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### FIGURES

People in need of humanitarian assistance	11.7 M
People in acute need of humanitarian assistance	5 M
Internally displaced people (as of April 2019)	5.9 M
Population Movements Jan – April 2019	372,800
Returnees Jan – April 2019	216,200

Source: HNO 2019 & IDPs Taskforce

### HRP 2019 Funding

**3.32 billion** requested (US\$)

**870.4 million** received (US\$)

**26.2 %** funded

Source: OCHA FTS 24 July 2019

## Upsurge in violence endangers 3 million people in northwest

The [United Nations](#) remains gravely concerned by the dramatic escalation of violence in northwest Syria which has resulted in over 400 civilians confirmed dead and hundreds of thousands of women, children and men displaced since the upsurge in violence began almost three months ago.

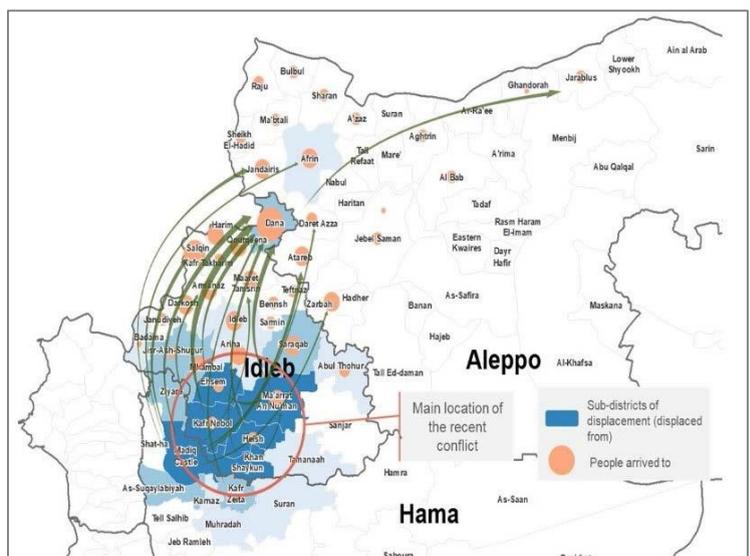
Ongoing clashes, shelling and air strikes, including the use of indiscriminate weapons, such as barrel bombs, continue unabated in Idlib, in western Aleppo and in northern Hama, damaging schools, hospitals, and other critical civilian infrastructure, while hindering humanitarian aid operations.

Since the end of April, there have been over 440,000 displacements (as of 14 July) from northern Hama and southern Idlib governorates, many of them multiple times. Some have been displaced up to five times, while others have been displaced as many as 10.

Most of internally displaced persons (IDPs) are currently living outside camps and reception centres. In Idlib alone, approximately 100 schools are now hosting displaced people. Camps for the displaced people are overcrowded, with many people forced to stay in the open air.

Entire towns and villages have reportedly emptied as residents flee their communities in search of safety and basic services. The majority of those fleeing have displaced within Idlib Governorate while a smaller number have moved into northern Aleppo Governorate. Roughly two-thirds of people displaced are staying outside camps.

The impact of the hostilities on civilian infrastructure remains severe as vital facilities such as hospitals, bakeries, schools and water pumping stations have been damaged or destroyed by airstrikes and shelling. Since the recent escalation of violence at the end of April, at least 39 incidents involving health facilities or personnel have occurred, killing and injuring civilians, people in need of medical care and the staff who care for them. At least 50 schools have been damaged due to airstrikes and shelling. In July alone there have been at least 29 incidents affecting civilian/humanitarian infrastructure or humanitarian staff or



humanitarian staff, including 8 health facilities, 4 schools, 3 IDP settlements, 5 bakeries, 3 markets, 3 water stations, 1 ambulance, and 2 mosques. Several humanitarian workers have also been killed. Reports of more schools, health facilities, and other infrastructure being impacted have been received so the figures are likely to increase.

In what could prove one of the deadliest days of all, at least 60 people reportedly lost their lives and hundreds more were injured following a succession of attacks and violence in three governorates, including Idleb, Hama and Aleppo, on 22 July. Of these, the singular worst attack was on a public market in the town of Ma'arat al-Nu'man in southern Idleb in which at least 39 people were killed, many of them women and children.

### Response Efforts

The humanitarian community has a detailed operational plan in place to respond to the needs of up to 800,000 people affected by the violence in the northwest, including 700,000 people through cross-border operations from Turkey and 100,000 people in Government-controlled areas from Damascus.

With some 15,000 aid workers on the ground, humanitarians continue to respond to the needs of the people in the area. This includes vital services such as providing food assistance to newly displaced households, surging health services in areas that are receiving people, and providing emergency protection services.

Hundreds of thousands of people – both from host communities and the newly displaced individuals – receive critical assistance essential for their survival. Humanitarians on the ground plan to provide food assistance to 1.2 million people in July and provide health services to hundreds of people injured in the violence. Tens of thousands receive other services and support, such as schooling, non-food items, clean water, shelter, and emergency nutrition and protection services. However, all of these efforts are challenged by insecurity and the scale of needs.

While humanitarian needs in northwest Syria have increased, however, the aid community's ability and capacity to respond has been eroded. Partners ability to deliver has been severely affected by damage to infrastructure used to deliver assistance, while many humanitarian staff have also become displaced and in need of assistance themselves, or have suspended operations to keep their staff and beneficiaries safe.

The scale of displacement has outstripped previous contingency plans; with funding now an urgent concern. To sustain current levels of response and ensure appropriate scale up of operations, humanitarian partners need US\$242 million. Without further donor support, partners will not be able to scale up their operations and respond to both new and existing needs

## Humanitarian needs persist across northeast

An estimated 1.65 million people are currently in need of humanitarian assistance in northeast Syria, one of the most complex humanitarian environments in the country. Of these, 900,000 are considered acutely affected due to a combination of factors, including displacement, recurrent exposure to hostilities, and limited access to basic services such as safe water, education and healthcare.

In the first quarter of 2019, the UN and its humanitarian partners reached an average of 805,000 women, children and men across the northeast with some form of humanitarian assistance each month; over half of those in need.



This scale of response was made possible by leveraging various modalities of assistance, with nearly two thirds delivered by actors from within Syria and complemented by actors delivering cross-border assistance from Iraq.

Increasing needs and improved access over the past 12 months has triggered a scale up of the UN's response efforts. Currently across the northeast, over 130 humanitarian actors are operational. In light of growing needs, plans are also underway to establish a UN hub in Deir-ez-Zour Governorate.

There are currently 605,000 IDPs in the northeast as a result of past and current military operations. Two out of every 10 displaced persons now live in an IDP site, including camps, as well as collective and last resort sites. Of these, 133,000 live in 57 sites, scattered across the governorates of Ar-Raqqa, Deir-ez-Zour and Al Hasakeh, as well as in districts in Aleppo Governorate. The largest site in the northeast is the Al Hol camp in Al Hasakeh, host to some 70,000 people, followed by Ein Issa (13,000 people) in Ar-Raqqa, Areesha (8,500 people) in Al Hasakeh and Abu Kashab (6,000 people) in Deir-ez-Zour. Those in IDP sites are fully dependent on humanitarian assistance.

To date, nearly half a million people (479,000 people) are believed to have returned spontaneously to their areas of origin in the region between January 2018 and April 2019. Mine risk education and clearance remains a critical need across the region, given the extensive explosive hazard contamination - an urgent priority given that spontaneous IDP returns are likely to increase in 2019.

On 23 June, some 300 people from Deir-ez-Zour left the Areesha camp, escorted by Security forces of the Kurdish Self-Administration and supported by tribal leaders in Deir-ez-Zour, towards their places of origin in Al Mayadin which is under government control. The majority of the population of Areesha camp is to be relocated in the coming weeks and months after the camp's tents, communal area, toilets and other facilities were heavily damaged last winter. Severe floods resulted in the camp deemed unsafe. Ground preparation is already progressing on the new site. Some of the displaced families are expected to choose to stay in the old location while the majority has already relocated temporarily.

Relocation has also been underway since 24 June, for residents of the Twaiheneh informal settlement that are being offered to move to the Mahmoudli camp, both in Ar-Raqqa Governorate. Around 50 families are relocating per day, with the move expected to be finalized by the beginning of August. Improved services in Mahmoudli are expected to improve conditions for IDPs living at the site.

## 70,000 IDPs in Al-Hol battle summer heat

The UN and its humanitarian partners are working to address the extensive needs of tens of thousands of residents of the Al Hol camp in the northeast of Syria where stifling summer temperatures can reach as much as 50 degrees Celsius during the day.

To respond to the urgent needs of camp residents, 35 humanitarian organizations are providing food, water, health care, shelter services, NFI supplies, including hygienic items and education and protection support. Low purchasing power is a challenge and people continue to receive food assistance through ready-to-eat rations and food rations.

To help families access services, four desks have been set up to provide information about general services in the camp, process of returns and permissions to leave the camp. Families remain concerned about their missing male relatives, including children, having received



limited information about their whereabouts. As for the detainees, camp administration officials state that information is not yet available and that coordination with high level entities is needed before the information is shared. A FAQ and map have been prepared to help families access information.

The three field hospitals in the camp are in need of technical and logistical support, with limited capacity to perform surgeries. To scale-up efforts, a blood bank is being opened in Phase 1. The need for a quarantine for infectious diseases remains critical. Despite the fact that health services in the camp have improved, humanitarian agencies continue to rely on five hospitals, outside the camp, for referrals of critical cases. The limited number of ambulances and transport for emergency cases remains a major obstacle. Rising summer temperatures also pose a critical challenge. Waterborne disease and respiratory diseases, as well as cases of acute diarrhea, leishmaniasis and malnutrition have increased.

Over 1,800 people with disabilities remain in critical need of assistance, including assistive devices such as wheelchairs, canes and crutches. There is also a need to expand comprehensive services for elderly persons to ensure that they are at the centre of the response. Efforts to improve overall living standards at the camp are underway. Enhanced illumination efforts are ongoing – including the procurement of 12,500 solar lamps to improve protection between tents, while rechargeable fans, mosquito nets and summer clothes for children are also being distributed to help the camp population combat the summer heat. Road construction, solar street lighting and other infrastructure services are also ongoing.

Since 26 June, the number of displaced people at Al Hol has decreased from 73,783 to 70,707 people (as of 18 July), due to the repatriation of third-country nationals and the return of hundreds of Syrian nationals to their areas of origin in Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor governorates following agreements with tribal leaders, including 196 Syrians who returned to their place of origin on 11 July. Iraq has cleared the repatriation of 2,000 out of 8,700 families, however, a return date has yet to be decided. The absence of legal documentation among many Iraqi families also poses an obstacle for repatriation.

Over the past couple of months, humanitarian partners have been working to reorganize the camp to alleviate overcrowding in some phases and mitigate tensions between different groups. While relocation to Phases 6 and 8 continues, the pace has been slower than expected as a result of resident concerns over limited available services in these areas and familiarity with their current setting. Humanitarian agencies are currently working to expand services to meet needs and communicate the availability of these to residents. Humanitarian access to the annexes hosting some 11,000 foreign nationals, who are neither Iraqi nor Syrians, has slightly improved although it remains limited, impacting in particular health and protection services.

## Rukban's population nearly halved as 17,000 leave

Over 17,000 internally displaced Syrians, as of 21 July, have now left Rukban along the southern border with Jordan, having lived in the remote location for years. That's 41 per cent of Rukban's estimated population of 41,700. Approximately 25,000 women, children and men remain in Rukban.

Since 2013, [Rukban](#) has served as an area for thousands of Syrians fleeing the conflict in the hope of seeking refuge in Jordan. In recent months, however, the humanitarian situation for those remaining has become



particularly dire, with limited access to basic health care and shortages of basic supplies such as flour, vegetables and bread.

Over the past two years, only two humanitarian inter-agency convoys have reached Rukban: November 2018 and February 2019.

As of 21 July 2019, a total of 23 groups have left Rukban since 23 March, nearly half of them children. Lack of access for goods has led to severe conditions and a lack of food and baby formula, an increase in infant mortality, and more cases of severe diarrhea and hepatitis; resulting in increased pressure on residents to leave.

Of those remaining, approximately 80 per cent are women and children who have been in Rukban for over two years. In the absence of regular humanitarian deliveries, the Rukban population has been able to sustain itself through commercial deliveries and supplies brought in through smuggling routes. However, in recent weeks even these have become a rarity as the population shrinks and fewer and fewer vehicles have been available to transport commodities to the area. This has resulted in sky-rocketing prices of staple food items, negative coping mechanisms and further protection concerns, as well as a further deterioration of health conditions.

The most durable solution, and the one that 83 percent of the residents of Rukban residents prefer, is the option to return to their area of origin.

The IDPs from Rukban arrange their own transport to the Al Waha crossing point, where they receive some basic services before being taken to Homs on government buses. They then spend approximately 24 hours in five collective shelters in Homs, receiving assistance from the UN and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC), in the form of blankets, hygiene and dignity kits, nutrition bars and health assistance. The UN is about to carry out its fourth visit to the shelters to monitor conditions – that have been deemed adequate after previous visits in past weeks.

Upon departure from the shelters, most IDPs settle in the Homs Governorate – either in Homs city or south and southeast of it - where they continue to be assisted by the UN through SARC. In terms of assistance, mobile health clinics have attended to hundreds of health cases, and more over 2,500 food parcels have been distributed to close to 2,000 families, as of 14 July. Outreach protection volunteers are carrying out visits to some of these families, while others are being assisted through existing community centers. An unspecified number have moved on to Ar-Raqqa, Deir-ez-Zor, Homs, Hama, and rural Damascus. Less than 500 people remain in the shelters – half of them men – while their status is being settled with authorities.

The UN is currently awaiting approval from the Government of Syria on an operational plan to assess needs inside Rukban, to assist with transport those remaining and who wish to leave voluntarily, and to provide humanitarian relief for those who decide to remain. The UN has for months advocated for safe, sustained and unimpeded humanitarian access to Rukban and continues to do so.

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