

# Barriers to Peace in the West Bank

## Introduction

The control and use of land in the West Bank remains a highly contentious topic within Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The expansion of Israeli settlements and restrictions on Palestinian movement in the West Bank are considered potential impediments to a two-state solution. Therefore, this project seeks to understand the physical barriers affecting Palestinians living in the West Bank, including where barriers are located and how that distribution aligns with the distribution of the Palestinian population in the West Bank.



## Methodology

Indices were created to measure the level of impediment posed by three types of physical barrier in the West Bank. See map descriptions below for more information.

## Results

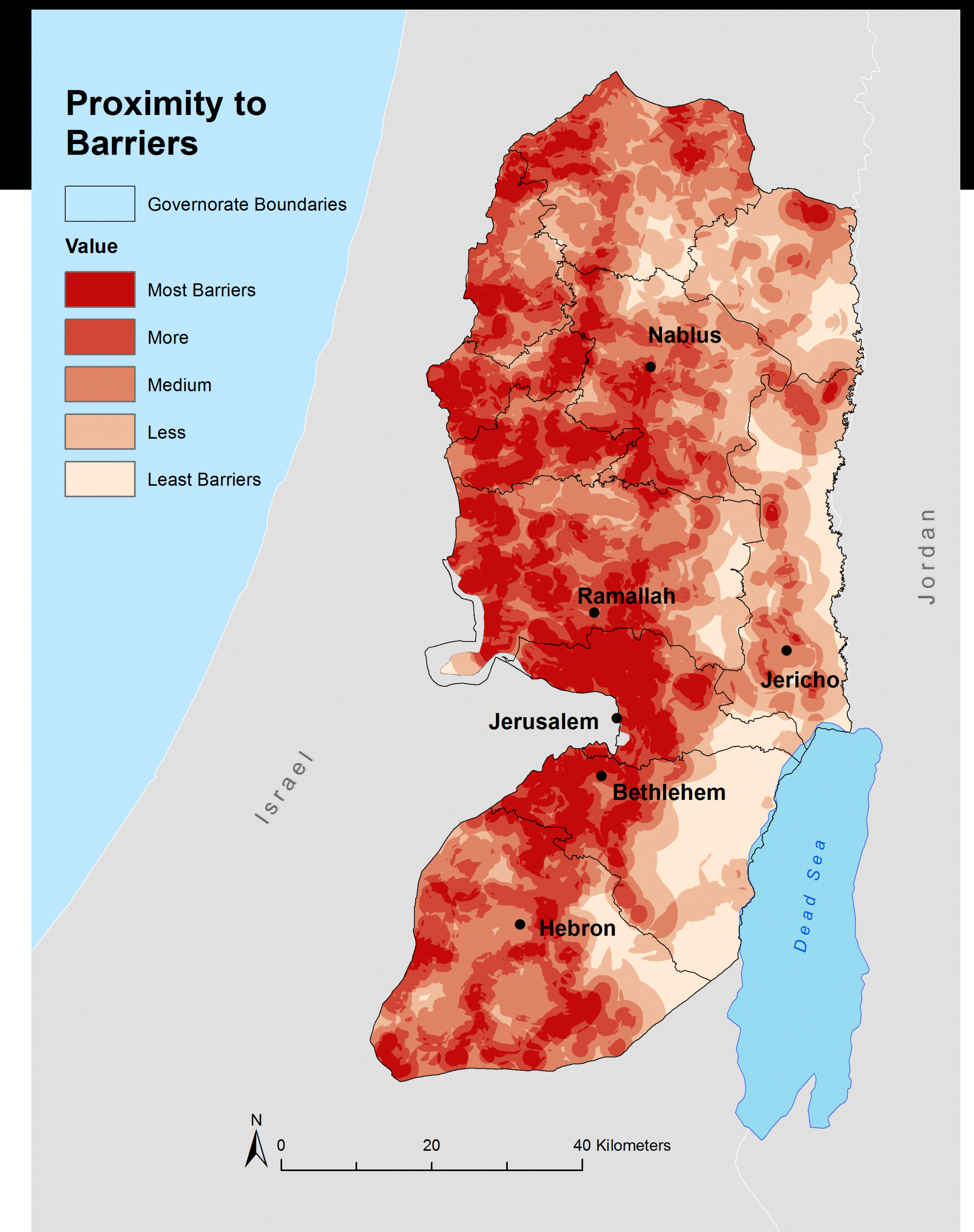
Physical barriers in the West Bank are concentrated in highly populated areas along the border with Israel. This region also includes the separation barrier, which operates as a de facto border between Israel and the West Bank. The corridor between Ramallah, Jerusalem, and Bethlehem is highly impacted by barriers. This high barrier zone extends into the central West Bank around Nablus. About 60% of the population for which data was available live within highly barriered zones. The region with the least barriers is largely made up of Area C. This may be because the region is restricted for Palestinian access so additional restrictions on Palestinian movement would be superfluous. Additionally, the southeastern region is predominantly desert and therefore less densely populated than other areas.

## Limitations

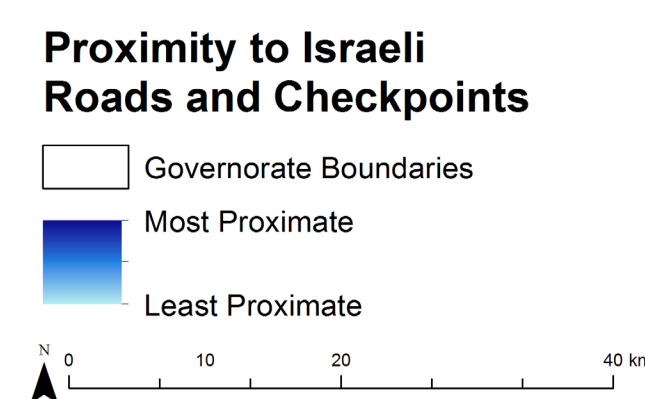
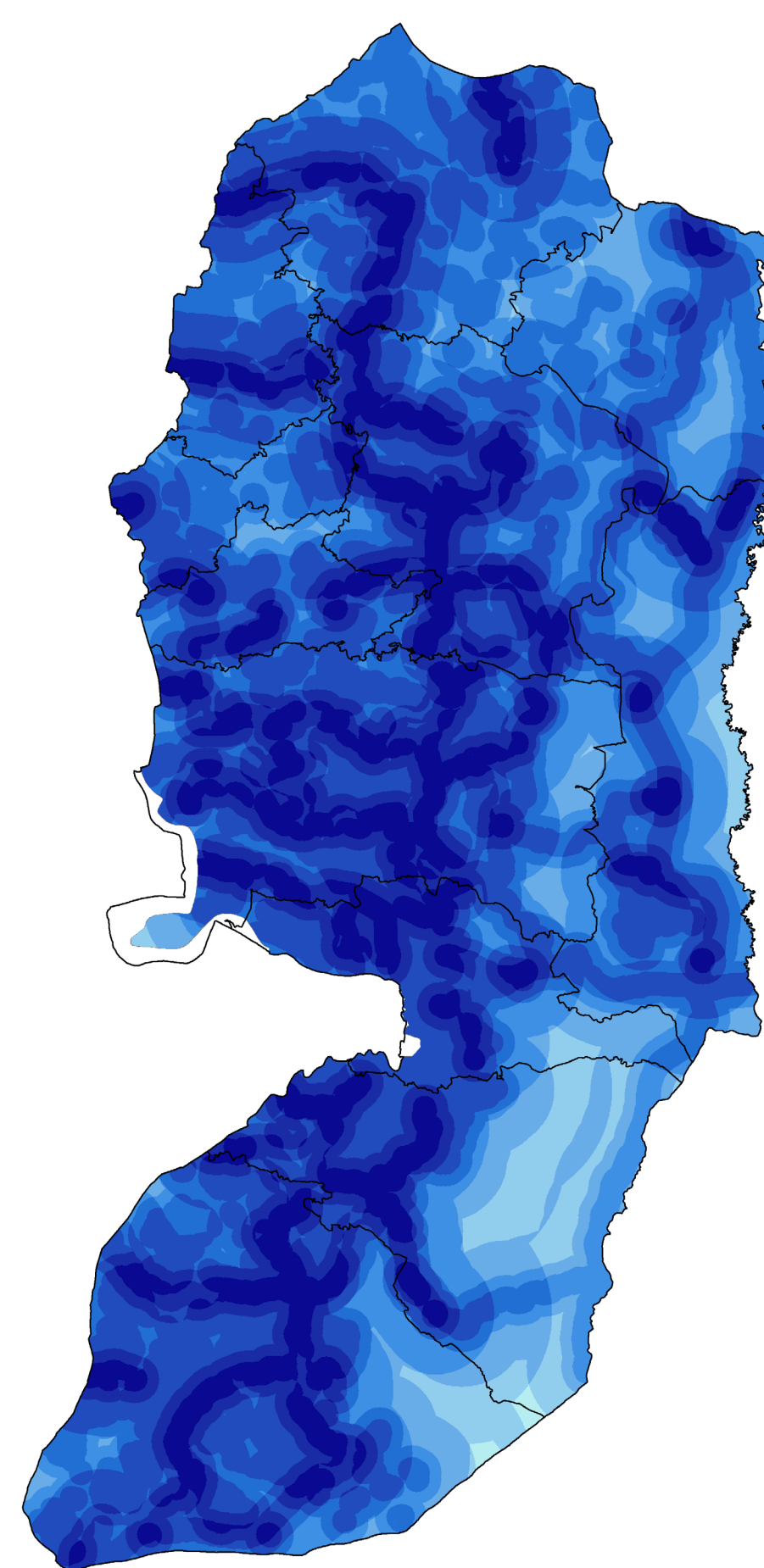
It was difficult to find data that would have supported this analysis. For example, no land cover data was available at an adequate scale, thereby rendering an impact analysis on land impossible. Similarly, the most recent data available for most indicators was from 2008. Even among the data sources available, there are often conflicting or incomplete data. For example, UNOCHA's populated places dataset includes locations for which the Palestinian Authority does not collect census data.

In my final analysis, many populated places fall into more than one zone, but for the purposes of clarity are classified as within one zone. It would be ideal to create a weighted scale to account for the proportion of the population within each zone based on populated places' distribution across multiple zones.

Zone	Area (m)	Localities Contained	Population (%)
1	24084	9	0
2	1069863	30	3.1
3	3212979	198	37.2
4	4175987	311	34
5	2479159	275	25.7

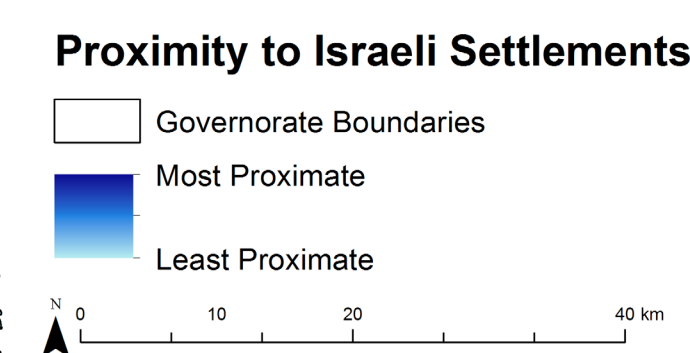
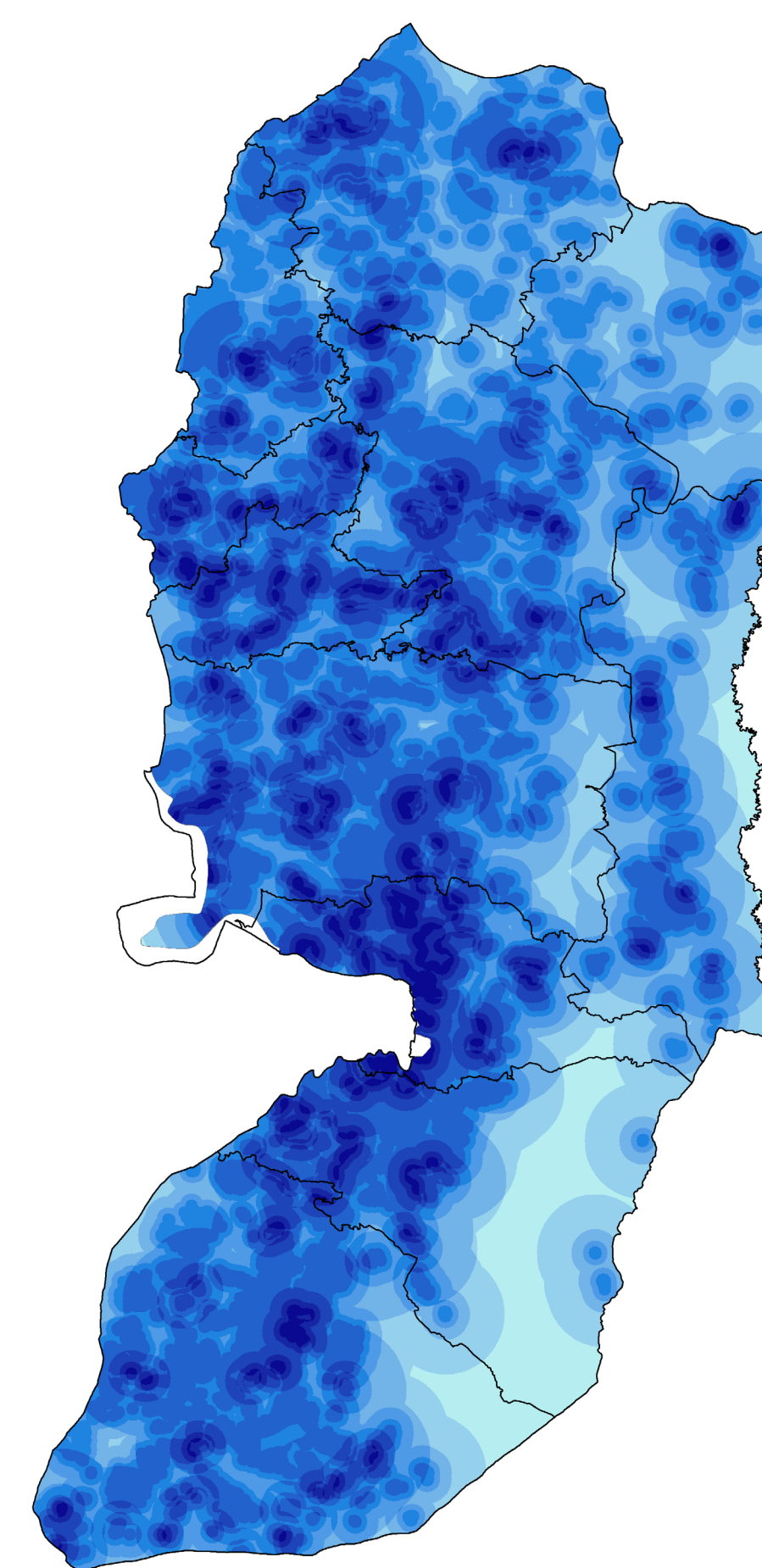


## Transportation Barriers



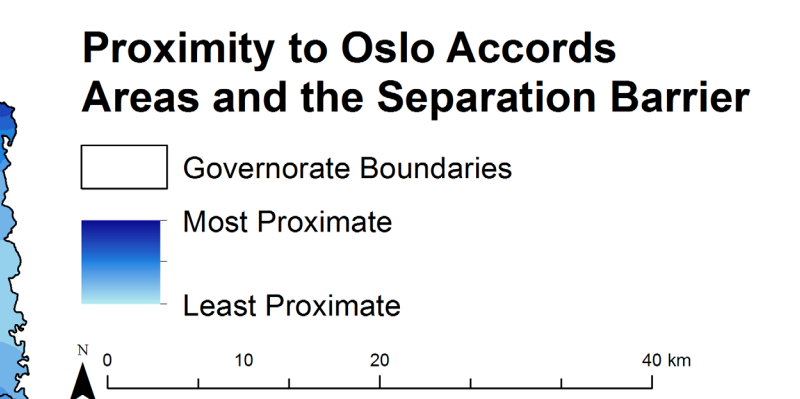
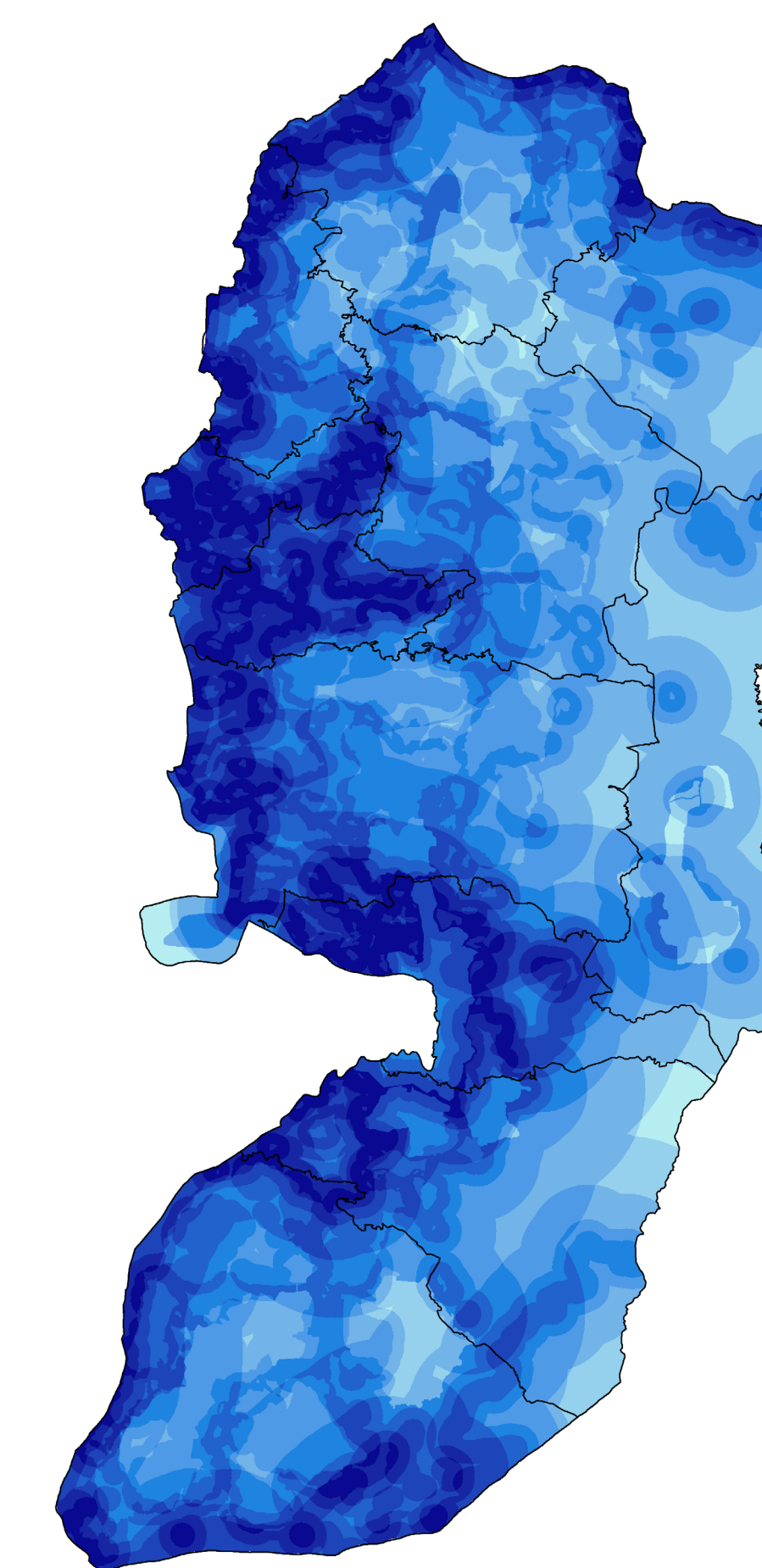
The first measures the proximity of transport barriers, which includes Israeli roads with restrictions on Palestinian use, road blocks, checkpoints, and partial checkpoints. For this index, close proximity to these barriers was indicated as high experience of barriers on an index of 1 to 5.

## Settlements as Barriers



Proximity to settlements were measured via a 1 to 5 index based on proximity of Israeli settlements to Palestinian cities and towns.

## Political Barriers



Political barriers accounts for both proximity to the separation barrier and administrative divisions established under the Oslo Accords: Area A (full Palestinian authority), Area B (Palestinian civil and Israeli military control), and Area C (full Israeli civil and military control). Distance to the separation barrier was measured on an index of 1 to 5, with 5 reflecting the closest proximity. Administrative divisions were measured on a scale of 1 to 3, with Area C representing the most significant barrier.