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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 August 2018)	6.2 M
Population Movements (January – December 2018)	1.6 M
Returnees (January – December 2018)	1.4 M

Source 2019 HNO

Record US\$7 Billion Pledged in Brussels

A record US\$7 billion was pledged for this year at the third “Supporting the future of Syria and the region” conference in Brussels from 12-14 March 2019, with expectations of similar funding as last year for the response to needs inside Syria.



Building upon the previous conferences, Brussels III renewed and strengthened the commitment of the international community to support the Syrian people, the neighbouring countries and the communities most affected by the conflict. The conference brought together 78 delegations, including 56 states, 11 regional organisations and international financial institutions, as well as 11 UN agencies.

The UN coordinates two international appeals in response to the Syria crisis. The 2019

Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) for inside Syria requires US\$3.33 billion, while the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) requires \$5.5 billion this year.

With the Syrian conflict now entering its ninth year, staggering humanitarian needs persist. An estimated 11.7 million Syrians are in urgent need of life saving humanitarian and protection assistance, while over 5.6 million Syrian refugees are displaced outside the country.

With an estimated 6.2 million people internally displaced in the country, people’s resources are increasingly depleted, and over eight in 10 people in the country now live below the poverty line. Every day, families are faced with impossible choices between putting food on the table, accessing healthcare or sending their children to school. Meanwhile, the risk of further escalation of hostilities in Idlib and surrounding areas in Syria’s northwest remains of very serious concern. Humanitarian organizations also continue to respond to humanitarian situations in Rukban and the north-east. For 2019, the UN and humanitarian partners are calling for \$3.32 billion to provide critical life-saving and life-sustaining assistance to 11.7 million Syrians this year. After over eight years of hardship and violence, the scale, severity and complexity of humanitarian needs in Syria remains. Lives can be saved and improved when the funding is in place. In 2018 humanitarian organizations received \$2.3 billion under the HRP and reached an average of 5.5 million people each month.

The conference also focused on the solidarity of countries and communities hosting Syrian refugees, and the challenges they face in the medium and long-term. Particular attention was also given to the perspectives of Syrian women.

Building on the successful model of last year, this year’s Days of Dialogue was an unprecedented effort to bring to Brussels hundreds of representatives of Syrian, regional and international non-governmental organizations and civil society. The first one-and-a-half days of the conference was devoted to a dialogue between these representatives and relevant ministers/principles and decision

HRP 2019 Funding

3.32 billion
requested (US\$)

196 million
funded (US\$)

5.9% funded

Source OCHA FTS 4 April 2019

makers from countries neighbouring Syria, donor countries and UN agencies.

Speaking at the opening of the conference, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mark Lowcock, thanked donors for their generous contributions last year and remained hopeful for similar funding this year.

“Without continued funding, humanitarian activities would be interrupted, cutting deliveries of life-saving food, water, health, shelter and protection,” he said.

UN and SARC Convoy Reaches 50,000 in Menbij

On 7 March, the UN and Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) dispatched an interagency convoy delivering humanitarian assistance to meet the urgent needs of 50,000 people in Menbij and surrounding areas in northeast Aleppo Governorate. This was the first time that assistance was delivered to Menbij from Aleppo. The convoy was made possible by the collaboration and support of all the parties in the area.

Following weeks of planning and preparations, humanitarian partners loaded 37 trucks that carried 862 metric tonnes of food, non-food items, education materials, nutrition and medical supplies. The food supplies will cover the needs of 50,000 for approximately 30 days while the medical supplies consisting of a range of life-saving medicines, will suffice to treat over 80,000 people. Medical supplies have been delivered to hospitals and dispensaries that provide healthcare free of charge.

Among the supplies that are being distributed are 10,000 ready-to-eat rations, 10,000 dry food rations, 10,000 blankets, 5,850 dignity kits, 5,000 school bags and stationery kits, 2,000 winter clothing kits and 765 cartons of supplementary feeding products to prevent and treat malnutrition; all of which are being distributed by SARC, following an assessment of the needs of the population and prioritizing female-headed households, people living with disabilities and those living in informal settlements.



Menbij and surrounding areas, 25 kilometers west of the Euphrates River, have witnessed periods of

heightened hostilities and large-scale displacement throughout the Syria crisis. Despite a gradual cessation in hostilities over the past two years, humanitarian response has been limited in the area and the needs of the population remain high.

The UN calls on all parties for regular and sustained access to Menbij and surrounding areas to facilitate the continued delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Violence in Northwest Syria Poses Threat to Civilians

A recent surge in violence in northwest Syria poses a significant threat to the civilian population in the area. Since 1 February, intensive artillery shelling has been reported across Idleb Governorate and northern Hama, affecting all aspects of civilian life. This despite the September 2018 agreement between the Russian Federation and Turkey to establish a demilitarized zone in and around Idleb which proved a significant turning point in preventing a possible humanitarian catastrophe and resulted in a notable reduction in hostilities at the time.

Recent weeks, however, have seen an alarming spike in civilian casualties and new displacement, with increased shelling along frontlines, an intensification of air strikes, and a growing number of attacks involving improvised explosive devices in urban areas, including Idleb city. In March alone, 90 civilians were reportedly killed, nearly half of them children. Over 86,500 people were displaced in February and March, compounding an already precarious humanitarian situation on the ground and resulting in further civilian suffering.

Civilian life in Idleb and northern Hama has been significantly impacted with markets, shops and schools being forced to close as a result of insecurity, and hospitals and other basic services.

While the humanitarian response is ongoing, with thousands of people already receiving non-food items, food, nutrition, protection and other assistance, a further deterioration of the situation could overwhelm humanitarian response capacities.



Further hostilities in northwest Syria could also undermine cross-border operations from Turkey, which play a significant role in responding to the needs of millions of Syrians in the northwest of the country.

As of March 2019, an estimated 2.7 million people in northwest Syria are in need of humanitarian assistance, including some 1.7 million IDPs. To support them, cross-border operations from Turkey provide regular services, such as emergency health care, technicians for water

systems, and teachers for schools. In 2018, a total of 1.9 million people received food assistance every month; 3.4 million people received water, sanitation and hygiene assistance; education supplies were delivered to 1.2 million people; and nutrition assistance was provided for 0.5 million people. In addition, some 12.9 million medical procedures were conducted.

Today, some 50 INGOs and over 150 Syrian NGOs and networks provide assistance into Syria from Turkey through thousands of staff and hundreds of offices throughout the northwest. They also assume the highest risk, working on the frontlines of the conflict and providing aid where others cannot. It is estimated that hundreds of humanitarian staff and health workers have been killed or injured during the course of the conflict.

The UN also provides assistance, authorised under UN Security Council Resolution 2165, which was unanimously adopted on 14 July 2014 and subsequently renewed. Since UN cross-border operations began in July 2014, the UN has conducted over 930 cross-border consignments, with some 19,108 trucks through the Turkish and Syrian border crossings of Bab al-Hawa and Bab al-Salam.

Attacks on Healthcare Continued in 2018

Attacks on healthcare in 2018 continued to have a significant impact on the state of healthcare in Syria. According to the 2019 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), close to half of all hospitals and primary health care facilities in Syria are either partially functional or not functional due to damage inflicted by hostilities over the course of the eight-year long crisis. Not only do such attacks kill and maim people seeking medical assistance and health personnel, they also deprive countless more from access to essential medical assistance. In 2018, the Health sector recorded 142 attacks on health care personnel and facilities, claiming the lives of 102 people and injuring 189. This was a significant increase over the previous year when 122 attacks had been confirmed, claiming the lives of 73 people and injured a further 149. Among health facilities reportedly attacked, six of them – located in East Ghouta, northern rural Homs and northwest Syria – had been de-conflicted



through a mechanism established to identify and protect humanitarian staff and facilities by sharing location details (including GPS coordinates) with the Russian Federation, members of the International Coalition and Turkey. At the start of 2018 and after four years of the deconfliction mechanism being in effect, only 169 facilities were deconflicted. By the end of 2018 that figure had risen to 1,047 deconflicted humanitarian facilities, including schools, medical facilities and humanitarian sites.

The UN continues to remind all parties to the conflict, as well as those with influence over them, of their obligations under international humanitarian law, and demand all parties to respect and protect medical personnel and humanitarian personnel and their means of transport and equipment, as well as hospitals and other medical facilities, as per UN Security Council Resolution 2286 (2016).

Speaking to the UN Security Council on the issue of protecting humanitarian and medical personnel on 1 April, Mark Lowcock, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, noted there had been 388 attacks on healthcare in 2018 globally, resulting in over 300 people killed and 400 injured.

“Respect for humanitarian and medical personnel has eroded across conflicts increasing the personal risk that aid workers take and impeding their life-saving work,” he said.

Responding to the Needs of All at Al-Hol Camp

The escalation of hostilities in Baghouz and surrounding areas in Deir-ez-Zor Governorate has triggered massive displacement, with most of those fleeing the area extremely vulnerable after living under dire conditions and being exposed to hostilities for a prolonged period under the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). More than 73,000 people are currently hosted at the Al-Hol IDP camp in Al-Hasakeh Governorate, including Syrian IDPs, Iraqi nationals and other third-country nationals.

Originally set up to host just over 40,000 people, the camp has significantly exceeded its capacity. Since early December, over 60,000 people – more than 90 per cent women and children - have been transported to the camp, with the number of people fleeing Baghouz surpassing all expectations.

As a result, humanitarian actors are currently working at full capacity to expand the camp to



accommodate the most recent arrivals and minimize time spent in communal living areas or larger tents. Some 19,000 people continue to be accommodated in these areas and large-sized tents until family tents can be erected and WASH facilities established.

Although the number of new arrivals has lessened over the past week, those that are arriving are in critical health condition, showing signs of distress and suffering from conflict-related injuries, malnutrition and fatigue. Medical teams are currently

working around the clock to provide primary and secondary health services, reproductive health and malnutrition support and facilitate referral to hospitals. In March, over 1,700 patients were referred to hospitals in the area. Referral hospitals are overwhelmed and the referral system is overstretched - the camp is therefore in an urgent need of expanded health services.

Forty-three per cent of the camp population are Syrian IDPs, 42 per cent are Iraqi nationals and 15 per cent are third country nationals, with assistance provided to all those in need without discrimination. Most of the arrivals have suffered from a prolonged exposure to hostilities and the strain of the journey from Baghouz, with many having specific needs, including pregnant women and girls, people with disabilities and more than 350 unaccompanied minors.

The size and the profile of the population requires a substantially increased protection presence and an expansion of services such as psychosocial support, case management, restoration of complex family links, specialised support for person with disabilities including war injuries.

To sustain the humanitarian response, the UN and humanitarian partners are calling on member states to continue providing support to humanitarian actors responding in the area, and to facilitate efforts to further scale up assistance. UN agencies are appealing for an additional US\$27 million to support the needs of the current population over the next months.

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