

BEIT LIF VILLAGE PROFILE

1. LOCATION AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Beit Lif is a village located in the district of Bint Jbeil, a city in the Southern Governorate of Lebanon (one of the eight governorates). It is around 106 kilometres away from Beirut, and around 0.18 kilometres from the centre of the Caza'. Beit Lif is characterized by a moderate climate. Its elevation is around 530 meters above sea level with an average annual rainfall of 600-700 mm.

The village covers an area of around 4.6 square kilometres.

2. POPULATION

The total population of Beit Lif is around 7100. The village inhabitants witnessed internal displacement, by which around 2000 villagers were displaced to other parts of the country (such as Ouzai in the Southern Suburbs of Beirut). Additionally, a number of the village inhabitants around 1000, migrated to countries such as Germany (200 residents) and Australia (800 residents).

There are 3500 inhabitants during the winter, while the number rises to around 5000 people during the summer. The number of registered voters is around 3280 voters, as identified in the 2010 election.

2.1 Age Groups

The distribution of the population by age groups in Beit Lif is as follows: 53.8 percent are less than 21 years, and 46.2 percent above 21 years.

2.2 Labour Force

The labour force in Beit Lif is 25 % of the total resident population of the village.

Women participate in agricultural work of the village. Additionally, many of the young people in the village who have dropped out of school- around 100 young people over the age of 18- and joined the working force are unemployed. While around 35 young people are under the age of 18 dropped out of school and hang around the village's square or on its streets.

Most of the villagers in Beit Lif are small farmers; as such unemployment affects more than more than half the village's population.

The distribution of the labour force by economic activity in Beit Lif is as follows:

- Agriculture (20%) such the cultivation of tobacco.

- Construction Industry (12%)
- Government Employees Sector, mainly in the security forces or the military (10%)-
- Livestock (5%)-
- Beekeeping (5%)-

The rest of the population make their living from farming and growing figs and olives.

3. ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

3.1 AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

Beit Lif has 400 dunums considered arable land. Around 70% of the villagers work in the sector. The 400 dunums are mainly planted with tobacco and grains, the rest of the land is non-arable land that needs reclamation.

The most common cultivated products within this area are tobacco, olives, grains, and figs. Also, there are about 240 dunums in the village which are considered as common property under the supervision of the municipality, including 100 dunums of protected woodland.

Beit Lif also produces a range of agro-industrial products such as dairy products, olive oil, dried figs and tobacco. The dairy products, olive oil and figs are marketed and traded with neighbouring villages in the district, and the tobacco goes to the Reggie. The village has two oil presses and a dairy factory.

The village had a single functioning agricultural cooperative; however it has stopped working.

There are, however, prominent problems facing the agricultural sector in Beit Lif. Before the 2006 war the village used to produce more than 550,000 kg of olive. After 2006, olive production fell under 100,000 kg as indicated by the villagers and olive oil press owners in the village. The villagers attributed this decline to the climate changes and to the weapons used during the recent war. As for the figs, they were hit by a disease called the snail disease which affected its production density and thus its marketing.

3.2 LIVESTOCK

Residents in Beit Lif are breeding domestic animals such as sheep, goats, chickens, and bees (Table 1).

Table 1: Livestock in Beit Lif

Cows	Beehives	Goats
50 heads	500	2 stocks

Around 10 families in Beit Lif are dependent on the rearing of livestock. The village's dairy production is given to the dairy company Yiran, which is then marketed in different regions of the South. The rest of the milk produced is less than the needs of domestic consumption.

3.3 CRAFTS AND TRADE SECTORS

There are several craft and trade activities in Beit Lif, mainly in tiling, aluminium, carpeting, plumbing, painting, concrete and electricity (see Table 2).

Table 2: Crafts and Trades

Profession	Number of Workers
Concrete Carpenters and constructors	7 people
Tiling, plumbing, electricity and painting	25 people
Olive oil presses	2 presses
Aluminum	2 people
Metal industry	2 people

4. EDUCATION

100 % of school children had primary education.

There one public primary school in Beit Lif. As such, the villagers are obliged to send their children to continue their secondary education in the neighbouring villages such as Rmeish, Ayta Al Shaab and Kafra. What is important to note is the fact that those villages are around 5-12 kilometres away and cost each student a transportation fee of 40,000-50,000 L.L per month. As for students seeking vocational and professional education they have to go to Beint Jbeil, with a monthly transportation fee of 75,000 LL.

5. HEALTH STATUS

Beit Lif health facilities are limited, as there is one public health clinic that is part of the Social Development Centre of the Ministry of Social Affairs. The clinic is being supported by both the Ministry and UNIFEL. There is one hospital building in the village, however it lacks all the medical equipments needed for it to function.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Beit Lif experiences several environmental problems, these problems are due to its reliance on one artesian well for both the provision of drinking water and irrigation services; the absence of a public sewage network and improper wastewater management; and poor solid waste management due to the lack of a sanitary landfill creates bad odours, distorts the landscape and the environment. Solid wastes are usually collected in one placed and then burned.

It is important to note that a sewage system was built in the village, however it does not function properly and still waiting for further funding to turn it into a proper functioning system.

Additionally Beit Lif suffers from a drinking water crisis. Drinking water is given for only 24 hours per week. As such the residents are obliged to buy water for a cost of 30,000 L.L per 4 cubic meters.

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

Beit Lif has built trade relationships with the neighbouring villages and businesses, and relies on them to market most of its olive oil products.

The support by immigrants is very weak due to the fact that most of those who left the village are families. The village has a local proverb that illustrates this situation which says that those who immigrated to Australia are on the death page.

8. INSTITUTIONS AND SERVICES

Beit Lif is governed by a municipal council. There is one permanent employee (policeman) working in the municipality. The municipal council does not have a permanent headquarters.

There is one functioning youth group in Beit Lif. The youth group has been created by UNDP South Lebanon.