

## Monitoring of the Protection Situation in Besieged East Aleppo City, November 18-20 2016



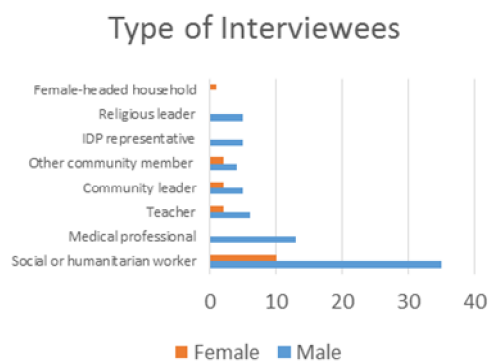
### Background and Objectives

This monitoring exercise is the third in an ongoing series conducted by the Syria Protection Cluster (Turkey) to track the protection situation of 270,000 civilians trapped in besieged Eastern Aleppo City. It follows a Rapid Protection Assessment in late August 2016 and monitoring in late October 2016. This exercise was undertaken to understand the impact of the resumed aerial bombardment covering a period of the last 3 weeks.

### Methodology

**Interviews:** The interviews for this report were completed from November 18-20, 2016 by the staff of six NGOs working inside East Aleppo city. Given the movement restrictions imposed during this period due to intensified bombardment, humanitarian, social, and medical workers make up the majority of interviewees (59 of 84 total). 68 interviewees were male and 16 were female. The total number of interviews is lower compared to 397 in the late October round. Therefore the difference in number and profile of interviewees should be taken into account in any comparison between the survey results. 15 neighborhoods were reached, as compared to 25 in late October. It should

be noted that a large number of Aleppo's neighborhoods are no longer inhabited, due to the violence and destruction of buildings and civilian infrastructure.

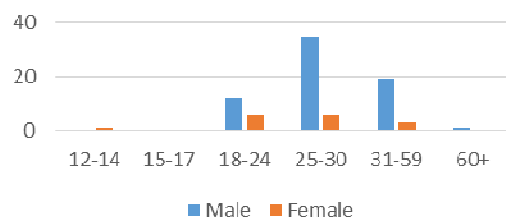


### KEY FINDINGS FOLLOWING CONTINUED BESIEGEMENT, INTENSIFIED BOMBARDMENT, and LACK OF HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

- **Physical threats:** 88% of respondents noted an increase in physical threats, including aerial bombardment.
- **Lack of food:** The extreme expense and scarcity of food was highlighted.
- **Movement restrictions:** Aerial bombardment was the primary cause of movement restriction.
- **Forced displacement:** 66% noted the prevalence of forced displacement within East Aleppo city, as people flee destroyed buildings and seek physical safety from bombs.

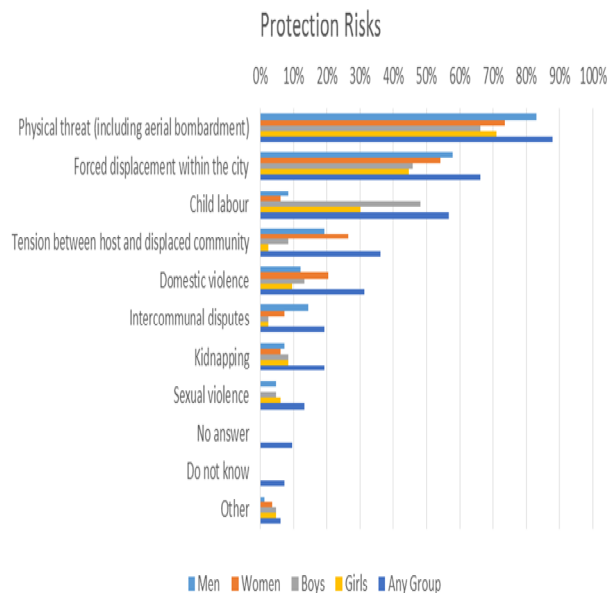
- **Tension between host and displaced communities:** 36% of respondents noted tensions between host and displaced communities.
- **Psychological pressure:** Respondents expressed fear for their lives and future.
- **Lack of safe exit routes:** The interviewees were unanimous (100%) in their belief that there are no safe exit routes from the city.
- **Movement intentions:** If there were safe and secure routes for civilians to leave East Aleppo city, 68% of respondents said that people would leave the city, an increase from 40% in the October sample.
- **Intended destination:** 93% of respondents said that in case people could exit, they would base their choice of destination on where they could have physical safety.
- **Reasons for staying:** The most common reason given for why people would stay in East Aleppo, even in case of safe exit route, was fear that they would not be able to return to their homes (50%).
- **Situation of children:** The physical threat of aerial bombardment has caused the suspension of children's school. 50% of respondents noted an increase in dropping out of school.

### Age/Gender of Interviewees



• **DETAILED FINDINGS**

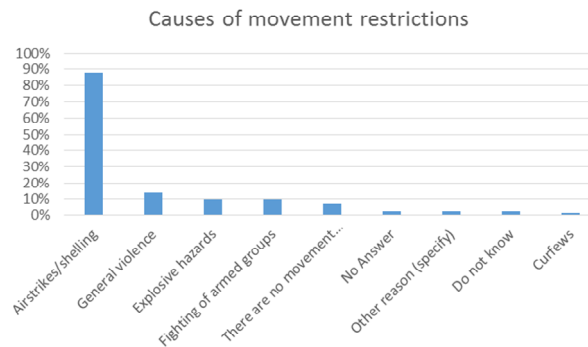
- **Physical threats:** 88% of respondents noted the prevalence of physical threats, including aerial bombardment. 83% cited that men were affected, followed by women (73%), girls (71%), and boys (66%).



- **Other protection risks:** Forced displacement within the city (66%) and child labour (57%) continued to be prevalent, while the incidence of tensions between host and displaced community was cited by 36% of respondents, domestic violence by 31%, intercommunal disputes by 19%, kidnapping by 19%, and sexual violence by 13% of respondents. In additional comments, interviewees noted the prevalence of hunger, the need for heating

with the advent of winter, and an increase in begging, theft, and looting due to hunger.

- **Movement restrictions:** 88% of respondents noted the restriction of movement due to physical threats including aerial bombardment, while only 14% or less stated other reasons, such as general violence, explosive hazards, or fighting of armed groups. Respondents noted intensified bombing of residential areas and areas crowded with civilians, and stated that this fear kept people inside most of the time. Children’s school was also suspended due to the physical threat. Additional reasons for movement restrictions included lack of transport and lack of fuel for transport. Respondents noted that they could not fetch daily necessities for fear of random bombing, that life was paralyzed, and that they faced increased psychological pressure due to the bombardment.

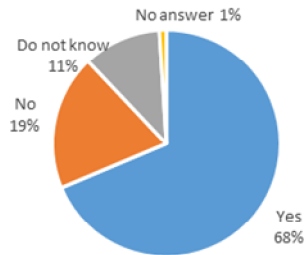


- **Lack of basic means of survival:** The besiegement and lack of humanitarian access has made it extremely difficult for individuals and families to secure food and basic goods for their families. The last food baskets were

distributed in half rations; any food on the black market is sold at exorbitant prices. Aside from the expense, movement restrictions prevent the securing of basic household needs; 37% (similar to 38% in late October) of respondents noted that more people were staying inside in order to cope with the physical threat. Lack of food has also led to increased physical and psychological fatigue among the population. In addition, the looting of relief warehouses was noted as a function of people’s dire hunger and poverty.

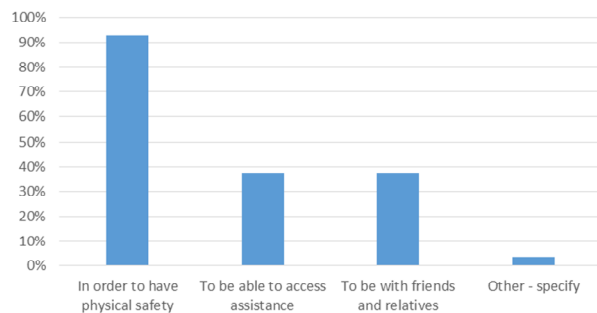
- **Lack of safe exit routes:** The interviewees were unanimous (100%) in their belief that there are no safe exit routes from the city. They explained the conditions of the besiegement, with attacks from all sides and from the air, the direct targeting of roads by snipers and bombing, the closing of any humanitarian crossing points or corridors, and continuous fear for their lives. This answer differs from late October, when 90% of respondents believed that there were no safe routes, 2% believed there were, and the remaining 8% did not know.
- **Movement intentions:** If there were safe and secure routes for civilians to leave East Aleppo city, 68% of respondents said that people would leave the city, an increase from 40% in the October sample. In this latest sample, 19% of respondents said that people would stay in East Aleppo, while in late October 44% of respondents said that people would stay.

Would people leave East Aleppo if there were a safe exit route?



- **Reason for choice of intended destination:** 93% of respondents said that in case people could exit, they would base their choice of destination on where they could have physical safety. 38% noted the importance of accessing assistance and 38% noted that the choice would depend on where they had friends and relatives.

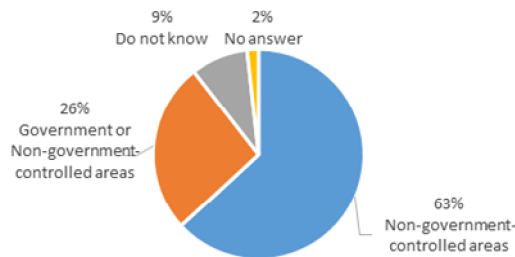
Reasons for Choice of Desired Destination



- **Intended destinations in case of safe exit:** Among those who indicated people would leave, 53% of 57 respondents said that people would go to another governorate, particularly

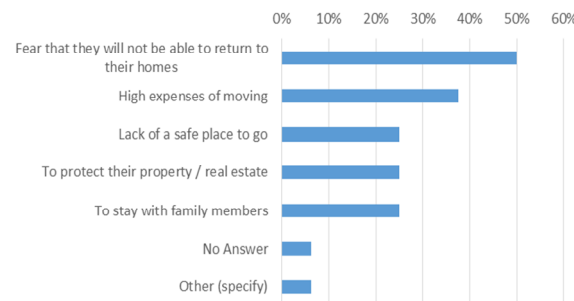
Idleb, with a few mentioning Turkey. 40% indicated another location within Aleppo governorate, particularly the western countryside. 2% indicated another safe place in the city. Many people cited simply “any safe place” without specifying a particular location.

Intended Destination in Case of Safe Exit



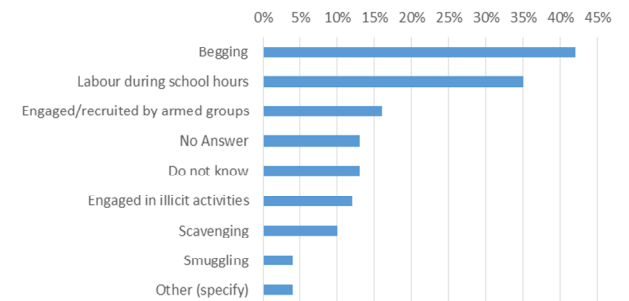
With regards to government or non-government control, 63% of 57 respondents said that people would go to non-government controlled areas, while 26% said that people would go to either government- or non-government controlled areas. 9% did not know and 2% did not answer.

Reasons why people would stay



- **Reasons for staying:** Reasons that people would stay in East Aleppo, even in case of safe exit route, included fear that they would not be able to return to their homes (50%), the high expense of moving to a different location (38%), the lack of a safe place to go (25%), the need to protect their property/real estate (25%), and the need to stay with family members (25%).
- **Displacement within East Aleppo city:** Forced displacement continues within East Aleppo city as people seek refuge from violent bombardment and destroyed homes. 47% of respondents noted the departure of civilians from their neighborhood, while 20% noted the arrival of civilians to their neighborhood.

Activities of Children



- **The situation for children:** The physical threat of aerial bombardment has caused the suspension of children’s school. 50% of respondents noted an increase during the last three weeks of children dropping out of school. Child labour is a prevalent issue in East Aleppo city with 48% noting that it affects boys, 25% that it affects girls, and 35% noting



child labour during school hours. 42% of respondents noted that children were seeing begging, 16% noted that they were engaged or recruited by armed forces, 12% noted that they were engaged in illicit activities, 10% in scavenging and 4% in smuggling. It was also noted that children carry water for their families.

- **Gender-based violence:** Among protection risks, domestic violence was noted by 20% of respondents to affect women, 13% to affect boys, 12% to affect men, 10% to affect girls, and overall by 31% of respondents to affect any of the above groups. Sexual violence was noted by 6% of respondents to be prevalent against girls, by 5% to be prevalent against men, by 5% to be prevalent against women, and by 13% to be prevalent against any of the above groups. 6% noted the restriction of movement of women and girls as a coping mechanism, and 1% noted the use of early marriage as a coping mechanism.
- **Security of humanitarian workers:** To the extent that the bombing is random and indiscriminate, the humanitarian workers reported that they are subject to the same physical threat of bombardment as the rest of the population. Some are living in buildings that have been directly bombarded from the air, and casualties have not spared humanitarian workers and their families. As they move from their homes or to the workplace or visit targeted areas more often, they are subject to a greater threat.
- **Respondents' additional comments:** Respondents reiterated the physical threat of

aerial bombardment and the extreme scarcity and expense of food, with very little sources for livelihoods. They reiterated the lack of food; water, including drinking water, electricity, fuel, and medical services. In addition they mentioned the fear of the population and the psychological pressure that they are facing.