



Rapid Protection Monitoring Report: Evacuation of Al Wa'er, Homs Governorate between 1 and 4 May 2017



Key Findings

- 51 Key Informants (KIs) (32F/19M)
- Older persons experienced difficulty in joining buses
- Long waiting periods and overcrowding were major problems while boarding; and waiting at checkpoints was the major problem during bus ride
- Sexual and physical violence and lack of education are the top main risks post-evacuation

Background Information

Between mid-March and 10 May 2017, there were 9 waves of evacuation from Al Wa'er neighborhood of Homs affecting an estimated 20,000 people¹. This is Syria Protection Cluster (Turkey)'s second Protection Monitoring Report on the Al Wa'er Evacuation. The first report, which outlines protection concerns of the evacuation of April, is available at the [Humanitarian Response website](#).

Methodology

This update is based on information collected by two members of the Protection Cluster in early May 2017. All interviews were conducted in Idleb governorate: 80% in Idleb and 20% in Harim districts. There were 51 key informants, of which 32 (63%) were female and 19 (37%) were male. 7 key informants (14%) identified as having a disability.

44 (86%) key informants (KIs) self-identified as civilian. 4 (8%) self-identified as combatant and 3 (6%) did not answer. Information about association of civilians with armed groups cannot be verified. 22 (43% of all KIs and 69% of female KIs) identified as housewives. In addition, among the KIs were the following occupations: 3 teachers, 3 civil defense employees, 2 nurses, 2 humanitarian workers, 2 day laborers, 1 Local Council member, 1 doctor, 1 tailor, 1 sweet-shop owner and 1 university student. The remaining 20% of KIs were unemployed, or did not respond. 36 (71%) key informants were accompanied by children.

Protection Risks Faced During Evacuation

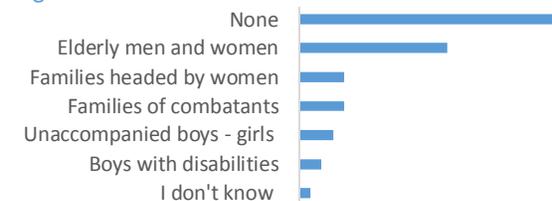
Key informants left Al Wa'er in March, April and May 2017. 30 (59%) of KIs moved on 1 May 2017. 47 (92%) KIs fled with their family members. At the time of the interview, key informants were on their way to the following destinations: Saaed Camp (30%), the Mud Village (28%), and Maaret Al Akhwan (18%). The remaining 25% did not know their destination.

3 key informants became separated from family members during the evacuation. 1 KI experienced separation before arriving to the bus site, 1 KI experienced separation while boarding the bus due to overcrowding and chaos, and 1 experienced separation from her child with a disability. The mother with child with a disability was the only key informant who had not reunited with family members at the time of the interview.

When asked about people from their neighborhood who could not join the evacuation buses, 24 (47%) said that there were none who could not join. However, 10 (20%) said that elderly men could not join. 4 (8%) key informants said that families headed by women could not join, and 4 (8%) said

that families of combatants could not join. Other mentioned groups were elderly women (6%), disabled boys (4%) and unaccompanied boys (4%) and unaccompanied girls (2%). It has been frequently noted that during evacuations, elderly persons without caretakers are unable to reach evacuation buses and certain groups are unwilling to evacuate as they fear retaliation by Government of Syria (GoS) forces during the journey.

Figure 1: Who Could Not Join the Evacuation Buses?



Problems Experienced While Boarding the Buses

Consistent with findings of the previous Al Wa'er report, long waiting periods (67%) and overcrowding (61%), were the most commonly reported incidents for this evacuation, reported by both men and women. An additional problem was verbal abuse towards men, reported by 10% of key informants—both male and female. KIs did not report verbal abuse towards women.

Figure 2: Problems While Boarding the Buses

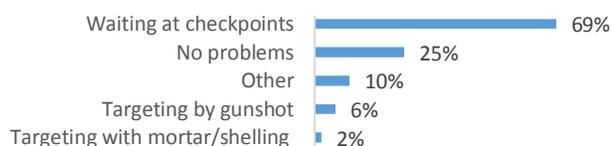


Problems Experienced During the Bus Ride

Waiting at checkpoints was the most frequently mentioned problem during the bus ride, with 69% of key informants reporting this; while 25% reported that there were no problems at all. 10% reported that they experienced other problems during the bus ride. Of these, 4 KIs reported that their bus lost the way during the journey. 6% reported that their bus came under gunfire, while 2% reported that their

bus came under shelling by mortars.

Figure 3: Problems during Bus Ride



Documentation

3 (6%) key informants were unable to take their documents with them during the evacuation. 26 (51%) KIs reported that their documents were either taken or photographed by Syrian Armed Forces and/or their allies during the displacement.

Explosive Hazards

2 key informants reported having encountered the risk of mines or explosives on the road.

Protection Risks Faced Post-Evacuation

The following perceived protection risks were identified for men, women, boys and girls by key informants:

Men: Unemployment was identified as a main risk for men at present time, and it remains so in this evacuation. 20% of KIs reported this as a risk for men. Unemployment was followed by kidnapping (14%), bombing (8%) and poverty (8%).

Women: 22% of KIs identified a form of sexual or physical violence as a main risk for women at the present time. Responses for this include the risk of exploitation, rape, abuse, and beating. Other risks included: risks of bombing (14%), adapting to a new home (6%), infectious disease (4%), and freedom of movement (4%).

Boys: Lack of education was identified as a risk for boys by 26% of key informants, while abuse and exploitation was identified as a risk by 20%; followed by risks of trafficking (4%) and infectious disease (4%).

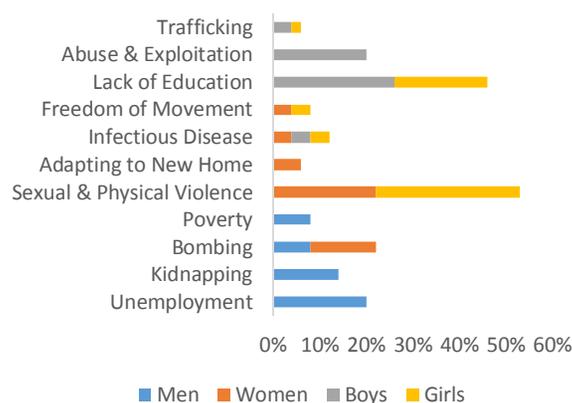
Girls: Similar to the concerns for women, sexual and physical violence was identified by 31% of key informants as a main risk for girls at the present time. Responses include harassment, abuse, exploitation and rape. Followed are

risks of lack of education (20%), infectious disease (4%), freedom of movement (4%) and trafficking (2%).

Present Needs

IDP key informants from Maaret Al-Akhwan community of Idleb reported the following present needs: 16% reported the need for schools, 14% reported need for housing renovation, and 10% reported need for a health center. IDPs emphasized the need for dentists. 53% of survey KIs answered that women and girls are not able to meet their

Figure 4: Main Risks at Present Time by Age and Gender



basic health needs. Additionally, 4% reported the need for gas and lighting.

Intentions for Onward Movement

11 (22%) key informants stated that they are planning to go somewhere else. Of those who stated that they plan to move onward, 55% were male and 45% were female. Of those who stated that they do not plan to move onward, 33% were male and 67% were female. Of those who plan to move onward, majority plan to travel to Turkey, and remaining KIs plan to travel to: a border camp/village, Darkush in Idleb, or Maarret Msreen in Rural Idleb. IDPs explained that they plan to move onward because of: 1) desire to be in Turkey 2) seeking physical safety, and 3) wanting reunification with relatives.

Comparison to Earlier Report

Although many experiences reported by IDPs from Al-Wa'er remain same compared to the previous report from April, such as the main concerns while boarding evacuation buses, there are also some changes. While some protection risks were reported less, some additional protection risks were also identified.

In regards to problems experienced by IDPs while boarding the evacuation buses, verbal abuse and physical violence were notable in the previous survey. However, in this survey no physical violence was reported by the key informants, and verbal abuse was reported only for men (10%).

April data indicated that IDPs' major concern following the evacuation was meeting of basic needs. According to this survey, IDPs' main concern is sexual and physical violence towards women and girls (reported 53%). While employment and education remain important for IDPs, lack of education for boys and girls (reported 46%) is further emphasized as a protection risk by IDPs in May.

Top Protection Concerns of IDPs from Al Wa'er		
	April 2017	May 2017
1	Basic Needs	Sexual and Physical Violence
2	Employment	Employment
3	Adjusting to Displacement	Education
4	Safety	Safety
5	Education	Poverty

In addition, IDPs in May expressed new protection concerns that had not been indicated previously. For example, 14% of key informants mentioned the risk of kidnapping for men. Risk of sexual and physical violence was noted significantly for both women (22%) and girls (31%), albeit greater for girls. Women and girls have described the risks as: exploitation, rape, abuse, beating, and harassment. Infectious disease has been noted as a risk for women (4%), boys (4%), and girls (4%). Trafficking was noted as a risk for boys (4%) and girls (2%).

¹ Adleh, Fadi and Favier, Agnes. "Local Reconciliation Agreements," *European University Institute*. June 2017.