



### Report #4 on the situation in Ein el Hilweh camp, Lebanon

Tuesday 8 August 2023, 12:00 hrs

#### Ein El Hilweh camp information

- UNRWA provides services to nearly 55,000 registered Palestine Refugees in Ein El Hilweh camp.
- Eight UNRWA schools serve around 6,000 students.
- Two UNRWA health centres provide primary health care including reproductive health, infant and child-care, immunizations, screening and medical check-ups and treatment.

#### Overview

The ceasefire in Ein El Hilweh camp has largely remained in place since 3 August with no further clashes reported. On 6 August, the Palestinian Joint Action Committee, comprising representatives of Palestinian political factions, issued a statement confirming their commitment to ending the fighting, establishing a comprehensive and permanent ceasefire, ensuring the withdrawal of armed individuals from the streets and opening roads. The Committee also called on residents who had fled to return to their homes.

From 5 August, displaced people left the UNRWA emergency centres in which they had been sheltering, with an unknown number returning to Ein el Hilweh camp and adjacent areas. By the morning of 7 August, all displaced people had departed the UNRWA Nablus School in Saida city, Askalan School in Mieh Mieh camp, and Siblin Training Centre. These installations have therefore ceased to operate as emergency centres. Up until 7 August, partners had continued to support displaced persons in the emergency centres through the provision of food and other essential items (see section below for details).

With clashes having halted on Thursday 3 August, humanitarian actors, including UNRWA, have initiated the second phase of the response that will allow the safe return of Ein El Hilweh residents to their homes and the rehabilitation of and return of UNRWA services to the camp. UNRWA has identified sectors of the camp which

were less affected by fighting as the initial focus for the resumption of its operations. These areas constitute over half of the area of the camp but exclude neighbourhoods on the camp's northern and southern edges heavily affected by the conflict. Re-entry to those areas in which hostilities were centered and where the situation remains tense will depend on security assurances from relevant actors as well as security and remnants of war assessments. These areas contain an UNRWA school compound. Updated reports indicate that three UNRWA schools serving nearly 3,000 students have been critically affected.

On 7 August, following a training on identification of unexploded ordnances (UXOs) and the handling of the same,

UNRWA sanitation workers began to clear garbage from the less-affected areas of the camp, with partners collecting garbage in other camp areas. On 8 August, following a safety assessment, UNRWA reopened one of its two health centres in the camp, which is also located in the less-affected sector.

UNRWA has publicly circulated advice on UXO safety for residents who choose to re-enter the camp. On 14 August, UNRWA, in coordination with the Lebanon Mine Action Center (LebMAC), will provide training on safety regarding UXO and other remnants of war for its own frontline staff and partner staff who will be entering affected areas. This will then enable UNRWA to safely clear rubble, collect garbage, and plan for the reopening of UNRWA installations.

Once safe entry to the camp is fully established, UNRWA alongside and coordinated with Palestinian and Lebanese partner organizations is ready to carry out an initial assessment of damage to shelters. This will be followed by a coordinated and comprehensive assessment of damage to infrastructure and other structures. Much severe damage is reportedly concentrated in settlement areas outside the formal boundaries of Ein El Hilweh camp. Any damage assessment will need to be jointly agreed and managed between UNRWA and other humanitarian actors, Lebanese government representatives, the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), municipality, and camp governance actors.

### Humanitarian Coordination, Information Management and Assessment

- UNRWA has requested a meeting of relevant governance and security actors this week to discuss plans for a comprehensive coordination mechanism for the assessment of damage to the camp and adjacent areas and to coordinate responses.
- UNRWA will coordinate with the Lebanese Army, LebMAC and humanitarian partners to carry out an assessment of UXO presence inside the camp and to safely clear from UXOs.
- Upon the closure of the UNRWA emergency shelters, UNRWA extends its sincere appreciation to local and international partners who provided goods, services and other assistance to displaced persons, and many of whom will continue to support people as they return to their homes: Al- Ghawth; Al-Maoun; Al-Moustashar Restaurant; Al-Mouwassat; Al-Rahma; Al-Riaya (Islamic Relief); ANERA; Arab Heritage; ARCPA – Al Jana; Cap Anamur; Charitable Organization for the Relief of Palestinians; General Union of Palestinian Women; ICRC; Intersos; Islaa Association; Lebanese Food Bank; MAP; Naba'a; Najdeh; NRC; Palestine Red Crescent Society; People's Aid for Relief and Development; Première Urgence; Qatar Red Crescent; Save the Children; Tadamon; UNHCR; UNICEF; Vision Engineering company.

### Humanitarian response and needs

- **WASH:** UNRWA and ICRC continue to provide diesel to maintain the functioning of water wells in the camp. As people return to their homes, there will be an immediate need to repair damaged household water tanks following a rapid assessment of needs; significant damage to water tanks has been reported. In coordination with political factions, UNRWA contracted a private company to collect garbage from areas of the camp less affected. UNRWA and partners will continue to collect garbage from these parts of the camp, with collection centralized at an UNRWA depot. Once garbage collection is complete, UNRWA will carry out a disinfection spraying campaign in these areas.
- **Health:** Human Call Association's al-Nida'a Hospital inside Ein El Hilweh camp has continued to run after oil was delivered by UNRWA in close coordination with LAF and Palestinian political factions. UNRWA will continue to provide healthcare through its health centres located outside the camp for displaced people unable to re-enter the camp. The ICRC also continues to support treatment and rehabilitation of persons injured in the clashes.
- **Shelter:** Once safe entry to the camp is established, UNRWA is planning for a rapid assessment of damage to shelters to inform rehabilitation efforts. An assessment of damage to the camp's electricity network will also be needed. UNRWA has begun work on maintenance and repair of its installations that were used as emergency centres for displaced persons.
- **Food security:** Until 7 August, a range of local organisations continued to provide hot meals for those sheltering at UNRWA emergency centres. The Palestine Red Crescent Society and Qatar Red

Crescent also distributed canned food and other food supplies that families were able to take with them as they returned to their homes.

- **Non-food Items:** On 4-6 August, local and international NGOs provided additional items for those sheltering in UNRWA emergency centres: NRC provided portable lamps to ensure night-time safety, Intersos distributed hygiene items and cleaning supplies, and Anera has provided a large number of hygiene and related items.
- **Protection:** Coordination among Protection actors continued, including on the provision of gender-based violence case management in emergency centres and the integration of vulnerability considerations in UNRWA needs assessments and recording of the details of displaced Palestine Refugees. The ICRC has carried out individual follow-up with parties to the hostilities to urge respect for humanitarian principles.
- **Education:** The Director of UNRWA Affairs Lebanon announced on 4 August that significant damage sustained by UNRWA schools inside the camp, including through unauthorized entry and use by armed actors, may delay the start of the school year for schools inside the Ein El Hilweh camp. The extent of damage to those schools most heavily impacted by fighting is not yet able to be assessed due to the lack of access for UNRWA staff, although initial reports indicate significant damage to at least three schools offering education for nearly 3,000 students.

#### Future needs

- Provision of assistance, including emergency cash assistance, to support families' recovery process, including rehabilitation works to their houses partially or entirely damaged by the fighting, as they return to the camp and based upon an initial shelter damage assessment.
- Removal of rubble, clearing of roads, and repair and maintenance of critical infrastructure in the camp, including water supply, wells, wastewater systems and the electricity network.
- Rehabilitation of affected UNRWA schools in the camp when safe access is secured, as well as the establishment of enhanced safety and security measures in these schools. Severe structural damage has been reported in the northern UNRWA schools compound located near the epicentre of hostilities.
- Ongoing awareness-raising among residents of the camp and adjacent areas to protect individuals from physical and psychological harm posed by UXO and other remnants of war.



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