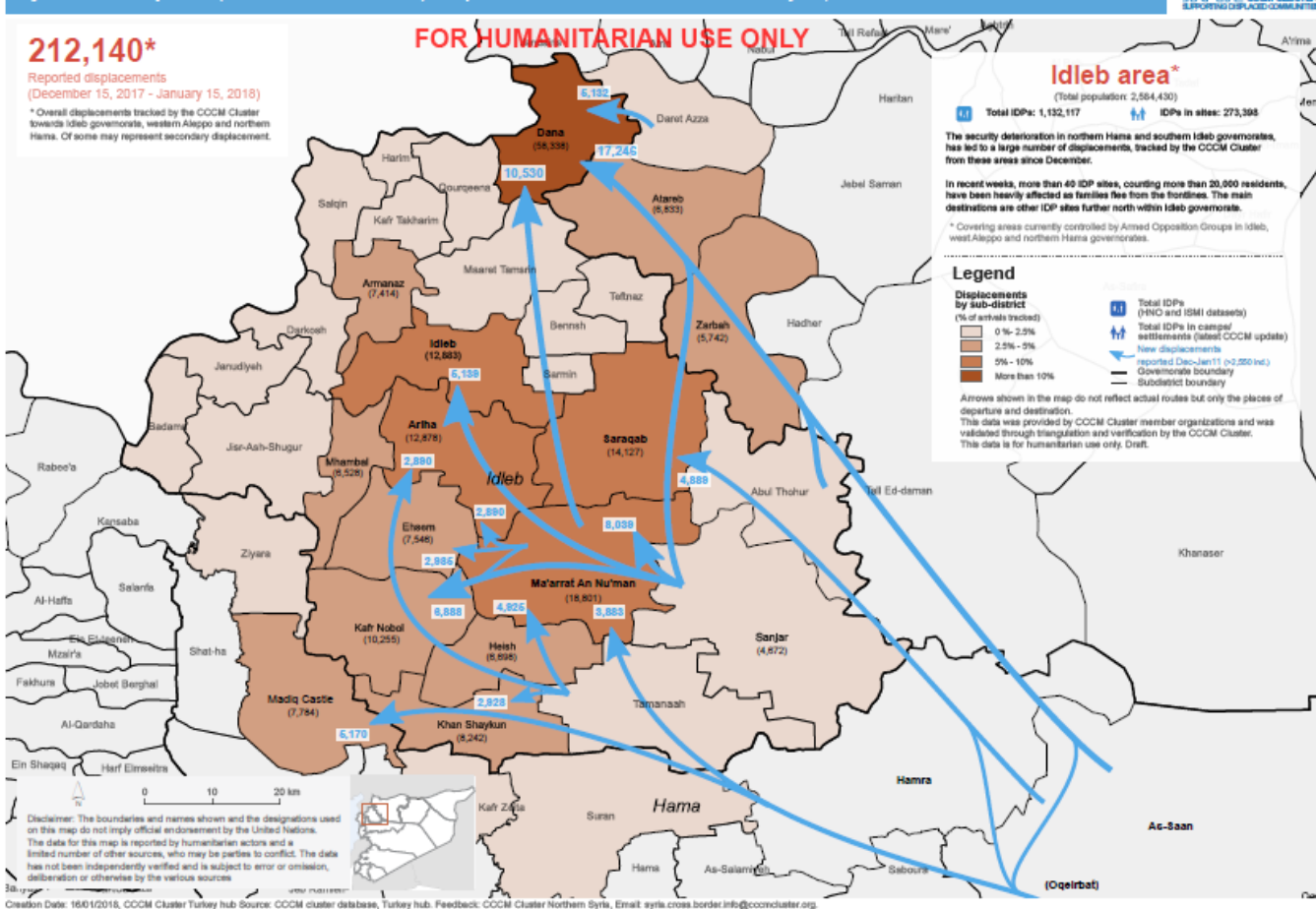


Highlights

- Hostilities between Government of Syria forces and non-state armed groups continued unabated in many areas in southern rural Idleb, northern rural Hama and southern rural Aleppo.
- Civilian displacement continues as hostilities intensify. The Cluster has tracked a total of 212,140 displacements (some may be secondary displacements) since December 15th, 2017 to date. At sub-district level, the six highest receiving sub-districts are; Dana (58,338 arrivals), Ma'arrat An Nu'man (18,801), Saraqab (14,127), Idleb (12,883), Ariha (12,878) and Kafr Nobol (10,255). Displacement to Government of Syria held areas in Hama Governorate was also reported.
- Attacks on civilian infrastructure continued with reported attacks on health facilities and personnel, schools, and civil defense centers.

Syrian Arab Republic (Northern Governorates): Displacements to Idleb area as of January 15, 2018



Situation Overview

As of 15 January, hostilities between Government of Syria (GoS) forces and non-state armed groups (NSAGs) continued in southern rural Idleb, northern rural Hama and southern rural Aleppo. Hostilities in southern rural Aleppo intensified significantly since 13 January. Parts of the contested areas in southern rural Idleb, southern rural Aleppo and northern rural Hama are reportedly empty of civilians. The areas that have been taken recently by GoS forces remain inaccessible for humanitarian due to the ongoing hostilities.

As a result of the ongoing hostilities, several incidents affecting civilians and civilian infrastructure were reported. The Health Cluster reported that an INGO-supported primary health (PHC) care facility in Heish sub-district in Idlib Governorate was impacted by an airstrike on 05 January. The attack resulted in structural damage rendering the facility out-of-service. On a monthly basis, the PHC provided an average of 5,700 consultations and 27 deliveries. On 07 January, a Syrian NGO-supported PHC in Abul Thohur sub-district in Idlib Governorate was reportedly impacted by an airstrike, resulting in structural damage. On a monthly basis, the PHC provided 4,600 consultations. On 07 January, a Syrian NGO-supported specialized healthcare facility in Idlib sub-district in Idlib Governorate was reportedly impacted by an explosion, which resulted in structural damages. Initial reports indicate that a doctor was injured. The facility is out-of-service. On 08 January, a doctor working for a Syrian NGO was killed in Ma'arrat An Nu'man sub-district in Idlib Governorate after an airstrike struck his home. As per initial reports, the doctor's wife, mother, son and mother in law were also killed; while his sister and four of his children were wounded. On 08 January, a Syrian NGO-supported surgical hospital in Kafr Zeita sub-district in Hama Governorate was reportedly impacted by an airstrike for the third time since the recent intensification of hostilities. The facility is out-of-service. On a monthly-basis, that hospital provided an average of 929 consultations, 78 admissions, 36 major surgeries and 35 war related trauma cases.

On 11 January, local sources in Idlib Governorate reported that airstrikes on Khan Shaykun town resulted in the death of a woman and her child. Furthermore, airstrikes on Ma'arrat An Nu'man town reportedly wounded the Syrian Interim Government's Health Minister, killed his driver and destroyed an ambulance belonging to one of the town's hospitals. In Saraqab town, local media sources reported that airstrikes resulted in the death of one person and caused material damage to the civil defense center in the town.

On 12 January, local sources in Idlib Governorate reported the death of nine people, including five children and three women, and the wounding of 10 people after several airstrikes struck Khan Elsobol town in the south-eastern part of the governorate. On the same day, airstrikes on Hbit town reportedly damaged a mosque during Friday prayers, wounding three people. Education Cluster partners reported that two schools in the town were damaged, as a result of these airstrikes. On the 13 January, local media sources reported that airstrikes on Khan Elsobol town caused minor damages to a school. Airstrikes on Sarja village near Ariha town reportedly damaged the village's civil defense center and destroyed one of its vehicles. Also near Ariha town, airstrikes on Shannan village reportedly destroyed the village's civil defense center, wounding one of its workers and destroying some vehicles. Airstrikes on Kafr Battikh village near Saraqab town reportedly resulted in the death of three people, including one child.

Humanitarian Response and Challenges

With hostilities showing no signs of slowing down in north-western Syria, the displacement of civilians continues. As of 16 January, the Camp Coordination Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster tracked a total of 212,140 displacements some of whom may be secondary displacements since December 15th, 2017. At sub-district level, the six highest receiving sub-districts are; Dana (58,338 arrivals), Ma'arrat An Nu'man (18,801), Saraqab (14,127), Idlib (12,883), Ariha (12,878) and Kafr Nobol (10,255). Displacement to Government of Syria held areas in Hama Governorate was also reported. Current displacements trends are both north-wards to Dana sub-district in Idlib Governorate and Atareb sub-district in Aleppo Governorate, and west-wards to areas between Kafr Nobol and Salqin sub-districts in Idlib Governorate. Four reception centers and sites in Idlib and Aleppo Governorates are receiving IDPs, with a fifth site being prepared. The five sites have a collective reception capacity of 9,750 people, and are currently hosting 3,309 IDPs. Movement of displacing people to the IDP settlements in A'zaz sub-district in northern rural Aleppo and Big Orm town in western rural Aleppo reportedly took place. Sources in both of these areas reported that the conditions of the displaced populations are dire with very little assistance being provided to them so far.

Displacement to GoS-held areas in Hama Governorate is a new phenomenon during this reporting period. Humanitarian organizations reported the displacement of 6,700 families from the NSAG-held parts of Hamra sub-district in Hama Governorate to the GoS-held parts of the same sub-district. Furthermore, 835 families from Idlib Governorate arrived in Suran, Taibat Al Imam, Maardes, Maar Shohur, and Kafer Raa communities in northern rural Hama, as well as, to several neighbourhoods of Hama city.

The Protection Cluster, Child Protection, Gender-based Violence (GBV) and Mine Action Sub-Clusters activated their emergency response to address needs related to the ongoing displacement from Hama and Idlib Governorates. Since the beginning of January, Cluster members provided 16,279 protection interventions to IDPs and affected host community members in 29 communities within nine sub-districts in Idlib and Aleppo Governorates, reaching 8,664 individuals (3,347 girls, 3,322 boys, 1,075 women and 920 men). The main services protection actors provided between 5-11 January are: psychological first aid for 650 girls, 494 boys, 573 women and 488 men; psycho-social support for 425 girls, 285 boys, 65 women and 63 men; distribution of dignity kits to 29 girls and 159 women; and risk education for 273 girls, 281 boys, 162 women and 117 men. Cluster members are also providing child protection

and GBV case management, referring individuals to more specialized services, initiating family tracing and conducting rapid assessments. The Cluster will initiate rapid protection monitoring to better document trends and to better inform the broad humanitarian response in the coming week.

WASH Cluster partners continue to provide water to the new arrivals at the IDP sites and communities through the existing networks. The focus of the Cluster during most of 2017 was to rehabilitate the water infrastructure in the north-west. This has proved vital in ensuring continued water services to the affected population, including having sufficient water for the recently displaced. Plans to scale up water support from 50,000 to 200,000 people are currently being discussed.

Shelter/NFI partners continued their response to the recent displacement. In December, the Cluster assisted 238,596 people, of whom 40,900 were IDPs from north-eastern rural Hama and southern rural Idleb, who displaced to Idleb Governorate. Of the 40,900 IDPs, 24,708 of them received core NFIs and 16,192 received seasonal/winter NFIs.ⁱ The Cluster met with representatives of 24 organizations that operate in Idleb Governorate on 09 January. The organizations agreed that the situation is extremely fluid and challenging and that shelter and winter NFI kits remain the most urgent need. The shelter absorption capacity in Idleb Governorate has already been exhausted and the current displacement is exerting a further strain on an already overburdened host community. Mosques were opened and are used as shelters by the newly arrived IDPs. Ten Shelter/NFI Cluster partners are planning to target 77,712 individuals in January and 24,960 individuals in February, with NFI kits, blankets, clothes kits and cash assistance.

Nutrition Cluster partners continued providing services through NGO mobile teams. Challenges to the ongoing response include the limited ability by NGOs to cover transportation costs required for the movement of these mobile teams. Additionally, the lack of privacy at some of the IDP sites is having an adverse effect on mothers' capacity to feed their babies with dignity.

Food Security and Livelihoods partners provided a total of 91,000 ready-to-eat rations in December 2017. Furthermore, 40,000 ready to eat rations and 6,000 food baskets are available for the ongoing response. In terms of the health response, the Health Cluster reported that seven immunization centers had to be closed due to proximity to the contested areas. Provision of health services through mobile clinics continues. To strengthen the referral system, WHO is providing running costs to 50 ambulances in Idleb Governorate. Health Cluster partners are currently using prepositioned stocks but supplies are running low. Facilities are strained due to the increasing caseload because of the recent displacement. The low winter temperatures and the lack of shelter is exacerbating the health situation of the IDPs causing winter-related illnesses.

ⁱ **Clarification:** The previous flash update contained inaccuracies regarding the Shelter/NFI Cluster response in north-western Syria during December 2017. The information provided in this update is an accurate representation of the Shelter/NFI Cluster's response in north-western Syria and supersedes what was mentioned in the previous report.

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