

## AAITIT VILLAGE PROFILE

### 1. LOCATION AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Aaitit is a village located in the district of Tyre, a city in the Southern Governorate of Lebanon (one of the eight governorates). Aaitit is around 96 kilometres away from Beirut and 15 kilometres from the centre of the Caza'. Aaitit is characterized by a moderate climate, its elevation is around 275 meters above sea level with an average annual rainfall of 600-700 mm.

Aaitit is bordered by the towns of Wadi Gilo and Bazourieh to the north, Ain Baal to the west, Joya to the east, Qana to the South, and the Musharraf and Al Bayad farms to the south-east.

The village is distinguished by its soil suitable for the cultivation of olives and figs.

### 2. POPULATION

The total population of Aaitit is around 4150. The village inhabitants witnessed internal displacement, by which around 875 villagers were displaced to other parts of the country as a result of war or internal conflicts, especially to the southern Suburbs of Beirut. Additionally, around 500 inhabitants migrated to countries such as Paraguay and Brazil (See Table 1).

**Table 1: Distribution of Population Movement**

Movement of Population	Number	In percent
Residents	2775	66.9
Displaced	875	21.1
Migrants	500	12.0
Total	4150	100.0

The village has around 2500 inhabitants all year long. The number of village inhabitants rises to around 3000 people during the summer. The number of registered voters is around 2150 voters.

#### 2.1 Age Groups

The distribution of the population by age groups in Aaitit is as follows: 48.2 % are less than 21 years, 47.2 % are between 21 - 64 years, and 4.6 % are 65 years and older (See Table 2).

**Table 2: Distribution of Population by Age Groups**

Age Group	Numbers	In percent
Under 21	2000	48.2

<b>Between 21-65</b>	1960	47.2
<b>Above 65</b>	190	4.6
<b>Total</b>	4150	100.0

## 2.2 Labour Force

The labour force in Aaitit is around 28 % of the total resident population of the village.

As for the economically active women of the population they participate in agricultural work of the village, in addition to a few who occupy positions in the private (accounting, education, nursing) sector in Aaitit or nearby villages such as Tyre.

Unemployment in Aaitit is around 12 %, as many of the young people in the village who have abandoned school are unemployed.

The results of a field survey on the distribution of the labour force by economic activity in Aaitit indicate the following:

- 55% work in trade in Aiteet and in Tyre.
- 20% Work as skilled labour
- 10% in agriculture, mainly in the cultivation of olives, citrus, tobacco, carob.
- 10 % are government Employees, mainly in the security forces or the military
- 5% are employed in private sector companies in Tyre.

## 3. ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

### 3.1 AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

Aaitit has around 65% of cultivated land, while 5500 dunums are considered arable land, and with around 150 people working in the sector (See table 3).

**Table 3: Land distribution (in dunums)**

<b>Land use</b>	<b>Area (in dunums)</b>
<b>Area of arable land</b>	5500
<b>Cultivated areas</b>	4900
<b>Irrigated areas</b>	100
<b>Areas of non-arable land</b>	600

Table 4 shows the different types of rain-fed and irrigated open-cultivated vegetables in Aaitit.

**Table 4: Distribution of cultivated areas**

Products	Cultivated areas (in dunums)
Olives	3430
Citrus Fruits	588
Tobacco	10 dunums
Carob	20 dunums
Greenhouse cultivation	5 dunums
Others	847

Aaitit's agro-industries consist mainly of olive oil production, which is mainly traded in neighbouring villages and in Southern Suburbs of Beirut. The village has also a factory of milk and cheeses.

The field survey shows that the number of those who work in the agricultural sector is very low. Additionally, there are no cooperatives in the village. The survey has further indicated that the villagers don't seem to have an interest in agricultural work, except for the cultivation of olive trees.

### 3.2 CRAFTS AND TRADE SECTORS

There are several crafts and trade activities in Aaitit (Table 5), as well as some industries which are limited to the production of cement (1 cement factory), marble stones (1 marble stone factory) and pebbles.

**Table 5: Crafts and Trades**

Profession	Number of Workers or institutions
Concrete Carpenter	10 institutions
Carpenter	3 people
Painting	4 people
Furniture painting	1 person
Construction	10 people
Plumbing	7 people
Tiling	3 people
Electricity	2 people
Bakers	5 people
Butchers	3 people
Barber	8 people
Aluminum	4 people
Cellular shops and maintenance	2 shops
Western Union	2 shops
Photography	1 Studio

<b>Water supply</b>	2 people
<b>Sanitary shops</b>	3 shops
<b>Gas stations</b>	2 stations
<b>Agricultural Tractors</b>	8 people

The economic status of the population has severely declined. Further, many of the workers rely on traditional techniques, particularly in plumbing and blacksmithing.

### 3.3 LIVESTOCK

The field survey shows that most of the residents in Aaitit are breeding and keeping domestic animals such as sheep, goats, chickens, and bees (See Table 5).

**Table 6: Livestock in Aaitit**

<b>Cows</b>	<b>Beehives</b>	<b>Chicken farms</b>	<b>Goats</b>
<b>3 cattle breeders</b>	20	4	2 herds

The village produces an average of 250 kilos of milk per day which are consumed by the villagers and the rest are sold to nearby villages. Meat is not produced in Aaitit and is imported for consumption from slaughterhouses in the region . As for the honey that is produced in Aaitit, it is usually marketed in Tyre and the Southern suburbs of Beirut.

## 4. EDUCATION

According to the field survey, 100 % of the students had primary education. There are three schools in the village; one is public and two private schools.

## 5. HEALTH STATUS

Aaitit's health facilities are limited to two health centres that attend to the needs of the village. One of the health centres belongs to the Sadr Foundation, and provides a wide range of services. In emergency cases, residents of Aaitit use the hospitals and health centres in Tyre which is about 15 Kilometre away from the village.

## 6. ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Aaitit experiences, like other villages in the Caza, several environmental problems: a water crisis and improper waste water and solid waste management. Water is provided only for four hours every two days. Additionally, wastewater is improperly managed due to the lack of a public sewage network. As for the solid waste management, the lack of a sanitary landfill creates bad odours, distorts the landscape and the environment. Solid wastes are usually collected in the municipality and then burned without treatments to the hazards emitted and with no considerations to the environment.

What is also apparent is that Aaitit has faced a problem with the Ain Baal waste disposal factory which is supposed to receive the garbage disposed by 64 villages in Caza Tyre. As such, the village of Aaitit will have to face the hazards and bad odours emitted by the factory which has not been run so far.

## **7. RELATIONSHIPS WITH NEARBY VILLAGES AND THE ROLE OF THE IMMIGRANTS**

Aaitit has built trade relationships with the neighbouring villages and businesses, and relies on them to market most of its agricultural and industrial production. Further, the village hold every Saturday an open public market that hosts producers and sellers from neighbouring villages to market their products. The market displays a wide variety of products such as toys, shoes, clothes and vegetables , as well as some agro-food productions such as summak, burghul, sumsum and thyme.

Additionally, Aaitit has witnessed a big wave of intermarriages between the village and neighbouring villages. Further, during the Israeli attacks on Lebanon Aaitit received a large number (around 1000 people) of those who were internally displaced from villages such as Haneen, Tiri, Rshaf. The field survey indicates that this displaced population still resides in Aaitit.

As for the role of the immigrants, the remittances sent to their families in the village have not been invested in opening shops in the village.

## **8. INSTITUTIONS AND SERVICES**

Aaitit is governed by a municipal council which was founded in 1965, and is currently administrated by 12 members elected by the locals of the area. The council is assisted by several committees composed of locals from the village. There are also 5 contracted and 2 permanent employees working in the municipality. The municipal council owns a permanent headquarters.

Additionally, Aaitit has a number of local institutions dealing with social matters in the village, they are:

- Associations of the Mahdi Scouts
- Islamic Scouting Association