

CHEBAA VILLAGE PROFILE

1. LOCATION AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Chebaa is a village located in the district of Hasbaya on the triangle boundary between Lebanon, Syria and Palestine. Chebaa is around 133 kilometres away from Beirut, and 18 kilometres away from the centre of the district. Its elevation is around 1250 meters above sea level with an average annual rainfall of 600-700 mm.

Chebaa is characterized by a cold climate and snowfalls that cover the village during winter. The village covers an area of around 2920 hectares (29.2 square kilometres), excluding the occupied Chebaa farms. The village is distinguished by its mountainous and rugged land.

2. POPULATION

The total population of Chebaa is around 30000. The village inhabitants witnessed internal displacement, by which around 17000 villagers were displaced to other parts of the country as a result of wars. Additionally, a number of the village inhabitants around 5000 migrated to countries such as Kuwait, Brazil, Canada and the United Arab Emirates (See Table 1).

Table 1: Distribution of Population

Population	Number	In Percent
Residents	8000*	26.7
Displaced	17000	56.7
Migrants	5000	16.6
Total	30000	100.0

*Other estimates consider the number of residents to be lower, not exceeding 5,000

There are 8000 residents in the village in winter, while the number of inhabitants in summer fluctuates depending on the security situation. The number of registered voters is around 11500 voters.

2.1 Labour Force

The labour force is distributed as follows:

- Industrial, liberal professions, crafts and small businesses (10%)
- Government employees sector, mainly in the security forces or the military (15%)
- Others working in agriculture, livestock and agro-industries

There are around 200 families with no income in the village and currently assisted by remittances of immigrants and charities in the village.

3. ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

3.1 AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

The agricultural sector in Chebaa has collapsed during the long years of war and conflict. During the early 1970s, it was the beginning of the immigration phase and thus no land was reclaimed for agricultural purposes. Additionally, the already agricultural fields were further destroyed.

In the past, the agriculture in this area was based mainly on the cultivation of peaches, cherries, apples, pears, and nuts; as well as some seasonal vegetables such as beans and tomatoes.

As for the numbers of farmers in this sector, it is limited to the old generations who cultivate some of their land with grains or take care of their fruit trees for home use.

It is worth mentioning that this sector's major problems are the absence of young generation to take on agriculture as a main profession, lack of security, and the high costs of land reclamation.

As for the agro-industrial production in this area it is mainly tied with the production of basic agro-food by a women cooperative. The produce is usually marketed and sold to the immigrants who come each year to visit the village. However, the marketing of the produce suffered this year due to the low numbers of visitors.

Chebaa has one cooperative: The Agricultural Cooperative of Chebaa.

3.2 LIVESTOCK

The livestock in this area is limited to the breeding of goats. There are around 25 goat flocks in the area with a total of around 10000 goats in total. The livelihood of around 150 people depends on this sector.

The milk produced from the goats is marketed in the neighboring villages and the surplus is used for the production of Labneh that is marketed around Lebanon.

The village also has around 1000 bee hives dispersed among 61 families.

3.3 INDUSTRIAL, CRAFTS AND TRADE SECTORS

There are several industrial, craft and trade activities in Chebaa, mainly listed in table 2.

Table 2: Crafts and Trades

Profession	Number of Workers or institutions
Blacksmith	5 people
Drilling	2 people

Carpenters	2 people
Aluminium	3 people
Furniture	1 person
Concrete carpenters	15 people
Painters	10 people
Electricians	25 people
Sanitary and tiling	10 people

4. EDUCATION

Most of the children in the village attend school. There is one elementary public school and another private school in the village, as well as a secondary school. As for the universities, students usually go to Saida and Beirut for their higher education.

5. HEALTH STATUS

Chebaa health facilities are limited to three clinics. In emergency cases, residents of Chebaa use hospitals and health centres in Marjeyoun and Hasbaya.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Chebaa experiences several environmental problems, these problems can be identified as follow by: the lack of irrigation water; 60 % of the village is covered by a decomposed sewerage system. Additionally, the wastewater treatment plant which was built by Mercy Corps in 2003 has been stopped due to its close proximity to the houses. Solid wastes are usually collected in one placed and thrown in the commons of the village without treatments to the hazards emitted and with no considerations to the environments.

7. RELATIONSHIPS WITH NEARBY VILLAGES AND THE ROLE OF IMMIGRANTS

Chebaa have limited trade relationships with nearby villages. As for the immigrants' role, the remittances aim to support their families and needy.

8. INSTITUTIONS AND SERVICES

Chebaa is governed by a municipal council and is currently administrated by 18 members elected by the locals of the area. The council is assisted by several committees composed of locals from the village. There are also 21 permanent employees working in the municipality. The municipal council owns permanent headquarters.

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

- Chebaa's Cooperative Association for Beekeepers
- Chebaa's Agricultural Cooperative Association
- UNDP's Youth Gatherings; as well as some religious, political and charitable youth gatherings.