

There has been a lot of noise and misinformation of late on the Bedouin in the Negev and in particular the Bedouin in Al Arakib. Unfortunately, in many cases – in blogs, articles, photos and even videos – authors do not care about the facts. They take license to make the points they want to and ignore much truth.

We understand that this is a complicated issue that goes back in time and involves many players. However, it is important to remember that JNF-KKL is not a part of the discussion relating to the issue of Negev land rights. JNF-KKL has nothing to do with determining whether a village – Jewish, Bedouin or otherwise – is legal or illegal; that is determined by the Israeli government.

Israel is a lawful society and land ownership disputes go through its judicial system. In certain cases the Bedouin have won; in others, the courts have not decided in their favor. In either instance, the law must be obeyed. When people build illegally on public lands, the government has a legal right to intervene, just as an individual would not be allowed to pitch a tent in Central Park and call it home. The same arm of the law removes Jews from the West Bank, and whether one agrees with this policy or not, it is the law. When Gaza was evacuated there were many who disagreed with the government's actions, but it was the law and it was carried out.

JNF-KKL, in its role as the Israeli forestation organization, executes the policy of the State of Israel and its planning institutions in all areas related to forestation. The government defines policy and budgets and provides the necessary permits and authorizations for forestation. JNF-KKL does not decide where a forest should be planted, but rather follows Israel's National Master Plan for Afforestation (NMP22). Forestation does not alter the zoning designation of the land.

JNF wishes to improve the lives of the Bedouin in the Negev and we are very proud of the work we do that benefits this population. Nothing exemplifies that better than our partnership with the Bedouin on Project Wadi Attir. [Watch the video here.](#)

