SDF advances east and west of Ar-Raqqah city resulted in the displacement of over 20,000 people bringing the total number of IDPs tracked since November 2016 to almost 200,000. The Self Administration reportedly decided to enact a rule to prevent IDPs from Ar-Raqqah governorate from leaving Ein Issa camp. Camp management authorities later indicated the rule will not be enforced. An estimated 400 families fled their homes in residential neighborhoods in western Ar-Raqqah city to the western countryside due to flooding in five residential neighborhoods. More than 15,000 IDPs returned to Al-Thawrah (Tabqa) town, where commodities are available but insufficient in quantity. Intense airstrikes and shelling continued across Ar-Raqqah Governorate, affecting civilians and vital infrastructure. Humanitarian partners and UN agencies continued to respond to the growing needs of IDPs, through the distribution of multi-sectoral assistance.

23,544 people displaced from 18 - 22 May
8,230 People reached with food assistance from 15-22 May in Ein Issa camp
200 Children per day benefit from child friendly spaces in Ein Issa camp
More than 95,000 People reached with WASH assistance between 15 - 22 May

Situation Overview

During the reporting period, the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) continued advances against ISIL in Ar-Raqqah countryside. Clashes and attacks persisted across the governorate, impacting civilians and critical infrastructure. As of May 22, SDF advanced its perimeter surrounding Ar-Raqqah city, capturing several villages to the west, north and northeast of the city. As of the end of the reporting period, SDF were only a few kilometers from the city. Some 20,000 IDPs reached Ein Issa camp over the last week, including 9,000 individuals who arrived on 15-16 May alone. However, local sources reported that, as of May 18, less than 3,000 people remained in the camp following the SDF agreeing that those people from Menbij and Al-Tabqa staying in the camp could leave and return to Menbij. On May 22, unconfirmed reports indicated that ‘thousands’ of IDPs originating from Ar-Raqqah city began to reach Ein Issa camp. It is anticipated that additional IDPs from Ar-Raqqah and surrounding villages will continue to move towards Ein Issa, especially as SDF-led offensives into Ar-Raqqah city begin.

In the past week, reports emerged that local authorities prevented IDPs originating from Ar-Raqqah governorate to leave Ein Issa camp by confiscating ID cards and travel documents. Camp authorities have since indicated the rules will not be enforced and that IDPs will continue to be able to leave the camps provided they find sponsors. Meanwhile, a new camp near the eastern entrance of Menbij town in Aleppo governorate, Rasm Alakhdar village, was opened to provide additional support for IDPs from Ar-Raqqah. Ongoing reports of detention and restrictions of freedom of movement of IDPs originating from Ar-Raqqah continue to raise concerns.

In Ar-Raqqah city, food prices continued to increase. Anecdotal reports indicate that bread prices in ISIL controlled areas have increased 25% in the past week due to decreased availability of fuel and wheat flour. Water is reportedly available for 4 hours per day on average and not adequately purified. In the western countryside, water is unavailable after Al-Asadiyeh water pumping station was rendered out of service. There are reported shortages of medical services, supplies and staff. Civilians are relying on generators due to the lack of access to electricity. On May 15, flooding forced an estimated 2,000 people to leave their homes, 120 of which fled the city. Unconfirmed reports...
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indicate that on May 21, an estimated 7,000 people were displaced from 11 neighborhoods in Ar-Raqqa city, after being forced to evacuate by ISIL in order to use the area for military activities. The majority were displaced to SDF controlled areas; others to Aleppo countryside (Al-Bab) and the rest to ISIL controlled areas (other neighborhoods or Ar-Raqqa southern countryside).

IDPs have started to return to Tabqah town after they were displaced in early May due to fighting. It is estimated that about 35,000 people are residing in Tabqah town at the moment compared to 80,000 before the fighting. Water supply is restored in most of the town and local markets are functional again with a variety of goods and products. At least 8 bakeries are functional in the town. The Tabqah dam bridge is open for civilian and commercial movement for 12 hours each day. Technical teams conducted a damage assessment and performed light maintenance on the Tabqah dam. Tabqah town is accessible to some humanitarian partners: one partner reported that it had already distributed 2,000 food kits in the town. Plans are underway to include the town in WFP’s regular food distribution programme (2500 general food rations/month).

Displacement trends

Since November 2016, the WoS CCCM Cluster has verified 197,599 displacements from Ar-Raqqa governorate, of which 160,070 took place since April 1st. During the week between May 18 and 25, the Cluster tracked 23,544 displacements; of these, 22,206 were within Ar-Raqqa governorate (particularly to Jurneyyeh and Ein Issa), 780 to Aleppo, 378 to Idleb and 180 to Deir-ez-Zor.

The situation remains highly fluid and there are many other unconfirmed reports of additional displacements including the below:

Displacements:
- On 21 May local media sources indicated 20,000 people were displaced towards SDF held areas (mainly local displacement in the same area) following airstrikes on Kderan village in the west Ar-Raqqa countryside.
- Almost 250 IDPs were reportedly moved from the camp of Upper Khneiz to Al Mabrouka camp in the sub-district of Ra’s el Ain. The total number of individuals in the camp is approximately 1,850 IDPs
- Both Salhabiah village in the western countryside and Hamra Naser in the eastern countryside fell under SDF control in recent fighting. It was also reported that about 7,000 civilians fled ISIL areas into the newly controlled SDF areas.

Returns:
- People continue to return to their communities of origin in the villages of the Ar-Raqqa sub-district such as Tal Elsam Tahham, Sukariyet Tal Elsam, Thuqlth Khneiz, Abarib, Kalla, Hilo Abed and Rohayat.
On 20 May, 100 families were allowed by SDF to return to their home village Al-Meezla (25 km north-east of Ar-Raqqa) after two months of displacement in Ar-Raqqa northern countryside. Reports indicate that 15 houses were destroyed, in addition to the village mosque and school. Neither electricity nor water is available.

On 19 May, 70 families were allowed by SDF to return to their home villages Al-Tkmani and Al-Boyd (35 km west of Ar-Raqqa) after three months of displacement in Al-Mhmoudli and Al-Hsaan village. Reported 15% of the villages’ houses are destroyed, in addition to the village mosque and school. No electricity nor water is available.

On 21 May SDF allowed approximately 6,000 people to return to their home town Hazima (30 km north of Ar-Raqqa city) after about one and half month of displacement. The majority were displaced in Al-Rajm Al-Abiad makeshift camp (seven km west of Hazima) and the rest in Al-Hisha town hosted by the host community. No electricity (damaged electricity network), nor water is available (people depend on Tal Al-Samen irrigation canal unsafe water), and reported presence of mines.

**Access**

The Damascus-Qamishly airlift operation continues operating at full capacity, conducting two flights a day, six days a week. Around 1,125 m³ of urgently needed Food, Shelter, Health, WASH, Protection commodities was airlifted to Qamishly between 14 and 21 May. The operation has been extended until the end of June.

Given access restrictions to bringing further supplies by road, a scale up of the airlift operation may be required should access by road not be viable. This would involve the utilization of an additional aircraft which could increase daily rotations from two to three. $3.4 million is required to bring into service a second aircraft for three months. Meanwhile, advocacy efforts to utilize land-routes to scale up the availability of supplies to the area continue.

**Humanitarian Response**

**Needs**

- Rapid assessments were conducted in Ein Issa following reports of 20,000 new arrivals in the wake of SDF advances over the past week. Indications on places of origin (Al-Tabka, Der-Ez-Zor, Al Raqqa, and Maskana) and intentions for further destinations (Azaz, Membij and Turkey) were found. Physical threats posed by presence of explosive hazards on routes taken by IDPs and risks related to the use of smuggling routes, such as recruitment and sexual violence, were also highlighted. As per information received, a significant number of families and individuals were authorized by the local authorities to move on from Ein Issa to Menbij, Azaz, Hisha, Jerniyah.
- As a security measure, it is reported that sponsorship is granted for IDPs to relocate to rural village areas but not to urban locations such as Tell Abiad, Ein Arous and Kobane towns. IDPs relocated to these villages have seen their identity documents confiscated at check-points if they need to travel to above-mentioned towns.
- Restrictions on freedom of movement, as shown by the situation in Mabrouka and Ein Issa, continue to be of concern. Some 3,500 families had reportedly been using their cars as shelter outside Ein Issa camp waiting for the authorities to return their identity documents. Communication devices are confiscated upon entry to Mabrouka camp.
- As a result of screening and sponsorship procedures and associated challenges, time spent by IDPs in camps/transit sites is highly variable. Prolonged stay in camps/transit sites leads to increased needs in terms of food and WASH/sanitation.
- While there are female SDF personnel at mobile front-line check points screening women for explosives and checking identity documents, this is reportedly not the case at other checkpoints in Ar-Raqqa.

**Gaps**

- Despite efforts to increase presence and coverage, including through new partnerships established by Qamishly-based protection agencies and local NGOs, the lack of a continuous presence of humanitarian actors in Ein Issa continues to hamper proper protection presence and response.
- While local advocacy continues for an improved system of screening – respecting fundamental rights and freedoms as well as due process – and the lifting or improvement of the sponsorship procedure, limited progress has been made so far. No breakthrough has been observed regarding improved communication to the population and streamlined procedures, including for persons with specific needs. A growing rejection of the sponsorship procedure has been reported within the affected population. At this stage, advocacy and influence from various stakeholders at the highest level is critical.
• Movements towards Aleppo and Azaz, although permissible, are unpredictable and sometimes delayed by lengthy security checks. Families are sometimes allowed to move forward, yet without identity documents due to delayed return of IDs or travel documentation. Movements from Qamishlo to Damascus via flights continue to be facilitated by the administration, although waiting lists are delaying the process. Movements to areas formerly controlled by ISIL are reportedly allowed when people return to their specific areas of origin only.

• Consultations with communities conducted by UNHCR partners in Mabrouka and Ein Issa have highlighted how irregular food distribution and sanitation conditions continue to affect the living conditions of the displaced population, particularly women and girls. In Mabrouka, health treatment support is identified as a pressing need, particularly the necessity for a more regular presence of medical doctors on site, facilitated exit of the site to access health structures for more complex cases, and consistency in the implementation of medical evacuation procedures.

• While ongoing fighting will increase explosive hazard contamination, including on major roadways, urban centres, water systems and agricultural areas, the ability of the sector to respond is hampered by access and security constraints.

Response

• More partnerships with NGOs are being established by protection agencies, with the expected result of increasing protection presence in various locations. UNHCR and its partners have been able to increase consultations with affected population and protection interventions in Mabrouka and Ein Issa, on top of assistance already provided in these sites. The ability of protection staff to identify families willing to move to specific destinations allowed for specific follow-up with the authorities and opportunities to facilitate their exit.

• Through field presence and contact with population, UNHCR staff and one partner have been able to identify separated and unaccompanied children in Mabrouka site; have supported the referral of medical cases to medical points on site, and made efforts to facilitate their evacuation. Still in Mabrouka, a Psychosocial First Aid session with newly arrived IDPs was conducted.

• UNFPA and partners continue to operate in Mabrouka and Ein Issa camps and have extended support to displaced women and girls in Jurniyeh. 2,800 women and girls of reproductive age received sanitary napkins in Mabrouka Camp; 6,000 in Ein Issa; and 14,000 in Jurniyeh. One women and girl safe space was set up in Surin. Women and girl safe spaces are also planned in Jarablus and Al Bab.

• Child Protection responses are based on the minimum package of assistance, including: awareness raising on key child protection concerns (such as prevention of child separation and risk education), psychosocial support¹ and specialised child protection services.

• During the reporting period, recreational activities were conducted in Jurniyeh sub-district targeting 300 children, as well as Mabrouka camp for around 700 children. 94 children and 61 adults were provided with emergency risk education in Ein Issa. Additional Child Protection spaces are being established in Suluk, Tell Abiad and Ein Issa Sub-districts. This represents only part of the child protection response underway for Raqqa by international and national NGOs.

• An initial assessment is being carried out to support the formulation of individual response plans for 50-60 unaccompanied and separated children that have been identified by a UNICEF partner in Jurniyeh area.

• Situation monitoring of child protection issues is ongoing through one child protection actor. Monitoring teams provide psychological first aid (PFA), referrals and other direct assistance to children and their families.

• Training on key competencies to deliver child protection services continues to be rolled out, including training of NGO frontline workers on psychosocial support for NGO staff from Suluk, Tal Abyad and Ein Issa.

Food Security and Agriculture

• In Ar-Raqqa Governorate, around 17,520 beneficiaries were reached with ready to eat rations (RTERs) and Food Rations covering food needs between 5 and 10 days for a HH of 6, including 11,520 in Ein Issa and 6,000 in Ath-Thawrah/Tabqa.

• In Al-Hasakeh Governorate, around 2,120 beneficiaries were reached with RTERs covering food needs for 5 days for a household of 5, including 1,870 in Mabrouka Camp and 250 in Al-Mashtal Camp.

• In Aleppo Governorate, at least around 2,856 beneficiaries were reached with Food Rations covering food needs for 14 days for a HH of 6 in Menbij Camp.

• This week, the FSS Partners have distributed food assistance to Ar-Raqqa Offensive-related IDPs as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of distribution</th>
<th>Number of beneficiaries</th>
<th>Type and quantity of assistance</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

¹ Psychosocial support interventions are supported to provide a sense of normality, stability and structure to children to reduce the risk that short-term distress leads to longer term concerns, and assist child protection actors in identifying and supporting children in need of more specialised child protection interventions, for example high risk cases such as unaccompanied and separated children.
**Nutrition**

- A nutrition screening for acute malnutrition - conducted by UNICEF in Ein Issa camp during the reporting period - among 50 children under five through randomly Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) measurement revealed no cases of moderate and severe acute malnutrition. However, supplementary nutrition activities for all children under five and mothers remain essential to maintain their nutritional status.

**Response**

- All children under five, pregnant and lactating women (PLW) benefitted from nutrition services such as the provision of preventive nutrition supplies and promotion and counselling on optimal feeding practices for infant and young children.
- During the reporting period, 2,000 children and PLW in Ein Issa camp benefited from 86 Cartons of High Energy Biscuit, 50 cartons of Plumpy Doz, 840 PACs of Multiple Micronutrient Powders for children and 10 PACs (each with 1,000 tab) of Multiple Micronutrient tablets provided by two UNICEF partners.

**Coordination:**

- The nutrition sub-sector convened a meeting between UNICEF, WFP and WHO to assess gaps and challenges faced for the Raqqa response and identified ways of addressing these gaps such as enhancing engagement of the Directorate of Health in Qamishli; supporting the Qamishli national hospital to establish an inpatient nutrition center; training more health workers on nutrition and establishing/strengthening nutrition surveillance centers to collect nutrition data for programming and monitoring.
- The sub-sector in Qamishli made arrangements to convene monthly sub-sector meeting to be attended by UN agencies, NGO partners, DoH and SARC to discuss Ar-Raqqa response among other nutrition activities in Al Hassakeh and Dier-ez-Zor.

**Health**

**Needs and response**

**Al-Tabqa**

A rapid health needs assessment was conducted in Al-Tabqa on May 17 which found the following:

- There are no functional health centers/ facilities in the area: One primary health care center (PHCC) is destroyed, one is partially damaged, and the third one is in a good condition and may be reactivated. The SARC health center is out of service due to mines (as it was used by ISIL);
- The nearest health facilities are Ain Al-Arab/Kobani hospital and Menbij hospital (about 250 km).
- The process of removing mines continues in the National hospital and its surroundings. The hospital building is partially damaged. All major equipment was looted: CT-Scan, incubators, dialysis machines, but operating theatres remained intact and beds are available.
- There are five doctors in Tabqa city (3 paediatricians – internal doctor – general doctor), one dentist, and three pharmacies are open occasionally (for fear of looting)
- Health staff are reporting increased numbers of cases of diarrhea. EWARS has been reactivated in three sites, and reports are expected to be received starting from next week.
Mabrouka Camp:
An assessment conducted in May 16th to Mabrouka camp identified the following:
- 2,000 individuals, mainly IDPs and a smaller number of Iraqi refugees, were present at the site during the assessment.
- Health services are provided by Al Bir NGO (Ras El Ein) – currently supported by UNFPA – through a mobile team consisting of a doctor and nurse, 3 days every 15 days
- A cross-border actor has a health point set up (tent) where medical staff visits the camp three times a week.
- No health services are provided after 3 pm and there are no ambulatory services or active referral services.
- Children from Raqqa and Mayadeen, Deir-ez-Zor had not been immunized, while children from Boukamal had received immunization for polio and other routine vaccinations.
- One acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) case (i.e. possible case of polio) was detected: a 15 months old male who had not received any vaccination from Mayadeen, Deir-ez-Zor.
- Randomly selected children were screened for malnutrition, no cases were detected.
- Mental Health is a major gap.
- Water is available via water tanks and active water trucking. The latrines are unhygienic and not cleaned regularly. At the same site, there has been an expansion with newly build latrines

Following the visit, the following actions were undertaken by the sector:
- Reinforce the NGOs present at the camp to provide services through supporting the supply of medicine and increasing the hours of availability (Technical details are finalized to send a medical mobile team from Ras Al Ain to Mabrouka camp to provide PHC services).
- Coordinate with local authorities to facilitate the referral of critical cases (ensure their regular presence at the camp).
- GOS Department of Health was immediately contacted and provided with the information required to send a rapid response team to the area and to follow up with the polio investigation protocol. (The sample was delivered to the laboratory and coordination is made with Pediatric hospital in Damascus to receive the case as soon as it reaches Damascus).
- WHO trained health workers and volunteers from Al-Hol, Tal Aswad, Ain Al-khadra, and Mabrouka camps.

Al-Karama Camp (informal settlements):
A rapid health assessment was conducted during the reporting period revealing the following:
- The assessed area includes five informal settlements with an estimated 25,000 IDPs. In the previous days the IDPs number was 35,000-40,000; however returns have been witnessed towards the areas of origin in Al-Karama sub district.
- One health point is available in the area with two doctors and two nurses working on a voluntary basis. One pharmacist is available in the area as well
- Cases of diarrhoea, measles, and scabies have been reported
- Snake and scorpion bites have been widely registered in the area (10 per/day)
- No referral system is available in the area. Patients face real challenges reaching hospitals in Tal Abyad (120 km), Ras Al-Ain (140 km), Al-Hassakeh (180 km), and Qmaishli (230 km)

Following the visit, the following actions were undertaken by the sector:
- A shipment of medicines and health care supplies (2 tons) was delivered on 14 May to Al-Karama and Ein Issa camps in Ar Raqqa in coordination with UNHCR.
- Nutrition surveillance activities are in place as a part of general northern Ar Raqqa nutrition surveillance system (being established in cooperation with the nutrition sector).
- KRC with support from a cross-border actor will start providing health services in the coming period.

Key gaps and challenges
- The dynamics around the displacement with rapidly evolving numbers of IDPs and locations constantly changing as well as the multiplicity of IDP sites and settlements renders sustained health assistance challenging.
- Attacks on health care in ISIL controlled area are difficult to record and monitor properly.

WASH partners in north-eastern Syria and Qamishli have started using the quick WASH assessment tool for all IDP locations.

Ein Issa
An INGO has started supplying water from recently rehabilitated water station inside the camp (around 340,000 litres)
per day) complemented by water trucking from an external source (~70,000 litres per day). The procurement process for construction of water network has been initiated. The water network will allow the eventual phase-out of internal water trucking and ensure more sustainable water supply to the area. The installation of additional latrines by UNICEF continues. A partner NGO continues hiring daily laborers for latrines cleaning and garbage collection. Family hygiene kits have been distributed and Hygiene Promotion sessions have been initiated by INGOs in the camp and surrounding areas.

Al Mabrouka Camp
UNICEF continues water trucking for the camp (75,000 litres per day). The borehole close to the camp is rehabilitated and a partner NGO will soon install a pipeline to the camp. Installation of additional latrines by UNICEF continues.

Karama
UNICEF completed the rehabilitation of boreholes closer to Karama which reduced water trucking distance from 160 km to 25 km and allowed to increase daily water supply from 200,000 litres to 600,000 litres. INGOs will provide more water storage tanks.

Other locations
An INGO continues water trucking for Menbij camp (50,000 litres daily) and Al Mahmoudly reception centre (7,000 litres/day). Family hygiene kits have been distributed in Al-Hisha village, in Menbij camp and in Tabqa city.

**Shelter and NFIs**

**Response:**

**Karama:** 500 tents were installed. Plans underway to provide 40 large size tents and to construct a shed. Scouting complete for a new site for IDP camp in Southern Hassekeh near Al Basel Dam, site map and plan being prepared, to be shared next week.

**Mabrouka:** 744 families assisted with core NFIs including mattresses, blankets, diapers, kitchen sets, sleeping mats, solar lamps and plastic sheets. 85% of site preparation is complete, with work on communal kitchens and lighting ongoing. Additional emergency stock of 264 tents made available.

**Jib al Shaair** (screening site) – no shelter intervention as yet. Plans to install 10 large tents subject to budget availability.

**Shahid Aziz** (transit area) – 100 UNHCR family tents installed. Plans to install 20 large tents, communal kitchen, roads construction and lighting, subject to budget availability.

**Ein Issa** (Cotton Factory) - 550 tents are installed, another 150 tents in stock, site preparation including laying of crushed stone, communal kitchen, lighting and identification of distribution site is ongoing for 5,400 individuals. 98% of site preparation is complete. Fire extinguishers installed. 15 large tents installed, 10 for use as communal kitchens, 5 for use as safe spaces / new arrivals. Additional emergency stock of 380 tents made available. 500 NFI Kits distributed by INGOs.

**Tabqa city** – 1,000 NFI kits distributed by INGO.

**Tel Abyad** – Multipurpose cash assistance for host families and new IDP arrivals in Southern Tel Abyad, targeting over 1500 households.

**Stock updates:**

250 family tents and 250 NFI kits in stock for Manbij, New Camp Rasm-Alakhdar
Planned replenishment of NFI stock available at Ain Issa camp to 300 NFI kits
Planned replenishment of NFI stocks available at Mabrouka camp to 500 NFI kits

**Gaps:**

33,400 children identified as in need of summer clothing in Karama, Mabrouka, Ein Issa and Mashtal
Gaps remain in terms of availability of large tents and number of local partners
**Education**

**Response**
A total of 211 grade 9 students (99 girls, 112 boys) from Tell Abiad District of Ar-Raqqa governorate arrived in Al-Hasakeh city on 12 May to take part in the national exam which started on 14 May, as no exam centers were available in their home towns in Ar-Raqqa. UNICEF, in cooperation with other sector partners, ensured a coordinated response to meet the needs of the students. UNICEF and its NGO partner GOPA covered the basic needs including food, transportation, hygiene kits and exam preparatory classes, while MoE provided accommodation centers and UNHCR supported with NFIs (mattresses & blankets). The majority of students originated from host community of Tell Abiad District, though 16 IDP students are also included among them. In addition, similar support will be also extended to grade 12 students in June.

From the beginning of the intervention in April to mid-May, UNICEF, Al Bir, and Al Ihsan NGO, provided education support to a total of 8,160 school-age IDP children (4266 boys, 3894 girls) hosted by communities in Tell Abiad, Suluk, and Ein Issa sub-districts through the provision of education supplies. The support will continue to reach more school age children in Tell Abiad and Jurneyyeh sub-districts in coming weeks. The security situation as well as the fluid movements of displaced populations continue to be fluid within Ar-Raqqa and further to Al Hasakeh, Aleppo, which poses challenge in the distribution of education supplies or in planning other education support.

**Gaps**
In Al Tabqa town (Al-Thawrah town), displaced civilians have reportedly started returning to the town after weeks of displacement. No schools are reportedly functioning in the area. It is expected that school age children have been out of schools with no access to alternative education opportunities. It is not yet clear whether GoS or Kurdish Self-Administration (KSA) will resume formal education in newly accessible areas including Al Tabqa town.

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