

# Mapping: Existing Public Shelters in Arab Towns

19/11/2023

## Background

This sample (hereinafter: mapping) seeks to provide a current, albeit partial, overview of the emergency preparedness status of Arab authorities, especially in times of war. To achieve this, a model was created for 33 Arab communities (in the Negev, Triangle, and Galilee) with a total of 393 shelters. The mapping refers to the types of shelters present in these communities. (shelters located in educational institutions, public facilities, places of worship, etc.)

Additionally, a review was conducted on the status of shelters in unrecognized villages in the Negev and the recent requests for the construction of public shelters in these villages, based on data from the Negev Situation Room in collaboration with civil society organizations.

To facilitate the mapping process, a questionnaire was prepared to assess the availability of public shelters within the community, identify the types of existing shelters and their respective structures, and capture precise addresses if available. To enhance the effectiveness of the survey, the team at Injaz initiated direct and personal communication with community leaders, authorities, and senior officials to gather the required data.



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This mapping initiative serves three core purposes: first, to establish a comprehensive database of public shelters in Arab communities; second, to delve into and thoroughly comprehend the data, facilitating the development of an emergency infrastructure plan to address present and future emergency scenarios; and third, to collaboratively update the locations of various shelters in coordination with civil society organizations, the locations will be integrated into popular navigation applications such as Waze and Google Maps, allowing residents to access real-time information during emergencies, ultimately enhancing community safety and well-being.

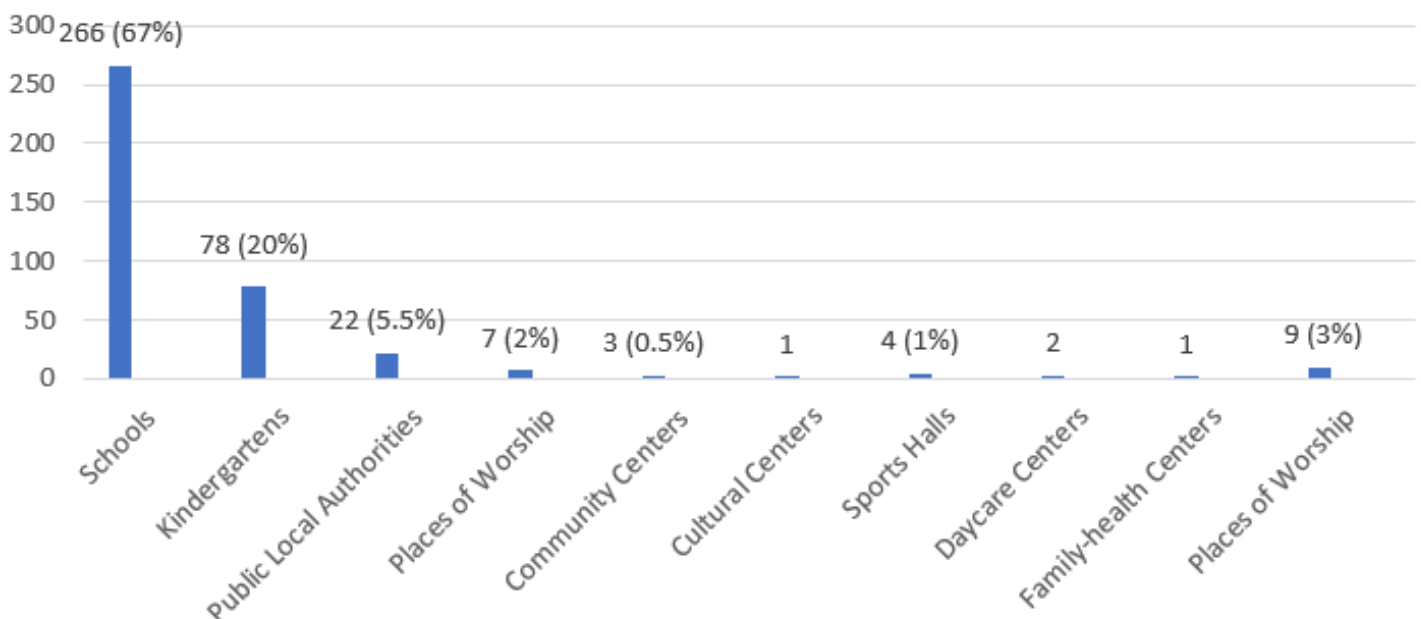
In addition, this mapping includes findings and recommendations directed towards government offices, local authorities, the National Committee for Heads of Arab Local Authorities (NCHALA), and civil society organizations. We believe that this mapping data could serve as the foundation for a comprehensive action plan by the government, NCHALA, Arab local authorities, and civil society organizations to develop emergency infrastructure in Arab communities, ensuring the safety and well-being of residents in these communities.

## Existing shelters in Arab communities; where are they located?

This mapping includes shelters located in 33 Arab communities spread across a wide geographical area (Galilee, Central, and Negev). The following graph illustrates the types of public shelters that were sampled:

Chart 1: Types of Public Shelters in the Sampled Communities

### Existing shelters in Arab communities; where are they located?



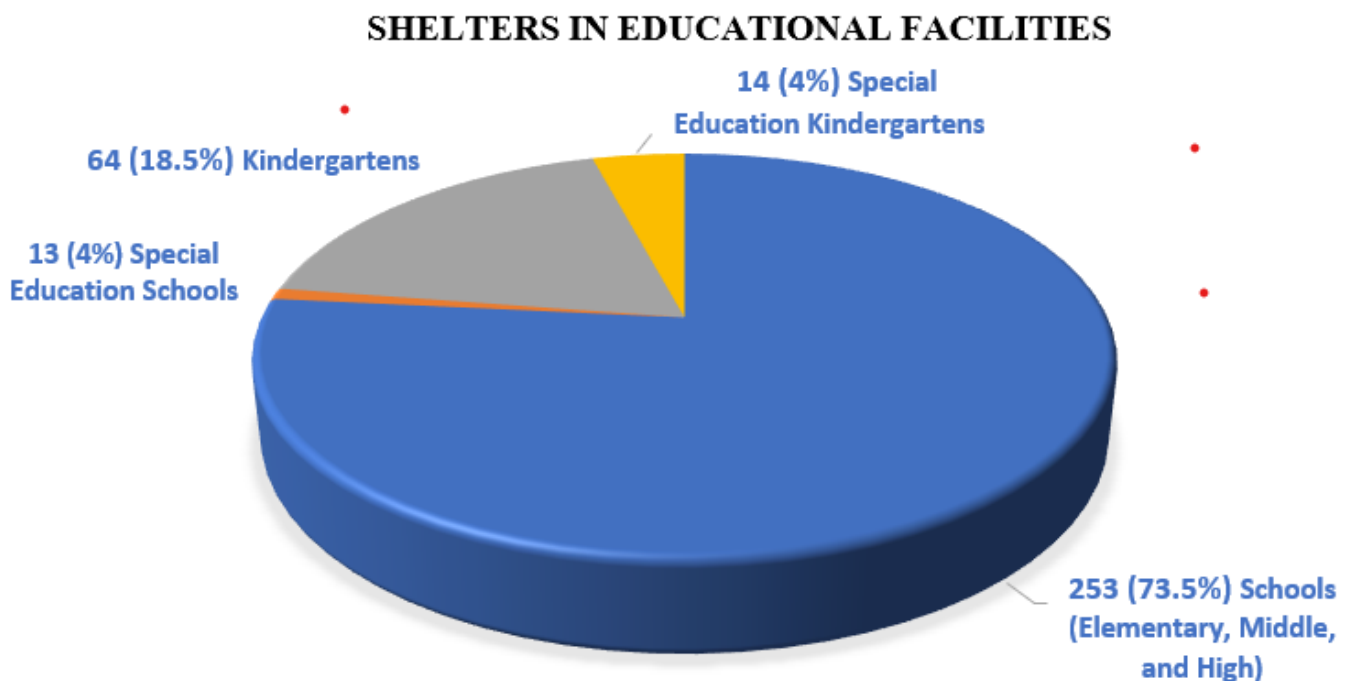
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The graph above indicates that the majority of the sampled shelters, comprising 87% (344 shelters), are situated within educational institutions. Specifically, 67% (266 shelters) are located in elementary, middle, and high schools, while approximately 20% (78 shelters) are designated in kindergartens. A smaller proportion, constituting only 13% (49 shelters), is distributed across public areas and community centers, including public shelters in residential neighborhoods, local authority facilities, places of worship, and recently constructed sports and cultural halls.

## Shelters in Educational Facilities

As previously mentioned, the vast majority of the sampled shelters are situated within the community's existing educational facilities, including schools and kindergartens. The graph below provides a breakdown of these shelters across the different educational institutions:

**Chart 2: Shelters in Educational Facilities: Types of Institutions**



The chart above indicates that the majority of shelters within the educational facilities are located in elementary, middle, and high schools. According to the data, 73.5% (253 shelters) are situated in these institutions, compared to 4% (13 shelters) in special education schools. Additionally, 18.5% (64 shelters) are found in kindergartens, contrasting with 4% (14 shelters) in special education kindergartens.



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## Shelters in Arab Communities in the Negev

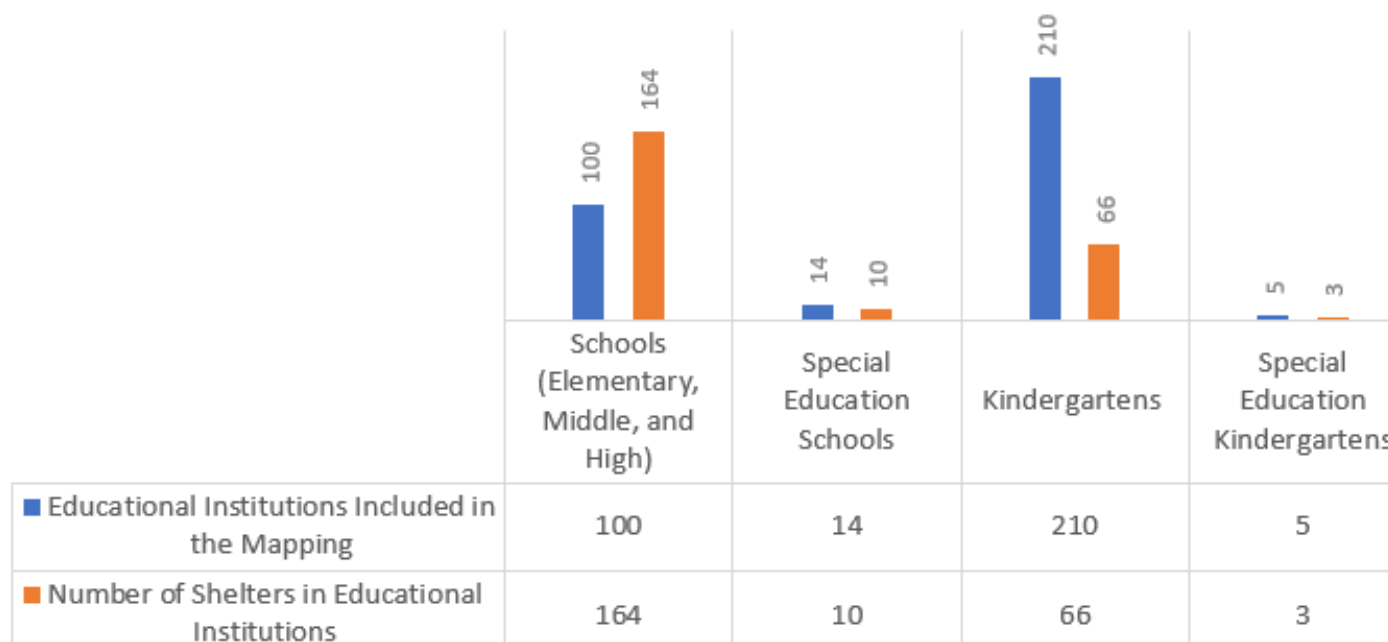
The Arab-Bedouin community in the Negev consists of approximately 280,000 people residing in nine permanent towns and 35 unrecognized villages. These communities share a distinctive feature of facing a notably low socio-economic status and a considerable deficiency in fundamental infrastructure. In the academic year 2020-2021, the student population in the Arab-Bedouin education system in the Negev totaled 101,239 (kindergarten till 12th grade). [1]

In this mapping, we sought to delve into the shelters located within educational facilities in the Arab communities in the Negev (excluding the unrecognized villages). The mapping included 329 educational facilities, comprising 110 schools (elementary, middle, and high schools), 14 special education schools, 210 kindergartens, and 5 special-education kindergartens.

**Chart 3: Shelters in Educational Institutions in Arab Communities in the Negev**

### SHELTERS IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN ARAB COMMUNITIES IN THE NEGEV

■ Educational Institutions Included in the Mapping    ■ Number of Shelters in Educational Institutions



[1] Abu Asaad, A. (2021). The Arab-Bedouin Education System in the Negev: Reality and Needs. The Israel Democracy Institute.



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Analyzing the data reveals that merely 32% (69 out of 215) of all surveyed kindergartens are equipped with shelters. Conversely, there are 174 shelters in 100 schools, indicating that certain schools have multiple shelters. It's noteworthy that the number of these shelters is considerably inadequate in comparison to the total student population in these frameworks, considering the Arab student population in the Negev stands at 101,239.

**Chart 4: Percentage breakdown of shelters based on the type of educational institution**

Educational Institution	Total Included in the Mapping	Number of Shelters	Shelter Percentage	Comments
Schools (Elementary, Middle, and High)	100	164	-	In most schools, there is more than one shelter.
Special Education Schools	14	10	72%	
Kindergartens	210	66	32%	
Special Education Kindergartens	5	3	60%	

## Public Shelters in Unrecognized Villages

According to data from the Arab Emergency Situation Room in the Negev, working in partnership with civil society organizations: Bimkom, Ajeec, Siraj, and Babcom, there are currently around 250 shelters in the 35 unrecognized villages in the Negev. These shelters were installed following the outbreak of hostilities and the casualties resulting from missile strikes in these areas.

It is important to note that these shelters were established through initiatives by civil society organizations, the Home Front Command, and associations affiliated with Arab parties. The mapping conducted in the unrecognized villages in the Negev reveals a deficit of over ten thousand shelters.



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## Conclusions and Recommendations

The mapping findings indicate a concerning reality regarding the readiness of Arab authorities to deal with emergency situations, particularly wartime scenarios. Some Arab communities lack any public shelters, while in others, the only public shelters are within educational institutions like schools and kindergartens. Additionally, in some communities, there are no shelters within educational institutions, and in some cases, rooms designated as shelters have been converted into classrooms or laboratories due to a significant shortage of classrooms in Arab society. In general, the available public shelters in Arab communities, including those within educational institutions, fall short of accommodating the entire population or the students they were originally designed for. These findings echo the insights from a 2013 research initiative by the Abraham Initiatives regarding the "Preparedness of Arab localities for emergencies." [2]

This mapping reveals a deficit in shelters within Arab communities, leading to significant shortcomings in vital services during emergency situations. The insufficiency mainly relates to public shelters in residential areas and communal buildings. As highlighted in the earlier research by the Abraham Initiatives, it is clear that the shelters and fortified structures within educational institutions in Arab communities can only accommodate approximately one-third of the students. There is a notable absence of protective facilities in public areas across all Arab communities, indicating that the shelter capacity in educational institutions falls short of meeting the students' needs adequately.

[2]

<https://abrahaminitiatives.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/%D7%9E%D7%95%D7%9B%D7%A0%D7%95%D7%AA-%D7%94%D7%99%D7%A9%D7%95%D7%91%D7%99%D7%9D-%D7%94%D7%A2%D7%A8%D7%91%D7%99%D7%99%D7%9D-%D7%9C%D7%97%D7%99%D7%A8%D7%95%D7%9D-%D7%93%D7%A6%D7%9E%D7%91%D7%A8-2013.pdf>



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## Recommendations

### Government Ministries

- The Ministry of Education should ensure that every educational institution includes designated spaces such as shelters, protected areas, protected classrooms alongside emergency equipment, and more.
- The Ministry of Education, in partnership with Arab local authorities, should ensure that existing shelters in educational institutions can accommodate all students, ensuring access for students with special needs.
- The Ministry of Interior, with the Home Front Command and local authorities, should conduct a comprehensive needs assessment in the area of public shelters in all Arab communities, including unrecognized villages in the Negev, and develop a detailed and comprehensive action plan with clear goals, timelines, and dedicated budgets for building public shelters and safe spaces in Arab communities.
- The Ministry of Housing should develop a plan for building public shelters in "longstanding" neighborhoods with multi-story buildings.
- The Ministry of Religious Affairs should ensure the development of a plan for building shelters in all places of worship.

### National Committee for Heads of Arab Local Authorities

- Include the emergency preparedness, particularly public shelters and shelters in educational institutions, on the agenda of Arab local authorities' meetings. Increase awareness of the emergency topic among local authority leaders and build a detailed and comprehensive work plan that sets clear goals and timelines for the construction of public shelters, while promoting the plan with various government ministries, including the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Education.



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## **Arab local authorities:**

- Establish an emergency protocol and work towards its implementation, specialize in emergency preparedness, and enhance collaboration with government ministries, Home Front Command, and civil society organizations in this field.
- Conduct a comprehensive mapping of all public shelters and protected spaces in the locality, focusing not only on those within educational institutions.
- Establish an emergency situation room that convenes regularly to monitor emergency-related matters, including public shelters.

## **Civil Society Organizations:**

- Work to expand their activities in Arab communities in the field of emergency preparedness in general, including the construction of public shelters and secure spaces, and advocate for this issue among decision-makers in government offices, while adapting activities to the unique characteristics of Arab communities and society.
- Develop training programs for professional growth and skill development of human resources in the Arab local authorities' teams, focusing on emergency preparedness.

