

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Armed opposition forces reportedly retook the Agop castle pushing government forces out of Handarat district.
- Al-Nusra Front, Islamic Front and some FSA-affiliates sustained their offensive on Nubul and Zahra villages in Aleppo.
- ISIL intensified its offensive in Ayn al-Arab city and continues fighting against GoS forces in Deir-ez-zor.
- During the reporting period, UN cross-border shipments under the Security Council Resolution 2165 reached 142,000 individuals in Aleppo, Idleb, Hama and Latakia Governorates
- The Turkish Red Crescent facilitated 351 truckloads of humanitarian supplies crossing through seven border crossings during the past two weeks

### FIGURES

# of People in Need (PiN)	10.8 m
# of IDPs	6.5 m
# of reported camps in northern Syria	145
# of IDPs in reported settlements	172,963



World Humanitarian Summit Consultation Meeting in Gaziantep

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## Humanitarian Context

### Armed opposition forces made gains at the entrance to Aleppo city:

Armed opposition forces reportedly made incremental gains against government forces at the entrance to Aleppo city, pushing government forces out of Handarat Camp/District and retaking a key hilltop - Agop castle – from government control. This somewhat reduces the scenario of government forces encircling the city entirely. However, government forces still control a position in Handarat village, allowing them to block the Handarat route – a major humanitarian access route - into Aleppo city, forcing humanitarian actors to rely on the Castello route.

### Several AoGs sustained their offensive on Nubul and Zahra villages in Aleppo:

Several AoGs, including Al-Nusra Front, Islamic Front and FSA-affiliates, sustained an offensive on the besieged government-held villages of Nubul and Zahra in Aleppo, succeeding in taking a small set of factories southeast of Zahra. However, government forces appear well-positioned to defend the towns, benefiting from aerial support. Informed observers speculate that AoGs may be intending to distract government forces from their continuing advances in Handarat which may see them encircle Aleppo city, or that they intend to block an alternative government advance from Aleppo to reconnect with Nubul and Zahra – a move that would block the Bab al-Salam access route.

### Nusra Front & Islamic Front sustained offensive on the military facilities in al-Sfira:

Al-Nusra Front and Islamic Front sustained an offensive on the military production facilities in al-Sfira, southeast of Aleppo, successfully taking several villages and contesting the government resupply route into Western Aleppo city; government sources now claim that they have pushed AoGs back and the offensive has failed. If successful, in taking or contesting this route, AoGs could block humanitarian assistance, as well as commercial goods, reaching western Aleppo city – a scenario that materialized several times in summer 2013, resulting in mass shortages and price rises in Western Aleppo city.

### ISIL intensified its offensive on Ayn al-Arab city:

ISIL intensified its offensive on Ayn al-Arab city, successfully contesting the border crossing on 29 November before being pushed back by YPG, Iraqi Kurdish and FSA forces. This highlights the fact that an ISIL takeover of the city remains a possible scenario, given that the Kurdish forces only control a portion of the city. This raises concern for civilians remaining inside of the city, who may be subject to indiscriminate violence; international media sources are now reporting that the number of civilians inside of the Kurdish-controlled area of the city is likely more than 1,000, given recent returns.

72 armed opposition factions formed the Syria Revolutionary Command Council aiming to coordinate military, political and legal dimensions of internal opposition.

### **Fighting has intensified between ISIL and government forces in Deir-ez-Zor city:**

Fighting has intensified between ISIL and government forces in Deir-ez-Zor city, with ISIL renewing its offensive on Deir-ez-Zor airport (3 December) and with some indications that ISIL may have pushed back government gains on Hweiqat Saqr, a small strategic island on the Euphrates River. Specifically, ISIL has taken a set of buildings – the fisheries – that represented the first line of defense for the airport itself, then securing large amounts of light and heavy weaponry that have allowed them to take half of Jafrah town. If the airport falls, ISIL would likely be able to take the rest of the city, impacting on the 150,000 people living under government control, to whom ISIL has already blocked almost all humanitarian access from the surrounding countryside. The Syrian government has responded by increasing bombardment on nearby towns of Mreiye and Al Bu Omar, displacing hundreds of civilians.

### **Al-Nusra Front's offensive continues against FSA-affiliates in Idleb and Hama:**

Al-Nusra Front launched a failed offensive in the opposition enclave of Rastan in Homs, attacking a local FSA brigade, to consolidate their control of the town. Al-Nusra Front fought and killed a number of FSA-affiliates in southern Idleb and northern Hama, causing two major FSA factions to disband and hand their weapons over to the local Islamic Front factions. A converse trend saw one major FSA-affiliate successfully expelled Al-Nusra Front from the towns of Ma'arat al-Nu'mana and Khan Sheikhoun. Overall, a range of factions continue to operate in Idleb and Hama – including Islamic Front and FSA factions – but Al-Nusra Front is clearly succeeding in expanding its influence in these areas, including in the realm of governance. So far, neither intra-opposition fighting or Al-Nusra Front's increasing governance and military role have had any sustained or widespread negative impact on humanitarian assistance.

### **72 armed opposition factions formed the Syria Revolutionary Command Council:**

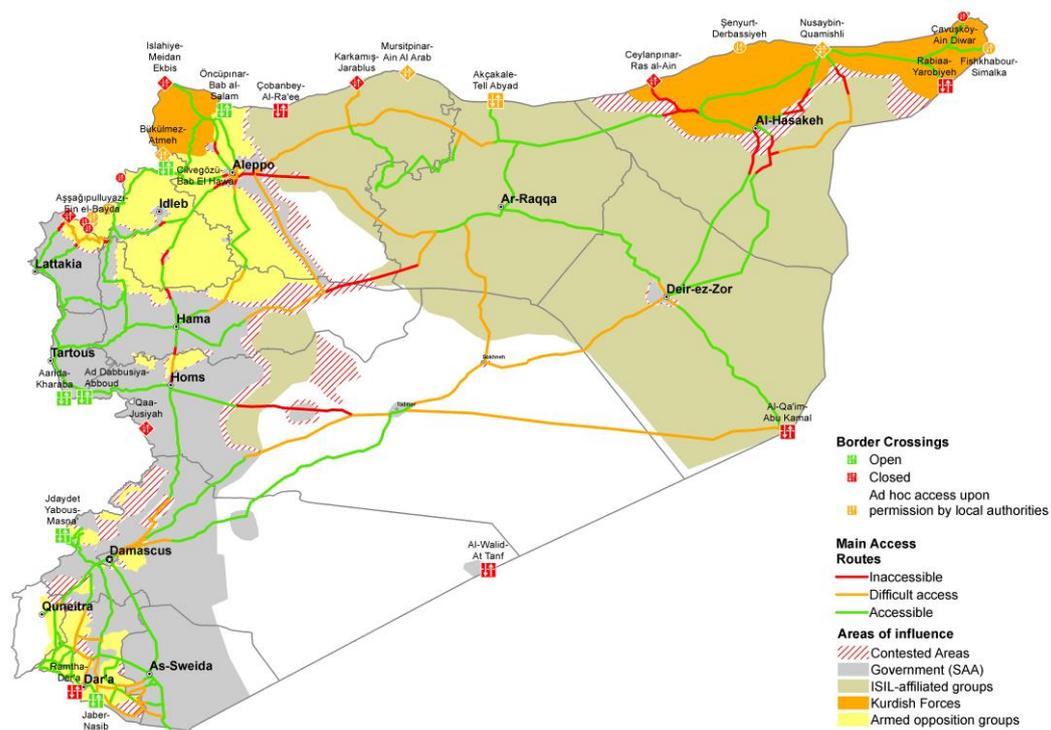
The RCC aims to represent and coordinate the internal opposition, in its military, political and legal dimensions. A precondition of membership is that factions must provide 100 fighters to a quick response force that nominally would number 7,200 fighters. If such a force is formed, and donors provide funds and material support, the SRCC could cause an escalation of conflict, in Northern Syria especially, with significant humanitarian consequences.

## **Humanitarian Access Constraints**

Access trends generally remain the same during the reporting period. Humanitarian supplies and personnel are still generally able to reach their intended areas or beneficiaries in the north-western Governorates, albeit with occasional delays as a result of active combat, such as the intra-opposition skirmishes detailed above. Access to the Government controlled villages of Nubul and Zahra in Aleppo remains fully restricted. Access to eastern Aleppo city, Kurdish and ISIL controlled north-eastern Governorates remains problematic.

Ongoing coalition airstrikes have not resulted in a reduction of humanitarian interventions. OCHA has no reports of the airstrikes having impacted on the humanitarian operation though humanitarian actors are operating with even greater vigilance. However, there remains a heightened concern that humanitarian workers might be subjected to arrest and/or violence by those armed actors currently being targeted by the airstrikes.

Humanitarian supplies and personnel are still generally able to reach their intended areas or beneficiaries in the north-western governorates, albeit with occasional delays.



The above map indicates that the broad areas of control by all the parties to the conflict remain roughly the same during the reporting period. The major routes remain largely accessible in Government of Syria (GoS) controlled areas; while routes crossing into opposition controlled areas remain contested.

### Update on SRP

The process to develop the Whole of Syria (WoS) Strategic Response plan (SRP) continued apace. In the middle of November, humanitarian actors working on Syria from Turkey, Jordan and Damascus gathered for the fourth time in Beirut in a Whole of Syria format to take stock of the progress made, discuss and agree on the 2015 Strategic Response plan, review its key components (country strategy, strategic objective, monitoring framework, sectors/clusters response plan, costing methodology) and put forward recommendations to strengthen coordination.

Humanitarian actors working on Syria gathered for the fourth time in Beirut in a Whole of Syria format in mid-November.

At the meeting the participants agreed on the following five objectives for the SRP along with three cross cutting issues of Gender, Protection Mainstreaming and Resilience.

- Protection - Promote protection of and access to affected people in accordance with IHL and IHRL including clear accountability of parties to the conflict and all relevant actors.
- Lifesaving - Provide life-saving and life-sustaining humanitarian assistance to people in need, prioritizing the most vulnerable.
- Resilience - Strengthen resilience, livelihoods and early recovery through communities and institutions.
- Coordination - Strengthen harmonized coordination modalities through enhanced information management, communication and joint planning.
- Response Capacity - Enhance the response capacity of all actors assisting people in need in Syria, including local actors and communities.

In addition agreements were made on sector specific objectives and activities, a new costing methodology that is a hybrid of both the project based and activity based models and respects the anonymity of partners working on cross boarder operations, a

monitoring framework in line with IASC guidelines and new Whole of Syria coordination arrangements.

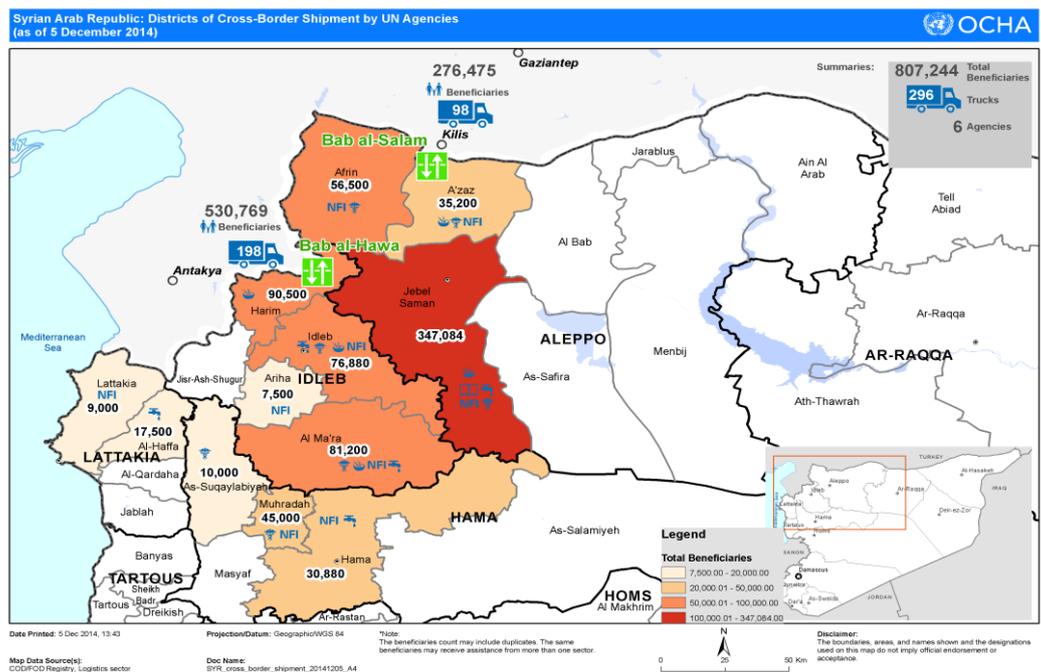
In early December the sector leads with support from OCHA have been working with partners to develop sector plans and budgets to be presented as part of the final SRP at the Berlin donor conference on 18 December 2014. This will be the first SRP in the Whole of Syria format and based on joint analysis from all three operations in Turkey, Jordan and Damascus as identified in the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) of October 2014.

## Response Update

On 14 July 2014, the Security Council adopted Resolution 2165 allowing the UN and its implementing partners to deliver humanitarian assistance into Syria across designated border crossings. The Resolution requires that the Government of Syria is notified of UN humanitarian assistance entering Syria across the border.

OCHA continues to coordinate cross-border humanitarian aid delivery under UN Security Council Resolution 2165.

The accumulated assistance provided through UN cross-border assistance from Turkey since the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 2165 reached to 807,244 individuals.

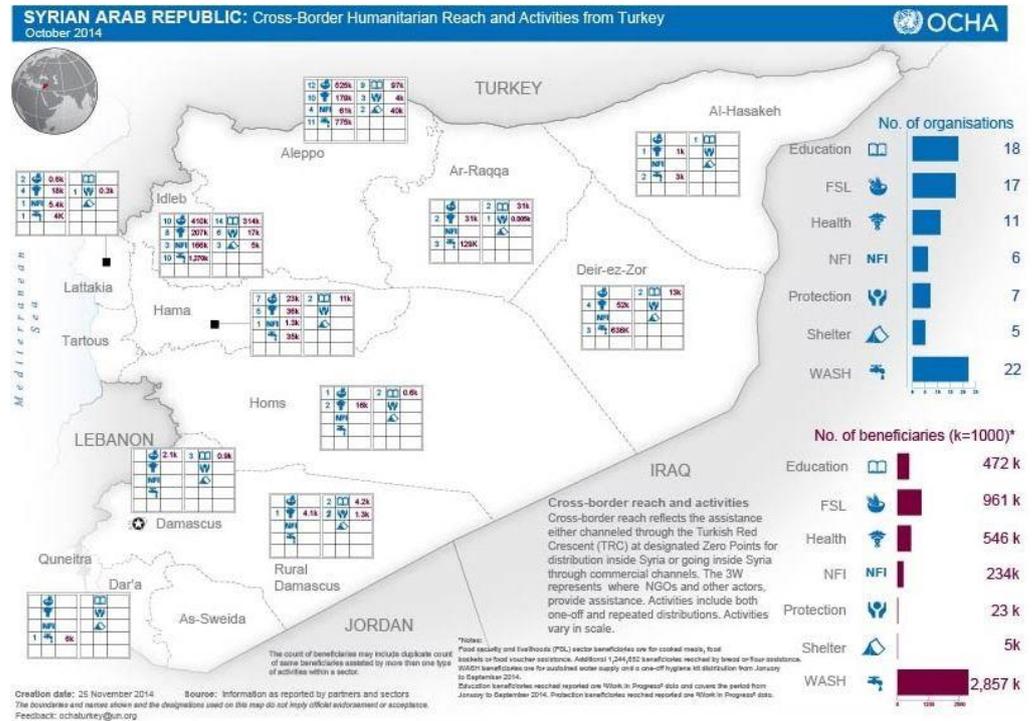


During the past two weeks, shipments with humanitarian supplies from WFP, UNHCR and IOM crossed the Bab al-Hawa and Bab al-Salam borders. The humanitarian supplies consisted of FSL, NFIs and WaSH items and will assist 142,000 individuals in Aleppo, Idlib, Hama and Latakia Governorates. The below map shows the accumulated assistance provided through UN cross border assistance from Turkey since the adoption of SCR 2165, which totals 807,244 people assisted.

In addition to the UN shipments, the Turkish Red Crescent (TRC) is facilitating the crossing of humanitarian shipments by NGOs and other actors through designated zero points along the Turkish border. Between 21 November and 4 December, the TRC facilitated the crossing of 351 trucks during 11 shipment days using seven border crossings.

The 3W map below highlights the number of beneficiaries reached in October by humanitarian organizations operating from Turkey. The highest concentration of sectoral interventions can be found in Aleppo and Idlib, followed by Deir-ez-zor and Ar-Raqqah with Al-Hasakeh and Homs having the least interventions. Over 2.8 million people were reached with WaSH interventions in six Governorates since January 2014. Food

assistance and health interventions were provided to 961,000 and 546,000 people respectively for the month of October. Compared to the month of September, on average more people were reached in October with various humanitarian interventions.



## Humanitarian Pooled Fund

The first allocation process of the HPF is well underway. Contracts for the 24-approved projects will be finalized by mid-December.

The Second Advisory Board meeting convened on 4 December 2014 in Gaziantep with participation of representatives of donors, UN agencies, INGOs and Syrian NGOs. The Advisory Board discussed the first allocation process, lessons learned and next call for proposals. Agreement was reached to launch the second call for proposals for USD\$15 million by mid-January 2015. At this stage, priority sectors (FSL, WASH and Protection and Health) for the call have been identified based on findings of HNO.

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