

THE URBAN CLINIC NEWSLETTER 2021



הקליניקה האורבנית
THE URBAN CLINIC
عيادة التخطيط الحضري

האוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים
THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM



RESEARCH

How did public space function during lockdown? The case of East Jerusalem.

What can be learned from East-Mediterranean architecture and its expression of public space? With field-level projects curtailed due to the pandemic, the Urban Clinic's senior staff focused on research and writing project. A team made up of Dr. Yaara Rosner-Manor, Dr. Michal Braier, Architect Yasmin Abu-Arafah, Architect Ziad Haddad, Dr. Noga Keidar, and Architect Islam Dais won a competitive research grant from the Truman Institute. During the first lockdown, they observed the emergence of alternative meeting spaces in A-Turi, a neighborhood in East Jerusalem. They found that traditional Arab design supported residents by providing safe, comfortable, and open communal meeting spaces where residents could eat, pray, and commune. This was possible because alleys, balconies, and rooftops all constitute Arab cities' urban fabric and blur the distinction between private and public land in A-Turi, facilitating spaces for public gatherings.

This issue of the Urban Clinic highlights research led by our senior staff, the Urban Clinic's scholars and community, and our work on advancing child-friendly cities in Israel.



HUJI + U of Toronto Alliance: Evolution of Cities - 4 year research funding

A-Turi's urban fabric came in stark contrast to neighborhoods in West Jerusalem, where the local authority and residents were forced to intervene to create these safe meeting spaces by building semi-open outdoor synagogues and play areas at building entrances. Read more about their findings [here](#).

Lockdown afforded lots of opportunities for thinking broadly over Zoom. Four Urban Clinic senior staff decided that they wanted to pursue post-doctoral research, to continue generating local knowledge. Building on Dr. Noga Keidar's boundary-spanning work from her Ph.D. at the University of Toronto and current post-doc position with the Urban Clinic and the Sociology Department at Hebrew University, we submitted a bid to the competitive Hebrew University - University of Toronto Alliance for four years of post-doc and research exchange funding. Our winning proposal, with faculty from the U of Toronto's School of Cities and Hebrew University's Geography and Theater departments, examines urban evolution from macro patterns of settlement to micro place-making processes. Arch. Drs. Enaya Banna and Yaara Rosner are now working half-time as post-docs with this project. Simultaneously, and drawing on thinking from the Urban Clinic reading group, Arch Drs. Michal Braier and Maisa Totry were each awarded full-time post-doc positions with the Truman Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies at Hebrew University.



Map and picture of A-Turi highlighting the neighborhood's ubiquitous alleys.
Credit: Yasmin Abu-Arafah

URBAN CLINIC SCHOLARS AND COMMUNITY



Pictures from our visit to Jizr A-Zarka. Credit: Alla Barhoun and Galya Globerman

The 2021-2022 cohort of Arab students awarded Urban Clinic tuition scholarships for their MA in Urban Planning is the largest ever - a total of ten students, split evenly between East Jerusalem residents and Israeli citizens. Seven of the ten are women, three are lawyers, four are architects or engineers, and three are graduates of the 'Cadets for Local Government' program. These ten join the fifteen graduates of the Urban Clinic tuition-scholarships program for Arab students in urban planning over the last five years, including profiles of Arch. Maliha Zugayer and Arch. Islam Idaes and Adv. Amal Oraby.

In 2021-2022, Urban Clinic Scholars Coordinator Tharaa Kiresh launched a new series of events to link Urban Clinic student fellows and graduates, members, and supporters. Just before the school year began, we met up in Jizr a Zarka for sea, sun, and an introduction to past and future town plans - see here for a summary. Before the rains, we headed to Al Auja, learning about water and geopolitics through a visit to 'the farm on the wrong side of the road,' where geopolitics brings a crisis around water resources. During the semester break, we head to Rahat, the second-largest Arab city in Israel, hosted by two of our fellows who are employed there.

The 2021-2022 cohort of Arab students awarded Urban Clinic tuition scholarships for their MA in Urban Planning is the largest ever - a total of ten students, split evenly between East Jerusalem residents and Israeli citizens. Seven of the ten are women, three are lawyers, four are architects or engineers, and three are graduates of the 'Cadets for Local Government' program. These ten join the fifteen graduates of the Urban Clinic tuition-scholarships program for Arab students in urban planning over the last five years, including profiles of Arch. Maliha Zugayer and Arch. Islam Idaes and Adv. Amal Oraby.

In 2021-2022, Urban Clinic Scholars Coordinator Tharaa Kiresh launched a new series of events to link Urban Clinic student fellows and graduates, members, and supporters. Just before the school year began, we met up in Jizr a Zarka for sea, sun, and an introduction to past and future town plans - see here for a summary. Before the rains, we headed to Al Auja, learning about water and geopolitics through a visit to 'the farm on the wrong side of the road,' where geopolitics brings a crisis around water resources. During the semester break, we head to Rahat, the second-largest Arab city in Israel, hosted by two of our fellows who are employed there.



Pictures from our visit to Al-Auja. Credit: Alla Barhoun and Tharaa Kirresh

CHILD-FRIENDLY CITIES



Playground in Beit HaKerem. Credit: Yuval Dryer Shilo

"If you could experience the city from the height of 95 cm (three feet, the height of an average 3-year-old) - what would you change?". This provocative question is at the heart of a massive international effort to make cities more child-friendly, spear-headed by the [Bernard Van Leer Foundation](#). In Israel, the Bernard Van Leer Foundation partnered with [the city of Tel Aviv to launch on-site pilot innovations](#) and with the Urban Clinic to investigate [urban planning and early childhood in nine diverse cities](#), from the ultra-Orthodox Ela'd where the average age was 8 (!) to the Arab Umm el Fahem with no public parks, and including Holon, Jerusalem and Kfar Saba.



Children in Umm el Fahm draw their future playground. Credit: The Urban Clinic

Overall, we found that Israeli concern with safety and public sector liability has been limiting early childhood development, particularly concerning sensory exploration and imaginative play.

The project culminated in a series of practical and easy-to-understand publications about [integrating play in the city](#), [planning child-friendly neighborhoods](#), [daycare facilities that support early childhood development](#), and [nature-based playgrounds in pre-schools](#). We also delivered four iterations of a University [course](#), Big Cities, Little Children, and wrote an accompanying [teaching guide](#), which is available to other institutions.

The next phase is to translate the knowledge into planning guidelines adopted by Government ministries and put them into practice. The Urban Clinic is working as an academic advisor with a steering committee of representatives from all relevant government ministries and professionals from diverse cities to develop national guidelines. Results from the first five sessions, with detailed drafts on recommended planning practices for public spaces and parks, mobility, and road networks, educational institutions, and residential neighborhoods can be found [here](#) (in Hebrew).

THE URBAN CLINIC

We are an academic body that works to strengthen creative and socially aware urban leadership in Israel. The Urban Clinic provides state-of-the-art knowledge about what works in housing, urban regeneration, and community planning to ensure that the current and next generation of urban practitioners are equipped with effective tools and skills to make our cities truly remarkable places for all. Founded in 2013, the Urban Clinic is part of the Faculty of Social Sciences at the Hebrew University, and linked to the Institute of Urban and Regional Studies.