

KHORBET SELEM

1. LOCATION AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Khorbet Selem is located near the town of Tibnin in the district of Bint Jbeil. It is around 100 kilometres away from Beirut and 17 km from the centre of the Caza'. Its elevation is around 600 meters above sea level with an average annual rainfall of 600- 700 mm. The village covers an area of around 670 hectares.

Khorbet Selem is surrounded by of Kafr Dunin, Qallawiyah, Jumayjimah, Deir Kifa, Deir Antar, Safed and Majdal Selem.

2. POPULATION

The total population of Khorbet Selem is around 17,000. This includes those who immigrated to Beirut, specifically in the areas of Zkak Al-Blat, Shiah and Al-Basta. Around 3000 inhabitants migrated to countries such as Germany and Abidjan. There are 4000 inhabitants during the winter, while the number rises to around 10,000 people during the summer.

The number of registered voters is around 4200 voters.

2.1 Labour force

The distribution of the labour force by economic activity in Khorbet Selem is as follows:

- Activities related to construction (50%)
- Government Employees Sector, mainly in the security forces or the military (15%)
- General Trade (35%)

The participation of women in the labour force is very low in view of the weakness of the agricultural sector, where usually women work.

3. ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

3.1 AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

Khorbet Selem is located on rocky slopes that are not suitable for the use of tractors. The arable land, however, is either being neglected by the villagers, or have been leased to peasants from the neighbouring villages.

The main crops in Khorbet Selem are olives, figs and cactus. These crops do not serve as a major source of income of the inhabitants.

This sector was neglected for its low productivity on one hand, and the lack of guidance, awareness raising and capacity building provided to the inhabitants to properly make use of available farming pastures on the other hand.

3.2 LIVESTOCK

Owning livestock is a new experience in Khorbet Selem, which was initiated by three inhabitants that purchased around 4 heads of cow each to produce milk. The production and supply of milk was further encouraged by the villagers' high demand for these dairy products.

3.3 TRADE, CRAFTS AND INDUSTRIAL SECTORS

Khorbet Selem has a number of factories:

- Factories for metal work (4)
- Carpentries (5)
- Stone plants (3)
- Tile factories (2)
- Olive press (1)
- Mills (2)

4. EDUCATION

100 % had elementary education and 100 % intermediary education. The village has an elementary school that suffers from chronic problems and the level of education provided is of a very low standards. Most of the students in these schools fail in the Brevet government examination. As such, most parents in the village end up sending their children to private schools in the neighbouring villages of Tibnin or Ain Al Mizrab . Tibnin and Ain Al Mizrab are around 10 kilometers far from Kherbet Selem, this costs the parents an amount of L.L 50,000 per month as a commuting price for their children to reach the school. Additionally, tuition fees in private schools are high. The village also lacks the presence of any technical and vocational schools. For such an education to be attained, the students should travel to the city of Bint Jbeil which costs them a transportation fee of L.L75,000 per month.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

There is an artesian well in Khorbet Selem that caters to the needs of the inhabitants in potable water.

As for wastewater management, the absence of a public sewage network and the use of cesspits for the disposal of wastewater, and the discharge of wastewater in the streets cause hazards that are currently present in the village.

A factory for sorting waste products was established in 1999 by the World Council of Churches. The effective sales of plastic and metal products help reduce the cost of collection and waste treatment. The factory has the capacity to absorb the waste products of other neighbouring villages; as such the municipality of Khorbet Selem is considering providing the services of this factory in return for specific fees.

6. RELATIONSHIPS WITH NEARBY VILLAGES AND IMMIGRANTS

Khorbet Selem has built trade relationships with the neighbouring villages and businesses, and relies on them to import most of the needed building material and electrical appliances. Further, the remittances sent by immigrants to their families in the village to reconstruct or build their houses has opened new work opportunities for villagers and expanded the construction sector.

7. INSTITUTIONS AND SERVICES

Khorbet Selem is governed by a municipal council, which is currently administrated by 15 members elected by the locals of the area. There are also 3 permanent and 5 contracted employees working in the municipality. The municipal council owns a permanent headquarters.