



Lebanon Situation Report

August 7, 2023

Background

Information about the ongoing economic crisis and political instability in Lebanon is summarized in Anera's last [Situation Report \(May 2023\)](#).

Overview

On July 29, deadly clashes broke out in Ein El Hilweh refugee camp, the largest and most crowded Palestinian camp in Lebanon. Fighting began between Fatah and Jund al Sham after Fatah claimed the group shot and killed Fatah military general, Abu Ashraf al-Armouchi.¹ The two groups used rifles, grenades, and other heavy weaponry.² The conflict reached a brief ceasefire on August 1, then gunfire resumed in the evening on August 2.³ The violence again subsided on August 3, but it left 13 people dead, more than 60 people injured, and several hundreds of people displaced.⁴

The next day, August 4, marked the third anniversary of the [Beirut port explosion](#).

Ein El Hilweh

About 80,000 people live in Ein El Hilweh refugee camp and the surrounding areas, including Palestinian refugees displaced from other regions in Lebanon and 6,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria.⁵ A large wall surrounds the camp, and the Lebanese Army limits access by regulating entry points.⁶ Ein El Hilweh has experienced interfactional violence for the last several decades, but the Lebanese army avoids entering the camp due to a 1969 agreement with the Palestinian Liberation Organization.⁷ The most recent inter-factional conflict has increased tensions between Lebanese and Palestinian officials. Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati called Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to condemn the clashes and the negative effect the violence has on livelihoods in Lebanon.⁸

¹ [What's behind the fighting in Ein el-Hilweh Palestinian refugee camp? | Al Jazeera](#)

² [Ibid.; Situation Report #2 on the situation in Ein El Hilweh, Lebanon | UNRWA](#)

³ [Situation Report #1 on the situation in Ein El Hilweh, Lebanon | UNRWA](#) and [Situation Report #2](#)

⁴ [Ibid.; Report #3 on the situation in Ein El Hilweh camp, Lebanon | UNRWA](#)

⁵ [Ein El Hilweh camp profile | UNOCHA](#)

⁶ [What's behind the fighting in Ein el-Hilweh Palestinian refugee camp? | Al Jazeera](#)

⁷ [Lebanon warns army may intervene if Palestinian faction clashes continue | Al Jazeera](#)

⁸ [Lebanon warns Palestinian president that troops may intervene if clashes continue in refugee camp | AP](#)

Health & Livelihoods

As the clashes continued, refugees sought shelter in mosques and schools.⁹ UNRWA shelters hosted 136 families – a total of 636 people – in the Saida area.¹⁰ Displaced groups included 352 children, 18 persons with disabilities, and 29 elderly persons.¹¹

Damage assessments have been slowed as the UN and other organizations face difficulties trying to enter the camp. Lebanese Armed Forces have now opened the entrances to the camp, but it is unclear if displaced persons can safely return.¹²

Ein El Hilweh's school complex sustained damage during the clashes, which raises concerns that the start of the school year may be delayed.¹³ The director of UNRWA in Lebanon, Dorothee Klaus, said that the armed groups raided and significantly damaged four of the agency's schools in the camp.¹⁴ Necessary and costly repairs may prevent the school year from starting as scheduled, which would further threaten the well-being of vulnerable children.

Economic Crisis

The ongoing economic crisis also continues to threaten the livelihoods of refugee communities in Lebanon. High inflation rates are combined with limited job and educational opportunities for refugees and deteriorating living conditions in camps like Ein El Hilweh.¹⁵ Food insecurity rates are higher among refugee communities in Lebanon and access to other basic necessities like water and shelter is made more difficult during conflict.¹⁶ Political gridlock and the politicization of Syrian refugees in Lebanon have placed the country in an unsuitable position to address the needs of vulnerable communities through political and economic reform.

⁹ [Lebanon warns army may intervene if Palestinian faction clashes continue | Al Jazeera](#)

¹⁰ [Situation Report #2 on the situation in Ein el Hilweh, Lebanon | UNRWA](#)

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² [Report #3 on the situation in Ein el Hilweh camp, Lebanon | UNRWA](#)

¹³ [Damage from clashes could delay start of school year in Lebanon's largest Palestinian camp. UN says](#)

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ [Palestine Refugees in Lebanon Teeter on the Edge of Existence | UNRWA](#)

¹⁶ [Escalating needs in Lebanon 2023 overview | OCHA, UN RC/HC Lebanon](#)

Anera's Response

Anera has worked in Ein El Hilweh for many years, starting with a humanitarian relief delivery in 1975. For the past decade, Anera has implemented programs across a range of sectors, from school infrastructure and non-formal education to livelihood development and healthcare improvements.

Emergency Relief

In response to recent violence, Anera is delivering chronic medicine to patients who have been displaced. Our staff has also distributed thousands of hygiene kits and is currently gathering food from local partners who have come forward to help affected communities. Today, Anera staff and partners participated in psychological first aid training to reduce early phase distress caused by the traumatic events and to foster short- and long-term adaptive functioning and coping for affected families.