

Lebanon: Ein el Hilweh Emergency

Situation Report No. 12

As of 1600hrs, Friday 29 September 2023

This report is produced jointly by UNRWA and OCHA Lebanon. It covers the period from 22 to 29 September 2023. Reports will be issued each Friday, with more frequent reporting if the situation requires.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The ceasefire entered its third week, but tensions in Ein el Hilweh camp remain. A joint Palestinian security force comprising members of Palestinian factions deployed in key locations from 25 September to consolidate the ceasefire. The Joint Security Force entered UNRWA schools in the camp on 29 September, reportedly to evacuate armed groups from them.
- Increasing numbers of displaced persons have begun returning to the camp. However, over 2,800 households remain recorded as displaced in emergency shelters or hosted in the community.
- On 27 September, UNRWA announced that the start of the UNRWA school year for 11,000 children in Saida area will be delayed due to the occupation of, and damage to, all eight UNRWA schools in Ein El Hilweh camp, the use of some schools outside the camp to shelter displaced families, and safety concerns about other schools in the vicinity of the camp. UNRWA has prepared for a transitional alternative plan to educate displaced Palestine refugee children in UNRWA schools external to but in the proximity of the camp. Preparations will be finalized by the end of October should stability in the camp and its environs prevail.

427

IDPs hosted in
UNRWA emergency
shelters

85

IDPs hosted in al
Fawar collective site

2,700

Families hosted
in the
community¹

SITUATION OVERVIEW

The ceasefire in Ein el Hilweh camp entered its third week on 28 September. This came after the expanded multi-factional Joint Security Force deployed at several strategic locations in the camp from 25 September to consolidate the ceasefire. Media reported that Palestinian factions had agreed that the eight UNRWA schools occupied by armed actors would be evacuated on 29 September although UNRWA has not received any official communication about this. According to media reports, at the time of the publication, the Joint Security Force had entered the UNRWA school premises.

An increasing number of families who had fled the camp have reportedly returned to their homes. Numbers of people in the three UNRWA designated emergency shelters (DES) decreased from 620 to 427 between 25 and 28 September, as well as in non-UNRWA collective sites, though accurate monitoring has been challenging due to the fluidity of the context. UNRWA closed its DES in Beit Jala school in Siblin, with remaining persons relocated to the adjacent Bir Zeit DES. All non-UNRWA collective sites are now empty of displaced persons except for the collective site in al Fawar, with the Hlaliyeh warehouse and el Musalli mosque sites now closed. UNRWA removed garbage from two collection points in the lower part of the camp in conjunction with a private contractor and Oxfam. Over the last two days, 100 tonnes of garbage have been collected, which is possibly an indication of the significant number of people who have returned to the camp.

However, a large number of camp residents remain displaced. Alongside the approximately 500 people in UNRWA and non-UNRWA emergency shelters, at least 2,700 households are reported to be sheltering with relatives or elsewhere in the community. It is expected that many of those in emergency shelters who fled the areas most affected by fighting in and around the camp – notably part of Hittin, Tawaree and Taamir neighbourhoods – will not have an inhabitable dwelling-place to which to return. An assessment of damage will only be able to take place when security conditions allow.

¹ Based on latest update from Naba'a on their door-to-door assessment.

GENERAL COORDINATION

UNRWA and OCHA are co-chairing sub-national meetings with operational partners to coordinate the delivery of services in emergency shelters and beyond, with support from sector coordination teams to ensure minimum standards are in place.

Partners report having capacity to continue providing support to those sheltering in UNRWA designated emergency shelters in terms of basic needs, WASH, protection and health until 6 October. Further discussion and coordination between actors will be needed to continue providing support beyond that point.

Discussions continue among partners on cash provision for those households affected by the Ein el Hilweh clashes in order to ensure a harmonized approach.

UNRWA and OCHA are discussing the provision of multi-sectoral aid kits for displaced persons hosted in the community.

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

Food Security

Response:

- Hot meals for displaced persons in UNRWA designated emergency shelters (three daily meals per person) have been provided by ANERA (through Mosawat), the Embassy of Palestine in Lebanon, Nashet Association, and Solidarités International.
- The Embassy of Palestine and other local actors are providing lunch meals for those sheltering at al Fawar collective site.
- Naba'a is providing fruits and vegetables for the Nablus School emergency shelter while NRC is doing the same in Siblin Training Centre and Bir Zeit shelters.
- Food parcels will be part of the multisectoral packages to be provided to families hosted in the community.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Insecure funding for ongoing provision of food to designated emergency shelters and collective sites.
- Food often lacks diversity and nutritional value. Close coordination between organizations providing food is required to ensure displaced persons can access a balanced diet.

Non-food items

Needs:

- Consistency in the composition and distribution of non-food items for displaced families in emergency shelters and hosted by families.

Response:

- Naba'a distributed 100 portions of clothes and shoes among displaced persons, while UNICEF has provided dignity kits. NRC have provided 300 pillows, 200 mattresses, 378 blankets and 20 diaper kits.
- Naba'a distributed toys, socks, clothes and toys for 134 children in Nablus school, 93 children in Fawar and 100 in Siblin Training Center.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Strengthening the alignment of items provided with the Sector composition of kits is required to avoid any potential overlap between partners.

Health

Needs:

- Continued primary healthcare assistance and hospitalization services to displaced persons inside and outside emergency shelters.

Response:

- UNRWA continues to provide medical services and medications via medical points inside UNRWA emergency shelters and through UNRWA clinics to treat acute and non-communicable conditions.
- MsF continued to conduct regular checks for patients with non-communicable diseases (NCD) at UNRWA designated emergency shelters. UNRWA is coordinating with MsF to avoid duplication.
- MsF continued to provide emergency health services for NCD conditions through its mobile medical unit at non-UNRWA sites. Coordination is expected between IMC, PUI and Cap Anamur to complement MsF services at the non UNRWA collective sites.
- UNRWA supports hospitalization for Palestine refugees and coordinates with partners to secure hospitalization for others staying in UNRWA shelters.
- UNRWA and health partners met in Saida area to identify gaps in overall health provision for displaced persons.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Due to the closure of both UNRWA health centres in Ein el Hilweh camp, the patient load has increased significantly at UNRWA Saida Polyclinic, straining capacity. UNRWA is assessing options for expanding capacity.
- Difficulties remain in hospitalization referrals for some non-Palestinian nationalities.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene and Shelter

Needs:

- Maintenance of hygiene and sanitation standards in emergency shelters.
- Ongoing collection of garbage inside Ein el Hilweh camp.

Response:

- Naba'a, Save the Children, Tadamon and UNRWA have conducted hygiene awareness sessions in designated emergency shelters, while ACF, NRC, Save the Children, and UNICEF have provided hygiene items for IDPs. In addition, drinking water was provided by MsF, Naba'a, NRC, Save the Children, and UNICEF.
- UNRWA continues to carry out water-quality testing and chlorination, and maintenance, sanitation and disinfection campaigns in its three designated emergency shelters.
- NRC carried out upgrades to bathroom facilities and electrical systems in al Fawar collective site and continues to cover WASH needs at the site.
- UNRWA is removing accumulated garbage from some areas of Ein el Hilweh, via a private contractor. Over 100 tonnes of garbage have been removed in the past two days. Oxfam is also carrying out garbage collection in some areas of the camp.
- UNRWA, through ICRC, provided 12,000 litres of oil to ensure water wells inside the camp could continue to operate.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Strengthening of WASH activities, including water trucking, hygiene awareness sessions, and provision of baby and hygiene kits is required for the Fawar collective site.

Protection and case management

Needs:

- Case management services to respond to gender-based violence and child protection cases and for others at heightened risk.
- Provision of community-based psycho-social support (CBPSS), especially for children, single parents and other at-risk groups.

Response:

- Inside UNRWA designated emergency shelters, multiple protection partners including ARCPA/AI Jana, Naba'a, Tadamon, Save the Children, and UNRWA are providing services including psychological support, emotional support sessions, case management and focused PSS.
- UNRWA is carrying out regular protection assessments of all its designated emergency shelters to identify and mitigate risks and ensure displaced persons' dignity and safety. UNRWA has also distributed codes of conduct for those sheltering in its designated emergency shelters and has carried out safeguarding sessions for shelter personnel.
- For non-UNRWA collective sites, INTERSOS provided awareness sessions on access to services, case management services and psychosocial support to individuals and families at heightened risk, including specialized GBV and CP case management. For those outside UNRWA emergency shelters, partners are identifying and referring cases to INTERSOS for protection, including CP and GBV services. Zaytouna is also providing psychological support and emotional support sessions.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Enhanced focus on provision of protection and PSS services to displaced persons in the remaining non-UNRWA collective site (al Fawar) is required, as well as for those hosted by families or otherwise living in communities.
- Information on GBV risk mitigation and access to services remains limited as well as access to dignity kits and hygiene items as part of GBV prevention programs at al Fawar collective site. UNFPA is planning to address this gap in collaboration with local partners.

Background on the crisis

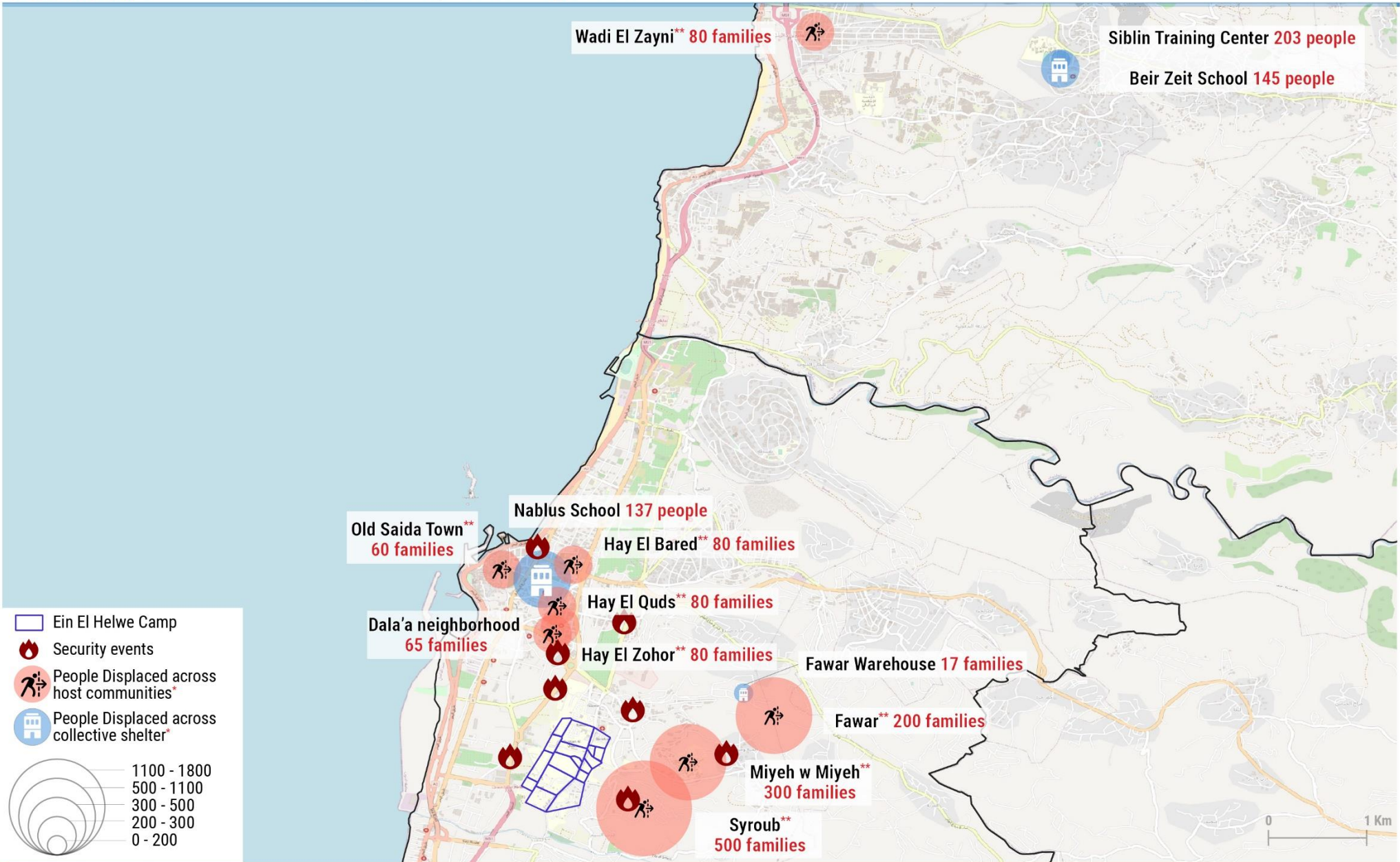
UNRWA provides services to over 38,000 registered Palestine Refugees in Ein el Hilweh camp. Eight UNRWA schools in the camp have 5,900 registered students, while two UNRWA health centres provide primary health care including reproductive health, infant and child-care, immunizations, screening and medical check-ups and treatment.

Since 31 July, fighting in Ein el Hilweh Palestine refugee camp has 30 people were killed and injured hundreds. Clashes have led to significant destruction across much of the camp, with thousands of people having fled. Armed groups have taken over eight UNRWA schools inside Ein El-Hilweh camp, threatening the access of nearly 6,000 children to education when the school year starts on 2 October.

For further information, please contact:

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For more information, please visit www.unocha.org - www.unrwa.org - www.reliefweb.int



*** Disclaimer:** These are approximate figures as the situation is volatile. ** People in these locations are displaced in the host community and not specific site. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

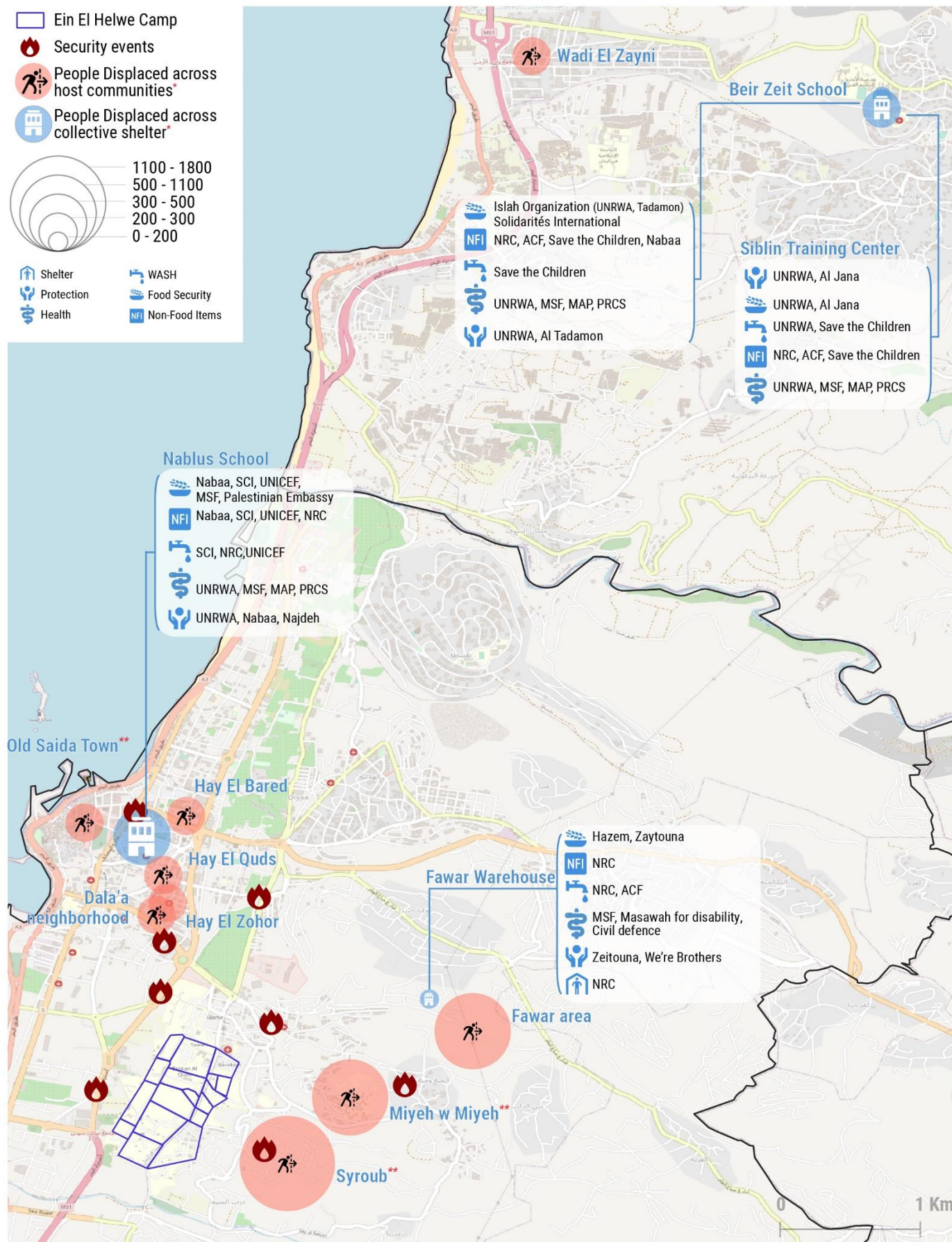
Creation date: 29 September 2023

Sources: OCHA, Humanitarian Partners, OpenStreetMap

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