crumbs”, and thus they were able to break the connection that had been achieved thanks to the tourism path extending from Egypt to Jordan through Palestine, and limit tourists stay to Israeli hotels. They also limited visiting hours to the Old City and holy sites to either early morning or evening, to reduce the city’s commercial activity.

- **Phase 6:** It extended from October 2015 until the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic in March 2020. This phase was characterised by the occupation forces using what is known as the “Knife Intifada” to significantly tighten the screws on the various aspects of life in Al-Quds. The occupation set up barriers in all the neighbourhoods of the city, especially the Old City, and tried to place electronic gates at all the entrances to the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque, which represented an additional and heavy blow to the various aspects of Palestinian life in all parts of the city, namely the commercial and tourism aspect.
- **Phase 7:** It began with the first repercussions of the pandemic on Palestine at the start of March 2020. This phase was very hard on the commercial life and tourism in Al-Quds, as the economic situation in the city declined significantly.

With the onset of the pandemic and the decision to put the city on lockdown, internal and external tourism have completely stopped, and that affected the movement of Palestinian citizens in Al-Quds, limiting it to their places of residence and locations near their homes.

In addition, the citizens' purchasing power was affected due to the suspension of the economic facilities where they used to work.

As a result, out of the 1,400 commercial and tourist shops in the old city of Al-Quds and its immediate surroundings, 420 shops specialised in selling oriental antiques were closed, in addition to 365 shops that were closed before the pandemic in the Suq Al-Lahhamen, Suq Al-Khawajat, and Bab Al-Silsilah (Al-Hroub, Habib; Dandis, Ahmed: The Old City Merchants Committee, and the statistics of the Jerusalem Center for Economic and Social Rights – October 2020).

In addition, all 49 hotels in Al-Quds, with 2,666 rooms, closed their doors (Salem, Waleed, Al-Balad News, The Journal of Tourism in Desecrated Al-Quds, October 2020). Tourism offices have also closed.

In addition, the impact varied on the rest of the shops in the city, as the revenue of clothing and shoe stores in the city decreased by 80%, while a number of tourist restaurants were closed. The revenue of accessories, sundries, as well as electrical and barber shops decreased by 50%, while building materials stores lost 20% of their revenue. Finally, popular restaurants, sweets shops, perfumers, and butchers saw their revenue decrease by 30% (Al-Hroub, Habib; Dandis, Ahmed: The Old City Merchants Committee, and the statistics of the Jerusalem Center for Economic and Social Rights – October 2020).

As for the rest of the economic sectors in Al-Quds, the impact of the coronavirus pandemic varied between the economic sectors in which Palestinians work in the city. The impact also varied between men and women and between different types of work or professions.

To illustrate the direct effects on this aspect, we will rely on the statistics of the Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research, which tackle the following areas:

#### ***Employment Rates in Al-Quds (2014-2019)***

- 1- Women participation rate in the labour market ranged between 18% - 23% of the overall working force.
- 2- Employment rate among men dropped from 83% to 78%.

With the Covid-19 pandemic, work activity has declined and the rate of layoffs has increased significantly, which was reflected in the rise of the number of unemployed people registered with the Israeli employment office from March to June 2020.

#### **The number of unemployed people by month during 2020**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Number of Unemployed</b>
March	5570
April	5432
May	30677
June	38352

Overall unemployment rate in Al-Quds stood at 31%, which is higher than the unemployment rate in Israel (28%).

The rate of Arabs who were unemployed in May 2020 was 35%, with an increase of 48% among men and of 52% among women.

The number of men who were unemployed between April and May 2020 was 24,366, while that of working women stood at 8,069.

#### **The number of unemployed people by age group**

<b>Age Category</b>	<b>Number of Unemployed</b>
15 – 17 years old	2000
18 – 25 years old	22000
26 – 35 years old	17000
36 – 45 years old	13000
46 – 55 years old	8000
56 – 65 years old	3500
66+ years old	1000

### The rate of laid-off workers in various work sectors in May and June 2020

Worker Category	Number of Lay-offs	Rate
Restaurant workers	3002	36%
Transport workers	2209	28%
Financial services workers	135	14%
Arts	233	33%
Wholesale and retail commerce and auto-repair	3432	28%
Industry	704	25%
Construction	2614	20%
Education	1708	20%

These statistics, published by the Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research, help draw three significant conclusions about the economic reality of the Palestinian citizens in Al-Quds. These conclusions are:

- The economic crisis that followed the Covid-19 pandemic has affected every household and neighbourhood in Al-Quds;
- Israeli policies and lockdown led to an ostensible rise of unemployment rate in Al-Quds;
- Women were more affected.

Accordingly, it can be said that the economic reality in Al-Quds was fragile prior to the pandemic, due to various occupation policies which affected the backbone of the Al-Quds economy – relying on tourism and trade. All aspects of the economic life were exasperated by the Covid-19 pandemic, with the different measures taken in Al-Quds, rising thus the rate of families living below the poverty line to about 80%.

## 2. Education Sector

The occupation authorities set a number of plans to control the Palestinian education system in Al-Quds, and countered any interference or funding which would allow education to be independent of its bodies. Thus, from the onset, they took control all the schools in Al-Quds

which were under the auspices of the Jordanian government, and annexed them to **the Israeli Education Department and Municipality**. They constitute about 60% of the number of schools attended by Palestinian students in the city.

The occupation authorities gradually suppressed the remaining schools, which belong to: 1) the Islamic Endowment Department – Palestinian Authority (about 12% of the schools of the city; 2) private schools affiliated with religious or charitable institutions or associations (about 26% of the schools of the city); and 3) UNRWA schools, (only 2% of the schools of the city, as they were consistently prevented from accessing funding, and banned from building additional classrooms in these schools, especially in the Old City of Al-Quds. That is why the capacity of schools that are not under the supervision of the occupation authority is very limited.

Data, as provided by the Civic Coalition for Defending Palestinians' Rights in Jerusalem, shows that the occupation controls approximately 60% of schools, and the remaining is distributed among the three abovementioned entities.

This control gives the occupation authorities the opportunity to implement its strategy of obliterating the national Palestinian identity among Maqdisi students and subverting their sense of belonging through teaching methods that are purely based on indoctrination. They also attempt to sell Israel's civilisation to Palestinian students through Hebrew language classes and various Judaisation and acculturation programmes.

In October 2019, the occupation authorities dealt another blow to the Palestinian education in Al-Quds, through closing the office of Jordanian Ministry of Awqaf's education directorate. This resulted in a huge void in the Palestinian education reference source in the city. This step, in addition to removing the umbrella over the Palestinian education, was aimed at intimidating school administrations, specifically civic and private schools, so they would not deal with the Palestinian education system. This was accompanied by a set of procedures and budgets that were allocated in terms of form to build additional, modern, and sophisticated schools, and in terms of substance to reproduce education as to serve the various occupation policies. This also applies to the financial incentives that were granted to civic and private schools to teach the Israeli curriculum, called "Bagrut", in exchange for huge and attractive budgets.

In light of all these challenges, the Covid-19 pandemic casted its shadow on education, showing the results of the neglect policies that the occupation authorities have imposed, while they sought to control the education in Al-Quds two decades ago. In 2001, the higher Israeli court upheld that the Israeli authorities did not meet their legal obligations in education.

The spread of the coronavirus led to two education types: in-person and distance learning. Each type has its needs which are as follows:

### **2.1 In-person Learning:**

- Facing shortages in classrooms, which amounted to 3794;
- Addressing overcrowding due to the shortage in classrooms;
- Providing open public spaces within the schools;
- Addressing the sanitary situations (hygiene, health units) after reducing the number of school cleaners before the pandemic.

As a result of these needs, the parents' board in the schools affiliated with the **Israeli Education Department** announced the suspension of schools with the first wave of the coronavirus in March 2020, before the Israeli authorities announce the suspension of education in general. Most students stopped going to schools.

As distance education became the prevailing alternative, the results of the first coronavirus wave showed that most of the Arab students in Al-Quds did not have distance-learning tools at their disposal, due to:

- Lack of computers. 2018 statistics show that one computer is available for 64% of Al-Quds population;
- The average number of family members in Al-Quds is 5.3 and 30% of the households include 7 members or more;
- The rate of Internet subscribers was 60%;
- The internet service infrastructure is poor in most of the neighbourhoods and absent in others. 40%-60% suffer from this.
- Most of Al-Quds residents are unfamiliar with modern communication tools and technologies.

With the end of the first wave of the coronavirus and the start of the school year in September 2020, 80% of the Arab students were not able to attend schools in-person for the same reasons mentioned earlier. On 09 September 2020, education was suspended in the eastern parts of Al-Quds and across several neighbourhoods due to the second wave of the virus. These neighbourhoods are Kafr Aqab, Beit Hanina, Tur, Issawiya, Anata, Shu'fat Camp, and Wadi Joz.

Schools were required to find quick solutions so the school year would not be affected by lockdown measures. Therefore, they moved to e-learning.

Other issues related to this type of teaching have arisen, including the teachers' inadequate skills and unreadiness to e-learning, as well as the inadequacy of curricula approved for it, in the absence of the conditions and techniques to support the adoption of this method. This made the schools strive, according to their capacities and capabilities, to meet these needs.

## **2.2 Distance Learning**

The results of the survey, which was conducted on a random sample of 200 households - from different residential areas in the city - whose children benefit from distance education, showed that 67.8% of fathers and 85.6% of mothers were negatively affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, and thus 87.8% of the households that took part in the survey said that their income had decreased due to the pandemic, and that the income of 36.3% of them had significantly decreased. This is the first indication of how difficult it is to provide appropriate devices for their children for e-learning. In the same survey, 56.7% of the households said that they had problems with the Internet infrastructure in the area where they live, which negatively affected their children's benefit from this type of education. 34.4% of the households expressed in this survey that the technology used by the school for e-learning is inadequate.

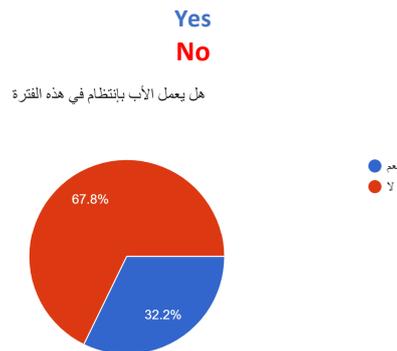
These numbers demonstrate the existing technical problem that did not allow a significant portion of students in occupied Al-Quds to benefit from e-learning effectively.

As for the curricula, evaluation, and the extent of their compatibility with e-learning, 50% of the households said that the curricula are not suitable for distance learning, and should be developed to be more interactive, and should rely on research and exploration more than indoctrination. For this reason, 58.9% of them said that the current evaluation of their children does not reflect their actual academic level. Thus, we conclude the importance of developing curricula and evaluation methods that are more interactive with students and take into account individual differences in an objective and professional manner.

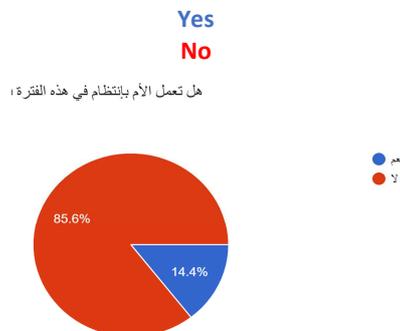
The following graphs capture the responses of the surveyed sample to the following questions:

- Has the father been working on a regular basis during the pandemic?
- Has the mother been working on a regular basis during the pandemic?
- Has the household income decreased during the pandemic?
- To what extent has the household income decreased during the pandemic?

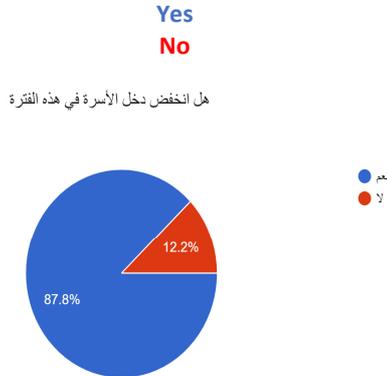
### Has the father been working on a regular basis during the period?



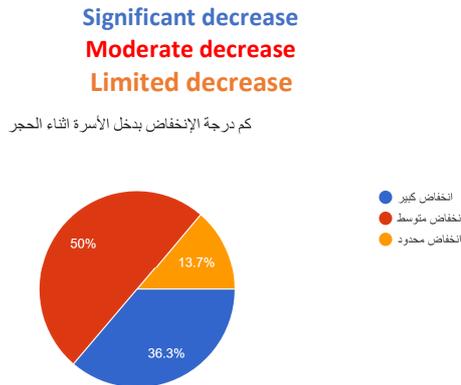
### Has the mother been working on a regular basis during the period?



## Has the household income decreased during this period?



## To what extent has the household income decreased during the lockdown?



The occupation sought to take advantage of the pandemic by imposing a health system (capsules) within schools in Al-Quds, regardless of their background, to tighten its grip on the city, as the education sector is the last sector that unites the city with its Palestinian roots. This was accompanied by allocating 400 million shekels to provide computers for Al-Quds schools affiliated with the **Israeli Education Department**, whether they are Arab or Jewish.

### 3. Cultural Sector

Culture is one of the most contentious topics for schools of thought that deal with the role of culture in shaping public awareness, in interacting with the political and social spheres, and in contributing to the economy, both in terms of production and consumption.

Given that the role of culture changes at every stage of human development, it remains one of the most important factors of self-immunisation in any society. A society may lose its military and economic battles at a given moment in history, but it will be able to rise again if it has a culture capable of overcoming vulnerability factors and stirring up motivation for change.

Over the past decades, Al-Quds has experienced extremely complex conditions due to persistent occupation policies to Israelise the population and Judaise the city. Each time, the occupation's endeavours were deterred by the socially prevailing culture, a culture that was crystallised during the conflict with the forces of occupation and was underpinned by both religious and patriotic fundamentals. These are the two dimensions that have overlapped and merged to form a general culture that protected society from being co-opted by occupation policies.

After the Oslo Accord, the cultural movement has changed, shifting from the context of youth movements to a more comprehensive framework that involves institutions whose orientations are driven by liberal culture. Employment on professional grounds was introduced to comply with funding conditions; appellations and roles were altered (i.e. a project coordinator replaced the field activist). Cooperative culture turned into paid positions and activities, with institutions adopting quantity as the success metric for their activities, neglecting the quality of those activities and the extent to which the community needs them. Culture became a commodity put on display in the foreign funding market – away from its core role, which is to safeguard the social fabric and develop social structures through a continuous process of deconstruction and construction based on the tandem notion of exclusion and quantitative accumulation.

In light of these changes, a group of institutions emerged in Al-Quds, divided between grassroots institutions (youth groups, *Dabke* bands), and institutions that worked to benefit from the funding boom and direct their activities to achieve stability and job security for their founders.

These new frameworks continued to operate without rethinking their role or working to develop their tools in light of the challenges that Al-Quds was undergoing. As this situation lingered, the said institutions found themselves during the Covid-19 pandemic incapable of raising people's awareness or galvanising synergies, being too far removed from their public role.

This has left the public sphere wide open to the procedures and practices of the occupation. The latter has taken advantage of the pandemic to activate its role in Al-Quds by imposing a series of measures to prevent any manifestation of a cultural dynamic that might seek to protect the local cultural environment or strengthen it by raising the awareness of individuals and groups, or by getting the community to do its part in preventing the spread of the virus and in braving the economic burdens resulting from the lockdown and its accompanying socio-economic challenges.

The institutions were closed to the public as a result of the lockdown, and laid off staff in an attempt to reduce operating expenses.

Cultural life disappeared from Al-Quds, as the cultural institutions could not hold their ground for a variety of reasons, most important of which are:

- Their dependency on staff and the absence of the role of committed intellectuals.

- Their tailoring of activities to suit in-person attendance in their physical spaces, plus their inadequate capacity to handle emergencies and transition quickly and smoothly to remote programming.
- Their reliance on funding for activity implementation.
- Their lack of professionalism in archiving.

Despite the apparent decline of cultural life in Al-Quds as a result of the closure of cultural institutions, the public landscape has seen occasional actions by some youth groups around the city's neighbourhoods, organising some artistic shows and performances, which the occupation sought to stop because they undermine its procedures aimed at controlling all aspects of life and draining Al-Quds from any levers of psychological and moral resilience.

#### **4. Health Sector**

Health is one of the most vital sectors, given its direct link to the livelihood of people and their physical and mental needs. In addition to being a regularly measured development indicator, health is a mark of sovereignty.

Since 1995, the Occupying State has enforced a mandatory health insurance for all citizens, including Palestinian citizens in Al-Quds who have a permanent resident status, as per the criteria set by the occupation.

Thus, total domination over the health sector was gradually cemented in Al-Quds, and doctors started working within the framework established by the Israeli Ministry of Health and the patient funds affiliated to it.

Still, Palestinian hospitals in Al-Quds have maintained relative managerial autonomy, with five specialty hospitals of quality available in the city: Al-Matla'a Augusta Victoria Hospital, specialising essentially in oncology and dialysis, among other specialties; Al-Maqased Hospital (internal medicine, cardiology, orthopaedics, paediatrics, among others); the French Saint Joseph Hospital (urology, internal medicine, and an obstetrics section, among other areas); the Saint John Eye Hospital (ophthalmology and associated surgeries); and the Red Crescent Hospital (obstetrics and mother and child care).

Prior to 1995, the transfer system in these hospitals depended on the physicians, with financial coverage coming from the insurance schemes that were available, such as UNRWA-provided insurance, or from the patients themselves. Which means that the patients had various hospital options for their healthcare needs, given the cost-sharing opportunities at hand.

Following the transformations that the health sector had undergone – and with the enforcement of mandatory health insurance and the declining numbers of patients from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip because of the separation wall and land annexations – hospitals have become mostly dependent for their survival and functioning on transfers from Israeli patient funds essentially, and on the healthcare allocations from the Palestinian Ministry of Health which were dwindling due to a host of administrative and financial factors.

Starting in 2018, some hospitals in Al-Quds were facing harsh financial crises, which only worsened with the slowness of the Palestinian Authority (PA) in honouring its financial commitments. Indeed, the PA's hospital arrears reached 250 million shekels due to the

Palestinian Health Ministry's failure to transfer allocations, as a result of political crises that have either blocked or reduced the PA revenues and the financial aid it receives. In fact, US President Donald Trump blocked US aid to the PA, estimated at \$25 million, while Israel delayed the payment of clearance revenues that make up the largest portion of the PA's income. Hospitals ended up with \$75 million in late bills owed to medical equipment suppliers.

Amidst such an already difficult situation, Palestinian hospitals in Al-Quds had to also confront, starting in March 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic, which has thrust its full weight on the medical infrastructure.

The pandemic has revealed two key elements:

- The measures taken by the occupation authorities in response to the pandemic have exposed the policy of discrimination and segregation, with the Israeli authorities further tightening their control over the city, exacerbating the suffering of the Palestinians who were met with collective neglect and deprived of their social, economic, and political rights, in a flagrant violation of international law, which compels an Occupying State to provide the healthcare necessities of the population it occupies, particularly during emergencies, epidemics, and wars.
- The PA has been unable to fulfil its duty towards hospitals, for two main reasons: The first one is financial, as the PA is going through a serious financial crunch due to a variety of well-known factors; the second reason has to do with the political agreements signed with the occupation, which forbid the PA from engaging in any activity inside the city of Al-Quds.

This explains why Palestinian hospitals in the city of Al-Quds had to face the pandemic with merely 22 ventilators split among three hospitals, which are Al-Maqased, Al-Matla'a, and the French Hospital – with 12 of these ventilators being in Al-Matla'a Hospital. In all three hospitals, only 62 Covid-ready beds were available, 22 of which in Al-Maqased, 28 in the French Hospital, and 12 in Al-Matla'a. Based on estimates by the Israeli Ministry of Health, the minimum bed requirement in the Arab side of Al-Quds was 200 beds, whereas the currently available number falls severely short of that.

## 5. Housing Sector

The occupation's social policies are focussed primarily on crushing the Palestinian social fabric, which is built around family ties and **organic** support mechanisms.

Indeed, occupation authorities applied the carrot-and-stick policy, granting a set of financial rights via social welfare policy as a gateway to hitting a social policy target, using the following tactic: Taking great interest in domestic violence, with a particular focus on engaging with the child or the victim, instead of working with the family as a whole, thus chipping away at the bonds between child and parent, or between husband and wife.

Such a policy has caused trouble in Palestinian households in the city of Al-Quds, with issues arising in densely populated areas, as in the Old City of Al-Quds, Silwan, Issawiya, and other neighbourhoods around town.

Policies pursued by the occupation to undermine Palestinian community bonds also include house demolitions and construction permit denials. In response, a group of Palestinian citizens have gone ahead and built homes without permits, underlining the critical importance of an abode for survival, and naturally making room for their growing families.

Here, the occupation government, via its municipality in Al-Quds, set out a number of procedures with the ultimate aim of making those Palestinian citizens demolish their own homes with their own hands – not to mention other sanctions, including hefty fines and sometimes even arrests. During the pandemic, the rate of house demolitions increased, as follows:

- During the first two months of the pandemic, the occupation municipality halted the house demolitions because a state of emergency was decreed.
- Later, the municipality conducted a wide-ranging house demolition campaign amidst the pandemic and the general economic crisis that came with it.
- From the beginning of the year until 18 August 2020, the municipality demolished 89 housing units under the pretext of construction without permit, compared to 104 such demolitions in 2019, and 72 and 86 in 2018 and 2017, respectively. (Ir Amim / Land Research Center)

Since the beginning of August, the municipality ordered the demolition of 24 homes, the highest number per month this year, amid the second wave of the coronavirus which registered a spike in the number of new infections in Arab neighbourhoods.

Quite a few demolitions have been self-conducted in an attempt by some to avert the huge financial toll, which can amount to 120,000 shekels, resulting from the municipality itself conducting the demolition. Those community members who protested against the demolitions and demanded that they stop were faced with rejection both from the municipality's legal committee and from the courts. The notable rise in the number of demolitions has been primarily linked to the application of the Kaminitz Law, which prevents courts from delaying house demolitions.

This year has seen the highest number of self-conducted house demolitions – particularly since the start of the pandemic – which shows the degree of despair and lack of safety nets suffered by Palestinian citizens in the city. Moreover, the ongoing economic crisis has left them unable to even risk being saddled with such exorbitant fines should the municipality proceed with the demolition on its own – so they end up tearing down their own homes.

Conducted since 1967 to this day, this policy has resulted in maintaining a particular population-to-area status quo, leading to serious overcrowding inside housing units whose areas range between 50sqm and 60sqm (540sqf to 645sqf), and can be home to more than 10 family members at a time– so much so that all family members, in some cases, would be sleeping in the same room, and using the same washroom.

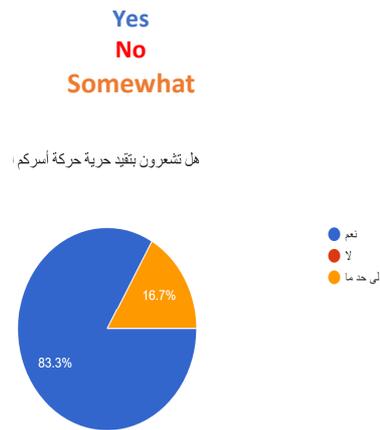
## 6. Psychological Impact of the Lockdown

The online survey conducted randomly on 200 families from various neighbourhoods in Al-Quds found that 83.3% of the respondents feel their mobility has been restricted, with 70% saying that household problems have increased during the pandemic, and 88.9% saying that they feel pressure and stress. These numbers are indicative of the psycho-social state experienced by Palestinians during this pandemic, but are also a manifestation of cumulative, pre-pandemic symptoms.

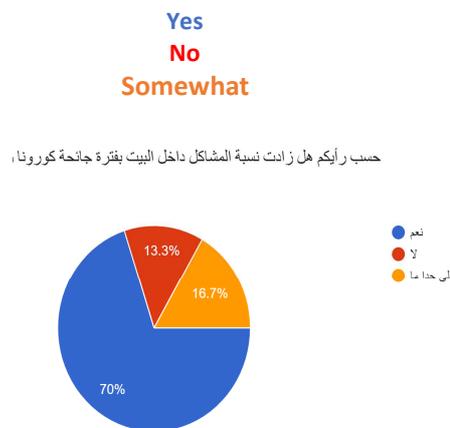
The following graphs capture the responses of the surveyed sample to the following questions:

- Do you sense restrictions on freedom of movement within the family?
- Have household problems increased due to the pandemic?
- Do you feel pressure and stress during the lockdown?

### Do you sense restrictions on freedom of movement within the family?



### Do you think household problems have increased due to the pandemic?



## Do you feel pressure and stress during the lockdown?



The measures taken by Israeli occupation over extended periods of time have led to changes in the socio-economic conditions of Palestinian citizens, resulting in the emergence of a general sense of alienation, as could be deduced from some interviews. This is a function of the state of helplessness felt by Palestinians in Al-Quds, particularly in their relationships with others, with groups, and institutions.

We can safely conclude that the hope factor is waning among Palestinians in Al-Quds, with the decline in the core values of society and the rise in the feelings of anxiety, despair, frustration, and insecurity. This is only made worse by the sense of powerlessness and, sometimes, the lack of the kind of safety nets that would promote the resilience of Palestinians and their ability to confront the challenges at hand. The absence of a national, Palestinian, and pan-Arab strategy to support Palestinian resilience in the city of Al-Quds does not help either.

## Conclusion

The economic and social hazards of the coronavirus are not any less severe than its health dangers. The city of Al-Quds lives in a peculiar economic reality that is fully linked with the occupation. It is a tourist city that depends mainly on inbound tourism, particularly foreign and domestic religious tourism.

As a result of the pandemic, the reservations of tourist delegations coming from abroad have been cancelled, in addition to the almost complete halt of domestic tourism. This led to the halt of the activities of tourism facilities and approved shops selling tourism products within them.

For instance, tourism offices, hotels, and tourist bus companies were closed. This was accompanied by the closure of most tourist antiques shops (Centauri), which constitute a large part of the shops inside the Old City of Al-Quds, leaving the bulk of employees and merchants directly linked to the tourism sector unemployed. They receive little economic services and aid

from the occupation's national insurance institute. (The National Insurance Institute collects monthly payments from residents over the age of 18, and these funds are invested for the benefit of the institution that returns part of its earnings in the form of monthly allowances in case of unemployment for those who paid during when they had a job.)

It is important to emphasise that not all employees and merchants received this simple aid, as it was given to those who had an official pay slip that included taxes paid. Those who did not have such a pay slip or had "family reunification" application and did not obtain residency in the city of Al-Quds did not receive this aid at all. Consequently, part of these employees and merchants became at the risk of poverty, which led to the deterioration of their economic and social conditions.

There are other large groups of the Maqdisi community, whose income has been greatly impacted as a result of the pandemic, including street vendors, especially if they depend on tourism. As for the rest, they were prevented from carrying out their business as a result of the repeated closures.

So is the case for informal workers in the construction sector or certain establishments who work on a daily basis and who do not have clear rights of annual leave or sick leave. These workers did not receive official salary slips. As a result, they did not receive any form of economic aid; which ravaged their economic and social situation.

All this greatly affected the economic and commercial situation in the city of Al-Quds and led to a sharp decline in the purchasing power of Palestinian citizens in Al-Quds. The priority for them has become to secure daily food. The rest of the sectors in Al-Quds have been affected disproportionately, as several sectors dispensed with many of their employees.

According to Israeli statistics issued by "The Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research" on the city of Al-Quds, the health sector has cut 16% of its employees, the education sector 18%, the industrial sector 21%, the construction sector 22%, and the auto repair sector 26%, the culture sector 36%, and the transport sector 40%.

As for the rest of the service sectors, 45% of their employees have been laid off.

These figures show the extent to which the economic situation in the city of Al-Quds has been impacted as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, warning of severe danger and showing the urgent need for intervention to help these groups maintain their ability to meet their basic needs.

As for the social situation in Al-Quds, it was affected by the pandemic. Among the factors that had a fundamental role is the economic situation and the quarantine imposed on citizens, which had a prominent impact on re-arranging the priorities of Palestinian families in the city, as the priority of meeting basic food needs in light of the emergence of new needs has become dependent on responding to the needs of the pandemic, due to the interruption of classroom education in schools which was replaced with distance education. This created the need for families to obtain Internet services and computers in order to continue the education of their children.

The involvement of families in the distance education process contributed to reducing the movement areas inside homes during the study sessions, and deprived the families of part of their privacy. Cameras of the devices revealed the homes, which created additional problems among families and led to the emergence of multiple and disturbing social problems that led to an increase in the problems within families. Many heads of households started suffering from psychological and social stress resulting from the economic burden, which led to a clear increase in violence inside and outside the family. The rate of societal violence increased clearly, causing at least one death and a number of accidents, which posed a clear threat to civil peace.

Daily scenes, in addition to Palestinian and Israeli press reports, showed a 25% increase in violence (Israeli Social Affairs Foundation).

As for the impact of the health status and quarantine, it was evident through the spread of psychological illnesses due to fear, anxiety, and staying in homes for prolonged periods of time. The effects of this have appeared on many families in the Old City that live in small houses with an area of 50sqm to 80sqm (540sqf to 860sqf).

The presence of family members in these numbers all the time inside the house without an outlet, leisure time programmes, or psychosocial support was a factor in increasing friction within the family, which in some cases led to the occurrence of divorce, and in other cases to the occurrence of some crimes or misdemeanours inside and outside the family. This phenomenon has become clear, and is increasing over time with the deepening of economic crises and the limited space in which citizens can move, which poses an evident threat to the psychological and social balance within families.

Regarding the issue of social distancing, it has in turn limited the intimacy of social relations between families. Attendance at social events – whether involving joy or pain – decreased, negatively affecting the sense of solidarity and community support.

Undoubtedly, the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the economic and social situation in Al-Quds will continue for many years, which makes it necessary to think about developing innovative programmes that contribute to mitigating the impact of this pandemic on Palestinian citizens in the city, who are already suffering from great pressures resulting from the occupation and its arbitrary measures towards them, with the aim of uprooting them from the city and deporting them.

## **II. The Outcome of the Agency's Work in Al-Quds for 2020**

The Bayt Mal Al-Quds Al-Sharif Agency, the field arm of the Al-Quds Committee, emanating from the Islamic Cooperation Organization, works under the direct supervision of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, Chairman of the Al-Quds Committee, to continue implement and finance many vital projects in the social and cultural, education, health and housing fields to protect the city of Jerusalem and support the resistance of its inhabitants on their lands, as part of its functions and tasks.

Despite the limited funding and its restriction in recent years, the steady pace of implementation of approximately \$3 million positions the Agency at the forefront of institutions operating in Jerusalem, because in the year 2020, it has carried out the programmed projects and approved an emergency plan to help the vital sectors of Jerusalem in the face of the "Covid-19" pandemic.

The social assistance sector is the first priority of the Agency's work program, given the difficult conditions in Jerusalem and the suffering of its inhabitants under occupation, with the aim of evicting them from their lands and depriving them of their identity.

Among the founding projects that the Agency continues to implement under its ongoing social assistance programs of interest to the following sectors:

### **Education**

The Agency pays special attention to this vital sector and its contribution to the promotion of education in Jerusalem and has worked on:

- Supporting the education sector and extending scholarships to students eligible to continue their studies in Palestinian universities, schools and higher institutes, as well as to students from Jerusalem wishing to continue their studies in Morocco, as the Agency provided 20 scholarships for the benefit of students from Jerusalem, including 16 students in medicine and pharmacy and 4 students in economics, law and humanities, for the second semester of 2019/2020 and for the first semester of 2020/2021 for a total amount of \$56,000. The Agency also awarded incentive grants to 5 outstanding students from Al Quds University with \$5,000.
- Rehabilitation and restoration of some educational and cultural clubs in Jerusalem within the framework of the "Environmental Clubs" project which includes in the first phase ten schools in Jerusalem starting from the "Hassan II" school in Wadi Al-Joz, which will be rehabilitated into a model institution respecting the environment. The school's garden will be restored and a Moroccan feature will be added to its entrance.

### **Social Assistance**

The agency has financed economic empowerment projects and created a significant economic cycle of no less than \$100,000 per month in the field of bread production and distribution within the framework of the "AlAychAlkarim" decent living program, through which the agency distributes 26,000 breads per day for the benefit of 2,600 families, and 21 bakeries.

### **Housing and protection of historic constructions**

The agency promotes the housing sector, restoration and protection of historic real estate, as it has worked on the:

- . Continuation of the \$5.3 million revolving loan program for the restoration of the homes of needy Jerusalem families through the Palestinian Housing Council.
- . Implementation of the third phase of rehabilitation and restoration of the Moroccan Cultural Center in Jerusalem, with the aim of helping women's associations in Jerusalem to carry out their

cultural activities. It also represents a space for the exchange of cultures and civilizations with \$40,000.

### **Emergency program to help facing the "Covid-19" pandemic**

In parallel with the spread of the "Covid-19" pandemic in Jerusalem, the Agency moved quickly to put in place a \$250,000 emergency plan to support priority sectors, namely health and education, and help families in need during the lockdown period, and this two-phase operation included:

- Support hospitals in Jerusalem by providing them with the medical tools, supplies and medicines needed to help them cope with the spread of the pandemic, with an amount of \$150,000 to benefit 3 hospitals; the Al-Maqasid Islamic Charity Hospital, the Augusta Victoria Hospital (Al-Mutlaa) and St. Joseph's Hospital (The French);
- Distribute more than 515 complete food baskets sufficient to meet the needs of beneficiary families during the quarantine period, which coincided with the blessed month of Ramadan;
- Distribution of 100 electronic tablets to 100 students from needy families to enable them to follow the study remotely since classes are closed.

### **Creation of an online platform for guidance and support**

The Agency has launched an electronic guidance and support platform available to associations and institutions in Jerusalem to receive project applications addressed to the Agency, which this year reached 10 projects submitted by various institutions in Jerusalem aimed at strengthening national identity and supporting the resistance of the inhabitants of Jerusalem to acquire skills in trades and crafts in addition to supporting students through training and sports programs. The cost of this platform amounted to \$6,250.00.

### **Cultural programs, Edition sector and political and legal advocacy activities**

The Agency continues to focus on political and legal advocacy by mobilizing experts to defend Jerusalem. It has funded 4 studies specializing in a number of social issues that fall within its interests, at a cost of approximately \$27,000.

### **Strengthening communication with Jerusalemite institutions during the quarantine period**

The agency organized a number of remote activities between Rabat and Jerusalem during the quarantine period, the most important of which are:

- The consultative meeting organized by the Agency between Rabat and Jerusalem on Saturday, June 27, 2020 with NGOs in Jerusalem on the new model of building partnerships in Jerusalem through the electronic project platform which included 20 associations and NGOs in Jerusalem, social actors and a number of professors and experts conducting research in the fields of health and education;
- Organization of a ceremony, in cooperation between the Agency and Al-Quds University, on July 21, 2020, to crown the students who won the excellence and distinction award of "Bayt Mal Al-Quds" for the benefit of medical and pharmacy students for the academic year 2019 / 2020.

In the end, Bayt Mal Al-Quds Al-Sharif Agency managed to achieve a significant accumulation in the service of Al-Quds Al-Sharif and its inhabitants, and was able to set up mechanisms and

consolidate the work in the administrative systems that guarantee the provision of support to those entitled to it in a safe and transparent manner, in compliance with the recognized standards in various international organizations, which depend on donations for their funding.

Therefore, it expects Arab and Islamic countries, economic institutions and individuals to work to enable the Agency to provide financial support in preserving the Holy City, protecting its religious and cultural heritage and supporting the resistance of its inhabitants.

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Despite the limited funding and its restriction in recent years, the steady pace of implementation of approximately \$3 million positions the Agency at the forefront of institutions operating in Al Quds, because in the year 2020, it has carried out the programmed projects and approved an emergency plan to help the vital sectors of Al-Quds in the face of the "Covid-19" pandemic.

The social assistance sector is the first priority of the Agency's action program, given the difficult conditions in Al-Quds and the suffering of its inhabitants under occupation, with the aim of evicting them from their lands and depriving them of their identity.

Among the founding projects that the Agency continues to implement under its ongoing social assistance programs of interest to the following sectors:

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The Agency pays special attention to this vital sector and to contribute to the promotion of education in Al-Quds has worked on:

- Supporting the education sector and extending scholarships to students eligible to continue their studies in Palestinian universities, schools and higher institutes, as well as to students from Al-Quds wishing to continue their studies in Morocco, as the Agency provided 20 scholarships for the benefit of students from Al-Quds university, including 16 students in medicine and pharmacy and 4 students in economics, law and humanities, for the second semester of 2019/2020 and for the first semester of 2020/2021 for a total amount of \$56,000. The Agency also awarded incentive grants to 5 outstanding students from Al Quds University with \$5,000.
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. Continuation of the revolving loans program for the restoration of the needy Jerusalemite families' houses with an amount of \$5.3 million, through the Palestinian Housing Council.

. Implementation of the third phase of rehabilitation and restoration of the Moroccan Cultural Center in Al-Quds, with the aim of helping women's associations in Al-Quds to carry out their cultural activities. It also represents a space for the exchange of cultures and civilizations, whereas, during the year 2020, the Agency funded the two projects for treating the causes of dampness and water leakage in the silt and in the walls and the grove of the center with an amount of \$40,000.

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### **Cultural programs, Edition sector and political and legal advocacy activities**

The Agency continues to focus on political and legal advocacy by mobilizing experts to defend Al-Quds. It has funded 4 studies specializing in a number of social issues that fall within its interests, at a cost of approximately \$27,000.

### **Strengthening communication with Jerusalemite institutions during the quarantine period**

The agency organized a number of remote activities between Rabat and Al-Quds during the quarantine period, the most important of which are:

- The consultative meeting organized by the Agency between Rabat and Al-Quds on Saturday, June 27, 2020 with associations and civil institutions in Al-Quds on the new model of building partnerships in Al-Quds through the electronic project platform which included 20 associations and civil institutions in Al-Quds, social actors and a number of professors and experts conducting research in the fields of health and education;

- Organization of a ceremony, in cooperation between the Agency and Al-Quds University, on July 21, 2020, to crown the students who won the excellence and distinction award of "Bayt Mal Al-Quds" for the benefit of medical and pharmacy students for the academic year 2019 / 2020.

In the end, Bayt Mal Al-Quds Al-Sharif Agency managed to achieve a significant accumulation in the service of Al-Quds Al-Sharif and its inhabitants, and was able to set up mechanisms and consolidate the work in the administrative systems that guarantee the provision of support to those entitled to it in a safe and transparent manner, in compliance with the recognized standards in various international organizations, which depend on donations for their funding.

Therefore, it expects Arab and Islamic countries, economic institutions and individuals to work to enable the Agency to provide financial support in preserving the Holy City, protecting its religious and cultural heritage and supporting the steadfastness of its inhabitants.

### **III. Programming and Prospects for the Agency's Work in Al-Quds for 2021**

Based on the outcomes of the consultative meeting organised by the Agency between Rabat and Al-Quds on Saturday 27 June 2020 with associations and civil institutions in Al-Quds on the new model for building partnerships in Al-Quds through the electronic project platform, the Agency received several projects submitted by Maqdisi associations and institutions relevant to all vital sectors in Al-Quds.

Given the human and social importance of these projects, the most needy groups were targeted, and youth and women were motivated by launching self-projects and income-generating projects, according to a purely participatory approach that aims to promote these vital sectors and the groups benefiting from them.

The Agency has also worked to reorder its priorities to choose projects that are more beneficial and have a direct impact, according to specific priorities of particular concern to promoting human development programmes aimed at groups in need in the fields of social assistance, youth, sports, women, education, and housing.

## 1. Education

In view of the importance of this sector in the Agency's plans, as education is the lever for development, and given the difficult reality of education in Al-Quds and the problems and obstacles imposed by the Zionist occupation, which were exacerbated by the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In order to contribute to overcoming these obstacles in support of the continuity of education and the advancement of this vital sector in Al-Quds, the Agency decided, despite its limited resources, to provide an educational offer that responds to the needs. The offer includes providing an appropriate educational setting based on the restoration and rehabilitation of schools and making them into ideal and environmental schools that provide an atmosphere that helps teachers perform their work and students to continue their studies, in addition to providing a financial assistance of students by granting scholarships in the fields of medicine, pharmacy, law, economics, and human sciences to help students complete their studies, and to implement training programmes, in addition to allocating incentive awards to motivate outstanding students. The offer also covers the encouragement of scientific and academic research specialised in fields related to the human, social, historical, and legal situation of the Holy City of Al-Quds, and the study of its natural and urban sphere. The Agency shall publish and distribute these efforts to preserve the unique character of the Holy City as a universal city with special symbolism.

Among the most important projects that the Agency has programmed in the education sector:

Project Title	Cost (US\$)
Scholarships for students	75,000.00
Grants for research and studies on Al-Quds in Palestine and in Morocco	52,630.00
Al-Quds Chair Project	52,630.00
Scholarships for students - Al-Aqsa Association for the Care of Endowments and Islamic Sanctities	25,000.00
Restoration and rehabilitation of Hassan II School	78,784.00
Environmental Schools - The Environmental Club at Hassan II School	40,909.00
Environmental Schools - The Environmental Clubs at Al-Quds Schools (9 schools)	180,000.00
Rehabilitation and restoration of Assafa School – Bayt Safafa village	90,000.00
Rehabilitation and restoration of Alforssan School – Bayt Hanina village	60,000.00
Rehabilitation and restoration of Afrir School – The old city	60,000.00
Al-Aminiya School Restoration - Northern Portico of Al-Aqsa Mosque	915,000.00
<b>Education Sector Total</b>	<b>1,619,953.00</b>

## 2. Social Assistance

Taking into account the difficult economic conditions in Al-Quds, which increased during the Covid-19 period, the Agency paid special attention to the groups in most need in the Maqdisi community. It has adopted specific projects in the field of social assistance to support the steadfastness of the city's standing people and help them bear the effects of the pandemic, improve their living conditions, fight poverty, and reduce social inequalities.

The programmed projects approved by the Agency in the social assistance sector are as follows:

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Cost (US\$)</b>
Decent Living	1,592,500.00
Maqdisi Orphan Custody	564,340.00
<b>Social Assistance Total</b>	<b>1,156,840.00</b>

## 3. Youth, Sports, and Women

The Agency has programmed projects in this sector that concern human development from the perspective of renewal and innovation within the framework of a methodology based on continuity in projects that revolve around integrating youth into the job market, qualifying them to create income-generating economic activities, encouraging innovation and entrepreneurial thought, and raising the skills of the youth of Al-Quds in a number of areas of expertise.

The Agency has also placed the theme of economic empowerment for women among the list of priorities and obligations included in its action plan, by programming projects that seek to advance the status of women, promote their economic empowerment, and enhance their capacity and opportunities for access to the job market, and aim for professional advancement through education and training programmes and the rehabilitation of a suitable and sustainable environment for the economic empowerment of women in order to give them the opportunity to effectively contribute to the development of society.

The programmed projects approved by the agency in the youth, sports, and women sector are as follows:

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Cost (US\$)</b>
Maqdisi Crafts by Female Hands – Maqdisi Girls Association	40,600.00
Yes for Equality – Insan Association for Culture and Charitable Development (For Women)	30,000.00
Economic Empowerment of Al-Quds Women – Silwan Women's Revolutionary Center	23,911.00

Support and development of food manufacturing, embroideries, and tailoring – Al Eizia Charitable Association	30,000.00
Startup School Jerusalem – JEST	29,984.00
Know your country to promote the Palestinian Arab national identity – CCPRJ	30,000.00
Training for a number of primary school students in Al-Quds – Medad Association for Training and Skills Development	30,000.00
Empowering the steadfastness of young Maqdisis and teaching them silversmithing through the Al-Quds workshop – Sons of Al-Quds Association	30,000.00
Mohammed VI Academy for Sports Excellence in Al-Quds	100,000.00
Sports trainers – Alansar club	29,800.00
Summer camp for Maqdisi children in Morocco	150,000.00
<b>Childhood, Youth, Sports, and Women Sector Total</b>	<b>524,495.00</b>

#### 4. Housing (Reconstruction, Restoration, and Rehabilitation)

Following the field visit by the Agency’s work team in Al-Quds to determine the situation of dilapidated and damaged buildings in several areas of the city of as a result of the heavy rains, which showed the great need for these buildings to be restored and rehabilitated, the Agency took the initiative to adopt repair, restoration, and reconstruction projects, given their urgent necessity and role in preserving the safety of the population and their properties, as well as to alleviate the burdens placed on them in support of the steadfastness of Maqdisi citizens in their city.

Among the most important projects that the Agency envisaged to programme for 2021 in the construction, restoration, and rehabilitation sector:

Project Title	Cost (US\$)
Construction and restoration of the property of Issa Ibrahim Asi Al-Awar – Bir Ayoub Silwan	50,000.00
Construction and restoration of the property of Fatima Hassan Kanaan (Yemeni), and her children and their families	27,000.00
Construction and restoration of the property of Muhammad Al-Julani – Bab Huta	71,000.00
Restoration of Wadi Al-Jouz Girls Elementary School – Refugee girl “D”	110,000.00
Restoration of collapsed retaining walls in Wadi Hilweh – Silwan	92,000.00
Emergency project for the construction and restoration of the property of the Majid Al-Rishq – Aqaba Darwish	20,000.00

Restoration and rehabilitation of the Al-Qattanin commercial market – west of Al-Haram Al-Sharif	588,000.00
Restoration of the Al-Khanqa Al-Salahiya building (mosque, school, and housing)	378,000.00
Restoration of Mrs Maysoon Al-Maslouhi’s house in the Moroccan Zawiya	20,000.00
<b>Construction, Restoration, and Rehabilitation Sector Total</b>	<b>1,356,000.00</b>

## 5. Urban Cultural Heritage Protection: Moroccan Cultural Center – Beit Al Maghrib

Due to the historical nature of the real estate, its area of 1,800sqm (19,375sqf), and its location between the Holy Al-Haram Al-Sharif and one of its entrances, and facing one of the most important Christian monasteries on the Via Dolorosa, the Agency established the Moroccan Cultural Centre with the aim of introducing Islam and Islamic culture based on tolerance and dialogue with the other. It is intended to be a nucleus for dialogue and a platform to embrace initiatives and projects that promote the spirit of tolerance and coexistence between religions and human civilisations, just as Holy Al-Quds has always been an incubator for pluralism and coexistence between religions and civilisations throughout Islamic history, the evidences of which are still standing today.

In order to be able to revitalise the Centre’s spaces, the Agency treated water leaks from the roofs and walls of the building in 2020 so that it could complete its rehabilitation and equip it before the opening date, as follows:

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Cost (US\$)</b>
Completion of the restoration and rehabilitation of the Moroccan Cultural Centre	267,000.00
Carpentry and wood works in the Moroccan Cultural Centre	117,000.00
Acoustics and sound insulation at the Moroccan Cultural Centre	117,000.00
Furnishing of the Moroccan Cultural Centre	117,000.00
Clearance expenses for exhibiting materials of handicraft and books for the Moroccan Cultural Centre	100,000.00
Annual expenses for running the Moroccan Cultural Centre, including technical programming and cultural and intellectual animation	1,000,000.00
Settlement of the old file of field employees in the Moroccan Cultural Centre	62,200.00
<b>Urban Cultural Heritage Protection Total</b>	<b>1,780,200.00</b>