

SYRIA: FLASH UPDATE ON RECENT EVENTS

24 May 2018

This update provides a summary of recent displacement, along with developments from the **UNHCR co-led Sector/Clusters of Protection, Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) and Shelter/Non Food Items (SNFI)**.

KEY DISPLACEMENT STATISTICS (AS OF 15 MAY 2018)¹

- **1,485,295** displacements recorded by the CCCM Cluster in the last 12 months from affected areas of northern and southern Syria:
 - **1,393,647** displacements from affected areas of northern Syria, including Idleb (405,479), Hama (256,935), Deir-Ez-Zor (251,792), Ar-Raqqa (226,631), Aleppo (157,357), Homs (37,826), Al-Hassakeh (13,484), Lattakia (1,540) governorates, northern Syria. This also includes some 42,600 displacements under verification. Around 15,000 displacements were recorded so far in May 2018, from Homs, Idleb, Aleppo, and Hama governorates.
 - **91,648** displacements from affected areas of Damascus, Rural Damascus, Sweida and Dar'a, south-western Syria, to northern Syria.

CONTEXTUAL DEVELOPMENTS

- On 21 May, the Syrian government [announced](#) that it had taken full control of all areas around Damascus. The announcement came after Syrian government forces took the last extremist-held pockets in the Yarmouk Palestine refugee camp and the Hajar al-Aswad district, southern Damascus.
- On 22 May, a group of around 400 people was reportedly evacuated from the Yarmouk Palestine refugee camp in southern Damascus to Madiq Castle, in northern Hama governorate, following a local agreement reached between parties. A spokesperson [said](#) that the UN was not a party to these evacuation agreements.
- Around 39,500 individuals displaced from eastern Ghouta remain in eight IDP sites in Rural Damascus. IDPs have also started leaving the sites and returning to their areas of origin in eastern Ghouta, with over 7,000 IDPs having left the sites during the last week.

UNHCR CO-LED SECTOR/CLUSTER UPDATES

Protection

Emergency response:

- **Syria Hub:** UN teams continue to visit the IDP collective shelters hosting IDPs from eastern Ghouta. Partners continue to conduct child protection, youth and psychosocial activities on a daily basis. To raise awareness on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) prevention and response, an SGBV awareness session was conducted on sexual harassment last week for women in Najha IDP site. Another partner conducted SGBV awareness raising sessions for children in Electricity Complex IDP site.
- **Turkey Hub:** The Protection Cluster, Child Protection, GBV, and Mine Action Sub-Cluster members continued emergency response service provision for civilians arriving from Rural Damascus and Homs. Eight Cluster members provided over 4,000 interventions to IDPs and affected host community members, providing protection services in 35 communities in 18 sub-districts in Idleb and Aleppo governorates, and reaching 3,110 individuals (1,146 girls, 851 boys, 931 women, and 182 men). The main services provided

¹ Some displacement statistics mentioned in other sections of this report may not be reflected in the "Key Displacement Statistics" as they are in the process of being triangulated by established population tracking mechanisms.

between 8 and 21 May include psychological first aid, psychosocial support, distribution of dignity kits, and mine risk education.

Other key activities:

- **Turkey Hub:** Cluster members in northern Syria continue to provide child protection and GBV case management services, referring individuals for more specialized services, and family tracing. Cluster members reported high levels of psychosocial distress among girls, boys, women and men. Rapid protection monitoring was initiated in April to better understand the protection risks of IDPs from eastern Ghouta, as well as threats faced during their flight. Seven Cluster members conducted rapid protection monitoring, speaking to over 400 individuals in Idleb and Aleppo. Key findings indicated that civilians arriving from eastern Ghouta experienced a long, humiliating, and dangerous flight process. Increased rates of loss of civil status documents due to flight, increased risk of child labour, early marriage and lack of appropriate care for children, as well as psychological distress, rank among the most commonly reported protection risks. The report is available through [this link](#).

Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM)

Cross-line displacements from northern Homs:

- **Turkey Hub:** Between 8 and 21 May, more than 35,000 individuals have reportedly left northern Homs towards northern Aleppo and Idleb governorates. CCCM Reception Centres in Maaret Elekhwan (Idleb) and Mezanaz (Aleppo) have received large influxes of new arrivals and are currently hosting 2,000 and 2,623 IDPs, respectively. Both centres are running over capacity.

Response and availabilities in north-west Syria:

- **Turkey Hub:** A total of 1,533 IDPs are currently being hosted in the A'zaz reception centre, 444 in the Al Bab reception centre, 2,623 in the Mezanaz reception centre, and 2,000 in the Maaret Elekhwan reception centre. The capacity of these four reception centres is expected to increase up to 9,100 individuals with the establishment of additional rubble halls. All IDP needs are being covered across these centres. Available spaces in sites and other locations in northern Syria remain extremely limited. Based on a collaboration between CCCM and SNFI clusters, the available shelter space (in and out of camps) in northern Syria was mapped out, and an online dashboard is available [here](#). Planned and current available spaces are estimated to be enough for around 23,000 individuals.

Shelter/Non-Food Items (SNFI)

Emergency response:

- **Syria Hub:** The emergency response to the displacement from both Afrin and eastern Ghouta continues. So far, 526,000 NFIs have been distributed to the affected population in the collective shelters in Rural Damascus, including blankets, mattresses, kitchen sets, hygiene kits, jerry cans, plastic sheeting, solar lamps, winter clothing kits, diapers, sleeping bags, and sleeping mats. Meanwhile, members in the Damascus Hub distributed 438,000 NFIs to IDPs from Afrin in Nabul, Zahraa, and Tall Refaat, including hygiene kits, plastic sheeting, blankets, mattresses, kitchen sets, jerry cans, buckets, solar lamps, sleeping mats, clothing kits, diapers, and sleeping bags.
- **Turkey Hub:** SNFI Cluster members have been responding to the new IDPs from northern Homs governorate with NFI distributions. Shelter absorption capacity in northern Syria remains limited, and there are reports of new arrivals sleeping in the open. The absorption capacity of host communities is also reported to be very limited.

Other key activities:

- **Turkey Hub:** One partner in the SNFI Cluster is carrying out an assessment on empty shelter sites in Idleb Governorate. So far, around 320 available shelters were identified. The SNFI Cluster is working on using the dataset provided through this assessment to develop an online dashboard that can be used to quickly identify possible shelters that can be supported with rent and rehabilitation assistance.

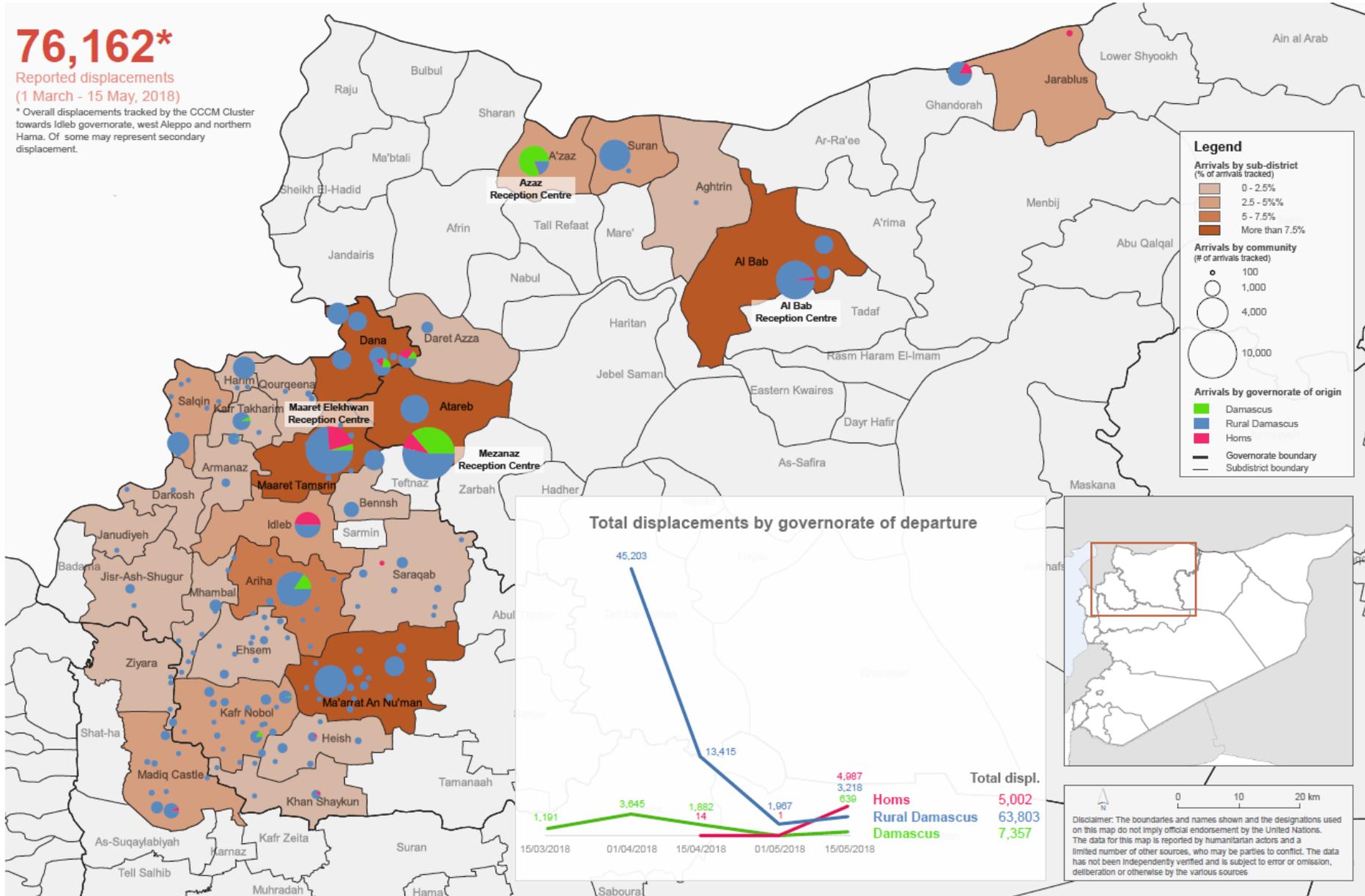
Syrian Arab Republic (Northern Governorates): Local agreements displacements overview between 1 March and 15 May, 2018



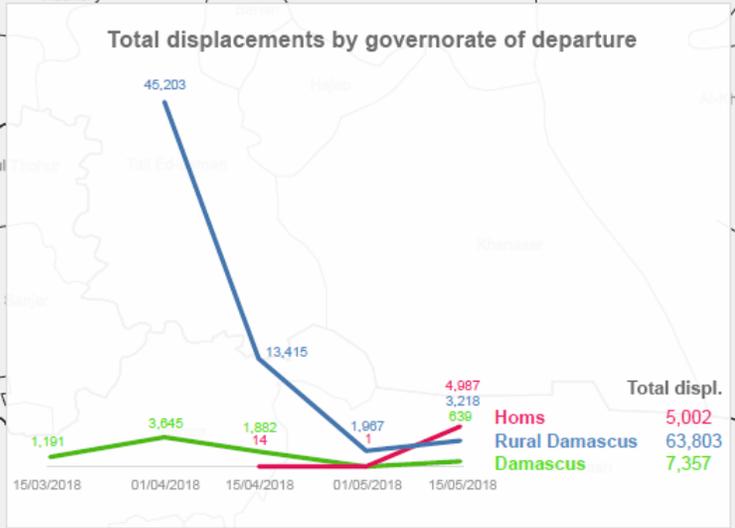
76,162*

Reported displacements
(1 March - 15 May, 2018)

* Overall displacements tracked by the CCCM Cluster towards Idlib governorate, west Aleppo and northern Hama. Of some may represent secondary displacement.



Total displacements by governorate of departure



Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement by the United Nations. The data for this map is reported by humanitarian actors and a limited number of other sources, who may be parties to conflict. The data has not been independently verified and is subject to error or omission, deliberation or otherwise by the various sources.