



COUNTRY SHEET

LEBANON

KEY ISSUES OF WATER AND SANITATION

Main issues:

- Sanitation: faced infrastructure and economic collapse since 2019, leaving regional water establishments unable to operate pumps or conduct maintenance or effectively treat the water.
- Energy: increased fuel prices and reduced fuel provision to regional water establishments is affecting the functionality of water and wastewater infrastructure; reliance on solar panels in some stations for continuity of services
- Drought and water scarcity: reduced rainfall below average, heavily depleting aquifers and groundwater and affected the agricultural sector mainly in 2025
- Tarification : pricing system does not cover cost of the service. Absence of volumetric pricing which does not favor water savings. Moreover collection of tariffs is low.
- Internal displacements: the ongoing war on Lebanon displaced over a million people overwhelming the existing WASH infrastructure
- Influx of refugees : increased pressure on water and sanitation services.
- Ongoing war: affected water and wastewater infrastructure as well as the loss of personnel in regional establishments in the affected areas

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Legal framework:

- [Water Code_amendment to the law N77_October 2020](#)
- [Law 221 dated May 29, 2000, and its amendements, organising the water and sanitation sector](#)
- [Municipal act, Decree-law No. 118 dated June 30, 1977](#)

National Strategies:

- [National Water Sector Strategy 2024-2035](#)

Key institutional actors

Five main structures are at the center of the legal system:

[Ministry of Energy and Water \(MoEW\)](#): defines the political and strategic framework of the sector - the central governing entity

[Council for Development and Reconstruction \(CDR\)](#) : is the contracting authority of water, sanitation and irrigation infrastructure projects financed by the Lebanese State and, if required, supported by international donors

Regional Water Establishments (RWEs): Four autonomous, corporate-style entities responsible for managing, operating, and maintaining water, wastewater, and irrigation infrastructure within their specific jurisdictions:

- [Beirut and Mount Lebanon Water Establishment \(EBML\)](#)
- [North Lebanon Water Establishment \(NLWE\)](#)
- [Bekaa Water Establishment \(BWE\)](#)
- [South Lebanon Water Establishment \(SLWE\)](#)

[Litani River Authority](#) : manages and operates irrigation in South Bekaa and South Lebanon

Municipalities : are given legal legitimacy by the municipal act to operate the sanitation facilities that they have built.

OVERALL CONTEXT



Currency : Lebanese pound pegged to the US dollar
(1 USD = LBP 89,550)

HDI : 0.752 ranked 102 globally and 10th among arab nations (UNDP, feb 2026)

Population :

*5,887,575 inhabitants including:

*203,000 - 231,000 Palestinian refugees (UNRWA, 2026)

*1,120,000 Syrian refugees (number fluctuates due to complex cross border movements following recent regional political shifts) (UNICEF, 2026)

Proportion of rural population : 9% (WorldBank, 2024)

Political framework : Parliamentary Republic

President of the Republic : Joseph Aoun, elected on January 9 2025

Territorial Organisation : Mohafazat (governorates), Caza (districts), Municipalities

DECENTRALIZED COOPERATION PROJECTS

Map of the decentralized and non-governmental cooperations in Lebanon :

www.pseau.org/actions

[HAUD Project - Grand Pic Saint Loup, AERMC, Mairie de Saint Clément de Rivière, Municipalité de Zahlé et Taanayel, Lebanon Reforestation Initiative \(LRI\)](#)

The purpose of the « HAUD » project is to protect the endangered natural water system in the Berdaouni River Basin (BRB).

The methodology is to combine :

- 1) technical actions that bring results locally and
- 2) governance actions in order to make it possible at the BRB scale
- 3) knowledge actions

[Detailed presentation](#) and [visual presentation](#)

[Reinforcing drinking water supply in Hammana - Coopération Vendée Eau, Hammana](#)

This project aims to address the structuring of the public drinking water service in Hammana. The system planned will be self-sufficient in renewable energies, guaranteeing continuity of service by controlling energy costs (absence of fossil fuels), preserving the health of residents by providing quality drinking water, monitored by a structured and trained municipal public service.

[Strengthening stakeholders and territorial dialogue to improve water management in the Qadisha Valley in Lebanon - decentralized cooperation between the City of Chambéry, Greater Chambéry / Bcharré District](#)

The overall objective is to enable stakeholders in the two districts of Bcharre and Zgharta to act collectively for better management of the Nahr Abu Ali water resource, essential for the sustainability of the agricultural and tourism sectors, in the context of climate change.

[Implementation of a non-collective sanitation service in the municipality of Antoura - AE Seine-Normandie, HAMAP Humanitaire, Hydreaulys, Ville de Bailly et Noisy le Roi](#)

This project aims to address the wastewater issue in Aintoura, proposing to install decentralised wastewater treatment units across the area and to train personnel and institutional actors on wastewater management

CONTACTS

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The main public service management structure

- Drinkable water : water management is delegated by the State to the four Water Establishments. In several municipalities, local water committees are still managing the water service. Those committees are unwilling to concede management of the service to the Water Establishments in accordance with the law No. 221, applied in 2005.
- Collective sanitation : despite substantial investments done, the level of services remains weak. Water Establishments are, by law, in charge of managing the service. In practice, several municipalities continue operating waste water networks. Generally, water treatment plants' operations are delegated by the CDR or Water Establishments to private companies. However, some water treatment plants are directly managed by municipalities.
- Individual sanitation : the investments, and costs of operating and maintaining household-level sanitation equipments are at the expense of users.
- Access to services for refugees : as 80% of refugees live in host community, Lebanese public institutions are meeting their needs. Regarding the population taking refuge in informal settlements, their needs of water and sanitation are mainly provided by the UN and NGOs.
- Regional water establishments: main service providers for water and wastewater services still faces challenges in terms of operation and maintenance; collection of tariffs is low hence less technical personnel to monitor the stations functionality

DONORS AND INTERNATIONAL NGOS

WorldBank provides significant loans and funding for large scale infrastructure projects (such as dams and major network rehabilitation) and broader public sector support.

UNICEF coordinates, with the MoEW, the response provided to meet water and sanitation needs of vulnerable populations (refugees and host communities). Its strategy is defined by the Lebanon Response Plan ([latest Flash Appeal March-May 2026](#)). UNICEF have been coordinating on the Lebanon Emergency Response in response to the escalation of hostilities and the internal displacement.

UNOCHA started the Lebanon Humanitarian Fund (LHF) in 2014. The Fund's activities are aligned with coordinated in-country humanitarian response planning, including the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP), allowing the fund to be a predictable and complementary source of humanitarian financing, making timely and flexible funding available for life-saving humanitarian activities.

AFD (French cooperation) dedicates 44.5% of its financial assistance to the water sector in Lebanon since 1999. Actively engaged in improving water governance, service continuity and financial viability across regional water establishments.

European Union, through the ECHO program (European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations), it provides emergency aid to meet the needs of vulnerable populations in term of water and sanitation. A leading financier of Lebanon's water sector providing grants for water supply and sanitation reforms.

SDC (Swiss cooperation) intervenes with the Bekaa Water Establishment to improve water and sanitation services for host and refugee populations.

GIZ and KfW (German cooperation) focuses on sanitation, environmental protection and infrastructure development particularly in areas in Beirut and Mount Lebanon

