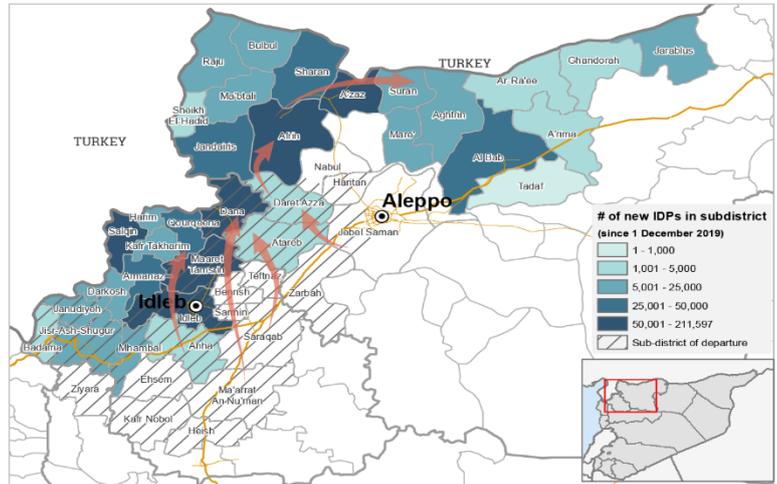


### HIGHLIGHTS

- With the announcement of a ceasefire on 6 March 2020, airstrikes in northwest Syria reportedly came to a halt while limited instances of shelling have been reported along the frontlines. Despite this, the immense humanitarian needs in the area will persist, given the preceding months of violence and large-scale displacement.
- The humanitarian needs in the area are across all sectors, but the most acute emergency needs are shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene, food and protection. Other needs with longer term impacts are becoming more apparent, such as malnutrition and stunting, the lack of education, and the loss of access to over 150,000 hectares of arable land.
- Humanitarian workers on the ground highlight the impact of the current situation on women and children, due to displacement, crowded living conditions, the lack of privacy, exploitation, and other factors. Four out of five people who have been displaced since 1 December are women, girls or boys.



Source: CCCM

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

## 4 M

People in northwest Syria comprising Idlib area and northern Aleppo governorate

## approximately 960,000

People newly displaced since 1 December

## over

## US\$ 300 M

Emergency funding secured to support 1.1 million people for the next 6 months

## 51%

CHILDREN (est)

## 60%

Of them are CHILDREN

## 25%

WOMEN (est)

## 21%

Of them are WOMEN

### SITUATION OVERVIEW

The humanitarian situation remains alarming across northwest Syria where the impact of the conflict continues to have a devastating impact on the lives of an estimated four million people living in the Idlib area and northern Aleppo governorate. With the announcement of a ceasefire on 6 March 2020, airstrikes in northwest Syria reportedly came to a halt and limited instances of shelling have been reported in concentrated areas along the frontlines. Despite this, the vast humanitarian needs in the area will persist given the prolonged effects of violence and displacement that the area witnessed. While the displacement from areas close to the frontlines in the Idlib area reportedly came to a stop with few additional movements being reported, the humanitarian needs of those who have been displaced since December 2019, as well as the pre-existing needs of the wider community remain acute. Prior to the ceasefire, violence continued to take a heavy toll on the civilian population. For example, a few hours after the dawn on 5 March, a poultry farm hosting some 70 IDPs in Ma'arrat Tamsrin

sub-district was reportedly hit by an airstrike, killing two children, five women and nine men, and injuring five children, five women and ten men.

Since 1 December, almost one million people, or one third of the total civilian population of the Idlib area, were forced to flee from their homes to escape from the violence. Some 550,000 people, more than half of the people who have been displaced since December, moved to northwestern areas in Idlib governorate into a small area already hosting hundreds of thousands of displaced people. Over 410,000 of those who escaped from the violence moved to areas in northern Aleppo governorate such as A'zaz, Afrin, Jandairis and Al Bab sub-districts, where existing services are over-stretched. While local sources have reported that some families were returning to areas such as Atareb and Ariha, their humanitarian needs will continue to persist upon return as many services in these areas have been suspended or moved.

This latest wave of displacement compounds an already dire humanitarian situation in northwest Syria where the resilience of communities, families and individuals have eroded as a result of nine years of conflict, multiple displacements, as well as economic hardship. Prior to the latest escalation, 2.8 million people out of a total of 4 million people living in northwest Syria were estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance.

The humanitarian needs in the area are across all sectors, with the most acute emergency needs being shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene, food and protection. For instance, the Food Security Cluster is reporting that there is a gap in providing food assistance to 438,000 people, particularly in A'zaz, Al Bab, Jandairis and Akhtrein sub-districts in northern Aleppo governorate and in Darkosh and Salqin sub-district in western Idlib governorate. About 150,000 hectares of arable lands are reportedly no longer accessible for farmers due to the displacement, which will have a negative impact on the availability of locally grown food in the Idlib area. In terms of shelter assistance, the needs of those who have been displaced to urban areas as opposed to camps and informal settlements require different interventions. Some 327,000 people are currently staying in camps and individual tents comprising up to 34 percent of those displaced over the past three months while 165,000 people are in unfinished houses or buildings. Some 366,000 IDPs are currently living with host families or in rented homes while some 93,000 people are staying in collective shelters, most of which were converted from public buildings such as schools and mosques. Moreover, there are important differences between the types of shelter in northern Aleppo governorate and the Idlib area. In northern Aleppo governorate, some 180,000 people are staying in makeshift tent settlements and unfinished buildings, which makes up 44 percent of some 410,000 people who have been displaced to these areas. In the Idlib area, only 22 percent - some 119,000 people - are sheltering in these conditions. On the other hand, 27 percent of the newly displaced people are in IDP camps in the Idlib area while this figure drops to 12 percent in northern Aleppo governorate.

Humanitarian workers on the ground are sounding the alarm on the particular impact of displacement, crowded living conditions and the lack of privacy on women and girls. Four out of five people who have been displaced since 1 December are women, girls and boys, who face serious challenges that compromise their health, security and well-being. Humanitarian actors on the ground are reporting incidents of exploitation and abuse of displaced women and girls by men in positions of power such as property owners, in exchange for cash or material assistance. Reports of women not being able to shower for several weeks due to lack of privacy and refusing to eat or drink in order not to go to the bathroom are extremely worrying. The Protection Cluster reported that some pregnant women are reportedly delaying planned births due to the lack of access to medical facilities, endangering both the baby's and mother's health. The violence and displacement have also significantly affected breastfeeding and dietary practices for children and women and increased their exposure to infection. This is being manifested in increasing rates of stunting, a largely irreversible form of malnutrition. Surveillance data collected by Nutrition Cluster partners among displaced children indicates that almost three in every ten children under the age of 5 years are stunted. Stunting is the impaired child growth that results in poor cognition and educational performance but also increases the risk of morbidity and mortality. Moreover, the recent escalation in violence and displacement had a devastating effect on education, particularly in the Idlib area. The Education Cluster estimates that almost 400,000 school-age children from 5 to 17 years old were displaced since 1 December, impacting their access to education. Education activities were suspended for several months in Idlib governorate and the western Aleppo countryside, and hundreds of schools continue to be out of operation. More than 20,000 people continue to shelter in 277 schools in the districts of Afrin, Al Bab and A'zaz in northern Aleppo governorate and Ariha, Harim, Idlib and Jisr-Ash-Shugur in Idlib governorate.

## FUNDING

On 21 February the humanitarian community issued the updated inter-cluster readiness and response plan for northwest Syria, revised for the ongoing reality. The financial requirement to implement the plan fully is US\$ 500 million, in order to provide basic humanitarian support to some 1.1 million people who are displaced or at risk of displacement in the greater Idlib area and northern Aleppo for the next 6 months. Donors have continued their efforts to provide additional funding to

support the plan. Over US\$300 million have been cumulatively pledged against the plan. Donors are encouraged to allocate funding against this plan to ensure that the most urgent needs are met.

A series of consultations and information-sharing sessions have been organized between donors and the humanitarian community both at headquarters and field level to ensure adequate communication on the needs and the response, as more funding is needed to support both the newly displaced and the 2.6 million people who required humanitarian assistance prior to the most recent violence. Providing funding that goes beyond July, when the Security Council Resolution authorizing the UN cross-border response is up for renewal, will be crucial in ensuring that vulnerable people are supported in a time of great need. The humanitarian needs of these people are not anticipated to decrease and further scale-up continues to be required.

Reprogramming efforts are also ongoing for existing projects that were being implemented in areas where humanitarian actors no longer have access. From December 2019 to March 2020, 54 revision requests were processed by the Syria Cross-border Humanitarian Fund. Most of the projects were relocated to areas that have received IDPs in the past three months such as Harim, Kelly, Jisr Ash Shugur, Armanaz, Kafr Takharim, Salqin, Darkosh, Dana, Maaret Tamsrin, Al Bab, A'zaz, Sharan, and Afrin.

## HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

### Camp Coordination and Camp Management

#### Needs:

- The existing reception centers and IDP sites are running over their capacity. Moreover, there is a requirement to address the shelter needs of the most vulnerable displaced population by expanding or establishing new IDP sites and reception centers as part of the response plan for the current influx.
- Some IDP families are using public buildings as collective centers, including some schools that need to be evacuated to resume the education process.
- Reportedly, some families have utilized poultry farms and other polluted places for shelter, one of which has recently been exposed to an airstrike. There is a need to map those families for the provision of better living conditions.
- Most of the IDP families have been hosted in three reception centers for four months already, with no possibility of relocation to permanent sites due to the lack of other shelter options.

#### Response:

- Until now, three functioning Reception Centers have responded by hosting 7,782 IDPs (1,297 families) where food, shelter and WASH services are provided.
- The reviewed 12 SCHF project proposals on the expansion/establishment of planned camps, which target 96,311 IDPs, are at the approval stage.
- The provision of technical guidance to cluster members is ongoing, on international standards in site selection, site planning, HLP, due diligence, and other camp management related activities.
- The CCCM Cluster continues to facilitate Land Identification Taskforce meetings. Among taskforce members, four organizations have been identified for site verification purposes. As of this week (9-13 March 2020), 5 million square meters of land have been identified with the capacity to accommodate 151,000 individuals.
- IDP figures, infographics, and dashboards have been produced based on the data received from cluster members and partners.
- The CCCM Cluster is closely monitoring 706 IDP sites hosting approximately 1.1 million IDPs, and incident reports affecting IDP sites are produced in a timely manner.
- As a member of the Rapid Response Mechanism, the CCCM Cluster provides its expertise and recommendations in the response's contingency stocks prepositioned in Syria, Turkey and those in the pipelines.

#### Gaps & Constraints:

- The continuous displacement led to a decrease in areas to accommodate the newly displaced population.
- Due to delays and/or contradictions in the information provided by many members across borders, data cleaning and verification is required.
- Reportedly, there are 2,721 IDPs in open areas in urgent need of shelter.

## Education

### Needs:

- An estimated 398,000 school-age children (5 to 17 years old) are amongst the displaced people in northwest Syria since 1 December 2019. Due to the large influx of displaced family, many schools were converted to temporary shelters. There are 23,419 people residing in 277 schools in the districts of Afrin, Al Bab and A'zaz (Aleppo) and Ariha, Harim, Idleb and Jisr-Ash-Shugur (Idleb).
- Education activities have also been continuously suspended due to insecurity on the ground as well as schools have been used as shelter. The education process has been suspended in Ariha sub-district with few schools still functional. For the time being, only 5 schools are still functioning with overcrowded classrooms due to displacement from nearby locations.
- More than 300 schools are out of operation, impacting 117,000 children and more than 5,000 teachers:
  - 135 schools in Ma'arrat An Nu'man and neighboring communities, impacting 48,649 children and 2,704 teachers;
  - 23 schools in the communities of Ariha, impacting 5,681 children and 384 teachers;
  - 41 schools in the communities of Saraqab, impacting 4,901 children and 615 teachers.
- To address the needs, the objectives of the Education sector are:
  - Advocating for the provision of shelter for newly displaced people, so that schools used as shelters can return to providing education services.
  - Providing psychosocial support (PSS) and psychological first aid (PFA) activities in coordination with the Child Protection Sub-Cluster.
  - Improving/establishing and furnishing temporary learning spaces.
  - Providing education personnel and teacher incentives and training.
  - Providing learning materials for children and teachers.

# 398,000

School-aged children (6-17) whose education is impacted by the ongoing displacement

### Response:

- The Education Cluster was able to reach 51,819 school aged children with education assistance. Children are being reached with diverse packages of education services including PSS, PFA, formal and non-formal education activities, home schooling, student bags, textbooks and distribution of winter clothes to ensure minimum disruption to children's learning.
  - 10,908 children supported with PSS and PFA in Idleb, Maaret Tamsrin, Harim, Dana and Atareb, Qourqeena, Daret Azza and Bennsh.
  - 18,080 children supported with formal and non-formal education in Idleb, Harim, Dana, Atareb, Salqin, Maaret Tamsrin, Qourqeena; including children with disabilities.
  - 825 children supported with winter clothes in Maaret Tamsrin and Atareb; 674 children benefitted from fuel for heating in schools.
  - 4,159 children supported with recreational kits, school bags, student kits and textbooks in Ariha, Idleb, Harim, Dana, Armanaz, Salqin, Kafr Takharim, Idleb City, Marat Tamsrin and Qourqeena.
  - 4,150 children supported for their mid-year exams.
  - 173 children provided with medicine against headlice in coordination with the Health Cluster.
  - 1,106 children supported with home-based education based on a self-learning programme, in Marat Tamsrin, Daret Azza, Ariha and Haritan sub-districts.
  - 4,000 out of school children provided with life skills, recreation and PSS education activities.
- 36 teachers and Education personnel are trained on Literacy and Numeracy and on psycho-social support and referral mechanisms
- 227 families have also been supported with tent provision by Education partners to support the relocation of IDPs sheltering in schools to allow the resumption of learning activities in the affected areas.

### Gaps & Constraints:

- Lack of funds makes it challenging for the Cluster members to provide quality education support, particularly in conjunction with the unfolding security situation in which children are constantly on the move.
- Education services need to be relocated to follow displaced populations and established in locations where displaced people settle. Lost or destroyed educational materials need to be replaced.
- The education system in areas receiving newly displaced families was already overstretched prior to the arrival of newly displaced people. The needs to receive the newly displaced people in the existing education services risk inflaming inter/intra-community tensions.
- Students and teachers lack basic education supplies, and school furniture and WASH facilities are insufficient.

- Many learning facilities remain cold and overexposed to the elements despite ongoing winterization efforts.
- Many learning facilities have no basic safety equipment/systems in place despite ongoing safety and security concerns.
- Students and education personnel are not receiving the psychosocial support, knowledge and skills needed for a safe and productive learning environment.

## Food Security

### Needs:

- Many of the 960,000 newly displaced people have moved with livestock, particularly those moving to Afrin district in northern Aleppo governorate where 30% of the sheep and goats and 18% cows belong to IDPs. Livestock is the only productive asset that the newly displaced people possess.
- Emergency food assistance for recently displaced people is needed during the first 2 to 4 weeks of displacement, through cooked meals and Ready-To-Eat rations (RTEs). Following the frontline emergency assistance, the people should be integrated in the monthly regular food assistance.
- After the initial displacement, lifesaving livelihood initiatives are also needed to support the affected communities and households in increasing agricultural production, sustaining small-scale food production, protecting productive assets, and restoring or creating income-generating activities to prevent negative or irreversible coping mechanisms.
- Provision of animal feed is needed to limit sales of livestock by displaced and impoverished households. Due to the transport cost, feed distributions are expensive and hence extremely limited in scope. Voucher schemes for provision of animal feed involving local suppliers are cost-efficient and much more sustainable. To enable improved planning and targeting of activities, there is a need to obtain updated estimates of livestock numbers owned by displaced people. The main needs for the livestock now are dry storage fodder warehouses, water for the animals and three main vaccinations: Pastorilla, Entrotoxiemia, PPR vaccine.

# 438,000

People for whom additional food assistance support is needed

### Response:

- The frontline response includes the distribution of ready to eat rations (RTEs) (tailored for a household of 5 people) and the provision of cooked meals and emergency multi-purpose cash grants (MPCG) of US\$ 120-130 for each household to cover the immediate food needs.
- From 10 February to 9 March, 16 Food Security Cluster members provided the following assistance to **521,453 newly displaced people**:
  - 11 FSL members distributed 79,813 Emergency Food Basket (one-off) to reach 400,180 beneficiaries.
  - 1 FSL members distributed 830 RTEs to assist 4,000 beneficiaries.
  - 2 FSL members distributed 1,003,200 USD MPCGs to assist 41,552 beneficiaries.
  - 6 FSL members distributed 75,721 Cooked Meals to assist 75,721 beneficiaries.
- By the end March 2020, Food Security Cluster members will provide further assistance to the newly displaced people according to the following plan that covers **792,555 newly displaced people**:
  - 8 FSL members planned 128,360 Emergency Food Basket (one-off) to reach 641,800 beneficiaries.
  - 4 FSL members planned 11,555 RTEs to assist 57,775 beneficiaries.
  - 2 FSL members planned 1,059,120 USD MPCGs to assist 44,130 beneficiaries.
  - 5 FSL members planned 31,450 Cooked Meals to assist 31,450 beneficiaries.
  - 1 FSL members planned 208,800 USD Cash for Food to assist 17,400 beneficiaries.
- Under the 2020 first allocation from the Syria Cross-border Humanitarian Fund, FSL Cluster members will scale up the response to assist the newly displaced people with cooked meals, RTEs, and food baskets until September 2020.

### Gaps & Constraints:

- The latest estimation points out to a gap for **438,000** individuals who have not yet received food assistance. The Food Security Cluster calls for additional support to meet these food assistance needs by delivering rapid emergency response (cooked meals, RTEs, food baskets either in kind, voucher, or cash).
- The main identified constraints regard security, transportation, access to safe locations, and harsh winter season that sharpen the urgent needs of the newly displaced people, that affected the IDPs and their livestock heads as well.

- Further, according to the Agriculture Technical Working group, about 150,000 hectares of arable lands are no longer accessible for farmers due to the displacement. Therefore, it is highly recommended to support the host communities and IDPs through livelihood activities.

## Health

### Needs:

- Since December 2019, following the deterioration of the situation in northwest Syria, heavy IDP movement occurred. The health response was strained due to limited available human resources and the need for further capacity of health partners to expand services to some 960,000 newly displaced individuals.
- There is a shortage in dialysis kits in northwest Syria as reported by the Hemodialysis care task force.
- As winter respiratory illnesses continue, H1N1 cases are above the threshold as reported via Early Warning Alert and Response (EWARN) Network, and the patent threat for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) increases as Turkey declared and confirmed their first case.
- Due to the violence in recent months, the EWARN system in northwest Syria has been disrupted at the same time as the continuous movement of facilities. This can delay medical reporting, which in turn delays response to alerts.
- No COVID-19 cases have been confirmed in areas under the control of the Government of Syria (GoS) or in northwest Syria. However, there is a need for a detection mechanism to be strengthened in northwest Syria. In coordination with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Health Cluster members, a plan has been developed and simultaneously actions are being taken.

### Response:

- A COVID-19 Task Force was established by the Health Cluster under WHO leadership. Cluster members have been organized to address the pillars of the response: coordination, risk communication, surveillance and case definition, point of entry, laboratory support, case management and Infection Control Programme.
- Laboratory technicians are being trained to use COVID-19 diagnostic tests.
- Protective wear and masks prepositioned for possible chemical events can and will be use as needed in case of a COVID-19 outbreak until supplies are delivered.
- Vis-à-vis the current situation and high numbers of newly displaced people, 2 mobile teams and 2 Primary Health Centers have been activated in the following locations:
  - Mobile teams: Salqin, Alani, Hir Jamous and new Camps; Qah camps, Salwa and Hezra.
  - PHCs: Armanaz and Hafasrjah communities.
- An additional 13 PHCs (10 in Afrin and 3 in Idleb), 9 mobile teams (7 in Afrin and 2 in Idleb) and 11 ambulances (A'zaz, Al Bab and Jarablus) are to be supported by the Cluster lead in order to provide needed services.
- Despite the suspension of some Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) centers due to security situation, there are 76 EPI centres still providing vaccination to 13,262 children under 1 year old as a monthly target. The effort is still ongoing by Syria Immunization Group (SIG) with concerned health partners to move the teams to areas where recent population movements arrived or are still ongoing.
- 10 EPI centres were relocated to new areas to serve IDPs.
- 70 kits were provided in warehouses in northwest Syria to be distributed to 15 intensive care units (ICU) and 17 general hospitals in northwest Syria. The kits were modified to fit the context to assure continuous proper care to non-chronic disease and critical medical cases in hospitals, including ICUs. This is a pilot to be evaluated in order to provide more kits to fit the purpose and to serve population in northwest Syria until end of the year.
- Since December 2019, cold chain equipment and vaccines from EPI suspended centers were secured in warehouses to be re-installed in re-located EPI centres.
- The Sexual and Reproductive Health Technical working group drafted a “patient’s card” to be carried by patients when they move from a place to another. This will help the patient to present to health facilities a comprehensive medical history in order to receive proper care. The card will be designed, printed and distributed to all health partners.
- A collaboration was created between local health authorities and the Dialysis Task-force to transfer the dialysis patients among new IDPs to existing dialysis centers in northwest Idleb via the existing referral network. Also, under SCHF funding, one Cluster member is conducting regular maintenance for hemodialysis machines in northwest Syria and providing basic medicines and consumables, while this does not cover all the needs.
- Paramedic training: 142 paramedics were trained.

### Gaps & Constraints:

- Delay of delivering of COVID-19 response supplies due to global ongoing shortages and demand.

- Since December 2019, 14 centres were temporarily closed, 9 in Idleb and 5 in Aleppo. The total estimated number of unreached children under one year old per month is around 1,998.

## Nutrition

### Needs:

- Need to scale up nutrition response to reach all displaced mothers and children within the accessible geographic areas.
- Multi-sectoral responses to address Acute Malnutrition among displaced Pregnant and lactating mothers and Chronic Malnutrition among displaced children 6-59 months

# 117,523

Children below age 5 and pregnant and lactating mothers reached with life- saving nutrition services

### Response:

- Since the start of the last escalations in Idleb and Western Aleppo, **117,523** pregnant and lactating women (PLW) and children under the age of five years were reached with life-saving nutrition services covering **135** communities in **32** sub-districts.
- The number of PLW and children under the age of five years reached to date represents nearly **44 percent** of the population in need of life-saving nutrition services with **13 percent** increase in the coverage compared to the last situation update.
- The life-saving nutrition services have covered the following categories of beneficiaries:
  - **32,302** PLW reached which represents nearly **42 percent** of those in need;
  - **85,221** children under the age of five years reached which represents **43 percent** of those in need.
- Life-saving nutrition services are provided through 65 Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) and mobile teams by **18** Nutrition Cluster partners.
- Nutrition Cluster partners provided the following services;
  - **15,274** displaced children under the age of 5 years, pregnant and lactating mothers received high-energy biscuits for prevention of acute malnutrition;
  - **31,853** pregnant and lactating mothers and Children 6-59 months age received micro-nutrient supplementation;
  - **27,843** children 6-59 months of age received high calories lipid-based nutrition supplements for prevention of acute malnutrition;
  - **23,727** mothers and care givers were reached with infant feeding and caring practices messages and counselling.
- Out of the **117,523** screened PLW and children under the age of five years for Acute Malnutrition:
  - **406** cases of severe acute malnutrition and 1,396 cases of moderate acute malnutrition were identified among displaced children 6-59 months and referred for appropriate treatment, with the highest number of cases found in Afrin and camps in Northern Idleb;
  - **2,647** acutely malnourished mothers identified and referred to appropriate treatment;
  - Nutrition surveillance data among IDPs indicates a proxy prevalence of acute malnutrition among children 6-59 months and PLW of **3 percent** and **21 percent** respectively.
- Nutrition surveillance data indicates a high proxy prevalence of chronic malnutrition among displaced children at **28 percent**.

### Gaps & Constraints:

- Increased insecurity and displacements which affects both population and nutrition partners.
- Management of chronic malnutrition among under the age of five years and acute malnutrition among PLW requires a comprehensive maternal health and nutrition response in close coordination with Food Security, Health, WASH and Shelter cluster.

## Protection

### Needs:

- The humanitarian situation, particularly in the Idleb area, continues to deteriorate as a result of the hostilities that escalated in late 2019. Ongoing conflict and civilians' direct exposure to hostilities, including to the use of explosive weapons in densely populated areas and particularly in the Idleb area, continue to pervade the protection environment in northwest Syria, exacerbating physical safety risks, high levels of trauma and distress, and contributing to forced displacement and restrictions on freedom of movement.

- The risk of death and injury due to explosive hazards, including unexploded ordnance, increased over the preceding months due to artillery and aerial bombardments in locations where civilians are located or moving, as well as the legacy of years of conflict.
- Protection risks have increased due to the ongoing displacement, the lack of shelter options, and sub-standard living conditions in areas of displacement. Some IDPs are reportedly moving to immediately unsafe areas due to a lack of available accommodation, while others are sheltering under trees in the wild or in overcrowded unfinished buildings. Related child protection (CP) and gender-based violence (GBV) risks include overcrowding in rental accommodation, collective centers, and makeshift shelters in IDP sites, as well as a lack of privacy and suitable, gender-segregated WASH facilities place women and girls at particular risk of GBV. GBV partners are reporting that many women and girls are not able to shower for an extended period of 3 weeks or more due to lack of privacy. This is leading to health concerns and consequences such as infections and severe itching.
- There are reports of girls being deprived of access to education due to unaffordable transportation costs.
- Large numbers of unaccompanied and separated girls as well as female headed households are reportedly sharing accommodation with related or unrelated individuals, which is creating several protection and privacy risks.
- GBV sub-cluster partners are reporting incidents of exploitation and abuse of displaced women and girls by men in position of power such as property owners, in exchange for cash or material assistance. Increased economic vulnerabilities due to displacement place women and girls at risk, especially recently displaced female-headed households.
- Pregnant women were identified on the road and in informal IDP sites and are in need of medical and other support. Some pregnant women are reportedly delaying planned birth due to lack of access to medical facilities.
- Children who are displaced are at higher risk of recruitment or use by armed forces and/or groups due to reduced family/community protection and exhaustion of coping mechanisms, as well as the impact of lack of economic and educational opportunities caused by displacement itself.
- Significant numbers of reports from the field in this period continue to inform on grave child rights violations including killing and maiming of children. In this reporting period alone, unverified reports from the field suggest that 14 children were killed and 8 injured as a result of strikes. Civilian infrastructure (essential to life) have continued to be either directly hit or damaged by nearby strikes having a direct impact on the protection of children and their parents/caregivers.
- Insecurity has disrupted child protection service provision, leading to suspension in many areas as well as relocation of services. Child Protection teams and their families themselves have also become displaced, affecting teams' capacity to respond. Similarly, some partners reported loss of equipment and supplies affecting their response capacity when moving to new locations.
- Territorial gains with subsequent displacement severely affect the protection of children and their caregivers. Death of caregivers and unreliable means of transportation continue to result in cases of unaccompanied and separated children as well as child-headed and female-headed households.
- Child protection concerns are compounding and rarely take place in isolation. Multi-sectoral coordination response prioritizing child vulnerability criteria is needed.

### Response:

- The Protection Monitoring Task Force (PMTF) completed the key informant survey with newly displaced households on intentions & protection. From 17 to 23 February, six PMTF partners conducted 193 key informant interviews (41% male, 59% female), (88% IDP, 12% host community) focusing on intentions of newly displaced populations as well as protection concerns. Interviews were mostly conducted across districts in Idlib governorate (Al Mara, Ariha, Harim, Idlib, Jisr-Ash-Shugur). Key findings show that displaced civilians in western districts of Idlib face desperation and a grim reality: the fear of aerial bombardments and shelling pervades all aspects of life, while households feel like they have run out of options to seek safety and security. The complete report is available on the Protection Cluster website.
- The Protection Cluster, through its newly formed Technical Working Group on Disability Inclusion, organized a two-day workshop on 2 and 4 March with 15 organizations to develop an inter-sectoral inclusion strategy. The group decided that the strategy will focus on issues both at the strategic and operational level, including meaningful participation, removal of barriers, empowerment, and data collection/identification. The group prioritized the following specific areas for immediate attention and action through the strategy: access to services, coordination, and staff capacity. Participants recognized that allocated funding and improved data collection underpin all meaningful change on disability inclusion. Further consultations at Gaziantep and northwest Syria level will take place, including with people with disabilities, clusters, and programme managers.
- From 3 to 9 March 2020, eight Protection Cluster members provided emergency response services for civilians displaced from Idlib and Aleppo due to the ongoing hostilities. Cluster members provided 12,913 protection interventions to IDPs and affected host community members in 30 communities within 9 sub-districts in Idlib and

Aleppo reaching 4,245 individuals (1,187 girls, 1,012 boys, 1,118 women, 928 men). The main services protection actors provided are as follows:

- Psychological First Aid (PFA) and Psychosocial Support (PSS)
- Information sharing about other services
- Child Protection case management
- Dignity kits distribution
- Risk education
- Cluster members also referred individuals to other basic services, notably to shelter.
- GBV sub-cluster partners aim to ensure GBV survivors have access to quality and life-saving responses, including specialized services such as case management, while engaging with communities to prevent and mitigate risks of GBV.
- GBV sub-cluster partners continued to distribute dignity kits, reaching 30,000 women and girls of reproductive age (through 15 GBV sub-cluster partners) since December. Distributions of dignity kits give GBV SC partners the ability to provide other essential protection services such as referral to urgent services (medical and legal), PFA, Individual Protection Assistance and information about available services with emphasis on how these services should be free of charge to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse.
- In areas where partners were able to continue their work, child protection partners prioritized response to displaced families particularly in the delivery of psychosocial support and case management. This intervention has continued to be possible in locations in Afrin and A'zaz - Al Bab – Jarablus area. In areas most affected by shelling and displacement, partners were in some instances unable to deliver most structured interventions like case management, parenting programmes and psychosocial support. In those areas, partners identified most vulnerable with specific protection concerns for the delivery of in-kind Individual Protection Assistance with the aim to prevent their exposure to further protection risks.
- During the month of February, approximately, 31,834 children (15,920 girls, and 15,914 boys) and 2,340 adults (1,282 women and 1,058 men) have been provided psychosocial support (structured and sustained) in Harim, Idleb, Afrin, Jarablus, Jebel Saman, Al-Bab and A'zaz districts of Idleb and Aleppo governorates. Additionally, reports from the field received to date for the month of February alone indicate case management for most severe protection concerns included 393 children (176 girls and 217 boys). Also, 127 children (68 girls and 59 boys) have been referred for specialized services for child protection needs Idleb.
- Identification and response to unaccompanied and separated children has been intensified since 15 December 2019. In most cases to date, separation has been found to be due to disrupted transportation means. It has been a temporary separation of children from their parents/ caregivers. To date, all 79 cases identified since 15 December (24 of which account for February alone) have been reunified with their caregivers. New cases coming up are observed to follow similar patterns and child protection partners respond accordingly.
- In the last two weeks, 10,140 children (5,461 girls & 4679 boys) have been reached with provision of recreational kits in Harim and Jisr-Ash-Shugur districts of Idleb governorate. This makes a total of 42,200 children reached with child protection supplies since December 2019. Also, 127 children (68 girls and 59 boys) have been referred for specialized services for child protection needs Idleb in the last two weeks alone.

### Gaps & Constraints:

- Protection cluster members continue to report suspensions, include activities in outreach units as well as static service points, for example community centers and women and girls' safe spaces. All suspension notifications cited airstrikes and shelling as the main reason. Displacement of humanitarian staff has also been reported.
- Severe lack of basic protection needs continue. Families cannot meaningfully engage in parenting programmes and awareness sessions unless their most basic needs of their families are met. Parents and caregivers fear for the safety of their children and often prevent their attendance to public gatherings including Child Friendly Spaces (CFS).
- Structured interventions like psychosocial support or case management are hindered by displacement and lack of possible continuity, predictability.
- Need to prioritize child protection vulnerability criteria in delivery of NFIs and services and inclusion of child protection specialized field staff with the rapid response teams.
- Suspension of child protection services in the reporting period has been of particular concern. In February 2020 alone, 69 suspension notifications on child protection services delivered by the child protection (CP) mobile teams and CFSs were received. All of the suspension reports were not from camps or IDP sites and most have been temporary. Delivery of CP services were affected in Atareb, Bennsh, Daret Azza, Haritan, Idleb, Maaret Tamsrin, Saraqab, Teftnaz and Zarbah sub districts in Aleppo and Idleb. Activities suspended included psychosocial support, life skills activities for adolescents, parenting programs, case management and referrals amongst others. Suspension has continued to severely affect the transportation of children with disabilities which is key for accessing support.

- Segments of the population who experience barriers in accessing existing humanitarian assistance and who generally lack specialized and focused response services continue to generate concern. This includes older people, people with disabilities, adolescent boys and girls, unaccompanied and separated children, female-headed households, and other individuals with specific legal and/or protection needs. Due to the specific nature and situations individuals in these groups find themselves in, flexible and ad-hoc assistance remains a strong need, including using small-scale cash and in-kind assistance using the Individual Protection Assistance modality.
- Contrary to humanitarian principles, the requirement of civil status documentation by donors and humanitarian actors continues to be reported as a barrier for IDPs to access basic services and humanitarian assistance. Furthermore, GBV SC partners are reporting difficulties in efficiently and safely utilizing GBV case funds due to some donors are asking for documentation requirements that are not in line with GBV guiding principles.
- GBV specialized services are still not available in 1,641 communities across NW Syria, mostly due to limited funding. Additional resources are needed to support GBV prevention and response with a particular focus on vulnerable groups such as adolescent girls, widows, and divorced women, persons with disability, as well as men and boys that have experienced sexual violence.
- Child Protection emergency case management funds continue to be insufficient to match the urgency and priorities on the ground. This is particularly affecting serious Child Protection cases (including child recruitment, child marriage and child labour) which require additional emergency funds for an effective response and follow up. Overcrowded IDP locations such as Dana and Jebel Saman where these cases are present are of concern.
- Donor flexibility is urgently needed to redirect the funds for the new emergency in order to avoid long-term consequences to children and their caregivers.

## Shelter and Non-Food Items

### Needs:

- The Shelter / Non-Food Items (SNFI) Cluster estimates that more than 434,800 people newly displaced in northwest Syria are in need of emergency shelter. Cluster members have already assisted 37% of those new IDPs (109,646 people).
- Finding land and obtaining authorization to extend or establish new camps is one of the main challenges experienced by humanitarian partners in the current situation, especially given the urgent needs for extensions of existing camps and establishment of new camps.
- Capacity-building for site planning, land and property rights is needed for SNFI Cluster members.
- There is a need to provide tents for informal IDP settlements.
- Shelter rehabilitation needs to be scaled up for people living in damaged/unfinished buildings, including provision of sealing-off kits and quick fixing.

### Response:

- SNFI Cluster members provided shelter and/or NFI assistance to almost 400,000 individuals in February, including both displaced people and host communities, and planned to reach 740,000 people in need in February.
- In IDP sites, 160,866 people have been provided with shelter that has already been installed or for which installation is currently underway.
- The SNFI Cluster is aiming to provide 81,200 tents to shelter around 435,000 IDPs. Of this, 19,200 tents have been installed or are currently being installed, 17,111 are in stock for distribution and 44,889 are in the pipeline. There is no gap.
- A site planning support group has been activated by the SNFI Cluster. This group provides technical support to cluster members to improve humanitarian standards in camps.
- Shelter rehabilitation projects are ongoing to reach 51,257 people living outside formal camps.
- 60,379 household NFI kits have been distributed or are currently being distributed. A further 9,991 NFI kits are in stock and 104,400 are in the pipeline.
- Winterization assistance has been provided to 768,779 people as of the end of February, for both newly displaced and previously displaced people. Winterization assistance is in progress for a further 186,329 people.

### Gaps & Constraints:

- SNFI Cluster members have difficulties to get authorization to establish camps in Northern Aleppo governorate.
- According to CCCM figures, 234,000 IDPs have moved to unfinished buildings or collective centers since 1 December. Only 14 organizations have reported having funding to rehabilitate or upgrade shelters. Funding for shelter rehabilitation remains the main funding gap. Cluster members have funding to upgrade/repair buildings for only 51,257 people (22% of the target)

- There are more than 2.8 million IDPs in north-west Syria. Cluster members have funding and stock to reach the new IDPs. However, there is no funding to replace damaged tents for those in IDPs in protracted displacement situations. Only a few organizations have funding for site preparation, gravelling, drainage in camps.

## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

### Needs:

- WASH cluster members reported continued high needs with regards to life-saving WASH supplies and services for people in Aleppo and Idlib governorates including in Afrin, and in A'zaz-AI Bab-Jarablus area. Comprehensive WASH services are needed to cope with the increased demand across all WASH services and supplies.
- In both formal and informal camps, there is a huge need to increase water supply and manage drinking water safety, to mitigate against diarrheal and other communicable diseases. In most of these locations, the number of IDPs has increased, sharing the same level of services and supplies.
- Landfill rehabilitation is becoming increasingly important especially in northern Idlib and A'zaz-AI Bab-Jarablus areas, resulting in a creation of new non-properly managed dumpsites/landfills.
- There is a need to increase the operational support to existing piped water systems to handle additional population in communities and in surrounding informal/formal settlements and camps.
- It is unlikely that new IDPs will return to their areas of origin in the near future. Therefore, there is a need to include them in the ongoing sustained emergency programs to ensure their continued access to all WASH services.

### Response:

- The ongoing WASH response has reached to 570,000 recently displaced people in 571 locations through 29 Cluster members (79% of the locations responded to are camps, 13% in communities, 3% in collective centers and 5% other locations).
  - 262,435 people received water trucking and continue to receive
  - 200,510 people received solid waste management service and continue to receive for 2 to 3 months
  - 96,536 people received new latrines (most of the existing public/community latrines are overcrowded due to an inadequate number of latrines)
  - 181,273 people benefited from hygiene kits (36,254 actual family hygiene kits)
  - 93,363 people benefited from water purifying agents (with Aqua tabs)
  - 140,368 people benefited with the distribution of jerry cans (56,147 can distributed, 2 cans per households)
- As half the influx of IDPs is towards communities, the pressure is increasing on existing water and sewerage infrastructure. This increase is reducing the adequate access of host communities to safe water which is causing conflict between host and IDPs. Increasing operational support and rehabilitation of systems supporting communities with a high number of IDPs will reduce the risk of conflict. In addition, there will be a reduction on the reliance on alternative unsafe, untreated water sources. It will also ensure a wider coverage for the needs of IDPs in communities who are not considered as a first step of response, as they are less vulnerable in comparison with IDPs in camps who rely heavily on aid from NGOs.
- Cluster members are preparing to scale up the response to meet at least the need of newly displaced people in their areas of operation in anticipation of availability of additional funding and supplies. Approximately \$ 14.3 million funds have now been secured and are in the pipeline to deliver supplies and services such as: water distribution via water trucking, provision of hygiene kits, construction and maintenance of latrines, and solid waste management. These activities should be all commencing by the end of March.
  - 156,180 people are expected to receive water trucking – as planned by cluster member organizations for IDPs
  - 282,533 people are expected to receive solid waste management services – especially in locations with high number of IDPs and will also benefit host communities (@ 50 %host community and @ 50% IDPs)
  - 152,696 people are going to benefit through new latrines under construction
  - 241,221 people are going to benefit with the available hygiene kits (48,244 actual family hygiene kits)
  - 125,284 people are going to benefit with available jerry cans (125,285 jerry cans available, each household usually receive 2 cans)

### Gaps & Constraints:

- Lack of adequate space in existing shelters continues to complicate the response, as recently displaced people continually move from one location to another. Recently displaced people are looking for potential shelters with existing services or where it is promising to receive services from the humanitarian agencies. The WASH cluster is working with the CCCM and Shelter Clusters to ensure joint planning and installation of new camps with requisite WASH services. The immediate gaps in nine sub-districts for approximately 52,000 IDPs are as below:
  - 48,936 IDPs lack water trucking (many more IDPs sharing existing water supply of host communities and other IDPs)
  - 28,900 people need public latrines rehab/construction.
  - 52,061 people need recurrent solid waste management
  - 19,151 people need hygiene kits
- Challenges are notably with regard to delivery of hygiene kits. Production continues to be acceptable locally, however the supply chain across the border has been disrupted due to recent escalations in the conflict inside Syria with subsequent unpredictability of transshipments.
- This is also constrained by the unequipped private sector that find it difficult to increase the supplies and services overnight in sporadic locations.
- To ensure a timely and effective WASH response to the increasing needs and to mitigate against the potential outbreak of communicable diseases, additional financial resources are urgently required for the aforementioned activities.
- The updated recent readiness and response plan estimate of 900,000 plus a contingency of 200,000, equaling 1.1 million IDPs (from the previous planned 700,000/200,000 contingency) still pertains to a \$ 28 million funding gap. This is after secured funds from CERF /Rapid and CERF/ underfunded to support some 535,000 beneficiaries, plus SCHF funds against the recent 'reserve allocation' to support another 250,000 people.

## Logistics

### Needs:

- Organizations responding to the needs of the affected population in northwest Syria require a reliable and consistent transshipment service that facilitates the delivery of life-saving cargo from Turkey into the region.
- As the situation becomes more dynamic and volatile, coordination and timely information sharing with partners will be critical to assist with partner operational decision-making and to ensure the duplication of effort is avoided.
- Visibility on storage capacity and transport routes inside the northwest is vital for organisations' planning and repositioning.
- Moving transshipment operations from the customs yard at Bab al-Salam to the dedicated transshipment hub in Kilis is required to increase the safety and security of humanitarian actors, and to expand overall transshipment capacity.

### Response:

- Written confirmation from the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs that operations may be undertaken at the dedicated transshipment hub in Kilis has been received, however final endorsement is still awaited. The move will provide greater flexibility in capacity in-case of further scale-up.
- The Logistics Cluster will coordinate with UNMM, UNDSS, customs authorities and partner agencies to maximize the daily transshipment capacity at Bab al-Salam.
- The capacity of the transshipment hub at Bab al-Hawa is 100 trucks daily.
- From 1 to 11 March, the Logistics Cluster has coordinated the transshipment of 444 Syrian trucks: 372 through Bab al-Hawa; and 72 through Bab al-Salam.
- Information on partner storage capacity inside northwest Syria is continually being updated to help coordinate any gaps in storage in the area.
- Coordination meetings are held in Gaziantep and Antakya on a monthly basis, and regular communication of logistics information and updates through a dedicated mailing list continues to be provided.

### Constraints:

- Due to the volatility of the situation inside northwest Syria, visibility on partner future transshipment pipelines continues to pose a challenge to planning.

## GENERAL COORDINATION

Emergency Task Force meetings continued over the reporting period, comprising key clusters and their lead agencies and NGO representatives. A sub-group of this has been created to look at the non-health implications to the response of

the Covid-19 coronavirus. This includes the impact on supply chains, staff movement, and other administrative and logistic impacts.

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