

REPORT #20: ANALYSIS of ZUFIN SETTLEMENT EFFLUENT;
8 JULY 2010

1. Introduction

In Report #7 (e-mailed on 22 April 2010) I referred to “...an evil smelling pool of dirty water which trickles down from the [Zufin] settlement on the hill above this [Jayyous] land...”—see photos below. There were various guesses as to what this effluent was: some farmers believed it was sewage from cattle sheds in the settlement or even human sewage. I decided we needed the facts, and arranged to have this effluent analysed by the Testing Laboratories of Birzeit University which I briefly described in my Report #19 (e-mailed on 12 June 2010).

On 2 June the soldiers did not allow me to cross through the North Gate into the “Seam zone” where the Jayyous farmers lands are so a farmer kindly collected a litre of effluent from the pipe which discharges from the Zufin settlement onto the farmers’ lands. Within a few minutes he was being asked by the settlement police what he was doing. He brought it across through a different gate and I collected it from him, put it on ice, and took the service taxi to Birzeit about 1.5 hours from Jayyous and north of Ramallah. There I handed it over to Dr Sameer Abuelhaj, Director of the Center. He had advised on the various analyses to be carried out to establish exactly what this effluent was.

2. Results of analysis

The results were unequivocal: **“The results of the analysis show that this discharge is typical domestic waste water. It is untreated. As such it includes all normal domestic waste water components, including human sewage. It is not municipal waste water because it does not contain heavy metals.”**

3. Conclusions

You may wonder as I do what sort of people or towns would discharge untreated effluent containing sewage onto a neighbour’s farmland. It is, one would have thought, not so much a question of human rights as common decency. In fact when, on my first visit to Palestine in 2003, the group was told that effluent containing sewage was discharged from the settlement of Betar Illit onto the fields of the small village of Wadi Fukin below, I didn’t really believe it. However in the intervening years other examples have come to light including effluent from the Ariel settlement, again shown to contain sewage, which pollutes the streams and groundwater in Salfeet District particularly in Broqeen village. So I return to my question: “what sort of people?”. The settlement authorities must

know what they're doing, and this is therefore yet more evidence that they just don't care about the Palestinians.

8 July 2010



Brown stinking water effluent which runs for well over a km across farmlands and paths. Tractors and people have to make their way through it in some places where it runs along paths.



This effluent collects in a pool—seen here—which is 50m long. As it dries in the sun, it forms a sludge around the edge. The source of this effluent, the Zufin settlement, can be seen in the background on the hill.