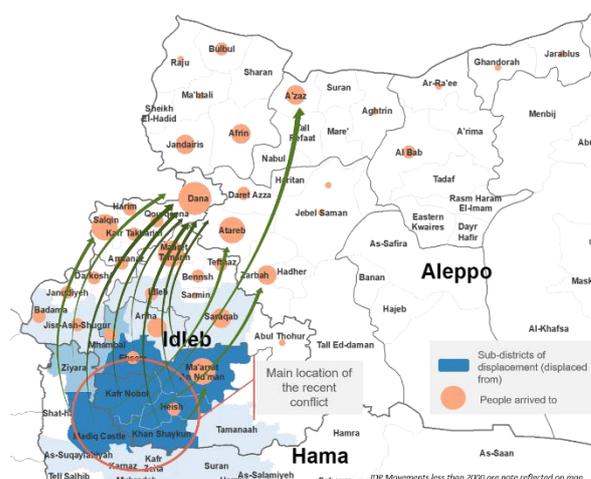


### HIGHLIGHTS

- Conflict has increased in northwest Syria, impacting civilians, civilian infrastructure and service provision in northern Hama and southern Idlib governorates.
- Approximately 180,000 people were displaced between 29 April and 9 May, while 15 health facilities, 16 schools, and 3 IDP settlements are reportedly affected due to hostilities.
- The humanitarian response is scaling up to meet people's need, in addition to the on-going response.
- Many humanitarian responders and service providers are part of the affected population and in many areas humanitarian operations have been suspended.
- The humanitarian community is responding in accordance with their readiness plan that had been prepared in the case of an increase in conflict in northwest Syria.



Source: CCCM as of 10 May 2019  
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

<p><b>180,000</b> internally displaced between 29 April to 9 May</p>	<p><b>Up to 120</b> civilians reported killed</p>	<p><b>Hundreds</b> civilians reported injured</p>	<p><b>15</b> health facilities reported affected</p>	<p><b>16</b> schools reported affected</p>
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### SITUATION OVERVIEW

Since 28 April, ongoing conflict in northwest Syria between Government of Syria (GoS) forces and its allies and non-state armed groups (NSAGs) has continued to escalate. On the morning of 8 May, GoS forces began ground operations against NSAGs, impacting on civilian populations, infrastructure and service provision in northern Hama and southern Idlib governorates. There are reports of people being killed and injured as a result of the recent escalation. While information is difficult to verify, unconfirmed reports indicate that more than 120 civilians, including women and children, have been killed, while many others have been injured. Between 29 April and 9 May, approximately 180,000 individuals fled the fighting, some 164,000 people fled to northern and eastern Idlib Governorate and around 16,000 people to northern and western Aleppo. Of note, there are reports of many communities that have been abandoned as their populations have fled. However, some people have stayed behind, many of whom are vulnerable. Many are dependent on humanitarian services for their daily needs.

There are an estimated 3 million people in the de-escalation zone in Idlib, of these 1.3 million are internally displaced people (IDPs). In the area impacted to date, there are an estimated 2.1 million people (Humanitarian Needs Overview, August 2018). Many of the population affected have been displaced in the past, for some this has been multiple displacements. As such, their ability to cope is reduced or compromised. The areas that recently displaced people are moving towards are already densely populated – often to areas with camps at full or excess capacity, putting additional strain on services. Reports indicate that rents have increased fivefold - where housing is available - since 1 May.

#### Impact on civilians and civilian infrastructure

Since the escalation of conflict on 28 April, many civilian structures have been impacted by airstrikes and/or shelling. On 7 May, two primary health care centres in Kafr Nabutha and Algab, both in Madiq Castle Sub-district in Hama Governorate were damaged. On 8 May, the Kafr Zeita Primary Health Centre in Hama Governorate was also damaged, bringing the total number of health facilities reported to be damaged or destroyed to 15 in this period. These health facilities provided at least 30,000 consultations, 860 hospital admissions and 700 surgeries per month to a highly vulnerable population. At least 16 schools have been reportedly damaged or destroyed as a result of airstrikes and shelling. The current fighting has resulted in the cancellation of final exams for the academic year in Khan Shaykun, Kafr Nobol, Ma'arrat An Nu'man, Ariha, and Jisr-Ash-Shugur. A total of 400,000 students of grade 1-

12 were registered to sit for these exams. At least four of the facilities that were damaged had been deconflicted with parties to the conflict.

### Suspension of humanitarian activities in NWS

The impact of the recent increase in conflict on the civilian population, civilian infrastructure and the provision of basic service is deeply worrying. Many humanitarian responders have been forced to suspend their activities in the conflict area. Some organizations suspended activities as their premises were damaged, destroyed or rendered unsafe by the violence. Others have suspended activities in order to keep their staff and beneficiaries safe, or because the beneficiary population has left. As of 8 May, at least 16 humanitarian partners have suspended their operations in areas impacted by conflict. Five humanitarian workers, including two health professionals, have been reportedly killed due to airstrikes and shelling.

## HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

The humanitarian community is implementing a readiness plan that was prepared in the case of a large-scale escalation of conflict in northwest Syria. This plan aims to provide support for up to 700,000 people in NSAG-controlled areas. The potential longer-term impact on the civilian population may be compounded as this escalation in violence is occurring during the harvest season. A rapid multi-sectoral assessment is planned in the coming days, in addition to needs assessments by individual organizations. Humanitarian assessments and response efforts have proven difficult to undertake as a result of the insecurity. Donors are asked to consider allowing for flexibility in terms of reprogramming existing funding so that partners can rapidly respond to emergency needs. Reprogramming will, however, leave gaps in existing programmes that will need to be funded urgently, not to negatively impact on other vulnerable populations. The current allocation for the Turkey Humanitarian Fund for Syria will prioritise, and fast track, activities that will aid the response. Further emergency allocations will also be considered.

The humanitarian response in northwest Syria is an integrated response which is service based. Aid is being provided by humanitarian partners working cross-border from Turkey to the population in the area. Humanitarian responders are themselves Syrians, many of whom are now part of the affected population. Humanitarian commodities are sent cross-border from Turkey. For the United Nations, humanitarian commodities continue to be sent through the Bab al Hawa and Bab al Salama cross-border facilities from Turkey. Partners' ability to respond has been compromised by the violence, as staff are displaced themselves and infrastructure to deliver services has been damaged or destroyed. A large influx of people displaced into areas with levels of existing IDPs can also overwhelm already overstretched services.

The Camp Coordination and Camp Management; Early Recovery; Nutrition; and Logistics Clusters are currently assessing the situation to ascertain further needs, constraints and gaps. Cluster members are addressing their existing caseload and scaling-up response to assist the populations in need.



### Education

#### Needs:

- Of the 180,000 total IDPs, the Education Cluster estimated that 45,000 school-aged children in need of immediate education services including accessing to their final exams, non-formal education such as remedial education, catch-up classes and self-learning program, recreational activities, and provision of learning supplies.
- Approximately 250,000 school-aged children are affected by ongoing hostilities in Idlib.

#### Response:

- The Education Cluster is monitoring the situation on the ground daily through its online real-time reporting mechanism.
- To enable a timely response, the Education Cluster has prepositioned essential learning supplies (school bag, school in a box, school tent including WASH facilities and school furniture, recreational kits) inside Syria for approximately 50,000 children.

#### Gaps & Constraints:

- **Attack on education facilities** continues in northwest Syria resulting loss of life and destruction of learning facilities. It was reported that 11 schools have been damaged or affected as a result of airstrikes and shelling between 1 April-3 May in southern Idlib and northern Hama. Several others have reportedly been affected since then.
- **Suspension of education activities** has been reported due to ongoing bombardment in North West Syria affecting 4,396 children in 14 communities in Idlib i.e. Ehsem, Maar Tahroma, Kafruma, Kafr Nobol, Heish, Khan Shaykun, Tamanaah, Sfuhen, Kawkabeh, Big Dara, Um Nir, Hazarin, Jbala, and one location in Arada of Aleppo.

- **Cancellation of final exams:** Final exams for academic year 2018-2019 have been cancelled in Khan Shaykun, Kafr Nobol, Ma'arrat Al -Nu'man, Ariha, and Jisr-Ash-Shugur. A total of 400,000 students of grade 1-12 were registered to sit for final exams between end of April and June in Idlib.



## Food Security & Livelihoods

### Needs:

- Approximately 180,000 newly displaced people require food assistance.
- FSL partners reported that the availability of wheat flour to produce bread in northwest Syria may be limited in the next months, producing as consequence shortages and increase in prices of bread.

### Response:

- The food security cluster lead WFP has prepositioned 25,000 ready-to-eat rations (RTERs) inside Syria to serve 125,000 individuals and approximately 40,000 RTERs in Turkey to serve 200,000 individuals.
- In May food security cluster members distributed or plans to distribute around 12,000 RTERs to serve approximately 60,000 newly displaced individuals.
- 14 partners reported planned extra activities for the holy month of Ramadan, such as distribution of cooked meals, raw meat, one-off food rations, to reach approximately 76,000 people, including and prioritizing newly displaced. A food partner is distributing Iftar meals to 26,000 beneficiaries in Dana camps.
- One partner is providing two cooked meals per day to 1,168 individuals in Mezanaz, 911 in Maaret El Ikhwan, 365 in Azaz reception centres.
- Other cluster members plan to distribute 2,370 RTERs for 13,718 individuals in 12 communities and multi-purpose cash grants to reach 2,426 families (12,130 people) in 8 communities.

### Gaps & Constraints:

- Although partners are stepping up their emergency capacity to procure additional RTERs, additional rations that were not already planned are expected to be delivered in June and July. Given the high needs, available response capacity will be exhausted soon.
- Partners report the most acute needs in newly established informal sites, especially in Dana Sub-district and in the Deir Hassan camp cluster.
- Prices of food items have reportedly increased significantly in the destination of displacements, mainly in IDP sites in northern Idlib Governorate. Emergency market and price monitoring is required.
- Some partners reported conducting rapid needs assessment to inform their operations, but an overall rapid needs assessment is needed to identify detailed needs and gaps.
- Displaced people are reportedly moving with their essential items, including livestock, which will create a need for animal feed and fodder.



## Health

### Needs:

- Health needs are vast among the affected community.
- 11 out of 98 vaccination centres in north western Syria, including all in northern Hama, suspended their activities for security reasons.
- Partners have been forced to suspend operations in at least 13 public health centres (PHCs) and suspend the services of several mobile teams to keep their patients and staff safe.
- In northern Hama, there are no functioning hospitals as of 9 May. Two out seven primary healthcare facilities are still functioning, but access is challenging due to the insecurity

### Response:

- The first priority is serving the high number of displaced people. Health partners are present with fixed and mobile PHC structures and secondary health care structures in the area.
- As the cluster lead, WHO is already supporting primary and secondary health services in the areas where the newly internally displaced people are expected to arrive. WHO will scale-up service provision based on ongoing needs assessments and prioritizes these areas in the next delivery of medical supplies.
- A mapping of health structures and their coverage of newly set up arrival sites will be done in the coming days and eventually a mobile response set up accordingly.
- WHO released emergency supplies from the prepositioned stock inside Syria already by end of March. These supplies were distributed among the front line and 1st and 2nd referral facilities (covering 10 primary and 11 secondary facilities). These supplies provided 92,200 treatment courses: 2,200 treatment courses for surgical and trauma care, 50,000 for secondary healthcare and 40,000 for primary healthcare.

- WHO finalized the chemical attack supplies distribution plan for the referral facilities for chemical attacks. This distribution plan was prepared in coordination with health cluster and all supplies are already within Syria.
- The Health Cluster based in the Gaziantep hub is currently collecting information on new demands from partners for medical supplies and a cross-border shipment and new distribution to health partners is planned the beginning of next week (week 20).
- 44 reproductive health kits were provided in late April. These kits can serve up to 450,000 - 500,000 people for three months, distributed in different locations in the northern Idlib and western rural Aleppo. The kits are designed for establishing new basic emergency obstetric clinics in case a health facility needs to be relocated. More kits have been ordered as of May 2019. The focus remains on establishing new facilities in safer areas and use of mobile clinics to provide services remote areas.

#### Gaps & Constraints:

- In northern Hama, emergency care is provided by three surgical/stabilization units, where staff can perform basic emergency procedures and stabilize patients for evacuation to neighboring Idlib. One of the surgical units is in an inaccessible area and the two others are currently out of service and being relocated.
- There is a lack of hospital beds especially for general medicine and pediatrics in the area, but referrals can be made to Idlib city.
- There are 13 ambulances still working in northern Hama. Evacuation routes for patients are extremely difficult as the routes pass inaccessible areas and/or are impassable due to insecurity.
- Health partners have either suspended activities or are considering suspending activities in southern Idlib. Health cluster is currently collecting and monitoring information to plan and coordinate needed health interventions.



#### Protection

##### Needs:

- All the affected population, both the newly displaced and the existing caseload.
- There are a variety of protection concerns given the vulnerability of the population, the increase of violence, and the situations in which people are living.

##### Response:

- Between 22 April and 7 May 2019, 13 Protection Cluster members provided emergency response services to civilians recently displaced due to the ongoing hostilities in southern Idlib and northern Hama. Cluster members provided 17,603 protection services to IDPs and affected host community members in 60 communities within 25 sub-districts in Idlib and Aleppo, reaching 8,672 individuals (2,591 girls, 2,398 boys, 2,370 women, and 1,313 men).
- Gender-based violence sub-cluster members are responding by using emergency stocks of 5,000 dignity kits inside Syria. 1,920 dignity kits for displaced women and girls in Kafr Takharim and Dana communities have already been distributed, 2,500 dignity kits are planned to be distributed in Armanaz shortly, and another 1,000 will be distributed in Atmah. 500 more remain in stock and 4,700 more dignity kits, including newborn kits, are on the way in the next week.

#### Gaps & Constraints:

- The Protection Cluster expects additional disruption to protection service delivery as the hostilities continue. Even with existing emergency response capacity and resources, the tempo of the conflict and the patterns of displacement will render response across sectors limited and insufficient.
- 13 static service points such as community centers, women and girls' safe spaces, child-friendly spaces and health facilities are currently non-operational. On average, these centers and their mobile teams reach over 1,150 women, men, girls and boys each month.



#### Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

##### Needs:

- The WASH cluster continues to carry out a needs assessment through its partners. With the current displacement of approximately 180,000 IDPs the existing camps and informal settlements are overcrowded. This demands additional water supply, community latrines and solid waste management services. Critical WASH supplies such as hygiene/dignity kits, jerry cans, water purification support are urgently needed.

##### Response:

- The WASH Cluster is in constant touch with partners to respond to the displacement, coordinate response and identify gaps among partners in terms of supplies and services. As of 9 May, at least six cluster partners responded to around 18,000 new IDPs in 33 communities, 49 camps in the sub-districts of Dana, Harim, Idlib,

Jebel Saman, Ariha, Ehsem, Ma'arrat An Nu'man, Heish, Kafr Nobol, Atareb and Maaret Tamsrin. Further, about 16,000 beneficiaries received bottled water, hygiene kits, jerrycans and water trucking services. In Afrin a cluster partner positioned 1,400 hygiene kits to respond to the needs of newly arrived IDPs in the district. Another partner is carrying out water trucking and dislodging in 20 camps in Maaret Tamsrin, Dana and Atareb to serve at least 2,985 beneficiaries. Cluster partners are encouraged to integrate WASH services to reach the entire target population through various platforms such as communities, protection centers, schools and health centers.

- As cluster lead, UNICEF is also complementing these efforts with prepositioned WASH stocks in Idlib and Aleppo that is ready to support over 250,000 individuals. Critical supplies such as water purifying chemicals are available to support 250,000 people for over six-months. Additional supplies such as hygiene kits are in pipeline to meet to critical needs of displaced population. Three partners are ready to carry out life-saving hygiene promotion, distribution of hygiene kits, water trucking, installation of water-tanks, restoration and repair of water systems, build latrine blocks, solid waste management, and operation and maintenance management of community latrines and water stations.

#### Gaps & Constraints:

- Since it is difficult to be precise in response planning due to unpredictable nature of the situation, it is necessary to constantly monitor the situation and keep flexibility of response.
- Several cluster partners have temporarily suspended their operations in several locations in southern Idlib, as the fighting escalated.
- Additional resources needed for community mobilization, installation of water points, construction of community latrines in the locations where additional IDPs are gathering.



#### Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFIs)

##### Needs:

- 180,000 people left their homes between 29 April and 9 May. Most of them need shelter support in and outside camps. Most IDPs also need non-food items (NFIs) even if some managed to move with essential items.

##### Response:

- Shelter/NFI cluster partners are conducting their assessments. The cluster has the capacity to provide tents and/or NFIs for at least 182,000 people. Additional items are also in the pipeline to assist 105,000 individuals.

#### Gaps & Constraints:

- The main challenges for the organizations are to assess needs when people are still on the move and to get authorization to install tents, water and sanitation facilities.

## GENERAL COORDINATION

On May 7, the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG), responsible for the technical aspects of coordinating humanitarian response for cross-border assistance from Turkey, met. The high level of hostilities and impact on humanitarian programs was noted, with many partners having to suspend operations. Many humanitarian staff in the area were also affected by the violence and are displaced themselves. Cluster leads are rolling out the readiness plan with their partners and clusters are implementing the plan through the previously identified response activities as best they can, given the volatile context. Nonetheless much of the plan will be challenging to carry out due to the conflict. A rapid needs assessment will be carried out in the coming days in affected areas, in addition to assessments and needs information gathered from individual organizations. Many clusters also called emergency meetings for their members to gauge and address needs. The Humanitarian Liaison Group (HLG), which is responsible for the strategic aspects of humanitarian response from Turkey, met on 9 May and discussed the situation. There are serious concerns about the protection of civilians, including ensuring freedom of movement of affected people. The HLG reiterated its commitment to enhance coordination, the need for flexibility of response, and the limitations of responding in active conflict situations. Overall the coordination of response is challenged by the high levels of violence and the remote management aspect of coordination mechanisms. Inside northwest Syria humanitarian organizations are coordinating through ad hoc groups in many geographic areas.

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